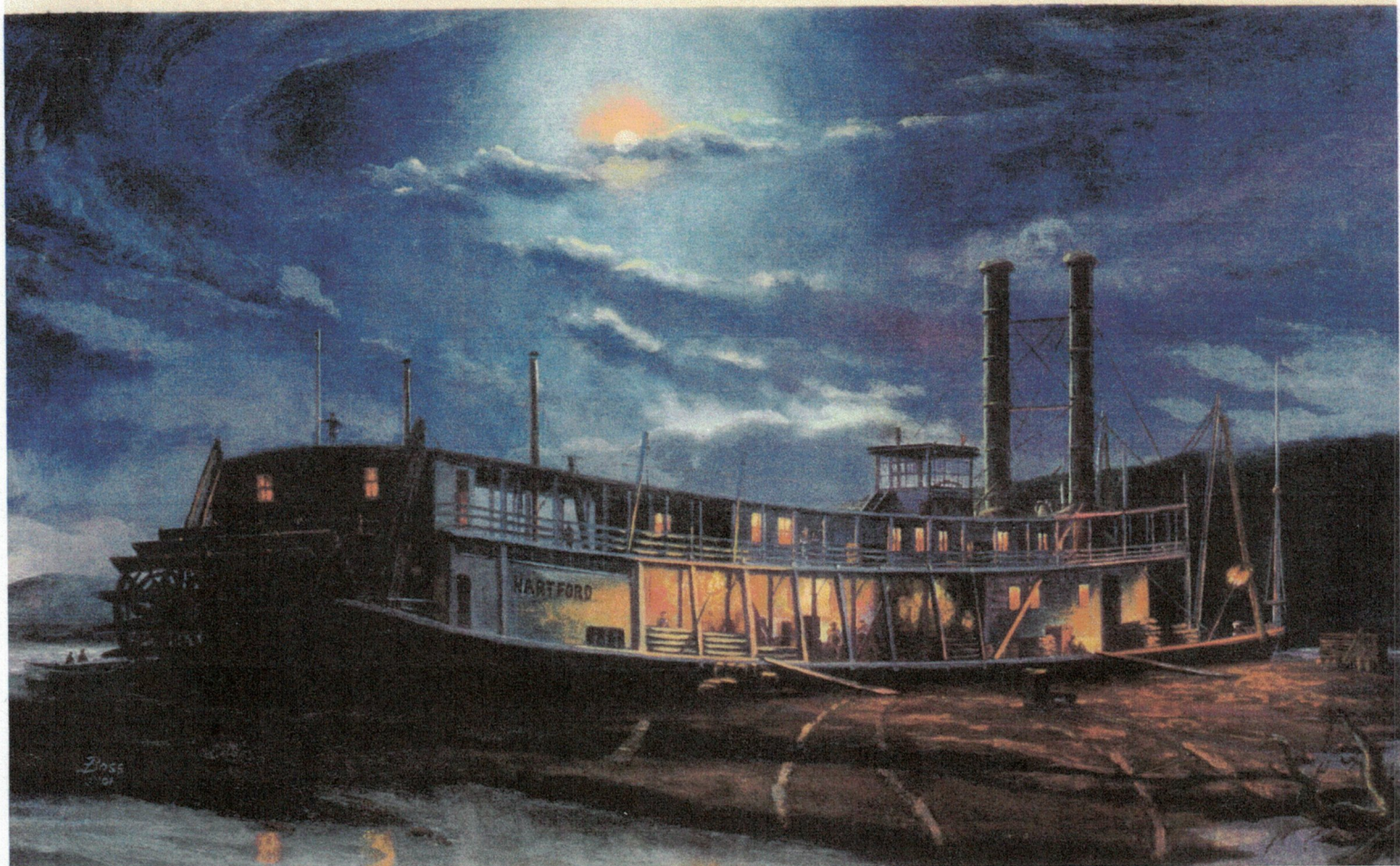


THAT SPLENDID LITTLE STEAMER

HARTFORD



By Sonie Liebler

THAT SPLENDID LITTLE STEAMER

HARTFORD

FOR CINCINNATI & LOUIS-
VILLE—The splendid new and light
draught steamer HARTFORD, Capt. Haslett,
will leave for above and intermediate ports on Wednesday,
at 10 o'clock, A. M.



For freight or passage apply on board, or to

jed

JOHN FLACK, Agent 

An advertisement from the June 5, 1851, Pittsburgh Gazette for the HARTFORD's first trip from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Cincinnati, Ohio, and Louisville, Kentucky, on the Ohio River.

Sonie Liebler

By Sonie Liebler

Cover: "Hard Aground: The Packet *Hartford* on the Kaw River"
From an original casein painting by Michael Boss
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Kaw River Research Publication
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

The Search for the HARTFORD

The opening of Kansas Territory to settlement in 1854 enticed thousands of emigrants westward. Steamboats were loaded to the guards at St. Louis and hurried up the Missouri River to the Port of Kansas (Kansas City). Fort Riley had been established at the headwaters of the Kansas (Kaw) River in 1853, and the need to transport supplies and building materials upriver lured steamboat entrepreneurs to try the Kaw. The first sternwheeler to land at Fort Riley was the EXCEL in the spring of 1854.

As a native Kansan who grew up on the Kansas River, I became interested in the river's early history and the brief, but exciting period of steamboat navigation from 1854 to 1866.

It is only natural that I start with the sternwheeler HARTFORD, that carried the founders of the town of Manhattan from Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1855. The project has grown under the encouragement of Dr. Homer E. Socolofsky, professor of history at Kansas State University, Manhattan. *That Splendid Little Steamer HARTFORD* is the first in a series of forthcoming articles on the steamboats that navigated the Kaw River, and an eventual book on the Kansas River and its steamboat trade.

My search for the HARTFORD, her size, her history before she came to Manhattan, the people associated with her, and the details of the trip up the Kaw, began in the 1850s newspapers, ranging from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to the Lawrence *Herald of Freedom*, the only Kansas territorial newspaper printed in the Kansas River valley in 1855.

No photograph exists of the HARTFORD, at least, none has been found in the major steamboat and river collections to this date. The sketch of the HARTFORD was drawn from the description in her Certificate of Enrollment (ship registration), and as a composite of sternwheelers built in the Pittsburgh boatyards during the 1850s.

My search has been aided by numerous individuals. I wish to thank my good friend, LuAnne Wright of Moody, Texas, who drew the HARTFORD; the staff of the Riley County Historical Society Museum, Manhattan, Kansas; the staff of the Kansas State Historical Society Records and Research Center, Topeka, Kansas; Dr. Homer E. Socolofsky; and my family, who have accompanied me on my search down the rivers of history.

Sonie Liebler
Manhattan, Kansas
7 September 1989

The HARTFORD

The fog lay in patches over the Kansas River on a cool October morning. The clerk, up before dawn, walked to the edge of the steamboat as was his habit every morning — hopeful to find the river rising — no such luck! The HARTFORD was still glued to the sandbar, where she had been for the last month. Glumly he thought, “The river’s falling again. I’ll bet we will be here all winter.”

He paused to watch a doe gracefully thread her way to the water’s edge for a drink. So accustomed to the steamboat’s presence, she seemed oblivious to it and content to share her watering hole.

The clerk followed the smell of fresh coffee to the galley — his thoughts intent on the day’s work, “Guess we should start scraping the paint off the cabin deck railings. The ladies’ cabin needs a coat of paint, too.”

Since the HARTFORD had gone aground about a month ago within sight of the St. Mary’s Mission, the crew had completely repainted the boiler deck and the outside cabin, replaced the temporary pig-stomach patches over the damage done to the hull on her trip upriver, and had replaced some dry rot on the paddlewheel braces.

The engineer had cleaned out the mud drum and rechecked all the fittings and valves. The engineer’s helper had entered each of the two boilers and scraped scale off of the inside. It sure helped to be only 5’4” and weigh 120 pounds to crawl into the boilers, but it was hot, dirty work. He was glad it was done! If they ever got off this dratted sandbar, they could get much more power out of her now.

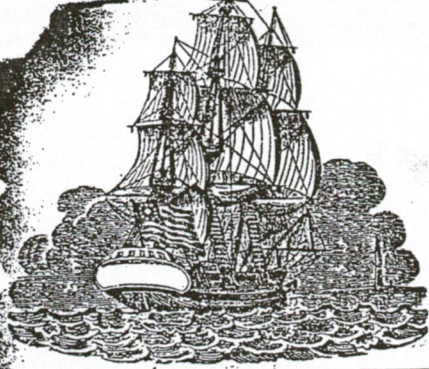
Captain Whittenburg was pleased with the progress overall. Actually for a four-year-old boat, the HARTFORD was in excellent shape. While aground near the new town site of Manhattan, the crew had replaced two cracked buckets (the boards of the paddlewheel) and a rocker shaft damaged on the trip upriver. Good thing she wasn’t a sidewheeler — she’d never have made it!

The sun appeared as a reddish-orange streak peeking through the gray fog bank. The clerk and the cook decided to walk about a half mile to the mission to do some trading for fresh eggs and more ground corn. Also, he would check with Father Duerinck about the wood the Indians were supposed to have delivered *yesterday*. Just in case — the clerk had a feeling today would be a special one for the HARTFORD and her crew!

* * *

What did the HARTFORD look like, how big was she, and where had she been before her historic trip to Kansas Territory in 1855?

The following advertisement appeared in the 29 May 1851 issue of the *Pittsburgh Gazette*:



ENROLMENT, in conformity to an Act of
 United States of America, entitled "An Act for
 licensing SHIPS OR VESSELS, to be employed in the
 Trade and Fisheries, and for regulating the same;"

David Millard of Cincinnati
 having taken or subscribed the oath required by the
 Act, and having sworn that his own name is
 part owner of the said Ship or Vessel called the
 "Hartford" of Cincinnati whereof David Millard
 is at present Master, and as he hath sworn is a citizen
 of the United States, and that the said Ship or Vessel was
 at Wilmington City, Pennsylvania
 the year 1831 as appears by his Certificate
 No. 2 issued under Act at the Port
 of Pittsburgh on the 2^d day of January
 1835 and that she is now under the charge of
 said David Millard

No. *five*

WHERE SURRENDERED.

Cincinnati

DATE OF SURRENDER.

*24 day of April
 1835*

CAUSE OF SURRENDER.

Change of Owners

AN ACT OF THE
 CONGRESS OF THE
 UNITED STATES

and that they are all citizens of the UNITED STATES
 sole owners of the Ship or Vessel called the "Hartford"
 of Cincinnati whereof David Millard
 is at present Master, and as he hath sworn is a citizen
 of the United States, and that the said Ship or Vessel was
 at Wilmington City, Pennsylvania
 the year 1831 as appears by his Certificate
 No. 2 issued under Act at the Port
 of Pittsburgh on the 2^d day of January
 1835 and that she is now under the charge of
 said David Millard
 And said David Millard
 having sworn
 that the said Ship or Vessel has on deck and no
 and that her length is 146 feet
 her breadth 25
 her depth 4 inches
 and that she measures
 143 95 tons; and
 that she is a Steamship has Steam
 Cabin on Deck and plans
 And the said David Millard has
 agreed to the description and admeasurement above specified, and
 sufficient security having been given; according to the said Act, the
 Steamship has been duly enrolled at the Port of

GIVEN under my Hand and Seal, at the
 Cincinnati this 24th
 day of April in the year
 thousand eight hundred and 35

S. J. M. C.
Sunny

Certificate of Enrollment of the HARTFORD's purchase by officers of the Cincinnati and Kansas Land Company in 1855. (Courtesy of the National Archives)

For Cincinnati & Louisville — The splendid new and light draught steamer HARTFORD, Captain Haslett, will leave for the above and intermediate ports on Saturday at 10 o'clock a.m.

A notice in the same newspaper announced the completion of the new steamer and that she was receiving passengers and freight. During her trial run the previous day, her engines had performed admirably and she was, in every way, well arranged for the accommodation of travelers in large and airy cabins.

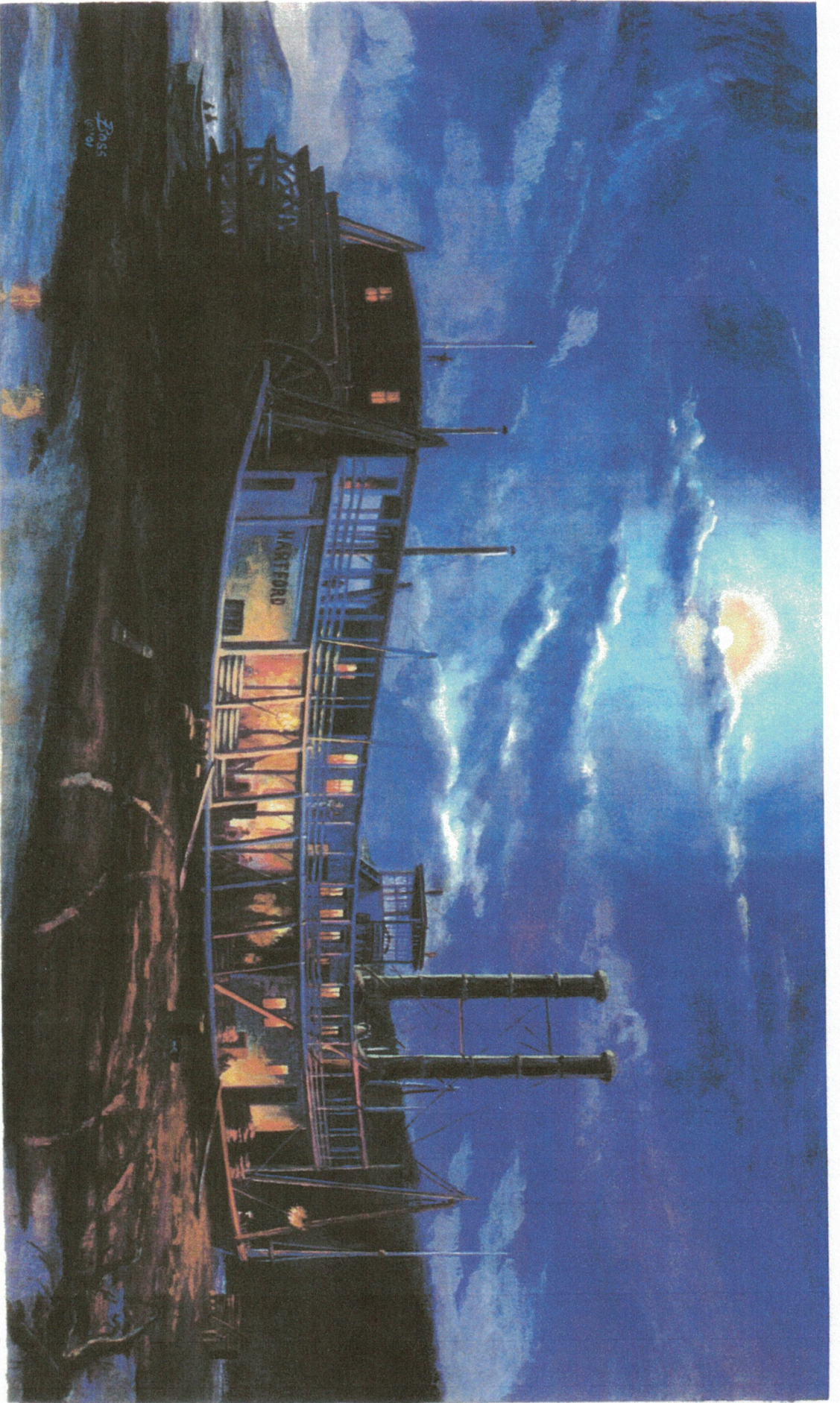
After 1838, federal law required periodic inspection and documentation of all American steam vessels engaged in the transportation of passengers or freight on the navigable waters of the United States. Each time a vessel changed owners, the boat was inspected and issued a new certificate of enrollment. This regulation has provided researchers with valuable information on ownership practices, boat specifications, and actual descriptions (however brief) of nineteenth-century steam vessels. Since Western river steamboats were built by "rule of thumb" craftsmen, very few line-drawings or plans exist. Procurement of the certificates for your favorite steamer can solve a lot of problems, or in some cases, will create new ones.

Having located the HARTFORD's certificates in Record Group 41 in the National Archives, the mysteries of the HARTFORD's size and appearance are now solved. The eight certificates signify eight different ownership combinations, beginning with the original license on 2 June 1851 and ending with the final enrollment on 24 April 1855. The final enrollment is of importance to Manhattan's history — the sale to David Millard, Joseph Davis, John Vattier, John Pipher, George Miller, and Hiram Palmer. All were 1/6th owners and were officers of the Cincinnati and Kansas Land Company.

What do the certificates tell us about the HARTFORD?

The HARTFORD, built at Monongahela City, Pennsylvania, near Pittsburgh, in the year 1851, was surveyed and admeasured, her hull and boilers inspected and certified by the surveyor of the Port of Pittsburgh. "The said ship or vessel has one deck and no mast, and that her length is 146 feet, beam 25 feet, her depth [of hold] is 4 feet, 2 inches, and that she measured 143 60/95ths tons, and that she is a steamer, has wheel stern, and cabin on deck and plain head (Enrollment #5)."

The HARTFORD's hull was 146 feet long, 25 feet wide, with an adequate hold of 4 feet, 2 inches in depth. No specific draft was listed, in keeping with the practices of the era, but she would draw no more than three feet! She was described as an excellent low-water boat in newspaper notices. Generally these dimensions are considered for the hull only, so the HARTFORD was longer and wider. She could have been 155 to 165 feet long, allowing for the stern paddlewheel. Possibly, a texas (the small upper cabin for crew quarters) had been added in her four and one-half year life.



"Hard Aground: The Packet HARTFORD on the Kaw River in 1855."
From an original casein painting by Michael Boss
(Copyright 2001. Used by Permission)

The HARTFORD had run in several trades: from Pittsburgh to Cincinnati; Pittsburgh to Nashville, to Memphis, and to Louisville, from the time she was launched in May 1851 through early April 1855.

The first owners were members of the well-known steamboat family, the Hasletts of Allegheny City, Pennsylvania. James H. owned 3/4th, William 1/8th, and James L. Graham 1/8th parts. James, master and captain, ran the steamer successfully between Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, and Louisville until his death in November 1852. His brother, William, became master and captain; his father, William, Sr., became 3/8th's owner; and Martha A. Haslett (James' widow), became 3/8th's owner. The Haslett family controlled varying parts of ownership until the HARTFORD neared the ripe old age of four years. I. G. Markle, of Monongahela City, purchased the HARTFORD in early January 1855.

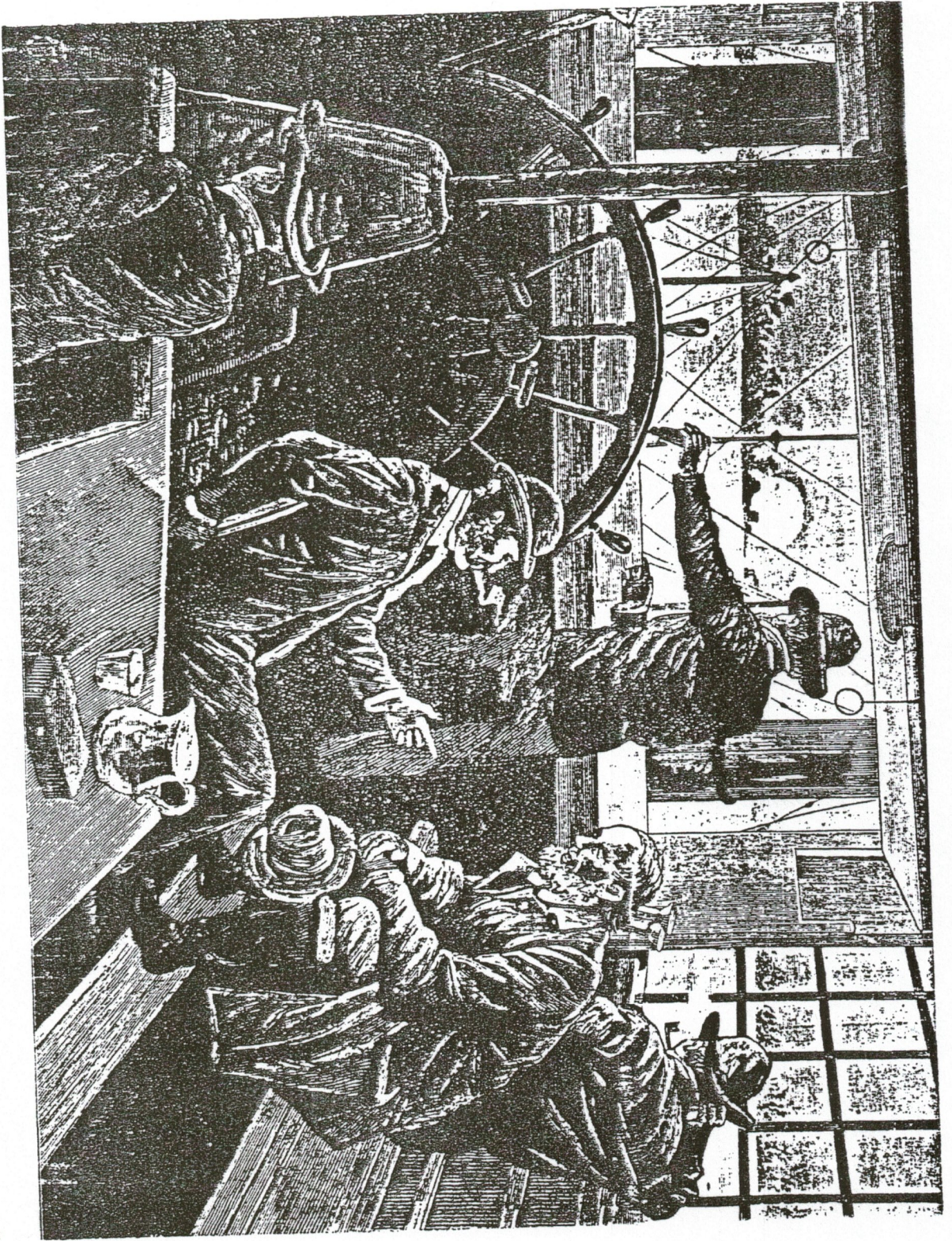
The sale was just good business for the Haslett family. The first year of a steamboat's life (if it survives) was considered the money-making year, without expenditures for major overhaul, replacement of boilers, machinery, etc. The boat usually paid for itself on the first or second trip.

Twenty-seven days after Markle's purchase, one of the HARTFORD's boilers burst. No one was seriously hurt, although one fireman was blown overboard, according to the *Louisville Courier*. Markle ran the steamer between Louisville, Cincinnati, and Pittsburgh until April 1855, when the HARTFORD changed owners for the last time.

There is an interesting sidelight to the HARTFORD and the Kansas River story. The EXCEL, the first steamboat to reach Fort Riley in 1854, ran in the same Ohio River trades during 1851. The EXCEL and the HARTFORD were often in port at the same time. The FINANCIER, predecessor of another Kansas River steamer, the FINANCIER NO. 2, also ran with the EXCEL and the HARTFORD. All had been built in the Pittsburgh area boatyards during the years 1850 to 1852. All had ended up in the Western river trades in 1854 and 1855. All had finished their careers on the Western rivers by 1856.

* * *

Space does not permit to explore the varied, fascinating cargoes this researcher found while logging the HARTFORD's port arrivals and departures and cargo manifests from the Pittsburgh and Louisville newspapers. Most cargoes can be quickly typed as Southern — cotton, tobacco, molasses, spring water, peanuts; the general store run — pork, potatoes, eggs, bacon, feathers, brooms, sundries; the foundry trade — sheet and pig iron, lead, wagon wheels, and plows; the Missouri River frontier trade — furs, hides, buffalo robes, hemp. But what kind of pearls was she hauling from Louisville, and what in the world was Blue Lick Water?! All these questions led to much day dreaming and, of course, had to be answered, for a steamboat's cargo was a microcosm of urban, frontier, and regional economics of the 1850s.



A wheelhouse scene, common to all Western river steamboats, shows the storyteller entertaining his audience on the "lazy bench," while the pilot keeps his eyes on the river. (Courtesy of the Memphis-Shelby County Public Library, Memphis, Tennessee)

Much can be learned from the cargoes, their origin, and their destination. The 20 March 1855 St. Louis *Missouri Democrat* announced the arrival of the 247-ton sidewheel STATESMAN from the Ohio River, bringing "crowds of passengers and the following of their property. . .50 tons moveable [sic], 36 coops shanghai chickens, 20 horses, 15 wagons, 2 portable houses, and 46 dogs, for Kansas."

* * *

The Cincinnati and Kansas Land Company (also known as the Cincinnati Kansas Association) tried to purchase the 155-ton LOUISVILLE for the trip West. Her owners wanted \$14,000 for the one-year-old sternwheeler, but negotiations broke down. Instead, the HARTFORD was purchased for \$7,000 (some reports say \$7,600) on 24 April 1855 and was scheduled to depart Cincinnati three days later. A ballyhoo in the 24 April issue of the Cincinnati *Daily Enquirer* reads:

Ho, for the Kansas River. The fleet and staunch [sic] HARTFORD, Captain DAVID MILLARD in command, and Captain JAMES, in the financial department, leaves today for Manhattan, at four o'clock p.m. Her officers are great favorites with travelers, and deserve all the popularity they enjoy. The HARTFORD feeds well, is swift, safe and under the best management, having courteous and attentive officers, who spare no pains to make passengers comfortable. She will have a big crowd, and, to secure state-rooms, early application should be made. There is no better boat in that trade, and we earnestly recommend her to all going up the Kansas.

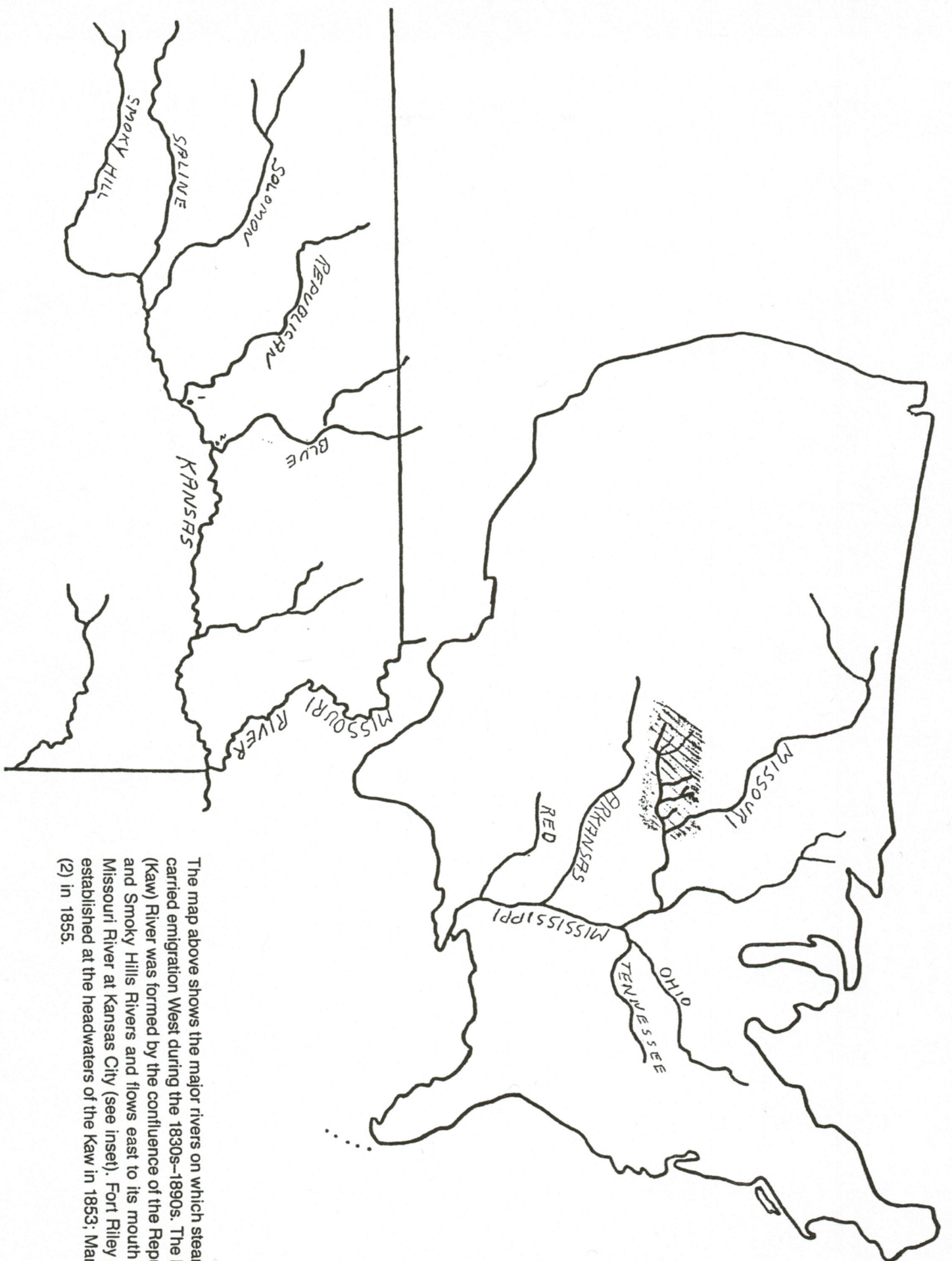
There are conflicting reports on how many pre-fab Cincinnati houses were included in the HARTFORD's cargo. The general consensus of newspaper accounts listed 10 to 14, while one source reported 25 and another, 11.

Besides the passengers leaving Cincinnati, a printing press, a steam engine, a saw mill, a grist mill, agricultural implements, seed, cooking stoves, four months' supply of provisions, groceries, and the passengers' personal belongings were reported to be on board.

A consignment of goods for St. Louis merchants consisted of 208 packages of miscellaneous merchandise; 1 lot sugar kettles, stoves, and irons; 140 barrels of whiskey and 140 barrels of ale.

Her cargo for Manhattan included: 388 castings and 200 dogs of iron, 40 stoves, 10 refrigerators, 38 dozen chairs, 20 bureaus, 6 tables, 50 tin safes, 40 kegs of nails, 10 casks of wine, 153 barrels of whiskey, the ready-to-build houses, and 209 packages of merchandise.

The fact that no passenger list has been found is typical of steamboat business practices. The lists might have existed, but they would include only stateroom and cabin reservations. The majority of the passengers took the cheaper deck passage, and no attempt was made to keep track of this group. Cincinnati newspaper



The map above shows the major rivers on which steamboats carried emigration West during the 1830s-1890s. The Kansas (Kaw) River was formed by the confluence of the Republican and Smoky Hill Rivers and flows east to its mouth on the Missouri River at Kansas City (see inset). Fort Riley (1) was established at the headwaters of the Kaw in 1853; Manhattan (2) in 1855.

accounts consistently reported about 100 to 150 passengers bound for Kansas on the HARTFORD, which included "All anti-slavery and temperance men comprising a good proportion of mechanics and farmers with a pleasant sprinkling of women and children."

* * *

We will complete the journey to Manhattan by steamboat log, which I have compiled from newspaper steamboat and river intelligence columns. Captains of steamboats did keep logs, an account and record of each trip, but very few survive. The following "could" have been written by the HARTFORD's captain.

26 APRIL 1855 — Captain David Millard, Captain James, Clerk. The passengers we have held the boat for finally arrived this morning. 5 o'clock p.m. — departure from Cincinnati bound for the Kansas River. Destination — the town site of Manhattan near Fort Riley, Kansas Territory. We are crowded to the guards (decks outside the hull) headed for the promised land. The top of the cabin decks is packed with excess freight. All remaining space is filled with fuel wood.

27 APRIL — Passed the Falls on the Ohio River at Louisville — water 6 feet over the bars. Reports here that the Missouri River stage is low, and navigation is difficult. With the steamer drawing only 3 feet, we should encounter no problems. I am concerned about the cholera outbreak in the East. So far, no cases aboard.

1 MAY — 8 o'clock a.m. — arrived St. Louis — will off-load consignments for Missouri merchants. Half of the boats on the Levee are in quarantine for cholera. We have several sick and have asked them to leave. The 50 St. Louis passengers have disembarked.

Problem of finding a qualified Kaw River pilot — The packet lines monopoly I read about in the *Cincinnati Enquirer* is worse than I thought. They are paying pilots not to work, to keep them off independent boats like ours. I have a firm offer of a pilot for \$750. That's outrageous! But there's nothing I can do. There are none available. I pray he is as experienced on the Missouri and the Kaw as he says he is.

A newspaper reporter has been talking to some of the passengers — called our steamer an "abolition boat." There is talk of putting the HARTFORD in quarantine, but I suspect the wharfmaster is a Southerner.

There are more people on the Levee seeking passage West to Kansas than there is available room on the boats. "Kansas Fever" overrules the fear of cholera. I can take only 20 more on board at \$4 a head for the Port of Kansas.

The Missouri River is a scant 3-1/2 feet over the bars. Only a light draught boat such as mine can make it.

3 MAY — Left St. Louis, 5 o'clock a.m. — river dropping. Am suspicious of the pilot — he mentioned tying up for the night. If he knows the river, he should be able to steam all night, and it should only take 4 or 5 days to Kansas, if all goes well.

Passed the ARABIA and the ELVIRA below St. Charles — amazed these big sidewheelers are able to float on the low water. Have passed 4 other sidewheelers

aground — each must be over 200 tons and draw 5 feet.

We have stopped for wood once.

4 MAY — My worst fears are confirmed — the pilot does *not* know the river. We tied up for the night, and he has informed *me* we will do so every night. *I* informed *him*, we had better get past *that* Southern “den of iniquity,” Lexington, by day or we would steam all night! I will not stop near there for fear of Southern rowdies boarding us to harass my passengers! A common practice, I have heard —

6 MAY — Fog delay this morn. Sickness has broken out — Cholera! I fear for the worst. Luckily, we have not run aground, and have only had to make stops for wood. The current is much swifter than that of the Ohio or Mississippi Rivers. Passed the sidewheel CLARA and the sternwheel F. X. AUBRY downbound.

7 MAY — Have lost 8 passengers to cholera. Short services were held onboard with burial on the sandy riverbank. We must move on. Fear for more deaths before we reach the Port of Kansas.

The engineer is concerned over the mud content of the water. The mud drum is cleaned at every night’s stop.

We saw our first Indians high up on the bluffs called Arrow Rock, as we passed. A treat for our passengers.

8 MAY — Have buried 7 more poor souls on the riverbank. Believe the worst is over.

River on the rise — we are making full steam.

I have been pleased with the number of woodyards and the quality of the hard wood, which has provided the hot fuel we need to pull the swift current.

10 MAY — While loading wood at Brunswick, the Clerk exchanged newspapers with the Captain of the sidewheel EXPRESS. He just delivered a boatload of Kansas emigrants to Kansas City and is returning to St. Louis where thousands wait.

Passengers are paying the exorbitant \$18 per person. Freight goes for \$2.50 per 100 lbs. because of low water. There is money to be made on these Western rivers.

We will pass that hot-bed Lexington this afternoon — if we don’t run aground.

11 MAY — Broke a starboard-side hog chain yesterday — 3 hours for repair. We exchanged river intelligence with the Captain of the CATARACT downbound for St. Louis.

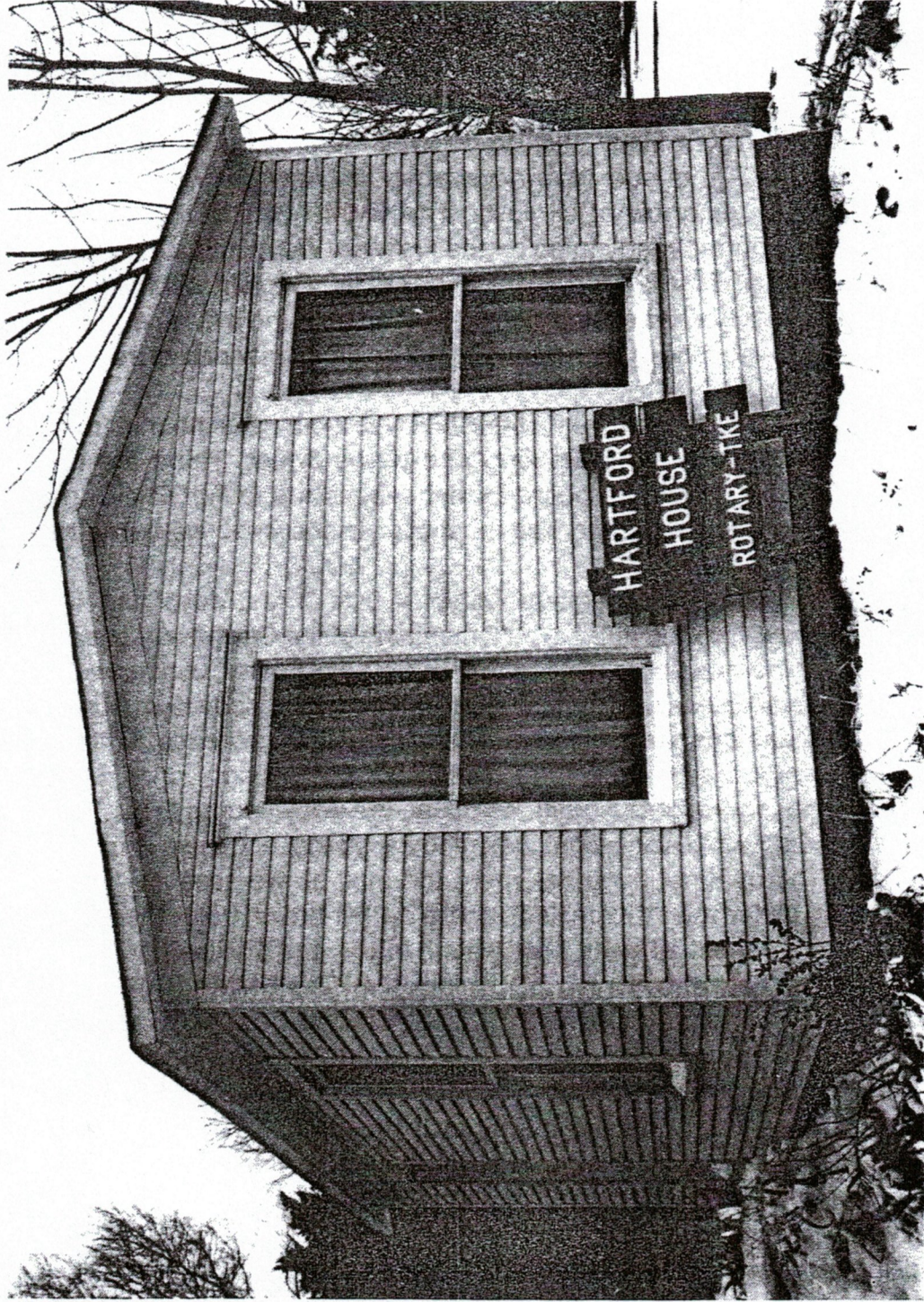
Passed Lexington after 5 o’clock! There was a small crowd at the Levee yelling and shaking their fists. Several mounted men rode along the bank brandishing rifles, but didn’t fire on us. All aboard were relieved to be past that abomination on the river!

Passed the KATE CASSELL downbound for St. Louis.

Plan to tie up at the woodyard at Napoleon for the night. The owners are reported to be friendly to Free-State emigrants.

12 MAY — Arrived at the Port of Kansas at 3 o’clock this afternoon. We have come 427 miles in 9 days. Need to take on provisions and wood as quickly as possible. The Kaw River is reported to be falling.

15 MAY — Still in port waiting for a rise. Missouri River at a stand with barely 5 feet in the channel. Not much traffic up or down.



One of the ready-to-build houses manufactured in Cincinnati, Ohio, that was brought to Manhattan on the HARTFORD. In 1971 the one-room house was found inside another house which was being demolished. It was moved to the Riley County Historical Museum grounds and renovated in 1973 by the Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity, Kansas State University, and the Rotary Club of Manhattan. (Courtesy of the Riley County Historical Museum)

Yesterday, I had a chance to explore the Port of Kansas — a boom town for Western emigration — people, wagons, and livestock pack the streets, outfitters are charging outrageous prices.

There is money to be made on the Kaw River. The present rates between here and Lawrence are 74¢ per hundred for freight and \$4 for passengers upriver and \$3 downriver. I just might run the HARTFORD between Manhattan and Wyandotte the rest of the summer.

I have inquired after a Kaw River pilot, to no avail. I am afraid we will have to use the one we've got — I'm sure he's *never* seen the Kaw before!

19 MAY — We will leave tomorrow at all costs. The EMMA HARMON and the FINANCIER NO. 2 are reported ready to go on the first rise. We must be the first!!

20 MAY — The race is on! The 124-ton EMMA HARMON, Captain J. M. Wing, has pulled out ahead of us. I'm told she carries 50 passengers and a large amount of freight bound for Lawrence. She draws 2 feet and will begin regular packet service to all points on the river.

Captain Mott Morrison has taken the FINANCIER NO. 2 out a half hour in front of us. The sternwheeler is over 150 feet long and draws 3 feet. There are 65 passengers and 100 tons of freight on board for her second trip to Fort Riley. I'm told she is to deliver one ready-to-build house, similar to the ones we carry, to Lawrence.

The channel has more than adequate water — 5 to 7 feet deep and no obstructions. We are heavily loaded and have 75 members of the Cincinnati Kansas Association bound for the new town of Manhattan, 243 river miles upstream.

We have seen several cabins with Indians watching from their doorways. Some of these Delaware Indians operate a woodyard 8 miles below Lawrence. With 2 steamers ahead of us, I am sure we will be cutting our own wood.

Will have to put into shore for the night, as usual. We will wood up then. The banks are heavily wooded with black walnut, oak, and hackberry, and there is much drift on the islands. The channel becomes more tortuous as we ascend.

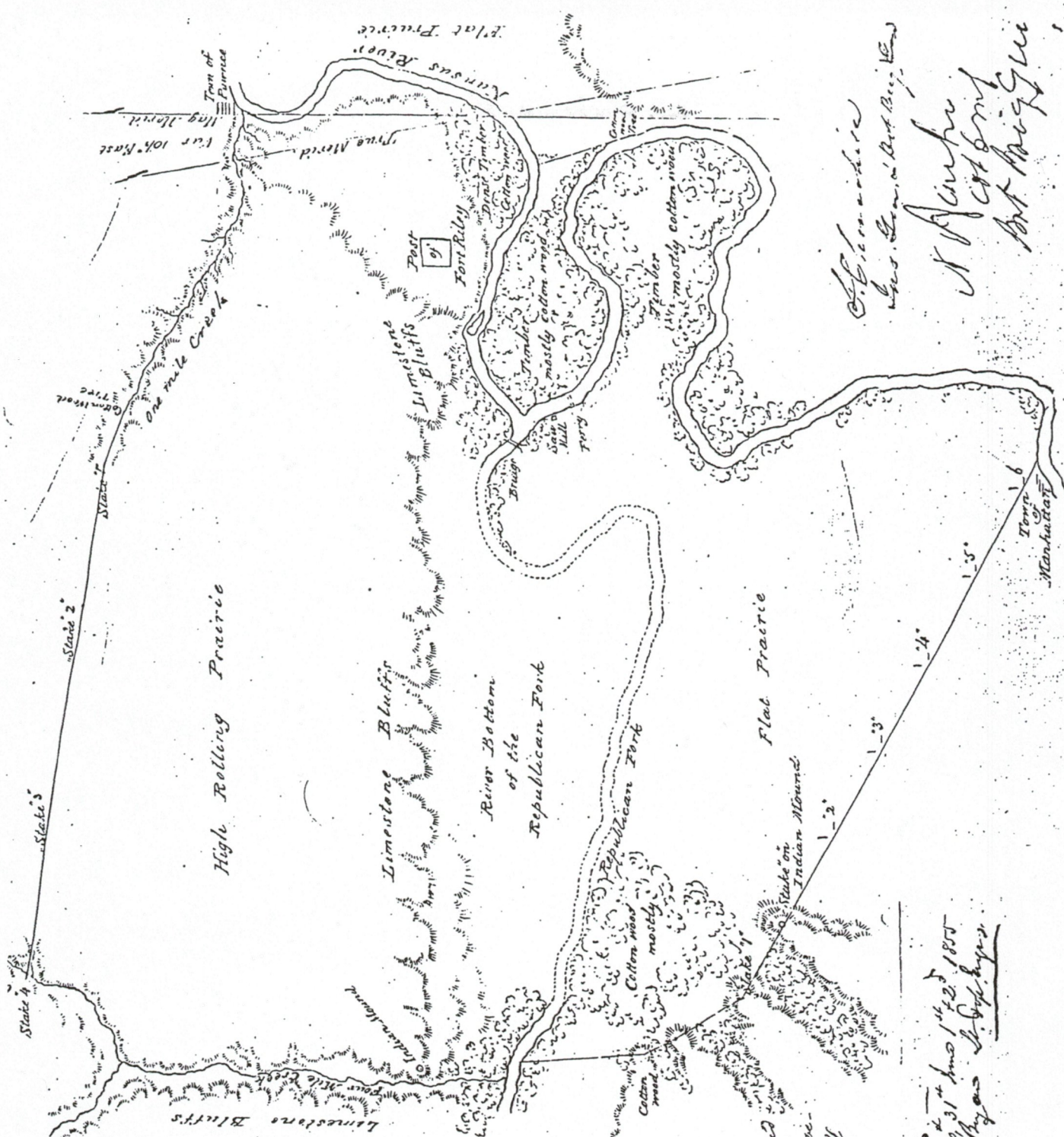
The Kaw is much wider than I expected, and a darker-brown color than the Missouri. The current is almost as swift. I estimate it to run 4 to 5 miles per hour.

21 MAY — Arrived at the Lawrence Levee at 1 o'clock p.m. The EMMA HARMON and the FINANCIER NO. 2 were in several hours earlier. We have been invited to unload here and join the New England Emigrant Aid Society settlers. Our Company officers have declined the offer.

22 MAY — Left Lawrence 5 a.m. behind the other 2 steamers. River on a stand — soundings show 3-1/2 feet over the bars. Ran hard aground near Douglas and spent 3 hours sparring off. Some settlers came aboard and asked our Company to join their new settlement. Offer declined.

23 MAY — Making slow progress — river on a stand — ran aground 3 times but able to back off easily. We see the smoke of FINANCIER NO. 2 ahead. She must be picking her way slowly, too. The wind gusts are increasing to the danger point. I have told the pilot and crew to tie up at the next bluff on the channel side of the river.

24 MAY — Landed at Topeka. The EMMA HARMON has unloaded all freight for



Plat of the Military Reserve
 at Fort Riley, Kansas Territory
 as determined by the board composed
 of J. S. Churchill, T. L. Lewis, and
 J. D. ... from the 1st of
 April 1855.

Scale 2 inches to one mile
 Surveyed and drawn May 30, 31 and June 1, 2, 1855
 Thomas G. Payne & G. D. Payne

C. L. ...
 Mrs. ...
 J. ...
 ...

The proposed townsite of Manhattan was platted on this map of Fort Riley, Kansas Territory, 28 April 1855. The site was about five miles from the confluence of the Smoky Hill and Republican Rivers which formed the Kansas (Kaw) River. The Cincinnati and Kansas Land Company was steaming on the HARTFORD toward this location (near present-day Junction City) when the steamer ran aground near the early settlement of Rocton

points above and is returning to Kansas City. The FINANCIER will take her freight on and push ahead. We are too heavily-laden to help.

The 40 miles from Lawrence to Topeka has taken 3 days!! Unless a freshet comes, we will never make it on to the Manhattan site this spring.

26 MAY — The FINANCIER left at dawn. We are loading all the hard wood we can carry. Cottonwood is in abundance on the upper river, but it burns too fast.

Finding 3-1/2 feet in the channel and proceeding slowly.

28 MAY — While tied up opposite St. Mary's Mission for the night, Father Duerinck came aboard for a visit. He assured me the Pottawatomis would have plenty of good black walnut wood for us to load at dawn.

30 MAY — River on a stand — still we must feel our way slowly. The passengers amuse themselves with the beautiful scenery. Wild grapes, paw paws, and raspberries are seen along the riverbank. We surprised a herd of buffalo drinking at the river's edge, when we suddenly rounded a tight bend.

Indians are seen occasionally at a distance. They are curious about our "fire canoes."

A couple of small boys are trying to catch one of those 100-pound catfish reported to thrive in the Kaw.

1 JUNE — Aground south of the small settlement of Boston. We can see the beautiful Blue Hill rising high above the river. Again, our officers have had to turn down an offer to locate, despite the friendliness and help its settlers have given our crew to get off the sandbar.

3 JUNE — Hard aground again one mile beyond the Blue River mouth, only 30 more miles to the Manhattan town site. We will have to wait for a rise. The crew has tried sparring the boat off, to no avail. The FINANCIER is reported hard aground several miles below Fort Riley.

4 JUNE — The officers of the Cincinnati and Kansas Land Company have made the decision to accept the offer of the Boston town to join their settlement, provided the town's name be changed to Manhattan. Of the original 85 members, 75 have reached their new homes.

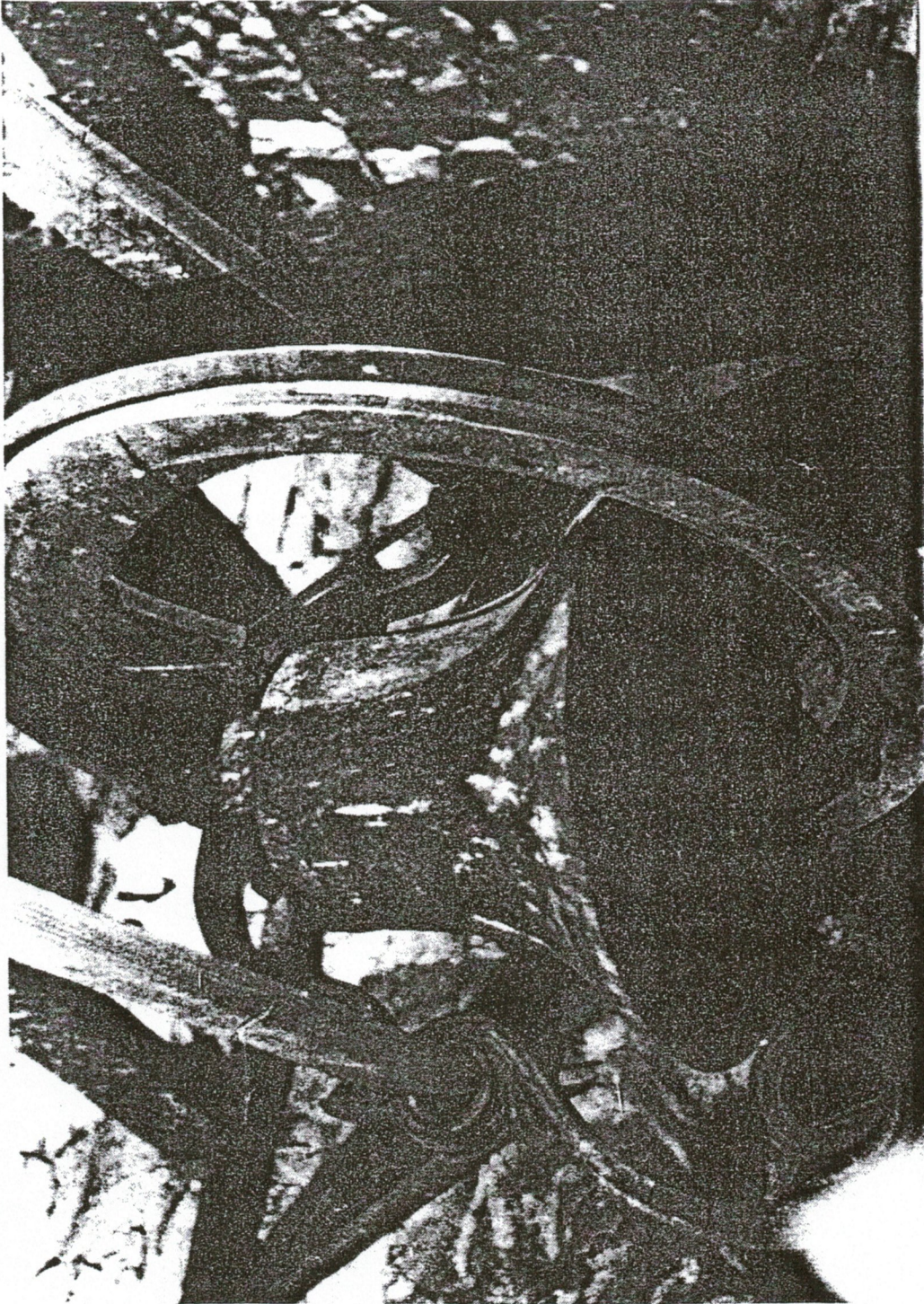
We will use the HARTFORD for temporary shelter and headquarters of our Company's business as well as hold church services on board.

1 JULY — A rise has freed the steamer. We will drop down to the mouth of the Blue to unload the heavy cargo.

* * *

Thus ends Captain David Millard's "log." There are entries missing in the saga of the HARTFORD, which remain question marks. Perhaps some day, the "missing pages" might be found in some old trunk or buried in some library collection.

Captain Millard left the HARTFORD some time between mid-July and October.



After its salvage by Judge John Pipher, one of the Cincinnati and Kansas Land Company officers, the roof bell of the HARTFORD hung in the belfry of the First Methodist Church, in Manhattan from 1858 to 1938. It now hangs in the lobby of the Riley County Historical Museum in Manhattan. The engine room bell was also salvaged from the burnt ruins of the steamboat and is in the Museum's collections. (Courtesy of the Riley County Historical Museum)

He probably returned to Cincinnati. The 1860 Federal Census of Ohio lists David Millard as residing in Cincinnati. Occupation? Patent agent. (He was listed as a steamboat man in the 1850 census.) I don't believe he realized the profits on the Kaw such as those he made as captain of the JNO. SWASSEY in the Ohio River trade during the early 1850s.

* * *

My purpose has been to bring you the story of "that splendid little steamer, the HARTFORD." Others have written of Manhattan's founding. But, I think the following article in the *Journal* [Boston?], 14 July 1855, presents a good description of the young town:

There is one other thrifty settlement about 45 miles west of Topeka, called Manhattan . . . A company with 25 houses and 2 steam saw mills went there in a steamer in May last. A sudden failure of the water left the boat aground and there were evidently some Yankees around, for the disaster was turned to excellent account. The steam saw mills were put up and the two engines of the steamer were made to operate other saws while the boat was used for a hotel.

How about that Yankee ingenuity? But what of the fate of that splendid little steamer? I'll let the clerk finish the story.

* * *

The clerk had a feeling this 10th day of October would be a special day for the HARTFORD. Earlier, he and the cook had visited the mission and returned with ground corn, eggs, and fresh-shot prairie hens. He could smell the corn bread baking. He looked up from his desk to find two Indians standing in the doorway. By the Indians' sign language, the clerk got the message: "Whiskey!" "Sorry we've run out — no more — !" The boatmen had been warned by Father Duerinck not to give spirited drink to the Indians. The Indians sullenly retreated as the clerk continued to shoo them off the boat. He watched them until they disappeared into a draw, a short distance away. Maybe they only wanted tobacco, he thought.

Checking the water depth around the steamer — again, no change — the clerk went to check on the crew painting the ladies' cabin. He heard the shout, "Fire!, Fire!" and the crackling of flames at the same time. The crew fought valiantly to put out the fire, but it spread too quickly through the tinder-dry superstructure of the HARTFORD. Captain Whittenburg ordered all off the boat. There was not time to save much — clothes, personal belongings, or the steamer's papers.

It was a special day, all right!! An especially tragic day for that splendid little steamer, the HARTFORD.

What caused the fire? It could have started from a cook stove, carelessness, or any number of reasons. One account blames the fire on the Indians, disgruntled in their visit to the boat. Another account is found in the 24 October issue of the *Louisville Daily Courier*:

Boat Burnt. Capt. W. W. Whittenburg, which [whose] boat has been lying in the Kansas river for several months, passed through Kansas City a few days since, and reported the Hartford burned on October 10. While lying near a prairie, the grass caught fire, which immediately communicated with [the] boat, and she became a total loss in a few moments.

The HARTFORD, insured for \$3,500, was considered between an \$8,000 to \$10,000 loss. There were reports that her Cincinnati owners were negotiating a sale at the time. Possibly, Millard could have gone back to complete the arrangements.

Salvage attempts could not be made until 1859 because of the low water during the intervening years. The title of the machinery had been acquired by Captain Josiah Simpson, of Kansas City. The STAR OF THE WEST towed the wrecking barge upriver until the 435-ton sidewheeler ran aground near Lecompton, where she remained all winter. Simpson proceeded upriver by sail and pole. He managed to get the engines and machinery out, but the fall of the river prevented its loading on the barge. He buried all except one boiler on the riverbank. This cache is still presumed to remain buried, though the river channel has changed. Simpson loaded one rocker shaft on this barge for sale in Topeka. The boiler was purchased for use in a Lawrence saw mill by the New England Emigrant Aid Society.

The story of the steamer HARTFORD is representative of the steamboats' golden era of the 1850s. Her adventurous trip on the virtually unknown Kansas River is comparable to others on the tributaries throughout the Western rivers systems. The HARTFORD carried emigrants to found and settle the new town of Manhattan, just as other steamers on other rivers brought settlement to the West. The HARTFORD, imprinted on Manhattan and Kansas history, was truly "that splendid little steamer."

About the Sources

The standard sources that should be consulted on the history of Western steamboats and their technology are *Way's Packet Directory, 1843–1983* (1983), compiled by Frederick Way, Jr.; Louis Hunter, *Steamboats on the Western Rivers* (1949); and Alan L. Bates, *The Western Rivers Steamboat Cyclopedium* (1968). Of the many sources on the Missouri River steamboat trade, the most helpful were Hiram M. Chittenden, *History of Early Steamboat Navigation on the Missouri River*, 2 vols. (1903) and William E. Lass, *A History of Steamboating on the Upper Missouri River* (1962).

Information on the Kansas River steamboat trade is sparse, but the search begins in the Kansas State Historical Society's archives and publications. The following articles were useful: "The Kansas River — Its Navigation," by Albert C. Greene, *Kansas State Historical Collections*, 9: 317–358; "A Review of the Early Navigation on the Kansas River," by Edgar Langsdorf, *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, 18 (1950): 140–145; "The First Survey of the Kansas River," by Edgar Langsdorf, *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, 18 (1950): 146–158. Webb's Scrapbooks, vols. 1 through 7, were consulted.

The HARTFORD's trip to Kansas and Manhattan was pursued in Winfred E. Slagg's *Riley County, Kansas* (1968) and Homer E. Socolofsky's *In the Beginning: A History of the First Methodist Church, Manhattan, Kansas 1855–1985* (1985).

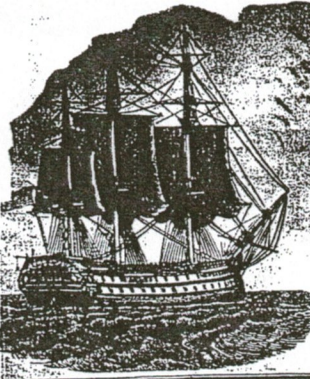
The bulk of the research was done in the 1850s newspapers and federal records. Steamboat port arrival and departure columns and river intelligence columns provided the information needed to trace the HARTFORD's trip from Cincinnati to Manhattan for the captain's "log." The following newspapers were used: The Cincinnati *Daily Enquirer* of 1855; the Pittsburgh (PA) *Gazette*, 1850–1856; the Louisville (KY) *Daily Courier*, 1850–1861; the St. Louis *Missouri Democrat*, 1854–1861; the St. Louis *Missouri Democrat*, 1854–1861; and the Lawrence (KS) *Herald of Freedom*, 1854–1861.

The Ohio federal census records of 1850 and 1860 and the *William's Cincinnati Directory's* of 1849–1850, 1851–1852, 1853, 1855, and 1857, provided David Millard's whereabouts and profession for those years.

The HARTFORD's hull specifications and ownership history were found in the Certificates of Enrollment from Record Group 41, Port of Pittsburgh, Marine Inspection and Navigation, National Archives.

Also, correspondence with steamboat historian and marine architect Alan L. Bates of Louisville, Kentucky, and James V. Swift, Contributing Editor of the *Waterways Journal*, of St. Louis, Missouri, provided valuable information on the steamboat construction of the 1850s. Ralph DuPae and the Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin–LaCrosse, lent assistance in trying to locate photographs of the HARTFORD and other Kansas River steamboats of the era. Since the Kansas River steamboat experience came very early in the new age of field photography, no photographs have been found to date. (The first steamboat photograph was taken in 1848.)

ENROLLMENT



ENROLLMENT in conformity to an act of the Congress of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, entitled "An act for enrolling and licensing SHIPS OR VESSELS, to be employed in the Coasting Trade and Fisheries, and for regulating the same."

James H. Haslett of Allegheny City

having taken or subscribed the Oath required by the said Act, and having sworn that he owns 3/4th James S. Graham 1/8th and William Haslett 1/8th all of Allegheny Pa.

82

Permanent

HERE SURRENDERED.

DATE OF SURRENDER.

REASON OF SURRENDER.

Pittsburg

day of

Wm. Woods
Inspector

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
CONGRESS OF THE
UNITED STATES

citizens of the UNITED STATES, sole owners of the Ship or Vessel called the *Hartford* of Pittsburgh whereof James H. Haslett is at present Master, and as he hath sworn is a citizen of the United States, and that the said Ship or Vessel was built at Monongahela City in the year 1851 as appears by her Certificate of Admeasurement No. 10 dated Pittsburgh June 2^d 1857 and Certificates of Hull & Boilers Inspections being filed

And the Surveyor of the Port of Pittsburgh having certified that the said Ship or Vessel has one deck and no mast and that her length is 146 feet her breadth 25 " her depth 4 " 2 in and that she measures One hundred forty three 60/95 Tons 143 60/95 tons and that she is a Steam Boat has Wheel Steer Cabin on deck and plain head. And the said James H. Haslett having agreed to the description and admeasurement above specified, and sufficient security having been given, according to the said Act, the said *Hartford* has been duly enrolled at the Port of Pittsburgh

GIVEN under my Hand and Seal, at the Port of Pittsburgh this Second day of June in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty one

Captain James H. Haslett built the HARTFORD in 1851 to run in the Ohio River trades. The Certificate of Enrollment gives valuable information on the ownership and specifications of the steamboat. (From Record Group 41, National Archives)

Appendix A*

The Early Years

The HARTFORD's history has been so closely tied to Manhattan that we forget where she came from and where she had been prior to the 1855 trip. The steamer had conducted business on the Ohio and Cumberland Rivers with three different major owners before Captain David Millard purchased her on April 22, 1855, to move the Kansas and Cincinnati Land Company westward.

In 1851, the steamer's hull was built in the McFall & Company boatyard on the bank of the Monongahela River in Pennsylvania. In the tradition of steamboat building of the time, the hull was floated down the river to a Pittsburgh area boatyard for the addition of its superstructure (decking and cabins, etc.), thence to another for the installation of engines, boilers and machinery, including the paddlewheel.

One of several brothers who captained river steamers, James H. Haslett announced his new boat's eminent appearance in the Ohio River trade in the May 29, 1851, *Pittsburgh Gazette*:

THE HARTFORD. — Capt. Hazlett's (*sic*) new steamer, under the above name, has been completed, and now lies at the wharf, opposite Wood Street, for the reception of passengers. The H. is as fine a steamer of her class as we have seen. She made a trial of her engines yesterday, and performed admirably. Her cabins are large and airy and she is every way well arranged for the accommodation of passengers.

However, no cost of construction was included. For comparison, from information available, a year after the HARTFORD had been built, Louisville boatyards were turning out steamboats at \$84 a ton in 1851.** Costs in the Pittsburgh area would have been similar. Rated at 144 tons, the HARTFORD would have cost about \$12,000. Haslett's expenditure could have been higher depending on how much fancy work he had ordered to be added to the cabins, etc.; and the size of the roof bell and engines. In 1859, one engine for an 121-ton steamboat built by James Rees and Sons Company, Pittsburgh, cost \$4,000.** The HARTFORD had two as did all steamers her size.

Haslett enrolled his steamer at the Port of Pittsburgh on June 2nd. Thereafter, as dictated by federal law, inspection and re-enrollment was required yearly or sooner if there had been a change of owner (see page 5).

The *Gazette's* "Port of Pittsburgh" column announced arrivals and departures and "Imports by River" — basically abbreviated cargo manifests. On June 19th, the recently arrived HARTFORD's freight from Louisville listed bacon, hams, lard, butter, candles, tobacco, cotton, deerskins, wire, rags, and whiskey were a few of the items in this load. [Only manifests coming into a port were listed in these columns.]

On July 1st, the HARTFORD and the EXCEL arrived—a coincidence that appeared in columns for the next two years, often including another future Kansas River steamer, the FINANCIER NO. 2.

ENROLMENT.

ENROLMENT, in conformity to an Act of the Congress of the United States of America, entitled "An act for enrolling and licensing SHIPS OR VESSELS, to be employed in the Coasting Trade and Fisheries, and for regulating the same;"



William Haslett of Allegheny City,
having taken or subscribed the Oath required by the said Act, and having Sworn that he owns 1/8
James S. Graham 1/8 Wm Haslett Sr
1/8 and Martha A. Haslett 1/8
all of Allegheny City
are

No. 9

Permanent

WHERE SURRENDERED.

at Pittsburgh

DATE OF SURRENDER.

23 day of April 1853

CAUSE OF SURRENDER.

on change of owners
in part

AN ACT OF THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES RELATIVE TO THE ENROLLMENT OF SHIPS AND VESSELS.

citizen of the UNITED STATES,
sole owners of the Ship or Vessel called the *Hartford*
of Pittsburgh whereof Wm Haslett
is at present Master, and as he hath Sworn is a citizen of
the United States, and that the said Ship or Vessel was built
at Monongahela City Pa. in the year 1851
as appears by her Certificate of Enroll
ment No. 74 dated & issued at Pitts-
burgh June 2, 1852 now surrendered
on change of owners in part.

And
the said Enrollment having certified
that the said Ship or Vessel has one deck and no mast
and that her length is 148 feet
her breadth 25 "
her depth 14 " 2 in
and that she measures one hundred forty three 1/2 tons
143 6/95 tons; and
that she is a Steam Boat has Wheel Steer
Cabin on deck and plain head.
And the said William Haslett having
agreed to the description and admeasurement above specified, and suffi-
cient security having been given, according to the said Act, the said
Hartford has been duly enrolled at the Port of Pittsburgh

GIVEN under my Hand and Seal, at the Port of
Pittsburgh this fifth
day of February in the year one
thousand eight hundred and fifty three,

Captain William Haslett took over the helm of the HARTFORD after the death of his brother James. Martha Haslett, James's widow was a part-owner. After each change of ownership, another inspection of a steamer was a requirement.

(From Record Group 41, National Archives)

During the winter Haslett took the HARTFORD to Nashville on the Tennessee River to bring back "Southern" cargoes that included cotton, tobacco, sweet potatoes, peanuts, ginseng, molasses, hides, plus the usual general store items—barrels of eggs buried in straw, castor and lard oils, dried apples, feathers (for pillows and beds), "Blue Lick Water," washboards, oats, and sundries. On June 17, 1852, 41 bales of hog hair and 8 bales of cows' tails were among the cargo shipped in from Louisville.

Button-making businesses were located in many river cities, so casks and barrels of pearls and mussel shells were staple shipments for the HARTFORD. A pearl press was even listed in another steamer's cargo.

The river stage was a concern to every river man. Floods and low water were noted in the newspapers. The HARTFORD was often advertised as "an excellent low water boat," which would prove a distinct advantage when she later ascended the Kaw.

"River intelligence," an exchange between up- and down-bound steamers, could make or break a successful trip. Illnesses and epidemics in river towns were closely watched. The June 12th *Gazette* mentioned an outbreak of cholera and ship fever on the Lower Mississippi River. In 1854, cholera was rampant in the country having been spread by passengers who had brought the disease on board. Captains did not land at towns known to be gripped by the epidemic and took their trade to non-affected rivers.

In the November 27, 1852, *Gazette* announced James H. Haslett's death. The Captain had died on board during a trip to Cincinnati. His remains were returned via railroad to his home in Allegheny City. Captain John C. Reno brought the steamer back to Pittsburgh and then took over the wheel for the remainder of 1852 and 1853.

James's brother William became the major owner along with Martha, James's widow, and ran the Pittsburgh-Cincinnati-Louisville trade throughout 1854. The St. Louis (MO) *Democrat* of December 2nd, announced the sale of the HARTFORD for \$6,000 to William J. Markle. The sale came just in time for the Hasletts, but it turned out to be a disaster for the new owners. The January 23, 1855, *Louisville Courier* reported:

Accident to the Hartford. — The Hartford, bound from Pittsburgh to Cincinnati, while rounding out from a point, near "Five Mile," burst one of her boilers. Fortunately, there were very few passengers on board, and no one was seriously injured. One of the firemen was blown overboard, but escaped without injury. The mate was slightly injured.

Consequently, the 1st engineer's license was revoked and the 2nd engineer was suspended for 60 days. Repairs were made quickly to get the steamer up and running with a full cargo for she arrived at Pittsburgh seven days later.

An average lifespan for a steamboat was four years. The HARTFORD was approaching three years of almost constant running. Hence the sale to Markle had been good business, as the Haslett family had built and were running other new steamers, according to the *Gazette*. Older boats were sold to owners who took them to tributaries such as the Wabash, Illinois, Tennessee, and eventually to the Kaw River.

On April 22, 1855, Captain David Millard, of Cincinnati, purchased the HARTFORD from Markle for \$7,000. Although Millard's river history has been hard to

trace, he was well enough known in Cincinnati steamboat circles to rate the following article in the city's *Inquirer*, same date:

Our old friend Capt. DAVE MILLARD is again afloat upon the waters, and those waters on the Ohio, Mississippi, and Missouri rivers. CAPT. MILLARD has purchased the Hartford, and he is now loading her for the Kansas River, to which point hundreds are rushing in the greatest kind of haste. We have known the Captain of the Hartford in all his steam-boat relations, and we can say, without hesitation, that he is the most competent man to fill his appointed position that we know of. This is the first and the best opportunity that has or will offer for adventures to see the new country about which so much is said, and we would advise such to call upon DAVE MILLARD, or his Clerk, immediately.

Millard and his company of Manhattan-bound settlers did not waste any time. The ever-optimistic *Inquirer* of April 27th noted: "The Hartford left last evening for Kansas, literally crowded. We know there will be a good time on board."

Good times and bad times....The rest of the HARTFORD's life was tied to Manhattan's founding story. The four years and four months of the steamer's existence mirrored the estimated life of an 1850s steamboat, ending in her burning near the St. Mary's Mission on October 10, 1855.

* Based on articles and advertisements in Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, and Louisville newspapers, 1850-1856.

** From Louis C. Hunter, *Steamboats on the Western Rivers: An Economic and Technological History* (1949), 110-112.

Appendix B*

The Odyssey to Manhattan

A closer look at the journey from Cincinnati to Manhattan, reveals the time frame and rigor of steamboat travel endured by passengers during the 1850s. But first, let's get an idea of how long a trip the Cincinnati Land and Kansas Company made to the port of Kansas (now Kansas City.) From the city of departure, the HARTFORD traveled approximately 511 miles down the Ohio River to Cairo where the steamer moved into the Mississippi River—then, upriver 180 miles to St. Louis.** After a short jaunt of approximately 15 miles to the mouth of the Missouri River, the HARTFORD faced the long haul upriver of 365 miles to Port of Kansas levee.*** Add the 243 miles of the Kaw. The HARTFORD had steamed a total of approximately 1,314 river miles to its destination! The trek had begun April 27th, and ended June 4, 1855—39 days! [*River mileage is approximate due to the constant changing of the channels through natural causes as well as man-made containment, such as dike, revetment and other flood control projects over the 148 years, since the HARTFORD made its journey. For example, in the "Gildersleeve Pilot Landing Book of June 1856," the distance from St. Louis to the Kansas Port landing was listed as 427 miles. The Missouri River channel has been straightened in places and chutes cut off to ease the navigation of the towboat industry. The Kansas River is about 167 miles today, but Captain Benjamin F. Beasley measured its length at 243 miles in 1859. The mileage of the Ohio, Mississippi, and Missouri Rivers have been taken from recent U.S. Corps of Engineers Navigation Charts.*]

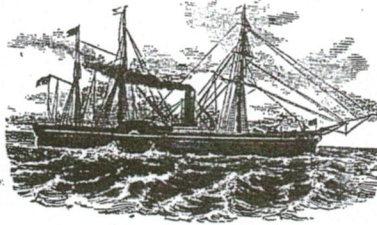
Steamboat passengers lists from 1850s have not survived, if they ever were kept. One reason is that the lower class, for a small fee, were loaded on the main deck until there was no more room. They carried their own food and bedding, even their animals and pets. First-class passengers paid higher fares and shared the limited space on the upper cabin deck. However, a partial list can be found in Homer E. Socolofsky's *From the Beginning: A History of the First Methodist Church, Manhattan, 1855-1985* (Manhattan, KS, 1985). Seventeen Methodists rode all the way via the HARTFORD: Judge John Pipher and his son, John W., Colonel Joseph J. Davis, Andrew J. Mead, Hiram Palmer, George Miller, Dr. J. C. Vattier, school teacher Amanda Arnold, her parents and sister, Laura Lane, Reverend Robert L. Harford, C. F. Briggs and his wife, A. J. Coe and his wife, and Captain David Millard via the HARTFORD. William Allingham and son Robert disembarked at Kansas City and reached Manhattan by other means.

I constructed the "Log" of the HARTFORD (pages 11-16) from newspaper articles, ads, and notices. Common on sea-going ships, logs were kept on inland river steamboats as well. However, few have been found from the HARTFORD's era.

Before the advent of telephone and ship-to-shore radio, river conditions such as rises or low water, and the danger of snags or wrecks, were shouted by the crews between passing steamers. Upon landing at towns along the way, "river intelligence," as it was called, was gleaned from levee workers, merchants, and boarding passengers. Newshawks and advertisers worked the riverfront of the larger towns. Newspapers, some months old, were gladly passed among the passengers and crew.

The down-bound trip from Cincinnati went fast with the aid of the current. Once the HARTFORD left St. Louis, it was a struggle against the strong upstream

ENROLMENT.



ENROLMENT, in conformity to an Act of the Congress of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, entitled "An act for enrolling and licensing SHIPS OR VESSELS, to be employed in the COASTING TRADE AND FISHERY and for regulating the same,"

W. J. Markle of Monongahela having taken or subscribed the *Oath* required by the said Act, having *Sworn* that he owns $\frac{1}{2}$ and *M. A. Moffet of same place* $\frac{1}{2}$

No. 2

Permanent

per Register's direction
WHERE SURRENDERED.

Continued

DATE OF SURRENDER.

24 day of April 1855

CAUSE OF SURRENDER.

Renewed

Wm. Hastings

Surveyor, &c.



An owner and ~~division~~ *division* of the UNITED STATES sole owner of the Ship or Vessel called the *Hartford* of *Pittsburgh* whereof *W. J. Markle* is at present Master, and as he hath *Sworn* is a citizen of the UNITED STATES, and that the said Ship or Vessel was built *Monongahela City* in the year *1851* as appears by Certificate of Enrollment No. *111* dated and issued *Pittsburgh April 17th 1854* and now *is* ~~under~~ *under* on change of owners *Entire*

And

The said Enrollment having certified the said Ship or Vessel has *One* deck and *No* mast and that her length is *146* feet *2* in. her breadth *25* " *2* " her depth *24* " *2* " and that she measures *one hundred forty three* ^{*60*} ~~*143*~~ ^{*60*} ~~*143*~~ ^{*60*} tons, and that she is a *Steam Boat* has *Wheel Steer* *Cabin on deck* and *plain* And the said *W. J. Markle* has agreed to the description and admeasurement above specified, and sufficient security having been given, according to the said Act, the said *Steam Boat* has been duly enrolled at the PORT OF PITTSBURGH.

GIVEN under my Hand and Seal at Port of Pittsburgh, this *2^d* of *January* in the year of *one thousand eight hundred and fifty five*

Captain William J. Markle purchased the HARTFORD in January of 1854. On April 22, 1855, Markle sold the steamer to Captain David Millard. The above Certificate of Enrollment dated January 2, 1855, fulfilled the yearly federal inspection.

(From Record Group 41, National Archives)

current of the Missouri River, fittingly called the "Big Muddy." The mouth of the Missouri could easily be found by its muddy-brown outpouring mingling with waters of the Mississippi (a sight that is very noticable on the river as well as from the air today).

After leaving Cincinnati on April 27, 1855, the progress of the HARTFORD can be charted from the Louisville *Courier* and the two competing St. Louis newspapers, the *Missouri Democrat* and *Missouri Republican*. The steamer traveled day and night, stopping only for wood to feed its hungry fireboxes, down the Ohio River, up the Mississippi to St. Louis, the "Gateway to the West."

The *Missouri Democrat* of May 2nd announced the steamer's arrival:

The Hartford, recently purchased for the Kansas river trade, arrived yesterday morning with some freight and several families and their plunder. She will leave for Kansas landing [*now Kansas City*], and if the stage of the river permits, she will proceed up.

From the May 4th Cincinnati *Gazette*:

A private dispatch received by us yesterday from the officers, of the steamer Hartford, states that ...had departed for Fort Reilly [*sic*] and Manhattan the following morning. All well and in good spirits. Speaking of Manhattan, we might here observe that evening before last most of the emigrants on the steamer *Statesman* were en route from Pittsburgh for that city there to locate. The *Keystone State* from Pittsburgh will be at our landing tomorrow. Most of her passengers are also on their way to Manhattan, which from present appearances, is destined to be the largest city in Kansas.

Upon reaching the St. Louis levee, on May 1st, many steamboats were in quarantine due an outbreak of cholera carried from the East. The deadly disease had spread along the Upper Mississippi as far north as St. Paul, Minnesota, and Dubuque, Iowa, and was reported on the Missouri as well, according to the Louisville *Courier* of May 2nd. The HARTFORD did not escape the scourge, and seven members of the Cincinnati and Kansas Land Company died en route.

The *Gazette* printed only glowing reports from the Company and its Captain. There was no mention of cholera. This typical article of May 14th still glorifies the ability of the HARTFORD:

We learn by private dispatches from Capt. Millard, with the Cincinnati Kansas Association [*sic*] aboard, arrived at Kansas on Saturday morning, all well and in good spirits. The Hartford will leave Kansas City today, for Manhattan and Fort Reilly [*sic*], so that by Thursday the Association will have commenced farming, building, etc., at their new home. We also learn that the steamer *Hartford* is the only boat which has succeeded

in ascending the Missouri river without getting aground or the numerous bars.

It was not that easy! The Pilot hired in St. Louis did not know the river, so for safety's sake, Captain Millard ordered the steamer tied to tree on shore overnight on the shallow stretches. Reports in the *Missouri Democrat* marked the HARTFORD 's progress up the river. On May 3rd, the steamer was passed by the downbound ARABIA and ELVIRA at St. Charles, MO, 30 miles from the Missouri's mouth; by the GOLDENSTATE at Dozier's Chute (named for the wreck of the MOLLY DOZIER) on the 4th; by the CLARA at Glasgow on the 5th; and the F.X. AUBREY passed her at Fisher's Landing on the 6th. On the 11th, the KATE CASSEL passed the HARTFORD near Wayne City near Kansas City.

The *Missouri Democrat* also reported small freight off-loaded from the above steamers at St. Louis, indicating the boats had been lightened to cope with the low water. The river stage dictated how much cargo was loaded. The steamers would adjust their draft according to how high or low the stage. Most of the Missouri River paddlewheelers could be loaded to the five-foot draft mark, but generally the water depth in the channel limited the load to draw only three-feet .

After arriving at Kansas City on May 12th, low water on the Kaw kept the HARTFORD at the levee for eight days. Finally, after a rise had raced down river, the HARTFORD pulled away from the levee behind two other sternwheelers, the EMMA HARMON and the FINANCIER NO. 2, a competitor of Ohio River days. Both steamers were carrying passengers and freight and supplies for settlements up river as well as for Fort Riley.

On May 21, the HARTFORD off-loaded the building materials for one two-story house on the Lawrence levee at the foot of New Hampshire Street. An early settler reminisced of the first appearance of steamboats at Lawrence :

Steamer Emma Harmon, three-decker, carrying a number of passengers surprised our citizens (before daylight one morning). The following day the steamers Financier and Hartford, both large Mississippi River steamers, arrived with passengers. There were 3 steamers unloading freight at our wharf....The 2 latter steamers continued their journey for Ft. Riley the next day. [Due to low water and the deep draft of the EMMA HARMON, she later transferred her passengers and cargo to the FINANCIER NO. 2 at Topeka, and turned back for Kansas City]

The May 26th *Herald of Freedom* (K.T.) gave the following account:

The Hartford, belonging to the Manhattan company, arrived from Cincinnati at about one o'clock, the same day [May 21st] heavily loaded with passengers and freight, for their new settlement at the junction of the Smoky Hill and Republican fork of the Kansas, five miles above Fort Riley, She was much more heavily loaded than either of the other steamers, and

like them experienced no difficulty for want of water...The present rates between this point and Kansas City, Missouri, are 75 cents per hundred for freight and four dollars for passengers up and three dollars downstream.

The HARTFORD's progress upriver proceeded slowly with many stops for wood, groundings, and nights hugging a tree ashore due to low water. By June 3rd, she had passed the small settlement of Boston. The Louisville *Courier* of June 15th continues the story:

The late rise in the Kansas only extended to the Big Blue, some 30 miles below Fort Riley, and in consequence of low water the Missouri ran out very soon, leaving boats which had started up in a bad predicament. The Financier No. 2 is hard aground a few miles below Ft. Riley,...with scarcely any water where she is grounded. The Hartford, 18 miles below...Fort Riley, is high and dry on a sandbar, without any prospect of getting off on a rise.

A few days later, a rise enabled the HARTFORD to drop back down the mouth of the Big Blue, where the Company officers accepted Boston's invitation to join their settlement, providing that the name be changed to Manhattan. The dream of reaching the original platted town site of the same name five miles from the confluence of the Smoky Hill and Republican Rivers seemed unobtainable after the slow and frustrating low-water trek up the Kaw. (See map page 15)

The hardy pioneers of the Cincinnati and Kansas Land Company had left a large city of near 210,000 people; had steamed three rivers; experienced a cholera outbreak on board; and had escaped harrassment and threats by Slave Staters at Lexington, Missouri. Life in the frontier town of Manhattan would certainly bring new challenges to the settlers. They had traveled 1,314 river miles in 39 days!

* Based on articles in Cincinnati, Louisville, St. Louis, and Kansas Territorial newspapers, of 1855.

** My thanks to friend Ms. Barbara Hameister, of Blanchester, Ohio, for calculating the mileage from the U.S. Army Corps Navigation Charts of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers.

*** U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, "Missouri River Navigation Charts: Kansas City, Missouri, to the Mouth," Kansas City District, ca 1992.