

## Mark Twain And The Queens Of The Mississippi

Cheryl Harness



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#### "Ste-e-e-amboat's a'comin!"

As a boy, Samuel Clemens loved it when a steamboat traveled up or down the Mississippi River to his town of Hannibal, Missouri. He'd run to the river bank and stare longingly at the boat that looked like a floating wedding cake, wishing he could be one of the lucky passengers or crew. As a young man, Clemens made his dream come true by working his way up to steamboat pilot. When the Civil War temporarily stopped the steamboats, Sam went west, where he began writing funny stories for newspapers. He signed one story "Mark Twain," a river term meaning two fathoms deep. It was a name he would eventually make famous through his lectures and books, the most popular of which were based on his boyhood days on the banks of the Mississippi. Mark Twain's life was curiously entwined with the Mississippi River and the majestic age of the steamboats. With a lively narrative sprinkled with quotes from Twain himself and dramatic panoramic paintings, Cheryl Harness has created fascinating portraits of America's biggest river and the great man it inspired.

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