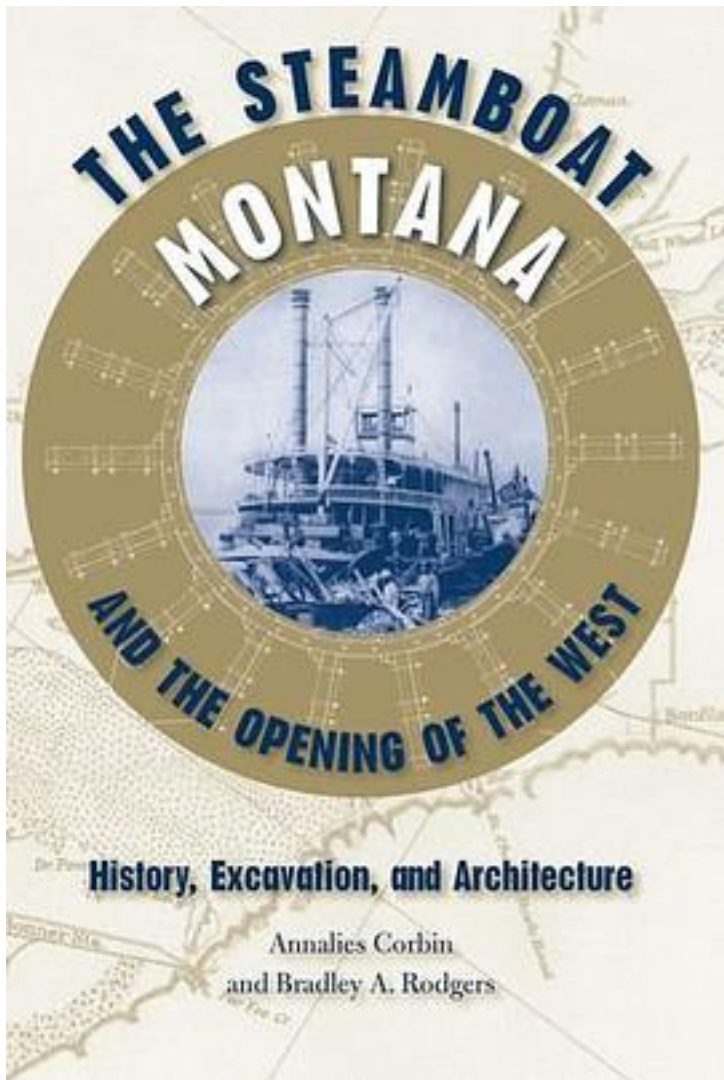


The Steamboat "Montana" and the Opening of the West



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著者:Corbin, Annalies/ Rodgers, Bradley A./ Bradford, James C. (FRW)/ Smith, Gene A. (FRW)

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The "Montana" was a shining example of modern design and technological sophistication when it made its maiden voyage in 1879. But it is remembered for its ironic end: only five years after it was launched, the "Montana" struck a railroad bridge near Bridgeton, Missouri, and sank. One of the largest stern-wheel vessels ever to navigate a western river, the "Montana "was built to compete with railroads. The recent archaeological excavation of its wreckage, combined with a wealth of written and visual material documenting its construction and use, offers fascinating insights into a little-known aspect of Western expansion.

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