

HANNAH'S DIARY

A Tale Of The Pony Express

Chapter Three – by Kay Hively

As the summer passed, Hannah helped her mother around the house. She also became better acquainted with her new neighbors, Mr. and Mrs. Cole and their son, Robert. They explained what the Pony Express was. It was a new business that would soon be started in St. Joseph. The company would have men and horses racing all the way from Missouri to California to deliver letters.

Hannah could not imagine a horse running all the way to California. But if they could, she hoped she would be able to write a letter to Betsy and let the Pony Express deliver it.

Every Saturday morning Hannah went shopping with her mother. On their shopping trip, they always went to visit Hannah's father.

Mr. Evans owned a warehouse on the banks of the Missouri River. Hannah enjoyed watching the boats come and go on the river. Her father's office was in the front of the building. This was where Hannah and her mother always went first. From the window in her father's office, Hannah could watch the men working on the boats.

When a boat arrived, men and boys worked hard and fast to unload the cargo. Much of it was put into Mr. Evans' warehouse.

Before she went back home, Hannah always went with her father into the big warehouse. There she saw great stacks of barrels and boxes and crates. These containers were filled with things like clothing, shovels and farm tools.

On one visit to her father's office, Hannah heard men talking. They talked about sending goods up the Missouri River. They said miners working in the gold fields needed supplies. A steamboat, they said, could haul many things the men would buy.

She also heard the men talk about a big show on a riverboat. It would have singers and dancers and maybe even jugglers or



clowns. Hannah hoped the show would come on Saturday. That was the only day she got to come down to the river bank.

That night Mr. Evans told Hannah that a big showboat was coming to St. Joseph in a few weeks, and it was going to come on a Saturday.

After supper Hannah wrote in her diary:

“Dear Diary, It must be wonderful in the gold fields. Papa is talking about sending a steam boat up there. Maybe I could send a message to Betsy. Wouldn't she be surprised to get a letter from me. I wonder how much gold she picks up every day.”



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Classroom Extensions

Things to Think About and Do –

- Have you ever seen or ridden on a riverboat? Draw a picture of one and decorate it with flags and banners.
- Riverboats all had names. Some of the most famous riverboats had names like “Delta Queen” and “Robert E. Lee.” Who was Robert E. Lee? If you had three riverboats what would you name them? Write down the three names.

Next Week: Chapter Four – Robert wants to be a Pony Express rider.