

"Observations on a Steamboat Between  
Pittsburgh and Cincinnati," *American Notes*

Charles Dickens, 1842

Description of how the Scenery

Occasionally we stop for a few minutes, maybe to take in  
wood, maybe for passengers, at some small town or village (I  
ought to say city, every place is a city here); but the banks are  
for the most part deep solitudes, overgrown with trees, which,  
hereabouts, are already in leaf and very green. For miles, and  
miles, and miles, these solitudes are unbroken by any sign of  
human life or trace of human footstep; nor is anything seen to  
move about them but the blue jay, whose colour is so bright,  
and yet so delicate, that it looks like a flying flower. Through  
such a scene as this the unwieldy machine takes its hoarse  
sullen way: venting, at every revolution of the paddles, a loud  
high-pressure blast; enough, one would think, to waken up the

In  
between  
cities

looks

all  
quiet

no  
people

It's  
our

noise  
we  
hear

host of Indians who lie buried in a great mound yonder. . . . The  
very river, as though it shared one's feelings of compassion  
for the extinct tribes who lived so pleasantly here, in their  
blessed ignorance of white existence, hundreds of years ago,  
steals out of its way to ripple near this mound; and there are  
few places where the Ohio sparkles more brightly than in the  
Big Grave Creek.

Overall, this is a  
wonderful spot!

Signs  
of  
tribes  
from  
long ago