

CURRICULUM GUIDE

The Economic Impact  
of the Steamboat

*by Jane Hedeem*

*for the Traveling Exhibition*

*Steamboat A-Comin': The Legacy of  
the New Orleans*

*developed in partnership with the Rivers Institute at Hanover College*



This is a publication of the Indiana Historical Society  
Eugene and Marilyn Glick Indiana History Center  
450 West Ohio Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269 USA

[www.indianahistory.org](http://www.indianahistory.org)

Cover: Painting *The New Orleans Steaming Upstream by Moonlight, 1811* by Gary R. Lucy. Courtesy of the Gary R. Lucy Gallery, Washington, Missouri. <http://www.garylucy.com>

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## Introduction

This lesson is designed as a complement to the traveling exhibition, *Steamboat A-Comin': The Legacy of the New Orleans*, developed by the Indiana Historical Society in partnership with the Rivers Institute at Hanover College. The exhibition celebrates the 2011 bicentennial of the *New Orleans*, the first successful steamboat to voyage down the Ohio River, and explores the ways this event effected the economy, technology, and culture of the Midwest and the country.

Steam technology and its innovative application to river navigation allowed the local, state, and national economy to grow exponentially. It also facilitated the westward migration of a large number of settlers, a trend that had a profound impact on Native American populations. While the river posed many dangers, it also offered thrilling adventures. For African Americans in particular, the river was both the scene of hard labor and a chance to experience freedom of movement. Those who worked, lived, and relaxed on the river became adherents to a culture that was expressed in poetry, literature, song, and legends.

The *Steamboat A-Comin': The Legacy of the New Orleans* traveling exhibition is available to organizations such as historical societies, museums, and schools. In some cases a nominal fee is charged for use of the exhibition. Lessons in the accompanying curriculum may be used to prepare students for a visit to the exhibition, as a follow-up to a visit, or as a stand-alone piece that provides historic context for this pivotal moment in history.

## Overview/Description

In this lesson students will learn about the variety of jobs available on a steamboat and compose job descriptions for each of them. Students will examine primary sources to discover the growth in river commerce associated with the transition from flatboats and keelboats to steamboats, as well as the range of industries that depended on or related to river commerce. In addition, they

will speculate on the impact to river communities when the railroad supplanted the steamboat as a means of transporting people and goods.

## Grade Level

Elementary (grades 4 and 5) and middle/intermediate school (grades 6, 7, and 8)

## Academic Standards

- Indiana Standards
  - Grade 4
    - Social Studies 4.1.6—Explain how key individuals and events influenced the early growth of and changes in Indiana.
    - Social Studies 4.1.9—Give examples of Indiana’s increasing agricultural, industrial, political, and business development in the nineteenth century.
    - Social Studies 4.1.22—Describe the transformation of Indiana through immigration and through developments in agriculture, industry, and transportation.
    - Social Studies 4.1.17—Using primary and secondary sources and online source materials, construct a brief narrative about an event in Indiana history.
    - Social Studies 4.3.8—Identify the challenges in the physical landscape of Indiana to early settlers and modern-day economic development.
    - Social Studies 4.3.9—Explain the importance of major transportation routes, including rivers, in the exploration, settlement, and growth of Indiana and in the state’s location as a crossroad of America.
    - Social Studies 4.4.1—Give examples of the kinds of goods and services produced in Indiana in different historical periods.

- Social Studies 4.4.3—Explain how both parties can benefit from trade and give examples on how people in Indiana engaged in trade in different time periods.
- English/Language Arts 4.1.7—Use context to determine the meaning of unknown words.
- English/Language Arts 4.4.2—Select a focus, an organizational structure, and a point of view based upon purpose, audience, length, and format requirements for a piece of writing.
- English/Language Arts 4.4.3—Write informational pieces with multiple paragraphs that: provide an introductory paragraph; establish and support a central idea with a topic sentence at or near the beginning of the first paragraph; include supporting paragraphs with simple facts, details, and explanations; present important ideas or events in sequence or in chronological order; provide details and transitions to link paragraphs; conclude with a paragraph that summarizes the points; and use correct indentation at the beginning of paragraphs.
- English/Language Arts 4.5.6—Write for different purposes (information, persuasion, description) and to a specific audience or person.
- English/Language Arts 4.7.1—Ask thoughtful questions and respond orally to relevant questions with appropriate elaboration.
- English/Language Arts 4.7.17—Make descriptive presentations that use concrete sensory details to set forth and support unified impressions of people, places, things or experiences.
- Science 4.4.7—Describe that human beings have made tools and machines, such as x-rays, microscopes, and computers, to sense and do things that they could not otherwise sense or do at all, or as quickly, or as well.
- Grade 5
  - Social Studies 5.3.12—Describe and analyze how specific physical features influenced historical events and movements.
  - English/Language Arts 5.1.6—Understand unknown words by using word, sentence, and paragraph clues to determine meaning.
  - English/Language Arts 5.5.6—Write for different purposes (information, persuasion, description) and to a specific audience or person, adjusting tone and style as appropriate.
  - English/Language Arts 5.7.1—Ask questions that seek information not already discussed.
  - English/Language Arts 5.7.13—Emphasize points in ways that help the listener or viewer follow important ideas or concepts.
  - Science 5.1.5—Explain that technology extends the ability of people to make positive and/or negative changes in the world.
- Grade 6
  - Social Studies 6.1.21—Analyze cause-and-effect relationships, keeping in mind multiple causations, including the importance of individuals, ideas, human interests, beliefs, and chance in history.
  - Social Studies 6.3.13—Explain the impact of humans on the physical environment in Europe and the Americas.

- Social Studies 6.3.14—Explain and give examples of how nature has impacted the physical environment and human populations in specific areas of Europe and the Americas.
- English/Language Arts 6.2.7—Make reasonable statements and conclusions about a text, supporting them with evidence from the text.
- English/Language Arts 6.5.6—Use varied word choices to make writing interesting.
- English/Language Arts 6.7.15—Ask questions that seek information not already discussed.
- Science 6.1.9—Explain how technologies can influence all living things.
- Grade 7
  - English/Language Arts 7.2.7—Draw conclusions and make reasonable statements about a text, supporting the conclusions and statements with evidence from the text.
  - English/Language Arts—Use varied word choices to make writing interesting and more precise.
  - English/Language Arts—Write for different purposes and to a specific audience or person, adjusting style and tone as necessary.
  - Science 7.1.9—Explain how societies influence what types of technology are developed and used in fields such as agriculture, manufacturing, sanitation, medicine, warfare, transportation, information processing, and communication.
  - Science 7.1.10—Identify ways that technology has strongly influenced the course of history and continues to do so.
- Grade 8
  - Social Studies 8.1.27—Give examples of scientific and technological developments that changed cultural life in the nineteenth-century United States, such as the use of photography, growth in the use of the telegraph, the completion of the transcontinental railroad, and the invention of the telephone.
  - Social Studies 8.1.28—Recognize historical perspective and evaluate alternative courses of action by describing the historical context in which events unfolded and by avoiding evaluation of the past solely in terms of present-day norms.
  - Social Studies 8.1.30—Formulate historical questions by analyzing primary and secondary sources about an issue confronting the United States during the period from 1754 to 1877.
  - Social Studies 8.3.8—Gather information on the ways people changed the physical environment of the United States in the nineteenth century, using primary and secondary sources including digitized photo collections and historic maps.
  - Social Studies 8.3.9—Analyze human and physical factors that have influenced migration and settlement patterns and relate them to the economic development of the United States.
  - Social Studies 8.4.6—Relate technological change and inventions to changes in labor productivity in the United States in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
  - Social Studies 8.4.11—Use a variety of information resources to compare and contrast job skills needed in different time periods in United States history.

- English/Language Arts 8.4.5—Achieve an effective balance between researched information and original ideas.
- English/Language Arts 8.5.6—Write using precise word choices to make writing interesting and exact.
- English/Language Arts 8.5.7—Write for different purposes and to a specific audience or person, adjusting tone and style as necessary.
- Science 8.1.8—Explain that humans help shape the future by generating knowledge, developing new technologies, and communicating ideas to others.
- National Standards (National Council for the Social Studies)
  - II. Time, Continuity, and Change
    - Identify and use various sources for reconstructing the past, such as documents, letters, diaries, maps, textbooks, photos, and others.
  - III. People, Places, and Environments
    - Examine the interaction of human beings and their physical environment, the use of land, building of cities, and ecosystem changes in selected locales and regions.
  - VII. Production, Distribution, and Consumption
    - Give examples of the various institutions that make up economic systems, such as families, workers, banks, labor unions, government agencies, small businesses, and large corporations.
    - Describe how we depend on workers with specialized jobs and the ways in which they contribute to the production and exchange of goods and services.

- VIII. Science, Technology, and Society
  - Identify and describe examples in which science and technology have changed the lives of people, such as in homemaking, childcare, work, transportation, and communication.

### **Social Studies/Historical Concepts**

Economy of nineteenth-century United States, commerce, nineteenth-century jobs

### **Learning/Instructional Objectives**

Students will:

- Be able to name at least three jobs on a steamboat.
- Use primary sources to gain an appreciation of the far-reaching economic impact of steamboats.
- Use the information gained to make an inference about the economic effects of a decline in steamboat traffic.
- Create their own advertisement for a steamboat-related business.

### **Time Required**

One class period

### **Materials Required**

- Copies of the following materials from the Indiana Historical Society collections:
  - “Flatboat and Keelboat Commerce Data Along the Ohio River, 1811” from Zadok Cramer’s 1811 *Navigator* (Indiana Historical Society Digital Image Collections, Image ID F0353\_C91\_1811)
    - This image is used for one of the “Suggested Modifications” activities.
  - “Steamboat Industry and River Commerce on the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers, 1822-1832,” pages 143–45, in *The West: Its Commerce and Navigation* by James Hall. Cincinnati: H. W. Derby and Company, 1848

(Indiana Historical Society Digital Image Collections, Item ID F353\_H2\_1848\_143, F353\_H2\_1848\_144, and F353\_H2\_1848\_145)

- This image is used for one of the suggested modifications activities.
- Copies of advertisements for the Jefferson Foundry and the G. and H. H. Armstrong Coppersmiths and Tin and Sheet Iron Workers from the 1859 *Williams' Madison Directory, City Guide and Business Mirror* (Indiana Historical Society Digital Image Collections, Item ID F534\_M22\_A18\_159)
- Refer to pages 10, 11, and 12 of this lesson.
- Copies of the Steamboat Jobs Handout on page 13 and 14 of this lesson.
- Paper and pencils or pens

### Background/Historical Context

Steamboats played a huge role in growing the economy of the United States. By making travel and commerce to the West faster and easier, steamboats facilitated the shipment of tons of goods along a system of rivers that stretched from east to west and north to south. According to author Donald T. Zimmer, “the early steamboats were a marked improvement over the upstream travel time of the keelboat and barge. Ordinarily it took a keelboat or barge from three to four months to make the journey from New Orleans to Louisville, with ten to twenty miles a day the average rate. Pioneer steamboats in 1815 and 1817 made the trip in twenty-five days, though trips of thirty to thirty-five days were more usual.”<sup>1</sup> By increasing the speed by which surplus crops could be transported to market, steamboats ensured that the crops would not spoil before reaching their destinations. This enabled crops to be shipped to

<sup>1</sup> Donald T. Zimmer, “The Ohio River: Pathway to Settlement,” in *Transportation and the Early Nation: Papers Presented at an Indiana American Revolution Bicentennial Symposium* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1982), 74.

more distant markets, giving an economic boost to western farmers.

With flatboats and keelboats, goods could only be shipped easily from north to south or east to west, following the river’s current. Too much effort and time was required to try to navigate upstream, fighting the current. Therefore, prior to the advent of the steamboat, “Once a flatboat reached its destination, cargo would be offloaded and its fate was determined by the owner. Settlers often dismantled their flatboats, using the planks to build homes, while businessmen typically instructed their steersmen to salvage any intact boards to sell as scrap timber.”<sup>2</sup> However, with steamboats, powering upstream was not a problem. Soon, goods such as cotton and sugar were moving from south to north and commodities such as grain, pork, and poultry were being transported from north to south. This meant that there could be more regional specialization in agriculture and manufacturing. Unfortunately, steamboats also facilitated the internal slave trade on the lower Mississippi River, particularly between Saint Louis and New Orleans.<sup>3</sup>

Steamboats also prompted a movement to make improvements to the river system. As river traffic increased, obstacles such as snags, rapids, and water level emerged as barriers to further economic growth. Improvements, including canals, dams, and locks, were needed to allow steamboats to bypass treacherous sections of the river or at least facilitate the navigation of those areas through the use of locks. In particular, the Falls of the Ohio presented a problem, since they could only be navigated in times of high water. In order for river traffic to be able to navigate the falls year-round, a system of canals, locks, and dams were needed. Rivermen, especially those associated with steamboats, became advocates for making river improvements and helped to usher in a

<sup>2</sup> Madison–Jefferson County Public Library, “River to Rail: Flatboats and Keelboats,” at <http://mjcp.org/rivertorail/beforesteam/flatboat> (accessed August 10, 2010).

<sup>3</sup> Camfield, Gregg, “Economic Development,” in *Mark Twain’s Mississippi*, at <http://dig.lib.niu.edu/dig.lib.niu.edu/twain/economic.html> (accessed August 10, 2010).

canal era in the United States, exemplified by the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825.

Furthermore, the rise of steamboats brought with it the rise of associated industries. Among these industries were shipbuilding, fuel, insurance, and repair facilities. Demand for goods shipped on steamboats increased as steamboats could move goods to more destinations. According to Leland Johnson, “Steamboats stimulated manufacturing and economic development along the inland rivers, launching the Ohio valley’s industrial revolution and moving the nation’s freight until supplanted by railroads trucks, and towboats. To fuel the *New Orleans* [the first steamboat on the western rivers], some of the first coal mines in the Ohio valley opened, presaging the boating of coal along the rivers to generate power for homes and industry. Pressing the frontier steadily west, steamboats carried Native Americans to new homes and converted agricultural villages into boat construction centers, manufacturing emporiums, and ultimately, cities, altering the social fabric of both native American and Euro-African settlers alike.”<sup>4</sup> In Indiana, several Ohio River cities benefited from the advent of the steamboat. New Albany, for example, became a center for shipbuilding, as well as the “head of navigation on the lower Ohio river.”<sup>5</sup> Jeffersonville also housed a vibrant shipbuilding industry (the Howard Shipyard is a shining example). Madison’s pork producers benefited from easy access to river trade, as did the auxiliary industries of lard, oil, candles, soap, bristle brushes, cooperages, and tanning.

The economic boom brought by the steamboat stimulated the growth of Indiana’s Ohio River cities. Laid out in 1810, the town of Madison had only one street and a few log cabins by 1815. It was an “embryo of settlement” when the *New Orleans* made her maiden voyage in 1811.<sup>6</sup> However, in the

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<sup>4</sup> Leland Johnson, “Steamboat 2011 History,” at <http://rivers.hanover.edu/steamboat2011/history.php> (accessed August 10, 2010).

<sup>5</sup> L. A. Williams, *History of the Ohio Falls Cities and their Counties: With Illustrations and Bibliographical Sketches* (Cleveland: L. A. Williams and Company, 1882), 220.

<sup>6</sup> Donald T. Zimmer, “The Ohio River: Pathway to Settlement,” 66.

1820s, once there was a steady stream of steamboats on the Ohio River and work was under way on a canal to allow boats to bypass the Falls of the Ohio, Madison began its transformation into a commercial trade center.<sup>7</sup> By the 1830s, Madison had become an export center for produce from inland farms. The transformation of Madison was complete by the 1850s, when the city boasted milling, packing, brewing, cooperage, tanning, and shipbuilding industries, as well as a railroad car works, an iron foundry, a steam engine manufactory, furniture factories, and lumber mills. “Business enterprises included numerous wholesale and retail merchants, eleven hotels, several insurance companies and three banks. Twelve churches and five schools served the community’s population of some eight thousand, many of whom lived in stately houses,” noted historian Donald T. Zimmer.<sup>8</sup>

The boom could not last forever. By the 1850s, railroad networks had supplanted some of the steamboat business. Railroads had the advantage of being able to reach towns and cities that were not adjacent to a river. Even when the railroad passed through Ohio River cities (as was the case with Madison, Indiana), this shift in the preferred method of transporting people and goods meant a decline in businesses such as shipbuilding and the loss of jobs for rivermen.

## Teachers Instructional Plan

### Introduction

Tell students that the steamboat played a large role in the economy of the United States, particularly between the 1820s and the 1850s, when railroads became popular. Steamboat lines employed many individuals and created jobs for others in related industries such as shipbuilding. In addition, increased river commerce due to steamboats led to increased demand for consumer goods, which caused factories and industries to employ

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<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 75.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.

more people. Inform students that in this lesson they will learn first about jobs on a steamboat and will then consider jobs brought about by the rise of the steamboat trade.

Distribute the “Steamboat Jobs” handout and read it with students, making sure that they understand the different jobs available on steamboats. Keep in mind that this list is not exhaustive, but covers the main occupations available on steamers. Group students in twos or threes and assign each group one job title. The group will have to write a job description for their job title. Each job description should include a list of the duties and responsibilities held by that worker, the type of skills, character traits, and physical characteristics needed to do the job, and pay rate.

After students have created their job descriptions, gather the class together. Create a graphic organizer on the board and have students brainstorm the types of industries, businesses, and jobs that might relate to steamboats, but not take place on the boat itself. Refer to page 9 of this lesson for a sample graphic organizer.

This flowchart is not comprehensive, but will provide you with some ideas to help get the students thinking. If necessary, start the discussion with one branch of the flowchart already completed. You may need to ask students some leading questions to help guide the conversation. For example, “What types of products might have been carried as cargo on steamboats? What businesses would have produced these goods?”

Distribute copies of the 1859 advertisement for the Jefferson Foundry in Madison, Indiana. This advertisement was printed in the *Williams’ Madison Directory, City Guide and Business Mirror*.

Define the word “foundry” for the students. A foundry is a factory where metal is cast (formed in a mold). Ask students to examine the advertisement to determine how a foundry’s business would be connected to steamboats. The image in the center of the advertisement specifically states that the foundry produces steamboat engines.

Steamboat engines are only one of the products that the foundry makes. What other products can students name that are highlighted in this advertisement? Ask students to speculate about whether the foundry’s business would have increased as a result of the popularity of steamboats. They should be able to explain their answer. What might happen to the business as railroads increase in popularity over the steamboat?

To conclude the lesson, students will create their own advertisement for a steamboat-related industry. Students may choose from among the jobs and businesses in the flowchart. Their advertisement should include a visual depiction of the business or its product. The advertisement should also stress the relation of their business to the steamboat trade and river commerce.

### **Assessment**

Conduct a prelesson test that includes a list of steamboat jobs and asks students to write a one-sentence description of what each steamboat crew member does. In addition, students should be asked to name at least two steamboat-related industries. After completing the lesson, students should complete the same test so that the teacher may assess student learning.

### **Suggested Modifications**

For students who are more interpersonal or auditory rather than visual or reflective learners, you might want to have them act out job interviews for steamboat workers. One student will serve as the interviewer and the other as an applicant. The interviewer must ask the applicant questions about his or her skills, strengths, weaknesses, etc. that will provide information about how he or she might perform in a certain job.

Mathematically inclined students may benefit from a comparison between records of commercial activity on the Ohio River before and after the steamboat era. Use the statistics found in the 1811 *Navigator* by Zadok Cramer (found on page 10 of this lesson) and an excerpt from *The West: Its Commerce and Navigation* by James Hall (found on page 11 of this lesson).

Have students read excerpts of oral histories done with steamboat workers. Online transcripts are available at <http://www.uis.edu/archives/projects.htm> (accessed August 29, 2010). Scroll down to the “Steamboats and Inland Rivers Project” description. Be sure to preview these transcripts to select an appropriate excerpt as some include racist language.

## Additional Resources

### Publications

Louis C. Hunter and Beatrice Jones Hunter, *Steamboats on the Western Rivers: An Economic and Technological History*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1993.

Reprint of a 1949 text that looks in depth at the many ways that steamboats had a profound impact on the West’s economy—by facilitating the settlement of the West, providing jobs for crew members, and spurring related industries.

McNeese, Tim. *West by Steamboat*. New York: Crestwood House, 1993.

Discusses westward expansion prior to the Civil War and the role of the steamboats on the inland rivers in the settlement of the West.

Williams, L. A. *History of the Ohio Falls Cities and Their Counties: With Illustrations and Bibliographical Sketches*. Cleveland: L. A. Williams and Company, 1882.

A detailed look at cities such as New Albany and Jeffersonville, Indiana, focusing on shipbuilding and steamboat-related industries.

Zimmer, Donald T. “The Ohio River: Pathway to Settlement.” In *Transportation and the Early Nation: Papers Presented at an Indiana American Revolution Bicentennial Symposium*. Edited by Allen County–Fort Wayne Historical Society Museum. Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1982.

This paper looks at Madison, Indiana, as an example of how cities along the river experienced growth due to the steamboat.

## Web sites

University of Illinois at Springfield. “Steamboats and Inland Rivers” oral history project. <http://www.uis.edu/archives/projects.htm> (accessed September 16, 2010) and scroll down to the “Steamboats and Inland Rivers” section.

Poet John Knoepfle conducted these interviews around Cincinnati, Ohio, and elsewhere in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The narrators discuss life and work on the Ohio, Mississippi, Illinois and other Midwest rivers from the late 1800s to the 1950s.

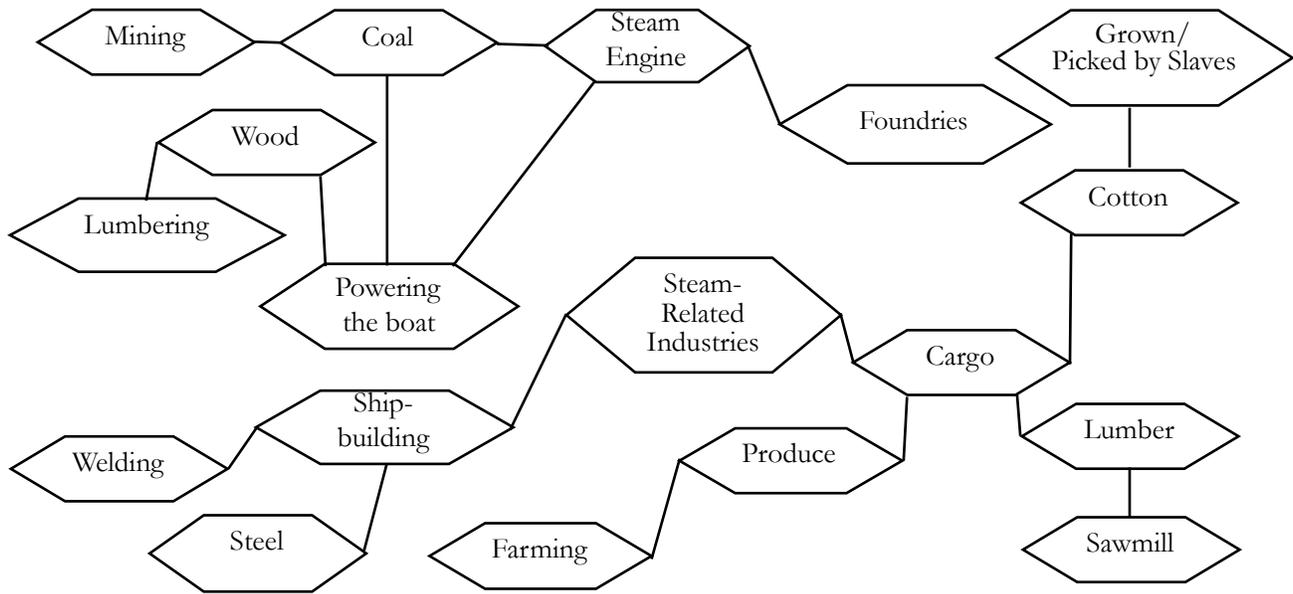
Madison–Jefferson County Public Library. “River to Rail: The Rise and Fall of River and Rail Transportation in Madison, Indiana.” Madison–Jefferson County Public Library and Jefferson County Historical Society, 2006–2007. <http://www.mjcp.org/rivertorail/index.php> (accessed September 16, 2010).

A digital history project with information and images about steamboats and railroads in Madison, Indiana’s history.

Northern Illinois University Libraries, The Newberry Library, The Saint Louis Mercantile Library, Tulane University Libraries, and University of California at Berkeley. “Mark Twain’s Mississippi.” <http://dig.lib.niu.edu/twain/> (accessed September 16, 2010).

This Web site provides a fully searchable and indexed digital library of some of Samuel Clemens’s publications under the name of Mark Twain, placing special emphasis upon Twain’s Mississippi novels and reminiscences (*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, and *Life on the Mississippi*). These works serve as lenses through which the public may explore additional text, images, and sound materials, drawn from the participating libraries, describing the Mississippi valley that Twain remembered and imagined in writing his classic works of literature.

## Graphic Organizer: Steamboat-Related Industries, Businesses, and Jobs



## COMMERCE OF THE OHIO.

*We have been obligingly favoured with a transcript from the books of Messrs. Nelson, Wade, and Great-singer, for two months, viz. from Nov. 24, 1810, to Jan. 24, 1811, 197 flat, and 14 keel boats, descended the falls of Ohio.*

18,611 bls. flour	59 do. soap.
520 do. pork	300 do. feathers
2,373 do. whiskey	400 do. hemp
3,759 do. apples	1,484 do. thread
1,085 do. cider	154,000 do. rope yarn
721 do. do. royal	681,900 do. pork in bulk
43 do. do. wine	20,784 do. bale rope
323 do. peach brandy	27,700 yds. bagging
46 do. cherry bounce	4,619 do. tow cloth
17 do. vinegar	479 coils tarr'd rope
143 do. porter	500 bushels oats
62 do. beans	1,700 do. corn
67 do. onions	216 do. potatoes
20 do. ginsang	817 hams venison
200 groce bottl'd porter	4,609 do. bacon
260 galls. Seneca oil	14,390 tame fowls
15,216 lbs. butter	155 horses
180 do. tallow	286 slaves
64,750 do. lard	18,000 feet cherry plank
6,300 do. beef	279,300 do. pine do.
4,433 do. cheese	

## ALSO,

A large quantity of potter's ware, ironmongery, cabinet work, shoes, boots, and saddlery—The amount of which could not be correctly ascertained.

☞ Taken from the Pilots' books, at Louisville, Ken. this 8th Feb. 1811. By JAS. M'CRUM.

"Flatboat and Keelboat Commerce Data Along the Ohio River, 1811" from Zadok Cramer's 1811 *Navigator* (Indiana Historical Society Digital Image Collections, Item ID F0353\_C91\_1811)

passenger is included in the number. Even in the more fatal cases which are here excluded, and in all accidents of this nature, the chief loss is sustained by the crew and officers attached to the boats, who, by the nature of their employments, are compelled to encounter by far the greatest portion of the hazard.

In the year 1832 it was estimated that, besides the steam-boats, there were four thousand flat boats annually descending the Mississippi, whose aggregate measure would be one hundred and sixty thousand tons. As these do not return, the loss on them would amount to \$420,000, and the expense of loading, navigating and unloading them \$960,000—making the whole annual expenditure upon this class of boats \$1,380,000.

In the same year the aggregate cost of steamboats, the expenses of running them, interest, wear and tear, wood, wages, and subsistence of crews and passengers, was estimated at \$5,906,000.

The total expenditure on steam and flatboats was, according to this calculation, \$7,286,000.

The value of the produce exported in these boats, together with the labor expended in and about them, was estimated at \$26,000,000.

The different descriptions of boats navigated on the western rivers, in that year, were supposed to give employment to sixteen thousand nine hundred men, namely:

To mechanics and laborers employed in building 30 steam-boats, and repairing others, . . . . .	\$1,700
Wood cutters, . . . . .	4,400
Crews of steamboats, . . . . .	4,500
Building flatboats, . . . . .	2,000
Navigating flatboats to New Orleans, . . . . .	4,000
Total, . . . . .	\$16,900

But adding to those who are directly engaged the much larger number who are indirectly employed in making engines, and in furnishing, supplying, loading and discharging boats, the whole number of persons deriving subsistence from this navigation, in 1832, was supposed to be ninety thousand. That number has since been greatly increased. During the last season there was built at Pittsburgh and the neighboring towns about twenty-five steam-boats, at Cincinnati and its neighborhood about twenty-five.

From 1822 to 1827 the loss of property on the Ohio and Mississippi, by snags, including steam and flatboats, and their cargoes, amounted to \$1,362,500. Loss in the same items from the same cause, from 1827 to 1832, \$681,000.

We close this part of our subject with the following extracts from two very interesting articles published in the *Wheeling Gazette*, since our table of steamboats was compiled:

"We are informed on good authority that the number of boats built the present year between Louisville and Pittsburgh, including those places, will not fall short of fifty. About thirty-five of these are for distant parts of the country—for the southern and westernmost States: the remaining fifteen will be added to our river trade, increasing the number of boats thus employed to about sixty. Supposing the amount of freight conveyed in each boat to be forty tons down and twenty up, some opinion may be formed of the amount of merchandise transported yearly upon the Ohio. The river may be estimated to be navigable from six to eight months in the year, and each boat to perform twelve trips from Wheeling to Louisville and back. Each boat, then, transports twelve times forty tons down, and half this quantity up, equal to seven hundred

and twenty tons. This multiplied by sixty, the number of boats, gives forty-three thousand two hundred tons as the gross amount of merchandise transported yearly in steam-boats upon the Ohio.

To fix the value of this merchandise is not so easy. Yet something like accuracy may be obtained. It is said that a wagon load of dry goods, weighing two tons, will cost about \$4,000, and that western merchants who purchase \$8,000 worth receive them generally in two wagon loads. This would make a ton of dry goods worth \$2,000. As grosser and heavier articles, however, are sent down the river in large quantities, the value per ton may be rated at \$500. Forty times five hundred gives \$20,000 as the value of each cargo; this, multiplied by twelve, gives \$240,000 as the amount conveyed by each boat during the season; and this multiplied by sixty, the number of boats, gives the sum of \$14,800,000 as the value of the down freight in a single year. This is independently of the merchandise conveyed in keel and flatboats, and the immense amount of lumber which almost covers the face of the river in the spring season. The value of the merchandise transported up the river may be estimated at \$1,500,000. Making the total value of merchandise, transported in steamboats yearly on the Ohio, upwards of \$16,000,000.

The following table shows the distances from each other of the places named, and from Wheeling, with the prices of passage. It is proper to observe that these are established rates, but that some boats charge less, the prices depending, in some degree, upon the number of boats in port, and the abundance or scarcity of passengers.

JOHN S. NEAL.

REUBEN E. NEAL.

**JEFFERSON FOUNDRY.**

J. S. &amp; R. E. NEAL,

Corner Second, Vine, High and Elm Streets,

—MANUFACTURERS OF—

**STEAM ENGINES,**OF THE LATEST STYLES AND MOST APPROVED PATTERNS,  
AND OF SUPERIOR MAKE AND FINISH.EVERY DESCRIPTION OF  
Brass, Key, Globe or Valve  
COCKS.  
ON HAND OR MADE TO ORDER.ALL SIZES OF  
Steam Whistles,  
AND EVERY VARIETY OF  
Force and Cold Water Pumps.

—ALSO—

**MILL MACHINERY,**

OF ALL DESCRIPTIONS, VIZ:

Saw Mills,                      Gin Shatting and Pulleys,  
Grist Mills,                      Cotton Screws, &c.

ALSO, ALL KINDS OF

**IRON AND BRASS CASTINGS**

MADE TO ORDER, AND ALL KINDS OF

FINISHED BRASS WORK.

**FIRE BRICK AND CLAY ALWAYS ON HAND.**

G. &amp; H. H. ARMSTRONG

**COPPER SMITHS,**

AND

Tin &amp; Sheet Iron Workers,

North Side Second St., bet. Elm and Vine, Madison, Ind.

Brewer's Kettles, Worms and Stills' Soda Fountains. Steam Boat and  
Mill Work, and every thing in the line made to order.

F. L. THOMPSON.

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**THOMPSON & McKIM,**

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL DEALERS IN

**COAL AND COKE,**South-West Cor. High and West Streets,  
MADISON, IND.The best quality of Coal, Coke, Fire Brick and Clay kept constantly  
on hand.

Copies of advertisements for the Jefferson Foundry and the G. and H. H. Armstrong Coppersmiths and Tin and Sheet Iron Workers from the 1859 *Williams' Madison Directory, City Guide and Business Mirror* (Indiana Historical Society Digital Image Collections, Item ID F534\_M22\_A18\_159)

## STEAMBOAT JOBS

There was a lot of work to do on steamboats! Read through the following list of jobs and consider what skills might be necessary for each position.

**Captain**—The captain had overall command of the steamboat and its crew. He was often the owner of the boat. In addition, he ran the boat's business affairs and served as a law enforcement officer for the crew. Occasionally he piloted the boat. The pay rate for this job (ca. 1860) is approximately \$300 per month.

**Pilot**—The pilot was a very skilled and well-paid man. It was his job to navigate the boat and to steer it safely into and out of landing sites. Pilots had to know the river well, since there were no markers or buoys to mark dangerous areas. The pay rate for this job (ca. 1860) is approximately \$250 per month.

**Mate**—The mate was second in charge to the captain. He stood watch over the boat's operations when the captain was in his cabin or in case of an emergency. The mate also directed the handling of cargo and fuel. The pay rate for this job (ca. 1860) was approximately \$200 per month.

**Clerk**—Clerks oversaw the loading of the boat. They kept track of the destinations of the different freight and made sure it was loaded together according to destination. Clerks also made sure that the weight of the freight was balanced so that the boat would not tip to one side. The pay rate for this job (ca. 1860) was approximately \$200 per month.

**Fireman**—It was the fireman's job to fuel and stoke the fires that heated the water in the boilers, making steam to power the boat. The pay rate for this job (ca. 1860s) was \$40 per month.

**Engineer**—The engineer started and stopped the boat's engines and monitored the amount of water in the boiler tanks, making sure there was enough water to produce steam to power the boat. The pay rate for this job (ca. 1860) was approximately \$200 per month.

**Stewards**—The steward purchased food for the crew and passengers at port cities along the ship's route. He planned the daily menus, oversaw food preparation, and planned leisure activities for the ship's passengers. The steward also had the less popular role of enforcing the boat's rules among passengers. The pay rate for this job (ca. 1860) was approximately \$200 per month.

**Deckhands and Roustabouts**—Deckhands (a term used in the North to refer to a laborer who was usually white) and Roustabouts (a term used in the South to refer to a laborer who was usually black) loaded the freight and supplies aboard the steamboats. They often had to lift loads of more than 100 pounds. The pay rate for this job (ca. 1870s) was as low as \$1 per day or \$30 per month and on packet boats was as much as \$110 per month.

**Cabin Boy**—The cabin boy had various jobs on the boat. He helped the cooks fix breakfast and cleaned the boat's staterooms by making the beds, etc. He also washed windows and polished brass, peeled potatoes, stringed beans, and peeled apples. The pay rate for this job (ca. 1870s) was as low as fifty cents per day or \$15 per month.

**Watchman**—The watchman's job was to keep an eye out for sparks coming from the smokestacks that could start a fire on the steamboat. The pay rate for this job (ca. 1870s) was as low as \$1 per day or \$30 per month.

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