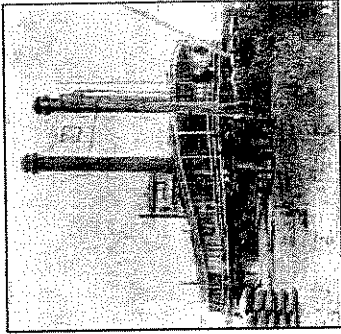


Steamboat



Many pioneers preferred to use the rivers as a means of transportation. Moving goods and people along river routes was cheaper and much quicker. Some pioneers traveled on rafts or flatboats. These flatboats were also used to move crops down the Mississippi River. But, these boats could only go one way. They could not travel upstream. Then there came the steamboat. John Fulton, a man who started out as a painter but later became an inventor, was the inventor of this amazing new boat. The steamboat solved the upstream travel difficulty. The boat got its power from a steam engine Fulton made to make it move. He named his first steamboat the Clermont. By the 1820s steamboats were carrying passengers and goods up and down eastern and western rivers. For the farmers in the South, these boats could pick up the goods they made and take them to new markets in the North.

When the steamboat transported people and goods upstream, it made a new economy, new towns, and brought unimagined luxury to the settlers. Before the steamboat, settlers on the other side of the Appalachian Mountains slowly floated their goods on flatboats and keelboats down the Mississippi River and only at great cost poled them up. Therefore, the spread of products and information was almost completely a one-way route, governed by the currents of the vast river. Now everything was changed.

Approximately two hundred years ago, people traveled by boat a lot. The boats they had only traveled downstream. They wanted something different. John Fulton gave them that different boat.

In 1769 a Scots man named James watt got a patented for a improved steam boat. The steam boat began in America in 1787. John Fitch made the first successful trial of a 45 foot steam boat on the Delaware river on August 22. John Fitch made four steam boats in between 1785 and 1796. John Fitch was granted his first U.S. patent for a steam boat on August 26 1791. The steam boats used water for steam. He was granted his patent only after a battle with James Rumsey.