

"Growth of the Steamboating Business — The Season of 1856" Newspaper Article, November 20, 1856

Pioneer and Democrat
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Saint Paul
Thursday Morning ... Nov. 20, 1856

No Paper. — On account of the strong desire on the part of every one connected with the Pioneer and Democrat office, to "give thanks," and in respect to his Excellency's proclamation, no paper will be issued tomorrow from this office.

"Growth of the Steamboating Business - The season of 1856.

About ten years after the first successful attempt at steamboat navigation on the Ohio River, the first steamboat that ever ascended the Upper Mississippi River to Fort Snelling, arrived at that post. This was the "Virginia" a stern-wheel boat, which arrived at the Fort in the early part of May, 1823. From 1823 to 1844 there were but few arrivals each year- sometimes not more than two or three. The steamers running on the Upper Mississippi, at that time, were used altogether to transport supplies for the Indian traders and the troops stationed at Fort Snelling. Previous to the arrival of the Virginia, keel boats were used for this purpose, and sixty days' time, from St. Louis to the Fort, was considered a good trip.

By a reference to our files, we are enabled to present, at a glance, the astonishing increase in steamboating business since 1844. The first boat to arrive that year, was the Otter, commanded by Capt. Harris. The following table presents the number of arrivals since that time:

<i>Year</i>	<i>First Boat</i>	<i>No. of Arrivals</i>	<i>River Closed.</i>
1844	April 6	41	Nov. 23
1845	April 6	48	Nov. 26
1846	March 31	24	Dec. 5
1847	April 7	47	Nov 29
1848	April 7	63	Dec. 4
1849	April 9	85	Dec. 7
1850	April 9	104	Dec. 4
1851	April 4	119	Nov. 28

1852	April 16	171	Nov 18
1853	April 11	100	Nov. 30
1854	April 8	245	Nov. 27
1855	April 17	560	Nov. 20
1856	April 18	837	Nov. 10

In 1851, three boats went up the Minnesota River, and in 1852, one boat ran regularly up the stream during the season, In 1853, the business required an average of one boat per day. In 1854, the business had largely increased, and in 1855, the arrivals of steamers from the Minnesota, amounted to 119.

The present season, on the Mississippi, has been a very prosperous one, and the arrival at St. Paul exhibit a gratifying increase over any preceding year, notwithstanding the season of navigation has been two weeks shorter than last season. Owing to the unusually early gorge in the river at Hastings, upwards of fifty steamers bound for this port, and heavily laden with merchandize (sic) and produce, were compelled to discharge their cargoes at Hastings and Stillwater.

Navigation this season opened on the 18th of April. The Lady Franklin arrived on the evening of that day from Galena. Previous to her arrival, there had been eighteen arrivals at our landing from the head of Lake Pepin, and twelve arrivals at the foot of the Lake, from Galena and Dubuque.

During the present season, seventy-eight different steamers have arrived at our wharf, from the points mentioned in the following table. This take we draw mainly from the books of the City Marshall, and by reference to our files.

<i>From St. Louis.</i>			
<i>Boats</i>	<i>No. Trips</i>	<i>Boats</i>	<i>No. Trips</i>
Ben Courain	19	York State	5
A.G. Mason	8	Mattie Wayne	4
Audubon	13	Brazil	4
Golden State	5	Dan Convers	1
Laslede	8	Henrietta	4
Luella	11	Editor	5
Chevlot	8	Minnesota Belle	8
James Lyon	1	Rochester	2
Vienna	7	Oakland	7
New York	5	Grace Darling	4

Delegate	1	Montauk	3
Mansfield	1	Fairy Queen	1
Forest Rose	7	Saint Louis	1
Ben Bolt	2	Americus	2
JP Tweed	1	Atlanta	1
Fire Canoe	2	Jacob Traber	6
Carrier	1	White Bluffs	1
Julia Dean	1	Arcola	8
Resolute	2	Conewago	10
Gossamer	4	Lucie May	8
Thomas Scott	6	Badger State	5
Gipeoy	2	Sam Young	4
W.G. Woodside	1	Violet	1
Total arrivals from St. Louis			212

<i>From Fulton City.</i>			
Falta City	11	H.T. Yeatman	11
Diamond	1	Time and Tide	5
Total from Fulton City			28

<i>From Galena and Dunleith.</i>			
Lady Franklin	23	War Eagle	17
Galena	30	City Belle	30
Alhambra	21	Golden Era	29
Royal Arch	6	Ocean Wave	28
Northern Belle	28	Granite State	12
Banjo	1	Greek Slave	3
Total from Galena and Dunleith			228

<i>From Dubuque.</i>			
Excelsior	23	Fanny Harris	28
Kate Cassell	29	Flora	29
Clarion	11	Hamburg	12
Tishimingo	3		
Total from Dubuque			135

<i>From Minnesota River.</i>			
H.T. Yeatman	4	Time and Tide	11
Globe	34	Wave	29
Clarion	12	Equator	46
Revelle	40	Minnesota Valley	20
H.S. Allen	10	Berlin	10
Total from Minnesota Valley			216

<i>Recapitulation.</i>			
Number of Arrivals from St. Louis			212
“ ” “ ”	“ ”	Fulton City	28
“ ” “ ”	“ ”	Galena and Dunleith	228
“ ” “ ”	“ ”	Dubuque	135
“ ” “ ”	“ ”	Minnesota River	216
“ ” “ ”	“ ”	Head of Lake Pepin	18
Whole Number of Arrivals			837
Whole Number of Boats			78

It will be seen from the above, that ten more steamers have been engaged in this trade during the present year than last; while in the whole number of arrivals the increase has been *two hundred and sixty-seven*.

The business on the Minnesota has greatly increased this year. This was to have been expected, considering the great increase in the population of that flourishing portion of our Territory.

A thriving trade has sprung up between the southern counties of Minnesota, and Galena and Dubuque. During the great portion of the summer, the War Eagle and Tisbomingo run regularly to Winora.

On the upper Mississippi, there are now three steamers, the Gov. Ramsey, H.M. Rice, and North Star (sew). During the season these boats ran between St. Anthony and Sauk Rapids.