WHAT  
HAPPENED

The steamboat "New Orleans" reached its namesake city on Jan. 10, 1812.

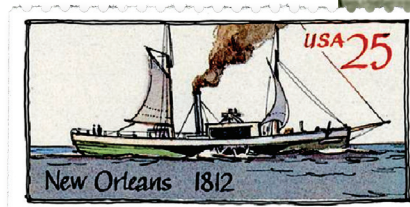
There may be no place more closely associated with **the river steamboat** than New Orleans.



A steamboat in New Orleans in 1910 loaded with cotton.



The Natchez, a steamboat commissioned in 1975 and still running today, is the ninth steamboat to bear the name Natchez. Her predecessor, Natchez VI, raced, and lost, to the Robert E. Lee in an 1870 race.



A 1986 postage stamp commemorating the first voyage by steamboat down the boat named 'New Orleans.'



While diesel engines gradually put most steamboats out of business, in 1935, steamboats, including the John W. Cannon, were still operating out of New Orleans.

The boats didn't originate in the city, but they altered the city's trajectory by making trade up-river possible. Before the steamboat, boats had to be rowed, pushed with poles or pulled. In 1811, Robert Fulton designed a steamboat named New Orleans. The boat made the first successful voyage from Pittsburgh to New Orleans, reaching New Orleans on Jan. 10, 1812.

The boat was soon making regular round trips between Natchez, Mississippi and New Orleans. By 1826, there were 143 steamboats on the river and by the 1830s, there were more than 1,000.

The Washington, built in 1816, was the first double-decker steamboat. The top deck carried passengers, and the lower deck carried cargo. By 1817, the boat was making the trip from Louisville, Kentucky to New Orleans in 25 days.

The steamboats were used to move cotton, rice, timber, coal and other goods up and down the Mississippi River and through other river basins. At the peak of the steamboat paddle wheelers in the 1850s, about 3,000 steamboats docked in the city each year. It was the golden age for New Orleans, with steamboats helping to make the city the fourth-largest commercial port of exports in the world.

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**NEW ORLEANS**

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The side wheeler the 'President' operated out of New Orleans for a few years before being moved to Iowa as a casino boat.