Traveling by Steamboat

Steamboat J. W. Spencer in Jefferson City, 1898.
Missouri State Archives
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This is a photo of the J. W. Spencer steamboat operating as a ferry in the Jefferson City area on the Missouri River. The steamboat J. W. Spencer was a sidewheel steamboat built in 1882. It was 131 feet long and 35 feet wide. The J. W. Spencer was one of the last steamboats providing both passenger and cargo service in the mid-Missouri area. It served as a ferry for about 10 years before the construction of the first bridge crossing the Missouri River at Jefferson City. After the bridge opened, the J. W. Spencer went to St. Charles, Missouri.