This thesis describes the river towns along the Willamette River in Oregon. River conditions, adaptation of the boats to the river, and steamboat routes shown at ten year intervals illustrate the degree of accessibility of the various towns. Reasons for success or failure in light of factors of site, situation, efforts of townsite promoters or lack thereof are evaluated. Increase in population is used as a measure of success. Orientation to the river was reflected in town plans and location of land uses as shown in early maps and views.