



PRIMARY SOURCE DOCUMENTS AT THE MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

Relating to the 2021 National History Day Theme

Communication in History: The Key to Understanding

The Missouri State Archives is the official repository for state records of permanent and historical value. It has many unique resources that are available to research Missouri topics for National History Day projects. Below are just a few suggestions to help select a project. Not all of the resources available on a specific topic may be included.

Finding aids are available for many resources at the Missouri State Archives. They are online at <https://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/resources/findingaids/default>.

When citing records from the Missouri State Archives, please use the following link for reference: <http://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/resources/citations>.

Missouri Digital Heritage (MDH) is a collaborative portal that allows access to over 9 million digitized records from Missouri's historical collections. You can find MDH at <https://www.sos.mo.gov/mdh>.

Always check your public library for secondary sources on any topic you choose to research.

Bertillon Measurement: What Does It Tell You –

The Bertillon measurement was a system of criminal identification using body measurements and proportions, markings, deformities and fingerprints. The information in this record group includes name, race, age and criminal history remarks.

Record Group 213: *Department of Corrections: Missouri State Penitentiary, Bertillon Measurement Records, 1908-1931, arranged chronologically by date received and numerically by inmate number.*

For information on Bertillon measurements contact Missouri State Archives reference at archref@sos.mo.gov.

Braille/Missouri School for the Blind –

The Missouri School for the Blind is an educational institution for students who are blind or visually impaired. It has served the greater St. Louis area for more than 150 years.

Annual reports are in the Missouri House and Senate Journals 1820-2017 (House) and 1820-1943 (Senate)

<http://mdh.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/housej>

State Documents Collection, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Missouri Commission for the Blind, Biennial Reports 1852-1892 (photocopies), Box 70, Folder 2. Excerpts from the Journal of the Missouri House of Representatives, 22nd and 23rd General Assemblies.

Codes, Passwords, Handshakes –

Missouri's Union Provost Marshal Papers 1861-1866

This collection details how the provost marshal affected the lives of citizens who encountered the Union Army. The records of the provost marshal offer a unique look at a state divided and the resulting way of life. In addition to information for military research, the provost marshal papers provide information about the role of women during the war, the war's effect on slavery, the difficulties experienced by war refugees and the various codes used to communicate during the Civil War.

<https://s1.sos.mo.gov/records/archives/archivesdb/provost/Default.aspx>

Communication: Petroglyph to Telegraph and Beyond –

The Oxford English Dictionary defines communication as “the imparting or exchanging of information or news.” Petroglyphs were one of the earliest ways North Americans communicated. The word comes from the ancient Greek words πέτρα (pétra) meaning rock and γλύφος (glyfos), a carved or inscribed symbol. The oldest petroglyphs in North America are 10,000 to 15,000 years old.

You can find examples of petroglyphs in Record Group 194 The Department of Economic Development, Division of Tourism, Tourism Slides (DIGITIZED, Series A and B) INDEX.xlsx and in The Missouri Division of Tourism Photograph Collection online at MDH

<https://mdh.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/divtour/search/searchterm/petroglyph>.

Another way to communicate was by the short-lived Pony Express. Photographs from The Missouri Division of Tourism are on MDH

<https://mdh.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/divtour/search/searchterm/Pony%20Express>.

The telegraph was widely used during the American Civil War, which you can see in Missouri's Union Provost Marshal Papers 1861-1865 on MDH in the Missouri Provost Marshal Database <https://s1.sos.mo.gov/records/archives/archivesdb/provost/>

Louisiana Purchase Exposition –

The Louisiana Purchase Exposition, informally known as the St. Louis World's Fair ran from April 30 to December 1, 1904. Local, state and federal funds totaling \$15 million financed the event.

- Information about this grand exposition is available in hosted collections on MDH, e.g. University of Missouri Columbia-MU Libraries https://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/mdh_splash/default.asp?coll=muellis as well as
- Missouri State Archives collections like the Department of Agriculture Report (1904) <https://mdh.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16795coll17>
- Stevens, Walter B. *The World's Fair: Comprising the Official Photographic Views of the Universal Exposition Held in Saint Louis, 1904* Art Edition [or Library Edition] c1904; Record Group 998.105; Missouri State Archives, Jefferson City.

Missouri School for the Deaf –

In 1851, The Missouri School for the Deaf opened in Fulton, Missouri .It has been in continual operation except for two years during the Civil War when Union troops occupied the campus.

State Documents Collection, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education:

- Missouri School for the Deaf (various names), Biennial Reports 1855 - .
- Missouri School for the Deaf: Newsletter "The Missouri Record," 1969 - .
- Missouri School for the Deaf: Alumni Newsletter "Notes & Notables," 1993 - .

MDH, Special Exhibits <https://cdm16795.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/deafdisg>
BECKER MEDICAL LIBRARY, WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY - Deafness in Disguise: Concealed Hearing Devices of the 19th and 20th Centuries.

Missouri State Fair –

At the turn of the century, Missouri lawmakers created the Missouri State Fair. Troubled by the continuing economic plight of Missouri's farmers and the flight of the state's youth to the city, lawmakers hoped the Fair would offer a partial solution to both problems by preaching the virtues of economic modernization in a manner people would find entertaining.

Sections about the Missouri State Fair became a standard part of the Missouri Department of Agriculture Reports following its establishment, <https://mdh.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16795coll17/search/searchterm/Missouri%20State%20Fair>.

The Missouri State Archives dedicated one of its exhibits to the State Fair. An online version of the exhibit, *Ticket to the Past: The First 25 Years of the Missouri State Fair* is online at <https://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/exhibits/StateFair/>

The Mormon War –

In the 1830s, “Mormonism” commanded center stage in Missouri politics. In MDH, you will find state records related to the Missouri-Mormon conflict, 1838-1841. Included are finding aids and digitized records that shed light on this chapter of Missouri history.

<https://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/resources/mormon.asp>

Storm Warning –

Meteorology is the study of the atmosphere. Meteorologists use science and math to understand and predict weather and climate. They also study how the atmospheric and weather conditions affect the earth and its inhabitants. Climatologists study historical climate patterns to understand long-term weather patterns and predict future climatic shifts.

Missouri Disasters 1785-Present online at MDH

https://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/mdh_splash/default.asp?coll=disasters gives you the opportunity to look at weather in Missouri over the years and ask if we could have predicted any of the natural disasters discussed today. Are agricultural and human disease connected with weather and climate? This is fascinating place to begin looking.

Women’s Suffrage –

Many women wanted the same right to make decisions about their lives as their male counterparts, but not all women supported the women’s suffrage movement. Some women firmly believed that they were stronger as “influencers,” controlling the actions of their fathers, brothers and partners by living as positive representatives of their lives.

Women communicated their desire for equal voting rights in different ways:

- In 1867, 355 St. Louis submitted a petition to the General Assembly asking for women’s right to vote
<https://cdm16795.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/housej/id/9646nd>
- Petition for Women’s Suffrage from the Women of Kansas City, 1901;
[Z:Public Digital Photo Collections without Finding Aids\Historical Documents](#) (in Historical Documents Folder, General Assembly)
- *Fighting for Franchise: The 19th Amendment in Missouri*, feature essay in the 2019-2020 Official Manual, on MDH at
https://www.sos.mo.gov/cmsimages/bluebook/2019-2020/1_Almanac.pdf#page=2

Decades of women’s fight for political equality culminated in the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution on August 18, 1920 and its certification by the U.S. Secretary of state on August 26, 1920. Five days later, Marie Byrum Ruoff was the first woman to vote in Missouri.

- MS005 Marie Byrum Collection – Hannibal Poll Book, August 31, 1920, Missouri State Archives. The PDF images of the poll book is available on the [Z: drive Public Folder](#) (Historical Documents Folder, 1920 Poll Book.)

Harriet Hampton, number 102 in the poll book, was the first African American woman to vote in Missouri.