



PRIMARY SOURCE DOCUMENTS AT THE MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

Relating to the 2024 National History Day Theme

Turning Points in History

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.

For more information on the collections contact Missouri State Archives reference at archives@sos.mo.gov or call (573) 751-3280.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

In 1867, 355 St. Louis women petitioned the Missouri General Assembly for voting rights of persons of color and for women. Virginia Minor led the effort. The petition may be found in the house journal that year.

- Missouri Digital Heritage
In 1873, Virginia Minor Court Case- Minor et al. v. Happersett, Missouri Supreme Court, 1873
- <https://s1.sos.mo.gov/Records/Archives/ArchivesDb/supremecourt/>

The General Election on November 3, 1914 contained a ballot initiative asking for women's right to vote. The referendum fails by a vote of 182,257 to 322,463. Election results were printed in the Missouri Blue Book.

- Missouri Digital Heritage
Governor Gardner signs Senate Bill 1 into law on April 5, 1919 allowing women to vote "for electors for president and vice-president of the United States."
- Missouri Digital Heritage
Marie Byrum of Hannibal, Missouri becomes the first woman to cast a vote in a Missouri election on August 31, 1920
- Marie Byrum poll book in Reference

Elected Officials

Mary L. Gant

Became the first woman elected to the Missouri Senate in 1972.

- Mary Gant Papers
- 1972 Election Results

DeVerne Calloway

Became the first African American woman elected to a state office when she was elected to the Missouri House of Representatives in 1962.

- Blue Book
- Candidate Information
- 1962 Election Results

Walthall Moore

Elected as a Representative from St. Louis, Walthall became the first African American to serve in the Missouri legislature.

- Missouri Blue Book
- Dictionary of Missouri Biography
- Death Certificate
- 1920 Election Results

Annie White Baxter

In 1890, she was elected as Jasper County Clerk making her the first woman elected to any office in the State of Missouri and the first female county clerk in the United States.

- Register of Civil Proceedings
- Bond of Civil Officers
- Civil Officers Elected
- Death Certificate

PRISON REFORM

Katherine (Kate) Richards O'Hare worked to improve prison conditions after spending time in the Missouri State Penitentiary for violating the Espionage Act after giving an anti-war speech in 1919

- Digital photos in Criminals and Inmates (Kate Richards O'Hare)
- Missouri State Penitentiary Data Base (Kate Richards O'Hare)
<http://s1.sos.mo.gov/records/archives/archivesdb/msp/Detail.aspx?id=42503>
- Books in Reference
- Missouri State Penitentiary Collection
- Department of Corrections Collection

MISSOURI STATE HOSPITAL

In 1847, the Missouri General Assembly voted to establish an asylum for the mentally insane in Central Missouri. Callaway County won the bid to build the hospital, and in 1851, the Fulton State Hospital opened as the first public mental hospital west of the Mississippi River.

- Governors Papers – Gov. Thomas Reynolds and Gov. Meredith M. Marmaduke (Reference)
- House and Senate Journals
- *Evolution of a Missouri Asylum* – Missouri Digital Heritage
- Photograph Collections – Missouri Digital Heritage

THE TRAIL OF TEARS

This is the name given to the forced removal of the Cherokee people from their homelands in the southeastern United States to Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma) in 1838 – 1839. Even though the Cherokee people had adopted many practices of the white culture, and had used the court system in two major Supreme Court cases, they were unable to halt the removal process. Thousands of these people lost their lives during their steamboat or overland journeys.

- Department of Public Safety - Office of the Adjutant General: Missouri National Guard, Muster Rolls for the Indian Wars – Box 19294 (96)
- Department of Public Safety - Office of the Adjutant General: Missouri National Guard, Indian Wars – Box 192
- National Register Files
 - Historic and Historical Archaeological Resources of the Cherokee Trail of Tears (Multistate) - Box 1 - <http://dnr.mo.gov/shpo/nps-nr/TrailOfTearsMPS.pdf>
 - Cherokee Trail of Tears in Missouri (NR007) – Box 2 - <http://dnr.mo.gov/shpo/nps-nr/64501226.pdf>
 - Indian Ford (NRRI009) – Box 6
 - Bainbridge Ferry (NRCG048) - Box 1 - <https://dnr.mo.gov/shpo/nps-nr/07000573.pdf>
 - Bainbridge Ferry Road (NRCG049) - Box 1 - <https://dnr.mo.gov/shpo/nps-nr/07000577.pdf>
 - Green's Ferry (NRCG051) - Box 1
 - Snelson-Brinker House (NRCR005) - Box 1 - <https://dnr.mo.gov/shpo/nps-nr/07000576.pdf>

- *Trail of Tears in Southeast Missouri* - Map circa 1994, Department of Economic Development, Division of Tourism, Box 33.
 - Map shows the three trails through Missouri and provides background history.
- Vertical File – In Reading Room
 - Native Americans – Missouri and Tribe Histories
 - Trail of Tears
- Commerce and Industrial Development and Tourism Photo collections – These collections include many modern photographs of the current Trail of Tears State Park. Indexes and images available in Reading Room.
- *Trail of Tears: The Rise and Fall of the Cherokee Nation*, John Ehle (R970.004 Eh52) – Reading Room
- *Cherokee Sunset: A Nation Betrayed, a Narrative of Travail and Triumph, Persecution and Exile*, Samuel Carter III (R970.004 C2467) – Reading Room

CIVIL RIGHTS

Ester vs. Clamorgan (1809) and Ester vs. Carr – Missouri Supreme Court (Territory of Missouri)

Jacques Clamorgan gave Ester, a freed slave, land in and around the area of Laclede's Landing. He took the land from Ester, when Missouri became a territory. Ester sued Clamorgan and won the return of her land in a series of court cases.

- Supreme Court of Missouri Historical Records
<https://s1.sos.mo.gov/Records/Archives/ArchivesDb/supremecourt/>
- Corbett, Katharine T. *In Her Place: A Guide to St. Louis Women's History*. St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 1999. (Located in the Archives Reading Room)

Gaines vs. Canada (1937)

Missouri Supreme Court Case - University of Missouri denied Lloyd Gaines admission to the University's law school because he was black. The case went to the United States Supreme Court.

- Missouri Supreme Court – September 1937: Gaines vs. Canada SC36235
- Vertical File – Reference: Gaines vs. Canada

Bluford vs. Canada (1941)

Missouri Supreme Court Case - University of Missouri denied Lucille Bluford to the University's School of Journalism because she was black.

- Missouri Supreme Court – May 1941: Bluford vs. Canada SC38316
- Vertical File – Archives Reference: Bluford vs. Canada

Shelley vs. Kraemer (1946)

Missouri Supreme Court Case that involved the Shelley family who bought a home in a neighborhood in which a majority of the property owners had signed a restrictive covenant. The covenant stated that no home was to be sold to any person who was black, which led to the suit by the neighborhood to undo the sale of the property to Shelley. The case went to the United States Supreme Court.

- Missouri Supreme Court – September 1946: Shelley vs. Kraemer SC40692
- Department of Natural Resources – National Historic Register Places: NRSLC151 – Shelley House – St. Louis
- Vertical File – Archives Reference: Shelley vs. Kraemer

Missouri Commission on Human Rights

The Missouri Commission on Human Rights is charged with providing equitable and timely resolutions of discrimination claims through enforcement of the Missouri Human Rights Act. It was instrumental in documenting the reality of racial discrimination in Missouri and contribution to the Civil Rights movement. Established in 1957, the Commission is under control of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations.

- RG 328 Missouri Commission on Human Rights
 - Minutes of Commission Meetings, December 6, 1963—May 26, 1979
 - Tape Recordings of Meetings, 1974—1977 (CONTENTS RESTRICTED – Use must be approved by the Executive Director of the Missouri Commission on Human Rights.)
 - Publications and Legislation, 1960—1972
 - Scrapbooks, 1958—1975
 - Labor and Industrial Relations
 - Untitled Series
- RG 108 Labor and Industrial Relations, Missouri Commission on Human Rights, boxes 1-4. Materials from MCHR created during Richard J. Chaumier's term 1968 – 1972; there are some restricted Files.
- RG 3.46 Office of Governor, Warren Eastman Hearnes, 1965-1973, box 118. Human Rights Commission, 1965-1972.

Urban League of Kansas City Photograph Collection

The Urban League of Kansas City was founded in 1919 and is part of the National Urban League, a community-based organization promoting civil rights and educational, personal and economic development for African Americans. The 91 photographs in this collection illustrate the early years of the Urban League of Kansas City, ca. 1922-1959. Subjects include conventions and meetings, training and education, health services, summer camps and athletics.

- Online Database:
https://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/mdh_splash/default.asp?coll=kcurbanleague

FIGHT AGAINST SLAVERY

Missouri Compromise

In 1820, amid growing sectional tensions over the issue of slavery, the U.S. Congress passed a law that admitted Missouri to the Union as a slave state and Maine as a free state, while banning slavery from the remaining Louisiana Purchase lands located north of the 36° 30' parallel. The Missouri Compromise would remain in force for just over 30 years before it was repealed by the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854. In 1857, the Supreme Court ruled the compromise unconstitutional in the Dred Scott case, setting the stage for the nation's final path toward the Civil War.

Missouri's 1820 Constitution:

<https://mdh.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16795coll1/id/41/rec/1>

- MISSOURI COMPROMISE REMONSTRANCE: A grand jury of the St. Charles Circuit Court was one of seven in Missouri that protested Congressional restriction of state's rights in the Missouri Compromise by citing a "declaration of American rights, the constitution of the United States, the treaty of Cession [Louisiana Purchase], and the blood of our fathers who achieved our independence."

Missouri-Kansas Border War

The struggle over the fate of slavery in Kansas Territory and erupted into partisan bloodshed in 1856. The rising number of fugitive slaves and tensions fueled by vengeful irregular violence swept across the border and threatened to push the leaders of Missouri and Kansas toward open warfare. The start of the national Civil War in 1861 brought even greater devastation, wrought less by the scattered battles between Union and Confederate armies than the widespread guerrilla war that raged through 1865, destroying several communities and displacing thousands of families showing the breakdown of diplomacy and its consequences.

- Special Collections RG 5.32 MO-KS Border War, 1858-1862 (on disk); Papers of Governor Robert Marcellus Stewart:
https://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/mdh_splash/default.asp?coll=rmstewart
- Wyllys C. Ransom vs. George C. Bingham
 - Title Wyllys C. Ransom vs. George C. Bingham Description These documents, created between 1866 and 1867, relate to the Jackson County, Missouri court case Wyllys C. Ransom vs. George C. Bingham. Ransom accuses Bingham of slander, asserting that Bingham publicly and repeatedly said he was a “murderer, robber, thief and a house burner” during the Civil War. Portions of testimony are from Ransom’s fellow officers in the Kansas Volunteers. Ransom seeks \$30,000 in damages.
- John C. Caldwell vs. Richard H. Porter
 - Title John C. Caldwell vs. Richard H. Porter Description These documents, created between 1855 and 1857, relate to the Jackson County, Missouri court case John C. Caldwell vs. Richard H. Porter. On January 1, 1855, Caldwell purchased a slave named Eliza for \$800 from slave dealer Clifton R. Barnes with plans to sell her for a profit in Louisiana. Caldwell later discovered that Eliza was “unsound both in body and mind” and accused Barnes of “fraud and willful misrepresentation.” Caldwell took Eliza back to Missouri but Barnes refused to rescind the sales contract.
- State vs. Thomas Brown
 - Title State vs. Thomas Brown Description These documents, created between 1855 and 1856, relate to the Jackson County, Missouri court case State vs. Thomas Brown. Brown is accused of attempting to take four slaves out of Missouri with the intention of procuring their freedom. The slaves were caught in DeKalb County,

Missouri in November 1855; a witness recounts that “Brown stated he took those Negroes for the love he had for them.” In a signed statement dated November 28, 1855, Thomas Brown pleads guilty to the charges.

Dred Scott Decision (1857)

Dred Scott, a slave, who had lived in the free state of Illinois and the free territory of Wisconsin before returning to the slave state of Missouri, sued for his emancipation (freedom). The case, which started in the Old Courthouse in St. Louis, went all the way to the US Supreme Court, where in 1857, Chief Justice Roger B. Taney declared that all blacks -- slaves as well as free -- were not and could not ever become citizens of the United States. The court also declared the 1820 Missouri Compromise unconstitutional, thus permitting slavery in all of the country's territories. This case deepened the conflict between free and slave states, and helped to move the country toward the Civil War.

- Case File and related information - Vertical Files – Reading Room
- St. Louis Circuit Court Case
- MO Supreme Court Case
 - 1848 Case – Emerson, Irene v. Scott, Dred and Scott, Harriet
 - 1852 Case – Scott, Dred v. Emerson, Irene
- U.S. Supreme Court Case
- Missouri’s Dred Scott Case, 1846-1857, Missouri State Archives - <https://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/resources/africanamerican/scott/scott>
- *Slavery, Law and Politics: The Dred Scott Case in Historical Perspectives*, Dan E. Fehrenbacher (R346.7301 F322) – Archives Reading Room
- *They Have No Rights: Dred Scott’s Struggle for freedom*, Walter Ehrlich (R346.73 Eh89) – Reading Room
- *Dred Scott: A Brief History with Documents*, Paul Finkleman (R342.73 F4957) – Reading Room
- *Old Courthouse* web page on Dred Scott case *Library of Congress* web page – Primary documents – Dred Scott v. Sanford
<https://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/DredScott.html>

Freedom Suits

The Missouri State Archives has many freedom suits that occurred before Dred Scott.

Information about these lawsuits may be accessed at

<https://s1.sos.mo.gov/Records/Archives/ArchivesDb/supremecourt/>

CIVIL WAR

Missouri's Union Provost Marshal Papers: 1861 – 1866

- Records of the Provost Marshal
 - The collection details how the provost marshal affected the lives of citizens who came into contact with the Union Army. In addition to a resource for military research, the provost marshal papers provide information about the role of women during the war, its effect on slavery, and the difficulties experienced by war refugees. The documents include correspondence, provost marshal court papers,

orders, passes, paroles, oaths of allegiance to the United States, transportation permits, and claims for compensation for property used or destroyed by military forces.

- Records of the Adjutant General's Office
 - Consisting exclusively of bound volumes, these records document the recruitment of African Americans for the United States Colored Troops (USCT) under General Order 135, November 14, 1863. This order authorized the provost marshals throughout Missouri to recruit slaves and free blacks and to compensate loyal slave owners up to \$300 for each slave they allowed to enlist.
- Missouri Provost Marshal Database:
<https://s1.sos.mo.gov/Records/Archives/ArchivesDb/provost/>

Civil War in Missouri

This collection combines non-governmental resources from several manuscript collections at the Missouri State Archives. The items vary from original correspondence and documents to photographs, newspapers and illustrations that represent both civilians and soldiers. Elements of the following manuscript collections are included:

- MS014 United Daughters of the Confederacy Winnie Davis Chapter Collection ([link to finding aid](#))
- MS107 Weller Family Letter ([link to finding aid](#))
- MS169 Confederate Currency
- MS247 Edward Newton Civil War Correspondence Collection ([link to finding aid](#))
- MS368 State Archivist Collection ([link to finding aid](#))
- MS404 Civil War Reunion Photographs ([link to finding aid](#))
- MS456 James Sullivan Civil War Collection ([link to finding aid](#))
- MS469 Civil War Portrait Collection
- MS482 Miscellaneous Missouri Photograph Collection ([link to finding aid](#))
- MS505 Dennis W. Belcher Civil War Collection ([link to finding aid](#))
- MS515 Frank Wallemann Civil War Collection ([link to finding aid](#))
- RG133 Adjutant General
- Link to the online database:
<https://mdh.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16795coll39>

LABOR MOVEMENTS

Bureau of Labor and Statistics - The Red Book

First published in 1879, the Bureau of Labor and Statistics Annual Report serves as a resource for providing information about Missouri's history of industry and labor. This collection is comprised of annual reports dating from 1879 to 2004. These reports detail the history of labor in the state of Missouri. Information on a wide variety of subjects including child labor, convict labor, unionized labor, coal mining, and statistics relating to labor during the World Wars can be found in these reports.

- Link to the online database: <https://mdh.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/redbk>

CONSERVATION

Missouri Department of Conservation

Missouri voters passed Constitutional Amendment No. 4 by initiative petition on November 3, 1936, creating the Missouri Conservation Commission and the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC). The Conservation Commission is a four-person board appointed by the Governor of Missouri. The Commission, in turn, appoints a director of the MDC. The MDC operates solely by monies gathered through sales of hunting, fishing, trapping and other licenses and a 1/8th of 1% sales tax, which was approved in 1976 with Constitutional Amendment 1.

- Department of Conservation – Initiative Petitions and Resolutions – Sample of 1936 Initiative Petition
- Office of the Secretary of State – Elections: Initiative Petitions and Referendums – Constitutional Amendment 4 (1936)
- Office of the Secretary of State – Elections: Election Returns for November 3, 1936 General Election: Constitutional Amendments, Adair – Wright and City of St. Louis
- Office of the Secretary of State – Elections: Election Returns for November 2, 1976 General Election: Constitutional Amendments and Propositions
- Missouri Department of Conservation Photograph Collection (Missouri Digital Heritage)

<http://cdm16795.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p16795coll24>

- *Missouri Conservationist* (Missouri Digital Heritage)

<http://cdm16795.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/moconserv>

- Missouri Department of Conservation – Annual and Biennial Reports, 1881 – Present

Annual reports from 2002 to present

<https://mdc.mo.gov/about-us/business-information/annual-reports>