

## Leader

**NAME:** Virginia Minor

**BORN:** 3/27/1824,  
Caroline County, VA

**DIED:** 8/14/1894, St. Louis, MO

**BURIED:** BelleFontaine Cemetery,  
St. Louis, MO

**VISIT:** Old Courthouse,  
St. Louis, MO



*Courtesy of Missouri State Archives*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Virginia Minor was born in Caroline County, Virginia. She married Francis Minor in 1843, and the couple moved to St. Louis. In 1872, she attempted to register to vote. At the time, women did not have the right to vote, and she was denied. Virginia and Francis sued the city registrar, and appealed their case to the United States Supreme Court. While the courts found against the Minors, Virginia's bravery in challenging the voting laws would inspire future suffragettes.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

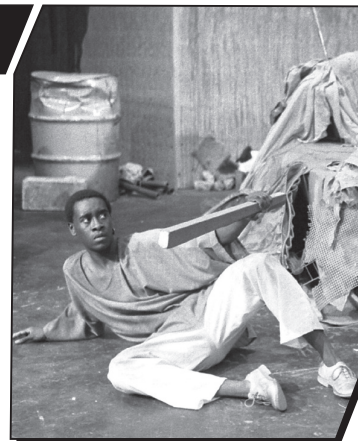
MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Actor

**NAME:** Don Cheadle

**BORN:** 11/29/1964,  
Kansas City, MO

**WATCH:** *Iron Man 2* (2010)



*Courtesy of UCLA*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Don Cheadle was born in Kansas City, Missouri. He is an actor with roles spanning from the dramatic (Paul Rusebahina in *Hotel Rwanda*), comedic (Al G. Rhythm in *Space Jam*), and action-packed (War Machine in the Marvel Cinematic Universe). For his work on screen and stage, he has won two Golden Globe Awards and a Tony Award. In 2016, he won his first Grammy Award for the dialogue he provided to the soundtrack for *Miles Ahead*, a biopic in which Cheadle played influential musician Miles Davis.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Actor

**NAME:** Cedric The Entertainer

**BORN:** 4/24/1964,  
Jefferson City, MO

**WATCH:** *Madagascar* (2005)



*Courtesy of Bert Sanchez*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Cedric Kyles was born in Jefferson City, Missouri. He was raised in Caruthersville, Missouri. Kyles graduated from Berkeley High School and Southeast Missouri State University. In the 80s and 90s, his stand-up comedy career thrived, performing for Def Comedy Jam, and at the legendary Apollo Theater. He has appeared in numerous TV shows and movies, including voicing Maurice in the *Madagascar* trilogy, and as Bobby Proud in *The Proud Family*. In 2019, he received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Artist

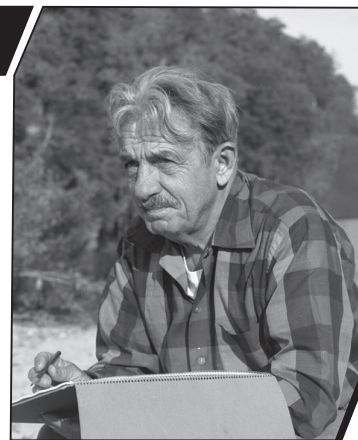
**NAME:** Thomas Hart Benton

**BIRTH:** 4/15/1889, Neosho, MO

**DIED:** 1/19/1975,  
Kansas City, MO

**BURIED:** BelleFontaine Cemetery,  
St. Louis, MO

**VISIT:** Home and Studio State  
Historic Site, Kansas City,  
MO; House Lounge in the  
Capitol, Jefferson City, MO



*Courtesy of Missouri State Archives*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Thomas Hart Benton was an artist, specializing in printmaking and painting murals. His most famous mural, *A Social History of Missouri*, covers the entire House Lounge in the Missouri State Capitol. Other murals by Benton are at Lincoln University in Jefferson City, the Truman Library in Independence, and Joplin City Hall. Benton's residence is now the Thomas Hart Benton Home and Studio State Historic Site.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Astronaut

**NAME:** Linda Godwin

**BORN:** 7/2/1952,  
Cape Girardeau, MO

**VISIT:** The Space Museum  
and Grissom Center,  
Bonne Terre, MO



*Courtesy of NASA*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Linda Godwin grew up in Jackson, Missouri. She graduated from Southeast Missouri State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in math and physics. She went on to receive her Masters and Doctorate in physics from the University of Missouri. In 1986, Godwin became an astronaut with NASA. In her career, she has flown on four space flights, logging 38 days in space, including two spacewalks. Today, she is a professor emerita of Physics and Astronomy at the University of Missouri.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

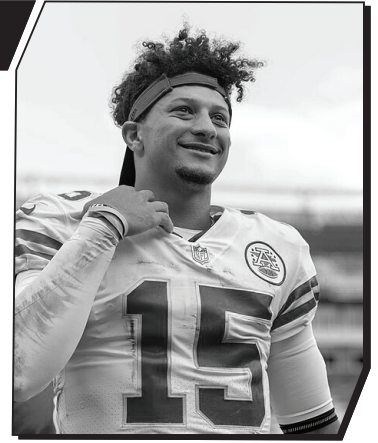
MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Athlete

**NAME:** Patrick Mahomes

**BORN:** 9/17/1995, Tyler, TX

**VISIT:** Chiefs Training Camp  
in July and August at  
Missouri Western State  
University, St. Joseph, MO



*Courtesy of All-Pro Reels Photography*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Patrick Lavon Mahomes II is a professional football player originally from Tyler, Texas. In 2017, he was selected 10th in the overall draft by the Kansas City Chiefs, and became the starting quarterback for the Chiefs in 2018. For leading Kansas City to their first Super Bowl win in 50 years, Mahomes was awarded the 2019 Super Bowl MVP Award, becoming the youngest quarterback to receive this honor. He is regarded as the best quarterback of his generation, possibly the greatest of all time.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Author

**NAME:** Mark Twain

**BORN:** 11/30/1835, Florida, MO

**DIED:** 4/21/1910, Redding, CT

**VISIT:** Mark Twain Boyhood  
Home and Museum,  
Hannibal, MO



*Courtesy of Missouri State Archives*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Samuel Clemens was an author from Hannibal, Missouri who first began writing under the name "Mark Twain" in 1863. He is best known for his novels *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Twain is an internationally celebrated author, sometimes called "the father of American Literature." Twain is the namesake of several Missouri landmarks including Mark Twain State Park in Monroe County, and Mark Twain National Forest in southeast Missouri, as well as an asteroid, 2362 Mark Twain.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Author

**NAME:** Laura Ingalls Wilder

**BORN:** 2/07/1867,  
Pepin County, WI

**DIED:** 2/10/1957, Mansfield, MO

**BURIED:** Mansfield, MO -  
Mansfield Cemetery

**VISIT:** Laura Ingalls Wilder Home  
and Museum, Mansfield, MO



*Courtesy of Missouri State Archives*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Laura Ingalls Wilder is was an author who wrote the *Little House on the Prairie* series. The books were based on her own childhood in a pioneer family in rural Kansas, Wisconsin, and South Dakota. In 1885, she married Almanzo Wilder, and the couple settled in Mansfield, Missouri. Her book, *Farmer Boy*, is inspired by Almanzo's childhood in upstate New York.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Author

**NAME:** Maya Angelou

**BORN:** 4/4/1928, St. Louis, MO

**DIED:** 5/28/2014,  
Winston-Salem, NC

**READ:** *On the Pulse of Morning*  
by Maya Angelou (1978)



*Courtesy of Library of Congress*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Maya Angelou was born Marguerite Annie Johnson in St. Louis. She grew up during the Great Depression between her mother's home in Missouri, and her grandmother's residence in Stamps, Arkansas. Angelou was a dancer, a singer, and a civil rights activist, but she is best remembered for her writing. Her autobiographies (such as *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*) and her poetry are used in schools worldwide. Her work explores difficult themes such as racism, survival, and identity.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Entrepreneur

**NAME:** J. C. Penney

**BORN:** 9/16/1875,  
Hamilton, MO

**DIED:** 2/12/1971,  
New York City, NY



*Courtesy of Missouri State Archives*

### BIOGRAPHY:

James Cash Penney was the seventh of twelve children born to a farming family in Hamilton, Missouri. Penney worked and invested in Golden Rule stores, purchasing full interest in all three locations in 1907. By 1916, Penney had dozens of stores operating across the United States under the new name "J. C. Penney Company". At its peak in 1973, the company operated 2,053 stores.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Entrepreneur

**NAME:** Annie Turnbo Malone

**BORN:** 8/9/1877, Metropolis, IL

**DIED:** 5/10/1957, Chicago, IL

**READ:** *Wonderful Hair* by  
Eve Nadel Catarevas (2022)



*Courtesy of Missouri State Historical Society*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Annie Turnbo Malone was born in Southern Illinois to a mother who escaped slavery. When she was orphaned, she moved in with her older sister Ada, living in Peoria, IL. From a young age, Malone was fascinated with hairdressing, practicing different styles on herself and her sister with a variety of products. Eventually, Malone created her own line of hair-care products and marketed them to other African-American women. Her business thrived in St. Louis, where she sold her products door-to-door.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Criminal

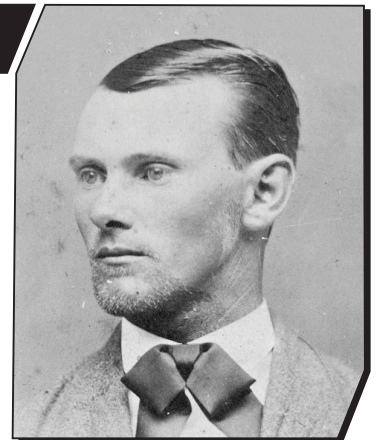
**NAME:** Jesse James

**BORN:** 9/5/1847, Kearney, MO

**DIED:** 4/3/1882, St. Joseph, MO

**BURIED:** Mount Olivet Cemetery,  
Kearney, MO

**VISIT:** Jesse James Birthplace,  
Kearney, MO



*Courtesy of Missouri State Archives*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Jesse James was an American outlaw born and raised in Clay County. James and his brother, Frank, were followers of William Quantrill and Bloody Bill Anderson, acting as pro-Confederate guerillas during the Civil War. After the war, the brothers formed the James-Younger gang, and committed murders and burglaries across the Midwest. They were notorious for robbing banks and trains.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

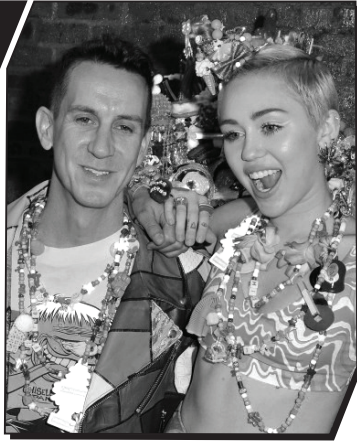
MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Entrepreneur

**NAME:** Jeremy Scott

**BORN:** 8/8/1975,  
Kansas City, MO

**WATCH:** *Making the Cut*,  
TV Series (2020-2022)



Courtesy of Getty Images

### BIOGRAPHY:

Jeremy Scott is a world-famous fashion designer. Originally from Lowry City, Jeremy Scott received his education at Pratt Institute, an elite art and design college in Brooklyn, New York. In 1996, Scott debuted his namesake brand, and soon after attracted the attention of fashion community elites like Karl Lagerfeld and Vogue magazine. His work is playful and irreverent, often drawing inspiration from science fiction, camp culture, and the 1980s. He has dressed some of Hollywood's most famous divas, from Beyonce to Miss Piggy.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Entrepreneur

**NAME:** Walt Disney

**BORN:** 12/5/1901, Chicago, IL

**DIED:** 12/15/1966, Burbank, CA

**VISIT:** Walt Disney Hometown  
Museum, Marceline, MO



Courtesy of Missouri State Archives

### BIOGRAPHY:

Walter Elias Disney was the animator and producer who created the Walt Disney Company. He was born in Chicago, and grew up in Marceline, Missouri. During his lifetime, the Disney company created famous characters like Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck, and produced iconic films such as *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, *Bambi* and *Mary Poppins*. He holds the records for the most Academy Awards earned (22) and most nominations (59).

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

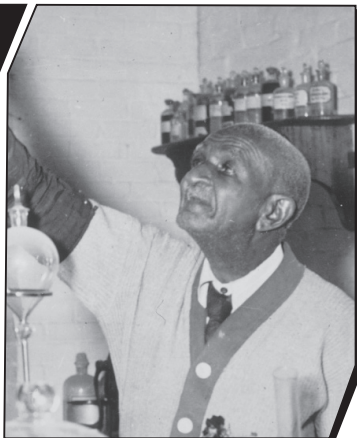
## Scientist

**NAME:** George Washington Carver

**BORN:** 1/1/1864, Diamond, MO

**DIED:** 1/5/1943, Tuskegee, AL

**VISIT:** George Washington Carver  
Birthplace National  
Monument, Diamond, MO



Courtesy of Missouri State Archives

### BIOGRAPHY:

George Washington Carver was an agricultural scientist and educator born into slavery in Diamond, Missouri. As a scientist, he promoted crop rotation to prevent soil depletion. He also developed hundreds of uses and recipes for peanuts and sweet potatoes. In 1943, The George Washington Carver National Monument was established in his hometown. This was the first national monument to honor someone other than a president, and the first to honor an African-American.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Musician

**NAME:** Sheryl Crow

**BORN:** 2/11/1962, Kennett, MO

**LISTEN:** *Everyday is a  
Winding Road*  
by Sheryl Crow (1996)



Courtesy of Recording Academy of the United States

### BIOGRAPHY:

Sheryl Crow was born in Kennett, Missouri, the daughter of a piano teacher and a trumpet player. Growing up, Crow played several instruments, including guitar, piano, and accordion. While attending the University of Missouri, she sang for a local band, Cashmere. She released her debut album in 1992, and would go on to win two Grammy Awards. In 2023, she was inducted into the Rock n Roll Hall of Fame.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## 🎵 Musician

**NAME:** Nelly

**BORN:** 11/2/1974, Austin, TX



*Courtesy of Flickr*

### BIOGRAPHY:

The rapper Nelly was born Cornell Iral Haynes, Jr. in Austin, Texas. He was raised in St. Louis, where he began his music career with the hip hop group, St. Lunatics. As an independent artist, Nelly has sold tens of millions of albums in the United States, and has won three Grammy Awards. Since 2013, he has hosted the annual Black & White Ball in St. Louis to benefit the Make-a-Wish Foundation.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## 👑 Leader

**NAME:** Great Walker (Moanahonga)

**BORN:** 1790, present-day Iowa

**DIED:** 1831, present-day Iowa



*Courtesy of Library of Congress*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Great Walker (Moanahonga) was an Ioway (Báxoje) tribal leader in the early 19th century. In English, he is known by several names: Big Neck, No Fear and Great Walker. During the War of 1812, Moanahonga fought against the United States expanding into Ioway ancestral hunting grounds. He refused to leave the land ceded to the state of Missouri, until his death in 1831.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## ✈️ Pilot

**NAME:** Charles Lindbergh

**BORN:** 2/4/1902, Detroit, MI

**DIED:** 8/26/1974, Kipahulu, HI

**VISIT:** Missouri History Museum (houses a duplicate of the Spirit of St. Louis), St. Louis, MO



*Courtesy of Missouri State Archives*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Charles Lindbergh was an American aviator who flew the first nonstop transatlantic flight from New York to Paris in 1927. He completed the voyage in his aircraft, the *Spirit of St. Louis*, which had been funded in part by the St. Louis Racquetball Club. Lindbergh finished the flight in 33 hours and 30 minutes, having flown 3,600 miles over the Atlantic Ocean only being able to see through a periscope.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

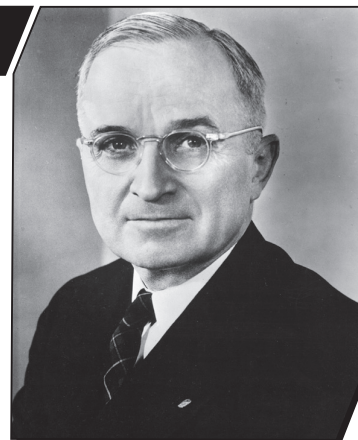
## 👑 Leader

**NAME:** Harry S. Truman

**BORN:** 5/8/1884, Lamar, MO

**DIED:** 12/26/1972, Kansas City, MO

**BURIED:** Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum, Independence, MO



*Courtesy of Missouri State Archives*

**VISIT:** Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum, Harry S. Truman House, Independence, MO

### BIOGRAPHY:

Harry S. Truman was the 33rd president of the United States. Having been elected vice president under Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Truman assumed the presidency after Roosevelt's death in 1945. As president, Truman ended World War II, integrated the armed forces, and established both the Truman Doctrine and NATO.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Actor

**NAME:** Emmett Kelly

**BORN:** 12/9/1898, Sedan, KS

**DIED:** 3/28/1979, Sarasota, FL

**VISIT:** Houston, MO for their annual Emmett Kelly Clown Festival in April



*Photograph Courtesy of Missouri State Archives*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Emmett Kelly was a circus performer who was raised in Houston, Missouri. While his other artistic skills included cartooning and trapeze, he is best known for his work as a clown in Ringling Bros circus. During the Great Depression, Kelly developed "Weary Willie," a hobo clown character who always messed up, but never gave up hope. The development of his tramp character became the basis for a new, American tradition of clowning. Furthermore, this character, and the laughter he brought, inspired Americans during a bleak time.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

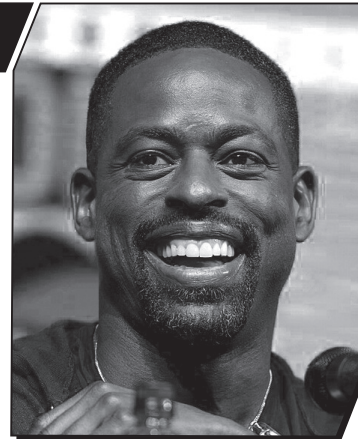
MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Actor

**NAME:** Sterling K. Brown

**BORN:** 4/5/1976, St. Louis, MO

**WATCH:** *Black Panther* (2018)



*Courtesy of Gage Skidmore*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Sterling Kelby Brown was born in St. Louis and raised in Olivette, Missouri. He attended Mary Institute and St. Louis Country Day School. He is an actor, educated at Stanford University, and the prestigious New York University Tisch School of the Arts. Brown is best known for his role as Randall Pearson on *This Is Us*, for which he won an Emmy and Golden Globe. He has also appeared as N'Jobu in *Black Panther*, and as Lt. Mattias in *Frozen II*.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Actor

**NAME:** Brad Pitt

**BORN:** 12/18/1963,  
Shawnee, OK

**WATCH:** *Megamind* (2010)



*Courtesy of Harald Krichel*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Brad Pitt was raised in the Springfield MO area. He attended, but did not graduate from the University of Missouri, as he left school to become an actor. Throughout the 1990s into the 2000s, Pitt made a name for himself as a Hollywood heartthrob. He starred in movies like *Oceans 11*, *Fight Club* and *Mr. and Mrs. Smith*. In 2020, he won the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor in *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

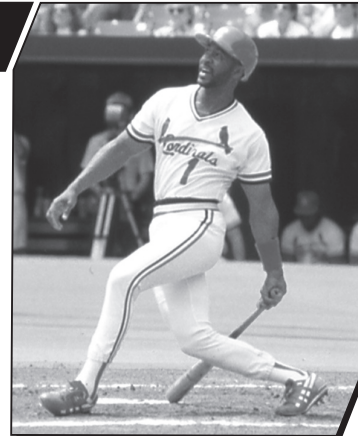
MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Athlete

**NAME:** Ozzie Smith

**BORN:** 12/26/1954, Mobile, AL

**VISIT:** St. Louis Cardinals Hall  
of Fame and Museum,  
St. Louis, MO



*Courtesy of Missouri State Archives*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Osborne "Ozzie" Smith was born in Mobile, Alabama, and raised in Los Angeles, California. Smith made his debut in major league baseball in 1978, when he was drafted by the San Diego Padres. In 1982, Smith joined the St. Louis Cardinals, helping the team secure the World Series. Smith played shortstop, and in addition to his quick reflexes, he became known for performing backflips in the outfield. He was inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 2002.

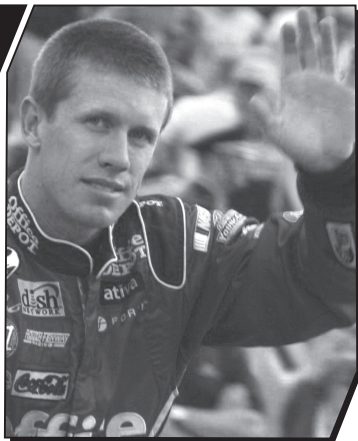
## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Athlete

**NAME:** Carl Edwards

**BORN:** 8/15/1979,  
Columbia, MO



*Courtesy of Kim Phillips*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Carl Edwards was born in Columbia, Missouri. He graduated from Rock Bridge High School, and briefly attended University of Missouri, before pursuing his dream of being a racecar driver. In 2002, he competed in the NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series, and became a full-time Truck Series driver in 2003. Competing in the Cup Series for 13 years, Edwards won 28 races, including the Coca-Cola 600 and Southern 500. Edwards was named one of NASCAR's 75 Greatest Drivers. In 2025, Edwards was inducted into the NASCAR Hall of Fame.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

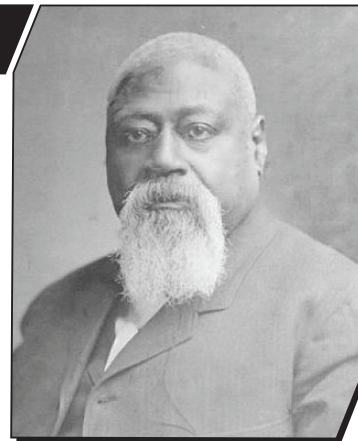
## Leader

**NAME:** James Milton Turner

**BORN:** 1840, St. Louis, MO

**DIED:** 11/1/1915, Ardmore, OK

**BURIED:** Father Dickson  
Cemetery, St. Louis, MO



*Courtesy of Library of Congress*

### BIOGRAPHY:

James Milton Turner was born into slavery in St. Louis. Unable to legally receive an education in Missouri, Turner attended school on a steamboat in the middle of the Mississippi River. During the Civil War, Turner served in the Union Army, under Colonel Madison Miller. After the war, Turner was among the Black veterans who established Lincoln University in Jefferson City. Later, he was appointed Ambassador to Liberia. Turner was the first African-American diplomat to represent the United States abroad.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Leader

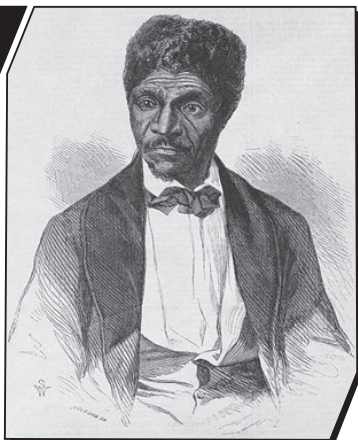
**NAME:** Dred Scott

**BORN:** c. 1799,  
Southampton County, VA

**DIED:** 9/17/1858, St. Louis, MO

**BURIED:** Calvary Cemetery,  
St. Louis, MO

**VISIT:** Old Courthouse,  
St. Louis, MO



*Courtesy of Missouri State Archives*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Dred and Harriet Scott met while they were separately enslaved in Wisconsin, a free state. They were married in a civil ceremony performed by Harriet's owner, Lawrence Taliaferro. Taliaferro then transferred ownership of Harriet to Dr. John Emerson, Dred's owner. Emerson and his wife relocated from Wisconsin to Missouri, a slave state. The Scotts remained property of the Emersons, even after Dr. Emerson's death in 1843. Dred Scott attempted to purchase freedom for himself, his wife, and their two children, but was denied. Harriet and Dred filed freedom suits with the Missouri courts in another attempt at freedom, though they were ultimately denied again in a landmark decision by the United States Supreme Court.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Leader

**NAME:** Harriet Scott

**BORN:** c. 1820, Virginia

**DIED:** 6/17/1876, St. Louis, MO

**BURIED:** Greenwood Cemetery,  
St. Louis, MO

**VISIT:** Old Courthouse,  
St. Louis, MO



*Courtesy of Missouri State Archives*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Dred and Harriet Scott met while they were separately enslaved in Wisconsin, a free state. They were married in a civil ceremony performed by Harriet's owner, Lawrence Taliaferro. Taliaferro then transferred ownership of Harriet to Dr. John Emerson, Dred's owner. Emerson and his wife relocated from Wisconsin to Missouri, a slave state. The Scotts remained property of the Emersons, even after Dr. Emerson's death in 1843. Dred Scott attempted to purchase freedom for himself, his wife, and their two children, but was denied. Harriet and Dred filed freedom suits with the Missouri courts in another attempt at freedom, though they were ultimately denied again in a landmark decision by the United States Supreme Court.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Leader

**NAME:** Emily Newell Blair

**BORN:** 1/09/1877, Joplin, MO

**DIED:** 8/3/1951,  
Alexandria, VA



*Courtesy of Library of Congress*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Emily Newell Blair was a suffragist from Joplin, MO. In 1914, she became the first editor of *Missouri Women*, a monthly periodical by the Missouri Equal Suffrage Association (MESA). In 1916, Blair participated in the "Golden Lane" silent protest outside of the Democratic National Convention in St. Louis. After women won the vote, Blair served as the national vice chairwoman of the Democratic Party, working to get women elected to public offices across America.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Author

**NAME:** Gottfried Duden

**BORN:** 05/19/1785, Prussia

**DIED:** 10/29/1855, Prussia

**VISIT:** Deutschheim State Historic  
Site, Hermann, MO  
For more information  
on German-Missourians



*Courtesy of Göttingen State and University Library*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Gottfried Duden was a Prussian immigrant who came to America in 1824, and purchased land in modern-day Warren County. He documented his experience in his *Report of a Multi-year Sojourn Through the Western United States*, in which he described Missouri's farm lands as ideal. Duden's report circulated throughout Germany and caused a flood of immigrants into what is now Missouri's Rhineland.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Educator

**NAME:** Susan Elizabeth Blow

**BORN:** 06/07/1843,  
Carondelet, MO

**DIED:** 3/27/1916,  
New York City, NY

**VISIT:** The first kindergarten  
classroom at the  
Carondelet Historical  
Society, St. Louis, MO



*Courtesy of Missouri State Archives*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Susan Elizabeth Blow was born in Carondelet, Missouri, the eldest of nine children. Though she never married, or had children of her own, Blow cared deeply about the youth of her day, and was a tutor to her younger siblings. During a trip abroad, Blow discovered the teachings of Friedrich Froebel, a German educator. She adapted his ideas in America, forming the first public Kindergarten in St. Louis in 1873. Today, she is remembered as the "Mother of Kindergarten."

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

## Explorer

**NAME:** Moses Harris

**BORN:** unknown

**DIED:** 5/6/1849,  
Independence, MO

**VISIT:** The Oregon Trail  
Monument at  
Independence Courthouse,  
Independence, MO



*Trappers. Alfred Jacob Miller, 1850. Moses Harris (L)*

*Courtesy of Walters Art Museum*

### BIOGRAPHY:

Little is known about the early life of Moses "Black" Harris. He was a skilled fur trapper, who may have worked for the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. Harris worked as a guide for other famous mountain men like James Beckwourth and Jim Bridger, assisting in several overland expeditions through the western frontier and to the Pacific Ocean. Those who knew him described him as brave man, with dark skin and hair. He may have been African American, but he also spoke Shoshoni. He died from cholera in Independence in 1849.

## FAMOUS MISSOURIANS

MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES