In his 1861 campaign for Governor, Claiborne Fox Jackson ran himself as a defender of the Union and the Constitution. After his election, Jackson led the state that would be supported by secession of the Union. He could only do so if the North and South had equal votes to determine whether slavery would be allowed or not. In his inaugural address, Jackson stated that he believed Missouri’s interests were best served by supporting the federal government.

"Missouri will not be forced to stand by the side, which her position of the border imposes; her honor, interest, and her necessities prefer her to take the lead, and she will stand by the South."

Claiborne Fox Jackson

As Southern states began to secede from the Union in December 1860, Missouri’s General Assembly called for a state convention to decide what path the state should follow. When Missouri’s state to secede degenerated into the formation of the Confederate States of America, they succeeded in forming a convention to draft a constitution. The Constitution of the State of Missouri was adopted in September 1861. It was in this constitution that Missouri’s government was transferred from the Union to the Confederacy. It is considered one of the most radical state constitutions, providing for a strong executive and judicial branch over the legislature.

"Any constitutional or amendments of said Constitution shall be adopted by the people of the State in the same manner as the constitutional Parties of the Union, or any other State, under a majority of the elected members of the Constitutional Convention, or a Constitutional Convention, or a majority of the people, shall vote for the same."

Fortifications at the arsenal in St. Louis, May 1861