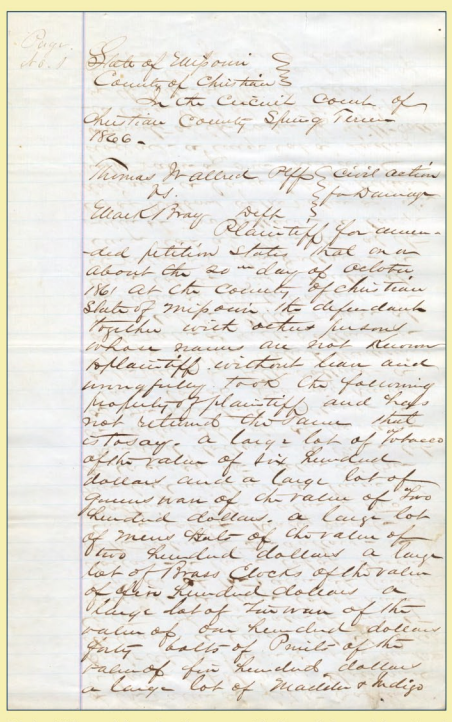
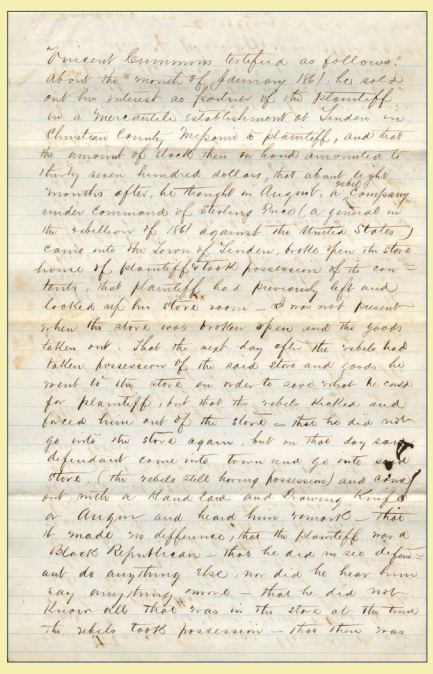
DIVIDED LOYALTIES
CIVIL WAR DOCUMENTS FROM THE
MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

# BATTLES FOUGHT IN COURT

## SEEKING COMPENSATION





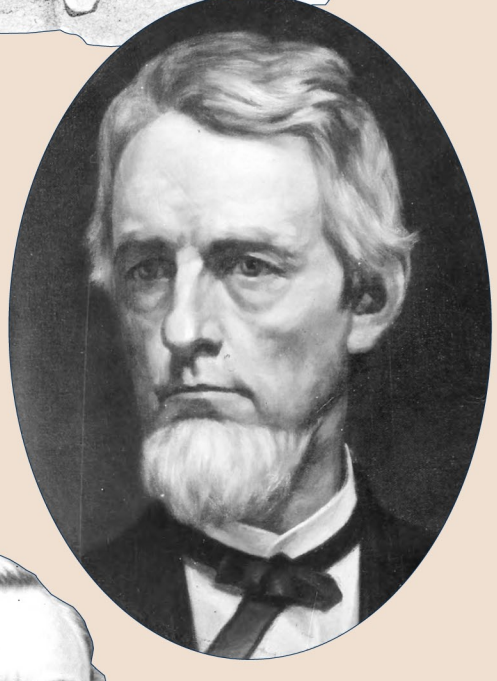
Plaintiff's petition for damages (*left*) and deposition (*right*) from *Allred v. Bray*, Christian County Circuit Court, Spring Term 1866.
*Missouri State Archives*

An old saying states that "an army travels on its stomach." Armies on the move have many needs and the troops that traveled through Missouri during the Civil War were no exception. As they marched, it was common for troops to take food, clothing, and other supplies that they needed from citizens along the way. Union soldiers who took supplies from citizens were supposed to write receipts so that the citizens could make a claim to the United States government and be paid for the items that were taken. Making a claim was not always easy, especially if the military failed, or refused, to provide the necessary receipts.

Missourians who had items taken by Confederate troops had an even more difficult time making claims for lost items, especially after the war when the Confederate government dissolved. After the war, some Missourians chose to take their claims for lost goods to court, directly suing individuals who had served in the Confederate army for compensation.

*"In August, a rebel company under command of Sterling Price . . . came into the town of Linden [in Christian County, Missouri], broke open the store house of the plaintiff and took possession of its contents." The defendant "came out of the store with a Hand Saw and Drawing Knife or Auger" and remarked "that it made no difference" because "the plaintiff was a Black Republican."*

## THEFT AND CONSPIRACY

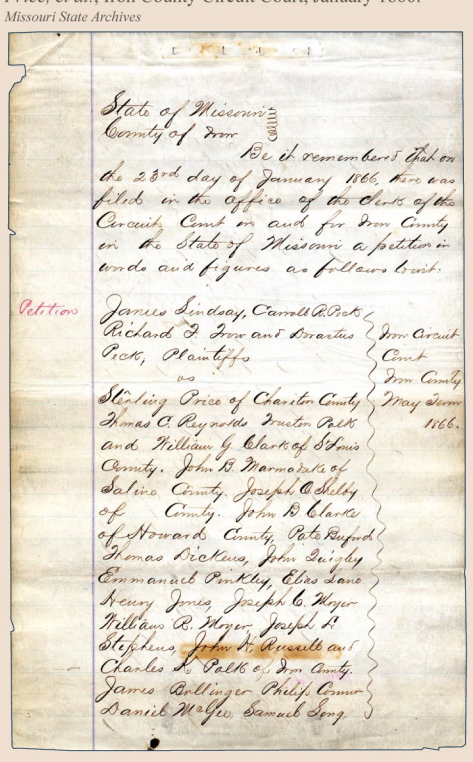


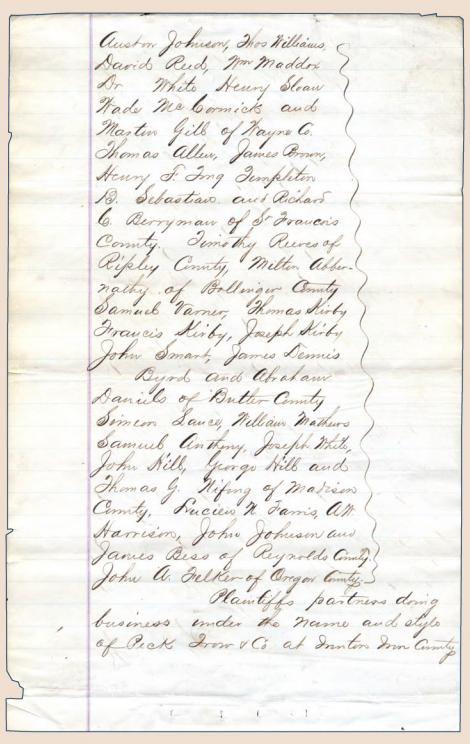
Among the defendants in the case were
*Above*: Former Missouri Governor and Confederate General Sterling Price
*Library of Congress*
*Right*: Former Missouri Governor Trusten Polk
*Missouri State Archives*
*Below*: Confederate General John Marmaduke
*Library of Congress*

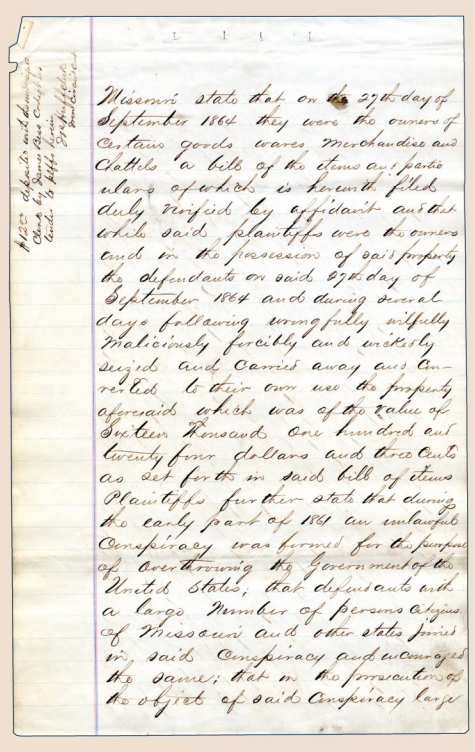
After having their store looted by Confederate soldiers in September 1864, four businessmen from the town of Ironton, Missouri filed suit against 55 well-known Confederates. The list of defendants included Sterling Price, Jo Shelby, and Thomas C. Reynolds. While few, if any, of the defendants were alleged to have participated in the actual crime, all of those listed were alleged to have participated in a conspiracy to overthrow the government of the United States. The plaintiffs reasoned that since it was that conspiracy that eventually led to the looting of their store, the high ranking Confederates were ultimately responsible for the damages.

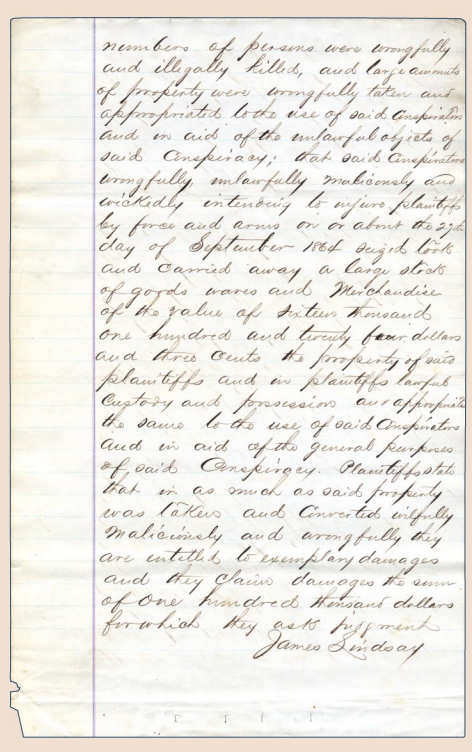
The suit took five years to make its way through the courts and was settled only after a change of venue to St. Louis. In the final verdict, the court ruled that the plaintiffs did not sufficiently prove the extent of their losses and the four businessmen lost the case.

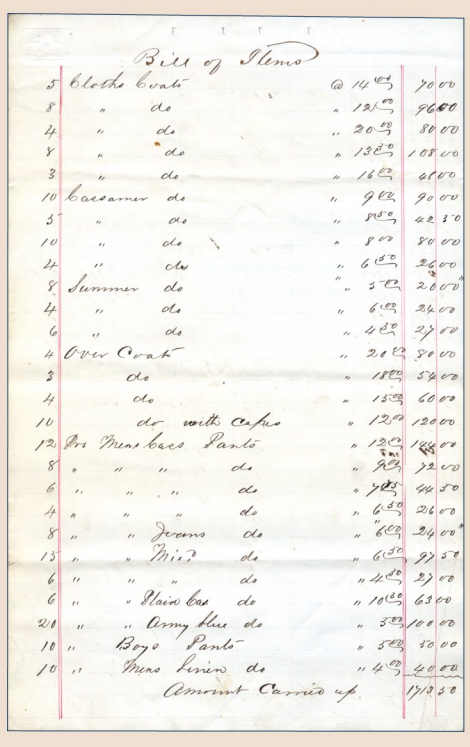
Pages from Plaintiff's petition, *Lindsay, et al. v. Sterling Price, et al.*, Iron County Circuit Court, January 1866.
*Missouri State Archives*

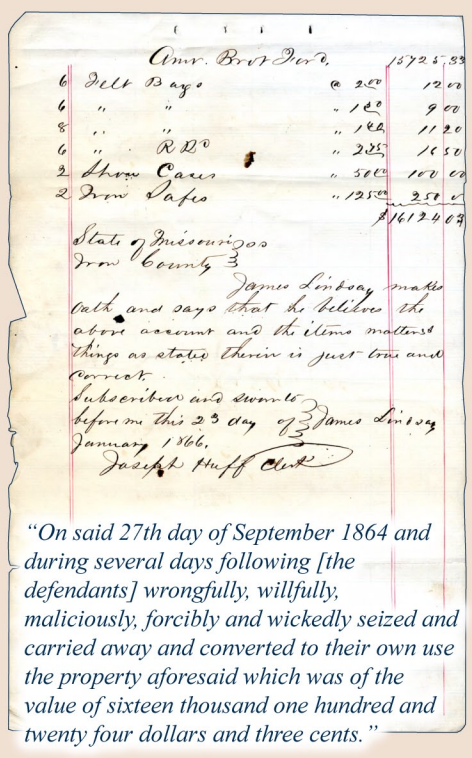












*"On said 27th day of September 1864 and during several days following [the defendants] wrongfully, willfully, maliciously, forcibly and wickedly seized and carried away and converted to their own use the property aforesaid which was of the value of sixteen thousand one hundred and twenty four dollars and three cents."*

*"Plaintiffs further state that during the early part of 1861 an unlawful conspiracy was formed for the purpose of overthrowing the Government of the United States. . . . That in the prosecution of the object of said conspiracy large numbers of people were wrongfully and illegally killed, and large amounts of property were wrongfully taken and appropriated to the use of said conspirators."*

1866