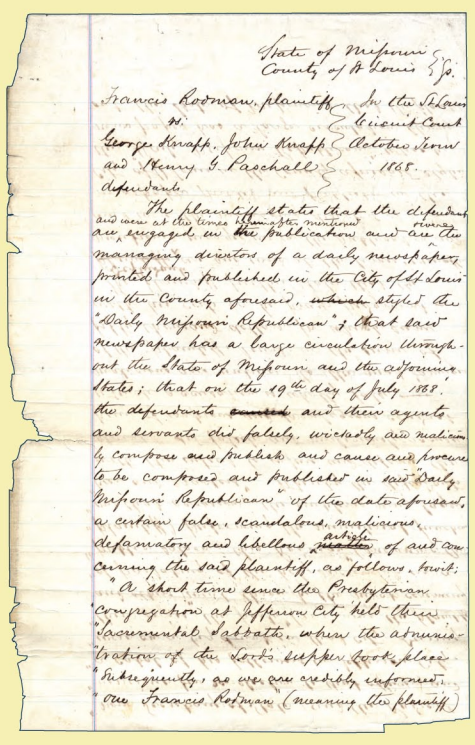
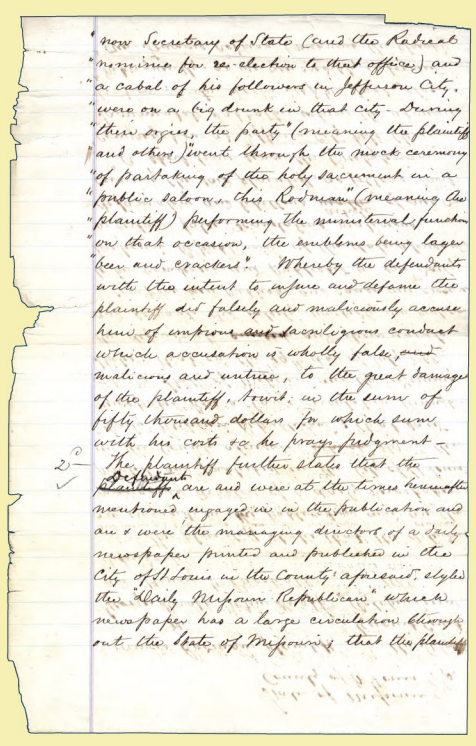
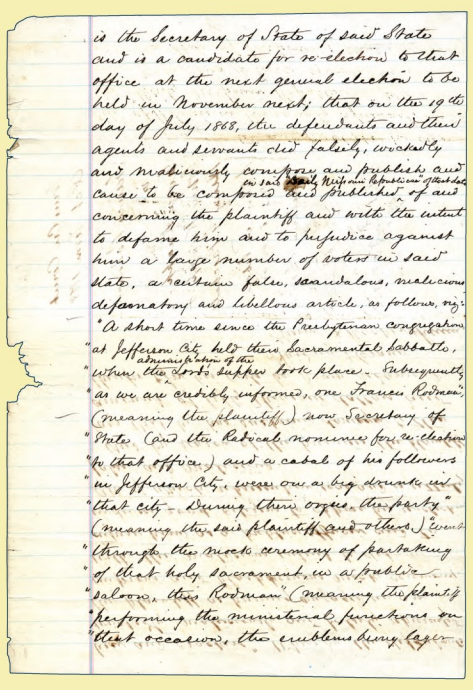
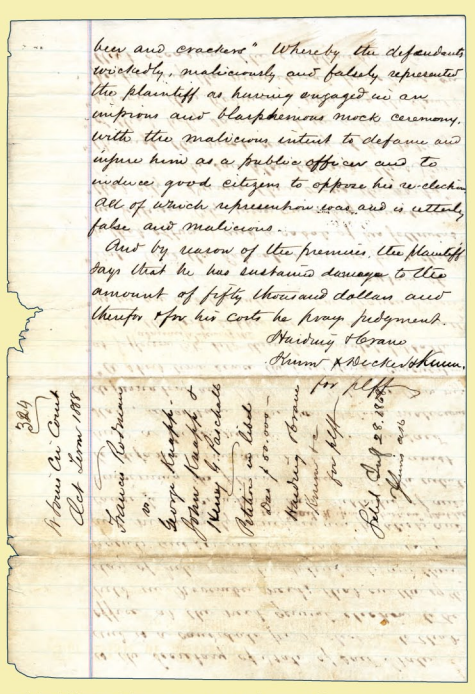
DIVIDED LOYALTIES
CIVIL WAR DOCUMENTS FROM THE
MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

POST-WAR CORRUPTION









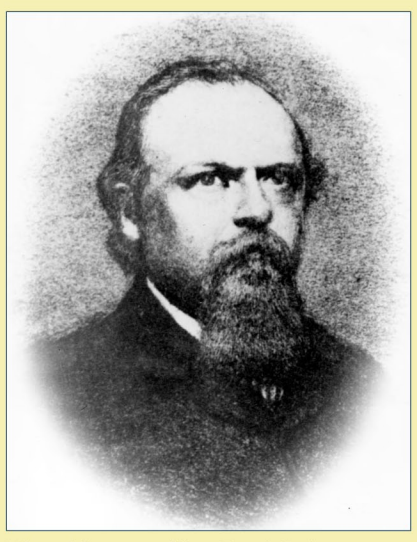
"The defendants wickedly, maliciously and falsely represented the plaintiff as having engaged in an impious and blasphemous mock ceremony with the malicious intent to defame and injure him as a public officer and to induce good citizens to oppose his re-election."

Plaintiff's Petition, *Francis Rodman v. George Knapp, et. al*, St. Louis Circuit Court, October term 1868.
Missouri State Archives

POLITICAL SLANDER

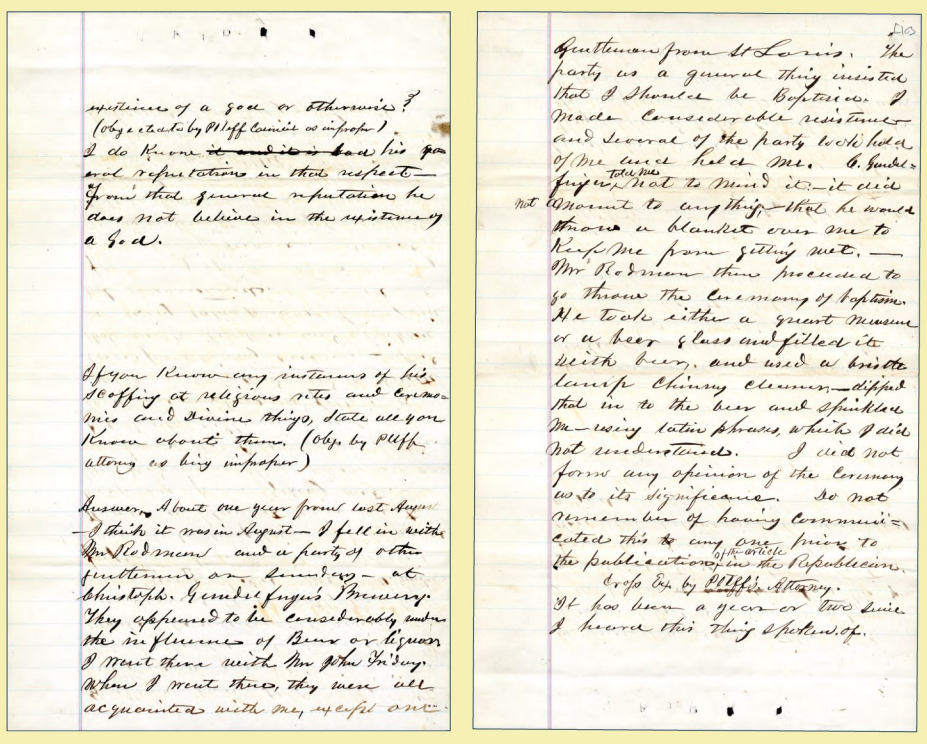
Missouri Secretary of State Francis Rodman was known as one of the most ardent supporters of the Radical Republican Party. A German immigrant, Rodman served in the Union Army during the Civil War and was briefly held captive by Confederate forces in 1864. Rodman's tenure as Secretary of State, which lasted from 1865 to 1871, was characterized by controversy and charges that he used his position as the state's top election official to tamper with the results of the referendum to hold the 1865 Constitutional Convention and to help put his fellow Radical Republicans in office.

Not surprisingly, Rodman was despised by Democrats, many of whom referred to him as "Count" because of the way he was alleged to have manipulated ballots. On July 19, 1868, the *Daily Missouri Republican* printed a story accusing the Secretary of State and several of his friends with holding a mock baptism ceremony in a Jefferson City saloon. Rodman sued the publishers of the paper for libel, stating that the story was fabricated in an attempt to spoil his chances of being re-elected in the fall. Though Rodman won the election, he was forced to file for bankruptcy and left the state after the end of his term.



Missouri Secretary of State Francis Rodman.
Missouri State Archives

"I fell in with Mr. Rodman and a party of other gentlemen . . . They appeared to be considerably under the influence of Beer or Liquor . . . The party as a general thing insisted that I should be baptized. I made considerable resistance and several of the party took hold of me . . . Mr. Rodman then proceeded to go through the ceremony of baptism. He took either a quart measure or a beer glass and filled it with beer and sprinkled me, using Latin phrases, which I did not understand."



Witness testimony, *Francis Rodman v. George Knapp, et. al*, St. Louis Circuit Court, October term 1868.
Missouri State Archives

OUR WAR CLAIM PHOTOGRAPHIC COPIES OF RECORDS RECEIVED

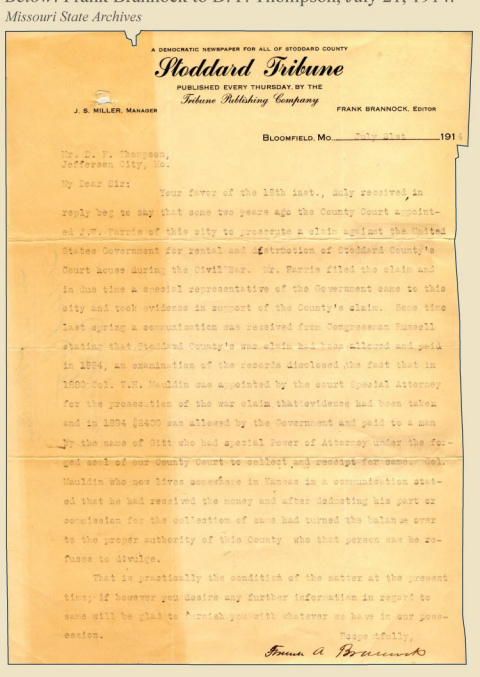
Copies Show Clever Work of Parties Who Forged the Orders.

The Stoddard county war claim that has been occupying front space in our local papers for the past several weeks is still in statue quo, and notwithstanding the fact that Judge N. C. Chasteen received this week photographic copies of the records in Washington, D.C., who, if any one in Stoddard county it was, that got that part of the money, that Col. Mauldin claims to have turned over to the proper authorities, is still a mystery. There is considerable conjecture as to whose handwriting the orders on record in Washington, copies of which we now have as above stated, are in. Even our expert penman are loth to say, definately, who wrote the orders. Possibly the only living man that could clear the mystery is Col. T. H. Mauldin, and there is a strong sentiment among our people that he should be brought back and forced to tell who it was that aided him in perpetrating this steal from Stoddard county. That can easily be done, for by his last letter which was sent to the Bloomfield News Co., and published in the Vindicator two weeks ago, he commits criminal libel when he said "I drew the $2400, took it home with me, took from it what was due me and turned the balance over to a party who had the legal right to receive and receipt for the same." The only party that had the legal right to receive and receipt for this money was the then County treasurer. Col. T. H. Mauldin in our opinion is guilty of no other crime that would be extraditable under the laws of our state.

The public is entitled to know, if possible to find out, who the guilty parties were; our present County court is, we are sure, anxious that it should know; officers who were then serving the people of this county should be relieved of any stigma attaching their names with this fraudulent transaction.

Let's do this? Bring back the man that can clear the mystery and give him a chance in his declining years to lift the cloud that will forever darken his name.

Left: Clipping from the *Stoddard Tribune*, July 21, 1914.
Below: Frank Brannock to D. F. Thompson, July 21, 1914.
Missouri State Archives



MISSING WAR CLAIMS

In 1912, the Stoddard County Court submitted a claim to the federal government to be reimbursed for damage caused by federal troops when they occupied the county courthouse during the Civil War. After reviewing the records, federal officials informed the county that they had already been paid $2,400 for their claim in 1894.

County officials determined that Colonel T. H. Mauldin, a lawyer and one-time district judge, had been assigned the task of filing the claim for Stoddard County in 1880. Mauldin, who by 1914 had moved to Kansas, admitted that he had received the county's claim in 1894 and, after taking his commission, turned the balance of the money over to "the only party who had the legal right to receive and receipt for the same." After reviewing the records, county officials realized that the receipt for the money had been forged. Mauldin refused to divulge any more information and the county was unable to extradite him from Kansas to interview him further on the matter. It is unclear whether Stoddard County ever retrieved its stolen war claim.

Bird's eye view of Jefferson City, 1869
Library of Congress

1868 - 1914