

Fall 2015

# THE MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES . . .

*Where History Begins*



## **Show Me Steamboats**

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### On the Cover

Actors portraying Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer watch the steamboat Golden Eagle, c. 1950s. Missouri State Archives.





# Preserving Tomorrow's History Today

Guest Commentary by  
Secretary of State Jason Kander



As your secretary of state, one of my primary goals is to make state government more transparent and accessible to all Missourians. No single division embodies this vision more than the Missouri State Archives.

Throughout the past 50 years, the Archives has preserved and cataloged an incredible amount of our state's history. This is an amazing feat, and one that has been nationally recognized on multiple occasions. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of staff and volunteers, an equally incredible amount of information is also now available online through the Missouri Digital Heritage website (<http://sos.mo.gov/mdh/>).

By accessing the collections available through Missouri Digital Heritage, I was able to find my great-grandfather's World War I enlistment records in a matter of minutes! Countless others have traced their family trees back even further, solving mysteries in an afternoon that in years past might have taken weeks.

Initiatives such as Missouri Digital Heritage have helped bridge the gap between modern technology and the historic records of the past, but the Missouri State Archives is also leading the way in preserving today's important electronic records for future generations. Pioneering work is currently underway—courtesy of national grant funding—to ensure electronic records are preserved as safely as paper, parchment and velum.

Building on the success of Missouri Digital Heritage, my office launched *The Missouri Channel* in 2013 to record and preserve the most fleeting historic record of all: live audio. We record all official audio from the floor each day of legislative session at the Capitol. These recordings are not only streamed live, but also available on demand at <http://s1.sos.mo.gov/records/missourichannel/>.

Whether you explore the Missouri Digital Heritage website, listen to lively floor debate on *The Missouri Channel* or make a special trip to the Missouri State Archives, there have never been more historic records from Missouri so readily available for researchers and enthusiasts around the globe to study and enjoy. I strongly encourage you to take advantage of the Missouri State Archives' immense resources and learn something new today!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jason KANDER". The signature is stylized, with a large, looping "J" and "K".

## Murder on Election Day

By Bill Glankler, Local Records Field Archivist

February 20, 1875, was Election Day in Troy. Dozens of people congregated about the courthouse, on nearby street corners and in front of businesses on Main Street when an altercation on the courthouse steps drew their attention around 2 p.m. Extensive testimony regarding the event comes from the Lincoln County Circuit Court case file of *State v. John R. Crouch*. This file, processed by the Local Records Program, vividly describes the incident and its setting, laying bare the potential consequences of violating racial customs in the years following the Civil War.

The quarrel began inside the courthouse as John R. Crouch, a white man, former slave Alec Carter and others crowded into the polling place. While in line to place their ballots, Crouch told Carter to get out of the way and Carter refused, grumbling loudly “he was a free man; that the Court House was as free to him as any other man white or black.” One witness believed both men were intoxicated and “it was whiskey” that emboldened Carter to verbally confront Crouch. The two men were also at odds about an unspecified railroad issue on the ballot, as Carter exclaimed “hurrah for the railroad” and Crouch, when asked by C.L. Wright to vote for the railroad, declared, “I can’t vote the way you want me to.” Whiskey, politics and race clashed when Crouch exited the courthouse and confronted Carter. “Are you the man that bantered me out of the courthouse?” Crouch asked, referencing Carter’s unwillingness to step aside in the voting line. When Carter answered yes, Crouch attacked him with an axe, striking Carter in the face. After the scuffle near the courthouse steps was broken up, Carter fled south toward Cherry Street with several other black men.



Lincoln County courthouse, Troy, Mo. c. 1870. From *Troy, Missouri Dosquicentennial Historical Book: Celebrating 175 Years, 1819-1994*.

asked, “Did you sauce a white man?” Alec answered, “You never knowed me to sauce a white man,” and pointed out Crouch as he was coming down the street holding a pistol. Crouch fired one shot at Alec, forcing him to retreat down Main Street. Crouch then pursued him past the Laclede House saloon and onto Cherry Street, firing three more shots as bystanders fled for cover. Two bullets struck the former slave in the left side and he fell to the ground in the middle of Cherry Street, less than two blocks from the courthouse. His friends quickly moved him to Birkhead’s stable where

he tragically bled to death. Just ten years removed from slavery, Alec Carter died a free man—a free man who made the mistake of publicly challenging a white man.

The sheriff arrested Crouch, and Justices of the Peace J.B. Allen and John M. Reed collected the testimony of 33 witnesses to the incident. While disagreeing on some minor details, the accounts corroborated that Crouch chased Carter with the intention of shooting him. In fact, several

witnesses overheard Crouch declare that he would “kill a negro” well before the fight near the courthouse steps. Even though the justices submitted the nearly 50 pages of testimony to the grand jury, Crouch was never indicted and the court released him on March 31, 1875.

The testimony paints a vivid picture of the incident, shedding light on Missouri’s Reconstruction-era social and political climate. In addition to providing evidence that whiskey and political differences contributed to the altercation, the majority of the testimony demonstrates the precariousness of African-American social status in the aftermath of slavery—free by law, but expected to remain publicly deferential to white society.

# U.S. Federal Census Mortality Schedules

By Erika Woehl, Research Analyst

Mortality schedules are not the Grim Reaper's to-do lists, as someone I know likes to kid. Instead, they were efforts to document deaths in the United States in the one-year period prior to the regular decennial population censuses. Most family historians are aware that the U.S. government practice of taking a population census every 10 years goes back to 1790. Less well known is that with each population schedule, a series of special schedules are also taken. From 1850 to 1880, these included the slave (1850 and 1860 only), industrial, agricultural and mortality schedules.

The last of these, the mortality schedules, are invaluable to researchers tracking down pesky ancestors with elusive death dates because they list the names of individuals who died during the year prior to the census. For example, the 1850 mortality schedule lists individuals who died between June 1, 1849 and May 31, 1850. These records are also of great importance to researchers in our state because Missouri did not require births and deaths to be recorded until 1910.

Mortality schedules provide genealogists and historians with vital date, place and cause of death information that would, in many cases, remain unknown. For example, the 1850 mortality schedule is of particular interest to those researching the cholera epidemic that swept the nation in 1849. Cholera was, in fact, the number one cause of death in Missouri on that schedule and the median age of death was only 17 years. It is also possible to learn a person's place of birth, as well as age, marital status and profession at time of death. See the table below for all included fields.

Column headings from the 1850 mortality schedule:

Line.	NAME OF EVERY PERSON WHO DIED during the Year ending 1st June, 1850, whose usual Place of Abode at the Time of his Death was in this Family.	Description		Free or Slave.	Married or widowed.	Place of Birth. Naming the State, Territory, or Country.	The Month in which the Person died.	PROFESSION, OCCUPATION, OR TRADE.	DISEASE, OR CAUSE OF DEATH.	NUMBER OF DAYS ILL.
		Age.	Sex.							

Unfortunately, the 1850 and 1860 mortality schedules do not include household identification numbers from the population schedule, meaning it is difficult to link individuals to particular households, such as children to their parents or slaves to their owners. The good news, however, is that the 1870 and 1880 mortality schedules DO include this number, thus linking the deceased to their household becomes possible.

One should also realize that not every person who died during the period covered by a mortality schedule is actually recorded. A good example of this comes, again, from the 1849 cholera epidemic. The 1850 mortality schedule includes the names of 3,644 people who died from cholera statewide, but academic research puts that number much higher, at approximately 7,000 people in St. Louis alone.

Although the state's original mortality schedules are in the possession of the Missouri History Museum in St. Louis, a recent collaborative project with the Missouri State Archives has made them digitally accessible. Both institutions now have images of all Missouri mortality schedules and name indexes to the 1850 and 1860 schedules, while the Archives' e-Volunteers are

*Continued on page 10*



# Picture This

By Amy Moorman, Visual Materials Archivist

## Show Me Steamboats

*"The face of the river, in time, became a wonderful book... which told us mind to me without reserve, delivering its most cherished secrets as clearly as if it had uttered them with a voice. And it was not a book to be read once and thrown aside, for it had a new story to tell every day."*

-Mark Twain, *Life on the Mississippi*

For centuries, the rivers of Missouri have inspired writers, artists, adventurers and many others. They have been the means of exploration in the region, the arteries of trade in a growing economy and a source of leisure for millions.

One of the most ubiquitous images of river travel in the state is the steamboat. The first such vessel to navigate the waters of the Missouri Territory was the Zebulon M. Pike, which arrived in St. Louis on August 2, 1817, after a six-week journey from Louisville, Kentucky. Though the two cities are only 160 miles apart, traveling against the Mississippi River current from Cairo, Illinois to St. Louis was slow going for the modest craft.

In those early years, steamboats competed with keelboats for cargo and passengers. These flat-bottomed boats were sailed or rowed downstream and, for the return trip back upstream, were aided by poling, or lesser known methods, including cordelling or bushwhacking. Cordelling required crewmen on shore to pull the boat upstream by rope, while crews using the bushwhacking technique made headway simply by pulling on exposed branches or bushes on the riverbanks.

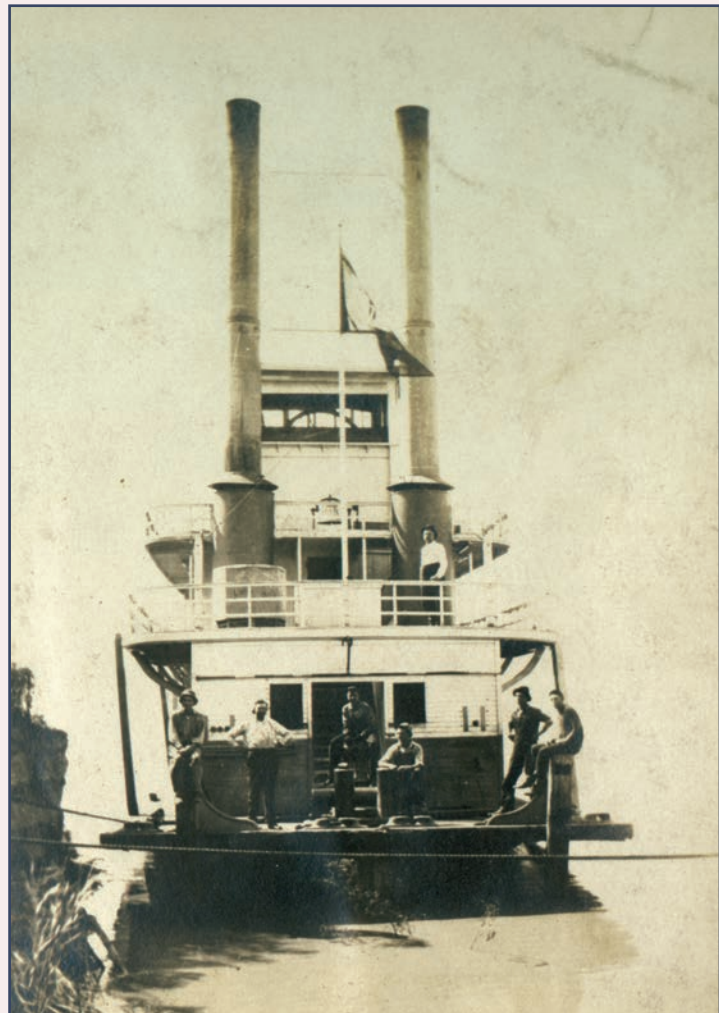
Steamboats eventually became the preferred means of river transportation because they were faster and could carry more cargo, which appealed to farmers, merchants and travelers alike, but they were also more prone to accidents. This was especially true in rivers like the Missouri with its swift current, variable depth and obstructions in abundance.

By the second half of the 19th century, widespread steamboat use was on the way out. After the Civil War and the expansion of the railroad, river travel became less profitable for the shipping and transportation companies, as well as less attractive to prospective customers. Despite this decline, steamboats remained popular as ferries and excursion vessels well into the 20th century.

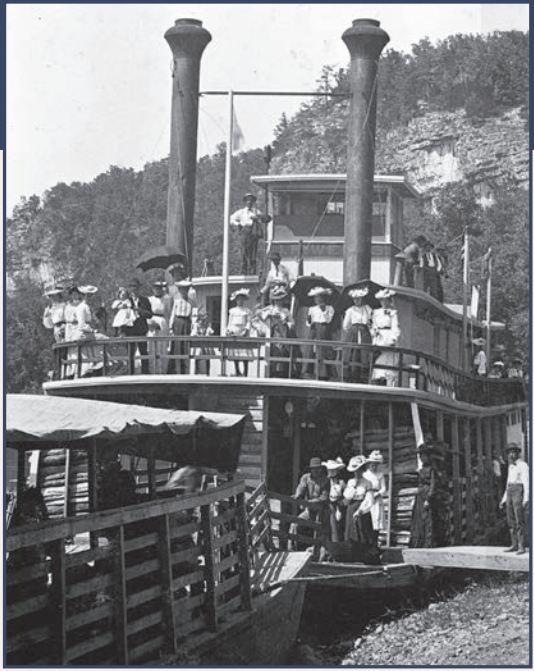
The *Vanishing Missouri*, Charles Elliott Gill, Joseph Summers, *Historic "Blue Book"* and Donald Carl Butzer collections all contain photographs of steamboats that once navigated the challenging waters of Missouri's rivers. Although just the *Charles Elliott Gill* and *Historic "Blue Book"* collections are accessible online through the Missouri Digital Heritage website ([www.missouridigitalheritage.org](http://www.missouridigitalheritage.org)), all collections have been digitized and are available for viewing at the Missouri State Archives' Jefferson City location.



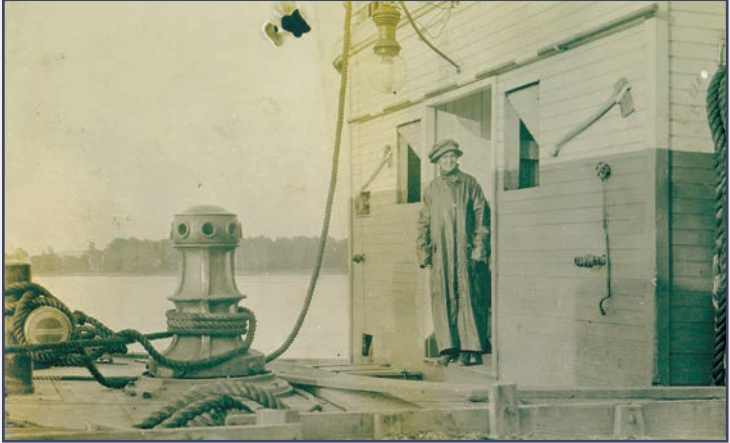
Above and below: Images of unidentified people and steamboats from the Donald Carl Butzer Collection.



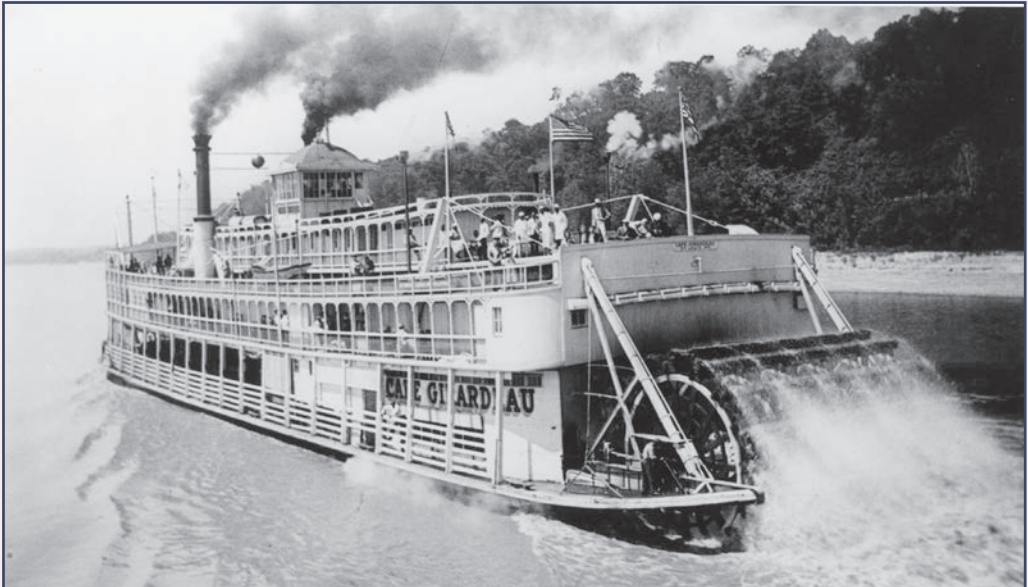




Above: Unidentified people stand on a landing next to a steamboat, *Donald Carl Butzer Collection*. Below: Steam ferry on the Missouri River at Hermann, c. 1912. Right: The steamboat Tuscumbia, c.1915, *Vanishing Missouri Collection*.



Left and above: Images of unidentified people and steamboats from the *Donald Carl Butzer Collection*. Below: The steamboat Cape Girardeau on the Mississippi River, c.1920s, *Vanishing Missouri Collection*.

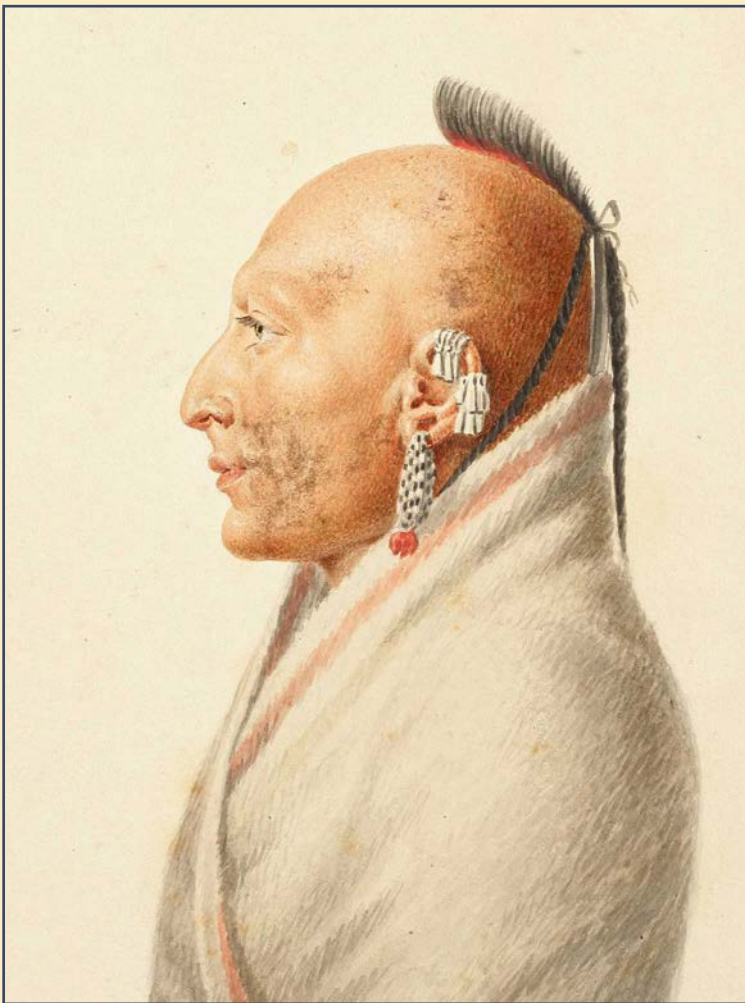




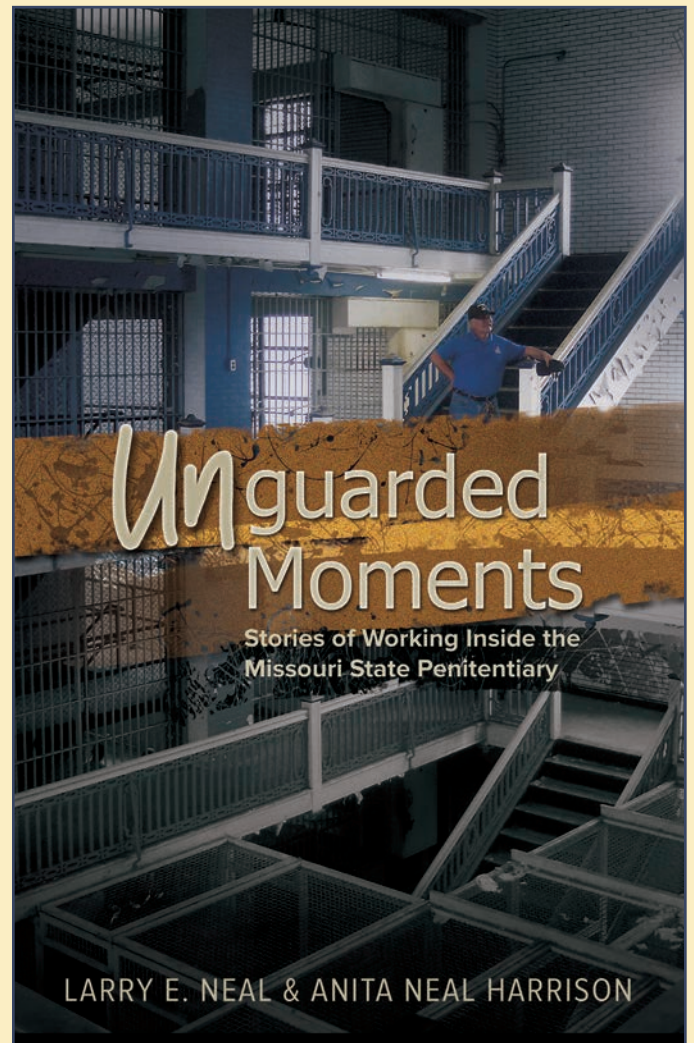
# Fall 2015/Winter 2016 Program Calendar

**Trade and Trepidation:  
The Osage and Spanish St. Louis  
November 12, 2015, 7 p.m.  
In Recognition of Native American Heritage Month**

The early trade economy of St. Louis was largely dependent upon furs provided by the Osage Nation. Cultural conflicts, however, periodically threatened that relationship: the early French colonials were resigned to the reality of Osage power, while the Spanish, who assumed control of Louisiana in 1762, were far less conciliatory. St. Louis merchants frequently found themselves at odds with the Spanish government's policy towards the Osage. Michael Dickey, administrator of the Arrow Rock State Historic Site and author of *Arrow Rock: Crossroads of the Missouri Frontier* and *People of the River's Mouth: In Search of the Missouria Indians*, will explore the sometimes uneasy détente that existed between the Spanish government in St. Louis and the most powerful native nation south of the Missouri River.



*Soldier of the Oak a Little Osage Chief*, by C.B.F. St. Memin 1805.  
Collection of the New York Public Library.



***Unguarded Moments  
Stories of Working Inside the Missouri State  
Penitentiary, January 21, 2016, 7 p.m.***

In *Unguarded Moments*, Larry E. Neal's memoir about life in the Missouri State Penitentiary (MSP) from the perspective of neither inmate nor guard, he reveals a portrait of the prison very different from common conceptions. Neal worked at MSP in a variety of positions from 1984 through its close in 2004; he began as a labor supervisor and, following the prison's shutdown, ended his career as the chief engineer at the Jefferson City Correctional Center. Stories from his time leading MSP prisoner work crews show that life inside the prison walls could be surprisingly lighthearted, complete with inmate escapades and pranks between prisoners and staff. In addition to offering a rare insider's view of prison humor, Neal will provide us a window into the rhythms of work crews, the daily life of prisoners and staff and the shared humanity of everyone behind the walls.



# Fall 2015/Winter 2016 Program Calendar



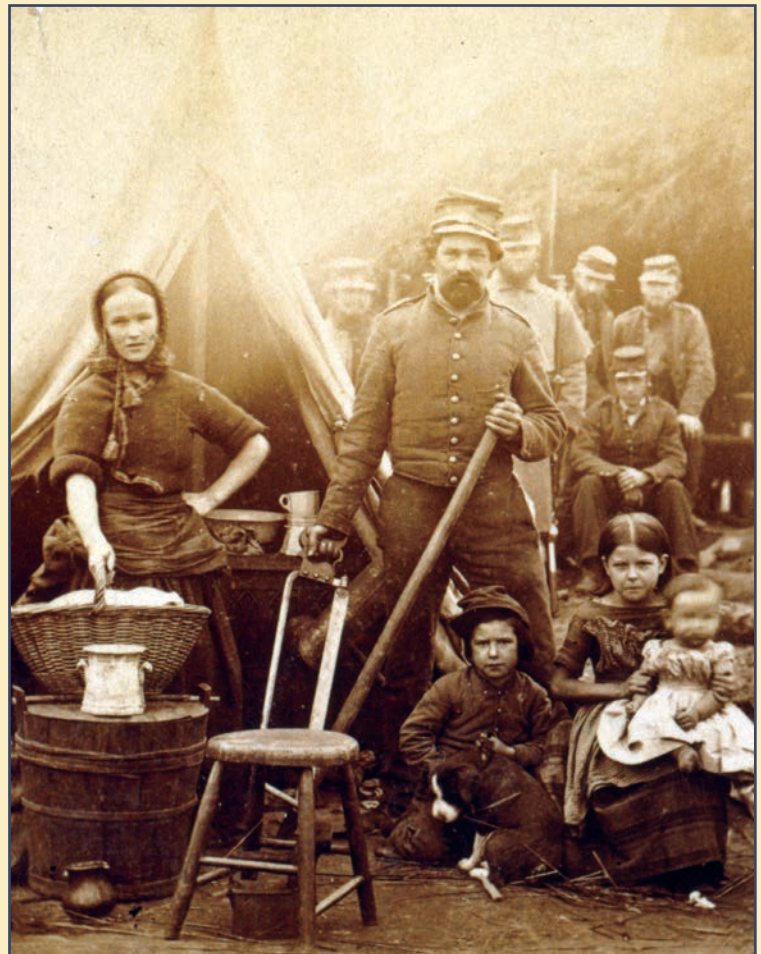
**Buffalo Soldiers of the American West**  
**February 18, 2016, 7 p.m.**  
**In Recognition of Black History Month**

For several years, artist and Lincoln University art professor Essex Garner has created images that reflect on the plight of United States Colored Troops (USCT) and Buffalo Soldiers. Using thousands of personal photographs in the possession of descendants and others, he created his *Portraits of American History* series, exhibited in the summer of 2015 at Lincoln University in Jefferson City. The images in this series celebrate the academic and personal struggles of the men who served in the 62nd and 65th USCT during the Civil War and went on to found Lincoln University. Join us as Essex Garner shares images from both this and his new series, *Buffalo Soldiers of the American West*, as well as the research and stories on which they are based.



**Missouri Women and Children in the Civil War**  
**March 17, 2016, 7 p.m.**  
**In Recognition of Women's History Month**

The Civil War is often thought of in terms of soldiers fighting in faraway battles and skirmishes. Although this was most certainly the case, there was another, less visible war fought at home and on, or near, the battlefield by women and children. In Missouri, these segments of the population often did much more than passively wait for their husbands and fathers to return home from military service. For most, the reality of living in a war zone meant they developed new skills and strengths. Driven by political views, faith and necessity, they left behind traditional roles to become heads of household, cooks and nurses, even smugglers and spies. Join us as author Robert Schultz presents select stories of these fascinating women and children who actively took part in the war.



Camp of the 31st Pennsylvania Infantry near Washington, D.C.,  
1862. Library of Congress

*All programs will be held at the Missouri State Archives, 600 W. Main St., Jefferson City, Mo., and are free and open to the public.*



# Archives News

## U.S. Federal Census Mortality Schedules

*Continued from page 5*

currently indexing 1870, with 1880 soon to follow. To volunteer to index these records from your home computer, send an email to [archvol@sos.mo.gov](mailto:archvol@sos.mo.gov). Please also feel free to request a search of the 1850 or 1860 mortality schedules by submitting an email to the Archives reference staff at [archives@sos.mo.gov](mailto:archives@sos.mo.gov) listing a single name and county of death.

### MORTAL FACTS

#### 1850:

- Includes 12,207 names.
- Seven people died from snakebites.
- Six people were struck by lightning.
- Whooping cough and measles killed 353 people.

#### 1860:

- Includes 17,552 names.
- Adair County is missing.
- Seven people were killed after being kicked by horses, mules or steers.
- About 200 women died in childbirth.

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## 50<sup>th</sup> Missouri State Archives

### Famous Missourians



Missouri Nature League pledge card. Designed by Walt Disney Studios, 1936 Missouri State Archives.

#### Walt Disney

Walt Disney was born in Chicago, but he spent much of his childhood in Marceline and Kansas City, Missouri. Kansas City was also the location of Disney's first animation studio.

By 1936, Walt Disney had moved his studio to California and released *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, the most successful animated film of its time. That year, Disney Studios designed the pledge cards for the Missouri Nature League, a program for youngsters aged six to sixteen that the Missouri Conservation Commission had just unveiled.



Walt Disney with seven-year-old boys, possibly Billy Wilder and Tom Sawyer, on a boat. Missouri State Archives.



Laura Ingalls Wilder. Missouri State Archives.

#### Laura Ingalls Wilder

Though Laura Ingalls Wilder was born in Wisconsin, she lived on a farm near Mansfield, Missouri for 43 years. It was there that she wrote her famous *Little House* books.

Wilder's death certificate is just one of thousands in the archives collection. Death records that were issued after 1910 and are more than 50 years old are searchable on the archives' website.



Certificate of Death, Laura Ingalls Wilder, February 20, 1957. Missouri State Archives.

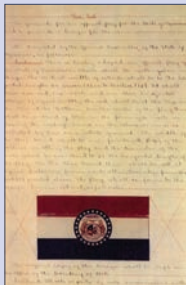
#### Marie Watkins Oliver

When the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) noticed that Missouri did not have a state flag, they appointed Marie Oliver to lead a committee that would recommend a design. Oliver worked with artist Mary Eckhardt to design a flag around the Official State Seal.

Senator Arthur L. Oliver, the nephew of Mrs. Oliver's husband, submitted a bill to the Missouri State Legislature that would make her flag the state's official flag. After two unsuccessful attempts to pass the bill, the flag passed in a tie in the state capital in 1913. Mrs. Oliver worked with another artist to recreate the flag and two years later, on March 22, 1915, the Oliver flag became the official flag of Missouri.



Marie Watkins Oliver. Missouri State Archives.



House Bill 226 (1913) Creating Missouri's Official State Flag. Missouri State Archives.

#### Harry Truman

A Missouri senator and thirty-third President of the United States, Harry Truman also visited the Missouri National Guard in 1905. The settlement and on the right shows that he was drafted for federal service in 1917. During World War I, he served in combat in France as an artillery officer.



Harry Truman. Missouri State Archives.

## Missouri State Archives 50th Anniversary Exhibit Opening

Missouri State Archives  
(600 W. Main St., Jefferson City, Mo. 65101)  
November 18, 2015, from 5–7 p.m.

The Missouri State Archives and the Friends of the Missouri State Archives invite you to attend the opening of the Archives' newest exhibit celebrating 50 years of preserving and providing access to Missouri's historical record. *Past Preserved: The 50th Anniversary of the Missouri State Archives* will include a brief history of the institution's growth, highlighting several of the Archives' most important documents and their stories. The Friends of the Missouri State Archives will provide refreshments.

The exhibit opening is a free event, but space is limited so please **RSVP to Brian Rogers at (573) 526-1981 or [brian.rogers@sos.mo.gov](mailto:brian.rogers@sos.mo.gov) no later than November 13.**

## Donations to the Friends of the Missouri State Archives (July 25, 2015—October 9, 2015)

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