

From 1820 to 1865 Missouri was a divided state in a divided nation that separated more and more with each day. The division between Americans existed when the Nation gained its independence in 1776, and when people began inhabiting Missouri in 1801, they brought their differences with them. The inhabitants of Missouri asked to join the Union as a state in 1820, leaving the federal government divided in their decision whether to do so; Abraham Lincoln explained that Congress was, “voting steadily for the prohibition of slavery in Missouri, and the Senate was voting as steadily against it” (*Peoria Speech*, Springfield Illinois, October 16, 1854). Missourians also had different opinions on the issue of slavery, leaving their state government in Jefferson City in turmoil. Citizens began to take the law into their own hands by forming militias and enlisting in armies, and by spring of 1861, Missouri was just like the rest of America: ready to fight. The Civil War in Missouri was a microcosm of the American Civil War; Missouri had urban and rural economies which created different cultures with opposing views on slavery, there was a political stalemate that forced people to take sides, and the course and tactics of the vicious fighting in Missouri mirrored those of the war as a whole.

As America gained new lands in the west , a new and more powerful nation was being born. With the acquisition of new land came the opportunity for more power, leading to great conflict in the government as it grew divided on what the identity of this new nation was going to be. President Thomas Jefferson officially began America’s westward expansion in 1803 by buying 828,000 square miles of land from the French in the Louisiana Purchase (Parrish 7). The purchase nearly doubled the size of the nation, eliminated a French presence in the western frontier, and gave America complete control of the Mississippi River. People in the southeastern region of

America took advantage of their opportunity and sailed up the river to settle the new territory. These

settlers then crossed onto the Missouri River and became the first of many Americans to inhabit the state that would become Missouri. Among the first settlers in Missouri, were many white southerners who found new farmland for their slaves to work. By 1810, there were nearly 20,000 people living in the Missouri territory, and by 1820, the population had tripled to about 66,000 (*1820 U.S. Census*). Soon the people of Missouri wanted their territory to become a state, which left the federal government in disagreement over the terms of its admittance for over a year.

The issue of slavery made Missouri's admittance difficult; the addition of Missouri threatened the mostly northern House of Representatives, who were worried another slave state would give the South more power. The two houses debated for months as plan after plan was rejected until they found compromise through the wisdom of the House's Speaker, Henry Clay. Clay proposed that the free state of Maine be admitted with Missouri into the Union. This proposal was passed, and became known as the Missouri Compromise. Although the Government was able to successfully negotiate, the problem of slavery was simply put aside to be solved for later. Thomas Jefferson was able to see that issue would have to be faced at some point as he wrote that the, "Missouri question aroused and filled me with alarm...I have been among the most sanguine in believing that our Union would be of long duration. I now doubt it much" (*Letter to William Short*, April 13, 1820). Jefferson was right that the addition of Missouri was only trouble, as it helped lead to a war over the same issue of slavery just 40 years later.

As more and more territories in the west were admitted as free states, in the 1850's

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southerners wanted to make Kansas a slave state so they could regain power in the Senate. To determine Kansas's status on slavery, Stephen Douglas determined the principle of popular sovereignty, leaving the decision up to the people of Kansas. Senator Charles Sumner gave a speech in Boston

mocking popular sovereignty and South Carolinian Senator, Andrew Butler, for supporting it (Reynolds 87). Two days later, Sumner traveled to the Nation's capital for a Senate meeting, where he was met by Butler's cousin, Representative Preston Brooks. Brooks immediately began beating Sumner with a cane nearly to the point of death. This act showed the government's failure to compromise over the issue of slavery anymore, and Sumner was seen as a hero throughout the North. Meanwhile in South Carolina, Brooks had been gifted with new canes and was heralded as a hero in the South as well (Reynolds 88). Popular sovereignty was implemented in Kansas, but it backfired as Kansas ended up becoming a free state due to its large antislavery presence. Another free state not only strengthened the power of the Republican party, but also strengthened the tension between the North and the South.

The South's last chance to level the political playing field was in the Election of 1860. The northern Republican party was mostly unified on their top candidate in Abraham Lincoln. However, the democratic party was divided, as their two top candidates, John C. Breckinridge and Stephen Douglas both received substantial votes throughout the South. With the split in the Democratic party, and the large amount of electoral votes from the north, Abraham Lincoln was able to win the election. With an almost entirely Republican government, focused on prohibiting the expansion of slavery, many Southern states felt that they had no option but to secede. By the summer of 1861, 11 states had succeeded, including Virginia whose location was so close to

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Washington D.C. that the nation was split in half.

By late July of 1861, the Civil War was well under way as Robert E. Lee's Confederate soldiers claimed an impressive victory over the Union Army at the First Battle of Bull Run. Confederate success continued throughout the start of the war due to a poorly opportunistic Union Army. By 1862,

it was clear that the American Civil War was not going to end anytime soon, and the Confederacy was hoping that a few more victories would help them gain alliance with European nations. The fighting was vicious and brutal, and in late September, 1862, the Union saw their first major victory at The Battle of Antietam which left a total of nearly 23,000 soldiers dead or wounded (Neely 34). The victory at Antietam hurt the Confederate's chances of gaining help from a foreign nation, and also led to Abraham Lincoln issuing the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863.

Many African-Americans helped the Union cause by working in Union camps and fighting. After the Emancipation Proclamation, slaves had a ticket to freedom if they could simply escape their owner. As the Union Army began invading southern states, many slaves found their way to Union Camps where they could find their freedom. Entire regiments of black soldiers emerged, like the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, who fought bravely. By the end of the war over 190,000 African-American soldiers fought in the Union Army, giving the North another huge advantage as they tried to close the war in 1864.

After losing the momentum in the war, Robert E. Lee led his army behind enemy lines in the Summer of 1863 where they met the Union Army at Gettysburg. After three days of fighting that left nearly 50,000 total casualties, the Lee retreated after losing almost one-third of his army

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(Neely 66). Most of the remaining Confederate army now had to retreat to Richmond to defend their capital, which allowed General William T. Sherman to lead a Union force of over 65,000 troops into Tennessee in the fall of 1864 (Neely 68). Sherman's objective was to march through the heart of the South and implement total war in each town they passed by destroying their enemies resources. The unstoppable Union force slaughtered cattle, salted farms, destroyed railroads, and left cities like Atlanta

and Charleston in ashes. Joseph Johnston lead the confederate opposition that left an army in the field until the end of the war, but was never able to resist Sherman's advance. Finally in April of 1865, the Confederacy accepted that their cause was hopeless and surrendered to the Union Army. Over 630,000 men were lost fighting in the Civil War, and an industrial and capitalistic economy displaced most of the agrarian economy.

Missouri was similar to rest of America in that it was home to people of completely different cultures, which is a key reason that the Civil War was fought. One culture was made of Missouri's first American settlers who were farmers. They brought their slaves and arrived by sailing up the Mississippi and Missouri rivers (Mutti-Burke 2). A particularly large concentration of these slave owners settled a region named "Little Dixie" that stretches from St. Louis to Kansas City along the Missouri river. However, starting after 1830, huge numbers of immigrants from eastern Europe and free-soilers from the Northeast began stepping off the train and settling in Missouri. St. Louis's easy accessibility turned it into an industrial hub in the west, while Kansas City was growing to become a city filled with Republican voters (Parrish 43). The Missouri River was incredibly valuable to immigrants and Republicans who could use it for industry and trade, while the slave owners needed it for the fertile land that surrounded it. The river was the only

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connection between the Union and the Confederacy in Missouri, and just like the border states in America, it would be where the battle for Missouri would be fought.

Most of the first settlements in Missouri were plantations along the Missouri River. In 1820, thirty-three percent of Lafayette County's population was made up of slaves, while Clay County was thirty percent slaves (Fuenfhausen). The short growing season and mild weather of the midwest made it

hard to grow cotton in Missouri, and so as cotton was being named king throughout Southeast America in 1830, Missouri was growing a cash crop of their own: hemp. Editor of the *Missouri Historical Review*, Robert M. Crisler, stated that in Missouri, “hemp was king!” (Crisler 59). More and more slave owners moved into the areas surrounding the Missouri river, almost tripling the state’s population from 1820 to 1830, and settling the region known as “Little Dixie” (Mutti-Burke 3). Even though Little Dixie was not producing much cotton like the deep south, hemp was also bringing in money and was keeping a high demand for slavery. Crisler explains that, “culturally, there can be but one opinion: Little Dixie is the very essence of the Old South,” (Crisler 54). The 25 counties that make up Little Dixie, gained more slaves as the Civil War came closer. The slave population in Howard, Platte, and Clay County’s slave population all grew by about 5% between 1830 and 1860 (Fuenfhausen). This trend was the same throughout many parts of the Southeast, like Georgia, and Alabama, who each saw their slave population grow by 7% between 1830 and 1860 (Fuenfhausen). As the Civil War drew nearer, the emergence of Little Dixie created a strong pro-confederate culture that stretched along the Missouri River from St. Louis to Kansas City.

Directly located where the Missouri and Mississippi rivers meet is the city of St. Louis,

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which became almost entirely pro-Union by the start of the Civil War. St. Louis had long been a city: in 1200, the Cahokia Indians inhabited the land that later became St. Louis and was one of the most populous cities in the world (Parrish 7). In the early 1800’s St. Louis was on the rise again as it became known as a gateway to the western frontier and attracted lots of trade and industry (Parrish 7). When Missouri was granted statehood in 1820, St. Louis already had about 5,000 residents within the six mile radius of the city’s limits (Parrish 8). Just like many Cities in the North in 1840, St. Louis had a hospital,

courthouse, a public school system, and a university (Parrish 32). In 1838, textile mills were flourishing in Massachusetts as they received cotton from the south. Meanwhile, St. Louis constructed Missouri's first factory along the Missouri River to process the tobacco that they received from Little Dixie (Parrish 35). As seen in an advertisement of an 1821 issue of *The Missouri Gazette*, there was work to be found in St. Louis as some merchants needed, "ONE HUNDRED MEN... to be employed for one, two, or three years," (Appendix B: *The Missouri Gazette*, 1821). The large job market in St. Louis attracted many immigrants and free-soilers. According to the 1860 U.S. Census, 23% of Missouri's inhabitants were born outside of America (Fuenfhausen). With a large presence of immigrants and Republicans, St. Louis developed a culture that would end up supporting the Union come wartime.

Although St. Louis was much like most northern cities in the 1850's, it had one major difference: there was a strong pro-slavery culture right outside the city in Little Dixie. According to the U.S. Census in 1860, St. Louis ranked eighth on a list of, "The Largest Urban Places," in America, and the city was almost entirely made up of German immigrants and Republicans (Appendix C: *Population of the 100 Largest Urban Places: 1860*). Directly beside this western

industrial capital, was the vast agricultural region of Little Dixie, which consisted of 23 counties with a slave population of at least fifteen percent in each (Fuenfhausen). America was mostly made up of these two cultures in the 1850's as well. The Republican party, focused on opening more job opportunities for white men, was dominant above the Mason-Dixon line. Meanwhile, the landowners in the South were making huge profits out of their crops, mostly because slavery allowed them to work their land at minimal expense. The two cultures relied and helped each other economically; the South grew the agriculture that the North needed for their industry and trade. The catch with Missouri was that the two

different cultures that relied on each other, were directly next to each other. As seen in the map of Missouri's slave population, St. Charles County had a slave population that made up 13.2% of the County's population in 1860, and bordering this part of Little Dixie, was St. Louis (Appendix A). By 1860, two completely different cultures had emerged in both Missouri and the rest of America.

The Republican party, which was dominant in St. Louis and throughout the North, was opposed to the expansion of slavery because it took away job opportunities for white men. The inhabitants of the South and the Little Dixie region relied on slavery so they could continue to gain a large profit out of their crops. Almost all modern historians argue that the American Civil War was caused due to the issue of slavery, and it was clear that slavery was the biggest issue in America and especially Missouri, as two prominent cultures desired completely different outcomes.

The North and the South had compromised over their separate desires since the day America gained independence. Eventually, the two sides could negotiate no longer, leading to a political stalemate throughout the nation. Angered by the way things were going, 11 Southern

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states formed the Confederacy and fought the Union Army, as everybody in the nation picked a side. Missouri's state legislature hit a political stalemate that left their government in pieces, and everyone in Missouri, from the Governor to the slaves, joined the fight.

The first signs of the stalemate are seen when state of Missouri was inducted into the Union because of a government compromise, beginning the first of many compromises to be made in Missouri. In St. Louis, 1836, a free mulatto man, Francis McIntosh, stabbed and killed a police officer who was wrongfully charging him with a crime that would have put him in jail for five years. Abraham Lincoln explained that McIntosh then, "was seized in the street, dragged to the suburbs of the city, chained to a

tree, and actually burned to death,” by a mob from St. Charles County (*Address at the Lyceum*, January 27, 1838). Abolitionists throughout the nation were enraged by this murder, as Elijah Lovejoy, and newspaper, *The Emancipator*, described the citizens of St. Charles County as acting with, “savage barbarity” as they set out to, “destroy, plunder and burn,” (Lovejoy, *The Emancipator*, issue 63, July 22, 1836). However, slave owners in Little Dixie were still angry that McIntosh had brutally murdered a police officer, and felt that justice was served. In the end, no charges or convictions were ever made for the crime, because it was clear that any decision on this case would just provoke more conflict (Harrold 96). The McIntosh case showed similar qualities of compromising that were going on throughout the rest of the nation.

Ten years later, in 1846, a Missouri slave, Dred Scott, sued for his freedom in court after his owner died while the two were in Illinois. No ruling for this case would be found until it was brought to the Supreme Court where the ruling was against Scott, stating that since he was not a

U.S. citizen, he could not sue in court (Harrold 131). Just like the rest of the nation, Missourians continued to put off issues of race as long as they could. The Missouri courts passed the *Dred Scott case* out of their hands to the Supreme Court, and they did not charge anyone for the crimes that took place involving Francis McIntosh. Missouri compromised just as much as the rest of the nation did, showing how their government's actions were a microcosm of the actions being made throughout the rest of the country.

Missouri's political stalemate began at the same time as the Nation's did; when southern states started joining South Carolina in seceding from the Union in the spring of 1861. After the bombardment of Fort Sumter, Lincoln issued a proclamation demanding, “the aggregate number of seventy-five

thousand, in order to suppress," the rebellion (*President Lincoln's 75,000 Volunteers*, April 15, 1861). Missouri's governor, Claiborne Jackson, had strong ties to the Confederacy and responded to Lincoln:

Sir: Your dispatch of the 15th instant, making a call on Missouri for four regiments of men for immediate service, as been received. There can be, I apprehend, no doubt that the men are intended to form a part of the President's army to make war upon the people of the seceded states. Your requisition, in my judgment, is illegal, unconstitutional, and revolutionary in its object, inhuman, and diabolical and cannot be complied with. Not one man will the State of Missouri furnish to carry on any unholy crusade (*Jackson's Letter to the President*, April 17, 1861).

Jackson's statement represents the outlook that most pro-slavery Missourians had on Lincoln's proclamation for soldiers. However, Jackson also spoke falsely on behalf of the many German immigrants and free staters that were also living in Missouri and were ready to enlist for the Union. With the great division that was displayed after The Bombardment of Fort Sumter, it is seen that the people of Missouri began preparing to fight each other just like the rest of the country was.

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Since Missouri had inhabitants fighting for both sides, the state fell into a massive political stalemate, much like the one that was present throughout the rest of the Nation. Jackson held a vote for secession in late April at a State Convention, but lost the vote 98 to 1 (Astor 27). However, the lopsided vote does not accurately display the many Missourians who were pro-Confederate, but did not want to succeed due to the many Union states that bordered them. Jackson's sole vote was like South Carolina when they were the first to secede: he made a bold move, and like Preston Brooks and the other states that later seceded, many missourians backed him up in his cause. Jackson, who was still the Governor of Missouri, led a militia made mostly of people from Little Dixie, and took a Union weapons arsenal in St. Louis on April 29, 1861 (Astor 28). Then, Jackson and his militia set up camp

with their newly seized weapons on the outskirts of St. Louis where they were met by Union Captain, Nathaniel Lyon, and his army that was made mostly of German immigrants (Astor 28). Jackson's militia was greatly outnumbered and was forced to retreat, ending the first of many battles to take place during the Civil War in Missouri. As the War progressed, the political stalemate in Missouri was ended the same way it was ended in Washington D.C.: martial law. In August of 1861, Union commander John C. Fremont declared martial law in the capital of Jefferson City, just as President Lincoln ended up doing in 1863 (Nichols 141). The political stalemate began the same way in both Missouri and the rest of America, and could only be ended in both cases through fighting and martial law.

The Civil War was brutal, and Missouri was no stranger to the vicious fighting as the war there took a very similar course to the war throughout the rest of America. The Civil War in America saw a large advantage in the number of soldiers for the Union, but early Confederate

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success. However, the Union army wore the confederate army down as the war progressed due to their superior resources and tactics of total war.

The amounts of soldiers and the backgrounds of soldiers that fought for the Union and Confederate Armies were very similar in Missouri and the rest of America. By the end of the War, the Union Army had enlisted about 2,100,000 soldiers, outnumbering the Confederate Army of about 1,006,000 nearly two to one (Harrold 12). This same ratio was seen in Missouri as the state sent nearly 110,000 soldiers to the Union Army, while close to 50,000 fought for the Confederate cause (Harrold 12). The Confederate Army in Missouri was made of mostly pro-slavery whites which was the common trait of almost all Confederate soldiers. The Union Army in Missouri was made of the same types of soldiers as well; there was a mixture of whites, immigrants, and African Americans (Fellman 88). Most

of the immigrants that fought in Missouri were of German descent, and fought with the same motive that immigrants throughout the country had: not wanting slavery to expand and take away job opportunities. Meanwhile, the many blacks involved in the War were fighting for their freedom after Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation was made in 1863, and it was official that the War was about slavery. About 179,000 African Americans fought for the Union army nationwide, and most African Americans in Missouri joined the fight too as 39% of all black men in Missouri had fought for the Union by 1865 (Mutti-Burke 8). The help of African-Americans greatly aided the Union Army, giving them another advantage to winning the war as the fighting progressed.

The tactics and the results of the fighting in Missouri mirrored those of the fighting throughout the entire nation. Similar to Robert E. Lee's early success at both the Battles of Bull

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Run and Chancellorsville, the Confederate leader in Missouri, Sterling Price, had great success at the start of the war (Nichols 46). However, as the focus of the war shifted to the issue of slavery, and the Union Army grew stronger, Price and his army were forced to retreat South into Arkansas when Union reinforcements arrived in Jefferson City (Nichols 48). But just like General Lee's attempt at an invasion in 1863, Price made a return with a stronger army in the fall of 1864. Union commander, John C. Fremont met Price and his army outside of Kansas City at the battle of Westport in the fall of 1864 (Nichols 96). Westport was similar to the battle of Gettysburg in that both the Union and Confederate Armies had almost identical casualties in both battles; 23,000 were lost for both sides at Gettysburg, while 1,500 were lost for both sides at Westport (Nichols 97). The only problem for the Confederacy was that their army was much smaller in both instances, leaving their Army fighting on their last leg after each battle. Price and the remainder of his army escaped Westport and began to head Southeast

through Little Dixie and into Arkansas. The smaller and more mobile Confederate force was being chased by Fremont who echoed the tactic of Total War that Sherman used while marching through Georgia. Fremont set Little Dixie on fire; he burned buildings, fields, and crops (Nichols 104). Price's army was still on the run when Johnston and Lee surrendered, where his army finally dropped their weapons and dispersed (104).

About 23% of South Carolina's male population died fighting in the Civil War, and just as many lives were lost, cultures were left behind as well. America became the urban and industrial nation that it was during the Gilded Age. For example, Kansas City had a population of no more than 5,000 in 1865, but by 1900, the Hannibal & St. Joseph Railroad helped turn it into the 22nd

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largest City in America (Parrish 165). St. Louis was prominent in the education movement in the late 1800's as the City was the first to offer Kindergarten in their public school system, and along with Milwaukee, St. Louis became the brewing capital of America (Parrish 166). The industrial and cultural changes that took place throughout America after the war also took place in Missouri, displaying the similarity between the two.

The Civil War in Missouri was a microcosm of the American Civil War. Missouri was made up of two different cultures: Northern and Southern. The people of Little Dixie supported the Confederacy, while the people of St. Louis helped out the Union in the war over slavery. These different cultures feuded in politics for decades until they could not make any more progress compromising with each other. As fighting in the Civil War happened throughout most of the border states, the fighting in Missouri also happened in the center of the state along the Missouri River. In the end, the Union prevailed over the Confederacy and the Nation became more urban and industrial. Everything and

everyone in America was affected by the Civil War, and the way a small state like Missouri embodied the major themes of the Civil War displays why the war helped shape and mold the nation into what it is today.

Word Count: 4,490