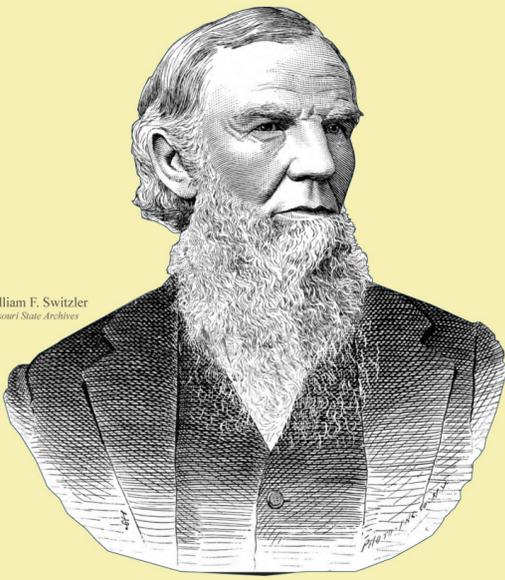


THE IRON CLAD OATH

LOYALTY AND THE RIGHT TO VOTE

The dramatic effect of the Iron Clad Oath can be seen in Missouri election results, like those shown below from Boone County, a Democratic stronghold. The results from August 1860 (left) show that about 2,600 voters went to the polls in the general election. Results from the general election on November 1868 show that only about 350 voters went to the polls. William Switzler, a Democrat from Boone County, had strongly opposed the oath as a member of the 1865 Constitutional Convention. He claimed that in 1866, "Radical Republican" election registrars used the oath to prevent all but 878 of the county's 5,000 eligible voters from registering to vote. "The registration engendered great bitterness of feeling," Switzler wrote in his 1882 *History of Boone County*, "sometime approaching the verge of personal violence."



William F. Switzler
Missouri State Archives

THE OATH OF LOYALTY PRESCRIBED BY THE CONSTITUTION, ADOPTED IN 1865.

I, William F. Switzler, of Boone County, Mo., do solemnly swear, that I am well acquainted with the terms of the third section of the second Article of the Constitution of the State of Missouri, adopted in the year eighteen hundred and sixty five, and have carefully considered the same; that I have never, directly or indirectly, done any of the acts in said section specified; that I have always been truly and loyally on the side of the United States against all enemies thereof, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the United States, and will support the Constitution and laws thereof, as the supreme law of the land, any law or ordinance of any State to the contrary notwithstanding; that I will to the best of my ability protect and defend the Union of the United States and not allow the same to be broken up and dissolved, or the Government thereof to be destroyed or overthrown, under any circumstances, if in my power to prevent it; that I will support the Constitution of the State of Missouri; and that I make this oath without any mental reservation or evasion, and hold it to be binding on me.



Witnessed and sworn to before me this 28th day of July 1865
Wm. W. Edwards - Aug. 13, 1865
Lawrence L. Smith

Missouri State Archives

The "Iron Clad Oath"

Article 2, Section 3 of the Constitution of 1865:

III. At any election held by the people under this constitution, or in pursuance of any law of this state, or under any ordinance or by-law of any municipal corporation, no person shall be deemed a qualified voter, who has ever been in armed hostility to the United States, or to the lawful authorities thereof, or to the government of this state, or has ever given aid, comfort, countenance, or support to persons engaged in any such hostility; or has ever, in any manner, adhered to the enemies, foreign or domestic, of the United States, either by contributing to them, or by unlawfully sending within their lines money, goods, letters or information; or has ever disloyally held communication with such enemies, or has ever advised, or aided any person to enter the service of such enemies; or has ever, by act or word, manifested his adherence to the cause of such enemies, or his desire for their triumph over the arms of the United States, or his sympathy with those engaged in exciting or carrying on rebellion against the United States; or has ever, except under overpowering compulsion, submitted to the authority or been in the service of the so-called "Confederate States of America;" or has ever left this state and gone within the lines of the armies of the so-called "Confederate States of America," with the purpose of adhering to said states or armies, or has ever been a member of, or connected with, any order, society, or organization inimical to the government of the United States, or to the government of this state; or has ever been engaged in guerilla warfare against loyal inhabitants of the United States, or in that description of marauding commonly known as "bushwhacking;" or has ever knowingly and willingly harbored, aided, or countenanced any person so engaged; or has ever come into, or has left this state for the purpose of avoiding enrollment for, or draft into, the military service of the United States; or has ever, with a view to avoid enrollment in the militia of this state, or to escape the performance of duty therein, or for any other purpose, enrolled himself, or authorized himself to be enrolled, by or before any officer as disloyal or as a Southern sympathizer, or in any other terms indicating his disaffection to the government of the United States in its contest with rebellion, or his sympathy with those engaged in such rebellion, or having ever voted at any election by the people in this state, or in any other of the United States, or in any of their territories, or held office in this state, or in any other of the United States, or in any of their territories, or under the United States, shall thereafter have sought or received, under claim of alienage, the protection of any foreign government, through any consul or other officer thereof, in order to secure exemption from military duty in the militia of this state, or in the army of the United States; nor shall any such person be capable of holding in this state any office of honor, trust or profit under its authority; or of being an officer, councilman, director, trustee or other manager of any corporation, public or private, now existing or hereafter established by its authority; or of acting as a professor or teacher in any educational institution, or in any common or other school; or of holding any real estate or other property in trust for the use of any church, religious society, or congregation. But the foregoing provisions in relation to acts done against the United States shall not apply to any person not a citizen thereof, who shall have committed such acts while in the service of some foreign country at war with the United States, and who has, since such acts, been naturalized, or may hereafter be naturalized under the laws of the United States; and the oath of loyalty hereinafter prescribed, when taken by any such person, shall be considered as taken in such sense.

Election returns, Boone County, Missouri, August 10, 1860 (left) and November 10, 1868 (right).
Missouri State Archives

Office	Party	Count
For Legislature		
John C. Reynolds	Dem.	1095
John C. Reynolds	Dem.	1095
For Secretary of State		
James W. Phelps	Dem.	1095
For Auditor of State		
James W. Phelps	Dem.	1095
For Register of Land		
James W. Phelps	Dem.	1095
For Representative to Congress		
John B. Henderson	Dem.	1095

Office	Party	Count
Public Administrator		
John C. Reynolds	Dem.	1095
Paul H. Weston	Dem.	1095
For Sheriff		
John C. Reynolds	Dem.	1095
For Justice of Peace		
John C. Reynolds	Dem.	1095
For School Director		
John C. Reynolds	Dem.	1095
For School Teacher		
John C. Reynolds	Dem.	1095
For School Superintendent		
John C. Reynolds	Dem.	1095
For School Board		
John C. Reynolds	Dem.	1095
For School Committee		
John C. Reynolds	Dem.	1095
For School Trustees		
John C. Reynolds	Dem.	1095
For School Officers		
John C. Reynolds	Dem.	1095
For School Agents		
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