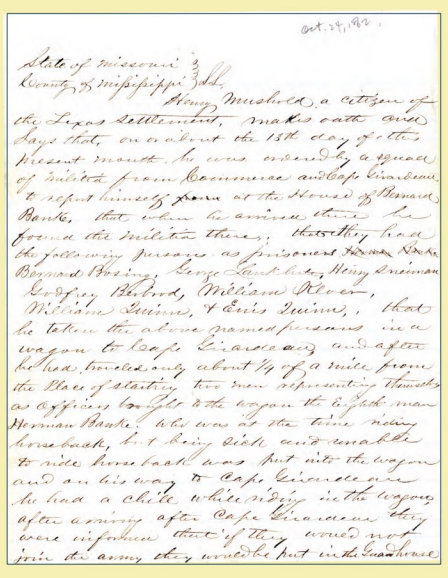
DIVIDED LOYALTIES
CIVIL WAR DOCUMENTS FROM THE MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES

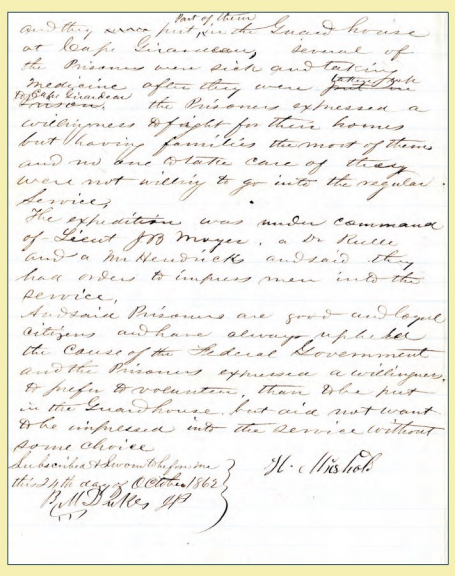
CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE

FORCED CONSCRIPTION

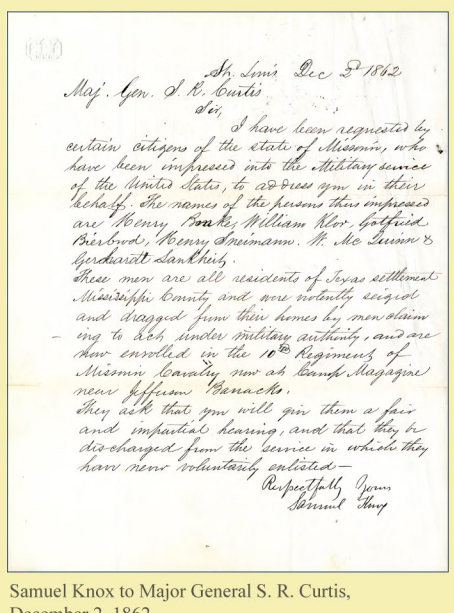
The Civil War turned the life of nearly every Missouri citizen upside down. Even those who did not wear a military uniform were forced to choose sides in the conflict. The documents below show that the choices people made could drastically affect their lives. Men in southeast Missouri were forced into the military service. Those who refused were imprisoned. In Jefferson City, a woman was turned out of her home because she supported the Union.



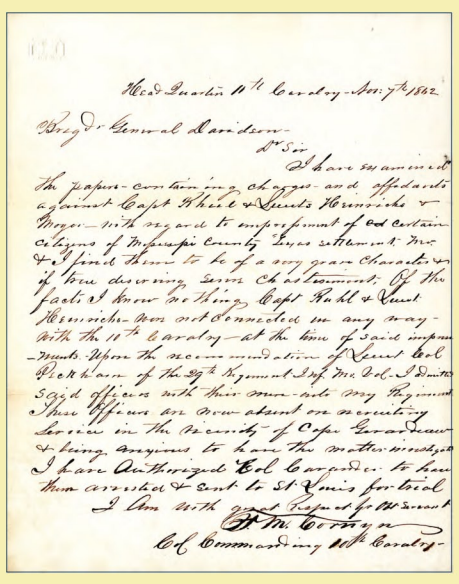
Affidavit of Henry Mushold, October 24, 1862.
Missouri State Archives



". . . After arriving in Cape Girardeau they were informed that if they would not join the army they would be put in the Guard house. . . [They] expressed a willingness to fight for their homes, but having families . . . and no one to take care of [them] they were not willing to go into the regular service."



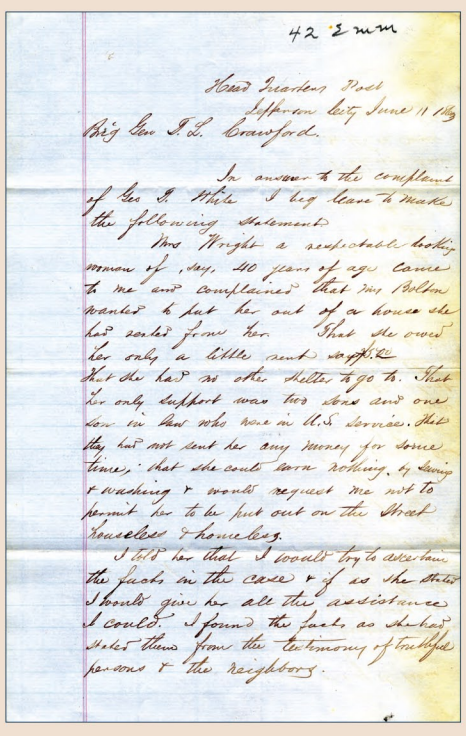
Samuel Knox to Major General S. R. Curtis, December 2, 1862.
Missouri State Archives

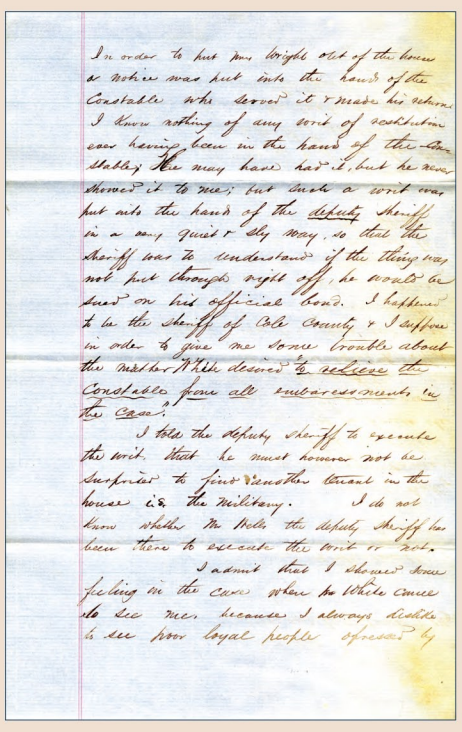


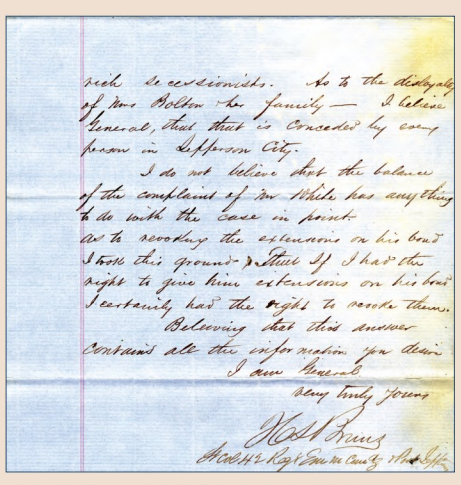
Colonel F. M. Cornyn to Brigadier General John Wynn Davidson, April 7, 1862.
Missouri State Archives

"These men were all residents of Texas Settlement, Mississippi County and were violently seized and dragged from their homes by men claiming to act under military authority, and are now enrolled in the 10th Regiment of Missouri Cavalry now at Camp Magazine near Jefferson Barracks."

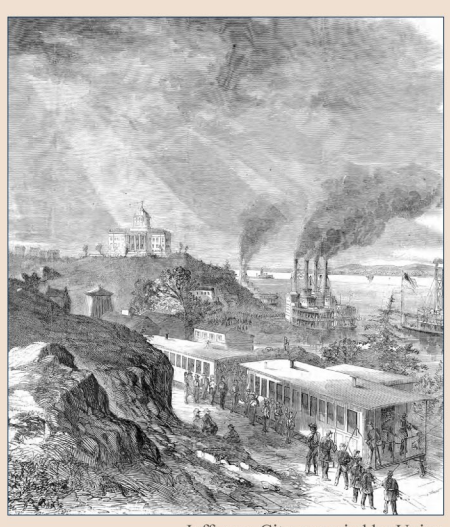
DISCRIMINATION







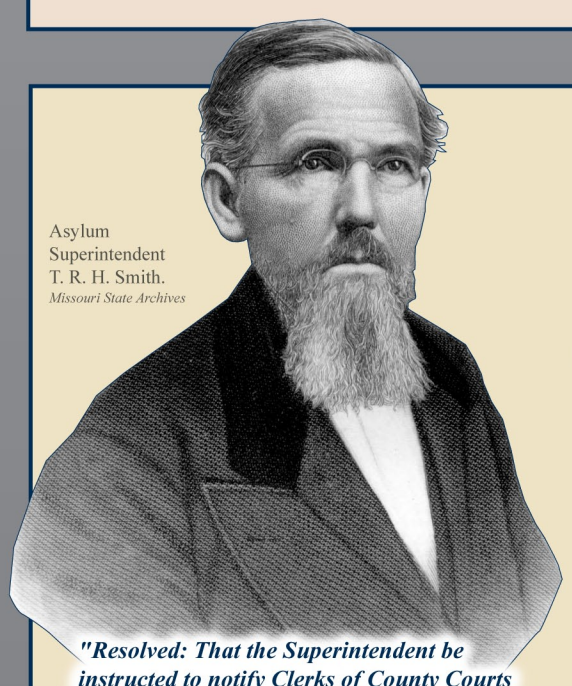
Lieutenant Colonel H. S. Bruns to Brigadier General T. H. Crawford, June 11, 1863.
Missouri State Archives



Jefferson City occupied by Union troops in October 1861.
Missouri State Archives

"Mrs. Wright, a respectable looking woman of, say, 40 years of age came to me and complained that Mrs. Bolton wanted to put her out of a house she had rented from her [in Jefferson City] . . . . That her only support was two sons and one son-in-law who were in the U. S. service. That they had not sent her any money for some time, that she could earn nothing by sewing and washing . . . I always dislike to see poor loyal people oppressed by rich secessionists."

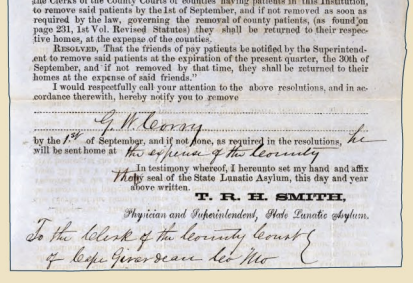
DISRUPTED GOVERNMENT



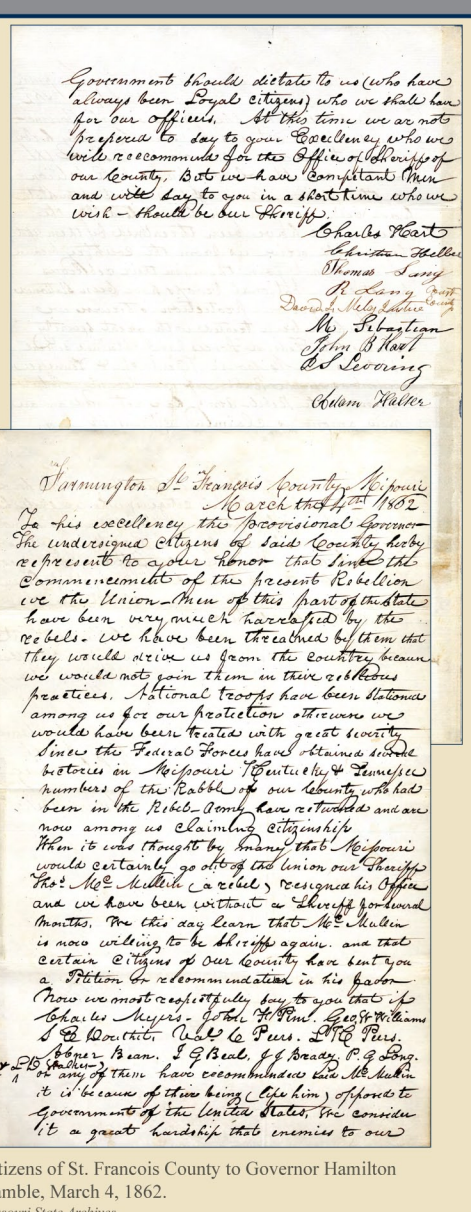
Asylum Superintendent T. R. H. Smith.
Missouri State Archives

"Resolved: That the Superintendent be instructed to notify Clerks of County Courts of counties having patients in this Institution, to remove said patients by 1st September, and if not removed . . . they shall be returned to their respective homes, at the expense of said counties."

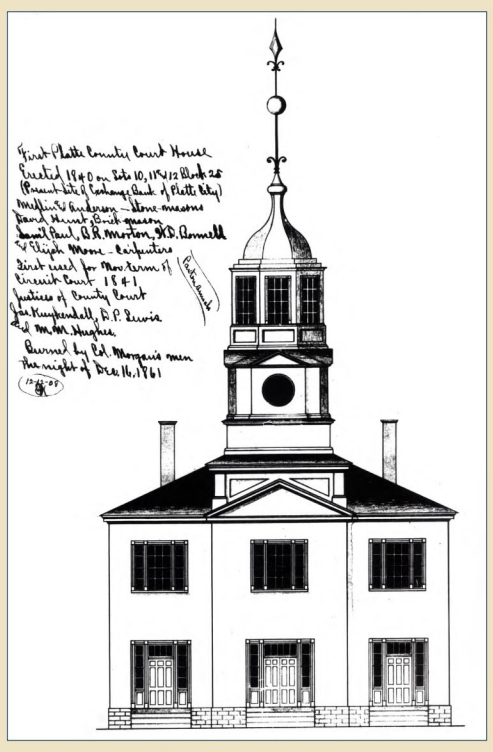
Meanwhile, state, county and local government services were often disrupted. For instance, Union troops led by Colonel W. James Morgan burned the Platte County Courthouse and other buildings in Platte City on December 16, 1861. In Saline County, circuit court terms were suspended and clerks removed the records and hid them for safe keeping. Confederate supporters burned the courthouse in Marshall, Missouri in 1864. Similar problems led to the temporary closing of the state mental hospital, then called the "Lunatic Asylum."



Asylum Superintendent T. R. H. Smith to the Court of Cape Girardeau County, August 24, 1861.
Missouri State Archives



Citizens of St. Francois County to Governor Hamilton Gamble, March 4, 1862.
Missouri State Archives



Platte County Courthouse, Platte City, Missouri.
Missouri State Archives

"We consider it a great hardship that enemies to our Government should dictate to us (who have always been Loyal citizens) who we shall have for our [government] officers."

"On Thursday night of last week a body of armed men visited the Lunatic Asylum, located at this place, and took by force a large lot of blankets and clothing belonging to the Asylum. This institution was again visited by about fifty armed men on Monday night, who took the remainder of the blankets, comforts, clothing, &c.

They compelled Mr. Swon, the Steward, and Dr. Smith, the Superintendent, to remain in their rooms - a guard being placed at the door - until they had taken what property they desired."

Missouri Telegraph, October 4, 1861

Missouri State Lunatic Asylum, Fulton, Missouri
Missouri State Archives

1861 - 1865