DIGITIZING CIVIL WAR DOCUMENTS

For more than a decade, the Missouri State Archives has been creating digital images of civil warera documents in its collection. The process of digitizing manuscripts is labor-intensive, value-added work that ensures these resources are more readily accessible to the public.

By placing digital images on the Missouri Digital Heritage website, the archives is making these important resources available to any researcher in the region and beyond. The digitization process has also created scans of documents that can be used in presentations, programs, and exhibits.

PRESERVING CIVIL WAR ERA COURT CASES

The Missouri State Archives was awarded a $330,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to assist in the Court Case Preservation project. This is a special designation for efforts that significantly advance the teaching, study, and understanding of American history and culture.

The more than 270,000 St. Louis circuit court records from the Civil War era are among those being digitized. These digitized records are available to researchers and public for the purposes of teaching, research, and library collections.

LOCAL RECORDS PROGRAM

The Missouri State Archives’ Local Records Program helps local government agencies evaluate and preserve documents in their collection. This program works closely with local officials to see through call files and identify other records that need to be restored, which will then be preserved and which should be discarded.

Occasionally, local records archived contain long-lost genealogical gems like the Civil War era record of Palmyra mentioned below. The digitized scan was stored at the State Archives’ conservation lab in Jefferson City. It depicts the town of Palmyra, from which 150 soldiers enrolled in Civil War Union units on October 10, 1862, took place at the skirmish line shown in the top right of the map.

Map of Palmyra, Missouri, 1860