

# the Confluence®





# the Confluence

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## COVER IMAGE

The intersection of 16th Street and Lucas Street in 1914, the site of the Lucas Place subdivision and Missouri Park. By the time William G. Swekosky (1894–1963) took this photo, Lucas Street had been renamed Locust Street, and Lucas Place had largely become a business district. For more on Lucas Place, see "Nature Much Improved: The Curation of a Nineteenth-Century Green Space." (*Image: Missouri Historical Society*)

## CONTENTS



*In this issue:*

2

**Nature Much Improved:  
The Curation of a  
Nineteenth-Century  
Neighborhood  
and Greenspace**

by SHANNAN C. MASON

Shannan Mason uses the Lucas Place neighborhood as a case study to understand the early movement of wealthier St. Louisans to the outskirts of the city and their role in rejecting crowded urban sensibilities for expanded greenspace. This article won the Morrow Prize for the Best Student Paper on a Missouri Topic from the Missouri Conference on History in 2020.

15

**Krekel & Kribben—  
Diverging Views on  
the Future of Slavery**

by STEVE EHLMANN

Steve Ehlmann explores the evolving views of two German politicians on slavery as the Civil War approached.

38

**Joseph Robidoux III,  
the 1780 Battle of  
St. Louis, & the St. Louis  
Robidoux Legacy**

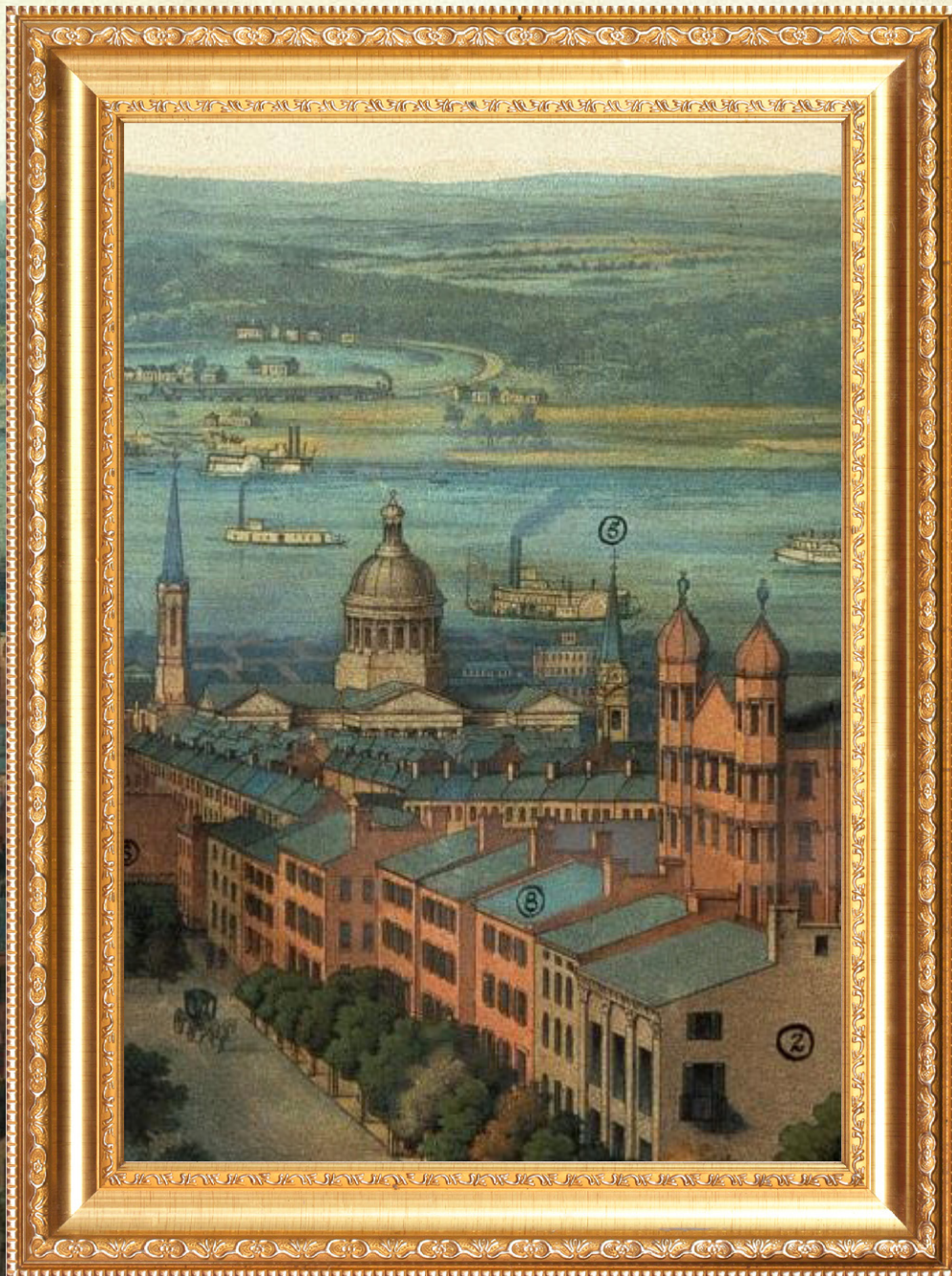
by STEPHEN L. KLING, JR.

The Robidoux family has been part of the history of Missouri on both sides of the state dating to the Revolutionary War period. Stephen Kling places Robidoux's role into historical perspective.

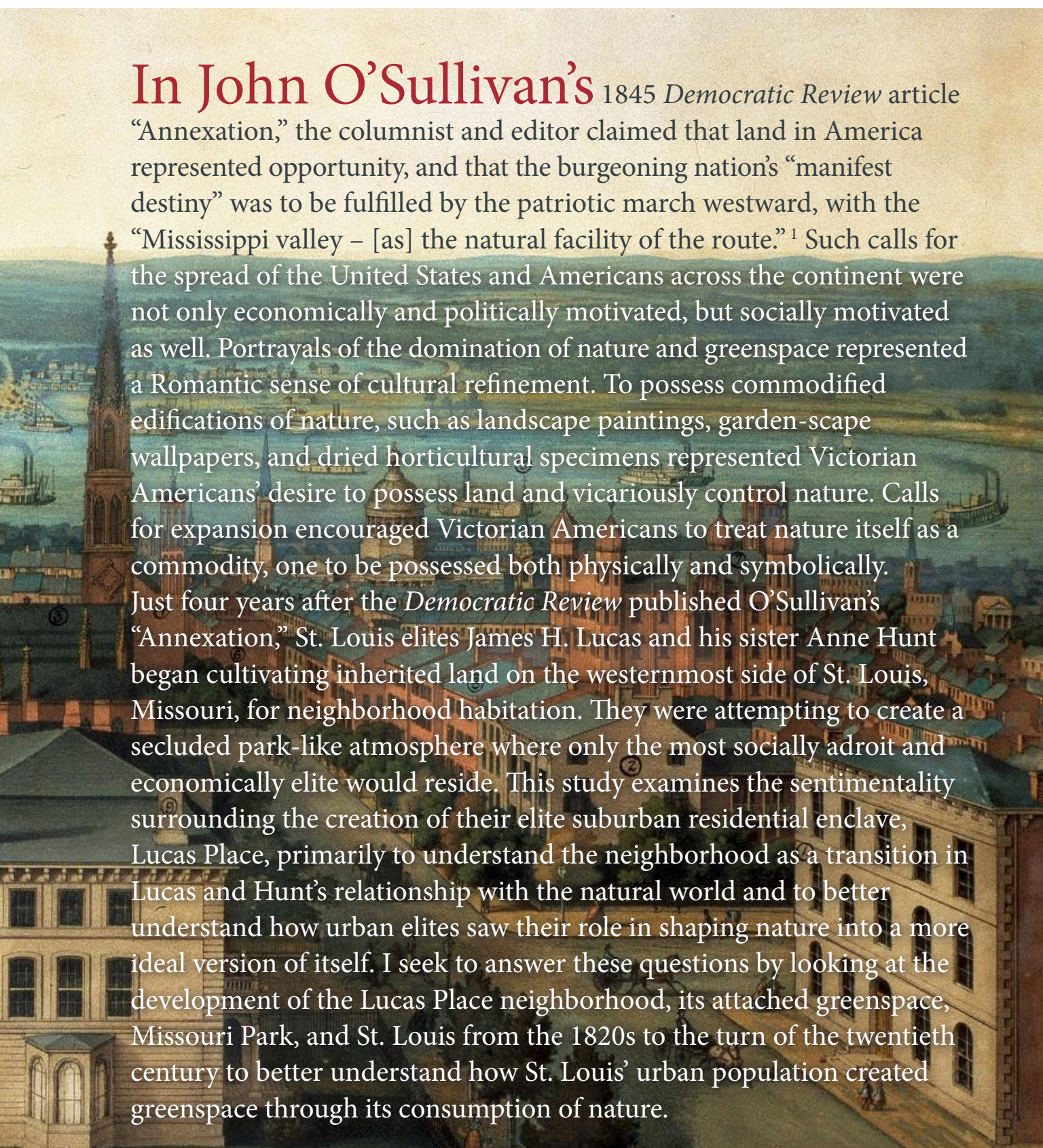


# *Nature Much Improved:* The Curation of a Nineteenth-Century Neighborhood and Greenspace

by SHANNAN C. MASON



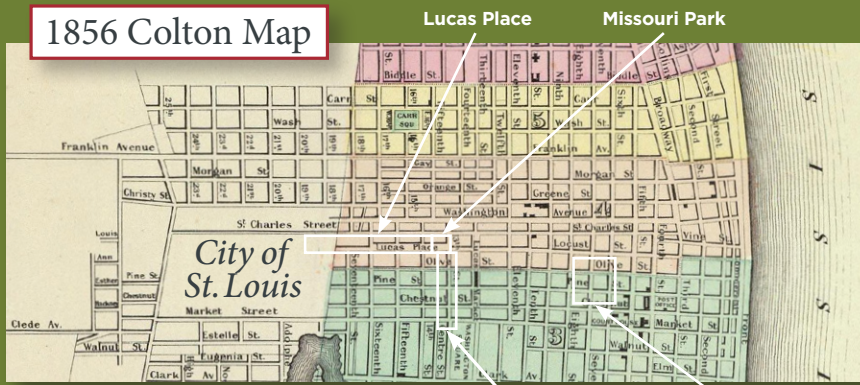




**In John O’Sullivan’s** 1845 *Democratic Review* article “Annexation,” the columnist and editor claimed that land in America represented opportunity, and that the burgeoning nation’s “manifest destiny” was to be fulfilled by the patriotic march westward, with the “Mississippi valley – [as] the natural facility of the route.”<sup>1</sup> Such calls for the spread of the United States and Americans across the continent were not only economically and politically motivated, but socially motivated as well. Portrayals of the domination of nature and greenspace represented a Romantic sense of cultural refinement. To possess commodified edifications of nature, such as landscape paintings, garden-scape wallpapers, and dried horticultural specimens represented Victorian Americans’ desire to possess land and vicariously control nature. Calls for expansion encouraged Victorian Americans to treat nature itself as a commodity, one to be possessed both physically and symbolically. Just four years after the *Democratic Review* published O’Sullivan’s “Annexation,” St. Louis elites James H. Lucas and his sister Anne Hunt began cultivating inherited land on the westernmost side of St. Louis, Missouri, for neighborhood habitation. They were attempting to create a secluded park-like atmosphere where only the most socially adroit and economically elite would reside. This study examines the sentimentality surrounding the creation of their elite suburban residential enclave, Lucas Place, primarily to understand the neighborhood as a transition in Lucas and Hunt’s relationship with the natural world and to better understand how urban elites saw their role in shaping nature into a more ideal version of itself. I seek to answer these questions by looking at the development of the Lucas Place neighborhood, its attached greenspace, Missouri Park, and St. Louis from the 1820s to the turn of the twentieth century to better understand how St. Louis’ urban population created greenspace through its consumption of nature.



### 1856 Colton Map



This map is a section from the 1856 Colton Map, copied from the David Ramsey Map Collection Online. All additional information was added by Shannan Mason. Summit Square, Lucas Market, Lucas Place and, Missouri Park, all outlined in white were built in that order, starting in 1828 and continuing well into the 1870s. (Image: David Ramsey Historical Map Collection, Stanford University)

No wards past Seventeenth Street  
- but signs of future development

Lucas Market

1828-Summit Square

Portrait of James H. Lucas in 1878 by John Reid. (Image: Missouri Historical Society)



View of St. Louis from Lucas Place, labeled as 1854. This is a cropped version of the image, eliminating an informational border along the bottom of the image that contained incorrect labeling. (Image: Missouri Historical Society)



*Lucas Place was a new type of residential community,*  
developed predominantly by the newly wealthy,  
where old modes of high fashion and tastes blended  
with innovative midwestern styles.

pg. 5

In the early nineteenth century, St. Louis, was in transition, rapidly shifting from a French frontier settlement to a rising mercantile metropolis. By the 1850s the city had quickly prospered and expanded; however, it was increasingly confronted with the problems that accompany urban development, such as disease and overcrowding. These conditions provided the animus for residents to move further westward onto undeveloped lands, expanding the city limits through the creation of new residential areas such as Lucas Place, located between the city blocks of fifteenth and twentieth streets on the westernmost edge of St. Louis.

Lucas Place was a new type of residential community, developed predominantly by the newly wealthy, where old modes of high fashion and tastes blended with innovative midwestern styles. St. Louisans in the mid-nineteenth century abandoned the traditional row house in favor of a more experimental single-family detached style of city home, which favored the creation of front yards and side lots.<sup>2</sup> In Lucas Place, “there emerged a preference for detached homes surrounded by landscaped grounds.” “Spaciousness would become a guiding principle” in the American West, because land was not as limited as it was along the coast and in Europe.<sup>3</sup>

Out of desires to create a “self-contained world,” in 1828, Anne Hunt (1796–1879) had developed a residential neighborhood referred to as “Summit Square” between Fifth

and Sixth streets and Olive and Pine.<sup>4</sup> Because of the city’s swift growth, however, Hunt’s development at Summit was absorbed by intense urban expansion and commercialization, largely due to a lack of zoning restrictions. Its residents soon moved elsewhere.<sup>5</sup> Nearly two decades later the Lucas family developed another set of parcels in the former site of a well-known meadow surrounded by “natural growth” known as “Lucas Grove.”<sup>6</sup> The grove was destroyed, reshaped, and renamed “Lucas Market,” which featured attractive permanent buildings. The natural space of the Meadow surrounded by trees was transformed and valued for its commodification, or economic potential. As a grove, the land only represented the potentiality of speculative wealth, but while in operation, the market was widely lauded as “one of the finest” markets in the city, “a handsome edifice, built of most durable materials in every part. . . . Everything about it . . . betokens the most liberal spirit, and desire to secure permanent prosperity to that section of the city,” due to its attractive exterior and spaciousness.<sup>7</sup>

In 1849, with the success of Lucas Market, James Lucas and Anne Hunt decided to develop another plot of land, a neighborhood called “Lucas Place.” Unlike Summit Square, it would remain viable and desirable for the long term, hence the creation of a series of thirty-year deed restrictions on the land.<sup>8</sup> The proposed site for the neighborhood straddled both city and hinterland as it resided on the outskirts of town, and its

westernmost edge would have been considered distant, despite the neighborhood’s easternmost edge being just a block away from the city limits, but a mile from the riverfront. To further create a private and exclusive atmosphere, the deed restrictions were designed to make the neighborhood into a separate residential “place.” With the structure of the deed restrictions, greenspace, and mandatory housing setbacks from the road, the development would be a healthful alternative to the sickly and disease-ridden downtown area, especially after a particularly deadly Cholera epidemic in 1849.



**Anne Lucas Hunt. This is the same image used to carve her likeness on her gravesite in the city's Calvary Cemetery.**  
(Image: Missouri Historical Society)

The land proposed for Lucas Place was forested; it was untamed, wild, and unlivable. However, by “improving” the rough “idle waste” and creating private places such as Lucas Place, people could be a part of nature, but in a strictly



controlled environment. This sense of control and community-led regulation makes the re-modeling of the untamed into a more ideal form of nature a consumptive practice, as the destruction of nature was then followed by the sale and construction of residential buildings, designed by and for the wealthy. Such distinction was reinforced by Hunt and Lucas' choice of name for the residential enclave; by using the moniker "Place," they were likely intentionally attempting to sell it as a place outside of the danger, decay, and disorganization of the city. The later 1854 addition of a park at the easternmost edge of the neighborhood physically solidified its separation from the thoroughfare of the city.<sup>9</sup> Yet the park was not the only actions Hunt and Lucas took to give the impression of a private landscape for residents. One of the neighborhood's unique features was the requirement that owners create a 25-foot easement. This setback was unique, because it is the first recorded instance of such a restriction in St. Louis. The easement had two effects: it created a front yard for residents to have grass or small gardens, while simultaneously causing the street to have the broader, more majestic appearance of a boulevard rather than a thoroughfare. In 1850 a *Missouri Republican* editorial justified the setback's establishment, even before the development's first house had been completed in 1851. Claiming it would make the surrounding area a more "attractive" and "healthful" portion of the city, the editorial stated:

Over this twenty-five feet, the owners have entire control as to the manner in which it may be adorned, but they cannot build upon it. . . . The space at present set apart for this purpose embraces about eighty lots, and if these should be improved in the manner proposed, it will make it one of the most healthy and beautiful parts of the city. As yet it is unimproved and the opportunity is thus afforded of erecting dwelling houses of such a character and in such style, as will distinguish it from all other parts of the city. A magnificent street, wide sidewalks and beautiful groves of trees, will ensure the circulation of fresh air, while it may reasonably be supposed that the houses to be erected will combine architectural beauty and every comfort which wealth can command. We hope the project will find general favor with the public . . . it must become the most attractive part of the city.<sup>10</sup>

The *Missouri Republican* was projecting the imagery and benefits of a park-like boulevard, where construction has a healthful benefit to the city due to its much-needed addition of fresh air and sidewalks aplenty to enjoy it. However, it was not the idea of the outdoors itself that was lauded for its "fresh air," but instead healthfulness created by a specifically curated space. Only a particular type of natural space was restorative and healthy — the natural that had been improved by men.

Because of St. Louis' French roots, Lucas may also have been envisioning the open pastoral French village style as a model while planning Lucas Place,

harkening back to the idea of a pastoral or gardenesque landscape. The Sarah Collier residence at 1603 Lucas, built in 1858, is an example of this French style, with its free-standing home surrounded by a garden-like environment.<sup>11</sup> The Collier residence included a new fledgling garden, complete with trees and a manicured lawn. Such depictions of saplings at the site of Lucas Place are ironic — they represent the destruction and reshaping of land that was previously known as Lucas Woods.<sup>12</sup> All signs of older growth, however, were removed and destroyed prior to construction in favor of a curated version of a carefully manicured ideal vision of nature. Trees were desirable, but only in specifically selected locations, appropriately distanced from each other and likely specifically selected based on their uniform rate of growth and appearance. In this way, the natural world was not necessarily desirable, but individual elements of it such as trees, flowers, and shrubbery — once properly selected and controlled by man — were desirable.

Similarly curated versions of the community were depicted in the newspapers, advertisements, and print media such as the wood engraving of Lucas Place entitled *View on Lucas Place*. Dated 1860, it offers us more than just a "view"; it is an example of the picturesque model of an idyllic version of Lucas Place. The choice to have a carefully manicured and picturesque lawn was not only an aesthetic one, but a moral sentiment as well.<sup>13</sup> Americans perceived the disorderly wilderness as a danger, indicative





.....  
*The Sarah Collier residence at 1603 Lucas, built in 1858, is an example of the French style, with its free-standing home surrounded by a garden-like environment.*

**Sarah A. Collier Residence in 1868, at 1603 Lucas Place, On the northwest corner of Lucas Place and Sixteenth Street.**  
*(Image: Missouri Historical Society)*







Wood cut engraving *View on Lucas Place* of the northwest corner of Lucas Place, dated 1860. Note the representation of Sarah Collier's residence (the first house on the left) in direct contrast to the wild and unmanaged lot across the street. (Image: Missouri Historical Society)



Lucas Place, 1875, from Richard J. Compton and Camille N. Drye, *Pictorial St. Louis, the Great Metropolis of the Mississippi Valley; a Topographical Survey Drawn in Perspective A.D. 1875*. View looking Northwest. In the bottom right corner of the image is Missouri Park. It is clear that by 1875, Lucas place was surrounded on all sides. (Image: Campbell House Museum)



*Lucas Street and Missouri Park at its easternmost point*  
 were lined generously with trees, creating a unique impression  
 of the houses being in the country or situated inside of a  
 park or villa rather than the city...

pg. 9

of darkness, decay, and chaos, while cleaner, more orderly spaces were recognized as Godly and pure.<sup>14</sup> Such conceptions are on display in the photograph of the Collier residence as well. The neat, orderly lines of Sarah Collier's manicured lawn, representing good and Godliness, are sharply contrasted against the disorder and darkness of the weeds and shrubbery directly opposite it, especially during a time when the existence of yards in the front or side yards between urban homes was fairly rare.<sup>15</sup>

Lucas Street and Missouri Park at its easternmost point were lined generously with trees, creating a unique impression of the houses being in the country or situated inside of a park or villa rather than the city, especially when one looked from the east across Missouri Park towards the neighborhood. To create the park as a utilitarian greenspace and buffer against through traffic, the city spent \$1,357 to grade and fill the land in 1858.<sup>16</sup> After this construction, commonly referred to as "heavycutting," was conducted, the earth was then relocated to the riverfront wharf for removal.<sup>17</sup> To assemble a substantial amount of land to create the park on the easternmost end of Lucas Place alongside Lucas Market, Lucas and Hunt additionally purchased several buildings and land along the eastern edge of the "place." By 1854, the duo had donated the land to the city for use as a park in perpetuity.<sup>18</sup>

In 1870 James Lucas and other Lucas Place residents wrote a letter to the Board of Parks Commissioners, congratulating it on the job well done on a

series of improvements to Missouri Park. Their work showcased the continual investment of the city and the desires of the area's residents to maintain the greenspace as a showpiece. Lucas also used the opportunity to remind the Board of Parks Commissioners of the city's promise to permanently maintain and improve the land that he and his sister had privately developed (and generously donated).<sup>19</sup> The letter then personally congratulates the superintendent for his supervision of the installation of a public fountain inside of the park.<sup>20</sup> Such interactions illustrate the concern and connection residents of Lucas Place felt with the greenspace of Missouri Park. These connections simultaneously encouraged development while gently reminding the city of its responsibility to continually maintain the public space as a healthful and desirable location for the neighborhood.

In 1877, maintenance and careful attention to the greenspace was still apparent. Regular inventories were taken of the trees and shrubs that lined the park, creating the impression of a vast, verdant landscape. This effect was especially apparent along the boulevard-like atmosphere looking westward down Lucas Place. Until 1870, Missouri Park had been the only city park with gas lighting. It operated with an annual budget of about \$1,000.<sup>21</sup> Many St. Louisans remembered its carefully crafted beauty. For example, St. Louis resident Isaac Lionberger (1854–1948) claimed, "We who have lived a little while, recall the quiet charm of Lucas Place: the pleasant park upon the

east, the rows of stately trees and stately houses, the aristocratic tide which streamed from its doors, the smart carriages, and the constant hospitality of its gracious inhabitants."<sup>22</sup> Lionberger's statement illustrates Lucas Place's unique composition of rows of trees, stately homes, and the park to the east—all markers to outsiders of how well J.H. Lucas and his Lucas Place residents had created a park-like atmosphere.

The curation of the land and its transition from "idle waste," as it had been previously referred to by the *Missouri Democrat*, to an accessible and productive land was evident by 1854.<sup>23</sup> The *Missouri Republican's* editors even instructed other city residents to conduct a voyeuristic homage to the site of development and examine the location, stating that "in its natural state, it is most beautiful, and when improved . . . a more pleasant neighborhood will not be found in the country. Valuable improvements are already going up on some of the lots, and others have been enclosed, and in a little while it will present an enchanting appearance."<sup>24</sup> Both the editorial's tone and the language used to describe the land prior to its development and in the anticipation of development are striking. The land in its "natural state, it is most beautiful," an appreciation solely for its beauty to be sure, but this statement is placed after it has been commodified as a "for sale" listing. The second point of interest here is the authors' reliance and appreciations of "improvements" to the "lots." Here we can see that despite the natural beauty of the land, it becomes "enchanting" and "improved" only when the land is



essentially owned and subsequently shaped or transformed by man. As a wilderness, it yields little utility, but as a commodity to be “sold and improved,” it increases in attractiveness because it increases in commercial and social value. The editorial also lends to the idea of an exclusionary aspect of the development. Outsiders are instructed to go to the site to imagine its potential and their potential inclusion, or others’ exclusion, from the residential enclave. Even before it is fully developed, its potentiality for the cultural and social capital that could be gained through its construction is understood and celebrated. Nature itself garners no respectability for residents; man’s command over nature is what makes it desirable and exclusive.

Even as late as 1880, descriptions of Lucas Place and Missouri Park focused on the greenery and the careful maintenance of the social and physical curation of the space, such as the following October 1880 “sketch” of “Lucas Street” from the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. It says the development is

one of those places which a certain class of reporters delight, once a year, to speak of as “the lungs of the city,” one of the city’s “breathing places,” etc. . . . Missouri Park abounds in shrubbery. . . . At Fourteenth Street begins one of the beauty spots of St. Louis, commonly known as Lucas Place. . . . All the houses are large and handsome, and the shade trees the best the city can show. The street is paved with large blocks of limestone, and is, consequently, very clean. It is an intensely quiet spot, and if children live there they are kept within doors and are never allowed to make mud pies in the gutter.<sup>25</sup>

Lucas Place and its adjoining park were a gem to its residents and the city, but in the same year the city had made several attempts to cut a thoroughfare through Missouri Park, much to the dismay of residents and the press. Directly petitioning the city through the *Globe Democrat*, the proposed alteration was described as an “impairment,” and residents lamented the inevitable devaluation of the surrounding land as a result, writing: “The first remonstrance against the extension of either Lucas Place or Locust Street through Missouri Park was received by the Street Commissioner yesterday. The objections raised to the extension are that it would greatly impair the value of Lucas Place, and that it is the belief of the petitioners that the city cannot open either of the streets named without forfeiting their right to the property used as the park. . . .”<sup>26</sup> Later attempts at cutting a street through Missouri Park were similarly referred to as “vandalism” to be “resisted vigorously,” as it would represent the “disfigurement of the only breathing spot near the crowded and smoky section of the city.”<sup>27</sup> Despite such appeals in April of 1880, a month later the city commissioner determined the park and its “fountains” and walking paths were an obstruction to city traffic and ordered them to be removed for the betterment of the city itself.<sup>28</sup> Concerns had shifted as the space no longer represented the refinement gained through the curation of the natural space. Rather, that conception had given way to a larger, more powerful narrative of industrial urban growth and development.

Industrial development and time were not kind to the Lucas Place neighborhood. Residents,

recognizing the impetus to change, decided to move. Unable to sell their stately mansions to individual homeowners, they unanimously voted to remove the deed restrictions put in place to protect the neighborhood from outside influence. As early as 1883, some St. Louis residents in a *St. Louis Post Dispatch* editorial aptly titled “Westward” were already considering the neighborhood for its potential utility as a “business street.”<sup>29</sup> Prominent St. Louisans seeking the same sort of verdant environment Lucas Place represented in its earlier years moved westward along the outskirts to areas such as Forest Park and the Vandeventer Neighborhood. Because of the demands of urban sprawl, a de-emphasis on nature and greenspace downtown occurred in tandem with an increased interest in the land’s productive economic utility rather than its social or cultural utility. In 1903 the city finally followed through with its proposals to connect Lucas Street with Locust by paving over the middle portion of Missouri Park.<sup>30</sup> And after the completion of the St. Louis World’s Fair in 1904, the city constructed a Carnegie Library over half of Missouri Park.<sup>31</sup> The stately houses that lined its streets were then torn down one by one, replaced with boarding houses and further business development until only one house remained. It still stands today as the Campbell House Museum.

Lucas Place neighborhood represents a unique opportunity to explore westward expansion in the “Gateway to the West” and the beginnings of suburbanization in St. Louis. It also offers a unique opportunity to examine the development and heritage of not only a neighborhood but also nineteenth-century conceptions



Taken by William G. Swekosky (1894–1963) in 1914, this image looks east on the intersection of 16th Street and Lucas Street (which had been renamed by that point to Locust Street). The neighborhood had dramatically changed by the turn of the century into an urban business neighborhood. (Image: Missouri Historical Society)



*Prominent St. Louisans* seeking the same sort of verdant environment Lucas Place represented in its earlier years moved westward along the outskirts to areas such as Forest Park and the Vandeventer Neighborhood.

of nature and its role in society — in the city, in the region, and nationally. As St. Louis began to grow and prosper economically, the city's inhabitants constantly re-negotiated their relationship with nature and its role in garnering respectability. As the city continued to thrive, businesses and industry were pushed further westward, transforming land yet again from residential curated versions of nature to what the contemporary individual would recognize as a downtown urban industrialized metropolis. In

their quest for social and cultural capital, prominent St. Louisans simultaneously adopted and rejected the natural world. Seeking social respectability, St. Louisans sought to create a curated version of the idealized form of the natural world in ways that enhanced the its residents' social status and health. The movement westward from the crowded, dirty downtown area not only represented a trend to escape the unhealthy effects of the riverfront, but also larger national trends towards land acquisition exemplified in John

O'Sullivan's calls for Manifest Destiny through westward expansion.<sup>32</sup> Yet such movements did not occur in a vacuum; the land was cut, cultivated, and curated, essentially to be harvested not for its nutritional bounty but instead for the potentiality for the social and cultural capital that its "improvements" represented in the nineteenth century. Ultimately, St. Louisans created and cultivated an "improved" greenspace through their consumption and destruction of the uncultivated natural world.



## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> John L. O'Sullivan, "Annexation," *Democratic Review* (July-August 1845), 5-11.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Allen Rosen, "St. Louis, Missouri 1850-1865: The Rise of Lucas Place and the Transformation of the City from Public Spaces to Private Places" (Ph.D. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1988). Richard Allen Rosen, "Rethinking the Row House: The Development of Lucas Place, 1850-1865," 22.

<sup>3</sup> Rosen "Rethinking the Row House," 22.

<sup>4</sup> Despite Anne's early attempts to develop the square on her own, in later developments, she was typically listed as co-owner, though many times it was her property being sold. Most transactions, however, were made under the name of her brother James H. Lucas (1800-1873) or his business. But in terms of land ownership, typically, if James owned one half of the block, Anne would then own the other side. Their father, Judge John Baptiste Charles Lucas (1758-1842), equitably distributed the land in his estate between his son and daughter.

<sup>5</sup> The land used for Summit Square was gifted to Anne by her father after her marriage to Theodore Hunt. See *Laws of the State of Missouri*, Chapter 85, dated 11 Dec. 1828 in *Laws of a Public & General Nature of the State of Missouri passed between 1824 & 1836*, Jefferson City, 1842, 2:139.

<sup>6</sup> The market's location is described as a meadow as late as 1842, according to the "Annual Review, History of St. Louis, Commercial Statistics, Improvements of the Year, and Account of Leading Manufactories, Etc.," from the *Missouri Republican*, January 10, 1854 (St. Louis, Chambers & Knapp), 1854, 43; for the quotation about the meadow and its surrounding of timber, see Elihu Hotchkiss Shepard, *The Early History of St. Louis and Missouri* (St. Louis: Southwestern Book & Publishing Co., 1870), 136.

<sup>7</sup> "St. Louis," *St. Louis Republican*, March 10, 1846, as cited in Joseph C. Thurman, "James H. Lucas: Eminent St. Louis Entrepreneur and Philanthropist" *Missouri Historical Review* 101, 3 (2007), 129-45.

<sup>8</sup> The deed restriction was established at the sale of each parcel of land, so they would be expiring at different times throughout the neighborhood. In 1888 a petition was created to end the deed restrictions on the street, and it successfully attained the necessary two thirds of landowners needed to sign it, according to "Real Estate Market," *Missouri Republican*, May 16, 1888, pg. 9, col 7. The deed for the land specified four major restrictions: "First, No tenement of any description shall be erected" and created a setback "twenty-five feet to the front line of said premises. . . . second, For the term of thirty years . . . [prohibits] any Family Grocery, Apothecary shop, Coffee House, Eating house, Restaurant, Dram Shop, Theatre, Circus, or any other business of amusement, or of the bargain or sale of any description of goods, wares, or merchandize." It then prohibited any construction of any of the above-mentioned businesses after thirty years without the express approval of all the owners on Lucas Place. If an owner of the land was found in violation of any of these restrictions, their property would then be reverted to the hands of James Lucas and his heirs, according to the deed. See James H. Lucas to Carlos S. Greeley and Daniel B. Gale, Missouri History Society Library, Treadway Papers Collection, January 1, 1853; Charles Savage claims the architect George I. Barnett worked with Lucas to introduce the deed restrictions on Lucas Place. See Charles C. Savage, *The Architecture of the Private Streets of St. Louis: The Architects and the Houses they Designed* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1987) 13.

<sup>9</sup> Savage, *The Architecture of the Private Streets of St. Louis*, 8-9.

<sup>10</sup> "Lucas Place," *Daily Missouri Republican*, November 11, 1850, 3. The paper has changed names several times throughout the course of its run; the titles listed below are alternate names the paper operated under in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In 1919 the paper was sold to the *St. Louis Globe Democrat*. For more information, see "Daily Missouri Republican," State Historical Society of Missouri, <https://digital.shsmo.org/digital/collection/dmr> (accessed March 31, 2019).

<sup>11</sup> Sarah Collier Residence, Photograph, Missouri Historical Society, Lucas Place Collection, <https://mohistory.org/search?text=Lucas%20Place>

<sup>12</sup> "Along Olive Street," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, December 11, 1887, 21.

<sup>13</sup> Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 55.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> "City Engineer's Report - 10 May 1858," *Daily Missouri Republican*, May 18, 1858, 4.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Lucas Market consisted of the block to the west of today's St. Louis Public Library, along the street we now refer to as Tucker Blvd. to the west of where Tucker now widens.

<sup>19</sup> James H. Lucas, et al., Letter to the Board of Park Commissioners, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis, October 29th, 1876.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> Swecosky papers, S.1.7.2a, Missouri History Museum.



<sup>22</sup> Isaac Lionberger, as quoted in James Neal Primm, *Lion of the Valley* (Boulder: Pruett Publishing Company, 1990), 362.

<sup>23</sup> "City Items - St. Louis Enterprise - No. 5," *Daily Missouri Democrat*, September 29, 1854, 3.

<sup>24</sup> "Cote Brilliante Property," *Daily Missouri Republican*, March 19, 1854, 2.

<sup>25</sup> "A Street Sketch," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, October 16, 1880, 4.

<sup>26</sup> "City Hall Matters," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, April 25, 1880, 13.

<sup>27</sup> Editorial comment, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, April 28, 1880, 2, 4.

<sup>28</sup> "The Missouri Park," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, May 24, 1880, 4.

<sup>29</sup> "Westward," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, December 7, 1883, 2.

<sup>30</sup> "To Make Locust A Handsome Street," *St. Louis Republic*, May 14 1903, 2.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Others who have written on the development of St. Louis' residential areas have similarly argued that St. Louisans were increasingly seeking alternatives to housing above the downtown area of shops and industry. However, they posit that such a change occurred because of class anxieties and a concern for the social issues that emerged from blending residential and business social spheres. Glen E. Holt, "The Shaping of St. Louis, 1763-1860" (PhD dis., University of Chicago, 1975) 317-318, 325; Richard Allen Rosen, "St. Louis, Missouri, 1850-1865," 93.

## Morrow Prize

This article received the **2020 Lynn and Kristen Morrow Missouri History Student Prize**, awarded for the best student paper on an aspect of Missouri history presented at the Missouri Conference on History. The annual Missouri Conference on History brings together teachers of history and other professional historians to share in the presentation of the results of research, to exchange information on teaching and curriculum, to consider ways to promote interest in history and the welfare of the profession, and to discuss other concerns common to all historians.







Engraving from William Still's 1872 book *The Underground Railroad Records*, with modern watercolor enhancement. (Image: Shutterstock)





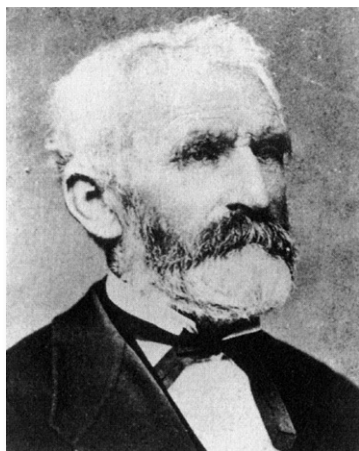
# KREKEL & KRIBBEN— DIVERGING VIEWS | | ON THE FUTURE OF SLAVERY

by STEVE EHLMANN

In 1848, Arnold Krekel and Christian Kribben were young, free-thinking lawyers and aspiring Democratic politicians, whose families had emigrated from Prussia to St. Charles County, Missouri, in the 1830s. Like most German-Americans, both initially opposed the spread of slavery into the territories, but neither was an abolitionist. **In 1854 they began moving in opposite directions.**



By July 1863, in the midst of a Civil War that would determine the slavery question, William Tausig, Presiding Judge of St. Louis County, reported to the *Neue Zeit* that President Abraham Lincoln had asked him, "Why don't the Germans of Missouri stand still?" Krekel had not stood still and now favored emancipation in Missouri, while the *Neue Zeit* described Kribben as someone who had stood still but explained he had not "receded more than the times have advanced," but "no longer understood the times; that was all."<sup>1</sup>



**Arnold Krekel (1815-1888) emigrated from Germany in 1832 at age 17 and moved to St. Charles, Missouri. His lengthy career included editing a newspaper, working as an attorney and a surveyor, serving in the Union Army, presiding over the 1865 Missouri Constitutional Convention, and as a U.S. District judge.**  
(Image: St. Charles County Archives)

Arnold Krekel, born in 1815, was six years older than Christian Kribben. Each received schooling in Germany before immigrating to Missouri with their families at age seventeen. Both eventually studied the law in St. Charles, where Kribben began his practice in 1843, as did Krekel in 1844, the year Kribben moved to St. Louis.<sup>2</sup>

Both men joined the Democratic Party to oppose anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic Nativists in the Whig Party. While both came from Catholic families, each became free-thinking anti-clerics. Political opponents would use their German origin and support for "Red Republican doctrines of Europe" against them as the debate over slavery intensified.<sup>3</sup>

After a rally for Democratic presidential candidate James K. Polk in 1844, the pro-Democrat Missouri Republican reported that Kribben spoke "in a brief, but spirited and eloquent manner, showing the importance of the present contest and the magnitude of the Texas question."<sup>4</sup> Missouri's U.S. Senator Thomas Hart Benton, who had opposed the Texas Annexation Treaty, was forced to work hard to win re-election that year. Kribben was nominated for St. Louis city attorney in 1846, but the Whigs nearly swept the municipal elections that year and elected the first nativist mayor of St. Louis.<sup>5</sup> The following year, Krekel was elected St. Charles County surveyor as a Democrat, receiving 65 percent in the three townships with highest percentages of German voters.<sup>6</sup>

Kribben enlisted as a lieutenant in an all-German artillery unit under the command of General Alexander Donovan after the outbreak of the Mexican War in 1846. During the war, the United States House of Representatives passed the Wilmot Proviso, which would have excluded slavery from any new territories gained in the war. When the matter reached the United States Senate, Senator John C. Calhoun offered

resolutions to ensure slaveholders' right to take their slaves into the new territories. Senator Thomas Hart Benton opposed him, insisting the future of the country depended on free soil and free labor and warning that the slavery issue could destroy the Union. In 1848 Claiborne Fox Jackson passed the Jackson Resolutions in the Missouri General Assembly, opposing Benton and asserting Congress had no power to limit or prohibit slavery in the territories.<sup>7</sup>

That year, while both shared Benton's concerns, Kribben went a step further than Krekel. After the New York State Democratic Party refused to endorse the Wilmot Proviso, a faction known as Barnburners opposed the Democratic nominee Lewis Cass and joined with others to form the Free Soil Party, nominating as their candidate former President Martin Van Buren. Kribben signed a Barnburner Call insisting, "He was an enemy of slavery and, if he were able to drive it out of Missouri with a wave of his hand or a nod of his head, he would do so in a second. He drank his hatred for slavery from his mother's breast and inherited it from his forefathers!"<sup>8</sup>

Even though Benton opposed it, passage of the Compromise of 1850 defused somewhat the slavery issue. That year, Kribben was in Europe and Krekel was an unsuccessful candidate for the State Senate. The following year Krekel was elected city attorney for St. Charles, but the legislature denied Benton re-election to the Senate. A month later, Krekel began publishing the *St. Charles Demokrat*, the first German



**NEGROES FOR SALE.**  
 IN pursuance of an order of the St. Charles County Court, obtained on the 28th day of November, 1844, the undersigned will, on Wednesday, the 1st day of January next at the Court House door in the town and county of St. Charles, sell to the highest bidder, THIRTY NINE NEGROES, belonging to the estate of Benjamin Lamasters, dec'd, consisting of men, women and children. A credit of nine months will be given the purchaser giving bond with approved security. The sale will commence at 10 o'clock A. M. on said day, and continue till all shall be sold. The most unexceptionable security will be required.  
 T. W. CUNNINGHAM,  
 Adm'r of B. Lamasters, dec'd.

# 39 NEGROES FOR SALE.

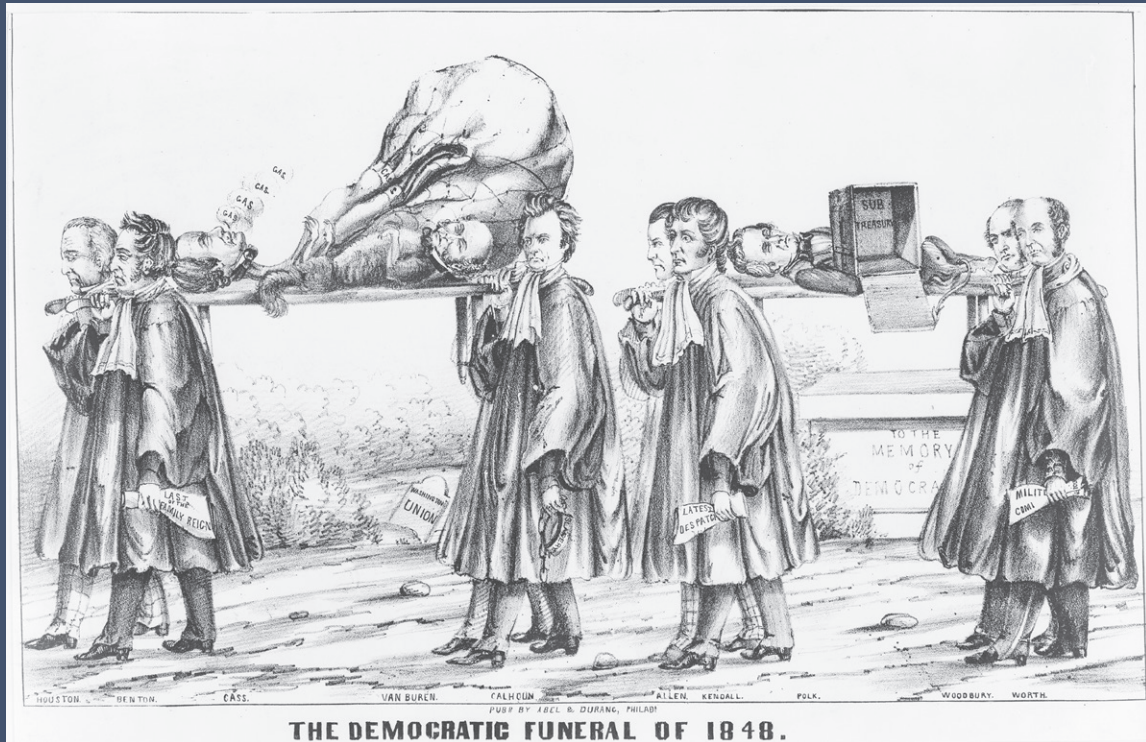


In pursuance of an order of the Saint Charles County Court, obtained on the 28th instant being the November Term of said Court 1844. The undersigned will, on Wednesday the 1st day of January next (1845,) at the Court House door in the Town and County of Saint Charles, sell to the highest bidder thirty-nine negroes belonging to the Estate of Benjamin Lamasters deceased; consisting of men, women and children. A credit of nine months will be given the purchaser giving bond with unexceptionable security. Sale will commence on said day at 10 o'clock A. M.

**T. W. CUNNINGHAM,**  
 Admr. of Benj. Lamasters dec'd.  
 November 28, 1844.



Forecasting political death for the Democratic Party, this cartoon imagines a funeral of its standard-bearers with Senators (left to right) Sam Houston, Thomas Hart Benton, carrying a slip of paper with the words, "Last of the Family Reign," and John Calhoun, carrying a manacle labeled "Slavery," serving as pall bearers for the bodies of Martin Van Buren and Lewis Cass. (Image: Library of Congress)



language newspaper in St. Charles County, and praised Benton for his opposition to Calhoun's resolutions, which "contained all of the principles and tenets that the Missouri legislature later passed in the infamous Jackson resolutions." His primary concern was that they "were intended to prepare the split of the union."<sup>9</sup>

Missouri Democrats reconciled in 1852, running an anti-Benton candidate for governor, while pro-Benton men were nominated for down-ticket offices. When Benton ran for Congress against Democrat Lewis Bogy and a Whig candidate, Krekel editorialized, "We hope this split within the party will be completely mended once the outstanding men of both branches, who are partly responsible for the split, will finally, decide to make the small sacrifice of leaving

personalities out of the game."<sup>10</sup> Neither did, and to oppose the Whig candidate for state representative, St. Charles County Democrats were forced to choose between Maj. George W. Huston, "a bitter Anti-Benton man," and Krekel, "a Bentonian," causing one observer to state sarcastically, "This is the kind of 'union and harmony' that prevails all over the state."<sup>11</sup>

That same month, after Krekel had seen the new *Demokratische Presse* edited by Kribben, he again called for reconciliation, commenting, "We hope that Mr. Kribben, a good advocate/lawyer who grew up in this area, will not use his talents for personal squabbling, but to vigorously and jointly represent the interests of the Democracy, particularly in view of the upcoming election

campaign."<sup>12</sup> But Kribben, having changed his mind while in Europe, parted ways with Benton and Krekel on the slavery issue, and supported Bogy.<sup>13</sup> Heinrich Boernstein, editor of the pro-Benton *Anzeiger*, decried the pro-Whig *Republican* for supporting Bogy, suggesting it "has a particular inclination and tenderness for the most regular [Democrat] Christian Kribben and for the more than regular '*Democratic Press*.'" Indeed, Boernstein charged, "Mr. Kribben is opposed to Benton," and "Bogy is the representative of the Southern nullifiers — the ultra-slave-holders — the faction that would destroy this glorious Union. . . ."<sup>14</sup>

On Election Day, Benton was elected to Congress and Krekel was elected to the House by six





Founded in 1852, the *Demokrat* was published by Krekel for four years, after which it was edited by his political allies. (Image: Steve Ehlmann)

votes, becoming the first German immigrant elected to the Missouri General Assembly and an opponent of the Jackson Resolutions. While the legislature had passed a statute requiring observance of the Puritan Sunday practiced by English-speaking Protestants, closing theaters, concerts, beer halls, and wine gardens — all significant to Germans, who observed the “Continental Sunday,” during which even religious Germans enjoyed beer, wine, music, and the theater on Sunday — Krekel did not attack the Sunday, or any other existing law, “regarded with sacredness by the American people.”<sup>15</sup>

Kribben married Edith Delafield in St. Louis in February 1854. Edith, a non-German, had been born in Ohio, and the Kribbens did not own slaves. Krekel and his wife, Ida, also a German immigrant, owned two slaves. They, like most Missouri Germans, had reached an accommodation with slavery where it existed, but they feared its spread could lead to disunion. They were reassured that the Missouri Compromise, which prohibited slavery in territories north of Missouri’s southern border, would stop the spread of slavery into new territories.<sup>16</sup>

However, in early 1854, Senator Stephen Douglas of Illinois, hoping to ease sectional tensions, proposed legislation to establish the territories of Kansas and

Nebraska and guarantee “popular sovereignty,” whereby the people of each territory would decide whether to allow slavery. Shortly thereafter, Representative Krekel attended a meeting allegedly “composed of the confidential friends and mouth-pieces of Benton,” opposing what became known as the Kansas-Nebraska Act. The abrogation of the Missouri Compromise provoked a strong reaction from opponents of slavery.<sup>17</sup>

Anti-slavery Germans were further alarmed when Congressmen from slaveholding states, including Senator John B. Thompson, a Whig from Kentucky, attempted to amend the Homestead Bill by confining benefits to “heads of families” and to “citizens of the United States.” Many German men, who had left their families in Germany until they could pay their passage, would not have the right to homestead prior to naturalization.<sup>18</sup>

Benton announced his candidacy for the Senate seat to be filled by the legislature after the election. The *Anzeiger’s* pages bristled with editorials assailing Douglas, with whom Kribben clearly had cast his lot. Kribben spoke in favor of Senator Douglas and the Kansas-Nebraska Act, urging Germans not to go like a “herd of sheep to vote for

Benton,” causing the pro-Benton *Neue Zeit* to editorialize:

When a German tramples under foot all the traditions of his native land, all the achievements of philosophy, of enlightenment and humanity, which he has brought with him from his old home — when a German obtrudes himself to be the advocate and representative of slavery and all its consequences — when he degrades himself to a Thompson German, and becomes the servile hod-carrier of slavocrats, then there is an end to all mercy, and such an exemplary exception of a German must be placed before public opinion in his entire nudity, to serve as a horrid example to others.<sup>19</sup>

About the same time, a Krekel critic, citing the German Progressive Party’s support for several “Red Republican doctrines of Europe,” as well as opposition to the extension of slavery and support for the Homestead Bill, charged him with “anti-American sentiments” and “exciting the Germans against American institutions,” whether it involved Sunday or slavery. Krekel, who had repudiated the party, alleged “deliberate villainy” and accused his critic of attempting “to excite the religious feeling of Catholics by charging that I am opposed to them.”<sup>20</sup>

While Krekel was mentioned as a possible pro-Benton candidate for Congress that year, after

## **We would much rather give our vote to a** TRUE DEMOCRAT.

stating, “We would much rather give our vote to a true Democrat,” he endorsed the Whig candidate because he opposed the Kansas-Nebraska Act.<sup>21</sup> Regarding Benton, Krekel assured readers of the *Demokrat*, “We are warm friends of the old hero, and do not feel ourselves at liberty to strike him down, either for his vote on the Nebraska or Texas question.” As to Benton’s detractors, Krekel pointed out that Benton had passed the Homestead bill in the House of Representatives and asked, “Is it for this you bloodhounds howl upon his track, and seek to dabble your thirsty jaws in the old man’s gore, and riot on the carcass of him under whose fostering care the Democracy have acquired all their glory and renown.”<sup>22</sup>

Benton was not sent back to the Senate, and his forces were not even seated at the 1856 Democratic National Convention. When Benton ran for governor that year, Krekel ran as the pro-Benton candidate for attorney general, opposing those who became known as “National Democrats.” After Kribben spoke in German, the *Republican* noted, “the Germans of Quincy still maintained their proud position upon the old national Democratic platform.”<sup>23</sup> However, when he spoke in English across the river in Hannibal, a nativist identified Kribben as a “Red-Republican Dutchman” and advised, “The democracy had better let such men as Kribben stay at home for American citizens cannot learn the duty they owe their country on advice from a foreigner.”<sup>24</sup>

While National Democrats swept the state offices in

Missouri, Benton supporters, now called Free Democrats, continued to work for free soil. In 1857 State Representative Gratz Brown, editor of the *Missouri Democrat*, called for the gradual emancipation of the slaves, citing economic rather than humanitarian reasons. When declining health forced Benton to retire from public life, many of his supporters joined Francis P. Blair, who had been elected to Congress and announced a plan in 1858 to emancipate the slaves and remove them from the country. After Free Democrats joined other anti-slavery factions in opposition to the National Democrats, they could not agree on a name and became known simply as “The Opposition.”<sup>25</sup>

Meanwhile, another split was developing between those who wanted the Democratic Party to remain a national party and those who wanted it to protect the sectional interest of the South. The issue was especially intense in Missouri, given its proximity to “bleeding Kansas,” where the pro-slavery Lecompton Constitution was approved at an election boycotted by anti-slavery voters. The *Columbia Democrat* asked, “Are our Pro-Slavery, and as they claim, National ‘Americans,’ prepared to cooperate with Blair, Brown, Boernstein, Krekel and company, in their efforts to ‘demonstrate to the Union’ that the subject of emancipation will be agitated in Missouri until she has become a free state?”<sup>26</sup>

Kribben announced his candidacy to fill a vacancy in the St. Louis delegation to the Missouri House at a special

election in August 1857. After National Democrat Robert Stewart, a native of New York State, announced his candidacy to be elected governor on the same day, the *Glasgow Weekly Times* explained, “Black Republicans prefer Northern men. They know their love of slavery is lip-love, whereas a southerner stands by the cause of the south, upon principle. Kayser and Kribben know what they are about. . . . They are all against slavery, and they know if Stewart is elected, they will have an approachable person ‘at court.’”<sup>27</sup> The same paper later complained about “Van Burenites like Kribben — that supports such abolition papers as the *German Chronicle*, which supports the New York Yankee for governor, because ‘he was not a slaveholder’ and would be the ‘first to lend his hand’ toward its abolishment.”<sup>28</sup>

Proponents of slavery reminded German audiences that many abolitionists were also nativists. When a jury quickly acquitted Kribben after a Grand Jury indicted him for “false pretense,” even though the supposed victim stated he had no complaint against him, the *Republican* called it “Failure of the Free-soil Know-Nothings to Reduce a Political Opponent to their Own Level.”<sup>29</sup> In St. Louis on Election Day, Stewart lost by 1,500 votes and Kribben, whom one newspaper described as “Bob Stewart’s Major General,” lost by 444 votes. Stewart, however, won statewide by less than 300 votes over Opposition candidate James Rollins and, in January, appointed Kribben Division Inspector for the 1st Military District of the Militia in St. Louis, with the rank of colonel.<sup>30</sup>





To promote a northern route for the transcontinental railroad that would benefit his Illinois constituents Senator Stephen A. Douglas wanted to organize the territory of Nebraska, which would have become a free state under the Missouri Compromise. Douglas proposed creating Kansas and Nebraska to gain Southern support, leaving it up to the settlers and providing an opportunity for Kansas to be the complimentary slave state, thus preserving the balance in the Senate.  
*(Image: Library of Congress)*

STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS.

BY J. H. WELLS & COMPANY,  
CHICAGO, ILL.

A prominent jurist later wrote, “Few lawyers were better known in his day than Kribben and he exercised a large influence with the German population.”<sup>31</sup> Members of the German Peters family hired Kribben to defend them after they were indicted for beating their slave Lucy nearly to death. With increasing concern in the German community over the plight of slaves, the *Anzeiger* had assured its readers the Peters family had agreed to manumit Lucy, and the German community could stop raising money to buy her freedom. The paper was outraged when the family, on the advice of their lawyer, changed its mind and noted “a remarkable fact that a *German* family that so cruelly mistreated a poor defenseless negro woman that even in a slave state the law intervened. . . . and it is a German who as lawyer for the family resisted the single step that could have redeemed in the eyes of their fellow citizens and make right again the injustice committed on humanity.”<sup>32</sup>

After Colonel Kribben became a candidate for one of the ten St. Louis County seats in the Missouri House in 1858, he informed the governor of complaints by “the German Companies” of the militia, writing, “I wish you to remind them of their duty as military men and officers,” and to inform them that their behavior “is not only reprehensible and unmilitary, but renders them subject to Court Martial.”<sup>33</sup>

When Kribben spoke in Jefferson City in favor of the National Democrat candidate Enos B. Cordell, he reminded

the Germans in his audience that James B. Gardenhire, his opponent for the legislature, had been a Know-Nothing. A reviewer called his performance “one of the most logical and powerful arguments in behalf of Democratic principles and policy, and against the conglomeration of Know-Nothingism and Black Republicanism, here denominated [by] the Union Party.”<sup>34</sup> He took the position that, if the Constitution allowed a slaveholder to be divested of his slave property, no one’s property was safe, arguing:

A man’s abstract notion as to whether slavery, which had been entailed upon us by the mother country, was right or wrong, had nothing to do with the question now agitating the public mind. It was among us, and it was not merely a matter of dollars and cents, but a question of good faith involving personal and inalienable rights — rights that cannot be disregarded without endangering our whole social and political fabric.<sup>35</sup>

Kribben, owning no slaves, asked the simple question, “If they really intend that the Negro shall be free, why do they not set the example by manumitting their own slaves.”<sup>36</sup> That same month Krekel, who still owned a slave, claimed the National Democrats had “sinned against the people and how no man, who was still honest and open about Missouri, could still support this party.”<sup>37</sup> On Election Day, Kribben became one of seventy-four National Democrats elected to the Missouri House of Representatives, compared to

fifty-eight for the opposition.<sup>38</sup>

After Douglas declared the pro-slavery Lecompton Constitution was a “fraudulent submission,” Congress rejected it and ordered another election that resulted in a new expression of “popular sovereignty” from a large majority of anti-slavery Kansas voters and seemed to settle the Kansas question. However, Jayhawkers had been crossing the border to free slaves, and Governor Stewart reluctantly sent militia units to Bates and Vernon counties in Missouri. Kribben informed Stewart that he disagreed with his decision, explaining, “The step to send troops there now will make a noise in the world; it may give our enemies a hold again on the Kansas question.”<sup>39</sup>

After the election, the *Republican* heralded the fact that Representative James O. Sitton from Gasconade County was the only emancipationist elected to the legislature. But ultra-pro-slavery newspapers continued to attack representative-elect Kribben from the right, claiming that while contending abolition was unconstitutional, he had suggested, “if it could be winked out of the state, he would set his eyes to winking quite fast.” One article concluded that such a speech “leaves little room to rejoice over the defeat of black Republicanism in Jefferson City,” while another regretted, “Cordell is endorsed by the National. Kribben is endorsed by them, and Senator Douglas will be shortly.”<sup>40</sup>



## Jayhawkers had been crossing the border to free slaves,

## AND GOVERNOR STEWART RELUCTANTLY SENT MILITIA UNITS TO BATES AND VERNON COUNTIES IN MISSOURI.

When the House met to organize, Representative Sitton zeroed in on Representative Kribben from the left, citing the same speech and stating sarcastically, "If the National Democratic Party sent such men here he was a National Democrat."<sup>41</sup> Sitton "divested himself of the exclusive proprietary title conferred on him by the *Republican*" and shared it with Kribben. The *Glasgow Weekly Times* now reported the divestiture "created some merriment and a good deal of feeling on the part of Mr. Kribben," who explained that, to keep the Germans from voting for Gardenhire, he had to make a stronger free-soil speech than him and make sure it was "good enough Morgan."<sup>42</sup>

After Sitton thanked Kribben for his youthful service to Van Buren and nominated him for speaker, Krekel wrote with some sarcasm of his own: "Mr. Kribben is said to be an able gentleman, a good advocate/lawyer, a German whom he, Sitton, largely credits with his election, and Mr. Kribben is sure to make a splendid speaker!"<sup>43</sup>

Kribben said he was ashamed he had supported van Buren and blamed it on his youth, explaining:

The predilections of most foreign persons who come to this country, not acquainted with the institution of slavery, are adverse to it. I do not deny that such were my first impressions; but on subsequent acquaintance with its workings I discovered its harmony with the Constitution, and my views underwent a transformation.



Some pro-slavery Missourians were suspicious of Governor Robert Stewart, who had been president of the Hannibal & St. Joseph Railroad, because one of its largest shareholders was the family of Eli Thayer of Boston, a known abolitionist who had argued the 600,000 acres of land along the railroad would be more valuable if Missouri were a free state. (Image: Missouri Historical Society)

Stating he had changed his mind after a two-year stay in Europe, he explained, "When I returned, the change that had taken place in my mind during my absence was the cause of the difference between Mr., Benton and myself, prior to which time I was his personal friend."<sup>44</sup> Sitton then ended the charade, criticizing the National Democratic Party by claiming no man "can get an office who does not change ground, holler 'Nigger' and commence pulling Negro wool over everybody's eyes."<sup>45</sup>

Kribben would have an opportunity to demonstrate his anti-abolitionist credentials. Governor Stewart sent the General Assembly a special message detailing troubles along the border with the Kansas territory, including the freeing of

slaves in Missouri by abolitionist John Brown. When the Militia Act, appropriating \$30,000 to enable the governor to "suppress and bring to justice the banditti on the western border of the state" came to the floor of the House, Kribben introduced a substitute bill increasing the appropriation to \$50,000. While the substitute was defeated, the original bill passed and expanded the powers of the governor to deal with Jayhawkers.<sup>46</sup>

Like Krekel earlier, Kribben had to battle the "Sunday fanatics" in the legislature, who called Kribben "a low-flung, vulgar Dutchman."<sup>47</sup> As they had with Krekel, nativists like Representative Charles Drake used his criticism of the Sunday Law to suggest he was no better than an abolitionist:



.....

## **In January 1860 the legislature considered a “FREE NEGRO BILL” to re-enslave all free blacks.**

There was a time, and I hope there will ever be, when the abolitionist who brought his views into this state of Missouri, and attempted to exercise them, was regarded and treated as a traitor. There is not less of treason in a man who comes from a foreign shore to plant in our soil his poisonous seeds to subvert our customs and overturn our institutions, even though it be according to law. We have the institution of slavery and the institution of Sunday, the latter not less dear to us than the former. If we permit meddling hands to exercise their ingenuity upon our institutions, in a few years American liberty will not be worth the paper upon which the word could be written.<sup>48</sup>

Drake reminded everyone that Kribben was an apostate, arguing, “Instead of regarding those great principles promulgated by our fathers, who shed their blood on hard fought ground, we are told to look to Europe, to pattern after the great truths of the French Revolution! Why Sir, the God of Wisdom who superintends the nations is dethroned by that document, and materialism, the God of the French, is to be placed in his stead.”<sup>49</sup>

When Kribben moved to table a bill, awaiting memorials from his constituents, Drake said he had no idea memorials could change Kribben’s mind “unless, indeed, they included every man, woman and child from the fatherland, the German population of St. Louis.” In reporting his reply to Drake, the *Republican* pointed out, “So far from being influenced by the signatures of his countrymen in St. Louis, he [Kribben] had the misfortune of having to contend

against the majority of them. For it is well known that three-fourths of the children of the fatherland, as they have been termed by his friend, belonged to the other side.”<sup>50</sup> That fact made National Democrats worry about the police in St. Louis, under local control, who greatly outnumbered the local militia, under the governor. In December 1859, Colonel Kribben resolved the dilemma in favor of his constituents when he joined Representative Sitton and spoke against a Metropolitan Police Bill to put the St. Louis police under the governor, which failed to pass.<sup>51</sup>

In January 1860 the legislature considered a “Free Negro Bill” to re-enslave all free blacks found in Missouri on September 1, 1861, and Representative Kribben again displeased pro-slavery extremists. Arguing the legislature had no constitutional right to confiscate property of Negroes, he explained, “I do not know of any measure more destructive to the Southern rights than this measure. It is calculated to work destructively to the Democratic Party.”<sup>52</sup> The bill passed the legislature and the governor vetoed it.

After Governor Stewart called a special session for which Kribben was elected speaker, ultra-pro-slavery newspapers complained Kribben was “not so sound on the nigger,” and called his election an “Abolition Triumph in the Missouri Legislature!”<sup>53</sup> When the session opened, an ultra-pro-slavery member argued Kribben’s election was unconstitutional because the

order of succession included the speaker, and the Constitution required the governor be a natural-born citizen. After the swearing in, another labeled him “an avowed infidel,” relating, “We saw him kiss the Bible, which he denounces as a batch of ‘cunningly devised fables.’”<sup>54</sup> The legislature again passed the Free Negro Bill, and the governor again vetoed it. The attempted override failed by a vote of 58 to 30, just short of the two-thirds required.<sup>55</sup>

In December 1859, Krekel and two others nominated 63 men as delegates to the State Opposition Convention at a meeting in St. Charles County that condemned abolitionism and nullification equally.<sup>56</sup> By February the *Democrat* was warning its readers, “do not any longer permit yourself to be charmed by the sonorous name ‘Democrat,’” explaining, “Today’s Democratic Party has no national vitality — it is a factional and conceited organization — inwardly deteriorated to the point of spreading one single idea.”<sup>57</sup>

The State Opposition Convention met in Jefferson City during the special session and elected Krekel as a vice president, adopted a platform that opposed “the errant heresies of the so-called National Democratic Party in regard to the subject of slavery in the territories,” and endorsed Edward Bates for president and Krekel for state representative. The Missouri Republican Party also endorsed Bates for president in March, after he wrote a letter agreeing with the Republican National Platform on slavery, causing the *Weekly West* to





Charles D. Drake, a St. Louis attorney, was a Whig during the 1840s before moving to Washington. He returned to St. Louis in 1850, established a successful law practice, and won a special election to the Missouri House of Representatives in 1859 as a Democrat, serving only one term. (Image: Missouri Historical Society)

A former Jacksonian Democrat, Francis Blair (1791-1876) left the party over expanding slavery into the western territories and helped create the new Republican Party in 1854. At the 1860 Republican convention, Blair supported Abraham Lincoln after it became clear that his first choice for the presidency, fellow Missourian Edward Bates, would not be nominated. (Image: Missouri Historical Society)



observe, “The recent Abolition letter of Edward Bates has broken up the Opposition before it has fairly organized, and Bob Stewart’s desertion of the Railroads and Christ. Kribben’s election to the speakership of the House of Representatives, have thrown the Democracy into ‘confusion worse confounded.’”<sup>58</sup>

The controversy over Speaker Kribben’s leadership highlighted the dissatisfaction of the ultra-pro-slavery faction with the National Democrats, causing the *Weekly West* to complain, “This same National Democratic Party openly avows that the election of

Kribben was intended to catch the Free-soil German vote in St. Louis.”<sup>59</sup> When the Democratic National Convention convened in Charleston, South Carolina, on April 23, 1860, northern Democrats wanted to reaffirm the platform of 1856, promising congressional noninterference with slavery. Extremist delegates from the Deep South demanded federal protection for slavery in the territories, and when they did not get their way, they walked out.

Krekel was a delegate to the Republican National Convention in Chicago in May. Illinois delegate Gustave Koerner later explained

that when Krekel appeared before the Pennsylvania delegation along with Blair in support of Bates, he “controverted the idea that Bates could carry Missouri, said that outside of St. Louis and a few German settlements represented by Krekel and Muench no Republican could get a vote; that the state was for Douglas.”<sup>60</sup>

After the Convention nominated Abraham Lincoln, Krekel, citing a “change in the aspects of the political affairs,” declined the nomination of the Opposition for the legislature, formally joined the Republican



Bates wished Krekel had waited until his letter endorsing Lincoln and after the Baltimore Conventions before leaving the Opposition. He believed, "If there be but one Democratic candidate, it (the Union Party) has no possible chance. And if there be two—Douglas and a fire-eater—most of the Southern Union Men (so miscalled) will have to affiliate with the extreme Southern Democrats, and perhaps be absorbed by them." *The Diary of Edward Bates, 1859-1866*, June 16, 1860. Howard K. Beale, ed. (Image: Missouri Historical Society)

Party, and became a presidential elector for Lincoln in the First District.<sup>61</sup> The Democratic Convention reconvened in Baltimore, where Stephen Douglas was nominated on the 1856 platform. The extreme pro-slavery delegates met later in Baltimore and nominated John Breckinridge, formally splitting the Democratic Party. For lieutenant governor Missouri Republicans nominated former Whig James B. Gardenhire. For attorney general they nominated Krekel, whose presence on the ticket was significant in that he was still a slaveholder, evidence that the Republicans were not a party of abolitionists.<sup>62</sup>

When the legislature adjourned, Kribben returned to his militia duties and the Douglas campaign. In June, to meet continued lawlessness by Kansas Jayhawkers, Kribben sent arms to militia in Southwest Missouri, apologizing for the delay and blaming the "miserable management of thing[s] at headquarters."<sup>63</sup> When the St. Louis militia paraded in October, Colonel Kribben was reported absent, probably campaigning

for Douglas. Over the previous months he had faced off against Republicans and Breckinridge Democrats. The *Missouri Democrat* reported on "the inevitable Col. Kribben, who made a more stupid speech than usual, which is saying a good deal."<sup>64</sup> Kribben challenged Carl Schurz, a Lincoln supporter, to a debate at Cooper Union in New York City, but he failed to attend.<sup>65</sup>

In Alton, Illinois, a fight broke out between Breckinridge and Douglas Democrats, causing the *Republican* to report that Kribben "was interrupted in his abuse of the Republicans by the cry of a free fight, and in the twinkling of an eye he was left solitary and alone. . . ." <sup>66</sup> A speaker at a Breckinridge rally in St. Louis "directed his remarks against the neophytes Drake, Kribben and others, who had sneaked into the party for office and failed to get it, [and] were now trying to disrupt the party."<sup>67</sup> After fusion of Lincoln and Douglas supporters in Oregon in October, Breckinridge supporters claimed, "This would exactly suit Mr. Speaker Kribben, Palm, and other free

soil emancipation Douglasites in St. Louis. The Douglas leaders are becoming desperate and we advise they be watched."<sup>68</sup>

That same month, Krekel spoke at a Lincoln rally in St. Charles and another in St. Louis, about which the *Missouri Democrat* reported, "Mr. Krekel's remarks were received with great applause, and as he closed, three cheers were given for 'Honest Old Abe.'" <sup>69</sup> While Lincoln won in St. Louis County, with many Germans supporting Douglas in St. Charles County, his 533 votes there were far short of the 1,000 predicted by the *Democrat*. As Douglas won the state, it was clear that Kribben, not Krekel, "understood the times" in Missouri.

After the Deep South states seceded in December, in January 1861 new Governor Claiborne Fox Jackson called for Missouri to secede and appointed a new Division Inspector for the 1st Military District. Those opposed to secession, who became known as "conditional unionists," met at the St. Louis courthouse, and Kribben was one of the speakers.<sup>70</sup> They opposed, with varying



AFTER THE DEEP SOUTH STATES SECEDED IN DECEMBER,  
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degrees of enthusiasm, secession by Missouri and the use of force to preserve the Union. The *Republican* became their mouthpiece, and after the legislature called a Convention to decide the issue, Kribben was listed as one who could be “supported by all who endorsed the resolution passed at the late Union meeting at the Courthouse.”<sup>71</sup>

By mid-February the Conditional Union Party had adopted a “Declaration of Principles” and appointed a slate of candidates. After Krekel addressed a gathering of mostly German “Unconditional Unionists” in St. Charles County, the *Demokrat* explained that the German population of the county was “through and through for the Union under the Constitution, without any ‘ifs’ or ‘buts.’”<sup>72</sup> Kribben spoke at a meeting to explain “the vast difference between the Black Republican ‘Unconditional Union ticket’ and the Constitutional Union ticket—the one going the full length of Mr. Lincoln’s doctrine, to apply coercion and whip the seceding states back into the Union: and the other demanding the just rights of all states in the union.”<sup>73</sup> In Missouri, delegates were elected, and, when the Convention met, with secessionists in the minority, it decided against secession. In Washington, Lincoln appointed Edward Bates as his Attorney General.

The legislature then passed a Metropolitan Police Bill putting the St. Louis police under the control of the governor who, pursuant to the Militia Act of

1859, ordered the militia to muster in St. Louis. In response, pro-Union Home Guard regiments, composed primarily of Germans, formed in St. Louis under Blair’s leadership. After they were federalized, Captain Nathaniel Lyon launched a successful pre-emptive strike on May 10. When the legislature passed a Military Bill creating a State Guard, outlawing other military organizations, and specifying all spoken commands were to be in English, Krekel wrote Blair complaining it allowed the secessionists, but not the unionists, to organize, and informing him, “We propose drawing together on the Fourth of July our whole Union Guard and I wish you to write fully to me as to your views and wishes in the premises.”<sup>74</sup>

At that meeting, Krekel, who had sold his slaves, was elected to command the St. Charles Home Guard that became known as “Krekel’s Dutch.” Meanwhile, Lyon’s troops proceeded to Jefferson City, causing Governor Jackson and the pro-Confederate legislature to flee. The future of slavery was little discussed until August, when General John C. Frémont declared martial law and ordered the emancipation of slaves of disloyal persons. President Lincoln, at the behest of pro-Union slaveholders, made it clear that slaves, like other property, would be confiscated only if they were being used to aid the rebellion.<sup>75</sup>

The Convention established a provisional government and appointed Hamilton Gamble as governor. While some anti-slavery

Unionists were assisting runaway slaves, Major Krekel, who was appointed provost marshal for St. Charles, Warren, and Lincoln counties in December, followed Gamble’s conservative policies designed to protect slave property. After receiving complaints that Major Hugo Hollan’s command was helping slaves escape from their masters, he sought authority “to dismount and disarm Major Hollan’s battalion and send it to St. Louis.” After several more complaints Hollan’s command was broken up and his men were placed in two different regiments.<sup>76</sup>

Major Krekel admitted Missourians might not yet support emancipation in a letter to Blair in May, suggesting, “In order to do anything with slavery in Missouri, it is necessary to place the separation of the races in the foreground.” He claimed four-fifths of the more than 1,000 interviews he had conducted as provost marshal were with non-slaveholders who “expressed little interest in the institution but did not want to become the equal of the Negro.” He warned against too radical an approach to emancipation when he predicted:

Time and reflection will soon work a vast change in the views of the non-slave-holding portion of our people, and unless some rash, foolish and impracticable scheme shall be set on foot by our overanxious friends, I can see the practical end of slavery in Missouri. But there is danger in our friends overleaping themselves, and this danger, I fear the more on account of the question being made a political hobby by political aspirants.<sup>77</sup>

**“WE MUST CAREFULLY DISCRIMINATE and see that we don’t carry our opposition to an extent so as to injure what we seek to uphold.”** –Arnold Krekel

That summer, Krekel signed the call for the Missouri State Radical Emancipation Convention in Jefferson City, where delegates from eighteen counties met and chose Krekel as a vice-president. While its very existence evidenced the pace of change, many “Charcoals” still approached emancipation as a war measure; primarily concerned with how it would benefit whites. However, the Convention did create a Radical Party, for which Krekel became Ninth District committeeman. It pledged to oppose the conservative “Claybanks” led by Governor Gamble, and it nominated candidates, planning to make support for emancipation a test of Union loyalty in the November election. Shortly thereafter, General John Schofield, a Conservative, relieved Krekel as provost marshal.<sup>78</sup>

By the end of that summer, Krekel had realized “the times have advanced,” and he could no longer “stand still.” Schofield ordered Krekel’s regiment to active duty. Encouraged when President Lincoln replaced Schofield with the Radical Samuel Curtis in September, Krekel led his men into Callaway County, described as “the headquarters of the *Sisesch* in North Missouri.”<sup>79</sup> His men did what Krekel had reported Hollan for doing earlier that year — liberating slaves of those suspected of disloyalty. That same month, Attorney General Bates complained about “the extreme wing of the Republican Party — men who, whether from intemperate zeal, or studious cunning, will accept nothing, not even the restoration

of the Union, unless accompanied by & through abolition.”<sup>80</sup>

That fall, unionists were supporting Conservative incumbent Ninth District Congressman James Rollins, whose opponent was thought to have the support of secessionists. However, Rollins came out against Lincoln’s Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation in September and predicted, “When the civil power shall be restored by the success of patriot arms, the ‘status’ of the ‘contraband’ will be purely a judicial question, to be determined by the Constitution and laws.” After the opponent pulled out of the race with Rollins “because their opinions were identical,” Krekel announced as a Radical candidate in October.<sup>81</sup>

The treatment “Krekel’s Dutch” afforded the slaveholders of Callaway County convinced Governor Gamble to disband the regiment and order the return to the people of “their possessions, horses, and Negroes acquired through a Jayhawker procedure.”<sup>82</sup> In response, the *Neue Zeit* suggested Gamble sought only to protect slavery and alleged, “We know also that he persecuted every officer with his disgrace who dealt severely with the rebels — thus Loan, Krekel, Penick &c — and that he protected everyone that was at heart a pro-slavery man or traitor. . . .”<sup>83</sup>

General Curtis’ provost marshal general lamented that past forbearance by the authorities “has led these people to believe that it is their ‘constitutional’ right to speak and conspire together as they may choose,”

and made arrests for mere criticism of federal officials or policies.”<sup>84</sup> After the State Democratic Convention in October, Barton Able, a Republican who had been a delegate to the National Convention in 1860, complained that Bogy, again a Democratic candidate for Congress, and Kribben, again a candidate for the Missouri House, had made a speech critical of abolitionists, Black Republicans, the costs of the war, and martial law. Kribben took a Loyalty Oath on October 28, and neither he nor Bogy were arrested, charged, or elected.<sup>85</sup>

However, William Kribben, brother of Christian, who had taken the loyalty oath the previous year, asked his brother for assistance after the provost marshal arrested him for attempting to convey letters to the enemy on the steamboat he was piloting.<sup>86</sup> At Christian’s request, Henry A. Clover wrote the provost marshal that he had known William Kribben for years and was “surprised to think that he could have done anything to make him susceptible to military charges.”<sup>87</sup> Similarly, Barton Able, who had complained about Christian’s speech four months earlier, wrote that he believed William was falsely accused. These letters and evidentiary problems at the hearing led to William’s acquittal in May.<sup>88</sup>

After Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863 (which did not apply to slave states like Missouri not “in rebellion”) Governor Gamble proposed gradual emancipation with compensation. While the





**Kribben spoke at a meeting of Conditional Unionists at the St. Louis courthouse as Missouri considered secession. Dred Scott, with his wife Harriet, sued for, and were granted, their freedom after a trial there in 1847 in a case that was overruled by the Supreme Court ten years later when it decided slaves were property and had no right to sue. (Image: Missouri Historical Society)**

legislature debated the issue, the *Demokrat* suggested Germans opposed slavery “because it stands in direct contrast to their feelings of justice and morality.”<sup>89</sup> In fact, many Germans realized that land being cultivated by slaves, whose owners had purchased the best land before the Germans arrived, would be for sale after emancipation.<sup>90</sup> Krekel admitted slavery “stands in the way of full enjoyment of the freedom of white men” and argued that the economic future depended on free soil and free labor, concluding that if the negro obtains his freedom in the process, “the blame, if blame it be, attaches to those who are disposed to complain, who have staked their all on slavery, and are seeking to make it the cornerstone of the new civilization.”<sup>91</sup>

After the legislature failed to act, Gamble called the Convention into session in June to consider gradual emancipation. Krekel was still willing to accept

an irrevocable ordinance of freedom within one year, with a limited apprenticeship, and compensation to truly loyal owners. Equally important, Krekel still cautioned, “We must carefully discriminate and see that we don’t carry our opposition to an extent so as to injure what we seek to uphold.”<sup>92</sup>

After an ordinance passed granting freedom to certain slaves in 1876, following a six-year apprenticeship, the *Demokrat* complained, “The entire ordinance is a network of contradictions and lies and would never have gotten the people’s sanction.”<sup>93</sup> Men like Blair, Gamble, and Bates, who had led the effort to limit the spread of slavery and preserve the Union, were now severely criticized by Krekel and other Radicals.<sup>94</sup>

While Krekel was not standing still on the emancipation issue, neither was Kribben, though he was moving in the opposite

direction. Congressman Clement Vallandigham was convicted in a military court after an anti-war speech in May 1863. He was sent through the enemy lines to the Confederacy, from which he made his way to Canada. After Vallandigham won the Democratic nomination for governor of Ohio in absentia in 1863, Kribben met with him in Canada and concluded:

Vallandigham is the representative man of the great West. If elected governor of Ohio in the fall, he could become a powerful ally of those who schemed to pull the state’s troops out of the war and create a Northwest confederacy, although he insisted he sought to only to end the war and bring the southern States back into the Union. As Governor, he could also become a prospect for the presidency, challenging the eastern politicians and the money men who had their hearts set on electing General McClelland.<sup>95</sup>



When the war caused a decline in enrollment, St. Charles College suspended operation in the summer of 1861. After Provost Marshall Krekel evicted the family of the college president, the building was converted into a prison in December 1862. When some members of the Board of Curators failed to take the Convention oath, the legislature passed a bill in 1863 declaring all their positions vacated and appointing a new board that included Krekel and Charles Drake. (Image: courtesy of St. Charles County Historical Society)

In September Krekel attended the Missouri Radical Emancipation and Union Convention that called for a new State Convention to pass an emancipation ordinance and replace the Gamble provisional government. Krekel was one of three men it nominated for the Missouri Supreme Court.<sup>96</sup> It also appointed a committee, led by Charles Drake and including Krekel, to present grievances against Conservatives to President Lincoln in Washington. When Secretary of the Treasury Salmon Chase invited them to his home, Attorney General Bates refused to join them, explaining, "I refuse flatly to hold social, friendly intercourse with men, who daily denounce me and all my friends, as traitors."<sup>97</sup> Lincoln later wrote a letter denying the delegation's requests.

Some of the delegates proceeded to New York where they were hosted by the German National Club at the Cooper Institute. In his speech, Krekel suggested that Lincoln, like him,

had not been standing still. He pointed out the president "says that the Radicals in Missouri, are too fast in their desire to overturn slavery in that state, when they are only attempting to do in a slower way what he, by the one single act of his proclamation, has done suddenly through all the states in rebellion."<sup>98</sup>

As Election Day neared, the *Missouri Democrat* reported efforts by Conservatives to persuade "unbought" Democrats to oppose the Radicals, but it suggested some of them, including Kribben, "seemed disposed, therefore, to preserve their Democratic integrity, even though it be on short rations, rather than take up their bed and board with the *Republican* and the Claybank leaders."<sup>99</sup> The *Republican* claimed Krekel was "imbued with all the abominable Red Republican doctrines of Europe." It further argued a vote for the Conservative candidates was "an endorsement of the truth of President Lincoln's letter to Drake & Co. As he did right

in writing that letter, so well calculated to give quiet to the State, every good and loyal man should give him the benefit of his endorsement at the polls, by voting the anti-Jacobin ticket."<sup>100</sup> Vallandigham lost on Election Day, and so did Krekel.

Despite the war effort, nativism remained. Reporting on a Radical meeting in St. Charles early in 1864, the *Republican* suggested, "It would be impossible for me to give you even a synopsis of Colonel Krekel's speech: so interlarded was it with Teutonic phrases, that one who is a native-born citizen finds difficulty in comprehending his meaning. Suffice it that he talked much, as a matter of course, about the nigger. . . ." The reporter added, "The meeting then adjourned, and a major portion of the 'freedom shriekers' repaired to the nearest beer saloon to finish up the night in drinking."<sup>101</sup>

The *Missouri Democrat* was kinder to "Kribben & Co." and



**... compared to Conservatives, “Kribben and associates has the ADVANTAGE OF BEING HONEST.”**

—*Missouri Democrat*

their belief that Lincoln “entertains an undue partiality for Cuffy and is disposed to push him forward entirely too rapidly, when he puts a bayonet in his hand,” and concluded that, compared to Conservatives, “Kribben and associates has the advantage of being honest.”<sup>102</sup>

Krekel, also unhappy with President Lincoln and refusing to “stand still,” was one of seventy Missouri delegates to the Slave State Freedom Convention held in Louisville, Kentucky. There, Krekel passed a resolution calling for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution “to secure freedom to every human being within its jurisdiction.”<sup>103</sup> When he passed another limiting the president to a single term, the *Anzeiger* insisted, “The passage of this resolution was by no means a victory of the ultra-Radicals, for Col. Krekel repudiated the charge that it was an indirect declaration against Mr. Lincoln.”<sup>104</sup>

Martial law remained an important intimidation tool in the hands of the Radicals and its abuses an equally important public relations tool in the hands of Democrats and Conservative Unionists. After Kribben authored resolutions at a Democratic meeting in St. Louis, a colleague suggested, “I say I don’t know but the brakes may be put on tomorrow, and that Chris. Kribben, for the resolutions he has promulgated here, and I, humble as I am, for endorsing them, may be ordered down South — or somewhere else (laughter) — or ordered to answer at headquarters for what we have chanced to say upon

this occasion. Well sir, so be it.”<sup>105</sup> A month later, Kribben, with two young children, had to deal with the death of his wife, Edith, at the age of 28. He did not, however, have to deal with the new provost marshal general, Colonel John Sanderson.

James Judge did. In April, a deputy provost marshal arrested him in St. Louis on the evening of his divorce trial, at which Krekel represented Judge’s wife, after he stated in a saloon that he wanted to see the Confederacy recognized. He was convicted of violating his oath and ordered to pay a fine of \$10,000. After Krekel reported to Sanderson that, after paying the judgment awarded his wife, Judge had only \$6,000, he was imprisoned and, with no notice of the proceedings, the sheriff sold at auction his property for half of what it was worth, and the government paid Krekel for collection of the fine.<sup>106</sup>

In June, the Democratic State convention met in St. Louis “to resurrect and reorganize the Democratic Party in Missouri,” which according to the *Missouri Democrat*, “has of late years been submerged in the weight of treason which clung to it.”<sup>107</sup> When Democrats, united in their opposition to emancipation, split again on continuation of the war, Kribben now did not “stand still,” but he became a “Peace Democrat,” calling for an immediate cessation of hostilities and a negotiated settlement with the Confederacy.<sup>108</sup>

The following month, Krekel wrote a letter to the *Missouri Democrat* explaining the need for

a convention to “put Missouri on its road to freedom and greatness,” stating it was more important now “than any personal preference as to the presidency can possibly be!”<sup>109</sup> By the end of July, Radical support for Fremont had nearly disappeared. Identifying only three exceptions, the Radical *Neue Zeit* reported, “In Missouri, nobody appears to be willing to make Fremont speeches,” and “Arnold Krekel and Frederick Muench are really opposed.”<sup>110</sup>

A provost marshal had intercepted a letter from Kribben to Colonel Robert Renick suggesting he also attend the meeting in Canada with other peace-at-any-price Democrats. Sanderson used it as evidence of a conspiracy by a secret organization called the Order of American Knights to inaugurate another rebellion in the loyal states of the West.<sup>111</sup> He claimed Vallandigham had conferred with “conspirators,” including Kribben, who “met in conclave, upon foreign soil, to confer with him and aid him in the organization of this secret league of sworn traitors.”<sup>112</sup> While many, including President Lincoln, questioned the accuracy and political motivation of the report, the *Missouri Democrat* published it in its entirety. Another paper insisted evidence was “at hand” concerning the motives of the conferees, “which in due time, no doubt, will reach the public eye.”<sup>113</sup> The *Republican* criticized Sanderson’s “extremely bungling style, full of contradictions and inconsistencies,” and regretting that those implicated had “all channels of denial closed to them.”<sup>114</sup>

## MARTIAL LAW WAS INEFFECTIVE against bushwhackers in St. Charles.

President Lincoln was renominated, and the Democrats nominated George McClellan, a “War Democrat,” who supported continuation of the war and restoration of the Union. However, the party platform was written by Vallandigham and other “Peace Democrats,” including Kribben. After McClellan repudiated the platform in his acceptance letter, the *Chicago Tribune* reported, “Chris Kribben, another peace apostle, and one of the electors at large in this State, declares that unless some explanation of this letter is made, satisfactorily to the peace wing of the party, he and his friends will fly the track. In the rank and file, this revolt is open and violent.”<sup>115</sup>

Nevertheless, Kribben became an at-large McClellan presidential elector in Missouri. Reporting on a rally in Springfield, Illinois, the *Daily Dispatch* suggested, “The speech of Chris. Kribben was a violent secession one, such as the Honorable Chris would find unhealthy to deliver at his home in St. Louis,” which was still under Martial Law.<sup>116</sup>

Martial law was ineffective against bushwhackers in St. Charles, where Kribben spoke at a McClellan rally on October first. A few days later, fifty volunteers, mostly Germans, joined Colonel Krekel after he reportedly warned, “It was no longer a time to speak, the present demanded action; he had come with his boys ready to fight the bushwhackers.”<sup>117</sup> A week later the *Missouri Democrat* reported Kribben had moderated his views on the war, supporting “fighting the rebels with the olive branch in one hand and the sword in the other.”<sup>118</sup>

Kribben continued to denounce Lincoln in two languages. His claim that there was “no more vilely treacherous man” than Lincoln did not go over well in the president’s home town, and a second speech by Kribben in German was cancelled in Springfield.<sup>119</sup> On Election Day it became clear that now Kribben “no longer understood the times.”<sup>120</sup> Lincoln was reelected, Missouri voters approved a state constitutional convention by a 68 percent majority, and Krekel was elected as a delegate. When the convention gathered in St. Louis in January 1865, the Radicals were in complete control, electing Krekel, now described as “an extremist of the most pronounced type,” as president and Charles Drake vice-president of the convention.<sup>121</sup> Its first action was to emancipate the remaining slaves in Missouri, and Krekel signed the Ordinance of Emancipation on January 11, 1865.

Congressman Blair had pointed out almost three years earlier that he and Krekel had come to the same conclusion—that “it was the *negro question*, and not the *slavery question* which made the war.”<sup>122</sup> The unity of the Convention quickly dissolved as, having decided the “slavery question,” the Convention turned to the “Negro question.” Krekel, not yet ready to “stand still,” stated, “In knocking the chains from four million of our people our work has been but half done. We must elevate them in the scale of humanity, for if they were excluded from all political privileges the old spirit of the master would soon assert itself, and the power of the aristocrat would be stronger than ever.”<sup>123</sup> Edward Bates called for a halt and

complained about Krekel’s influence: “The Convention seems to be running the same career as the French Legislative Assembly, and the Turners’ Hall begins to assume the powers of the Jacobin Club.”<sup>124</sup>

President Lincoln nominated Krekel as a federal judge on March 6, and the United States Senate confirmed him three days later. Krekel did not take the bench immediately, but campaigned for the new constitution, written under the influence of Charles Drake, who had thoroughly alienated the German community. The new constitution was soundly beaten in St. Louis and St. Charles County, causing Edward Bates to write, “And so, Mr. Drake is plucked bare, and cast down upon his own dunghill. In St. Charles, Krekel fares no better.”<sup>125</sup> Nevertheless, the new constitution was ratified by the statewide vote. Krekel took the bench, no longer to be part of the continuing political debate over the “negro question.”

Christian Kribben died on June 16, 1865, and would also not be part of the debate. General Alexander Donovan eulogized him as “a profound lawyer, an able advocate, a statesman of profound learning, the able speaker of the popular branch of the Legislature, and the efficient representative.”<sup>126</sup> Ten days after Kribben’s death, Frank Blair returned to St. Louis to lead opposition to the Radicals. Kribben would have been very comfortable in the postwar Democratic Party, for which Blair became the vice-presidential candidate in 1868.<sup>127</sup>



## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> "Spirit of the German Press," *Daily Missouri Republican*, July 31, 1863.

William Taussig was born in 1826 in Prague and educated at the University of Prague before coming to the United States in 1847. He became a judge of the St. Louis County Court as a reform candidate and was reelected in 1863 as presiding judge.

<sup>2</sup> Walter D. Kamphoefner, "Arnold Krekel: A Republican for Immigrant Rights and Racial Equality," *Boone-Duden Historical Society Newsletter* (April 2015). Krekel attended a school in Mannheim before being apprenticed to a spice merchant in Cologne. By the age of five, Kribben had shown a talent for languages and began to study Latin before attending private school in Cologne. Krekel attended St. Charles College and studied surveying, while Kribben worked as a clerk in his family's grocery in St. Charles. *Ibid.* It was later pointed out, "Christian Kribben had not only mastered by study our laws, but he had fully mastered our language. He spoke it as fluently and correctly as any lawyer at the bar. Besides this, he was . . . logical and forcible in his declarations, at times reaching the domain of impassioned eloquence." *Ibid.* *The History of the Bench and Bar in Missouri: with Reminiscences of the Prominent Lawyers of the Past, and a Record of the Law's Leaders of the Present*. Ed. by J.D. Stewart (St. Louis: The Legal Publishing Company, 1898).

<sup>3</sup> Paul C. Nagel, *The German Migration to Missouri, My Family's Story* (Kansas City: Kansas City Star Books, 2002), 61. The pastor of a German Protestant congregation in St. Charles described Kribben as "a disowned member of the Catholic Church disowned for misdemeanors and is an agent for that infidel and infamous newspaper—the *Antipriest*." St. Charles County Circuit Court Records, State v. Heyer, Box 21. Likewise, the thirty-eight members of the Friends of Religious Enlightenment who founded the Association of Rational Christians in 1844 elected Friedrich Muench president and Krekel a director. Anita M. Mallinckrodt, *From Knights to Pioneers: One German Family in Westphalia and Missouri* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Press, 1994), 230. A contemporary reported Krekel "embraced liberal views on religious matters at a very early age, and though perhaps not an infidel in the real meaning of that word, he does not believe in the divine origin of the Bible or the biblical account of creation." *History of St. Charles County, 1765-1885* (reprint, St. Louis: Paul V. Cochrane, 1969), 107.

The St. Charles County portion of the *History of St. Charles, Montgomery, and Warren Counties* was reissued in 1997 as the *History of St. Charles County, 1765-1885* by the Partria Press with an introduction by Paul R. Hollrah and an index, referred to hereafter as the "1885 history." All page references are to the 1997 edition.

<sup>4</sup> *Daily Madisonian*, November 14, 1844.

<sup>5</sup> 1885 History, 201-3. *Boon's Lick Times*, March 14, 1846. Frederick A. Hodes, *Rising on the River, St. Louis 1822-1850* (Tooele, Utah: Patrice Press, 2009), 634-35.

<sup>6</sup> *Boon's Lick Times*, August 12, 1847.

<sup>7</sup> Perry McCandliss, *History of Missouri, 1820-1860, Volume II* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1971), 243-44. While serving, Kribben published accounts of the Mexican War in the *Republican* and other newspapers around the country and rose to the rank of colonel. He put his linguistic talents to good use, beginning a study of Spanish and, while stationed at Chihuahua, edited a newspaper printed half in Spanish and half in English.

<sup>8</sup> *Demokrat*, January 6, 1859. Krekel "never had any sympathy with the pro-slavery tendencies and antecedents of his party." 1885 History, 200.

<sup>9</sup> *Demokrat*, January 31, 1852. Kristen Layne Anderson, *Abolitionizing Missouri* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2016), 32-33.

<sup>10</sup> *Demokrat*, May 29, 1852.

<sup>11</sup> *New Albany Daily Tribune*, May 28, 1852.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, May 22, 1852. When Kribben resigned from his position as editor of the newspaper a week later, Krekel reported, "The reasons for his resignation appear to be differences with the paper's founders and owners. We wish him all the best." *Demokrat*, May 29, 1852.

<sup>13</sup> "Speech of Col. Lewis V. Bogy" (St. Louis: St. Louis Times office, 1852).

<sup>14</sup> *Republican*, July 31, 1852. The following year the Continental Sunday was under attack after the Grand Jury in St. Louis, packed with "temperance men and Sabbath-bats," began a persecution of German innkeepers for serving alcoholic beverages on Sundays. When a circuit judge held Boernstein in contempt for refusing to answer questions under oath about tavern keepers who advertised in his newspaper, he retained Kribben to represent him.

<sup>15</sup> *Demokrat*, July 31, 1852.

<sup>16</sup> Anderson, *Abolitionizing Missouri*, 18-19. Edith Delafield was born at Columbus, Ohio, on March 23, 1836. The Kribbens had two children, Bertram D. and Edith Wallace. Germans with non-German wives and who had immigrated early were more likely to be pro-slavery. Harrison Anthony Trexler, *Slavery in Missouri, 1804-1865* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press), 1914, 166, n. 112. Walter D. Kamphoefner, "Arnold Krekel: A Republican for Immigrant Rights and Racial Equality," *Boone-Duden Historical Society Newsletter* (April 2015).

<sup>17</sup> *Washington Sentinel*, "Letter by D.R. Atchison," June 17, 1854. Bay, Gratz Brown, Frank Blair, and Alexander Kayser were also at the meeting.

<sup>18</sup> F.I. Herriott, *Senator Stephen Douglas and the Germans in 1854* (Illinois State Historical Society, 1912), 15. Anderson, *Abolitionizing Missouri*, 47.

<sup>19</sup> *Republican*, July 27, 1854. Anderson, *Abolitionizing Missouri*, 51-52. The *Republican*, now anti-Benton with the decline of the Whig Party, challenged Alexander Kayser, a leading pro-Benton German in St. Louis, to debate Kribben in English and German. Kayser responded, "I say: I am willing at the times fixed by me, to meet any Whig or enemy of Democracy, be his name Kribben, Stephen Arnold Douglas, or John Cutthroat Richardson of Quincy. Against which, on the other side, I despise the assistance of no Democrat." *Republican*, July 26, 1854.

## ENDNOTES continued

- <sup>20</sup> Heinrich H. Maurer, "Early German Nationalism in America," *American Journal of Sociology* 22, No. 4 (January 1917), 530–31. *Demokrat*, July 22, 1854. Krekel responded that he had been "brought up in the Catholic Church myself, with an aged father, sisters, and brothers now worshipping at its altars in our very midst. . . ." Anderson, *Abolitionizing Missouri*, 77.
- <sup>21</sup> *Demokrat*, June 24 and July 29, 1854.
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, July 22, 1854.
- <sup>23</sup> *Republican*, September 26, 1856.
- <sup>24</sup> *Hannibal Messenger*, July 29, 1856. Krekel condemned those who called for an "America ruled by Americans." Mallinckrodt, *Knights to Pioneers*, 289. Kribben also spoke to Democrats of German birth at Tammany Hall in New York City. *Brooklyn Eagle*, October 7, 1856.
- <sup>25</sup> McClure, "A Century of Missouri Politics," 321.
- <sup>26</sup> *National Era*, May 7, 1857.
- <sup>27</sup> *Glasgow Weekly Times*, July 23, 1857.
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, August 27, 1857. Pro-slavery feelings had led the citizens to change the name of Van Buren County, just south of Jackson County, to Cass County in 1848.
- <sup>29</sup> *Republican*, July 21, 1857.
- <sup>30</sup> *Lexington Express*, reprinted in the *Liberty Tribune*, September 3, 1858; *Republican*, January 7, 1858. Kribben was under the command of General Daniel M. Frost. State statute allowed the governor to appoint one inspector for each district in the state, who "shall regard himself as acting on behalf of the State, for the preservation of its military honor, as well as its arms and munitions, and he shall prefer and prosecute charges against any and all officers and soldiers whose conduct shall be prejudicial to the interest of either." 1857 Missouri the Session Laws, 36.
- <sup>31</sup> Bay, *Reminiscences of the Bench and Bar of Missouri*, 352–53.
- <sup>32</sup> Anderson, *Abolitionizing Missouri*, 52–55.
- <sup>33</sup> Chr. Kribben to Robert Marcellus Stewart, June 9, 1858, Robert Marcellus Stewart Collection, Missouri State Archives.
- <sup>34</sup> *Missouri Republican*, July 28, 1858.
- <sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>37</sup> "Mass Union Meeting at Cottleville," *Demokrat*, July 8, 1858, in Mallinckrodt, *A History of Augusta, Missouri and its Area 1:41, 1:26*.
- <sup>38</sup> *Demokrat*, July 29, 1858. *St. Louis Evening News*, August 3, 1858. *Demokrat*, August 5, 1858. Allison Clark Efford, "Race Should be as Unimportant as Ancestry: German Radicals and African American Citizenship in the Missouri Constitution of 1865," *Missouri Historical Review* (hereafter, MHR), Vol. 104, No. 3 (April 2010): 148.
- <sup>39</sup> See Ch. Kribben to Robert M. Stewart, August 25, 1858, MSA, where Kribben expressed his lack of confidence in General Frost. See also Pearl T. Ponce, "The Noise of Democracy: The Lecompton Constitution in Congress and Kansas," in Jonathan Earle and Diane Mutti Burke, eds., *Bleeding Kansas, Bleeding Missouri* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2013), 85–92.
- <sup>40</sup> *Glasgow Weekly Journal*, October 7, 1858. *Lexington Express*, reprinted in *Liberty Tribune*, September 3, 1858.
- <sup>41</sup> *Missouri Democrat*, December 30, 1858.
- <sup>42</sup> *Glasgow Weekly Times*, January 6, 1859. "Good enough Morgan" was a talking point used to influence voters temporarily in the period preceding an election.
- <sup>43</sup> *Demokrat*, January 6, 1859.
- <sup>44</sup> *New York Daily Tribune*, January 10, 1859.
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>46</sup> *Randolph Citizen*, January 28, 1859. Harriet C. Frazier, *Runaway and Freed Missouri Slaves and Those Who Helped Them, 1763–1865* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2004), 150. In April the governor dispatched troops to the border with orders not to cross into Kansas Territory. Tony R. Mullis, "The Illusion of Security: The Government's Response to the Jayhawker Threat of Late 1860," in Earle and Burke, eds., *Bleeding Kansas, Bleeding Missouri*, 110.
- <sup>47</sup> *Randolph Citizen*, February 5, 1859. Sunday fanatics called the delegation from St. Louis "Beer House and Whiskey Shop politicians striving only to pass such local bills as would propitiate the Dutch, including Sunday sales and a County (Court) Bill." *Liberty Tribune*, April 1, 1859.
- <sup>48</sup> *Republican*, February 5, 1859. See Anderson, *Abolitionizing Missouri*, 74–75. When Kribben argued that coercive measures by the legislature could never make individuals moral, Drake responded by quoting the findings of a Grand Jury on the evil effects of Sunday amusements, including Sunday theatricals. After moving to St. Louis, Christian Kribben and his younger brother, William, became active in the German theater; Christian also played in a symphony orchestra. Heinrich Boernstein, a prominent stage manager, described Christian Kribben as one of the two "best romantic leads I was able to raise." Heinrich Boernstein, *Memoirs of a Nobody: the Missouri years of an Austrian Radical, 1849–1866*, edited by Steven Rowan (St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 1997), 241.
- <sup>49</sup> *New York Daily Tribune*, January 10, 1859. An ultra-pro-slavery newspaper wrote, "Mr. Kribben hails from St. Louis—is a foreigner—a national Democrat with anti-slavery, anti-Sunday, Red Republican proclivities." *Glasgow Weekly Times*, February 29, 1859.



<sup>50</sup> *New York Daily Tribune*, December 16, 1959. Bay, *Reminiscences of the Bench and Bar of Missouri*, 352–53. The same political fact created a dilemma for National Democrats when it came to governance issues in St. Louis, a political subdivision of the state, whose legislature they controlled. In December 1858, Blair's newspaper, the *Missouri Democrat*, criticized the three-member St. Louis County Court, on which anti-slavery city residents were grossly underrepresented. After the legislature passed a bill replacing the existing county court with a seven-member (five from the city and two from the county) commission elected on a general ticket, Governor Stewart vetoed it, claiming it was unconstitutional. After an unsuccessful attempt to override, Kribben introduced a compromise bill addressing the constitutional concerns but replacing the county court, but with five commissioners (three elected in the city and two in the county). The governor signed the bill, but Blair later described Kribben as "the author of the odious county court bill, authorizing the governor to impose officers upon us not of our choosing," *Democrat*, July 16, 1860. *Hannibal Messenger*, March 8, 1859. Thomas S. Barclay, *The Movement for Municipal Home Rule in St. Louis* (Columbia: University of Missouri Studies, 1943), 24–26.

<sup>51</sup> *Liberty Tribune*, December 23, 1859.

<sup>52</sup> *Missouri Democrat*, January 13, 1860. Louis Gerteis, *Civil War St. Louis* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001), 312–13. The bill also banned manumission without a \$2,000 bond that the freedman will leave and not return to the state, and freedmen under 18 were to be apprenticed until they turned 21. *Janesville Morning Gazette*, December 28, 1859.

<sup>53</sup> *Glasgow Weekly Times*, March 15, 1860. *Lexington Express*, reprinted in the *Liberty Tribune*, March 23, 1860.

<sup>54</sup> *Liberty Tribune*, March 23, 1860.

<sup>55</sup> "St. Louis News," in *Madison Wisconsin State Journal*, March 22, 1860. The special session was called to address the unfinished railroads in Missouri. The election of Kribben as speaker led one political observer to explain, "The so-called Anti Railroad men, the Coffee men, and the enemies of Drake, are said to have combined on him, and thus secured the nomination." Corwin to Snyder, February 29, 1860, Dr. John F. Snyder Collection, Missouri History Museum (hereafter, MHM). Railroad men called Kribben "a captious and partial presiding officer," and they complained about the "factious efforts of half a dozen ruthless politicians, whose efforts seconded by a speaker who has shown himself incompetent for his duties." *Republican*, March 12, 1860, reprinted in the *Liberty Tribune*, March 16, 1860. The bill passed, and the governor vetoed it. The House had passed a resolution to adjourn, and many members had gone home. When the Senate did not concur, the House ordered the sergeant-at-arms to go after the absentees, but Speaker Kribben countermanded the order and the legislature adjourned sine die without considering an override of the veto. *Glasgow Weekly Times*, March 22, 1860. *St. Joseph Weekly Free Democrat*, March 24, 1860.

<sup>56</sup> "Procedures of the Opposition Meeting," *Demokrat*, December 29, 1859, in Mallinckrodt, *History of Augusta*, 1:31.

<sup>57</sup> "Preparation for Struggle," *Demokrat*, February 2, 1860, in Mallinckrodt, *History of Augusta*, 1:38.

<sup>58</sup> *Republican*, March 6, 1860. The letter made it impossible for him to be the candidate of the Opposition, "which failed to perfect their organization in Missouri." C.H. McClure, "A Century of Missouri Politics," *MHR*, Vol. 15, No. 321. *Republican*, March 28, 1860.

<sup>59</sup> *Weekly West*, March 24, 1860.

<sup>60</sup> *Memoirs of Gustave Koerner*, 1809–1866, 2:88–89, cited in "The Republican Party in the 'Border-Slave' States," 159.

<sup>61</sup> *Anzeiger*, June 15, 1860. Edward Bates wished Krekel had waited until his "Lincoln letter and after the Baltimore Conventions," in *The Diary of Edward Bates, 1859–1866*, June 16, 1860, edited by Howard K. Beale (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1933), 135.

<sup>62</sup> Gerteis, *Civil War St. Louis*, 76.

<sup>63</sup> Ch. Kribben to Capt. J.F. Snyder, June 25, 1860, Dr. John F. Snyder Collection, MHM. After the request from Col. John F. Snyder, Kribben agreed to comply "by the time General Frost returned from Washington." Jas. S. Hackney to Col. J.F. Snyder, May 16, 1860; B.F. Massey to Snyder, June 4, 1860; Jas. S. Hackney to Col. J.F. Snyder, June 11, 1860; Patrick Gorman to Col. J.F. Snyder, June 15, 1860, Dr. John F. Snyder Collection, MHM. Receipt of the 45 muskets, however, prompted a complaint that "the arms, though perfectly clean and in order, are very indifferent and unfit for service." J.F. Snyder to G.A. Parsons, *Journal of the House of the State of Missouri*, 1860, 656.

<sup>64</sup> *Missouri Democrat*, August 25, 1860.

<sup>65</sup> *North Iowa Times*, October 10, 1860.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, July 25, 1860. *Press and Tribune*, July 25, 1860.

<sup>67</sup> *Press and Tribune*, September 26, 1860. *Ibid.*, August 25, 1860.

<sup>68</sup> *Glasgow Weekly Times*, October 4, 1860.

<sup>69</sup> *Missouri Democrat*, November 2, 1860. "The Republican Meeting in Augusta," *Demokrat*, October 7, 1860, in Mallinckrodt, *History of Augusta*, 1:47.

<sup>70</sup> *Republican*, January 13, 1861.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> "The Union Meeting in Cottleville," *Demokrat*, February 14, 1861, in Mallinckrodt, *History of Augusta*, 1:55.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, February 15, 1861.

<sup>74</sup> A. Krekel to F.P. Blair, June 1, 1861, in James Peckham, *Gen. Nathaniel Lyon and Missouri in 1861* (New York: American News Company, 1866), 215. Former speaker John Coffee, Dr. John F. Snyder and Daniel M. Frost all served as officers in the Confederate Army.

## ENDNOTES continued

- <sup>75</sup> Phillips, *Damn Yankee*, 215–39. Gerteis, *Civil War St. Louis*, 94. Former governor Stewart attempted to join the Union Army, but his health kept him from serving. See also Dennis K. Boman, *Lincoln and Citizens' Rights in Civil War Missouri* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011), 44. The standard for emancipating slaves had been established by Congress in the Confiscation Act passed in early August 1861. Boman, *Lincoln and Citizens' Rights*, 56–57.
- <sup>76</sup> Boman, *Lincoln and Citizens' Rights*, 117. Under orders to exclude slaves of loyal masters from Union camps, Krekel wrote his commander in March 1862, "A Negro boy gave valuable information in conducting the command, and I would ask for permission to retain him until the war is over, as he cannot safely return." Lieutenant Colonel A. Krekel to General John M. Schofield, St. Charles, March 10, 1862, *OR*, 7:333.
- <sup>77</sup> *Missouri Democrat*, June 12, 1862.
- <sup>78</sup> Anderson, *Abolitionizing Missouri*, 100–103.
- <sup>79</sup> Walter D. Kamphoefner, *Germans in the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Press, 2006), 345.
- <sup>80</sup> Edward Bates to Hamilton Gamble, September 21, 1862, Bates Family Papers, MHM.
- <sup>81</sup> *Missouri Democrat*, January 20, 1863. *Chicago Daily Tribune*, October 30, 1862. *Demokrat*, October 30, 1862, in Mallinckrodt, *History of Augusta, Missouri*, 1:81.
- <sup>82</sup> *Missouri Democrat*, December 17, 1862. "The Infamy against Krekel and the Germans Becomes Greater," *Demokrat*, December 4, 1862, in Mallinckrodt, *History of Augusta*, 1:84. While his military exploits earned Krekel the vote of almost all voters in uniform and nearly 80 percent in St. Charles County, some in the German press criticized U.S. Senator John Henderson, who tried to get Krekel to reach "an accommodation of principles" with Rollins, and blamed Henderson when Krekel received less than three percent of the combined vote in Audrain, Boone, Monroe, Pike and Ralls counties on Election Day. *Chicago Daily Tribune*, October 30, 1862. *Demokrat*, October 30, 1862, in Mallinckrodt, *History of Augusta*, 1:81.
- <sup>83</sup> *Neue Zeit*, in *Missouri Republican*, October 15, 1863. Anderson, *Abolitionizing Missouri*, 140.
- <sup>84</sup> Gari Carter, *Troubled State: Civil War Journals of Franklin Archibald Dick* (Kirksville: Truman State University Press, 2008), 91, 114, 119.
- <sup>85</sup> *Republican*, November 5, 1862. Loyalty oath of Christian Kribben, October 28, 1862. Radical C.P. Johns received 6,386 votes, Conservative S.T. Glover received 5,397 votes, and Kribben received 3,396 votes. *Republican*, November 10, 1862.
- <sup>86</sup> William Kribben to Theobald Engel, March 4, 1863, F1638; March 23, 1863, F1638, Provost Marshal's Papers, MSA. William asked Christian to get him a speedy trial or parole and sought permission to travel with a guard to see his brother, who was to act as his counsel.
- <sup>87</sup> Clover to Dick, February 26, 1863, F1638, Provost Marshal's Papers, MSA.
- <sup>88</sup> Letter from Barton Able to Col. F.A. Dick, March 6, F1638; Parole, Special Order 138: Kribben Acquitted, Released. May 23, 1863, F1359, Provost Marshal's Papers, MSA. William Kribben was piloting a steamboat traveling from Cairo to Memphis when federal officials discovered it was carrying rebel mail, and Kribben was a suspect based on the testimony of a female slave and a free black woman. Provost Marshal Letters Case in Brief, February 20, 1863, F1593; Statement of Charles W. Conklin, February 24, 1863, F1638; Statement of Christine Simmons, February 25, 1863, F1638; Statement of Sarah Grey February 26, 1863, F1638; Statement of Kribben, N.D. F1638; Letter from Allen Blacker to Colonel F.A. Dick, May 14, 1863, F1638; Letters from Allen Blacker, May 14, 1863, F1638. Missouri's Union Provost Marshal Papers, MSA.
- <sup>89</sup> "Protest Meeting at Augusta," *Demokrat*, March 26, 1863, in Mallinckrodt, *History of Augusta*, 1:92.
- <sup>90</sup> Kamphoefner, *Westphalians*, 131, 134, 123–124. "Germans Increase Land Holdings," *Demokrat*, October 2, 1879, in Mallinckrodt, *History of Augusta*, 2:405.
- <sup>91</sup> Remarks of Arnold Krekel at Warrenton, June 13, 1863, MHS, 8;
- <sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>93</sup> Mallinckrodt, trans., "Missouri Emancipation," *Demokrat*, July 16, 1863, in Mallinckrodt, *History of Augusta*, 1:99.
- <sup>94</sup> *Ibid.* Remarks of Arnold Krekel at Warrenton, June 13, 1863, MHM, 8; Benjamin Merkel, "The Anti-Slavery Controversy in Missouri, 1819–1865," 32.
- <sup>95</sup> Klement, *The Copperheads in the Middle West* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 50, 99. After meeting with New York Governor Horatio Seymour in Albany in August, Kribben wrote Colonel Robert Renick expressing his frustration. "I sincerely believe that Seymour is infinitely more radical at heart than he can be permitted to express for he is a public officer," he said, accusing him of "cowardice." Frank Van Der Linden, *Dark Intrigue: The True Story of Civil War Conspiracy* (Golden, Colo.: Fulcrum Publishing, 2007), 88–89.
- <sup>96</sup> *Weekly National Intelligencer*, September 10, 1863; Anderson, *Abolitionizing Missouri*, 135–36.
- <sup>97</sup> Edward Bates to Hamilton Gamble, October 10, 1863, Broadhead Papers, MHS, Diary of Edward Bates, September 30, 1863, 308.
- <sup>98</sup> *Weekly National Intelligencer*, October 8, 1863; *Missouri Democrat*, October 5, 1863; *New York World*, October 3, 1863; *Washington Evening Star*, September 3, 1863.
- <sup>99</sup> *Weekly National Intelligencer*, October 1, 1863; *Missouri Democrat*, October 21, 1863.
- <sup>100</sup> *Missouri Democrat and Republican*, November 2 and 3, 1863. A strong showing by Radicals in state circuit-judge elections convinced Lincoln that recruiting slaves was politically feasible in Missouri and "all able-bodied colored men, whether free or slave," were received into the service. Blassingame, "The Recruitment on Negro Troops in Missouri during the Civil War," *MHR*, 326–29.
- <sup>101</sup> *Missouri Republican*, February 7, 1864. See also Benjamin Merkel, "The Anti-Slavery Controversy in Missouri, 1819–1865," 43–44.



- <sup>102</sup> *Missouri Democrat*, March 1, 1864. In "Bidding for the Rebels," the same newspaper identified "a very spirited competition between two enterprising political firms, whose bidding of late has been a most lively character. One of these, Messrs. Kribben & Co., a democratic house, whose principal place of business is at Washington Hall in this city, made the first proposition." *Missouri Democrat*, March 3, 1864.
- <sup>103</sup> *Republican*, February 24, 1864.
- <sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, February 29, 1864
- <sup>105</sup> *State Sentinel*, February 27, 1864. In February 1864, the Supreme Court ruled courts had no power to issue a writ of *habeas corpus* to a military commission. *Ex parte Vallandigham*, 1 Wallace, 242.
- <sup>106</sup> Proceedings of military commission against Judge, May 12, 1864; Letter from Arnold Krekel to Colonel Sanderson, September 24, 1864; Accounting by Sheriff Gatzweiler, F 1353; Accounting by Sheriff Gatzweiler, F 1353; Missouri's Union Provost Marshal Papers, MSA. *Judge v. Booge*, St. Charles County Circuit Court records, 13, 45, 50.
- <sup>107</sup> *Missouri Democrat*, June 17, 1864.
- <sup>108</sup> *Ibid.* The Missouri delegation selected to attend the Democratic National Convention in Chicago was composed entirely of "Peace Democrats."
- <sup>109</sup> *Missouri Democrat*, July 11, 1864. The *Missouri Democrat* insisted this position conflicted sharply with the express opinions of some of "the more imperious of the German leaders, who wish to subordinate all other questions to the single one of the Presidency."
- <sup>110</sup> *Neue Zeit*, August 1, 1864, from *Missouri Democrat*, August 17, 1864.
- <sup>111</sup> Frank L. Klement, *Dark Lanterns: Secret Political Societies, Conspiracies and Treason Trials in the Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1984), 177-78. Klement, *Copperheads of the Middle West*, 178.
- <sup>112</sup> *New York Times*, October 19, 1864, from *Missouri Democrat*, July 28, 1864.
- <sup>113</sup> *Missouri Democrat*, July 31, 1864.
- <sup>114</sup> *Republican*, July 29, 1864. Klement, *Dark Lanterns*, 87-88.
- <sup>115</sup> *Chicago Tribune*, September 14, 1864.
- <sup>116</sup> *Daily Dispatch*, September 3, 1864. Anderson, *Abolitionizing Missouri*, 140.
- <sup>117</sup> "St. Charles County under Arms," *Demokrat*, October 6, 1864, in Mallinckrodt, *History of Augusta*, 1:118. Liberty Tribune, October 7, 1864.
- <sup>118</sup> *Republican*, October 14, 1864.
- <sup>119</sup> *Chicago Tribune*, October 12, 1864.
- <sup>120</sup> "Spirit of the German Press" *Daily Missouri Republican*, July 31, 1863. Gerteis, *Civil War St. Louis*, 197. Klement, *Dark Lanterns*, 136-51.
- <sup>121</sup> Galusha Anderson, *Story of a Border City during the Civil War* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1908), 344.
- <sup>122</sup> Donnie D. Bellamy, "The Persistence of Colonization in Missouri," *MHR*, Vol. 72 (October 1977): 13.
- <sup>123</sup> *Gallatin North Missourian*, May 11, 1865.
- <sup>124</sup> *The Diary of Edward Bates*, 447. Bates had resigned from Lincoln's cabinet.
- <sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 486. Krekel would be instrumental in the founding of Lincoln Institute in Jefferson City, the predecessor of Lincoln University. He served on its first board of directors, lectured, and raised funds. Barnes-Krekel Hall was the first women's dormitory at Lincoln constructed in 1881. Walter D. Kamphoefner, "Arnold Krekel,"
- <sup>126</sup> *Republican*, June 17, 1865.
- <sup>127</sup> Mallinckrodt, trans, "Federal Judge Arnold Krekel," *Demokrat*, July 19, 1888, in Mallinckrodt, *History of Augusta*, 3:543. Anderson, *Abolitionizing Missouri*, 1-2.

# Joseph Robidoux III, the 1780 Battle of St. Louis, & the St. Louis Robidoux Legacy

by STEPHEN L. KLING, JR.



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Panoramic View of St. Louis  
during the 1780 attack,  
painted by Anton Batov.  
(Image: THGC Publishing)

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While much has been written about the founder of St. Joseph, Missouri, Joseph Robidoux IV, his father has not received the attention he deserves.<sup>1</sup> On February 12, 1750, Joseph Marie Robidoux was born in the Montreal area to Joseph Robidoux II and Marie Ann Le Blanc.<sup>2</sup> His ancestors had come from France to Canada in 1664, first settling in Quebec. Joseph III was the first-born child and only son of the marriage, which also produced six daughters.



## St. Louis grew quickly, and by the time the Robidoux arrived, the town already had around 115 houses. . . .

Joseph II subsequently left Montreal with his son, leaving his six daughters in Montreal with relatives.

The girls' grandfather, Joseph I, his second wife, and most of the large family of children Joseph I fathered through two marriages, remained in Canada, so there was plenty of family to watch over them. Most eventually married into local Montreal society, though some resettled in Detroit during 1778–82.<sup>3</sup> Modern authorities differ as to whether Joseph II's wife died before (and perhaps prompting) his departure or whether she and a daughter or two subsequently moved to St. Louis after Joseph II was established there.<sup>4</sup> We do know that at least one of the younger daughters, Marie Josephte, later moved to St. Louis in the 1790s after losing two husbands in Montreal. In any event, father and son headed to St. Louis from Detroit, arriving in the latter part of 1770.<sup>5</sup> They likely would have used the lake and river system for most of their journey, either crossing Lake Michigan to use the portage at Chicago down the Illinois River, or the Wabash River to the Ohio River, to eventually reach the Mississippi River.

St. Louis was founded in 1764 by Pierre Laclède and a number of other area Frenchmen eager to establish a new trading post near the Missouri River, which was not subject to periodic flooding. As St. Louis was built on high limestone bluffs, it was an ideal location. While we do not know the exact reasons for the departure of Joseph II and Joseph III from Montreal, they may have been evading the new British Protestant authority in Canada

and attendant restrictions on French traders, seeking new financial fortunes and opportunity in the west, or some combination of both.<sup>6</sup>

St. Louis grew quickly, and by the time the Robidoux arrived, the town already had around 115 houses, of which 15 were stone and the rest, save one, were built in the French vertical log style.<sup>7</sup> Joseph II must have been a man of some means, because he bought a lot on April 4, 1771, and contracted to have a new home built on it, although it had not been completed by the time of his death on September 12, 1771.<sup>8</sup> Joseph II died in the house of a friend, Kiery Denoyer, located at the corner of present day Main and Elm streets. An inventory of his effects was taken, as was the custom in those days, and his possessions, after paying his debts, were placed in the possession of Joseph III.<sup>9</sup>

The next surviving record of Joseph III is in the official Spanish militia lists in 1779 and thereafter. St. Louis had become Spanish by secret treaty between France and Spain toward the end of the Seven Years' War. The local French were none too happy about their change of fortunes, and some of the residents in New Orleans actually started a revolt, which was ruthlessly put down by Spanish soldiers. Eventually, the local French accepted their new Spanish rulers, and many former French soldiers elected to stay in the New World and take service with Spain.<sup>10</sup> St. Louis was part of the Spanish Louisiana territory, which had a governor located in New Orleans. St. Louis and

Natchitoches were established as sub-areas, each with a lieutenant governor, and Spanish commandants were in charge of several smaller but important towns and villages in the territory.<sup>11</sup> After suffering a shocking defeat in the Seven Years' War, Spain completely reorganized colonial defense. Militia augmented by fixed (*fijo*) regiments of regulars, who were permanent residents, would be the backbone for future defense of the Spanish colonies. The Spanish required all men aged 15 to 50 in the Louisiana territory to be in the local militia, trained by Spanish regulars of the Fixed Infantry Regiment of Louisiana, and they kept detailed records of their militia musters once war with Great Britain loomed. Militia were trained in the basics of wheeling and firing, generally after mass on Sunday.<sup>12</sup> The initial organization of the Spanish Louisiana militia had infantry companies at St. Louis and Ste. Geneviève. Later, St. Louis added a cavalry militia company.

### Early Years at St. Louis

The November 7, 1779, St. Louis militia list indicates both the name of each militiaman and his occupation. It includes Joseph III in the militia infantry company with his occupation as a hunter, while a later list in 1780 describes him as a shoemaker.<sup>13</sup> Most later lists unfortunately do not include occupations. It is possible that he was shoemaking to maintain a regular wage while learning the arts of hunting and trading, as he later became a successful trader.



Nombre de Voluntario	Edad	Estado	Nombre de Voluntario	Edad	Estado
Antonio reseda	Francisco	Argentino	capitan	D. Juan Bapt. Montigny	
Juan Jarama	canada	canador	teniente	D. Vicente Basquez	
Nicolas Daniel	canada	canador	Suavito	B. Pedro Montadoy	Francisco
Jacob Langmitt	canada	canador	Juan I.	Nicolas Rey	Voto
Juan Witt	canada	canador	Juan I.	Joseph Huetis	
Juanita Vallo	canada	canador	Juan	Franco Basca	
Juan Pedras	canada	canador	cano	Joseph Leb	
Jos. Robins	canada	canador	Don	Juan Bapt. Capina	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador	Don	José gamel	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador	Don	Carlos Kant	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador	cano	Antonio Noidel	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador	Don	Roy Denoyer	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador	Don	Joseph Borden	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador	Don	Andrés Dupuis	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador	Soldado	José B. Borden	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Gamalon	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Blas	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Basquel	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Joseph Sant	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Miguel pibe	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Carlos Tiban	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Dickinson	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Don J. Leary	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Nicolas Strass	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		St. Juan	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Guillemot Lente	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Agustin a. Leconte	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Yegor de Calas	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Franco Delour	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		can los mox	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Joseph Laro	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Joseph Robeat	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Juan Bapt. Bonat	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Goussay	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Joseph Calpe	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Joseph Calpe Aygo	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Franco conpat	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Franco Martin	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Antonio Sant Louis	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Antonio L. de la Cruz	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Etchen Lamanche	canada
Jos. Robins	canada	canador		Joseph Lamanche	canada

Total 168  
 V. B.  
 Joseph

S. Luis de Nuevas a 3 de Noviembre de 1779  
 por ordenancia del capitán Benito Basquez

Jos. Robins

St. Louis Militia List, November 9, 1779, marked. (Image: Archivo General de Indias)

**British issue George III  
Indian Military Gorget.**  
*(Image: Stephen L. Kling, Jr.)*



**British issue George III  
Indian Peace Medal.**  
*(Image: Stephen L. Kling, Jr.)*





## ...the secretive attack allowed the Americans to take control under the very noses of the British.

Fur trade was the mainstay of the hunters and traders, with furs being equivalent to, and often preferred over, currency. Hunting and trading were far more lucrative than farming, assuming one could handle the dangerous and often lonely lifestyle.

Joseph III next shows up in connection with a failed love interest. He became close to the daughter of Jean Baptiste Bequet (sometimes Becquet), a local blacksmith, and sought her hand in marriage. Ms. Bequet's father and uncle were none too happy with the young and rather poor Joseph Robidoux and quickly sought to end the romance. Jean Baptiste Bequet was an original founder of St. Louis. He had a reputation to keep and undoubtedly wanted something better for his daughter. Vicious rumors about Joseph Robidoux III's family began to circulate around St. Louis. In those days, a man's good name depended largely on the reputation of his family, and stories became more and more outlandish, including one describing Robidoux relatives desecrating a cross in Montreal, and another about Joseph killing a spouse and his employer in Canada, and then running off with another man's wife in Cahokia to Vincennes and assaulting an engagé of an inhabitant of a trading post. With no other way to defend himself from this onslaught of rumors, on January 28, 1780, Joseph III filed a defamation case seeking to clear his name. The new Spanish lieutenant governor of St. Louis, Fernando de Leyba, was also expected to act as judge and conducted a hearing on the matter. Joseph III presented several

character witnesses testifying to the virtue of his family, while other witnesses came forward to give testimony of stories they had heard about the Robidoux family's bad acts. The names of all these witnesses and other details of the trial have survived. Finding nothing but hearsay and other less than credible evidence, Leyba dismissed the case on February 2, 1780, and admonished all parties not to further spread unsubstantiated stories until such time as real evidence could be presented.<sup>14</sup> Nonetheless, the damage was done, and Mr. Bequet continued to refuse Joseph III's request to marry his daughter.

### The American Revolutionary War Comes to the West

The next few years brought a significant change to St. Louis and Spanish Louisiana, particularly as the American Revolution erupted in the east. In 1778, Americans under George Rogers Clark conquered the Illinois Country (roughly modern-day Southern Illinois and Indiana), complete with its major French towns of Vincennes, Kaskaskia, and Cahokia. This was British territory, but no regular soldiers were in garrison at the time, as they had been recalled to the east, and the secretive attack allowed the Americans to take control under the very noses of the British. The Spanish quickly sought to aid the Americans by clandestinely shipping supplies up the Mississippi River from New Orleans to St. Louis and Fort Pitt, where they could be sold to the Americans.

The records of George Rogers Clark refer to a "Continental Store" stocked by these illicit shipments at St. Louis.<sup>15</sup> In 1778, 150 bales of blue, white, and red cloth — mostly for uniforms for Clark's men, who were in desperate need of clothing — were in the boats bringing Leyba to St. Louis. Later requisitions show that hats, buttons, shirts, muskets, powder, musket balls, and even rum were sold to Clark's men. To further complicate matters for the British, Spain entered the war as an ally of France in 1779. Almost immediately after the Spanish entry into the American Revolutionary War, British Lord George Germain, the appointed North American Colonial Secretary and de facto commander-in-chief, issued a series of orders intended to sweep both the Americans and the Spanish from the Mississippi River Valley.<sup>16</sup>

In the south, British General Campbell at Pensacola was instructed to gather a force to attack New Orleans and then proceed to Natchez to await British forces attacking from the north. Campbell assembled five hundred British regulars in five ships and gathered enough "presents" to assemble two thousand local allied Native American warriors for the attack. However, the Spanish struck first, capturing the important British lower Mississippi River posts of Natchez and Baton Rouge, and the attack from the south was called off. In the north, Lord Germain instructed Frederick Haldimand, the governor of Canada, to organize an attack from that quarter. Haldimand in turn sent a circular letter to his

**The attackers' early reconnaissance** accurately reported that St. Louis and Cahokia had no defenses, so the British expected an easy victory.

lieutenant governors in Michilimackinac and Detroit to coordinate the effort. The main attack force was organized from Michilimackinac and assembled at Prairie du Chien for a descent down the Mississippi River against St. Louis and Cahokia. Eventually that force consisted of around one thousand men, mostly Native Americans from tribes allied with the British, but also including about fifty British Canadian traders and their servants, a few dozen volunteers, and several officers and interpreters of the British Indian Department at Michilimackinac. The Indian Department officers and interpreters wore non-regulation red coats not only to signify their authority but to keep them from being the target of friendly fire. This force was under the overall command of Captain Emanuel Hesse with Lieutenant Alexander Kay as second in command — both commissioned in the British Indian Department, Hesse very recently.<sup>17</sup> Also receiving commissions and red British officer coats with gold lace were Sioux Chief Wapasha and Chippewa Chief Matchekewis. Wapasha, Matchekewis, and possibly other chiefs present were likely issued silver military British officer gorgets as well, as was customary to recognize the status of war captains. This force also included several British traders influential with certain tribes through marriage or by trading relationships, such as Joseph Calvé and Jean Marie Ducharme, both of whom had problems with the local Spanish authorities and frequently violated their trading regulations. The officers and interpreters from the British

Indian Department and these key traders helped organize peace amongst the tribes.<sup>18</sup> The British attack force was aided when Lieutenant Kay, commanding thirty-six Menominee warriors, confiscated a trade boat full of supplies owned by Charles Gratiot of Cahokia. The British justified their action by alleging that Gratiot was a rebel sympathizer freely trading with the rebels from Cahokia.<sup>19</sup> The provisions proved very useful in equipping such a large force and constituted the main source of supplies for the expedition.

Captain Charles de Langlade, another British Indian Department officer, was dispatched down the Illinois River with another mainly Native American force to second the attack on St. Louis and Cahokia, with orders to stay in the area until Ste. Geneviève and Kaskaskia were captured.<sup>20</sup> The Native Americans were promised plunder, and the traders were to receive exclusive trading rights down the Missouri River, rights which had been denied to them under Spanish rule.<sup>21</sup> Key to the expedition's success were the British Native American allies, whose chiefs had been awarded silver medals and commissions written in both English and French bearing their names and flags to be flown from their cabins, and whose tribal members received many tons of trade goods from the local British Indian Department posts. Wapasha had received his silver medal several years before at Montreal, signifying his status in British eyes. The Native Americans in the British-controlled areas heavily depended upon the British for trade goods, which had become vital

for their livelihood. Such goods not only included muskets, powder, and musket balls but also shirts, blankets, hats, shoes, needles and thread, cloth, scissors, knives, mirrors, tobacco, rum, hoes, animal traps, lace, and silver jewelry. The Americans were always short of supplies and had few to spare for the Native Americans, and the Spanish were unable to remotely match the volume of the goods provided by the British. British trade goods, together with judicious awards of medals, generally kept most of the tribal groups firmly allied to the British cause.<sup>22</sup>

The attackers' early reconnaissance accurately reported that St. Louis and Cahokia had no defenses, so the British expected an easy victory. British Lt. Governor Patrick Sinclair at Michilimackinac boasted that St. Louis would be easier to conquer than hold later. However, the inhabitants of St. Louis were warned by several people, most notably by Madame Honoré, and those of Cahokia by Pierre Prevost, weeks ahead of the attacks. Both towns had time to prepare. St. Louis built a large stone tower on some high ground to the west of the town and constructed 2,000 yards of entrenchments on both sides of the tower around the town to the river. The tower was christened Fort San Carlos in honor of the Spanish king in a solemn ceremony on April 17, 1780.<sup>23</sup> Forty men, many of whom were prominent St. Louisans including members of the Chouteau, Bequet, Labadie, Lami, Tayon, Vasquez, and Martigny families worked full time on the defenses during April and May.<sup>24</sup> Joseph III is not on



**Picking Strawberries for the Feast of the Corpus Christi at St. Louis, May 25, 1780, by Mitchell Nolte.**  
(Image: THGC Publishing)



**Fort San Carlos by Mitchell Nolte.**  
(Image: THGC Publishing)



**Elizabeth Barada Ortes, the source of the story.**  
(Image: Historical Society, St. Louis)



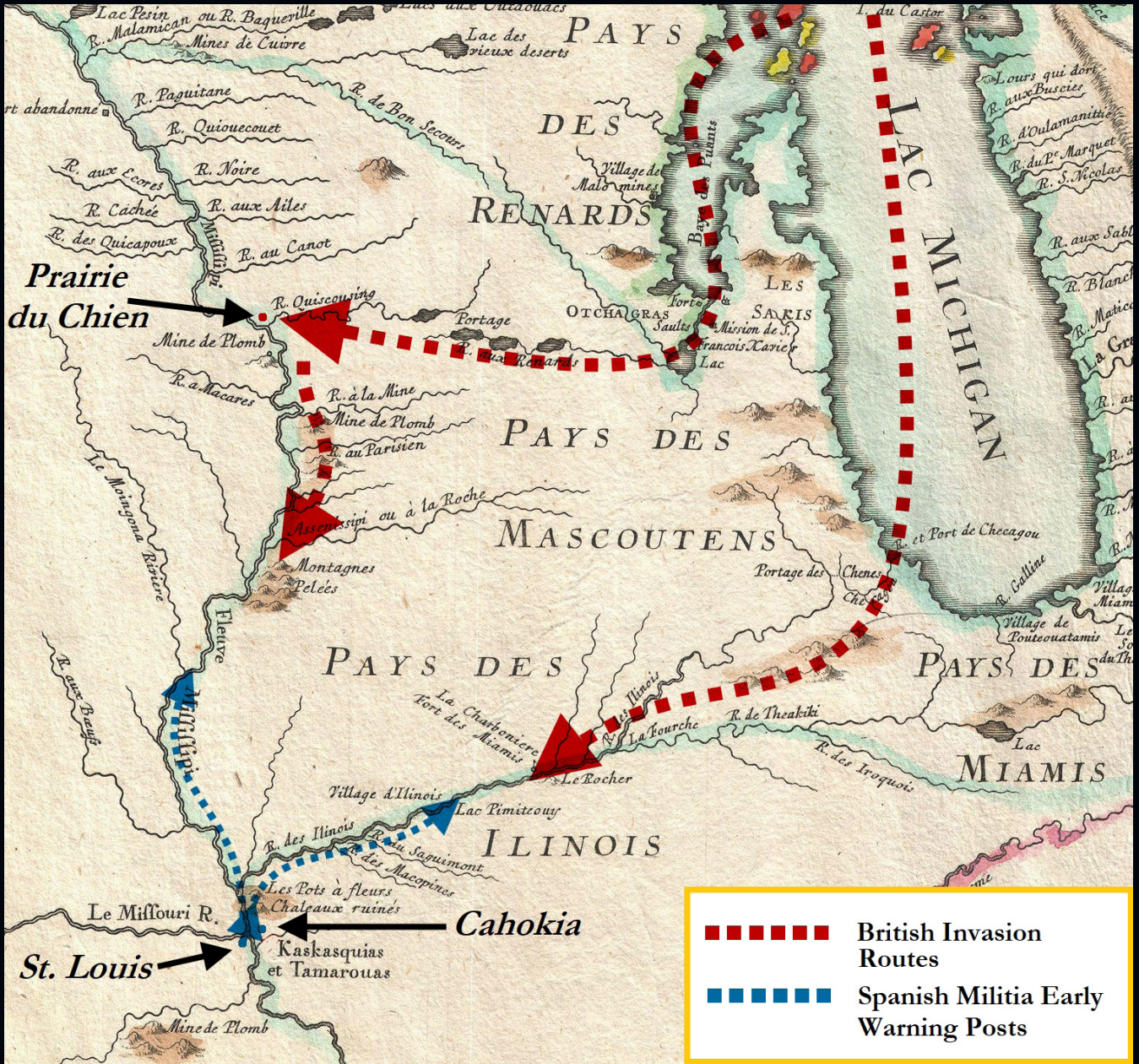
this list, but most of these names were wealthy men who could have slaves and *engagés* tend to their lands and business; Joseph III had yet to attain that level of financial success. Five 4-pound and 6-pound cannons retrieved from an old fort were hoisted into the tower, and several 2-pound cannons and swivel guns were placed with the militia in the entrenchments.<sup>25</sup>

### The British-Led Attack on St. Louis in 1780

Native American scouts from the attack force arrived the day before the planned attack, but they could not get close enough to St. Louis to see the defenses because the residents were out

in the fields picking strawberries for the Festival of the Corpus Christi.<sup>26</sup> When the attack began at 1:00 p.m. on May 26, 1780, the attackers were surprised to be met by cannon fire from both the tower and entrenchments and an organized militia. All of the hunters had been called back to St. Louis, and 60 militiamen were ordered up from Ste. Geneviève so that the defenders totaled 281





Spanish Early Warning Posts and British Avenues of Attack Against St. Louis 1780-1782, Map of North America, 1755, by Jacques Nicolas Bellin, fragment, marked. (Image: Atlas Homannianus Mathematico-Historico Delineatus, 1755)



## While St. Louis and Cahokia had been saved for the moment, their peril was not over.

militia and 29 regulars. While the attackers consisted of about 750 men and greatly outnumbered the St. Louis defenders, they were shocked to find St. Louis heavily defended, particularly with cannon. Part of the attack force headed south of the town to cut off the expected retreat of St. Louisans along the road to Ste. Geneviève. Others engaged in probing attacks and feints against the entrenchment lines, attempting to find a way through the defenses or draw the attackers out of them. After two hours, the attack was called off, unable to penetrate the defenses. A popular account of the attack reflects that the British Native American allies later referred to the tower as a “high-fenced house of thunder,” evidencing the psychological effect of the tower and its cannons in beating off the attack.<sup>27</sup> No specifics about Joseph III’s part in the battle have survived. We do know from Lt. Governor Leyba’s report that at the first alarm of the attack, all of the men in the town rushed to their assigned positions along the entrenchments, half to the north of the tower and the other half to the south. Leyba noted “there was not a single man left in the houses,” so it can be presumed that Joseph III, a mere private in the militia, was one of the men who defended the entrenchment lines.<sup>28</sup> Across the river, where around 250 of the attackers sought to capture Cahokia, a similar story unfolded. Cahokia’s fortifications were based around an old missionary property, and a collection of Clark’s regular soldiers, Cahokia militia, and Kaskaskia Native Americans stoutly defended the

makeshift defenses. The Cahokia attackers soon left their attack and, in their frustration, fired across the river at the houses at St. Louis. In their retreat, the attackers on both sides of the river burned crops and slaughtered all the livestock they found.<sup>29</sup>

By the end of the day, victory on the field had been secured, but the price in human lives was heavy. Twenty-one inhabitants were killed, seven wounded, and twenty-five captured at St. Louis.<sup>30</sup> At Cahokia, four were killed and five were captured, with no wounded mentioned, though this comes from a British report and is unlikely to be accurate. A doctor’s requisition at Cahokia the following day included a large medical bill, more reliably indicating that there were indeed wounded and, given the amount of the bill, quite a number.<sup>31</sup> Over 40 more inhabitants from St. Louis and Cahokia were taken along the Mississippi River both before and after the attack. Despite advanced warning of the impending attack, many inhabitants were caught while out working in their fields at the beginning of the battle.<sup>32</sup> The battle became quite famous in later history of St. Louis, particularly after the Louisiana Purchase, and it was commonly referred to as *L’Année du Coup* (the Year of the Great Blow). A number of popular stories were associated with the battle, and recent research by the author has confirmed that most of the individuals associated with the personal stories were actual residents of St. Louis at the time.<sup>33</sup>

While St. Louis and Cahokia had been saved for the moment,

their peril was not over. The British planned to come back, and the area residents knew it. Lt. Governor Leyba had recently died, but his successor, Francisco Cruzat, immediately had a wooden palisade wall built around the town and secured new war supplies.<sup>34</sup> Early warning posts were established at tall bluffs at Piasa (near present day Alton) on the Mississippi River and at Le Pe (present day Peoria) on the Illinois River. Militia lists show that Joseph Robidoux was posted for a time at Piasa.<sup>35</sup> The militiamen posted at these early warning posts were regularly rotated and kept in existence through 1782. It is entirely possible that Joseph III was posted there on several occasions. After peace was made with the Sac and Fox, the early warning post at Piasa was moved farther north near the Salt River and a small Sac and Fox village. In 1781, the rumors of another attack became serious. The Americans and their allies learned that the British were stockpiling supplies at Fort St. Joseph near Lake Michigan for another attack. Lt. Governor Cruzat assembled some 65 St. Louis militia, twenty Cahokia militia, and 60 friendly western Potawatomi warriors, and marched up the Illinois River during the dead of winter and caught the British by surprise at Fort St. Joseph, capturing all of the supplies and burning the fort to the ground. No complete list of the militia taking part in the attack has been located, but it is possible that the young Joseph III participated, as only experienced hunters would have been included in this force, given the number of St. Louis militia. The invaders

**By 1799, Joseph III was engaged as a lieutenant in the St. Louis militia, generally a position held by men of social and financial prominence.**

also took a moment to plant the Spanish flag and claim the land for Spain, which caused some political issues later at the peace table.<sup>36</sup>

### **Establishment of a Trading Empire and Marriage**

From late 1781 to 1782, Joseph III's name is absent from the militia lists.<sup>37</sup> Presumably, he was out learning the fur trade and establishing his trade contacts, especially as the threats to St. Louis subsided. Several years later he is referred to in the records as "merchant." As peace brought new friction between Spain and the fledgling United States over navigation of the Mississippi River, Joseph III's trading activities would have been restricted to the western Spanish side of the Mississippi River.

Joseph III had married Catherine Marie Rollet dit Laderoute on September 21, 1782.<sup>38</sup> Joseph was 32 while Catherine was 15. It was an economically successful marriage, as Catherine brought a \$200 dowry to the marriage.<sup>39</sup> In 1786, his financial resources allowed him to make his first real estate purchase in the southern half of Lot 6 near the center of town, close to the Mississippi River. At first, he lived and operated his trading business out of a wooden vertical-log style home, but during 1800–1802, a stone house, a stone store, and a stone bakehouse were built on the property at what was then the northwest corner of Main and Elm streets. The bakehouse was especially important to the

rise of the Robidoux's fortunes, as Joseph III had purchased a large horse-powered grist mill in 1799 at Second and Market streets.<sup>40</sup> In 1960, Jefferson National Expansion Memorial archaeologists excavated part of the bakehouse's stone remains.<sup>41</sup> The lot also featured fruit trees and a garden in the rear of the buildings. He acquired several parcels of real estate in both St. Louis and newly established Florissant, Missouri, as his trading business flourished.<sup>42</sup>

While Joseph III was busy with his successful merchant business, he still managed to create some controversy. In 1795, the Spanish Governor in New Orleans became concerned about possible local French sympathies to the French Revolution and a potential revolt. He dispatched Manuel Gayoso de Lemos to St. Louis, ostensibly on an "official administrative" visit to gauge the sentiments of the St. Louis residents and report on any revolutionary activity. Lavish parties were held, including one at the Chouteau mansion, where Joseph III and Catherine Marie Robidoux were among the guests. Gayoso noted no red, white, and blue ribbons or similar adornments at the events, with one exception: Madame Robidoux wore a dress of red, white, and blue — the colors of the French Revolution. However, on later reflection, he concluded that no slight was intended and that the matter was simply one of bad taste, as the dress itself was older than the French Revolution and the Robidoux were known to be of good character.<sup>43</sup>

By 1799, Joseph III was engaged as a lieutenant in the

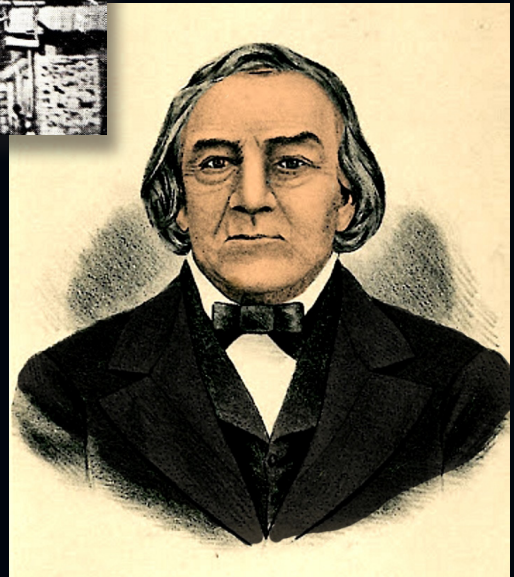
St. Louis militia, generally a position held by men of social and financial prominence. Official correspondence also refers to Joseph III as *Don*, a title which afforded special privileges under Spanish rule. Spanish Governor Carlos Dehault Delassus appointed Don Joseph Robidoux and Don Auguste Chouteau as special agents to oversee assessments by local carpenters as to the condition of, and recent storm damage to, the fort guarding St. Louis on the hill to the west of town.<sup>44</sup> The same year, Joseph III was part of a group of "well-to-do people" of St. Louis in the royal service of Spain who made contributions to the Spanish Crown to demonstrate their patriotism.<sup>45</sup> He clearly was literate, as he can be found in the records as a frequent witness, appraiser, executor, note holder, and signer of real estate and government documents. Through his thriving trade business and land holdings, Joseph III became one of the wealthiest men in St. Louis. A real estate tax list of 1805 indicates his holdings were valued second highest of all St. Louisans, only behind those of Auguste Chouteau.<sup>46</sup>

The marriage of Joseph III and Catherine produced ten children, three of whom died while very young.<sup>47</sup> All of them were baptized at the Catholic Church in St. Louis, and all were educated, likely at Trudeau's French School.<sup>48</sup> The first son, Joseph IV, followed in the family business for a while, but he later sold out his local trading interests and moved further west to establish new trading connections in the Blacksnake Hills area, part of present-day St. Joseph, Missouri.





**Robidoux House, front (top) and back (bottom), bakehouse in the rear (with pointed roof), photographs by Thomas Easterly. (Images: Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis)**



**Joseph Robidoux IV, tinted.**  
(Image: St. Joseph Museums, Inc., also appearing in the July 26, 1893 St. Joseph Daily Herald)

François, the second son, also ran the family business in St. Louis for a time, but he later engaged in expeditions up the Mississippi River and across the plains of Nebraska.<sup>49</sup> Antoine, another son, sought his fortune in New Mexico, while his younger brother Louis initially joined Antoine but later explored California and founded the town of Riverside.

For a time, Joseph III and his older sons were active participants in the American Fur Company. In 1800, Joseph III established a trading post along the Missouri River named Fort Robidoux, a couple of miles from Brunswick, Missouri.<sup>50</sup> Ongoing trade was also maintained by Joseph IV with the Missouri and Sac and Fox Native American groups. By 1803,

Joseph III's health began to fail, and his business was increasingly run by his sons. He also suffered from blindness, a condition later experienced by his sons Joseph IV, François, and Antoine. In connection with the transfer ceremonies at St. Louis for the Louisiana Purchase, American Captain Amos Stoddard asked

## The Robidoux legacy in Missouri shifted to the Blacksnake Hills after Joseph Robidoux IV established a trading post there around 1825. . . .

Spanish Lt. Governor Delassus for a list of St. Louisans in his employ. Joseph III had an entry which read, "Joseph Robidou, an infirm old man, almost blind."<sup>51</sup> However, this did not stop Joseph III and his sons from taking advantage of the new and larger opportunities provided by the change in government.<sup>52</sup> For their expedition to explore the Louisiana Territory, Lewis and Clark obtained a large portion of their supplies and equipment from Joseph III's store in St. Louis.<sup>53</sup>

### Death, Joseph Robidoux IV, and the Founding of St. Joseph, Missouri

Joseph III died on March 17, 1809, after a successful and eventful life of sixty years. His personal property was sold at auction and included a large inventory of thousands of pelts; barrels of lard and of sugar; pigs of lead; axes, hatchets, muskets and gunpowder; dozens of shawls, caps, and handkerchiefs; bolts of chintz, calico and cashmere; bracelets, beads and other trinkets for Native American trade; and three barges, two canoes and a pirogue.<sup>54</sup> Auguste Chouteau was executor of his estate and inventoried his property in the presence of Catherine and his sons Joseph IV and François.<sup>55</sup> By 1820, some of Joseph III's sons were still in business in St. Louis.<sup>56</sup> Eventually, most of Joseph III's sons permanently moved away from St. Louis, and they went on to establish their own legacies of trade and exploration.<sup>57</sup> Catherine remarried in 1811 or 1812 and

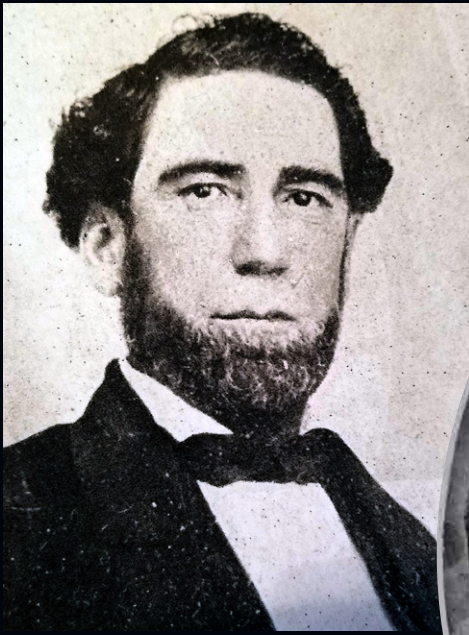
moved away from St. Louis.<sup>58</sup> No known painting or drawings of Joseph III survive, but several exist for his son, Joseph IV, which may give us some idea of his appearance.

The Robidoux legacy in Missouri shifted to the Blacksnake Hills after Joseph Robidoux IV established a trading post there around 1825 and eventually founded the town which bears his name. Joseph IV was born in St. Louis on August 10, 1783, and was the oldest son of Joseph III.<sup>59</sup> After his father's death, he quickly became the patriarch of the family and a skilled trader, and the most successful of Joseph III's sons. In fact, other than Louis, most of the other sons benefited greatly from Joseph IV's generosity. Joseph IV was legally married a few times and had several children, including a few from unions with Native American women.<sup>60</sup> From his first marriage, he had a son, Eugene Joseph Robidoux (sometimes referred to as Joseph E., Edmond, or Indian Joe, as he spent most of his time living with Native Americans), and several children from his second marriage — Julius (Jules) Cesar born in 1814, Farron Antoine in 1816, Francois Belevere in 1818, Felix in 1820, Edmond in 1825, Sylvanie in 1827, Marie Agnes in 1827, and Charles in 1831.<sup>61</sup> Charles was tragically killed during a late-night frolic in St. Joseph.<sup>62</sup> All of the children from these marriages were born in St. Louis except Charles, which showed the continued strong ties Joseph IV had with St. Louis. However, eventually Joseph IV made St. Joseph his home and moved his family there as it grew to be more than a trading post at

the Blacksnake Hills. The town was officially platted in 1843, and lots were quickly sold. Despite his change of residence, he continued a brisk business with his St. Louis contacts, including prominent St. Louis businessman Robert Campbell. The Campbell House Museum has recently transcribed and indexed dozens of letters to Joseph IV from Robert Campbell or his trading company, R & W Campbell, between 1844 and 1860.<sup>63</sup> Many of these letters reflect ongoing business transactions between Joseph Robidoux IV and his sons to procure trade goods from Campbell. However, real estate transactions also show Robert Campbell buying lots in St. Joseph from Joseph IV. In 1850, Joseph IV and his wife were in St. Louis, where they sold one of their last real estate holdings in the city to Robert Campbell for \$3,000.<sup>64</sup>

Joseph IV gradually gave away the large fortune he accumulated through fur trading and the sale of city lots to his numerous children, his brothers, their children, and Native Americans with whom he had relations. The gift of a fifteen-room, eight-fireplace house in St. Joseph to his daughter Sylvanie is just one example.<sup>65</sup> Later in life, he moved into a multi-family building he constructed to meet the needs of growing St. Joseph, which is now the Robidoux Row Museum. At the time of his death, he had given away so much of his property that in terms of investment real estate, he owned but one city lot. Joseph IV died in St. Joseph on May 27, 1868. His funeral was attended by a great throng of people, and the city closed all business by proclamation





**Felix Robidoux.**  
(Image: St. Joseph  
Museums, Inc.)



**Francis P. Corby and  
Josephine Angelique  
Robidoux around the time  
of their marriage in  
1861.** (Image: St. Joseph  
Museums, Inc.)

for the funeral procession.<sup>66</sup> His sons continued the family trading and real estate businesses and became major movers in St. Joseph society.<sup>67</sup> The Robidoux influence was strong in St. Joseph, and streets in downtown St. Joseph still bear family names from when Joseph IV platted them. All of Joseph IV's sons remained in and near St. Joseph.<sup>68</sup> His only surviving daughter, Sylvanie, married Frances A. Beauvais, a jeweler from St. Louis, and though they lived several years in St. Joseph, they eventually moved back to St. Louis.<sup>69</sup>

### **The Marriage of Francis Corby and Josephine Robidoux and the Return of the Robidoux to St. Louis**

By a curious coincidence, part of the family's legacy shifted back to St. Louis when the daughter of Joseph Robidoux's son Felix, Josephine Angelique, married Frank (Francis) P. Corby, a widower nineteen years her elder.<sup>70</sup> Francis was of Irish descent, with his

father an immigrant from Limerick, Ireland. Josephine grew up in St. Joseph and attended the Academy of Sacred Heart, where she developed some proficiency as an artist; one particularly fanciful piece became a family heirloom.<sup>71</sup> Francis met Josephine on one of his many trips to visit Corby relatives in St. Joseph. Felix, noted as studious and a scholar, in addition to running part of the family business, served St. Joseph in several capacities—Postmaster from 1852–1855, Assessor, 1854, and City Recorder in 1857.<sup>72</sup> Given his public profile in the



**Josephine Robidoux Corby later in life.**  
(Image: original source unknown)

**Corby Family Heirloom, painting by Josephine Robidoux Corby while at the Academy of the Sacred Heart in St. Joseph.**  
(Image: St. Joseph Museums, Inc.)



**Charles E. Robidoux (left-Josephine's brother and St. Louis resident), his daughter May Tilden Lewis and grandchild (center), and mother and wife of Felix, Jane Catherine Robidoux (right), who came to live with Charles in St. Louis after Felix's death.** (Image: St. Joseph Museums, Inc.)

town, there was probably lots of idle talk about the marriage, and he initially had some misgivings about his daughter marrying a much older man. However, Francis won him over, and he ultimately gave his consent to the union.<sup>73</sup> Francis and Josephine were married in St. Joseph on June 16, 1861. After spending some time in Ohio, Tennessee, and St. Joseph, the couple settled in St. Louis. By 1874, Francis operated Francis P. Corby & Co., located in St. Louis, which provided equipment and supplies for the railway industry and was noted to have been a major contractor for materials for the construction of the Eads Bridge.<sup>74</sup> Francis and Josephine quickly produced a large family, and Francis was involved in many businesses with Robidoux family members. A family Bible from the time reflects a record of the birth of each of their children — Frank Felix, John Leslie, Marie Louise, Edith Lucille, Jane Smith, William Edwin, and Jerome Bauduy.<sup>75</sup>

Francis died at a relatively young age in 1876.<sup>76</sup> After his death, his will provided for the continuation of his business interests under the management of Josephine's brother, Charles Edward Robidoux.<sup>77</sup> He was soon joined by two of Francis' sons. However, by 1880 Hugh Lewis Fox was added as a co-owner, and the company became Fox, Corby and Co. Hugh Lewis Fox married Sarah Isabel Corby, who was the daughter of Francis' son from his first marriage, Joseph A. Corby of St. Joseph. They must have been close to the Francis P. Corby family as their sons were named Hugh Corby Fox and Francis Farmer Fox. That business was dissolved a few years later, perhaps due to some financial difficulties and domestic problems of Hugh Fox, though these must have been resolved, as no divorce resulted.<sup>78</sup> Hugh Fox's wife was a claimant of the Corby estate in St. Joseph, the probate of which was contentious; Hugh and his wife eventually bought real estate

at 5th and Edmond Streets in St. Joseph to resolve some of the litigation.<sup>79</sup> Hugh Fox eventually moved to New York and had great business success there with his sons in a family business. Charles Edward Robidoux and Francis Felix Corby, Francis P.'s eldest son by his marriage to Josephine, formed Robidoux & Corby, manufacturing agents. This new venture, which continued in business for several years, was located in the Commercial Building in downtown St. Louis in 1892, later moving to larger space in the Security Building in 1894.<sup>80</sup> Josephine moved to New York on May 7, 1892, with two of her daughters, likely looking for a new beginning.<sup>81</sup> She lived to the age of 87, dying in 1930 more than fifty-four years after her husband's death, and her remains were returned to St. Louis for local burial.<sup>82</sup>

Charles Edward Robidoux married Annie George on December 21, 1869, and moved to





Edith Corby.

**The New Olympic Theatre at 101 S. Broadway in 1896 and a caricature of Edith Lucille Corby in 1890.** (Images: Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis, theater building, caricature, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, August 31, 1890)

St. Louis from St. Joseph on April 1, 1874.<sup>83</sup> Charles and Annie had nine children — Marie (May) Tilden Robidoux, Ella Warren Robidoux, Edna Marguerite Robidoux, Francis Corby Robidoux, Edwin Robidoux, Annie Caroline Robidoux, George Seward Robidoux, Guy Ambrose Joseph Robidoux and Victor Leslie Robidoux — the last seven being born in St. Louis.<sup>84</sup> The papers noted Charles as a “great” card player.<sup>85</sup> He later became president of the Real Estate Building and Loan Association.<sup>86</sup> His mother, Jane Catherine Robidoux — Felix’s wife and former Jane Catherine Smith — moved to St. Louis to live with Charles Edward after Felix’s death until she passed away on December 29, 1895.<sup>87</sup> Charles Edward died in St. Louis on April 19, 1915.<sup>88</sup> Another one of Josephine’s siblings, Ella Amanda Robidoux, also had a St. Louis connection, as she married James P. Sweney on November 14, 1872, and took up residence in St. Louis after a St. Joseph marriage

ceremony. The couple had eleven children, all born in St. Louis — Ella Robidoux Sweney, Adele Sweney, Felix Sweney, Henry Sweney, Clara Louise Sweney, Isabel Sweney, Clarence Puschall Sweney, Florence Jean Sweney, James Paul Sweney, Justin Sweney, and George Sweney.<sup>89</sup> James P. Sweney may have worked with his father, who operated James Sweney & Son, which later changed its name to James Sweney Copper and Brass Company.<sup>90</sup> The company was located in St. Louis and sold copper and brass products to the railway industry. The father died on July 2, 1902, and the son of the same name on February 4, 1914.<sup>91</sup> Apparently, there was some extended family financial acrimony, as Hugh Lewis Fox sued James P. Sweney in 1901 for dishonored notes, checks, and bills. Ella died on June 13, 1940.<sup>92</sup>

Most of Josephine’s children eventually moved away from St. Louis. Frank Felix was working in Chicago by 1901 and died in

Pittsburg on June 15, 1938.<sup>93</sup> John Leslie attended Saint Louis University and served in Battery A of the U.S. Army during the Spanish American War. He was a rising physician but contracted paresis and died a few years after the war.<sup>94</sup> Marie Louise (Lulu) was a renowned pianist whose first husband, the famous doctor Seward Finney, died early in the marriage on January 13, 1894, from a prolonged illness. The expenses of his care left her penniless, and she lived with Josephine for a time, but she later married Arthur Walrond and died in Florida on May 28, 1954.<sup>95</sup> The St. Louis press recognized Edith Lucille as a budding artist in 1890; she studied Fine Arts at Washington University.<sup>96</sup> She became an actress, appearing in major theatrical productions throughout the east.<sup>97</sup> She appeared at the Olympic Theatre in St. Louis in 1896 to an audience that included a balcony box filled with her mother and sisters.<sup>98</sup> Jane Smith is the most difficult to

## Jerome Bauduy became a prominent St. Louis businessman and founded Corby Supply Company in 1907, which sold railway specialty cars and railway supplies.

trace. She may have been the wife of playwright James Anderson Russell, who lived in New York City before moving back to St. Louis late in life. William Edwin (who went by Edwin) started out studying to be a Jesuit priest, but he later went into business with his youngest brother.<sup>99</sup> He married Birdell Doyle of St. Louis and died on November 18, 1956. Edwin received some local notoriety for a downtown St. Louis walking race in 1908 which was repeated twenty years later.<sup>100</sup> All of the Robidoux (and Corby) women wore special colored gowns at the noted wedding of Charles Edward Robidoux's daughter, May Tilden Robidoux, to William E. Lewis (a relative of Meriwether Lewis of Lewis and Clark fame).<sup>101</sup>

### Jerome Baudy Corby and his Progeny

Francis P.'s youngest son, Jerome Bauduy (known as JB) was born on May 21, 1875, a year before Francis died. He was possibly named after Jerome Keating Bauduy, a famous doctor of psychological medicine and diseases who was also the physician in chief for St. Vincent's Asylum for the Insane in St. Louis, president of the St. Louis Medical Society, and a professor at Washington University in St. Louis.<sup>102</sup> In his younger years, JB was an accomplished swimmer and avid baseball player.<sup>103</sup> He became a prominent St. Louis businessman and founded Corby Supply Company in 1907, which

sold railway specialty cars and railway supplies.<sup>104</sup> The company later expanded to supply all sorts of specialty equipment, both electrical and air-operated, with a byline, *If it is air operated, we have it, as well as all kinds of accessories.*<sup>105</sup> JB must have been very driven to succeed; he worked part time in the railway business at 12 years old while attending school, and he took a full-time position at age 14. He married Ann M. Woods on June 9, 1899, in a private ceremony conducted by Father Fenlon at Visitation Church.<sup>106</sup> Corby Supply Company became very successful and brought JB to local prominence. JB held positions on boards for many trade associations, banks, and civic organizations. In 1913, he was part of a small group of St. Louisans organized as the Business Men's League, which chartered the Steamship *Atenas* for a vacation trip to Panama. Several periodicals covered the trip, and they published full page photo spread on it.<sup>107</sup> During World War I, he accepted a position in the U.S. Ordnance Department with the rank of major. A contemporary biographical dictionary of prominent St. Louisans noted his Robidoux heritage in his description.<sup>108</sup> JB and his daughter Betty continued the memory of the Robidoux legacy in St. Louis for many years.<sup>109</sup> JB's older brother, Edwin, worked at Corby Supply Company, as did JB's son Frank, who was a machinery salesman. Edwin was also a minority shareholder. Betty was a secretary at the company and for JB's various railway associations until her marriage on June 4,

1927. JB and his wife had partially retired and moved to Delray Beach, Florida, by 1953. JB died on August 1, 1959, at the age of 84, and most of his descendants remember him being nicknamed "Skipper," though the reason why remains unknown.<sup>110</sup> Edwin ran the company for a few years after JB's partial retirement, but he passed away in 1956.<sup>111</sup> With JB and Edwin having passed away, Corby Supply Company was eventually sold to Rudolph Freedman in 1960, who changed the company name to Semmelmeier-Corby dba Semcor. Semcor evolved into a major player in the sale and distribution of industrial products and remains headquartered in St. Louis.<sup>112</sup>

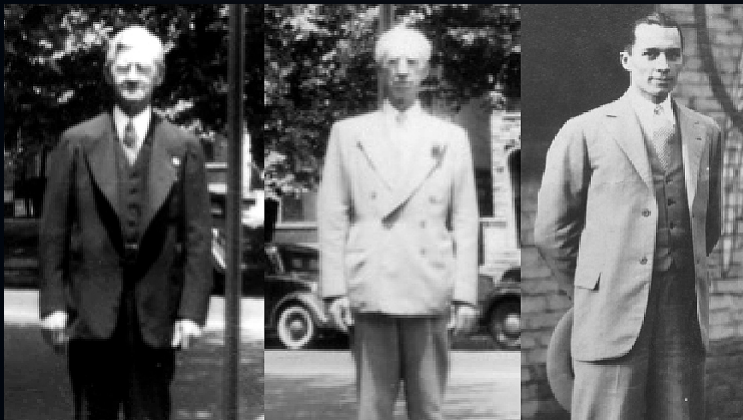
JB's son Frank, a lieutenant in the army reserve, entered the army's new military aeronautics school and later became a prominent member of the St. Louis Flying Club. As a Boy Scout, he participated in the Pageant and Masque of St. Louis, celebrating the 150th anniversary of the founding of St. Louis.<sup>113</sup> In 1918, he graduated from Soldan High School. Frank attended Washington University in St. Louis for a few years, then entered the service and later transferred to the University of Michigan, where he obtained an undergraduate degree in 1922 and an advanced degree in engineering in 1924. He was on the swimming team while at the University of Michigan, and at Washington University he was selected to be a member of *Quo Vadis*, a club for young men recognized by its





**JB and Ann Woods Corby on the Steamer *Atenas* on a chartered cruise to Panama in 1913 sponsored by the Business Men's League of St. Louis.**  
*(Image: St. Louis Post Dispatch, March 16, 1913)*

**Corby Supply Company Headquarters in St. Louis, Missouri.**  
*(Image: Stephen L. Kling, Jr.)*



**Corby Family officers from left to right: JB Corby, Edwin Corby, and Frank Corby.**  
*(Image: Stephen L. Kling, Jr.)*



**Corby Supply Specialty Car.**  
*(Image: Stephen L. Kling, Jr.)*



**Betty Corby, St. Louis socialite, JB Corby's daughter in the early 1920s.**  
*(Image: St. Louis Post Dispatch)*



**JB's daughter Betty** was a prominent socialite of the day, frequently appearing in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* society column.

members as a major contributors in college activities.<sup>115</sup> On August 14, 1924, he married Florence Robinson of St. Louis.<sup>115</sup> Tragically, Frank took his own life on February 5, 1935, leaving behind his wife and a young son named Frank. The death certificate indicated a self-inflicted gunshot wound to his temple while suffering from a temporary mental aberration.<sup>116</sup>

JB's daughter Betty was a prominent socialite of the day, frequently appearing in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* society column.<sup>117</sup> She was quite progressive for the times, being the secretary of the St. Louis junior branch of the Alliance of Unitarian and Other Liberal Christian Women at age 12.<sup>118</sup> Betty attended Mary Institute for a few years, after which she went to Bennett School for Girls, an elite finishing school in Millbrook, New York, from 1923 to 1924. Also attending Bennett School with Betty was her best friend

Katherine Hall (later Mrs. D. D. Walker), who served as maid of honor at Betty's wedding in 1927. Betty married William Donaldson Hemenway, Jr. in 1927. JB gave the couple a brand-new house at 30 Picardy Lane in St. Louis as a wedding gift.<sup>119</sup> The Hemenways had a forty-five foot yacht, the *Marbo III*, registered in Betty's name. The Hemenways would sail up the Illinois River to Pentwater, Michigan, to visit JB, who had a cottage there, following the same path of Langlade in 1780 and the St. Louis militia attack on St. Joseph in 1781.<sup>120</sup> The yacht, one of the largest on the Mississippi River at the time, famously sank in 1940 from a fumes explosion during a cocktail party given by the Hemenways. Many of the guests had to be rescued from the river fully clothed in their life preservers as others clung to a dinghy.<sup>121</sup> The Hemenways traveled extensively, often to Europe, for months at a time. Betty died in Europe from a

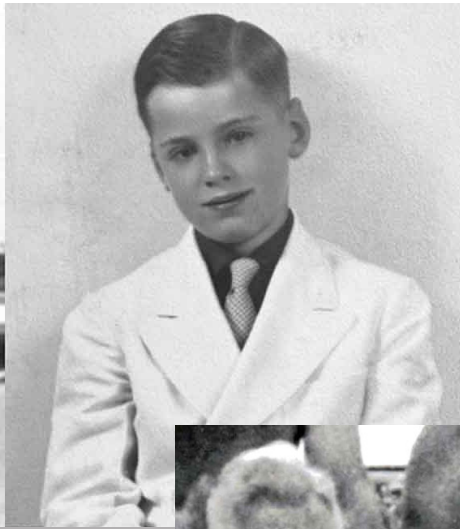
cerebral hemorrhage on May 14, 1956, at only 50 years old.<sup>122</sup> She was interred at Calvary Cemetery in St. Louis, and contributions were directed to the hospital fund in Bitburg, Germany. Her personal estate, which she kept apart from her husband, was significant, totaling more than \$1,000,000 in today's money, though half of it was invested in her husband's company, which subsequently failed.

JB had three grandchildren. Frank had a son by his marriage to Florence Robinson, and Betty had a son and daughter by her marriage to William Donaldson Hemenway. As JB had lost both his children and his brother Edwin, he spent considerable time with his grandchildren and great-grandchildren in his last years. Most of their descendants unknowingly share the Robidoux heritage. There are undoubtedly other Joseph III Robidoux legacies in St. Louis that need further study.

Some argue his and other French roles in the development of this country have been consistently downplayed. . . .



**JB Corby's grandchildren in the 1930s.**  
*(Images: Stephen L. Kling, Jr.)*



**JB Corby and Stephen L. Kling, Jr. around 1957.**  
*(Image: Stephen L. Kling, Jr.)*



## Conclusion

The remembrance of Joseph III languished for many years after the deaths of JB and Betty until the author, a grandson of Betty, rediscovered the records and undertook further research. Joseph IV is a pillar of St. Joseph, Missouri, history. Interestingly, another branch of the Corby family figures prominently in St. Joseph history: John Corby, a brother of Francis P. Corby. John Corby settled in St. Joseph a few months after Joseph IV organized the town, and later became mayor and one its most

influential citizens. Joseph IV and John Corby were the principal shareholders in the Hannibal & St. Joseph Railroad Company, which helped put the City of St. Joseph on the map in 1859. Later that year, St. Louis was connected to this line at Macon, Missouri. However, the life of Joseph III is likewise an important part of the history of early St. Louis, and he left a number of descendants who participated prominently in the later history of the city. He has largely been forgotten among the more well known names of Laclede, Chouteau, Gratiot, Cerré, and others, but he made

his mark in what were certainly interesting times. Some argue his and other French roles in the development of this country have been consistently downplayed as an unfortunate legacy of the French and Indian War, and due to the role the French played, as pariah capitalists, in the mediations between the Native Americans and the United States government after the Louisiana Purchase. Their stories and the legacies they have left, like the Robidoux story and legacy, are much more complex and important in the scheme of our regional and national history.



## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> As to the use of “x” at the end of the Robidoux name, see John C. Luttig, *Journal of a Fur Trading Expedition on the Upper Missouri: 1812-1813*, edited by Stella M. Drumm. (St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society, 1912), 147-48. All references from the Missouri Historical Society and its archives are hereafter cited as MHS. The x did not appear until later, and French documentation of the earlier period mostly spell the last name as Robidou without the x. See, for example, Cyprien Tanguay, *Dictionnaire Généalogique Des Familles Canadiennes Depuis La Fondation de la Colonie Jusqu'à Nos Jours*, 7 vols. (Montreal, Canada: E. Senecal, 1890), 6:605-8. The use of the Roman numerals with respect to the various Josephs in this article is for identification purposes only, as otherwise it is difficult in identifying them, as there was a succession of descendants named Joseph. Given all of the Robidoux named Joseph in the 18th and 19th centuries, some confusion is unavoidable, but adding greatly to the confusion is the complete omission of Joseph Robidou I by some early modern authors. These authors start their Roman numerals with his son Joseph, named Joseph II in this article, and the founder of St. Joseph is named Joseph III. For example, see Merrill J. Mattes, “Joseph Robidou,” in LeRoy R. Hafen, ed., *Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far West*, 10 vols. (Glendale, Calif.: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1971), 8:287-314, and Orral M. Robidou, *Memorial to the Robidoux Brothers: A History of the Robidoux in America* (Kansas City, Mo.: Smith-Grievies Company, 1924), both often cited sources of this confusion. The confusion in identification resulting from these sources continues to this day. The Mattes article draws from the Orral Robidou book, which is based almost exclusively on oral history, and care should be taken in using them as sources.

<sup>2</sup> Frederic L. Billon, comp., *Annals of St. Louis in its Early Days under the French and Spanish Dominations* (St. Louis Mo. G. I. Jones & Company, 1886), 445.

<sup>3</sup> Hugh M. Lewis, *Robidoux Chronicles: French-Indian Ethnoculture of the Trans-Mississippi West* (Victoria, B.C., Canada: Trafford Publishing, 2004), 17-20; “Survey of the Settlement of Detroit, 31st March, 1779,” *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections*, 40 vols. (Lawson, Mich.: The Pioneer Society of the State of Michigan, 1876-1929), 10:311, 320, 324; “Survey of the Settlement of Detroit, 16th July, 1782,” *ibid.*, 10:601-3.

<sup>4</sup> Clyde M. Rabideau, *Joseph Robidou: The Family Patriarch* (Plattsburgh, N.Y.: Heartnut Publishing Company, 2005), 1-2; Lewis, *Robidoux Chronicles*, 12. Lewis claims to have found St. Louis death records of Marie Ann (Leblanc) Robidou and some of the daughters. Lewis also refers to another family member, Paul, a cousin as possibly coming to St. Louis around this time as the writer of an April 13, 1797 letter to Commandant Charles Vallé at Ste. Geneviève, *ibid.*, fn. 45, 207.

<sup>5</sup> Rabideau, *Joseph Robidou: The Family Patriarch*, 1-2, 8.

<sup>6</sup> Lewis, *Robidoux Chronicles*, 17-25.

<sup>7</sup> Billon, *Annals of St. Louis*, 95.

<sup>8</sup> Charles E. Peterson, *Colonial St. Louis: Building a Creole Capital* (St. Louis: MHS, 1949), 45.

<sup>9</sup> Billon, *Annals of St. Louis*, 444; John A. Bryan, “A Study of the Robidoux Sites in Blocks No. 5 and 6 St. Louis,” Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, National Parks Service, April 1938, 3; Inventory of the Deceased Joseph Robidou, September 12, 1771, St. Louis Recorded Archives Index, vol. 3, book 2:2305, MHS. Some modern sources inaccurately list Joseph II's death in 1778.

<sup>10</sup> Grimaldi to Ulloa, July 3, 1765, in Lawrence Kinnaird, ed., *Spain in the Mississippi Valley, 1765-1794*, 3 vols. (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Print Office, 1949), 1:2.

<sup>11</sup> “List of Officials Appointed by O'Reilly,” *ibid.*, February 12, 1770, 1:158-59.

<sup>12</sup> Stephen L. Kling, Jr., Kristine L. Sjostrom, and Marysia T. Lopez, *The Battle of St. Louis, the Attack on Cahokia, and the American Revolution in the West* (St. Louis Mo. THGC Publishing, 2017), 30.

<sup>13</sup> November 9, 1779, St. Louis Militia List, Archivo General de Indias, Casa Lonja de Mercaderes, Seville, Spain, leg. 213, fol. 950; December 5, 1780, St. Louis Militia List, *ibid.*, leg. 9, fol. 41. All references from Archivo General de Indias in Seville, Spain, are hereafter cited as AGI, Cuba. He may be listed as a shoemaker in learning that trade from his father as was the custom in those days, who was also listed as a shoemaker in the records. St. Louis Recorded Archives, vol. 4, book 2:313-14, MHS

<sup>14</sup> “Papers regarding the Court Case of Joseph Robidou against Louis Robert and Luc Marly,” Litigation Collection, folder 15, 1779 December—1780 February, MHS Archives, St. Louis, MO.

<sup>15</sup> “Inventory of Continental Stores taken from St. Louis to Kaskaskia,” September 17, 1778, “Receipt for Continental Stores Delivered to St. Louis,” April 20, 1779, and “Inventory of Goods taken from the Continental Stores in St. Louis,” May 24, 1779, in John Francis McDermott, ed., *Old Cahokia* (St. Louis, Mo.: St. Louis Historical Documents Foundation, 1949), 235-38, 253.

<sup>16</sup> Kling, Sjostrom, and Lopez, *Battle of St. Louis*, 15-26, 31-2, 48, 154; Lord George Germain Papers, June 17 and June 25, 1779, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan; Stephen L. Kling, Jr. and Kristine L. Sjostrom, “The British Attacks against St. Louis and Cahokia during the American Revolutionary War,” in Stephen L. Kling, Jr., ed., *The American Revolutionary War in the West* (St. Louis Mo. THGC Publishing, 2020), 69-71. This last article by Kling and Sjostrom provides a far more detailed and heavily documented analysis of the British campaign than previously covered in the *Battle of St. Louis* and includes copies of Germain's correspondence in the appendix.

<sup>17</sup> Cruzat to Miro, October 21, 1781, AGI, Cuba, leg. 114, fol. 939.

<sup>18</sup> Kling and Sjostrom, “The British Attacks against St. Louis and Cahokia during the American Revolutionary War,” 71-74. The participation and importance of the British Indian Department to the organization and leadership of this expedition has been largely missed and underappreciated by earlier researchers. The cited article has in-depth analysis and references in this regard.

## ENDNOTES continued

- <sup>19</sup> Kay and McCrae to Haldimand, November 13, 1780, in Ruben Gold Thwaites, *Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin* (in 31 volumes, published from 1854 to 1931 by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, hereafter cited as WHSC), 12:54-55; Sinclair to Haldimand, May 29, 1780, *ibid.*, 11:151-53. Apparently, Gratiot was indeed aiding the Americans; see note to the foregoing at the bottom of page 151 and the referenced court proceedings, which apparently became a *un cause célèbre* in St. Louis. Lt. Kay's brother John, a British trader was a former business partner with Gratiot. Gratiot had experienced significant problems with payments on British bills sent to him, the acceptors of which he said were nearly all insolvent, and he was likely amenable to trading to Americans who had taken possession of Cahokia. Gratiot to Bernard, *Report of the Canadian Archives for 1886*, B97-2:331. Gratiot later moved to St. Louis and became a prominent resident.
- <sup>20</sup> Sinclair to Langlade, undated and unsigned, Newberry Library, Vault Box Ayer MS 809. See page 124 of *The American Revolutionary War in the West* for a copy and translation of this order; see also Sinclair to Haldimand, May 29, 1780, WHSC, 11:152 for further details on the disposition and garrison plans for St. Louis, Cahokia, Ste. Geneviève, and Kaskaskia.
- <sup>21</sup> Kling, Sjostrom, and Lopez, *Battle of St. Louis*, 50, 52.
- <sup>22</sup> The Spanish believed they could not even give 1/100th of the presents given to the Native Americans by the British. Cruzat to Gálvez, December 2, 1780, in Louis Houck, *Spanish Regime in Missouri*, 2 vols., (Chicago, Ill.: R. R. Donnelly & Sons, 1909), 1:177; Navarro to Cruzat, February 15, 1781, *ibid.*, 1:202.
- <sup>23</sup> *Baptisms, Marriages, Burials 1766-1781*, Old Cathedral Parish Register of the Basilica of St. Louis, St. Louis County Library, fol. 2.
- <sup>24</sup> "Petition for Pay," AGI, Cuba, leg. 113, fol. 653.
- <sup>25</sup> "Inventory of the Effects Belonging to the King," September 29, 1780, *ibid.*, leg. 2, fol. 653.
- <sup>26</sup> Walter B. Stevens, *St. Louis, The Fourth City, 1764-1911*, 3 vols. (St. Louis Mo. The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1909), 1:66; James H. Perkins, *Annals of the West* (Pittsburg: W. S. Haven Book and Job Printer, 1856), 1:315. The story originates from Elizabeth Barada Ortes, who was 16 at the time of the attack and lived to be 106.
- <sup>27</sup> Stevens, *St. Louis the Fourth City*, 1:73.
- <sup>28</sup> Leyba to Gálvez, June 8, 1780, A. P. Nasatir, "St. Louis During the British Attack," in George P. Hammond, *New Spain and the Anglo-American West*, 2 vols. (Los Angeles: Private Printing, 1932), 1:247.
- <sup>29</sup> Pascal Leon Cerré, interviewed by Lyman C. Draper, St. Louis, MO, 1846, *Missouri Historical Collections*, vol. 2, no. 6 (1906): 51.
- <sup>30</sup> "Manifest of the Dead, Wounded and Prisoners," Fernando de Leyba, May 28, 1780, AGI, Cuba, leg. 113, fol. 600.
- <sup>31</sup> Sinclair to Haldimand, July 8, 1780, *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections*, 9:959; Donald E. Gradeless, ed., *Abstract of the George Rogers Clark Papers* (Chicago: Private Printing, 1998) and microfilm listing at <http://srl.gradeless.com/clairk.htm>, microfilm roll #4, May 28, 1780, 5705-4-120. The surgeon was Dr. Andrew Ray.
- <sup>32</sup> Leyba to Gálvez, June 8, 1780, in Nasatir, "St. Louis During the British Attack of 1780," 1:244-45; Kling, Sjostrom, and Lopez, *Battle of St. Louis*, 98.
- <sup>33</sup> Kling, Sjostrom, and Lopez, *Battle of St. Louis*, 104-5, and in more detail, Kling and Sjostrom, "The British Attacks against St. Louis and Cahokia during the American Revolutionary War," 88-91.
- <sup>34</sup> Depictions of the battle at the St. Louis Old Courthouse and the Missouri State Capitol, while evocative in some respects, inaccurately show the wooden wall, which was not built until after the battle.
- <sup>35</sup> September 5, 1780, St. Louis Militia List, AGI, Cuba, leg. 2, fol. 575-76.
- <sup>36</sup> Kling and Sjostrom, "The British Attacks against St. Louis and Cahokia during the American Revolutionary War," 96-97; Kling, Sjostrom, and Lopez, *Battle of St. Louis*, 180-81.
- <sup>37</sup> The militia lists in the AGI archives cover the war years, the end of 1779 to February of 1783, and comprise more than thirty monthly lists. Several monthly lists from first half of 1780 appear to be missing. These lists are more accurately censuses, as they do not necessarily reflect men on active duty.
- <sup>38</sup> Marriage Contract, St. Louis Recorded Archives Index, vol. 1, book 1:186, MHS.
- <sup>39</sup> Bryan, "A Study of the Robidoux Sites in Blocks No. 5 and 6 St. Louis," 5; Peterson, *Colonial St. Louis*, 4.
- <sup>40</sup> Bryan, "A Study of the Robidoux Sites in Blocks No. 5 and 6 St. Louis," 5; Peterson, *Colonial St. Louis*, 26.
- <sup>41</sup> "Riverfront Excavators Unearth the Foundations of 2 Early Buildings," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, July 17, 1960, 3A. Copies of the older editions of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* can be found at the St. Louis County Library and Washington University in St. Louis Libraries.
- <sup>42</sup> Papers of the original claimants are recorded in Land Titles, Box 12, Folder 20, 2:707, *Missouri Secretary of State Archives*.
- <sup>43</sup> Don Manuel Luis Gayoso de Lemos to Francisco Luis Héctor de Carondelet, November 24, 1795, in Abraham P. Nasatir, *Spanish War Vessels on the Mississippi, 1792-1796* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 334.
- <sup>44</sup> Eugenio Alvarez to Delassus, October 11, 1779, in Houck, *Spanish Regime in Missouri*, 2:267-69.
- <sup>45</sup> "Patriotic Donations and Loans made by the Residents of Upper Louisiana to Aid Spain in the War-1799," *ibid.*, 2:292-97.
- <sup>46</sup> "St. Louis Land Owners in 1805," *Missouri Historical Society Collections*, vol. 3, no. 1 (1908): 183-92.
- <sup>47</sup> Billon, *Annals of St. Louis*, 445-46.
- <sup>48</sup> "Earliest Registers of First Catholic Church in St. Louis," St. Louis Genealogical Society and St. Louis County Library; *Robidoux Memorial to the Robidoux Brothers*, 45.



- <sup>49</sup> Luttig, *Journal of a Fur Trading Expedition*, 34, 147-48; Lewis, *Robidoux Chronicles*, 69-70. There is some dispute on which Robidoux was in Nebraska at the time; see Merrill J. Mattes, "Robidoux's Trading Post at 'Scott's Bluffs,' and the California Gold Rush," *Nebraska History* 30 (1949): 133.
- <sup>50</sup> Louis Houck, *A History of Missouri from the earliest explorations and settlements until the admission of the state into the union*, 3 vols., (Chicago, Ill.: R. R. Donnelly & Sons, 1908), 3:143.
- <sup>51</sup> Billon, *Annals of St. Louis*, 365.
- <sup>52</sup> Houck, *A History of Missouri*, 3:162.
- <sup>53</sup> Bryan, "A Study of the Robidoux Sites in Blocks No. 5 and 6 St. Louis," 6, 8.
- <sup>54</sup> Estate of Joseph Robidoux, March 16, 1809, Pierre-Chouteau Collection, MHS, reel 40, file 0782; Peterson, *Colonial St. Louis*, 6; Bryan, "A Study of the Robidoux Sites in Blocks No. 5 and 6 St. Louis," 8.
- <sup>55</sup> Billon, *Annals of St. Louis*, 444; Bryan, "A Study of the Robidoux Sites in Blocks 5 and 6 St. Louis," 8.
- <sup>56</sup> Houck, *A History of Missouri*, 3:194.
- <sup>57</sup> Rabideau, *Joseph Robidoux: The Family Patriarch*, 156. For an account of the exploits of the other sons of Joseph Robidoux III, see: Robert J. Willoughby, *The Brothers Robidoux and the Opening of the American West* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2012); Lewis, *Robidoux Chronicles*; Bartlett Boder, "More About Robidoux," *Museum Graphics*, vol. 2, no. 4 (Fall, 1950): 8.
- <sup>58</sup> Billon, *Annals of St. Louis*, 444; Willoughby, *The Brothers Robidoux and the Opening of the American West*, 34.
- <sup>59</sup> Julia Chipps, "Joseph Robidoux," *Museum Graphic*, vol. 2, no. 2 (Spring, 1950): 3.
- <sup>60</sup> Lewis, *Robidoux Chronicles*, 137-41.
- <sup>61</sup> Ibid., 223, fn. 118. There was at least one if not two children named Messanie who died at or shortly after birth. Willoughby, *The Brothers Robidoux and the Opening of the American West*, 29, 34; Lewis, *Robidoux Chronicles*, 223, 319. Note, some sources give the baptism dates as birth dates, which is not always accurate.
- <sup>62</sup> "Serious Affair," *Adventure* [St. Joseph, Missouri newspaper], September 13, 1850, 2.
- <sup>63</sup> Campbell House Museum Index and Transcription of Robidoux Letters, June 1, 2020, compiled by Thomas Gronski and Andrew Hahn. This index and transcription covers fifty-six letters between Robert Campbell or R & W Campbell and members of the Robidoux family, most of which are to Joseph Robidoux. The original documents are in the St. Louis Mercantile Library.
- <sup>64</sup> Lewis, *Robidoux Chronicles*, 60.
- <sup>65</sup> *Missouri: The WPA Guide to the "Show Me" State* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1941), 288; Mother Flavia Augustine, "Cultural and Religious Effects of the Convent of the Sacred Heart of St. Joseph, Missouri" (Master's thesis, Creighton University, 1952), 26-27.
- <sup>66</sup> "Proclamation," *St. Joseph Morning Herald*, May 28, 1868, 1; "Funeral of Joseph Robidoux," *ibid.*, May, 29, 1868, 1.
- <sup>67</sup> Boder, "The James Treacy Collection of Photographs of St. Joseph Pioneers in Civil War Days," *Museum Graphic*, vol. 7, no. 2 (Spring, 1955): 7-16; Boder, "Felix Robidoux," *ibid.*, vol. 4, no. 3 (Summer, 1952): 4; Boder, "More About Robidoux," *ibid.*, 8; Lewis, *Robidoux Chronicles*, 61; Robidoux, *Memorial to the Robidoux Brothers*, 150-51.
- <sup>68</sup> Rabideau, *Joseph Robidoux: The Family Patriarch*, 217-19.
- <sup>69</sup> Ibid.; "Death comes to Mrs. F. A. Beauvais," *St. Louis Republic*, October 20, 1900, 7
- <sup>70</sup> Boder, "Josephine Robidoux and May Tilden Robidoux," *Museum Graphic*, vol. 8, no. 4 (Fall, 1956): 2; Boder, "Love Letter of Frank P. Corby," *ibid.*, 7-9; Boder, "Love Letter of Josephine Angelique Robidoux," *ibid.*, 10-11.
- <sup>71</sup> Boder, "Josephine Robidoux and May Tilden Robidoux," *ibid.*, 2.
- <sup>72</sup> *The History of Buchanan County, Missouri: containing a history of the county, its cities, towns, etc., biographical sketches of its citizens, Buchanan County in the late war, general and local statistics, portraits of early settlers and prominent men, history of Missouri, map of Buchanan County, etc.* (St. Joseph, Mo.: Union Historical Company, 1881), 443, 445; Personal (Deaths), *Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 23, 1873, 7.
- <sup>73</sup> Boder, "Love Letter of Josephine Angelique Robidoux," *ibid.*, 8; "Felix Robidoux," *ibid.*, 4.
- <sup>74</sup> *Gould's St. Louis Directory, for 1874*, 198; "Mrs. Charles Keebaugh funeral tomorrow," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, September 19, 1953, 16.
- <sup>75</sup> *The Robidoux Family Bible Leaves*, St. Joseph Museums, Inc. The Bible leaves consist of four pages, two of births, one of marriages, and one of deaths, maintained until the early 1900s.
- <sup>76</sup> *Gustavus V. Brecht v. Josephine A. Corby, Executrix*, 7 Mo. App. 300 (1879).
- <sup>77</sup> Last Will and Testament of Francis P. Corby, March 15, 1876, Buchanan County, Missouri, Recorder of Deeds, Book 161, Page 531; copy also in records of State Historical Society of Missouri.
- <sup>78</sup> "Hugh Fox's Home Seized for Debt," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, December 28, 1895, 1.
- <sup>79</sup> "A St. Joseph Purchase," *ibid.*, October 11, 1891, 23.
- <sup>80</sup> *The Iron Age*, vol. 49 (January 28, 1892): 167; *ibid.*, vol. 53 (April 26, 1894): 811; *The Robidoux Family Bible Leaves*, St. Joseph Museums, Inc.
- <sup>81</sup> *The Robidoux Family Bible Leaves*, St. Joseph Museums, Inc.
- <sup>82</sup> "Obituaries," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, September 28, 1930, 65.
- <sup>83</sup> *The Robidoux Family Bible Leaves*, St. Joseph Museums, Inc.
- <sup>84</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>85</sup> "About St. Louis People," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, April 28, 1889, 20.
- <sup>86</sup> "Sales of Real Estate Reported by Agents," *ibid.*, August 2, 1908, 12B.
- <sup>87</sup> "Death of Mrs. Jane Robidoux," *ibid.*, December 30, 1895, 3. Note this article erroneously states that Jane is the wife of Joseph Robidoux, the founder of St. Louis.
- <sup>88</sup> "Death of C. E. Robidoux in St. Louis," April 24, 1915, *The Catholic Tribune* (St. Joseph, Mo.), 5
- <sup>89</sup> *The Robidoux Family Bible Leaves*, St. Joseph Museums, Inc.

## ENDNOTES continued

- <sup>90</sup> *Gould's St. Louis Directory, for 1890*, 1287. It may be that the son struck out on his own as he appears as the president of Ewald Iron Company in St. Louis in 1900 and 1902 and associated with that company as secretary under L. P. Ewald as president in 1898, *Gould's St. Louis Directory, for 1898*, 1633, *Gould's St. Louis Directory, for 1900*, 561, *Gould's St. Louis Directory, for 1902*, 590, and *Directory of Iron and Steel Works of the United States and Canada*, vol. 15 (Philadelphia, Penn.: American Iron and Steel Association, 1902), 242. James Sweney Copper and Brass Co. is shown as the successor to James P. Sweney & Son in *Gould's St. Louis Directory, for 1898*, *ibid.*, 242. Thanks to Michael E. Sweney, a local St. Louis attorney, for confirming there are Ella descendants still in St. Louis.
- <sup>91</sup> *The Age of Steel, St. Louis*, Vol. 92, No. 20 (November 15, 1902): 19; "Obituaries," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, February 4, 1914, 14.
- <sup>92</sup> "Brought Suit for \$ 11,000.00," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, January 6, 1901, 2.
- <sup>93</sup> Card Parties, *St. Louis Republic*, February 17, 1901, 2; "Society," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, September 22, 1901, 8A; "F. Corby Dies in Pittsburg," *ibid.*, June 15, 1938, 3C. Note: this article erroneously names Frank as Frank C. instead of Frank F.
- <sup>94</sup> "Dr. Corby Very Ill.: Held At The City Hospital For Observation," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, December 19, 1899, 12.
- <sup>95</sup> "Weddings To-Day: A Number Of Interesting Nuptial Ceremonies In St. Louis Society," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, November 5, 1890, 18; "Deserted and Destitute," *ibid.*, June 17, 1894, 5.
- <sup>96</sup> "Amateur Artists: St. Louis Ladies Who Are Skilled With the Pencil," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, August 31, 1890, 14.
- <sup>97</sup> "The Rising Generation," *The Critic and Amusement Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 4 (Cleveland, September 5, 1896): 2; "Benefit of the Doubt," *Boston Daily Globe*, October 27, 1896, 2; Dr. Corby Very Ill," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, December 19, 1899 (mentions appearing in New York).
- <sup>98</sup> "The Theaters," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, September 17, 1896, 9. This is the new Olympic Theatre replacing the old one torn down in 1882; "The Olympic Theater to be Pulled Down Soon," *ibid.*, March 3, 1882, 5. The new Olympic Theatre Building was composed five floors fronting on Broadway. The theater auditorium was in the rear or western portion of the building and could seat 2,500 patrons in three levels of seating. Stores were located on the first floor, rooms on the second floor were reserved for theater related business, and the rest of the space was operated by the St. James Hotel. *The American Gas Light Journal*, vol. 56 (January 11, 1892): 48; *Chouteau v. The St. Louis Gaslight Company*, 47 Mo. App. 328 (1892). The new Olympic Theatre opened in late 1882 and soon became the most celebrated theater in St. Louis. A haunt of the city's rich and famous, it achieved an international reputation for its accommodations, management, and history of performance. The famed English actor Sir Henry Irving called this theater the finest playhouse in America. American actress Ethel Barrymore praised its facilities as among the best anywhere, "The New Olympic Theater," *The Society of Architectural Historians Newsletter*, vol. 20, no. 4A (Winter, 2014): 2.
- <sup>99</sup> "Coming Back: St. Louisans Returning from Mountains, Lakes and Coasts," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, August 28, 1892, 26.
- <sup>100</sup> "Fat Men Walking Race to Forest Park," *ibid.*, April 4, 1908, 2; "Repeat of Walking Race of 20 Years," *ibid.*, April 8, 1928.
- <sup>101</sup> "Society Gossip," *ibid.*, Dec 20, 1889, 4
- <sup>102</sup> "Semi-Centennial Anniversary Volume of the American Neurological Society 1875-1924" (Albany, N.Y.: Boyd Printing Company, 1924), 140; Jerome Keating Bauduy, "Lectures on Diseases of the Nervous System," *The American Journal of Medical Sciences*, vol. 71 (1876): 234-36; "A President Elected: Dr. J. K. Bauduy Honored by the St. Louis Medical Society Last Night," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, December 29, 1889, 5; "Dr. James K. Bauduy Funeral Held Today," *ibid.*, October 13, 1914, 20.
- <sup>103</sup> "Amateur Baseball Notes," *St. Louis Republic*, June 28, 1901, 7; "Boyce and Orthwein Divide Swimming Honors," *ibid.*, October 26, 1903, 4; "A. C. Aquatics (St. Louis City Championships)," *ibid.*, November 8, 1903, 47.
- <sup>104</sup> Articles of Association, filed March 21, 1907, *Missouri Secretary of State Archives*.
- <sup>105</sup> *Proceedings of the Illinois Mining Institute* (Springfield, Ill.; Jefferson Printing Company, 1935), advertising section, 85; *ibid.*, (1936), advertising section, 95; *ibid.*, (1937), advertising section, 55.
- <sup>106</sup> *Dye's Newsletter-Society Gossip*, The Insurance Exchange, St. Louis, Missouri, vol. 5, no. 16 (1899), 8.
- <sup>107</sup> "Reservations are being made for 1913 B. M. L. Panama Trip," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, November 24, 1912, 8B; "B. M. L. Panama Party to go Feb. 3 on Special Train," *ibid.*, January, 19, 1913, 2B; "B. M. L. Panama Party is at Colon: All Well," *ibid.*, February 12, 1913, 2; "St. Louisans on Winter Trip to Panama," *ibid.*, March 16, 1913, 70.
- <sup>108</sup> Albert Nelson Marquis, ed., *The Book of St. Louisans: A Biographical Dictionary of Leading Living Men of the City of St. Louis and Vicinity* (Chicago: A. N. Marquis & Company, 1912), 132; Walter B. Stevens, *Centennial History of Missouri*, 6 vols. (St. Louis: S.J. Clarke Publishing company, 1921), 5:126-27.
- <sup>109</sup> Additional Sketches of Noted Missourians, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, July 11, 1937, 8H. However, they had the benefit of Josephine living until Betty was 24 and JB 57.
- <sup>110</sup> "J B Corby Funeral to be Tuesday," *ibid.*, August 2, 1959, 19A.
- <sup>111</sup> Boder, "Josephine Robidoux and May Tilden Robidoux," *Museum Graphic*, vol. 8, no. 4 (Fall, 1956): 12-13.
- <sup>112</sup> A special thanks to Richard Freedman of Semcor. Richard provided some background history of his father's purchase of Corby Supply Company and information on some company pictures.
- <sup>113</sup> Thomas Woods Stevens and Percy MacKaye, *The Book of Words of the Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis* (St. Louis: St. Louis Drama Association, 1914), 43.



- <sup>114</sup> *The Hatchet*, Washington University in St. Louis, 1919, 67, 226–27; *ibid.*, 1920, 11; *ibid.*, 1921, 282, 290–91, 314–15; *Michiganensian*, University of Michigan, 1922, 84, 372; *ibid.*, 1924, 560; Society News, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, May 31, 1922, 17. For the background of the Quo Vadis clubs, “The Quo Vadis Club,” Banta’s Greek Exchange, vol. 9, no. 3 (July, 1921): 150.
- <sup>115</sup> Society News, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, August 24, 1924, 1; *Michigan Alumnus*, University of Michigan, (1924–25): 31:560.
- <sup>116</sup> Certificate of Death, March 5, 1935, Missouri State Board of Health, File no. 6869.
- <sup>117</sup> Social News (débutante), November 12, 1924, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 19; “Visiting Chicago,” *ibid.*, March 18, 1925, 17; “St. Louisans Abroad and Others Making Vacation Journeys,” *ibid.*, May 30, 1926, 2; Social Activities, *ibid.*, August 16, 1926, 17; “Bride-to-be in the East,” *ibid.*, August 27, 1926, 23; “Betty Corby to Wed,” *ibid.*, April 20, 1927, 25; “Betty Corby becomes bride of William D. Hemenway, Jr.,” *ibid.*, June 5, 1927; Society News Section, 1; Society News Section, *ibid.*, June 12, 1927, 1; Social Activities, *ibid.*, August 4, 1932, 3C; “What Smartly Dressed Women of St. Louis are Wearing Now,” *ibid.*, December 10, 1939, 1G.
- <sup>118</sup> *The Alliance of Unitarian and Other Liberal Christian Women Manual*, 1918–1919 (Concord, N.H.: The Rumford Press, 1918), 148.
- <sup>119</sup> *Society News, St. Louis Star and Times*, June 4, 1927, 5; “New Home for Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Hemenway, Jr.,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 5, 1927, 1D.
- <sup>120</sup> “Many St. Louisans at Pentwater, Michigan,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, July 12, 1936, 1G; “Pentwater Beach Attracts Visitors,” *ibid.*, August 8, 1937, 20. Apparently, JB Corby had the same or possibly a different cottage in Michigan for some time, having his own kids there in the summer of 1912. “Society,” *ibid.*, July 12, 1912, 7.
- <sup>121</sup> “Foundering in the River,” *ibid.*, September 17, 1940, 1.
- <sup>122</sup> “Mrs. W. D. Hemenway, Jr., Dies on a European Trip,” *ibid.*, May 16, 1956, 3D.
- <sup>123</sup> “Mrs. W. D. Hemenway’s Estate Valued at \$114,573,” *ibid.*, July 15, 1956, 2B.
- <sup>124</sup> Many thanks to the Hemenways, Suzy and Sallie in particular, and the late Scott Bauduy Corby and his wife, Anne Corby, for their support and assistance with certain family history details.
- <sup>125</sup> For a discussion of some of the other possible Robidoux St. Louis connections, see Lewis, *Robidoux Chronicles*, 165–97. One can pick up a St. Louis phone book and readily see there are many Robidoux entries.
- <sup>126</sup> “Corby Family,” St. Joseph Museums, Inc., [https://stjosephmuseums.fandom.com/wiki/Corby\\_Family](https://stjosephmuseums.fandom.com/wiki/Corby_Family), accessed May 5, 2020; *The History of Buchanan county, Missouri*, 471.
- <sup>127</sup> Willoughby, *The Brothers Robidoux and the Opening of the American West*, 183; Lewis, *Robidoux Chronicles*, 60; Boder, “The Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad,” *Museum Graphic*, vol. 6, no. 2 (Spring, 1954): 6.
- <sup>128</sup> Lewis, *Robidoux Chronicles*, xv; Anna K. Roberts, “Finding Their Place in an American City: Perspectives on African Americans and French Creoles in Antebellum St. Louis” (Master’s thesis, College of William and Mary, 2016): 9–11, 20, 22. <https://scholarworks.wm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1069&context=etd>, accessed May 5, 2020.

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Mr. Ehlmann holds degrees from Furman University and the University of Missouri-Columbia, as well as a law degree from Washington University. He was a teacher and coach in the public schools for seven years and a practicing attorney for 12 years. He is the author of *Crossroads, A History of St. Charles County Bicentennial Edition* and several other articles on the Civil War era in Missouri.

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