

Collection Highlights

These include manuscript, printed and visual sources:



St. Louis Mercantile Library Collection

Sale booth honoring President Lincoln at the Grand Mississippi Valley Sanitary Fair to aid the union cause - St. Louis, 1864

- Robbins Papers; 85 letters written during the Civil War by a Confederate soldier, Edward C. Robbins, and family members which depict vividly life on the homefront of wartime St. Louis; other manuscripts, business ledgers, and diaries—the Mercantile Library's own archives—exist in the Mercantile's manuscript collections and these provide unique glimpses into the world of thoughts, emotions, and daily events of the times.
- Hinton Rowen Helper; the library of the Southern abolitionist and author of **The Impending Crisis**, including hundreds of anti-slavery tracts and periodicals, and Helper's annotated copies of his own books.
- Confederate Imprint collection of books printed in the South during the Civil War.
- Historic Newspapers; including a run of the **Missouri Republican** from 1847- 1869, and numerous other titles which document the Civil War in an unbroken record of important events. Files of earlier and later newspapers deal with such topics as slavery's expansion into Missouri in the earliest days to issues concerning Reconstruction following the War. In microfilm and hard copy.
- Collections of contemporary sheet music, paper money, theater bills, scrapbooks, prints, photographs and maps add to the visual record of the War and society of Civil War times; early 20th century tourist pamphlets and guide books document the popular culture which has developed around the story of the Civil War for later generations.
- Contemporary novels, poetry, government documents, and local St. Louis printed publications.

Facilities, Systems, Services & Access

Access to the collections is available free of charge for all inquiries connected with personally conducted research. The Library catalogues its collections on OCLC, the national bibliographic database. Finding aids and guides to the collections are available to researchers; interlibrary loan, Infopass and on-line database searching and Internet services are also available. The Mercantile Library sponsors internships, symposia, lecture series and exhibitions on its history and on its collections. Further programs continue to be developed. Optional membership allows holders borrowing privileges for circulating materials.

A Special Collection within the **ST. LOUIS MERCANTILE LIBRARY**

at the University of Missouri – St. Louis

(Thomas Jefferson Library Building)

8001 Natural Bridge Road

St. Louis, Missouri 63121-4499

Hours:

8:00am – 10:30pm – Mon. – Thurs.

8:00am – 5:00pm – Friday

9:00am – 5:00pm – Saturday

1:00pm – 9:00pm – Sunday

Rare Book and Manuscript Reading Room,
Intersession and summer school hours vary from the above.

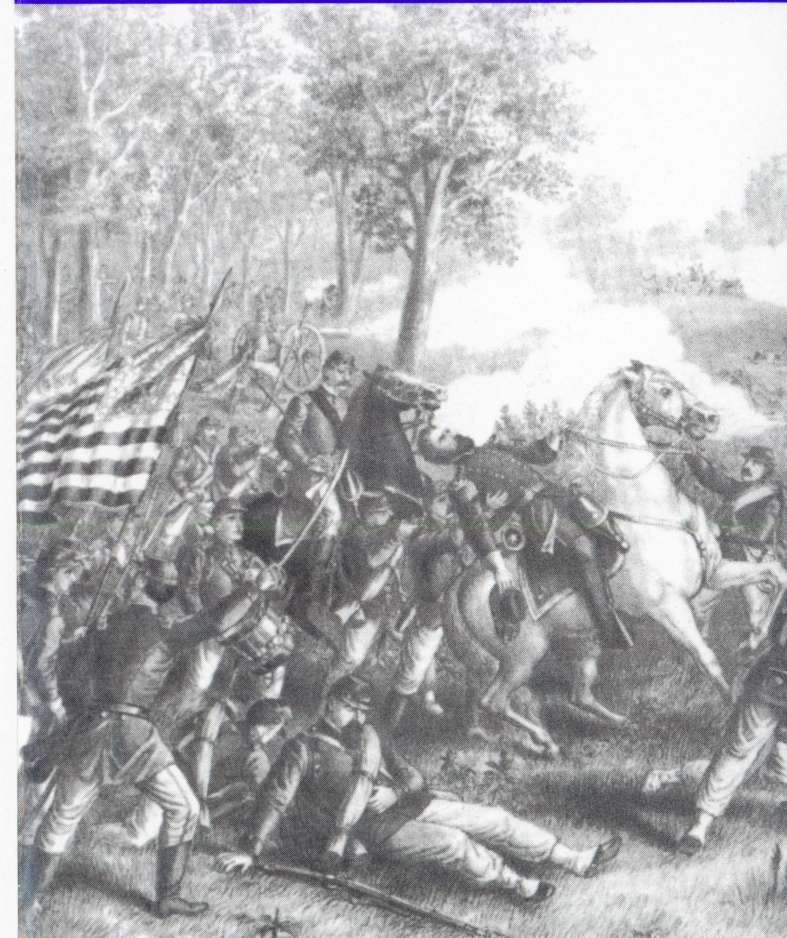
Telephone: 314/516-7247

FAX: 314/516-7241

Fees: Annual \$35 Membership (Student \$15.00) in the Library allows for certain reduced fees (i.e. photocopying—15 cents per page; 30 cents non-member); other service fees may be charged depending on the nature of research, such as photographic duplication, and the amount of staff time involved.

This brochure was produced through the generosity of the Civil War Round Table of St. Louis in conjunction with its promotion of inquiry into all aspects of Civil War History, especially as it relates to Missouri and St. Louis. The brochure was released in conjunction with a workshop conducted for St. Louis area educators interested in teaching to their students the story of Missouri's involvement in the Civil War.

Special Collections for Researching Civil War History



Battle of Wilson's Creek – St. Louis Mercantile Library Collection

St. Louis Mercantile Library
at the University of Missouri – St. Louis

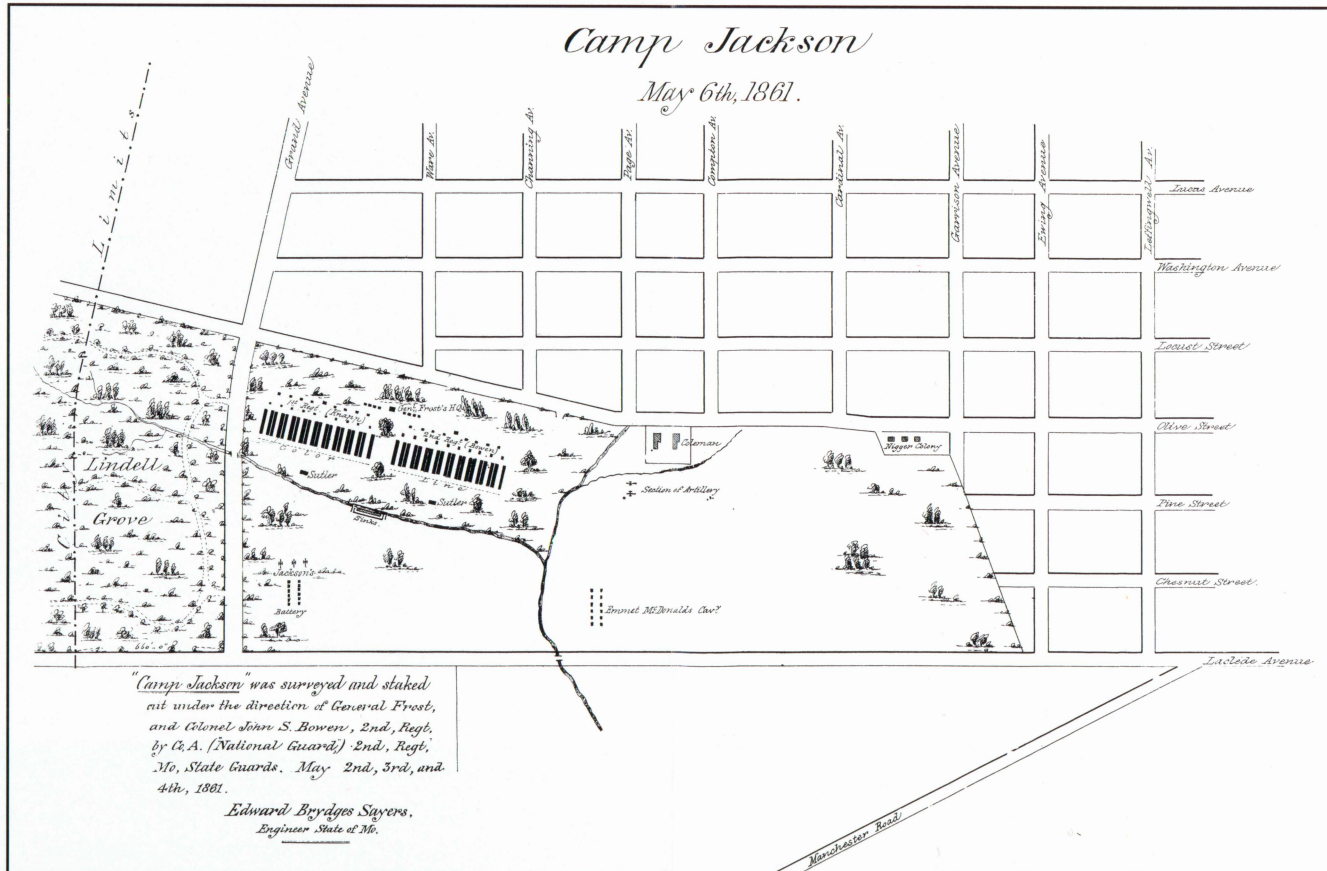
Documenting a Great Conflict, Its Tragedies and Triumphs

Since its earliest days, the St. Louis Mercantile Library was an observer of the social and political currents which swirled around its building on the corner of Locust and Broadway in downtown St. Louis. It was a crossroads for those heading West; it was a bastion for the City's prominent business leaders and their families; it was a forum for inquiry and a meeting place. Because of that, many of the Mercantile Library's famed collections found their wellspring in the fortuitous effort to document the life present in the institution's midst, an endeavor in which its early staff excelled. The great events of Western Expansion, the rise of Missouri's pre-dominance in the West, the resolution of the slavery question, and the Civil War in all of its multifaceted richness afforded special collecting opportunities.

Concerning the example of the Civil War, the Mercantile Library literally lived the history of the day. It saw on its site many meetings of Union patriots; its huge hall was a soldiers' drill field; conventions proclaimed from its chambers ratification by the Missouri State Convention of 1861 allegiance to the Union; and again in 1865, the Emancipation Ordinance. Its founding father, James Yeatman, undoubtedly used the Library's quiet recesses to plan his fateful work in promoting the Western Sanitary Commission, for which he led the Executive Committee for the Fair of 1864 to aid the Union cause. Here an intellectual Civil War was fought between the staunchest and most brilliant citizens of St. Louis over states' rights and slavery's great evil blight.

The researcher of ante-bellum, Civil War, and Reconstruction history is thus afforded in the Mercantile Library excellent opportunities for study. From the time

when these great questions were debated, argued, and fought over to the present, a slice of this tumultuous era is represented in an array of special collections in various formats. Primary and secondary sources strongly related to both the national scene and Missouri's and the region's own response to the upheavals of the Civil War are represented in the collection, providing the student of Civil War history with a wealth of valuable comparative data state by state. Primary sources of the times are supported by current reassessments. Virtually unobtainable local sources are combined here with the response to the Civil War in early European publications. The mix of research materials provides a unique experience for beginning as well as advanced study of this fascinating era.



Camp Jackson in St. Louis after its capture by U.S. Forces - St. Louis Mercantile Library Collection



Genl. Ulysses S. Grant

from a contemporary engraving - St. Louis Mercantile Library

The Scope of the Collections

The Civil War holdings in the Mercantile Library extend in part to over twenty special collections of primary and secondary sources, and include 2000 books. Added to this core collection are manuscripts, daily issues of various regional and national newspapers, and photographs and prints which number an additional 1000 items.