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Centrally located in the United States, Missouri lies on the eastern edge of the Great Plains and on the southern edge of the glaciated area. Its landforms are a combination of plains and hills, and its soils are largely of the gray-brown podzolic and black earth varieties. Since Missouri is on a parallel with Illinois and Kansas, it has been grouped with the north-central states by geographers and the census bureau since at least 1870.

In many aspects, however, Missouri has been just as southern as midwestern in orientation. Missouri is tied to the South and the Midwest by its drainage system. The Missouri and Mississippi Rivers and their tributaries border and flow through the state of Missouri on their journey from the upper Midwest to the Gulf of Mexico. These rivers early linked Missouri to the Midwest and to the South through their transportation of people, furs, and commerce.¹

Because of a common drainage system, Missouri was explored and settled almost simultaneously by the same type of people as the upper South and the Middle West. Although Francisco Vasquez de Coronado probably did not reach Missouri in his exploration of the Southwest in 1540, Louis Joliet and Father Jacques Marquette did when they made their historic descent of the Mississippi River to the mouth of the Arkansas River in 1673. Joliet and Marquette especially noted the locations where the Missouri and Ohio rivers joined the “Father of Waters.”²

Until 1763, the area of Missouri was under French control. At that time, the Louisiana Territory was transferred to Spain by the Treaty of Paris, which ended the Seven Years War. The main center of Spanish activity in the Louisiana Territory after 1763 was at St. Louis. In that year Pierre L. Liquest (Laclede) and his stepson, Auguste Chouteau, came up to the St. Louis region from New Orleans and established a trading

²William B. Munro, Crusaders of New France (New Haven, Connecticut, 1918), 103; James C. Olson, History of Nebraska (Omaha, 1955), 29-32.
post. In 1767 a Spanish official made his appearance at St. Louis and two years later Alexander O'Reilly took over the leading role in the development of the upper Louisiana Territory for the Spanish. O'Reilly's Spanish-Missouri Fur Company began the exploration of Nebraska and the Dakotas.

Despite their activity, the Spanish had moved only a short distance out of St. Louis by 1785. After 1785 the Spanish began to travel the upper Missouri River more to protect their land and keep out the British and Americans, than to obtain trade. The attack against the Spanish hold in the West in the 1760's was led by England's Hudson Bay and Northwest companies. Swarming out of Mackinac and Prairie du Chien in the Lake Michigan area, the traders of these companies went as far west as the Mandan villages on the upper Missouri River. In 1791 Spain, fearing the loss of northern Louisiana, sent agents up to win back the Indians. Auguste Chouteau was dispatched to build Ft. Carondelet among the Osage villages in 1794. Both Jacques L'Eglise and Jacques Clamorgan made expeditions up the Missouri to the Mandan villages in the 1790's. Despite their efforts, Spanish influence in the Middle West remained weak. As late as 1803, the Chippewa and Sioux Indians in Minnesota and the Dakota's were under the control of the British trading companies.

The American conquest and exploration of the western section of the Midwest did not take place until after 1803, when

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the United States purchased Louisiana Territory from France. Almost immediately President Thomas Jefferson decided that he wanted to have this unknown region explored. He selected Meriwether Lewis and William Clark for the mission. In May of 1804, they set out from St. Louis with a party of 45 men and three boats. Ascending the Missouri River, they passed a few Creole and American villages in Missouri. They made their first Kansas landfall at the present site of Kansas City. As they proceeded up the Missouri, they saw large numbers of buffalo, elk, antelope, deer, coyotes, wolves, and wild turkeys. After leaving Missouri in 1804, they went to the Pacific coast via the upper Missouri, and then retraced their steps back to St. Louis.

A second famous American explorer in the area in this period was Lieutenant Zebulon M. Pike. In August 1805, Jefferson sent the twenty-six-year-old Pike with twenty men to find the headwaters of the Mississippi River. Although attaining some success in his negotiations with the Sioux, Chippewa, and the British, he failed in his primary mission. He mistook Leech Lake for the source of the Mississippi. Soon after returning to St. Louis in April 1806, Pike was sent west with a party of 23 men to make peace with the Pawnee Indians and to explore the country drained by the Arkansas and Red Rivers. Venturing too far south, however, he was captured by the Spanish, and subsequently released and returned to Louisiana in July 1807.

4Theodore Roosevelt stated in his Winning of the West that the United States would have acquired the Louisiana Territory even if President Thomas Jefferson had not purchased it. Roosevelt contended that the American frontiersmen swarming into the valleys of the Tennessee, the Cumberland, and the Ohio would have flowed on across the Mississippi to acquire the area by occupation. Be that as it may, the United States still obtained a bargain in buying the Louisiana area for $15,000,000. By this purchase, the United States not only obtained unrestricted navigation of the Mississippi, but all or part of the future states of Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Wyoming. Theodore Roosevelt, The Winning of the West: An Account of the Exploration of Our Country from the Alleghanies to the Pacific (New York, 1906), VI, 99-125.
Later expeditions included Henry R. Schoolcraft's exploration into the Ozark Mountains of Missouri and Arkansas in 1818 and Colonel Henry Atkinson's "Yellowstone Expedition" in 1819. Atkinson's group went up the Missouri River to Council Bluffs where they built Ft. Atkinson to serve as winter quarters. The scientific portion of this expedition was commanded by Major Stephen H. Long, who helped to build up the tradition that the western Midwest was the "Great American Desert."\(^5\)

Much of the exploration of the Louisiana Territory was also accomplished by the fur traders who traversed its rivers and streams. Among the first important American fur-trading companies in the Missouri River area was the Missouri Fur Company under the direction of Manuel Lisa. Beginning his trading activities with the Osage prior to 1800, he concentrated his operations at Ft. Lisa near Omaha in 1812, where he controlled the trade with the Omaha, Pawnee, and Oto. From 1812 to around 1823, the Missouri Fur Company was the most important trading company on the Missouri River.

The fur company, however, that did the most to tie the fur trade in the trans-Mississippi area together was the American Company established by John J. Astor in 1808. After 1820 Astor moved into the Missouri River area and quickly absorbed the competition, of which there was an abundance. In 1822 there were an estimated 1000 fur traders on the upper Missouri and 500 on the upper Mississippi. In June 1827, when Ft. Atkinson was abandoned and the Sixth Infantry transferred to Jefferson Barracks near St. Louis, Bellevue, a post a few miles south of Ft. Atkinson, became the center of the fur trade on the Missouri under the direction of the American Fur Company. But even the American Fur Company could not last forever. Liquor and cutthroat competition had taken their toll, and the beaver, mink, muskrat, otter, and fox were disappearing. The American Fur Company went broke in 1841, and by 1850 the romantic period of the beaver was drawing to a close.\(^6\)

As early as 1732, a few French people from Illinois built cabins at a location that became Ste. Genevieve, Missouri. A large number of the early settlers in Missouri were relatives or descendants of the French in the southern Illinois villages.

\(^6\)Olson, Nebraska, 42-46; Billington, Westward Expansion, 444-65.
In 1750 the St. Louis area was considered one of the four main French outposts and trading centers in the central United States. Forty families moved there in 1764. By 1772 there were 1,288 (803 white and 485 Negro) people in Missouri, of which nearly half were in St. Louis.

In the early 1770's, the Spanish opened up homesteads to Americans who crossed the Mississippi River into Missouri. An American could obtain 800 acres for $40.00, the clerical and surveying costs. The Spanish did this for the purpose of setting up an American buffer against the English. The Americans were supposed to be Catholic and loyal to the Spanish king, but these provisions were not rigidly enforced. The leading Spanish villages in the Missouri country in the 1790's were St. Louis, Ste. Genevieve, New Madrid, St. Charles, Cape Girardeau, and La Charette.

After 1798 Americans poured in. Moses Austin came to St. Louis in 1799. He sank the first lead shaft and built a shot tower on a cliff at Herculaneum. Daniel Boone joined his sons at La Charett, Missouri, in 1799. On his arrival from Kentucky, Boone was given command of the district where he settled and a land grant of 8,500 acres on the Missouri River. Boone and his sons began making salt at Boone's Lick, and were soon supplying the residents of St. Louis with salt.

Missouri, along with Ohio, Illinois, Kentucky, and Indiana, also profited from the Ohio River migration that took place around 1800. Theoretically, Missouri had an advantage over the three states to the east in attracting settlers from the South. The Land Ordinance of 1785 and the provisions of the Ordinance of 1787 were both applied to Missouri, with one exception. The non-slavery clause did not apply to Missouri, because the United States had to accept the Spanish property law allowing slaves, which was in force when the U. S. purchased the Louisiana Territory in 1803. Thus a number of southerners did cross Indiana and Illinois into Missouri, because only the latter allowed slaves. Some Illinois residents referred to the Missourians as "Pukes," because they maintained that Illinois had regurgitated them.

Indiana and Illinois also had a struggle over the slavery issue, but it came out differently in those states than in Missouri. Since Missouri did not have the non-slavery clause of the Ordinance of 1787 and since it had a larger influx of southerners with slaves, Missouri maintained slavery as an active institution during its territorial period and came into the Union.

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7 Viles, Missouri, 22-40.
as a slave state under the famous Missouri compromise.

Settlement in Missouri up to 1815, however, was relatively slow. One reason for this was the fact that Missouri had a terrific land-title problem. Few people had received good titles from the Spanish government. It took a congressional commission some thirty years to get the titles straightened out. Land offices were not even opened to sell land in the area until 1818, and as a result Missouri had many squatters. This is one reason why Senator Thomas H. Benton took the western view on squatter and pre-emption laws.

The influx of settlers into Missouri in the period 1815 to 1819 was a part of the general westward movement in the period after the War of 1812. With this inpouring of settlers, Missouri's population expanded by leaps and bounds. From the low figure of 19,783 in 1810, Missouri's population grew to 66,586 by 1820. Seven-eighths of these people were farmers, and most of them lived in the Missouri River-Boonville-Franklin area. The slaves present were used as servants or in general farming; there were few staple crops or plantations.

With the building of the Erie Canal, the main immigration route shifted from the Ohio River to the Great Lakes after 1825, and Missouri's settlement slowed down. Like the southern parts of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, the largest number of Missouri's residents, born-out-of-state, came from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia. Despite the decline in the rapidity of settlement, Missouri's population still increased to 383,702 by 1840.

Like the states to the East, Missouri had a heavy influx of Germans in the two decades after 1840, especially in the St. Louis area. As early as 1850, 12 per cent of Missouri's population was from foreign countries of which about seven per cent or 44,352 were from Germany.

8Ibid., 54-64.
9Carl Wittke, We Who Built America: The Saga of the Immigrant (New York, 1945), 202-03. Missouri, like her neighbors, served the function of populating states further west. Missouri, with the main western trails originating within her boundaries, became the "mother of states." Both the Oregon and California trails had their point of origin in Missouri; and Missourians also claimed the distinction of opening up the Santa Fe Trail. In 1850 Missouri did have the largest number of ex-residents in Oregon and California, and the seventh largest number in Texas. Viles, Missouri, 22-40.
After the Civil War, Missouri became a mixture of pure Anglo-Saxon stock in the Ozark Mountains, a large German element in St. Louis, and heterogeneous Americans. Out of Missouri's 216,379 foreign born in 1900, over half of them were German. Ireland and England contributed the next largest groups of foreign-born residents to Missouri.  

The territorial stage of Missouri at first paralleled the territorial developments in the midwestern states of Indiana and Illinois. Three months after its purchase in 1803, the newly acquired Louisiana Territory was divided by Congress at the thirty-third parallel. The enormous area north of this line was named the District of Louisiana and for a short period was attached to the Indiana Territory for administration. During this period, American institutions and laws were introduced into Missouri by Indiana's Governor William H. Harrison in a fifty-five page volume of statutes. But the attempt to govern St. Louis and the other Missouri settlements from Vincennes proved unsuccessful, and Congress in 1805 formed the Territory of Louisiana with its capital at St. Louis. In 1812 the name of Louisiana Territory was changed to Missouri Territory to avoid confusion with the newly admitted state of Louisiana. At the same time, Missouri went into the second territorial stage and was allowed to elect its own legislature. In 1819 Missouri's boundaries were drawn along their present lines. The area to the south became Arkansas Territory, and that to the west and north remained unorganized. The parallel of 36 degrees and 30 minutes was the southern boundary, with the exception of the New Madrid settlements in southeast Missouri. Two years later, Missouri was finally admitted as a slave state, having

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10 Abstract of the Twelfth Census of the United States 1900 (Washington, D. C., 1904), 42 and 60.
been paired off with Maine as a free state.\textsuperscript{11}

In the period prior to the Civil War, Missouri's political views were personified in the southerner Thomas H. Benton. Born in North Carolina, he moved to Tennessee, and then to Missouri in 1815. He served as the United States Senator from Missouri from 1821 to 1851. He lost his senate seat because he opposed the secessionists and favored the gradual abolition of slavery. His last official position was that of United States Representative from 1853 to 1855. He ran for governor of Missouri at the age of 74 in 1856, was defeated, and died of cancer two years later. One of the most outspoken and influential of the southern and western politicians, he advocated sound money, opposed the national bank, championed a liberal land policy, opposed the annexation of Texas, and favored a gradual abolition of slavery. He represented a compromise of the South and the West not only in the measures he advocated, but even in his manner of speech, which was earnest, assured, boastful, buoyant, and idealistic.\textsuperscript{12}

After the Civil War, Senators Carl Schurz and Benjamin G. Brown of Missouri, both former Union brigadier generals, took the lead in forming the Liberal Republican Party. Tired of President Ulysses S. Grant's nepotism, corruption, inefficiency and harsh rule in the South, the Liberal Republicans held their national convention in Cincinnati in 1872 and adopted a platform of leniency toward the South, civil service reform, and a lower tariff. As a presidential candidate, they chose Horace Greeley, lifelong foe of the Democrats and a low tariff. With-

\textsuperscript{11} The Missouri Compromise was passed in 1820, but the actual admittance of Missouri to the Union was held up for another year due to a provision in Missouri's Constitution, which in effect barred free Negroes from the State. This brought on a new debate in Congress over whether or not this abridged the privileges and immunities of citizens as stated in the U. S. Constitution. This so-called second compromise provided that the President of the United States would proclaim Missouri a state if the Missouri legislature would promise not to pass a law abridging the privileges and immunities of citizens of other states. The Missouri legislature agreed to this arrangement, and Missouri was officially declared a state in August 1821.


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out enthusiastic Democratic support and opposed by the majority of the Republicans, Greeley was easily defeated. Missouri deserted the Midwest and joined the South in casting a majority of the Republicans, Greeley was easily defeated. Missouri deserted the Midwest and joined the South in casting a majority of its electoral votes for Greeley and Brown.\(^{13}\)

In the period 1875 to 1899, Missouri's most noted congressman was Richard P. (Silver Dick) Bland. He was a spokesman for both the agrarian West and South in their advocacy of the free coinage of silver. He was co-author of the Bland-Allison Act of 1878, which provided that the treasury department would buy two to four million dollars of silver bullion each month for coinage.

In 1912 Missouri had a leading presidential contender in the form of Champ Clark, Speaker of the House of Representatives. Clark had a majority of the delegate votes on numerous ballots, but he could not obtain the two-thirds vote required for nomination. Although William J. Bryan and the Nebraska delegation were pledged to Clark, they finally deserted Clark for Woodrow Wilson when Tammany of New York swung to Clark. This resulted in Wilson obtaining the nomination on the forty-sixth ballot. Clark was very angry at Bryan over his defection.\(^{14}\)

In more recent years, the southern and western quality of Missouri's politicians has been represented in President Harry S. Truman and Senator Stuart Symington. Truman obtained the nomination for vice president in 1944 when the political bosses pushed out the more liberal Henry A. Wallace. Several months after taking office for the fourth time, President Franklin D. Roosevelt died and the man from Missouri was left with the final World War II victory, the making of the peace, and the establishment of the United Nations.

After an eventful first term, President Truman ran for office again in 1948. His platform included stronger civil rights, federal health insurance, and federal aid to education. A southern block refused to go along with his civil rights plank and they nominated J. S. Thurmond on the Dixiecrat ticket. A progressive bloc opposed Truman's "get tough policy" with

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\(^{13}\) Howard P. Nash, Jr., Third Parties in American Politics (Washington, D. C., 1959), 106-20.

Russia and chose Henry A. Wallace as its candidate. But despite the fact that Truman's party was split, and the Midwest was divided in its support of him, Truman still won a substantial victory.

Senator Symington has remained on the liberal side in the civil-rights controversy and has concentrated his guns on defense and preparedness. He is generally considered moderate in viewpoint.

Overall since 1820 in presidential elections, Missouri has voted the Whig ticket 0 times, the Democratic ticket 27 times, and the Republican ticket 8 times. This compares to Indiana which has voted the Whig ticket twice, the Democratic ticket 14 times, and the Republican ticket 19 times; and Illinois which has voted the Whig ticket 0 times, the Democratic ticket 17 times, and the Republican ticket 18 times.15

Whereas the rivers tended to link Missouri more to the South, the roads and railroads linked Missouri to the Midwest. One of the earliest roads in Missouri, Boone's Trace, connected the border of Illinois with the interior of Missouri. Missouri's main trails to the West, the Santa Fe and the Oregon, also crossed Kansas. The National Road, begun shortly after 1800, connected Maryland, Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri when completed to St. Louis in 1850. When railroads came into vogue, the Ohio and Mississippi railroad was built to connect Cincinnati to St. Louis. Begun in 1852, the first 26 miles were completed two years later. Lack of money delayed its completion until 1857. The later main railroads in Missouri, such as the Missouri Pacific, tended to run east and west, connecting Missouri to the Midwest rather than to the South.16

When the Civil War came, the Midwest was generally in favor of saving the Union. There was, however, a strong sympathy for the South in certain sections of Missouri, southern Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. In all these areas, it was touch and go for a time. Ohio refused to re-enact personal liberty laws in 1860 in an attempt to placate the South. Thomas Corwin of Ohio was the chairman of the "Committee of 33" instituted in 1860 to prevent secession. They proposed an amendment to guarantee slavery in the South forever and Ohio ratified

16Seymour Dunbar, A History of Travel in America (Indianapolis, 1915), III, 1087-96; IV, 1125-60.
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Clement L. Vallandigham, U.S. Representative from Dayton, was violently opposed to fighting the South and he had considerable support. Copperheadism was still present in Ohio in 1864. Southern Indiana had a similar organization, the Knights of the Golden Circle, which later changed its name to the Order of American Knights and later still to the Sons of Liberty. Southern Illinois was openly sympathetic to the South in early 1861. Senator Stephen A. Douglas used his influence to keep it Union.

Because of its slave orientation, Missouri had an even greater struggle in remaining Union. In February 1861, Missouri had a convention to decide on what course to follow. A resolution favoring war against the Union was defeated, and a decision was postponed. Governor Claiborne F. Jackson, however, took steps to secede. On the other hand, Frank P. Blair organized the Wideawakes, Republican marching groups, to protect the St. Louis arsenal. In April and May of 1861, the Wideawakes were mustered into federal service in lieu of the state militia that Jackson would not provide. Nathaniel P. Lyon, commanding the federalized Wideawakes, captured the state militia at Camp Jackson and a local civil war ensued. The state assembly met in night session, created a state army, and gave the governor virtual dictatorial powers. In August 1861, Lyon attacked the state forces under Sterling Price. Assisted by Arkansas troops, Price defeated Lyon. Meanwhile, the moderates seized control and elected Hamilton R. Gamble as provisional governor. Price marched north in Missouri and won at Wilson's Creek and Lexington, but retreated before federal troops led by General John C. Fremont. In October 1861, an assembly called by Jackson declared Missouri's secession from the Union. But the defeat of Price, commanding the state army, and the defeat of the Confederates at Pea Ridge in northwest Arkansas, crushed Jackson's hopes of reestablishing his government in Missouri. Although raiding in Missouri continued, Missouri remained substantially loyal to the Union. In all, the state supplied around 110,000 troops to the Union armies and 50,000 to the Confederate cause.17

In literature Missouri again demonstrated a compromise of South and West. Its most noted author, Samuel L. Clemens

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17 Jay Monaghan, Civil War on the Western Border 1854-1865 (Boston, 1955), 129-239; Ralph R. Rea, Sterling Price: The Lee of the West (Little Rock, Arkansas, 1959), 32-75.
(Mark Twain), was born in Florida, Missouri, in 1835. His parents soon moved to the river town of Hannibal where he spent his boyhood. His experiences in this river town gave him a background for his two most popular books, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer and The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. At an early age, he worked as a printer in Hannibal, St. Louis, New York, and Philadelphia. He next apprenticed himself to a steamboat pilot and eventually became an experienced pilot, but the Civil War halted traffic on the Mississippi. Some of his experiences as a pilot on the river are related in Life on the Mississippi. He spent two weeks with a troop of Confederate volunteers, then deserted and went west with his brother. After considerable wandering, he eventually settled in New York. He was the epitome of American satire, exaggeration, and humor.18

In art, Missouri produced two especially outstanding painters, one of whom represented more the South and the other the Midwest. In 1819 George C. Bingham was brought to Missouri by his family at the age of eight. He attended the Pennsylvania Academy for a short time and then returned to Missouri to paint. Some of his paintings included "Fur Traders Descending the Missouri," "The Jolly Flatboatmen," and "Raftsmen Playing Cards." His two most noted pictures were "The County Election" and "The Verdict of the People," which displayed democracy in action. His most dramatic picture was "Order No. 11," which was a protest against the federal order stripping western Missouri of all produce in order to stop Confederate guerillas operating in the region.

In more recent times, Missouri's Thomas H. Benton, along with Kansas's John S. Curry and Iowa's Grant Wood, have comprised the Midwest's outstanding triumverate of regional painters. Benton's preachers, racketeers, gamblers, cowboys,

Indians, farmers, lumbermen, and stripteasers all writhed and pranced in similar fashion. The color oppositions, the pitting of one vortex of energy against another, and the bulging muscles were his forte. Benton's scenes were representative of the vibrancy of the Midwest.  

Missouri is a composite of the Midwest and the South. In location, it is midwestern. Because it is a part of the Missouri-Ohio-Mississippi drainage basin, it was originally explored and settled by the French and Spanish. Under the United States after 1803, its later exploration and settlement were accomplished simultaneously with the western north-central states by the same explorers and by a similar type of people. However, its population came more heavily from the South than the rest of the Midwest did. Missouri's Indian population (Pawnee, Wichita, Caddo, Arikara, Mandan, Iowa, Kansa, Missouria, Omaha, Ponca, Osage, and Dakota) were of the same stock as those found in the western Midwest. Modern transportation facilities also have tended to tie Missouri more to the Midwest, although historically the river traffic tied Missouri to the South.

On the other hand, Missouri in the Civil War took an even more favorable attitude toward the deep South than Kentucky and Maryland. Missouri's desire to be admitted as a slave state certainly displayed a southern attitude. In voting in national and state elections, Missouri has tended to be predominantly Democratic and southern in viewpoint.

Yet again, Missouri's outstanding politicians have been a compromise between South and Midwest. And in literature and art, Missouri has also displayed this split personality. It is nearly impossible to add up all these points, pro and con, and arrive at a conclusion as to which region Missouri belongs in. By geographical location, Missouri is midwestern, but by temperament, Missouri is much more difficult to categorize. Over the years, Missouri has become increasingly midwestern, but even yet, Missouri is in that indefinite position of being either one of the most northern of the southern states or the most southern of the midwestern states.