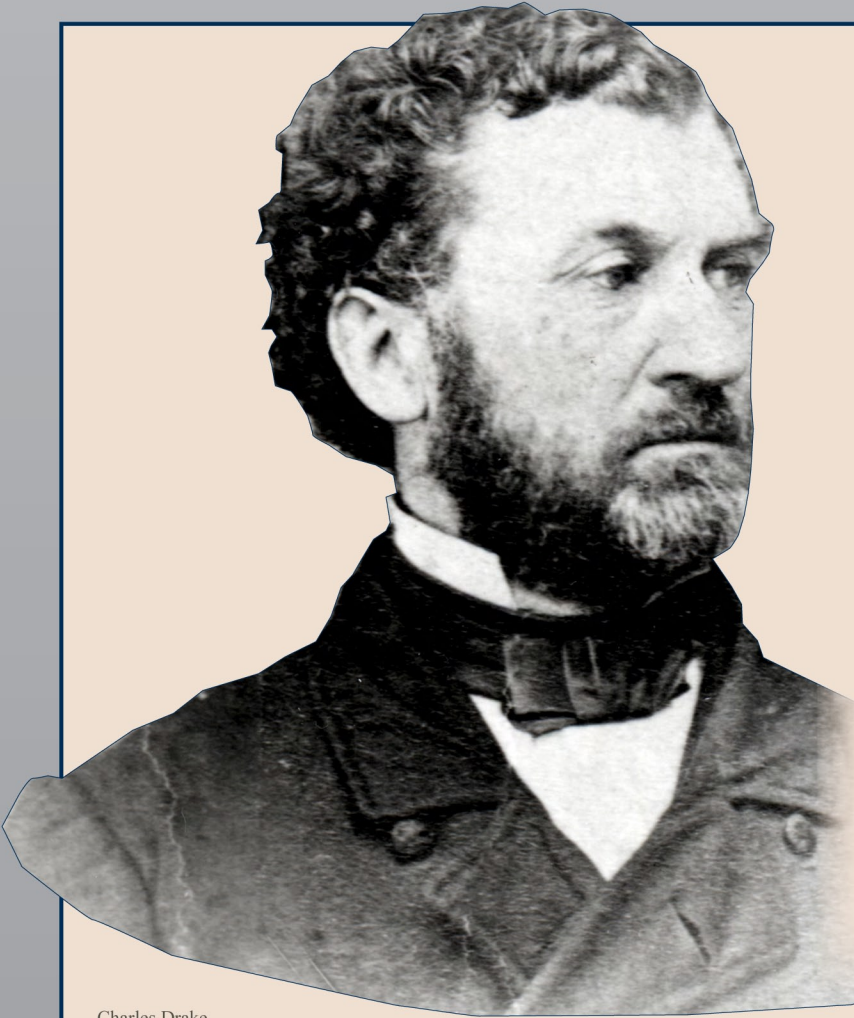




MISSOURI'S 1865 CONSTITUTION

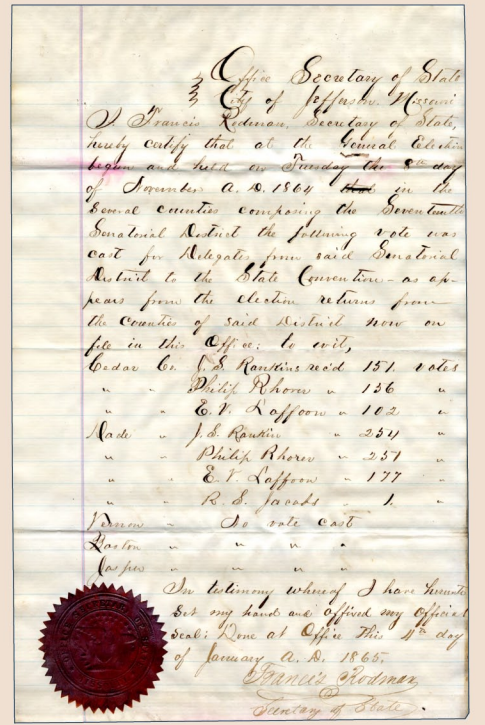


Charles Drake
State Historical Society of Missouri - Columbia

THE DRAKE CONSTITUTION

As the war drew to a close, Missouri citizens elected delegates to a new constitutional convention, which met at the Mercantile Library in St. Louis in early 1865. While the convention was supposedly called to legalize the abolition of slavery, the convention's vice president, a St. Louis lawyer and "Radical Republican" named Charles Drake, persuaded the delegates that the 1820 constitution should be rewritten in order to help Missouri move forward from its slave-holding past.

The so-called Drake Constitution, which was adopted on April 8, 1865, famously included a provision called the "Iron Clad Oath." The constitution stipulated that in order for Missourians to cast ballots in elections, hold public office, teach school, or be the trustee of a corporation, they had to sign a loyalty oath. Missourians who took the oath swore that they had never actively helped to advance the Southern cause, had never supported the cause in any way, and that they had never even spoken in favor of it. This provision disenfranchised large numbers of people because of their alleged disloyalty to the Union during the war years.



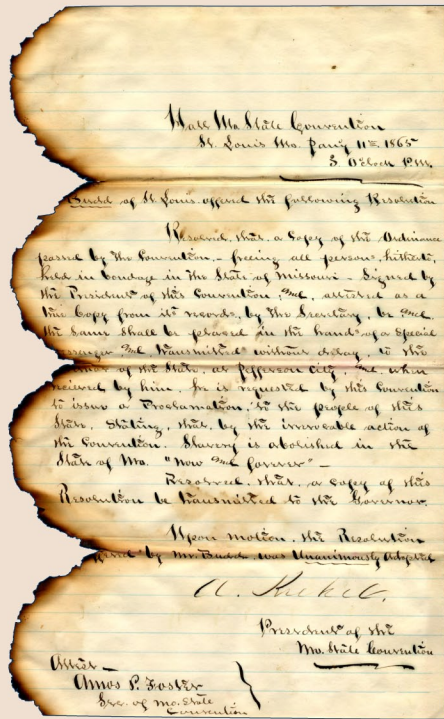
Secretary of State Francis Rodman certifies delegates to the Constitutional Convention from the 17th senatorial district, January 4, 1865.
Missouri State Archives

"That hereafter in this state there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude . . . and all persons held to service or labor as slaves are hereby declared free"

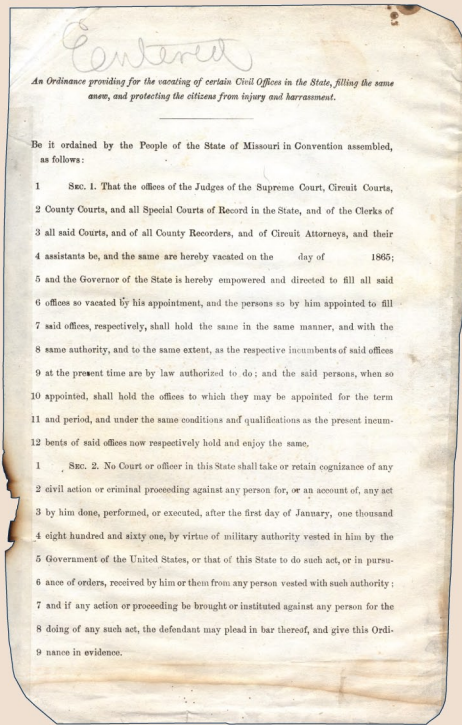
Abolishing Slavery in Missouri,
January 11, 1865



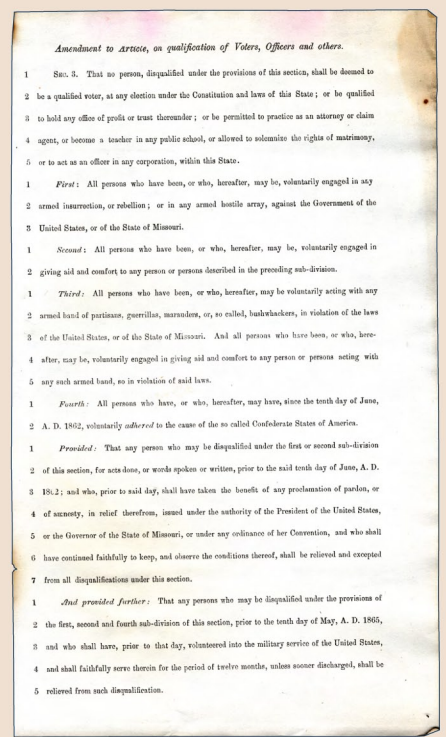
Arnold Krekel, president of the Constitutional Convention of 1865.
State Historical Society of Missouri - Columbia



A Resolution Abolishing Slavery in Missouri, adopted by the State Convention on January 11, 1865.
Missouri State Archives



An Ordinance providing for the vacating of certain Civil Offices in the State. A version of this ordinance was adopted as an amendment to the 1865 Constitution on March 17, 1865.
Missouri State Archives



Proposed Amendment to Article, on qualification of Voters, Officers, and others. While this amendment was not adopted, similar provisions were included in the Constitution of 1865.
Missouri State Archives

Why are these documents burned?

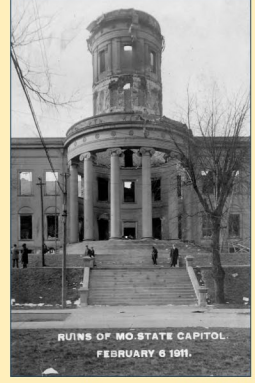
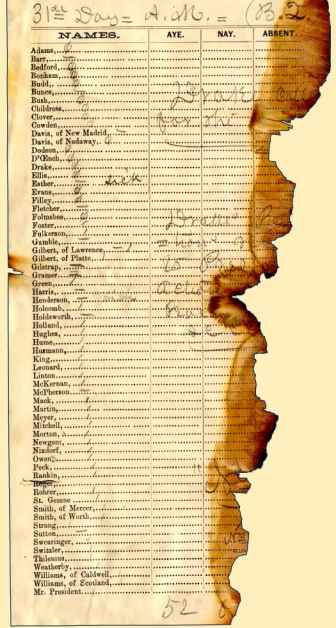
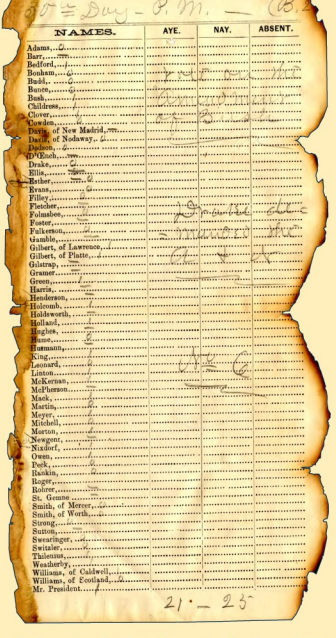
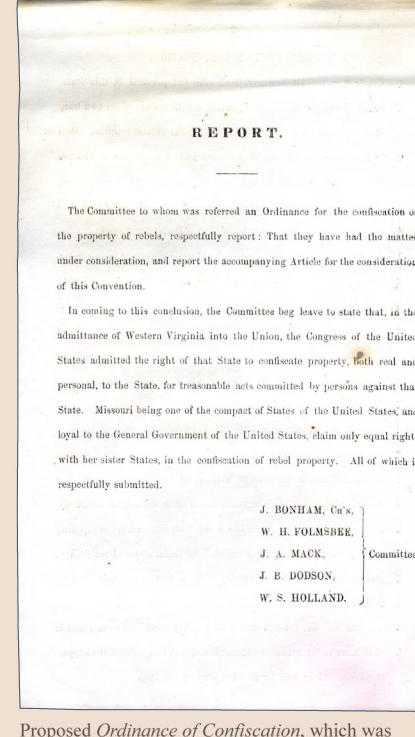


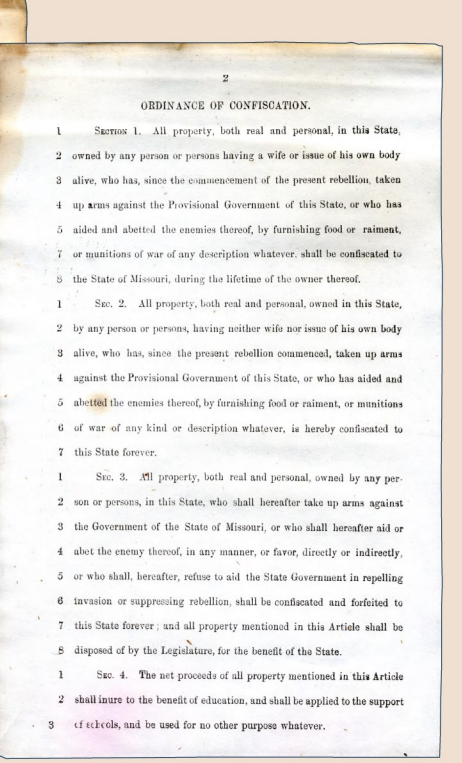
Photo courtesy of Bob Fridly

State documents littered the ground the day after the capitol burned in 1911. While many important documents were destroyed in the fire, thousands like the ones shown here, were salvaged from the capitol ruins.

Delegation ballots from the 30th and 31st days of the Constitutional Convention.
Missouri State Archives



Proposed Ordinance of Confiscation, which was not included in the constitution.
Missouri State Archives



Proposed Ordinance of Confiscation, which was not included in the constitution.
Missouri State Archives

Below: Constitution of 1865, State of Missouri, page 1 (left) and page 40 (right).
Missouri State Archives



Mercantile Library, St. Louis, c. 1878
Missouri State Archives