



MISSOURI

CROSSROADS OF THE NATION

ABOUT THE BOOK

Searching for a way to enrich the French crown and save souls for the Church, in 1673 explorer Louis Jolliet and Jesuit priest Jacques Marquette paddled down the great “father of waters” from its origin, exploring the river natives called “Mesippi.” Sometime that summer the Frenchmen disembarked from their canoes to become the first Europeans to set foot on Missouri soil.

Nature had placed two great rivers in the center of the American continent. Successive generations of Native Americans, French, English, Spanish and Americans would make the land around the rivers the center of a global, national, and regional struggle for influence. The state was born on the fields of the 19th century’s imperial competition for resources. It quickly assumed a central role in the drama of the nation’s “manifest destiny” and weathered hatred and hostility from without and within during the Civil War. Even today, Missouri draws strength from its diversity and the differences of its geography, people and ideas: big city and small town, prairie and mountain, bankers and farmers, technocrats and conservationists, Jeffersonian ideals and machine politics.

In *Missouri: Crossroads of the Nation* the authors chronicle, with lively, stirring prose, the home state of Twain and Truman, ragtime and renegades, Dred Scott and the Pendergast machine. More than 400 vintage photographs, maps, and illustrations illuminate the text, highlighted by a sparkling array of color photographs that add unsurpassed beauty to this breathtaking collection.

A special chapter, *Chronicles of Leadership*, recounts the histories of businesses and organizations that have contributed to Missouri’s great historical importance. An illustrated chronology of significant events enhances the text and puts it all in perspective.

Missouri: Crossroads of the Nation will inform and fascinate long-time residents and newcomers alike. This handsome and thought-provoking volume will be a valued addition to any library for years to come.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Charles Phillips has had extensive involvement with state and local history and was director of information services at the American Association for State and Local History, where he edited *History News*.

A graduate of the University of Iowa’s Writers Workshop, Phillips has written a number of books, including *Passion by Design: The Art and Times of Tamara de Lempica*, the first biography of the famous Art Deco painter and *The Encyclopedia of Historical Treaties and Alliances*. He has produced numerous volumes for the Time-Life Books series.

Betty Burnett of St. Louis, Missouri, graduated from Southern Methodist University and later earned an M.A. in American history from Southwest Missouri State University and a Ph.D. in American studies from St. Louis University. She is the author of several books, including *St. Louis at War: The Story of a City 1941-45*; *St. Louis: Gateway to Tomorrow* and *A Time of Favor: The Story of Catholicism in Southern Illinois*. She compiled and edited *The Great Flood of 1993, Stories from a Midwestern Disaster* and co-authored a history of the St. Louis Fire Department. Editorial director of The Patrice Press for 15 years, she is a member of the National Council for History Education and has served as freelance editor for Corinthian Press.