The following is a report on the SAIF Grant that James Hibbard received for 2009-2010. SAIF Grant Account Number 131-273132-2.

The Influence of Missouri on the Settlement of Texas and Wisconsin

Original Proposal

“Introduction: Objective, Background and Description

The objective of this project is to research the impact of the Missourian migration on the two areas that most of them migrated to during the 1820s to the 1840s: southwest Wisconsin and southeast Texas, and how those Missourians contributed to the settlement of those respective areas and how they may or may not have contributed to the Blackhawk War and the Texas Revolution and the removal of the Native Americans, both of which resulted from Anglo-American settlement.”

Report

“Gone to Texas” was the phrase that emigrants often carved into trees before they left for east Texas. This was true throughout the American South. From the mid-1820s onward, the number of emigrants to Texas steadily increased: 1825, 2,021; 1831, 4,248; 1832, 5,660 and so on. Conversely, a similar trend occurred in Southwest Wisconsin. In 1825 it had a population of 200 Anglo-Americans, 1826, 1,000, 1827, 4,000, and 1828, 10,000. (1)

Over the next few years both areas experienced war up close. In both cases the people who had inhabited the respective areas, the Mexicans in Texas and the Winnebago American Indians in Wisconsin, lost any claim to the land, and were removed from power, if not from the actual land. A large share of the population that moved into each area was Anglo-Americans from Missouri. It was also the Missourians who filled many of the positions of political power. My SAIF Grant research was conducted to determine if there was anything correlation between these two migrations and their subsequent results.

In comparing the two regions, I looked into three specific counties in each state where the highest number of Anglo-American settlement occurred. I used the 1850 U.S. population census to come up with general statistics. (Note: Previous censuses before the 1850 census did not list enough information for comparison. The 1840 U.S. population census, for example, only listed head of households, ages and genders.) The results are as follows:

People born in Missouri living in Wisconsin:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Grant County</th>
<th>Lafayette County</th>
<th>Iowa County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1850:</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

People born in Missouri living in Texas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bexar County</th>
<th>Travis County</th>
<th>Milam County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1850:</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>168 (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In each case, the number of Missourians in each county was about three percent of that county’s population (Grant County, for instance, had 16,000 people in 1850). While this may seem small, their impact on the development of each area was profound. In both states, many of the local leaders were either Missourian by birth or influenced by Missouri. Texas had Stephen Austin, who is considered the “Father of Texas.” Born in Virginia, Austin was raised and came to adulthood in Missouri. Through his efforts, hundreds of Missourians emigrated to Texas and settled. As a result, many of the Alamo defenders were either born in Missouri or lived in it before going south to Texas.

For its part, southwest Wisconsin experienced similar impact from Missouri. Wisconsin Territory’s first governor, Henry Dodge, was born in Indiana but lived in Kentucky and Missouri before coming to Wisconsin. He, along with many other Wisconsin pioneers who had connections to Missouri, was deeply involved the Black Hawk War of 1832, which, in essence, removed most Native Americans from the Territory of Wisconsin.

Besides these links, I was able to find three other direct connections in the settlement patterns.

**First:** In the Missouri subjects that I researched, regardless to the direction that they took, Wisconsin or Texas, brought their slaves with them. In Texas the Missourians and other slave owners retained ownership of their slaves; hence, the slaves were listed on the 1850 U.S. Census Slave Schedules.

In Wisconsin, where the Northwest Ordinance forbade slavery, the African-Americans who were brought north were listed on the census with the families that they lived with in Missouri. The population census Wisconsin, of course, does not list them as being owned, but other evidence indicates that they were still slaves. There is a manuscript, for example, that demonstrates that John Rountree, who came from Kentucky and had connections with Missouri, clearly had slaves in his household in Platteville in the 1830s.

This quasi slave status gradually changed as the demographics in southwest Wisconsin became predominantly New England (or east coast) by the 1850s. What appears to have happened was that the slaves became free, for they usually changed households or owned their own house by the 1860 population census.

This does not mean that the freed African-Americans were treated equally, however. In one case, a former slave from Missouri, who was brought to Wisconsin by his owner, sued in court for work that he performed in Iowa County, Wisconsin. The court heard the case, and even though the surviving court papers demonstrate that the former slave was on solid legal ground, the court ruled against him.

**Second:** Many of the Missourians who migrated had mining experience of one sort or another, usually lead mining. Once they arrived at their respective destinations, Texas or Wisconsin, they continued to mining.
Third: The Missourians (along with other southerners) transplanted their form of government in both Texas and Wisconsin. Instead of establishing a township centered local governments (New England style), they established county commissioner centered governments, which followed the southern pattern.

Original Proposal
“Part of the Texas leg of this trip would include my attendance at the 30th Annual Order of the Indian Wars Conference, held in Austin for four days: Thursday, October 22-Sunday, October 25, 2009.”

Report
I attended the conference. The first day was filled with presentations by leading authorities on the settlement and wars that occurred in Texas during the 1820s-1840s. The Next three days involved tours of various battle sites: Fort Parker, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame, Fort Sam Houston, the Alamo and two other San Antonio Missions, Texas Cemetery (Austin), and the Texas Museum (Austin). The final event, on the fourth day, was a speech by Robert Utley, one of the most respected historians of Western history.

Original Proposal
“My research methodology would be two pronged. I plan on identifying five to ten subjects (individuals or families) who initially lived in Missouri and migrated to southeast Texas from the 1820s to the 1840s. I would be looking for any distinctive patterns, or lack thereof, among these subjects using the following criteria: age, gender, race, ethnicity/nationality, birthplace, occupation, economic status, size of family, marital status, slave owner or not, living patterns (stationary or mobile), and any changes in these categories. I would then compare these subjects to the subjects from Missouri (whom I have already identified and researched) that moved to Wisconsin to see if any pattern emerges. I plan on identifying my subjects in U.S. population censuses, biographical entries in county histories, obituaries, and other genealogical sources. The various research institutions, archives, museums, and so forth will contain primary sources with which I will be able to track these subjects through time and space.”

Report
This research has demonstrated that the Missourians who migrated to Wisconsin and Texas were remarkably similar. The early migrants of the 1820s and 1830s were predominantly male, single, and Anglo-American. Their most prevalent occupation was mining. If they brought their families with them, they usually would bring their slaves as well. In Wisconsin, those slaves eventually gained their freedom.

The Missourian’s route of travel was the same, the Mississippi River, and then overland into their respective regions. And finally, Missourians in both Wisconsin and Texas strongly supported the respective military movements to gain political control of their regions, most notably the Black Hawk War of 1832 and Texas Independence in 1836.

Research
In Wisconsin, I primarily used UWP’s Southwest Wisconsin Room and its primary sources. In Missouri I used the archives and the library of the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial; the
Missouri Historical Society and Library and Research Center; and the St. Louis Mercantile Library at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. And in Texas I researched at the Texas State Library & Archives Commission in Austin and the University of Texas Library Center for American History.

Sharing of Information

I have presented my research findings at the following:

1) 2010 Poster Day at UWP.
2) Grant County Historical Society
3) Grant County Genealogical Society

In 2011 I plan on presenting my findings at the following:
1) Southwest Wisconsin Association of Libraries
2) Wisconsin Genealogy & Local History Roundtable
3) Cornish Festival in Mineral Point

In conclusion, I would like to thank the committee for awarding me a SAIF Grant. It assisted me greatly in my research. It also gave me a chance to promote UWP from Wisconsin, through Missouri, down to Texas. Thanks. I really appreciate it.

Sincerely,

James Hibbard
University Archivist

August 30, 2010.

Bibliography


History of Grant County, Wisconsin. Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1881.


