

McWorter's New Philadelphia
and
Other Settler Communities in Western Illinois

in
The Smithsonian Institution's
Many Voices, One Nation Exhibition

HOW DID WE BECOME US?

Some of Us Were Already Here



From the National Museum of American History

Some of Us Came Here Voluntarily

Statue of Liberty, Possible Original Model, New York, 1876-1886

Some of Us Were Forcibly Brought Here



Shackles, Middle West, 19th Century

Some of Us Remained in Place as the United States Expanded to Our Land



Document, 18th Century

Discover How Diverse Peoples Built A Nation Together

Hall of the American People

Many Voices, *** ONE NATION

The people of North America came from many cultures and spoke different languages long before the founding of the United States, even before European contact. Involving the new settlers, early leaders envisioned a country that promoted equality and freedom not only for white. As the population grew, the people who lived in the United States had more to negotiate, or work out, what it meant to be American. That negotiation continues. This exhibit explores how the many voices of people in America have shaped our nation.

HOW DID WE BECOME US?



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UNSETTLING THE CONTINENT, 1492-1776

It was an age of empires. The great European powers competed for wealth, territory, and global influence. That competition brought hundreds of thousands of Europeans and Africans to the North American continent, where Native peoples had lived for millennia.

What happened next was a profound *unsettling* of the continent. The continent's population actually declined in this period, as Old World diseases swept through Native populations that lacked immunity. Beyond that profound tragedy there would be new conflicts, new forms of freedom, new forms of slavery, and new ways of living together.

Our world today grows out of that unsettling history.



PEOPLES
THE EXPANDING
NATION,
1714-1800



THE
COURT
OF
THE
KING

THE
COURT
OF
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THE
COURT
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PEOPLING THE EXPANDING NATION, 1776-1900

The inhabitants of the new nation were diverse and they would become more so with westward expansion, importation of enslaved Africans, incorporation and conquest of land and peoples, and increasing migration and immigration. With few restrictions on U.S. immigration until the late 1800s, peoples from Europe, the Americas, and Asia arrived seeking land and economic opportunity. The Civil War tested the strength of the Union and resulted in a renewed commitment to the ideal of one nation.

This section tells stories of people who came to the United States and those who were already here, both along the challenges they faced in negotiating their place in the expanding nation.





WESTERN UNION
التصوير الإلكتروني

OUT OF MANY
... VOICES
... STORIES
... LIVES
WE BECOME
U.S.

OUT OF MANY, ONE



Leave Your Handprint
Press here for the
map for 30 seconds
to leave your handprint.

EXIT



Eagle Owl, Finnish, around 1911
Gift of Mrs. Anne Butler

Leaving Owl, Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, 1820-1860
Gift from National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution

Decorated Egg, Ukrainian, around 1880
Gift of Philadelphia

Silver Spoon, French, 1820s
Gift from Mrs. George Bulch 1915

Brooch with Diamonds, Irish, around 1850
Gift of Lushkin de Lushkin, Toronto, PA, in memory of the Rev. Thomas

Face Vessel, African American, 1850s
Gift of Anne de Mary Stewart Jones

Eagle, around 1850
Gift of Mrs. Butler

Hair Comb, Mexican, around 1850
Gift of the Society in memory of Elizabeth Taylor

Negotiating Freedom

Identification tag worn by enslaved person, Charleston, South Carolina, early 1800s
Gift of Susan Brown

Medal made for supporters of slavery's abolition, early 1800s
Gift of Volney A. Pearson, M.D.

The importation of enslaved African peoples and slavery's acceptance by founders of the new nation bound the country to an institution at odds with its ideals of equality, liberty, and freedom. Even as northern and southern economies benefited from enslaved labor, some people raised their voices and acted in objection. After the Civil War, the Fourteenth Amendment promised citizenship for newly freed people.





PLACES OF NEGOTIATION

What is Peace? Why is it so hard to achieve? How do we negotiate? How do we resolve conflict? How do we build trust? How do we create a better world? How do we create a better future? How do we create a better world? How do we create a better future? How do we create a better world? How do we create a better future?

We are MUSA
America's
Welcome Center

How Peace

Promoting the Transatlantic Slave Trade, 1774-1808

Western Migration to the Mississippi Valley

Growing numbers of people migrated to the Mississippi Valley in search of economic opportunity and land. On the way, they carried with them the culture and traditions of their homelands. In the process, they brought to the region a mix of languages, customs, and ways of life. The region's diverse population and the fertile land along the Mississippi River made it a major center of commerce and industry in the early 19th century.



A large glass display case filled with historical artifacts. On the left, a rocking chair sits next to a white ceramic pitcher. In the center, a wooden scale is prominently displayed. The case is filled with various documents, photographs, and smaller objects, all arranged on white platforms. Informational cards are placed in front of the artifacts.

A large, low-profile table with a dark wood-grain top. On the table, a large map of the Mississippi Valley is spread out, showing the river and surrounding regions. Next to the map is a document titled "Slave Trade" with text describing the transatlantic slave trade. Other historical items, including a large metal object and a wooden scale, are visible in the background behind the table.

EXIT

Peopling the Expanding Nation, 1776-1800

Western Migration to the Mississippi Valley

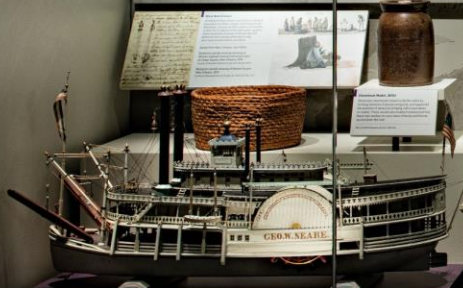
Growing numbers of people migrated to the Mississippi River Valley after the purchase of the Louisiana Territory in 1803. Some went in search of land and work. Others relocated for social, religious, and personal freedoms. Enslaved Africans were brought by force to labor in Southern cotton plantations. Westward migration affected the balance between slave and free states. Political disputes over this new westward expansion of slavery threatened the unity of the nation and resulted in the Civil War.

Stories displayed here take place along the Mississippi River, which linked peoples as diverse as freed slave Frank McWorter, the migrants and Quaker communities of western Illinois, and the people who were enslaved in Deep South cotton plantations.

Mississippi Valley



Mississippi Valley



The River Trade
The Mississippi River was a major trade route for goods and people. Steamships and flatboats facilitated the movement of goods and passengers between the East and West.

The Migration of Frank McWorter
Frank McWorter, a freed slave, migrated to the Mississippi Valley in search of land and work. He established a community of freed slaves in western Illinois.

The Impact of Westward Migration
Westward migration affected the balance between slave and free states. Political disputes over this new westward expansion of slavery threatened the unity of the nation and resulted in the Civil War.

Religious and Social Communities on the Mississippi
The Mississippi Valley was a melting pot of different religious and social groups. Quaker communities and other religious groups established settlements along the river.



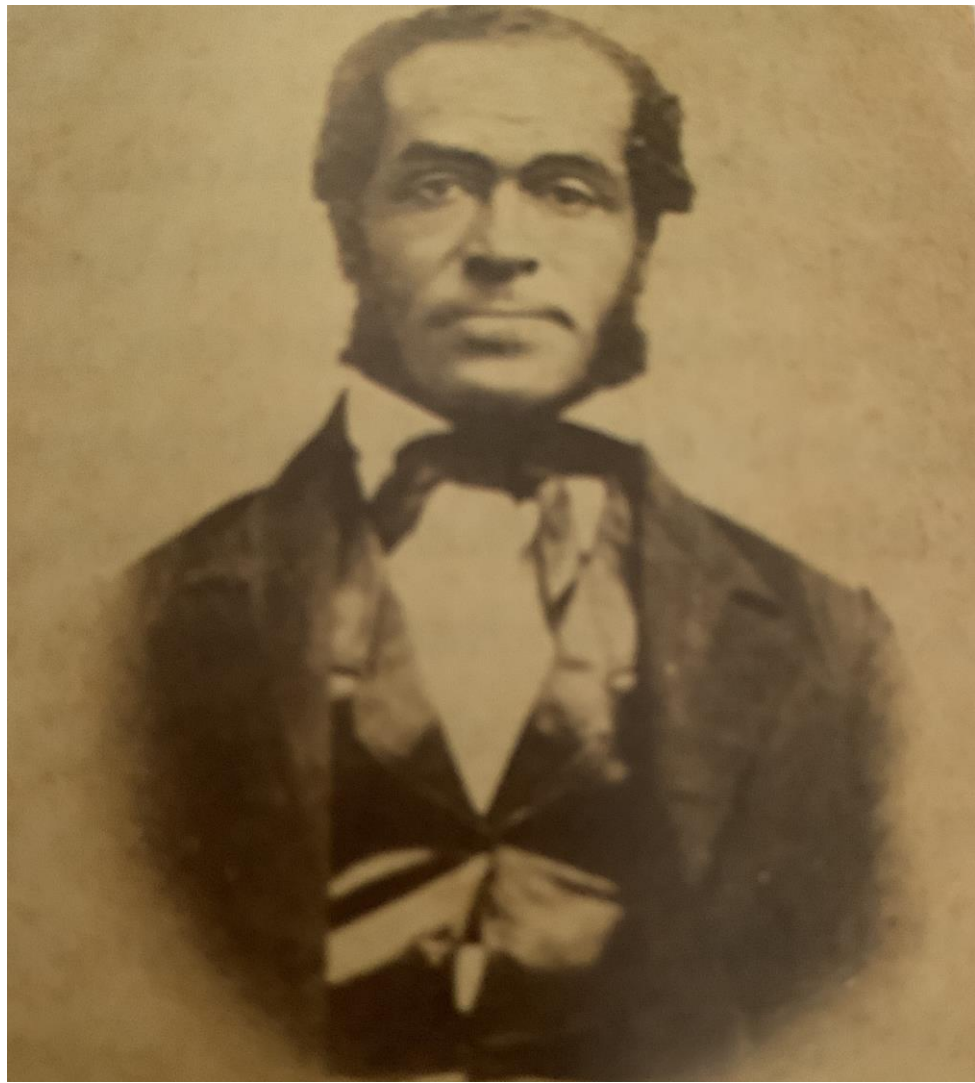




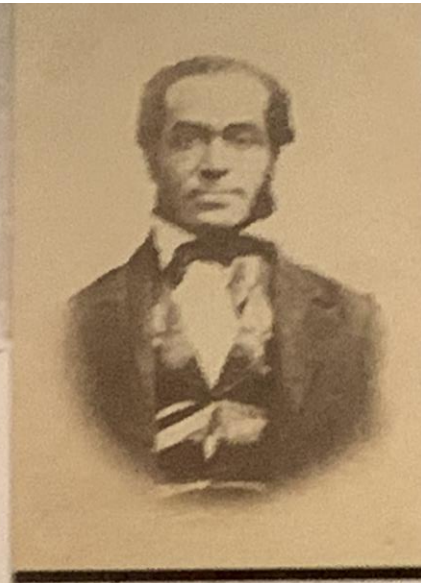
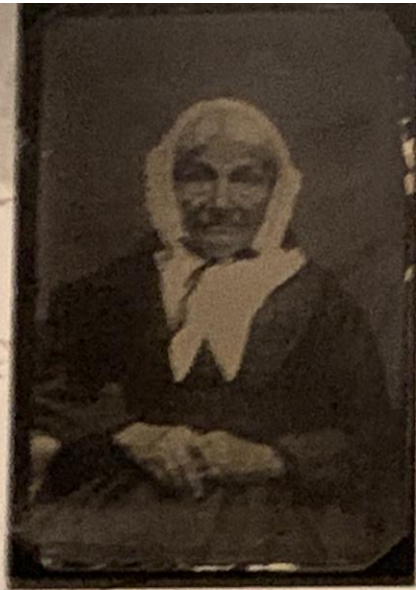






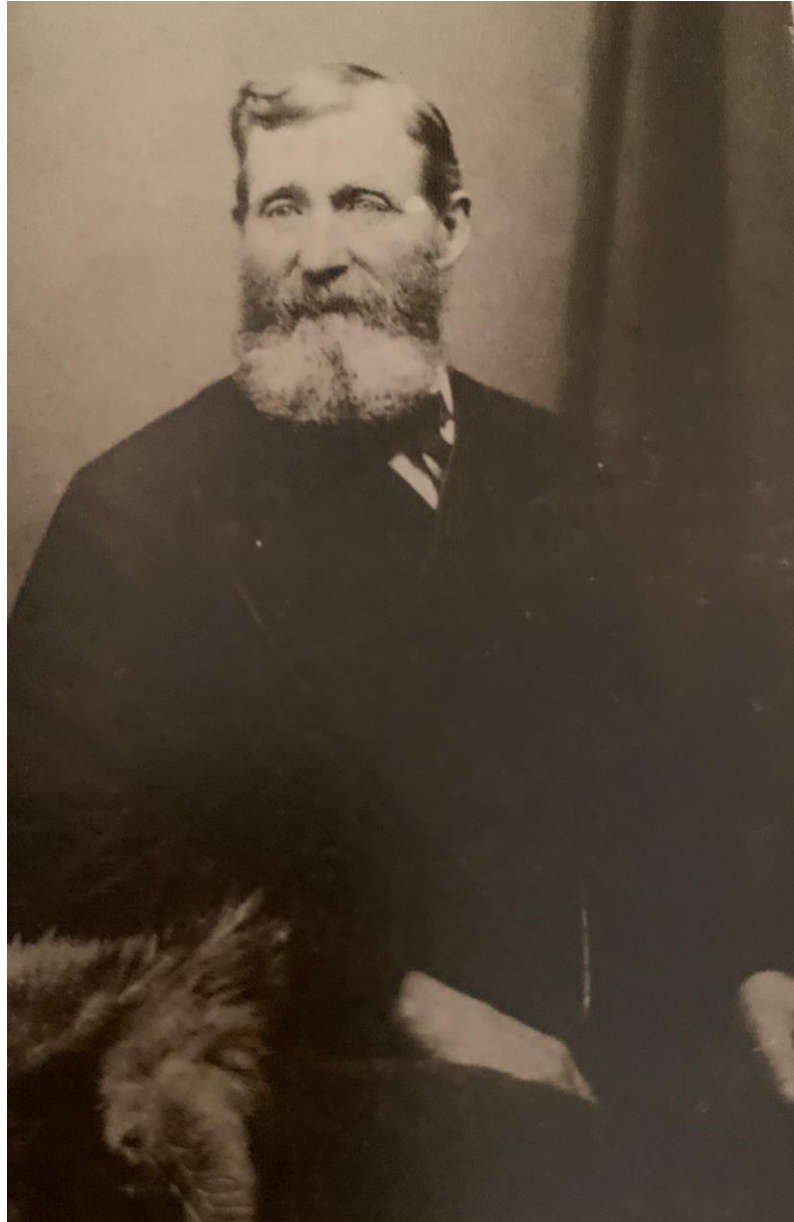




















Presenting the Foundational History, 1770-1800

Western Migration to the Mississippi Valley

Following centuries of settlement along the Eastern Seaboard, the search for land and opportunity led many Americans westward. The Mississippi River basin, stretching from the Gulf of Mexico to the Canadian border, offered vast, fertile land and a major waterway. This exhibit explores the challenges and triumphs of pioneers as they ventured into the West, from the early days of exploration to the mass migrations of the 18th and 19th centuries.



A large glass display case filled with historical artifacts. On the left, a wooden rocking chair sits next to a white ceramic pitcher. In the center, a wooden bowl and a small wooden chest are visible. The case is filled with various documents, photographs, and smaller objects, all arranged on a light-colored surface. A small informational card is placed in front of the rocking chair.



An interactive exhibit featuring a large, dark wood table with a map of the Mississippi Valley. Several informational cards are placed on the table, including one titled "Slave Trade". A vertical sign with Chinese characters "參茸玉桂" (Shen, Jiu, Yu, Gui) is visible on the left side of the exhibit. The background shows a glass display case with various artifacts and a purple informational panel.

EXIT

Celebrating American Identities

Celebrating American Identities

Family, community, and religious celebrations help define who we are. Through them we value our traditions and create new ones. We invite you to experience some of the many ways we celebrate our identity and establish our place in the United States.



OUT OF MANY, ONE



Leave Your Handprint