



Resources Hall Lunettes

MISSOURI STATE CAPITOL



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Missouri State Museum

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Telling Missouri Stories

The Missouri State Museum, located in the Missouri State Capitol, is surrounded by history and art. These artworks have much to tell about Missouri's history, resources and people.



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Introduction

The Missouri Capitol is the center of state government. It also is a building that tells stories. The Missouri Capitol Decoration Commission hired artists to tell Missouri stories through sculptures, paintings and stained glass. These artworks showcase Missouri's ideals, history and natural resources.

In this book we'll look at eight lunettes, or half-circle paintings, that tell stories about Missouri's natural resources. Completed in the early 1920s, these paintings show Missouri's beautiful places. They also show how Missourians use the state's resources. Read about each lunette to learn more!

Resources Hall Lunettes

Visitors can find the natural resource lunettes in the Resources Hall of the Missouri State Capitol. The Resources Hall is a large gallery in the west wing of the building. It is two stories tall!

The Missouri State Museum has exhibits on the first floor. The eight lunettes are on the second floor. They line two hallways that overlook the museum exhibits.

The paintings are in geographic order. The four lunettes in the south hallway represent eastern Missouri. The other hallway has paintings of places in western Missouri.

DID YOU KNOW?

Missouri artists painted each of the Resources Hall lunettes.



THE FATHER OF WATERS

Father of Waters

A PAINTING BY ROBERT A. KISSACK

Father of Waters

Missouri is known for its two mighty rivers: the Missouri and the Mississippi. Artist and educator Robert A. Kissack painted parts of both in this lunette.

Kissack traveled along the Mississippi River looking for the perfect place to paint. He settled on bluff top near Alton, Illinois. This scene overlooks Missouri's rich farmland along the Mississippi River bottoms in St. Charles County. In the distance are bluffs marking the Missouri River floodplains.

Query

What story does this painting tell about the Mississippi River?

What evidence in the picture makes you think that?

Activity

Use your imagination to tell a story about this lunette. How would you capture your audience with the tale?



Artery of Trade

A PAINTING BY FRANK B. NUDERSCHER

A Bridge over the Mississippi

Missouri has rural farmlands and fast-paced urban centers. St. Louis, established in 1764, has been a center of trade for more than 250 years!

Artist Frank B. Nuderscher captured some of St. Louis' spirit of trade in this painting from 1921. The painting features the Eads Bridge spanning the Mississippi River, with a view from Illinois toward St. Louis. Steam from locomotives billow from the lower deck of the bridge. Steamboats ply the waters. Trucks are ready to carry cargo to stores and business throughout the region.

Did you know?

- Eads Bridge, built in 1874, is still in use. If you visit this spot today, what might be different? What might be the same?
- Eads Bridge is an engineering landmark in the United States. It was James B. Eads' first bridge design.



Eads Bridge, photographer W.C. Persons.
Image Courtesy Missouri Historical Society.



James Eads, c. 1870.
Image Courtesy Missouri Historical Society.



Ha-Ha-Tonka

A PAINTING BY EDMUND H. WUERPEL

Nature's Showcase

Ha Ha Tonka is one of Missouri's most beautiful places. Artist Edmund H. Wuerpel captured the Ozark's landscape in Camden County from a cliff top. The Niangua River curves below.

You can visit this very spot today. The State of Missouri purchased this land in the 1970s. It became Ha Ha Tonka State Park. It looks a little different today, though. On top of the cliff in the painting today are the ruins of the "castle" built for Robert M. Snyder. Snyder's home was completed in 1922, but burned in the 1940s.

Karst Landscape

Ha Ha Tonka is a showcase of karst geology. Karst landscapes form when water dissolves the bedrock. This leaves behind caves, natural bridges, sinkholes and more.





Reclamation of the South

A PAINTING BY CHARLES GALT

A Land "Reclaimed"

Do you think this is a funny name for a painting of farms? The name refers to the “reclaiming” of land from swamps. Before the 1910s, most of Southeast Missouri was swampland. It was home to wildlife, huge cypress trees and other plant life.

In the late 1800s, lumber companies began cutting down the trees. Soon there was not much left but water and stumps. The lumber companies came up with the idea of draining the swamps for farmland.

They formed the Little River Drainage District to divert water into the Mississippi and other rivers.

Charles F. Galt painted this lunette to highlight the richness of the land for farming. This specific farm may have come from Galt’s imagination. The painting does not depict a specific place. Instead it represents much of the Missouri Bootheel.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Little River Drainage District is still active. They maintain 1000 miles of drainage ditches in southeast Missouri.



Wealth of the North

A PAINTING BY F. HUMPHRY WOOLRYCH

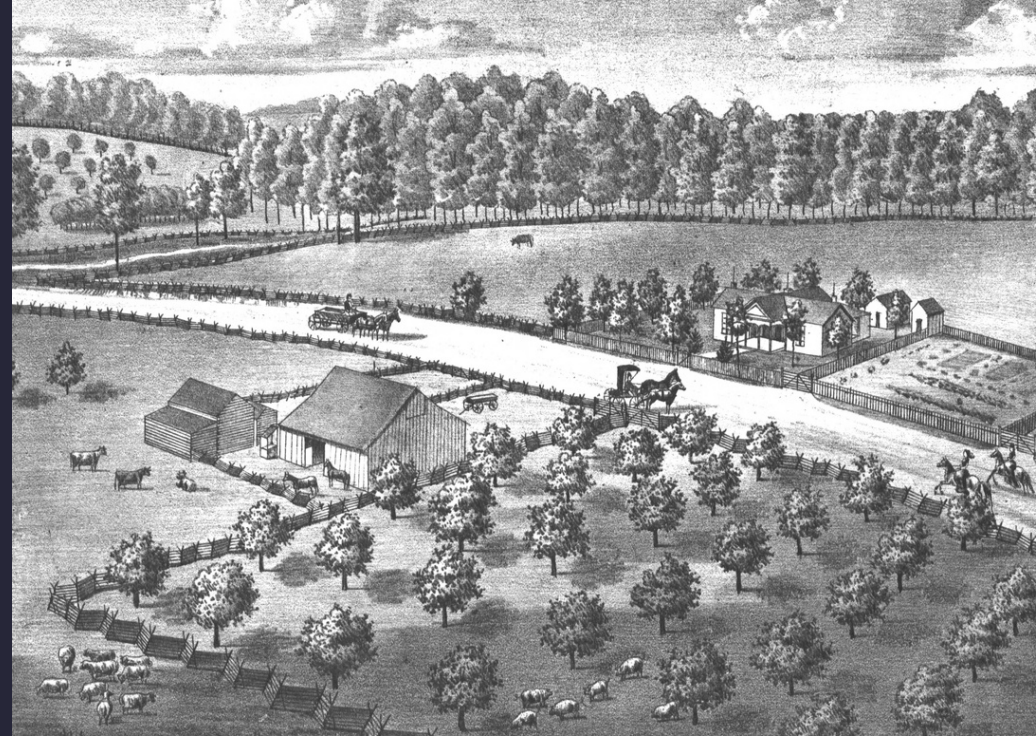
Farmland

What is the wealth of the north?

F. Humphry Woolrych's painting showcases the region's rich farmlands. Fields of golden grain and green pastures stretch to the horizon.

The landscape in this picture represents much of northwest Missouri. The area is known for its rolling hills and rich farmlands.

The scene in this painting never existed. Woolrych used a house from Carrollton in Carroll County to paint the farmhouse. The barns are modified versions of outbuildings from the University of Missouri farms in Columbia.



An Illustrated Historical Atlas of Carroll County, Mo.
Philadelphia: Brink, McDonough & Co., 1876.

Activity

Farm scenes were often included in historic atlas maps of Missouri. Compare Wealth of the North with the image of a Carroll County farm, above.

How are the two images alike? What is different?



Gateway of the West

A PAINTING BY ROBERT BALL, JR.

Mother of the West

Many cities claim to be the “gateway to the west.” This painting gives that honor to Kansas City on Missouri’s western border. Wagon trains heading west for trade and settlement organized and got supplies here.

Artist Robert Ball, Jr. painted this scene of his home town. It contrasts the beauty of nature with industrial development. The scene is painted from Cliff Drive, a scenic roadway in the Kansas City. It overlooks the mills and factories of the Missouri River bottoms.

Kansas is in the distance. Many people bought supplies in Kansas City before departing to find land and opportunity in Kansas and other western states.

Did you know?

One of Missouri’s many nicknames is “Mother of the West.” The Santa Fe, California-Oregon and other trails started in Missouri.





RICHES OF THE MINES

Riches of the Mines

A PAINTING BY THOMAS P. BARNETT

Mining

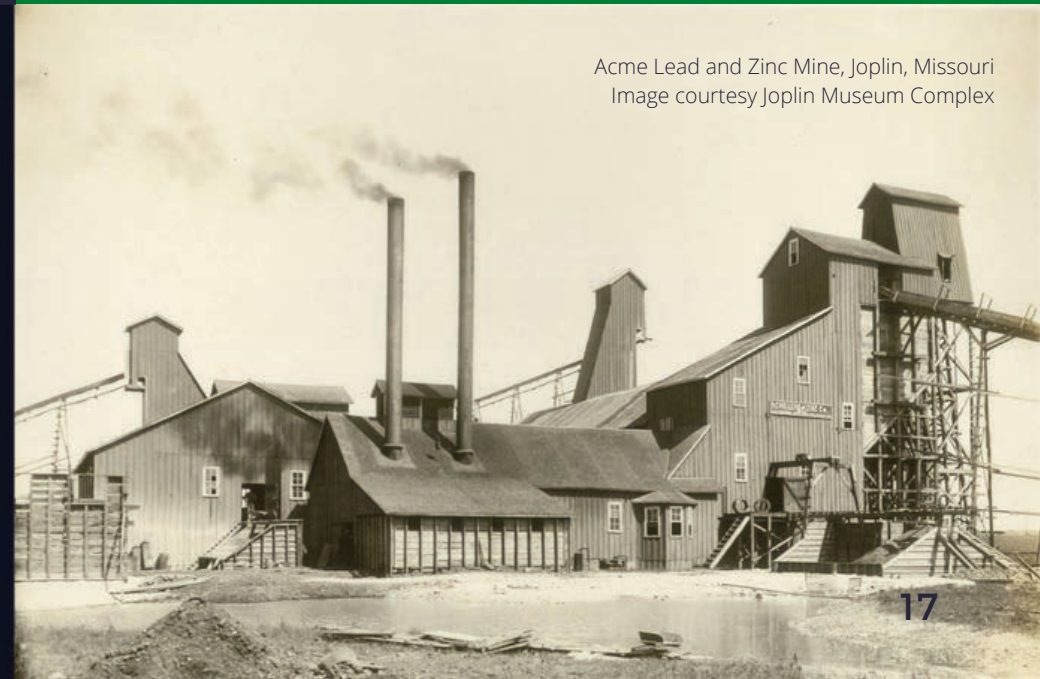
Southern Missouri's Osage Plains and Ozark Plateau is rich in minerals. Native Americans mined the state's minerals before European settlers arrived. In the early 1700s French settlers began mining lead. We still mine lead in Missouri today!

Minerals mined in Missouri have many uses. They help build our roads, homes, cars and more. Extracting minerals from the ground can be harmful to the land and people.

Thomas Barnett's painting shows a mine in the Tri-State district of southwest Missouri, Oklahoma and Kansas. The image in the Capitol highlights the importance of mining to the state. It also depicts some of the damage that mining can do. The scene includes a cave-in, mining waste piles, and dirty pools of water.

Bleak Desolation

The Capitol Decorations Committee called this painting a “scene of bleak desolation in nature.” Do you know what that means? What in the image is bleak or desolate?



Acme Lead and Zinc Mine, Joplin, Missouri
Image courtesy Joplin Museum Complex



Power from the Hills

A PAINTING BY RALPH C. OTT



Water Power

Beauty and industry combine in this lunette. Rocky cliffs, forested hills and water are common features of the Missouri Ozarks. This painting by Ralph C. Ott also features something else—Missouri’s first hydroelectric dam.

Known as Powersite Dam, this structure crosses the White River and was built in 1913. More than 1000 people worked to build the dam. It impounds, or holds back, water to make Lake Taneycomo. The lake soon became a tourist destination with resorts along its banks.

Did you know?

The scenes in *Power from the Hills* and *Riches of the Mines* are linked by more than geography. The electricity

created by the Powersite hydroelectric dam powered the mines of the Tri-State Mining District.

Powersite Dam Construction Site.
Image Courtesy Missouri State Archives

VOCABULARY

Capitol: a building where the lawmakers of a state meet

Geography: the science of the earth's surface

Geology: the study of the physical structure of the earth and how it has changed over time

Hydroelectric: related to producing electricity using moving water

Karst: an area where limestone is common, characterized by ravines, sinks, and caves made by underground streams

Landmark: an object or feature of a landscape or community that is easily seen and recognized

Lunette: a semicircular or half-round painting

Mineral: a substance formed in the earth that is not from a plant or animal

Missouri Bootheel: the southeastern most part of Missouri that has a shape similar to the heel of a boot.

Natural resource: materials that are found in nature that can be used by people in many ways.

Ply: travel regularly over a route

River bottoms: low-lying land along a river

Scenic: showing natural or beautiful scenery



RESOURCES HALL LUNETTES

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Plan your visit to the Capitol and Missouri State Museum.

<https://mostateparks.com/park/missouri-state-museum>

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The Missouri State Museum is part of Missouri State Parks, a division of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

