

**The Mississippi Glass Company and
The Rise and Fall of St. Louis:
A Brief History**

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Introduction

Since becoming a member of the Chit Chat Club, I have been fortunate to hear all but one or two of the essays that have been presented. Each of them has been informative as well as entertaining. In considering possible subject matter for my initial essay, I have been struck by the personal nature of so many of the talks I have heard: Michael Thaler and his search for Dr. Fleck; Charles Sullivan and his quest to find his relative Zollicoffer Sargent, Jr.; Paul Karlstrom and his personal insights into the artist Carlos Villa; and our leader George Hammond describing how he became a realistic optimist, to name only a few. This awareness prompted me to pay attention to the gaps in my knowledge of my own family history.

I was born in Manhattan, but at the age of two my family moved to St. Louis when Mississippi Glass Company, the company my father worked for, transferred its headquarters from Manhattan to be close to its major glass production facility in St. Louis. Founded in 1873 by George Humphreys, a distant great-uncle of mine, it became the subject of further research into the role Humphreys descendants played in the operation of the company. This in turn led to an exploration of the much more complicated history of the City of St. Louis. Although residing in the Bay Area for fifty years, I still have a strong connection to the City, and what follows is a layered history of the Humphreys family, the Mississippi Glass Company, and the City of St. Louis. I hope to show the reader the important role antecedent Humphreys played in the operation of the glass company, and the history of the glass company in its more than 100 year existence. These become entwined in the history of St. Louis, a once major metropolis replete with the paradoxes and contrasting themes of our nation as a whole, although I shall touch on only a few of the highlights of this history. The bibliography at the end will guide the interested reader to a more complete picture of its interesting and complex story.

Early History of St. Louis

The Eurocentric view of the origin of St. Louis dates from 1764, when Pierre Laclède, a French businessman in New Orleans (La Nouvelle-Orleans) paddled with his agent and step-son August Chouteau 600 miles up the Mississippi to establish a trading post just south of the confluence of the Missouri River with the Mississippi. However, the land on which the current city sits had known human activity since at least the 10th century. The Mississippian people had thrived in the area, and built a large city in Cahokia, less than 10 miles across the river in what is now Illinois. Archeologists estimate that ten to twenty thousand people lived in Cahokia in 1100, more than in Paris or London. Its most significant feature was a series of mounds constructed in an orderly pattern, and recent study suggests parallels between the Mississippian and the earlier Incan and Mayan cultures of Central America. The land on which St. Louis stands also had a series of mounds indicating that mound people had settled there, but the mounds were flattened as the city began to grow and there is little record of them. Only one mound is still discernible. Called Sugar Loaf, it was purchased in 2009 by Jim Gray, the Chief of the Osage Nation. By 1300 the Mississippians had largely left Cahokia and the surrounding area; the reasons for this, and where they went, are not yet fully known¹.

Early St. Louis was a French town, with French the common spoken language, and an influx of French-speaking settlers occurred after the end of the French and Indian War in 1763 as they sought to escape British rule east of the Mississippi. The Louisiana Territory was ceded by France to Spain at this time, but without marked effect on St. Louis. After establishing the town, which they named St. Louis after the 13th century French king Louis IX, Chouteau succeeded in partnering with the Osage Indians, the largest and potentially most threatening tribe in the area. This partnership was a win/win: the Osage benefited from the food produced by farmers around St. Louis and tools and dry goods from the townspeople, and the town profited from the beaver furs the Indians had trapped. These were then shipped to the east and on to Europe. The partnership kept the settlers free from Indian attack, allowing the town to grow and prosper².

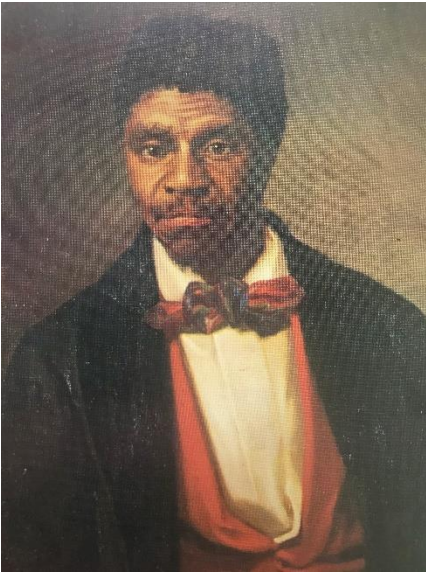


Figure 2. Portrait of Dred Scott painted in 1881 by Louise Schultz from a daguerrotype made in 1858 shortly before Scott's death, commissioned by the Black citizens of St. Louis. Missouri History Museum.

sue for wrongful enslavement and to be freed without re-enslavement if they had lived in a free state. Scott and his wife sued for their freedom starting in 1846, and after a series of positive alternating with negative outcomes in lower courts, the Supreme Court heard the case in 1856. Chief Justice Roger B. Taney, from a slave-owning family in Maryland, wrote in 1857 the majority (7-2) opinion that the Constitution did not consider slaves as having rights because they were not citizens, and that, since slaves were property, slave owner rights were protected by the 5th Amendment and owners should be compensated if slaves were freed. The ruling also found the Missouri Compromise to be unconstitutional, thus removing any role of Congress in preventing the spread of slavery⁵. This decision is regarded by many as the worst in Supreme Court history and fueled the flames of Civil War. Scott was ultimately returned to the son of his original Missouri owner, who freed him, but died from TB after less than two years as a free man. The major elements of Taney's decision were largely done away with by the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 and passage of the 13th and 15th Amendments in 1865 and 1870.

The Growth of Commerce

The arrival of the steamboat Zebulon Pike to St. Louis in 1817 heralded the beginnings of commercial traffic up and down the Mississippi, which steadily increased as steamboat engineering and design improved, so that by the 1840's as many as 50 could dock at St. Louis wharves at one time. Raw materials from the City could now be easily transported not only to cities along the Mississippi but also to Cincinnati and Pittsburgh via the Ohio and west to Kansas City via the Missouri, and finished goods returned for local consumption.

Solon Humphreys

The Humphreys family presence in St. Louis began in 1844 when my great-great-grandfather Solon Humphreys (1821-1900) moved to St. Louis from New York. Born in Canton, CT, the seventh of ten children, he attended



Figure 4. Solon Humphreys, c. 1870

St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland. The president of the college was his uncle Hector Humphreys. He then clerked in the wholesale grocery business and bond brokerage house of E. D. Morgan in New York. Why did Solon go to St. Louis? Perhaps he was anticipating the later phrase attributed to Horace Greeley to "go west". He established a wholesale grocery and commission firm in the City. He met Ellen Walsh, the daughter of Edward Walsh, an immigrant from Ireland who was very successful in banking and other enterprises, a respected leader of the City. Solon and Ellen married in 1847, and the next year their only child, Edward Walsh Humphreys (1848-1918), was born; the names of Humphreys and Walsh are deeply entwined in the rest of this story. Solon's younger brother George joined Solon's firm around 1850. Solon returned to the East Coast in 1854 and built a family home in the Bergen Point section of Bayonne, NJ. He quickly became a partner at

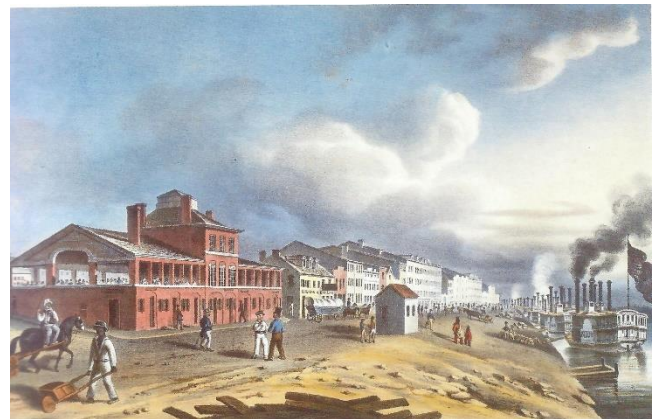


Figure 3. View of Front Street, St. Louis. Note the numerous steamboats at the levee. From a lithograph by J.C. Wild, 1840. Missouri History Museum.

the E.D. Morgan bond brokerage house where he had worked before going to St. Louis, and achieved wealth like several men of that era by investing in railroads and consolidating small trunk lines into larger networks; the most famous line with which he was involved was perhaps the Wabash line, as will be demonstrated later.

St. Louis During and After the Civil War

Although Missouri was admitted as a slave state, an influx of anti-slave German immigrants to St. Louis in the 1840's and '50's altered the pro-slavery sentiments of St. Louisans. The City was not seriously engaged in battle during the Civil War even though the governor at that time, Claiborne Jackson, wanted to have the state join the Confederacy. In 1826, an army base established north of the City was moved to more suitable land in South St. Louis, **Jefferson Barracks**. At the outbreak of the Civil War, secessionists in the City, who called themselves Minute Men, coveted the large cache of arms there as well as gold stored for safekeeping. Major Nathaniel Lyon had recently been appointed to be head of the facility; he was strongly on the side of the Union and was aware of the motives of the Minute Men. Through a series of clever maneuvers, he secretly shipped most of the arms upriver to Alton, Illinois, and with the aid of Frank Blair, the representative to Congress, recruited ten thousand union supporters, who called themselves the Wide-Awakes, to support his troops in defending the Barracks; many of these volunteers were the newly arrived Germans. The secessionists, realizing they had been outsmarted and outgunned, ceased to be a real threat, and Jackson was forced from office by the State legislature⁶.

The post-war period saw the real flowering of St. Louis. Industries started before the War expanded, and new industries emerged. The growth of the City even led to the idea of moving the Nation's capital from Washington to St. Louis, and legislation for such a move reached the floor of the House in February 1868; surprisingly, it only lost by a vote of 97-77⁷. In 1883 J. Thomas Scharf published a two-volume work titled "History of Saint Louis City and County, Including Biographical Sketches of Representative Men". In this work he enumerated the industries and trades established in the City and gives short but interesting vignettes of the men who ran them. The underlying theme of his work was that St. Louis out-produced Chicago in every category of product he examined, whether it be bushels of wheat processed, barrels of sugar shipped, bottles of beer produced, etc. Rivalry between the two cities had existed since before the Civil War. Although St. Louis initially had a bigger population and transportation advantage because of its access to the Mississippi, Missouri, Illinois, and Ohio Rivers, the tide turned significantly after the Civil War when railroads became widespread and Chicago became a major rail hub⁸. They had similarities: each had a rapidly increasing population, much of it fueled by immigrants, and each had a major fire which destroyed significant portions of the city, St. Louis in 1849, and Chicago in 1871.

Eads Bridge



Figure 6. Eads Bridge

The Civil War marked the slow demise of steamboat river traffic, supplanted by the rise of railroads. City leaders were aware of this, and wanted the proposed transcontinental railway to pass through St. Louis but were stymied by the absence of a railroad bridge across the Mississippi. In 1867, they contracted with James Buchanan Eads, a self-taught engineer who managed a salvage company recovering ships and their cargo from the bottom of the Mississippi and other rivers. A staunch Unionist, he had signed a contract with the Union in 1861 to build 7 steel-clad river gunboats and managed to deliver them all in 65 days. These antedated



Figure 5. Mr. and Mrs. Solon Humphreys at home in Bayonne

the Monitor and Merrimack by a full year. The vessels were successful in carrying the war to Southern river forts and towns, and introduced Eads to General Ulysses Grant. Since Eads had never built a bridge before, he was confronted with skepticism, ridicule, and design changes meant to stop the bridge's construction. The firms which operated ferries crossing the river led the opposition, since they recognized that their livelihoods would disappear once the bridge was opened. Foes in Chicago also contributed to the efforts to derail the construction of the bridge. Eads introduced the use of caissons to build the solid bases necessary to support the piers of any bridge; 14 of his workers died from the bends. He also came up with a graceful design consisting of three arches supported on four piers. The bridge opened in 1874 to huge crowds and great success; the City had the good sense to name it after Eads⁹. One of the many obstacles which Eads had to face was the ferry owners' insistence that trains from the east joining the Missouri Pacific line south of St. Louis had to go through an underground tunnel and not on the surface of the City. Instead of fighting this obvious ploy to impede the bridge's construction, Eads went along and built a tunnel 4,800 feet long. When St. Louis' Union Station opened in 1894, the tunnel brought passengers there. Another concern raised was that clearance under the bridge was 55 feet whereas smokestacks on larger steamships often soared to 100 feet in height. The Corps of Engineers suggested that this problem could be solved by building a canal around the foot of the bridge! Wiser heads prevailed, and a shift in steamboat engine design allowed for shorter smokestacks.

Other prominent players were involved in one or another aspect of Eads Bridge. President Ulysses S. Grant married a St. Louis native, Julia Dent, and the Grant family had lived in St. Louis from 1854 to 1860. He dedicated the bridge at its formal opening on July 4, 1874. Earlier, in the negotiations for the bridge contract, Eads had gone to Grant for his support against the Secretary of War William Belknap, who favored a different design. Grant unambiguously gave his support to Eads¹¹. General William Tecumseh Sherman hammered in the last spike¹². Andrew Carnegie had been instrumental in raising money for the bridge by selling bonds in Europe, chiefly in England, and his company, the Keystone Bridge Company, had won the bid to construct the bridge superstructure. Despite many differences with Eads, Carnegie became a great admirer of the bridge¹³. Walt Whitman was a huge fan of the bridge, writing after a visit to St. Louis in 1879, "*I have haunted the river every night lately, where I could get a look at the bridge by moonlight. It is indeed a structure of perfection and beauty unsurpassable, and I never tire of it.*"¹⁴

The Separation of St. Louis from St. Louis County

A consequential change in the governance of the City occurred in the 1870's. With statehood in 1821, the St. Louis Territory was divided into the City, at that time about 20 square miles, and St. Louis County, more



Figure 7.. City of St. Louis vs. St. Louis County

than 500 sq. mi. The two were governed together. The county court was the governing body, and by the 1850's the County had a majority on the court. It passed a tax levy in 1858, the burden of which fell mostly on City residents, and a movement for home rule gained increasing strength. A group of Freeholders from the City and County agreed on new boundaries for the City which nearly tripled its size, allowing the space for a 1,300 acre Forest Park plus open land for future expansion. The plan was approved at a state Constitutional Congress in 1875; it was submitted to the voters

the next year and was initially thought to have been defeated. However, rampant fraud in the election was clearly documented, and a recount showed that the measure had narrowly passed, making the City of St. Louis

an independent entity. While this resolved the vexing taxation of the City by the County, it had unforeseen consequences in the next century.

The Founding of Mississippi Glass Company

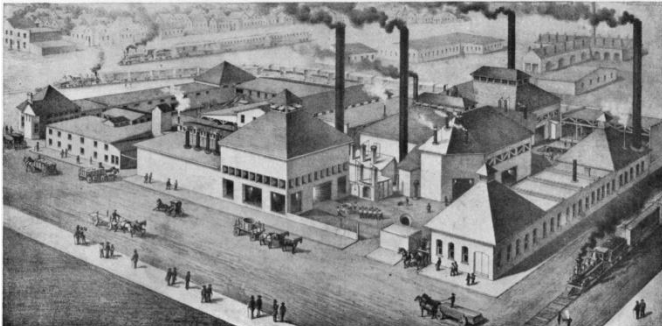


Figure 8. Drawing of Mississippi Glass factory, St. Louis

George Humphreys left the wholesale grocery business started by his brother Solon and founded the Mississippi Glass Company in 1873. By this time beer brewing was the largest industry in the City, in no small part due to the influx of Germans moving there, and the glass company was initially focused on making beer bottles and jars for preserving fruit. Glass is made from soda ash, sand, and limestone heated together at high temperature; the latter two materials were abundant around St. Louis, and soda ash readily available via the

waterways. George died unexpectedly in 1875. Solon and his brother-in-law John Walsh agreed to take over the fledgling company, with John being president as Solon was then living in Bayonne, NJ and working in Manhattan. John Walsh died in 1882, and his brother Edward Walsh, Jr., became president; Edward Walsh Humphreys (Solon's son) became vice-president from New York. Around this time, the product line changed from bottles and jars to plate and rolled glass and rough glass for skylights. The reason for this shift probably relates to the passage of tariffs on imported plate glass during the 1890's which enhanced the profitability of this type of glass production. It may also have been a response to

Anheuser-Busch's decision to outsource its purchase of beer bottles to Germany. The plant was at Angelica and Main Streets in North St. Louis, just a few blocks from the river, and employed more than 250 workers by the end of the 19th century.

Newspaper articles of the time indicate commercial success, e.g., “. . . The use of colored glass has increased immensely and become almost a fashion both in homes and business houses. . . The largest factory for stained and rough glass in the United States is the Mississippi Glass Co. of St. Louis . . .” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Dec. 30, 1888, p. 18 and “The Mississippi Glass Co. report an unusually good trade during the past season, having sold over 1,000,000 feet of glass to the World's Fair [of 1893] in Chicago . . . This is the largest glass concern in the United



Figure 10. Edward Walsh Humphreys, c. 1910

States and is enjoying an enormous trade.” *Ibid*, Oct. 4, 1891, p. 16. Edward Walsh, Jr. died of a heat stroke in 1901, and his brother Julius was appointed president with Edward Walsh Humphreys remaining as vice-president; by 1911 the company headquarters had moved to New York and E.W. Humphreys, my great-grandfather, was president. The company had acquired in the 1890's the sole rights to manufacture and market wired glass, glass made with “chicken wire” embedded in it and which I remember seeing in elevator doors; this glass was shown to be more resistant to fire and thus used in many industrial and commercial enterprises. The National Board of Underwriters demanded that buildings use such glass in skylights in order to obtain insurance, and Mississippi Glass Co. was the first to pass the new standards, in 1899. The company

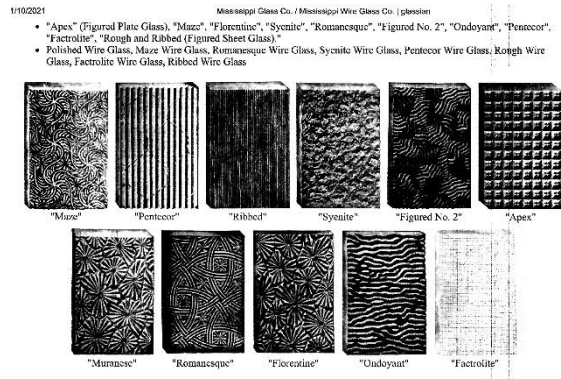


Figure 9. Samples of Mississippi Glass products



Figure 11. *The Humphreys family in Southhamptom, c. 1890. In rear, Solon and Ellen; seated at left foreground, Mary Duane; her nephew; her son RDH; and husband E.W. Humphreys.*

grandfather's house in Westchester County, NY. She ruled the roost, or so it seemed to my 10-year old awareness. When I became restless at Sunday church services she would reach into her purse and give me a small mint candy the French call *pâtes de fruit* from a silver vial to keep me quiet. My grandfather started working for the Company after graduating from Harvard in 1904; he rose to become president in 1937 and chairman of the board in 1949, ultimately retiring in 1957. He married Fannie Harrington Ellis and they had six children, my father Ellis (1906-1993) and five daughters, my aunts, each with distinctive strong personalities. My father graduated from Harvard in 1928, and after a year in which he drove a motorcycle out to Wyoming, the stock market crashed and the Great Depression set in. I don't believe he had a general interest in business or the Mississippi Glass Co. in particular. He did have an interest in architecture, but a position in "the family firm" was perhaps the most available job, and he started working there in 1932. He married my mother Ruth Palmer, also from Manhattan; my sister Sandra was born in 1936 and I followed in 1938. The headquarters of the company moved from New York back to St. Louis in 1940, and thus we also moved there too. My father satisfied his architectural bent by designing and building a house in University City, a border town with St. Louis, where he and my stepmother

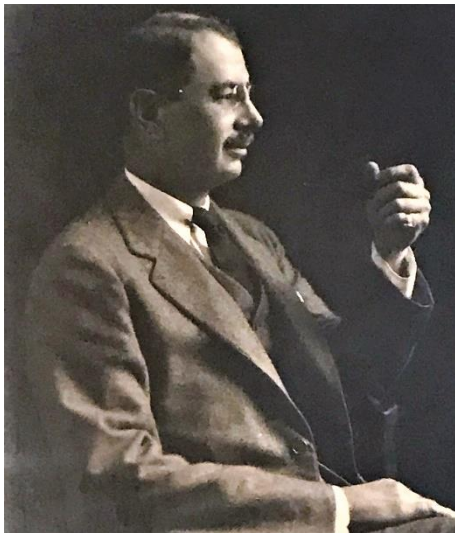


Figure 13. *Richard Duane Humphreys*

lived for the rest of their lives. He had a passion for Porsches, owning two or three of them. He also liked to give each of his cars a name. One evening while I was home from college my date and I went out to dinner with my father and stepmother. We had come in separate cars, and after dinner he let me drive his silver-colored Porsche Speedster, which he had cleverly named Sylvia, back to the house. I managed to break the ignition key off in the ignition as I was trying to start it up. Fortunately, the key was easily fished out of the ignition and an alternate key was found, but any chance of having the evening be an opportunity to make an impression on my date was lost.

expanded and built or renovated factories in Port Allegany, PA (1901), Morgantown, WV (1904), Floreffe, PA (1906), and Fullerton, CA (1933). In addition to these glass plants, the company established a wholly owned subsidiary, Walsh Refractories, which manufactured the bricks used in the furnaces needed for the elevated temperatures necessary to make glass.

Edward Walsh Humphreys married Mary Duane (1858-1951), the great-granddaughter of Benjamin Franklin; their only child was my grandfather Richard Duane Humphreys (1882-1968). I remember my great-grandmother Great Granny on family visits to my



Figure 12. *Mary Duane Humphreys (Great Granny). Portrait by Lydia Emmet, c. 1890. It hangs in our living room.*



Figure 14. My father Ellis Humphreys, age ~18

My father traveled often in his job with the Company; I was aware of only three plants in the late 1940's and early '50's, St. Louis, Floreffe, PA, and Fullerton, CA. In 1956, the Company employed 850, with 450 of them in St. Louis. The factory in St. Louis was close enough to the river that flooding occurred with some frequency, and I remember going there with my father when the plant was shut down because of the muddy water. There were disabling floods in 1943, '44, '47, and '51, and the Company secretary-treasurer testified before the House Ways and Means Committee in 1957 to plead for a flood control plan for St. Louis.

Not much seems to have happened, as a record flood occurred in 1993, and near record flooding occurred again in 2015 and 2019. I also remember being shown the making of glass in the plant by my father; I was totally awed to see the hot liquid glass being poured onto the racks where it cooled, molten lava flowing from a furnace volcano. Through all this, I never felt that my father loved what he was doing. He seemed to enjoy being with the men in the plant but never expressed enthusiasm for his job, and I can't help but wonder whether he would have enjoyed more a career as an architect.

The later floods didn't affect the Company, however. In 1967, it was acquired by Combustion Engineering, a large conglomerate, and was to be run as an independent subsidiary, C-E Glass Co, which was formed in 1970 by merging Mississippi Glass with Hordis Brothers, each a part of Combustion Engineering. Hordis Brothers was spun off in 1981 and bought the remaining assets of C-E Glass. The Glass Company plant in Floreffe, PA had been shuttered in 1974, but got a new life as plans for reactivating it under the Hordis logo were developed in 1982. It was sold again in 1985 to Guardian Industries but was closed for good in 2014. The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reported on July 10, 1986 that the factory on Angelica Street had been sold to a salvage company, representing the true end of Mississippi Glass Company after its 113-year run. It's fortuitous that after college my interests veered sharply towards medicine; any employment I might have had in "the family firm" would not have lasted very long.

It is difficult to tell how well the Company responded to the vicissitudes of economic surges and declines in the City, the country, and the world. The Company published a brochure in 1929 which highlighted the success of the wired glass as a fire retardant and described a number of new types of glass they developed to serve a variety of purposes such as light diffusion to reduce glare, light and heat absorption, and improved light transmission. The short five-page summary of the company's history in that brochure certainly suggests that the Company was innovative and a leader in the development of glass technology¹⁶; The remainder of the brochure was on glass technology and the different types of glass produced by the Company (see Figure 9). There is no information I was able to find on how it fared during the Depression, nor how it probably expanded during and after WWII as did many St. Louis companies. The theme of innovation is echoed in a three-page typed paper in 1964 by a St. Louis advertising company, apparently for broadcast over a local radio station. My cousin Duane Iselin, a CPA, served on the Company's Board of Directors for several years in the 1960's and told me that he thought the Company was well run and had steadily increasing sales volumes. He was disappointed in the merger with Combustion Engineering because he regarded the prospects for the future as very good. In summary the balance of information indicates that the Company was well managed, technologically innovative, and had a good run, which might have gone on longer had its last leaders had the vision of future growth and expansion.

How should we regard Solon Humphreys? He seems to have run with the robber barons of the Golden Age, as outlined above, and his obituaries in the *New York Times* and *Hartford Courant* describe him as a

member of the “old guard” of Wall Street. These obituaries also emphasize his integrity and involvement in his community. A long-standing member of the New York Chamber of Commerce, he served as its treasurer for 22 years until the time of his death. The tribute to him by that organization is perhaps the most glowing: after summarizing his many business involvements and accomplishments, it goes on to say “Such is a sketch of his public career; and whatever lustre it may shed upon him, it is but a moonbeam when compared with the sunshine of his private and personal character . . . his liberality knew no limit of prejudice, and no needy person was turned away unheard or unaided.” Glowing words indeed, oh that we all could have the same said of us! On the other hand, there is a 15-page article published in 1888 which attempts to track the mortgages and debt accrued in the various railroad maneuvers employed by Jay Gould, Solon Humphreys, et al. regarding the Wabash line¹⁷. I readily confess to being unable to sort out the trail followed by the author and his implications of wrongdoing by the men involved (the author of this article is not identified, unlike other articles in this journal). He ends his analysis with a sentence written by the 1st century AD Roman satirist Juvenal which says in part “This contagion will spread its foulness . . . as a whole herd may fall into scabies . . .” (translation thanks to my classmate James White). I acknowledge that of all the robber barons, Jay Gould has emerged with the least admirable reputation and zero evidence of concern for the good of others, and Solon’s partnering with Gould does not reflect well on him from this viewpoint. I choose nevertheless to go with the Chamber of Commerce’s assessment of Solon.

St. Louis in the 20th Century

The 20th century in St. Louis was filled with many historically relevant events but I am going to mention only a few of them. The City had continued to grow in population and productivity in the last decades of the 19th century; its population in 1900 was 575,000, the fourth largest in the nation after New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia. The first memorable event of the new century was the 1904 World’s Fair, titled the **Louisiana Purchase Exposition** to celebrate the purchase of the Louisiana Territory from France. St. Louis was a logical site to host such a fair because of its importance as the jumping off point for the West, and it came on the heels of an effort to host the previous World’s Fair, the Columbian Exposition, a decade earlier to celebrate the European discovery of the Western Hemisphere by Columbus. That fair was awarded to Chicago by the House of Representatives over bids from St. Louis, New York, and Washington, DC because of superior fund raising by Chicago even though New York had Morgan, Vanderbilt, and Astor going to bat for it. That decision left a sour taste in the mouths of St. Louis business leaders because of the rivalry between the two towns, and fueled the intent to host the Louisiana Purchase Exposition. Although many prominent St. Louisans participated in the efforts most of the credit goes to David R. Francis (1850-1927), a successful businessman who served as mayor of the City from 1885-1889 and then as Governor of Missouri from 1889 to 1893. He headed up the committee to manage the Exposition, participating in most of the decisions about the themes, structure, and events to be featured. Most of Forest Park, mentioned earlier, was the site of the Fair, and underwent a considerable makeover, even though having only opened in 1876.



Figure 15. Schematic map of the 1904 World's Fair

The Fair was scheduled to open on April 30, 1903, the centennial date for the Purchase. In April of 1902 there was concern that some of the government and state structures might not be ready in time, and a number of nations declined to exhibit at the Fair. Congress agreed to postpone the opening by a year; President Theodore Roosevelt was very enthusiastic about the Fair and urged his diplomatic corps to talk enthusiastically about it at their posts. Francis went to Europe to talk up the Fair to the kings and presidents in all the European capitals, while Walter Williams, commissioner of the press, made sure that newspapers in North and South America, Asia, and Europe were full of articles about it. He observed that the best-known Americans in Europe

were “President Roosevelt, Pierpont Morgan, David R. Francis, and the Missouri Mule”¹⁸. Exhibitors happily signed up. Roosevelt opened the Fair by pressing a telegraph key in the White House that turned on power to all the exhibits, and the crowds poured in. It proved to be immensely popular; the major theme of the Fair was education and its benefits in the improvement of mankind, although other, less positive analyses have pointed out the implicit expectation that all cultures of the world should aspire to the standards of white America. The summer Olympic Games also took place in St. Louis in 1904, using the athletic facilities of Washington University which was in the process of moving into new facilities across the street from the western edge of Forest Park (including its track and field site, Francis Field; Francis oversaw the opening ceremonies of the Games in addition to his role in the Exposition).



Figure 16. Mural hanging in the dining room of the Racquet Club of St. Louis

There were numerous bright moments for the City in the first half of the century in addition to the Exposition, and some of them are depicted in this mural which hangs on the dining room wall of the Racquet Club in St. Louis. The two men on the far left are Joseph Wear and Dwight Davis, who won the National Squash Racquets championship in New York in 1914. Below them is the race car driven by Major Albert Lambert in the first Indianapolis 500 race, 1911; he also arranged for the international balloon races to take place in St. Louis in 1907, symbolized by the balloon in the center. The golfer is George Herbert Walker, grandfather of Bush 41 and great-grandfather of Bush 43; the Cup is the Walker Cup, which he donated. Above the balloon is Lucky Lindy’s plane the Spirit of St. Louis, supported financially by five St. Louis businessmen who were members of the Racquet Club. Next is Dwight Davis again, now playing tennis, next to the Davis Cup which he donated. And at the far right, the dignified man in the top hat is David R. Francis, introduced earlier. In addition to his elective offices of Mayor and Governor, and the president of the Exposition Committee, he was appointed Secretary of the Interior by President Cleveland in 1896, and served as the US Ambassador to Russia under President Wilson for 1916-17, becoming a witness to the Russian Revolution. In the foreground is one of the main buildings of the Exposition, while the background building refers to Francis’ time as Ambassador in Moscow. The mural is thus a symbol of wealthy white American men pursuing their favorite pastimes as the Golden Age was winding down.

Sports

St. Louis has had its share of professional sports teams over the years, now reduced to only two. Although baseball’s roots go well back into the 19th century, the two current major leagues, National and American, effectively began in 1900. Both the St. Louis Cardinals and the St. Louis Browns moved to St. Louis, the former starting as a barnstorming club called the Brown Stockings and subsequently the Cardinals, joining the NL, and the latter moving from Milwaukee, adopting the name of Browns (short for Brown Stockings) and joining the American League. The Cardinals have been very successful over the years; the only

team in either league with more World Series titles is the NY Yankees (25 vs. 11). Both the Cardinals and the Browns played in the same ballpark. The Browns were perennial losers; in their 53 seasons in St. Louis they only won one pennant, in 1944 when many star players on other teams, e.g., Ted Williams of the Red Sox, had been inducted into the armed forces. The Browns lost the World Series that year to the Cards. There was a deprecating saying amongst Browns fans: *First in shoes, First in booze, and last in the American League*. The shoes reference is to International Shoe Company and the Brown Shoe Co., big employers in town, and booze to Southern Comfort, which was made in St. Louis after 1934. It was my misfortune to have inherited my father's penchant for rooting for the underdog, and we both were inveterate Browns fans. After the 1953 season they moved to Baltimore and became the Orioles, and I spent several years rooting for them with their new name and location; they almost immediately became much more successful than their previous iteration.

In 1960 NFL football came to St. Louis as the Chicago Cardinals became the St. Louis Football Cardinals. Somehow, they managed to stay for 27 years before their owner Bill Bidwell thought he had a better deal in Arizona. Their loss however was made up for when the Los Angeles Rams under the ownership of the widow Georgia Frontiere moved to St. Louis in 1995. She regarded St. Louis as her hometown, and as the League's only woman owner, she presided over the team's resurgence, winning the 1999 Super Bowl and playing in but losing it in 2001. She died in 2008, and a minority owner, Stan Kroenke, gained League approval to be the team's owner in 2010, after which he bought the shares inherited by Frontiere's children. He set about trying to extort a more advantageous deal from the City, holding the leverage of moving the team unless he got what he wanted. The cash-strapped City did the best it could, but he moved the team back to LA for the 2016 season, to the bitter disappointment of the St. Louis fans. The City also had a successful National Basketball Association team, the Hawks, starting in 1955, but they became the Atlanta Hawks after the 1968 season. The only major league franchise to stick besides the baseball Cardinals has been the St. Louis Blues in the National Hockey League. It started de novo in 1967 as an expansion team; after 52 years of trying, it won the Stanley Cup (the World Series of hockey) for the first time in 2019.



Figure 17. The two iconic symbols of St. Louis, the Arch and Eads Bridge, seen from Illinois.

Figure 14. View of Eads Bridge and the Arch, two iconic symbols of St. Louis, from the Illinois shore.

The Arch

Leaders of St. Louis had been thinking since the early 1930's about a monument to recognize St. Louis' river history in its role in the opening of the west, with an eye on the City's 200th

“birthday” in 1964. A plan developed to level a 40-square block area along the levee starting just south of Eads Bridge; the plan was funded by a City bond issue and money from the Works Progress Administration. Further action was put on hold during the war years, and the cleared area became a parking lot for 4,500 cars. After the war, momentum built up to move the project, termed the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, ahead. This was energized chiefly by the St. Louis businessman and civic leader Luther Ely Smith, who organized a design competition for a waterfront memorial in 1947-48. The winner was Eero Saarinen, whose parabolic arch is simple and elegant. It took ten years to raise the funding for construction, and another



Figure 18. View of downtown St. Louis from the top of the Arch. Note the previous Busch Stadium to the left echoing the Arch theme. Reference to the Arch in the current stadium (2006) is more subtle.

seven to build it, but the **Arch** stands as the distinguished and unique symbol of a City sorely in need of a refurbishing of spirit. It has also become a target of sorts for daredevils and adventurous pilots; several of the latter have flown their aeronautical vehicles through the Arch. One experienced parachutist landed on the top of the Arch with the intent of jumping off and floating down with his back-up chute. The wind blew him off balance, and the chute failed to open; he died in the fall. Another, spiderman improviser, climbed up the Arch with suction cups and then safely parachuted off the top. For us mortals, the Arch has an internal tram that takes one to the observation room at the top, from which you can get a good view of downtown St. Louis and the flat landscape of Illinois. It is now called Gateway Arch National Park which includes the Old Courthouse and the riverside park on which the Arch rests.

Notable St. Louis

It is worthwhile to mention a few notable people with connections to St. Louis. **T.S. Eliot** (1888-1965) was born in St. Louis; his grandfather was William Greenleaf Eliot who founded Washington University as well as numerous other civic and religious institutions. T.S. Eliot moved to England at the age of 24 and ultimately renounced his US citizenship to become an English citizen. However, he considered himself fortunate to have been born in St. Louis. **Kate O'Flaherty Chopin** (1850-1904) was also born in St. Louis. She married Oscar Chopin, a native of Louisiana, at age 20 and had six children in rapid succession. Kate moved back to St. Louis after her husband's death, where she established herself as a writer of short stories and novels. Her work was not greatly appreciated in her lifetime, but her novel *The Awakening* is recognized for its groundbreaking attention to women's inner life and is a landmark of women's literature. **Josephine Baker** (1906-1975) was another woman born in St. Louis and after a hard-scrabble childhood, made her way to New York and then to Paris as a chorus dancer. She rose to stardom as a singer and dancer, and appeared in several movies. Like Eliot, she renounced her American citizenship, becoming a citizen of France in 1937. She recently received a very high honor when French President Macron announced that her remains would be placed in the Pantheon in Paris, a tribute to her role in the French Resistance during WWII. **Tennessee (Thomas Lanier) Williams** (1911-1983) was born in Mississippi but the family moved to St. Louis when he was eight as a result of his father's promotion in his work at International Shoe Co. After high school, he was a lackadaisical student at the University of Missouri and his father made him take a job in the shoe company factory. He began writing but achieved little success until *The Glass Menagerie* was a big hit in New York. This led to multiple subsequent successes, but his later life was plagued with alcohol, drug use, and depression. He had a nervous breakdown in 1969 and was flown from Key West to St. Louis and hospitalized at Barnes Hospital, which he called Barnacle Hospital, for three months. He is credited with saying "America has only three cities: New York, San Francisco, and New Orleans. Everywhere else is Cleveland". Or, I suppose, St. Louis. **Joseph Pulitzer** (1847-1911) emigrated from Hungary in 1864 and found his way to St. Louis in 1866. In 1878 he purchased the *Dispatch*, an evening paper with only a small following, and a short time later also bought the *Post* and put them together as the *Post-Dispatch*, still printing today. He moved to New York in 1883 and purchased the *World*, the leading liberal paper there, while assuring St. Louis that the *Post-Dispatch* would continue to fight for the City's best interests. This proved to be true, as his son, Joseph Pulitzer II (died 1955) brought the paper to a national audience as its editor for 38 years, and Joseph Pulitzer III (1913-1993), also involved in the paper but even more notable for his collection of modern art displayed in the Pulitzer Art Foundation and its museum. The senior Pulitzer arranged in 1917 for the Pulitzer Prizes to be awarded annually through an endowment to Columbia University. **Winston Churchill** (1871-1947), not the person usually thought of by the name, was a novelist who was born and raised in St. Louis. After graduating from the US Naval Academy, he set about writing novels, initially historical but later focused on contemporary life; his books were best sellers, and caught the attention of the Englishman of the same name. The latter apparently proposed that they distinguish the authorship of their writings by the Englishman signing his writings with his middle name, Spencer, or more simply, S. The two did meet on two occasions but never established a friendship. **Roger Baldwin** (1894-1981) was born into a Boston Brahmin family. After graduating from Harvard in 1905 he followed the advice of Louis Brandeis and went to St. Louis to be a social worker, giving the first lectures in the field of sociology at

Washington U. He became a pacifist, organizing the American Union Against Militarism, and spent 9 months in jail for refusing to sign up for military service in 1918. He went on to form the American Civil Liberties Union. **Scott Joplin** was born in Texas, and after some years as an itinerant pianist in the South moved to Sedalia, Missouri in 1894 as a music teacher. He then spent 6 years in St. Louis (1901-06) and helped augment the City's role in the development of ragtime music. He was awarded a Pulitzer Prize posthumously. **George Caleb Bingham** (1811-1879) was born in Virginia but his family moved to central Missouri when he was eight. He developed an interest in and skill at portrait painting, and would travel to St. Louis in the 1830's in search of clients. He moved his family there permanently in 1845. His paintings were influential in showing easterners the details of life in the center of the country.



Figure 19. *Jolly Flatboatmen in Port, St. Louis, 1857.* George Caleb Bingham

In addition to these individuals, St. Louis has other attributes worth attention. Figure 20 shows in the distance the spire of the Old Cathedral (1834) and the rounded dome of the Old Courthouse (1826) where Dred Scott's legal ordeals began; Figure 18 shows the courthouse after its renovation. The Missouri Botanical Garden is a famous public garden established by Henry Shaw in 1859. It has a California connection, as its President for four decades was Peter Raven, a San Francisco native and UC Berkeley PhD. The St. Louis Art Museum and the Zoo are both in Forest Park and have roots in the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition; they are both world class. The Wainwright Building (1891) is a noted architectural achievement by Louis Sullivan not only for its success in achieving the "proud and soaring thing" he sought but also because it was the first tall building to use steel girders in its construction. The St. Louis Symphony Orchestra is the second oldest in the country and remains distinguished.



Figure 20. *Lithograph of St. Louis in 1854, which hangs in our dining room. The tall spire is the Old Cathedral; the dome of the Old Courthouse is more distant.*

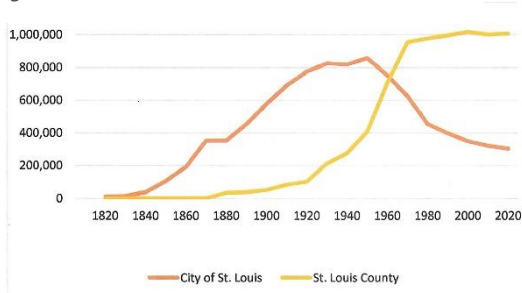
East St. Louis

A brief word should be said about East St. Louis across the river from St. Louis and home to the eastern end of Eads Bridge. Always smaller than St. Louis, its population peaked at 82,000 in 1950, and its current population is 26,000; 96% of its current residents is Black. The town started as a “company town”; its laws and policies were designed to support industry, not people. Major industrial plants were located in and around the city: Aluminum Ore Co. (now Alcoa), Monsanto Chemicals, Standard Oil, Shell, Granite City Steel, Western Cartridge (now Olin), and Armour and Swift meat-packing houses. The taxation rates for these companies were low and safety oversight for workers was non-existent. Graft was rampant, and public services like police and fire were substandard¹⁹. Blacks were routinely excluded from higher paying jobs in these factories; during the period when the country was preparing to enter WWI in 1917, production ramped up, and many factories ran three shifts a day. At this time, total population was 60,000, with an increase in Blacks to 10,000 due to migration from the south. There were strikes and work stoppages by the white workers to try to take advantage of the increase in production to obtain a higher wage. In retaliation, the companies offered some of the jobs to Blacks, who would work for an even lower wage. Resentment flared among the whites, leading to rumors that trainloads of Blacks were coming from the South to East St. Louis, and that Blacks would “colonize” (i.e., take over) the city. When 200 white union workers were fired from Aluminum Ore and replaced with Blacks in April, a sort of precursor march of whites battered any blacks they came across for one night in May, and tempers remained short. The fuse was finally lit on July 2 and whites marched through town shooting any Black they saw; some were burned alive, houses were set on fire and the occupants shot as they fled. Police watched and even participated in the slaughter, and National Guard troops also did nothing to stop the bloodshed. Those able to flee streamed across Eads Bridge, and the St. Louis Police force did the right thing, protecting the fleeing Blacks from their white pursuers. Josephine Baker, watching from across the river in St. Louis, saw the flames from the burning homes and became terrified. There are no definite numbers of those murdered, but they were in excess of 100; President Woodrow Wilson was noticeably absent from any commentary on this travesty.

Thus, the East St. Louis riot was the precursor to the Red Summer of 1919 after the end of WWI, when race riots occurred in numerous cities including Chicago and Washington, DC. This ugly period of American history can be extended to include the Tulsa massacre of 1921, about which there has been so much recent attention.

Modern Day St. Louis

Figure 21.



St. Louis today is a shadow of its former self. As shown in the adjacent graph, its population has shrunk from a maximum of 860,000 in 1950 to around 300,000 currently, and equally important, the composition of its people has changed over the same timeperiod from 82% white/18% Black to about 47%/47%. This would suggest that most of this population shift is made of whites moving from the City to St. Louis County, but this is certainly an oversimplification. The 2020 census counted just over a million people living in the County, 25% of whom were Black, and some of the ~95 towns in the County are majority Black.

Some of the Blacks in the County no doubt moved from St. Louis, but there must have been a corresponding influx to the area to keep the City’s overall Black population constant for the last 70 years as well as account for

the increase of Blacks in the County. Nevertheless, the decline in overall population of the City is a serious problem and has several factors that contribute:

- The legislation separating the City and the County in 1876. This has resulted in the City “maxing out” its tax basis with no way to increase the tax revenue which would have resulted if it had been able to incorporate the wealthy zones of the County. Kansas City has supplanted St. Louis as the largest city in the state, in part because it has been able to annex adjacent communities and expand its borders. There have been at least two major efforts to rewrite the relationship between St. Louis City and County that I am aware of, and both have been decisively defeated. The County doesn’t want anything to do with the City except to go to a ballgame or a symphony concert.
- A change in the structure of the economy since 1950. St. Louis had a stable and growing economy after WWII through the 1970’s; in 1979 a smattering of fortune 500 companies, per capita income 89% of that in New York, and hope for biomedical startups suggested optimism for the future. But a shift in public policy in the Reagan years led to progressive job loss due to deregulation. This deregulation resulted in mergers and buyouts of local companies by larger, often international companies. BP bought Ralston Purina, InBev bought Anheuser-Busch, Boeing bought McDonnell-Douglas, to name the most glaring. Jobs were lost when headquarters and production facilities were moved elsewhere²⁰.
- Racism. There seems little doubt that the movement of white St. Louisans to the County was a reflection of “white flight” to escape a rising crime rate and a growing Black underclass. The City had failed its Black citizens from the very beginning; efforts to provide lowcost housing in projects like the Pruitt-Igoe complex (1953) were under-resourced and became such safety concerns and maintenance problems that its 33 buildings were demolished starting in 1972. St. Louis has had the dubious distinction of being the homicide capitol of the US, and it is perfectly plausible to think that Blacks as well as whites would choose to move to a safer place if they could. However, the City’s past is littered with policies which, no matter their good intentions, had a negative impact on the Black Community.

These are brief allusions to complex social and societal issues, each of which has been the subject of detailed examination in books and journals. Like most of the rust-belt cities, St. Louis has a storied past, studded with actions, policies, and behaviors which hindered its ability to respond to economic, social, and demographic changes, helping to account for its fall from grace. Like our nation trying to make a more perfect union, the City has sought always to improve, not always obtaining positive outcomes.

Conclusion

This has been a very personal essay looking at four generations of Humphreys through the eyes of a fifth. I have tried to weave three stories together: a brief exploration of the history of Mississippi Glass Company, and the role of my family antecedents in that history. These both take place on the larger stage of the City of St. Louis with its rich and often troubling history. The ups and downs of the City have not been fully reflected in the limited history I could find of the Glass Company, and certainly not in the several generations of the Humphreys family, at least until the return of my father to St. Louis in 1940 from New York. As a child growing up in St. Louis, I had limited awareness of the racial tensions in the City. When we first arrived, we lived on a farm in Ferguson, a suburb which became known to all after the Michael Brown murder in 2014. But we moved into an apartment after a couple of years, in St. Louis right across from Forest Park. The racial divide was evident: Blacks lived in North St. Louis, but the rest of the City was white. That still remains true. I went to private schools which were completely white; my boarding school had its first Black student in my class, and it took a long time for my eyes to open to racial disparities.

The Midwest writ large has been dismissed as the flyover zone by elites on both coasts, yet on our occasional trips back to St. Louis, it still feels like I'm coming home. My wife and I have in common a sense of community when we return, and we have the good fortune to share our memories with our son and his family, who moved there six years ago. Our family has in that sense come full circle. There are many challenges that face the people of St. Louis, and we can only hope that they can find their way to harmonious and equitable solutions to them.

Acknowledgements

I am delighted to acknowledge the help of my sister-in-law Carolyn Brooks, who has become a very proficient internet researcher. She found pertinent information on the Mississippi Glass Company and made a timeline of significant events for me. Her husband, my brother-in-law Peter Morrin, also made helpful suggestions, and Robert Duffy provided important information. I have also received help from the Missouri History Museum and the Mercantile Library of the University of Missouri-St. Louis. My wife Sheila has been instrumental in suggesting important ideas and people to be included in the essay, and has given it several careful readings. I owe her a debt of great gratitude and thanks.

Footnotes

1. Timothy R. Pauketat, *Cahokia: Ancient America's Great City on the Mississippi*, pp.14-26. New York, Penguin, 2009. See also Maureen O'Connor Kavanaugh, *Hidden History of Downtown St. Louis*, pp. 13-19, The History Press, 2017 for a description of what little is known about the mounds in early St. Louis. The purchase of the only remaining mound by the Chief of the Osage Nation is a personal communication from Robert Duffy.
2. Primm, Chapters 1, 2; van Ravenswaay, Chapter 1; Fausz, pp. 15-99
3. Fausz, pp. 183-198, Epilogue: Finding and "Fixing" St. Louis
4. Primm, 115-116; Johnson, 79-83
5. <https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/dred-scott-case>. A straightforward account of the major features of the Dred Scott case. A more detailed and interesting account can be found in van Ravenswaay, pp. 404-411.
6. Primm, 232-240. What I've said is a simplification. For a more complete picture, see Galusha Anderson, *The Story of a Border City in the Civil War*. Boston, Little Brown and Co., 1908, and Louis S. Gerteis, *Civil War St. Louis*. Lawrence, University Press of Kansas, 2001.
7. Livia Gershon, *The Ill-Fated Idea to Move the Nation's Capital to St. Louis*, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com>, April 22, 2021
8. Troy Anstine, *Second Place: Competition between St. Louis and Chicago, 1764-1900*. Thesis for Master of Arts in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Northwest Missouri State University, April 2015. See also the relevant pages in Primm and Johnson.
9. The full story of Eads Bridge is a book unto itself. See Primm, 279-291 et al., Johnson, 170-172, Kirschten 230-243; Murphy, 4-36; Collins, *distilledhistory.com/eadspartiv/*.
10. Primm, 292-93; Theising, 64
11. Primm, 279-90
12. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/eads_bridge; Kirschten, p. 240
13. Collins, *op. cit.*
14. Walt Whitman, *Specimen Days*, 1882
15. Primm, 298-301
16. Glass by Mississippi, pp 1-72. <https://archive.org/details/page/n63/mode/2up>
17. The North American Review 146 (375):176-193, Feb., 1888 (no author specified)
18. Primm, 385
19. Johnson, 217-249; Theising, 7-220
20. Brian S. Feldman, *The Real Reason Middle America Should Feel Angry*. Washington Monthly, March/April/May 2016 <https://washingtonmonthly.com/magazine/maraprmay-2016/the-real-reason-middle-america-should-be-angry/>

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James Neal Primm, *Lion of the Valley. St. Louis, Missouri, 1764=1980*, 3rd Edition, Missouri Historical Society Press, 1998.

The authoritative work on St. Louis, usually cited as a source on any subsequently written book or article on the City.

Walter Johnson, *The Broken Heart of America. St. Louis and the Violent History of the United States*. Basic Books, New York, 2020.

A controversial rethinking of the historical facts of St. Louis to emphasize the disenfranchisement of Native Americans and Blacks starting with Jefferson and the Louisiana Purchase. One cannot deny the negative aspects of policies, and events stemming from them, that were usually intended to keep Native Americans out and Blacks down, but current residents have not unexpectedly taken issue with his approach.

Charles van Ravenswaay, *St. Louis. An Informal History of the City and its People, 1764-1865*. Missouri Historical Society Press, St. Louis, 1991 (distributed by University of Illinois Press).

A well written and detailed source of the individuals and events during the City's first century. He gives an exhaustive list of primary and secondary sources for this period.

Earnest Kirschten, *Catfish and Crystal*. The Patrice Press, St. Louis, 3rd edition, 1989.

An informal and relaxed, almost anecdotal, history of St. Louis, engagingly written by a reporter for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, who described the work as "a love letter to St. Louis" in a postscript to the first edition (1964). As the Introduction to this third edition says, "This is no labored scholarly treatise". A gentle introduction to the City's rich history.

J. Frederick Fausz, *Founding St. Louis. First City of the New West*. The History Press, Charleston, SC, 2011.

A well-researched book documenting the lives of Pierre de Laclède, August Chouteau, and others in the early days of St. Louis, and the development of trading relationships with the Osage by the French.

East St. Louis

Andrew J. Theising, *Made in the USA: East St. Louis. The Rise and Fall of an Industrial River Town*. Virginia Publishing Co., St. Louis, MO, 2013.

An accounting of East St. Louis, with many photos, some disturbing, of the 1917 riot. Pairs well with Chapter 7 in Johnson's book.

Eads Bridge

Quinta Scott and Howard Miller, *The Eads Bridge*. Missouri History Museum Press, St. Louis, 1999.

A photographic essayist (Scott) and a historian (Miller) team up in a wonderful blend of words and pictures to paint the details of Eads' triumph.

Cameron Collins, *The Summer of Eads*.

<https://www.distilledhistory.com/category/famoustlouisans/jameseads/>; a four-part lyric to James Eads in an offhand tone that has its entertaining features.

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Nini Harris, *This Used to Be St. Louis* St. Louis, Reedy Press, 2018

Mary Bartley, *St. Louis Lost. Uncovering the City's Lost Architectural Treasures*. St. Louis, MO, Virginia Publishing Co., 1994

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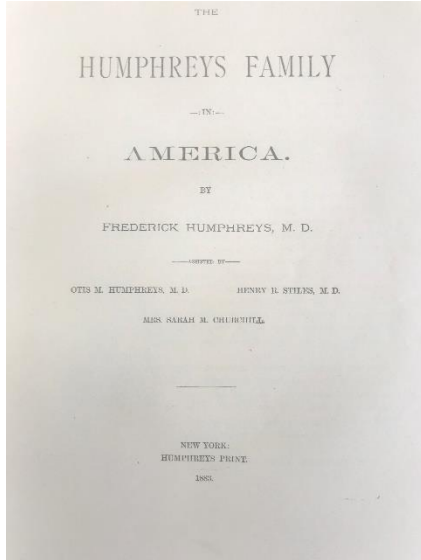
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APPENDIX

Frederick Humphreys (1816-1900)

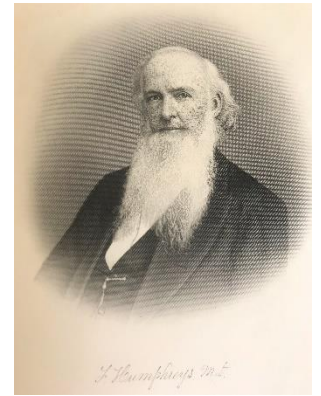
Much of the information regarding my ancestors derives from a book by Frederick K. Humphreys called *The Humphreys Family in America*, which was published privately by him in 1883. This book is a remarkable genealogical compendium of all the Humphreys he could trace in the United States through the early 1880's,



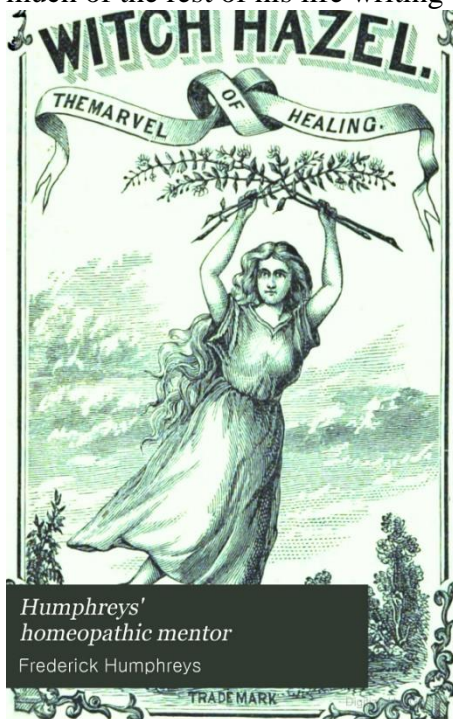
and comprises 1,115 pages of Humphreys (including Humphrey and Humphries spellings) who he traces back to a Michael Humphreys, an immigrant to Connecticut from England in 1641. The research involved in carrying out all this genealogical research is mind-boggling, as he recorded not only birth and death dates, but also wedding dates and names of spouses and the name and title of the officiating rector; he even went back to the original Michael's ancestors in England. By my reckoning, he and Solon would have been 5th cousins; they were contemporaries, and in all likelihood knew each other, as each was a member of the New York Chamber of Commerce.

Auburn, NY; his father was a medical doctor, but Frederick initially was drawn to the church, and after his first wife died he became an itinerant minister in Ohio and New York. He wrote "Yet the trammels of the itinerancy were irksome, the pay was meagre, and the outlook forbidding". In 1844, he moved to Utica and joined his father's medical practice while practicing homeopathy successfully. After a few years he studied for and received the MD degree from a college of homeopathic medicine in Philadelphia in 1850. This proved to be his true calling, and he spent much of the rest of his life writing textbooks and treatises about homeopathic

Frederick took advantage of the author's privilege to write more about himself and filled slightly more than two pages of autobiographical information (Solon only got one). He grew up in



Frederick Humphreys, c. 1880



treatments. He was integral to the formation of the New York Homeopathic Medical Society, and was invited to be the chair of the "Homeopathic Institutes and Practice of Medicine" at the school where he received his MD, a position which he accepted. While according to his assessment he made a "brilliant record as lecturer for three years" he resigned because his work on the side at homeopathic cures put him in the middle of a conflict between the College and his professional colleagues. He alludes to flack he took because of doubts about the efficacy of homeopathy, but started his own company, Humphreys Homeopathic Medicine Company, to spread the word about the field and the compounds he felt were cures for common conditions. He wrote a "little Manual" which "has had a circulation of several million copies in English, French, German, Spanish, and Portuguese", and in addition treatises on disorders of the sexual system and dysentery, and a 300 page book on homeopathic mentoring. He also applied his remedies to veterinary problems (see below). What is common to all his tonics and elixirs is 15% alcohol, I presume as a solvent. He was important enough to have been described in

Wikipedia, and *The Humphreys Family in America* has been uploaded on the internet by Google Books.

Currently, homeopathic medicine has largely fallen out of favor in the US, but it still has its adherents although I am not one of them. I have no way of knowing if any of the agents and techniques used by Frederick Humphreys is employed today. I include below an advertising panel for his various remedies. The panel was given to us by a friend who spotted it in a flea market and thought we would find it humorous; little did she know how close to home it actually is. I am compelled to salute him for the massive amount of effort he made to document the detailed ancestry of my forebears.

