

# First Missourians

**For at least** 12,000 years American Indians have lived in what is now Missouri. We know little about the earliest peoples, called Archaic, Woodland and Mississippian. Our clues about how they lived come from their stone tools, pottery, and ceremonial mounds.

Starting in the late 1600s Europeans met tribes of this region: Osage, Missouria, Kickapoo, Shawnee and Delaware, Sac and Fox, Ioway, and Illinois. Many of these tribes came to Missouri from the East or Great Lakes.

Osages moved from the Ohio River valley and became the great power south of the Missouri River. They operated a large fur trade with the French, British, and new United States. Treaty by treaty they saw their lands shrink, then moved to a reservation in Oklahoma.

The Osage story is typical. Today, former Missouri tribes are based in Oklahoma, Kansas, and Nebraska. Their cultures did not stay intact—but they survived. Growing economic power means better futures for these tribes.

**Clockwise from top left:** Osage chief Soldat du Chene. 1820 sketch of Mississippian mounds in St. Louis. Kaskaskia (Illinois confederation) warrior. Osage chief Black Dog of Mottled Eagle clan. **Background:** Sauk leader Ma-ka-tai-me-she-kia-kiak, or Black Hawk.



Image credits: State Historical Society of Missouri, Columbia.