



# Missouri's Silver Age: Silversmiths of the 1800s

*Norman Mack*

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## **Missouri's Silver Age: Silversmiths of the 1800s** Norman Mack

The result of nearly two decades of intensive research by Norman Mack and his late wife, Beatrice Davidow Mack, *Missouri's Silver Age: Silversmiths of the 1800s* is a comprehensive directory of nineteenth-century Missouri silversmiths, their works, and their identifying makers' marks. Illustrated with over one hundred photographs, this exceptional reference for historians and silver collectors showcases the Macks' three-hundred-piece collection of Missouri silver, which includes a representative sample by nearly every known Missouri silversmith and is housed at the Missouri Historical Society in St. Louis.

Featuring more than a hundred detailed biographies of the artisans and apprentices who created handmade silver in St. Louis and Missouri during the nineteenth century, *Missouri's Silver Age* also contains extensive photographs of makers' touchmarks and of the pieces themselves, which include bowls, dishes, spoons, and ladles, as well as other household utensils and decorative items. Arranged alphabetically, the biographies reveal all known details of the business activities and locations of the silversmiths. Collectively, the entries and the illustrations shed light on the growth of enterprise in Missouri, show the impact of the individual on the developing frontier economies of the Midwest, and reveal how the production, acquisition, and possession of material goods reflected the culture and values of Americans during the 1800s.

Mack provides a brief but thorough history of silversmithing in America for novice collectors and historians, detailing the various methods used in making silver and the range of styles that were popular, providing insight into the methods of training apprentices, and explaining the effects of mechanization on the trade. Augmenting this volume are an appendix by Jo Ann Griffin on how to care for old silver, a map of the silversmiths' primary locations, and a helpful alphabetical appendix of the silversmiths that includes illustrations of their touchmarks.

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