

August 22

1831 Spencer Pettis challenged Thomas Biddle to their famous duel. Pettis was running for Congress and criticized Biddle's brother, the manager of the St. Louis branch of the Bank of the United States. Biddle attacked Pettis in his hotel room. Pettis issued a challenge after the election. Four days later, Biddle accepted, and both men died on "Bloody Island."

1848 Ulysses S. Grant married Julia Dent. Grant was serving in the Fourth U.S. Infantry at Jefferson Barracks. Their romance began when Grant paid a visit to the parents of his West Point roommate, Frederick Dent. Two future Confederate Generals served as best men, Cadmus Wilcox and Julia's cousin, James Longstreet. When he became president Grant appointed Longstreet as minister to Turkey.

1876 An election was held on the proposal to separate the city and county. It looked like the measure had failed, but allegations of fraud quickly surfaced. A commission found hundreds of fraudulent ballots, and a recount found the plan had passed. The "Great Divorce" was made official on October 22nd.

1892 The contract for construction of Union Station was awarded to the firm of Adams, Ridpath and Chandler for \$457,800 dollars. The contract covered the building, except the foundations, marble work, hearing, elevators and decorations.

1904 Author Kate Chopin died of a cerebral hemorrhage in her home at 4232 McPherson. Chopin had collapsed due to the heat two days earlier at the World's Fair and suffered complications from a stroke. Chopin had written very little since her 1899 novel "The Awakening." Critics condemned its frank depiction of sexual desire.

1915 The rampaging Meramec River devastated the booming community of Valley Park. The 20-acre St. Louis Plate Glass Plant, which had caused the boom in the area, was wiped out. More than 2,000 people were homeless. Before the flood, the population of Valley Park was 3500. Only about 500 moved back.

1936 Nellie Muench and three others were found guilty of conspiracy. Muench was a reverend's daughter, sister of a state Supreme Court judge and was a West End socialite. She masterminded the kidnapping of a prominent doctor by gangsters in order to pay off a debt. Muench was acquitted of kidnapping, but it turned out she had stolen a baby to bring to court to appear more sympathetic to the jury. She even convinced a doctor to give her money by telling him he was the father!

1951 Eddie Gaedel was in the headlines again. Just days after Brown's owner Bill Veeck sent the 37" midget up to bat for the Browns, Gaedel was arrested in Cincinnati. Police there had mistaken him for a juvenile and busted him for curfew.

1957 Stan Musial's consecutive games streak came to an end at 895. An injury finally forced him to the bench after establishing a National League record for consecutive games played.

1966 The Pentagon announced that it would re-open the army ammunition plant at Goodfellow and Bircher to produce shells for the war in Vietnam. It was estimated that 2500 people would be at work in the plant by next May.

1973 St. Louisans found themselves without a morning paper. The *Globe-Democrat* and the *Post-Dispatch* were shut down by a strike by Teamsters Local 610 that would last until October.

1976 Five people were shot to death in Beverly Hills, St. Louis County. Police said they suspected the murders at 3526 West Place were drug-related.

1980 James S. McDonnell died at the age of 81. He founded McDonnell Aircraft in 1939 with one employee and no contracts. When he died, McDonnell-Douglas employed over 83,000 people in the St. Louis area. Brown Road in Hazelwood was re-named in his honor.

1982 Glenn Brummer made his memorable steal of home with two out in the 12th inning of a pivotal game against the Giants, giving the Cardinals a 5-4 win. Brummer only had four steals in his entire career.

1994 Ground was broken for the Thomas Eagleton U.S. Courthouse in downtown St. Louis. The fourth tallest structure in the city, and the largest courthouse in the nation, the building was completed in September 2000.

1999 Mark McGwire became the only player in Major League history to hit 50 home runs in four consecutive seasons. Mark slugged his 49th and 50th of the season in a double header at Shea.

2000 A parade of presidential candidates continued through St. Louis. George W. Bush was here to meet with students at Wild Horse Elementary School in Chesterfield. Vice President Al Gore had spoken to supporters in Kiener Plaza just over one week earlier.