

Tales of Marvelous Missouri

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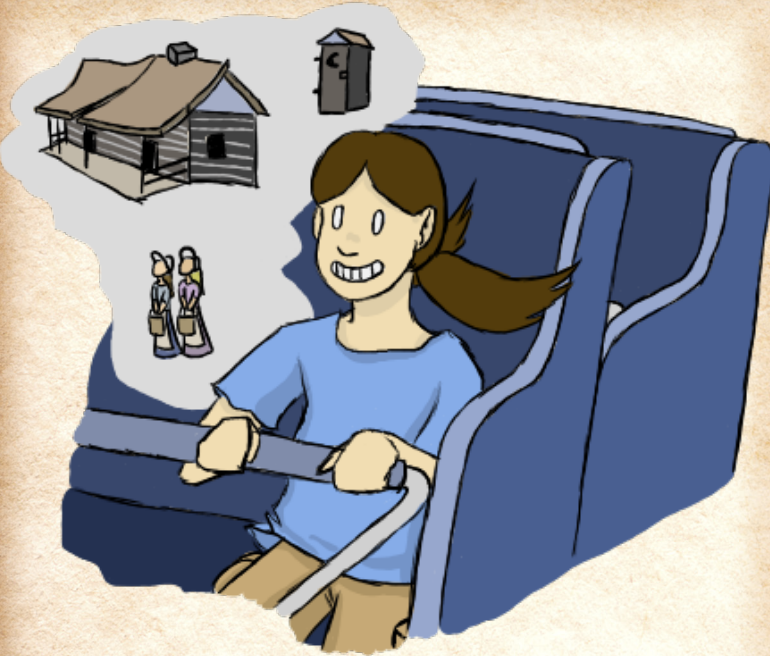
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Chapter 8: Missouri Then & Now

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“Molly, what did you see?” Her dad asked.

“Well,” Molly answered. “First there was the cave, and then I met Elsie, and she showed me Birdle’s cabin, and I found her diary and then...”

Her dad looked at her, quizzically.

Molly gave him a sheepish grin and said, “I’ll tell you all about Missouri, Silver Dollar City, Marble and Marvel Cave and bat poop!”

“Come on,” he told her. “Let’s go find the others so you can tell us all while we wait to ride Fire-In-The-Hole!”

Molly and her dad found her mom and brother, and she told them the stories she’d just heard from Elsie, until the family boarded the roller coaster.

As Molly strapped into her seat, she looked around, seeing Silver Dollar City with new eyes. Molly imagined roller coasters that moved at these speeds with twists and turns and drops would have been unimaginable when Birdle and her family moved to Missouri in 1916.

But it was more than that. Molly saw families waiting in line for the clean, indoor restrooms with flushable toilets. Birdle had used an outhouse in her backyard!

Other families were walking around enjoying turkey legs and corn on the cob. Birdle’s family had to work hard to find and manage enough food to feed their family. Now, it seemed to Molly, there was food everywhere in Silver Dollar City.

Her family didn’t need to can goods to store in a root cellar to survive the winter! She saw drinking fountains and remembered Birdle writing about walking to a spring to fetch water. Back in St. Louis, her family lived in a three-bedroom, two-story home, instead of a tiny, one-room cabin.

Things sure are different these days, Molly thought.

It suddenly occurred to Molly, though, that 200 years was a long time with a lot of history, and she was a part of that history too. Living as she did in St. Louis, with a laptop and running shoes, she was just as much a Missourian as Birdle and her sister were, washing clothes in the spring. Genevieve and Miriam Lynch running Marvel Cave and Mary Herschend and her sons creating Silver Dollar City were a part of Missouri history too. It took lots of different people with lots of different lives to make a state.

Suddenly, the rollercoaster lurched, and Molly and her family catapulted down the track! She threw her hands up and screamed along with the rest of the riders as the coaster twisted and turned down drops and around hair-splitting corners. By the time it screeched to a stop and her family climbed off, Molly felt exhilarated. What a day!

“Where to next?” Molly’s mom asked the family.

Molly thought back to where Silver Dollar City all started.

“How about Marvel Cave?” she suggested.

Molly smiled and grabbed her dad’s hand as she and her family left behind the bright summer sunshine and stepped into the cool air of the Missouri cave.

Newspaper Connections:

Use the facts in all of the chapters to write a newspaper-style story, with a strong lead sentence and include the 5 Ws and 1 H; who, what, where, when, why and how.

