Oct. 2, 1820

*This Date in Missouri Senate History*

On *This Date in Missouri Senate History*, the date was Oct. 2, 1820, the day both Thomas Hart Benton and David Barton were selected to represent Missouri in the U.S. Senate.

Prior to adoption of the [17th Amendment](https://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/amendmentxvii), United States senators were chosen by that state’s Legislature. Since Missouri was not yet a state, but in the process of becoming one, the territorial Legislature picked the U.S. senators.

Benton would continue as a United States senator through 1851, serve one term in the U.S. House of Representatives and then run unsuccessfully for Missouri governor.

Barton was born in what was then North Carolina in 1783. In 1809, he would move to St. Louis. Barton would be Missouri territory attorney general in 1813, serve as territorial House speaker in 1818, run Missouri’s constitutional convention in 1820, spend 10 years as a United States senator and then spend one year as a *Missouri* state senator, from 1834 into ’35.

Oct. 2, 1820, the date marking territorial legislative approval of Missouri’s first U.S. senators — Thomas Hart Benton and David Barton — on *This Date in Missouri Senate History*.

(Sources: U.S. Senate and U.S. Constitution)