

MISSOURI COURTHOUSES

WARREN COUNTY

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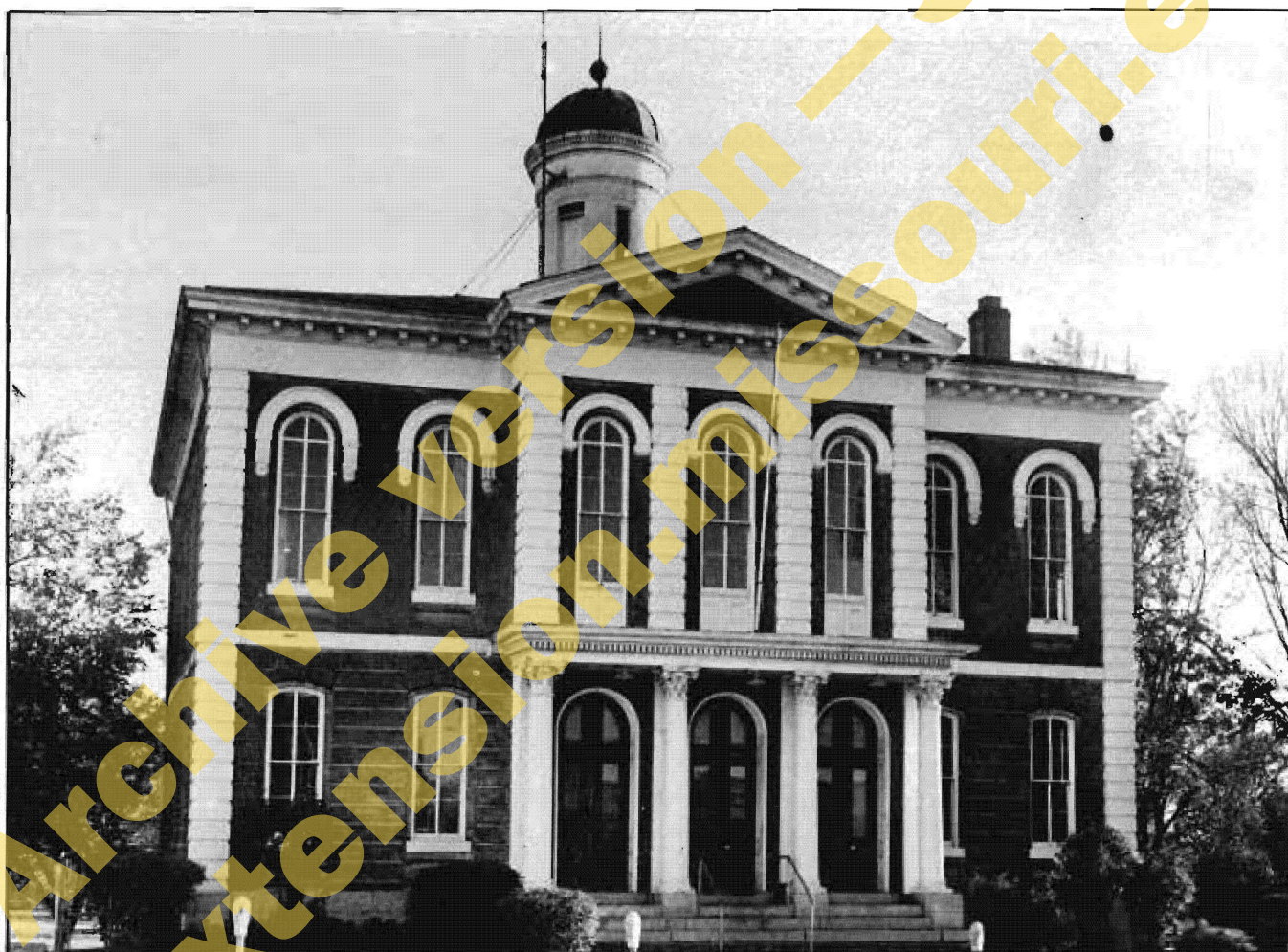
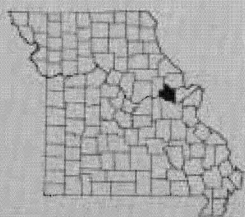


Fig. 1. Warren County Courthouse, 1870-. Architect: Thomas W. Brady (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri, photo by J.C. Caldwell)

County Warren
Organized Jan. 5, 1833
Named After Joseph Warren, a
Revolutionary
patriot
County Seat Warrenton



Warren County was organized in 1833, but the site for the county seat remained undesignated for three years. In January 1836 county citizens cast their ballots in favor of Warrenton as the county seat. The court called for proposals for the first courthouse in May 1837 and accepted the plans of Solomon Jenkins in February 1838. Jenkins married Jane Wells, whose brother, Carty

Wells, Jr., was circuit and county clerk of Warren County.

The court appropriated \$2,600 for the new courthouse. No known illustrations exist, but it was described as a grand building. Some criticized the extravagance of the court appropriation.

This was the earliest Missouri courthouse designed by Jenkins. Later courthouses by Jenkins include St. Charles County in 1849, and Scotland and Callaway counties in 1856.

The building, located on the same square as the present courthouse, was ordered sold after construction was completed on the second courthouse. On January 20, 1871, the sheriff reported sale of the building for \$325.

Warren County's second and present courthouse was begun in June 1869 when Francis Varekel, superin-

tendent, was ordered to secure plans and specifications. The court appropriated \$25,000 and approved the plan of Thomas W. Brady, an architect from St. Louis, for which they paid him \$350 (Fig. 1). Julius Conrad and Co. submitted a bid of \$25,240, which the court accepted in September. The County Court room and four offices are located on the first floor, a large Circuit Court room on the second. Final costs reported in 1871 were about \$40,000.

Warrenton is a growing community, and the need for modernization and expanded county services placed a burden on a 100-year-old building. Resolving the problem required understanding and compromise. For now, preservation of the courthouse seems assured. The building was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in March 1972.

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