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ENCYCLOPEDIA
OF
MISSOURI COURTHOUSES

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Cover photo: Jackson County Courthouse, built 1836. (From: *The United States Illustrated*, ca. 1854.)

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COURTHOUSES

Marian M. Ohman

University of Missouri-Columbia
Extension Division

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MISSOURI COURTHOUSES

FOREWORD

Missouri has a long and colorful history in the development of county government. During the 19th and 20th centuries, the 114 counties built more than 360 courthouses, usually in the center of the public squares. Information on all of these buildings is contained in this work, a treasure for those interested in the history of Missouri courthouse architecture. Many of these grand old buildings deserve recognition and should be preserved whenever possible.

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Program has been quite interested and supportive of retaining the charm and character of the architecture in county seats of government. Through their effort, 22 Missouri courthouses have been included on the National Register of Historic Places: Adair, Buchanan, Caldwell, Chariton, Cole, Dent, Iron, Jackson, Jasper, Johnson, Lafayette, Macon, Moniteau, Morgan, Nodaway, Platte, Pulaski, Ralls, Ray, Ripley, Saline and Warren. The University of Missouri-Columbia College of Arts and Science has also encouraged the study of Missouri's architectural heritage with special courses on historic preservation.

Since 1973 Dr. Marian M. Ohman, University of Missouri-Columbia College of Arts and Science and Extension Division, has prepared several projects related to the history of Missouri art and architecture. Her series "Show Me Courthouses and City Squares" achieved national recognition in 1974 from the American College Testing-National University Extension Association with an award as an innovative program in continuing education.

This encyclopedia was coordinated with another of Dr. Ohman's projects—information sheets prepared for the series "Missouri Courthouses," published by the

University of Missouri-Columbia Extension Division. These individual histories, which duplicate the information contained in this book and bear the same masthead as this page, are available at each county extension center at no cost for single copies.

The University of Missouri and county government have long been involved in a cooperative and supportive relationship. In 1913 the Missouri legislature authorized county courts to appropriate funds for a county adviser to cooperate with the College of Agriculture in aiding and encouraging agricultural development. State statutes nurtured this early beginning with additional legislative acts in 1919, 1923, 1943, 1945, 1955 and 1961, which expanded the University and county court relationship and increased the counties' responsibility and role in leadership.

Traditionally, the courthouse, home of county government, has also served as the home of the "county" extension program. These offices are now referred to as University of Missouri Extension Centers. Currently (1981), 72 Missouri county courthouses accommodate the local University Extension Center.

The culmination of Dr. Ohman's years of research has been compiled in this encyclopedic work, the only complete survey of Missouri's county courthouses and the most comprehensive single study of any state in the United States. The Columbia campus of the University of Missouri is pleased to have had a part in making this contribution to Missouri's rich heritage.

Leonard C. Douglas
Vice Provost, Extension

About the Author

Marian M. Ohman studied sociology, American history and art history at the University of Missouri-Columbia where she received a Ph. D. in 1973. Since that time she has had an appointment with the College of Arts and Science in the University of Missouri-Columbia Extension Division as Program Coordinator-Humanities.

PREFACE

Missouri became a state in 1821, the 24th state to be admitted to the Union and the second state formed from the land acquired in the 1803 Louisiana Purchase. By 1861 the state had authorized formation of 114 counties to complete Missouri's present county organization. Only three states contain more counties—Texas, Georgia and Kentucky.

The purpose of this work is to provide information regarding dates of construction, names of architects and builders, approximate costs, and illustrations whenever possible for every courthouse known to have been built in Missouri. This encyclopedia is not intended to be a complete story of any county's courthouses. Such an effort would touch upon many aspects of Missouri's cultural, political, social and geographical history; however, the bibliographies that conclude each of these reports will help local historians begin such an undertaking.

In a publication subsequent to this encyclopedia I classify county seat plans, trace the legal framework for building courthouses, present courthouse plans, examine the role of the architects and their relation to the courts, and further analyze the evidence reported here.

Official County Court records provide the most reliable documentary evidence regarding courthouses, although the older records are somewhat difficult to read. The pages of the small, thin, early 19th century volumes were filled with labored penmanship, along with more than a few errors in spelling and grammar. By the 1850s and 1860s the volumes had become large, cumbersome works, written in script with a cultivated flourish on fine-quality, lined paper.

Fortunately, handwritten documents have now been replaced by typewritten copy. To alleviate storage problems and for safekeeping, microfilm copies of many County Court records are now available from the Office of Secretary of State, Records Management and Archives Service in Jefferson City, Missouri.

The Work Projects Administration Historical Records Survey, compiled during the 1930s and early 1940s, was a tremendous help to this work. In addition to transcriptions of County Court records, these WPA

archives, located in the Western Historical Manuscripts Collection in Columbia, Missouri, contain some courthouse plans, occasional photographs, and manuscripts based upon local tradition or oral history.

Bringing a human dimension to the history of official records are 19th century newspaper accounts recreating life in these small Missouri county seats. Blazing headlines frequently announced the results of approved bond issues for funding courthouse construction. Local reporters made periodic progress reports on construction, capitalizing on any dissension between architects, contractors and the court, often writing with ill-disguised prejudices. Vivid accounts described cornerstone ceremonies or formal dedications, capturing local spirit and color. Fortunately, the State Historical Society of Missouri contains the largest collection of state historical newspapers in the United States.

The reference library of the State Historical Society of Missouri contains an extensive collection of county histories, atlases and photographs. General works on Missouri courthouses include a series, "Historic Missouri Courthouses," in the *Missouri Historical Review* from April 1963 through January 1965. Several courthouses are described in *Missouri Historic Sites Catalog*, edited by Dorothy J. Caldwell and published by the State Historical Society of Missouri in 1963. Exceptional photographs of a few Missouri courthouses appear in *Court House: A Photographic Document*, edited by Richard Pare and published by Horizon Press in 1978. Unpublished works include Paul K. Goeldner's 1970 dissertation from Columbia University, "Temples of Justice: Nineteenth Century County Courthouses in the Midwest and Texas," available at the University of Missouri-Columbia Ellis Library or the State Historical Society of Missouri.

Nomination forms for courthouses on the National Register of Historic Places contain important research on file at the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Program, Jefferson City.

Unfortunately, because of missing records and lack of historical newspapers or published materials, there is little evidence for courthouses in a few counties. I was surprised to find that, in spite of the significance of the courthouse, there are so few illustrations in some cases. For this encyclopedia I have used historical photographs of courthouses whenever possible, even though sometimes of poor quality, to show original appearance.

Trenton Boyd generously permitted reproduction of many postcards selected from his extensive collection devoted to Missouri subjects. In some instances, his postcards are the only known visual evidence for a courthouse. Unique or seldom-seen views from his

collection have also enhanced this work.

I offer heartfelt thanks to the County Court officials, State Historical Society of Missouri staff, extension personnel and local historians who have helped me by identifying local resources, checking cornerstones for dates and names, verifying information in court records, and locating rare photographs. Two colleagues from the University of Missouri-Columbia Extension Division gave exceptional support. Montie Mountjoy has provided valuable assistance with research and manuscript preparation since this project's inception. Robert L. Briggs, Jr. served as editor and is responsible for the layout.

M.M.O.

INTRODUCTION

Early in the 19th century immigrants brought to Missouri mental images of familiar architecture. They recreated these forms, following traditional ways of constructing simple buildings, using only a few tools, native timber, field stone and hand-made brick. While many of the first courthouses could scarcely be distinguished from homes, typical courthouse designs also appeared early in the century.

County government was important to Missouri settlers, and no public building was physically or symbolically closer to the people than their county courthouse. One of the first which settlers considered suitable to occupy the place of honor in the center of the courthouse square was a square, or nearly square, two-story building with center entry and regularly placed windows. The truncated hipped roof had a cupola, frequently topped by a large ball or decorative weather vane. See Daviess County for a typical example. From the second decade of the 19th century until the 1870s, these foursquare courthouses were a favored design; more than 40 were built between 1822-1885. The restored Johnson County courthouse, minus a cupola, and a remodeled late example in Bollinger County are the only survivors.

Only a few temple-type courthouses, rectangularly shaped with gable roof and portico, were built in Missouri during the same years as the foursquare. During the 19th century 14 were built, dating from 1814 to 1860. Three survive: those in Lafayette and Ralls counties still serve as courthouses; the 1839 St. Louis representative, which had a large dome added later in the century, now is used for other purposes.

Red brick buildings with hipped roofs, trimmed in white, featuring multipaned sash windows, pedimented entries, projecting center pavilions and cornices with ornamental blocks called modillions characterize much of 18th century American architecture. The Lincoln County courthouse, which dates from 1869-70, typifies the 19th century use of the style and "T" plan in parts of Missouri. See similar characteristics on courthouses in Platte and Warren counties. The Jackson County courthouse at Independence, 1933-34, is a noteworthy

20th century revival of this style.

Mansard roofs, a fashion imported from France, became popular after the Civil War. At least six courthouses incorporated this feature. The earliest, from Bates County, dates from 1869; examples from the 1870s in Dent and Lewis counties continue in use as courthouses. In the 1870s the courts took advantage of additional attic space made possible by mansard roofs, renting the top story to lodges or civic groups; in the 1880s and 1890s, mansard roofs appeared as decorative elements on the more elaborate towered courthouses. See Pettis, Howard, Nodaway or Atchison counties.

Towers and domes were prominent features on many public buildings in the second half of the 19th century. Nodaway County's was exceptionally tall and slender; others, such as those found on Saline or Barton Counties' courthouses, had shorter, robust proportions. Placement might be center, front, or more rarely, on the side. Architectural details on these courthouses were often selected from historical styles and arbitrarily arranged as decorative elements.

A popular architectural design in the 1880s and 1890s was a two-story building with central tower, four separately roofed corner pavilions and a distinctive entrance. Pettis County's was the earliest example, dating from 1883 and featuring classical details. Those in Howard, Morgan, Mississippi and Gasconade have suffered serious fire damage but continue to serve the counties. The St. Charles County courthouse, designed in 1898, remains in excellent condition.

An extraordinary American taste for Romanesque forms prevailed in the 1890s and continued for a few years beyond the turn of the century. Characteristics include: large, rusticated stones; bold towers; pyramidal and steeply pitched roofs; wide, deep arches with massive radiating stones; and clustered, squat columns. Between 1889 and 1906 Missourians built almost 20 courthouses showing some degree of Romanesque features. Almost all are still in use; see Adair, Cole, Johnson or Jasper counties for diversity in the style.

Ideals changed at the turn of the century. Several county officials expressed disdain for what they called outdated, useless ornamentation. Increasingly, the courts turned to designs of simplicity and order. Classical traditions inspired the choice of light-colored, smooth stone, columns, porticoes, pedimented entries, and flat or low roofs concealed by balustrades. Twenty-three courthouses showing these features were built between 1900 and 1928; Boone, Cape Girardeau, Pettis, Mercer, Franklin and Cooper counties show the various options offered to the courts.

Lean depression years followed with virtually no building. Federal grants stimulated construction of 19 new courthouses between 1934 and 1941. Twelve of the

19 were in the southern third of the state, an area particularly hard hit during the 1930s. World War II abruptly ended this era. Clay, Dunklin, Harrison and Callaway counties have typical WPA (Work Projects Administration) courthouses.

Since 1950 ten counties have built new courthouses, most designed with the simple lines that characterize post-war architecture in America. Generally, Missourians have endorsed modern interiors, plans, engineering and technology. Some counties also have willingly accepted modern exteriors. Others, however, such as Chariton and Schuyler counties, have rejected proposed contemporary designs in favor of familiar images that symbolize the past.



Fig. 2. Adair County Courthouse, 1897-.
 Architect: Robert G. Kirsch.
 (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

\$50,000. During September 1897 the court chose the winning design from competition attracting nine architects, including George McDonald of Johnson County and Frank Miller of Cole County. The *Kirksville Journal* noted that "our own county was not badly represented in the plans of our young architect, Mr. George W. Sublette," and the *Kirksville Democrat* published J. B. Legg's plan, which was ultimately built in Gasconade, Mississippi and St. Charles counties. However, judges of the court selected the design of R. G. Kirsch and Co. of Milwaukee (Fig. 2). Kirsch was to receive 2½ percent of the building cost, estimated to be \$47,000.

Firms from Denver, Milwaukee, Chicago, Omaha and Kirksville prepared alternate bids for building the

courthouse, based upon the selection of building stone. Apparently, the first preference had been red portage stone, but Ohio blue sandstone became the final choice. Sealed proposals were accepted until late in October 1897. A Quincy, Illinois, firm, Anderson and Menke, submitted the low bid of \$46,695, which the court accepted November 6, 1897. C. C. Anderson was from Kirksville, F. W. Menke from Quincy.

Adair County's courthouse was to measure 112 feet, 10 inches by 85 feet, and was to rise to a height of 139 feet. The foundation, of concrete and Quincy limestone, was laid in hydraulic cement; the outer walls were of sandstone, and stone-arched entrances rested on granite columns. Granolithic and tile floors were supported by a steel and concrete foundation. Metal stairways had birch handrails. There was a copper cornice and a slate roof. All construction was fireproof; there were six fireproof vaults. The building was lighted by electricity, heated by steam, and featured "sanitary sewage," a technological improvement much appreciated by those familiar with the privy on the square.

In spite of earlier rain and the threat of continued bad weather, cornerstone ceremonies for the Adair County courthouse, held May 2, 1898, attracted a crowd estimated at 15,000.

Three other counties contracted with architect Kirsch to build courthouses, using the same plan as Adair County, with roof variations on the corner pavilions and minor tower changes. Carroll County's building dates from 1901, and construction began in Polk and Vernon counties during 1906.

After being without a courthouse for so many years, Adair County had felt the sting of ridicule from her sister counties. Finally, when county officials occupied the building March 31, 1899, Adair County could boast about having the best courthouse in the northeast part of the state. This courthouse is now included in the National Register of Historic Places.

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Illustrated Historical Atlas of Adair County. Philadelphia: Harrison and Warner, 1876.

ANDREW COUNTY

Savannah is one of the few county seats in Missouri that chose not to use the entire public square for county business. County authorities designated a public square when they laid out Savannah in July 1841. But the following month the county clerk recorded this court transaction:

“Ordered . . . there shall be no public square, and the same left for that purpose by the surveyor and commissioner on the platt [sic] here-with filed, shall, as soon as practicable, be laid out in lots as the other blocks in said town.”

The north half of block 24 was reserved for county business, and a 60-foot street, considerably wider than the other standard alleys, divided the block into two equal rectangles (Fig. 1).

During the July term of 1841 the court approved plans and specifications and appropriated \$600 for a wood and stone courthouse in Savannah. Gallant Rains, in whose home first courts met, acted as superintendent; James Herring served as builder. The court met in the 1½-story, wooden-frame courthouse November 15, 1841.

The building’s description quoted in the Work Projects Administration transcription of the County Court Record was so explicit one could accurately reconstruct the 20-by-26-foot courthouse. This 1841 building, on the corner of Sixth and Market, was described as a primitive structure, poorly adapted for public use. The court abandoned it after a brief period, but later others used it as a church.

The next courthouse, built on the square in 1844, was a rectangular, brick building with gable roof and

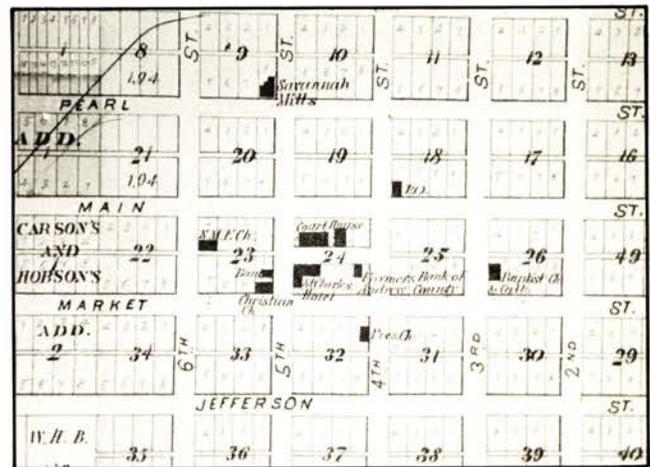


Fig. 1. Plan of Savannah, Andrew County, Missouri. (From: *Illustrated Historical Atlas of Andrew County*, 1877)

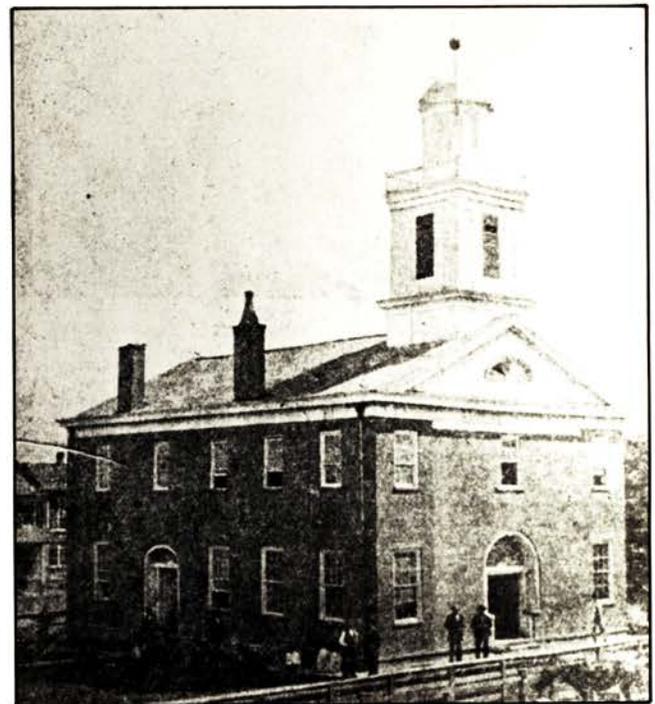


Fig. 2. Andrew County Courthouse, 1844-1899. Architect: Samuel Knight (From: *Savannah Reporter*, historical edition, 1941)

County	Andrew
Organized	Jan. 29, 1841
Named After . . .	Andrew Jackson Davis, early resident, or President Andrew Jackson
County Seat . . .	Savannah



Fig. 3. Andrew County Courthouse, 1899-. Architect: George E. McDonald (From: W.P.A., Historical Records Survey)

cupola (Fig. 2). Samuel Knight drew plans and specifications for the 40-by-50-foot, two-story building. The 1877 *Atlas* gave measurements of 46 by 60 feet and identified the superintendent as Elijah W. Ballard. But the *History of Andrew and DeKalb Counties* credited Edwin Toole. The courtroom and sheriff's office were on the first floor, petit and grand jury rooms on the second. Three Nelson brothers, Samuel, James and John, contracted the building for \$6,280. They had it ready for occupancy on December 17, 1845.

Fifty years of use took its toll on the building, and by 1899 it was condemned and razed. To finance the \$48,000 new courthouse, voters passed a 27-cent direct tax in a special election April 30, 1898. From eight plans presented, the judges selected one submitted by George E. McDonald. Alfred Meier, from St. Joseph, acted as supervising architect for builder J. A. Nason of Northern Building Co., Minneapolis, Minnesota, who submitted the low bid of \$37,500. Cornerstone ceremonies took place on January 14, 1899; one year later the building was completed (Fig. 3). Officials of Andrew County still use this building as the courthouse. The courthouse measures 84 by 104 feet and 120 feet from the ground to the top of the tower. The 42-by-60-foot courtroom on the second floor could seat about 500. Built of hydraulic pressed brick, the building has a

slate roof and sandstone ornamental trim.

Three other courthouses designed by architect McDonald in Johnson, Lawrence, and Bates counties are similar, although the choice of brick, rather than stone in Andrew County creates a remarkably different appearance.

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ATCHISON COUNTY

Linden, about five miles north of Rock Port, became the first county seat of Atchison County in 1846 and remained so until 1856. A two-story, frame courthouse, built of dressed walnut weatherboarding, measured 20 by 30 feet. Exterior stairs provided access to the second story. On the lower story, five windows framed in walnut featured window shutters. A complete description may be found in the County Court Record. Jesse Cole was superintendent, Isaac F. Wallis the contractor, and the building was apparently completed in May 1848 at a cost of \$475.

After the northern boundary of Missouri was permanently established by a Supreme Court decision in 1849, 10 miles of Atchison County became part of Iowa. Linden then was considered too far from the center of the county, and after bitter arguments the seat of justice was moved to Rock Port in 1855. In August 1856, the commissioner of the former seat of justice was ordered to sell the remaining lots, courthouse and jail in Linden.

The court accepted a donation of land for the site of the county building in the Nuckoll and White addition at the western edge of Rock Port.

W. H. Dunbar, commissioner of the new Rock Port courthouse, received instructions from the court to submit a plan and cost estimate in September 1856. Dunbar visited Oregon, in neighboring Holt County, as instructed, to make a draft of the courthouse there. Dunbar offered this draft, along with another plan which he personally preferred, to the court with specifications and cost estimates. The court accepted Dunbar's preferred plan and made an initial appropriation of \$6,000 for the construction of the building on the city

County	Atchison	
Organized	Feb. 14, 1845	
Named After	David R. Atchison, Missouri's U.S. Senator, 1843-54	
County Seat	Rock Port	

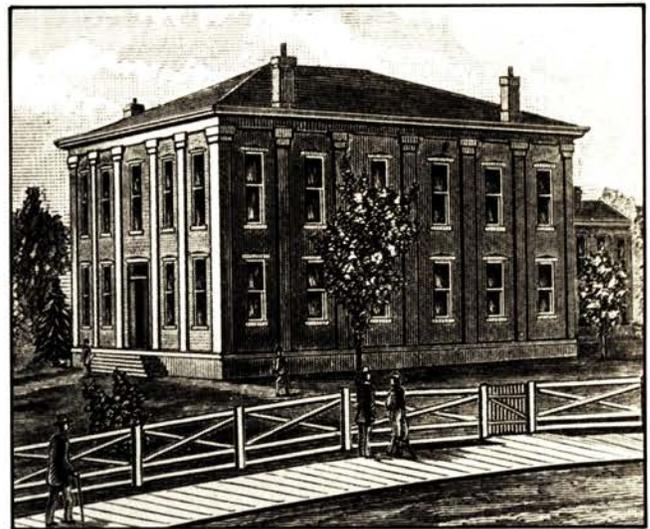


Fig. 1. Atchison County Courthouse, 1856-1880s.
(From: *History of Atchison County*, 1882)

square, which was situated on a lofty hill west of the city.

The two-story brick structure was approximately 50 by 60 feet (Fig. 1). Pilasters (rectangular columns projecting slightly from walls) with cast-iron caps extended the height of the two stories and encircled the building. Lintels (horizontal crosspieces over doors) were also of cast iron. There were seven rooms, large and well lighted, plus the jury room. A zinc-covered cupola rose from a base on the roof but was later destroyed by wind. Figure 1 shows the building after the cupola was removed.

In spite of flooring that did not meet specifications because of improper seasoning, the superintendent recommended the court receive the building on February 16, 1858. Final costs were estimated between \$12,000-\$15,000. Several contractors were identified. A privy in the courthouse yard, built in 1859, and a fence around the square in 1860 completed the public square.

During the Civil War the courthouse sheltered soldiers in the upper level and horses in the lower. In the 1880s the building was condemned and sold to John Dopf for \$600.

Once again a fierce struggle ensued for the location of the seat of justice, as Tarkio offered to donate a new courthouse. But Tarkio's challenge was to no avail; the seat remained at Rock Port.

The members of the County Court visited neighboring Nodaway County to inspect its courthouse. Then they contacted architects Edmund J. Eckel and George R. Mann of St. Joseph to discuss a proposed courthouse for Atchison County. The court accepted the architects' plans on December 26, 1881, but then citizens rejected bond issues in January and March of 1882 in the amount of \$40,000 for construction.

Determined to proceed, the court set aside \$15,000 of the general revenue fund in May 1882. They appointed F. A. Foster superintendent and ordered the construction of the Eckel- and Mann-proposed design (Fig. 2). Private subscriptions amounted to \$10,000.

In June the court accepted the bid of R. K. Allen, who had built the Nodaway courthouse. The court rejected a lower bid because they questioned its validity. Cornerstone ceremonies were conducted October 19, 1882. The shell of the building was erected first, and the interior was finished as finances allowed. The court received the building May 9, 1883.

The imposing two-story brick building, 75 by 91

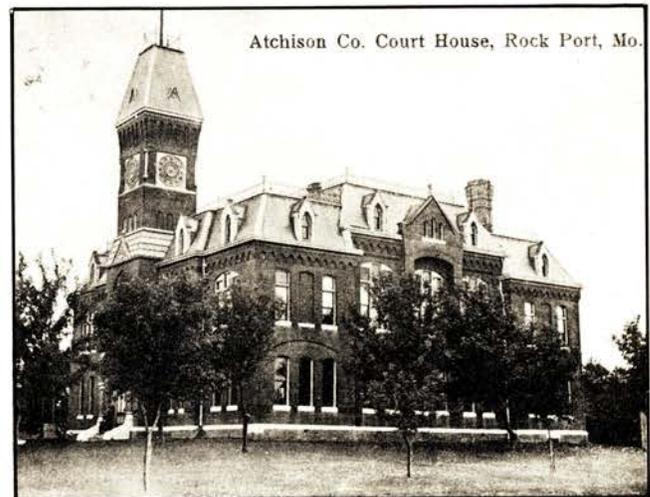


Fig. 2. Atchison County Courthouse, 1882-.
Architects: Eckel and Mann
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

feet, sits on an elevated spot with spacious surrounding grounds and still serves as the Atchison County courthouse. The tall, square tower above the entry, as shown in Fig. 2, is no longer there. Decorative brick corbeling just below the eaves provides a transition from wall to roof. The steeply sloped mansard roofs and projecting dormer windows are covered with slate and metal roofing. Cresting originally crowned the roof line.

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Plat Book of Atchison County, Missouri. Minneapolis: Northwest Publishing Co., 1904.

AUDRAIN COUNTY

When Audrain County was organized in December 1836, officials selected Mexico as the county seat. Two months later commissioners were appointed to build a temporary, one-story, 18-by-36-foot, hewn-log courthouse on the south side of the square. It was to be partitioned into two rooms, one 22 feet long. The order called for a brick chimney, two outside doors, four windows and a shingled roof. The County Court Record, vol. A, has a detailed description. The building was completed July 10, 1837.

Officials ordered this first courthouse sold while the second was being constructed. The *Atlas* of 1877 noted the building was still standing, and being used as a bakery and confectionery.

In November 1838 construction began on the second courthouse, a two-story, brick building located in the center of the square (Fig. 1). William White was the superintendent, later replaced by M. Walton, who completed the work in November 1840. The contract for the brick work went to Judge James E. Fenton; Norvell Harison (sic) was contractor.

The courtroom was on the first floor; on the second floor were three rooms for offices which occasionally were rented for lodge rooms or used for other purposes. The sale of lots from county-owned property at the county seat provided enough money to cover the \$1,600 building costs. During the Civil War it was used as a barracks and sustained major damage. For the next four years the county had no courthouse building.

In May 1868, before deciding on new courthouse plans, commissioners went to Paris, Missouri, to examine Monroe County's courthouse. Impressed with what they saw, the commissioners chose a similar de-

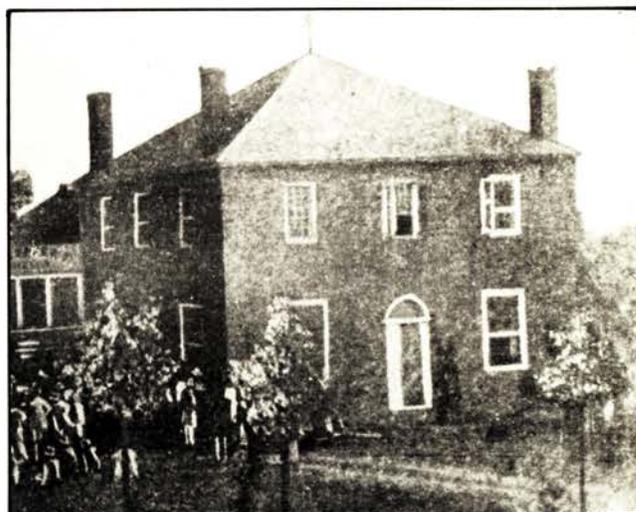


Fig. 1. Audrain County Courthouse, 1838-1860s.
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)



Fig. 2. Audrain County Courthouse, 1868-1949.
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

County	Audrain	
Organized	Dec. 17, 1836	
Named After . . .	James S. Audrain, Missouri representative or Col. Charles H. Audrain	
County Seat . . .	Mexico	

sign for Audrain County (Fig. 2).

The court appropriated \$50,000 and appointed John M. Gordon superintendent, who was later replaced by E. P. Cunningham. The contracting firm for the project was Terrell and Hays, Macon City, Missouri. Work



Fig. 3. Proposed Audrain County Courthouse, 1947.
Architects: Bonsack and Pearce
(From: *Mexico Evening Ledger*, June 5, 1947)

began in 1868 and was completed in 1869. Costs amounted to about \$43,000. It was a two-story, brick building, measuring 102 by 60 feet at the base and 40 feet tall. It contained 10 rooms with the courtroom on the second floor.

In 1938 a Public Works Administration engineer spoke with a civic club in Mexico and tried to persuade them to take advantage of the government's offer of matching 45 percent of courthouse costs. Accompanying him was a Fulton firm that presented a drawing of a traditional design.

No action was taken until 1947 when the court considered a design from the St. Louis firm, Bonsack and Pearce (Fig. 3). The county had voted \$500,000 in bonds to build this courthouse, but since all bids exceeded the appropriation, the project was temporarily dropped.

Later, the court requested Bonsack and Pearce to revise the plans. Revision consisted of stripping the building of its historical detail, leaving the plan essentially the same (Fig. 4). Again the court solicited bids; this time costs came within an acceptable range.

In May 1950 John Epple and Sons, Columbia, Missouri, contracted to build the new courthouse for \$527,300. The contractors completed their work in the fall of 1951, and the courthouse was dedicated October 9 of that year.



Fig. 4. Audrain County Courthouse, 1951-. Architects: Bonsack and Pearce (From: postcard. Trenton Boyd collection)

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BARRY COUNTY

Mount Pleasant served as Barry County's first county seat. A County Court Record description of the 1837 courthouse suggests a log or frame building with one door and one window.

As continued county division reduced Barry County's boundaries, Mount Pleasant was no longer centrally located. In 1839 commissioners were ordered to locate the county seat within six miles of the new geographic center. First, they selected McDonald (later called McDowell), where the site was ordered surveyed and laid out in September 1840. But county residents were dissatisfied with the choice. After several more abortive attempts, the seat was finally permanently located in Cassville during June 1845.

The house of William Kerr served as the meeting place for the first courts in Cassville, and the town was laid out soon after by Nathan Richardson, surveyor. Kerr's plan for the first courthouse in Cassville was filed in December 1845, and the court appropriated \$510 for construction.

John O. Burton was appointed superintendent in March 1846. After permitting several time extensions, the court finally accepted the building in September 1847. It, too, was either a log or frame courthouse. A decision in the county record concerning altering the upper story by moving the partitions to create a room for rent indicate that the building was either one and one-half or two stories. Originally on the square, the courthouse was later removed; it was burned in the Civil War.

Arrangements for the second courthouse, a two-story brick, began in June 1854. W. G. Townsend, M. L. Wyrick and L. J. Blankenship comprised the com-

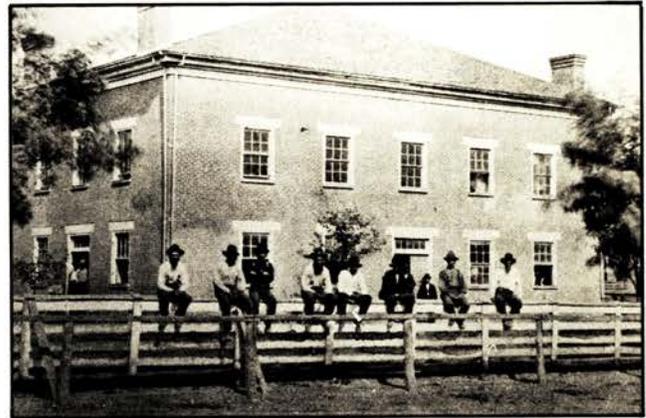


Fig. 1. Barry County Courthouse, 1855-1907, repaired in 1872. (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri, B.J. George Sr. collection)

mittee responsible for obtaining a plan and estimates. A year later the plan was filed and \$5,500 appropriated. The contract was given to William Young and Abner Neely for \$4,995 in September 1855. The new building was to be on the square, upon a good foundation, with two brick stories and a tin roof. While construction was in progress, the court gave qualified permission for a civic group, the Sons of Temperance, to add a third story, but, apparently, the group did not proceed. Workers completed the building, and the court accepted it September 8, 1858 (Fig. 1).

Within a few years this courthouse figured prominently in the Civil War as a group of Missourians considered secession. On July 9, 1896, G. C. Vest, who after the Civil War served as U.S. senator from Missouri, recounted the early Civil War events in the *Cassville Republican*:

“The Ordinance of Secession passed by the Missouri Legislature in 1861 was drawn by me and adopted at Neosho. [The] Legislature adjourned from Neosho, after passing the Act of Secession, to Cassville. In the northeast room of the courthouse at the latter place, we elected delegates to the Provisional Congress of the Confederacy.”

County	Barry	
Organized	Jan. 5, 1835	
Named After . . .	William T. Barry from Kentucky, a member of Andrew Jackson's cabinet, or John Barry, of the Revolution	
County Seat . . .	Cassville	

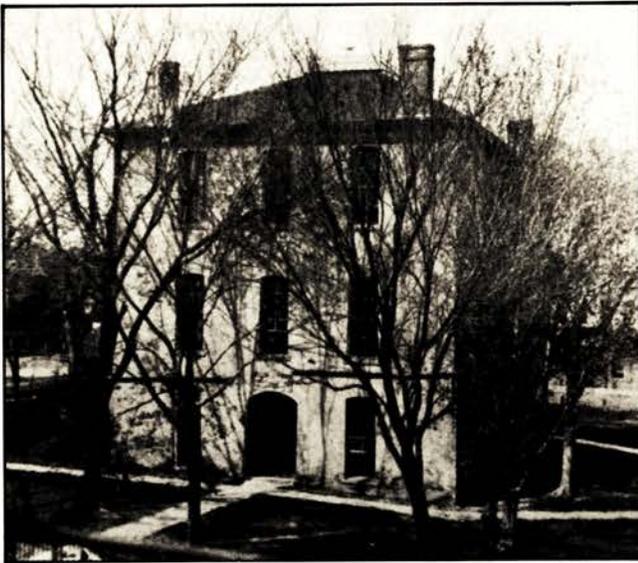


Fig. 2. Barry County Courthouse, after remodeling in 1884; razed in 1910.
(From: *Cassville Republican* Historical Edition, July 9, 1896)

Federal troops occupied the courthouse during the Civil War, inflicting extensive damage. The court ordered repairs in 1872, for which the county later received government compensation of more than \$1,800. County Court records describe a two-story building with a courtroom on the second floor. The only known photograph which has been identified as this courthouse (Fig. 1) was probably made after the 1872 repair. The third story dates from an extensive 1884 remodeling (Fig. 2).

The county vacated the three-storied courthouse in 1907 when it was condemned. County officials moved to other quarters, and the building was razed in 1910. The county held numerous elections before one succeeded on July 6, 1912, when Barry County residents voted for a \$40,000 bond issue. Cassville residents do-

nated \$10,000 toward the \$50,000 goal to help keep the county seat in Cassville; Monett had hoped to secure the site.

The judges traveled to inspect courthouses in other counties, and in November, gave the contract for plans and specifications to C. E. Hair and Co. of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. One judge voted disapproval, and citizens complained that the construction contract had not been sufficiently advertised; the judges rescinded the order, but the following month readopted the Hair plan. Disagreements continued until the court appointed a new superintendent, who selected another architect, Henry H. Hohenschield. Hambley and Hanson of St. Louis contracted to build the reinforced concrete, stone-veneer structure for \$45,720. Cornerstone ceremonies were conducted in August 1913.

The building measures 84 by 100 feet. Ionic columns flank the main entrance on the south. The courtroom is on the first floor, with entry from the lobby. The courtroom, which seats 380 on the lower floor and 200 in the gallery, features an inclined floor; it originally measured 35 by 55 feet, extending outward on the north with a five-window bay. Now almost 70 years old, the courthouse continues to serve Barry County.



Fig. 3. Barry County Courthouse, 1913-.
Architect: Henry H. Hohenschield
(From: *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, Nov. 15, 1925)

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BARTON COUNTY

Lamar, county seat of Barton County, was laid out in 1856 by Allen Petty on property given to the county by Elisha Peters. The exceptional size of the square, 400 feet, has been attributed to the influence of George E. Ward, a leader in establishing the pioneer village of Lamar. The idea for the unusually large square size was believed to have come from Ward's earlier experiences on the frontiers of Spanish settlements. The town of Lamar reportedly was named after Ward's school friend Mirabeau Lamar, a military hero in Texas.

Barton County has had four courthouses, two temporary and two permanent. Since county records were destroyed in a Civil War incident in November 1862, there is no documentary evidence for the first courthouse. When the *History of Hickory, Polk, Cedar, Dade and Barton Counties* was written in 1889, apparently some remembered the location of the original site, across the street from the square on the north side.

The Story of Barton County also credits Ward for financing the first temporary building. Lumber for the building came from Ward's sawmill. It has been reported as a two-story building, 60 by 30 feet.

In 1860 a second courthouse, made of brick and designed for permanent use, was built on the 400-foot square. *The Story of Barton County* claims it was a two-story brick building in the center of the square. Destruction came during the Civil War, in November 1862, by fire. In 1866 the sheriff was ordered to offer the remaining foundation at public sale to the highest bidder. Samuel Cones purchased it November 5, 1866 for \$255.

County officials called for a temporary courthouse to be built on the west side of the square and requested

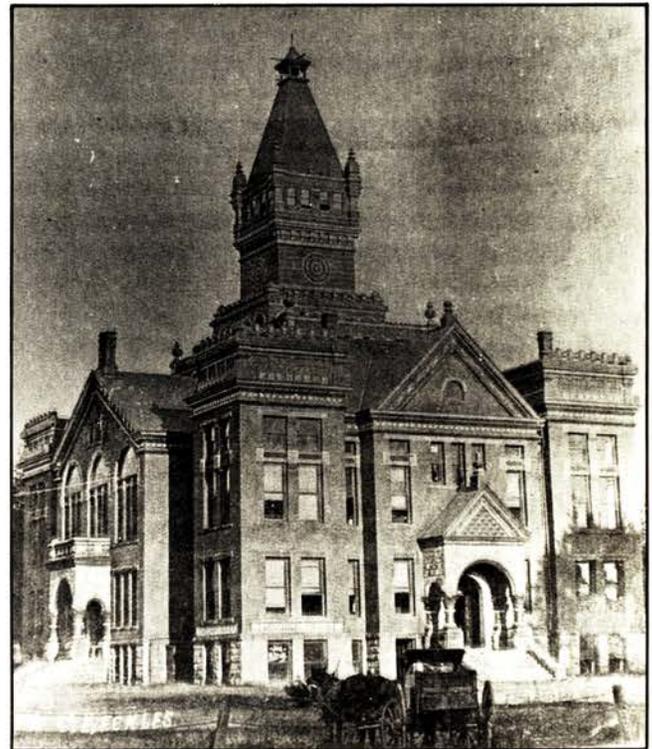
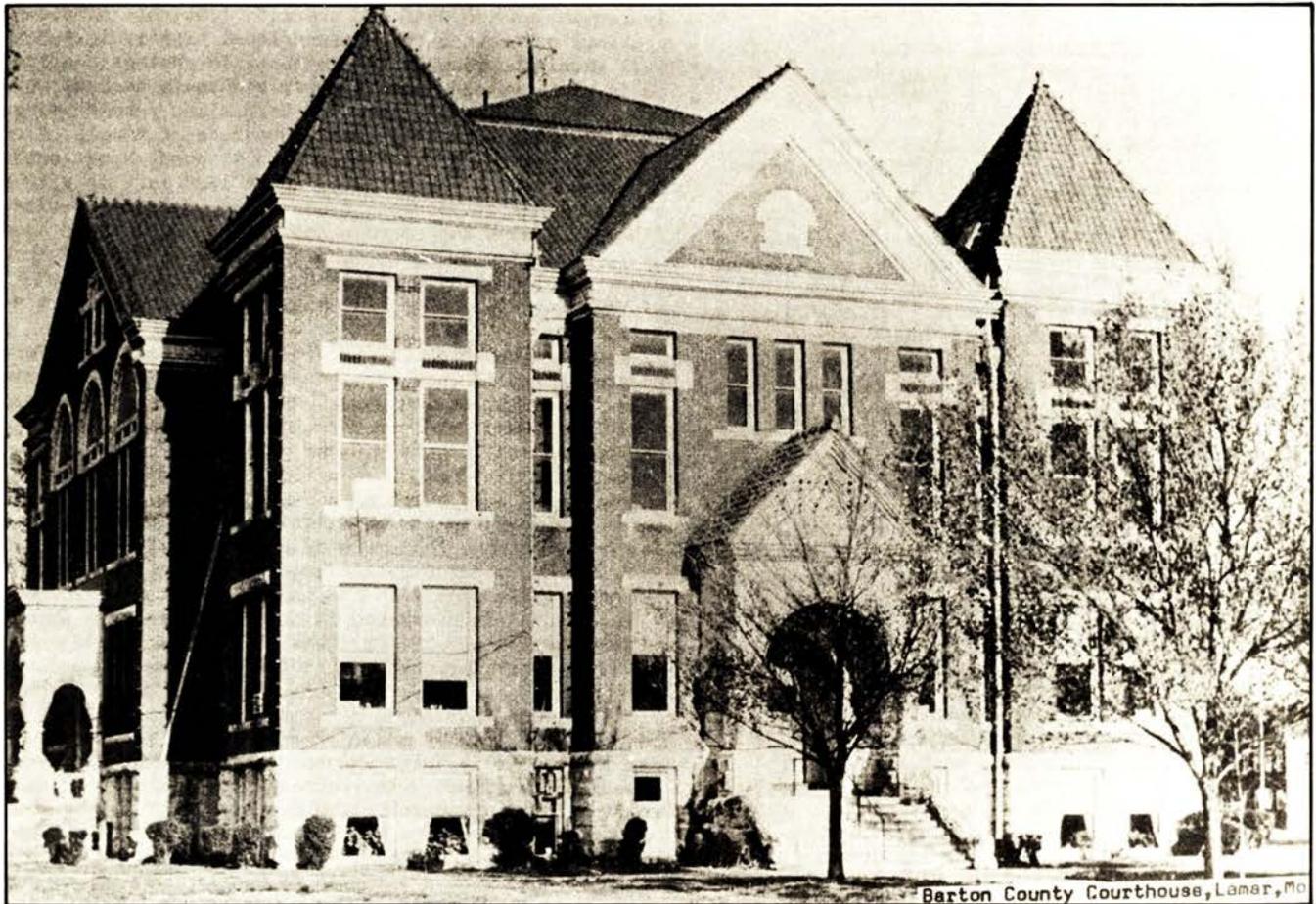


Fig. 1. Barton County Courthouse, 1888-.
Architect: W.R. Parsons and Sons
(From: *Souvenir of Barton County, Missouri*, 1900)

Samuel Cones, A. H. Gibbs and J. C. Gaston to provide specifications. The county clerk recorded a description of the building: 34 by 20 feet, two stories, the lower 10 feet high, the upper 8 feet, with a board partition separating the upper story. Weatherboarding covered the exterior. Specifications called for a bannistered interior stairway and three panel doors hung with good lock and key.

The clerk's office received bids until February 10, 1866. Charles Van Pelt offered low bid on the contract. Cost was approximately \$5,000. The court received the completed building August 9, 1866. Apparently this courthouse continued in use until replaced by the next

County	Barton	
Organized	Dec. 12, 1855	
Named After . . .	David Barton, U.S. Senator 1820-1831	
County Seat . . .	Lamar	



Barton County Courthouse, Lamar, Mo

Fig. 2. Barton County Courthouse, 1888-, after roof alteration. (From: *The Story of Barton County*)

permanent building. At that time it was sold, moved and diverted to other uses.

An election in 1882 gave voters the option for a new courthouse, but it was not until November 1887 that a proposal passed. W. R. Parsons and Son, Topeka, Kansas, provided the plans; Morrison Brothers of Lamar agreed to construct the building for \$32,500 (Fig. 1). Building materials for the 80-by-120-foot courthouse were Barton County stone and St. Louis red brick. The abundant use of native stone and white trim contrasted sharply with the red brick. This contrast along with the small prickly patterns around the tower and roof line animated the building's appearance. The architect varied the window grouping and canopy design on adjacent sides of the building. The *Lamar Democrat* printed all the specifications June 7, 1888.

During the 20th century workers removed the clock tower and replaced the corner tower parapets with pyramidal roofs (Fig. 2). Although these design changes have altered its appearance, this same building, built in the late 1880s, still functions as the Barton County courthouse.

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BATES COUNTY

Missionaries from New York settled the first community in Bates County, Harmony Mission, for the purpose of educating Indians. When Bates County organized and separated from Cass County in 1841, county commissioners selected Harmony Mission as the first county seat, presumably because of the established development and central location.

After first meeting in a private home, subsequent courts met in the Mission House until 1847 when the county seat moved to Papinville, three miles southeast of Harmony Mission.

Orders for building the first courthouse, at Papinville, came in November 1852, when the court appointed Freeman Barrows superintendent and appropriated \$2,500. The following month Barrows submitted a plan and the court accepted bids. But, in August 1853 Abraham Redfield replaced Barrows as superintendent and produced plans and specifications prepared by Fritzpatrick and Hurt from Benton County. (Fritzpatrick's name also appears as Fitzpatrick.) The court appropriated \$4,200 for the 35-by-60-foot brick building. It was completed in 1855. After 1856, when the county seat moved to Butler, Philip Zeal bought the courthouse and converted it to business use. Destruction by fire came in 1861, during the Civil War.

In 1855, after an area separated to become Vernon County, Papinville was no longer near the geographic center of Bates County. The original plan for dividing Butler's land into building lots, commonly called a plat, was filed and recorded in August 1853. Fifty-five acres donated to the county induced officials to move the county seat to Butler in 1856. The court ordered a 50-by-50-foot brick courthouse at an estimated cost of

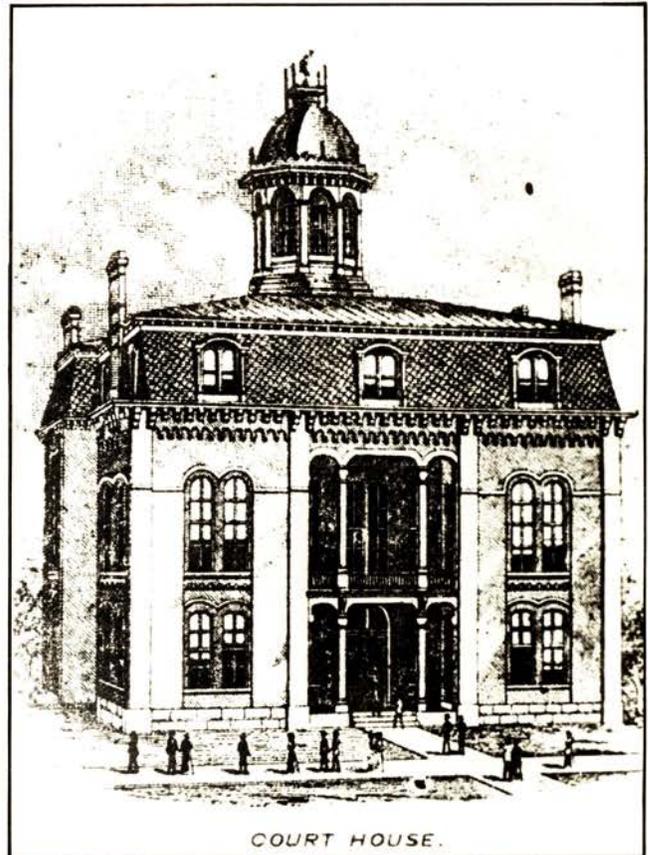


Fig. 1. Bates County Courthouse, 1869-1899.
Architect: P.B. Leach

(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

\$5,000. Fritzpatrick and Hurt again served as contractors. This building, too, burned in 1861.

During the Civil War courts were held in locations other than the county seat. In May 1864 the court met at Johnstown. The legislature recognized Pleasant Gap as the official county seat in 1865, and the sheriff was ordered to prepare a clerk's office and courtroom.

At the end of the Civil War, Bates County citizens returned to a devastated county seat. At the November 1865 term, the court appropriated \$750 for a clerk's office and courthouse. The courthouse was to measure 16 by 24 feet, the clerk's office 16 feet square, and both

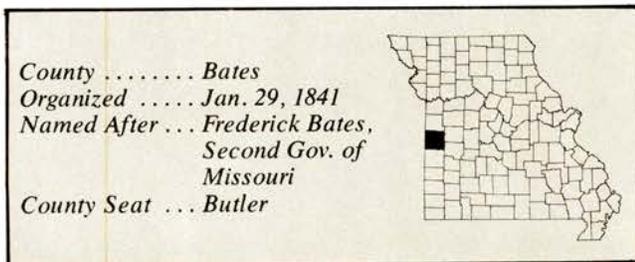




Fig. 2. Bates County Courthouse, 1901-
Architect: George McDonald
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

10 feet high. Later appropriations raised the sum to \$1,100. John D. Meyers, county clerk, served as superintendent, and the court authorized him to select the site for this interim courthouse. Old settlers recalled the frame building situated in the northeast corner of the square.

After several attempts, plans for the 1869 courthouse crystallized (Fig. 1). Plans of architect P. B. Leach and specifications submitted by Samuel Ward were adopted. In April 1869 the court awarded the building contract to J. B. Linkenpaugh for \$23,000. Cornerstone ceremonies, held on July 15, 1869, were reported in the *Bates County Record*, then reprinted in the 1883 *History*.

This 75-foot-square brick building, in the center of the 300-foot public square, had five rooms on the first



Fig. 3. Cornerstone ceremony October 10, 1901.
(From: *Butler, Missouri Centennial 1856-1956*)

floor, three on the second and two large rooms on the third floor, leased by local civic or fraternal organizations. In 1899, after being declared unsafe, the building was sold for \$500 to the highest bidder, J. S. Francisco.

The court moved into new quarters in January 1900. A successful election for \$40,000 in bonds was supplemented by \$10,000 from general funds. This provided \$50,000 for a new courthouse. George McDonald was chosen architect for the 80-by-105-foot building (Fig. 2). The courthouse of 1901 is similar to three other Missouri 19th century courthouses by the same architect: Andrew County, 1899; Johnson County, 1896; and Lawrence County, 1900. Contractors for this building, which was built with Carthage stone, were Bartlett and Kling, Galesburg, Illinois. Excavation began during July 1901; the cornerstone was laid October 10, 1901 (Fig. 3), and the court accepted the completed building, which is still in use as the Bates County courthouse, in July 1902.

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BENTON COUNTY

After Benton County organized in 1835, legislators appointed three commissioners to select the county seat. However, the commissioners failed to act, and in January 1837 three new commissioners were instructed to locate the county seat at a site as near the center of the county and the Osage River as could be found. After strong competition from vying communities, the commissioners selected the Warsaw site. Robert Wyatt laid out the town into lots in November 1837.

The first courts met in homes. In March 1838 the court appointed Adamson Cornwall building superintendent of a temporary courthouse. The court had reserved a site for the courthouse that fronted 20 feet on Washington Street and extended back 24 feet on Van Buren. Appropriation of \$250 came from the sale of lots. An additional \$50 appropriation later raised the total to \$300, but deductions later were made because of poor work. Glover and Davis contracted to build the plan approved by the court. Lay's *History of Benton County* identified it as a log house.

In June 1841, after the building served as courthouse for three years, commissioners authorized the sale of the lot where the temporary courthouse stood, providing the lot not be sold for less than \$800. They also held the right to use and occupy the old courthouse for county business until they could move into the new one. The unsold courthouse became available for rent in December 1841.

The same year the first courthouse came into being, 1838, the court began planning for a permanent courthouse. The copy of the plan described in the contract indicated a two-story, square building with hipped roof and central cupola. Rolla M. Griffith contracted for the

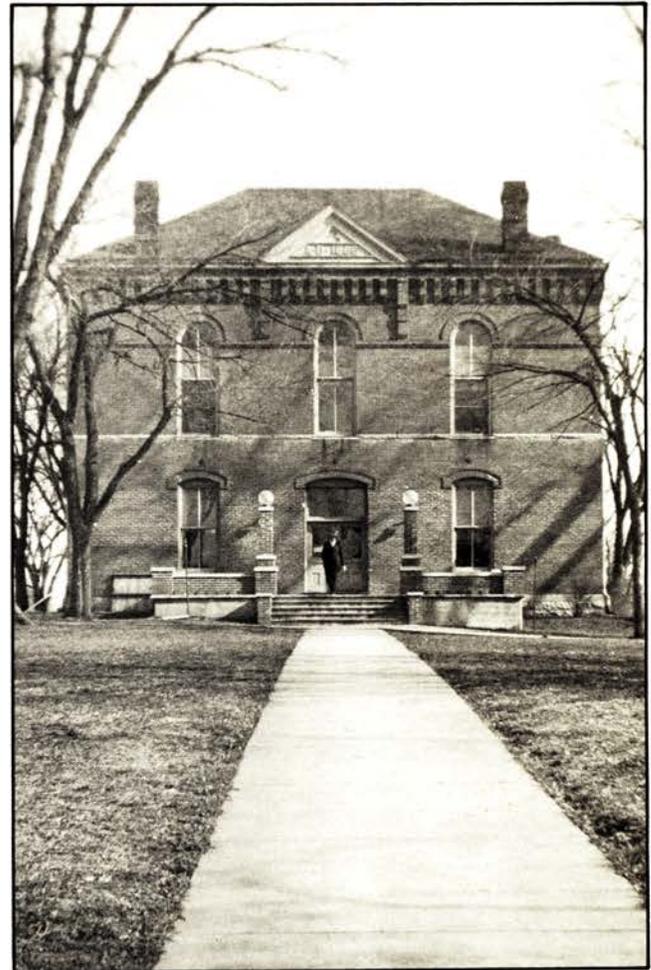
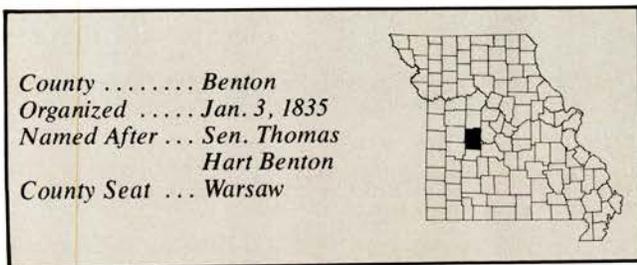


Fig. 1. Benton County Courthouse, 1887-.
Architect: George A. Masters
(From: W.P.A., Historical Records Survey)



building and began the foundation, but was replaced by four contractors, Bartholomew Keown, William Hurt, Joel Shepard and James Donald, in July 1840, and the plan was changed to a rectangular design measuring 40 by 52 feet.

The two-story brick structure, a better building, had a main entry door in the gable end 6 feet wide with

narrow windows at the sides. On the second floor, decorative windows corresponded to the width of door openings. The opposite gable end featured similar windows, one on each floor. Ten windows on each side, five per story, provided light for offices and the courtroom. The door frame and all window frames except crescent windows in the gable were made from black walnut. A contract for \$2,925 was filed June 5, 1840, but final costs brought the total to \$4,500. County officials began occupying the building in 1842.

A defective foundation caused the courthouse to be condemned in 1881, and the court ordered the building sold to Waldo P. Johnson for \$275 in December 1881.

In May 1886 the court contracted for the third and present courthouse. James H. Lay superintended the building and employed architect George A. Masters to submit plans in June. One contract for building the foundations, walls, and roof was awarded Maurice Barrett, Sedalia, Missouri, for \$6,620. The court received this portion of the building Dec. 28, 1886 (Fig. 1).

In April 1887 L. C. Steavenson, superintendent, accepted bids to finish the courthouse. The court authorized him to accept the low bid of Fred Busche, Lincoln, Missouri, in the amount of \$2,469. This contract included plastering and adding cresting (ornamental ridging on walls or roofs) and finials (decorative tips of spires and gables). Busche completed his work in August 1887. Total cost was \$9,089.

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BOLLINGER COUNTY



Fig. 1. Bollinger County Courthouse, 1885-. Architect: Morris Frederick Bell. (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

Bollinger County, originally a part of Wayne, Cape Girardeau and Stoddard counties, became an independent county March 1, 1851. During the same year

Thomas Hamilton selected the site and laid out a plan for the town of New California. Commissioners assigned to locate the county seat laid out a town called Dallas, which included New California. Citizens petitioned to change the name to Marble Hill in 1865. Commissioners located the first courthouse, built in 1852, several blocks north of the original public square. The 30-foot-square, brick, two-story building served as courthouse until destroyed by fire March 2, 1866.

At a special meeting March 12, 1866, the court appointed Philip Sutherlin (also spelled Sutherlan and Sutherland) clerk, to serve as commissioner of the new

County *Bollinger*
 Organized *Mar. 1, 1851*
 Named After . . . *Col. George Fred
 Bollinger, first
 settler, early
 politician, state
 senator*
 County Seat . . . *Marble Hill*



courthouse. The court authorized him to contract with James Rogers, who was also the sheriff, to build on a plan similar to that of the previous building. In November 1866 the court decided the building should be two feet taller.

By December Sutherlin reported work in progress, and in July 1867 he said the building was completed as agreed. Contracted for \$2,800, final costs amounted to about \$3,000. Louis Houck, an eyewitness in 1869, described the courthouse as a frame building in an unfenced, treeless public square.

By 1884 the building had been condemned as unsafe and virtually abandoned. It was destroyed by fire March 12, 1884.

After an unsuccessful attempt to move the county seat to Lutesville, a new 50-by-60-foot brick courthouse, designed by Morris Frederick Bell, was erected in 1885 (Fig. 1). James P. Gillick, St. Louis, was contractor, and superintendent was Jacob J. Conrad. The

building, which originally cost about \$9,000, was enlarged in 1912 by Carmen and Smith for about \$7,000. Extensive repairs in the 1960s and 1970s have made possible continued use of the courthouse.

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BOONE COUNTY

Smithton Company, a real estate enterprise, founded the town of Smithton in 1818, anticipating that it might become the seat of justice for the county of Boone. Located about ½ mile west of the present courthouse in Columbia, Smithton did serve as Boone County's first county seat until 1821 when Columbia became the favored site.

Tradition maintains that first Circuit Courts met under an arbor of sugar trees. But in Boone, as most counties, courts met outdoors in pleasant weather and then moved indoors to private homes as winter came.

Three years after the move to Columbia, the court contracted for building a "hull of a courthouse," that is, the shell of the building. Subsequent contracts for interior work and exterior finishing continued into 1828. The 40-foot-square, two-story, brick courthouse with hipped roof featured a cupola-like structure at the apex. The courtroom occupied the first floor. After only 20 years, the building was reported in deplorable condition.

In 1845 the court appropriated \$10,000 for a new courthouse and appointed William Jewell commissioner. The court boosted the appropriation \$5,000 after approving the plan Jewell presented in January 1846 (Figs. 1, 2). Architect probably was W. M. Winter, whose name originally appeared on a plaque. Little is known about Winter. He entered a proposal for the University of Missouri Academic Hall building, but was not awarded the commission.

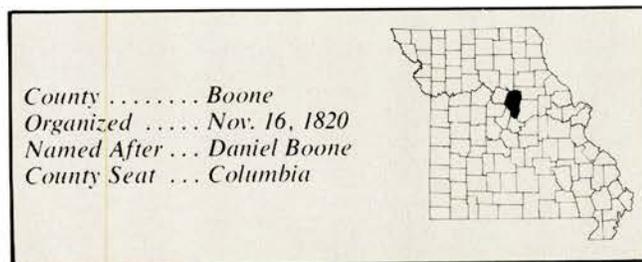
The building measured 84 by 51 feet and fronted south. The columns of this courthouse aligned with the columns on Academic Hall at the University of Mis-



Fig. 1. Boone County Courthouse, 1847-1909.
Probable Architect: W.N. Winter
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)



Fig. 2. Facing north on Eighth street toward 1847 courthouse, photo ca. 1900.
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)



souri several blocks south of the courthouse; this explains the unusual corner placement of the courthouse on the square.

Boone County used this courthouse throughout the 19th century. When the 1906-09 courthouse neared completion, the County Court ordered the old building



Fig. 3. George Caleb Bingham's painting, *Verdict of the People*, 1855, shows scene on Boone County Courthouse steps. (From: Collection of the Boatmen's National Bank of St. Louis)

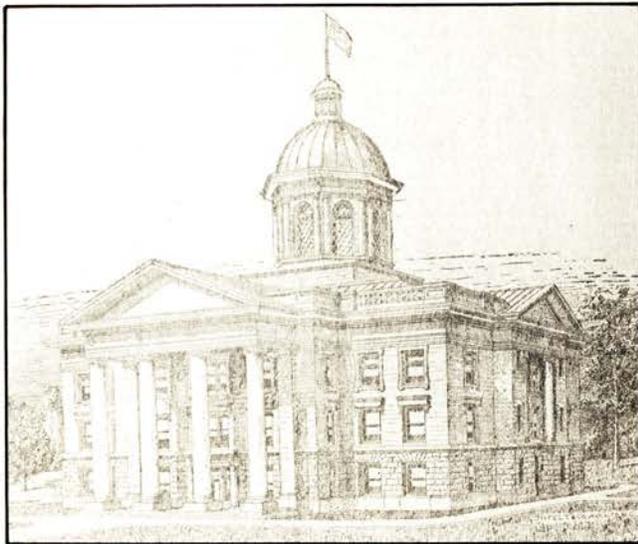


Fig. 4. Proposed Boone County Courthouse, 1906. Architect: J.H. Felt (From: *Columbia Missouri Statesman*, Feb. 23, 1906.)

razed. However, after a concerted effort by townspeople to save the building, the decision was made to preserve the columns (see remaining columns in Fig. 5). Today, the columns of the 1846 courthouse and the columns of the University's Academic Hall stand in their original alignment of the mid-19th century.

This courthouse, which housed a studio of George Caleb Bingham, appears as the courthouse in both ver-



Fig. 5. Boone County Courthouse, 1906-. Architect: J.H. Felt

sions of Bingham's 1855 painting *Verdict of the People* (Fig. 3).

For the third and present courthouse, the location was moved to the center of the square. Twenty-two architects visited with the court before the court commissioned John H. Felt to draw plans for the new building. The court requested that Felt design a building conforming with their wishes for a restrained classic design. A taller dome, originally planned for the courthouse, met with disapproval (Fig. 4); the architect altered the design, producing the lower, rounded dome (Fig. 5). Construction began in 1906 and was finished in 1909. The contractor was J. A. McCarter, Macon, Missouri; costs came to about \$100,000.

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BUCHANAN COUNTY

After organization of Buchanan County in 1839, first courts met in St. Joseph. When appointed commissioners selected the county seat for Buchanan County, they chose a quarter section about seven miles south of St. Joseph, where the court convened in 1840 in a private home. The county seat was named Benton first, in honor of Sen. Thomas Hart Benton, but this did not meet with popular approval, so the court changed the name to Sparta.

On January 4, 1841, the court ordered construction of a building to be used as a courthouse and clerk's office until a more suitable building could be provided. The county clerk recorded explicit plans and specifications for the two-room, 18-by-36-foot, log structure in the County Court Record. John Sampson acted as superintendent. Guilford Moultray, the builder, completed the work in July 1841 for approximately \$300. This structure remained standing as late as 1898 or 1899, used as a granary.

Although Sparta was located near the geographical center of the county, the trading center development arose in St. Joseph. Citizens petitioned for removal of the county seat to that city in 1843. After several legal complications regarding rights to the section and a challenged election, citizens voted on February 28, 1846, to remove the seat to St. Joseph. Joseph Robidoux donated land for use as the public square.

For this commanding site overlooking the growing settlement below, the County Court accepted a temple-type courthouse design submitted by Lewis Stigers, originally from Delaware, and William J. Taylor, born in Pennsylvania (Fig. 1). The court appropriated \$10,000

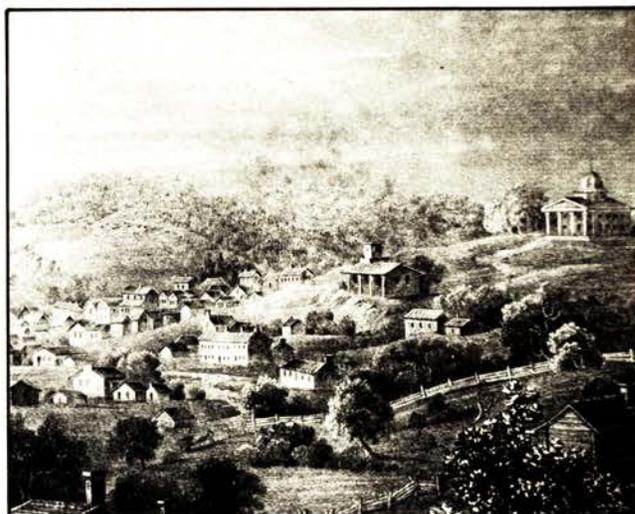


Fig. 1. Buchanan County Courthouse in St. Joseph, 1846-1871 (far right), ca. 1850.
Architect-builders: Lewis Stigers and William J. Taylor
(From: *The United States Illustrated*, ca. 1854)

in April 1846. On June 5 the contract was given to Stigers and Taylor for \$6,280. John Carby superintended the beginning work and was succeeded by James Anthony, who reported the work completed in October 1847.

The two-story, nine-room building measured 50 by 75 feet, including the portico. The contemporary drawing shows a central dome with a much larger base diameter than typical cupolas on other temple-type Missouri examples, and resembles the courthouse dome in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, ca. 1843, a possible source of influence.

Less than 25 years later, the same architect-builder, Stigers, had the unfortunate task of submitting a report on the condition of the building in August 1871. He concluded, "... the building in its present condition is dangerous and unsafe and unfit for the purpose for which it is used." County officials vacated the building in October 1871.

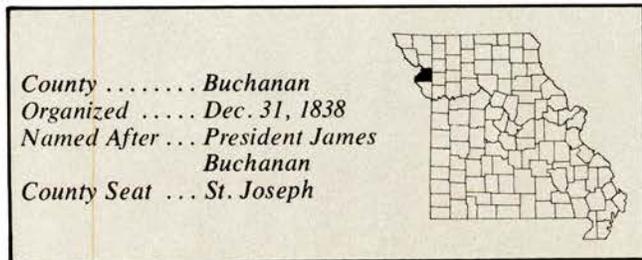




Fig. 2. Buchanan County Courthouse, 1873-.
Architect: P. F. Meagher
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

County government grew rapidly from the 1840s until 1870, and even before the architects examined the deteriorating courthouse, citizens called for a new and larger one. John C. Cochrane from Chicago, Illinois, who designed the Saline County courthouse in 1881, submitted a proposal for the court's consideration, but the court accepted the preferred design of P. F. Meagher on March 28, 1873. A complete description of Meagher's plans was published in the *St. Joseph Weekly Gazette*, April 2, 1873.

County Court officials signed a building contract with John DeClue in July 1873 for about \$175,000 to build on the same site after grading the hill 35 feet.

Cornerstone ceremonies took place August 20, 1873, and contractors completed the building in August 1876, although it had been occupied in part since the beginning of that year (Fig. 2). The brick building is trimmed with cut stone. Three porticoes project from facades which measure 235 feet and face east, west and south. The original Greek cross plan measured 235 by 205 feet and featured a dome 40 feet in circumference. The dome rose at the crossing 145 feet from the first floor and 60 feet from the roof. The effect suggests a county capitol image. A fire on March 28, 1885, destroyed the dome and gutted the interior.

The building was covered by insurance, but a settlement proved difficult because county officials demanded cash for the amount of the policies so they might begin on a new building. The insurance companies refused, attempting to reach a partial settlement, since they did not regard the building as a total loss. The court reached an agreement with the insurers when they obligated themselves to place the building in the same condition it was before the fire.

R. K. Allen, architect of the reconstruction, altered the dome design. After minor interior changes, there were 41 rooms in the two upper stories, with an additional 11 rooms in the basement. The Circuit Court room is on the second floor. For a number of years the building was painted white, but then restored to the natural red brick color during extensive restoration in 1979. This is an important and rare example of courthouse design from this period of Missouri's architectural history; it has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

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BUTLER COUNTY

Butler County was created in 1849, and commissioners selected Poplar Bluff, a wilderness at that time, for the county seat. The court appropriated \$200 for the first courthouse and ordered Jesse T. Gilley to secure a plan. Gilley presented a plan in November 1850, and the court ordered it let to the lowest bidder on December 1, 1850.

For some reason Gilley presented a second plan December 16, 1850, which the court accepted in place of the first one. Phillip L. Varner superintended construction of the courthouse.

In May 1851 the court appropriated an additional \$54.50 for weatherboarding the exterior and finishing the interior. An entry in the County Court Record on February 10, 1852, to build a partition in the south room suggests at least a two-room building. G.R. Loughead, Butler County historian, provided information to indicate the courthouse was on the southeast corner of the square.

In 1867 the court sold the courthouse. Richard Metcalfe's history of Poplar Bluff claims the material from the courthouse was used in the construction of a frame residence which was still standing in 1884.

The court authorized funds for the second courthouse from the sale of 10,000 acres of swampland (at not less than \$1.00 per acre), which was the only source of income to finance such a project. Commissioners also had the option of trading swampland to the contractor as compensation. The court appointed three commissioners in April 1858 who were to furnish plans and superintend construction. After serving for some time, one commissioner resigned, and finally all three



Fig. 1. Butler County Courthouse, 1858-1886.
(Courtesy: G.R. Loughead, from the collection of Ott Heacock)

were discharged in May 1860. John Yarber was appointed and authorized to make alterations in plans and specifications as necessary.

Contractors of the courthouse are not positively identified, but Solomon G. Kitchen appears to be one of the principals. Others mentioned include: D. B. Miller, William N. Ringer and Charles T. Arthur. Construction dragged on for years and then came to a standstill during the Civil War. After the war, building resumed, but then again faltered. The court took action to prosecute contractors Arthur and Kitchen or recover 10,000 acres of land conveyed to them.

Sometime in 1866 the contract was awarded to W. F. Mitchell and Park H. Peters, who presented bond for \$8,500 to do work on the new courthouse. Additional appropriations of \$3,100 were required to finish construction. In February 1867 Simmons R. Horwill was appointed commissioner; after settling with the contractors for \$4,245, he recommended the court receive the building (Fig. 1).

The square, brick building probably had transverse halls; offices were on the first floor with the courtroom

County	Butler	
Organized	Feb. 27, 1849	
Named After . . .	William O. Butler from Kentucky	
County Seat . . .	Poplar Bluff	



Fig. 2. Butler County Courthouse, 1887-1927.
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

and jury rooms on the second. A small octagonal cupola topped the hipped roof. Fire destroyed the building December 14, 1886.

Little is known about the third courthouse, which was built by L. B. Walker and Co. in 1887 at a cost of \$11,475 (Fig. 2). A disastrous tornado ripped through Poplar Bluff May 9, 1927, and damaged the courthouse beyond repair (Fig. 3).

An advisory committee was appointed in June 1927, and they invited proposals for a new courthouse to be considered in July. Architects submitting plans included: Martin Laubis, Poplar Bluff; M. B. Howard, St. Louis; Earl Hawkins, Springfield; Gill and Jackson, St. Louis. The court awarded the commission to N. S. Spencer and Sons, Chicago. Bedford stone was the recommended material for the three-story, 100-foot-square building.

A successful bond issue authorized expenditure of \$250,000 in November 1927. George Gassman received



Fig. 3. Butler County Courthouse, after 1927 tornado.
(Courtesy: G.R. Loughead, from the collection of Ott Heacock)

the contract in March 1928, and work began immediately.

The cornerstone ceremony was conducted June 26, 1928. The following May the courthouse was dedicated (Fig. 4). Final costs amounted to \$265,000. There are four entries, all alike so as to show no partiality to any adjacent properties. The Circuit Court room on the third floor, which seats 300, had elevator service in the original plan. Butler County government continues to operate from this 20th century courthouse.



Fig. 4. Butler County Courthouse, 1927-
Architect: N.S. Spencer and Sons
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

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CALDWELL COUNTY

Except for a few probate records, all Caldwell County records were lost in an 1860 fire that destroyed the courthouse. The *Illustrated Historical Atlas of Caldwell County*, 1876, provides the earliest history.

After county organization in 1836, Far West, a community created by Mormons, served as Caldwell's county seat until 1842. A school was moved from the southwest part of town to the center of the square for the courthouse.

A shifting population favored a more central location and chose Kingston the second county seat. In Kingston a log building served as the first courthouse. The court may have authorized construction in 1843, or the courthouse may have been an existing building used by the early courts. This 1½-story structure stood on the south side of Main St. opposite the square. The *History of Caldwell and Livingston Counties*, 1886, described it as not very attractive.

Caldwell County built its second courthouse in either 1847 or 1854. The *Atlas* of 1876 says 1847; the *History* of 1886 mentions both dates and identifies Hawkins Green as the builder. Both sources describe it as a two-story, brick building, on the square facing south. The upper story remained unfinished; offices and courtroom were on the first floor. Fire consumed most county records when suspected arsonists set the courthouse ablaze April 19, 1860.

In 1860, for their third courthouse, the County Court awarded the contract to builders J. A. Crump and George A. Kice of Lexington and appropriated \$20,000. The court specified the building be completed by September 1, 1861. This temple-type building re-

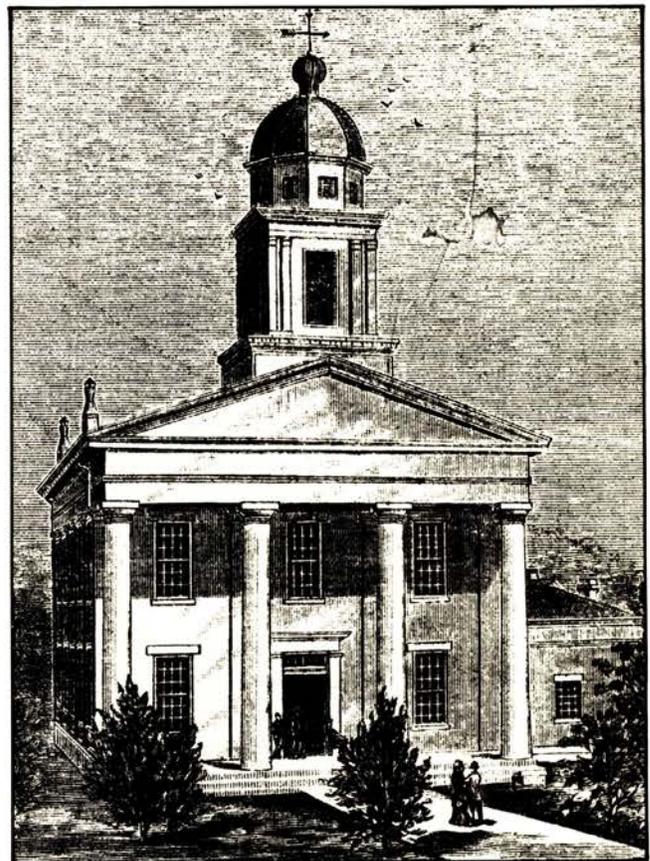


Fig. 1. Caldwell County Courthouse, 1860-1896. (From: *Kingston Times*, Dec. 5, 1890.)

sembles the Lafayette County courthouse of 1847 in Lexington and the 1856 Ray County courthouse in Richmond (Fig. 1). Contractors Crump and Kice were responsible for construction of all three. On November 28, 1896, fire once again consumed the Caldwell County courthouse. The *Hamiltonian Farmer's Advocate* described the building as a large, commodious, two-story, brick with "an old colonial portico in front . . . much admired for its antique and quaint architecture."

At this point Hamilton contended for the county seat, but the site at Kingston withstood the challenge.

County	Caldwell	
Organized	Dec. 29, 1836	
Named After . . .	Capt. Matthew Caldwell, a Kentucky Indian fighter.	
County Seat . . .	Kingston	



Fig. 2. Caldwell County Courthouse, 1898-.
Architect: L. Grant Middaugh
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

The court proceeded with plans for the courthouse of 1898. The cost was not to exceed \$26,000. Bonds for an indebtedness of \$18,000 were passed on March 5, 1898. Several architects competed, among them William Schrage, architect of courthouses for Howard, Morgan and Ripley counties, whose plans were described as the most elaborate; Homer H. Carr, St. Joseph; and William Garver, who presented a corner tower design. The court selected the proposal of Kansas City architect L. Grant Middaugh. Court officials awarded the building contract to Stanberry Pressed Brick Co. for \$24,827 in May 1898; the building was to be completed

December 1, 1898. J. W. Harper, presiding judge, acted as superintendent of construction.

There are two entries which face south and east on the 74-by-69-foot, pressed-brick building. Stairways on each side of the main south entrance lead to the second story. The Circuit Court room is in the northwest part of the second story.

Cornerstone ceremonies took place September 2, 1898; the crowd was estimated at 2,000. This courthouse continues in use today and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

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CALLAWAY COUNTY

The first county seat of Callaway County was at Elizabeth, about six miles south of Fulton, the present county seat. The court issued orders for a jail to be built, but no courthouse. After changing the county seat to Fulton in 1825, the court appointed three commissioners to submit a plan and cost estimate for a courthouse on the square. The court initially appropriated \$550. Apparently, subsequent appropriations raised the final cost to about \$1,300. A portion of the funding came from a forfeited bond.

S. J. Ferguson built the two-story, 36-foot-square, brick courthouse, described as a "model of neatness, comfort, and convenience." It was finished early in 1827. The courtroom seems to have been on the first floor. Sold for \$400, the building was razed in 1856.

On August 24, 1854, the court directed George W. Braley, the commissioner, to prepare plans and submit estimates for a new building. Apparently, Braley submitted the temple-type design of Solomon Jenkins, which the court approved on May 25, 1855. The following day the court awarded the contract for \$17,850 to Alfred Moore, who reported the building completed in 1856 (Fig. 1).

Grading the yard about the square and repairing the stone wall completed the project in May 1858. The gable ran east-west with a large clock tower on the west. This courthouse and an 1847-49 St. Charles example by Jenkins each had six columns; most Missouri examples had four.

No known photographs exist of the Callaway County courthouse before remodeling. There are photographs of the St. Charles courthouse, however, show-

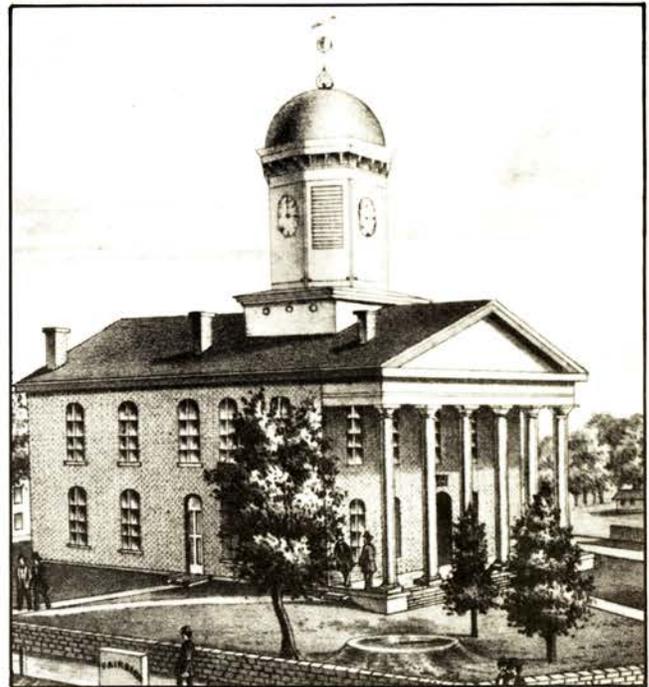


Fig. 1. Callaway County Courthouse, 1856-1938.
Architect: Solomon Jenkins
(From: *An Illustrated Historical Atlas of Callaway County*, 1876.)

ing it to be a building with handsome proportions. This evidence, as well as other examples of Jenkins' work, suggests that perhaps the unflattering illustration (Fig. 1) of the Callaway County Courthouse is a result of an inaccurate drawing.

Unfortunate remodeling in 1885 added a mansard roof at the cornice line. The remodeled design preserved the clock tower, but reshaped the dome. Local architect M. F. Bell drew plans and superintended the work (Fig. 2). Builder W. A. Gregory of Fulton received the contract for \$4,875. The building was demolished in 1938; Governor Lloyd C. Stark bought the lumber from the building presumably, the *Daily Sun Gazette* reported, for use in Stark's nursery.

County	Callaway	
Organized	Nov. 25, 1820	
Named After . . .	Capt. James Callaway, fought in War of 1812, killed by Indians in 1815	
County Seat . . .	Fulton	

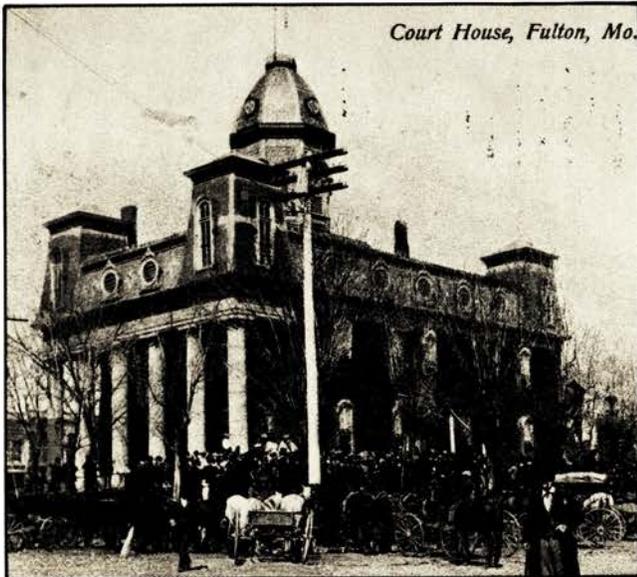


Fig. 2. Callaway County Courthouse, after remodeling in 1885.
 Architect of remodeling: M.F. Bell
 (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

As early as 1919 citizens realized the growing population needed a larger building, but it was not until 1938 that the remodeled structure gave way to a new courthouse.

Callaway began earnestly considering a new courthouse in 1938 when they learned federal funds would be available. The court looked at courthouses in Pike, Marion and Knox counties and talked with representatives from many state firms before employing architects E. C. Henderson, Jr. and Paul Elsner, who prepared the plans for a three-story building with a jail. Bonds were voted for \$125,000 in June 1938. Federal contribution was \$102,273, and final figures ran close to \$250,000. J. E. Hathman contracted and built the 134-by-80-foot, three-story, brick and stone structure, with the principal entrance facing north (Fig. 3). The court accepted the completed building in December 1939. Dedication of the courthouse that still houses county officials took place March 18, 1940.



Fig. 3. Callaway County Courthouse, 1938-. Architects: E.C. Henderson, Jr. and Paul Elsner, Fulton; Clark Merrick, Boston. (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

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CAMDEN COUNTY

Kinderhook, the name of President Martin Van Buren's residence, was the original name of Camden County. The legislation that changed the name to Camden in 1843 also directed commissioners to locate the county seat on the Osage River. The first location, Oregon, also underwent a name change to become Erie in 1843.

Orders made for a courthouse in 1841 never materialized, but in 1846 the first courthouse was built in Erie. S. R. Roberts superintended and William C. Young contracted for the two-story, 40-foot-square, brick building for \$4,046. The courtroom was located on the first floor, county offices on the second. After removal of the county seat to Linn Creek, this courthouse sold at public auction for about \$175.

Fire destroyed county records in 1902; fortunately, Goodspeed's *History of Laclede, Camden, Dallas, Webster, Wright, Texas, Pulaski, Phelps, and Dent Counties* of 1889 appears to have used the County Court records for resource material.

After the move to Linn Creek in 1855, temporary quarters sufficed until 1867, when the court appropriated \$6,500 for a courthouse on the square. In June 1867 the contract was let to G. B. Shubert and James H. Waldron for \$4,975. Thomas Selby superintended the work. The 32-by-40-foot, plain, two-story, brick building had a courtroom on the first floor and county offices on the second.

By 1902 county needs outgrew the courthouse. The courtroom had become too small, and the offices were inadequate. Fire severely damaged the building and destroyed the contents January 28, 1902. Several quar-



Fig. 1. Camden County Courthouse, 1906-1930.
(From: *Before the Dam Water*, 1974)

ters served as temporary locations for county functions and business until August 10, 1905, when a committee petitioned the court to rebuild the courthouse, using the standing brick walls. The court agreed that if the town of Linn Creek would spend \$1,500, then the court would supplement the amount, provided it did not exceed \$1,000. Total costs came to several thousand dollars above this figure. The additional money was raised by popular subscription, but there is no record of a final accounting.

The court resumed use of the enlarged building in February 1906 (Fig. 1). The building measured approximately 40 by 60 feet, two stories, with a large attic room used as a jury room. The courtroom was on the second floor, the county offices on the first floor.

In 1930 the Lake of the Ozarks, impounded by Bagnell Dam, inundated the site of Linn Creek. In November of that year the county formally voted for removal to a newly created town, Camdenton, which became the county seat. A temporary courthouse,

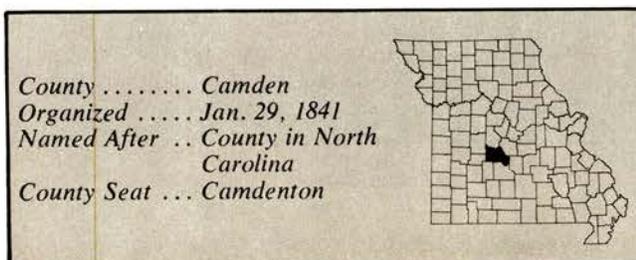




Fig. 2. Aerial view of 1931 courthouse (lower left).
(From: *Lake of the Ozarks Country of Missouri*)

which cost about \$4,000, was built by W. J. Cochran and Sons of Boonville.

The permanent courthouse site was at the junction of two highways, occupying a triangular plot (Fig. 2). Union Electric compensated Camden County \$60,000 for loss of the old courthouse. Architect Victor J. DeFoe designed the new courthouse. B. O. Short, Pierce City, received the construction contract for about \$50,000 in August 1931. Cornerstone ceremonies were conducted November 3, 1931 (Fig. 3).

The building was completed in July 1932. The yellow brick and tile building measures 76 by 76 by 32 feet and is trimmed with stone. A public assembly hall was planned for the half basement. County offices are on the first floor and the courtroom on the second floor. It was the first Missouri courthouse built in a modern style.

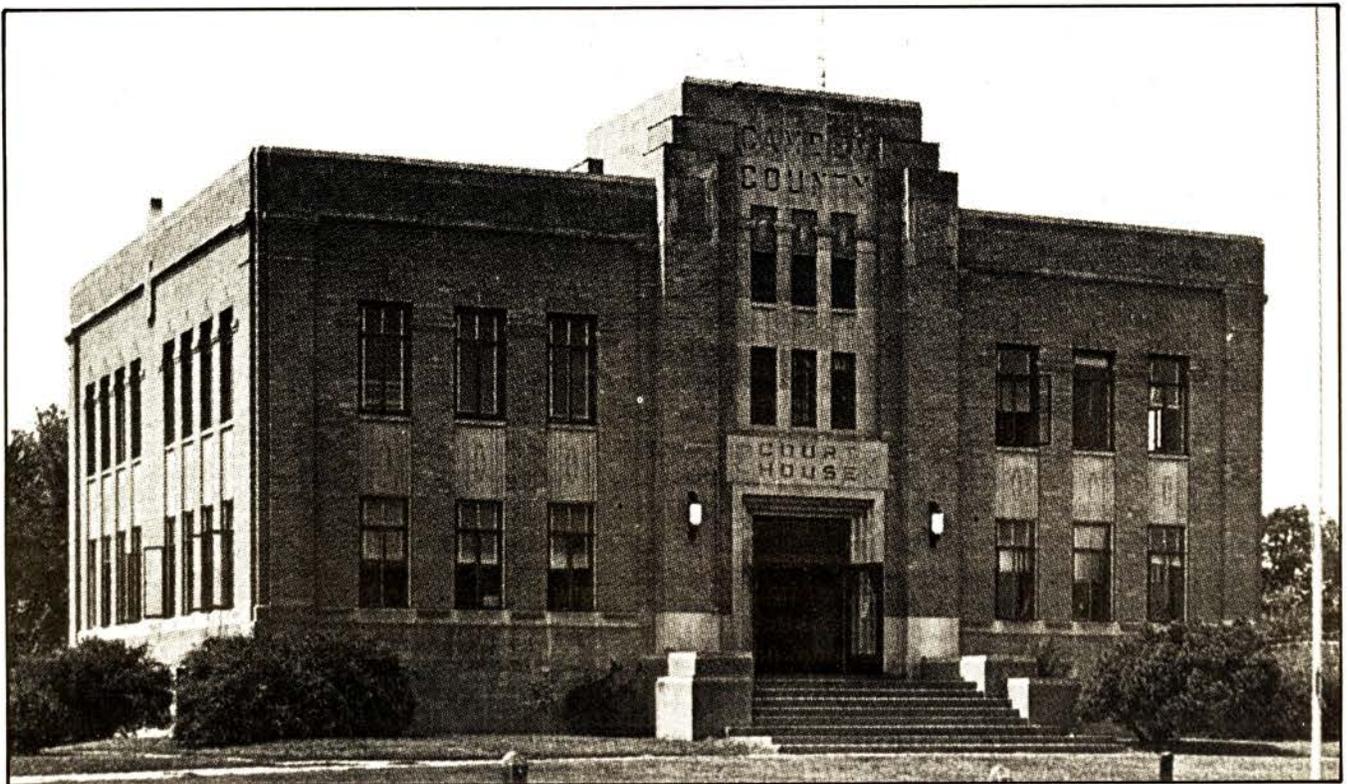


Fig. 3. Camden County Courthouse, 1931-. Architect: Victor DeFoe (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

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CAPE GIRARDEAU COUNTY

It was first thought that Cape Girardeau would be the county seat of Cape Girardeau County. But because of a legal question concerning the title to the land donated to the county, commissioners chose not to build on the Cape Girardeau site. Instead they bought 50 acres in nearby Jackson and located the county seat there.

Volumes A and B of Cape Girardeau County Court records are reported missing, so there is no official confirmation of the earliest account of the Cape Girardeau courthouse in Jackson. Louis Houck's *History of Missouri*, 1908, identified the first courthouse at Jackson as a log structure, but this may have been one of the court's temporary quarters; Goodspeed's *History of Southeast Missouri*, 1888, described the first courthouse as a "barn-like" structure built in 1818 by John Davis for \$2,450. After the 1818 building outlived its usefulness, the court ordered it sold and specified that it be removed in April 1839.

Next, the court ordered a 45-foot-square, two-story, brick and stone building with cupola in 1837 and directed that it be built on the most suitable part of the public square at the discretion of the commissioners. The initial \$3,000 the court borrowed from the road and canal fund; later, an additional \$2,000 was appropriated.

Missouri historian Louis Houck saw the building in 1869 and described it as old and neglected. He recalled that the courtroom was on the second floor and the clerk's office on the first. This courthouse was destroyed by fire July 18, 1870. No known photographs exist.

County	Cape Girardeau	
Organized	Oct. 1, 1812	
Named After . . .	Ensign Sieur Girardeau, French officer who developed trading post on site of Cape Girardeau	
County Seat . . .	Jackson	

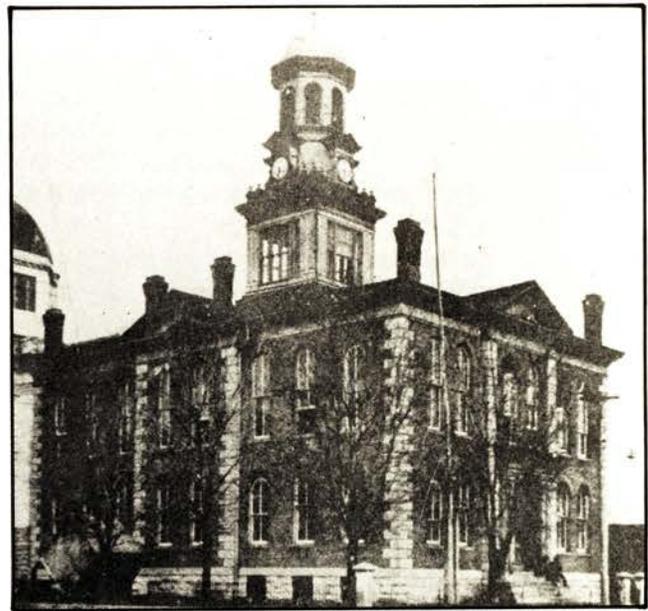


Fig. 1. Cape Girardeau County Courthouse at Jackson, 1870-1908, photo ca. 1908.
Architect: E. D. Baldwin
(From: *Jackson, Missouri, Souvenir Historical Program*, 1965)

E. D. Baldwin of St. Louis served as architect of the next courthouse. The court accepted his plans November 18, 1870. The building contract was awarded Joseph Lansmann. The cost came to \$25,000. The court stipulated no wood should be used on the floors or stairs. The two-story, brick and stone building with cupola was accepted by the court April 17, 1872 (Fig. 1). The building was south of the present courthouse. It was razed to make way for the 1908 courthouse.

The county bought additional land north of the 1870 courthouse site to enlarge the square and provide space for a larger courthouse. Among those submitting proposals for the court's consideration were Jerome Legg, architect of the nearby Mississippi County courthouse and the 1885 remodeled Cape Girardeau Court of Common Pleas; J. B. Blackwood from Cape Girardeau; and Robert Kirsch, architect of recent Adair,

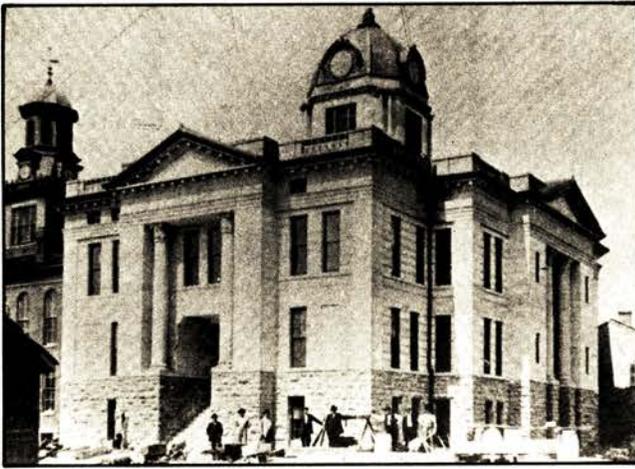


Fig. 2. Cape Girardeau County Courthouse at Jackson, 1908-. Old courthouse (Fig. 1) visible on left.
Architect: P.H. Weathers
(From: *Jackson, Missouri, Souvenir Historical Program*, 1965)

Carroll, Polk and Vernon counties' courthouses. But the court selected architect P. H. Weathers' design because it was fireproof; the others were not. Weathers was a prolific courthouse architect in the midwest. The

plan he presented Cape Girardeau County was not specifically designed for Jackson, so he adapted it to suit the local situation.

Bids were opened December 18, 1905. Low bidder for the contract was M. T. Lewman and Co., Louisville, Kentucky. The original bid of about \$66,000 was based upon the assumed use of Bedford stone for the 81-by-108-foot building that would be 90 feet high, but the people preferred locally quarried stone, which raised the price about \$3,000. The site of the old and the new courthouse was on the same square, so as construction proceeded, county officials conducted business in the 1870 courthouse until the new one was finished and dedicated in August 1908 (Fig. 2).

The Circuit Court room on the second floor occupies most of the east half of the floor. Daviess County has a courthouse of the same design, built by Weathers in 1906-08 and Stoddard County, adjacent to Cape Girardeau, remodeled in 1909 using Weathers' same design, but with brick as the principal material. Costs on the Cape Girardeau courthouse came to about \$125,000.

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CARROLL COUNTY

Carroll County planners reserved the highest point within the 80-acre grant to the county for the courthouse. The first courthouse was built in 1834 according to specifications in the County Court Record filed in July 1834. The building was 18 by 20 feet, of hewn logs, 1½ stories with either brick or stone chimney, and underpinned with rock and mortar. William Glaze, contractor, completed the building in November 1835 at a cost of \$273.50. The building and lot sold for \$450 in May 1841.

The second courthouse, a 40-foot-square, two-story, brick building, occupied the center of the square. Window frames, sash and staircase were to be of walnut. The floor on the east side of the first floor, for the judge's bench, was elevated and laid with brick, the remainder of the floor laid with oak plank. Woodwork was painted white, the doors mahogany. Specifications called for four interior wood columns to be painted marble. The clerk recorded a description of the building in the County Court Record.

Work began in September 1839. The exterior was to be completed by November 1842; interior finishing continued into 1843. Costs are difficult to estimate. Initially, \$4,000 was appropriated with subsequent amounts of \$1,000 in 1841, and \$375 for the cupola. Warrants for \$1,728.90 were issued in December 1840; thereafter many orders were rescinded or altered, and piecemeal work progressed slowly.

Although original plans called for a cupola, apparently it was not built until citizens petitioned for construction in 1855. Commissioners presented a plan for a cupola in August 1855 similar to the one on the semi-



Fig. 1. Proposed Carroll County Courthouse, 1867.
(From: *An Illustrated Historical Atlas Map of Carroll County*, 1876)

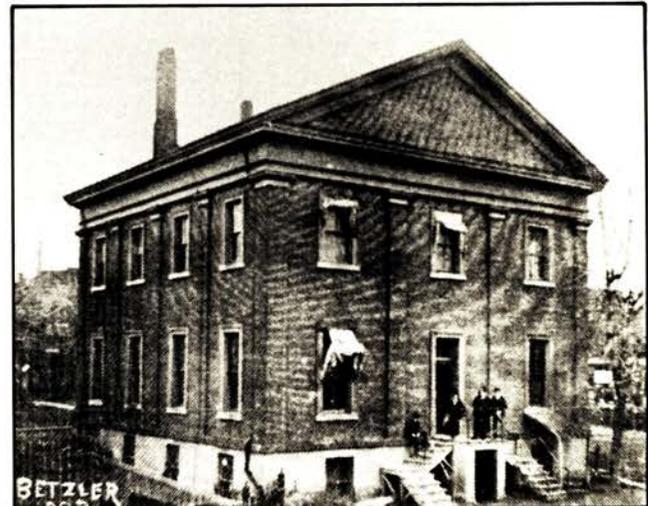


Fig. 2. Carroll County Courthouse, 1867-1901.
(From: *Carroll County, Missouri, 1910-1968*)

County Carroll
Organized Jan. 2, 1833
Named After . . . Charles Carroll,
local resident and
signer of
Declaration of
Independence
County Seat . . . Carrollton



nary, which had been built in 1854. The commissioners reported in December 1856 that the work by Thomas Tweedy was not completed as required by contract and ordered him to comply or the county would sue him.

The work seems to have dragged on, for a new commissioner, Joseph Troxel, was appointed in April 1857. Samuel Turner and S. A. Clark's *Twentieth Century History of Carroll County, Missouri*, 1911, reported that according to tradition, the building was unsafe and was razed in 1865.

In 1867 \$2,500 was appropriated for a new courthouse and Henry Sloan appointed commissioner. The contract for the two-story, brick building was given to Jacobs, Farris and Co. for \$12,350. They completed construction in December 1867. Funds came from the general fund and a bond issue. An illustration of the proposed building (Fig. 1) indicated a larger, more elaborate building than the one built (Fig. 2). This building, razed in 1901, was bought for \$900.

Participants in a mass meeting held early in 1901 came to three conclusions: Carroll County needed a new courthouse that should not cost over \$60,000; it should be financed by direct tax; and it should be built in the center of the square. An illustration of an accepted design proposed by Jerome Legg accompanied news items related to the May 1901 election. Other Missouri courthouses built by Legg about this time include Shelby, Gasconade, St. Charles and Mississippi. However, all bids exceeded the \$60,000 limit, and Legg was dismissed.

The court then solicited new plans and accepted the proposed design of Robert G. Kirsch. In December 1901 the court accepted a bid from John Scott and Sons,

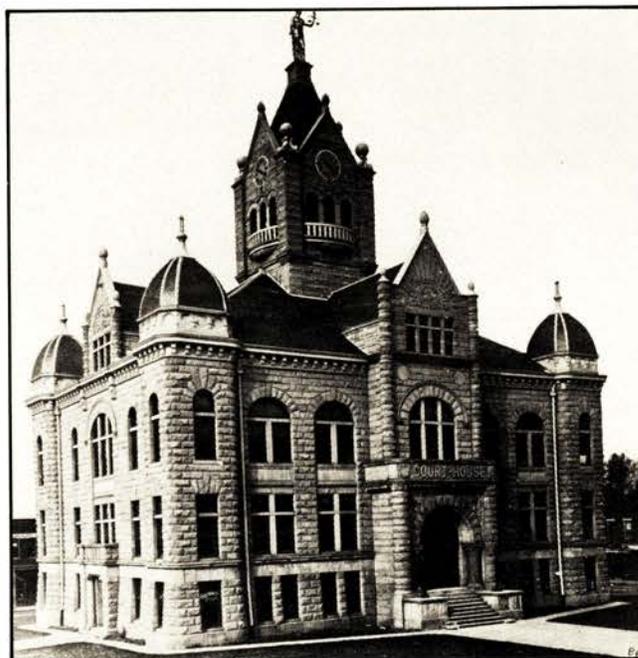


Fig. 3. Carroll County Courthouse, 1901-.
Architect: Robert G. Kirsch
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

Lancaster, for \$45,900. Cornerstone ceremonies took place in June 1902, and the building that continues to serve as the Carroll County courthouse was completed in June 1904 (Fig. 3). Kirsch did similar buildings in Adair, 1897, and Polk and Vernon counties, 1906.

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CARTER COUNTY

The Work Projects Administration inventory record described Carter County's first courthouse, dated 1837, as a frame, two-story, four-room building put together with wooden pins. The fireplace and chimney were built of native sandstone. This early courthouse was located on the west bank of the Current River, one-half mile west and across the river from the present county seat. It was used while Carter County was a part of Ripley County, before separating in 1859. A commission voted to retain Van Buren as the county seat. The log courthouse also continued in use, but was supplemented with space in the Coleman Hotel.

Court officials authorized a temporary courthouse to be built in 1867, west of the present square. Specifications called for a hewn-log house, 18 by 24 feet. They appointed James Snider superintendent.

The court appropriated \$3,000 in March 1871 to build a courthouse on the square (Fig. 1). William Dawson, superintendent of public buildings, presented a plan and specifications, apparently provided by Peter Ake, who built the courthouse in December 1871. The court paid Ake \$10 for providing a "diagram" of the courthouse. W. P. A. records describe it as a 40-by-40-foot, two-story building made of hand-planed pine lumber, on rock foundation, with six rooms.

Early in the 20th century several proposals to build a new courthouse were defeated. Instead, the 1871 courthouse was remodeled, expanded, and covered with native cobblestones. The architectural firm of Heckenlively and Mark, Springfield, Missouri,

County	Carter
Organized	Mar. 10, 1859
Named After	Zimri Carter, a local pioneer
County Seat	Van Buren




Fig. 1. Carter County Courthouse, 1871-, extensively remodeled in 1936.

(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri, gift of Townsend Godsey)



Fig. 2. Carter County Courthouse, after 1936 remodeling.
Architects: Heckenlively and Mark

planned the remodeling for a Public Works Administration project from 1935-37 (Fig. 2). The original plan called for 13 rooms and a jail. The courtroom seated 350. This is the only courthouse in Missouri known to have been built with cobblestones.

The architects put a 30-by-70-foot addition on the east of the old square building. Interior remodeling placed the courtroom in the new addition on the second floor. Cost of the building was about \$30,000. A P.W.A. grant provided \$25,000; county funds paid the remain-

der. No bond issue was necessary. Cornerstone ceremonies were conducted January 21, 1936, and the building, which is still the Carter County courthouse, was dedicated in August of the same year.

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CASS COUNTY

First called Van Buren in 1835, this county changed its name to Cass in 1849.

Although the clerk recorded specific instructions for building a courthouse in April 1837 and identified the superintendent, this order was rescinded at the May 1837 meeting, and the court appointed another superintendent, John Cook. No additional entries clarify the order, but the County Court Record does note that court was held at the courthouse in Harrisonville on February 5, 1838.

Specifications called for a 1½-story, two-room, weatherboarded building. One room was 18 feet square, and the other 14 by 18 feet. Two stone or brick fireplaces were to be in each end, with the tops of the chimneys completed with sticks and good lime mortar. The floor was to be well laid so it would not rock, shake or rattle.

Some speculate the building was never erected. Others assume it was. No location was identified, but Allen Glenn wrote in 1917 that he believed it was a log courthouse off the square.

On February 14, 1843, the court appointed Charles Sims superintendent to prepare and submit a plan with cost estimates not to exceed \$3,000 for a permanent courthouse. This suggests that the previous courthouse was considered temporary. Sims submitted plans which the court approved in March 1843 and specified a completion date on or before September 1, 1844. Contractors were Henry Baker, John Fife and George Rice. The two-story, brick building occupied the public square, which was enclosed by an iron fence (Fig. 1).

An order issued by the court in May 1860 for building a new \$15,000 courthouse caused concerned citi-



Fig. 1. Cass County Courthouse, 1843-1896.
(Courtesy: Cass County Historical Society)

zens to sign a petition protesting such action because of depressed financial conditions. They encouraged the court to reconsider the order. Disregarding this protest, the court proceeded to contract for manufacturing the brick.

War erupted and all thought of building was dismissed. Soldiers quartered their horses in the courthouse during the war, and at the conclusion of hostilities, the court declared the building unfit for occupancy. In 1865 sale of the 300,000 unused bricks that had been manufactured five years earlier for the planned courthouse provided funds for repairing the 1843-44 building, which served Cass County until the end of the century.

A petition presented to the court in November 1895 asked the court to develop plans and specifications for a \$45,000 courthouse. W. C. Root, an architect from Kansas City, drew the plans for Cass County's third courthouse, which was built in 1897 (Fig. 2).

Thomas Wilson contracted for the building in December 1895 for about \$40,000. Citizens paid \$45,000

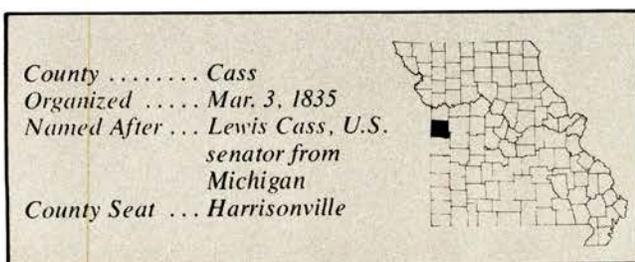




Fig. 2. Cass County Courthouse, 1897-. Architect: W.C. Root (From: W.P.A., Historical Records Survey)

for the building by direct taxation in two years, which they had authorized in an election March 14, 1896. W. B. Harrison superintended construction.

The three-story, yellow brick courthouse measured 93 by 78 feet. Dominating the facade is the off-center tall clock tower. Cornerstone ceremonies for Cass County's present courthouse took place April 10, 1897.

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CEDAR COUNTY

First courts of Cedar County met at Crow's Mill in May 1845. In February 1846 the court ordered the laying out of Lancaster, the first county seat, in compliance with a plan filed with the clerk and approved by the court. Lancaster's name was changed to Fremont in January 1847 and again to Stockton in February 1859.

During the May court term of 1846, William G. Blake submitted a courthouse plan and was appointed to serve as superintendent of the building. The court appropriated \$350, but construction never began. A new County Court, elected in 1846, rented meeting facilities. On February 17, 1847, the court bought a house and lot for \$210 from Samuel Moore to use as a temporary courthouse. The house was west of the first considered courthouse site. The court requested possession on or before May 10, 1847.

For the permanent courthouse, the community favored a brick building. The court designated the center of the 220-foot square as the site of the 1852 brick courthouse, the first substantial brick building in town. In May 1852 the court appointed Benjamin H. Cravens superintendent and appropriated \$5,500. Contracts were given to Dozier C. Gill, Isaac Ragan and A. M. Long in August 1852 in the amount of \$5,500. Cravens soon resigned. Several subsequent superintendents also resigned.

In August a year later, the court ordered that the columns supporting the second floor be changed from round to square. Copper gutters, tin spouts and spout heads were put on in October 1853. The following month the brick and stone work was finished.

Although work was to have been finished by April 1,

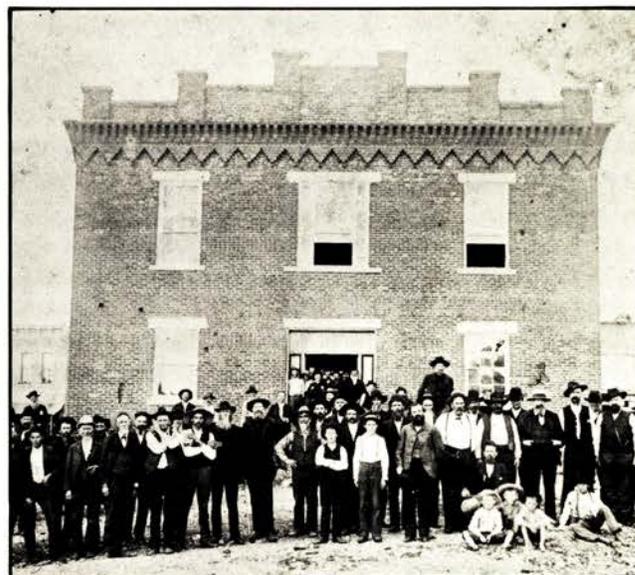


Fig. 1. Cedar County Courthouse, 1867-1940.

(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

1854, the work was not completed by June, endangering what work had been done; the court ordered the bid re-let. M. C. White offered the low bid of \$3,000. Except for the railing that enclosed the judges' area, the courthouse was completed October 19, 1855; destruction came by fire in a Civil War incident October 5, 1863. No known illustrations of this building exist.

The clerk recorded no court meetings between May 19, 1863, and March 23, 1864. After the war, the clerk ordered the records of Cedar County, which had been stored in Springfield, to be returned by the first safe means. For four years following the destruction Cedar County had no courthouse.

In May 1867 the court appropriated \$10,000 for rebuilding on the original site. B. Davis, sheriff, acted as superintendent. The following day the court approved the plan Davis presented—a two-story, brick building, 46 by 50 feet, six rooms below, two small rooms and courtroom above. Specifications called for fireplaces in the lower rooms, wall openings for stove pipes and a fireproof roof. Work proceeded quickly, and in December 1867 the court accepted the building (Fig. 1).

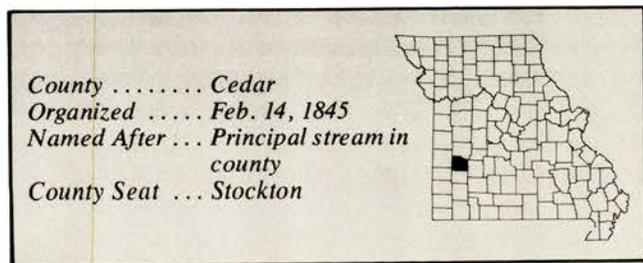




Fig. 2. Cedar County Courthouse, 1938-. Architects: Marshall and Brown (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

Only two months later, in February 1868, the court issued orders to repair the leaking fireproof roof. In the following months several references indicate continued problems with leaking, and in May 1869 the court appointed James A. Cogle to superintend the repairs and put on an entire new roof, if necessary. Porches were added later. This courthouse continued in use until the 20th century courthouse was built. The court sold the building in 1939 for \$100.

Cedar Countians voted down bond proposals to finance a new courthouse in November 1937, but when the opportunity came to apply for federal assistance, they approved a \$60,000 indebtedness matched by a Public Works Administration grant of \$49,050. James D. Marshall and M. Dwight Brown, an architect-engineering firm of Kansas City, presented a plan to the court.

The first site, with four streets entering in the center of the small block, proved inconvenient, so the city gave the county one block 160 feet square, plus one-half of the block to the west. The site was south of the original square and large enough for sufficient lawn on all sides. The slope of the land permitted a useful ground floor at the rear with full-length windows in one section. Marshall and Brown pointed out that the monolithic cement building would be fireproof in addition to other advantages (Fig. 2).

W. F. Edgell and Son, Leavenworth, Kansas, con-

tracted to build the courthouse for \$94,104. Hare and Hare, landscape consultants, assisted with the plan. A cornerstone was not possible with the poured construction, so the copper box containing the traditional local memorabilia (coins, papers, pictures, Bibles, etc) was placed in the cement floor of the first story. Dedication took place January 4, 1940. Final costs amounted to \$112,600. This was reported to be the first monolithic or architectural concrete public building in the state.

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CHARITON COUNTY

First courts met in Old Chariton for about 10 years and built no courthouse. After the move of the county seat to Keytesville in 1833, the court built a brick, two-story, square courthouse with four rooms below and a courtroom above. The courthouse and other public buildings were constructed on land donated to the court by James Keyte.

A fire in the clerk's office, apart from the courthouse, destroyed all County Court records November 11, 1861, and fires set by Confederates on September 20, 1864, destroyed the courthouse.

By 1865 the Chariton County Court ordered the treasurer, Hale T. Chellis, to act as commissioner and examine courthouses at Macon, Columbia and Fayette, obtaining dimensions, costs, etc. before reporting back to the court. Apparently, the court favored the style of the recently built Macon courthouse.

The court called for bids on the plan marked "A" and awarded the contract on February 8, 1866, to Levi Aldrich (Fig. 1). The court wanted the masonry, brickwork and carpentry done in a plain, durable style, leaving off all ornamental work. The firm of Mitchel [sic] and Wagner received the contract for interior work on October 23, 1867.

The shuttered, two-story, brick building had a cupola rising from the crossing of gabled roofs. Measurements were 110 by 62 feet, and the cost was \$40,000. The brick courthouse, painted white in 1969, was destroyed by fire August 27, 1973, during a renovation project (Fig. 2).

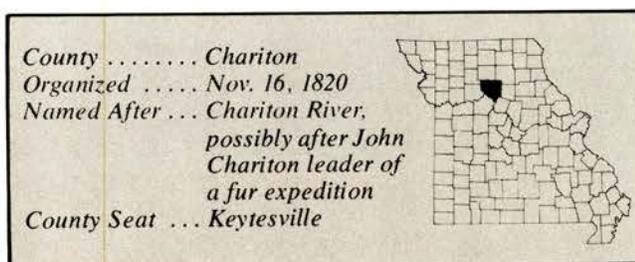
As County Court judges considered building a new courthouse in the fall of 1973, they visited several



Fig. 1. Chariton County Courthouse, 1867-1973.
Architect: Levi Aldrich
(From: *An Illustrated Historical Atlas of 1876*)



Fig. 2. Chariton County Courthouse, destroyed by fire, August 27, 1973.
(Courtesy: Mary Alice Alspaugh)



recently constructed courthouses in Kansas, Nebraska, Illinois and Missouri. They were particularly impressed with a Seneca, Kansas, example and requested architect Carroll Hutchens to submit a similar design for consideration, which the court accepted in January 1974 (Fig. 3).

A protesting group in Keytesville, who considered a modern design unsuitable, offered an alternative (Fig.

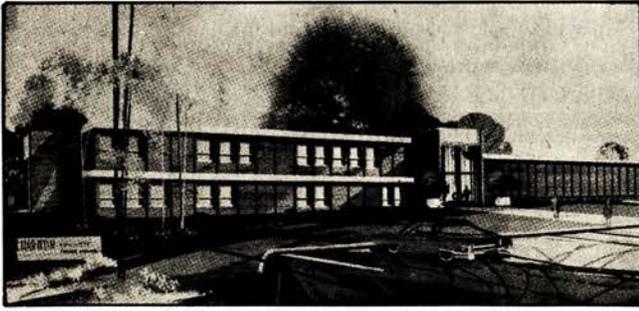


Fig. 3. Proposed Chariton County Courthouse, 1974.
Architects: Frangkiser and Hutchens
(From: *Chariton Courier*, April 18, 1974)

4). Committed to Hutchens, the court asked him to revise his proposal. Hutchens then presented several options for the exterior, but retained the basic plan. The court accepted one of Hutchens' revisions, and Irving-bilt Co. of Chillicothe, low bidder, began construction in the summer of 1974 on the \$725,000 courthouse (Fig. 5).

Formal ceremonies at the courthouse were held July

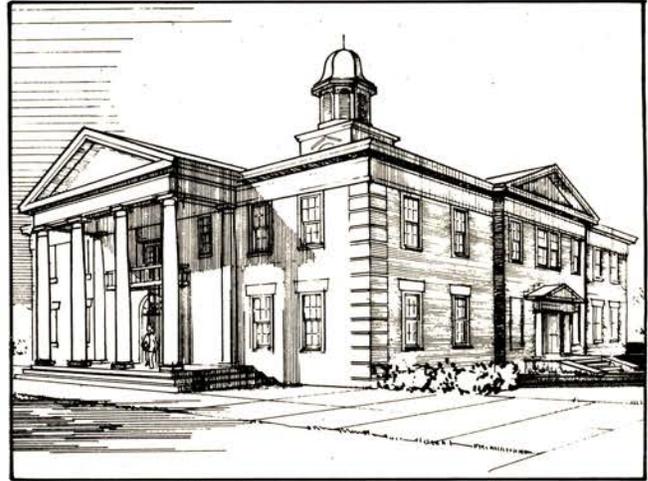


Fig. 4. Proposed Chariton County Courthouse, 1974.
(From: *Chariton Courier*, April 18, 1974)

27, 1975, and the court occupied the completed building the following month. Principal sources of funding came from fire insurance compensation, revenue sharing and a grant from Missouri Law Enforcement Assistance Council.

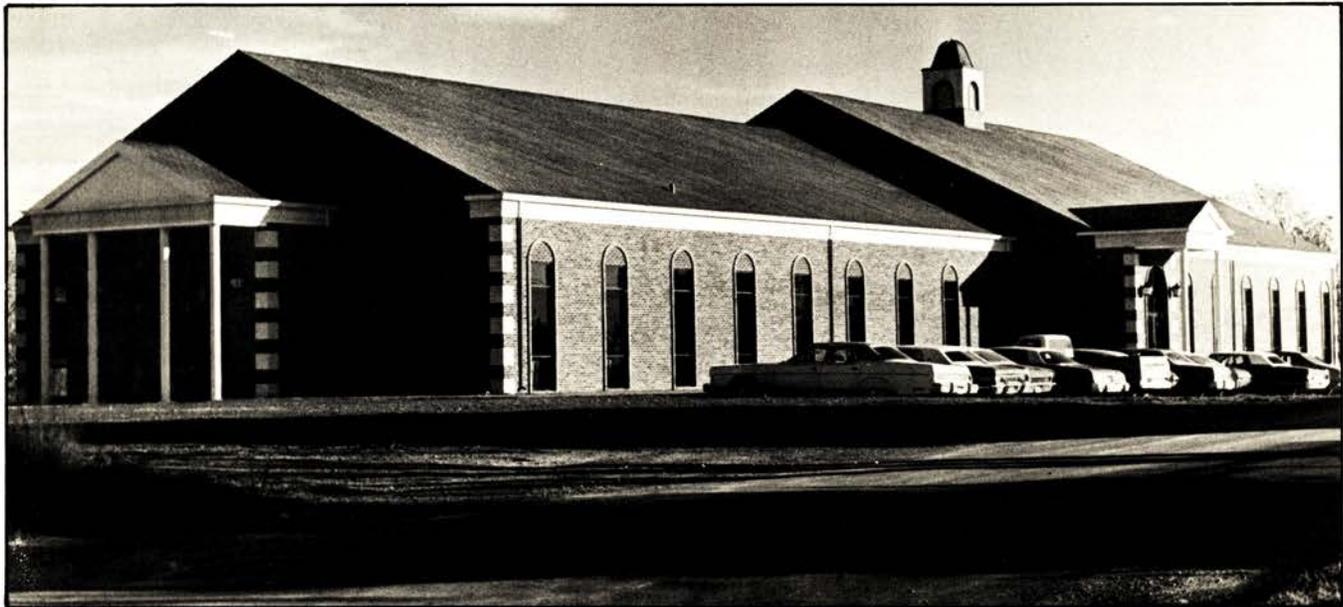


Fig. 5. Chariton County Courthouse, 1974-. (From: *Salisbury Press Spectator*)

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CHRISTIAN COUNTY

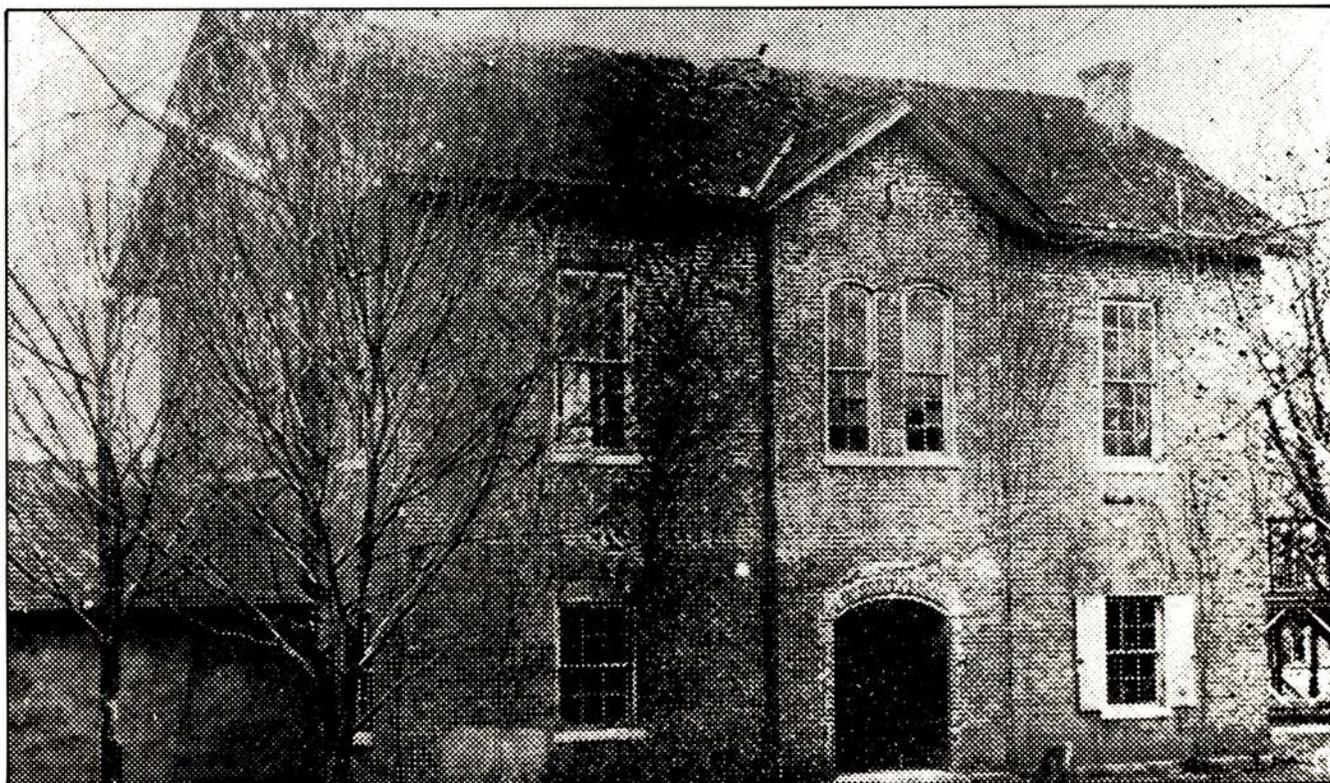


Fig. 1. Christian County Courthouse, 1867-1914. (From: *Ozarks Mountaineer*, July 1958)

Commissioners selected Ozark as the county seat of Christian County in 1859 because of central location and accessibility. In 1860 the first courthouse, a two-story frame, was built on the north side of the square, probably financed by \$4,000 from the sale of lots. It

measured 30 by 40 feet, with the courtroom below and offices on the second floor. Arsonists destroyed the building and all court records on August 20, 1865.

The court appointed James W. Robertson superintendent of public buildings and in 1866 requested he present two plans for consideration, one of brick, the other of frame. The court appropriated \$5,000 and in May 1866 ordered that the courthouse be built on the center of the square. The court placed notices for contracting in Springfield papers and then accepted William Laring's [Lawing] bid for \$7,000 in September 1866. Final costs came to \$7,775 (Fig. 1).

The County Court Record recorded specifications and referred to four detailed drawings which had ac-

County	Christian	
Organized	Mar. 8, 1859	
Named After ...	Christian County, Kentucky	
County Seat ...	Ozark	

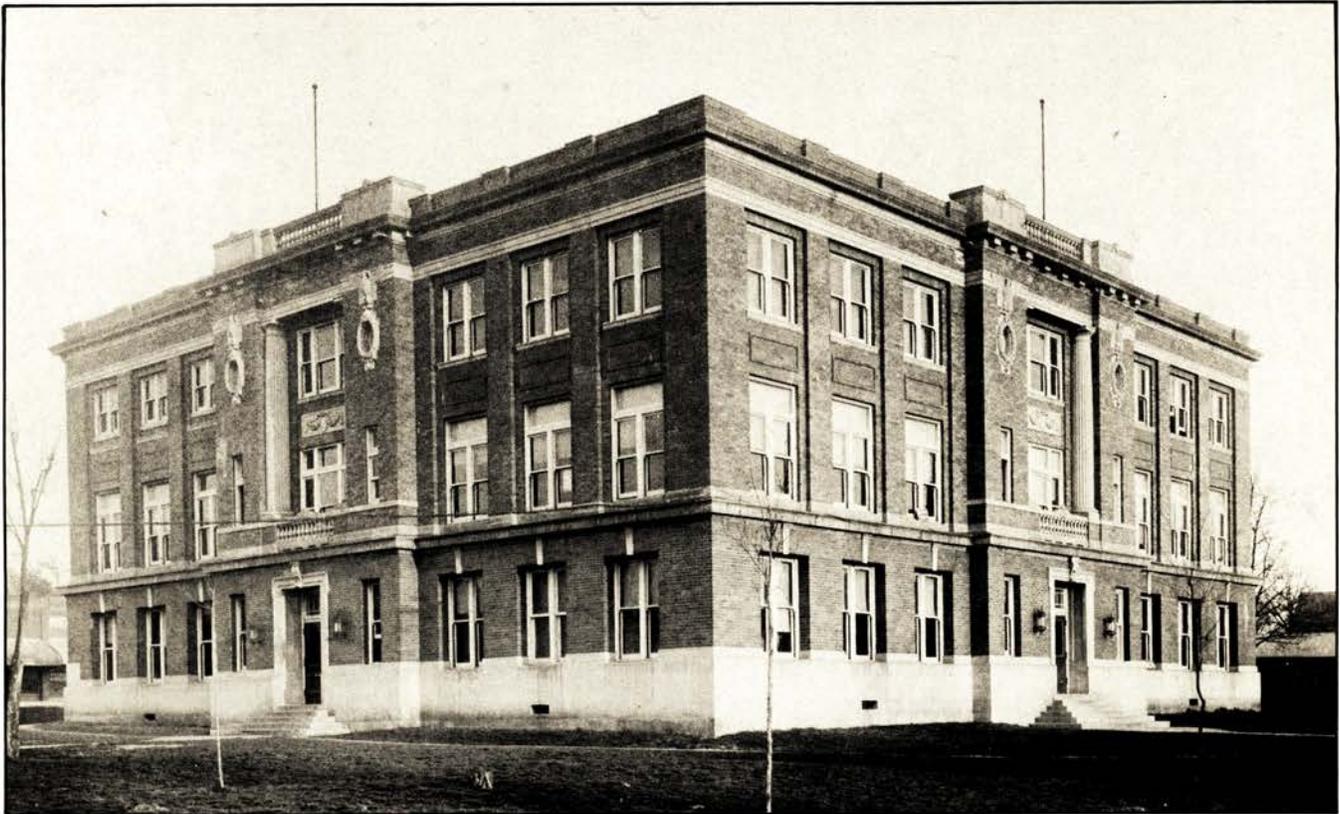


Fig. 2. Christian County Courthouse, 1919-. Architect: H.H. Hohenschild (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

panied the specifications but were not included in the record. An illustration shows the brick, rectangular building with projecting entry featuring a segmental arch above the door, which is balanced by a pair of windows on the second story. The courtroom was on the second floor. The building continued in use until 1914, when razed. Contemporary accounts described it as the county's oldest building and one of the landmarks of southwest Missouri.

In 1913 the state legislature gave counties the authority to issue bonds for constructing county buildings without submitting the question to a vote of the people. Christian County was the first to attempt the action. The court visited Barton and Barry counties, examining their courthouses. After interviewing and considering proposals from Charles A. O. Brunk Construction Co., St. Louis, J. M. Whitehead, and Henry H. Hohenschild, the court unanimously selected Hohenschild and commissioned him to prepare plans.

The county, however, was embroiled in politics and unsettled over location of the county seat. With such antagonism existing, some viewed the court's move as underhanded.

In March 1919, after a long, bitter legal struggle, voters did authorize \$90,000 for a courthouse. The site was the same as the previous courthouse, which had been razed four years previously. The new court represented the obligation the former court had made five years earlier to Hohenschild's plan, but felt bound by

the commitment, particularly since the architect had been paid \$2,150.

H. J. Hanson, Sarcoxie, successfully bid for the general contract in June 1919; Earl Hawkins acted as superintendent. Work began in August; cornerstone ceremonies took place on March 16, 1920, and Christian County's present courthouse was completed by December of that year (Fig. 2). Other related courthouse designs from Hohenschild include Scott, 1911; Barry, 1913; and Pemiscot, 1924, all still standing.

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CLARK COUNTY

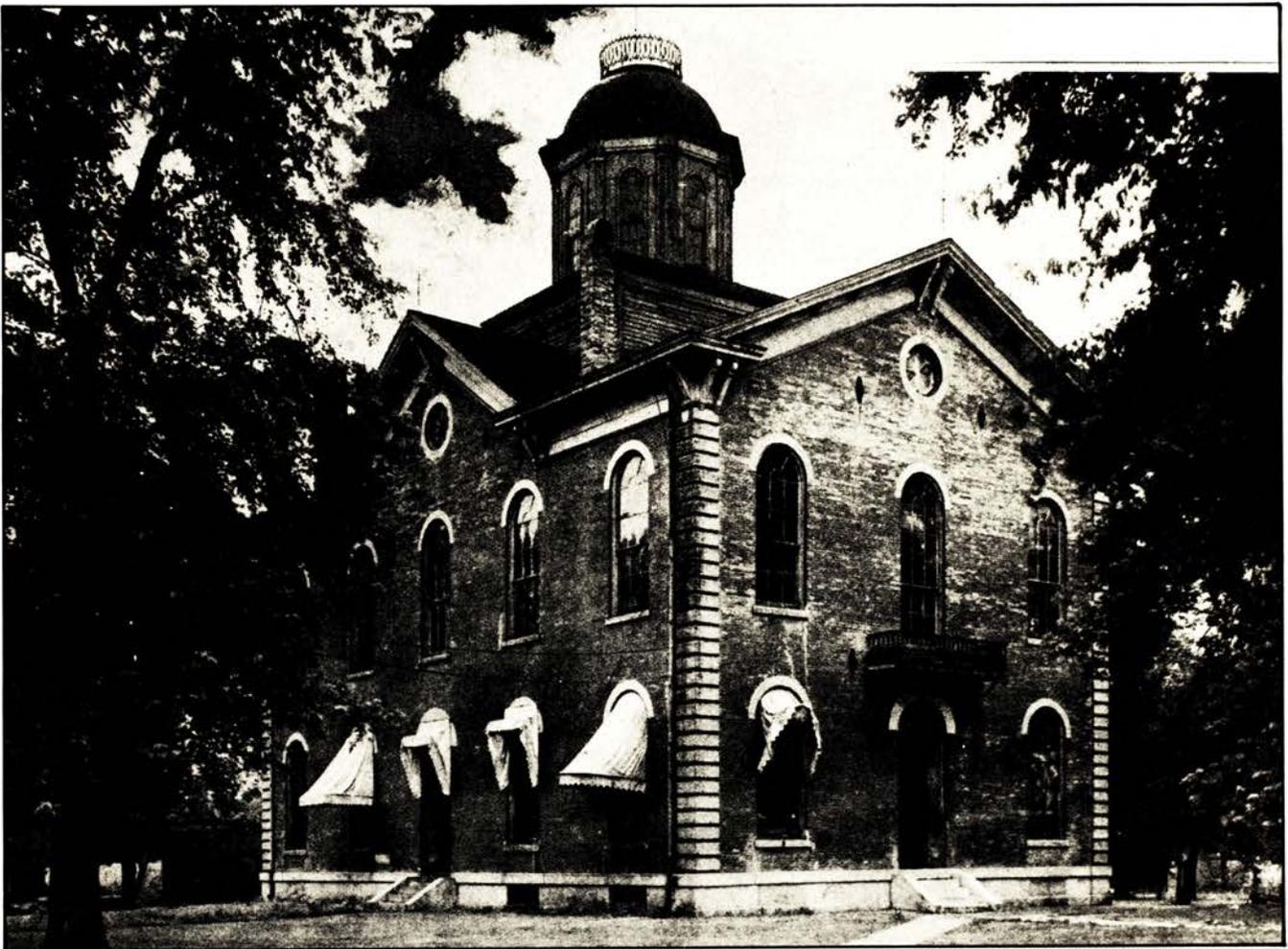


Fig. 1. Clark County Courthouse, 1870-. Architect: W.B. Larkworthy (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

County	Clark	
Organized	Dec. 15, 1818	
Reorganized	Dec. 16, 1836	
Named After	William Clark of Lewis and Clark Expedition and governor of Missouri territory	
County Seat	Kahoka	

Clark County moved its county seat three times before permanently establishing it. For the first 10 years the county seat was in Waterloo, an interior location. In 1847 county officials tried a river site at Alexandria, but repeated flooding prompted a move back to Waterloo in 1854. Finally, officials settled permanently at centrally located Kahoka in 1865.

In Waterloo, the first county seat for Clark County, the court authorized the first courthouse. Joseph McCoy served as treasurer of Clark County, 1837-40, and apparently was the same Joseph McCoy who provided the plan for the first courthouse October 11, 1837. The court rescinded the order due to a minor legal technicality December 12, 1837, but immediately reappointed McCoy commissioner, who again presented a plan. In all probability some minor procedure was not handled properly.

McCoy's plan of October 11, 1837, for a brick, 43-foot-square building with a stone foundation may be the same as that approved by the court in December. The courtroom was on the first floor, offices on the second. For this construction the court appropriated \$4,700 in December. The court accepted the completed courthouse March 13, 1839, and paid McCoy for superintendence. On August 6, 1847, the county seat moved to Alexandria, and Waterloo citizens converted the courthouse for use as a church and school. While at Alexandria, the court appointed Ephraim Warner commissioner to superintend construction of a courthouse donated by citizens of the community. The *History of Lewis, Clark, Knox and Scotland Counties*, 1887, described it as a plain, inexpensive, two-story, brick building, with county offices on the first floor, the courtroom on the second. Court first convened in the new courthouse June 11, 1849.

Repeated floods in Alexandria after 1851 caused apprehension about its use as a permanent site. Petitions for moving resulted in an 1854 vote to shift back to the original site at Waterloo. Repairs made by Whiting Johnson on the Waterloo courthouse indicate its revived use on November 5, 1855.

After a decade, once again the seat of justice was

moved. An act of the legislature relocated the county seat on February 20, 1865, in Kahoka, apparently at the instigation of vested real estate interests. Donations of \$12,000, supplemented by a court appropriation of \$15,000 authorized in 1870, provided funds for a new courthouse.

In November 1870 the court appointed Peter S. Washburn to act as superintendent. Although the architect has not been identified in Clark County sources, an article in a Sedalia, Missouri, newspaper credited W. B. Larkworthy as architect of the Clark County courthouse. Larkworthy, born in England, is known to have lived in Quincy, Illinois, and Kansas City, Missouri. Plans, with variations A through G filed with the county clerk, were approved December 6, 1870. The court made selections and accepted a bid of \$18,985 made by the firm of J. G. Orr and P.H. Conner, Quincy, Illinois, on December 22, 1870.

The two-story, brick building measures 45 by 72 feet (Fig. 1). Specifications in the County Court Record called for 9-by-4½-by-2½-inch brick. The floor of the courtroom was to be "deafened with sawdust on mortar." The shingle roof was to be laid in fireproof composition paint. An octagonal cupola was to stand at the crossing of the gable roofs. The cupola was chosen from plan "B," the cornice from "A."

Court met in this courthouse January 15, 1872. A Public Works Administration project in 1934 stuccoed the exterior white; repair and maintenance work was done in 1976. Today, the building retains its original form, one of Missouri's few examples of a courthouse from the 1870s.

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CLAY COUNTY

“This court having viewed with regret the inconvenience the citizens of the county labor under, as well as the great inconvenience the courts encountered for want of suitable buildings for the accommodations of the different courts, deem it necessary to make an effort to construct a courthouse upon the public square in the town of Liberty.”

Although Clay County organized in 1822 and Liberty was chosen as the county seat, it was not until the May term of court in 1828 that this proclamation gave authority for building the first courthouse. Several plans or drafts were submitted for the court’s consideration, but commissioners accepted the one Judge George Burnett submitted.

No known illustrations exist, but there is a complete description in the County Court Record for June 1829 which indicates a 44-foot-4-inch, square, brick courthouse, five bays wide with doors on the south, east and west, featuring decorative semicircular fanlights. The courtroom occupied the north part of the building, apparently on the first floor. A hip roof was first planned, but in 1829 changed to a square roof.

Joseph Bright was contractor for the building, but progress was slow. The brick floor on the first story was laid in 1831, so some of the rooms could be occupied; final work was not completed until 1833. Costs of approximately \$1,770 came from the sale of county lots and public subscription. Subsequently enlarged by additions on the east and west, it was described as being in

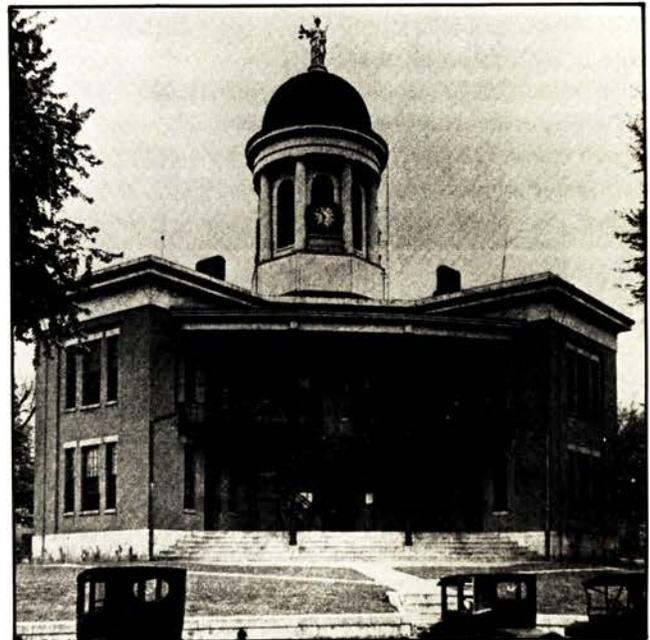


Fig. 1. Clay County Courthouse, 1857-1934.
Architect: Peter Mc Duff

(From: *Missouri's Contribution to American Architecture*, 1928)

poor condition by 1847-48. Fire destroyed this courthouse March 27, 1857.

A *Liberty Weekly Tribune* editorial reported the advantages of relocating the courthouse off the square, but tradition prevailed, and in May 1857 the court authorized construction of the second courthouse on the site of the first. The court appropriated \$35,000 for the new building and paid Peter Mc Duff \$100 for one of two plans he submitted (Fig. 1).

McDuff resided at Weston, Missouri, but was born in Scotland in 1813. Little is known of his background, training or interest that might have inspired either this unique design or the one for Clinton County in 1859. In 1866 Mc Duff designed the Platte County courthouse, which is the only surviving example of his courthouse work.

The court also appointed Mc Duff superintendent. Crump and Thompson were the contractors. The build-

County	Clay
Organized	Jan. 2, 1822
Named After . . .	Henry Clay, Kentucky
County Seat . . .	Liberty



Fig. 2. Proposed Clay County Courthouse, 1931.
Architects: David Fredrick Wallace and M. Dwight Brown
(From: *Liberty Advance*, March 26, 1934)



Fig. 3. Clay County Courthouse, 1935-
Architect: Wight and Wight
(From: *Public Buildings*, 1939)

ing was received by the court November 9, 1859, and the *Tribune* boasted, "Clay County now has the best courthouse in the state." This courthouse was sold to a St. Joseph wrecking firm for \$330 and razed in 1934, as the square was prepared for the next and present courthouse.

By 1934 Clay County considered its courthouse 75 years behind the time. During the 1930s Public Works Administration projects encouraged public building applications, and after Clay County approved bonds in the amount of \$200,000, P.W.A. approved a \$75,500 grant.

Thomas and Edward Drewin Wight, of the Kansas City firm, served as architects. When a sketch of their proposed modern design appeared, an uproar ensued by those who favored a traditional design, which they had thought the court intended to build. However, the

traditional design which had accompanied the grant application (Fig. 2) was the action of a courthouse committee, rather than the County Court.

The court retained Wight and Wight, who designed a white limestone building 117 by 87 feet and 60 feet high (Fig. 3). The architects needed to rework their original plans to bring costs within the acceptable range. Bliss and Duncan, Kansas City, received the contract for \$192,330; construction began March 27, 1935. The cornerstone ceremony was conducted September 19, 1935, and, in spite of labor problems, the building was completed in June 1936. Construction costs ultimately reached \$263,410.

Acute space problems developed in the 1970s. An annex was built and several ideas for additions and enlargements have been considered since. This is an outstanding example of a government project of this period.

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CLINTON COUNTY

Clinton County used three different names for its county seat between 1833-35. Concord was chosen first in November 1833, then was changed to Springfield in January 1834. Another Missouri town claimed that name, so a year later the name was changed again, this time to Plattsburg. The Clinton County Court requested that Plattsburg be laid off upon the same plan as Liberty, in adjacent Clay County, which had been organized during the preceding decade.

Early courts met in private homes, according to the 1881 *History of Clinton County*. The County Court Record of January 1834 called for a two-room, hewn-log courthouse with centrally placed chimney of stone or brick to be built south of the square. Counties often built a simple structure near the square to serve as a temporary courthouse while construction of the permanent building proceeded on the square; this may have been the intent of the court.

James Riley, a prominent Clinton resident, claimed in 1876 that the court reconsidered its decision and contracted instead for a larger brick building in June 1834. Helen Russell, who wrote on the history of Clinton County courthouses, agreed and noted there was no evidence in the court record to indicate the building ordered in January was built.

Again, plans for a brick courthouse were initiated at the May term in 1834. The original specifications called for two stories, 32 feet square and 20 feet high, on rock foundation, two fireplaces in each story, four chimneys, three doors, 25 windows, "two good and neat pillars in each story," covered with a shingle gable roof. There was one large room on the first floor, three rooms

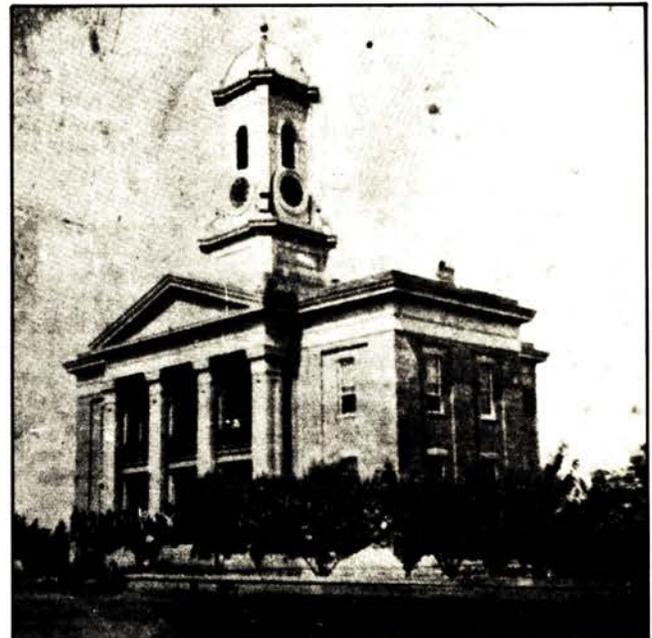


Fig. 1. Clinton County Courthouse, 1860-1895.
Architect: Peter Mc Duff
(From: *Plattsburg Leader*, Jan. 27, 1967)

on the second. The contractor was Solomon Fry.

Extensive repairs were ordered in June 1848: a new pine shingle roof, two coats of plastering on the lower room, brick repair, new closed stairway in the northeast corner and other minor work. Winslow Turner, clerk, also served as superintendent. The court awarded the contract to Dobbs and Young for \$450. This building was used until it was razed in 1858.

In September 1859 the county justices appropriated \$25,000 for a new courthouse. Hervey [sic] Whittington served as superintendent. Peter Mc Duff earned \$60 for drawing the plan. Mc Duff also drew plans for the Platte County courthouse, 1866, and the Clay County courthouse, 1857. Low bidder was William C. Black, who was given the contract for \$27,050 (Fig. 1).

The courthouse sustained great damage in a fire

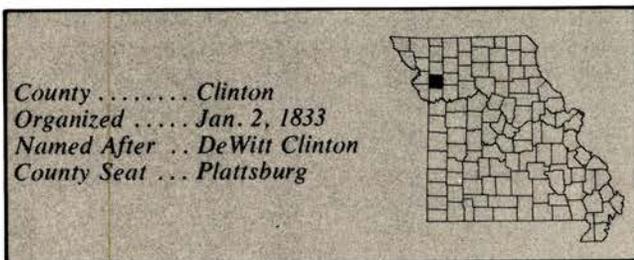




Fig. 2. Clinton County Courthouse, 1895-1974.
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

April 15, 1895, but the walls remained standing. In spite of newspaper reports that the walls would be torn

down, apparently they were incorporated in the rebuilding. C. P. Schmidt drew the plans and John T. Neil contracted for \$12,985 to rebuild and enclose the courthouse (Fig. 2). Stephen Collins acted as superintendent. The appearance of the building was considerably altered after it was stuccoed and painted white in 1958. Fire again damaged the building June 14, 1974, this time beyond repair.

Demolition began in September, and the following month the court approved plans for a courthouse and jail building, drawn by Homer Williams of the Kansas City firm Reed and Williams (Fig. 3). A bond issue in the amount of \$700,000 was passed in November. Bids for construction were opened in April 1975, and the court signed a contract with Pool and Canfield, a Kansas City construction company, for \$827,235 in June 1975, with work to be completed within a year.

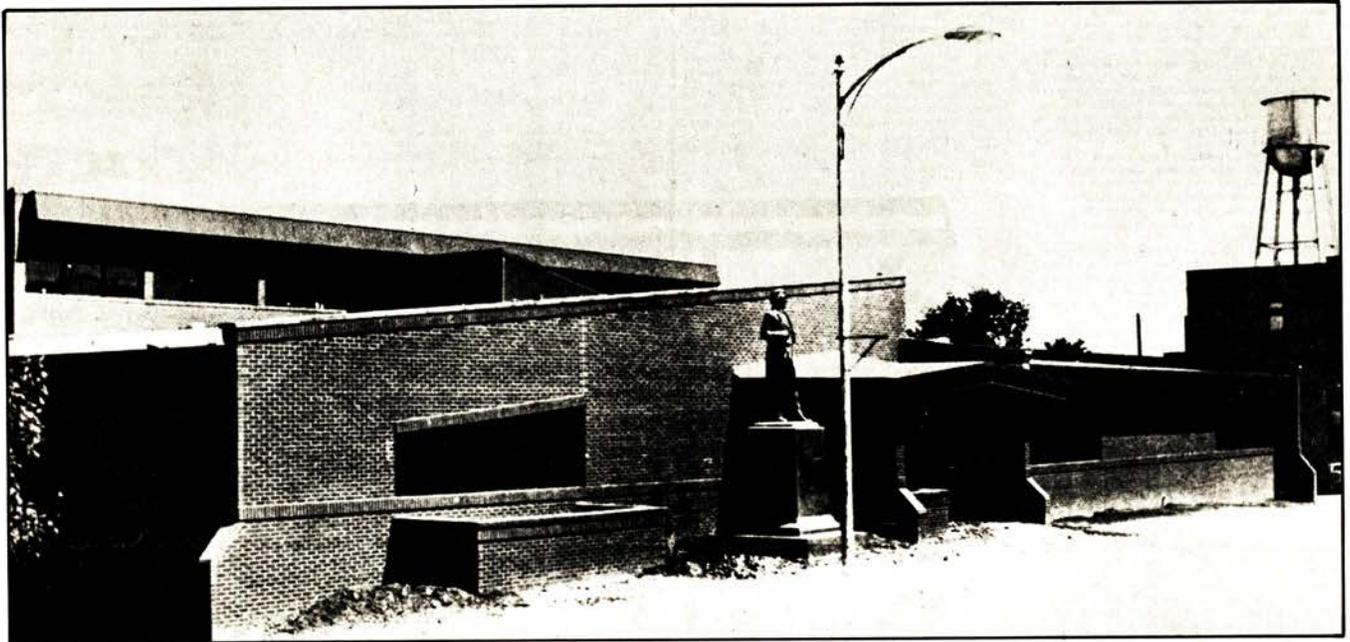


Fig. 3. Clinton County Courthouse, 1975-. Architect: Reed and Williams (Homer Williams) (From: *Plattsburg Leader*, Bicentennial Supplement, July 2, 1976.)

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COLE COUNTY

The home of John English, in Marion, served for Cole County's first court meeting. Three commissioners were appointed to supervise construction of a courthouse built there in 1825 for \$748. A portion of the County Court Record is destroyed, but a partial description in the record indicates at least three rooms with brick floors, two outside doors and four shuttered windows. The last session of court in Marion was in February 1829. The courthouse sold for \$450.

In Jefferson City, the permanent county seat site, the court first occupied a log house owned by John Gordon. They took temporary quarters in the state capitol in February 1831, then rented the old post office for \$50 per year until the courthouse, which was begun in 1836, was completed in 1838 (Fig. 1).

An appropriation of between \$4,000-\$5,000 made in February 1836 provided funds for a building reported to be 54 by 54 feet, with hip roof, two stories, the foundation of stone and the front wall of hammered stone. The building was to be similar to the warden's house, a contemporary account noted.

James Dunnica acted as first superintendent. He was later replaced by Henry Robinson. Builders were Thomas L. Ferguson and the contracting firm of Griffith and Crump. The building faced west, 40 feet from the street. The entrance hall was 15 by 25 feet; to the left was the county clerk's office and vault. The courtroom was at the rear of the first floor, and near the entrance to the courtroom was a spiral stairway. The second floor remained unfinished for years; it was rented for special occasions before it was partitioned into county offices. The 1885 Sanborn Map shows a 15-foot frame cupola,



Fig. 1. Cole County Courthouse, 1836-1896.
(From: Robyn's engraving of Cole County, 1859)

but it is missing in the 1892 map.

The building was condemned in 1891, but voters defeated a proposition for a new courthouse. In 1892 the grand jury reported it unsafe and dangerous. Finally, in 1895, voters approved a \$60,000 bond issue, providing the means for a new courthouse.

After the state capitol burned in 1837, the Cole County courthouse provided space for the state government. In spite of the historical significance of this courthouse, and the fact that it existed until 1896, illustrations are rare. The building was razed in 1896 and part of the stone (locally called "cotton rock") was used in the new courthouse.

When Cole County prepared to build a new courthouse in 1896, the court received 22 proposals; a reporter for the *Daily Tribune* briefly described all entries. Two proposed designs were modeled after the state capitol, located only two blocks away. One called for a 130-foot replica of the capitol dome on an Indiana stone building with 32-foot stone columns supporting a 16-foot porticoed entry.

After several days of agonizing deliberations, the

County	Cole	
Organized	Nov. 16, 1820	
Named After . . .	Capt. Stephen Cole, pioneer and Indian fighter	
County Seat . . .	Jefferson City	

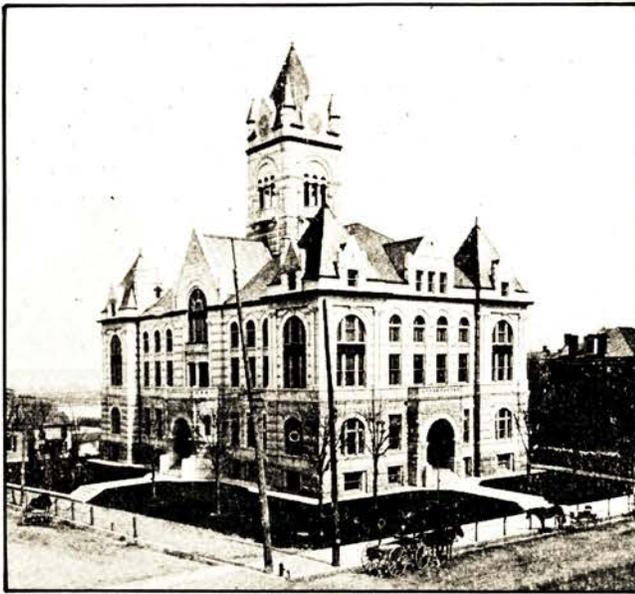


Fig. 2. Cole County Courthouse, 1896-.
 Architect: Frank B. Miller
 (From: *Illustrated Sketchbook and Directory of Jefferson City and Cole County*, 1900)

court adopted the plans of a local architect, Frank B. Miller (Fig. 2). Miller and A. W. Elsner, both Jefferson City architects, enjoyed the status of favorite sons.

Elsner's plan showed more massive proportions. When contractors submitted bids on Miller's plan, they offered two figures based on the use of either Warrensburg or Carthage stone. H. J. Wallau's bid of \$47,750, using Carthage stone, was accepted in March 1896. Cornerstone ceremonies were held in July.

The first story was of stone; the second story was of pressed gray brick with copper and stone trim. The tower rose 126 feet from the ground and featured four dials for the clock and an observation platform. County offices were on the first floor. The Circuit Court room, measuring 45 by 63 feet, with a seating capacity of 500, was on the second floor. Total costs came to approximately \$60,000.

While vaults provided fire protection for records, 19th century courthouses were often destroyed or damaged by fire. Finding methods of building fireproof courthouses was of increasing concern to county officials. Miller's courthouse plan for Cole County was presented as "practically fireproof," an apt, but unfortunate, description. The building suffered extensive fire damage March 14, 1918. Once again, Miller acted as architect of the repaired building. This courthouse has now been placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

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COOPER COUNTY

At the March term of Circuit Court in 1819 the circuit judge appointed three commissioners to locate and superintend the building of a courthouse and jail for Cooper County. Eight persons promised to donate 50 acres if the county seat were located in Boonville. At the September term in 1820 the commissioners reported they reserved places for the courthouse and jail on the 50 acres, and the remainder of the property would be surveyed into lots, streets and alleys. Lots sold at public auction September 2, 1820, brought \$16,245.25.

On March 21, 1821, the commissioners let to the lowest bidder, William C. Porter (or Potter) and Willis Kempshall, for \$9,699, the building of a brick courthouse about 40 feet square, with stone foundation and two stories, one room below, two jury rooms above. Some alterations were made in the plan before the building was completed in 1823.

In 1831 a brick floor replaced the wooden one on the first floor, and additional work was done on the second-story gallery floor. At the July term of court in 1838 the courthouse was ordered to be sold at public auction. When the building was razed, some of the brick was reportedly used in the next courthouse.

The \$9,000 cost would have been a great sum in 1821. The county used the courthouse for only 15 years before replacing it, certainly not a typical lifespan for such a costly building.

In May 1838 the County Court ordered a portion of the public square to be laid off into lots and sold to raise funds in order to build a larger courthouse (Fig. 1.). The site for the courthouse was retained but reduced in size; it overlooked the river and provided an excellent view

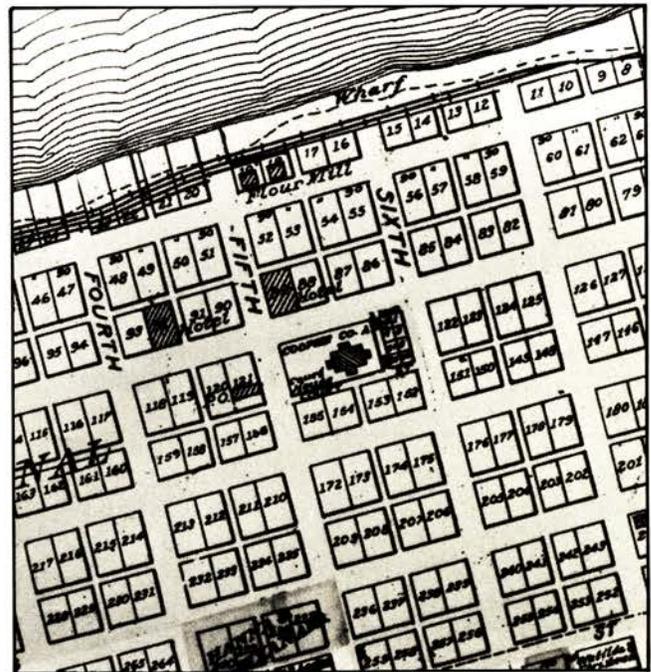


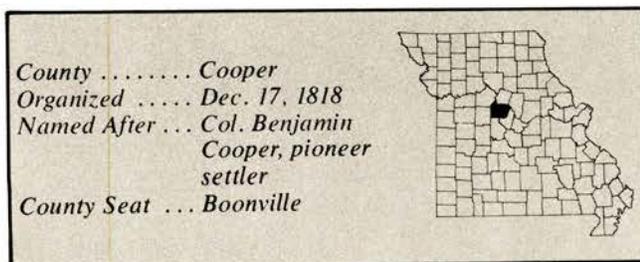
Fig. 1. Plan of Boonville, Missouri.
(From: *Standard Atlas of Cooper County, Missouri, 1915*)

from the cupola. Specific instructions for dividing the public square were recorded in the County Court Record.

A model and plan of the courthouse were filed with the county clerk. The court appropriated \$10,800. Subsequent appropriations for the courthouse brought the total to approximately \$30,000, again a very high figure for the time. The court ordered the second story to remain unfinished until a later date, and requested that the ornamental work remain simple.

The County Court received the building at the August term in 1840. Jacob Wyan and Charles W. Johnson were commissioners. Seltzer and McCullough were the contractors (Fig. 2).

This building served Cooper County until 1911,



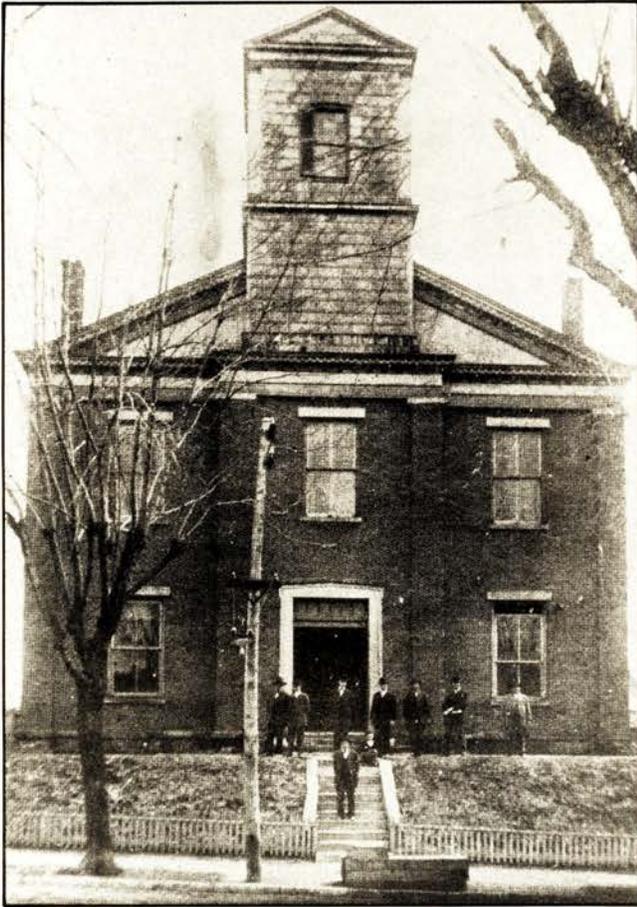


Fig. 2. Cooper County Courthouse, 1838-1911.
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

when commissioners who reported on the building declared it unfit. It was sold to W. J. Cochran, contractor



Fig. 3. Cooper County Courthouse, 1912-.
Architect: Robert G. Kirsch
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

for the 1912 courthouse, for \$300 and demolished in March of 1912.

Petitions to the court asking for a \$100,000 bond issue to finance a new courthouse resulted in an election in June 1911. The town of Boonville made a contribution of \$15,000 toward construction. Plans of R. G. Kirsch for a three-story, 80-by-100-foot building were accepted, and the contract was given to W. J. Cochran of Boonville for about \$95,000.

Cornerstone ceremonies were conducted July 9, 1912, and the building was received by the court September 15, 1913 (Fig. 3). The main facade of the building faces Fifth Street, which became the principal artery through town.

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CRAWFORD COUNTY

When Crawford County's boundaries extended to include most of Phelps and part of Dent counties, the county seat was located at the mouth of the Little Piney River. The court met in the two-story, hewn-log house of James Harrison.

After a reduction in county size, a meeting to organize Crawford County took place on February 23, 1834. Liberty Hill served as a temporary county seat until the commissioners located the permanent seat at Steelville in 1835.

The County Court Records indicate no attempt at construction of a courthouse until May 1837. At that time M. W. Trask, superintendent of the courthouse, provided a plan for a brick, 1½-story courthouse that would measure about 26 by 30 feet. The court approved the plan, but apparently building did not immediately proceed in spite of an \$800 appropriation.

In August 1837 a clerk's office was being built, which the court intended to use, but in November the court was paying Simeon Frost rent for a house in which to hold court. In November of 1837 the court authorized purchase of land for the public square. Simeon Frost acted as commissioner and paid \$80 for the lot.

By May of the next year, 1838, the court authorized Trask to prepare a new plan for a 29-foot-square courthouse. In the spring of 1839 the two-story structure, built by Obadiah Ferguson, was completed; courts met there in May, although finishing continued for some time. The courtroom was completed in 1843-44.

The second courthouse, built in 1857 on the same site, was two stories, brick, 36 by 48 feet, with stone

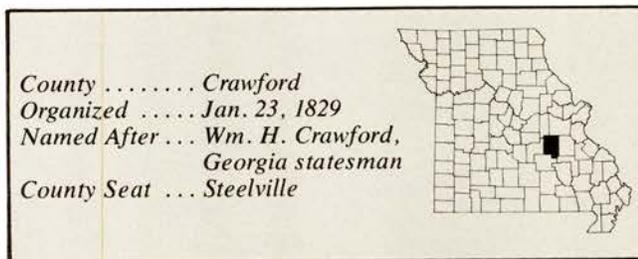


Fig. 1. Crawford County Courthouse, 1885-.
Architect: J.J. Upchurch
(Courtesy: Leroy Pinnell)

foundation. The court appropriated \$6,000 for this structure. Fire destroyed the building February 15, 1873.

The following month the court appropriated \$10,000 for the third courthouse. Joe Davis superintended the work. The two contractors with the lowest bids would not provide bond, so A. E. Dye and Sons were awarded the contract for \$9,775. This building, too, was consumed by fire, which began in the cupola, January 5, 1884. The court carried \$9,000 insurance on this courthouse.

J. J. Upchurch designed the fourth and present courthouse, which was built in 1885-86 (Fig. 1). Hollow and Salzer received the contract for construction of the 71-by-36-foot, two-story, brick building which cost about \$7,500. An addition made in 1974 was designed by Dan Mullen and built by Cyrus Dace.



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DADE COUNTY

The log cabin residence of William Penn on Pennsylvania Prairie provided the location for the first courts of Dade County, but the permanent county seat was to be located within four miles of the center of the county. The first courthouse, built in Greenfield in June 1842, according to probate records, was a 1½-story, frame building with courtroom on the first floor. R. S. Jacobs and Joseph Griggs contracted the building for \$800-\$900. The court abandoned the structure about the time the second courthouse was built.

Dozier C. Gill built the second courthouse on the public square in 1850, a brick, two-story building that cost about \$7,500. Transverse halls separated the first floor into four office rooms; the courtroom, with small adjoining rooms, occupied the second floor. The courthouse was destroyed in the Civil War, October 6, 1863.

The third courthouse, completed in December of 1868 by contractor Francis M. Wilson, was also a two-story brick building, costing about \$10,000 (Fig. 1). The court appropriated the money in July 1867. An east-west hall divided the first floor into three offices on the north side and two on the south. The courtroom and jury rooms were on the second floor. A grand jury condemned the building in February 1925; it was razed the following August.

In 1921 a grand jury had reported the old courthouse in deplorable condition; they recommended a new one at that time and called for the court to select an architect and schedule an election. The court chose St. Louis architects Fred C. Bonsack and Harvey J. Pearce. Pearce brought plans of Franklin County to show the court. When he learned of the proposed budget, he

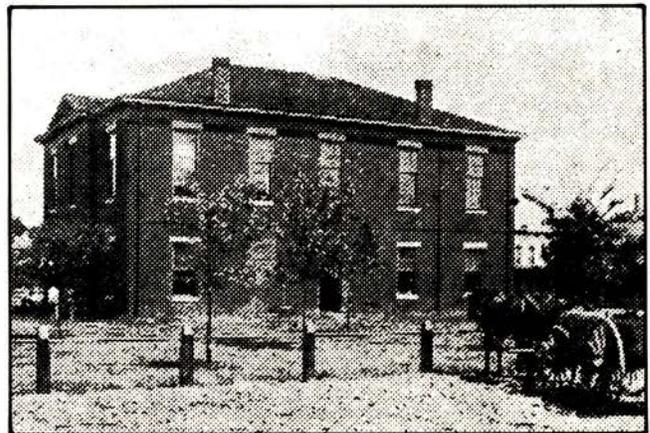
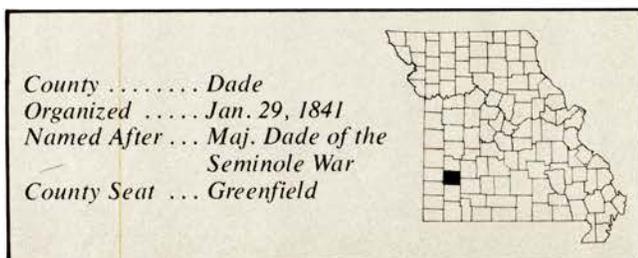


Fig. 1. Dade County Courthouse, 1868-1925.
(From: *Souvenir Program, 125th Anniversary, 1966*).

offered to revise the plans for a smaller building and simplify the design to reduce cost. This modified version, of brick and stone, was presented to the voters, but the \$100,000 bond figure recommended by the grand jury and the court met defeat at the polls January 31, 1922.

During the depression one of the state relief organizations encouraged Dade County to submit a courthouse proposal. The earlier Bonsack and Pearce plans were revived. An election was called for January 1934, and the presiding judge again contacted the architects' firm. County residents first rejected an \$85,000 figure, but subsequently indicated their support for the project by approving a \$75,000 bond issue. County officials anticipated a supplement of \$36,100 from the Work Projects Administration, but when approved by the federal government in July 1934, it was for \$110,100, far above what they had expected. With this windfall the less expensive modified version of Franklin County was not necessary. Dade County's courthouse resembles the Franklin County courthouse built in 1921-23.

The contract was let on October 11 to C. F. Rinehart, St. Louis, for \$87,527. Greenfield stone was



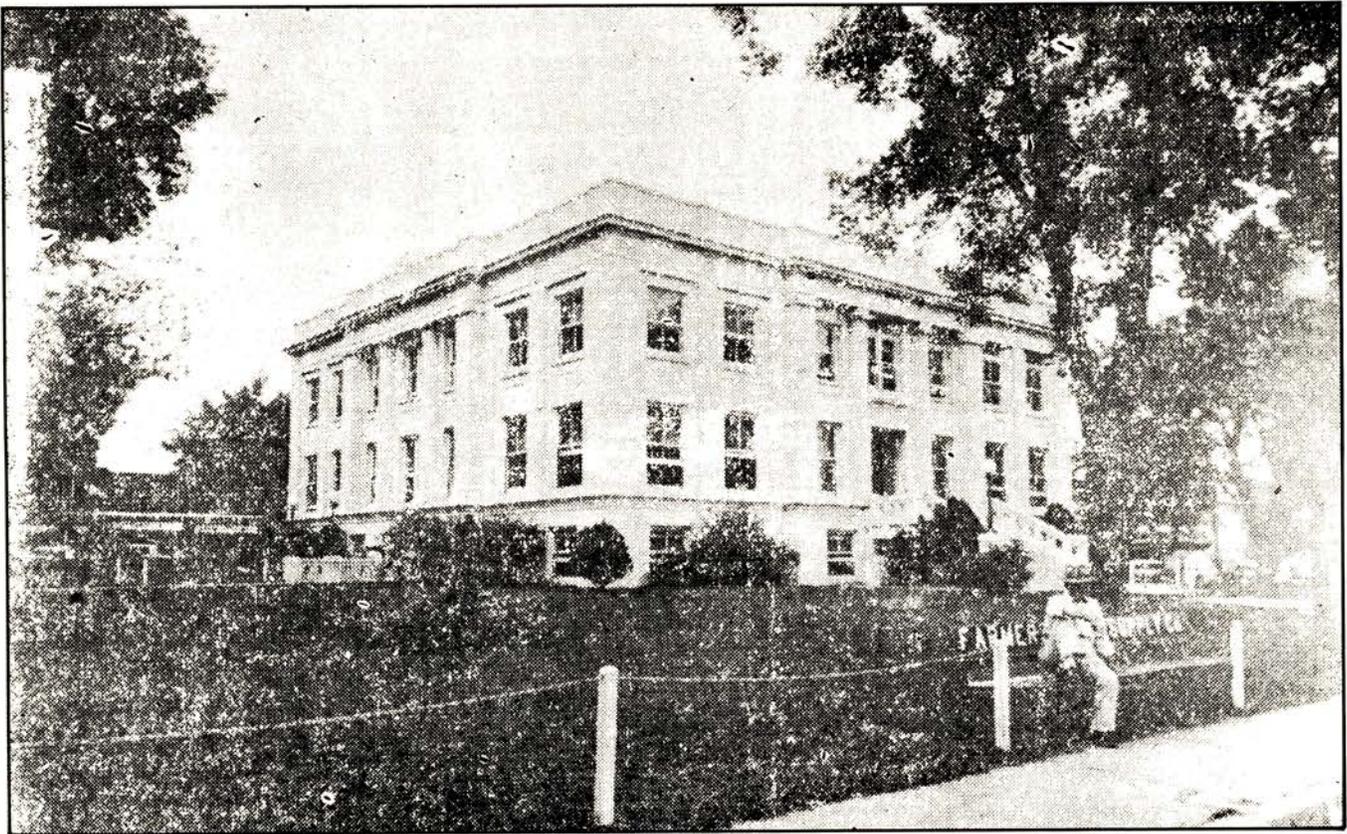


Fig. 2. Dade County Courthouse, 1934-. Architects: Bonsack and Pearce (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

originally specified, but the local quarry was unable to comply, so Carthage stone was the alternate choice. Labor problems with stone cutters and imported skilled laborers caused delays, and the building was not completed until late in 1935. The three-story building, 70 by 70 feet, has the courtroom, which seats 250, on the

third floor. Cornerstone day was March 29, 1935. The county offices moved into their new quarters in December 1935; the court formally accepted the completed building January 18, 1936 (Fig. 2). Approximate total expenditure came to about \$135,000.

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DALLAS COUNTY

Niangua was the name chosen for this county when it was first organized in 1841; after boundaries were slightly changed in December 1844, officials renamed the county Dallas because Niangua was hard to spell, write and pronounce. First courts met in a log schoolhouse, according to recollections of settlers.

Levi Beckner built the first courthouse during 1846-47, a small two-story building with the courtroom on the first floor and county offices on the second. The site was on the present square. Confederate troops burned the building October 18, 1863. Fire also destroyed two subsequent emergency quarters during 1864 and 1867, consuming most county records.

During the February term of 1868 the court appointed Eleazer Hovey, a dentist, superintendent of a new courthouse to be built upon the square and appropriated \$15,000. Plans which Hovey presented to the court for a 44-by-60-foot, two-story, brick building were approved in November 1868. The court awarded the contract to A. E. Dye in February 1869. Dye, who also built Dent and Crawford County courthouses, requested and received an additional sum of \$1,000 for his proposed cupola and door shutter in February 1870. The court accepted the completed building in June 1870. Final costs came to about \$17,500 (Fig. 1).

This building was renovated in 1937 and the cupola was removed in 1951, but it continued in use until destroyed by fire March 2, 1955. Thomas Hart Benton immortalized this Dallas County courthouse in a painting done in the 1950s. Figure 2 shows a 1973 lithograph

County	Dallas
Organized	Jan. 29, 1841
Named After	1844 vice presidential candidate George M. Dallas
County Seat	Buffalo




Fig. 1. Dallas County Courthouse, 1868-1955.
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri, gift of Martin Eichenlaub)



Fig. 2. "County Politics," 1973, Thomas Hart Benton's lithograph of his painting.
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)



Fig. 3. Dallas County Courthouse, 1956-. Architect: Eugene F. Johnson

taken from the painting entitled "County Politics."

Voters approved a courthouse bond for \$250,000 in September 1955; the court selected Eugene F. Johnson architect, and on March 16, 1956, awarded the building contract to Rex A. Kinser for \$241,114. The one-story, 121-foot-square building has a partial basement con-

forming to the site slope. Occupying the center area in the square plan is the Circuit Court room. Completed in February 1958, the dedication ceremonies for Dallas County's present courthouse took place March 5, 1958 (Fig. 3).

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DAVIESS COUNTY

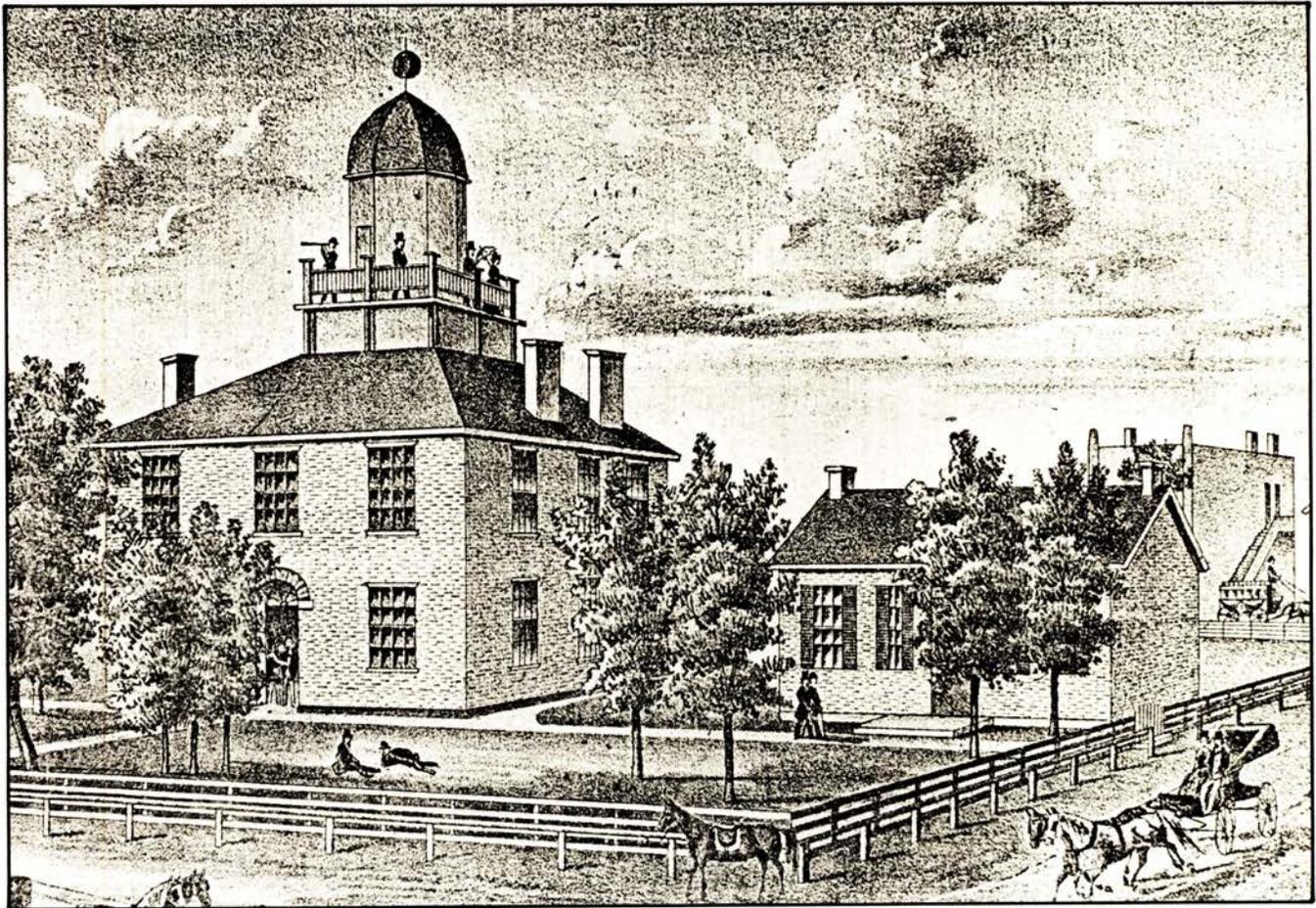


Fig. 1. Daviess County Courthouse, 1840-1886. Architects: Jacob Stollings and W. C. Lincy (From: *Illustrated Historical Atlas of Daviess County, Missouri*, 1876)

County Daviess
 Organized Dec. 29, 1836
 Named After Col. J. H. Daviess
 of Kentucky
 County Seat Gallatin



Philip Covington drafted a plan for the Daviess County courthouse and presented it March 26, 1838. Although the court appropriated \$6,000, this project apparently did not proceed.

Next the court accepted the plans of Jacob Stollings and W. C. Lincy in March 1840. For this courthouse there is both documentary and visual evidence. A drawing from *An Illustrated Historical Atlas of Daviess*



Fig. 2. Daviess County Courthouse, 1906-. Architect: P. H. Weathers (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

County, 1876, depicts this example at Gallatin, and County Court records supply specifications (Fig. 1).

The foundation was to be 3 feet thick, the brick wall of the first floor, 18 inches, and the second story, 13 inches thick. The building was "to be four square." The walls and roof of the colorful building were Venetian red. Doors were beech yellow; white window casings and sashes were accented with green blinds.

Bids for construction were let in 1840, and the contractor was given two years to complete his work. L. Nelson took the contract but needed an additional year. The cost of \$8,094.55 exceeded the original estimates of \$6,000. The work was completed in May 1843.

Double doors on the west and south provided entries to the courtroom, which occupied the entire lower floor. The rostrum on the north was so high that the feet of those on it were above the eye level of spectators seated on wooden benches. A stairway at the southwest corner led to four rooms on the second floor. When celebrating special occasions, the observation tower at the base of the cupola was decorated

with flags. It provided space for speakers or bands. The large cupola, topped by a large brass ball, attracted admiration, but maintenance was a constant problem; leaking began only a few years after construction, causing water damage. Finally, after years of complaints, the court ordered the building razed in 1886.

After several unsuccessful elections, a special election held December 9, 1905, finally produced a vote in favor of a \$75,000 new courthouse. The court selected the plans of P. H. Weathers July 9, 1906. On August 29 the building contract was awarded to M. T. Lewman and Co., Louisville, Kentucky, for \$69,650. Construction began the following November, and the cornerstone was laid May 23, 1907. Work was completed on the building and accepted by the court in August 1908; dedication ceremonies took place October 5, 1908 (Fig. 2). This courthouse resembles those Weathers designed for Cape Girardeau County, 1906, and Stoddard County, 1909.

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DEKALB COUNTY

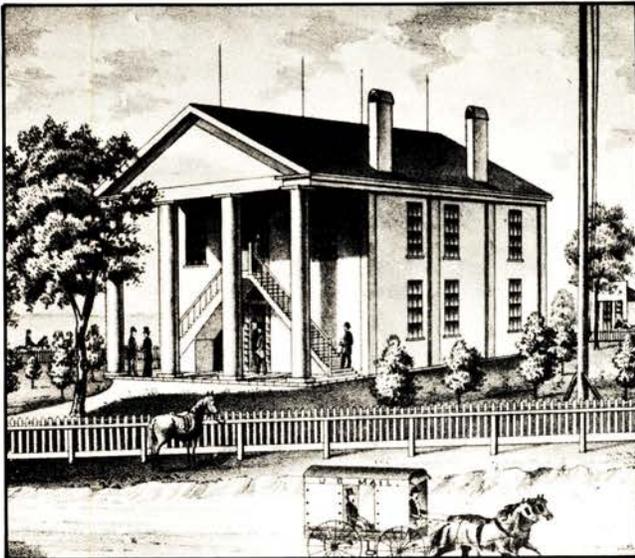
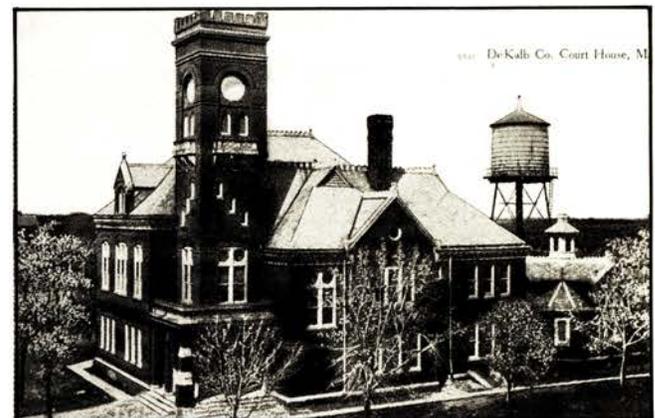
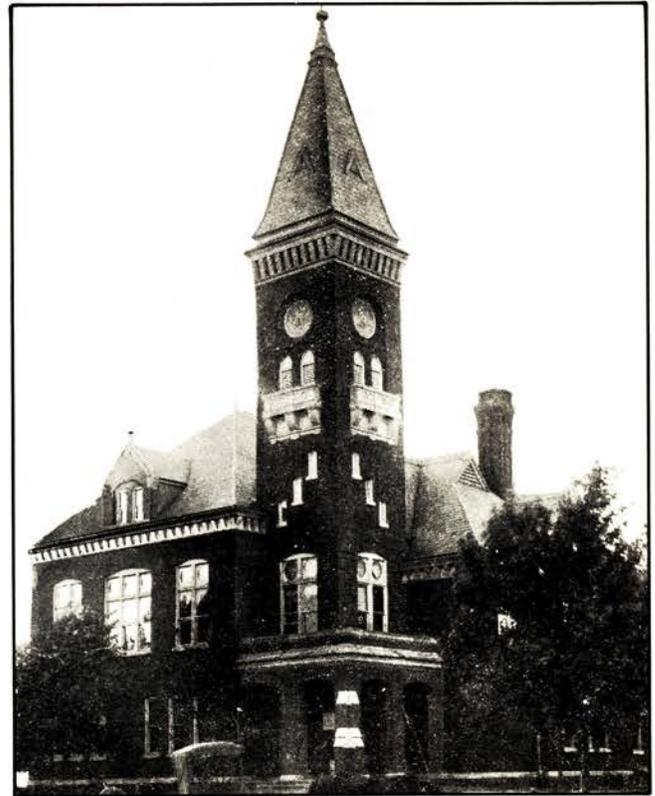


Fig. 1. DeKalb County Courthouse, 1851-1878.
(From: *An Illustrated Historical Atlas of DeKalb County, Missouri*, 1877)

After county organization in 1845, first courts met in homes. In 1848 DeKalb County residents presented a petition to the County Court to build a courthouse, but the court rejected it, preferring to purchase a log cabin on the east side of the public square in Maysville. Three years later a new court looked favorably on building a courthouse and respected the wishes of the petitioners.

In 1851 the court ordered Abram Barger, superintendent, to submit a plan for the courthouse. His original design called for a cupola, but the court

County DeKalb
Organized Feb. 25, 1845
Named After Baron John
DeKalb of
Revolutionary War
fame
County Seat Maysville



Figs. 2 and 3. DeKalb County Courthouse, 1885-1938 (above);
after tower removal (below).
Architects: Eckel and Mann
(From: postcards, Trenton Boyd collection)

considered this an extravagance and eliminated it from the design. The 55-by-30-foot brick courthouse was built by George W. C. McPherson at a cost of approximately \$3,750 and completed in 1852 (Fig. 1). The porticoed entry faced south; the courtroom and two offices were on the first floor, with additional offices on the second floor. The building was destroyed by fire on Christmas night in 1878.

Several communities then contended for the county seat, but Maysville remained the choice of the people. The cornerstone of the next building was laid on August 27, 1885 (Fig. 2). It was designed by the St. Joseph architectural firm of Edmond J. Eckel and George R. Mann. Other northwest Missouri courthouses by this important firm include: Nodaway, 1881, Atchison, 1882, and Gentry, 1884. This brick building contained two wide halls on the first floor and a pair of stairs leading to the second floor. The cost of the building was \$32,000. The jail in the rear of the building contained eight revolving cells and two rooms for hospital care. The spire of the corner tower was taken off after

lightning severely damaged the tower in the early 1900s (Fig. 3). The building was razed in 1938 when a new courthouse was built.

Twice propositions for a new courthouse were defeated, but in August 1938 voters approved a \$55,000 bond issue, which was matched by a \$45,000 government grant. Eckel and Aldrich, St. Joseph, were selected as architects. George R. Eckel was the son of Edmond J. Eckel, architect of the previous courthouse. A contract for about \$59,000 was awarded the J. E. Hathman Construction Co. in December 1938 for a 110-by-55-foot, brick building trimmed with stone. Limited funds prohibited an all-stone structure. Offices and County Court room were on the first floor, Circuit Court room on the second, the jail and sheriff's quarters on the third. Cornerstone ceremonies were held April 10, 1939. The cornerstone from the old courthouse was placed in the entrance hall of the new. Dedication of the new courthouse took place October 20, 1939 (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4. DeKalb County Courthouse, 1938-. Architects: Eckel and Aldrich (From: *Architecture and Design*, Vol. IV, No. 13, July 1940)

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DENT COUNTY

The original area of Dent County was formed from parts of Crawford and Shannon counties; the southwest portion of the county was added later. Present-day boundaries were established by the Revised Statutes of 1879. Commissioners first met in May 1851 to locate the county seat. First courts met in homes, but in 1853 county business was transacted in Salem, the county seat.

In 1852-53 a two-story, brick building was built south of the present courthouse. It measured about 20 by 40 feet; the county offices were downstairs, the courtroom and circuit clerk's office, upstairs. This building, built by J. T. Garvin for \$800, was burned in the Civil War.

The next courthouse, built in 1864, also fell victim to fire in May 1866. This one-story, plank, 26-by-36-foot building, was located on the square. The fire destroyed county records.

By 1870 the county had recovered sufficiently to begin a new courthouse. In March the court accepted a plan from a St. Louis firm, Randolph Brothers, probably the work of Mahlon Randolph. A. E. Dye, who also built Dallas and Crawford County courthouses, contracted the 42-by-78-foot, brick building for \$15,500 (Fig. 1). An additional appropriation of \$1,700 came later. A square tower with mansard roof topped by cresting and opened with dormer windows rises through the center of the facade. The round, arched, open base of the tower provides a foyer to double doors, which lead to a central hall. The courtroom is on the second floor.

In 1896-97 a one-story addition was made on the

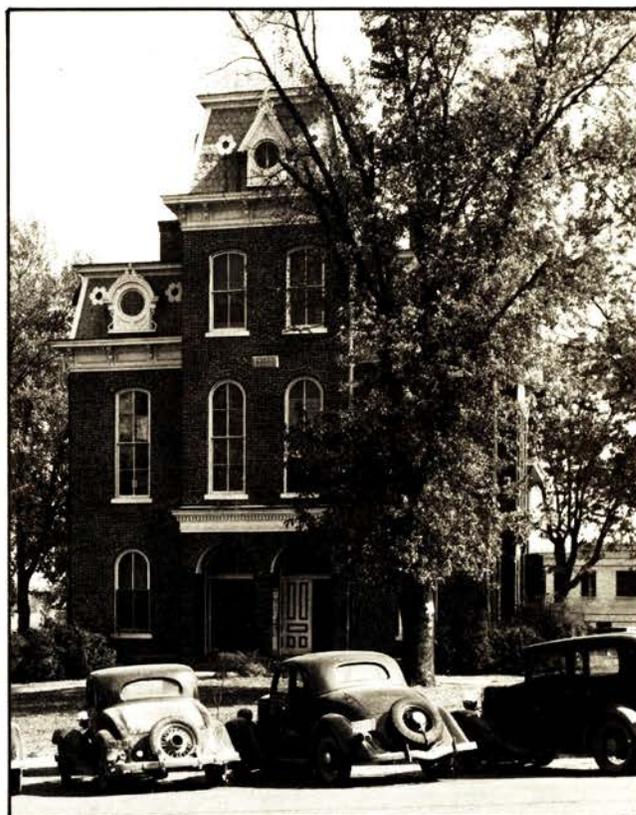


Fig. 1. Dent County Courthouse, 1870-.
Architect: Randolph Brothers.
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

east; a 1911 project increased the addition to two-stories. Originally, there were two stairways, one on either side of the entry. About 1933 the north stairway was removed, and the space was converted to the treasurer's office. At the same time, the court authorized boxing in an area next to the south stairway to provide an additional office; the handmade walnut stair railing and walnut and cherry courtroom benches were painted yellow. Renovation in 1976 included new windows, paneling, suspended ceilings, remodeled restrooms and restoration of the building's trim. The Dent County courthouse is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

County	Dent	
Organized	Feb. 10, 1851	
Named After . . .	Lewis Dent, an early settler and first state representative	
County Seat . . .	Salem	

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DOUGLAS COUNTY

Different accounts conflict concerning the history of Douglas County's courthouses. In addition to the published histories, a manuscript by Herbert Garton, based upon 1937-38 Work Projects Administration interviews with early settlers and county officials, provided more information about Douglas County's history.

After bitter quarreling over location of the county seat, Vera Cruz became the compromise choice. The first courthouse, made of logs by volunteer labor, was completed in six weeks. It had a puncheon floor and hand-crafted furnishings. County officials occupied the building December 27, 1857.

The county seat moved to Rome after a Civil War incident in which the courthouse in Vera Cruz was fired upon, but continued war activity in Rome prompted a return to Vera Cruz.

Beginning in 1866 a series of elections were held attempting to move the county seat to Arno. The elections failed but contributed to intensified rivalry between east and west. The struggle culminated with Arno advocates "stealing the courthouse" (i.e. county records) and moving them to the home of the circuit clerk in Arno on February 24, 1872. For two weeks no one knew where the records were.

Retaliation came when citizens of Militia Springs (called Ava since 1881) built a \$350 courthouse in 1872, retrieved the records and placed them in a log vault. Vandals burned the Militia Springs courthouse, destroying many records in July 1872, according to the *Jefferson City People's Tribune*. The paper's account carried a taste of cynicism:

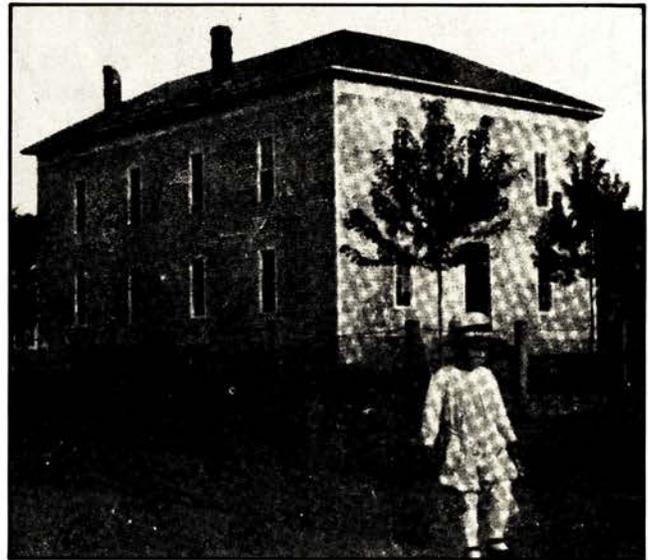


Fig. 1. Douglas County Courthouse, 1888-1937.
(From: *Douglas County Herald*, March 26, 1976)

"... who he is will probably never be found out, or if so, he would never be punished, as no crime committed in that county has been punished since the war, at least so far as we know."

Curry's *A Reminiscent History of Douglas County* mentioned an 1870 fire, which may have been a separate incident.

After the fire citizens promptly began to rebuild a courthouse of hand-hewn lumber (the first not of logs) in Militia Springs, which was completed and occupied January 22, 1873. Precise location of this courthouse is not certain; it may have been in the center of the square, as Garton claims, or on a corner lot northwest of the central square, as another account reports.

Strong antagonism continued with repeated petitions presented to move the county seat. Again the courthouse was burned, this time by the county assessor-treasurer, destroying incriminating evidence of embezzlement. The court convicted him of arson and sentenced him to five years in prison. Date of the fire was about April 26 or 27, 1886. According to the *Jefferson*

County Douglas	
Organized Oct. 29, 1857	
Named After . . . Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois	
County Seat . . . Ava	



Fig. 2. Ava city square without courthouse.
(From: *Early Settlers of Douglas County, Missouri*, 1952)

City Daily Tribune, it was May 2, 1886. Persistent attempts to move the county seat continued stirring dissension between sections of the county well into the 20th century.

A schoolhouse provided space for the courts to meet until a two-story, 40-by-70-foot, clapboard building with hip roof was built in 1888 on the square (Fig. 1). This courthouse continued in use until 1937 when it was sold for \$350.

Government talk of possibly funding about 50 percent of construction costs for a new courthouse prompted the Douglas County Planning Commission to assess needs. Their existing courthouse was a fire hazard and structurally weak; the building swayed, and doors could not be closed because of sagging timbers. The court hired Dan R. Sanford, who had experience with similar projects and government grants. The plan-

ning board recommended that the old site be turned over to the city and used as a park. Public opinion was divided, but the decision was made to move from the original square.

In September 1935 citizens voted a \$50,000 bond issue, to be supplemented by a government grant of \$33,545. Specifications that Sanford submitted included a \$3,000 sum for purchase of a new site. The 185-foot square was too small to accommodate the new building. Then, too, a highway had been routed through the center of town in 1923; the noise from increased automobile traffic interfered with court business. An open central square in a county seat is rarely found in Missouri (Fig. 2).

Contracts for building the new courthouse were awarded in December 1935 to Week's Construction Co., Kansas City. The red brick building is trimmed with "cast" stone, made with Carthage stone chips, crushed, mixed with cement, cast into blocks and polished to give the appearance of quarried stone (Fig. 3). Work began in March 1936, and county officials moved into the completed building in January 1937.



Fig. 3. Douglas County Courthouse, 1936-.
Architect: Dan R. Sanford
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

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DUNKLIN COUNTY

Goodspeed's *History of Southeast Missouri* of 1888 provides the history of Dunklin County courthouses, since county records were destroyed by fire.

Hiram Langdon built Dunklin County's first courthouse in 1847 on the square. The 40-foot-square, 1½-story building was made of hewn gum logs. The courtroom was on the lower floor; an outdoor stairway led to the second-story offices. Fire destroyed this courthouse during the Civil War.

A large, two-story, frame courthouse, 50 by 60 feet, built in 1870, also fell to flames in April 1872; this was the fire that destroyed all records. From April 1872 until 1892, courts rented a frame building on the south side of the square.

Dunklin County residents did not authorize construction of a new courthouse until almost 20 years later on September 19, 1891, when they approved bonds for \$15,000. Several architects contacted the court. Henry H. Hohenschild, architect of numerous Missouri courthouses, presented two designs. The *Kennett Clipper* reported that a proposal by Mr. Harding, from Little Rock, Arkansas, had the finest appearance, but the arrangement of offices, vaults and courtroom was not appropriate. The court accepted the design of Louis Miller on March 10, 1892 (Fig. 1). The brick building measured 56 by 80 feet; it was 40 feet high, 96 feet to the top of the tower.

When they contemplated building, some expressed the opinion that the square was too small. Then, after construction began, it was apparent to some that the building was too small for the square. Even before construction was completed, there were those who



Fig. 1. Dunklin County Courthouse, 1892-1937.

Architect: Louis Miller

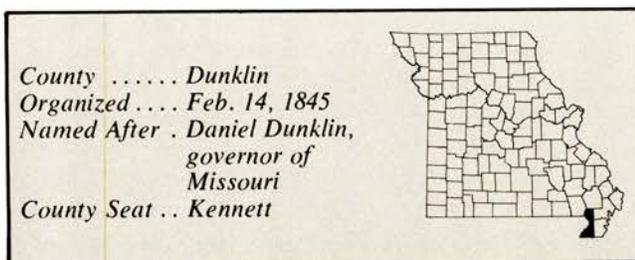
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

maintained that the courthouse was not large enough to serve the needs of Dunklin County. Nevertheless, one attorney praised the acoustics as the best he had encountered.

A St. Louis construction company, Shinnick and Robinson, submitted the low bid of slightly less than \$15,000 and received the contract for building the courthouse. On August 9, 1892, the county held a cornerstone day picnic at the fairgrounds.

In 1937 the courthouse was reported in dangerous condition. The dome had sunk several inches; ceiling joists were pulled completely out of the walls, and the Circuit Court room was in danger of collapsing. The *Dunklin Democrat* claimed it was the worst courthouse in southeast Missouri. The building was razed in 1937. Louis Miller's drawing was found in the cornerstone.

For the new courthouse, the Work Projects Administration offered to assist with a \$150,000 building if the county would contribute one-third. The county



placated local concern by agreeing not to move the site; in addition the court selected a committee of six upstanding citizens to act in an advisory capacity, representing different sections of the county. In April 1937 a bond issue was passed for \$50,000 to be used in conjunction with the Work Projects Administration courthouse. The committee interviewed architects and visited courthouses in neighboring counties as well as those in Ripley, Tennessee and Jonesboro and Blytheville, Arkansas.

They selected Ernest T. Friton, St. Louis, as architect and instructed him to go to Jonesboro, Arkan-

sas, and Ripley, Tennessee, to examine courthouses that particularly impressed them. Friton's plan for a two-story, brick building with skeleton-type concrete construction, 116 by 75 feet, was approved. Excavation began in December 1937. The building was completed in February 1940. A special feature is a map of Dunklin County executed in the terrazzo floor. The Circuit Court room was finished in black walnut with walnut wainscoting. The cost, including furnishings, came to approximately \$178,000 (Fig. 2).

Architect Friton also designed Montgomery County's courthouse in 1953. Both buildings are still used for county business.



Fig. 2. Dunklin County Courthouse, 1937-. Architect: Ernest T. Friton (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

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FRANKLIN COUNTY

Franklin County has had four courthouses. Newport (also called Campbellton in 1854 and Dundee in 1857), served as Franklin's county seat from date of organization in 1818 until 1826. Newport was the site of the first courthouse.

The \$1,950 contract for a brick, two-story courthouse in Newport was awarded to James McDonald in December 1819. The court gave McDonald a promissory note, and when the court could not meet the obligation, McDonald sued. The case was carried to the Missouri Supreme Court, where McDonald was awarded \$3,432.25 plus costs. As part of the settlement the court awarded him the public square. His heirs later deeded it back to the county.

Final cost of the courthouse amounted to about \$3,700. The court received this building July 13, 1820, and it continued in use as a courthouse until 1827. By Clark Brown's account of the history of the courthouse, it was razed early in the 20th century; the Work Projects Administration report claimed it was standing in the 1930s.

Because of the inconvenient river site, the legislature acted upon a citizens' petition for removal of the county seat to within three miles of the center of the county. Court was to continue in Newport until the courthouse in the new county seat was completed. The county seat moved from Newport to Union in 1827.

A log building in Union, built by Ambrose Ranson, was used by the county from June 1827 until November 1828, while construction on the courthouse took place (Fig. 1).

The second courthouse built in Union was on the

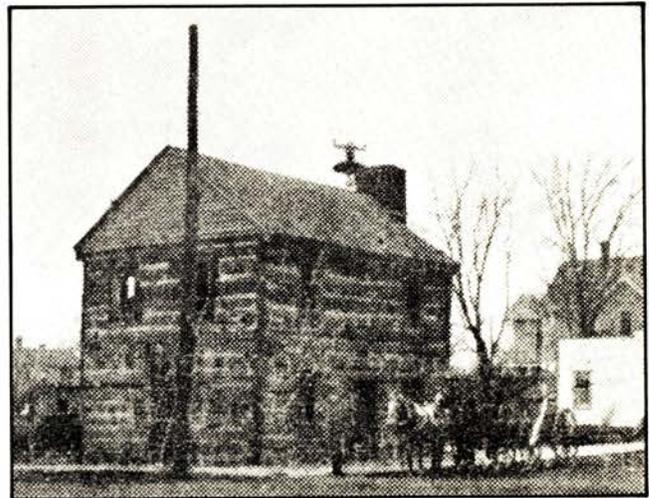


Fig. 1. Franklin County Courthouse, 1827-1828.
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

square; it was a one-story, brick building with one room on the south and three on the north. The court received the courthouse February 5, 1827. No official record of the cost has been found, but an 1877 history indicated \$844.79, the figure which has been used since. Tradition claimed it was a log building; Goodspeed's *History*, 1888, calls it a log courthouse; but Clark Brown's deed evidence for a brick building is convincing.

By the 1840s the courthouse was in poor condition, and while there was interest in building a new one, there was also agitation to move the county seat to Washington. But the county seat remained at Union; the one-story, brick courthouse was used until 1849.

The court appropriated \$5,000 on November 18, 1847, for a courthouse. Henry H. Wright completed construction in May 1849, then sued the court to receive \$50 compensation for the use of his plans and specifications. Wright did similar courthouses for other counties: St. Francois, 1848; Washington, 1849; and Iron, 1858.

The building measured 45 by 60 feet; the courtroom

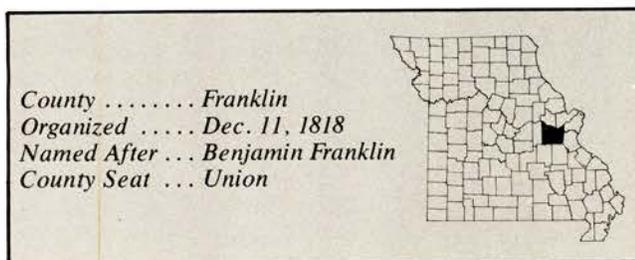




Fig. 2. Franklin County Courthouse, 1847-1922.
 Architect: Henry H. Wright
 (From: *Centennial Biographical Directory of Franklin County, Missouri*, 1925)

on the second floor was to have 16-foot ceilings, with a gallery on the south; the stairs, too, were located on the south end of the building (Fig. 2). Costs may have finally mounted to \$7,720.

The gallery on the entire south end of the Circuit Court room was later closed and made into two rooms. Serious cracking occurred in 1868. In addition to general repairs authorized at that time, the court ordered the cupola removed and a new roof; a 34-foot addition was made on the south. Costs came to \$5,000 - \$6,000. This addition needed more than \$4,000 worth of repairs in 1885. A west wing and vaults were begun in 1891 and completed in February 1892 at a cost of \$6,604.75.

At a public meeting March 9, 1921, citizens agreed that the building was not worth the estimated \$30,000

repair; the 1847 courthouse was razed in February 1922.

Voters authorized construction on the 20th century courthouse in August 1921 in a special election. The court accepted the plans of a St. Louis firm, Bonsack and Pearce, November 16, 1921 (Fig. 3). Sealed bids for construction were received March 13, 1922, and the court accepted George H. Gassmann's bid of nearly \$155,250. Cornerstone ceremonies took place in September 1922.

The three-story, 90-foot-square building with four similar facades is built of reinforced concrete with Carthage and Bedford facing stone. Total costs amounted to more than \$200,000. The court received the building in July 1923, and a dedication was held the following month.

In 1975 a second courtroom for the second division of Circuit Court was created in a \$42,550 remodeling project, financed by federal revenue sharing funds.



Fig. 3. Franklin County Courthouse, 1922-.
 Architect: Norman Howard of the firm Bonsack and Pearce
 (Courtesy: Western Historical Manuscripts Collection)

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GASCONADE COUNTY



Fig. 1. Gasconade County Courthouse, Hermann, 1842-1896, top of hill on right. Drawn by Robyn ca. 1859-60. (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

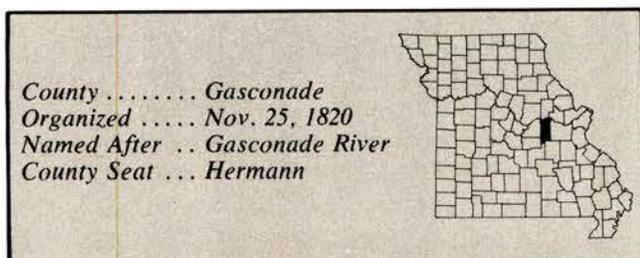
Gasconade City, Bartonville and Mount Sterling were early locations of Gasconade's county seat. Courts began meeting in Gasconade City, located on the Gasconade River, in 1821 and continued meeting there until 1825, when flooding caused relocation. The second site, Bartonville, was also located on the Gasconade River, in what later became Osage County. It, too, flooded, and the county seat next moved to Mount Sterling in 1832.

Volume A of the County Court Record indicates that the court planned a one-story, 22-foot-square,

hewn-log building; however Goodspeed's *History of Franklin, Jefferson, Washington, Crawford and Gasconade Counties* of 1886 describes a 20-by-24-foot, log, two-story building on stone foundation, with a stone chimney and two fireplaces. The courtroom was on the first floor. Joshua Cox contracted the building for about \$300.

After an election on March 14, 1842, the county seat moved to Hermann. The town paid for the courthouse, which was built in the center of a block on East Front Street (Fig. 1). This site, high on a bluff above the Missouri River, is one of few courthouse sites that takes advantage of a natural vista. The square, two-story, brick building with hip roof cost about \$3,000 (Fig. 2). The County Court used this courthouse until 1896 when they ordered it razed.

The present courthouse, a gift to the county from Charles D. Eitzen, was built in 1896-98. Architects were J. B. Legg, St. Louis, and A. W. Elsner, Jefferson City, who originally presented plans calling for a 143-by-88-foot building. The two-story courthouse had



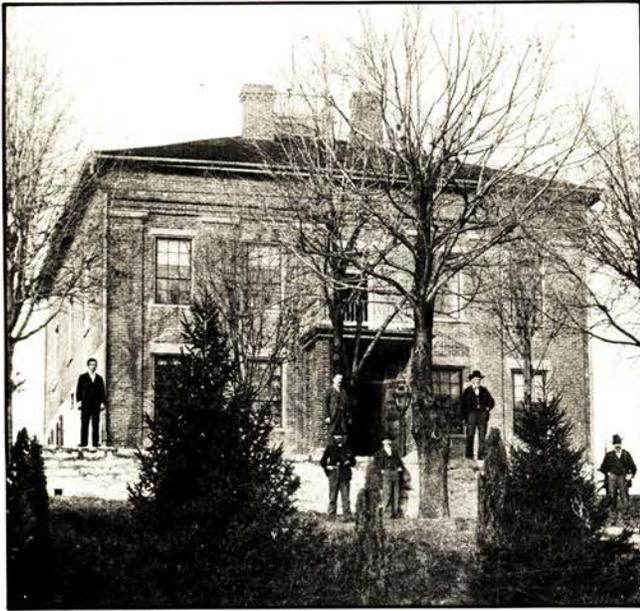


Fig. 2. Gasconade County Courthouse, Hermann, 1842-1896.
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri, gift of W. J. Eitzen)

a finished basement and a dome that rose 120 feet. Originally, the building was to be constructed of light-gray or medium-buff brick with matching terra cotta trim. The main roof was to be dark Pennsylvania slate, the dome roofs of tin, painted a copper color. The rotunda and corridors were to be tiled in Italian marble and mosaic.

In February 1897 the court called for bids. Thirty contractors responded, but all bids for the Legg-Elsner design were too high. The architects then modified the plans, eliminating some of the more costly specifica-

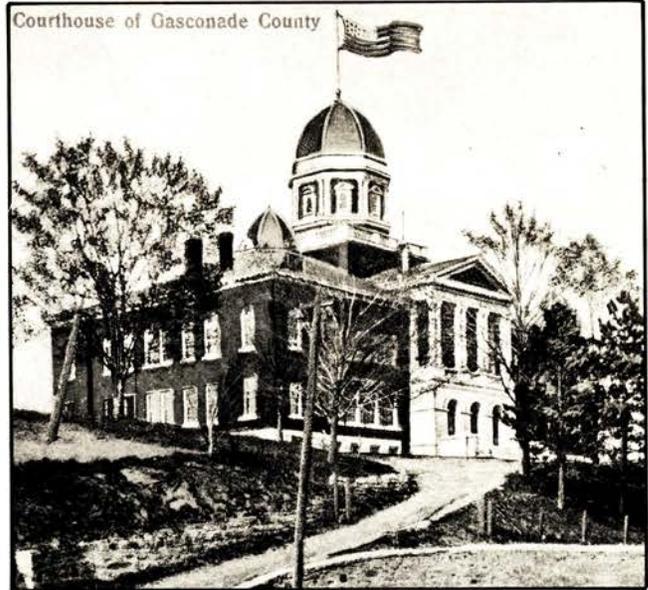


Fig. 3. Gasconade County Courthouse, 1898.

Architects: J. B. Legg and A. W. Elsner
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

tions. Red brick with white stone trim was substituted for the gray or buff brick. Again the court called for bids; H. J. Wallau received the building contract for \$41,500 and completed his work in 1898 (Fig. 3). On the first floor, offices open off a long east-west hall; the 41-by-44-foot Circuit Court room is located on the west end of the second story. Dedication took place May 25, 1898. Fire damaged the building February 3, 1905.

This courthouse may be compared with two similar courthouses Legg designed a few years later: Mississippi County, also of red brick, and St. Charles County, done in gray stone.

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GENTRY COUNTY

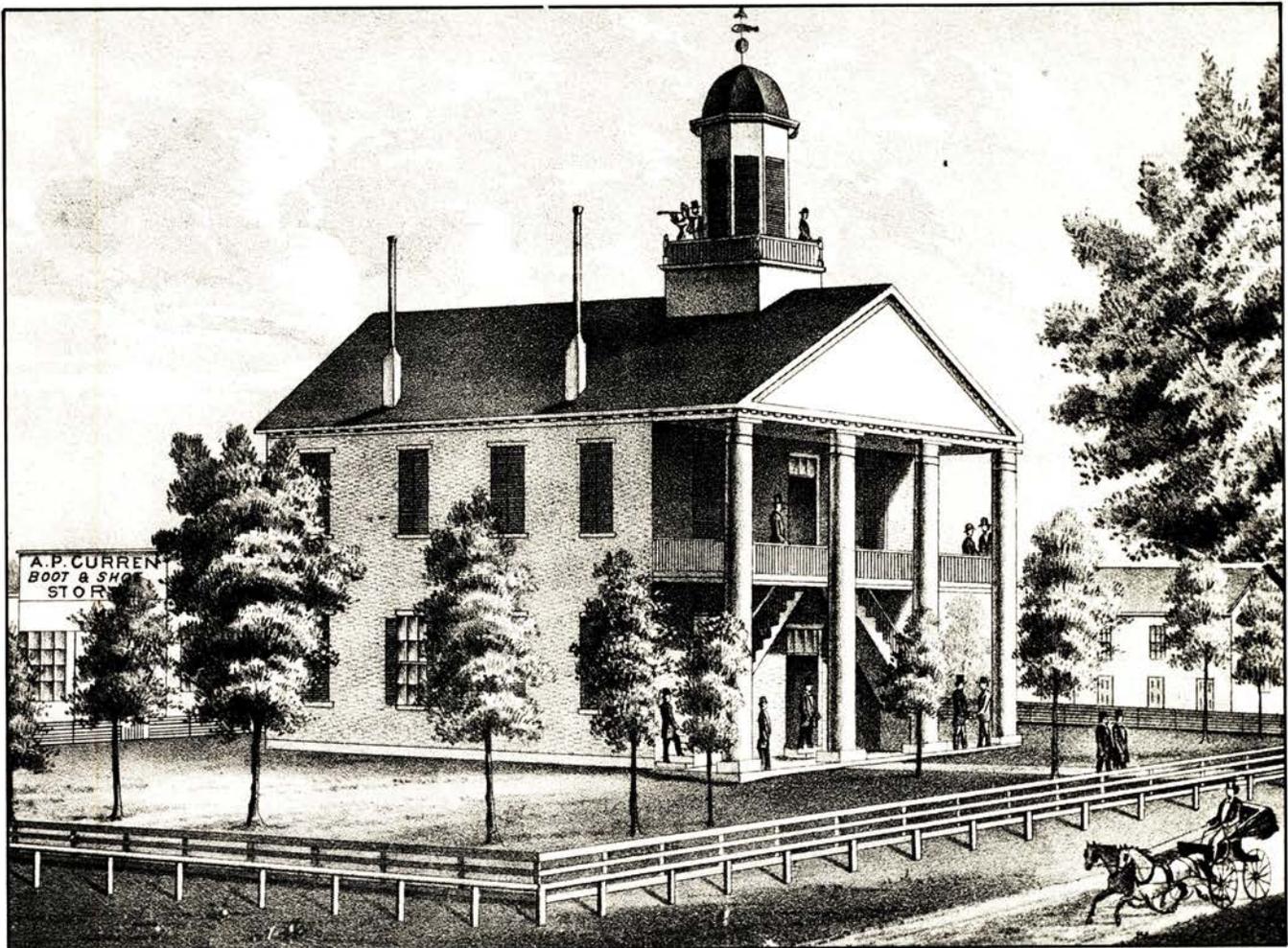


Fig. 1. Gentry County Courthouse, 1853-1883. (From: *An Illustrated Historical Atlas of Gentry County, Missouri*, 1877)

<p>County Gentry Organized Feb. 14, 1845 Named After . . . Gen. Richard Gentry County Seat . . . Albany</p>	
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The name of the county seat of Gentry County, originally Athens, was changed to Albany in 1857. Isaac Cameron was commissioner of the first courthouse, which dates from 1845. The court order, issued June 7, 1845, called for a hewn-log, two-story building, 24 by 20 feet. There were three upper rooms, a brick chimney and two fireplaces. Two doors and two win-

Gentry County Court House, Albany, Mo.

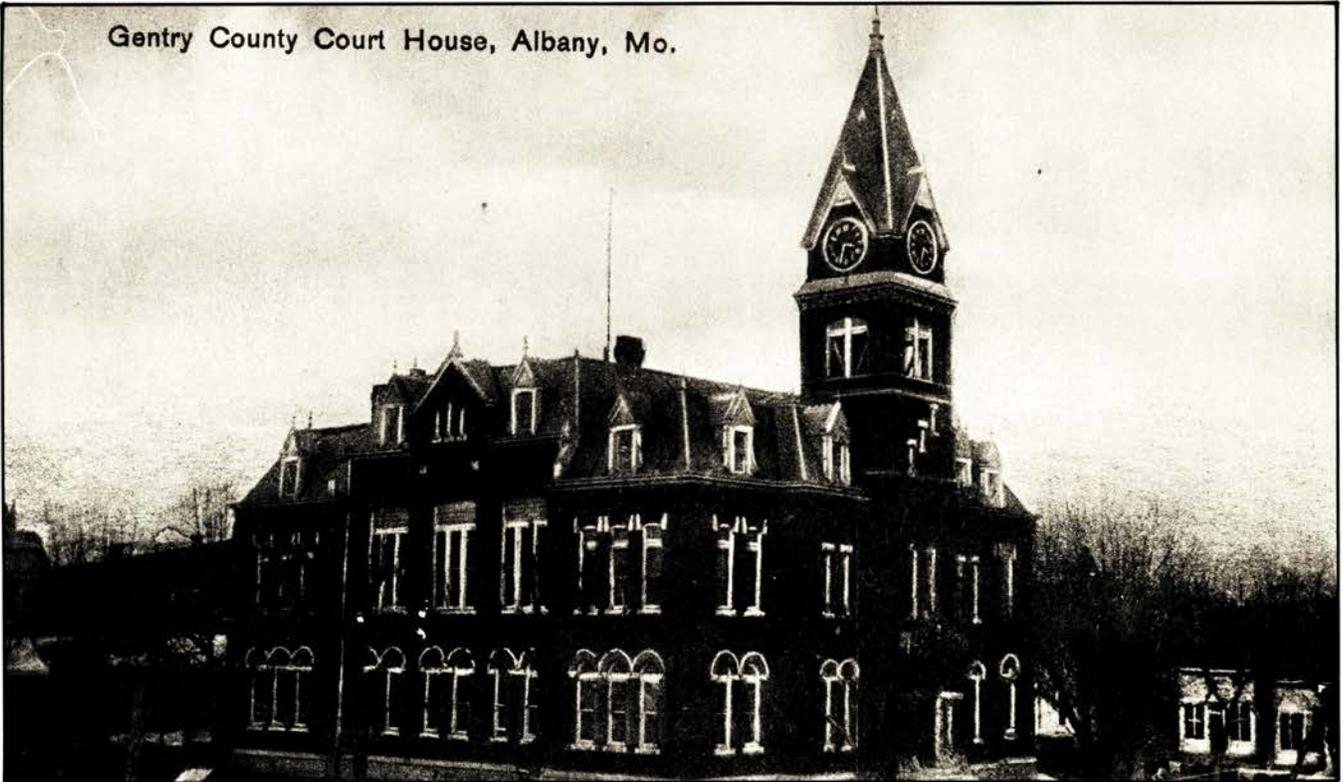


Fig. 2. Gentry County Courthouse, 1884-. Architects: Eckel & Mann (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

dows were in the lower story, and one window and one door in each upper room. The courtroom was located in the lower floor with curved bar and judge's bench. The courthouse and lot sold for \$275 to Judge Elias Parrot when a new building was anticipated.

The second courthouse in Gentry County was a temple-type building erected between 1853-55 by George H. Mosley, who sub-contracted some of the work. It was a brick building, 60 by 45 feet, two stories with a 12-foot-wide portico on the south. There were four rooms upstairs for a public hall and jury rooms. The courtroom originally was located in the lower story and measured 40 by 45 feet. During remodeling in 1875, the courtroom was moved to the second story (Fig. 1). Exterior stairs may have been added at that time. Total

appropriations for the building came to about \$6,000. The building was destroyed by windstorm on July 13, 1883.

The third and present courthouse, a three-story brick building, dates from 1884-85. Designed by Edmond J. Eckel, one of northwest Missouri's finest architects, it was built by Rufus K. Allen, St. Joseph, Missouri, who first contracted for the exterior and roofing of the 200-foot-square building for \$22,000, and later completed the interior work. The cost was \$29,100.

Cornerstone for the building was laid August 24, 1884; the building was accepted June 5, 1885 (Fig. 2). Other Missouri courthouses by Eckel's firm include Nodaway, 1881, Atchison, 1882 and DeKalb, 1885.

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GREENE COUNTY

Courts in Greene County met first in the home of John P. Campbell. He donated 50 acres to the county, and proceeds from the sale of the lots provided revenue for public buildings. Orders in the court record suggest facilities for a courtroom were installed in his home.

Instructions to build a courthouse on the square came on November 28, 1836. Sidney Ingram, superintendent, presented the plan for a brick, two-story, 40-by-36-foot building on rock foundation. A flat roof was first contemplated, but later changed to a hip roof. The court appropriated \$3,250 for this building.

A description of the anticipated building is in the County Court Record, Book A. In addition to the roof change, a brick partition wall order was later rescinded, and new orders pertaining to stairs were made. No known illustrations exist, but a 1910 description in the *Springfield Daily Republican* called it a modest brick structure, plastered or cemented on the outside and marked to imitate cut stone. This same account referred to a pretentious central dome and four entrances to crossing halls.

An order issued in January 1859 to sell the building and have it removed apparently was never carried out. Civil War prisoners were confined in the building in 1861. Also restrained in the courthouse was a deranged local man, who set a fire that destroyed the building October 28, 1861.

A site off the square was selected for the second courthouse, which was begun in 1858. Commissioners recommended purchase of a \$3,000 lot on the northwest corner of the public square at College Street; the court appropriated \$40,000 for the building.

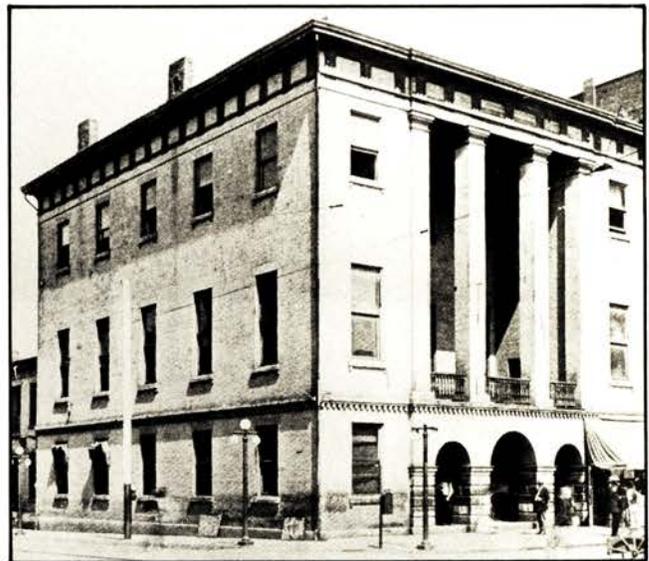
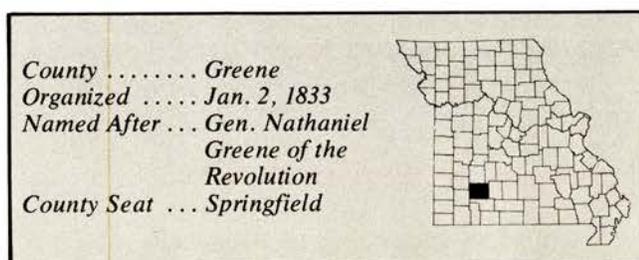


Fig. 1. Greene County Courthouse, 1859-1914.
(From: *Past and Present of Greene County*, 1915)

By April 1861 three rooms were finished and clerks moved into the new quarters. The courtroom was on the second floor. This was one of the few three-story buildings in southwest Missouri; the design is unusual for Missouri courthouses of this period, but the architect is not known.

The court paid Josiah Leedy, one of three commissioners, \$163.25 for plans and specifications of the nearly square building featuring columns and classical details. Pillars at the base were of "cotton" rock (Fig. 1). Leedy then submitted the low bid of \$36,000 for construction. Acute financial circumstances and the Civil War prevented Leedy from fulfilling the contract. The courthouse acquired military significance during that tumultuous period, but miraculously escaped destruction. Repaired after the war, it continued in use as a courthouse until 1914.

An active community developed north of Springfield, and for a number of years the two towns had



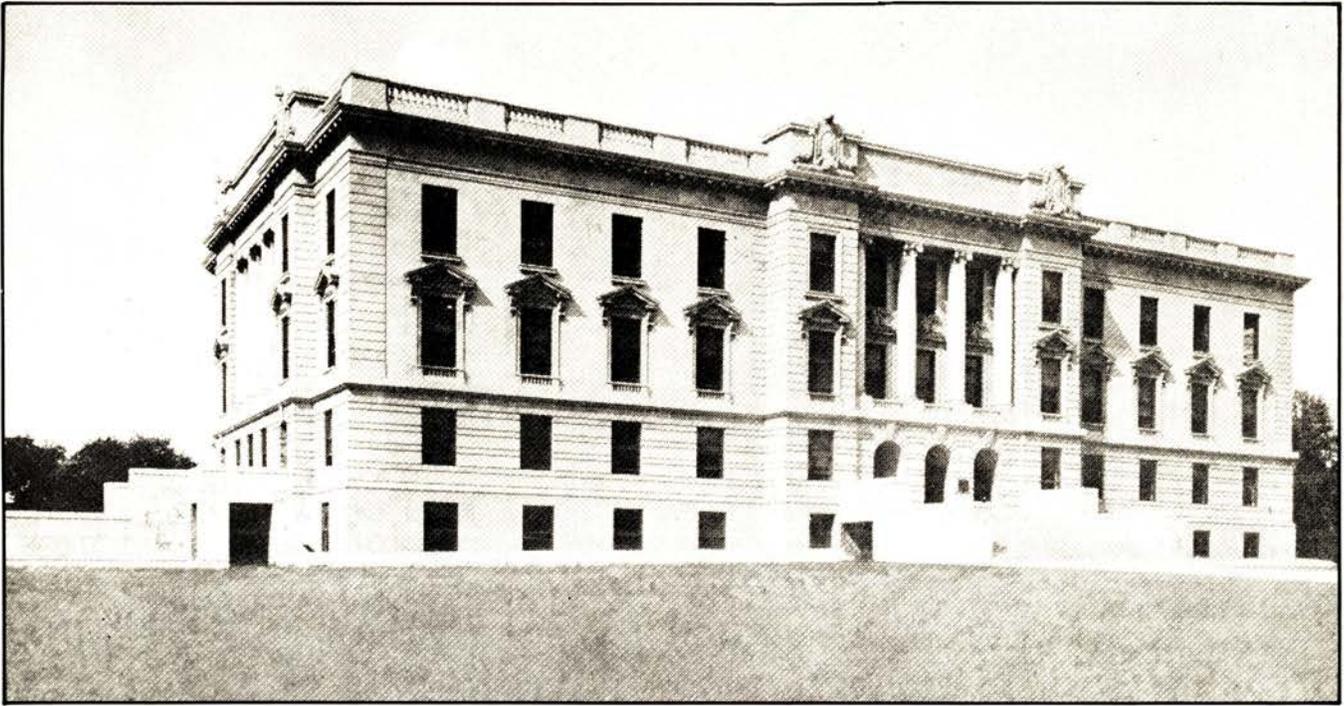


Fig. 2. Greene County Courthouse, 1910-. Architect: A.N. Torbitt of Miller, Opel and Torbitt (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

separate corporate existence. They became united in 1877 under one city government. For the 20th century courthouse, a site on Central Street, north of the previous square, was selected and purchased by the County Court commissioner in February 1908. The decision was intended to link the two developments but instead became the subject of great controversy.

The campaign for a new courthouse started a year later. From competing architects the court selected the plan of A. N. Torbitt, of Miller, Opel and Torbitt, a Jefferson City firm which may have had a Springfield office. The announcement came as something of a surprise, for there was speculation that Reed and Heckenlively, a Springfield firm, would receive the commission. Other contenders included George E. McDonald and P. H. Weathers. Both were responsible for several Missouri courthouses. McDonald designed courthouses for Johnson, Andrew, Lawrence and Bates counties. Weathers did Cape Girardeau, Daviess and Stoddard counties. Out-of-state architects came from Texas and Alabama.

The design had an optional dome, but for financial reasons, the court decided against it, saving an estimated \$25,000 (Fig. 2). Built of Greene County Phoenix stone, the building measured about 100 by 200 feet. The first stage of construction called for the shell of the building; expensive interior work was completed later, after a \$150,000 bond issue was passed in April 1911. The court estimated final costs to be about \$200,000.

The first contract was awarded the J. E. Gibson

Construction Co. of Tulsa, Oklahoma, for \$81,749, but later assigned to Hiram Lloyd Co. of St. Louis. Construction began in April 1910. Cornerstone ceremonies were held July 16, 1910. County offices moved into the new facilities in March 1912, although work continued until the building was completed in 1915.

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GRUNDY COUNTY

First courts of Grundy County met in homes, and then for more than a year they met in a log church. Grundy County has built only two courthouses. The first, which dates from 1840, was a popular type. It was an almost square, two-story, brick building, 40 by 45 feet with hip roof and central cupola (Fig. 1). A complete description can be found in the 1842 County Court Record.

The walls of the Trenton courthouse were laid in Flemish bond, that is, with alternating headers (the short end of the brick) and stretchers (the long side) in each course. Four fireplaces were planned. There were two doors and 21 windows.

The cupola was to measure 21 feet to the top of the dome from the 13-foot-square base. Specifications called for a shuttered drum to be 11 feet tall on an 8-foot-square base. The dome was to be covered with tin topped by a rod with gold-leafed ball and dart. The walnut shingles were painted a Spanish brown, the body of the courthouse painted a rock color; doors, sashes, cornices and the cupola were to be white. No known photographs exist that show the cupola.

Andrew J. Walker was superintendent; contractors for the \$6,000 courthouse were William Collier, Larkin Richardson and Joseph Thompson, all from Howard County. The contract was awarded in March 1842; construction was to be completed by July 1844. After many years of service, this courthouse was finally abandoned and sold in 1902 to an individual who planned to reuse the brick.

After securing a \$60,000 bond commitment for courthouse and jail in December 1901, Grundy County officials had proposals from 30 architects. It was a year



Fig. 1. Grundy County Courthouse, 1842-1902.
(From: *Centennial History of Grundy County*, 1939)

before officials found a plan that could be built within the appropriation. In addition to examining plans which came to them, the court officials visited Kirksville, Palmyra, Hannibal, Macon, Jefferson City, Warrensburg, Butler and Nevada in Missouri; Ottawa, Topeka, Clay Center, Beloit and Garnet, Kansas; and Thayer and Beatrice, Nebraska.

Plans by the Topeka, Kansas, firm of Holland and Squires, and those from architect R. G. Kirsch ran to as much as \$10,000 over the estimated costs when put out for bid. George A. Berlinghoff, Beatrice, Nebraska, then offered a proposal that was also first bid above the limit, but Berlinghoff put the court in touch with contractor John H. Sparks, who received the contract for his bid of \$57,000. Cornerstone ceremonies took place in December 1903, and the building was dedicated October 25, 1905.

The courthouse, which still serves as the Grundy County temple of justice, is on the same block as the

County	Grundy	
Organized	Jan. 29, 1841	
Named After . . .	Felix Grundy, U.S. senator from Tennessee	
County Seat . . .	Trenton	

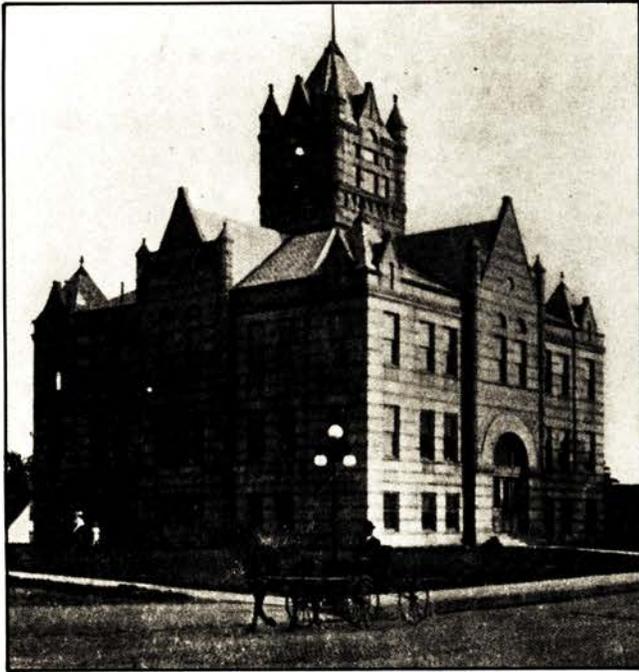


Fig. 2. Grundy County Courthouse, 1903-
Architect: George A. Berlinghoff
(From: *Standard Atlas of Grundy County, Missouri*, 1915)

first courthouse (Fig. 2). Constructed of Bedford stone, the building measures 79 by 84 feet. Height to the cornice is 45 feet and to the top of the tower, 106 feet. There are alternating courses of rough and smooth stones; the rough courses extend inward, becoming an integral part of the wall. There are three stories and four entrances. The Circuit Court room is 31 by 52 feet. Although the task was difficult, court officials managed to keep costs very close to the \$60,000 figure.

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HARRISON COUNTY

An order issued by the Harrison County Court on June 14, 1845, commissioned John S. Allen to procure plans and superintend the construction of a courthouse in Bethany, on a site northeast of the public square.

The County Court Record described the new courthouse as a 24-by-20-foot frame, 1½-story building, with the lower story 9 feet and the upper story 5 feet. There were to be two windows in the upper story, seven in the lower, all to have 12 panes. The specifications did not mention a door. Presumably this was left to the discretion of the builder.

Elkana Grover contracted to build for \$194. In December 1857, as a new courthouse was being constructed on the square, the court offered this building for sale; Charles J. Blackburn bought it for \$500.40. The building continued in private use until razed in 1881. The material was then reused in another building constructed on the same site.

In February 1856 the court appropriated \$8,000 for the second courthouse, which was constructed on the square. William G. Lewis superintended the building; the contract was let to Asbury Allen and Allen S. Meek for \$9,732. They made the brick in 1856 and began construction in 1857. It was two stories and measured 65 by 40 feet. A hall divided the building lengthwise on the first floor, with four rooms on the south, three on the north. The courtroom and jury rooms were on the second floor. Fire destroyed the building January 7, 1874.

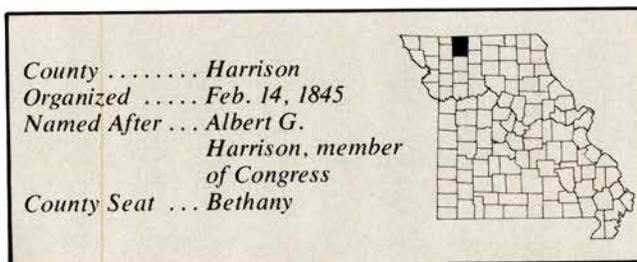
Immediately the court appointed Charles J. Blackburn to get plans and superintend construction of the replacement; W. Angelo Powell, St. Joseph, has been identified as architect (Figs. 1 and 2). The court appropriated \$9,000 on January 22, 1874; citizens donated



Fig. 1. Harrison County Courthouse 1874-1939, front view.
Architect: W. Angelo Powell
(From: *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, Nov. 1, 1925)



Fig. 2. Harrison County Courthouse, 1874-1939, side view.
(From: *Standard Atlas of Harrison County, Missouri*, 1917)



\$3,000 to the fund.

Benton Edwards and Isaac Hayes of Macon were awarded the contract for the two-story, brick, 80-by-45-

foot building, which they began in May 1874. The court received the completed courthouse in November 1874. Part of the existing walls of the old courthouse may have been incorporated in the new building; all possible material was reused.

This courthouse was more spacious than the previous one, but it was based upon a similar plan that placed offices on the first floor and the Circuit Court room on the second. After the turn of the century, a grand jury reported the courthouse inadequate and unsafe, but it was not until 1939 that Harrison County got a new courthouse.

There had been several attempts to move the county seat to a more central location: In 1870, 1874 and 1880, voters defeated proposals to move to Lorraine; in 1892 and 1912 Ridgeway was the losing contender.

The Kansas City firm of Keene and Simpson worked with Harrison County Court officials preparing plans for the 1938-40 Work Projects Administration funded courthouse (Fig. 3). Supervising architect was William L. Perkins from Chariton, Iowa. Bonds in the amount of \$90,000 were voted in October 1938. The courthouse committee carefully examined other courthouses. They visited Princeton, Unionville, Chillicothe, Linneus, Marshall and Neosho. A government engineer sent plans of DeKalb County for their consideration. The final plan called for an 87-by-83-foot building with full basement, assembly room and some offices on the first floor; on the second floor were the Circuit Court room and additional offices. The third floor contained jails for men and women and living quarters for the sheriff.

The court awarded the \$124,000 contract to Thomas H. Dawson of Kansas City in February 1939.



Fig. 3. Harrison County Courthouse, 1939-
Architects: Keene and Simpson
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

Cornerstone ceremonies on August 11 used the same trowel which had been used for the 1874 ceremony. This trowel had come to America from Holland 200 years before.

Problems in construction delayed the completion date. Dawson's bid, \$11,000 below the others, had raised a question about the accuracy of his figure at the time. Midway through the project seven superintendents had already been in charge. The architects were summoned because the building inspector found the contractors had not adhered to the blueprints and specifications.

Finally the building was ready for occupancy in March 1940. Landscaping plans included no large trees, but called for smaller shrubbery and more than 3,000 bulbs. Honeycombed in the lawn was a copper sprinkling system; floodlighting illuminated the building at night.

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HENRY COUNTY

Henry County has had two courthouses. The first dates from 1837 when the county was called Rives. The court appropriated \$2,500, and commissioners presented a plan for a brick courthouse in December 1837. John Mercer received a contract for the work, which he completed in 1839 (Fig. 1). Final cost of the building was \$2,565.

In 1853 the court appropriated \$1,500 to improve and complete the structure. By the 1880s this courthouse was considered unsafe; it was condemned in 1884

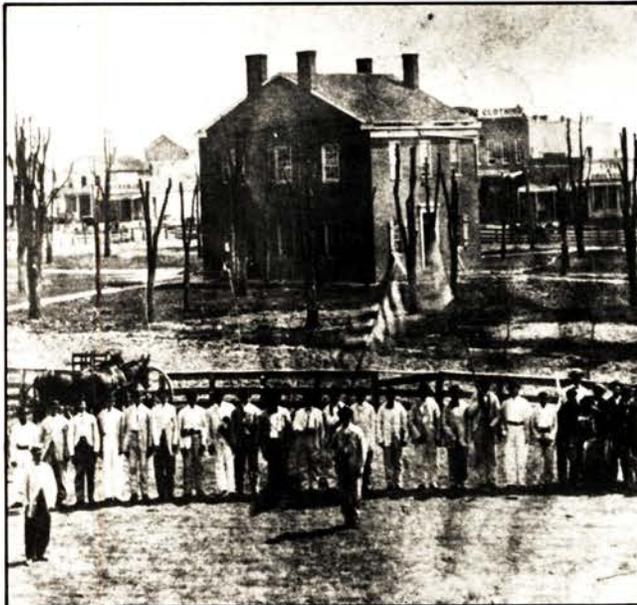


Fig. 1. Henry County Courthouse, 1837-1887, photo ca. 1884. (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

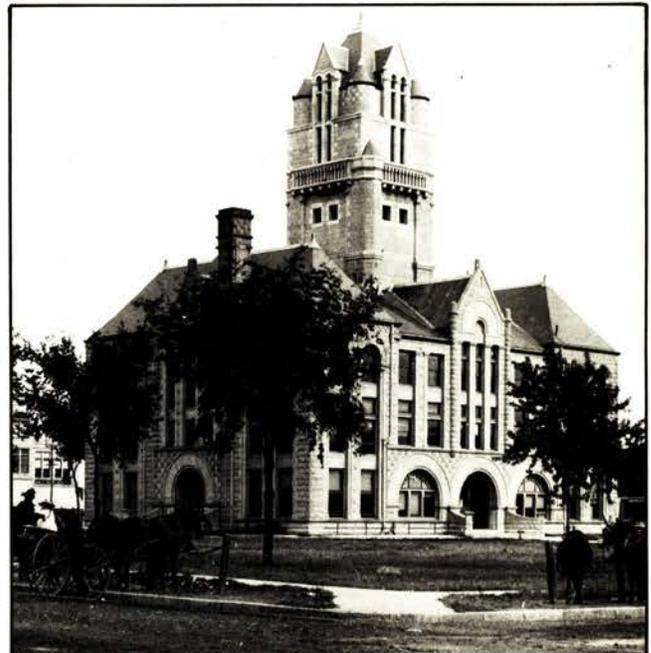


Fig. 2. Henry County Courthouse, 1891-. Architects: Frederick C. Gunn and Louis S. Curtiss (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

and razed in 1887.

After several unsuccessful attempts, residents of Henry County passed a \$50,000 bond issue in 1891 for construction of a new courthouse. The court accepted plans of Kansas City architects Frederick C. Gunn and Louis S. Curtiss, and gave the contract to D. J. Hyde (or Hayde) and Co. of Sedalia for \$47,221 in February 1892. Cornerstone ceremonies for Henry County's present courthouse took place June 24, 1892 (Fig. 2).

The three-story building, constructed of Warrensburg sandstone, measures 96 by 71 feet. The tower, originally 127 feet tall, was made with impermanent material; the steel framework was covered with copper and a stucco shell. It began leaking a few months after it was completed in June 1893; architect Gunn was recalled in 1896 to make repairs.

<p>County Henry Organized Dec. 13, 1834 Named After . . . Patrick Henry County Seat . . . Clinton</p>	
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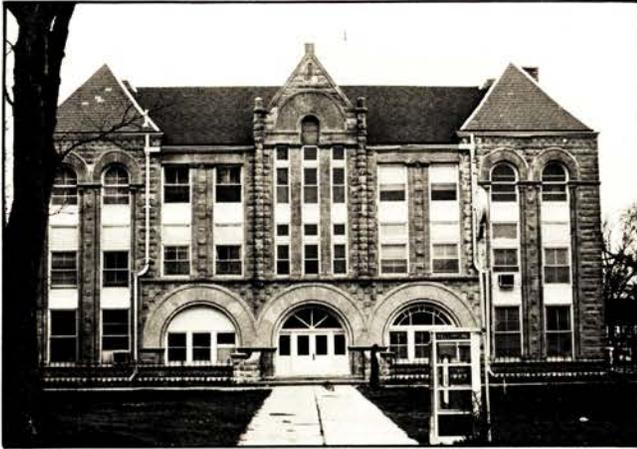


Fig. 3. Henry County Courthouse, after tower removal, photo 1973.

Repairs on the tower plagued 20th century courts. Finally, in 1969 the judges suggested removal and sought the county's opinion in a straw vote. Of 20,000 residents, 532 cast ballots; 425 voted for removal of the tower, 107 favored restoration. The judges voted unani-

mously to remove it on February 21, 1969, amidst the protests of historic preservationists (Fig. 3).

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HICKORY COUNTY

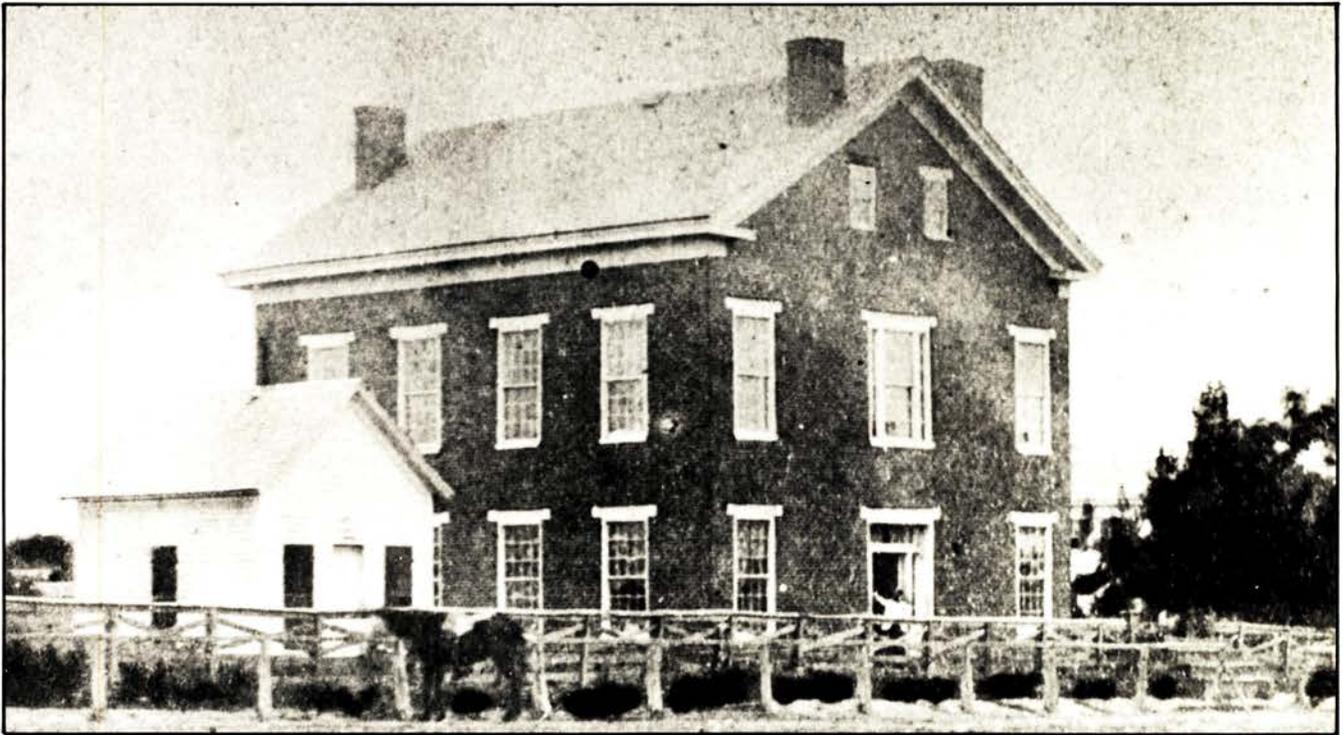


Fig. 1. Hickory County Courthouse, 1860-1881. (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri, gift of Mrs. Nannie Jenkins)

Fire took a tragic toll in Hickory County during the 19th century, destroying two courthouses and many records. First courts met in homes. The history of the early courthouses is not clear. Goodspeed's *History of Hickory, Polk, Cedar, Dade and Barton Counties*, 1889, describes the first courthouse a 1½-story build-

ing built during 1847 at the southeast corner of the square. Fire destroyed the courthouse in 1852.

Goodspeed says the county was without a courthouse until 1860. F. Marion Wilson, writing in 1907 on Hickory County history, described the courthouse as a two-story, frame structure with a school occupying the lower floor. This may have been space rented by the court after the fire. Fire destroyed this building, too. Wilson interviewed elderly citizens regarding the date of the fire. Answers varied by four years, but the fire evidently occurred about 1860.

The brick, two-story 1860 courthouse, measuring 40 by 42 feet, occupied a site on the square south of the present courthouse (Fig. 1). A north-south hall divided the lower floor. There were four rooms on the first

County Hickory
 Organized Feb. 14, 1845
 Named After . . . President Andrew
 Jackson's nick-
 name "Old
 Hickory"
 County Seat . . . Hermitage





Fig. 2. Hickory County Courthouse, 1896-. (From: *Wilson's History of Hickory County*, 1907)

floor; the courtroom was on the second story with two jury rooms. A storm damaged part of the roof and upper story in April 1879; fire destroyed the building January 8, 1881.

From 1881 until 1896 Hickory County managed without a courthouse. Continued talk for removal of the county seat to a different location failed to gain suffi-

cient support.

The present two-story, brick courthouse with hip roof was completed in 1896; cost came to \$5,350 which was paid by subscription (Fig. 2). In plan it resembles the 1860 design. Offices are on the first floor, courtroom on the second. An open belfry above the gable marks the front of the building.

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HOLT COUNTY

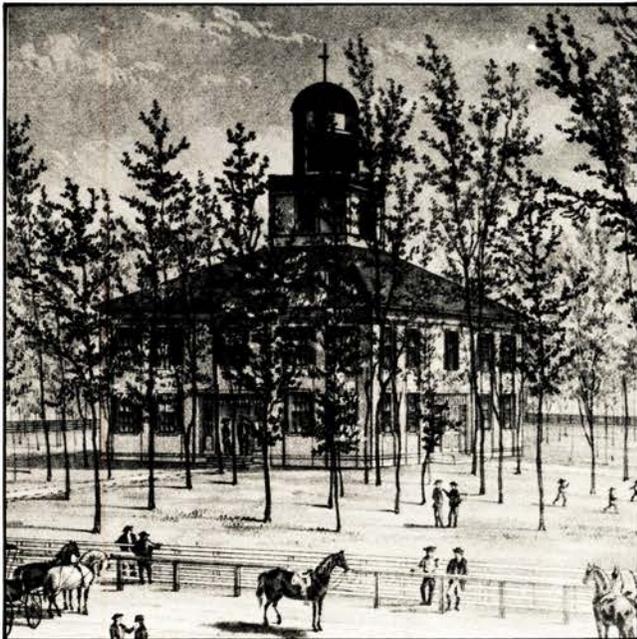


Fig. 1. Holt County Courthouse, 1850-1965.
(From: *An Illustrated Historical Atlas Map of Holt County, Missouri*, 1877)

Jesse Carroll built Holt County's first courthouse in 1841-42 for \$659. The two-story, frame building measured 20 by 26 feet, rested on rock foundation, and had walnut weatherboarding and shingles. The courthouse site fronted 20 feet on Nodaway Street and 26 feet on Washington. R. M. Barkhurst acted as county superintendent. In October 1842 the court accepted the completed building.

County	Holt	
Organized	Jan. 29, 1841	
Named After . . .	David R. Holt, member of state legislature	
County Seat . . .	Oregon	

Henry Watson contracted for \$4,995 to build the second courthouse, a 46-foot-square, brick, two-story building with hip roof. The court received the completed courthouse in May 1852; final costs came to about \$6,000 (Fig. 1).

Remodeling with mansard roof and tower, designed by Levi Zook and built by Moses Bennett, transformed the building in 1881 at a cost of \$9,600 (Fig. 2). The work began in June and was completed in December. The entry, from the north, featured a 15-foot vestibule paved with stone slabs. A double staircase of black walnut led to the second floor. Patterned colored roofing decorated the mansard roof.

Some people questioned the legitimacy of the court's action, which took the county so far into debt. They were convinced that the court actually rebuilt under the guise of repair to avoid taking the issue before the county, since voter approval was not required for repair. Their protest resulted in a lawsuit that went to



Fig. 2. Holt County Courthouse, after 1881 remodeling.
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

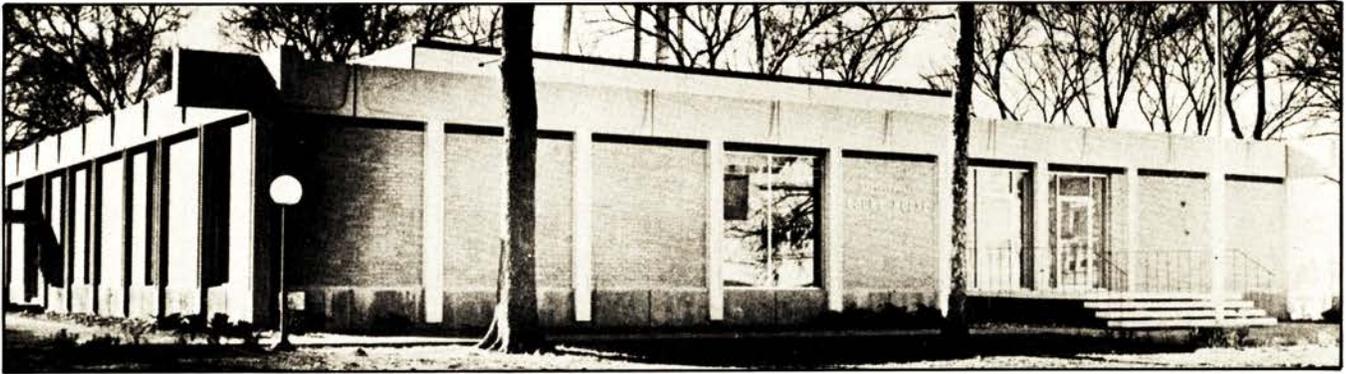


Fig. 3. Holt County Courthouse, 1965-. Architect: B.R. Hunter (Courtesy: Richard Buntz, Holt County Clerk)

the state Supreme Court in 1886. There, the court affirmed the county's power to act as long as it did not violate the constitution by incurring a debt in excess of the revenue provided for that year.

Twentieth century remodeling included a citizen-funded project in 1911, designed by St. Joseph architects Eckel and Aldrich, which added four rooms on the south. Another addition came in 1938. The building was painted gray in 1927, white in 1950, and restored to natural brick about 1960. Fire in February 1965 destroyed the several-times-remodeled courthouse.

Voters authorized a bond issue for \$162,500 in August, 1965. Architect B. R. Hunter, of the Kansas City firm Geis, Hunter and Ramos, was architect of the new building (Fig. 3). Brick for the new building was similar in color and texture to the previous courthouse. The design called for a flat roof poured in place or of precast concrete. Tinted glass in the exterior windows diffused glare and heat. Contractors for the 90-foot-square building were Herbert and Broomer, St. Joseph, for \$194,863.45. Completed in the summer of 1966, Holt Countians celebrated with an open house September 4, 1966.

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HOWARD COUNTY

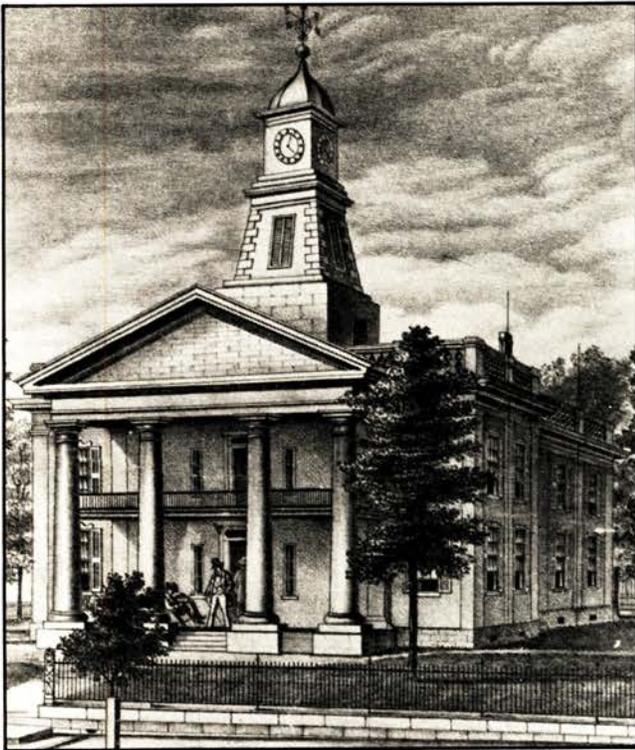


Fig. 1. Howard County Courthouse, illustration, 1857-1886.
 Architect: Joseph Megraw
 (From: *An Illustrated Atlas Map of Howard County, Missouri*, 1876)

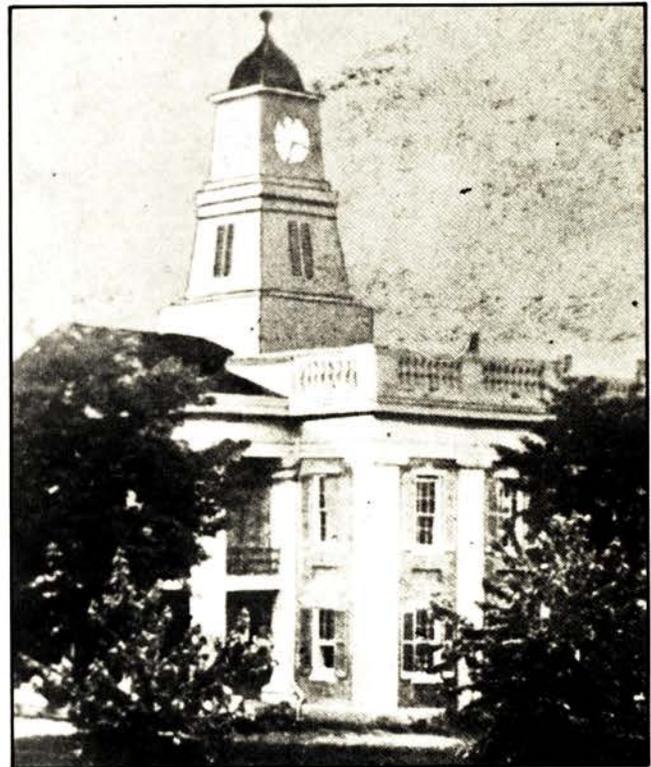


Fig. 2. Howard County Courthouse, 1857-1886.
 (From: *Picturesque Fayette*, 1905)

After the county seat of Howard County moved to Fayette from Franklin, court officials planned to build the shell of a courthouse. Advertisements in July 1823 asked for bids on a brick, 35-by-45-foot, two-story building with stone foundation. The first stage of

construction was reported near completion in June 1826. J. W. Garner and Stephen Trigg were contractors. Bids for finishing and interior work were solicited in August 1827.

A year later plastering was completed and 30 pairs of window shutters were hung.

Joseph Megraw, an Irishman, built Howard County's second courthouse in 1857. Megraw had come to Howard County in 1852; previously he studied carpentry in Pittsburgh. The court appropriated \$25,000 for the two-story, brick porticoed building (Figs. 1 and 2). A balustrade concealed the tin-covered roof. A cupola with a clock, weathervane and decorative eagle sat toward the front. The courtroom and jury

County	Howard
Organized	Jan. 23, 1816
Named After . . .	Gen. Benjamin Howard, governor of Kentucky and Missouri and Louisiana territories
County Seat . . .	Fayette

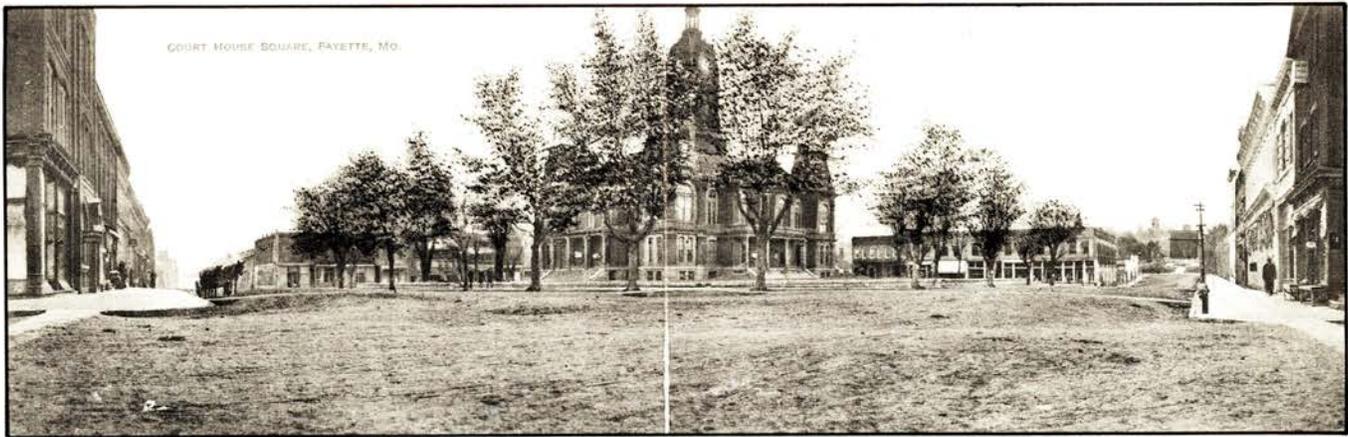


Fig. 3. Howard County Courthouse, 1887-. Architects: firm of Schrage and Nichols (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

room were on the second floor; eight offices were on the first floor. Wings were added sometime before 1883. Fire destroyed the building December 1, 1886.

After the fire the neighboring town of Glasgow publicly expressed hope of having the county seat moved there, but Fayette residents were confident that Glasgow could not muster the necessary two-thirds vote required to relocate the county seat.

Representatives from the townships met in Fayette during February 1887 to consider the indebtedness they would incur for reconstruction. In a petition, they requested that the voters consider the sum of \$25,000. Proceeds from an insurance policy on the destroyed building assured \$10,000.

In an election held the following month, voters approved the proposition, and planning proceeded rapidly. By May the court had engaged the architectural firm of Schrage and Nichols of Kansas City for plans, drawings and specifications for Howard County's third courthouse (Fig. 3). The cornerstone ceremony took place September 15, 1887. The cost of the building was \$32,942.

In 1968 a bond issue for \$350,000 permitted remodeling and exterior renovation for the deteriorating building; Carroll Hutchens served as architect. Final costs came to about \$375,000.

December 31, 1975, fire gutted the building. In

extensive repair and rebuilding, the exterior walls were retained, but the original interior design has been lost.

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HOWELL COUNTY



Fig. 1. Howell County Courthouse, 1882-1933. Architect: Henry H. Hohenschild (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

Howell County organized in 1857, but all records were destroyed in an 1866 fire. An 1876 account

County	Howell	
Organized	March 2, 1857	
Named After ..	Howell Valley, where James Howell made first settlement	
County Seat ...	West Plains	

described a log cabin one mile east of West Plains where the first Circuit Court met. A small, wooden courthouse built on the square in West Plains in 1859 was damaged in the Civil War during 1862. In the fall of 1863, guerillas burned West Plains, devastating the community; not one person remained. Three years later, the county reorganized.

T. E. Britton built the second courthouse in West Plains in 1869, a small, three-room, frame building, about 24 by 30 feet. The county appropriated \$1,200 and paid Britton \$755.50 for building the courthouse. The



Fig. 2. Howell County Courthouse, 1935-.
Architect: Earl Hawkins
(From: *West Plains Journal*, June 17, 1937, courthouse dedication issue)

building, located south of the square, still stood in 1885 and was used as rental property.

A \$15,000 appropriation voted for in November 1882 financed the third courthouse for Howell County. At one time the court considered placing the courthouse away from the square, but they finally opted for the center site. Architect Henry H. Hohenschild was only 19 when he designed this courthouse. He received \$200 for his plans and specifications (Fig. 1). Hohenschild practiced for many years; among his courthouse designs are those of 11 or 12 Missouri counties.

The three-story, brick building had four similar facades, with the principal entrance receiving some additional embellishment at the ground level. The building measured about 65 by 65 feet and cost \$16,600. The courtroom was on the second floor; the third floor was to be finished by the Mount Zion lodge in a manner similar to the rest of the building. G. W. Goodlander, Fort Scott, Kansas, contracted the building. Cornerstone ceremonies took place on July 4, 1883; the court accepted the completed building January 14, 1884. An explosion in the West Plains Halstead block caused extensive damage April 19, 1928, and the building was condemned and abandoned before being razed in 1933.

In June 1935 county officials considered accepting the government's offer for help in constructing a new courthouse. The committee moved with haste when they heard federal assistance might not be available much longer. Alternate sites to the small square were seriously considered before the court decided to keep the same location.

Six years earlier the court had accepted plans from Springfield architect Earl Hawkins for a new courthouse. However, it was not until November 8, 1935, that voters approved a \$50,000 bond issue, which was matched by a federal grant of \$45,000, making construction of a courthouse possible. On October 12, 1935, the court again turned to Hawkins as architect for the 82-foot-square, three-story, Carthage-stone building. It is not known whether or not the court used the same plans. L. H. Britton was the contractor. Final costs amounted to about \$107,000 (Fig. 2).

Boy Scouts conducted tours through the building, lecturing on the construction during the week of dedication in June 1937. An aerial view shows the courthouse in the center of a circular pattern (Fig. 3). In this city plan with streets entering at the center of the block, the traffic flow around the square eventually cut away the corners, creating this unusual shape.



Fig. 3. An aerial view of courthouse.
(From: Map of West Plains)

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IRON COUNTY



Fig. 1. Iron County Courthouse, 1858-. Architect: Henry H. Wright (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

County Iron
Organized Feb. 17, 1857
Named After In recognition of
its iron mines
County Seat Ironton



Iron County has had only one courthouse. Ironton was chosen as the county seat in 1857. David Carson and Hiram N. Tong, businessmen in the area, owned the site of Ironton and had laid out the town. They donated alternate town lots to the county, and money from the sale of these lots provided more than \$10,000 of the \$14,000 cost of the courthouse.



Fig. 2. "Saturday, The County Court House, Ironton," painting by Howard Baer. (From: Scuggs, Vandervoort, Barney Collection, University of Missouri-Columbia)

Henry H. Wright furnished the plan for the building and was awarded \$25. The court granted the building contract to George S. Evans and William F. Mitchell. The cornerstone ceremony took place on July 4, 1858. Construction was completed and the building ready for occupancy in October 1860 (Fig. 1).

The red brick building trimmed with white stone originally measured about 50 by 65 feet. There were six rooms on the first floor, the courtroom on the second. Other Missouri courthouses by Wright include: Washington, 1849; Franklin, 1847; St. Francois, 1848.

In 1964 a three-story addition to the west extended the length of the courthouse to almost 110 feet. Architects of this \$113,000 project were Hutchens and Frangkiser, Kansas City.

Howard Baer's painting of this courthouse, 1947, is in the Scuggs, Vandervoort, Barney collection at the University of Missouri-Columbia (Fig. 2).

The courthouse is included in the National Register of Historic Places. The nomination form includes the Civil War history associated with this courthouse.

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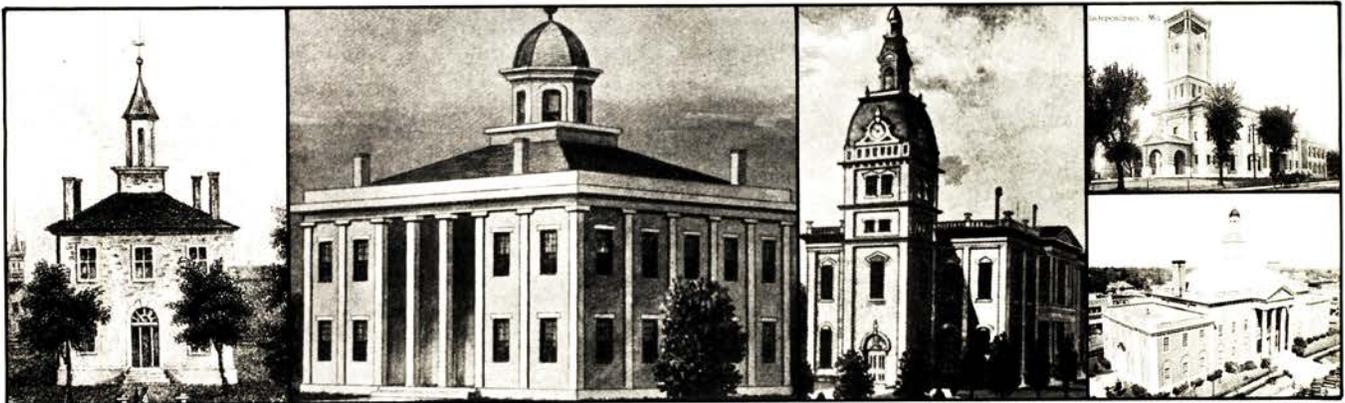
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JACKSON COUNTY



Figs. 1-5. Jackson County Courthouse, Independence. (Left to right) built in 1836. Remodeled in 1852; 1872; 1905 (above), architect: William E. Brown; and 1932 (below), architects: Keene and Simpson, D. F. Wallace, associate. (From: [Fig. 1] *The United States Illustrated*, ca. 1854; [Figs. 2, 3] *Courthouses of Jackson County, Missouri*, 1934; [Figs. 4, 5] postcards, Trenton Boyd collection)

Commissioners chose Independence for the name of the county seat of Jackson County in 1827. First courts met in private homes.

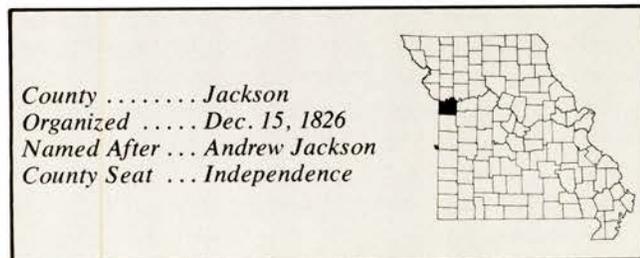
Lilburn W. Boggs, who became governor in 1837, was appointed superintendent in September 1827 to oversee construction of a temporary log courthouse. The court appropriated \$175, then received seven bids in February 1828, accepting the low bid of \$150 from Daniel P. Lewis. Lewis completed the two-room, 15-by-36-foot, log building by late summer 1828. The log structure was moved to a new location in 1916 and restored.

Boggs, who also acted as superintendent for the permanent courthouse, presented a plan to the courts in November 1827 for a brick and stone building with a

cost estimate of \$1,500. In February 1828 the court called for bids, which came to about \$1,900. James King became the contractor, with several subcontractors who were compensated with lots in Independence. Work did not progress well or quickly; the building apparently was completed in 1831.

Only five years later grand jurors reported the courthouse erected 1827-31 was in deplorable condition; the court ordered construction of a new courthouse and appropriated \$5,000. Henry Chiles, who was to superintend construction, presented a plan and estimate of \$4,000. Daniel King contracted to do the brick and stone work for \$3,500. The cupola evidently was not put on until 1846 when \$150 was appropriated for erecting a cupola (Fig. 1).

The court undertook the first major remodeling of this courthouse at the June term in 1852, when they appointed Jacob C. Hovey and John McCoy as commissioners to provide a plan for enlarging and improving the courthouse. The following month the court accepted the low bid from the firm of Leonard and Stewart for \$12,500. Early in 1853 parts of the building were ready; by May the work was completed (Fig. 2).



In 1872 a new east wing with tall clock tower was added; porches and balconies were placed on the north and south entries. The exterior was covered with red brick, and urns were placed at intervals along the roof line (Fig. 3). Funds from general revenue financed the \$48,000 project. In 1887 a west annex added space.

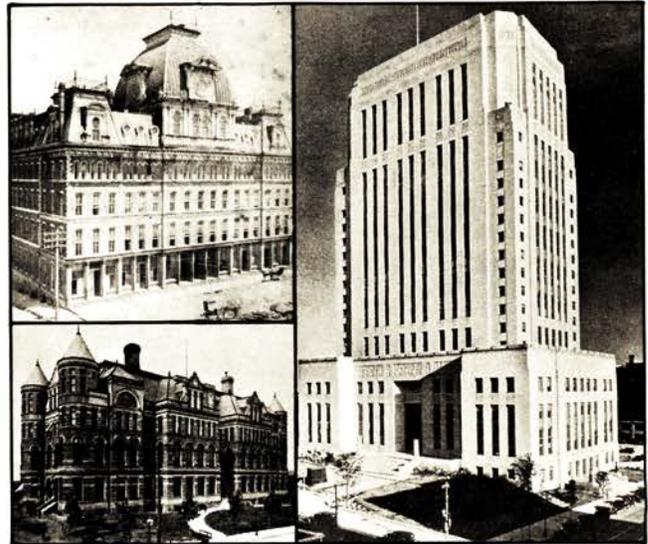
The next major alteration began in 1905 when a new division of Circuit Court was established in Independence. In March 1906 the court accepted the plan of William E. Brown that provided a courtroom by enclosing the balconies. The court also veneered with buff-colored brick. In May 1906 the court contracted with Chris Yetter. Work was completed in 1907. The records are confusing, but costs have been estimated at \$100,000 (Fig. 4).

Jackson County appropriated \$200,000 for the last and most extensive remodeling, designed in 1932 by David Frederick Wallace, architect with the Kansas City firm of Keene and Simpson (Fig. 5). Low bidder was Weeks Construction Co., whose bid of \$145,351 was accepted in October. Completed in the following year, the dedication took place on September 6, 1933.

All accretions to the 1836 courthouse were removed, but portions of the original building have been retained in the present structure, visible in a second-floor courtroom and the attic. The square configuration is evident in plans. Harry Truman was presiding judge during this period of construction. The courthouse is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Kansas City quickly outgrew Independence and needed a courthouse to efficiently conduct court business and Circuit Court. For \$20,000 the county purchased an unfinished five-story hotel at Second and Main. A. B. Cross, commissioned as supervising architect, prepared plans for the county to complete the building; W. B. Everhart was contractor. Work was completed in 1872 for about \$90,000 (Fig. 6).

A tornado seriously damaged the building in 1886. A new \$200,000 site was purchased at Fifth and Oak in 1887 for the next courthouse, which opened in April 1892. According to the *Kansas City Times*, September 21, 1888, Leo Canman (or Canmann) won \$1,000 for his



Figs. 6-8. Jackson County Courthouse, Kansas City. 1871-1892 (upper left). 1888-1935 (lower left): architect: Leo Canman, or Canmann (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri). 1933- (right); architects: Wight and Wight, Keene and Simpson (From: *Architectural Record*, December 1936)

courthouse design, which the county selected. Only four architects competed; second prize of \$500 went to a Kansas City firm, Schrage and Nichols. Asa B. Cross, often thought to be the architect, was appointed supervising architect for the \$500,000 courthouse (Fig. 7).

A bond election was passed in 1931 that supported a 10-year plan for improvements in Kansas City, which included \$4 million assigned for a new courthouse at Twelfth and Oak. The site for the building cost \$1 million.

Plans were approved May 15, 1933. Architects included: Wight and Wight, exterior; Keene and Simpson, plans; Edward F. Neild, consulting architect-engineer, Shreveport, Louisiana; and Frederick C. Gunn, supervising architect (Fig. 8). Swenson Construction Co. received the contract for more than \$2,145,000 in July 1933. Harry Truman presided at the dedication of the 28-story courthouse December 27, 1934.

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JASPER COUNTY

Jasper County's first courthouse, a one-story building on the north side of the square in Carthage, was built by Levi H. Jenkins for \$398.50. He completed the building June 29, 1842.

The square also was the site of the next courthouse. Plans were presented to the court in July 1849 by John R. Chenault, superintendent. He was allowed \$15 for the plans and specifications, which were furnished by S. W. Walcott; however, the order was rescinded November 28. Gabriel Johnson then built the courthouse; the record is not clear about whether Walcott's or Johnson's plans were used. Costs of the two-story, brick building came to \$4,760 (Fig. 1). The first story was used for Circuit Court room and offices, the second story for jail and offices. The courthouse was completed July 10, 1854. Used as a hospital during the Civil War, it was destroyed by fire in October 1863.

For the next 30 years the court moved into a number of temporary quarters: a school, a remodeled jail, a two-story building on the west side of the square and a Baptist church converted for the court's use.

Officials took steps in 1891 toward building two courthouses, one, a joint Carthage-Jasper County project costing \$100,000, the other, a special \$20,000 project at Joplin for holding Circuit Court. This did not materialize because Webb City residents, who had not approved of the proposition, challenged the election on the basis of a technicality in the voting procedure. The protest ended in the Supreme Court, where the decision required that the issue be resubmitted to the people. In May 1893 the tax to fund the building again received an affirmative vote.

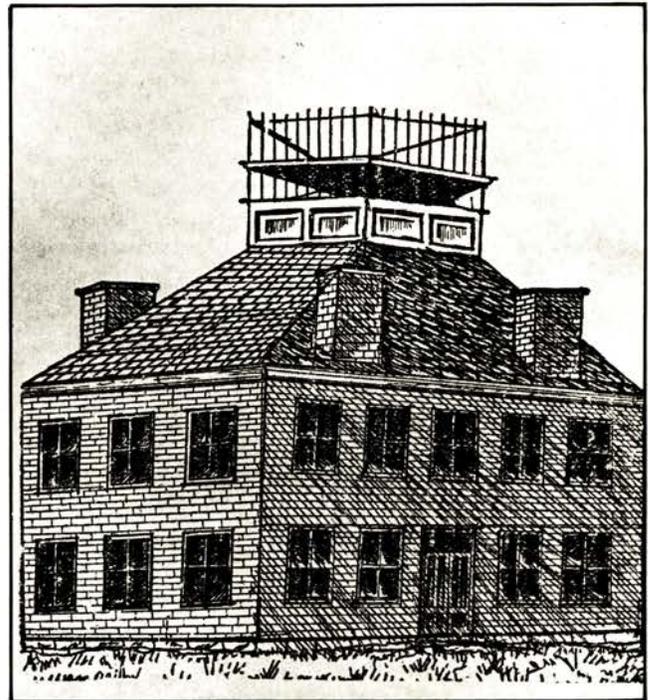


Fig. 1. Jasper County Courthouse, 1854-1863.
(From: *Official Program*, Courthouse Day, Aug. 21, 1894)

The city and county shared costs equally for the \$100,000 Carthage courthouse, and the city was to be granted the use of not less than four rooms. Officials accepted the plans of architect M. A. Orlopp, residing in New Orleans at that time, for a 106-by-133-foot building constructed of native Carthage stone.

The large appropriation and opportunity to bid on two courthouses at the same time attracted at least 16 architects, some with national reputations. According to the *Carthage Press*, Orlopp had built 10 or 12 courthouses, the most notable in Dallas, Texas, and New Orleans, Louisiana, both costing several times Jasper County's appropriation. L. W. Divelbiss, Olathe, Kansas, submitted the low bid for Jasper County's courthouse of \$91,600.

County	Jasper	
Organized	Jan. 29, 1841	
Named After . . .	Sgt. William Jasper of the Revolution	
County Seat . . .	Carthage	



Fig. 2. Jasper County Courthouse, 1893-. Architect: M. A. Orlopp (From: *Carthage Souvenir Album*)

The cornerstone was laid August 21, 1894. However, a strained relationship had developed between the architect and the court-appointed superintendent of construction, Nelson L. Damon. The dispute spread to the community, creating factions and resentment. Construction proceeded at such a slow pace the townspeople became impatient, then angry. At the height of tension one group called for Orlopp's dismissal. Damon had reservations about Orlopp's specifications; Orlopp did not trust Damon's judgment and threatened to resign

if Damon continued to represent the court. The newspapers carried accounts of the dispute, quoting both sides, but generally sympathetic to Damon.

In spite of the problems of conflicting personalities and questions of judgment, the building was dedicated October 9, 1895 (Fig. 2). The courthouse, one of Missouri's finest, has remained a source of pride for Jasper Countians ever since. It is now included on the National Register of Historic Places.

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JEFFERSON COUNTY

Jefferson County, organized in 1818, is one of Missouri's oldest counties. Six commissioners established the first county seat at Herculaneum, but no courthouse was built there. A black man rented space in his log cabin to the county for the first courtroom; for several years the court met wherever circumstances and convenience permitted.

As early as 1832 the court considered moving to Monticello, a more central location, but this suggestion met defeat at the polls. A persistent effort to relocate caused the court to appropriate \$400 in July 1836 for building a 20-by-25-foot, 1½-story, hewn-log courthouse, but because of continued opposition, the project did not materialize.

In November, J. J. Parnell was appointed commissioner and asked to determine whether stone or brick would be best and least expensive for the courthouse. This time the court considered a 30-foot-square building and appropriated \$1,000. Still the courthouse seems not to have been built, probably because of continued dissatisfaction with the site.

Hillsboro became permanently established as the county seat in 1838. Samuel Merry and Hugh O'Neil donated the site of 50 acres; the deed is dated April 7, 1838.

The county surveyor laid out the county seat in June 1839. An advertisement for sealed bids, published in the *St. Louis Argus Weekly* in 1839, described the proposed courthouse as a brick structure, 50 by 33 feet, with stone basement, and two feet above ground. There were to be four rooms on the first floor and a 31-by-37-foot courtroom on the second floor with a 10-foot lobby.

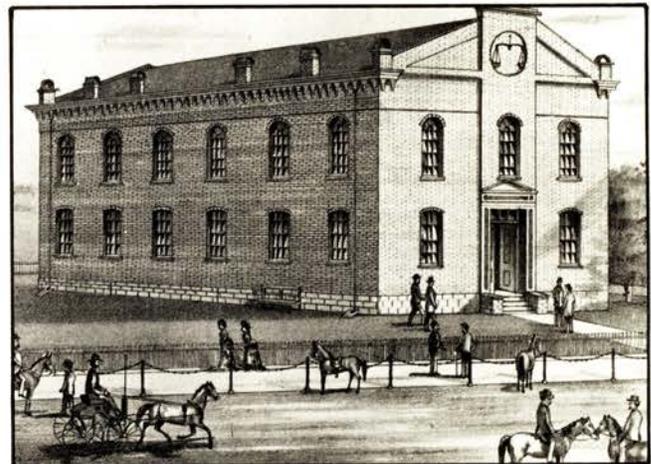
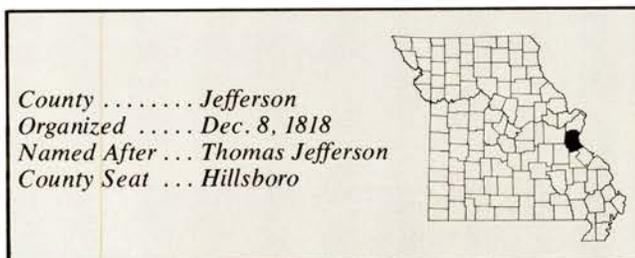


Fig. 1. Jefferson County Courthouse, 1863-.
 (From: *An Illustrated Historical Map of Jefferson County, Missouri*, 1876)



Fig. 2. 1892 addition on left; courthouse on right.
 (From: *Western Historical Manuscript Collection*)

Roche and Erisman submitted a bid of \$3,800, which the court accepted. Subsequent appropriations raised the cost to over \$4,000. This building apparently continued in use until the 1863-65 building replaced it.

Charles H. Pond built the second courthouse, a 40-by-60-foot building, at a cost of \$16,500 (Fig. 1). It was placed on a different location in Hillsboro. Scales of justice recessed in a circle above the entry at the roof



Fig. 3. Proposed 1953 remodeling.
From: *Jefferson County Record*, December 3, 1953.

line distinguished this simple brick courthouse. The court accepted the completed building on July 5, 1865. County offices were on the first floor, the Circuit Court room on the second.

A fireproof addition east of the courthouse was built in 1892 with a second-story connecting walkway. Joseph Hoeken was contractor and builder of this \$5,000 structure (Fig. 2).

The court dispelled rumors of building a courthouse in one of the larger areas of Jefferson County in July 1953 when they appointed Howard Donald to get plans and estimates for repairing and modernizing the courthouse. On September 14 the court examined a proposal and preliminary drawings prepared by Bruce Barnes and Associates, architectural engineers from Poplar Bluff. Barnes estimated a cost of \$280,000-\$300,000 to increase the space by three-fourths.

Originally, the plans called for features reminiscent of the 1865 courthouse: round, arched, multipaned windows and ornate cornice. Wings were to be added on either side of the principal entrances, which featured pilasters (shallow rectangular projections from the wall) designed to suggest a columned temple front (Fig. 3).



Fig. 4. Jefferson County Courthouse, after 1954 remodeling.
Architect: Bruce Barnes and Associates

However, alterations changed the final appearance (Fig. 4).

The court reached an agreement with Barnes that he would receive no compensation for his plans unless the bond issue passed. If it passed, the architect was to receive 7 percent of the total cost of the building. The issue passed in December 1953.

The court received bids on July 15, 1954, and early in August accepted the bid of \$233,700 for general contracting from Plez Lewis. Separate bids for heating, plumbing and electrical work came to about \$62,250. Dedication ceremonies took place May 5, 1957; a crowd of 600 attended the ceremonies that included the presentation of a flagpole, flag and keys to the court.

Jefferson County, just south of St. Louis, has grown rapidly. The courthouse's several stages of renovation and expansion continued in 1975-76 when a \$950,000 project provided space for a third Circuit Court and law enforcement facilities. Architect was Jack Stefanski of the firm Hastings and Chivetta, Clayton.

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JOHNSON COUNTY

Warrensburg, the county seat of Johnson County, was laid out on a high ridge with a commanding scenic view. Until they built their first courthouse, courts met in various places.

The initial appropriation of \$2,500 for Johnson County's first courthouse came in March 1838. The court accepted plans presented by Harvey Dyer, supervisor of construction, and awarded the building contract to William N. Wade.

Originally, the plans called for a 44-by-36-foot, two-story, brick building, with three doors, but this was later modified to a 36 foot square. Although a cupola was anticipated in the original design, the lack of funds prevented it ever being built.

A subsequent appropriation brought the total cost to \$2,800. The court accepted the building July 28, 1842, after a prolonged construction period (Fig. 1). The courtroom on the first story had a brick floor; the second story, with offices, was laid with random-width boards.

This is the only surviving example of one of the most popular Missouri 19th century courthouse designs. It was used for county business until 1878, when the commercial emphasis moved several blocks east toward the railroad. The building continued in use as a private residence until 1965, when the Johnson County Historical Society bought it and began restoration.

Exterior additions had been made, the brick stuccoed, and the first-floor courtroom, which originally occupied the entire first floor, had been divided into several rooms. Restoration has been guided by the original specifications and has proceeded as funds became available through voluntary contribution. Now fur-

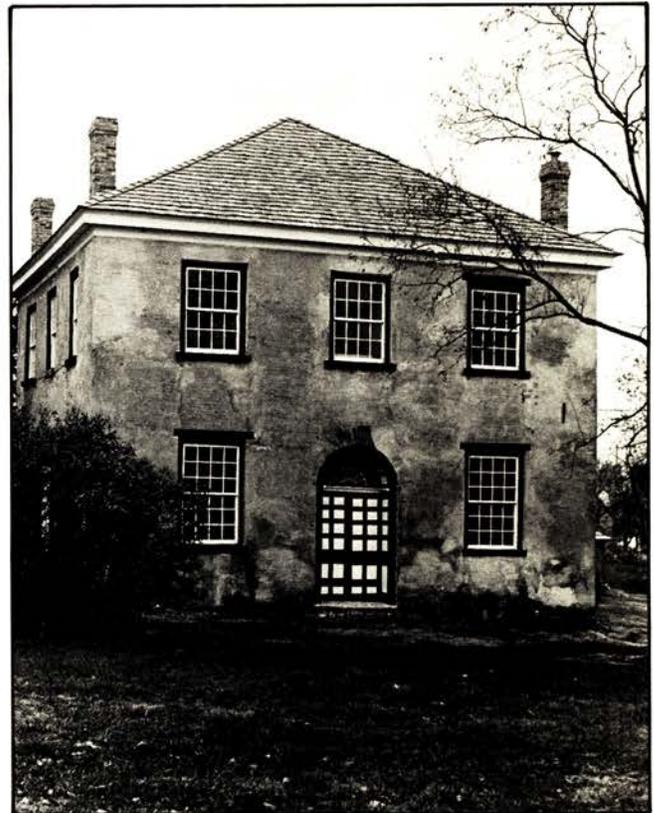


Fig. 1. Johnson County Courthouse, 1838-1878, restoration began 1965.
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

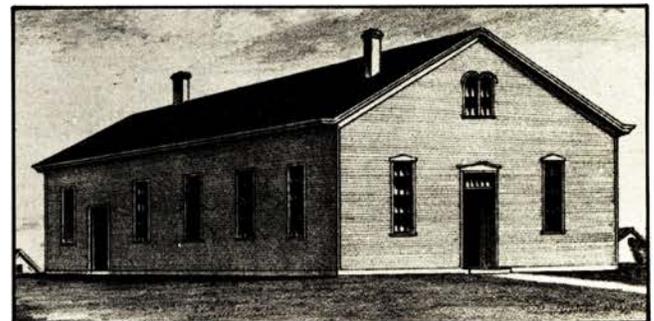


Fig. 2. Johnson County Courthouse, 1875-1890s.
(From: *Atlas Map of Johnson County, Missouri, 1877*)

County	Johnson	
Organized	Dec. 13, 1834	
Named After . . .	Richard M. Johnson of Kentucky	
County Seat . . .	Warrensburg	

nished as a courthouse, a few original items are supplemented by appropriate period pieces. It is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Johnson County's second courthouse, located on the square several blocks east of the old square, came as a result of a business population shift to the new railroad depot. Citizens of Warrensburg donated a courthouse in 1875 after the county rejected bond proposals to provide facilities. The simple frame building on the west side of the square measured about 30 by 50 feet (Fig. 2). It was used for part of the county's business activities until the 1890s.

After Johnson County citizens approved a \$50,000 bond issue for a new courthouse, the court began considering plans. Among the architects submitting proposals for the 1896 courthouse were St. Louis architect J. B. Legg, who designed courthouses for Gasconade, Mississippi and St. Charles counties between 1896-1900, and Gunn and Curtis, who planned the 1891 Henry County courthouse. But the Johnson County Court was impressed with a design submitted by architect George E. McDonald for their anticipated courthouse (Fig. 3). They met with him and then traveled to several cities in Nebraska to examine his work and check references on his reliability and trustworthiness.

Apparently satisfied with what they found, they awarded him the commission in March 1896 and approved his plans for an 84-by-104-foot, two-story building, constructed of Warrensburg sandstone. In May, J.M. Anderson, Emporia, Kansas, received the building contract for about \$50,000.

Problems arose immediately with the public; there was dissatisfaction about the choice of the architect and the fact that McDonald instead of a county man was appointed supervisor. Some Johnson Countians doubted that the building could be erected for \$50,000; further irritation erupted when the court did not require bond from McDonald.

Cornerstone ceremonies took place August 25, 1896, but the project was beset with problems. It became

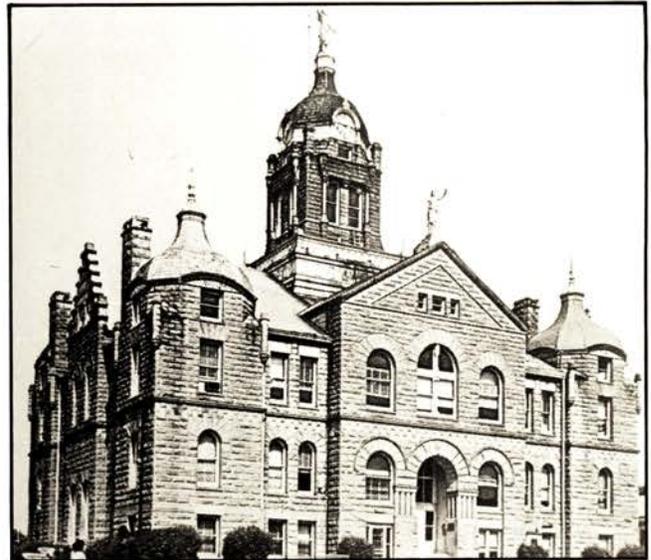


Fig. 3. Johnson County Courthouse, 1896.

Architect: George E. McDonald

(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

obvious that the construction would not be finished by the estimated date in December 1896, nor was it completed a year later. Not until January 1898 did the court accept the building, but costs ran only \$585 above the \$50,000 appropriation.

As soon as county officials moved in, the probate judge, who, much to his annoyance, had been assigned space in the basement, itemized 11 protests. He claimed the courthouse was an unfit place to keep records; sandstone had been a poor choice of building material since it admitted moisture; there was inadequate ventilation; his rooms were in inaccessible quarters; the rooms were poorly lighted, et al.

In spite of the judge's objections, Johnson County continues to use this courthouse. Three other Missouri examples of McDonald's courthouse design are in Andrew, Bates and Lawrence counties, all built within a 5-year period. This courthouse, along with the first Johnson County courthouse, is included on the National Register of Historic Places.

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KNOX COUNTY



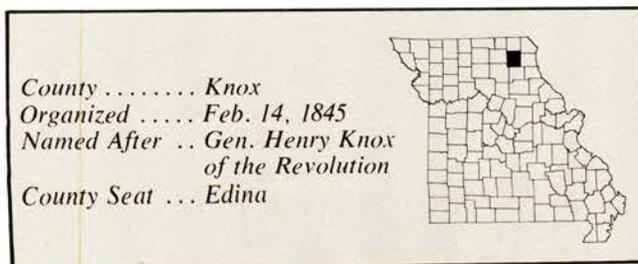
Fig. 1. Knox County Courthouse (right), 1848-1885. (From: *Illustrated Historical Atlas of Knox County, Missouri*, 1876)

During the 19th century Knox County had only one courthouse. Edina became the county seat in May 1845, and for the first two years the county rented facilities. On November 9, 1847, the county appropriated \$1,600, which was borrowed from the internal improvement fund, for a 40-by-30-foot, two-story building to be built in the center of the square.

Apparently, the court drew the first plan, which was then elaborated by Martin Baker, Jr., who had been appointed commissioner in 1846. In May 1848 a \$1,650 contract was given to James W. Baker (Fig. 1). The building had been unoccupied for some time and in deplorable condition when fire destroyed it on Christ-

mas Eve 1885; although arson was suspected, a contemporary report claimed that the county was not too concerned about apprehending the offenders.

Knox County continued without a courthouse, renting facilities for county business until 1934 when the county collector proposed the idea for building a new one; the court encouraged him to investigate grant possibilities. For several months a small informal committee worked surreptitiously making preparations (the county collector was accustomed to this; a few months later he was indicted after almost \$30,000 was missing from county funds). The committee contacted an architect for preliminary sketches, which they submitted with a grant request to the Public Works Administration before making their actions publicly known in Knox County. The grant was approved, providing that the county pass a bond issue, which they did in August 1934. The grant was for \$80,000; 70 percent of it was for a government loan. The court then formally approved architect William B. Ittner's design, which had accompanied the initial request for a two-story, brick building with stone trim. The courtroom and jail were on the second floor.



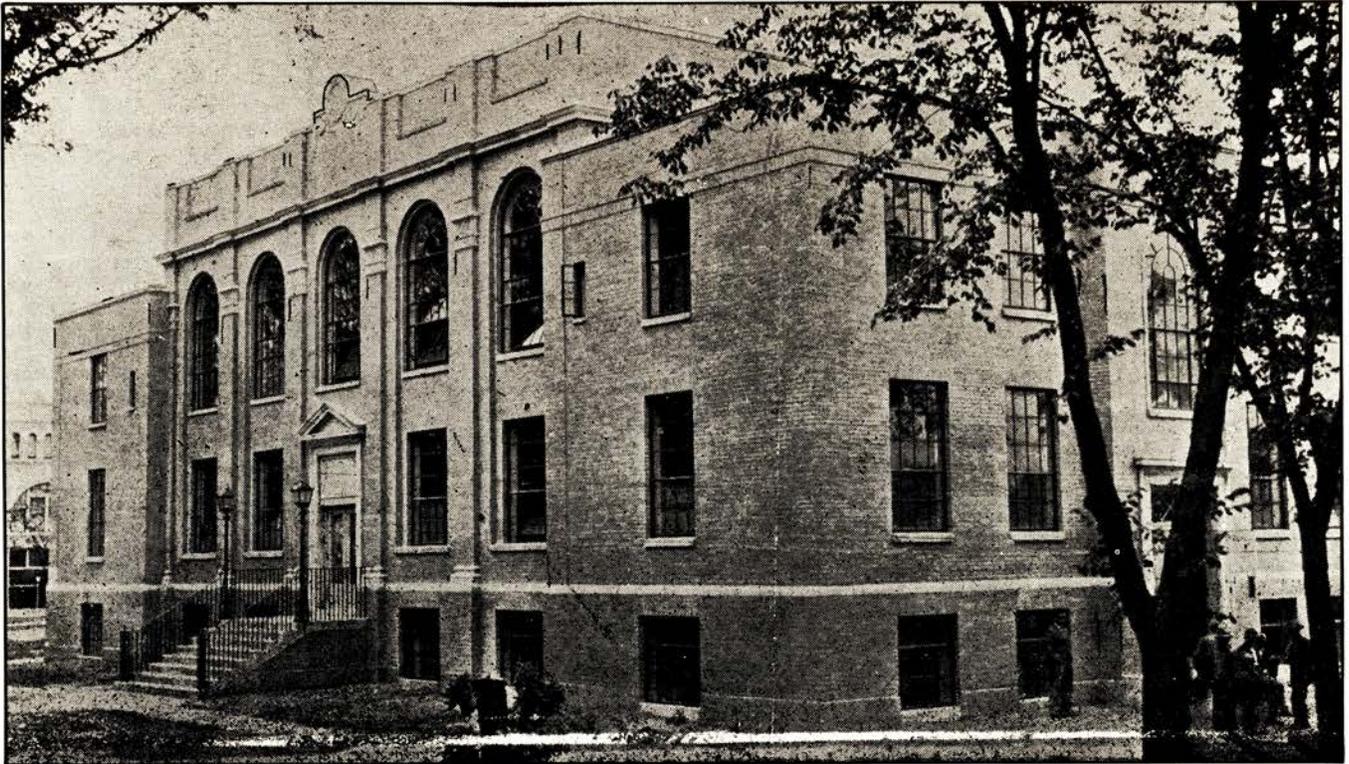


Fig. 2. Knox County Courthouse, 1934-. Architect: William B. Ittner (From: W.P.A., Western Historical Manuscript Collection)

The building contract was let to J. E. Williams, St. Louis, for \$61,882 in November 1934, and ground breaking took place December 18, 1934; cornerstone ceremonies were conducted April 6, 1935; the building was dedicated September 13, 1935 (Fig. 2). Total costs came to about \$80,000. Ittner was a respected St. Louis architect known principally for his school buildings. This is his only courthouse work in Missouri.

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LACLEDE COUNTY



Fig. 1. Laclede County Courthouse, 1894-1920. Architect: William F. Schrage (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

County Laclede
Organized Feb. 24, 1849
Named After . . . Pierre Laclede,
founder of St.
Louis
County Seat . . . Lebanon



When Laclede County was organized in 1849, first courts met in private homes, but the following year the court decided to build a courthouse and appointed John J. Thrailkill superintendent of buildings. In May 1850 the court let the contract for building a 1½-story, frame courthouse to A. S. Cherry. Construction was completed in 1851. The courtroom occupied the first floor; the clerk's office was on the second. Laclede County



Fig. 2. Laclède County Courthouse, 1924-. Architect: Earl Hawkins

used this courthouse for almost 20 years.

In the 1870s a controversy over an attempt to move the county seat led to a disruptive period that left Laclède County without a courthouse for over 20 years. The controversy began when the railroad came to Lebanon in 1868, stopping about a mile from the courthouse in the county seat at Lebanon. A new business district developed, and the county moved its records to new town and sold the old courthouse for \$50. Opponents of the move claimed that the new location was not legally a part of the county seat. It was not until the 1890s that a courthouse was built in new Lebanon.

William F. Schrage was architect of this courthouse, built by S. J. Hyde and Co., Kansas City, for about \$20,000 (Fig. 1). Cornerstone ceremonies took place June 23, 1894. The two-story building with basement had four entrances and wide transverse halls. The first floor had 16 rooms; the courtroom was on the second floor with jury, witness and consulting rooms. This building burned February 28, 1920. Schrage did

other Missouri courthouses similar to this: Howard County, 1887, Morgan County, 1889, and Ripley County, 1898.

In a June 1920 election, voters defeated a \$100,000 bond issue to finance a new courthouse. Many considered \$100,000 too much to pay. Considerable enthusiasm was generated for the \$80,000 bond issue that came later, however, and voters responded with a resounding yes in May 1924. Three architects were considered: H. H. Hohenschild, W. E. Hulse, and the one the court chose, Earl Hawkins of Springfield. Hawkins' plan was for a 100-by-63-foot, three-story, brick structure with Carthage stone trim. The tall courtroom spanned the second and third stories, with a third-story balcony.

The contract was let to M. E. Gillioz of Monett for \$72,428. Cornerstone day was October 2, 1924. The court accepted the completed building in June 1925 (Fig. 2).

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LAFAYETTE COUNTY



Fig. 1. Lafayette County Courthouse, 1847-. (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

Lillard County came into existence along with seven other counties in 1821. Mount Vernon was the temporary county seat for Lillard County, which was named Lafayette in 1825. At that time the permanent county seat was in "Old Town" of Lexington, and as at Mount

Vernon, courts first met in homes.

Henry Renick, who was also justice of the peace, built the first courthouse in 1824-25 on the square. The record is unclear about how much Renick was paid. One payment of \$875.15 was made June 27, 1825; another of \$467.41¼ appeared on November 23, 1825, for construction of the courthouse. Apparently, the court accepted the building November 23, 1825, and continued using it until 1832.

William Chiles delivered an address July 4, 1876, and claimed that young "bucks" celebrated the 4th of July in 1831 by tearing down the walls and blowing up the foundation of the courthouse. This story has been often repeated. The following year the county declared the building unsafe and ordered James Fletcher to sell

County Lafayette
 Organized Nov. 16, 1820
 Named After . . . French General
 and statesman
 Lafayette, who
 served in
 American
 Revolution
 County Seat . . . Lexington



the brick and timber from the courthouse except for the foundation materials. William Young, in *History of Lafayette County*, claims it was sold August 1, 1832.

The second courthouse, which was also on the square in "Old Town," was built in 1835. It was a three-story building, regarded as perhaps the finest, most classic public building in Missouri. Three-story buildings were very rare in Missouri during the early 19th century. Mr. Rollins did the masonry and Charles Thomas, the carpentry. This brick building continued in use until 1849, when the present courthouse was occupied. The Baptist Female College bought the 1835 courthouse on March 25, 1849. During the Civil War it became a hospital, subsequently an isolation hospital for smallpox. Finally abandoned, it was sold for the brick.

No known illustrations exist, but a description, written in 1853, called the building (which by that time was the Female Seminary)

. . . one of the noblest structures of art.

The passing stranger would suppose at a glance that it was the legislative hall of some proud nation, instead of an institution for the improvement of the human mind. Both external and internal the building is superb in every sense of the word.

The principal business district of Lexington moved about one mile west after the town incorporated in 1845; the courthouse site moved to a new, central location.

The old courthouse was inconvenient, and, according to the *Lexington Weekly Express*, there was ". . . nothing to do while whiling away the time waiting to be called." The *Express* called for a large elegant building, a fine specimen of architecture, one of which the county need not be ashamed.

The court appropriated funds for the third and present courthouse in March 1847. It is the oldest Missouri courthouse that has continued in use as a courthouse. In April 1847 the court paid William Daugherty, a 30-year-old carpenter, \$40 for his plans and specifications; a number of contractors completed the building: William Hunter and John Alford did the brick work; James A. Crump did the stone work. Completed in 1849, the costs were about \$12,000. Ray and Caldwell counties had courthouses built upon the same plan with minor variations in trim. During the 1861 Civil War battle of Lexington, the courthouse was fired upon; a cannon ball embedded in one of the columns remains an object of great curiosity.

A small annex was built in 1854 for the clerk's office, and a two-story annex was constructed in the 1880s (Fig. 1). The Lafayette County courthouse has been included on the National Register of Historic Places. This courthouse and the Ralls County courthouse, 1858, are the only two temple-type courthouses from the 19th century that are still used as Missouri courthouses.

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LAWRENCE COUNTY



Fig. 1. Lawrence County Courthouse, ca. 1846-1855.
(From: *Lawrence County, Missouri, History, 1845-1970.*)



Fig. 2. Lawrence County Courthouse, 1853-1895.
(From: *Lawrence County, Missouri, History, 1845-1970.*)

The first courthouse of Lawrence County, a frame, two-story, 18-by-30-foot building, was constructed in 1846 and continued in use for many years (Fig. 1). Initially, the county appropriated \$400, later adding \$200. Final costs were probably \$700. Matlock and Sanford (also appears as Sanders or Saunders), of Springfield, contracted the building. After 1854 or 1855 when it was no longer useful as a courthouse, investors moved the building to the north side of the square, where over the years its doors opened to shops for millinery, carpentry, blacksmithing and wagon repair. Later, it was converted to apartments and finally was razed about 1916-18.

At the January term of the County Court in 1853, the court awarded a contract for a new courthouse. This

building served Lawrence County for more than 40 years until gutted by fire at the end of the century. Originally planned as a two-story building, an agreement with a local lodge resulted in the addition of a third story. This brick, three-story structure with stone foundation, sills and lintels measured 50 by 60 feet. Stephen M. Walcott, of Newton County, completed the courthouse in May 1855 for about \$7,000 (Fig. 2).

Improvements made in 1869-70 included putting on a new tin roof, painting the cornice and landscaping. The third-story Masonic Hall was finished at the same time. A commission in 1895 reported the building unsafe. In June, after the fire, it was sold for \$225 and removed from the square.

County	Lawrence	
Organized	Feb. 14, 1845	
Named After . .	Capt. James Lawrence of the "Chesapeake" in War of 1812	
County Seat . . .	Mount Vernon	

At an election held June 1, 1900, Lawrence County authorized a \$50,000 indebtedness to build a new courthouse. The townspeople were so elated when the proposition passed they built a temporary stand in the park for the band to play *Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight*.

The court selected George McDonald's plan. A newspaper illustration of the proposed courthouse



Fig. 3. Proposed 1900 Lawrence County Courthouse.
Architect: George McDonald
(From: *Mount Vernon Fountain and Journal*, May 24, 1900.)



Fig. 4. Lawrence County Courthouse, 1900.
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)



Fig. 5. 1900 courthouse facing Main Street. (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

shows pier-supported porches on three sides, which were apparently eliminated before construction (Fig. 3). The contract was first let in July 1900 to J. D. Armstrong of Chicago for \$48,875. After he forfeited the bond, T. A. Miller, of Aurora, Missouri, received the contract for the 84-by-104-by-82-foot-tall, stone building on November 28, 1900.

The unusual inscription on the stone, "Be sure your sins will find you out," is from *Numbers 32:23*. A year after construction began the building was complete (Figs. 4 and 5). Architect McDonald designed similar courthouses for Johnson County, 1896; Andrew County, 1898; and Bates County, 1901.

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LEWIS COUNTY

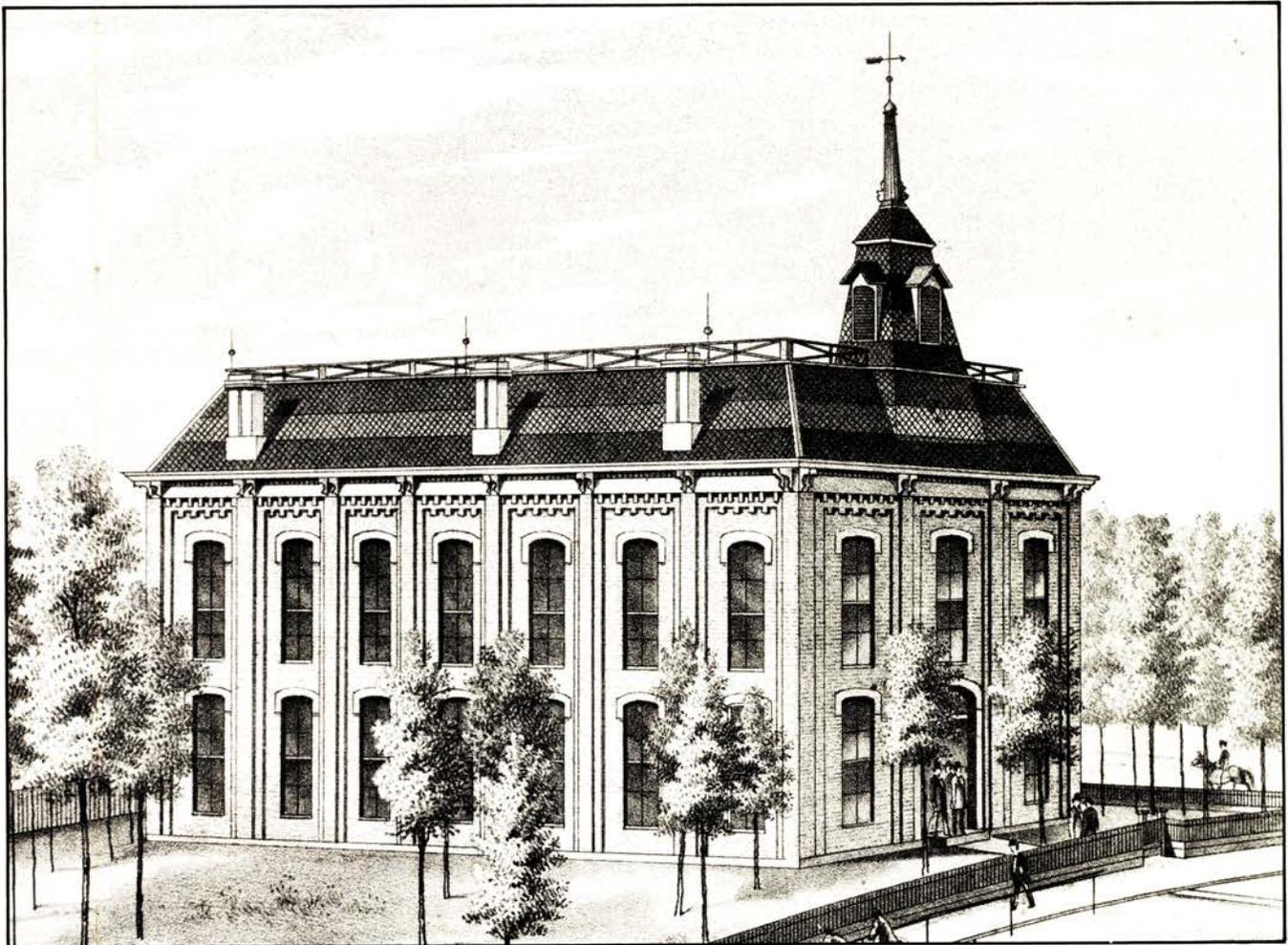


Fig. 1. Lewis County Courthouse, 1875-. Architect: J. T. McAllister (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

County Lewis
 Organized Jan. 2, 1833
 Named After .. Meriwether Lewis
 of Lewis and
 Clark Expedition
 and governor of
 Missouri Territory
 County Seat ... Monticello



Lewis County built three courthouses in the 19th century. The first, built in 1834, was a one-room log building about 100 yards northwest of the present courthouse site. The 1887 *History of Lewis, Clark, Knox and Scotland Counties* described it as neither spacious nor comfortable, but the court intended it to be only a temporary courthouse. J. W. Buckley contracted the building for \$210, but the court needed to borrow



Fig. 2. Lewis County Courthouse, 1875-. (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

\$100 to pay him. In September 1839, as plans for the next courthouse progressed, county officials ordered the building and the lot on which it stood sold at the courthouse door to the highest bidder.

At the December term in 1838, the court appointed William Ellis commissioner. His assignment was to draft a plan then let the bid by public auction after giving one month's notice in area newspapers. The court appropriated \$3,200 in February 1839 for this two-story, brick building. Williams S. Pemberton and James A. Richardson apparently shared responsibility for the construction. The courthouse was on the square, facing west. No known illustrations exist.

The third and present courthouse dates from 1875 (Figs. 1 and 2). J. T. McAllister, architect, prepared

plans for the two-story, brick building with patterned mansard roof. A small, unusual overtop rises above the roof, marking the entry. Decorative brick work and paired brackets enrich the cornice. The building measured 75 by 50 by 30 feet. At the time it was built, there were six offices and a large hall on the first floor; the courtroom, three offices, library, judge and jury rooms were on the second. S. J. Vandiver was superintendent for the county. George Barnes contracted the building. Costs ran slightly over \$10,000.

Additions have been made, but they did not significantly alter the original design. Lewis County's is one of the few remaining courthouses in Missouri dating from the 1870s.

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LINCOLN COUNTY



Fig. 1. Lincoln County Courthouse, 1869-. Architect: Gustave Bachmann (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

County Lincoln
Organized Dec. 14, 1818
Named After .. Gen. Benjamin
Lincoln of
Massachusetts
County Seat ... Troy



Monroe was the first county seat of Lincoln County. But since Monroe was in the southeast corner of the county, it proved to be an inconvenient site. The last court session held there was in November 1822. Next, commissioners chose Alexandria, where the court convened in February 1823 in the only home there, a hewn-log residence.

Goodspeed's 1888 *History of Lincoln County* states that a small frame courthouse was built at Alexandria.

Sales of town lots in April and May 1822 made available \$887.25 for construction of a courthouse and jail. Apparently the court paid \$448.50 for the courthouse in the same year.

Citizens petitioned for the next move of the county seat to Troy, and voters approved the change. Courts started meeting in Troy in February 1829.

In May 1829 the court ordered sealed proposals for construction of a new courthouse in Troy; they chose a 40-foot-square, two-story, brick building. David Bailey received the bid for contracting at a cost of \$1,500. Completed in 1830, the county used the courthouse until 1869, when the building was auctioned off for \$410 and razed in September to make way for the next courthouse.

The present courthouse in Lincoln County was built in 1870; Gustave Bachmann was the architect (Fig. 1). In June 1869 Edwards and Griffith, contractors, received the bid for the 75-by-80-foot, brick building with "T" plan. Construction was completed November 10, 1870, for about \$27,500.

The front was 70 feet wide with a 30-foot portico, featuring six fluted Corinthian columns. The rear wing was about 80 feet long, the height to the top of the cupola, about 82 feet. Offices are on the first floor; double stairways lead to the second story. The 36-by-48-foot courtroom is at the back of the second story.

Several additions have been made since. A two-story addition costing about \$8,000 was made in the

1930s. Judges approved plans for the most recent addition, estimated to cost \$150,000, in June 1974; Henze and Kuda Associates designed and approved the project.

Two other courthouses similar to this were built earlier in the 19th century. Bachmann was responsible for one in Montgomery County, 1865; the other, in Randolph County, 1858, was the work of Henry Austin. Only Lincoln County's survives.

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LINN COUNTY

Linn County's first courthouse, a hewn-log building, was built off the square in 1841. It was a two-story, 36-by-20-foot, weatherboarded structure, with oak shingles covering the roof. One center door with flanking windows was in the narrow end of the building, which faced the square. The court appropriated \$400, and the final cost came to \$516.50. Contractors were David Jenkins and Goldsby Quinn (also referred to as Goolsby Quine). By the time it was completed, the original plan had been altered considerably.

In March 1846 the court appropriated \$4,000 and instructed Thomas Barbee to prepare plans for a new courthouse to be in the center of the square. Contractor of the brick, two-story building was Joseph (or James) L. Nelson, who built the Daviess County courthouse in Gallatin. Nelson completed the building in the fall of 1848 for \$3,894.85 (Fig. 1).

In June 1857 the county paid \$800 for repairs; the building was extensively remodeled between 1865-1867. In only 20 years Linn County spent almost \$8,500 on repairing this building (Fig. 2). Even so, by 1879 the building was considered unsafe, and the county offices moved out. Although the accounts are unclear, repairs and remodeling once again must have kept at least part of the structure in use, for Sanborn maps show a square, brick building in the center of the square from 1894 to 1910 that measures about 40 feet square.

Early in the 20th century grand juries repeatedly reported the courthouse in deplorable condition. Linn County citizens presented a petition to the court calling for a new courthouse. After receiving the petition, the County Court scheduled an election for a \$60,000 bond



Fig. 1. Linn County Courthouse, 1848, remodeled 1867.
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

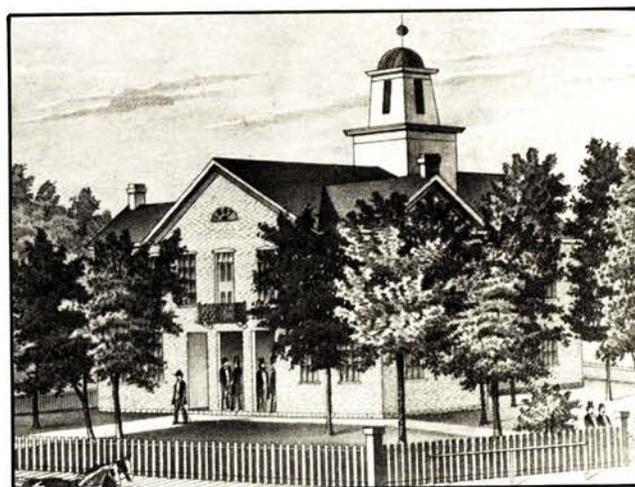


Fig. 2. Linn County Courthouse, after remodeling ca. 1867.
(From: *An Illustrated Historical Atlas of Linn County, Missouri*, 1876.)

County	Linn	
Organized	Jan. 6, 1837	
Named After . .	Lewis F. Linn, U.S. senator	
County Seat . .	Linneus	

issue August 1, 1911. They timed the election to coincide with the state-wide election to approve appropriations for a new state capitol to replace the one destroyed by fire February 5, 1911. County officials anticipated support for the capitol and thought voters might be more inclined on that day to approve the county bond issue. Election expenses also would be reduced.



Fig. 3. Linn County Courthouse, 1915-. Architects: Rae Sanneman and R. W. Van Trump (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

For two months before the election, the newspaper publicized the issue, gathering support. Finally, after weeks of anticipation, headlines in the *Linneus Bulletin* announced the results: "Go Ring the Bells and Fire the Guns." When the returns came in, the town went wild with delight. Bells rang, whistles blew, cars honked and anvils roared; bands, skyrockets and bonfires all demonstrated the enthusiasm in the county.

The court appointed a Kansas City firm, Rae Sanneman and R. W. Van Trump, to prepare plans. Together the court and the architects visited Carroll, Daviess,

Vernon, Johnson and Grundy counties to examine recent projects. The preliminary concept indicated a building with dark-red brick for the main walls, trimmed with stone, but ultimately a gray brick replaced the red. The court wanted no gingerbread or unnecessary trim; they did not consider a dome because of the fire hazard and expense, but columns flanked the entry, and a balustrade at the roof line added classical details.

The building measured 55 by 80 feet (Fig. 3). Offices were on the first two floors; the Circuit Court room was on the third. Ray and Son received the building contract in January 1913 for \$56,000. Cornerstone ceremonies were conducted June 5, 1913. A year later the dedication took place. Final costs came to about \$60,000.

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LIVINGSTON COUNTY

Livingston County planned a temporary building in Chillicothe, the county seat, for its first courthouse in 1837; the cost was not to exceed \$50. The court ordered the 18-foot-square, log building to be built in the manner of cabins, covered with clapboards and laid with a puncheon floor (split log with a smoothed face). For the first 18 months the building apparently had no windows. The court later made arrangements to have them cut in. The court held session in the building during May 1838. As soon as the need for this courthouse passed, it was used as a schoolhouse.

The court arranged for the first permanent courthouse to be built on the square. An initial appropriation of \$4,000 in September 1839, later supplemented by an additional \$1,600, provided funds for the two-story, brick courthouse with cupola.

In February 1840 the court awarded the building contract for \$5,600 to Moses Burton. He completed the building November 2, 1841. An early postmaster in Livingston County drew an eyewitness rendering of the courthouse in 1840 (Fig. 1).

In 1864 the court condemned the building as unsafe and ordered it razed. For many years the square remained open and available to the public. Townspeople called the area "Elm Park." County officers occupied quarters in different buildings around town until the 20th century courthouse was built.

Voters in Livingston County rejected several bond issues to finance a courthouse. Finally, a direct tax of 25¢ per \$100 valuation passed in April 1912, providing funds for a \$100,000 building.

The question of where to locate the courthouse caused some disagreement. Many in Chillicothe

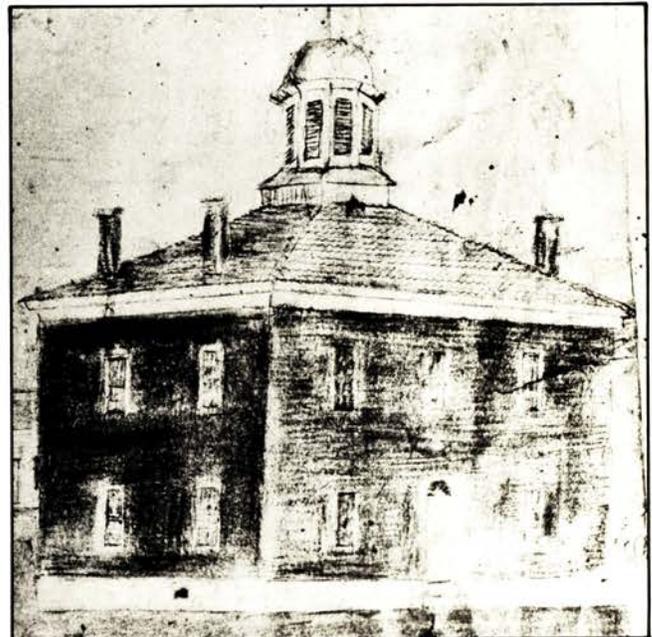


Fig. 1. Livingston County Courthouse, 1840-1864.
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri, drawing dated 1840)

wanted to keep the pleasant park atmosphere on the square, but the park was county property, and apparently the judges felt the majority of county residents favored a courthouse site on the square.

The court visited Carroll, Boone, Vernon, Jasper, Barton and Monroe counties to examine their recently constructed courthouses. The commissioners were not favorably impressed with Jasper and Barton; the exterior of Carroll they found acceptable, but they did not care for the plan. They liked Vernon; Boone was closer to what they had in mind, and they were impressed with City Hall in Kansas City, Kansas.

Eighteen architects presented plans before the court; one brought a model of his work. Late in July 1912 the court accepted the proposal of Warren Roberts and George Saase for a three-story building, 80 by 100 feet, of Bedford stone.

County	Livingston	
Organized	Jan. 6, 1837	
Named After . . .	Edward Livingston, secretary of state	
County Seat . . .	Chillicothe	



Fig. 2. Livingston County Courthouse, 1913-. Architect: Warren Roberts and George Saase (From: W.P.A., Historical Records Survey)

The general contract was let to L. W. Dumas, Jr. Construction Co. of Columbia, Missouri, for \$97,890. Ground was broken in April 1913. Cornerstone ceremonies were conducted June 28, 1914, and the court accepted the completed building July 25 (Fig. 2).

This was a popular courthouse design in Missouri from 1910-1930. Ray County officials visited Livingston County during construction of this courthouse, talked with architect Roberts, then chose him to design their 1914 courthouse. Both buildings continue to serve the counties, excellent examples of Warren Roberts' work.

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McDONALD COUNTY

When McDonald County was created in 1849, two communities, Rutledge and Maryville (which was later named Pineville), competed fiercely for the county seat. An 1850 confrontation in Rutledge resulted in death to three participants. About six years later a log courthouse, reportedly built in Rutledge, was demolished in one of the acts of hostility that continued to occur between the antagonistic factions.

From the time of organization in 1849 until winter of 1857, McDonald County operated with two courthouses and two sets of officials. The General Assembly appointed commissioners to select the legal county seat. They settled the matter by relocating the county seat at Pineville.

The first courthouse in Pineville, a one-story, frame building, built in 1858-59, measured 30 feet square and stood at the corner of Third and Main.

The next courthouse, a two-story, brick house built in 1861, was located on the city square site in Pineville. The Freemasons planned a third-story addition to this courthouse for their lodge room. Whether or not the third story was ever built remains a matter of conjecture, but J. A. Sturges, an attorney who came to McDonald County in 1881 and interviewed old-time residents of Pineville for his history, maintains it was built. Bushwackers burned the courthouse in 1863, destroying most records.

In November 1866 the court appointed a representative to rent rooms for county use and to sell the bricks and bats from the old courthouse. Roman Malach, a local historian, noted a payment of \$25 made to Z. P. Cogswell for making plans and specifications for the



Fig. 1. McDonald County Courthouse, 1870-1978.
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

new courthouse, begun in 1869. In December of the same year the court accepted the low bid of \$4,949.50 from contractors Willis R. Cox and Zachariah Smith. Construction began in 1870 on a two-story, brick building measuring approximately 42 by 48 feet (Fig. 1). The court accepted the building in June 1871. Sturges claimed the old courthouse was on the same plan; another source, *1849-1949, 100 Years of History and Progress*, maintained that part of the 1861 building was in the 1870 building.

In 1905 the court made a \$1,500 appropriation for an addition on the east to provide vaults; in 1943 the building was stuccoed and painted white. The courtroom was paneled, the ceiling lowered, and the room was rewired with new light fixtures in 1969.

The County Court bought a \$10,000 lot north of the city square for the 20th century courthouse in 1977. Hood-Rich, architects and consulting engineers from Springfield, designed the one-story, 72-by-84-foot, masonry building. R. E. Smith Construction, Joplin, received the building contract in December 1977.

County	McDonald	
Organized	March 3, 1849	
Named After . . .	Alexander McDonald, Revolutionary soldier and congressman	
County Seat . . .	Pineville	



Fig. 2. McDonald County Courthouse, 1977-. Architects: Hood-Rich, architects and consulting engineers. (Courtesy: *McDonald County News-Gazette*)

Ground breaking took place December 21, 1977 (Fig. 2). The amount of space, 5,500 square feet, was about the same as in the old courthouse.

The Local Public Works Capital Development and Investment Act of 1977, as amended by the Public Works Employment Act of 1977, under the U.S. Department of Commerce, provided a grant of \$145,000. Local contributions of about \$20,000 completed the funds.

Dedication and open house were planned for July 1978 to coincide with Jesse James Days, when a festival air reigns throughout the town, with street dancing, music, a brush arbor wedding and a showing of the film *Jesse James*. In 1938 Twentieth Century Fox brought Tyrone Power, Randolph Scott and Henry Fonda to Pineville and the 1870 courthouse to shoot the Missouri epic. The occasion has been celebrated ever since. As one resident said, "It's the greatest thing that ever happened in McDonald County." The old courthouse, immortalized in the film, was leased for possible commercial development in 1980.

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MACON COUNTY



Fig. 1. Macon County Courthouse, 1865-. Architect: Levi Aldrich (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri; photo by Massie, *Missouri Commerce*)

County	Macon	
Organized	Jan. 6, 1837	
Named After . . .	Nathaniel Macon of North Carolina, U.S. congressman and senator	
County Seat . . .	Macon	

Bloomington, the site of Macon County's first county seat, had the first courthouse. It was a temporary log structure, built in 1838 according to a plan submitted by Joseph Owenbey. The building measured 20 by 30 feet. There were two stories, one central chimney stack, four doors and three windows. Built by Willis E. Green, the building cost \$209. It was later sold for \$150 but apparently rented for a time by the County

Court as a clerk's office.

James T. Haley built the second courthouse in Bloomington, a 45-foot-square, brick building with cupola. After many delays and changes, the court accepted the building in November 1841. The first story was 14 feet, the second 10 feet. Estimated cost was \$3,000.

Because of its citizens' Southern sympathies, Gen. Lewis Merrill ordered Bloomington burned; fortunately, Maj. Thomas Moody suggested a more humane penalty—move the government to a new county seat. In 1863 an act of legislature moved the site to Macon City.

For their first Macon City courthouse, the court appointed Fred Rowland superintendent, who was to present a plan to the court for consideration. They approved the plan March 9, 1864 (Fig. 1). Levi Aldrich was architect and contractor. In February 1864 the court had appropriated \$10,000 from the general fund and ordered that the money be raised by a special tax. After seeing the plan, they appropriated an additional \$15,000. Costs ran to approximately \$30,000. The

county offices moved into the building in September 1865. An annex was added in 1895, costing about \$8,500.

Levi Aldrich immigrated to Missouri from Rhode Island, settling in St. Louis. He was born in 1806; the 1850 census identified him as an architect-builder. Aldrich also served as architect of the 1865 Chariton County courthouse. These are the only two known examples of courthouses designed by Aldrich.

In 1938 Macon County began planning for a new courthouse when they got a Work Projects Administration grant for \$114,545. Officials called a special election for September 20, 1938, to vote on a \$140,000 bond issue, but they cancelled the election because of insufficient time to complete necessary arrangements and begin construction within the specified nine week time limit.

Today, the 1865 courthouse is a rare example of architecture, representing this turbulent decade of Missouri's history. It has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

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MADISON COUNTY

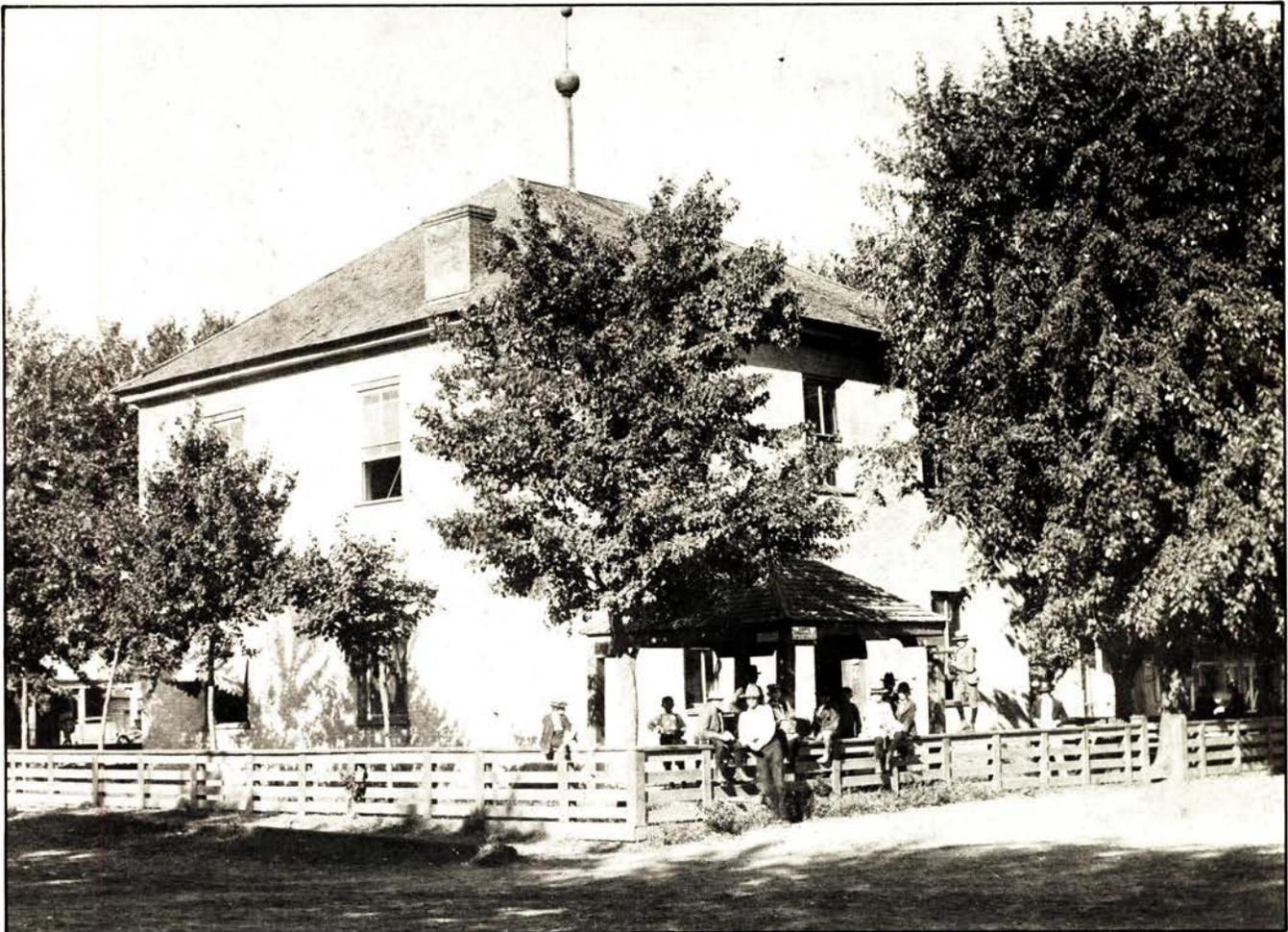


Fig. 1. Madison County Courthouse, 1822-1899. (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri, gift of Mrs. Clarice B. Andrews)

County Madison
Organized Dec. 14, 1818
Named After . . . James Madison
County Seat . . . Fredericktown



Madison County held its first Circuit Court meetings in homes. The County Court organized in 1821, and it too met in homes until 1822. Madison County's first courthouse was a brick structure, built of handmade bricks from the area in 1822; it continued in use until J. F. Boggs was paid \$25 for tearing it down in 1899 to make way for the new courthouse (Fig. 1). The building



Fig. 2. Madison County Courthouse, 1899-. Architect: Theodore C. Link (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

originally had a cupola, which was removed in February 1838.

This style building, square with a hip roof, cupola, and regularly placed windows and doors, and sometimes with transverse halls, was one of the most popular courthouse designs in Missouri. Madison County's measured about 50 feet square, with the principal entrance facing south. There were four rooms and a north-south hall on the ground floor; the courtroom was on the second floor. The building continued in use until the end of the century. According to a turn-of-the-century county clerk, there is no record of the builder or the cost, but construction was financed by the sale of county-owned lots.

September 5, 1899, Madison Countians voted in favor of a new courthouse, and the County Court selected Theodore C. Link to prepare plans. Link, a well-educated and trained St. Louis architect, came to Missouri in the 1870s. Lewis Miller, of Iron County, was awarded the building contract for \$18,093. Constructed of red brick, the building measures 66 by 76 feet; the principal entrance is on the south; offices open off a north-south hall. The courtroom, about 52 by 52 feet, occupies the central portion of the second floor; a small office, and the jury and witness rooms are on the east and west. Room occupancy has changed, but the basic plan remains the same. Final costs amounted to approximately \$22,000 (Fig. 2).

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MARIES COUNTY



Fig. 1. Maries County Courthouse, 1869-1940. (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

Maries County organized in 1855 and built its first courthouse the following year. Robert McKin, of California, Missouri, constructed the brick, two-story building, which measured 40 by 44 feet, for \$3,000. It faced east and stood close to the street on the edge of the square. A fire, believed to have been set intention-

ally, destroyed the building and most records November 6, 1868.

In March 1869 the court appropriated \$10,000 for construction of a new courthouse, to be built in the center of the square (Fig. 1). George A. Lett, of St. James, contracted to build the courthouse and completed his work in February 1870. The two-story building, with simple gable roof, resembled the previous structure. A double stairway on the north led to the courtroom on the second floor. The building continued in use until the 20th century courthouse was built.

County	Maries
Organized	March 2, 1855
Named After . . .	Two principal streams, Big and Little Maries
County Seat . . .	Vienna

In December 1939 Maries County considered a new three-story courthouse, 115 by 80 feet, of Missouri



Fig. 2. Maries County Courthouse, 1940-. Architect: Macon C. Abbitt

stone and concrete. About \$90,000 was the investment considered: Work Projects Administration funding \$50,000, supplemented by a bond issue proposal for \$40,000. The following month the *Belle Banner* urged community support; the editorial cautioned that federal aid would not last forever. County residents voted approval in January 1940.

The architect was Macon C. Abbitt. Allan Bethel, Jefferson City, was foreman of construction. Excavations began in June 1940. It was built in two stages. County offices occupied the first unit, while the second unit, which extended to the south, was finished. The jail occupied the top story. The September court term of 1942 met in the new \$76,000 courthouse (Fig. 2).

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MARION COUNTY

Marion County officials first met in homes, then, in 1828 considered building their first courthouse. But title to the chosen site did not appear clear, so County Court judges postponed plans.

In 1830 planning resumed, and Samuel C. Reed, appointed as superintendent, submitted a plan for a two-story, brick building with a hipped roof and cupola, with bell to call court. The court contracted with John D. White, of Ralls County, for brick work. Changes in the plan raised the cost to \$1,750. White's work was received by the court in February 1832. Finishing work delayed the date of completion until February 1835. The courthouse stood on the east side of the public square, facing east. It was demolished in January 1853 in preparation for the next courthouse.

Marion's second courthouse, which used bricks from the first, was designed by Charles Levis from Paris, Missouri (Fig. 1). The county used this courthouse until razing it in 1900 to clear the site for the present courthouse in Palmyra. The original plans called for a temple front, but the porch was never built, although the foundation was laid. The county gave the building contract to the firm of Felps and McLeod for \$15,750 on December 19, 1853. Construction progressed rapidly enough that the court occupied the building in March 1855. The ball from the top of this courthouse is a monument on the grounds of the present courthouse.

By the turn of the century, Marion County considered building a new courthouse. A Court of Common Pleas had been established at Hannibal in 1844 to handle maritime services, then broadened in 1845 to

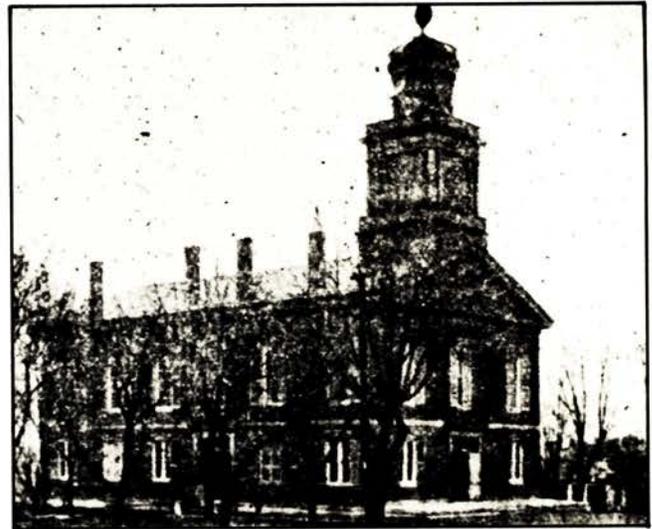


Fig. 1. Marion County Courthouse, 1853-1900.
Architect: Charles Levis
(From: *Palmyra Spectator*, July 19, 1900)



Fig. 2. Marion County Courthouse, Palmyra, 1900-.
Architect: William N. Bowman
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

County Marion
Organized Dec. 23, 1826
Named After . . . Francis Marion of
the Revolution
County Seat . . . Palmyra



include probate matters, and in 1847 expanded further to receive misdemeanors, felonies and appeals from the City Court. Marion County used a converted church as a courthouse in Hannibal. At one time the county considered repairing the Palmyra building and constructing a new one in Hannibal. Eventually, county residents resolved the problem by voting January 25, 1900, to build a new courthouse in each town for \$50,000.

Eight or 10 architects competed for the right to draw plans for the courthouse in Palmyra. There were three finalists: Jerome B. Legg, St. Louis, architect of several Missouri courthouses; George Behrensmeyer, Quincy, Illinois; and William N. Bowman, Grand Rapids, Michigan. First, the court gave the commission to Behrensmeyer, but apparently he could not provide the court with an acceptable plan and was asked to withdraw. Next, the court adopted the plans of Bowman. Trouble came again when Bowman left the Michigan firm with which he had been associated; the firm claimed the right to the plan, but Bowman contested their position. Palmyra proceeded with Bowman and his original plan.

Initially designed for red brick, dark gray brick was substituted. The courthouse measures 113 by 79 feet. The court awarded the building contract to F. W. Menke Stone and Lime Company, Quincy, Illinois, on July 2, 1900, for \$41,600. Cornerstone ceremonies were conducted October 25, 1900, and the building was completed and accepted by the court August 3, 1901 (Fig. 2). The central tower, the round, arched, recessed entries and the Romanesque details characterize the most popular courthouse design at the end of the 19th century.

The Hannibal project did not encounter such a problem with the architect, James Hogg, formerly a resident of Hannibal, but practicing in Kansas City. Hogg's design for a porticoed building with classical details is one of only two built in Missouri at the turn of the century; the other is in Columbia, Boone County. Menke also received the bid for building this courthouse June 18, 1900. Built with stone facade and brick sides and back, the building measures 124 by 80 feet. Costs came to about \$43,500. The court accepted the completed building July 12, 1901 (Fig. 3).

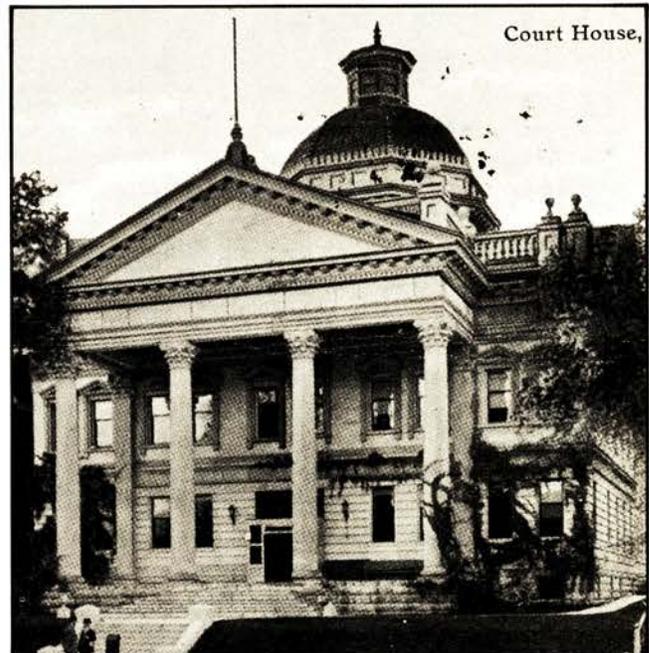


Fig. 3. Marion County Courthouse, Hannibal, 1900-.
Architect: James O. Hogg
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

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MERCER COUNTY

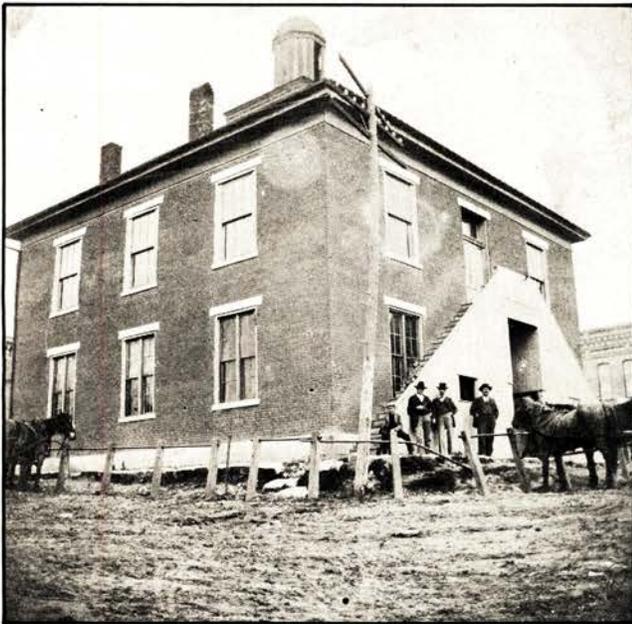


Fig. 1. Mercer County Courthouse, 1858-1898.
(From: postcard, Virginia Botts collection)

Mercer County bought 40 acres from the U.S. government for the county seat and sold lots, using the money for public buildings. The first courthouse, built in 1847 east of the public square, was a two-story, log structure, measuring 24 feet square.

The second courthouse, built in 1858 in the center of the square, was a brick building, which cost about \$8,000. H. B. Nesbitt was the builder (Fig. 1). Exterior

stairs were probably added later. If a separate or enclosed stairway were not provided, office workers were disrupted while court was in session. Fire destroyed the building March 24, 1898. For several years Mercer County considered building a courthouse. In 1907 a Scotland County, Missouri, newspaper illustrated one of Mercer County's contemplated designs (Fig. 2). Officials had been planning a new courthouse for Scotland County and considered what other counties were doing.

After half a dozen rejected bond issues, courthouse advocates mustered their strengths and succeeded in passing by a four to one ratio a bond issue for \$75,000 in October 1911. More than 16 architects sought the commission; R. W. Van Trump and Rae Sanneman of Kansas City were awarded the contract.

After the fire in 1898, the county had sold the square to the city for a park, so a new site was necessary. Princeton residents donated \$4,000 for a lot close to the square.

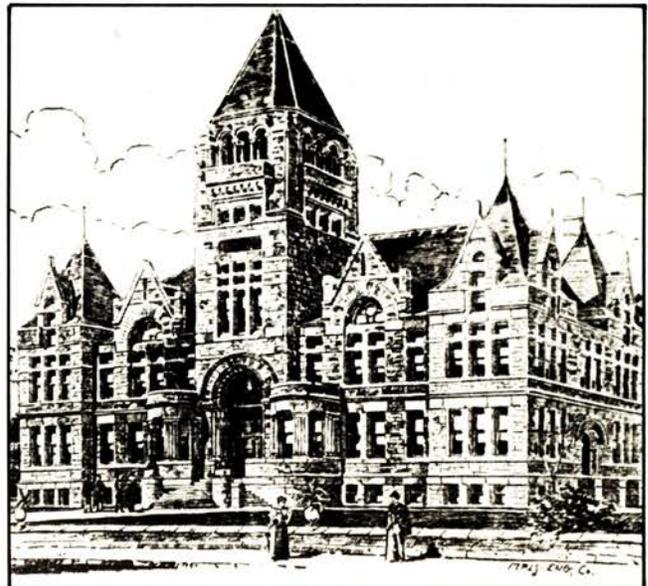


Fig. 2. Proposed Courthouse for Mercer County.
(From: *Memphis Reveille*, February 28, 1907)

County	Mercer	
Organized	Feb. 14, 1845	
Named After . . .	John F. Mercer of the Revolution	
County Seat . . .	Princeton	



Fig. 3. Cornerstone ceremony, June 8, 1912.
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

J. E. Anderson of Kansas City was low bidder for the contract with \$70,500. Construction was to be completed March 1, 1913, or he was to pay \$10 a day penalty. Cornerstone ceremonies took place June 8, 1912, attracting a very large crowd (Fig. 3). The event inspired some merchants to hold Cornerstone Day sales. The dedication took place in April 1913, again with an overflowing crowd.

The stone building is 65 by 90 feet and two stories plus basement (Fig. 4). A large courtroom is on the third floor, and an assembly room for 300 is on the first floor. Final cost for the courthouse came to more than \$76,000; furnishings amounted to almost \$5,000.

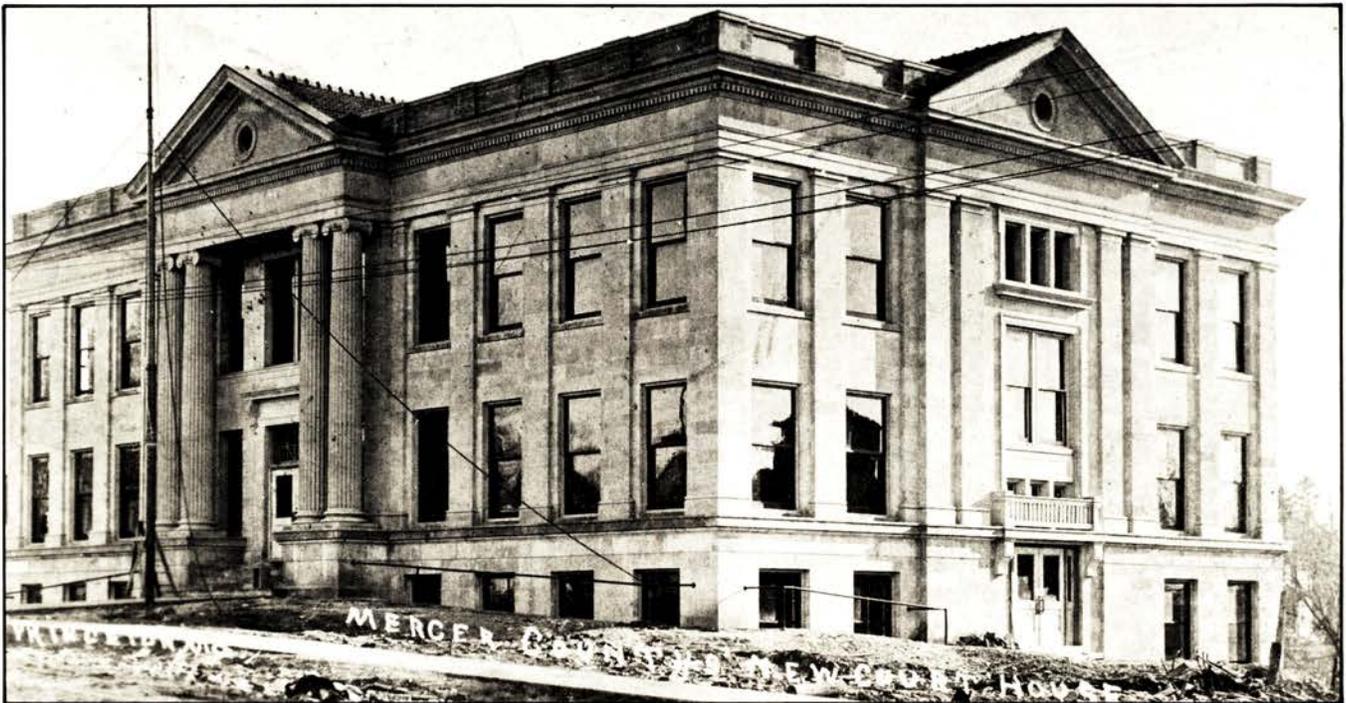


Fig. 4. Mercer County Courthouse, 1912-. Architects: Richard W. Van Trump and Rae Sanneman (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

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MILLER COUNTY

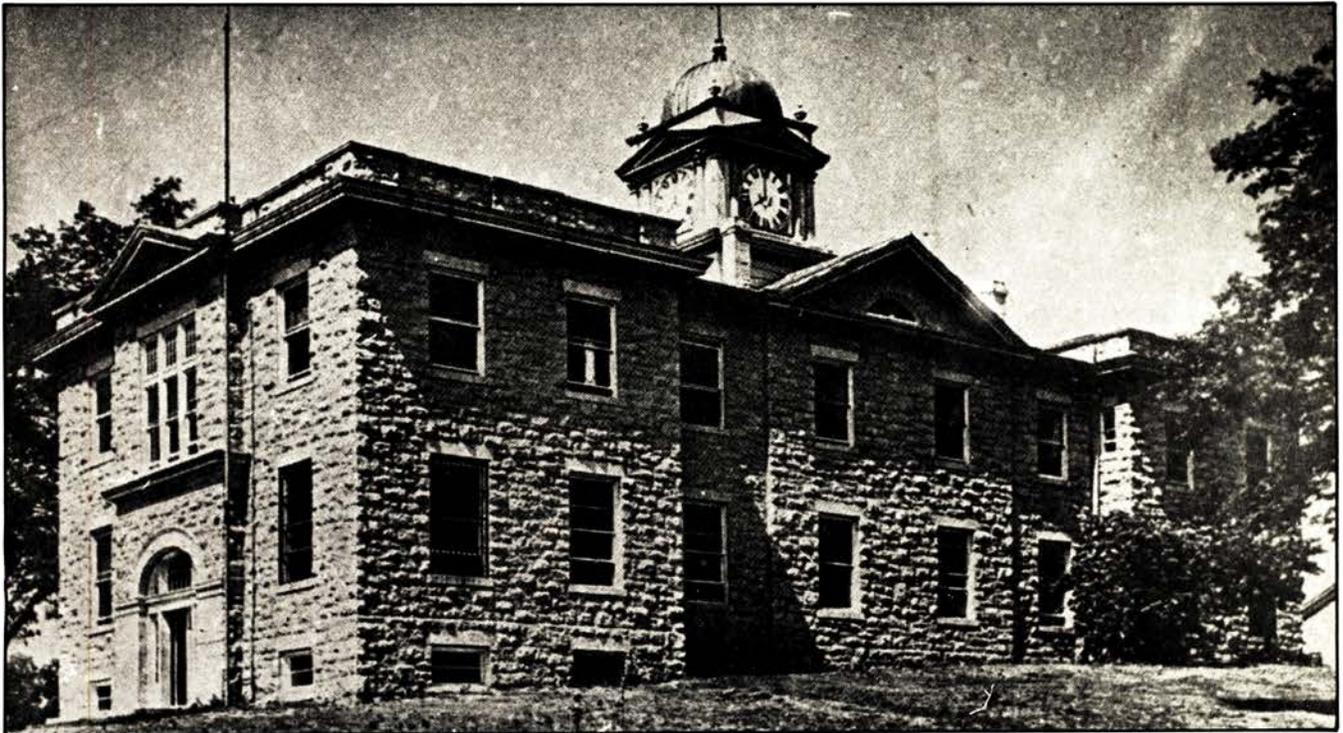


Fig. 1. Miller County Courthouse, after 1910 remodeling. Architects: Frank B. Miller and Charles Opel (From: W.P.A., Western Historical Manuscripts Collection)

Miller County attempted to build a courthouse in Tuscumbia in 1838. In February judges appropriated \$400 and advertised for construction, but received no bids. The court tried again in 1839, appropriating \$250 and appointing Hardin M. Williams superintendent.

This time they succeeded when John Davis, one of the judges, submitted a low bid of \$199.

The 32-by-20-foot, hewn-log building had a stone foundation, rough plank floor, hewn boards covering the cracks (apparently board and batten construction) and a gable roof. A partition wall divided the courthouse into two rooms.

Davis completed his work during August 1840. Finishing work continued until May 1841. Repairs on the building in 1843 and 1847 still did not provide satisfactory accommodations, and the clerk twice sought quarters elsewhere. Finally, in 1858, as preparations were made for a new facility, the courthouse of 1839-40 was ordered sold to the highest bidder.

County Miller
 Organized Feb. 6, 1837
 Named After . . . John Miller,
 governor of
 Missouri, 1826
 County Seat . . . Tuscumbia



Petitions from citizens asked for a new courthouse in 1856, and the court made an initial appropriation of \$4,000. The court awarded the contract to Robert McKim and Robert Ainsworth for \$6,000 in November 1857. They built a two-story, brick, 56-by-40-foot courthouse, on a plan which the court accepted from Owen Riggs, the superintendent. The brick was made locally, but the masonry was of such poor quality the court had it painted with two coats of red paint. The court accepted the completed building in February 1859. This courthouse continued in use into the 20th century.

Numerous attempts to vote bonds for a new courthouse were defeated, partly because there was some desire to relocate the county seat. In 1909 one prominent citizen encouraged relocation advocates to stop talking about it, because, he said, "Elephants will turn to ants and flies to dianasauruses [sic] before the county seat is removed from Tuscumbia."

The following month the court decided to repair the old courthouse, for approval by vote was not necessary when repairing county property. On November 6, 1909, the clerk was ordered to contact different architectural firms for a remodeling design. The court then commissioned the Jefferson City firm of Miller and Opel, who presented a plan that reversed the previous arrangement by putting the courtroom on the second floor, with offices on the first.

Wings were added to the north and south of the central block, which had been the 1858 courthouse. The court awarded a contract April 14, 1910, for veneering the sides of the old building with native limestone and making two 28-by-50-foot additions, increasing the size of the building to 110 by 50 feet (Fig. 1). P. F. Havenstein (or Hauenstein) and R. T. Roberts received the contract for \$13,800.

Finally the county did need to pass a \$10,000 bond issue to finish the project. W. W. Whitlock received the contract in September 1913 for \$8,483 to complete the remodeling. He finished the work in December 1913.

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MISSISSIPPI COUNTY



Fig. 1. Mississippi County Courthouse, 1899-. Architect: Jerome B. Legg (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri, gift of Henry Stark, Jr.)

County Mississippi
Organized Feb. 14, 1845
Named After Mississippi River
County Seat Charleston



Although Mississippi became a county in 1845 and a clerk's office was built in 1846, it was not until 1852 that County Court officials authorized construction of a frame courthouse in Charleston. James T. Russell contracted the two-story building, which remained standing in 1888, the date of Goodspeed's *History of*

Southeast Missouri; the structure appears on an 1886 Sanborn map as a square shape. The 1852 courthouse reportedly burned in 1891.

After the fire the court used two, small, brick offices on the square and the opera house to conduct county business until 1900. A neighboring community, Hibbard, began vying for the county seat as early as 1893, but Charleston remained the county seat.

Architect Jerome B. Legg planned the second courthouse after the court appropriated \$25,000 in a special election September 30, 1899 (Fig. 1). St. Charles County used Legg's same design for their present courthouse, but selected gray stone building material.

Legg's design for the Gasconade County courthouse, 1896, is similar, but constructed of brick.

V. O'Bryan and the Central Bridge Co., of St. Louis, contracted Mississippi County's 114-by-70-foot, brick building. Construction began in February 1900 on the same block as the previous courthouse. The court accepted the finished courthouse in May 1901. The courthouse continues in use today, although repairs altered its appearance considerably after workmen on a Work Projects Administration repair crew, in September 1938, apparently set the tower on fire while using a blowtorch to remove paint.

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MONITEAU COUNTY



Fig. 1. Moniteau County Courthouse, 1867-, after 1905 remodeling. (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri, gift of W. W. Wisdom)

County Moniteau
Organized Feb. 14, 1845
Named After ... French spelling of
Indian word
meaning "spirit"
or "God"
County Seat ... California



The first session of Moniteau County Court took place on February 27, 1845, a few miles north of the present-day county seat. In May of the same year, Mr. and Mrs. A. T. Byler donated 50 acres in Boonesborough, an early name for California, which was designated as the county seat. The square was to contain one acre. In May 1846 the court ordered the

sheriff to sell the old building on the public square.

In September 1846 the court appropriated \$2,500 for a two-story, brick courthouse with stone foundation to be built on the same site. The building contained two small offices on the south side, a large room on the north (apparently the courtroom), and one large room on the second floor, which was leased to a lodge in 1852. Albert Byler contracted the building of the 50-by-70-foot courthouse for \$2,176.85. In April 1867, as the court prepared to build a second courthouse, they ordered the building sold to the highest bidder. H. C. Finke bought it for \$550 and removed it.

The court made an order in January 1867 for a new courthouse. William Vogdt was appointed to superintend construction, which the court estimated to cost about \$45,000-\$50,000. A new site was briefly considered, but in February 1867 the court chose the site of the previous courthouse. The commissioners received bids for construction of a 54-by-89-foot building in March 1867.

The Illinois firm of Underwood and Conn submitted a bid of \$40,433.75, which the court accepted in April 1867. Contractors completed construction in February 1868. Seven rooms were on the first floor; double stairways leading to the 54-by-54-foot courtroom on the second floor were later reduced to one stairway by enclosing the well on the east.

In 1905 O. E. Sprouce directed an extensive remodeling that included alteration of the roof, which had caused so much leaking. He increased the height of the dome 20 feet, replastered the walls and added a metal ceiling to the Circuit Court room (Fig. 1). Minor repairs

and alterations were made in 1934 under a federal Civil Works Administration project.

The curved portico design is similar to the 1826 St. Louis County courthouse designed by Morton and Laveille. It is also reminiscent of the Missouri State Capitol, designed by A. Stephen Hills in 1837, remodeled in 1888. Moniteau County's courthouse is now on the National Register of Historic Places.

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MONROE COUNTY

Monroe County, organized in 1831, selected Paris as the county seat. Officials paid \$100 for suitable land for a square, and in November 1831 they appropriated \$3,000 for their first courthouse. The 50-foot-square, two-story, brick building, with white stone foundation and hipped roof was in the center of the square. An 8-foot, shuttered, octagonal cupola was supported by a 10-foot-square base. Its roof was covered with tin; a brass ball, fish and Franklin rod adorned the top.

The superintendent, who also provided the plan, was Sylvester Hagan; builders were Pavey and Orr. Three sides had doors with fanlights, flanked by a pair of windows. The first floor was laid with brick up to the bar in the courtroom. The wood bar was raised 4 feet. The second floor was not finished when first built. The *Missouri Intelligencer* reported it a very handsome brick courthouse, neatly finished. Other sources report the dimensions as 50 by 80 feet; the building may have been enlarged. The courthouse burned in December 1861.

The second courthouse, built in 1867-69 by Burton Edwards of Macon, cost \$37,452 (Figs. 1, 2). John Parsons and Henry Davis were superintendents. It, too, was a two-story, brick, domed structure, but larger, measuring 60 by 102 feet. It contained nine rooms, two vaults, and Circuit and County Court rooms. This building was razed in 1912.

Monroe County voted three times before passing a bond issue in 1911 enabling them to build their third courthouse. It was said the committee visited almost every county seat in Missouri to examine recently constructed buildings. For the architect, they selected

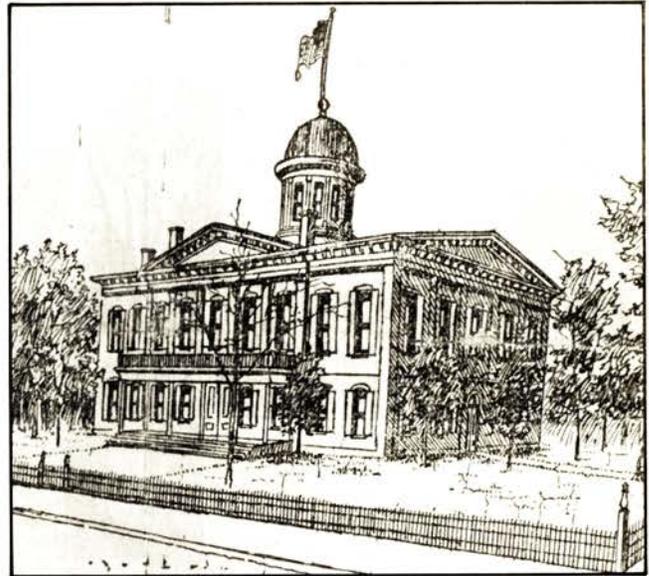


Fig. 1. Monroe County Courthouse, 1867-1912.
(From: *St. Louis Republic*, December 23, 1895)

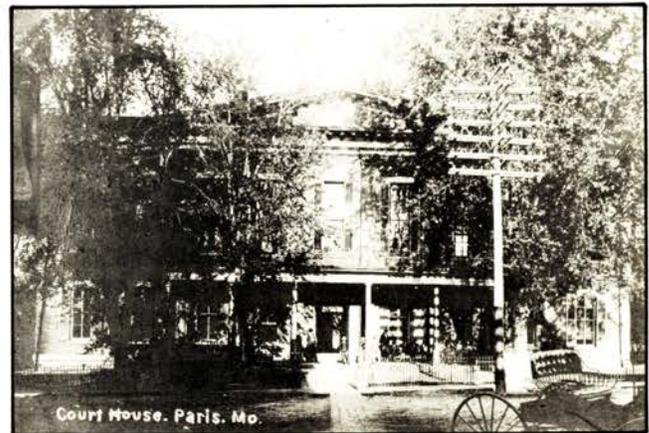
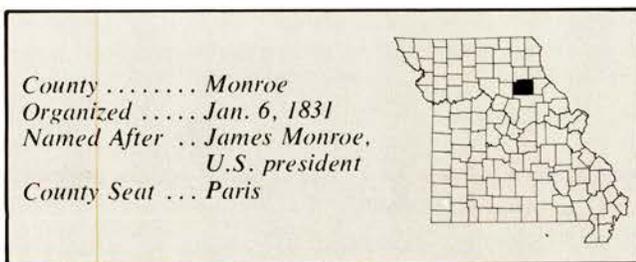


Fig. 2. Monroe County Courthouse, 1867-1912.
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri, gift of Ralph Gregory)



the Kansas City, Kansas, firm of William W. Rose and David B. Peterson. Rose had served as mayor of Kansas City, Kansas, in 1905. The committee also

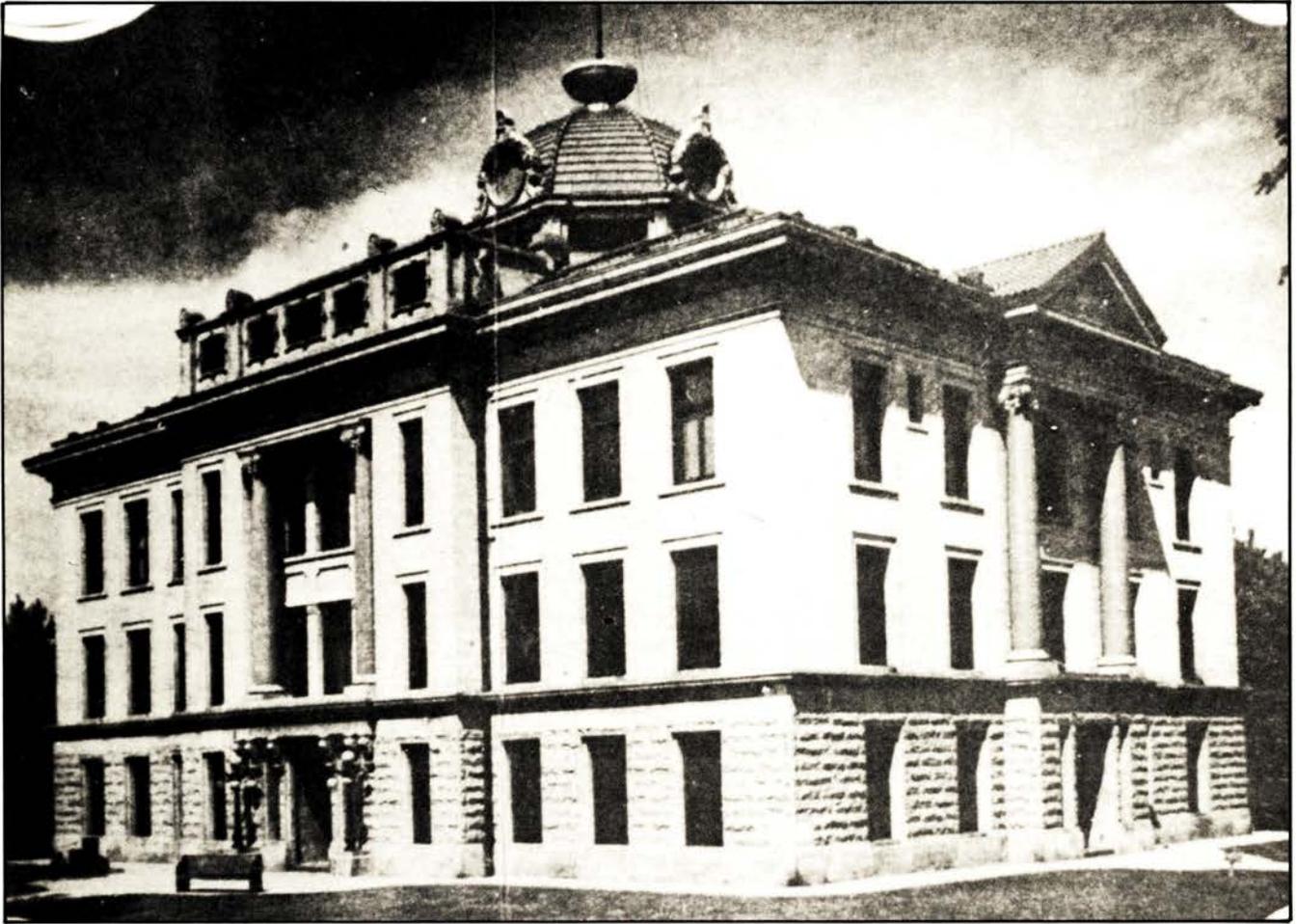


Fig. 3. Monroe County Courthouse, 1912-. Architects: William W. Rose and David B. Peterson (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

inspected other buildings erected by the firm before making their decision about design and plan.

This building, Monroe County's present courthouse, measures 108 by 82 feet; on the shorter side, columns support a pediment above a rusticated basement floor

entrance (Fig. 3). The principal entrance on the long side has a ground-level entry with a slightly projecting pavilion, recessed columns and a parapet above. The dome, with clock faces, is the last domed courthouse built in Missouri. The Henning Construction Co. received the contract for \$83,450 in February 1912.

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Pinckney, located on the Missouri River, was laid out in 1819 for Montgomery County's first county seat. Court met in a rented frame house. Pinckney proved to be an inconvenient location and gave way to Lewiston in 1824 as the second county seat. In Lewiston a 16- or 18-foot-square, log building, erected by Charles Allen, became the first planned courthouse. It had a puncheon floor and clapboard roof, held firm with weight poles.

Warren County separated from Montgomery County in 1834, and the county seat moved to Danville. There the court built a brick structure on the square; although occupied by county offices, the interior remained unfinished. Damaged by fire in the Civil War, the building was later razed in preparation for the 1860s courthouse.

Gustave Bachmann, architect of the third courthouse, prepared plans in 1865 (Fig. 1). On October 12, 1865, the court awarded the contract to James Getty, of St. Louis, for \$27,700. He completed the building in August 1867. This courthouse burned April 12, 1901, destroying many county records. There was no insurance, since no company had been willing to take the risk. The county could spend no more than \$3,000 for repairs without a bond issue, and the strong vote in Montgomery City would not support repairing the Danville courthouse.

Montgomery City had been laid out in 1853. After the North Missouri Railroad reached Montgomery City in 1857, the town became the principal trading center in Montgomery County. The townspeople wanted the county seat in Montgomery City, but for years Danville withstood the pressure. Acts passed by



Fig. 1. Montgomery County Courthouse, Danville, 1865-1901.
Architect: Gustave Bachmann
(From: *An Illustrated Historical Atlas of Montgomery County Missouri*, 1878)



Fig. 2. Montgomery County Courthouse, Montgomery City, 1889-1953.
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

County	Montgomery	
Organized	Dec. 14, 1818	
Named After . . .	Gen. Richard Montgomery of the Revolution	
County Seat . . .	Montgomery City	

the legislature in 1889 provided legal justification for sessions of circuit and probate courts to be held in Montgomery City. Enterprising Montgomery City residents, anxious to have a courthouse, raised about

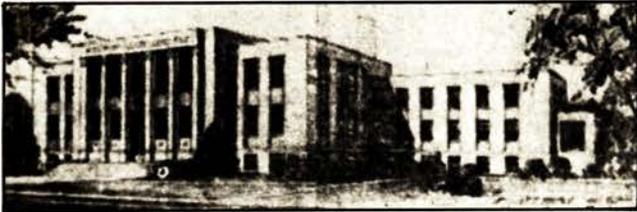


Fig. 3. Architect's drawing of Montgomery County Courthouse, 1953-.

Architect: Ernest T. Friton

(From: *Montgomery Standard*, April 9, 1953)

\$20,000 by subscription to build a two-story, brick courthouse, which they donated to the county (Fig. 2).

The court awarded the contract to four men: R. A. Sharp, C. P. and John Evered, and August Stanhardt, on September 27, 1889. Although interior finishing remained incomplete, the first session of court convened in the courthouse in mid February 1890, less than five months after construction began. The 60-foot-square building featured a corner tower, which contained the iron staircase. Building material for the foundation was cut stone with brick walls and a slate roof. The lower floor contained six rooms; the upper floor held the courtroom and three offices. Costs were between \$18,000 and \$20,000.

Knowing the county would not authorize construction of another courthouse, the officials conceded and



Fig. 4. Montgomery County Courthouse, 1953-.

moved the county seat to Montgomery City, occupying the recently built courthouse.

In 1953, after the 19th century building was condemned, citizens voted \$400,000 in bonds June 4 to finance a new courthouse. The court selected architect Ernest T. Friton to plan the 20th century Montgomery County courthouse (Fig. 3). Friton had previously designed the Work Projects Administration Dunklin County courthouse in 1940. Brockmeyer Construction Co., St. Louis, received the contract in November for \$383,599. Cornerstone ceremonies took place in April 1954; one year later construction was completed (Fig. 4).

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MORGAN COUNTY

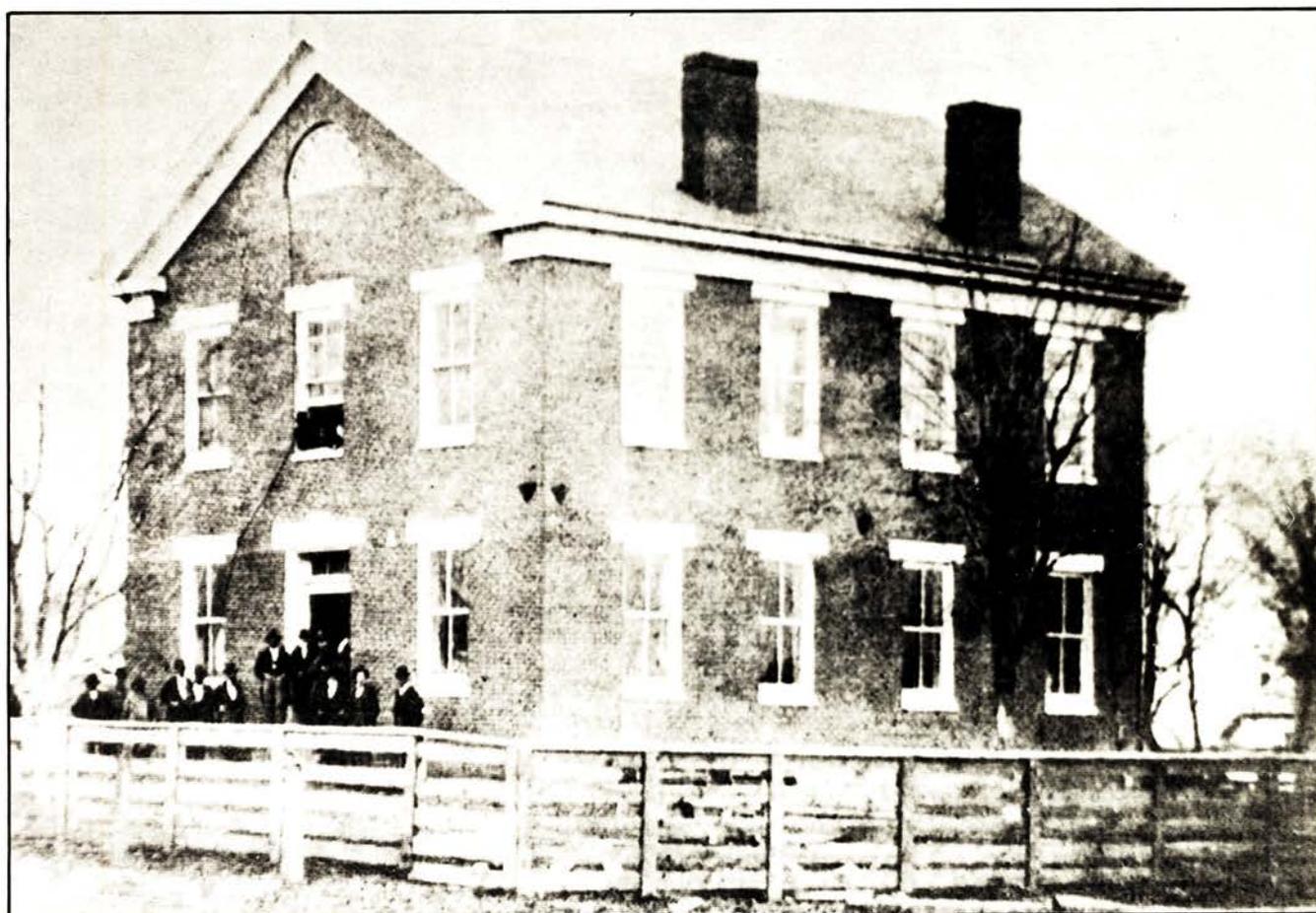


Fig. 1. Morgan County Courthouse, 1844-1887. (From: *Versailles, Missouri—Its First 125 Years*)

County	Morgan
Organized	Jan. 5, 1833
Named After . . .	General Daniel Morgan, Revolu- tionary War hero
County Seat . . .	Versailles



In 1906 John Salmon, a Morgan County citizen, recalled that the court purchased a log house off the square for the county's first courthouse in 1836. They moved the building to the center of the square, where it continued in use as a courthouse until 1843.

The second courthouse was a rectangular, two-story building built in 1844, also on the square (Fig. 1). Two men from Jefferson City, William Burch and



Fig. 2. Morgan County Courthouse, 1889-.
 Architect: William F. Schrage
 (From: *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, Sept. 20, 1925)

Colonel Young, made the brick.

On March 12, 1887, before construction began on the new courthouse that Morgan County citizens had voted to build, fire destroyed their modest brick courthouse of 1844. Fireplaces and pot-bellied stoves created fire hazards that constantly threatened 19th century buildings; arson frequently was suspected if the courthouse held damaging evidence to be used in a forthcoming trial. After the fire, Versailles businessmen quickly constructed buildings and rented space to the County Court at rates which some considered exorbitant.

In June 1887 voters defeated a proposition for a bond issue. Two area newspapers blamed a third newspaper for the defeat, claiming the *Morgan County Leader* had failed to educate the people. The following year the county held another election. In spite of a majority vote, the election results were challenged. Those disputing the results asked whether the two-thirds majority, which the law required, applied to the total number of voters or only those who voted on the courthouse issue. The challenge was finally resolved in February of 1889 when the judge ordered the County Court to issue bonds for the new courthouse.

The third and present courthouse was designed by William F. Schrage, an architect from Kansas City, in 1889 (Fig. 2). Henry H. Hohenschild, an architect practicing in Rolla, also visited Morgan County's court and presented plans for their consideration. But the court chose Schrage's plan, which called for four corner pavilions, a center tower and porches supported by brick columns.

This courthouse is similar to those built according to Schrage's design in Howard County, 1887, Laclede County, 1894, and Ripley County, 1898. Pettis County's more costly version, designed by J. G. Cairns and J. S. McKean in 1884, was built with light-colored stone, creating an entirely different effect. The cost of Morgan County's courthouse was about \$20,000; Harmon Griffith, Sedalia, was the contractor.

A great portion of the tower has been removed, but the courthouse is still used and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

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NEW MADRID COUNTY

In 1812 New Madrid was a vast county extending south through much of Arkansas. The area was cut roughly in half during the following year, and even further reductions came by 1816. New Madrid County, located by the Mississippi, was one of Missouri's earliest counties. The town of New Madrid was founded in 1783, and the county was organized in 1812. First courts met in New Madrid, but county records previous to 1816 are missing.

After the devastating earthquake of 1811 and repeated flooding of the Mississippi, the court chose an inland site for the county seat. According to an 1888 account, court convened in March 1814 in Big Prairie, and the seat of justice was located in Rossville, just south of present-day Sikeston, on a 50-acre site donated by Stephen Rose and Moses Hurley. Lots were sold to build a jail in 1817, which also served as a meeting place. County Court records in 1817 mention courts convening in the courthouse, and a page in the 1817 County Record has a simple drawing showing the jail in the center of a square and an intended courthouse at the edge. But there is no indication that a courthouse was built at Rossville.

Winchester, also in the neighborhood of Sikeston, was identified in the records as an early county seat. Securities for three commissioners of the courthouse and jail were made October 24, 1817, and according to the County Record, court was held April 12, 1819, at the courthouse in Winchester.

Two years later, in May and August of 1821, court met in a home, and the sheriff was ordered to take possession of the courthouse of New Madrid county in Winchester and superintend repairs. The public proper-

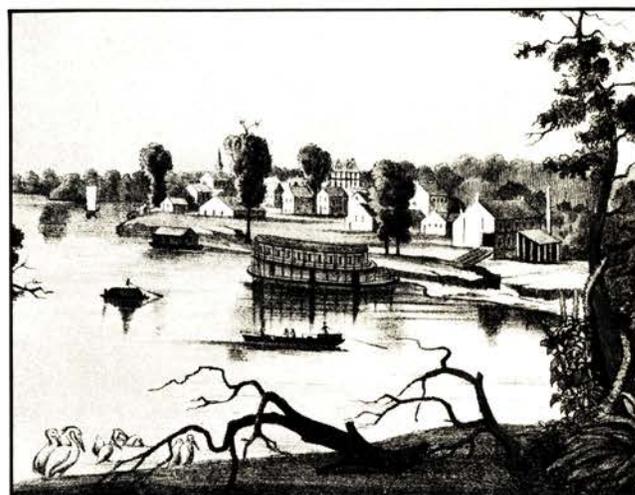


Fig. 1. New Madrid. Sketched by Henry Lewis ca. 1847. (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri, from Henry Lewis, *Das illustrierte Mississippithal*, 1857)

ty in Winchester was ordered to be sold to the highest bidder on May 14, 1824, but county records do not mention the courthouse.

The seat of justice moved to New Madrid February 4, 1822; commissioners were appointed for the courthouse and jail on May 13, 1822. This courthouse has been reported as one of the first frame buildings in the county; the others presumably were of log construction. According to Wetmore's *Gazetteer* of 1837, all the buildings in New Madrid were frame to hold up against the continued shaking of the earth after the New Madrid earthquake of 1811.

On November 17, 1848, the court ordered the disposal of the public square and the courthouse to help defray expenses for a new courthouse and square. A similar order appeared June 11, 1852, but apparently the courthouse was not sold until October 3, 1854.

Two 19th century illustrations of New Madrid, Charles Lesueur's, about 1826 and Henry Lewis' in 1847 (Fig. 1), do not include the courthouse.

For the new courthouse, ordered June 11, 1852, the court changed the location, appointing Robert Hatcher to select the site by purchase or donation. The cost was





Fig. 2. New Madrid County Courthouse, 1915-. Architect: H. G. Clymer (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

not to exceed \$2,000. Apparently Hatcher failed to act; the court then appointed Thomas J. O. Morrison to replace him in February 1853. More problems followed, with one contractor forfeiting bond. Work was eventually completed; Morrison recommended the court receive the building November 13, 1854, reporting an expenditure of \$2,950.

On March 17, 1875, five commissioners were appointed to select a new site for relocating the courthouse and other public buildings. The courthouse reportedly had been moved three times to escape the encroaching river.

Fire, however, rather than flood, finally destroyed this courthouse on September 24, 1905. A contemporary news account of the fire described the building as a one-story frame, constructed of red cypress, with a small door in the north gable above the porch. There were two offices on the south end, two on the north, with a courtroom in the middle.

No known photographs exist of any 19th century New Madrid courthouses. After the fire, county offices moved into several different buildings in New Madrid. Lilbourn, a few miles west of New Madrid, challenged for the county seat in 1912, but by vote New Madrid remained the people's choice.

For the 20th century courthouse, New Madrid County purchased a new site north of the original town in March 1915. From architects who presented plans, the court selected those from H. G. Clymer of St. Louis. Clymer's plan was for a brick building 107 by 75 feet with stone trim (Fig. 2). The court accepted the Interstate Building and Construction Co.'s bid of about

\$80,000 for the shell. Citizens donated \$20,000 to supplement the \$50,000 bond issue. Cornerstone ceremonies were July 4, 1915. Additional funds for finishing the courthouse and jail were authorized early in 1917, but no bids were received. World War I was beginning, and the labor force was reduced. Finally, W. W. Taylor, a master builder from Cape Girardeau, superintended final interior work, which was completed in January 1919. Final costs exceeded \$100,000. This courthouse continues in use as New Madrid's seat of justice.

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NEWTON COUNTY

During the 19th century Newton County had four courthouses. In December 1840 the court ordered the first, a hewn-log building, 18 by 20 feet, with wooden chimney, one door and one window. The clerk recorded a complete description of the building in the County Court minutes. Cost was between \$150 and \$300.

The second courthouse built in the center of the square came in 1847, when the court appropriated \$3,000. A succession of men acted as superintendent; John Plummer was the builder. The structure was reported as a two-story brick building with cupola. The court accepted the building during October 1849. It was destroyed in Civil War activity. Neosho citizens landscaped the square, planted trees, and treated the square as a park.

In May 1867 the court purchased the lot north of the courthouse square. J. C. Herms built a two-story, frame house, 22 by 80 feet. Costs are uncertain. Reports have varied between \$2,500 and \$4,600. This courthouse continued in use until 1878 when the fourth courthouse was completed on the square. For the fourth courthouse St. Louis architect C. B. Clarke was paid \$360 for producing plans and specifications for the elaborate design (Fig. 1). E. W. Bray contracted for building in May 1877. The state had compensated Newton County \$2,000 for loss of the courthouse during the war; Neosho residents contributed \$6,000, and the court appropriated \$10,000. The grounds were fenced in 1887, and landscaping, with walks and a fountain, was added later in the century. During the 20th century, portions of the towers were removed

County	Newton	
Organized	Dec. 31, 1838	
Named After . . .	Sgt. John Newton, Revolutionary War soldier with the "Swamp Fox," Gen. Francis Marion	
County Seat . . .	Neosho	



Fig. 1. Newton County Courthouse, 1877-1935.
Architect: C. B. Clarke
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

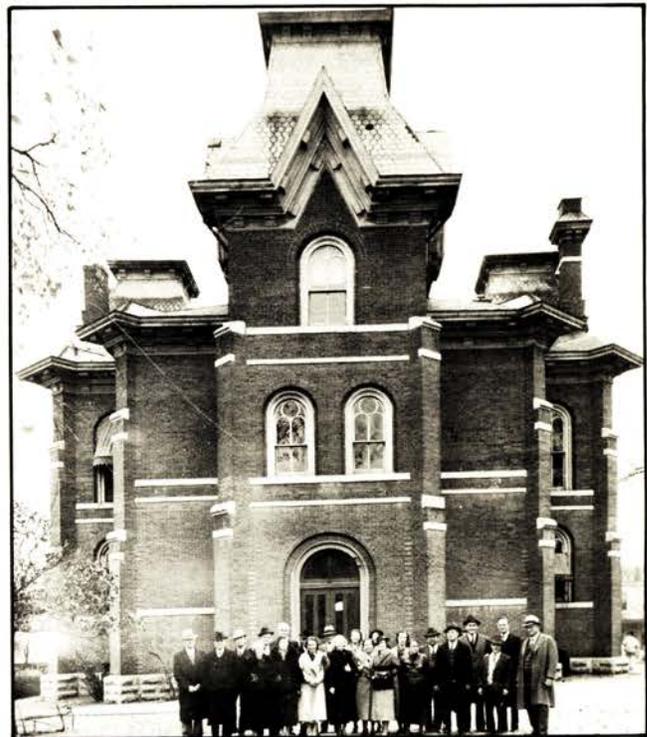


Fig. 2. Newton County Courthouse, after tower removal ca. 1920.
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri, gift of Charles Allonby)

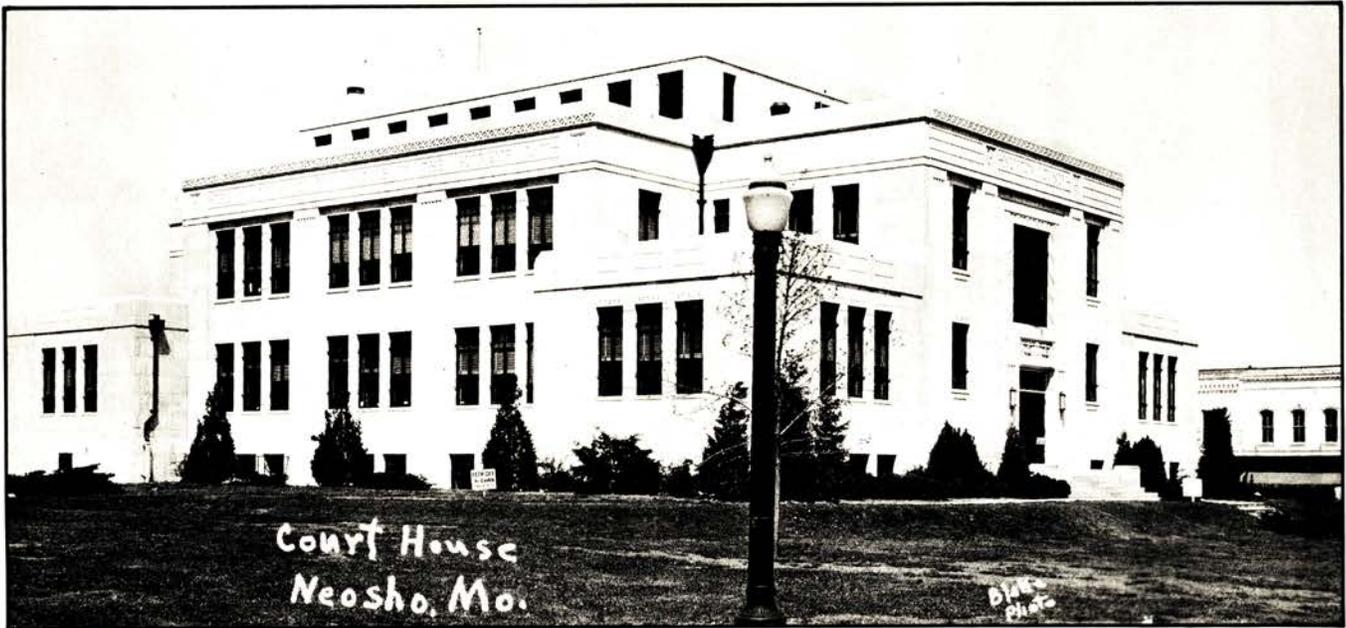


Fig. 3. Newton County Courthouse, 1936-. Architect: Neal Davis (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

(Fig. 2), but the building continued in use until it was razed in December 1935 as construction began on the present courthouse.

Newton County chose St. Louis architect Neal C. Davis to design the fifth courthouse, funded by the Work Projects Administration. Other plans came from firms in Kansas City and Joplin, but the committee favored Davis, who originally came from Newton County. The court approved his plan in October 1935. The courthouse contract was let for \$162,687, and the jail contract for \$11,150. The jail was on top of the building.

Construction began in April 1936. A memorial tablet replaced the traditional cornerstone, which was no longer a construction component, and ceremonies took place July 30, 1936. U.S. Senator Harry Truman, Grand Steward of the Grand Lodge of Missouri, was the speaker.

Built of Carthage stone, the building consisted of four stories: basement, first floor for general offices, second floor for the Circuit Court room, and top floor for the jail (Figs. 3 and 4). The building measured about



Fig. 4. Newton County Courthouse, 1936-. (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

112 by 90 feet. Appropriate inscriptions were carved in the frieze, and the court accepted the building in February 1937. M. V. Woodward was landscape architect.

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NODAWAY COUNTY

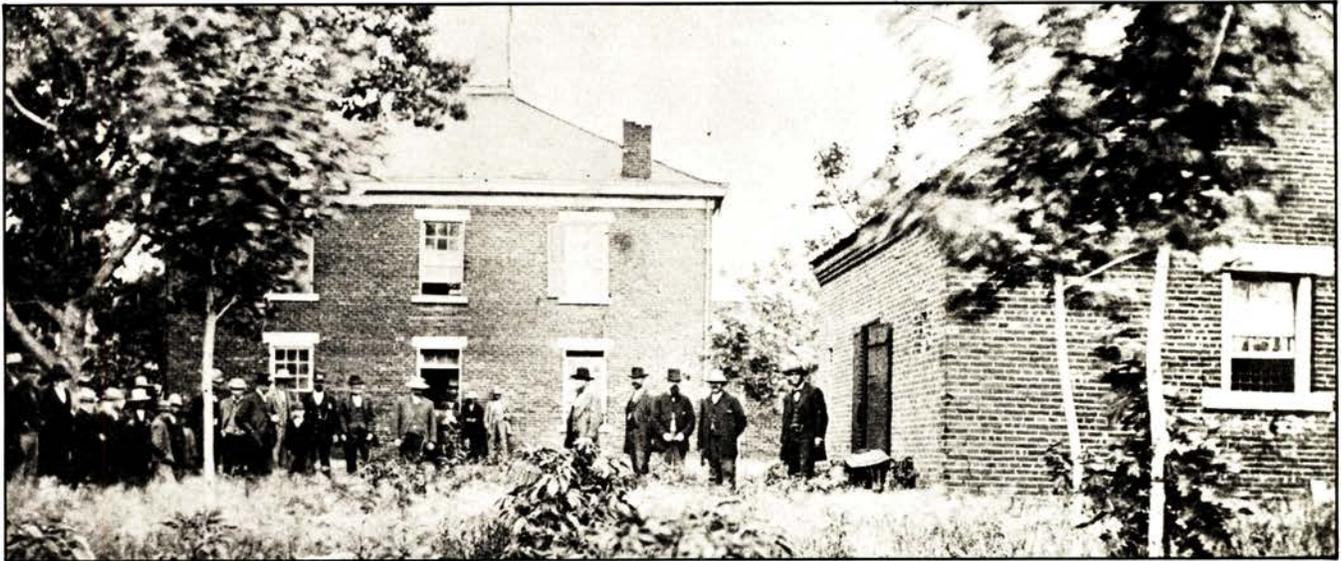


Fig. 1. Nodaway County Courthouse, 1853-1881 (left); jail (right). (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri, gift of Nodaway County Historical Society).

First courts of Nodaway County met in either private homes or a schoolhouse. In February 1846 the court appropriated \$250 for a two-room, log courthouse. James Vaughn superintended the construction done by Benjamin Sims, whose bond the court approved on April 6, 1846.

According to the County Court Record, the court assigned a lot at the southwest corner of Second and Main for the courthouse. A complete description of the 32-by-20-foot building with central chimney is in the court record.

The court encountered difficulty with the slow progress of Sims' construction; several times the court threatened to forfeit his work unless completed by specified dates. By February 1847 court was held in the courthouse, but work continued through the summer. Finally, the court accepted the building in October 1847.

In July 1853 the court appointed James Ray superintendent of the anticipated new courthouse and appropriated \$3,500; a month later, Ray, who operated a drinking establishment in Maryville, presented a plan. James C. Nelson contracted for building the courthouse. The square, brick building with cupola was received by the court in June 1855 (Fig. 1). Total costs amounted to \$4,461.

During the winter of 1856 the cupola leaked, and by May, roof and cupola were reported in poor condition. The inspector recommended covering with zinc or tin. Apparently, the courtroom on the first floor proved inconvenient. In 1869 the building was remodeled at a

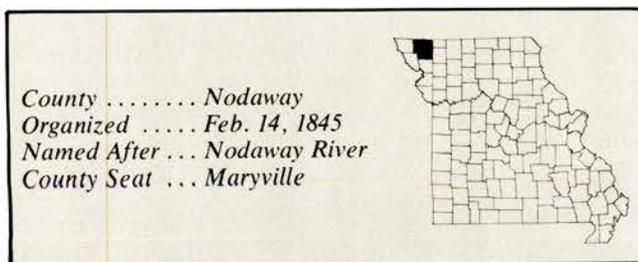




Fig. 2. Nodaway County Courthouse, 1881-.
Architects: Edmond J. Eckel and George R. Mann
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

cost of \$391.45 to place the courtroom on the second floor with offices on the first. The building was razed in September 1881 as construction began on the next county courthouse.

An election on June 7, 1881, authorized \$80,000 for building a courthouse and jail; \$60,000 of this sum went to the third and present courthouse of Nodaway County. Edmond J. Eckel and George R. Mann, architects from St. Joseph, designed the building (Fig. 2). The contract was given to R. K. Allen for construction of courthouse and jail for \$74,000. The 111-by-76-foot, red-brick building is trimmed with white sandstone. County offices occupy the first floor; smaller offices and the courtroom are on the second.

Few alterations have been made. In 1932 a new floor was put in the Circuit Court room, and the direction was changed so the room faces north rather than south. Exterior renovation in 1950 cost about \$15,000.

Nodaway County's courthouse is a fine example of a tall-towered, late 19th century courthouse. Architect Eckel and his partner, Mann, were members of an outstanding firm in northwest Missouri, and this courthouse is one of their earliest surviving works. It is now on the National Register of Historic Places.

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OREGON COUNTY

In 1847 the Oregon County Court ordered a 20-foot-square, hewn-log courthouse of two stories to be built in Thomasville, the first county seat of Oregon County. John R. Woodside served as superintendent. The two-story building, erected on the square, cost about \$140. Specifications recorded in the county record are reprinted in Lewis A. W. Simpson's book, *Oregon County's Three Flags*, and a drawing illustrates the description.

When the county seat moved to Alton, the court ordered the old courthouse sold in February 1860. It brought \$105.

The court appropriated a total of \$4,550 for a courthouse to be built in Alton on the square. G. W. Reed (or Read) contracted the building and when the building was completed in August 1861 he received \$75 to cover additional finishing.

In October 1863 this courthouse was burned in a Civil War incident. At the conclusion of the war the court occupied temporary quarters in Alton. After considering building a new courthouse, the court decided to rebuild on the old foundation instead. In November 1870 the court ordered W. Huphers to draft a plan to suit the old foundation, so the designs were probably similar.

The court appropriated \$8,000 for the rebuilding in February 1871 and appointed Samuel W. Greer, a commissioner, to draw the plan and superintend the building. The court accepted Greer's plan and ordered him to advertise for bids. The commissioners gave the contract to J. F. Kidwell for \$5,795 in June 1871.

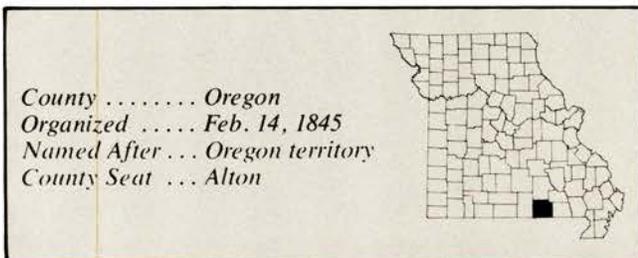
Construction apparently was underway in October



Fig. 1. Oregon County Courthouse, uncertain date. (From: *Oregon County's Three Flags*, 1971)



Fig. 2. Oregon County Courthouse, after 1903 remodeling. (From: *Oregon County's Three Flags*, 1971)



1871 after the foundation had been cleaned out. Since Fig. 1 is an undated photograph, it may be the 1861 or 1871 building. If it is the 1861 courthouse, the 1871 rebuilding may have used the segmental arches.

In March 1903 a grand jury recommended improvements, which a local paper noted were badly needed. In July 1903 the court asked contractors for bids on improvements, which included a 22-foot addition, new

roof and three fireproof vaults. W. E. Wadsworth submitted the lowest bid and filed bond. By April 1904 the work, which cost about \$5,100, was nearly completed. The old building was raised 13 inches and both old and new enclosed with a mansard roof, which created a third story (Fig. 2).

The windows with segmental arches in Fig. 2 indicate a change from the horizontal frames seen in Fig. 1. The 13-inch addition in height mentioned in a contemporary account is evident when comparing roof lines in the two illustrations.

The building of 1861, rebuilt in 1871 and enlarged with a 22-foot extension in 1903-04, was razed in October 1939 as preparations for the present courthouse began.

Because government funds were available in the 1930s, Oregon County took steps to build a new courthouse by authorizing bonds amounting to \$25,000 in January 1939. A Work Projects Administration grant for almost \$75,000 brought the total to about \$100,000.

The court secured plans from Earl Hawkins, a Springfield architect, for a three-story building with offices on the first floor and the sides of the second. The courtroom occupied the center of the second and third stories. On the sides of the third story were the jail and a local lodge.

Oregon County citizens preferred using local stone, but Ironton red granite was finally chosen since it cost less than quarrying native Oregon County stone. The court received the building from the W. P. A. in February 1942 (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3. Oregon County Courthouse, 1939-. Architect: Earl Hawkins

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OSAGE COUNTY

First courts met in homes in Osage County, but in August 1843 the County Court called for bids on a courthouse. George Cretzinger, the superintendent, provided plans, and the contract was awarded to builders from Jefferson City, William Young and John Burch, in February 1844. Cost of the 30-by-38-foot, two-story brick building with a plain-gable roof was \$3,420.79.

There were two entrances to the building and fireplaces in each of the four rooms on the first floor. A stone wall was built around the courthouse yard in 1854, and a fence was added in 1860. The building was repaired in 1867.

In 1874, as construction on the new courthouse progressed, the old courthouse was ordered sold. J. K. Kidd bought it for \$100. An illustration of this first courthouse was placed in the cornerstone of the 1872 building. When the 1872 building burned, the contents were apparently placed in the cornerstone of the present courthouse, built 1923-25. Osage County's first courthouse was reported to be a replica of the Maries County courthouse at Vienna, except the latter faced north and south, while the courthouse at Linn faced east and west.

The court requested that the second courthouse be built on the south side of the square. Louis Trentmann, an immigrant from Hanover, Germany, presented plans August 9, 1872 (Fig. 1). The court requested he provide specifications by August 26. The court called for bids on the 61-by-81-foot building in September 1872 and appropriated \$25,000. Trentmann, Narup and Co., of Washington, Missouri, contracted the building. W.

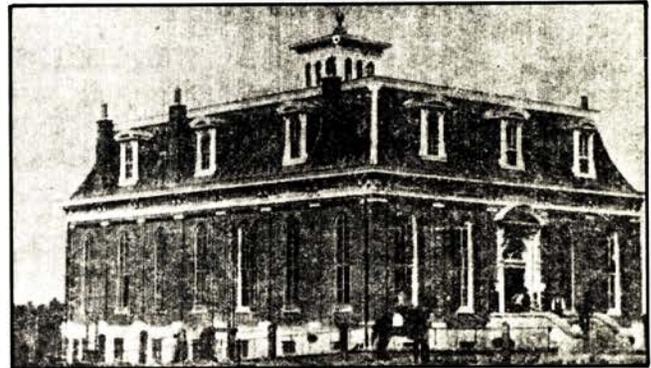
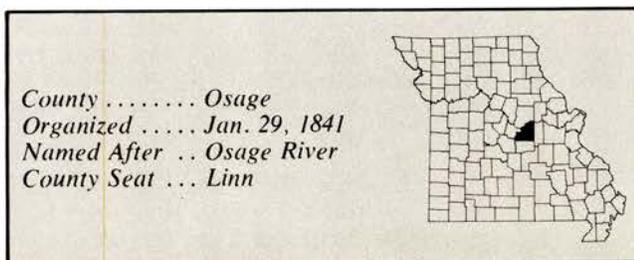


Fig. 1. Osage County Courthouse, 1872-1922, damaged by fire 1880.
Architect: Louis Trentmann
(From: *Osage County Observer*, Jan. 27, 1966)



Fig. 2. Osage County Courthouse, after 1881 remodeling.
Architects: Goesse & Rimmers
(From: *Osage County Centennial*, 1941)



A. Weeks served as superintendent. Cornerstone ceremonies took place in June 1873; the court inspected and received the completed building in July 1874. A fire on November 14, 1880, damaged the courthouse.

After the fire, plans for rebuilding were provided by architects Goesse and Rimmers of St. Louis. Appar-



Fig. 3. Osage County Courthouse, 1923-. Architect: Henry H. Hohenschild (From: W.P.A., Historical Records Survey)

ently, these men were Joseph B. Goesse and Frederick J. Rimmers, identified in Gould's *St. Louis Directory*, 1880. H. H. Beinke, of Washington, contracted the rebuilding for about \$13,000. The principal changes occurred in the upper level of the building, where a dome replaced the smaller square belfry on the previous building (Fig. 2). The courthouse was completed and presented to the court in September 1881. The courtroom was considered one of the finest-furnished and best-planned courtrooms in Missouri. Fire destroyed the building October 30, 1922.

At a meeting held in January 1923, some citizens thought it best to reconstruct, using the existing foun-

dations and walls, because of precarious county finances. Offices were temporarily placed in different locations throughout Linn. In November 1923 the court decided to build a new courthouse. They accepted a plan from architect Henry H. Hohenschild and contracted with McCarthy Construction Co. for about \$45,000 for the first stage of the building. It is not reported whether or not part of the foundation and walls were incorporated in the new building. Two years later, in October 1925, the court received the new building (Fig. 3). Total costs came to about \$85,000.

The red brick building with white trim has three stories. The courtroom is on the third floor; the jail was placed in the basement.

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OZARK COUNTY

Ozark County was first established in 1841. It adopted the name Decatur in 1843-45, then reverted back to Ozark. Ozark County's early courthouses have a complicated history, characteristic of those counties scarred by fires and Civil War activity.

When the area of Ozark County included what is now Douglas County, commissioners selected Rockbridge as the county seat. Shortly after 1841 they erected a courthouse which continued in use until destroyed by fire in 1858 or 1859. After Douglas County became established in 1857, Rockbridge no longer remained in a central location. Commissioners secured a 60-acre tract in Gainesville and designated it the county seat. The court moved there in March 1860.

The second courthouse was built in Gainesville, but was destroyed by fire sometime before February 1864. Circuit Court records indicate that court could not safely be conducted in Gainesville, so it met at the Spring Creek schoolhouse. Court continued meeting there until the fall of 1865, when they rented, and apparently finally purchased, temporary quarters until a courthouse could be built. Several attempts to plan a courthouse or begin construction failed. Although the court ordered the sale of the building used as the courthouse on November 3, 1869, it was not until August 8, 1871, that the court authorized the commissioner to advertise for bids to let the contract; however, the court rescinded the order the following day.

Finally, the court appropriated \$2,000 for construction of a courthouse on August 6, 1873 (Fig. 1). R. P. Ellison superintended the construction done by contractor W. J. Piland, who bid \$1,825.28. The two-story,



Fig. 1. Ozark County Courthouse, 1873-1934.
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

frame building continued in use as Ozark County's courthouse until destroyed by fire November 28, 1934.

The court then purchased the old Christian Church building in 1935 for \$4,200. This, too, fell to fire in January 1937. After this, county offices rented space in various buildings around the square.

Encouraged by possible assistance from the federal government, voters approved a \$20,000 bond issue by a ten to one margin in September 1938, as a 55 percent shared cost of the Work Projects Administration project. Earl Hawkins, of Springfield, drew plans, but when bids were received, they all exceeded the \$35,000 limit. Hawkins revised the plans, and in March 1939, the contract was awarded to James Douglas for \$34,950. Final costs were near \$43,000 when the courthouse was completed in November 1939 (Fig. 2). Final government inspection was in June 1940. Hawkins drew plans for other southern Missouri courthouses: Laclede County, 1924; Howell County, 1936; and Webster and Oregon counties, 1939, all of which are still in use.

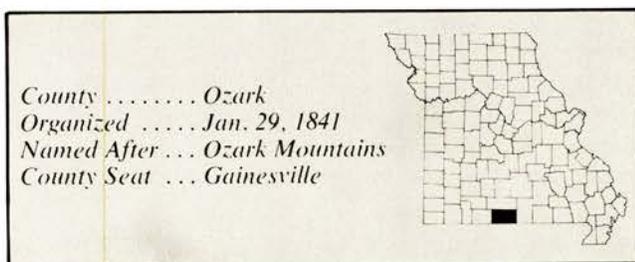




Fig. 2. Ozark County Courthouse, 1939-. Architect: Earl Hawkins (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

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PEMISCOT COUNTY



Fig. 1. Pemiscot County Courthouse, Gayoso, ca. 1883-1899. (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri, gift of Mrs. Josamyn S. Garrett)

Pemiscot County has known five courthouses, three in Gayoso, which was the county seat from 1851 until 1899, and two in Caruthersville, the present county seat. The county purchased 50 acres in Gayoso in 1854 and built a small frame building on the public square.

County officials used this courthouse until 1873, when it was moved and converted for another purpose.

The second courthouse was built in 1873 with \$750 obtained from the state legislature. This building burned December 2, 1882.

Again the county obtained an appropriation from the state, this time of \$4,000. Maj. George W. Carleton superintended construction of a two-story, square, frame building with cupola, which continued in use until the county voted to move the seat to Caruthersville in 1899, after repeated flood damage at Gayoso (Fig. 1). The courthouse was adapted to other use.

For the new county seat in Caruthersville, residents donated the site and Charles B. Faris superintended

County Pemiscot
 Organized Feb. 19, 1851
 Named After . . . Pemiscot, its
 principal bayou
 County Seat . . . Gayoso initially,
 Caruthersville
 currently



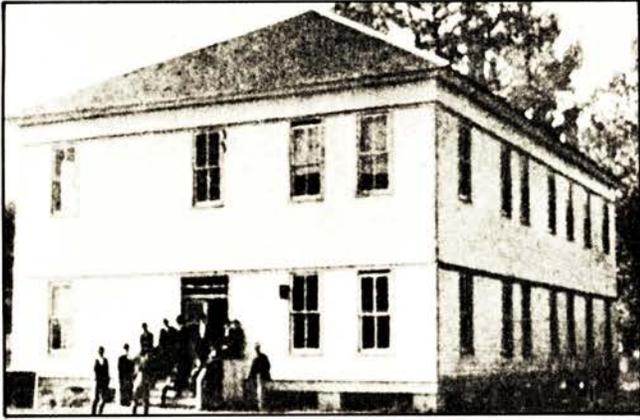


Fig. 2. Pemiscot County Courthouse, Caruthersville, 1899-1924. (Courtesy: Ophelia Wade. From: Riparian Lands of the Mississippi River)

construction on the square of a two-story, white, frame courthouse with hip roof, which the county used until 1925 (Fig. 2).

In 1924, as preparation began for building the fifth and present courthouse, the county offered the old courthouse for sale. When no acceptable bids came, officials decided to move the courthouse to the northwest corner of the square, where it continued in use until dismantled and sold in 1925.

Caruthersville planned simultaneous construction of a school and courthouse to save money and assure close supervision of both projects by the architect, Henry H. Hohenschild. The building contract for the

courthouse was given in June 1924 to McCarthy Construction Co. for about \$114,000, less than the original estimate because prices had declined.

Cornerstone ceremonies for the stone-trimmed, brick courthouse took place on September 30, 1924, and the building was completed in the fall of 1925 (Fig. 3). Scott County, just two counties north of Pemiscot, had built a similar design by Hohenschild in 1911. Both courthouses are fine examples of one of Missouri's most prolific architects.

Renovation of the courthouse was undertaken in July 1974; Henry Creighton, architect, planned the interior and Bien Construction, Dexter, were general contractors. Work was completed in June 1975.



Fig. 3. Pemiscot County Courthouse, 1924-. Architect: Henry H. Hohenschild (From: *Caruthersville Centennial, 1857-1957*)

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PETTIS COUNTY

Pettis County Courts met first in St. Helena (also known as Pin Hook), 1833-37, at the home of James Ramey. The county seat moved in 1837 to Georgetown, where the county built a \$4,000, square courthouse with cupola. They used this courthouse until the county seat moved to Sedalia in 1865. The Georgetown courthouse was destroyed by fire June 22, 1920.

It was agreed that Sedalia should be responsible for building the next courthouse. Citizens cleared almost enough money from an elaborate 4th of July celebration to finance the new building.

In 1865 they built a large, frame building near Ohio Street between Main and Second streets for about \$900. No known photographs exist of either building.

It was a common practice for attorneys' offices to be in the courthouse. This provided the court additional revenue from rent. But, in 1882 a group of disgruntled attorneys considered the facilities in the Pettis County courthouse so unsatisfactory that they removed their offices and initiated the movement for a new courthouse. After a year of arduous campaigning, which appealed to public pride, citizens of Pettis County generously and overwhelmingly voted \$100,000 for their new courthouse in December 1883. This strong support inspired a tribute:

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow
that Pettis County is not swayed nor likely to
be by old fogey notions and antedeluvian ideas
as to expenditures of public funds for the public
good.

The committee responsible for selecting a plan went to Nodaway and Buchanan counties to view their

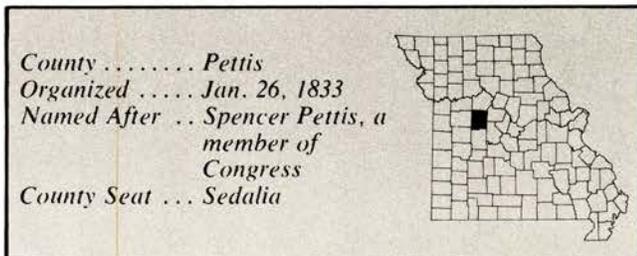


Fig. 1. Pettis County Courthouse, 1884-1920.
Architects: J. G. Cairnes and J. S. McKean
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri, from *Sedalia of Today*)

recently built courthouses, then crossed over the state line to see Leavenworth County in Kansas. They stopped at the Jackson County courthouse in Kansas City, Missouri, on the way back.

Architects came to Sedalia, bringing their courthouse plans. Among them were J. Oliver Hogg, Hannibal; Lynch and Masters, Sedalia; Mr. McPherson, Omaha, Nebraska; Mr. Nichols, Atchison, Kansas; George Mann, of the firm Eckel and Mann, St. Joseph; and Parsons and Son, probably a Topeka, Kansas, firm. The court selected the proposal from J. G. Cairns and J. S. McKean of St. Louis in May 1884 (Fig. 1).

W. B. Larkworthy, who built and was credited as architect for the courthouse in Clark County, Missouri, and who constructed the Quincy and Adams counties' courthouse in Quincy, Illinois, received the \$100,000

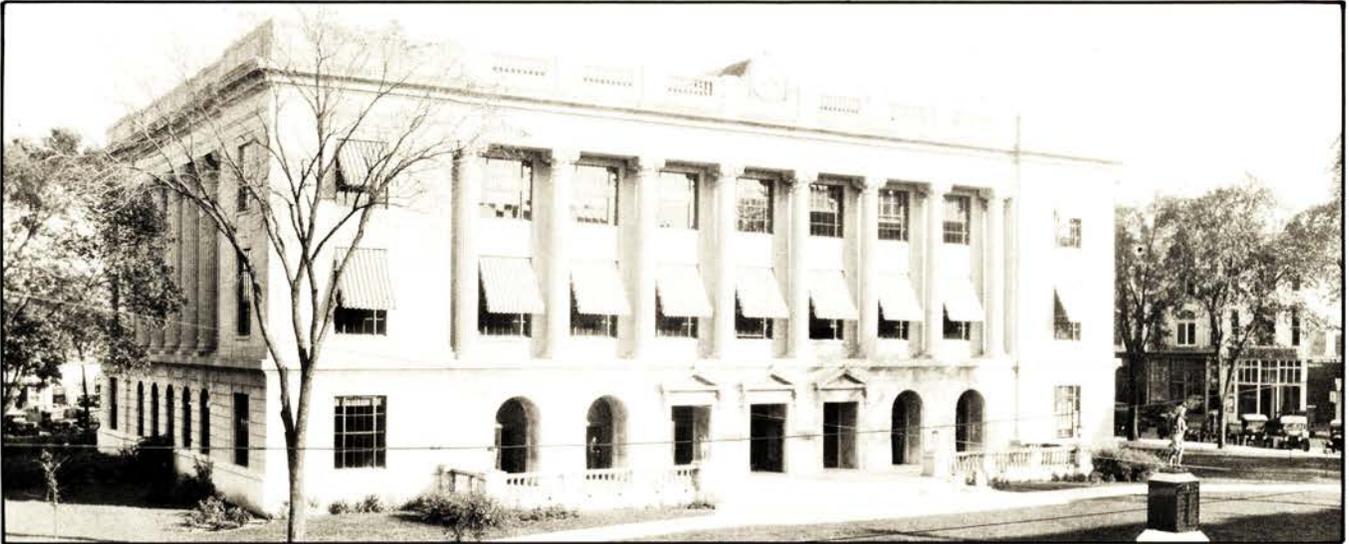


Fig. 2. Pettis County Courthouse, 1923-. Architect: W. E. Hulse (From: W.P.A., Historical Records Survey)

contract. A local reporter regarded the \$248,000 courthouse at Quincy, designed by architect McKean, as one of the finest public buildings in the west, and described the Pettis County version as a smaller scale counterpart. McKean, who was from Quincy, collaborated with Cairns on this project.

The dimensions were 100 by 145 feet, with a 22-foot tower. This basic form, a high tower decorated with classical motifs and topped by a lantern, rising from the center of a base featuring four corner pavilions, remained a popular design to the end of the century. Carthage stone was used for the base; the upper portion had stone veneering. Crossing halls and public offices were tiled; two courtrooms occupied the second floor. Walls of the courtrooms were frescoed, and the ceilings were painted with allegorical scenes by Italian artists. The oak furniture was hand carved. This fine courthouse of the 1880s was destroyed by fire June 16, 1920.

After rejecting three bond issues, voters authorized \$350,000 in April 1923 for constructing a new court-

house. Above public protests, the court accepted plans of William E. Hulse, Hutchinson, Kansas, who was associated with a firm specializing in public buildings. Objections were raised because: the court made an arrangement with the architect before the committee or superintendent had been appointed, raising a question of legal procedure; the architect catered to the court; and the architect did not provide an appropriate plan with conveniently arranged space. Attorneys criticized the third-floor location of the Circuit Court room without elevator service; others questioned placing the most important county offices on the second floor, rather than the more convenient first floor.

Western Construction Co., of Des Moines, Iowa, received a contract in October 1923 for \$285,500, which did not include heating, ventilating, plumbing or electrical work. The three-story building measures 136 feet long, 96 feet wide and 55 feet high (Fig. 2). The building was completed in 1925. Open house was held in April, and the courthouse was formally dedicated in May 1925.

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PHELPS COUNTY

In 1857 Phelps County commissioners were instructed to find the most suitable location for the county seat on the survey line of a branch of the Pacific Railroad without regard for the geographical center of the county. Edmund W. Bishop, who was anxious to develop a town, offered 50 acres if the commissioners would locate the county seat on his property. Although opposition surfaced, the commissioners accepted Bishop's offer, and the legislature concurred. The first courts convened in private homes or the railroad office. Orders to build the first courthouse came October 17, 1859, to the county clerk, F. M. Lenox. This temporary building continued in use until completion of the permanent courthouse.

During August 1859 E. W. Bishop was appointed superintendent of the courthouse. The court appropriated \$8,000 for construction of the 45-by-65-foot, brick building, and the contract was awarded to P. J. Lynch and Andrew Malcolm. The court accepted the nearly completed building in June 1863, but deducted \$2,000 from the contract price of \$7,975 for unsatisfactory workmanship (Figs. 1 and 2). The sand-mud brick for the courthouse has been reported as the first brick made in Rolla.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Rolla was recognized as a southern stronghold, but June 14, 1861, the Confederate flag was taken down. Union troops took possession of the courthouse and used it for their base of operation. The courthouse was also used as a quartermaster store and hospital. Fig. 2 shows how the courthouse dominated the Rolla skyline during this time.



Fig. 1. Phelps County Courthouse, 1859-.
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)



Fig. 2. Photo of Rolla near the time of the Civil War showing dominance of the courthouse.
(From: *Our Centennial Book*, 1957)

<p>County Phelps Organized Nov. 13, 1857 Named After . . . John S. Phelps, a member of Congress and governor County Seat . . . Rolla</p>	
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Vault wings were added after 1881, the jail was added in 1912, and the cupola was removed in the 1940s. Clair V. Mann, Phelps County educator and historian, documented Phelps County's unsuccessful 20th century attempts to build a new courthouse.

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PIKE COUNTY

Pike County, one of Missouri's older counties, has had six courthouses, five in the 19th century. The first was in Louisiana, Missouri, Pike County's first county seat. It has been described as a two-story, small, brick building, the first brick building erected in Pike County, built 1819-20. Owners donated the site, but complications arose about the deed. Apparently all courts continued meeting in Louisiana throughout 1824, although the county seat officially moved to Bowling Green in 1822. The county authorized the sale of the building in February 1826. Michael J. Noyes bought it for \$450. The 1875 Atlas reported the building had recently been torn down.

Nathaniel Montgomery built the first courthouse in Bowling Green of logs in 1823; costs were first estimated to be about \$75, but finally amounted to \$114. Planned as a temporary building, it was located on the northeast corner of the square. Apparently the building was razed in about 1831.

Levi Pettibone superintended the next courthouse, the second in Bowling Green; Walter and John Crow built it in 1829. It, too, was a temporary building, located off the square. Citizens guaranteed \$600 to be matched by \$600 from the county with the understanding the county seat would not be moved for two years. Built of brick with chimneys in each corner, it remained standing at the edge of the square while the 1844 house, the first permanent courthouse, was being erected in the center of the square.

Early in 1843 the court appropriated \$6,000 toward construction of the permanent building. By one account the final cost was \$11,200. The Rev. J. W. Campbell superintended the construction done by W. W.



Fig. 1. Pike County Courthouse, 1865-1915.
Architects: George I. Barnett and A.H. Piquenard
(From: *Illustrated Atlas Map of Pike County, Missouri, 1875*)

Blain and Samuel Kem. The brick building measured 44 by 50 feet, faced south, and had two stories and a balcony. One half of the lower floor was a hall or lobby. Doors from the east, west and south opened into the lobby. Winding stairs from the southeast and southwest corners led to the courtroom above on the north side. Space below the courtroom on the first floor held four offices. Topping the square cupola was a bell and arrow, the arrow bearing the date 1844. I. W. Basye's contemporary account reported the floor of the balcony to be made of lead. Fire destroyed this building in March 1864. After the fire the court used the jail for temporary quarters.

Architects George I. Barnett and A. H. Piquenard, St. Louis, developed plans in 1865 for the fourth courthouse in Pike County from sketches presented by Conrad Smith, who acted as both superintendent and contractor. Costs were approximately \$70,000 (Fig. 1). The building suffered damage from a severe storm in November 1866 while under construction. Considerable delay resulted while those involved determined

County	Pike	
Organized	Dec. 14, 1818	
Named After . . .	Zebulon Pike, commander of expedition up Mississippi River in 1818	
County Seat . . .	Bowling Green	



Fig. 2. Pike County Courthouse, 1917-. Architect: Henry H. Hohenschild (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

who should pay. It was completed in September 1867. Fire destroyed this building October 16, 1915.

It is surprising there are no known photographs of this building, considering the reputation of the architects, the costliness of the project, and the fact that it lasted well into the 20th century. Rosalyn Smith, Conrad Smith's granddaughter, gave the plans of the 1865-67 courthouse to the Pike Historical Club in 1967.

After the fire the possibility of two courthouses was considered, one in Bowling Green, the other in Louisiana. Although voters supported the proposition in 1915, the election was declared invalid when submitted to the Missouri Supreme Court, because the electorate had not been offered the option of one or the other. When resubmitted in November 1916, the voters reconsidered and rejected the courthouse for Louisiana. The court selected Henry H. Hohenschild as architect for the Bowling Green courthouse. The 85-foot-square building is constructed of Bedford stone and gray Georgia granite. Cornerstone ceremonies were held September 13, 1917; the court first occupied the completed \$100,000 building in January 1919 and has been meeting there ever since (Fig. 2).

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PLATTE COUNTY

After the court had been meeting in homes and rental property, Platte County paid \$100 for a double log structure to use as a courthouse in February 1840. The court used this building for nearly two years until the first permanent courthouse was completed. Construction for the permanent courthouse had been ordered in May 1840. W. M. Paxton, in *Annals of Platte County*, claims that Demetrius A. Sutton (1795-1848), an experienced architect, drew the plans and prepared the specifications for the 50-foot-square brick courthouse. For this service the court paid him \$10. He also served on the courthouse building committee.

Sutton, a native of Fayette County, Kentucky, gained the respect of his Platte County associates, who considered him intelligent, well read, agreeable and talented. In addition to providing the plan and design of the courthouse, he may have been responsible for the drawing found in the clerk's office (Fig. 1).

The two-story building, completed by the November 1841 court term, faced south. On the first floor, a center hall led to the courtroom on the north. Two 18-foot-square offices on either side of the hall faced south. The second story repeated the arrangement.

Religious leaders conducted services in the large meeting hall above the courtroom, where seats were reserved by subscription. The courthouse had a hipped roof, covered with tin and topped by a cupola with ball and spire. Medlin and Anderson did the stone work, David Hunt, the brick work, and four carpenters finished the wood work. By August 1842 contractors completed the courthouse, and proud Platte Countians held a celebration ball. Contributions from religious organizations and subscriptions partially funded the building.

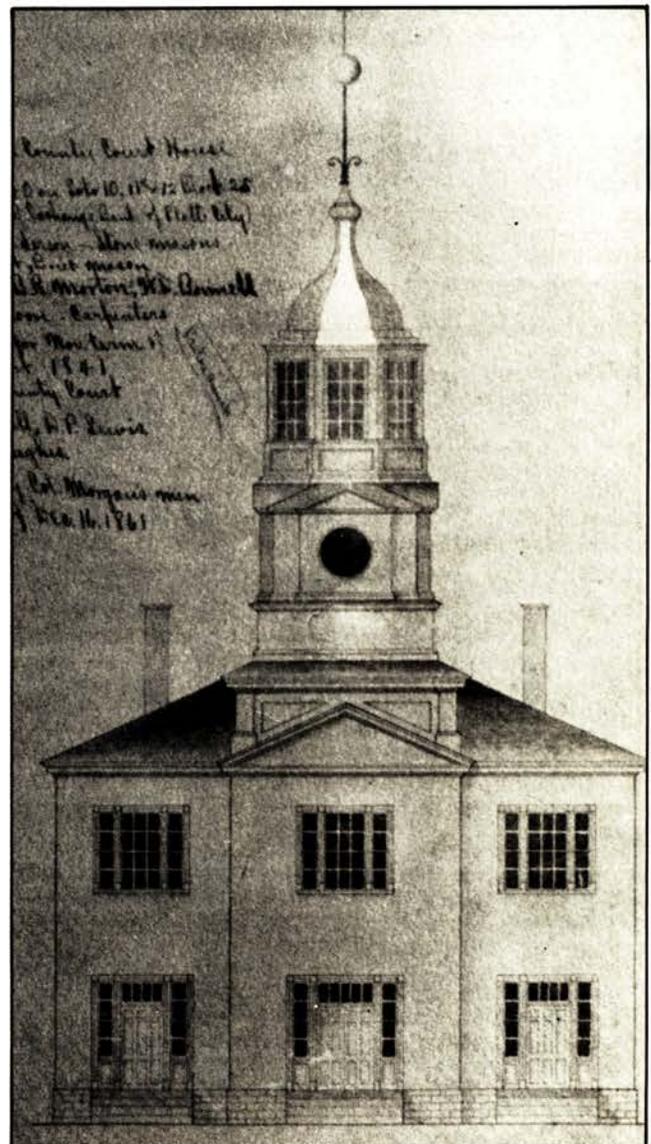
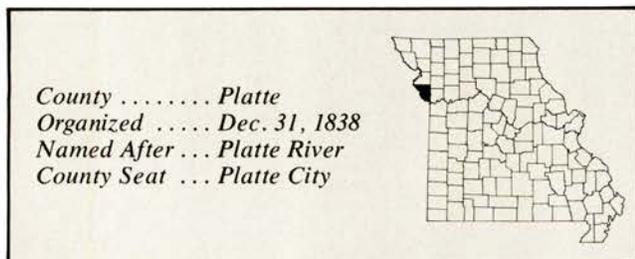


Fig. 1. Platte County Courthouse, 1840-1861.
 Architect: Demetrius A. Sutton
 (From: Joan Cox collection)

The 1876 Atlas estimated the cost at \$15,000. In December 1861 the building was destroyed by Civil War activity.



Fig. 2. Platte County Courthouse, 1866-. Architect: Peter McDuff (From: W.P.A., Historical Records Survey)

In September 1864 the court made the first appropriation of \$40,000 to begin a new courthouse; they accepted the plans of Peter McDuff and awarded the building contract to J. A. McGonigle for \$88,500. McDuff, born in 1813, immigrated from Scotland. He had designed courthouses for Clinton County in 1858 and Clay County in 1859. He identified himself as a carpenter in the 1850 census, but earned the reputation in northwest Missouri as a superior draftsman and contractor. For this new courthouse, the court bought the lot where the Platte County courthouse still stands.

Cornerstone ceremonies took place on June 20, 1866, and by May 1867 the two-story, soft red brick building was completed (Fig. 2). It originally measured 80 by 100 feet.

The building faces south and features a triple-arched entry in the center pavilion. The black and white square flagstones on the foyer floor have been a particular source of pride. Several additions have been made through the years to this building that continues to serve as Platte County's courthouse.

After many years of discussion concerning the fate of the courthouse, preservation of the building now

seems assured. It is a fine and rare example of Missouri architecture from the 1860s and has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Platte County was fortunate in having two unusually talented men contribute to its 19th century architectural heritage.

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POLK COUNTY



Fig. 1. Polk County Courthouse, 1841-1905. (From: W.P.A., Historical Records Survey)

Courts first met in Polk County in private homes. William Jamison purchased the site of Bolivar from the U. S. government in 1835 for the county seat. In May 1837 the court appropriated \$125 for the courthouse, a sum supplemented by private donors. By 1842 the

building, located on a corner of the square, had served its purpose and in November was ordered sold to the highest bidder on 12 months credit.

Jamison also acted as the first superintendent of the second courthouse. An advertisement appeared in the *Jeffersonian Republican* March 30, 1839, for a 50-foot-square, brick building with separate contracts for masonry and woodwork. By November 1841 the brick work was almost complete. The courthouse was located in the center of the square with a board fence and hitching post around the perimeter (Fig. 1). The building survived the Civil War. It was sold in October 1905 for \$351, then vacated for safety reasons.

As early as 1903, Polk County tried to build a new courthouse, but a levy failed in November of that year.

County Polk
Organized Jan. 5, 1835
Named After . . . James K. Polk
County Seat . . . Bolivar





Fig. 2. Polk County Courthouse, 1906-. Architect: Robert G. Kirsch (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

Two years later, to finance a new courthouse, the electorate authorized bonds, which were sold in September 1905. Four or five plans were submitted for the court's consideration. The court selected the plan of Robert G. Kirsch in October. The following month Atlas Construction Co., St. Louis, received the general contract for \$41,950. The design was the same Kirsch used in three other Missouri counties: Adair, 1898; Carroll, 1901; and Vernon, 1906. Polk and Vernon courthouses were the last of the Romanesque designs to be built in the state. Cornerstone ceremonies for the Polk County courthouse, which is still in use, took place on May 24, 1906; the dedication was held on November 25, 1907 (Fig. 2).

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PULASKI COUNTY

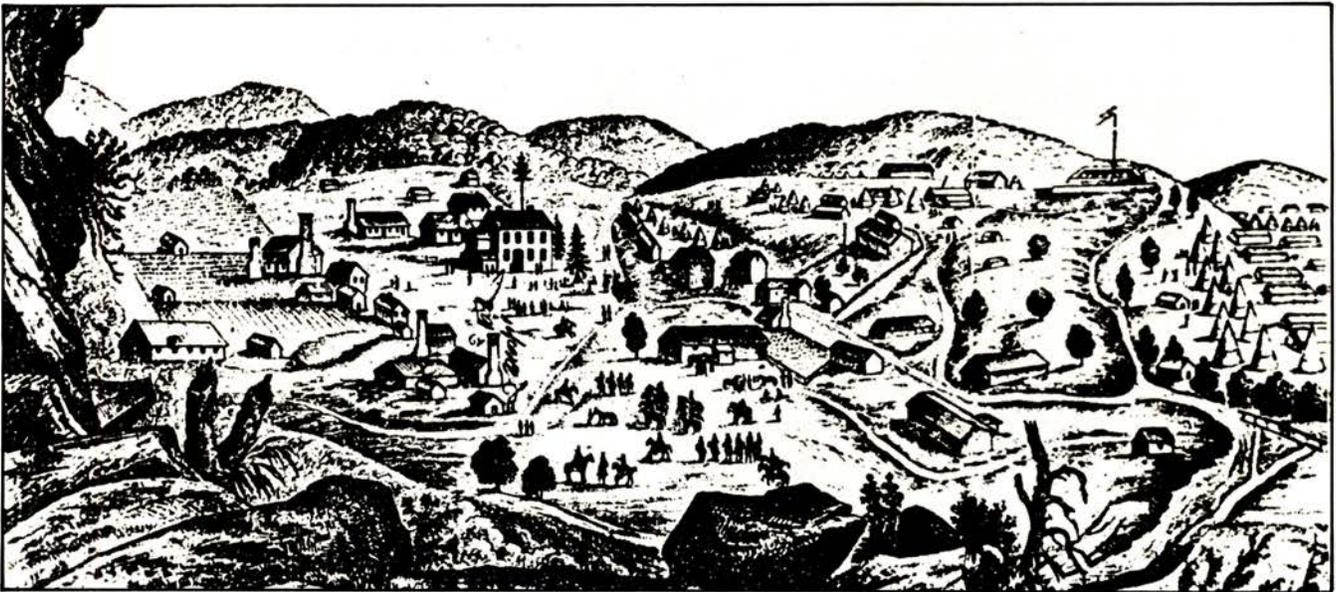


Fig. 1. Sketch of Waynesville during Civil War showing Pulaski County courthouse, 1843-1872, two-story building in center. (Courtesy: Dru L. Pippin)

Fire destroyed most Pulaski County Court records June 13, 1903. The remaining records begin with book D, dated November 7, 1898. The only known reference to Pulaski County history prior to 1898 is Goodspeed's 1889 *History*.

In 1818 a Pulaski County was organized but did not survive. Its boundary included no part of present day Pulaski County. Another Pulaski County, organized in 1833, passed through many boundary changes before the present boundaries were set in 1859.

First courts met in homes. In 1839 commissioners

were appointed to procure a site for building a courthouse. By August 1840 the court accepted a hewn-log courthouse, apparently intended to be temporary.

In February 1843 officials moved the county seat to Waynesville, and contractor Allen Hamor built on the present site a two-story, brick courthouse measuring 40 by 28 feet at the base and 22 feet high (Fig. 1).

Three rooms and two halls filled the first floor, and two doors led to the outside. Although badly damaged in the Civil War, the courthouse continued in use until 1872 when it was considered beyond repair and no longer safe for storing records or holding court.

The state appropriated \$2,000 war damages and the county issued \$6,000 in bonds for construction of a new courthouse in 1872-73. An additional appropriation of \$1,500 brought the total to nearly \$10,000. The two-story, brick courthouse, built on a part of the old courthouse foundation, was larger than the first, measuring 60 by 40 feet at the base and 22 feet high. W. C. Kerr superintended construction. Fire consumed the build-

County	Pulaski	
Organized	Jan. 19, 1833	
Named After . . .	Count Pulaski of the Revolution	
County Seat . . .	Waynesville	

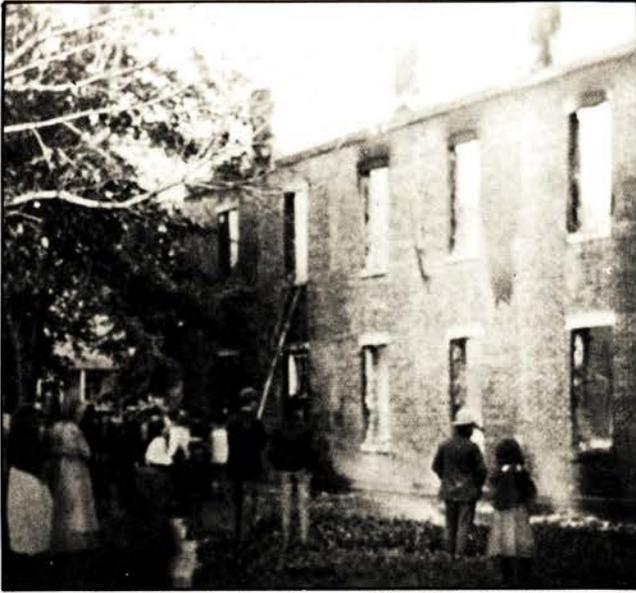


Fig. 2. Pulaski County Courthouse, 1872-1903, after fire June 13, 1903.

(Courtesy: Pulaski County Historical Society)

ing June 13, 1903. The only known photograph of the building shows the walls that were left standing after the fiery destruction (Fig. 2).

On July 3, 1903, less than a month after the fire, the Pulaski County Court ordered rebuilding and selected architect Henry H. Hohenschild to draw plans. The court was conservative and stayed within an austere budget. Ed Long, Rolla, Missouri, contracted the building for \$10,240 in September 1903. He completed the brick, 60-by-40-foot building in March 1904, nine months later (Fig. 3). The exposed elements in the ceiling construction are a notable feature. Insurance compensation and general funds covered the cost of construction.

Today county offices still occupy the first floor with the courtroom on the second floor. The Pulaski County courthouse is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Fig. 3. Pulaski County Courthouse, 1903-. Architect: Henry H. Hohenschild (Courtesy: Pulaski County Historical Society)

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PUTNAM COUNTY

Putnam County, organized in 1845, apparently has had six different courthouses. While the first county seat and first courthouse were in Putnamville, county officials moved the county seat several times before permanently establishing it at Unionville.

Little information exists about the first three courthouses in the county. The court record does show that an order from the court on June 16, 1845, called for the county's first courthouse to be built on a corner lot in Putnamville. At that time, county jurisdiction included land extending nine miles north into Iowa.

Joseph Guffey built the Putnamville courthouse for \$169.25; it was ready for occupancy in September 1845. Robert Cochran superintended Guffey's work.

Next, the county seat moved to either Calhoun or Winchester. A court order called for a move to Calhoun in August 1847, according to Goodspeed's 1888 *History*. However, the order may never have been fulfilled. If the county seat was established at Calhoun, it would have been only for a short time, since in August 1848 the court received a petition asking for relocation of the county seat from Putnamville to a location in the center of the county, which the court named Winchester. In February 1849 the order came to sell the old courthouse in Putnamville, indicating that a new courthouse must have been ready in either Calhoun or Winchester. Ross Asbell bought the Putnamville structure.

The record described a rather unusual procedure for building the courthouse in Winchester, which presumably was built on the 160-foot public square with William J. Cook as superintendent:

... the letting of the court house be divided into three classes; First—Pulling down, moving and raising the pillars three on each side; second—putting on roof, undertaking to furnish everything, gable ends included; third—flooring, sleepers, joist and two doors. . . .

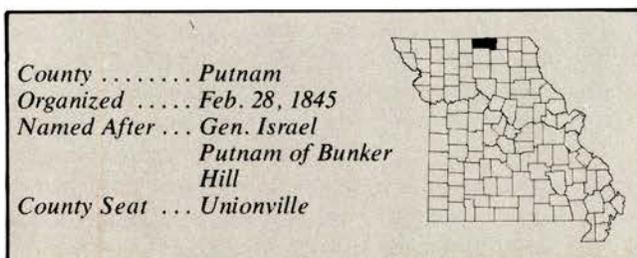
On July 10, 1854, the court ordered the Winchester courthouse sold for not less than \$150.

In June 1851 an election called for removal of the seat to Fairplay, later called Hartford. The town was to be laid out on the same plan as Winchester. Nothing is known of this courthouse except that it was ordered sold in 1855. Participants in the Old Settlers Reunion in 1903 noted it had disappeared.

Dodge County, which no longer exists, organized in 1846 and was located west of Putnam County. It too extended north to include land in present-day Iowa. When the Missouri-Iowa boundary dispute was settled in 1851, neither Putnam nor Dodge contained the minimum territory required by state law for county organization. Therefore, in 1853 Dodge County became attached to Putnam. The county seat was relocated in 1854 to the new geographical center of the county and symbolically named Harmony. But, in 1855 the name was changed to Unionville.

David Thatcher superintended construction of the temporary courthouse built in Unionville in about 1853-54 west of the public square. The two-story, log building, 18 by 24 feet, had a brick chimney, stone foundation, and four 12-light windows. The cost was \$250. The court used this building from 1854 to 1858.

Construction on the next courthouse, a two-story, red brick structure, built on the square, began in May 1857 and ended during December 1858. Smith A. John was superintendent of the building, which cost \$11,175 (Fig. 1). Apparently, the courtroom on the second floor was condemned and was not used in the 1880s. The court ordered the building sold January 7, 1890. A local organization, called Soldier's Reunion, bought it for



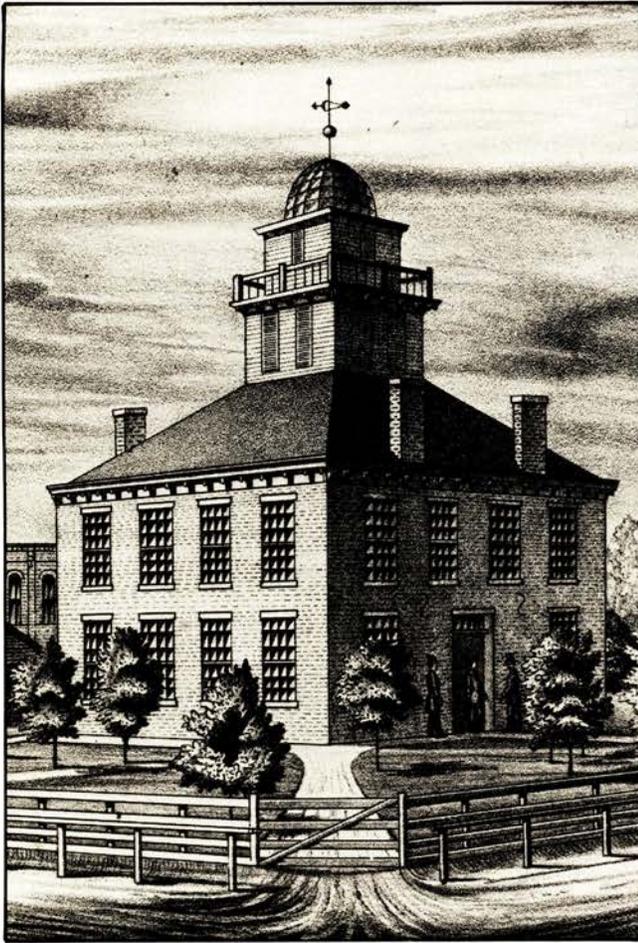


Fig. 1. Putnam County Courthouse, 1857-1890.
(From: *An Illustrated Historical Atlas of Putnam County, Missouri*, 1877)

\$250 with the understanding it was to be removed by May 1890. The court kept the bell, weathervane and safes.

Putnam County then was without a courthouse for more than 30 years. In February 1923 citizens presented a petition calling for an election to authorize

construction of a courthouse. Few counties, it was pointed out, did not have a courthouse. An election in June 1923 authorized expenditure of \$150,000 for construction. So elated were residents of Unionville, they celebrated in the streets when election results were announced.

Plans by J. G. Braecklein, Kansas City, were approved in August 1923 for a 62-by-92-foot, three-story building with Carthage stone facing (Fig. 2). Entries were planned for each of the four sides. After receiving bids, the court awarded the \$128,000 contract to George Gassman Construction Company in September 1923. Cornerstone ceremonies celebrated the progress of construction February 26, 1924. The building, still in use as Putnam County's courthouse, was completed in September with its formal dedication on November 11, 1924. An unsatisfactory settlement with the contractors delayed acceptance of the building until January 1925 after Gassman made concessions of \$1,621 because of defective floor construction.



Fig. 2. Putnam County Courthouse, 1923-.
Architect: J.G. Braecklein
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

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RALLS COUNTY

The first courthouse for Ralls County, completed in 1822 and located west of the present courthouse site, was a two-story, log structure, 24 by 18 feet. The first floor contained the jail and a dungeon; the courtroom occupied the second floor.

For the second seat of justice the court moved to the present site because it had better drainage and roads. The second courthouse was built in 1835 by Samuel Mayhall and Richard S. Howard with funds from private subscription. The courtroom, with a brick floor, occupied the first floor of the two-story, 50-foot-square courthouse. Offices were on the second floor.

As the third and present courthouse went up in 1858, the court ordered the former courthouse sold. Mayhall bought the structure for \$175 and received instructions to move it within eight months.

In March 1857 Ralls County judges appointed a building committee and requested a plan, cost estimate and list of suggested material for the new courthouse. The county attorney, Henry C. Wellman, drew the plans and specifications; Nathan S. Dimmitt shared responsibility for the specifications. Two handbooks were consulted: Thomas Tredgold, *Principles of Carpentry*, first published in 1820, and Minard Lafever, *Modern Builders Guide*, 1833.¹ Both authors wrote several books that contained practical reference material designed to assist builders in basic skills.

The court first appropriated \$8,000. Final costs amounted to about \$18,000. The court awarded the building contract for \$16,400 to Francis Kidwell, who then subcontracted. Three building superintendents were appointed; one resigned, and the court dismissed another. The court accepted the building in 1859 from

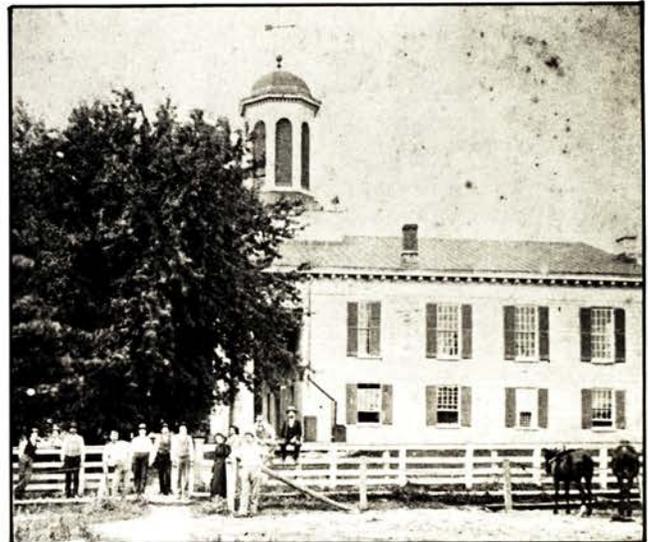


Fig. 1. Ralls County Courthouse, 1858-
Designed by Henry C. Wellman, attorney.
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

contractor Kidwell, although interior finishing continued for several months (Figs. 1 and 2).

Walls of the courthouse are made from locally quarried limestone; the columns are plastered, and the pediment and cornice are of wood. Interior woodwork is handcrafted. The courtroom, noted for its acoustical quality, is on the second floor. Because of relatively few alterations the interior maintains the integrity of the original design.

To accommodate needs of the growing county, Arthur Hogg designed an addition in 1935, funded in part by the federal Public Works Administration project. The two-story addition, 104 by 42 feet, was made of stone that had come from the abutments and middle pier of an old toll bridge over the Salt River. Total cost of the project was about \$25,000; federal funds

¹ Mrs. Oliver Howard, *Ralls County, Missouri* (Privately printed, 1958), p. 2. This work contains the most complete history of Ralls County courthouses.

County Ralls
Organized Nov. 16, 1820
Named After . . . Daniel Ralls, a
member of the
state legislature
County Seat . . . New London



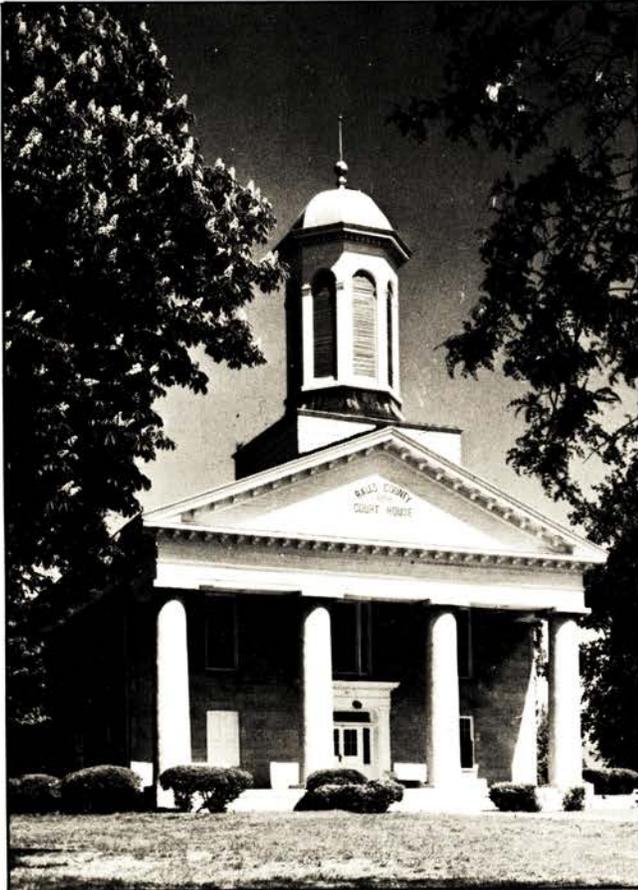


Fig. 2. Ralls County Courthouse, 1858-, front view).
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

amounted to \$15,490.

In 1938 James P. Jamieson and George Spearl, St. Louis architects, re-created the facade of the courthouse for the entrance of the Missouri buildings at the New York World's Fair and the Golden Gate International Exposition in San Francisco, both in 1939 (Fig. 3). According to one commentator, it was the only exhibition of states' buildings at the New York fair that challenged the imagination without great expenditure or extensive grounds.

Ralls County's courthouse, now listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is one of two 19th century Missouri temple-type courthouses still in use as the official county building. The other, in Lafayette County, dates from 1847.



Fig. 3. Replica of Ralls County Courthouse at New York World's Fair, 1938.
Architects: James P. Jamieson and George Spearl.
(From: *Missouriana*, September 1939)

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RANDOLPH COUNTY

Four landholders in Randolph County, their land identified by A, B, C and D in Figure 1, each donated a 12½-acre triangle from adjoining corners of their properties to provide land for a county seat, later to be called Huntsville. The courthouse was built in the center of the public square, the precise meeting point of the four parcels of land. The street layout aligned with the square plan.

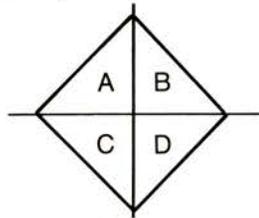


Fig. 1.

After Randolph County organized in 1829, the first courts met in homes. Two years later preparations were underway for building the first courthouse. On June 13, 1831, the court let the contract for a brick, two-story, square courthouse. William Lindsey has been identified as superintendent, and Henry B. Owens as builder of the \$2,400 building. The courtroom was on the first floor, and three rooms were on the second floor. As preparations began for the next, larger building, the court ordered the first courthouse razed in either 1858 or 1859.

The next courthouse, a two-story, brick building, contracted for in October 1858, occupied three times the space of the first courthouse, but stood on the same site (Fig. 2). The contractor was Henry Austin. Austin also made the brick. The outside walls were of pressed brick, harder and smoother than others commonly used. Receipts from the sale of lots and general funds financed the \$15,000 project.

Laura Balthis, author of an early historical account of Randolph County, credits Austin with building both



Fig. 2. Randolph County Courthouse, 1858-1882, remodeled 1877.
Builder: Henry Austin
(From: *An Illustrated Historical Atlas of Randolph County, Missouri*, 1876)

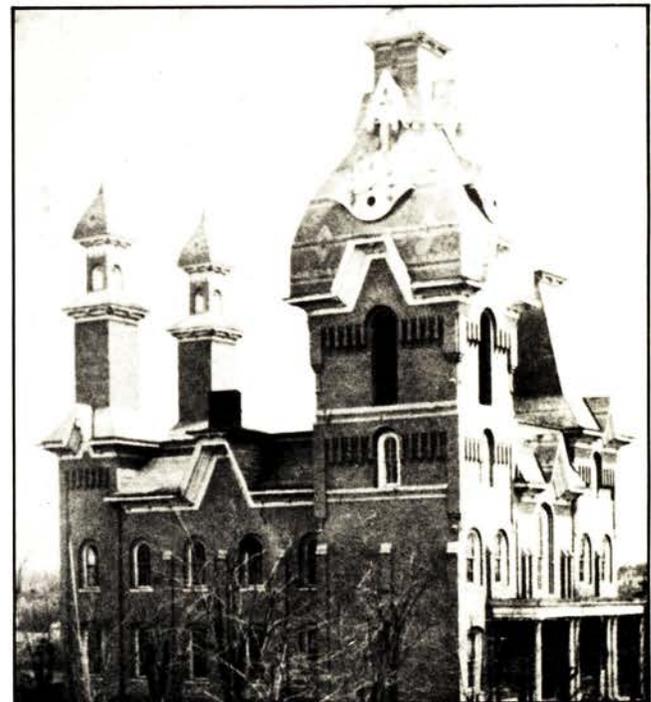


Fig. 3. Randolph County Courthouse, after 1877 remodeling.
Architect of remodeling: C.B. Clarke
(From: Jason Wright collection)

County	Randolph
Organized	Jan. 22, 1829
Named After . . .	John Randolph of Virginia
County Seat . . .	Huntsville



Fig. 4. Randolph County Courthouse, 1882-, left; Architect: James McGrath (From: *Standard Atlas of Randolph County*, 1910). Center, after tower removal (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection). Right, after remodeling, photo 1973.

the first and second courthouses. Austin, born in 1809, came to Huntsville in 1829 at age 20 and might have participated in construction of the first courthouse, but perhaps without being the responsible contractor. Contemporary accounts describe the second courthouse as a large and handsome building, equal to similar buildings in neighboring counties that cost much more. Montgomery County's courthouse of 1865 was almost identical, and Lincoln County's of 1869, very similar, both the work of Gustave Bachmann. A plank fence enclosed the courthouse, and by 1860, a clock was in the tower.

In March 1876 voters soundly defeated a proposal to build a \$25,000 new courthouse, even though a committee had reported the old building unsafe. The court decided not to risk submitting an unpopular proposal to the voters, since some wanted to move the county seat to Moberly. Instead, the court appropriated \$10,000 and proceeded with remodeling plans prepared by architect C. B. Clarke, St. Louis (Fig. 3).

Clarke's design added the towered extension across the rear and the complex roof arrangement, which begins at the top of the second story windows of Austin's 1858-60 building. The porch is the same with single columns at each end and two pairs in the middle, but the railing above the porch is missing in Fig. 3. Clarke enlarged the second-story door, which opened onto the balcony, to the cornice line, approximating the first-story door in size and shape. Clarke eliminated the small stone cap on the narrow strip separating the decorative brick arches on the side of the front. These caps probably served as Clarke's reference for the additional caps on the vertical brick strips that appear along the side of the building. Clarke's remodeling design was one of the most extraordinary in Missouri. Sandison and Murray, from Huntsville, contracted the work for \$9,979 in June 1876; the court received the building April 9, 1877.

August 12, 1882, fire, which began in the second story between the two towers, consumed the courthouse. A witness reported seeing from a nearby vantage point, a figure fleeing through the doorway. Some

suspected arson since rivalry was intense between Moberly and Huntsville for the site of the county seat.

In 1882 a majority voted to move the county seat to Moberly, but they did not constitute the necessary two-thirds majority. The County Court began the procedure for building the third courthouse in Huntsville in December 1883.

James McGrath, a St. Louis architect, provided the plan for a two-story, brick building that would cost about \$35,000 (Fig. 4). The court awarded the building contract to J. M. Hammett, W. T. Rutherford and Co. The 104-by-46-foot building contained 11 rooms. Offices occupied the first floor; iron stairways flanking a central entry led to the second floor and the Circuit Court room, which measured 42 by 25 feet. Contractors completed the building in April 1884. As part of a Work Projects Administration project, workers installed central heating in 1937. Although this continues to be the official courthouse of Randolph County, the original design has been lost through several remodelings and a fire in July 1955.

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RAY COUNTY



Fig. 1. Ray County Courthouse, 1856-1914, moved in 1915.
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

Following six years of controversy, commissioners chose the site of Richmond in 1827 as the permanent location for the county seat of Ray County. It was a primitive site at the time and required more development before it could adequately function. Until that time, Bluffton, the first and temporary location, continued to serve as the county seat.

Money from the sale of lots funded the first courthouse in Richmond, which was completed in 1829. The hewn log structure was chinked with mulberry blocks, and the interior finished with oak. The fireplace at one of the gable ends was constructed of stone, but reportedly had a delicate wooden chimney.

The second courthouse (Fig. 1), a temple-type design with Doric order, was copied after the one in nearby Lafayette County. The county commissioners appointed George W. Dunn as superintendent in July 1856. They instructed him to work out the plan and submit a cost estimate, making such suitable variations as



Fig. 2. Ray County Courthouse, after removed from square in 1914. Round columns replaced with square brick. Razed in 1960s.
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

County . . . Ray
Organized Nov. 16, 1820
Named After . . . John Ray, a
member of the
Constitutional
Convention of 1820
County Seat . . . Richmond





Fig. 3. Ray County Courthouse 1914-. Architect: R. Warren Roberts (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

the commissioners might suggest.

The court appropriated \$25,000 for construction and asked that the work be completed by January 1, 1858. The court paid George A. Kice \$40 for drafting plans and specifications, which originally called for a shingle roof and copper-covered dome. Specifications were changed in October 1857, calling for the roof and dome to be covered with tin instead.

A severe storm tore off the roof and weakened the cupola on June 1, 1878. Early in 1914 the United Mine Workers bought the courthouse and moved it to the corner of Franklin and College streets as construction began on the present courthouse (Fig. 2). The 1856-58 courthouse was razed in the 1960s.

In the 20th century Ray County needed a new courthouse, better suited for a progressive, growing community. Voters authorized bonds totaling \$100,000 in December 1913. The court traveled to several counties to inspect recently built courthouses. They narrowed the selection of potential architects to five before selecting R. Warren Roberts, whom they had visited in Chillicothe when they inspected Livingston County's courthouse.

L. W. Dumas was the successful bidder for contracting the Bedford-stone building at about \$98,000. Cornerstone ceremonies took place September 24, 1914, and the building, which is still the Ray County courthouse, was dedicated Nov. 20, 1915 (Fig. 3). Specifications for the three-story, 75-by-100-foot building may be found in the County Court Record (Book W,

pp. 602, 631).

James Oliver Hogg, an eminent Kansas City architect, had submitted a handsome design with a low dome and Doric portico. An extraordinary feature was the accompanying landscape plan with the columns from the previous courthouse integrated into a graceful pattern of walks leading from the four corners of the courthouse block.

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REYNOLDS COUNTY

In 1845 when Reynolds County was organized, Lesterville was designated as the first county seat. Courts met in the home of Joseph McNails until a small, log courthouse was built in 1846-47. Fire destroyed this structure and all county records in 1862.

For the next three years courts met in private homes until the county seat moved to Centerville. The court authorized construction of another small building of logs or rough lumber for court purposes in 1865, but it too burned on November 24th or 25th, 1871. The following day the court met in the courtyard by the ruins and appropriated \$10,000 for a new building.

The third and present courthouse, a two-story brick building, originally measuring 50 by 40 feet, reportedly cost \$8,000, less than the \$10,000 the court had appropriated in 1871 (Fig. 1.) The original specifications, which are on file at the courthouse, called for a dome and lantern, but these apparently were never built.

In the 1930s when Work Projects Administration projects helped counties in building new courthouses, it was out of the question for Reynolds since there were insufficient funds to sponsor the county share. Instead, the court bought for \$600 a two-story, 24-by-40-foot frame building and moved it to the southwest corner of the square.

The 1871 courthouse continues in use, a typical example of a courthouse design found in Missouri during the 19th century. The Reynolds County courthouse is one of the few in Missouri over 100 years old.

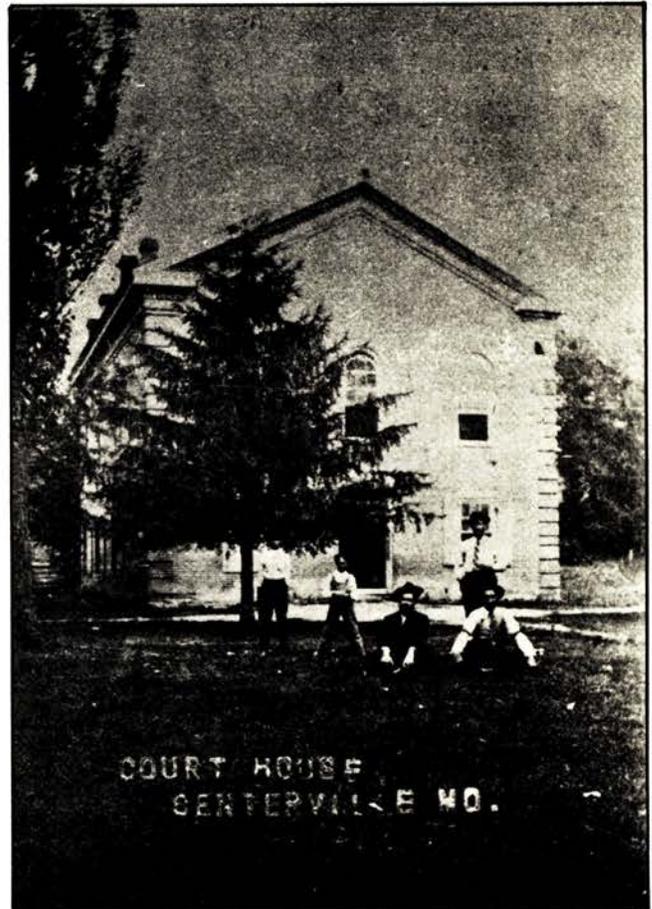


Fig. 1. Reynolds County Courthouse, 1871-.
(From: *A Reynolds County Commerative* [sic], 1973)

County	Reynolds
Organized	Feb. 25, 1845
Named After . . .	Gov. Thomas Reynolds
County Seat . . .	Centerville

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RIPLLEY COUNTY



Fig. 1. Ripley County Courthouse, 1898-. Architect: William F. Schrage (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

Early Ripley County boundaries included nearly one-fifth of the state. As new counties acquired independent status, Ripley County shrank to its present size in March 1859. The legislature legally fixed the boundary April 1, 1872.

Commissioners selected a 50-acre site, donated by George Lee and his wife, for the county seat. At Lee's suggestion, they named the town Doniphan.

The first courthouse, a log structure, was built there in 1848. Civil War activities devastated Doniphan, and the courthouse was burned. Court sessions then were held in homes for six years.

In 1871 county citizens voted \$10,000 in bonds to build their second courthouse, this one of brick. No illustrations are known to exist. Campbell's *Gazetteer* of 1874 described it as substantial. Fire destroyed this building, too, on January 1, 1898.

William F. Schrage, Kansas City architect, designed the third courthouse, which was built in 1898-99

County Ripley
 Organized Jan. 5, 1833
 Named After . . . Gen. Eleazar W.
 Ripley of the
 War of 1812
 County Seat . . . Doniphan





Fig. 2. Tambourine players pose on the steps of the Ripley County Courthouse. This group, directed by Mrs. Marion Hudson, performed in Ripley County early in the 20th century. (From: Mrs. Margaret Shemwell collection)

(Figs. 1, 2). Judge McManus was appointed superintendent, and John M. Anderson contracted the building. The two-story courthouse, built of local brick, measured 128 by 95 feet at the base and 30 feet high. On July 30, 1898, Ripley County authorized \$20,000 in bonds to pay for the courthouse and jail. By 1899 the courthouse was completed.

Schrage also designed similar courthouses for Morgan, Laclede and Howard counties. Laclede's courthouse was destroyed by fire; Morgan's has lost part of its tower; and Howard's was seriously damaged by fire in the 1970s, but was repaired. The three related court-

houses, which were built a few years earlier than Ripley County's, all featured a central tower.

During the 1930s a Work Projects Administration project repaired storm and tornado damage, but until the 1970s the Ripley County courthouse remained without central heating or a regular maintenance program. Extensive remodeling began in 1976. Ripley County contributed \$80,000 for the project; the remainder of the \$325,000 cost came from an Economic Development Administration grant. This building, which still functions as the Ripley County courthouse, has been included in the National Register of Historic Places.

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ST. CHARLES COUNTY

St. Charles County was organized in 1812, but present boundaries were not established until 1818. For several years the county rented quarters. Among them were rooms in Peck's Row, provided by Charles and Ruluff Peck, the same space the brothers rented to Missouri's first state government when officials met in St. Charles, from 1821 to 1825.

In 1833 the county bought a house and lot from William Pettus for \$800, on which officials planned to build a courthouse and jail. This became the site for the 1846-49 courthouse designed by Solomon Jenkins (Fig. 1). Little is known of Jenkins, who built three other courthouses in Missouri: Warren, 1838, Scotland and Callaway, 1856. Born in Virginia in 1808, he was active in St. Louis in the 1830s. In the census of 1850 he is identified as a house builder. The same census also recorded two carpenters living at Jenkins' address, one from Virginia, the other from Ireland, and a stone cutter from Scotland, bringing to Missouri several possible sources of influence.

The one-story courthouse, built between 1846-49 for about \$9,000, featured a handsome Doric portico with fluted shafts on the six columns and pilasters between shuttered windows on the sides. Grouped pilasters at the corners trimmed both stages of the cupola; the traditional ball and arrow topped the domical roof.

Clerk's offices were housed in small, one-story, fireproof buildings near the courthouse. William L. Overall supervised construction, which was completed in 1849. This courthouse was located at the northwest corner of Main and Madison streets. Sustaining extensive damage after a storm on February 26,



Fig. 1. St. Charles County Courthouse, 1846-1903.
Architect: Solomon Jenkins
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

1876, the building continued in use until razed in 1903, when the court moved to its new location.

The county purchased a spacious site for the next and present courthouse in 1851 from the city of St. Charles for \$223.87½. The county and circuit clerks' offices constructed on the site caused it to be referred to as "Clerks' Hill."

Special elections to authorize a new courthouse failed in 1888 and 1894. Three years later a petition presented to the court again called for a new courthouse. The court then appointed Jerome B. Legg architect in July 1898 to prepare plans, but an appropriation of \$25,000, made in August 1898, put county funds in such a precarious state that the county feared it could not conduct its business. The court then reconsidered Legg's plans, which would have cost an estimated \$60,000-\$90,000 to build; the court rescinded the appropriation and decided to defer construction.

It was not until December 1900 that the court commenced construction, using Legg's design of 1898 for

County	St. Charles
Organized	Oct. 1, 1812
Named After	Charles V of France
County Seat	St. Charles

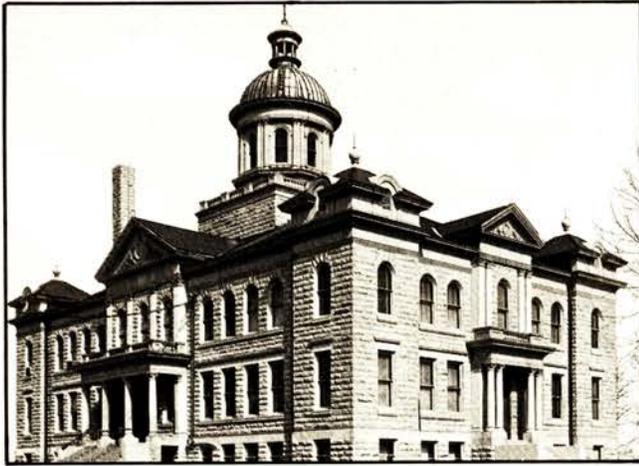


Fig. 2. St. Charles County Courthouse, 1901-.
 Architect: Jerome B. Legg
 (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

the new courthouse on "Clerks' Hill" (Fig. 2). Due to the slope of the hill, grading was necessary. In January 1901 J. W. Thompson received the contract for foundation, walls and roof for \$37,349; the work was to be completed within a year. Cornerstone ceremonies took place June 12, 1901. Contract for completing the building was awarded Nicholas Pelligreen of St. Louis for \$57,000.

The County Court room, 30 by 26 feet, and several offices were on the first floor; the Circuit Court room, 42 by 46 feet, probate court and jury rooms were on the second floor. The new courthouse was occupied in April 1903. Serious flooding in June 1903 interfered with the planned dedication ceremonies.

Other related Missouri courthouses by Legg were constructed of brick in Gasconade County, built in 1896-98, and Mississippi County, 1899-1901, but the St. Charles stone building is the finest example of Legg's turn of the century courthouse design.



Fig. 3. Aerial view of present courthouse, photo ca. 1935. (From: W.P.A., Historical Records Survey)

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ST. CLAIR COUNTY

First courts in St. Clair County met in homes before a courthouse was built in 1842. Various references in the County Court Record indicate the two-story building had a parapet, tin roof, plank floor and was built on the public square, which was fenced. Parapets, small extensions of a wall above the roof line, were unusual features found on few early Missouri courthouses.

This structure is apparently the one that was burned in September 1861 by Gen. James Lane. One account claims that Lane's raid only partially destroyed the courthouse; by some accounts it was rebuilt and used until November 1864, when it was again burned in Civil War activity.

In June 1866 voters approved appropriation of \$15,000 for building a new courthouse. William O. Mead acted as superintendent and advertised for proposals. A. G. Clarke, assisted by Thomas Sutherland, was paid \$20 for making a plan for the courthouse.

A newspaper announcement calling for proposals for building the courthouse stated that the builder would be permitted to use the old bricks which were still on the site. Specifications called for the ground floor to be of brick laid in cement, as in the previous courthouse. The 44-foot-square structure was to be built upon the foundation of the previous building. Crossing halls were originally planned with exterior doors, but later windows were substituted. On the main facade, facing Second St., a porch had two stairways leading to the second story. Four two-story brick pillars supported the roofs covering the porches. Plans also called for a 16-foot shuttered cupola, which could be used as a bell tower. There was a five-foot cornice; caps and sills

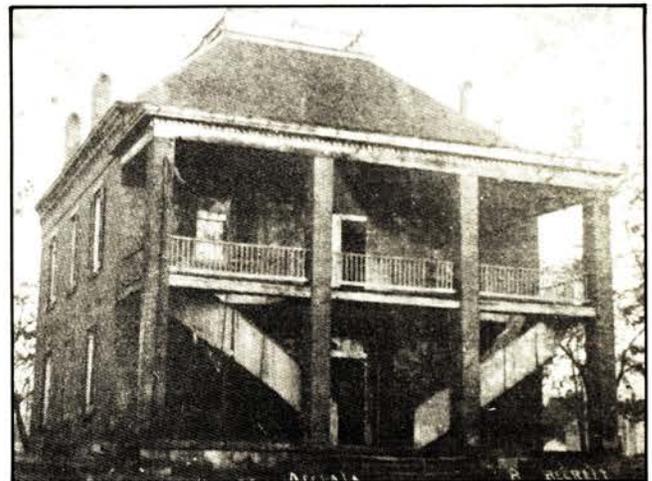


Fig. 1. St. Clair County Courthouse, 1866-1908.
(From: *Ozarks Mountaineer*, October 1956)

of the doors and windows were to be of cut stone. Pine would be used for doors as well as for shutters, which would cover the windows.

The contractors, Hicks and Brown, completed their work and turned the building over to the county on Dec. 4, 1867. However, the county commissioner deducted \$200 due to unacceptable work. Cost of the courthouse was about \$15,000. No early photographs are known; a late 19th century illustration shows the courthouse with the cupola missing. (Fig. 1).

In 1880 the building was insured for \$3,000, and by 1890 the safety of the building was questioned, although it continued in use for another 18 years. In spite of the courthouse's condition, in December 1905 voters rejected a proposal to build a new courthouse. Some county offices leased space in another building on the square; it was not until the Circuit Court judge refused to hold court in the courthouse that it was vacated in 1908. Still the building was not razed. Instead, a small addition was made on the east, permitting some county offices to continue using the courthouse.

In spite of the acute need, several years passed before the County Court selected the architect of the 20th century courthouse. The court finally se-

County	St. Clair	
Organized	Jan. 29, 1841	
Named After . . .	Gen. Arthur St. Clair of the Revolution	
County Seat . . .	Osceola	

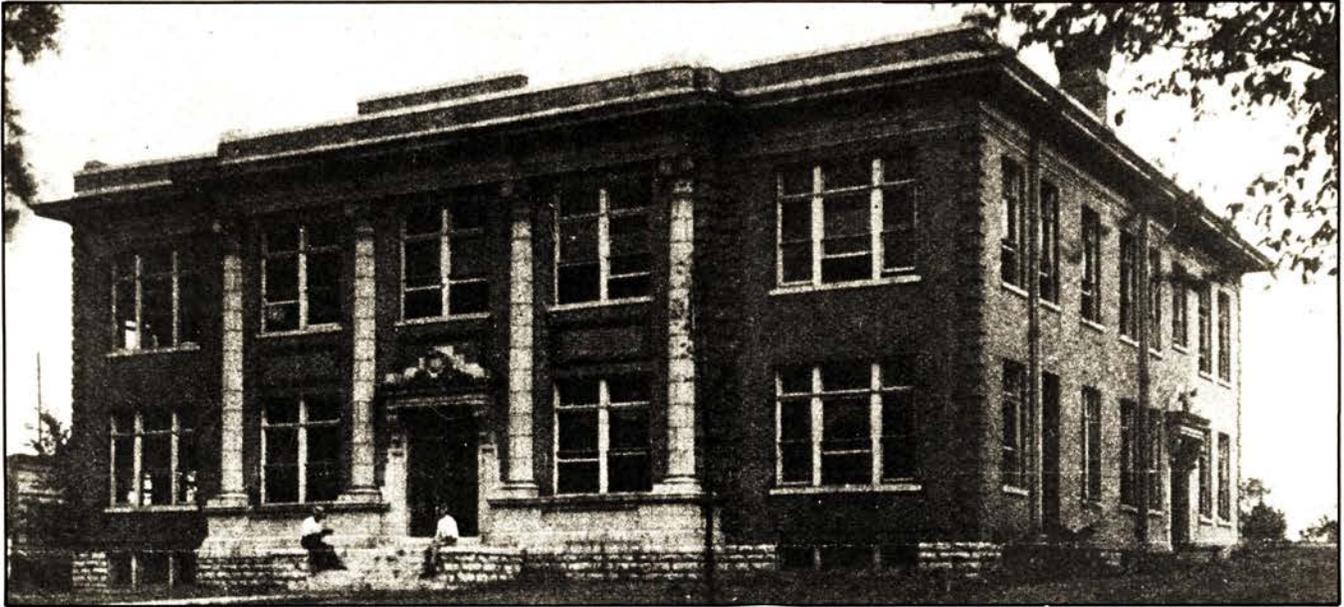


Fig. 2. St. Clair County Courthouse, 1916-. Architect: Clifton B. Sloan (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

lected Clifton B. Sloan of Kansas City, who presented his plans in May 1916. Razing of the old building began the same month, but apparently the east extension was incorporated in the new building. At the time, the construction was referred to as a further addition.

The court received nine bids after offering prospective contractors four alternative propositions to bid on. According to the *Appleton City Journal*, the proposals were so complicated that the average citizen could understand only the one designated "A." Proposal A provided for destruction of the old building, excavation for a basement, and construction of new walls and roof. The court accepted a bid on proposal A of \$12,500 from D.M. Wall.

The principal entry would face north with others on the east and west. Work ceased when the roof was in place, marking the end of stage one. Unfortunately, construction did not resume due to lack of funds. The financial bind stemmed from forty years earlier when the county had gone deeply into debt on an unsuccessful railroad venture. Now that the county appeared solvent, heirs of the original lenders filed suit demanding payment on the old debt. Their legal action succeeded in halting construction of the new courthouse. Parts of the incompleated building were used for county business, but the quarters were cramped and inconvenient. The unfinished state of the building left it liable to possible damage, and the court did allocate \$1,500 in 1917 for draining the basement and glazing the windows. A further limitation was imposed because of World War I and the order from the State Council of Defense that restricted building. Finally, voters acknowledged the railroad indebtedness and passed a bond issue in September 1918 to settle with the claimants.

Construction resumed on the courthouse project when bids were received in June 1919 and again in February 1920 after suitable appropriations had been made. The second-floor courtroom was dedicated September 9, 1920, but other finishing work continued into 1923. By January of that year, costs amounted to about \$52,500. The prolonged period of construction, done in stages with many separate contracts, and the intervening legal problem make a complicated history. Constructed of yellow brick and white stone trim, the building continues in use today (Fig. 2).

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ST. FRANCOIS COUNTY

The sale of lots from 52 acres of land donated for the county seat by David Murphy provided funds for the first courthouse in St. Francois County. An announcement soliciting bids for construction appeared in a St. Louis paper April 2, 1823. George Taylor received the contract for the shell of a two-story, brick, thirty-foot-square courthouse. Additional work was completed when funds became available.

An illustration drawn in 1826 by a French traveling artist shows the courthouse in the midst of a clearing (Fig. 1). Records indicate that there were two rather tall chimneys, shuttered windows and a fan light over the door. Floors were of grooved pine plank; the walls were plastered. The courtroom occupied the first floor. John Andrews superintended the work for the county.

In 1845 the public square was enclosed by a five-foot-high plank fence with stiles in the center of each side to keep out livestock. At one time locust trees were planted in even rows that were 20 feet apart. Toward midcentury when preparations for a new courthouse began, the first courthouse was ordered razed.

The court ordered a new courthouse November 24, 1848, but the treasury contained insufficient funds to finance an \$8,000 project. The county solved the problem by borrowing from the canal and road fund to finance the \$8,000 building.

Architect-builder of the courthouse was Henry H. Wright, originally from New York but residing in St. Louis in 1850. Wright is known to have planned three other Missouri courthouses: Franklin, 1847; Washington, 1849; and Iron, 1858.

His design for St. Francois County called for a two-story, rectangular, brick and stone building with



Fig. 1. St. Francois County Courthouse, 1823-1848.
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri, from Charles A. Lesueur sketch, 1826)

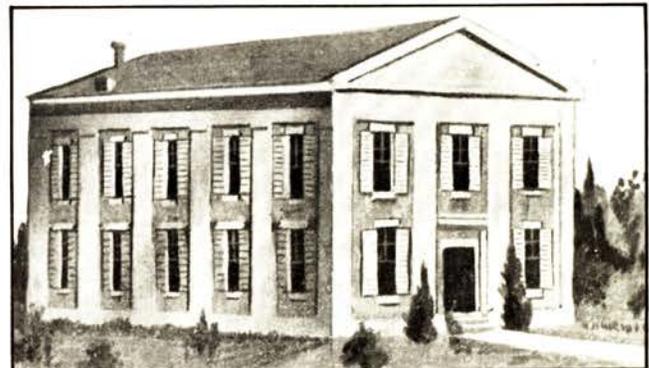


Fig. 2. St. Francois County Courthouse, 1848-1885.
Architect-Builder: Henry H. Wright
(From: *Financial Statement of 1909*)

gable roof. No photographs or contemporary drawings are known, but a drawing, probably from memory, was reproduced in 1910 (Fig. 2). The county offices moved into the completed building in 1850. Unused space in the courthouse was leased, furnishing the county with additional revenue.

Twenty years later, in 1870, William F. Story, a St. Louis architect, examined the building and reported it in poor structural condition. A grand jury condemned it in 1877 and recommended the Circuit Court rent space elsewhere. The court moved for a brief period but then returned to the courthouse despite great concern about the unsafe condition of the building. It was not until

County St. Francois
Organized Dec. 19, 1821
Named After . . . St. Francois River,
named for the
founder of the
Franciscan order
County Seat . . . Farmington



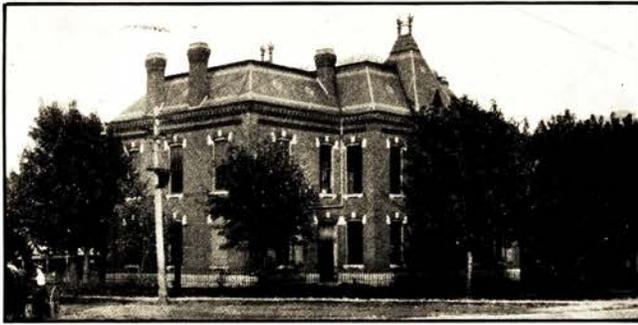


Fig. 3. St. Francois County Courthouse, 1885-1925.
Architect: Jerome B. Legg
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

1885, after the third courthouse had begun to take form, that the building was razed.

A petition presented to the court asked for a special election March 21, 1885, to authorize funds for a new courthouse. The voters rejected the proposal, so the County Court turned to surplus funds to finance construction.

Architect Jerome B. Legg, St. Louis, designed the third courthouse for St. Francois county in 1885 (Fig. 3). James P. Gillick submitted a bid of about \$14,000 for construction. The court accepted the completed courthouse, which was built with much of the material from the previous courthouse, in October 1886. Final costs amounted to about \$15,500.

The decorated mansard roof with cresting such as this courthouse had characterized popular taste during the 1870s and 1880s. This courthouse design is very similar to that of the remodeled Ste. Genevieve courthouse, which Legg also did at about the same time, a building which is still in use. St. Francois County officials used their courthouse for about 40 years, until November 1925.

For the 20th century courthouse, voters overwhelmingly agreed to authorize a \$250,000 bond issue in August 1925. Several architects requested a hearing with the court to present their ideas. The court met with them, discussing plans and examining sketches. Eighteen ballots were cast before they selected Norman B. Howard as architect, from the St. Louis firm of Bon-sack and Pearce. Howard first proposed a design similar to that of the nearby Franklin County courthouse,



Fig. 4. St. Francois County Courthouse, 1926-.
Architect: Norman B. Howard
(From: *Missouriana*, November 1938)

which he had worked on. Howard was immediately subjected to criticism because of the lack of originality in his design and because it seemed out of proportion.

The building contract was awarded McCarthy Construction Co. in May 1926 (Fig. 4). Strong sentiment called for using St. Francois County red granite, but when bids were accepted, they were for Carthage marble and Bedford limestone on the exterior. Floors, wainscoting (paneling on the lower part of walls) and steps on the interior were of marble. The four entrances, one on each side of the courthouse, were similar with loggias (open porches) and Corinthian columns. The elevator that led up to the third-floor courtroom attracted particular interest; the precision of its operation was likened to human intelligence.

Architect Howard continued having problems in the county. Innuendos about fraud led to a grand jury investigation; the solution to the architect's questionable procedure apparently was resolved by closer supervision. More trouble followed when the cornerstone provided by the architect was unacceptable to the court, and the ceremony was so far behind schedule that the court cancelled it.

Finally, the building was completed and accepted by the court during September 1927; dedication ceremonies took place October 13, 1927. Costs apparently were close to the quarter of a million dollar appropriation. St. Francois County officials still conduct their business out of the 1926 courthouse.

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STE. GENEVIEVE COUNTY



Fig. 1. Ste. Genevieve County Courthouse, 1885-. Architect: Jerome B. Legg (From: Vera Okenfuss collection)

County Ste. Genevieve
Organized Oct. 1, 1812
Named After A saint of France
County Seat Ste. Genevieve

Early courts in Ste. Genevieve County met in homes. A tax levy in 1821 enabled construction on the first courthouse to begin. During 1821-22, while construction was underway, courts continued meeting in the home of Henry Dodge, who was commissioner of the courthouse. The county paid more than \$1,000 to contractors Loper and McCullough in February 1823, but so many entries in available records relate to con-

struction costs, it is difficult to determine the actual final cost. Interior finishing continued into 1826.

Surprisingly, no known photographs exist, although the building stood until the 1880s. A few references in the County Court records and descriptions of authorized repairs indicate it was a two-story, brick building with the courtroom on the first floor and three rooms and a gallery upstairs. The cupola had glass windows and was topped by a gilded ball and weathervane. Shutters and blinds were green; trim was white. The plan proved to be inconvenient, however, and interior remodeling changed the room and stair arrangement during 1853 and again in 1855.

Military personnel occupied the building during the Civil War. After the war, in 1865, the court appropriated more than \$1,600 for repairs. In July 1843 the court appropriated funds to build an 18-by-23-foot clerk's office. The County Court Record provides a careful description of the building and indicates the site was to be aligned with the front of the courthouse, but 30 feet to the north. The court later rescinded the order.

After 32 years the plan revived. Construction of the fireproof clerk's office began in 1875 on the northeast corner of the square facing Merchant Street and aligned with the courthouse, near the originally proposed site. At the same time, the county built a jail on the southeast corner of the square.

The court had appropriated \$5,000 for the jail January 28, 1875, and accepted the proposal of John S. Whitlock, a local builder-architect, paying him \$125 for the plans and specifications. Whitlock acted as superintendent for both the jail and clerk's office. Peter J. Pauley and Bros. contracted for the jail construction.

In April 1875 the court appropriated \$2,500 for the clerk's office. About a month later Joseph B. Jennings

contracted a low bid of \$2,500 for the fireproof clerk's building. Plans for both buildings originally called for brick trim, but in May 1875 white sandstone quoins (dressed stones at the corners of a building) and door and window moldings were substituted.

The court received the jail September 23, 1875; on November 25 two county officials moved into the new fireproof building. Both the jail and the clerk's office still stand flanking the courthouse, but are now used for different purposes.

In May 1884 a grand jury found the courthouse, built in the 1820s, dilapidated. After involved planning and legal maneuvering, the court started building a new courthouse in 1885 under the deliberately misleading designation of "repairing." In March 1885 the court accepted a design from Jerome B. Legg, requesting plans and specifications before April 1, 1885. The court appropriated \$5,884.60 on May 16 for building costs. Legg supervised construction of the 36-by-48-foot brick building with Ste. Genevieve sandstone trim, built in part on foundations of the previous courthouse (Fig. 1). Albert A. Boyer contracted the building. Final costs reached almost \$8,000 by the time the building was completed in the fall of 1886.

Originally, five offices and a hall occupied the first floor, and a 40-foot-square courtroom occupied the second floor with an 11-by-16-foot jury room in the north corner. This courthouse is very similar to the one Legg designed for St. Francois County at the same time.

In 1915 the McCarthy Construction Co. built a rear extension planned by architect Robert G. Kirsch. The court appropriated \$11,000 in November 1914 for the addition to the courthouse that still houses Ste. Genevieve County offices.

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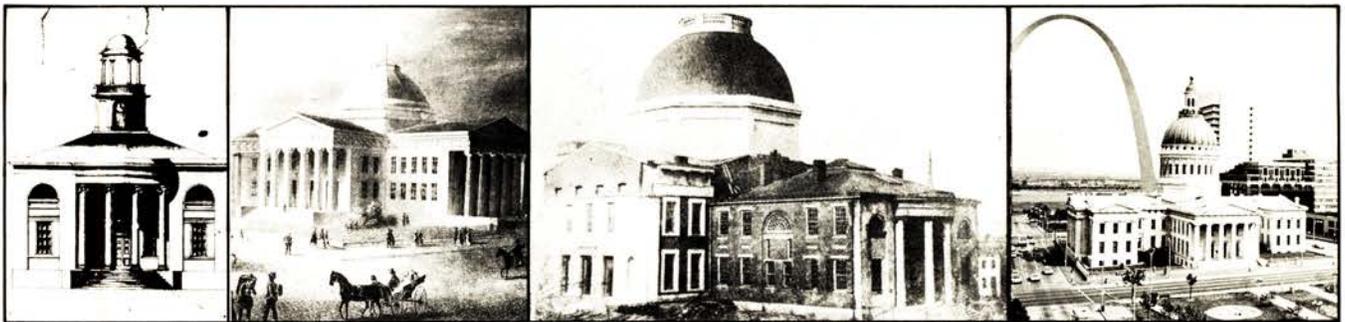
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ST. LOUIS COUNTY



Figs. 1-4. St. Louis County Courthouse, St. Louis. Left, 1826-ca. 1852. Architects: Morton and Laveille (From: "A Physical History of the Old Courthouse"). Center-left, proposed courthouse, 1839. Architect: Henry Singleton (From: *The United States Illustrated*, ca. 1854, drawing attributed to George Barnett). Center-right, during construction, ca. 1851 (Courtesy: Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis). Right, Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, photo 1977.

Boundaries of St. Louis County were established by the Territorial Legislature in 1813. Early courts occupied a succession of temporary meeting places.

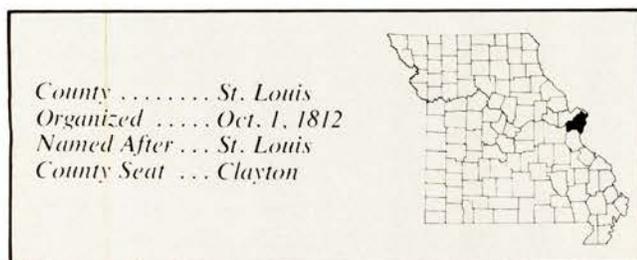
After statehood in 1821, the Legislature approved an act providing for construction of a courthouse and jail, and appointed five commissioners to select a proper site within the town of St. Louis. They accepted a donation from Auguste Chouteau and J. B. C. Lucas. In 1825 the court made the initial appropriation of \$7,000 for the building and a year later added \$8,000. The County Court judges asked the courthouse commissioner to contact George Morton (1790-1865) and Joseph Laveille (1785-1842), immigrants to Missouri who established their St. Louis firm during the 1820s. The judges asked them to submit two or three courthouse plans for the court's consideration. In May 1826 the court approved the plans and a cost estimate of

\$12,000 (Fig. 1). Morton and Laveille contracted the construction, which began immediately.

Alexander Stuart, the first commissioner, resigned, and the court appointed Henry S. Geyer, superintendent. The two-story building measured 60 feet square with a 20-by-40-foot semicircular projection. Rounded steps led to the front portico facing Fourth Street. A cupola offered a commanding view. Costs amounted to \$14,416 when the building was completed about 1830. It contained courtrooms on each floor, jury rooms on the second floor and offices on the first.

The need for additional space prompted the court to call for plans and estimates of a building or buildings to be erected on the square in September 1838. Prospective builders and contractors had the option of submitting plans for additions to the existing courthouse or designing a new structure. In March of the following year the court requested plans in conformity to a sketch prepared by Henry Singleton (Fig. 2). In July 1839 the court accepted the plan Singleton submitted. Cornerstone ceremonies took place October 21, 1839.

The building contained about 15,000 square feet. The principal section was 183 by 64 feet. Porticoes projected 12 feet, supported by limestone columns. The main



floor was divided into two courtrooms and four offices. The rotunda, 60 feet in diameter, rose 130 feet, had three galleries, and was surmounted by a heavy dome. A photograph of 1851 shows construction in progress around the existing brick building of 1826 (Fig. 3). After disagreements with the court, Singleton was dismissed and replaced by William Twombly.

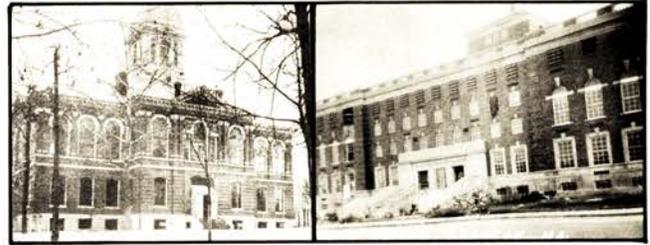
In 1851 Robert S. Mitchell, a St. Louis architect, submitted an altered plan for completing the building. The present courthouse largely reflects his work. Demolition of the 1826 brick courthouse was completed in 1852.

Mitchell continued working on the project until 1857, when he resigned. Subsequent architects included Thomas D. P. Lanham, William Rumbold and Thomas W. Walsh. The present appearance of the building dates from 1862 (Fig. 4).

In 1876 the city of St. Louis separated from the county; the city used the courthouse until 1930. The property was deeded to the U.S. government in 1937; subsequently it became a part of the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial.

After the separation of the city of St. Louis from the county, the seat of justice moved about eight miles west where first courts met in temporary quarters. County commissioners accepted a site of 104 acres donated by Ralph Clayton and M. F. Hanley in the wooded, undeveloped area that became Clayton. Even when the cornerstone ceremony took place May 9, 1878, the *St. Louis Globe Democrat* reported the courthouse was represented only by an unsightly hole in the center of a forest.

A resolution in January 1878 provided funds from the sale of county land for building the courthouse. Plans for the courthouse, which county architect F. A. Renick prepared, were contracted by the firm Rude and Luke (Fig. 5). The courthouse measured about 110 by 205 feet and contained 17 rooms and two courtrooms. Costs came to approximately \$38,000. County officials



Figs. 5.6. St. Louis County Courthouse, Clayton. Left, 1878, portions incorporated into 1949 project. Architect: F. A. Renick (From: *History of St. Louis County*, 1911). Right, 1949, incorporated into 1968 complex. Architect: Preston Bradshaw (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection).

occupied their new quarters during December 1878, only seven months after the cornerstone was laid. The court authorized a 110-by-69-foot addition April 19, 1912, which extended on the south and cost \$75,000.

Between 1925 and 1945 St. Louis County voters defeated six courthouse elections, the last in May 1945 for a \$4,250,000 complex; given the alternative for a \$2,000,000 courthouse in December of the same year, voters gave their approval. Preston Bradshaw, a St. Louis architect, prepared a plan for a four-story, red brick building with white stone trim. A judge asked for a design complementing that of the recently completed city hall and post office. Construction was contracted by H. D. Deal and Co. for \$1,155,415. The building was completed in December 1949, five months ahead of schedule (Fig. 6).

March 28, 1950, St. Louis voters approved a charter permitting home rule for St. Louis County, replacing the three-member County Court with a seven-member council and a county supervisor as the county's chief administrative office.

By the 1960s county government had become so vast a single building concept was replaced by a county government complex designed by the St. Louis firm, Murphy, Downey, Wofford and Richman. Voters approved a bond issue in 1967. Construction began in November 1968 and was completed in late 1971. The cost was \$18,602,266.

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SALINE COUNTY

Saline County organized in 1820, and Jefferson (later Cambridge) was designated the first county seat. In 1831 Jonesboro became the seat and the court met in rented facilities. A third move of the county seat took the court to Arrow Rock in 1839. Now restored, the building where the court met is part of historic Arrow Rock (Fig. 1). George Caleb Bingham depicted the building used as a courthouse in his painting *County Election*, 1852 (Fig. 2). In 1839 commissioners determined that the most appropriate site, closest to the center of the county, for permanently locating the county seat would be Marshall. The court started meeting there during 1840.

Henry Hook submitted plans for the first courthouse built by the county in 1841; the court appropriated \$12,000 and awarded the building contract to William Hook for \$9,000. It was a 45-by-40-foot, two-story, brick building with a cupola. In August 1864 the courthouse burned as a result of Civil War activity.

The second courthouse dates from 1868. It was a brick building with round arched windows, brick pilasters, bracketed cornices and eaves, and a small cupola (Fig. 3). J. D. McGowan was appointed superintendent. The contract for the \$40,000 building was awarded to Buckner and Walker. The court accepted the completed building in 1868.

Less than 10 years later, in 1877, the County Court decided the needed repairs would be a waste of money and closed the courthouse in 1879. This suggests extremely poor workmanship or perhaps unwise construction upon previous remains of the burned courthouse. This courthouse burned on April 3, 1881. Slater was competing for the county seat, and each commu-



Fig. 1. Restored building used as Saline County Courthouse in Arrow Rock, the model for George Caleb Bingham's painting, *County Election*.



Fig. 2. George Caleb Bingham, *The County Election*, 1851-52. (From: Collection of Boatmen's National Bank of St. Louis)

<p>County Saline Organized Nov. 25, 1820 Named After Salt Springs County Seat Marshall</p>	
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nity accused the other of arson.

At an October 1881 election voters agreed to incur \$51,800 indebtedness for a new courthouse. Several architects submitted proposals. The court selected the crossed gable plan with central tower from John C. Cochrane of Chicago, Illinois. Cochrane previously used this same design for a courthouse in Lake County, Indiana, which the court traveled to see.

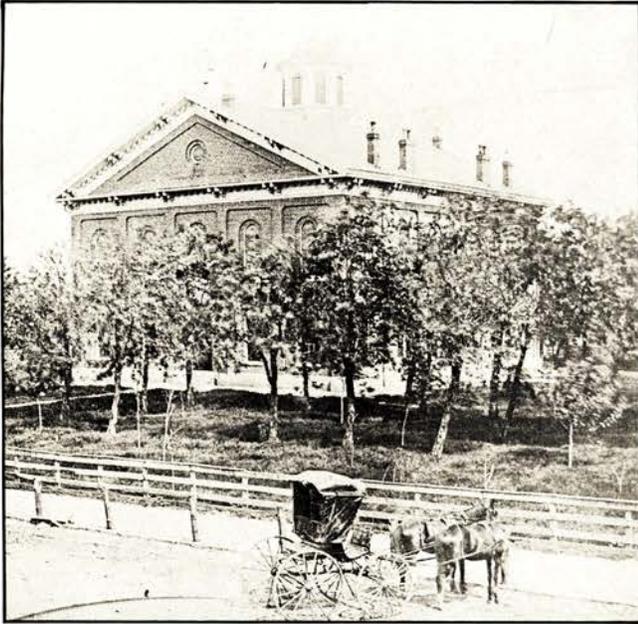


Fig. 3. Saline County Courthouse, 1868-1881.
(From: W.P.A., Historical Records Survey, Photo ca. 1875)

C. G. Page acted as superintendent for Saline County. The building contract was awarded to John Volk and Co., Rock Island, Illinois, March 2, 1882, for their bid of \$51,762. The two-story, 100-by-110-foot building of red pressed brick has limestone trim (Fig. 4). Originally, local brick was to be used, but later the contractor found it necessary to ship in brick, which added \$5,000 to the cost.

Offices are on the first floor, Circuit and County Court rooms on the second. For years the courthouse

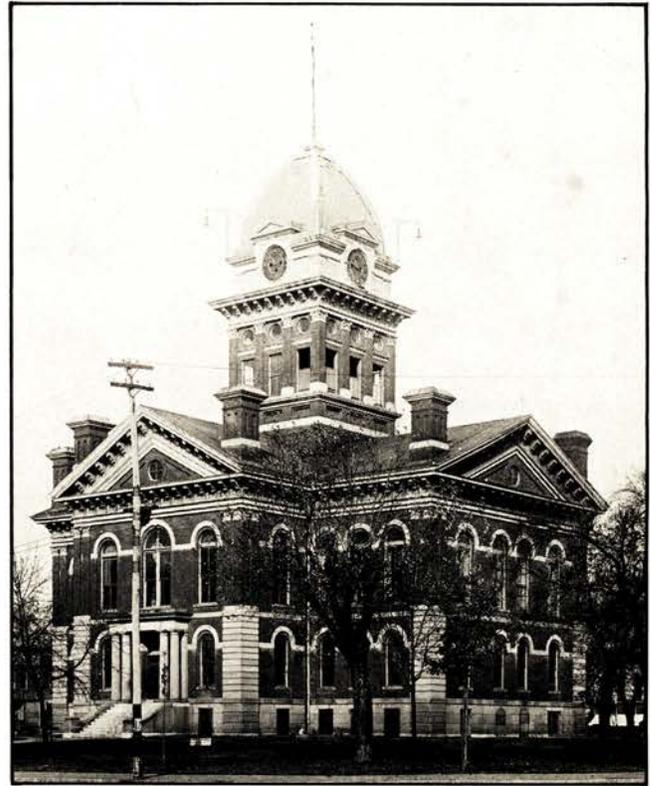


Fig. 4. Saline County Courthouse, 1882-.
Architect: John C. Cochrane
(From: W.P.A., Historical Records Survey)

trim was painted white, but architect Philip Cotton, who planned the restoration in 1973, returned to the original trim colors of buff, maroon and blue-green. This courthouse building, still serving as the Saline County courthouse, was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1977.

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SCHUYLER COUNTY

The first county seat of Schuyler County was Tippecanoe, a site about three miles southeast of Lancaster. But in June 1845 commissioners chose Lancaster as the permanent seat and authorized construction of a temporary courthouse. The two-story frame, 20 by 24 feet, was weatherboarded with walnut. A hall divided two rooms on the upper story. A complete description may be found in the County Court Record.

Cahill Parks built the courthouse financed by \$200 set aside by the court from the sale of town lots in July 1845. An unusual order in July 1848, found in the court record, called for painting two sides of the building white and the other two sides red, with green for windows and doors; the court later had second thoughts and rescinded the order at the next session. As the county began building the next courthouse, William Buford bought this frame building and the lot at a public sale. The building continued in use until destroyed by fire in 1887.

The court appropriated \$10,000 for the second courthouse and accepted the plan prepared by Yelverton W. Payton in December 1856 (Fig. 1). Contractor for the building was William L. Shane, who completed his work in August 1858. Approximate cost was \$9,000. This two-story, brick building, 44 feet square, had four offices on the first floor with the courtroom on the second. An architect found the building unsafe in the spring of 1894, and it was demolished as preparations for the third courthouse began.

Queen City wanted to become the county seat, but after a struggle, Lancaster retained the honor. For construction of their third courthouse, Lancaster contributed \$7,500; the remainder of the funds came from

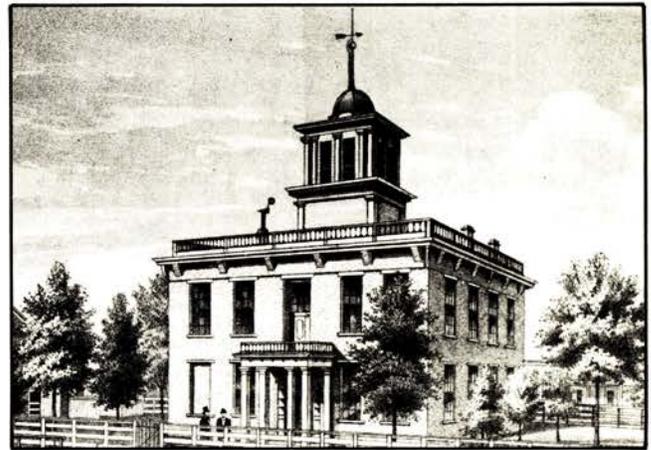


Fig. 1. Schuyler County Courthouse, 1856-1894.
(From: *An Illustrated Historical Atlas of Schuyler County, Missouri*, 1878)

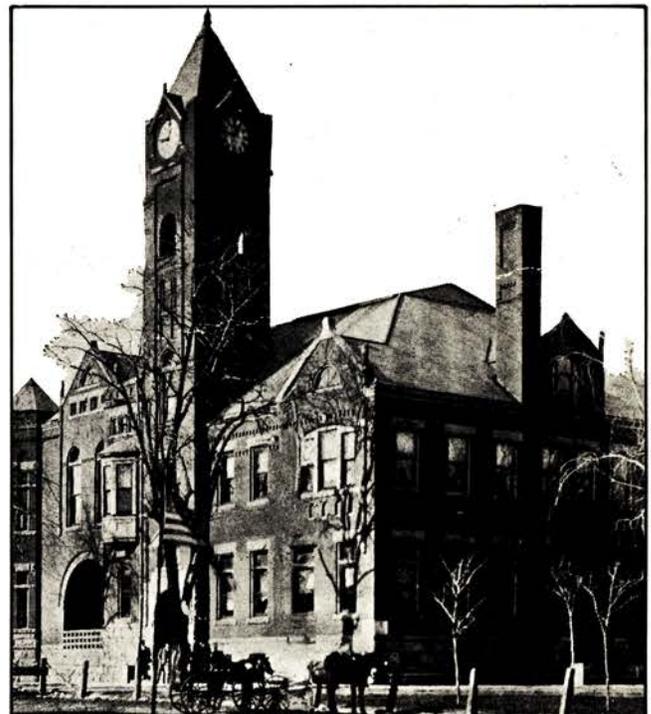


Fig. 2. Schuyler County Courthouse, 1895-1960.
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

County Schuyler
Organized Feb. 14, 1845
Named After . . . Gen. Philip
Schuyler of the
Revolution
County Seat . . . Lancaster



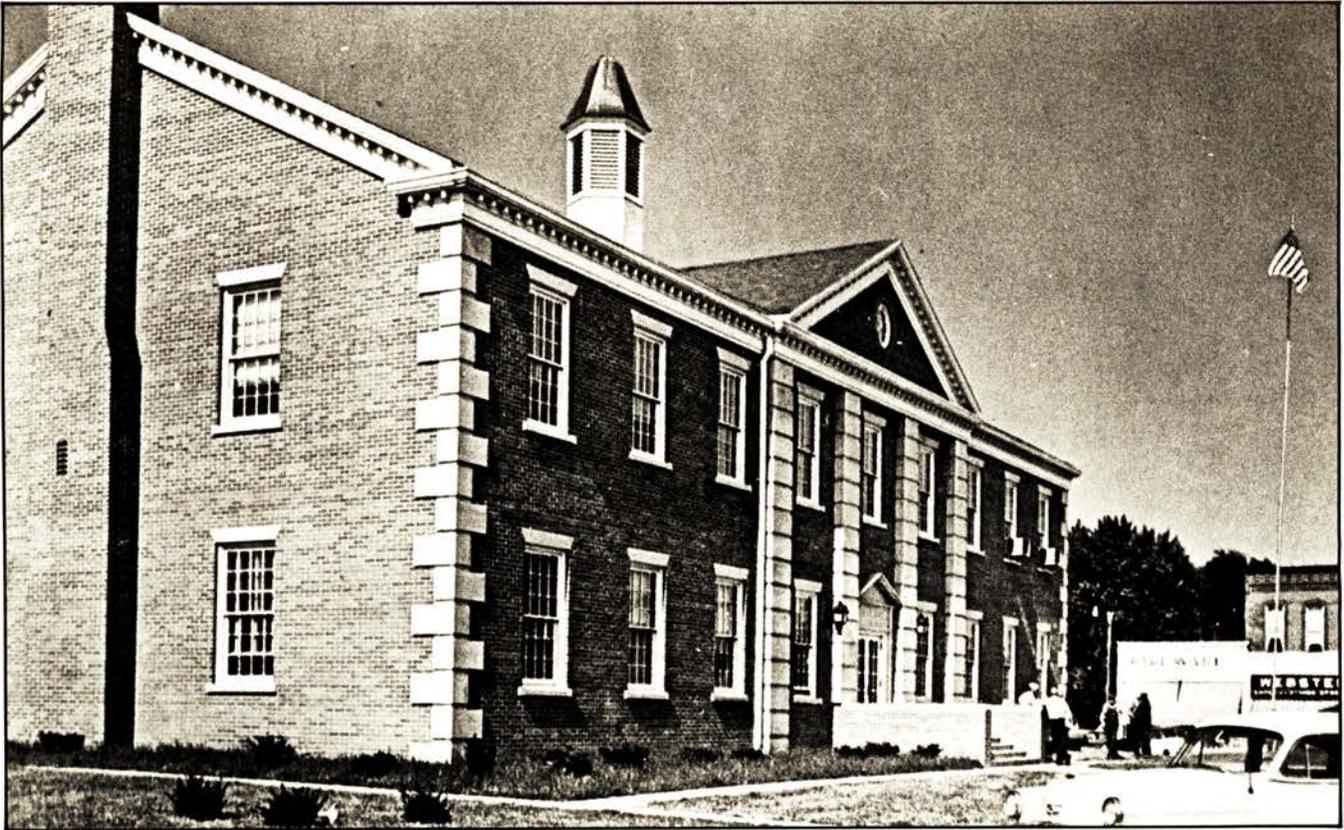


Fig. 3. Schuyler County Courthouse, 1960-. Architect: Kenneth O. von Achen and Associates (From: postcard, Schuyler County Historical Society)

public subscriptions. The county and city shared use of the building (Fig. 2).

C. A. Dunham, architect from Burlington, Iowa, received \$275 for his plans. The low bid for construction, \$22,233, came from L. S. Atchison, who represented a Colorado Springs, Colorado, firm. Cornerstone ceremonies took place June 24, 1895.

Originally, the first floor had space for five offices with additional office space on the second where the courtrooms were located. This courthouse continued in use until the present courthouse was built in 1960.

Kenneth O. von Achen and Associates proposed one design for the new courthouse in 1958. But some Schuyler County residents considered the design too modern and inappropriate for Lancaster. They asked for a more traditional concept and accepted the revised plan, which called for a two-story, red brick design, trimmed with white stone and featuring a cupola (Fig. 3). Contractors for the building were J. J. Watson and R. W. Warren of Kansas City for \$254,351. Corner-

stone ceremonies were in October 1960, and dedication took place after the building was completed on July 30, 1961.

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SCOTLAND COUNTY

When Scotland County officials met to organize, they first assembled at a home near Millport, then met at Sand Hill, the first seat of justice. Memphis became the permanent county seat when Samuel and Lilly Cecil donated a site in 1843.

Charles Mety, superintendent of public buildings, provided the plans for Scotland County's first courthouse in February 1844. The court located the 25-by-36-foot, two-story, brick building one block north of the public square. The courtroom was on the first floor; five offices occupied the second story. William Staples of Monticello completed construction in June 1845 at a cost of \$1,500. Ten years later the court considered the building unsafe. It stood until 1857.

The second courthouse, from 1856, occupied the public square. Levi J. Wagner, superintendent, presented several plans. The court selected those of Solomon Jenkins, who served as architect-contractor (Fig. 1). Other Missouri courthouses by Jenkins include: Warren County, 1838; St. Charles County, 1849; and Callaway County, 1856. The Scotland County building measured about 40 by 70 feet and was constructed of locally made brick and dressed stone from the Des Moines River. Offices occupied the first floor, which was divided by crossing halls; the courtroom and jury rooms were on the second. Costs amounted to \$19,500.

Thirty years later the building seemed small because of increased population and county business, but the building continued in use until condemned May 16, 1905. The court considered repair work, but consulting architect Richard H. Phillips, St. Louis, estimated it would cost almost \$7,000. He recommended a new

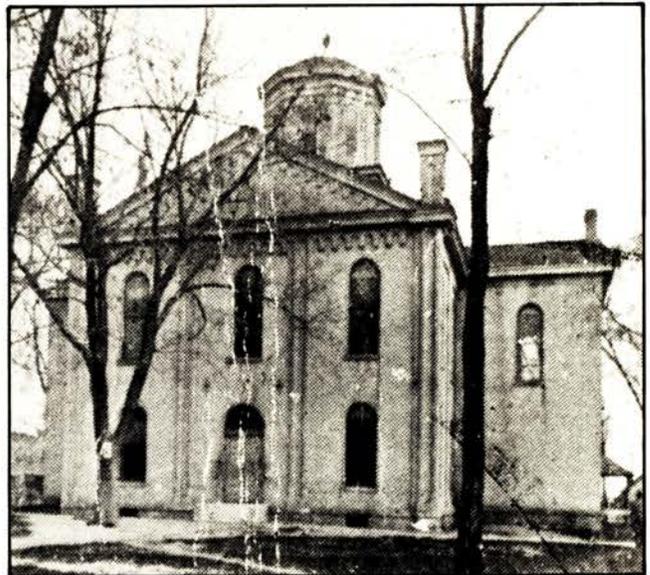
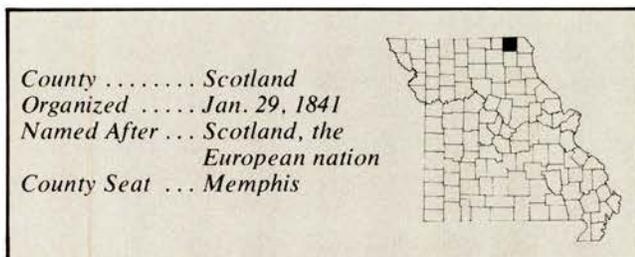


Fig. 1. Scotland County Courthouse, 1856-1905.
Architect: Solomon Jenkins
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

building. The 1856 courthouse was razed in 1907 by John Scott, who bid \$1,128. The weathervane and ball from the cupola were saved and placed on top of the water tank in Memphis.

Scotland County pointed with pride to the fact that when she was ready to build a 20th century courthouse, only one election was necessary to authorize funds for construction, in spite of a challenge for the seat from Gorin. This was in contrast to many counties, where often several elections failed before one finally succeeded. Scotland County judges had several architects' proposals from which to choose; they decided upon a plan from architect W. Chamberlain and Co., Birmingham, Alabama. Nothing is known of Chamberlain, and this is the only courthouse he built in Missouri.

Scotland County officials had interviewed about 10 architects, but many presented plans for buildings costing \$85,000 to \$125,000, far exceeding Scotland County's appropriation of \$50,000. Among the examples of other courthouses Scotland County considered were: a



proposed courthouse of Mercer County, Missouri; those constructed in Carroll and Hancock counties, Illinois, and courthouses in Davis, Decatur and Appanoose counties in Iowa.

Contract for the courthouse was awarded to the Falls City Construction Co., Louisville, Kentucky, in July 1907. For some unexplained reason, which puzzled the court judges, Falls City Construction Co. made the only bid. The company offered four options ranging in price from \$47,700 for a pressed-brick building to \$50,000 for a stone-veneered building with concrete base, slate roof, tin valleys and copper-covered dome. The court accepted the \$50,000 option.

The building measured 101 by 77 feet at the base, and 80 feet to the top of the dome. To cut some expense, the court simplified the architect's plan by eliminating a dome over the curved end and reducing the number of clock faces; the basement story was raised, thus providing more usable space. Some people expressed concern about the small size of the courtroom. The *Memphis Reville* believed it was a mistake to have a courtroom that would seat only 300. The paper said every county



Fig. 2. Scotland County Courthouse, 1907-
Architect: W. Chamberlain and Co.

(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

seat located in the country should have a courtroom that would seat 500.

The cornerstone was laid October 22, 1907; the court accepted the completed building July 31, 1908 (Fig. 2).

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SCOTT COUNTY

County records from Scott County were destroyed during the Civil War. Goodspeed's 1888 *History of Southeast Missouri* provided the basic information for the county's early history, which has been used in subsequent histories.

The first log courthouse in Benton, built on the square soon after the town was laid out in 1820, quickly became inadequate and was razed. A brick building replaced it in 1844, but, poorly constructed in the first place, it soon became unsafe and was condemned. The third courthouse in Benton, a frame structure built in 1855, lasted less than 10 years. According to *Laws of Missouri*, 1863, the State Legislature ordered the county seat moved to Commerce in 1863 to escape Civil War raids of armed rebels, which had prevented the court from holding any session for several months. Previous county records were moved to the military post at Cape Girardeau.

In Commerce the court built the fourth courthouse, a plain, substantial, two-story, brick courthouse (Fig. 1). But Commerce proved to be an unacceptable site, and the people voted to move back to more centrally located Benton in 1878.

The fifth courthouse, completed in 1883, was a brick, two-story building about 40 by 70 feet with a cupola (Fig. 2). The costs came to about \$11,000. Thirty years later the community had outgrown the building. It was not well heated or lighted, and renovation would have been costly, so county officials decided to build a new one. The 1883 building was demolished in 1912, making way for the new and present courthouse.

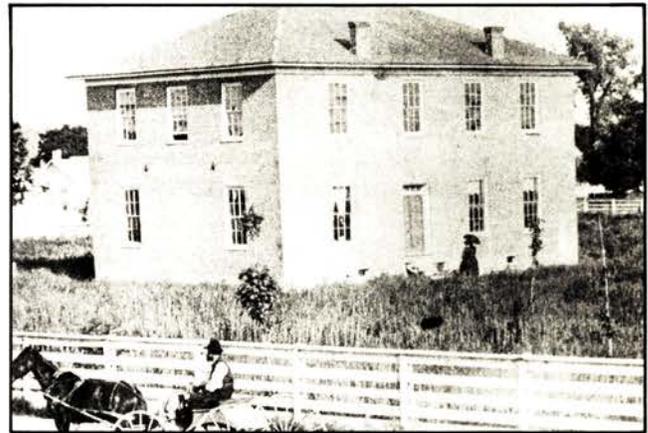


Fig. 1. Scott County Courthouse, 1864-1878, Photo ca. 1886. (From: *Benton, Missouri Centennial, 1860-1960*)

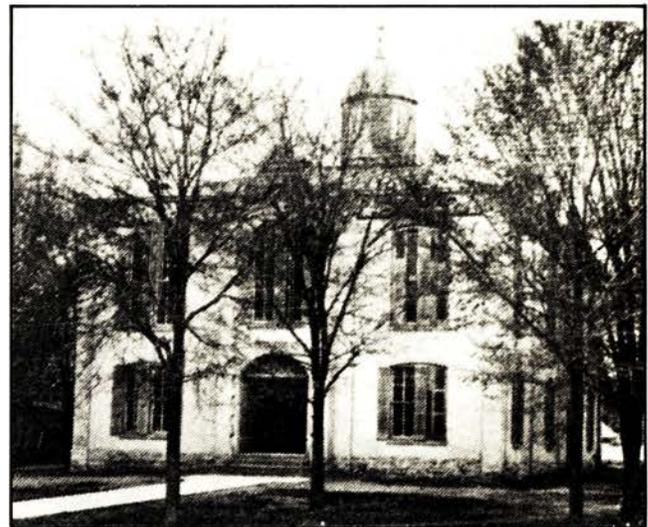


Fig. 2. Scott County Courthouse, 1883-1912. (From: *Benton, Missouri Centennial 1860-1960*)

County	Scott	
Organized	Dec. 28, 1821	
Named After . . .	John Scott, first congressman from Missouri	
County Seat . . .	Benton	

The fire that destroyed the capitol in Jefferson City in February 1911 prompted Scott County to build a more secure repository for county records. Inspired by Greene County financing a courthouse from general revenue funds, Scott County chose a similar method and set aside \$50,000.

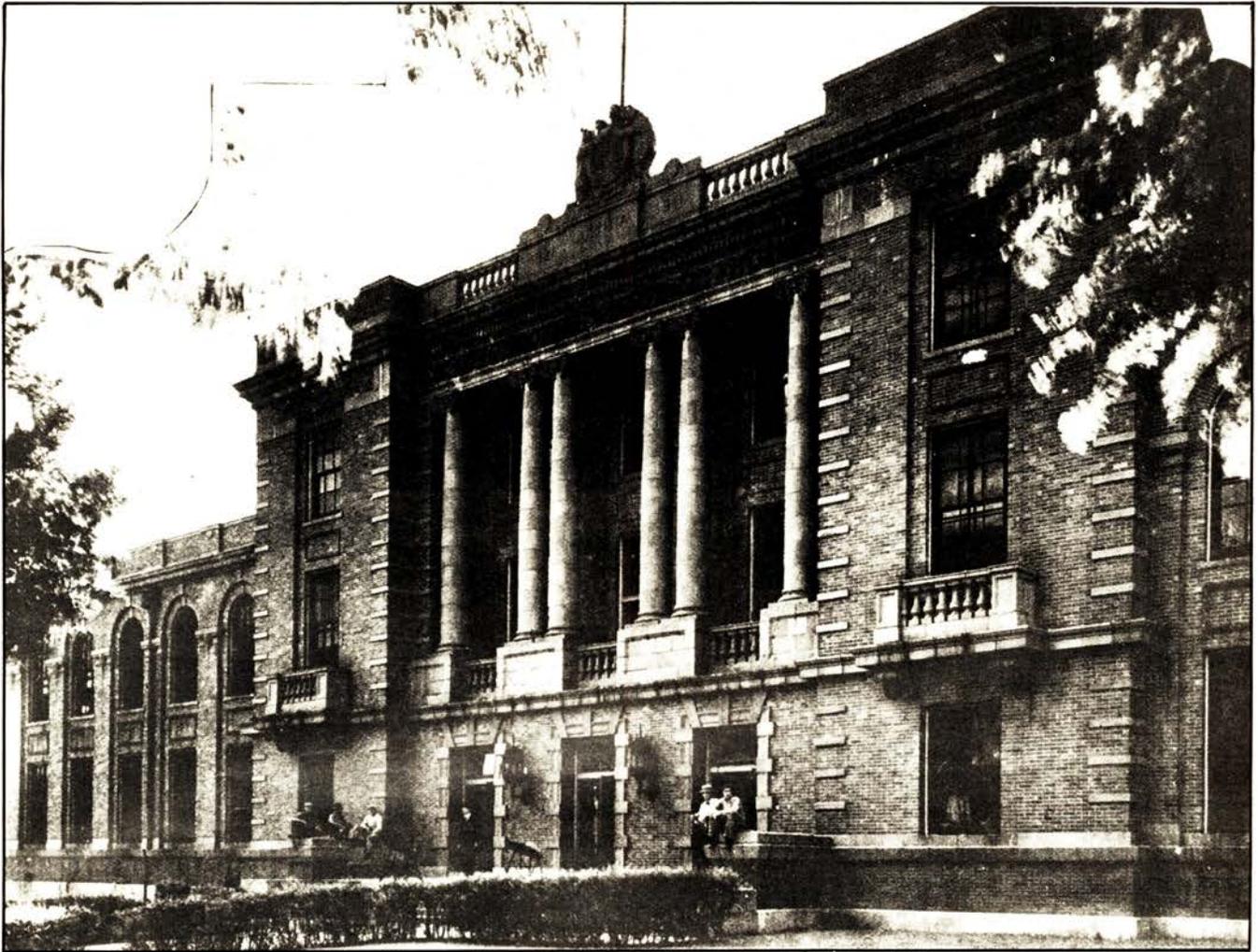


Fig. 3. Scott County Courthouse, 1912-. Architect: Henry H. Hohenschild (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri, From: *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*)

First, the court commissioned architect Henry H. Hohenschild in April 1911; in June 1911, the county approved plans submitted by Hohenschild. Construction proceeded in stages; the court gave the contract for the shell of the building to J. W. McCarthy in October 1912.

Proponents of a new courthouse, anxious to push on and finish the project, kept a stream of publicity going. They even involved young people under 21 by sponsoring a 500-word-or-less essay contest. First prize was \$10. The topic: "Why a \$40,000 bond issue should be voted to complete the new courthouse of Scott County, Missouri." March 20, 1913, proponents of the new courthouse announced winners of the contest. The following week voters, perhaps properly inspired, approved the \$40,000 bond issue to complete the interior. Final costs of the project have been estimated between \$100,000 and \$140,000; work was completed in December 1913.

Hohenschild's plan called for a T-shaped building of reinforced concrete, with brick facing and terra cotta trim. The main stem of the T-shape was three stories,

56 by 122 feet; wings measured 52 by 55 feet. There were four entrances, one on each side. Six large columns distinguished the principal facade (Fig. 3).

Hohenschild was a prolific architect of Missouri courthouses. Other Hohenschild designs that are similar to Scott County's include: Barry County, 1911; Christian County, 1913; and Pemiscot, 1924. The well-maintained building continues to function as the seat of justice for Scott County.

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SHANNON COUNTY

When first organized in 1841, Shannon County embraced a much larger area. When Texas, Reynolds and Carter counties organized, they absorbed parts of Shannon County.

For the first courthouse, officials picked a site near the center of the county, across the Current River near Round Spring. Built in 1845, the 16-by-20 foot, hewn-log courthouse cost \$75. Fire caused by Civil War activities destroyed this early Shannon County courthouse along with all county records.

After the war, county officials again looked for a location near the center of the county for a new courthouse. Thomas J. Chilton deeded 50 acres, one of the few sites with clear title, upon which Eminence was laid out in 1868. Within a year, builders completed a 30-foot-square, weatherboarded courthouse. Contract price was \$3,000 bid by William Orchard and T. B. Dunvas of Thomasville, Oregon County. Fire destroyed the building December 31, 1871.

For the next courthouse, a two-story frame with offices on the first floor and a courtroom on the second was built. In time the county outgrew this courthouse; the county and circuit clerks' offices moved to other quarters. An arsonist set fire to the courthouse and both clerks' offices in March of 1895. The courthouse was not seriously damaged, although all county records were destroyed. The building was later moved to the north side of the square and used for several years as a commercial building. No known photographs of these early courthouses exist.

County citizens voted November 10, 1898, to finance the next courthouse by a direct tax. In March 1899 the court invited architects and builders to submit

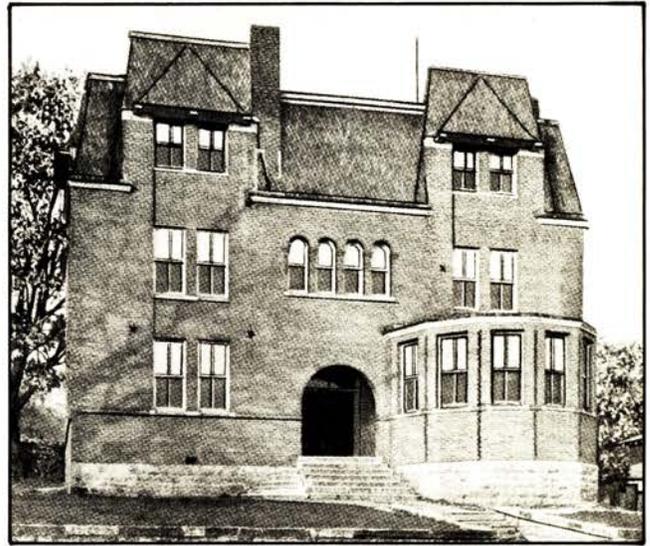


Fig. 1. Shannon County Courthouse, 1899-1938.
Architect: Henry H. Hohenschild
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

plans. County Court officials selected the plans of Henry H. Hohenschild. Hohenschild's first plans provided for a building costing about \$9,000, almost twice the sum Shannon County could commit. The court contemplated possible changes and asked the architect to draw plans for a building costing not more than \$5,000.

Partial funding came from the Odd Fellows for the attic story, which was used for their lodge. This probably explains the unusual roof configuration. The first story was arranged for office space; the courtroom, measuring 34½ by 38½ feet, and two jury rooms were on the second floor.

R. M. Beatty, contractor, was supervised by George Mathews [sic] of West Plains. Henry Cardz acted as county superintendent. Cornerstone ceremonies took place on August 11, 1899 (Fig. 1). On May 23, 1938, fire destroyed this courthouse, which was insured for \$23,500.

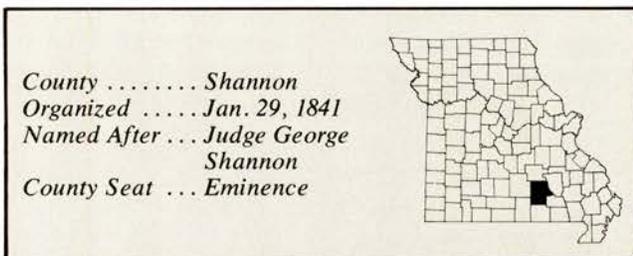




Fig. 2. Shannon County Courthouse, 1939-. Architect: Dan R. Sanford (Courtesy: *Ozark Graphic*, Doniphan, Missouri)

After the courthouse burned, an election to remove the county seat to Winona failed. A project submitted to the Work Projects Administration was rejected in June 1939, but after architect Dan R. Sanford, Springfield, conferred with the court in August regarding plans for a new courthouse, the proposal was resubmitted and approved in November 1939. The two-story plus basement building, built of reinforced concrete, concrete blocks and structural steel, has brick veneer with white stone entry (Fig. 2). It was completed in the summer of 1941 and dedicated August 2, 1941. G. A. Norton of Springfield was the foreman, a contractor of wide experience. Shannon County's present courthouse has 27 rooms and cost \$77,500. W. P. A. approved financing for \$52,000; the county paid the remainder, \$25,500.

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Fig. 2. Shelby County Courthouse, 1891-. Architect: Jerome B. Legg. (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

dissatisfaction came from those who wanted more ornament on the building.

Judge George J. Parker acted as superintendent for the project. On February 4, 1892, the court awarded the building contract to Charles E. Force and Co., Kansas City, Missouri, for \$24,380. The building was to be completed November 1, 1892, but progress was slow. The court could not occupy the completed building until July 1893 (Fig. 2). Due to damages sustained because of delays in construction, the county deducted \$580 from the final costs. Louis Miller designed a similar courthouse to this in 1892 in Dunklin County. Builders made improvements in 1909 with the installation of plumbing and steam heating. In 1915 basement rooms were completed, and in 1934, a renovation included installing hardwood floors on the first floor. This building continues to house Shelby County officials.

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STODDARD COUNTY

Fifty acres donated in Bloomfield provided the site for Stoddard's county seat. First courts of Stoddard County met at the home of H. B. Bailey in February 1835. Within a short time a small, two-story, brick building, 40 by 30 feet, was constructed on the square and continued in use until 1856. Cost of the building was \$2,500.

In 1856 the court appropriated \$10,000 for a courthouse reported to be a two-story, brick building, almost square. Solomon G. Kitchen supervised the construction, which was done by William Ringer. Final costs amounted to about \$12,000. Less than 10 years later this building was burned in Price's raid during the Civil War.

Construction on the next courthouse began in 1867 and was completed in 1870; W. B. Phelan supervised construction (Fig. 1). George Miller and Sam Henson contracted the almost-square building for \$14,800; final costs ran to approximately \$18,000.

On the first floor a hall ran through the center of the building from north to south, with three rooms on each side. A double stairway led to the courtroom and jury room on the second floor. Various repairs were made through the years before part of this structure was included in an extensive remodeling during 1909.

Long rivalry between Bloomfield and Dexter for the county seat culminated in Dexter securing enactment of a law permitting four terms of Circuit Court to be held in Dexter. A two-story, brick courthouse was built in Dexter, but the arrangement was unsatisfactory and terminated within a few years.

County Stoddard
 Organized Jan. 2, 1835
 Named After . . . Maj. Amos
 Stoddard, first
 American civil
 commandant of
 Upper Louisiana
 County Seat . . . Bloomfield

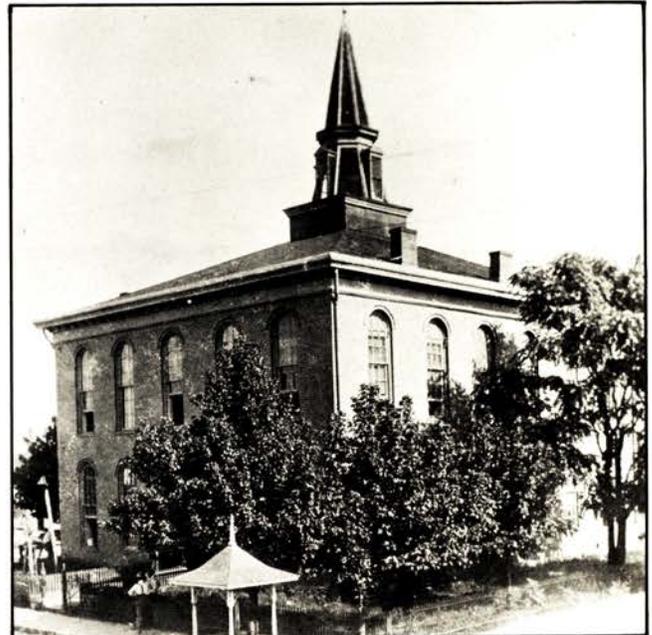


Fig. 1. Stoddard County Courthouse, 1867-
 (Courtesy: Grant Thorn)



Fig. 2. Stoddard County Courthouse, after remodeling 1909.
 Architect: P. H. Weathers
 (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

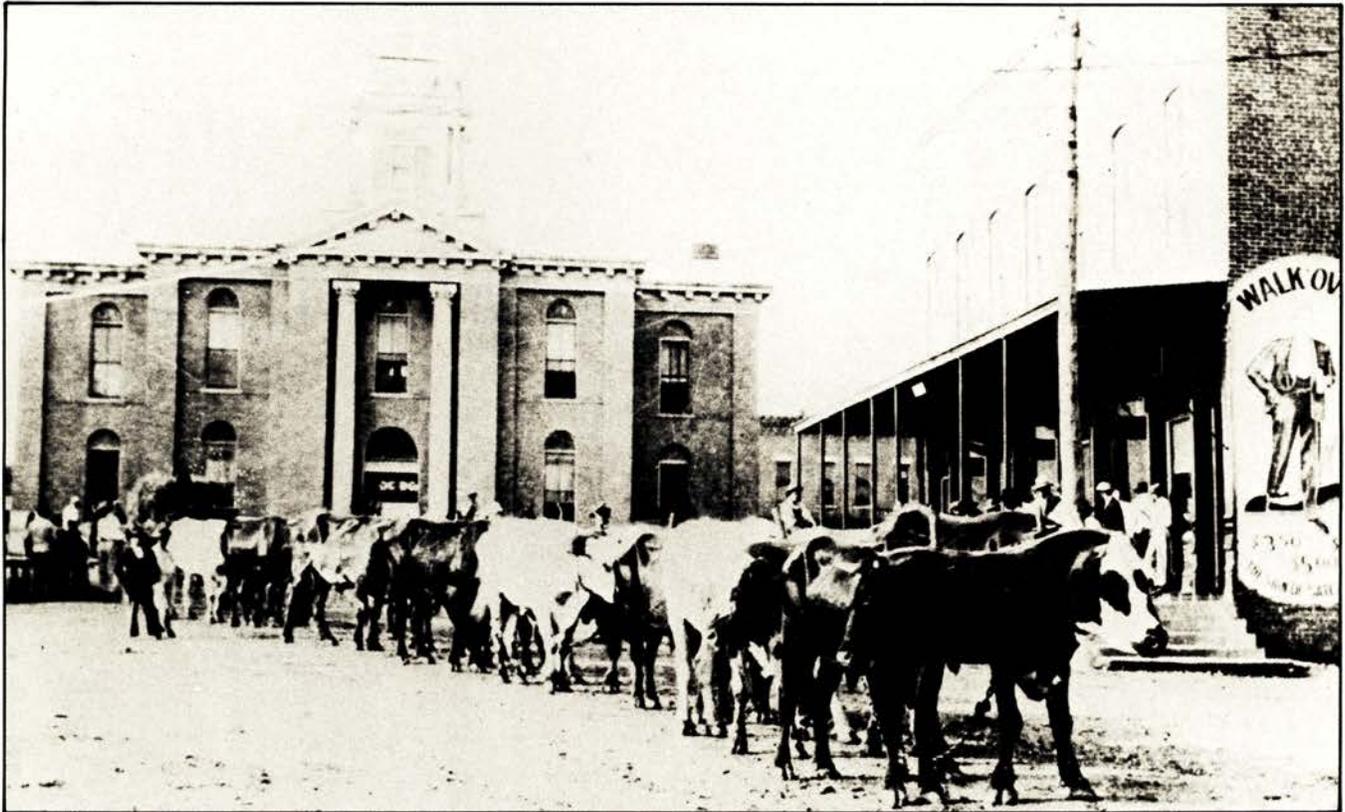


Fig. 3. In 1910, streets were still unpaved, and cattle drives came by the courthouse through the center of town. (Courtesy: G. R. Loughead, from Ott Heacock collection)

P. H. Weathers prepared a design to enlarge and repair the 1867 Bloomfield courthouse, and the court adopted it May 22, 1909 (Figs. 2, 3). T. P. Milner, Atlanta, Georgia, supervised the work, which was contracted for \$28,325 by the Manhattan Construction Co., Guthrie, Oklahoma. The foundations were reinforced, new brick wings were added, and old walls were covered with brick veneer. Weathers used a similar design in stone for Daviess and Cape Girardeau counties about this time.

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STONE COUNTY



Fig. 1. Stone County Courthouse, 1870-1919, left. County jail, right. (From: *Centennial Edition, Stone County*, May 1951)

The home of John B. Williams, in Cape Fair, served as meeting place for Stone County's first County Court. In January 1852 court was ordered to meet at Jamestown, the county seat. Jamestown's name was changed to Galena in January 1853.

Money for construction of the first courthouse came from the sale of lots. The court appropriated \$376 and

appointed Samuel D. Nelson, superintendent. John H. Moore submitted the low bid and won the contract for building the two-story, hand-hewn structure, which the court accepted in February 1853.

The upper story was neither finished nor partitioned. Court officials kept their records and equipment in special corners.

Workers painted the building in 1854 and repaired the underpinning and the chimney in 1858. By 1867 the courthouse was in such poor condition that the county clerk's office moved to the home of P. C. Berry, a few yards from the courthouse.

On December 12, 1870, the court appropriated \$4,000 for construction of a new courthouse (Fig. 1). Harry Baker served as first superintendent. He was succeeded by W. P. Davenport. Contractors were

County Stone
 Organized Feb. 10, 1851
 Named After . . . William Stone,
 pioneer judge
 County Seat . . . Galena





Fig. 2. Stone County Courthouse, 1920-. Architect: Charles Sudhoelter and Co. (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

Goodall and Bradshaw. Apparently, an additional appropriation of \$986 was required to complete construction on the hip-roofed, two-story frame. It may have had a cupola. Exterior stairs led from each side to the center door upstairs. The court accepted the courthouse May 4, 1874.

By 1919 the building was in such a deplorable state of repair that only three offices remained; the other offices were scattered throughout Galena. After more than 50 years of use, the courthouse was razed when Stone County authorized construction of a 20th century courthouse.

Petitions presented to the Stone County Court called for an election on a \$50,000 bond issue, which passed in July 1919. Illustrations of recently built neighboring courthouses were printed next to the old courthouse of Stone County to point out the contrast.

Commissioners chose Charles Sudhoelter and Co., Joplin, as architects. Contractor was the Pauley Construction Co., Springfield, which bid \$47,600 on the three-story, 65-by-70-foot, 40-foot-tall, brick building with concrete trim (Fig. 2). A central hall divides

the interior; courtrooms, located on the south, have a curved projection with seven windows. The graceful, oval shape of the third floor Circuit Court room distinguishes this modest courthouse. Cornerstone ceremonies for Stone County's present courthouse took place on March 27, 1920.

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W.P.A. workers in Stone County cited County Court records to provide documentary evidence for the history of Stone County's courthouses and supplemented the material interviewing Galena citizens.

SULLIVAN COUNTY

Sullivan County, first known as Highland County, had its boundaries defined in 1843; county organization became official in 1845. First courts in Sullivan County met at the home of Armstead C. Hill in May 1845.

In 1846 the court appropriated \$800 to build a brick courthouse in the center of the square in Milan, but a year later these ambitious plans were superseded by orders to build a more modest 1½-story, hewn-log structure south of the public square. The building measured 20 by 24 feet; the lower floor had one room, the second floor had two. The upper rooms served as jury rooms when needed; one doubled as a clerk's office, the other for probate court.

William Putnam contracted to build the modest structure, and the court appropriated \$300. Ira Sears superintended the work. Putnam had the courthouse ready for occupancy by October 1847.

The courthouse square of Sullivan County originally was the site of a curious V-shaped mound, pointing to the northwest, elevated about 15 feet at the highest point. When leveling the mound, excavators found three Indian skeletons. Stones which had been placed around the skeletons were used as foundation stones for the jail.

The second courthouse for Sullivan County occupied the site of this mound. Major John McCullough constructed the building in 1857-58 at a cost of \$5,000. The cupola was added later. The 1877 *Atlas* indicates a small octagonal cupola (Fig. 1), but a photograph shows a square, lower cupola (Fig. 2). The roof slope was not as steeply pitched as indicated in the *Atlas*. This was the first brick structure in Milan.

By 1891 the courthouse had deteriorated, and the

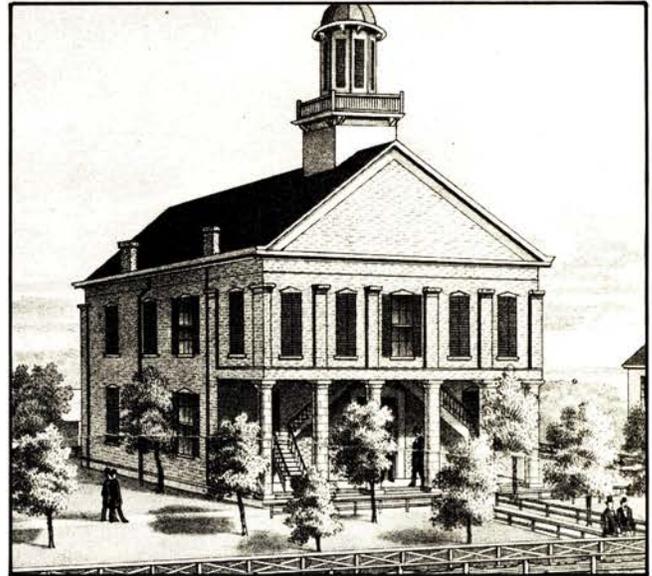


Fig. 1. Sullivan County Courthouse, 1857-1908.
(From: *An Illustrated Historical Atlas of Sullivan County, Missouri*, 1877)



Fig. 2. Sullivan County Courthouse, 1857-1908.
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

County Sullivan
Organized Feb. 14, 1845
Named After . . . James Sullivan of
the Revolution and
member of
Continental
Congress
County Seat . . . Milan



court asked for an examination by architect Adriance Van Brunt from Kansas City. Van Brunt recommended building a new courthouse, but the court chose to repair the old building. Kerns and Shearer did carpentry and roofing work.

Fire destroyed the building June 26, 1908. For a temporary courthouse, the county purchased a two-story, brick building erected by the O. K. Railroad Company. Purchase price was \$6,000, the sum the county received from fire insurance on the courthouse.

Sullivan County existed without a courthouse for 30 years until the federal government made financial assistance available. In June 1938 county residents voted support for the project.

Milan had a favorite son architect, Lyle V. DeWitt, raised in Green City. At an early age, DeWitt showed interest in architecture. Upon graduation from a school of architecture in Illinois, DeWitt was the natural choice for designing the 1938 courthouse, in spite of being only 23 years of age.

The Public Works Administration approved the plans for courthouse and jail in June (Fig. 3). Contracts were let in October 1938 to Walter Barenfanger, Vandalia, Illinois, for the three-story, 110-by-66-foot building constructed of buff brick with Indiana limestone entrances.

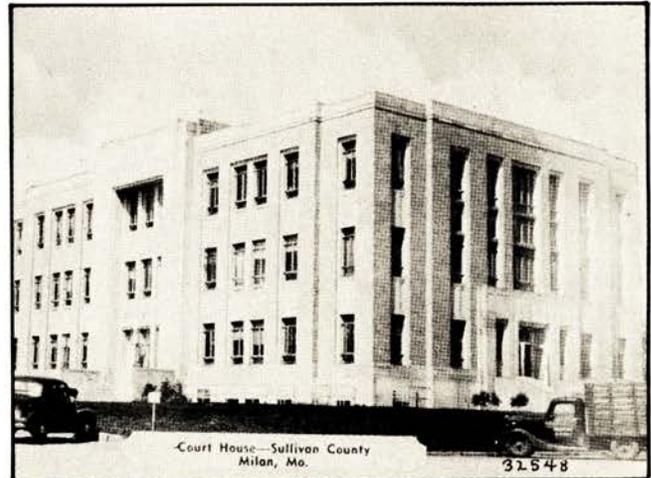


Fig. 3. Sullivan County Courthouse, 1939-.
Architect: Lyle V. DeWitt
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

Anticipating elevators at a later date, DeWitt left shafts for them in his plans. A community room in the basement is still an asset to Milan; a well-maintained, carefully preserved courtroom occupies the second floor. The initial request estimated costs to come to \$136,500; construction contracts totaled about \$125,500.

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TANEY COUNTY

Taney County officially organized in 1837, but most of the official records were destroyed in a courthouse fire during 1885. The tumultuous years during and following the Civil War add further obstacles to documenting the history of all Taney County courthouses. There were at least five and perhaps six. The sixth might more appropriately be called repair work on an already existing courthouse. Chapter 2 of *The Land of Taney* by Elmo Ingenthron provides the most complete history of Taney County courthouses.

First courts met in private homes until a temporary courthouse site was established at the mouth of Swan Creek, later the town of Forsyth. But commissioners appointed by the state chose to move the county seat to a site at the mouth of Bull Creek. County residents felt slighted by the commissioners' decision, and in 1841 they succeeded in getting legislation authorizing the election of county commissioners by county residents. In 1845 elected county commissioners returned the county seat to Swan Creek.

Apparently, log courthouses were built at each location. In 1941 Work Projects Administration recorders interviewed Judge W. A. Keithley, who remembered that when he was a boy his father showed him the old "peeled cedar" log structure at Bull Creek. Another eyewitness for the W.P.A. report recalled that it was still standing in the 1930s.

According to Ingenthron, in about 1855 the county got permission from the state to borrow from the internal improvement fund to build a three-story, brick courthouse at Forsyth; it came to be regarded as one of the finest buildings in the White River region. Charles H. Groom, interviewed for the W.P.A. project in 1940,

said it was about 50 feet square and built by Larkin W. Selsor for \$3,600. There are no known illustrations, but if Ingenthron's and Groom's information is correct, this building dating from 1855 would have been a rare example of a three-story courthouse.

During the Civil War, both Confederate and Union troops occupied this courthouse, with possession changing hands more than once. It was severely damaged in a skirmish April 22, 1863. At one time a stockade was built around the courthouse. After the war, workers repaired the courthouse, apparently within existing walls. More evidence is needed to determine whether this should be counted as the fourth courthouse or merely as repair work. Fire destroyed the courthouse and most records December 19, 1885; The remains were razed in 1887.

After the fire in 1885 left the county without an operable courthouse, county residents could not agree on what to do next. In 1886 a petition to move the courthouse to Kisse Mills was defeated. The following year a bond proposal to authorize courthouse funds was not approved. In 1889 a proposal to move the county seat to Taney City also met defeat. Finally, in 1889 plans for building a new courthouse in Forsyth were confirmed after Governor David Francis made a state appropriation of \$5,000 to build a new courthouse. A. D. Prather, courthouse superintendent, presented plans and specifications prepared by architect James A. Barton of Springfield. The court accepted bids through December 2, 1889. The day after bids were due Prather modified, or had the architect modify, the original plans by removing a vestibule from the north and reducing the size of the tower.

Prather failed to comply with the court's orders regarding some matter with the courthouse; in a special session December 28 of the same year, the court dismissed him, appointing John H. Parrish in his place. L. W. Selsor, probably the same Larkin W. Selsor associated with the previous courthouse, contracted the

County Taney
Organized Jan. 6, 1837
Named After . . Chief Justice
 Roger B. Taney of
 the Supreme Court
County Seat . . . Forsyth



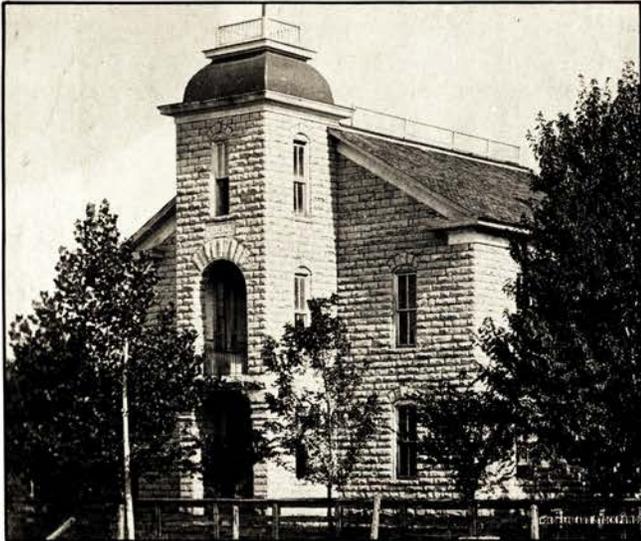


Fig. 1. Taney County Courthouse, 1890-1950.
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

building. Built upon part of the foundation of the preceding building, the courthouse measured 40 by 50 feet, with a 10-by-12-foot tower (Fig.1). The courtroom occupied the second floor, offices the first. The building was completed in January 1891. An addition was made to both stories in 1914.

The lake formed by Bull Shoals Dam inundated the area in 1951. The School of the Ozarks purchased the courthouse for \$2,000, disassembled it and reused the stone in School of the Ozarks construction. Taney County was compensated \$75,000 for the courthouse loss.

On January 20, 1950, the court selected a new site on a bend in the highway that ran through Forsyth. Commissioners first considered building a two-story, 50-by-100-foot, brick-faced building, but all the bids that came

in were above the figure the county was willing to commit. The cost of labor was rising, jobs were plentiful, and large Springfield firms were not interested in contracting small projects. So, in April the court turned to local resources for a new plan and labor force. This decision produced one of the most unusual courthouse designs in Missouri.

An engineer, Volney A. Poulson, inspired by South American architecture, conceived the plan for a stuccoed building, planned around an open courtyard. The design called for a 116-foot-square structure, with 10-foot walks around the perimeter. The building, which still functions as the Taney County courthouse, has 24 rooms, including the jail and a 28-by-40-foot courtroom. Central passageways through the building lead to a 42-foot-square open courtyard (Fig. 2). Built of cinder blocks, stuccoed and painted off-white, the building is heated by hot water carried through copper tubing. The court contracted with George Brown to build it for \$66,912.50. A few months later Brown defaulted. A controversy arose with Paulson, who resigned, and work stopped for a time. Construction which began in July 1950, was completed August 6, 1951. Planners considered future landscaping and a fountain to enhance the effect of the courtyard.



Fig. 2. Taney County Courthouse, 1951-.
Architect: Volney A. Poulson
(From: Elmo Ingenthron, *The Land of Taney*)

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TEXAS COUNTY

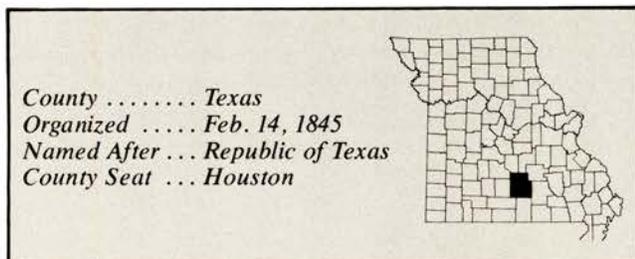
Texas County was first known as Ashley County; the name was changed in 1845 when the county was officially organized. Texas County's eight courthouses have a complicated history.

First commissioners appointed by the governor to locate the county seat of Texas County failed to act; a second group likewise failed, so early courts convened at the home of David Lynch on the banks of Big Piney River. In June 1845 another group of commissioners was appointed. They originally selected 40 acres for the county seat and later added an adjoining 40 acres. A year later, Houston was chosen as the name of the county seat.

In September 1846 the commissioners ordered construction of a courthouse and sought bids, but specified that they would accept no bid of more than \$150. A plan was filed in the clerk's office and advertisements placed in public places. Apparently, the appropriation was inadequate, for at its March meeting in 1847, the court levied an additional tax of 1/6 of 1 percent and authorized contractor James G. Sweeny (or Sweany) to proceed with construction. James R. Gardner served as superintendent. The adjusted amount prescribed by the court for construction was not to exceed \$500.

The court then ordered County and Circuit courts to meet in Houston at the seat of justice after September 1847. The contract established the date of completion as October 1, 1847. Apparently, this courthouse was either burned or badly damaged in about 1850. Court met in December 1850 at the home of Richard Y. Smiley (Smyley), where the plan for a new courthouse was shown.

The new courthouse was to be a brick, one-story,



building, 45 by 30 feet with two chimneys. It would be divided into three rooms, one room thirty feet square, the other two rooms, 15 feet square, with a fireplace against the brick partition wall of each room.

In April 1851 the court contracted with Allen Hamer to build the courthouse for \$550. R. W. Rogers acted as superintendent. Ten years later, as a new courthouse neared completion, the court ordered this courthouse to be sold in August 1860.

R. Y. Smiley had presented a plan for a new courthouse in March 1858. The County Court Record clearly indicates that construction was anticipated. But, due to some problem that arose, construction was postponed a year. The plans in the December 1858 County Court Record called for a two-story, brick, 44-foot-square building. The plan underwent only minor modifications before the court appropriated \$5,000. A Jefferson City paper carried the description and notice to contractors. E. Y. Mitchell acted as superintendent. The court ordered it to be built in the center of the public square. In March 1859 a contract for construction was given to George W. Read (Reed) for \$4,650. William Van Winkle appears to have been a subcontractor. A final payment on May 11, 1860, indicated construction had been completed.

Twice Houston was destroyed during the Civil War, and, according to Goodspeed's *History* of 1889, when peace came there was not a single inhabitant. Some court sessions were held in Licking while resettlement of Houston gradually took place.

In November 1865 the court ordered construction of a temporary courthouse on the northeast corner of the public square. M. C. Keeth (Keith), commissioner, reported an expenditure of \$361.96 in construction costs.

During May 1868 the court ordered a tax levy of 40¢ per \$100 for building a courthouse on the old foundation on the public square. August 8, 1868, Ira Martin was appointed superintendent and ordered to bring a plan to the court, the cost not to exceed \$6,500.

Martin's plan called for a building 44 feet square

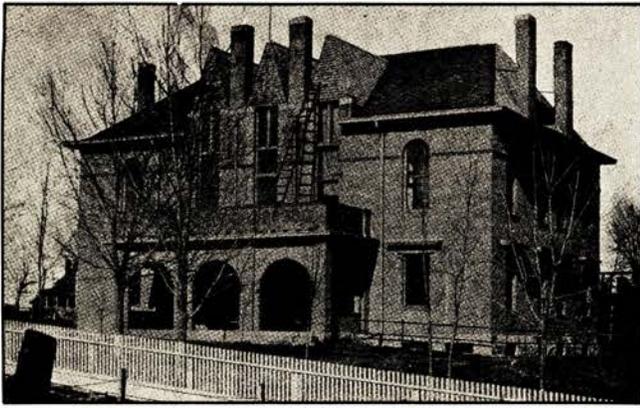


Fig. 1. Texas County Courthouse 1881-1930, after 1901 alteration.
Architect of remodeling: Henry H. Hohenschild
(From: postcard, Virginia Botts collection)

with two stories. Double doors with stone steps would provide entry on the north and south. Four offices, a library and hall were on the first floor, separated by a north-south center hall; on the north end of the second floor was a courtroom, 44 by 32 feet. A jury room was on the southwest corner. A ridge roof covered the building, with a brick cornice under the eaves. A conical tin roof covered an 8-by-8-by-8-foot cupola on the south end and carried a 12-foot flagpole. A stairway from the jury room provided access to the cupola.

A complete description of the building and its furnishings are in the County Court Record, August 8, 1868. R. Y. Smiley submitted the low bid of \$6,000, which the court accepted February 8, 1869. Valentine Sutton became the superintendent. The building appears to have been completed, fenced and landscaped in 1871.

The court ordered R. Y. Smiley and Joseph Parson, who had bought the old temporary courthouse, to remove it in February 1871.

Ten years later, February 12, 1881, fire damaged the 1871 courthouse, but the court ordered brick construction upon the remaining foundation in August 1881. This, too, was a square building with a similar plan, but this time the court chose a hip roof with walnut shingles and a central cupola containing four windows. The court entered a contract with Arthur Bate in July 1881 for construction in the amount of \$4,270. The court ordered Bate to complete the work by May 1882, but Jackson Cobble, superintendent, reported the building

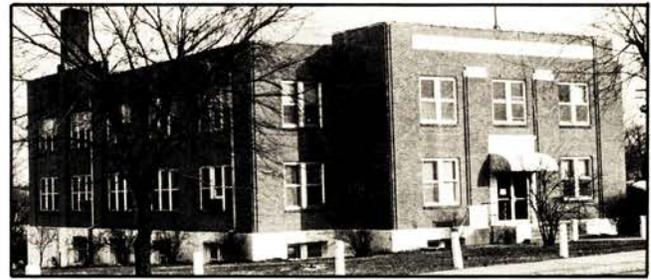


Fig. 2. Texas County Courthouse, 1932-
Architects: Johnson and Maack
(From: State Historical Society of Missouri)

completed in March 1882, two months early and in a "manner highly honorable to the contractor." No known photographs exist of any 19th century Texas county courthouses.

In 1901 the court authorized Henry H. Hohenschild to make plans for extensive alterations and additions to the 1882 project. In July 1901 George E. Matthews offered the only bid for \$5,873, which the court accepted. Matthews completed the work in 1902 (Fig. 1). On December 14, 1930, fire destroyed this building, which was insured for \$23,000.

Texas County residents could not agree on how deeply to go into debt for a new courthouse. Some opted for \$75,000; others thought \$40,000 was more realistic. The court compromised with a \$60,000 proposal. Architect E. S. Johnson of Johnson and Maack, St. Louis, showed plans of Osage and Christian counties' courthouses, but the cost was more than \$100,000. The court asked Johnson to submit other plans.

In February 1931 Johnson submitted a plan for a native rubblestone building with face brick and art stone or terra cotta trim. As election time drew near and passage seemed unlikely, the court called off the election. Taking the fire insurance money, they immediately began restoring and rebuilding on the remaining fire-damaged foundation, accepting George H. Gassman Co.'s bid of \$20,148 in May 1931. Only enough funds were available to complete the first floor. Voters approved \$25,000 in bonds in September 1931 to finish construction on the second story. On April 7, 1932, builders finished the new brick and stone, 95-by-70-foot courthouse, which continues in use today (Fig. 2).

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VERNON COUNTY

Vernon County was organized in 1855. In the same year commissioners bought 50 acres for \$250 as the site of the county seat. The county seat was first called Fairview; later the name became Nevada City.

First courts met in private homes. The court gave the contract for building the first courthouse to James Bryan in May 1856 and appropriated \$900. D. C. Hunter, county clerk, appointed as superintendent, presented a plan that called for a building 28 by 18 feet with the first story nine feet high, the second story seven feet. The exterior would have frame weatherboarding, the interior, plastering. The building was to be painted white with green shutters and covered with a shingle roof; there were to be four panel doors and seven windows. A closed stairway, which turned at the corner, led to the second story, which had two partitions. The courtroom was apparently on the lower floor, since this room was available for religious services of all denominations. On June 23, 1857, the court accepted the building, which was one block west of the public square.

A brick building for the clerk's office was built on the southwest corner of the square in 1860 for \$550. Both the courthouse and clerk's office were destroyed when the town was burned in 1863, and the county seat moved for safety reasons. Officials stored records in several locations in Arkansas and Kansas, but returned them after the war. County Court records are missing from 1861-65.

In January 1867 citizens presented a petition for building a new courthouse, and the court first appropriated \$15,000 for construction. A. A. Pitcher acted as superintendent of public buildings, and Charles W.

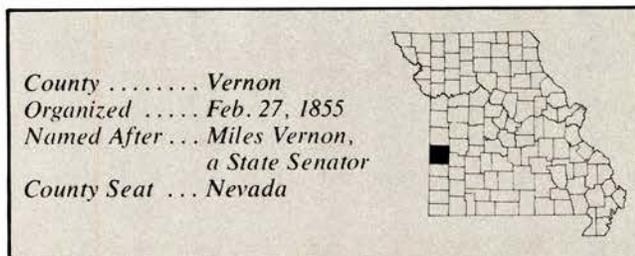


Fig. 1. Vernon County Courthouse, 1868-1906. (From: *History of Vernon County*, 1911)

Goodlander contracted with the court for construction of the two-story building (Fig. 1).

Completed in October 1868, the final costs totaled approximately \$25,000. The 50-by-60-foot brick building had a 15-foot tower that rose from a 10-foot base. This tower appears on detailed maps from 1885 to 1900, but does not show in the undated photograph in Figure 1. The building had a recessed vestibule opened with two white stone square columns supporting a small cornice. White quoins trimmed the side walls of the entry and corners of the building. The white was repeated in segmental lintels above the windows on the first floor and round arched lintels on the second floor. Supporting the cornice were pairs of brackets at the corners and above each window.

The building faced south. A center hall divided the first floor with three rooms on each side. The Circuit Court room was on the second floor. There were two rooms and a gallery above the vestibule. In 1868 the court charged for renting the courtroom—\$1.00 for churches and lodges; \$10.00 for dances, shows or exhibitions; political, railroad or agricultural meetings were free. Later, this courthouse was altered to create more



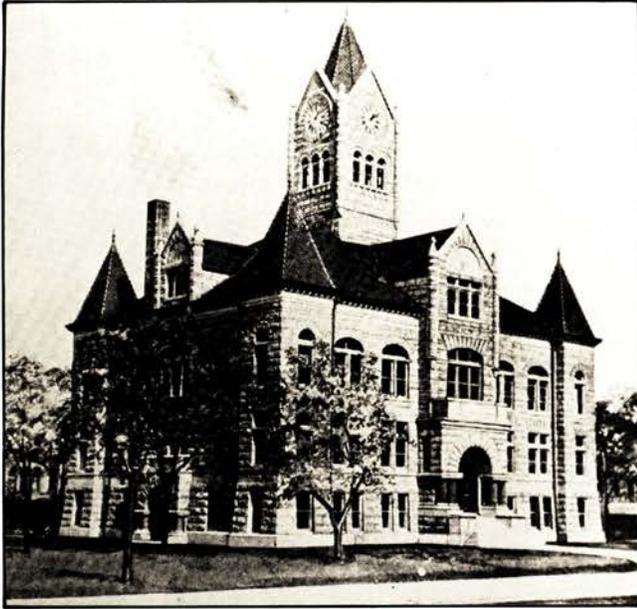


Fig. 2. Vernon County Courthouse, 1906-.
Architect: Robert G. Kirsch
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

usable space. In time it deteriorated and was sold and razed in 1906.

Vernon County's present courthouse was built in 1906-08, of a similar design to the 19th century court-

houses of Adair and Johnson counties, and the 20th century Polk County courthouse, all built by the same architect, R. G. Kirsch (Fig. 2).

Ten architects presented plans to Vernon County court officials in March 1906, and by an overwhelming vote, officials selected Robert G. Kirsch. W. L. Garver, formerly of Nevada, was runner-up. Other plans the court admired were too expensive. The court called for bids in July, but all exceeded the \$75,000 limit. Costs were rising rapidly, so Kirsch altered his plan. Substituting less expensive materials, he gave contractors options on materials for inside foundation above footings and changed the main staircase from marble and iron to quarter-sawed oak.

Dye and Beagles Construction firm of Nevada received the bid for \$71,186. Built of Carthage stone, the three-story building measures 80 by 100 feet and rises to 126 feet at the top of the dome. The courtroom, which seats 310, is on the second floor. Cornerstone ceremonies took place October 30, 1906; the court accepted the completed building in February 1908. Final costs for the courthouse amounted to almost \$80,000. Most maintenance on the building has respected the original design.

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WARREN COUNTY



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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WASHINGTON COUNTY

Marian M. Ohman
Coordinator, Art History Programs

Washington County, one of Missouri's earliest, organized in 1813. The commissioners located the seat of justice at the village of Mine à Breton, which later became Potosi, and accepted donations of 50 acres for the county seat.

Moses Austin donated 40 of the 50 acres; his partner, John Rice Jones, who was also one of the county judges, donated the other 10 acres. Austin, an immigrant to Missouri from Connecticut, Virginia and Pennsylvania, came to Washington County for business opportunities in lead mining. He is known to have had an interest in architecture and undoubtedly provided the courthouse plan.

In the summer of 1814 an advertisement appeared in the St. Louis *Missouri Gazette* asking for bids on the proposed courthouse which was described in detail. The plan for a three-story courthouse with two-story wings was ambitious. As Missouri progressed toward statehood, Washington County hoped that a building suitable to function as a statehouse might entice legislators to locate the first state capital at Potosi. But this, like so many of Moses Austin's elaborate schemes, was overly ambitious and never came to full fruition.

County commissioners sold 79 lots in Potosi for \$5,080 to finance the courthouse construction. Nehemiah Cravens received the building contract for \$5,595. The court accepted bond with securities for completion by December 1, 1815. Cravens was unable to fulfill his contract, even though alterations reduced the three-story center building to a two-story frame on stone foundation with brick columns and one-story wings (Fig. 1).

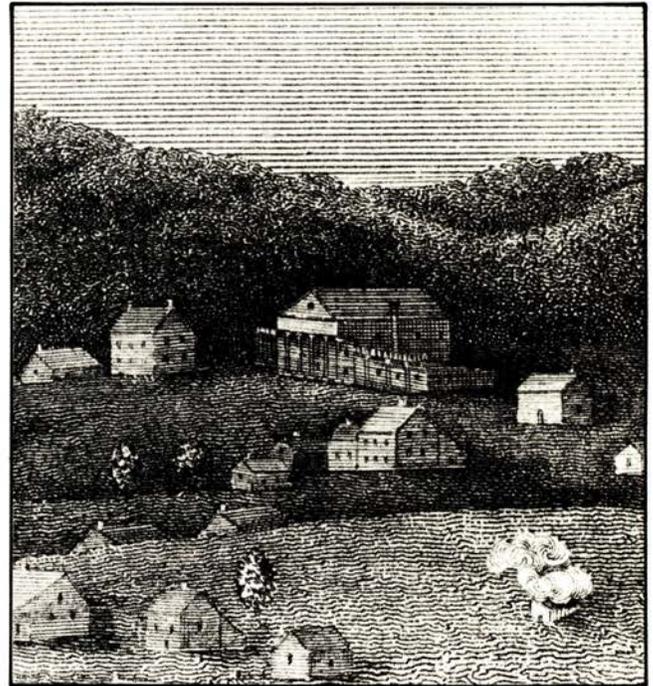


Fig. 1. Washington County Courthouse, 1814-1849.
Architect: Moses Austin, presumably
(From: *A View of the Lead Mines of Missouri*, 1819)

Austin was appointed courthouse commissioner when the original commissioner resigned after Cravens forfeited. Sureties on the contractor's bond later funded construction on wings which were used for county offices. The first story of the main building became the courtroom; the second story was never finished. In 1849 the courthouse was razed, and salvage material was used in construction of the second courthouse.

County officials moved the site of the second courthouse south of the original location on a tract of land purchased for \$750. The court appointed Matthew Webber superintendent and accepted the building contract from Henry Wright for \$10,000. Other Missouri courthouses by Wright include Franklin, 1847, St. Francois, 1848, and Iron, 1858.

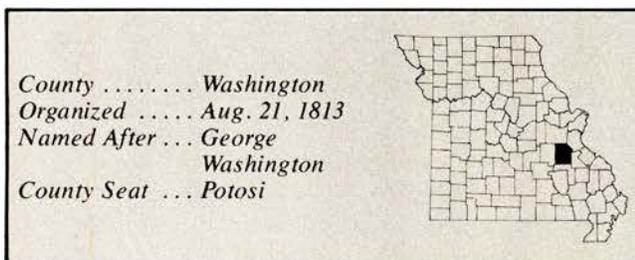




Fig. 2. Washington County Courthouse, 1849-1907, after remodeling in 1895.
Architect: Henry H. Wright
(From: *Potosi 200 Years: 1763-1963*)

The two-story building with cupola and slate roof had a stone foundation. It was painted red, with the mortar joints delineated in a process called penciling. The plan called for offices on the first floor, a courtroom and two jury rooms on the second.

Wright completed his work in 1850, and the court accepted the courthouse April 29 even though they considered some of the work unsatisfactory.

In April 1897 A. H. Mitchell presented plans and specifications to the court for repairing, reroofing and painting the courthouse. The mansard roof dates from this time. Part of the earlier cupola seems to have been incorporated in the remodeled tower.

D. N. Porter and Son received the contract for remodeling for about \$1,500 in August and had completed most of the work in December 1897 (Fig. 2). Fire consumed the building January 9, 1907.

Immediately, Washington Countians thought of building. After petitioners called for an election, voters

expressed their willingness in March 1907 to incur a \$30,000 indebtedness to build their third and present courthouse. Pictures of Mississippi and Perry County courthouses appeared in the newspapers for consideration. From several plans which had been submitted, the court selected the proposal from Henry H. Hohenschild, a prolific architect of Missouri courthouses.

The court awarded the building contract to W. R. Oder of Canton, Missouri, for about \$30,000. I. F. Plank was appointed superintendent. Cornerstone ceremonies took place March 25, 1908 (Fig. 3).

Washington County's red brick courthouse, with a tall, square, bracketed tower rising from an entry porch, is comparable to neighboring Madison County's courthouse, 1899, designed by St. Louis architect Theodore C. Link.



Fig. 3. Washington County Courthouse, 1907-
Architect: Henry H. Hohenschild
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

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WAYNE COUNTY

Wayne County is one of Missouri's oldest counties. At one time the county embraced a vast portion of the state. Fire destroyed two Wayne County courthouses, one in 1853 or 1854, the other in 1892, at which time all county records were burned. Therefore, the early history of the courthouses depends on secondary sources.

For several years courts were held in rented facilities. The county is believed to have had six courthouses. The first courthouse, a two-story, log structure, was located on the square in historic Greenville and financed through the sale of lots. This building was used until 1849.

The second courthouse, a brick structure built in 1849, was used for about five years before it burned in 1853 or 1854.

For the next courthouse, built in 1856, the county appropriated \$2,500. This two-story, brick building was damaged by fire December 14, 1892. The extent of architectural damage is uncertain, but a fire insurance policy paid the county \$4,300.

The fourth courthouse of the 19th century may have been a rebuilding of the 1856 courthouse. The court approved plans for a two-story, brick building with hip roof in 1893. C. Lindeman and Son, Cape Girardeau, contracted for the building at \$4,350. Final costs, including vaults and interior finishing, amounted to about \$7,000. The building was completed and accepted by the court December 20, 1893. In 1912 the exterior was painted, and benches in the courtroom were replaced with opera chairs. A report in the May 24, 1923, *Wayne County Journal* described the court-

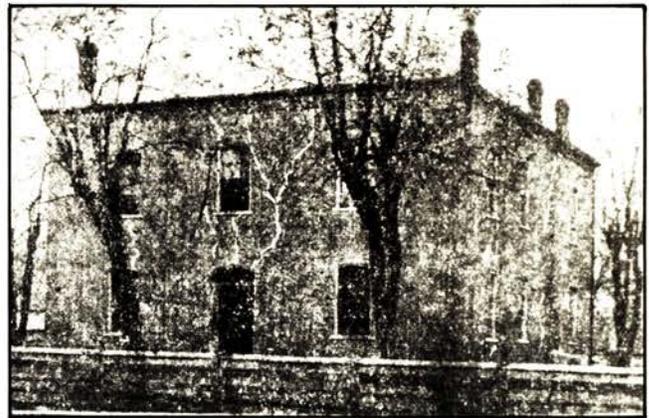


Fig. 1. Wayne County Courthouse, Old Greenville, photo undated. It is either the 1856-1892 courthouse or after the 1893 rebuilding.

(From: *Wayne County Journal*, Jan. 25, 1912)

house and said the main section had been built before the War; an addition to the north had been made more than 30 years before (which would have been the 1893 project). The building was razed in 1924.

Grand juries had recommended for years that a new courthouse should be built; records were kept in offices all over Greenville. In May 1923 the grand jury called this a shameful arrangement, before they condemned the courthouse and ordered all officials to vacate.

A November 1923 election authorized a bond issue of \$50,000 for a red brick and white algonite stone building designed by Martin Laubis, Poplar Bluff, which had been simplified from an earlier, more elaborate design to keep within the \$50,000 limit (Figs. 2 and 3). The structure was to be as substantial and convenient as originally planned, but not as ornamented. The size was reduced by narrowing hallways; the Circuit Court room was on the north part of the third floor and not much larger than the previous one. Cornerstone ceremonies were held May 21, 1925. Completed in December 1926, this courthouse was in use less than 20 years when the government condemned it and compensated Wayne

County	Wayne	
Organized	Dec. 11, 1818	
Named After . . .	Anthony Wayne, Revolutionary War General	
County Seat . . .	Greenville	

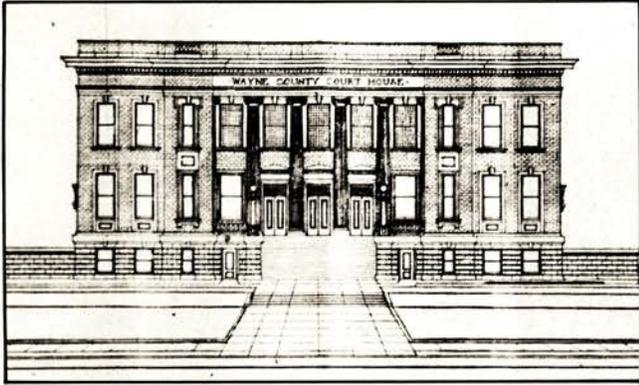


Fig. 2. Proposed Wayne County Courthouse, 1923.
Architect: Martin Laubis
From: *Greenville Sun*, Oct. 18, 1923.

County about \$70,000; Wappapello Lake, formed by a government dam project, would soon inundate old, historic Greenville.

Twice petitions asked for removal of the county seat from Greenville to Patterson; twice they were defeated. Piedmont was another contender, but Greenville remained the preferred site. F. W. Carlton, a



Fig. 3. Wayne County Courthouse, Old Greenville, 1925-1941.
Architect: Martin Laubis
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

former banker, was given the responsibility of selecting a site on higher ground and procuring courthouse plans. Eugene S. Johnson and Albert Maack, members of a St. Louis firm who had provided preliminary sketches, were retained as architects. They completed the plans and supervised construction of the three-story building, which cost about \$98,000 and was funded in part by W. P. A. Construction began in March 1941 and was completed in September 1943 (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4. Wayne County Courthouse, 1940-. Architects: Eugene S. Johnson and Albert C. Maack (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

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- Dec. 5, 26, 1940; Jan. 23, March 6, April 24, Dec. 25, 1941; July 2, Aug. 27, Dec. 24, 1942; Sep. 2, 8, 1943.
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WEBSTER COUNTY

Webster County, organized in 1855, contained areas previously located in Greene and Wright Counties. Sixty acres of land were donated for the county seat. The land was divided into building lots by July 1856 and became Marshfield.

In November 1856 the court appropriated \$1,000 and authorized construction of a courthouse on the east side of the square. James M. Allen was appointed superintendent.

The rectangular building measured 20 by 40 feet with the narrow side facing the square. Its two stories were framed with oak and built on a rock foundation. The walls were painted white, windows shuttered, and an outdoor staircase ascended the building's south side. John C. Andrews, contractor, completed the courthouse during August 1857. It was destroyed by fire in 1863 in a Civil War incident.

In 1860 the County Court envisioned a grand courthouse in the center of the square and appropriated \$28,000, but the war interrupted the plan. Activity resumed in March 1868 when the court appropriated \$18,000 and gave a contract to Dr. E. Hovey for \$17,531.40. Hovey completed the building in January 1870. The large, two-story, brick courthouse had a hip roof and round arched windows, with a string course marking division of the two stories (Fig. 1).

The second story was damaged by a tornado on April 18, 1880. R. P. Goodall and Frank A. Bradshaw from Laclede received the contract for repair work June 8, 1880, and added a cupola above the entry (Fig. 2).

In the 20th century numerous complaints were made about the deplorable condition of the building. But it was not until an engineering firm from Springfield

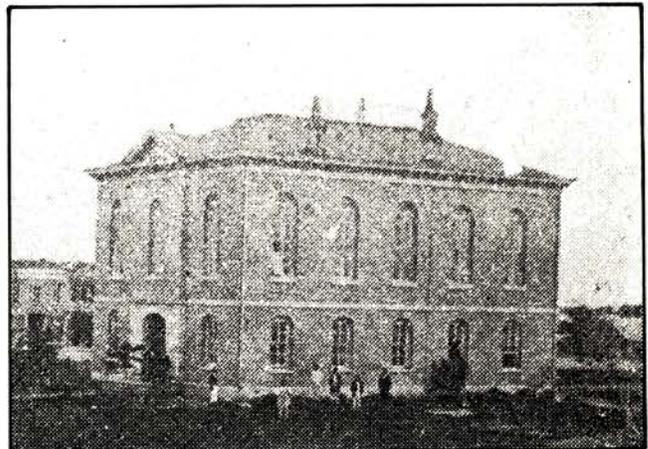


Fig. 1. Webster County Courthouse, 1868-1939.
Architect/Contractor: E. Hovey
(From: *History of Webster County, 1855 to 1955*, ca. 1955)



Fig. 2. Webster County Courthouse, after repair and remodeling in 1880.
(Courtesy: Martha McGrath)

County	Webster
Organized	Mar. 3, 1855
Named After	Daniel Webster
County Seat	Marshfield



Fig. 3. Webster County Courthouse, 1939-. Architect: Earl Hawkins (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri, photo by Massie, Missouri Resources Division)

made an alarming report on the building's condition in February 1930 that the county vacated the offices of the clerk and County Court and closed the courtroom. Others apparently continued using this building until 1939 when it was razed as construction began on the present courthouse. Brick from the old building was used in constructing interior walls of the present courthouse.

Preliminaries were begun in 1935 for a new courthouse. E. R. Sanford, architect from Springfield, drew

plans, but problems arose, and the project was cancelled. In 1938 a bond issue carried, and the court accepted the plans of another Springfield architect, Earl Hawkins, in October 1938 (Fig. 3). Work Projects Administration approval of the plans came in June 1939. Carthage stone was selected for the building material. Total costs of Webster County's present courthouse amounted to about \$150,000; final work was completed late in 1941.

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WORTH COUNTY



Fig. 1. Worth County Courthouse, 1866-1897. (From: *An Illustrated Historical Atlas of Worth County*, 1877)

In 1861 Worth County was organized, the last of Missouri's 114 counties. During the 19th century, Worth County had three courthouses. From 1861-1863, Smithton, also called Worthville, was the seat of justice, but after a petition requested removal to a central location, the county seat was moved to Grant City.

County	Worth	
Organized	Feb. 8, 1861	
Named After . . .	Gen. William Worth of the Florida and Mexican Wars	
County Seat . . .	Grant City	

County officials appropriated \$600 in September 1863 for a 20-by-40-foot, two-story courthouse. Built on the northeast corner of the square, the courthouse was used for the July 1864 session of court. Fire destroyed this building in February 1866.

The court appropriated \$1,000 for the next courthouse, which was to be built on the square. The frame, two-story building, superintended and apparently planned by John F. Mason, measured 40 by 32 feet (Fig. 1). County offices were on the first floor, the courtroom above.

By 1882 this building was considered unsatisfactory. The 1882 *History of Gentry and Worth Counties* reported that the courthouse was gloomy, dingy, poorly lit and inadequately ventilated. The writer advocated

Court House, Grant City, Mo.

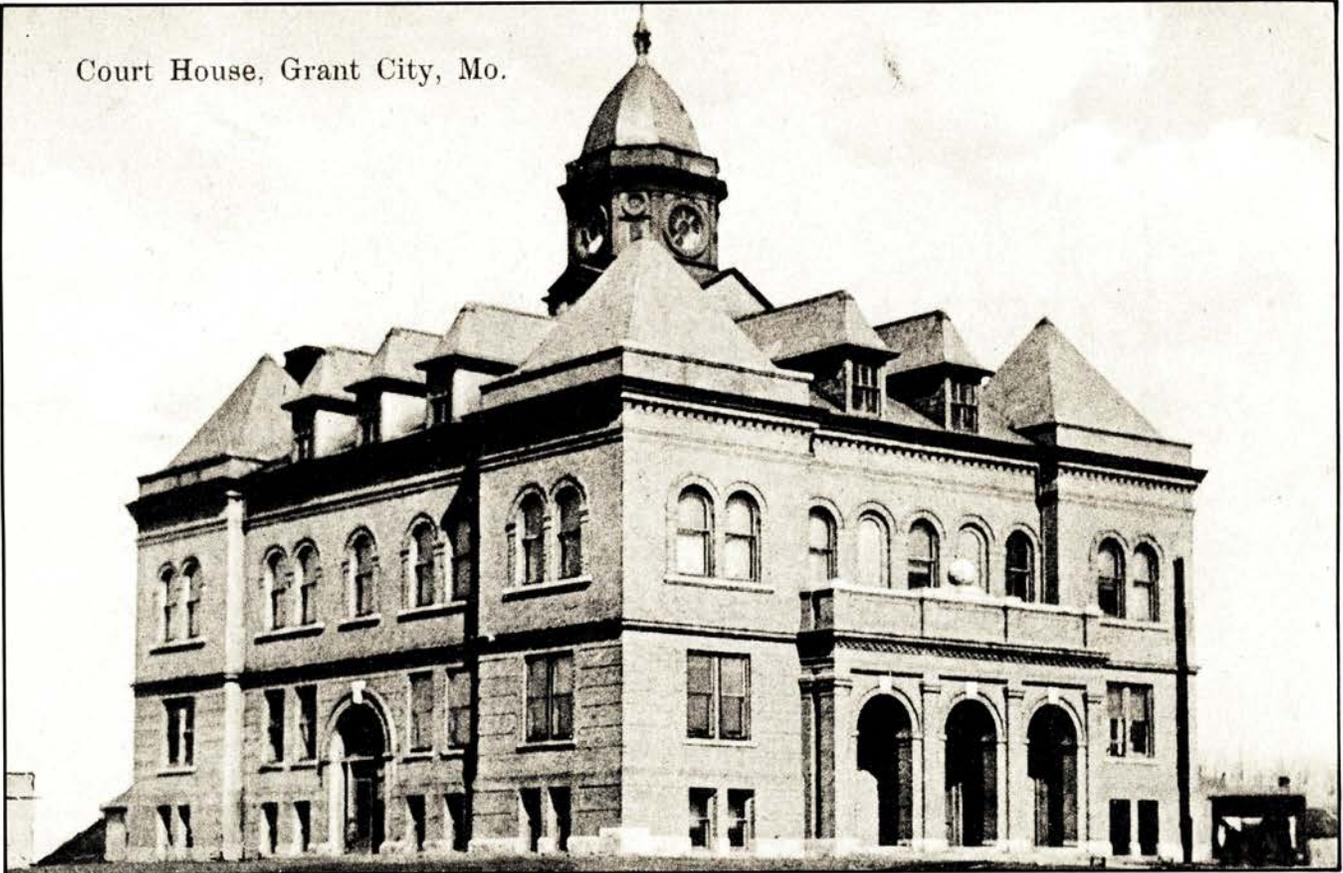


Fig. 2. Worth County Courthouse, 1898-. Architects: Orff and Guilbert (From postcard, Trenton Boyd Collection)

building a new courthouse, which would enhance the county seat, reflecting the "genius, enterprise and generosity of her people." It was not until 1897 that Worth County citizens authorized \$25,000 to be issued in bonds for building a courthouse. Nine architects submitted designs. The court chose the plans of architects Fremont C. Orff and Ernest F. Guilbert, of Minneapolis, in October 1897. Their design called for a two-story building of hard brick with stone trim, measuring 71 by 80 feet. The center tower was to rise over 100 feet. Four entries were planned, one from each side of the square. The court awarded the building contract to Stansberry Press Brick Co. for \$19,360. Heating and plumbing contracts amounted to \$1,929 (Fig. 2).

During February 1899 county officials moved to the new courthouse, and in April, the Grant City Bar sponsored a social event to raise money for furnishing the courtroom.

More than 80 years later, although still used, the courthouse is deteriorating, and there are no funds for maintenance. In November 1979 the county was in

desperate financial condition, and after county voters repeatedly rejected proposed tax increases, Worth County officials closed the courthouse. They moved back in May 1980 with limited services of water and lights only. Worth County, with a rural population, is the smallest of Missouri's counties, and will continue to face difficulties supporting a county government.

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WRIGHT COUNTY



Fig. 1. Wright County Courthouse, 1849-1896, reconstructed after Civil War, damaged by tornado in 1888. (Courtesy: Darrell J. Hunter, Wright County Bank)

County Wright
Organized Jan. 29, 1841
Named After ... Silas Wright, a
 U.S. senator
County Seat ... Hartville



County Court records for Wright County were destroyed in an 1896 fire, and there are few newspaper records. The earliest history is Goodspeed's, 1889, which mentioned construction of a small building used as a clerk's office. Work Projects Administration records call it a small courthouse. A photograph in the Pulaski County Historical Society is identified as

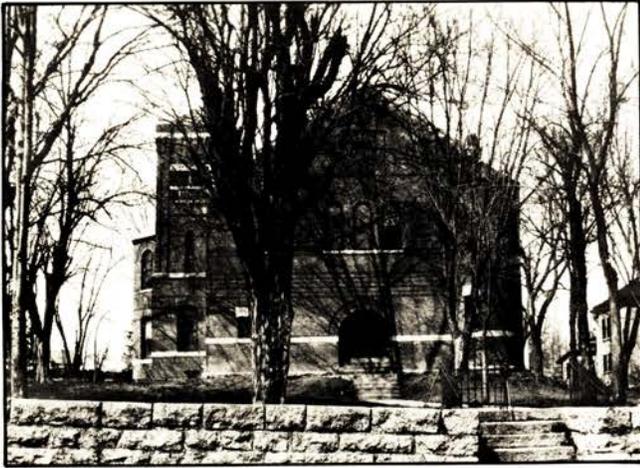


Fig. 2. Wright County Courthouse, 1898-1964, front view.
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)



Fig. 3. Wright County Courthouse, 1898-1964, rear view.
(Courtesy: Darrell J. Hunter, Wright County Bank)

Wright County's courthouse of 1841-1845, but this may be a home in which early courts met.

On March 10, 1849, John H. Hight presented the plan for a brick courthouse, which William C. Young contracted to build. The court received the building in December, although it was not completed. The yard was fenced and brick sidewalks laid in 1850. The clerk's office on the square was sold in February 1851.

Courthouse history during the Civil War period is unclear. Apparently, the 1849 courthouse was burned and partially destroyed in 1862. A subsequent frame

building used for a courthouse, which the court may have had built, was also burned, reportedly January 11, 1863. The partially destroyed courthouse was rebuilt at a cost of \$6,700 after the war (Fig. 1). A tornado damaged the building in 1888.

W. S. Candler and George W. Freeman acted as superintendents of the last courthouse built in the 19th century. Rader and Huffman were contractors for the two-story, brick building erected in 1898 (Figs. 2, 3). Built of soft brick, the courthouse plagued the county with constant need of repair until it was demolished in January 1964 as the new courthouse was being constructed.

In November 1962 architect Roger Frangkiser, Kansas City, met with Wright County officials to give them information about the federal government Community Facilities Administration funds for new public buildings under the Accelerated Public Works program. Wright County's need made it a potential recipient for a grant.

The court accepted Frangkiser's offer to draw new courthouse plans contingent upon approval of the grant application and the county's willingness to vote bonds. The Community Facilities Administration allowed \$10,000 engineering-architectural planning costs before approving a grant of \$187,000 for the new courthouse in July 1963. Bonds were approved for \$187,000 on August 23, 1963.

Bids were received in November 1963, and the court awarded the contract to E. R. Smith for \$279,950. In January 1965 county offices moved into their new courthouse (Fig. 4).

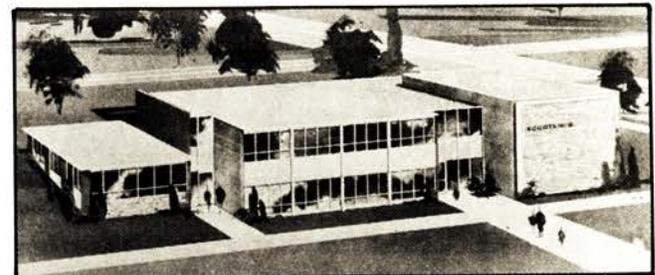


Fig. 4. Wright County Courthouse, 1964-, architect's rendering.
(From: *Ozarks Mountaineer*, December 1964)

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