

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

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1. Name of Property

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historic name: Clay County Savings Association Building

other name/site number: Jesse James Bank Museum Building

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2. Location

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street & number: 104 East Franklin Street

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Liberty

vicinity: N/A

state: MO

county: Clay

code: 047

zip code: 64068

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3. Classification

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Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: _____

Name of related multiple property listing: "Historic Resources of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri"

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Federal

Other Description: _____

Materials: foundation Stone roof Rubber
walls Brick other Wood
Stone

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Local.

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : N/A

Areas of Significance: Commerce
Architecture
Other: Folklore

Period(s) of Significance: 1859 - 1942

Significant Dates : 1859 1866

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.
X See continuation sheet.

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SUMMARY:

The Clay County Savings Association Building is located at 104 East Franklin in Liberty, Clay County, Missouri. The two-story, gable roof, rectangular brick bank was completed in 1859 utilizing Federal architectural design elements on a commercial building. Simple classical detailing distinguishes this building from the commercial structures which would later be constructed on Liberty's square. Prominent is the low-pitched gable roof with pedimented gable end on the south side of the building. The window and door openings on the first floor are recessed within a semi-circular relieving arch, and contain semi-circular fanlights. All windows on the original portion of the bank are double-hung, with multiple panes and louvered shutters. A cross gable, two-story section, formerly forming a "T", is believed to be original. By 1883, though, a two-story addition was added in the northeast corner of the "T". The building was enlarged further to the north between 1906 and 1913 (Sanborn Maps, 1883, 1889, 1894, 1899, 1906, & 1913). Another two-story brick addition was added to the southeast corner of the "T" in 1922. This section has a flat roof. The primary facades, those on the west and east, have remained virtually unchanged, and the new additions are clearly distinguishable from the original structure.

ELABORATION:

The Clay County Savings Association Building was built on the northeast corner of the square, at the intersection of East Franklin and North Water streets. The original portion of the bank building was constructed in 1858, and is three bays wide on East Franklin, and five bays long on North Water. It sits on a stone foundation, and is two stories tall, with a low-pitched, gable roof with boxed cornice forming a pedimented gable on the south side of the building. A wide band of painted, projecting brick forms a frieze under the roof cornice. On the north side, the cornice forms gable end returns, and there is very little eave overhang. Also on the north side at the ridge line is a brick chimney.

The brick on the south and west side of the original portion is running bond, and on the north elevation is common bond. A continuous stone lintel connects the windows on the south and west, and another wider stone belt course separates the first from the second floor on these two elevations. The fenestrations on the first floor of the south and west elevations are set within semi-circular arched, recessed openings which extend to the building's stone sill. The openings are topped with double

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arches of radiating brick voussoirs, with a stone keystone on the upper arch. Set within the recessed openings are three entry doors - one on the first and fifth bay of the west side, and another on the left bay of the south side. The two wood doors on the southwest corner are six panelled, with a semi-circular fanlight above. The door on the northwest corner is wood, with two lower panels and nine glass panes, also with a fanlight above. The fourth bay of the west side has been bricked in, but the other openings contain multiple pane wood, double-hung sash windows, with the upper sash having a semi-circular top. The first floor windows on the north elevation are identical to the others, except they are set within single arched openings, rather than double recessed openings. The second story windows on the original portion of the bank building are six-over-six, double hung wood sash, with wood louvered shutters. They have flat arch lintels with radiating brick voussoirs. All windows, on both the original building and the additions, have simple stone sills.

The gable roof addition on the northeast has brick walls of common bond, and single windows set in arched brick openings. There are entry doors on the northwest and northeast section of this addition. The southeast addition of 1922 has running bond brick walls and a flat roof. A projecting cornice line connects with the boxed cornice of the 1858 section. The windows are grouped in two's and four's, and are six-over-one, double-hung wood sash, with a continuous stone lintel under each window grouping. Due to the drop in elevation in East Franklin street from North Water to the east, basement windows are also evident on this addition. A deeply recessed first story entry is on the south elevation of the 1922 addition, adjacent to the original bank building. Concrete steps lead up to an entry door on the addition, and a window from the east side of the original building is still visible.

The lot is level with the streets, and there is drive on the north leading from North Water to parking in the rear (north) and east. A small deciduous tree on the north shades a grassy picnic area.

Inside, some parts of the building have been structurally altered for contemporary use. The entire second floor, for instance, has been divided into three apartments, requiring the addition of bathrooms, kitchens, closets and hallways. Consequently, there is little historic fabric in this area of the building. The principle access to the second floor, is through the large southern entry hall and up a graceful geometrical staircase with

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mid-floor landing. This original staircase, which boasts lathe-turned balusters, a continuous curved handrail, and a 6-sided newel post, bridges the two intersecting wings of the original bank building.

An office area now located in the southeast corner of the building on the ground floor was added in 1922. The earlier addition in the northeast corner of the building is now occupied by a museum display room and storage area. The south wall of the display room has been exposed to reveal brickwork which once formed the exterior wall on the original north wing elevation. This is the only significant interior detail to be found in either of the two additions.

The public areas of the original portion of the building have retained many of their original features. Distinctive door and window trim has been retained in the interpretive areas of the current Bank Museum. Header trim over the original interior doors has a slightly pedimented appearance, reinforcing the more formal elements of the Federal style.

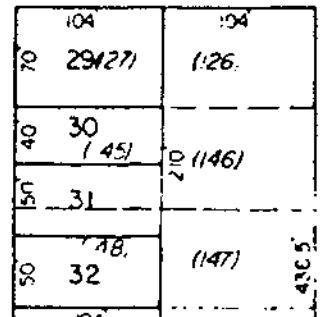
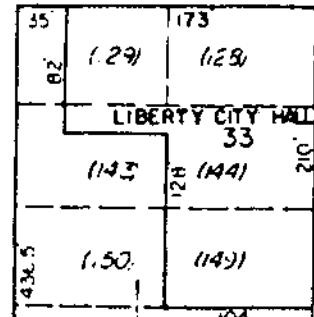
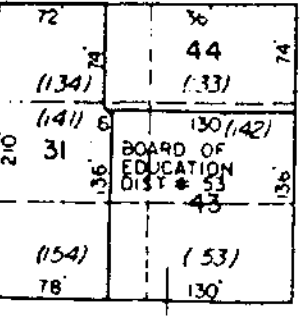
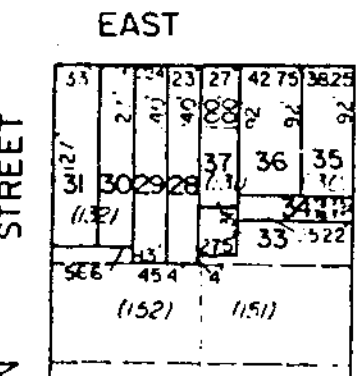
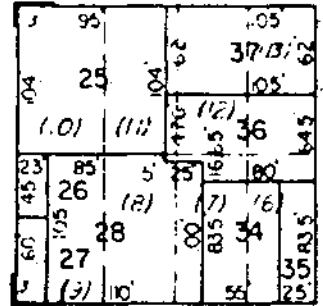
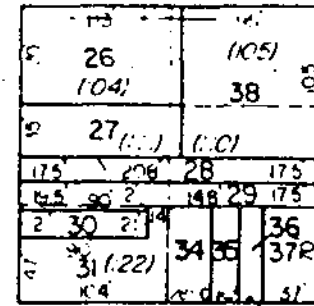
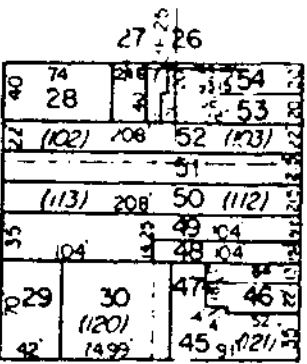
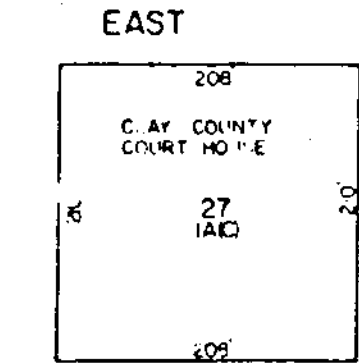
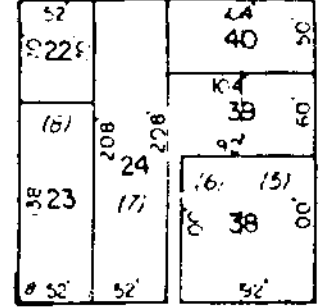
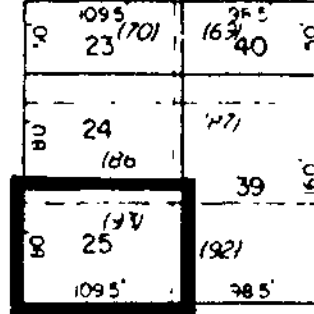
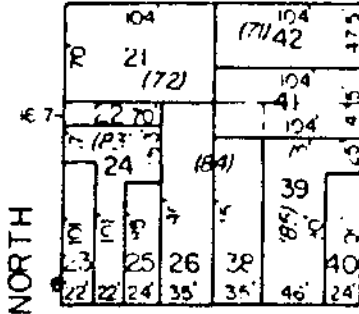
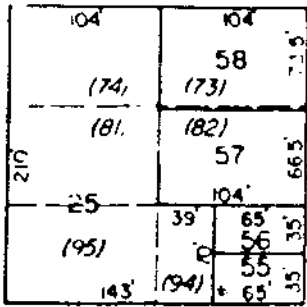
The double-door combination safe -- made by the Lily Safe Company in New York and patented in 1851 -- is also original to the building. It is made of chilled steel and, according to local tradition, was carried to the site by wagon from Liberty Landing on the Missouri River.

According to the current owner, the pressed metal ceiling in the gift shop and bank were installed ca. 1865. His restoration of the bank room in the 1960's involved refinishing the random width tongue and groove yellow pine flooring, repainting the walls a period green color, removing radiators, and installing a walnut mantel (on the east wall). The furnishings currently on display in the museum are not original to the building, but are period pieces dating to the Civil War.

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104 East Franklin
Liberty, Clay County, Missouri
Scale: Unknown



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SUMMARY: The Clay County Savings Association Building is significant under Criterion A in the areas of [OTHER:] FOLKLORE and COMMERCE, and under Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE. In the areas of COMMERCE and ARCHITECTURE, the building is an example of the Two-Part Commercial Block property type and meets the registration requirements for that property type (see "Historic Resources of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri: The Courthouse Square in Liberty, 1858-1942"). It is the only antebellum example of the property type extant in Liberty and housed the first bank established in the region. Prior to its construction in 1858, residents wishing to undertake banking business had to travel to Lexington, Missouri. Despite alterations to secondary elevations, the two primary elevations of the original building are virtually unaltered and feature details distinctive to the Federal style of commercial architecture. In the area of FOLKLORE, it is the site of what is regarded as the first daylight bank robbery during peace time in the nation, which occurred on February 13, 1866. As such, it is an integral part of the folklore which derived from the postbellum wave of banditry on the Middle Border and, specifically, of the folklore which surrounded the career of the James-Younger gang. Although many facts regarding the robbery remain unresolved, most historians regard the daylight raid on the Clay County Saving Association as the beginning of the outlaw career of Jesse James, "the central American Robin Hood figure in folklore."¹

NARRATIVE: 1858 was an important year for construction on the square in Liberty; both a new court house and a new bank building on the northeast corner of the square were begun. Prior to this date, residents of Kansas City, Independence, and Weston, as well as Liberty, had to travel to Lexington to conduct their banking affairs. Acknowledging the potential for growth in the area, the Farmers Bank of Missouri at Lexington opened a Liberty branch in 1858. At first, the Liberty branch was housed in a building on the north side of the square. In January of 1859, their new building at 104 East Franklin was completed and the Farmers Bank opened its doors with a capital of \$225,000.²

The building at 104 East Franklin is Liberty's only extant example of an antebellum commercial building. Although historic photographs reveal that Liberty's square once contained several similar buildings, the Clay County

¹Michael Fellman, Inside War: The Guerrilla Conflict in Missouri During the American Civil War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 262.

²Jack Wymore, "The Jesse James Bank Museum: Basic Tour" (N.p.: n.d.), n.p.

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Savings Association Building at the northeast corner is the only surviving representative of Liberty's commerce prior to the Civil War (see MPS). Unlike the commercial buildings constructed in the late nineteenth century, antebellum commercial buildings usually resembled residential architecture of the period, with low-pitched gable roofs and fenestration detailing similar to antebellum houses. Later commercial buildings would have flat roofs, and a clearly distinguished storefront with large display windows.

The architectural features found on the Clay County Savings Association, which are typical of the Federal style, are the low-pitched gable roof with unadorned cornice line, the continuous lintel separating the first and second floors. Simplicity is emphasized throughout the design of the building, including the plain stone window sills and smooth wall surface. The regularly spaced, double-hung, multi-pane windows are also typical of the period, as are the elliptical fanlights. The recessed entry doors are more elaborate, and are found on both the south and west elevations.

Liberty was one of the central foci of the slavery controversy from the beginnings of the border war over Kansas. In December 1855, proslavery forces seized the federal arsenal in the town and removed the arms and ammunition; all but four hundred dollars worth were eventually recovered. On April 20, 1861, the arsenal was again seized and the arms and ammunition removed, this time permanently. With the outbreak of the war between the North and the South, the Farmers Bank sided with the South, buying Confederate bonds and dealing in Confederate currencies. In addition, it also loaned money to Confederate families for the war efforts. The course of the Confederacy in Missouri had always been uncertain, but any remaining hopes of its success were ended with the disastrous conclusion of Sterling Price's raid in the fall of 1864 at Westport. That same year, the Farmers Bank went out of business, and a new bank, the Clay County Savings Association, was organized and rented the banking room of the former Farmers Bank.

This banking venture proved to be short-lived, however. On February 13, 1866, only eight months after the end of the war, the building was the site of the first daylight bank robbery during peace time in the nation.³ A band of ten to twelve robbers made off with about \$60,000 in gold and bonds, an incredible

³About a year before the Liberty robbery, Confederate soldiers dressed in civilian clothes robbed the banks in St. Albans, Vermont. William A. Settle Jr., Jesse James Was His Name (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1966), p. 34.

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sum of money at that time.⁴ The bandits shot and killed an innocent bystander --George Wymore, a student at William Jewell--during their getaway.⁵

The Liberty robbery was the first in a series of similar robberies, executed with the precision and often the ruthlessness of a war-time raid, which began in Missouri and eventually spread to neighboring states. In October of that year, in Missouri, the Alexander Mitchell Bank in Lexington was robbed, followed by the robbery of a Richmond bank in May 1867; in March 1868, a bank in Russellville, Kentucky, was robbed. All the robberies followed the general pattern set at Liberty. As the number of robberies increased, as well as the attendant publicity, Missouri became known nationally as "The Outlaw State," or "The Bandit State," and most of the robberies were attributed to former Civil War irregulars, idolized as guerrillas by those with Southern sympathies and reviled as bushwhackers by persons whose allegiance lay with the Union.⁶ Then, on December 7, 1869, a bank in Gallatin, Missouri, was robbed and the suspects included Clay County natives Alexander Franklin and Jesse Woodson James. Although the brothers professed their innocence, they refused to be arrested and thus placed themselves outside the law.

Frank and Jesse James were natives of Clay County and were raised on a farm near Kearney, Missouri, twelve miles north of Liberty. Their father, Robert James, was a Baptist minister, one of the founders of William Jewell College, and served on the college's first board of trustees. In 1850, the elder James left his family--Frank was seven and Jesse was nearly three--to travel to the gold fields of California, where he died shortly after his arrival. The mother of the boys--Zerelda Cole James--was thus left with the sole responsibility for raising them. In common with most of the settlers of Clay County, Mrs. James was strongly pro-Southern in her sympathies, and she apparently bequeathed those sympathies to her sons.⁷

⁴Liberty Tribune, 16 February 1866.

⁵Liberty Tribune, 2 March 1866.

⁶Richard S. Brownlee, Gray Ghosts of the Confederacy: Guerrilla Warfare in the West, 1861-1865 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1958), p. 244.

⁷Settle, pp. 6-28; and Albert Castel, William Clarke Quantrill: His Life and Times (New York: Frederick Fell, 1962), pp. 222-223.

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With the outbreak of civil war on a national scale, the western counties of Missouri, which had been engaged in border warfare with anti-slavery partisans in Kansas since the mid-1850s, were further devastated. Bitter reprisals by pro-Union factions against those with secessionist leanings forced many young men in western Missouri into partisan bands. In May 1861, Frank James joined a home guard company in Clay County but left its service after the battle of Wilson's Creek in August of that year.⁸ Sometime during the following year, Frank joined William Clarke Quantrill's guerrillas, one of the most notorious and ruthless of the irregular Confederate military groups on the western border. By 1864, seventeen year old Jesse had joined the same band, then led by Bloody Bill Anderson, who had deposed Quantrill.⁹ Following the war, the James brothers returned to the family's farm near Kearney, and, at first, outwardly settled into a quiet life of farming.

While the James brothers were apparently discussed as suspects in many of the earlier robberies, the Gallatin raid was the first in which their names were publicly linked to the wave of outlawry. By 1870 Frank and Jesse James were regarded as the head of a gang of bandits which became the most notorious in the West and included among its members Cole, Bob, and Jim Younger, sons of a prosperous Jackson and Cass county farmer.¹⁰ After the spectacular and disastrous raid on Northfield, Minnesota, on September 7, 1876, an enthusiastic press and public attributed all previously unsolved bank, stage, and train robberies to the gang.¹¹ According to Frank Triplett, "by the time of Jesse's murder [on April 3, 1882], . . . the James boys were already well on their way to becoming legendary characters . . ."¹²

⁸Brownlee, p. 30.

⁹Ibid., p. 62.

¹⁰Both Thomas Coleman (Cole) and James Younger served as Confederate guerrillas during the war; Cole rode with Quantrill's band at the same time as Frank James. Settle, p. 23.

¹¹Castel, p. 223; and Settle, p. 96. In July 1876, a group of robbers believed to be members of the James-Younger gang robbed a Missouri Pacific train near Otterville, Missouri.

¹²Frank Triplett, The Life, Times and Treacherous Death of Jesse James (St. Louis: J.H. Chambers and Company, 1882; reprint ed., introduction and notes by Joesph Snell, Chicago: Sage Press, Swallow Books, 1970), pp. ix-xi.

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Much of what later became the James legend was established while the gang was still active and before Jesse's assassination by Bob Ford at St. Joseph, Missouri. Many of the essential and most enduring details of that legend were contributed by Major John Newman Edwards, a newspaper editor before and after the Civil War and adjutant to Confederate General Jo Shelby during the war.¹³ Edwards glorified the unorthodox Shelby and his command in two books, Shelby and His Men (1867) and Shelby's Expedition to Mexico (1872). On November 22, 1873, in an article published as a special supplement of the St. Louis Dispatch, Edwards turned his talents to the current activities of the James-Younger gang. In the article, "A Terrible Quintette," Edwards set forth many of the details of what became the James legend, including their exploits as Civil War partisans, their persecution by authorities in post-war Missouri, their championship of the Lost Cause against the social and economic oppressors of Confederate veterans and their sympathizers, and their conversion to outlawry despite their true desire for peace.¹⁴ Although Edwards intemperately embellished the details of the James brothers' careers and allowed his own pro-Southern bias to infuse all of his works, most historians continue to accept at least his general assertions that "the James band's career of lawlessness and the growth of the legend around it are deeply rooted in and inextricably bound to the events of the Civil War and its aftermath."¹⁵

The history of the James brothers, as presented by Edwards, in most respects fulfilled the archetype of the American social bandit and accounted in large measure for the persistence of that legend. According to Richard White and others, the social bandit was forced to become an outlaw because of an act which was defined as criminal by hostile authorities, but which was traditionally sanctioned by local convention. Despite his outlaw status, however, the social bandit remained an honorable and admirable man to the members of the community, on whom he never practiced his profession. Although he violated the law, the bandit acted in the interests of a higher justice,

¹³In 1882, after Jesse's death, Edwards escorted Frank James to the office of Missouri governor Thomas J. Crittenden, where James surrendered.

¹⁴Margaret Baldwin and Pat O'Brien, Wanted: Frank and Jesse James, The Real Story (New York: Julian Messner, 1981), p. 56; Settle, p. 51; and Albert Castel, "Foreword to the Morningside Edition," Noted Guerrillas, or the Warfare of the Border by John N. Edwards (St. Louis: Bryan, Brand & Company, 1877; reprint ed., Dayton, Ohio: Morningside Bookshop, 1976), n.p.

¹⁵Settle, p. 3.

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robbing from the rich and giving to the poor and killing only in self-defense or for justifiable revenge. Invulnerable to his enemies, he could only be betrayed or killed by his friends.¹⁶

In subsequent articles on the continuing exploits of the gang, Edwards further refined these and other myths, assisted by correspondence purportedly written by Jesse James and published in Missouri newspapers. For example, on September 26, 1872, the Kansas City fairgrounds was robbed in a daring daylight raid. Although the bandits were not identified, Edwards and others were quick to attribute it the James-Younger band, and, in his account of the crime, Edwards placed the likely perpetrators firmly in the ranks of the mythological figures of ancient romances. In the September 29 issue of the Kansas City Times, in an article entitled "The Chivalry of Crime," Edwards exclaimed that the bandits were "'men who might have sat with Arthur at the Round Table, ridden at tourney with Sir Lancelot, . . . shivered a lance with Ivanhoe . . . or met [Dick] Turpin and [Claude] Duval and robbed them of their ill-gotten booty on Hounslow Heath . . ."¹⁷ The following month the paper printed a letter purportedly signed by Jesse James which indicated the gang had eagerly embraced the mythology supplied by Edwards. In addition to Jesse's signature, the letter was also signed Jack Shepard, Dick Turpin, and Claude Duval and proclaimed, in a self-serving justification, "'We rob the rich and give to the poor."¹⁸

In 1875, the first book on the still active James and Younger gangs--The Guerrillas of the West by Augustus C. Appler, an Osceola, Missouri, newspaper editor--was published. Two years later, Edward's Noted Guerrillas, or the Warfare of the Border was issued. According to Castel, the book, published just after the Northfield, Minnesota, raid, "probably did more than any other book to establish and perpetuate the fame of the James Boys."¹⁹ Like Edwards's earlier works on Shelby, the book was "a mixture of fact and fancy.

¹⁶Richard White, "Outlaw Gangs of the Middle Border: American Social Bandits," Western Historical Quarterly 12 (October 1981): 387; and Fellman, Inside War, p. 263.

¹⁷Michael Fellman, "Introduction," in Robertus Love, The Rise and Fall of Jesse James (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1926; reprint ed., Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), pp. vii-viii.

¹⁸Ibid., p. viii.

¹⁹Castel, in Edwards, n.p.

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. . . his object in this book, as in the earlier ones, was less to produce a history than it was to create a legend."²⁰

The elements of this legend, which Edwards had propounded in his newspaper writings, were repeated and amplified in his book, a paean to the imagined cavaliers of the Lost Cause. Edwards attributed the lawless actions of the former guerrillas to the deadening effect of their merciless conduct during the Civil War and to their subsequent persecution after the war:

Some were killers because of the terrible renown won in the four years' war; some were forced to hide themselves in the unknown of the outlying territories; and some were mercilessly persecuted and driven into desperate defiance and resistance because they were human and intrepid. To this latter class the Jameses and Youngers belonged.²¹

The James and Younger brothers were, in Edwards's view, forced into their life of banditry by unforgiving Unionist authorities who sought to punish them for actions justified by the nature of the military conflict. According to Edwards,

No men ever strove harder to put the past behind them. No men ever submitted more sincerely to the result of a war that had as many excesses on one side as on the other. No men ever went to work with a heartier good will to keep good faith with society and make themselves amenable to the law. No men ever sacrificed more for peace, and for the bare privilege of doing just as hundreds like them had done--and the privilege of going back into the obscurity of civil life and becoming again a part of the enterprising economy of the commonwealth. They were not permitted so to do, try how they would, and as hard, and as patiently.²²

As acknowledged by Settle, most aspects of the James legend were based on fact, although he also conceded that "fact and fiction are so entwined that it is difficult--at times, impossible--to untangle them."²³ Newspapers, illustrated story papers, nickel thrillers and dime novels, ballads, and all the media of popular culture eagerly exploited the legend of the James-Younger band and further obscured the line--which was never distinct--between

²⁰Castel, in Edwards, n.p.; and Settle, p. 180.

²¹Edwards, p. 448.

²²Ibid.

²³Settle, p. 2.

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fiction and reality. The ultimate result of the mythology first propounded by Edwards was the elevation of Jesse James to the status of "the most legendary of American outlaws, our very own Robin Hood."²⁴ According to Carl Sandburg, "Jesse James is the only American bandit who is classical, who is to this country what Robin Hood or Dick Turpin is to England, whose exploits are so close to the mythical and apocryphal".²⁵

The question of whether either of the James brothers actually participated in the February 13, 1866, robbery of the Clay County Savings Association has never been satisfactorily resolved. It has also never been clearly established whether either brother was involved in any of the series of robberies which were committed from 1866 to 1868 in Missouri and Kentucky. Further, as Castel noted, "it has never been proved in a strictly legal sense that the James boys, the most famous outlaws in American history, ever committed so much as a single robbery!"²⁶ Only after the James brothers were publicly named with the robbery at Gallatin and with their growing notoriety were Frank and Jesse James openly accused of participation in, or the conception of, the seminal robbery in Liberty, as well.

The exact identity of the all of the bandits who robbed the Clay County Savings Association was also never resolved. A contemporary newspaper, however, was clear in its attribution of blame:

The murderers and robbers are believed by many citizens, and the officers of the Bank, to be a gang of old bushwhacking desperadoes who stay mostly in Jackson county. But it makes no difference who they are, or what they claim to be, they should be swung up in the most summary manner.²⁷

²⁴Fellman, in Love, xi. See Michael Fellman's introduction to Love, where in endnote 5 he cites several articles on the folkloric treatments of James. In addition, Settle's bibliography contains 19 pages of references to the James gang and the period, a clear indication of the voluminous amount of material devoted to this legend.

²⁵Carl Sandburg, The American Songbag (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1927), p. 420, quoted in Settle, p. 1.

²⁶Castel, Quantrill, p. 231.

²⁷Liberty Tribune, 16 February 1866.

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Clay County Savings Association Building

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In the same issue, the culprits were identified as a "band of bushwhackers, who reside chiefly in Clay Co., and have their rendezvous on or near the Missouri River above Sibley in Jackson Co."²⁸

Although the number of participants and the identity of those involved varied from account to account, all sources agreed that, of the eight or nine men allegedly recognized, the majority were former Confederate guerrillas who rode with Quantrill, Anderson, or George Todd.²⁹ Frank and Jesse James were not among those publicly named, although locally there was speculation that the two brothers were either participants or had planned the robbery, which had many of the earmarks of a wartime raid. Adding fuel to the speculation that the James brothers were somehow involved, a number of those who were identified had served in guerrilla bands with the brothers, and two of those were relatives of Frank and Jesse.³⁰

Apologists for the James brothers placed Frank in Kentucky and Jesse gravely ill at the family farm near Kearney at the time of the robbery. However, one eyewitness, David Duncan, who operated a store near the James farm, encountered the bandits after the robbery and claimed to have recognized Frank and Jesse; he later recanted his identification. The family of George Wymore, also claimed to have received a letter about three weeks after the robbery which read:

We regret the death of your son and hope you will believe it was an accident as we had no cause to kill him and never really meant to do so. You have our deepest sympathy. [signed] Jesse and Frank James³¹

Despite the uncertainties and ambiguities, most historians of the postbellum banditry on the Middle Border have asserted that the careers of the James gang

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹See, for example, Settle, p. 36; and Brownlee, p. 36.

³⁰Settle, pp. 35-36.

³¹Carl W. Briehan, The Complete and Authentic Life of Jesse James. With an introduction by Homer Croy (New York: Frederick Fell, 1953), p. 211; and Briehan, The Younger Brothers, 2d ed. (San Antonio: Naylor Company, 1961), p. 67. The letter purportedly remained in the possession of the Wymore family until about 1935, when it was either lost or destroyed. Although the letter is widely quoted, others regard it as a legend. See, for example, Baldwin and O'Brien, p. 54.

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began on February 13, 1866, at Liberty with the robbery of the Clay County Savings Association.³² According to St. Louis newspaperman Robertus Love, Liberty was "the town selected for the first manifestation of peace-time violence."³³ and "was to become that very day and to continue for more than sixteen years the seat and center of this weary old world's most amazing man-hunt."³⁴

As the site of what is regarded as the first daylight peace-time bank robbery, the Clay County Savings Association Building achieved its own mythic stature. Love's 1926 study of Jesse James glorified the building's significance in the area of American folklore:

At the northwest corner of the Liberty square on that long-gone day stood, as it stands now, the substantial brick building in which the Clay County Savings Association did its banking business. The bank was as solid as the building, though shortly after that day it liquidated its business and ceased to be. The shock the bank received that morning more than sixty years ago wrecked it as a financial institution. It was the shock of an onset of a round dozen of he-devil youths lately released from the restraints, so to say it, of war. They were graduates of guerrillaism, bearing diplomas that made them bachelor of freebootery. Some of the dozen were, in time, to acquire the master degree.

Fortunately we have . . . the bank building itself as a standing relic of the first bank raid, robbery and murder committed by these graduates. . .³⁵

The same day of the robbery, the Clay County Savings Association called all their loans and closed their doors; their depositors eventually received about

³²See, for example, James R. Ross, I, Jesse James (Los Angeles: Dragon Publishing Corporation, 1989), pp. 56-64; Harry Sinclair Drago, Road Agents and Train Robbers: Half a Century of Western Banditry (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1973), pp. 153-154; and William Henry Allen [Will Henry], Death of a Legend (New York: Random House, 1954; reprint ed., The Raiders, New York: Bantam Books, 1956), chapter 5. Ross is the great-grandson of Jesse James and a Superior Court Judge in Orange County, California.

³³Love, p. 59.

³⁴Love, p. 60.

³⁵Love, p. 62.

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sixty cents for each dollar. Over the next thirty-one months, \$40,000 worth of the bonds stolen in the robbery were redeemed by the U.S. Treasury in the next thirty-one months in ten cities, including New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Lexington, Kentucky; and Washington, D.C. Despite the failure of the Clay County Savings Association, the building retained its prominent location on the square and continued to serve other commercial enterprises after 1866 and reflected the commercial currents of the town. For example, in 1888 and again in 1907, the building was again used as a bank, and various retail shops or offices were housed there at other times; in the 1910s and 1920s, it housed a millinery shop.³⁶

³⁶Love, p. 65.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: Clay County Archives (Liberty, MO)

=====

10. Geographical Data

=====

Acreage of Property: Less than one acre

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>15</u>	<u>377550</u>	<u>4344950</u>	B	___	___	___
C	___	___	___	D	___	___	___

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: See continuation sheet.

Boundary Justification: See continuation sheet.

=====

11. Form Prepared By

=====

Name/Title: Deon K. Wolfenbarger

Organization: Three Gables Preservation Date: _____

Street & Number: 9550 NE Cookingham Drive Telephone: 816/792-1275

City or Town: Kansas City State: MO ZIP: 64157

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Clay County Savings Association Building

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Clay County Savings Association Building

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Triplett, Frank. The Life, Times and Treacherous Death of Jesse James. St. Louis: J.H. Chambers and Company, 1882; reprint ed., introduction and notes by Joseph Snell. Chicago: Sage Press, Swallow Books, 1970.

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Clay County Savings Association Building

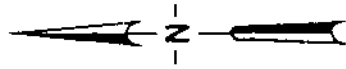
Page 1

Verbal Boundary Description:

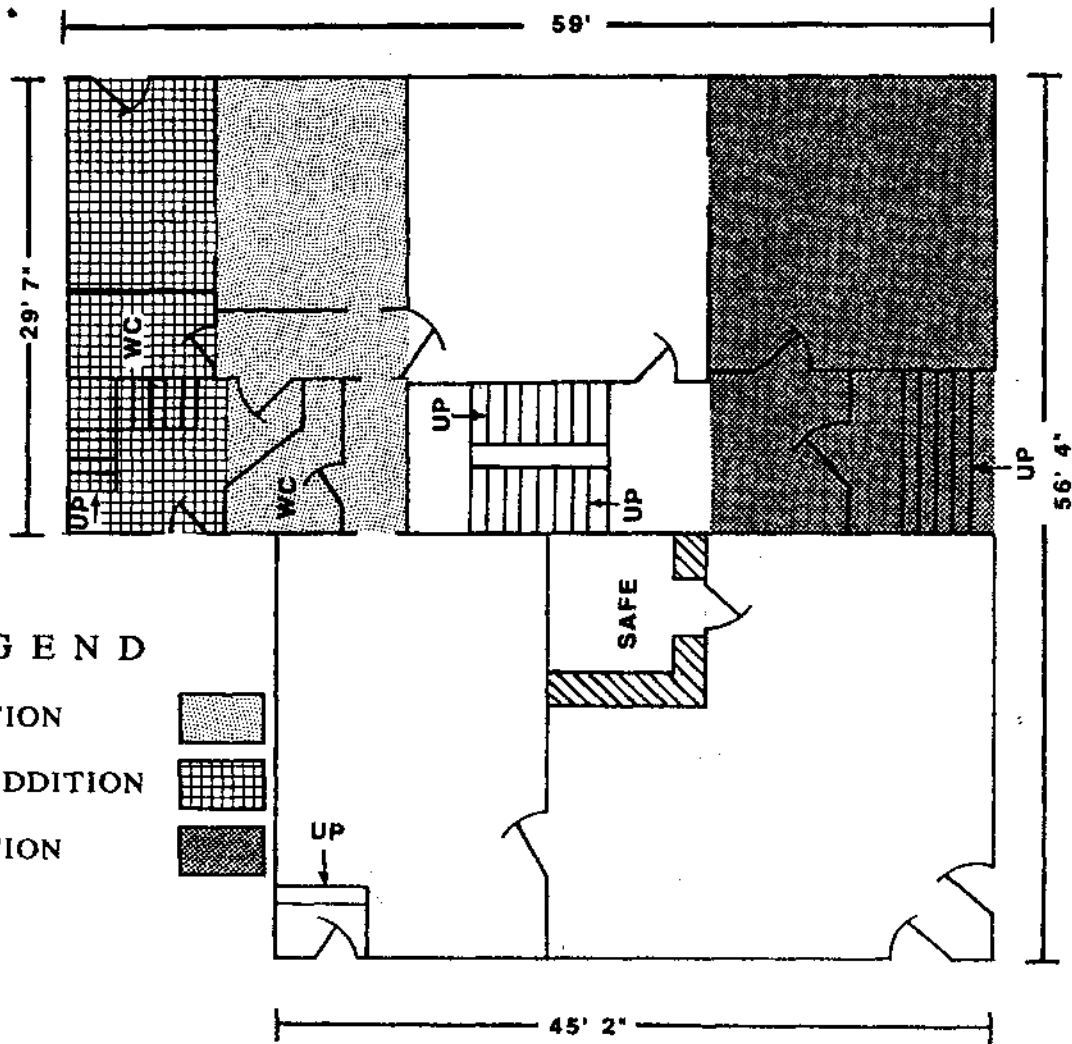
All of Lot 93, and the south 10 feet of Lot 86, the south 10 feet of the west 5.5 feet of Lot 87, and the west 5.5 feet of Lot 92, of the Original Town of Liberty, Clay County, more particularly described as follows: Beginning at the intersection of East Franklin and North Water streets, proceed north 90 feet along the right-of-way of North Water Street; then proceed east 115 feet; then proceed south 90 feet; then proceed west 115 feet along the right-of-way of East Franklin Street to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary includes the city lot and the portions of three other city lots which have been historically associated with the nominated property.



CLAY COUNTY SAVINGS ASSOC. BUILDING



LEGEND

1883 ADDITION



1906-1913 ADDITION



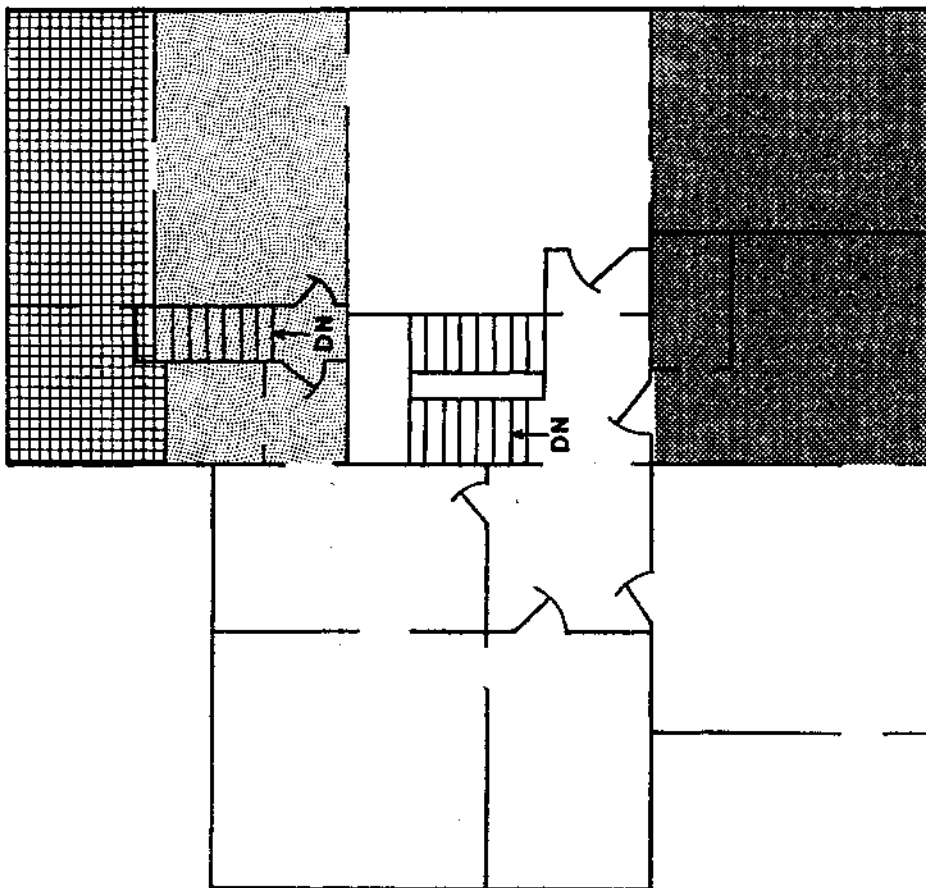
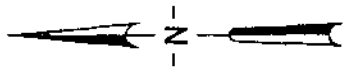
1922 ADDITION



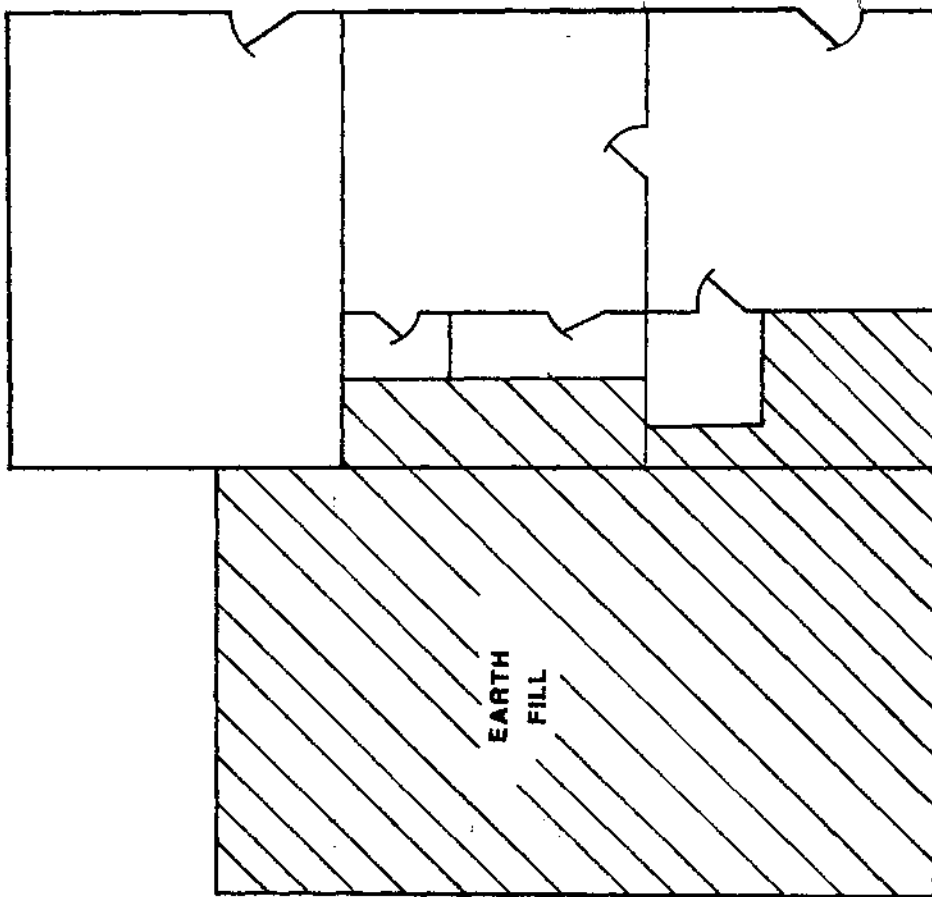
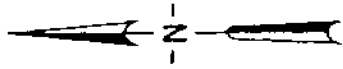
1st Floor

Liberty, Clay County, Missouri

Scale: $\frac{3}{32}'' = 1'$
(approx)



2nd Floor



Basement

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Section number Photographs Clay County Savings Association Building Page 1
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The following information is the same for all photographs listed below:

LOCATION OF SITE: Clay County Savings Association Building at 104 East Franklin
Street, Liberty, MO

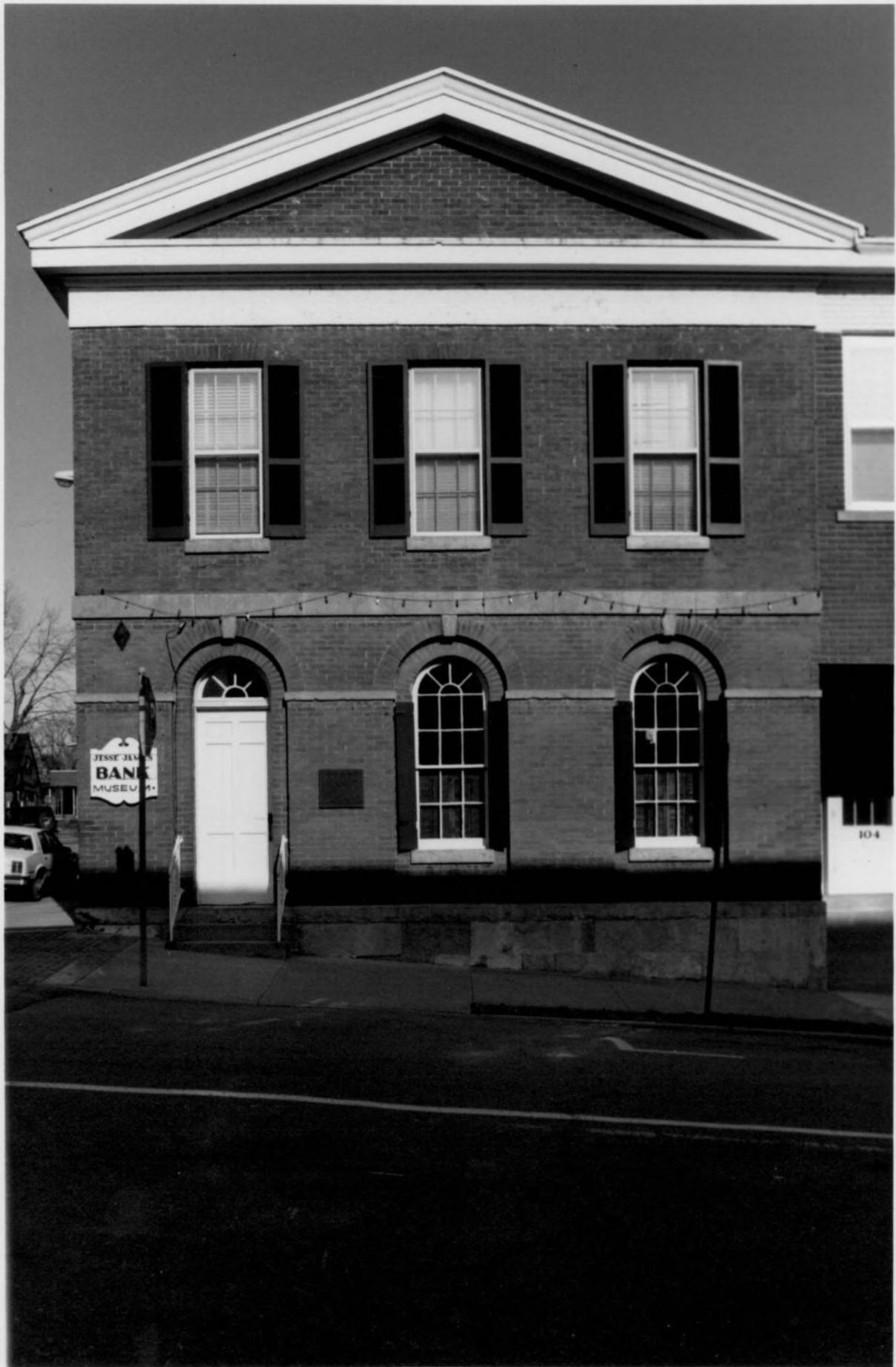
NAME OF PHOTOGRAPHER: Bob Askren

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: 19 December 1991

LOCATION OF NEGATIVE: State Historic Preservation Office, Jefferson City, MO

List of Photographs

1. South elevation of original 1858 building.
2. Northwest elevation of building, showing later addition on the left of photo.
3. West elevation, showing entry (on left side of the building) to the Bank Museum.
4. Southwest elevation, showing 1922 addition on right side of the building.
5. Southeast elevation, showing location of the 1858 wing, sandwiched between two later corner additions.
6. View towards staircase, taken from just inside the south entry door and looking north.
7. Looking northeast towards bank safe, from southwest corner of Bank Museum. Site of the 1866 bank robbery.
8. Detail of pressed metal ceiling in Bank Museum room at southwest corner of the building.



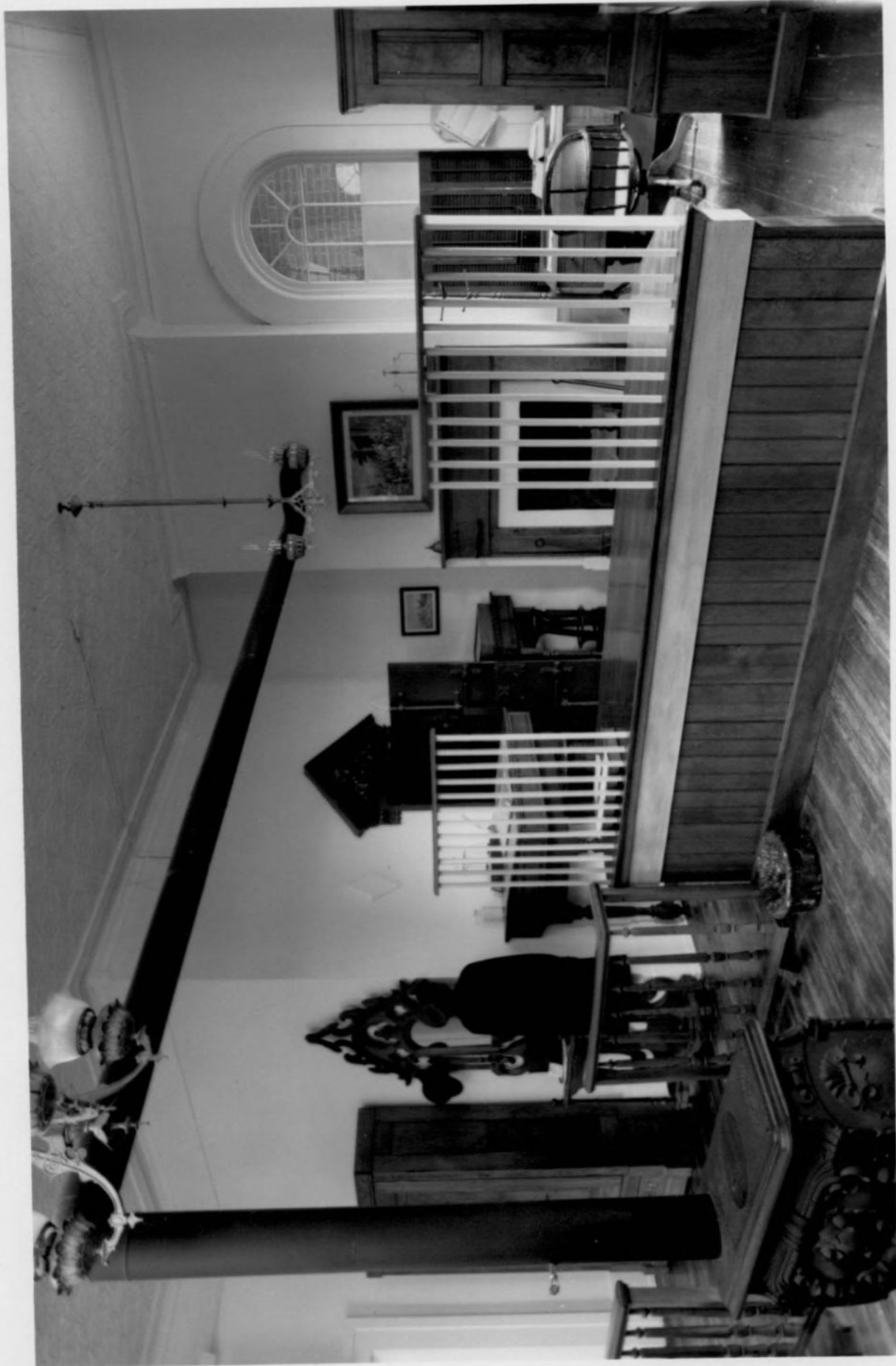














United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Multiple Property Documentation Form

=====

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

=====

Historic Resources of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri

_____ See continuation sheet

=====

B. Associated Historic Contexts

=====

The Courthouse Square in Liberty, 1858 - 1940

_____ See continuation sheet

=====

C. Geographical Data

=====

The 1940 city of limits of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri

_____ See continuation sheet

=====

D. Certification

=====

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.



Signature of Certifying official

Claire F. Blackwell, Deputy SHPO

Department of Natural Resources

9 November 1992

Date

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper of the National Register

Date

=====
E. Statement of Historic Contexts

Discuss each historic context listed in Section B.

=====
 X See continuation sheet
=====

=====
F. Associated Property Types

=====
The narrative of this section must be titled and clearly arranged using the following headings, in order, on continuation pages:
=====

I. Name of Property Type

II. Description

III. Significance

IV. Registration Requirements

=====
 X See continuation sheet(s)
=====

=====
G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.

=====
 X See continuation sheet
=====

=====
H. Major Bibliographical References

=====
 X See continuation sheet
=====

Primary location of additional documentation:

 State historic preservation office

X Local government

 Other State agency

 University

 Federal agency

X Other

Specify Repository: Liberty City Hall; Clay County Archives

=====
I. Form Prepared By

name/title: Deon K. Wolfenbarger

organization: Three Gables Preservation

street & number: 9550 NE Cookingham Drive

city or town: Kansas City

state: Missouri

zip code: 64157

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National Park Service

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Section number E HISTORIC RESOURCES OF LIBERTY, CLAY COUNTY, MO Page 1
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Preface

The multiple property listing "Historic Resources of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri" has focused on the center of trade for Liberty - the Clay County Courthouse and the town square. One historic context and two associated property types, presented in this submission(*), reflect this focus. Other historic contexts and property types have preliminarily been identified in a summary report of survey activities in Liberty (Wolfenbarger, September 1987). As these themes are outside the scope of this grant project, they remain yet to be developed. It is hoped that future amendments to this nomination will more fully develop these additional proposed contexts and associated property types, outlined below.

Exploration and Settlement in Clay County, 1817-1860.

Log Buildings
Greek Revival Residences
Settlement Religious Buildings
Vernacular Settlement Residences

* The Courthouse Square in Liberty: Commercial and Governmental Center of Clay County, 1858-1942.

Two-Part Commercial Block
Civic Buildings

The Real Estate "Boom" and Residential Growth in Liberty, 1866-1896.

Victorian Residences
National Folk Style Residences

Suburban Residential Growth in Liberty, 1896-1941.

Revival Style Houses

The Education of Citizens: Liberty and Beyond.

Transportation in Clay County.

The "Interurban" Electric Resources

Background

The first Europeans to explore the Missouri River Valley were the French. In the area which was to be known as Clay County, there is historic mention of a settlement of French trappers on the Randolph Bluffs in 1800 (History of Clay and Platte Counties, Missouri, 1885). As the French generally did not establish permanent

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number E HISTORIC RESOURCES OF LIBERTY, CLAY COUNTY, MO Page 2
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settlements in the area, no tangible traces remain today. After the War of 1812, migration into Missouri finally began in earnest. Actual exploration of the area was brief; permanent settlement of Liberty and its environs began soon after the first arrivals. The earliest groups of white settlers arrived in Clay County around 1817, when the Federal government established the first base lines from which local surveys could be made. This enabled property ownership to be recorded for the first time. A few more settlers arrived in 1818 and 1819. A heavy increase in migration began in 1820, and by 1821, there were 1,200 people in the area (Jackson, 1976). The majority of new immigrants to Clay County were settled at this time near the Missouri River.

Americans from the Upper South had begun to migrate into Missouri by the turn of the nineteenth century, settling among the hills along the north side of the Missouri River. This continued until a veritable flood of settlers from the Upper South eventually contributed to a majority of Missouri's population. Clay County and Liberty were a part of this Southern American settlement experience. The pioneers came mostly from the state of Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Maryland, and brought with them a decidedly southern culture. In fact, the county was named in honor of the Kentucky statesman, Henry Clay, when it was portioned off from Ray County in 1822 (The History of Clay and Platte Counties, Missouri, 1885).

The location for the county seat was selected shortly after the first session of the Clay County Court in February, 1822. A fifty-acre square tract of land that is generally around the current courthouse square in Liberty was selected. The town of Liberty was platted in the summer of 1822, and like most of Missouri's county seats, it utilized a central courthouse square plan (Ohman, 1985). Again, as with the majority of central courthouse square plan county seats in Missouri, Liberty features a "Shelbyville" square, named after an area in Tennessee where this plan was prevalent (Ibid.). A Shelbyville square has two streets entering at each corner, with a total of eight entrances to the central courthouse square. This central square was a designated open space, upon which the key public building in the county seat - the county courthouse - was built. Historically, the principal business district forms the perimeter of the central square. The blocks in the original plat of Liberty were 210 feet square, and were arranged around the central square. The lots north and south of the central square were 70 feet by 140 feet; on the streets surrounding the square, 59 1/2 feet wide; and on all other streets, 50 feet wide (Ibid.). The first sale of lots was held on July 4,

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1822 (Withers, 1922). The most popular lots, as evidenced by their higher price and quick sales, were those around the square.

The location for the county seat was chosen because of its healthful location, being high and well drained, and for having an excellent water supply, typified by the springs near the center of town (Ibid.). The rolling uplands and hills surrounding the town were well-timbered, providing a ready supply of oak, walnut, ash, and hickory. Less than four miles away was Liberty Landing, which eventually became a prosperous commercial site on the river (see 1877 map of Clay County, page 14). Initially, ferry landings were extremely important to insure trade with the communities south of the Missouri River. As western Missouri continued to grow, steamboats from the east provided additional commercial opportunities for these "landings". Allen's Landing, south of Liberty, was succeeded by Liberty Landing, which in turn served as the main port for northwest Missouri for several decades (Ohman, 1985). By 1830, steamboats from St. Louis were making regular trips to Liberty Landing (The History of Clay and Platte Counties, Missouri, 1885). Liberty Landing probably reached its peak in the 1850's, when as many as five steamers would move up the river daily, with at least one docking at Liberty Landing (Jackson, 1976). It remained an important site for steamboat traffic until railroad transportation became more prevalent in the 1860's (Withers, 1922).

As important as the River was to early commerce in Clay County, the Missouri was prone to frequent and violent flooding. The devastation after the flood of 1826 prompted many entrepreneurs to move their businesses to higher ground, rather than risk annual destruction (The History of Clay and Platte Counties, Missouri, 1885). Although the site of the town of Liberty was some distance from the river, the commercial establishments of the town were still able to take advantage of the river trade. The steamboats travelling from St. Louis on the Missouri would fire a cannon when several miles away from Liberty Landing in order to allow merchants and residents of Liberty time to reach the river (Jackson, 1976). This gave the town of Liberty many of the commercial benefits associated with river traffic, without the disadvantages of being located in a floodplain.

In 1828, the Clay County Court authorized construction of a courthouse for the new county seat. However, construction of the first courthouse was not completed until 1833, on the same site as the present building (Ibid.). This building was destroyed by fire in 1857, and was replaced by a more elaborate building in 1858.

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Liberty was incorporated as a town in 1829, and was granted its first charter in 1851 (Withers, 1922). The town encompassed one square mile, with the courthouse as the physical center. During this early period, road districts were established, as well as a post office. Commercial activity naturally grew with the population of Clay County. Prior to 1821, there were no stores or trading posts in the county from which to purchase supplies (Jackson, 1976). In 1822, however, the first county clerk, William L. Smith, began selling a few goods out of his home in Liberty. That same year, the county collector licensed only six stores over the entire county (Withers, 1922). Two other stores started in Liberty in 1822, one run by Essex & Hough, and the other by Robert Hood. A tanyard opened in 1825, a distillery in 1826, and a harness shop in 1827. Earlier, in 1821, a grain mill had already been built near Liberty (Norris, 1918).

When Fort Leavenworth was established in Kansas in 1827, commercial activities began to expand more rapidly in town, with construction materials, labor, and supplies being supplied by Liberty and the surrounding area. Not only were goods shipped northwest to the Fort from Liberty (generally by steamboat), the nearby military post brought increased commercial traffic to the town itself. The federal trade generated by Fort Leavenworth, coupled with the river trade mentioned earlier, led to the establishment of the first dram-shop in 1828, adding to two taverns established earlier (one by Leonard Searcy in 1826, and another by Laban Garrett in 1827). Another tavern was added by John Chauncey in 1832 (Ibid.). The increased trade and traffic in the town generated business in other areas of commerce as well. The Green Hotel, on the north end of the east side of the square, was a popular retreat in the 1830's for military men on weekend leave from the Fort, as Liberty was the closest town to the east (Jackson, 1976).

The founding of the Liberty Tribune in 1846 did much to legitimize the town of Liberty. At the time of its first issue on April 4, 1846, it was one of the few newspapers west of the Mississippi River which was regularly published (Ibid.) By this date, leading merchants in Liberty included T.G. Slaughter, J.A.H. Garlichs, and E.C. Hale. Garlichs and Hale operated a drugstore in partnership on the south side of the square. Other establishments at this time were Schild & Siegel and Christy & Kyle, a dry goods business on the west side of the square. Dr. E.S. Ferguson was a physician and obstetrician with an office on the square. Two attorneys' offices were also located on the square. They were joined in 1847 by Liberty's first permanent dentists, H.E. Peebles and Joel Ball (Ibid.)

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A few short years later, in 1849, Liberty had not only several commercial establishments within its boundaries, but industrial concerns as well. There were eight dry goods stores, two drug stores, eight taverns, three cabinet shops, four blacksmith shops, five tailors, four saddlers, four carriage manufacturers, one tinner, two hatter shops, three shoemakers, three groceries, one bakery, one silversmith, one tanner, one gunsmith, two stonemasons, one brick mason, two plasterers, one carding machine, one oil mill, one circular saw mill, one printing office, one rope manufacturer, one livery stable, nine lawyers, seven physicians, and one dentist (Withers, 1922). Nearly all of the commercial enterprises were on the square, and the industrial or manufacturing concerns were located to the south and east of the square.

As mentioned earlier, Liberty's proximity to Liberty Landing, as well as its serving as the county seat, did much to attract business and trade to the town. Starting in the 1840's, however, Liberty's reputation as an educational center began to grow, which in turn had a beneficial effect on the business climate of the town. Liberty was particularly respected for the educational opportunities it provided women, as well as for the quality of higher education found at William Jewell College. Several of Liberty's educational establishments were established before the Civil War. In 1841, the Liberty Male and Female Seminary was opened. Soon afterwards, the most significant educational institute in Liberty, William Jewell College, had its charter approved by the Missouri Legislature in 1849. In 1852, the Liberty Female Institute was founded, and re-opened in 1855 as the Liberty Female College. James Love founded the Clay Seminary in 1855. After it was destroyed by fire, another school, the Hawthorne Institute was opened in 1883. Also providing higher education for women throughout the region was the Liberty Ladies College, opened in the fall of 1890 (Withers, 1922).

The decade before the Civil War was a time of great unrest in western Missouri. Clay County experienced this turmoil over the issues of slavery and free soil states. In 1850, the population of Clay County was 9,426, of which approximately 27% were slaves. Liberty's Negro population at this time comprised just over 20% of the total population of 827. At this time, there were only 14 free Negroes in the entire county. Guerrilla border warfare plagued Liberty and its environs both before and after the Civil War, with some of its more infamous "citizens" giving it a nationwide reputation for lawlessness. As late as 1879, promotional literature prepared about Clay County still found it necessary to refute the "popular prejudice against Missouri, and Clay County

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particularly" by insisting that the whole region was not "UNDER MORTGAGE TO THE JAMES BOYS", and in fact, this opinion was "A GRAND MISTAKE" ("Clay County, Missouri", 28 August 1879). It was true, however, that at one point in 1864, business in Liberty came to a standstill due to the ruthlessness of the bushwackers (Jackson, 1976). However, the most infamous incident of this period occurred shortly after the war. The first daylight bank robbery during peace time in the nation took place on February 13, 1866, at the Clay County Savings Bank on the northeast corner of the square (Ibid.).

The Courthouse Square in Liberty: Commercial and Governmental Center of Clay County, 1858-1942.

The decade of the 1850's had seen the construction of number of large, imposing structures on the square. Whereas the earliest buildings on the square were constructed of wood (and often served the dual purpose as a dwelling), the structures built in the 1850's were usually of brick. The Arthur House, on the southeast corner of Water and Kansas streets, was known as the finest hotel west of the Mississippi when it was built in the first part of the 1850's. It was an imposing three-story structure, and was the site of many of Liberty's social events until it burned in 1903 (Ibid.). 1858, in particular, saw the construction of more buildings on the square in that year than had been undertaken during much of the previous part of the decade (Liberty Tribune, 8 October 1958). The most prominent of these on the square were the Clay County Courthouse (replacing one which had burned in 1857) and the Liberty branch of the Farmer's Bank of Missouri at Lexington (later the Clay County Savings Association). The 1858 Clay County Courthouse was physical evidence of the county's and town's affluence by this time. It was an ornately featured structure, which to this date is still fondly remembered in the community. Its cross-shaped plan was oriented so that the four points faced the intersections of the four streets on the perimeter of the public square. The Courthouse featured a prominent dome with a heroic-sized bronze above. A classically inspired portico was on the main facade.

By the 1850's, the central courthouse square truly served as the focus of governmental, commercial, and social activity in Liberty. Originally, the county court was held in various homes. The first courthouse was finally constructed in 1833 in the central public square, and it has occupied this site from that date. As stated earlier, the lots around the square were the first to sell, and the first to contain retail enterprises in Liberty. The four streets which form the perimeter around the Courthouse have always been a

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place of vitality, as evidenced by the intense level of development, and the wide variety of goods and services provided. Saloons and hotels, but one indicator of social life, were located in buildings around the courthouse, and even in the courthouse itself. Fraternal organizations started to meet in buildings around the square during this period, and eventually constructed their own buildings facing the courthouse. Among the businesses in and around the square in 1858, were two carriage shops, three blacksmiths, a wagon shop, five tailor shops, three cabinet shops, two tinmiths, one cooper, a gunsmith shop, five milliners, two liveries, three boot and shoe stores, and two saddlers (Liberty Tribune, 22 October 1858). The high level of construction activity in the late 1850's is evidenced by the four carpentry shops, and the numerous painters, paperers, bricklayers, plasterers, and stone masons cited in local newspapers of the period (Ibid.).

The Civil War interrupted nearly all facets of life in Clay County, as virtually all construction activity was halted in Liberty during this period. After a few years, however, life returned to normal, and the town began to pick up the pace of commercial development which had been started in the 1850's. The commercial buildings around the square in the 1860's and early 1870's, for the most part, remained much the same as they were immediately preceding the Civil War. Photographs from this period reveal the these commercial structures were brick, one to two stories in height, and featured gable roofs. All of the brick for these first masonry commercial buildings were manufactured within the town. A few of the commercial buildings were constructed of the soft bricks taken from the demolished Liberty Arsenal, which was constructed in 1832, but abandoned at the close of the War and sold to a private owner in 1868 (Jackson, 1976). The ridge line of the roofs paralleled the street, and the roof slopes were frequently pierced by dormers and chimneys. From this period, only the Clay County Savings Association remains, located on the northeast corner of E. Franklin and Water Streets.

As with many small midwestern communities, Liberty's growth after the Civil War was aided by the arrival of the railroad lines. Local citizens realized the importance of railroads to their town's future. However, as the state of Missouri was deep in debt as a result of the War, it was up to the local governments to attract financiers as well as the railroad companies. As a result, several committees in Liberty were formed to promote the area for railroads. They were rewarded in 1867 when the Hannibal & St. Joseph (later the Chicago, Burlington, & Quincy) made Liberty a stop on the line from Kansas City to Cameron, Missouri (Jackson,

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1976). In 1868, the Wabash, St. Louis, and Pacific Railroad passed through the south part of Liberty. By the turn of the century, six to eight passenger trains passed through or stopped in Liberty each day (Piland, 1985). Ironically, the coming of the railroad to Liberty, so necessary for a town's survival, probably also led to a halt in any further commercial expansion in the town. The construction of a railroad bridge across the Missouri River, which allowed the connection to Kansas City, helped that city emerge as the dominant railroad town in the region. This, coupled with the ending of the steamboat era in nearby Liberty Landing, led to shift in commercial enterprises. Businesses in Liberty focused on serving the town and the surrounding area, rather than on trade for the larger region.

The coming of the rail lines to Liberty did not effect the physical development of the town to any great extent, and certainly did not diminish the importance of the square. The railroad line was located south of Mill Street, a block south of the square. A small industrial area, with two woolen and flour mills and two wagon and carriage factories, had already been established close to the rails. Also located just off the square, due to the nature of the businesses, were several livery stables and a stockyard. A few commercial structures were constructed just adjacent to the square on the four roads leading away from the courthouse. However, the vast majority of commerce was conducted in the structures facing the courthouse. The commercial and service enterprises of Liberty remained centered around the square, just as they were before the War and the coming of the railroads (Sanborn Maps, 1883, 1889, 1894, 1899).

After it was apparent that Kansas City would serve as the regional center for commerce and trade, the town of Liberty began to cultivate an atmosphere of gentility, emphasizing service over trade and manufacturing. Although commercial businesses were obviously established to serve the town and the nearby farmland, regionally Liberty was more noted for education, religion, quality journalism, culture, and temperance (for a short period). Saloons had been fixtures in Liberty nearly from its inception. The first courthouse, built in 1833, even contained a public bar which was renovated at public expense (Jackson, 1976). In 1873, however, with five saloons located around the square in Liberty, the County Court voted to no longer grant saloon licenses. By 1880, all of the saloons and dram shops in Clay County were gone (Ibid.). Liberty had associations with the temperance movement nationwide, as well. Carry Nation, a famous leader of the Woman's Christian

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Temperance Union, had been a student at the Clay Seminary in Liberty, when she was known as Amelia Moore.

By 1883, all types of commercial establishments which were necessary to small town life were found immediately on the square - two clothing stores, two furniture stores, three harness stores, three barber shops, the Post Office, a photographer, a paint store, tinner, four dry goods establishments, five druggists, a hardware store, two books & stationery stores, two confectioneries, a newspaper office, general office space, and a skating rink (Sanborn Map, 1883).

Commerce in general prospered in Liberty in the decade of the 1880's, and several new commercial buildings were constructed on the square in this period. In the first six months of 1885, five commercial buildings were completed on the square, and other merchants were "talking confidently of building" (Liberty Tribune, 31 July 1885). All of these new buildings were constructed in a similar manner - they all filled up the entire lot, were built of brick, and had their facades organized in a distinct two-zone pattern. For the first time, the buildings on the square were quite distinct in their construction from the residential buildings of the period. In short, they were representative of the Two-Part Commercial Block property type, which was prevalent throughout the United States in the late 19th and early 20th century (Longstreth, 1987).

The late 1880's brought the "Great Boom" in Clay County real estate. Until this point, Liberty had experienced steady growth since the 1850's, when the population was around 800. In 1860, it was 1,300; in 1870, 1,700; and in 1880, it had actually dropped slightly to 1,500. In 1890 though, the population had jumped to 2,600 residents. The first year of the boom is variously placed in 1887 or 1889. In one year during this short period, the value of real property transfers in Clay County was reported at \$6,074,176.00 (Jackson, 1976). The "boom" was reflected in not only the dollar amounts of real estate transfers, but by the amount of construction taking place in Liberty. Particularly around the square, the 1880's was the decade of the greatest amount of construction. A survey of 89 buildings surrounding the square revealed that 23 buildings were constructed in the 1880's - over twice the number of any other decade in the survey area (Piland, 1985).

Almost immediately, the "boom" turned to a "bust", leaving many in the area in financial distress. This in turn must have affected

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business on the square. However, except for one vacant spot in the center of the east side of the square (along Water Street), all of the lots facing the courthouse by this point already contained two- to three- story brick commercial buildings (Sanborn Map, 1889). The physical appearance of the square was thus, for the most part, already confirmed.

At the turn of the century, there were sweeping technological changes which seemed to have more effect on the residential development of the town than on Liberty's square. The Electric Light Company was formed in 1887, but by the turn of the century, customers were still only allowed one light bulb. The few street lights in town were turned on only when the moon was not shining (Jackson, 1976). In 1906, Liberty's waterworks system began operation, and the sewer system was completed in 1909. The first telephone company was started in 1896 (Withers, 1922). Other phone companies were formed and competed for business until 1917, when all the systems were bought by the Liberty Telephone Company (Jackson, 1976). This enabled Liberty to have connections with the long distance lines operating in Kansas City.

Other advances led to Liberty and Clay County becoming more closely tied to the development of the Kansas City area. In 1911, the Armour-Swift-Burlington (A.S.B.) Bridge opened for traffic, connecting Liberty to Kansas City over the Missouri River. The opening of this bridge led to the formation of the Kansas City, Clay County and St. Joseph Electric Railroad (the "Interurban"). Liberty had two stops on the branch from Kansas City to Excelsior Springs, and the trains to Kansas City came at forty-five minute intervals (Jackson, 1976).

The electric interurban trains had a brief but important impact on Liberty's development. The train allowed people to commute to Kansas City to work. The fare, however, was high enough that only the middle to upper class could afford to do so. Thus the town soon became desirable for its quiet residential character and its quality, middle class homes. The electric trains did not last long, as they were soon supplanted by the automobile. The paving of Highway 10, the A.S.B. Bridge, and later the Liberty Landing Bridge (opened in 1929), made the automobile the preferred mode of transportation to Kansas City. In addition, a bus line started hourly service from Liberty's square to downtown Kansas City in 1923 (Ibid.). However, even this fare was considered high for the day, and owning an automobile was still a luxury of the middle class. As the city made no real attempt to attract industry in this period, most of Liberty's residential growth at this time was

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limited to those who could afford to move here and commute to Kansas City.

The business establishments of Liberty thus remained fairly stable from the turn of the century to the second World War. By 1899, nearly all of the commercial buildings facing the courthouse square were in place. A comparison of business types shown on various Sanborn Maps also reveals that, especially on the west and south sides of the square, not only were the buildings in place, but most of the business establishments themselves remained constant from the 1880's through the 1920's (Sanborn Maps, 1883, 1889, 1894, 1899, 1906, 1913, 1924). In 1922, the following businesses were on the square: three banks, five grocery stores, five clothing stores, two dry goods stores, a Red Cross Rest Room, three shoe stores, two meat markets, two jewelers, a millinery, an undertaker, five drugstores, two barber shops, a book store, a tea company, three hardware stores, a furniture store, a "Five to Twenty-five Cent Store", a cafe, a tailor, as well as offices for various professionals (Withers, 1922). Also on the square were the lodges for three fraternal organizations, the post office, and the printing press for the newspaper. These businesses do not represent much change from those found on the square in the 1880's. Most industrial enterprises were still located near the railroad, just to the south of the square. However, one "light" manufacturing plant was situated on the second floor of two buildings on the north side of the square (Sanborn Map, 1924). The Mother Goose Toy Shop in 1922 employed fifteen women, and made fabric "cuddle" toys, Mother Goose character dolls, and animal souvenirs for conventions. These toys were sent around the world (Withers, 1922).

The most visible change in the physical appearance in the square in the first decades of the twentieth century occurred when two new bank structures were constructed on Kansas Street, and a third bank "modernized" their original building. In 1914, a new group of commercial buildings was built on the southeast corner of East Kansas and Water streets, on the former site of the Author House, and had a bank as the anchor building on the corner (Sanborn Map, 1924). During 1915, the Commercial Bank completely remodeled their building at the southwest corner of East Kansas and Water streets ("The First 100 Years.", 1967). In 1923-1924, the First National Bank constructed a new building on the southwest corner of West Kansas and Main streets, and vacated their former building on North Main Street (Ibid.). At this point in time, then, all four corners of the square were occupied by bank buildings, or at least, buildings which at one point had contained a bank.

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On the square itself, the only construction activity after 1929 occurred with the "modernization" of the existing structures or the replacement of buildings lost to fires. Interestingly, although the Depression brought a virtual halt to construction in Liberty (which wasn't truly revived until after World War II), the only building permits issued during the height of the Depression was for plate glass storefronts on some commercial structures around the square (Building Permits). Business was steady enough that entrepreneurs were willing to expend money to update the appearance of their store. Another reason given for the number of storefront alterations at this time was the construction of the new county courthouse. Merchants felt it necessary to modernize their storefronts ". . . in order to have the four sides of the square conform as nearly as possible to the new building." (Piland, 1985).

Since all of the lots facing the county courthouse already contained a building, new commercial construction during the 1920's took place on the streets leading away from the square. From 1920 to 1929, twenty-one buildings were constructed around the central courthouse square, and the majority of these were just "off" the square (Piland, 1985). Some of this new construction involved examples of the Civic Buildings property type. These differentiated from Two-part Commercial Blocks in their function, which in turn was reflected in the design of the buildings. First and foremost, as a reflection of their importance to the community, Civic Buildings were freestanding, and set within an open space. Two-part Commercial Blocks, on the other hand, abutted the street and occupied the entire lot upon which they were set. The surrounding open space gave the Civic Buildings an importance which was not accorded to single commercial structures, and reflected their standing in the community. In accordance with Liberty's size, however, only few of these structures were constructed. The most significant of these, however, was also the largest single construction project in the city of the period.

Prior to 1934, there had long been a recognition of the need for a new county courthouse. Finally, in the spring of 1934, bonds were voted for the construction of a new courthouse, with P.W.A. providing additional funds. The total cost of the structure was \$275,000.00, and its design reflects the prevailing Art Deco/Moderne styles. The cornerstone was laid in 1935, with Senator Harry S. Truman taking part in the ceremony by the Masonic Grand Lodge of Missouri (Jackson, 1976). Today, the Clay County Courthouse serves as the prime example of a Civic Building property type in Liberty.

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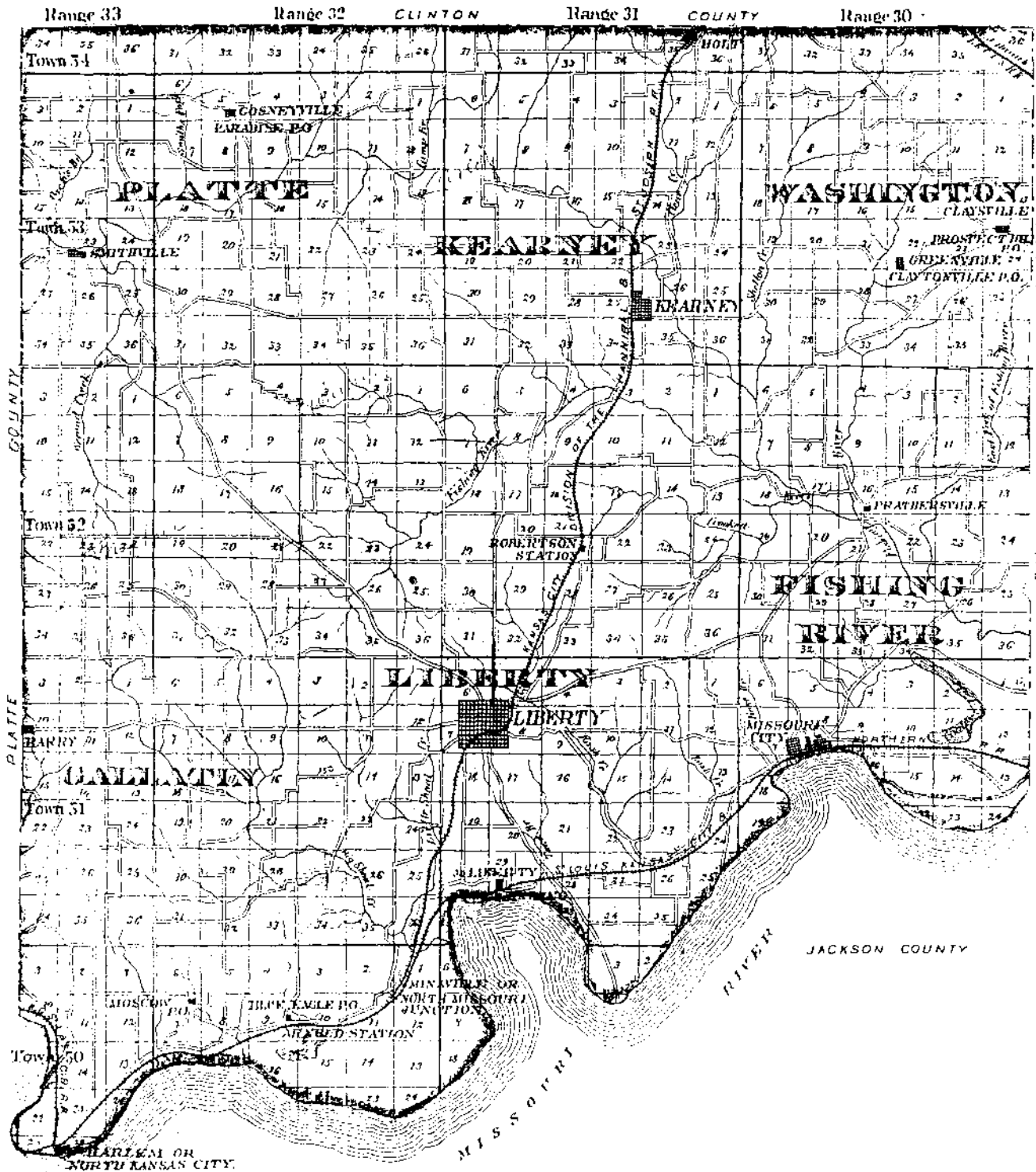
Other new commercial construction on and around the square occurred over the years, however, in response to disasters, primarily major fires. On August 10, 1934, a fire started in an old mule barn on "Jockey Row" between Mill and Kansas, and quickly spread until almost that entire block was destroyed (Sun Special Edition, 1991). The fire was especially disastrous, as Liberty's fire station was next door to the barn. It, too, was damaged, and consequently delayed the city's response to the fire. Substantial damage was also done to other buildings along Kansas Street, and to the Plaza Theatre located on Water Street, just south of Kansas.

Liberty's courthouse square has continued to play a key role in commerce, government, and social activities in town through the present date. A need for expansion of Clay County government offices in the 1980's led to a recommitment to the courthouse square, with new facilities constructed on the southeast corner of East Kansas and Water streets. In this same decade, the City of Liberty constructed a new City Hall on this block as well. However, due to the arbitrary fifty-year rule, the period of significance for this nomination ends with 1942.

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Map of Clay County, Missouri. From the Illustrated Historical Atlas of Clay County, Missouri (1877).

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I. Name of Property Type: Two-Part Commercial Block

II. Description

Historically, Two-Part Commercial Blocks were the most common property type (based on facade arrangement) for small and moderate-sized commercial buildings throughout the country (Longstreth, 1987). They were prevalent from the 1850's to the 1950's across America, but in Liberty, were constructed primarily after the Civil War to the turn of the century. Extant examples of this property type, which still retain their historic integrity, can be found on Liberty's central courthouse square dating from 1868 through 1923, although later examples exist as well.

In Liberty, Two-Part Commercial Blocks are two stories in height, sometimes with an exposed basement level on corner lots where the street drops in elevation. The prime defining characteristic is a horizontal division of the facade into two distinct zones (Ibid.). The lower zone, at the first-story, indicates public use, such as a retail store or bank. The upper zone suggests more private spaces, which in Liberty were generally offices, rooms for let, or meeting halls. The first and second story zones may either be similar in architectural treatment, or different in character, but still reflect the differences in use.

The four main streets surrounding the public courthouse square served as the anchors for the location of Two-Part Commercial Blocks in Liberty, although a few were constructed on the streets leading away from the square. Around the square, however, the Two-Part Commercial Block buildings not only abutted the sidewalk, but the adjacent building as well. This utilized all of the available land fronting the square, which was a valuable and scarce commodity, and as noted in Section E, the prime location for commercial activities in Liberty. All of the lots around the square are narrow and rectangular in dimension, and are deeper than they are wide. Thus it was the lots around the central courthouse square which were the determinant of the size and floorplan of this property type. Except for the four corner lots on the square, all of the Two-Part Commercial Blocks are found within a row, with common walls.

In many respects, the Two-Part Commercial Block buildings differed not only from the preceding commercial buildings on Liberty's square, but from the nearby residential buildings as well. In addition to being two stories in height, the Two-Part Commercial

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Blocks were all constructed of brick. Previously, many of the commercial buildings on the square had been of log or wood frame construction. Also after the Civil War, this property type featured flat, rather than gable roofs. Several decorative architectural features, found only on commercial buildings, also became prevalent in the late 19th century. The cornice was accentuated and more ornate, serving as an elaborate terminus to the building. Most typically, the cornice projected outwards from the plane of the front elevation, and featured either a wood or metal entablature with brackets, or elaborate patterns of corbelled brick. A late example of a Two-Part Commercial Block in Liberty from the 1920's still finds an emphasis on the cornice, although in this case it doesn't project outward from the wall. Instead, a parapet roof and two-dimensional patterns in brick provide a focus on the roofline.

From the 1870's to the turn of the century, an increased amount of ornamentation, and a greater variety of design elements and materials, were utilized on the facades of Two-Part Commercial Blocks. A larger portion of the wall surface was covered with decorative patterns of brick, wood, stone, cast iron, terra cotta, etc. New technological advances allowed for mass manufacturing of ornamentation, flat roofs, larger panes of glass, and the casting of iron. As this latter material was thought to be fire-proof, entire storefronts were sometimes constructed of cast iron.

Retail stores, in particular, utilized the new technology of glass manufacturing. Large windows were the perfect means by which to display merchandise. Often, the entire storefront was of glass, divided only by window frames and cast-iron columns supporting the wall above. Since these buildings were usually part of a row of connecting buildings, the availability of light was greatly decreased. Buildings owners compensated for this lack of light with not only the large display windows, but with transom lights above these. The first-story, storefront section was then usually topped by its own cornice, further delineating the first story from the second. A few buildings accentuated the division between the two floors with a brick or stone stringcourse.

The second-story windows were tall and narrow, and more closely resembled those of residential buildings in that they were usually double-hung, rather than fixed panes of glass. As was also common with residential architecture during the Victorian era in America, a variety of fenestration openings were utilized in order to provide visual interest. While the second story windows were usually tall and narrow, they were often of varying shapes and

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sizes. They were frequently embellished by decorative surrounds or caps, and were sometimes set within arched, recessed openings. The second story windows on Two-Part Commercial Blocks were arranged in regularly-spaced patterns across the facade, although every window opening on one building was not necessarily identical. Combinations of paired and single windows were typical. Oriel windows were sometimes added to break up the pattern of the wall surface.

As mentioned earlier, there was often a continuous lintel or other horizontal device separating the two floors. In addition, many buildings had decorative vertical treatments on the sides, serving to enframe either the first floor only, or sometimes the entire structure. The first and second story of one building usually featured slightly different forms of architectural treatment, to further emphasize the distinction between the two zones of the facade. However, the design of banks was generally distinguished by having a greater consistency in the treatment of all the stories (Ibid). Fraternal halls, or buildings with meeting halls and theaters above, were sometimes taller than the norm. Usually, though, retail shops were included as part of fraternal hall buildings in order to generate additional revenue, and therefore differed little in overall visual appearance from their commercial neighbors, save for an embellished entry or sign (Ibid.).

The architectural details of Liberty's Two-Part Commercial Block buildings' facades were typical of those found across the United States in this period. The underlying desire was for these commercial structures to look urban, even if the amount and/or lavishness of detailing may have been restricted by the available resources in Liberty. The Two-Part Commercial Blocks built from 1868 to the turn of the century reflect the influence of the variety of architectural styles prevalent during the Victorian era. They run the gamut from simple vernacular expressions, to high-style representatives, some of which were designed by professional architects. During the late 19th century, the most common architectural design elements on Two-Part Commercial Blocks in Liberty come from the Italianate, Romanesque, and Queen Anne styles. Often, architectural features from a variety of styles are utilized in an eclectic manner.

Few Two-Part Commercial Block Buildings were constructed on Liberty's square after the turn of the century. Those that were rarely contain any references to past periods, and therefore are quite plain. However, the division between upper and lower stories is still quite pronounced. Retail storefronts are often little

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more than a wall of plate glass, made possible by the development of steel and concrete frame construction and lightweight steel trusses (Ibid.). The prevailing commercial architectural styles in the early part of the twentieth century were the Art Deco or Moderne styles. These influences avoided the use of historical references, but still composed the facades in the same manner as their Victorian predecessors. Rectilinear geometric forms were prevalent, and verticality was emphasized by engaged piers, usually of brick. Abstract relief ornament was often used as embellishment. Some Art Deco buildings emphasized horizontality instead of verticality, with decorative banding, smooth wall surfaces, and long stretches of windows adding to the feeling of horizontality (Ibid.).

III. Significance

Commercial block structures in Liberty are significant in the areas of either COMMERCE or ARCHITECTURE, or both. Under COMMERCE, the buildings are directly associated with Liberty's period of commercial expansion around the central courthouse square. The buildings contained a variety of commercial enterprises which served not only Liberty, but Clay County residents as well. From hardware stores to banks to doctors' offices, these properties represent the range of business which was conducted around the square from the late nineteenth century through the early twentieth century. They are tangible links to a period of great economic growth in Liberty, and represent the success of commerce at this time. They are therefore eligible under Criterion A for their association with this period of development in Liberty.

Two-part Commercial Block buildings in Liberty were constructed as early as 1868. Prior to this, the earliest commercial buildings actually were a combination of residential and commercial uses, housed within a single log building. There were few features to distinguish the special functions of the building. The rapid growth of commerce in Liberty led to alterations of existing shop-house buildings, and eventually, to their supplantation by more substantial structures on the four streets which faced the courthouse square. However, these replacement buildings still often combined residential with commercial quarters. In these cases, the upper section of the building retained a domestic character, while the first-story gained a more commercial appearance. Historic photographs dating from the 1860's and 1870's, when a few of these earlier buildings were still extant, reveal that these buildings were either frame or brick, one to two

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stories in height, and featured gable roofs. The ridge line of the roofs paralleled the street, and the roof slopes were frequently pierced by dormers and chimneys. Double-hung sash windows, usually 6/1, were common.

As the commercial trade in Liberty grew with the population, the combination shop-houses were no longer functional. The lots facing the central courthouse square were too valuable to waste with dwellings. As happened across most of the country, Two-Part Commercial Block buildings eventually dominated the streets in Liberty immediately bordering the central courthouse square. A visual distinction could be seen between the commercial district in Liberty and the nearby residential areas.

The arrangement of the facades, including both the distinction between the first and second story, and the distinction between commercial and residential structures, was born out of practical considerations. Entrepreneurs, in Liberty as well as other towns across the country, wanted their building to serve as an "advertisement" for their business. Strangers to the town should be able to recognize the structure as a commercial structure, simply based on the building type and the arrangement of its facade. An accentuated entry door, transom lights above to allow for light (as there were generally no side windows), and large display windows for merchandise, all let the passerbys know of the purpose of the building. Thus, not only are Two-Part Commercial Blocks representative of the changes in commerce on Liberty's square, but also of a property type which came to dominate small-town commercial landscapes for nearly a century (Ibid.). They are therefore significant under Criterion C in ARCHITECTURE as physical illustrations of the Two-Part Commercial Block property type.

Many of Liberty's Two-Part Commercial Block buildings are also good examples of a specific architectural style or type, particularly the Italianate, Romanesque, and Queen Anne style. They are typical of level of stylistic treatment accorded to small-town commercial buildings. Although similar in many respects, the individual Two-Part Commercial Blocks remain distinct from adjacent properties due to stylistic or ornamental treatment. The general public's enthusiasm for architectural decoration in the Victorian period is reflected in this property type, which served as ornaments for the entire community. These examples would also be eligible under Criterion C for ARCHITECTURE. Also eligible under Criterion C would be the relatively rare examples in Liberty of early twentieth century architectural styles, such as the Art Deco or Moderne styles.

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IV. Registration Requirements

To be eligible under Criterion A, the resources must retain a strong association with the growth and development of commerce in Liberty and Clay County. A variety of commercial enterprises were found on the central courthouse square in Liberty, typical of those necessary for small town life before the turn of the century. The historic associations will obviously vary from building to building; some businesses stayed in the same location for over ninety years, and some buildings housed a variety of differing enterprises over the years. In addition, as the key physical elements of the built environment of the square, it is essential that there be a high degree of integrity in location, setting, and feeling.

Two-Part Commercial Blocks were constructed in Liberty from just after the Civil War, up through the 1950's. However, most examples of this property type were constructed on the square by the 1920's. A variety of architectural styles is thus represented, but all examples should retain their integrity of basic design composition of their facade in order to be eligible, both under Criterion A or C. The facades are the key element by which these structures are evaluated, as that is how commercial buildings in the late 19th and early 20th century were designed to be viewed (Ibid.). These property types were not conceived as free-standing objects.

For those buildings eligible within a historic district, the distinction between the first and second stories is the primary design feature which should be retained. This distinction includes a well-defined storefront, with features reflecting its public use. These public features include an entry door, usually single but sometimes double in width and often recessed, and large display windows. The second stories, generally containing more private functions, should retain their regularly spaced fenestrations, usually with some form of detailing. An accentuated cornice line should also be retained. The basic rectangular building form, two-story height, and flat roof should also be retained.

It is typical in small town commercial buildings for some sort of alteration to occur over the years, either with a change in function, ownership, or merely in a desire to "keep up with appearances". Liberty's square was no exception to this phenomenon. However, these alterations may not affect the building's individual eligibility, providing a high degree of integrity in overall building design remains, and the integrity of

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materials on the second story is still evident. First-story storefronts are the most likely area to have undergone changes over time; the rare building which retains its original storefront, is clearly individually eligible under both Criteria A and C. Buildings whose storefronts have been altered may still be individually eligible, however, if the arrangement of the storefront design features remains, such as pattern of fenestrations, and proportion of window to bulkhead and transom area. The distinction between first and second story should also still be clearly represented by architectural features.

Alterations to non-street or square-facing elevations, including subsidiary additions, will not prevent the example from being eligible. Particularly important for individually eligible structures is the retention of cornice line decorations and other second story features. The pattern of fenestration should be retained on the second story, as well as any decorative window surrounds or embellishments. Again, however, most significant is that the facade is divided into distinct sections or zones. Materials, design features (such as doors, windows, and cornices), decorative details and stylistic features are secondary characteristics by which these buildings are evaluated, and are not as critical for Criterion A.

Under Criterion C, however, the secondary characteristics noted above take on a greater significance. Again, of primary concern for eligibility is integrity of location, association, feeling, and design. Basic integrity of design is met with a facade that is divided into distinct sections or zones. Materials, individual design elements (such as doors, windows, and cornices), decorative details and stylistic features are secondary, but important nonetheless for designation under Criterion C. These secondary characteristics are critical for identifying those buildings which exhibit a particular architectural style, and usually, for identifying the period of construction (or alteration). The division of the building into distinct zones is the underlying similarity that ties all of the Two-Part Commercial Block buildings together. The "secondary characteristics", on the other hand, are what help to distinguish one building from another.

Under Criterion C, therefore, the resource must at the minimum be a typical example of a Two-Part Commercial Block building. Again, the distinction between the storefront and the second story is vital. The upper story should retain the original fenestration patterns, cornice line treatment, and exterior wall cladding material. In addition, as a good representative of a particular

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style of commercial architecture, the building should possess an integrity of materials. Specific architectural design elements which represent the particular style should be present, such as arched window surrounds, brackets, brick corbelling, or cast-iron storefront piers. The pattern of recessed store entry, large display glass windows, bulkhead, and transom area should be retained, as well as some original element of the storefront. This, at the minimum, could be represented by the enframing elements at the side and cornice line of the first story.

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I. Name of Property Type: Civic Buildings

II. Description

After the turn of the century, Liberty settled into its role of a quality residential community which provided services and amenities to its residents. As such, the citizens desired civic and public buildings which represented the high ideals of the community. A few of these buildings were constructed on or around the courthouse square in Liberty. Some were the result of city bond issues and public works funds, such as the Clay County Courthouse, while others were the result of philanthropic donations, such as the Frank Hughes Memorial Library. These two examples of this property type were constructed in the mid to late 1930's; others were constructed in the first decades after the turn of the century.

As opposed to Two-part Commercial Block buildings, which filled the entire lot and abutted the street, Civic Buildings were designed as freestanding objects. Their importance to the community was demarcated by the surrounding open space (Longstreth, 1987). Civic and public structures ranged in height from one to three stories. As they were usually meant to represent lasting qualities of the community, the exterior wall cladding was usually brick or stone, giving an appearance of permanence. The Clay County Courthouse, in particular, visually dominates the entire square through not only its size, but its choice of material and design.

The style of the Civic Building property type varies greatly, and was chosen according to the use and location of the facility. The structures just off the square, on the fringe of the commercial district and closer to the residential neighborhoods, were often constructed in a style which would be complementary to the adjacent homes. This can be seen in the Frank Hughes Memorial Library, whose Neo-classical style, brick construction, and gable roof complements the nearby residential neighborhood. The larger scale Civic Buildings, such as the Courthouse mentioned earlier, utilized an architectural style which emphasized the monumentality of the building. Very often the style for these structures carried some sort of symbolic association which corresponded with the original use. The styles tend to differ markedly from the design of the Two-Part Commercial Block buildings.

All of the Civic Buildings retain some stylistic influences from the period in which they were constructed. Representatives range from the Art Deco/Moderne style to Neoclassic Revival. The main

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feature which distinguishes these from Two-Part Commercial Block buildings is the lack of a clearly defined storefront space. While the first floor may still be differentiated from an upper story, it does not contain typical storefront references.

III. Significance

Civic Buildings may be significant under either Criterion A or C, or both. They may be significant in the area of ARCHITECTURE, or in the areas which relate specifically to the resource's historic use, specifically SOCIAL HISTORY, EDUCATION, LAW, and POLITICS/GOVERNMENT. To be significant in these areas, the building must have been constructed as a civic or public building, and must contribute to an understanding of this area in Liberty's history.

An analysis of these structures provides a more complete understanding of the growth and development of Liberty beyond the area of commerce. As the county seat, Liberty provided services not only to the residents of the community, but to a greater number of citizens of the county. Although travel to Kansas City was greatly facilitated after the turn of the century, the vast majority of needs of local residents were met within the city limits of Liberty. Civic Buildings played an important role in the day-to-day lives of Liberty citizens. Representatives of this property type are thus eligible under Criterion A for their association with the broad patterns development of Liberty's history.

As many of these resources were built for use by the entire community, a great deal of care was taken in their construction and/or design. Well-known professional architectural firms, usually from Kansas City, were employed. Some may thus be eligible under Criterion C as not only a typical examples of a Civic Building property type, but also as excellent representatives of a particular style of architecture.

IV. Registration Requirements

To qualify for listing under Criterion A or C, the resource must retain its integrity in location and association. As the courthouse square represented the focal point of commercial, governmental, and civic activity in town, these resources reflect the importance of being "on" or "near the square". The building should also retain its integrity of design and materials, and be

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recognizable to the time it was constructed. Of particular importance is the retention of stylistic features which identify the various post-1900 styles. These include window and door openings, roof shapes, exterior wall cladding, and various distinguishing decorative features.

To qualify as significant under Criterion C., the resource must be a well-preserved example of a style, and must be recognizable to the time it was constructed. Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship are of particular importance. A greater amount of original historic fabric should be retained than for the resources eligible under Criterion A. The architectural features which are most typically associated with a particular style are the most critical.

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The multiple property listing, "Historic Resources of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri", is based upon survey efforts conducted by the City of Liberty from 1984 to 1987. As a Certified Local Government, the City of Liberty received funding for the survey through the Historic Preservation Program, Missouri Department of Natural Resources. To date, an intensive level survey of the following areas in Liberty has been completed: the courthouse square area containing historic commercial structures, and residential neighborhoods in all four directions from the square. The majority of structures surveyed date from the late nineteenth century, although one residential survey district dates from the early twentieth century. An analysis of the survey efforts, "Liberty Survey Summary Report", was completed in 1987. This multiple property listing is based upon that analysis, and the survey documentation of approximately 600 structures.

In order to begin the registration process in Liberty, it was decided to focus on the most visible and public potential district in the city - the courthouse square. City and Missouri Historic Preservation Program staff members reviewed the aforementioned documentation and developed the boundaries for two commercial districts and the list of five individual commercial/public structures. Thus the context and property type analysis was limited to a focus on commercial activities and structures. For future listings of additional structures and districts, this document will be amended to expand both the context development and the property type analysis to included historic residential properties.

The typology of associated property types is based on function (commercial/public use), form, style, and association with the historic context. Integrity requirements are based on National Register standards for assisting integrity (NPS Bulletin 16), the survey data base and the "Liberty Survey Summary Report", and the scarcity of a particular property type in Liberty.

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National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

New Submission Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historic Resources of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Establishing a City: Liberty from 1817-1860.

Stability vs. Growth: Residential Growth and the Real Estate "Boom", 1867-1896.

The "Bon-ton" Suburban Community: Liberty from 1896-1946

The African American Experience in Liberty: Forging a Community after the Civil War, 1866-1941.

C. Form Prepared by

name/title Deon Wolfenbarger, Preservation Consultant

organization Three Gables Preservation

date 10/12/96

street & number 9550 N.E. Cookingham Drive

telephone 816/792-1275

city or town Kansas City state Missouri

zip code 64157

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. () See continuation sheet for additional comments.)


Signature and title of certifying official Claire F. Blackwell/Deputy SHPO

22 Nov. 00
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

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Historic Resources of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri

Name of Multiple Property Listing

Missouri

State

Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

	Page Numbers
E. Statement of Historic Contexts (If more than one historic context is documented, present them in sequential order.)	15
F. Associated Property Types (Provide description, significance, and registration requirements.)	12
G. Geographical Data	2
H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods (Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.)	2
I. Major Bibliographic References (List major written works and primary location of additional documentation: State Historic Preservation Office, other State agency, Federal agency, local government, university, or other, specifying repository.)	3

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Section number E Page 15

Historic Resources of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri

Preface to amendment

The original multiple property listing "Historic Resources of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri" focused on the historic commercial development of Liberty, which was centered around the Clay County Courthouse and the town square. Some of the information presented in the original submission is repeated herein; in other instances, reference is made to the original document.

In the preface of that initial cover document (Section E, pg. 1), an outline was presented which proposed additional contexts and property types not developed at that time. This amendment presents historic contexts and associated property types which represent the historic residential development of Liberty around the town square. These contexts were preliminarily identified in a summary report of survey activities in Liberty, but are further refined for this submission.¹

Establishing a City: Liberty from 1817-1860.

Greek Revival Residences

Stability and Growth: Residential Growth and the Real Estate "Boom", 1867-1896.

Residential Districts

The "Bon ton" Suburban Community: Liberty from 1896-1946.

Residential Districts

The African American Experience in Liberty: Forging a Community after the Civil War, 1866-1941

Residential Districts, subtype: African-American Residential Districts

A Midwestern Community: Liberty from 1822-1946.

¹Deon Wolfenbarger, "Liberty Survey Summary Report," September 1987.

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Historic Resources of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri

Establishing a City: Liberty from 1817-1860.²

Clay County and the surrounding area was explored by the French around 1800; settlement by European Americans started shortly thereafter in 1817. Emigration into the area which would be Clay County increased dramatically in 1820. At this time, it was still a part of Ray County. Clay County was officially established in January 1822. The county's boundaries extended north to the Iowa line, covering a territory of over 2,000 square miles; it was reduced to its present size of approximately 402 square miles in 1833. In spite of the expansive boundaries of the newly formed county, the majority of 1,200 residents (in 1821) in Clay County settled on or near the Missouri River.

The earliest settlers in Liberty, Clay County, and Missouri were from the upper south states, and most settlers were from the lowland regions therein--the Bluegrass, the Tidewater-Piedmont, and the Nashville basin.³ Those that settled north of the Missouri River were farmers and naturally brought with them many of their agrarian traditions, such as a slave-based economy, tobacco, and hemp plants. So too, were the building traditions of the Upland South transplanted to the fertile hills around Liberty, where they not only reflected building types dominant in the American South but where they also acquired local or regional character. One of the most common house types transplanted to Clay County was the I-house, while the most common style was Greek Revival. Few, if any, frame homes are extant from this period although some log buildings still remain in Liberty. The large antebellum brick homes of some of Liberty's most prominent settlers have proven to be the most resilient over the years, and these homes remain to represent this early period of residential development. Many were located on rural property not within the city boundaries at the time of their construction, but in later years were incorporated into Liberty's city limits.

The fertile agricultural land near the Missouri River may have been the earliest drawing card for settlement in Clay County, but the establishment of Liberty soon attracted other settlers. The first session of the Clay County Court was held in February 1822. A month later this Court appointed county commissioners and charged them with the duty of selecting a suitable site for the county seat. As the primary mode of transportation in western Missouri during this period was by river, it is probable that some of the ferry sites along the Missouri River were considered. Indeed, many of these ferry sites would later prosper for a short period. Nearby Liberty Landing would become a regular stopping point for steamboats coming from

²Although Section E of the original multiple property listing "Historic Resources of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri" focused on the commerce of Liberty, it also presented the general historical development of the city as a whole. That section will not be repeated in its entirety here, but key elements will be highlighted. Additional information pertaining to residential development will be presented.

³Howard Wight Marshall, *Folk Architecture in Little Dixie* (Columbia, MO.: University of Missouri Press, 1981), p. 4.

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Historic Resources of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri

St. Louis, and the landing was the site of much river traffic prior to the Civil War.⁴ However, the Missouri River was prone to frequent and violent flooding, and the County Commissioners showed great insight in selecting a fifty acre tract for the county seat, situated on high, well-drained ground with a good, healthful water supply and located at some distance from the river.

Shortly after its selection as the county seat in 1822, the town of Liberty was platted. Although there were a handful of early settlements in Clay County prior to 1826 (most clustered around mills on creeks and rivers), Liberty was the earliest town in the county.⁵ The "Original Town" plat featured a central courthouse square plan, which has two streets entering at each corner of the square, giving a total of eight entrances to the central courthouse square. The country courthouse was constructed on the central square, and the principal commercial enterprises were built on its perimeter.⁶

The selection of Liberty as the county seat stimulated commerce. Prior to 1821, there were no stores or trading posts, and only eight houses by the time the town was platted.⁷ Soon thereafter, the first county clerk began selling a few goods out of his home in Liberty. Two other stores started that same year; a tanyard opened in 1825, a distillery in 1826, and a harness shop in 1827. The establishment of Fort Leavenworth in Kansas in 1827 encouraged more rapid commercial development in Liberty. Not only were goods shipped northwest to the Fort from Liberty, the nearby military post brought increased commercial traffic to the town itself.⁸

The officers from Fort Leavenworth and their wives were attracted to not only the commercial enterprises of Liberty, but to the social amenities as well. An atmosphere of gentility was presented by the community, which differed dramatically from the rough conditions at the Fort. This atmosphere was aided in part by the large number of publications founded in Liberty, at a time when journalism played significant roles in the settlement of the American West. Prior to the Civil War, *The Far West* [est. 1836], the *Liberty Banner* [1843], the *Liberty Tribune* [1846], and the *Clay County Flag* [1860] were among those newspapers published in Liberty. Through its editorials, the *Tribune* encouraged the growth and development of the town.

⁴See original MPS Submission, Section E, p. 3, for a discussion of the relationship of river trade at Liberty Landing to the commercial enterprises in Liberty.

⁵Ethel Massie Withers, ed., *Clay County Missouri Centennial Souvenir: 1822-1922* (Liberty, MO: The Liberty Tribune, 1922), pp. 18, 33.

⁶See original MPS submission, Section E, pp.2-3 for further description of the "Original Town" plat.

⁷Don Jackson, *The Heritage of Liberty* (Liberty, MO.: R.C. Printing Service, 1976), p. 3.

⁸Deon Wolfenbarger, "Historic Resources of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri," National Register of Historic Places, Multiple Property Documentation Form, Section E, p.4.

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Liberty's atmosphere of gentility was further enhanced by its growing reputation as an educational center starting in the 1840s, which in turn had a beneficial effect on the business climate of the town and influenced residential development. Initially, Liberty was better known for its private academies and institutes, particularly those for women. Most of these academies were located in residential buildings, and in turn many of the students boarded in nearby residences. A partial list of the private educational institutes (and their founding date) located in Liberty during this period reveals the extent of influence that education had on the economy and development of the city: High School for Young Ladies [first] (1828); Liberty Female Seminary (1838); High School for Young Ladies [second] (1840); "Female School" (1844);⁹ Liberty Male and Female Seminary (1841); Liberty Female Institute (1852, re-opened as the Liberty Female College in 1855); Clay Seminary (1855).

There were numerous smaller academies for both males and females in Liberty, but the largest and best known institution, and at first for men only, was William Jewell College. It was established by charter by the Baptists of Missouri in 1849. It was named for Dr. William Jewell of Columbia, Missouri who provided a land endowment for the formation of a College. Two Liberty citizens, Judge Joseph T.V. Thompson and Colonel Alexander W. Doniphan, are credited with working to locate the college in Liberty. A subscription drive amounting to \$22,000.00 in Clay County undoubtedly was a deciding factor as well. William Jewell opened for instruction on January 1, 1850 in the basement of the Baptist Church with the Rev. Elijah Dulin as principal. Construction of Jewell Hall at the east end of Franklin Street began in 1852, and classes were held there for the first time in 1853.

This period saw Liberty move from its settlement period to the early stages of community development. Although influenced by the nearby Missouri River traffic and the surrounding agricultural lands, Liberty's growth and development was more affected by its selection as the county seat. The accompanying commercial growth, as well as the establishment of the numerous educational institutions, in turn was reflected by the town's buildings and infrastructure.

Stability and Growth: The Residential Real Estate "Boom" in Liberty, 1867-1896

The period immediately following the Civil War was one of both economic and social unrest. Three quarters of the voting men in Clay County were disfranchised by the Drake Constitution, and guerrilla violence gave Liberty a short-lived reputation as a community in turmoil. Construction activity in the city was virtually halted during the War. However, Liberty's survival as a community after the Civil War was assured when a rail line linked the town to the rest of the country. Although never a major shipping or transfer point, the rails nonetheless kept the city connected to other communities. In 1867, the Hannibal & St. Joseph (later the Chicago, Burlington, & Quincy) Railroad made Liberty a stop on the line from Kansas City to Cameron, Missouri. In 1868, the Wabash, St. Louis, and Pacific Railroad passed through the south

⁹Withers, *Clay County Centennial*, p. 132.

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Historic Resources of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri

part of Liberty.¹⁰ New commercial and industrial businesses were established along the railroad corridor. This corridor for a time served as an effective southern boundary to residential development in Liberty, further encouraging construction to the north, east, and west sides of the square.

Liberty's economy and existence did not hinge on the railroad lines, however. After it was apparent that Kansas City would serve as the regional center for commerce and trade, Liberty's role became defined as the governmental seat for Clay County as well as a commercial center for the surrounding countryside.¹¹ The Courthouse Square contained all types of commercial establishments which were necessary to small town life. In 1883 there were two clothing stores, two furniture stores, three harness stores, three barber shops, the Post Office, a photographer, a paint store, tinner, four dry goods establishments, five druggists, a hardware store, two boots and shoe stores, two confectioneries, a newspaper office, general office space, and a skating rink.¹² New commercial buildings were constructed, but mainly to replace earlier ones. In general, all commerce was conducted on the square. The immediately adjacent blocks to the east and west contained livery stables and lumber yards, establishments which required more property, while the area south near the rail line had industrial concerns such as mills.

Liberty's growth in population was relatively steady through the 1870 census, but it actually dropped from 1870 to 1880. It had grown from the 1850 population of 800 to 1,300 in 1860, and to 1,700 in 1870. In 1880 the population dropped slightly to 1,500. During the decade of the 1880s, though, the population grew comparatively dramatically. By 1890, Liberty's population increased by 73% from the previous decade to 2,600. This increase in population had a corresponding effect on new housing construction in the town.

Prior to the population boom of the 1880s, only a few new additions and subdivisions had been platted in Liberty. Michael Arthur's 1st and 2nd Additions were among the earliest after the Civil War. Arthur's 2nd Addition of 1870 platted Arthur Street from South Leonard east to Jewell, while Arthur's 1st Addition paralleled this along Mill Street. Another one of the earlier plats was Lightburne's 1st Addition of 1883, which divided up a portion of the large farm of Major Alvan and Ellen Lightburne along Water, Missouri, and Leonard streets.

During the real estate boom of the late 1880s and early 1890s, there was a flurry of plat activity. North and east of the square, Brown's M.B. Subdivisions (1887), Allen & Burns Addition (1887), and Jewell Addition (1898) were platted. West of the square, Corbin & Hughes (1890), Dougherty Place (1890), and Prospect

¹⁰See original MPS Submission, Section E, pp. 7-8 for further discussion of the effect of the railroad on Liberty's development.

¹¹See original MPS Submission for a more thorough discussion of the factors affecting Liberty's governmental and commercial development, Section E, pp. 6-13.

¹²"Liberty, MO," (New York: Sanborn Map & Publishing Co., Sep. 1883) pp. 1-2.

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heights (1889) were laid out. Along South Leonard, Ford Place (1891), Lincoln Place (1889), and Groom's Addition (1889) divided the land west of that road. Many of these plats were carved out of land associated with existing residences on larger lots, which naturally limited the size of the development. All plats in Liberty were quite small, however, usually only a block or two in size. It is possible that during this frenzied period of real estate transactions, the cost of acquiring consecutive lots within the city limits was prohibitive. Therefore, those most likely to file new additions to the city during this period were established citizens who owned relatively large plots of land around their existing residence.

With new lots available for construction and new residents clamoring for housing, the "boom" period saw an unprecedented number of houses built. In 1887, approximately seventy new residences were constructed at an average cost of \$1,000.00 each. A similar number were constructed the following year at an average cost of \$1,500.00. By 1889, the average cost had risen to \$2,000.00 and approximately eighty new homes were built in Liberty.¹³ These new houses were built on vacant lots of the "Original Town" plat, or on the newly platted parcels of land purchased from the larger estate owners.

There were several reasons that residents were attracted to Liberty during the latter part of the nineteenth century. In addition to its role as governmental center of Clay County, Liberty continued to cultivate an atmosphere of gentility, emphasizing service over trade and manufacturing. Education, religion, quality journalism, culture, and temperance were important themes in Liberty's history during this period. Education in particular remained a facet of community living that Liberty's citizens stressed, and one that attracted a number of residents to the community.

One of the reasons that Liberty continued its well-deserved reputation after the Civil War as a regional education center which served Clay County and beyond was the fact that it was the location for the only schools for higher education for a radius of many miles.¹⁴ Free schooling only covered the elementary grades, and those seeking higher education had to attend the institutions at Liberty. Many of the schools which were founded prior to the Civil War continued to operate, and new institutes or academies were established. Professor George Hughes conducted the "Liberty High School for Young Ladies" from 1868 to 1871.¹⁵ The Hawthorne Institute was founded in 1881, and conducted classes in a building on Water Street.¹⁶ William Jewell College continued to flourish, but did not admit women until 1917. A fund-raising campaign was launched for a new institution of higher education for women, called the Liberty Ladies College. Eleven acres at the west end of Franklin Street were chosen for the college. The site was just a mile from William Jewell on a prominent hill overlooking the Courthouse Square to the east. The new

¹³Wolfenbarger, "Summary Report," p. 25.

¹⁴Withers, *Clay County Centennial*, p. 131.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 130.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 138.

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building was on a direct sight-axis to William Jewell as it overlooked the valley down into the town. The cornerstone of the large, 100-room brick building was laid on May 30, 1890.

Architecture

There were many diverse forms of vernacular, or National Folk, residences built in Liberty in this period. High-style homes were constructed in this period as well, but of the extant resources in Liberty, the vernacular type predominates. There is a great variety of vernacular building forms in Liberty, however, and those are further distinguished by the use of applied architectural ornament. With the advent of the industrial age, architectural ornamentation could be mass produced and shipped inexpensively by rail. Owners of modest means could thus personalize a common building type and differentiate their home from those of their neighbors.

The residences of the more prominent citizens of Liberty in the late nineteenth century tended to be either Italianate or Queen Anne houses, usually two stories in height. A few Italianate residences are extant and are typically distinguished by their low-pitched roofs, overhanging eaves with decorative brackets, tall narrow windows with elaborate or molded crowns, and accentuated entry doors. More commonly found are a number of Queen Anne residences, both large and small in scale and constructed of either frame or brick. These are distinguished by their irregular massing, multiple rooflines, and a variety of other architectural features which were used to avoid a smooth-walled surface: varied wall coverings, projecting bays, and applied decorations.

As noted earlier, Victorian era details, such as turned porch spindle posts, friezes, and carved brackets were applied to vernacular or National Folk residences.¹⁷ Liberty has a number of representative buildings from the wide variety of national vernacular housing types found nationwide during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Some of these housing types had persisted from the previous period, but most were affected by the coming of the railroads after the Civil War. Modest dwellings, which were previously reliant strictly upon local building materials, now could be constructed of lumber milled in far-away places. In addition to lumber, ready-built stylistic details could be made quickly due to changing technology and shipped cheaply due to the railroad. The advent of balloon framing affected not only the basic floor plan but the types of roofs that could be constructed. As a result, residences no longer reflected regional or ethnic building trends, but nationwide trends in domestic architecture instead.

Liberty contains examples of virtually every type of late nineteenth century vernacular housing type. *I-houses* are a form which persisted from the antebellum period, and are typically two stories in height, two rooms wide, and one room deep. Many of Liberty's *I-houses* vary slightly from the typical from in that they are usually one-and-a-half stories in height with a central peak in the form of a wall gable dormer. *Hall & parlor* houses are simple one-story side-gabled houses that are two rooms wide and one room deep. As a traditional British folk form, they have been constructed over a long period of this country's history.

¹⁷As defined in Virginia & Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984), pp. 88-101.

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Variations to the form are found through the porch sizes and roof shapes, differing chimney placements, and various patterns of additions which were necessary to accommodate the small buildings for modern living. *Double pen* houses persisted as a popular vernacular housing type even when balloon frame lumber construction was employed. Double pens were originally formed in this country by adding another "pen" to a single pen log cabin. Double pen houses are thus two rooms wide and one room deep, with each of the rooms having a front door. Virtually all have side gable roofs, and, in Liberty, all are one story in height. Most of the extant double pens are located in the area north of the Square. *Pyramidal* homes are distinguished by the pyramidal hipped roofs which covered a square floor plan. Although slightly more complex in their roof framing, they required fewer long rafters and were less expensive to build. One-story examples are more typically found in southern states and are true folk forms.

The above listed National Folk housing types, particularly the latter three, were typically built for residents of very modest means. Other vernacular residences were outfitted with varying degrees of architectural details depending upon the means of their owners. The *Gable-Front* form evolved from the Greek Revival style, where its front-gabled shape mimicked the pedimented temple facades of that style. It was common in New England and the northeast region in the pre-railroad era, and continued with the expansion of the railroads after the 1850s. The form was best suited for narrow lots in the neighborhood. There are also a few remaining small "shotgun" houses in Liberty. Other gable-front houses in Liberty were at least two rooms wide, but varied from one to two stories in height. *Gable-front & wings* (also referred to as "gabled ells") are believed to have also descended from styled Greek Revival houses. Gable-front & wing houses were more common in rural areas. In this form type, a side-gabled wing was added at right angles to the gable-front section, forming an L-shaped plan. In Liberty's historic neighborhoods, most were simple folk houses where the wings were generally the result of additions over the years. Both one- and two-story examples are found. Also classified within this category are Liberty variants which have identical L-shaped floor plans but with hip roofs rather than gable over the two main blocks.

The "Bon ton" Suburban Community: Liberty from 1896-1941

Changing technology, particularly in the area of transportation, was to play a major role in the development of Liberty's built environment after the turn of the century. The new technology paved the way for the transition of Liberty from an outlying rural county seat to a suburban community within the larger Kansas City metropolitan area. Some of this technology had its roots in the late nineteenth century. Liberty's Electric Light Company was formed in 1887. As with many other changes in Liberty, the electric revolution was slow in coming at first. By the turn of the century, electric customers were still only allowed one light bulb, and the few street lights in town were turned on only when the moon was not shining.¹⁸ In 1896, Dr. F.H. Matthews established the first telephone company in Liberty; there were fifty residential subscribers at \$1.00 per month. Additional telephone companies were formed and all competed for business until 1917, when the duplicated systems were eliminated after being purchased by the Liberty Telephone Company.¹⁹

¹⁸ Jackson, *Heritage of Liberty*, p. 115.

¹⁹ Jackson, *Heritage of Liberty*, p. 89.

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This enabled Liberty for the first time to have connections with the two long distance toll lines operating in Kansas City. Changes such as this helped connect Liberty with the greater metropolitan area. Other improvements to Liberty's infrastructure further encouraged residential development, giving residents the advantages that citizens in Kansas City enjoyed decades earlier. Liberty began operation of its own waterworks system in April 1906. The sewer system was completed in 1909 and was designed by local hydraulic engineer, Wynkoop Kiersted.

Changes in transportation were to have the most significant effect on the residential development of Liberty. The coming of automobiles to town required that the roads have permanent solid surfacing. The streets around the square were the first to be hard-surfaced, but the main residential streets soon followed. In 1910, a contract for paving West Franklin was signed at the cost of \$1.88 per square foot. South Leonard was paved in 1911, and East Kansas in 1916. East Kansas was one of the first streets in Liberty to be paved with concrete.²⁰ Later, in 1923, a critical paved road from Liberty to Kansas City would be built, but events leading up to this road had more profound influences on Liberty's transportation opportunities and subsequent growth. On December 28, 1911, the Armour-Swift-Burlington (A.S.B.) Bridge opened for traffic, spanning the Missouri River and connecting Liberty to the Kansas City metropolitan area. The construction of this bridge led to the formation of the Kansas City, Clay County and St. Joseph Electric Railroad company. Operation of its electric interurban trains began on January 21, 1913. At its peak operation, over eighty cars per day were operated which were capable of speeds of seventy-five miles per hour. Two branches ran from Kansas City-- one to St. Joseph and the other to Excelsior Springs. This latter line included two stops in Liberty. One interurban station was on the William Jewell College campus, and the other on the southeast corner of E. Mill and S. Leonard. The trains to Kansas City came at 45 minute intervals. The running time in 1917 was between 40-47 minutes from Liberty to 13th & Walnut streets in Kansas City. In spite of the outrageous fee of thirty-five cents, which Liberty citizens believed was far too high, the Interurban trains greatly facilitated travel between Liberty and Kansas City.²¹

Although extremely significant for its role in opening up travel from Liberty, the electric trains' heyday was short-lived. The rise of automobile traffic probably contributed to the company's demise, and in 1930, it went bankrupt. The A.S.B. bridge allowed automobiles as well as trains to cross the Missouri River. With the paving of Highway 10 in 1923, travel by automobile was much easier. Prior to 1927 when the bridge became toll-free, automobile traffic did not make significant inroads on the electric train ridership. A bus line started in 1923, and competed with the Interurban by providing hourly service from Liberty's square to 7th Street and Grand Avenue in Kansas City (even though the fare was all of seventy-five cents round-trip or forty cents one way). Accessibility by automobile was greatly improved in 1929 when the Liberty

²⁰Wolfenbarger, *Summary Report*, p. 53.

²¹*Ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

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Landing Bridge was opened across the Missouri River. This placed the city for the first time on a major highway--then U.S. 71 By-Pass, now Missouri Highway 291.²²

With all of these transportation alternatives, not all of Liberty's residents in the early twentieth century were dependent upon the local community for their needs. Not only did some commute to Kansas City for work, but shopping, banking, and other goods and services were purchased in the "big city." However, the Missouri River remained enough of a deterrent, both literally and physically, to prevent rapid suburban development in Liberty. Although the electric Interurban line did open up daily commuting possibilities, its cost was affordable only to the most comfortable middle-class citizens. The long commute, coupled with the toll fee on the bridge in place until 1927, effectively relegated automobile commuting to only well-to-do residents.

With the large migration of the rural population to urban areas occurring nationwide and in the region, Liberty might have attracted more citizens had it made efforts to attract industries which could provide jobs. Liberty instead chose to retain its character as a small town focusing on local and county services; the position of industrial center north of the Missouri River fell to North Kansas City. The citizenry's feelings on this were reflected in a description of the community in the *Clay County, Missouri Centennial Souvenir* of 1922.

Liberty has been a conservative town not given to taking up hurriedly with untried innovations, but its progress in a material way has been constant. Today it leads all the towns of its size in Missouri in beauty, in public utilities, traffic ways, etc. . . . Liberty aspires to continue as a home and school center rather than to attain industrial prominence.²³

Most of Liberty's residential neighborhoods continued to develop in the same pattern established in the nineteenth century. New homes continued to be constructed near the town square in the "Original Town" plat or in subdivisions laid out in the late nineteenth century. As in the previous decades, these homes were constructed on vacant lots or on the site of an earlier building. A few new subdivisions/additions were platted in the city, most on the vacant land surrounding a large property. Unlike nearby Kansas City, where one can find block after block of nearly identical houses built speculatively by one developer, the majority of Liberty's houses were built one at a time, generally for or by the owner. Also unlike urban settings such as Kansas City, the existing residential areas did not "fall out of favor" in Liberty. In small towns, prime residential sites from the nineteenth century were generally still considered valuable into the twentieth century. In fact, land values by 1919 were booming again in and around Liberty. Thus in the nineteenth century plats or additions, modern Colonial or Tudor Revival homes would be constructed immediately adjacent to an "out-of-date" Victorian remnant from the previous century.

²²ibid., p. 54.

²³Withers, *Clay County Centennial*, p. 34.

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Liberty's growth continued at a slow rate; its population by 1930 was only 3,500. Although this slow rate of growth did not warrant large-scale planned subdivisions, some local developers planned a few of these new "suburban"-type additions on a smaller scale in out-lying areas of the city. G. W. Clardy, who owned the Greek Revival Mansion at 758 W. Liberty Drive, envisioned a planned subdivision on the northeast portion of his estate. In 1912, he submitted his plan for "Clardy Heights." Most of the lots were approximately 50' by 135', and were for sale for about \$300.00. Clardy prepared a promotion brochure for his new neighborhood extolling the virtues of living in Liberty, "the Bon ton suburb of Kansas City." Clardy believed that Liberty was "destined to be to Kansas City what Pasadena is to Los Angeles; a city of fine suburban homes."²⁴ Undoubtedly echoing the thoughts of many of its residents, in his pamphlet Clardy emphasized the good schools, fine residences, and quality of life that could be found in Liberty at this time.

Education continued to serve as a drawing point for new residents. Liberty High School was the first high school in Clay County to give a full four years' course of study. The public school system became overcrowded in the first two decades of the century, and in 1921, Liberty's citizens voted to spend \$125,000 to construct a new high school. The site chosen for the new school was the former location of the Liberty Ladies College. That institution had prospered until a catastrophic fire on February 23, 1913 which completely destroyed the building.

Bigger changes in education were in store at William Jewell College in the fall of 1917, when Liberty residents finally managed to persuade faculty members to teach classes for young ladies. This was due in part to financial necessity, due to declining enrollment because of World War I, and in part as a response to the lack of women's educational facilities after the fire at the Liberty Ladies College. In the 1922 *Clay County Centennial*, the effect of education on the quality of life in Liberty was expounded by the editor.

The effect of almost a hundred years of splendid schools has been to increase constantly the number of educated citizens who have been and are stimulated mentally by contact with educators of the highest scholarly qualifications and there has been set a standard, an ideal, of intellectual development and culture, whose influence has been persistently though intangibly diffused among the people.²⁵

Besides attracting professors and other staff to residences near the college campus, William Jewell affected the housing development in Liberty due to the inadequate dormitory facilities at the college during the early twentieth century. Many of the out-of-town students were housed in private homes, boarding houses, and fraternity and sorority houses off-campus.²⁶ A map from the 1930s Hare & Hare report shows that a large number of the non-resident students lived in the area immediately west and southwest of the college.

²⁴"Clardy Heights," promotional brochure, [1912].

²⁵Withers, *Clay County Centennial*, p. 139.

²⁶Hare & Hare, *A City Plan*, p. 8.

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Architecture

Liberty experienced a building boom around 1908, when at least forty new residences were completed. These houses were a departure not only in style but in form from their Victorian counterparts. The two predominate styles for the first two decades of the 1900s were the Prairie and Craftsman styles. Compared to Victorian-era residences, these houses had simpler detailing, more geometric massing, and more interior space given over to the new technologies. Electricity had rescued people from darkness; pure water and indoor plumbing for virtually all citizens were true marks of civilization; and the ring of a phone connecting voices hundreds of miles apart was nothing short of a technological marvel.

After the Victorian era, the country as a whole was rejecting the old-fashioned exuberant styles from the previous decades. Tastes in residential architecture were turning in favor of revival styles, which harkened back to an even earlier era, or to the simpler lines of the Prairie style. The level of detailing on many of Liberty's residences indicates the professional services of an architect. Horace LaPierre of Kansas City was commissioned for several Liberty residences, including 222 W. Franklin. Nationwide, architects were beginning to enjoy higher status and profiles. Most were more highly educated than their predecessors, studying either in Europe or in the newly developing architectural schools in this country. With over 10,000 architects listed nationwide in the 1900 census, there was keen competition for the commissions of large public buildings and private mansions. Many architects during this period made their reputation in comparatively modest residential designs. With Kansas City in easy access, both physically and by telephone, Liberty residents could choose from among the many architectural firms in that city.

The Craftsman style was the dominant style for smaller houses built throughout the country and in Liberty from about 1905 until the early 1920s. The Craftsman style featured a low-pitched roof with wide, unenclosed overhanging eaves in which the roof rafters were usually exposed. A full or partial width porch had square porch columns, often tapering and on piers or pedestals. The Prairie style, one of the few indigenous American styles of architecture, is typified by a low-pitched roof with widely overhanging eaves. The emphasis in the detailing is on the horizontal, although the overall massing of the house may be vertical or squarish. Craftsman and Prairie details, or a combination of both, were frequently applied to modest buildings such as foursquares and bungalows. Additionally, many Victorian era homes in Liberty were updated in the early part of the twentieth century with a Craftsman/Prairie porch featuring square, wide tapering porch columns on stone or brick piers.

Liberty's economy quickly recovered after World War I and land values in and around town were once again on the rise after 1919. Transactions occurred so rapidly that several properties changed hands on a daily basis. New technologies continued to be introduced at a rapid rate--so rapid, in fact that a nostalgia for simpler times was reflected in new housing styles. Revival styles, such as the Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, and Neo-classical styles, gained rapid popularity as choices for residences.

The examples of the Colonial and Tudor Revival styles in Liberty are generally modest, but are typical of those found in the region in the early 20th century. Common identifying features of Liberty's Tudor Revival include the steeply pitched roofs, with at least one front-facing gable, and ornamental false half-timbering and stucco in the upper story. Colonial Revival houses in Liberty are simple as well, featuring symmetrical

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facades, accentuated front door, and multi-paned windows. Neo-classical buildings were also popular in Liberty, both for new construction and for alterations to existing buildings. Many earlier antebellum homes were updated with a massive, two-story Neo-classical entry porch in the early twentieth century. Indeed, the porch is one of the main identifying features of this style and one that sets the buildings apart with some degree of monumentality.

The Depression brought a virtual halt to new construction in Liberty, and the building industry wasn't truly revived until after World War II. During one year of that bleak period, the only building permits issued in Liberty were for plate glass storefronts around the square. After the Depression, the majority of new construction activity, as reflected in building permits, was for garages. Although some of the largest residences had carriage houses which were now converted to garages, a large number of simple buildings were constructed to house the automobiles of the middle class. Although some were built with design features which echoed the style of the main residence, the vast majority were simple wood buildings with gable roofs. Due to the built-up character of most of Liberty's neighborhoods, most were constructed at the rear of the lot with access provided by the rear alleys.

Duplexes and apartment houses were also among the new types of buildings constructed in the early twentieth century. "The Ramona" on N. Leonard Street laid claim to being the first apartment building in Liberty. Built in 1910, this simple brick, flat-roofed building has sparse architectural details. Brick "quoins" ornament the corners of the building, but the facade is dominated by the one-story porch with verandah above. Duplexes were more common than apartment buildings, though. In Liberty, they were usually "doubledeckers"; that is, two apartment units per building, each on its own separate floors. A doubledecker facade features double-stacked front porches with wide, square porch columns.

The African American Experience in Liberty: Forging a Community after the Civil War, 1866-1941²⁷

Liberty's white settlers came primarily from the Southern states of Kentucky, Virginia, and Tennessee. The Southern culture that these settlers brought with them included commercial agriculture in the form of tobacco, hemp, and hogs, which in turn was dependent upon slavery. Slavery was common in Clay County from the time of its organization in 1822, although there were no large plantations, and large numbers of slaves were not needed at most farms and residences. Slave-owners in Clay County utilized African Americans as field hands, housekeepers, gardeners, and nurses. Hemp and tobacco crops, commonly grown in this area, dictated intensive, back-breaking labor--work deemed more suitable for slaves by the farm owners.

²⁷This context was based upon a survey of African American resources in Liberty completed in 1995. The accompanying survey report presented a draft of this context and an evaluation of potential National Register districts. In Deon K. Wolfenbarger, "African American Architectural/Historic Resources, Liberty, Missouri: Survey Report," report for the Liberty Historic District Review Commission, 15 September 1995.

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By 1849 the population of Clay County consisted of 6,882 whites, 2,530 slaves, and 14 free African Americans. In Liberty 49 individuals owned 157 slaves in 1850. This constituted an average of nearly three slaves per owner, not counting Col. A. Lightburne, who owned eighteen. The total African American population (freed and slaves) was just over 20% of the city's 827 population in 1850. In 1860 the number of slave-owners in Liberty had grown to 82, and the number of slaves totaled 346.

After the Civil War, ex-slaves in Missouri had to begin new lives with little or no resources and few jobs available to them. Some African Americans responded to the animosity against them by leaving the state. By 1870, the number of African Americans in Missouri had dropped to 6.9 percent of the total population. This population trend was found in Liberty as well. Beginning in the 1860s the percentage of African Americans as part of total population in Liberty steadily declined, although in actual numbers the population totals increased until about 1890. The opportunities for employment and housing for African Americans were greater in larger cities, and this may have been a factor in the slower rate of population growth for Liberty's African Americans.²⁸

Little documentation about the lives of post-Civil War African Americans in Liberty was found during the 1994-1995 survey, but that research indicated that their experiences were similar to those of African Americans in other small, previously pro-Southern towns in Missouri. From the latter decades of the nineteenth century up to World War I, African American progress in Missouri was halting. Housing for African Americans was hard to find and often substandard. One consequence of poor living conditions, general poverty, and persistent discrimination was the rise of African American businesses, fraternal organizations, and lodges which formed to assist members of their community.

African American institutions provided the social, economic, and cultural opportunities denied them by white society. Churches and lodges contributed greatly to social life by holding fairs, picnics, suppers, and dances. They were also important as ties to other communities--travelers could stay at homes of members of sister lodges or of church members. In Liberty, these institutions served the same significant role in the lives of its African American citizens. Before the end of official segregation, Liberty's African Americans operated businesses out of their homes by necessity. They were not allowed in white establishments, and were not allowed to rent, even if they could afford to, business quarters in town. Some of these enterprises, noted in the 1994-1995 resource survey, were restaurants, an undertaker, funeral home, nightclub, a greenhouse (patronized by both African Americans and white residents), grocery stores, beauty parlors, pool halls, and recreation facilities such as a croquet court and tennis

²⁸As a percentage of Liberty's entire population, African Americans' numbers have continued to decrease over the years. They totaled 14.1 percent of the population in 1931 and less than 3 percent in 1970. In Wolfenbarger, "African American Resources Survey Report," pp. 13-15.

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court.²⁹ Segregation, although it achieved nothing else positive, did foster a sense of community for a group that was excluded from full participation in white society.

Another key institution in the lives of Liberty's African American residents were the schools. Early schools for African Americans, both in Missouri and across the country, were held in churches, homes, or other "make-shift" facilities. When schoolhouses were built, they were usually of the traditional one-room design, were constructed of frame rather than brick, and had few amenities. By 1900 more substantial schools were being built. A number of African American schools in Missouri were built through Works Progress Administration grants. By 1939 Missouri had approximately 260 elementary and high schools for African Americans.

African American education in Liberty followed the general pattern within the state, with public facilities not provided until the late 1800s. The first school for African American children is commonly believed to have been a subscription school that was established at the end of the Civil War. Mrs. Laura Armstrong taught the school in a room of her home, which was located on W. Mill Street, between Gallatin and Prairie Streets. Students paid \$1 a month, and attendance was said to have grown rapidly.³⁰ Lucretia Robinson is thought to have taught the second African American (and Indian) school in Liberty at her residence on 446 N. Water Street. The third school met in the Old Rock Church, located on a hill near where Garrison School is now located. The first Garrison School building was constructed in 1880 on the present site at 502 N. Water Street, where it was central to the greatest portion of the African American population. The present school building was constructed shortly after the first was destroyed by fire in 1911.³¹

Churches were generally the most significant institution in the African American community, and Liberty was no exception to this generalization. During the early African American independent church movement in this country following the Civil War, African Americans gravitated toward the Baptist and Methodist churches. These denominations were usually preferred because of the more emotional form of worship, the absence of formal ritual, and the greater leadership opportunities offered to ministers. The earliest African American churches in Liberty were from these two denominations. The First Baptist Mt. Zion Church was the first African American church to be established in Liberty.³² Rev. William Brown organized

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-26.

³⁰ One unsubstantiated written account, which is not corroborated elsewhere, states that in 1867 an African American man taught the first African American school in Liberty. He was also said to be the first African American commissioned by Governor Thomas Fletcher to establish free schools for African American children. Black History Files, Clay County Historical Society Archives, Liberty, Missouri.

³¹ Wolfenbarger, "African American Resources Survey Report," pp. 17-21.

³² The Mt. Zion Baptist Church is referred to locally as the oldest church in Liberty--white or black congregations. Other congregations were founded earlier; however, the scope of this study did not

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the church in 1843 when he was in his late teens. After worshiping in varying locations, the Baptist congregation purchased the present lot on N. Gallatin and constructed a church in approximately 1874. The church offered a variety of activities for its members; it had at least six choirs at one time, as well as other church organizations, which included the Mission Society, the Pride of Zion Club, and the Willa Herring Matrons. The St. Luke A.M.E. congregation was organized by Rev. Jesse Mills in 1875, and the church building was constructed in 1876 at 443 N. Main. The other significant African American church in Liberty was the Sanctified Church/Church of God in Christ/Humphrey Temple, located at 213 W. Shrader Street and established at an unknown date. The church was referred to as the Humphrey Temple after Rolla Humphrey, who helped to construct and maintain the buildings; it is also colloquially referred to as the "Holy Roller" church.³³

African American lodges also served as important social foundations for the Liberty's black community. They served to provide many of the social supports that were not available to African Americans otherwise. Masonic organizations were among the most important of these societies nationwide. In northern Missouri, enough African American Masonic chapters existed by 1869 for a conclave to be held. The (African American) Liberty Lodge #37 of the A.F. & A.M. was issued a charter in 1877. The first brick Masonic Lodge structure, built in the late 1800s, was once located on N. Main Street, near the Garrison School. This hall was torn down in the 1930s. In the 1980s the lodge met twice a month in a small hall on Grover Street. The lodge had about thirty members at that time.³⁴ Other important African American organizations in Liberty included the St. Matthews Commandery No. 17 of the Knights Templar of Liberty, who won the state drill contest in 1922; the Football Town Team organized in 1915; and its later version, the Liberty Athletic Club Team (which went undefeated for ten years).³⁵

Just as the social, religious, and educational institutions for African Americans in Liberty were segregated, so were the areas for housing. Historically, the African American population in Liberty has been concentrated in two areas. The first area is bounded by Francis Street on the north, N. Main Street on the east, Mississippi Street on the south, and N. Morse Street on the west. It appears that these lots were set aside for African Americans from the end of the Civil War, although documentation has not been found to verify this assumption. The section west of N. Grover was called "Happy Hollow," currently Ruth Moore Park. A second major section is bounded by Shrader, Pine, and Ford Streets on the north, Jewell and

confirm whether these other congregations are still in existence. The Mt. Zion Baptist Church is the First Baptist Church of Liberty, however, of any ethnic group.

³³Wolfenbarger, "African American Resources Survey Report," pp.21-23.

³⁴Ibid., pp. 23-24.

³⁵Withers, *Clay County Centennial*, p. 53; and Jackson, *Heritage of Liberty*, pp. 158-159.

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Leonard Streets on the east, Murray Road on the south, and the Burlington Railroad on the west.³⁶ This area near W. Shradler is popularly called "The Addition," or New Liberia (the name of the plat). The basic geographic distribution defined by these two areas has remained fairly constant through the present, and was illustrated by two maps in the city plan report prepared by Hare & Hare (ca. 1930s). At that time, students of grade school age were located north of Mississippi between Miller and Water streets, as well as in the location of the present Brooks Landing, along Pine, and on Richfield Road. Junior high and high school age African American students are located in the same areas, with a few additionally located on Doniphan Road east of Garrison School.³⁷

As was typical in segregated towns, Liberty residents wanted to maintain the separation of living areas. The official position of white residents in the 1930s, at least as expounded by Hare & Hare in their city plan, seemed to be that African Americans were a "useful element" whose welfare should be safeguarded, but that separation of housing areas "be controlled by mutual agreement between the races."³⁸ The proposed method of enforcing segregation was to continue confining African Americans to the two main districts in which they already lived, since there existed "ample area within these districts" according to the planners.

Conditions in these district were, of course, not equal to those in the white portions of town. Houses in the African American sections tended to be smaller, and, given the greater poverty of African Americans, in poorer condition. Electricity, water, and telephone service were installed at later dates than in white homes. Because many of the houses were not supplied with water, it had to be drawn from springs, such as the one near the present Franklin Elementary School at Mill and Gallatin Streets, and another near Pine and Missouri Streets.

³⁶The African-American neighborhoods fell into the following platted subdivisions: outlots in the Original Town of Liberty, platted about 1823; Corbin Place, was platted in 1888; Arnold's Addition, was platted in 1886; New Liberia, platted in 1888; Petty's Addition, was platted in 1889; Adkin's Addition, platted in 1881; Willmott's Addition, platted in 1899; Michael Arthur's Second Addition, platted in 1870; Suddarth Place, platted in 1890; Morse's Addition, was platted in 1884; Peter's Addition, platted prior to 1877; M.B. Brown's Subdivision, platted in 1887; and Bird & Glasgow Addition, platted prior to 1877.

In 1930, the two sections were defined as follows: the most populous section was bounded by Corbin Street on the north, Water Street on the east, Mississippi on the south, and Morse Avenue on the west. The second area was bounded by Pine Street on the north, railroad tracks on the south and west, and a creek on the east.

³⁷Hare & Hare, "A City Plan for Liberty, Missouri," accompanying maps.

³⁸Ibid., p. 6. Hare & Hare not only recognized the existing segregation but perpetuated the practice in planning by preserving these geographic divisions.

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Housing standards were particularly low during the Depression. A 1938 newspaper article admitted that "there is not a house that [African Americans] can buy, or rent that is fit to live in, and in a number of cases there are several families living together in very crowded quarters."³⁹ The housing shortage was exacerbated during this period because many white families were on relief and, unable to afford houses in the white portion of town, bought homes in African American neighborhoods, displacing African Americans from the only neighborhoods open to them.

Even after segregation was declared unconstitutional, African Americans in Liberty did not move out of the two traditionally African American sections in great numbers. Some, particularly those who had lived in the area for many years, stayed because they were older and had neither the desire or financial resources to move. Many younger African Americans who could have afforded housing in previously white areas moved out of Liberty because of the lack of job opportunities. It was not until the 1970s that segregation of residential housing ended and African Americans were finally allowed to purchase residences in any part of the city.

Architecture

The majority of buildings constructed in the late 1800s up through World War I in these African American neighborhoods were simple examples of "National Folk" types, including some types not typically found in other sections of Liberty. A few shotgun, single pen, and several double pen and half--and-parlor houses remain, although the vast majority have been altered. After the turn of the century, new construction was more likely to contain architectural features of the period, such as bungalows with Craftsman detailing.

A Midwestern Community: Liberty from 1822 through 1946.

Several factors combined to influence the development of Liberty from its inception through the end of World War II. Some of these factors were unique to Liberty; others are representative of small, Midwestern towns. The factors which affected the development of Liberty over the years were: its selection as the county seat of Clay County; the central courthouse square plan of the "Original Town" plat, with the square situated in a lower flat area surrounded by hills on three sides; its location high above the river flood plain, yet within proximity to the Missouri River; its ability to provide goods and services for trade to the northwest; the high number of educational institutions; the securing of railroad lines; a stable, slow-growing economy and population; increased transportation opportunities between Kansas City and Liberty allowing for suburban-type development patterns. The majority of these factors have been introduced in earlier contexts within this document. They are discussed herein for their association with *Community Planning and Development*, and their effect on the physical appearance and layout of Liberty's historic neighborhoods.

The site chosen for the new town of Liberty provided safety from the frequent flooding of the nearby Missouri River, yet it was still close enough to the river that merchants in Liberty could benefit from river traffic. Liberty Landing, on the river itself, served as one of the main ports for northwest Missouri for

³⁹"The Liberty Negro is Title of Church Paper," *Liberty Tribune*, 26 February 1938.

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several decades. Steamboats traveling from St. Louis on the Missouri would fire a cannon when several miles away from Liberty Landing, allowing merchants and residents of Liberty plenty of time to reach the river.⁴⁰ The town of Liberty was platted shortly after its selection as the county seat in 1822. At this time there were only eight houses within its boundaries. The "Original Town" plat featured a central courthouse square plan surrounded by small lots. Although a copy of the "Original Town" plat no longer exists at City Hall, the 1877 county atlas reveals the probable original layout (see Figure 1). The courthouse square was bounded by Franklin on the north, Water on the east, Kansas on the south, and Main on the West. Other east/west streets in the Original Town plat were Mill and Mississippi streets. North/south streets included Prairie, Gallatin, Missouri, Leonard, and possibly Lightburne streets. The small lots extended two blocks to the north, one block to the south, two blocks and one lot to the west, and between one to three blocks on the east. The rectangular blocks were longer in their north/south axis than along the east/west axis. The central courthouse square plan determined the development of the commercial area, and also affected the residential sections. The four streets bounding the central square were the earliest arteries into the town, and development naturally occurred in these areas first. Many of Liberty's oldest residences are located on these streets.

Historical maps, atlases, or other primary data is not available for determining the location or extent of the earliest construction in Liberty. The earliest map of the city is from 1877, and it primarily reveals the platted lots at that time. However, some inferences can be drawn from this map. A greater number of residential lots and churches are located north of the Courthouse Square, which combined with the fact that a number of antebellum residences are extant in the area north of the square, indicates that most of the earliest development occurred north of the Courthouse.

As the county seat and the leading provider of goods and services within the county, Liberty had by far the greatest number of roads in the county connecting it with other communities. The location of these major arteries also affected development in the town. The 1877 atlas reveals a veritable hub of roads radiating around Liberty (see Figure 2). While some of these led directly into the Courthouse Square, others connected with the city at its boundaries or at the edge of the commercial district. Growing travel and trade between Liberty and Fort Leavenworth encouraged residential construction on the connecting roads; the roads leading to other settlements in Clay County, such as Barry, Gallatin, Kearney, and Excelsior Springs, and to other county seats north of the Missouri River, such as Richmond and Lexington, were among the major arterial transportation routes.

The numerous schools, seminaries, and institutions of higher learning found in the community also impacted Liberty's development. These educational institutions attracted students and professors, giving the community a "cultured" appeal not found in other nearby towns, and affected the development of some residential areas. Although little primary data is available to directly correlate the effect of education on the community's physical layout, many sources provide examples of residents' opinions of the importance of

⁴⁰Jackson, *Heritage of Liberty*, pp. 3-4.

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education to Liberty's economy and development. An editorial in the July 25, 1846 in the *Liberty Tribune* newspaper states that:

Liberty, in its comprehensive, national sense, can only be preserved, strengthened and enlarged by virtue and intelligence . . . , can only be kept from becoming a place for 'bats and owls' by enlarging the means of educating the youth of the county.

The editorial further emphasized the importance of education over commerce in Liberty by going on to state that Liberty:

has no commercial advantages, beyond that of any other spot of land in the county; but it has the most superior advantages for schools. These advantages are: First, as healthy a situation as can be found in North America; Second, good water; Third, a dense population around it; Fourthly, it would command a large portion of several adjoining counties.⁴¹

Over forty years later on December 20, 1898, an editorial in the *Liberty Tribune* noted that as Liberty would not usurp other larger cities as a commercial center:

. . . she must place her main reliance for prosperity in the future on her schools and colleges. She must and will attract the youth from all parts of the country to her institutions of learning. This is now being done and William Jewell College, Clay Seminary and our Public Schools . . . will . . . conduce more to our prosperity than all our other advantages put together. The future of Liberty in respect to education is brilliant. If she can not be a busy mart she can be a great educational center.⁴²

Again in 1922, the *Clay County, Missouri Centennial Souvenir* noted "Liberty's greatest interest has always been in education and from the beginning she has had good schools."⁴³

Particularly in the early part of Liberty's development, the number of educational institutions in town had a profound effect on the economy. For example, in 1847, there were 170 pupils from Clay, Ray and Platte Counties enrolled in the Liberty Male and Female Seminary, while there were only 744 residents in all of Liberty at that time.⁴⁴ In addition to the numerous schools attracting students to the community, the location of these various institutions influenced housing and residential development in Liberty and impacted the quality of life in the community. The location of the William Jewell College campus, for example, encouraged construction on the east end of town, and other institutions had the same effect. Many schools or academies either located in existing residential buildings or constructed new buildings

⁴¹ Jackson, *Heritage of Liberty*, p. 5.

⁴² Withers, *Clay County Centennial*, p. 129.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

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which resembled the surrounding housing stock. Additionally, neighboring homes were used to house out-of-town boarding students, and likely additions were made to existing residences for this purpose. Some fraternity residences were constructed for students at William Jewell, and several residences were eventually completely converted to apartments for other Jewell students.

Transportation was another key factor in the development of Liberty. Securing rail lines insured that Liberty, although never a major shipping point, would not be cut off from the rest of the country. In addition to impacting the city's economy, the railroad affected the physical layout of the town. New commercial and industrial businesses were established along the railroad corridor, which lay just south of the Courthouse Square. For a time this corridor served as an effective southern boundary to residential development in Liberty, further encouraging construction to the north, east, and west sides of the square. Property along Leonard Street, which was the primary road leading south of town across the railroad line, was not subdivided until the latter half of the nineteenth century.

In the early part of the twentieth century, new bridges across the Missouri River, the Interurban electric rail line, and automobile traffic changed the face of development in Liberty even further. With the problem of crossing the Missouri River and travel to and from Kansas City settled, Liberty could finally compete with other surrounding small towns as a suburban community. Representative of the nationwide trend, transportation was changing the way urban centers developed in the early twentieth century. First streetcars, then trains and automobiles permitted and even encouraged new housing to be constructed away from the densely populated cities and in the ever more distant suburbs. Starting in the 1890s, well-to-do American citizens were able to commute to work at an urban center from a distant neighborhood or even a small outlying town, such as Liberty. Although Americans had long glorified rural living as a more "natural" and preferable existence, by the turn of the century the majority of our nation's population was no longer living on farms. Although the best wages were to be had in the city, the suburbs were perceived as the best place to raise a family. Liberty was far enough from Kansas City to retain important rural qualities but was now close enough, due to increased transportation opportunities, to allow commuting. There were open fields and wooded areas nearby, and without paying city prices for land, homeowners could afford a large enough lot to have a good-sized garden behind the house with a front lawn setting it off from the street.

Liberty did not immediately become a suburban community. The rate of growth up through the second World War was still slow and steady. Lots were still available in the close-in older neighborhoods surrounding the Courthouse Square. Where lots were not available, sometimes older houses were demolished, making way for newer residences. In general, though, the older houses were well maintained throughout their history, and these neighborhoods surrounding the Square never really fell out of favor. Due to Liberty's slow, stable economy, these neighborhoods surrounding the Square remain as excellent examples of the more gradual and relaxed pace of small town development and retain their integrity, thus representing an important aspect of the community's history. Because of this random building pattern, antebellum homes in Liberty are often adjacent to Craftsman bungalows, which in turn might be across the street from a Queen Anne cottage.

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Although the residential development within Liberty's historic neighborhoods surrounding the Square is representative of change over time, the layout and size really did not change much from what had been established in the 1800s through the early twentieth century. A 1930s city plan prepared by Hare & Hare, a nationally recognized landscape architectural firm, noted the physical conditions at that time which characterized Liberty's development.

The topography of the district in which Liberty is situated in [is] quite broken, and the total difference in elevation within the city limits is more than two hundred feet. The town itself consists of a group of hills, ridges and valleys. The Court House is located near the south end of a ridge which extends north to the city limits, then turns northwest for several miles. At the northeast section of the city is a hill on which William Jewell College is located, and this site overlooks a broad valley to the east and south. Another ridge, starting at about the center of the south city limits, runs southeast into the country. The west half of the city is a group of hills . . . The natural expansion of the town is limited on the north by a sharp break of grade, and on the east and to some extent on the south by lower land and railroads.⁴⁵

Hare & Hare also noted that the town was laid out on a rectangular grid pattern, which unfortunately does not fit the topography in some places. Topographical barriers have tended to cause gaps in the rectangular street system, and relatively few streets extend entirely across the city. For instance, the north part of the city is entirely lacking in any through street between the east and west side of town.⁴⁶

At the time of Hare & Hare's report, Liberty had not benefited from any formal planning. As with many other small towns, however, there had been no need for formal planning, because as Hare & Hare felt, "Liberty is not destined to be a large city."⁴⁷ The planners did not find any congested areas of development, and noted that the permanent population (i.e., not including William Jewell students) was fairly evenly distributed over the developed areas of the city (see Figure 3).⁴⁸

Liberty's development to this point was the result of a combination of physical, locational, and economic factors, creating a community which was both unique in some aspects, and at the same time, representative of small towns across the Midwest. The geographic location gave it unique physical characteristics. It was located on high ground at a distance from the river, which made it safe from

⁴⁵Hare & Hare, "A City Plan for Liberty, Missouri: A Report of the City Planning Commission, 1930-1934," pp. 2-3.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 11.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 4.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 7.

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flooding but still provided opportunity from early river traffic. The hills surrounding the Courthouse Square also provided unique vantage points for some of the key educational institutions in the community. As the county seat, Liberty was afforded economic benefits from the business and service industries associated with that branch of local government. This, in turn, assured that the town would remain linked to other parts of the region with various forms of transportation. The physical plan of the Courthouse Square also affected the historic development of the town. Racial segregation within the community affected the residential patterns of African Americans within Liberty, as did the location of the numerous educational institutions. The slow, steady growth of the city preserved the building patterns within the residential neighborhoods up through the second World War. After World War II, the growth of the city was focused in other areas of town and the historic neighborhoods surrounding the Courthouse Square were not substantially affected in an adverse way. Today, the city is fortunate to have districts representative of these community development trends with a high degree of integrity.

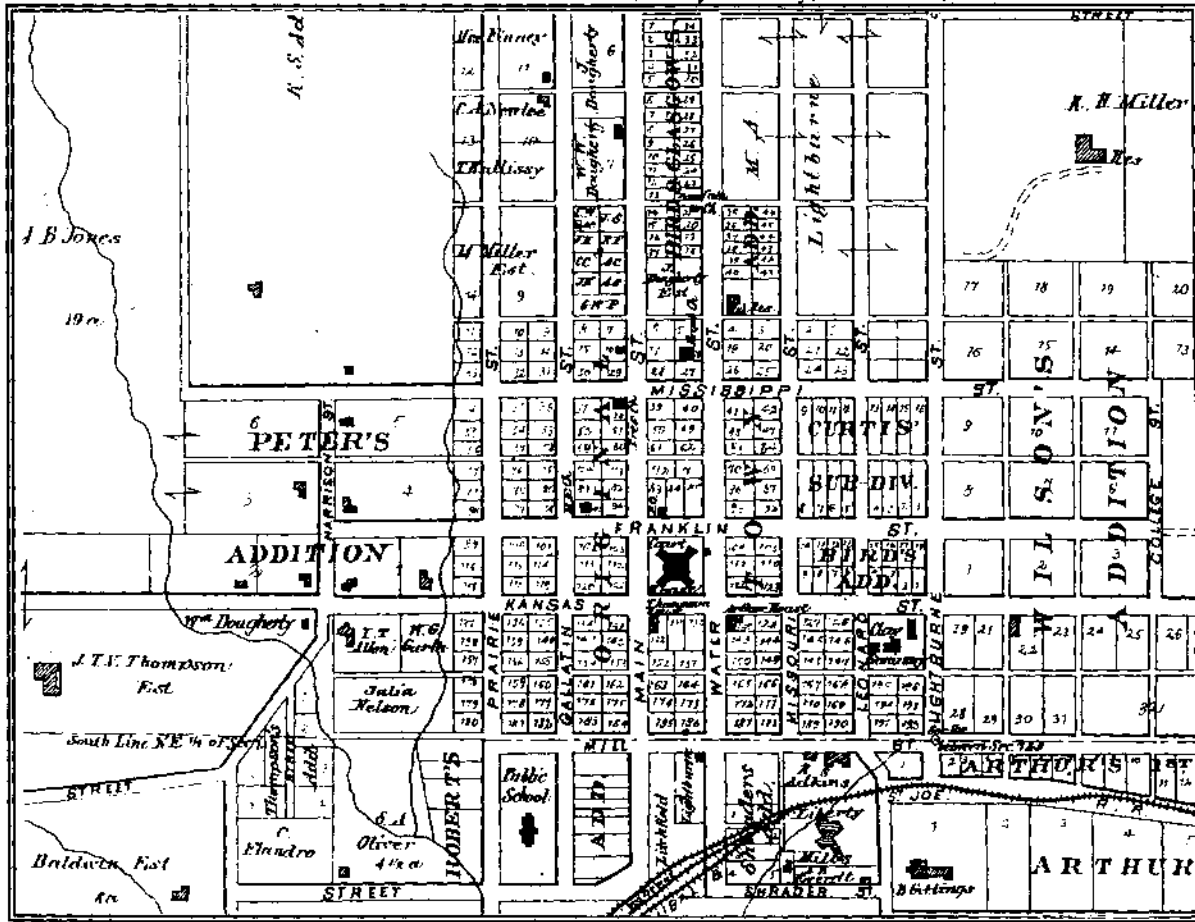
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Figure 1
from *An Illustrated Historical Atlas; Clay County, Missouri, 1877.*



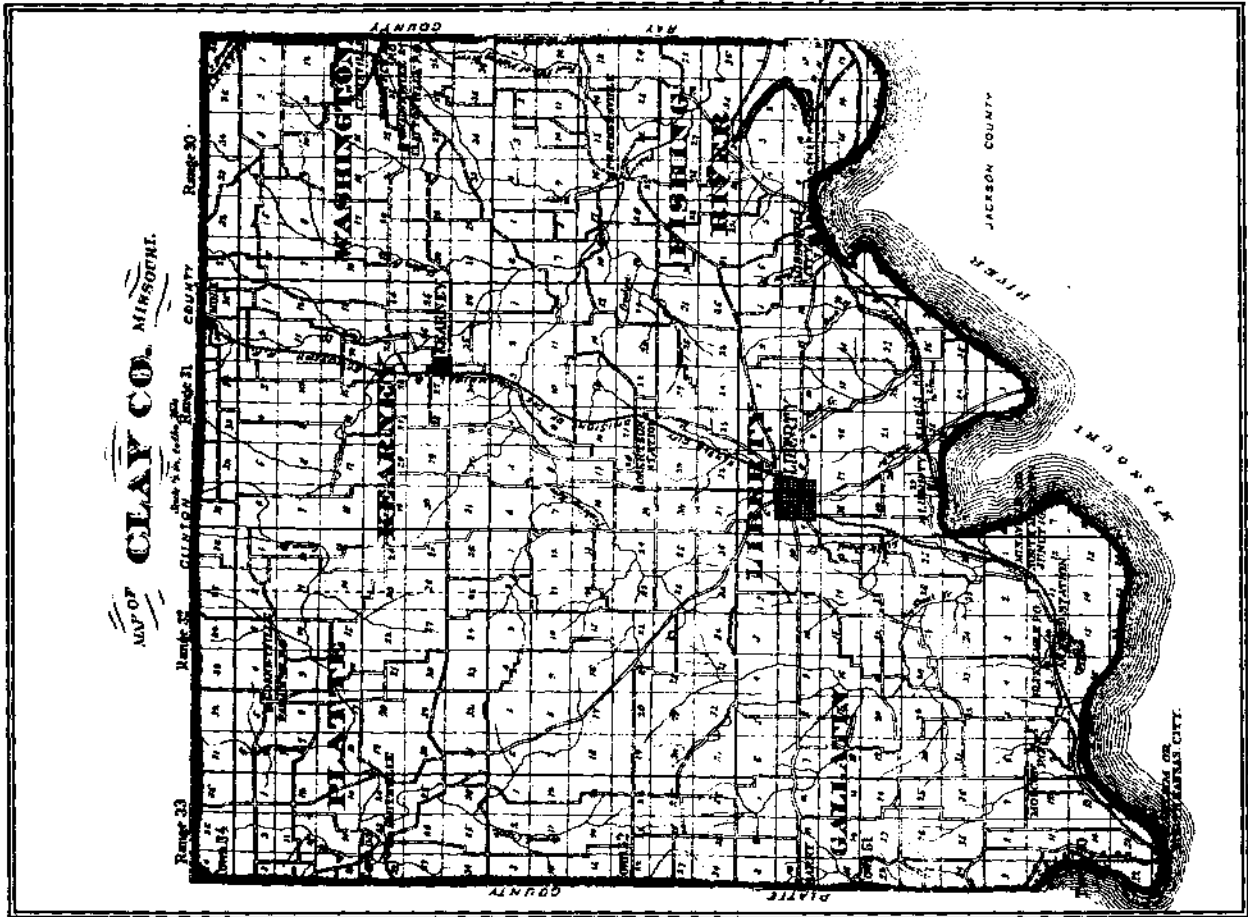
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Figure 2
from *An Illustrated Historical Atlas; Clay County, Missouri, 1877.*



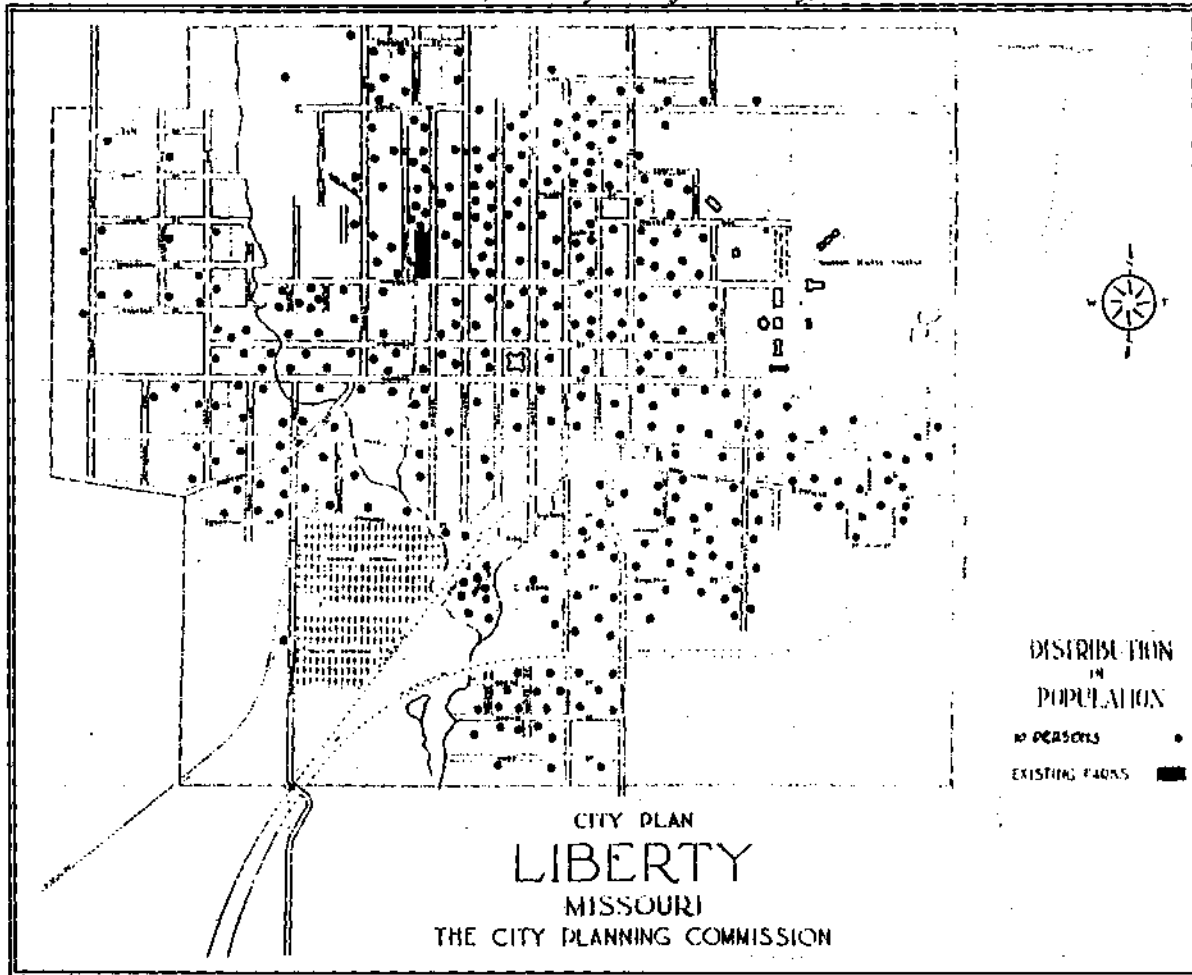
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Figure 3
Distribution of Population (ca. 1930s)
from Hare & Hare, "A City Plan for Liberty, Missouri."



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F. Associated Property Types

I. Name of Property Type: *Greek Revival Residences*

II. Description



Built from the 1830s through 1860s in Liberty and usually of brick construction, Greek Revival residences were often the first substantial homes constructed in and around the community after the initial settlement dwellings. Building traditions of the Upland South were perpetuated by the brick construction, with chimneys usually placed at opposite ends of the main block. The Greek Revival style is distinguished by its simple rectangular form with a symmetrical appearance on the facade. The window and door openings are the principal areas of decoration, generally coupled with some form of cornice elaboration. Typical identifying features include: a low-pitched gable or hip roof; a cornice line emphasized with a band of trim; boxed cornice returns or full pedimented gable ends; and a

pedimented or flat-roofed entry supported by classically-inspired columns (if original). The windows are generally multi-paned with either rectangular or triangular molded lintels. The entry door is a dominant feature, and it generally has either sidelights, transoms, or both with rectangular glass panes. The entry door, in turn, is usually set within a larger, decorative enframingent. A wide band of trim beneath the cornice may contain dentils, or may consist of flat unadorned boards. Although some Greek Revival residences are located within Liberty's historic residential districts, others are located on what were the outer edges of the city at the time of their construction.

III. Significance

The Greek Revival Residences are significant under Criterion C in the area of *Architecture* as good examples of a style which was enormously popular in nineteenth century America. The Greek Revival style sustained its popularity longer than any other style of the period. It was identified with the ideals of ancient Greece, and was a visual attempt to link the world's oldest and newest republics. Most residential examples were constructed between 1830 and 1860 in Liberty, when the style was popularized by carpenter's guides and pattern books. In Liberty, these houses are typically associated with settlers from the Upland South. Some of the examples are substantial mansions built for farmers with large holdings of land supported by a slave economy, while other more modest versions nonetheless reflect the civilized aspirations of its owners. These residences represent the change from a pioneering settlement to a more refined community (see "Establishing a City: Liberty from 1817-1860").

IV. Registration Requirements

Under criterion C in the area of *Architecture*, a resource must have been constructed in the decades from the 1830s through the 1860s, and be a good example of the Greek Revival style. As representative of emigrant building traditions, the building should also be a good example of a type or method of residential

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construction. This is particularly true for the examples which are folk housing forms to which Greek Revival features have been applied. In these instances, individually eligible buildings must have integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. This includes original floor plan, roof, and fenestration patterns clearly distinguishable on the front or main facade. Original main door enframingent should be retained. Rear alterations are acceptable in all cases providing they are not so large as to overwhelm the original portion of the building when viewed from the public right-of-way. Additions to the side should also not overwhelm the original block (which must still be clearly evident), and should be secondary in all features. Original exterior wall cladding material should be present. Higher style Greek Revival residences should additionally retain the original features of an accentuated doorway, which will usually include transom and sidelights incorporated into an elaborate door surround. This door enframingent may have varied pediments but usually features classically inspired pilasters at the sides. A cornice band representing a classical entablature should also be present at the main roof. Many of the Greek Revival residences were associated with agriculture, and were formerly sited on properties with large acreage. As the City of Liberty has grown over the years, nearly all of these residences are now situated on much smaller lots. Therefore, integrity of setting is not critical. Integrity of location often provides important references for historic association and should generally be required. The majority of extant Greek Revival residences are located on roads which formerly served as main arteries leading into Liberty's commercial center at the Courthouse Square.

As one of the oldest surviving residential property types in Liberty, it is not surprising that few examples of Greek Revival residences remain. Those that do have undergone additions and/or alterations.¹ Allowable alterations include non-original front porches, providing that porch is historic and thus has achieved its own significance over time, or is complementary in materials, mass, and form to the Greek Revival style. For Greek Revival residences which are contributing to a historic district, the original form of the building should still be evident. This would be noted by original floor plan on the historic portion and original fenestration patterns. Original door enframingent should be evident, but the door itself may be non-historic. Additions to the rear and side would be allowed if those alterations did not overwhelm the original in mass or scale.

I. Name of Property Type: *Residential Historic Districts*

II. Description

Liberty's *Residential Historic Districts* are cohesive collections of dwellings that are associated with one or more of the historic contexts which represent the town's developmental phases. The historic buildings are linked historically by their association with the economic and social trends outlined in Section E, and united visually and aesthetically by their physical development and concentrations. This property type can include districts in which one architectural style or type is dominant resulting from the majority of houses being built at one time. More typically, however, the property type includes a variety of styles or types from different periods of American architecture. This variety of styles is the direct result of Liberty's long period

¹Based upon information gathered in grant-funded intensive survey.

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of slow but steady growth. This property type includes buildings within the districts which were constructed from before the Civil War through World War II. The majority of buildings within a residential district are over fifty years in age, and although primarily residential in nature, they may contain a few commercial, religious, or public use buildings, which reinforce the cohesiveness of the historic neighborhood, or, in the case of African American districts, the isolation of the neighborhood. Most non-contributing buildings within this property type are garages, and a very few historic buildings have been substantially altered.

As noted, there are a wide variety of housing forms and styles within the most common type of Liberty's residential historic districts, ranging from vernacular to comparatively high-style examples. This variety not only reflects the pattern of development in the community, but it also presents a good view of small town American residential architecture from around the Civil War up through World War II. Not only is there a variety of housing types, but the buildings vary in mass, materials, roof types, and size of lots. Occasionally, a small group of nearly identical buildings might be found along a portion of a block. These usually are smaller buildings, such as bungalows or Queen Anne cottages. There is no discernable pattern in the location of the various housing types. Large Victorian or antebellum houses are just as likely to be found in the middle of the block as on a corner lot. Exceptions to this type of development, however, are found in the residential districts significant in the area of ETHNIC HERITAGE for their association with Liberty's African American population. These neighborhoods were confined to two areas of the city and contain a large number of National folk type houses to the exclusion of "high style" residences.

The most common vernacular or National folk houses (a general category used by Virginia and Lee McAlester to describe modest or vernacular residential dwellings built from about 1850 through 1890 and beyond) in Liberty are *gable-front* houses, *gable-front & wings*, *I-houses*, *hall & parlors*, *double-pens*, and *pyramidal* houses.² The gable-front, as the name implies, has a front-gabled shape which mimics the pedimented temple facades of the Greek Revival style. Gable-front & wings have a side-gabled wing at right angles to the gable-front section, forming an L-shaped plan. I-houses are typically two stories in height, two rooms wide, and one room deep. Many of Liberty's I-houses vary from the typical form in that they were often one-and-a-half stories in height. Several also had centered peaked wall gables. Hall & parlor houses are simple one-story side-gabled houses that are two rooms wide and one room deep. Double pen houses are two rooms wide and one room deep, with each of the rooms having a front door. Pyramidal houses have a square plan with pyramidal hipped roofs. Many of these National folk house forms had Victorian details applied, and are sometimes referred to as *Folk Victorian* houses.³ After the turn of the century, the forms of residential housing in American underwent significant changes from the previous period. The most common in Liberty include *bungalows* or *bungaloids*, generally thought of as one- or one-and-a-half story houses with porch roofs extending from that of the main house and sweeping over a verandah. Typically Craftsman-style features were found in the porch supports, windows, and exposed rafters or brackets in the eaves. A *foursquare* house is a two-story building, two rooms wide and

²Virginia & Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984) p. 89.

³*Ibid.*, p. 309.

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two rooms deep, also with a low-pitched roof. The features and details of both structures borrow from the Prairie and Craftsman styles and include elements such as wide, overhanging eaves, square or tapered porch supports, full length front porches, and horizontal groupings of windows.

Of those houses with a discernable style, representatives of popular styles range from the latter half of the nineteenth century through the first half of the twentieth century. Some of the most common styles include the *Italianate*, *Queen Anne*, *Colonial Revival*, and *Tudor Revival*. Liberty's *Italianate* houses are two stories in height and have low-pitched gable or hip roofs, with wide, overhanging eaves accented with decorative brackets on a wide trim band. The windows are tall and narrow, often with elaborate molded crowns. *Queen Anne* houses feature steeply pitched roofs with irregular shapes, asymmetrical facades, partial or full-width porches (sometimes wrap-around), varying window types and sizes, bay windows, spindlework porches, and varying wall textures. There are a few large extant Queen Anne houses in Liberty, but the majority in the residential districts are smaller, one-story versions. The *Colonial Revival* style has identifying features which include an accentuated front door, such as a decorative pediment or crown supported by pilasters or a pedimented portico serving as the entry porch. The facades are symmetrically arranged, and windows are double-hung and multi-paned. The examples of the *Tudor Revival* subtype in Liberty are generally modest, but are typical of those found in the larger Kansas City metropolitan area in the early twentieth century. Common identifying features are steeply pitched roofs, with at least one front-facing gable. Many have ornamental false half-timbering and stucco in the upper story. The windows are tall and narrow, often in bands of twos or threes, and are multi-paned, some with diamond-shaped lights.

In addition to the type, age, and concentration of residential buildings, landscape features and setting are diagnostic elements of this property type. Liberty's residential historic districts are generally located near the historic courthouse square. For the most part, the boundaries of these historic districts start at the edge of the historic commercial or light industrial parts of Liberty and end with a natural or man-made feature. Boundaries do not necessarily represent the original plat boundaries, but instead reflect the highest concentration of extant historic buildings as determined by previous survey. There is some uniformity among the earliest examples of this property type due to the grid pattern of streets imposed upon the hilly topography; later districts, particularly post-WWII, tended to be more responsive to the topography and feature curving roads. There are a few remaining historic brick streets. Some of the older streets do not provide automobile egress to the lot; instead, the owners use gravel alleys to the rear to reach their garages or parking area. Most garages were constructed after the original house, which differs from post-WWII neighborhoods where the garage is usually attached to the residence. Some have granite curbs. Concrete sidewalks are along one or both sides of the street. Original historic street lights line the sidewalks. The straight visual sight lines along a street in a district are further emphasized by the mature street trees. The neatly mowed lawns and manicured flower beds add to the picturesque setting, and Liberty's residential historic districts are in good to excellent condition.

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III. Significance

Liberty's Residential Historic Districts may be significant under criterion A in the area of *Community Planning and Development*, and/or under criterion C in the area of *Architecture*. Some may also be eligible under criterion A in the area of *Ethnic Heritage*. Although these residential historic districts may contain buildings that might be individually eligible for listing in the National Register, this property type presents a more complete cross-section of Liberty's developmental history.

Under criterion A, Liberty's residential historic districts are significant for their association with the town's development. Districts that contain a majority of residences from a specific period are good representatives of a boom period in Liberty's history. The districts which contain a wide variety of styles and forms, however, are representative of the slow and steady economic growth of the city which lasted prior to the Civil War up through World War II. As a cohesive collection of buildings, residential historic districts better represent Liberty's development than could a single building. The layout of the roads and the first platted lot sizes reflect the plans of Liberty's earliest citizens for the city's development and growth, even though Liberty's subsequent growth through the rest of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century was generally haphazard in appearance. Subdivisions and new additions to the town were platted which added residential lots to the city in a regular manner and appearance on paper, but, in reality, construction of new houses occurred differently. Slow but steady growth gave rise to a need for new housing, but not at such a rate that block after block of residences were constructed at the same time. Instead, an Italianate house might be built in the 1870s; ten years later a Queen Anne cottage might be constructed next door; and twenty years might go by before the surrounding vacant lots would contain a house. In the years after World War II up through the present, the vast majority of new construction in Liberty occurs within a planned subdivision where the adjoining houses are virtually identical. Styles are generally not mixed within a development, and most new houses in a subdivision are within a similar price range.

Under criterion C, Liberty's residential districts are a virtual textbook sampling of homes typically constructed in the Midwest from the 1850s through World War II. Nearly every style of American residential architecture can be found, from the simple to the more elaborate. Styles and/or residence types found in Liberty range from examples of National Folk houses -- including gable-front, gable-front & wing, I-houses, pyramidal, double-pen, and hall & parlor -- to high style examples, such as Queen Anne and Italianate houses from the late nineteenth century, and Colonial Revival and Tudor Revival houses in the early twentieth century. Also after the turn-of-the-century, many pattern-book type houses were constructed, such as bungalows and foursquares.

Liberty's residential districts associated with African American residents are also significant under criterion A in the area of *Ethnic Heritage*. Confined to two areas of town until the 1970s, the African American neighborhoods were the centers of social, economic, educational, and religious life for Liberty's African American residents. Churches, businesses, school, home, and family all combined to provide the support necessary to survive in a segregated community. The buildings associated with these institutions were all found in the two segregated neighborhoods. Black businesses were not allowed in the commercial center of Liberty, the Courthouse Square. Instead, African American entrepreneurs ran their businesses out of

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their homes. Although in actual numbers the African American population grew slowly after the Civil War, as a percentage of Liberty's overall population they steadily decreased from approximately a quarter of the population to just 3% in 1970. It appears that new African American residents were not attracted to Liberty, although many African American families have resided in the city since prior to the Civil War.

IV. Registration Requirements

To be eligible under Criterion A in the area of *Community Development and Planning*, a residential historic district must be a cohesive collection of primarily residential properties that are reflective of one or more periods of Liberty's development. To be eligible under Criterion C in the area of *Architecture*, a residential historic district must contain good examples of architectural styles, types, or periods of construction common to or distinctive of the city of Liberty.

A residential historic district must possess a significant concentration of historic (at least fifty years old) buildings, and the majority (over fifty percent) must be contributing. This requires that the individual resources must retain most of their integrity, and that the district overall presents a historic sense of time and place. Under Criterion A, the districts must retain integrity of association, setting, and location. Contributing buildings should depict the period of their historic association. Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship for individual buildings are not as critical, providing that any reduction of integrity in these areas does not significantly change the overall appearance of the district. The district should retain integrity of design in its street pattern, however. Retention of historic materials, such as street lights or brick streets, adds significantly to the historic ambience.

Under Criterion C, residential historic districts must contain good examples of an architectural style, type, or period of construction. The district should have buildings representative of the period. Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship are more important under Criterion C. Contributing buildings should not have been substantially remodeled within the past fifty years. Original building form and plan, fenestration patterns, and a historic porch are features which are critical for a building to be considered contributing to a residential historic district. As a residential historic district property type, a large number of the residences may lack individual distinction, but as a group, they possess greater significance in both areas of consideration.

For residential historic districts which are significant in the area of *Ethnic Heritage: Black*, the contributing buildings must be associated with the African American community in Liberty. This is especially critical for buildings which have suffered some loss of integrity in materials or design. A survey of African American resources in Liberty, completed in 1995, revealed that there are virtually no buildings remaining which have been unaltered since the time of their original construction. The buildings that remain are the only representatives of the African American built environment in the city. Therefore, a lower degree of integrity in materials, relative to those resources which are not related to the African American context, is acceptable for buildings which contribute to districts significant in the areas of *Ethnic Heritage*. Integrity of location is critical; the buildings must be located in the areas identified in the 1994-1995 survey of African American resources in Liberty, which were the areas historically reserved for African Americans, in the segregated society of which Liberty was a part. The two main areas of African American development in

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Historic Resources of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri

Liberty are north of the square, roughly around the Mt. Zion Baptist Church and the Garrison School, and south of the square near the present day Brook's Landing. Again, due to intervening demolition, the African American districts in Liberty will likely be small pockets of extant historic buildings separated by new construction.

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Historic Resources of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri

G. Geographical Data

The 1995 city limits of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri.

H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

This amendment to the multiple property listing, "Historic Resources of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri," is based upon survey efforts conducted by the City of Liberty from 1984 to 1987, and upon the survey of African American resources conducted in 1994-95. An analysis of this latest survey was presented in "African American Architectural/Historic Resources, Liberty, Missouri: Survey Report" completed in September 1995. Combined with the previous survey, approximately 760 buildings have been inventoried in Liberty through 1995. All survey was conducted according to N.R. Bulletin 24.

This amendment focuses on the historic residential neighborhoods surrounding Liberty's Courthouse Square. The consultant, city staff, and Missouri Historic Preservation Program staff reviewed the aforementioned documentation and developed the boundaries for five proposed historic districts. Thus the context and property type analysis was limited to these residential districts. The selection of the "Liberty Residential Districts" property type was based upon the study of the fullest extent of the significant historic values of the related resources: i.e., the significance of Liberty's collection of historic residences lay with the group as a whole, not with the individual buildings. Property types based upon individual building forms and/or styles sharing similar architectural features was explored and later abandoned when such definitions resulted in narrowly defined types. The "Liberty Residential Districts" property type is based on the resources' function, form, and association with the historic contexts. The "Greek Revival Residences" property type was based on style. Integrity requirements for these two property types were based on a knowledge of the condition of existing properties.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

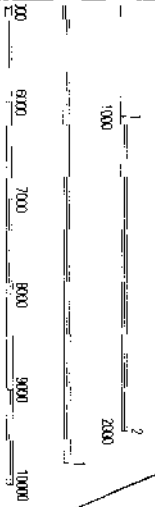
Section number G.H Page 2

Historic Resources of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri

This amendment to the multiple property listing, "Historic Resources of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri," is based upon survey efforts conducted by the City of Liberty from 1984 to 1987, and upon the survey of African American resources conducted in 1994-95. An analysis of this latest survey was presented in "African American Architectural/Historic Resources, Liberty, Missouri: Survey Report" completed in September 1995. Combined with the previous survey, approximately 760 buildings have been inventoried in Liberty through 1995. All survey was conducted according to N.R. Bulletin 24.

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MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
 FOLLOWING FEDERAL SURVEYING
 AND LAND SURVEYING
 STANDARDS, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
 SOURCE: ROLLA, MISSOURI 65401
 SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

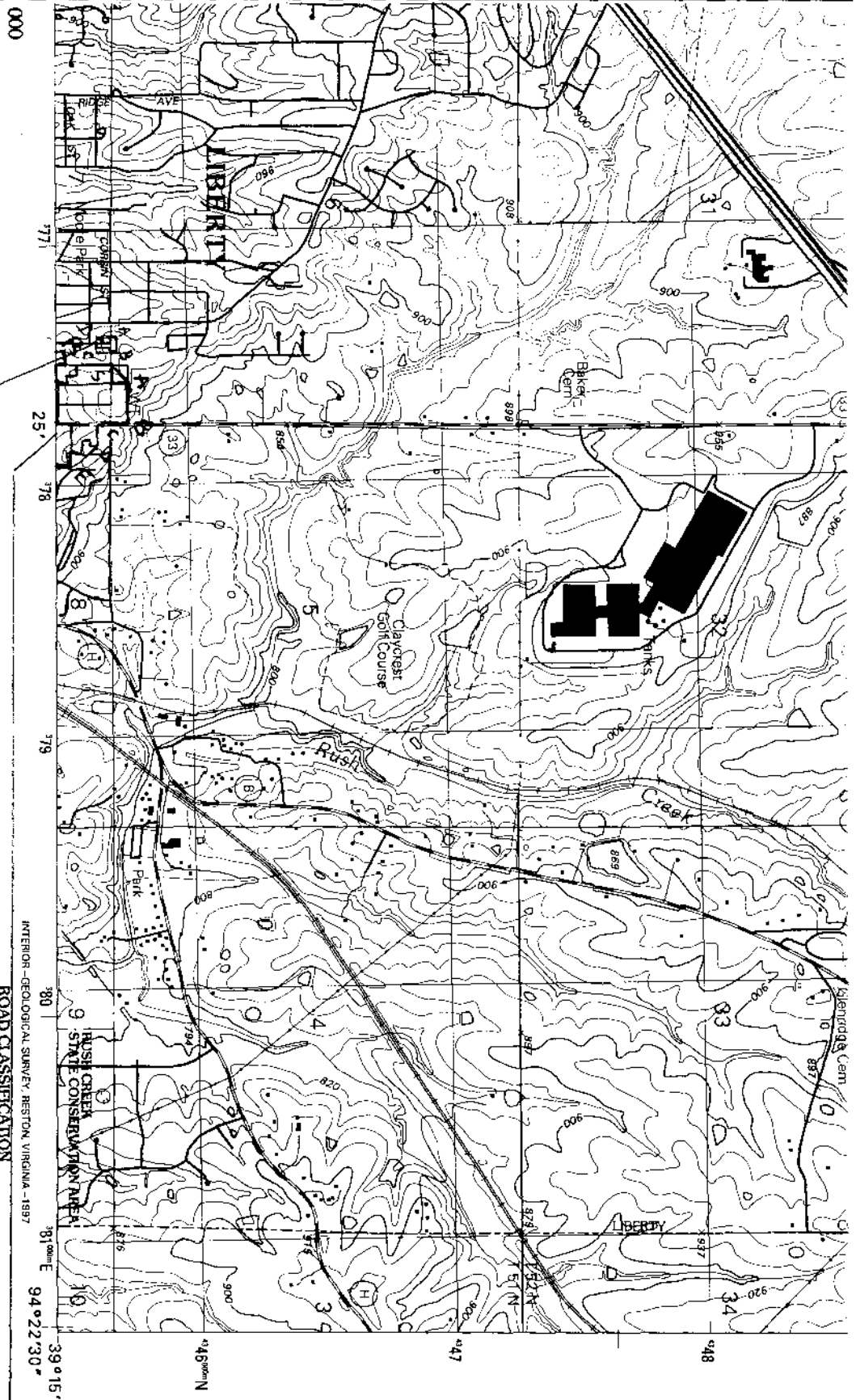


QUADRANGLE LOCATION

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8

1 Southville
 2 Arley
 3 Holt
 4 Nashua
 5 Kearney
 6 North Kansas City
 7 Liberty
 8 Missouri City

ADJOINING 7.5' QUADRANGLE NAMES



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- Primary highway hard surface
- Secondary highway hard surface
- Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
- Unimproved road
- Interstate Route
- U.S. Route
- State Route

Historic Resources of Liberty, Clay County, MO

Garrison School Historic District

Clay County, MO KEARNEY SW, MO

- A. 15/377420/4345720
 - B. 15/377490/4345720
 - C. 15/377490/4345640
 - D. 15/377420/4345640
- 39094-C4-TF-024 1990
 DNA 7162 IV SW SERIES V879

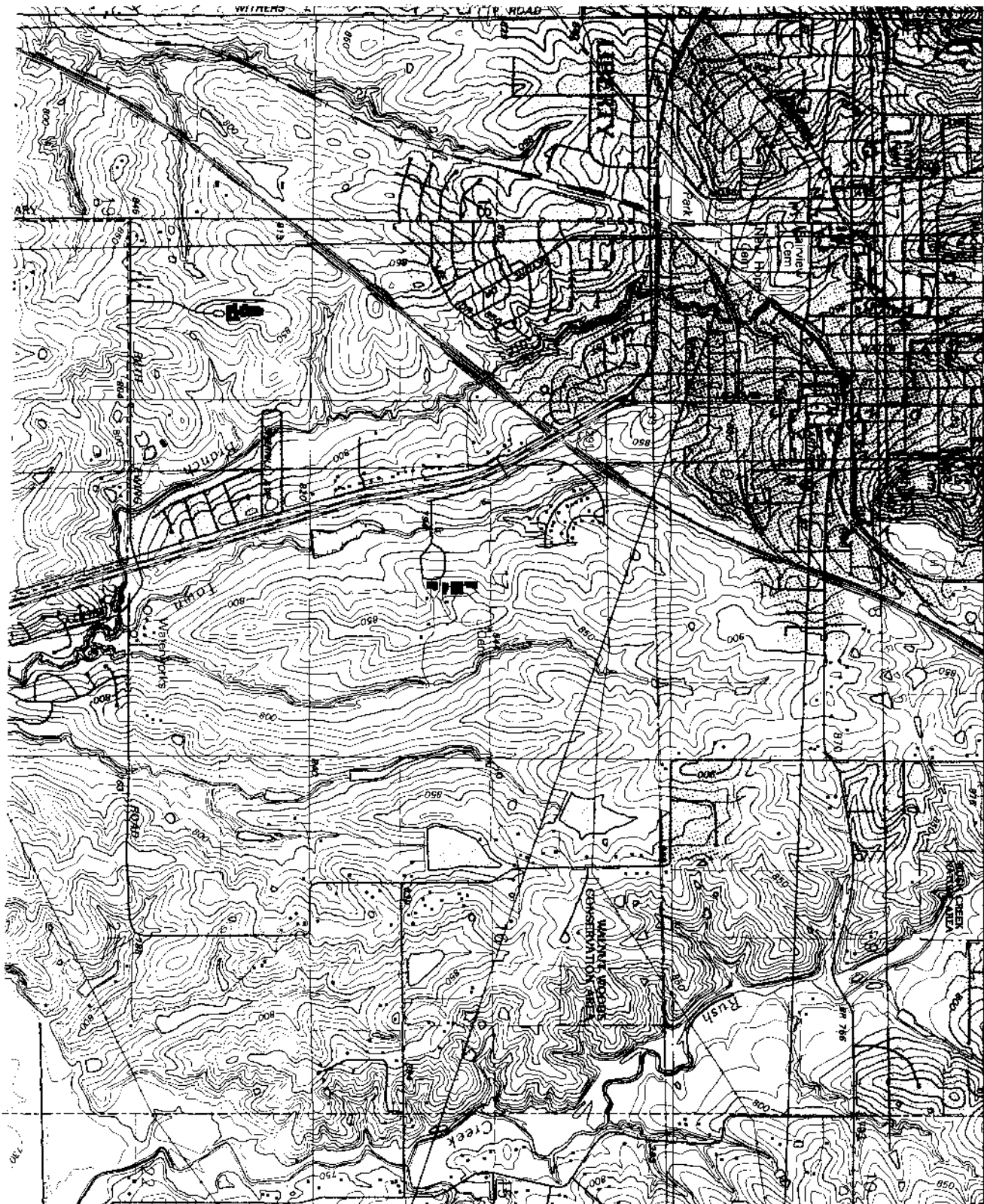
Jewell-Lightburne Historic District, Clay County, MO

- A. 15/377600/4345760
- B. 15/377770/4345760
- C. 15/377770/4345640
- D. 15/377850/4345640
- E. 15/377930/4345540
- R. 15/377480/4345520
- S. 15/377520/4345700 (see Liberty Quadrangle for points D-Q)

ISBN 0-607-85704-8



780607 857047



Downtown, Prospect Heights, Historic District (Clay County, MO)
 A. 15/376740/4345210
 B. 15/377120/4345210
 C. 15/377120/4345280
 D. 15/377140/4345280
 E. 15/377310/4345230
 F. 15/377360/4345120
 G. 15/377240/4345020
 H. 15/377220/4344970
 I. 15/377050/4344820
 J. 15/377020/4344800
 K. 15/376940/4344800
 L. 15/376940/4344720
 M. 15/376870/4344710
 N. 15/376870/4344640
 O. 15/376730/4344990

Prospect Heights, Historic District (Clay County, MO)
 P. 15/376730/4344990
 Q. 15/376730/4344990
 R. 15/376730/4344990
 S. 15/376730/4344990
 T. 15/376730/4344990
 U. 15/376730/4344990
 V. 15/376730/4344990
 W. 15/376730/4344990
 X. 15/376730/4344990
 Y. 15/376730/4344990
 Z. 15/376730/4344990

Prospect Heights, Historic District (Clay County, MO)
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Prospect Heights, Historic District (Clay County, MO)
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Prospect Heights, Historic District (Clay County, MO)
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 EX. 15/376730/4344990
 EY. 15/376730/4344990
 EZ. 15/376730/4344990

Historic Division of
 Liberty, Clay County,
 MO

Liberty Heights Historic District
 A. 15/376370/4344640
 B. 15/376430/4344650
 C. 15/376430/4344620
 D. 15/376370/4344570

Arthur Leonard Historic District
 A. 15/377660/4344810
 B. 15/377740/4344820
 C. 15/377790/4344690
 D. 15/377840/4344680
 E. 15/377840/4344740
 F. 15/378040/4344750
 G. 15/378040/4344680
 H. 15/378120/4344680
 I. 15/378000/4344620
 J. 15/377780/4344610
 K. 15/377780/4344650
 L. 15/377780/4344650

391 54' 22" 30"
 391 54' 15" 00"

25,000 FEET
 1:120,000

MISSOURI
 LIBERTY QUADRANGLE
 7.5-MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)