

A HISTORICAL INVENTORY
OF
DEKALB COUNTY MISSOURI

1979

INTRODUCTION

The historic inventory of DeKalb County was conducted during the summer and fall of 1979. In attempting to locate the various sites, buildings and objects, local resource persons were contacted in each township. The DeKalb County Historical Society served as the local resource agent and nominated the majority of the architectural sites. Mrs. Lora Lockhart of Maysville, Missouri, was of valuable assistance in surveying the area and is the local contact person for the society.

Miss Nancy Sandehn worked as an assistant in surveying the area. She made the primary contacts with the resource persons in each township and the initial survey was carried out under her guidance. Another source of obtaining site and architectural locations in the county was by using the windshield technique. This was extremely useful in discovering agricultural architecture since a majority of these structures were missed in the first survey of the area.

The final forms were completed by Thomas W. Carneal, Assistant Professor of History at Northwest Missouri State University. John Huffman of Architects and Planners Collaborative, Kansas City, Missouri, served as the architectural resource person and Robert Bray of the State Archaeological Survey office as the archaeological resource person. Dr. Harmon Mothershead of Northwest Missouri State University served as historical research advisor on the project.

After completing the initial survey, one must conclude that some sites were missed and therefore the survey must remain open for further additions as more research is carried out. Some of the nominated sites stand on their architectural merit but need further research on their historical significance.

The survey indicated there is a wealth of Queen Anne architectural styles in the area. There are several areas which possess the possibility of being developed as historical districts, especially Osborn, Stewartsville, and Clarksdale. In Maysville there would be the option of developing a multiple resource district in both the South Water Street area and the East Main Street Area. There is a voluminous amount of sites and materials which portray the agricultural nature of the county.

In attempting to evaluate the significance of the inventory in each township the resource and advisory group looked at each nomination. The historical sites are separated from the archaeological sites and have separate code and numbering systems.

The inventory definitely indicates several sites that are worthy of nomination to the National Register. The primary project for the next year should be the nomination of:

1. The Mathies House near Weatherby.
2. The Octagonal Barn on the McDonald Farm near Maysville.
3. The Round Top School near Santa Rosa.
4. The David Delaney House near Clarksdale.

DEKALB COUNTY

DeKalb County lies in the center of a Northwest district of some nineteen counties, and is representative of the origin and characteristics of most of the region. Maysville is the County seat and the major trading and political center of the County. Major access to the County originally was the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad which nearly equally divides the County into North-South halves but tapering off southwesterly towards St. Joseph some thirteen miles away in Buchanan County. The Chicago, Burlington and Quincy cuts across the Northwest corner of the County, and the Hannibal and St. Joseph traversed the County along its southern border. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century these proved a great boon to the growth and prosperity of the area. Today a number of improved state roads, as well as U.S. 169, U.S. 69, and U.S. 36, provide an adequate transportation system in the County.

DeKalb County was organized out of the then existing County of Clinton, February 25, 1845. The act creating the County also named the commissioners and charged them with locating a County seat and organizing the County. The present site of Maysville near the geographical center of the County was designated as being an ideal location for a town. In 1847 a small log structure was built on the east side of the square to serve as a temporary Court House. This was replaced in 1852 by a brick building 55 by 30 feet. That structure, along with the records in the County Clerks office, was destroyed by fire in 1878 and touched off a bitter fight in the County for the erection of a new building and an attempt to change the County seat to Stewartsville. Originally (1845) the County was divided into five townships with four more being added in 1870.

Early settlers came primarily from Kentucky and Tennessee. Although a few adventurers lived in the area as early as 1825, and three soldiers traveling the military trail from Council Bluffs to Liberty nearly lost their lives in a snow storm on "Lost Creek" in 1824-1825, permanent settlers did not arrive until 1838-1839. These were the usual hearty frontier folk from neighboring counties and states. Families, often extended families, of married brothers and/or sisters as well as the parents and an occasional grandparent were not an uncommon pattern.

Politically the County reflected its border state heritage, generally Democratic, but divided on the issue of the war. Republicans received no votes in 1856; Lincoln received only six in 1860, but carried the County two to one over McCellan in 1864. Grant received nearly the same margin in 1868, but 1872 saw a much closer election with 1,017 for Grant and 841 for Greeley. Hayes carried the County by thirty votes in 1876. After that date the County generally returned to the Democratic fold. The Bench and the Bar were closely associated with the politics of the County. While many able attorneys and judges followed the Fifth Judicial Circuit, one person, Austin A. King, was distinguished above the rest. King, a native of Tennessee, came to Missouri in 1828, was elected as State Representative from Boone County in 1836, was appointed as the first Judge of the Fifth Judicial Circuit in 1837, serving until 1848 when he was elected as Governor of Missouri (Democrat) after which he again became Judge of the Fifth Judicial Circuit. In 1864 he became a U.S. Congressman from Missouri for one term.

The County's religion reflected its ancestry as surely as did its politics. Baptist; Old School, Missionary, and Free Will were common, as were Methodist, Presbyterian, and Christian. The unusual religious group was the establishment

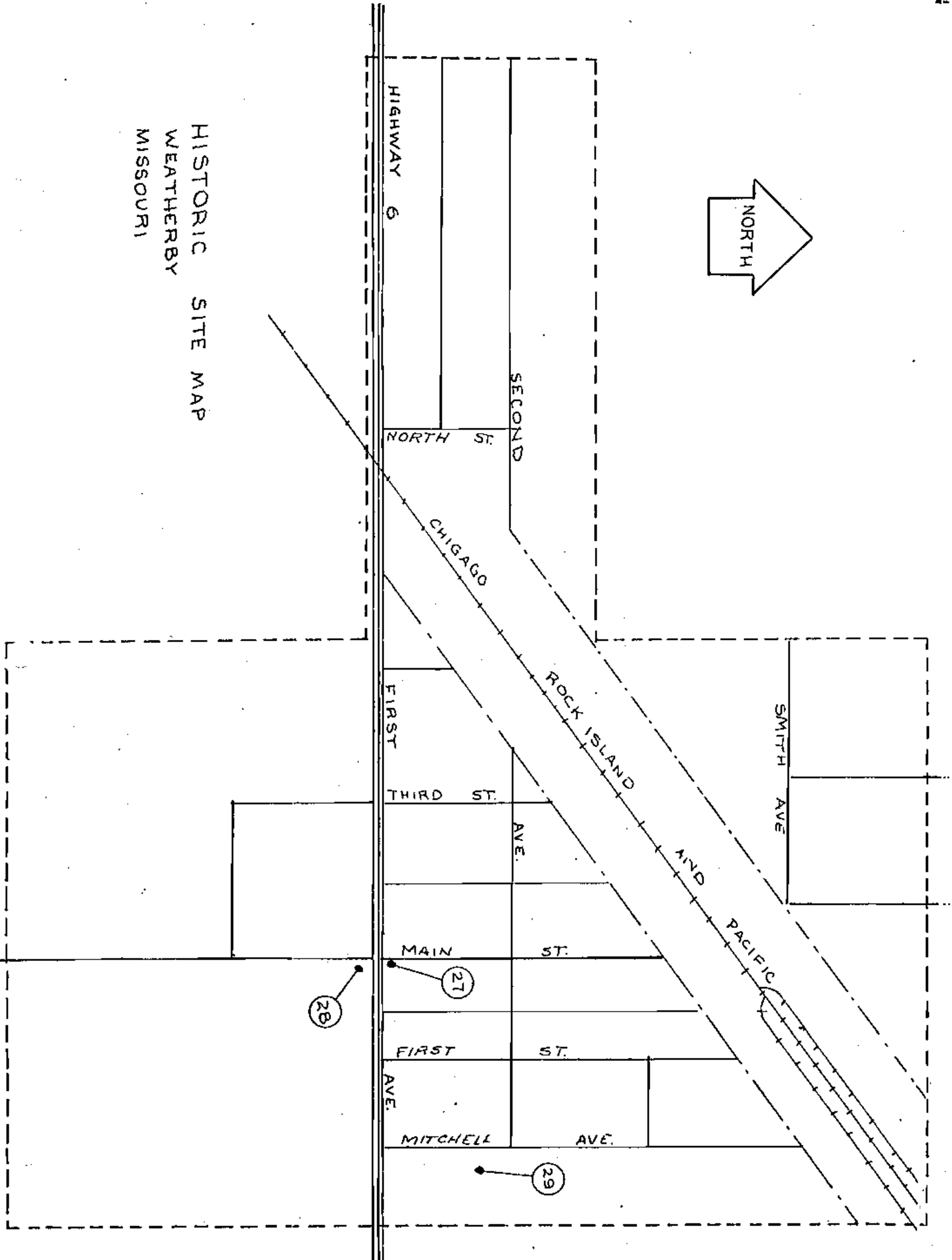
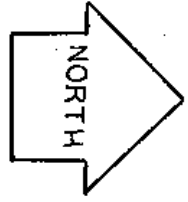
of a branch of the Latter Day Saints in Stewartville in 1882. (Maybe as early as 1875.)

Maysville, the County seat, is the largest and most important trading center in the County. Very early it was the site of mercantile and grocery stores, a treadmill, and even a furniture factory for a brief time. Blacksmiths, carpenters, masons, tailors, millers, freighters, as well as professional men--doctors, lawyers, dentists, and editors all plied their trade in the town. Stewartville, established in 1854 as a stopping point on the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad, was named after former governor Robert M. Stewart who was also an officer of the Hannibal and St. Joseph. This became the second most important town in the County even surpassing Maysville in manufacturing, and was distinguished by the establishment of Stewartville College from 1860-1885.

Other communities of importance in the early history of the County were Osborn, Union Star, Fairport, Clarksdale, Weatherby, Amity, Santa Rosa, Winslow, and Standard, the latter a one-store town about ten miles southwest of Maysville. Somerville and Bucklin were both paper towns that never were established.

As is the history of all similar counties the valuation of land, and the size of the farms have increased during the past forty years while the population, number of farms, and self-sufficiency have decreased. Population declined by 34 percent from 1940-1960 but gained 3 percent between 1960-1970, the total population in the County for the latter year being 7,305 compared to 14,418 in 1900. The total assessed valuation in the County in 1900 was \$5,917,372 compared to \$24,007,337 in 1979.

HISTORIC SITE MAP
WEATHERBY
MISSOURI



HIGHWAY 36-33

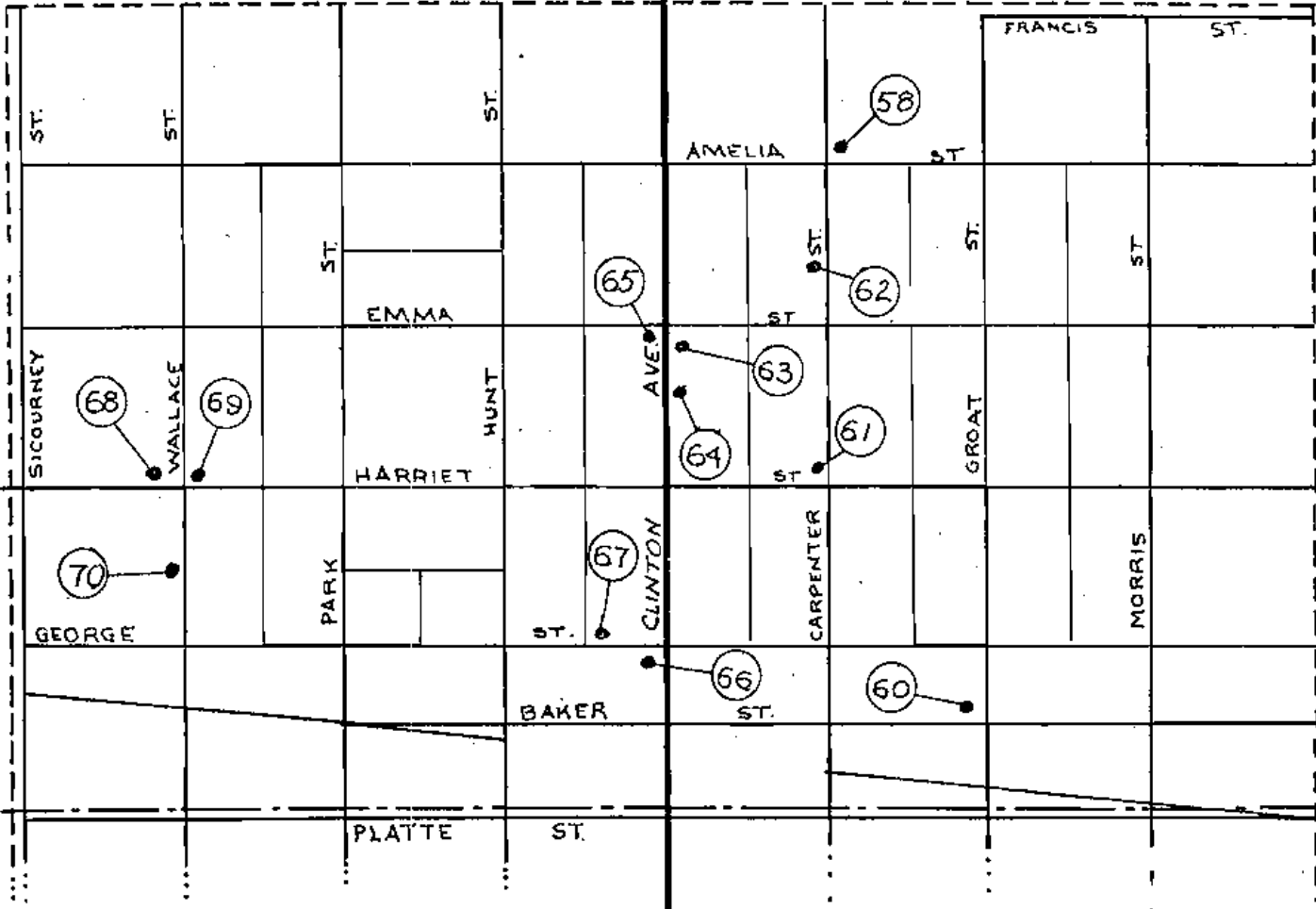
HIGHWAY 33



HIGHWAY 36

ROUTE M

59



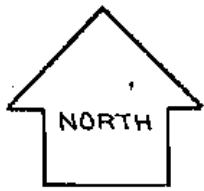
DEKALB COUNTY
CLINTON COUNTY

HISTORIC SITE MAP
OSBORN
MISSOURI

HISTORIC SITE MAP
CLARKSDALE
MISSOURI

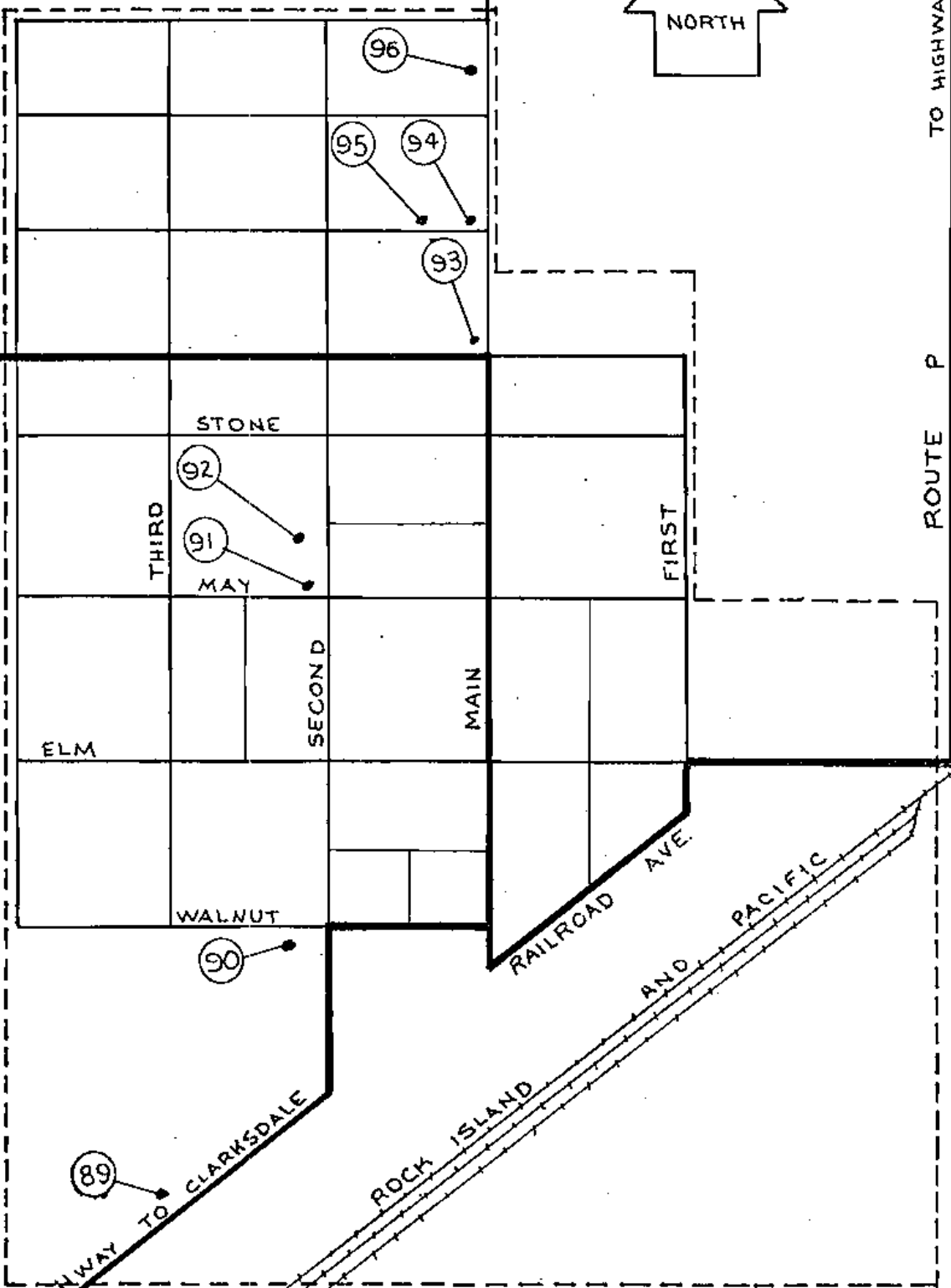
TO HIGHWAY 6-31 ↑

TO HIGHWAY 6-31 ↑



ROUTE P

ROUTE P



STONE

THIRD

92

91

MAY

SECOND

MAIN

FIRST

ELM

WALNUT

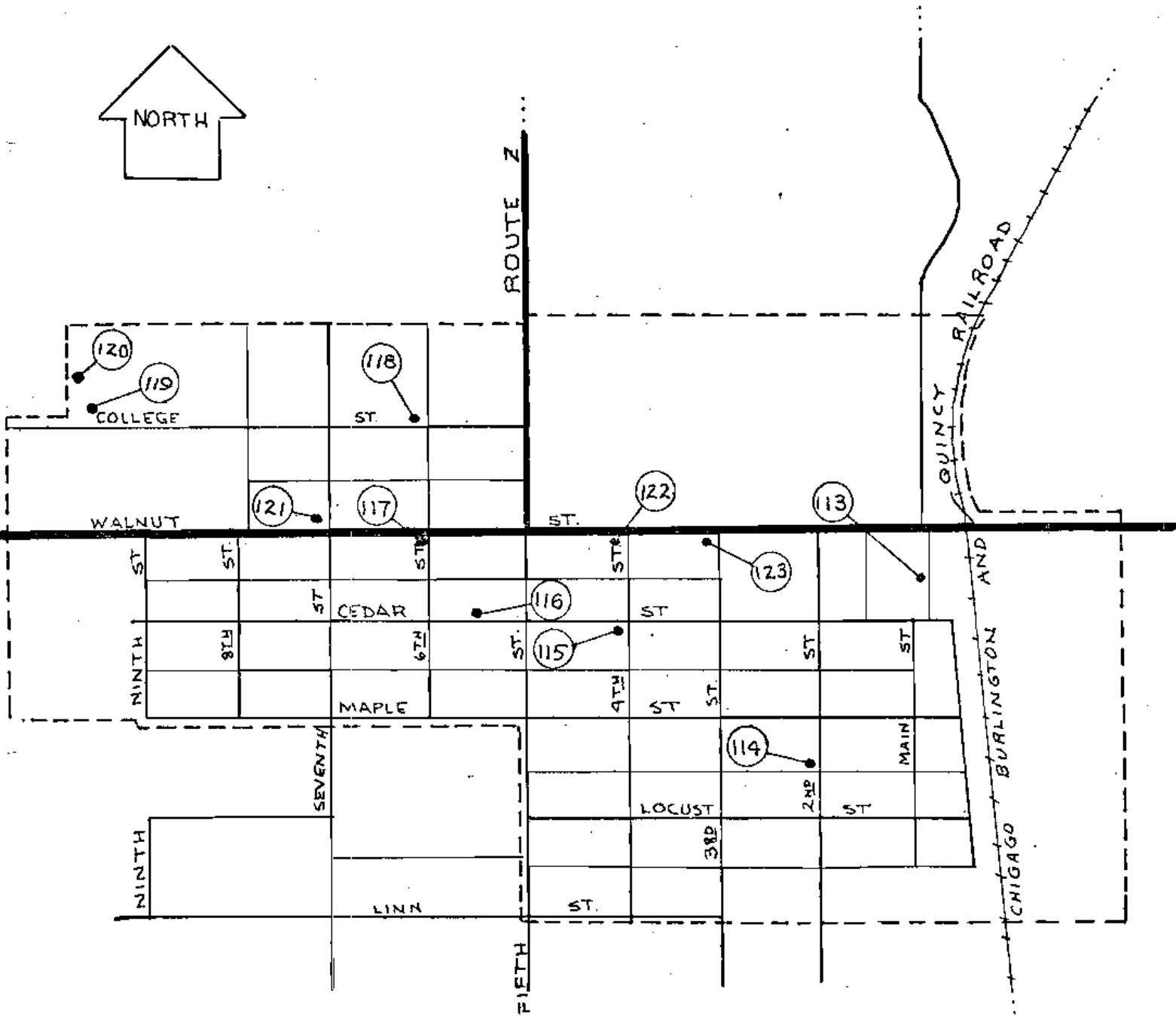
90

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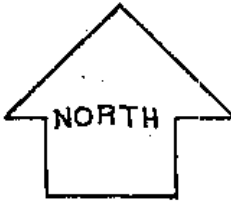
OLD HIGHWAY TO CLARKSDALE

CHICAGO
ROCK ISLAND
AND
PACIFIC

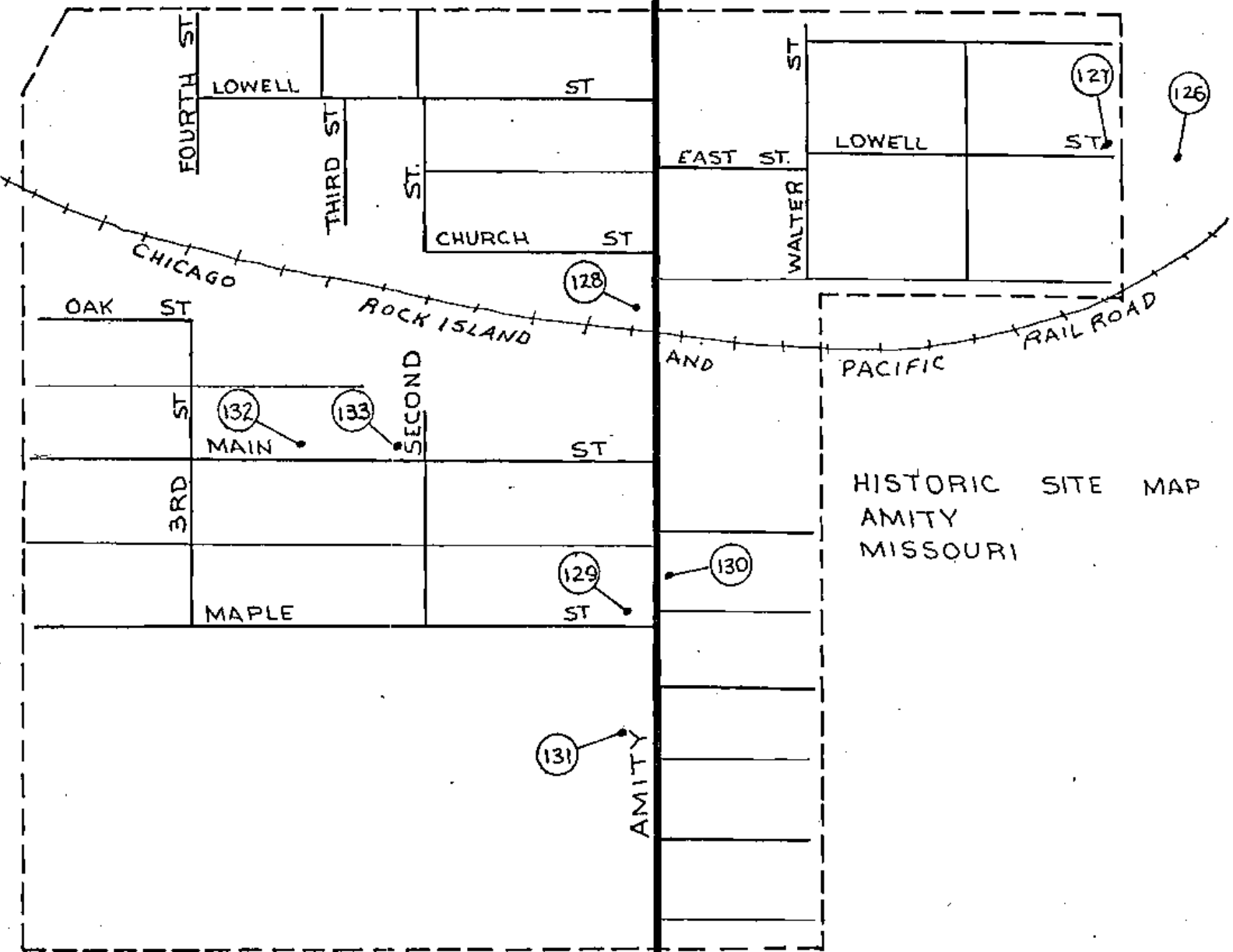
RAILROAD AVE



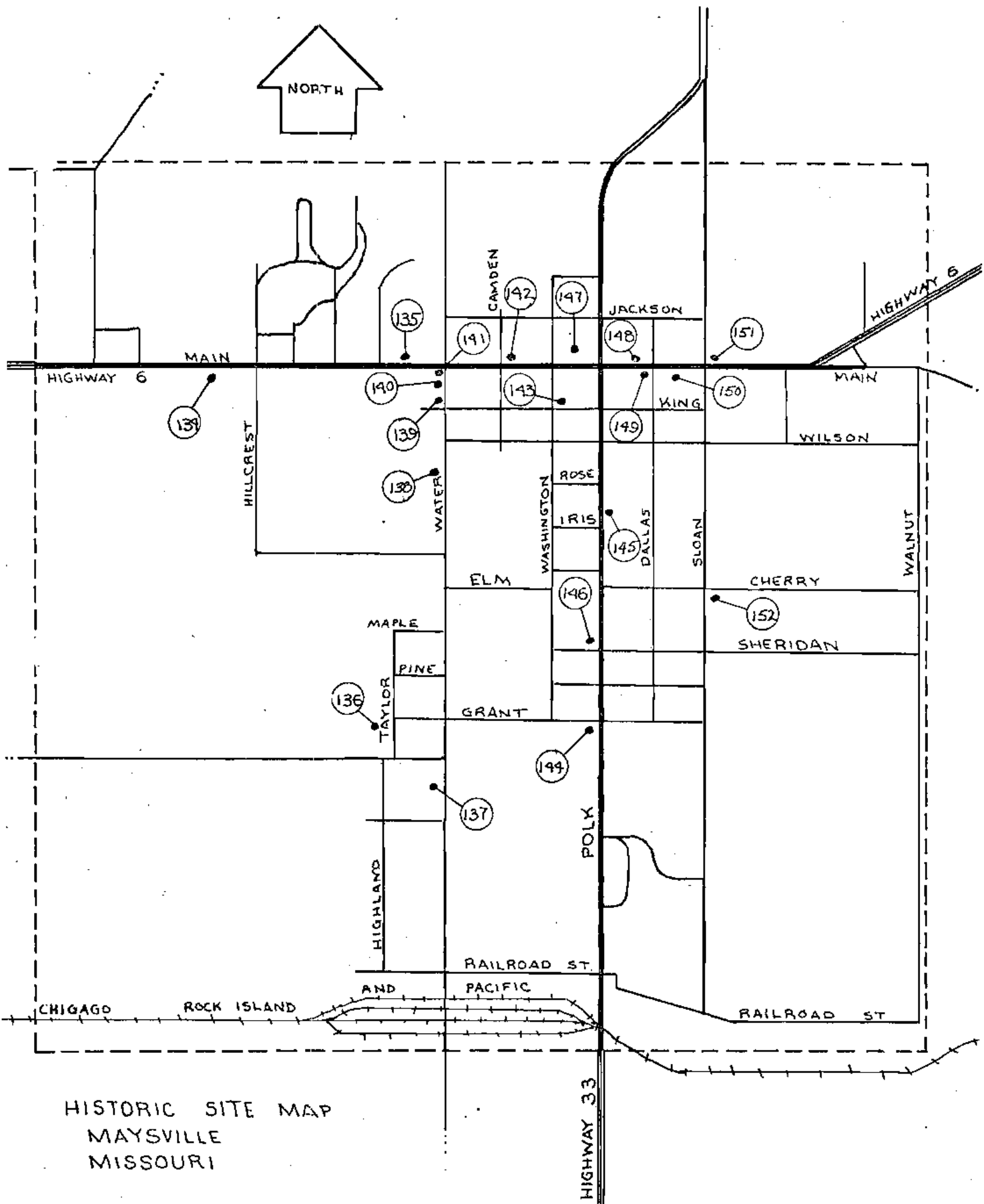
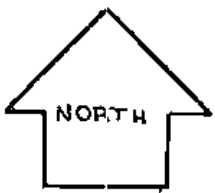
HISTORIC SITE MAP
UNION STAR
MISSOURI



ROUTE J
to HIGHWAY 6
ST.



HISTORIC SITE MAP
AMITY
MISSOURI



HISTORIC SITE MAP
MAYSVILLE
MISSOURI

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Round Top School

#45 Appendix

DeKalb County Cemetery Census: 1845-1971. Compiled by the DeKalb County Historical Society. Stewartsville: Farmer Printing Co., 1972.

DeKalb County, Missouri: Rural Resident Directory. Boulder, Co. : Directory Service Co., 1979.

History of Andrew and DeKalb Counties, Missouri. St. Louis: The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1888.

Interview with Ralph Wolf.

On site observation by Nancy Sandehn and Tom Carneal.

Reflections: 1845-1974: Dallas and Grant Townships. Marceline: Walsworth Publishing Co., 1974.

Ruth Owens Inventory of DeKalb Co: Historic Homes and Sites.

#46 addition

The original survey inventory was completed by Nancy Sandehn, fall of 1979.

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Ruth Owens Inventory of DeKalb CO: Historic Homes and Sites.

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