

The State Historical Society of Missouri

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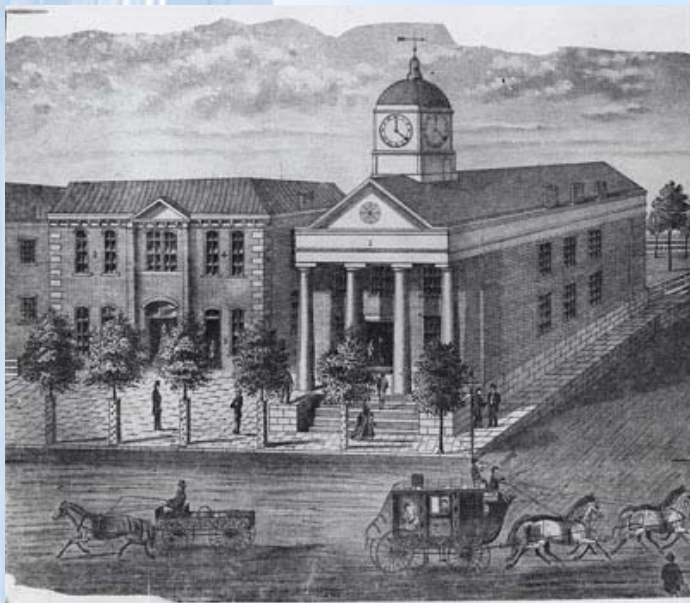
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Boone County Courthouses of Yesterday and Today



Original Boone County Courthouse

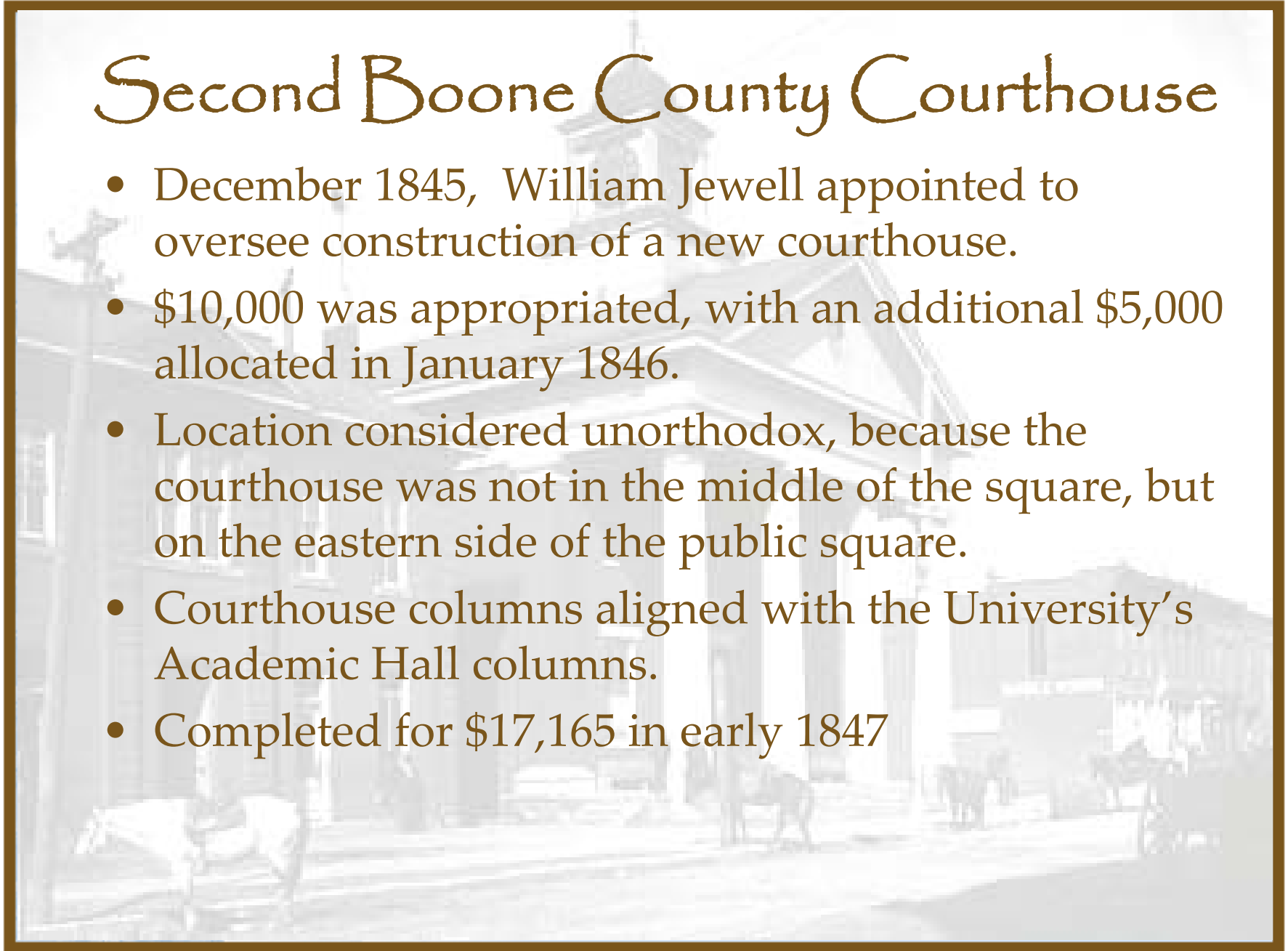
- Located in the Public Square
- Built in 1824, with work continuing until 1828.
- No illustrations of the building have ever been located. It was described as “a small two story brick house shaded in the rear by two small rooms.”
- Building suffered several small fires and over time became unstable.
- The building was sold and destroyed following the finishing of the new courthouse in 1847.

Some Original Courthouse Trials

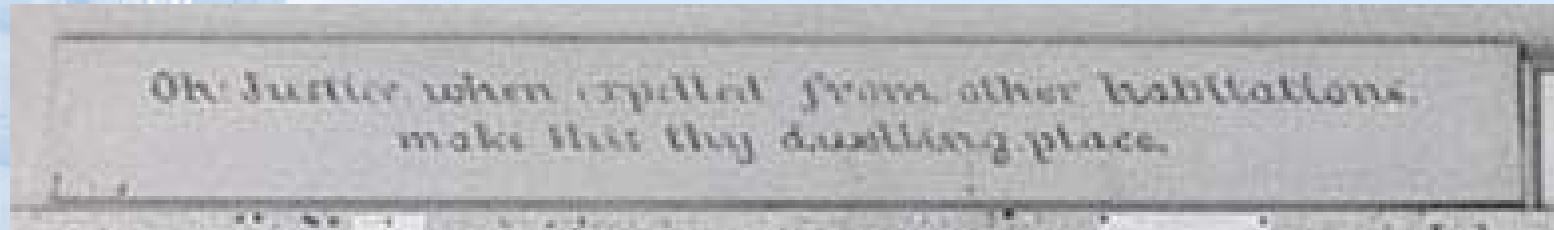
- December 1831 - First legal hanging in Boone County occurred after a Ralls County man was convicted of murder. The case was tried in the Boone Circuit Court on a change of venue.
- June 1843 – Five of Hiram Beasley's slaves were charged with murdering their master.
 - ❖ Two of the slaves, a married couple, were hanged after being tried and convicted of murder.
 - Doctors who examined the female slave before the hanging said she was not pregnant, a doctor who examined the female slave posthumously claimed she was pregnant.
 - ❖ Two other slaves, both male, were found guilty of second-degree murder and punished by 39 lashes and banishment from the state.
 - ❖ The other slave, a female, was acquitted of the murder.

Second Boone County Courthouse

- December 1845, William Jewell appointed to oversee construction of a new courthouse.
- \$10,000 was appropriated, with an additional \$5,000 allocated in January 1846.
- Location considered unorthodox, because the courthouse was not in the middle of the square, but on the eastern side of the public square.
- Courthouse columns aligned with the University's Academic Hall columns.
- Completed for \$17,165 in early 1847

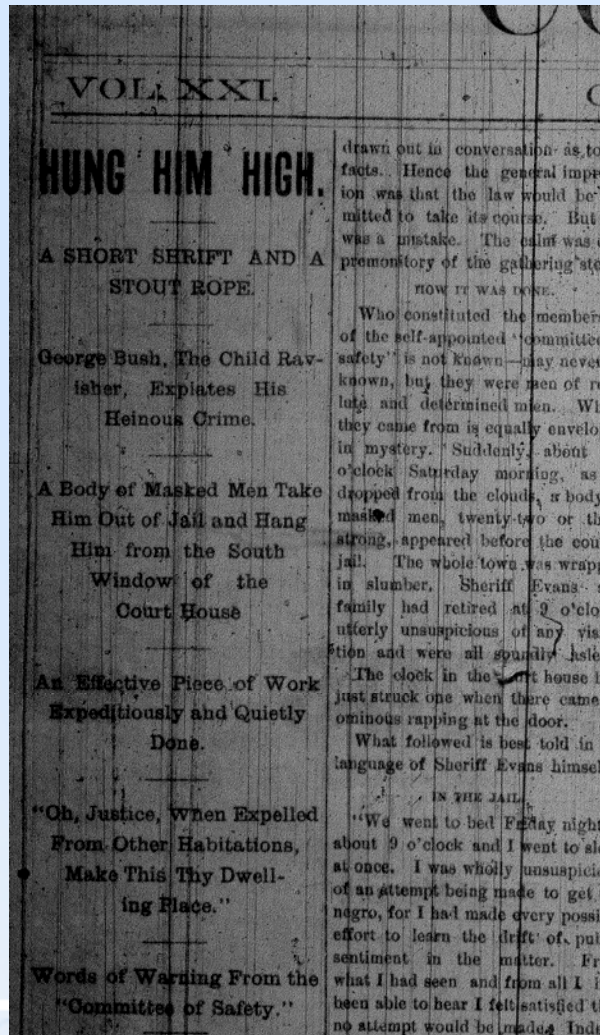


Mystery Quote.....



- “Oh! Justice, when expelled from other habitations, make this thy dwelling place.”
- Dr. William Jewell was believed to be responsible for the quote, but it was not until 1956 that evidence was found. In an open-column letter to the Tribune, noted editor and historian William F. Switzler stated that Jewell was the author of the quote.

Lynching of George Bush, 1889



Early Courthouse Uses

- Nov. 20, 1848 – courthouse served as a meeting place after the election of General Zachary Taylor
- Land Auctions
- Sale and hiring of slaves
- Religious Services
- Public Library
- George Caleb Bingham used the Grand Jury room as a studio and the courthouse used in both versions of his painting *Verdict of the People* is most likely based on the courthouse.
- Gathering location for discussions on:
 - ❖ Kansas-Nebraska Act
 - ❖ Mormon Situation



Boone County and the Civil War

- 1860 Presidential Race Results for Missouri:
 - ❖ Douglas: 58,801
 - ❖ Bell: 58,372
 - ❖ Breckenridge: 31,317
 - ❖ Lincoln: 17,027 (half of which came from St. Louis)
 - Boone County Voters cast only 12 ballots for Abraham Lincoln (Boone County Pop: 14,339)
 - ❖ 1 in Columbia
 - ❖ 3 in Ashland
 - ❖ 8 in Claysville



The Boone County Courthouse as a meeting place:

- April 20, 1861 – Southern Rights Meeting highlights:
 - ❖ Resolutions adopted against both Lincoln and the Federal Government
 - ❖ Call for another convention on secession for Missouri
 - ❖ Confederate State Flag with 15 stars was flown and there were three cheers for Jeff Davis and the Southern Confederacy.
- May 6, 1861 – Union Meeting highlights:
 - ❖ Resolution adopted calling for Missouri to “maintain an independent position within the Union.”
 - ❖ Approval for the votes cast by local delegates to the Missouri secession convention.



State vs. Butler



- Ed Butler, of St. Louis, was indicted by a St. Louis City Grand Jury for attempting to bribe a member of the Board of Health.
- Trial moved to Columbia on a change of venue.
 - ❖ Jurors were isolated from the public and slept in the courtroom.
 - ❖ Biggest trial Columbia had ever experienced, with statewide media attention.
 - ❖ Courtroom procedures were adapted for the “city” visitors, including court hours of 9 to 5.
 - ❖ Former Lt. Governor Charles P. Johnson and other well-known St. Louis and Columbia men defended Butler.
- Butler was convicted and sentenced to three years, but the MO Supreme Court reversed the verdict and ordered Butler discharged.
- The Butler trial and several others helped to make Prosecutor Joseph W. Folk a household name, eventually propelling him to Governor in 1905.



Present-Day Boone County Courthouse

- Location and type of building were the main points that had to be worked out.
- Courthouse was moved to the middle of the square and a simple “no unnecessary useless ornamentation” building was designed.
- Built between 1906-1909 at a cost of \$100,000.
- After consideration the only part of the old courthouse that remained were the columns.



Lynching of James T. Scott

- Lynching occurred on April 29, 1923 at Stewart Bridge
- May 3, 1923, Boone County Grand Jury indicted George W. Barkwell for 1st Degree Murder and 4 others with obstructing an officer.
- Barkwell Murder Trial began on July 11 and ended on July 12
- 11 minutes for Boone County Jury to return with not guilty verdict
- One of the obstruction charges was dismissed and the other three were “continued indefinitely” in a confidential agreement between the state and defense.

Columbia Daily Tribune

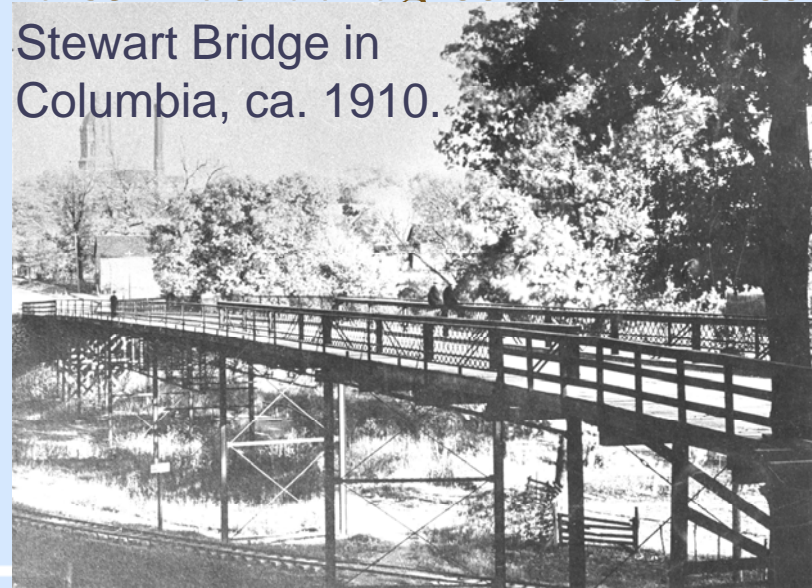
NOT GUILTY, SAYS BARKWELL JURY

Columbia Contractor Is Cleared of Murder Charge in Case Growing Out of Lynching of Negro, James T. Scott, For Assaulting 14-Year-Old White Girl Last April.

VERDICT CAME IN ELEVEN MINUTES

Several Witnesses Testify That Defendant Was on Other Side of Bridge When Mob's Victim Was Thrown Over—One Man Identified Him as Leader at Hanging Scene.

Stewart Bridge in Columbia, ca. 1910.



Death Certificate for James T. Scott

MISSOURI STATE BOARD OF HEALTH
BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS
CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

11912³

1. PLACE OF DEATH
County Boone Registration District No. 73 File No. 11912³
Township Columbia Primary Registration District No. 304 Registered No. 93
City Columbia (No. 1) St. Mo. Ward 1

2. FULL NAME James T. Scott
(a) Residence No. 1 St. Mo. Ward 1
(Usual place of abode) (If nonresident give city or town and State)
Length of residence in city or town where death occurred yrs. mos. ds. How long in U.S., if of foreign birth? yrs. mos. ds.

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS

3. SEX M. 4. COLOR OR RACE Colored 5. SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED OR DIVORCED (write the word) married
5A. IF MARRIED, WIDOWED, OR DIVORCED HUSBAND OF (OR) WIFE OF Gertrude Scott
6. DATE OF BIRTH (MONTH, DAY AND YEAR) Oct 6th 1887
7. AGE YEARS 35 MONTHS 6 DAYS 23 If LESS than 1 day, hrs. or min.
8. OCCUPATION OF DECEASED (a) Trade, profession, or particular kind of work Janitor
(b) General nature of industry, business, or establishment in which employed (or employer) Universally Missouri
(c) Name of employer
9. BIRTHPLACE (CITY OR TOWN) New Mexico (STATE OR COUNTRY)
10. NAME OF FATHER James Scott
11. BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (CITY OR TOWN) Missouri (STATE OR COUNTRY)
12. MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER Sarah Brown
13. BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (CITY OR TOWN) Missouri (STATE OR COUNTRY)

PARENTS

14. INFORMANT Gertrude Scott (Address) Columbia, Mo.
15. FILED 4/20/23 James Gordon REGISTRAR

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

16. DATE OF DEATH (MONTH, DAY AND YEAR) April, 29 1923
17. I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from 1923 to 1923, and that (that I last saw him) about 1:30a and that death occurred on the date stated above, at about 1:30a
THE CAUSE OF DEATH* WAS AS FOLLOWS:
Asphyxiated or
Strangled by neck
after fight in Court Jail
committed Rape
CONTRIBUTORY (SECONDARY) (duration) yrs. mos. ds.
18. WHERE WAS DISEASE CONTRACTED 1923
IF NOT AT PLACE OF DEATH, DATE OF 1923
DID AN OPERATION PRECEDE DEATH? DATE OF 1923
WAS THERE AN AUTOPSY? 1923
WHAT TEST CONFIRMED DIAGNOSIS? Dr. H. Baker Coroner (Signed) 4/30, 19 23 (Address) Columbia Mo.
*State the DISEASE CAUSING DEATH, or in deaths from VIOLENT CAUSES state (1) MEANS AND NATURE OF INJURY, and (2) whether ACCIDENTAL, SUICIDAL, or HOMICIDAL. (See reverse side for additional space.)

19. PLACE OF BURIAL, CREMATION, OR REMOVAL Columbia Mo. DATE OF BURIAL 1923
20. UNDERTAKER W. H. Caudle ADDRESS Columbia Mo.

Killing of Sheriff Roger Wilson & Sgt. Benjamin Booth



- Shot and killed at a roadblock in Columbia after a bank robbery in Mexico, MO on June 14, 1933.
- On Friday, June 16, the bodies of Wilson and Booth lay in state in the corridor of the courthouse.
- Criminal Trial of one of the suspects was held at the courthouse, the other suspect pleaded guilty and testified for the state.
- Ben Booth was the first member of the MO State Highway Patrol to be killed in the line of duty.

D





Courthouse Columns



Columns standing among ruins of the 1847 courthouse.



Columns in 1940, with the lights.



Columns prior to the addition of lights.



Columns in 2006

Other Courthouse Features



Confederate Rock



World War I Memorial



Roger Wilson Memorial Bell



Jamboree



MO Seal near War Memorials

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