UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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(Number all entries)

6.

CHARITON COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Missouri State Historical Survey and Planning Office

1971

Missouri State Park Board

P.O. Box 176, 1204 Jefferson Building

Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

Code: 29

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CHARITON COUNTY COURTHOUSE

The Chariton County Courthouse is a two-story, white-painted, brick, rectangular structure which gives the appearance of sturdiness as demanded by the County Court. Obviously the building was well constructed, judging from the soundness of the roof and the firmness of both interior and exterior walls. The exterior brickwork remains sound, even though not freshly tuckpointed, and only a few minor cracks appear in the interior corridor walls. The building is topped by a hip-roof, surfaced with tin sheeting. A large central two-story cupola dominates the roofline.

The ground floor contains offices of the county clerk, circuit clerk, recorder of deeds, probate judge, Justice of the County Court, a laboratory and rest room facilities. The offices flank a central north-south hallway running the length of the building. An ancillary corridor joins the main artery and connects it to the front entrance. The second floor contains courtrooms, a jury room, circuit attorney's office, surveyor's office, and an office for the University of Missouri Extension Service. An unfinished attic is reached through a narrow stairway from the second floor, and entrance to the cupola is attained by means of a ladder-stairway from the attic.

All four elevations of the Chariton County Courthouse are symmetrical. No appendages have been added or removed. A recessed-fanlighted, front entrance is centered in the nine-bay east (main) elevation, and all windows are topped by segmental arches. Tall, narrow windows are used throughout, with 4 over 4 light, double-hung sash on both floors. In keeping with the Court's desire for simplicity, the cornices are modestly ornamented with paired brackets and dentil course under the eaves. The walls are atriculated with recessed panels framing the window and door openings. course divides each facade horizontally at the level of the second floor. The top of each panel is ornamented with brick corbeling just below the wooden cornice. A front (east) access consists of one independent doorway flanked by ornamental sidelights. An auxiliary entrance consisting also of a single doorway is located on the north elevation. The entire structure measures 100 by 62 feet, and is situated in the north-central portion of the small square. The cupola is of frame construction. "X" braces have been recently installed on the interior to stabilize the structure against the wind.

Although the interior of the Chariton County Courthouse shows few examples of decorative ornamentation, prefabricated, patterned-matal, ceilings were installed in 1909. (Chariton Courier, Keytesville, Missouri, August 25, 1966). Durable concrete floors have been poured in the first-floor hallway. Exterior louvered shutters, pictured in an 1877 engraving, have been removed. A doorway in the center of the west elevation has been bricked-in, and the entranceway converted into a laboratory. Otherwise the exterior appears essentially unaltered from the early view. Similarly, an interior stairway at the north end of the building leading to the circuit courtroom has been closed and converted to a small office.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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CHARITON COUNTY COURTHOUSE

The Chariton County Courthouse was repainted white in 1969. An obvious program of maintenance has kept the building structurally sound and pleasantly clean. Offices are well lighted and freshly painted. Heavy-duty carpeting has been installed in several offices and hallways to baffle sound.

ERIOD (Check One or More as	Appropriate)		
Pre-Columbian	16th Century	☐ 18th Century	y 20th Century
15th Century	17th Century	2 19th Centur	у
PECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicab	de and Known) 1866		
REAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Ch	eck One of More as Appropr	iate)	
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☐ Conservation	Music	☐ Transportation	

CHARITON COUNTY COURTHOUSE

The Civil War experience in Chariton County typifies the secession struggle in central Missouri, as Chariton itself was the scene of intense conflict. Because of its strategic location, and the large proportion of slaveholders in the region, Chariton County became a significant area of contention in Missouri. Keytesville, the county seat, likewise became the locus of much guerilla activity during 1864. The primary objectives of the Confederate guerilla "bushwackers" were the disruption of civil government in Chariton County, the elimination of Union forces from the area, and the intimindation of loyal citizens. An effective means to destroy Chariton County government was to sack the Keytesville courthouse. Several raids were attempted, and a fire set at the courthouse in 1863 destroyed county tax records for several previous years. (Liberty Tribune, Liberty, Missouri, July 14, 1864. Minutes of the Chariton County Court, Record Book "A", p.1). The major attack, however, occurred September 26, (Minutes of the Chariton County Court, Record Book "A", p. 292). During this raid, the courthouse was burned, the sheriff murdered, and all Chariton County court records were destroyed. The guerilla commander, John Thrailkill, justified the destruction of the building by claiming it was being used as a Union fortress. During the attack, a force of 45 defenders yeilded to 60 guerillas, and many "loyalists" followed Thrailkill out of town. (United States War Department, The War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. XLI, Part III, 1886, p. 330).

The slave population of Chariton County between 1850 and 1860 remained a stable 23%, while the statewide ratio of blacks-to-whites decreased from 12% to 9% overall. (Floyd C. Shoemaker, "Missouri as a Border State", Missouri Historical Review, Vol. VII, Jan. 1913, pp. 63-75). Also, Chariton County figured heavily in Union strategy to prevent the secession of Missouri, since the county was situated on the strategic Missouri River and contained a number of slave-holders and southern sympathisers (Capt. Lewis Benecke, Historical Sketch of the Sixties in Chariton County, Missouri, 1909, p. 6). As a result, United States troops were mustered in force at both keytesville and Brunswick, and remained garrisoned in these towns through 1864. Southern men in Chariton countered by supporting guerilla activities since the presence of Federal troops alarmed masters and caused unrest among the slaves. Furthermore, General Sterling Price, a fromer governor of Missouri and native of Keytesville, supported

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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8. CHARITON COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Governor C. F. Jackson's refusal to supply troops to President Lincoln. (Richard S. Brownlee, <u>Grey Ghosts of the Confederacy</u>, 1958, p. 212). Price's endorsement of the secessionist Governor aroused considerable Confederate support in central Missouri.

Especially in the counties of north-central Missouri, where the institution of slavery was as cherished as many master's loyalty to the Union, political confusion prevailed during the years of the Civil War. North-central Missouri occupied a strategic military location within the contested state, as the several counties were situated equidistantly between loyal Iowa and secessionist Arkansas. The United States desired to maintain political control of central Missouri, since that region contained the greatest proportion of the state's population (except St. Louis), and most of Missouri's best tillable acerage.

Following the election of a unionist state government in 1864, and the cessation of hostilities the following year, severe measures were undertaken to punish Missourians who had aided the Confederacy during the War. Under the leadership of St. Louis Attorney Charles Drake, the governing Radical Unionist Party promulgated a new Missouri Constitution in 1865 which provided for the emancipation of slaves, the removal of state officials suspected of Confederate sympathy, and an "iron-clad oath" to restrict the franchise exclusively to Union loyalists. The immediate post-war years in Missouri therefore were a period of extreme reaction against those individuals who had threatened the Union by encouraging Missouri's secession. During 1865, nearly 800 state officeholders were ousted, including a large number of county and circuit court officials. The new Constitution furthermore stipulated that only those individuals who could qualify to vote under the "iron-clad oath" would be permitted to ratify the constitution. (Constitution of the State of Missouri, 1865, Art. XII, Sec. 6). Former Confederates therefore were effectively removed from State and local government in Missouri.

Coincident with the post-war reorganization of State government, the Chariton County Court ordered construction of a new courthouse. Bids were received diring February, 1866, and a contract was let to Levi Oldrich to erect a building for \$40,000. (The Brunswicker, Brunswick, Missouri, February 3, 1866. Minutes of the Chariton County Court, Record Book "A", p. 459). When the Chariton County Court approved a plan for their new courthouse at Keytesville, they stipulated that "the mason brick work, carpenter's work, etc., shall be done in plain style, looking exclusively to durability, leaving off all unnecessary work, which is only ornamental". (Minutes of the Chariton County Court, Record Book "A", p. 439). Accordingly, a brick building was erected in 1866-1867 on the foundation of the original structure. The new courthouse at Keytesville, constructed during a time of political reaction against secessionists, would serve as an example to former rebels of Chariton County, since additional funds required by Oldrich were to be obtained by a

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF MISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - ROMINATION FORM

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\$35,000 surtax levied against seven wealthy secessionists. One of the seven assessed, Jordan Bentley, was forced to sell a thriving tobacco processing plant and much of his acreage in Chariton County. (Judge Jordan P. Bentley, Justice of the Chariton County Court, interviewed by S. J. Raiche, Staff member, Missouri State Historical Survey and Planning Office, April 9, 1971). It may be assumed the enforcement of such retaliatory decisions during 1866-1867 was permissible because of the domination of Missouri State government by Radical Unionists and the corresponding loss of political influence. Chariton County Court minutes for 1866 and 1867 provide substantial evidence that the Court was willing to grant cash "bounties" to loyalists, especially as a reward for service in the Chariton County home-guard under the command of Captain Lewis Benecke. (Minutes of the Chariton County Court, Record Book "A", p. 438). On two separate occasions county funds were specially appropriated for the benefit of Benecke's defenders. Such definitive action by the Court, in a county so recently divided, suggests a substantial realignment in Chariton County political affairs after the Civil War, and the impressive Chariton County Courthouse at Keytesville, Missouri, stands today as a memorial to the turbulent war years in Missouri.

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES								
Benecke, Captain Lewis, <u>Historical Sketch of the Sixties in Chariton</u> County, Missouri. <u>Brunswick</u> , Missouri: 1909.								
Bentley, Judge Jordan P., Justice of the Chariton County Court, interviewed by S. J. Raiche, staff member, Missouri State Historical Survey and Planning Office, April 8, 1971. On file at the Missouri State Park Board, P.O. Box 176, 1204 Jefferson Building, Jefferson City, Missouri 65101.								
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As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion				certify th	nat this pr	operty is		
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Name			ATTEST					
Joseph J. Jaeger, Jr.,						• •		
Title Director, Missouri State						•	**	•
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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FOR NPS USE ONL	Y
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

9. CHARITON COUNTY COURTHOUSE

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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9. (#2) CHARITON COUNTY COURTHOUSE

United States War Department, The War of the Rebellion: A

Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and
Confederate Armies: Washington D. C.: 1866. Series I,
Vol. XLI, Part I.

United States War Department, The War of the Rebellion: A
Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and
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Vol. XLI, Part III.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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Form 10-301 (Dec. 1968)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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	NATIONAL PARK SERVICE	Missouri	
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

<u>65261</u>

State Historical Society of Missouri

NEGATIVE FILED AT: State Historical Society of Missouri, Hitt and Lowry Street,
Columbia, Missouri 65201.

Main Elevation (East), Chariton County Courthouse, East facing West.

Missouri

ca. 1950

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

3. PHOTO REFERENCE PHOTO CREDIT:

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Chariton

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Missouri COUNTY Chariton

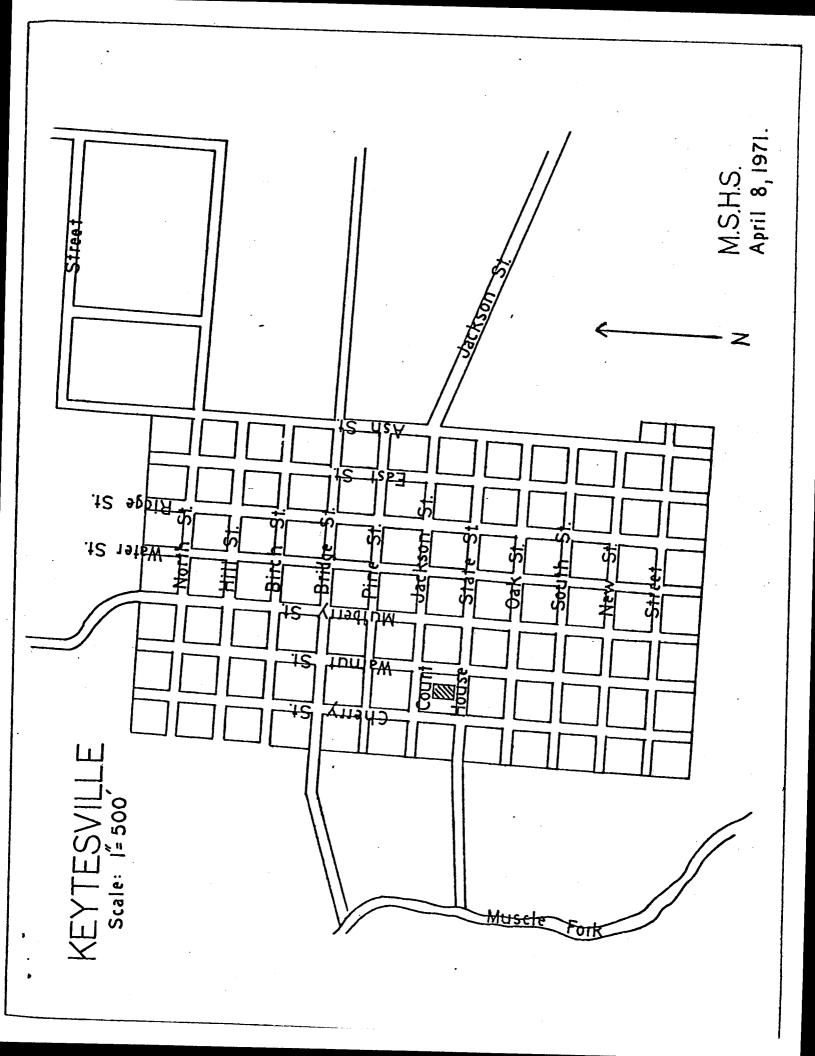
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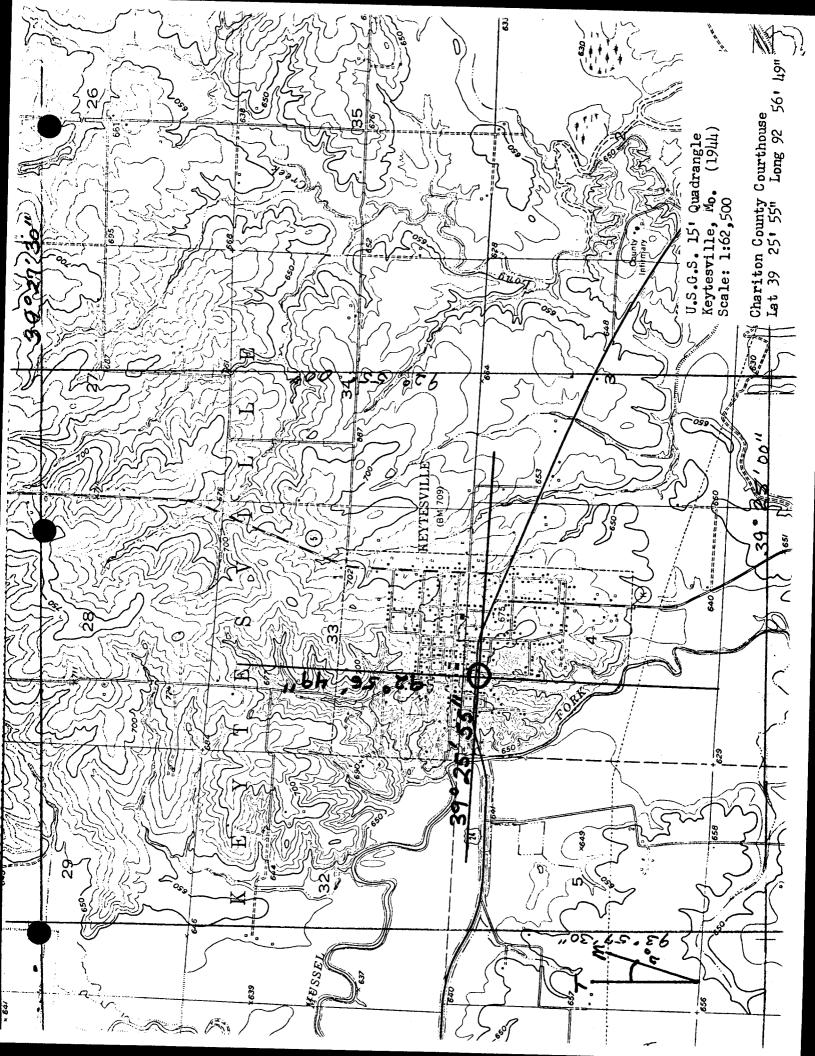
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COUNTY COURT HOUSE KEYTE SVILLE MO.

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COUNTY:

Chariton

Keytesville, Missouri

LOCATION:

OWNER: ADDRESS:

DATE APPROVED BY A.C.:

DATE SENT TO JEFF. CITY:

DATE SENT TO D.C.:

DATE OF REC. IN D.C.:

DATE PLACED ON NATIONAL REGISTER:

DATE AWARDED CERTIFICATE (AND PRESENTOR):

DATE FILE REVIEWED:

07-13-71

05-15-71

County of Chariton State St., Keytesville, Mo. 65261

07-14-71

07-19-71

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attempted, and a fire set at the courthouse in 1863 destroyed county tax records for several previous years. (Liberty Tribune, Record Book "A", p. 1.) The major attack, the county seat, likewise became the locus of much guerilla activity during 1864. The primary objectives of the Confederate guerilla "bushwackers" were the disruption of civil government in Chariton County, the elimination of Union forces from the area, murdered, and all Chariton County court records were destroyed. The guerilla however, occurred September 26, 1864. (Minutes of the Chariton County Court, Record Book "A", p. 292). During this raid, the courthouse was burned, the sheriff commander, John Thrailkill, justified ... (cont. on Site File Copy). County government was to sack the Keytesville courthouse. Several raids were and the intimidation of loyal citizens. An effective means to destroy Chariton central Missouri, as Chariton itself was the scene of intense conflict. Because of Chariton County became a significant area of contention in Missouri. Keytesville, its strategic location, and the large proportion of slaveholders in the region, The Civil War experience in Chariton County typifies the secession struggle in EXTRA









