

**A HISTORIC INVENTORY
OF
DAVISS COUNTY, MISSOURI**

1979

INTRODUCTION

The historic inventory of Daviess County was conducted during the fall of 1978 and the summer of 1979. In attempting to locate the various sites, buildings and objects, local resource persons were contacted in each township. The Daviess County Historical Society served as the local resource agent and nominated the majority of the architectural sites. Mrs. Kay Kordes of Gallatin, Missouri, was of valuable assistance in surveying the area and is the local contact person.

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. Mr. James Hurst 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.

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 the Morman area around Adam-Ondi-Ahman. 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 Daviess County Courthouse.
2. The Adam-Ondi-Ahman Site.
3. The Terry Dolan Barn

A Short History of Daviess County, Missouri .

The history of Daviess County is a microcism of rural northwest Missouri. Named after Colonel Daviess who died at the Battle of Tippecanoe, the county was established out of controversy. Its inhabitants developed a grain-livestock economy. They went through the pain connected with school reorganization and consolidation. Finally, they faced the steady drain of rural population to the urban-industrial regions where jobs are to be found.

Daviess County, some 563 square miles, was created along with Caldwell County by the state legislature in 1836. The legislators hoped to end the Mormon problem that had developed in and around Jackson County once and for all. Caldwell was to be the new permanent home of the hated group. There they could run their own affairs without interference from outsiders. Thus, the conflicts between the "gentiles" and the "saints" would end.

Settlers were drawn to the region due to the rich bottom land along the Grand River. Many men had visited the area while serving in the Black Hawk War. They returned bringing their families with them. Among the first to come were Milford Donaho and Robert P. Peniston, Sr. and family. Millport was the first town in the county but was soon replaced in importance by nearby Gallatin. Like many frontier areas the settlers came largely from nearby states.

As the Mormans claimed the good land in Caldwell County others began to take up lands in neighboring Daviess. Lyman Wright established, in the central part of the county, Adam-Ondi-Ahman ("Where Adam Shall Come Visit His People"). Within a year there were more than 500 Mormons in the town and surrounding areas.

The first serious outbreak of trouble took place at Gallatin on August 6, 1838. Here a group of Mormons came to town on election day to vote. William P. Peniston, the Whig candidate for sheriff, called on his supporters to block the Mormons. He feared they would vote as a block for his opponent. A riot developed.

There were many reasons why frontiersmen feared and hated the Mormons. Among these was a basic intolerance to any religious group who preached "corporatism." This view ran counter to traditional individualism. Others resented the "saints" claims of superiority. Still others charged the Mormons with being pro-black; pro-Indian; and prohibitionists. The combination of these and other factors had previously led to violence in Jackson County and now would lead to similar problems in northwest Missouri. (One must note that the practice of polygamy stems from a later date.)

To further complicate the situation was a split within the church itself. The more militant group known as Danites ("Sons of Dan, Destroying or Avenging Angels") led by Sidney Rigdon called for force to meet force. He argued that justice was on their side as they were the chosen people.

Soon after the election riots, there were reports throughout Daviess County of plundering, violence, threats, and the like. A group of Mormons forced the Justice of the Peace Adam Black to pledge respect for their legal rights. Later Joseph Smith was arrested, tried, and forced to

post bond of \$500 to keep the peace. The threats against Justice Black further set back the cause of the Mormons. Conditions were such that one observer reported that the region was "a scene of desolation."

Upon being notified of the numerous acts of violence, Missouri Governor Lilburn W. Boggs sent state militia to control the area. General David R. Atchison arrived with a division of state militia in order to determine the causes of the violence and to curb further outbreaks. The governor soon sent further support and in all, more than 2,000 troops were in the area to curb the Mormons.

On October 18th, a band of Mormons seized and looted the town of Gallatin and soon after Millport suffered a similar fate. Daviess County was the scene of sporadic violence and pillage, blamed on the Mormons.

On October 30th, twenty Mormon families were attacked at Haun's Mill in Caldwell County. Seventeen were killed and eleven wounded at this "Massacre." This strengthened the Mormon's determination to resist.

Even before the Haun's Mill Massacre, Governor Boggs had issued his "Extermination Order." In his orders to his field commanders of October 27th, he wrote: "I have received. . . information of the most appalling character, which entirely changes the face of things, and places the Mormons in the attitude of an open and avowed defiance of the law, and of having--made war upon the people of this state. . .The Mormons must be treated as enemies, and must be exterminated or driven from the state if necessary for the public peace--their outrages are beyond all description."

Ultimately Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon were arrested by the state militia. After a court-martial trial both were sentenced to die. The commander of the troops, Alexander W. Doniphan refused to carry out the sentence. By the end of October, Far West, Mormon headquarters in Caldwell County was surrounded and forced to capitulate. Surrender terms called for all Mormons to turn over to the authorities all responsible leaders to be tried and punished; all those who partook in acts of violence to forfeit their property; the remainder to leave the state as soon as possible; and finally the Mormons were to turn over all their arms to the troops.

By November 6th, Militia General John B. Clark found that the Mormons had lived up to the harsh terms in good faith. He, too, blamed all the troubles on the Mormons. Within a few days, those at Adam-Ondi-Ahman surrendered and joined the others in Caldwell County. By April of 1839, the Mormons, numbering some 5,000, had left Missouri for Illinois.

Affairs in Daviess County quieted down. The farmers prospered. For example one could expect in 1842 to receive \$4.00 for a cow; \$40.00 for a good horse; .25¢ for a bushel of wheat; and 18¢ a gallon for whiskey. All in all, peace had come to Daviess.

The tranquility of the region was broken by the Civil War. As the residents were closely divided over the war, the county was placed under control of the militia with the civil government suspended for the duration. Land values declined; farms went untended; and business languished.

Guerrillas roamed the region at will. It was estimated that at least 300 inhabitants of Daviess County served the Confederacy. With the end of hostilities, the militia were removed and elections were held. Peace again came to the county.

By 1871, the Walbash Railroad had reached Jameson and the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad began service to Daviess County two years later. The County was not to be spared the activities of Jesse James and his gang. The Daviess County Savings Association was hit in 1869; a bank in Gallatin was robbed in 1873 and a Rock Island train was stopped in 1881. While the actual participants in these crimes was never clearly established most citizens blamed Jesse James.

Almost from the inception of civil government in the county the voters have supported the Democratic Party. Gallatin became the county seat with the first court-house the rented home of Elisha B. Creekmore. In 1840, a permanent building was constructed at a cost of \$6,000. This building served the county until 1887 when it was torn down. In 1907, the present structure was built at a cost of approximately \$70,000. Except for a few recent national elections, the voters still remain loyal to the Democratic Party.

Two prominent residents of the county have been elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. After serving sixteen years in Congress, Alexander Monroe Dockery, a Gallatin banker and doctor, was elected governor of the state in 1900. Later, Dockery was appointed Third Assistant Postmaster-General by President Woodrow Wilson. The other, Joshua W. Alexander, served in Congress from 1910 to 1919. He gave up his seat in

order to serve President Wilson as Secretary of Commerce during the last few months of Wilson's administration.

The history of education in Daviess County followed much the same pattern as other regions of the state. As an area developed support for a school, the families banded together and built and operated a one-room school. At one time there were more than 100 such schools in the county--each generating fierce loyalty among its patronages. The county even undertook to educate the blacks of the region and established the Wilberforce School for blacks at Gallatin in 1867.

In 1909, the state of Missouri began to grade the schools of the state. This encouraged some consolidation of rural schools. In 1914, the state began a general reduction of small one-room schools. In Daviess County many felt the loss of their beloved school. Again in 1954, the state ordered school consolidation. This time only six school systems remained. The one-room school faded away with the exception of a few serving the Amish. This group came to the Jamesport area in the 1950's to settle.

Higher education too was found in the county. The citizens of Gallatin in 1892 encouraged the Grand River Baptist College to move from Edinburg, Grundy County. The school had more than one hundred students. It was closed in 1900 and reopened in 1908 by William Jewell College of Liberty, Missouri. In 1915, the college was sold to Dr. E. W. Dow. He and his three daughters and one son operated the school until a fire destroyed the building in 1918. His daughter, Blanche Dow, ultimately gained a national reputation in the field of higher education.

The Grand River, too, has made itself felt in the area. On at least four occasions there has been major flooding with considerable damage to the towns along its banks. The Army Corp of Engineers proposed a dam and watershed project to handle the flooding by the Grand River. The extensive program was debated heatedly in 1950's and 1960's. Finally the plans were dropped as opponents argued costs far outweighed benefits.

Daviess County in the 1970's faces a problem common throughout northwest Missouri---declining population. There has been a steady drop in inhabitants in the rural areas of the state while the state as a whole has had some population growth. Modern agricultural methods have reduced the need for labor on the farm. As none of the towns of Daviess County have any significant amount of industry the farm worker has moved to the urban areas and the jobs they offer. Today as the farm goes, so goes the county. The grain-livestock economy supports all in one fashion or another. Gallatin, the county seat, never grew larger than 2,000. Daviess County had fewer than 7,300 people in the 1970 census compared to 21,325 in 1900.

Daviess County was born out of the Mormon controversy. Rural in orientation, the county still has made a contribution to the affairs of the state and the nation in its more than one hundred and forty years of existence.

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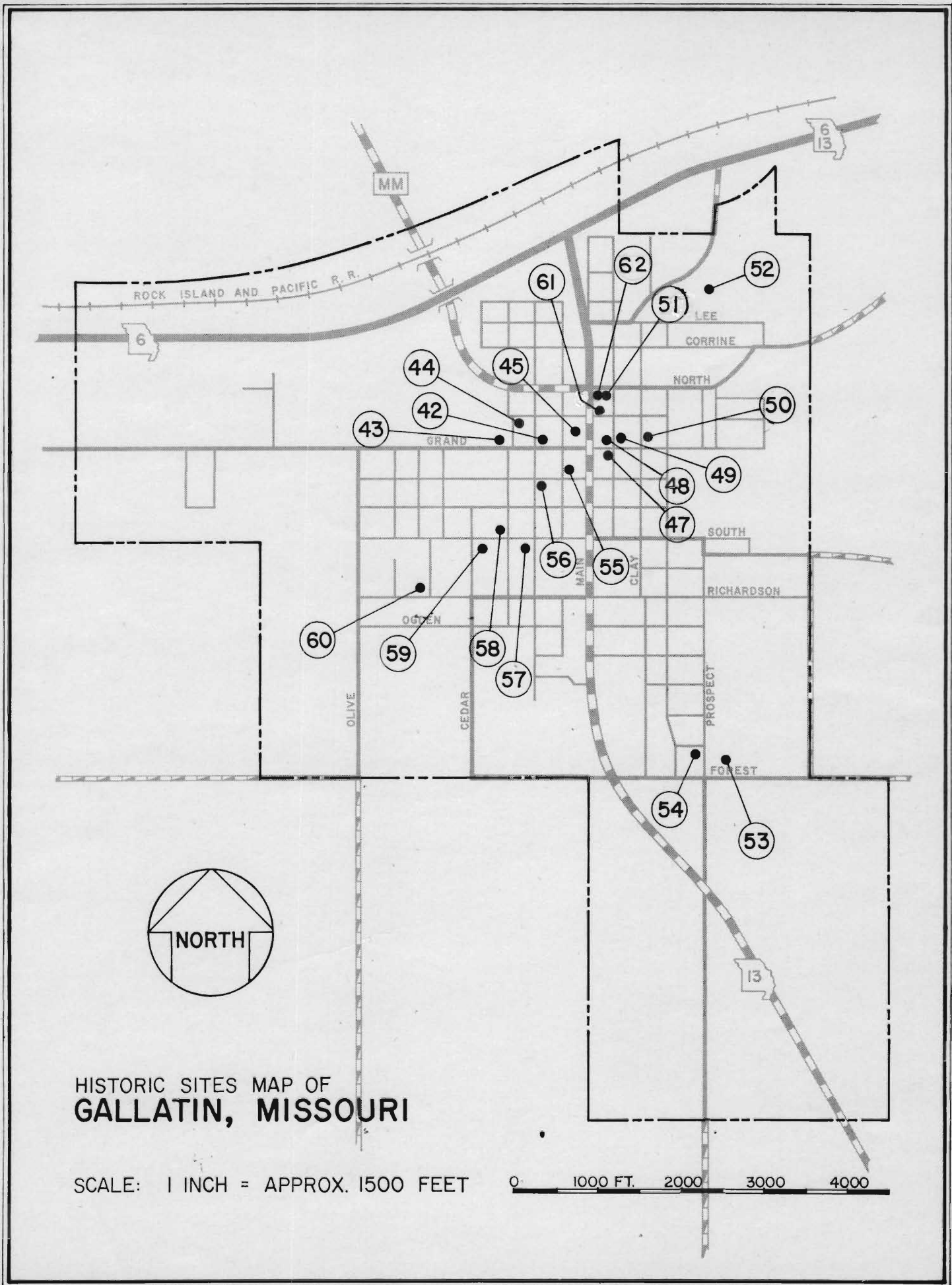
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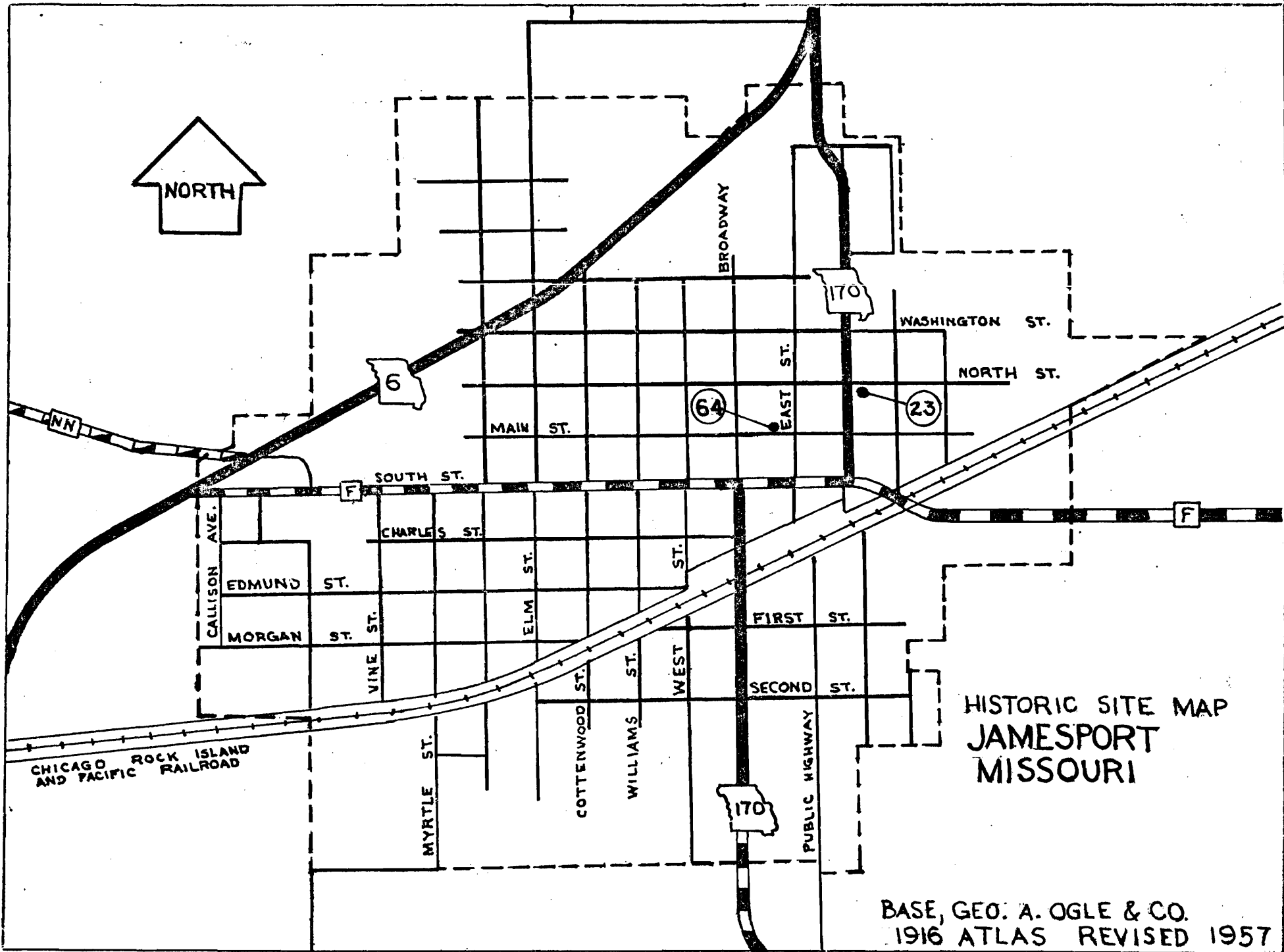
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HISTORIC SITE MAP
JAMESPORT
MISSOURI

BASE, GEO. A. OGLE & CO.
1916 ATLAS REVISED 1957

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