

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Dimmitt, George, Memorial Hospital

other names/site number Polk Community Hospital; Lakeshores Residential Center

2. Location

street & number 102 South Bolivar Road not for publication N/A

city or town Humansville vicinity N/A

state Missouri code MO county Polk code 167 zip code 65674

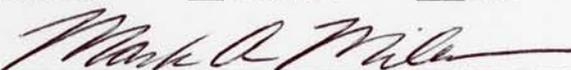
3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local


Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles, Deputy SHPO

JANUARY 20, 2012
Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

Dimmitt, George, Memorial Hospital
Name of Property

Polk County, Missouri
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- Private
- public – Local
- public – State
- public – Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
0	0	district
0	0	site
0	0	structure
0	0	object
1	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

HEALTH CARE: hospital

HEALTH CARE: sanitarium

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS
Colonial Revival

foundation: STONE
walls: BRICK

roof: ASPHALT
other: TERRA COTTA

Dimmitt, George, Memorial Hospital
Name of Property

Polk County, Missouri
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

Health/Medicine

Architecture

Period of Significance

1929-1961

Significant Dates

1929

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Heckenlively, J. L. & Mark, Carl

Easley Brothers Construction Company

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Dimmitt, George, Memorial Hospital
Name of Property

Polk County Missouri
County and State

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u> Zone	<u>449320</u> Easting	<u>4182940</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

11. Form Prepared By

name/title 1. Renee Christensen (original preparer) 2. Roger Maserang (additional research and editing)
organization 1. MU student 2. Missouri SHPO date 1. Feb. 26, 2011 2. Sept. 30, 2011
street & number 1. 23820 East 480th Road 2. P.O. Box 176 telephone 1. 417-754-1150, 417-399-6928
city or town 1. Humansville 2. Jefferson City state Missouri
e-mail 1. rdcwyb@mail.missouri.edu 2. roger.maserang@dnr.mo.gov

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:**
 - X A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
 - o A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Photographs.**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Gary and Cecile Boggs
street & number 102 South Bolivar Road telephone (417) 722-4416
city or town Humansville state Missouri zip code 65674

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Dimmitt, George, Memorial Hospital
Polk County, Missouri

Summary

Constructed in 1929, George Dimmitt Memorial Hospital at 102 S. Bolivar Road (Route 123) in Humansville, Missouri, is an irregular shaped brick building consisting of a three-story central portion flanked by two-story wings with gallery porches. Springfield architects Heckenlively and Mark designed the attractive, west-facing hospital to incorporate an existing two-story brick residence with an ell at the north end of the property. The taller central part contains the former operating room on its top floor and features a wide frieze and cornice, rendered in terra cotta. A tile band with the name, GEORGE DIMMITT MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, is centered in the façade. The two-story wings are side-gabled with end chimneys. The middle portion has a flat roof from which a brick elevator headhouse emerges. The Colonial Revival style building measures approximately 110 feet across the primary elevation and in its original form was approximately 39 feet deep at the two-story gabled ell, including the porch. In the 1970s, the ell was expanded. A basement is under the entire building. Historic material is present throughout much of the building, most windows and doors are original, and the hospital floor plan is substantially intact. The operating room retains its original skylight, plate glass north wall, and tile floor. In the back, metal fire escapes serve the upper floors. A noncontributing (ca. 1970s) storage building is behind the hospital. The area around Dimmitt Hospital is a mixture of residential, commercial and institutional properties near the center of Humansville, on the east side of Bolivar Road across from the Humansville Community Building and Dimmitt Memorial Park. George Dimmitt Memorial Hospital easily reflects its historic appearance and retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

Elaboration

A concrete sidewalk runs along the front of the building parallel to Bolivar Road, and a driveway (Human Street) at the north end accesses a rear parking area. Other sidewalks access the main entrance from the north driveway and from Bolivar Road. The ground slopes southward from the approximate center of the hospital, gradually exposing more of the foundation—roughly three feet at the southwest corner. The north wing with the main entrance is only a few inches above grade, with a gentle ramp used by both wheelchairs and pedestrians. Four small trees and a couple of evergreen bushes are arranged across the narrow front lawn. The hospital grounds include a storage building and a basketball half-court, both in the rear and non-historic. The remainder of the tract to the east contains grassy areas with trees. Modern dwellings are adjacent to the hospital on both sides (a driveway is on the south).

The brick hospital building is reinforced with steel and concrete. Bricks, laid in a six-course common bond, are from multiple sources. Those in the three-story central portion are red wire-cut bricks from a brickyard in Fulton, Missouri. Bricks in the original north wing (the former two-story residence, constructed ca. 1876) are a lighter shade and were probably handmade. Bricks in the south wing are hued much like those in the north wing but appear to have been extruded. Bricks in the expanded ell are smooth and modern. The foundation is cut limestone clad with stucco. The stucco is scored to resemble stone blocks.

The center portion of the west elevation with the former operating room has a flat roof. This cubelike segment contains most of the building's Colonial Revival stylistic features. The façade is highlighted by precast terra cotta design elements such as a wide cornice, name tiles, belt courses, window sills and

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Dimmitt, George, Memorial Hospital
Polk County, Missouri

keystones. The low profile, shallow-molded, unadorned terra cotta cornice contributes to the overall simplicity of the style by minimizing exterior ornamentation. Three sets of five double-hung original windows with six-over-one glazing are symmetrically arranged across the facade.

The wings flanking the central portion of the building are fronted with two-tiered, full-façade porches under an extension of the main roof. Each of the four porches is 40 feet wide and has an ornate pressed metal ceiling. Paired square, classical columns (three in the corners) support a plain entablature faced with what appears to be wood siding. All of the trim is painted white, as is the foundation. The terra cotta (in the central portion) is a creamy white. Integral chimneys rise from each gabled end of the building.

Prior to becoming an integral part of the hospital in 1929, the north wing was a two-story brick single family residence originally known as the John Garrison home. Constructed in ca. 1876, it was the first house built of brick in Humansville.¹ Probably an I-House with a central ell, the Garrison home was described as “a splendidly constructed nine room brick house with large porches and basement...situated on a beautiful site 120x210 feet.”²

Central entrances on each floor of the north wing are flanked by two double-hung, six-over-one windows on each side, all with segmental arches. The first floor entrance became, and remains, the main entrance to the building. The door at this location has been replaced but the original surround with sidelights is intact. The upstairs entrance also has sidelights, as well as what appears to be the original or very old door. Window sills in this wing are made of wood.

Although its fenestration is different and arches over openings are flat rather than segmental, the south wing is otherwise much like the north wing in size and design. Porches have the same array of columns and ornate metal ceilings but instead of a central entrance on each floor, windows and doors alternate across the façade—a total of three doors and three windows on each level, symmetrically arranged. The doors are transomed with divided glazing and windows are double-hung six-over-one units. Window sills resemble the painted wood sills in the north wing but in this case are terra cotta. Screen doors are non-original.

The south (side) elevation is indented slightly at the rear. On each level, the main portion contains a central window with a keystone and sill similar to those in the three-story primary elevation. A small vent window is high within the gable. The indented portion also contains a window on each level, but without keystones. Except for the vented opening, all four windows are double-hung six-over-one sash. A coal door is at ground level.

The north (side) elevation contains four windows, two on each floor, which repeat the double-hung pattern with six-over-one pane glazing.

The east (rear) elevation is irregular, with minimal ornamentation. Two metal staircases serve as emergency exits from the second and third floors. Many of the original double-hung sash are intact, with

¹ *Souvenir Humansville, Missouri* (Humansville: *Humansville Star-Leader*, 1902).

² “Modern Hospital for Humansville,” *Humansville Star-Leader*, 13 December 1928.

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Polk County, Missouri

window sills of concrete. This elevation contains the expansion of the two-story gabled ell. Windows in the expanded portion include what appear to be casements. Ground floor entrances are located in the rear of the south wing and in the south side of the ell.

Interior

The interior is substantially intact, with much historic material present. Although portions of the interior have been reconfigured, how the spaces were used when the hospital functioned historically can still be discerned. Inside the main entrance was an admitting area and waiting room, to the right. To the left of the main entrance was the matron's/head nurse's room. Another room served as an office. The kitchen and dining area remained in their original locations which extended into the ell. To the south were a double patient room, an office, a nurses' station and three patient rooms—two double and then a private room at the far end of the corridor, on each floor. All rooms had access to either a private or shared bathroom. Each floor also had two shower rooms at the rear, next to the stairwell. All of the building's original heat radiators are intact.

In addition to more double and single patient rooms, the second floor also had a men's ward (which was used as a women's ward, as needed),³ an X-ray room, a maid's room, and a nursery. Corridors on both levels are approximately eight feet wide by seventy feet long and have "mosaic-terrazzo" surfaces with brass divider strips.

The hospital was designed to house a maximum of about twenty patients, assuming up to six patients in the second floor ward.

The top floor of the middle, three-story part of the hospital housed the operating room, sterilizing room, surgeon's wash-up room, storeroom, lavatory and waiting area. The equipment has been removed, but the spaces are relatively intact otherwise. The operating room has walls of white tile and a floor consisting of small white hexagon-shaped tiles with a central drain. The north wall of the operating room is plate glass and there is a skylight.

In addition to wide stairways, the building was equipped with an Otis elevator system. The elevator car is constructed of ornamental iron, finished in grained walnut and provided with a Boatwick type, electrically operated collapsing safety gate. The elevator remains in the hospital but is not operational.

The building's full basement contains a modern heating system, although the original coal heating system is still present. The basement included a laundry area and janitor's quarters.

In the 1970s, a small, one-story brick addition was constructed on the rear of the north wing for storage and to house an emergency generator.

Directly behind the north half of the hospital is a one-story concrete block storage building with a raised-seam metal surface on its gable roof. Constructed ca. 1977, this white-painted, non-contributing building measures 60 feet by 24 feet. A sliding vehicle door made of wood and a window are in the south gabled

³ Josephine LeAn, personal interview with Renee Christensen, 18 August 2011.

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Dimmitt, George, Memorial Hospital
Polk County, Missouri

end. There are three entrances and two windows in the west elevation, five windows in the east elevation and one window in the north elevation.

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Dimmitt, George, Memorial Hospital
Polk County, Missouri

Summary

The George Dimmitt Memorial Hospital in Humansville, Missouri, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C with local significance in the areas of Health/Medicine and Architecture. Constructed in 1929, the building is an uncommon example of a modern, small but fully-equipped hospital erected in a town with a population that seldom topped one thousand, thanks to benefactor Charles E. Dimmitt who established it as a memorial to his deceased son, George Watson Dimmitt, who was born in Humansville. Designed by Springfield architects James L. Heckenlively and Carl Mark, and incorporating what was then considered the latest advances in medical technology, the attractive, Colonial Revival style building features a three-story central element with an operating room on the top floor, flanked by two-story side wings with gallery porches where able patients could sit and convalesce—a design that reflected the theory that the optimal hospital environment should be informal and homelike. The period of significance begins with the building's completion and opening in 1929 and ends in 1961, the year when events begun historically continue to have importance and no more specific date can be defined. However, Dimmitt Hospital functioned for several more years, through the advent of Medicare (when the Humansville community raised \$25,000 for repairs and improvements to comply with the new rules). The hospital closed in 1977, was reopened a decade later as a drug and alcohol treatment center, and currently serves as a residential care facility.

Elaboration

Humansville is near the northwest corner of Polk County, a primarily agricultural region in southwestern Missouri, two counties east of Kansas and two counties north of Arkansas. Humansville, with an official population of just 946, is the second largest town in Polk County. Bolivar, the county seat, has a population of 9,143. Kansas City is roughly sixty miles northwest of Humansville and Springfield lies about forty miles to the southeast. Before Dimmitt Hospital was erected in 1929, the nearest hospital was in Springfield, at that time more than fifty road miles away. But few families in such a rural area owned automobiles, and even the main roads were in poor condition in those days. Although there were local physicians, prompt, adequate medical care was often unavailable to the residents of Humansville and much of the area around it, prior to Dimmitt Memorial.

Humansville is named after founding father James Gundy Human, who settled there in about 1834 and remained until his death in 1875. A native of Knox County, Tennessee, Human built the first store in what became Humansville and was the town's first postmaster. From 1837 to 1840, he purchased forty acres for town lots (at \$1.25/acre) from the U. S. government. In 1850-51, Human represented Polk County in the Missouri House and was a justice of the peace for several years until his death at the age of 77. Humansville was incorporated on May 30, 1872. The railroad between Kansas City and Springfield was completed through Humansville in 1885, after which the town's population grew rapidly until, by 1902, it was between one and two thousand persons. By this time there were forty-two businesses in Humansville, not counting several churches. Several doctors were practicing from small offices in their homes. The pastor of an early Humansville church, Shady Grove Methodist (which became Humansville United Methodist) was Jonas Hare Dimmitt. Pastor Dimmitt was the father of Charles E. Dimmitt, the benefactor who established Dimmitt Memorial Hospital as a memorial to his son George.⁴

⁴ *History of Hickory, Polk, Cedar, Dade and Barton Counties, Missouri* (Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1889); *Humansville Missouri Centennial, 1872-1972* (Humansville, Lincoln and Cole Camp: Williams Press), 1972.

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Dimmitt, George, Memorial Hospital
Polk County, Missouri

Although he was born in Illinois, Charles E. Dimmitt grew up in Humansville before heading northwest to seek his fortune. He married Luella Montgomery in 1884, and two years later (on November 21, 1886) their son, George Watson Dimmitt, was born in Humansville. In 1896, having managed the local lumber company for several years, Charles Dimmitt moved his family to Great Falls, Montana where he became involved in the general mercantile business. Later Dimmitt became associated with the Golden Rule syndicate, which operated mercantile stores in several western states. James Cash Penney began working for Golden Rule, and in 1907 bought out the other partners. In 1913, Golden Rule incorporated as the J. C. Penney Company, and as such rapidly expanded. Charles Dimmitt held executive positions with J. C. Penney, Inc., at their corporate headquarters in New York, and became wealthy.⁵ In 1922, Dimmitt retired from J. C. Penney and relocated his family to Hollywood, California. On August 20, 1928, their son George Dimmitt died.⁶ Subsequently the Dimmitts returned to Humansville and donated funds for constructing and equipping the nominated hospital, as a memorial to their son with the stipulation that the hospital be “operated without profit, thus serving a great community need and extending charity to humanity.”⁷

While he was at it (presumably influenced by his minister father if not by the example for philanthropy set by J. C. Penney), Charles Dimmitt also purchased and donated the site for a city park and made a substantial contribution toward a \$75,000 community building in Humansville. All three projects were well under way when the stock market collapsed on Black Tuesday (October 29, 1929) and in any case were completed or virtually completed in November of that year. The Humansville Community Building apparently was completed slightly before the hospital and Dimmitt Memorial Park, which featured a pavilion with sixteen Ionic columns made of concrete. Heckenlively and Mark designed the community building and pavilion as well as the hospital.

According to the *Star-Leader*, “During the many years of their absence Mr. and Mrs. Dimmitt retained a warm feeling in their hearts for the Old Home Town as has been manifested in recent years by their frequent visits here, and by their splendid donations to our churches and other institutions of the town. It was while visiting here in the fall of 1928 that they purchased the beautiful brick residence property of Mrs. Harriet Beason for the purpose of converting it into a modern hospital.”⁸ In addition to the Beason property, the frontage north to Buffalo Street with the exception of a residence, plus a two-acre tract on the east and additional acreage to the west and north extending to Main Street was acquired for development. Dimmitt purchased and donated all of Block 15 of the Original Town of Humansville, specifically for development as a park. The newspaper noted that a few of the town’s older residences were torn down or removed to clear space.

⁵ “Announcing the Opening of the George Dimmitt Memorial Hospital,” *Humansville Star-Leader*, 21 November 1929.

⁶ Present research was unable to determine any details of George Dimmitt’s death on August 20, 1928, although a computer search of historic records indicated that he married Bertha Donna Mcandries in Salt Lake City in 1920, at the age of 33. The marriage ended in divorce a few years later, in Denver in 1926. He was 41, reportedly living in Los Angeles and associated with his father in business at the time of his death. At the time of the 1930 census, Charles E. and Luella had an adopted son, Charles R., age six.

⁷ “Announcing the Opening of the George Dimmitt Memorial Hospital.”

⁸ Ibid.

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Dimmitt, George, Memorial Hospital
Polk County, Missouri

On May 21, 1929, the contract for erection of the hospital was awarded to the Easley Brothers Construction Company of Aurora, Missouri. Work began the next day, with Creed Baccus as construction superintendent. Just three weeks earlier, on April 30, Easley Brothers had been awarded the contract for construction of the Humansville Community Building. A preponderance of local labor was involved in the projects.⁹

When the hospital was constructed and the Beason residence became its north wing, it was arranged that Mrs. Beason would continue living there as the hospital matron. According to local historians, the Beason home (aka the John Garrison house) was the first brick residence built in Humansville.¹⁰

Charles Dimmitt did more than just bankroll the hospital and contribute to other community projects. He was very much a hands-on benefactor as well, even though he was well into his 60s at the time. After visiting Humansville during the summer of 1928, the Dimmitts returned to their West Coast residence. In 1929 Charles Dimmitt, at the request of the Humansville Community Association, returned to Humansville to oversee construction of the community building. "Mr. Dimmitt consented to do this without pay and for eight months he has been constantly on the job," the *Star-Leader* reported in November. "He has made many trips to the various markets for material and supplies all at his own expense and it is needless to say that his knowledge of construction work and buying materials and equipment has not only saved the Association thousands of dollars but in addition has been of untold help to the Community."¹¹ There is a local perception that Dimmitt travelled to Georgia in search of bricks for the hospital's south wing, but why this might have been done is not explained.¹² Darker wire-cut bricks (from Fulton, Missouri) were used in the three-story central portion of the building.¹³

While the Dimmitts maintained a residence in California (Charles Dimmitt had an office in the Hollywood Security-First National Bank building), they also bolstered their ties with Humansville, purchasing in March 1930 "the beautiful residence of Mrs. Clara Hahn...which will be their home while here."¹⁴

When construction of George Dimmitt Memorial Hospital was completed in November 1929, the *Star-Leader* observed that "the extent of its usefulness cannot be reckoned in dollars and cents but only in the manifold blessings to our people. Not only will this hospital stand as a memorial to their son, but it will be a lasting monument to the benevolent purpose and the splendid work of the donors. The people of Humansville can never hope to fully repay their debt of gratitude and only partially express their appreciation to Mr. and Mrs. Dimmitt for their great gift."¹⁵

Thousands of visitors attended the joint dedication of Dimmitt Hospital and the Humansville Community Building on November 21, 1929. After the ceremony, the buildings were open to visitors who reveled in

⁹ "Hospital Contract is Awarded, Work Begun," *Humansville Star-Leader*, 12 May 1929.

¹⁰ D. S. McNeil, "The Story of Humansville," *Humansville Star-Leader*, 1934.

¹¹ "Humansville Community Building Exceeds the Fondest Anticipations," *Humansville Star-Leader*, 21 November 1929.

¹² Mary A. Owens, "My 60 Years in Humansville," self-published, 1982.

¹³ Although the bricks are a close match, not only is the fenestration different from wing to wing, but the north wing openings have segmental arches while the south wing has flat arches.

¹⁴ "Dimmitts Buy Residence," *Humansville Star-Leader*, 6 March 1930.

¹⁵ "Announcing the Opening of the George Dimmitt Memorial Hospital," *Humansville Star-Leader*, 21 November 1929.

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Dimmitt, George, Memorial Hospital
Polk County, Missouri

their “beauty and magnificence [and] many were heard to remark that the equal of these buildings is seldom if ever found in towns of like size anywhere in the country.”¹⁶ The hospital had a capacity of about 20 beds.

George Dimmitt Memorial Hospital

After about 1900, physicians increasingly made the transition from a home-based practice to hospitals with their greater capacity for diagnostic and surgical treatments:

To prevent internal “epidemics” of telltale diseases such as erysipelas, pyemia, and “hospital gangrene,” what (or who) was isolated from what, and how that isolation was achieved, altered dramatically. Traditional strategies of increasing the air space and flow around each patient gave way to Florence Nightingale’s sanitary nursing, Joseph Lister’s antiseptic, Joseph Grancher’s barrier system of nursing, D.L. Richardson’s aseptic nursing, and Charles Chapin’s advocacy of individual cubicles. The larger social and medical transformations of hospital design colored all of these shifts. Additionally, the changing isolation strategies reveal a transformation of the underlying understanding of the role that hospital architecture played in disease incidence.¹⁷

Within its Colonial Revival facade, Heckenlively and Mark’s design for George Dimmitt Memorial Hospital incorporated a floor plan with specialized spaces that facilitated the work of staff in caring for the special needs of their patients while providing the latest treatment options. George Dimmitt Memorial Hospital was fitted with what was considered the latest medical technology including top of the line surgical, X-ray, sterilization and lighting equipment. The fact that this was accomplished in such a relatively small town, and without religious affiliation, seems remarkable today. Although the building is no longer a general hospital, it still serves a related purpose as a residential care facility and retains integrity from its period of significance.

Prior to the existence of modern hospitals like Dimmitt, hospital environments were neither designed nor organized with any or consistent expectations about their use by patients and staff. At best, room types and hospital spaces were often vaguely designed with undifferentiated behavior settings. Since patients were incapable of altering their environment, they had to adapt their behavior to what existed even though it did not reflect patterns of activity found anywhere outside of the hospital. Consequently, patients often found themselves forced into random, relatively undirected behavior that failed to meet their needs and perhaps affected their rate of recovery.

Perhaps most obviously, the changing ideology within the medical field was reflected in the design of Dimmitt Hospital by the focus on private or double rooms as opposed to wards. Both wards and private rooms have advantages and disadvantages, but the private room design has the benefit of supporting a wide variety of ordinary human behavior by mimicking, as closely as possible, models of everyday living

¹⁶ “Dedication Attracts Thousands of Visitors,” *Humansville Star-Leader*, 28 November 1929.

¹⁷ Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic: Archaeology of Medical Perception* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1973).

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Polk County, Missouri

which are considered the optimal hospital environment.¹⁸ There was a small ward at Dimmitt Hospital, but for the most part patients enjoyed the privacy of their own single or double rooms which incorporated modern hospital equipment and yet were decorated with items typically found in any bedroom within the community. The hospital was sufficiently informal that patients enjoyed the freedom to step out onto a porch from their room, sit in a rocking chair and visit with friends, relatives and neighbors.

While the design of the patient rooms allowed patients to behave in more natural ways, the highly specialized rooms (X-ray, sterilization, etc.) enabled the staff to administer treatment most efficiently while also displaying behavioral indicators or “messages” to the users.

The Dimmitt Hospital operating room on the third floor contained the most modern equipment available at the time, according to the *Star-Leader*. For example, the surgical table (made by Scanlin-Belfour) represented the latest developments in such things and cost \$800. Adequate lighting was crucial, and the operating room utilized a six-foot circular unit with eight parable reflectors attached to a ring so the light could be focused on an area eighteen inches in diameter, producing absolutely shadowless illumination. A floor spotlight supplemented the circle light, as needed. The operating room also was designed for optimal use of available daylight. In addition to a north skylight, most of the north and east sides of the operating room were made of plate glass, providing an abundance of natural lighting. Walls and the floor were of white tile for easy cleaning. Surgical instruments were housed in a cabinet. Also on the third floor were sterilizing, supply, waiting and wash-up rooms plus lavatories. The equipment has been removed but the spaces are otherwise intact and easily recognizable from their period of significance.

On the second floor, the X-ray department was equipped with a Victor X-ray machine that cost over \$4,000 and which “should be able to supply the public with every needed X-ray service.” The sterilizing room on the second floor utilized “White Line” equipment manufactured by the Scanlan Morris Company which, the *Star-Leader* noted, was also the choice of surgeons at the Mayo Clinic and other prominent institutions.¹⁹

The hospital’s most expensive piece of equipment was its electric passenger elevator. Custom-designed by the Otis Electric Elevator Company, the elevator featured an automatic leveling system which “avoids any possibility of accidents while entering or leaving.” The elevator cost in excess of \$7,800.²⁰ The elevator system is intact but no longer functional.

The establishment of a hospital in Humansville allowed medical doctors to perform surgeries and provide advanced medical care. Many operations took place there as doctors came from surrounding communities, such as Bolivar and Stockton, to admit their patients to Dimmitt Hospital for surgery or other medical treatment. Information about the hospital’s early years is buried in the pages of the *Humansville Star-Leader*, but in addition to original matron Harriett Beason, Mrs. H. B. Steward was the original head nurse and the first four patients reportedly were Mrs. Howard Drake of Bolivar, Mrs. Elizabeth Rummel of rural Humansville, a Mrs. Green from Kansas City and a Mr. and Mrs. Crutcher of

¹⁸ Ibid. The main advantage of the hospital ward compared with the private room is generally considered to be its relative ease of supervision.

¹⁹ “Announcing the Opening of The George Dimmitt Memorial Hospital,” *Humansville Star-Leader*, 21 November 1929.

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Dimmitt, George, Memorial Hospital
Polk County, Missouri

St. Louis. The *Star-Leader* regularly reported the hospital's admissions and dismissals in an "At the Hospital" column, often specifying the nature of the operations. Patients came from a wider area than just Humansville and Polk County. On March 6, 1930, for example, patients were listed from the towns of Deepwater, Hartville, Osceola, Rosco and Collins and their maladies were identified as appendicitis (mentioned three times), extraction of teeth, and removal of an eye. Regarding Mrs. Drake and Mrs. Rummel: "Both were serious operations and each patient is recovering satisfactorily at this time," the *Star-Leader* reported on November 28, 1929.²¹

By the 1940s, while several doctors had hospital rights (to some extent), there was also at least one registered nurse on duty at Dimmitt Hospital along with several other staff members. Josephine LeAn worked at the hospital from 1947 through 1960 as a practical nurse. With no professional training, Ms. LeAn said that she and other practical nurses were trained by the doctor and nurse on duty. When asked what her responsibilities were, she stated, "Whatever it was, we did (including) giving anesthesia."²² Ms. LeAn said the staff handled everything from births to gunshot wounds. One current resident of the Humansville area, Mrs. Lowell Myers, remembers her mother's surgery at George Dimmitt Memorial Hospital in 1963. The family lived approximately thirty miles away, in El Dorado Springs. Mrs. Myers said they chose George Dimmitt Memorial Hospital due to its reputation as having an excellent doctor and facilities. Mrs. Myers added that "when they had a hospital to go to, they went."²³ This attitude reverberated throughout several conversations with local residents. Additionally, because the staff lived in and around the Humansville community, patients often were cared for by people they knew from church, school, recreation, or as neighbors. In many cases they shared acquaintances and friends. Overall, being hospitalized then was not the disorienting and impersonal experience so common today.

The City of Humansville maintained control of Dimmitt Hospital through a management organization called the Polk County Hospital Corporation (PCHC). Later the PCHC changed the hospital's name to Polk Community Hospital. By 1977, after suffering extreme financial mismanagement, the hospital was forced to declare bankruptcy.²⁴ The property was then sold to Osage Prairie Medical Association who slightly remodeled the interior, converting it for medical and dental offices. George Mathews, recruited by the Osage Prairie Medical Association as an intern, moved to Humansville in 1980 and served the community for three years.²⁵ During the winter of 1983, he recalled, the hospital suffered severe water damage and was vacated by the various medical and dental offices. It was sold back to the City of Humansville, but remained closed. In 1986, the property was sold again to two longtime residents. In 1987, after repairs and renovations, the hospital was reopened as a drug and alcohol treatment center. It was operated in that capacity until it was sold to its current owner, Lakeshores Residential, in 2001. Since then it has been operated as a residential care center for individuals with psychiatric or developmental disabilities.

²⁰ "Hospital Opened for Business Monday," *Humansville Star-Leader*, 28 November 1929.

²¹ "Announcing the Opening of the George Dimmitt Memorial Hospital."

²² Josephine LeAn, personal interview by Renee Christensen, 18 August 2011.

²³ Lowell Myers and Virginia, personal interview by Renee Christensen, 13 March 2011.

²⁴ "Auction Part of Bankruptcy Settlement," *Humansville Star-Leader*, 29 September 1977.

²⁵ George Mathews, personal interview by Renee Christensen, 25 August 2011.

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James L. Heckenlively, AIA and Carl Mark, Architects

Dimmitt Memorial Hospital was designed by James Heckenlively and Carl Mark. Known as one of Springfield's most prominent architects, James L. Heckenlively was born on August 18, 1863 in Gentry County, Missouri, the son of Jacob and Martha J. (Shisler) Heckenlively. James received part of his education in Gentry County, where he taught school and later attended the Normal College at Stanberry. He had a "decided natural bent toward architecture, which manifested itself when he was a small boy, and when he began the study of this profession he did so with diligence and devotion, making rapid progress, serving as an apprentice in an architect's office."²⁶ After his Stanberry apprenticeship, Heckenlively moved to St. Joseph in 1893 where he continued drafting and carpentry as well. In 1894 he came to Springfield, forming a partnership with George R. Reed that lasted until 1913.

In their 1915 Greene County history, Fairbanks and Tuck spoke glowingly of James Heckenlively at, roughly, the midpoint of his career. Over a period of 20 years, they noted, the architect's career had been marked by steady growth. He began on a small scale but soon developed a large and lucrative business in general architecture, and was involved in all aspects of the profession including civil engineering. In addition to his reputation in Springfield, Heckenlively's services were in demand in other cities and towns as well. In 1918, after returning from military service, Heckenlively formed a partnership with Carl Mark, a draftsman he had formerly employed, and they would work together for another two decades.

Springfield designs by Heckenlively and Mark include the Abou Ben Adhem Shrine Mosque, a fraternal temple designed in a Moorish-inspired style in 1922-23 (NR listed 9/9/82). Heckenlively, having been appointed architect for the Springfield school ward, was responsible for several school designs including Campbell Public School, Bailey School, Bowerman School, the Central High Fine Arts Building, Weaver Public School and the Harrison Football Stadium in Springfield, and in St. Clair County the Osceola Public School Building (NR listed 1/21/99). Heckenlively's other important jobs in Springfield include the Carnegie Public Library, Grace Methodist Episcopal Church, St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church, the Springfield Packing Company plant and the original portion of St. John's Mercy Hospital (NR listed 9/2/03). In 1921, Heckenlively and Mark (in association with Carl Boller) designed the alterations and renovation of the Landers Theatre in Springfield (NR listed 8/12/77). Heckenlively and Mark also designed three collegiate buildings at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, and Indian schools and dormitories at Wagoner, Oklahoma. In 1935-37, Heckenlively and Mark planned the remodeling of the Carter County Courthouse, a Public Works Administration project which became Missouri's only courthouse known to have been built with cobblestones²⁷

In addition to his architectural practice, Heckenlively was a founder of the Reserve Officers' Association in Missouri (he had returned from World War I as a major) and one of the organization's first presidents.

²⁶ Jonathan Fairbanks and Clyde Edwin Tuck, *Past & Present of Greene County, Missouri: Vol. II* (Indianapolis: A. W. Bowen & Co., 1915), pp. 1837-1839.

²⁷ Ibid., and Cydney Millstein, "Osceola Public School Building" National Register nomination, 1998; Marian M. Ohman, *Encyclopedia of Missouri Courthouses* (Columbia: University of Missouri—Columbia Press, 1981), unpaginated; and Marian M. Ohman, *A History of Missouri Counties, County Seats and Courthouse Squares* (Columbia: University of Missouri—Columbia Press, 1983), pp. 56, 123.

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After a long illness, Heckenlively died on August 28, 1938, six months after the death of his younger partner, Carl Mark.²⁸

Conclusion

Prior to the erection of George Dimmitt Memorial Hospital, medical care was either inconvenient or unavailable to many Humansville area residents; often cures were sought at home. While a few physicians practiced in Humansville before the hospital existed, they were primarily doctors of osteopathy and generally were limited to minor procedures in their offices.²⁹ Birthing, illness and accidental injuries too often resulted in death due to the lack of resources within the community. At the time Dimmitt was built, transportation facilities were limited and the nearest hospital was more than fifty road miles away. Few residents owned motor vehicles, and in fact many families still traveled by horse and buggy. The roads were not well maintained, so this distance was often a huge obstacle to receiving prompt and adequate medical care. Also, distance created a barrier for family and friends to be part of the treatment of Humansville area patients taken to existing hospitals in Springfield or the Kansas City area.

While many hospitals constructed through donations were associated with religious denominations, George Dimmitt Memorial Hospital is an example of a privately funded philanthropic effort on the part of Charles E. and Luella Dimmitt and the community of Humansville. Although small (Dimmitt Hospital probably could accommodate no more than twenty patients), its design and historic use reflected the most current ideology of disease management including an understanding of patient behavioral needs. The specialized rooms were representative of the latest technology and theories regarding disease.

At the time of its construction, George Dimmitt Memorial Hospital was “thoroughly modern in every respect and second to none in this section of the country.”³⁰

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ George Mathews, personal interview by Renee Christensen, 25 August 2011.

³⁰ “Announcing the opening of the George Dimmitt Memorial Hospital.”

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Dimmitt, George, Memorial Hospital
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Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the Northwest corner of Lot 16 in the original town of Humansville, Polk County, Missouri, thence North 69 degrees East 208.6 feet to the Northeast corner of said Lot 6, thence continuing North 69 degrees East 31.0 feet, thence East 119.0 feet, thence South 1 degree 34 minutes East 183.3 feet to an existing iron pin, thence south 69 degrees West 77.7 feet to an existing iron pin at the southeast corner of said Lot 16, thence North 21 degrees West 75.0 feet, thence south 69 degrees West 208.6 feet, thence North 21 degrees West 133.7 feet to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of George Dimmitt Memorial Hospital is the same today as it was at the time the property was developed as a hospital. Although a modern storage building has been constructed a short distance behind the hospital, and there is a basketball half-court, the area behind the building is otherwise much the same today as it was historically.

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Dimmitt, George, Memorial Hospital
Polk County, Missouri

Photographs

The following information is the same for all photographs:

George Dimmitt Memorial Hospital
102 S. Bolivar Road
Humansville, Missouri
Photographer: Renee Christensen
Taken February through August 2011

1. View of west (primary) elevation from west
2. View of west (primary) elevation from northwest
3. View of east (rear) elevation from southwest
4. View of south elevation from southeast
5. North elevation from north
6. Looking eastward from hospital roof
7. Group of three front porch supports
8. Detail, main entrance
9. Detail, pressed tin ceiling on porch
10. Plate glass window in operating room
11. Hospital corridor with terrazzo floor
12. Old gurney in hospital basement
13. Skylight in operating room (taken from inside)
14. Noncontributing storage building in rear

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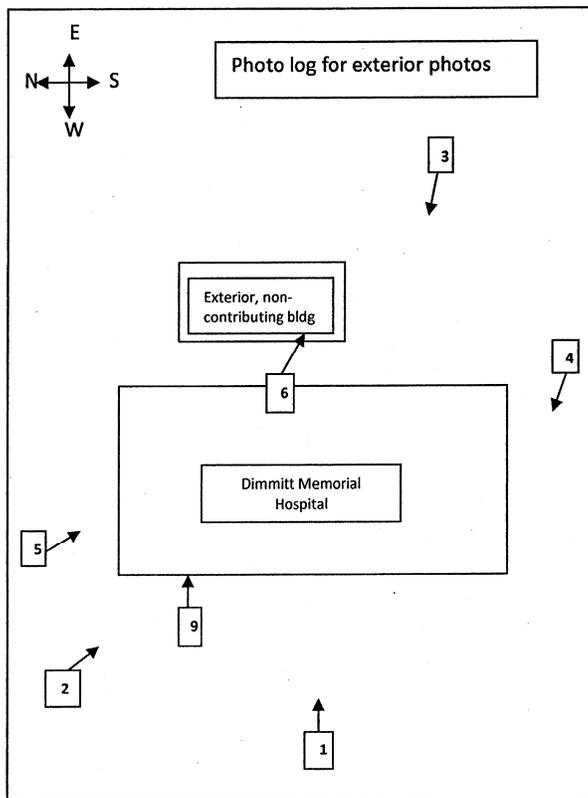
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Dimmitt, George, Memorial Hospital
Polk County, Missouri

Figure Log:

1. Photo Angles, Exterior
2. Plat Map, Humansville, Polk County, Missouri, ca. 1903
3. First Floor Plan
4. Spatial Arrangements During Early Years as Hospital
5. Lot Survey

Figure 1: Photo Angles, Exterior

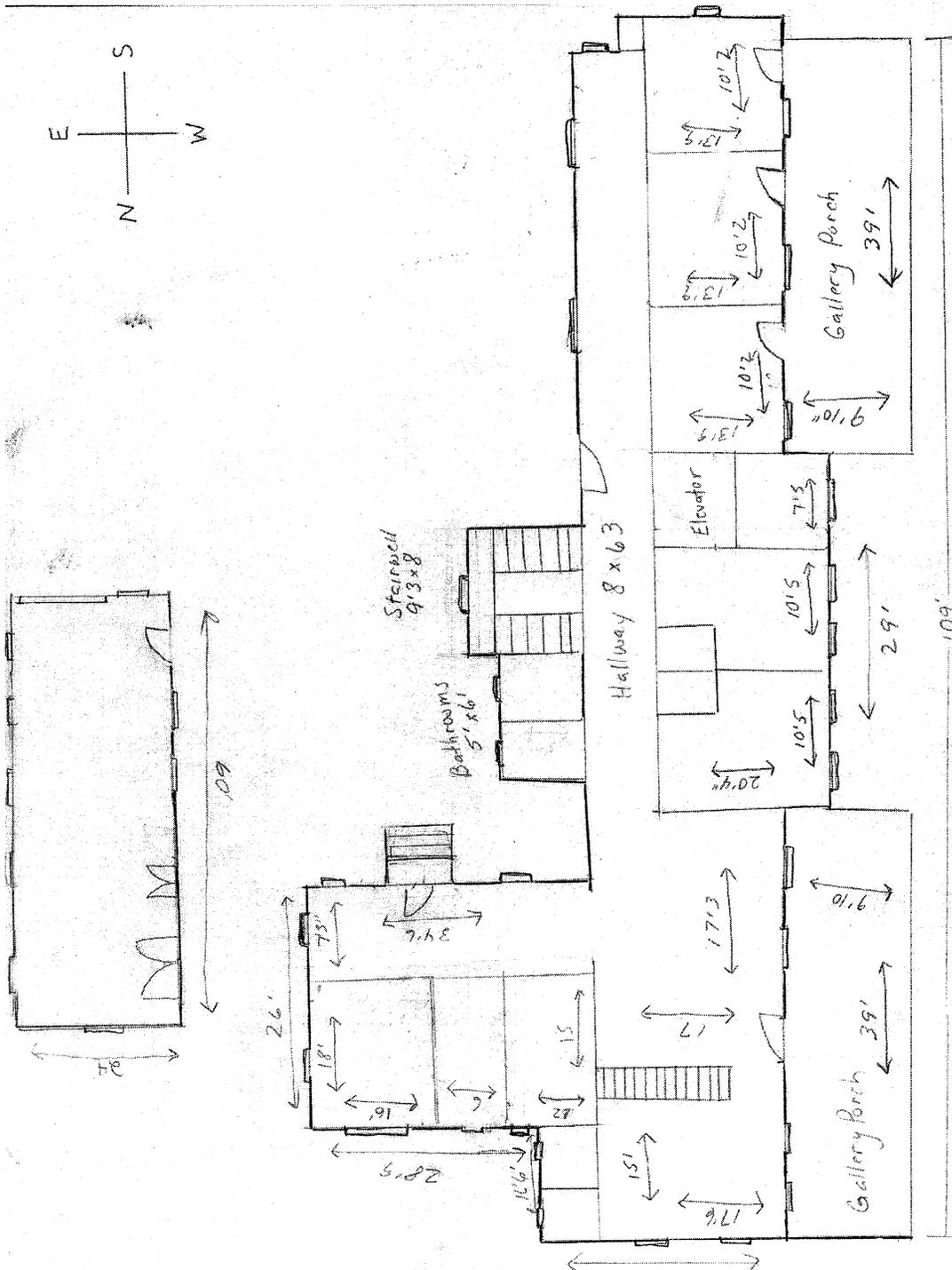


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Dimmitt, George, Memorial Hospital
Polk County, Missouri

Figure 3: First Floor Plan

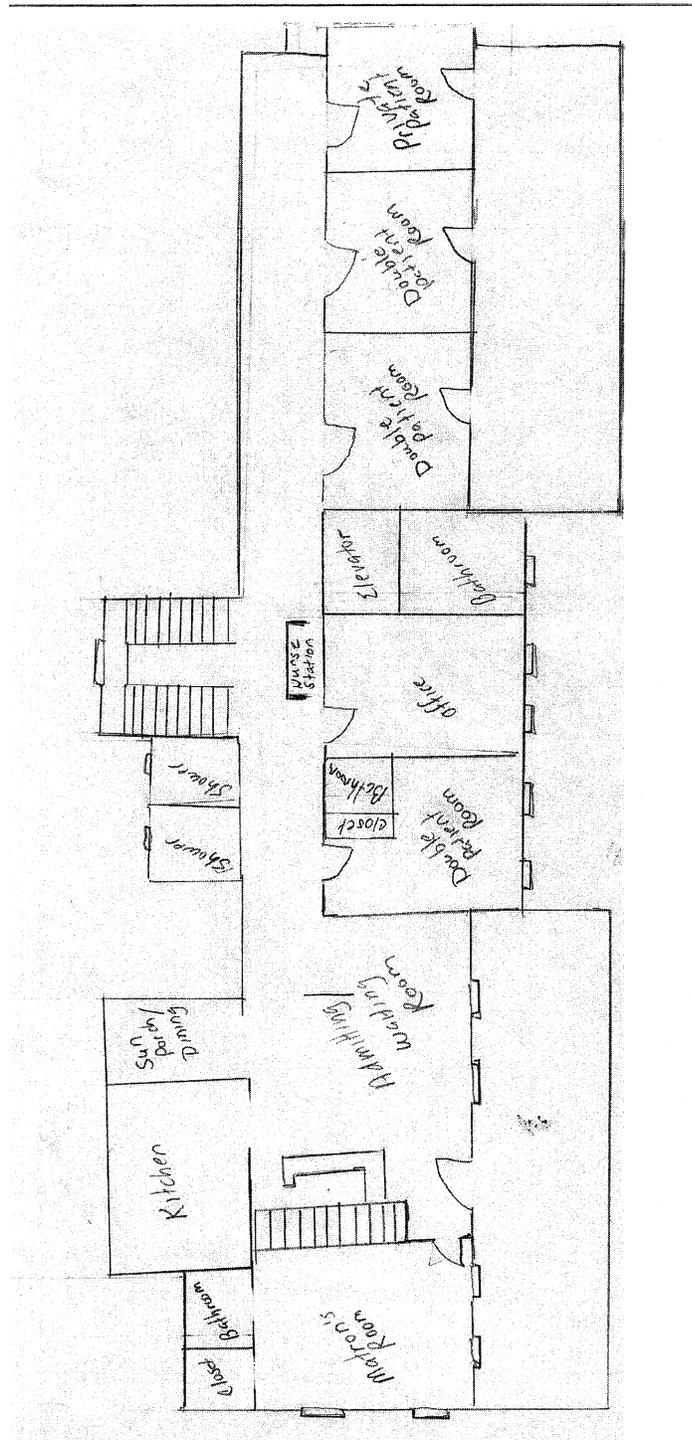


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Polk County, Missouri

Figure 4: First Floor Spatial Arrangements During Early Years as Hospital

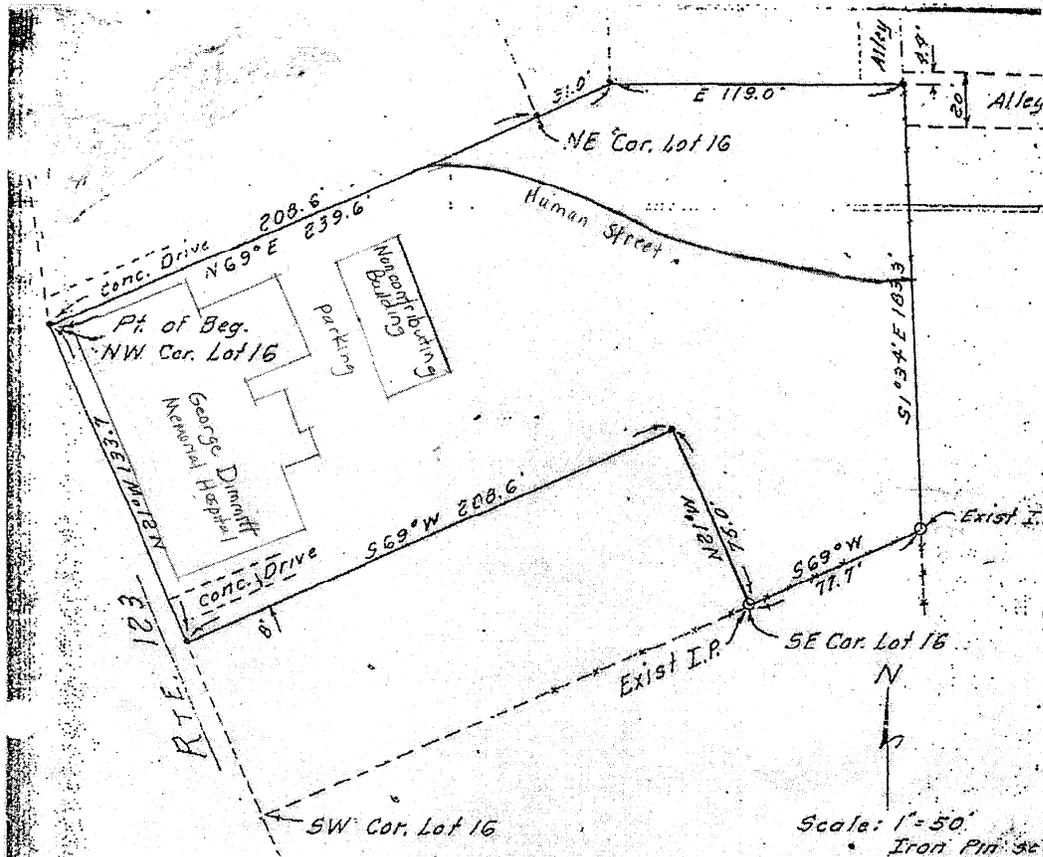


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Polk County, Missouri

Figure 5: Lot Survey



DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the NW Cor. of Lot 16 in the Original Town of Humansville, Missouri, thence N 69° E 208.6 ft. to the NE Cor. of said Lot 16, thence continuing N 69° E 310 ft., thence East 119.0 ft. to an exist. I.P., thence N 1° 24' E 183.3 ft. to an exist. I.P., thence S 69° W 77.7 ft. to an exist. I.P. at the SE Cor. of said Lot 16, thence N 21° W 75.0 ft. thence S 69° W 183.3 ft. to Pt. of Beg.



I hereby certify that I have examined the plat and the survey hereon

May 1986

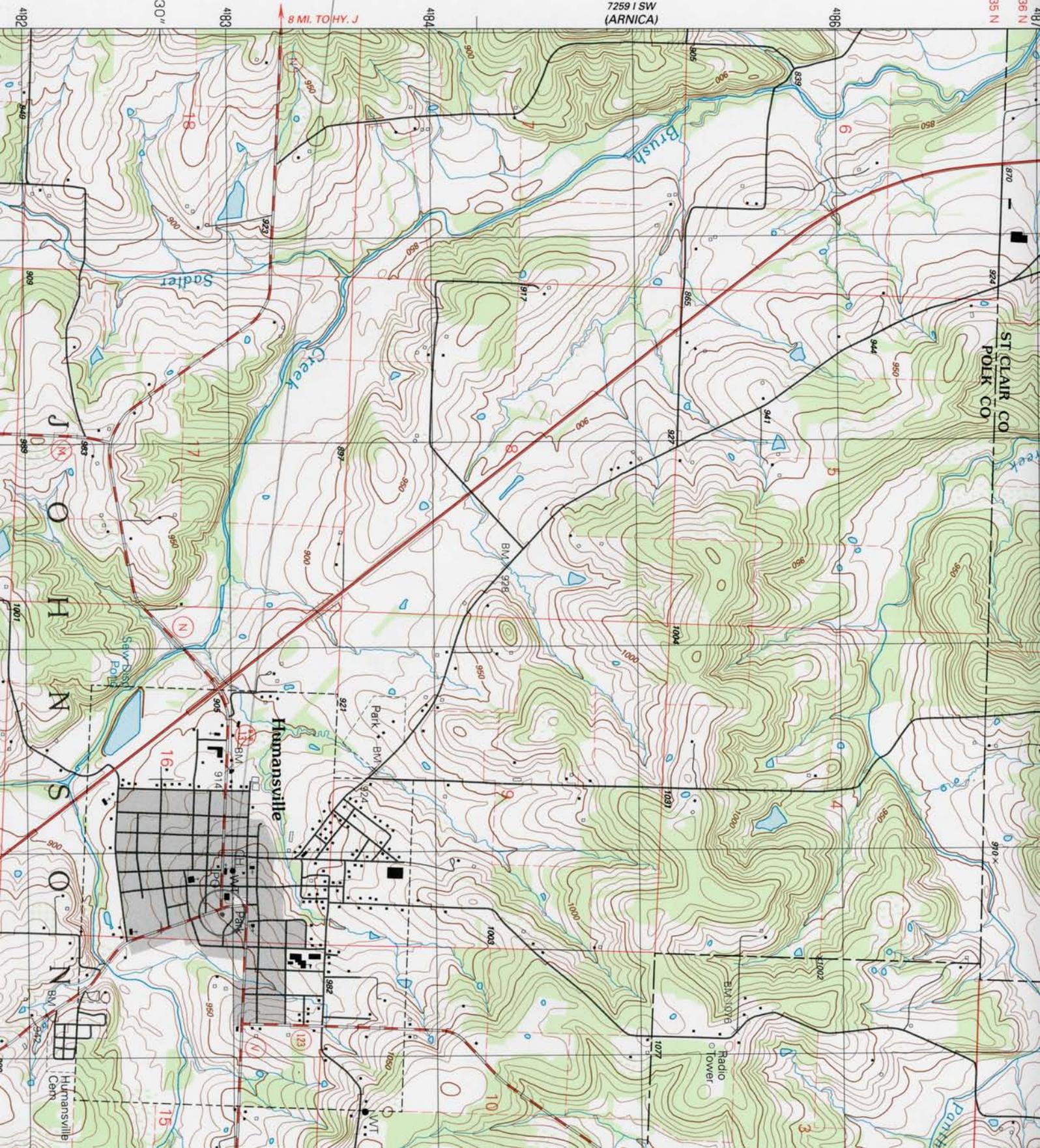
Rex L. Hopkins
Rex L. Hopkins
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