

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Lawrence County Bank Building

other name/site number n/a

2. Location

street & town 100 W. Commerical Street n/a not for publication

city or town Pierce City n/a vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Lawrence code 109 zip code 65723

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 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mark A Miles 01/20/05
Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

Lawrence County Bank Building
Name of Property

Lawrence County, MO
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

n/a

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

n/a

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce / Trade: Financial Institution

Current Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce / Trade: Business

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Romanesque

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Brick

Stone

roof

other Cast iron

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

Lawrence County Bank Building
Name of Property

Lawrence County, MO
County and State

8. Description

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.

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Architecture

Period of Significance

1892 -1924

Significant Dates

1924

Significant Persons

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Legg, Jerome B.

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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

University of Missouri-Rolla

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

Lawrence County Bank Building
Name of Property

Lawrence County, MO
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 17.5 41107700 4089020
Zone Easting Northing

2 / / /
Zone Easting Northing

3 / / /
Zone Easting Northing

4 / / /
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Lot 1 Block 29 OS Pierce City section 28 Town 26 Range 28 0.00 Acres

Property Tax No. 17-8, 0-28-002-003-001.000

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Shirley Elwing

organization n/a

date 10/1/04

street & number 3795 Lawrence 2220

telephone 417-476-2856

city or town Pierce City

state MO zip code 65723

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs: Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items: (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

name/title Shirley Elwing (also see continuation sheet)

street & number 3795 Lawrence 2220

telephone 417-476-2856

city or town Pierce City

state MO zip code 65723

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. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**Lawrence County Bank Building
Lawrence County, MO**

Summary:

The Lawrence County Bank Building is located at 100 W. Commercial Street, in Pierce City, Lawrence County, Missouri. The Romanesque Revival style building was constructed in 1892 from designs by Jerome B. Legg, a St. Louis architect. This corner building has a relatively narrow façade, measuring 25 feet in width with a 100 foot long street elevation along Walnut Street. The two-story buff brick building sits on a full basement of large blocks of cut Carthage limestone. The ornate façade has pairs of round arched windows on the second floor and a series of original storefront windows on its first floor street elevations. The façade is highlighted with stone accents including a prominent round arched, rusticated stone corner entrance surround. The building was heavily damaged during a tornado in May of 2003 that caused the collapse of the rear wall and necessitated the removal of part of the corner tower. Despite the damage, the building retains a significant amount of its historic materials. The design and most of its prominent architectural details are intact, and the building conveys its significance as important commercial building in downtown Pierce City.

Elaboration:

The Lawrence County Bank Building sits on the northwest corner of Commercial (Hwy 37) and Walnut streets in downtown Pierce City. Once part of a thriving commercial district, the building is now just one of a handful of historic buildings remaining after a devastating tornado hit downtown in May of 2003. Though extensively damaged by the tornado, the building retains a significant amount of historic material and architectural features and remains part of a small group of historic commercial buildings in downtown Pierce City.

The south (primary) façade facing Commercial Street is relatively narrow, measuring only 25 feet in width. The façade is asymmetrical with a wide building bay flanked by brick pilasters and a narrower elaborately detailed bay marking the corner entrance. The first floor of the wide bay is filled with an original cast iron storefront with a decorative metal pilaster separating the door leading to the second floor stairwell from a large opening for a plate glass display window. A metal beam decorated with evenly spaced metal rosettes tops the storefront. The storefront is separated from the second floor façade by a dentiled frieze and stone cornice. Between the pilasters on the second floor are paired 1/1 windows separated by short brick pilasters. The windows are topped by wide rusticated stone lintels, above which are two round arched "transoms." The half-round transoms were historically filled with brick. The arches are outlined in soldier bricks and decorative molded bricks. The architectural details of the bays and windows are repeated on the east elevation.

The architectural details of the corner entrance bay are repeated on both the south and east facades. The recessed corner entrance, which led to the bank lobby, has the original paired doors with decorative glass transoms above. Two original concrete steps and a third granite step remain at this entrance. The glass panes in the wood doors had to be replaced after the tornado. The front entrance is deeply recessed and framed by 15 foot arches supported by three truncated granite columns. The columns rest on limestone plinths and are topped by

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**Lawrence County Bank Building
Lawrence County, MO**

cushion capitals with stylized acanthus leaves. The pillars visually emphasize the front entrance and are structural, as well as decorative. The columns support large arches consisting of varying sizes of limestone voussoir. Large Carthage limestone blocks fill in above the arches to the second story. The second floor of the corner bay has a wide round arch supported by paired molded brick columns topped by stylized Corinthian capitals. The arch consists of soldier bricks surrounded by molded decorative brick. The arched opening has paired 1/1 windows with a rusticated limestone lintel. Before the tornado required its removal, the corner entrance bay was topped by a 1/2 story square tower with pyramidal roof.

The east elevation shares the decorative detail of the south façade, notably on the second floor. The east elevation has a narrow entrance bay on the southern corner (see above) and six wider bays created by brick pilasters. The second floor of each bay has paired windows with round arches identical to those in the wide bay of the south façade. The storefronts and display windows on the first floor have similar decorative element on the south façade's storefront. A metal beam decorated with rosettes frames each storefront. Each bay has a decorative dentiled entablature and stone cornice.

Originally, the first four bays were windows for the bank lobby and the northern most bays housed two separate storefronts. The first two bays retain their original paired window frames and transoms separated by decorative cast iron columns. The windows sit on stone sills over a short brick wall and exposed limestone foundation. The third and fourth bays retain many of their original architectural features, but have been modified to allow for pedestrian entrances. Based on the design of the doorway and retention of materials, this modification may have been done in the early 1900s or soon after the bank closed in 1924. The fifth and sixth bays retain their original cast iron and wood storefronts, though the door doors have been replaced.

The west elevation is blocked by the adjoining building.

The north (back) elevation, was historically very simple without the decorative detail of the south façade or east elevation. The back of the building was severely damaged by the tornado in May 2003. The tornado took most of the roof off the building and caused the north elevation to collapse. The wall has since been rebuilt using some of the original brick on the first floor and concrete block on the second.

The original bank lobby has seen some changes, but retains many of its original features. The original lobby had 6 in. solid concrete floors for security and to support the heavy vaults. The vault has been removed, but much of the original trim and high ceilings remain along with a solid concrete section where the vault stood. The bank lobby will be restored as original, with high, metal decorative ceilings, but will not be restored to a bank facility.

From the front lobby the basement can be accessed. There is a full basement under the building with huge Carthage limestone blocks as a foundation. The basement was hand dug and the original dirt floor remains. There are two entrances to the basement, interior and exterior. There is also an opening on the east side of the building which allows ventilation to the

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**Lawrence County Bank Building
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basement and is covered by the original iron grate. The original iron gates that close off access to the front steps between the pillars can still be attached to small iron hinges and closed for extra security.

The second floor was originally office space and was later converted to two apartments. Though it has been remodeled on several occasions, it will be rehabilitated for two apartments. The original stairs are present with some original trim and floors remain. The roof was completely lost in the tornado and the building took on some water damage, as FEMA would not let anyone into that area. Since the building was open and exposed for some time original ceilings were lost and it became necessary to lower some. However, some portions of the second floor retain their 10 foot ceilings.

Integrity

Considering the devastation caused by the May 2003 tornado, the Lawrence County Bank is largely intact. Much of the original material is still in place, notably on the south, east and west elevations. The storefronts retain their original framing members and cast iron elements, though much of the glass was blown out and had to be replaced. The upper story windows were heavily damaged and were replaced. Replacement windows fit into the original openings and are generally of the same size and configuration of the original windows. The most extensive loss of original material is on the very narrow (25 ft) rear (north) elevation. Historically, this wall was the back of the building and simply designed. Though the wall has been rebuilt with modern material, it does not have a significant effect on the overall character of the building.

The building was inspected by a structural engineer and found to be in sound and good structural condition. The building, which is being preserved, retains character, integrity, unique material and workmanship associated with the 1900's. The Lawrence County Bank building has always been a major landmark in the area and the top of it as graced by a large tall tower. FEMA demanded this be removed for a safety precaution. Hopefully at some later time the tower can be reconstructed.

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Lawrence County Bank Building
Lawrence County, MO

Summary:

The Lawrence County Bank Building in Pierce City, Lawrence County is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C with local significance in the areas of COMMERCE and ARCHITECTURE. Established in October of 1873, the bank was the first to open in the community and helped fuel the economic boom of the newly settled community. In 1892 the growth and prosperity of the business was manifested in the construction of a new bank building. The prominent corner location and high style architectural elements of this Jerome B. Legg designed building made it an early and continuing landmark in the community. The period of significance for the building is 1892, the date of construction, to 1924, the last year the building housed the bank.

Elaboration

Community Background

Pierce City (originally spelled Peirce City) was a relatively new community when the Lawrence County Bank was chartered in October 1873. Lawrence County itself had been organized in 1845 and grew in population in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Peirce City Real Estate Company laid out the town in 1870 in anticipation of the rail line under construction through the area. The town was named for Andrew Peirce, the first president of the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad (part of the St. Louis and San Francisco railroad) company.¹

The railroad was the stimulus for the town's creation and spurred its economic growth and development. One history noted that in 1870 the population of the community was already 700.² This number may be a slight exaggeration, or swelled by laborers and construction workers building the town and rail lines because in 1873 the population was down to 300.³ The city was not to stay small, and by the late 1870s Pierce City was the largest town in Lawrence County with a population of 1200 to 1500. In 1879, Pierce City had "a bank, about twenty stores, mill, wagon and soap factories, lumber yards, brick yard, elevator, and the finest lime kiln in Southwest Missouri. It has four churches and a very fine school building costing over \$15,000."⁴

¹ "Pierce City: The Hustling Little City to the East—Facts About the Place." The Weekly Empire, 17 May 1900. Accessed 10/7/2004,

<<http://www.rootsweb.com/~molawre2/PCHistHerad.htm>>

² A Reprint of Goodspeed's 1888 History of Lawrence County. Cassville, MO: Litho Printers, 1973. Accessed 10/7/04, <<http://www.rootsweb.com/~molawre2/goodb.htm>>

³ Ibid.

⁴ R.H. Landrum, "History of Lawrence County, Missouri." An Illustrated Historical Atlas of Lawrence County, Missouri. Philadelphia: Ewards Brothers, 1879. Republished online by Lem and Sue Comptan, Lawrence County Historical Society. Accessed 10/7/04, <<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~judysstuff/lawatlas.htm>>

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**Lawrence County Bank Building
Lawrence County, MO**

Bank History

The Lawrence County Bank claims 1870, the year Pierce City was founded, as their founding date, but the bank was formally chartered on October 6, 1873 when subscribers met to "organize a bank in this place." The bank was started with a capitalization of \$50,000 in 500 shares owned by: Lewis L.L. Allen, E. Allen, A.L. White and a handful of others. The founders included several other names including Jacob Linzee, chairman of the board; A.B. Charles, J.B. Perkins, F.B. McCurdy and W.G. Rice. The Allen family would have a long association with the bank. It is likely that the bank established at this time took over or reorganized a previously existing bank since the new Board of Directors purchased a "bank building" from Allen Brosley on October 15.⁵

The bank, at least initially, was successful. The location in the booming new community of Pierce City, nearness to rail lines and association with the growing lime and quarrying industries prospered the bank. Within a year of its founding the bank declared a 5% dividend and just over a year later had a dividend of 25% returned to the shareholders. This high rate of return to investors continued for the next couple of decades with average annual dividends of 5 to 10%.⁶ In March 1877, the bank replaced its early frame building with a more substantial 2 story brick building.⁷ This second building was later replaced by the current building designed by Jerome B. Legg. (See Figure 1)

The Allen family owned 200 of the original 500 shares and retained controlling interest in the bank for most of its 50 year history. Lewis L.L. Allen was one of the founders of the bank and held positions on the board of the directors and also the president of the bank. L.L.L. Allen had past financial experience in the counting room of a large wholesale clothing house in St. Louis, before coming to Pierce City in c. 1870.⁸ Several of L.L.L. Allen's children also held positions in the bank. Charles E. was cashier, and Lewis L. was assistant cashier. Both served on the board of directors during the banks history. Lewis later held a higher position in the bank but resigned after a negative audit in 1910.

The Bank was located across from the Frisco Railroad Depot. During the heyday of the community, the city had a population of 2500 and the mainline of the railroad with 29 passengers and 39 freight trains daily stopping to do business in Pierce City. Located across from the Bank and the depot was the Fallis Hotel and Linzee Livery Stable. This ensured that everyone coming to town would stop at the bank to do business. Next door to the bank and one building down was the Fall-Flowers building that housed the hardware store. The bank's nearness to the depot and location in the heart of the commercial district, made it a hub of

⁵ David R. Pruitt, "Lawrence County Bank, Records, 1873-1924-Information Sheet." Rolla, MO: Western Manuscripts Collection. <<http://web.umn.edu/~whmcinfo/shelf22/r543/info.html>>

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Goodspeed.

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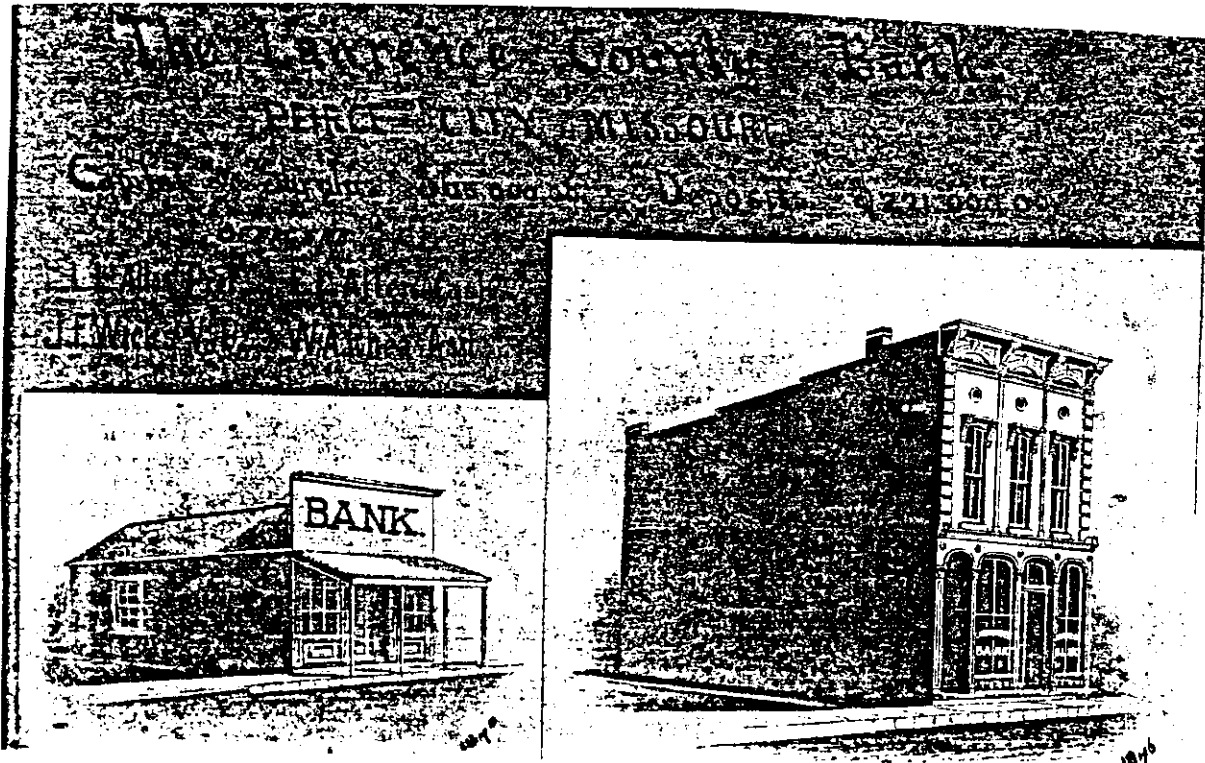
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Lawrence County Bank Building
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commerce and economic development for the area.

Figure 1: First and Second Lawrence County Bank Buildings



The bank's commercial success was also derived from the lead and zinc mines located in the area. The mines created attention for the Bank as millions of dollars was realized from this industry. Local farmers used the bank for loans and deposits from their crops with strawberries producing at \$200.00 to \$250.00 and acre.

The bank business grew over the next several years and reached a peak in 1905 with \$341,883 in financial resources. After 1905, there seems to have been a drop in financial resources and bank minutes and correspondence from the era hint at future problems. In 1910, a state bank examiner visited the bank twice in a three week period and noted that many of the banks loans were "doubtful" (\$30,402) and others "bad" (\$5,754). The Allen family covered the bad debt, but Lewis.L. Allen resigned as cashier and his father, L.L.L. Allen, resigned as president.⁹ The bank bounced back somewhat after this and was noted as having resources of \$303,197 in 1913.¹⁰

Although the details are somewhat sketchy, the bank closed rather abruptly and with some

⁹ Pruitt, n.p.

¹⁰ Ibid.

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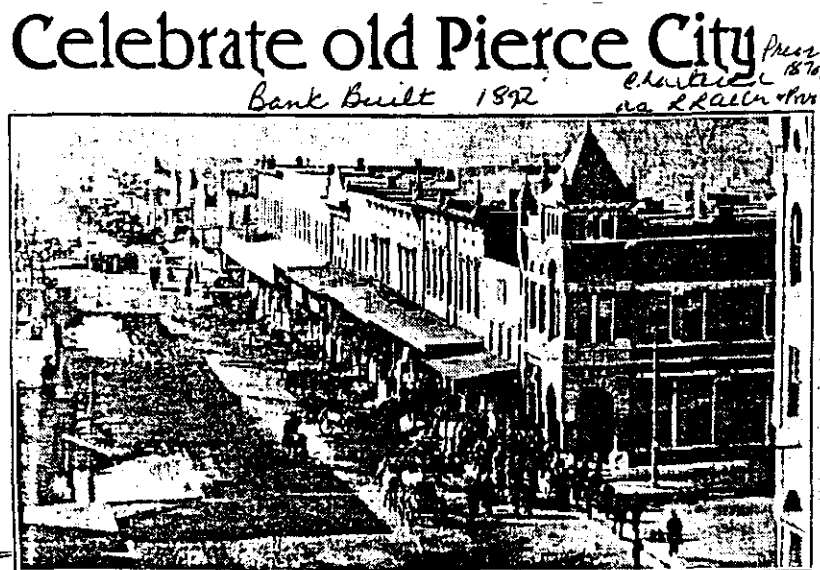
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**Lawrence County Bank Building
Lawrence County, MO**

scandal on May 8, 1924. Four of the bank directors were under arrest and the former cashier under arrest for embezzlement. The bank president, J. R. Pearson, had a warrant for his arrest also.

Figure 2: Historic Pierce City Street Scene, note Lawrence County Bank's prominent location.



1906 photo book produced by Peirce City Commercial Club
now available in facsimile form. larger than the original. crisp reproduction
\$10. available at The Monett Times and Jack Frost Printing
Proceeds go toward projects at the Harold Bell Wright Museum

Architecture

The importance of the bank to the shareholders and community is reflected in its architecture. When the time came to construct a new bank building, the bank board chose Jerome B. Legg to design the building. Legg was born in Schuyler County, IL around 1838 and came to St. Louis in 1864 where he attended Jones Commercial College. Legg worked for St. Louis architect George Barnett who encouraged Legg to study architecture. Within 4 years of coming to St. Louis, Legg had started his long and significant career as an architect. His first major job was superintending the construction of the Thomas Dixon designed Centenary Methodist Episcopal Church (NR listed in 1997).¹¹

By 1892, when the Lawrence County bank was constructed, Legg had already made a name for himself in Missouri and neighboring states. Legg designed several prominent buildings for

¹¹ Carolyn Hewes Toft. "Jerome Bibb Legg." St. Louis Architects: Famous and Not So Famous in Landmarks letter (23) July/August 1989 (2pp). Accessed October 7, 2004
<<http://stlouis.missouri.org/landmarks/architects14.html>>

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the state of Missouri and several Missouri counties. His works, completed by the early 1890s included: remodeling of the Missouri State Capital, and courthouses in St. Francois (1885), Ste. Genevieve (1885) and Shelby County (1891).¹² Legg also designed numerous religious, educational, manufacturing and residential buildings in Missouri before and after his Lawrence County Bank commission. Several buildings designed by Legg are individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These include Henderson Hall in Lewis County, MO (listed 10/2/78); Finke Opera House, Moniteau County, MO (listed 3/22/04), Oliver-Leming House in Cape Girardeau County, MO (listed 9/12/1980); Moore House, Mississippi County, MO (listed 9/18/1980) and the Ballard County Courthouse in Wickliffe, KY (listed 2/27/1980). Several of Legg's residential and institutional designs are also listed as part of National Register listed historic districts.

Legg designed the building in Richardsonian Romanesque style. The use of rusticated limestone blocks and round arched windows are typical of this late 19th century architectural style. Richardsonian Romanesque is a subcategory of the larger Romanesque Revival movement popular from the mid-19th C into the early 20th Century. Designers of churches in the mid-1800s helped make the style popular. They began using the round arches and other features of the "Round style" as a reminder of early Christian churches in Europe.¹³ The style also came to be used for public buildings, although its influence on residential architecture would take several more years. Romanesque Revival is characterized by the use of round-arched window and door openings and often towers with pyramidal roofs.¹⁴

Like Romanesque Revival, Richardsonian Romanesque is a round-arched style which was popular between c. 1880 and 1900. The Richardsonian Romanesque, however, has features that distinguish it from other Romanesque buildings. The sub-style was the creation of Henry Hobson Richardson (1838-1886), an important American architect. Richardson's take on the Romanesque included heavy masonry walls, the use of rough-faced stonework, and entrance arches supported by squat columns.¹⁵ Richardson's interpretation of the Romanesque was not academic, and was known for blending historic styles and interpretations of styles.

The Lawrence County Bank building is a good example of the Richardsonian Romanesque adapted to a two-part commercial block form. The corner location allowed for more complete development of the style than might have been possible on a building in the middle of the block and the Romanesque architectural features are carried out on both the street elevations. The style is characteristically "weighty," using large masonry/stone blocks and rough faced stone arches. The use of masonry gives this style a sense of age and permanence, an image that

¹² Marian Ohman, *Encyclopedia of Missouri Courthouses*. (Columbia: University of Missouri Extension Division, 1891. Legg later designed three other courthouses in Missouri: Gasconade County (1899), Mississippi County (1899), and St. Charles County (1901).

¹³ Marcus Whiffen, *American Architecture Since 1780*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996, 63.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Virginia and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995. 301-302.

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**Lawrence County Bank Building
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might have been important to the bankers that commissioned the building. The bank building's corner entrance with rough-faced stone arches supported by squat granite columns are typical of the style. The use of paired, round-arched windows on the upper floor is also characteristic. Though the tornado required its removal, the building also had a pyramidal roof corner tower extension. Towers were commonly incorporated into Richardsonian Romanesque style buildings.

Building History

The Lawrence County Bank building was part of the original survey of Pierce City which was incorporated in 1870 as Lot 1 Bock 29. In 1885 the lot was titled to L.L. Allen. In 1891-1892 the lot was then deeded to the Lawrence County Bank for the construction of its third building. The bank building has served many purposes over the years since its completion in 1893. Built to house a bank on the first floor, the second floor was historically professional offices. The storefronts on the north end of the east façade traditionally housed profession offices and other commercial enterprises.

Between 1892 and 1924, when the bank was in operation, the storefronts on Walnut St. side of the building and the second floor housed a variety of business. One long term inhabitant of the building was the Lawrence County Telephone Company was headed by local resident George Armstrong. The telephone company opened in the building in 1893 on the second floor and later moved to one of the first floor storefronts. The local company was later purchased by the Bell Telephone Company. Bell retained its office in the building until 1954. Edna Fenske, a lifelong resident of Pierce City, served as the operator for the Bell company.

The second floor and first floor storefronts also housed the bank officers and their families. In the 1920's a Dr. E.B. Wright had his office in the front of the upper level. White was also on the board of directors when the bank failed and was arrested at the time of the banks closing. His home was located just up the hill on Walnut Street, which runs along the east side of the bank. A spinster and millinery shop owner named Annie Buchner, sister of bank board member Ed F. Buchner, lived in an apartment upstairs with her niece, Mary Jane Pruitt. Mary recalls tying a string around her dolls and lowering them to the sidewalk. Ed F. Buchner was one of the board members arrested at the time of the bank failure.

In addition to the telephone exchange that moved downstairs in 1936, the first floor storefronts north of the bank lobby housed a variety of businesses. Frank Boucher ran a barber shop for a time out of one of the storefronts and the small commercial spaces also housed Ben McReynolds Real Estate and Forseyth Insurance. During the period when the telephone company was in operation, there was also a beauty shop next door.

When the bank closed in 1924, the first floor lobby was used for other commercial purposes. In the 1940's the lobby was transformed into Walton's Dime Store. Mrs. Basil Walker ran the store and carried basic supplies for the local residents. In the 1950's Dr. Spears had his office in the former bank lobby. The building also housed Petey Restaurant. In the 1960's the bank

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Building

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housed a Mr. Hamilton, a Reflexologist, for a short while. Apparently he was not well accepted because his business did not last long. After that time it has been reported that there was also an insurance and real estate office in the lower level. In more recent years, the bank lobby was home to O'Hara's taxidermy business.

Today the Lawrence County Bank Building bravely stands as a reminder of the great history of this small town. It is the surviving spirit of the residents and the pioneers that built the town in 1870. Time and nature have taken its toll, but the structure still stands.

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**Lawrence County Bank Building
Lawrence County, MO**

Bibliography

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Lawrence County, MO**

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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**Lawrence County Bank Building
Lawrence County, MO**

10. Verbal Boundary Description

LT 1 Blk 29 of Pierce City, Lawrence County, Missouri
Section 28 TWN 26 RNG 28

Property Tax No.
17-8.0-28-002-003-001.000

Boundary Justification

The building fills the entire lot and the boundary is essentially the footprint of the building. The boundary includes all the property historically associated with the 1892 Lawrence County Bank building.

11. Form Prepared By

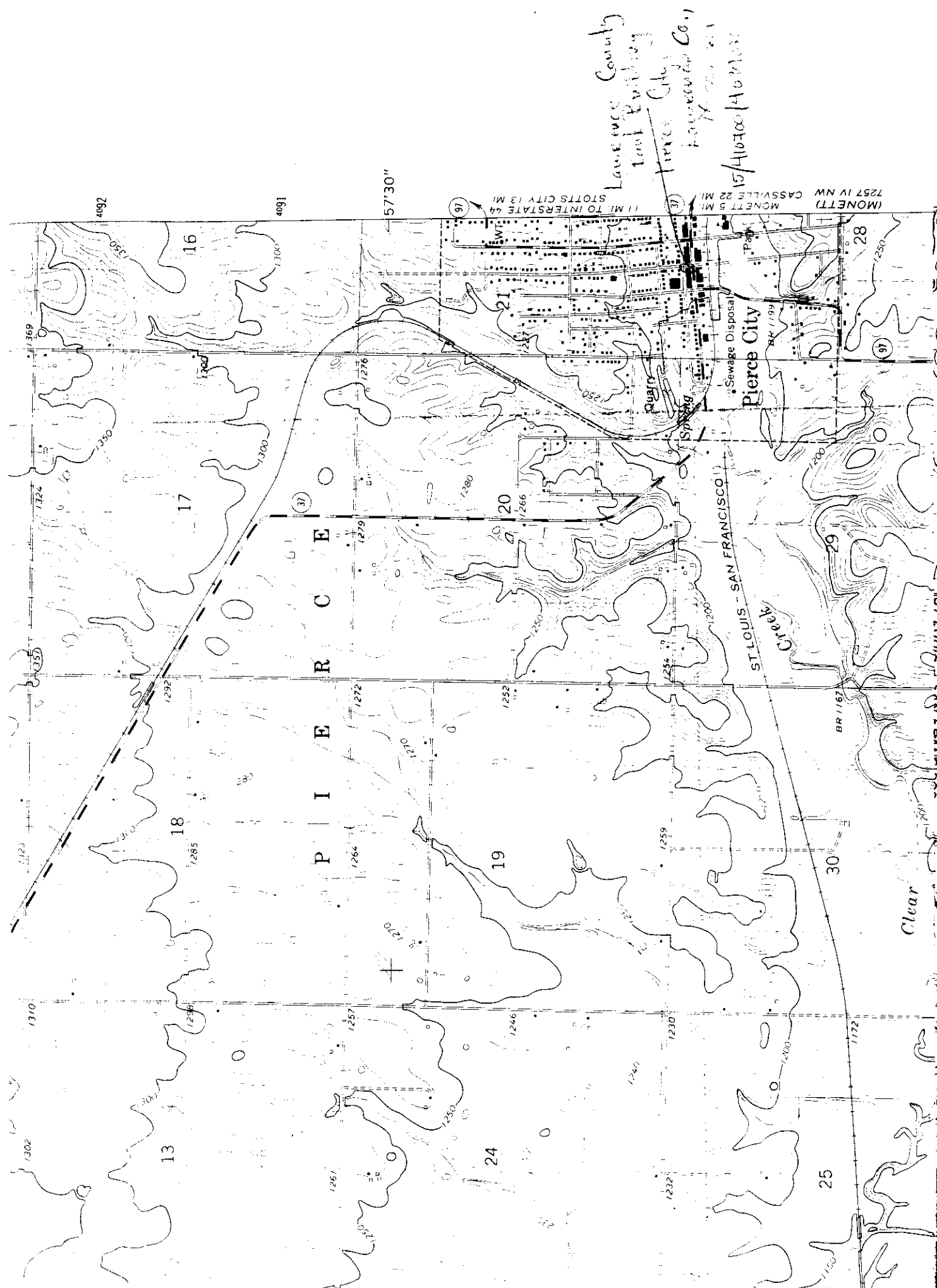
Edited and revisions by:
Tiffany Patterson, National Register Coordinator
Missouri State Historic Preservation Office
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65109

Photo log:

Unless noted otherwise, the following is true for all photos:

Lawrence County Bank Building
100 W. Commercial St.
Pierce City, Lawrence County
Photographer: Shirley Elwing
Date: September 11, 2004
Location of Negatives: maintained by photographer

1. South façade, looking north.
2. Detail, corner entrance arches, looking north.
3. Detail, stairwell to second floor, looking north.
4. Detail, entrance doors and decorative transoms, looking northwest.
5. East elevation, looking northwest.
6. North elevation, looking south.
7. North façade, looking south immediately after tornado. Photographer _____, May 2004.



P I E R C E

Pierce City

ST. LOUIS - SAN FRANCISCO

St. Louis Creek

Clear

Lawrence County
Treat Building
Pierce City
Lawrence Co. 15/410100/10 miles

11 MI. TO INTERSTATE 44
STOTT'S CITY 13 MI

MONETT 5 MI.
CASSVILLE 22 MI.
7257 IV NW

57'30"

4092

4091

BR 1167

16

17

18

13

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29

30

31

30

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