

Liberty Survey Summary Report

Liberty, Missouri



Prepared by
Deon K. Wolfenbarger
for the
Liberty Community Development Department

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Introduction</u>	1
<u>Survey</u>	
Methodology	2
Overview of Past Surveys	5
Historic Contexts & Property Types	
Exploration & Settlement	8
Log Construction	12
Greek Revival	14
Federal/Commercial	17
Early Religious	19
I-house	20
Economic Boom/Residential Growth	22
Gothic Revival	26
Italianate	28
Queen Anne	31
National Folk	37
Late Nineteenth Century Commercial	42
Italianate/Commercial	45
Romanesque/Commercial	47
Queen Anne/Commercial	49
Victorian/Commercial	51
Early Twentieth Century Suburbia	53
Prairie	59
Craftsman	63
Colonial Revival	66
Tudor	69
Neoclassical	71
Early Twentieth Century Commercial	73
One-part Commercial Block	75
Two-part Commercial Block	76
Neoclassical/Commercial	77
Art Deco	78
Early Twentieth Century Ecclesiastical	79
Maps	80
<u>Registration</u>	
Methodology	81
Current Designations	81
Potential Districts	
Liberty Square Historic District	84
Jewell Residential District	86
Lightburne Historic District	87
West Kansas & Franklin Streets District	89
Proposed Survey Districts	90
Potential Individual Landmarks	91
Priorities for Designation	91

<u>Planning</u>	
Methodology	93
City Planning	94
Preservation Planning	97
Goals & Objectives	99
 <u>Bibliography</u>	 101
 <u>Appendixes</u>	

HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY:

SUMMARY REPORT

LIBERTY, MISSOURI

The purpose of this report is to provide an evaluation of past survey efforts in Liberty. This evaluation has three major objectives. First, it will develop historic and architectural contexts for Liberty, and evaluate the surveyed resources in terms of those contexts. Second, it will discuss the potential for National Register nominations, define preliminary district boundaries, and set priorities for the nomination of properties. Third, it will summarize historic preservation planning activities to date in Liberty, and discuss goals and objectives for future planning efforts.

The summary report was prepared by Deon K. Wolfenbarger, who was hired as the consultant to Liberty's Community Development Department. Ms. Wolfenbarger has her Masters in Landscape Architecture with an emphasis in preservation planning, and formerly worked for the Preservation Services Division of a National Park Service site and the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office. The project coordinator for the City of Liberty was Jared Cooper. Mr. Cooper is the Community Development Coordinator, and oversees historic preservation activities in Liberty. He has a Masters in Historic Preservation.

This document was funded in part by the City of Liberty with a matching grant through the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Program, which receives allocations from the Historic Preservation Fund of the Department of Interior, National Park Service, under the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and subsequent amendments.

SURVEY

Methodology

The previously surveyed historic resources in Liberty were evaluated in accordance with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Preservation Planning, Identification, and Evaluation. According to these standards, this evaluation of historic resources must be referenced against broad patterns of historical development within a community, defined as **historic contexts**. Cultural resources have long been examined from some sort of historical perspective, but by evaluating them in reference to historic contexts, important links can be made with local patterns or major themes in Missouri history. Therefore, an accurate appraisal of the significance of these properties can't be established with locally meaningful terms unless they are defined by historic contexts. Only then may the criteria for evaluating properties for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places be successfully applied.

Historic contexts broadly define cultural themes within geographical and chronological limits. In Liberty, these themes are represented by its historic resources. The individual houses and other properties reflect the development of Liberty's built environment. Between the level of individual buildings and the broad historic contexts is a concept known as **property type**. A property type is a grouping of individual properties based on shared physical or associative characteristics. In Liberty, six broad historic contexts were developed, which contained 24 property types.

As mentioned, property types are grouped according to shared characteristics. Within this evaluation, the characteristic most often used was architectural style. Architectural styles are the typical method of categorizing structures. However, so many buildings constructed in the vernacular tradition lack any stylistic devices. The next most prevalent tendency is to categorize the building according to its form (I-house, gable-front-and-wing) or use (warehouse, commercial). Confusion often arises when one categorization method isn't sufficient, and two methods of categorization are combined. A representation of this can be shown with the type of residence known as the I-house. In Liberty, there are several buildings which have the one-room deep, two-story I-house form, but which also contain fairly sophisticated features associated with the Greek Revival style. On the other hand, some carry almost no reference to style. Others reflect the influence of the Italianate style. In some areas of the South, the I-house is given equal status with other American stylistic terms and is called "Plantation Plain" (if it has a front and rear one-story porch). There seems to be little agreement in this case. Grouping all I-houses together, whether as a form or as a separate entity, neglects the stylistic variation that exists within this group, as well as the contribution

some high-style I-houses make to a particular architectural tradition in a community. Therefore, in this evaluation, structures are grouped into property types based on style. When this is not possible, they are listed by form. Given the above example, the reader must realize that the property type "I-house" does not fully represent all houses of this form in Liberty - only those with little to no stylistic interpretations. However flawed this approach might seem, it at least makes the results comparable to similar survey evaluations.

Another problem occurs in defining property types with vernacular building traditions. How much style (or how many features of a style) must be present before a structure can truly be said to "belong" to that style? In addition, how does one categorize a building which has been altered from its original appearance? Within this evaluation, property types are intended to be the links between individual structures and the broad historic contexts. Thus a vernacular house type built in the Queen Anne tradition is reflecting the same local and national forces which shaped the more elaborate Queen Anne mansions (see figures 1 & 2). Therefore, whether vernacular in its interpretation or altered by a later period porch, buildings are categorized by the style in which they were built. The maps and building counts reflect this decision. However, within each building type, there is a discussion on the various sub-types, whether that be vernacular (folk) or high-style. Besides illuminating the historical patterns in building and community development, this will aid local building owners and the Historic District Review Commission with restoration or rehabilitation plans. By knowing which architectural tradition a structure was built in, informed decisions can be made about later additions or proposed changes.

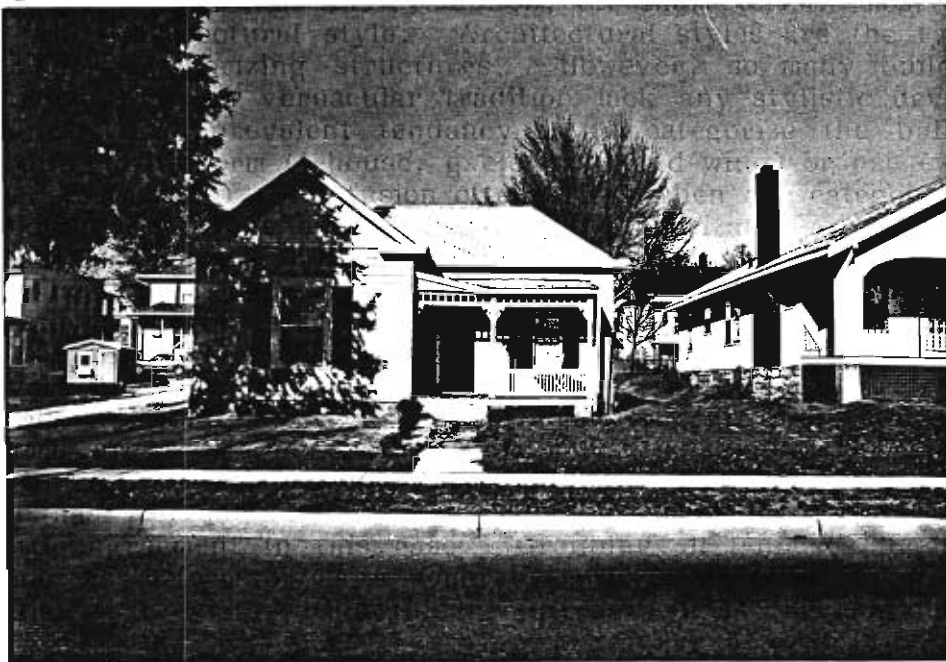


Fig. 1. 328 W. Kansas. The Queen Anne style as applied to a vernacular house type.

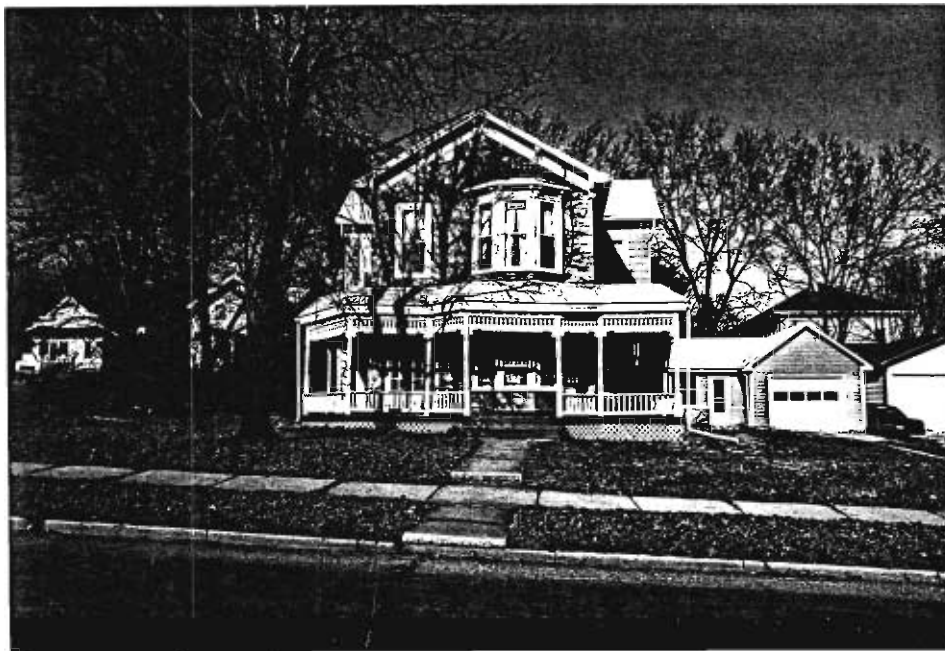


Fig. 2. 232 W. Kansas. A high-style interpretation of the Queen Anne style.

Exceptions to this were made when the alterations were so severe as to completely hide the original design intent. In some cases, a later alteration or addition might achieve its own significance over time, such as the Dimmitt-Ringo-Dougherty house at 242 W. Franklin. A large, two-story brick Italianate home was added around a small, antebellum structure. No vestiges of the earlier home are visible from the street, and it was thus classified as "Italianate". In other instances, all traces of historic fabric have been either hidden or removed by unsympathetic alterations. These buildings do not add to our understanding of historic contexts, and as such, are classified as "Non-contributing, non-historic".

The Secretary of Interior's Guidelines for Local Surveys strongly recommends that historic contexts be developed **prior** to conducting survey work. For Liberty however, the contexts are being developed after the majority of surveying has been completed. In addition, the contexts are based primarily on the existing survey data base. This ordering of events will have some drawbacks. First, since there were no contexts to guide the survey work, it is likely that entire property types were neglected. As an example, there are three known log structures in Liberty, and none are located within the survey boundaries. Only quick thinking by the Community Developer Coordinator and the Landmarks Committee of the Historic District Review Commission got two of these structures surveyed.

If the "Exploration & Settlement" context had been developed, the survey work could have been directed towards these types of resources. Second, priorities for surveying, local designation, and National Register were set without the important background of the historic contexts. No archeological survey, for example, has been considered. Yet there are very few extant structures associated with the Civil War, an important theme in Liberty's history. The Liberty Arsenal (no longer standing) was the site of the second act of civilian aggression against the Federal government in the nation, occurring only nine days after the firing of Fort Sumpter. Non-surveyed resources tend to be neglected, and contexts based only on survey material will continue to ignore these neglected resources.

There will be some benefits to establishing historic contexts, even if after the survey. As mentioned earlier, an accurate appraisal of the significance of properties can be made with locally meaningful terms. At this point in time however, a property can only be related to a **local** historic context. The Missouri State Historic Preservation Office has not defined (for local governments) any broad, general, statewide contexts which might be directly or indirectly applicable at the local efforts. The Secretary of Interior's Guidelines for Local Surveys recommends that local contexts be coordinated with the state's efforts. For this and other reasons, historic contexts should continually be refined, modified, or added to when necessary. They should remain a flexible tool for local preservation planners.

Overview of Past Surveys

Phase I of the historic resources survey was conducted from 1984-1985 and centered around the Courthouse Square area. The survey area consisted of the four streets which front onto the square (Main, Franklin, Water, and Kansas) and extended outward one block from these streets. Approximately 100 buildings were surveyed.

Phase II of the survey was conducted from 1985-1986 and focused on the residential neighborhoods north and east of the square. The boundaries were: Gordon Avenue to the north; Mill Street, south; Water, Missouri, and Leonard Streets on the west; and Jewell and Evans Streets to the east. Approximately 275 structures were surveyed.

Phase III of the survey was conducted in 1986-1987 and dealt with two residential areas, one west and the other south of the square. The boundaries for the west district were W. Franklin on the north; Fairview Avenue on the west; W. Liberty Drive, Harrison, and W. Kansas on the south; and N. Prairie on the east. The southern survey area was S. Leonard Avenue from Mill to Hurt, and Arthur Street from S. Leonard to Jewell. Approximately 218 structures were surveyed.

As this report is based on the survey material already gathered, it is important to briefly discuss that data. As mentioned earlier, no contexts were developed prior to this survey, but an attempt to correlate building types to general historical themes was made in the reports for Phases I & III. The Phase I report contains a good, brief summary of Liberty's history which related to the built environment. A section entitled "Architectural Correlations" was unable to relate property types due to the fact the one section on the data sheets, "Item 18. Architectural Style", was not completed. However, "Item 43. History & Significance" and "Item 42. Further Description of Important Features" contain much information which aided in developing property types for the buildings around the square. It was necessary for this report to complete Item 18 of the survey data sheets first in order to develop commercial property types for Liberty.

The Phase II survey report was a copy of the report completed for Phase I. The data sheets were not consistent, and have been changed for this report, particularly in "Item 18. Architectural Style." In order to develop property types which reveal information about Liberty's history and relate to historic contexts, it is important that similar and/or identical buildings be consistently classified. Also, a builder's attempts at a style, however vernacular that application may seem, may also yield important information if properly categorized with the corresponding style. Therefore, wherever possible for this report, buildings were placed in property types which are based on style, rather than form. In Phase II, the data sheets tended to categorize buildings by form types, such as "Gable-front-and-wing", "Massed-plan, side-gable", and "Hall-and-parlor", or when in doubt, the catch-all term "vernacular" was used. It should be acknowledged that vernacular housing is often very difficult to categorize, and there is not even agreement among architectural historians as to the style or type definitions. Nonetheless, to ignore vernacular style applications is to underrate their historic contribution. For the purpose of developing historic contexts, it was necessary to re-classify the data sheets from Phase II. Some differences can be noted between the map and "Item 17. Date(s) or Period". In Phase II, water permit hook-up dates were frequently used as construction dates. This would not take into account an antebellum structure which is not hooked up for water until it is first available around the turn of the century. Therefore, for this report some buildings are mapped in a different time period than is indicated on the survey data sheet. When referring to structures within the Phase II boundaries, it is recommended that the maps from this report are first consulted and referenced against the information presented about the property type and historic context, then compared to the data sheets.

Phase III of the survey was conducted by the same consultant as for this report. Thus the architectural styles on the data sheets will closely relate to the property types identified here. In reviewing all of the structures previously surveyed, some changes in categories which are similar have been made. For example, all 4-squares were assumed to be associated with the Prairie style. However, in Liberty there appears to be 4-squares which were precursors to the Colonial Revival style. While the property type may be somewhat changed, this will not affect any property's relationship to the historic contexts. The report for Phase III contained a preliminary attempt at developing historic contexts; these will be expanded and fully developed in this summary.

Historic Contexts & Property Types

Exploration & Settlement

The first Europeans to explore the Missouri River valley were the French. In the area which was to be known as Clay County, there is mention of a settlement of French trappers on the Randolph Bluffs in 1800. However, the French generally did not establish permanent settlements, and no tangible traces remain today. After the War of 1812, migration into Missouri began in earnest. The earliest groups of white settlers arrived in Clay County around 1817, when the Federal government established the first base lines from which local surveys could be made. This enabled property ownership to be recorded for the first time. A few more settlers arrived in 1818 and 1819. A heavy increase in migration followed in 1820, and by 1821, there were 1,200 people in the area. The majority were settled at this time near the Missouri River.

Americans from the Upper South had begun to migrate into Missouri by the turn of the nineteenth century, settling among the hills along the north side of the Missouri River. This continued until a veritable flood of settlers from the Upper South eventually contributed to a majority of Missouri's population. Clay County and Liberty were a part of this Southern American settlement experience. The pioneers came mostly from the states of Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Maryland, and brought with them a decidedly southern culture. In fact, the county was named in honor of the Kentucky statesman, Henry Clay, when it was partitioned off from Ray County in 1822.

The location of the county seat was selected shortly after the first session of the Clay County Court in February, 1822. A fifty-acre square tract of land that is generally around the current courthouse square was selected. The town of Liberty was platted in the summer of 1822, with the first courthouse erected on the same site as the present building. The first sale of lots was held on July 4, 1822. At that time, the existing homes in Liberty were log cabins, and their number was estimated at no more than a dozen. None are known to remain.

The site for Liberty was chosen for its healthful location, being high and well drained, and for having an excellent water supply, typified by the springs near the center of town. The rolling uplands and hills surrounding the town were well-timbered, providing a ready supply of oak, walnut, ash, and hickory. Nearby was Liberty Landing, then a prosperous community on the river which served as the main port for northeast Missouri from 1829-1841. Steamboats travelling from St. Louis on the Missouri would fire a cannon when several miles away from the landing in order to give residents of Liberty time to reach to river. This gave Liberty many of the benefits associated with river traffic and commerce without the disadvantages of being located in the floodplain.

Actual exploration of the area was brief; permanent settlement of Liberty and its environs began soon after the first arrivals. The first form of pioneer construction was the log cabin. The log-building traditions were undoubtedly those of the Upland South, which carried with it many variants based on form, log types, notching, door and chimney placement, etc. In Liberty, the three known remaining log structures were all once part of the surrounding countryside and probably date at least from the 1840's. All are covered with siding, have had subsequent additions, and are in private ownership which precludes further study at this time. With such a small group of unknown construction and form, it is sufficient to designate the property type simply as **Log Construction**. None are within the survey boundaries.

Many of the other remaining manifestations of the Southern migrations into Missouri are also rural in nature, reflecting the agrarian traditions of the settlers. This slave-based agricultural economy was transplanted into the fertile hills around Liberty, and is today physically represented by several large, antebellum brick homes which bear the cultural mark of the Upper South. The predominant property type owes much to the **Greek Revival** style, and is thus titled. Like their plantation forebears, the large farm owners relied on grain and stock production. However, all of the settlers associated with the larger, more elaborate examples of this property type had other vested interests, and contributed much to Liberty's early history in spite of their living at that time outside of the town's boundaries. Darwin J. Adkins, for example, established the Farmer's Bank of Liberty (later the Commercial Savings Bank). William G. Garth was a Missouri state representative. Samuel Ringo was a member of the first board of trustees of Liberty, and managed a mercantile store in town. Maj. Alvan Lightburne established a hemp factory on his farm, and was active in many civic affairs. William Jewell College was located in Liberty primarily due to his efforts. These pioneers' homes (discussed more fully later) illustrate their positions and importance to the area, as well as serving as physical reminders of their southern heritage. These homes are also significant as the last remaining structures associated with Liberty's major economic themes of this period - agriculture, hemp and rope manufacturing, and river commerce.

Not all **Greek Revival** property types were rural. Some were built by well-to-do town dwellers, such as the Madison Miller home at 124 N. Gallatin. Miller was the first mayor of Liberty, and was a successful dry goods merchant and banker. Other structures were more modest, reflecting the means of their owners. The Moses Lard house at 470 E. Mill Street was the home of Rev. Lard, a leader and founder of many Christian Churches in Clay County (see fig. 3). The classical detailing, in spite of being on a house of modest size, is evidence of the owner's knowledge and tastes.



Fig. 3. Moses Lard House. 470 E. Mill St.
A Greek Revival cottage.

Liberty was incorporated as a town in 1829, and was granted its first charter in 1851. The town encompassed one square mile, with the courthouse as the center. During this time, road districts were established, as well as a post office. The town first flourished as a trading post and outfitting point for westward migration. Trade traffic greatly increased in Liberty after nearby Fort Leavenworth was established in Kansas. Almost no structures remain from this early period of commerce or trade. More surviving examples might have warranted this sub-theme of "Exploration & Settlement" as a full-fledged historic context. With only one extant example, it is sufficient to refer to the **Federal/Commercial** as a property type. The earliest photographs of the square reveal that most of the commercial buildings of this era were brick, one to two stories in height, and featured gable roofs. Today only the Jesse James Bank Museum remains, located on the northeast corner of E. Franklin and Water Streets on the square. It was constructed in 1858 as the branch office of the Farmer's Bank of Missouri at Lexington. Later, it served as the Clay County Savings Association, and in 1866, served as the site of the nation's first daylight bank robbery.

Another property type which is rare in Liberty is **Early Religious**. Religion was a very important theme in Liberty's and Clay County's history. The great majority of emigrants from the Upper South who moved westward up the Missouri River were Evangelical or Protestant. The largest number of these were Baptists, Disciples, Methodist and Presbyterians. The Baptists did not form officially until 1843. The Christian Church (Disciples) began in 1837; the Methodist in 1822; and the Presbyterian Church in 1829. One Catholic church, the Saint James, also dates from this period (1840). However, as congregations outgrew their original small brick or frame structures, they very often rebuilt more elaborate churches on the same site. Although a few examples still exist in the county, only one of these modest houses of worship remains in Liberty. 9 S. Leonard Street was originally built for the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1842. It was sold in 1855 to Professor James Love and then served as part of the Clay Seminary.

The building traditions of the Southern settlers were not always associated with high stylistic delineations of property types. Vernacular traditions of early ethnic architectural forms continued well past the Civil War. The most prevalent of these is the **I-house**. The I-house is distinguished by its plan and form: side-facing gables, one-room depth, at least two-room width, and two full stories in height. So persistent was this form throughout the nineteenth century that it can be found with a variety of stylistic features. Many of the aforementioned Greek Revival property types have the basic I-house form. Some later I-houses were constructed in the Italianate style. Where these embellishments are obvious, the buildings have more associations relevant to the architectural style and have therefore been classified as such, rather than being categorized merely as an I-house. Some I-houses, however, have been altered, losing their stylistic associations. The form was also favored as a modest folk dwelling type, and several were constructed in Liberty without any pretentious decorations. The I-house is thus treated as a separate property type. A more detailed discussion of it and all the property types associated with the **Exploration & Settlement** context follows.

Log Construction



Fig. 4. Wymore-Wornall House. 400 Spring Street.

The three buildings in Liberty known to be of log construction are: the Wymore-Wornall House, 400 Spring Street; the Jones Distillery House on Murray Road; and 525 N. Gallatin. As was often the case with log structures, all of these have been altered by clapboard coverings, thus preventing any further generalizations. The siding coverings also make it difficult to identify any more log structures which may still exist in Liberty.

Only the Wymore-Wornall House has a survey data sheet. It was built sometime after 1835 by James M. Hughes, an early settler and merchant in Clay County. Hughes had a mail contract, which may have been delivered to this residence, thus contributing to the rumor that the structure used to be a stage coach stop. William H. Wymore, owner of a livery stable and several large tracts of land, purchased the property and lived there with his family until after the Civil War. It is probable that he was responsible for the Greek Revival modifications (see Fig. 4).

The Jones Distillery House was originally three log cabins, joined together when a distillery was built on the site in the 1840's. A 10,000 gallon spring supplied water for the distillery, which operated until the turn of the century. Also on the site were two ice houses and a barrel house, torn down in 1920. The distillery was owned by Mrs. Amelia M. Jones. She and her husband, James M. Jones, shipped whiskey throughout the west.

Not much is known about 525 N. Gallatin, except that it does have a portion which is log construction. John H. Burnett lived here from approximately 1900 to the 1930's; it is possible he was a relative of Peter Burnett, a Liberty pioneer who went on to become the first governor of California. Hidden by foliage on the right is the massive exterior stone chimney.

Further research is required before any generalizations about the type of log construction typical to Clay County can be made. Perhaps if further log structures are discovered, a pool of information can be started. If it is found that indeed only three log buildings exist, then it is doubtful that any conclusions can be drawn. However, that does not indicate that these three are not significant. On the contrary, only three examples of a once common homesteading property type increases their significance to Liberty's history.

Greek Revival



Figure 5. Lightburne Hall. 301 N. Water.

Features:

- *Low pitched gable or hip roof
- *Cornice line emphasized with trim band
- *Pedimented or flat-roofed entry or full-width porches, one story or full height, supported by Greek inspired classical columns
- *Front doors surrounded by narrow sidelights and a rectangular line of transom lights, usually incorporated into a more elaborate door surround
- *Boxed cornice returns or full pedimented gable ends
- *General symmetrical appearance usually on a simple rectangular block

History

The Greek Revival style was enormously popular in America, and sustained that popularity longer than for any other style. It had the perception of being identified with the ideals of ancient Greece and was an attempt to link the world's newest and oldest republics. That it was inspired by the architecture of ancient Greece was due to a variety of factors - archeological investigations in the early nineteenth century, sympathy for Greece's war for independence from the Turks, and the War of 1812 diminished American affection for British architectural models. Most domestic examples were constructed between 1830 and 1860. The style was spread by carpenter's guides and pattern books, the most popular written by Asher Benjamin and Minard Lafever.

In Liberty, Greek Revival houses were the first permanent dwellings built after the homesteading period. Stereotypically associated with the South, this style nonetheless bore the imprint of the Southern American migrants who settled the Missouri River valley in the early nineteenth century. Several substantial mansions built by farmers were the physical manifestations of the economic rewards of large holdings of land and slaves. Southern traditions were perpetuated by the brick construction of the mansions with the chimneys usually placed at opposite ends of the main block. The brick was typically fired on site, and the houses were built by slaves. One of the more distinguishing features of a Greek Revival house, its front porch, has been altered on nearly all of Liberty's extant examples. The Garth house at 218 W. Kansas has a portion of a Victorian porch; the Hughes-Kiersted Estate at 101 N. Nashua has a screened-in Craftsman style porch; and the Samuel Ringo House at 758 W. Liberty Drive has a sympathetic, but not original full-height Neoclassical porch.

Lightburne Hall, 301 N. Water, is a fully realized example of the Greek Revival style (see fig. 5). The monumental pedimented portico supported by prominent square Doric columns on the south facade is particularly noteworthy. Entries on both facades and first and second stories have double leaf doors with rectangular transom and sidelights set within an elaborate door surround. The east entry has two-story pilasters, dentils, and a broken pediment.

Lightburne Hall is a rare example in Liberty of a fully executed Greek Revival structure. More common was the Georgian ideal I-house, modified in Liberty to conform to Southern tastes and represent the affluent local gentry. Such is the Adkins-Bruening Farm house on W. Liberty Drive (see fig. 6). Built in 1859 high on a ridge on a road leading out of Liberty, the structure features a low-pitched hipped roof and a full-height entry porch supported by square columns. The front doors on both stories again feature the typical Greek Revival entrance - rectangular side and transom lights set within an elaborate door surround. The simple plan of central hall and two rooms on each floor was used by many of the wealthy, large land owners surrounding Liberty.



Fig. 6. Adkins - Bruening Farm on West Liberty Drive.

The Greek Revival style was applied to other conservative vernacular house forms, such as the gable-front and the hall-and-parlor. Even the larger I-house "mansions" were often not textbook examples of the style. Rather, they were comfortable adaptations made for the rural lifestyle on the western edge of civilization. Across the Missouri border was Indian territory and the rough world of Fort Leavenworth. Back in Liberty however, even townspeople of modest means could aspire to a civilized home reflecting the classical ideals of architecture and thus the hopes of a new democracy. The Moses Lard House (fig. 3, pg. 10) is the best preserved example, retaining many original details, such as the pedimented gable ends, denticulated cornice, 6/6 windows, and typical Greek Revival entrance.

Liberty has a total of 11 Greek Revival property types, some suffering from varying losses of integrity. There are seven brick mansions and three cottages. One would expect more examples from a town of Liberty's size during this period, but these have either been demolished or so vastly altered as to suffer a total loss of integrity. The small number of this once popular type makes these especially important resources in Liberty.

Federal/Commercial

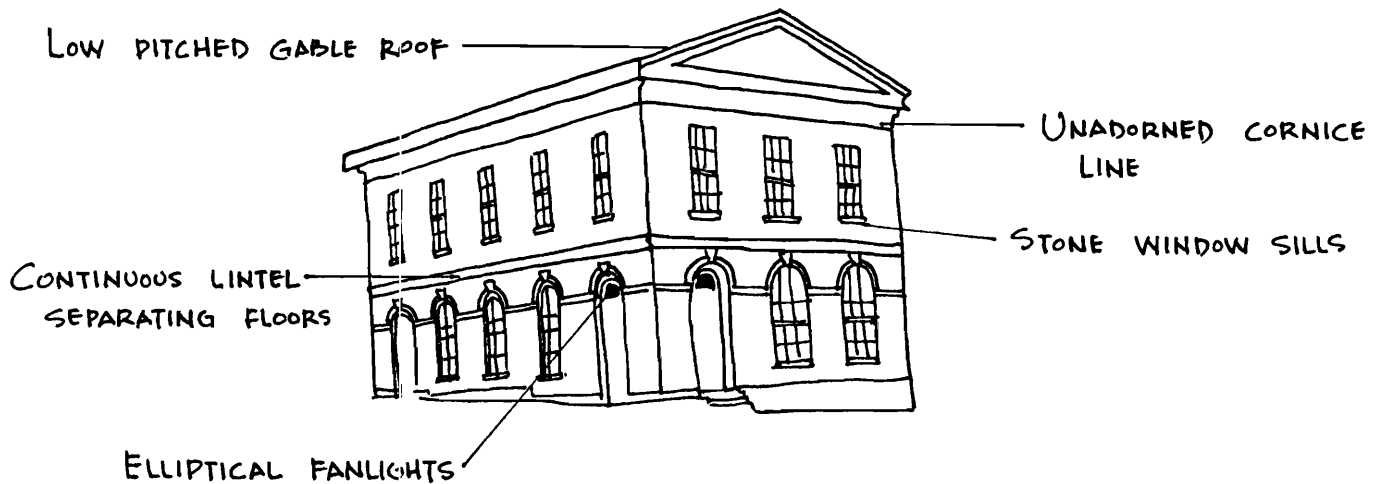


Figure 7. Jesse James Bank Museum

Features:

- *Low-pitched gable roof
- *Simple classical detailing, such as unadorned cornice line and stone window sills
- *Smooth (flat) surface
- *Continuous lintel separating the first and second floors
- *Regularly spaced, double-hung multi-paned windows
- *Elliptical fanlights
- *Elaborate entry door, often recessed

History

The Federal style is closely related, and sometimes referred to as the Adam style. It generally was a refinement of the Georgian style which preceded it. It has lighter and more delicate features than the robust Georgian. Door and window openings are carefully scaled and articulated. It was derived from the work of the English Adam brothers. The eldest, Robert Adam, made a study of domestic Roman architecture, and contributed greatly to the knowledge of that area. As applied to commercial buildings, the style retains its simple integrity of design. Classical ornament can be placed along the cornice line, but the features are generally more flush with the wall surface than the commercial styles which follow.

Liberty's earliest trade was undoubtedly conducted in the log structures which also served as residences for the owners. However, the first true commercial buildings (devoted entirely to commerce) constructed around the square appear to have been built in the same manner as the Jesse James Bank Museum (see fig. 7). Early photographs indicate simple gable roof buildings. Several storefronts were cast iron and had masonry piers separating one shop from another. The ridge of the rooflines parallel the street. In the case of the Museum, the corner lot location allows for a full pedimented gable end to face one street, and the ridgeline to parallel the other street. The Museum is significant as the only remaining Federal/Commercial structure in Liberty.

Early Religious

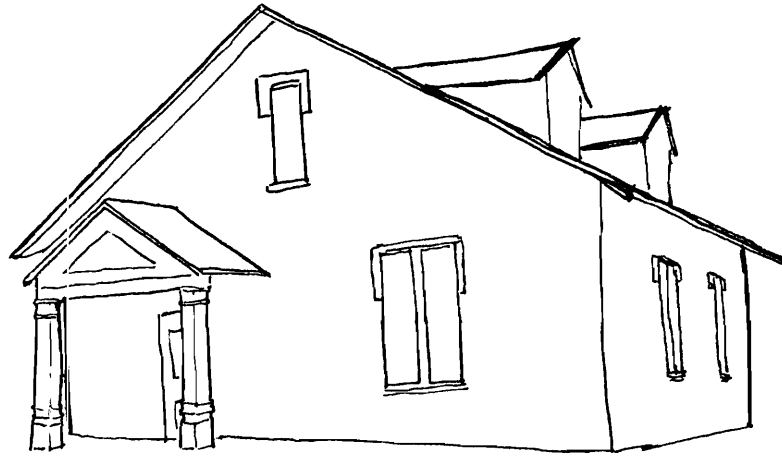


Fig. 8. 9 S. Leonard. Methodist Episcopal Church; Clay Seminary

As with the Log Construction property types, there are not enough representatives of the Early Religious building type to allow for generalizations. As mentioned earlier, when congregations outgrew their original buildings, they often tore them down when constructing their new church.

There are some similar modest church buildings scattered around Clay County, and they appear to have some features in common with 9 S. Leonard. All were simple rectangular blocks, with a front-facing gable end. There are two doors at the front - one for the men and one for women. Early photos and drawings of the Methodist Episcopal Church show that it also had two doors, one of which has been modified to a window. As typical evidence of a Southern transplanted culture, most of the early churches were brick, after the brief homesteading period in which all structures were log.

The Methodist Episcopal Church has undergone other modifications, some of which occurred when it served as one of the two buildings of the Clay Seminary. Dormers have been added on the right. In 1916, the Christian Science Church bought the property and stuccoed the exterior wall surfaces. It is probable that the Craftsman style entry porch was added at this time. It is presently owned by the county, and is being rehabilitated to house the Chamber of Commerce offices.

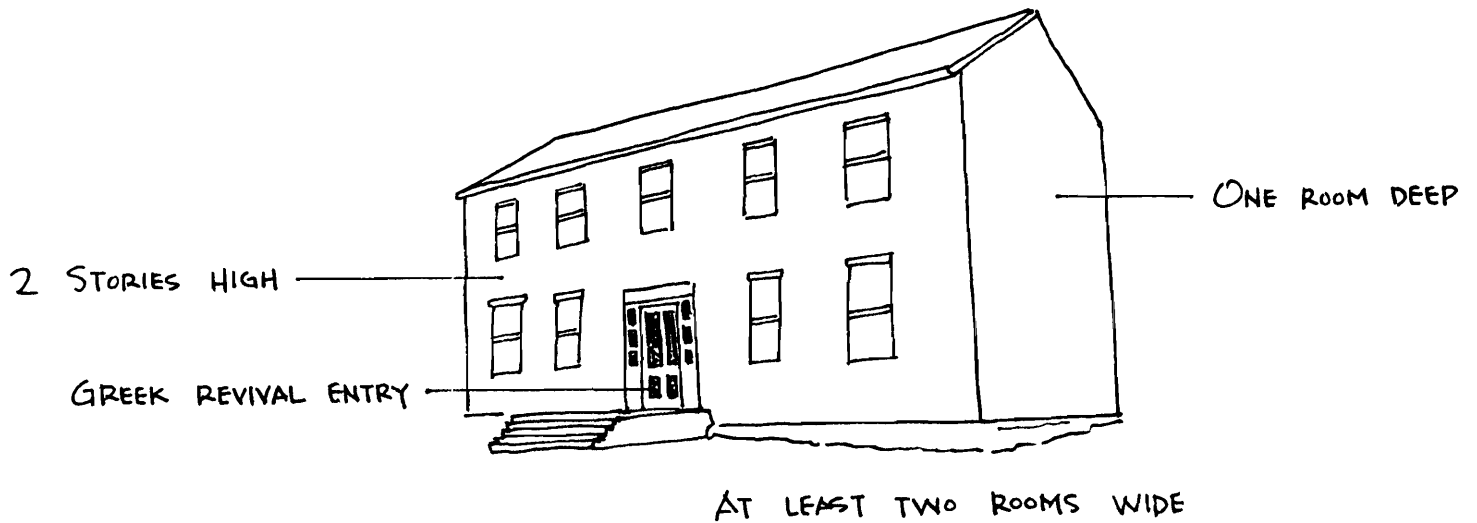
I-House

Figure 9. 125 N. Lightburne Street.

Features:

- *One room deep
- *At least two rooms wide
- *Two full stories high
- *Greek Revival entry (door surrounded by rectangular transom and sidelights)

History

The I-house is a traditional British folk form introduced into North America in Colonial times. It possibly had the widest distribution of any folk house in America, and was particularly popular in the South and Midwest. It was constructed up to the beginning of the 20th century.

The I-house form served as a backdrop for the transition between many styles - in Liberty, especially between Greek Revival and Italianate stylistic adaptations. The full-fledged Italianate style is classified by most as a Victorian or Romantic style (in other words, a rejection of the classical). Adapted to an I-house, the Italianate featured a centered front wall gable with paired brackets under the eaves and tall, narrow windows. As such, these houses are portents of the other Romantic styles which follow. They are herein classified as Italianate, and are therefore associated with a later historic context. In Liberty, however, and throughout most of Missouri, it was the favored building type of the transplanted Southerners. With its Greek Revival entry, the I-house was a common form throughout the Exploration & Settlement period.

As mentioned earlier, the I-house in Liberty and elsewhere served as a backdrop for the application of other styles. Many of Liberty's I-houses are therefore categorized with the appropriate styles. However, some were originally very modest in appearance, and others have suffered from loss of stylistic features. Of these then, there are six I-houses within the survey boundaries. Several other I-houses exist in Liberty which were not included in any of the three survey phases. The majority are on the roads which were the old routes to and from Liberty, such as N. Gallatin (Old Bluff Road or Platte City Road) and Richfield Road (Old Missouri City Road). These have been altered, primarily by unsympathetic siding, but still have the potential to yield new insights to the history of Liberty's built environment. It will be necessary to research those structures before definitive statements can be made about the I-house's influence in Liberty.

Economic Boom/Residential Growth

The period immediately following the Civil War remained turbulent in and around Liberty. Three quarters of the voting men were disenfranchised by the Drake Constitution. This, coupled with the continued guerrilla violence of southern sympathizers halted most construction activity in Liberty. However, life soon returned to normal, and the town began a short period of quiet growth.

Liberty's growth was aided by the arrival of the railroad lines. As with most smaller communities, local residents realized the importance of railroads to their town's future. The location of a railroad line had the capacity to build or destroy a town. Citizens knew that a railroad connection would link them to more communities, more markets and goods - in effect, with the rest of the world. However, it was up to the local governments in Missouri seeking to attract rail routes to finance the lines. The state was deep in debt as a result of the Civil War, and the railroad financing issue was not resolved until the turn of the century. As a result, several committees in Liberty were formed to promote the area for railroads. They were rewarded in 1867 when the Hannibal & St. Joseph (later the Chicago, Burlington, & Quincy) made Liberty a stop on the line from Kansas City to Cameron, Missouri. In 1868, the Wabash, St. Louis, and Pacific Railroad passed through the south part of Liberty. At the same time however, nearby Westport Landing began to grow in importance, and with the coming of a railroad bridge across the Missouri, the future Kansas City emerged as the dominant railroad town. This, coupled with the ending of the steamboat era in nearby Liberty Landing, led Liberty to adapt its economy.

Liberty's economy in the Exploration & Settlement period was based primarily on river commerce, agriculture, and hemp manufacturing. The realities of the times forced the city to adapt to the age of the railroads. New commercial and industrial areas were established along the railroad corridor. As Liberty was not a major crossroads for the rails, but merely a stop along the line, this was in actuality not a very major adjustment. The railroad line were located south of Mill Street, a block from the square. A small industrial area with two woolen and flour mills and two wagon and carriage factories flourished close to the rails and downtown. This caused some changes in the the everyday landscape, but did not alter the original commercial focus of the downtown square.

While Liberty's existence may have hinged on the railroad lines, its vitality did not. With railroad transportation playing an important, but not dominant theme, Liberty began to cultivate an atmosphere of gentility, emphasizing service over trade and manufacturing. Education, religion, quality journalism, culture, and temperance (for a while) became important themes in Liberty's history. Education in particular is an area in which Liberty's citizens have long been proud.

As early as 1822, Liberty had its first log school house. The town was incorporated into Clay County's first school township in 1825. The idea of free public schools for all was not popular at first however, and academies and institutes flourished. Liberty Male and Female Seminary was founded in 1841; William Jewell College and Academy in 1849; Liberty Female Institute in 1852 (later called the Liberty Female College in 1855); and Clay Seminary in 1855 were but some of the many private schools in existence. It was natural that Liberty should become known as a regional education center, and it served Clay County and beyond in this capacity. Many leading figures received their education in Liberty. One of Missouri's pioneer suffrage workers, Phoebe Routt Ess attended Clay Seminary, as did Carry Nation, national temperance leader. During this period, two more educational institutions were opened--the Hawthorne Institute in 1883, and Liberty Ladies' College in 1890. Very few structures associated with this educational theme have been surveyed, save for 438 W. Franklin, 430 E. Franklin, and 9 S. Leonard, which were all constructed in the "Exploration & Settlement" period. However, while no other historic resources have been evaluated, the quality of education played a major role in attracting teachers and other new residents to Liberty in this period.

In addition to quality education, the establishment of journalism also separated Liberty from its uncivilized neighbors to the west, and contributed to the community's aura of refinement. An amazing number of papers, now defunct, were published for brief periods: The Far West, founded in 1836; The Western Journal in 1841; the Liberty Banner in 1843; the Clay County Flag in 1860; the Liberty Weekly Union in 1867; the Clay County Democrat in 1870; and the Liberty Advance in 1877. The Liberty Tribune was founded in 1846 and continues to be published today. It is the oldest continuously publishing newspaper west of the Mississippi River. Through its editorials, the Tribune encouraged the growth and development of the town. The large number of papers added to the sense of civic pride felt in this period.

The cultural amenities and interests discussed above affected the housing choices of the residents and newcomers. Encouraged by the cultivated atmosphere, businessmen and educators from William Jewell began to construct homes which reflected their growing prosperity and position in society. Pattern books by Andrew Jackson Downing were quite popular at the time, and began to influence residential architectural styles everywhere. These styles were generally romantic, and began as a reaction against the prevailing Greek Revival style. One of these, the **Gothic Revival** style, came to this country from England. However, it never achieved widespread popularity, perhaps because of its association with England, still not favored in the new democracy. As a property type in Liberty, it was never built in great numbers. Another picturesque style, the **Italianate**, was more influential in Liberty. It also began in England as a protest against the prevailing era of classicism, and was adapted in America with varying degrees of authenticity.

Liberty had experienced steady growth since the 1850's, when the population was around 800. In 1860, it was 1,300; in 1870, 1,700; and in 1880, it dropped slightly to 1,500. The late 1880's brought the "Great Boom" in Clay County real estate, and with it came unprecedented growth. The population in 1890 jumped to 2,600 residents. The first year of the boom is variously placed in 1887 or 1889; what is important to note is that in one year the value of real property transfers in Clay County was reported at \$6,074,176., a staggering sum in those days. A property often changed hands several times, each time at an inflated price.

One man in particular, W.E. Winner, was heavily involved in Clay County real estate. In 1887, his investment company purchased 18,000 acres of Clay County land. In 1891, he bought the Reed Springs Hotel and changed the name to the Winner Hotel. As his fortunes began to decline, he sold the hotel to the Grand Lodge of the Missouri Independent Order of Odd Fellows. In 1896, 9000 acres of land were sold to satisfy bonds issued to Mr. Winner, and the "Great Boom" was over, leaving many in financial distress. The Odd Fellows, however, profited from Mr. Winner's and others' losses by getting the hotel and 240 surrounding acres for a very reasonable price.

Prior to the boom, only a few new additions and subdivisions had been platted. Michael Arthur's 1st and 2nd Additions were among the earlier, with the 2nd Addition of 1870 laying out Arthur Street from S. Leonard east to Jewell. Lightburne's 1st Addition of 1883 divided up some of the large farm of Major Alvan and Ellen Lightburne. These are typical examples of how the city grew in this period and how lots were made available to the general public. The large land owners would decide to sell off some of their acreage, and as it was easier to sell land within the city limits, they would apply to have their parcels added to the city.

During the boom, there was a flurry of activity in addition and subdivision platting ("subdivision" being the re-platting of previously platted land within the city boundaries). North and east of the square, Brown's M.B. Subdivision (1887), Allen & Burns Addition (1887), and Jewell Addition (1898) were platted. In the neighborhoods west of the square, Corbin & Hughes (1890), Dougherty Place (1890), and Prospect Heights (1889) were laid out. Along S. Leonard, Ford Place (1891), Lincoln Place (1889), and Groom's Addition (1889) divided the land west of the road. The trend in Liberty appears to have been towards small developers. All the platted areas were quite small, usually only a block or two. It is possible that the frequency and cost of land transactions prevented any one person from acquiring large tracts of land. Thus the owners of the larger, close in estates were in the best position to profit from Liberty's growth, and many small lots were laid out among the large, earlier homes.

The construction industry followed the developers' lead with enthusiasm. In 1887, approximately seventy new residences were constructed at an average cost of \$1,000 each. A similar number were constructed the following year at an average cost of \$1,500. In 1889 the average cost had risen to \$2,000, and approximately eighty new homes were built in Liberty. Most new houses were built on existing lots of the "Original Town" plat, or on the newly platted parcels of land purchased from the large estate owners.

Most houses built during the height of the boom were in the **Queen Anne** style. Some were vernacular adaptations of the style, such as 328 W. Kansas (fig. 1, pg. 3), typical of many small cottages built in Liberty. High-style Queen Anne residences, like the Raymond House at 232 W. Kansas (fig. 2, pg. 4), feature elaborate porch spindlework, varied surface textures, and irregular roof lines typical to the style. These houses reflect the changes that were occurring in architecture across the country. Rather than regional or ethnic forms of architecture, most of the country was dominated by pattern-book inspired construction, such as the Queen Anne style. Liberty moved into the American mainstream of national architectural styles during its own period of booming growth.

There were many diverse forms of vernacular, or folk architecture that were constructed before, during, and even after the boom. The coming of the railroads signaled an end to the rough, pioneer folk types built during homesteading periods. Log houses (and in other parts of the country, sod and timber frame) were abandoned for wooden dwellings constructed with balloon framing and covered by wood sheathing. Lumber from sawmills and other materials could be moved rapidly and cheaply over long distances. Large lumberyards became standard fixtures in towns along the rail lines. In 1883, Liberty had at least two lumberyards, the Wilmot Lumber Co., which averaged 300,000 board feet, and P.B. Burn's Lumberyard, which averaged 150,000 board feet. Wood and mill work was also stored at the Columbus Buggy Co. at the corner of S. Leonard and E. Kansas Streets. The S.H. Brown Saw Mill was located 500 feet south of the school house. As a result of this easy accessibility, the building materials and construction techniques of folk dwellings changed.

Some previous folk shapes, such as the I-house, persisted, others were modified, and new shapes were constructed. In Liberty, six folk house forms were discovered, some with greater frequency. However, they all tell much the same story in regards to their association with the "Economic Boom/Residential Growth" context - that is of the influence of the railroad to spread housing types and to move building materials cheaply. For this report, these six subtypes are referred to as one property type - **National Folk**. A discussion on each individual subtype is included.

Gothic Revival



Figure 10. Shadowlawn. 704 N. Nashua.

Features:

- *Steeply pitched roof
- *Steep, front cross gable(s)
- *Wall surface extending into gable without break
- *Windows extend into gables, frequently with pointed arch (Gothic)
- *One-story porch, usually with flattened Gothic arches
- *Decorative bargeboards and trim

History

Andrew Jackson Downing's influential book, The Architecture of Country Houses, was primarily responsible for the popularity of the Gothic Revival style in America from 1840 to 1870. They are most abundant in the northeastern states. As the style reached its zenith after the Civil War, states experiencing war debts and reconstruction, such as Missouri, did not grow in the period when Gothic Revival houses were built. Although never as popular as the Greek Revival and Italianate styles, Gothic Revival was influential for several reasons. Gothic Revival homes were often the first buildings in an area to use the balloon framing construction technique. It was also important for breaking associations with classical architecture. It was the predecessor for the later romantic/picturesque styles, such as the Italianate and the Queen Anne.

The Gothic Revival style was never widely constructed in Liberty, but the few houses associated with it were probably influential models for the later romantic styles. Shadowlawn at 704 N. Nashua had the ideal setting for a Gothic Revival home. The writings of both A.J. Downing and Alexander Jackson Davis promoted the suitability of the style for rural settings, stressing its compatibility with the natural landscape. Shadowlawn was sited on a prominent ridge on the major road leading north out of town, and was undoubtedly noticed and admired by Liberty residents. Manheim Goldman, twice mayor of Liberty and a store owner, must have been one resident who noticed, for he constructed his town home in the same style. His house at 214 Mississippi features three steeply pitched front gables, narrow, pointed Gothic windows, and finials in the gable ends. It has suffered the loss of some original details, but still stands out from the other homes of the period.

There are only four examples of the Gothic Revival property type in Liberty. 139 Morse is a modest, vernacular example of the style, which is often referred to as "Carpenter Gothic". It is possible that there were more vernacular examples of Carpenter Gothic in Liberty. The detailing which distinguishes these houses from a vernacular house type (gable end bargeboards, jigsawn porches) is usually the first to go in a "remodeling" scheme. Lacking that detailing, a Carpenter Gothic house becomes just a vernacular house type.

Italianate



Figure 11. 242 W. Franklin.

Features:

- *Two stories high
- *Low-pitched gable or hip roof
- *Wide, overhanging eaves
- *Single or paired decorative brackets on a wide trim band under eaves
- *Tall, narrow windows (sometimes paired), one or two pane glazing
- *Often elaborate window crowns
- *Porches usually one-story; square supports with beveled corners

History

The Italianate style, along with the Gothic Revival, began in England as a part of the Picturesque movement. This was a reaction to the formal, classical ideals as carried out in architecture by the Federal (Adam) and Greek Revival styles. It was popular from about 1850 to 1880, especially in the expanding towns of the Midwest. Again, as with the Gothic Revival style, it was never widely built in the South due to the Civil War and reconstruction. The number of Italianate houses in Liberty is not great, but is large enough to signal the start of a new era. The cultural ties to the South were beginning to weaken, and the ethnic character of architecture became diluted as pattern book inspired houses began to dominate.

This process of converging into homogenous national styles was gradual. Vernacular housing traditions remained strong as the I-house continued to be used as a backdrop for stylistic applications. In the Italianate, the I-house was modified with a centered front gable, paired brackets under wide, overhanging eaves, and tall, narrow windows, often with crown moldings. A representative is the Arthur House at 316 E. Franklin. As this was the home of Michael Arthur, a local slave dealer, it serves as a symbol of the transition between the cultural traditions of the South and the desire to be part of the national mainstream in architecture. A few Italianate homes were built prior to the Civil War, but as the style has more historical associations in Liberty with this period, all Italianate houses are included in the "Economic Boom/Residential Growth" context.



Fig. 12. "Belle Maison" 404 S. Leonard.

An example of a more elaborate, asymmetrical type modeled after Italian villas is 313 N. Nashua. Early photos reveal arcaded porches, panelled bay windows, and decorative entries. Another elaborate example is "Belle Maison" at 404 S. Leonard (see fig. 12). The Queen Anne inspired porch was a later addition, but the asymmetrically massed house still features the round arched windows and bracketed eaves.

A simpler version of the Italianate style is the Dimmitt-Ringo-Dougherty House at 242 W. Franklin (see fig. 11). It is a basic two-story rectangle with a low-pitched hip roof. A portion of the house was built by St. Clair Dimmitt between 1849 and 1856. Subsequent owners built the Italianate house around the antebellum portion from about 1867-1871. The paired eave brackets, tall, narrow arched windows, and right bay tower are all identifying features of this house type. Although simpler in plan than 313 N. Nashua, this house retains more integrity than most of the other Italianate houses remaining in Liberty.

Twelve examples of the Italianate style were found within the survey boundaries, retaining varying degrees of integrity. Many have important historical associations with prominent Liberty citizens, and others are good representatives of the property type. These should be considered for protection in Liberty's preservation plan.

Queen Anne



Figure 13. 471 E. Kansas.

Features:

- *Steeply pitched roof of irregular shape
- *Asymmetrical facade
- *Partial or full-width porch, often wrap-around
- *Devices to avoid smooth-walled appearance:
 - .Varying wall textures, such as clapboard & patterned shingles
 - .Bays, oriels, and towers
- *Varying window types, especially many small, square panes surrounding a larger "plate"

History

The Queen Anne style was largely the creation of a group of English architects led by Richard Norman Shaw. They borrowed heavily from Elizabethan and Jacobean models and designed imposing half-timbered and masonry structures. A group of buildings in Liberty was influenced by this melding of the Elizabethan and Jacobean styles (hence the term "Jacobethan"). The major structures at the state home for the Missouri Independent Order of Odd Fellows were built in this vein, even though the construction and design lasted beyond the Queen Anne period. Most Liberty Queen Anne structures, however, were influenced by pattern books and architectural magazines which were promoting interpretations more indigenous to America.

The Queen Anne style was popular for only two decades, from about 1880 to the turn of the century. However, it was the dominant style at a time of rapid growth across America and in Liberty, and was therefore built in great numbers. It came at a time of many technological advances in the housing and construction industry, and was thus "modern". At the same time, it represented a renewed interest in picturesque qualities, and conjured up a period of the past which was just distant enough to seem rosy after the financial panic of 1873. Yet while being nostalgic, it also encouraged the disestablishment of all previous standards of design.

Structurally, the Queen Anne houses were much different from their predecessors. Nearly all used the balloon framing construction technique introduced by the Gothic Revival houses. Gone were the simple rectangular boxes of earlier days. The shape of the house was now determined by the internal layout of rooms. The inner structure reflected the outer shape, and that inner structure was changing. Now single-purpose rooms were designed, and kitchens were typically part of the house (rather than separate, as in earlier homes). Central heating was becoming more common, but indoor toilets were still considered a luxury in the 1880's.

The first examples of the Queen Anne looked vaguely Gothic. This changed to become the highly exuberant "spindlework" version of the Queen Anne style (see fig. 13). Characterized by delicate turned porch supports, balusters, and frieze, with decorative bargeboards and shingles in the gable end, the spindlework version was dominant during the 1880's. There was certainly no shortage of trim work. Improvements in wood-working equipment, particularly in turning machinery, gave rise to factories producing ready-made gingerbread. Potential home builders could browse through catalogs and chose their ornamentation. As a result, many vernacular house types (i.e., those with simple plans, rather than the irregular high-style) were decorated without restraint.

Victorian/Commercial

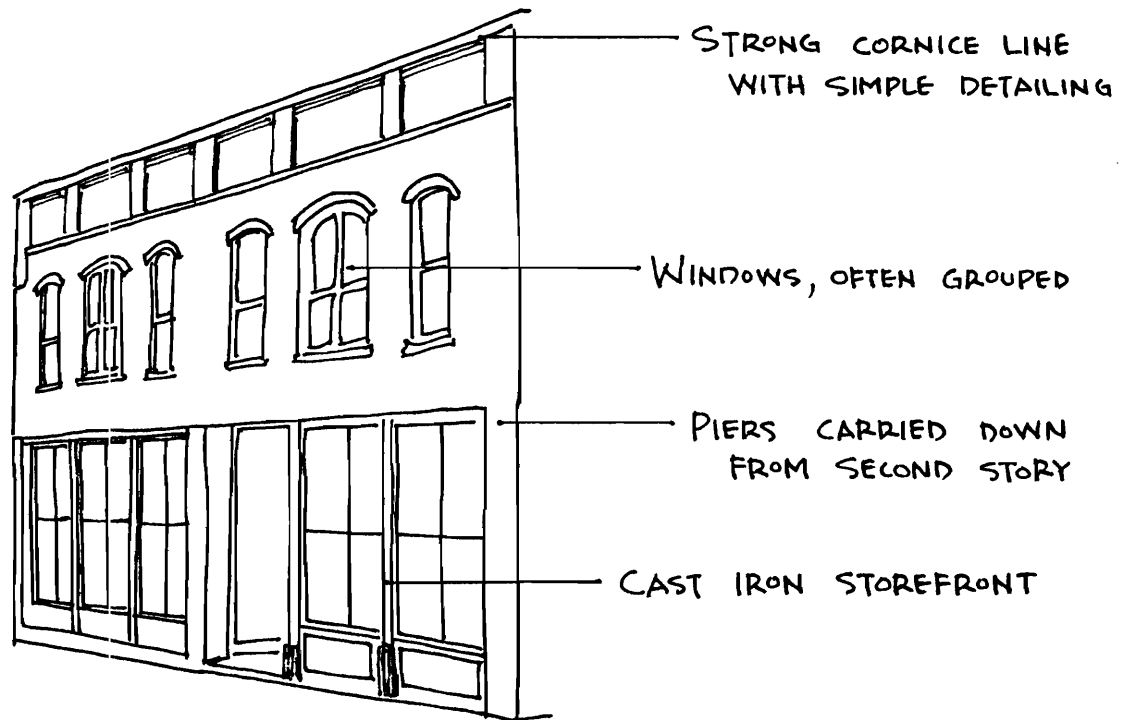


Figure 26. 24-30 S. Main.

Features:

- *Strong cornice line with simple detailing
- *Windows often grouped
- *Ground floor piers carried down from second story
- *Cast iron or wood & glass storefronts

History

Many of Liberty's Victorian commercial buildings reflect several stylistic trends. Some are elaborate, such as 12 N. Main, which features a heavy bracketed cornice of the Italianate type coupled with the highly textured surface reminiscent of the Queen Anne style. Others, such as the building in Figure 26, are simpler vernacular expressions of higher style commercial structures. The Victorian/Commercial property type is a "catch-all" category for all of these buildings.

In general, Victorian/Commercial buildings in Liberty are built in brick and have double-hung windows with at least a minimal form of decorative treatment. With seven Victorian/Commercial buildings remaining in Liberty, this type comprises a large portion of the downtown fabric. They were constructed from the time of Liberty's real estate boom to the turn of the century. This type has received a greater loss of integrity than the other historic property types from this context. The majority have completely altered first floors; only the second stories remain to tell us of the buildings' history.

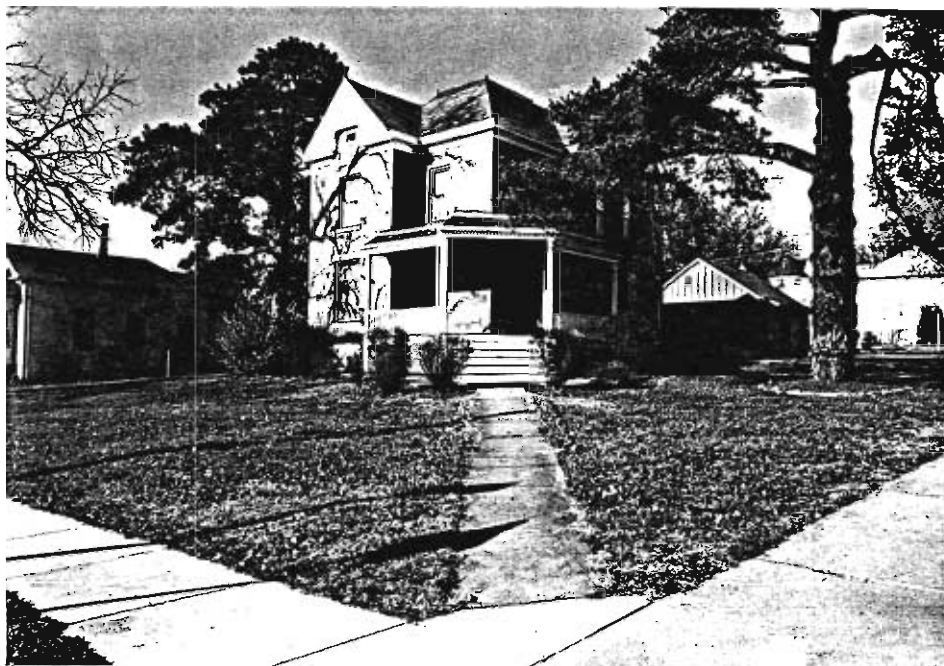


Figure 14. 302 W. Kansas.
A free classic subtype of the Queen Anne.

In the 1890's, the "free classic" version of the Queen Anne style became widespread (see fig. 14). It was thus called because of its free use of Greek and Roman decorative motifs. Dentils appeared under the cornice, Palladian windows were revived, and porch supports were inspired by classical columns. The free classic Queen Anne was actually transitional to the Colonial Revival style which was to follow.

Information about a local builder who worked in this style has surfaced in research. Elderly residents speak of John Will Hall as being the "best around", using only quality materials inside and out. It is believed he was responsible for the designs of many of his buildings as well. Mr. Hall built all manner of residences, from the fanciful Queen Anne at 442 W. Franklin to the vernacular house at 507 W. Liberty Drive. Mr. Hall was well known in Liberty for reasons other than his quality construction. A Confederate vereran, he was responsible for raising the Confederate flag over the Clay County Courthouse in 1862. When the American flag was raised over the courthouse in 1912 (for the first time since 1861), John Will Hall was asked to serve the honor.



Fig. 15. 333 N. Water.
A Shingle style house.

During the Victorian period of architecture in America, a closely related style - the Shingle style - was built. Only one extant example remains in Liberty, 333 N. Water (see fig. 15). It is possible that more were built in Liberty, but many older houses have lost their original wall cladding and have been covered by asbestos shingles or aluminum siding. Altered in this manner, a Shingle house would have the characteristics of a simple Queen Anne. The Shingle style has many of the same historical associations as the Queen Anne; for example, mass production of the shingles was also due to a technological innovation, the band saw. In this report, it is therefore included with the Queen Anne property type.

In Liberty, Queen Anne residences were designed in three levels of intensity: large, elaborate two-story (typically called "high-style"); elaborate one-story cottages; and vernacular house types with Queen Anne detailing applied. Within the survey boundaries, there were approximately an equal number (thirty) of each of these three levels. The Queen Anne cottages differ from the vernacular, or "folk Victorian" houses by floor plan and degree of detailing. The cottages feature the highly irregular roofline and massing, typically a hipped roof with lower cross-gables (see fig. 16.) The decorative features also appear to be more a part of the original design of the building, rather than merely applied to a basic house shape.



Fig. 16. 422 N. Leonard St.
Queen Anne cottage (note corner wood quoins).

Figure 17 is an example of a basic house type, the gable-front-and-wing, with Queen Anne detailing. The boxed gable returns have paired brackets and the porch has an incised Eastlake frieze. The windows have decorative crowns, and the bay window is especially elaborate for this type of house.



Fig. 17. 128 N. Leonard St.
"Folk Victorian"

The Queen Anne house fits the stereotypical description of an "old house", complete with gingerbread, "bric-a-brac", and even ghosts. As an old, and therefore "out-dated" style, over the years it has suffered through many subsequent remodellings. Several of the Queen Anne residences in Liberty fell victim to this urge to remodel. As mentioned earlier, the alteration of wall cladding to either asbestos shingles or aluminum siding changes the characteristic of highly textured surfaces. In addition, Victorian porches were often removed and replaced with Craftsman or Prairie style porches in the 1910's and 1920's. Other decorative details, such as brackets and bargeboards, were removed to make painting and other maintenance chores easier. The loss of too many details can severely compromise the design integrity of the buildings.

National Folk

As railroads spread across America in the decades from 1850 to 1890, the nature of folk housing changed dramatically. Modest dwellings were no longer restricted to local materials. Instead, houses were built of lumber from sawmills in a balloon frame and sheathed with clapboards. In Liberty, this began in the 1870's, after the railroad and lumberyards became important fixtures in the community.

Although new building techniques were used, some previous vernacular shapes persisted, such as the I-house. These earlier folk dwelling types, along with new shapes, make up the four folk house subtypes within the "National Folk" property type. All of the subtypes are defined by their plan, form, and roof shape. These simple houses rarely had any form of decoration, and were usually built by the working class for modest sums.



Fig. 18. 210 Mississippi.
Hall-and-parlor

Features:

- *Two rooms wide
- *One room deep
- *One story high
- *Typically, a front porch and a rear addition

History

The simple side-gabled, hall-and-parlor houses are a traditional British folk form popular since Colonial times. In the pre-railroad Tidewater South, it was executed in a variety of materials (timber frame, hewn log, and brick) and in several variations based on chimney placement, addition of central hall, and rear extensions. After the railroad, the hall-and-parlor type became widely distributed. There are seven modest hall-and-parlor houses in Liberty. The majority have two doors, such as the one pictured in Figure 18. Another, 20 Lincoln Street, is a version featuring a central hall.



Fig. 19. 311 N. Lightburne.
Gable-front

Features:

- *One or two stories
- *Front-facing gable

History

Gable-front houses were first used during the Greek Revival period of American architecture, where the front facing gable echoed the pediment of Greek temples. Again, the railroad expanded the use of this house form after 1860, and it persisted into the twentieth century. It was particularly suited for narrow urban lots in rapidly expanding cities. Gable-front houses can be quite modest, or more styled, such as the example at 311 N. Lightburne (fig. 19). There are eight gable-front houses within Liberty's surveyed boundaries which do not fit into other stylistic categories.



Fig. 20. 217 N. Missouri.
Pyramidal

Features:

- *Pyramidal roof
- *Squarish floor plan

History

Vernacular houses with square plans are typically built with pyramidal roofs. This type of roof is less expensive to build as it requires fewer long-spanning rafters than a gable roof. One-story pyramids were common in the South, but were less commonly constructed in Liberty. Only two unstyled pyramids are extant from this period. Two-story pyramids (called four-squares) built after the turn of the century are quite common in Liberty. Nearly all have Prairie style detailing, and are classified with that property type.



Fig. 21. 14 N. Prairie.
Gable-front-and-wing

Features:

- *One or two stories
- *Side gable wing at right angles to gable-front wing
- *Typically, a shed-roofed porch placed in the L made by the two wings

History

Like the gable-front subtype, this form of vernacular housing also descended from Greek Revival housing. Whereas the gable-front was more common in urban neighborhoods, the gable-front-and-wing prevailed in rural areas. With the coming of the railroad and abundant lumber, simple hall-and-parlor and I-houses had front gabled wings added, or an entire house was built as an L-shaped unit. Two-story gable-front-and-wing houses are common in the midwest (fig. 21), and one-story more so in the South. As the gable-front-and-wing is the most common National Folk property type in Liberty, there are both one- and two-story examples. There are twenty-seven unstyled gable-front-and-wing houses in Liberty. Being the most common folk subtype, this form most often received stylistic detailing. Gable-front-and-wing houses often had Queen Anne style spindlework porches and brackets added. In this report, these were classified as the "Folk Victorian" subtype of the Queen Anne style.

Vernacular housing can exhibit a wide variety of floor plans, roof shapes, and stylistic detailing. With the coming of abundant lumber, trim work, and technological changes in the construction industry, a local builder had more freedom to alter traditional plans. In addition, through the years some styled houses have become so altered as to obscure the original design intent. For this reason, there is a remaining number of non-classified folk housing (four structures) which are simply referred to as "vernacular".

Late Nineteenth Century Commercial Growth

In the Exploration/Settlement period of Liberty, the earliest shops were contained in a place of residence. Sometimes the type of commercial enterprises were reflected in the architecture, but more often there was no indication that the structure housed a different use. This type of "shop-house" was common across America. It was not until the early nineteenth century that the design of strictly commercial buildings emerged as a separate facet of American architecture. The development of an entire town can often be traced by its patterns of commercial architecture. The size and extent of commercial buildings are an index of a town's achievements and potential, and play a major role in defining the character of a community. Liberty's downtown square is thus a reflection of its period of commercial growth and development in the late nineteenth century.

The importance of the railroad to Liberty's economy and growth was discussed in the previous historic context. As mentioned, the railroad did not affect the basic configuration and focus of Liberty's commercial district. The square remained the dominant place to conduct business. As a county seat, the square's plan is typical of those in many other Midwestern states. The courthouse is built on a central, open space and is surrounded by streets on all four sides. The principal business district is clustered around the perimeter of the central square. Early in its history, Liberty thus had a core district which became a major component of its identity, and gave a focus for community activities.

The four streets of Franklin, Kansas, Water, and Main were the anchors of the square, and the commercial district focused inward towards those streets and the Courthouse. The buildings abutted the sidewalks and their neighbors, filling the entire lot. If any open space existed on the square, it was assumed that a building would someday move in. This dense pattern of construction had existed in urban areas for hundreds of years. However, what was occurring in American commercial districts during the nineteenth century was somewhat different. The major difference was the wide, straight linear streets, necessary for the heavy traffic that these districts received. The reason the traffic was heavier was that commercial usage dominated these districts. Even though there were sometimes apartments on the upper stories of these buildings, this was generally not a shared area for residences. Except in the very large cities, residential districts in America focused on free-standing buildings. Thus in smaller to mid-sized communities in late nineteenth century America, it was very easy to differentiate between commercial and residential areas.

Liberty's short homesteading period and quick rise in economic power led the way for the abandonment of shop-houses. The increasing demand for trade and professional services was coupled with an increase in land values. Indeed, from the initial offering of lots around the square, the popularity of the location was evidenced by the quick sale of lots. Such valuable land could not be wasted on residences or even shop-houses, and strictly commercial buildings were soon built. These early buildings looked similar to residences, but were taller, more uniform, and had more practical facades. Photographs dating from the 1860s and '70's reveal that the earlier commercial buildings were brick, one to two stories in height, and featured gable roofs. The ridge line of the roofs paralleled the street, and the roof slopes were frequently pierced by dormers and chimneys. Double-hung sash windows, usually 6/1, were common.

As the Victorian period of residential architecture brought about many changes, so did this period of commercial architecture change the visual components of the street facades. By the 1870's, a different stylistic treatment supplanted the earlier type. Most commercial buildings constructed after this date have flat, rather than gable roofs. The cornice is accentuated and more ornate, serving as an elaborate terminus to the buildings. Windows are taller and more narrow, and are frequently embellished by decorative surrounds (sometimes arched with keystones) or caps. There is often a continuous lintel or other horizontal device separating floors, and decorative vertical treatments on the sides. The general public's overall enthusiasm for decoration at this time is especially reflected on these commercial buildings, which were viewed as ornaments to the community. Like the residential decorations, this was due in part to technological advances and mass manufacturing of ornamentation. Another development in technology was the casting of iron. Entire storefronts were sometimes constructed of cast iron, as this was thought to be fire-proof. In spite of these new construction techniques, which also allowed for the flat roofs, the upper stories of Liberty's buildings remained constructed of masonry. Although the buildings generally remained two stories tall, they were increased in scale. The proportions were taller and more slender, and the facade elements themselves, such as windows, were larger.

The styles of commercial architecture in this period were diffused from larger urban examples to the smaller towns, much as pattern books spread residential styles. In spite of Liberty having its own distinct flavor, certain uniform characteristics were common to many commercial buildings across America. Generally, people wanted their places of business to look urbane and therefore "successful". This desire gave rise to the development of national commercial styles. The extent to which Liberty's commercial buildings reflected these urbane styles depended upon the town's available economic resources and aspirations, as well as upon its level of sophistication.

As mentioned earlier, Liberty was beginning to view itself less as an agricultural trade center and more as a service, education, and cultural center. Thus the commercial district never expanded much more than a block beyond the square, and the size of the buildings remained modest (two stories). However, the individual buildings themselves generally received a high degree of ornamentation and design, showing the citizen's awareness of current architectural styles. The earliest of these more sophisticated property types is the **Italianate/Commercial**. This was quickly followed by two highly decorative types, the **Romanesque/Commercial** and the **Queen Anne/Commercial**. At the same time, some commercial buildings were very eclectic in nature, and others were more modest in their ornamentation. These are classified under the more general **Victorian/Commercial** property type.

Although the buildings around the square had many design elements in common which lent to a unified, collective image, they still exhibited some degree of individuality. This was due to the fact that the buildings were becoming increasingly specialized in their function. Banks, theatres, hotels, and retail structures began to develop their own type of commercial architecture in this period. For example, retail structures featured large plate glass windows (another technological development) to better show off their wares. Hotels had regularly spaced windows which reflected their interior room configurations. In addition, highly decorative appearances, previously reserved for only the most costly buildings, were now available with mass-manufactured ornamentation. It was necessary for facades to become advertisements for the type and quality of business conducted within due to the large number of enterprises competing on the square. The 1883 Sanborn Map of Liberty reveals the following types of business on the square alone: clothing (two); furniture (two); harness (three); barber (three); Post Office; photographer; paint; tinner; dry goods (four); druggists (five); carpenter; jewelry (two); bank (two); grocer (five); hardware; books & stationery (two); confectionary (two); offices; newspaper; hotel; a dwelling, and a skating rink!

The commercial and industrial part of town was not confined to the square, although it did serve as the focal point of business for Liberty. A stockyard and several livery stables were just south of the square and north of Mill. South of Mill Street, adjacent to the railroad tracks, were the Liberty Flour & Woolen Mill, the Rohman & Damon National Flour Mill, the S.H. Brown Saw Mill, and Wilmot Lumber Company. Two blocks east of the square (on the corner of Leonard and E. Kansas) was the Columbus Buggy Company. Immediately to the northwest on the same block was P.B. Burn's Lumberyard. The first lateral expansion of the commercial district along the four major arteries occurred during this period. By 1883, five commercial structures were built on E. Kansas between the square and Columbus Buggy Company.

Italianate/Commercial

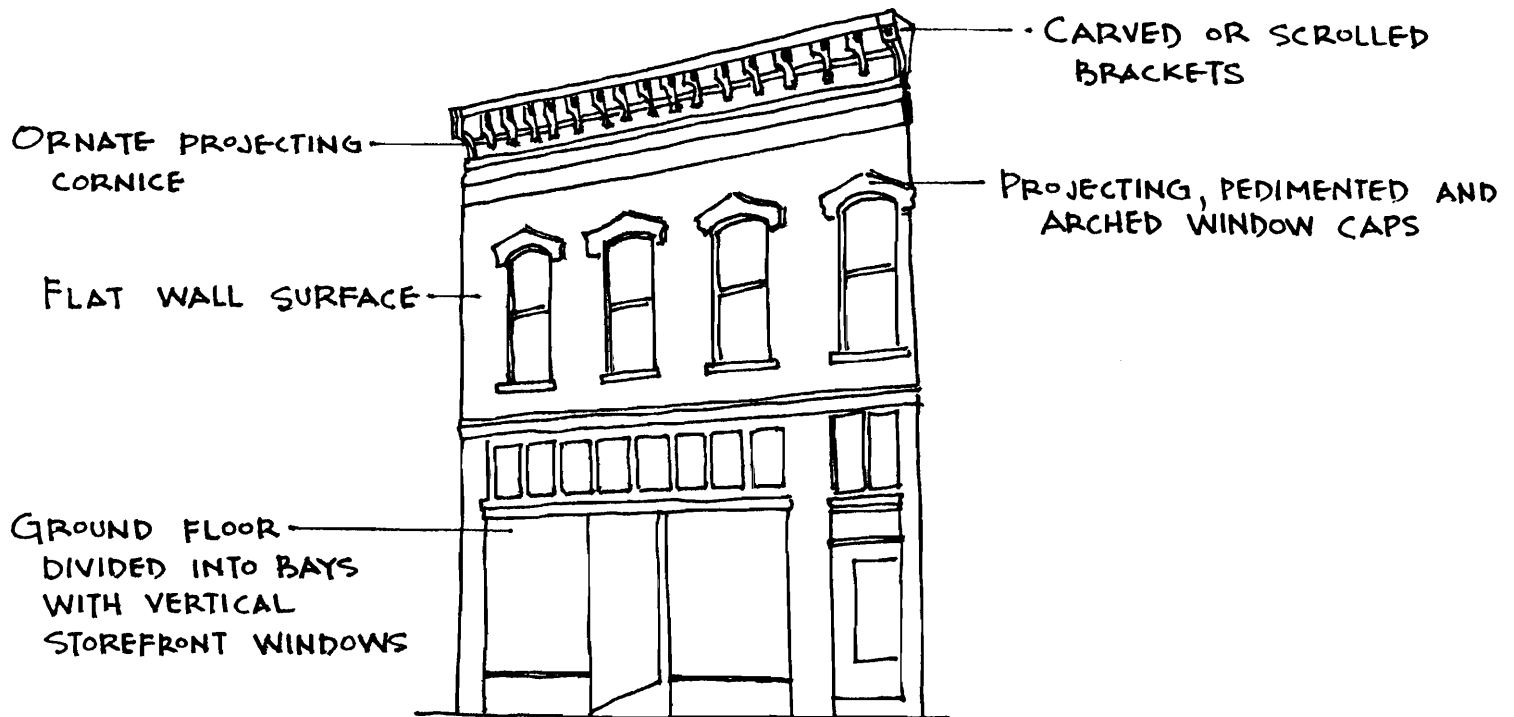


Figure 22. 11 E. Kansas.

Features:

- *Ornate, projecting cornice
- *Carved or scrolled brackets
- *Flat wall surface
- *Projecting window caps & sills, often pedimented or arched
- *Regular window placement
- *Ground floor divided into bays
- *Vertical storefront windows

History

The Italianate/Commercial style was the result of the transformation of an earlier revival by architects. By the time the style was diffused down to small-town commercial architecture, there were not very many revival characteristics left. The Italianate movement in general was used only in domestic (discussed earlier) and commercial architecture. It emerged as one of the dominant commercial styles in America from about 1845 to 1875, and received many varying and vernacular applications. In Liberty, there are seven Italianate/Commercial buildings on the square with varying degrees of integrity. Most are missing their original storefronts, but some have their ground floor bays and transom windows intact, such as 11 E. Kansas (see fig. 22). Nearly all have deep, elaborate cornices (some made of metal) with brackets. 2 E. Franklin has no brackets, but instead has a corbelled masonry cornice. All feature decorative window treatments - some have arched openings with a stone keystone set within a masonry opening, and some have wood pedimented crowns with arched undersides.

Romanesque/Commercial

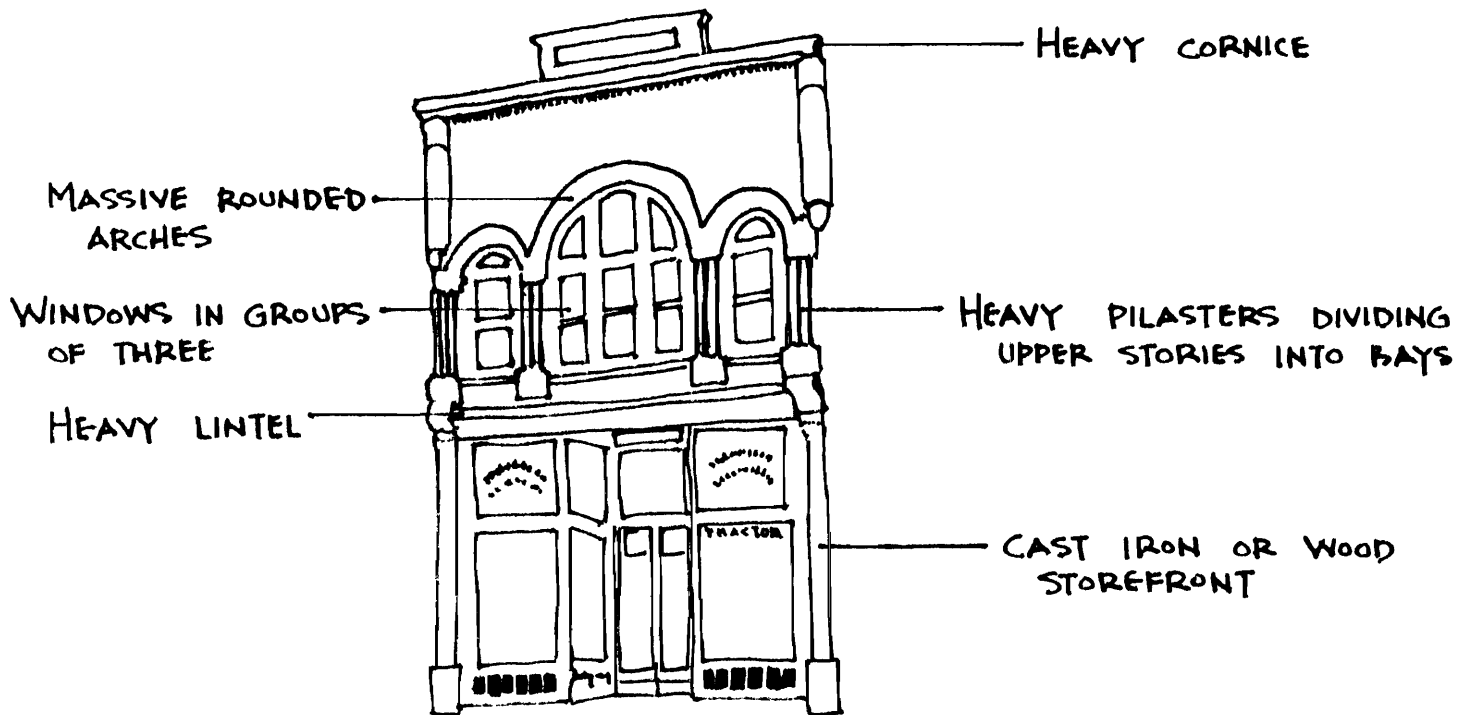


Figure 23. 5 E. Kansas.

Features:

- *Heavy cornice
- *Massive round arches
- *Heavy pilasters dividing upper stories into bays
- *Cast iron or wood storefront
- *Windows in groups of threes
- *Heavy lintel

History

The Romanesque Revival style began in the 1840's, and featured the revival of the medieval round arch, as opposed to the pointed Gothic arch. Generally, heavy emphasis is given to the structural elements of this style. H. H. Richardson, one of the greatest American-born architects, developed his own style called "Richardsonian Romanesque", which even further emphasized the structure and the massiveness of the materials (most frequently stone). From about the time of his death in 1886 until the turn of the century, versions of this style once again became popular.

The rounded arches are what distinguish the buildings as Romanesque/Commercial. The arches rest on wide pilasters which divide the facade into vertical bays. Romanesque designs traditionally emphasize the structural elements: columns, lintels, pilaster, and arches, which are usually wide and heavy, creating an impression of weight and massiveness. There are three Romanesque/Commercial buildings in downtown Liberty. Boggess Hardware is an excellent representative of the style, and is virtually intact (see fig. 23).

Queen Anne/Commercial

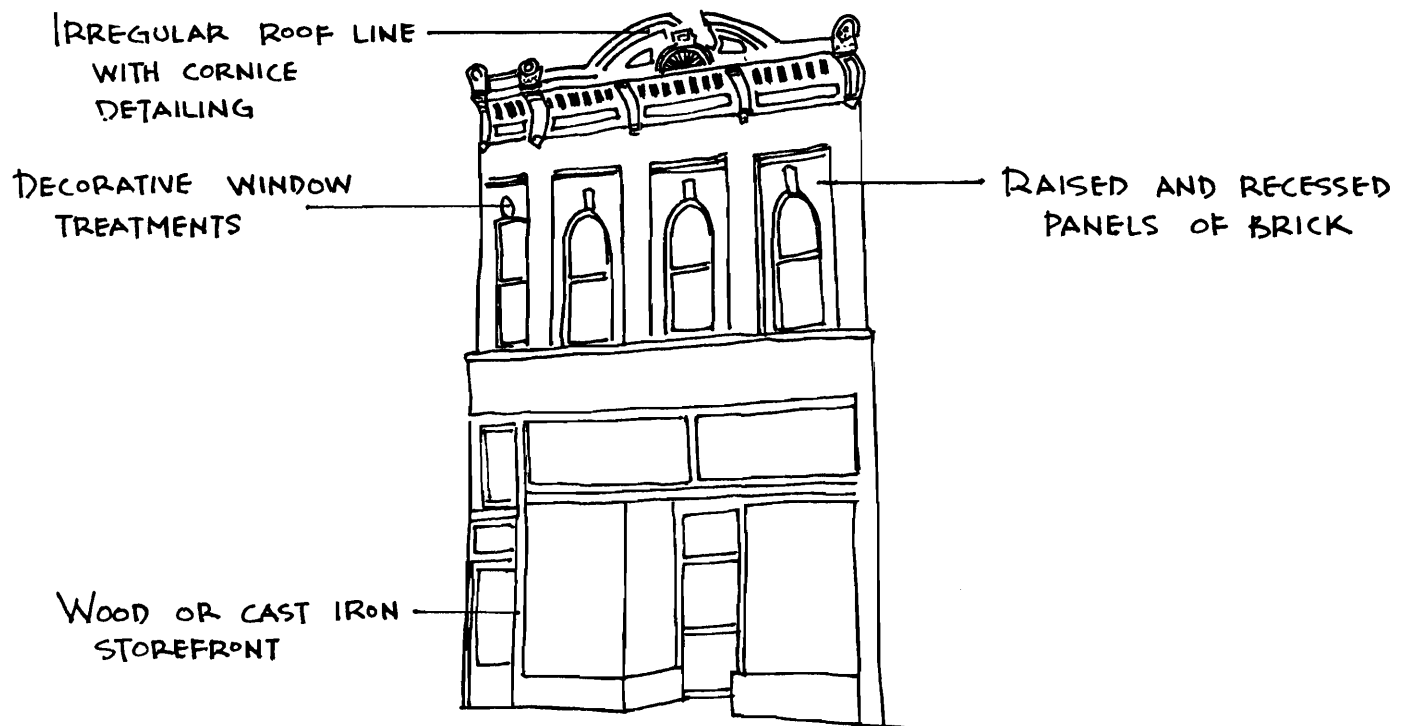


Figure 25. 7 E. Kansas.

Features:

- *Irregular roof line with cornice detailing
- *Raised & recessed panels of brick
- *Decorative window treatments
- *Decorative windows sometimes in transom area
- *Wood or cast iron storefronts

History

The Queen Anne/Commercial style gained popularity later in the Victorian era, from about 1880 to 1900. This style saw a great increase in ornamentation due to the ready availability and relatively inexpensive cost of features. In Liberty, this style also coincided with the real estate and construction booms. One of the most distinguishing features of the Queen Anne is its irregular roofline (see fig. 24). In addition, a variety of other design elements and materials were used. Wood, stone, masonry, and metal were all combined on a single building. There is usually a playful treatment of surface textures through the use of raised and recessed panels. Windows are also decorative elements in the design of Queen Anne buildings. Note the varying sizes and treatment of the windows in the Clay County Historical Museum (fig. 25). The windows are tied together by a linear band of stone which follows the curvature of the window heads. 1 E. Kansas features a cast metal oriel window on the second story facade. Historic photographs of this building indicate the presence of an elaborate, pedimented cornice, now missing.

There are three extant examples of the Queen Anne/Commercial style in Liberty - two were originally drugstores, and the other served as a dry goods store on the first floor and as the Knights of Pythias Lodge on the second. As there were several drugstores and dry goods establishments competing for business on the square, these buildings served as vivid advertisements. The entrepreneurs who constructed these lavish structures were making a statement to their clientele about their level of success.



Figure 25.
14 N. Main.

Early Twentieth Century Suburbia

Technology and transportation were to play major roles in changing the face of Liberty's built environment in the 1900's. The beginnings of the technological revolution occurred a short while before the turn of the century. The Electric Light Company was formed in May, 1887. By the turn of the century however, electric customers were still only allowed one light bulb, and the few street lights in town were turned on only when the moon was not shining. Dr. F.H. Matthews established the first telephone company in 1896. There were fifty residential subscribers at \$1.00 a month.

The brief forays into the new world of technology in the late nineteenth century were soon overshadowed by the changes coming in rapid succession after 1900. Other telephone companies formed and competed for business until 1917, when the duplicated systems were eliminated as they were bought by the Liberty Telephone Company. This sale enabled Liberty to have connections for the first time with the two long distance toll lines operating in Kansas City. Liberty began operation of its own waterworks system in April, 1906. The sewer system was completed in 1909. A local hydraulic engineer, Wynkoop Kiersted, designed Liberty's systems, as well as Kansas City's and fifty other cities across the country.

Transportation became a dominant theme in the beginning years of the twentieth century. Liberty's traffic soon required hard surfaced roads. The streets around the square were the first to be hard surfaced. In 1910, a contract for paving West Franklin was signed with Ed Main and Stan T. Field at \$1.88 a square foot (the total cost of the road was \$7000). South Leonard was paved in 1911, and East Kansas in 1916. East Kansas was one of the first streets in Liberty to be paved with concrete. A bond issue of over \$1,000,000 was passed in 1916 for hard surfaced roads in Clay County. By 1922, there were six-and-one-half miles of mostly concrete paved road in Liberty. It seems that the citizens of Liberty and Clay County could never be satisfied with their roads, though. Newspaper articles and editorials were full of clamors for more and better paved roads, sometimes to the point of neglecting other news (such as the war in Europe!). In 1923, a hard surface road for automobiles was completed to Kansas City. Before such a road to Kansas City could be built, another event occurred which had more profound influence on Liberty's transportation and subsequent growth.

On December 28, 1911, the Armour-Swift-Burlington (A.S.B.) Bridge opened for traffic, spanning the Missouri River and connecting Liberty to the burgeoning metropolis of Kansas City. This allowed the Kansas City, Clay County and St. Joseph Electric Railroad to form. Operation of the electric interurban trains began on January 21, 1913. At its peak over eighty cars per day were

operated, capable of speeds of seventy-five miles per hour. Two branches ran from Kansas City; one to St. Joseph, and one to Excelsior Springs. This latter branch included two stops in Liberty - one at William Jewell College, and the other at the Interurban Station on the southeast corner of East Mill and South Leonard. The Craftsman style station was built in 1912, and soon became a familiar landmark. The trains to Kansas City came at forty-five minute intervals, and the running time in 1917 was between forty and forty-seven minutes to 13th Street and Walnut in Kansas City. The citizens of the day felt that the thirty-five cents fare was too high; in spite of the outrageous fee, the Interurban did much to open up travel between the two communities.

The electric trains had an important, but brief heyday. The company went bankrupt in 1930, but their demise began with the paving of Highway 10 from Kansas City to Liberty, with the A.S.B. Bridge again allowing for the connection between the two towns. The biggest disadvantage to travel by automobile was that the bridge did not become toll free until 1927. A bus line started hourly service from Liberty's square to 7th and Grand in Kansas City in 1923. The fare was seventy-five cents round trip or forty cents one way. In 1929, the Liberty Landing Bridge was opened across the Missouri River, thereby placing Liberty for the first time on a major highway, U.S. 71 By-Pass (now Missouri Highway 291). Transportation was really "moving", and Liberty citizens had a variety of modes and routes to choose from.

The technological and transportation changes occurring in Liberty coincided with similar trends nationwide. There was a clear change in city growth patterns as streetcars, trains, and automobiles permitted and encouraged housing to move away from the dense city to the ever more distant suburbs. Starting in the 1890's, being well-to-do offered the privilege of commuting to work at the city center while living in a distant neighborhood or even a small town, such as Liberty, further out. Americans had long glorified rural existence as the natural way to live, certainly the best way for family life. By the turn of the century however, the majority of the population was no longer living on farms. When the United States was founded, only 10% of its people lived in cities. By 1930, America had completed its transformation from a largely rural to predominantly urban population. Wages had to be earned in the city, so the suburbs became the best compromise as a place to live. The man of the household would commute to earn a living, while the more delicate wife and children would stay behind in the healthful suburbs. Liberty was far enough from Kansas City to have important rural qualities. There were open fields nearby, and homeowners could afford enough land to have a good-sized garden behind the house with a front lawn setting it off from the street. Liberty thus earned a new social function in this period. No longer was it only a county seat and service center for the surrounding rural families. It became a haven for people wishing to escape the dirty, noisy, crowded, corrupted, and unhealthy city!

As mentioned, the new modes in transportation allowed for the migration from Kansas City outward. The railroad was too expensive for commuters to use, however. It wasn't until the advent of the electric Interurban line that daily commuting became affordable to the middle-class. The final boost to Liberty's suburban growth was the automobile, which by the 1930's had largely put the Interurban out of business. Due to various factors however, Liberty never experienced an overwhelming migration from either Kansas City or the rural hinterlands. First, while Kansas City was made accessible, the river still imposed somewhat of a barrier to rapid development. Electric interurban, trains, and automobiles using the toll bridge were used largely by the middle class. Second, Kansas City developers were promoting subdivisions, commercial areas, and parks all south of downtown, turning their backs on the river and the potential up north. Last, Liberty made no real efforts to attract industries which could provide jobs for rural families wishing to move to a city, but who couldn't afford to commute great distances. It remained by choice a quiet, residential community which placed a great emphasis on education and service. Liberty thus retained its character as a small town, while at the same time served as a suburban enclave for middle-class Kansas City workers.

Liberty first lived up to its new role as a suburban community around 1908, when it experienced another building boom. At least forty new residences were completed which represented quite a departure, not only in style, but in form, from their Victorian counterparts. The two predominate styles for the first two decades of the 1900's were **Prairie** and **Craftsman**. These property types had simpler detailing, more geometric massing, and more space given over to the new technologies. Electricity had rescued citizens from darkness; pure water and indoor plumbing for all were true marks of civilization; and the ring of a phone connecting voices hundreds of miles apart was nothing short of a technological marvel. The "modern" house was first and foremost a house of comfort and convenience. Indoor plumbing, built-in gas, electric facilities and central heating were luxuries a few decades before. Even laundry facilities began to appear in basements. Coal-fired central-heating systems almost entirely superceded the wood or coal-burning stoves in the post-Victorian period, even though they were introduced in 1818. By the 1920's, alternative heating systems utilizing steam, hot air, and hot water were available.

To compensate for the technological improvements in kitchen, bath, and heating and ventilation systems (which now comprised 25% of the total cost of the house), the houses overall got smaller and the square footage decreased. The smaller size also reflects the decrease in the average size of the American family, from five children in 1870 to three-and-one-half in 1900. In contrast to Victorian single-purpose rooms and accumulated clutter, these houses had multiple-function spaces, simpler interior woodwork and furnishing for more efficient, sanitary living. In practice however, isolated box-like rooms continued to be designed for sleeping areas, probably due to the owners' desire for privacy.

For the first time, a number of houses in Liberty were designed by professional architects, primarily the large, impressive Prairie style homes. Horace LaPierre of Kansas City designed the Schubael Allen home at 222 W. Franklin (see fig. 27), and is believed to have done other work in Liberty. Nationwide, architects began to enjoy higher status and profiles. There were 10,000 listed in the 1900 census. These architects were more highly educated than their predecessors, studying either in Europe or in the newly developing architectural schools. In previous decades, architects were responsible for the design of nearly all of our country's large public buildings and private mansions. With so much competition now, these large commissions were no longer easy to get, and people like Frank Lloyd Wright made their reputation in residential design. Well-to-do Liberty residents had a choice from among several prominent architectural firms in Kansas City.

Architects were in a minority during this period when it came to house design in the Prairie or Craftsman property type. Vernacular builders (i.e., carpenters) used architectural features without being conscious of style. Contractors replicated and adapted complete building plans from a variety of sources, such as books, catalogues, and trade literature. The Ladies Home Journal was a major arbiter of residential taste, and supplied plans for a nominal fee. Entire books of plans, such as the Radford catalogues, offered blueprints through the mail. Hank B. Simpson was a prominent contractor in Liberty whose houses closely resemble the designs found in many of these plan books. Lastly, entire buildings could be ordered from a number of firms. The idea of ordering parts of a building was not new. It was in the previous decades that the standardization of millwork for balloon framing and ready-made trim was spread by the network of railroads. In contrast, mail-order firms of this period felt that by ordering an entire ready-made building, an owner could eliminate the mistakes and misinterpretations of local carpenters. The Aladdin Company, Sears, and Montgomery Ward were among the major suppliers of ready-to-build homes, but several small firms flourished too.

Other national trends had some effect on Liberty's built environment. By the beginning of the twentieth century, middle-class women were finding themselves freed from many household drudgeries, again thanks to the technological revolution. This, combined with their increased affluence, led women to look outside their homes for personal satisfaction. With time on their hands, they soon organized into many civic groups whose goals were to bring the same order, cleanliness, and beauty to the community as they had to their homes. These groups had varying social and cosmetic objectives, some of which were dedicated to beautifying their communities. While Liberty had many community organizations which provided much service, the enthusiasm for beautification was short-lived. The women's Civic League was organized in 1908 and ceased to function in 1912. Their banner year was 1910 when funds were

raised for building a fence with iron panels and large ornamental posts of native stone on the north and west sides of Fairview Cemetery. This organization also inaugurated the first official community "clean-up" day. Other efforts given to beautifying and improving the town included planting shrubs at Fairview Cemetery.

The interest in community beautification was fueled by the "White City" of the World's Columbian Exposition of Chicago in 1893. If nothing else, the fair provided a positive statement about the possibilities for American cities. The "City Beautiful" movement began from the visions of that fair, and out of the City Beautiful movement was born the city planning profession. However, the far-reaching idea that comprehensive planning could produce a more livable environment was largely overlooked for many decades. Rather, the cosmetic aspects of the fair - the classical architecture, the broad thoroughfares, and the generous landscaping - were what ended up becoming popular themes. From city planning came the concepts of separation of uses, planned residential communities with restrictive covenants, and the tool of zoning. In Liberty, the first zoning ordinance was enacted in 1955, and a comprehensive land-use plan was not developed until the late 1960's.

Within the survey boundaries, Liberty experienced a pattern of growth typical to many small towns. Residences continued to be constructed near the town square in the "Original Town" plat or in subdivisions laid out in the late 1800's. The homes were built on remaining vacant lots, or sometimes on the site of an earlier structure. A few new subdivisions and additions were platted within the survey boundaries. These again were fairly small parcels of land left over from dividing existing estates and farms. Within the survey area at least, it was already so developed that it was impossible for someone to accumulate enough land to develop either an Olmstedian romantic neighborhood (complete with gently curved roads separated with park spaces) or the more typical gridded neighborhood with restrictive covenants. Liberty's size, grown to 3,500 in 1930, also did not warrant such large-scale ventures, which were common nationwide. A few planned neighborhoods were laid out in non-surveyed areas, and these deserve further study. One interesting example was laid out around the antebellum Ringo House at 758 W. Liberty Drive. In the 1910's, the owner of the Greek Revival mansion and surrounding land was G. W. Clardy. He envisioned a planned subdivision on the northeast portion of the estate, and in 1912, submitted his plan for "Clardy Heights." The majority of the lots were approximately 50' by 135', and sold for around \$300. A good portion of the promotional brochure developed for the neighborhood is devoted to Liberty, "the Bon ton suburb of Kansas City." Clardy felt that Liberty was "destined to be to Kansas City what Pasadena is to Los Angeles; a city of fine suburban homes." By emphasizing the good schools, fine residences and quality of life, Mr. Clardy's brochure probably echoed the thoughts of most residents of Liberty at this time.

After World War I, America's industrial plants were undamaged and its banking system emerged unscathed. The economy was healthy as compared to that of war-torn Europe. The twenties saw a building boom in suburbs throughout much of the nation, and Liberty was no exception. Land values in and around town were once again on the rise after 1919. Transactions occurred so rapidly that several properties changed hands on a daily basis. The feeling of optimism in America and belief in the superiority of Western technology was still high, yet all was not perfect. Corruption in city government and politics was rampant at this time. Also, the technological revolution had brought about more changes in the past few decades than had ever occurred in all of previous history. These rather frightening developments saw citizens turning back to America's glorious past (in this case, Colonial times) in an attempt to recreate stability, security, and graciousness. This nostalgia was a large reason for the increasing popularity of the revival styles, **Colonial Revival**, **Tudor**, and **Neo-classical**. As with other revival periods in architecture, these property types represented visual metaphors of our nation's past cherished values. In the twenties however, these reminders of the past were placed within that most modern and particularly American development - the suburb.

The depression brought a virtual halt to construction in Liberty, which wasn't truly revived until after World War II. During one year of the depression, the only building permits issued in the town were for plate glass storefronts around the square. Perhaps store owners thought a more modern appearance could help slumping sales. After the depression, the majority of new construction activity was garages. The upper class had always had carriage houses built to the rear of their lots. These were converted to use for automobiles after the turn of the century. Contemporary homes for the well-to-do included garages built much in the same manner as carriage houses. When the middle-class began to buy automobiles in great numbers, the mail-order companies saw a good chance for profit, and developed inexpensive garages in a variety of styles. Garages accounted for a large percentage of mail-order business. These later added garages were still built detached and as far away from houses as possible. Fear of fire and smells, as well as force of habit were responsible for their placement. It wasn't really until the 1950's that attached garages were accepted, although there are isolated examples among Liberty's historic residences.

Prairie



Figure 27. 222 W. Franklin.

Features:

- *Emphasis on horizontal line, with short, vertical accents
- *Low-pitched hip or gable roof with broad, overhanging eaves
- *One story porches, usually full-length
- *Contrasting horizontal band between floors or at second story window sills
- *Wide, square porch supports, sometimes on brick piers
- *3/1, 4/1, or even 7/1 windows, with vertical lights on top sash
- *Clear, precise ornamentation

History

The Prairie type is one of the few indigenous American styles of architecture. It is also distinctively Midwestern, with its horizontal lines hugging the earth taken from the flat prairies. It started at the turn of the century with a group of Chicago architects who had Frank Lloyd Wright as their self-proclaimed leader. It was primarily a residential style, but was comparatively short-lived. It fell out of favor after World War I when Americans, and particularly the Midwesterners who popularized it, turned to the more comfortable associations of the nostalgic revival styles.

In addition to its radically simple and modern exterior appearance, the interiors of Prairie style homes were different from those of the previous decades. They were designed to maximize the sense of space, as homes of this period were not as large as they appeared, especially with the new utility systems taking up so much floor space. The designers vanquished the compartmentalized interiors of the Victorian Queen Anne, and opened up the living and dining rooms to form a single L-shaped space pivoting around a large fireplace. Japanese architecture was also responsible for many aspects of Prairie design, with the sand-finished plaster walls and wide, simple wood trim resembling paper screens.



Figure 28. 433 Miller.

During this period, Liberty residents employed architects for the first time, and the style they designed in was Prairie. 433 Miller (fig. 28) and 202 N. Water are typical of asymmetrical, high style homes found across the nation. More typical of Liberty architect-designed residences however, are the symmetrical, large brick homes built from about 1908 through 1915. These were basically boxy in shape, but asymmetrical in some of their detailing and features (see fig. 27). These more elaborate homes feature extensions from the main structure, such as wings or porte-cocheres. Walls and terraces also extend outward, with a coping or ledge of contrasting material emphasizing the horizontal. There are often horizontal ribbons of windows (three or more) with vertical mullions. The chimneys are large and plain. 416 S. Leonard and 343 Harrison are other representatives of the seventeen high-style examples of the Prairie property type which were probably designed by architects, or at least built by very competent and sensitive contractors.



Figure 29. 325 Arthur Street.
Prairie foursquare.

The most common vernacular expression of the Prairie style is the foursquare (see fig. 29). As typically defined, the foursquare is a house **form** which is becoming more and more used as a **style**. In Liberty, houses with foursquare shapes were found which had features representative of two different stylistic categories - Prairie and Colonial Revival. The most common were Prairie influenced, and there were twenty-three examples within the survey boundaries. The foursquares with Colonial Revival detailing are actually more transitional between the two styles, but are herein classified as Colonial Revivals. A Prairie foursquare in Liberty typically has the following features: two stories high on a raised basement; box-like shape; low-pitched hipped roof with wide, overhanging eaves; usually at least a front, hipped roof dormer, sometimes also side; one-story front porch running the full length of the house; wide, square porch supports, often tapering and on piers; first floor door approached by steps. These were very popular homes in plan books and mail-order catalogues, and their sturdiness and massiveness were emphasized in the ad copy. They were built in great numbers across the country in this period.

The Prairie style was very wide-spread in a more diluted form, and features were often applied to many different vernacular house types, such as the gable-front-and-wing and gable-front. These feature the wide, overhanging eaves, but on a gable rather than hipped roof. The porch supports are typical Prairie, and there is often a difference between the two stories in wall coverings (this is locally referred to as a "Shirtwaist" house). Twenty-three vernacular house types within the survey boundaries have varying amounts of Prairie detailing.

Duplexes and apartments were new types of residential structures to Liberty. A few were built within this period, and it is natural that their styling reflect the Prairie influence. Duplexes were built in what has been called the "Doubledecker" form; that is, the two apartments are on separate floors. The facade features double stacked front porches with wide, square supports. 343 and 347 West Franklin are doubledeckers which were identical when they were built side-by-side in 1924. Simple, flat-roofed brick apartments feature Prairie style porches, but are almost a property type in themselves. As there were only two built within the survey boundaries, it is sufficient to classify them as Prairie.

There were a total of sixty-seven Prairie style residences surveyed in Liberty, varying from high-style homes to vernacular forms with a few Prairie details. All of these retain a high degree of integrity and are mostly in good structural condition. This is probably due to their relatively recent construction. Research to date has not documented the full extent of the influence of pattern books and mail order firms, but it is probably greater than residents believe.

Craftsman



Figure 30. 500 W. Franklin.

Features:

- *Low-pitched gable roof with wide and unenclosed overhanging eaves
- *Roof rafters usually exposed
- *Decorative beams or brackets under gables
- *Full- or partial-width porch
- *Square porch columns, often tapering and on piers or pedestals

History

Two California architects, Charles S. and Henry M. Greene inspired much of the design in America in the Craftsman style. The Greene brothers' residences were large, elaborate examples which in turn were influenced by Gustav Stickley and his magazine. Stickley was devoted to Craftsman design and smaller, simpler homes. Examples from these two sources were popularized by period magazines geared towards women, and as a result, the pattern books and mail-order firms quickly followed with a multitude of variations on the style. It was the dominant style for smaller houses built throughout the country and in Liberty from about 1905 until the early 1920's.

A closely related form is the bungalow house type. Hardly known in 1900, there were literally thousands built by 1910. It is a term used loosely to refer to many types (as it was a more popular term than "cottage"), but it generally refers to a one or one-and-a-half story small house with a full-length front porch. As a house form it probably began in British India in the nineteenth century. Nationwide, it was generally built with Craftsman features. In Liberty, all bungalow types had either Craftsman detailing, or else very little architectural style at all. As the two terms (Craftsman and bungalow) are often used interchangeably, and as both were greatly popularized through plan books, in this report bungalows are simply a sub-type of the Craftsman style.



Figure 31. 504 W. Liberty Drive.

Many Craftsman features are similar to those used in vernacular Prairie houses, such as the 3/1 windows, square porch supports, and wide, overhanging eaves. Distinctive to the Craftsman style is the unenclosed eaves with exposed rafters. Also, most Craftsman houses are one-story, while most Prairie are two-story. 504 W. Liberty Drive is an exceptionally detailed, two-story Craftsman exception (see fig. 31). Note the extremely short, tapering wood columns on massive brick piers and the multiple roof lines with exposed rafters.

The Craftsman/bungalow property types were built in great numbers in Liberty - ninety-five within the survey boundaries. This is due to three major factors: the pervasiveness of the style nationwide; the fact that Liberty was experiencing a building boom at this time; more of the middle class were moving to Liberty due to its accessibility, and more were able to afford modest homes.

Colonial Revival



Figure 32. 429 W. Franklin.

Features:

- *Accentuated front door, commonly with overhead fanlight and sidelights
- *Usually a decorative crown with pilasters, or a pedimented entry porch with slender columns
- *Double-hung sash windows, usually with multi-pane glazing in upper or both sashes
- *Usually symmetrical

History

The first big promotion of architecture harking back to Colonial times occurred with the outburst of patriotism in America after the 1876 Centennial in Philadelphia. This was somewhat reinforced by the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. The nostalgia only went so far as to revere English or Anglo-Saxon heritage. It was felt by recreating Colonial English architecture, it might be possible to preserve the vanished world of our country's ancestors. In the last decade of the Queen Anne style's popularity, a subtype developed which was influenced by the growing interest in early English and Dutch houses on the east coast. The free classic subtype of the Queen Anne utilized Palladian windows, simple classical columns, and other motifs which made it very similar to early, asymmetrical Colonial Revival houses. In fact, it is often difficult to distinguish between late free-classic Queen Anne and early Colonial Revival. In ensuing decades after the turn of the century however, the Colonial Revival style grew in popularity and the fashion shifted towards carefully researched copies with more correct proportions and details. This effort for faithful reproduction was further aided in the 1930's when the first HABS drawings were produced. Their exact measurements made authentic reproduction of features possible.

Different versions of the Colonial Revival style have remained popular from the turn of the century up to the present day. In the twenties and thirties, for example, a popular subtype was the Dutch Colonial house, which always featured a gambrel roof. 331 W. Franklin features a cross-gambrel roof, which was an earlier type popularized by pattern books from about 1905 to 1915. Another Colonial Revival form is commonly referred to as the Cape Cod cottage. As represented by 132 N. Missouri Street, it features a steeply pitched, side gabled roof. The symmetrical small houses typically have a simple, yet accentuated entry - this entry is flanked by wood pilasters.

Figure 32 is a typical two-story example of the Colonial Revival property type in Liberty. There were several similar ones built in town with either brick or wood cladding. Although looking to the past for exterior design features, the interior of these houses were thoroughly modern. There were fewer rooms, but the rooms were much larger and space flowed more freely. Often, especially in smaller houses, the dining room was replaced by a dining area at one end of an oversized living room. Of course, no Colonial Revival house was complete without the most modern utility systems incorporated.

Many Colonial Revival details were utilized on vernacular house types, such as the foursquare or gable-front-and-wing. In Liberty, a Colonial Revival foursquare features simple classical porch columns rather than the square supports of the Prairie foursquare. The typical foursquare hipped roof is sometimes replaced with a front-facing gable roof. There are forty-five Colonial Revival structures within the surveyed areas of Liberty. Many more undoubtedly exist outside the survey boundaries in areas which developed slightly later, as this was a very popular style. Most have retained a high degree of integrity from the period in which they were built.

Tudor



Figure 33. 424 Wilson.

Features:

- *Steeply pitched roof
- *Facade dominated by one or more prominent cross gables, also steeply pitched
- *A variety of wall treatments, including:
 - .Decorative half-timbering with stucco
 - .Brick with stone accents
 - .Wood clapboard
- *Large, prominent chimneys
- *Detailed doorways, often with stone quoins or keystones in arches

History

As Americans became more enamored with their Anglo-Saxon heritage (see page 68), late Medieval English prototypes became the basis for an eclectic style known as the Tudor style. This property type was relatively uncommon before World War I, but exploded in popularity during the twenties and thirties. Growing masonry veneering skills allowed even modest homes to mimic the elaborate English prototypes. 424 Wilson (see fig. 33) is an excellent representative of the many variations of this style.

The earliest American examples of this type are architect-designed and more closely follow Elizabethan and Jacobean examples. Liberty is fortunate to have three excellent examples of this "Jacobethan" type of Tudor design at the Missouri State Oddfellows Home complex on Missouri Highway 291. The Administration Building (fig. 34) was designed by William B. Ittner, a well-known St. Louis architect who built many fine examples of this style.

There are twenty-two Tudor structures surveyed in Liberty. Nearly all retain a high degree of integrity due to their relatively recent construction dates.



Figure 34. Administration Building at the Missouri State Oddfellows Home complex.

Neoclassical

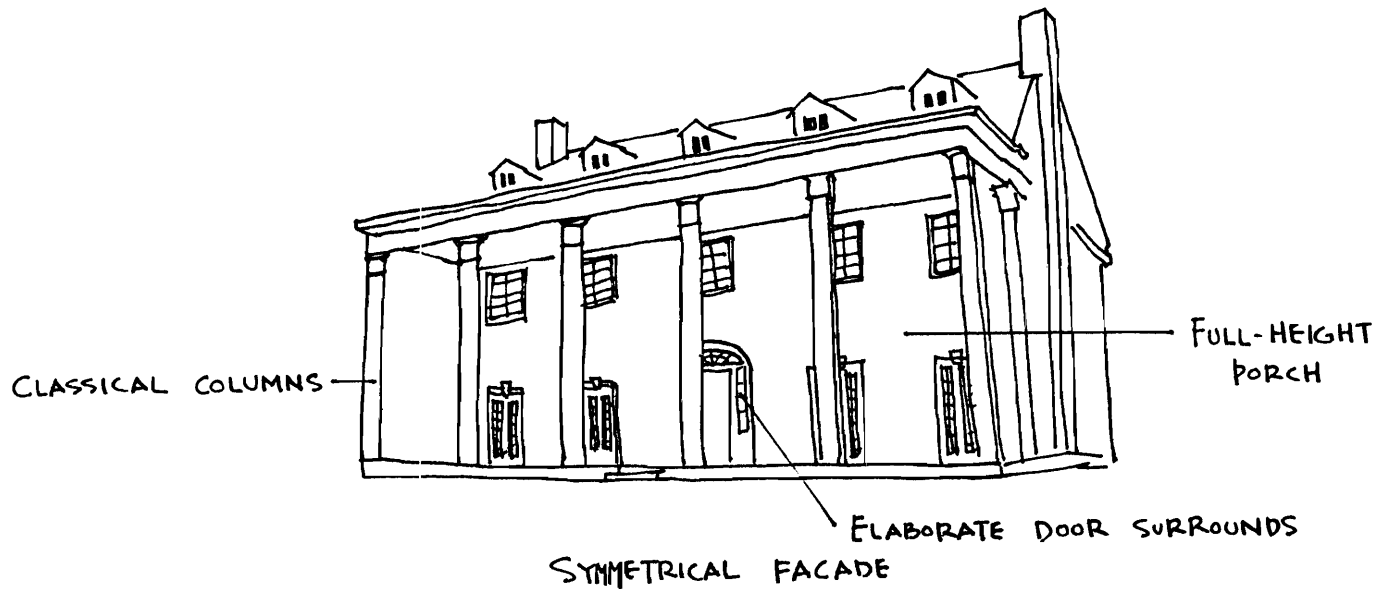


Figure 35. 17 S. Jewell Street.

Features:

- *Full-height porch
- *Classical columns, typically with Ionic or Corinthian capitals
- *Symmetrical facade
- *Elaborate, decorative door surrounds, some based on Greek Revival, others on Georgian or Adam (with fanlights)
- *Double-hung sash windows, usually with multi-pane glazing in upper or both sashes

History

The World's Columbian Exposition held in Chicago in 1893 was responsible for the revival of interest in classical architecture in America. Originally used on monumental public buildings, the style eventually filtered down to residences. In Liberty, these Neoclassical houses retained a degree of monumentality which sets them apart from others (see fig. 35). In fact, the three Neoclassical houses surveyed no longer serve as residences - two are fraternity houses, and one serves as a branch of the library. A few commercial and ecclesiastical Neoclassical structures were constructed in Liberty, and are discussed later.

Early Twentieth Century Commercial

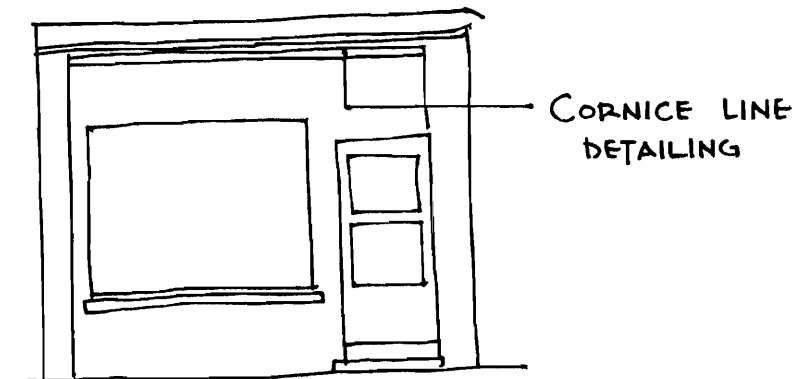
After the turn of the century, Liberty's commercial growth was focused on the major arteries leading away from the square, as by 1900 most of the square was fully constructed. The 1906 Sanborn Map indicates that Kansas Street was developed for one block east of the square, as was the east side of S. Main and the north side of W. Kansas. The remaining blocks around the square had some commercial enterprises, but there were still a few residences scattered among them. There was still one livery nearby on S. Missouri, but many which were present in 1883 were now absent. They were beginning to make way for new businesses, as well as for two new suburban building types - garages and gas stations. In 1913 there were enough owners of automobiles to warrant the formation of an automobile club. By 1915, the automobile was a permanent fixture in Liberty, and it required its own special form of architecture.

The last remaining livery stable in the area of the square was destroyed by a major fire which occurred in 1934. The fire started in the mule barn and immediately spread to the nearby fire station, preventing quick action to fight the fire. By the time fire trucks arrived from other communities, almost the entire block of buildings between Kansas and Mill Streets on Missouri were destroyed. Substantial damage was done to other buildings along Kansas Street, to the Plaza Theatre (located on Water Street south of Kansas), and Satterfield's Garage just north of Mill on Water. Other buildings were destroyed by burning embers carried by strong wind. This brought about the rebuilding or remodeling of several buildings on the square and nearby.

Most new commercial buildings (garages included) were quite modest **One-part Commercial Block** types. A few were **Two-part Commercial Block** types. Both of these property types are determined by their form and their minimal amounts of detailing. Liberty's very modest commercial growth in this period could be due to a number of factors: a) The town appears to have made a conscious effort to emphasize service and residential growth over trade. b) Transportation links were strong enough to ensure the town's continued existence, but not strong enough to warrant explosive growth. c) Kansas City's dominance precluded the need for large, regional type of commercial enterprises. d) Liberty's conservative banking community may have clamped down on the money supply after the real estate crash in the late 1890's.

A few large impressive commercial and/or public structures were built in the early decades of the twentieth century, utilizing the **Neoclassical/Commercial** or **Art Deco** mode. One surveyed structure did not fall neatly into any developed property types or historic contexts. The Garrison School, located at 502 N. Water Street, is a two story, flat-roofed education building. Although its architectural integrity is somewhat compromised by later additions, it is significant as the only resource connected with black history in Liberty. The school was organized in the 1880's for the black children of the community. This particular structure was built in 1912 after a fire destroyed the first school. James A. Gay was the principal, and the school was named for William Lloyd Garrison, a famous abolitionist. Black and other minority historic contexts were impossible to develop from the surveyed buildings and accumulated data sheets. This area merits further research so as to document its influence on Liberty's built environment. Also neglected in past surveys were Liberty's historic schools. Undoubtedly a historic context could be developed around Liberty's educational system. The resources identified with such a context would undoubtedly prove to be significant, as education was a very important theme throughout Liberty's history.

One-part Commercial block



The one-part commercial block has only a single story topped with a flat roof. The store or shop front is treated in much the same way as storefronts of two-story commercial buildings. The buildings are generally constructed of brick and are quite modest. While composed in an orderly manner, most examples from this period in Liberty have few if any historical references. The configuration of the building only allowed for a little embellishment near the roofline - sometimes raised horizontal bands of brick capped off the building at the cornice line (see fig. 36). There were eleven one-part commercial block structures built in and around Liberty's square in this period.

Two-part Commercial Block



Figure 37. 14 W. Kansas.

The two-part commercial block varies from two to four stories in height. The structures have a horizontal division dividing the buildings into two distinct zones (in the case of two-story structures, dividing between the two floors). There are three two-part commercial block buildings which have two stories. These are flat-roofed, and like the one-story commercial blocks, feature a little embellishment at the cornice line (fig. 37). The Colonial Hotel at 112 East Franklin is the only one taller than two stories, and it has several strong stylistic ties to the Prairie style, with its wide, overhanging roof eaves and square porch supports.

Neoclassical/Commercial

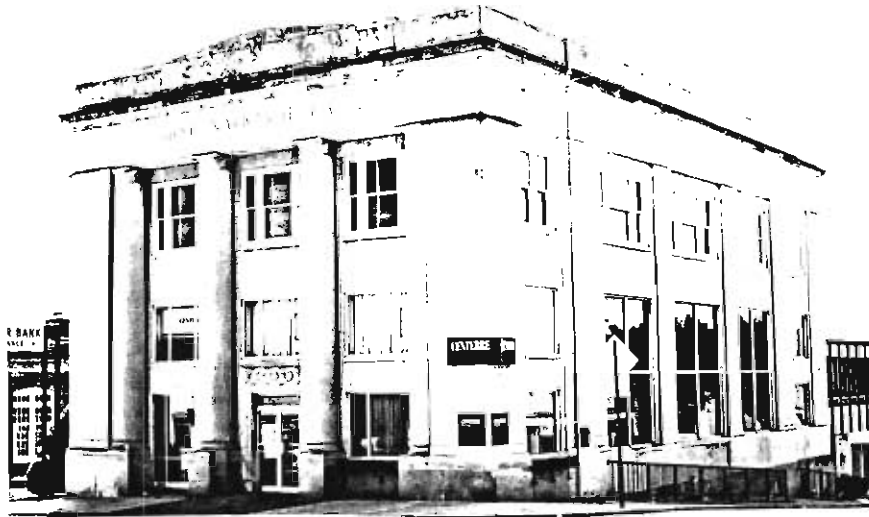


Figure 38. 2 S. Main.

The underlying reasons for America's renewed interest in classicism and the basic features of the style were discussed on pages 72-73. When applied to commercial and public buildings, this style took on an especially monumental scale (see fig. 38). Due to their commercial nature and site locations abutting the street, the Neoclassical/Commercial buildings do not feature a full height porch. Rather, a flattened pediment, pilasters, or engaged columns are used to express the monumentality of the style in the entry. There were three Neoclassical structures built in this period. One, 17 East Kansas, was actually a facade renovation for the Commercial Savings Bank. It features simpler, austere detailing reminiscent of Renaissance Revival architecture.

Art Deco



Figure 39. Clay County Courthouse.

In 1934, amidst the fervor of new governmental public construction inspired by the Public Works Administration, bonds were voted for the construction of a new courthouse for Clay County. It would be the third to occupy the site, with the first destroyed in 1857 by fire, and the second becoming outdated. Prominent Kansas City architects Wight & Wight designed the 1935 courthouse in a "modern" style, now referred to as Art Deco (see fig. 39). The style conspicuously strove for modernity, simplicity, and an artistic expression of the machine age. This can be seen in the smooth limestone facade and minimal, stylized ornamentation. One other structure, the I.O.O.F. Liberty Lodge #49 at 16-18 E. Franklin was also designed in this style, though not on such a monumental public scale.

Early Twentieth Century Ecclesiastical

Not all churches have been surveyed within the city limits of Liberty. As this should not prove to be a cumbersome task, and as an accurate appraisal of this context would truly be incomplete without such a survey, this historic context is not fully developed here. Suffice it to say that religion was an important facet of community life, and churches were highly visible symbols, especially in this era of stressing the quality of life found in Liberty.

The Second Baptist Church at 309 E. Franklin was built in the **Neoclassical** style, whose features and history have been discussed in earlier sections. The Liberty Christian Church (427 E. Kansas) and the Old St. James Church (342 N. Water) are elaborate examples of the **Victorian Gothic Revival**, also called High Victorian Gothic by some historians. Features can include a bi- or polychromatic color scheme; combination of brick and stone work; solid details, such as moldings, tracery, and carved ornaments; often complex rooflines and towers; and pointed Gothic arched windows.

Maps

The maps relating to the historic contexts and property types are arranged in the following manner. The contexts are grouped according to their time limits; therefore **Exploration & Settlement** (1822-1864) is on one map, **Economic Boom/Residential Growth** and **Late Nineteenth Century Commercial** (1865-1900) are on another, and **Early Twentieth Century Suburbia**, **Early Twentieth Century Commercial**, and **Early Twentieth Century Ecclesiastical** are on a third. The limits of the **Exploration & Settlement** map were not expansive enough to locate all structures within this period, as the boundaries of Liberty have greatly expanded to now include a few historic rural resources.

A fourth map presents all six historic contexts together, and included a designation for non-contributing resources. The map designating potential district boundaries are discussed in the **REGISTRATION** section of the report.

The non-contributing designation refers herein only to the most obvious application of the guidelines set out in National Register Bulletin #16, that is " a) it was not present during the period of significance, b) due to alterations, disturbances, additions, or other changes, it no longer possesses historic integrity reflecting its character at that time or is incapable of yielding important information about the period, . . .". While this does not include the vacant lots presented as data sheets in Phase II of the survey, it does include new construction from approximately 1940 on, and buildings altered beyond recognition, such as historic commercial buildings covered by false facades. It does not reflect the degree of integrity remaining to other buildings, such as stores with much altered first floors, homes with later porch additions, or unsympathetic siding. Decisions regarding a resource's contribution to a historic context will be made in the registration phase.

REGISTRATION

Methodology

"Preservation Planning" refers to the concept of **identifying, evaluating, and protecting** historic resources. The survey phases I, II, and III have identified the majority of historic properties in Liberty, but continued identification is recommended. The next step, evaluation, is undertaken so as to designate those historic properties which are worthy of preservation and should be considered in local planning. The results of this can provide the basis for designation of historic properties and districts under Liberty's local preservation ordinance, and can later serve as a basis for design review, educational projects, and other functions of the Historic District Review Commission.

A related purpose of the evaluation process is to identify properties or districts for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Evaluation of historic resources were made with reference to Liberty's six historic contexts, using the National Register criteria as a basis. Each resource was preliminarily compared against the characteristics expected of its type and assessed for its significance within the relevant historic context. Districts found to have potential for nomination to the National Register were described and their boundaries defined. Registration potential for local districts and landmarks was also described.

These recommendations for registration were based on the survey data, historic contexts, and property types. It does not take into account the non-surveyed portions of Liberty and unexplored themes, such as education, which warrant further research.

Current Designations

At the time of this report, one building is listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places. Jewell Hall is a three-story, masonry Greek Revival structure which served as the only building associated with William Jewell College from 1857 until 1881. A nomination for the Odd Fellows Home District, located on Missouri Highway 291 one mile south of the courthouse square, was approved by the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation on May 8, 1987, and was sent to the Keeper of the National Register on August 6, 1987, where it is awaiting approval. The three main buildings are all two-story, red brick, gable-roofed Jacobethan Revival structures. The thirty-six acre district contains three contributing buildings, four contributing structures, one non-contributing building, and one non-contributing structure.

Liberty has designated two historic districts under their local preservation ordinance. The Liberty Square Historic District contains sixty-seven buildings within the boundaries shown in Figure 40. The Lightburne Historic District contains nineteen buildings within the boundaries shown in Figure 41. At the time of this report, the Landmarks Committee of the Historic District Review Commission is proposing the nomination of eighteen antebellum structures as individual Landmarks. See Appendix A for a list of the proposed Landmarks.

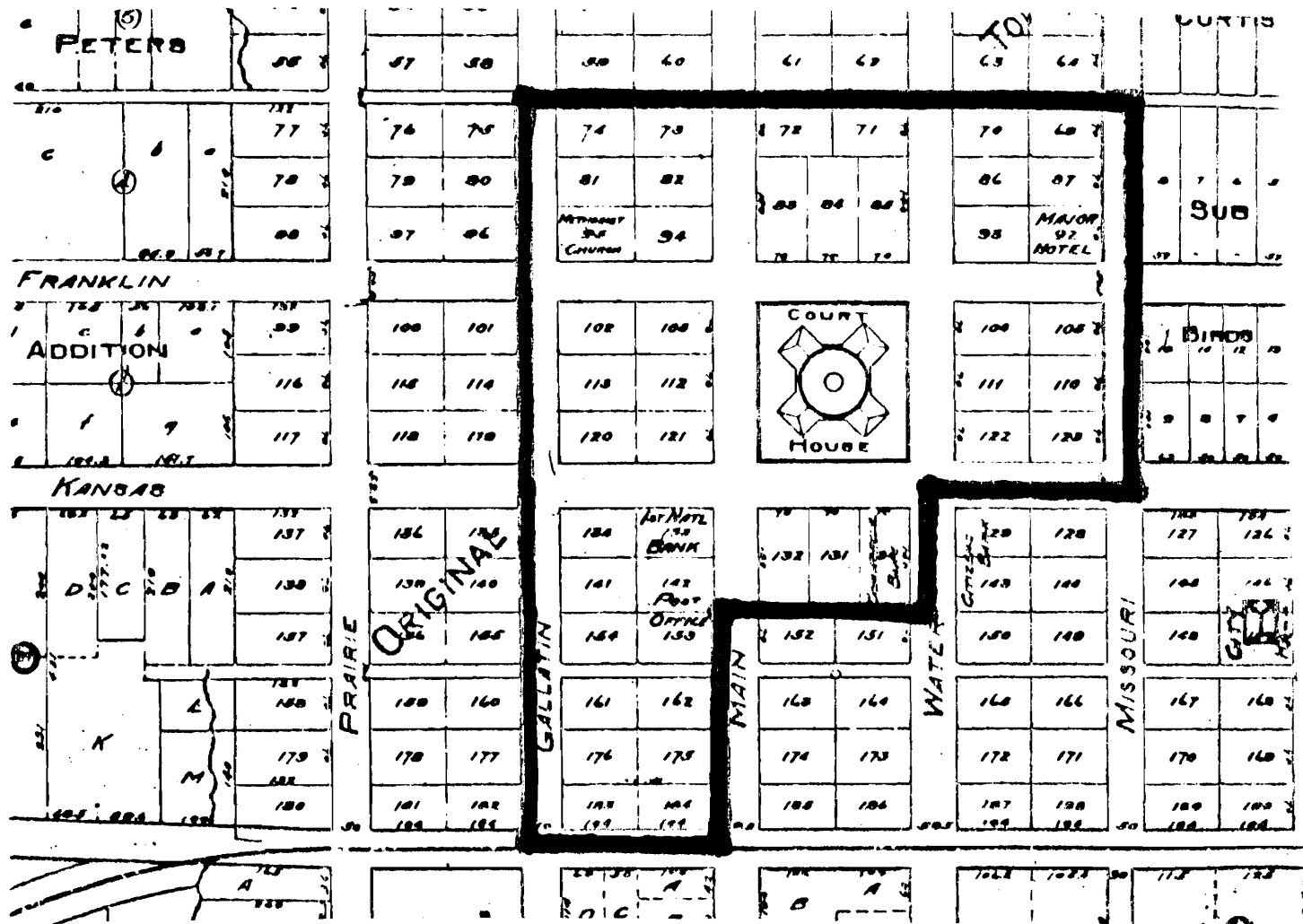
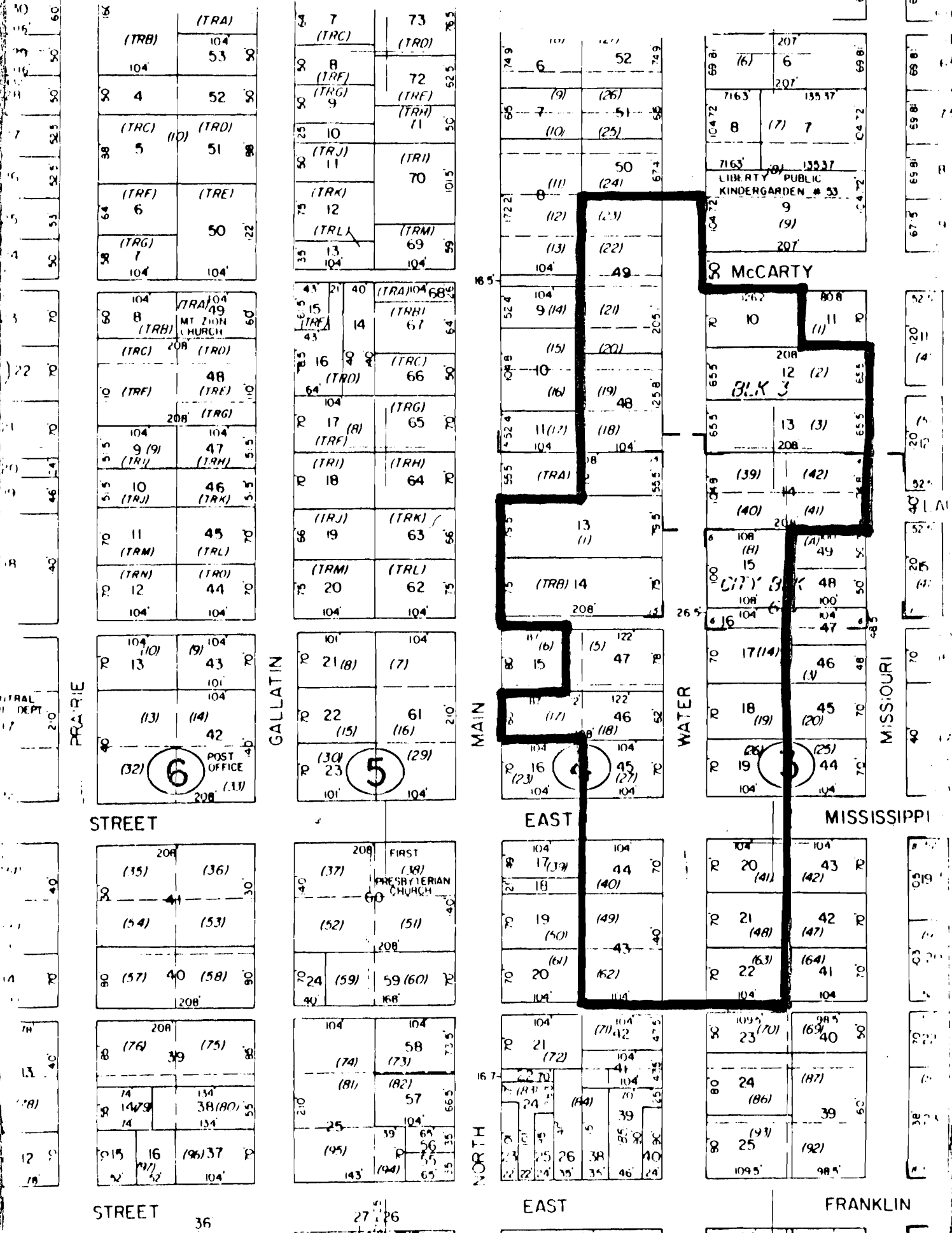


Figure 40. Liberty Square Historic District.

Figure 41. Lightburne Historic District.

83



Potential Districts

The "Historic Contexts" map accompanying this report shows the distribution of property types in Liberty. From that, a "Historic Districts" map was developed, which reflects existing and proposed local historic districts, as well as the boundaries for potential National Register Districts. Only the obvious non-contributing structures were noted on this map; the borderline cases within districts were not given a final review as the districts are in a constant state of flux. Luckily for historic resources, most of this change is for the better. There is a great deal of interest in restoring the integrity of historic buildings. Inappropriate siding and unsympathetic additions are being removed. A general "fix-up, clean-up" attitude is prevailing, due in large part to the efforts of the Community Development Coordinator and to the local designation of two districts. It was felt that a final decision as to an individual property's contribution to a historic context and to a district should be made during the actual nomination process. Thus the proposed boundaries, while not arbitrary, may nonetheless prove to be generous.

Overall, the distribution, scale, and style of individual structures in Liberty are accurate records of the districts' relations to the historic contexts. From the times of Southern immigration to pattern-book architecture, Liberty's individual buildings and districts were conservative, comfortable versions of regional and national movements in building and planning. The architecture and neighborhoods maintain a simplicity and modest scale that contrasts with the more spectacular adventure and glamour of skyscrapers, estates, and vast rowhouse development of major cities. Regional and national trends of development are reflected here, but for the most part Liberty's historic districts have evolved over time. While Liberty has remained a small town, it has always continued to grow and change. Thus no districts can be found which contain only one property type, or which even represent only one historic context. Instead they have evolved over time to produce Liberty's own version of small town Middle America.

Liberty Square Historic District

Already designated a local historic district, this section will focus only on the square's potential for National Register designation. As previously stated, the site for the Courthouse square and its surrounding commercial district was laid out in 1822. From that time on, it has served as the focal point to the community, and until recent years due to expansion in other parts of the county, as the focal point for the entire county. Construction on the first courthouse began in 1828, and three successive structures have stood on the same spot. The four streets surrounding the

courthouse have had commercial structures, the majority two-story, from probably around the 1830's. Only one structure on the square remains relating to the early "Exploration & Settlement" context, the Jesse James Bank Museum on the northeast corner of E. Franklin and N. Water. Compared to other commercial buildings of the period, the Bank was one of the more significant structures in terms of both materials and design. Its significance, and fortune of escaping damages from any of the several fires on the square, is probably why it is the only one remaining.

Other buildings from that period weren't as fortunate. Property around the square was too valuable to warrant keeping out-dated wood structures, so the majority of the buildings were torn down and new ones constructed. This period of rebirth around the square occurred during the "Late Nineteenth Century Commercial" context, and the buildings were good representatives of the correlating property types. Historic photographs indicate that while the buildings remained fairly modest in size (none over two stories except for the Arthur Hotel), there was no restraint used in applying ornamentation to the building facades. Liberty business owners shared the period's love for exuberant Victorian decoration.

The "Early Twentieth Century Commercial" context ushered in an age of new technologies. As the square was already developed, new construction took place on the surrounding fringe. The majority of this was modest in scale and design. Businesses on the square however, could not afford to appear behind the times. The Commercial Savings Bank updated their appearance in 1915 with a sleek restrained classical revival facade. The First National Bank (now the Liberty Square Centerre Bank) followed suit with a lavish Neoclassical monument built in 1923, which contained state-of-the-art banking facilities. The fever for modernity overtook the second county courthouse, and a third one was built in 1935 in the Art Deco style. Its streamlined appearance was a monumental metaphor for the machine age. Many buildings fronting the square remodeled or redecorated their first floors at this time ". . . in order to have the four sides of the square conform as nearly as possible to the new building." The desire to modernize was so great that even during the depths of the depression, building owners were ordering new plate glass storefronts. Of course, previous fires caused unplanned remodeling of several buildings.

In the 1950's, another fire caused the destruction of several buildings on the north side of the square. The infill structures disrupt the continuity of the square by being only one story in height. During the fifties and sixties, eight buildings around the square were altered so much as to lose their integrity of design, and thus their relationship to any historic context. The south side of the square (East Kansas) retains the most integrity.

Some buildings have original storefronts, others retain the ones from the thirties which are sympathetic to the original design and have achieved their own significance. The west (North Main) side is a contrast between some very intact examples and those which have their entire facade hidden beneath false fronts. The east side has one new building and another false front, and the north side has three non-historic structures. As it stands today, too great of a percentage of structures which face onto the square have been substantially altered, thus making the area infeasible as a National Register district.

Given recent efforts and interest in restoring the square, a National Register district nomination should not be ruled out however. Most of the false facades are alterable, probably at least five of the eight around the square. Some of the lower level storefront alterations are also reversible. If the integrity could be restored to two key corner buildings on N. Main and to at least one facade on each of Main, Franklin, and Water Streets, then the possibility of National Register district designation becomes much more realistic.

The buildings on the square represent the only extant examples of property types relating to the two historic commercial contexts. At the minimum, if a multiple property National Register listing is pursued, several buildings would be eligible for designation due to their associations with the historic contexts defined for Liberty. One structure, the Jesse James Bank Museum, would probably qualify for individual National Register designation.

Jewell Residential District

A number of structures associated with the "Exploration & Settlement" context are located within the boundaries of the Jewell Residential District. Their location is due to two factors: a) the accessibility afforded by the two major east/west streets (Kansas and Franklin) leading from the square, and b) the proximity of William Jewell College, which forms the eastern boundary. As within any town, growth naturally occurs on travelled roads between two focal points - in this case, between the commercial district and the college. Many of these early structures are associated with education in Liberty. Perhaps because of William Jewell College, the other academies and institutes also decided to locate on the eastern side of town.

In the "Economic Boom/Residential Growth" period, construction of dwellings in this district was still confined to the roads between the square and the college, in addition to the major roads leading to other towns. Large, impressive Italianate and Queen Anne homes were built on E. Kansas and E. Franklin, as well as on

N. Lightburne (the north/south axis) and E. Mill (the east/west axis). These are interspersed with smaller, but still comfortable vernacular homes. In spite of the flurry of construction activity being conducted in Liberty, this neighborhood did not receive a lot of new dwellings in this period. This was due to the fact that William Jewell College and others still owned a large percentage of the land between the campus and N. Lightburne Street. It wasn't until 1898, after the crash of the real estate market, that the Board of Trustees of William Jewell finally recorded the plat for Jewell Addition with the city. Therefore, a majority of the houses are from the "Early Twentieth Century Suburbia" period, and most represent the property types commonly built around 1908, Liberty's next period of construction activity.

Today, these properties retain a high degree of integrity, in spite of some conversions of large residences to apartments. Maintenance standards have probably been kept high over the years because of the influence of William Jewell College, a small private and conservative campus. The majority of buildings retain the characteristics expected of their property types, and the neighborhood in general retains the character which makes it significant within the "Early Twentieth Century Suburbia" context. The high traffic of N. Lightburne on the western boundary, and the proximity of the industrial and commercial traffic on the southern boundary (E. Mill Street) have reduced the integrity of the buildings on these edges. However, these boundaries, along with William Jewell College on the east and Doniphan Street on the north, remain fairly true to the historic boundaries of the neighborhood. It is therefore recommended that this district be considered for nomination to the National Register, and designated a historic local district.

Lightburne Historic District

Directly contiguous to the western boundary of the Jewell Residential District is the proposed Lightburne Historic District. The proposed district encompasses Liberty's existing Lightburne Historic District (refer to fig. 41), and expands upon that to the east.

The district's historic focal point was undoubtedly Lightburne Hall, an impressive Greek Revival structure from the "Exploration & Settlement" period. It was originally outside of the city limits on Water Street, one of the north/south axes from the square. The owner, Major Alvan Lightburne, was a prominent citizen and land-owner. In addition, the property had a hemp factory on it at one time, all of which contributed to making the mansion a familar landmark to residents. In 1883, Alvan and Ellen Lightburne petitioned to have several acres of their farm added to the city

and sold off as residential lots. As a result, the majority of homes were built during the period of "Economic Boom/Residential Growth." As typical of small towns, the social gradations at the time were not rigid as far as house location. Small, working-class homes were built right up to an enclave of larger, more spacious Victorian residences. The fact that these houses were small did not prevent their aspirations to mimic the elaborate, high-style Queen Annes. In fact, this district has an interesting collection of Queen Anne cottages, some of them quite elaborate. One cottage plan in particular was repeated several times throughout the district, often forming short rows of what once were identical structures (compare the cottages on the 400 block of N. Missouri to those on Laura Street: all featured hipped roofs with lower cross gables, inset porches with spindlework, bay windows, and corner eave brackets).

Some houses continued to be built after the turn of the century, and remain characteristic of the property types relating to the "Early Twentieth Century Suburbia" context. After World War II, other areas of town became fashionable to live in, and the district went through a period of slight decline. Some large homes were converted into apartments, and maintenance standards weren't always kept up. The area is once again on the upswing, and building owners are interested in restoring the integrity of their historic homes. Inappropriate siding and porch alterations remain the biggest detriment to some individual structures' significance. Overall, the district geographically reflects the major area of Liberty's residential development from the 1880's to the 1910's, and contributes greatly to our understanding of Liberty's "Economic Boom/Residential Growth" period. The combination of small and large homes reflects the genuine community atmosphere of Liberty, which is formed by its balanced diversity.

It is recommended that a National Register district nomination for the area be pursued. At the time of preparing the nomination, a closer examination of the boundaries should be taken, in particular the eastern edge (N. Lightburne Street). This suffers from the most intrusions and some loss of integrity. Locally, the city could have two options. If in agreement with these recommendations, they could either expand the existing Lightburne Historic District to the proposed boundaries, or they could propose a new local district.

West Kansas & Franklin Streets District

The major historic roads leading west from the courthouse are highlighted by representatives from the "Exploration & Settlement" period. Close in to town, the residences of prominent citizens were on Kansas and Franklin Streets. At the intersection of W. Kansas and Harrison, the small cottage of Dr. W.W. Dougherty, an early Liberty physician, is located. At this point, the major road out of town becomes Harrison, which heads southwest past the large Greek Revival Ringo House. Harrison Street was formerly called "Garrison" as it connected Liberty to Ft. Leavenworth, but an error in map transcription caused the name change.

Most of the houses which were built in the "Economic Boom/Residential Growth" period followed the district's earlier pattern of settlement - west from the square on Kansas and Franklin to approximately Harrison Street, and there southwest out of town. This was changed when the development of Liberty Ladies College at the west end of Franklin Street formed a new western terminus for the residential neighborhood. The college building was situated on a hill overlooking the town in one direction and the Missouri River in the other. It lay one mile directly opposite Jewell Hall on the William Jewell campus. This, and the development of several residential lots, opened up the western end of this district. Interestingly, the land for the Liberty Ladies College was a gift of Capt. L.B. Dougherty and his brother, O'Fallon. The brothers owned the land between Dougherty's home at 242 W. Franklin and the college, and they undoubtedly profited from their gift after the sale of their lots. Whatever their motives, many fine large homes were built among the earlier residences on W. Franklin, and continued to be built throughout the "Early Twentieth Century Suburbia" period.

West Kansas shows the gradations of size, style, and time from the city square outward. Generally, the larger, more elaborate homes were built closer in, and smaller, newer homes were built westward, as well as among the existing homes. The area between W. Kansas and Harrison Street was known as the Prospect Heights addition. A combination of small and large homes was built in this area, primarily from the "Early Twentieth Century Suburbia" context. In fact, a great majority of the homes built in Liberty in this period were located at the western portion of this district. There are very few intrusions, and the majority of structures retain a high degree of integrity. Fairview Avenue has suffered some loss of structures, and several buildings have undergone too much alteration to be included in this district.

It is recommended that a National Register district nomination be pursued for this area. A local district is also recommended, with the option of adding a few locally significant contiguous structures from the south side of W. Liberty Drive.

Proposed Survey Districts

There are five additional areas of Liberty which may contain the potential for National Register districts and/or individual listings, but which require additional surveying and research. Both the Arthur's Addition District and the South Leonard Street District have received some survey attention to date. As surveyed, the South Leonard Street District does not have sufficient resources to warrant national designation, although some individually significant structures are located here. However, it is believed the fairly intact working-class neighborhoods to the west could strengthen the possibility of a National Register district. Some interesting smaller homes are located here, such as the heart-shaped (double octagon) house on Groom Street. Of the surveyed houses along S. Leonard however, the area along the west side has an intact group of significant historic structures which are worthy of local district designation.

Preservation efforts in the Arthur's Addition District would also be enhanced by local designation. It was historically developed as a two-block enclave of nice, middle-class dwellings, and retains enough integrity to be listed as a local district. However, the streets to both the north and south contain historic working-class homes which undoubtedly developed around the finer homes on Arthur Street. As their location is partially or wholly dependent upon Arthur Street, it is felt that further research is warranted. Until that time, a National Register district designation would probably not be possible unless a multiple property listing was pursued.

The William Jewell Campus District, Garrison School District, and Liberty Junior High School could either be studied separately, or together in their relation to a proposed historic context focusing on Liberty's educational property types. The entire William Jewell campus will probably be found deserving of a National Register district nomination, as its contribution to the community has been great. Liberty Junior High School was an important part of the West Kansas and Franklin Streets neighborhood, and could be added to that district. Garrison School is one of the most significant extant structures associated with black history in Liberty. It is possible that the contiguous modest residential neighborhood (which is already partially surveyed and contains some good examples of the hall-and-parlor property type) might also prove to be significant to black history.

Potential Individual Listings

Several of Liberty's representatives of the "Exploration & Settlement" period lie outside of potential historic districts. These are: the Samuel Ringo House at 758 W. Liberty Drive; the Hughes-Kiersted Estate at 101 Nashua Road; the Adkins-Bruening Farm at 1815 W. Liberty Drive; the Wymore-Wornall House at 400 Spring Street; the Methodist Church - Clay Seminary at 9 S. Leonard; the "Wine Cellar" House at 438 Moss Street; and the Jones Distillery at 409 Murray Road. All of these are worthy (and have been proposed) as local landmarks. With the possible exception of the Wine Cellar House, all have the potential to be listed individually in the National Register for their significance within the historic context.

A few outlying examples of property types from other historic contexts are also not within any proposed district. The Pomp Gordon House and "Shadowlawn" on N. Nashua Road are both worthy of consideration for nomination to the National Register. In addition, they should be considered for local designation as landmarks.

Other Liberty homes possess enough significance to be listed as local landmarks, but fall within potential districts. Some will hopefully be designated in the current round of antebellum listings. Others, such as the Italianate Dimmitt-Ringo-Dougherty Home at 242 W. Franklin, or the number of architect-designed Prairie homes could be individually listed if the surrounding local district nomination should not prove feasible.

Priorities for Designation

The best possible course for National Register listings is to pursue a multiple property nomination. Not only would this prove to be the most economical in terms of dollars, manpower, and time, it may also be the **only** way that the outlying structures relevant to the "Exploration & Settlement" context could ever be listed. It is highly doubtful that the building owners or the City of Liberty would choose to list each building separately. Also, while the residential districts each represent a portion of three historic contexts, a better understanding of the contexts is gained through the relationship of these districts to the overall pattern of development. Without a multiple property nomination, an incomplete history of Liberty's historic built environment will be presented. Liberty's size and distribution of historic resources make a multiple property nomination quite feasible.

If a multiple property nomination should not work out, the nomination of separate districts should proceed based on quality and significance of resources as related to their property types and contexts. It is recommended that the Jewell Residential District be pursued first, followed by the W. Kansas & Franklin Streets District, then the Lightburne Historic District.

Locally, the priorities for designation have been set for the near future. After the antebellum landmarks, the Historic District Review Commission will consider the Jewell Residential District. It is recommended that the commission consider the same priorities for district nominations as outlined above, adding the remaining outlying individual landmarks and the Arthur's Addition District to the list of priorities. Since local designation is viewed as an honor as well as a protection tool, individual landmarks which are located **within** districts can be considered for designation, but that should only occur after the historic resources which deserve protection have been designated.

It should be noted that at any time a National Register district or landmark nomination is reviewed by the Historic District Review Commission, action be undertaken at **that** time to also prepare its local nomination. For example, the Odd Fellows Home District should very soon be considered for local designation. National Register listing should almost automatically confer local approval for registration. If additional survey work is undertaken (as is recommended), the above outlined priorities may change. The Community Development Coordinator and the Historic District Review Commission should continue to expand upon Liberty's base of knowledge about its built environment.

PLANNING

Methodology

Preservation planning typically has three major components which work to integrate the various activities of a community and give them coherence and direction. Hopefully they should relate the preservation efforts to community development planning as a whole. A plan first directs the identification of historic properties, then the evaluation of those resources, and last works for their protection and enhancement. Some of the major elements of a comprehensive historic preservation plan have already been conducted (identification). Others have been evaluated earlier in this document, such as:

- *the historic contexts relevant to Liberty
- *the basic types of properties likely to be found
- *evaluation of the properties in relation to the contexts

In this section, further elements of a preservation plan will be evaluated; in particular, those elements relating to the protection and enhancement of historic resources. This will include:

- *the social groups and organizations having historic and cultural interests in the area
- *the historic preservation goals and priorities that currently apply to Liberty, and likely future goals and priorities
- *mechanisms that might be used to achieve preservation goals

Community development planning is not unrelated to preservation planning. Indeed, the two should be closely coordinated as they often involve the same activities and strategies. For ease of presentation, the city-wide planning efforts of Liberty will be discussed separately.

City Planning

History & Current Status

Formal city planning did not begin in Liberty until 1955, when the first planning commission was formed. About the same time, the first zoning ordinance was enacted. However, the first comprehensive land-use plan was not developed until the late 1960's. The current general plan was adopted in 1975 and updated in 1980. A planning consultant was kept on retainer from 1974 until 1984, at which time the position of City Planner was created. The City Planner oversees and reviews development applications and prepares the staff reports for the nine-member Planning and Zoning Commission. The Commission meets formally once a month, and conducts one study session per month. In addition to reviewing development which might impact historic areas of Liberty, the commission reviews proposed historic districts and landmarks prior to City Council's approval.

A new future land-use plan is currently being developed by city staff, with adoption anticipated in September, 1987. A street plan, parks & open space plan, and storm water management plan are being prepared by consulting firms. The proposed land-use plan will be much more sensitive to historic preservation than the current General Plan. The proposed plan has analyzed the existing land-use patterns in the central historic portion of town, called the "Core Area", and has highlighted conflicts with existing zoning. (See Appendix B.) Most notable is the disparity between the current (and historic) land uses and the intensity of uses permitted in the historic residential neighborhoods. These neighborhoods, historically single-family residential, are zoned R-6, which is in conflict with the goals of preserving these neighborhoods. The new plan would propose a "Neighborhood Conservation Zone", which recognizes existing densities, but would not allow for further encroachment by new commercial or multi-family development.

Other historic areas with zoning problems are the Central Business District and the land south of the downtown along the railroad spur. Currently, the Central Business District has the same kind of commercial zoning allowed along highway strips. This does not follow the historic and existing land-use patterns of the CBD. As the site of both Liberty's City Hall and the Clay County Courthouse, the nature of commercial establishments has gradually changed over time towards service or office uses with a public or institutional orientation. The other existing retail uses tend to provide specialty services or products. In addition, there are some residential units in the upper floors of the buildings around the square. A new "Central Business District Zone" is proposed, which will recognize and help to protect the special characteristics of the Liberty square.

The area south of downtown and along the railroad spur has been zoned industrial for many years. Some of this was historically industrial in character, such as the flour and woolen mills. Today however, there are very few industries situated here, and those that do exist are not sympathetic to the surrounding historic resources. Some commercial enterprises have located here, and a potential exists for additional commercial growth, which would prevent businesses from encroaching on the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

The parks in Liberty are good but are not very visible, and are practically non-existent within the core area. However, before the park planning consultants make recommendations for this area, they should research the historic open spaces of Liberty and take into consideration the importance of intact historic districts. While the residential neighborhoods and central business district need access to parks and open spaces, important historic residential and development patterns should not be sacrificed. Such an instance occurred when the Citizen's Bank, located on the southeast corner of the square, was demolished to make room for a county plaza and fountain. The absence of this key corner building effectively breaks the aesthetic continuity formed by the four "walls" of buildings surrounding the square.

The Liberty city limits are today greatly expanded beyond the plat of the original town. The city has the potential to grow from its present population of approximately 19,000 to an estimated 70,000 within its current boundaries. In addition, seven areas are designated as annexation holding areas. The historic and potential expanded boundaries are important in preservation planning for their potential to contain historic resources, primarily rural. The three survey phases have been confined to the original town, except for a few very well-known landmarks. The majority of efforts in preservation planning have also been confined to this central portion of Liberty. While it is true that the majority of resources are indeed concentrated here, some potentially significant resources could be situated in outlying areas. These rural resources are typically overlooked and underrated, and therefore are usually the most threatened with demolition or neglect. The City of Liberty needs to be aware of these non-surveyed resources when making land-use plans outside of the central core. An example is the log cabin situated at 525 N. Gallatin. It is currently "hidden" with siding, and few people are aware that a log structure is beneath its unsympathetic additions. Yet it is believed to be one of only three log structures left within the city limits, and is threatened by encroaching multi-family residential development.

Another area of city planning which might impact historic resources is the housing authority. A "Residential Rental Occupancy Code" was developed, which could conceivably affect historic structures. The code was discussed at a meeting of the Historic District Review Commission. Continued communication between the various groups at City Hall is recommended.

Comments

Liberty's proposed land-use plan will be sensitive to the goals of historic preservation in the core area. The development of new zones which recognize the special character of the historic districts should address the needs of these areas. With the adoption of the land-use plan, the zoning ordinance will complement the historic preservation ordinance, rather than be in conflict with it. These two regulatory tools, one dealing with use and the other with design, will work together to protect Liberty's unique character.

The current size and makeup of Liberty's city staff have fostered good communication between departments. All areas seem aware of the goals of historic preservation. Anything that might impact historic resources is reported to the Community Development Coordinator. By the same token, the Coordinator works with the other areas of city planning to mesh historic preservation with the other goals of Liberty. However, in case of staff turnover or increased job responsibilities, it is important to keep these lines of communication open.

In keeping with open communication about historic preservation, a "mini" training session for new members of the Planning & Zoning Commission should be developed if one is not already conducted. The field of preservation, as with any area of specialization, comes with its own agreed set of concepts and jargon. The City of Liberty has gone to great lengths to set up the regulatory framework within which the preservation of historic resources can occur. The citizens in decision-making positions need to be educated and aware of the objectives of historic preservation.

Preservation Planning

History & Current Status

The City of Liberty's historic preservation activities are centered around the position of Community Development Coordinator. This position was first created in 1980. At that time, the job responsibilities included directing the housing authority, which naturally took a majority of the position's work load. In 1985, a separate position was created to deal with housing. Today, the Community Development Coordinator works under the City Planner and deals strictly with historic preservation activities within the older parts of town. Duties have included: restoration consultations; coordination of special downtown events, such as the Farmer's Market and Spring Festival; establishing and coordinating RARE (Restoration & Renovation Enthusiasts), a group of homeowners interested in preservation; establishing the Preservation Library, which has materials available for loan to Liberty citizens; applying for and supervising historic preservation grants; coordinating the Historic District Review Commission (HDRC) and the Preservation & Development Commission; reviewing designs prior to submittal to HDRC and writing staff reports for Certificates of Appropriateness; developing the historic preservation ordinance and the Certified Local Government application.

Prior to the creation of the Community Development Coordinator position, historic preservation activities in Liberty were directed by the Preservation & Development Commission. This twenty-two member panel, appointed by the Mayor, was responsible for initiating the renovation activities on the downtown square. In 1982, the Downtown Design Assistance Pool was started with a \$60,000 gift from the Hallmark Corporation, and \$14,000 from the city. This pool for architectural fees was available to property owners who agreed to renovate their building in a certain manner. Recently, the city added \$10,000 to the fund. While the city is very fortunate to have such a renovation tool, there have been some problems associated with its implementation. In the past, only one architectural firm has been allowed to produce the renovation plans. The designs at times were not sensitive to the historic fabric and did not follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Also, the Community Development Coordinator did not have any input regarding the proposed changes until after the designs were completed. In addition, money from the pool was paid for designs which were never executed. Changes involving some of these problems are currently being implemented. There will be a choice from among at least three architectural firms, and a letter of assurance that the renovation work will be completed is required before the design money is released. The Community Development Coordinator needs to be involved with the architects and owners prior to design completion to insure that the plans meet accepted rehabilitation guidelines. Hopefully, building owners will continue to take advantage of this valuable tool for revitalizing the downtown. However, the requests for assistance have dwindled over the years, probably because the most interested building owners have already benefited from it.

In 1984-85, the Preservation & Development Commission also helped to coordinate the downtown streetscape plan, which involved lighting, street furniture, sidewalks, crossings, parking, and curbs. Again, the funding for the project came from a donation from Hallmark coupled with funds from the city. In recent years, the Preservation & Development Commission has not been as active.

In 1985, another commission was formed - the Liberty Historic District Review Commission. It, along with city staff, worked for the adoption of the historic preservation ordinance. Three drafts were required to make the ordinance acceptable to local needs and to meet the state statutes. Ordinance No. 5136 was approved May 12, 1986. At this time, HDRC was officially established. The seven member commission is composed of Liberty residents, all of whom are appointed by the Mayor and approved by City Council. Members must have a demonstrated interest in the history or architecture of the City of Liberty. The commission has many duties, such as survey, local and National registration of districts or individual structures, assistance to historic property owners, public education, and review of application for design changes affecting Historic Districts or Landmarks. They are also responsible for Certificates of Appropriateness, development of design guidelines for historic Districts, review of zoning amendments that affect historic resources, and many other preservation duties.

One of the most important protection tools for historic resources, and one of the main functions of the Historic District Review Commission, is the nomination and designation of Historic Districts and Landmarks. Currently, there are two historic districts designated, the Liberty Square Historic District and the Lightburne Historic District. The Landmarks Committee of HDRC is proposing the nomination of several antebellum structures for Landmark status. The next proposed nomination will focus on the residential district east of the square, between William Jewell College and N. Lightburne Street. Further nominations will depend upon HDRC's approval of the recommendations of this report and the Commission's agenda over the next couple of years.

In 1986, not long after the historic preservation ordinance was approved, the City of Liberty applied for and was approved as a Certified Local Government (CLG). This federal designation indicates that Liberty has met five standards which deal with local preservation legislation, review commissions, and other aspects of historic preservation. Since Liberty already had a commission and an ordinance prior to becoming a CLG, the main benefit from this designation has been the eligibility of federal grant money available only to other Missouri CLG's. At first, the number of CLGs was quite small and there was little competition for grant money. As the number of CLGs in Missouri grows, the likelihood of Liberty receiving these grants will decrease and the benefits of this designation may become less tangible.

Other groups have been involved peripherally in historic preservation in Liberty. The Clay County Historical Society was founded in 1934 by Ethel Massie Withers, and today has over 200 members. Concerned with Liberty history and education, they have promoted involvement in historic preservation with historic house tours. To celebrate the Bicentennial, the Society designated 76 structures as Clay County Landmarks (not an official county designation). They have also published a census of cemeteries. The Clay County Museum Association owns and operates the Clay County Historical Musuem at 14 N. Main. Besides preserving this intact example of Victorian commercial architecture, the museum has items of historic interest to Clay County, in particular a photo collection helpful to researchers of Liberty's built past. The Clay County Archives also operates a large collection of historic documents valuable to researchers at 210 E. Franklin Street. The Downtown Merchants Association is a loose-knit group of business owners which has collected money in the past for special projects, such as the downtown banners.

Goals & Objectives

The objectives of preservation planning in Liberty can very generally be described as continuing the process of **identification**, **evaluation**, and **protection** of local historic resources. Therefore, specific goals and recommendations were developed for each of these three components of preservation planning.

Identification

1. Continue the ongoing process of identifying Liberty's historic resources, including the Proposed Survey Districts outlined on the accompanying "Historic Districts" map. Other areas of town deserving of survey are Clardy Heights, Ridge Avenue, N. Gallatin, and Richfield Road. Undeveloped thematic areas, such as education, religion, rural resources, and black history also contain resources worthy of identification.
2. Consider feasibility of an archaeological overview of Liberty.
3. In developing an education program (see Protection phase), consider training volunteers or students for part of survey work.
4. Encourage cooperation with Clay County government in a joint survey project, such as rural resources in outlying portions of Liberty.
5. Pursue grants and funding for additional surveying.

Evaluation

1. Continue on-going process of refining, modifying, and elaborating on historic contexts as additional survey work and research data warrants.
2. Encourage participation of local historical societies or preservation groups to survey and evaluate important Liberty property types, such as log cabin construction.

Protection

1. Pursue multiple listing National Register nomination; apply for 50-50 matching grant for project with Missouri State Historic Office.
2. Designate local districts and landmarks in priorities outlined earlier, revising priorities if necessary in order to protect resources under development pressure. Develop working guidelines for applying local criteria for designation, so not only all members of the Historic District Review Commission understand the process, but so that the designations will have more credibility in public hearings. After each local or National Register district designation, a fun community celebration could be held in the district, with walking tours highlighting features of the area.
3. Develop design guidelines for local districts based on survey data.
4. Consider facade easement program, an allowable duty for the Historic District Review Commission.
5. Develop a public and school-age information program, as education is often the best protection device of all. Utilize the services of commissions and associations which have been active in the past. For example, the Preservation & Development Commission could sponsor a walking or driving tour brochure of Liberty, which could be used in promotional tourism efforts. These could be distributed at several points around the city, such as the new Chamber of Commerce offices located in the historic Methodist Church - Clay Seminary building. The city could fund any number of public information projects, such as a video, slide shows, or pamphlets. Encourage the local school systems to develop a "Liberty Heritage Education" packet, which would focus on local history as expressed by Liberty's built environment.

Liberty is fortunate to have such an active and conscientious preservation planning program. Many towns several times Liberty's size do not offer such professional services. The historic preservation ordinance, the development of a full-time city preservationist (the Community Development Coordinator), the formation of the Historic District Review Commission, and the sensitivity of the proposed land-use plan to preservation are all highly commendable efforts. The best preservation goal toward which Liberty could strive would be to continue their present course. With the completion of this report and some National Register listings, Liberty will have achieved much in all phases of preservation planning.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Newspapers

Liberty Sun & Liberty Tribune, numerous issues.

Maps and Atlases

Illustrated Historical Atlas of Clay County, Missouri, 1877.

Standard Stlas of Clay County, Missouri. Chicago: George Ogle & Co., 1898 & 1914.

Sandborn Map for Liberty, Clay County, Missouri. New York: Sandborn Map Company, 1883 & 1906.

City and County Histories

History of Clay and Platte Counties, Missouri. St. Louis: National Historical Company, 1885.

Woodson, W.W. History of Clay County, Missouri. Topeka: Historical Publishing Company, 1920.

Clay County Missouri Centennial Souvenir, 1822-1911. Liberty: Liberty Tribune, 1922.

Jackson, Don M. & Wymore, Jack B. The Heritage of Liberty. Liberty: R.C. Printing Service, 1976.

Miscellaneous and Unpublished Sources

Denny, James M., Gilleard, Gerald Lee., & Davis, Joetta K. "Cultural Resources along the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad Route: Sedalia to Machens, Missouri". September, 1986.

"Get to Know Old Clay". Historical Tour, Clay County Historical Society. June 2, 1973.

Liberty City Hall: Missouri Office of Historic Preservation Architectural/Historic Inventory Survey Forms. Subdivision files. Water permit files. Building permit files.

Personal interviews: John J. Harlin, 4/3/87. Medora Chrane, 4/22/87. Nadine Thompson, 6/9/87. Bruce Knight, City Planner, 8/3/87. Jared Cooper, Community Development Coordinator, 8/3/87.

Piland, Sherry & Uguccioni, Ellen J. "Courthouse Square Area: Liberty, Missouri". April, 1985.

References

Bishir, Catherine & Earley, Lawrence. Early Twentieth-Century Suburbs in North Carolina. Lillington, NC: Edwards Brothers, Inc., 1985.

Blumenson, John J.G. Identifying American Architecture. Nashville: A.A.S.L.H., 1981.

Foley, Mary Mix. The American House. New York: Harper & Row, 1980.

Glassie, Henry. Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968.

Gowans, Alan. The Comfortable House. Cambridge, MS: The MIT Press, 1986.

Historic Preservation Handbook. Atlanta: Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, 1976.

Longstreth, Richard. The Buildings of Main Street. Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1987.

Lowell: The Building Book. Lowell, MS: City of Lowell, Division of Planning and Development, 1978.

Noble, Allen G. Wood, Brick, and Stone. Amherst, MS: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1984.

McAlester, Virginia & Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984.

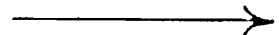
What Style Is It? Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1983.

Whiffen, Marcus. American Architecture Since 1780. Cambridge, MS: The M.I.T. Press, 1985.

Appendix A

The following buildings are being proposed for designation as individual landmarks:

1. Historic name: Jewell Hall
Present use: Classroom building
Location: William Jewell College Campus
2. Historic name: Farmers Bank of Missouri
Present use: Jesse James Bank Museum
Location: 103 North Water Street
3. Historic name: Lightburne Hall
Present use: Residence (Charles Cox, Lyle Pinick)
Location: 301 North Water Street
4. Historic name: Samuel Ringo House
Present use: Residence (Mr. and Mrs. Charles Thompson)
Location: 758 West Liberty Drive
5. Historic name: Hughes-Kiersted Estate
Present use: Residence (Mr. and Mrs. Howard Pavelsek)
Location: 101 Nashua Road
6. Historic name: Adkins-Bruening Farm
Present use: Vacant
Location: 1815 West Liberty Drive
7. Historic name: Garth House
Present use: Residence (Mr. and Mrs. George Robinson)
Location: 218 West Kansas Street
8. Historic name: Madison Miller House
Present use: Apartments
Location: 124 North Gallatin Street
9. Historic name: Michael Arthur House
Present use: Apartments
Location: 316 East Franklin Street
10. Historic name: Corbin-Davis House
Present use: Residence (Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Welch)
Location: 430 East Franklin Street
11. Historic name: Moses Lard House
Present use: Residence (Mr. and Mrs. Richard Gregg)
Location: 470 East Mill Street
12. Historic name: Dr. William Dougherty House
Present use: Apartments
Location: 305 West Kansas Street



13. Historic name: Wymore-Wornall House
 Present use: Residence (Helen Walker)
 Location: 400 Spring Street
14. Historic name: Smithey-Ritchey House
 Present use: Residence (Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Cain)
 Location: 504 East Mill Street
15. Historic name: Methodist Church - Clay Seminary
 Present use: Under construction (Chamber of Commerce Offices)
 Location: 9 South Leonard
16. Historic name: The "Wine Cellar" House
 Present use: Residence (Mr. and Mrs. William Harris)
 Location: 438 Moss Street
17. Historic name: Jones Distillery House
 Present use: Residence (Mr. and Mrs. Norman Kirby)
 Location: 409 Murray Road
18. Historic name: Liberty Female College
 Present use: Apartments
 Location: 438 East Franklin Street

Appendix B

CORE AREA STUDY

TOPIC: EXISTING LAND USE

PURPOSE:

To analyze existing patterns of land use in the Core Area identify existing problem areas and highlight conflicts with existing zoning and future land use designations.

ANALYSIS:

1. Existing land uses in the core area do not reflect the intensity of use which is allowed under the existing zoning. Since the preservation of historic neighborhoods has been established as an objective of the community, encroachment on those areas by new commercial, industrial or multi-family development should be discouraged. Therefore, the disparity which presently exists between existing land uses and the intensity of uses permitted under existing zoning is in conflict with the goals of preservation.
2. Some significant new multi-family development has occurred in the Core Study Area as a result of the existing R-6 zoning. Because of the significant size of these areas, future zoning designations should probably reflect the existing land use.
3. Very little parkland or open space exists in the City's core area to serve existing residential neighborhoods.
4. The nature of the commercial area in the central core is gradually changing due to the large amount of public and institutional land use. Many of the commercial land uses now establishing are service or office uses with a public and institutional orientation.
5. Retail uses in the Central Business District tend to be limited to businesses which are characterized by the provision of specialty services, more personal services or those which desire the lower rent structure afforded in the downtown area. These types of uses should continue to be encouraged in order to maintain a strong Central Business District.
6. Commercial land uses have been expanding into an area south of the downtown which was previously industrial in character and zoning. In order to prevent the encroachment of commercial uses on existing residential neighborhoods, expansion in this area should continue to be encouraged.
7. In several instances around the boundaries of the Central Business District, commercial land use has encroached upon the existing residential neighborhoods. However, many lots on the periphery of the Central Business District, currently zoned for commercial development are presently used for residential purposes. Adjustment should be made to the commercial and residential zoning boundaries to better reflect both

existing and future use of the land in this area.

8. Two tiers of commercial development presently exist in the core area. First, the Central Business District uses reflected by the historic Liberty Square area and second, newer peripheral development which is oriented around the major entry points to the Central Business District. These two tiers of commercial development have different needs for off-street parking and signage and ultimate zoning regulations in this area should reflect those needs.
9. Although the land along the railroad spur running through the core area has been zoned industrial for many years, very few industrial land uses currently exist and those that do exist are not well suited to this area of town from an aesthetic standpoint.

CONCLUSION:

Existing land uses in the core area of Liberty do not currently follow the patterns which have been established by recommended future land uses in the General Plan and the existing zoning of the area. This disparity probably reflects the inadequacy of current zoning to serve the needs of this area. Further, given the community objective of preserving historic neighborhoods in the core area, a major shift away from existing land use patterns would result in a great deal of damage to the historic fabric of this area.