

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

1 Name of Property

historic name Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House

other names/site number William Porth House; Colonial Tea Room

2 Location

street & number 631 W. Main Street [N/A] not for publication

city or town Jefferson City [N/A] vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Cole code 051 zip code 65109

3 State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  
 nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National  
Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the  
property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  
 nationally  statewide  locally.  
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [ ])

Signature of certifying official/Title *Claire T. Blackwell* 21 Dec 03  
Claire T. Blackwell/Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title

State or Federal agency and bureau

4 National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date

- entered in the National Register  
See continuation sheet [ ]
- determined eligible for the  
National Register  
See continuation sheet [ ]
- determined not eligible for the  
National Register.
- removed from the  
National Register
- other, explain  
See continuation sheet [ ]

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property		
		Contributing	Noncontributing	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	1	0	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	0	0	sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	0	0	structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	0	0	objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	0	0	
		1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources  
previously listed in the National  
Register.

Name of related multiple property listing.

N/A

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Function	Current Functions
<u>DOMESTIC / single dwelling</u>	<u>VACANT</u>
<u>DOMESTIC / multiple dwelling</u>	
<u>COMMERCIAL / office</u>	

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
Second Empire

**Materials**  
 foundation Stone  
 walls Stone  
 roof Metal  
 other \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history

B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

Property is:

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

ARCHITECTURE

**Periods of Significance**

ca. 1842 -

ca. 1888

**Significant Dates**

ca. 1842

ca. 1888

**Significant Person(s)**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

UNKNOWN

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major Bibliographic References**

**Bibliography**

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

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

# \_\_\_\_\_

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

# \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other:

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of Property Less than one acre

**UTM References**

A. Zone	Easting	Northing	B. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	571535	4270660			
C. Zone	Easting	Northing	D. Zone	Easting	Northing

[ ] See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Jane Rodes Beetem, Historic Preservation Consultant  
organization N/A date November 18, 2000  
street & number 1612 Payne Drive telephone 573-635-0662  
city or town Jefferson City state Missouri zip code 65101

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

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

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

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional Items**

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

**Property Owner**

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

name The Porth House, LLC, c/o The Architects Alliance  
street & number 1431 Southwest Boulevard telephone 573-636-5000  
city or town Jefferson City state Missouri zip code 65109

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri

Section 7 Page 1

**Summary:** The Dr. Joseph P. and Effie Porth House, 631 W. Main Street in Jefferson City, Missouri, is a two-story stone house with partial walkout basement on the front facade. The Porth House was constructed in its original form between 1827 and 1842, and the mansard roof was added between 1885-1888. The house has grown and evolved through the years, to achieve its present form. Now square in plan, the stone portions of the house began as a rectangular double pen, built of local limestone known as "cotton rock." In its early years the house was constructed with stone chimneys at the gable ends and a porch extending across the front facade between the basement and first floor levels. Between ca. 1860 and 1885, stone additions to the rear transformed the house into a square two-story house, two rooms deep. The upper story was added between 1885 and 1888, utilizing a Second Empire style mansard roof, iron roof cresting, an ornately bracketed cornice and pedimented dormers. At this time the porch was replaced with an iron balcony between the basement and first floor. The Porth House retains a high level of integrity of location, setting, design, materials and craftsmanship.

**Elaboration:** The Porth House, also known locally as the Colonial Tea Room, faces W. Main Street, with a side entrance on Bolivar Street. The house is built facing north, at the edge of the sidewalk on W. Main Street, with only enough setback on the Bolivar Street side to fit the side entry stairs. A herringbone patterned brick walkway is visible underneath this stairway. The rear, or south side, has ground level access to the first floor, and a wooden stair leading to the upper floor. A large deteriorated asphalt parking area and several mature evergreen trees fill the rear yard. This area is accessed on the Bolivar Street side by a short flight of concrete steps, with a walkway and small landscaped area leading to the rear entrance. The east side slopes considerably toward W. Main Street, and consists of a grassy yard with a low stone retaining wall at the sidewalk along the street. A one-story building is shown to the rear of the Porth House on the Sanborn Maps of 1885 and 1892, but no outbuildings currently exist. Two outbuildings, a smokehouse and a washhouse, were known to exist,<sup>1</sup> with the washhouse being demolished prior to 1977, and the smokehouse demolished in the early 1980s.

The neighborhood surrounding the Porth House has experienced changes, but as in the days when the Porths lived here, the intersection of W. Main and Bolivar is still a center of business activity. The corner of W. Main Street and Bolivar has served as a neighborhood business center since the Civil War era. This neighborhood was known as the "Rich Man's Hill" area, later called Richmond Hill. Directly and diagonally across the street remain two buildings that have anchored this intersection, along with the Porth House, for well over 100 years. Across the street the Richmond Hill Grocery Store no longer sells candy to children<sup>2</sup>, but Discovery Place daycare center keeps the corner buzzing with activity. Pat's Place, a long-time drinking establishment, has recently become Paddy Malone's, but continues to provide a place to quench the local's thirst. This building shows on the 1885 Sanborn Map, as well as the Bird's Eye View of Jefferson City, 1869. Paddy Malone's has also evolved over

---

<sup>1</sup> 1891 historic photo of the Millbottom area shows two outbuildings. Cole County Historical Society.

<sup>2</sup> In her interview in 1977, Mrs. Elsie Baldwin stated "The only thing I really remember about the grocery is that when my parents sent me over to get something, they always gave me a piece of candy!"

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri

Section 7 Page 2

time, having a gabled roof in 1885, but now exhibits a historic mansard roof. West of Paddy Malone's is a women's clothing boutique in a historic building. The residential area to the west retains its historic character for over a block. To the east, the Missouri State Capitol continues to dominate the skyline. The current capitol is younger than the Porth House, having burned in 1911 and been rebuilt in the same location.<sup>3</sup> Between the Capitol and Discovery Place, on the north side of W. Main Street, is the modern James C. Kirkpatrick Office Building and parking area. This area, formerly known as the Millbottom, was the commercial and industrial center of Jefferson City throughout much of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>4</sup> The Millbottom area was redeveloped as part of the Urban Renewal Capitol West Project in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Adjacent to the Porth House on the east side is the circa 1940s Missouri Department of Transportation garage and office building. On the south side is a recently constructed four story office building called Riverview Center. Across Bolivar to the west, at the corner of Bolivar and Main is the two-story Missouri Public School Retirement System building. Extending west along W. Main Street on both sides of the street is a historic residential area. Several of these buildings appear on the Sanborn Maps of 1885 and 1892, and on the Bird's Eye View of Jefferson City, 1869. At least 5 buildings are shown in this area on an undated map of Civil War fortifications in Jefferson City.<sup>5</sup>

As the neighborhood has continued to grow and develop over time, so has the Porth House. The house is now square in shape, with two full stories and a walkout partial basement facing W. Main Street. Constructed to take advantage of the sloping lot, the basement level is just over one room deep. The basement and first floor are constructed of random ashlar stone, local limestone known as "cotton rock." Large stones at the corners serve as quoins. The pre-1860 historic photograph shows the front section as one room deep with a one-story stone section to the rear. This evidence, combined with the presence of large "quoin" stones in the middle of the west wall, indicate one or more early stone additions to the rear of the house. The front section of the home was originally one room deep and had a gable roof with stone chimneys at either end. A full-length porch extended across the front facade between the first floor and the basement. This porch was accessed by wooden stairs on the Bolivar Street side. Around 1860, the stone was covered in "concrete" and scored to look like stone.<sup>6</sup> This treatment is still visible inside, where paneling has been removed from a former exterior wall, but does not remain on the exterior. The back half of the home, also one room deep, is shown on the 1885 Sanborn Map as having a gable roof running north to south, perpendicular to the roof on the front section. By 1885 the house had received another rear addition and achieved its current

---

<sup>3</sup> The WPA Guide to 1930s Missouri, (Lawrence, Kansas, University Press of Kansas, 1941) p. 229.

<sup>4</sup> Craig Sturdevant, Ruth Sturdevant and Gary Kremer, "Cultural Resources Inventory and Evaluation - Capitol West Jefferson City, Missouri," for Jefferson City Housing Authority HUD Urban Renewal Project, June, 1982. (Missouri DNR/Historic Preservation Program) p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Map. Note at bottom says "Drawn in 1872 from base map of 1842." Jefferson City History file, Missouri River Regional Library.

<sup>6</sup> The Sunday News and Tribune, June 26, 1977, "Mrs. Baldwin remembers childhood home."

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri**

**Section 7 Page 3**

square form, and by 1888 the mansard roof addition had been added, to attain the current configuration. All of these additions are over 100 years old, and contribute to the house's historic character.

**Figure 1 : Historic Photograph - Former State Capitol in background**  
(Photo taken between 1888 and 1911. Cole County Historical Society)



**Figure 2: Historic Photograph - Front Facade**  
(Photo - pre-1860. Cole County Historical Society)



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri

Section 7 Page 4

The front facade faces north, and abuts the sidewalk. A pre-1860 photograph of the front facade shows two doors on both the first floor and basement levels, with a window on each side of each door on the first floor (4 windows total), and only one window to the outside of each door on the basement level. Two more windows have been added to the basement level so that the fenestration is symmetrical. Original windows on the first floor were rectangular double-hung 9/6 windows with wooden shutters. These have been replaced with 1/1 sash and aluminum storms. The basement doors have been replaced with modern aluminum commercial type doors. The first floor doors originally had wooden doors with a multi-pane transom, which have been replaced with a single pane of glass. All windows and doors retain their original stone lintels.

The upper floor, added between 1885 and 1888,<sup>7</sup> replaced the gabled roof and stone chimneys. At the same time, the wooden porch across the front facade was replaced by an iron balcony with wooden floor, supported by iron brackets. The balcony does not extend across the full facade, but ends just outside the first floor doors. The upper level now exhibits a pressed metal Second Empire style mansard roof, iron roof cresting and finials, an ornately bracketed cornice with two sizes of brackets, pedimented dormers and five decorated brick chimneys. The front facade features four dormer windows. The dormers are gabled and extend to the bottom edge of the mansard roof, with arch topped windows, and a triangular pediment with fan-shaped ornamentation. The dormer roofs have a small overhang, supported on each side at the front by a small bracket. On the casing just under the pediment on each side of the window is a decorative block with flat decorative trim. The dormers show significant deterioration, as some have very little metal roof remaining. The pressed metal roof is painted blue, slightly concave in shape with a modest flare at the lower end. While still repairable, small holes can be seen upon close inspection. The cornice is made of a wide board with trim at the bottom edge and underneath the lower ends of the smaller size brackets. The smaller brackets are made of three parts, all having the same profile, but with the flat sides extending further than the center section. These brackets are almost half as tall as the cornice board. Trim encircles the top of each bracket. The larger brackets, at least twice the size of the smaller brackets, are also more elaborate. Each bracket has three pieces that extend, with two sections having the same profile but recessed. The sides of the larger brackets have cut-out scroll detailing. These brackets are the full height of the cornice, supported at the lower end by the cornice trim. Spacing of these large brackets is symmetrical, but uneven. The pattern of small brackets between the large brackets is five, three, four, four, three, and five, which repeats on all sides of the house. The elegant iron roof cresting is intact on all sides of the house, and features tall finials at each corner. The cresting appears to be in excellent condition. The brick chimneys were built to serve heating stoves in place of the stone chimneys that vented the fireplaces, which were sealed around 1860.<sup>8</sup> The chimneys are tall, extending from the base of the mansard roof to above the roof cresting. The base of each chimney is slightly larger, and a decorative 3-brick wide trim band occurs

---

<sup>7</sup> The Sanborn Map of 1885 shows the house having a gabled roof. A historic photograph of the house with the mansard roof shows the former Missouri State Capitol in the background, complete with wings, which were added in 1888, so the addition must have been completed by 1888.

<sup>8</sup> The Sunday News and Tribune, June 26, 1977.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri

Section 7 Page 5

approximately 6 courses from the top of the chimney. In the center of each chimney, on the side facing out, is a pair of recessed diamond patterns. Some deterioration of the chimneys is evident, as spot tuckpointing is needed, and the addition of flashing to the back side indicates a problem with water runoff from the upper roof. At the top of the mansard roof, just below the roof cresting, is a fairly small wooden trim board, which completes the high-style Second Empire roofline.

On the east end of the front facade is a two-story concrete block addition, painted the same color as the stone exterior walls. On the basement level, a triple window with three 1/1 metal windows is on the east end, and a commercial metal door is on the west end. Over the center window a metal vent protrudes. On the first floor level, two 1/1 metal windows are evenly spaced.

The west wall of the house faces Bolivar Street. Two basement level windows occur north of the entry stairs, and there are two small windows covered by a heavy iron grate. One of these occurs underneath the stairs, and one by the bottom of the stairs. The two full size windows have only one pane of glass in each. The southern half of the first floor level has a window on the southern end and a recessed door just south of the middle of the wall. Leading to this door is a flight of steps and a landing, with beautifully executed iron railing on one side, and the original iron newel post. The wooden stair treads and landing floor have been replaced with treated lumber, which is in fair to good condition. The doorway is unlike any other on the house, having raised wood panels on the recessed sides, and even on the arched top. The arch is executed in stone. The door itself is a modern commercial type metal and glass door with matching sidelights. The transom area has been filled in with wood. Light fixtures with large clear glass globes are on either side of the doorway. The upper floor has three dormer windows, fairly evenly spaced, and one chimney. The chimney occurs just south of the northernmost dormer.

The south, or rear wall, has no exposed basement wall, as the basement does not extend under this portion of the house. A line in the stone near the west wall, before the first window, indicates another early addition, which changed the house from an L-shape to a square. On the first floor there are two windows, one on either side of an original exterior stone chimney. To the west of the window closest to Bolivar Street is a line in the stone indicating an addition. This addition was in place by 1885, according to the Sanborn Map. The chimney has been terminated at the cornice line, allowing the cornice to extend across the back wall unimpeded. Three dormer windows grace the mansard roof on the rear wall, as well as three chimneys. One chimney is located outside each outer dormer window, and one just east of the central dormer. The block addition extends to the east, one-story in height. A shed roof slopes from just under the cornice on the original exterior wall to the east. A modern metal door provides access from the rear parking area to the first floor. The addition is L-shaped in the rear, with a wooden stair leading to the roof of the addition in the ell. A 1/1 window is located partly under the stair on the recessed rear wall.

The east wall of the original house is obscured below the cornice level by the addition. Part of the basement wall of the addition is exposed as the yard slopes toward the street. One window occurs on this level and on the first floor level. A door remains on the first floor level, which is visible from the interior but has been blocked up on the exterior. The front part of the addition has a flat roof.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri

Section 7 Page 6

The mansard roof of the house remains clearly visible on this facade. One of the three dormer windows has been converted into a door, providing access to the upstairs as a separate apartment while owned by the Housing Authority. The central window has been blocked down, and the cornice and boxed gutter severed to allow conversion from a dormer window to a door. One chimney stands south of the northernmost dormer window.

Prior to 1925 the house had a kitchen, parlor and dining room in addition to the bedrooms and the maid's room, and featured stained glass windows and a winding staircase.<sup>9</sup> No mention was made of what the basement rooms were used for after Dr. Porth moved his medical practice to High Street circa 1908. The interior of the basement level consists of three main rooms, with a large half bath inserted in the corner of the eastern room. The eastern room is in the addition, and two steps lower in elevation than the rest of the basement. To the rear of the western room is a half bath accessed by a small hallway, and a storage / furnace room. Little original detail remains in these rooms, as the rooms have concrete floors, paneled walls, replacement windows and trim and dropped ceilings. A narrow wooden stairway to the first floor is located to the rear of the central room.

The first floor interior has been altered, but significant elements still remain. Throughout the first floor, paneling and dropped ceilings were installed. These have since been removed, but much of the original trim has been lost, and furring strips remain on the walls. Wallpaper remnants and pieces of trim can be found in various places. On the north side of the stone portion, most of the original central wall has been removed, making one large room. A stud wall has been added in its place, which has been stripped to the studs. The original fireplace on the east end of the stone portion was closed circa 1860 by Dr. Joseph Porth, but reopened when the Colonial Tea Room occupied the house.<sup>10</sup> This fireplace is extremely simple in style, with a narrow but graceful wood mantle and surround made of three pieces of stone. The entire fireplace is painted black, so further investigation may tell if the mantle is original or not. But the stone, with its vertical markings carved into the stone as it was dressed, appears original. The interior of the fireplace is also stone, but hidden behind gas logs and an attached fireplace screen. The hearth has been raised slightly by the installation of black ceramic tile. The original hearth stone may remain beneath the tile. The fireplace is the dominant feature of the room. The other notable details are the raised wood panels on the sides of the deep window openings and the three doors to the rear section of the house. These panels were masterfully executed when originally constructed, but some were shaved to allow for perfectly vertical installation of paneling over them.

The south portion of the stone section was entered from Bolivar Street, into a stair hall. The stair has been removed, but began on the west wall, turned at a landing, ran along the south wall, turned again, and continued along the east wall of the hall to a circular opening in the upper floor. Two small half baths have been added to the south of the stair hall, with 3/4 height walls. The north wall

---

<sup>9</sup> According to an interview with Dr. Porth's daughter, Mrs. Elsie Baldwin in 1977. The Sunday News and Tribune, June 26, 1977.

<sup>10</sup> The Sunday News and Tribune, June 26, 1977.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri**

**Section 7 Page 7**

of the entry hall has a door to the northern section of the house that has been covered over. A door on the east wall leads into a large room with two windows on the south side. A fireplace once existed on the south wall between the windows, but has been closed. Below chair rail height, sizeable remnants of a Lincrusta type wall finish remain in this room. Two doors on the north side lead to the large room on the front of the house. A door on the east wall leads to a narrow passageway, flanked on the north by a narrow, twisting servant's staircase and the stairs coming from the basement. On the south, a large furnace room has been enclosed with stud walls. An exterior window on the east end of this room is visible from the next room. At the end of the hall is the end of the original stone portion of the house. Raised panel trim conceals the thick stone of the exterior wall. The block addition has two rooms on the first floor. The front, or north room, exhibits the concrete covering on the former exterior wall that was installed circa 1860, scored to look like large stone blocks.

The upstairs retains most all of its original doors, windows and trim. The doors and windows have reeded casings placed on blocks, with corner blocks carved in a leaf design. Above the corner blocks is a scrolled block, repeating the carved leaf design. The scrolls point away from the center of the door or window. The doors are five-panel doors, with a narrow horizontal panel about doorknob height. Original porcelain doorknobs remain on most doors. Above, the transom areas have been filled with plywood to allow installation of heating vents in each room. The tall dormer windows appear recessed, as they extend past the roofline on the exterior.

Three nearly identical rooms are on the north side of the upper floor, with a central hall running east to west. At the east end of the hall is the opening for the servant's stairs, which was boarded up until recently, and so lacks a railing around the perimeter. Right beside this opening is the door to the roof of the addition and the rear exterior stairs. At the west end of the hall is a circular opening for the main stair, which has been covered, but is visible beneath the dated carpet. On the south side of the upstairs is a bathroom, a kitchen, and a third room in the center. The kitchen and bath appear to have been remodeled in the 1970s, with ill-fitting cabinets that extend over dormer windows. The bath retains the 1970s vintage dark wood paneling, and is long and narrow.

Despite lack of maintenance and insensitive remodeling on the first floor, the Porth House essentially retains its appearance from ca. 1888. The stone walls appear sound, with most of the exterior rehabilitation needs confined to the upper floor, on the mansard roof, dormer windows and cornice. Inside, new mechanical systems, wall finishes and updated bathrooms and kitchen will make the home into a handsome office building, one that will serve for years to come.

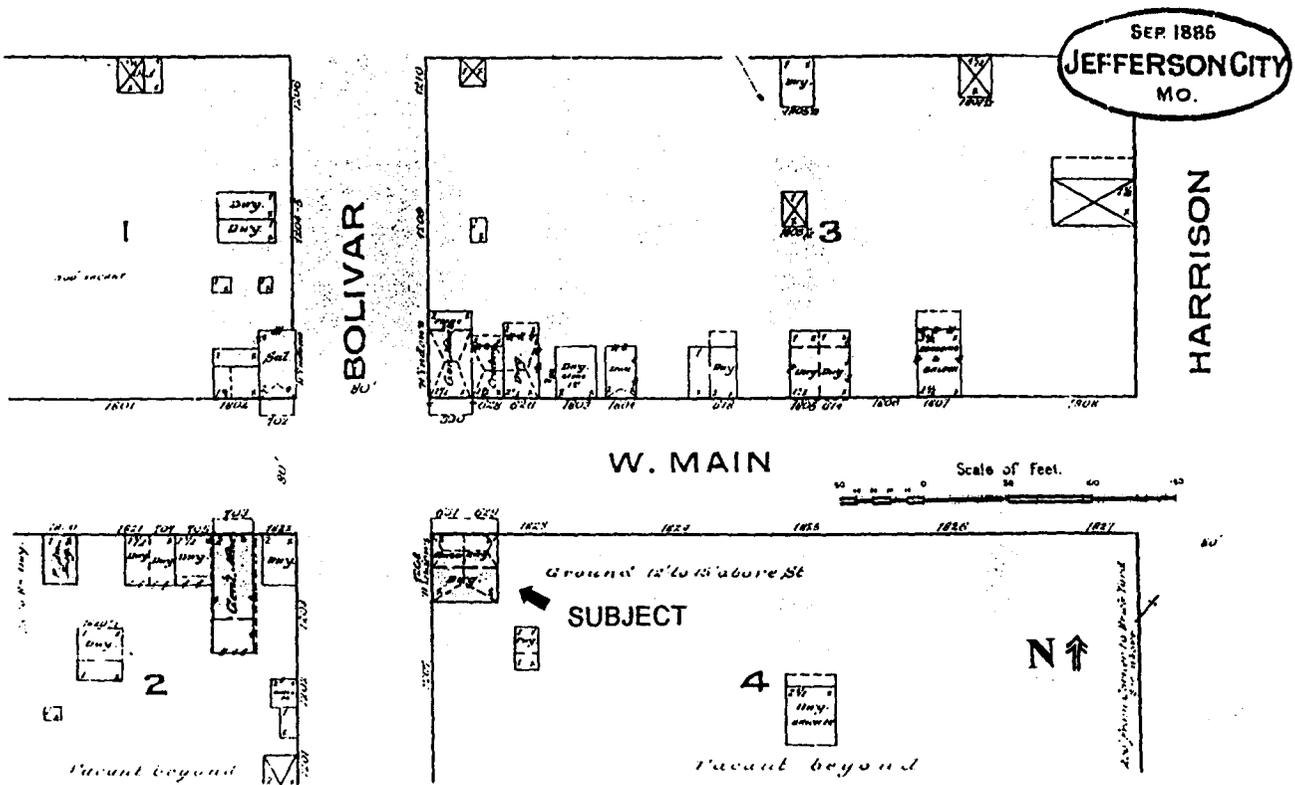
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 8

Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri

Figure 3: Sanborn Map, 1885



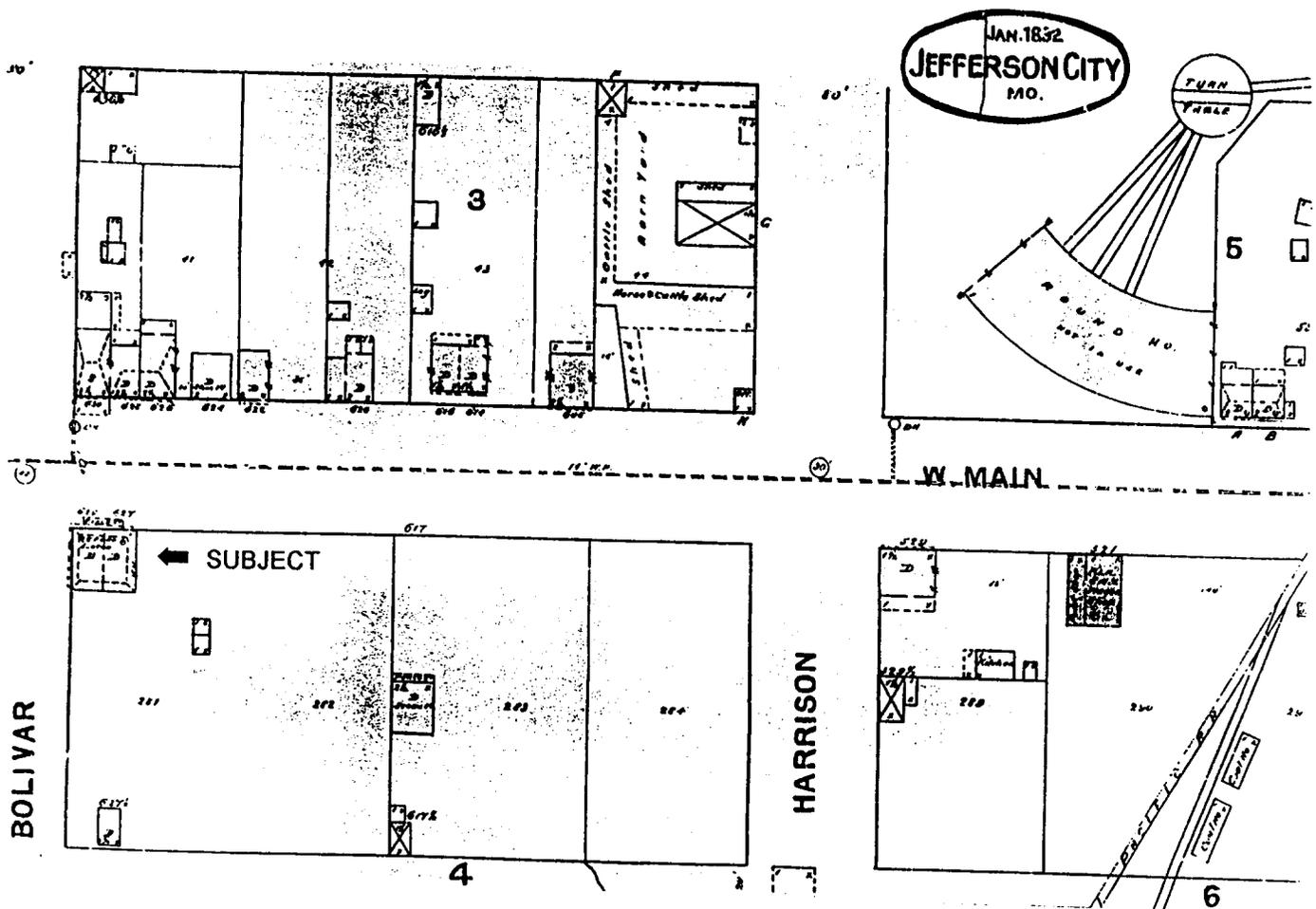
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 9

Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri

Figure 4: Sanborn Map, 1892



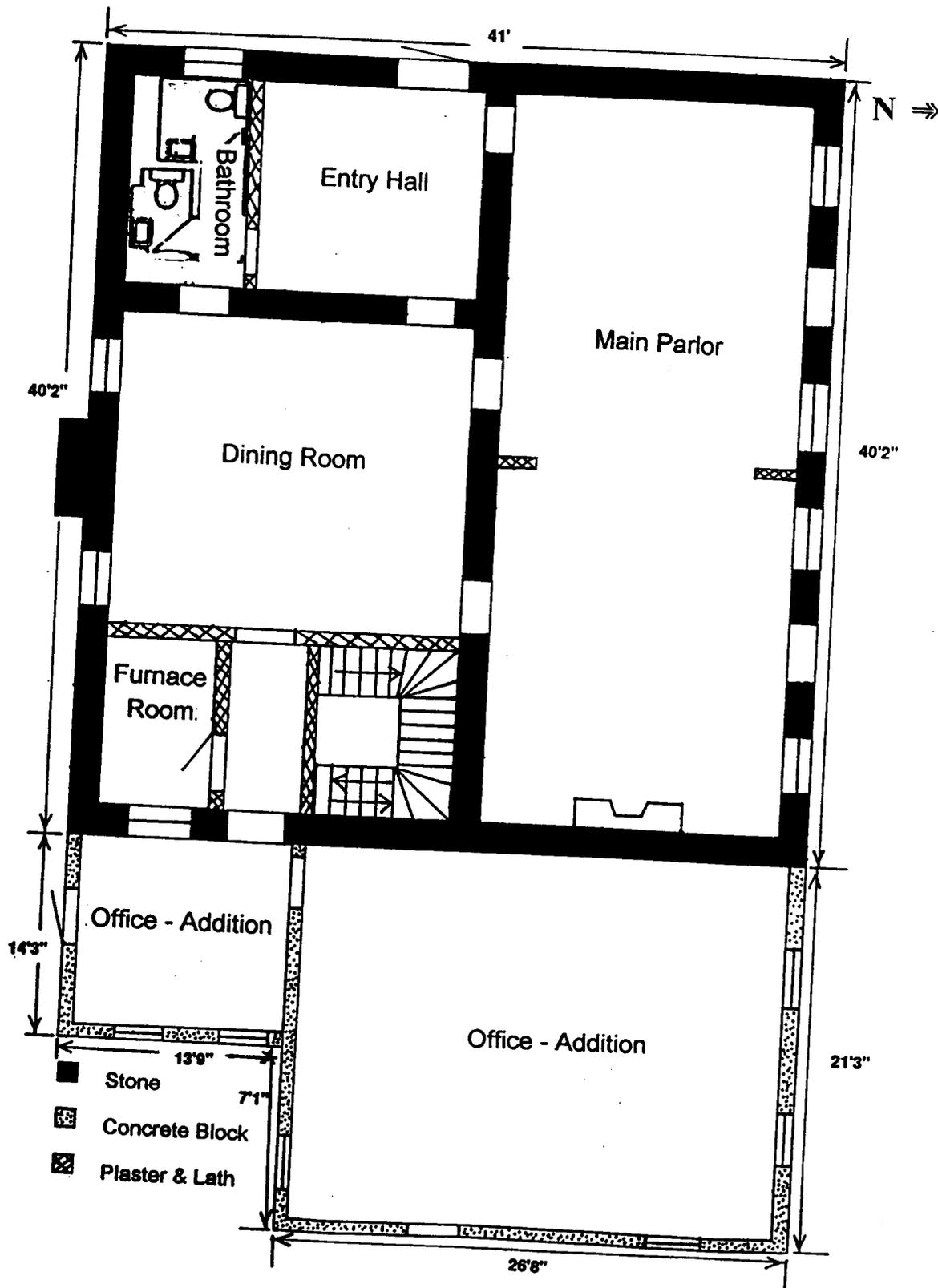
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 10

Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri

Figure 5: Floor Plan, First Floor



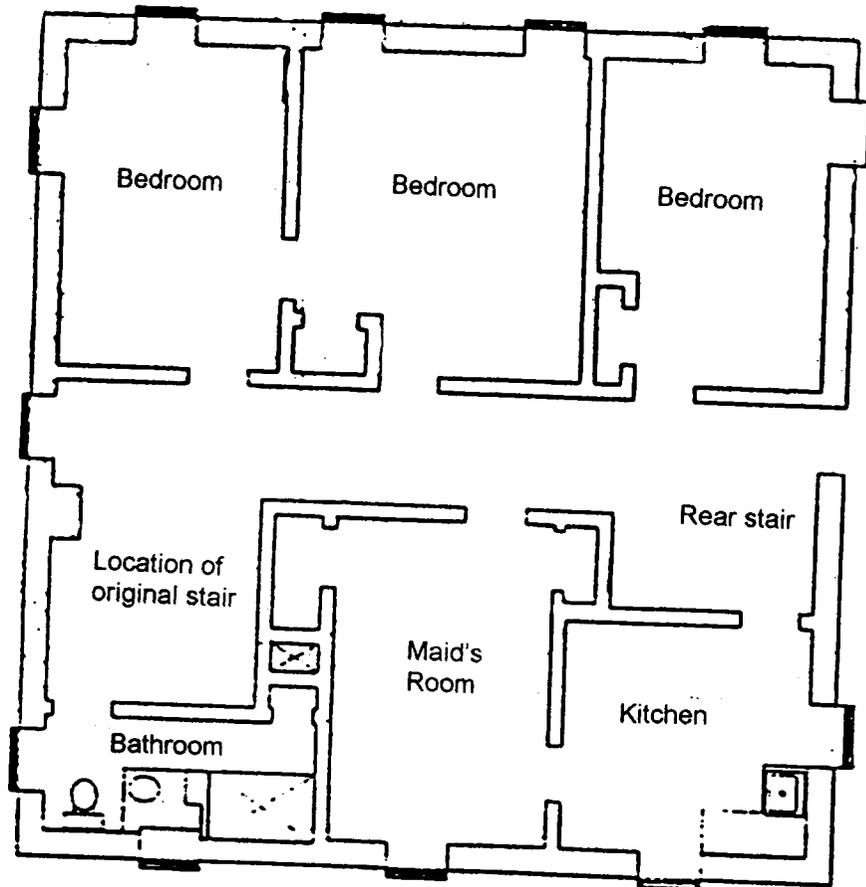
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 11

Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri

Figure 6: Floor Plan, Second Floor



N ↑

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 12

Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri

Figure 7: Floor Plan, Basement

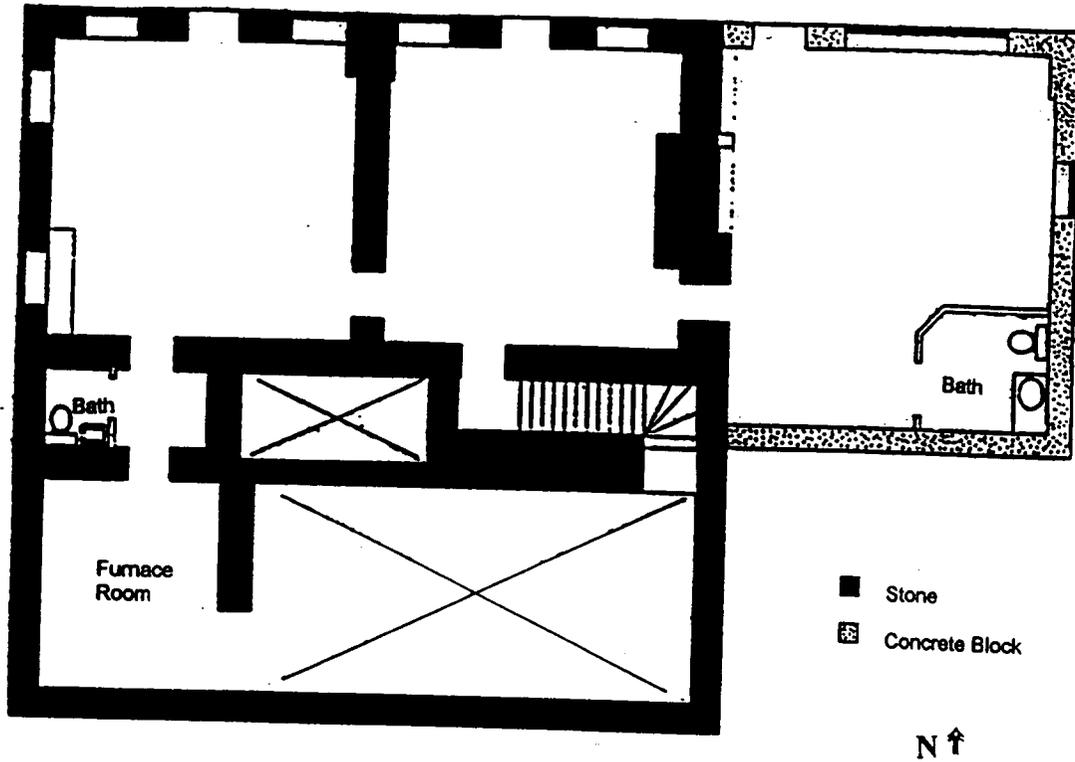
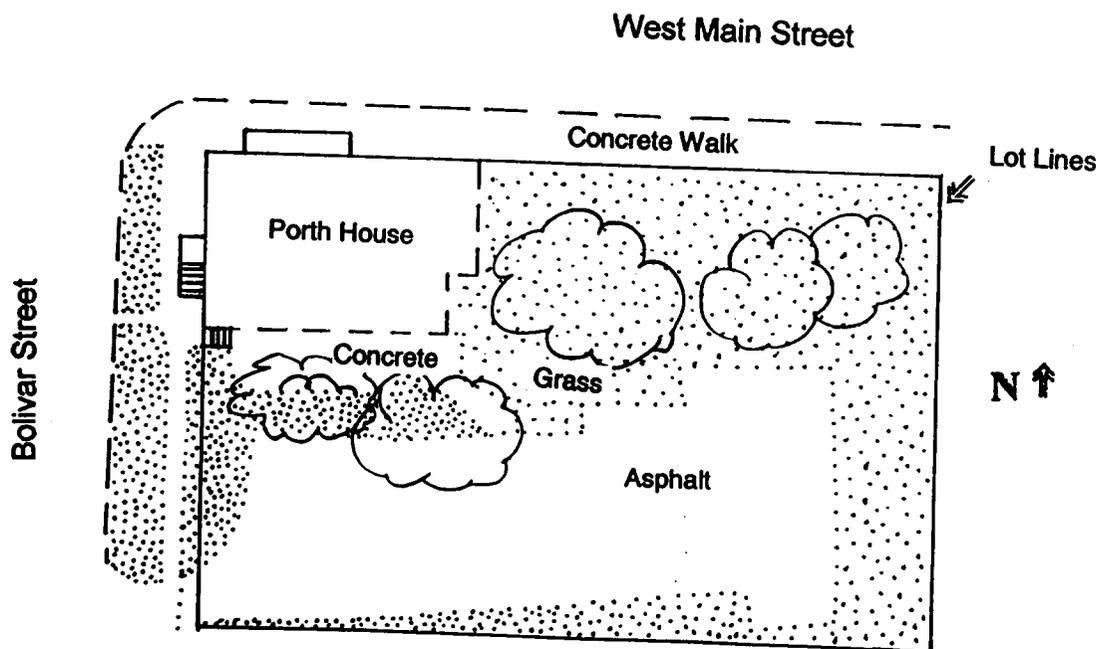


Figure 8: Site Plan



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri

Section 8 Page 13

**SUMMARY:** The Dr. Joseph P. and Effie Porth House, 631 W. Main Street, Jefferson City, is eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion C, in the area of ARCHITECTURE. The house is an example of the vernacular architecture common in the early settlement era of Jefferson City, and the much later Second Empire style, exhibited on the upper floor level. These architectural designs are still clearly visible. The stone portions of the house exhibit the work of a skilled mason, similar to that of Lohman's Landing in the nearby state historic site. By studying the stone work, it is possible to trace the evolution of the house from a one-story double pen house to the square two-story form it has had since ca. 1888. Between 1885 and 1888, an elaborate Second Empire roof was added, similar to the nearby Governor's Mansion. The Second Empire style is uncommon in Jefferson City, with less than six examples remaining. The Second Empire addition is remarkably intact, both on the exterior and interior. The house was home to the locally prominent Porth family for many years. While a Criterion B argument has not been developed, the house is potentially eligible under Criterion B. The house reflects its various periods of construction with a high degree of integrity of original location, design, setting, materials and craftsmanship. The period of significance is from the time of construction, at least as early as 1842, to the completion of the Second Empire addition, circa 1888.

**ELABORATION:**

**House and Family History:** The house was the home of the locally prominent Porth family for two generations, approximately 80 years. Van Ravenswaay notes that the family emigrated to Missouri in 1842.<sup>11</sup> William Porth, pictured in the pre-1860 historic photograph in Figure 2, was elected presiding judge in 1876, and died in office.<sup>12</sup> William Porth lived in the home during the Civil War. Fortifications were constructed around this hilltop overlooking the Capitol,<sup>13</sup> and the lower level of the Porth House was reportedly used for storage by federal troops. General Fremont's headquarters were located in the Dulle Home nearby on St. Mary's Boulevard.<sup>14</sup> William Porth appears to have been prominent in the community, yet frugal. The Sanborn Maps of 1885 and 1892 show two addresses for the house, indicating it was divided in the middle from north to south. William Porth shared the home with a boarder, F. W. Roor, a clerk, and a servant named Elizabeth Arenz, even though he was described as the "most successful Millbottom Prussian."<sup>15</sup> William Porth's son, Dr. Joseph P. Porth inherited the

---

<sup>11</sup> Charles Van Ravenswaay, The Arts and Architecture of German Settlements in Missouri, (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1977) p. 198.

<sup>12</sup> History of Cole, Moniteau, Morgan, Benton, Miller, Maries & Osage Counties, Missouri, Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1889. p. 247.

<sup>13</sup> Map. Note at bottom says "Drawn in 1872 from base map of 1842." Jefferson City History file, Missouri River Regional Library.

<sup>14</sup> "Cultural Resources Inventory and Evaluation - Capitol West, Jefferson City, Missouri," p. 20.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. p. 23.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri

Section 8 Page 14

house upon his father's death and raised his family in the home from 1888 until he died in 1923.<sup>16</sup> It was while living in this house that Dr. Porth established his medical practice, served three terms as a state representative at the nearby Capitol, and gained a reputation as a prominent citizen of Jefferson City. Dr. Porth received his medical degree from St. Louis University, and received degrees from universities in Berlin, Paris, Vienna and Greifswald. Dr. Porth served as Mayor in 1903,<sup>17</sup> as county and city physician,<sup>18</sup> and was president of the Cole County Medical Association.<sup>19</sup> Dr. Porth's medical practice operated out of the basement level of the house,<sup>20</sup> until he moved his office to 210½ High Street circa 1908.<sup>21</sup> He had one child, a daughter, who was born and married in the house.<sup>22</sup> It is apparent that the Porths were financially well off, at least for a time, as Dr. Porth was able to study in Europe for a number of years before returning to Jefferson City to establish a medical practice, and the family had at least one servant who lived in the house.<sup>23</sup> Following his death in 1923, the house was sold. During the 1930s, the house was used as a restaurant called the Colonial Tea Room.<sup>24</sup> Acquired by the Jefferson City Housing Authority in the late 1970s as part of the Urban Renewal Capitol West Project, it was renovated and rented to the Corps of Engineers until the late 1990s. The house is in the process of being rehabilitated for private office use.

Architecture: The Porth House is a good example of an early stone vernacular house, perhaps dating to the settlement era of Jefferson City, and known to have been constructed by 1842. The house retains the distinctive characteristics of the Second Empire style exhibited in the upper floor addition, and has the ornate detailing typical of the style. In 1978, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources' Office of Historic Preservation described the house as significant for its association with historic persons and events and is a representation of Jefferson City's early history. Architecturally, the building... is an important, well-preserved example of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Empire Style [and] is eligible for

---

<sup>16</sup> James E. Ford, A History of Jefferson City - Missouri's State Capitol and of Cole County, (Jefferson City: New Day Press, 1938) p. 514.

<sup>17</sup> "Cultural Resources Inventory and Evaluation - Capitol West, Jefferson City, Missouri," p. 29.

<sup>18</sup> The Daily Capital News, Jefferson City, Missouri, August 31, 1923, p. 1.

<sup>19</sup> Jefferson City Daily Tribune, Jefferson City, Missouri, January 13, 1905, p. 2.

<sup>20</sup> The Sunday News and Tribune, June 26, 1977.

<sup>21</sup> Hackman's Jefferson City & Cole County Directory, 1907-08.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> The Sunday News and Tribune, June 26, 1977.

<sup>24</sup> The Sunday News and Tribune, June 26, 1977.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri

Section 8 Page 15

nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>25</sup>

An interview with Dr. Porth's daughter in 1977 puts the date of construction at "before 1845." A newspaper article in 1965 states that the property was first deeded by the government in 1826, with the house being built between 1827 and 1842.<sup>26</sup> Van Ravenswaay notes that the family emigrated to Missouri in 1842.<sup>27</sup> So either the family purchased an existing house upon their arrival, or built the house shortly after 1842. The style of the original fireplace on the first floor, the quality and type of the original stone work, are comparable to mid-Missouri structures built in the 1820s and 1830s. Two examples would be the Lohman Building, built in 1838<sup>28</sup> a few blocks away, and the Henry Jacob Porth House in Westphalia, Osage County, Missouri.<sup>29</sup> Whatever the actual date, the house is certainly one of the oldest structures remaining in Jefferson City. An undated report titled "Pre-1860 Houses in Jefferson City" depicts 25 houses in existence at the time of publication. Only thirteen of these houses, including the Porth House, exist today.<sup>30</sup> Jefferson City was only chosen as the location for the State Capitol in 1821, incorporated as a city in 1825, and selected as county seat in 1829.<sup>31</sup> Very few houses existed when Jefferson City was selected as the State Capitol, and there were not all that many houses built before 1860. Many of the houses from this era were constructed near the river in the Millbottom, and have since been demolished.

The earliest form of this house is shown in the pre-1860 photograph in Figure 2. The house started out as a simple double pen one-story house with walk-out basement, constructed of the local limestone, commonly known as "cotton rock." The walls are constructed of random sized stones, and while not completely dressed as would be expected on a modern stone wall, the effect achieved is that of a smooth stone wall. In the pre-1860 photo, a one-story stone ell is visible to the rear. Inspection of the west wall reveals large stones which act as quoins at the mid-point in the wall,

---

<sup>25</sup> Letter, dated March 30, 1978 to General Services Administration from the Missouri DNR/Office of Historic Preservation. (Missouri DNR/Historic Preservation Program.)

<sup>26</sup> Post-Tribune, Jefferson City, Missouri, August 8, 1965, p. 13.

<sup>27</sup> Charles Van Ravenswaay, The Arts and Architecture of German Settlements in Missouri, (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1977) p. 198.

<sup>28</sup> "Cultural Resources Inventory and Evaluation - Capitol West, Jefferson City, Missouri," p. 33.

<sup>29</sup> Van Ravenswaay, p. 198. Henry Jacob Porth inherited his house in 1859, and operated a brewery in Westphalia.

<sup>30</sup> Undated report by Jean Ann Harrison, "Pre-1860 Houses in Jefferson City," Jefferson City History file, Missouri River Regional Library.

<sup>31</sup> National Register Nomination for John B. and Elizabeth Ruthven, Cole County, Missouri. p. 8.9. (Nomination on file with the Missouri DNR/Historic Preservation Program.)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri

Section 8 Page 16

indicating that at one point the wall ended at these stones, so the ell clearly was an early addition. By 1885 another addition across the rear changed the house from an L-shape to a square form.<sup>32</sup> The break in the stone and presence of large "quin" stones between these two rear additions is clearly visible on the south wall. The stone portions of the house retain their form, massing and fenestration, and the craftsmanship of the masonry is readily apparent.

Dating the addition of the upper floor is a bit easier. The Sanborn Map of 1885 shows the house having a gabled roof, rather than the current mansard roof. A historic photograph of the house with the mansard roof addition shows the former Missouri State Capitol in the background, complete with wings, which were added in 1888, so the addition must have been completed by 1888. The addition of the upper floor was constructed in the Second Empire style of architecture. The Second Empire style was a dominant style in houses built between 1860 and 1880, with later examples not uncommon in the 1880s. The style was most popular in the northeastern and midwestern states.<sup>33</sup> The most notable example of the style in Jefferson City is the Governor's Mansion, built in 1871 just a few blocks from the Porth House<sup>34</sup> by architect George Ingham Barnett (pictured in The American House as an example of the typical Second Empire style<sup>35</sup>). Indeed the two share many similarities in the detail of their roofs - particularly the dormer windows extending to the base of the roof, the distinctive iron roof cresting, and the patterned roof itself.

The Second Empire style was considered very modern in its day, as it imitated the latest French architectural fashions.<sup>36</sup> The vast extension of the Palace of the Louvre, built 1852-1857, was one of the first public works of the Second Empire in Paris, by architects L.T.J. Visconti and H.M. Lefuel. Known as the New Louvre, this heavier, more sculptural version of the 17<sup>th</sup>-century palace was the central building of the Second Empire style. However, the building's influence in America was indirect, as designs inspired by the New Louvre were entered in a competition for a new foreign office and war office in London in 1857. These designs were illustrated more widely than the original, and therefore imitated more frequently, than the Parisian prototype. Neither this, nor the fact that a handful of examples possessing the characteristics of the style had been previously executed (in France, England and the United States) before Napoleon was proclaimed Emperor detracts from the classification of the Second Empire style, as it was a consciously 'modern'

---

<sup>32</sup> Sanborn map of 1885.

<sup>33</sup> Virginia and Lee McAlester, A Field Guide to American Houses, (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984) pp. 241-243.

<sup>34</sup> The WPA Guide to 1930s Missouri, p. 230.

<sup>35</sup> Mary Mix Foley, The American House, (New York, Harper Colophon Books, 1980) p. 164.

<sup>36</sup> McAlester, pp. 241-243.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri

Section 8 Page 17

movement, deriving prestige from contemporary Paris, rather than any period from the past.<sup>37</sup>

The Second Empire style was used for many public buildings during the Grant administration (1867-1877), and so has sometimes facetiously been called the General Grant style. James Renwick, pioneer of the Romanesque Revival, was the architect of two of the first major non-residential buildings of the Second Empire style - the Corcoran Gallery (now Court of Claims), Washington, in 1859, and the Main Hall of Vassar College, near Poughkeepsie, New York, in 1860. The model for the latter was not the New Louvre, but the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Palace of the Tuileries, which as Napoleon III's official residence was almost as much a symbol of contemporary Paris. In 1862 work began on Boston City Hall, by Gridley Bryant and Arthur Gilman. Gilman subsequently became consultant to the office of the architect responsible for most of the big federal buildings during the Grant administration, Alfred B. Mullett, and is thought to have been the actual designer of many of them, including the Executive Office Building (originally the State, War and Navy Building) of 1871-1875. Another surviving Second Empire work from Mullett's office, and a powerful one, is the Old Post Office (originally the Federal Building and Customs House) in St. Louis, Missouri.<sup>38</sup> Following the panic of 1873 and the subsequent economic depression, the style rapidly passed out of fashion.<sup>39</sup>

The Porth House is typical of the simple mansard roof variant of the Second Empire style, which represented about 20% of all Second Empire houses. These houses are symmetrical square or rectangular houses, the only interruption of the mansard roof being the dormers. The mansard roof was considered especially functional, as it allowed full use of the attic level. For this reason the style became popular for remodeling earlier buildings (as is the case with the Porth House) as well as for new construction. In the Porth House, the chimneys also interrupt the roofline, as occurs in other examples of the style shown by McAlester.<sup>40</sup> The slightly concave sides of the Porth House's mansard is a common roof shape for Second Empire houses, and is extremely similar to the shape of the Governor's Mansion roof. The house's pedimented dormers extending to the base of the roof, brackets of varying size, roof cresting and patterned roof material are all typical elements of this architectural style.<sup>41</sup> Very few Second Empire style houses exist in Jefferson City, as the community's architecture is predominantly vernacular in style. In the Historic East survey, only two houses were noted, an apartment building on Capitol Avenue and the National Cemetery

---

<sup>37</sup> Foley, pp. 103-104.

<sup>38</sup> Marcus Whiffen, American Architecture Since 1780, A Guide to the Styles, (The M.I.T. Press, Cambridge, 1969) pp. 103-108.

<sup>39</sup> McAlester, p. 242.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 245, 252.

<sup>41</sup> McAlester, p. 243.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri**

**Section 8 Page 18**

Caretaker's House on E. McCarty Street.<sup>42</sup> There is another house on the 600 block of Madison Street, and, of course, the Missouri Governor's Mansion.

Another addition to the Porth House is the concrete block addition to the east side, painted the same color as the stone. While the addition does not add to the historic character of the house, it does not interfere with the ability of the house to reflect its periods of construction. This addition does not appear on the Sanborn maps of 1939, but is believed to be over 50 years of age.

The Porth House was part of the Urban Renewal Capitol West Project, a federally funded activity subject to review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. In recognition of its historic significance and the need for its protection, a Memorandum of Agreement was drafted and signed by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation in 1983.<sup>43</sup> Under the terms of this agreement, the house shall be maintained according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Any changes to the building require approval of the Missouri Historic Preservation Program, and upon sale, preservation covenants shall be attached to the property's deed.

The Dr. Joseph P. and Effie Porth House is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C, Architecture, as it retains the original form, massing, and materials of its vernacular beginnings, plus the distinctive Second Empire characteristics of the upper floor addition. The house retains a high degree of integrity of location, design, materials, craftsmanship and setting. In Jefferson City, predominantly a city of vernacular structures,<sup>44</sup> the stone portion of the Porth House is typical of architecture from the city's early period of development. Few of these early structures remain in Jefferson City. The fact that there are few examples of high-style architecture in Jefferson City makes the Second Empire addition to the Porth House an even more uncommon and distinctive historic resource.

---

<sup>42</sup> Urbana Group, "Jefferson City Historic East Survey." Jefferson City, MO: Missouri DNR/Historic Preservation Program, 1991.

<sup>43</sup> Memorandum of Agreement, dated May 19, 1983. (Missouri DNR/Historic Preservation Program.)

<sup>44</sup> Urbana Group, "Jefferson City Historic East Survey," pp. 18-19; Summary Report.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri

Section 9 Page 19

Bibliography

Cole County Recorder of Deeds Records, Jefferson City, MO.

Foley, Mary Mix. The American House. New York, Cambridge, Philadelphia, San Francisco, London, Mexico City, Sao Paulo, Sydney: Harper Colophon Books, 1980.

Ford, James E. A History of Jefferson City - Missouri's State Capitol and of Cole County. Jefferson City: New Day Press, 1938.

Goodspeed Publishing Company, History of Cole, Moniteau, Morgan, Benton, Miller, Maries & Osage Counties, Missouri. 1889.

Hackman's Jefferson City & Cole County Directory, 1907-08.

Harrison, Jean Ann. "Pre-1860 Houses in Jefferson City." Undated report, Jefferson City History file, Missouri River Regional Library.

\_\_\_\_\_. Historic photo of the Millbottom area, 1891. Cole County Historical Society.

Jefferson City Daily Tribune. Jefferson City, Missouri, January 13, 1905.

Library of Congress web page. "Bird's eye view of Jefferson City, the capitol of Missouri 1869."

\_\_\_\_\_. Letter, to General Services Administration from the Missouri DNR/Office of Historic Preservation. Dated March 30, 1978. Missouri DNR/Historical Preservation Program.

\_\_\_\_\_. Memorandum of Agreement. Dated May 19, 1983. Missouri DNR/Historic Preservation Program.

\_\_\_\_\_. Map. Note at bottom says "Drawn in 1872 from base map of 1842." Jefferson City History file, Missouri River Regional Library.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses, (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984)

National Register Nomination for John B. and Elizabeth Ruthven, Cole County, Missouri. Nomination on file with the Missouri DNR/Historic Preservation Program.

Post-Tribune. Jefferson City, Missouri, August 8, 1965.

Sanborn Maps, 1885 & 1892.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri

Section 9 Page 20

---

Sturdevant, Craig, Ruth Sturdevant and Gary Kremer. "Cultural Resources Inventory and Evaluation - Capitol West Jefferson City, Missouri." A report for the Jefferson City Housing Authority HUD Urban Renewal Project, June, 1982. On file with the Missouri DNR/Historic Preservation Program.

The Daily Capital News. Jefferson City, Missouri. August 31, 1923.

The Sunday News and Tribune. Jefferson City, Missouri. "Mrs. Baldwin remembers childhood home." June 26, 1977.

The WPA Guide to 1930s Missouri. Lawrence, Kansas, University Press of Kansas, 1941.

Urbana Group, "Jefferson City Historic East Survey." Summary Report for and Architectural/Historic Survey, 1991. On file with the Missouri DNR/Historic Preservation Program.

Van Ravenswaay, Charles. The Arts and Architecture of German Settlements in Missouri: Survey of a Vanishing Culture. Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1977.

Whiffen, Marcus. American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles. Cambridge and London: The M.I.T. Press, 1969.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri**

**Section 10 Page 21**

---

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The Porth House is located at 631 West Main Street, on the southeast corner of West Main and Bolivar streets. The boundary includes part of Inlots Nos. 281 and 282 in Jefferson City, Cole County. Beginning at the southeast corner of the intersection of West Main and Bolivar streets, proceed southeast along the south right-of-way of West Main Street 166.76 feet; then proceed southwest along the east property line of 631 West Main Street and perpendicular to West Main Street 110.07 feet; then proceed northwest along the south property line of 631 West Main Street and perpendicular to Bolivar Street 166.82 feet, to the east right-of-way of Bolivar Street; then proceed northeast along the east right-of-way of Bolivar Street 110.06 feet, to the point of beginning.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary encompasses all of the remaining land which has been historically associated with the Dr. Joseph P. and Effie Porth House.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri**

**Section Photographs Page 22**

---

Photographs

The following information is the same for all photographs:

Dr. Joseph P. and Effie Porth House

631 W. Main Street, Jefferson City

Cole County, Missouri

Photographer: Jane Beetem

March, 2000

Negative location: Jane Beetem, 1612 Payne Drive, Jefferson City, MO 65101

List of Photographs

See photo map key for indication of camera angles.

1. Streetscape - facing east toward Missouri State Capitol along W. Main Street.
2. Streetscape - facing west along W. Main Street.
3. Front facade, facing W. Main Street.
4. Detail, iron balcony.
5. Front facade and west side, facing Bolivar Street.
6. Detail, iron newel post on side stairs.
7. West and south facades.
8. Detail of brackets, roof, dormer, chimney and iron cresting.
9. East facade.
10. Original fireplace, first floor.
11. Original raised panels, first floor doorway. Lincrusta remnant visible at lower right.
12. Typical door trim and transom treatment, upper floor.
13. Typical five-panel door and original hardware, upper floor.
14. Dormer windows, upper floor.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Porth, Dr. Joseph P. and Effie, House  
Cole County, Missouri

Section Photographs Page 23

Photo Key Map

