

# SITE FILE COPY

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Missouri	
COUNTY: Jackson	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Temple Site

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Mormon Temple Site

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Corner of Lexington Avenue and River Boulevard

CITY OR TOWN:  
Independence

STATE Missouri	CODE 64051	COUNTY: Jackson	CODE 095
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**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisitions: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____ _____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Church of Christ (Hedrickites)

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Lexington Avenue and River Boulevard

CITY OR TOWN: Independence	STATE: Missouri	CODE 64051
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**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Office of Recorder of Deeds, Jackson County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Independence	STATE: Missouri	CODE 64051
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**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE:
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7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Independence Temple site, located to the west and south of the intersection of Lexington Avenue and River Boulevard, contains approximately one city block of land. Except for a small frame church building, owned by the Church of Christ (Hedrickite), the only distinguishing feature on the site is a small stone obeliscal marker. The remaining portions of the temple site are gently rolling grasslands.

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**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Sociol/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Mormon Temple site and lot, located in Independence are significant for two reasons. First, the site holds special religious meaning for the followers of Joseph Smith. Members of the various sects of the Mormon Church consider the area to be holy ground. Second, the site has major historic significance. Here was to be built the major Mormon temple which would serve as the church's world headquarters.

In July 1831, several days after Joseph Smith's arrival in the Independence area, the Prophet received a revelation designating the temple lot as the heart of the future city of Zion. As stated in the church's Doctrine and Covenants, "Wherefore, this is the land of promise, and the place for the city of Zion. . . . Behold, the place which is now called Independence is the center place; and a spot for the temple is lying westward, upon a lot which is not far from the court-house. . . ." (Doctrine and Covenants 57) (The History of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 1951 ed., vol. I, pp. 205-07.) On August 3, 1831, Smith dedicated this site. (Klaus J. Hansen, Quest for Empire, 1967, p. 47.) Several months later Edward Partridge, the first bishop of the Mormon Church, purchased 63.43 acres of land around the site chosen and dedicated by Smith. Although the temple site was surveyed and dedicated, construction did not begin. The reason for postponing the building of the temple centered on difficulty with local non-Mormon residents. Smith and other high church officials believed that their persecution by "gentiles" would make it impossible for permanent settlement. After a series of conflicts with non-Mormons, church members in 1833 fled en masse from Jackson County across the Missouri River into Clay County. Then in 1836 after more conflict with non-Mormons, the church moved to Caldwell County where a new Zion was established at Far West. (R. Don Oscarson and Stanley B. Kimball, The Travelers' Guide to Historic Mormon America, 1965, p. 54; Warren A. Jennings, "The Army of Israel Marches into Missouri," Missouri Historical Review, 62:107, January 1968.)

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8.

MORMON TEMPLE SITE

It was not until 1867 that the Mormon Church, now badly split, became interested in the Independence site. In that year Granville Hedrick, leader of a minor Mormon sect known as the Church of Christ, purchased the temple site and subsequently constructed a small frame church near the spot dedicated by Smith. Then in the 1880's the Reorganized Church of Latter-day Saints and the Hedrikites began a long legal dispute over the rightful ownership of the property. After a series of court battles, which culminated in the case going before the United States Supreme Court, the Hedrikite church received full legal title to the temple site. Today the Church of Christ, LDS, and RLDS churches all own portions of the original 63.43 acre temple lot, although the Church of Christ owns the actual temple site. (Circuit Court of the United States Kansas City Missouri: Plaintiff's Abstract, 1893; Historical Facts Concerning the Temple Lot, 1954).

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

1. Circuit Court of the United States Kansas City, Missouri: Plaintiff's Abstract. Lamoni, Iowa: Herald Publishing House and Bindery, 1893.
2. Hansen, Klaus J. Quest for Empire. Ann Arbor: Michigan State University Press, 1967.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE				
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	39°	05'	29"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"	94°	25'	31"
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"			
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **less than ten acres**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**H. Roger Grant, Research Historian**

ORGANIZATION: **Missouri State Park Board**      DATE: **April 22, 1970**  
**State Historical Survey and Planning Office**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**P.O. Box 176, 1204 Jefferson Building**

CITY OR TOWN: **Jefferson City**      STATE: **Missouri**      CODE: **24**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION      NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

<p>As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:</p> <p>National <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>      State <input type="checkbox"/>      Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name <u>Joseph Jaeger, Jr.</u></p> <p>Title <u>Director, Missouri State Park Board, and Missouri State Liaison Officer</u></p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>_____ <i>Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</i></p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p>_____ <i>Keeper of The National Register</i></p> <p>Date _____</p>
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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(Continuation Sheet)

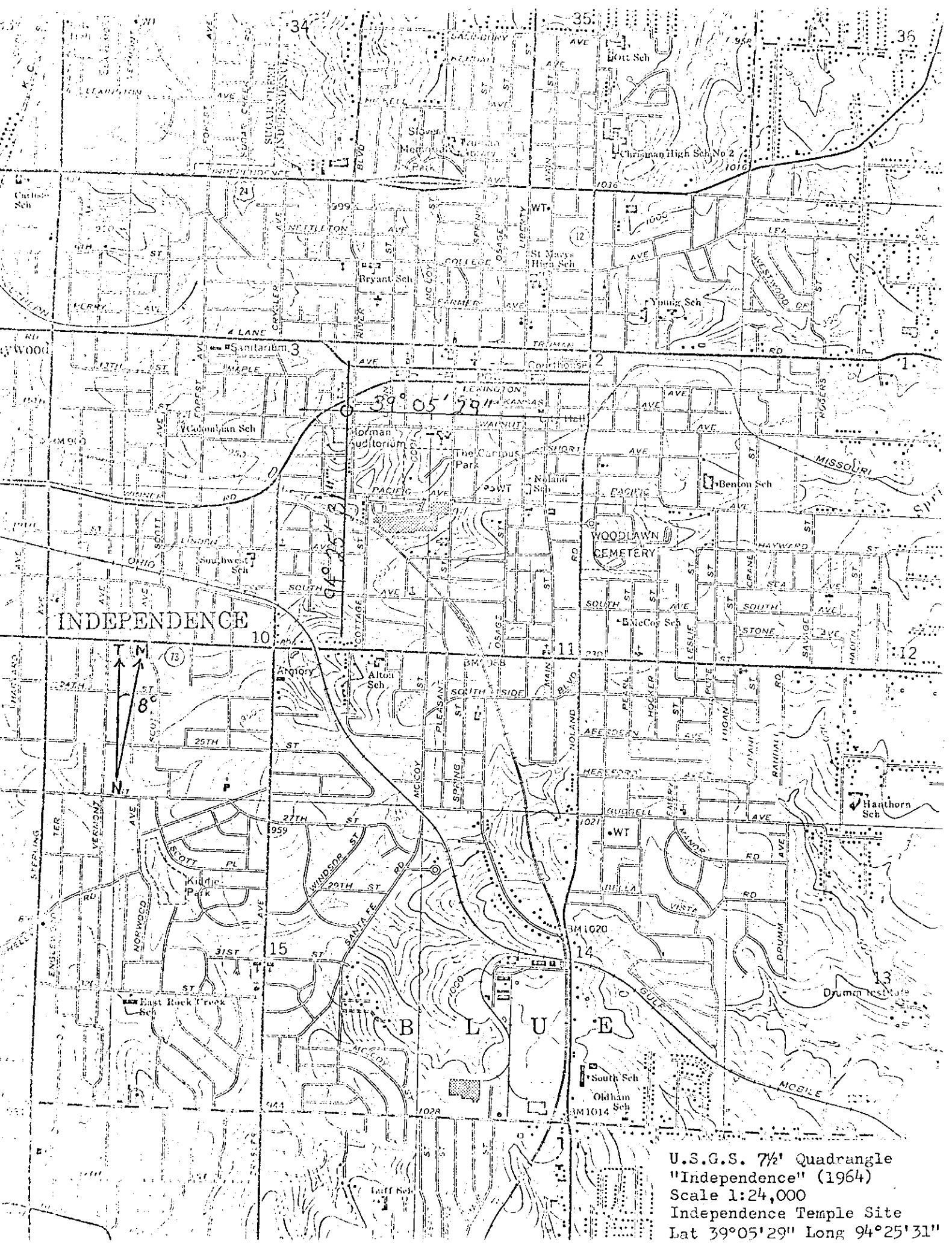
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9.

MORMON TEMPLE SITE

3. Historical Facts Concerning the Temple Lot. Independence, Missouri: Board of Publications, Church of Christ, 1954.
4. The History of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. 4 vols. Independence, Missouri: Herald House, 1951.
5. Jennings, Warren A. "The Army of Israel Marches into Missouri," Missouri Historical Review, 62-107, January 1968.
6. Oscarson, R. Don and Stanley B. Kimball. The Travelers' Guide to Historic Mormon America. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, Inc., 1965.



INDEPENDENCE 10



U.S.G.S. 7 1/2' Quadrangle  
 "Independence" (1964)  
 Scale 1:24,000  
 Independence Temple Site  
 Lat 39°05'29" Long 94°25'31"