

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

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received **AUG 25 1987**
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Dr. Uriel S. Wright Office

and or common Dr. Uriel S. Wright Office

2. Location

street & number 120 Church Street not for publication

city, town Fayette vicinity of

state Missouri code 029 county Howard code 089

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Boonslick Heritage Association, Inc., Douglas S. Miller, President

street & number 203 N. Main Street

city, town Fayette vicinity of state Missouri 65248

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Commercial Trust Company

street & number c/o L. W. Jacobs, Jr.

city, town Fayette state Missouri

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Missouri State Historical Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1986 federal state county local

depository for survey records Department of Natural Resources
Historic Preservation Program

city, town P. O. Box 176
Jefferson City state Missouri 65102

7. Description

Condition

excellent deteriorated
 good ruins
 fair unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

This property is a small Federal-style two-story brick building with an inaccessible attic. The outside dimensions of the building are 19 feet square with each floor originally containing one room.

The building fronts immediately upon the sidewalk with the facade composed of Flemish bond brick. The ends of the front facade feature closer bricks approximately 1/3 the size of the regular stretcher bricks in alternating rows. These bricks are smaller than the header bricks and appear to have been placed 2 rows from the end of the building in an attempt to make the building fit the lot and assume a specific size. The first story windows of the facade are topped with gauged jack arches. The facade contains a central door and one window on either side evenly spaced. The door frame is original and features hand carved moulding of three rectangular panels with each panel being longer than the panel above it.

The second story of the facade features three windows for a total of 5 on the front of the building. The windows also contain their original surrounds which are hand carved and feature deeply fluted architraves with a bull eye in the upper corners of each.

A boxed cornice with moldings below occurs at the eave of the facade.

The two sides of the building originally were blank walls stretching up to the roofline. The southern side of the building is now encased in a common wall with the adjacent building up to the second story line. The entire northern wall is exposed and a door has been added to the second floor apartment. This was probably done in the 1940s. A chimney extends through the roof at the north end of this wall.

The back of the building abuts an adjacent building up to the second story line. It features 2 windows identical in style to those on the front. Modern sashes have been inserted in all window openings.

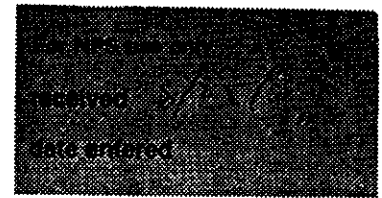
The interior of the structure was originally one room per floor with an interior staircase in the northwest corner leading to the upstairs. When the building was divided, the top portion of the stair was retained complete with the railing, but the landing was removed and the stairs run straight to a new door cut in the north wall. The ground floor room was then sealed from the stairwell so that two totally self-contained rooms were formed.

The ground floor room contains an original Georgian style mantel still in place. The fireplace has been boarded up. The fireplace on the second floor has also been walled in, although closet placement suggests that it still remains behind the wall.

Partitions have been added in both rooms during a 1940s renovation of the building. They have not substantially changed the building. The original window mouldings still remain on the interior as well.

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This small building was constructed for business purposes and reflects the typical room/business combination of the Boonslick. Small in scale, it features decorative touches typical of the other Federal buildings of the period. It also is typical of the vernacular Missouri buildings with the details being simpler than what can be seen in some Federal period homes in the area.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics: government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1828 - 1832 Builder/Architect Unknown - architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Dr. Uriel Wright office building is eligible under Criterion C because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the vernacular Federal style as manifested in the central Missouri "Boonslick" region during the first half of the 19th century. Drawing its name from one of its later tenants (Dr. U. Wright, 1882-1914), the building is significant in the area of architecture; it is, by all best estimates, the oldest building on the square in Fayette. Built between 1828-1832 the building was one of the first permanent architectural fixtures in the region and retains its physical character from its period of significance. The building exemplifies the distinctive character of early vernacular domestic Southern architecture while conveying the persistence of tradition and cultural conservatism associated with mid-Missouri's ante-bellum society.

Architectural Significance and Context: The Wright building is located in the town of Fayette, county seat of Howard, central Missouri's oldest county and the heart of a region that has been known from earliest times as the "Boonslick." The Boonslick Region (consisting of the present-day counties of Boone, Cooper, Howard and Saline) was named after a saltworks operated in about 1807 by two sons of Daniel Boone--Nathan and Daniel Morgan Boone. Their venture did not succeed but they did lend their celebrated name to central Missouri's oldest American settlement region. A small band of permanent settlers established an outpost along the Missouri River banks beginning in 1810, and "forted up" there during the Indian hostilities that accompanied the War of 1812. The conclusion of that war set the stage for an influx of migrants from the states of the Upper South--Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina--that approached biblical proportions in the eyes of some contemporary observers.

In 1816, Howard County's first seat, Franklin was established on the banks of the Missouri River, and in its capacity as America's westernmost town quickly became a frontier boomtown. The opening of a land office in Franklin in 1819, followed by statehood a year later, paved the way for the rapid development of the Boonslick. Unfortunately, due to the raging brown currents of the Missouri River, Franklin began to be washed away, building by building, making it necessary to establish a more centrally located county seat situated on high ground. Fayette became the new county seat in 1823 and was laid out with a courthouse in the center surrounded by a square. The Uriel Wright building was constructed within 5-10 years of the actual founding of the town, and is the only survivor of that original town square streetscape.

The first two decades of Boonslick history witnessed the establishment and flowering of a remarkable regional culture based on the outlook and values of the Old South. This florescence generated in one instance a brilliant

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political life (eight of Missouri's first fifteen governors resided at one time or another in Howard County) and in another produced the great nineteenth century artist, George Caleb Bingham. Wealthy farms and hemp and tobacco plantations, based on slave labor, and growing and prospering towns, drawing their wealth from a thriving trade that extended from Santa Fe to New Orleans, provided the impetus for the appearance of the distinctive architecture of the Boonslick.

The vernacular Southern architecture of the Boonslick region is of particular importance not only to the architectural history of Missouri, but also to that of the Upper South as well. Several reasons account for this fact. The first is that the Boonslick was the most American, and Southern, of Missouri's territorial and early statehood settlement frontiers. The Euro-American outposts along the west bank of the Mississippi River were initially French, and did not become "Americanized" until the early Statehood period. By contrast, Southerners were the dominant group in the Boonslick from the very beginning of permanent Euro-American settlement. Using Fred Kniffen's concept of initial occupance, it is possible to conclude that the Boonslick received a post-pioneer settlement imprint that was virtually entirely derived from the traditions and material culture of the Upper South.

A second reason is that because the Boonslick was the first permanent American settlement in the Missouri River country, its vernacular architectural traditions began a decade or two earlier than those of other settlement regions. As a result of this early beginning, the Boonslick has the best and most extensive representation (small though it may be) of exploration/settlement period Southern American vernacular architecture in Missouri. During this early period, ca. 1819-1840, the Boonslick witnessed a final western florescence of the Federal style, along with vestigial elements of the Georgian style, both deep in their provincial phases, and lagging well beyond the exhaustion of the more sophisticated manifestations of these styles in such cosmopolitan centers as the Bluegrass or Tidewater.

A third reason is that because of the Boonslick region's reputation as the Eldorado of the Missouri River country, a well educated and ambitious class of men and women with ties of kinship and economic interests to the Eastern states gravitated to the region and attempted to replicate a dignified and enduring cultural landscape that reflected the deeply imbued Southern traditions and values they brought with them. The result of their efforts, as we have already suggested, was the finest, oldest, and most varied and interesting ensemble of exploration/settlement period buildings to be found in Missouri.

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Having said all of the above, it must be noted that the years have not been kind to the early architectural heritage of the Boonslick region. The forces of abandonment and destruction have left a devastated wake, so that the history of that region's antebellum built environment must be reconstructed more from Historic American Buildings Survey, and other, data than from surviving examples. The Uriel Wright building, itself, is a fortunate and improbable survivor of the otherwise complete and total transformation of the Fayette town square, the present-day configuration of which is the result of post-Civil War rebuildings. Now happily under the stewardship of preservationists, the Wright building has long outlived its contemporaries, and stands today as a unique and rare survivor of a vanished age.

An evaluation of the architectural significance of the Wright building should begin with the observation that the property shares in common with what is known of early commercial construction in Missouri the fact that, despite its historic commercial function, it is entirely domestic in character and appearance. It could have easily served as a dwelling, and it embodies all the distinctive characteristics of early Southern dwelling construction, except for the fact that it presently lacks the rear or side wing usually appended to Southern houses. Because of the fact the Wright building possesses a high degree of integrity and still retains most of its original features, a close scrutiny of it will tell much of early Boonslick building practices.

We should begin with what is typical about the building. It can first be said, in this respect, that the building typifies the vernacular Federal/vestigial-Georgian mode that was pursued by the early Missouri craftsmen. This mode could manifest itself in any of the standard Southern house types from single-pen to central-passage I house configurations. Such dwellings, whether constructed of hewn logs, braced timber framing, or brick (stone being used only in foundations or chimneys in Boonslick construction), generally had eaves flush with their gable ends, as does the Wright building, and symmetrical facades of three, four or five bays. The brick work of the Wright house is also what one would expect to encounter in a building of the exploration/settlement period: flemish bond is reserved for the facade, while common bond is employed on the remaining sides. The gauged brick arches over principal window and door openings are typical of the era, and lend to the building the spare, crisp and cleanly articulated look of the provincial Federal style.

The building's most arresting exterior features are the window surrounds of the facade; the style of execution of these surrounds--deeply grooved architraves accentuated by bulls-eye blocks in the upper corners--is a hallmark of the

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Howard County Federal style and can be encountered adorning door and window openings of several area dwellings built during the late 1820s and early 1830s. The Wright building differs from these other buildings, however, in its comparative smallness and modesty, its lack of the exuberantly carved Federal style mantels (the finest achievements of the vernacular Federal style in the trans-Mississippi West) and other fine woodwork they contain, and by the curious fact that on the Wright building these surrounds are found on the exterior while in the others this feature was employed inside.

The ground floor mantel in the Wright building, while not of interest as folk art, is still important as a good example of vestigial-Georgian decoration. Its design is the most simplified and distilled expression of the prototypical Georgian mantel; it consists of a simple breakfront shelf resting on built-up ovolo moldings below which are architrave blocks at either end and a simple band of molding articulating the fireplace opening. That such a feature, a tiny, free floating fragment broken off from the vast and complex Georgian ideal of the eighteenth century, should make its way across such a vast distance, and persist so far beyond its time, is eloquent testimony to the inherent conservatism of Southern culture, and to the powerful pull of tradition in remote frontier settings.

There are other, and more fundamental ways in which the Wright building exhibits the traits of cultural conservatism. We have so far been addressing the building in terms of vernacular style. This approach is not entirely satisfactory, however, because vernacular Southern buildings of the type under consideration are the product of complex and interacting historical forces that can only be partially explained by the notion of style. Throughout the colonial and antebellum periods, Southern vernacular architecture developed slowly and cautiously a limited set of form-classes derived from English prototypes that evolved during a three-century long housing revolution, ca. 1500-1800. These form-classes reflected post-Medieval influences: hall and hall-and-chamber plans, single-pile profiles, lofted or storied elevations, and internal enclosed stairs to serve the upper levels; the influence of the Renaissance was also evident in square cornered, symmetrical facades, the central-hall plan, open staircases, and in the evocation of Classicism as the symbolic architectural language for the proto-modern forces that were being unleashed. That this dialogue between these great historic forces permeated the domestic architecture of the Old South, and was expressed throughout its entire domain, can be confirmed by an analysis of the form of the Wright building.

While the ordered, three-bay facade of the Wright building reveals the distant power of the Renaissance, its single-pen plan reflects still more remote

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post-Medieval origins. The one-room plan is, in fact, the most remarkable aspect of this building. Virtually every other early brick house in the Boonslick, or Missouri for that matter, is of either the hall-and-parlor or central-passage variety. This single-pen plan, the basic building block of Southern vernacular architecture, was usually reserved almost exclusively for log homestead construction, and became, in the form of the log cabin, the quintessential symbol of the frontier experience. Two-story, single-pen houses of log or frame construction were identified by Howard W. Marshall in his study of the folk houses of Little Dixie; he termed this dwelling type a "stack house." But while the Wright building might technically be a stack house, its formal character conveys a much different feeling than Marshall's folk stack houses, and the building is at least two or three decades older than any of the stack houses identified in Little Dixie. Despite this difference, the fact that the Wright building shares in common with log cabins the same deep post-Medieval roots is betrayed by the presence of a boxed-in stair (of which only the upper portion is presently intact) granting access to the upstairs room. This is a pre-Georgian feature, in terms of historical origin, and is a common fixture of storied or lofted single- and double-pen Southern dwellings, regardless of construction material.

To summarize, the Wright building is significant because:

1. It is the oldest building on the square in Fayette, and probably the town's oldest building.
2. It is a rare survivor from the first period of permanent architecture in the Boonslick, central Missouri's earliest Euro-American settlement region.
3. Because of its high level of intactness, it embodies the distinctive characteristics of early vernacular domestic Southern architecture in the trans-Mississippi West.
4. Because it was built on the western extreme of the Old South, it serves as an excellent illustration of role of tradition and cultural conservatism in Southern vernacular architecture.

Additional Background Information:

The abstract on the Wright building property shows that on September 19, 1828, the lot was sold for \$135.00 to Abel Marley and Randolph Cole, hatters. This price is higher than prices for neighboring lots although no written proof exists as to whether a building was on the property at that time.

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Fayette was already a busy community in 1828. The local newspaper reported an inventory of 4 stores, 2 groceries, 4 taverns, 2 printing offices, 5 lawyers, 4 physicians, 2 painters, 3 saddlers, 2 hatters, 1 tailor, 2 shoemakers, 2 wool carding machines, 2 cabinet makers, 2 blacksmiths, 1 watchmaker, 1 chairmaker and a considerable number of carpenters, masons, and plasterers.

The actual building is first mentioned in the November 1, 1832 indenture where the structure is offered as collateral when Marley and Cole borrowed money from Anthony W. Rawlins (Rollins, ed.). Randolph Cole died in the fall of 1832 and his will instructs his administrator to sell the building at public sale. This was done and Abel Marley purchased the property on January 1, 1833 for \$453.50. He in turn sold the structure on November 14, 1846 for \$1,500.00 to Reuben Johnson and Henry Kring. The price jump reflects the booming business structure in Howard County during this era. The building was then sold in 1857 to Frances Blakey. She paid only \$600.00 for the building, but the abstract reveals that the rest of the lot had been sold off in the meantime for non-payment of debts. Blakey owned a candy shop in the building. Local tradition says that on the night the town learned of Lincoln's murder, those who were Northern sympathizers placed candles in their windows. Among those who participated in this mostly Confederate town was Blakey who lived above her shop. She placed her candle in the shop window on the first floor so it wouldn't be missed. (The 1860 census shows that the county was 59% slave before the war -- Northern sympathies were rare!).

Blakey sold out for \$1,000.00 in 1868 and the next owners used the property until purchased by Dr. Uriel S. Wright in 1882 for \$2,800.00. He used the building as his medical office until his death in 1914. Dr. Wright was president of the Missouri State Medical Association in 1900. A native of Fayette and a graduate of Central Methodist College, he was the father of Dean N. Louise Wright, first dean of Swinney Conservatory of Music at Central Methodist. Dean Wright was one of the premier female musicians in the United States around the turn of the century.

Upon Dr. Wright's death, the property became involved in a New Madrid claim dispute which was finally settled just prior to the Great Depression when the building sold for \$3,500.00. By 1937, the structure was worth only \$900.00.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name "Fayette, MO"

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	5	5	2	7	3	4	0	4	3	3	2	9	3	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

B

Zone	Easting			Northing										

C

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D

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E

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F

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title 1. Maryellen McVicker

organization Friends of Historic Fayette

date May 23, 1986

street & number 813 Christus

telephone 816/882-3141

city or town Boonville

state Missouri 65233

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Wayne E. Iron

for Frederick A. Brunner, Ph.D., P.E., Director, Department of Natural Resources and State Historic Preservation Officer

date 8/17/87

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

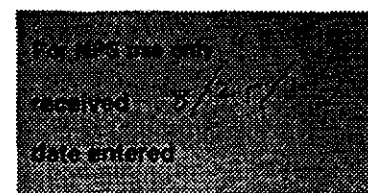
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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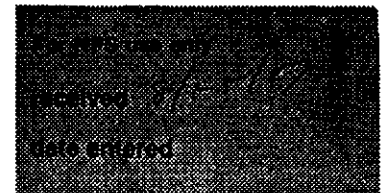
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Continuation sheet Dr. Uriel S. Wright Office Item number 9

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INTERVIEWS

Denny Davis, owner of Woodcreek Corporation, on May 23, 1986.

L. W. Jacobs, President of Commercial Trust Company, on May 23, 1986.

Mary Shell, present tenant of Uriel S. Wright Building, on May 23, 1986.

8/25/87

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A parcel of land on which is erected a brick building, being a parcel of the North part of Lot No. 117 in the original Town, now City of Fayette, Missouri, said building fronting approximately twenty-one (21) feet, six (6) inches on North Church Street and extending Southwesterly toward an alley approximately Twenty-one (21) feet, ten (10) inches.

Also an undivided one-half (1/2) interest in and to a brick wall between the aforesaid described building and a building located on the South one-half (1/2) of said Lot.

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2. Hugh Davidson
Preservation Planner and
State Contact Person
Historic Preservation Program
Division of Parks, Recreation,
and Historic Preservation
P. O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102
Phone: 314/751-5377
Date: August 20, 1987

Dr. Uriel S. Wright Building #1 of 7
Fayette, Missouri

Douglas S. Miller
August 1986
Boonslick Heritage Association, Inc.

Principal (Northeast) facade, looking
Southwest



Dr. Uriel S. Wright Building #2 of 7
Fayette, Missouri

Douglas S. Miller
August 1986
Boonslick Heritage Association, Inc.

Principal and Northwest facade looking
South



Buick

KELLER MOTOR CO.

Dr. Uriel S. Wright Building #3 of 7
Fayette, Missouri

Douglas S. Miller
August 1986
Boonslick Heritage Association, Inc.

Northwest and Southwest facades,
looking East



Dr. Uriel S. Wright Building #4 of 7
Fayette, Missouri

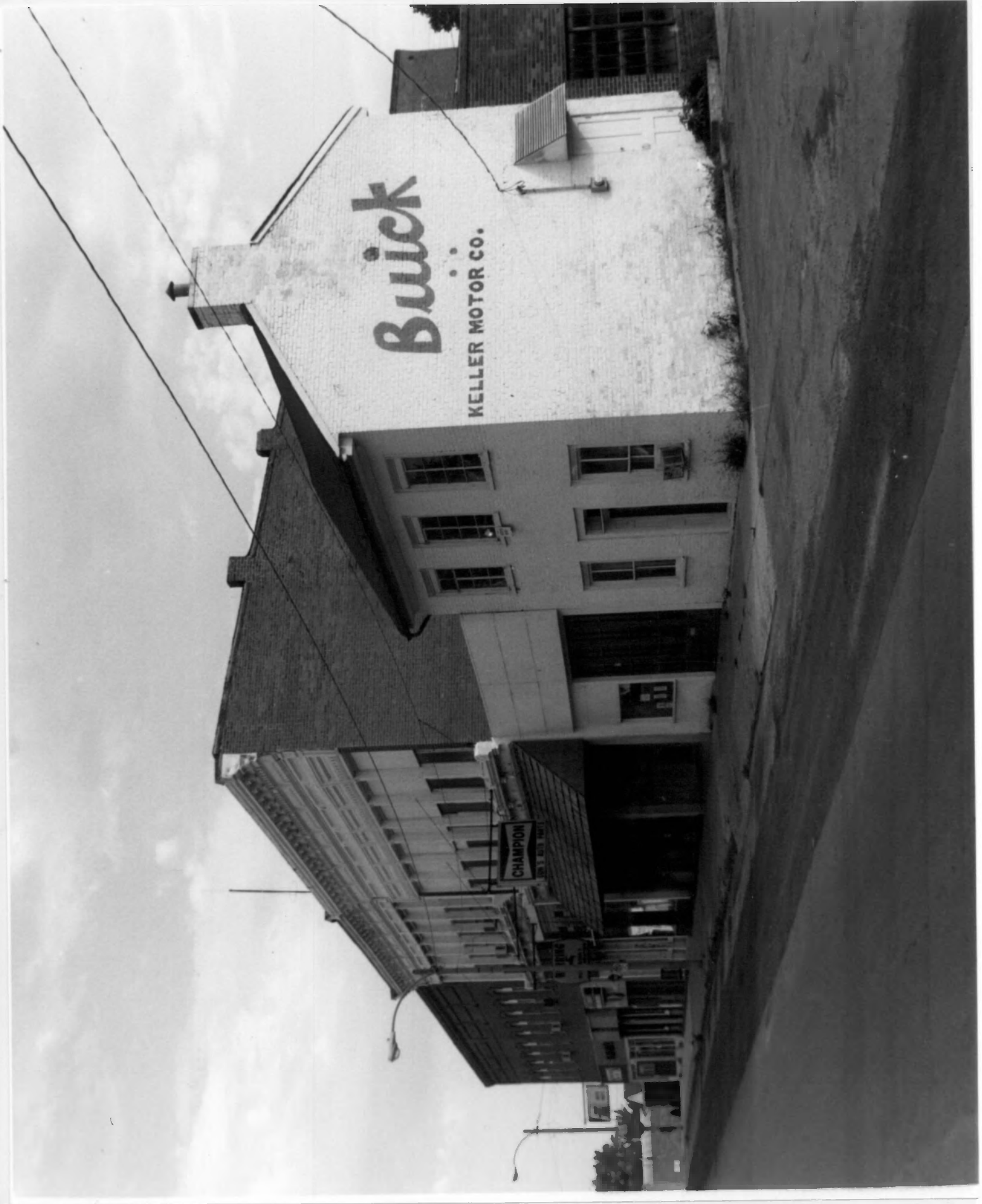
Douglas S. Miller
August 1986
Boonslick Heritage Association, Inc.

Dr. Wright building in context of
adjoining properties, looking South

Buick

KELLER MOTOR CO.

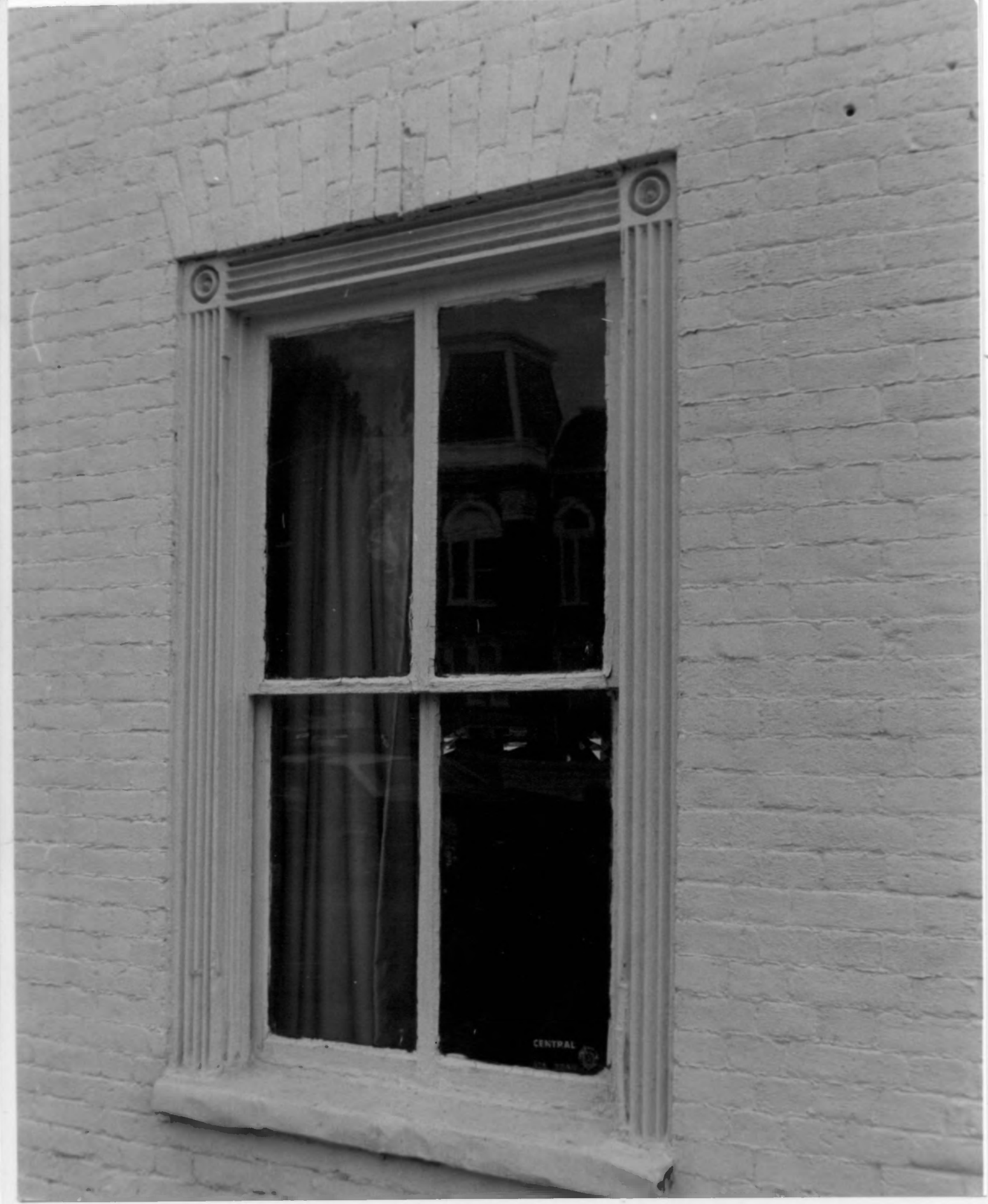
CHAMPION
FIRST BEST PARTS



Dr. Uriel S. Wright Building #5 of 7
Fayette, Missouri

Douglas S. Miller
August 1986
Boonslick Heritage Association, Inc.

Detail of window molding on principal
facade



Dr. Uriel S. Wright Building #6 of 7
Fayette, Missouri

James Denny
Circa 1983
James Denny

Detail of interior window molding of
principal facade, looking Northeast



Dr. Uriel S. Wright Building #7 of 7
Fayette, Missouri

James Denny
Circa 1983
James Denny

Detail of fireplace mantel on first
floor

