

MISSOURI COURTHOUSES

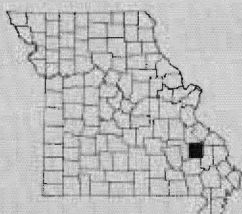
MADISON COUNTY

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Fig. 1. Madison County Courthouse, 1822-1899. (Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri, gift of Mrs. Clarice B. Andrews)

County Madison
Organized Dec. 14, 1818
Named After . . . James Madison
County Seat . . . Fredericktown



Madison County held its first Circuit Court meetings in homes. The County Court organized in 1821, and it too met in homes until 1822. Madison County's first courthouse was a brick structure, built of handmade bricks from the area in 1822; it continued in use until J. F. Boggs was paid \$25 for tearing it down in 1899 to make way for the new courthouse (Fig. 1). The building



Fig. 2. Madison County Courthouse. 1899-. Architect: Theodore C. Link (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

originally had a cupola, which was removed in February 1838.

This style building, square with a hip roof, cupola, and regularly placed windows and doors, and sometimes with transverse halls, was one of the most popular courthouse designs in Missouri. Madison County's measured about 50 feet square, with the principal entrance facing south. There were four rooms and a north-south hall on the ground floor; the courtroom was on the second floor. The building continued in use until the end of the century. According to a turn-of-the-century county clerk, there is no record of the builder or the cost, but construction was financed by the sale of county-owned lots.

September 5, 1899, Madison Countians voted in favor of a new courthouse, and the County Court selected Theodore C. Link to prepare plans. Link, a well-educated and trained St. Louis architect, came to Missouri in the 1870s. Lewis Miller, of Iron County, was awarded the building contract for \$18,093. Constructed of red brick, the building measures 66 by 76 feet; the principal entrance is on the south; offices open off a north-south hall. The courtroom, about 52 by 52 feet, occupies the central portion of the second floor; a small office, and the jury and witness rooms are on the east and west. Room occupancy has changed, but the basic plan remains the same. Final costs amounted to approximately \$22,000 (Fig. 2).

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