

MISSOURI COURTHOUSES

CARROLL COUNTY

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Carroll County planners reserved the highest point within the 80-acre grant to the county for the courthouse. The first courthouse was built in 1834 according to specifications in the County Court Record filed in July 1834. The building was 18 by 20 feet, of hewn logs, 1½ stories with either brick or stone chimney, and underpinned with rock and mortar. William Glaze, contractor, completed the building in November 1835 at a cost of \$273.50. The building and lot sold for \$450 in May 1841.

The second courthouse, a 40-foot-square, two-story, brick building, occupied the center of the square. Window frames, sash and staircase were to be of walnut. The floor on the east side of the first floor, for the judge's bench, was elevated and laid with brick, the remainder of the floor laid with oak plank. Woodwork was painted white, the doors mahogany. Specifications called for four interior wood columns to be painted marble. The clerk recorded a description of the building in the County Court Record.

Work began in September 1839. The exterior was to be completed by November 1842; interior finishing continued into 1843. Costs are difficult to estimate. Initially, \$4,000 was appropriated with subsequent amounts of \$1,000 in 1841, and \$375 for the cupola. Warrants for \$1,728.90 were issued in December 1840; thereafter many orders were rescinded or altered, and piecemeal work progressed slowly.

Although original plans called for a cupola, apparently it was not built until citizens petitioned for construction in 1855. Commissioners presented a plan for a cupola in August 1855 similar to the one on the semi-

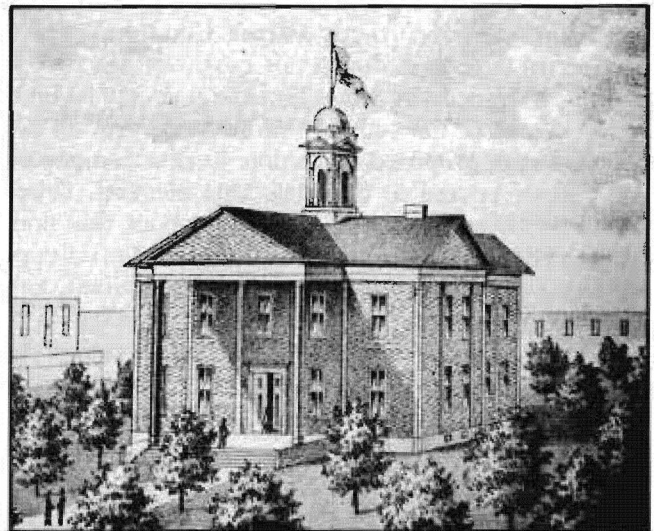


Fig. 1. Proposed Carroll County Courthouse, 1867.
(From: *An Illustrated Historical Atlas Map of Carroll County, 1876*)

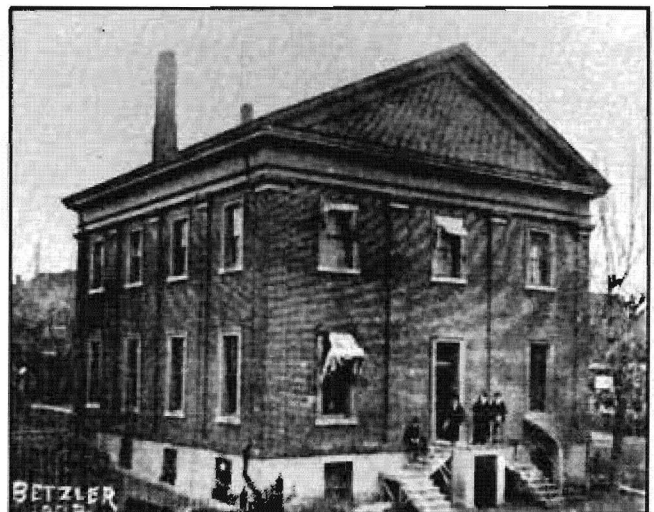


Fig. 2. Carroll County Courthouse, 1867-1901.
(From: *Carroll County, Missouri, 1910-1968*)

County Carroll
Organized Jan. 2, 1833
Named After . . . Charles Carroll,
local resident and
signer of
Declaration of
Independence
County Seat . . . Carrollton



nary, which had been built in 1854. The commissioners reported in December 1856 that the work by Thomas Tweedy was not completed as required by contract and ordered him to comply or the county would sue him.

The work seems to have dragged on, for a new commissioner, Joseph Troxel, was appointed in April 1857. Samuel Turner and S. A. Clark's *Twentieth Century History of Carroll County, Missouri*, 1911, reported that according to tradition, the building was unsafe and was razed in 1865.

In 1867 \$2,500 was appropriated for a new courthouse and Henry Sloan appointed commissioner. The contract for the two-story, brick building was given to Jacobs, Farris and Co. for \$12,350. They completed construction in December 1867. Funds came from the general fund and a bond issue. An illustration of the proposed building (Fig. 1) indicated a larger, more elaborate building than the one built (Fig. 2). This building, razed in 1901, was bought for \$900.

Participants in a mass meeting held early in 1901 came to three conclusions: Carroll County needed a new courthouse that should not cost over \$60,000; it should be financed by direct tax; and it should be built in the center of the square. An illustration of an accepted design proposed by Jerome Legg accompanied news items related to the May 1901 election. Other Missouri courthouses built by Legg about this time include Shelby, Gasconade, St. Charles and Mississippi. However, all bids exceeded the \$60,000 limit, and Legg was dismissed.

The court then solicited new plans and accepted the proposed design of Robert G. Kirsch. In December 1901 the court accepted a bid from John Scott and Sons,

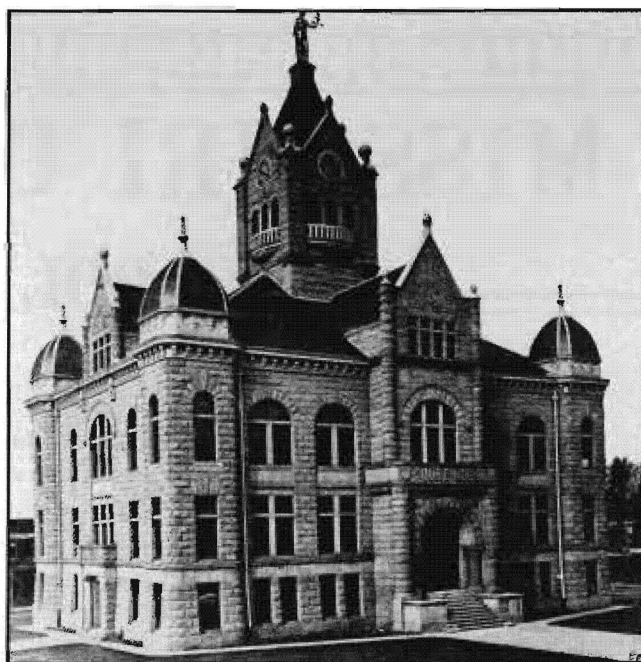


Fig. 3. Carroll County Courthouse, 1901-.
Architect: Robert G. Kirsch
(Courtesy: State Historical Society of Missouri)

Lancaster, for \$45,900. Cornerstone ceremonies took place in June 1902, and the building that continues to serve as the Carroll County courthouse was completed in June 1904 (Fig. 3). Kirsch did similar buildings in Adair, 1897, and Polk and Vernon counties, 1906.

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