

# MARIES COUNTY

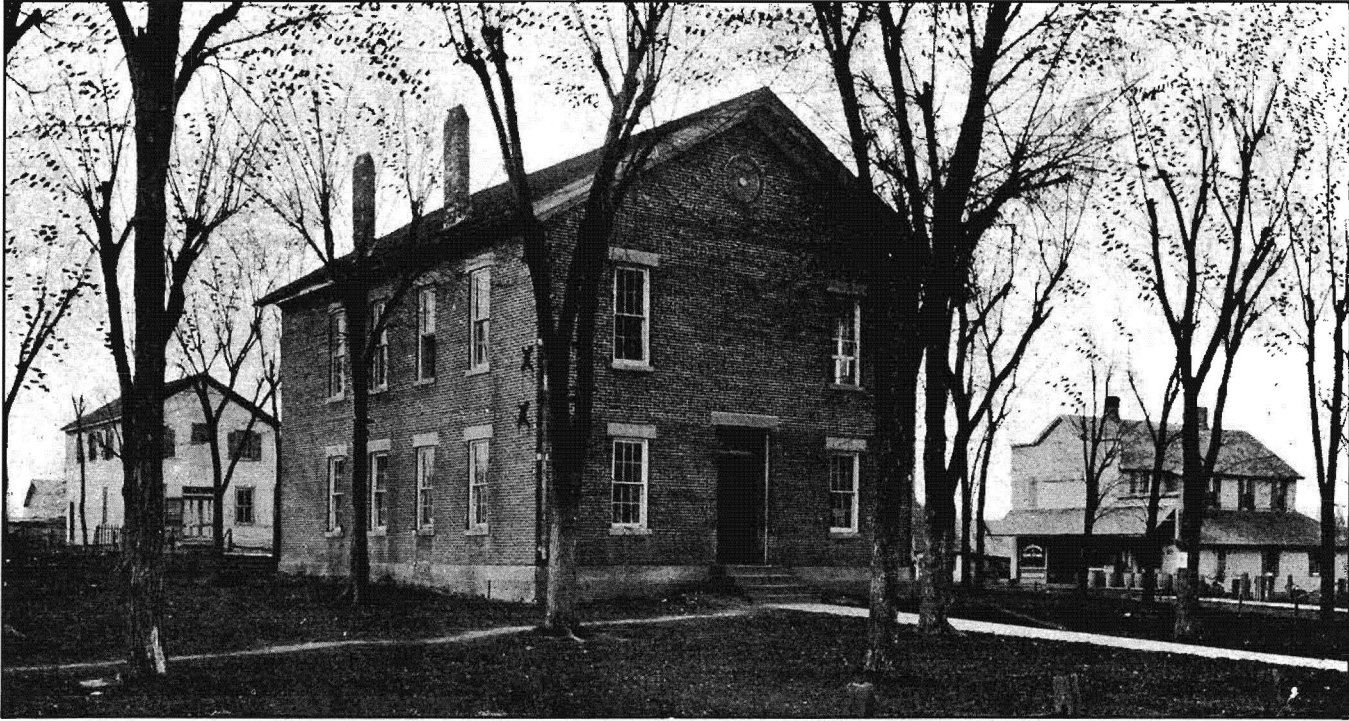


Fig. 1. Maries County Courthouse, 1869-1940. (From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)

**M**aries County organized in 1855 and built its first courthouse the following year. Robert McKin, of California, Missouri, constructed the brick, two-story building, which measured 40 by 44 feet, for \$3,000. It faced east and stood close to the street on the edge of the square. A fire, believed to have been set intention-

ally, destroyed the building and most records November 6, 1868.

In March 1869 the court appropriated \$10,000 for construction of a new courthouse, to be built in the center of the square (Fig. 1). George A. Lett, of St. James, contracted to build the courthouse and completed his work in February 1870. The two-story building, with simple gable roof, resembled the previous structure. A double stairway on the north led to the courtroom on the second floor. The building continued in use until the 20th century courthouse was built.

County . . . . .	Maries	
Organized . . . . .	March 2, 1855	
Named After . . .	Two principal streams, Big and Little Maries	
County Seat . . .	Vienna	

**I**n December 1939 Maries County considered a new three-story courthouse, 115 by 80 feet, of Missouri



Fig. 2. Maries County Courthouse, 1940-. Architect: Macon C. Abbitt

stone and concrete. About \$90,000 was the investment considered: Work Projects Administration funding \$50,000, supplemented by a bond issue proposal for \$40,000. The following month the *Belle Banner* urged community support; the editorial cautioned that federal aid would not last forever. County residents voted approval in January 1940.

The architect was Macon C. Abbitt. Allan Bethel, Jefferson City, was foreman of construction. Excavations began in June 1940. It was built in two stages. County offices occupied the first unit, while the second unit, which extended to the south, was finished. The jail occupied the top story. The September court term of 1942 met in the new \$76,000 courthouse (Fig. 2).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Books

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### Newspapers

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(Vienna) *Maries County Gazette*, Dec. 14, 1939; June 20, Dec. 5, 1940.

### Manuscript Collections

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