

# MISSOURI COURTHOUSES

## PERRY COUNTY

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After Perry County organized in 1821, county officials used a two-story, log building for conducting county business. In 1825 a contract was let for the first courthouse. Funding of the \$1,486.25 project came from the sale of 55 lots from property deeded to the county by Bernard Layton.

No known illustrations of the structure exist. The two-story building was either frame or a combination of frame and brick. Thomas Hayden contracted to build this courthouse and completed his work in August 1826. The site was on the northeast corner of the square.

By 1859 a growing county created a need for more space. The court appropriated \$8,000 for a two-story building, completed in 1861. John R. Layton superintended construction (Fig. 1). The building continued in use until after the turn of the century, when grand jury reports indicated the condition of the building was beyond repair.

After county residents presented a petition calling for an election in February 1903, voters approved a proposition September 1, 1903, for a \$30,000 bond issue to finance a new courthouse. From several plans submitted in November, the court selected the proposal of J. W. Gaddis, Vincennes, Indiana.

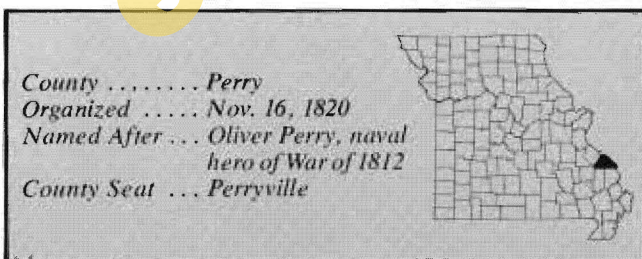
Caldwell and Drake, Columbus, Indiana, contracted for construction in January 1904. Construction began in February 1904; cornerstone ceremonies were conducted June 4, 1904. Total cost on the red brick, 65-by-92-foot building was \$31,819. The courthouse continues in use today (Fig. 2.)



Fig. 1. Perry County Courthouse, 1859-1900s.  
(From: "Public Buildings of Perry County, Missouri," *Perry County Republican*, 1904)



Fig. 2. Perry County Courthouse, 1904-  
Architect: J. W. Gaddis  
(From: postcard, Trenton Boyd collection)



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