

MISSOURI COURTHOUSES

PULASKI COUNTY

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Fig. 1. Sketch of Waynesville during Civil War showing Pulaski County courthouse, 1843-1872. two-story building in center. (Courtesy: Dru L. Pippin)

Fire destroyed most Pulaski County Court records June 13, 1903. The remaining records begin with book D, dated November 7, 1898. The only known reference to Pulaski County history prior to 1898 is Goodspeed's 1889 *History*.

In 1818 a Pulaski County was organized but did not survive. Its boundary included no part of present day Pulaski County. Another Pulaski County, organized in 1833, passed through many boundary changes before the present boundaries were set in 1859.

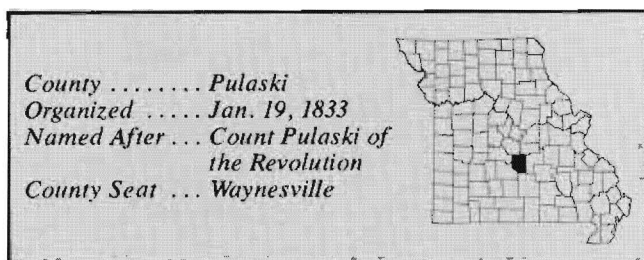
First courts met in homes. In 1839 commissioners

were appointed to procure a site for building a courthouse. By August 1840 the court accepted a hewn-log courthouse, apparently intended to be temporary.

In February 1843 officials moved the county seat to Waynesville, and contractor Allen Hamor built on the present site a two-story, brick courthouse measuring 40 by 28 feet at the base and 22 feet high (Fig. 1).

Three rooms and two halls filled the first floor, and two doors led to the outside. Although badly damaged in the Civil War, the courthouse continued in use until 1872 when it was considered beyond repair and no longer safe for storing records or holding court.

The state appropriated \$2,000 war damages and the county issued \$6,000 in bonds for construction of a new courthouse in 1872-73. An additional appropriation of \$1,500 brought the total to nearly \$10,000. The two-story, brick courthouse, built on a part of the old courthouse foundation, was larger than the first, measuring 60 by 40 feet at the base and 22 feet high. W. C. Kerr superintended construction. Fire consumed the build-



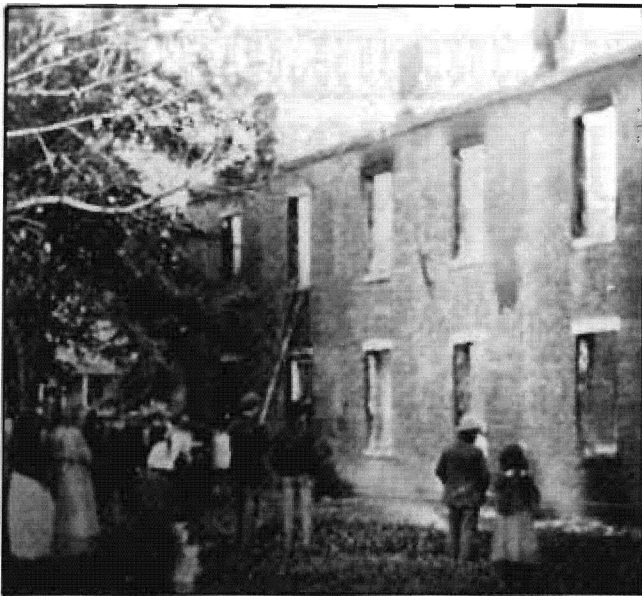


Fig. 2. Pulaski County Courthouse, 1872-1903, after fire June 13, 1903.

(Courtesy: Pulaski County Historical Society)

ing June 13, 1903. The only known photograph of the building shows the walls that were left standing after the fiery destruction (Fig. 2).

On July 3, 1903, less than a month after the fire, the Pulaski County Court ordered rebuilding and selected architect Henry H. Hohenschild to draw plans. The court was conservative and stayed within an austere budget. Ed Long, Rolla, Missouri, contracted the building for \$10,240 in September 1903. He completed the brick, 60-by-40-foot building in March 1904, nine months later (Fig. 3). The exposed elements in the ceiling construction are a notable feature. Insurance compensation and general funds covered the cost of construction.

Today county offices still occupy the first floor with the courtroom on the second floor. The Pulaski County courthouse is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

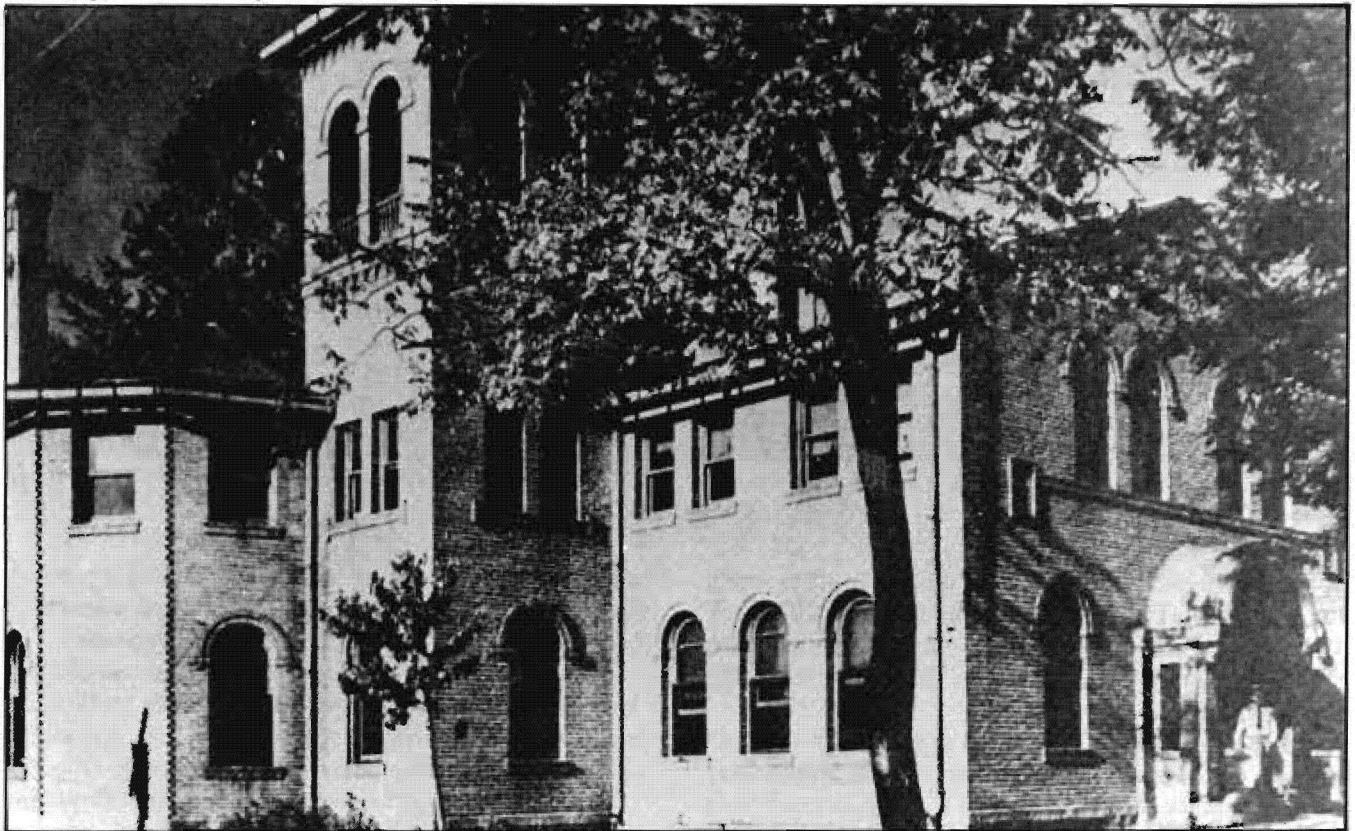


Fig. 3. Pulaski County Courthouse, 1903-. Architect: Henry H. Hohenschild (Courtesy: Pulaski County Historical Society)

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