

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name Marion County Jail and Jailor's House

other names/site number Palmyra Jail; Palmyra Massacre Jail

2. Location

street & number 210 West Lafayette Street [n/a] not for publication

city or town Palmyra [n/a] vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Marion code 127 zip code 63461

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this
[X] nomination [] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my
opinion, the property [X] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered
significant [] nationally [] statewide [X] locally.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [].)

Signature of certifying official/Title Claire F. Blackwell/Deputy SHPO

Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [].)

Signature of certifying official/Title

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

[] entered in the National Register
See continuation sheet [].

[] determined eligible for the
National Register
See continuation sheet [].

[] determined not eligible for the
National Register.

[] removed from the
National Register

[] other, explain
See continuation sheet [].

Signature of the Keeper

Date

5. Classification

| Ownership of Property | Category of Property | Number of Resources within Property | |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| | | Contributing | Noncontributing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <u>1</u> | <u>1</u> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local | <input type="checkbox"/> district | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State | <input type="checkbox"/> site | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal | <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> object | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> |
| | | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> |
| | | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> |
| | | <u>1</u> | <u>1</u> |

Name of related multiple property listing.

n/a

Number of contributing resources
previously listed in the National
Register.

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

Government/correctional facility

Domestic/Single dwelling

Current Functions

Vacant

7. Description

Architectural Classification

Greek Revival

Materials

foundation Stone

walls Brick

Stone

roof Asphalt

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history

☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

Property is:

☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ **B** removed from its original location.

☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.

☐ **D** a cemetery.

☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ **F** a commemorative property.

☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

Politics/Government

Military

Architecture

Periods of Significance

1858 - 1951

Significant Dates

1858

October 18, 1862

Significant Person(s)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Asay, A.B.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

☐ previously listed in the National Register

☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register

☐ designated a National Historic Landmark

☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State Agency

☐ Federal Agency

☐ Local Government

☐ University

☐ Other:

Name of repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than 1 acre

UTM References

| | | | | | |
|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|----------|
| A. Zone | Easting | Northing | B. Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 15 | 626320 | 4406250 | | | |
| C. Zone | Easting | Northing | D. Zone | Easting | Northing |

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carrie Crozier/Intern

organization State Historic Preservation Office date September 2001

street & number P.O. Box 176 telephone 573/751-4692

city or town Jefferson City state MO zip code 65102

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Marion County Court

street & number 100 S. Main telephone 573- 769-2549

city or town Palmyra state MO zip code 63461

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Marion County Jail and Jailor's House
Marion County, Missouri

Summary: Constructed in 1858, the Marion County Jail and Jailor's Residence is located at 210 W. Lafayette St., Palmyra, Marion County, Missouri. The two-part building consists of a brick, double-pile, central passage main block, resembling a deep I-house and a broad two story ell constructed of dressed limestone blocks. A full-width, one story front porch across the primary facade, a later addition, is supported by smooth tapering Doric columns. Greek Revival styling is evident in a dentiled brickwork frieze which wraps in to the gable ends for a pedimented effect, along with side lights and segmented transom framing the main entrance.

Narrative: The Marion County jail in Palmyra was built in 1858 and is commonly known as the Palmyra Massacre Jail. It is situated on the northeast corner of Lafayette and Dickerson streets. It is a vernacular two story Greek Revival building with a large rear ell. The main block is 45 feet wide by 36 feet deep. In the original configuration, the main block served as the jailor's house. The rear ell was the principal jail space and was for male prisoners only. Entry to the female cells is through the main house, about two-thirds up the stairs to the second floor. These two sizable cells are original, extending into the jail block on the same level as the upper level men's cells.

The residence portion of the building is built of soft local brick laid up in common bond and has a rubble stone foundation with a dressed chamfered water table. The south (front) facade is three bays wide, consisting of paired four over four double hung windows, stacked first floor to second floor. Lintels and sills are of dressed limestone. The center bay entry originally had side lights and segmented transom, now replaced by plywood panels and a modern slab hollow core plywood door. Recent tuck pointing (within the last 40 years) was sensitively done with heavy lime mortar and retains original joint profiles.

Beneath the eaves of the house runs a nine course brick corbeled entablature with a center spaced vertical dentil row. The original roof was made of metal, while currently the roof has asphalt singles. One chimney is visible from the south facade. Historically, there were two symmetrically spaced chimneys with the same dentil work on the tops of them. A single story porch was added some time in the 1920's. The simple wooden Doric columns have concrete block bases. The extremely low pitched porch roof is covered in asphalt shingles. The concrete floor of the porch covers the openings that had originally existed into the basement. One remaining opening is evident on the west side of the building, aligned with the first and second story window openings.

The east facade is two bays wide. The windows on this portion of the building are single four over four double hung windows, also with dressed limestone lintels and sills. An exterior door to the original jailor's office is located in the northernmost corner of this facade. In the gable ends of this portion of the building, the dentiled frieze follows the pitch of the gable, while the front and rear facade friezes wrap around and end as broken pediment.

The west end of the building is a mirror image of the east, with a door from the kitchen to the west storage building, which also contains a kitchen, added during the 1920's.

The jail block (rear ell) of the jailor's house/jail is a building 40-feet long by 35-feet wide attached to the center of the north wall of the house and extending northward. The structure is built entirely of non-laminate limestone. The foundation is of semi-dressed limestone, as was the original floor (the floor

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Marion County Jail and Jailor's House
Marion County, Missouri

is now covered with concrete). A dressed limestone water table separates the foundation from the upper two-story-high exterior and interior walls of the jail. The jail ell is gabled (north-south) with the south gable intersecting with the rear (north) of the house block. The four exterior walls of jail block are constructed of blocks ranging from 3-5 feet, approximately 18 inches high, and 18 inches thick. The method of masonry construction of the jail block is said to be unique and escape-proof, in that each horizontal surface of the stone is keyed with stone courses above and below by placing of a cannon ball into two half-spherical concave cups chiseled into each stone. Because of this detail, no block could move in any direction.¹ The blocks were laid up in common bond or "broken joint" fashion with narrow mortar joints.

The west and east facades each have openings for four windows on the upper portion of the walls. There are no windows to the first level of the jail block. Originally, each window was covered in heavy wire mesh, on top of woven strap window barring. Currently, the two center windows on the east facade have been replaced with ventilation fans.

The north end of the jail block is gabled, with a simple broken pediment. There is one window located high in the gable of the wall. The roof consists of the original terne sheathing.

While the entire main block (with the exception of the female cells to be described) originally served as the home for the sheriff and his family, more recently its uses came to be the sheriff's office complex with family-use rooms on the second floor for one of the jailor's families. Finally, the residential functions of the house gave way to space needs for evidence storage, deputies' equipment storage, photography room, etc. in addition to the aforementioned modern era uses.

The floor plan of the main block is balanced, with a walk-through stair hall in the center of the house. The stairway is on the west (left) and the hallway is on the east (right) side of this foyer. To the east (right) of the central hall is the former sheriff's office and to the rear of that is the jailor's office/radio dispatch room. The present jailor's office was originally the sheriff's office and jail office, but the two east rooms were adapted to different uses once the building was no longer used as a residence. It is in the jailor's office that the modifications are most apparent. Several layers of flooring are apparent, as are additions and removal of partial walls, and shelving. During the conversion of the house portion into the jail offices, a door was cut into the wall between the two east rooms, at nearest the east exterior wall. To the west (left) of the center hall was the family dining room, later adapted to a room split with a wall and screening for visitation of prisoners by family, minister, or attorney. The north (rear) room is the original kitchen, which has remained a kitchen for the preparation of the prisoners' meals.

On the second floor, the front room on each side of the upper center hallway is a former bedroom. At the south (front) end of the hall is the center facade paired-windows, and at the rear (north) end of the hallway, off a stairway landing, are the female cells. Equally spaced off both sides of the hallway are doors to the four rooms, originally all bedrooms.

¹Caldwell, Dorothy J. ed. Missouri Historic Sites Catalogue. The state historical society of Missouri. Columbia Missouri, 1968. Pg 104

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Marion County Jail and Jailor's House
Marion County, Missouri

All walls in the home are plastered (except the female cells), plaster-to-brick on the exterior walls and on the interior bearing walls, plaster-on-lathe on interior non-bearing walls. Floors throughout the residential portion of the house are 6-inch tongue and groove pine. Residential room ceilings are 10-foot high and are plaster-on-lathe. During the conversion of the residence to office space, modern suspended tile was installed, and has recently been removed. Floors, ceilings, and walls of the female cells are 1/4-inch sheet steel; cell doors are woven strap steel, and sheet steel bed frames hang from the north (rear) walls.

The main house has a complete basement with a stairway from the kitchen directly under the first to second floor stairway. Interior basement bearing walls are brick up to the attic space. A chimney runs from the basement through the kitchen, in the rear of the west front bedroom and exits the roof just north of the east-west ridge. The removal of the corresponding chimney occurred around the same time as the installation of the vent for the house/jail boiler. Heating of the jail was probably originally by stove, later by steam. Its present boiler, in the basement of the sheriff's house, is non-operational. The basement floors are partially brick, partially concrete and support the present heating unit. There are no basement windows. The floor-to-ceiling height varies from room to room throughout the basement and averages seven feet.

Sometime in the 1920's, a summer-kitchen-type building was added in the west yard some ten feet west of the kitchen door. That building is gabled (east-west) and has north and south single windows; the building most recently served as a pantry/supply room and principal kitchen. A full basement serves as added storage. More recently, a breezeway or enclosed vestibule was built from the storage building to the main block surrounding the kitchen door. Now, one can go from the kitchen to the newer kitchen/supply room without going outdoors.

The main door from the residence into the cell block resembles an old bank safe door and is cast iron with cast iron ornament. This is the only entry into the cell area. Just inside the cell block of the main door is a woven strap cage, with a separate door into the cell area itself.

The interior of the cell block consists of common areas (hallways and/or bullpens) surrounding the individual one and two-inmate cells. The flooring of the jail is poured concrete. Some local people claim that this floor was poured over the original floor, but there seems to be little evidence to support this. The main floor cells and stairway to the upper ward-type cell were placed in the center of the cell block away from outer stone walls. All cell walls, ceilings, and floors are constructed of 1/4" inch steel plate. The large open cell on the upper level appears to have originally been 4-5 separate cells. The dividing steel plates were removed at some point, most likely using a blowtorch, as seen by the uneven cuts visible in the cell area. Corners, doors, door jambs, etc. are constructed of L-angle steel riveted to the sheet steel or steel strapping, similar in construction to the Monitor and Meramec-type "ironclads." There is room for 28 beds. In recent years, for some reason unknown to sheriff office officials, all cell doors but three are missing from the jail.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

Marion County Jail and Jailor's House
Marion County, Missouri

In all respects, both the residential portion and the jail itself retain a high degree of Civil War-era integrity, with virtually no irreversible modifications. Much of the interior woodwork is intact, and the windows are original. It is typical of many Midwestern house/jail combinations of the period mid-nineteenth and early twentieth century and is virtually the twin to the jail built in 1864 on the square in Carthage, Illinois, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The jail sits on the west half of a double lot, with a parking lot on the east half of the lot along Dickerson Street. North (behind) the jail is a modern wooden shed on a gravel foundation, constructed recently for storage of equipment being used for the work being done on the courthouse. North of the shed, runs an east-west alley. The facade of the main block of the complex sits back 20-feet from Lafayette Street. The lot location is across Dickerson Street west from the present turn-of-the-century (and previous) Marion County Courthouse. In the blocks north, south, and west of the jail are still a number of houses contemporary to the jail, all of which were built as residences and still retain some historic integrity. Main Street, one block east of the jail and running in front of the courthouse, contains the commercial and public buildings of "downtown" Palmyra. The historic character remains to a considerable degree intact, some of it typical of the post-Civil War periods.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

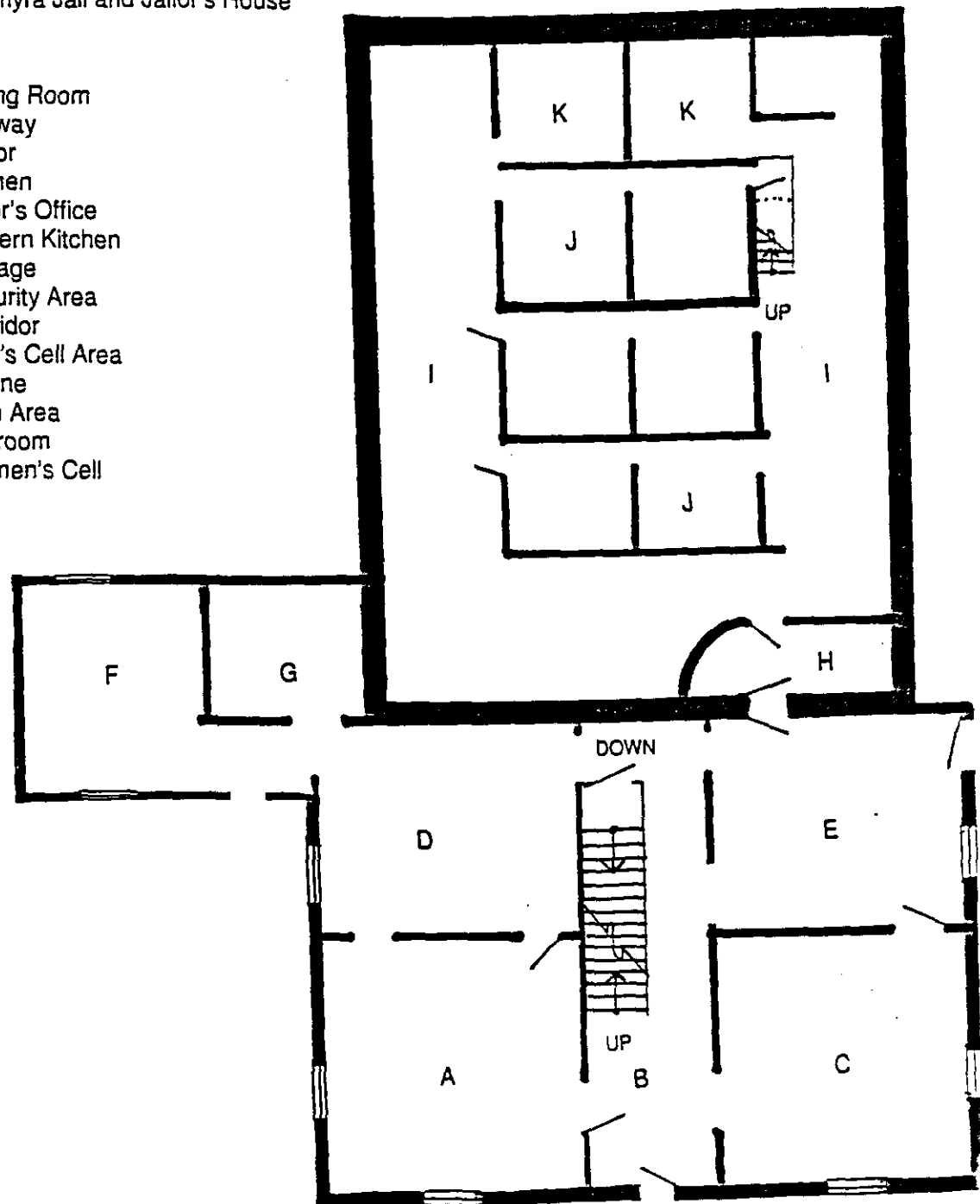
National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

Marion County Jail and Jailor's House
Marion County, Missouri

First Floor Plan, Palmyra Jail and Jailor's House

- A. Dining Room
- B. Hallway
- C. Parlor
- D. Kitchen
- E. Jailor's Office
- F. Modern Kitchen
- G. Storage
- H. Security Area
- I. Corridor
- J. Men's Cell Area
- K. Latrine
- L. Bath Area
- M. Bedroom
- N. Women's Cell



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

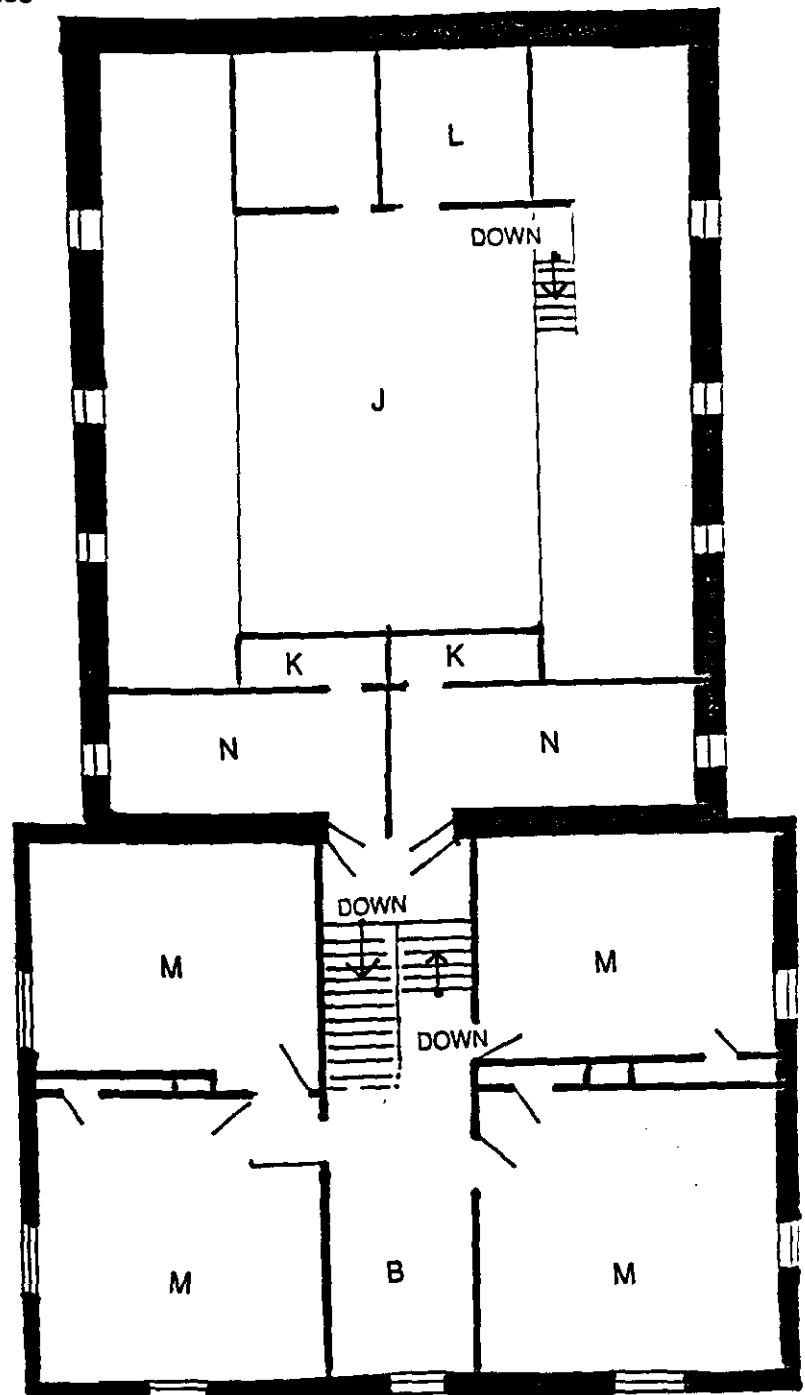
National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 6

Marion County Jail and Jailor's House
Marion County, Missouri

Second Floor Plan, Palmyra Jail and Jailor's House

- A. Dining Room
- B. Hallway
- C. Parlor
- D. Kitchen
- E. Jailor's Office
- F. Modern Kitchen
- G. Storage
- H. Security Area
- I. Corridor
- J. Men's Cell Area
- K. Latrine
- L. Bath Area
- M. Bedroom
- N. Women's Cell



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 7

Marion County Jail and Jailor's House
Marion County, Missouri

Historic photograph of the Palmyra Jail
Date Unknown
Provided by Mr. Keck, owner of the *Palmyra Spectator* newspaper. Palmyra, Missouri.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

Marion County Jail and Jailor's House
Marion County, Missouri

Summary: The Marion County Jail and Jailor's Residence, 210 W. Lafayette, Palmyra, Marion County, is significant under criteria A in the areas of politics/government and military, and criteria C in the area of architecture. From its antebellum beginnings in 1858, through 1951, the arbitrary National Register cutoff date, the building served as the county's primary detention facility and the symbol of law enforcement in the county. Thousands of inmates were confined in this building which replaced an earlier log jailhouse. In the area of significance of military, during the American Civil War, the Marion County Jail and Jailor's Residence housed the ten men, accused of being Confederate partisans, who were selected by Union authorities to be executed in reprisal for the disappearance of a local Union supporter. The executions, later referred to by Confederate supporters as the "Palmyra Massacre," took place on October 18, 1862, and elicited sustained controversy, both publicly and within the Union and Confederate governments, as well as abroad. The event is representative of certain prisoner and hostage treatment practices of the times. The Marion County Jail and Jailor's Residence is a fine example of a vernacular Greek Revival style building, and is the oldest extant residence-jail in Northeast Missouri. With a main block rendered in brick and a jail section constructed of thick limestone walls said to be doweled with cannon balls, the "escape-proof" building remained in continuous use as a jail facility from the time of its construction until 1994. With the Maries County Jail, also constructed in 1858, the Marion County jail is the oldest combination jail and jailor's or sheriff's residence in Missouri listing in the National Register.¹

Narrative: Marion County was created in 1826 by act of the Missouri Legislature. The county was named after Francis Marion, a Revolutionary war hero. During the first term of the county court, Palmyra was decided upon as the county seat. Palmyra was founded in 1819, the original plat consisting of an eight block by five block parallelogram.² In 1830, the citizens decided to incorporate the town, forming the city council and other local government bodies. In 1834, the county's first homicide was committed by Alexander Dixon. Since the nearest jail was in St. Charles County, he was held in a local hotel until he could be tried. In 1837, the county decided to construct its own jail. The log structure was to be built 22 feet and 6 inches square, with thick double floors and walls, with stone filling the space between the walls

¹Combination jails and sheriff's residences in Missouri listed in the National Register:
Carroll County Sheriff's Quarters and Jail. Constructed 1878; NRHP 1979.
Chariton County Jail and Sheriff's Residence. Constructed 1906-07; NRHP 1996.
Cole County Courthouse and Jail-Sheriff's House. Constructed 1896; NRHP 1973.
Daviess County Rotary Jail and Sheriff's Residence. Constructed 1888; NRHP 1989.
Iron County Courthouse Buildings. Jail and residence constructed circa 1866-1867; NRHP 1979.
Jackson County Jail and Marshall's House. Constructed circa 1860; NRHP 1970.
Laclede County Jail. Jail constructed 1876, residence added 1913; NRHP 1980.
Linn County Jail and Sheriff's Residence. Constructed 1871; NRHP 2000.
Maries County Jail and Sheriff's Residence. Constructed 1858; NRHP 2002.
Ralls County Courthouse and Jail-Sheriff's House. Constructed 1869; NRHP 1972.
Ripley County Jail, Sheriff's Office and Sheriff's Residence. Constructed 1899; NRHP 1991.
St. Francois County Jail and Sheriff's Residence. Constructed 1899; NRHP 1991.
Vernon County Jail, Sheriff's house and Office. Constructed circa 1870; NRHP 1977.

²R.I. Holcolmbe, *History of Marion County* (St. Louis: E.F. Perkins, 1884; Marceline, Missouri: Walsworth Publishing Co., 1979), 828.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

Marion County Jail and Jailor's House
Marion County, Missouri

Within 20 years of the construction of the first jail, the county realized that the log jail was not sufficient to hold prisoners securely, and in July of 1858, contracted the construction of a new, modern jail.³

Architectural Significance: The Palmyra Jail and Jailor's Residence is an intact example of the combination residence-jail found throughout Northeast Missouri. Constructed at the heart of the Greek Revival timeperiod, the Palmyra Jail stands as a fine example of the Missouri interpretation of the style.

The design of this building is very simple and straightforward, with few frills afforded it. Unlike most Greek Revival buildings, the door is not elaborate or exceptionally decorative. The broken transom light and side lights, however are a distinctive feature of this style of building. The windows seem to have as much visual weight as the doorway itself, be approximately the same width, and have the same lintels. The cornice lines also reflect the Greek Revival. The dentiled frieze work emphasized the cornice line, as does the broken pediment gable ends.

The building currently has a first level porch, spanning the entire of the front facade. However, the original construction did not have a porch, as indicated by historic photographs.⁴ This representation of the Greek Revival style is unique, in that only about five percent of Greek Revival style buildings are constructed having no front porch at all.⁵

The jail is based on jails located in Indianapolis, Indiana, and Cincinnati, Ohio. A.B. Asay, the superintendent of the project, traveled to and from these areas, seeking out plans and estimates for building the new jail. The jail was built by different contractors working together. A. C. Lightfoot of Illinois did the stonework of the building, consisting of the foundation for the jailor's house, and the walls of the jail. After the stonework was completed, Matthew Fletcher completed the brickwork on the jailor's house. Once the jail stonework was completed, Thomas F. Baker of Cincinnati, Ohio, shipped the ironwork for the cells, and arrived to install them.⁶ The total cost of the new jail and residence was estimated at \$15,000, as reported by local newspapers.⁷ The jail was completed around April of 1859, and the first jailor's family and inmates moved in.

Little change was made in the building over the next several years. During the 1920's, a small kitchen was added off the west side of the jailor's house. A storage room was later added on next to that, completing an inclosed passage to and from the old kitchen to the new one. In addition, at approximately the same time, a porch was added onto the front of the house, with concrete blocks formed to resemble stone as the

³Holcolombe, *History of Marion County*, 203.

⁴Photograph provided by Palmyra *Spectator* newspaper owner, Mr. Keck.

⁵Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997), 179.

⁶Palmyra, Marion County, Missouri, *Marion County Court Records, Volume F*, 477, 479.

⁷*Palmyra (Missouri) Spectator*, (July 8, 1858)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

Marion County Jail and Jailor's House
Marion County, Missouri

bases for the doric columns. The residence was last used as a residence in during the 1950's. After that, the residence was converted in to offices, a prisoner visiting room, storage, and a photo lab. The building was last used as a jail in 1994, when the new Marion County Correctional facility was completed.

Although the building is now vacant, local residents are interested in restoring the jail and residence, and using it as a Civil War museum.

Historical Significance: Missouri's involvement in the Civil War bore little resemblance to the engagements occurring in other parts of the country. It was an ambiguous war. Since the beginnings of Missouri's history as a state, it was divided over issues such as slavery and states rights. From this background, numerous battles and skirmishes took place between those with Northern sympathies and Southern sympathies. On July 29, 1861, Brigadier General John Pope was assigned command of all Missouri Union forces north of St. Louis. In his first order, Pope explained to the soldiers in the newly formed District of North Missouri that "It is the mission of the forces under my command in North Missouri to restore peace and safety to a region distracted with civil commotion, and to bring to punishment the infamous assassins and incendiaries who have been infesting this country."⁸ However, he warned his troops not to be too zealous in the pursuit of that mission: "All the forces in North Missouri . . . are cautioned against excesses of any kind, and especially against any depredations upon the persons or property of any citizen of Missouri."⁹

As early as August 1861, Marion County and Palmyra were noted by Union forces as centers of secessionist sympathies and resistance. On August 17, Brigadier-General John Pope, commander of Union forces in north Missouri, informed Captain J.C. Kelton that a train carrying Union troops was fired upon as it left Palmyra. Pope fumed, "This county of Marion has been the principal seat of the disturbances in North Missouri, and it is my purpose immediately to inflict such punishment as will be remembered."¹⁰ On August 19, Pope ordered the mayor and civil authorities of Palmyra to deliver up to the military authorities of this brigade, within six days from the date of these presents, the marauders who fired upon the train bound west on the Hannibal and Saint Joseph Railroad on the evening of 16th instant, and broke into the telegraph-office. If the guilty persons are not delivered up as required, and within the time herein specified, the whole brigade will be moved into your county, and contributions levied to the amount of \$10,000 on Marion County and \$5,000 on the city of Palmyra.¹¹

⁸O.R., series 1, volume 3, p. 416.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰O.R., series 1, volume 3, p. 135.

¹¹Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 11

Marion County Jail and Jailor's House
Marion County, Missouri

In June 1862, Missouri, with the exception of the three southeasternmost counties, was organized as the District of Missouri, under command of Brigadier General John M. Schofield. Schofield further divided the state into divisions, with the Northeastern Division under the command of Colonel John McNeil, Missouri State Militia. In his report on operations in his district since he assumed command, Schofield noted that a "desperate and sanguinary guerrilla war" had begun about July 20, 1862, with the assemblage of small groups under Joseph Porter, John A. Poindexter, and a partisan leader named Cobb.

The primary leader of guerilla forces in Northeast Missouri was Joseph Porter. His attempts to recruit volunteers for the Confederate forces were a persistent irritant to Union forces. In the months preceeding the "Palmyra Massacre," Colonel John McNeil had been tracking Porter's movements across Northeast Missouri, and engaged him in battle. Porter made several successful attempts at misleading McNeil as to his whereabouts. In September of 1862, Porter had deceived McNeil into chasing him elsewhere, and took the opportunity to lead a raid on Palmyra, Missouri. The intent was to release prisoners in the Palmyra jail, take supplies, and destroy official papers. During this same engagement, Porter's forces captured a suspected civilian Union informant, Andrew Allsman.

Colonel John McNeil ordered Provost-Marshal General William R. Strachan to issue the following notice in the *Palmyra Courier*:

Notice to Joseph C. Porter
Palmyra, Mo., October 8, 1862

Joseph C. Porter:

Sir: - Andrew Allsman, an aged citizen of Palmyra, and a non-combatant, having been carried away from his home by a band of persons unlawfully arrayed against the peace and good order of the state of Missouri, and which band was under your control; this is to notify you that unless said Andrew Allsman is returned unharmed to his family within ten days from date ten more men who have belonged to your band and unlawfully sworn by you to carry arms against the Government of the United States, and who are now in custody, will be shot as a meet reward for their crimes, among which is the illegal restraining of said Allsman of his liberty, and if not returned, presumably aiding in his murder. Your prompt attention to this will save much suffering.

Yours etc.

W. R. Strachan
Provost-Marshal General
District N.E. Missouri

While Porter later contended that Allsman had been released on parole, evidence suggested that he had been murdered enroute home, by a group of Porter's men detailed to escort him.¹² In any event, on October 17, Allsman never having been returned, McNeil ordered Strachan to select ten men from the Palmyra and Hannibal Jails. The five from Hannibal arrived late on the night of the 17th, spending their last night in the Palmyra jail. The men selected had originally been held for various offenses, some as

¹²Joseph Mudd, *With Porter in North Missouri*, (Washington D.C.: National Publishing Company, 1909) 298.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 12

Marion County Jail and Jailor's House
Marion County, Missouri

"oath-breakers," but the majority for having southern sympathies. The men were from many of the surrounding counties. These men were to be executed, without trial, for a crime they did not even take part in.

The following day, nine of these men, and one who had been substituted for the tenth man, were taken to the fair grounds east of town.¹³ Here, they set out the coffins.

The ten coffins were removed from the wagons and placed in a row 6 or 8 feet apart, forming a line north and south, about 15 paces west of the central pagoda or music stand, to the center of the ring. Each coffin was placed upon the ground, with its foot west and head east. Thirty soldiers of the Second Missouri State Militia were drawn up in a single line, extending north and south, facing the row of coffins. This line of executioners ran immediately at the east base of the pagoda, leaving a space between them and the coffins of 12 or 13 paces. Reserves were drawn up in line upon either flank of the executioners.¹⁴

The men each sat upon their coffins, the execution squad took aim, and fired. In the initial volley, only three men were killed. Six others were wounded, one man completely unharmed. The reserve squad was called forward, to finish the executions with revolvers.

The "Palmyra Massacre" had several results. This one event exemplified many different aspects of the government's dealings with various issues, from prisoner treatment, to protecting itself from harm by taking a "hands off" approach to the Missouri problems. Following the "Massacre", almost all of the guerilla activity came to a halt for the remainder of the war. Joseph Mudd, a man who was actively involved in Porter's activities, contends that the "massacre did not cause the end of the major activity in that area of Missouri."¹⁵ Porter had gathered as many men as he could from that area, and was in the process of creating distractions north in order to send these recruits to the south. Although, it is certainly believable that it dissuaded others from making attempts in the area, solidifying the Union grip on the area.

The "Massacre" inspired a large reaction at both the national and worldwide level. An editorial in the *London Star* stated "What comment is needed upon a crime like this? Its stupidity is as astonishing as its ferocity is terrible." The *New York Times* commented that "there could be no justification for such a

¹³After the massacre, the fair grounds were never used for that purpose. The grounds are currently being farmed.

¹⁴*The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series 1, volume 22, part 1, pp. 817-818 ("The Civil War CD-ROM," version 1.55, Carmel, IN: Guild Press of Indiana, 1997). Hereafter cited as O.R.

¹⁵Mudd, *With Porter in North Missouri*, 307.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 13

Marion County Jail and Jailor's House
Marion County, Missouri

butchery, and our government owes it to itself, to the country, and to the sentiment of the civilized world to mark by some prompt and direct action its reprobation of it."¹⁶

Jefferson Davis, upon reading of the event, demanded the Union turn over McNeil to Confederate forces for the murder of those citizens. This prompted an exchange of letters between Union and Confederate forces, but the matter was eventually dropped. Citizens of the area signed a petition sent to President Lincoln, defending and supporting McNeil's actions in Missouri. Some authors claim it prompted cabinet meetings on both sides, although evidence is not currently available to suggest that Lincoln involved himself with the affairs of the Palmyra Massacre.¹⁷

Shortly following the "Palmyra Massacre," Strachan was removed from his post as Provost-Marshall General of the Northeast District. The military governing the area gave other reasons for his dismissal at the time. The appointment of a judge advocate in the district removed the need for a Provost-Marshall. In the years following the war, Strachan was indicted on a variety of charges concerning his time as Provost-Marshall, one including an accusation concerning the Palmyra "Massacre."¹⁸

McNeil, on the other hand, was later promoted. This promotion served to defend the government from criticism, by showing support all around for the decisions he made. Even though publicly the government took actions to appear united and supportive, at other times, various members of the military claimed to have no control or knowledge over what McNeil decided to do. Major General Curtis from the St. Louis headquarters responded to the Confederacy that "McNeil is a State general, and his column was mainly State troops. This matter has therefore never come to my official notice.... I am not therefore authorized to admit or deny, justify or condemn."¹⁹

While the event of the massacre is important to the story of the jail, it reaches farther than that. At a national level, it speaks to the treatment of prisoners during the Civil War. During this time, the Union and the Confederacy had enacted an exchange cartel, designed to make a set of equivalencies of officers. This kind of paroling was fairly common at the time. This cartel began to fall apart by mid 1863.²⁰ The Federal government did not want to recognize captured southerners as prisoners of war, as this would indicate a recognition of the Confederacy as an autonomous government. In Missouri, this was highlighted by the fact that there were relatively few "regular" Union or Confederate forces; most of the soldiers were

¹⁶Scott E. Sallee, "Porter's Campaign in Northeast Missouri, 1862," *Blue and Gray Magazine*, (February 2000), p. 48.

¹⁷Mudd, *With Porter in North Missouri*, p. 305.

¹⁸William E. Parrish, "The Palmyra 'Massacre,'" *Journal of Confederate History*, 1, no. 2 (Fall 1988): 260.

¹⁹O.R. Series 1, volume 22, part 1, p. 860.

²⁰William Best Hesseltine, *Civil War Prisons: a Study in War Psychology*, (New York, Frederick Ungar Publishing Co, 1964), p. 115.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 14

Marion County Jail and Jailor's House
Marion County, Missouri

from the Missouri State Militia and guerillas, making this a matter between the State of Missouri and "criminals" to the state. Amongst some Union officials who took a harder approach to the treatment of guerillas, they said that they should be treated as "highway robbers and pirates." The ways of distinguishing the guerilla from the average citizen was left up to the officer in charge, leaving no clear definition or policy, and opening the door for the abuse of such power against the citizens of the area.²¹ Such could well be the case of Palmyra. The prisoners were not caught in arms against the Union, but were still dealt with in the harshest manner, as criminals but without a trial to prove the guilt.

Hostage taking was also a relatively common occurrence, designed to ensure the safety of those held in other prisons and jails. The "Palmyra Massacre" easily falls into this classification, as those involved were being held for the safety of another captured person.²² In most hostage situations, those held were not executed by their captors. This event stands out, however, as it drew national and world wide attention for the the extreme ratio of 10 men for one, and for the resulting executions of 10 men innocent of the accusations.

Considering the treatment of guerillas captured during the Civil War in Missouri, and the manner of prisoner treatment and exchange during that time, the "Palmyra Massacre" is representative of a system that continued to degrade throughout the progress of the war.

²¹Michael Fellman, *Inside War: The Guerrilla Conflict in Missouri During the American Civil War*, (New York, Oxford Univeristy Press, 1989), 84-88.

²²Webb Garrison, *Civil War Hostages: Hostage Taking in the Civil War*, (Shippensburg, PA: White Mane Books, 2000), 203-211.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 15

Marion County Jail and Jailor's House
Marion County, Missouri

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

- Fellman, Michael. *Inside War: The Guerrilla Conflict in Missouri During the American Civil War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Fishman, Joseph F. *Crucibles of Crime: the Shocking Story of The American Jail*. Montclair, New Jersey: Patterson Smith, 1969.
- Garrison, Webb. *Civil War Hostages: Hostage Taking in the Civil War*. Shippensburg, PA: White Mane Books, 2000.
- Goldfarb, Ronald. *Jails: the Ultimate Ghetto*. Garden City, New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1975.
- Hesseltine, William Best. *Civil War Prisons: a Study in War Psychology*. New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1964.
- Holcombe, R.I. *History of Marion County*, St. Louis: E.F. Perkins, 1884; Marceline, Missouri: Walsworth Publishing Co., 1979.
- Moynahan, J.M. and Earle K. Stewart. *The American Jail: It's Development and Growth*. Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1980.
- Mudd, Joseph A. *With Porter in North Missouri*. Washington D.C.: National Publishing Company, 1909.
- Parrish, William E. "The Palmyra "Massacre" A Tragedy of Guerrilla Warfare." *Journal of Confederate History*. 1, No. 2, Fall 1988.
- Sallee, Scott E. "Porter's Campaign in Northeast Missouri, 1862." *Blue and Gray Magazine*. 1, no. 2, February 2000.
- Speer, Lonnie R. *Portals to Hell: Military Prisons of the Civil War*. Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1997.
- War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. Washington, D.C., 1880-1902.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 16

Marion County Jail and Jailor's House
Marion County, Missouri

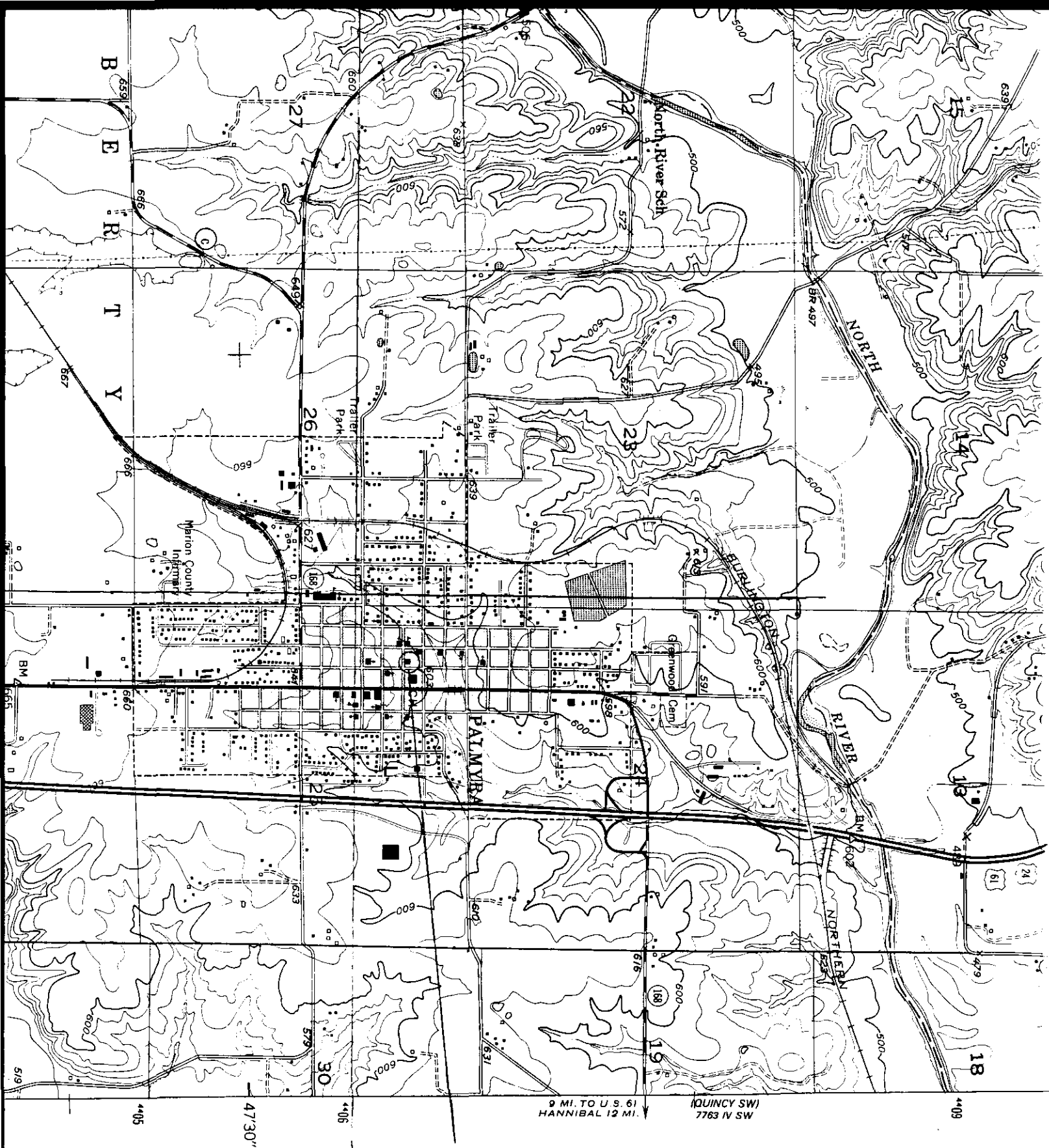
10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

Lot Number 7 in Block 22 in the City of Palmyra, Marion County, 66 feet wide by 127 feet deep. (As described in the Marion County Deed Record, Book 2, page 460.)

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the nominated property contains the lot historically associated with the Jail and Jailor's Residence.



PALMYRA JAIL AND JAILORS' HOUSE
PALMYRA, MARION COUNTY
15/626320/4406250

Palmyra Jail and Jailor's House (preserved)

Marion Co., MO

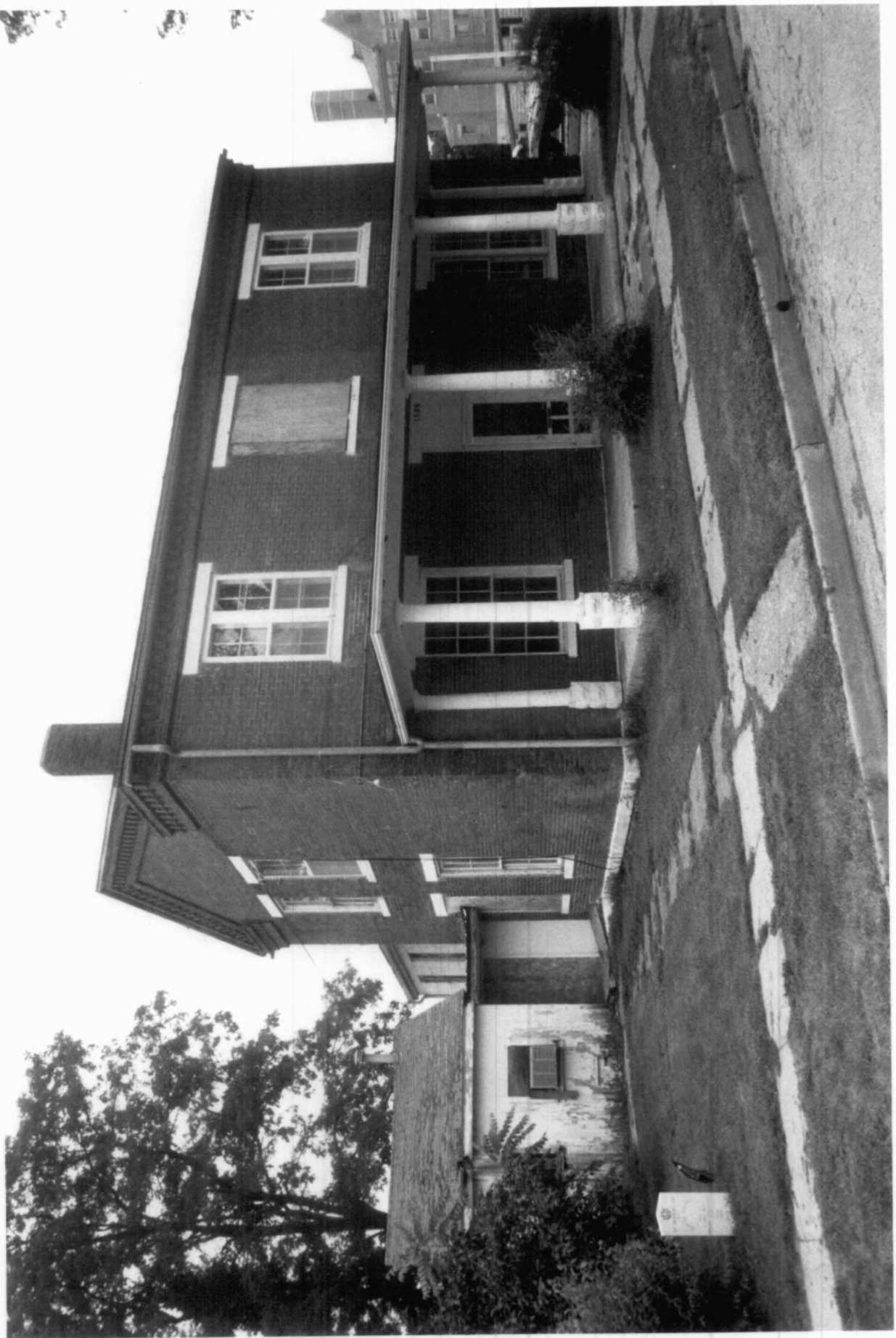
Lee Gillette

July 26, 2001

Missouri Cultural Resource Inventory

looking NE

#1



Palm Springs, California

Marion Co, MO

Lee Gilliland

July 26, 2001

Missouri Cattle and Resource Inventory

Looking NW

#2



Palmyra Jail & Barlow House (preferred)

Marion Co., MO

Lee Gilheard

July 26, 2001

Missouri Cultural Resource Inventory

Looking SW

#3



Palmira Jail and Jailor ~~Residence~~ House [previously]

Marion Co., MO

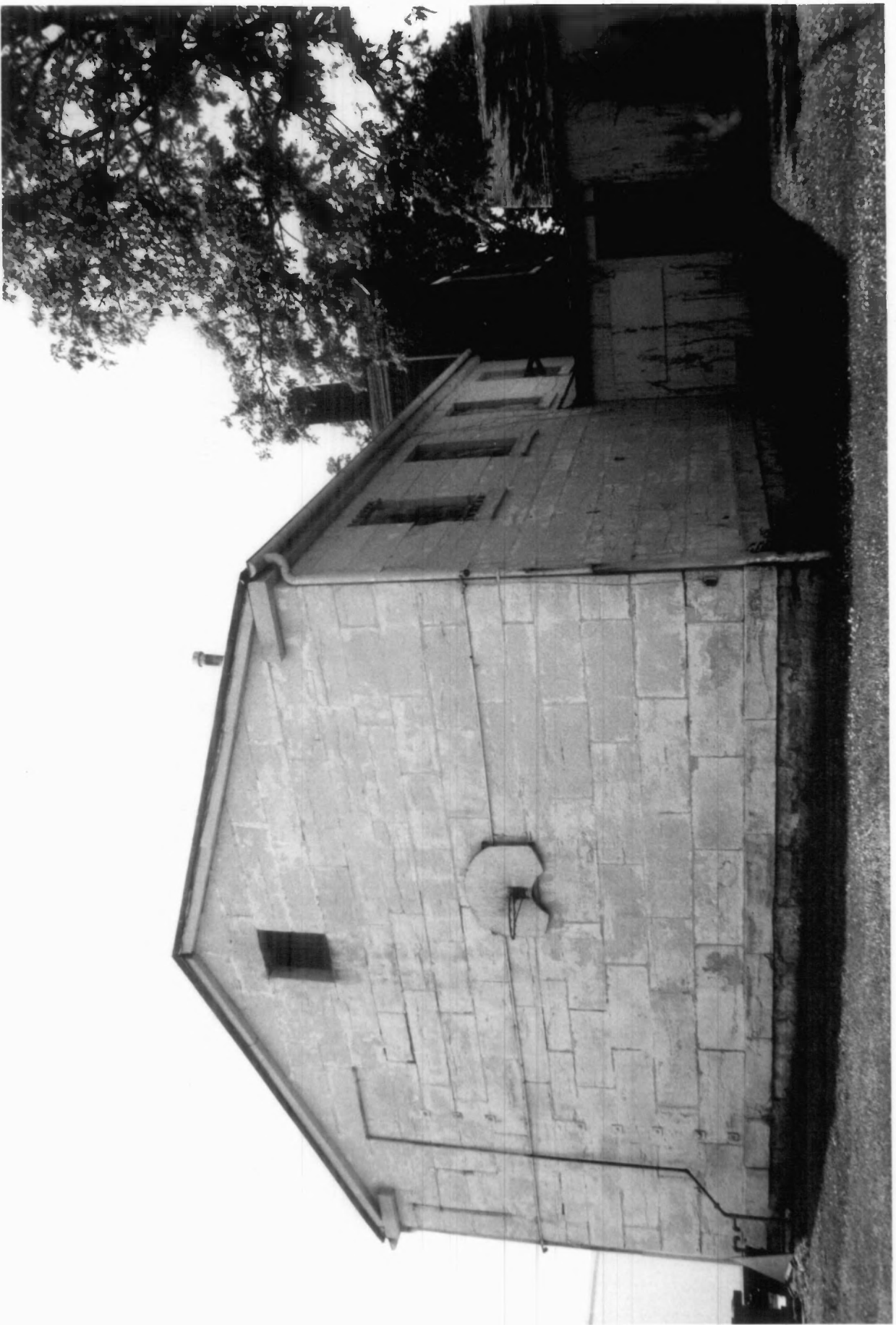
Carrie Crowder

June 22, 2001

Missionary (C) ~~Residence~~ Inventory

looking SE

#4



Palmira Jail on 12th & 13th [preferred]

Marion County, MO

Lee Grilleard

July 26, 2001

Missouri Cultural Resources Inventory

Basement, looking WSW

#5



Palmira Jail and Jailor's House (pretend!)

Marion County, MO

Lee Gilieard

July 26, 2001

Missouri Cultural Resources Inventory

basement Looking E

#6



Palmyra Jail and Sailor's House [preferred]

Marion County, MO

Lee Gilheard

July 26, 2001

Missouri Cultural Resources Inventory

House Stairhall, looking NW

#7



Palmyra Jail and Sailor's House [preferred]

Marion County, MO

Carrie Crozier

June 22, 2001

Missouri Cultural Resources Inventory

Kitchen Looking SW

#8



Palmyra Jail - Sailor's House (preferred)

Marion County, MO

Carrie Crover

June 26, 2001

Missouri Cultural Resources Inventory

~~#1~~ Detail of House/Jail connection from
Sailor's office; looking North

#9



Palmyra Jail and Jailor's House [preferred!]

Marion County, MO

Lee Gilbeard

July 26, 2001

Dining Room, looking NE

10



Palmyra Jail and Jailers House Exposed,

Marion County, Mo.

Lee Gilheand

July 26, 2001

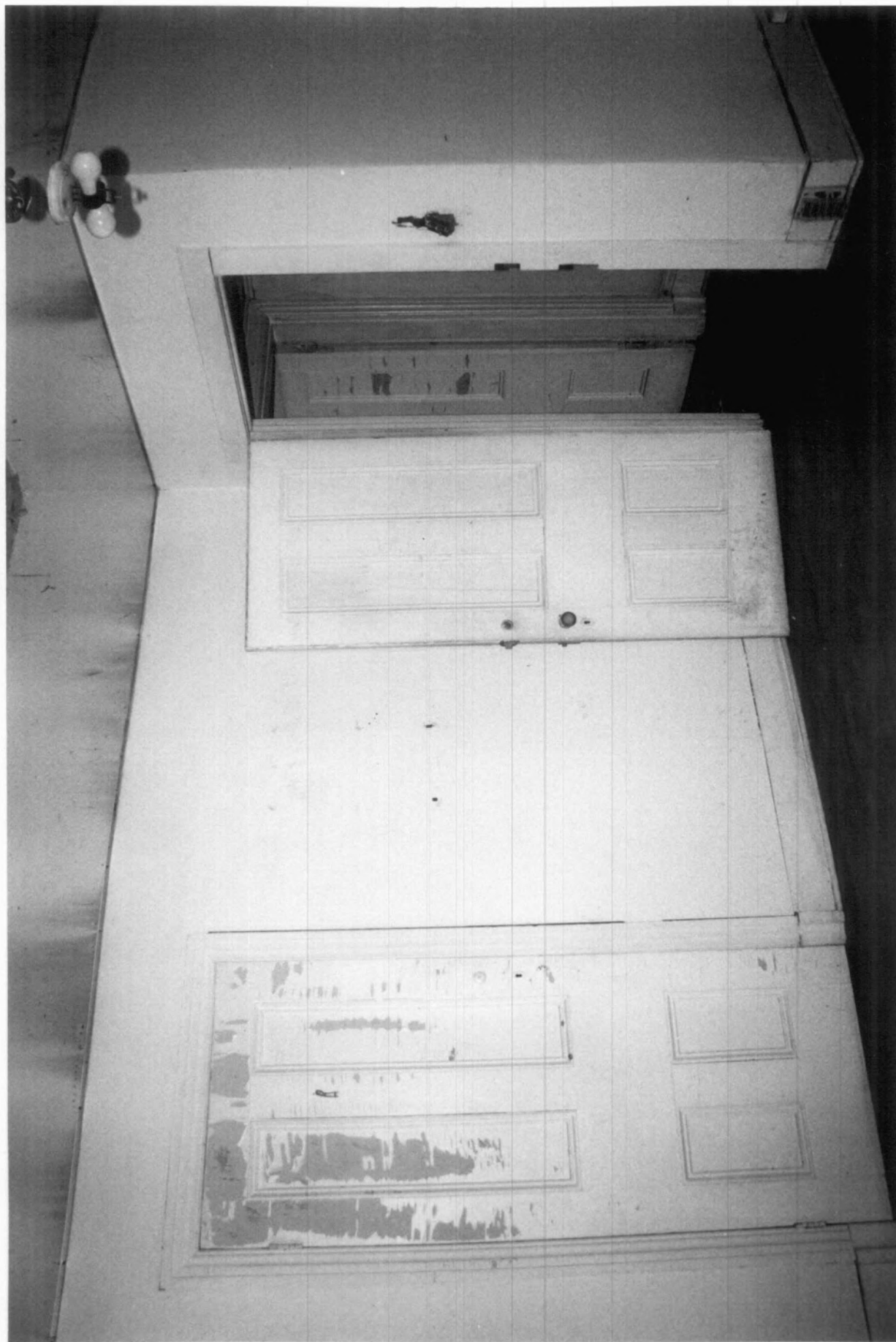
Missouri Cultural Resources Inventory

2nd Floor SE Bedroom; looking NW

#11



Palmyra Jail and Jailers House [preferred]
Marion County, MO
Carrie Crozier
June 22, 2001
Missouri, Cultural Resources Inventory
2nd Floor SW Bedroom, looking NE
#12



Palmyra Tailor's House
Palmyra, Missouri, Marion Co.

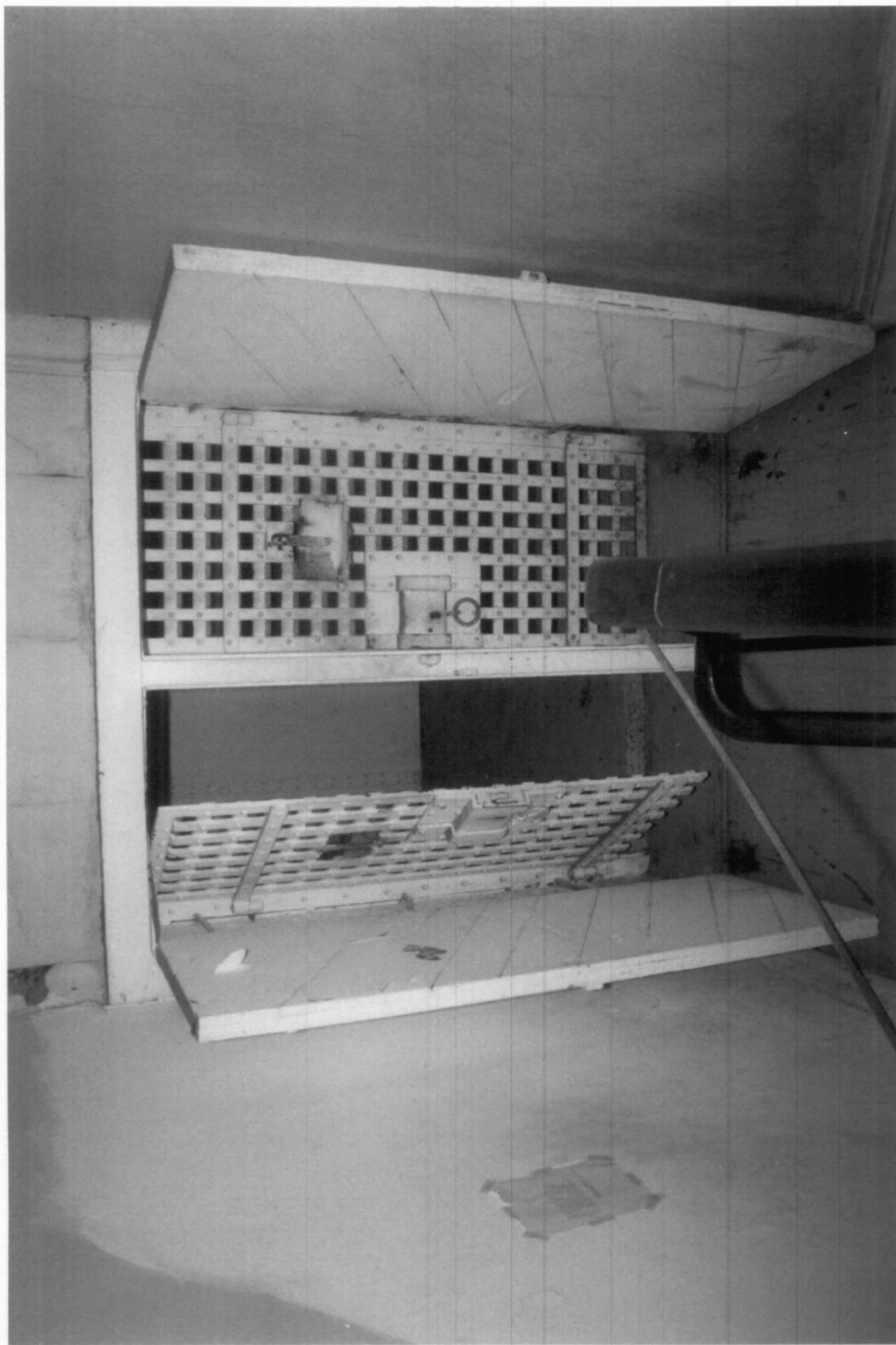
Carrie Crozier

June 22, 2001

Missouri Cultural Resources Inventory

View of women's cell doors, looking North, standing
on 2nd level looking down to landing

#13



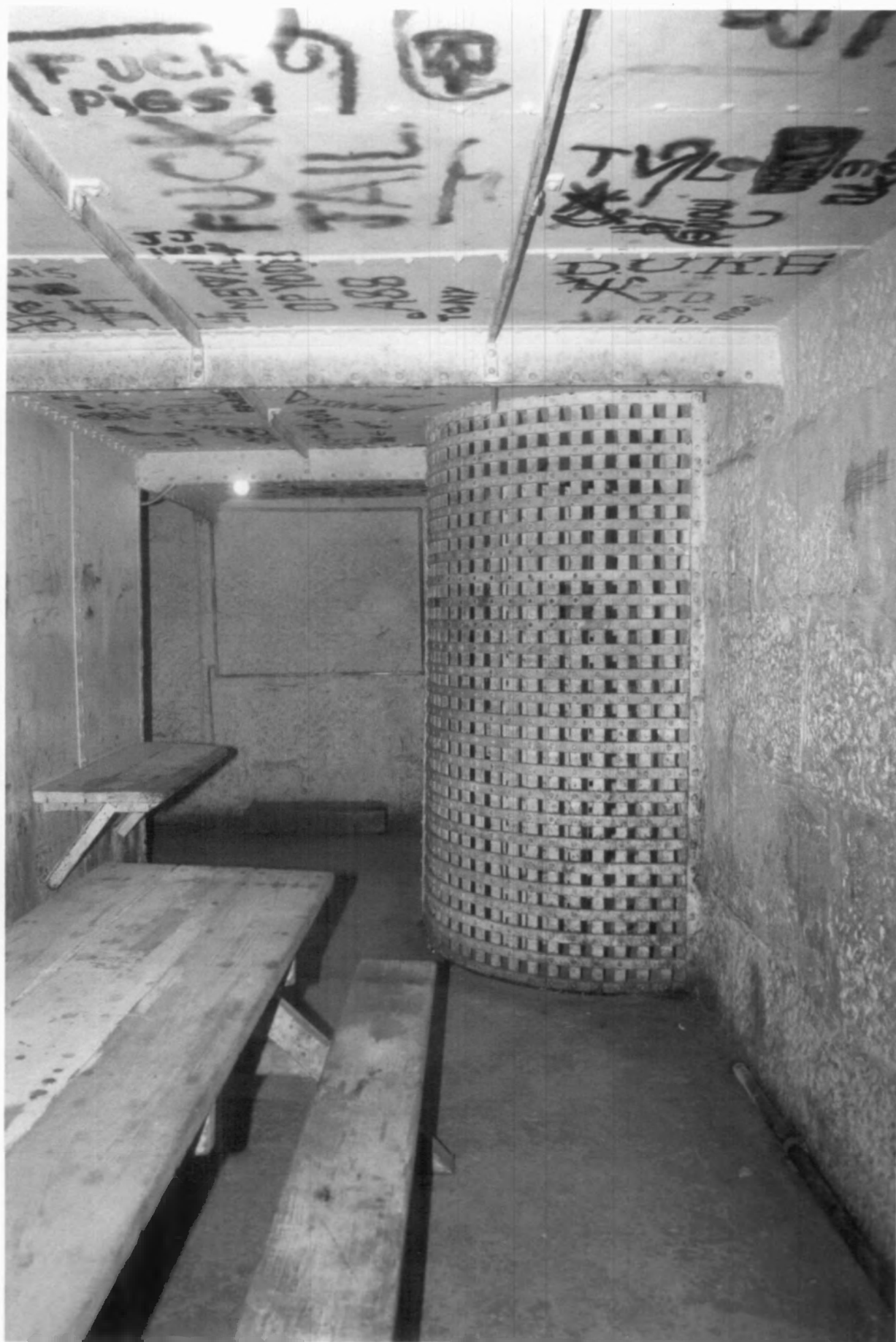
Palmyra Jail and Jailor's House [preferred]
Marion County, MO
Carrie Crozier

June 22, 2001

Missouri Cultural Resources Inventory

View of Jail Block security entry,
looking E

#14



Palmyra Jail and Jailor's House [preferred]

Marion County, MO

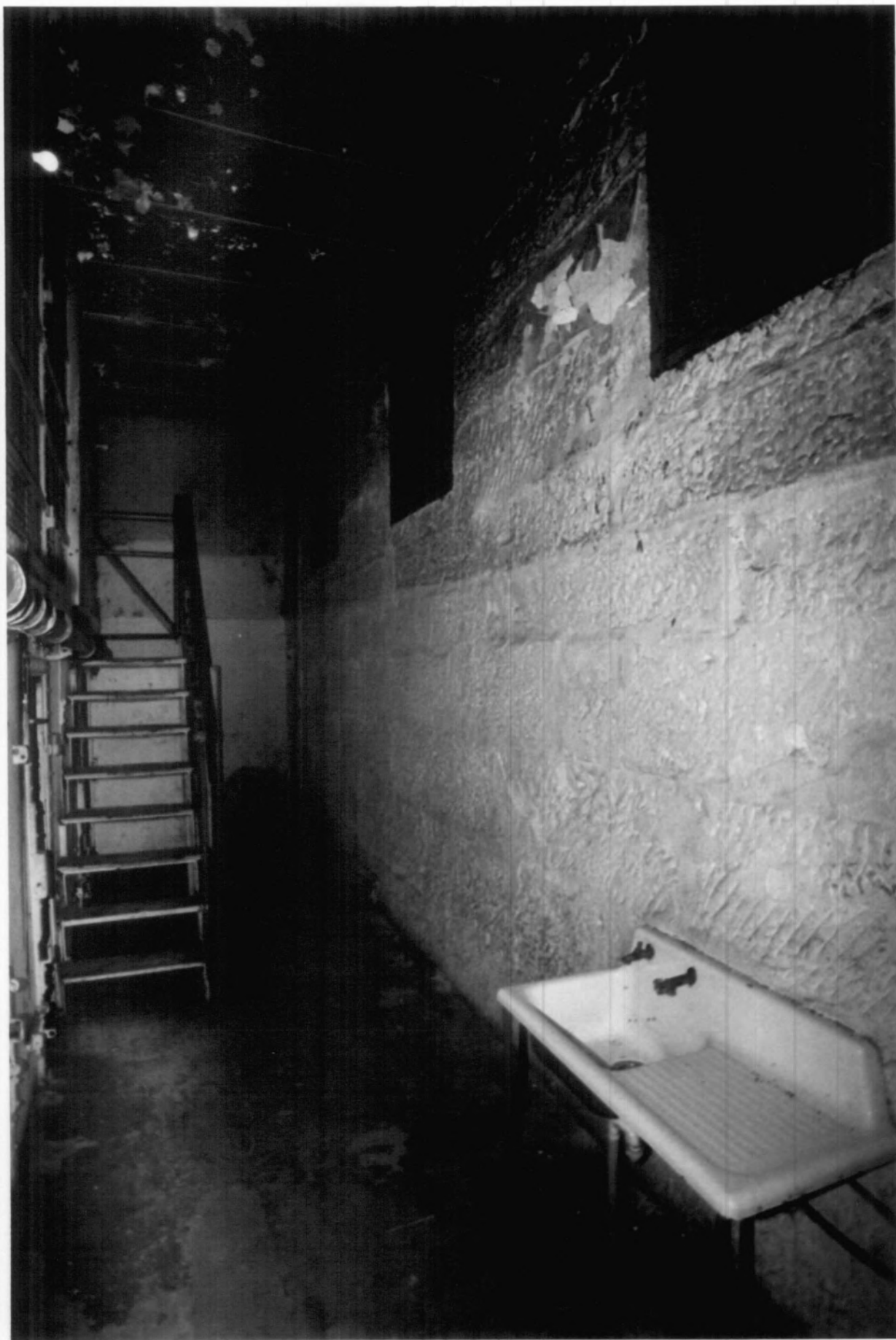
Lee Gilleard

July 26, 2001

Missouri Cultural Resource Inventory

Eastern Jail block corridor, looking N

#15



Palmyra Jail and Jailhouse [preferred]

Marion County, MO

Carrie Crozier

June 22, 2001

Missouri Cultural Resources Inventory

Western jail block corridor, looking S

#16



Palmyna Zail and Zailor's House (preferred)

Marion County, MO

Lee Grilleard

July 26, 2001

Missouri Cultural Resource Inventory

upper level jail cells, looking SSE

#17

Palmyra Jail and Jailers House (preferred)

Marion County, MO

Lee Gilheand

July 26, 2001

Missouri Cultural Resource Inventory

upper level jail cells, looking SSE

#17



EXTRA
PHOTOS



