

***History of the 1889 Boone County Courthouse,  
Boone County, Kentucky***



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Prepared by:  
Matthew E. Becher  
Boone County Rural/Open Space Planner

For:  
Boone County Historic Preservation Review Board  
P.O. Box 958, Burlington, KY 41005  
859-334-2111

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	- 2 -
<b>The Old Boone County Courthouse</b> .....	- 3 -
<b>The Courthouse Square, Monuments, and Memorials</b> .....	- 5 -
<b>The McDonald Brothers and their Courthouses</b> .....	- 7 -
<b>Benjamin Franklin Trester and the Bandera Job</b> .....	- 8 -
<b>TABLE - Courthouses of the McDonald Brothers and Related Firms</b> .....	- 11 -
<b>FIGURES</b> .....	- 13 -
<b>ENDNOTES</b> .....	- 24 -

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## The Old Boone County Courthouse

The building referred to as the Old Boone County Courthouse is actually the third courthouse built on the northeast corner of Washington and Jefferson Streets in Burlington, Kentucky. The first log courthouse, built on the site in 1801, was replaced by a larger, 2-story, brick building in 1817<sup>1</sup> (Figures 1 & 2). That courthouse was remodeled several times but eventually demolished to make way for the present building.<sup>2</sup> Completed late in 1889 at a cost of \$19,740, the courthouse was built by the McGarvey Brothers of Cincinnati under the supervision of the McDonald Brothers.<sup>3</sup> As completed, the building was predominantly Renaissance Revival in style with a cruciform plan and imposing clock tower (Figure 3). It featured a central foyer/hallway on the first floor with offices of varying sizes to either side, and a grand staircase winding up from the back entrance to the spacious second floor courtroom. Additional corner offices and the judges' chambers completed the plan of the second floor. Three distinct attic spaces above the courtroom and in the clock tower were reached by a series of stairs and ladders leading from the room behind the judge's bench.<sup>4</sup> The clock tower itself was supported by a massive wood truss system, similar in design to a railroad bridge, which rested on the building's four primary load-bearing brick walls.

After their final inspection of the building, the McDonald Brothers noted a few minor variations from the original plans and observed that the brick was not uniform in color.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, today the variation in brick color is clearly visible: the brick on the first story does not match the rest of the building. This may have been an indication of future trouble, but the county accepted the building and paid the McGarveys and the McDonalds for their services. An architectural rendering of the Boone County Courthouse as built appears in a c. 1903 brochure featuring the works of McDonald & Sheblessy, which was a later name for the firm (Figure 4).<sup>6</sup> While the drawing is a precise rendition of the Boone County Courthouse, down to the finest detail, the plate is erroneously labeled "Washington County Court House, Salem, Ind." The McDonald Brothers' Washington County Courthouse (built in 1886 in Salem, Indiana) is in fact Romanesque in style with a corner clock tower and bears no resemblance whatsoever to the Boone County building.

By mid-1896, the walls of the Boone County Courthouse were starting to show cracks and county officials were debating whether to install rods to try and hold the building together. That idea was rejected and the problem persisted. By 1898, the courtroom ceiling was leaking and it was clear that something needed to be done. The county hired noted Cincinnati architects Samuel Hannaford & Sons to look at the problem and also dispatched a court-appointed representative to Louisville to request a copy of the plans from the McDonald Brothers.<sup>7</sup> Hannaford determined that the load-bearing brick walls simply could not support the combined weight of the massive wooden roof trusses and clock tower and furnished designs for a new, smaller, cupola. It is worth noting that the McDonalds were unable to supply a copy of the plans for the building, which were apparently "destroyed by fire."<sup>8</sup> In the fall of 1898, contractors removed the original courthouse clock tower, reconfigured the roof and built the cupola

that crowns the building to this day. The outline of the base of the clock tower is visible about halfway up the slope of the current pyramidal roof, especially after a light snow has fallen.

The courthouse has undergone various repairs and “updates” in the nearly 110 years since the clock tower was replaced by the cupola. Some of the more notable events included installation (in 1910) of a central steam heating system and replacement of that system (in 1993) by a central heating/air conditioning system. In the mid-1960s, the exterior of the building was sand-blasted, an event that has resulted in slow deterioration of the outer brick and stone details, particularly on the building’s west side. The long-term impact of the sand-blasting is particularly notable on the sandstone water-table, which is spalling badly in some places. At about this time (c. 1967) the second floor courtroom was also remodeled. The work included removal and replacement of all of the original floor features (e.g., jury box, witness stand, judge’s bench) with the exception of the wooden benches in the gallery. The glass windows and door in the wall behind the judge’s bench (originally designed to allow natural light into the courtroom) were replaced with a solid wall and doors. The pressed tin ceiling was covered in square acoustical tiles and the lights were suspended from the ceiling.

Aside from the courtroom remodeling, the most significant alterations to the 1889 Courthouse occurred when the Courthouse Annex was added to the structure’s east elevation in 1959. To provide access to the Annex, the first floor office in the southeast corner of the original building was turned into a corridor. The room immediately north of that corner office (original function unknown) was apparently originally accessed from a doorway in the north wall of that office. A faint outline of the door is visible on the north wall of the corridor and that room is now accessed from the annex through what was originally a window opening. Also at this time, the original wood/glass front and rear entrances were replaced with aluminum/glass to more closely match the aluminum/glass windows and doors of the annex. Two additional entrances to the courtroom were created as well. One entrance was built from the second floor of the annex, which involved filling in the southernmost of the four second floor arched window openings on that side of the building. A second arched window opening on the west side of the courtroom was sacrificed to accommodate an emergency metal fire escape. These changes gave the courtroom three egresses. However, provision for wheelchair access to the courtroom as never been built.

The Boone County Courthouse Annex was designed by Betz, Bankemper & Associates of Covington, in the then-popular International Style (Figure 5). The Annex is of poured concrete construction with red brick facing. The building is rectangular in plan with a full basement and two above-ground stories. A broad stairwell located at the south end of the building provides access between the three Annex levels and access to the first and second floors of the Old Courthouse. Debate over the appropriateness of the 1959 Annex in “Historic Burlington” has been prevalent since the mid-1980s. While not handicapped accessible, the annex does contain the most modern and functional office space in the Courthouse.

Ironically, the Annex is one of only two known International Style buildings in Boone County. Carl C. Bankemper is credited with the design of hundreds of (mostly institutional and government) buildings in Southwestern Ohio and Northern Kentucky, including Covington Catholic High School (1953), Newport Catholic High School (1953), Immaculate Heart of Mary Elementary School (1960), numerous buildings on the Marydale campus in Erlanger and other properties owned by the Cincinnati Catholic Archdiocese. Bankemper later designed the 1981 Boone County Administration Building, located immediately east of the Old Courthouse on Burlington Pike. Upon his retirement in 1983, Bankemper noted that the two works he was most proud of were the Boone County Administration Building and the Covington-Kenton County City-County Building in Covington.

In 1979, the Old Boone Courthouse was listed in the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing element to the Burlington Historic District. In 2004, Boone County Fiscal Court funded a \$250,000 exterior rehabilitation for the Courthouse. Conducted to Secretary of the Interior Standards, the project included new roof coverings, rebuilding of all original windows, installation of interior storm windows, extensive masonry work, and reconstruction of the wooden front entrance and doors that were removed when the Annex was built in 1959.

When the Boone County Justice Center opened in early 2003, Boone Circuit Court and the judge's chambers moved out of the Courthouse. Since then, the second floor courtroom and two of the four corner offices have seen very little use. The other two second floor offices are used by the Boone County Historic Preservation Review Board and most of the 1<sup>st</sup> floor office space is occupied by the state Child Support Office. At this time, approximately 60% of the 10,000 sq. ft. in the Old Courthouse is utilized. The 5,000 square-foot Annex was occupied by the County Attorney and staff until mid-July, 2008: future plans for the Annex are not known at this time.

Although rarely used, the second floor Courtroom in the Old Courthouse is a striking public space. Encompassing nearly 2,000 sq. ft., it has a meeting capacity of approximately 120 people. The courtroom's tin ceiling is suspended from above by the wooden truss system in the attic. It has hosted re-enactments of the notorious 1942 Kiger Murder Trail, produced and performed by members of the Boone County Historical Society. The courtroom also sees occasional use for receptions or other public events. However, lack of an elevator or other handicapped access limits public use of the Courthouse's second Floor.

## **The Courthouse Square, Monuments, and Memorials**

The Old Courthouse is located on the northeast corner of the "Public Square" depicted on the 1800 Plat of the town. A separate jail and county clerk's building was sited on the southeast corner of the square. Originally, the square was bounded on all four sides by a street named Union Square. The roads into town from north, south, east

and west, intersected Union Square, requiring travelers to go around the square. About 1820, the North/South and East/West roads were connected in the center, effectively quartering the town square. The county sold the western two quarters to private buyers and retained the eastern two quarters. Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and well into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, County business was conducted from the trio of government buildings (courthouse, jail, clerk's building) on the courthouse square (Figure 6).

In 1853-54, the county replaced the frame jail and clerk's building with sturdier structures of brick construction. The 1854 jail was replaced again in 1928 by a bungalow plan building that remains on the site of the original jail. When the 1889 courthouse was completed, the county sold the 1853 Clerk's Building to the Boone County Deposit bank. The bank operated from the building on its original site at the southeast corner of Jefferson and Washington Streets for over 30 years. The bank finally outgrew the little Clerk's Building in 1924 and designed a larger Neo-Classical facility to replace it. Rather than demolish the Clerk's Building, it was jacked up and rolled on logs across Jefferson Street to the lot immediately west of the corner store at Jefferson and Washington. The building was put into use as the Burlington Post Office, replacing a post office that had recently burned. The Clerk's Building was later converted into an auto repair garage and in 2001, the county relocated it to a new site north of the Administration Building. The Clerk's Building was rehabilitated in 2002 and is presently occupied by the Boone County Historical Society as a museum.

Aside from the noted c. 1820 reduction in size, the only other major change to the courthouse square occurred when Burlington Pike was widened in 1974. The lawn in front of the building was reduced in depth by about 10 feet and the grade lowered approximately 2 feet. A low concrete retaining wall was poured along the sidewalk. In 1992-1993, a courthouse square beautification effort (funded in part by a Kentucky Bicentennial grant) placed a wrought iron fence on the retaining wall, installed a decorative brick walkway and placed three park benches.

Several monuments and memorials are located inside the courthouse and on the courthouse square. The earliest of these is a World War I Memorial Plaque, installed in the building's first floor hallway and dedicated on Armistice Day, 1920 (Figures 7 & 8). The plaque lists 16 individuals with the caption "Erected in grateful memory of the men of Boone County who died in the Great World War 1918-1919, that others might live." Two other memorial plaques are located outside on the southwest corner of the lawn. One is a bronze plaque dedicated to the memory of Burlington Firefighter Donnie L. Kirkpatrick, who died in the line of duty on October 18, 1989. The other plaque is dedicated to the efforts of the Boone County Water District to construct a county-wide public water system in 1967-68. Buried near the two memorials is a time capsule placed during the Boone County Bicentennial on June 20, 1998, with instructions that it be opened on June 20, 2098. A wooden plaque inside the building (opposite the World War I Memorial Plaque) lists the names of everyone who volunteered on the 1998 Bicentennial Committee. Two other plaques installed in the building include "Past

Presidents of the Northern Kentucky Bar Association” in the first floor hallway and “Distinguished Lawyer Award,” located on the wall outside the second floor courtroom.

### **The McDonald Brothers and their Courthouses**

As noted above, the 1889 Boone County Courthouse was designed by the McDonald Brothers of Louisville, KY. The McDonald Brothers and their associates were among the most prolific architectural firms to operate in Louisville in the Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Harry P. McDonald (1848-1904) obtained a degree in civil engineering from Washington & Lee University in Virginia and came to Louisville in 1869.<sup>9</sup> Harry’s early architectural commissions were related to his position as Chief Engineer for the Elizabeth & Paducah Railroad. In 1874, he formed the architectural firm of H. P. McDonald, which became H. P. McDonald & Brother when Kenneth joined in 1878. Kenneth McDonald (1852–1940) had obtained a degree in civil engineering from Virginia Military Academy and relocated to Louisville after graduating. He was probably the most talented and imaginative architect of the firm; Harry was more of the businessman. Donald McDonald (1858-1924) followed a track similar to his older brothers and joined the firm in 1881, after which it was known as the McDonald Brothers. Roy McDonald (1858-?) worked for the family business for awhile as a construction foreman.

Outside of Louisville, the firm established a large regional practice in Kentucky and elsewhere, primarily thanks to Donald, who traveled extensively to negotiate contracts and oversee construction. The firm’s out-of-town commissions fell off notably after Donald’s resignation in 1892. Along with the many courthouses and jails they designed, the McDonald Brothers’ other notable works from the period include: Calvary Episcopal Church, Louisville (1886), West Tennessee Insane Asylum, Bolivar, TN (1886), the Kansas State Capitol Building, Topeka (1887), St. Andrews Episcopal Church, Louisville (1890), and the Kentucky National Bank, Louisville (1891). Kenneth continued working after Harry’s 1904 death and is credited with numerous other designs with William J. Dodd, with whom he partnered from 1906 to 1913 under the name McDonald & Dodd.

Completed in 1889, the Boone County Courthouse was at least the 14<sup>th</sup> courthouse the McDonald Brothers had designed and supervised construction over.<sup>10</sup> Between 1875 and 1913, the McDonalds (or Kenneth McDonald alone) were responsible for the design of a total of 27 courthouses and courthouse additions in 7 states (See Table 1). The majority (n=13) were built in Kentucky, although others can be found in Indiana, Illinois, Texas, Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia. Most were patterned off what Hedgepeth calls the firm’s “prototype” 1883 courthouse in Franklin, Simpson County, KY (Figure 9). Although not their first courthouse design, the Simpson County building had all the elements that typify the standard McDonald Bros courthouse: a cruciform plan with projecting entry bay, central first floor hall, large second floor courtroom, and imposing clock/bell tower. Courthouses nearly identical to

the Simpson courthouse were built in Hickman County, KY (1884-1885), Carroll County, KY (c. 1885), Laurel County, KY (c. 1885), Adair County, KY (1887), Cumberland County, IL (1887), and Fort Bend County, TX (1887) (see Figures 10 – 14). All of these buildings featured a four-sided or “pyramidal” roofed clock tower. By contrast, the courthouses built in Boone County, KY (1889), and Bandera County, TX (1891), featured domed clock towers (Figures 3 & 15).

Virtually all McDonald Brothers courthouses featured a clock or bell tower, although some of them (e.g., Henry County, KY; Washington County, IN) were located in the front of the building, either centered or in one corner. An interesting, and certainly unintended, characteristic of a number of the central clock tower courthouses is the propensity for leaking roofs and/or structural instability. The bell tower of the 1884 Trimble County Courthouse was downsized in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century and eventually removed when the building was badly damaged by fire in 1952 and subsequently rebuilt. The Hickman County Courthouse (1885) lost the upper part of its tower after a 1917 windstorm; the lower “drum” portion was taken off in 1938 (see Figure 10).<sup>11</sup>

The *Bandera County Courthouse Master Plan* (2000) indicates that “the roof on the courthouse has been a problem for Bandera, almost since it was put on the building,” and lists 17 episodes of roof repair between 1893 and 1996 alone. In fact, the roof situation became so bad that emergency shoring of the roof and tower above the courtroom was installed in 1996 at a cost of \$26,895. The shoring was removed in 2006, following the complete reconstruction of the clock tower. As mentioned above, the original Boone County Courthouse clock tower was replaced in 1898. This author can personally attest to the fact that the flat roofs above the four second-floor corner offices still leak. Indeed, the ceiling in the Historic Preservation Office suffered a partial collapse in February, 2007. The dropped ceiling in the old judges’ chamber on the opposite corner of the building partially collapsed in March, 2008.

### **Benjamin Franklin Trester and the Bandera Job**

In late 2006, the man supervising the restoration of the Bandera County Courthouse in Bandera, Texas, contacted the Boone County Historic Preservation Office by email.<sup>12</sup> He had stumbled across a photograph of the 1889 Old Boone County Courthouse in Burlington, Kentucky, and was surprised by its striking resemblance to the Bandera Courthouse, built in 1890. In fact, with the exception of building materials and some exterior details, the two buildings were near twins (Figure 16). The apparent twin courthouse in Texas was a surprise, as was the claim that a man named B.F. Trester was credited with the design of the Bandera Courthouse. There is little doubt that the McDonald Brothers were the architects of the 1889 Boone County Courthouse. In fact, the McDonald Brothers’ signed original contract, receipts and correspondence with Boone County officials are among the files in the Boone County Historic Preservation Office (Figure 17).<sup>13</sup>



Additional research has been undertaken since the existence of Boone's Bandera Courthouse twin surfaced. This has included correspondence with individuals in Texas who have some knowledge of the courthouses there,<sup>14</sup> searches of the internet for photographs of other suspected McDonald Brothers courthouses, and additional research into the McDonald Brothers. Although not yet complete, a plausible explanation of the similarity between the two buildings and the relationship between Trester and the McDonalds is taking shape.

It turns out that B. F. Trester built the McDonald Brothers-designed Trimble County Courthouse in Bedford, KY, in 1884 (Figure 18), as well as the Lawrence County Courthouse in Lawrenceville, IL, in 1888-1889. Trester also constructed the Ft. Bend County courthouse in Richmond, TX, in 1887. The Trimble and Ft. Bend courthouse designs were very similar to the McDonald Brothers' Simpson County prototype. The Lawrence County building was a carbon copy of the 1889 courthouse in Mayfield, Graves County, KY. Curiously, the Ft. Bend courthouse design is credited to well-known Texas architect George Edwin Dickey. There is no mention anywhere of the McDonalds in association with that courthouse, which was replaced by a Neo-Classical building in 1908.

While census records indicate that Benjamin Franklin Trester (1817-1891) lived in Aurora, IN, from 1850 to 1880, the 1887 Ft. Bend job suggests that he was either laying the groundwork for a move or had relocated to Texas before 1890. In May of that year, Bandera County, TX, made it known that they were soliciting designs for a new courthouse.<sup>15</sup> In June, Trester and Alfred Giles each presented plans to the Bandera County Court. Inexplicably, Trester's design was chosen over those of Giles, a well-known and respected San Antonio architect. Trester was living in San Antonio by then, but had nowhere near the track record of Giles. According to Bandera County Commissioner Doug King, Trester is believed to have bought the courthouse plans for \$5 and sold them to Bandera (together with his supervisory services) for \$500. Trester died in February of 1891 and his foreman A. B. Frankel took over supervision of the project which, after squabbles over cost overruns and design, was finally completed in late September, 1891.

Although constructed of locally quarried limestone, the Bandera County courthouse is startlingly similar in exterior appearance to the Old Boone County Courthouse, which was built from brick fired on site (see Figure 16). Comparisons of interior photos of the two buildings reveal that the floor plans and many interior details of the buildings were nearly identical upon completion (compare Figures 19a/19b and 20a/20b). The story McDonald Brothers gave about the Boone County Courthouse plans being lost in a fire seems a bit too convenient. It is within reason to suspect that, for whatever reason, they sold their copy of the Boone County plans to Trester, who subsequently resold them to Bandera County. Trester may have done the same thing in Ft. Bend County in 1887. Curiously, there is conflicting information about the true construction date of the Ft. Bend County courthouse, with various completion dates for the building, including c. 1880, 1883, 1887, and 1891. Consequently, it is well worth

noting the possibility that the Ft. Bend courthouse was built before the McDonald Brothers' Simpson County, KY, "prototype" courthouse was completed in 1883. That would open the door for speculation that B. F. Trestler developed the original cruciform courthouse plan which became the standard McDonald Brothers' design. We may never know the whole truth behind the story, but it is safe to say that the courthouses in Boone County, KY, and Bandera County, TX, are still considered treasured landmarks by their respective communities.

**TABLE - Courthouses of the McDonald Brothers and Related Firms**

**McDonald Brothers (1882-1896)**

1875-76*	Henry County, KY (New Castle)
1883**	Simpson County, KY (Franklin)
1884**	Trimble County, KY (Bedford)
1883	Gibson County, IN (Princeton)
1884-1886**	Adair County, KY (Columbia)
c. 1885**	Carroll County, KY (Carrollton)
1884-85	Hickman County, KY (Clinton)
1887-88**	Cumberland County, IL (Toledo)
1886-87	Washington County, IN (Salem)
1886**	Union County, KY (Monroe)
1888	Noble County, IN (Albion)
1887	Roanoke City, VA (Roanoke City)
1887	Fort Bend County, TX (Richmond)
1889*	Boone County, KY (Burlington)
1889	Casey County, KY (Liberty)
1889**	Graves County, KY (Mayfield)
1889	Bell County, KY (Pineville)

**1981 Condition (and recent comments)+**

VG – built before Simpson county prototype developed, but shows some elements of the Prototype design  
 G^ - Prototype – Adair, Carroll, & Hickman nearly identical  
 Burned 1952 – rebuilt w/original 1<sup>st</sup> floor intact – contractor was B.F. Trester, who sold courthouse plans to Bandera, TX; original **clocktower removed** before 1952 fire  
 Standing – atypical; Roy McDonald construction foreman  
 Standing – Clone of Simpson County (also Carroll and Hickman; builder William Henry Hudson’s likeness carved into capital of one entry column. Completed in 1886.  
 Sympathetic 1976 additions but interior gutted – exterior identical to Simpson/Adair/Hickman County  
 Standing – near clone of Simpson/Adair/Carroll design – **missing clocktower**  
 Standing – similar to Simpson/Adair/Carroll/Hickman  
 Condition not noted – atypical plan  
 May be McDonald work – remodeled by WPA in 1938  
 Much altered  
 Replaced circa 1915  
 Appears identical to Simpson/Adair/Carroll/Hickman plan; B. F. Trester credited as builder, George Edwin Dickey as architect; Replaced in 1908 by Ruffini courthouse  
 VG – near clone of Bandera County, TX; 1959 Annex addition to east elevation **clocktower removed 1898**  
 Standing – atypical plan w/unusual comer tower  
 Additions – blend of early Henry County and later Simpson County prototype designs  
 Burned

1888-89	Lawrence County, IL (Lawrenceville)	Altered/addition – very similar to Graves County, KY, and also built by <u>B.F. Trester</u>
1889	Decatur County, IN (Greensburg)	Addition to 1854 building – standing
1889	Uvalde County, TX (?)	<u>B.F. Trester</u> architect, John Comack builder
1890*	Bandera County, TX (Bandera)	Standing – nearly identical to Boone, KY – <u>B.F. Trester</u> credited with design
1891	Coke County, TX (Robert Lee)	Replaced in 1956 but 1891 building looks suspiciously like McDonald Bros work ( <b>Note missing clocktower!</b> )
1893	St. Clair County, IL (Belleville)	Additions
1893	Davies County, KY (Owensboro)	Addition only – building replaced 1964
unknown	Laurel County, KY (London)	Noted in 1974 Hickman County NR form – burned 1958?
unknown	Whitley County, KY (Williamsburg)	Noted in 1974 Hickman County NR form – burned 1930?

#### **Kenneth McDonald (1896-1901)**

c. 1900	Bartow County, GA (Cartersville)
1903	Buncombe County, NC (Asheville)

#### **1981 Condition/Comments**

Standing – similar to Muhlenburg, KY
Burned

#### **McDonald & Dodd (1906-1913)**

1907*	Muhlenburg County, KY (Greenville)
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#### **1981 Condition/Comments**

VG – departs from typical prototype plan
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+ Table assembled from information contained in Hedgepeth (1981), who described the condition of most of the extant courthouses.

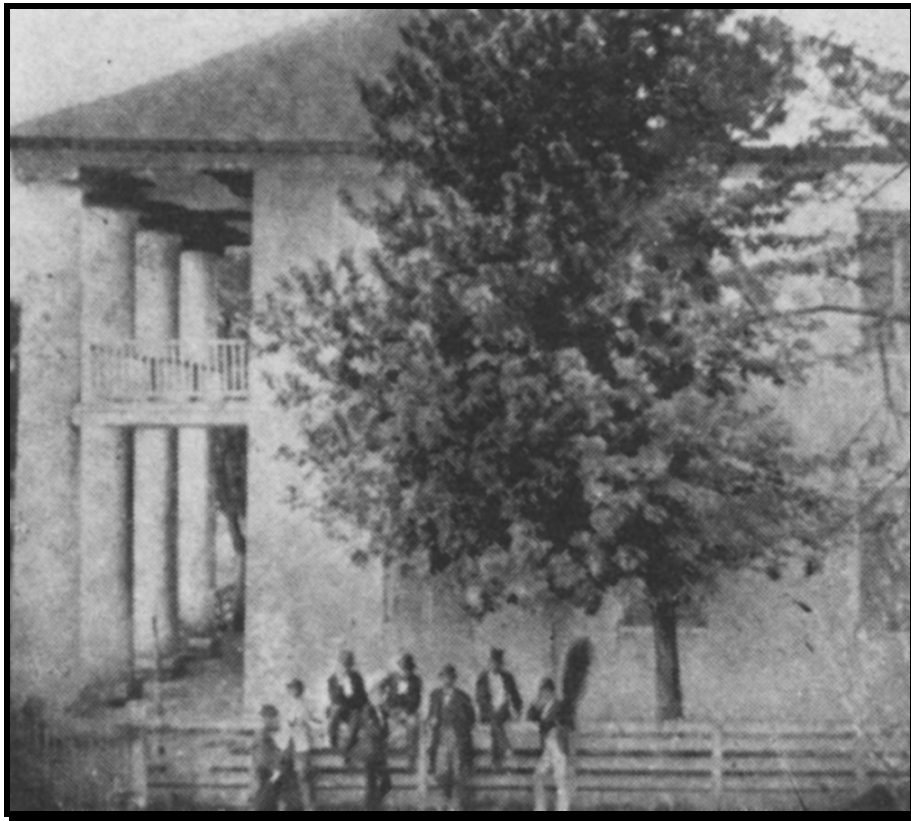
Additional comments added by Matt Becher based on more current information and observations.

\* Built with rounded clock tower

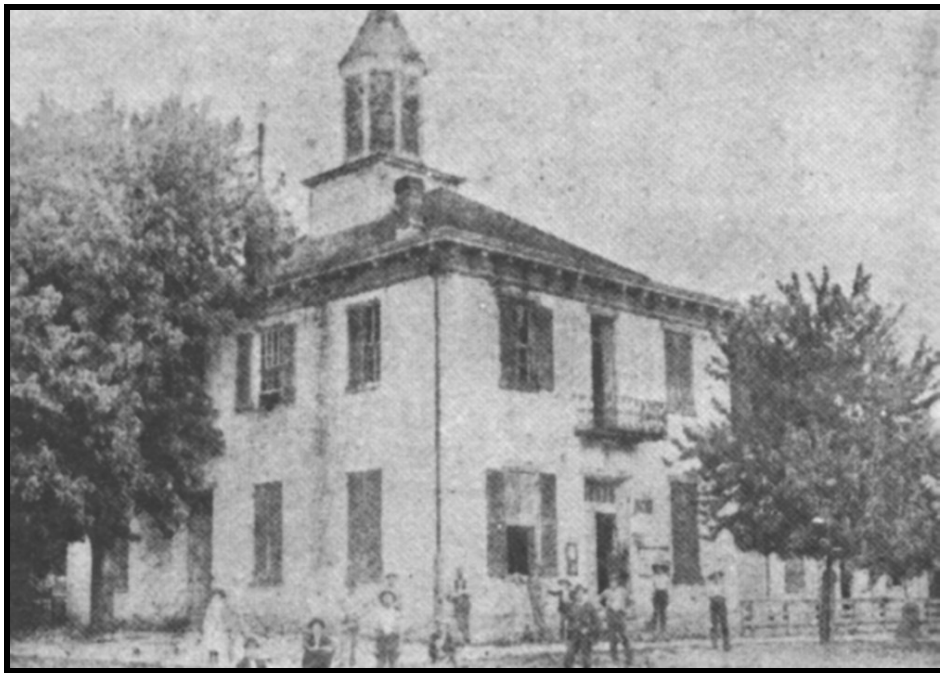
\*\* Built with pointed clock tower

^ Prototypical cruciform plan – used as basis for most other McDonald courthouse designs

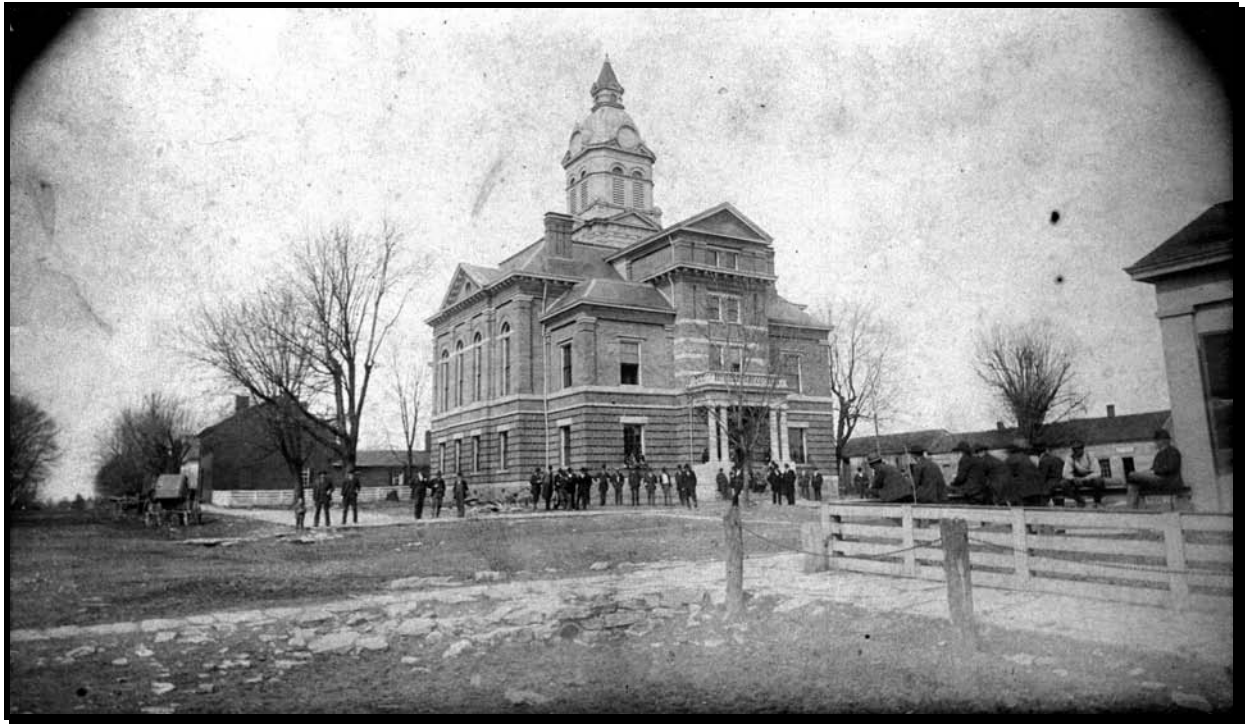
**FIGURES**



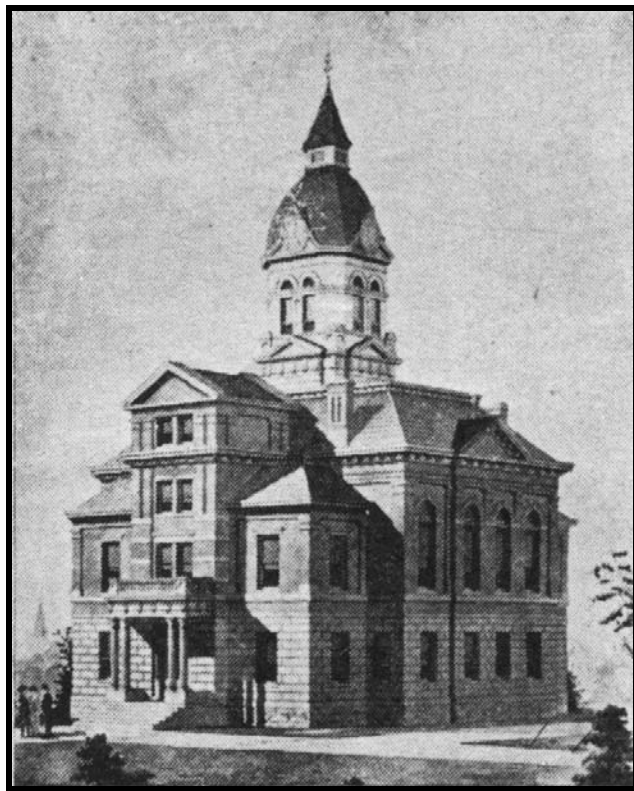
**1. 1817 Boone County Courthouse as it appeared c. 1830.**



**2. 1817 Boone County Courthouse after 1878 remodeling.**



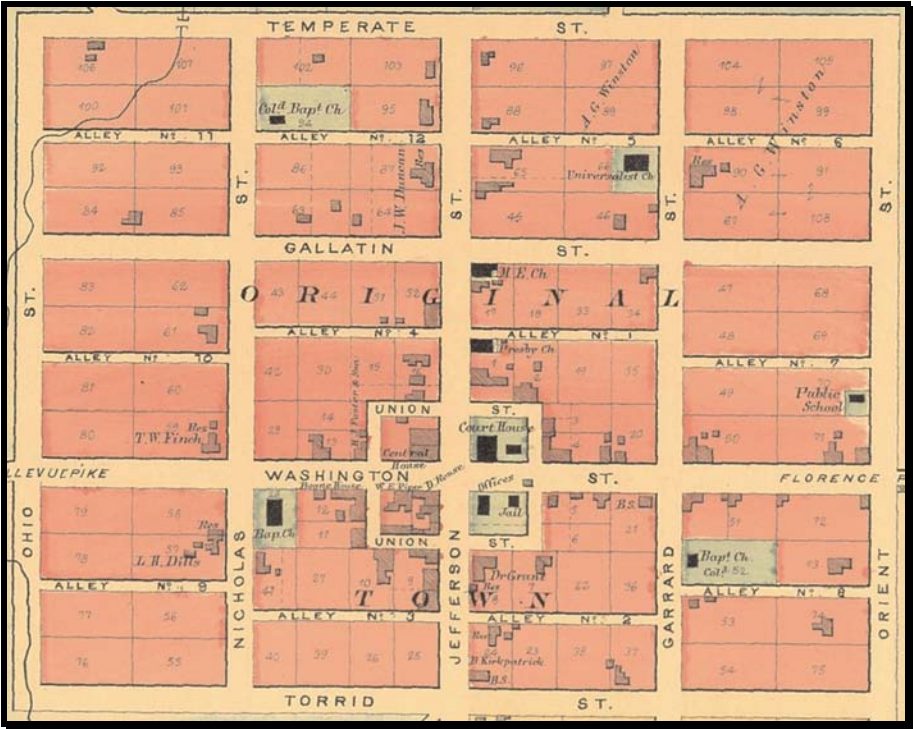
3. 1889 Boone County, KY, Courthouse as it appeared c.1890 with original clock tower.



4. Architectural Rendering of the 1889 Boone County  
from c. 1903 McDonald & Sheblessy brochure.



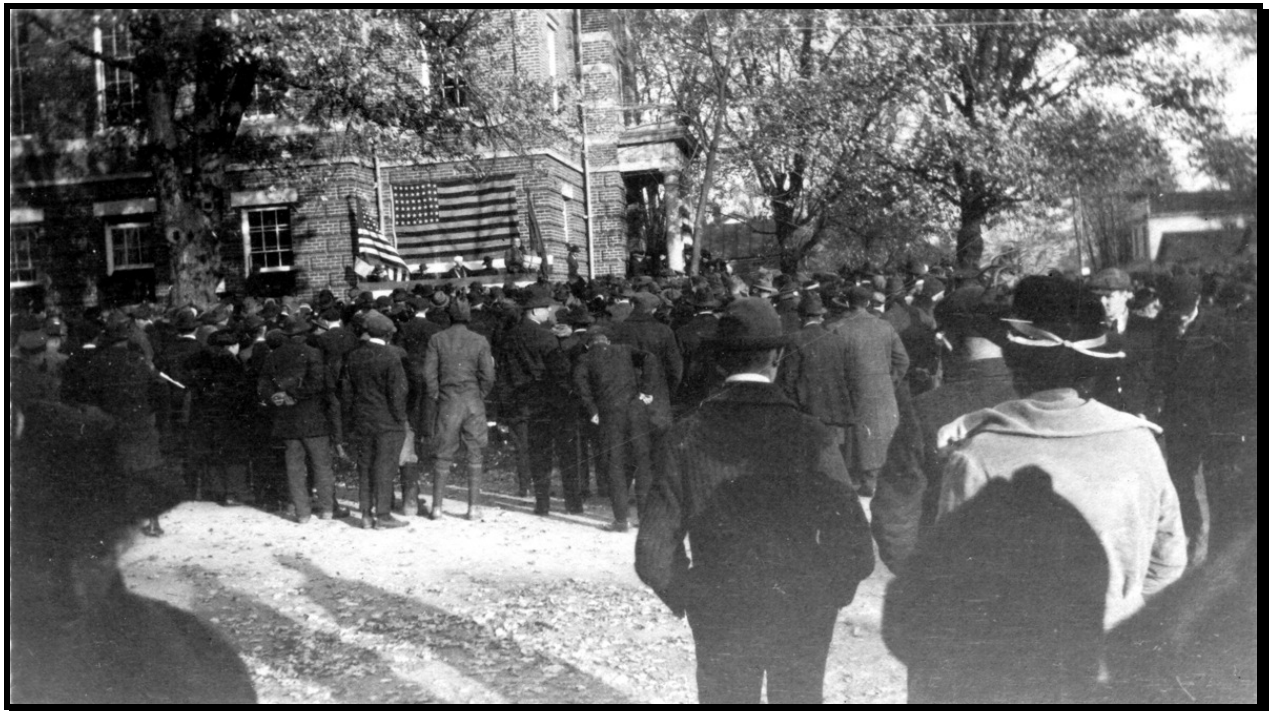
5. Recent photograph showing the 1959 Boone County Courthouse Annex.



6. Map of Burlington from D.J. Lake & Company's 1883 Atlas of Boone, Kenton, and Campbell Counties, Kentucky.



7. World War I Memorial Plaque, first floor, Old Boone County Courthouse.



8. Dedication of the World War Plaque on Armistice Day, 1920.





**9. 1883 Simpson County, KY, Courthouse as it appears today.**



**10. 1885 Hickman County, KY, Courthouse as it appeared in 1974.**



11. Undated postcard showing the c. 1885 Carroll County, KY, Courthouse.



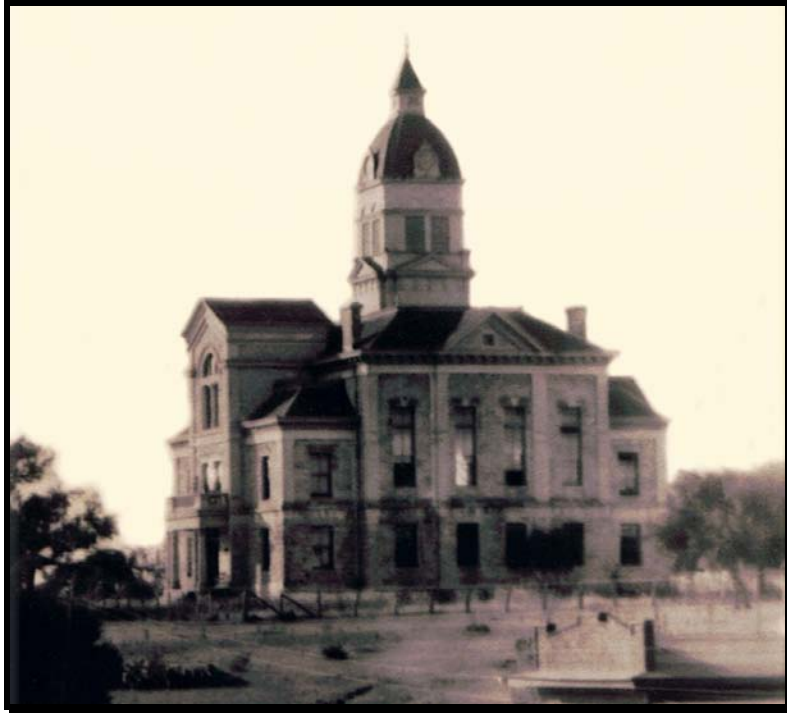
12. c. 1885 Laurel County, KY, Courthouse as it appeared in 1954.



13. 1887 Adair County, KY, Courthouse as it appeared in 1974.

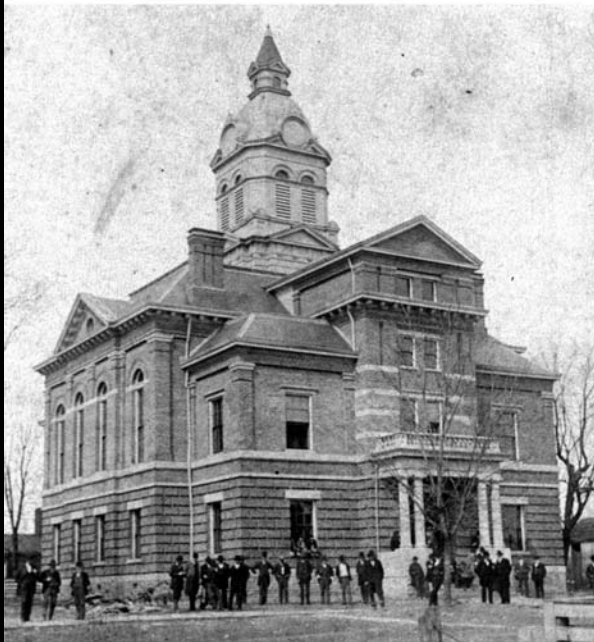


14. Recent photograph of the 1889 Cumberland County, IL, Courthouse.



15. 1890 Bandera County, TX, Courthouse as it appeared in 1909.

## SEPARATED AT BIRTH?

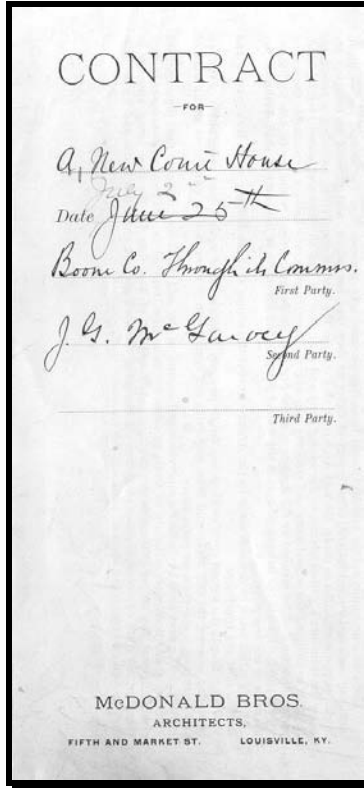


BOONE COUNTY, KY  
COURTHOUSE, 1889

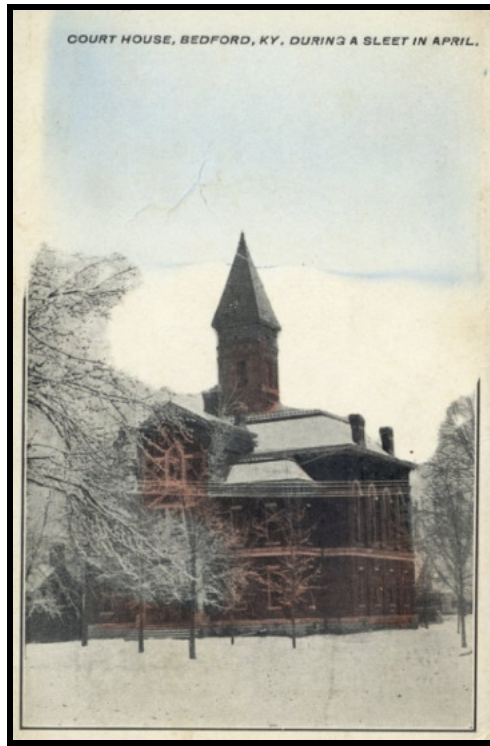


BANDERA COUNTY, TX  
COURTHOUSE, 1890

16. Side-by-side comparison of the courthouses in Boone County, KY, and Bandera County, TX.



17. The cover of the original contract for the 1889 Boone County, KY, Courthouse.



18. 1884 Trimble County, KY, Courthouse as it appeared in 1916.



19a & b. Recent comparative photos of the courtroom entrances in the Boone County (above) and Bandera County (below) courthouses.





20a & b. Recent comparative photos of the courtrooms in the Boone County (above) and Bandera County (below) courthouses.



## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> *Boone County Recorder: Special Illustrated Edition*, August 19, 1903.

<sup>2</sup> A cupola and colonnaded entry were added in 1828, but the most notable (and final) remodeling took place in 1878. Some sources erroneously state that the 1817 courthouse fire substantially damaged by fire and completely rebuilt in 1878, but in fact it was simply expanded and updated.

<sup>3</sup> The final cost of the building was established by adding the amount of cost overruns and changes specified in the McDonald Brothers final invoice (dated June 4, 1889) to the \$18,595 specified in the original contract.

<sup>4</sup> The walls of the main room in the first attic space have become a canvas for the signatures of many individuals over the years. The earliest signatures date to 1898 and everyone from county officials to boy scout troops have left their mark in the intervening years.

<sup>5</sup> *Letter* from Kenneth McDonald to Boone County Commissioners, July 22, 1889.

<sup>6</sup> *McDonald-Shebllessy Architects* brochure, c. 1903, Filson Club Library, Louisville, KY.

<sup>7</sup> Boone County Order Book 1, pp 112-113. Samuel Hannaford (1835-1911) was one of Cincinnati's most renowned architects of the Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. His most noted Cincinnati buildings include Music Hall (1878), Cincinnati Workhouse (1869, demolished 1990), Cincinnati Hotel (1882) and Cincinnati City Hall (1893). Hannaford and Sons had specialized to a degree in designing and redesigning towers, especially for churches, which may explain why Boone County officials retained the firm (personal communication with Margaret Warminski, Architectural Historian, Cincinnati Preservation Association, 2007).

<sup>8</sup> Boone County Order Book 1, p 116.

<sup>9</sup> Much of the information specific to the McDonald Brothers and their courthouses presented here is taken from Marty Lyn Poynter Hedgepeth's Master of Arts thesis *The Victorian to the Beaux-Arts: A Study of Four Louisville Architectural Firms - McDonald Brothers, McDonald & Shebllessy, Dodd & Cobb and McDonald & Dodd*, submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Louisville, 1981.

<sup>10</sup> This and most of the subsequent information about the McDonald Brothers and William J. Dodd is culled from Hedgepeth's thesis.

<sup>11</sup> Mrs. R. B. Jewell, Jr., *Hickman County, KY, Courthouse National Register Nomination*, 1974.

<sup>12</sup> Nolan Bees, Stoddard Construction, San Antonio, TX, email received October 22, 2006.

<sup>13</sup> The pedigree of the Old Boone County Courthouse is well documented in many sources, including The Kentucky Heritage Commission's *Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky: Boone County*, 1979, pp 60-61 and Dr. Kenneth Gibbs', *Burlington National Register Historic District Nomination*, 1978. There are also numerous references to the McDonald Brothers in the Boone County Court order books in 1888 and 1889.

<sup>14</sup> Terry Jeanson of San Antonio forwarded a series of current digital images of the Bandera County Courthouse, together with a history of the building from the *Bandera County Courthouse Master Plan* (2000) provided by the Honorable Doug King, Bandera County Commissioner, District 4.

<sup>15</sup> *Bandera County Courthouse Master Plan*, p 6.