

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Forest City, Missouri, City Hall

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Missouri State Highway 111

CITY, TOWN

Forest City

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

#6-Hon. E. Thomas Coleman

STATE

Missouri

CODE  
029

COUNTY  
Holt

CODE  
087

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

**OWNERSHIP**

**STATUS**

**PRESENT USE**

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

**ACCESSIBLE**

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Municipality of Forest City  
Mr. O'Neil Hicks, Mayor

STREET & NUMBER

Forest City Hall

CITY, TOWN

Forest City

VICINITY OF

STATE

Missouri 64451

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of County Clerk  
Holt County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Courthouse Square

CITY, TOWN

Oregon

STATE

Missouri 64473

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Missouri State Historical Survey

DATE

1979

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Office of Historic Preservation, Department of Natural Resources

CITY, TOWN

Jefferson City

STATE

Missouri 65102

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The City Hall in Forest City, Missouri is a two story building, rectangular in plan, with a one story section to the rear. This section appears to be a later addition, but, though it does not appear on the architect's original plans, it is included in the contractor's original drawings. The City Hall is constructed of red brick laid in common bond on a foundation of smoothed and coursed native limestone blocks. It measures 80' along its east and west sides, 40' along the north and south, and it rises 50' to the summit of the tower's parapet. Its walls are 13" thick, and its shed roof of tin slopes to the north over the two storied section.

#### EXTERIOR

The three-bayed primary facade faces south. This side is dominated by a square clock tower in its western bay which also encompasses the southern bay of the west side of the building. Two first floor, single leaf entrance doors are located here. Each is capped with an arch of radiating brick voussoirs with hood mold and corbeled label stops. Flanking these doors the brickwork which edges the corners of the tower seems to form quoins. In reality, this feature is created visually through the selective use of red mortar in a pattern imitating quoin headers. This same device is employed to emphasize all stringcourses, arches, corbels and other decorative brick highlights on the exterior of the City Hall. Above the entrance doors, a stringcourse encircles the tower, edging a plaque on the south which identifies the building. At the level of the second floor, the tower includes one round-arched window in each of its two exposed sides which is capped in each case with a hood mold and an arch of radiating brick voussoirs. These windows are joined above and below by stringcourses and are surmounted by a heavy, arcuated corbel table executed in brick.

Above, the tower continues to rise one-half story above the molded and paneled parapet which caps this facade. At its summit it is topped with moldings of brick and a crenellated parapet of its own. Clock faces can be seen in porthole openings on the south and west sides of the tower which were originally painted with hands pointing to the hour, 12:44.<sup>1</sup>

The two eastern bays of the south facade are identical to each other in design. The lower register features paired sash surmounted and joined by an enlarged fanlight capped with an arch of radiating brick voussoirs and a hood mold and linked at impost level by a stringcourse. The upper level here is identical to that of the west tower bay.

The west side of the building is plain with a stepped parapet and two levels of round arched windows in its two storied section. To the rear, the one story section is the location of a segmentally arched window and doorway.

The east side is similar to the west with the addition at the northeast corner of a second floor access stairway of cast iron with wooden treads, supported on heavy ornate cast brackets.

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The north side of the City Hall features segmentally arched windows on both upper and lower levels. A transomed doorway is also located here which gives access to the former stage-dressing room area. At the northeast corner the stair begins which turns the corner and rises to the entrance to the second floor on the east side.

INTERIOR

The interior of the City Hall features a large room on each floor with accessory areas on the north side in each case (see plan). On the first floor the southeast corner of the large room has been partitioned to provide city office space. To the north, a wall has been built through the proscenium arch of the stage creating a separate room in the former area of the dressing room and the rear of the stage. Fixtures in these rooms are plain and the floors are of unpolished wood. The only embellishments are the bull's eyes decorated with Eastlavian floral carving which are found on the corner blocks of all window and door surrounds.

The second floor is entered atop the cast iron stairway on the east side (see plan). The only embellishments on this floor are found in the large meeting room. Here, a molded tin ceiling features a diaper pattern and classically derived moldings. Its expanse is broken only by two stromboli fans which hang centrally along the north-south axis. Below, the linoleum floor covering is decorated with a repeated hexagonal pattern in black, gold and white, imitating similar designs found in the medium of marble (opus sectile). A raised platform, interrupted by two large podia, surrounds the room.

ALTERATIONS

No records regarding alterations to the City Hall have been kept. Those which are evident upon examination of the building include the replacement of the original paneled door on the south entrance with a less substantial and plainer door. The original must have been similar to that one the west tower facade. On the north, the easternmost window has been boarded up. Inside, the large room on the first floor is the site of the addition of a partitioned area to the southeast and a wall closing the proscenium arch of the stage, which have been mentioned. In addition, an oil burning furnace has been added here with a duct which cuts through the added stage wall.

PRESENT STATUS AND CONDITION

At present there are no plans to demolish or in any way alter or restore the City

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Hall. It remains the only public meeting house in town and is utilized as such periodically. Across the road to the west, a school building constructed in the 1930's has recently been demolished after consolidation of this district with that of Oregon, Missouri. A senior citizens' center will be constructed on the spot, funded by the Farmers' Home Administration. It is hoped that the City Hall can be more fully utilized in the future in connection with this center, but there are no definite plans in this regard as yet.

The City Hall is in only fair condition, and, due to the effects of increasingly severe winters, it continues to deteriorate. On the exterior, its soft bricks are in fragmentary condition on the tower parapet, below the water table on the south facade and on the north side where gutter leaks to the east and west have caused damage which is only partially evident in the accompanying photograph. Elsewhere extensive tuckpointing is needed. In addition, the fabric of the walls is infested with beetles which make their appearance in large clusters on the exterior at spots where the bricks have deteriorated. It is not evident what damage, if any, these beetles might have caused to the interior wall structure. Inside, plaster has weakened, cracked and fallen away from the lath in several spots. Otherwise the interior condition is good. Some signs of settling can be seen on the exterior in the separation of brickwork between the main building and the two story section to the rear.

FOOTNOTES

1. The clock faces were originally painted with this odd hour to commemorate the campaign promise of William Jennings Bryan in his bid for the Presidency of a 16:1 silver to gold ratio (12:44 = 16 minutes to 1:00). The clock faces are now obscured.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
...PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
...1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
...1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
...1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
...1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
...1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
...X1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1901-1904

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Contractor-Andrew Tochterman  
Architects-John H. Felt and

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Homer Carr

Forest City Hall, Forest City, Missouri is significant as a symbol of the early history of the town of Forest City to the local citizenry and as an early work of John H. Felt, a respected architect of the early twentieth century in the Midwest.

Forest City was founded in 1857 and laid out on a tract of 520 acres, purchased for \$10,000 by the Forest City Extension Company. Membership in this company included Milton, Thomas and Joseph Tootle and William Farleigh of St. Joseph, Missouri, and Levi and William Zook, Hiram Patterson, Abram Nave, R.E. Turner and James McCord, all of Oregon, Missouri. For over ten years Forest City served as a well known shipping point for farm produce on the Missouri River, doing about \$300,000 per year mercantile business at its height.<sup>1</sup>

In August, 1868 the Missouri River cut a new channel overnight two miles west of town, and the river town of Forest City essentially ceased to exist. The newly completed Kansas City, St. Joseph and Council Bluffs Railroad, however, which ran through Forest City, enabled the town to remain a local center for the export of farm products.<sup>2</sup>

The first Mayor of Forest City, Mr. George Weber, donated the land upon which the City Hall was constructed between the years 1901 and 1904 with \$600 raised by a local bond issue of June, 1900.<sup>3</sup> From its inception, this building was considered to be not only the City Hall and seat of local government, but, with its early sobriquet of Opera House, it served as the local entertainment center as well. Musical and theatrical groups, both local and traveling, performed there, and high school commencements and church bazaars took place there. With the advent of moving pictures, the building served as the local nickelodeon on weekends.<sup>4</sup> All of this activity was due to the existence of the stage in the first floor area of the City Hall which was considered to be the largest and most complete in the area.

The City Hall was constructed by a local contractor, Andrew Tochterman, from plans drawn by John H. Felt and Homer Carr of St. Joseph, Missouri with bricks produced on the site by the Seven Brothers Brick Company of Forest City. No record remains of Homer Carr, but John H. Felt, A.I.A. (1867-1938), became well known as an architect in the Midwest. Felt was self educated. He came from Indiana and settled in St. Joseph where he joined into partnership with Homer Carr. Around 1907 he moved to Kansas City and set up his own firm, J.H. Felt and Company. In 1927 the firm became Felt, Dunham and Kriehn and later, after Mr. Dunham retired, Felt and Kriehn.

Felt's firm was responsible for much institutional and church architecture in the Midwest in addition to the Forest City Hall. Examples include the Neoclassical

FHR-8-300A  
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HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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Revival Boone County Courthouse, Columbia, Missouri (1908), the Tudor Revival Administration Building at Northwest Missouri State University in Maryville, Missouri (1910), the Jacobethan Junior High School in Beatrice, Kansas (1926), the Georgian Revival High School in Lexington, Missouri (1927) and the Beaux Arts Junior High School in Jefferson City, Missouri (1938).<sup>5</sup> Except for the Boone County Courthouse, which is a substantial local example of its style, all of these buildings are vernacular institutional constructions with only minimal applied decoration indicating stylistic affinities.

The survey of Missouri's historic sites is based on their selection as they relate to theme studies in Missouri history as outlined in "Missouri's State Historic Preservation Plan". The City Hall in Forest City, Missouri, therefore, is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as an example of the themes of "Architecture", "Political Affairs" and "Fine Arts and Humanities".

### FOOTNOTES

1. History of Holt County, Missouri (St. Joseph: Historical Publishing Co. 1916), pp. 210-212.
2. Forest City, Legacy of a Restless River, 1857-1957, script for centennial celebration in possession of Mr. George Wohlford of Forest City, Missouri.
3. Minutes of the City Council, Forest City, Missouri, Bills #76 and #77, 1900.
4. O'Neil Hicks, Mayor, personal correspondence with the Office of Historic Preservation, February 24, 1979 and Forest City [Missouri] News, January 23, 1914.
5. Guy Study, "Junior and Senior High Schools", Architectural Record, LX (July-December) 1926, 208-209 and H.F. and E.R. Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects, Deceased (Los Angeles: New Age Publishing Co., 1956), p. 206.

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Forest City, Legacy of a Restless River, 1857-1957. Script for centennial celebration in possession of Mr. George Wohlford of Forest City.
2. Forest City [Missouri] News, January 23, 1914.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

QUADRANGLE NAME "Oregon, Mo.-Kans"

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 15 311291815 4141217181915

B         

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C         

D         

E         

F         

G         

H         

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Block 41, Lots 6, 7 and 8.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

1. Noelle Soren  
Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Office of Historic Preservation  
Department of Natural Resources

DATE

April 11, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 176

TELEPHONE

314/751-4096

CITY OR TOWN

Jefferson City

STATE

Missouri 65102

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

Director, Department of Natural Resources and State  
Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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3. Hicks, O'Neil. Personal correspondence with the Office of Historic Preservation, February 24, 1979.
4. History of Holt County, Missouri. St. Joseph: Historical Publishing Co., 1916.
5. Minutes of the City Council, Forest City, Missouri. Bills #76 and #77, 1900.
6. Study, Guy. "Junior and Senoir High Schools", Architectural Record, LX (July-December), 1926, 024-210.
7. Withey, H.F. and E.R. Withey. Biographical Dictionary of American Architects, Deceased. Los Angeles: New Age Publishing Co., 1956.



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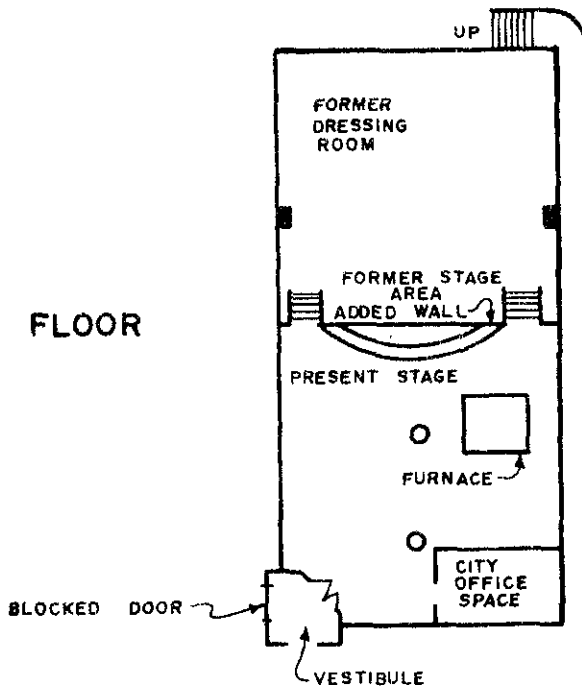
2. Mr. O. Conrad Gebhart  
Appointed Research Assistant  
Lions International, Forest City Chapter  
Forest City

816/446-2067  
Missouri 64451



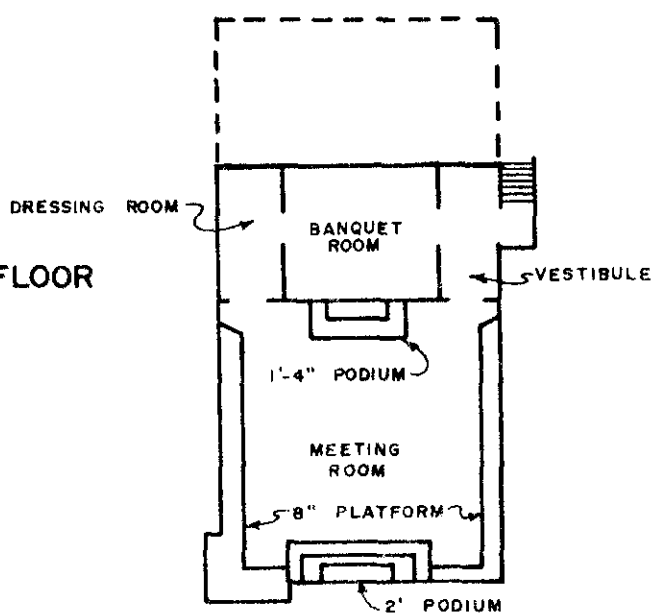
CITY HALL  
FOREST CITY, MISSOURI

FIRST FLOOR



NOT TO SCALE

SECOND FLOOR



FOREST CITY, MISSOURI, CITY HALL #1  
Forest City, Missouri  
Photographer: Noelle Soren  
March, 1979

Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 176,  
Jefferson City, Mo. 65102  
South side, main facade. Note quoin effect of  
red mortared bricks on base of tower. This  
effect is repeated on all arches and string-  
courses.



CITY HALL.

FOREST CITY, MISSOURI, CITY HALL #2

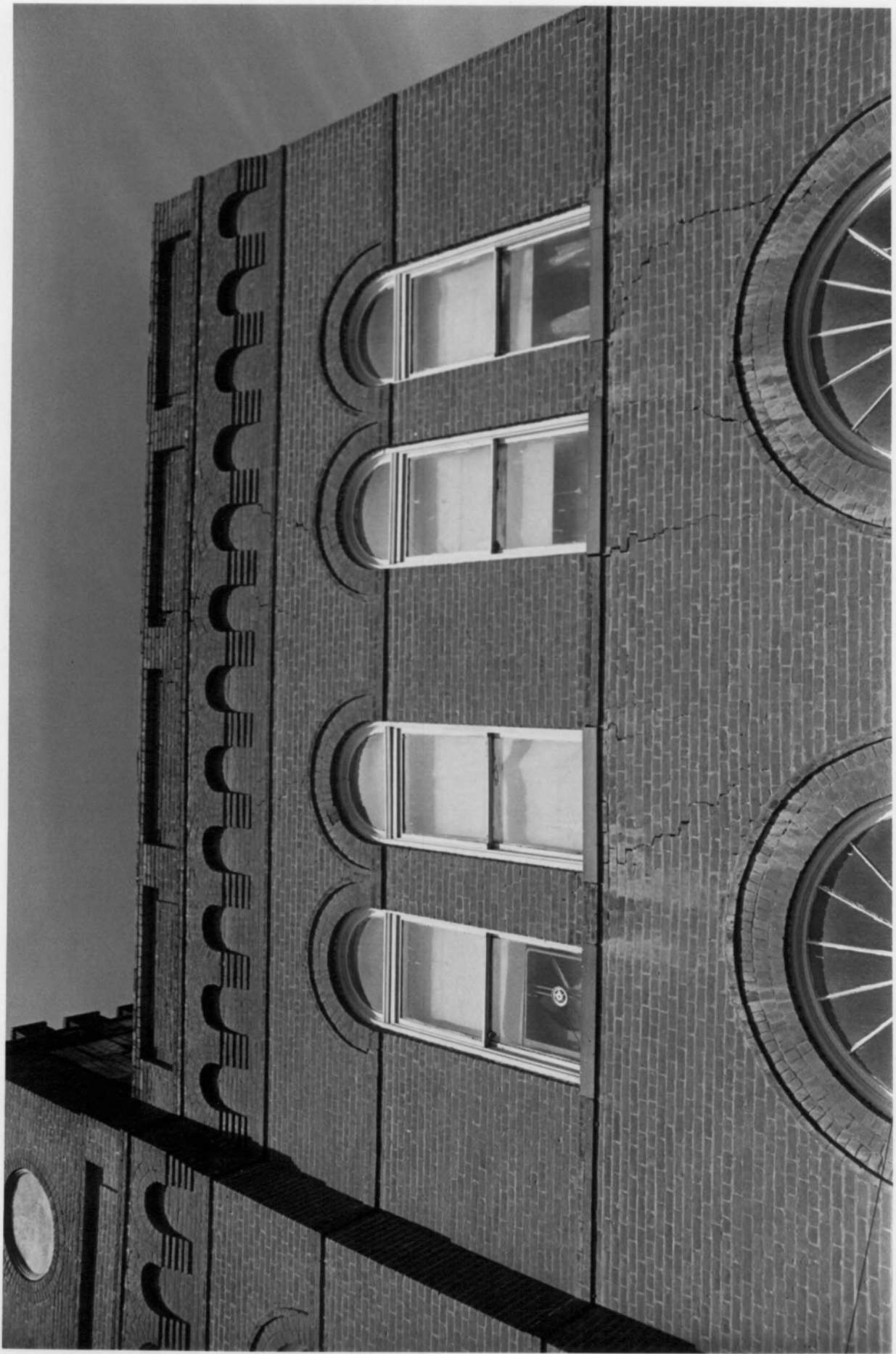
Forest City, Missouri

Photographer: Noelle Soren

March, 1979

Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 176,  
Jefferson City, Mo. 65102

South facade, detail showing corbel table,  
parapet and joints in need of tuckpointing.



FOREST CITY, MISSOURI, CITY HALL  
Forest City, Missouri

#3

Photographer: Noelle Soren  
March, 1979

Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 176,  
Jefferson City, Mo. 65102

West side. The original door remains in this  
side if tower. Note rear section which houses  
the former dressing room area for the stage.  
Though this appears to be an addition, it is  
included in the architect's original plans.





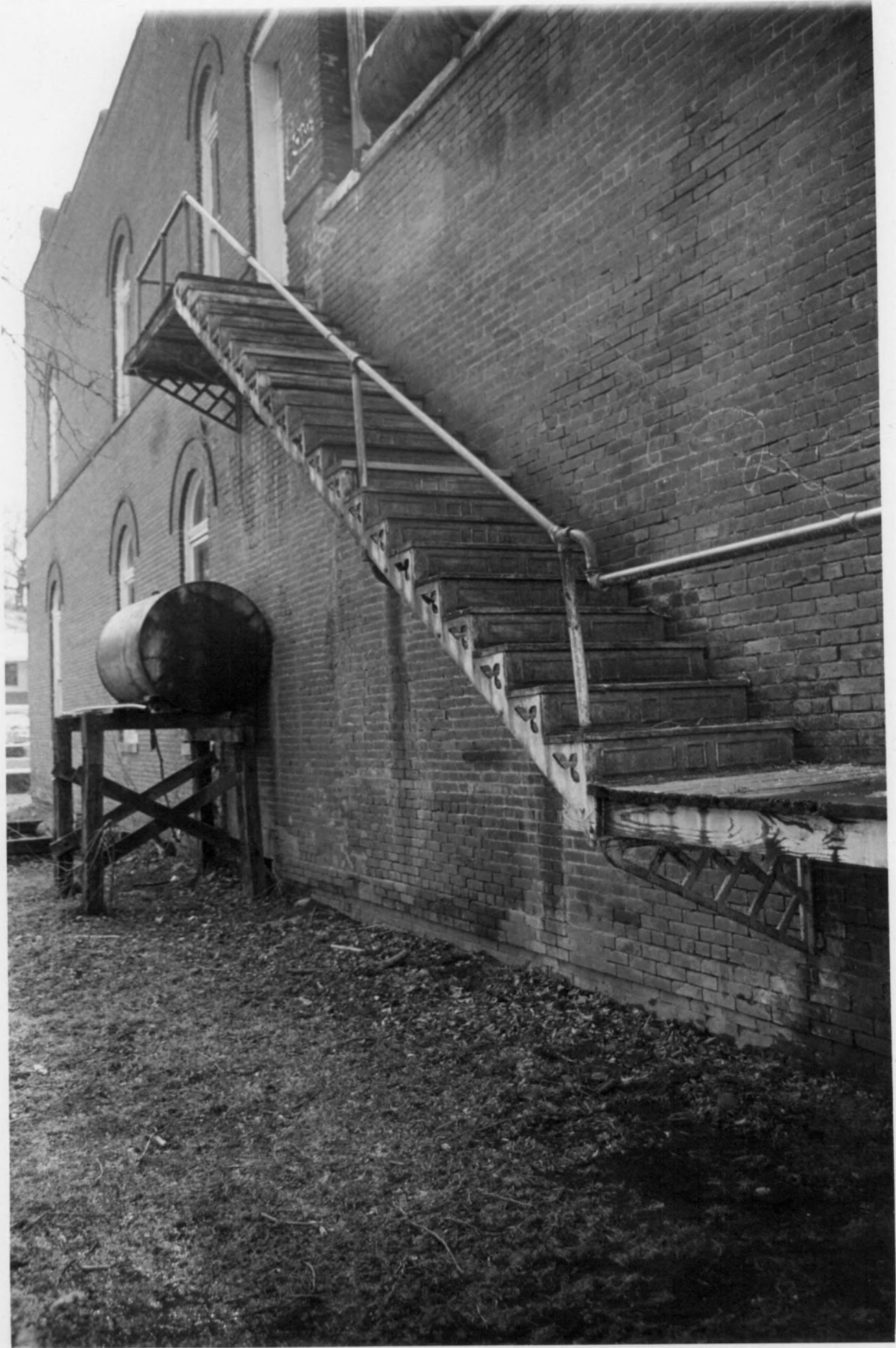
FOREST CITY, MISSOURI, CITY HALL #4  
Forest City, Missouri

Photographer: Noelle Soren  
March, 1979

Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 176,  
Jefferson City, Mo. 65102  
North side. The brick is deteriorating serious-  
ly here due primarily to several gutter leaks.  
Only access stair to second floor shown to left.



FOREST CITY, MISSOURI, CITY HALL #5  
Forest City, Missouri  
Photographer: Noelle Soren  
March, 1979  
Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 176,  
Jefferson City, Mo. 65102  
East side, showing second floor access stair  
of cast iron with wooden treads.



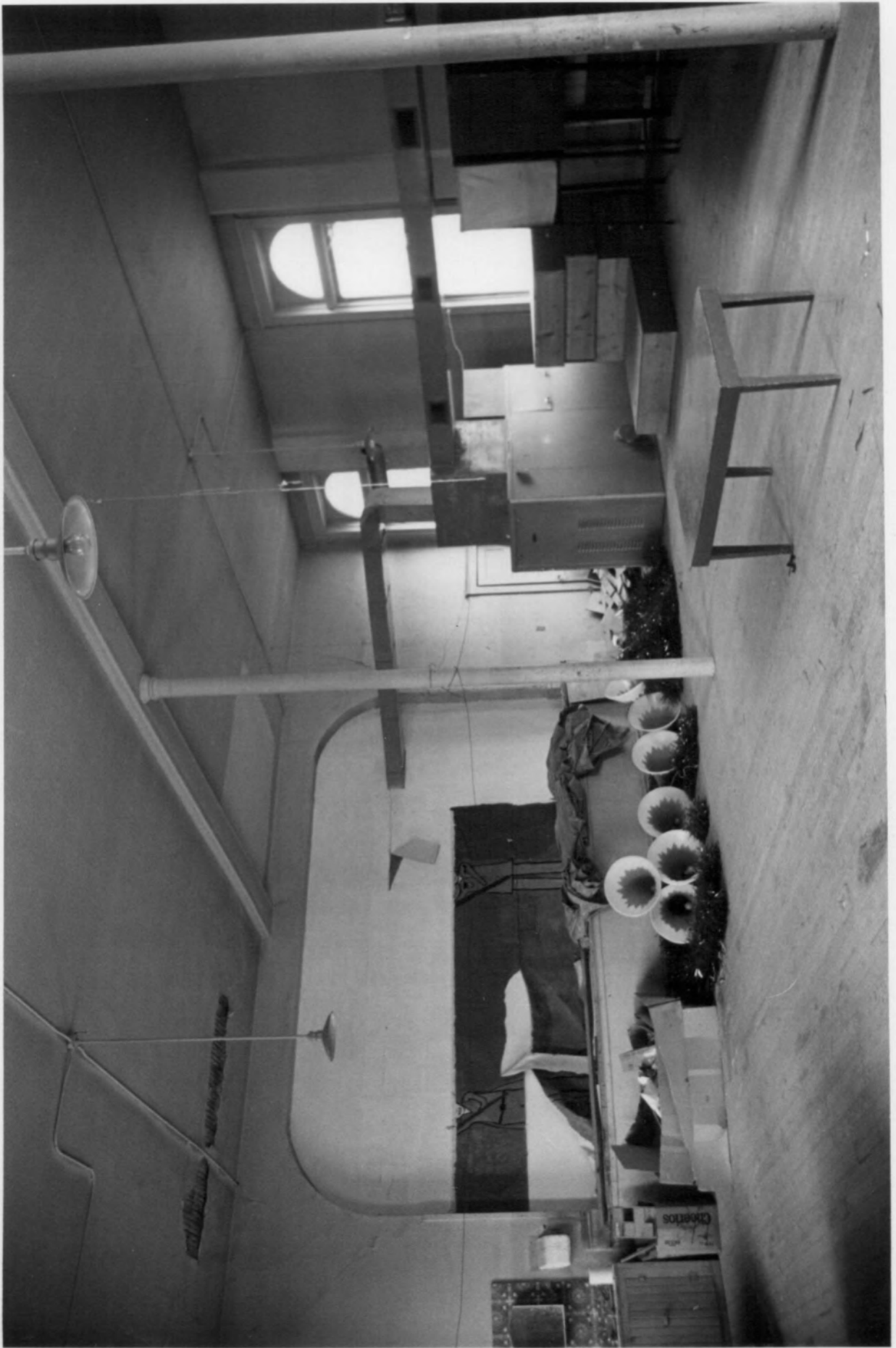
FOREST CITY, MISSOURI, CITY HALL #6

Forest City, Missouri

Photographer: Noelle Soren  
March, 1979

Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 176,  
Jefferson City, Mo. 65102

Interior, first floor to northeast showing  
stage which has been walled-in. Only remaining  
city office space is a small partitioned area  
just beyond the photo to the right.



EXTRA  
PHOTOS







CITY HALL.

















