

Jones - Wells House  
626 West Main Street  
Jefferson City  
Cole County  
Missouri

HABS No. MO-1256

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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Rocky Mountain Region National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Denver, Colorado 80225

JONES - WELLS HOUSE

Location: 626 West Main Street, In lot 41, Jefferson City, Missouri

Present Owner: City of Jefferson, Housing Authority

Present Occupant: Vacant

Present Use: Vacant

Statement of

Significance: The Jones - Wells House (Log House) was constructed as early as the 1840's and is conjectured to be one of the earliest remaining partially extant structures within Jefferson City.

Date of Erection: Circa 1840 date of construction.

Architect: Vernacular log structure, unknown architect.

Original and Subsequent Owners

1832	Deed, January 27, 1832, recorded in Book A, Page 527. James Jobe to Robert Jones
?	No record of transfer
1837	Deed, September 22, 1837, recorded in Book C, Page 30.
?	Sheriff's Deed, not recorded
1843	Deed, January 26, 1843, recorded in Book E, Page 502. John B. Walters to Bernard Eveler.
1898	Will, April 4, 1898, recorded in Book C, Page 382.

- 1916 Deed, June 27, 1916, recorded in Book 4, Page 301.  
F. W. Roer to G. Herman Schulte.
- 1921 Deed, October 14, 1921, recorded in Book 53, Page 637.  
Pauline Tanner (Schulte) and Julius T. to Cecil W. Thomas.
- 1924 Deed, February 2, 1924, recorded in Book 58, Page 320.  
C. W. Thomas to Thos. L. Price.
- 1928 Deed, August 9, 1928  
T. L. Price back to C. W. Thomas.
- 1941 Trust Sale Deed, November 14, 1941, recorded in Book 96, Page 49.  
To Lesslie Bryant Pratt.
- 1942 Deed, February 26, 1942, recorded in Book 1200, Page 222.  
L. B. Pratt to Robert Burke.
- 1945 Deed, May 26, 1945, recorded in Book 108, Page 637.  
R. Burke to Elmer Wornell.
- 1947 Deed, March 3, 1947, recorded in Book 114, Page 207.  
Elmer Wornell to Tressie E. Brown.
- 1955 Deed, December 27, 1955, recorded in Book 144, Page 130.  
T. Brown to Herbert Ousley.
- 1975 Deed, October 22, 1975  
Raymond Ousley to City of Jefferson Housing Authority.

The references to the chain of title to the land upon which the structure stands as indicated by the preceding listing are in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds, Cole County Courthouse, Jefferson City, Missouri.

#### Historical Narrative

The exact age of the Jones - Wells House has been difficult to determine. Robert Jones purchased in lot 41 and other property from James Jobe for \$30 on January 27, 1832. Five years later, on September 22, 1837, John Wells gained

title for \$100. The relatively low selling prices in both cases imply that no structures were present at the time of these transactions. In February of 1842 a deed of trust for \$2,559 was obtained backed by a \$1,500 mortgage and personal security of Thomas Price and John English for T. S. Smith and Mrs. B. Yount. Although this deal also involved the purchase of five lots, the price suggests that there was a building in existence at that time on this property. It is fairly certain that the cabin was at the appropriate location in the 1859 lithograph of Jefferson City made by Edward Robyn.

A point of interest regarding the cabin is its deep foundation. From a vantage point on a knoll on the south side of West Main, the top of the knoll appears to be exactly in line with the bottom of the log portion of the cabin. It is possible that the log portion of the cabin was built at street level when the grade going up West Main was ten to twelve feet steeper than it is now. The grade of West Main was changed in 1856. If the cabin was built on the street, modifications in the incline of the hill would have left it with an insufficient amount of dirt for a stable resting place. Following this, the owners probably found it necessary to erect a stone basement/foundation to support the structure to prevent its slipping onto West Main as well as to allow street level entry to the building.

The Jones - Wells House has been utilized for varied businesses since at least the turn of the century. The last business to operate in the structure was Gammon's Tavern which was closed in the late 1970's.

#### Architectural Information

The Jones - Wells House is a relatively simple architectural specimen consisting of two stories with a rectangular eight - nine hewn log upper story and a partial limestone and mortar lower story. Logs are V-notched with clay and stone making up chinking. Two windows are balanced around a door on the second and first floors facing West Main and one window on the southwest and northeast sides. One door is in the rear of the log portion of the structure. An exterior chimney was located on the southwest side. The upper level had two rooms. Evidence of a second floor porch roof is visible

along the roof line. A turn of the century photograph shows that the building had clapboard walls. A gable roof with an east-west ridge covered the structure at that time and shutters surrounded the southeast windows. The clapboard, roof and porch have been removed.

PROJECT INFORMATION

The Jones - Wells House is scheduled for demolition during the summer of 1983. The present documentation was carried out by Environmental Research Center of Missouri, Inc. and the City of Jefferson Housing Authority and completed in May 1983. The land on which the Ross House is located is part of a parcel which is being transferred to the State of Missouri from the City of Jefferson. The project is part of a larger Urban Renewal project in the City of Jefferson and is funded by HUD.

