

A Walking Tour of the Jewell and Lightburne Districts and William Jewell College

Length: *Approximately 1½ miles.*

Start: *There is free parking in the lot at the corner of East Kansas and South Missouri Streets, where the tour begins.*

9 S. Leonard (1842) The Clay Seminary / Vernacular Ecclesiastical

This small stucco building housed one of the earliest Methodist churches organized west of the Mississippi River. The building was constructed in 1842 of bricks shipped from Philadelphia. In 1855, it became part of the Clay Seminary, a famous school for young ladies, founded by Professor James Love. Its notable students included Zerelda Mimms (wife of Jesse James) and Carrie Nation (leader in the temperance movement). It currently serves as offices for the Clay County Courts.

Walk east on Kansas Street and cross Lightburne Street. On the north side of the street, note a series of neat cottage-style homes at 400, 410, & 416 E. Kansas from the turn of the 19th century.

427 E. Kansas (1907) Liberty Christian Church / Gothic Revival

The Christian Church is noted for its stained-glass windows and bell that dates from the 1850s. If the doors of the church are unlocked, go inside to the sanctuary for the full effect of the stained glass designs and colors. Each window has a theme – North: *Rock of Ages*; West- *Tree of Life*; East: *The Resurrection*.

449 E. Kansas (1906) Lambda Chi Alpha Fraternity House / Neoclassical

Next-door to the Christian Church is the former Lambda Chi fraternity house, affiliated with William Jewell College. In 1996, the house was severely damaged by a fire. It was then restored as a single family residence.

471 East Kansas (1890) Queen Anne Victorian

Note the Victorian architecture of the Geilker house at 471 East Kansas. Completed in 1890 in was the home of Dr. E.F. Miller, for whom the

Liberty Junior High School building was named. With magnificent woodwork and Italian tile fireplaces, the house stood on a full quarter of a block with a stable in the rear for the doctor's horse and buggy. Owned by the Miller family until 1945, it was then purchased by the Wyatt Aull's. The present owners, the Geilkers, are only the third owners.

Turn north (left) onto Jewell Street and then climb the steps at the center of the block for a visit to the William Jewell College campus and Jewell Hall, the building of neo-classical architecture atop the hill.

Jewell Hall (1858) Classical Revival

Completed in 1858, this Classical Revival educational building was the first erected on the campus of William Jewell College and serves as its centerpiece. The hall is listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its association with the Civil War, Alexander Doniphan, and for its historical significance as an institution of higher learning.

Turn left and walk across the quad.

Curry Library

See the valuable 'Glass Galaxy' a collection of antique glassware given by the late college trustee, William F. Yates. Ask to see the reproduction of the Library of the Rev. Charles Hadden Spurgeon, famous English Baptist preacher.

Gano Chapel

Step into Gano Hall, the college chapel. It was named for the chaplain of George Washington's army.

Mt. Memorial Cemetery

Look across the drive toward the north, at the old Liberty cemetery, dating to the 1820s. Despite its location on the college campus, the cemetery is owned and maintained by the City of Liberty. The cemetery was listed in the National Register

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of Historic Places in 2012, a rare honor for cemeteries.

President's House (1904)

To the west of the cemetery is the home of the college president (circa 1904).

Retrace your steps, going down the main steps to Franklin Street.

459 East Franklin (1885) John Rothwell House / Queen Anne Cottage.

Dr. John H. Rothwell, a physician and William Jewell Alumnus, built this house on land given him by his father, professor of religion at the college from 1872 to 1898 and chief administrator from 1873 to 1883.

Continue west on Franklin Street.

450 East Franklin (c.1860) Routt-Plumb House / Princess Anne

It was built in the 1860s by Colonel Henry Routt, who led a Confederate raid on Liberty Landing in 1861. The land had been purchased by his wife, Catherine Routt, upon receiving an inheritance of \$1,500.

449 East Franklin (1885) Judge James Sandusky House / Italianate

Judge Sandusky was a prominent banker, lawyer, and jurist. Constructed about 1885, it features graceful turned spindles as part of the archway woodwork. He owned the house until his death in 1938. It has been carefully restored.

430 East Franklin (1842) Stone-Corbin House / Greek Revival

This house is a registered Clay County historic landmark built in 1853 and featuring a circular staircase. It served for a time as the dining hall and dormitory for the Female College that once stood at 438. It is now a private home. It was restored by Lucille Davis, for many years a leading Liberty businessperson.

Cross Lightburne Street.

316 East Franklin (c. 1859) Estes-Arthur House / Italianate

"The Mansion" as it was called by one of its owners, is a red brick house at 316 East Franklin. Built in 1859 by Marion Estes, it was purchased the next year by Michael Arthur, a financier and slave-dealer. It is said to have had an upstairs slave room reached only by an outside staircase, and the house may have served as a hospital and officer's quarters during the Civil War. It is now an apartment building.

Second Baptist Church (1925)

Occupying the block across the street is the Second Baptist Church, dedicated in 1925, after fire destroyed the previous building on that site.

210 East Franklin Street (1940) Frank Hughes Memorial Library / Neoclassical

The Frank Hughes Memorial Library was built in 1940, as directed by the will of Frank Hughes, in "as far as practicable some colonial design". It was designed by the notable Kansas City architects, Wight & Wight. The building is now home to the Clay County Archives and Historical Library.

112 East Franklin

The Colonial Hotel at the corner of Franklin and Missouri Streets is now apartments, but at one time, it housed many important Liberty visitors and gala social events.

104 East Franklin (1858) Clay County Savings Association / Greek Revival

In 1866 this bank was robbed by the Jesse James-Younger Gang, on February 13, 1877, and is considered to be the world's first daylight bank robbery. The site is now the Jesse James Bank Museum, which tells the tale of this notorious outlaw. It is open to the public (there is a small admission fee.)

Turning north (right) on Water Street, pass by the shops, many of which are located in turn-of-the-century residences.

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139 North Water (1895) Sandusky House / Folk Victorian

This house was built by Sidney J. Sandusky, who sold it to Ephraim Sandusky for \$2,500 in 1895. It was a residence until recently being converted to law offices. Weddings are frequently performed in the garden during the summer months.

Cross Mississippi Street and walk up the east side of North Water Street.

301 North Water (1852) Lightburne Hall / Greek Revival

Alvan Lightburne was a farmer, businessman, and slave owner. The house has two front facades: it originally faced south, was modified to face west, then restored to face south again. It is believed to be the largest Greek Revival home west of the Mississippi.

319 North Water (1895) Matthews House / Queen Anne Victorian

A substantial brick structure of simple style, it was the longtime home of Dr. Francis Matthews, a prominent Liberty physician and the owner of Liberty's first telephone company.

Cross Water Street and continue north to the St. James Church.

342 North Water (1913) St. James Church / Gothic Revival

This former Catholic Church dates to 1913, and prior to that was the location of a Catholic convent academy. The church was close to demolition in 1988, but found a new owner and a new life as a bed & breakfast. It is now used once again as a church.

Proceed back down the west side of Water Street.

316 North Water (1890) Alexander House / Craftsman Bungalow

This house was also built by O'Fallon Dougherty, and was home to Mary Dougherty and her husband Harry Alexander. It has been an

apartment building for many, many years. The building provided an early and novel form of cooling, a refrigeration system in the basement that pumped cool water through the copper pipes to the several apartments.

302 North Water (1881) O'Fallon Dougherty House; Rose Hill / Vernacular

O'Fallon, the son of Major John Dougherty, moved to Liberty from Multnomah, the family plantation, to allow his children a good education.

216 North Water (1890) John Dougherty House / Queen Anne Victorian

This house was owned originally by the Honorable John Dougherty, who was elected prosecuting attorney for Clay County in 1888, and later served a Missouri congressman. From 1906 to 1921, the house served as the home of the Sigma Nu fraternity of William Jewell College.

210 North Water (1898) Prairie Style

This property was a part of land owned by Major John Dougherty, an early Indian agent at Fort Leavenworth, who also owned Multnomah, six miles northwest of Liberty, which was once the largest plantation in Clay County. This was also the site of the first school house in Liberty, a log cabin built in the 1820s and destroyed by a cyclone in the 1880s.

Now turn west (right onto Mississippi Street) and visit the Mormon Shrine at the corner of Mississippi and Main Streets.

Historic Liberty Jail

It contains a reconstruction of the Liberty Jail in which Joseph Smith, the Mormon leader, was imprisoned during the winter of 1838-39. (Open to the public.)

Cross Mississippi Street and walk south on Main Street.

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First Presbyterian Church (1889) Romanesque Revival

The sanctuary, design by Willis Polk (a direct descendent of President James Polk) was constructed in 1889 and is of Romanesque architecture. The original pews of cherry wood remain. Look up and notice the gargoyles on the north façade.

Presbyterian Park

If you are ready for another rest; stop to enjoy the mini-park across the street. It is owned and maintained by the Presbyterian Church and designed for public use.

104 North Main; Liberty Tribune

While its current location is not of much visual interest, it is interesting to note that the paper has been in continuous production since its founding by Robert Miller in 1846, and has been located, at one time or another, on all four sides of the Square.

Stand at the northeast entrance to the Square and look at the facades showing a fascinating variety of periods and styles. Continue down Main Street. All of the buildings on the west side (Main Street) date to the late 1880s.

14 North Main (1877) Hughes-Simmons Building / Clay County Museum

The buildings formerly housed Simmons' Drug Store, and on the second floor the offices of long-time Liberty physician Dr. William Goodson. This area has been restored as the office looked when Dr. Goodson practiced there and is open to the public. Since 1965, this building has been home to the Clay County Museum and Historical Society. This building and those adjacent on either side are listed collectively on the National Register of Historic Places as "West Liberty Courthouse Square Historic District".

2 South Main (1923) National Bank

At the corner of Kansas and Main on the south side, is the former National Bank Building, now the law offices of Withers, Brant, Igoe & Mullennix, constructed in 1923.

1-17 East Kansas (1875-94) South Liberty Courthouse Square Historic District

The entire south side of the square, plus 2 South Main and the Courthouse itself is identified as a National Register district for its historic integrity. These commercial buildings and offices display a wide variety of commercial architecture from the late 19th century.

1 Courthouse Square (1935-36) Old Clay County Courthouse; Administration Building / Art Deco

This Clay County Courthouse was constructed in 1935-36, utilizing elements from the then prevailing architectural styles - the Art Deco and Moderne styles. This is the third county courthouse on this site. The first burned; the second was demolished to make way for this Public Works Administration project, designed by Kansas City architects Wight & Wight.

101 East Kansas (1985) Liberty City Hall

As you return to your car, be sure to stop in at the Liberty City Hall, a modern spacious office compound that blends congenially with the older styles of historic Liberty and contains a mural depicting the city's history in the Council Chambers. The lobby also serves as an art gallery for the work of local artists. (Open Monday-Friday, 8 am-5 pm)

We are glad you took the time to see something of old Liberty. Please come again soon!

Jewell-Lightburne Walking Tour

