

B L O U N T C O U N T Y C O U R T H O U S E S

The Act of the Legislature establishing Blount County provided for the first court to be held in the house of Abraham Weir. A number of persons have made search for some record showing definitely where that house was, but without success. The best that can be ascertained is, that it was some two or three miles west of Maryville, where large bodies of lands were owned by the Weirs. The first court was held, as appears from the records at the place designated.

The County has had the following Court Houses:

1. Erected in 1796, on Lot 83, according to the plan of the town of Maryville, which is the middle lot in the block on which the present jail is situated. It was built of logs, and evidently a very crude structure. The probabilities are that the men turned out, made a frolic and built it without charge, as money at that time was not in circulation to any extent. Joseph Black, one of the commissioners of the town and also special commissioner for aiding the construction of a new court house was authorized to sell the same for what he could get and the proceeds to be turned into the county, and on February 29, 1801, he had sold the building and the lot, and turned the price over to the contractor, Jacob Danforth, taking his receipt, being \$50.00

2. The second court house was also built of logs in the year 1800, on lot 61, being partly on the lot on which the Bank of Blount County now stands, the corner of Main and Cusick streets. * Dr. John W. Cates, now deceased, told me ^{that} he remembered this building from a little circumstance that occurred when he was a small boy. There was a cellar under the building, the rains ran in, and the water stood in a pond. He and some other small boys got some boards and was floating around on the water. He lost his balance and fell into the water and mud, and had to go home to his mother, very greatly humiliated.

3. The third building was of brick, and stood on Lot 61, corner of Main and Cusick streets, was first occupied February 1, 1842. ** It was standing during the Civil War, and Lieutenant Dorton, of the Union army with a detachment of men, barricaded the same, and occupied it defensively, when he was attacked by Gen. Joseph Wheeler with a superior force of Confederates. Wheeler could not force a capitulation until he attacked with artillery, and the court room was badly torn and damaged by exploding shells, so Dorton was forced to surrender. It was burned in February, 1879. The records do not show the cost of this building.

4. The fourth was of brick and was completed in 1882, at a cost of \$12,779.01. It was also destroyed by fire in 1906. It was located on the same place as was the preceding house.

5. The fifth house still stands at this time, being constructed of brick. The old lot was sold, and the lands for the present location containing eleven acres were purchased from Dr. John W. Cates, for which \$10,000 was paid, and the house built costing \$51,780.47, to which add the amount paid for the grounds, make \$61,780.47, aside from the furniture and equipments.

* The second house cost \$571.33 1/3.

** The cost of the third building is either \$658.50 or \$6,580.00. This figure is inked in and not discernible.

/s/ Will A. McTeer

Maryville, Tenn.
June 10, 1921

I, Joe L. Marshall, County Court Clerk of Blount County, took the above information from a type-written Memorandum written by Will A. McTeer, a practicing Attorney in the City of Maryville--said information was pasted on the back of a picture of the present Court House of Blount County. This picture is in the possession of Will A. McTeer, a nephew of Will A. McTeer, who furnished the above information and the present owner of the picture is now Judge of the General Sessions Court of Blount County.

This November 12, 1963.

Note: Feb. 29, 1801 would not seem correct, as 1801 was not a Leap Year.

Joe L. Marshall
County Court Clerk of
Blount County