

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**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

(Old) Linn County Jail (preferred name)

AND/OR COMMON

City Hall

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

312 Main

CITY, TOWN

Mound City

STATE

Kansas

VICINITY OF  
CODE

20

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

No. 5 Joe Skubitz

COUNTY

Linn

CODE

107

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDEN
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

City of Mound City, Kansas

STREET & NUMBER

312 Main

CITY, TOWN

Mound City

VICINITY OF

STATE

Kansas 66056

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Register of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

Linn County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Mound City

STATE

Kansas 66056

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

107-3810-011

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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

The old Linn County Jail is a two-story rectangular brick structure with a front gable facade facing south on Main street in Mound City. The exterior features of the building have been plainly articulated. Simple stone sills and lintels distinguish the rectangular windows and doors. A simple wooden boxed cornice and plain frieze board serve as the only other significant source of ornamentation. The brick walls of the structure measure 21 inches thick and have been painted tan. Adjacent to the west wall is a brick-faced garage that houses the city fire truck.

The old jail measures 27 feet by 34 feet. Its rectangular plan is divided into three basic functional units, two on the ground floor consisting of one room each and one on the second floor consisting of four connected rooms. The south space on the ground floor is an office/meeting room where the sheriff's office was located. The north space on the ground floor served as the jail area. The second story rooms provided living quarters for the sheriff.

The building's three functional units are not internally connected. Access to each is achieved through a distinct exterior entrance(s). The facade entrance gives access to the ground floor office, a rear door on the ground story leads to the old jail area, and two second story entrances, one at the east and one at the rear, provide access to the second story rooms. The second story door on the east is reached by a wooden stairway built along the east wall; the second story entrance to the rear presently lacks a stairway.

Like the building's doors, the fenestration, though disposed regularly, also conforms in placement and size to the multiple uses of the structure. The second story is provided with two moderately large two-over-two windows on each wall, while the south room on the ground floor displays a similar type of window to the south and, originally, to the west. The window treatments in these areas are designed to provide ample light for interior activity. The rest of the ground story elevation, except for the rear door and for a small window to the north end of the east wall measuring six inches by twenty-two inches and located six feet above the ground, is devoid of openings, suggesting that this area was used for a different purpose than were the other areas of the building. This impression is reinforced by the appearance of the jail door on the north which is fitted with both an outer latticed iron door and a heavy interior wood door.

Two chimneys straddle the roof ridge, one to the north and one to the south.

The historical character of the building is primarily conveyed by its exterior appearance--a stone date stone inscribed "1868" confirms suspicions concerning the structure's age. The portion of the interior that most vividly conveys the building's history is the old jail area where the walls retain their original iron facing (attached to iron plates imbedded in the brick walls and visible from the exterior) and where one of the original two cells retains all its original features. An iron flooring remains in each of the cell areas. In addition a solid six-inch hand-hewn beam running north-south supports the ceiling of the ground-floor rooms.

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7.

Alterations:

While the old county jail retains a high percentage of its original features, certain changes have been made over the years:

1. The garage that was added to the west in the early 1960's is the most obvious alteration to the property. When it was added, the west window of the old sheriff's office was converted into a door.
2. The building has been painted tan.
3. The roof was covered with wood shingles in 1975 in the belief that the original roof would have been wood.
4. The iron bars have been removed from the east jail cell to facilitate use of this area for storage.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<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 1867-1868 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Ezekial Bunn

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Built in 1867-1868, the Old Linn County Jail in Mound City has provided continuous governmental service to the people of the county and the community, first as a jail and then after 1903 as the City Hall of Mound City.

Linn county was organized in 1855 with the first county seat at Paris. After an 1859 election the county seat was moved to Mound City. In 1865 Mound City lost the county seat but regained it in 1866. Another series of county seat elections between 1871 and 1875 continued to reflect the intense community rivalries in Linn county. The issue of the county seat location was not permanently resolved until 1885.

As a border county adjoining Missouri, Linn county experienced much of the violence and lawlessness during the so-called "Bleeding Kansas" period and the Civil War. Peace came to the area as the war ended. With peace there came a westward migration in the U.S. Linn county's population jumped from 6,336 in 1860 to 12,174 in 1870. With the greater population came additional problems for the county and local governments. Linn county had no courthouse or jail facilities in 1867. (In fact, the first county courthouse was not built until 1887, and it was donated to the county by the citizens of Mound City. That building stands across the street from the old jail and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.) The nearest available place that lawbreakers could be jailed was at Lawrence. Evidently the costs of transporting prisoners back and forth for trials and hearings and paying for their care while confined was a substantial portion of Linn county's budget. Agitation developed in 1867 for constructing a facility at Mound City which would provide jail cells, an office and living quarters for the sheriff, and space that could be used for court.

Land for the jail was purchased by the county on April 15, 1867, for \$90. Also in April the commission paid local contractor Alfred Babb \$5.00 for drawing plans for the jail. By the end of May contractor Ezekial Bunn had evidently begun construction. The county commissioners' journal indicates payments to Bunn at intervals for work performed, such as \$175 for foundation work in the summer and \$1000 in August when the foundation was completed and first floor walls were up. At a meeting in September, 1867, the commissioners estimated it would cost an additional \$3885 to complete the building.

The county jail was the first major governmental facility outside of a school-house to be built in Mound City, and its progress was given a great deal of attention by the editor of the local newspaper, the Border Sentinel. The Sentinel reported on September 12, 1867:

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"The jail is growing slowly, but surely and strong. The floor is spiked and the cell walls taking form and comeliness. Mr. Dewey is doing a good and faithful job and we presume according to the specifications. We anxiously await its completion. The gloomy bare walls of these cells, will stand as great conservators of the peace, awing into apparent civility the vicious man, and the rowdy street brawlers, on the same principle that the hangman's whip formerly held the wretch in order."

In October a second installment of \$1000 was paid to Ezekial Bunn and later in the month the Sentinel (October 25, 1867) noted:

"The walls of the jail are growing finely, the cells are made, and the work progressing. Bunn has been very successful in getting a fine lot of brick, the best it is said ever made at or near Mound City."

The same paper stated on November 8, 1867:

"The brick jail is assuming shape, and frowning barred windows lend a melancholy gloom to that part of town. The iron doors and massive walls, the dark cells, and huge iron rings fastened to the floor, speak of society as it is, not as it will be."

"Mound City will soon be prepared to dungeon a man for crime, and display to the public, for the benefit of whom it may concern, the hangman's whip."

By early December the building had progressed to the point where the first floor cells could be used. A third installment to the contractor of \$1000 was authorized at the December county commissioners' meeting.

By January, 1868, the building was finally enclosed and the floor laid in the second story. A New Year's Eve cotillion was the inaugural use of the second floor. The commissioners inspected the building in early January and were reportedly well pleased with the work of contractor Bunn and carpenter Henry Dewey.

However, the new jail was not to the liking of one of the early occupants. On February 19, 1868, the two occupants of the jail departed after one named Barrett used a stove leg to batter a hole in the brick wall. The other prisoner went immediately to the sheriff's house and turned himself in, but Barrett left for parts unknown.

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On March 6, 1868, the Border Sentinel announced:

"The jail is completed throughout. The hole made by Barrett is still there. But the jail was received from the hands of Mr. Bunn, by the Commissioners, last Monday."

"There is a great satisfaction among all parties; even Barrett the jail bird is fully satisfied."

The final payments to Mr. Bunn of \$132.70 and \$1295 were made at this time. The editor also informed his readers that Bunn had lost money on the contract.

The building continued in use as the county jail until the county erected a new jail and sold the old one to the city for \$275 on January 16, 1903. Since that time the building has been the City Hall. It has been the meeting place for the city council and the local police court, the city offices, and the local polling place. For a time after the city's purchase, the second floor was rented to a barber who had his shop and living quarters there.

The (Old) Linn County Jail has had a significant role in the history of Linn county and Mound City. For 110 years it has been in active governmental use, and there are no plans for that use to change.

\* \* \* \* \*

No. 9

Bibliography

History of the State of Kansas (Chicago, A.T. Andreas, 1883), pp. 1107, 1108.

Linn County Commissioners' Journal No. 1, Office of the County Clerk, Linn County Courthouse, Mound City, Kansas, pp. 146, 158, 163, 169, 175, 182, 193, and 195.

Linn County Republic, January 16, February 6, March 6, 1903.

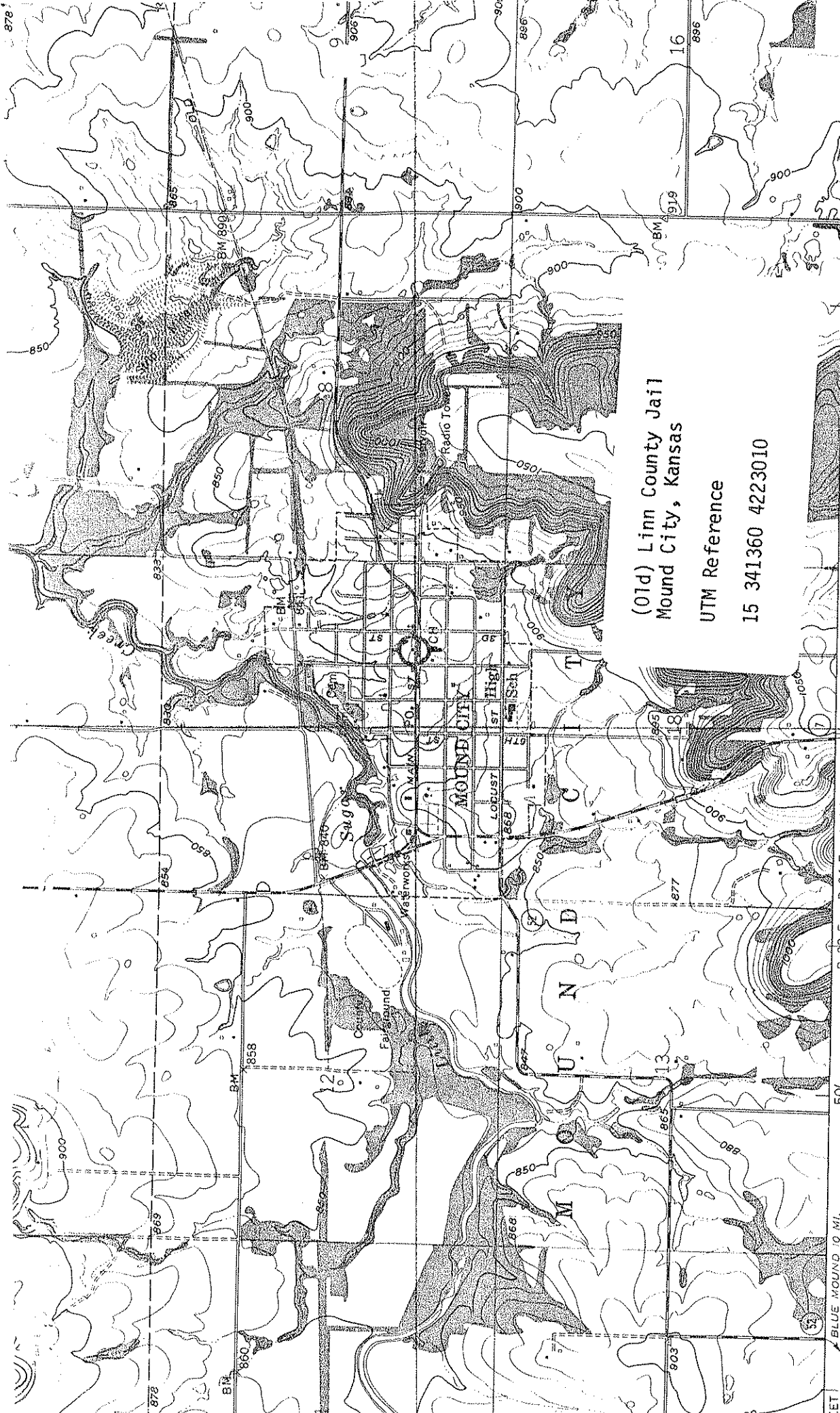
Minute Book of Mound City Council, City Hall, Mound City, Kansas.

Mound City Border Sentinel, May 24, 1867--March 6, 1868.

Pittsburg (Kansas) Morning Sun, August 4, 1975.

Preliminary nomination form prepared by Linn County Historical Society.

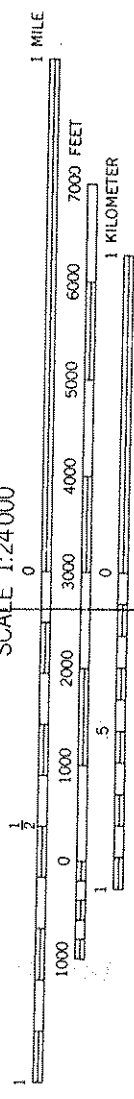




(01d) Linn County Jail  
 Mound City, Kansas  
 UTM Reference  
 15 341360 4223010

R. 23 E. R. 24 E. MANTHEY 5.2 MI. (MANTHEY)  
 FT. SCOTT 26 MI.

SCALE 1:24000



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
 DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

TRUE NORTH  
 MAGNETIC NORTH 8°

*Mound City, Ks*  
*Quadrangle*

