By Claudia Frazier

At one time Adair County sheltered 59 post offices throughout the county, and of all of them only Brashear, Gibbs, Kirksville and Novinger are presently operating. The Kirksville Post Office is the largest of the four currently in operation. Evidence shows it was at least Jan. 17, 1843, before a post office was established in Kirksville.

In 1843 the first postmaster was Jesse Kirk, for whom the town of Kirksville was named. He also owned a tavern near the present Willard School. Before 1905 the post office was kept in rented buildings and frequently moved from place to place.

In 1873 it was on the south side of the square, two doors west of Baird’s bank; in 1876 it was moved to the north side; and in 1898 it was moved to a room just east of the northeast corner of the square. There it remained until the government building was erected on the corner of Franklin and McPherson in 1905, the building now serving as the Kirksville City Hall.
The building was built to resemble the capitol in Williamsburg, Virginia. In 1916, 11 years after the completion of the post office building, it became necessary to add on to the structure.

The class of post office depends upon the amount of business transacted by it during the fiscal year. Kirksville became a second-class post office in 1895 and a first-class office in 1921. The dollar volume of business, a figure which excludes money orders and business not of a postal nature, has steadily increased and has leaped with the increase of postal rates. In 1875 the receipts were $3,576; in 1905 they were $18,850; in 1910, $22,881; in 1960, $171,145; in 1974, $675,000; and in 1981, $1,668,000.

In 1961 five homes were torn down in the block between Marion and High and Jefferson and Pierce, and the present one-story post office was completed in 1962.

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**POST OFFICES OF ADAIR COUNTY**

**1832-1976**

Adair  
Beatyville  
Blandin  
Blanket Grove  
Brashear*  
Bullion  
Chariton Mills  
Charleston  
Clay  
Connelsville  
Danforth  
Dart  
Domey's Mills  
Fegley  
Floyd's Creek  
Freeborough  
Gibbs*  
Hilberton  
Ida  
Idaho  
Jasmine  
Kirksville*  
Lindensville  
Loffler  
McPherson  
Millard  
Middle Fabius  
Morgan  
Nefy  
Nind  
Nineveh  
Novinger*  
Page  
Paulville  
Pettuce  
Prairie Bird  
Pure Air  
Resort  
Rigos Point  
Rye  
Sand Creek  
Shibley's Point  
Sloan's Point  
Sperry  
Spring Valley  
Sublett  
Stahl  
Timber Branch  
Timbered Brank  
Tippecanoe  
Trade Centre  
Trinity  
Troy Mills  
Waltersville  
Wilmuthsville  
Wilson  
Yarrow  
Youngstown  
Zig

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In the top photo, four gentlemen posed at the back of the Post Office in October 1904. The bottom photo is dated December of that year, showing workers putting on the finishing touches to the roof and cupola.

**Photos of the original construction courtesy of the Kirksville Postmaster**

Remodeling photos dated 1916 and after courtesy of David Lawson
In 1916 the Kirksville Post Office was remodeled and expanded into the lot on the east side of the building. The view below shows the new construction site facing north toward what is now Baldwins in Kirksville. Note the vehicles and carriages in the background. In the photo on the right, the interior of the Post Office is shown. On the right-hand side of the photo are rows of hanging mailbags.
THE 1916 REMODELING PROJECT

The top left photo shows workers inside the newly built Post Office in May 1905. The top right photo was taken in September 1916 during the remodeling of the building. The center photos both show the 1916 exterior work in its early stages; center left is facing north and center right is facing south. The bottom left shot, facing north, shows the shell of the expanded portion of the building. Bottom right is the completed walls of the expansion, with work on the roof just beginning.
OLD POST OFFICE

The top two photos show the final stages of the 1916 remodeling project. Throughout the years other renovations have been made on the building.

Right, a photo of the building in the 1950s shows that the cupola and old lamp posts were still intact. Below left, in April 1956 a new, wider entrance was made. Below right, a flagpole was also added in 1956. Notice the brick streets and, in the background, the old Palace Bakery.