These are miscellaneous items from Webster County, Missouri. Included are an extract from the minutes of the county court containing specifications and details for the new courthouse (1856) and a wartime letter from Marshfield to Mrs. J. A. Cottrell (1863).

Webster County was created on 3 March 1855 from portions of Greene, Wright, and Dallas counties. The town site at Marshfield was designated the county seat in May 1856. On 8 November 1856, the county court authorized construction of a courthouse on the east side of Marshfield, appropriated one thousand dollars toward the cost, and appointed James M. Allen to superintend the work.

The court approved specifications for a small two-story frame building on 15 December 1856. The extract from the county minutes includes the details of the size, construction, and building materials. A “plat” of the work that accompanied the original county minutes is not included with this extract.

The courthouse served until it was destroyed in 1863, presumably during John S. Marmaduke’s Confederate raid through Marshfield. The prospect of hard times at the close of that year is mentioned in a brief letter from Marshfield addressed to Mrs. J. A. Cottrell on 16 December 1863. The unidentified writer expressed concern about having food enough to last through the winter, but said that there had not been much recent villainy except the burning of Caleb Haynes’s house and some petty thievery by refugees.
Index Cards

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