

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad Depot  
other names/site number Rock Island Depot in Atlantic, Iowa

2. Location

street & number 1st and Chestnut Streets N/A  not for publication  
city or town Atlantic N/A  vicinity  
state Iowa code IA county Cass code 029 zip code 50022

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] SHPO 12/20/93  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

to Signature of the Keeper Entered in the Date of Action  
[Signature] National Register 12/25/94

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s), district, site, structure, object

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Table with columns: Contributing, Noncontributing, buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total. Values: 1, 1, 2, 0.

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

NA

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "NA" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) The Advent and Development of Railroads in Iowa: 1855-1940

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION/rail-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/Renaissance

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls brick

terra cotta

roof tile

other iron

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See attached Continuation Sheet.

Name of Property

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Transportation

Period of Significance

1898
1898-1943

Significant Dates

1898

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

unknown/Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See attached Continuation Sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography See attached Continuation Sheets.

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Criteria for previous documentation on file (NPS).

Primary location of additional data:

- Criteria for primary location of additional data.

Name of repository:

See attached Continuation Sheet.

Name of Property

County and State

**10. Geographical Data**Acreage of Property less than one acre**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	15	3311760	4586020
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

 See continuation sheet**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.) See attached Continuation Sheet.

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.) See attached Continuation Sheet.

**11. Form Prepared By**name/title Jan R. Nash w/ assistance of W. Roscoe, M. Weresh & S. Fischerorganization Tallgrass Historians L.C. date August 1, 1993street & number 931 Maiden Lane telephone 319/354-6722city or town Iowa City state Iowa zip code 52240**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets****Maps**

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional Items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Atlantic Rock Island Society EnterpriseWallace Roscoestreet & number c/o 802 E. 13th St. telephone 712/243-4740city or town Atlantic state Iowa zip code 50022

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Atlantic, Cass County, Iowa

GFN-259-1114

## 7. DESCRIPTION

## SUMMARY PARAGRAPH:

The Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad (Rock Island) depot in Atlantic, Iowa, was completed in the fall of 1898. The depot straddles the town's main street, effectively establishing the northern terminus of the town's business district and, along with the railroad yard, the boundary for any significant urban growth in that direction. Built in a stylish combination of multi-colored brick, terra cotta, tile and iron materials, this depot replaced the original wood frame depot and it represented the prosperity at the time of both the county seat town of Atlantic and the Rock Island Railroad. Its overall style is Renaissance Revival with homage to Italian models, but the influence of the Art Nouveau also is seen in the serpentine canopy supports and the decorative use of iron. While the materials employed in this brick depot are repeated in numerous other depots built by the Rock Island across Iowa and Illinois in 1898 and 1899, the Atlantic depot's design is unusual and does not fit any of the standard Rock Island plans. This Rock Island station is counted as one unit or complex consisting of the depot proper, and the attached baggage and express room. The complex was built at one time, in one style, of a single set of construction materials, and with only one physical plant. The town historically has treated, and currently treats, the complex as "the depot." Visually tied together by their iron canopy and the brick platform, the two parts are meant to be seen as a single railroad station. With the demise of the Rock Island in 1980, the Atlantic depot came under the ownership of the Iowa Interstate Railroad which until recently used it only lightly for storage. Vacant and without function, the depot shows surprisingly little deterioration. The major exterior alteration is reversible--the open space under the iron canopy was filled in the 1950s with wood frame walls to provide additional work space.

## DESCRIPTION

*Exterior*

The Rock Island depot in Atlantic is an imposing rectangular building, symmetrical in form, with a two-story central pavilion flanked on either side by one-story hipped-roof blocks. The block or cube shape is repeated in the one-story hipped-roof express building. The depot's below-grade foundation is concrete, but the visible, slightly battered foundation is of rough faced, dark red "vitrified" brick extending to the sills of the windows (*Atlantic Daily Telegraph*, 10/27/1898).<sup>1</sup> Red mortar is used and the brick is laid with stretchers only exposed. Above a decorative terra cotta beltcourse, the walls

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<sup>1</sup>When the same brick was used for the new Rock Island depot in Iowa City on the other side of the state the same year, it was called "rock-faced St. Joe brick" (*Iowa City Weekly Republican*, 10/05/1898).

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change to pale yellow or buff-colored smooth brick,<sup>2</sup> joined by mortar of the same color and also laid in a stretcher-only pattern. The iron canopy or awning which wraps around the entire depot/express complex is positioned just at the top of the first-floor windows. It extends about 8 feet from the building to cover a brick platform of "Des Moines" pavers laid in a herringbone pattern. The canopy appears to have been originally painted dark red.

Above the canopy, the wall treatment is different in the central pavilion from the two flanking wings. The red-brick-under-buff-brick pattern is repeated in the central pavilion, as if the canopy creates another ground level to build on, while the buff brick continues to the eaves in the flanking blocks, interrupted only by two slightly protruding brick courses. The town's name is spelled out in red terra cotta just above the canopy on the north (main track) side of the central pavilion.

At the eaves, the drainage gutter system includes a decorative pressed-metal cornice with dentils, once painted to match the buff bricks. Above this cornice, the roof is covered with rounded red tiles with knobby joints and roof crests. Terra cotta acroterion in an acanthus leaf pattern decorate (north one nonextant) the central pavilion roof and mark the peak of the parapet gables. Buff terra-cotta coping covers the parapets which flare outward at the lower edge. At this lower edge--the important juncture of gable roof, front wall and side wall--a solid block of buff-colored stone is used.

Fenestration consists of single-light sash windows, paired in the block wings on either side of the central pavilion, and arranged as single windows elsewhere. A large half-round window appears near the roof of each parapet gable. The curve of this window is accentuated by an arch of multiple courses of wedge-shaped bricks laid perpendicular to the opening. Lintels on the single windows and door openings are flat or jack arches of the angled and wedge-shaped buff bricks. The paired windows have no visible lintel indicating an internal structural support buried behind the brick. The red terra-cotta beltcourse between the red and buff bricks is used to form the window sills. Each five-panel wood door has a transom light over it and a large well worn stone sill beneath it. The express building's west wall has a large elevated freight doorway, protected by a heavy timber platform and bumper.

The iron canopy wrapped around and between the depot and express building is impressive. Covered with corrugated sheeting once painted dark red, the canopy is supported every ten feet by very large, iron brackets. The open interior triangle of each bracket is filled with iron tendrils and iron strapping wrapped into tight curls which appear to be springing open. The last curl on the outermost edge of the bracket forms a cup to hold the gutter.

Generally, the exterior architectural appearance of the depot complex is one of refined and confident

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<sup>2</sup>The same bricks are called "La Salle pressed bricks" in the Iowa City depot.

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Railroad Depot, Atlantic, Cass  
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design. The brickwork is restrained and absent applied decoration. Rather, the wall surface itself is used as decoration through subtle changes of texture and color. The form, scale, and setting of the depot give it the prominence its designer and the Rock Island must have sought.

### *Interior*

The interior of the depot is dominated by function. In the custom of the day, separate waiting rooms were provided for men and women in the one-story wings. The west room--currently the freight room--was the men's waiting room, while the east ladies' waiting room eventually became the one public room. It is unknown when the men's waiting room was converted to a freight room, but one local resident and student of the depot's history speculates that this occurred between 1925 and 1940 (Wallace Roscoe, interview 07/02/93). At that time, the railroad industry was feeling the effects of better highways and increased automobile traffic. The elimination of the gender-specific waiting rooms--necessitated by social custom--probably reflects the hard economic need of the railroad to increase freight business as it tried to compensate for the reduced passenger numbers. A wall was erected to separate the men's waiting room into freight space and a hall way. Removal of this wall would open the room to its original size and configuration as the men's waiting room, but additional research first should be conducted to determine the historical significance of the space as a freight room.

The central area of the building contains the restrooms and the ticket/dispatcher office on the ground floor and the roadmaster's office on the second floor. The upstairs cannot be reached from the interior but is only accessed by a staircase and exterior entrance on the south--downtown side--of the building. This means railroad employees downstairs would need to go outside in order to get upstairs. There is however a speaking tube--a metal pipe--for communication between the two floors.

The large public rooms in the depot are finished in raised-panel wainscoting of quarter sawn oak. Trim around the doorways, ticket office and exterior windows is also quarter sawn oak. The ticket office shelf in the east waiting room is missing. Floors are mosaic and inlaid tile in both geometric and floral patterns. Walls are painted in various shades of green, and where the paint has peeled, other earlier shades of green are visible beneath. Early stenciling is also visible in various locations throughout the interior. Newspaper accounts at the time of construction indicate "the walls are frescoed" (*Atlantic Daily Telegraph*, 10/27/1898).

When constructed, the building was heated by steam. Additional radiators have been added. Also, it was wired for electric lights and plumbed with modern conveniences. Some of the original plumbing fixtures may still be present in the restrooms.

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The interior of the express building--originally described as the "baggage and express room" (*Atlantic Daily Telegraph*, 10/27/1898)--is much less finished as might be expected<sup>3</sup>. The brick walls are painted in a two-tone scheme and a brick chimney stack rises from floor to ceiling in the center. This chimney stack vents the boiler for the entire complex which is located under the wood plank floor. There is some indication the floor may have been raised somewhat from its original position. A doorway on the north side centered between two windows has been converted to a third window by filling in the lower portion with bricks closely matching the original bricks. A modern overhead double door has been installed in the west end wall. Glass in the express room windows is protected on the inside by flat iron bars.

Sometime during the 1950s, the breezy, covered walkway between the depot and the express buildings was filled in with wood frame partitions and heated. The Rock Island also filled in the open space between its depot and express buildings in Ottawa, Illinois, during this same time period. This alteration may represent an attempt by the railroad to convert the unneeded platform area to usable space at the lowest possible cost as it struggled with ever dwindling business.

#### *Landscape*

The site of the Atlantic depot is a contributing resource. Constructed to be an "island depot," a single set of tracks separates the depot from the Atlantic business district to the south, while a wide yard with many sets of tracks lies to the north. The active Iowa Interstate track is immediately adjacent to the depot's north side. The original brick platform is 500 feet long and was extended (date unknown) by another 300 feet of concrete sidewalk on the north side and a shorter distance of concrete on the south side. Tall electric lamps with metal poles, and flattish bowl-shaped painted metal shades now are spaced along the platform/sidewalk.

Another important extant element of the original landscape is the town's name spelled out in white-painted ballast rocks imbedded in a concrete pad on the ground near the east end of the depot. The letters are about 36" high. Early, although undated, historic photographs of the depot show the depot area to be landscaped also with small bushes near the east- and west-end platforms and with shade trees farther out from the depot on the island. These trees and bushes are no longer present.

Farther to the east of the depot, near the convergence of the single south track into the main line, are the remnant concrete foundations of railroad-related structures no longer present. Historic photographs indicate these foundations may be those of the a water tower and a coal elevator/chute.

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<sup>3</sup>Sanborn maps which predate 1898 show both a "passenger and freight depot" and a separate "U.S. Express Office." All references to an express company disappear however with the construction by the Rock Island of the baggage and express building as a part of the new depot.



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Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad Depot  
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Across the tracks and a block to the northwest, the ca. 1905 Atlantic Northern & Southern Railroad depot is still extant though nearly buried by later additions and overall possessing poor integrity. Company correspondence of the Rock Island Railroad indicates the Rock Island purchased this depot from the Atlantic Northern & Southern in 1919 and at the same time invested money for some kind of work on its Atlantic freight house--the old wood frame passenger depot still standing at that time (but demolished in the 1970s) to the southeast of the present brick depot. In 1919, the economy of the state and of the railroads hauling the state's produce was good though about to precipitously decline. The Rock Island must have needed the additional freight space. It is possible the conversion of the men's waiting room also dates to this same period.

### *Physical Condition*

Largely because of its sturdy construction and an intact water drainage system, the building has suffered very little serious deterioration. The roof tile has had some hail damage. Many of the windows have been boarded up with plywood to protect the glass and to guard against vandals but some windows have been broken. The southwest corner of the express building evidences the only failure in the drainage system with a damaged gutter and downspout. A small area of the brick wall in that area needs to be repointed, and the damaged drainage system needs to be repaired. During the 1960s the depot, which is at the bottom of a hill, was hit by a speeding car coming down Chestnut Street. The car rode up the wall, hit the canopy and flipped over. Thankfully, the driver and the canopy were capable of repair and each escaped permanent damage, but the bricks still show the chipping and abrasion of the impact. Even with such damage, the sturdy walls of the depot survived without so much as a crack in the mortar.

## 8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### SUMMARY STATEMENT

The Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific (Rock Island) depot in Atlantic, Iowa, is a significant example of the importance of the railroad to the town of Atlantic and to the State of Iowa. The depot is significant under Criterion A at the local level as the principal reminder of the railroad's one-time importance to the city and its standing in the county and surrounding area. Not only did the coming of the railroad in 1868 determine the city's location, Atlantic then became the largest and most important city on the line between Des Moines and Council Bluffs. When early in 1898 the Rock Island undertook extensive expansion and line improvements through issuance of 100 million dollars in bonds, Atlantic found immediate benefit in the form of a new depot. Being on the main line of the Rock Island gave Atlantic an important edge in the area's railroad situation which, in the words of a 1906 observer, showed the town to have "exceptional railway service" and to be "splendidly located for jobbing and manufacturing establishments." Thus the Rock Island stood as a leading factor in

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Atlantic's prosperity and the 1898 depot symbolized the town's integral association with the railroad at that time.

The depot with its attached express building is also significant under Criterion C on the local and state level as a property type associated with "The Advent and Development of Railroads in Iowa: 1855-1940" (Conard, National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form, 1990). Specifically, the depot is a good example of second generation, replacement *passenger depots* built in Iowa during "the Golden Age of Steam Railroading," ca. 1890-1920. The attached *express building*, built in the same style and operated by the railroad, is a good example of the express freight and baggage buildings railroads constructed during this period at larger high-volume stations. The depot also may be significant as the work of a master since it is not a standardized plan, but an unusual design for the Rock Island Railroad and likely the design of an architect, perhaps from Chicago. Additional research on Rock Island depots needs to be done to uncover the source of both standard-plan depots and individualized, architect-designed depots such as Atlantic's, and to develop an understanding of the corporate image the Rock Island sought in its stations.

*Criterion A*

The Rock Island undertook the improvement of the station at Atlantic in 1898 as a part of a major capital improvement project. The project was financed by a huge bond issue and spurred by the prosperous times enjoyed by the rail companies after the panic of 1893. Atlantic, which in 1868 had been founded due to the railroad's construction, continued to be shaped by the railroad's presence well into the twentieth century.

The original Rock Island depot, a combination passenger and freight depot, sat one block to the southeast, at the north end of Walnut Street. It was a frame building which survived until the 1970s. When the present depot was built in 1898 across Chestnut Street, it permanently closed a bustling north-south thoroughfare with well-established downtown shops and businesses. The main street of the town was forever blocked to development at its north end, although the town may have felt it a small price for such an important new structure. The Rock Island's new depot became the jewel of the town, with the main street literally leading right to its doorstep.

During this heyday of the railroad, Atlantic also saw two short lines running north and south out of town. The Atlantic Northern ran to Kimballton (17 miles); the Atlantic Southern ran south to Villisca (38 miles). Eventually these lines merged and became the Atlantic Northern and Southern. Never in sound financial shape, the rail line closed its south route in 1914 and its north route by 1936. Its passenger depot, built around 1905, still stands across the rail yard to the northwest of the Rock Island depot (see Illustrations 1 and 2). Records of the Rock Island indicate it purchased the rough-cast concrete block depot from the Atlantic Southern in 1919. This building is now nearly enclosed by

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additions and new construction and possesses little integrity (see Illustration 3).

Because Atlantic was on the main line of the Rock Island, it saw early development of a variety of industries and businesses needing access to rail transportation. Atlantic developed into a regional center for commerce. Farmers brought their corn, wheat, barley and potatoes as well as their livestock--cattle, hogs, sheep and poultry--to be processed and shipped East. One nineteenth-century historian appropriately used a railroad freight car as his yardstick of the importance of Atlantic as a commercial center:

*The business of the city is exceptionally good. The large area of the country which seeks Atlantic as a market for the sale and interchange of commodities affords an ample field for mercantile and manufacturing enterprises of every description. It is not an unusual event to be able to count 800 to 1000 farmers' wagons on one of our main streets on a Saturday afternoon, each of them having brought a load of farm products for disposal. Estimating an ordinary freight car to carry ten tons, if all the cars that are loaded from this point during the year were put into one continuous train they would cover 125 miles of track, or in other words they would reach to Des Moines 80 miles from here and 45 miles beyond (Atlantic Iowa 1868-1968, p. 12).*

During the first decades of the twentieth century, Atlantic industries continued to rely on rail transportation. Companies such as the Shrauger and Johnson factory, which manufactured a variety of sheet metal products for residential and agricultural use, would have needed the heavy rail shipper. The Atlantic Automobile Company used the rails to receive its materials. Partially assembled automobiles were shipped in crates from the factory to Atlantic. They were uncrated and their wheels were put on at the rail yard, and then rolled to the company headquarters for final assembly and sale. Atlantic also did a booming business in egg handling and poultry processing which relied heavily on rail transportation. The first such company, Priebe-Simater Co., was established in the mid 1890s and was still flourishing in 1906 when the Central Iowa Produce Company purchased it. The plant did a "large volume business" shipping by rail 132 cars of eggs, 118 cars of poultry, and 30 cars of butter in 1928. The Rock Island also ran a volume passenger business through Atlantic. In 1906, for example, 12 passenger trains ran through Atlantic daily.

Atlantic's good fortune continued through the rise of truck and automobile travel and the construction of highways to accommodate it. However, these highways meant tough competition for the rail lines. Atlantic maintained its position of prominence in western Iowa by being included in the "Great White Way" or "White Pole Route," the first highway registered by the state in 1914 running from Davenport on the Mississippi to Council Bluffs on the Missouri River. Atlantic also found itself on the 1922 registered "Whiteway 7 Highway" from Chicago to Council Bluffs, which later became U.S. Highway 6. Much of today's Interstate 80 follows the U.S. 6 route, although I-80 bypassed Atlantic

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Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad Depot  
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79x 259-1114



ILLUSTRATION 1: Atlantic Northern & Southern Railroad Company depot, Atlantic, IA, ca. 1905. (Ken Moorman collection.)



ILLUSTRATION 2: Rail yard near Atlantic Northern & Southern, Atlantic, IA. Date unknown. (Ken Moorman collection.)

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Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad Depot  
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28N-289-1114

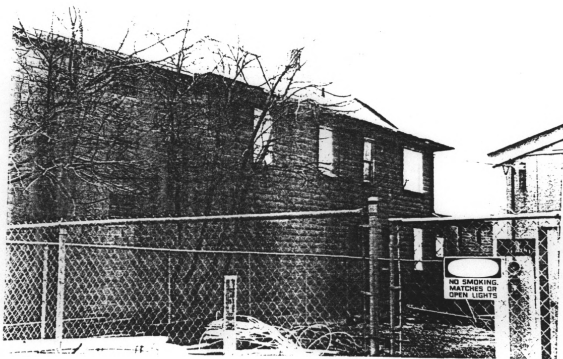


ILLUSTRATION 3: North side view (facing southwest) of Atlantic Northern & Southern Railroad Company depot in Atlantic, Iowa, March 1993. (Jan Nash, photographer.)

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by 10 miles.<sup>4</sup>

The Rock Island depot in Atlantic reflects not only the returning prosperity of the late 1890s, but also the twentieth-century changes in freight and passenger business brought about by the highways. Conversion of the men's waiting room to baggage space, filling in the north doorway of the express building, adjusting the height of the west end loading platform to accommodate trucks, all may indicate the Rock Island's attempts to respond to shifting customer needs and declining profits. Filling in the breezeway space under the canopy between the depot and express building in the 1950s also appears to have been a cost-saving means of converting obsolete space to usable work areas.

*Criterion C*

The railroads that survived the reorganizations and consolidations of the early 1890s thrived during what is now called "The Golden Age of Steam Railroading," from about 1890 to about 1920. Nearly every major rail company expanded and invested in its line, replacing bridges and depots and building an inventory of yard structures based on specific functions. This period of expansion and prosperity was tied directly to the growth of agriculture in the Midwest and the rise of industries, such as meat-packing and steel and iron works, which utilized the rails' heavy hauling and long-distance hauling capabilities. As Iowa farmers prospered and increased production for the commercial markets beyond the Midwest, the railroads--including the Rock Island--improved their main lines and built a network of spurs between smaller towns. The 1898 Atlantic depot, with its attached express building, is an intact example of high integrity of the stylish buildings the Rock Island was able to construct along its main line during this prosperous period.

The Atlantic depot, according to one authority on Rock Island depots, is a highly unusual design for that railroad company (William Riebe, Rock Island Technical Society, interview 06/30/93). Yet it is built of materials common to other Rock Island depots of the same time--the rough-faced red brick, the smooth yellow brick, the red-tile hipped roof. Use of these materials created a corporate look for the Rock Island while permitting variation in design where it was necessary, for whatever reason. These same materials were used in depots in Ottawa, Illinois (1898-99); Iowa City, Iowa (1898); Grinnell, Iowa (date unknown but ca. 1898); Anita, Iowa (date unknown but ca. 1898, red brick only); Wilton, Iowa (1898, red brick only); and Council Bluffs, Iowa (1898). The Ottawa, Iowa City, and Council Bluffs depots are also virtually identical "standard plan" designs. Additional research is needed on the Rock Island line depots to determine the full extent to which these materials were used

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<sup>4</sup>The siting of the Cass County Courthouse shows the shift away from the rails to the highways in the twentieth century. The monumental courthouse, built in 1932-34 in PWA Moderne style, was constructed at the crest of Chestnut Street (the depot is at the foot), along the U.S. Highway 6 route through town.

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to achieve a corporate image, and to examine the question of where and why standard plans were abandoned in favor of individual designs.

*Conclusion*

The Atlantic, Iowa, depot is a very good example of late nineteenth-century railroad depots which were constructed when times were prosperous for the railroads and the agricultural towns of Iowa and the Midwest. Individually designed, the impressive new brick depot replaced a frame combination depot which was then recycled and used many more years. This was typical of the type of line improvements the railroads were able to make at the end of the century. The Atlantic depot and express building remain alongside the active track of the Iowa Interstate railroad and are surrounded by a rail yard of extant, though largely, unused sidings. What changes have been made to the depot and express building over the years are either relatively minor, reversible, or may have attained historical significance in their own right. The interior layout and function, for instance, probably reflects as important a story for the Rock Island--the railroad's struggle to survive the changing transportation patterns--as the initial gender-specific waiting room layout tells of Atlantic's social history. The intact condition of the depot, with its attached express building, and the presence of the iron canopy, a feature often lost, mean this Rock Island depot retains a high degree of integrity. It recently has been purchased from the Iowa Interstate by a local nonprofit group and this gives it some stability and security for the future.

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Agnew, Dwight L. "The Rock Island Railroad in Iowa." *Iowa Journal of History* 52 (1954), pp. 203-222.

*Andreas' Atlas*, Bird's eye view of Atlantic, ca. 1875.

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*Atlantic, Iowa: 1868-1968 One Hundred Years of Pioneering and Progress*. Atlantic Chamber of Commerce, 1968.

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Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific company records, contained in Western History Collections,  
University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

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Conard, Rebecca. " 'Once I built a Railroad': Viewing History from the Depot Platform." *The Public Historian*, 14(Spring 1992), pp. 31-48.

Conard, Rebecca and Tracy Ann Cunning. *The Advent and Development of Railroads in Iowa: 1855-1940.* National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, 1990.

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Grant, H. Roger. "Iowa's Railroad Stations: A Pictorial Essay." *The Palimpsest*, July/August 1973, pp. 16-25.

*History of Cass County.* Springfield, Illinois: Continental Historical Co., 1884.

Interviews with J. Nash:

-*Marcia Hastings*, chair, Historical Society of Pottawattamie County, Council Bluffs, Iowa, 06/16/93.

-*Wallace Roscoe*, local historian and resident, Atlantic, Iowa, 07/02/93.

-*Dave Austead*, agent, Iowa Interstate Railroad. Iowa City, Iowa 06/17/93.

-*Harold Krewer*, local railroad historian, Ottawa, Illinois, 06/23/93.

-*William Riebe*, Rock Island Railroad historian, Rock Island, Illinois, 06/30/93.

*Iowa City Republican* newspaper, 10/05/1898.

"Iowa's First Railroad." *The Palimpsest*, September 1963, pp. 381-444.

Thompson, William H. *Transportation in Iowa: A Historical Summary.* Iowa Department of Transportation, 1989.

Sanborn Company fire insurance maps, 1883, 1888, 1893, 1899, 1908, 1913, 1923, 1931.

## PRIMARY LOCATION OF ADDITIONAL DATA

Corporate records of the Rock Island Railroad were widely dispersed following the demise of the company in 1980. Substantial collections of Rock Island records are located (or said to be located) at



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the following institutions:

--Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma (perhaps the largest collection and currently [1993] being processed; contains blueprints and drawings);

--Special Collections, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa (not inventoried, unprocessed and not accessible to the researcher);

--Newberry Library, Chicago, Illinois (primarily financial records).

### 10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

#### VERBAL BOUNDARY DISCUSSION

The overall measurements of the parcel to be included are 60' by 433' and include the depot and attached express building plus the brick platforms and concrete sidewalks running along side both the south and north sides of the buildings and extending approximately 93 feet to the northwest and approximately 180' to the southeast. Included in the east side of the property is the town's name, "Atlantic," spelled in ballast rock and concrete imbedded in earth.

#### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries selected are the same for the parcel of land which was sold and for which title was transferred from the Iowa Interstate Railroad to the Atlantic Rock Island Society Enterprise.

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R. I. & P. Depot, Atlantic, Iowa.



CHICAGO, ROCK ISLAND & PACIFIC RAILROAD STATION, facing northwest. From a historic hand-colored postcard, ca. 1910-1915. (Ken Moorman collection.)

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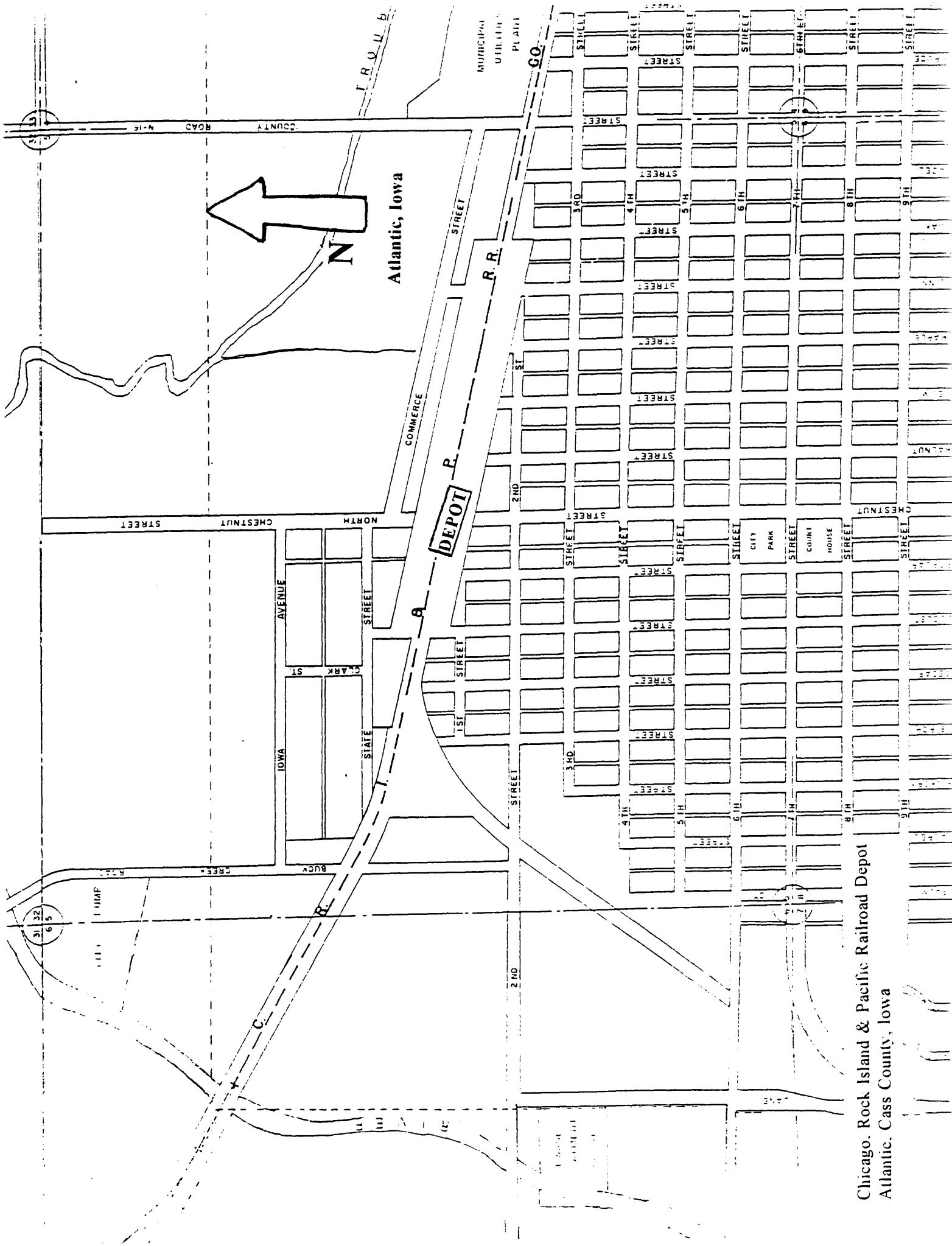
ADDITIONAL  
DOCUMENTATION

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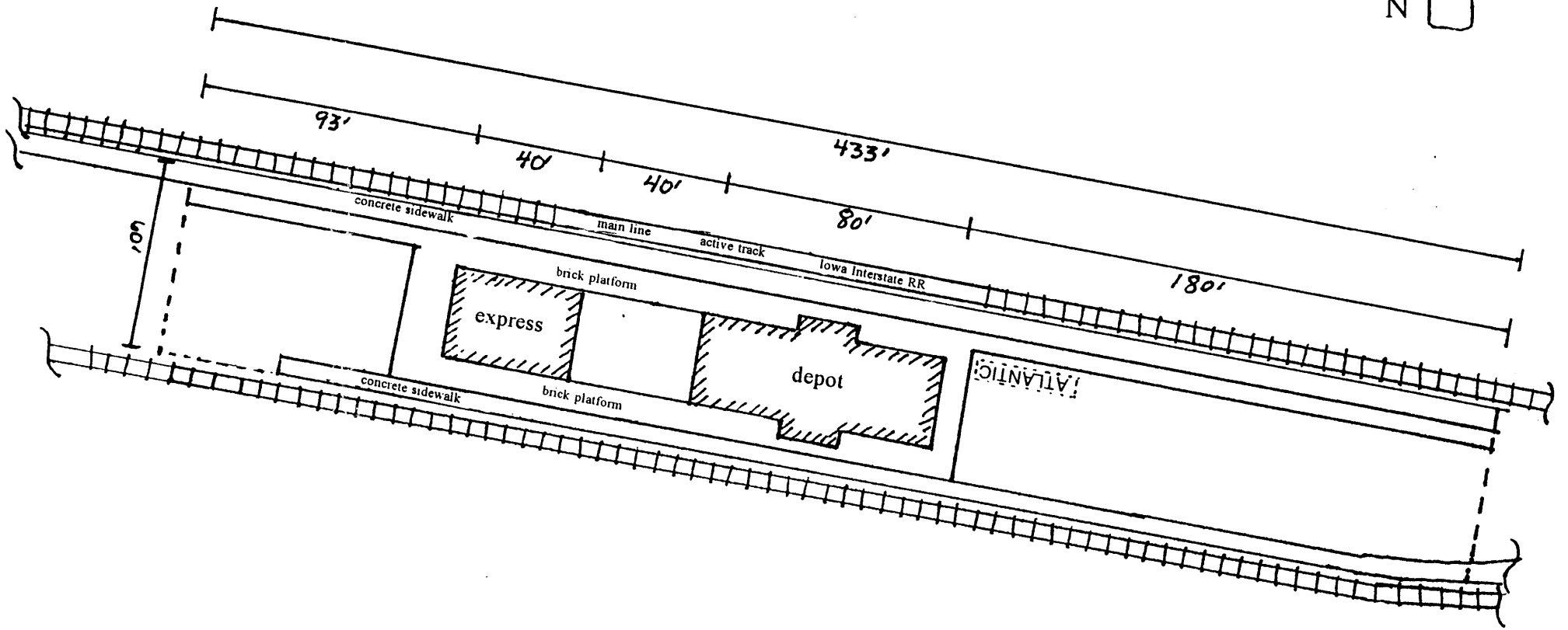
Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad Depot  
Atlantic, Cass County, Iowa



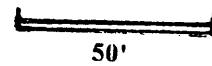
CHICAGO, ROCK ISLAND & PACIFIC RAILROAD STATION, facing northwest. From a historic hand-colored postcard, ca. 1910-1915. (Ken Moorman collection.)



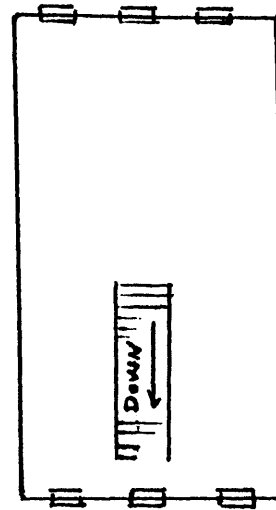
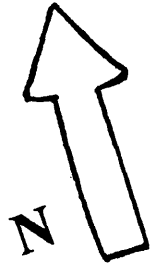
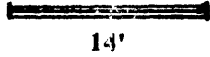
Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad Depot  
 Atlantic, Cass County, Iowa



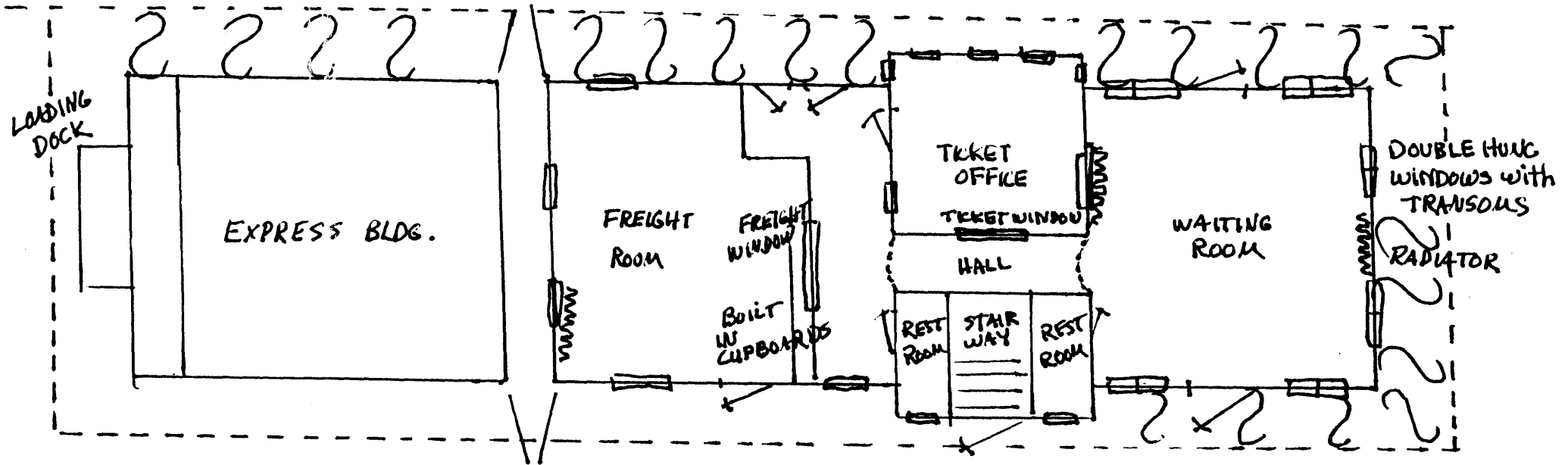
CHICAGO, ROCK ISLAND & PACIFIC RAILROAD DEPOT  
in Atlantic, Iowa (1993 site plan)



CHICAGO, ROCK ISLAND & PACIFIC  
RAILROAD DEPOT in Atlantic, Iowa



SECOND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR

COVERED  
WALK THROUGH  
40' BETWEEN  
BUILDINGS  
NOT SHOWN ABOVE

AWNING SURROUNDS  
THE BUILDING WITH  
ORNAMENTAL IRON BRACES.  
BENEATH IT.