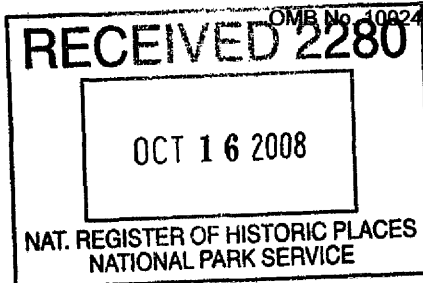


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



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 Burlington Depot

other names/site number Union Depot, CB&Q Depot

2. Location

street & number 210 West Main Street [N/A] not for publication

city or town Ottumwa [N/A] vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Wapello code 179 zip code 52501

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).

Baunna Q. Mitchell, DSHPO 10/09/08  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA  
State or 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:)

Robert H. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action  
11-26-08

**Burlington Depot**  
Name of Property

**Wapello County, IA**  
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.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>1</u>		Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION/Rail-Related/Depot

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**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION/Rail-Related/Depot

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TRANSPORTATION/Road-Related

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RECREATION & CULTURE/Museum

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**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT

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**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE/Limestone

---

walls STONE/Limestone

---

roof SYNTHETICS

---

other \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Narrative Description**

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

Burlington Depot  
Name of Property

Wapello County, IA  
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.)

**A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

**B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

**C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

**D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

**A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

**B** removed from its original location.

**C** a birthplace or grave.

**D** a cemetery.

**E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

**F** a commemorative property.

**G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

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

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION

COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1951-1958

**Significant Dates**

1951

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Holabird, Root & Burgee  
Benson Construction Co.

**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Burlington Depot  
Name of Property

Wapello County, IA  
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] [54]9[211]0 [45]4[07]8[0] 2 [15] [0]0[0]0[0]0 [0]0[0]0[0]0  
Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing  
3 [15] [0]0[0]0[0]0 [0]0[0]0[0]0 4 [15] [0]0[0]0[0]0 [0]0[0]0[0]0  
 See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Molly Myers Naumann, Consultant mollynaumann@pcsia.net  
organization \_\_\_\_\_ date June 2008  
street & number 167 West Alta Vista telephone 641-682-2743  
city or town Ottumwa state IA zip code 52501-1437

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the complete 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 Wapello County Historical Society (Attn: Rusty Corder)  
street & number 210 West Main Street telephone 641-682-8676  
city or town Ottumwa state IA zip code 52501

**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.



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

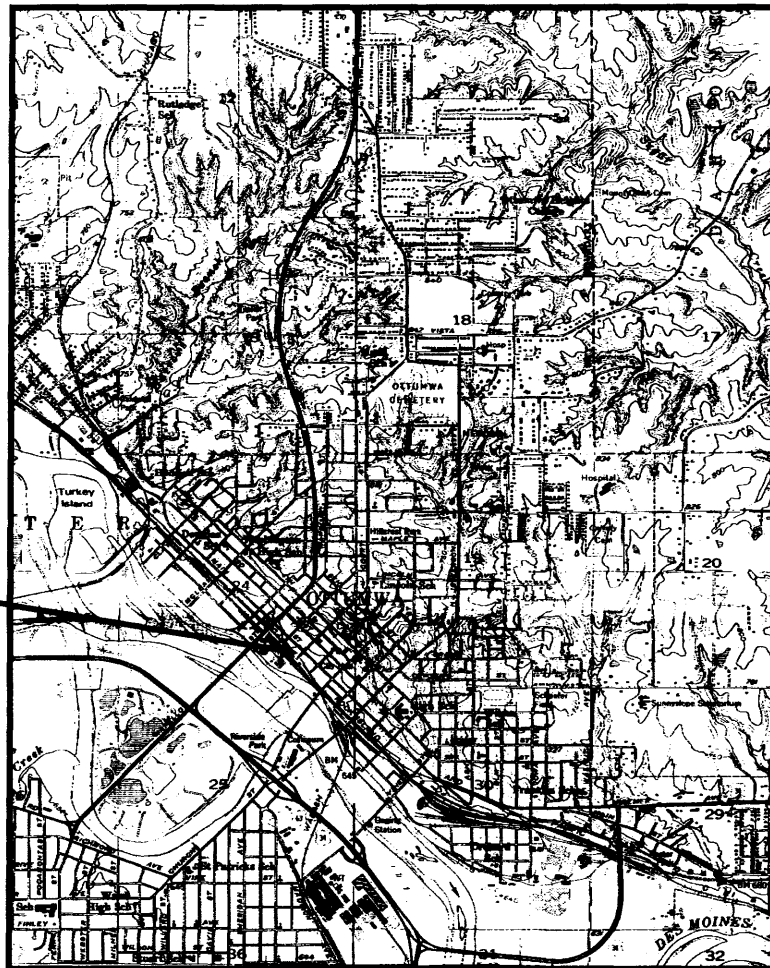
**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Burlington Depot  
Wapello County, IA**

Section number 7 Page 1

**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION:**

The Burlington Depot was built in Ottumwa by the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy (CB&Q) Railroad in 1951. It is located at 210 West Main Street, on Lot 13 of the Original Plat of Louisville (Ottumwa). The Original Plat was laid out on a northwest to southeast axis, running parallel to the Des Moines River. It was not until later additions were made to the community that streets were laid out with orientation to the cardinal points. The depot is on the northeast side of the CB&Q Railroad tracks that also run parallel to the Des Moines River. Ballingall Park is located in front of the depot along Main Street. The depot is in Ottumwa's central business district which begins in the 200 block of West Main and extends southeast seven blocks to Union Street and northeast three blocks to Fourth Street.



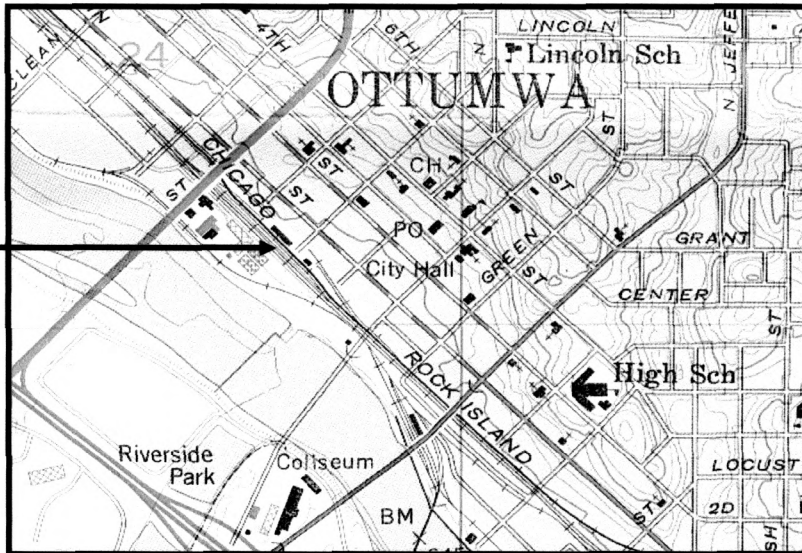
U.S.G.S. Map of Ottumwa (1976)  
Location of depot indicated by arrow

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National Park Service

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Burlington Depot  
Wapello County, IA

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Top: 1976 U.S.G.S. Map (detail)

Arrow indicates location of depot on both maps



Bottom: 2002 Orthophoto (detail)  
(Iowa Geographic Map Server)



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**Burlington Depot  
Wapello County, IA**

Section number **7** Page **3**

**Exterior:**

The Burlington Depot is a combination passenger and freight facility, and as a division point on the railroad the second floor housed division offices. It was designed by the Chicago architectural firm of Holabird, Root & Burgee and is a good example of the simplified modern style that became popular in the years following World War II. However, this was not a completely new building in 1951. There was an 1889 depot on this site that was partially demolished in 1950 with the removal of the roof and upper part of the walls. Plans for the present building utilized the limestone foundation and exterior brick walls of the older building. Many interior walls were removed as part of the new construction. None of the old building is visible today.



Old Depot during partial demolition in May 1950  
(Courtesy of Michael W. Lemberger Private Collection)

The depot is a two story rectangular building that features a flat roof with broad eaves. It measures approximately 214 foot by 40 foot (due to a shallow projection on the track-side, the northwest wall is about 4 feet wider than the southeast). A single chimney rises from near the center of the building. The exterior of the masonry building is sheathed in ashlar Lannon limestone of varying sizes laid in well-defined courses. The strong horizontal feeling to the building is created by several things: the overall length of the building in comparison to height, the use of horizontal stone, banded windows, the broad over-hanging eave, and the heavy corner treatment of the building. The building was designed with three primary façades: the front entrance on the northeast elevation facing Ballingall Park and Main Street; the southeast elevation which faces the parking lot; and, the southwest elevation which faces the tracks.

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**Burlington Depot  
Wapello County, IA**

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The location of the lobby at the east end of the building is indicated on the northeast elevation by a series of 21 windows (45 inches by 37 inches) arranged in an aluminum grid three panes high by seven panes across. The main entrance is located at the west end of this grid. It is created by a 7 foot 6 inch by 13 foot glass vestibule with a broad flat 15 foot by 20 foot concrete canopy. Steel columns provide support for the canopy. The walls of the vestibule continue the glass grid pattern, being two panes wide and four panes across the front. A shallow flat roof extends out above the wall of windows and ties into the canopy at the inside corner.

Windows on both floors of the primary façade illustrate the window pattern used throughout the building. With a few notable exceptions, the windows are rectangular, 3 foot by 4 foot 6 inches, arranged in horizontal bands. The bands connecting the windows feature dressed stone sills and lintels, with dressed stone panels between the windows. This creates a strong horizontal emphasis on all elevations. Centered above the lobby windows are black letters reading "WAPELLO COUNTY HISTORICAL" with "MUSEUM" below

Immediately to the west of the main entrance is a shallow (4 foot by 20 foot) projection that houses the interior stairwell. This was the base of the massive tower on the 1889 depot. This wall is broken at the first floor level by a center door flanked by a single window. The upper portion of this 20 foot section is unbroken by windows. This section extends above the roofline, creating a chimney-like effect. At the top left corner of this wall is a stylized clock that was part of the original design. It consists of a 5 foot in diameter circle created by 12 "tymstone" disks, 6 inches in diameter, representing the numerals normally found on a clock. Originally these were gold with black edges. The hands of the clock are of dull black finished aluminum. Below the clock the words "BURLINGTON ROUTE" were spelled out in 24 inch "tymstone" letters, gold in color with black edges. These letters were removed in 1987.

Proceeding to the northwest from the tower base along this first floor wall, there is a banded group of 3 small (38 inch by 24 inch), high windows, a doorway, and then another banded group of 6 standard size windows. Another projected wall, measuring 5 foot deep by approximately 30 feet long contains a set of 4 standard size banded windows. The final 37 feet of the front elevation contains a band of five small high windows. On the second floor, the openings echo that of the floor below, but all windows are the standard 3 foot by 4 foot 6 inches. These are all banded, with a set of seven above the lobby area, eleven along the longest portion of the wall, four in the projecting wall, and a final set of five near the west end.

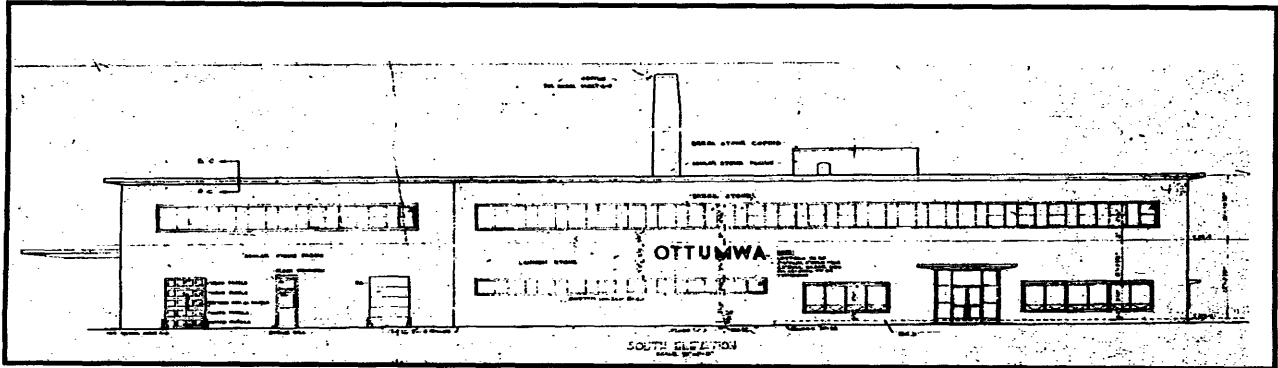
The southeast elevation is the end wall of the lobby, and is the part of the building seen first by travelers arriving by car and parking in the paved parking lot. Six broad (45 inch) windows divided by aluminum strips are centered in the first floor wall with small, 12 inch by 45 inch windows below. A shallow flat roof extends across the top of the grouping. The second floor of this elevation has a set of five banded windows separated by stone panels. "OTTUMWA" in 30 inch letters (now black, but originally gold) is centered on the wall between the two floors, with the word "MUSEUM" in smaller letters centered directly below.

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**Burlington Depot  
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Architect's drawing of track-side elevation  
Dated 3-6-50  
(Courtesy of Wapello County Historical Society)

The first floor of the track-side elevation (southwest) has a set of 6 banded windows with flat roof identical to those on the southeast side. Moving to the northwest, a glass-walled vestibule echoes the one on the front elevation in terms of size, but it is capped by a larger concrete canopy (20 foot by 20 foot). Two steel posts are used for additional support. A band of 4 windows (complete with flat roof) is found north of the track-side entrance. A band of 10 high small windows (38 inches by 24 inches) extends toward the north end and the last 66 foot section of the elevation projects out 5 feet. This section contains two large baggage doors, one on each side of a narrow metal entrance door. The second floor of this southwest elevation is very simple, with a band of 23 standard size windows interspersed with stone panels along the long section of the wall, and another band of 9 standard windows plus stone panels along the 66 foot projecting wall. Like the end wall, the word "OTTUMWA" in 30 inch black letters is centered between the two floors.

The only elevation that is not treated as a primary façade is that at the northwest end. This was designed purely for baggage and freight purposes and has four large overhead doors opening onto a loading dock. A 20 foot by 40 foot canopy shelters the loading dock. The second floor repeats the band of 5 standard windows found on the opposite (southeast) end of the building.

There are two 850 foot long canopies that provide shelter for travelers that run parallel to, and are situated between, the railroad tracks. These were not included in the depot project but were designed and built by the Chicago Burlington & Quincy Railroad just as the new depot was reaching completion. These are of steel construction with wood roofing. These are owned by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) and are not included in this nomination.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Burlington Depot  
Wapello County, IA

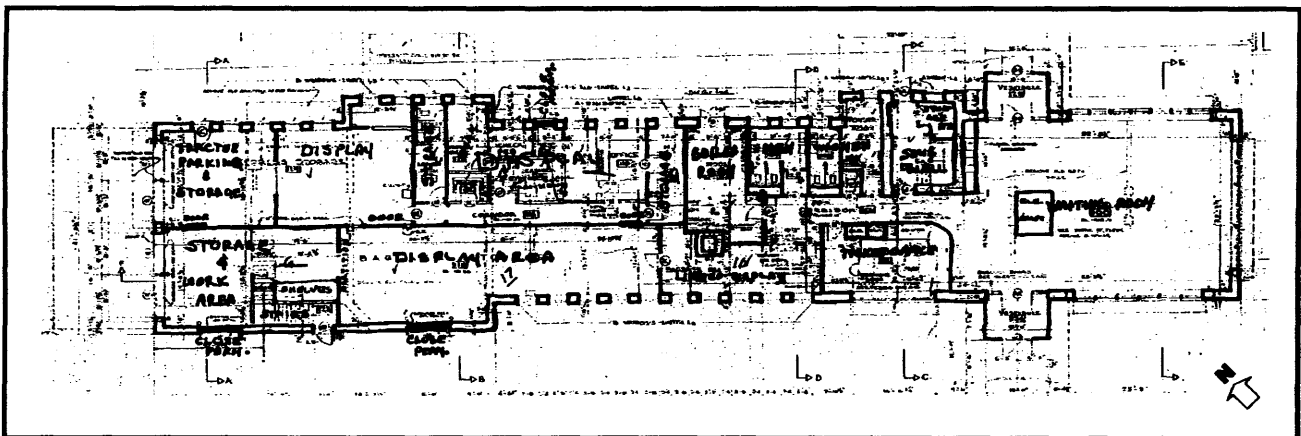
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Ballingall Park, between the depot and Main Street was designed and built by the city at the same time the depot was planned and built. This was a conscious effort by the city to enhance the depot building. Like the canopies, the park is not owned by the Historical Society and is not included as part of this nomination.

### Interior:

The drawings for both the first and second floors have a notation "remove old brick walls" with arrows pointing to dotted lines. It is impossible today to determine where these walls were. The drawings included in this nomination show the alterations made by the Wapello County Historical Society (WCHS) when they purchased the building in 1987. Unfortunately, these changes were drawn on the original drawings with bold black marker and obscure some of the original details.

The first floor of the Burlington Depot consists of 13 rooms and 2 stairwells: the lobby, ticket office and restrooms are in the southeast end, with the center and northwest part of the building originally housing the boiler room, small offices, baggage and freight storage rooms. This main floor has 14 foot ceilings.



Architect's drawing of the first floor plan  
Dated 3-6-50, revised by WCHS in 1987  
(Courtesy of Wapello County Historical Society)

The lobby measures approximately 55 foot by 39 foot, with the 12 foot by 21 foot ticket office located at the northwest end. A 5 foot corridor leads from the lobby toward the baggage areas with the restrooms and stairwell opening off of it to the right. The flooring of this public area, including the two vestibules, is terrazzo. Lobby walls are of large marble panels with walnut trim. The 16 metal lockers that were built into the northwest lobby wall are now

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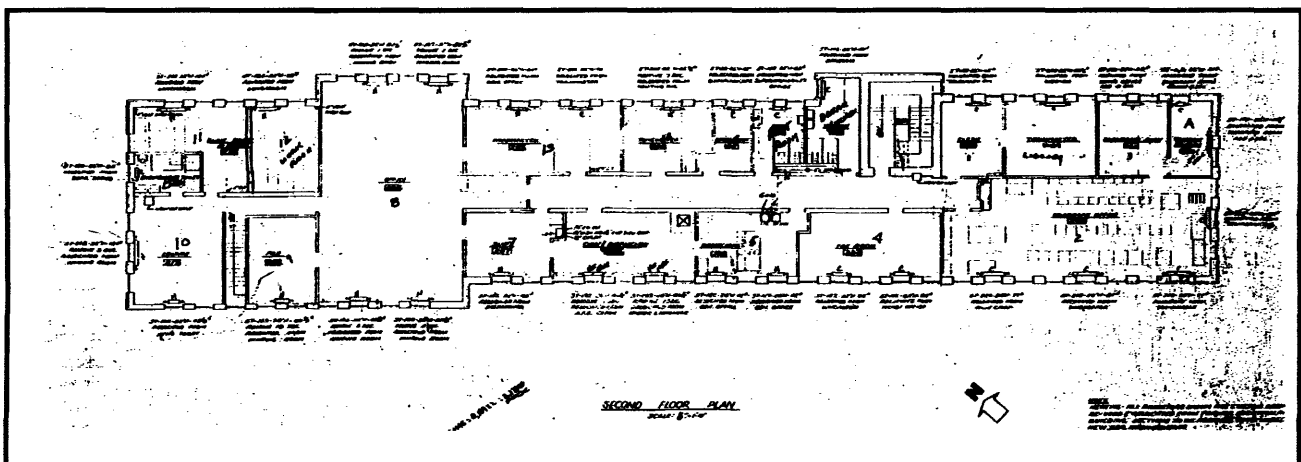
Burlington Depot  
Wapello County, IA

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hidden behind a large display cabinet. The original acoustic tile on the ceiling has been replaced by the present ceiling. Six of the original 40 upholstered leather chairs are still in use. With 3 walls that are almost entirely of glass and the reflective quality of the terrazzo and marble, the lobby is very light and open. An architect's drawing of the interior appeared in the *Ottumwa Courier* on October 5, 1950 with a caption reading "...the waiting room is to be the 'last word' in modernistic design and furnishing. Generous window space on three sides will afford a maximum of daylight, and a clear view of approaching trains from the east, loading of trains on the south, and the new Ballingall Park on the north."

The ticket counter is composed of marble panels and features a rounded corner. The glass partition currently in place is not original. The ticket office has the same light and open feeling as the lobby due to the band of windows along the track-side wall. Flooring in the ticket office and two other small offices in the center part of the building is of asphalt tile. These small offices are located along the northeast wall and originally served as cashier and money departments, locker room, and record storage room.

The rest of the main level is purely utilitarian with concrete floors, plaster walls, and plaster ceilings. The large baggage and express storage areas are served by the large overhead doors allowing easy access for large crates and pieces of equipment. A second, smaller stairwell is located near the northwest end of the building. This leads to the living quarters for crew changing shifts at this division point. The baggage and storage areas are now used to house large pieces of equipment such as an historic fire truck and early agricultural implements.



Architect's drawing of the second floor plan  
Dated 3-6-50  
(Courtesy of Wapello County Historical Society)

As noted earlier, the second floor housed the CB&Q division offices. Original plans show 17 rooms plus 3 restrooms on this level. Although the function of the rooms has changed the



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**Burlington Depot  
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WCHS has retained this floor plan with one exception: The women's restroom next to the staircase has been converted into a kitchen. The original drawing identifies the railroad function of each of the rooms. The area above the lobby housed the trainmaster's office, telephone exchange and a 19 foot by 52 foot telegraph room. A long 7 foot wide corridor connected this area with the large (28 foot by 46 foot) open room near the northwest end that housed the general offices. Beyond this large room were the crew bunk room, lounge and showers. Opening off each side of the long corridor were doors leading to the main stairwell, restrooms, dispatcher's room, and offices for the superintendent, roadmaster, chief dispatcher, and the timekeeper. The doors opening into the hallway all have functioning transoms. Flooring on the second level was maple, with plaster walls and ceilings, and birch trim. The maple floor remains in the hallway, but carpet has been laid over the maple in the individual offices now used for museum exhibits. "Marblette" flooring was used in the restrooms with plaster walls and ceilings. Although the second floor was designed more for function than "show," it was also planned to provide pleasant, well-lighted work environment.

**Integrity:**

This building was purchased by the Wapello County Historical Society in 1987 for use as a museum. Ottumwa is one of five AMTRAK stops across the southern part of the state and the Burlington Northern Railroad leases the lobby and ticket office for continued use by rail customers. In addition, the lobby serves as ticket office for Trailways Buses. Several changes have been made in the "public" area of the first floor. A new grid-system suspended ceiling has been installed to allow for new lighting and ductwork. This ceiling does not extend below the top of the windows. An elevator has been installed to provide access to the museum upstairs. This is shown on the floor plans and in the photographic documentation. It is free-standing in the northern one-third of the lobby space. The bus ticket counter is adjacent to it on the south. A glass partition has been installed around the AMTRAK ticket counter for security purposes. A large display case has been placed in front of the in-wall lockers along the north wall. As noted earlier, six of the original upholstered chairs remain in use in the lobby although the majority of the chairs are of the molded shell pedestal type. Originally there were large green plants in the lobby, and this continues today. The remainder of the main floor is used by the museum as storage and as display space for large items such as a fire engine and agricultural equipment. The second floor has been altered primarily in terms of flooring. The hallway retains the original maple floor, but the rooms have all been carpeted. The former women's restroom has been converted into a kitchen. No walls have been moved or removed.

The major alteration that is visible from the exterior involves the installation of some new windows and the covering of other window openings on both floors. This was done for two purposes: for greater energy efficiency; and, to eliminate some of the daylight that can be harmful to artifacts. The Historical Society did this in such a manner that it does not detract from the original design of the building. Panels have been placed in the window frames, but all of the window openings are still visible on both the exterior and interior. The original fenestration pattern has not been disturbed.



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**Burlington Depot  
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This building remains a fine example of the Modern Movement by a noted architectural firm with its simplicity of design and form, the use of the textured limestone with the smooth, sleek quality of aluminum and the shiny hard surface of the walls of glass, the horizontal emphasis created by the long bands of windows, the flat roof and the broad overhanging eaves. It remains "as thoroughly modern as the fleet of Zephyrs that serves Ottumwa." (*Ottumwa Courier*, May 25, 1951. Full page ad celebrating the dedication of the depot.)

The Burlington Depot maintains a high degree of all seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Location, setting, feeling, and association are all wrapped up together, as it was originally built as a railroad depot and continues to serve that purpose, with all of the railroad associated elements (track, platforms, and canopies) still in place and Ballingall Park, that was designed and built to highlight the depot, continues to provide a tree shaded "front yard." In terms of design, materials, and craftsmanship, the depot also retains a high degree of integrity. It would be readily identified by the architects, or Ottumwans returning to the community after decades away. Most of the 1951 materials have been maintained, and the present physical condition of the building speaks to the quality of the original craftsmanship.

The Wapello County Historical Society is committed to preserving the Burlington Depot as a significant Ottumwa landmark.

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**Burlington Depot  
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**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

The Burlington Depot (1951) in Ottumwa, Iowa is locally significant under Criterion A as a symbol of the important role the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad played in Ottumwa's development from 1859-1958. In addition, it has Criterion A significance as a major new building constructed during the period of Post-World War II Development in Ottumwa, 1944-1959. Criterion C significance is achieved as it is a fine example of the Modern Movement by the noted Chicago architectural firm of Holabird, Root and Burgee. It displays a simplicity of design, form and materials that is consistent with this period and style.

**Criterion A:**

**Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad**

The portion of the vast Chicago, Burlington and Quincy (CB&Q) Railroad that runs across the southern tier of Iowa counties began as the fledgling Burlington and Missouri (B&M) River Railroad chartered in Burlington in 1852. Like most early railroad ventures, it was slow to gain support, and it wasn't until the summer of 1855 that a contract was let to construct the road from Burlington to the east bank of the Skunk River in Henry County, a distance of 35 miles. The tracks didn't actually cross the Skunk River until 1857. It was with great anticipation, and a great celebration that the first Burlington and Missouri River train reached Ottumwa on September 1, 1859. Ottumwa was to remain the western terminus of the railroad until after the Civil War.

By reaching Ottumwa, the railroad could connect with the steamboats plying the Des Moines River between the Mississippi and the Raccoon River at Des Moines. During the war years Ottumwa became a major wholesale center because goods could be shipped that far by rail before being loaded onto wagons to continue the trip west. This was a period when many young men, known as "Pike's Peakers" were heading to Colorado and Ottumwa was the last chance for many of them to buy necessary supplies and equipment. This image as a wholesale center would continue well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The CB&Q had a vested interest in the B&M River line as they wanted to extend their control to the Missouri River, with hopes of becoming part of a transcontinental railroad. They invested heavily in the proposed extension of the B&M from Ottumwa to Chariton, and later made the commitment to the Union Pacific (UP) to build to the Missouri River if the Union Pacific would build the bridge across the river. In July 1865 construction started on the rail line west from Ottumwa and the B&M tracks reached Plattsmouth, Iowa on the Missouri River in late 1869. The CB&Q became owners of the B&M by deed of all of its property and franchises on July 31, 1875. (Overton, Burlington Route, p 95)

In 1889 the CB&Q constructed a new combination passenger and freight depot in Ottumwa. This was said to have been designed by Burnham and Root of Chicago. That architectural firm was responsible for the larger depots on the CB&Q line, and the Ottumwa

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depot certainly met that requirement as a two story building with the division offices housed on the second floor.



Union Depot, 1889  
(Flower, Illustrated Review of Ottumwa, Iowa, facing p 7)

In 1890 there were five railroads "reaching to or passing through" Ottumwa. These included the CB&Q, the Chicago, Milwaukee & St Paul (CMSTP), the Wabash, the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific (CRI&P), and the Iowa Central (IC). (Flower, p 12) The CB&Q shared the new station with the CRI&P, thus the name "Union Depot." Railroad historian Robert Brown says that "despite the name, to the railroaders and the citizens of Ottumwa it was always called the Burlington Depot." (Brown, Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad Company: Iowa Main Line & Branch Lines Depots & Towers, p 16) Originally Ottumwa was the division point housing dispatchers for the middle of the Iowa Division of the railroad. Shortly after 1900 the Chariton office was closed and those tracks added to Ottumwa, and soon after that the trackage from Burlington to Ottumwa was added. (Brown, p 14)

In her Multiple Property Documentation Form, "The Advent and Development of Railroads in Iowa: 1855-1940," Rebecca Conard referred to the period of 1890-1920 as the "Golden Age of Steam Railroading." This was a period of improvements to railroad bridges and buildings. During this time the CB&Q "...built many of its brick depots in southern Iowa county seats..." (Conard, E-17) This includes not only the Ottumwa building, but smaller, single story

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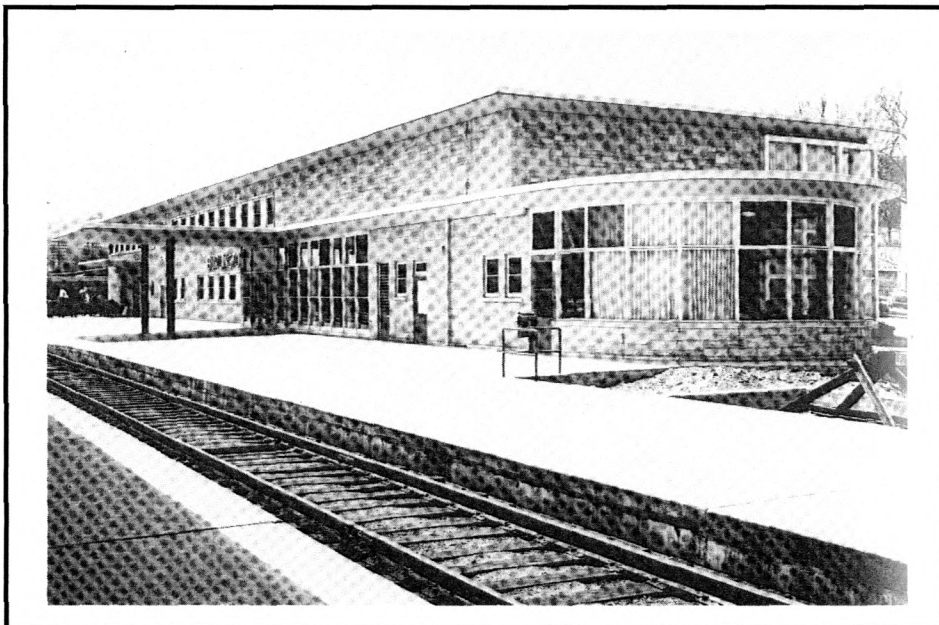
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stations in Mount Pleasant, Fairfield, Albia, Chariton, Osceola, and Red Oak. The two story Creston CB&Q depot also dates to this period and was the next division point west of Ottumwa. All of these depots, with the exception of Albia, are extant.

The years between 1920 and 1940 saw improvements in efficiency of the railroads, abandonment of unprofitable track, and the introduction of the Diesel engine. The Diesel was a cheaper alternative to steam engines and gained favor prior to World War II. The CB&Q became famous for their streamlined Zephyrs that whisked people from point to point in modern, up to date cars. With the streamlined appearance of the trains, CB&Q officials made plans to build modern, streamlined passenger stations as well. The outbreak of World War II put those plans on hold. However, a fire in the Burlington, Iowa depot in January 1943 created the opportunity to construct a modern depot, even in the middle of a war. The new Burlington CB&Q depot (NRHP) set the standard for others constructed after the war.



CB&Q Depot in Burlington, Iowa (1944)  
(Overton, Burlington Route, facing p 152)

The new Burlington Depot was designed by the firm of Holabird, Root & Burgee in a simple modern style. The exterior was of Lannon limestone with large areas of windows set in aluminum grids. The two story building had a flat roof with broad eaves, and windows were banded together. A semi-circular restaurant wing was included on the north end of the building. The design of this building was considered significant enough that it was featured in an article in the Architectural Record in October 1944.

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During the war years railroads "were responsible for 97% of all troop movements and 90% of all domestic military equipment and supply movements." (Conard, E-20) However, right after the war railroads experienced real competition. "Substantial amounts of freight business were lost to trucks, while buses, airplanes, and above all, the private automobile made great inroads on passenger traffic. Business was also lost to water transport and pipelines." (Overton, Burlington Route, pp 112-113) It was in this situation that the decision was made to erect a new depot in Ottumwa. The railroad hoped that the modern structure would be more appealing to travelers, and it certainly would be a more efficient operation.

**Post-World War II Development in Ottumwa: 1944-1959**

Ottumwa changed radically during World War II with the arrival of the Ottumwa Naval Air Station, and all of the military personnel and their families. Following the War, some of the Naval personnel remained in Ottumwa, and native Ottumwa veterans returned to the community to establish their homes. There was a growing need for housing and with that came a growing need for non-residential facilities as well. After the lack of building materials during the war years, people were ready to make up for lost time. Not only was there new commercial construction, but new schools, churches and health facilities as well. Between 1945 and 1950 there were 755 new houses constructed in Ottumwa. Between 1945 and 1952 four new elementary schools were built and a new junior high school was added. Commercial construction took place in the business districts on both sides of the Des Moines River with new grocery stores and car dealerships both downtown and on the outskirts. As early as 1945 there was talk of building a new hospital. In 1949 a new tuberculosis sanitarium opened and finally, the Ottumwa Hospital became a reality in April 1951. The city built a new fire station on the south side and began plans for a river widening and levee system project to protect the city from future floods.

It was in this period of re-development that the new Ottumwa CB&Q Depot was constructed. Plans had been drawn for a new depot in Ottumwa prior to the beginning of the war. The new building would be of the same style and building material (stone) used for the new depot in Burlington. These plans were interrupted by the war years. From 1945 on there appears to have been discussion on a regular basis concerning when, and if, the new building would be constructed. In early 1949 the City Park Commission agreed to acquire property in front of the depot building to make park improvements to encourage the railroad to make a decision. The *Ottumwa Courier* noted in April "That new Burlington Railroad depot project and its allied parks improvement project isn't forgotten, but at the moment, it seems almost buried beneath a maze of legal details." (April 25, 1949, p 15, c 1)

Finally, near the end of the year, the decision was made and announced to the people of Ottumwa.

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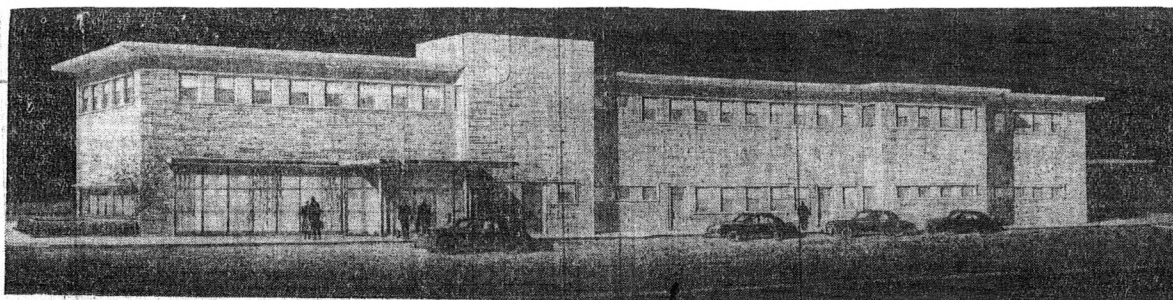
Burlington Revises Depot Plans,  
To begin Construction Next Spring

Construction of the new Burlington railroad depot here will be started as early next spring as weather will permit.

Officials of the Burlington Lines gave that assurance here yesterday at a conference with city park commissioners when complete plans for the new structure were explained, and a time schedule worked out for the enlargement of Ballingall Park that will complete both improvements at approximately the same time in the early fall of next year.

...

A substantial savings over the original plan has been achieved, Mr. Jones said, by building the new station on the exact site of the present depot rather than 30 feet to the west. This change will make it possible to use the present foundation which is heavy stone construction. (*Ottumwa Courier*, November 12, 1949, p 1, c 5-7)



*How Depot Will Look* —Under its finally approved program, this is how it's new Burlington depot will look when viewed from the Main street side of the structure. It is completely modernistic with artfully designed windows, entrance canopies and square tower accentuating the beauty of its limestone exterior. Working

drawings for the building are now being completed, bids will be called for and a construction contract awarded in time to start actual work no later than April 1. Burlington railroad executives told members of the Ottumwa park department Friday that, in all cases possible, Ottumwa labor will be used and new materials will be purchased in Ottumwa. Feb. 11, 1950. *Ott. Courier*

Drawing of final design  
(*Ottumwa Courier*, February 11, 1950, np)

The caption above reads, "It is completely modernistic with artfully designed windows, entrance canopies and square tower accentuating the beauty of its limestone exterior."

In April 1950 the contract was let to Benson Construction Co. of Chicago and demolition of the roof and towers of the old depot began the first part of May. Two passenger cars were put in place near the CB&Q Veteran's Clubhouse just east of the depot to serve as a ticket office and waiting room for passengers during the construction, and division telegraphy and dispatcher equipment was installed in the Clubhouse. For the next 12 months Ottumwans watched as their new depot and park took shape before their eyes.



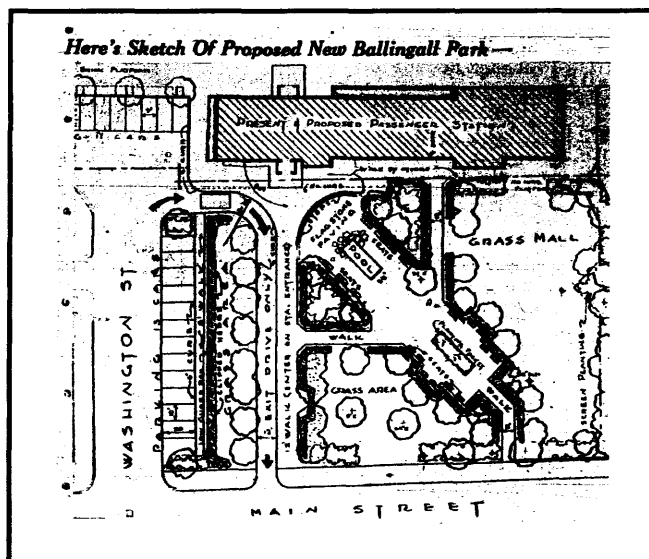
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The *Ottumwa Courier* carried the architect's drawing for the rebuilding of Ballingall Park with shrubs, trees, a formal garden with a pool, and "possibly an electrically lighted fountain." (*Ottumwa Courier*, April 22, 1950, p 13, c 1-5)



Architect's Drawing of Ballingall Park  
(*Ottumwa Courier*, April 22, 1950, p 13)

On May 26, 1951 the new Burlington Depot and Ballingall Park were dedicated with much ceremony. 15 executives of the Burlington Line from Chicago made the trip to Ottumwa, along with other Burlington personnel from Galesburg to Omaha. A formal dedication ceremony was held in the large new lobby, with a public address system to carry the program to the crowd outside. The mayor accepted both the depot and the park on behalf of the people of Ottumwa, the Reverend Harold Drown of First Presbyterian read the invocation, the Morrell Men's Chorus sang, and organ music preceded and followed the ceremony. Swenson Bakery created a cake that was an "exact replica of the new Burlington railroad depot..." (*Ottumwa Courier*, May 28, 1951, p 7, c 2-4) Burlington employees were available to give the public tours of the new building during an Open House from 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM. The day was capped off by a recognition dinner given by the Chamber of Commerce at the Hotel Ottumwa. (*Ottumwa Courier*, May 25, 1951, p 1, c 4-5 and May 28, 1951, p 7, c 1-4)

The feelings of the community were best expressed by a statement in the *Railroader* magazine in June 1952. "Nowhere 'along the lines' will you see a more pleasing impression [the new depot and park] - one that says to both traveler and homefolk alike: 'Ottumwa is a Fine Place to Live.'" (*Railroader*, June 1952, p 3)

Completion of the Burlington Depot added a modern new building to Ottumwa's central business district. Its construction not only brought about a redesign of Ballingall Park, but also

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resulted in the demolition of a large brick building that had long been considered an eye-sore. More importantly perhaps for the railroad, the new building provided ample office space on the second floor. This became very important when the dispatcher's office in Creston was closed in 1954. That left the Ottumwa division office handling the main line all the way from Galesburg, Illinois to the Missouri River, plus some branch lines. In 1957, dispatchers from the St. Joseph, Missouri office were also transferred to Ottumwa. (Brown, p 14) Two years later (1959) Ottumwa celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the railroad's arrival.

**Criterion C:**

The Burlington Depot in Ottumwa is a fine example of modern design from the mid-twentieth century that was designed by the renowned Chicago architectural firm of Holabird, Root & Burgee. This firm was established in 1927 by John A. Holabird and John W Root Jr., the sons of famous Chicago architects William Holabird (of Holabird & Roche) and John W Root Sr. (of Burnham & Root). Joseph Burgee joined Holabird & Roche in 1923 and made the move to the new firm in 1927. The senior William Root's first major commission in 1883 was the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad's corporate headquarters in Chicago. Burnham & Root designed railroad stations for the Penn Central Railroad as well as the CB&Q. The 20<sup>th</sup> century firm of Holabird & Root (later Holabird, Root & Burgee) designed a number of large structures including hotels (the Palmer House and the LaSalle in Chicago, the Nicollet in Minneapolis), commercial buildings (Chicago Daily News Building), and even athletic complexes (Soldier Field in Chicago). They had a strong working relationship with the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad, designing not only railroad depots but also projects such as railroad car interiors. (Krieger, "Burlington Depot" National Register of Historic Places nomination form)

The Ottumwa Depot is very similar to the 1944 building in Burlington which was said to be the prototype for post-World War II CB&Q railroad stations. Both are good examples of the Modern Movement utilizing simplified design in terms of form and materials. Both are two story structures as both served as division points on the railroad and the second story was needed for the division offices. Rectangular in shape with a flat roof and broad eaves, the buildings have a strong horizontal emphasis. This is created in part by the length of the buildings themselves, but even more by the bands of windows that are found on each elevation and the material used (horizontal blocks of Lannon limestone laid in well-defined courses). The use of large areas of glass in aluminum grids adds to the sleek, streamlined appearance. The sleek appearance is carried to the inside where the public areas are finished in marble, terrazzo, and glass, all very hard, but reflective materials. The "modernistic" design was mentioned in almost all of the newspaper articles.

Lannon limestone appears to have been a favorite exterior material of the Holabird, Root & Burgee firm during this period. For example, they designed several dormitories on the Northwestern University campus in the 1950s with a lavish use of Lannon stone. This high quality stone comes from a small area near Lannon (Waukesha County), Wisconsin. It was also prized



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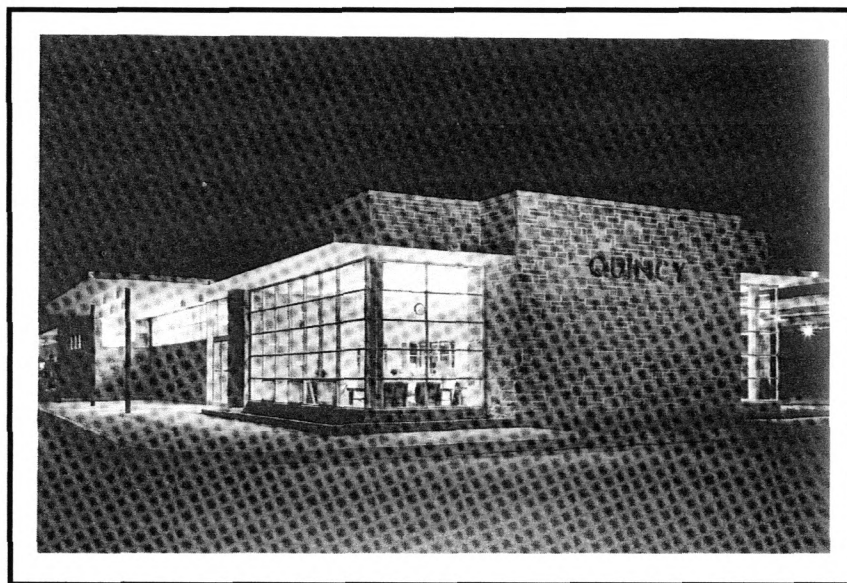
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by other mid-20<sup>th</sup> century architects such as Eliel Saarinen, who used Lannon stone for the original (1948) section of the Des Moines Art Center (NRHP).

There was a third CB&Q Depot constructed in this style. Though it was often referred to as the Quincy Depot, it was actually built across the Mississippi River in West Quincy, Missouri in 1954. It was a single story structure with Lannon limestone exterior, a multi-pane grid of windows (in this case, set in the corner), and a canopied entrance with steel posts supporting the roof. Unfortunately, like the depot in Burlington, this one was heavily damaged by the Floods of 1993. However, unlike Burlington's depot which is being preserved, this one was demolished in October 1993. (Telephone conversation with Jean Kay, October 2007)



CB&Q Depot in West Quincy, Missouri (1954)  
(Overton, Burlington Route, facing p 152)

While there are many similarities between the buildings in Burlington and Ottumwa, there are differences as well. Burlington's depot was constructed during the war because of the 1943 fire. For that reason, many materials changes had to be made due to war time scarcity. Regular incandescent lights had to be used instead of the preferred fluorescent bulbs. The acoustic ceiling had to be removed from the plans, and the canopies over the railroad platforms between the tracks had to be of poured concrete rather than the recommended steel. Ottumwa was lucky that the scarcity of materials had lessened by 1950 and it could be built as drawn. One major change had to be made, however, when the decision was made to build the new structure on the foundation of the 1889 building to save money. That foundation was not large enough to support a restaurant as well as the large baggage, express, and mail space needed in Ottumwa. For that reason, the restaurant was eliminated. It has not been

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determined if the restaurant part of the Ottumwa building was to have had a semi-circular end like the Burlington building or not.

The *Railroader*, "a magazine devoted to railroad people...and the railroad industry," devoted its June 1952 issue to the City of Ottumwa, with emphasis on the new Burlington Depot. Two exterior photos graced the front cover, and inside there were two full pages of interior photos. The article inside said that there were two photos on the cover because "It would be impossible to do justice to this beautiful structure to show only the single view." It went on to say,

The Burlington Railroad has, in recent years, replaced many of its early depots with the most attractive type of modern designed structures. Beside being attractive to the eye, they are the last word in practical usefulness. They are as new to railroading as are the sleek appearance of the Zephyrs.

Ottumwa had long wanted one of these modern stations. The old station was hidden behind early Main Street warehouses or store buildings. The city was fortunate to have as its park commissioner, a man with vision, a man who could see the effect and improvement to the city, of a new modern depot with a beautiful city park facing Main Street. The name of the Park Commissioner is C.B. Hightshoe.

So we see in these two views the results when a great railroad and a far-seeing park commissioner work together – Ottumwa's new depot and city park. (*Railroader*, June 1952, p 3)

**Recommendation:**

As stated earlier in this document, only the depot is being nominated at this time. However, the close association of the city-owned Ballingall Park, the Burlington Northern owned platform canopies, and the privately owned CB&Q Veteran's Clubhouse offers the potential for a historic railroad district. It is recommended that the Ottumwa Historic Preservation Commission approach the individual owners of these properties and encourage the nomination of this geographic area as a historic district.

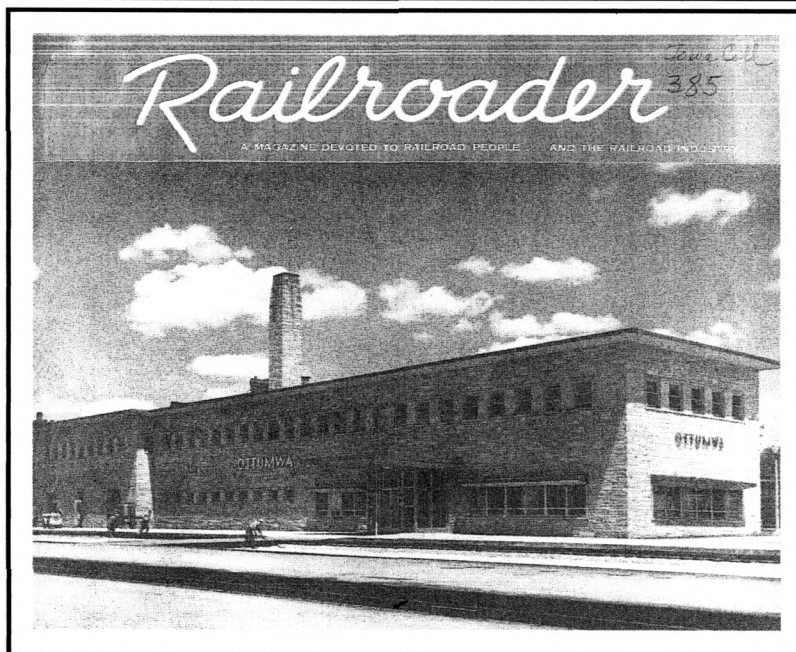
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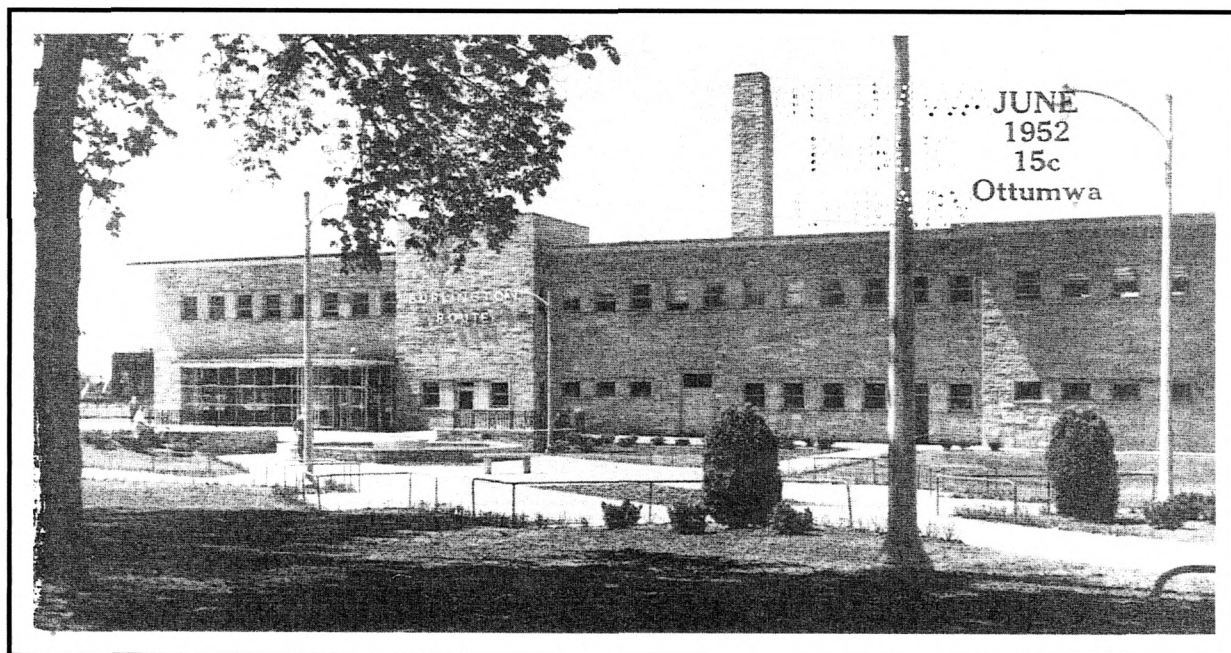
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The two cover photos from *Railroader*, June 1952



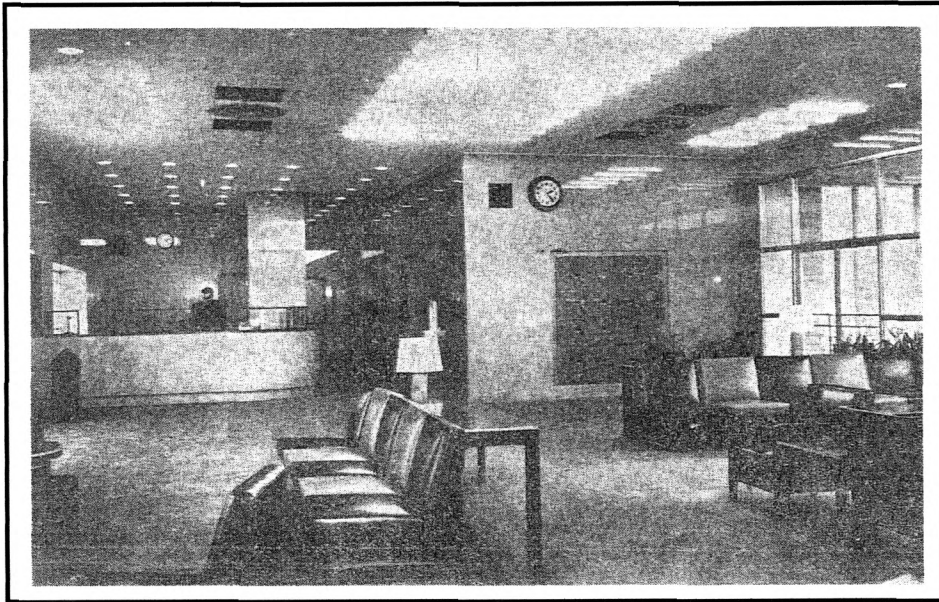
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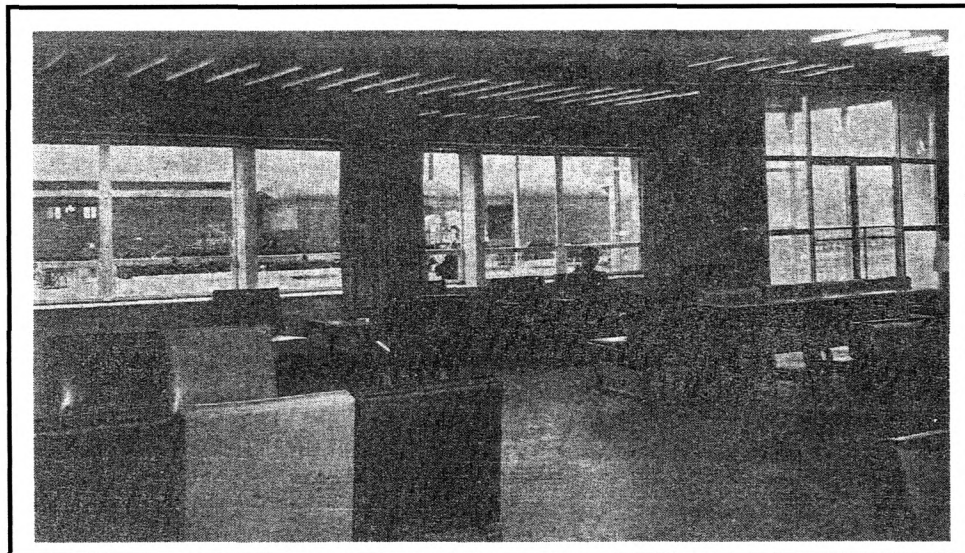
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Photos of the Lobby from *Railroader*, June 1952





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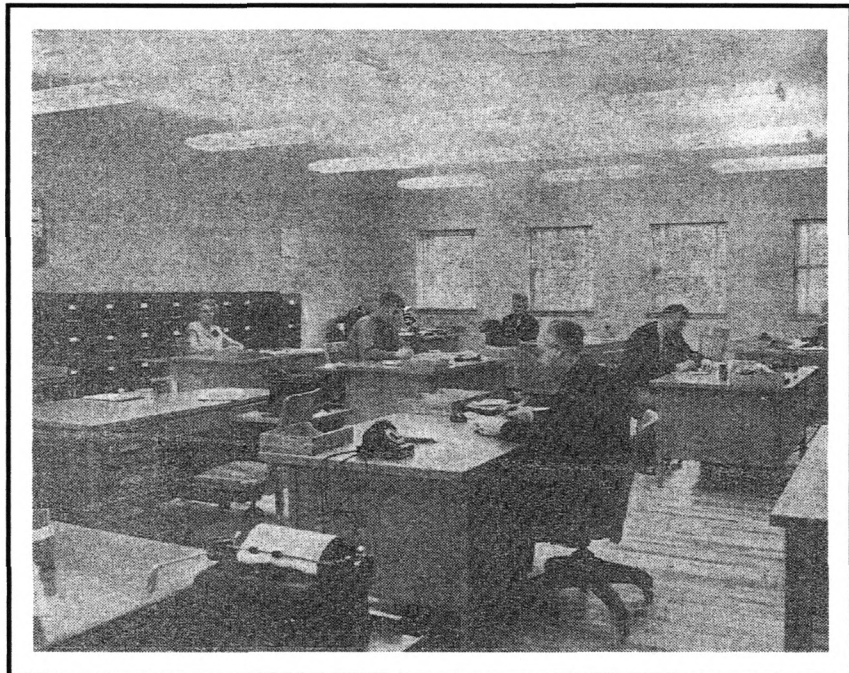
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2<sup>nd</sup> floor photos from  
*The Railroader*

Left: Superintendent's Office

Below: Large main division office



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**Conclusion:**

The Burlington Depot (1951) in Ottumwa is locally significant under Criterion A as it represents the importance of the CB&Q Railroad in Ottumwa's development from the arrival of the railroad tracks in 1859 through construction of the present depot in 1951, and to 1958 (the 50 year requirement for eligibility) but it continues to serve both the community and the railroad today. The size and design of the station demonstrate the importance of Ottumwa and its depot as a division point on the line. Rebecca Conard expressed the importance of depots in her definition of Significance in the MPDF (F-10).

Depots are the primary structures associated with railroads, and they derive significance in a number of ways. These buildings were the first structures erected, and station operations generally were controlled from depots. .... Depots were, and still are, the primary buildings that the public-at-large associates with railroads, and it is hard to overstate the evocative power of an extant depot. People who are old enough to have ridden trains with any regularity or who ever frequented a local railroad station attach tremendous symbolic value to depots. In short, depots recall the glory days of the railroad industry. In addition, depots were among the most prominent buildings in any town, no matter the size. Iowa depended heavily on railroads to move goods and people from the 1850s through World War II, and many towns in the state owe their very existence to railroads. Consequently, almost every extant depot is significant at the local level.

Ottumwa's Burlington Depot definitely meets the standards established by Conard for significance related to the railroad. The expansion of the Ottumwa division's responsibilities in the 1950s was made possible by the space available in the new building. Hundreds of Burlington employees were headquartered in Ottumwa.

The Burlington Depot was one of the most important public buildings constructed during the period of Post World War II Development in Ottumwa. While the community was trying to meet the needs of returning veterans, new businesses, and new demands on public infrastructure, the CB&Q made the decision to build their new, modern, station in this bustling town. The building is emblematic of Ottumwa's post-war growth and prosperity and is significant under Criterion A because of it.

The Burlington Depot is locally significant under Criterion C as a well-preserved example of the Modern Movement by a noted architectural firm, Holabird, Root & Burgee. The stylistic elements seen in this building include: simplicity of design and form; the use of textured limestone with the smooth sleek quality of aluminum and the shiny hard surfaces of glass, marble, and terrazzo; and, the horizontal emphasis created by the long bands of windows, the flat roof, and the broad overhanging eaves. It truly remains "as thoroughly modern as the fleet of zephyrs that serves Ottumwa."

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- "Burlington Revises Depot Plans, To Begin Construction Next Spring" November 12, 1949, p 1, c 5-7
- "Depot Contract Let" April 22, 1950, p 1, c 4
- "Here's Sketch of Proposed New Ballingall Park" April 22, 1950, p 13, c 1-5
- "New Depot Will Get Marble Walls" July 3, 1950, p 14, c 4
- "New Depot Interior" Architect's drawing of lobby, October 5, 1950, p 14, c 1-4
- "New Ottumwa Depot In Use," February 24, 1951, np
- "Dedicate New Depot and Park at 2:30 Tomorrow" May 25, 1951, p 1
- "Burlington President Calls Ottumwa 'One of the Best Cities On Our Lines'" May 28, 1951, p 7, c 1-4
- "Cake for New Burlington Depot" photograph, May 28, 1951, p 7, c 2-4
- "Ottumwa Depot" May 18, 1989, photos, p 8, c 1 & 2

Ottumwa from Above. Ottumwa, Iowa: *Ottumwa Daily Courier*, ca. 1950.

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Cover photographs of exterior  
Photographic essay with interior photos

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**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA:**

**Verbal Boundary Description:**

Part of Lot 13 Original Plat of Louisville: Also part of vacated South Washington Street and also Part South Half (S ½) Southeast (SE1/4) Section 24-73-14 commencing at the most Northerly corner intersection of South Washington Street and West Main Street in City of Ottumwa, South 45 degrees West along Northwestly line of Washington Street 235.50' to point of beginning, Continuing South 45 degrees West along Northeastly line of vacated Washington Street ext 77.60', South 46 degrees West 68.91 feet thence North 43 degrees West 329.58 feet thence North 46 degrees East 71.40 feet thence South 44 degrees East 251.84 feet to point of beginning.

**Boundary Justification:**

This is the parcel of land directly associated with the Burlington Depot. It is the area purchased by the Wapello County Historical Society from the Burlington Northern Railroad in 1987.

Although associated with the depot, the railroad tracks and canopies are owned by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad, the Burlington Northern Railroad Veteran's Clubhouse is owned by the BN Veteran's Association and Ballingall Park in front of the depot is owned by the city of Ottumwa. Due to this difference in ownership, these properties are not included in the present nomination.

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The photographs submitted with this nomination were all taken by Molly Myers Naumann in October 2006 and April 2007. Digital copies are on file in the collection of the Wapello County Historical Society, the State Historical Society of Iowa, Office of Historic Preservation, and the National Park Service.

IA\_WapelloCounty\_BurlingtonDepot\_

0001	Façade and southeast elevation from Ballingall Park, looking southwest
0002	Southeast elevation with sign (façade and front entrance on right), looking west
0003	Front entrance on façade (northeast elevation), looking south
0004	Track-side façade (southwest elevation) and southeast end, looking north
0005	Track-side entrance, looking northeast
0006	Track-side elevation with freight/baggage doors, looking north
0007	Northwest elevation with freight doors and track-side elevation, looking east
0008	Interior: Lobby, looking east
0009	Interior: Lobby, looking north
0010	Interior: Original 1951 chairs in lobby, looking west
0011	Interior: Ticket office and hallway from lobby, looking northwest
0012	Interior: Elevator in center of lobby, looking southeast
0013	Interior: 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor hallway from elevator, looking northwest
0014	Interior: 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor meeting room, looking southeast