

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

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received FEB 13 1985  
date entered MAR 29 1985

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic ROCK ISLAND DEPOT

and/or common "Katy" Depot

**2. Location**

street & number North of the east end of Chickasha Ave., West of tracks N/A not for publication

city, town Chickasha N/A vicinity of

state Oklahoma code 40 county Grady code 051

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name State of Oklahoma, % Dept. of Transportation

street & number 200 NE 21

city, town Oklahoma City N/A vicinity of state Oklahoma 73105

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of County Clerk

street & number Grady County Courthouse

city, town Chickasha state Oklahoma

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Oklahoma Comprehensive Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 7-84  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Oklahoma Historical Society

city, town Oklahoma City state Oklahoma

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

## Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

A long rectangular shape dominates the floor plan of the Rock Island Depot which is intersected by the rectangular floor plan of the waiting room about 30 feet north of the south end of the building. The resultant floor plan shape is a crude cross, the long axis running north/south, parallel with the railroad tracks. The waiting room's east side projects about 3 feet beyond the east wall of the longer building and the west wall projects about 30 feet beyond the west wall of the longer elevation. Chickasha Avenue, the east/west main street of the business district, angling slightly to the north toward the Depot is brick as are the sidewalks and loading/unloading areas around the building.

Spanish clay tile covers all roof surfaces, hipped and gabled, and is a weathered reddish color. Eaves are bordered with wood cornice which conceals metal gutters leading to the metal downspouts. The wood cornice is made up of classic moldings which are deteriorated in a good many areas and show evidence of having needed paint for some time. The main rectangular structure supports hipped roof areas while the more massive waiting room roof is pitched with gables on the east and west. North and south ends of the gable are broken and level-off into parapets, about 4 feet wide, each capped with its own clay tile roof and gable end.

Exterior north and south walls of the waiting room are decorated below the roof soffit with a 2' foot deep horizontal stone ribbon of vertical fluting. This feature is accented at regular intervals with rosettes which project from recessed square elements. All walls are covered with stucco which has been applied to rough brickwork of red variegated colors. The stucco has been finished-out with a skim coat which contains crushed quartz aggregate embedded in the surface. A raised belt of stucco surrounds the entire building except the altered north end where several bays of the building were razed to permit construction of a new viaduct. The belt course determines the height of all doors and window transoms.

Outstanding features of the east and west elevations are the entrances to the waiting room which are bordered with ornamental terra cotta of natural red clay of capsule and dart shapes. This band of decoration of warm gray glazed background is interrupted by six medallions of natural red clay which are spaced over the windows and anchor the lower ends. Both elevations are dominated by the door and window arrangement which takes the configuration of a huge arch. Access to the waiting room from the exterior is through three single doors, side by side, east and west elevations. Directly above each door is a wood, double hung window over 6, separated from the doors with the stucco belt. Over each of these three windows is an operating sash which is fabricated to fit the round arch. Mullions of equal width divide the windows. The lower portions of the doors are wood paneled to the height of the brick wainscot with the rest of the door containing glass, now broken out and replaced with plywood.

The textured brick wainscot surrounds the building, interrupted only by doors and freight openings which appear to be framed with metal. A series of arched recesses in the east and west elevations contain windows with arched transoms or doors with sidelights and transoms. Freight doors are heavy wood construction with plywood filler in the arched areas above.

Early postcards show torch-like lighting fixtures mounted to the sides of the building at belt line height. Only metal covers remain where the fixtures were formerly located. Stucco is falling from the walls in several places, few roof tiles are broken and missing, several window panes are broken, and toilet fixtures and marble wainscot/dividers are gone.

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Despite the lack of maintenance, the waiting room is impressive with quarry tile floor, gently sloping smooth brick wainscot and window surrounds, high wood beamed ceiling and "eye-like" transoms in the side arches. Missing are the large light fixtures, 4 in number, used to illuminate the waiting room. Only the daylight filtering through the massive end windows and transoms provide enough light to move through the space.

In spite of the altered north end due to highway construction, the building still maintains its integrity. A semicircular bay which houses the dispatchers office and projects slightly onto the brick between the building and the tracks, is the present active use of the building. It is located immediately north of the east waiting room entrance and carries on the purpose for which it was originally intended. For almost 75 years this one spot in the building has seen action regardless of night or day, peace time or periods of world conflict, fair weather or storm, good times or depression. This building is the one location in this community that is an example of transportation history still remaining. Hopefully it will remain for many years to come for its construction is extremely sound.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

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<b>Specific dates</b>	1910	<b>Builder/Architect</b>	Unknown
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**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Rock Island Depot is significant primarily because it is representative of the importance of the railroad industry in western Indian Territory and later Oklahoma, and also because it has survived to the present day almost intact as a unique example of railroad architecture.

The Rock Island Depot is historically and architecturally significant because (1) it represents the tremendous importance of the railroad to the development of Chickasha as a transportation and trade center for this part of south central Oklahoma and (2) because it is the oldest and best remaining piece of monumental architecture in the community.

Railroad transportation was a vital factor in the economic growth of late 19th and early 20th century Oklahoma, and the city of Chickasha owes its basic existence to the Rock Island Railroad. Generally following the old traces of the Chickasha was founded the rail line crossed the Washita River in 1892 and the city of Chickasha was founded to serve as a passenger and rail freight station. The Rock Island aided Chickasha in becoming an important trade and transportation center and even before the turn of the century it served four passenger trains daily. Ranchers and farmers benefited by the export of almost 100 carloads of freight each month, and the local economy was aided by a \$30,000 per month payroll to residents working for the railroad. Thus, by 1900 Chickasha had become a flourishing trade center, and much of the success later to come in its economic development is directly related to the Rock Island.

The original quite modest structure quickly was insufficient to serve such a busy rail center, and the nominated property was constructed in 1910. While the use of the structure is limited, it still serves a railroad company today.

Sited immediately north of the east end of Chickasha Avenue the Rock Island Depot with its dusty red Spanish clay tile roof, walls of warm gray stucco and rough red brick wainscot is unlike any other in Oklahoma. Special decorative features of glazed/unpreserved. Stone roettes and fluting, near the eaves of the waiting room, are in very good condition but the surrounding wall stucco, which has a skim coat in crushed quartz aggregate is gradually giving way to weathers destructive processes. The Depot rests in a sea of red brick pavers, its geometry only slightly broken by the rounded lines of the dispatchers office which protrudes toward the tracks for better visibility. Inside the cavernous waiting room with its smooth brick wainscot and wood beamed ceiling, the quarry tile floor produces sounds from the impact of hard needed shoes that echo repeatedly. unusual brick ribbons rise from the wainscot to envelope the side arch window openings with eye-like transoms. The monumentality of this structure is a landmark for this community as it has been for almost 75 years.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Munn, Irvin; Chickasa - A Journey Back in Time. University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma (1983)  
Fields, R.E. "Rock Island Depot article". Chickasha Daily Express, Sect. 4-D (Sept. 7, 1938)

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Chickasha

Quadrangle scale 1:2400

### UTM References

A 

1	4	5	97	4	00	38	7	19	1	2	10
Zone		Easting			Northing						

B 

Zone		Easting			Northing						

C 

Zone		Easting			Northing						

D 

Zone		Easting			Northing						

E 

Zone		Easting			Northing						

F 

Zone		Easting			Northing						

G 

Zone		Easting			Northing						

H 

Zone		Easting			Northing						

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Beginning on the north curb of Chickasha Ave, at the southwest corner of the sidewalk curb (just southwest of the Depot) and proceeding east to the east edge of the brick loading/unloading surface adjacent to the tracks; thence north parallel to the tracks.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state NA code county code

state NA code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Bill E. Peavler, AIA Senior Preservation Architect

organization Oklahoma Historical Society date 7/24/84

street & number 2100 N. Lincoln Blvd. telephone (405) 521-2491 X32

city or town Oklahoma City state Oklahoma

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature C. E. Metcalf

title \_\_\_\_\_ date 1-28-85

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Beth Groover date 3/29/85  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

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Bailey, Mary Hewett. Personal communication, 1979;'80;'81;'82;'83;'84.

Bailey, Mary Hewett. "History of Grady County." Master's Thesis on file, Oklahoma University (1937).

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to the south edge of the viaduct of U.S.Highway 62; thence west along the south edge of the viaduct of U.S.Highway 62 a distance of 80 feet, thence south to the point of beginning.