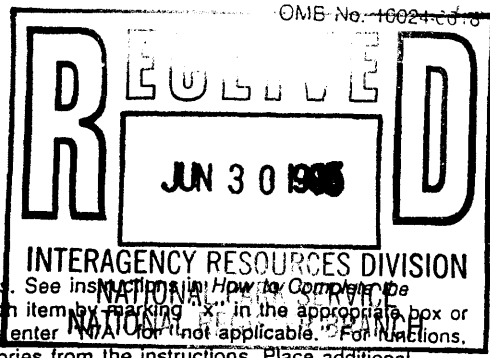


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 Union City Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 214 East Church Street not for publication

city or town Union City vicinity

state Tennessee code TN county Obion code 131 zip code 38261

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.)

Herbert L. Hays 6/28/95
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
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): _____

Edson H. Beall 7/28/95
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
Entered in the National Register

Union City Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot
Name of Property

Obion Co., TN
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	
1		buildings
	1	sites
		structures
		objects
1	1	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

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Mediterrean Revival with Craftsman
influences

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls STUCCO

roof CLAY TILE

other WOOD, METAL

Narrative Description

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

See continuation sheets.

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: n/a

- 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1923-1945

Significant Dates

1923

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Hayes, Charles A., architect

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

Union City Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot
Name of Property

Obion Co., TN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

Union City, TN, 427 NE

1	16	315740	4032760
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.)

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Trina Binkley and Carroll Van West

organization MTSU Center for Historic Preservation date January 30, 1995

street & number PO Box 80, MTSU telephone 615-898-2947

city or town Murfreesboro state TN zip code 37132

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 Obion County Chamber of Commerce (Ginny Acree, Executive Director)

street & number PO Box 80, 215 S. 1st telephone 901-885-0211

city or town Union City state TN zip code 38261

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.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Union City Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot, Obion Co., TN

VII. Architectural Description

The Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot in Union City (pop. 10,436), Obion County, Tennessee is located at the corner of South Division and East Church Street. Its irregular plan's main facade is located east, facing the original trackside. The 1923 depot has a continuous poured concrete foundation with wood frame walls faced with an exterior brick wainscoting and stucco. The parapet roof is flat with a tar and gravel covering and tile coping. Original windows are wood frame 2:2 sash painted grey. Directly above the windows, circumscribing the depot, is a decorative roof, covered with clay tile, designed to keep waiting passengers dry on wet days. The decorative roof is supported by prominent wood brackets painted grey, typical design elements associated with railroad architecture. The eaves and rafters are exposed with horizontal trim along the bottom. Decorative cast iron downspouts are located on each elevation, with nine in all.

The east facade is composed of three symmetrically placed bays attached to a projecting bay of three windows on the northern end. The windows are original, with original glass. The original door into the white waiting room, however, has been removed and a modern security door installed, probably in about 1982. Above this door is the original single pane glass transom window. The wall surface above the projecting bay is paneled on each bay.

The south elevation of this irregularly composed building consists of two parts. The east section has three symmetrical bays. The double glass and wood paneled doors with fan light transom that led into the white waiting room are located in the center bay. The flanking bays contain an original window. The west end of the south elevation consists of four bays, with three of the four grouped together as a door and flanking window combination. This side door also leads into the white waiting room. It is wood with a multi-pane glass opening with a single glass transom above. The flanking windows are original. West of

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Union City Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot, Obion Co., TN

the door and windows combination is a single original window.

The west elevation is broken up by an outward extension of the building on the north end of the plan. The south end of the west elevation contains one original window at the south corner and two other narrower original windows. The window in the center was later made into a doorway, but is presently boarded up. The north end of the west elevation extends out from the south nine feet. The south elevation of this extension contains a multi-paned door. This new door is set into the original six foot wide horizontal folding doorway which led into the baggage room. The north end of the west elevation contains five bays: two original short nine pane fixed wood windows covered with original iron window guards and three original windows. In this last group, the window at the north corner has a piece of wood at the top; however, the original window is intact.

The north elevation consists of five bays. The western half of the north elevation contains a replica of the entrance and flanking windows on the south elevation which led into the white waiting room. The north elevation entrance led into the African-American waiting room. The flanking windows are original, but the double doors have been changed. The fan light transom above is original. The eastern end of the north elevation contains two original windows; however the inner window has been altered to receive the outside air conditioning system.

The interior of the depot is typical of plans for depots found in the segregated South of the early twentieth century. Characteristically, there were four primary rooms: an office, a white waiting room, segregated African-American waiting room, and baggage room. The original interior design elements of the depot were: approximately thirteen foot high plastered ceilings; plaster walls coved at the ceiling line with a small picture molding ten inches from the ceiling in all rooms except the baggage and rest rooms; three foot three inch high wood wainscoting in all the rooms except the rest rooms (wainscoting here was seven feet high); eight inch high wood baseboards; cast iron floor

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Union City Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot, Obion Co., TN

radiators; and four inch poured concrete floor. The floor in the baggage room had wood boards laid on top of the concrete floor.

At the Union City Mobile and Ohio Depot the white waiting room was designed to be located beside the main loading platform. The African-American waiting room was placed along the trackside closer to the rear where the cars reserved for African-Americans would be located. The baggage room was at the rear of the building, most accessible to outside truck traffic. The interior elements of the white and African-American waiting rooms follow the description above and were designed to have wooden seating.

The baggage room was designed to be accessed via a step from the ticket office and from the outside on the west elevation. Scales were located in the western half of the baggage room, and remain there today.

The ticket office was placed between the two segregated waiting rooms and connected to the baggage room, with a small 10 foot 9 inch by 5 foot off-duty room for trainmen in the north corner. The ticket office was located in the north east corner of the depot. It contained the large three-bay window combination described earlier and originally had a shelf that ran along the bay window at the height of the wainscoting. Ticket counters were located on the north (African-American waiting room) and south west (white waiting room) walls. The south wall of the trainmen's room was designed with a seven foot, five inches high wood trim that surrounded a wood panelled and florentine (acid-etched) glass door, plaster dado with wood trim and baseboard, and two fixed florentine glass panes.

The only other spaces in the original depot plan were reserved for rest rooms. The segregated white rest rooms were located beside the white waiting room, next to the baggage room. A ladies lounge and rest room were located in the south west corner of the white waiting room. The men's rest room was located in the western corner of the white waiting room. This rest room has remained almost completely intact with its original wood seven foot high partition and

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

Union City Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot, Obion Co., TN

paneled toilet door, vanity mirror, plaster walls, seven foot high wood wainscoting and eight inch high baseboard. The African-American rest rooms were located within the "colored waiting room" space on northwest end.

All of these interior rooms remain intact today. However, once the station was converted into a private business during the early 1980s, the new owners put up fiberboard partitions and fiberboard wall coverings to create additional private work and storage space. Dropped ceilings were added in most rooms, with a notable exception being the ticket office, which is the most intact interior space. Carpet was also added to cover the concrete floor, except in the original baggage room. These temporary coverings mask the interior woodwork and detailing of the individual rooms in only the former black waiting room. Otherwise, the original woodwork was left exposed in the rooms. The large white waiting room has been subdivided with a partition into two offices. The new dividing walls are fiberboard; however, the original walls of the room are partially visible (some plaster areas have been covered with fiberboard) as is the original wood wainscoting. The original white rest room walls remain, but the entrance door to the ladies rest room has been converted into a built-in shelf unit and the original fixtures are gone. As stated earlier, the white men's rest room has maintained good integrity.

The ticket office has also maintained good integrity. The original wall treatment remains; however, some of it is covered by fiberboard. The original African-American waiting room area has been divided up into two rooms. The new dividing wall is fiberboard, but the original wood wainscoting and plaster walls remain intact, with the plaster covered by fiberboard. Only the original black men's rest room remains. The baggage room has also been divided into two rooms. A small room was created with a new fiberboard wall to contain the heating and cooling unit, but some of the original lath, plaster, and brick walls are also visible. The remainder of the baggage room is open, but the walls have been covered with fiberboard.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

Union City Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot, Obion Co., TN

During the planned renovation of the depot, Union City Chamber officials are planning to restore the interior according to the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

The original depot corner lot also contains a long rectangular, gable roof, metal "Butler" building that has a concrete foundation. This building, constructed in about 1984, is non-contributing (NC, due to date).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 6

Union City Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot, Obion Co., TN

VIII. Statement of Significance

The Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot in Union City, Obion County, Tennessee, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, for its significant association with the transportation history of Union City and Obion County, and under Criterion C as a locally significant example of railroad architecture. It is the only intact twentieth century Mobile and Ohio passenger station in Obion County.

Union City owes its very creation to the emergence of a regional railroad transportation system in the Upper South during the late antebellum era. In 1854, George Washington Gibbs established the town as "Junction City" because the site was projected as the junction of the then under-construction Nashville and Northwestern Railroad (the western branch of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad) and the Mobile and Ohio Railroad. The name was changed to Union City due to the fact that another Tennessee settlement already claimed the name of "Junction City." The entire length of the Mobile and Ohio was ready for traffic by April 1861, but that month also witnessed the beginning of the Civil War. By the end of the war, according to the 1866 annual report of the company, "all our bridges, trestle work, warehouses and station buildings between Union City, Tennessee and Okolona, in Mississippi, a distance of 184 miles, were destroyed." (1)

After the Civil War, officials of the Mobile and Ohio gave up on the initial grand plans to make the line a major north-south transportation corridor. The Mobile and Ohio became strictly a line of local and regional importance. In 1901, the Mobile and Ohio came under the control of the powerful Southern Railway and remained an independent branch line within the Southern empire until it was combined with other companies to create the Gulf, Mobile, and Ohio Railroad during the Great Depression. The connection with the Southern allowed the Mobile and Ohio to invest in and improve its physical facilities along the line. "Under the guidance of the Southern," observed railroad historian John Lemly, "the M&O was able to secure new capital sufficient to make the road a major contender for traffic into and out of the Mobile area." (2)

The nominated Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot in Union City,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 7

Union City Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot, Obion Co., TN

designed in 1922 and completed in 1923, dates to this period of capital improvement along the Mobile and Ohio's main line. It was designed as a joint passenger station, for use by both the Mobile and Ohio and the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railway, a powerful Tennessee line controlled at that time by the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. Charles A. Haynes of St. Louis, from the office of the chief engineer of the Mobile and Ohio, was the architect of the depot. Surviving building plans for the station state that both lines would use the passenger depot. This type of rural "Union" station was commonly built and shared by the major railroad lines in small southern towns during the early twentieth century. With the continual drop in passenger traffic from the 1910s forward, it made economic sense for the large corporations to pool their resources in such a manner. The construction of the new Union City depot was also a corporate response to recent improvements by the line's primary competitor in West Tennessee, the Illinois Central Railroad. The Illinois Central had recently constructed new combination passenger stations for nearby Dyersburg (no longer extant) and Newbern (NR 3/25/93).

The improved capital commitment by the Mobile and Ohio to passenger and freight service in Union City coincided with a decade of economic growth and expansion. At the same time that the new depot was being planned and under construction, the Brown Shoe Company of St. Louis built a factory in Union City. Its opening in June 1923, according to a recent local history, "ushered Obion County into the industrial age." (3) The shoe factory was then followed by the Salant and Salant textile plant. As railroad historian Darren Doss concluded, "in the early 1920s, larger industries began to come to town which meant a greater need for rail service." (4) The next years in Union City also would witness the construction of the Capitol Theater (circa 1927, with later alterations) and the Davy Crockett Hotel (circa 1931). According to a 1923 survey of the state, Union City had 4,412 residents. About fifteen years later, when the count was taken for the WPA Guide to Tennessee, the number of residents had increased significantly to 5,865. The town description given in that book documents the recent improvements to the urban landscape: "The broad main street has some modern chromium-plated shop fronts, four- and five-story office buildings and two hotels." (5) Throughout the depression decade, the Mobile and

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 8

Union City Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot, Obion Co., TN

Ohio operated two local trains through Union City. By the time the WPA writer had visited the city, negotiations were already underway to merge the Mobile and Ohio with other southern lines to create the Gulf, Mobile, and Ohio Railroad. That merger was complete by September 13, 1940. The days of Mobile and Ohio Railroad in Obion County were over, but the depot experienced probably its heaviest period of use from 1941 to 1945 as wartime demands for materials, and the presence of a nearby airbase, increased both freight and passenger traffic through Union City. The Gulf, Mobile, and Ohio continued to use the depot until it ceased passenger operations at Union City on October 14, 1958. The depot remained in use as a train order office, however, until the early 1980s. At that time, the Seaboard System owned the depot and sold it to Sta-Dry Roofing Contractors, who operated from the depot until the building's recent acquisition by the Obion County Chamber of Commerce.

The Mobile and Ohio passenger station is also locally significant to the architectural traditions of Union City and Obion County. Designed by company architect Charles A. Hayes, of the Chief Engineer's office of the Mobile and Ohio, the station was a functional building. Its architecture blended the Mediterrean Revival and Craftsman styles, which were two popular styles of domestic architecture throughout the 1920s. Its non-linear plan and architectural embellishments made it a striking small town depot design, when compared to other more linear, largely unadorned depots surviving in such West Tennessee county seats as Covington, Selmer, and Paris (NRHD 9/07/88). Designed in 1922 and opened for service in 1923, the station was a "combination" depot because it served passengers of both the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railway and the Mobile and Ohio Railroad. Like all southern railroad facilities built during the era of Jim Crow segregation, the building also maintained separate waiting rooms and facilities for its white and African-American patrons.

Endnotes:

1. James H. Lemly, The Gulf, Mobile and Ohio: A Railroad that had to Expand or Expire (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1953), p. 311.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

Union City Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot, Obion Co., TN

2. Ibid., p. 313.
3. Bill and Charlene Threlkeld, A Time Returned: A Pictorial History of Obion County (Virginia Beach, VA: Donning Company, 1994), p. 20.
4. Darren Doss, "The GM&O in Union City, Tennessee," GM&O News, undated copy in author's possession, p. 13.
5. Federal Writers' Project, The WPA Guide to Tennessee (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1986 [1939]), p. 417.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 10

Union City Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot, Obion Co., TN

IX. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Lemly, James H. "Mobile & Ohio Railroad." Robert L. Frey, ed. Railroads in the Nineteenth Century. New York: Facts on File, 1988.

Threlkeld, Bill and Charlene. A Time Returned: A Pictorial History of Obion County. Virginia Beach, VA: Donning Company, 1994.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 11

Union City Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot, Obion Co., TN

X. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated boundary is at 214 E. Church Street, listed as parcel 7.01 on the attached Union City tax map Q-48-L.

Boundary Justification

The nominated boundaries contain all of the historic property associated with the Mobile and Ohio Railroad Passenger Station.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number PHOTOS Page 12

Union City Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot, Obion Co., TN

PHOTOGRAPHS

Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot

Union City, Obion Co., TN

Photos by: Carroll Van West

MTSU Center for Historic Preservation

PO Box 80, MTSU

Murfreesboro, TN 37132

Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission

2941 Lebanon Road

Nashville, TN 37243

Date: November 1994

South elevation and east facade, facing northwest
1 of 22

East (trackside) facade, facing west
2 of 22

South elevation, facing northeast
3 of 22

South elevation (detail), facing north
4 of 22

South elevation (detail), facing northwest
5 of 22

West elevation, facing east
6 of 22

North elevation, facing southwest
7 of 22

Office (former white waiting room), facing southeast
8 of 22

Office (former white waiting room), facing west
9 of 22

Office (former black waiting room), facing north
10 of 22

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number PHOTOS Page 13

Union City Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot, Obion Co., TN

Office (former black waiting room), facing northwest
11 of 22

Storage (former office and ticket booth), facing east
12 of 22

Storage (former office and ticket booth), facing southwest
13 of 22

Utility room (exhibits original wood paneling), facing west
14 of 22

Meeting room (former baggage room), facing north
15 of 22

Office (former white waiting room), facing northwest
16 of 22

Storage (former office and ticket booth), facing east
17 of 22

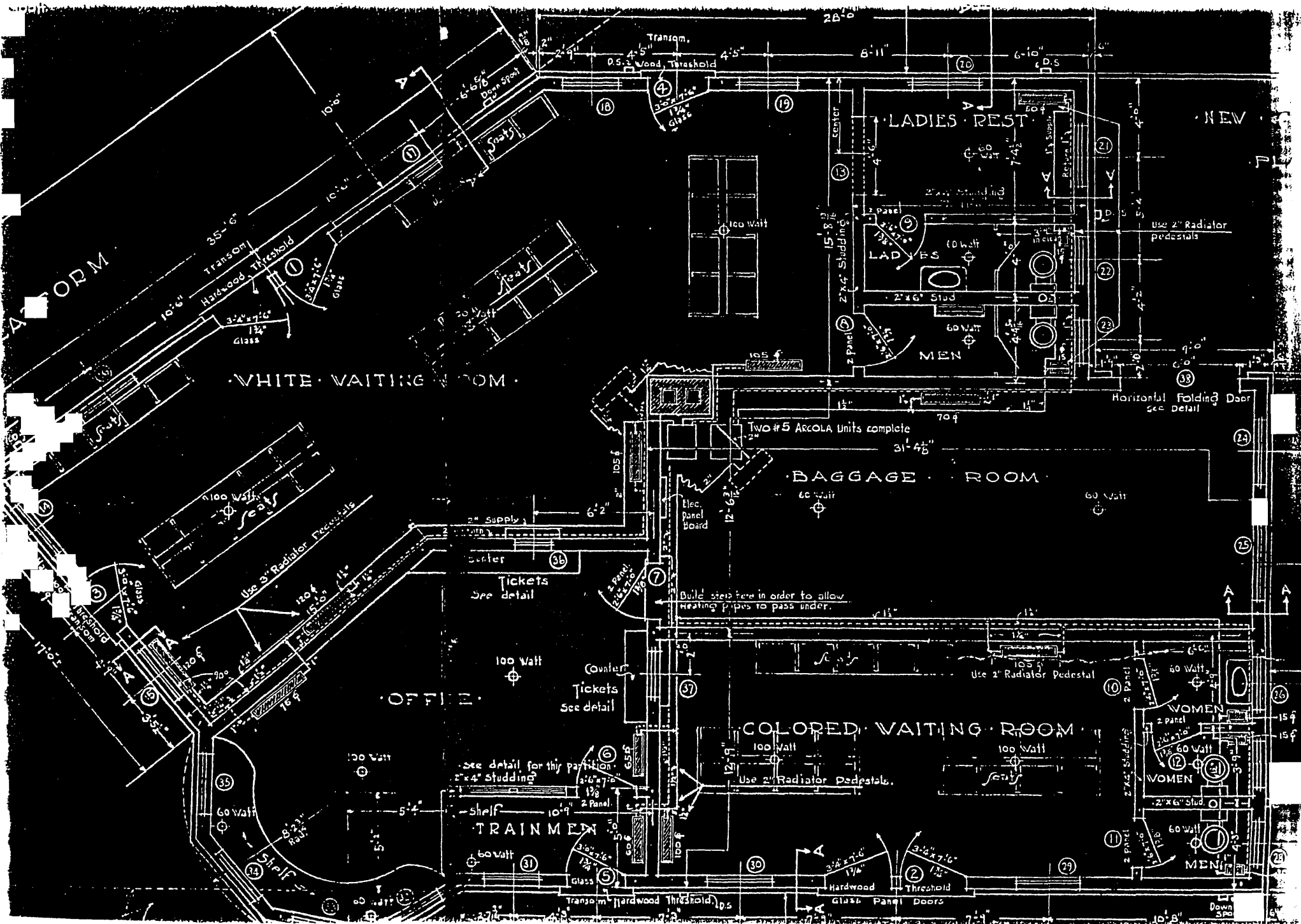
Ticket booth from office to white waiting room, facing south
18 of 22

Storage (former trainmen room), facing east
19 of 22

Office (former black waiting room), facing south
20 of 22

Scales, baggage room, facing east
21 of 22

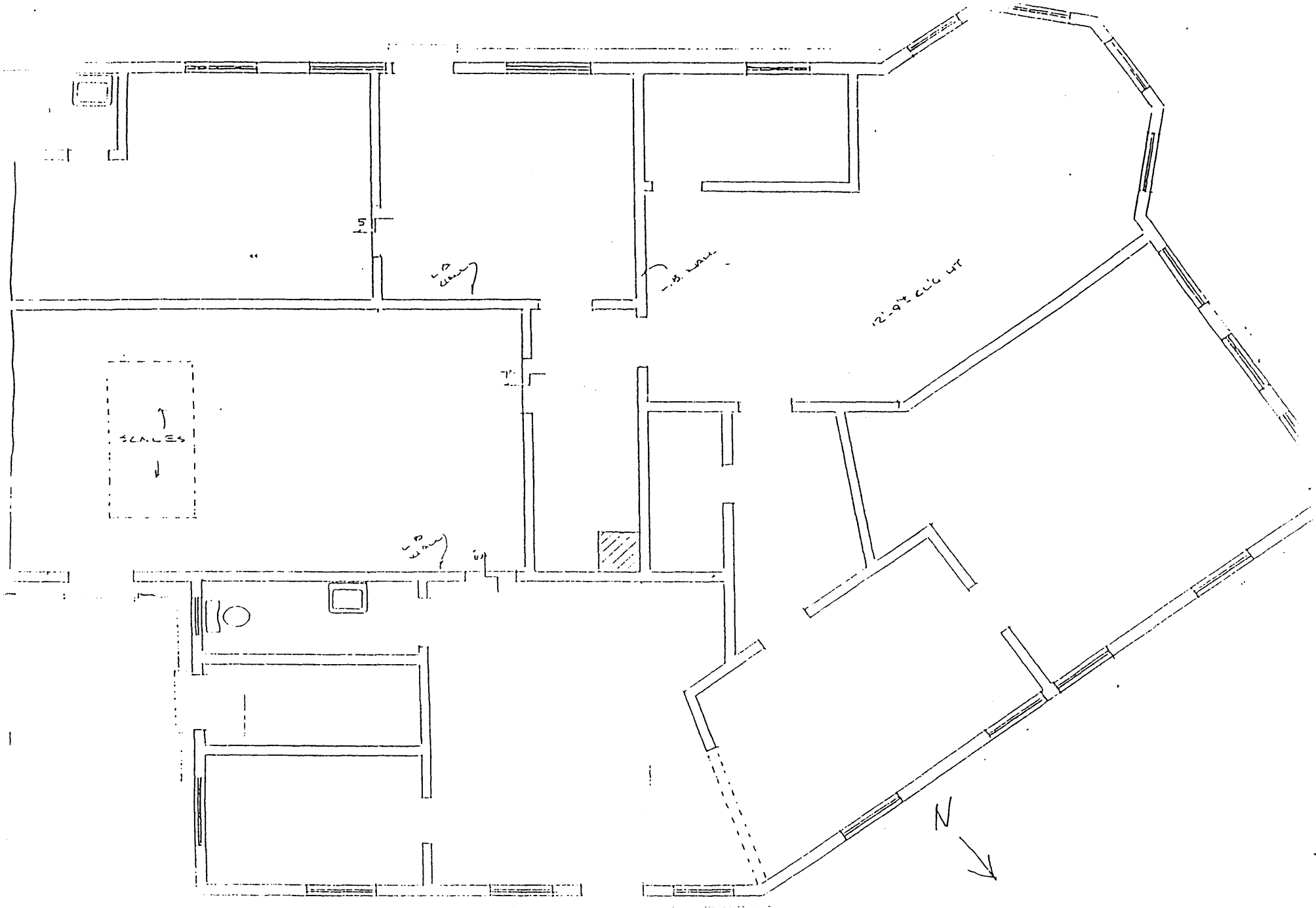
White restroom, facing south
22 of 22



Union City Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot, Obion Co., TN

ORIGINAL FLOOR PLAN





LAYOUT OF INTERIOR OF BUILDING TODAY

Union City Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot, Obion Co., TN

