

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

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JUL 23 1990

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions **NATIONAL REGISTER** *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Wabash Combination Depot--Shenandoah  
other names/site number Shenandoah Wabash Depot

2. Location

street & number Ferguson Road & Burlington Northern Tracks  not for publication  
city, town Shenandoah  vicinity  
state IOWA code 019 county Page code 145 zip code 51601

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
The Advent & Development of Railroads in Iowa 1855-1940

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.  See continuation sheet.

[Signature] 7/18/90  
Signature of certifying official Date  
Bureau of Historic Preservation  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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:)

Beth Boland 9/6/90  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
Transportation/Rail-Related

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---

---

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
Vacant/Not in Use

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Stick Style

---

Queen Anne

---

---

foundation Concrete

---

walls Wood Shingle

---

Clapboard

---

roof Asphalt

---

other Board and Batten

---

---

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

See Continuation Sheet, Attached.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

1903  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

1903  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

None.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

None.  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder

Wabash Railroad  
Unknown.  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See Continuation Sheet, Attached.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Bryant, Ray L. A Preliminary Guide to Iowa Railroads 1850-1972. Bryant, 1984.  
Corbin, Bernard G. Across Iowa on the Keokuk & Western and the Humeston & Shenandoah Railroads. Red Oak: Corbin Publications, 1984.  
Divine, Robert A. et al. America, Past and Present. Glenview: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1984.  
Donovan, Frank P., Jr. "The Wabash in Iowa." Palimpsest, October 1964, pp. 369-401.  
Drake, George C., Jr. "Wabash Depots." the Banner, A Quarterly Publication of the Wabash Railroad Historical Society, Winter 1984.

See continuation sheet

**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

Specify repository:  
Iowa Site Inventory

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property Less than one acre.

**UTM References**

A 

15	299950	4515960
Zone	Easting	Northing

B 

Zone	Easting	Northing

C 

Zone	Easting	Northing

D 

Zone	Easting	Northing

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The precise verbal boundary is a rectangle measuring 108'2" running northeast-southwest and 45'5" running northwest-southeast, centered on the subject building. The rectangle allows for an extension of ten feet on each side of the structure.

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

This nomination includes only the above-mentioned depot. It excludes all adjacent trackage and any other structures.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Tracy Ann Cunning with Nicholas L. Pitsch and Rebecca Conard  
organization PHR Associates date 1 December 1989  
street & number 725 Garden Street telephone 805-965-2357  
city or town Santa Barbara state California zip code 93101

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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The Wabash Combination Depot is located in the north central section of Shenandoah, in Sportsman's Park. It lies just north of the intersection of Ferguson Street and the Burlington Northern railroad line. The building was aligned along the tracks in order to recreate an historically accurate setting. This site is only a short distance from its original location at the corner of Wabash Avenue and North Center Street or Iowa Highway 48.

The depot is a standard Wabash combination depot. Built in 1903, it is a one-story, rectangular building of frame construction. It measures 88'2" wide by 20'5" deep, or 6x2 bays. Known as an "island" depot, the building was designed to accommodate tracks along both front and rear elevations. The rear track was a siding used for loading and unloading freight. Main line rails were along the front elevation. The depot originally rested on timber piles, but a more stable concrete block foundation supports the depot in its new location.

The depot displays elements of both the Stick and Queen Anne styles. In keeping with those architectural styles, the walls are clad with an assortment of sidings. A band of vertical weatherboarding under the window sills is separated by a strip of molding from a wide band of board-and-batten siding on the main wall surface. Directly underneath each window is a small panel of horizontal, false-bead tongue-in-groove siding. From the tops of the windows to the bedmold is a band of drop siding, except for a central panel on the gable ends. This panel is filled with alternating rows of sawtooth and scalloped wood shingles, with a very faded wood station sign in the middle. Each gable peak has a Queen Anne window (ten panes of glass around one central pane) surrounded by more alternating rows of sawtooth and scalloped shingling.

The depot roof is gabled, and has wide, overhanging eaves supported by turned (spindled) angle braces. The roof is covered with rolled asphalt. Two brick interior chimneys pierce the rear roof slope, and indicate that stoves were located in the ticket office and in the freight room.

Cross-gabled bay windows on trackside and rear elevations mirror each other. The trackside, or front bay, is angled with windows on each of its three sides. It measures 14'3" wide by 3' deep. A seven-light, transom-like window is set in a wood-shingled panel on the front elevation. Above this panel vertical, false-bead tongue-in-groove siding lines the gable peak behind the remnants of a spindled gable screen. The west bay window is rectangular and is only 2' deep. On the rear elevation one central window is flanked by two smaller, square windows. This bay too has a transom window, but is wood-shingled all the way to the gable peak.

Windows and doors on the depot have all been boarded over, except for the entry just north of the front bay window. Original fenestration was 2/2 double-hung wood sash.

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Doors to the waiting rooms flanked the front bay window and had two-light transoms above. Freight doors on the rear and north end elevations have been infilled with board-and-batten siding; transom windows above them have been covered with plywood. The freight door on the front elevation was originally much narrower as indicated by the five-light transom window above it. The freight door itself is a wide, four-panel, interior sliding door with panels of diagonal, false-bead tongue-in-groove siding; the right and left-side panels mirror each other. The boards dividing the panels have chamfered edges.

The floor plan of the depot consists of a women's waiting room at the south end, the ticket office (with the bay windows) to the north of that, and a men's waiting room north of the ticket office. The freight room comprises the long north end of the building. The interior of the depot has diagonal, false-bead tongue-in-groove walls and ceilings, except in freight room, which has plain weatherboard walls and ceiling. Doors and windows have molded surrounds with bullseye corner blocks. Floors in the ticket office and waiting rooms are varnished hardwood, while those in the freight room are plank. The train order signal mechanism over the dispatcher's desk in the front bay window is still operable. Cupboards, shelves and ticket window in the ticket office are also intact.

The Wabash Combination Depot in Shenandoah is one of the larger standard plan Wabash depots. It is amazingly unaltered on both the exterior and interior. The only changes to the exterior appear to be the replacement of the original timber freight platform, and the filling in of the rear and north end freight doors. Since both freight doors were infilled with board-and-batten siding the visual effect of the alteration is not so jarring. Nearly all doors and windows are covered with plywood, but the original glass appears intact, except where slightly vandalized. The only real change to the depot interior has been the c. 1935-1940 addition of a toilet and sink in the small closet created by the rear bay window. No dates are known for any of the other alterations.

This depot has been purchased from the Iowa Southern Railway by the Wabash Trace Nature Trail, an organization acquiring some of the old Wabash right-of-way in Iowa. As a condition of sale ISR required the group to move the building to another site prior to transfer of title. The Wabash Trace has relocated it along the Burlington Northern tracks in Sportsman's Park in Shenandoah. This site was selected to preserve the depot's historic orientation to the rails.

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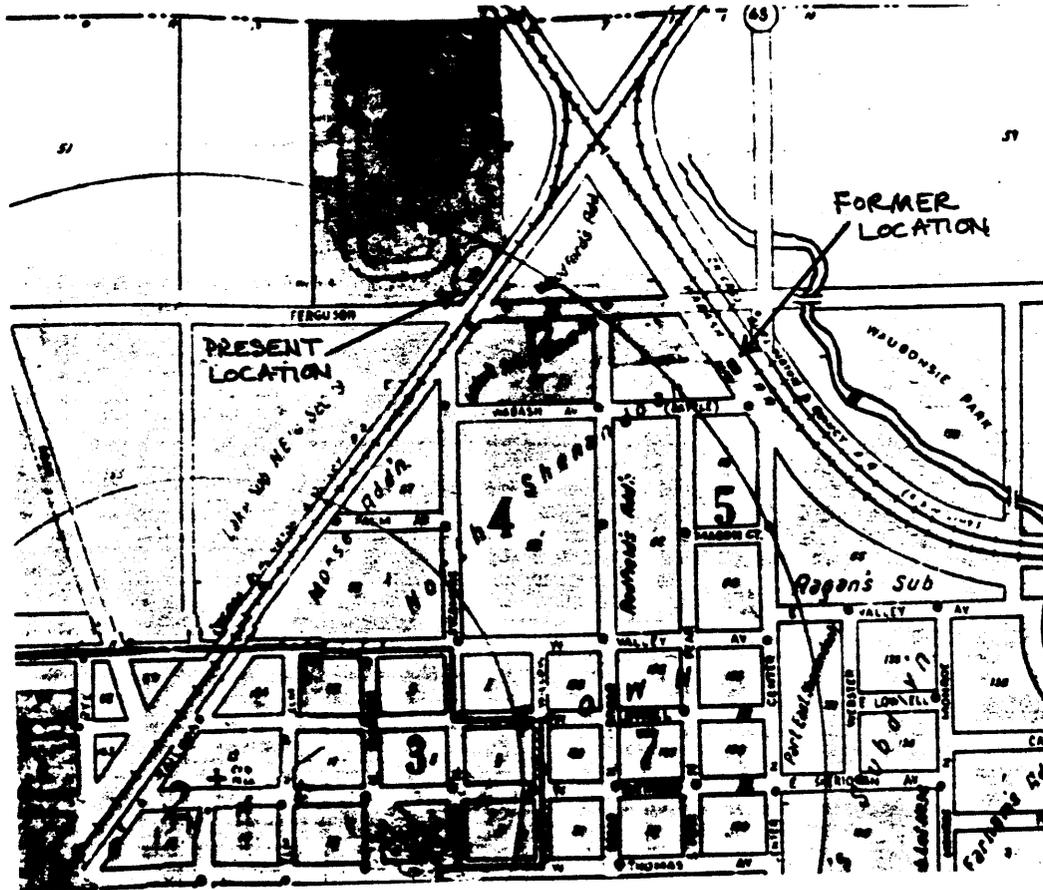
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Wabash Combination Depot--Shenandoah  
Ferguson St. and the Burlington Northern Tracks  
Sportsman's Park

From the 1927 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (Updated 1949)  
Showing the Present and Former Locations of the Depot



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### **INTRODUCTION:**

The Wabash Combination Depot in Shenandoah is significant under Criterion C as one of three remaining standard plan, wooden Wabash depots in Iowa. Two others are in Moravia and Moulton, in Appanoose County. Virtually unaltered on the exterior and interior, this depot also represents the typical mid-American small town railroad station built during the peak railroad years (The Advent and Development of Railroads in Iowa 1855-1940, "The Golden Age of Steam Railroading: c. 1890-c. 1920" and "Railroads and Architectural Standardization, Three Generations: 1855-1940").

### **BACKGROUND:**

To understand the significance of the Wabash Depot in Shenandoah as a classic standard plan depot, a closer examination of Jay Gould and the Wabash railway is necessary. Gould was a greedy, shrewd speculator, adept at seizing railroad companies and draining them in order to acquire others at incredible profits. Throughout the 1870s and early 1880s he coveted the territory that the Chicago Burlington & Quincy and the Chicago Rock Island & Pacific established in southern Iowa and northern Missouri. He was determined to control more of the rich transcontinental and local business that passed through the Missouri Valley area, and would stop at nothing to gain access to the Union Pacific (which he also controlled) at Omaha for his eastern roads. Gould tried several times to break into the Omaha (or Iowa) Pool which monopolized transcontinental traffic through Iowa, and when the Pool refused admittance, he decided to force the Wabash into Omaha-Council Bluffs by simply building a railroad there (MPD, "Early Railroad History: 1855-1889" and "Consolidation in the Railroad Industry: 1870-1900").

To this end Gould helped organize the Council Bluffs & St. Louis Railway. The company began construction at Pattonsburg, Missouri in late 1878, and the line opened to traffic in October 1879. Shenandoah became a major coaling, watering, and perhaps a crew change station on the CBSL by virtue of its location near the line's halfway point (N. L. Pitsch, interview). In 1879 the company was also leased to the St. Louis Kansas City & Northern, and in November the SLKCN became part of the Wabash St. Louis & Pacific Railway (Bryant, "Corporate Histories--Iowa Companies"). With this move and other consolidations, Gould created a patchwork line connecting Chicago to the Missouri River, challenging the CBQ and RI domination of traffic in the corridor.

By invading CBQ territory, the Wabash nearly precipitated a construction war in southern Iowa. In 1880 the CBQ acquired a small railroad in northern Missouri and southern Iowa to provide itself with an alternate route to Council Bluffs and to reinforce its position in the area. Gould responded by declaring he would extend another of his railroads, the Missouri, Iowa and Nebraska which ran from Keokuk to

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Humeston, through the heart of CBQ territory to the Missouri River (Overton, p. 171-172). Traffic on this line would continue on to Council Bluffs from Shenandoah via the new St. Louis-Council Bluffs route.

Each rail company threatened to invade the territory of the other in a series of flanking maneuvers. In order to avoid a costly construction war, the CBQ suggested a jointly built, owned and operated line between Humeston and Shenandoah. A truce was declared in October 1880, and a new railroad, the Humeston & Shenandoah was constructed. (The CBQ acquired the HS, and used the its depot as a freight house in later years; the structure no longer stands.) Additionally, the CBQ allowed the Wabash a few shortline branches in southern Iowa (Overton, p. 172). This was a clear victory for Gould, but he did not stop there. In 1889-1890, the Wabash-backed Moulton Albia & Des Moines completed a line connecting St. Louis to Des Moines, passing through the heart of the CBQ and Rock Island territory (Bryant, "Corporate Histories--Iowa Companies"). The Wabash depots in Moulton and Moravia were erected along this line.

### **THE TYPICAL STANDARD PLAN DEPOT:**

Partly because of Gould-induced construction in southern Iowa, an astonishing number of miles of track was laid in the state during the 1870s and 1880s (Bryant, "Iowa Rail Mileage, 1850-1972"). It was an era of feverish expansion and vicious competition between railroad companies, which included the construction of many depots. Since construction costs were high, railroad engineering departments drew up a set of uniform plans for small town depots in order to reduce company budgets. The Wabash system developed its own distinctive line of depots, despite the fact that before 1900 its numerous divisions operated like separate railroads (Grant & Bohi, p. 48).

Indeed, the standard depot design employed by the Wabash railway emerged as the "'typical' single-story combination station in mid-America" in the last quarter of the 19th century (Grant and Bohi, p. 52). The company adopted a utilitarian, one-story, frame depot with a gabled roof and wide, overhanging eaves. An angled trackside bay window with a cross-gabled roof, and a variety of inexpensive, applied woodwork also became trademarks. The railroad erected a series of depots essentially of the same design along its line, but by alternating the decorative elements (e.g., spindled brackets, gable screens and textured wall surfaces) managed to make each station look different.

This depot plan was attractive, flexible and repeatable, and the idea was copied by several other railroads, who substituted their own distinctive characteristics. Naturally, depots most similar to the Wabash type appear along railroads that were once part of the Gould empire, i.e., the Erie, the Missouri Pacific, and the Union Pacific

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(Grant and Bohi, p. 52). Local residents throughout the Midwest were undoubtedly pleased to have such highly decorated gateways to their communities.

The Shenandoah station is a classic example of the standard Wabash depot. It replaced an earlier wooden combination station in 1903; perhaps traffic through Shenandoah overwhelmed the older structure or perhaps it burned. This depot is no less a standard plan structure than its predecessor, which was built during the era of greatest railroad construction in Iowa. Despite the prosperity of the period 1890-1920 for railroads, the Wabash never outgrew its need for standard plan depots, and erected them even into the late 1910s (Grant & Bohi, p. 51). After the 1890s the railroad began eliminating separate men's and women's waiting rooms from its plans, "largely as a cost-cutting measure" (Grant & Bohi, p. 48). The Shenandoah depot is unusual in that it post-dates 1890 and has two waiting rooms. Its basic form, a variety of wall sidings, spindled brackets and gable screen, and a multi-paned Queen Anne window all combine to identify this depot as unmistakably Wabash. The Wabash depots in Moravia and Moulton resemble the Shenandoah Wabash depot, especially Moravia, although both are smaller than the Shenandoah structure.

### CONCLUSION:

The Wabash railway increased its trackage in Iowa to over 500 miles during the Gould years, but compared to the 1,000 to 2,000 miles held by companies like the CBQ, the RI and the Chicago & North Western, the Wabash was a minor player in Iowa. By the 1960s, little more than 200 miles of Wabash rails existed, and today the figure is nearer 100 miles (Donovan, p. 370). Given that the Wabash was never a major railroad in Iowa, and that so much of its trackage has been abandoned, it is surprising that three of its depots are still extant.

The depot is the last visible remains of the Wabash presence in Shenandoah, once a major stop on the line, and it is one of the few lingering standard Wabash depots in the state. Each of these depots has been moved, and the Moulton depot has been restored. Unlike the Moulton and Moravia stations, however, the Shenandoah depot is situated in a park along a railroad, preserving its historic orientation to the tracks. (See "Integrity Considerations" for depots in Section F of the MPD.) The Wabash Trace plans to restore it and headquarter their organization in the building. It has undergone no substantial alterations, and as a standard Wabash depot, the Shenandoah depot exemplifies a larger variation of the typical small town depot built during the Wabash railroad's prime in Iowa.