

PH0663077

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED FEB 15 1978  
DATE ENTERED AUG 3 1978

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC  
South Milwaukee Passenger Station, Chicago and Northwestern Railroad  
AND/OR COMMON  
South Milwaukee Depot

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER  
Milwaukee Avenue  
CITY, TOWN  
South Milwaukee  
STATE  
Wisconsin  
VICINITY OF  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
Fourth  
COUNTY  
Milwaukee  
CODE  
079

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME  
Eugene P. Berg, Chairman and President, Bucyrus-Erie Company  
STREET & NUMBER  
1100 Milwaukee Avenue  
CITY, TOWN  
South Milwaukee  
STATE  
Wisconsin  
VICINITY OF  
53172

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
Milwaukee County Courthouse  
STREET & NUMBER  
901 North Ninth Street  
CITY, TOWN  
Milwaukee  
STATE  
Wisconsin  
53233

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE  
Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places  
DATE  
1977  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
State Historical Society of Wisconsin  
CITY, TOWN  
Madison  
STATE  
Wisconsin  
53706

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input 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		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Open house for the South Milwaukee depot was held on December 27, 1893. The South Milwaukee depot was built of red brick with Lake Superior brownstone voussoirs and sills on large, arched openings. The main section was sheltered by a short parapet-gabled roof perpendicular to the tracks, projecting from which were two long gabled wings. Under the central gable was a ticket office marked by a one-story frame bay decorated with scroll work on its pilasters and projecting from a large arched opening. The other end of the central gable featured a group of three arched attic windows in the manner of Richardson, under which was a brick bay. Large, arched entrances were placed symmetrically on both sides of the wings. To the north a sheltering porch roof extended the vertical roof line of the main section. To the south extended a long, low, hipped roof covering the freight office and connecting it to the main block over a wide-arched porch. All eaves were decorated with simple brackets and exposed beam ends. Two weather vanes in the form of locomotives crowned the ends of the main section.

The main section contained the ladies' waiting room, train dispatcher's office and gents' waiting room. The ladies' waiting room, in addition to the usual wooden settees, had several rockers for the use of mothers with young children. The interior of the main section was finished in crushed strawberry stucco above the wainscoting. It was lit by new-fangled electric chandeliers with back-up gas fixtures. To the south was a separate section containing two large rooms for baggage, express, and storage.

The triangular lot around the depot was known as "Depot Park" and was graced by landscaped grounds and a large fountain near Milwaukee Avenue. To the east of the depot stood the 1885 frame depot, which was razed in 1942.

In November of 1947, station agent Edwin Myers complained of conditions at the depot. The furniture and fixtures were the original ones. Myers requested more space for storage, records and rest rooms, an improved waiting room and heating system. He also suggested that the park was little more than a resort for bums. Myers' recommendations led the railroad to renovate the depot to its present appearance. The widely-arched porch area was bricked in along with several doorways. Much of the glazing in the large arched was replaced by plywood. The interior was altered, too, but the wainscoting and one bench were retained. The park was converted to parking.

The depot has been a central landmark in the business district along Milwaukee Avenue since it was built. Composed mostly of two-story commercial buildings, the business area has somewhat deteriorated along with the depot.

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Owner ✓

Chicago & Northwestern Transportation Company  
c/o K. A. Leiser, Real Estate Representative  
Eastern Region  
400 West Madison Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60606

# 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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES      1893<sup>1</sup>                                      BUILDER/ARCHITECT      Charles Sumner Frost<sup>2</sup>

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The South Milwaukee depot is significant primarily as a major landmark in the community of South Milwaukee, which owes its prosperity to the railroad and which, at its "boom" period, elected to build a fine station to symbolize its new-found growth and prosperity. The depot was for many years the beehive of activity, both for passengers and freight traffic. Now, it is one of very few buildings remaining from South Milwaukee's boom years.<sup>3</sup>

The depot is also significant as the work of a regionally important architect, Charles Sumner Frost, who specialized in railroad stations.<sup>4</sup>

### Architecture

Born in 1856 in Maine, Charles Sumner Frost studied architecture at MIT and then worked for several Boston firms, notably Peabody and Stearns. After moving to Chicago, Frost worked in partnership with Henry Ives Cobb from 1882 to 1889. Then he practiced alone until 1898 when he became a partner with Alfred A. Granger.

In 1885 Frost married Mary Hughitt, daughter of Marvin Hughitt, president of two major midwestern railroads. This liaison no doubt contributed to Frost's receipt of many commissions for railroad depots and offices and to his special studies of railroad design. Among the many railroad designs executed by Frost and his partners were the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad Company offices, the La Salle St. Station and the Northwestern Terminal in Chicago, Union Stations in Omaha and St. Paul, and the Northwestern Depot of Milwaukee.

Smaller stations in Wisconsin designed by Frost which are still in existence include depots at Lake Geneva, Oconomowoc, Wausau, Ashland, Fond du Lac, Superior, and Eau Claire. In regard to small depot design Frost said:

The design for small stations is very similar; each requires two waiting rooms, one ticket office, and a baggage-room, but so simple a problem, if considered rightly, has many points important both to the company and the travelling public . . . . Architecturally, the building should express its purpose and when possible, also give some hint as to the character of the town or city it serves. Above all things, as it is intended for a waiting place, the shelter feature must be strongly developed. The wall and piers should be massive, even out of proportion to the load they carry, in order not

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY about .5 acre  
 UTM REFERENCES

A 

1	6
ZONE	EASTING

4	2	9	5	5	0
EASTING	NORTHING				

4	7	5	0	9	5	0
EASTING	NORTHING					

B 

ZONE	EASTING

EASTING	NORTHING		

### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property consists of a triangular piece of land bounded on the north by Milwaukee Avenue, on the east by Eleventh Street, and on the west by the railroad tracks.

Starting at the intersection of Milwaukee and Eleventh, proceeding south to the intersection of Eleventh and the railroad tracks, thence northnorthwesterly to the intersection of the railroad tracks and Milwaukee Avenue.

### LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Katherine E. Hundt, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

December 30, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

816 State Street

TELEPHONE

608/262-2970

CITY OR TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53706

## 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

*Richard Remy*

TITLE

Director  
 State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

1/21/78

### FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Katherine E. Hundt*

DATE

8/3/78

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

*Charles Remy*

DATE

8.1.78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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to be damaged by the vibration and jar caused by passing trains. The roof is, after all, the chief feature, and on its handling and material depend much of the failure of success of the design. . . 5

All of Frost's Wisconsin depots reflect his design philosophy and the philosophy of Late Victorian picturesque design: as is usual in depot design the ticket office is centralized and marked on the exterior by a tower and/or bay; most of the depots contain a central waiting room section with baggage rooms separated from it by an arched porch area; all feature long, dominating roofs supported by brackets, and platforms sheltered by long roofs which extend the horizontal line of the buildings. Although similar in plan, each depot was built of materials and designed in a style suitable for the particular community it served. In the case of South Milwaukee, red brick trimmed with brownstone and a mixture of Queen Anne-Romanesque details in a quiet, nearly symmetrical design appropriately convey the character of a suburban industrial and residential town desirous of expressing its new-found prosperity.

Because of his intensive study of railroad design, Frost's depots, including the South Milwaukee depot, are some of the finest in Wisconsin. Unfortunately, the South Milwaukee depot is among those in the most desperate state of disrepair.

### History

The railroad came to South Milwaukee in 1855 when the railroad lines between Milwaukee and Chicago were completed. At first the depot at South Milwaukee was merely a platform at Luther Rawson's crossing west of Tenth and Rawson Avenues, a site now occupied by Bucyrus-Erie. This platform was moved to the present depot site and a small wooden depot was built on the west side of the tracks in the winter of 1864-1865.

It was at this small frame station that people gathered to welcome home the Civil War soldiers. In 1885, a new and larger passenger depot was built of wood. The old building was moved to the south and used as a freight and express office.

In 1891, Fred W. Rogers, Wm. Williams, Fred Mansfield, and George Van Norman organized the South Milwaukee Company with a view to the development of the area into a permanent manufacturing and residential community. Ads were placed in various realty magazines extolling the virtues of the proposed town of South Milwaukee. One, the Realty and Building Record, Vol. 12, No. 1, dated May 23, 1891, says, "the facilities for conveniently reaching the place could not be excelled. The Chicago division of the C&NWRR with from 15-20 trains a

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day passes directly through the property and the survey of a new line, understood to be that of the Wisconsin Central crossed the tract between the Northwestern and the lake shore."

A small booklet, "South Milwaukee Penned and Brushed," published in 1893 states, "the spirit of encouragement with which the C&NWRR greeted the establishment of a new town on their line was of much importance in hastening the upbuilding of the town. The company took a most active interest in the new enterprise and promptly put in ample side tracks to all factory sites, thus making transportation facilities complete for all."

Because of this and because of the natural lake harbor to the east, enterprising capitalists were easily interested in the townsite.

The developers offered to the Bucyrus Steam Shovel Company of Bucyrus, Ohio, 15 acres of land and \$50,000 towards construction of a factory. The land was to include an 8-acre plant site adjacent to the C&NWRR tracks, 5 acres of building lots and 2 acres of dock area on Lake Michigan, the last to be connected to the factory by a belt line railway. A contract on file in Bucyrus-Erie archives states that the Bucyrus Company was to have perpetual rights of free transportation of men and materials over the beltline.

By 1892 there were located at South Milwaukee the Bucyrus Company, Hatch Cutlery Works, Schutz Bros. Furniture, Eagle Horseshoe factory and the Adamant Paint factory, among others. On January 1, 1893, there were 199 houses and 53 business that included 5 hotels and boarding houses which housed people employed in the new factories and those at work on new buildings. There were 8-1/2 miles of streets and 17 miles of wooden sidewalks. The C&NWRR had also completed a spur from its main line near the station to the harbor one mile away. The census in August of 1892 was 517 persons, but by 1897 there were more than 1500 persons living in South Milwaukee.

Along with inducing new manufacturers to South Milwaukee, the men of the South Milwaukee Company knew that a new depot was needed to fill the expectations of the growing town. A site worth \$10,000 was donated by the company and the railroad would invest a like sum in building the new depot. The old depot was moved to the east. During February 1893, engineers J. E. Blunt, Lewis H. Evens, and assistant Mr. Slattery came to look over the ground for the new depot site.

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On June 17, 1893, the plat for the new depot was staked off and work was begun. The C&NWRR took formal possession of the finished depot on December 30, 1893.

The new depot served not only the manufacturers of the town but also offered many tours and excursions through the railroad. At times tickets were offered at reduced rates to persons traveling to points of interest. Delegations from the fire department traveled to state meets, leaving from the depot in cars "tastily and appropriately decorated." A "scoot" operated from Milwaukee to the south bringing workers to their jobs in South Milwaukee and down into Carrollville. Ladies of the town rode the "scoot" to visit friends.

On August 17, 1934, the depot saw a moment of glory as hundreds of people gathered there to glimpse President Franklin Roosevelt as his train slowed to a crawl.

During World War II, Bucyrus-Erie conducted a vigorous recruiting program including an experiment with the employment of a number of displaced persons. With the assistance of Bishop Dionesyze of Libertyville, Illinois, about 125 Yugoslavs and Serbians were brought into the South Milwaukee plant. Many of them stayed on and South Milwaukee now has a sizable Serbian and Armenian population for its size. Some of the oldtimers recall coming on the train and getting off at the depot -- their first sight of South Milwaukee.

Now, because of changing transportation patterns, the South Milwaukee Railroad depot has deteriorated and is facing abandonment. The South Milwaukee Historical Society is encouraging the preservation of the structure to restore its importance as a central point of interest in the community. In addition, it is hoped that the restoration of the depot will serve to spur the revitalization of the deteriorating business district near by.

1. South Milwaukee Journal, June 17, 1893.
2. Original plans in the collections of the Chicago and Northwestern Transportation Company.
3. Letter from South Milwaukee Historical Society to the Wisconsin Public Service Commission, March 24, 1977, and "City Backs Off on Depot Plan," South Milwaukee Voice Journal, July 7, 1977.
4. Henry and Elsie Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased), Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingalls, p. 224.
5. Architectural Reviewer, September, 1897, pp. 19-49.







ELEVENTH SO. MILWAUKEE AVE.

B-E Property

B-E Leased Property



DEPOT

175 OAKCREAK

Amtrak

A-2720

62

69

CHICAGO & NORTH WESTERN RY.  
WISCONSIN DIV. OFF. OF DIV. ENGR.

**LEASE MAP**

LOCATION SOUTH MILWAUKEE, WIS.  
TO ACCOMMODATE LEASE TO

BUCYRUS-ERIE COMPANY

771853

SCALE: 1"=100' DATE: SEPT. 23, 1968

ELEVENTH

11TH