

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *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 Illinois Central Combination Depot--Ackley
other names/site number Ackley Depot

2. Location

street & number N. of Railroad St., bet. State & Mitchell Streets not for publication
city, town Ackley vicinity
state IOWA code 019 county Hardin code 083 zip code 50601

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] 7/18/20
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:)
[Signature] 9/6/50
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation/Rail-Related

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/Not in Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th & Early 20th Century American
Movements; Prairie Style Influence
Tudor Revival Influence

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other Limestone

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

1926-1927

Significant Dates

1926

Cultural Affiliation

None.

Significant Person

None.

Architect/Builder

J. H. Schott, Illinois Central Railroad
Coomer & Small Construction Co., Sioux City

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

See Continuation Sheet, attached.

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

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

1	5
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4	9	4	7	2	0
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4	7	1	1	2	0	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The precise verbal boundary consists of a rectangle measuring 145' running northeast-southwest, and 60' northwest-southeast, which is centered on the subject building. This area allows for a 14'9" extension to the northwest and southeast sides of the building, and a 16' extension to the northeast and southwest ends of same. The area specified above contains a portion of the original brick and concrete platform.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

This nomination includes only the depot and a portion of the original platform surrounding the depot. Adjacent trackage, parking lot, and any other structures are excluded.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Tracy Ann Cunning, with assistance from J. Beranek, N. L. Pitsch, and R. Conard
 organization PHR Associates date 1 December 1989
 street & number 725 Garden telephone 805-965-2357
 city or town Santa Barbara state California zip code 93101

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The Illinois Central Combination Depot in Ackley is a substantial brick building exhibiting characteristics of the Prairie Style with a Tudor Revival influence. The depot was built in 1926 by the Coomer and Small Construction Company of Sioux City, and was designed by Illinois Central architect J. H. Schott. Estimated cost was \$25,000 (Railway Age, p. 443). The depot is a long, low, rectangular structure sited prominently one block away from the downtown commercial district. Known as a "island" depot, it lies between the main line tracks and a siding, and is surrounded by an open area. The building's nearest neighbors are a c. 1930 grain elevator and a c. 1915 creamery to the east and west, respectively. A parking lot behind Railroad Street stores spans its south elevation and farther away, a row of houses lines a hill directly to the north, across the tracks. Since the rails pass through Ackley on a northeast/southwest axis the depot actually faces north-northwest, but throughout this narrative "north," "south," etc., will be used when describing the elevations.

The Ackley combination depot is a one-story, 12x3-bay building with an off-center, rectangular trackside bay window. The building measures 115'6" wide by 28' deep. The foundation is concrete, and the building has no basement. The depot walls are solid brick: 5:1 American bond with a veneer of more highly vitrified dark brick. Architect's drawings specify a veneer of "Range No. 40 Face Brick" with chocolate brown mortar made by the Kalo Brick & Tile Company in Fort Dodge. The roof is hipped and covered with asphalt shingles. The bay window extends only up to the eaves; a gabled dormer is set into the roof above it. A similar dormer is set into the rear (south) roofslope although there is no projecting bay on that side. On top of the roof is a tall, brick chimney with a cast concrete cap.

The door and window configuration is complex because of the building's length. On the trackside elevation, the eastern "half" comprises five bays, with the following configuration: window-window-door-window-bay window. The windows are paired 3/1 double-hung wood sash. The western "half" comprises seven bays: door-baggage door-door-window-freight door-window-freight door. The first door west of the bay window is a narrow door, and opens into the trainmen's closet. The baggage door extends all the way to the ground and has a five-light transom window above, unlike the freight doors which are four feet above the ground and have windows above. The windows on this end are high, rectangular, three-light fixed windows. Doors throughout the building are one-light over three-panel wood doors, and have three-light transom windows above. Freight doors are X-braced with panels of vertical, false-bead tongue-in-groove siding underneath.

On the rear elevation, the eastern end mirrors the front elevation, except that the bay window section has a door flanked by two single windows rather than one set of paired windows. The western end has the following door and window configuration from east

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to west: single window-freight door-window-window-freight door-window-freight door. A Majestic coal door is also on this side below one of the small three-light windows. Freight doors, doors and windows are all as they are on the front.

The east end elevation is composed of all windows; two on the right are paired and one on the left is alone. The west end elevation consists of a single freight door flanked by two high, three-light windows. A timber platform under all the freight doors once wrapped around the west end and has been removed, revealing the bond of the brick walls.

The Prairie feeling that the Ackley depot projects is enhanced by several decorative features. A low concrete watertable is capped by a continuous soldier course around the building. At the window sill level a header course wraps around the building, except where it is interrupted by the cut stone sills under each window. Abutting the eaves another continuous soldier course forms a lintel for windows and doors. Each of these beltcourses emphasizes the long, horizontal aspect of the depot. Wide, overhanging eaves, although typical of railroad stations, further emphasize the Prairie influence in the depot. Tudor Revival features often accompanied the Prairie Style, and on this depot that feature is the half-timbering found in the two dormers.

The interior of the Ackley depot is as functional in organization as the exterior is clean in line. Larger than most combination stations, the depot contains a women's restroom, men's and women's toilet rooms, a janitor's sink, file room, trainmen's closet, baggage room, heater room, and coal room in addition to the general waiting room, ticket office and freight room. (See Continuation Sheet, attached.) Walls are plaster with wainscoting from floor to chair rail. Doors are five-panel wood with plain hardware. Door and window surrounds are simple with slightly molded caps on top. A picture molding separates the wall surface about eighteen inches above door and window openings. Floors are maple except in the toilet, coal and heater rooms, which had concrete floors. Of the furnishings only the desks, shelves and cupboards in the ticket office remain. The ticket window is intact.

The integrity of the depot is quite good. The original brick platform with its concrete curb still wraps around the north and east elevations of the building, and the iron wheel bumpers on all the corners are all present. Perhaps more significantly, the train order signal post still stands next to the bay window. Windows and most doors are covered with boards, but all glass and doors appear intact. The only major alteration to the depot has been the removal of the timber platform under the freight doors. Inside, neglect seems to have made the changes rather than the railroad. Paint and plaster are peeling, but no water damage is apparent. One door is open, and vandalism may soon become a problem. Due to its downtown location and sound condition, the possibilities for adaptive reuse of this simple yet attractive depot are great.

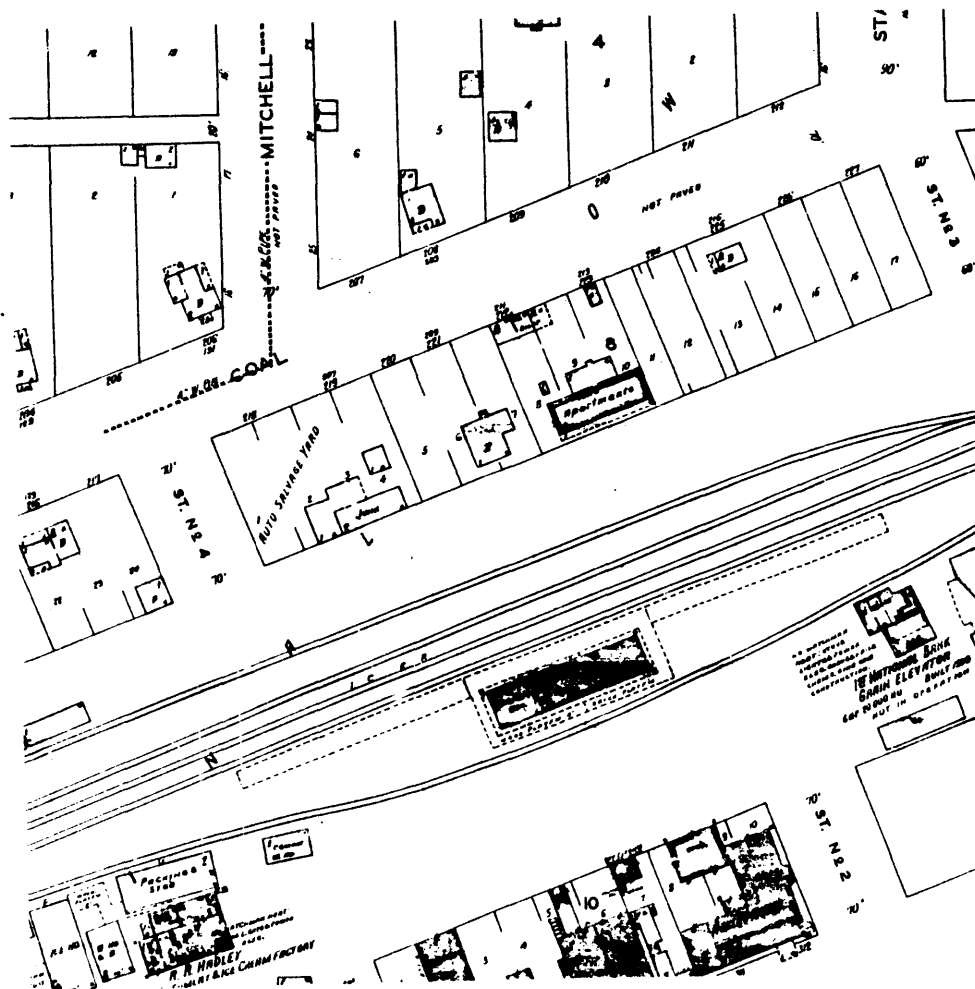
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Illinois Central Combination Depot--Ackley
N. of Railroad St., between State and Mitchell Streets
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1930



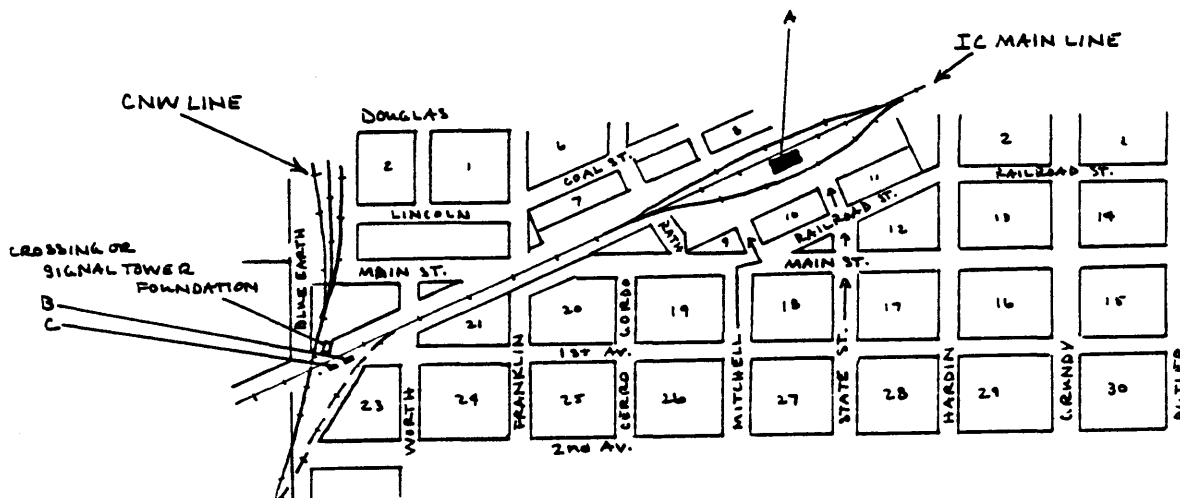
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Illinois Central Combination Depot--Ackley
N. of Railroad St., between State and Mitchell Sts.
Railroad Structures in Ackley
from Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1930



A= Depot

B= c. 1945 Toolhouse

C= c. 1912 Signal
Maintainer's House

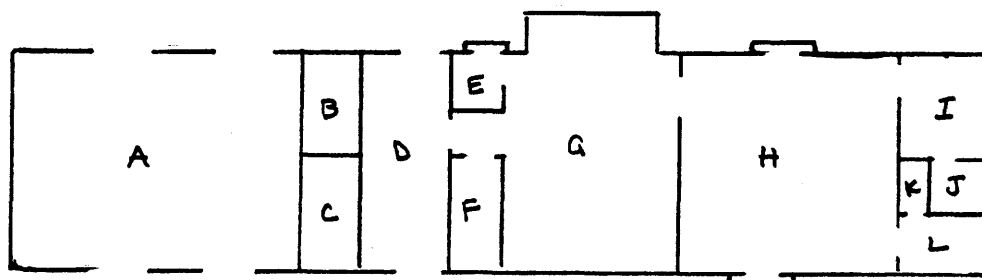
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Floor Plan for Illinois Central Combination Depot--Ackley



A = Freight Room
B = Heater Room
C = Coal Room
D = Baggage Room
E = Trainmen's Room

F = File Room
G = Ticket Office
H = Waiting Room
I = Women's Restroom
J = Women's Toilet
K = Janitor's Sink
L = Men's Toilet

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INTRODUCTION:

The Ackley depot is an example of a second generation depot that the Illinois Central Railroad began constructing in Iowa in the early 20th century (The Advent and Development of Railroads in Iowa 1855-1940, "The Golden Age of Steam Railroading: c. 1890-c. 1920;" "Efficiency, Improvement and Retrenchment: c. 1921-1940;" and "The Illinois Central, A Line Study: 1855-1940s"). The company replaced several of its depots between the 1890s and the 1920s, a period which roughly coincides with the golden age of steam railroading in Iowa. Replacing its original, wooden one- and two-story combination stations, the company erected brick depots with hipped roofs in the larger towns and cities along its main Iowa line. The Ackley depot was built in 1926-27, one of the last replacement stations the company designed before the Depression. As physical evidence of the Illinois Central's early 20th century improvement program, the Ackley combination station is significant under Criterion C.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE:

The Illinois Central Railroad's affiliate, the Dubuque & Pacific, surveyed its line to Sioux City through Hardin County in 1856. The company began construction from the Dubuque end in that year, but the Panic of 1857 halted progress. The town of Ackley had already been platted and people began settling there in anticipation of the building boom that would accompany the arrival of the railroad. By the end of the Civil War, the railroad changed its name to the Dubuque & Sioux City (a more realistic goal), resumed laying rails and reached Ackley on October 16, 1865. For two years Ackley was the end of the line on the DSC, for the company ran out of money and interest in continuing the line further.

In 1867, John I. Blair helped organize the Iowa Falls & Sioux City railroad to complete the line to Sioux City, which it reached in 1870. Both the DSC and IFSC were later leased to the Illinois Central, and the route from Dubuque to Sioux City, and points beyond, became the company's Iowa Division. In 1868 the Central Iowa Railroad laid rails from Eldora to Ackley, giving the people of Eldora access to an east-west road. This company later became the Iowa Central Railroad and with service by two railroads, Ackley developed into a bustling agricultural shipping center. Stock yards, lumber yards, warehouses and grain elevators ringed the IC depot in the middle of town. The Iowa Central depot on the western edge of town, being the latecomer, had fewer businesses around it.

Although the Illinois Central main line lay between Chicago to the Gulf of Mexico, the Iowa Division continued to generate business for the railroad. The period from 1890 to 1920 was the most profitable for the state's farmers and small industries, and shipping

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points like Ackley outgrew their older frame depots. Partly because of the economic health of the region traversed by the IC and partly because automobiles had not yet begun to steal railroad traffic, the Illinois Central enjoyed a stable financial position in the early 20th century. Throughout the 1910s and 1920s it upgraded passenger, freight, and shop facilities at many of its stations.

In 1925 the two-story wood combination depot in Ackley was sixty years old and probably in need of repair. The Iowa Central, which was absorbed into the Minneapolis & St. Louis railroad system in 1912, erected a new depot around 1910, and the Illinois Central may have felt it needed a new depot in Ackley in order to keep up with its cross-town rival. At any rate, since Ackley possessed a flour mill, two grain elevators, a cement factory, a pickling factory and several lumber yards and warehouses by this time, the business generated in Ackley justified the construction of a new station. Plans were drawn in 1926 by J. H. Schott, an IC architect, and after minor revisions the building contract was let to the Coomer and Small Construction Company of Sioux City. The railroad apparently no longer constructed its own stations.

Few of the Illinois Central depots constructed during this period were from standard plans. These replacement structures were similar in appearance because of the functional requirements of a railroad and because they were created by a single group of architects, but they were also unique. The railroad attempted to create space-efficient, yet pleasing, depots tailored to the peculiar needs of the community they were intended for.

The Ackley depot is strikingly similar to that of Marcus, in Cherokee County. The Marcus depot was built in 1917, and is slightly longer and narrower than the Ackley depot. The two have the same roof profiles (minus the dormers at Marcus), bay windows, windows, doors, and brick and stone trim. The architect for the Marcus depot is unknown, although Schott may have designed both Marcus and Ackley depots.

Of the two Ackley is in far better physical condition. Additionally, the Ackley depot is in a much better location for adaptive reuse; it is adjacent to the downtown commercial district of a more vibrant community. In all, the Ackley combination depot is a good example of an Illinois Central replacement station built during the prosperous years of steam railroading in Iowa, as well as an excellent candidate for restoration and reuse.

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Illinois Central Railroad Drawings A-3835 to A-3838, A-3918, A-4394, A-5931. July 20, 1917, by J. H. Schott.

Moir, Hon. William J., ed. Past and Present of Hardin County, Iowa. Indianapolis: B. F. Bowen & Co., 1911, pp. 169-173.

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