

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

RECEIVED JUL 23 1990

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).

1. Name of Property

historic name American Express Building--Carroll other names/site number Carroll Express Building

2. Location

street & number North West and West Fifth Streets not for publication city, town Carroll vicinity state Iowa code 19 county Carroll code 027 zip code 51401

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private (checked), public-local, public-State, public-Federal. Category of Property: building(s) (checked), district, site, structure, object. Number of Resources within Property: Contributing 1, Noncontributing 0 buildings, sites, structures, objects. Total 1.

Name of related multiple property listing: The Advent and 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 of certifying official: Bureau of Historic Preservation. Date: 7/18/90.

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 (checked), determined eligible for the National Register, determined not eligible for the National Register, removed from the National Register, other (explain:). Entered in the National Register. Signature of the Keeper: Helene J. Date of Action: 8/6/90.

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation/Rail-Related

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation/Rail-Related

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and Early 20th Century Revivals

Other: Utilitarian

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Limestone

walls Brick

Limestone

roof Asbestos

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

(See Continuation Sheet, attached.)

 See continuation sheet

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The American Express Building in Carroll was designed by Charles Sumner Frost of Chicago for the Chicago & North Western Railroad, and completed in 1896, the same year the depot and its attached baggage room to the west were finished. The express building imitates the style of the larger building, and is composed of the same materials, but is much less decorated than its counterpart. Since it is essentially a utilitarian structure it is simply ornamented, but because of its association with passenger traffic it has more style than the typical railroad yard building.

The express building is rectangular, four by two bays, and faces south. It measures 42'5" wide by 27'5" wide, has a limestone foundation, brick walls, and a hipped roof with asbestos shingles. A brick stove chimney pierces the east roofslope. Wide, overhanging eaves are supported by large angle braces which have stone bases. The building has a high water table of alternating wide and narrow limestone bands, and the masonry walls are laid in 5:1 American bond.

The building has three freight doors, two on the south or track side and one on the street side. A pass door with transom is in the right bay on the track side, and contains a modern wooden door with a single central light. Windows have four-over-two-light glazing. All original door and window surrounds are brick laid in a crenellated pattern and projecting slightly from the wall surface.

Due to a poor drainage system the building's limestone watertable is deteriorating, especially at the corners. Despite this and a few missing roof shingles, the express building appears to be in good condition. It is currently used by the C&North Western's Maintenance of Way Department for storage.

The east end of the building was originally the American Express Office, while the west end was the company's storage area. This area of the building has an unusual floor composed of large wooden timbers placed on end and set into the ground. This technique was probably designed to reduce damage to the floor; over the years it has been well-dented (Landtiser and Plunkett, p. 17).

The CNW has made few alterations to the express building since its construction, and the building's integrity is high. The left bay freight door on the south side was originally a pass door; the opening appears to have been widened in the 1950s or '60s. The freight door on the north side mirrored that in the center of the south side, but was widened at an unknown date. Other than the replacement of the original right bay pass door on the track side with a modern door, no other changes have been made to the building's exterior.

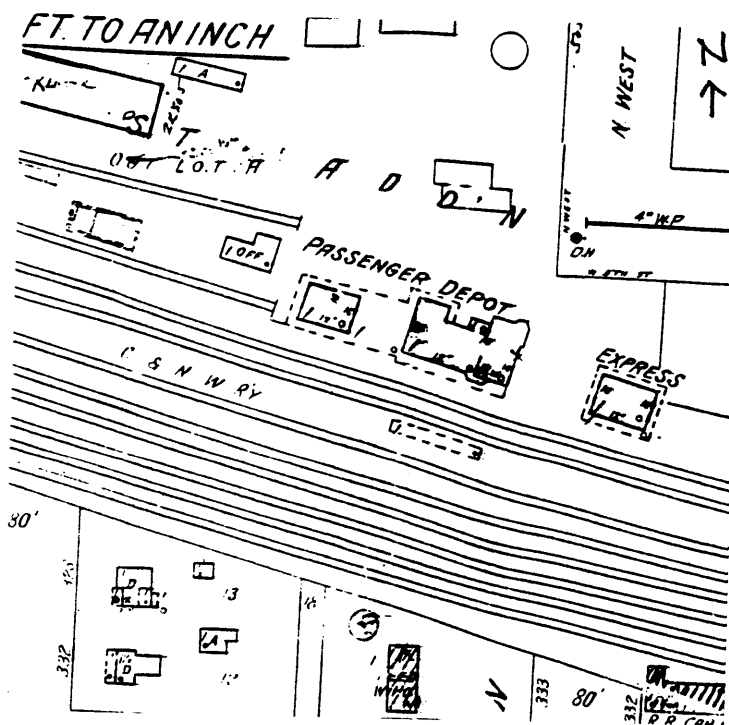
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American Express Building
North West and West Fifth Streets
Carroll, Iowa



Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, June 1935
Scale 100 feet to 1 inch

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

1896

Significant Dates

1896

Cultural Affiliation

None

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Charles Sumner Frost, Chicago
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

(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

Acreeage of property Less than one acre.

UTM References

A

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3	1	5	1	5	0
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4	6	5	8	5	1	5
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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 of the express building is a rectangle 90' west-northwest to east-southeast, and 55' east-northeast to west-southwest, and centered on the subject building. The rectangular area allows for an extension of ten feet from the edge of the eaves on the northeast, southeast, and southwest sides of the building, and an extension

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

This nomination includes only the American Express Building. It excludes adjacent trackage and all other buildings.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

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organization PHR Associates date 1 December 1989

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INTRODUCTION:

The American Express Building in Carroll is a good example of the functionally specific buildings that railroads began constructing in Iowa between the late 1880s and the early 1900s (The Advent and Development of Railroads in Iowa 1855-1940, "The Golden Age of Steam Railroading: c. 1890-c.1920"). Railroads expanded their lines at a dizzying rate in the late 1870s and 1880s, tapping fertile agricultural areas and encouraging settlement, especially in western Iowa. After the burst of construction, rail companies prospered from the traffic their lines generated. This period, c. 1890-1920, was the heyday for steam railroads in Iowa, when they replaced general purpose buildings with new structures to serve only particular functions. For instance, railroads replaced wooden combination depots with passenger stations, freight houses, baggage rooms and express buildings. The division of railroad functions into separate structures in Carroll illustrates the prosperity of the Chicago & North Western Railroad during this era. In this way the express building is significant under Criterion C, as a building type.

The American Express Building imitates several of the characteristics of the neighboring depot and baggage room, and was designed by the same architect, Charles S. Frost of Chicago. Like the depot and baggage room it exemplifies the close stylistic as well as economic ties between Chicago and Iowa (MPD, "Railroads and Architectural Standardization: Three Generations, 1855-1940"). The express building is therefore also significant under Criterion C as the work of a master.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE:

Following the completion of the Chicago & North Western Railroad's main line from Chicago to Council Bluffs in 1867, Carroll became a major shipping center for farmers in the area; businesses along the tracks in town generated even more revenue for the company (see also the nomination for the Carroll Passenger Depot and Baggage Room). After the railroad constructed two branch lines extending north and south from Carroll County between 1877 and 1880, the increased volume of traffic through Carroll dictated a separate building to house the express office, thus establishing the tradition of an express building in Carroll.

The express building is associated in several ways with the depot and attached baggage room across the street from it. Like the depot it is the third such building the North Western erected in Carroll. The first express office was a small wooden affair built between 1883 and 1888. The second express office, this time called the American Express building, accompanied the construction of the second North Western depot between 1888 and 1893; it was also a wooden building, but somewhat larger than its predecessor (Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1883-1898).

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The existing structure was built at the same time as the present Carroll depot in 1896. It was designed by the same architect, Charles Sumner Frost of Chicago, and matches its counterpart in materials and design, although the depot is more highly decorated and this building is rather utilitarian. The Charles Frost characteristics of the express building are: rusticated stonework, quoins, and crenellated door and window surrounds.

American Express was just one of several independent express companies operating during the golden age of steam railroading. Typically, the railroad company agreed to rent or lease facilities to the express company and to carry and service its cars for a certain price. The relationship between the two carriers was evidently good since railroads frequently incorporated express offices into their depot plans and even erected separate express facilities at their larger stops. The express company actually did the railroad a favor by handling small shipments, which were less cost efficient than large shipments for the railroad to handle. The railroad literature fails to mention anything of the relationship between the American Express Company and Iowa railroads, but field survey indicates that American Express was the major, if not the only, express company in Iowa until 1918, when the federal government mandated the national unification of express companies into the American Railway Express Agency (Hammell, p. 18-19.)

The express building is similar to the North Western's replacement depots in that it is an elaborate and commodious structure. Express facilities by no means require such stylish designs, but the North Western wanted to improve its corporate image, impress its customers and advertise to potential ones through attractive depots and related buildings (Parrott, p. 5-6). Together with the depot and attached baggage room, the Carroll express building represents this desire as well as the North Western's ability to afford it during the prosperity of the period. By virtue of its Frost origins, the American Express Building also reinforces Carroll's link to the railroad architecture of Chicago.

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Bach, Ira J.; and Susan Wolfson. A Guide to Chicago's Train Stations, Present and Past. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1986.

Bryant, Ray L. A Preliminary Guide to Iowa Railroads 1850-1972. Bryant, 1984.

Grant, H. Roger; and Charles W. Bohi. The Country Railroad Station in America. Sioux Falls, South Dakota: Center for Western Studies, Augustana College, 1988.

Hammell, Alfred L. Wm. Frederick Harnden (1813-1845), Founder of the Express Business in America. New York: Newcomen Society in North America, 1954.

Landtiser, Jeffrey G.; and Dan Plunkett. "Chicago and Northwestern Depot, Carroll, Iowa--An Architectural Study." Paper prepared for Architecture 406, Iowa State University, Department of Architecture, July 1987.

Maclean, Paul. History of Carroll County, Iowa, Volume I. Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1912.

Parrott, Charles. "An Architectural Study of the Chicago and North Western Railway Passenger Stations on the Iowa Division Designed by Charles S. Frost 1893-1919." Paper, Iowa State University, Department of Architecture, August 1971.

Pitsch, Nicholas L. Railroad Historian, Bellevue, Nebraska. Telephone Interview, 17 December 1989.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Carroll, Iowa, 1883-1935.

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Verbal Boundary Description (cont.):

of thirty feet on the northwest side of the eaves.