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1.1.

The old Santa Fe railroad depot at Ottawa, Kansas, is a well-maintained, large rectangular two story building facing west onto the tracks. /It is constructed of random ashlar masonry in the Vernacular style. The rough hewn stones give a rustic appearance to the structure. Red-painted, standing seam metal roofing covers the steeply pitched hip roof. Projecting gables occur at each end of the hip and are decoratively treated with a low arched recess the full width of the gable and a sunburst batten pattern. A stone chimney is placed in the east gable. Four small dormers emerge from the roof at the four corners. A broad flat-roofed porch surrounds the north, west and south sides of the building. The porch is supported by cast iron posts with ornamental corner brackets. Window openings for both floors are evenly spaced around the facades and are tall rectangles with double hung sash windows. A large single stone block spans the top of each window opening. The rough cut stone sills are generally one piece also and project slightly from the wall. The building rests on a base of massive smooth cut stones. All wood trim and metal work are painted black. Comparison of present and original photographs indicates that the exterior of the depot has not changed over the years. Some slight alterations have been made to the interior to adapt it for museum use.



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The old Santa Fe railroad depot at Ottawa was erected in 1888 for use as a passenger station and division offices by the Southern Kansas railroad, a Line which was being leased at the time by the Santa Fe railroad. Construction of the large two story stone structure began in April, 1888. Sone Pierson, a local stone mason, prepared and laid the stone which was quarried at Cambridge in south central Kansas. Original plans were to have the \$35,000 building completed by September 1, but work was not finished until January, 1889. The first floor housed the waiting rooms, ticket counter and freight facilities, and the second floor contained the division offices. Contemporary reports in local newspapers indicated that the railroad intended to add a hotel and Fred Harvey eating house to the depot in the future, but evidently these plans never materialized.

In 1899 the Southern Kansas railroad was purchased by the Santa Fe railroad, and the depot continued to serve Santa Fe passengers until 1962 when a new railway station was built. Members of the Franklin County Historical Society petitioned the railroad to donate the old building to their organization for use as a museum, and that was done on December 6, 1962. The building was officially dedicated as a museum and opened to the public July 4, 1963.

The old Santa Fe depot at Ottawa is the best remaining example of two story railroad depot architecture in Kansas. In addition to being an excellent example of Vernacular architecture, the depot is of local importance for its 75 years of service as a commercial and transportation facility in Ottawa.

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