

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received FEB 1 1977

date entered 2-1-77

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic N.C.O. Railway Depot

and/or common The Whistle Stop

2. Location

street & number Northeast corner of East and Third Streets N/A not for publication

city, town Alturas N/A vicinity of

state California code 06 county Modoc code 049

3. 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"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Clubhouse

4. Owner of Property

name Alturas Garden Club

street & number P.O. Box 118

city, town Alturas N/A vicinity of state California 96101

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder's Office, Modoc County Court House

street & number Modoc and Court Streets

city, town Alturas state California

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title California Inventory of
Historic Resources

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date March 1976 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Office of Historic Preservation, P.O. Box 2390

city, town Sacramento state California 95811

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved	date 1915
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The former NCO Railway passenger station is a stone block structure built in 1908; it is a late example of Queen Anne styling. The 1-1/2-story building has a bellcast roof with a minor cross-gable and slanted operator's bay on the track side; decorative patterned shingles fill the gable ends. In 1915, the building was disassembled, the stone blocks were numbered, and the building was reassembled at a new site, eight blocks closer to the center of town. Integrity has remained generally high since that time. The building now serves as a meeting place for the Alturas Garden Club and other community groups.

The station was constructed of native stone block in 1908. The plan is rectangular, with a projecting operator's bay on the track side (east). The 1-1/2-story building has a shingled bellcast roof with broad eaves supported on all four sides by open braces. Each gable end is enclosed by a pent roof below and a jerkin-head overhang supported by curved brackets; bands of decorative shingles in a variety of patterns fill the gable ends. The original round window in each end has been replaced by a rectangular sash window.

The east facade overlooks the tracks and is dominated by a centrally placed slanted operator's bay, surmounted by a small cross-gable filled with bands of patterned shingles; the original oculus remains. The operator's bay contains three windows and is flanked by the baggage room doorway on the north and the waiting room doorway and a window on the south. The western elevation faces East Street and has a doorway flanked by two windows; the former baggage room doorway on the north end has been filled with a large window. An eyebrow dormer is centrally placed in the roof. The ends of the building are dominated by the decorative treatment of the end gables with pent roofs, patterned shingles, and jerkin-head overhangs. In addition, the north end contains two small square windows on the first floor, while the south end has two centrally placed tall rectangular windows flanked by two smaller narrow windows. All original ground floor windows have shallow projecting stone lintels and sills.

The original location of the depot was Twelfth and Oak Streets near the railroad company's yards half a mile northwest of town. This location eventually proved to be too inconvenient, and the building was dismantled stone-by-stone, the blocks numbered, and the building reconstructed eight blocks closer to downtown in 1915. Its new site was very similar to the original, and the building maintained its historic orientation to the railroad tracks. It continued to operate as the NCO's local passenger depot until the end of passenger service on January 1, 1938.

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 type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1908, 1915 **Builder/Architect** Martin and Diamond, Contractors

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Alturas passenger station was built in 1908 by the Nevada-California-Oregon Railway (NCO) when Alturas was the narrow gauge railroad's northern terminus. This small Queen Anne station, constructed of stone blocks, is an excellent example of its type and period and is similar in design to many of the smaller East Coast railway stations of the late 19th century. The building was used as a depot until 1938 when passenger service was discontinued. It now serves as the clubhouse for the Alturas Garden Club.

Alturas, the county seat of Modoc County, is located in the remote northeastern corner of California. The arrival of the NCO narrow gauge railroad provided the area with greatly improved transportation and played a key role in the development of the county. Construction crews began building north from Reno late in 1880 but, due to numerous legal entanglements and construction stoppages, the railroad was not completed to Alturas until December 1, 1908. In 1917, the NCO Railway sold the southern portion of its line from Reno to Hackstaff (Herlong) to the Western Pacific. This required relocating the NCO's shops and offices from Reno to a new site on the surviving portion of the line; Alturas was chosen as the new headquarters. In 1926, the remainder of the NCO's lines were sold to Southern Pacific, which began the conversion to standard gauge the next year. For a short time, the Southern Pacific operated both a standard gauge and narrow gauge on the line but dropped the narrow gauge within a few years.

The NCO depot was completed shortly after the arrival of the railroad. The chief building material was locally quarried stone; the builders were Martin and Diamond, Contractors, of Reno. When the original out-of-town location proved too inconvenient, the building was disassembled and relocated eight blocks closer to town where it resumed its role as the railroad passenger station for Alturas for the next 23 years. The NCO was the principal means of public travel into and out of the remote northeastern corner of the state from 1908 to 1938, with daily service to Reno and Klamath Falls after the takeover by Southern Pacific. Passenger service was terminated in 1938. The building was then used for railroad crew housing and eventually vacated. In 1962, the old station was acquired by the Alturas Garden Club as a meeting place. It has also been used for church meetings, weddings, receptions, pot luck suppers, and other gatherings. Rental fees help to maintain the building and its grounds.

The old NCO passenger station is unusual in the context of California railroad architecture by virtue of its stone construction and its late Queen Anne styling. It is a simple, straightforward design for a small station, although the styling is somewhat anachronistic for the date of construction. It is a style which was seldom used in California and has a much stronger affinity with late 19th century railroad station design for smaller towns in the eastern United States. It is a handsome survivor of its era and strongly retains its historic character in its adaptive reuse as a clubhouse. The tracks beside the building are still in use for Southern Pacific freight service.

9. Major Bibliographical References

David F. Myrick, "Nevada-California-Oregon Railway", The Western Railroader, June 1955
Journal of the Modoc Historical Society, No. 4, 1982
 American Public Works Association, Sacramento Chapter, monthly meeting notice, 11/7/83
Alturas Plaindealer, February 1, 1918
 Newspaper articles, Modoc Record, 1917, 1974, 1983

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property Approximately 1/4 acre

Quadrangle name Alturas

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UTM References

A

1	0
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7	0	5	4	8	0
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4	5	9	5	5	0	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

B

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 Zone Easting Northing

C

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Building and grounds occupy a triangular parcel bounded by East Street, Third Street, and the railroad right-of-way. Nomination boundaries are drawn upon historic (and current) lot lines of the property occupied by the building since its relocation in 1915. Assessor's Parcel No. 3-200-01

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marjorie Price, Historian (OHP Staff Revision: 10/84)

organization Alturas Garden Club date November 28, 1983

street & number P.O. Box 118 telephone (916) 233-3339

city or town Alturas state California 96101

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 Marian Mitchell-Watson

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date 1/2/85

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 2/28/85

Keeper of the National Register

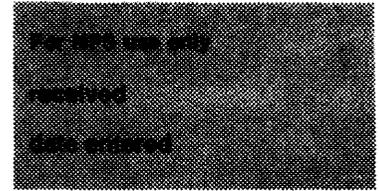
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number

6

Page 1

Representation in Existing Surveys (Continued)

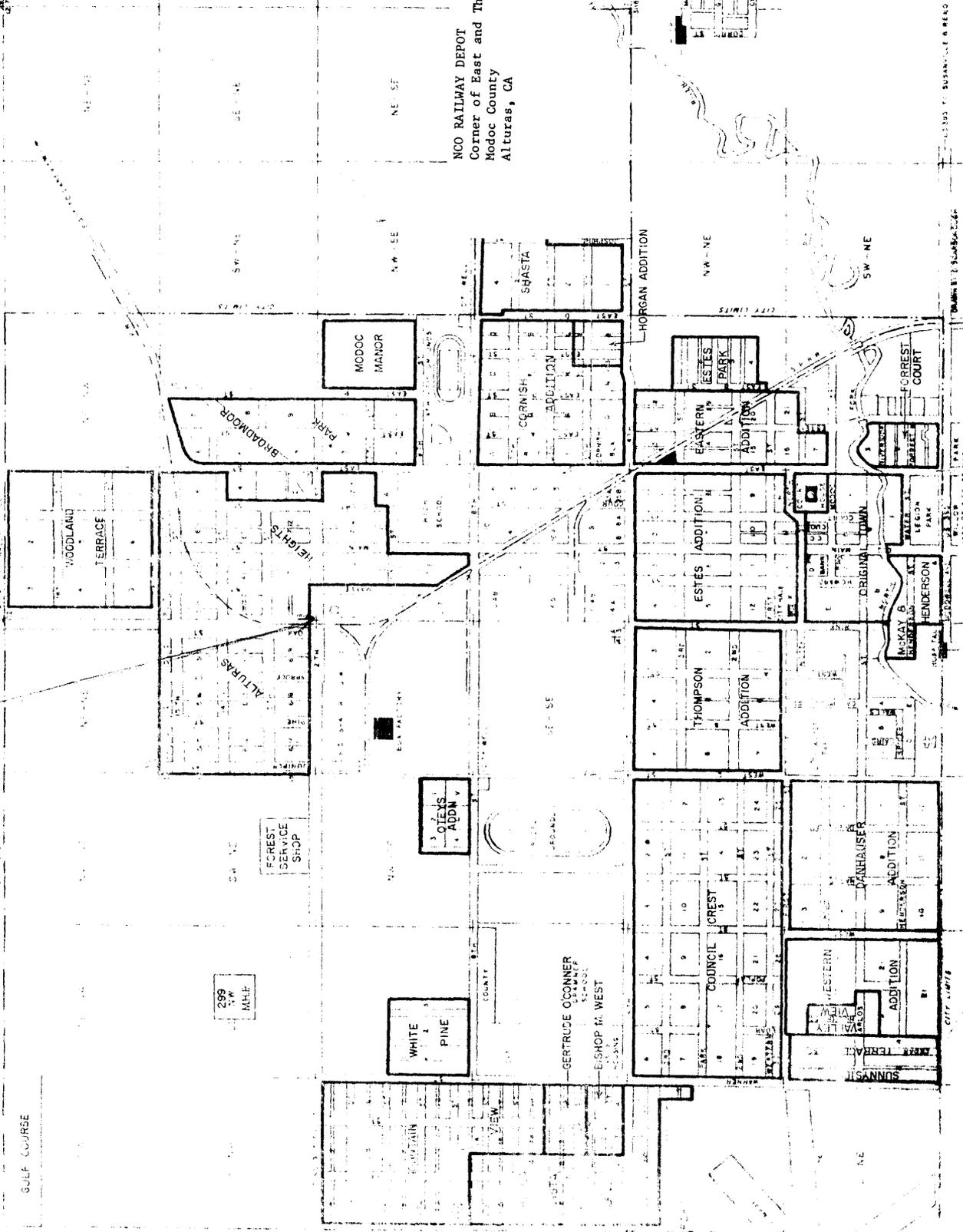
State Point of Historical Interest, Mod-002
January 10, 1974 x State
Records at State Office of Historic Preservation
P. O. Box 2390
Sacramento, CA 95811

MAP OF ALTURAS

MODOC COUNTY
CALIFORNIA
SCALE 1" = 200'

NCO RAILWAY DEPOT
Corner of East and Third Streets
Modoc County
Alturas, CA

Original with C.D. 1950



SUELF COURSE

299
N.W.
M.L.P.

CITY 1917

SECRET SIZE OF MAP

W.P.R. 1917
M.C. 1917
A.L. 1917
M.C.

13305 E. SUSANVILLE & RENO

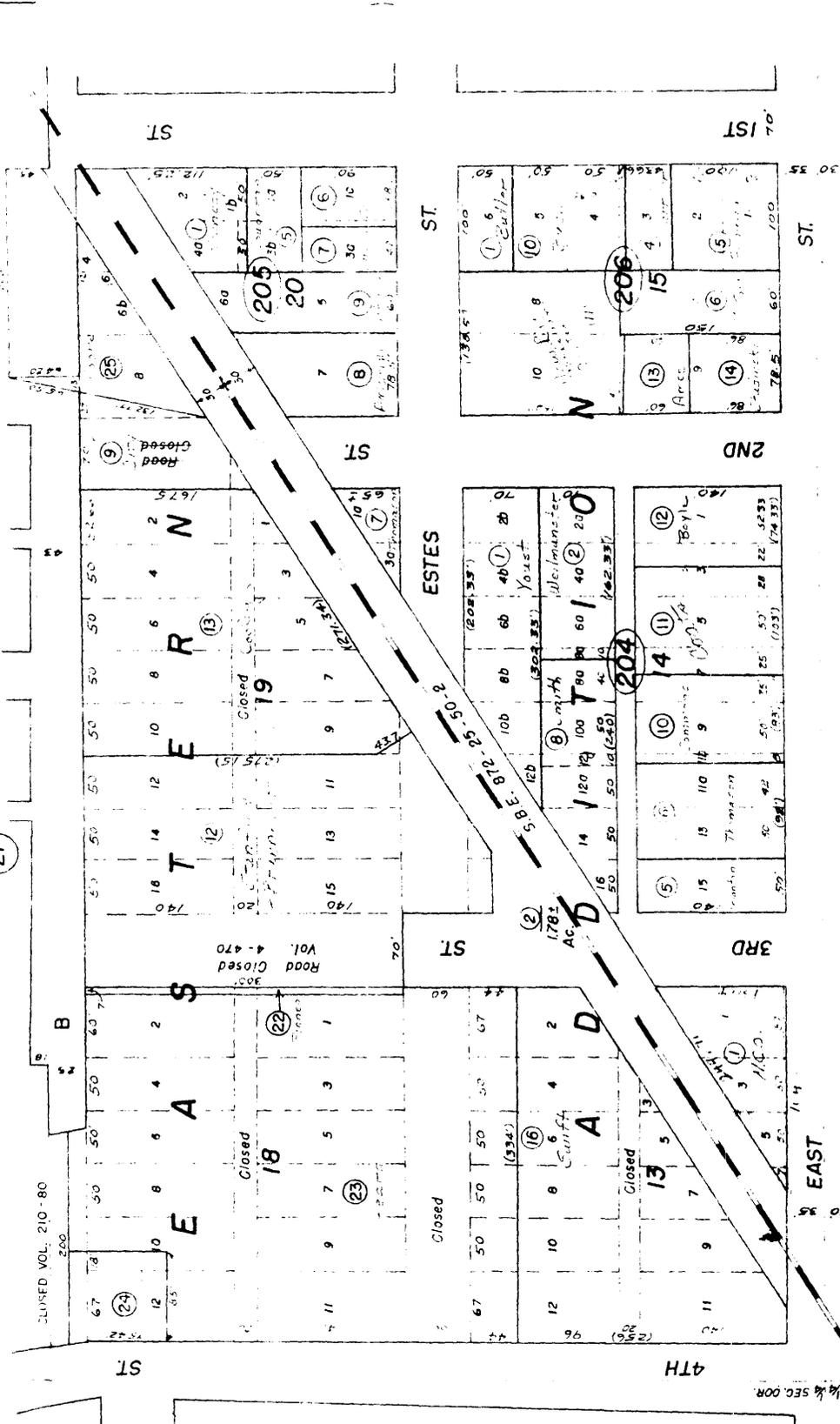
THOMAS E. SHARPE & CO.

3-20

Tax Area Code
1-00

POR. W 1/2 OF E 1/2 OF NW 1/4 SEC. 13 T. 42 N., R. 12 E. M. D. B. & M.

(21)



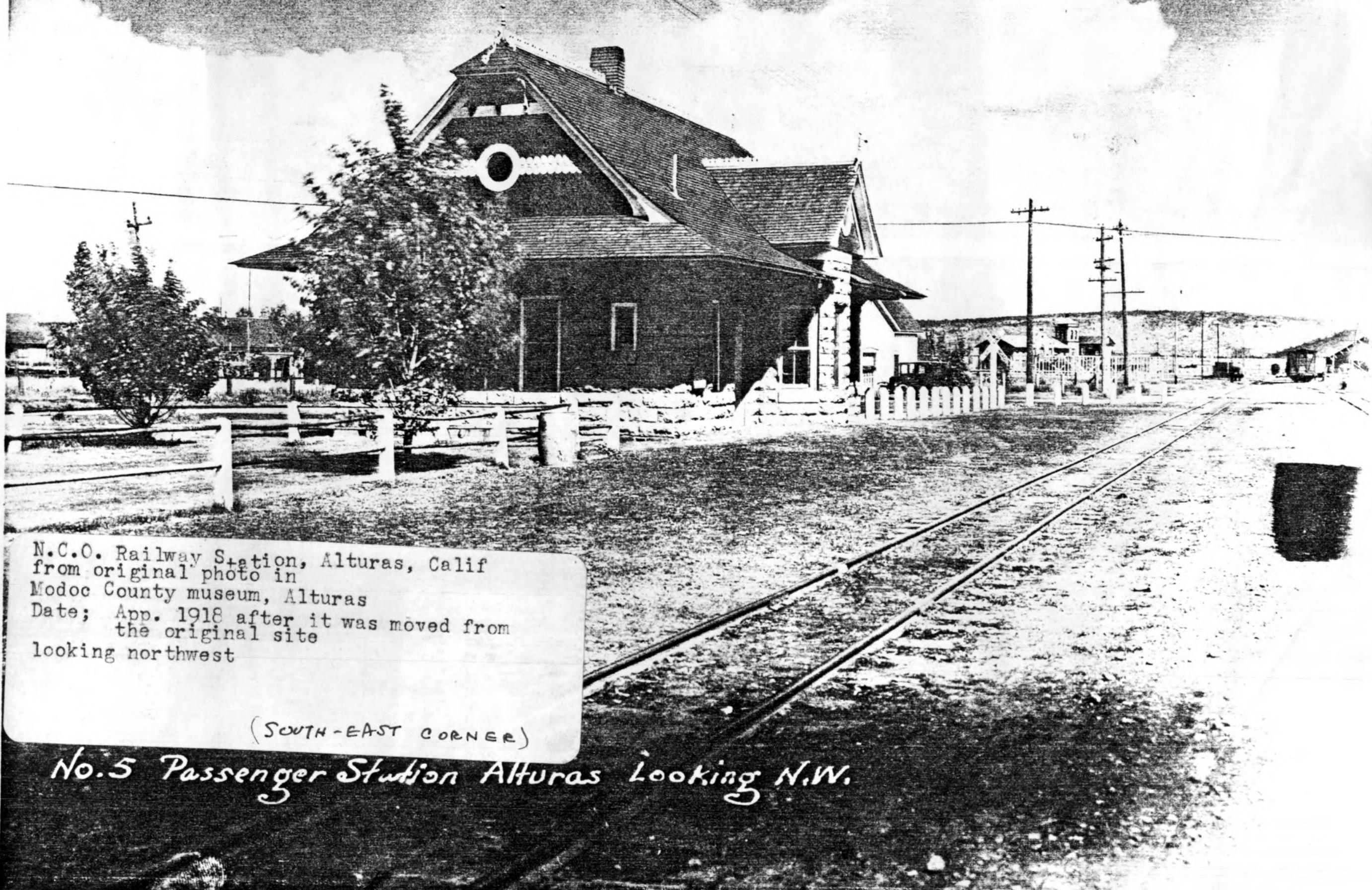
Bk. 2
18

NCO RAILWAY DEPOT
Corner of East and Third Streets
Modoc County
Alturas, CA

NOTE - ASSESSOR'S BLOCK
& LOT NUMBERS
SHOWN IN CIRCLES

Assessor's Map 3-20
City of Alturas
County of Modoc, Calif.
Nov. 1979

Eastern Addition



N.C.O. Railway Station, Alturas, Calif
from original photo in
Modoc County museum, Alturas
Date; App. 1918 after it was moved from
the original site
looking northwest

(SOUTH-EAST CORNER)

No. 5 Passenger Station Alturas Looking N.W.



N.C.O. Railway Station, Alturas, Calif.
copy from original photo in
Modoc County Museum, Alturas, Calif.
Photographer unknown
Photo taken at original site, 12th & ^{oak} Main Sts.
date: app. 1910 - 1912

SOUTH-WEST CORNER

P12083B