

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

RECEIVED 413

OMB No. 1024-0018

JUL 11 1994

INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

866

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 Danville Southern Pacific Railroad Depot
other names/site number Danville Feed and Garden Supply Store

2. Location

street & number 355 Railroad Avenue not for publication
city, town Danville vicinity
state California code CA county Contra Costa code 013 zip code 94526

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
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] July 1, 1994
Signature of certifying official Date

California Office 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:)

Ethan H. Beall Entered in the National Register 8.16.94

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)

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN : Stick/Eastlake

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Wood

roof Asphalt

other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

SUMMARY

The Danville train depot consists of a combination one-story/two-story wooden structure constructed in 1891 by the Southern Pacific Railroad for passenger and freight use in accordance with a design identified in their records as "Combination Station No. 22". Its original and present location is on the east side of the Southern Pacific tracks (now removed) in the 300 block of Railroad Avenue in the town of Danville. The wooden frame building, with overall outside dimensions of 25 x 90 feet, remains as it was built with no alterations to its basic structure. Exterior walls are covered with 1" x 8" shiplap siding on the first floor and decorative shingles on the second floor including gables; roofed originally with wood shingles, its two brick chimneys remain intact. The two-story section of the structure is located at the north end with outside dimensions of 25 x 47 feet. The downstairs is partitioned into three main rooms; a waiting room, baggage room, and ticket office with a train-order window protruding on the western train side of the building. A staircase on the east side of the office leads to the station master's two bedroom upper floor apartment. The one-story portion of the depot, lying to the south, consists of the 25 x 43 foot enclosed freight room; this room is surrounded on the west, south and east sides by a loading platform. Minor alterations made to the building's exterior include the addition of a temporary enclosure of the train-side loading platform on the west and removal of the loading platform ramp on the south. Modification of the interior has also been minimal, thus leaving the building intact since the addition of electricity and indoor plumbing in the early 1900's.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING

Location and Orientation

The Danville train depot was constructed as a combination passenger-freight depot building on the east side of the Southern Pacific's San Ramon branch line and is oriented in a general north-south direction (actual N52°41'W); the passenger portion is on the north end. The depot location is shown on the accompanying copy of a portion of a Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Danville, California dated 1925 revised to 1932, marked Sketch Map No.1.

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

Area of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance
1891 - 1939

Significant Dates
1891

Cultural Affiliation
NA

Significant Person

Architect/Builder
Southern Pacific Railroad

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

SUMMARY

Under Criterion A of the National Register Criteria, the Southern Pacific Railroad Depot is very significant to the history of the Danville area because of its service to the farming community in the transportation of both freight and passengers. By the 1890's the area was well into the second phase - that of growing grain - of the three farming phases which it was to pass through prior to becoming a suburb. The early settlers had raised cattle before discovering that the San Ramon Valley's climate and the dry-farming method used there, suited the growing of wheat. Soon wheat, barley and hay were the important grains grown but hay was the leading product to be shipped from the Danville area in the 1890's. It was shipped to U.S. Army cavalry posts and to markets in other countries. Large warehouses were built near the depot to store hay; often as much as 3500 tons of hay would be stored awaiting shipment. The third chapter of the area's economic life - the fruit and nut era - was already under way but the coming of the train with its available shipping service, encouraged more growing of these products by more farmers. The depot, located in the geographic center of the area, was built in 1891 concurrent with the railroad to serve the transportation needs of the farming community for shipment of farm products; this major improvement was in lieu of the then time-consuming horse and wagon transportation over narrow, often muddy roads to the north where the Southern Pacific Railroad was serving the northern part of Contra Costa County at Port Costa, Martinez and Avon; from these shipping points freight was transported to Oakland and San Francisco, or to cities in the east through San Joaquin County. The need for hauling by wagon southward to markets in Hayward and Livermore was eliminated after the 1909 extension of the rail line from San Ramon to Radum near Pleasanton. The depot also helped provide the link to the outside world for members of farm families, thus allowing them the freedom to travel and have visitors, a privilege long denied them in this region of central Contra Costa County, CA. The Southern Pacific Railroad's San Ramon Branch Line from Avon to San Ramon began operation on June 7, 1891; the Danville depot opened its doors to the public late in December of the same year. The building is representative of the property type of country railroad depots built by the Southern Pacific Railroad during the late 1800's and early 1900's using an early set of standard plans known as Southern Pacific Combination Station No. 22. Of the four depots on the San Ramon Branch Line, which were built in 1891 using this plan, only the depot at Danville has survived with a high degree of architectural and historical integrity intact; the depots at Concord and San Ramon have been demolished; major alterations have been made to the other one at Walnut Creek which has been moved from its original site.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

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:

Town of Danville Planning Department
San Ramon Valley Historical Society
Private Communication

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

A

1	0	5	8	8	2	6	0	4	1	8	6	0	7	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

B

Zone		Easting						Northing						

C

Zone		Easting						Northing						

D

Zone		Easting						Northing						

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Please see attached scale map.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries encompass the depot and its immediate setting.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Irma M. Dotson and Myron Reynolds, Trustees - Museum of the San Ramon Valley
organization for the Town of Danville date September 13, 1989
street & number 510 La Gonda Way telephone (510) 820-1448
city or town Danville state California zip code 94526

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Construction

Based on Southern Pacific's "Combination Station No. 22" plans, the building was constructed by company forces in 1891; many local variations of the standard plan were incorporated in each location, including the subject depot building at Danville. While some historical drawings and descriptions of many individual parts of the building have been located, no comprehensive set of building plans for the Danville depot building have been found to exist.

The building is of wooden frame construction with overall dimensions of 25 x 90 feet at foundation level, divided into a northern two-story section 25 x 47 feet and a southern one-story freight room section 25 x 43 feet. The gabled second floor is oriented perpendicular to that of the first, that is, the gables face east and west, while the main first floor runs north and south parallel to the tracks. These features are shown in the accompanying photographs Nos. 1 and 2. Photograph No. 1, taken from train-side looking in a southeasterly direction, shows the depot building as it appeared in the early 20th century, circa 1910; No. 2 shows its present appearance from street-side looking in a southwesterly direction.

The foundation of the two-story section of the building consists of brick and mortar piers, and a perimeter wall of the same materials, on which the wooden floor girders rest; the freight room floor girders are also supported on brick and mortar piers (no perimeter foundation wall) but elevated by short wooden 8" x 8" posts to raise the freight room floor level with that of a freight car.

The original wooden train order signal post, as seen in photograph No. 1, was located on the freight platform; it was replaced later with a metal post anchored to a 22" x 22" concrete block located 5' 6" from the depot in front of the train order window. The block with its four anchor bolts remain in place in the ground.

Exterior

Exterior walls of the first floor are constructed of 1" x 8" "V" grooved shiplap siding; decorative shingles are used to cover the second floor walls, including the east and west facing gables, except for a decorative paneled section below the window level; these features are visible in the accompanying photographs.

The roof is of shingle construction; roll roofing has been used over the shingles to re-roof the freight section (currently in need of repair).

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

All functional windows are of the double-hung sliding sash type; except for the need for replacement of broken glass, all sash are original and in good repair. On the train-side, two eighteen-inch, and three thirty-inch wide windows enclose the telegrapher's bench, sufficient to provide good visibility of train traffic in both north and south directions; one thirty-six inch window, and a glass paneled thirty-six inch door in the west wall of the waiting room provided adequate light and train side visibility for passengers; four forty-eight inch adjoining windows were located on the west side of the second floor bedrooms. On the north wall two thirty-six inch windows were located on both the first and second floors. The locations of these train-side and north wall windows may be seen in Photograph No. 1. The upstairs windows on the train-side are also visible in Photograph No. 4; the downstairs windows have been boarded up. Facing eastward, windows were located as follows; one each in the downstairs waiting room and the office area (thirty-six inches); three fifty-four inch windows upstairs in the living room-kitchen area and one small one in the bath. These may be seen in Photograph Nos. 2 and 3. The only window facing south (other than the two fixed windows in the freight room) is a small one lighting the upper portion of the stairwell shown in Photograph No. 3. The locations of all the above windows (and doors described below) are indicated in the floor plan.

Five exterior doors located on the west (train-side) provided access to the waiting room, ticket office, and baggage room (door now inactive), men's room, and freight room; exterior doors on the east side provided entrance to the waiting room (glass panel), office and stair-well (glass panel), baggage room, women's room and freight area; the original sliding doors (two 37 inch wide) on the east wall of the baggage room have been deactivated in an open position and replaced functionally with a thirty-six inch hinged door.

The large freight room is surrounded on three sides by a wide loading platform at freight car level; the platform width is respectively nine, eight and seven feet on the west, east and south sides; access was provided on the east and west sides of the depot by steps; an incline, or ramp (now removed), on the south side provided vehicular access.

Decorative cresting and finials originally topped the ridgeline of both the upper story roof (east-west) and the freight room roof (north-south). It is no longer in place, having been removed sometime (from photographs) in the early 1900's. Other exterior decorative features of the building include scrolling on the fascia boards at both the east and west gables (visible in Photograph Nos. 1, 2 and 4): scrolling above the window overhang, second floor on the west side (Photo No. 1); horizontal and vertical trim to create a paneling effect on the second floor walls below window level; decorative (and functional) knee braces below roof overhangs; and vertical trim elements on sides of windows and spaced along the walls.

Two original brick chimneys still exist, one adjacent to the extreme north wall serving the first story waiting room and second story living room;

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 3

the second on the south side of the two-story section served the upstairs kitchen and downstairs office. These chimneys were built for wood-burning stoves (now removed).

The most prominent change in the external appearance was one made during the 1950's to the west section of the loading platform when it was enclosed with temporary add-on siding material (Photograph Nos. 3 and 5); no original structural members of the building were removed or altered; the west freight-room sliding door was left intact. The ramp (incline) on the south end of the loading platform has been removed. The original exterior paint (Southern Pacific yellow) has been repainted red on the north, east and south sides of the building.

Overall the building is in a very good condition of preservation after a century of use; items in need of maintenance include the roof, the loading platform, and window glass replacement; repainting is required to restore the exterior to its original Southern Pacific yellow with brown trim.

Interior

The interior lay-out of the building is shown in the accompanying floor plan identified as "DANVILLE DEPOT FLOOR PLAN".

The downstairs of the two-story section is partitioned into three main rooms; the northernmost is a waiting room 16 x 24 feet; in the middle a ticket office 16' x 17' with a train-order window protruding on the western train side; and a 12' x 24' baggage room. A stair-case on the east side of the office leads to the station master's four-room upper floor apartment, which consists of two bedrooms (13' x 10' and 14' x 10') facing west (train-side); a 10' x 14' living room and a 14' x 13' foot kitchen face the eastern street-side; to the south, a small bath (7' x 8') and storage room extend over the downstairs baggage room. The one-story portion of the depot, lying to the south, consists of the 24 x 43 foot (inside dimensions) enclosed freight room.

Interior walls and ceilings throughout are made of 1" x 4" Douglas fir boards (beaded tongue and groove), with the wall boards running vertically.

Floors are constructed of three and three-eighths-inch wide soft-wood lumber. Stairs are of wooden construction, with solid risers.

Modifications to the interior have been minor; downstairs they include the replacement of the ticket window by a door between the office and waiting room; partial removal of the wall between the office and baggage room; and deactivation of both train and street-side baggage room doors. Upstairs the open passage between the kitchen and living room has been widened. Otherwise the building has remained basically intact since the addition of electricity in 1911 and indoor plumbing in the early 1900's.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 1

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Beginning in the 1840's with acceleration following the Gold Rush period, the San Ramon Valley together with its adjacent valleys, began to be settled by families moving west from the eastern part of the United States. Transportation was ever a problem; farm products had to be hauled over very poor roads either to the north or south for shipping and receiving. The Southern Pacific Railroad line from Avon to San Ramon, California was completed in May, 1891; on May 17, Southern Pacific officials and guests were first to ride on the line. The first passengers were carried on June 7, 1891. The line had been constructed with the time and financial support of local farmers and land owners in an effort to bring freight and passenger service to central Contra Costa County. In Danville Southern Pacific purchased 8.65 acres of farm land from John Hartz for use as the train station.

In 1891 the coming of the train, its depot, its attendant warehouses, not only promoted growth of the area but changed the way the farming community lived even to the types of crops grown. Fruits and other perishable produce could now be shipped daily from the local depot. In 1894 Danville merchants were shipping 1500 to 2000 dozens of eggs each week. The R. O. Baldwin and M. S. Stone Nursery just south of Danville were shipping products all over the state. Walnuts were grown using the dry-farming method; Bishop Ranch planted 500 acres of this crop; most farmers planted some acreage. Orchardists provided employment for harvesting walnuts; for picking, cutting and drying of apricots, peaches and prunes. Great pear orchards were developed which would make the Valley the Pear Capital of the World. Cherries were another fruit which grew well here; in May and June 1923, 4322 boxes of cherries were shipped from Danville to southern markets. Coming of the train was the first step towards suburbanization of the area since daily commutes to the cities of Oakland and San Francisco were now available. In 1908 for example, commute passengers left Danville at 6:47 A.M. arrived in Oakland (16th St.) at 8:54 A.M. and at Market Street Depot in San Francisco at 9:28 A.M.; the return trip left Market Street at 4 P.M. and arrived in Danville at 6:28 P.M.

The depot building was centrally located on the 8.65 acre railroad station plot which in 1891 was on the western edge of the village of Danville. Creation of the railroad station had a major impact on subsequent development of the village. The railroad line with its depot divided the farm of Mr. Hartz leaving a separate strip on the east side of the tracks. Mr. Hartz had this property surveyed into small town lots with streets laid out including Railroad Avenue; a map was drawn and filed with the County as the Hartz Addition to the Town of Danville. This first subdivision with its small lots changed and thereby established the character of the town which continues today; many of the original small homes built in the 1890's and early 1900's remain on these lots. Later, two other subdivisions in Old Downtown Danville followed the pattern set by the Hartz Addition thus giving the entire older part of Danville its character. After the coming of the railroad, the center

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

of activity in Danville began to move from the Front Street area located two blocks to the east, to the area around Railroad and Hartz Avenues. The coming of the train also created a need for a hotel. Built facing the depot and slightly north, the Railroad Hotel offered service to train travelers and employees of the railroad. This structure, now moved a short distance east, continues to serve the community as an office and retail business building.

The fifty year period of 1891 to 1939 is the most historically significant because (a) it was the era when the principal freight service from the depot was that of shipping farm products from the valley and (b) for most of this period passenger service was provided from the Danville depot. It was during this period that the depot served its dual role of offering both freight and passenger service. With the exception of moving military personnel and materials during World War II and a few excursion trips in the late 1940's, passenger service ended in 1931. Freight service continued through the Danville depot until the building's retirement from service by the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1951, then directly to individual company sites along the line until September 1978, at which time the Interstate Commerce Commission granted Southern Pacific permission to abandon the line between Concord and Dublin. Beginning in 1951 the depot building was used for the operation of a Feed and Garden Supply store by Joseph Ramos, Sr. and his son, Joseph Ramos, Jr. In 1957 they purchased the building and leased the underlying land from the railroad company. This business continued in the depot until Nov. 4, 1987, ending with the death of Joseph Ramos, Jr.

The structure, which is currently vacant, is owned by the Town of Danville with the underlying land still owned by Southern Pacific Railroad. The Town of Danville has granted authorization for rehabilitation of the building as the Museum of the San Ramon Valley, work which is currently underway.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

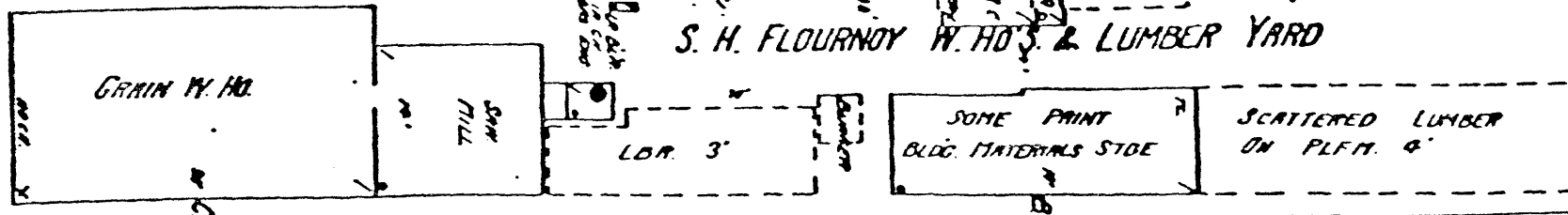
Section number 9 Page 1

#9. Major Bibliographical References

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Contra Costa County, CA. Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors. *San Ramon Branchline/I-680 Corridor Transportation Study Summary Report*. 1987.
- Contra Costa County, CA. Contra Costa County Planning Department. *Southern Pacific Right-of-Way Report (San Ramon Branch Line)*. 1980.
- Coombs, Gary B. *Goleta Depot; The History of a Rural Railroad Station*. Goleta, CA: Goleta Beautiful, Inc. and Institute for American Research, 1982.
- Danville, CA. Town Council. *Downtown Master Plan*. 1986.
- Danville, CA. Town Council. *Historic Resource Survey*. 1988.
- Dotson, Irma McGinnis. *The San Ramon Branch of the Southern Pacific Railroad; A History of the San Ramon Branch from Avon to Radum*. Unpublished. Author, 306 Bonanza Way, Danville, CA 94526.
- Murdock, Dick. *Walnut Creek's Unique Old Station...A Short, Colorful History*. Walnut Creek, CA: J D Graphics Enterprises, 1974.
- Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Danville, 1917, 1925, and 1932. NY: Sanborn Map Company. On microfilm at University of California, Berkeley.
- San Ramon Valley Historical Society. Photo Collection and Clipping Files. Society, Box 521, Danville, CA 94526.

S. H. FLOURNOY W. HO'S. & LUMBER YARD



SOUTHERN PAC.

(51)

Southern Pacific Railroad Depot at Danville
 Identified as
 "Freight & Passenger Station"

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map
 Danville, California
 (dated 1925, rev. 1932)

Portion of

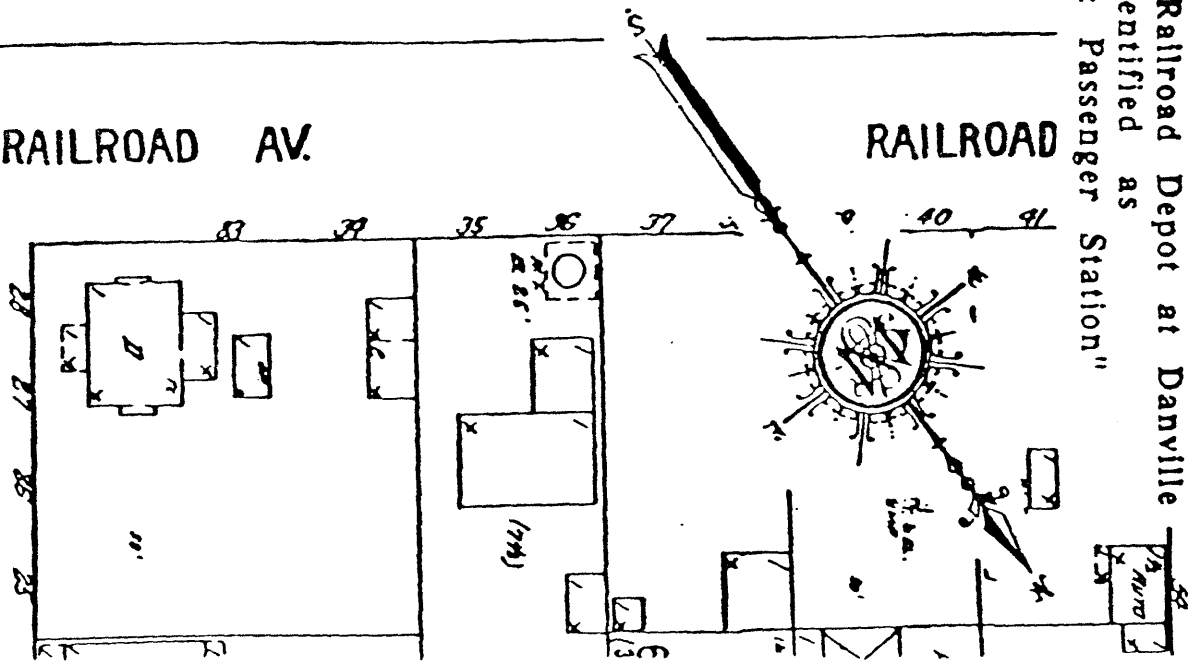
AV

ROOF LINE
 10 FOOT BOUNDARY LINE

FREIGHT & PASSENGER STATION

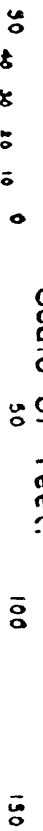
RAILROAD AV.

RAILROAD



Danville So. Pacific Depot
 Contra Costa Co.
 California

Scale of Feet.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Danville Southern Pacific Railroad Depot
Contra Costa County CALIFORNIA 94000860

PROPOSED MOVE APPROVED

S. R. Jager 9/25/95