

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

For NPS use only

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

received **OCT 7 1985**
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Tennessee Central Railroad Depot

and or common Cookeville Railroad Depot (preferred)

2. Location

street & number Corner of Broad and Cedar Streets N/A not for publication

city, town Cookeville N/A vicinity of

state Tennessee code 047 county Putnam code 061

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: None

4. Owner of Property

name City of Cookeville

street & number Municipal Building, 45 East Broad Street

city, town Cookeville N/A vicinity of state Tennessee

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Putnam County Courthouse

street & number Courthouse Square

city, town Cookeville state Tennessee

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Putnam County Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1983 federal state county local

depository for survey records Tennessee Historical Commission

city, town Nashville state Tennessee 37219-5237

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Situated approximately one-half mile west of the Putnam County Courthouse on the courthouse square in Cookeville, Tennessee (pop. 20,744), the Cookeville Railroad Depot (1909) is a one story red brick building constructed on a stone foundation and delineated by brick quoins and multi-pane windows with stone sills. A bell cast hip roof with wide overhanging eaves surmounts the main building, as well as two open platform extensions. Originally sheathed with pressed metal, the roof is now covered by asphalt shingles. Rectangular in plan with two centrally located bays on the north and south elevations, the horizontal lines of the depot are contrasted by the appearance of tall brick chimneys. The interior of the depot still retains its original beaded wainscoting and hardwood floors. Having undergone few alterations, the depot has retained its architectural integrity.

The north facade (facing the railroad tracks) is sixty-eight feet long with twenty-five feet long open platforms on both the east and west elevations. Brick quoins are found on each corner of the facade as well as on all other elevations. A projecting central bay, slightly taller than the rest of the building, is surmounted by a bell cast hip roof with wide eaves. This roof is pierced by a tall brick chimney. Originally this chimney (and the others) had corbeled caps but the corbeling was lost when the chimneys were repaired in the 1970s. One 12/1 double hung sash window and two 8/1 double hung sash windows, each with recessed brick panels above them, delineate each side of the bay. East of the bay are two 12/1 double hung sash windows separated by an entry comprised of a glass-paneled door surmounted by a multi-pane transom window. Dentil moldings accentuate the transom bar. The east corner of the facade contains two plaques. An inscribed stone plaque honoring Jere Baxter, the founder of the Tennessee Central Railroad, was dedicated in 1909. In 1976 a second plaque was placed here to honor Alexander Crawford who first brought the railroad to Cookeville in 1890. A painted white stringcourse is located below the window sills and extends around the building, as does a painted frieze below the eaves. The open platforms at each end are supported by narrow metal columns.

The south elevation is ornamented in a manner similar to the north facade. The central bay on this facade is rectangular in shape and dominated by two 8/1 double hung sash windows on the south side and one 8/1 double hung sash window on both the east and west sides. A bell cast hip roof surmounts the bay. Both the edges of the bay and the depot itself are delineated by brick quoins. This elevation is symmetrically designed with each side of the bay having two 12/1 double hung sash windows separated by entries identical to those on the north facade. Low sandstone flower boxes were built on this side of the depot in 1977. (Plans call for their removal)

Both the west and east elevations of the depot are twenty feet wide, while the platform extensions are only fifteen feet wide. Large double doors with cross bracing are the only openings on the west elevation. A multi-pane transom light with dentil moldings is located over the doors. The east elevation exhibits two 12/1 double hung sash windows identical to other windows on the depot.

The floor plan of the Cookeville depot contains elements common in most small depots. A centrally located ticket office separates two passenger waiting rooms. A large room located behind the ticket office has been converted into two restrooms. The west end of the depot contains the baggage room. Most interior walls are plaster and have beaded wainscoting and chair rails. Ceilings are also plaster while the floor is hardwood. Interior doors are paneled and have plain wood surrounds. The walls and ceilings in the baggage room are sheathed with beaded wainscoting. Eight globe lights suspended on brass chains are located

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throughout the building. The lights are not original to the depot but were acquired from an old school building and placed in the depot in the late 1970s.

There are no extant outbuildings associated with the Cookeville Railroad Depot. The depot is located on a small wedge shaped lot adjacent to the railroad. Landscaping is minimal and consists only of the flower boxes on the south side of the depot. The building provides the end point of a street lined with public buildings. The downtown business district is east of the depot and additional early twentieth century commercial buildings are found north of the depot. The depot is in good condition and has retained its architectural integrity.

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/	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)	urban development
Specific dates	1909–1935	Builder/Architect	Unknown		

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Cookeville Railroad Depot is being nominated under National Register criteria A and C for its architectural and historical significance in Cookeville, Putnam County, Tennessee. Architecturally, the depot is significant as a fine example of a vernacular type of railroad depot design in the Upper Cumberland region of Tennessee. Historically, the depot played a significant role in the development of rail transportation in Putnam County and in the development of Cookeville, especially the west section of the city. It was not only the impetus for the development of West Cookeville but was for many years the major form of transportation in the region. The depot has undergone few alterations and retains its historical and architectural integrity.

Although Putnam County was first organized in 1842 and reorganized in 1854, with Cookeville as the county seat, it was not until the 1880s when the railroad arrived in the county that any substantial growth began. A.L. Crawford, an iron manufacturer from Pennsylvania, financed the construction of the Nashville and Knoxville Railroad in order to exploit the coal resources of the Cumberland Plateau. The track was begun in Watertown in 1887 and reached Cookeville in 1890. The small towns of Monterey, Baxter, Silver Point and Algood soon grew up along the railroad and the mining industry in the east section of the county developed.

In Cookeville, the arrival of the railroad was especially important to the development of the west section of the city. When the Nashville and Knoxville Railroad announced in 1890 that it would build a two story frame passenger depot (non-extant) and a separate freight house (non-extant) west of the County Courthouse, property values on the west side of town soared and new business and residential districts began to develop. In the following year over fifty residences and several businesses were constructed near the depot. By 1900, five hotels had been built in Cookeville near the depot. The depot became the focal point of this development and was a commercial and social center for the city as a whole.

Jere Baxter of Nashville and a group of businessmen from St. Louis organized the Tennessee Central Railroad in 1893 and in 1902 they purchased the Nashville and Knoxville Railroad. Cookeville was located on the main rail line of the Tennessee Central between Nashville and Harriman. By connecting the smaller Tennessee Central line with the larger rail networks - the Southern Railroad at Harriman, the Illinois Central at Hopkinsville, Kentucky and the Louisville and Nashville at Clarksville - Baxter gave Cookeville and the Upper Cumberland region access to markets throughout the eastern United States. When the railroad first started service in Cookeville both passengers and freight used the same trains but by the early 1900s separate trains were needed. Six passenger trains traversed the county each day and additional lines were added.

The area around the depot continued to develop as an important commercial center in Cookeville. In 1909 the Tennessee Central Railroad constructed the present one story brick depot and a new freight house (non-extant) to accommodate the increase in rail travel. Distinguishing features of the new passenger depot included a bell cast hip roof with wide overhanging eaves and centrally located projecting bays with multi-pane windows. These features were practical

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 0.2232 acres

Quadrangle name Cookeville West, Tennessee

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	6	6	3	4	1	6	0	4	0	0	3	0	0	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

B

Zone	Easting			Northing										

C

Zone	Easting			Northing										

D

Zone	Easting			Northing										

E

Zone	Easting			Northing										

F

Zone	Easting			Northing										

G

Zone	Easting			Northing										

H

Zone	Easting			Northing										

Verbal boundary description and justification

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Pat Lane, Humanities Scholar-in-Residence (with assistance of several members of the Cookeville Depot Preservation Committee)

organization Tennessee Community Heritage Project date April 1, 1985

street & number Box 5064, Tennessee Tech. University telephone (615) 528-3616

city or town Cookeville state Tennessee

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.

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer signature Herbert L. Byer

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission date 9/26/85

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

Delores Byer

Entered in National Register

date 11-7-85

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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as well as decorative. The eaves protected waiting passengers and railroad workers while the bays allowed the station agent to see incoming trains. On November 4, 1909 the Putnam County Herald called the new depot "the handsomest station of any town its size in the state."

The Tennessee Central Railroad was busy but not profitable. It was placed in receivership in 1912 and finally reorganized in 1922 when a business syndicate purchased the railroad company. At that time the railroad began upgrading tracks and cars and extending the line. With the advent of the automobile as the major source of transportation, the use of the Cookeville depot declined. In 1949 two of four daily passenger trains were stopped and in 1955 all passenger service ceased. Freight hauling continued but in 1968 the Tennessee Central Railroad declared bankruptcy and sold off its lines. The Louisville and Nashville Railroad purchased the line Cookeville was on and continued to use the depot for freight service until 1974.

In 1975 the City of Cookeville purchased the depot from the Seaboard System Railroad, although it did not obtain the land on which the depot sits until 1984. Recently, the Cookeville Depot Preservation Committee was organized to preserve the depot. The depot is now open on special occasions, such as the Fourth of July, with displays of railroad memorabilia and historical photographs. The City Council has recently approved a budget to hire a part-time director to establish a small museum at the depot. The Cookeville depot is one of only three extant Tennessee Central Railroad depots and the only one located on its original site. Because the depot was an important commercial and social center in Cookeville and because of its excellent design, the Cookeville Railroad Depot is a significant architectural and historical resource.

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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Foster, Austin P. Counties of Tennessee. Nashville: State of Tennessee, 1923.

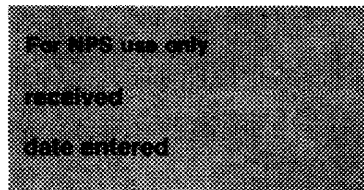
McClain, Walter S. A History of Putnam County. Cookeville, Tennessee: Quimby Dyer and Company, 1925.

O'Neal, Michael Ray. "Historic Railroad Depot Architecture in Middle Tennessee." Master's Thesis, Middle Tennessee State University, 1983.

Putnam County Herald, various issues, 1909.

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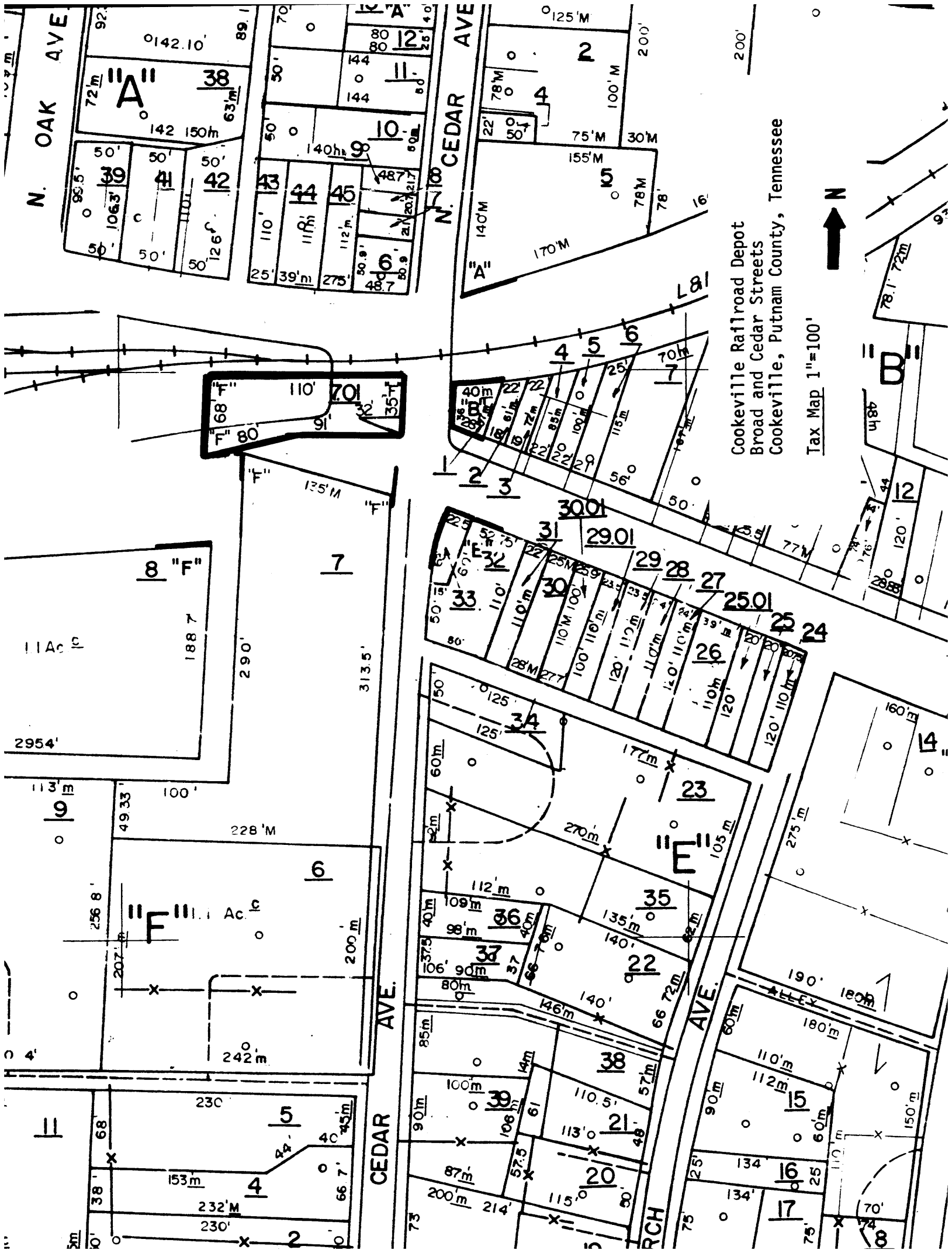


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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property is less than one acre in size and approximately rectangular in shape. It is bounded on the north by the railroad tracks, on the south by South Oak Avenue, on the east by North Cedar Avenue, and on the west by the adjoining property line. It includes enough land to protect the historic setting and architectural integrity of the Cookeville Railroad Depot.



Cookeville Railroad Depot
 Broad and Cedar Streets
 Cookeville, Putnam County, Tennessee

Tax Map 1"=100'



N. OAK AVE

N. CEDAR AVE

CEDAR AVE

RCH AVE

