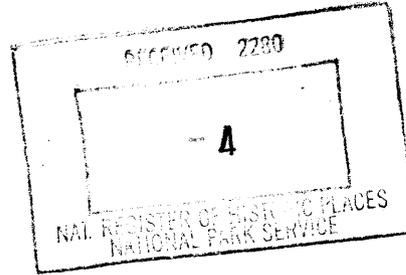


**United States Department of Interior
National Park Service**



133

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Frederic Depot
other names/site number Minneapolis, St. Paul & Sault Ste Marie Railroad Depot; Soo Line Depot

2. Location

street & number 210 Oak Street West
city or town Frederic
state Wisconsin **code** WI **county** Polk
code N/A **not for publication**
code N/A **vicinity**
code 095 **zip code** 54837

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Alicia L. Cochran
Signature of certifying official/Title

January 31, 2003
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Frederic Depot
Name of Property

Polk County
County and State

Wisconsin

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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.
___ See continuation sheet.
___ removed from the National
Register.
___ other, (explain:)

Edson H. Beall

3/21/03

[Signature]

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as
as apply)

___ private
 public-local
___ public-State
___ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

building(s)
___ district
___ structure
___ site
___ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources
in the count)

contributing	noncontributing
1	1 buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
1	1 total

Name of related multiple property listing:
(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property
listing.)
N/A

**Number of contributing resources
is previously listed in the National Register**
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)
TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)
RECREATION and CULTURE: museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)
LATE VICTORIAN

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)
Foundation STONE

walls WEATHERBOARD

roof ASPHALT

other WOOD

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 1

Frederic Depot
Frederic, Polk County, Wisconsin

Narrative Description

Site: The Frederic Depot is located on the north side of Oak Street West, immediately west of the former main line track of the Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Sault Ste. Marie Railroad (Soo Line Railroad) in the Village of Frederic, West Swede Township, Polk County, Wisconsin. The main line track and two adjacent siding tracks have been removed and replaced by the route of the Gandy Dancer Trail. This 98 mile recreational trail follows the old Soo Line grade from St. Croix Falls north to Superior. The trail passes through Burnett and Polk counties in Wisconsin and Pine County in Minnesota. The trail was covered with crushed limestone in 1995.

The parcel containing the Frederic Depot measures 88 feet by 359 feet, extending along the former north-south main line track between Oak Street on the south and Elm Street on the north. The parcel is largely level except for a shallow embankment along the northwest edge of the property where the land falls off slightly. A narrow concrete sidewalk extends along the south edge of the property facing Oak Street but no sidewalk is present along the north edge. East of the Gandy Dancer Trail the Village of Frederic has established a small city park and picnic shelter for trail users. A concrete sidewalk extends along Oak Street with an intersecting walk forming an approach to the depot. An unpaved parking lot extends along the east side of the Gandy Dancer Trail designated for trail users and depot visitors.

State Road 35 or Wisconsin Avenue, located two blocks east of the Frederic Depot, is the primary route through Frederic from north to south. It is a two-lane asphalt paved road with curb and gutter and parking lanes. Frederic's central business district extends along both sides of Oak Street between the depot and State Highway 35. Oak Street is 80 feet wide with angled parking located along both sides. The business district includes a mix of one and two-story masonry buildings dating from Frederic's founding from 1901-1910 through the 1950s. Buildings on the north side of the 100 block of Oak Street west of State Highway 35 all post date a conflagration that destroyed buildings in this block in 1908. The fire did not damage the depot. Buildings on the south side of Oak Street include several from the years immediately following Frederic's founding in 1901. Most buildings on both sides of Oak Street have been substantially remodeled through the years.

The blocks west of the depot site contain a mix of one and two-story single-family dwellings dating from the 1920s through the 1960s. Most residences are of frame construction with a handful featuring stucco or stone finishes. The property south of the depot extending along the Gandy Dancer Trail contains several commercial lots that originally held buildings located along a railroad siding, including several buildings associated with the local farmer's cooperative exchange and a warehouse. The land immediately east of the Gandy Dancer Trail and south of Oak Street has now been cleared.

The property north of the depot site contains the former right-of-way of the Soo Line Railroad's main line and the northern leg of the Gandy Dancer Trail. The area contains no buildings and is being allowed to return to its natural state. Adjacent blocks to the east contain commercial buildings, churches and residences.

Contributing & Non-Contributing Resources: The Frederic Depot site contains one contributing and one non-contributing resource. The depot is the central historic resource on the site and retains sufficient architectural integrity to qualify as a contributing structure. The non-contributing resource is a small frame building moved to the site in 2001. It was originally used as Frederic's first public library and more recently served as a summer cottage. When the building was scheduled for demolition, the Frederic Historical Society made arrangements to save the building and move it to the depot site. The building is located west of the depot facing Oak Street.

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Continuation Sheet

Frederic Depot

Frederic, Polk County, Wisconsin

Section 7 Page 2

Building Description: The Frederic Depot is an example of a combination depot, the term historically used by railroads to refer to small and medium sized stations where freight and passenger service were "combined" in the same building. The building design was adopted in the late 1880s and continued in use until after World War I. When originally constructed in 1901 by the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie Railway Co., the Frederic Depot measured 24 feet by 56 feet and was based on Plan 3072.¹ In 1916 the freight room was extended 24 feet on the south end with the resulting form based on Plan 3104B² or a nearly identical plan. A portion of the latter drawing appears in Figure 2.

The Frederic Depot is built on a low concrete block foundation with a shallow crawl space. The building has wood framing with 6-inch lap siding and plain cornerboard trim for the exterior cladding. Early photographs show the building's 1:4 gable roof covered with wood shingles. The roof surface was changed to "patent" or asphalt shingles at an unknown date with the current asphalt shingles installed during the 1996 depot restoration.

Although railroad stations were frequently designed with narrow, linear footprints in order to fit between multiple tracks and sidings if need be, for small depots the principal façade nearly always faced the main line track, or in this case, east. The building has overall dimensions of 24 feet (east-west) by 80 feet (north-south). The one-story freight room (24 feet by 48 feet) is located at the south end of the building and the two-story section (24 feet by 32 feet) containing the agent's office and waiting room on the first floor and the agent's living quarters on the second floor is located at the building's north end.

The two-story sections of the depot's east and west façades have scroll-cut brackets with a circular pattern installed at 10½ foot intervals along the plain cornice. No brackets are located along the gable ends. The asymmetrical arrangement of first floor openings on the east façade includes an entrance on the right, a single window in the center, and a shed roofed bay window on the left side, which opens into the agent's office. This bay has three tall 4/4 double-hung windows facing the track with 2/2 windows on each side. This arrangement was standard depot design because it provided a better view of approaching trains and yard activities than typical flush mounted windows. A similarly sized 4/4 double-hung window is centered on the east façade and opens into the waiting room with the passenger entrance on the far right. The passenger door, a metal door matching the design and configuration of the original door, has five horizontal panels. A two-light rectangular transom is above the door. Windows on the second floor are shorter than those on the first with side-by-side 2/2 double-hung sash.

The north façade includes four asymmetrically placed window openings, two on each level. The first floor windows match those on the east façade in size and configuration and open into the waiting room. Those on the second floor also have a 4/4 configuration but are slightly shorter with one opening into the living room/parlor and the other into the bedroom. The asymmetrical arrangement differs from that of Plan 3104 B. The south façade of the second floor contains two nearly square 2/2 double-hung windows symmetrically placed. The asymmetrical arrangement of openings on the west façade, like the east side, relates to the function on interior space. Two smaller 4/4 double-hung sash on the left-hand side of the first floor open into restrooms. A small horizontal two-light window on the far right provides light along the interior staircase. An entrance principally functioning for the private use of the agent's family is located at the foot of the staircase leading to the second

¹"Plan 3070, M. St. P. and S. Ste. M. RY. 24'x56', Second Class Depot with Living Rooms and 10'x12' Warming Room" (one sheet) Prepared by Office of Superintendent of B. and B., Shoreham Yards, August 1905 and revised May 1906, in Frederic Historical Society Collection.

²"Plan 3104 B, M. St. P. and S. Ste. M. RY. 24'x80', Second Class Depot with Living Rooms and 11'6"x15' Warming Room" (one sheet) Prepared by Office of Superintendent of Bridges and Buildings, Shoreham Yards, undated, in Soo Line Historical and Technical Society Archives Collection.

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Continuation Sheet

Frederic Depot

Frederic, Polk County, Wisconsin

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floor apartment. It is set beneath a low-pitched gabled entrance hood supported by plain knee-brace brackets. This entrance was reworked slightly during the 1995 restoration when a non-original porch was removed. The entrance opening contains the original five-paneled door and two-light horizontal transom.

The one-story freight room section of the depot has cornice, cladding and trim elements similar to the remainder of the building with the only difference being in the closer spacing of the brackets, approximately 7 feet rather than 10½ feet. Freight door openings appear along the east façade (track side) and at the south end (street side). Both doors were originally mounted on hardware designed to slide the doors along the inside, unfinished wall. The depot's original doors appear in historic views of the depot and were built of vertical tongue-and-groove boards. The design for the present doors was specified in both Plan 3072 and Plan 3104B. When plans were made to convert the depot to use as a community museum, the decision was made to permanently fix the doors along the east façade and convert the single door on the south end to two swinging doors to allow for exiting requirements. The exterior design for each freight door opening has four recessed panels built from diagonal tongue-and-groove bead board with wide rails and stiles.

The original freight room dimensions were 24 feet by 24 feet with the sole access door centered along the east façade. When the freight room was extended in 1912, the door opening was moved further south to provide room for construction of the "warming room" in the interior. A second door was located in the south gable end of the addition. Both freight door openings have rectangular transoms containing a band of six lights. The position of the freight doors is one of the few differences seen between the standard depot plans and the as-built depot.

The interior floor plan of the Frederic Depot shows few changes from its original construction. Inside the main entrance in the north half of the building is the passenger waiting room. The original space measured 23 feet by 18 feet but was reduced in size when public restrooms were added in 1949 along the west wall. The two windows along the west wall apparently replaced the single window previously in this space. The room's interior walls and ceilings are clad in narrow tongue-and-groove boards specified on original plans as basswood. Boards were installed vertically in the wainscoting area and horizontally on the wall surfaces above the chair rail. A similar finish was installed on the ceiling. During the 1996 restoration, all surfaces were painted to match colors specified by the Soo Line for depot interiors. The extremely worn floor in the waiting room was replaced in 1996 with new maple flooring matching that originally specified in Plan 3104 B.

The men's and women's restrooms located along the west wall of the waiting room were rehabilitated in 1996 as part of the depot restoration. The 1949 fixtures were removed and new ADA acceptable plumbing fixtures installed. A tile wainscoting was established, plaster walls painted, and new tile floors installed. Obscure window glass was installed in the windows.

Immediately adjacent to the waiting room is an area that served as both the ticket office and agent's office. Measuring approximately 12 feet by 24 feet, the office is connected to the waiting room by a passage door and ticket window. The shelves with bracket supports specified in the original plans remain in use in the ticket office and the waiting room. The original built-in agent's desk remains in place in the bay window area along the east wall. Along the west wall is an exit to the outside, stairs leading to the second floor living quarters, and a small closet. The south wall has a series of four rectangular vent openings in the wainscoting and upper wall area. These vents originally connected into the "warming room" portion of the freight room. Their purpose was to provide warm air from the heated office space, allowing a portion of the freight room to be maintained at a higher temperature than the balance of the room. Building records suggest that the current warming room was installed as part of the 1916 expansion of the freight room portion of the depot. Floor, wall, and ceiling finishes in the agent's office are identical to those found in the waiting room.

The former freight room now serves as the museum's principal permanent and rotating exhibit space. The warming room located in the northeast corner of the freight room has been retained, complete with its original pine sheathing. The building's new water heater and furnace were installed in a portion of the warming room.

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Frederic Depot

Frederic, Polk County, Wisconsin

Section 7 Page 4

The original coal bin located in the northwest corner was removed. All exterior walls and the ceiling were insulated and covered with sheet rock. Heating ducts were installed in the crawl space and exhibit lighting in the ceiling. New wide pine flooring was installed in the freight room.

The second floor of the building contained the stationmaster's apartment. The apartment was reached by stairs, which could be accessed either directly from the outside or from the office. The apartment includes a living room, kitchen and two bedrooms. No changes have been made to the second floor.

A good record of changes to the Frederic Depot and the surrounding yards survives for the years 1901 through 1932. The Engineering Department of the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie Railway recorded dates for building construction and improvements to the yards as well, as the size of buildings, the cost of construction contracts or the company's building and labor expense, and miscellaneous remarks. The table that appears in Figure 3 below includes information drawn from this record as well as from other sources.

A major historic rehabilitation of the Frederic Depot was completed in 1996 under the direction of the Frederic Historical Society. Architect for the project was Mark Balay, AIA of Stillwater, Minnesota with the Braden Company of Lake Elmo, Minnesota serving as general contractor. The Wisconsin Conservation Corps completed additional work during 1994-1996. Measures were taken to rehabilitate the building and provide for its reuse as a public museum and trail users' facility. Interior work completed during the project involved work in the crawl space, a new heating system, plumbing for public restrooms, electrical work, new floors, creation of a museum exhibit space in the freight room, and new finishes on all interior surfaces. No rehabilitation work was completed on the second floor. Exterior work included foundation repairs, a new roof, window repairs, new storm sash, replacement brackets, removal of non-historic Insul-Brick™ siding, and repairs of wood siding and trim. Other exterior work included the reinstallation of a semaphore matching the original and construction of a wood platform along the east and south sides. The most significant exterior change was the addition of a small deck area with seating at the north end of the platform for the use of museum visitors and trail users. Work was financed with an Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) grant and matching funds from individual contributors, the Village of Frederic, and the Frederic Historical Society. All work was completed in conformance with *The Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Historic Buildings*.

Frederic Depot
Name of Property

Polk County
County and State

Wisconsin

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1901-1952

Significant Dates

1901

1916

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 1

Frederic Depot
Frederic, Polk County, Wisconsin

Statement of Significance

Summary: The Frederic Depot is significant locally under National Register Criteria A and C. Under Criterion A, the depot is significant in the area of transportation. The depot's construction in 1901 at the terminus of the line being built from the Twin Cities to Duluth by the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie Railway marked an important step in the development of a regional transportation system. With Frederic being one of the last municipalities to be established in Polk County, the arrival of the railroad and the construction of the depot signaled a change in the economy and settlement patterns in this section of Northwest Wisconsin. Frederic was founded in 1901, the same year that the depot was constructed. The Soo Line Railroad continued to use the depot until the line was abandoned in 1985. Under Criterion C, the Frederic Depot is eligible for the National Register in the area of architecture as a well-preserved example of the two-story combination depot form favored by several Midwestern railroads, including the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie Railway, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The period of significance begins with the construction of the depot in 1901 and continues to the end of the historic period in 1952. The depot was in use during the entire period.

Historic Background:

The village of Frederic was founded in 1901 by William J. Starr, a land speculator and owner of a 12,000 acre tract of hardwood forest in Polk County at the turn of the century. Frederic is located in West Sweden Township near the northern edge of Polk County in west central Wisconsin. Located about 75 miles northeast of Minneapolis and St. Paul and about 75 miles south of Duluth, Frederic was named for Starr's seven-year old son, Frederic Hill Starr.

Unlike other sections of Northern Wisconsin, the timberlands owned by Starr in Polk County contained stands of hardwood trees. Unlike the lighter weight pine harvested and shipped out in log rafts using the state's river system, the hardwood lumber harvested from Starr's holdings needed to be shipped out by rail. In order to provide a shipping route for the lumber, Starr and others secured a charter for a railroad line that would connect the area to points south – the Superior, Balsam Lake and Southern Railroad.

As plans for building a railroad were taking shape, the interests of Starr appeared to coincide with those of other railroad builders headquartered in Minneapolis at the time. The Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie Railway commonly referred to as the "Soo Line" had organized in 1888 as the merger of several other railroads under the leadership of Minneapolis citizens led by W.D. Washburn. By the turn of the 20th century, the development of this line was credited as a major factor in the growth of the Northwest. A contemporary writer asserted that it was "difficult to overestimate the importance of this road in the making of Minneapolis."³ The east-west route of the railroad through Northern Wisconsin lined up with the 45th parallel giving grain and flour shippers an "almost straight line [route] along that parallel, affording by far the most direct and shortest route between Minneapolis and ocean carriers at Montreal and thence either to Portland, Maine and Boston or to England."⁴ By 1900 the construction of another route between Minneapolis and Duluth was being advocated by flour millers who wanted to use the Great Lakes for shipping their product. In either case, the routes avoided Chicago's rate structure.

³Minneapolis Journal, April 18, 1900.

⁴"Soo Line History, 1914 – 1944," unpublished, Soo Line Archives, Minnesota Historical Society.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 2

Frederic Depot
Frederic, Polk County, Wisconsin

With the common interests of Minneapolis shippers and Wisconsin loggers to be served, the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie Railway Company purchased the chartered, but as yet unbuilt, branch line through Polk County. Construction of what came to be known as the "Frederic Branch" by the Soo Line north from Dresser Junction began in 1900. Railroad records date completion of the Frederic Depot, a standard Second Class Depot with living quarters for the agent, sometime in 1901. Historical accounts indicate that it was already in place on November 21, 1901 when the first train reached Frederic. William Starr held a town lot sale the same day. The village was incorporated by a vote of the electors on March 28, 1903.

Population in West Central Wisconsin grew slowly until the arrival of the railroad in 1901. According to Federal Census figures, Polk County's population was 17,801 in 1900 with West Swede Township numbering just 282 settlers prior to Frederic's founding. By the end of 1902, local news accounts reported the village growing to 350 full-time residents with additional seasonal laborers. Town planners saw their wishes realized when the railroad that had given birth to the village served as an outlet for the production from four logging camps. Within a short time, 150 car loads of lumber were being shipped each week from Frederic with most of the logs sold to Chicago lumber buyers.⁵

By the end of the first year, business listings suggested that a bustling local economy was in place. Among the businesses were four general stores, six saloons, two blacksmith shops, a livery, a hardware store, two barber shops, a meat market, a tailor's shop, two restaurants, two hotels, a clothing store, a harness shop, a planing mill, a saw mill, the four logging camps on Coon Lake, a bank, a printing office, a feed barn, an elevator, and a stock yards.⁶ As already noted, the Frederic Depot was in place when the railroad line brought the first settlers and town lot buyers to Frederic. Located at the west end of Oak Street, the village's main street, the depot was instrumental to local commerce. Express shipments were handled in the depot's ample freight room. Regular passenger service to points south kept Frederic's growing population well-connected to other parts of Wisconsin and Minnesota.

The depot served as the hub for managing the other rail yard facilities. From the agent's office located in the depot, orders were relayed to train crews and line maintenance crews. The direct role played by the railroad in the local economy was seen in nearby rail facilities as well. Regional agricultural shipments were handled from the privately owned elevator and potato warehouse erected just south of Oak Street fronting on a railroad siding and from the railroad-owned stock yards (non-extant) erected north of the depot in 1902. The railroad's Mill Spur was part of a Y-track configuration built at the end of the line. The Mill Spur curved east from the main line to the Coon Lake yard of the Wisconsin Oak Lumber Company and the McDonough Saw Mill. The Mill Spur also facilitated shipments from the stave and heading mill, which was established in 1904 to construct barrels and lids.

By the time the 1910 Census was recorded, Frederic had grown to 511 residents, more than doubling West Swede Township's population in just a decade. Frederic remained at the end of the line for ten years during which time the Soo Line added a series of support structures to its Frederic rail yard including an engine house, section house, hand car house, a stock yards with an addition, a scale, coal derrick house and platform, and engine house addition - all non-extant. In 1911 railroad track building resumed with the Soo Line extended to the north 72.5 miles from Frederic to Boylston Junction and then on to Superior and Duluth. To mark the completion of the Frederic Branch, in 1912 the Soo Line added a semaphore to signal train orders along the main line and two sidings through the Frederic yard. An extension to the freight wing of the Frederic Depot was

⁵Asper, p. 12.

⁶Ibid.

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Frederic Depot
Frederic, Polk County, Wisconsin

added four years later.

Frederic's population continued to grow but at a slower pace in the decades following completion of the Frederic Branch. In 1920 population stood at 602, by 1930 it had grown to 680, and by 1940 had risen to 725. Polk County's population hit a pre-World War II high in 1920 with 26,870. Once the Frederic Branch was completed, daily passenger service saw as many as three trains pass between the Twin Ports and the Twin Cities – a day local, a day through express, and a night train with sleeping cars. Each stopped in Frederic for a few minutes to pick up passengers, express, and mail shipments.

As the above numbers illustrate, the arrival of the railroad in this area of northern Wisconsin significantly contributed to the area's growth and development. In addition to exporting the region's hardwoods to lumber buyers, the railroad brought in people and commodities to supply the growing community. While once part of a larger railroad complex, the Frederic Depot is the sole element remaining relating to the central role the railroad played in the village's founding and its expanding economy.

Architecture

The Frederic Depot derives architectural significance as an example of the standard Second Class Depot design built by the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie Railway. The Soo Line's "signature" combination depot design included a freight room, joint passenger waiting room for men and women, and agent office/ticket office on the first floor with the agent's living quarters on the second floor. The first use of this Second Class Depot design by the Soo Line was in 1891 and the last in 1918.⁷ It appears to have borrowed elements from similar depot designs built by other Midwestern railroad companies including the Toledo and Northwestern; the Chicago and North Western; the Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific; the Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Northern; and the Great Northern.⁸

Estimates range from 175 to 200 for the number of depots built using the Second Class Depot.⁹ According to Soo Line railroad historian Stuart Nelson, a total of 165 depots are known to have been built using a plan identical to that of the Frederic Depot. These include 57 in Minnesota, 5 in Montana, 89 in North Dakota, 6 in South Dakota, and 8 in Wisconsin. These depots ranged in cost from \$1,441 for the first ones built in 1891 in North Dakota to \$5,126 for the last one built 27 years later. Building records maintained at the Shoreham Yards by the Soo Line's Engineering Department for Frederic, Wisconsin indicate that the first depot's construction cost in 1901 was \$1,525 for material and labor with the freight room extension costing \$563 in 1916. Other Wisconsin towns with Second Class Depot designs included Kennan and Catawba, with the Frederic Depot the only extant building. Five other non-extant examples of the Second Class Depot were built along the Frederic Branch in Minnesota. These were the depots in Markville, Cloverton, Kingsdale, Belden, and Harlis.

Construction of Soo Line depots such as that built in Frederic was usually carried out under the direction of the railroad contractor in charge of building the line itself or a sub-contractor who moved from town to town along the

⁷ Interviews conducted by Marlys Svendsen via email with Stuart Nelson, retired train dispatcher and railroad historian for the Soo Line Railroad at the Shoreham Yards, Minneapolis, Minnesota, May 11 and 15, 2002.

⁸ Roger H. Grant and Charles W. Bohi, *The Country Railroad Station in America* (Sioux Falls, South Dakota: The Center for Western Studies, Augustana College), 1988.

⁹ John A. Gjevre, *Saga of the Soo, Part I: West from Shoreham*, second edition (Moorhead, Minnesota: Gjevre Books), 1990, p. 97.

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Section 8 Page 4

Frederic Depot
Frederic, Polk County, Wisconsin

line completing nearly identical buildings. Replacement depots were often built by the Bridge and Building Department from stores kept at the line's Shoreham Yards in Minneapolis. In either case, standard blueprints were maintained for the structures along with a specification list that included a master table for the materials required. These materials were then shipped in by flat car to the station being built, since, in most instances, towns and lumberyards did not exist in the new communities.

Through the years, the standard Second Class Depot became the most popular design on the Soo Line. Its "architectural features and paint colors were often so distinctive that, to anyone with an interest in railroads and their history, a station building could be almost instantly identified as to its railroad company owner and sometimes, even the operating region within which it was located."¹⁰ Over time, these Soo Line depots saw electricity added, indoor plumbing installed, wood platforms replaced with concrete platforms, and Insul-Brick™ siding installed. In some cases where traffic warranted it, freight rooms were enlarged and warming rooms were added for the storage of perishable freight. This was the case in 1916 in Frederic when the freight room was extended 24 feet on the south end with the resulting form based on Plan 3104B.

Beginning in the 1870s railroad companies began producing standard plans for their small to mid-size depots. Standardized plans reduced both the cost of the materials needed to construct the depot and saved on design costs. Combination depots, such as the one in Frederic, were most commonly designed to house the passenger, freight and train control functions in one building. As seen here, the office is in the center, flanked by the passenger area and freight storage on either side. The Soo Line in addition other rail lines, also incorporated the living quarters on the second floor of some depots. This allowed the stationmaster to be accessible 24 hours per day. Separation of entrances, as seen here, provided some measure of privacy to the stationmaster's family.

From an architectural perspective, the Second Class Depot design was highly functional. Economical design is seen in a combined waiting room for men and women passengers due to the small number of ticketed passengers; the use of a projecting bay window along the wall facing the main line in order to alert the depot agent of arriving trains and yard activities; or the location of sliding doors in the freight room wing to maximize storage space and provide for convenient unloading of freight. Another important element was the location of the agent's living quarters above the station. This meant that the agent was always on hand for a business that operated 24 hours a day.

The warming room found in the Frederic Depot was added within the unheated freight room space by locating a separate walled off area next to the agent's office. A series of wall vents were then installed between the heated office area and the separate walled off storage area thus providing for a "warming room." Railroad historian John Gjevre suggest that the use of warming rooms initially came about on the Soo Line as a result of the practice of drop-shipment of liquor handled by the railroads in constitutionally dry North Dakota prior to the turn of the 20th century.¹¹

The Frederic Depot continued in active service. Its activities paralleled the Soo Line and the history of railroading in general. Eventually the number of passenger trains diminished and during the difficult economic times of the 1930s, the section buildings were sold and the land they occupied was leased. In 1937 the Minneapolis, St. Paul

¹⁰ John A. Gjevre, *Saga of the Soo, Part I: West from Shoreham*, second edition (Moorhead, Minnesota: Gjevre Books), 1990, p. 97.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

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Frederic Depot
Frederic, Polk County, Wisconsin

and Sault Ste. Marie Railway went into receivership. The difficulties brought on by World War II delayed reorganization until 1944 when the line emerged as the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie Railroad Company. Reorganization in the rail industry continued during the next fifteen years along with an infusion of capital from the Canadian Pacific Railroad. In 1961 three railroads that previously operated through joint ownership and mutual agreements in the Upper Midwest and West formally merged as the "Soo Line Railroad Company." They included the Duluth, South Shore and Atlantic Railroad (a wholly owned subsidiary of the Canadian Pacific Railway); the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie Railroad, owner of the Frederic Depot; and the Wisconsin Central Railroad Company (jointly owned by the Canadian Pacific Railway and the former Soo Line).

Communities with standard second class depots such as the Frederic Depot saw these railroad icons begin to decline as railroad services began to shift. In Frederic passenger service continued on Trains 62 and 63 between St. Paul and Duluth until June 26, 1961 when all passenger trains along the Frederic Branch ceased. LCL (less-than-car load) freight service continued until the mid-1980s in Frederic with freight car service continuing for several local factories as well. Soo Line Railroad Company records show that the Frederic Depot was officially recommended for closure and removal on August 12, 1985. The poor condition of the station, future maintenance costs, the fact that it was no longer needed for railroad operations, and trespasser liability were given as reasons at the time for its closure.¹² Negotiations by the railroad at the time to acquire two other major Midwestern rail lines - the Milwaukee Road and the Minneapolis, Northfield and Southern Railroad - may have contributed to the decision to abandon selective Soo Line stations. In any case, company records show abandonment decisions rendered for dozens of similar depots in Minnesota, Wisconsin, the Dakotas, and Montana during the 1980s. By 2002 other preserved examples of the standard Second Class Depot included only those in Viking, Minnesota (used as a museum); Clearbrook, Minnesota (used as a museum); Egeland, North Dakota (used as a museum); Winger, Minnesota (used as a restaurant); and Lake Bronson, Minnesota (used as a museum).

Soon after the announcement was made that the Frederic Depot would be retired in 1985, the idea of preserving the building as a local museum was suggested to the Village Board but no action was taken. The building remained abandoned and boarded up for the next five years while negotiations took place and support for a local museum grew. In 1990 the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources was given the job of supervising the abandoned roadbed through Polk and Burnett Counties. The DNR entered into a memorandum of understanding with the Village of Frederic whereby the building would be preserved as a museum and trail support facility along the Gandy Dancer Trail then being established along the former right-of-way of the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie Railroad, by then known as the Wisconsin Central Railroad. The Frederic Historical Society was formed on June 28, 1990 to oversee the restoration and operation of the museum on behalf of the Village of Frederic. Restoration of the Frederic Depot was completed in 1996 with financing provided by a federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Enhancement Act grant, the Village of Frederic, the Frederic Historical Society, and dozens of volunteers.

Summary: The Frederic Depot is significant locally under National Register Criterion A for its association with the expansion of the rail line and the subsequent founding of Frederic, Wisconsin, a railhead town in the hardwood forests of northwest Wisconsin. The depot was a pivotal building in the development of the community. The depot's construction in 1901 at the terminus of the line being built from the Twin Cities to the

¹²"Authority for Expenditure, Soo Line Railroad Company," August 12, 1985, from files of Frederic Historical Society.

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Frederic Depot
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Twin Ports by the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie Railway marked an important step in the development of a regional transportation system. It further illustrates a pattern of land development that was inaugurated by the arrival of the railroad, with the community being laid out in relation to the railroad and the entire growth spurred or instigated by the presence of the new rail line and depot.

In addition, the Frederic Depot is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C as a well-preserved example of the standard two-story combination depot form favored by several Midwestern railroads in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This form provided for both the passengers and the movement of goods. In addition some plan also provided a residence for the station manager. In a community such as the newly founded Frederic with few buildings, the residence would have also been a necessity in attracting a railway employee to the site. In 2002, the Frederic Depot stands out as one of only a handful of preserved depots from the more than 165 examples of this type that once stood out as symbols of the Soo Line Railroad.

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Frederic Depot
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Frederic Depot
Frederic, Polk County, Wisconsin

Verbal Boundary Description

Commencing at a point 12 feet west of the center of the main line track of the abandoned Wisconsin Central Railroad R.O.W., and 40 feet north of the centerline of Oak Street; thence west parallel to Oak Street 88 feet to the west boundary of said railroad R.O.W.; thence northwesterly parallel to the center line of the main line track 359 feet to the centerline of Elm Street; thence east parallel to Oak Street 88 feet to a point 12 feet west of the center of the main line track; thence southeasterly parallel to the main line track 359 feet to the point of beginning, all being in Section 28, Township 37 North, Range 17 West, Polk County, Wisconsin.

Boundary Justification

This parcel includes the land acquired by the Village of Frederic from the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources on July 20, 1990 for use as a trail facility, and is a portion of the parcel historically associated with the depot and railway operations in Frederic.

Frederic Depot
Name of Property

Polk County
County and State

Wisconsin

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name/title	Village of Frederic, c/o Village Clerk-Treasurer	telephone	715/327-4293
street&number	P.O. Box 567	zip code	54837-0567
city or town	Frederic	state	WI

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Frederic Depot
Frederic, Polk County, Wisconsin

Photographs: Frederic Depot, Frederic, Polk County, Wisconsin
Photographs taken April 2002 by Marlys A. Svendsen with Svendsen Tyler, Inc.,
Sarona, Wisconsin.
Negatives stored with Frederic Historical Society, Frederic Depot, 210 Oak Street,
Frederic, Wisconsin.

1. Exterior, looking northwest
2. Exterior, looking northeast
3. Exterior, looking east northeast
4. Exterior, looking southwest
5. Exterior, bay window detail, looking southwest
6. Interior, waiting room and ticket window, looking southeast

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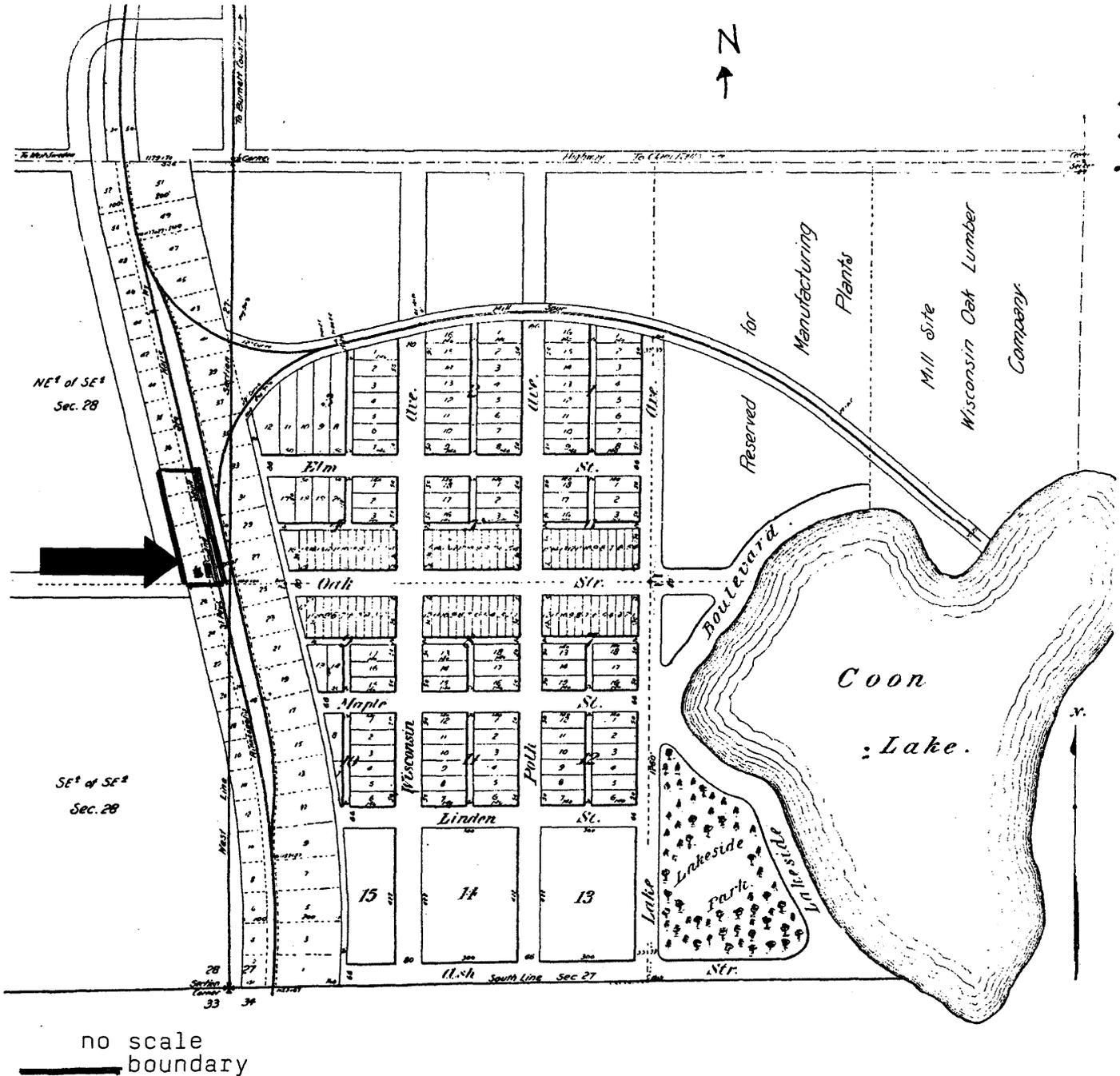
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Frederic Depot, Polk County, Wisconsin

Figure 1: Plat of the Town of Frederic, Polk County Wisconsin.¹



¹Asper, Bernice, *Frederic... For 75 Years* (Frederic, Wisconsin: Inter-County Cooperative Publishing Association), 1976, p. 4.

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Frederic Depot, Polk County, Wisconsin

Aerial Sketch Map for Site and Building, 2001

Gandy Dancer Trail

N ▶

Frederic Depot



OAK STREET

S.R. 35

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Frederic Depot, Polk County, Wisconsin

Historical View, ca. 1915 (Frederic Historical Society Collection)



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Frederic Depot, Polk County, Wisconsin

Historical View, undated, ca. 1910 (from "Saving the Frederic Depot," *The Soo*, p. 37)



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Historical View, undated, ca. 1902 (Frederic Historical Society Collection)



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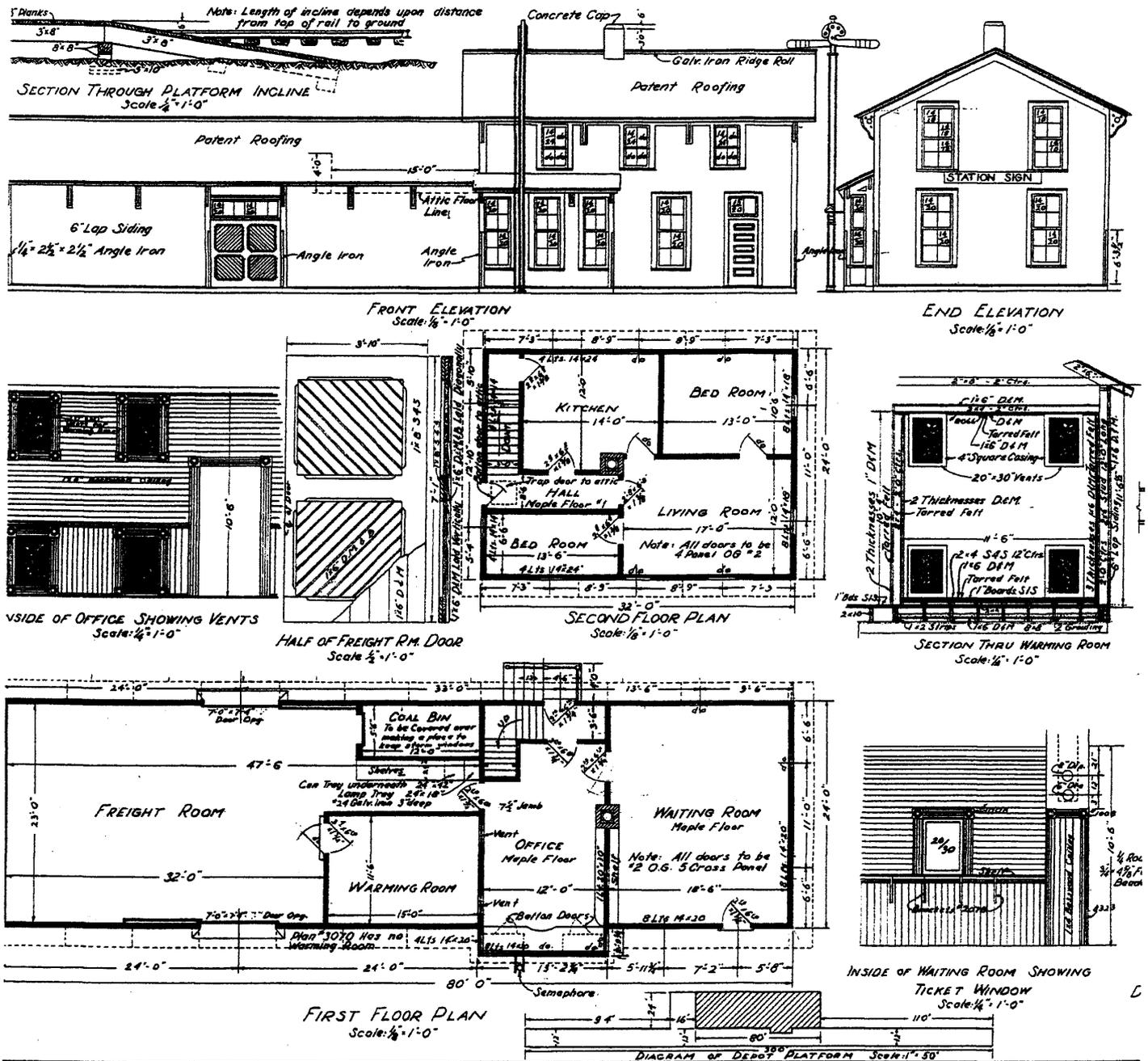
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Figure 2: "Plan 3104 B, M. St. P. and S. Ste. M. RY. 24'x80', Second Class Depot with Living Rooms and 11'6"x15' Warming Room."⁴



⁴Ibid.