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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

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 Illinois Central Railroad Yard--Cherokee
other names/site number Cherokee Illinois Central Station

2. Location

street & number Betw. S. 4th & 5th Sts. frm. W. Maple to W. Beech Sts. not for publication
city, town Cherokee vicinity
state IOWA code 19 county Cherokee code 035 zip code 51012

3. Classification

| | | | |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Ownership of Property | Category of Property | Number of Resources within Property | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> building(s) | Contributing | Noncontributing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-local | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district | <u>8</u> | <u>9</u> buildings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State | <input type="checkbox"/> site | _____ | _____ sites |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal | <input type="checkbox"/> structure | _____ | _____ structures |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> object | <u>8</u> | <u>9</u> Total |

Name of related multiple property listing:
The Advent & Development of Railroads in Iowa 1855-1940
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] 7/18/90
Signature of certifying official Date
Bureau 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. **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): _____
[Signature] 9/6/90
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)

Vacant/Not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

N/a

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concretewalls BrickOther: Drop Sidingroof Asphaltother Limestone

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

(See Continuation Sheet, Attached.)

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1**Summary of District:**

The Illinois Central Railroad Yard in Cherokee is a long, irregularly shaped district located in the south-central part of town. It lies between South Fourth and South Fifth Streets, and extends from W. Maple Street south beyond W. Beech Street, toward the Little Sioux River. The district is surrounded by a mixed commercial, light industrial and residential neighborhood. On the north end (nearest the depot) downtown commercial structures flank it; in the central and southern parts of the district homes line the eastern edge of it, while grain elevators and other light industry line the western edge. The southern end of the yard is much more wooded since it is closest to the river.

The district consists of seventeen structures dating to various periods of railroad history, predominantly the last (The Advent and Development of Railroads in Iowa, "Efficiency, Improvement and Retrenchment: c. 1921-1940"). Ten are of wood frame construction, and seven are of brick; only the turntable is of concrete and steel. Although the brick buildings are outnumbered they are by far the largest, and their high visibility creates the impression of a district primarily composed of brick structures. The district possesses no real architectural style, but the degree of ornamentation present in the yard varies from the "high style" eclecticism of the depot and American Express building to the undecorated, utilitarian support structures like the toolhouses.

Integrity varies from the well-preserved turntable to the much-altered freighthouse, but this is offset by the unusually large number of historic buildings still extant. Collectively, the integrity of these structures is quite high when compared to the scaled down, heavily remodelled yards that currently exist in Iowa. The Illinois Central complex in Cherokee is the last nearly-complete pre-Diesel era railroad yard left in the State of Iowa. What follows is an inventory of the buildings within the district:

A.) Passenger Depot, 1896, 1941-1943, 1946. Contributing. The Cherokee depot is two and one-half stories tall, 4x3 bays, rectangular, and faces west. It is surrounded on the north, west and south sides by a brick platform which was, until a few months ago, covered by a one-story canopy. The building has a limestone foundation, brick walls that are veneered on the exterior, and a hipped roof clad with asphalt shingles. The trackside bay window is two stories tall, rectangular, and topped by a hipped roof. On the east side, three small projecting bays contain entries to the building. Of the station's four basic bays most hold three openings; the north side bay has four, and the trackside bay window has just two. All windows have been covered with boards. The north end bay is also narrower than the other bays; three oversized angle braces support the overhanging roof on both sides of this bay. An interior brick chimney rises from the west roofslope.

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Stylistically the Cherokee depot is an eclectic building. The shallow eaves are supported by scrolled modillion blocks in an acanthus leaf design. The cornice is metal and sports an egg-and-dart motif. The building has a wide frieze board with "CHEROKEE" over the windows of the trackside bay window. All windows and most doors have splayed, gauged lintels. Windows on the second floor have cut stone sills; sills on the first floor are incorporated in a continuous beltcourse of the same material. On the east elevation the central bay has an oval window with cut stone false keystones. The leaded glass may still be intact in this window. This bay is interesting in that the roof over it projects slightly while the wall surface itself remains flush with the rest of the building. This emphasizes the main entry below, and suggests symmetry with the truly-projecting trackside bay on the west side.

The trackside bay possesses more stylish detailing, as is common on railroad stations. This was the most important feature of the depot since the dispatcher controlled the yard traffic from the bay window; it was also quite noticeable to the public because it projected out from the wall. The Illinois Central highlighted Cherokee's bay window with battered walls and a cut stone veneer below the beltcourse on the first floor. The beltcourse is also denticulated around the bay.

Another common railway station feature was the canopy over the platform. Cherokee had a broad, hip-roofed canopy supported by posts. The posts were square, and had chamfered edges and shallow, slightly curved braces. Unfortunately the canopy was demolished December 28, 1989, at the request of the City of Cherokee, for unknown reasons.

The first floor plan from north to south is as follows: baggage room, men's waiting room, ticket office, main entry and restrooms, and finally women's waiting room. The baggage room has small, square windows and a central freight door on the track side. The men's and women's waiting rooms have their own entrances (in angled entry bays) from both the platform and the street. The main entry on the east side is in a larger, rectangular bay. All pass doors are flanked by windows. The second floor was devoted to division offices. (See sketch of probable second floor plan, attached.) The interior wood work is simply molded, except for the baggage room, which has plain board surrounds. Interior doors were similar to original exterior doors (see drawings, attached).

The Cherokee depot survived unaltered until 1941, when the IC planned to repair and reduce energy costs for its larger depots. At Cherokee these amounted to removing the canopy over the east side entries, and reconstructing the angled main entry bay into a

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rectangular one. At the same time the company removed the second story porches on the baggage room end, and replaced them with angled braces. The elegant porches distinguished the depot with their Tuscan columns and spindled balustrades. Doors opening onto the porches were then replaced with windows.

In 1943-46 the company toyed with more radical changes to the depot, including the removal of the entire second floor and all extraneous decorative features. For unknown reasons, most of these alterations never occurred. The flag pole, finials, hipped roof dormers and their leaded glass windows were removed when the entire roof of the structure was replaced. The total removal of the large dormer over the main entry and the reduction of the trackside bay roof were completed at this time. Other modifications were the replacement of the original slate roof with asphalt shingles, the removal of the chimney's corbelled cap, the removal of the oriel window on the south end, and the replacement of four windows in the trackside bay with only two windows. The original exterior pass doors were replaced with plain one-light over three-panel doors about the same time. The streetside freight door in the baggage room was reportedly infilled before 1946. The most recent alteration, a new ice-cuber, was installed in the men's waiting room in 1965.

Remarkably, in each replacement the railroad took pains to reconstruct beltcourses and match brick. The company was probably much more careful with changes made at Cherokee than at other depots because of the station's importance as a division point and junction for several of its branches. The depot today retains much of its integrity despite so many changes. Alterations become obvious only after studying the depot and comparing it to the architect's original plans. (In addition, most of these will be historic changes within a year or two.) Overall the IC architects managed to make the Cherokee depot more efficient for railroad use and to sustain its feeling of historic time and place.

B.) American Express Building, 1896, 1922. Contributing. One-story, 3x1-bay, rectangular plan building with a concrete and limestone foundation, brick walls, and hipped roof with asphalt shingles. The building faces west, and measures 32' wide by 24'6" deep. Front elevation has two freight doors with segmentally-arched transom windows above. The east side has one freight door and two windows next to it. Both north and south sides have tripled half-height 1/1 windows with a single sill underneath.

All window sills are cut limestone. Bullnose or rounded bricks soften the building's corners. The eaves have a shallow overhang and the metal cornice is identical to that on the passenger depot. The older freight door in the right-bay of the west side was originally like those on passenger depot. Its segmentally arched transom window once

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held leaded lights with a splayed, gauged, lintel above. In 1922 twelve feet were added to north end. A second freight door on the west side was added then. On east side, the freight door was moved north and another 1/1 window replaced it. The tripled windows on north side were moved to new wall but the interior wall remains.

The right-bay freight door on east elevation has a replacement 12-light, segmentally-arched transom which was probably installed in the 1922 alterations. The freight doors on the west elevation have seen further modifications. The left-bay door has been widened and its transom boarded over. The right-bay original freight door on this side has been partially infilled with brick and a pass door placed in the center. Its transom is also boarded over.

Steel bumper plates have been affixed to the west wall. A standing tank for fuel leans against the south wall. According to the drawings for this building, steam pipes from the depot were plugged at the depot end in 1965. Facetone brick pavers on the north, west and south elevations are intact; those on north side are continuous with the depot's pavers.

The American Express building has experienced significant alterations, but like its larger neighbor, they are not immediately obvious. The Illinois Central reused many of the building's original materials and matched others in its 1922 modifications. The most notable example of this is the company's replacement of the bullnose bricks at the structure's northern corners. Despite alterations, the integrity of this building is high; a sense of historic time and place has been preserved.

C.) Freight House, 1870, 1896, c. 1910, 1946. Contributing. One-story, eavefront, rectangular building facing west with concrete foundation, drop siding, and asphalt shingled roof. The roof is hipped on the north end and gabled on the south end, revealing the extensive 1946 modifications. The freight house measures 162'6" wide by 24'5" deep. Windows are 6/6 wood sash with plain board surrounds. Three asymmetrically placed freight doors on the east and west sides have vertical tongue-in-groove wood clad doors. These doors are eight feet wide, but one freight door on the south end is 11'8" wide. Offices were located in the northern end, from which the second story was removed in the 1940s. A concrete platform measuring 293 feet long and 3'6" high spans the front of this building, and has wooden ramps on each end. A brick stove chimney pierces the roof toward the building's north end.

The freight house was built in 1870 as the original IC combination depot. When the new station was erected in 1896 the depot was moved to this site and converted to a freight house. The building reportedly collapsed in 1899, but no major damage was done; it may have collapsed because of the move. Between 1909 and 1914, the south end of the building was extended, nearly doubling its size. The IC made even greater

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modifications in 1946, when the freight house was stripped to the studs and rebuilt without the second story portion; the hipped roof on this end reflects the changes. A gabled ell in the center of the front side was added after 1946, and recently removed. Details about the changes made to this building are sketchy, and there are few photographs of it as a freight house. The freight house was leased by the IC to a local grocery store chain for use as a warehouse sometime in the late 1940s (E. T. Parker, interview.) It was last used four years ago as a storage building by Hy-Vee foods. The structure is one of two known recycled Illinois Central freight houses in the state; the other is in Iowa Falls. With its alterations the freight house reflects the corporate attitude of the Illinois Central toward its physical plant, perhaps more than any other structure in the Cherokee yard.

D. Tool House, c. 1930. Non-contributing due to age. One-story, rectangular, eavefront structure facing west. It has a foundation of railroad ties and concrete, indicating that it has probably been moved. It is clad with drop siding and has a gabled roof with asphalt shingles. The building measures 27'4" wide by 9'6" deep. Windows are 1/1 single-hung, and the door on the west side is one-light over three-panel. A metal stovepipe is at the roof ridge of the tool house's north end. The southern end was extended at some unknown date, and was possibly used for firewood storage. There are two rooms inside; the southern room also has shelves for tools. No exact construction date is known but this is probably a newer structure on an old toolhouse site.

E. Carpenter Shop, c. 1945. Non-contributing due to age. One-story, 4x2-bay, rectangular structure facing east. This building has a concrete foundation, drop siding, and a gabled roof with asphalt shingles. The door and window configuration is asymmetrical: window-door-window-freight door. Windows are small, square, and without glazing. Both doors are hinged and of vertical tongue-in-groove wood siding. A central brick stove chimney stands at the roof ridge. The carpenter shop is definitely one of the IC's later buildings constructed out of salvaged materials.

F. Mill Room, unknown construction date. Non-contributing due to condition. This one-story, rectangular, shed-roofed building does not appear on any of the fire insurance maps, and is therefore difficult to date. It faces east, rests upon timber piers, indicating that it is portable, and has vertical, false-bevel tongue-in-groove siding. The roof is covered with rolled asphalt. It has one small square window without glass on the east side. A hinged door with vertical wood siding is on the same side, and has an interior "Z" brace. Windows and tools are stored inside. Vertical sided buildings are unusual along the IC lines in Iowa.

G. Sand House, c. 1925. Contributing. One-story, 1x1-bay, square structure has a concrete foundation, brick walls, and a shed roof covered with tar and gravel. 1/1-panel doors in both the north and south elevations. One window opening is set in each

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side; glass is gone. The masonry is laid in 5:1 American bond, and the walls are capped with concrete copings. The building measures 16 feet wide by 9'6" deep, and the walls are 9 inches thick. On the rooftop is an elevated dry sand tank for pumping sand into the engines. The sand house was built on the site of an earlier water tank, which was here as late as 1918; a cistern in between the tracks on the east side of the structure is further evidence of the previous building. By 1930 the sand house was located here, next to a large sand bin to the north. The sand tank was added in 1945 and holds 10 cubic yards of sand.

H. Turntable, 1914. Contributing. The turntable is 85 feet in diameter, and set in a round pit approximately five feet deep. The walls of the pit are board-formed concrete, and the floor is lined with bricks. The turntable itself is a steel plate girder table with a wood plank deck. The track inside the pit is still intact. A steel bridge to hold electric wires above the engines, and railings of wood posts and steel cord are still intact. The operator's cab is wooden, measuring four feet by four feet. The controls inside are still attached to the table but the electrical cords have been disconnected. The turntable was manufactured by the Nichols Engineering Company, Chicago, Illinois. The number "8526" is stamped on the table but there is no patent date. The previous turntable was situated near the alley of W. Locust and S. Fourth Streets, near the old Cherokee Lumber Yard in 1893, but there was no engine house or shop facility at that location. The Sanborn maps of Cherokee do not depict the present turntable here in 1914, but IC drawings of the yard indicate that it was operating by June 1915. The integrity of the turntable is amazingly high; there have been no apparent alterations to it.

I. Engine House and Machine Shop, 1887; (altered c. 1905, 1915; additions demolished 1978). Contributing. One-story, 4x7-bay, irregular plan structure facing north. The foundation is concrete, walls are brick and the generally flat roof is covered with tar and gravel. The freight house is difficult to measure because of its unusual plan, but it measures roughly 59 feet wide by 105 feet deep. The walls are parapetted and capped by tile copings; wall pilasters divide the wall surface on the east and rear west sides into panels. Windows set in the east and south walls are paired and covered with boards; 9/9 single-hung windows predominate. Doors are assorted sizes, mostly covered with boards, and are found on all the structure's elevations. The doors of the engine house are 12 feet wide, have panels of diagonal boarding and are braced on the exterior; they are hinged and swing outward. The building's interior is littered with tools, machine parts and drums previously filled with oil. It was probably last used by the Maintenance-of-Way Department.

The original machine shop, two-bay engine house attached to its west side, and blacksmith's shop at the southwest corner of the machine shop are all that remains of the roundhouse complex today. These rooms and a boiler room behind the machine shop (non-extant) were built in 1887-1888, and formed the core of the roundhouse.

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Some time before 1908 the company added a ten-stall roundhouse to the 1888 engine house; the round house was heavily damaged by a wind storm in 1908. In mid-1915 the IC altered and enlarged the complex to accommodate larger locomotives. The original paired 9/9 sashes with segmental arches on the east side were apparently enlarged; the present windows have flat arches. Windows on the rear elevation of the old engine house, however, were unmodified and are still segmentally-arched. The wall parapets and copings were added in 1915, and the original round-arched engine house doors were replaced with taller, rectangular, multi-paned doors. A toilet room at the southwest corner of the original engine house was added at the same time.

The greatest alteration in 1915 was the addition of eleven new engine stalls to the west of the original two. According to the plans for a "Standard 100 Foot Engine House" drawn by D. F. McLaughlin in June 1915, the timbers of the old house were to be carried by new walls, and the roof was to be "well-flashed" where the two met. The new stalls were wider (14 feet), taller and deeper than the 1887 stalls. A band of clerestory windows rose above the tops of the doors, about one-third the distance from the front of the stalls. Wide metal chimney pipes on the roof, one for each stall, removed smoke and fumes from the engine house below.

Since the 1940s one of the east side windows has been converted to a door to allow access between the timber platforms on the inside and outside walls of the machine shop. The present doors were probably around 1942. The machine shop was retired in March 1957, but the facility was probably still used for occasional engine storage until the 1960s and then by the M-of-W Department into the late 1970s. In 1978 the deteriorating eleven-stall addition and boiler room behind the machine shop were demolished after years of disuse; their concrete foundations are grown over with trees and weeds. What remains of the shop complex now is the original two-stall engine house, etc., with its 1915 alterations. The condition of the structure is fair to good, and its integrity is high. All alterations were made by the railroad, and no alterations to the 1887 core of buildings have been made since the 1940s.

J. Electrician's Shop, c. 1950. Non-contributing due to age. One-story, 3x4-bay rectangular building facing west. It has a concrete foundation, clapboard siding, and a gabled roof with asphalt shingles. It measures 18'6" wide by 26'2" deep. A shed-roofed extension has been added to the east end, which measures 12'6" wide by 8 feet deep. Central entry on west side and has a door of vertical tongue-in-groove boards. Windows are 8-light fixed on north side and 4/4 double-hung sash on south side. Horizontal weather board interior walls. The construction date for this structure is based on IC plans for a similar building built c. 1950.

K. Storage Shed, c. 1950. Non-contributing due to age. One-story, dilapidated, rectangular shed rests on timber stringers, has shiplap siding, and a shed roof covered

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with rolled asphalt. It has a central entry on the north end, measures 12'6" wide by 25 feet deep, and appears to have been a storage shed. The construction date for this building is based on IC plans for a similar building built c. 1950.

L. Tool House, c. 1942. Non-contributing due to age. One-story, 6x1-bay, rectangular eavefront building facing west. It is supported by timber piles, has drop siding, and an asphalt-shingled gable roof. This is a long narrow building, measuring 60'6" wide by 18 feet deep. A brick stove chimney is set in the east roof slope. Windows are small, 2/2 sash in the gable ends and on the east side. Four hinged double doors are placed asymmetrically on the west side; a single pass door is in the right-bay of that side. All doors have vertical board siding and are "Z" braced. The office in the south end of the building probably served as the section foreman's office. The rest of the building was used for tool and hand car (track speeder) storage.

M. Oil Room-Store Room-Yard Office (aka Multi-Purpose Building), c. 1890. Contributing. One and one-half-stories, 5x2-bay, eavefront building facing west. The foundation was not visible, but it is probably concrete; the watertable is concrete. The walls are brick, laid in 5:1 American Bond. The roof is gabled, covered with asphalt shingles and without eaves. The structure measures 100'7" wide by 30'3" deep. Each bay is recessed and most contain two door or window openings. The window and door configuration of the front elevation is asymmetrical. The south end has a freight door and window; this section was the oil room. The central bay contains a freight door, and is flanked by windows; this section of the building was the store room. The north end has just one pass door and one window, and was the yard office. The gable ends of the building are pedimented, and the south end holds a c. 1960 replacement freight door. All doors and windows are segmentally-arched, and the windows are boarded over. The older freight doors have seven-light transom windows above, and are of diagonal tongue-in-groove boards. A loading platform and ramp lie along most of the structure's east side. The building is still used by the CCP Maintenance-of-Way Dept. and is padlocked, so no view of the interior was available.

N. Locker Room, c. 1950. Non-contributing due to age. One-story, 1x2-bay, gable front structure facing south. It measures 18 feet wide by 24 feet deep, has a concrete foundation, brick walls, and a gable roof covered with asphalt shingles. The masonry is 5:1 American Bond. The off-center door is six-light over three-panel wood. Windows are small, square and a mixture of 3/1 sash and three-light hopper windows. The interior has lockers, sinks, a urinal, and steam heat registers; interior walls are of tile blocks. There are no apparent alterations. The construction date for this building is based on IC plans for such a building built c. 1950.

O. Hose Cart House, c. 1920. Non-contributing due to condition. One-story, dilapidated square structure facing west. This building rests on railroad ties, indicating

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it was portable. It measures 8'4" wide by 12'5" deep and its walls are vertical false-bevel, tongue-in-groove boards. The shed roof is of shiplap, with remnants of tar on it. The only opening is the wide central entry on the west side. It was painted red with a white band midway down the wall. "Hose Cart House" in white letters is faintly visible over the entrance. This building was used for storage of fire extinguishers, and was portable so that it could be moved around as the yard expanded over the years.

P. Rip Track House, c. 1950. Non-contributing due to age. One-story, 4-bay, rectangular building facing east. It measures 52 feet wide by 12 feet deep, has a concrete foundation, brick walls, and a shed-roofed, composition roof. The masonry is 5:1 American Bond, and walls are capped with concrete copings. The east side has three doors and one square window (glass missing). The doors are clad with vertical tongue-in-groove boards and metal. The interior is divided into work rooms; the building was used to store materials and equipment for repairing or removing tracks. No apparent alterations. Air lines (for the engines' air brakes) lie just to the east of this structure. The construction date for this building is based on IC plans c. 1950 for such a structure.

Q. Scale House, 1929. Contributing. One-story, 1x2-bay, rectangular structure facing west. It measures 13'10" wide by 6' deep, has a concrete foundation, clapboard siding, and asphalt shingles on the flat roof. The south has a right-bay door; windows wrapped around from the south to the west and north sides. In front of the scale house is a 50 foot, 150-ton Howe Type 7x15-75 track scale. The scale inside and four lamps affixed to the cornice of the building, are intact. Tracks to the scale have been removed, and the window glazing is gone, but there are no other alterations to the building. The building date is based on IC plans for this structure.

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Illinois Central Passenger Depot--Cherokee
S. Fourth and W. Maple Streets, Cherokee

ICRR Drawing No. A7785, File No. 1422-D
July 1, 1896



Streetside Elevation

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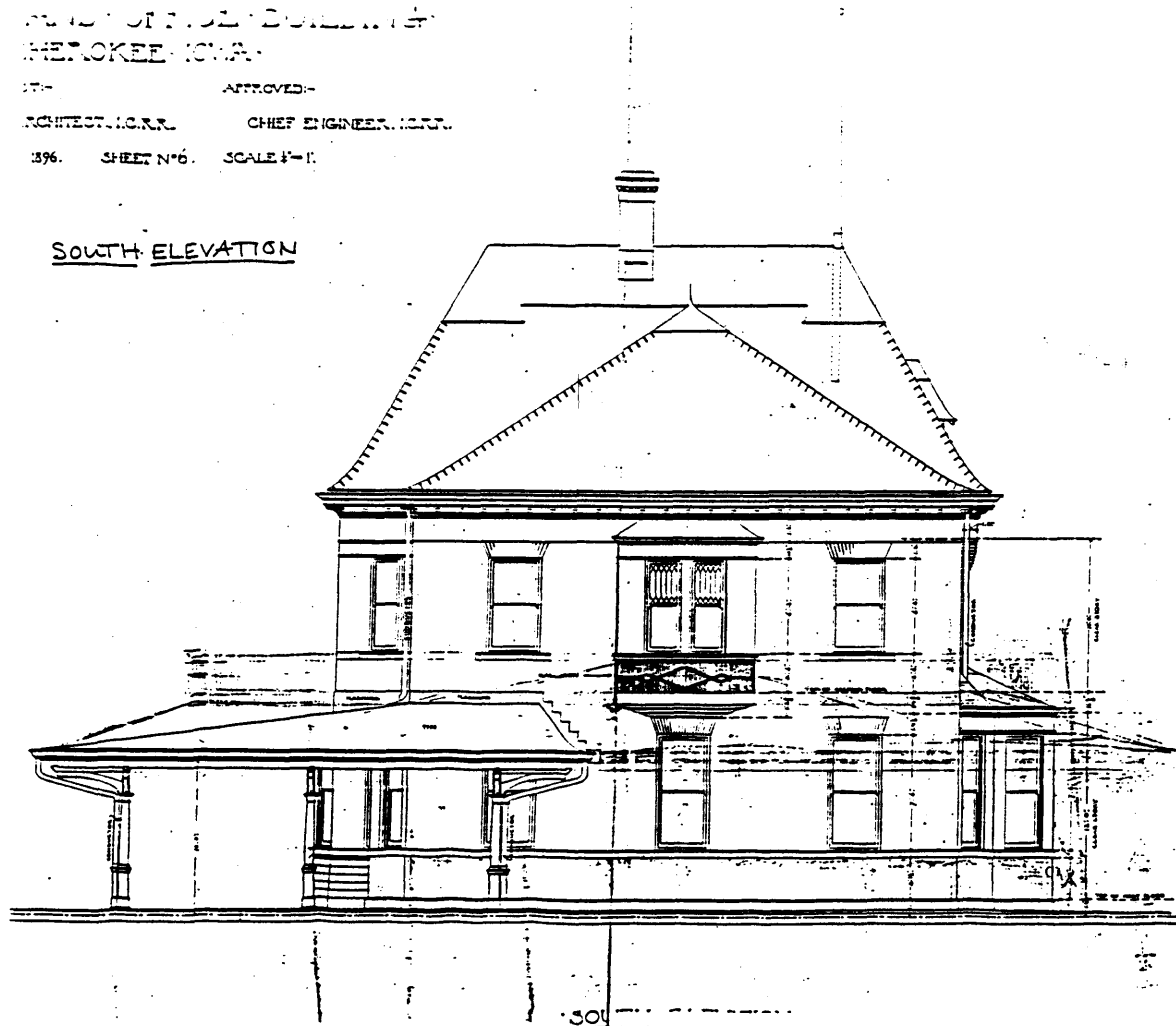
CFN-259-1116

Illinois Central Passenger Depot--Cherokee
S. Fourth and W. Maple Streets, Cherokee

ICRR Drawing No. A7786, File No. 1422-E

DEPT. OF THE INTERIOR
CHEROKEE, IOWA
APPROVED:
ARCHITECT, I.C.R.R. CHIEF ENGINEER, I.C.R.R.
1896. SHEET N° 6. SCALE 1/4"=1'

SOUTH ELEVATION



July 1, 1896

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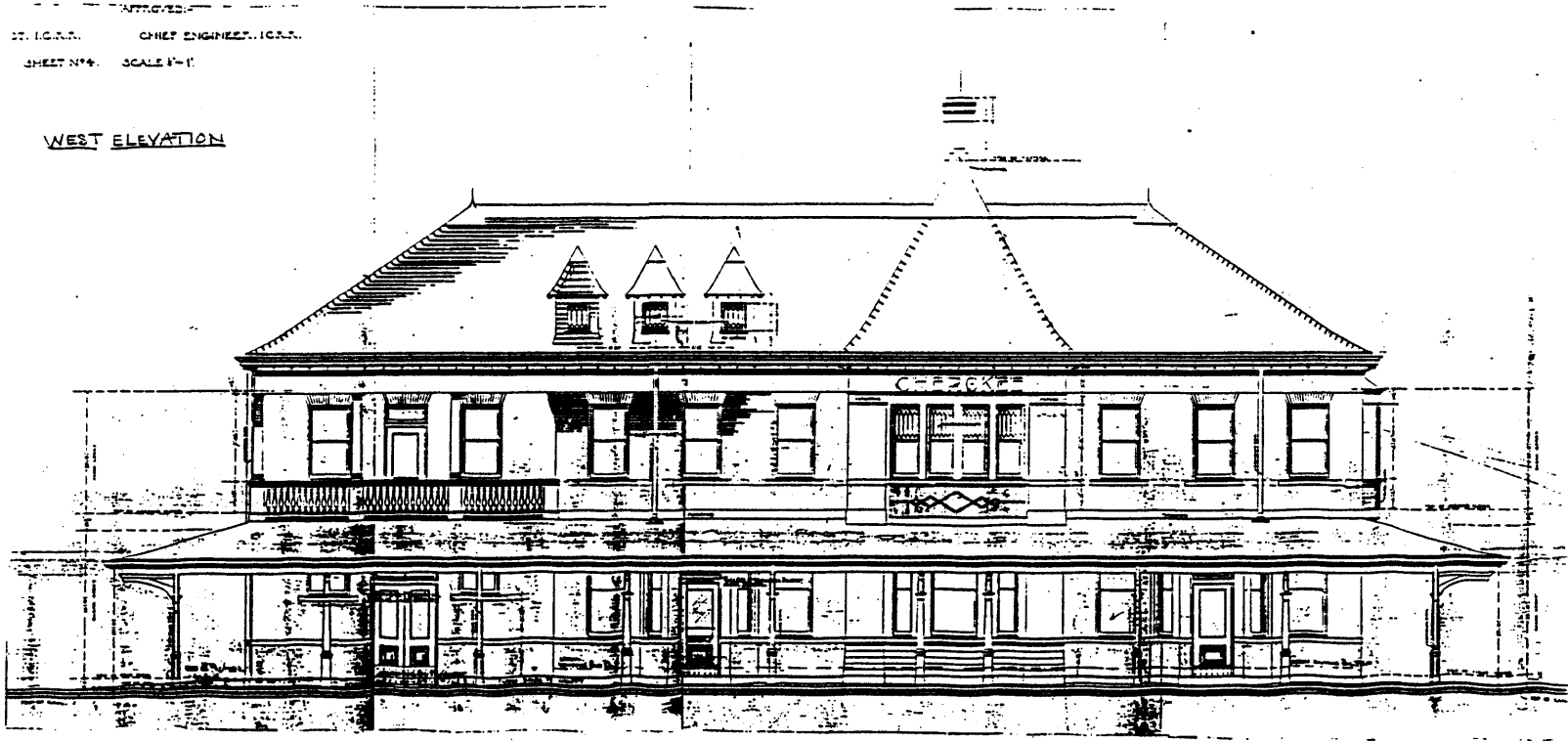
Section number 7 Page 12

Illinois Central Passenger Depot--Cherokee
S. Fourth and W. Maple Streets, Cherokee

ICRR Drawing No. A7784, File No. 1422-C
July 1, 1896

APPROVED:
J. L. G. S. S. CHIEF ENGINEER, I.C.R.R.
SHEET NO. SCALE 1/2"=1'

WEST ELEVATION



Trackside Elevation

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CFN-259-1116

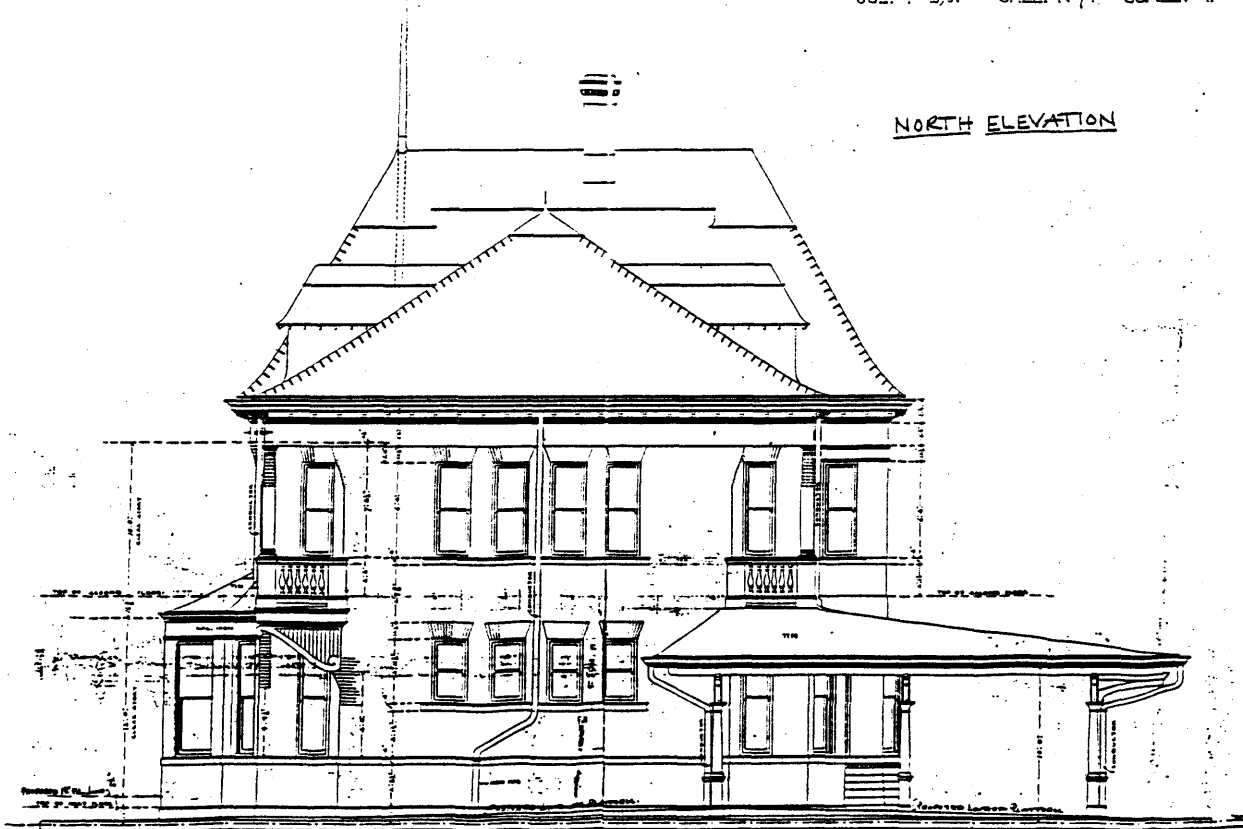
Illinois Central Passenger Depot--Cherokee
S. Fourth and W. Maple Streets, Cherokee

ICRR Drawing No. A7787, File No. 1422-F
July 1, 1896

STATION AND OFFICE BUILDING
CHEROKEE, IOWA

CORRECTED BY _____ APPROVED BY _____
ARCHITECT, I.C.R.R. CHIEF ENGINEER
JULY 1, 1896 SHEET NO. 7 SCALE 1/4" = 1'

NORTH ELEVATION



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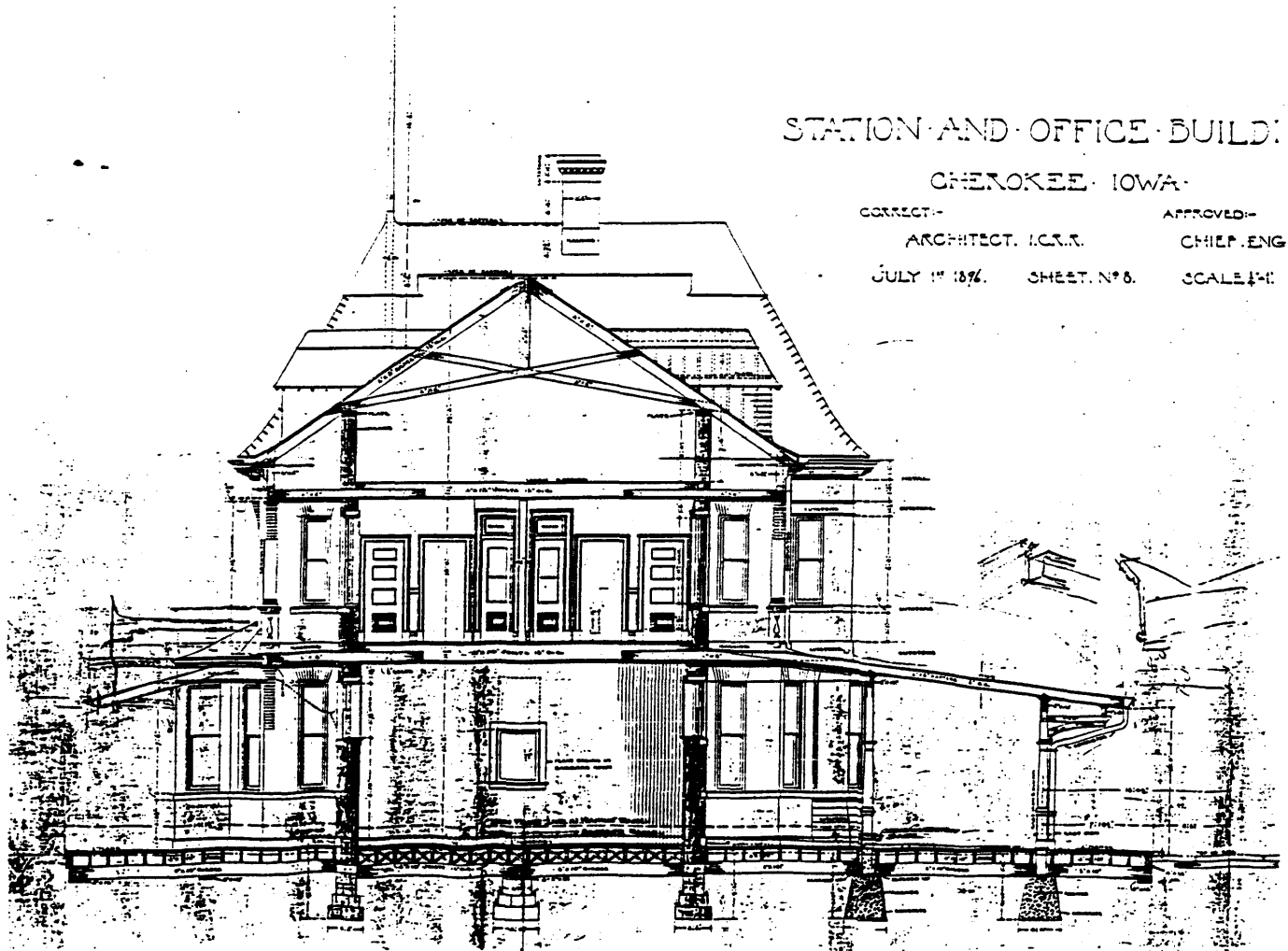
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CFN-259-1116

Illinois Central Passenger Depot--Cherokee
S. Fourth and W. Maple Streets

ICRR Drawing No. A7788, File No. 1422-G
July 1, 1896

Section of Building

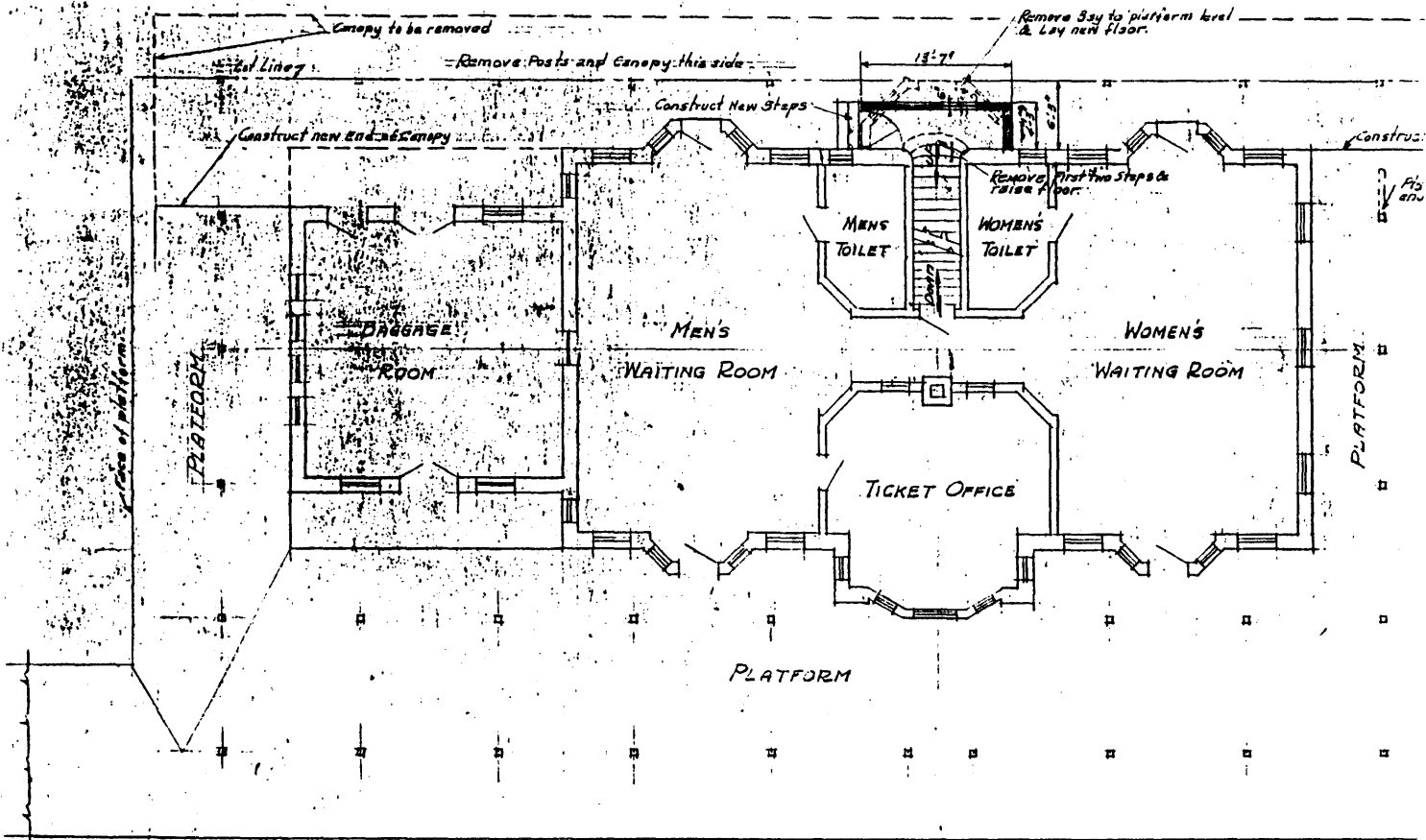


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CFN-259-1116



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

ICRR PASSENGER DEPOT
CHEROKEE, IA
(1993)



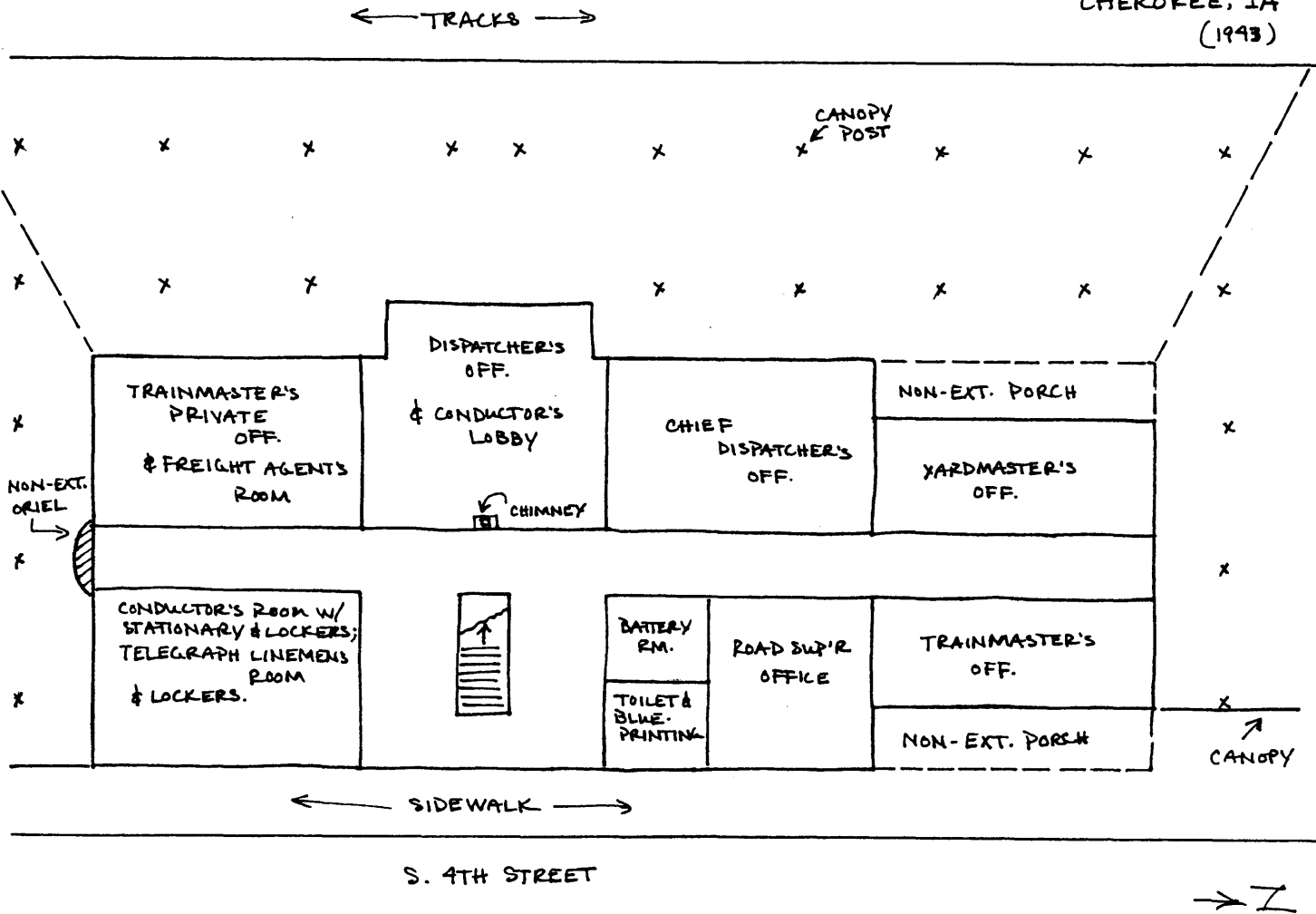
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IC PASSENGER DEPOT
CHEROKEE, IA
(1943)



Second Floor Plan

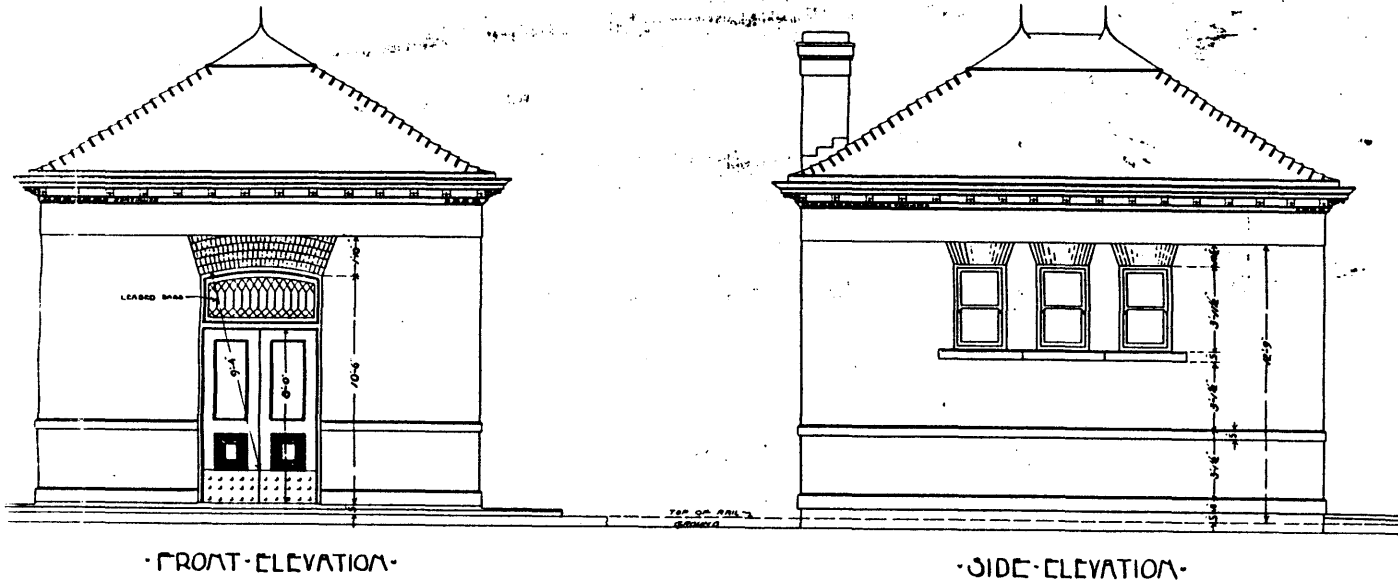
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American Express Building
S. Fourth and W. Maple Streets
Cherokee, Iowa

ICRR Drawing No. A8093, File 1422-BB
October 24, 1896



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ICRR Drawing No. A8093, File No. 1422-BB
October 24, 1896

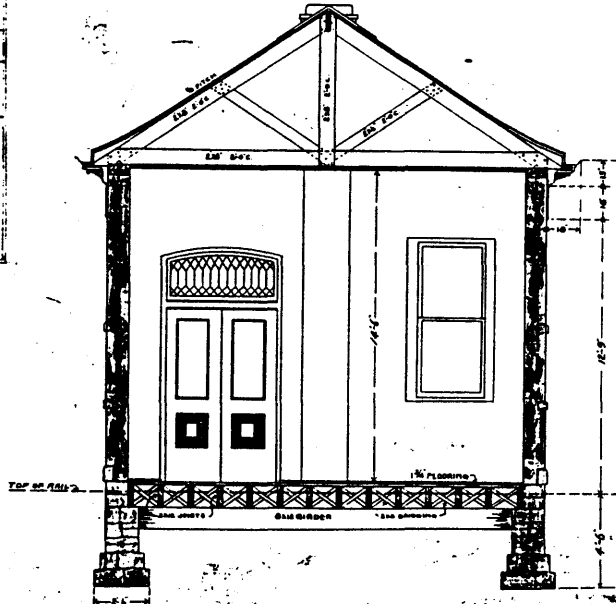
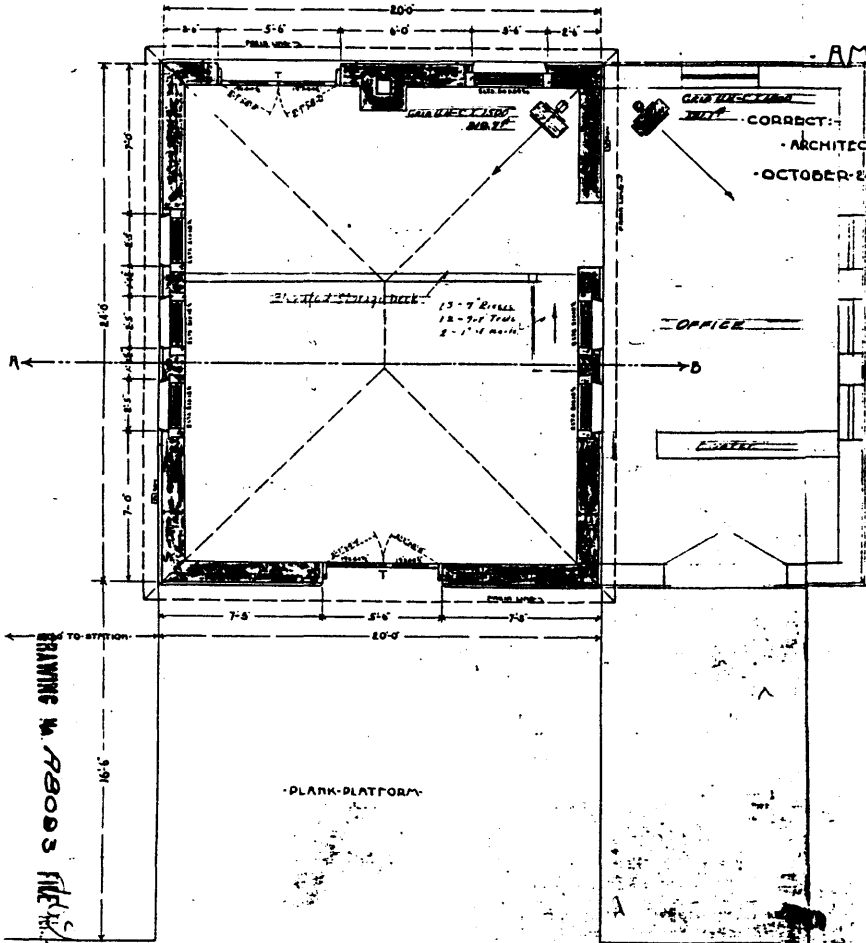
AMERICAN EXPRESS BUILDING

CHEROKEE IOWA

ARCHITECT: ICRR
OCTOBER 24 1896

APPROVED: CHIEF ENGINEER: ICRR
SCALE: 1/4" = 1 FOOT

SHEET NO. 1.



SECTION ON LINE A-B

Revised 3-9-82
Revised 10-21-84

Steam Lines Disconnected & Plugged at Pass. Sta. 1065
DEX NO. C-38-1002

DRAWING IN ROOMS FILE 1422-BB
3-1-11

PLAN

CFN-259-1116

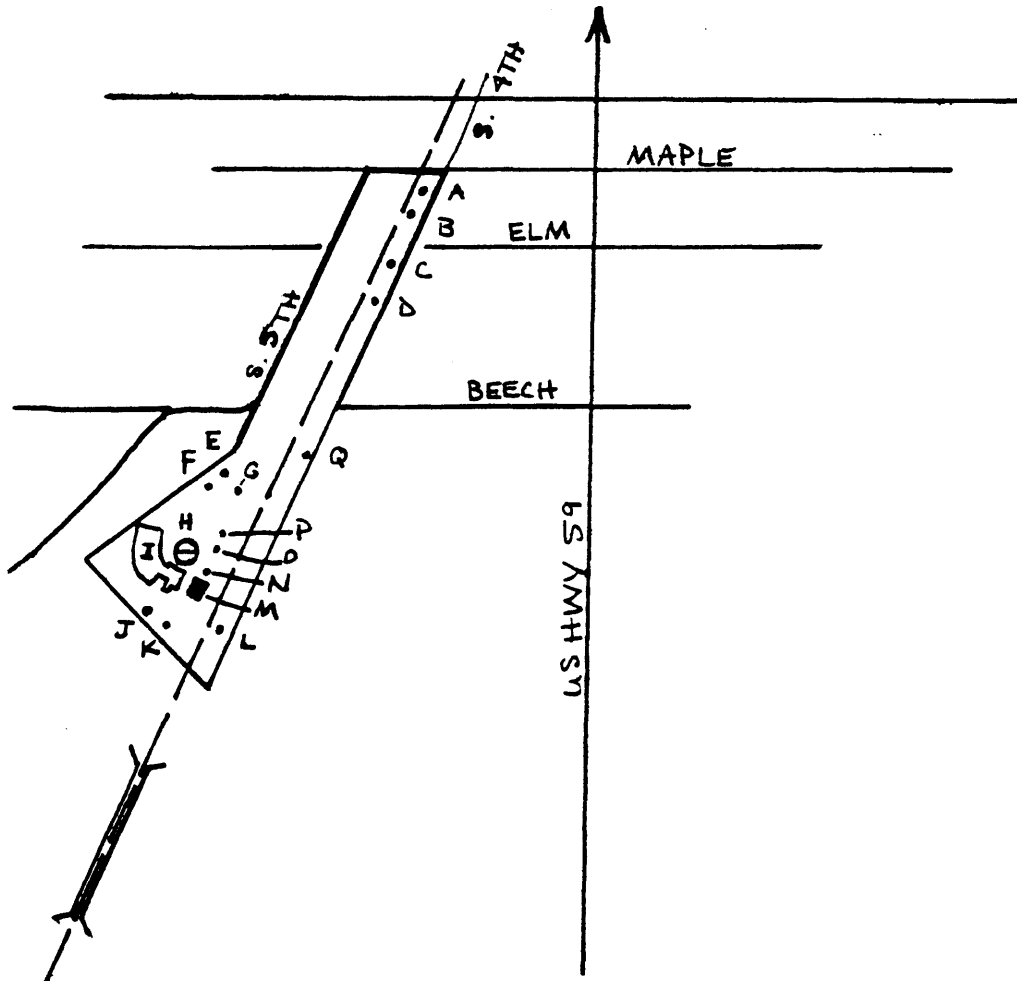
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Illinois Central Railroad Yard -- Cherokee
Map of District

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| A = Depot | I = Engine House |
| B = Express Building | J = Electrician's Shop |
| C = Freight House | K = Storage Shed |
| D = Tool House | L = Tool House |
| E = Carpenter Shop | M = Multi-purpose Building |
| F = Mill Room | N = Locker Room |
| G = Sand House | O = Hose Cart House |
| H = Turntable | P = Rip Track House |
| | Q = Scale House |



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

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
" "
Transportation

Period of Significance

1870-1940
" "
1870-1940

Significant Dates

1870, 1888,
1896, 1915,
1888, 1915

Cultural Affiliation

None

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Illinois Central Railroad
Illinois Central Railroad

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

(See Continuation Sheet, Attached.)

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Allen, Arthur F. Northwestern Iowa: Its History and Traditions, 1804-1926, Volume II. Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1927, pp. 644-650.
Bork, Christian. "'The Cherokee Round House to Go Up at Once.'" Cherokee County Historical Society Newsletter. Volume 23, No. 2, April-June 1988, pp. 1-6.
Bryant, Ray L. A Preliminary Guide to Iowa Railroads, 1850-1972. Bryant, 1984.
Cherokee Centennial History 1856-1956. No author, no publisher, p. 74.
Cherokee County Historical Society. Newsletter, Volume 10, No. 10, October 1975, p. 8.
Cherokee County Historical Society. "Cherokee and Dakota Railroad Special Issue." Newsletter. Volume 13, No. 4, April/May 1978.

See continuation sheet

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Iowa Site Inventory

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Approximately 19 acres.

UTM References

A
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

This nomination includes only the buildings within the Illinois Central Railroad Yard as defined by the above boundaries. It excludes all adjacent trackage, grain elevators, grain or fee storage buildings, the Little Sioux River bridge, and all other structures.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Tracy Ann Cunning with James bernek, Nicholas L. Pitsch, and Rebecca Conard
organization PHR Associates date 1 December 1989
street & number 725 Garden St. telephone 805-965-2357
city or town Santa Barbara state California zip code 93101

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INTRODUCTION:

The Illinois Central historic district in Cherokee consists of a collection of structures representing various periods of that company's Iowa line history, and is therefore significant under Criterion C. The contributing buildings are associated with the railroad's second and third building phases, 1860-1870 and 1886-1888, respectively, as well as the expansion of the roundhouse in 1915. Architecturally, the yard represents each of the IC's three "architectural generations" mentioned in the IC historical context (The Advent and Development of Railroads in Iowa, 1855-1940; "The Illinois Central, A Line Study: 1855-1940"). The freight house is associated with all of the generations; the depot, American Express building, engine house and several yard structures date to the second generation; and the toolhouse locker room, rip track house, etc., all fall within the last generation.

The district's importance is further increased by Cherokee's stature as a hub for IC branch lines and as the westernmost division headquarters on the Illinois Central line in Iowa. This group of buildings exists in Cherokee only because the IC deemed it the most logical place from which to build branch lines, and the IC later promoted it to a division point. These developments grew out of the railroad's need to reinforce its position in Iowa (MPD "The Golden Age of Steam Railroading: c.1890-c.1920 and "Consolidation in the Railroad Industry: 1870-1900"), and for this reason the district is significant under Criterion A.

BACKGROUND:

The Illinois Central's subsidiary company, the Iowa Falls and Sioux City, designated a spot near the Little Sioux River as "New Cherokee" in 1870. This segment of the IC line was completed during that railroad's second and most intense building phase, 1860-1870. The IFSC grading and track-laying crews commenced the final push to finish the line in 1869 from both Sioux City and Fort Dodge. In January 1870 the Sioux City crews reached New Cherokee and the town remained the eastern terminus of this segment for a short six months when the crews moved on toward Storm Lake.

Similar to several other small towns along the IC line, a few people were already settled near the new station site in anticipation of the economic boom which always followed the railroad's arrival. In 1869, William Van Epps purchased a parcel of land near the river, and when the railroad announced its route through the area, he platted a town and sold lots hoping the IFSC would build its depot in his town. Van Epps named it Blair City, perhaps as an added inducement to the railroad's director John I. Blair to locate a station there. His hopes vanished when the railroad chose a more convenient station site south and west of Blair City.

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Cherokee originated as just a box car depot, but the settlers from "Oldtown" as it later came to be known soon moved their homes and businesses to the new townsite. The first passenger train entered Cherokee in July 1870, and by November the railroad erected a standard plan depot on S. Fifth Street, between W. Maple and W. Elm Streets. The two-story frame combination depot with its one-story freight room was almost a carbon-copy of the stations built in Ackley, Iowa Falls, Fort Dodge, and other towns to the east. Like those, it was built without a bay window, but unlike them, it was clad with drop or clapboard siding rather than board-and-batten.

Throughout the 1870s and 1880s the plain structure welcomed a steady flow of settlers, many of whom stayed in Cherokee. Some of the new residents established grain elevators, lumber yards, warehouses along the IC tracks near the depot. By 1888 at least five grain elevators lined South Fifth Street. Numerous stores and businesses crowded into two blocks of Main Street, north and east of the depot.

The 1880s were years of tremendous railroad growth in Iowa, and the Illinois Central recognized the need for feeder lines to remain competitive with rapidly expanding rivals in southern Iowa. In addition, east-west routes were already well-established by the 1880s and the company sought increased revenues from diagonal routes through untapped territory. Accordingly, the IC organized the Cherokee and Dakota Railroad in July 1887 to construct a branch line from Cherokee to Onawa, and from Cherokee to Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Cherokee was not without contestants for the prized branch lines. Le Mars, Storm Lake and Fort Dodge all issued their proposals to the IC; in fact, a line from Le Mars would have opened up a larger area to the railroad than one from the other towns. In the end the railroad probably selected Cherokee because it was halfway between Fort Dodge and Sioux City, and because it was situated on the Little Sioux River, down which valley lay the most practical route to Onawa. The company also received a great deal of support from the citizens of Cherokee, who promised to "finance the securing of the right of way...through this county, and [to] encourage other communities along the route to do likewise." In return for their support the IC agreed to "locate a round house and machine shops in Cherokee" (CCHS Newsletter, April/May 1978, p. 7, 10). (See also MPD, "Early Railroad History: 1855-c. 1889.")

The lines to Sioux Falls and Onawa were completed in 1887 and 1888. In late 1887 the promised yard facilities were built between Fourth and Fifth Streets, north of the Little Sioux River in what was previously "McConnell's pasture" (CCHS Newsletter, April/May 1978, p. 16). The Weekly Cherokean reported in September 1887 that a crew from Fort Dodge was to begin construction that week, and that J. M. Starbuck of Cherokee won the contract to supply all the brick for the new structure (CCHS Newsletter, April-June

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1988, p. 1). (The crew from Fort Dodge may have worked for the IC's engineering department, and may have just finished erecting the round house in that town before they arrived in Cherokee.)

The brick engine house had just two stalls, with an attached machine shop and blacksmith shop. A brick multi-purpose building containing an oil room, store room, and yard office was built across from the engine house c. 1890. North of the shops stood the standard wood stave water tank, with a cadre of coal sheds farther north of the tank. The railroad probably hesitated to put up a larger engine house until the new lines produced enough business to justify better shops. (Another railroad, the Toledo & North Western, followed the same procedure with its shops in Lake City around the same time.) Whether they did immediately or not, the core of the present yard complex was in place, and Cherokee soon became a division point by virtue of the east-west main line and two north and south branches radiating out from it.

The engine house and multi-purpose building were the first of the second generation buildings erected in the Cherokee yard. Although they were not replacements their construction dates lie within the 1890-1930 time frame for the second generation. They were brick, displayed a little more ornamentation than the first yard buildings did, and indicated that the IC was in Cherokee to stay.

In the early 1890s the volume of traffic in Cherokee was heavy enough for the IC to consider building a new station. The branch lines passed through rich agricultural areas, and the amount of produce shipped from them increased as the land was settled. Cherokee was a division point and about forty men worked in the shops, but the yard had no offices, and business was probably outgrowing the original frame combination depot.

In July 1896 Illinois Central architects drew plans for a new passenger depot worthy of a busy division town. The elegant, two-story brick building had scrolled modillion blocks, egg-and-dart motif, several hipped roof dormers, leaded glass windows, and second story porches with Tuscan columns and spindled balustrade. A wide canopy sheltered the platform surrounding the building; on the two-story trackside bay window, letters spelling "CHEROKEE" proclaimed the town and station name.

The new depot was constructed nearer the downtown commercial district, at the corner of W. Maple and S. Fourth Streets. An American Express building and lunch room of a simplified but similar design flanking the structure were added later in 1896 and in 1898 respectively. The old depot was moved across the tracks to the corner of S. Fourth and W. Elm Streets, and converted into the freight house. Cherokee residents now had three impressive buildings and a growing yard complex at the gateway to their community.

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Business along the Illinois Central's Iowa lines accelerated throughout the 1900s and 1910s. The Cherokee creamery and bakeries shipped ice cream and baked goods daily to neighboring small towns. As northwestern Iowa farmers produced more, the railroad's grain and stock shipments increased. Every Saturday train crews from Cherokee picked up carloads of livestock from each station in the area (E. T. "Biz" Parker, interview). Brisk business required larger facilities, so between 1909 and 1914 the company lengthened the freight house. At about the same time, they added a ten stall round house to the existing two stall engine house.

Technological changes came rapidly to the railroad industry during the 1910s, and the recently added roundhouse was short-lived. Locomotives were bigger, faster, and stronger than ever before, and the shops at the IC's division headquarters in Waterloo, Fort Dodge, and Cherokee were unable to handle such large machines. The big engines just could not fit into the older repair facilities! In 1915 the IC designed standard 100' round houses for all three stations. A contract of approximately \$45,000 was awarded to the construction company of Leyden-Ortseifen of Chicago (Railway Age Gazette, 1915, p. 257). At Cherokee the contractors left the original 1888 engine house, but replaced the existing ten-stall house. The new facility was taller, wider, and deeper than its predecessor, and had a band of clerestory windows above the stall doors. Great metal smokestacks carried out the engine exhaust from below, and with its enormous size, gave the complex the appearance of a factory. In order to move the modern locomotives into the roundhouse the IC installed a new 85' electric turntable just north of the house in late 1914 or early 1915.

The peak years for the railroad in Cherokee were the 1920s. This survey found no archival evidence by which the volume of traffic through Cherokee might be judged, but maps and the construction or expansion of several buildings attest to the prosperity of those years here.

The first physical evidence of a need for more space due to booming business is seen in the 1922 enlargement of the American Express building, south of the depot. Twelve feet, two freight doors and a new office were added (IC building plans). Around 1925, the IC built a sand-drying house and sand house on or near the site of the old wooden water tank (building plans). In 1928 a wash and locker room was planned (plans). The following year, 1929, a new 150-ton scale and scale house were added to the northeast part of the complex (plans). By 1930 a new pumphouse, oil storage building, ashpit, and boiler washout rack were located in the yard, evidence of a greater number of trains and engines to service (plans). Former Cherokee trainmaster, E. T. "Biz" Parker, remembers thirteen passenger trains and thirty to forty freight trains leaving the station daily during the peak years.

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In 1924 the IC also undertook improvements of its actual roadbed. The company purchased a gravel pit across the Little Sioux River, southeast of the bridge, and reballasted the tracks through the Cherokee division with the gravel. The operation naturally produced a small "lake," and when the company no longer needed the quarry it sold the property to the city of Cherokee, which turned it into a park and "Spring Lake" (E. T. "Biz" Parker, interview).

The golden years lasted until 1930, when the full impact of the 1929 stock market crash hit the over-extended Illinois Central. Retrenchment began in the Cherokee division in 1934, with the abandonment of the less-profitable Onawa branch from Onawa to Anthon. By 1941 rails along this section had been pulled up, and the depots either moved or razed. Daily passenger trains to Anthon, Sioux City, Sioux Falls, and Fort Dodge were curtailed, and only restored briefly during World War II. Freight traffic through Cherokee remained relatively high during the war and post-war years, but the IC stationed only a skeleton crew in the Cherokee offices (E. T. "Biz" Parker, interview).

In the early 1940s the railroad embarked on a system-wide replacement and alteration program. The overhaul of its physical plant and rolling stock cut operating costs and improved efficiency, and resulted in the third generation of Illinois Central buildings in Iowa. The Cherokee depot survived replacement but underwent several changes, including the removal of the decorative porches, dormers, oriel window, and the infill or replacement of a few doors. The IC was remarkably careful in its modifications of the depot in Cherokee, taking pains to match beltcourses, brick and windows. "[F]unctional needs...always outweighed considerations of aesthetics" but in the case of Cherokee the changes were more sympathetic to the building's historic appearance than those made to other stations probably because of Cherokee's importance as a division point.

In 1942 the company allotted \$50,000 for improvements to Cherokee. The contractor was Zitteral-Mills, a Webster City firm which performed much of the IC's replacement work in Iowa (Parker, and Cabbage, interviews). At least five of the structures in the IC yard complex at Cherokee were built after 1942 and are third generation buildings: carpenter shop, electrician's shop, toolhouse, locker room, and rip track house. Three others, besides the depot, were the subjects of improvement. The first of these, the freight house underwent massive changes and is now unrecognizable as the original two-story depot. The second, the sand drying house, had a sand tank added to its roof. The third, the engine house, received only superficial alterations such as new stall doors.

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The Illinois Central Railroad Yard in Cherokee may also be significant for its historical archaeology potential. A reconnaissance level survey of the yard is first required, after which the district's eligibility under Criterion D may be evaluated.

CONCLUSION:

Built by a railroad company well-known for its thorough replacement and abandonment program in the mid-1940s, it is ironic that Cherokee yard retains so much feeling of the pre-Diesel railroad era. The railroad's need for branch lines in the late 1880s was the genesis of Cherokee as a division point, out of which grew the core of the present yard. It is probably intact today because of the station's importance as a division office and shop complex. The buildings in this district are by no means the best or the only representatives of the Illinois Central's building phases and architectural generations still extant in Iowa. The significance of the Cherokee structures is collective; together they constitute the the only intact railroad yard complex left in Iowa.

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McCulla, Thomas. History of Cherokee County, Iowa. Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1914, pp. 161-171.

Parker, E. T. "Biz." Retired Illinois Central Employee, Cherokee, Iowa. Interview, 7 October 1989.

Pitsch, Nicholas L. Railroad Historian, Bellevue, Nebraska. On-Site Interview, Cherokee, Iowa, 18 August 1989.

Railway Age. Volume 113, July 25, 1942, p. 155.

Railway Age Gazette. Volume 59, August 6, 1915, p. 257.

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Railway Review. Volume 58, 1916, p. 109.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Cherokee, Iowa, 1883-1947.

"Through Iowa--Illinois Central Railroad." No author, no date [between 1888 and 1896],
p. 14.

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Verbal Boundary Description:

The verbal boundary of the Illinois Central Railroad Yard in Cherokee is a polygon of the following description:

SIDE A--from the southeast corner of West Maple Street and South Fourth Street in a southwesterly direction along the west side of South Fourth Street, continuing beyond West Beech Street for a distance of approximately 2,500 feet, passing to the east of the scale house and toolhouse.

SIDE B--thence in a northwesterly direction for a distance of 800 feet, passing just south of the electrician's shop.

SIDE C--thence in a northeasterly direction for a distance of 700 feet, passing just west of the roundhouse foundation.

SIDE D--thence in a north-northeasterly direction along the east edge of South Fifth Street for a distance of approximately 1,300 feet to the southeast corner of West Maple Street and South Fifth Street.

SIDE E--thence east for a distance of approximately 200 feet to the point of beginning.

The site is located in T92N, R40W, Section 34, E $\frac{1}{2}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$.

UTM References

- A. 15 291040/4735880
- B. 15 290730/4735240
- C. 15 290590/4735380
- D. 15 290770/4735560
- E. 15 290940/4735880