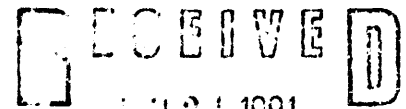


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



JUN 24 1991

NATIONAL REGISTER

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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 Louisville, Henderson, and St. Louis Railroad Depot
other names/site number Fordsville Depot; L and N Depot, Fordsville (OH-3)

2. Location

street & number Walnut Street (SE side, 200' N. of Highway 54) not for publication
city, town Fordsville vicinity
state Kentucky code KY county Ohio code 183 zip code 42343

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> objects
			<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
NA

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.

David L. Morgan Signature of certifying official 6-18-91 Date
State Historic Preservation Officer, Kentucky Heritage Council
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) _____

Alvina Byrum entered in the National Register 7/26/91

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)

Prairie School

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete - block
walls concrete - block
wood - tongue-and-groove
roof ceramic tile
other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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)

Transportation

Period of Significance

1916 - 1941

Significant Dates

1916

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Significant Person

NA

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

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

Specify repository:

Kentucky Heritage Council
Frankfort, Kentucky

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 0.26 acres

UTM References

A

1	6
---	---

5	2	4	9	7	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	1	6	5	3	1	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

B

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

C

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Fordsville Quad.

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

A tract of land beginning at an iron pin 25 feet east of center of Walnut Street and 180.2 feet north of center of Highway 54; thence northeast 80 feet with Walnut Street; thence southeast 136.36 feet to an iron pin; thence southwest 85.2 feet to an iron pin; thence northwest 136.36 feet to the point of origin.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the intact historic acreage associated with the depot.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carolyn Brooks

organization _____ date March 27, 1991

street & number 1288 Bassett Avenue telephone 502/456-2397

city or town Louisville state Kentucky zip code 40204

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetLouisville, Henderson and St. Louis
Railroad Depot
Fordsville, Ohio County, KentuckySection number 7 Page 1

Built in 1916, the Louisville, Henderson, and St. Louis Railroad Depot in Fordsville, Kentucky is a long, low, concrete-block, tile-roofed building which relates most closely in style to the Prairie School. It sits prominently on an untended, one-quarter acre lot located on Walnut Street, just north of Main Street (State Highway 54), Fordsville's main commercial street. The building is in somewhat deteriorated condition with many windows broken and some roof tiles missing, but it still retains most of its historic fabric on both the exterior and the interior. The railroad tracks which ran along the north side of the depot were removed shortly after the railroad was abandoned in 1941. Otherwise the building and its setting appear much as they did during the period of significance, 1916 - 1941.

The depot is a one-story rectangular structure of approximately 18' by 70'. A small rectangular bay located in the ticket office protrudes from the north side near the west end. The building served originally as both a passenger and freight facility and is subdivided on the interior into four rooms. It is constructed of smooth-faced concrete block resembling square-cut, regular-coursed ashlar. The red-tiled roof is hipped, with a very low pitch and a deep overhang. It is finished on its underside with tongue-and-groove boards. A gable-roofed projection extends over the bay.

Windows are nine-over-one double-hung sash. They rest on a continuous concrete water table that wraps around the building, and they are capped by concrete lintels that protrude slightly from the wall. Windows are paired on the west end of the building and in the ticket-office bay. Others are individually set along the north and south walls to light the waiting rooms and freight area. Doors have five horizontal panels. Three, leading from ground level into the waiting rooms, are topped by large nine-light transoms; two, leading from loading docks into the freight and luggage area, are paired with windows and capped by a long narrow transom. The building has two small interior chimneys that rise through the roof ridge.

Exterior detailing is simple, relying on the low, Prairie-style massing, the handsome tile roof, and the nine-over-one windows to make an architectural statement. Corner quoins formed of bevel-edged blocks, the continuous water table that runs around the building, and a simple Stick-style decoration around the attic window in the gable end over the ticket-office bay constitute the only significant detailing.

The interior is equally basic. The four spaces are arranged

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Louisville, Henderson and St. Louis
Railroad Depot
Fordsville, Ohio County, Kentucky

Section number 7 Page 2

laterally in the building. Interior doors are arranged shot-gun style so that, with the doors open, one can stand at one end of the building and see all the way through to the other end. At the west end two waiting rooms, one for white and the other for black passengers, flank a central ticket office. Up three steps at the east end is a large, partially subdivided space that served as a freight and luggage room.

The ticket office and the two waiting rooms are finished with concrete floors and plaster walls and ceilings. Door and window surrounds consist of simple wood frames. At the east end, the freight room has walls of exposed concrete block. Exterior doors on both sides of this room lead out to the remains of historic wood loading docks.

Changes to the depot are minimal. After the railroad was closed down the building was sold, in 1941, to a private individual who adapted it as a residence. Only two changes appear to have been made. Square ticket windows that opened from each waiting room into the ticket office were filled in. Their outline is still visible. In the freight room a wooden partition was constructed that partially subdivided the space. Both these changes appear to be reversible. According to elderly residents of Fordsville who remember the depot when it was still operating, it never had indoor plumbing. There is no evidence that it was ever installed.

For some years the building has been used to store automobile tires. It is in a somewhat deteriorated condition with many broken windows, some missing roof tiles, and some serious decay to the tongue-and-groove boards under the roof overhang. However, the building appears to be completely sound with all of its historic fabric intact.

The 80' by 136' lot is located half-way up a gentle slope that rises up from Main Street (Highway 54) just to the south. The depot lies parallel to Main Street and is very prominent landmark from the small business district which is located there. The lot is presently rather uncared for. Rough grass and the remains of last summer's weeds surround the building. To the north of the depot is a small non-historic house, to the south a modern gas station. Fordsville has modernized the facades of most of the historic buildings in its business district. Consequently, there appears to be no possibility of creating an historic district that would include the depot.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Louisville, Henderson and St. Louis
Railroad Depot
Fordsville, Ohio County, Kentucky

Section number 8 Page 1

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Louisville, Henderson, and St. Louis Depot in Fordsville was built in 1916 to replace the original 1890 depot built when the railroad was first operational. In terms of Criterion A, the depot is important for its associations with the railroad era in Ohio County that resulted in the growth of the region through the development of agriculture, timber, coal, and oil. The railroad depot is a property type that is important in the historic context of The Railroad Era in Ohio County. That historic context has been developed for this nomination, and has not been formally completed by the SHPO. The Fordsville Depot is the only major depot remaining in Ohio County and one of the few in the surrounding area.

Transportation-related Significance

Fordsville, a small town in northeastern Ohio County, has a present population of about 580 (1980 census), considerably less than its early 20th century high of about 900. Ohio County, established in 1798, was very sparsely settled through the first half of the 19th century. Its citizens relied almost exclusively on agriculture, hunting and fishing, and its huge timber reserves for their living. Only Hartford, the county seat located approximately fifteen miles southwest of Fordsville, was a town of any size.

Fordsville is listed in the Kentucky State Gazetteer and Business Directory for 1859 - 1860 as a "post village." In the 1877 version of Collin's History of Kentucky, Fordsville is mentioned along with a string of other Ohio County localities as either "railroad depots, villages or post offices." Clearly Fordsville did not develop extensively until two railroad lines were routed through the community in the late 1880s and early 1890s. After that, its growth was dramatic.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Louisville, Henderson, and St. Louis
Railroad Depot
Fordsville, Ohio County, Kentucky

Section number 8 Page 2

THE RAILROAD ERA IN FORDSVILLE AND OHIO COUNTY: 1869 - 1941

Ohio County's first railroad was the Elizabethtown and Paducah which began construction in Elizabethtown in 1869 and was completed to Paducah three years later. This line was part of the post-Civil War push in Kentucky to link the state's communities by rail from east to west. The principal stop of the Elizabethtown and Paducah in Ohio County was at the village of Beaver Dam, five miles from Hartford. This line eventually became part of the Illinois Central's southwestern Kentucky trackage and still operates as a freight line today.

In 1882, the Louisville, St. Louis, and Texas Railroad was chartered, principally with Owensboro backers, with plans to run along the Ohio River from Henderson, in Henderson County, to West Point, in Hardin County. Although construction on this line was not begun until 1886, it was the inspiration for two feeder lines that ran into Ohio County. Both these lines were routed through Fordsville.

The first feeder was the Owensboro, Falls of Rough, and Green River Railroad, chartered in 1882 and opened to Fordsville in 1889. This line, completed to Horse Branch in 1893, also became part of the Illinois Central system. The Fordsville to Horse Branch portion was abandoned in 1941.

As this line was being built, a second feeder planned from Irvington, near the Ohio River in Breckinridge County, to Fordsville was in the process of organization. This became the Louisville, Hardinsburg, and Western Railroad, chartered in 1888. Construction on the line was begun in Fordsville in 1890 and completed to Irvington in 1891. This railroad soon ran into financial difficulty and was rechartered in 1896 as the Louisville, Henderson and St. Louis Railroad.

The final addition to the Ohio County rail network was a connection from Ellmitch, just a few miles northeast of Fordsville on the Louisville, Henderson and St. Louis line, to Hartford and on to Madisonville in Hopkins County. This was completed in 1910 by the Madisonville, Hartford, and Eastern Railroad, a subsidiary of the Louisville and Nashville. This line was built with the

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Louisville, Henderson, and St. Louis
Railroad Depot
Fordsville, Ohio County, Kentucky

Section number 8 Page 3

intention of creating a diagonal shortcut from Louisville to the western Kentucky coal fields. Unfortunately, the extremely poor condition of the Fordsville to Irvington track which had been cheaply constructed with sharp curves, steep inclines, and light rail made the venture unprofitable. This led to the abandonment of the Hartford-Fordsville-Irvington portion of the track in 1941.

In the early years of Ohio County's railroads, timber was the principal freight, particularly on the Louisville, Henderson, and St. Louis that served an extensive timber operation owned by Colonel Lafayette Green at nearby Falls of Rough. However, by about 1900 much of the area's forest had been depleted. The railroads also served the agricultural and commercial needs of the area, transporting in fertilizers, farm implements, household goods, and general manufactures and carrying out agricultural produce, principally tobacco, poultry, and stock. Passenger service was also important until the 1920s, after which reliable roads and the automobile began to draw travellers away from the trains.

In 1890 and 1893 two coal mines were established just outside Fordsville, and coal began to be shipped in limited quantities on the Louisville, Henderson, and St. Louis. In 1934, at a time when the line (by then owned by the L & N) was struggling to survive, oil was discovered near Oaks, a few miles northeast of Fordsville. Within a year, a substantial volume was being shipped out by rail. In 1939, however, a pipeline was completed which virtually ended the railroad transport of oil and led directly to the abandonment of the line two years later.

The railroads brought immediate growth and development to the county and, particularly, to Fordsville. By 1891, just two years after the first railroad had arrived, Fordsville had grown from a "post village" to a town of 300 people. Six years later its population had doubled to 600. According to Sanborn maps, it had risen to 900, probably an all time high, by 1915. In 1925 it had dropped back to 700.

The railroad allowed Fordsville, located in the northeast corner of this large county well away from the other county population center at Hartford and Beaver Dam, to become an important regional supply center for the surrounding agricultural area. A bank, the Fordsville Banking Company, opened in 1893; a

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Louisville, Henderson, and St. Louis
Railroad Depot
Fordsville, Ohio County, Kentucky

Section number 8 Page 4

second, the Bank of Fordsville, was established in 1906. A flour mill, a planing mill, a stockyard, two tobacco warehouses, and a chewing tobacco factory were all in place along the tracks near the depot by 1915. By 1925 about 25 store buildings were located along Main Street just south of the tracks.

The present Louisville, Henderson and St. Louis Depot, built in 1916 to replace the original wood-framed depot, was built at the height of the town's prosperity. It and three other replacement depots were built within about a year along the Fordsville Branch. No doubt the railroad was hoping to encourage passenger business in the last days before the automobile began to bite into its business.

Of the various types of resources directly associated with the Louisville, Henderson, and St. Louis Railroad almost all have disappeared since the line was abandoned in 1941. The track was dismantled shortly thereafter, and all the water towers and sheds along the track have disappeared. Only a very few depots remain as an extant property type. Of the eighteen station stops between Fordsville and Irvington only the depot at Fordsville and a freight depot at Irvington remain.

Fordsville's second depot, a wood-framed structure that served the Illinois Central line, was demolished in 1941 when the Illinois Central track into Fordsville was removed. The Hartford and Beaver Dam depots have been demolished since they were surveyed in 1977. The only other remaining railroad-related structure in Ohio County is a small wood-framed shed that served as a station at Horse Branch.

The Louisville, Henderson, and St. Louis Depot in Fordsville therefore documents the important presence of the railroad not only in Fordsville but also in Ohio County. The substantial nature of the concrete-block, tile-roofed depot attests to the fact that it was constructed at the height of Fordsville's railroad-generated prosperity.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Louisville, Henderson, and St. Louis
Railroad Depot
Fordsville, Ohio County, Kentucky

Section number 9 Page 1

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Annual Report of the Louisville, Henderson and St. Louis Railway Co. June 30, 1916; December 31, 1916; December 31, 1917 - December 31, 1927. On file at the L & N Collection, University of Louisville Archives. 85-20, Box 6.

Brown, Claudia. "Old Town Historic District, Hartford, Ky." A National Register nomination on file at the Kentucky Heritage Council, Frankfort, Ky., October, 1988.

Collins, Lewis. History of Kentucky, Volume II (revised and brought down to the year 1874 by his son Richard M. Collins). Covington, Ky.: Collins and Co., 1878.

Fogle, McDowell A. Fogle's Papers: A History of Ohio County, Kentucky. Hartford, Kentucky: McDowell Publications, 1977.

Hayes, David. "Railroad Line Abandoned 50 Years Ago." The Herald-News, Hardinsburg, Kentucky, January 23, 1991, p. 18.

Hayes, David. P.O. Box 382, Hardinsburg, Ky. 40143. Telephone Interview by Carolyn Brooks. January 5, 1991.

Kentucky State Gazetteer and Business Directory for 1859 and 1860. Louisville, Ky.: G.W. Hawes, 1859, p. 96.

Kentucky State Gazetteer and Business Directory for 1891 - 1892. Detroit and St. Louis: R.L. Polk & Co., 1891, p. 260.

Lee, Fannie. Box 158, Fordsville, Ky. 42343. Interviewed at her home by Carolyn Brooks. December 12, 1991.

"Louisville and Nashville Standard Buildings." Office of the Chief Engineer, Louisville, Ky., 1911. On file at the L & N Collection, University of Louisville Archives. 88-4, Box 33.

Ohio County, Kentucky Deed Books: Book D, page 259; Book 10, page 556; Book 16, page 356; Book 140, page 31; Book 253, page 807; Book 276, page 18.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Louisville, Henderson, and St. Louis
Railroad Depot
Fordsville, Ohio County, Kentucky

Section number 9 Page 2

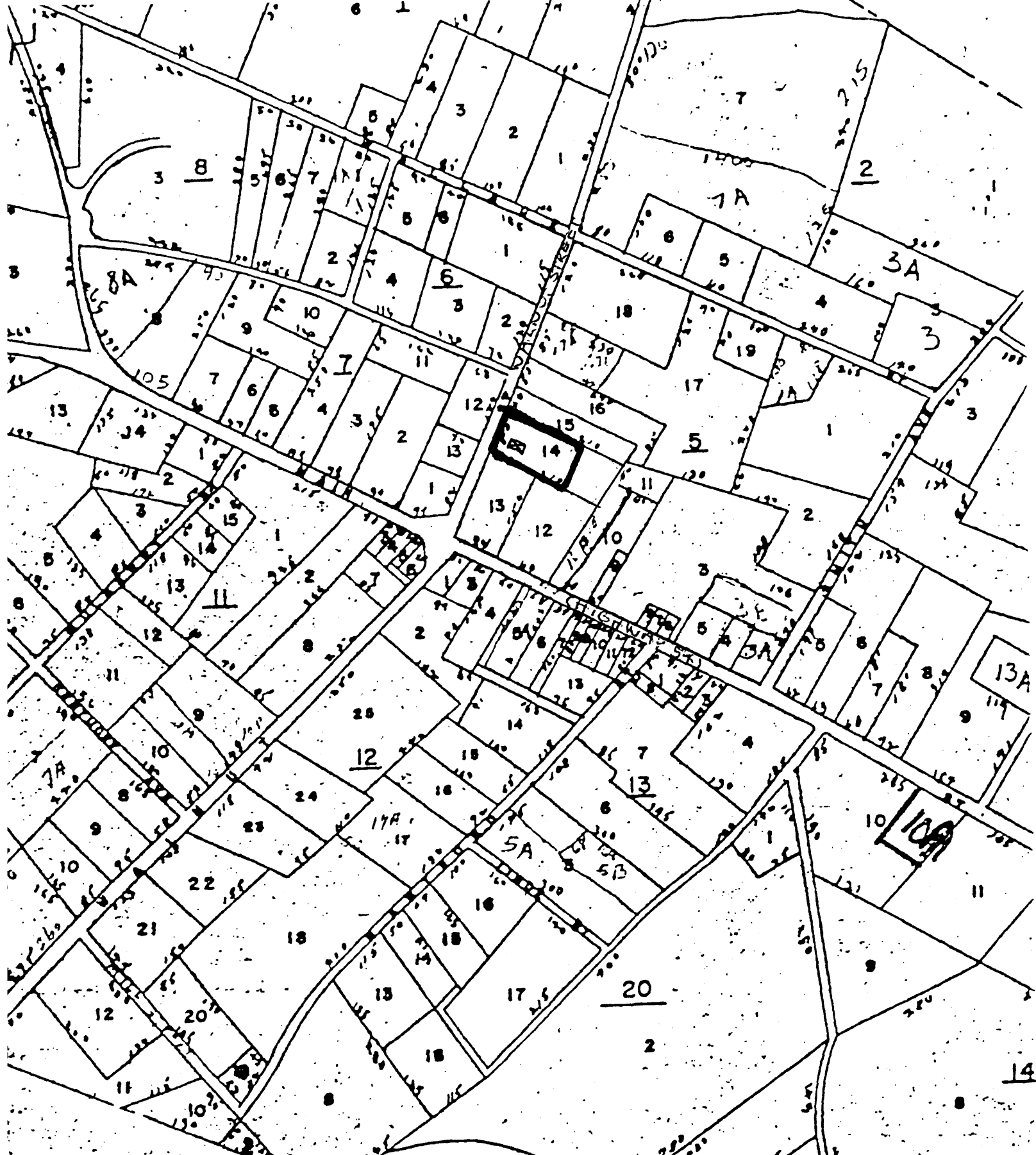
"Plans of Passenger and Freight Stations on the Cincinnati Division. L & N RR Co." Revised August 8, 1919, March 23, 1922. On file at the L & N Collection, University of Louisville Archives. 88-4, Box 33.

"Plans of Passenger and Freight Stations on the Henderson Division. L & N RR Co." Revised January 15, 1917, January 28, 1920, February 19, 1921. On file at the L & N Collection, University of Louisville Archives. 88-4, Box 33.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Fordsville, Kentucky: 1915, 1925.

Sulzer, Elmer G. "Kentucky's Abandoned Railroads: No. 18, In Breckenridge, Ohio, and Hancock," The Kentucky Engineer, August, 1953, pp. 17 - 24.

Sulzer, Elmer G. Ghost Railroads of Kentucky. Indianapolis: Vane A. Jones Co., 1967.

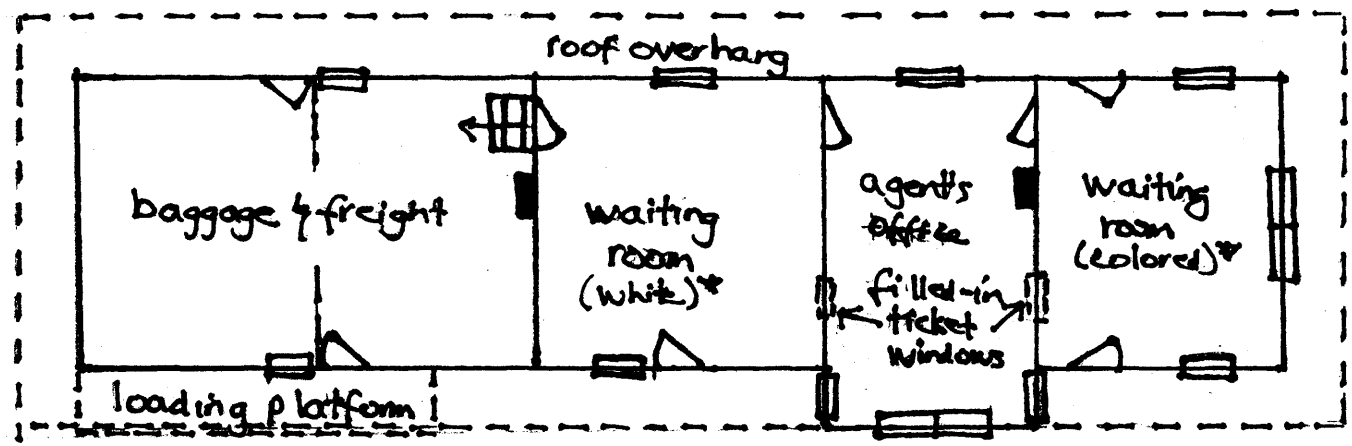


Louisville, Henderson and
 St. Louis Railroad Depot
 Fordsville, Ohio County, Ky.
 PROPERTY SKETCH MAP.
 Source: Ohio County Tax Maps.
 Scale: 0' ————— 120' North: ↑

Louisville, Henderson, and St. Louis Railroad Depot.
Fordsville, Ohio County, Kentucky.

Scale: 0 ————— 12'

North: ↓



* according to an elderly resident of Taylorsville

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number _____ Photos _____ Page 1 _____

PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Louisville, Henderson, and St. Louis Railroad Depot
2. Fordsville. Ohio County, Kentucky
3. Photographer: Carolyn Brooks
4. Date: December, 1990
5. Negatives on file with the Kentucky Heritage Council, Frankfort, Ky.

(The above information is the same for the eight photographs submitted with the nomination. Below the photographs are listed in order of their photograph numbers. Each view is described.)

1. North facade and west end; photographer facing south.
2. North facade and east end; photographer facing west.
3. Detail of north facade; photographer facing southwest.
4. South facade and east end; photographer facing north.
5. South facade from Highway 54; photographer facing north.
6. West waiting room; photographer facing north.
7. View into west waiting room from agent's office; photographer facing west.
8. View from east waiting room to agent's office and west waiting room; photographer facing northwest.