

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

For NPS use only

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

received **AUG 27 1986**
date entered **OCT 2 1986**

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

1. Name

historic McHenry, End of Line, Northern Pacific Railroad Turn Around Loop

and/or common McHenry Railroad Loop (Preferred)

2. Location

street & number N/A N/A not for publication

city, town McHenry X vicinity of

state North Dakota code 38 county Foster code 031

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Historic Site

4. Owner of Property

name See continuation sheet

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Foster County Register of Deeds Office

street & number Foster County Courthouse

city, town Carrington state North Dakota

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date N/A federal N/A state county local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town N/A state N/A

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The McHenry End of the Line Railroad Turn Around Loop nomination discusses the entire complex as two primary components; the loop, per se, and the adjacent, integral railroad yard. The entire nominated complex contains one significant structure (the loop/yard complex) and one non-significant structure (a modern, concrete waiting apron of recent construction.)

The McHenry Railroad Loop, lying partially within but mostly outside of one of the many swales that dot the glaciated Drift Prairies of central North Dakota, was constructed by crews working for the Northern Pacific Railway Company in October of 1899. Running for approximately 3,268 linear feet around a tear-shaped course (see Photo #1), the constructed grade encloses an open space of some 13.6 acres, grown to prairie grasses and wetland plants. As illustrated on Map #2, the right-of-way extends outward 15 feet on both sides of the track's centerline (a total width of 30 feet) except in the loop's southwest quadrant where it expands to 50 feet from the track centerline on the inside curve of the loop and to 100 feet along the outside curve (a total width of 150 feet). The actual right-of-way consists of approximately four acres. Except for routine maintenance functions such as periodic rail and tie replacement, the site shows little evidence of change since its original construction. The railway grade, level at 1507 feet above sea level, varies from a few feet above to a few feet below the general grade level of the surrounding land. Owing to the natural contours of the landscape (essentially a flat "bench" on the south and west, cut by a swale on the north), varying degrees of "cut" or "fill" occur along its "grade." "Fill" sections are most evident on the northern and northwestern extremes; "cut" sections are most evident at the western extreme. Much of the route is built at grade level.

The beginning point of the loop per se is marked by a particularly wicked looking, barbed cattle guard at the eastern extremity (see Photo #2). The course of the loop then passes a vintage, manually operated switch stand of the Northern Pacific pattern (see Photo #3), curves northwesterly into the swale, continues curving southerly past a noticeable rise (which may be either natural or man made but has been obviously landscaped for track clearance), curves back northeasterly past a built up feature of mounded earth (age and function unknown), and continues on towards the northeast until it reverses its curve towards the east and connects with its beginning point by means of an aged railway "frog" at the "split" type switch block. Trackage is 4 feet 8.5 inch gauge (standard on U.S. railroads since 1862¹), 90 lb. rolled steel rail (primarily 1910-1927 vintage) conventionally set with two-nail tie plates and joined with 4-bolt rail joints. Cross ties are trimmed timbers set on about two and one half foot centers although spacing has become skewed and uneven through prolonged use with only minimal maintenance. Packed earth comprises the primary ballast material, although some cinder ballast is in evidence.

As a railroad facility, the trackage is in a deteriorated condition; as an historic site it is in fairly good condition but continues to deteriorate due to natural adverse effects. The marshy nature of the setting and additional moisture via annual rain and snowfall continue to rust the rails and metallic fixtures, rot the ties

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1899

Builder/Architect Northern Pacific Railway Company

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Although the comprehensive preservation planning context(s) for railroads in North Dakota are not yet finalized, preliminary context-related research indicates that: 1) the activities of the railroads had significant effects on many aspects of North Dakota's history; 2) in North Dakota, a number of railroad context related properties remain that appear to illustrate significant contributions of the railroads; and, 3) many of these properties (landscape embellishments once so very common to, but now rapidly disappearing from the North Dakota landscape) as well as much of North Dakota's railroad heritage is being lost from public view and appreciation due to the abandonment and removal of railroad properties rendered surplus by changes in the needs and methods of modern railroad operations. The uncommon and somewhat enigmatic railroad turn-around loop at McHenry is significant to the town and to the State as an intact, physical remnant of the railroads, historical movements influenced by the railroads, and as a regionally rare example of railroad engineering and technology.

The arrival and expansion of railroads in North Dakota influenced many aspects of the State's history. In various ways and to various degrees, for example, their activities contributed to the exploration and pacification of the territory, to evaluating and publicizing the worth of the land, and to establishing and fostering Euro-American cultural institutions. Most importantly, North Dakota railroads provided important incentives to encourage and expedite the process of settlement by Euro-Americans. Not only did the railroads provide a relatively quick and inexpensive means for interested settlers to get to the area, the companies also played a significant role in inspiring that interest by advertising the values and opportunities of the State and by actively recruiting prospective settlers, directly through their own corporate organizations, or indirectly through subsidiary land companies. Once settled and productive, those same settlers could rely on the railroads to carry their products to market and to return needed supplies. Some of the railroads could even supply the land on which to settle, produce and prosper.

The railroads' motives were not, of course, purely altruistic. Most were, after all, profit-seeking corporate entities. Those that had land to sell, sold it to finance expansion, subsidize operations or augment investment returns. To earn profits, railroads needed passengers and freight, so their efforts to entice settlers and to encourage towns were quite natural¹. Competition among railroad companies was frequently intense, bursting occasionally into competitive traffic or territorial "wars" that could have consequences reaching far beyond the results intended by the participating companies or anticipated by their clientele².

In North Dakota, the Northern Pacific Railroad, the first railroad to enter the state, James J. Hill's Great Northern Railroad, and the Great Northern's primary antagonist, the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste Marie (the Soo Line) became legendary giants, whose accomplishments and contributions, whose embroilments and peccadillos, whose merits and foibles are still remembered and discussed and whose presence is still variously felt or missed, but whose symbols and landmarks and lore still make up large and significant portions of the State's heritage.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See footnotes at end of Significance statement and continuation sheet # 10 & 11

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 32.5

Quadrangle name McHenry, N. Dak.

Quadrangle scale 7.5'

UTM References

A	1 4	5 3 0 3 7 0	5 2 6 9 4 1 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	1 4	5 3 0 0 0 0	5 2 6 9 1 3 5
E	1 4	5 3 1 1 6 0	5 2 6 9 3 5 0
G			

B	1 4	5 3 0 0 0 0	5 2 6 9 4 1 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	1 4	5 3 0 3 7 0	5 2 6 9 1 3 5
F			
H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

See item # 7 Description.

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

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

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Walter L. Bailey

organization State Historical Society of North Dakota date April 9, 1986

street & number North Dakota Heritage Center telephone (701)224-2672

city or town Bismarck state North Dakota 58505

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

James E. Sperry
State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title State Historic Preservation Officer (North Dakota) date August 14, 1986

For NPS use only

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

JA Beth Crowne
Keeper of the National Register

date 10/2/86

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

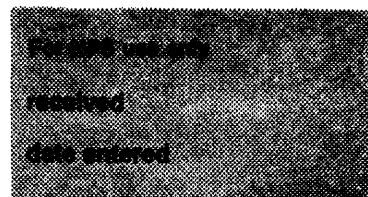
Continuation sheet

Item number 4

Page 1

Mr. O. J. Norman
Property Management Department
Burlington Northern Railroad
Post Office Box 64960
St. Paul, MN 55164

Rodney C. & Lola Leir
McHenry, ND 58464

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 2

and destabilize the grade. The rails show substantial wear and fatigue. Rail alignments, both horizontal and vertical, are in need of straightening and stabilization (see Photo #4.) In short, the loop's current condition and appearance is that of a common, low traffic branch line that has been accorded little maintenance over a long period of time and virtually no maintenance in recent years. Other than the earth works mentioned above, there is no readily observable indication of ancillary facilities or structures ever having existed around either the interior or exterior perimeter of the loop; nor, has any record, either photographic or documentary, been found to indicate the former presence of such structures.

Beyond the loop proper (east of the cattle guard) lies the former railroad "yard," some 2,240 feet (nearly one half mile) long and 400 feet wide, an area of approximately 23.32 acres. Single trackage still crosses the extent of the yard area and is paralleled by an approximately 1,900 foot long siding track complete with intact and operable switches and switch stands at each end. The condition of this trackage is slightly better than that of the loop itself showing some evidence of more recent routine maintenance and better soil and moisture conditions. At one time no fewer than six sidings connected various commercial or railroad track-side installations with the main branch track. Five to seven grain elevators, a bulk oil plant, a stock yard, two lumber companies, a railroad coal station, a section house, a water tank, an engine house and freight platforms occupied the yard. A two story passenger/one story freight combination depot stood in the center of the yard from 1899 to 1959 when it was replaced by a much smaller one story depot, itself since removed. Fairly ornate for the unsettled plains of "turn-of-the-century" North Dakota, the frame depot had a passenger waiting room and baggage room, a station agent's office (which contained ticket sales, telegraph and train operations stations) and a freight office (with shipping, receiving and storage facilities) all on the first floor. Living quarters for the station agent and his family were located on the second floor.²

Of all these yard facilities, only one elevator complex, the tracks and a few crumbling, grass obscured foundations remain today. The integrity of much of the original railroad yard has been further compromised by modern intrusions including several modern grain storage bins, a modern wooden freight platform, a modern concrete waiting apron, and a modern electric semaphore signal. Because of the loss of so many of the important early facilities and the addition of the several obviously modern intrusions, only the trackage portion (including a small protective zone) of the yard area has been included in this nomination. Further site investigation and feature identification may justify a future request for a nomination boundary expansion but at this time, only the loop, per se, and the trackage portion of the yard are being proposed for nomination. The boundaries of the proposed nomination, therefore, enclose an area of approximately 32.5 acres and include all trackage, the three switch stations, and the non-significant, modern, concrete waiting apron and electric semaphore which are included only by virtue of their lying within the small protective zone adjacent to the tracks. This boundary is shown on the U.S. Geological Survey, 7.5 minute topographic map, entitled McHenry Quadrangle, accompanying this nomination, and is further described as follows:

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

7

Page

3

From a point on the centerline of the main branch track of the now defunct Cooperstown to McHenry Branch of the Burlington Northern Railroad (successor to the Northern Pacific Railway Company), where said track crosses the east section line of Section 5, Township 147 North, Range 62 West of the 5th Principle Meridian, Foster County, North Dakota, thence westerly 100 feet along said centerline to the Point of Beginning; thence northerly 35 feet; thence westerly 2,540 feet; thence northerly 215 feet; thence westerly 1,320; thence southerly 940 feet; thence easterly 1,320 feet; thence northerly 655 feet; thence easterly 2,540 feet; thence northerly 35 feet to the point of beginning, an area of approximately 32.56 acres, more or less. This area includes the entire loop with its right-of-way and its integral features and the still intact trackage portion of the original "yard" and provides a small area of protection around the perimeter.

1.) David Herbert Donald. Liberty and Union. Little, Brown and Company, Boston and Toronto, 1978, Page 227.

2.) Information compiled from various sources. See especially: Sanborn Map Company, McHenry, Foster County, North Dakota, January, 1927. Also see: Seventy-Five Years, McHenry, North Dakota, 1899-1974. author unknown, n.d., n.p., pages 2-3.

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

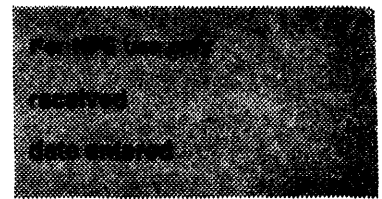
Item number 8

Page 4

The experience of McHenry, North Dakota provides an example of some of the ways railroads and their machinations could affect struggling but optimistic small, rural towns during North Dakota's "settlement period." By 1899, the Northern Pacific, recipient of the largest railroad land grant in U.S. railroad history - totaling some 10.7 million acres in North Dakota alone³, had become anxious to sell large portions of its remaining grant lands. The perpetually financially troubled railroad, having suffered its second bankruptcy, was under a court order to divest itself of much of its unsold grant lands⁴, and, an 1898 North Dakota Supreme Court decision had found the railroad liable for taxes on its unsold land-grant lands⁵. By 1898, the Northern Pacific had begun negotiating the sales of huge tracts with several large land speculators⁶, one of whom was the D.S.B. Johnston Land Company of St. Paul, Minnesota⁷. Even while these negotiations continued, Johnston, knowing the importance of towns and railroads to the success of large scale land speculation⁸, offered to buy smaller, choicer tracts provided the Northern Pacific would assure construction of rail facilities into the purchase area⁹. Apparently the railroad agreed to these provisions because Johnston bought Section 5 of Township 147 North, Range 62 West, Foster County, North Dakota on May 29, 1899 and platted the the city of McHenry on September 4, 1899.¹⁰ The purchase of town lots and neighboring farm lands, the construction of homes, farms and business buildings and the arrival of new residents commenced almost immediately.

A thriving community of about twelve businesses and perhaps a hundred residents was already on hand awaiting the promised railroad when the first train rolled in on October 26, 1899. The town's first newspaper, The Foster County Tribune¹¹, kept track of the railroad's progress and reported the comings and goings of its various crews and work parties. On October 6th, the Tribune reported that, "Instead of putting a turn table in at McHenry the railroad company have had constructed a loop that takes up about forty acres of ground," and that, "The side tracks and loop are finished and the construction gang has been put to work surfacing. The work is being hurried along more rapidly, and the road ought to be completed next week."¹²

McHenry loved its railroad, even with its "loop" instead of "turntable" and it loved what the railroad was doing for the town. By October 13th, the Tribune was reporting the first sale of grain, being shipped by the car load, and by November 22nd, the first shipment of cattle. Successive issues contained news of new business openings, established businesses moving into newly constructed buildings, told of new arrivals, and kept its readers apprised of the doings of the railroad. The arrival of G. H. Kelly, the station agent, was reported as was the completion of the new depot, the stock pens and the freight docks. Changes in train crews and timetables received as much note as the highly successful social event, the Woodsmans Ball. The construction of a new water tank, maintenance of the telegraph line and the work of snow removal crews were reported as surely as the formation of the new gun club, or the arrival of a train load of new settlers from Iowa¹³. By 1905, the population had grown to 417 and McHenry was listed in the 1905 Legislative Manual as being among the state's "leading cities"¹⁴. By 1910, the population had fallen to 398 but its outlook was still bright and its prospects still good.¹⁵

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 5

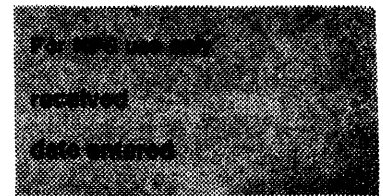
Up to 1910, the Great Northern Railroad, dominant rail power in the Red River Valley, had seemed content with its network of small branch lines which fed into its mainline transcontinental route which ran north out of Fargo, to Grand Forks and then west across the northern part of the state on its way to Seattle; it had stayed largely out of the central portions of the drift prairies, occupied since the 1880's by the Northern Pacific and, after 1893, by the Soo Line as well. But in 1910, in response to one of the Soo Line's earlier periodic raids on the Great Northern's northern network, the Great Northern decided to add a diagonal route across the drift prairies, from Fargo to Surrey, virtually paralleling the Soo Line's Valley City to Minot line and crossing the Northern Pacific's existing north-south branch lines in the area¹⁶. For McHenry, this spelled disaster. If new towns established along the Great Northern in the McHenry area were to prosper, they could do so only at the expense of McHenry's trade.¹⁷ There simply wasn't enough population or trade to allow all these towns to survive. And so it happened. New towns, such as Juanita, Glenfield, Sutton and Brantford, despite brave beginnings, soon folded, without ever experiencing McHenry's early exuberance. But in the meantime, the loss of business, however temporary, had so weakened McHenry's trade center commerce that it was never to recover. After achieving its all time high population of about 500¹⁸ McHenry's population began its decline to today's population of 134.

As the population went, so went the train service. From an all time high of two trains daily (one passenger train in and out daily, and one freight in one day and out the next¹⁹), the service dropped first to one train daily, then to three weekly, and, in 1959, passenger service was discontinued entirely²⁰. In 1981 the Burlington Northern (successor to both the Northern Pacific and the Great Northern) announced abandonment of the Binford to McHenry section of the Cooperstown Branch entirely²¹.

Although the railroad is gone from McHenry, a mystery remains; why the loop? Why was this particular type of facility ever built at McHenry? Although several knowledgeable informants seem to disagree among themselves about how common such loops may have been, evidence suggests that such devices were not frequently built in the United States²². Even though at least one railroad engineering handbook of the period suggests the desirability of a branch terminal loop in situations involving high passenger volumes in congested areas with limited land availability, only the South Boston passenger station and New York's Grand Central Station are cited as examples of such loops actually having been built²³. A loop was built (again by the Northern Pacific) at Gardiner, Montana to serve high volume passenger needs near Theodore Roosevelt's Grand Gateway Arch in Yellowstone National Park²⁴. A loop was built near Riverdale, North Dakota, during the construction of Garrison Dam in the late 1940s, to facilitate receipt of the huge volume of construction equipment and materials necessitated by that massive undertaking²⁵. Comparisons between the volume and nature of either passenger or freight traffic at these places with traffic volumes at McHenry, however, neither justify nor explain such a structure at McHenry. There is a loop at Fox Lake, Wisconsin, however, where traffic demands are more similar to those at McHenry than were the traffic demands at the other places mentioned above. At Fox Lake, however, there are freight facilities around and within the loop which suggests that the loop there is as much a service yard as a turning device, and which, while

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

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



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 6

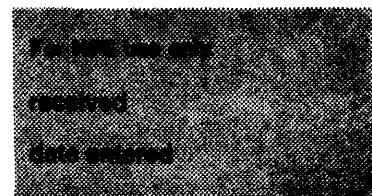
clearly not the case at McHenry, does provide some hint of what the loop at McHenry might have become (or been intended for?) had the economic and population boom of the late 1890's and early 1900's continued²⁶.

If the purpose of building the loop was solely to provide a way for turning trains around, there were certainly more convenient and less expensive ways to accomplish the task. One practicing railroad engineer has indicated that curves and curve engineering are sufficiently problematical, for a number of technical engineering reasons, that a railroad company might choose almost any other device in preference to such a loop.²⁷ In addition, such a loop requires a great deal of land (even this tiny loop requires nearly 30 acres), and a lot of material. Based on the principles, quantities, and cost estimates cited in William C. Raymond's, Elements of Railroad Engineering, a loop such as the one at McHenry may have cost somewhere in the vicinity of \$ 5,000²⁸ whereas a simple turntable at that time might have cost as little as \$500.²⁹

Knowledgeable persons³⁰ have suggested possible explanations for these apparent incongruities: 1) There was plenty of land available; 2) considering the amount of railroad construction going on in the state at the time, the facility might have been relatively inexpensively built using essentially surplus construction materials; 3) the company's operating costs might have been substantially reduced by avoiding the costs of the yardmen and trainmen needed to operate other turning devices; 4) the ability to use a simple front end snow plow for snow removal rather than the more labor intensive (and expensive) manual snow removal needed for more complicated devices may have been a factor; 5.) trains (or engines) can be turned more quickly on a loop than on either a turntable or a "wye." It is also possible that the loop was not originally intended to be a permanent structure and that the company felt that installing such a device "temporarily" would be less expensive over the long term than would be the installation of a turning device more appropriate for a permanent "end of the line" location. At least as early as 1898 rumors about Northern Pacific plans to build a rail line through (rather than to) the McHenry area were appearing in area newspapers³¹ and not until 1905 did the rumors stop.³² The fact is, we may never know why this particular facility was built in this particular place, but as long as the structure remains, scholars, railroad hobbyists, local residents, or other interested parties may be inspired to seek answers.

When the Burlington Northern announced its plans to abandon and destroy the Binford-McHenry segment of the Cooperstown branch line, the City of McHenry appointed a special committee under the auspices of the City Council to try to save the loop.³³ First told that McHenry could buy the loop for some \$82,000,³⁴ the committee pursued its objective so persistently that, eventually, they managed to secure use of the right-of-way, from the BN, for \$1.00 per year and received the trackage as an outright gift.³⁵ Today, the city maintains the facility as an historic site dedicated to the town's railroad heritage.

Now, in this current day of high speed travel, well engineered highways, automobiles, jet aircraft and trips to outerspace, McHenry's railroad buildings are gone, many of its former business buildings are gone, the Northern Pacific is gone,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Continuation sheet

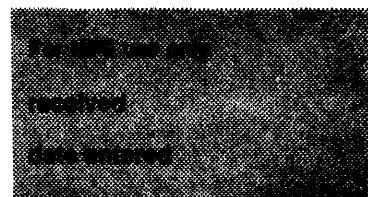
Item number 8

Page 7

the Great Northern is gone, and the only other known loops in North Dakota and Montana are gone. Even the tracks are gone from the Binford-McHenry section of the Cooperstown Branch, as they are from the more than 605 miles of railroad line and dozens of depots, railroad yards, bridges, roundhouses and other railroad related properties that have been abandoned and removed from North Dakota since 1980³⁶. At McHenry, only the loop, the last regional example of this particular type of railroad technology, remains in silent testimony to things that were and to things that might have been.

NOTES

- 1.) For a somewhat dated, but still solid, professional overview of this, as well as other, aspects of North Dakota history see, Elwyn B. Robinson, History of North Dakota (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966); For a less philosophical, more chronological overview see, Earling Nicolai Rolfsrud, The Story of North Dakota (Alexandria, MN: Lantern Books, 1963).
- 2.) For a interesting discussion of one of these railroad "wars," its origins, conduct and its ramifications, particularly regarding small, rural towns in North Dakota, see, John C. Hudson, "North Dakota's Railway War of 1905," North Dakota History, 48-1 (Winter 1981), pp. 4-19.
- 3.) Ross Cotroneo, "Northern Pacific Officials and the Disposition of the Railroad's Land Grant in North Dakota After 1888," North Dakota History, 37-2 (Spring 1970), p. 79.
- 4.) Valley City, Times-Record, February 3, 1898, p. 3. For a detailed discussion of the Northern Pacific's financial problems see, Louis Tuck Renz, The History of the Northern Pacific Railroad, (Fairfield, Washington: Ye Galleon Press, 1980), passim.
- 5.) Valley City, Times-Record, May 4, 1899, p. 1, 6.
- 6.) For examples of some large scale bidders and the property blocks they were interested in, see Cotroneo, p. 79-83.
- 7.) St. Paul, Pioneer Press, Tuesday, November 17, 1914, pp. 1, 10.
- 8.) For an excellent discussion of railroad involvement with the creation of towns see, Hudson, John C., Plains Country Towns (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), passim.
- 9.) Valley City, Times-Record, March 4, 1899, p. 1.
- 10.) Foster County Register of Deeds Office, personal communication, July 17, 1985.
- 11.) The Foster County Tribune changed its name to the McHenry Tribune in 1905.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Continuation sheet

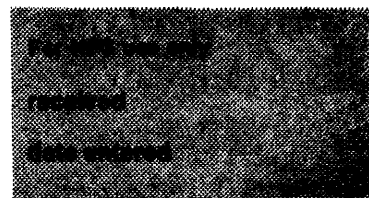
Item number 8

Page 8

- 12.) McHenry, Foster County Tribune, October 6, 1899.
- 13.) Ibid., October 13, 1899.
- 14.) North Dakota Legislative Manual For 1905, Bismarck, 1906.
- 15.) Reasons for this optimism, based on industrial and agricultural economics, are addressed in D. Jerome Tweton, "The Golden Age of Agriculture: 1897-1917," North Dakota History, 37-1 (Winter 1970), pp. 41-55
- 16.) Hudson, "North Dakota's Railroad War of 1905," Small Country Towns
- 17.) For a thorough discussion of the general effects of such actions on small towns generally, see Hudson, Small Country Towns, passim.
- 18.) Foster County History Book Committee, Lucile Zink, et. al. compilers, A History of Foster County, (n.p., Foster County Book Committee, 1983) p. 340.
- 19.) Seventy-Five Years, McHenry, North Dakota: 1899-1974, (n.d., n.p.) p. 2.
- 20.) Avis Lowe, personal communication
- 21.) Foster County History Book Committee, p. 341.
- 22.) Ronald V. Nixon, life long railroad hobbieist and scholar, in a telephone conversation on, June 26, 1985; F. Stewart Mitchell, a practicing railroad engineer and Associate Editor of Modern Railroads Magazine, in a telephone conversation on, June 18, 1985; Frank E. Vyzralek, former archivist of the State Historical Society of North Dakota and long time railroad scholar, in several personal conversations occurring between June 18, 1985 and October 22; Karl Keffer, retired railroad environmental planner, in a telephone conversation on July 22, 1985; all suggested the rarity of the structure type in their considerable personal experiences. Donald P. Morgan, Editor of Trains Magazine, and Andy Sperandio, Model Railroader Magazine, expressed their belief that the structure type was not so very uncommon. Letter, Morgan to author, July 18, 1985.
- 23.) William P. Raymond, Elements of Railroad Engineering (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1905), p.109.
- 24.) Carrington, Foster County Independent, "Second Section", Wednesday, January 20, 1982, p. 1A.
- 25.) Vyzralek, telephone conversation, June 18, 1985.
- 26.) Gordon Odegard, "Milwaukee Road's Fox Lake Junction," Model Railroader, February 1976, pp. 48-53.

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

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



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 9

- 27.) Mitchell, personal communication, June 18, 1985.
- 28.) This estimate was calculated using data appearing in Raymond, pp. 275-283.
- 29.) Ibid., p. 281.
- 30.) See note #33. Except for Karl Keffer and R.V. Nixon, the same individuals offered these suggestions.
- 31.) Valley City, Times-Record, January 26, February 23, and March 23, 1899.
- 32.) McHenry Tribune, May 4, 1905. The rumors about extension of the rail line apparently flared up from time to time. In 1901, the Foster County Tribune got into a bit of a verbal war with the New Rockford Transcript over the issue. See, McHenry, Foster County Tribune, March 7 and March 28, 1901
- 33.) Letter, Margaret Sommerville, Mayor, McHenry, North Dakota to Tom Ehlinger, Law Department, Burlington Northern, Inc., St. Paul, MN. February 10, 1981; Avis Lowe Papers, McHenry North Dakota.
- 34.) Carrington, Foster County Independent, May 22, 1981.
- 35.) Bill of Sale, September 2, 1981 and Indefinite Term Lease, Number 238,763, September 16, 1981. Avis Lowe Papers, McHenry, North Dakota
- 36.) North Dakota Public Service Commission, "Past North Dakota Rail Line Abandonments," 1985.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 10

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

- Briggs, Harold E.
"The Great Dakota Boom." North Dakota Historical Quarterly, 4-2 (January 1930), 78-108.
- Drache, Hiram.
"The Economic Aspects of the Northern Pacific Railroad in North Dakota." North Dakota History, 34-4 (Fall 1967), 320-372.
- Cotroneo, Ross R.
"Northern Pacific Officials and the Disposition of the Railroad's Land Grant in North Dakota After 1888." North Dakota History, 37-2 (Spring 1970), 77-103.
- Hammer, Kenneth
"Territorial Towns and the Railroads." North Dakota History, 36 4 (Fall 1969), 357-368.
- Hudson, John C.
Plains Country Towns. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985.
"North Dakota's Railway War of 1905." North Dakota History, 48-1 (Winter 1981), 4-19.
- Mitchell, F. Stewart.
"The Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway and James J. Hill in Dakota Territory, 1879-1885." North Dakota History, 47-4 (Fall 1980), 11-19.
- Raymond, William G.
The Elements of Railroad Engineering. 3rd ed. New York and London: John Wiley and Sons, 1917.
- Renz, Louis Tuck.
The History of the Northern Pacific Railroad. Fairfield, Wa.: Ye Galleon Press, 1980.
- Ridgley, Ronald.
"The Railroads and Rural Development in the Dakotas." North Dakota History, 36-2 (Spring 1969), 163-187.
- Robinson, Elwyn B.
History of North Dakota. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966.
- "Seventy-five Years, McHenry, North Dakota, 1899-1974.", (n.p. n.d.).

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

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

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 9

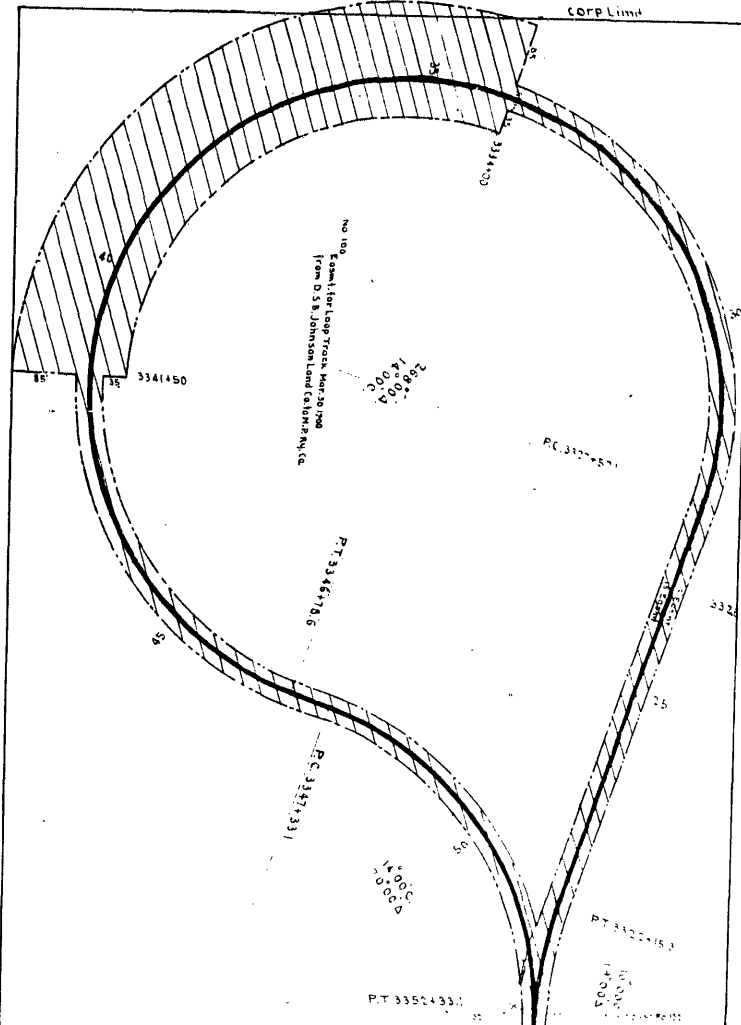
Page 11

Tweton, D. Jerome.

"The Golden Age of Agriculture: 1897-1917." North Dakota History, 37-1 (Winter 1970), 41-55.

Wood, Charles R.

The Northern Pacific. Seattle: Superior Publishing Company, 1968.



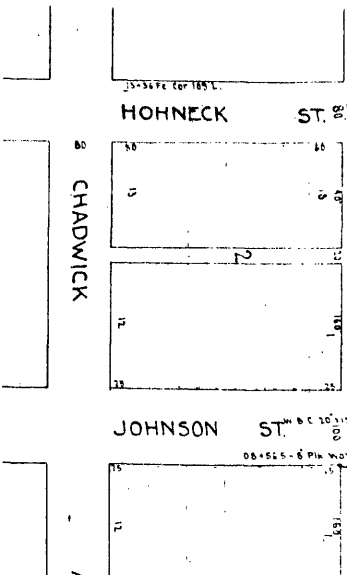
City of McHenry
Historic Site

HOHNECK ST.

CHADWICK

BURROWS

JOHNSON ST.

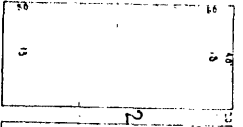


City of McHenry
Historic Site



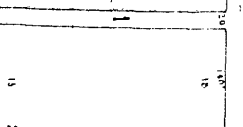
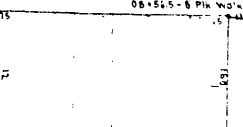
HOHNECK ST.

CHADWICK

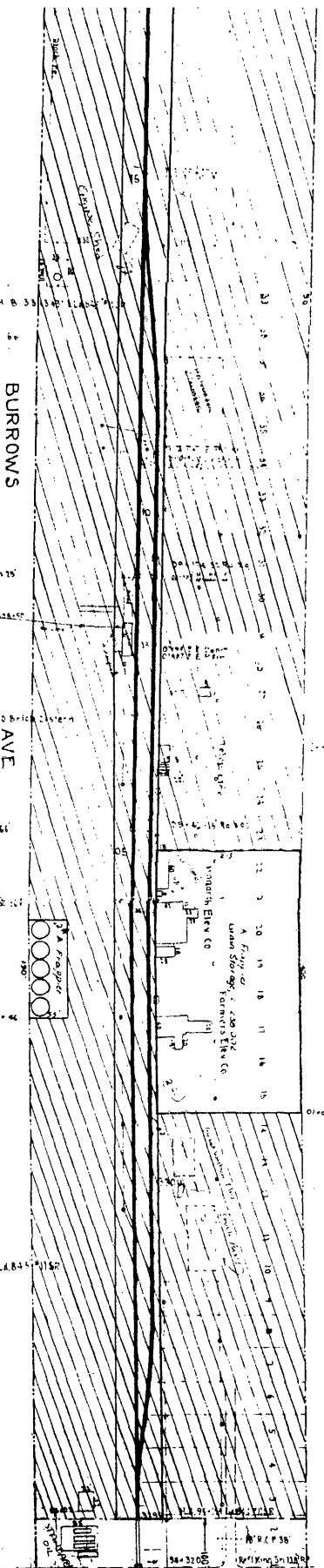


JOHNSON ST.

AVE.



WILSEY ST.



N.P. RY.
COOPERSTOWN BRANCH
McHENRY

55 T 147 N R 62 W
54 T 147 N R 62 W

McHENRY