

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED SEP 15 1977
DATE ENTERED MAR 29 1978

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Sainte Marie Railroad Company Depot
Soo Line Depot (Preferred)
AND/OR COMMON Wilton Community Museum

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER First Street at McLean Avenue
CITY, TOWN Wilton VICINITY OF _____ CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 1
STATE North Dakota CODE 38 COUNTY McLean CODE 055

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Future Museum

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME City of Wilton
STREET & NUMBER Post Office Box 365
CITY, TOWN Wilton VICINITY OF _____ STATE North Dakota 58579

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. McLean County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER 712 Fifth Avenue
CITY, TOWN Washburn STATE North Dakota 58577

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE North Dakota Historic Sites Survey
DATE 1976 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS State Historical Society of North Dakota
Liberty Memorial Building
CITY, TOWN Bismarck STATE North Dakota 58505

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE <u>May 18, 1976</u>

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Soo Line Depot in Wilton is a 1½-story frame structure without basement which on its first site rested upon heavy wooden timbers laid directly on the ground (at its present location it has a concrete foundation). The clapboarded walls are painted the traditional Soo Line colors (maroon base and yellow superstructure) and wooden shingles stained black cover the combination hipped and gabled roof. The overhanging eaves have an undersiding of matched boards and are supported on all elevations by large carved brackets. The roof is broken on the southeast end by a gabled dormer probably added at the time (1907) the 20 by 68-foot building was lengthened to 92 feet. The roof also carries a broad, low tower, vaguely pagoda-like with the corners of its square base terminating in triangular weatherings and thus diminishing the upper stage into an octagonal form. The whole is surmounted by a shallow, conical roof with slightly flared eaves.

Directly beneath the tower is a pentagonal window which, when the building was on its original location, gave the station agent visual access to trackside. Northwest of the window is a freight door with angled matched siding set in rails and stiles and topped by a transom with radiating muntins. An identical door is on the northwest elevation of the building, and conventional entrances are on the southwest (facade) and northeast elevations.

The waiting room on the first floor of the interior is an ensemble of wooden finish: exposed floors, molded baseboards, vertical board wainscoting, chair rail, horizontal board upper walls, paneled doors, and beaded, matched board ceiling. A ticket window with a wooden shelf on wrought-iron brackets opens up the wall between the waiting room and the ticket agent's office, which has finish similar to that of the waiting room but without wainscoting. The ledge of the pentagonal window in the office provides working space above storage cabinets, and a false arch in the ceiling creates an alcove effect between the office and the freight room.

The interior of the depot has been largely stripped of accoutrements except for venetian blinds; a single wooden bench with wrought-iron legs and armrests; a large wooden desk with drawers and tapered legs; a wall sink in the waiting room; and restroom fixtures (the latter are believed to have been installed ca. 1925 and are to be replaced during renovation.

An enclosed quarter-turn stairway with landing leads to the 3-room apartment on the second floor which was formerly the station agent's living quarters. (Unconfirmed local tradition maintains that William D. Washburn occupied the apartment during visits to Wilton, but it seems more likely that on such occasions he remained aboard the private railroad car in which he traveled.) Walls and ceilings in the apartment are plastered, and the double windows in the gabled dormer are trimmed with molded casings featuring carved corner blocks at top and bottom. A ladder stair gives access to the upper stage of the tower, the walls of which have an octagonal configuration and are sheathed in beaded boarding, as is the ceiling. In the latter is a trapdoor to the attic.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1900

BUILDER/ARCHITECT William J. Keith (Architect)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Sainte Marie Railroad Company (Soo Line) Depot in Wilton is historically significant for its association with William Drew Washburn (1831-1912). It is architecturally distinctive for its incorporation of a pagoda-like tower within what is otherwise a conventional design for a railroad structure.

Born at Livermore, Maine, into a family active in politics and commerce, William D. Washburn later moved to Minneapolis, where he was a member of the Minnesota legislature. He was appointed surveyor general by President Abraham Lincoln and was a member of the United States House of Representatives for three terms and a United States Senator for six years. He built railroads and flour and lumber mills and was instrumental in developing the city of Minneapolis and the Northwest.

Washburn was the first president of the Soo Line, resigning that position following his election to the United States Senate from Minnesota. Defeated in his re-election bid in 1896, he toured the Orient for two years and upon his return to the United States purchased from the Northern Pacific Railroad 115,000 acres of land north of Bismarck and east of the Missouri River. To make his lands more marketable to settlers, Washburn founded the Bismarck, Washburn & Great Falls Railway which in 1899 began grading north from Bismarck. Reaching Wilton in 1900, the road was built north to the town of Washburn the following year and to Underwood in 1903. East of Wilton, William D. Washburn opened a coal mine which, because of the quantity of lignite deposits available, soon became one of the world's largest underground lignite mining enterprises.

Making Wilton the headquarters for his mining and land sale operations, Washburn erected a depot alongside the railroad track in town. Designed by Minneapolis architect William J. Keith, the structure is notable for a somewhat truncated tower reminiscent of a pagoda, perhaps the result of Washburn's exposure to the architecture of the Far East during his travels there.

In May, 1904, the Bismarck, Washburn & Great Falls Railway was acquired by the Soo Line, and today the depot built by Washburn is the only physical reminder of that independent short line. The depot served Wilton until December, 1970, at which time it was closed. It was initially feared that the building would thereafter be demolished since the railroad wanted the site vacated. However, local

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Maddox, Dawn. Personal inspection, May 18, 1976, and May 20, 1977.
 Vyzralek, Frank E., et al. "North Dakota's Railroad Depots: Standardization on the Soo Line." North Dakota History, Vol. 42 (Winter, 1975), No. 1, pp. 4-25.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1 acre.

UTM REFERENCES

A 14 36,48,5,0 5,2,2,4,1,6,0
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Frank E. Vyzralek, Archivist
Dawn Maddox, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION State Historical Society of North Dakota DATE September 9, 1977

STREET & NUMBER Liberty Memorial Building TELEPHONE 701-224-2666

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 X LOCAL X

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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE James E. Sperry DATE September 9, 1977

TITLE N.D. State Historic Preservation Officer

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION W. M. Sturtevant DATE 3-29-78

ATTEST: Wathorne Cole KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER DATE 3-17-78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED SEP 15 1977

DATE ENTERED

MAR 29 1978

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 1

sentiment for saving it was organized during the Bicentennial year, with the result that the Soo Line donated the building to the city, the city provided a site for relocating it for use as a museum, and the North Dakota State Bicentennial Commission allotted \$3,000 for the project, which amount was matched by community funds.

In May, 1976, the depot was moved from its original location to its present site several blocks northwest. The following month, on June 19, during Wilton's Bicentennial Days, it was dedicated as a future community museum. Plans are to restore the waiting room and offices to type, as well as the station agent's living quarters on the second floor; a museum of lignite coal mining will be installed in the freight room. Sponsorship of the project has been assumed by the Lions' Club, with other local organizations assisting, including the Senior Citizens, American Legion, and Homemakers' Club.