

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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received MAR 23 1982

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Continuation sheet

Item number

7

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34. (N- 4025):

A. Property Name: Newark Passenger Station

B. Location and Verbal Boundary Description: The Newark Passenger Station is located at the northeast corner of the intersection of South College Avenue (Rt. 896) and the Amtrak/Conrail Railroad. (Property Tax Map, City of Newark, no. 32, parcel no. 181). The property being nominated includes the passenger station and a 25-foot buffer immediately surrounding the station including the platform and brick sidewalk.

C. Owner: Amtrak, 1617 Pennsylvania Blvd., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

D. Property Description:

Newark Station is a brick, one and one half story, "T" plan structure with a hipped, cross gable roof and Victorian detailing. A three bay facade faces four rows of Philadelphia to Baltimore Amtrak/Conrail tracks. Entry is through doors in each of the two outside bays. The load bearing brick walls are laid in full stretcher bond with thin black mortar joints, courses and fields of diagonal sawtoothing, and dual belt courses of black (tar dipped) brick that have red herring-bone between. Gothic arched window openings and segmental arches over the doors are formed of rubbed red brick. The foundation is faced with axed dressed granite slabs with chamfered top edges. Door and window sills are of the same grey granite. A trapezoidal telegraph window projects from the center bay of the first floor facade and supports a segment of the porch hood (piazza) that originally ran the length of the building. That hood is also supported by 2 (originally 6) brackets, with decorative chamfering and notches, that rest on brownstone blocks corbelled out from the wall. Similar porches and brackets on the rear of the building have been removed.

A 17'3" X 16'6" wing projects rearward from the central bay of the main unit. Its gable roof intersects the main hipped-gable roof at the same ridge height and forms a large dormer in the facade. There are six single gable roofed dormers: one projecting from each of the front and rear roof faces of the two outside wings, and one in each of the hipped ends of the main roof. All roofs have an approximately 1.5 in 1 pitch and a slight bell at the eaves. The covering is black asphalt shingles (originally black slate).

In addition to the porch sections, most of the barge-boards and decorative iron scrollwork along the ridgelines, shown in the drawings of the Newark that appeared in the April 26, 1878 issue of the Railroad Gazette (p. 205), have been removed. One over one cathedral topped windows have been retained, but the double doors have been replaced with recent single ones. Two door openings on the rear of the building have been bricked up. Partitions and room arrangements on the first floor have been radically changed when the main function of the station shifted from passenger to computerized freight management. The "X" shaped central partition was removed, a W.C. was installed in the rear kitchen wing, and the west bay was partitioned to form an office and waiting room. The second floor plan (originally quarters for the agent) is unchanged although the space is now used for storage.

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Despite some superficial changes, Newark Station retains much of its original appearance. The modifications have not affected the basic structure or patterned brickwork and all interior wainscoting and opening architraves are extant.

E. Historical Background:

Newark Station was erected in January, 1877 by the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad (P.W. & B.). Designed by Architect/Engineer S.T. Fuller, the station was built at a cost of \$9,452.86 to replace an earlier frame structure. The 1860's and 1870's had been prosperous years for the PW&B. That line formed the only rail link between the Pennsylvania R.R. at Philadelphia, and the Baltimore and Potomac, and Baltimore and Ohio lines at Baltimore until the B. & O. built a parallel link in the 1880's. In those circumstances, the PW&B held a monopoly over all traffic between New York City and Washington, plus all points between and beyond. Traffic generated by the Delmarva peach boom and the Civil War contributed to the line's prosperity and the 1876 Centennial celebration in Philadelphia gave it yet another boost.

In the midst of this boom, the PW&B began a campaign of station repair, renovation, and construction. Stations in Delaware and suburban Philadelphia, the prestige-commuter sections of the line, received the greatest attention. It appears that the new stations were not needed on economic or maintenance grounds, instead they represented the company's desire to present an image of prosperity and well being.

Newark Station is a product of that campaign. Its carefully selected materials, fine brickwork, and elaborate (albeit restrained) wood trim, presented a vision of corporate self-confidence. Newark was an important site to the PW&B. It was located at the junctions of their line with the Delaware Railroad, the only line that ran the length of the Delmarva Peninsula, and the Pomeroy Branch of the Pennsylvania R.R. that gave direct access to Lancaster and Harrisburg. The PW&B recognized and emphasized the importance of that junction point when they built a solid, almost pretentious, station at the crossing.

The location of the 1877 station had a dramatic effect on the subsequent growth pattern of Newark. The rail line ran 3/4 of a mile south of the village center. Prior to 1877, trains were diverted onto the Pomeroy Branch tracks and ran to a station called Newark Center, near the present intersection of Main and Chapel Streets in downtown Newark. They then backed down to the main line and continued on their way. After 1877, trains stopped at the new station, on the main line about 3/4 mile from town. In response to the new transportation focus, late nineteenth century development in Newark was drawn and diverted toward the southern limits of the city.

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Telegraph service, provided by Western Union at Newark Station, commuter trains to Wilmington and Philadelphia, and the small freight station/stockyard complex on the opposite side of the tracks, combined to make the railroad station a focal point of commercial and secular activities in the community.

Newark Station provided a rather unique service for its parent company. Greenhouses and gardens, that surrounded the station, provided cut flowers for dining cars on PW&B passenger trains, and later on Pennsylvania runs, up through the 1950's.

Newark Station received extensive coverage in the Railroad Gazette on April 26, 1878, when an article was published which included front and side elevation drawings and excerpts from the contract specifications for construction techniques, materials, and finish. the amount of coverage in that journal, especially when compared with the slight attention given to other new stations that year, indicates that Newark Station was considered to be a significant piece of railroad architecture by contemporary observers in the trade. The Railroad Gazette article also provides fine documentation for modern study of the station, its original appearance, and its subsequent modifications.

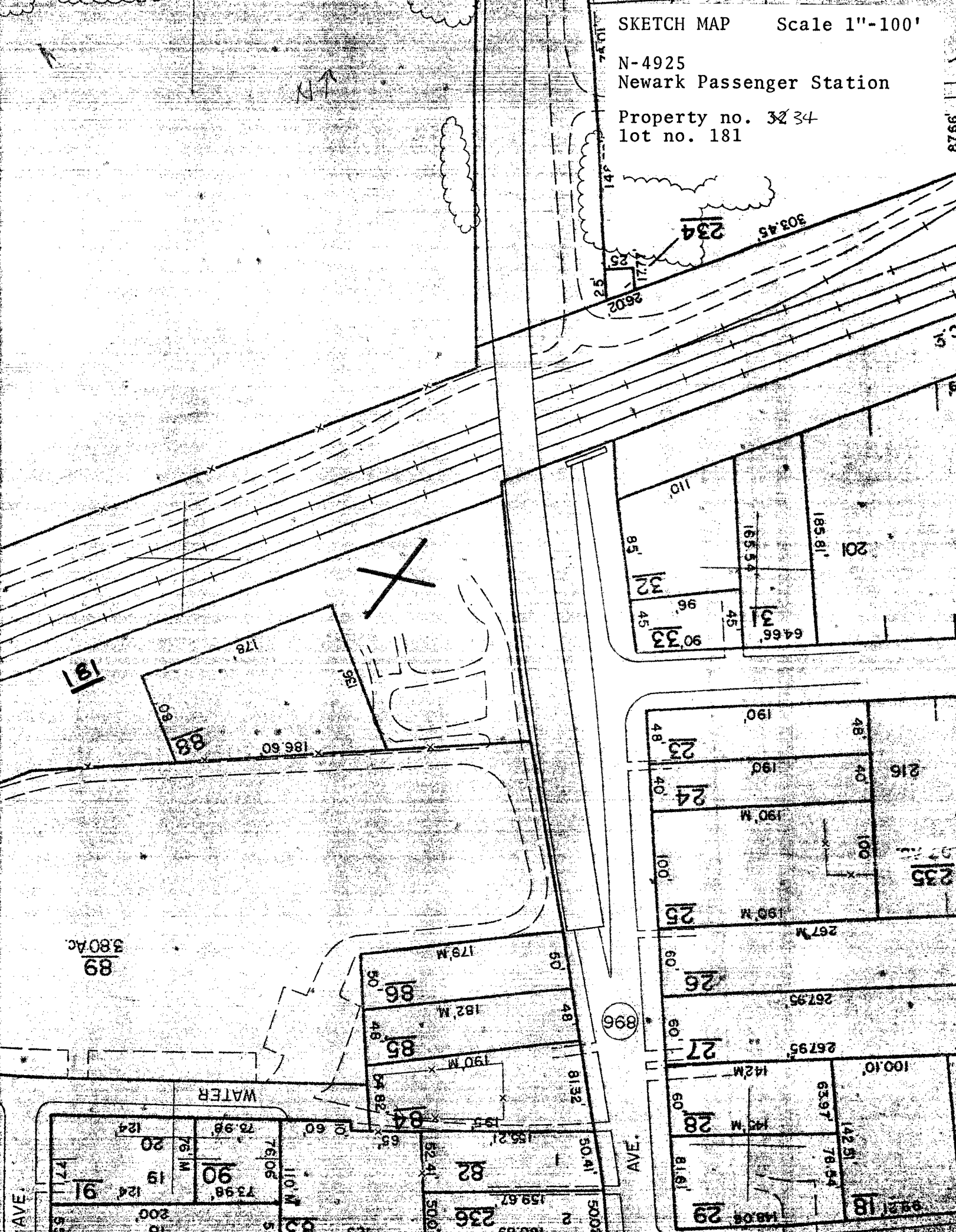
F. Significance:

The Newark Passenger Station is an excellent survival of high Victorian railroad station architecture which has suffered few substantial modifications since its initial date of construction. The choice of materials lavished in its construction indicate strong corporate opinions about commercial architecture. In addition, the subsequent orientation of buildings and streets near the station give testimony to the importance of this railroad facility in the lives and commerce of Newark citizens.

SKETCH MAP Scale 1"=100'

N-4925 Newark Passenger Station

Property no. ~~32~~ 34
lot no. 181



181

88

89
380Ac

84

85

86

82

236

91

90

234

20

32

33

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

18

896

AVE.

AVE.

WATER

SKETCH MAP Scale 1"=100'

N-4925 Newark Passenger Station

Property no. ~~32~~ 34
lot no. 181