

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received SEP 24 1986

date entered OCT 23 1986

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

1. Name

historic Union Station

and or common Columbia Railway Depot

2. Location

street & number Depot Street N/A not for publication

city, town Columbia N/A vicinity of

state Tennessee code 047 county Maury code 119

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name J.A. "Buddy" Morgan

street & number 1306 Trotwood

city, town Columbia N/A vicinity of state Tennessee 38401

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Maury County Courthouse

street & number Courthouse Square

city, town Columbia state Tennessee

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Maury County Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1982-86  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Tennessee Historical Commission

city, town Nashville state Tennessee

## 7. Description

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

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Columbia, Tennessee's Union Station was designed in a vernacular adaptation of the Romanesque style of architecture. The two-story brick and stone structure, completed in 1902, is located on its original site five blocks south of downtown Columbia (pop. 26,571), the county seat of Maury County, Tennessee. The railway depot, Columbia's third, is one of the city's most imposing landmarks and one of very few buildings in the city designed in the Romanesque style. The structure is distinguished by its paired arched entries, rusticated stone side wings, and traceried windows. The interior retains much of its original wood trim and tile floors. Although somewhat neglected in recent years, the building is now being restored by a new property owner.

The depot is a two-story rectangular building of mixed masonry construction. Brick walls are faced with ashlar-cut Bowling Green limestone. The building rests on a brick and stone foundation, and is topped by a hipped slate roof. Hipped roof one-story wings of rusticated stone construction flank the central section. Wide overhanging eaves are supported by carved wooden brackets. At the east end of the two-story main block there is a tall stone chimney with four flues and a corbeled cap. A second chimney is located at the side of the western wing.

The main facade faces north towards Depot Street. The front is asymmetrically arranged around two double-leaf entries with wood-and-glass doors set under semi-circular hood molds and topped by three-light transoms with traceried muntins. The hood molds are framed by raised stone spandrels that rest on corbeled impost blocks. Much of the entry area is set in a surround of geometrical bas-relief decoration. Three-over-one double-hung sash windows with arched wooden muntins are located to either side of the entrance bay (two to the east and three to the west). Stone moldings and corbeling surround each set of windows. Above a raised stone first floor cornice are eight one-over-one double hung sash windows. These windows are capped by a series of small relief panels, and above these are small rectangular fixed single light attic windows. The entire facade is crowned by a heavy overhanging tin cornice trimmed with dentil blocks.

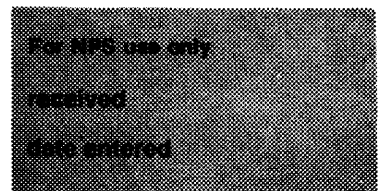
The south or trackside facade is basically similar, but somewhat simpler in detail. The paired entries are framed by the same semi-circular stone arches, but one of the doorways, to the station master's office, is a single-leaf door. A third arched entry to the freight room is located at the east end of the main structure. No windows are located on the second floor above this entry, although seven one-over-one windows and seven attic windows delineate the second story.

One-story wing sections of rusticated stone construction are attached to the east and west sides of the main block. These sections rest on coursed stone foundations with dressed stone water tables and are topped by hipped roofs trimmed with iron cresting. Above a plain stone frieze on each side is a tin cornice with gutters.

The west wing is four bays wide with a canted corner. At the center of the north side are double-leaf wood-and-glass doors topped by a two-light transom. Windows are double-hung sashes with one-over-one etched-glass lights. The trackside features a double-leaf door capped by a transom light and three double-hung sash windows. The west end is a plain wall but for two double-hung sash windows and a tall stone chimney with a corbeled cap.

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Two large freight doors, comprised of nine diagonal batten panels, and three double-hung sash windows are located on the north or street side of the east wing. On the south or railway side are two nine-panel freight doors, two six-over-one double-hung sash windows, and a single-leaf wood-and-glass door with a pivoting transom. The east elevation is another simple end with two six-over-six double-hung sash windows.

The central waiting room of the depot features paneled oak wainscoting, a molded chair rail, and wood window surrounds. Pilasters with molded capitals and dentil trim and a paneled beam ceiling embellished with plaster rosettes are other decorative features of the central waiting room. A plaster hood mold sits above an arched doorway that leads to the ladies' waiting room. The east wall of the main waiting room contains the ticket window with its decorative plaster surround and a molded shelf supported by wooden scroll brackets and carved volutes. Arched double-leaf doors open to the street and the platform. The tile floor is laid in a diamond pattern.

At the southeast corner, and unconnected to the main lobby, is the former negro waiting room. It is a large room with somewhat simpler decoration but still featuring ornamental window surrounds, a high plaster ceiling with a cove molding cornice, a decorative tile floor with Greek key border, and a marble baseboard. An arched double-leaf doorway opens to the street and another set of paired doors lead to the stair hall and the tracks beyond.

Between the two waiting rooms in the main block and the stair hall is the ticket office. It is a small room with a hardwood floor, simple wooden baseboard, plastered walls, a wooden chair rail, and single-leaf doors leading to the platform and the waiting room. Below the ticket window on the west wall is the original ticket office cabinet and till.

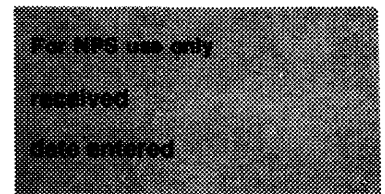
A large stair hall at the corner of the main block provides access to the waiting rooms, offices, baths, and the second floor. The area is decorated with the same paneled oak wainscoting found in the main lobby and features a tile floor and a plaster cove molding cornice. A wooden six-panel door leads to a large bath and dressing room that contains the original wooden beadboard partitions and chair rail. The broad staircase itself is distinguished by recessed wooden panels matching the room's wainscoting, a heavy rail supported by turned balusters, and ornamental wooden newel posts at the landings.

The second floor is arranged with three long rooms to each side of a central hall running the length of the building. The rooms each have operable pebbled glass transoms on the hall side, plaster walls and ceilings with cove molding cornices, hardwood floors, wooden chair rails, and four-panel doors set in frames decorated only by simple circular corner-blocks. Baths are located at the corner, and at the stairhall at the opposite end of the hall. Upstairs rooms have served as offices, storerooms, and for a while, as an apartment for the stationmaster's family.

Another stairway leads to the attic above. The wooden stair rises from a broad ornamental newel post and has a heavy rail supported by turned balusters. The attic is a massive unfinished open room with a hipped roof supported by heavy queen-post trusses. Small fixed rectangular windows on the outside walls provides a modest amount of light to the large room, apparently used at times for storage.

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The low wing to the west contains the ladies' waiting room. The room has paneled oak wainscoting, plaster walls with a cove molding cornice and wooden picture rail, arched double-leaf wood and glass doors, a tile floor with Greek key border, and a marble baseboard. In the corner is the women's bath.

The baggage room and Railway Express Agency (REA) offices were located in the one-story east wing. The baggage room is a simple rectangular room with brick interior walls, sliding wooden loading doors, and one double-hung sash window with six-over-six lights. The REA office has brick walls inside, loading doors to the track and a streetside loading platform, and a six-panel door. Behind the original wooden service counter is a small room divided from the main section by a latticework partition, used for locking up suitcases and other parcels.

One small ancillary structure is located just behind and to the east side of the depot. This small shed structure, roughly ten feet square in dimension, was an insulated ice house for storage of ice to replenish the trains. The icehouse is of cinderblock construction, with a low wooden batten door to the west, topped by a tin shed roof. (Non-contributing)

## 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input 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** 1902-1936 **Builder/Architect** unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Union Station, the Louisville and Nashville Railroad terminal at Columbia, Tennessee, is being nominated under National Register criteria A and C for its significance to Columbia and Maury County, Tennessee in architecture and transportation. The depot, Columbia's third, was completed in 1902 and served the Maury County seat until 1954, by which time commercial airlines and improved highways had made rail travel obsolete. The two-story brick and stone structure is a vernacular adaptation of the Romanesque style of architecture chosen for many larger railway stations in major cities. The depot was little altered during its half-century of use and remains one of the more imposing public buildings in the important commercial center of Columbia. Rail transportation and shipping quickly replaced slackwater navigation on the Duck River and travel over the rough turnpikes of the area. Maury County, the agricultural and manufacturing center of the south central Tennessee region, depended on the railroad to reach other markets.

The first railroad to be constructed through Maury County was the Tennessee and Alabama Railway. The first train arrived at Columbia from Nashville on June 16, 1859. This line, later the Nashville and Decatur, was leased by the Louisville and Nashville and Great Southern trunk line systems in 1872. The city's first depot was built on the south edge of Columbia, some distance west of the present terminal. This depot was later replaced by a board-and-batten frame structure with a low hipped roof. After construction of the present Union Station, this depot was made part of a later freight depot complex, and was destroyed long ago.

In 1860 another railway line was built between Columbia and Mt. Pleasant in the southwest corner of the county, but this small railway was abandoned during the Civil War. Its tracks were torn up and a connector was not rebuilt until the closing years of the century.

In 1870 the Duck River Narrow Gauge Railroad was chartered by the state legislature with the intention of linking Fayetteville on the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railroad (through Columbia) with the Tennessee River port of Johnsonville ninety miles to the west. Although this railroad was never constructed west of Columbia, work began soon afterwards on the Columbia-Fayetteville section, and by 1874 the tracks had been extended from Columbia as far as Petersburg, 32 miles to the southeast. The railway was subsidized in part by the various municipalities along the line. Columbia paid \$50,000 and Maury County paid \$1,500. Before service could begin, the line was leased in 1879 by the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad, which sought to gain access, through Fayetteville, to the lucrative Columbia market, an important center for agriculture and the manufacture of finished goods. After some delays, the line was completed to Fayetteville and the last spike driven on March 2, 1882. The first train on the narrow gauge line ran the entire line on April 7. It traveled 48 miles in three hours.

In 1895 a third line, the Nashville, Florence and Sheffield line (to Sheffield, Alabama) was constructed southwest from Columbia. This line again provided Mt. Pleasant with rail service, and was useful for shipping phosphate from Maury County mines to the processing industries at Muscle Shoals. This line was later electrified and light electric rail

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1.06 acres

Quadrangle name Columbia, TN

Quadrangle scale 1: 24000

### UTM References

A 1 6 4 9 6 6 2 0 3 9 4 0 2 9 0  
Zone Easting Northing

B                          
Zone Easting Northing

C                                             

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G                                             

H                                             

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet

### 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 Richard H. Quin, Preservation Planner

organization South Central TN Development District

date May 1986

street & number P.O. Box 1346

telephone 615-381-2040

city or town Columbia

state Tennessee 38402

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

   national    state   X 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.

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer signature Herbert L. Hoyer

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission date 9/19/86

### For NPS use only

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

for Helmut Byer  
Keeper of the National Register

date 10-23-86

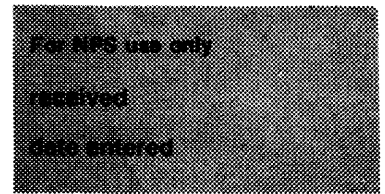
Attest:

Chief of Registration

date

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passenger cars provided transportation between Columbia and Alabama.

In 1902 Major W.F. Whitthorne and John P. McGaw, local entrepreneurs, persuaded the Louisville and Nashville to build a new depot at Columbia. On March 3, the Columbia Board of Aldermen and Mayor discussed the proposal, and estimated the cost of construction of a new depot at \$75,000. The city government voted to appropriate a sum not to exceed \$10,000 as its contribution to the project. On June 24 a tract for the new station, bounded by High, Garden, and Depot streets was purchased from local financier J.L. Hutton.

Work on the new building, located a block east of the old depot (which continued to be used as a freight station until it was razed about 1960), began on June 24, 1902. By this time the estimated cost of construction was \$200,000, largely due to the addition of a complete machine shop (no longer extant) and changes in building materials. The railway absorbed the additional costs, and the city did not have to increase its share of the expenses. During the period of construction, a number of serious grade problems in the south Columbia area were corrected, and a pedestrian underpass or tunnel, was constructed on the west side of the depot. The new Union Station took its name as the hub or union station for the different railroads. In 1903 another \$100,000 was spent on paving for the trackside area and for construction of a 600 foot covered platform along the tracks.

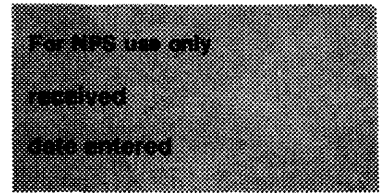
It appears that for a while the Duck River Valley Railroad and its successors maintained a separate station and shops in east Columbia, but by the time of the construction of Columbia's new station, passenger services had been combined with the Louisville and Nashville line.

During its boom years in the early part of the century the depot was the center of transportation and freight shipping for Columbia and Maury County. Many of Maury County's agricultural products, including corn, wheat, cotton and livestock depended on the railroads for shipping, as did manufactured goods, such as carriages, furniture, and farm equipment. Mail service and the Railway Express Agency, a parcel service, were both important side ventures of the railroads that operated out of offices in the depot. Formal gardens were located at the east and west sides of the structure. Visitors to the depot included William Howard Taft in 1910, General John Pershing, Buffalo Bill, evangelist Billy Sunday and William Jennings Bryan.

Passenger use of the railway line peaked about the time of World War II. To provide faster service, the railroad introduced its first diesel locomotive in 1941 and by 1956 the last of the steam locomotives had been removed. But highway improvements and increased numbers of automobiles and trucks led to a rapid decline in use of the railway. On November 12, 1945, the Interstate Commerce Commission approved an application to abandon the Duck River Valley line between Columbia and Lewisburg. Less than a decade later the railroad ceased passenger operations. The last passenger train left Columbia on December 7, 1954. (The railroad occasionally used the line up until the 1960s when there were breakdowns on the main Nashville-Birmingham line which runs to the east through Lewisburg). The Railway Express Agency office closed approximately ten years later. The depot was then used only occasionally as a section office. In December 1982, the Louisville and Nashville Railroad was purchased by the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad Company, now a division of CSX Corporation. In 1986 the empty railway station was purchased by J.A. "Buddy" Morgan. The building has been abandoned for some time and shows signs of deterioration but a complete restoration is planned by the new owner.

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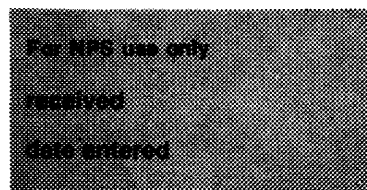
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Union Station is an excellent example of vernacular Romanesque architecture. The two-story structure is of brick construction and faced with ashlar-cut Bowling Green limestone, with low one-story wings of rusticated stone at either side. The paired entry on the main street side is particularly fine and features two sets of double-leaf doors set under great stone arches and decorated with bas-relief trim. The interior retains its original hand-laid tile floors, paneled wooden wainscoting in the waiting rooms, marble bathroom fixtures, and other original trim. Although the trackside platform was removed years ago, the main body of the building has been little altered and remains an important landmark in Columbia.



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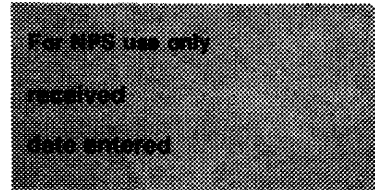
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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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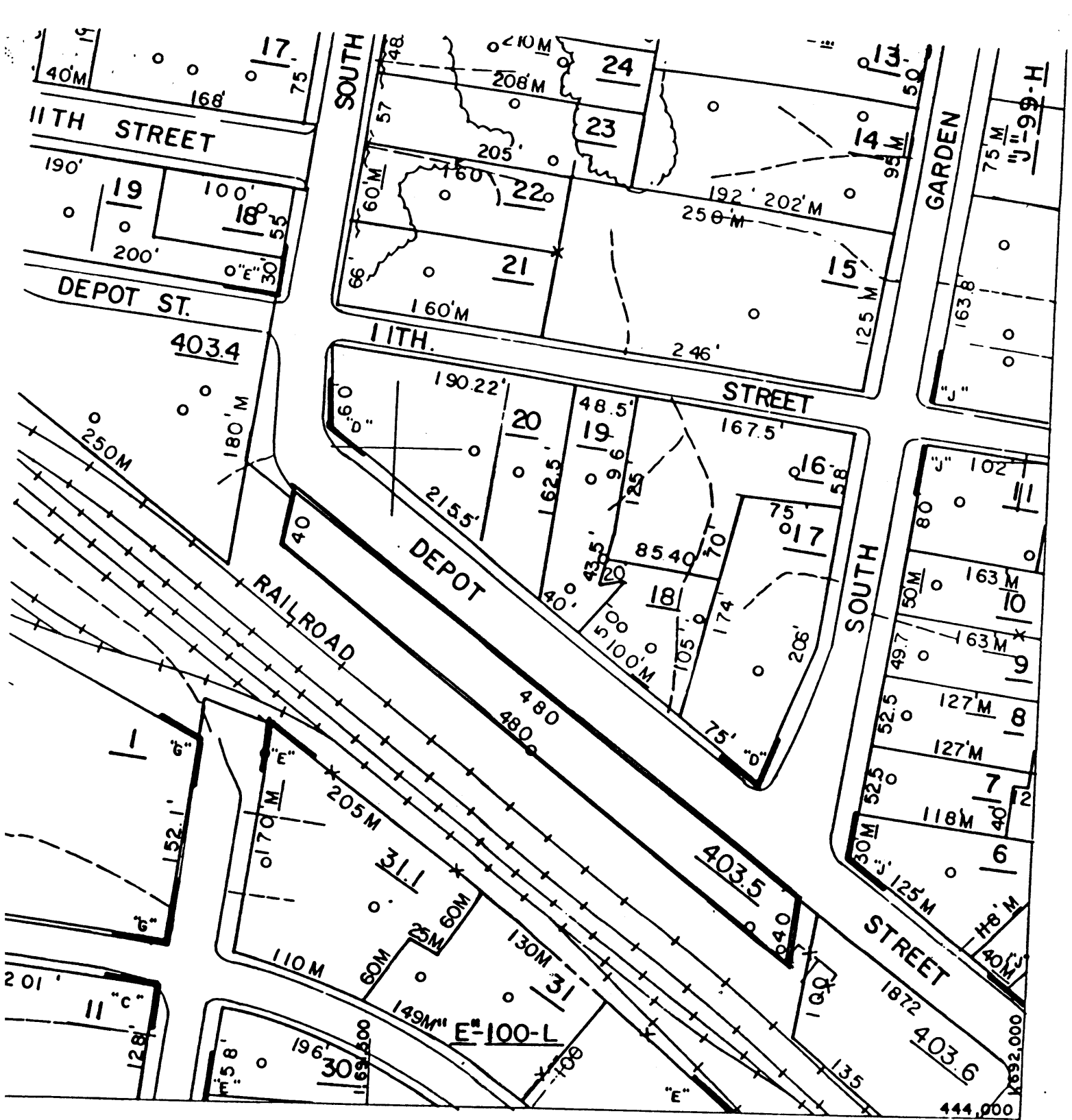


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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

The nominated property is approximately rectangular in shape and 1.06 acres in size. It is bounded by adjacent roads and the Seaboard System Railroad. The boundary contains sufficient property to protect the historic setting and architectural integrity of Union Station. (See tax map)

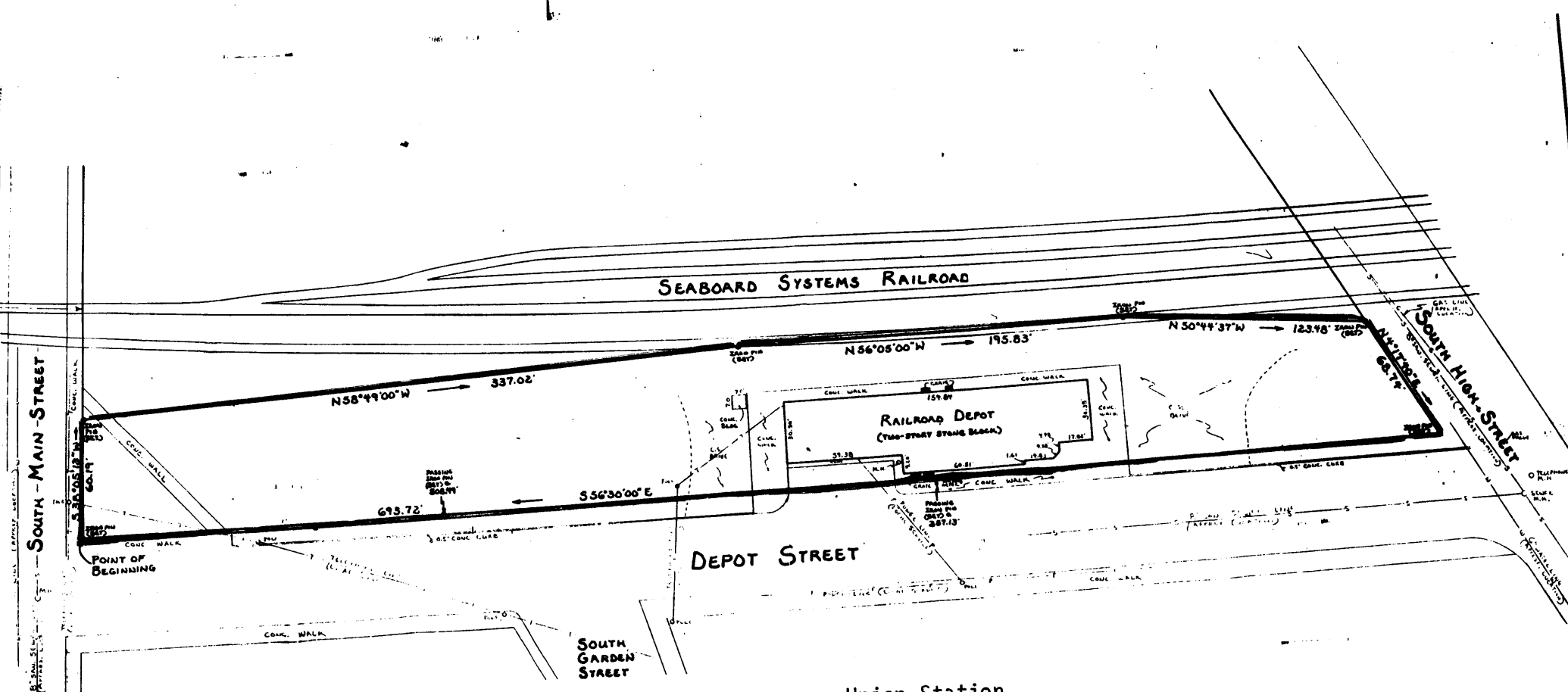


**COLUMBIA**  
**Maury County, Tenn.**

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15	

Union Station Depot Street Columbia, Maury County, Tennessee  TAX MAP 1" = 100' #1 of 2	MAP N°  100 E
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Union Station  
 Depot Street  
 Columbia, Maury County, Tennessee

SITE MAP 1" = 75'  
 #2 of 2

