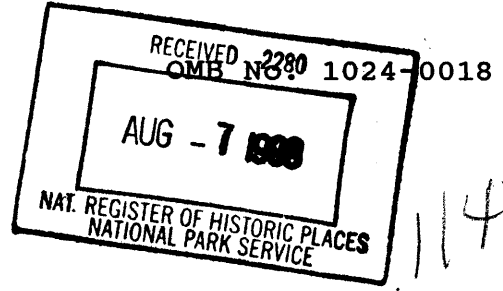


NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



=====

1. Name of Property

=====

historic name Walters Rock Island Depot

other names/site number N/A

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number 220 W. Nevada not for publication N/A
city or town Walters vicinity N/A
state Oklahoma code OK county Cotton code 033
zip code 73752

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: TRANSPORTATION Sub: rail-related

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: SOCIAL Sub: clubhouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
roof CERAMIC TILE
walls BRICK
STUCCO
other _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====
8. Statement of Significance
=====

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance 1920-1948

=====
8. Statement of Significance (Continued)
=====

Significant Dates 1920

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder UNKNOWN

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====
9. Major Bibliographical References
=====

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: _____

=====
10. Geographical Data
=====

Acreage of Property 1 acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>14</u>	<u>563330</u>	<u>3801490</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
2	<u>N/A</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

N/A See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

=====
11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Cynthia Savage, Architectural Historian
organization State Historic Preservation Office date May 1998
street & number 2704 Villa Prom, Shepherd Mall telephone 405/522-4478
city or town Oklahoma City state OK zip code 73107

=====
Additional Documentation
=====

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage
or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form
Walters Rock Island Depot
Cotton County, Oklahoma

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=====
Property Owner
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Walters

street & number P.O. Box 485 telephone 580-875-3337

city or town Walters state OK zip code _____

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SUMMARY

The Walters Rock Island Depot was built in 1920 in Walters, the county seat of Cotton County, Oklahoma. The building is located to the southwest of the central business district in a primarily residential area. To the south of the depot, along the railroad tracks, are several grain silos. The tracks are still in place in front of the depot and are used once a year when a train is sent from Waurika, thirty miles southeast of Walters, to pick up grain. The depot is a one-story, Italianate style building with a red, ceramic tile, hipped roof and concrete foundation. The building is a combination of red brick along the lower portion of the walls and stucco along the upper walls. The windows are primarily twelve-over-one but there are also several six-over-one windows and a couple of four-over-four windows. Of the four doors, two freight and two pedestrian, three are original. One pedestrian door has been replaced with a wood slab door. Decorative detail includes brackets, triple windows and quoins along the upper corners. Owned by the city of Walters since 1984, the building has been rehabilitated by the Cotton County Arts Council for use as classrooms. The building maintains a high degree of integrity on the exterior and interior.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The one-story, red brick and stucco building has a red, ceramic tile, hipped roof. The roof was repaired in 1985 when the Cotton County Arts Council began their rehabilitation of the building. The roof was missing many tiles but the arts council obtained replacement tiles from Stillwater, Oklahoma. The tiles were manufactured by the same company as the original but have a slightly different color variation. The replacement tiles are not noticeable. The roof has extended open eaves with decorative wood brackets underneath. Towards the south end is a red brick chimney.

Centered along the roof is a gabled cross section which creates bay windows in the ticket office and bathrooms and a small attic space above. The walls are stuccoed with red brick trim along the parapet and triple windows. The windows are four-over-four. A name plate with "Walters" is visible near the top of the gable on both sides. A dropped stucco parapet with red brick decorative detail partially obscures the windows.

The front elevation (west) faces on to the railroad tracks. Beginning in the northern end of the elevation, the fenestration pattern is a single twelve-over-one window; a nonoriginal wood slab pedestrian door with three-over-three transom;

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a single twelve-over-one window; a bay window with one side six-over-one window, triple nine-over-one windows in the center and a side six-over-one window; a single twelve-over-one window; original pedestrian door with hardware and a three-over-three transom; finally, a freight door with a six light transom. Above the freight door is a three row brick header.

Also visible on the west elevation is a railroad signal switch. The signal is not original to the building but in the original location of the switch. The original mechanism inside the ticket office to operate the switch remains in place and operable. The new switch was obtained from a site between Comanche and Duncan, Oklahoma. The switch was put into place in front of the Walters Depot in November 1986. Connected to the interior mechanism, the switch is functionable.

The north elevation features two windows and a metal "Walters" sign hanging from the eave. The easternmost window is twelve-over-six and the westernmost window is twelve-over-one.

Although having the same basic decorative details as the west elevation, the east elevation has only one freight door and is obviously the rear of the building. Starting on the south end of the east elevation, there is an original freight door with six pane transom; paired twelve-over-one windows; bay window with paired six-over-one windows; and, three twelve-over-one windows. Matching the freight door on the west side, a three row brick header remains in place above the freight door. Underneath the paired windows towards the southern end of the east elevation is a wooden box sheltering the air conditioning unit.

The south elevation has three small six pane windows. The windows are fixed with matching storm windows.

In front of the depot, between the building and railroad tracks, is a red brick loading dock. On the south and east side, an asphalt drive has been laid, allowing vehicular traffic easy access to the depot.

To the south of the depot is a noncontributing Union Pacific Caboose. The caboose is located on new railroad track, which was completed on 27 November 1990. The caboose was moved onto its location on 9 May 1990. The caboose measures 16 feet high, 11 feet wide and 41 feet long.

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INTERIOR DESCRIPTION

Overall, the interior retains a high degree of integrity. Under the direction of the Cotton County Arts Council, new sheetrock in all rooms but the baggage room was installed on the walls. However, the historic woodwork was only repaired, varnished and re-installed. Due to the condition of the concrete floor, a quarry tile floor was installed in 1986. To facilitate use of the building for art exhibition, new florescent and spot lights have been added in the various rooms. Some of the original lights were also retained. The majority of doors in the building are the original seven foot doors.

The Walters Depot is laid out in the standard manner of railroad depots. On the south end accessed by the two freight doors and one interior wooden door is the baggage room. The east side freight door is used as the handicap accessible entrance. Slightly ramped, the freight door allows easy access to the interior of the baggage room. The stairs from the baggage room to the adjacent ladies waiting room has also been ramped for access. Entry to the small cellar underneath the building is also gained from this room. The baggage room retains its original exposed brick appearance. The original hardware for the freight doors and two original light fixtures remain in place in the room. In addition to new florescent lights, some kitchen facilities and cabinets have been added against the north wall. The cabinets are used for the heating and cooling equipment.

Adjacent to the baggage room to the north is the ladies waiting room. This room is smaller than the mens waiting room on the north end of the depot. However, it retains the original wood wainscotting and molding. On the south wall, there are two 5 foot X 7 foot fresco murals painted by the artist "Black Moon" (a.k.a. Leonard Moons) in 1989.

Conveniently located, both bathrooms are situated to open onto the appropriate waiting room. The ladies room is located in the northeast corner of the ladies waiting room. The mens room is located in the southeast corner of the mens waiting room. Although the fixtures have been modernized, the original wood partitions remain in the bathrooms.

Located to the west of the mens and ladies waiting rooms are the ticket office and a hallway connecting the passenger areas. The ticket office is situated to the west of the hallway. Entrance to the ticket office is through a door in the ladies waiting room. The original counters and signal switch mechanism remain in place in this room. As part of the rehabilitation project, the glass separating

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the ticket agent from the passenger has been decoratively sandblasted. Access to the roughly 9 foot X 12 foot attic space is gained through the ticket office but the stairs have been removed. The hallway connecting the passenger areas has the same wainscoting as the rest of the public areas with a water fountain in the center. Although operable, the water fountain has been filled with artificial flowers to discourage children from using.

In the north end of the depot is the commodious mens waiting room. With matching wainscoting and molding, the mens waiting room is similar to the ladies room but more spacious. Used as a classroom, ceiling fans with lights have been added in this room.

ALTERATIONS

Overall, the Walters Depot retains a high degree of exterior and interior integrity. The only alterations on the exterior consist of replacing some missing/damaged roof tiles, one new wood slab door, the addition of the wood box for the heating/cooling equipment on the east side and the signal switch. None of these alterations impact the integrity of the building.

While more alterations have occurred on the interior, it is still amply able to convey its historic significance. Interior alterations include replacement of the concrete floor with quarry tile, instillation of florescent and spot lighting and new sheetrock on the walls. Additionally, new fixtures in the bathrooms and cabinets and kitchen facilities in the baggage room have been added.

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SUMMARY

The Walters Rock Island Depot is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A and Criterion C. The depot is significant within the context of transportation and architecture in Walters, Oklahoma. Located in the county seat of Cotton County, the depot is the only remaining building associated with rail transportation from the first half of the twentieth century in Walters and Cotton County. Under Criterion C, the building is architecturally significant as the only extant depot in Walters and Cotton County and as an excellent example of a brick and stucco Rock Island railroad depot.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Located in the former Comanche, Kiowa and Apache lands, the area comprising what is now the town of Walters was opened to non-Native American settlement in 1901. The federal government selected a new method of land opening for the Comanche, Kiowa and Apache lands. Rather than a land run, a land lottery was used to distribute the land to homesteaders and town builders.

In 1901, eager settlers organized a new townsite on the bottom land of Cache Creek. The town's first name was McKnight for the registrar of the land office in Lawton where homesteaders had entered their claims for land in the lottery. It was soon discovered that another town in Comanche County had the same name. Then the town chose the name of "Walter". High waters soon forced the town to relocate one-half mile south of the original location. On this new location, the town was incorporated in 1902. In 1917, an act of Congress changed the name to "Walters."¹

The town of Walters and what is now eastern Cotton County were included in the 1901 boundaries of Comanche County, Oklahoma Territory. In 1906, the Big Pasture Reserve was opened to settlement by sealed bid. This area was included in the existing Comanche County. In 1907, statehood was granted to Oklahoma Territory and Indian Territory, which were combined to create the state of Oklahoma.

For some time, the residents of the southern portion of Comanche County had been dissatisfied with the attention paid to them by county officials. It was felt "that the northern part of the county received all the favors and the interests of the southern portion was ignored." Under the initiative and referendum provisions of the state constitution, a "numerously signed petition" was sent to the state legislature to address the perceived injustice. In 1912, the

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legislature granted an election in the southern portion of the county to decide the issue of creation of a new county from Comanche County. The August 22, 1912, election resulted in a vote of 1,673 votes in favor of a new county and 963 opposed. On September 10, 1912, Governor Lee Cruce proclaimed the new county of Cotton County and designated its boundaries.²

Temporarily, the county seat was located in the town of Randlett. The two contenders for the permanent county seat were the towns of Walters and Paris. Already established, Walters enjoyed the distinction of being on the line of the railroad. Paris, to be located in the geographic center of the county, was proposed by interested citizens from the Cotton County towns of Devol and Randlett. On November 14, 1912, only these two towns were on the ballot and voters cast 1,547 votes in favor of Walters and 1,265 for Paris. Governor Cruce proclaimed Walters the permanent county seat of Cotton County on November 18, 1912.³

Important to the county seat battle was the fact that Walters had a railroad connection. Cotton County was serviced by only one railway company, the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific (Rock Island). The Missouri, Kansas, Texas railway had a line which cut through the very tip of southwestern Cotton County. The Rock Island road through Cotton County was established in 1901-1902 when a line was laid between Waurika, Jefferson County, and Lawton, Comanche County. This line remained in use until after 1970 when the Walters to Lawton section was abandoned. The Waurika to Walters line remains in use once a year. The only stations along this line in Cotton County were at Temple and Walters.⁴

Similar to most towns and counties in Oklahoma, agricultural and oil played a major role in the development of Walters and Cotton County. By 1913, the population of Walters stood at 2,000. By the early 1920s, the principal crops included cotton, wheat, corn, oats, Irish and Sweet potatoes, kafir, maize and all feed stuffs, alfalfa and peanuts. Livestock raising, dairying and poultry were also important components of the agricultural economy. In 1917, oil and gas wells blew in in northeastern Cotton County in the vicinity of Walters. In August 1919, the newspaper related the news of a third refinery to be constructed in the Walters vicinity with the possibility of news of a fourth by the following week. During the early 1920s, the local newspaper's front page continued to be filled with oil related news. By 1936, in the midst of the depression, Walters claimed a population of 3,500.⁵

In both of Walters' primary industries, agriculture and oil, the transportation of goods along the railroad was critical to their development. Additionally, for passenger travel, the railroad was the dominant means of transportation until the 1920s when the automobile became dominant. In 1920, rail transportation peaked

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in America with 1,270 million passengers taking the railroad to reach their destination. Within ten years, the number of railroad passengers had dropped to 708 million and continued to drop over the ensuing decade to 456 million. America's involvement in World War II brought an upsurge in rail-related travel which peacetime was unable to sustain.⁶ In Cotton County, Oklahoma, the only rail transportation available was on the Rock Island's tracks and the only two passenger stops were in Walters, the county seat, and Temple.

During the peak of rail transportation, the community of Walters intensified their demand for a depot which would be "commensurate with the great amount of business done over the Rock Island railroad" in their community. The town had been without a depot since the previous frame building was destroyed by fire in March 1916. At that time, the city resisted the railroad company's efforts to rebuild a similar wooden building. The advent of America's involvement in World War I further slowed the construction of a new depot. During this time, a '66 passenger coach was pressed into service as a depot.⁷

By August 1919, the city had filed suit against the railroad company to force the construction of a fire proof depot and a freight house. A scathing editorial in The Walters New Era asserted that "...our city is growing by leaps, and the vast amount of passenger and freight traffic that is daily transacted here demands that the Company should furnish facilities to handle it...." By November 1919, the issue had been resolved and the suit dismissed with the Rock Island ordering construction of a "fine stucco fire proof depot" and freight house as soon as practical.⁸

As part of the agreement between the city and the railroad, in January 1920, representatives of the Rock Island met with city officials to review the plans for the proposed building. The city approved the plans for a 76 X 24 feet building the same night that they were presented, January 19, 1920. The depot was to be built of brick along the lower seven feet of the wall with stucco above and a tile roof. The south end of the building, 24 X 29 feet, was to be a general waiting room. The office room was to be next to that with the ladies and gentlemen lavatories opposite the office. Then another waiting room with the baggage room, measuring 22 X 22 feet, on the north end. Separate waiting rooms for men and women were provided in the plan rather than separate waiting rooms for blacks and whites. A separate black waiting room was deemed unnecessary for Walters because "the company knew we didn't and were not going to have any" black passengers "and thought it wise and best to use that space for a rest and waiting room for women."⁹ The building as built follows this basic pattern, however, the larger men's waiting room is located on the north end of the building and the baggage room on the south end.

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In February 1920, the Rock Island moved in a wooden depot from Junction City to provide temporary service until construction of the new depot was completed. This did raise some fears in the community that the moved depot would be "all the depot we will ever get." However, others were optimistic that construction on the new depot would soon be underway.¹⁰

This confidence in the railroad was well placed. On September 16, 1920, the new brick and stucco depot was opened to the public. Although not as large as the depots in Lawton or Waurika, the local newspaper judged the Walters Rock Island Depot as nice in appearance. One year later, in expounding on the advantages to be found in Walters, the depot was noted as a community asset and to be "beautiful in architecture."¹¹

The Rock Island continued to use the depot until about 1950.¹² After this, the Missouri, Kansas and Texas (M-K-T) railway company took over the building. In the 1960s, the depot was abandoned.¹³ In 1984, the city of Walters acquired the depot from the M-K-T and immediately leased it to the Cotton County Arts Council. The arts council began rehabilitation of the depot at that time for use as a community center. The rehabilitation of the building was completed in about 1990 by the Cotton County Arts Council at a cost of about \$55,000 to \$60,000. Today, the Cotton County Arts Council continues to lease the building from the city and to use it for their workshops.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Walters Rock Island Depot is architecturally significant as the only extant rail-related building in Walters and Cotton County and as an excellent example of a standardized, brick and stucco Rock Island depot. Although the Rock Island built a freight depot near the passenger depot in about 1920, this rail-related building no longer stands. There were no other railway companies with lines into Walters and, hence, no other rail-related buildings were constructed in the town.

In Cotton County, the Rock Island, the only railway company that maintained a line through the county, constructed only two depots, one in Walters and one Temple. According to the Temple city hall, the Rock Island depot in Temple is no longer standing. Thus, the Walters Rock Island Depot is the only depot remaining in Cotton County.

Similar to many major corporations, the Rock Island used standardized plans in constructing their facilities. The Walters Rock Island Depot is no exception. Following the basic pattern of a "combination depot", the Walters Rock Island

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Depot is similar to other depots in Oklahoma, such as the Hobart Rock Island Depot, Hobart, Kiowa County (NR Listed 12/7/95). Like the Hobart Rock Island Depot, the Walters Rock Island Depot was constructed of a brick and stucco mix and intended only as a passenger depot. As previously mentioned, the Rock Island had constructed a new freight depot near the passenger depot to handle the freight business transacted in Walters. The freight depot is no longer extant.

The Walters Rock Island Depot maintains a high degree of exterior and interior integrity. The depot is the only extant building associated with railroad transportation in the first part of the twentieth century in Walters and Cotton County. Additionally, the building is an excellent example of a standardized Rock Island depot and is the only example of this property type in Walters and Cotton County.

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ENDNOTES

1. Weedman and Wolgamuth, "Walters," (n.p., Oklahoma Historical Society Research Library Vertical Files, n.d).
2. Lura Wilson, "Cotton County," (n.p., Oklahoma Historical Society Research Library Vertical Files, 1936) 2-3.
3. History of Cotton County: Family and Area Stories, (Walters, OK: Cotton County Historical Society, Inc., 1979) 5.
4. Prior Falk, "Cotton County," (n.p., Oklahoma Historical Society Research Library Vertical Files, 1936), 5. See also Railroads of Oklahoma (State of Oklahoma Department of Highways Survey Division, January 1, 1970), map and 43.
5. History of Cotton County, 7. See also The Cotton County Enterprise, Walters, Oklahoma, 22 February 1921; Weedman and Wolgamuth, "Walters,"; and, Wilson, "Cotton County," 3.
6. Albro Martin, Railroads Triumphant: The Growth, Rejection, and Rebirth of a Vital American Force (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 110, 124.
7. The Walters (Oklahoma) New Era, 21 August 1919. See also The Cotton County Enterprise, Walters, Oklahoma, 17 September 1920.
8. The Walters New Era, 21 August 1919 and 13 November 1919.
9. The Walters New Era, 15 January 1920.
10. The Walters New Era, 19 February 1920.
11. The Cotton County Enterprise, 17 September 1920 and 4 November 1921.
12. Thelma Cunningham and Leola Kerr, Interview with author at Rock Island Depot, Walters, OK, 21 May 1998.
13. The Cotton Electric Current, Walters, Oklahoma, 19 November 1984.

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Weedman and Wolgamuth. "Walters." n.p., Oklahoma Historical Society Research Library Vertical Files, n.d.

Wilson, Lura. "Cotton County." n.p., Oklahoma Historical Society Research Library Vertical Files, 1936.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the northwest junction of the railroad right-of-way and West Nevada, proceed 200 feet east and south along the curbline, then 234 feet south, then 180 feet west, then 312 feet north to the point of beginning, having described an enclosed polygon comprising 49,140 square feet, more or less, Block 8, Walters Heights Addition.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes the area sold to the city of Walters by the Oklahoma, Kansas and Texas Railroad Company in 1984. This boundary is the only legally recorded description for the property and includes the property historically associated with the depot.