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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Rock Island Passenger Depot
other names/site number _____

2. Location

Rock Island Avenue between 1st and 2nd Streets (south side)
street & number not for publication
city, town Oskaloosa vicinity
state Iowa code TA county Mahaska code 123 zip code 52577

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N.A.
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

[Signature] Date 9/18/89
Signature of certifying official
Bureau of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain): _____

[Signature] Date of Action 10/30/89
Signature of the Keeper

Entered in the
National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation/rail-related

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Work in progress/vacant

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian: Stick/Eastlake

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Limestonewalls Brickroof Composition shingleother

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Rock Island Railroad crosses the southern part of Oskaloosa in an east/west line. The passenger depot is located on the north side of the mainline tracks (non-extant), facing Rock Island Avenue, between South 1st and South 2nd Streets.

The depot (1887/88) is a single story brick rectangle with gable roof. It has an east/west axis, parallel to the main tracks. A single story baggage room, with a slightly lower gable roof, is attached to the east end. The entire structure rests on a limestone foundation with stone watertable. The main block of the building (59' x 31') is bisected by a cross gable which covers a shallow rectangular bay (4' x 14') with gabled roof on both the north and south elevations. These bays are flanked on both elevations by a window/door/window arrangement. The bays have two windows on the primary elevation, and a single window on each side wall. The east (baggage) wing has two windows on the north elevation, and a window and door on the south, while the east end wall contains one wide door. The west end of the building originally had two windows, but now has a single window and a freight door. All openings are segmental arched except for the "new" freight door.

The roof has broad eaves with diagonal braces of turned spindles, creating a Stick Style feeling. The gable ends originally had a design created by these turned spindles. Lunette windows are found at the attic level of the north, south, and east gable ends.

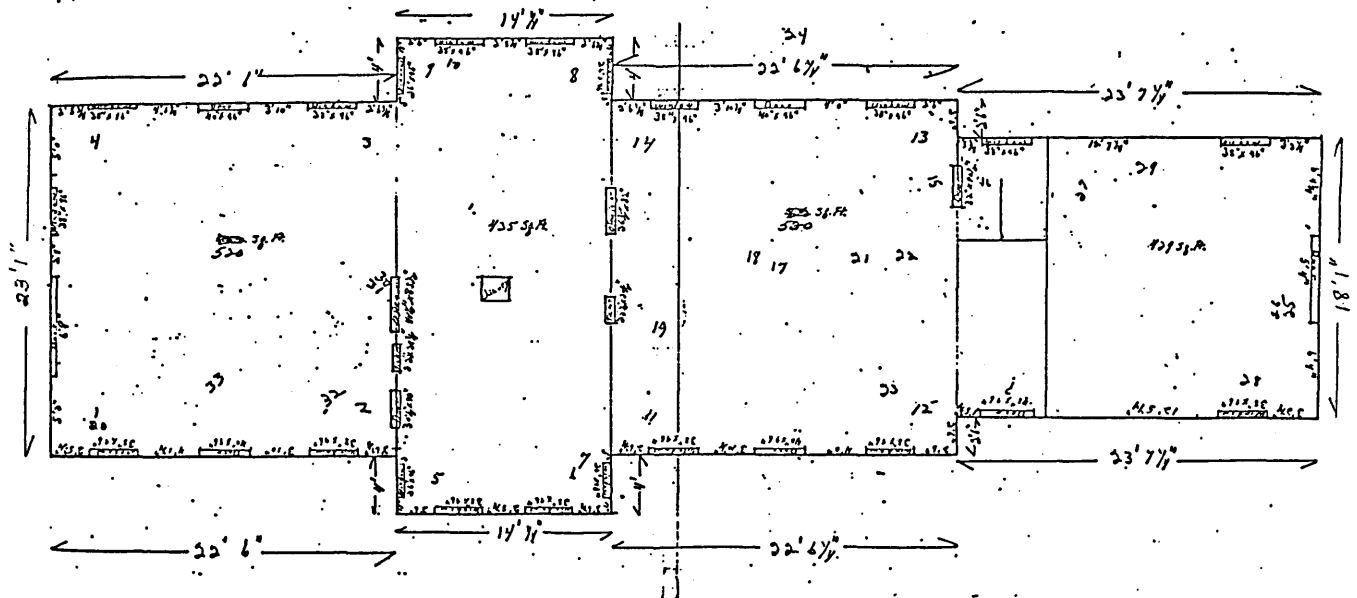
The interior follows the original room arrangement, with a large room (21' x 22') on each side of the narrow (13') center portion which housed the ticket agent. The east wing contained the baggage room and water closets. Throughout the interior, the original pine (or fir) woodwork is in place. Doors and windows have simple grooved molding with Bull's Eye cornerblocks. The transoms above the doors feature Queen Anne lights. Some original hardware remains on the doors and windows. Wainscoting runs along the interior walls of the main block. Floors throughout are of hard maple. Those in the west room have been heavily damaged and may require replacement.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

CFN-259-1116



The present appearance of the building is almost unchanged from the original design. At some time the bricks were painted tan with a darker brown band from the sills down. Above the baggage door on the east end it is still possible to see the name "Oskaloosa" and the Rock Island logo. The windows are presently covered with wood panels on the outside, but the original windows exist under the panels and can be seen on the interior. A few panes have been broken, but most are intact. The lunette windows in the attic have colored glass panes, and all but two are extant. Several of the diagonal eave braces are missing, but enough remain to show the original design. Approximately ten years ago a wind storm damaged the west end of the building, causing the loss of decorative gable elements and part of the roof. The rest of the roof is intact, and sound. Beneath the composition shingles is a layer of metal which has kept the building dry over the years. Recently boxes containing ticket stubs and routing slips dated March and April, 1888, were found in the attic, in mint condition.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

CFN-259-1116

Both a historic photo and the 1896 Sanborn map show a narrow wooden porch or platform around the building. This was evidently removed and replaced by two sets of steps to the front (north) doors at a fairly early date, because the porch is not seen in a historic postcard of the depot. A large freight door and wooden platform were added to the west end of the building c. 1930 when the passenger and freight depots were consolidated.



Portions of a brick drive are found along the east and south sides of the depot. To the north, the lot slopes down to Rock Island Avenue. A stone retaining wall with steps leading from the depot to the street is seen in all the old photographs. The wall and steps remain, but a fence along the top of the wall has been lost. Rock Island Avenue is brick paved. Across the street from the depot is a frame two story building that served originally as a hotel, and a narrow two story brick building which was built as a saloon. To the northeast is a small building constructed c. 1920 as a lunch room. All of these buildings grew up around the depot and can be considered railroad related.

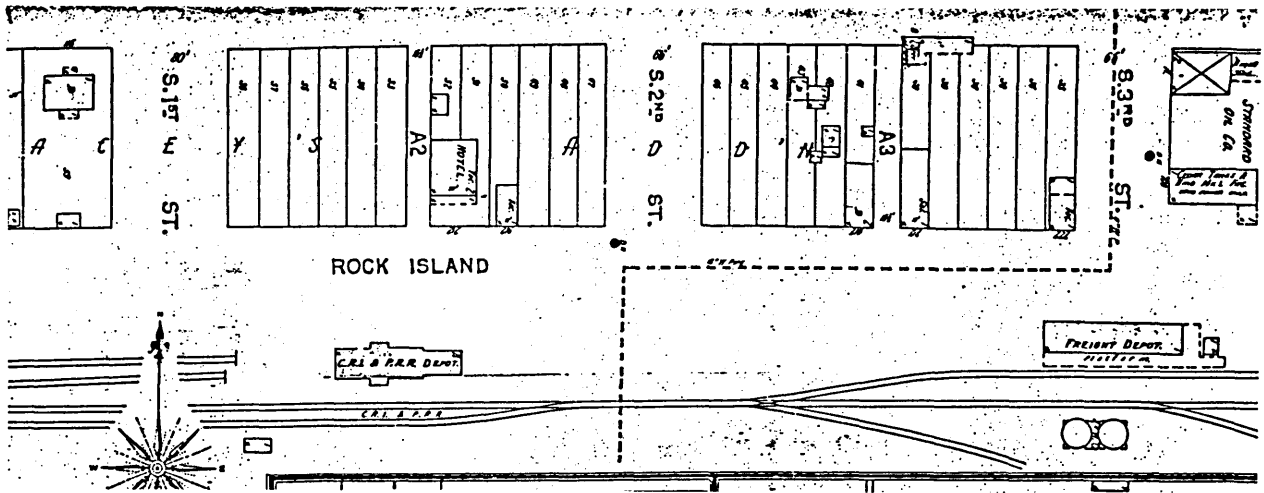
Present owners have plans for rehabilitation, retaining the historic fabric of the building. They have been working closely with Judith McClure, the architect with the Iowa Bureau of Historic Preservation on this project.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

CFN-259-1116



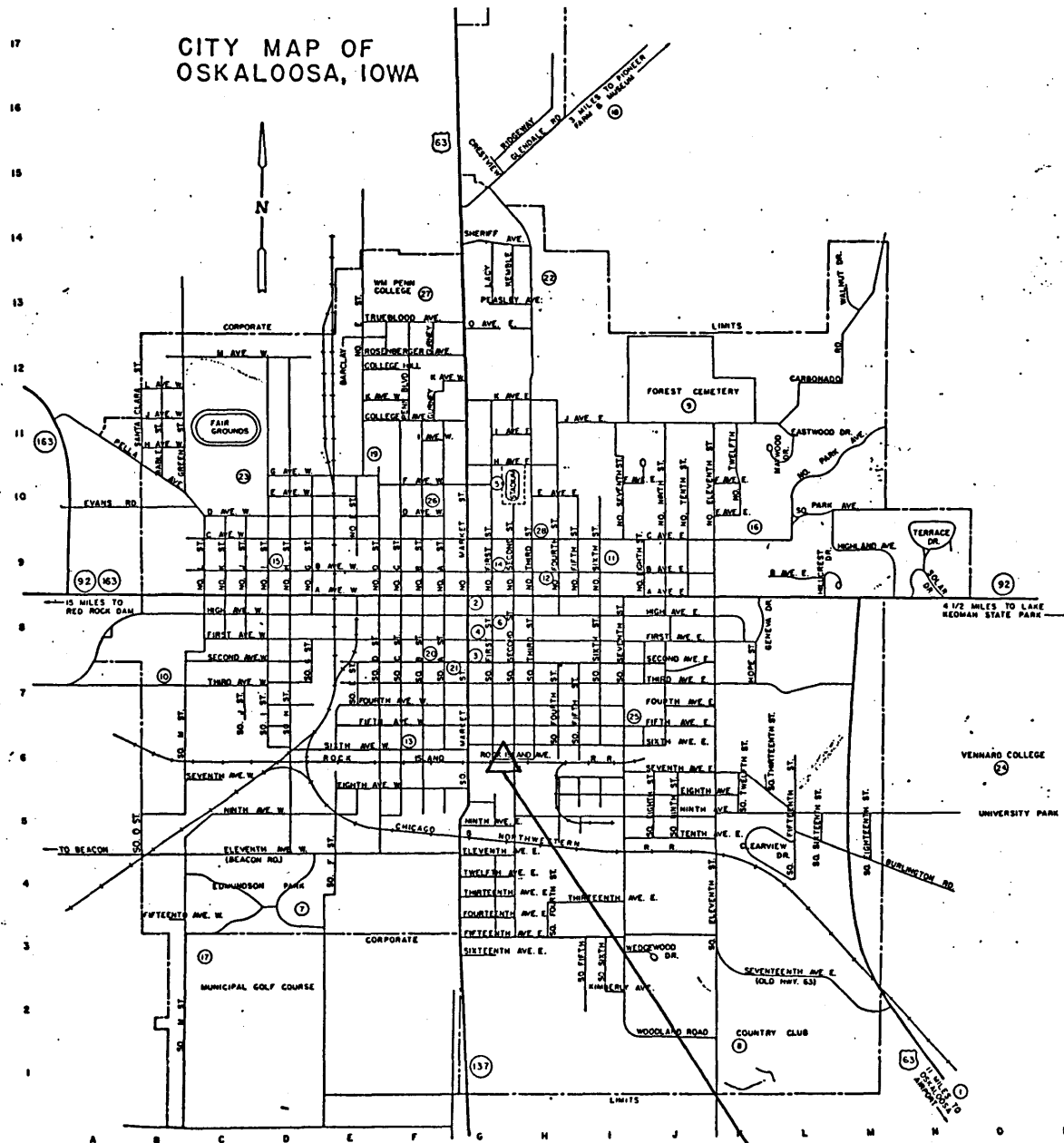
SANBORN FIRE INSURANCE MAP FROM 1902
Shows relationship of passenger depot, freight depot,
and Rock Island Avenue.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

CFN-259-1116



Site of Rock Island Passenger Depot

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Architecture

1887/88

1887/88

Cultural Affiliation

Significant Person
N.A.

Architect/Builder
Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Oskaloosa Rock Island Passenger Depot (1887/88) is significant under criteria C as a good example of a small depot design used by a major railway company in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

The relatively small size (main block, 59'x 31'), and simple design (single story rectangle with gable roof) of this building, are typical of many depots constructed in the state during the late nineteenth century by a number of different railroads. However, the Oskaloosa depot was built of brick, rather than the wood frame construction used for most of these small depots. The use of brick may indicate the importance of Oskaloosa as a county seat town, or it may have been that local brick was readily available (no documentation on origin of the brick has been located). The major decorative elements on the exterior are the turned spindles used as eave braces, and the lunette windows in three of the gable ends. Finials originally adorned the peaks of the gables. The contrast (both color and texture) between the limestone foundation and red brick wall adds another decorative element to the design. The building is functional in plan, featuring the two waiting rooms that were considered necessary in the 1880s, a small room for the ticket agent, an area for a lunch counter, and a wing to the east containing the baggage room and water closets. The attic area was left as one unfinished room. The interior featured common woodwork of the day, with wainscotting in all major rooms, and simple grooved molding with corner blocks around the windows and doors. The use of colored glass lights in the Queen Anne transoms and the lunettes adds a somewhat more elegant touch.

Little is known about the designer and/or builder of this depot. The records for the Rock Island line in Iowa have been deposited with the University of Iowa Library in Iowa City. However, these have not been cataloged, and remain in boxes in the basement, inaccessible for research purposes. The Oskaloosa Herald has provided some insight into the

See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

CFN-259-1116

construction of the depot. In June 1887, there was a brief paragraph,

New Depot. Tuesday the new Rock Island depot was located, about 100 feet west of the freight house. It will be 81 feet in length, built of brick, and be in all respects a first class station.....

The Herald chronicled the arrival of sixteen car-loads of stone for the foundation (September 8, 1887), and noted "Roadmaster Dye says that it will be a model." On October 6, the Herald noted,

The New Station. The plans for the new Rock Island station are with Capt. Searle, and call for a brick building 82.6 feet long, 24 feet wide. There will be a gentleman's waiting room on the west, 21 x 22 feet; a ladies' room on the east, same size. The ticket office will be 12 x 13 feet, octagon. Opposite will be room for a lunch counter. The baggage room is 16 x 16 feet, with water closets conveniently located. It will be a pretty one-story structure. Bids are wanted for its construction, and what's the matter with our builders that they do not take in the job?

The next mention of the Rock Island depot is not found until February 9, 1888,

Moved In.....having moved into the new station, it is proper that the event should be duly marked.....The station is a very convenient one, well furnished in every way, and is in all ways a substantial redemption of the promises of the Rock Island people. The old station will now be at once reconstructed and prepared for the occupancy of Supt. Coombs, who will come here with dispatchers as soon as the building shall be made ready.....

These are the only articles about the new Rock Island passenger depot found in the Oskaloosa Herald during this period. The mention that this was to be a "model" did not explain whether that was "model" as in a "perfect" depot, or "model" as in a prototype. Many years later (c. 1940), the Herald ran a series on the history of Oskaloosa, and reported that A. Kimball, assistant to the President of the Rock Island, was responsible for selecting the site and design of the depot.

Extensive research has been done in the Manuscript Room of the State Historical Society of Iowa in Iowa City. This houses maps, postcards, and photograph collections, including the railroad photographs of Nicholas Pitsch. Pitsch is systematically photographing all of the known railroad depots in the state of Iowa. The Iowa City facility

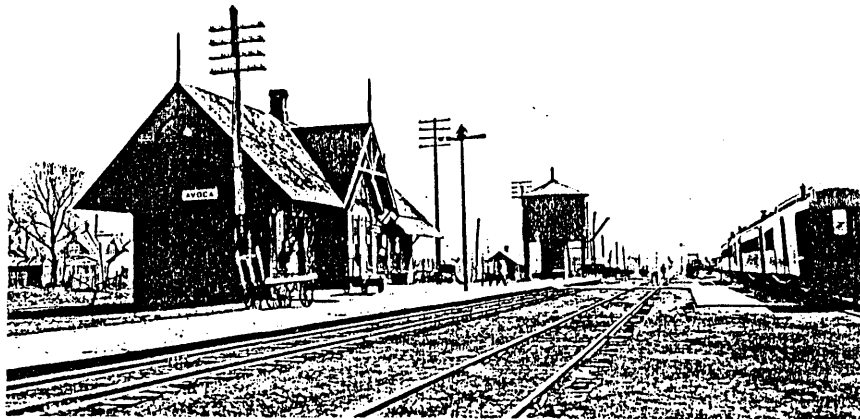
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

CFN-259-1116

currently houses photographs of between 275 and 300 depots. None of these is similar to the Oskaloosa building. In the postcard collection, a card was found with a photograph of the Rock Island depot in Avoca (Pottawattamie County). It is a frame structure built to replace an earlier depot/hotel which burned in 1886. Except for the use of wood frame instead of brick construction, the Avoca depot appears to be the same size, shape, and design as the Oskaloosa building (even to the gable ornaments and finials). The Avoca structure is non-extant.



No other similar buildings have been located. It is possible that others existed, but it is unusual that no documentation remains. The Oskaloosa Rock Island passenger depot pre-dates the Rock Island depots in Grinnell (1892) and Iowa City (1898) which are of brick construction, but of more elaborate design. Today we view the Rock Island as a major railway, and study the design of its depots across the state. However, at the time that the depot was built in Oskaloosa, The Rock Island was not viewed as the major local railroad.

Railroads arrived in Oskaloosa at a late date in comparison to other area towns. When the Des Moines River Valley Railroad (successor to the Des Moines River Improvement Project) was built from Eddyville north to Pella in 1864, it bypassed Oskaloosa to the west. Not until

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 4

CFN-259-1116

the Iowa Central was formed in 1870 did Oskaloosa have tracks coming through the community. The Iowa Central, thought of as a "local" railroad, because prominent businessmen from the area had helped develop it, ran from Albia north to Mason City. After many years, and many mergers, the Iowa Central is now part of the Chicago Northwestern.

Even though the Iowa Central connected with major east/west lines, it was felt that Oskaloosa needed an east/west track coming directly through town. In 1875 it was proposed to extend the Rock Island line west from Sigourney to Oskaloosa. This was accomplished by the city providing the right-of-way for the tracks, and raising \$20,000 to help fund the project. By February 1876 trains were running through Oskaloosa on the new R.I. track. A depot was constructed on the north side of the tracks at the foot of South 3rd Street. This served as both freight and passenger depot until the new brick building was constructed in 1887.

The Iowa Central continued to receive most of the press in Oskaloosa. There were regular notes of Iowa Central improvements and activities. The Iowa Central depot, located on the west side of Oskaloosa, was an imposing two story building, complete with tower. The difference between the two depots was so striking, that in an 1896 souvenir book the article about the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad begins, "One of the picturesque buildings of this locality is the neat and cozy passenger depot of the C., R.I. & P. Ry."

Ten passenger trains a day stopped at this "neat and cozy" depot. In 1903, it was to this depot that President Theodore Roosevelt came to dedicate the new Y.M.C.A., and it was from this depot that Oskaloosa soldiers left to serve their country in both World Wars. In 1930 the freight and passenger depots were consolidated into one building (the passenger depot), and on September 25, 1973, the Iowa Commerce Commission authorized abandonment of the C.R.I.P. depot in Oskaloosa.

This depot is the only extant nineteenth century railroad building in Oskaloosa. It represents the Rock Island line, and illustrates a simple passenger depot design in a small county seat town from the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

CFN-259-1116



ROCK ISLAND LINES
 Route of the Rocky Mountain Rocket to Colorado
 Golden State to Arizona - California
 Twin Star Rocket -- Minneapolis & Houston

9. Major Bibliographical References

Andreas, A.T. Illustrated Historical Atlas of the State of Iowa.
Chicago: Andreas Atlas Co., 1875.

Avoca Historical Book: 1869-1969. Avoca Centennial Committee.
Avoca, IA: 1969.

Hedge, Manoah. Past and Present of Mahaska County. Chicago:
S.J. Clarke Pub. Co., 1906.

History of Mahaska County. Des Moines: Union Historical Co., 1878.

Keo-Mah Genealogical Society and Mahaska County Historical Society.
The History of Mahaska County, 1984. Dallas: Curtis Media Corp., 1984.

Watkins, Kirk, Ed. The Oskaloosa Times Souvenir. Oskaloosa, IA:
The Times Co., 1896.

See continuation sheet

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

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of property 0.653 acres

UTM References

A

1	5
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5	2	9	9	2	0
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4	5	7	0	7	1	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

This is the area traditionally associated with this building.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Molly Myers Naumann, Consultant
organization _____ date June 1989
street & number 167 W. Alta Vista telephone (515) 682-2743
city or town Ottumwa state IA zip code 52501

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 2

CFN-259-1116

PERIODICALS

Nelson, Paul C. "The Rise and Decline of the Rock Island Passenger Train in the 20th Century." Annals of Iowa, Third Series, Vol. 41, No. 1, Summer 1971, pp. 649-681, and Vol. 41, No. 2, Fall 1971, pp. 729-764.

Rock Island Magazine. October 1922, p. 23.
December 1930, p. 53.

Second Annual Report of the Board of Railroad Commissioners, for the Year ending June 30, 1879. Des Moines: F.M. Mills, State Printer, 1879, p. 103.

NEWSPAPERS

Des Moines Register, "The Rock emerges as a rich, new company, but not without critics." Sunday, April 15, 1984, Iowa Farm/Business Section, pp 1 & 4.

Des Moines Register, "CNW to be bought by management group in \$1.6 billion leveraged buyout." June 7, 1989, p. 5S.

Oskaloosa Herald, 1886 through 1892, with specific reference to, June 30, 1887, September 8, 1887, October 6, 1887, October 20, 1887, November 3, 1887, and, February 9, 1888.

MAPS

Map of Iowa, prepared and printed for the Railroad Commissioners to accompany their report for 1889.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Oskaloosa, 1885, 1891, 1896, 1902, 1920, 1917, and 1927.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Pitsch, Nicholas. Railroads - Depot Photos. Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, Manuscript Collection (PA129).

Warren, W.A. Railroads - Depot - Avoca, Iowa. (Postcard) Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, Manuscript Collection (PA159).

Private Collections, Oskaloosa, Iowa.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 2

CFN-259-1116

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

A part of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad Company's Station grounds located in the NE 1/4 of the NE 1/4 of Section 24 - Township 75 north - Range 16 west of the 5th P.M. in the City of Oskaloosa, Mahaska County, Iowa more particularly described as follows: Commencing at the intersection of the west line of South 2nd Street with the centerline of said C.R.I. & P. Railroad main track; thence south along the west line of South 2nd Street 27.35 feet to a point 70.0 feet north from the north line of Lot 1 of the subdivision of Lot 2 of the SE 1/4 of the NE 1/4 of said Section 24; thence west 270.40 feet along a line which is 70.0 feet from and parallel with said north line line; thence north 39.27 feet; thence easterly 188.0 feet along a line which is 13.0 feet distant from and parallel with the centerline of said main track; thence northerly at right angles 65.96 feet to the south line of Rock Island Avenue; thence east along said south line 82.70 feet; thence south 79.0 feet along the west line of South 2nd Street to the point of beginning;

and also the parcel described as follows:

Commencing at the intersection of the West line of South 2nd Street with the centerline of said C.R.I. & P. R.R. main track; thence Westerly along said centerline 82.5'; thence Northerly at right angles 13.0 feet to the point of beginning; thence continuing Northerly 65.96' to the South line of Rock Island Avenue; thence Westerly along said South line 188.0'; thence Southerly 65.87' to a point 13 feet Northerly from said centerline; thence Easterly parallel with said centerline 188.0 feet to the point of beginning.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Photo Page 1

CFN-259-1116

ROCK ISLAND PASSENGER DEPOT
Rock Island Avenue between First and Second Streets
Oskaloosa, IA 52577

Sheri Schmidt, photographer
October, 1988

Negatives are filed with property owners: Sammy & Rosemary Schmidt
Route #2
New Sharon, IA 50207

General view of north elevation, looking south from Rock Island Ave.
#1

3/4 view of north and west elevation, looking southeast.
#2

General view of south elevation (track side), looking northwest.
#3

General view of east elevation (baggage room), looking west.
#4

Detail of east elevation showing lunette and logo, looking west.
#5

Detail of door on north elevation opening into east waiting room,
looking south.
#6

Interior: Door and windows in north wall of east waiting room,
looking northeast.
#7

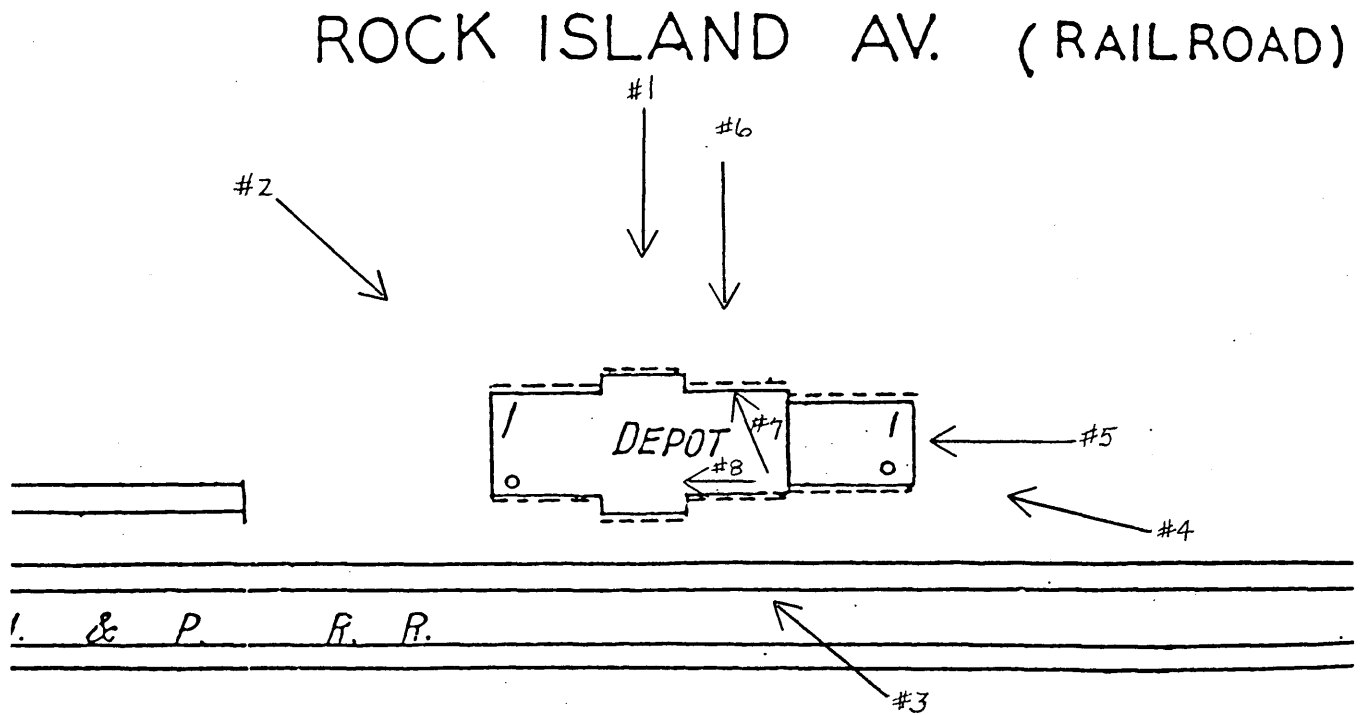
Interior: Ticket window in wall between east waiting room and ticket
office, looking west.
#8

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Photo _____ Page 2

CFN-259-1116



CAMERA ANGLES: PHOTOS #1 THROUGH #8