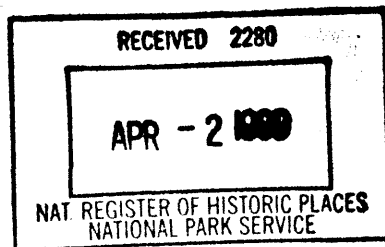


**United States Department of Interior  
National Park Service**



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**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Middleton Depot, Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad  
other names/site number Middleton Senior Citizens Center

**2. Location**

street & number	1811 Parmenter Street	N/A	not for publication
city or town	Middleton	N/A	vicinity
state Wisconsin	code WI	county Dane	code 025 zip code 53562

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_ nationally \_ statewide  locally. (\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Alicia L. Coen*  
Signature of certifying official/Title  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer-WI

3/12/99  
Date

State Historic Preservation Officer-WI  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_ meets \_ does not meet the National Register criteria.  
( \_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Middleton Depot, C. M. & St. P. Railroad

Dane

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the 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.

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_ removed from the National Register.

\_\_\_ other, (explain:)

*Edson H. Beall*

*4-29-99*

*for*

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**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

\_\_\_ structure

\_\_\_ site

\_\_\_ object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

contributing

noncontributing

1

0

buildings

sites

structures

objects

1

0

total

**Name of related multiple property listing:**

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources**

**is previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION/rail-related

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL/civic

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation Brick

walls

Weatherboard

roof

Asphalt

other

Wood

**Narrative Description**

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

Middleton Depot, C. M. & St. P. Railroad  
Name of Property

Dane  
County and State

Wisconsin

### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the 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.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or 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

1895-1948

1895

#### Significant Dates

N/A

#### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

#### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

#### Architect/Builder

Nettenstrom, J. U./Architect

C. M. & St. Paul Railroad/Builder

#### Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Middleton Depot, C. M. & St. P. Railroad  
Name of Property

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### 9. Major Bibliographic References

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

**Previous Documentation on File** (National Park Service):

- 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:  
Middleton Area Historical Society

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less Than One Acre

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

1 16 295640 4774205  
Zone Easting Northing

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

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	Timothy F. Heggland/Consultant for:		
organization	City of Middleton Landmarks Commission	date	January 17, 1998
street & number	1311 Morrison Street	telephone	608-251-9450
city or town	Madison	state	Wisconsin
		zip code	57303

Middleton Depot, C. M. & St. P. Railroad

Dane

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

**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)

**Property Owner**

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

<b>name/title</b>					
<b>organization</b>	City of Middleton			<b>date</b>	January 17, 1998
<b>street &amp; number</b>	7426 Hubbard Avenue			<b>telephone</b>	608-827-1059
<b>city or town</b>	Middleton	<b>state</b>	Wisconsin	<b>zip code</b>	53562

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 1 Middleton Depot, C. M. & St. P. Railroad  
Middleton, Dane Co., WI

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**Description**

The Middleton Depot of the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad (C. M. & St. P.) is a fine, highly intact frame construction building built by the railroad in 1895 to replace an earlier depot on the same site that had been built in 1869 and destroyed by fire earlier in 1895. The present Depot is located immediately adjacent to the still active railroad tracks of the Wisconsin & Western Railroad at their point of intersection with Parmenter Street. The one-story, rectilinear plan, Late Victorian style Depot building measures 24-foot-wide x 84-feet in length. It rests partially on brick foundation walls and partially on posts, has exterior walls that are clad in both drop and lap clapboard siding, and it is sheltered by a hip roof that features broad-overhanging eaves that are supported by large wooden knee braces. The Middleton Depot belongs to a type of depot known as a "combination station" because separate spaces allocated to passengers and to freight operations were housed under one roof. The design of the Depot was based on a standardized plan, one of a number for depots of differing sizes that were developed by the Bridge and Building Department of the C. M. & St. P. in the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. Middleton's Depot, which the railroad later expanded by adding twenty-four feet to its length (it originally measured 24 x 60-feet), remained in active use as a passenger station until 1960 and as a freight depot until 1975, when it was acquired by the City of Middleton, which restored it and now uses it to house a senior citizens center.

The present city of Middleton is now largely surrounded by the suburbs of the much larger city of Madison, the state capitol.<sup>1</sup> When the Depot was built, however, Middleton was a physically distinct and separate entity whose downtown was located about six miles west of the downtown of Madison. The principal thoroughfare in Middleton's historic downtown core is the north-south-running Parmenter Street, which achieved this status because of its location relative to the east-west running railroad tracks, which cross Parmenter Street one-half block south of the east-west running Hubbard Avenue. The first building that served as a depot in Middleton was constructed in 1856, the year when the railroad tracks first reached this location and the same year that the pioneer settlement of Middleton Station (later known as Middleton) was platted. Parmenter Street provided the first direct access to this first depot and since the railroad, depot and street were all built at the same time, the area around the depot quickly evolved into the commercial core of the village and it remained so until the growth of auto-related transportation arteries in the area in the late 1930s led to the development of other commercial areas within the city.

The land around the present Depot is flat and the streets that surround it were laid out as part of the original rectilinear shaped plat of Middleton Station, across whose grid-like street pattern the gently curving tracks and right-of-way of the railroad cuts through. The Depot is located at the west end of a very long block that is bounded on the west by Parmenter Street, on the south by Hubbard Avenue, and on the north by the railroad tracks. Located just to the north of the Depot is a narrow, black-topped parking lot that separates the Depot from one of the oldest buildings in Middleton, the now much altered, brick, Front Gable form William A. Wheeler Building (7467 Hubbard Avenue), built in 1856. To the east of the Depot is another small, black-topped parking lot, and to the south are the railroad tracks, across from (to the south of) which is a landscaped parking lot belonging to a large, very recently constructed apartment complex that occupies most of that portion of the former depot grounds that was located south of the tracks. A small landscaped area consisting mostly

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<sup>1</sup> The 1990 population of Middleton was 13,289; the population of Madison was 191,262.

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Middleton, Dane Co., WI

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of lawn ornamented with a few shrubs and a small tree is placed between the west elevation of the Depot and the sidewalk that borders the heavily traveled Parmenter Street. A former station baggage cart is placed on this lawn close to the Depot and a concrete path cuts diagonally across the lawn and leads from the sidewalk to the gently ramped sidewalk that gives access to the south-facing main entrance door of the Depot.

As noted above, the area around the Depot was originally the historic commercial core of Middleton and it remained so until the start of World War II. Since then, however, the rapid growth of the city and the new civic needs that resulted has placed considerable redevelopment pressure on this area and has resulted in the demolition of many of its historic commercial buildings. Although several of the new buildings that have replaced the earlier ones are themselves buildings of architectural merit, the net effect has been the gradual destruction of the overall historic fabric of Middleton's historic downtown commercial core. It is especially fortunate, therefore, that efforts to save the Depot following the railroad's decision to abandon it in 1975 were successful. Following negotiations with the railroad, the Depot was purchased by the City of Middleton in 1977 with the intent of restoring it and reusing it as the new home of the Middleton Senior Citizens Center, which was then housed in the basement of the City Hall (non-extant).<sup>2</sup>

The Middleton Depot is rectilinear in plan, one-story in height, and measures 24-foot-wide x 84-foot-long. The west end of the building (which originally contained the Depot's office and passenger waiting room) rests on brick foundation walls that enclose a crawlspace. The remaining portion (which originally contained the Depot's freight room) rests on 10" x 10" x 3' posts set on blocks. The exterior walls that rest on these foundations are each enframed with corner boards and they are all clad in drop siding from the ground up to a wooden beltcourse that encircles the building just below the level of the window sills and in lap siding above this beltcourse. These walls are sheltered by very wide overhanging eaves having soffits clad in tongue and groove boards and these eaves are supported by large, regularly spaced, wood knee braces. The ridgeline of the Depot's hip roof runs east-west and its slopes were originally covered in wood shingles but are now covered in shingles made of asphalt. The main facade of the Depot faces south towards the railroad tracks, but it is the west-facing Parmenter Street side elevation that one sees first.

**West-Facing Side Elevation**

The 24-foot-wide west-facing side elevation of the Depot fronts onto Parmenter Street and it is symmetrical in design and one-bay-wide. This bay consists of a centered window opening that is enframed with simple boards and which contains a two-over-two-light, double-hung, wood sash window. This window originally provided light for the waiting room inside. Four large knee braces support the eaves that shelter this elevation.

**South-Facing Main Facade**

The 84-foot-long, asymmetrically designed main facade of the Depot faces south onto the railroad tracks and the three-bay-wide, 28-foot-long, west end of this facade is unchanged from its original design. The first bay from the left consists of another flat-arched window opening that is enframed with simple boards and contains a two-over-two-light,

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<sup>2</sup> *Wisconsin State Journal*. February 1, 1977, and February 5, 1977.

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Section 7      Page 3      Middleton Depot, C. M. & St. P. Railroad  
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double-hung, wood sash window. This window also provides light for the waiting room. The second bay from the left contains the main entrance to the Depot, which consists of the original, five-panel, solid wood door, which is surmounted by a three-light transom. The third bay from the left consists of a rectilinear plan nine-foot-wide by two-foot-deep bay that is completely sheltered by the overhanging eaves of the main roof. This bay occupies one end of the office space inside the Depot and its purpose was originally to house the desk of the station agent. A semi-circular cutout in the desk allowed the agent to actually work while sitting within the bay and windows on both sides of the bay, as well as in front of it, provided the agent with a clear, unimpeded view up and down the tracks outside. These four windows (there is one on either side of the bay and two facing south onto the tracks) are all of the same size and design and are identical with the other windows described above. In addition, a small, square plan, brick chimney mass that originally served two wood stoves inside the Depot pierces the ridge of the roof in a position that places it just above this bay.

The remaining 57-feet of this facade originally acted as the south wall of the Depot's freight room before this space was converted into a meeting room and activity room for senior citizens. Not surprisingly, this conversion resulted in certain changes being made to this portion of the facade, although this was actually the second time it had been altered. As the enclosed drawing (Appendix A) shows, this portion of the overall facade was originally only 30-feet-long and its length was broken by a centered freight door opening that contained a sliding door made out of vertical boards that was surmounted by a six-light transom. When the freight room portion of the Depot was lengthened by 24-feet sometime after 1919, this freight door was moved further down towards the east end of the facade and it remained there until the conversion of the building into a senior citizens center in 1977. The new senior citizen's meeting room, however, required much more light than the old freight room so this freight door opening was removed and three pairs of windows that are identical in design to the Depot's original ones were placed at even intervals along this wall surface instead. Fortunately, the new windows match the original ones so closely that the fact that they are modern additions is not readily apparent.

#### **East-Facing Side Elevation**

The 24-foot-wide east-facing side elevation of the Depot faces a small parking lot that serves the senior citizens center and this elevation is now asymmetrical in design and two-bays-wide. The left-hand bay is a result of the conversion of the building into a senior citizens center and consists of an entrance door opening that contains a four-panel, two-light, wood door that is reached by ascending a concrete handicapped access ramp whose length spans the width of the elevation. The second bay is actually centered on the elevation and it consists of an oblong, seven-light window that is both shaped like a transom window and is placed like one, high up on the wall surface. This window appears to be original to the Depot and it was probably retained when the Depot was lengthened.

#### **North-Facing Rear Elevation**

The 84-foot-long, asymmetrically designed rear elevation of the Depot faces north towards the adjacent rear elevation of the Wheeler Building. Placed between the two buildings is a narrow, black-topped parking lot that covers what was originally a one-track-wide freight siding. The right-hand (west) portion of this elevation features two small, four-light windows that are placed to the right of a larger window opening that contains a two-over-two-light, double-hung, wood



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sash window. The larger window provides light for the waiting room and an identical window placed a bit further to the left provides light for the office. These four windows are now the only openings on this elevation, but it should be noted that the original plan of the Depot shows that another freight door was originally located still further along towards the eastern end of the elevation. No evidence of this door is now visible, though, it having been removed when the Depot was converted to its present use. Another result of this conversion, however, had the result of restoring an important feature of the original building that had been lost. Sometime before 1977, the railroad chopped off most of the width of the overhanging eave of the roof along the entire length of this elevation in order to accommodate larger trains and all the supporting knee braces were removed at this time as well. After the Depot was purchased by the city, the spur track on this side of the building was discontinued and part of the renovation of the Depot included the reconstruction of all the roof's missing elements.

**Interior**

As noted earlier, much of the original 17x24' waiting room and all of the adjacent 11x24' office of the Depot is still in largely original condition. The ceilings of these two rooms are clad in their original tongue and groove boards, the walls are clad in the same material, and the floors consist of wooden boards that are now covered in both linoleum (much of the waiting room) and carpeting (the office). All of the trim sets that encircle the original windows and doors in these rooms are still in place and feature head blocks decorated with incised bull's eye ornaments and fluted side and head casings. A partition wall that is fashioned out of two-by-two-inch boards that are placed about two inches apart and turned at a 45° angle separates these rooms. These boards reach from the floor to the ceiling and they form a kind of a grille that effectively separates the two spaces, while allowing air, light, and conversation to circulate. The Depot's ticket window consists of a centered opening in this grille and a shallow shelf supported by brackets that is placed on the waiting room side of this opening and was originally used by the Depot's patrons for the receipt of tickets and for handling change.

At some point after the Depot was completed, the railroad constructed a small, rectilinear plan, indoor restroom in the northwest corner of the original waiting room and this room was still in place when the 1977 conversion began. This restroom was inadequate to meet the needs of the new users of the building, however, so a new and larger restroom was constructed around the existing one. Some of the elements of the original room were reused, including its original wooden baseboard, which was placed at the base of the outside surface of the new drywall partition walls that enclose the new room.

The original office of the Depot is almost totally intact and is now used as the office for the administrator of the Middleton Senior Citizens Center. Already noted is the station agent's desk, which is inserted into the bay window that faces south onto the tracks and above which are located the original cast iron signal levers that once operated the Depot's semaphore signals. Also still in place is an original counter (with has a vertical tongue and groove board base and a solid wood top) and its adjoining gate (which, like the grille that separates the office and the waiting room, is made from angled two by twos). These two elements span the north end of the office and separate it from an eleven-foot-long passageway that leads from the waiting room to what was once the freight room.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The original paneled doors that once closed off the ends of this passageway have now been removed.

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The former freight room is the most altered space in the Depot. Originally, it is believed, this room had a board floor and walls clad in vertical tongue and groove boards. In addition, the floor of this room was raised almost two feet above the level of the office and waiting room. Since the room functioned as a warehouse only, it was unheated and was lit by the single window group located in the east wall of the room. When the decision was made to convert the Depot into a senior citizens center, however, it became necessary to substantially remodel this room in order to accommodate the needs of its new patrons. First, a ramp was constructed between the office and the new meeting room in order to make the new room wheel chair accessible. Then, the walls of this room were insulated and covered with drywall, three new pairs of windows were cut into the room's south wall, a second exit door was cut into its east wall, and a suspended ceiling was installed over the original one. The result is a spacious (24x56') multi-purpose room that is admirably suited to its new role, but which is largely devoid of any historic references.

Despite the changes necessitated by the Depot's new role, the overall integrity of the building is high. Great care has been taken to ensure that changes made to the exterior, such as the removal of the original freight door(s) and the addition of new windows, was done in a way that complimented the original design. All new windows duplicated the design of the pre-existing ones and any other new exterior work was done so as to be indistinguishable from the old. As a result, the Middleton Depot of today is now one of the handsomest and best restored buildings in the city and is a credit to those who worked so hard to ensure its survival.

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Section 8      Page 1      Middleton Depot, C. M. & St. P. Railroad  
Middleton, Dane Co., WI

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**Significance**

The Middleton Depot of the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul (C. M. & St. P.) Railroad is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) for its local significance under National Register (NR) criteria A and C. More specifically, the Depot is being nominated for its associations with the NR significance areas of Transportation and Architecture, themes that are also identified in the State of Wisconsin's *Cultural Resource Management Plan* (CRMP). Research into these areas of significance centered on evaluating the Depot using the Vernacular Forms study unit of the CRMP's Architecture Theme section and the Later Rail Lines subsection of the CRMP's Transportation Theme section.<sup>4</sup> The results of this research is detailed below and confirms that the Depot is locally significant under NR criterion A as the only surviving resource associated with railroading in Middleton, a community that was founded when the first railroad line built across Wisconsin reached this point in 1856 and whose principal reason for being – acting as a transshipment point for goods raised by area farmers – was based on its location on this railroad line. This research also confirmed that the Depot is locally significant under NR criterion C as well, as a fine, largely intact, and now very rare example of the type of late nineteenth century wood frame depot that was built by the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad for the smaller communities that it served.

The Middleton Depot was constructed by the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad in 1895 to replace one built by the railroad in 1874 on the same site that was destroyed by fire in 1894. The 1895 depot is of frame construction, sided in clapboard, and its design, which incorporated a passenger waiting room, office, and freight room under one roof, was based on a standard plan that had been developed by the railroad's architects. Originally, the 1895 Depot was 24-feet-wide x 60-feet-long, but the length of the Depot's freight room was later extended by another 24 feet, giving the building its present overall length of 84-feet. Middleton's depot continued to be used by the railroad until 1975. The building is currently owned by the City of Middleton, which has restored the building's exterior and the passenger waiting room and office portion of the interior, while the remainder of the interior has been remodeled for reuse as a senior citizens center.

**Historic Context**

A detailed overview of the history of the city of Middleton is included in the recently completed *City of Middleton Intensive Survey Report*.<sup>5</sup> Consequently, this information will not be repeated here except as is necessary to place the Middleton Depot into its appropriate historic context.

The first settlers of what is now the Town of Middleton, in which today's city of Middleton is situated, arrived in the spring of 1841. This area was then without governmental organization and although a steady stream of new settlers soon followed the first pioneers it remained in this state until 1846, when the Town of Madison was officially formed. In 1848, what is now the Town of Middleton was created out of the westernmost district of the Town of Madison and it was

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<sup>4</sup> Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.). *Cultural Resource management in Wisconsin*. Madison: Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986, vol. 2, pp. 6-5 – 6-8 (Transportation), and 3-1 (Architecture).

<sup>5</sup> Heggland, Timothy F. *City of Middleton Intensive Survey Report*. Madison: 1996.

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**Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 2 Middleton Depot, C. M. & St. P. Railroad  
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reputedly named after Middleton, Vermont. The rich, gently rolling farmland that characterized much of the new town and its proximity to the nearby state capitol city of Madison made it attractive to settlers wishing to engage in agricultural pursuits and, by the early 1850s, farming and related activities were the dominant economic activity in the town. As a result, several very small trading centers developed in the town to service the needs of the farming community, chief among them being the hamlet of Pheasant Branch, which is now included within the greatly expanded boundaries of the city of Middleton, and Middleton Junction (a.k.a. East Middleton), which located in the east part of the town.

What is now the city of Middleton got its start, as did many other communities of that day, with the coming of the railroad. In 1856, the tracks of Wisconsin's first railroad, the Milwaukee & Mississippi, were being laid west from Madison towards Prairie Du Chien and the Mississippi River along a route that took it through the Town of Middleton. In the same year, E. M. Williamson took advantage of this situation and platted the Village of Middleton Station, which plat now constitutes the historic core of the present city, and had it surveyed so as to border both sides of the new rail line. As a result, the railroad line, which is still an active one, enters the plat at its southeast corner and then curves gradually, proceeding to bisect the plat as it proceeds on its way west. Shortly thereafter, the first house and the first store in the new village were built and William Wheeler constructed the first brick building in the town on the corner of Parmenter and Hubbard streets immediately north of the railroad track, which he used as a general store. This act helped establish Parmenter Street as the principal commercial thoroughfare of the new village and subsequent commercial development would concentrate along this north-south axis and around its point of intersection with the railroad track.

The arrival of the railroad brought immediate change to the new village. Now, farmers in the enormously fertile area that surrounded it had a means of transporting their abundant produce to distant markets. New settlers in the village were quick to provide an infrastructure to service the demand these farmers generated. By the end of 1856, B. C. Slaughter had built the first warehouse near the railroad tracks and several other men promptly set up office as grain buyers. This activity soon reached large proportions. By 1865, local grain buyers R. E. Davis and Richard Green were purchasing as much as \$119,000 worth of grain a month and by 1868 it was estimated that as much as half a million bushels of grain and large quantities of livestock were being shipped from the village in a single year. This activity resulted in the construction of several warehouses and grain elevators and a new depot alongside the tracks. It also led to the formation of a commercial district complete with hotels, stores, and other commercial buildings centered on Parmenter Street. Surrounding this central area and radiating out from it to the east along Hubbard and Slaughter (today's Elmwood) avenues were the houses of the merchants and other citizens of the village.

The earliest settlers in the village of Middleton Station were of English and New England backgrounds, but they were joined almost immediately by others of predominantly German ancestry who quickly became the dominant ethnic group in the village and remained so until well into the twentieth century. While it would be inaccurate to say that the village "boomed" during the 1850s and 1860s, growth was steady. In January of 1867, E. D. Clinton had an addition platted to the east of the original plat and the village might have grown still larger at this time had it not been for the significant downturn in the local economy that occurred at the end of the decade. By 1870, area farmers were being afflicted with crop losses caused by insect infestation, which resulted in much smaller grain shipments. Ironically too, Middleton, as the village was now called, began to suffer from competition in the form of another railroad, the Chicago & Northwestern, which laid a competing track in the south part of Dane County in 1870. Consequently, Middleton settled

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down to its quiet future as a small area trading and transshipment center that was closely tied to the rural agricultural community that surrounded it.

Even as late as 1905, the year Middleton was officially incorporated as a village, its population was just 544 and its population had little more than doubled by the advent of World War II. Once World War II ended, however, Middleton entered a period of growth and transformation that is more active now than ever. By the end of the war the east-west-running thoroughfare that had originally been called Whittlesey Avenue had been renamed University Avenue and it was both a continuation of the street of the same name that ran eastward some eight miles into Madison and it was also a part of USH 14, which ran west to Spring Green and onward to La Crosse. Just to the west of the village, University Avenue/USH 14 intersected with the north-south running USH 12 as well, and the volume of traffic that flowed on these new corridors brought new development to the village, most of which was directed away from the historic core and out towards the new peripheral highways. As the 1950s turned into the 1960s, growth intensified and what had once been the village of Middleton gradually became less of a separate community and more and more a bedroom community for people working in Madison. By the end of the sixties the historic core of Middleton was ringed by new subdivisions and the city boasted several new commercial areas. By 1990, what is now the City of Middleton had a population of 13,289. Since that time, Middleton has grown faster than ever and it has now reached a state of growth that has probably exceeded the expectations of even its most fervent original boosters.

### **Transportation**

The Middleton Depot is believed to be of local significance under NR criterion A as the only surviving Middleton resource that is associated with railroading. The coming of the Milwaukee & Mississippi Railroad to western Dane County in 1856 coincided with the founding of Middleton in the same year, the original plat of the village being laid out so as to border both sides of the new railroad tracks. The subsequent growth of the village of Middleton occurred because the railroad made the new settlement the area transshipment point for the produce raised on the surrounding farms. The railroad was thus central to the existence of the community and it would continue to play a major part in its history until well after World War II. Consequently, resources associated with the railroad are of special significance to Middleton's history and the Depot, as the only surviving resource with these associations, is therefore believed to be of special historic significance to the city.

A good general history of early and late railroads in Wisconsin is contained in Vol. 2 of the CRMP and a more specific history of railroading as it applies to Middleton's history is included in the *City of Middleton Intensive Survey Report*. Consequently, this information will not be repeated here except as is necessary to place the Depot into its appropriate historic context.

The history of Middleton has been more significantly interwoven with the theme of transportation than with any other. Indeed, Middleton owes its very existence to the arrival of the Milwaukee and Mississippi Railroad in 1856. The Milwaukee & Mississippi Railroad was the first to lay track in Wisconsin, beginning its existence as the Milwaukee & Waukesha Railroad, which received its charter from the state legislature in 1847. After changing its name to the Milwaukee & Mississippi Railroad in 1850, the company laid the state's first track between Milwaukee and Waukesha and

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then began its long journey across the southern part of the state, its ultimate goal being to reach Prairie du Chien and the Mississippi River. By May of 1854, track had been extended as far west as Madison, an occasion that was greeted with jubilation by residents in that city who almost immediately saw 25-30 car trains loaded with wheat leaving the city for markets in the eastern part of the state and beyond.

Early in 1856, track began to be laid west from Madison on a route that E. M. Williamson, a Madison real estate dealer and the brother-in-law of John Catlin, president of the Milwaukee & Mississippi Railroad, realized would pass through Section 11 of the Town of Middleton.<sup>6</sup> Believing that the increasingly productive farms in the town would benefit from the establishment of a trading center in this location, Williamson platted land on both sides of the track in Section 11 in November of 1856, shortly after the tracks arrived, and named his new plat Middleton Station. Almost immediately thereafter, the first buildings in the future village of Middleton began to be erected, among them being a warehouse owned by B. C. Slaughter that was located just north of the tracks on a large parcel in the center of the plat that Williamson had been careful to reserve for the use of the railroad. Slaughter's warehouse was the first of several that were built on these grounds and it also served as the village's first railroad depot and post office in the 1850s, but by 1880 it had been moved to Lot 2, Block 13, of Clinton's Addition and converted into a house that is no longer extant.<sup>7</sup>

In 1869, the railroad, which was now known as the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad, built its first depot in the village on a site just to the north of the tracks at the point where the tracks intersect Parmenter Street.<sup>8</sup> This depot lasted until 1895, when it burned and was replaced by a new depot on the same site.<sup>9</sup> The 1895 depot remained in service until 1975 and it is this depot that is the subject of this nomination.

So far as is known, these three successive buildings were the only ones built in the village that had direct links to the railroad. The few other buildings that were built on the depot grounds over the years were all privately owned buildings that, like the first two depot buildings, have now been demolished. Thus, the present Depot, built in 1895, is now the only surviving building in Middleton that has historic associations with the railroad.

The importance of the railroad in Middleton's history cannot be overstated. Quite literally, the railroad put the village on the map and it also played a vital part in its economic life, it having been the principal means by which the produce of the surrounding countryside was shipped out of the area and new goods brought in until well into the twentieth century. In addition, the railroad was also the only form of reliable mass transportation that was available to the residents of Middleton until well into the twentieth century, it being the usual and most convenient means by which they could reach the nearby capitol city of Madison as well as points beyond. Throughout this period (from 1856-1975) it was the

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<sup>6</sup> Gruber, John. "Railroad People Boost Town Sites As Construction Crews Move West." *Mid-Continent Railway Gazette*, November, 1989, p. 10. John Catlin was one of the earliest settlers of Madison, Wisconsin, arriving in 1836, and Williamson arrived just four years later in 1840.

<sup>7</sup> Butterfield, Consul W. *History of Dane County, Wisconsin*. Chicago: Western Historical Co., 1880, pp. 905-906.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* P. 906. This was the first depot in Middleton actually built by the railroad. The original 1856 depot was contained within the privately owned building known as Slaughter's warehouse (non-extant).

<sup>9</sup> *Mazomanie Sickle*. June 21, 1895, p. 2.

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railroad's depot buildings that were the hub of this essential activity and the present Depot, the only surviving resource associated with railroading in Middleton, served this role for eighty years, from 1895 to 1975. The Middleton Depot is therefore believed to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places for its local associations with the NR significance area of Transportation because of the key role it played in the history of the community. The historic significance of the Depot is further enhanced by the building's high degree of integrity and excellent condition.

**Architecture**

The Middleton Depot is also believed to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places for its local associations with the NR significance area of Architecture because it is an excellent, largely intact example of the type of smaller, frame construction, Late Victorian style combination passenger/freight depots that the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad and most other railroads of the time constructed for the smaller communities that they serviced. Such depots were once common throughout the state but the demise of passenger service to all but a very few of the state's communities has rendered them obsolete and has resulted in the demolition of all but a few. Consequently, the Middleton Depot, which was built in 1895, is now one of the few surviving intact examples of this important and highly threatened resource type.

Once again, a good general history of early and late railroads in Wisconsin is contained in Vol. 2 of the CRMP and a more specific history of railroading as it pertains to Middleton's history is included in the *City of Middleton Intensive Survey Report*. Consequently, this information will not be repeated here except as is necessary to place the Depot into its appropriate historic context.

One of the best available overviews of the evolution of the smaller railroad stations constructed in the United States in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is Grant and Bohi's *The Country Railroad Station in America*.<sup>10</sup> In this work the authors set forth the salient characteristics of the resource type that the Middleton Depot represents, which they call the "combination " station.

The most common method of providing railway service to small communities was to erect a "combination" station. Such a structure sheltered passengers, freight, and train control under a single roof. Floor plans were usually simple. One end contained a waiting room while the middle area housed an office, nearly always with an attached bay window. The office, of course, provided sufficient space for the agent to do his bookkeeping work and perform services for the public, plus, the bay window gave him better visibility up and down the track. This section, too, contained the operator's table on which were located the telegraph key and other tools needed for train control. Finally, the end opposite the waiting room accommodated the freight section. Usually, some type of wooden platform was attached to the freight house to permit the easy movement of bulky goods to wagons or trucks. While there existed variations on this basic layout, most small towns had depot floor plans of this type.

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<sup>10</sup> Grant, H. Roger and Charles W. Bohi. *The Country Railroad Station in America*. Sioux Falls, SD: The Center for Western Studies, Augustana College, 1988.

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For all their concern about creating objects of civic pride and meeting consumer demands, railroads remained acutely cost conscious. Building railways was expensive; money saved on depot construction could be put to good use elsewhere. To slash costs, and because it was more convenient, most railroads adopted standard plans for their combination stations. While these designs were made sufficiently flexible to meet local needs, depots on some lines tended to look the same in town after town. Most railroads, however, employed various minor architectural features (brackets, vertical siding, and the like) to make stations built to the identical plan seem different to the casual observer, while allowing the company to benefit from the lower costs which standardization made possible. Some companies regularly relied on attractive and imaginative roof styles — ones that gave cheap, wooden stations a more "substantial" appearance, yet which did not unduly escalate overall construction costs.<sup>11</sup>

All of the characteristic design features of the combination station as described above by Grant and Bohi are present in the Middleton Depot. What debt the design of this depot owed to the one it replaced is somewhat conjectural. A Bird's Eye View of Middleton published in 1876 shows that the depot built in 1869 was rectilinear in plan, had a gable roof, and was located almost exactly where the present one is now.<sup>12</sup> In addition, an historic photo of the village taken by noted area photographer Andreas L. Dahl between 1869 and 1879 shows that this depot was clad in clapboards, had wide overhanging eaves supported by large brackets, and had two window openings on its west-facing end elevation, the one that faced onto Parmenter Street.<sup>13</sup> In all likelihood, given the small population (285) of Middleton in 1870, this depot was probably a simple combination station built to a standardized plan, the term "standardized" being used here to mean that depots of the same design were also replicated elsewhere by the railroad. Grant and Bohi go into the history of the history of the standardized depots constructed by the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad (an amalgamation of the Milwaukee & Mississippi Railroad and others that in the twentieth century was better known simply as "the Milwaukee Road") in considerable detail.

The Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul and Pacific or Milwaukee Road, now [1988] a part of the Soo Line, continues to serve the agricultural states of the nation's heartlands. Inheriting a diverse collection of post-Civil War station types from predecessors, particularly in Wisconsin and Illinois, a large number of the firm's combination depots resemble those farther east. At the turn of the twentieth century, the Milwaukee clarified its depot design policies; it devised an elaborate set of combination station drawings that would provide a structure to meet the traffic requirements of any community on its now far-flung system. With money often in short supply, economy of construction undoubtedly forced a rethinking of traditional depot designs and hence produced these more rigorous standardized plans.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Grant and Bohi, op. cit., pp. 22-23.

<sup>12</sup> Bird's Eye View of Middleton, Dane County, Wisconsin, 1876.

<sup>13</sup> Andreas L. Dahl Collection. Visual and Sound Archives, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, File No. 6090.

<sup>14</sup> Grant and Bohi, op. cit., p. 71.



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These designs were produced by the staff of the Chicago-based staff of the Bridge and Building Department of the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad, which Department was, by the late 1890s, designing all but the largest and most important depots belonging to the Railroad. Most of these designs can now be seen in the extensive collection of corporate records, plans, and other items given to the Milwaukee Public Library by the Milwaukee Road. Among the many depot designs to be found in the collection is one showing the floor plan and two elevations (west and south-facing) of a 24' x 60' depot dated November, 1899, which the design sheet notes was "as built in Middleton [Wisconsin], Elmsprings, So. Amana [Iowa], Dexter, and Arlington [either Wisconsin or Iowa]."<sup>15</sup> This design depicts the 1895 Middleton Depot as originally built (see Attachment A), the later date on the plan being, perhaps, either the date when the plan was redrawn for inclusion in a portfolio of standardized designs produced by the Department or possibly the last date when this plan was used.

Somewhat surprisingly, considering the overall simplicity of its design, the Middleton Depot and most of the others constructed by the Milwaukee Road were actually designed by architects working for the Bridge and Building Department. The architect listed on the plan of the Middleton Depot, for instance, was J. U. Nettenstrom, who may have been the actual designer, but was most likely the person in charge of others in the Department's design office. Despite having been architect-designed, the Department's smaller depot designs were usually exceedingly simple in conception. Indeed, these designs have an almost vernacular quality about them, in part because of the relatively simple programmatic requirements that these smaller depots were asked to fulfill. The present Middleton Depot is a good case in point. Indeed, so unchanging were the programmatic needs of the railroad in Middleton between 1869 and 1895 that the design of the later depot still retained many design features found on the 1869 depot such as its simple rectilinear plan, frame construction, clapboard siding, and wide overhanging eaves supported by large brackets. Differences, however, included the substitution of a slightly more complicated hip roof for the earlier gable roof and the addition of ornamental wood cresting on the new roof's ridgeline, although this last feature was removed when the roof was later reshingled.

Interestingly, the Middleton Depot of today is twenty-four feet longer than the original planned length, being 84-feet in total length rather than 60-feet. A photo of the Depot taken in 1976, the year the Depot was acquired by the City of Middleton, shows that the building had reached its present length by that date and it also shows that the location of the south-facing freight door shown on the original design had by 1976 been moved further towards the east end of that elevation. Thus, at some time between 1919 and 1976 the railroad added 24 feet to the east end of the Depot, presumably in order to enlarge the size of the freight room since the size of the office and waiting rooms remained the same.<sup>16</sup>

Middleton's new depot did service as a passenger station from 1895 until January 6, 1960, when the last passenger train to use this line stopped at the station. The station agent at Middleton still remained in place afterwards, however, and assumed responsibilities for not only Middleton, but for all the other depots in the western Dane County communities on

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<sup>15</sup> Milwaukee Road Collection. Milwaukee Public Library, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Sheet No. 8.

<sup>16</sup> Local sources consistently cite 1939 as the year when this expansion occurred, but no corroboration of this date has been found. Information on the Depot in an Interstate Commerce Commission report dated 6-16-1919, though, gives the building dimensions as 24x60 as of that date, which suggests that the extension must have been built after that date.

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this line as well; Cross Plains, Black Earth, and Mazomanie, and for the community of Arena in adjacent Iowa County. Finally, in 1975, the railroad decided to transfer the station agent's duties to the Madison office and close down and demolish its Middleton Depot.<sup>17</sup> Following lengthy negotiations with the railroad, the City of Middleton purchased the Depot in 1977 with the intent of restoring the building and turning it into a senior citizen center. The restoration and conversion were completed in 1978 and the building has served Middleton in this capacity ever since.<sup>18</sup>

Today, although the Depot has been converted to a new use, the appearance of its exterior and of its interior is still much the same as it has always been. Consequently, the recently completed Middleton Intensive Survey chose the Depot as one of five buildings in the city that it believed to be potentially individually eligible for listing in the NRHP. The Middleton Depot, therefore, is being nominated for inclusion in the NRHP because it is a largely intact example of a Late Victorian style frame construction combination passenger and freight railroad depot. Such stations were once a common feature of the Wisconsin landscape but the ongoing evolution of the nation's railroad systems has now rendered them obsolete and most of them have now either been demolished or irreversibly altered. Thus, intact examples of these stations such as the Middleton Depot are of great importance in portraying the story of railroad development in Wisconsin and the evolution of the state's railroad depots.

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<sup>17</sup> Records of the State of Wisconsin Public Service Commission, File No. 2-R-6076, dated June 13, 1975.

<sup>18</sup> *Wisconsin State Journal*. July 20, 1978. Section 1, p. 6.

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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Lot 1, Certified Survey Map (CSM) 4622, Certified Survey 20/171-173, R6678/47-49, 4/11/84. Described as Sec 11-7-8, Part N $\frac{1}{2}$ S $\frac{1}{2}$ . Beg. SE corner Lot 2, Old Middleton Plat and CSM 4369 Lot 1, then S0°W 8.02', then S86°E 66.07' to POB. Then N0°E 41.66', then S80°E 101.17', then N0°E 9.5', then N89°E 45.89', then S87°E 28.3', then S0°W .22', then along curve to R radius 948' LC S84°E 106.97', then N0°E 5.55', then along curve to R radius 953.5' LC S75°E 209.78', then S0°W 5.48', then along curve to R radius 1658.63' LC S68°E 202.32', then along curve to R radius 2889.79' LC N79°W 516.5', then N85°W 167.27' to POB (25,511 square feet, more or less).

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundaries set forth above enclose all the land historically associated with the Middleton railroad depot.

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Items a-d are the same for each photo.

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- a) Middleton Depot, C. M. & St. P. Railroad
- b) Middleton, Dane County, WI
- c) Timothy F. Heggland, December 21, 1997
- d) State Historical Society of Wisconsin
- e) General View, View looking NE
- f) Photo 1 of 8

Photo 2

- e) View of Main Facade, View looking NE
- f) Photo 2 of 8

Photo 3

- e) View of West Elevation, View looking E
- f) Photo 3 of 8

Photo 4

- e) View of West and North Elevations, View looking SE
- f) Photo 4 of 8

Photo 5

- e) View of North and East Elevations, View looking SW
- f) Photo 5 of 8

Photo 6

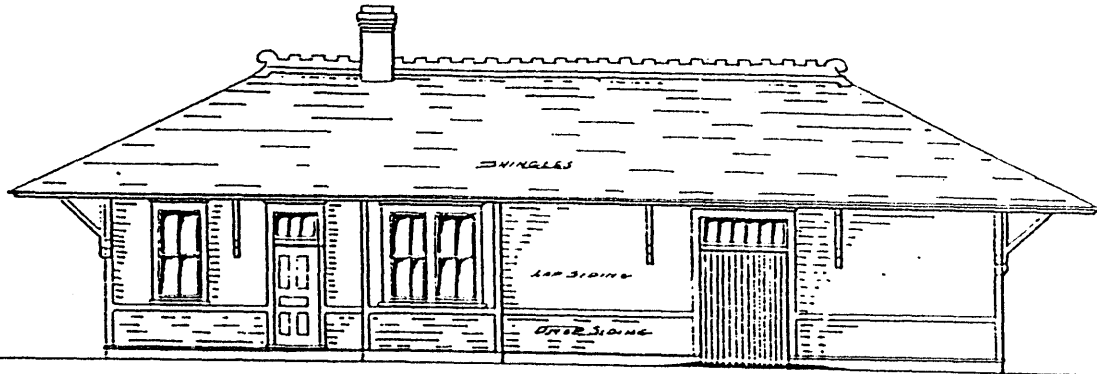
- e) View of East Elevation, View looking W
- f) Photo 6 of 8

Photo 7

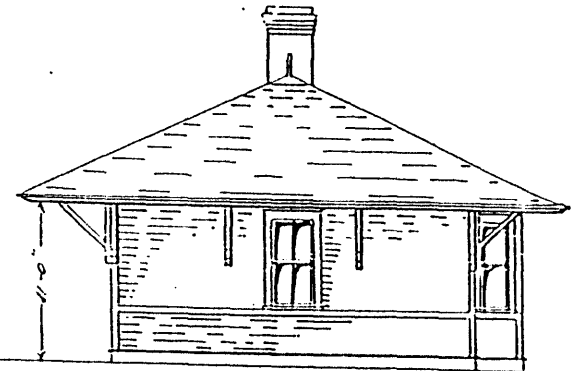
- e) View of Interior of Former Passenger Waiting Room, View looking S
- f) Photo 7 of 8

Photo 8

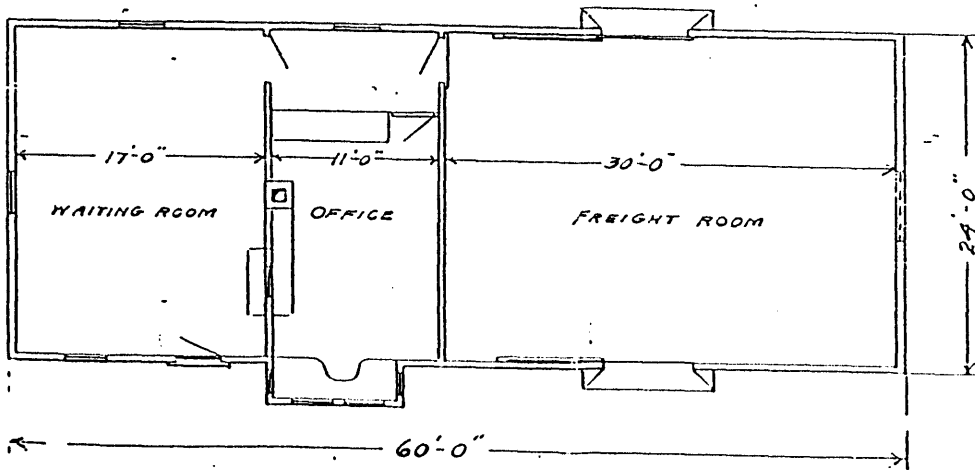
- e) View of Interior of Former Station Master Office, View looking S
- f) Photo 8 of 8



FRONT ELEVATION



END ELEVATION



C. M. & ST. P. RY.

BRIDGE & BUILDING DEPT.

24' x 60' DEPOT.

AS BUILT AT ELMSPRINGS, MIDDLETON,

SO. AMANA, DEXTER, & ARLINGTON

CHICAGO, NOV. 1899

J. U. NETTENSTROM

ARCHITECT.

ONWARD BATES

ENGR & SUPT B. & B.

SHEET No. 8.