

1827

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 Missouri, Iowa & Nebraska Railway co. Depot - Weldon
other names/site number Weldon Depot

2. Location

street & number North Main Street & Decatur County Line not for publication
city, towns/site number Weldon vicinity
state Iowa code IA county Decatur code 053 zip code 50264

3. Classification

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

Name of related multiple property listing: Railroad MPS 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] 10/31/91
Signature of certifying official Date

State Historical Society of Iowa
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 for the National Register.
 other, (explain:)

Gary M. Rapley 12/13/91

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

TRANSPORTATION/Rail Related

Current Functions

VACANT/Not in Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

No Style

Materials

foundation Concrete

walls Wood

roof Asphalt

other Wood Siding

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Acreage of property less than one

UTM References

A

Zone Easting Northing

C

B

Zone Easting Northing

D

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The precise verbal boundary of the Weldon Depot is a rectangle 81 feet west to east and 48 feet, 6" north to south. This area allows for an extension of 15 feet on all sides of the depot and encompasses the areas of the original platforms.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

This nomination includes only the subject depot and the area encompassing the original platforms. All other structures are excluded.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Betty Wallace (research by Weldon Depot Preservation Committee)

organization _____ date October 21, 1991

street & number PO Box 143 telephone 515-445-5146

city or town Weldon state Iowa zip code 50264

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

The Missouri, Iowa & Nebraska Railroad started building the Weldon Depot in 1880 and completed it during the winter of 1880-81. It is a one story wooden frame structure 18 feet 6 inches wide and 51 feet long and stands approximately 45 feet east of the north end of Main Street. It sits on the original erection site approximately 36 feet south of the Decatur County line. The site was originally purchased from the Kline family by the railroad for right-of-way. Then the town began to develop with people moving close to the railroad. After the railroad discontinued service in the mid-1940s, the depot was turned over to the Town of Weldon.

The original foundation, made of railroad tie pilings set in the ground and 8 x 8 wood stringer beams rotted away. In 1989, the building was raised, floor joists replaced, and the foundation was replaced. The new foundation began with cement footing, 16 inches wide and 12 inches deep. From there, 8x8x16 cement blocks were laid two rows high. The depot then had 2x6 floor joints resting on the cement blocks.

The walls are 2x4 studs 13' high. The ceiling joists are 2x6" and the rafters are 2x6" wood. The shingles presently are green asphalt but plans are to replace them with wooden shingles similar to the original. There is also a brick chimney, recently repaired, almost in the center of the roof. The depot has a gabled roof with an eave overhang of 4' on both sides and both ends.

The outside walls have vertical barn board and batten strips on all four sides. The 10" barn boards extend from the top of the foundation to the eaves on the north, east and west sides. The barn boards are original and the batten strips were replaced.

The barn boards on the south side, also original, and the batten strips extend from the eave down 10'. From the barn boards to the foundation there is horizontal drop siding 3', 3". On the west end of the south side there is a 36" wide wood door leading into the baggage room. Above the door is a 36" long by 18" wide transom window that does not open. On the southwest corner there is a large, eight-sided, four inch pole support from the eave to the wall, bracing the large eave. The baggage platform on the south side is missing but plans are being made to replace it according to the original specifications.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Further east is the bay window protruding 3' out from the main foundation with a width of 9'. It is filled with windows, east, west and south, giving a better view of the tracks and trains. On the west side of the nook is a 19" window with two sliding sections. On the south side of the nook are three more windows identical to the one just described. On the east side of the nook there is a window matching the west side. In the middle of the nook, above the windows, the train signal rests on a wooden ledge.

The signal consists of a tin sign with two 2" holes on either side to provide a signal for the passing trains. This sign gave the signal for the trains to stop or proceed. If the red end of the sign was facing south toward the tracks, the train stopped. If the green end showed, the train passed without stopping. Attached to the tin sign is a chain, extending inside the building. This chain was pulled by the station master to signal the train.

Just east of the bay window is the second 36" wood door almost identical to the one previously described, except for the transom window, which is 36" long and 24" wide and has two equal panes of glass. This door is the main entrance. To the right of the door is an old, wooden sash window which slides up and down. It is comparable to the window already described. This window has four panes of glass in each sliding section. Each glass pane is 12" x18". All of the windows were needed for lighting in the 1880s. To finish the south side is the matching 4" post support.

On the east and north sides of the depot there are two windows each, mates to the ones on the south. All of the windows are original.

The newly replaced baggage platform on the west is much as it was in the 1800s. Also on the west are double doors leading into the baggage room. Each door measures 32" wide by 80" tall. Each door has 4" tongue and groove siding and the boards are put on at an angle opposite each other to produce the image of an upside down V. Above the double doors is another transom window 16" wide and 62" long. It consists of one solid glass pane. The large overhanging eaves, typical of depots of this type, give a distinguished appearance and accommodate the strong, 4" post supports from the eaves to the walls.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

The depot was repainted in 1990 using paint as near the original color as possible. The white block letters spelling out the name of the town were put on the east and west ends.

the west double doors lead to the baggage room. This room has no finished walls and only one light bulb hanging from a twisted cord. The floor is original and of native wood lumber 8" wide. The walls are unpainted and writing from years ago can still be seen. The 2x4 wall studs are rough and dingy. There is no boxing inside the room and no ceiling. The room measures 20', 1" long and extends the width of the depot. It is an open rectangle with the exception of one small records storage area in the northeast corner. There is a door just south of this storage area leading into the Agent's room.

The Agent's area is the middle room. On the west wall south of the door are base cupboards for records and supplies. Across the south end of the room is the earlier described nook consisting of five 19" windows used for observation of the tracks and trains. The ticket window is located on the east wall. Below the window is a cash drawer. Beneath and to the left of the cash drawer are small storage cupboards. On the north wall is a window. North of the ticket window is a door leading into the passenger waiting room.

The walls of the passenger waiting room are finished with horizontal 6" tongue and groove boards and are painted. These boards are original. There is an old wood stove near the middle of the west wall. The two light bulbs hanging from the ceiling on twisted cords have old white globes over them. The flooring is the original wood as is the flooring in the entire depot.

The people of Weldon are very proud of the depot and consider it to be a very historic site in this area. It is one of the few depots left to be restored and is still on its original site. The committee has obtained an old baggage cart which they have restored and painted to resemble its original appearance. There are plans to obtain a caboose, make a city park on land adjoining the depot, and use the depot to house a railroad museum. Completion of these plans will give a historic appearance and promote tourism in this part of the state.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

INTRODUCTION

The depot has twofold significance under National Register Criterion A, the first for its association with the railroad origins of Weldon and the second for its being a rare surviving reminder of both the growth of the Missouri, Iowa & Nebraska (MI&N) Railway under Iowa railroad builder Francis M. Drake, and of its aggressive takeover by Jay Gould's Wabash line as the southern Iowa key to his strategy of competitive expansion against the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy (CB&Q) Railroad. The period of significance dates from the summer of 1880 until April of 1881, during which time the MI&N completed its main line extension through Weldon to Van Wert and opened for traffic by early fall of 1880, only to transfer operating control to Gould's Wabash, St. Louis and Pacific Railway Company as lessee from October 1, 1880 to April 1, 1881 at which time the Wabash and CB&Q reached a truce to jointly extend the line further west through their new jointly owned line named the Humeston and Shenandoah Railroad Company.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

Weldon found life when Francis Drake's MI&N, which ran from Alexandria, Missouri to Corydon, Iowa, decided to extend their main line further west to Van Wert. Work commenced in 1879 and by early summer of 1880 the line had opened for traffic to Humeston. As things proceeded westerly, the MI&N purchased from J. P. Kline 70 acres of farm land in northwestern Franklin Township for a townsite of what would become Weldon. This townsite, situated adjacent to and south of the forthcoming trackage was to be marketed by the company of four proprietors--a man named Hill of Centerville, L. P. Sigler and J. L. Young of Leon and, of course, Francis Drake. There the railway soon erected its depot built to the same design of at least one erected a few miles previous in Cambria. The depot then became headquarters for many of the town people while awaiting the establishment and building of stores and businesses once the laying out of streets and lots occurred in early August.

With Weldon's MI&N beginnings scarcely underway, the line's prospects fell under the sway of larger railroad forces contending for dominance in southern Iowa. Jay Gould, the bold and expansion-minded railroad system organizer, saw in the 142 mile long MI&N a way to beat rival lines by gaining a more direct route for his Wabash line from Council Bluffs to Chicago. If Gould could gain control of the MI&N, all he needed to do was

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

then extend it ninety-five miles further west and he would be poised to effectively compete with the CB&Q and other well-entrenched competition in Iowa which had combined in a pool to maintain their share of the through rate.

As part of the bold moves carried out by Gould during 1879-1881 which would reshape the railroad map of the nation and force his conservative competitors into expansion programs of their own, he gained controlling interest in Drake's shortline and had it leased to the Wabash. Having thus beat out the effort by his principal foe, the Burlington, to get control first of the MI&N, Jay Gould announced his intent to build the line westward from Van Wert to Shenandoah. This posed a direct threat to the Iowa Pool Roads, and especially the CB&Q by invading the Burlington's rich southern Iowa territory. After exchanging mutual threats of retaliation, Gould accepted an overture by Charles Perkins of the CB&Q to meet and see what might be arranged to stabilize things. At a peace conference in New York during October 1880, Gould and Perkins agreed, among other things, for the Wabash and the Burlington to jointly build and manage the line between Humeston and Shenandoah. This they carried out through organizing the Humeston and Shenandoah Railroad in April 1881 which came into possession of the original MI&N segment constructed earlier between Humeston and Van Wert, including Weldon.

The territorial agreement produced an uneasy peace, however, for soon Gould had worked out yet another lease--this time with Francis Drake's Centerville, Moravia & Albia Railroad--for the Wabash to establish a north-south line into Des Moines, an action which violated the spirit of the 1880 agreement and contributed to its ultimate collapse by 1881 as another round of expansion wars ensued. In 1886, following the Wabash bankruptcy, the Missouri, Iowa and Nebraska was reorganized as an independent Keokuk & Western Railroad, which then operated the line until 1901, after which it became part of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad Company. This lasted until 1946 when railroad service ceased to Weldon and the tracks were torn up.

The 1881 depot at Weldon thus stands as a reminder of the larger railroad struggles that surrounded the line's arrival as well as calling attention to the origins of the town, which were so intimately connected to the railroad and to Francis Drake's important role in creating modest-size railroads. As such it relates in the following way to results of the previous Multiple Property Listing entitled "The Advent and Development of Railroads in Iowa: 1855-1940." The historical context of the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

depot's history is principally discussed in the sections concerning "Railroads and Settlement Patterns in Iowa: c. 1860-c. 1890" and "Consolidation in the Railroad Industry: 1870-1900" and provision for additional significance is contained in treatment of "Iowans and Railroad Development," "Railroads and Town Development," and "Railroad Line Studies" as elements of the section on "Topics for Future Research." The Weldon Depot is a "first generation station" and, as a particular "type of property," comes under the classification of a "combination passenger and freight depot."

Under "Registration Requirements" for passenger depots, the depot would be evaluated under Criterion A as having been significantly associated with a railroad that had a major influence in the growth and development of the community. No known examples exist of another first generation depot associated with the history of the Missouri, Iowa and Nebraska Railroad.

The Weldon depot is located on Main Street and the Decatur County line, which makes it visible to all by passers. The building of the depot in 1880 by MI&N was a great asset in developing the businesses and homes that were built in Weldon, which became a progressive little town. On August 3, 1880, the town was laid out in streets and lots on land the railroad acquired from Mr. Kline. These lots were rapidly purchased. Weldon's main street is 140 feet wide and divides the town almost in half.

The area farmers used the railroad for transporting grain and livestock. Lumber was brought in for building and supplies for the businesses of town.

With the railroad, Weldon became a prosperous town with banks, a hospital, three hotels, four grocery stores, a millinery shop, lumberyard, blacksmith shop and newspaper office. Located to the east of the depot was an elevator and stockyards; to the west was a structure for grain storage.

The means of communication was the telegraph, which carried messages of World War II. The railroad was also used to transport mail, coal, groceries, hardware and other supplies. Area residents used the railroad for transportation to visit relatives and friends and to conduct business in other towns.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

The last passenger car went through Weldon in December 1945 and the last freight went through in January 1946, at which time railroad service ceased to Weldon and the tracks were torn out. The depot then came under the jurisdiction of the town.

In the fall of 1988, the Weldon City Council called a meeting to determine whether the townspeople wanted to restore the depot. Sufficient interest was expressed that a committee was appointed which consisted of Ted Quayle, Norman Owens, Bill Carroll, Elaine Fisher, Kathryn Mason and Betty Savely. Money was raised through various fund raising activities and from individual donations to help finance the restoration project.

The entire community has shown their support by their generous contributions of time and money to this project.

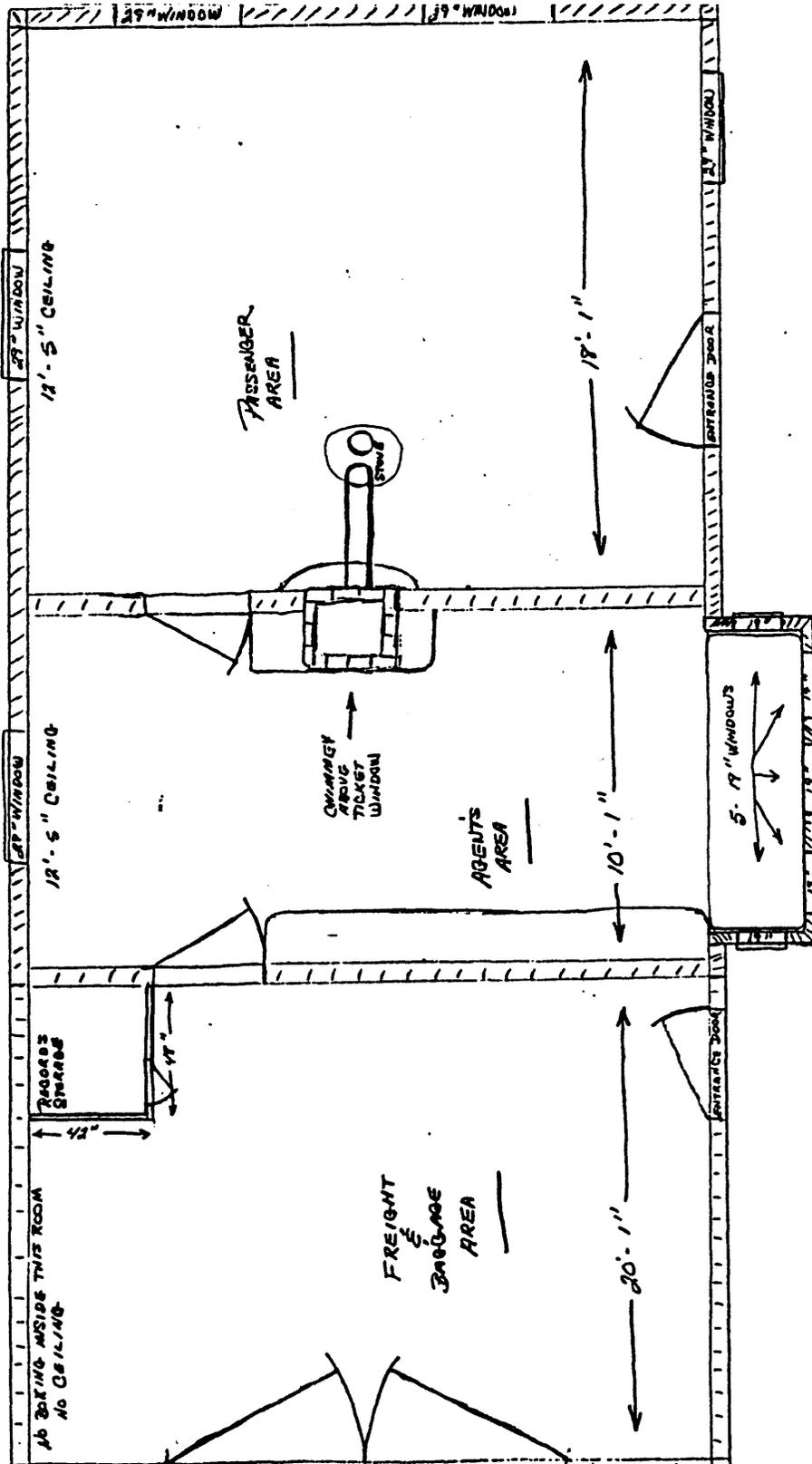
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

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Sketch #2



WELDON DEPOT FLOOR PLAN
(NOT TO SCALE) JIM ELLIS

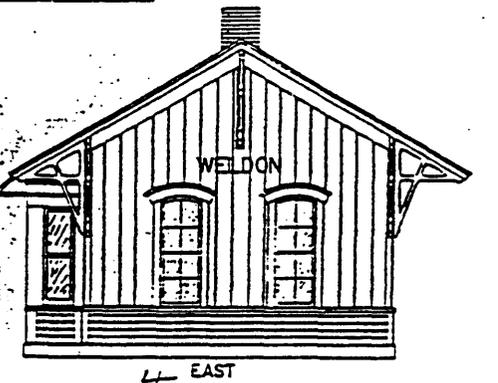
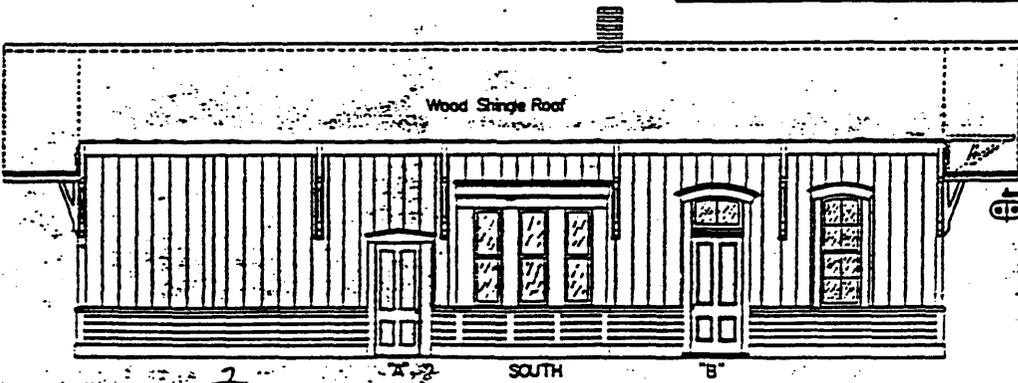
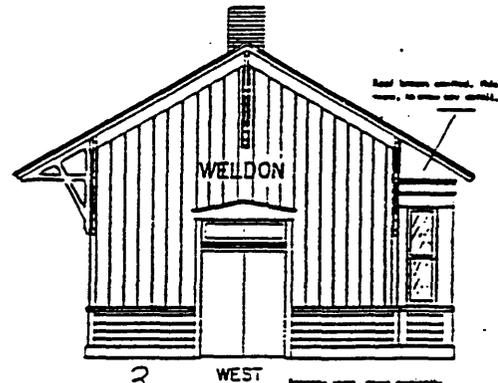
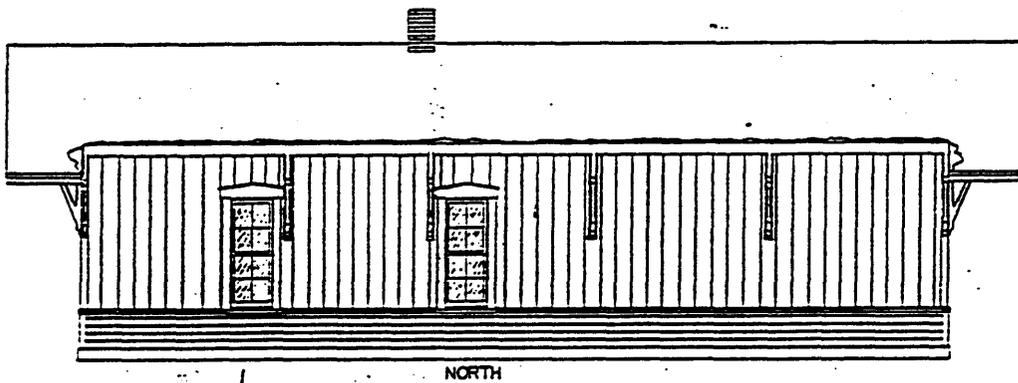
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

CFN-259-1116

Weldon



Measured and drawn 11-20-83 by FRANK M. ELLINGTON

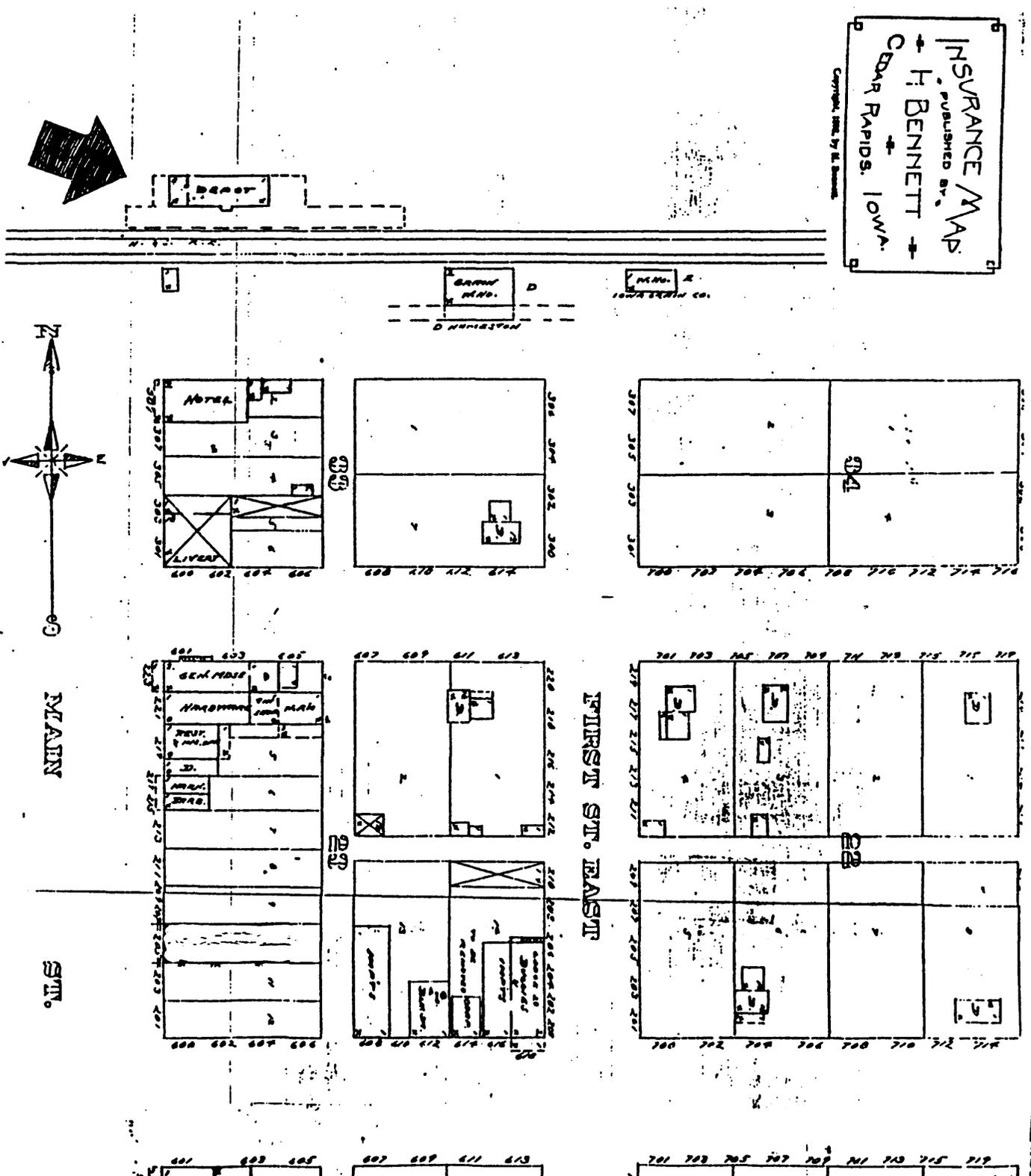
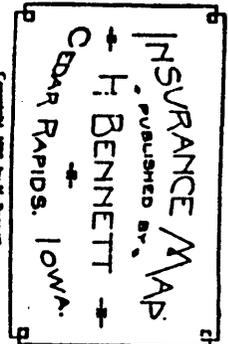
WELDON, IOWA
CHICAGO, BURLINGTON & QUINCY.
PLANNERS, ARCHITECTS & ENGINEERS

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 6 Page 7

CFN-259-1116



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

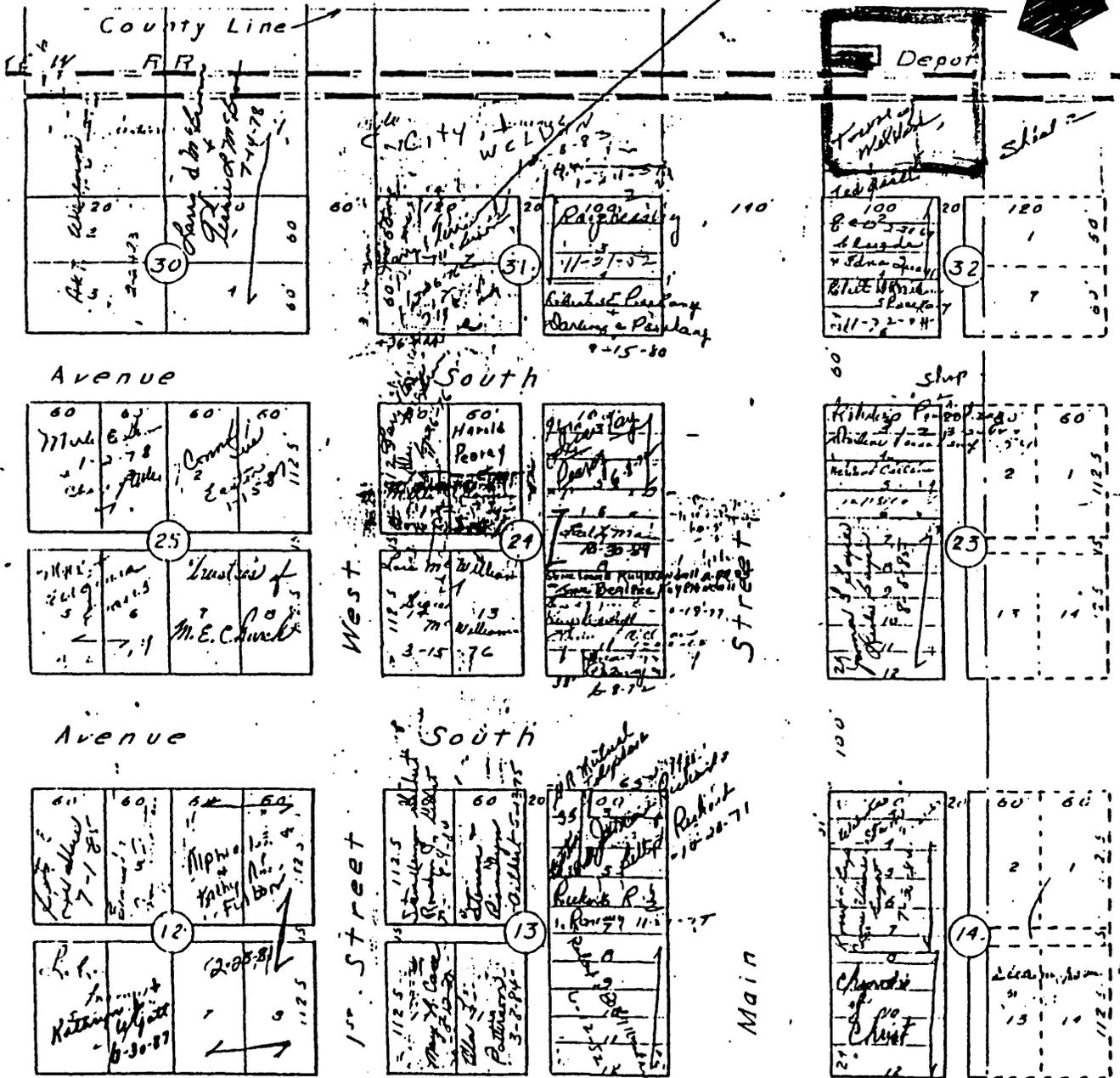
Section number 8 Page 8

CFN-259-1116

TOWN OF WELDON

NW, NE Sec 4-70-25

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

A Century of Memories Van Wert, Iowa 1880-1980, pp. 14-16.

Beasley, Roy, Weldon resident, telephone interview March 6, 1991.

Corbin, Bernard G., Across Iowa on the Keokuk & Western & the Humeston & Shenandoah Railroads (Red Oak: Corbin Publications, 1986)

Delk, Mary, Weldon resident, personal interview December 19, 1990.

Insurance Map for Weldon, 1898, H. Bennett, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Hoffman, Himena, The History of Decatur County, Iowa (Decatur County Historical Society, 1972)

Jamison, Mrs. Lew, "Historical Sketch of Weldon," (Osceola Sentinel, Osceola, Iowa, August 4, 1927).

Madden, Jack, Cantrel, Iowa, former ticket agent. Telephone interview March 6, 1991.

Reflections of Grand River, Iowa, 1881-1981, pp. 17-19.

Weldon Centennial 1880-1980, pp. 13, 86-87.

Weldon School Notes (The Tribune, Osceola, Iowa, March 28, 1939).

Grant, H. Roger and Charles W. Bohi, The Country Railroad Station in America (Sioux Falls: Center for Western Studies, Augustana College, 1988), p. 175, photo

Baldwin, W. W. Corporate History of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad Company and Affiliated Companies (1917), 171-175, 259-261, 266-267

Donovan, Frank P. "The Wabash in Iowa," Palimpsest, 45 (October 1964), 378-384.

Grant, H. Roger, "Francis Marion Drake," in Robert L. Frey, ed., Railroads in the Nineteenth Century (New York: Facts On file, 1989), 104-106.

Johnson, Arthur M. and Barry E. Supple, Boston Capitalists and Western Railroads: A Study in the Nineteenth-Century Railroad Investment Process (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), pp. 270-276.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number photo Page 1

Weldon Depot, Weldon, Decatur County

Photographer: Elaine Fisher

Date: (#101) 909 (#2, 5-7, 10, 12-19, 22-23) December 1990.

These photos were not numbered consecutively.

Photo #101, photographer unknown.

101. To NE
2. To NW
5. To NNW
6. To E
7. To SE
10. To SW, door to passenger area
12. To NE, ticket window
13. To NE, windows east end of passenger area.
14. To NE, passenger area benches
15. To S, windows in Agent's area
16. To W, storage cupboards in Agent's area.
17. To E, west side of ticket window
18. To NE, records storage in freight and baggage room.
19. To W, double doors in baggage room.
22. To NE, ceiling fixture in passenger room
23. To N, window in Agent's area