

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

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received **SEP 30 1986**

date entered **SEP 6 1986**

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

1. Name

historic Clayton Railroad Station

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Bassett Street not for publication

city, town Clayton vicinity of

state Delaware code 10 county Kent code 001

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name 1) Robert D. & Mildred Beyer
2) Town of Clayton

street & number 1) Clayton Railroad Station, Bassett Street
2) Town Hall

city, town 1 & 2) Clayton vicinity of state DE

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder of Deeds, Kent County Courthouse

street & number Federal Street

city, town Dover state DE

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Cultural Resource Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1984 federal state county local

depository for survey records Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

city, town Dover state DE

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Clayton Railroad Station is a five bay, one-story, brick, Italianate building with a low hip roof which extends about three feet from the building forming an overhang. Three metal vents pierce the roof. The pressed brickwork is all stretcher bond. All of the windows and doors are arched and have hood moulds. Fanlights were originally above the doors and windows, and many of them remain today. All of the doors were originally double, but are now single. On the interior there are six rooms, two at either end that extend the width of the building. In the middle on the east side there are two rooms, one to the north that is nearly double in size of the one to the south which seems to have been the ticket office. On the west side there is a small freight office and a larger room. Originally the building had a brick floor. Very little of the original trim remains on the interior.

Nineteenth century photographs reveal that the building originally had two ridge chimneys with decorative tops and that the windows were six-over-six, double hung sash windows. The roofline has been slightly modified by the removal of the shallow brackets; evidence for these brackets remains in the brickwork. In addition, the passenger shed that extended to the south to protect freight and passengers has been removed.

A brick sidewalk surrounds the building, and a modern iron cemetery railing has been added as a safety measure.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
	<input type="checkbox"/> invention			

Specific dates c. 1850's Builder/Architect unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Clayton Railroad Station is significant because of its history, as a part of the Delaware Railroad so important in the economic history of Delaware after the Civil War, and because of its architecture as an intact mid-nineteenth century Railroad depot with Italianate features.

Because the station is closely linked to the history of the Delaware Railroad, an important Delaware transportation system, the Clayton Railroad Station is being nominated to the National Register on the basis of Criterion A. The station is also significant architecturally and therefore is being nominated to the National Register on the basis of Criterion C.

The Clayton Railroad Station was built around 1855 at a small settlement called Jimtown, near Smyrna, as the Delaware Railroad moved southward, and for nearly one hundred years served the diverse needs of the agrarian region surrounding it. The Delaware Railroad was originally chartered in 1836; however, this attempt was unsuccessful because insufficient funds were raised primarily as a result of the Panic of 1837 and the devastating economic conditions that plagued Delaware and the nation. John M. Clayton, Secretary of State under President Zachary Taylor, was a driving force behind this earliest attempt to establish a railroad. Later Jimtown, or Smyrna Station as it came to be called, would be named after Clayton.

Thirteen years after this early attempt, the charter was revived primarily through the efforts of Delaware's Chief Justice, Samuel M. Harrington; however, nothing was done until 1852 when the State of Delaware subscribed 5,000 shares of stock in the new company to be paid out of the revenue accrued from the New Castle and Frenchtown Rail Road. In 1853 the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad (P. W. & B.) became interested in the railroad. The president of that railroad was Samuel M. Felton; he and Charles I. du Pont became directors of the reorganized Delaware Railroad Company which was heavily funded by Philadelphia investors, but controlled by Delawareans. The Pennsylvania interest resulted from their attempt to divert trade from Baltimore. Thereafter construction was pushed. In 1854 the company experienced more financial difficulties only to be remedied by a bond sale in the amount of \$200,000 guaranteed by the P. W. & B. The bonds were not all sold, but P. W. & B. came forward with the money as did the state, and on May 4, 1855 the railroad was completed to Middletown, and by January of 1856, it had passed through Jimtown and had reached Dover.

The railroad was completed when it reached Seaford in December of 1859 even though a spur was added to Delmar in 1859. A Maryland portion of the railroad was operated by the Delaware Company, but built under the charter of the Eastern Shore Railroad which controlled the line to Cape Charles through Virginia.

9. Major Bibliographical References

- Gibb, Hugh R., "The Delaware Railroad," unpublished M.A. thesis for the University of Delaware, 1965.
- Hayman, John C., Rails Along the Chesapeake: A History of Railroading on the Delmarva Peninsula, Marvadel Publishers, 1979.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property $\frac{1}{4}$

Quadrangle name Clayton

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

18	445390	4349070
Zone	Easting	Northing

B

Zone	Easting	Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification The boundaries are the legal parcel upon which the station is located and is described in Kent County deed book B40 p. 169 plus the portion of Bassett Street of the Town of Clayton which the building physically occupies and over which the roof overhangs. This is more fully shown on the attached survey map.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susanne N. Fox, Historian

organization Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Pres. date August, 1986

street & number Old State House telephone 301-736-5685

city or town Dover state DE

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

John Wilson

title Dir. Div. of Hist. & Cult. Affairs

date 25 Sept 86

For NPS use only

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

for Allene Byers

Keeper of the National Register

date 11-6-86

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 2

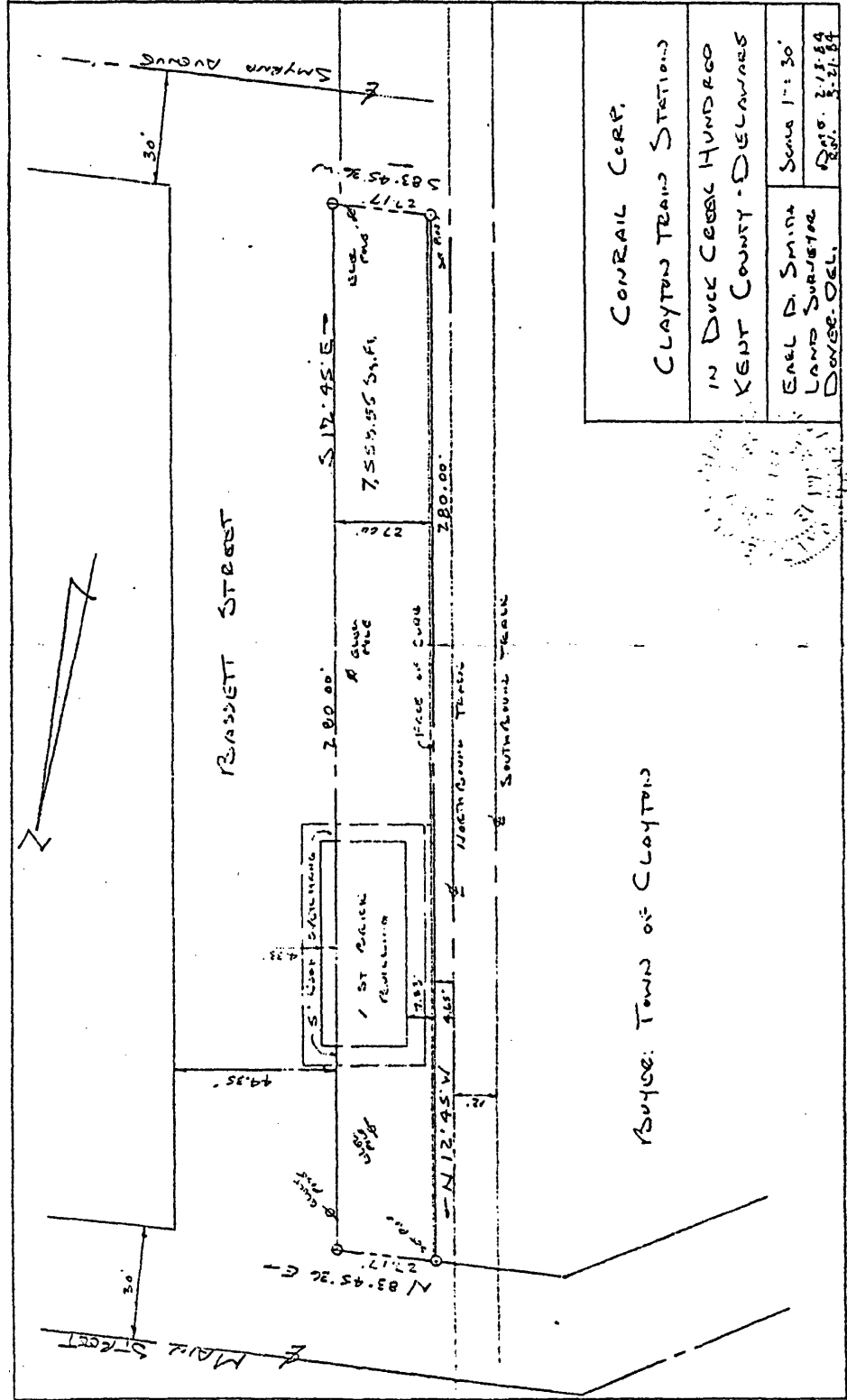
The Delaware Railroad planners early proposed a route from Middletown to Brenford, north of Dover, following an absolute straight line. Such a route was financially more expedient but unfortunately bypassed Smyrna and instead located the Smyrna depot at Jimtown. According to Hugh R. Gibb's "The Delaware Railroad," it was incorrect that the railroad did not go through Smyrna because the water transportation interests there did not want it. Instead, the people of Smyrna did want it, but were unwilling and unable to raise the \$40,000 it would take to alter the proposed line. Indeed prominent Smyrna residents such as George Cummins, Daniel Cummins, and William Spruance were only able to raise \$8,000; thus the railroad followed its original course.

By 1866, however, the citizens of Smyrna decided that they wanted their own railroad link and formed the Smyrna Railroad Company as a subsidiary of the Delaware Railroad. The line was a mile long and ran from Smyrna Station, by that time called Clayton, to the town of Smyrna. Two years later when the Beers Atlas was published, it showed the Clayton station or depot located between the connector line of the Smyrna Railroad and the main line of the Delaware Railroad. The map also showed that near the station were a freight house, and express office, an "Eating Saloon," a hotel, and several stores.

In 1870, the Delaware Railroad and its branches formed the Delaware Division of the P. W. & B., and in 1885 the offices and shops of the Delaware Division were moved to Clayton. Thereafter as the division headquarters, Clayton became one of Delmarva's largest railroad centers.

The advent of the railroad in downstate Delaware greatly stimulated the economic development of the state. Shortly after the completion of the railroad, there was a bumper peach crop beginning a long union between fruit growers and the railroad. This union also created a great dependency on the railroad which in effect controlled the distribution of the produce--leaving the growers at the mercy of the railroad. As early as 1863, there was a car shortage which prevented the growers from marketing their crops which were extremely large that year; as a result legislators began to grumble about the high costs of the railroad, and the growers filed suit alleging the money spent on the railroad would have been better used to develop alternate forms of transportation. In addition a severe storm in 1873 damaged the bridge over the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, and railroad traffic was suspended for a week. Ultimately, other forms of transportation were developed, and gradually during the twentieth century Delaware farmers became less and less dependent on the railroad. The Delaware Railroad System was subsequently directly absorbed into the Pennsylvania Railroad System, and is today part of the Conrail System. The Clayton Railroad Station, once passenger service was ended in the 1950's, fell into disrepair. Several years ago Mr. and Mrs. Beyer purchased the building, refurbished it, and are using it as an antique store.

Architecturally, the building is significant because much of its original fabric remains. Only the removal of the brick chimneys, shallow wood brackets, and the passenger shed have altered its original appearance. It is an excellent example of the Italianate style in its low hip roof that overhangs and its moulded hoods over arched windows with fanlights.



CONRAIL CORP.
 CLAYTON TRAIN STATIONS
 IN DUCK CREEK HUNDRED
 KENT COUNTY - DELAWARE
 EARL D. SMITH
 LAND SURVEYOR
 DOVER, DEL.
 Scale 1" = 30'
 P.L.S. 2/15/84
 R.S. 3-21-84

BUOY: TOWN OF CLAYTON