

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

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

For NPS use only

received **MAY 14 1986**

date entered **6-13-86**

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

**1. Name**

historic Chicago St. Paul Minneapolis and Omaha Depot

and/or common Westbrook Depot

**2. Location**

street & number 4th Street at 1st Avenue

N/A not for publication

city, town Westbrook N/A vicinity of

state Minnesota code 27 county Cottonwood code 033

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name Fred Hage (In trust for Westbrook Heritage House)

street & number Westbrook State Bank, P.O. Box 219

city, town Westbrook N/A vicinity of state Minnesota

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder's Office, Cottonwood County Courthouse

street & number Third Avenue

city, town Windom state Minnesota

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Minnesota Statewide Survey of Historic Resources has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1980  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Minnesota Historical Society-Ft. Snelling History Center

city, town St. Paul state Minnesota

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>N/A</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Omaha Depot at Westbrook is a single story frame-construction building measuring approximately 24' x 70'. It is situated immediately north of the former main line track running west to Currie. The western side of the property fronts onto First Avenue. The roof is a simple hipped type with rolled asphalt, deeply overhung, with large brackets under the eaves. The walls are faced in shiplap siding.

The building is divided into two main areas: the eastern end is the passenger waiting room and railway ticket agent's office; the western end is the freight depot. The freight room is separated from the passenger area by the agent's office, which also served as the telegraph office. Three loading docks open from the freight room, one to the main line, one to a siding north of the depot, and one towards First Avenue. The passenger area and agent's office were well lighted by several large windows facing south and east.

The depot deteriorated badly following the railway line's abandonment in 1980. Parts of the roof blew away, windows were broken out, and the interior was damaged by wind and rain. In the fall of 1984 a local volunteer committee undertook to restore the depot for use as a museum. It will be known as the Westbrook Heritage House. To date, the committee has restored the roof and closed off windows and doors with plywood. The committee is now in the process of restoring the depot and obtaining identical replacement windows from the Jeffers depot nearby on the same line and built at the same time (1900) by the same contractors as the Westbrook depot. The committee also measured the window openings on the two depots and the Westbrook window frames still in place. Support for the restoration project has been received from local residents, the Westbrook Bank, and from Cottonwood County.

## 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 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1900 **Builder/Architect** Des Moines Valley Railway Co.

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Westbrook Depot, built during the summer of 1900, is significant for its connection with the construction of the "Currie Branch" of the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis and Omaha Railway. It is also directly connected with the platting of Westbrook village on June 8, 1900. The depot immediately became the center of communication for Westbrook and the surrounding agricultural community, and the focus of the local economy.

In 1899 the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis and Omaha Railway (known as the "Omaha road") began to push a branch line westward from Bingham Lake in Cottonwood County through underdeveloped farmland to Currie in Murray County. By the fall of 1899 track was laid as far as Jeffers. The 38.6 mile branch line was completed to its terminus at Currie in June 1900. Construction of the branch resulted in the establishment of new towns (Delft, Storden, Jeffers and Westbrook) and the development of a prosperous agricultural economy along the route. The depot at Westbrook is the last physical reminder of a once successful railway line.

The depot was built between July and August 1900 by the Des Moines Valley Railway Company; the latter was the contractor for the "Omaha road", and builder of the branch line. Westbrook townsite was platted on June 8, 1900 but the first sale of lots did not take place until July 11. The local history does not record when the depot was built but records of the Minnesota Railroad and Warehouse Commission show that it was in existence by August 1900 when Reinke Brothers sought the commission's assistance in securing an elevator site on the Omaha track. The depot, therefore, is both one of the earliest structures built at Westbrook, and a structure uniquely connected with the town's origins.

The depot's significance is reinforced by its association with the rise and decline of an agricultural economy based on railroad branch lines. For the first half of the Twentieth Century, the depot was the central collection and distribution point for the local grain and livestock businesses. It was also the focus of passenger traffic, and of telegraph communication via Western Union. As the rural economy shifted towards centralized processing, and as trucking competed successfully against railways, traffic on the Currie Branch declined. Passenger traffic was discontinued in the 1950's, and by 1970 only three freight trains a week ran over the line.

In 1980 the Chicago and Northwestern Transportation Company, owner of the Omaha road, abandoned the track and sold the right-of-way. At that time (September 1980) Westbrook State Bank purchased the depot; the bank is now committed to deeding the depot and its site to the Westbrook Heritage House Committee.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Windom Reporter, 1900 Interviews: Sever Knutson and Gary L. Hofer, Westbrook  
 Cottonwood County Citizen, 1900 Heritage House Committee  
 John R. Brown, ed., History of Fred Hage, Westbrook State Bank  
 Cottonwood and Watonwan Counties, Minnesota Minnesota Railroad and Warehouse Commission,  
 (Indianapolis, 1916) Annual Report, 1900.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1 acre  
 Quadrangle name Westbrook, Minn. (1967) Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A	15	304890	4878970	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

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

state	N/A	code	N/A	county	N/A	code	N/A
state	N/A	code	N/A	county	N/A	code	N/A

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Norene A. Roberts and Charles Quinn  
 organization Historical Research, Inc. date July 5, 1985  
 street & number 5535 Richmond Curve telephone (612) 929-2921  
 city or town Minneapolis state Minnesota 55410

## 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 Russell W. Fridley  
 title State Historic Preservation Officer date 5/8/86

### For NPS use only

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

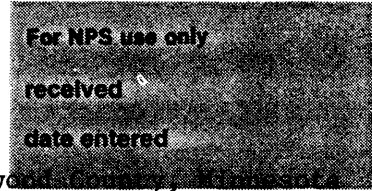
Russell W. Fridley Entered in the National Register date 6-13-86  
 Keeper of the National Register

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Chief of Registration

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Chicago St. Paul Minneapolis and Omaha Depot, Westbrook, Cottonwood, Chicago, Minnesota



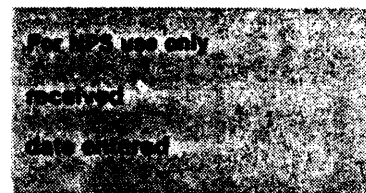
Continuation sheet      Resource Count      Item number      8      Page      1

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The Chicago St. Paul Minneapolis and Omaha Depot Nomination  
Contains 1 contributing building.

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Continuation sheet Verbal Boundary Description Item number 10

Page 1

Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Omaha Railroad Depot, Westbrook, Minnesota:

All that part of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$  Section 29, T107N R38W, bounded and described as follows:  
Beginning at a point on the southerly extension of the east line of First Avenue  
(formerly Whited Street) 63' northerly, measured at right angles from the center line of the  
main track (now removed) of the Des Moines Valley Railway Company of Minnesota (now  
the Chicago and North Western Transportation Company) as said main track was originally  
located and established in said Section 29; thence southerly along said east line of  
First Avenue, extended, to the said center line; thence easterly along said center line  
a distance of 260'; thence northerly at right angles to said center line a distance  
of 63"; thence westerly and parallel to said center line to the point of beginning.