

PH035085X

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	APR 30 1976
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

Rail ...
 HISTORIC Rock Rapids Depot, Bridge No. 2834, track and hand switch
 AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
North Story Street

CITY, TOWN
Rock Rapids

STATE
Iowa

VICINITY OF
Sixth

COUNTY
Lyon

CODE
119

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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 type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Depot owned by Lyon County Historical Society, Rock Rapids, Iowa.
Appurtant structures owned by Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Lyon County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
Rock Rapids,

STATE
Iowa

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Two elements of local historical significance are nominated, namely: the depot, and appurtenant structures including Bridge no. 2834 immediately to the east of the depot and the hand switch and trackage adjacent to the Depot within Block 1 of the Berkholtz Addition of Rock Rapids.

The Rock Rapids Depot is a two-story, gable-roofed building of wood frame construction located in a picturesque, wooded lot in the small town of Rock Rapids. The depot rests upon a stone foundation. At its base, the building measures approximately 70 feet by 20 feet.

The treatment of wood used in this structure is varied and interesting. Siding used on the north, south, and east sides of the first story is horizontal, flush to the wall, and very narrow. Siding on the west side of the first floor, on the other hand, is equally narrow but has been applied vertically. The second story also has vertical siding of slightly wider dimensions than that used on the first floor. The north, south, and east sides of the building contains string course decoration of a scalloped design. Similar decoration of scalloped wood is found on the carved bracket consoles located under the eaves. Four carved wooden circles are located within each console. Scalloped, wooden awnings shield each door and window area. These areas appear quite prominent because of the rather dark stain used on the frames and the awnings. One may say, overall, that the treatment of the exterior of this depot is in the "stick" style.

Other prominent features of this building include an exterior staircase located on the south side, and a bay window, crowned with a low, wooden railing, which is situated on the north side. Originally, the east end of the building contained several small rooms which were used as offices, while the west end (the warehouse area) consisted of one large room. The interior, however, has subsequently been vandalized, and current plans call for the construction of workshops, meeting rooms, and a display area.

Concerning adjacent appurtenant improvements, an old hand switch is situated just north of the depot. Its exact age is impossible to say at this time. On the east side is Bridge No. 2834, constructed in 1886. Its total length from abutment to abutment is approximately 550 feet, the last 400 feet of which are constructed on horizontal circular curve. The total structure consists of nine spans. The two east spans are heavy box-type plate girders spanning the main channel of the Rock River. Six interior plate girder spans cross the land portion of Island Park. The west span, which crosses the west branch of the Rock River, is also a heavy box-type plate girder structure. All of the piers and abutments, except for the pier located in the main channel of the Rock River, are constructed of carefully fitted blocks of oolitic limestone. The pier situated in the Rock River is constructed of poured-in-place concrete with an ice breaker located on the upstream face.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input 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 1886

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The advent of the railroad had such a profound impact on the development of northwestern Iowa, we feel the necessity of preserving its elements as a part of our record of the past. This area was not settled extensively until after the Civil War and settlers were at first dependent for supplies on barges that came up the Big Sioux River. Until rail service was available, the potential of the area could not be fully realized.

The first efforts by Lyon County to obtain rail connections in the 1870's proved unsuccessful. But by 1885 prospects had brightened. President Ives of the Burlington, Cedar Rapids, and Northern Railway proposed to construct the line between Little Rock and Sioux Falls, S.D. via Rock Rapids with the stipulation that a bonus of \$80,000 dollars and the right-of-way be furnished locally. Lyon County's \$30,000 dollar share was raised by a voter approved tax levy of 5 percent of the assessed value of property in affected townships for the year 1885. The election notice also called for a depot to be located on the west side of the Rock River at Rock Rapids. Acquisition of the right-of-way was also financed locally.

Construction of the line was carried out by the Cedar Rapids, Iowa Falls and Northwestern Railway, which was affiliated with the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern and which carried out the bulk of new construction in Iowa during the 1880's. On September 10, 1886, when the first train arrived in Rock Rapids, the editor of the Lyon County Reporter exhaulted that this was "the greatest event of the place for several years and one which will mark an epoch in the history of Rock Rapids and Lyon County."

The adjoining railroad bridge was also constructed in 1886. Over two-thirds of its length is constructed on horizontal circular curve. According to R.D. Reckert, a northwest Iowa engineering consultant, this undoubtedly presented difficult and unique engineering design and construction problems considering the time period during which the structure was built. Another rather unique feature of the interior plate design is that they contain double top and bottom cover plates on the flanges which reduced the depth of the structural sections required. Although this is common practice now it represents an aspect of structural design that was little understood and probably considered somewhat daring in 1886.

Since 1973, the Rock Rapids Depot has been owned by the Lyon County Historical Society, while the tracks, old hand switch and bridge are presently in the hands of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway. The company is in the process of abandoning this line, however, and so the depot's appurtenant structural elements are endangered. The historical society hopes to preserve all these elements intact so as to complete the original setting and enable the display of rolling stock along with other items on display in the depot. It is expected that the City of Rock Rapids will be given these structures upon abandonment.

