NPS Form 10-900
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

998

RECEIVED 2280
DEC 11 2015
Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

OMB No. 1024-0018

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Sac City Chicago and North Western Depot
Other names/site number: Sac City Depot, Depot Pizza, The Ol' Depot
Name of related multiple property listing:
The Advent and Development of Railroads in Iowa: 1855-1940.
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing

2. Location

Street & number: 103 North 13th Street
City or town: Sac City State: IA County: Sac
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x 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 x meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___national ___statewide x local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

x A ___B x C ___D

3 Dec 2015

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

State Historical Society of Iowa

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: **Date**

Title : **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

Sac City Depot
Name of Property

Sac, IA
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Jon Edson H. Beall 1-26-16

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private: [x]

Public – Local [ ]

Public – State [ ]

Public – Federal [ ]

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s) [x]

District [ ]

Site [ ]

Structure [ ]

Object [ ]

Sac City Depot
Name of Property

Sac, IA
County and State

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use
Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
TRANSPORTATION/rail-related

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
_OTHER/C & NW standard plan depot

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: _Brick
Wood/weatherboard_
Concrete____
Asphalt_____

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

While driving west across Iowa on Highway 20, travelers encounter plains, hills, and numerous small towns. Prior to 2012, motorists entering Sac County on Highway 20 drove through the heart of the county seat town of Sac City. After rerouting Highway 20, drivers can now detour less than two miles south to visit the Northwest Iowa community of Sac City and its 2300 residents. Those entering from the east cross the North Raccoon River, travel through the business district, up Main Street Hill and journey several blocks before encountering the former Chicago & North Western Railroad Depot on the northwest corner of the intersection of Main Street and 13th Street. The depot sits on a gently sloping 60' by 300' lot. The original brick platform on the west side of the building is a contributing structure. A concrete parking area covers most of the southern part of the lot as well as the area between 13th Street and the front of the building. The northern part of the lot is grass covered and shaded by two large oak trees. The depot is a one-story red brick building with deep red painted wood trim. It is sited on a north-south axis with the east face adjacent to 13th Street and the west face open to that area that once contained railroad tracks. Even though the building was utilized as a pizza restaurant for over 35 years and now is a store for antiques and home decor, anyone seeing the building has no doubt as to the edifice's original purpose. The shape, layout, and even the original "Sac City" signage clearly demonstrate that this is a building that served as an integral part of the railroad system that changed and shaped not only the pattern of local history, but the future of the entire country.

Image 1: Chicago & North Western Depot in Sac City (Photo Perry) (2015)

Narrative Description

The shape of Sac City's Chicago & Northwestern Depot is the first thing one notices when approaching the building. The characteristic double pitched hip roof is covered in dark grey asphalt shingles. The roof line is broken on each side by gabled dormers that are slightly south of the building's central axis. Being positioned perpendicular to Main Street was necessary to allow the frontage to the railroad tracks.

The red brick depot is constructed on a poured concrete foundation. Window openings in the foundation indicate there is a basement below part of the one-story building. The south face of the building has two double-hung windows; the top portion of each window is divided into four vertical panes and the bottom portion is divided into two vertical panes. All windows in the building are of this type. Hanging from the overhang on the south face is the original sign identifying "Sac City." The west face of the building, which opened onto brick platform and the railroad tracks, features the original bay window area that allowed the station master to watch the trains coming in. There are two sets of double doors on the north half of the west face, both of which allowed access to the baggage/freight room in the depot. The windows in the station master's office still provide a view to the area where the tracks once ran. A set of wooden doors with transom windows above them on the south half of the building allowed passenger access to the trains, and a pair of double hung windows near the

south end gave light to the passenger waiting area as well as permitting passengers to watch for trains' arrival.

The fenestration on the north face of the building is two windows; both have been covered with wood. The original sign identifying "Sac City" is also present on the north face. The east face of the depot has two sets of double hung windows that match those on the south face as well as two sets of double doors and two single doors. All doors are original. Because the depot is built on a sloping lot, there are two sets of six steps leading to the two doors used by passengers. The double doors on the north end of the east face, which were used for unloading freight and baggage, have only one relatively large step and are at the height of a low truck or wagon.

The wood overhang around the building is painted a deep barn red. Original down spouts from the gutters appear to be cast iron. The down spouts empty directly into the ground and apparently connect to a tile system around the building. The roof has recently been replaced with asphalt shingles and the brick work is in quite good condition. Doors are all original, as are the wood framed windows. Modern storm windows do provide protection for the wood from the elements.

The inside of the building has undergone relatively few modifications. Plaster walls, oak wainscoting, crown molding, and trim work are extant. Many of the original light fixtures remain, although some additional light sources have been added. An examination of the extant terrazzo floors indicates where changes in the floor plan occurred when the building was transformed into a pizza restaurant. Although the south room of the building (originally the women's waiting area) exhibits no change in layout, the north wall of the station master's office was removed and turned 90 degrees into the former men's waiting room to enlarge the area that had been the office and decrease the size of the waiting room. (See floor plan, page 25.) The patina of the crown molding and wainscoting on the moved wall matches that in the rest of the building, indicating that historic materials were reused when building the new wall. As with all public areas of the depot, the terrazzo floors remain and are in good shape. Even though it appears from outside the building that windows have been removed and boarded up, all windows are present and visible from inside the building. (See image 2, page 26)

The area that once housed the station master's office is surrounded by plaster walls and oak trim. The telegraph mechanism remains, as do the teller windows covered by metal bars. (See image 4, page 28) The original frosted glass on the interior windows is extant.

There are two restrooms on the east side of the building; the men's room retains the porcelain urinal from 1916. Radiators along the west wall are the only visible remnants of a boiler heating system. A new heating system has recently been installed in the building, as the original boiler system had not worked for over 40 years. (The building was literally heated with space heaters and pizza ovens.) Radiators have been retained even though they are no longer functional.

The north room of the building was designed as a freight/baggage area. It would appear the walls of this room were originally unfinished brick, but they have been covered with a wood material detailed to look like brick. The scale used to weigh freight still sits in the room. (See Image 3, page 27) The entrance to the basement is on the south end of the freight room.

A partial basement is under the center section of the depot. There is no basement under the freight/baggage area and only a crawl space under the women's waiting area. The basement provided a location for the boiler and other mechanical elements for the depot. A coal chute from the east exterior wall into the basement allowed easy access to the coal bin.

Historic photos indicate the presence of an eyebrow dormer on the north portion of the west roof. The dormer was removed by 1970. (Compare image 10, page 31 with images 12 and 13, page 32.)

The **brick platform** to the west of the depot provided passengers safe access to the trains. By 1970, the tracks had been removed and filled in, making the platform less prominent. Nevertheless, the brickwork is extant and serves as a contributing structure for the property.

Integrity Statement

Overall, there is a high degree of integrity in Sac City's Chicago & North Western Depot. Even though there have been neither trains, passengers nor freight in the building for more than 40 years, the transformation from train depot to Depot Restaurant to The Ol' Depot gift shop was accomplished with relatively few permanent alterations. The specific aspects of integrity are as follow:

Integrity of **location** is completely intact. The depot and platform have remained in the same location since their construction in 1916.

The depot retains a high degree of integrity of **design**. The building was designed to be uniquely identifiable as a depot of the C & NW line. The roof line stands as proudly today as it did nearly 100 years ago. The characteristic four over two windows are intact, even though some are covered on the outside. At some point, the office area (later used as kitchen) was enlarged into what had been the men's waiting area. Even the down spouts retain their relatively ornate design. The eye brow dormer visible in historic photos has been removed.

Integrity of **setting** is only partially intact. The open lot remains, as do the streets surrounding the property. The most significant change is the absence of railroad tracks on the property. The brick platform on the west side of the depot is an intact contributing structure that contributes to the integrity. Signals that at one time helped assure safety of the trains and their passengers are nowhere to be found. The electrical generator plant to the west that relied on rail access to supply its coal has been replaced by a convenience store. Nearly all of the business district that had sprung up as a result of the depot's location has been razed. In spite of the missing elements in the setting, the graceful depot still creates a setting that leaves little doubt as to the building's importance to the community and its historic function as a vital part of the rail system that served Sac City and the surrounding area.

The resource maintains significant integrity of **materials.** Brickwork, windows, terrazzo, oak trim, light fixtures, and even an original scale document the materials originally used in the building and brick platform. Wood coverings on many of the windows mirror the original wood of the overhang; removal of the wood coverings on the windows would certainly enhance the integrity of materials.

Integrity of **workmanship** in the depot is well represented in the exterior brickwork, as well as the fine craftsmanship in the interior.

Integrity of **feeling** is easily demonstrated by walking up to the extant ticket window, moving the arm of the freight scale, or examining the telegraph system that has lain dormant for many years.

Visitors easily understand the integrity of **association** as they read the signs that identify Sac City and easily recognize the building as having been uniquely associated with the rail industry.

Future Plans

Current owners have rehabilitated the property and opened a retail outlet that will hopefully bring at least a portion of the renewed energy to the community that the railroad brought with its arrival in 1879.

---

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

[x] 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.

[x] 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.

[ ] Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

[ ] 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
Transportation
Architecture

Period of Significance
1916-1965

Significant Dates
1916

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder
Chicago & North Western Railroad
Unknown

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Chicago & North Western Depot in Sac City is eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places and locally significant under Criteria A and C. The Depot's association with the railroad makes it a vital link to the transportation industry that connected and united people not only in Iowa, but throughout the United States. As the only extant depot and rail platform in Sac City, the property serves as a reminder of the rail industry that promoted growth in the community as it shipped goods to and from the area. Architecturally, the depot is a fine example of a Number One Plan Chicago & North Western depot. The period of significance begins in 1916 when the depot was built in its current location and continues to 1965 in keeping with the National Register of Historic Places 50 year rule. *The Advent and Development of Railroads in Iowa: 1855-1940* helps demonstrate the significance of the Sac City depot to the rail industry. "Depots were, and still are, the primary buildings that the public-at-large associates with railroads, and it is hard to overstate the evocative power of an extant depot." (Conard and Cunning, Section F, p. 10) Sac City's Chicago & North Western Depot's dimensions, floor plan, roof line, and fenestration conforms to the Number One standard plan as outlined in the MPD for railroads in Iowa. Sac City's depot meets the Criteria A requirement of being "associated with a railroad that had a major influence in the growth and development of the community" and Criteria C requirement of "depots that exemplify the evolution of a corporate style(s) associated with a particular railroad" (Conard and Cunning, Section F, p. 11)

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

History of Chicago & North Western Railroad in Sac City

Shortly after the town was platted in 1855, Sac City residents and businessmen began to campaign for a rail connection to help the town prosper. There was talk of building a railroad through Sac County as early as 1859. The state of Iowa had given the county a parcel of land. Residents had the opportunity to vote on a proposition that would have deeded $25,000 worth of swamp land to aid a company in building a railroad. 33 residents cast ballots on the measure; the measure failed 33-0. As badly as the people wanted a railroad, there was no support for any proposal that would have residents pay for the project and yet have no control of the resultant stock in the same. (Hart, p. 184) No one will ever know whether or not the lack of public support for the first proposal delayed the coming of the railroad. "The county developed as best it could, drawing her supplies from Des Moines, Council Bluffs, Fort Dodge and Sioux City for all the years intervening between 1855 and 1879." (Hart, p. 184)

In 1877, the first rail line in Sac County entered the area that became the town of Wall Lake. (*A Century of Living in Wall Lake*, p. 197) The business people of Sac City must have been disappointed to have rail access come to an area that had yet to become a town. Nevertheless, a connection to the line in Wall Lake became the key to bringing the railroad to Sac City.

Property records indicate that Asa and Adelaide Platt issued a quit claim deed to Sac City & Wall Lake Railroad on 21 December 1878 for land that would ultimately become railroad tracks. (Book 1, p. 423) D. Carr and Sarah Early issued a quit claim deed for lots in Sac City to Sac City & Wall Lake Railroad on 31 December 1878. (Book B, p. 307) The Sac City & Wall Lake Railroad deeded all of their property to the Maple River Rail Road Company on 1 June 1879. (Book 1, p. 518) Maple River Rail Road Company became part of the Chicago and North Western system in 1884.

The arrival of railroad tracks in Sac City was a cause for celebration and the source of great pride for those who had worked tirelessly for nearly 20 years to secure rail access for the community. *The Sac Sun* summarized the two decades of effort and disappointment that ultimately lead to the first train entering Sac City.

> Twenty-three years after it was laid out as a town Sac City has a railroad. The history of its efforts in this direction constitute a long chapter of hard work and bright schemes that failed, encouragements and discouragements, that perhaps have seldom been equaled in the history of any Iowa town.
>
> We believe that the Cedar Rapids & Missouri River Railroad (now the Northwestern system) was the first road to be surveyed through this county. It did not pass through Sac City, but the people had hopes of being able to bring it here. It was afterwards diverted south to Carroll County, to make its terminus at Council Bluffs, to connect with the Union Pacific system—which was then only a dream of the future. Next came the Iowa Falls & Sioux City line (now Illinois Central), which was surveyed through our county, some distance to the north of Sac City, but was finally changed to run through Buena Vista county.
>
> The next important project, and one of which we all felt sure, was the Iowa Pacific, which was surveyed through Sac City and considerable work done on it in 1873-74, but the general prostration of business and almost total cessation of railroad building killed this enterprise, leaving us only a grade which in all probability will never be used, although a road is now being built from Minneapolis to Fort Dodge, which is intended to extend on to Omaha. It may or may not come this way. In the spring of 1876 an effort was made to induce the Iowa Land Company to build a road, starting from Jefferson, coming up through Lake City and on to Ida County. But the present route of the Maple Valley road had already been selected, and it seemed as if the fates were against us in Sac county. The building of this road was a serious blow to Sac City and at one time threatened to swamp us. But, with an energy born of despair, its people started with more earnestness to secure a railroad. The Illinois Central was appealed to, but it would not consider or even condescend to reply to communications.
>
> About August, 1877, Judge Duffie wrote E. P. Hull, general manager of the Maple River Railroad Company, telling him that Sac City wanted a railroad and asked him if he could do anything to help us build one to Wall Lake. The reply led to the formation of the Sac City & Wall Lake Railroad Company in September, 1877, to build a road between those two points.

> Judge Duffie was elected president and a five per cent tax was voted in aid of the road in Jackson township as well as in Cedar township, but defeated in Coon Valley and Wall Lake townships. A preliminary survey was made in the fall of the year last mentioned, and the cost of grading ascertained.
>
> In May, 1878, the company proposed to the Iowa Land Company to grade and bridge the road and provide right of way and depot grounds and give it to them if they would complete it and cause it to be operated. The proposition was taken under advisement by the company, but for a while no answer could be received. Our people again began to think they were to be disappointed and so turned their attention to a road to the east, connecting with the old Des Moines & Fort Dodge line at Gowrie. A company was formed and preparations made to go on with the work. A survey was made, but before it was finished the Iowa Land Company accepted the proposition made to them. They doubtless realized that Sac City was determined to have a road and thought it best to have one of theirs here, rather than a competing road.
>
> Last Friday [1 August 1879] the rails were laid to Main street and the long-looked for, hoped-for, worked-for railroad became a glorious fact. Among those whose names should never be forgotten in securing this road to Sac City are: Judge Early, Judge Criss, Judge Duffie, Asa Platt, W. H. Hobbs, N. W. Condron. While it has cost our people considerable, yet the road, we think, will amply repay all for what they have spent in securing it. (*Sac Sun*, 8 August 1879)

Chicago & North Western erected a two-story depot on the southeast corner of 13th Street and Early Street in the early 1880's. The station agent lived on the second floor. (See images 7, 8, pp. 29-30) The advent of the railroad in Sac City had a positive impact on the community. Between 1880 and 1885, the town's population grew from 595 to 1200. The city platted four new housing additions between 1883 and 1901.

One of the most significant areas of growth in Sac City was the development of a business district near the Chicago & North Western depot. Stock yards, a lumber yard, cemetery monument business, a hotel, and retail outlets sprouted up in the area called Bingville. (See image 9, p. 30)

In 1916, Chicago & North Western built the extant Sac City Depot one block south of the first depot's location. At one point, there were eight trains that carried passengers and freight through Sac City each day. The last passenger train departed Sac City in 1948. (Schnirring, p. 96) This depot continued to serve the area as a freight depot until the railroad sold the property to Youll Plumbing, Inc. on 11 July 1971 (Book 11, p. 494). Chicago & North Western relinquished all rights to the railroad right of way on 1 June 1972 (Book 30 p. 227).

Youll Plumbing, Inc. sold the depot to The Sac City Depot, Inc. on 31 August 1976, at which time Dale Schnirring opened The Depot restaurant. The Depot continued operation for more than 35 years, closing in 2012. Current owners Patricia Wirtjers and Angela Kreft acquired the property in December, 2014, and have done some rehabilitation work on the edifice that now houses a retail store.

Background of Railroad Depots in the Mid-West

During the era when railroads were the main method of transportation in the Great Plains, the railroad depot was both the economic and social gateway to the community it served. The railroad station, whether a roughly hewn shack or an ornate masonry structure, was the place where people could assemble to board a train for faraway places or welcome arriving travelers. It provided a central delivery point where a community's life-sustaining goods could be shipped or delivered by rail. And in the period from approximately 1865 to 1920 it served as a place where people could come to hear the news of the day, socialize with others, or simply be entertained by the daily arrival and departure of the trains.

When railroad builders first pushed their lines west across the Plains, they realized the importance of establishing railroad stations approximately every ten miles. The concept of having closely spaced stations made sense at a time when farmers used horse-drawn wagons to deliver their goods for shipment by rail. These stations also served as communication points for dispatching trains, fueling facilities for steam locomotives, and potential town sites that could provide future revenue for the carrier.

For isolated communities established on the Plains prior to the arrival of a railroad, obtaining a railroad station once the tracks did arrive in the area was vital to their continued existence. Quite frequently, local citizens and railroad officials disputed the exact location of the town's depot. Most often, the railroad won out. And if the depot was located at some distance from the original town site, residents would usually relocate to the depot site.

In their initial rush to lay tracks, railroad companies often hastily used portable shacks or old boxcar bodies as the first depot for a new community. If the community grew into an established town, the initial roughshod structure was replaced with a frame depot of a standard design adopted by the particular rail carrier. These designs allowed depots of nearly identical appearance to be cheaply and efficiently constructed at hundreds of towns along the lines of a rail system. Minor changes in design were made to conform to the needs of a particular station site; for example, station buildings in more isolated areas had living quarters for the station agent.

Most depots constructed for small towns otherwise followed the combination station plan devised by railroad architects. This combination design essentially provided all railroad services for the public under one roof. A ticket and work office for the agent was most often situated in the center, flanked by a passenger waiting room and a freight room for express shipments. As business grew at some stations, a separate building for freight business was established.

Major railroad companies of the Great Plains such as the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe in the United States and the Canadian Pacific in Canada came to be closely identified with their standard design depots (much as fast food restaurants are today). However, as towns grew, local promoters often pressed railroad officials to replace their community's old wood depot

with a larger and more ornate building of brick or stone. The railroad station was the first impression that travelers received of a town, and citizens obviously wanted their station to reflect a prosperous image. Railroad officials would sometimes comply, especially if the community was a vital center for railroad operations such as a county seat or college town.

The rise of competing forms of transportation in the early to mid–twentieth century eventually all but eliminated the railroad depot as a Great Plains landmark. Passenger trains and branch lines were abandoned as first the automotive age and then the Great Depression cut into railroad profits. Fewer freight trains were needed as steam locomotives were replaced by diesel engines that could pull longer trains. New communication technologies eliminated the need for an agent to be employed at each town. All these factors prompted the major railroad companies serving the Great Plains region to close almost all their remaining railroad stations by the late 1970s.

Currently, a limited number of Plains depots remain open to the public in communities that have government-subsidized passenger train service. But the majority of extant station buildings have been acquired by private citizens or public municipalities and converted to other uses. A number of these structures now serve as museums devoted to a time when adventure began or ended on a railroad station platform. (Reisdorff)

Building of 1916 Sac City Chicago & North Western Depot in Sac City

The original Chicago & North Western depot in Sac City met the needs of both the railroad and the community for over 20 years. Having a second floor residence for the station master was certainly convenient. In 1899, the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Company extended a line to Sac City and erected a depot nearer to Sac City's downtown area. (See images 16, 17, p. 34) The new line offered improved passenger service and freight service to the community. (Hart, p. 185) By 1914, there were 107.65 miles of railroad track in Sac County. Chicago & North Western owned 69.5 miles and only 19.15 miles belonged to Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul. (Hart, p. 185). Nevertheless, C. M. & S.P. had the more modern and conveniently-located depot.

The Chicago & North Western depot in nearby Wall Lake was newer and more up-to-date than the one in Sac City; there were also more passenger trains running through Wall Lake than through Sac City. Even though rail access remained important, the automobile was becoming much more prevalent; in fact, in 1916, Sac County had more automobiles per capita (one for each 7.75 people) than any other county in Iowa. (*Sac Sun,* 15 June 1916) In order to keep their service in Sac City attractive and viable, Chicago & North Western needed to build a new depot.

Judging from the local paper's account, some people must have been skeptical about the coming of a new depot.

For the benefit of doubters, the *Sun* wishes to say that the contractor has begun work on the construction of the new passenger station for the Chicago & Northwestern *(sic.)* railway at Sac City. Excavation was commenced yesterday for the basement and foundation. The station will be 89 1/4 feet in length and from 22 to 27 feet in width. The walls will be composed of brick

> and the roof will be covered in asphalt shingles. The building will be on the east side of the track about midway between Main and Early Streets. The women's waiting room will be on the north end and the ticket office and toilet rooms will be between it and the men's waiting room. The baggage room and express room will be at the south end. The building will be heated by steam, with a boiler and coal and ash room in the basement. The ceilings will be 11 feet in height. The structure will be thoroughly modern and tasteful in design. (*Sac Sun,* 15 June 1916)

Although the newspaper account is quite detailed, there was either a mis-communication or a change of plans in the depot's design. The layout of the building was reversed from the description; women's waiting room on the south end, ticket booth and restrooms separating it from the men's waiting room, and the baggage and express area on the north end. The dimensions of the building are also slightly smaller than those indicated in the article.

It is no surprise that the depot design in Sac City bears striking similarities in shape to the one in Wall Lake. (See image 18, page 35) Although the shapes are similar, there are significant differences as well. The Sac City depot's brick exterior, central heating system, terrazzo floors and heavy oak trim set it apart from many standard design depots. The details in the downspouts and hidden gutters provided a level of workmanship not present in many standard designs. One of the most striking aspects of the Sac City depot are the two large sets of steps leading to the passenger areas. The extra elevation gives the depot a sense of grandeur that many rural depots lacked. The materials used in construction were certainly of high quality and demonstrate the railroad's desire to create an impressive depot for the people of Sac City.

Other Chicago & North Western depots in Sac County were constructed earlier than the present example in Sac City. An examination of Images 22-24 (page 38-39) demonstrates few architectural similarities among the other county depots. *The Advent and Development of Railroads in Iowa: 1855-1940* lists no examples of C & NW standard plan one depots in Iowa. Images 20-21 (Page 37), showing depots in Illinois and Wisconsin, depict depots architecturally similar to those in Sac City and Wall Lake. The dimensions of the depot (88' by 22') indicate close adherence to the C & NW standard number one plan. (Conard and Cunning, section F, p. 4)

The new depot was ready for occupation five months after construction began. On 16 November 1916, the railroad announced changes in scheduled departures: westbound train #15 would leave at 2:32 instead of 2:33 and the southbound train would leave at 7:28 rather than 7:18. (*Sac Sun,* 16 November 1916) The times coincided with the move to the new depot. The following week, the *Sun* reported the move.

> Agent W. B. Laing moved his office into the new Chicago & Northwestern *(sic)* passenger station last Friday afternoon and the new station was used for the first train leaving for the south at 7:28 p.m. The first ticket sold in the new station was purchased by John F. Dalton, editor of the Manson Democrat, who chanced to be in the city on a business trip. It is noticeable that some passengers getting off the train are now somewhat confused and some who wish to go down town go by way of Early street *(sic)* instead of taking the short cut to Main street *(sic),* but doubtless these matters will soon adjust themselves and it will be discovered that the new station is

> practically one block closer to the business part of the city. It certainly contrasts decidedly with the old station for the passengers who have to wait inside. L. W. Speer, who was cashier at the old station, will care for freight business at the old station. Operator H. R. Elrod has charge of the passenger ticket sales in the new station. Agent Liang, of course, has general oversight of both the passenger station and freight depot and will look after the express. J. A. Stanislaus is telegraph messenger and general utility man. (*Sac Sun* 23 November 1916)

The freight depot was razed in the mid-1940's. (Schnirring, p. 96) By the late 1930's, the 1916 depot had become a combination depot, serving as a hub for both passengers and freight traffic until rail passenger service to and from Sac City ceased in 1948.

Combination Depots in Iowa

The combination depot was the most common type of station building built in Iowa. Such buildings housed the combined functions of passenger shelter, train control, and freight at stations of relative minor importance, where the amount of freight or the volume of passenger business did not warrant the construction of separate buildings. Combination depots often were built from standard plans which placed the waiting area at one end, the office in the center, and the freight section at the other end. With rare exceptions, the central office area was built with a trackside bay window so that trains and other track activity could be viewed in both directions from inside the depot. In locations where the railroad preceded appreciable town development, living quarters for the station agent often were incorporated into the plan. Other interior rooms might include a baggage room, telegraph office, and toilets. Since the freight handling area was incorporated into the combination depot plan, the building might also have a bi-level platform, with a low platform space for passengers and a high platform space for transferring cargo. To offset the monotony inherent in standardization, railroad companies employed a variety of minor architectural variations (brackets, siding, roof overhang, color scheme, etc.) that added visual interest and, at the same time, provided a corporate identity by which the buildings of one line could easily be distinguished from those of another. (Conard and Cunning, section F, p. 2)

Conclusion

Sac City's Chicago & North Western Depot is significant under Criterion A at the local level as the only extant railroad-related building in a small town that was once home to three depots and served by two major railroads. It is also significant under Criterion C as a fine example of standard-plan depot design and construction that exemplifies the practice of many railroad companies. It meets the registration requirements for combination passenger and freight depots as articulated in "The Advent and Development of Railroads in Iowa: 1855-1940" (MPDF, 1990), Section F. Specifically, under Criterion A, the depot is "associated with a railroad that had a major influence in the growth and development of the community," and under Criterion C, it exemplifies "the evolution of a corporate style associated with a particular railroad" and also "the architectural standardization practices of railroads." (Conard and Cunning)

Archeological potential

Archeological potential was not examined as a part of this nomination. Many documented stories about encampments of the Sac Indian tribe in the area would lead one to believe there may be some potential for significance; unfortunately, decades of building roads and buildings in the area would have diminished the probability of significance.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

A Century of living in Wall Lake, 1877-1977. N.p: n.p., 1977. Print

"Chicago & Northwestern." *Chicago & Northwestern.* N.p., n.d. Web. 23 Oct. 2015.

Conard, Rebecca and Tracy Ann Cunning. *The Advent and Development of Railroads in Iowa: 1855-1940.* NRHP Multiple Property Document prepared for Iowa Bureau of Historic Preservation, 1990.

Conard, Rebecca. *Chicago & North Western Passenger Depot in Wall Lake National Register of Historic Places Application.* United States Department of Interior. 2003.

Perry, Bruce. *Chautauqua Park Historic District National Register of Historic Places Application.* United States Department of Interior. 2014.

Perry, Bruce. *Collection of Sac City Postcards, Photos and Ephemera*
212 South 8th Street, Sac City, IA

Phillips, Shirley et al. ed. *Reflections: Sac City Quasquicentennial, 1855-1980.*
Odebolt, Iowa: The Odebolt Chronicle Print, 1980. Print

Phillips, Shirley et al. ed. *Sac City, Iowa Established 1855.*
N.p,: n.p., 2005. Print

Public Records, Transfers Books 1, 11, 30 and B
Sac County Recorder's office, Sac City, IA

Reisdorff, James. "Encyclopedia of the Great Plains." Encyclopedia of the Great Plains. University of Nebraska--Lincoln, 1 Jan. 2011. Web. 7 Nov. 2014.

Schnirring, Dale. Reflections of an Old Shephard *(sic).* self published. Sac City, IA. 2008.

Sac City Bulletin 1901-1923. Sac City, IA. Microfilm

Sac City Democrat 1890-1909. Sac City, IA. Microfilm

The Sac Sun 1876-1940. Sac City, IA: Sun Publishing. Microfilm

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 # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

_x__ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
_x__ Other
Name of repository: _Sac City Public Library, Bruce Perry Collection of Sac City Ephemera, Sac City Historical Museum_____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

---

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property __Less than one acre_____

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: Longitude:

2. Latitude: Longitude:

3. Latitude: Longitude:

4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or
UTM References
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

[ ] NAD 1927 or [x] NAD 1983

1. Zone: 15T	Easting: 335512.78	Northing: 4698643.89
2. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
3. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
4. Zone:	Easting :	Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)
The Sac City Chicago & North Western Depot sits on a 60' wide lot, bordered on the north by Early Street, on the east by 13th Street, and on the south by Main Street. All of lot 1, east 10; of lot 2, and all of lot 11 in block 21 of Platt's Addition to Sac City, IA.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)
The selected boundaries represent the area historically associated with the Chicago & North Western Depot in Sac City. Although the railroad owned more property at one point, the boundaries described include the land that has been used as the lot for the depot since 1916.

---

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Bruce Perry
organization:
street & number: 212 South Eighth Street
city or town: Sac City state: IA zip code: 50583
e-mail BruceLPerry@gmail.com
telephone: 515 979 5620
date: 7 July 2015

Property owned by

name/title: Patricia Wirtjers and Angela Kreft
contact: Angela Kreft
street & number: 3111 270th Street
city or town: Sac City state: IA zip code: 50583
e-mail AngieKreft@gmail.com
telephone: 712-830-2401

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Sac City Chicago and North Western Depot

City or Vicinity: Sac City

County: Sac State: IA

Photographer: Bruce Perry

Date Photographed: 5 June 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 13
South face of depot showing sloped terrain, original Sac City sign and parking lot. (camera facing north)

2 of 13
East face of depot. Two sets of double doors on right were used for baggage and express shipment, then later freight. Steps to passenger entrances are on the left. (camera facing northwest)

3 of 13
North face of depot. Original Sac City sign is present. Windows have been covered with wood, even though the windows themselves are extant.

4 of 13
West face of depot that originally faced the tracks. Dormer over bay window that allowed station agent to observe trains. Windows that are covered in wood, retain original windows on the inside. Brick platform is in foreground. (camera facing northeast)

5 of 13
Center of east face of building. Door on right was entrance into men's waiting area. Depot is structurally sound and the brick work is in good condition. Chimney remains, even though it is unused. (camera facing west)

6 of 13
Detail of fenestration and Sac City sign on north face of depot. Wood covering over extant windows. (camera facing south)

7 of 13
Detail of overhang and downspout construction on southeast corner of depot. (camera facing up and slightly north)

8 of 13
Detail of downspout on southeast corner of building. Bottom portion of downspout appears to be cast iron. Photo also shows close up of brickwork in the platform. (camera facing north)

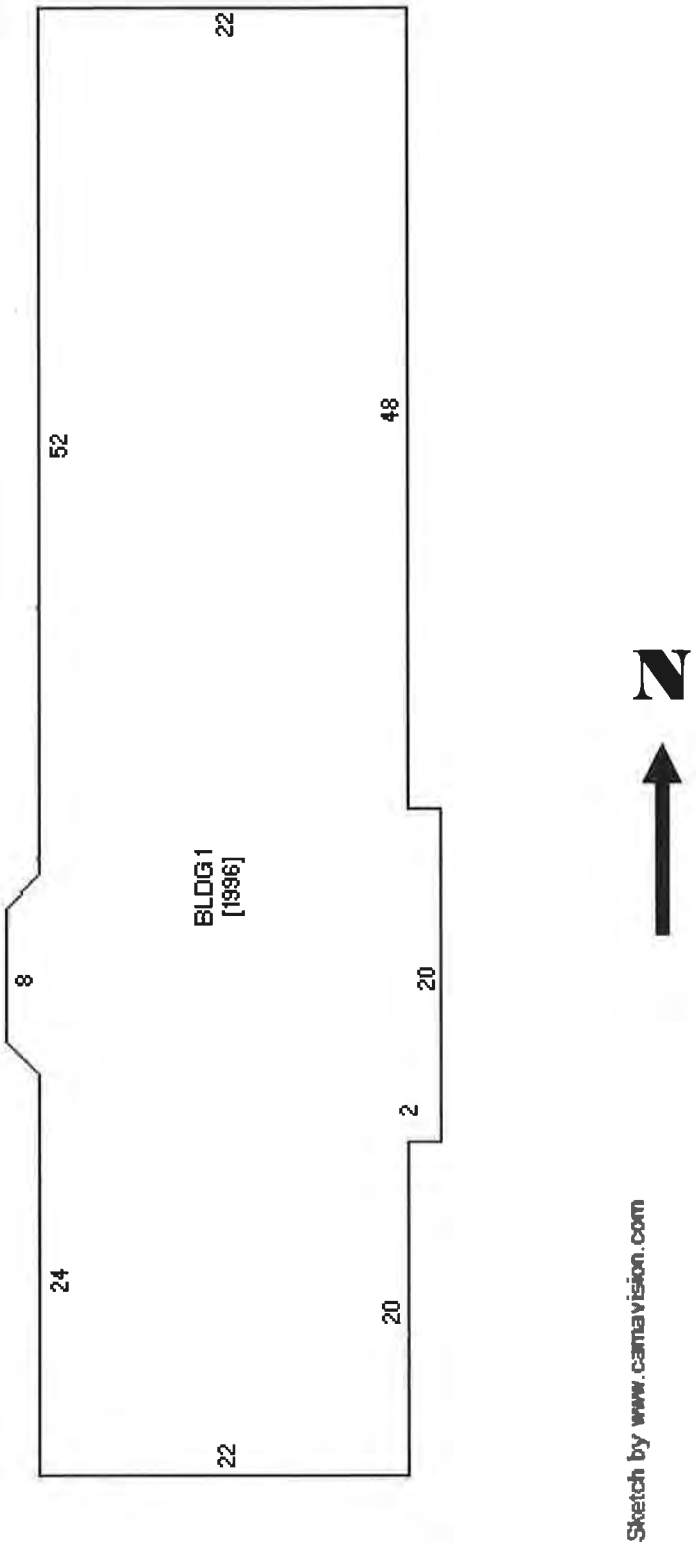
9 of 13
Detail of original crown molding and light fixtures. Wall on the left was extended when the depot was converted to a restaurant, but original crown molding and wainscoting were used to build new wall. (camera looking north)

10 of 13
What was once the women's waiting room has become a display area for merchandise. (camera facing south)

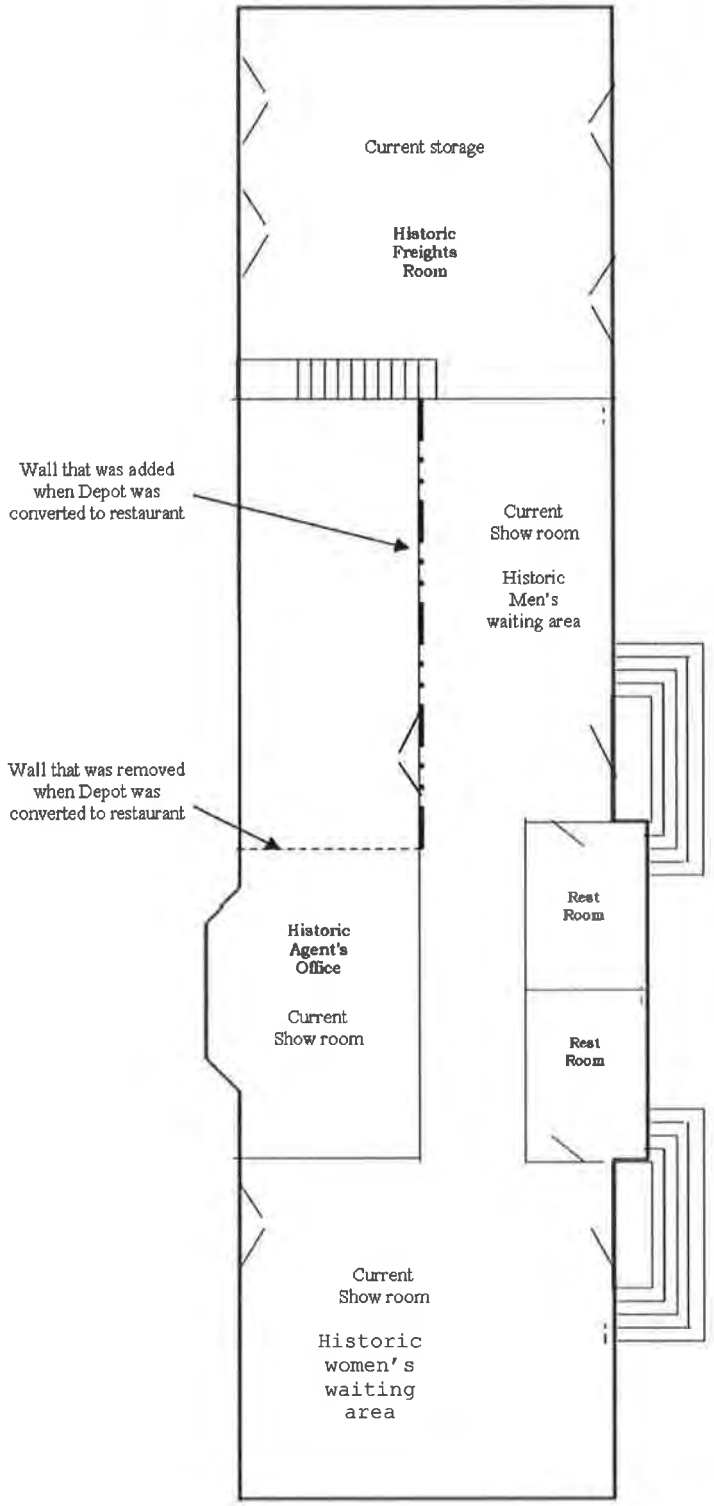
11 of 13
Original ticket window and wainscoting in women's waiting area. Remnants of the telegraph system can be seen on frames on either sides of the windows. (camera facing north)

12 of 13
Area that once allowed station master a view of incoming and departing trains has become a merchandise display area. The roughness of the plaster on the right side of the photo indicates where a wall once was. (camera facing southwest)

13 of 13
One set of freight doors that lead to the tracks. Transom windows remain above the doors, which appear to be soft wood in contrast to the oak doors in the public areas of the depot. (camera facing west)



Dimensional Floor Plan by Canavision.com (Sac County Assessor Web site) 2015



Floor plan not to scale.
By Bruce Perry - 2015

Floor plan showing current and historic usage as well as wall modification to original design.

Embedded Images of Architectural Details

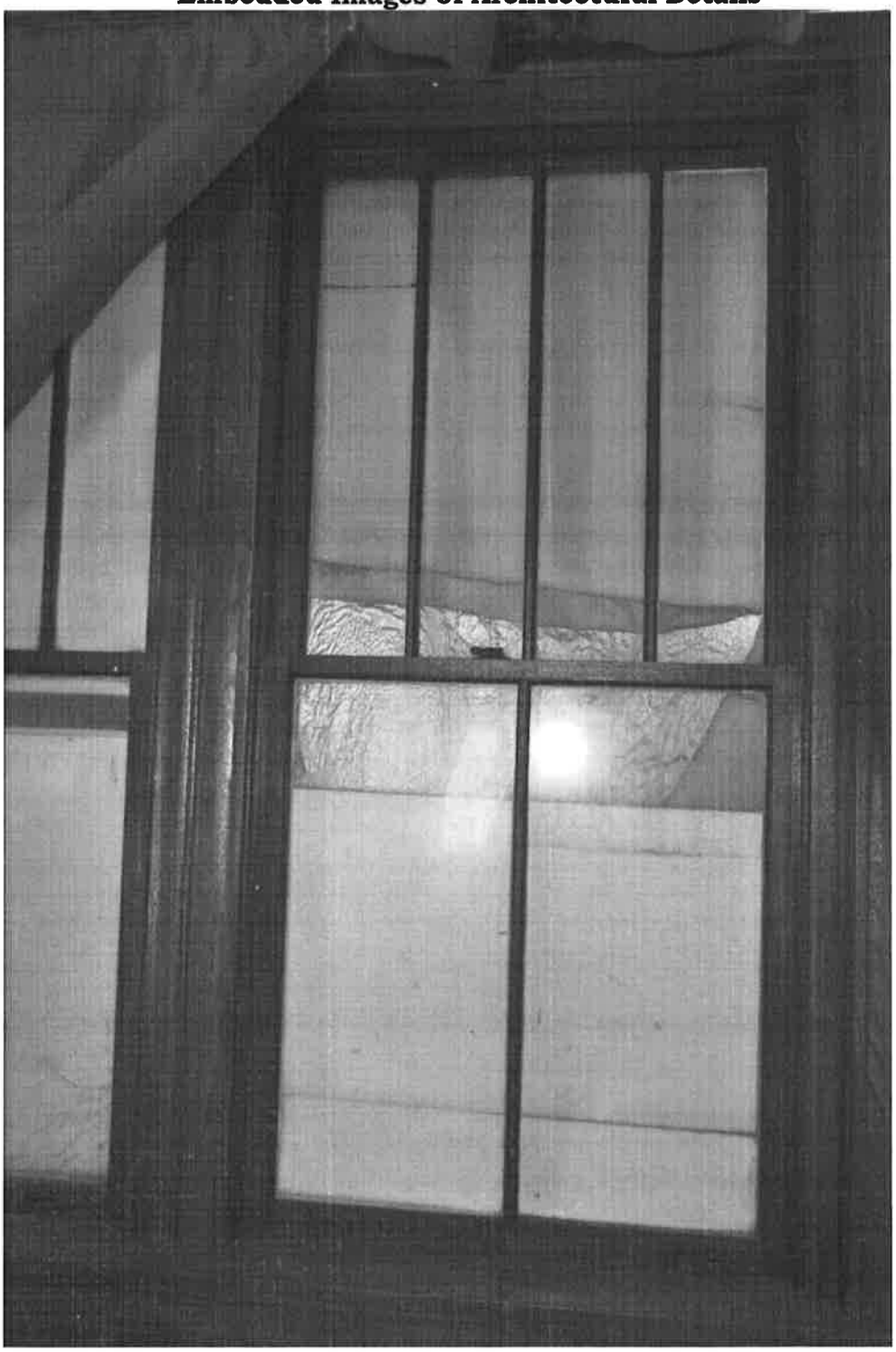


Image 2: Detail of four over two window showing presence of windows inside of depot. All windows are extant, even though some have wood coverings on the outside. This style of window was typical for most C & NW standard design depots. (Photo Perry) 2015

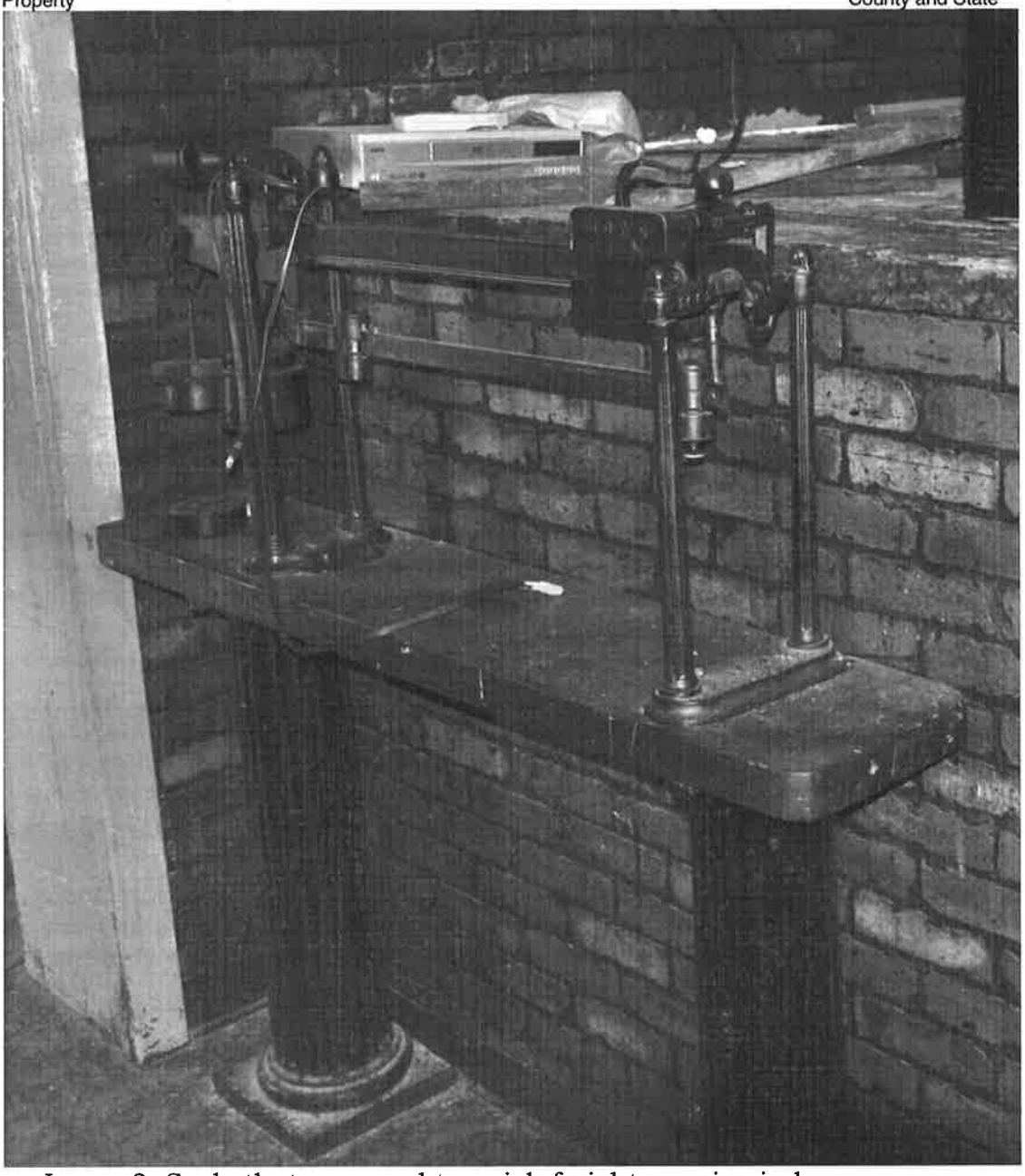


Image 3: Scale that was used to weigh freight remains in baggage room. (Photo Perry) 2015

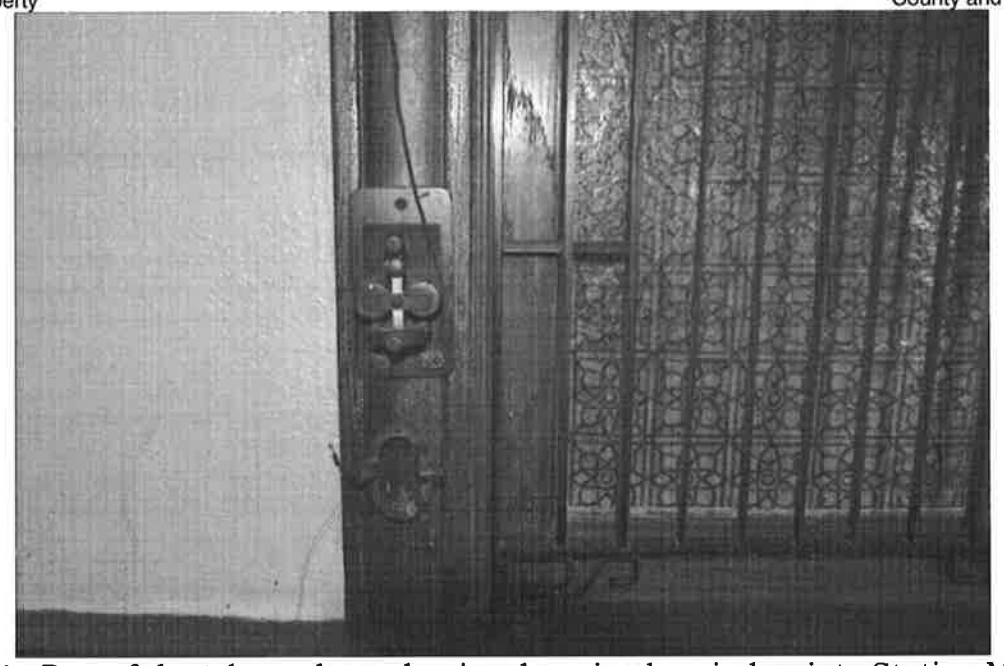


Image 4: Part of the telegraph mechanism hanging by window into Station Master's office. (Photo Perry) 2015

Embedded Historic Images

Image 5: Building the rail line from Wall Lake to Sac City. 1879.
(Photo *A Century of Living in Wall Lake*)

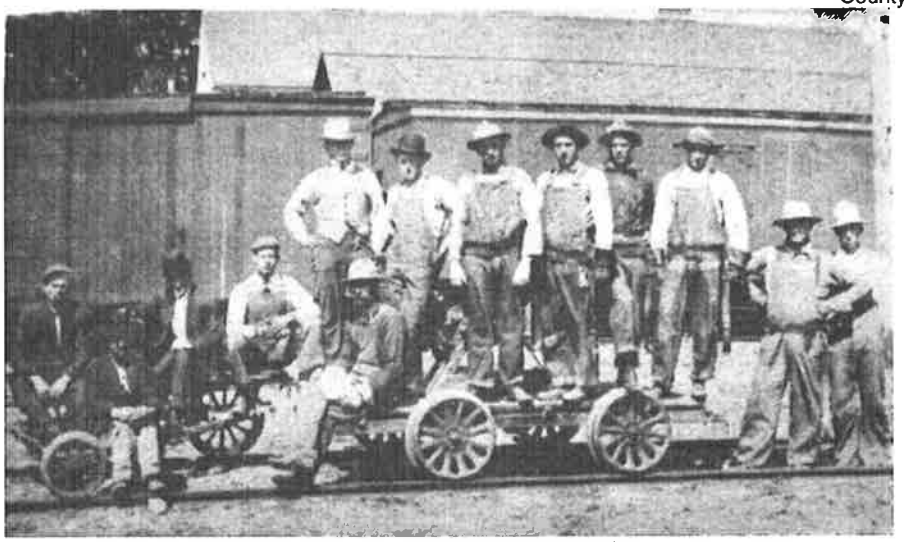


Image 6: Workers on Maple Valley Line. *ca.* 1885
(Photo *A Century of Living in Wall Lake*)

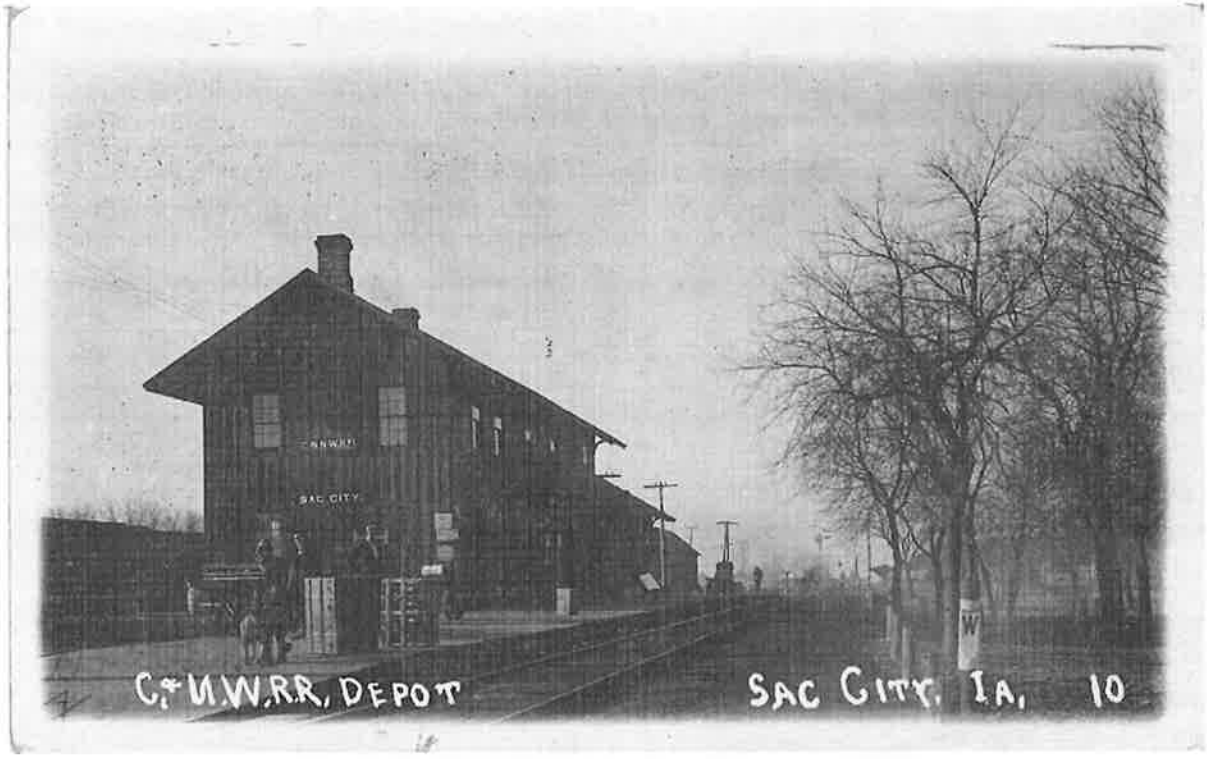


Image 7: First Depot in Sac City. *ca.* 1907
(non-extant) (Photo Perry Collection)

Image 8: Chicago & North Western Depot in Sac City. *ca.* 1895. (non-extant) (Photo Phillips: *Sac City, Iowa. Established 1855*)

Image 9: Business district on Early Street known as Bingville that developed around the C & NW depot in Sac City. *ca.* 1907 (non-extant) (Photo Perry Collection)

Image 10: Replacement C & NW depot in Sac City. 1917
(Photo Perry Collection)

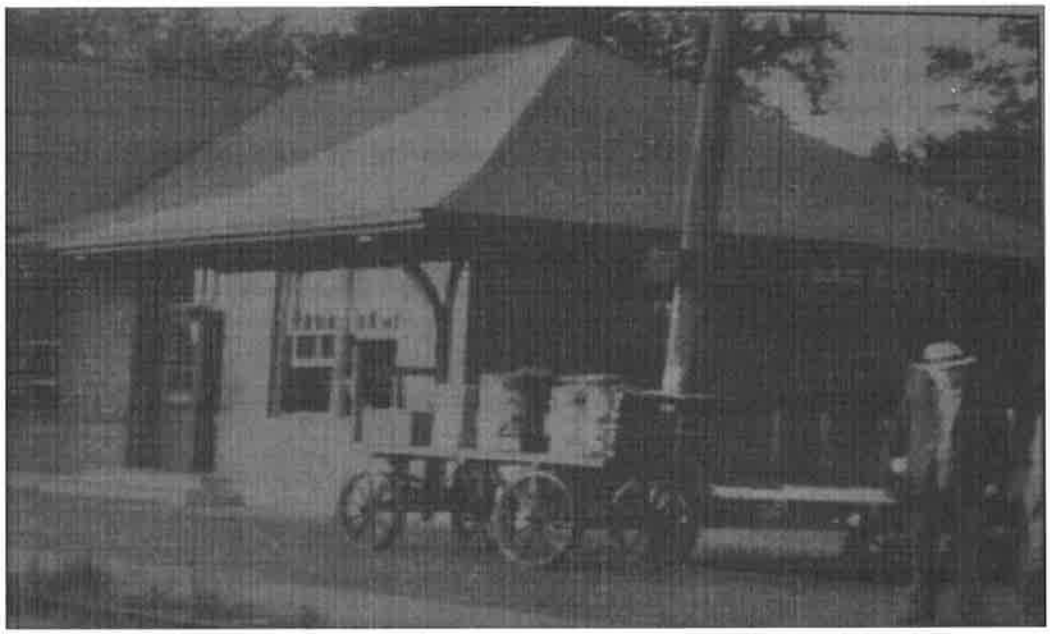


Image 11: C & NW depot in Sac City. *ca.* 1920
(Photo Phillips, *Reflections)*

Image 12: Depot in Sac City with Park Hotel bus that transported passengers to the hotel in downtown Sac City. (Photo Perry Collection)

Image 13: Sac City C & NW depot *ca.* 1970.
(Photo Perry Collection)

Image 14: Railroad tracks north of Sac City. *ca.* 1910.
(Perry Photo Collection)

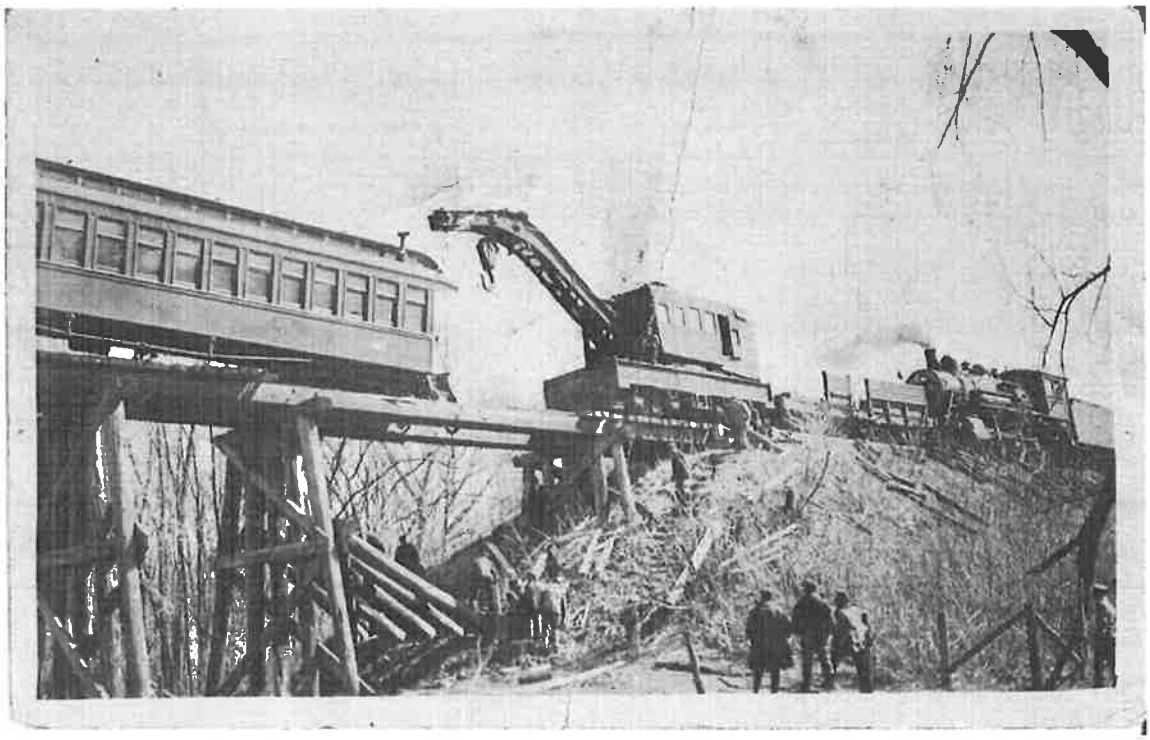


Image 15: C & NW train derailment about a mile north of Sac City. *ca.* 1915
(Photo Perry Collection)

Image 16: Building the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul depot in Sac City provided some of the impetus for C & NW to upgrade their depot. (non-extant) (Photo Perry Collection)

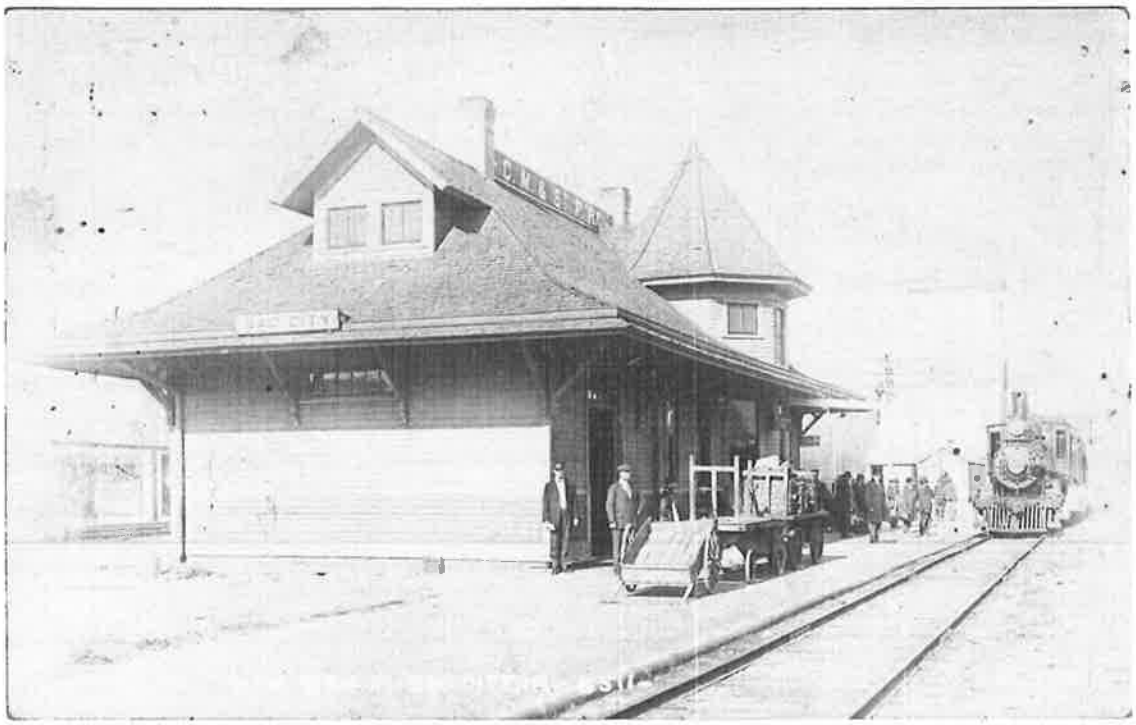


Image 17: Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul depot provided competition that helped assure quality rail service in Sac City. (non-extant) (Photo Perry Collection)

Image 18: C & NW depot in Wall Lake exhibits a striking similarity of shape to the 1916 depot in Sac City. Although the buildings differ in construction materials, the characteristic shape would identify both as belonging to the same railroad company. Photo *ca.* 1970 (Photo Perry Collection)

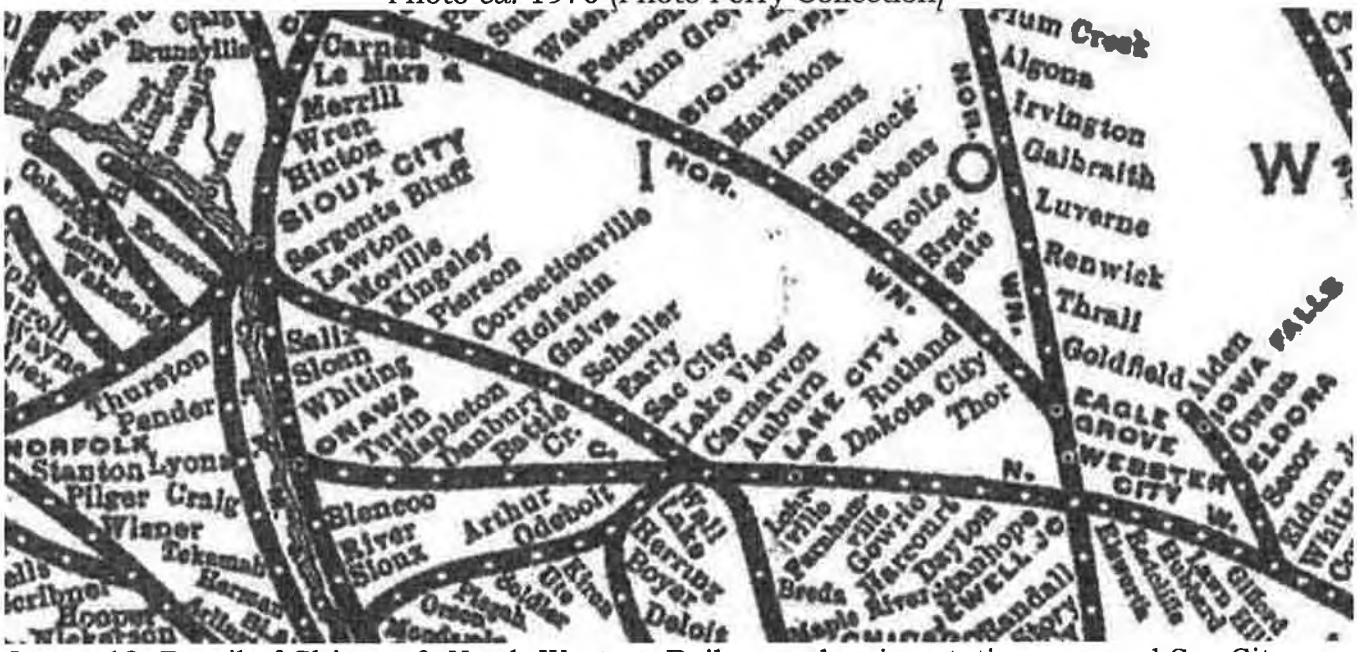
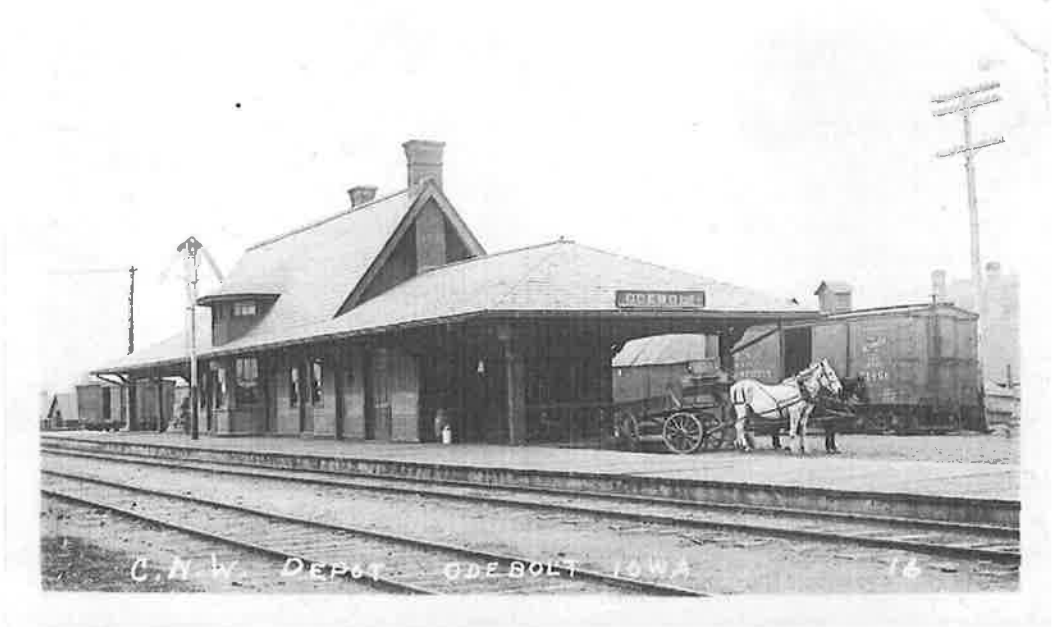


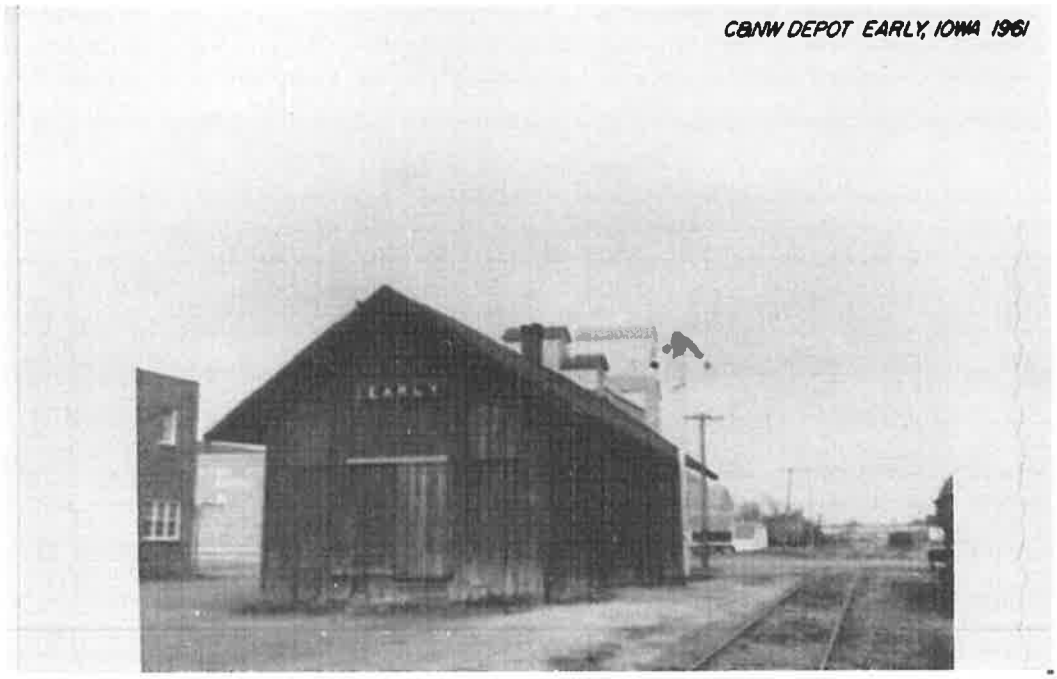
Image 19: Detail of Chicago & North Western Rail map showing stations around Sac City *ca.* 1909.
www.cnwhs.org/archives_maps.htm

(Image 20) Chicago and North Western Depot in Crystal Lake, Illinois.
http://www.rr-fallenflags.org/cnw/cnw-crysta-ana.jpg

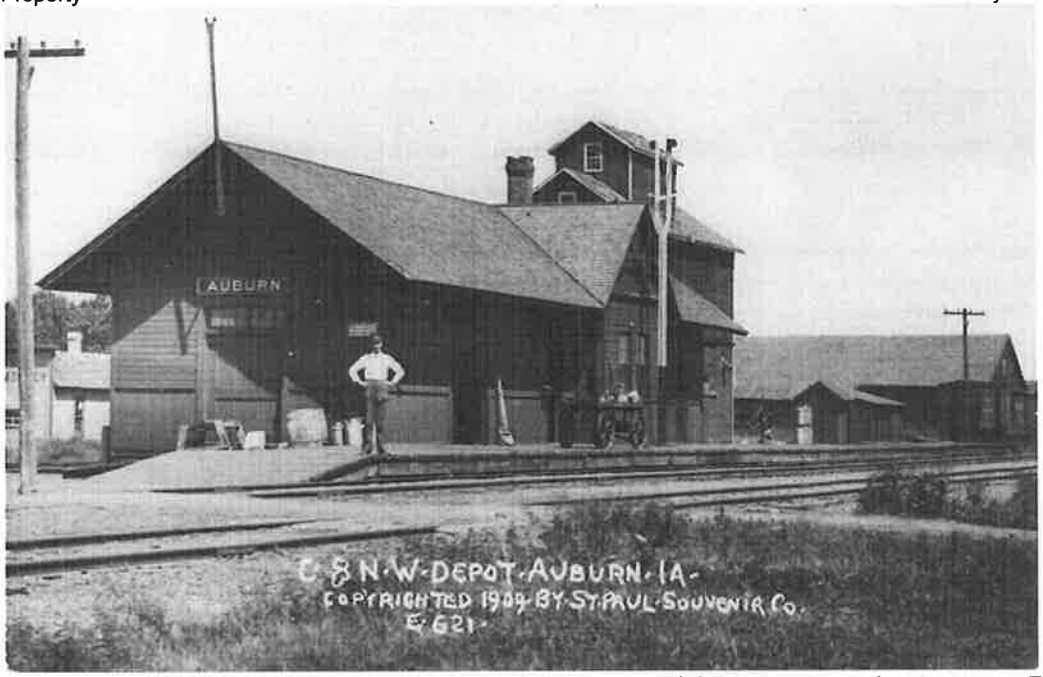
(Image 21) Chicago and Northwestern Depot in Merillan, Wisconsin, has characteristic end roof line with the addition of peak over station master's area.
http://www.rr-fallenflags.org/cnw/cnw-sesta-ana.jpg



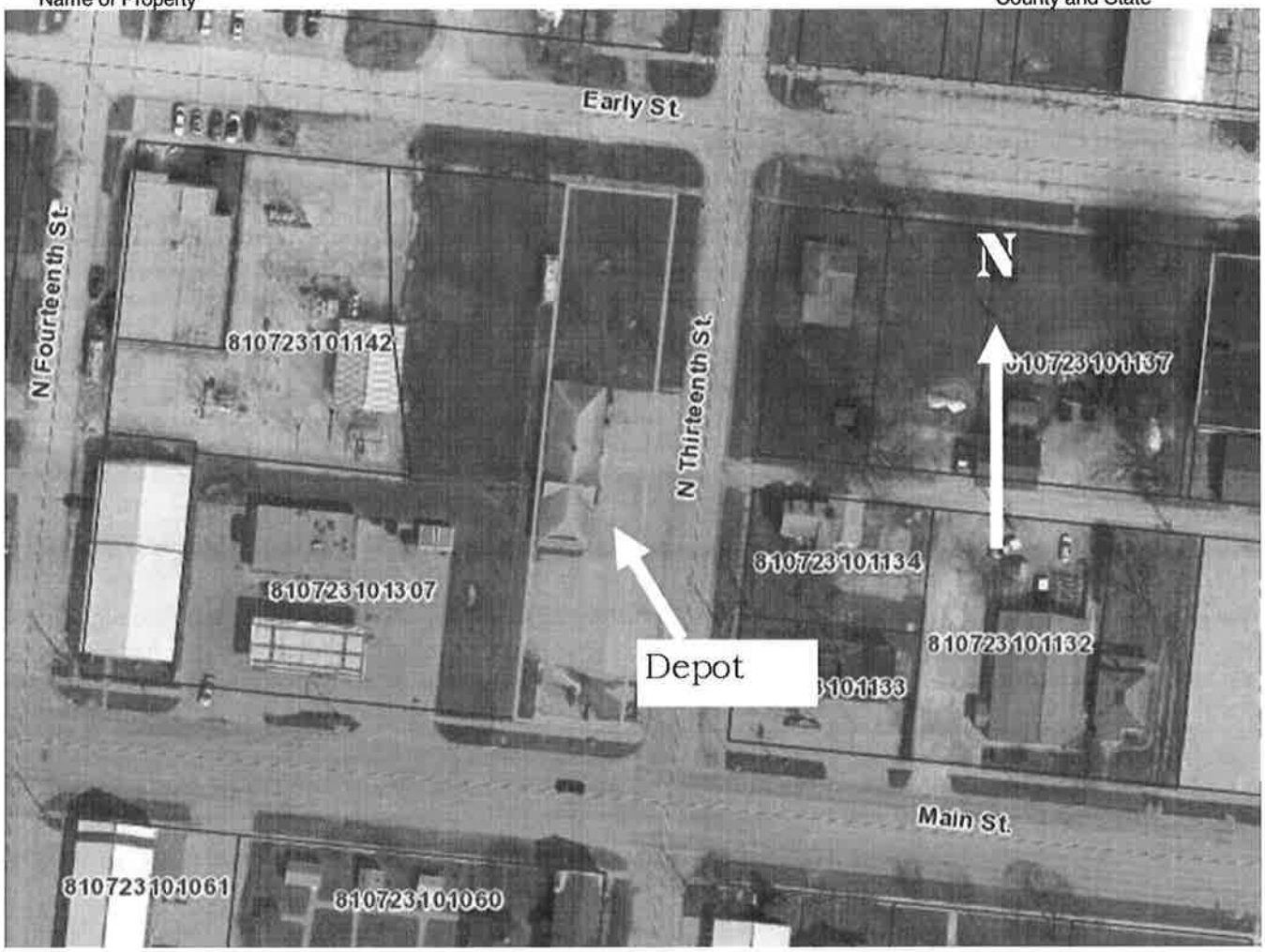
(Image 22) Chicago & North Western Depot in Odebolt, IA *ca.* 1910. The older design did not feature the characteristic roof line of the standard plan depots. (non-extant) (Photo Perry Collection)



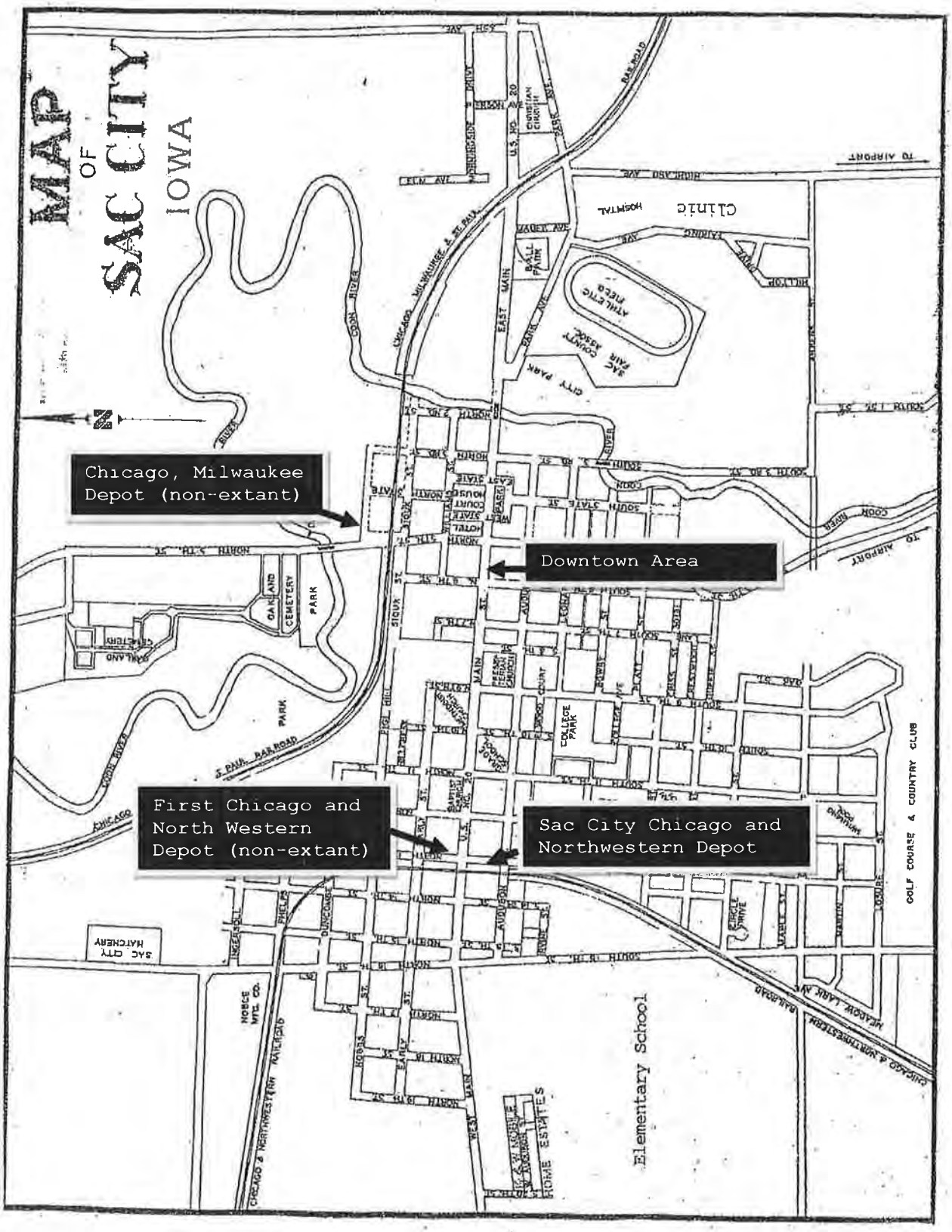
(Image 23) Chicago & North Western Depot in Early, IA, was constructed *ca.* 1900. The simple design is typical of many early depots in rural Iowa. Photo 1961. (non-extant) (Perry Photo Collection)



(Image 24) 1909 photo depicts another Sac County Chicago & North Western Depot. The shape is similar to the depot in Sac City, but the roof line is not a double hip roof. (non-extant) (Photo Perry Collection)



Map from Sac City Assessor web site, 2015

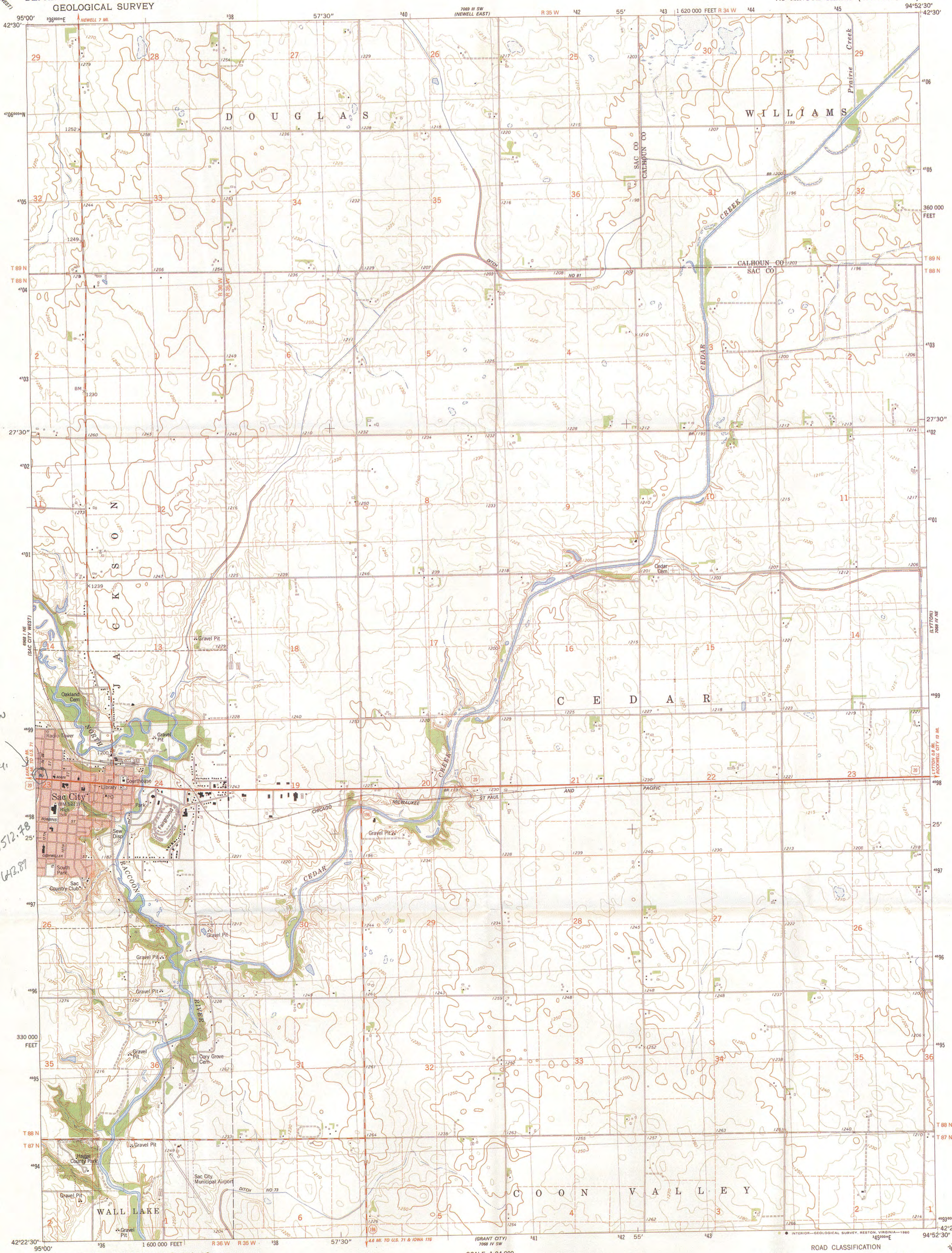

MAP OF SAC CITY IOWA
Chicago, Milwaukee Depot (non-extant)
Downtown Area
First Chicago and North Western Depot (non-extant)
Sac City Chicago and Northwestern Depot
Elementary School
GOLF COURSE & COUNTRY CLUB
CITY PARK
COOK RIVER
EAST MAIN
SIOUX ST.
OAKLAND CEMETERY
PARK
COLLEGE PARK
BALL PARK
ATHLETIC FIELD
SAC COUNTY FAIR ASSOC.
CLINIC
HOSPITAL
TO AIRPORT
CHICAGO, MILWAUKEE & ST. PAUL
CHICAGO & NORTHWESTERN RAILROAD
SAC CITY HATCHERY
HOBBS MFG. CO.
HOME ESTATES

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

SAC CITY EAST QUADRANGLE
IOWA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



Chicago Northwestern Depot Sac County, IA
Zone 15T
Easting 335512.78
Northing 4698643.87

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1974. Field checked 1975. Map edited 1980

Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Iowa coordinate system, north zone (Lambert conformal conic)
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 15
1927 North American Datum
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 5 meters north and 21 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks

Red tint indicates area in which only landmark buildings are shown

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked

UTM GRID AND 1980 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET
GN MN 1°18′ 23 MILS 6½° 116 MILS

SCALE 1:24 000
1 ½ 0 1 MILE
1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET
1 .5 0 1 KILOMETER

CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
DOTTED LINES REPRESENT 5-FOOT CONTOURS
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
AND BY THE IOWA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, IOWA CITY, IOWA 52240
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

IOWA
QUADRANGLE LOCATION

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, hard surface
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Unimproved road
Interstate Route
U. S. Route
State Route

OCT 23 1980
USGS Historical File Topographic Division

SAC CITY EAST, IOWA
N4222.5—W9452.5/7.5
1980
DMA 7068 IV NW—SERIES V876

1950

SAC CITY.

OPEN
CHICAGO
NORTH WESTERN
RAILWAY

SAC CITY.
STOP
BEVERAGES
SANDWICHES

CHICAGO
AND
NORTH WESTERN
RAILWAY

SAC CITY.

GRIST MILL
1872

MILK

MORNINGSIDE
GRAIN & SEED CO.
RANDOLPH

40
Coors
LIGHT