

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC New Rock Island Depot and Freight House

AND/OR COMMON  
Rock Island Depot and Freight House

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER  
32 Liberty Street

CITY, TOWN  
Peoria

STATE  
Illinois

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF  
CODE  
12

\_\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
18th

COUNTY  
Peoria

CODE  
143

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" 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 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 type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER
			Development plans under consideration	

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME  
City of Peoria

STREET & NUMBER  
419 Fulton

CITY, TOWN  
Peoria

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE  
Illinois

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Peoria County Courthouse, Room 11, Recorder's Office

STREET & NUMBER  
324 Main

CITY, TOWN  
Peoria

STATE  
Illinois

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE  
Inventory of Historic Landmarks in Peoria County  
Illinois Historic Sites Survey

DATE  
August 1972

\_\_\_ FEDERAL  STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS  
Illinois Historic Landmarks Survey

CITY, TOWN  
Carbondale

STATE  
Illinois 62901

## 7 DESCRIPTION

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

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Rock Island Depot was constructed in 1899-1900 at 32 Liberty Street, Peoria, Illinois. The railroad station consists of a two-story depot and an adjacent one-story Freight House built at the same time. The property on which the buildings are located is between a department store and the Illinois River (Photo #1).

The building is of bearing wall construction with timber and iron work superstructure. Red brick with a recessed bonding course occurring every seventh row form quoins at the building's corners and pilasters between major arched window openings. The entire first level facade of the original clock tower is composed of this same brick coursing (Photos #6 and #9). The use of brick in this fashion is unusual and seems to substitute for the granite or other light colored stone faces used as building material during the late 1800's. A low base of Ashler masonry encircles the entire building complex. The base is of Lake Superior sandstone.

A low pitched clay tile roof with large bracketed overhang of Italianate character emphasizes the broad proportions of the lobby portion of the building (Photo #8). A similar roof at a slightly lower level designates the office and baggage area, having much shallower overhang without iron brackets. The narrow gabled roof of the waiting shed continues along one side of the building supported only by the brackets which terminate at the wall with stone corbels in the form of the railroad emblem (Photo #11). This shed continues for another 100 feet along the waiting platform, extending the horizontal appearance of the building. This shed is supported by square wood columns and brackets. At the original entrance to the Main Lobby from the waiting shed, the vestibule form was allowed to protrude through the lower roof of the shed and has its own stone-capped gable and a ball ornament at its peak. This entrance, with a simple arched pediment, has been insensitively bricked in and an aluminum frame window added. The aforementioned ornament has also been lost (Photos #2 and #14).

The adjacent freight house has a low pitched gable roof supported by King-post trusses of light wood and iron members (Photo #19). The roofing of the Freight House has been replaced with asphalt shingles. Some of the tiles were salvaged and stored for future use.

At the southwest corner of the office portion is the remaining lower third of a clock tower which was originally built to a height of 118 feet. Obviously impressed by its construction in 1900, a reporter for the Peoria Herald-Transcript said of the tower, "...while only sixteen feet square, (the tower) is embedded in a massive (below-grade) foundation 30 feet square and six feet thick." The tower's foundation held firm, but nature took its toll in another way on numerous occasions. According to Paul Stringham, who operated the newsstand at the Depot from 1933-1954, lightning struck the tower "a half dozen times", destroying parts and details with each blow (Photo #4). The upper portion of the symbolic tower was removed in 1939, terminated so as to be distinctive from the adjoining portion of the depot and roofed with a low pyramidal form with tiles from an old freight house.

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The original tower was of Renaissance order; i.e., having heirarchical orders of base, shaft and capital, the latter was a temple form not unlike a building unto itself complete with pilasters, arched openings, and triangular pediments on all four sides (Photo #4). The placement of the tower at a corner of the elongated building seems to have precedence in the romantic notions of the late 1800's high Victorian styles and more specifically, with the Italian Villa style.

Probably due to the nature of the supporting walls, the entrance into the building through the tower is very narrow and flanked by two small windows not unlike the gunports of a fort. This arched opening is of extremely refined detail, including a broad band of radial tapered brick terminated by the raised brick drip ledge. The small windows, brick arched, and door opening are very palladium in form and, in this respect, relate to the distinctive and graceful arched windows that characterize the lobby. A simple arched glass fits above the flat stone lintel which is, in turn, supported on each side of the door by pilasters with simple stone capitals that face the door opening (Photo #-). That this elegant detailing surrounds the secondary entrance and that the tower itself is at the working end of the facility as opposed to the public entrance to the lobby, speaks of the incongruity associated with this picturesque style.

In 1948, the public portion of the station was remodeled in an insensitive but practical attempt to bring the aging building up to date with the "Rocket" trains which stopped at its platform. The elegance that had "struck the visitor at once" in 1900 was recorded in 1948 by the newspaper as "the erstwhile, dingy, half-century old" depot. Wood frame windows of oak were replaced with steel sash and glass block. Oak benches, darkened with age, were retired for more comfortable "easy chairs." All the dark woodwork was covered over or removed and the lower portions of the walls paneled in "light hued" paneling, and the upper walls painted in pastel green.

The adjacent Freight House is of the same brick as the Depot but is devoid of quoins and ornament except for a raised stepped brick pattern in the northeast gable (Photo #14). Windows are elongated as typical of Victorian proportions and have gently curved brick lintels. A deep overhang, again supported by brackets, continues along the entire south facade (Photo #17). This deep overhang lowers the apparent height of the Freight House and shades the wall from the intense heat of the summer sun. The trussed construction leaves the floor space free and clear for storage of goods or for other activities requiring open space (Photo #18). In 1965 a link was constructed between the Depot and the Freight House. It is of brick and is in keeping with the Freight House architecture.

The reminiescent classical architecture of the Depot Complex is typical of the late Victorian period as architecture moved away from exuberant spirit in a search for more ordered expression.

# 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 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 1899 - 1900

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Rock Island Depot is a landmark in Peoria because it is the last remaining structure signifying the importance of the railroad in Peoria's history. The Depot is further significant because its eclectic character epitomizes the spirit and rebirth of the trade-based economy at the end of the nineteenth century.

The opening of the Rock Island Depot in 1900 was attended by "thronges of populous." Peoria had been a true rail transportation center rivaled only by Chicago in the Midwest previous to the 1880's depression. Railroads touched the lives of most Peoria citizenry as it was the only transportation link of consequence until expressways and air travel were established after World War II.

The Rock Island Depot is a building of contrasts and vitality. Familiar classical details were assembled to create a form identifiable as a Midwestern train station, using the classical arched windows below an Italianate bracketed overhang and the long, low profile which predates the Prairie Style of architecture. The Depot expresses a "picturesque eclecticism," which architectural historian Vincent Sculley has said was "...the only kind of architecture that could have made sense in this period."

The Rock Island Depot is a good example of Peoria architecture at the turn of the century. Its location on the waterfront and its architectural character established in brick, mortar and stone, the robust commercial nature of this community's past.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Peoria Public Library Clippings, October 10, 1954; March 29, 1966  
 Peoria Public Library, Information Compiled by WPA, late 1930's; unpublished  
Peoria Journal Star, September 22, 1974

Peoria Herald-Transcript, March 31, 1900

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

QUADRANGLE NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
 UTM REFERENCES

QUADRANGLE SCALE \_\_\_\_\_

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the Rock Island Depot and Freight House Complex property is shown as shaded in red on the accompanying map obtained from the Peoria City Hall records, Scale 1" = 85', Date 9/28/35.

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

Richard M. Montena, Project Architect

ORGANIZATION

Kenyon and Associates, Architects

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

735 N. Knoxville

309-674-7121

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Peoria

STATE

Illinois 61602

# 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

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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"Modern Railroad", October 1952, "Rocket"

Iron Road to Empire, William Hoyer

Records from Peoria County Courthouse

Letter from "Chicago, Rock Island, & Pacific" Railroad Company,  
February 18, 1975 (April 27, 1966)

American Architecture & Urbanism, Vincent Sculley, 1969, Frederick A. Praeger,  
Publisher, New York City

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ILLINOIS

STATE

Date Entered      **DEC 22 1978**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
• Rock Island Depot and Freight House	Peoria Peoria County
• Naples Archeological District	Scott County
• Original Springs Hotel and Bathhouse	Okawville Washington County
• Briscoe Mounds	Will County
• Hofmann Tower	Lyons Cook County
• Sheets Site	Fulton County
• Fountain Creek Bridge	Waterloo vicinity Monroe County
• Marsh, William W., House	Sycamore DeKalb County

Also Notified

Honorable Charles H. Percy  
Honorable Adlai E. Stevenson  
Honorable Robert H. Michel  
Honorable Paul Findley  
Honorable Paul M. Simon  
Honorable George M. O'Brien  
Honorable Edward J. Derwinski  
Honorable Tom Railsback  
Honorable Tom J. Corcoran

**COPY OF CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION**

For further information, please call the National Register at (202)343-6401.

P-H-29

200233

ILLINOIS HISTORIC SITES SURVEY INVENTORY

SURVEY USE ONLY

1. Name of Site: **Rock Island Depot**

Common

Historic

- Archaeology
- Architecture
- History

2. Location:

Street and Number

Township

Section

**32 Liberty St.**

City or Town

Zip Code

Range

1/4Section

**Peoria**

County

3. Classification:

Category (Check one)

Integrity (Check one)

- District
- Site

- Building
- Structure

- Altered
- Unaltered
- Moved
- Original Site

4. Ownership

Status (check one)

- Private
- Public

- Occupied
- Unoccupied
- Preservation work in progress

Access to Public

- Yes
- Restricted
- Unrestricted
- No

Present Use (check one or more)

- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Educational
- Entertainment
- Government
- Industrial
- Military
- Museum
- Park
- Private Residence
- Religious
- Scientific
- Transportation
- Other (specify)

5. Ownership of Property

Owner's Name **Forest Park Foundation**

Street and Number **Community Workshop & Training Center**

Phone Number

City or Town

State

County

Zip Code

6. Description

Condition

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Deteriorated
- Ruins
- Unexposed

Is there a program of preservation underway?  Yes  No

TRANSPORTATION





7. Historical Themes: (check one or more of the following)

- |                                     |                     |                          |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Archaeological Site | (pre-Columbian)          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Archaeological Site | (post-Columbian to 1673) |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | French Influence    | (1673-1780)              |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Illinois Frontier   | (1780-1818)              |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Illinois Early      | (1818-1850)              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Illinois Middle     | (1850-1900)              |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Illinois Late       | (1900-present)           |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Famous People       | (Give names & dates)     |

8. Specific Date:

Areas of Significance (check one or more of the following)

- |                                     |                           |                          |                     |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Aboriginal (historic)     | <input type="checkbox"/> | Literature          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Aboriginal (pre-historic) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Military            |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Agriculture               | <input type="checkbox"/> | Music               |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Architecture              | <input type="checkbox"/> | Political           |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Art                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | Religion/Philosophy |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Commerce                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Science             |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Communication             | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sculpture           |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Conservation              | <input type="checkbox"/> | Social/Humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Education                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Theater             |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Engineering               | <input type="checkbox"/> | Transportation      |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Industry                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Urban Planning      |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Invention                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (specify)     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Landscape Architecture    |                          |                     |

Brief statement of significance: (include all names and dates). Use additional sheets if necessary.

9. Form prepared by:

Name and Title: Metager Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Street and Number \_\_\_\_\_

City or Town \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

During the course of the Survey we often find it necessary to search for references for a particular site. When filling out the Survey form, please list according to the following example, published references to the site for which forms are being completed. If a bibliography can be compiled, it will greatly deduct from the Survey's task.

Bibliography

Robertson, Robert, Of Whales and Men. New York, Alfred K. Knopf, Inc., 1954.