

Serial 70 Washington

9-30-86

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad Depot, Tamms, Illinois

and or common Tamms Depot

2. Location

street & number Front Street not for publication

city, town Tamms vicinity of Congressional District #22

state Illinois code 012 county Alexander code 003

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Village of Tamms, Honorable Kerry Baugher, Mayor

street & number Post Office Drawer E

city, town Tamms vicinity of state Illinois

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Alexander County Courthouse

street & number 2000 Washington

city, town Cairo state Illinois

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Southern Five Historic Preservation has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date August 4, 1986 (revision) federal state county local

depository for survey records Southern Five Planning Commission

city, town Vienna state Illinois

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		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The depot at Tamms was boarded up after 1955. A slow, insidious deterioration began to set in. The worst damage was to the interior of the building--some by vandalism before it was boarded up. The only cheerful aspect it presented at that time was its bright red tile roof--also in need of minor repairs.

Today, the depot once again proudly surveys the town it helped build. Everything is as closely patterned after the original as research and pictures can possibly make it. It stands freshly painted and repaired, its windows gleam brightly in the sunlight. They have all been replaced to match the old ones as closely as possible. The front and back door have had to be replaced. The old ceilings (beyond repair) have been replaced and lowered from 14' to their present 10' height. The floor plan is the same as it was many long years ago. Most of the interior walls have been replaced, (as in earlier days) with tongue-and-groove wood car siding and rough-sawn and reversed board and batten. The freight room to the North now has inner folding doors along its west wall to hide the filing cabinets there. A very small window in the upper outhwest wall of this room has been covered over.

The center room (dispatchers' room) remains structurally unchanged. The switch levers are no longer there. The railing enclosing the raised (4') dispatchers' area still has three of the original "round-knob-top posts"--another had to be replaced, as did the deteriorated inner wood rails between these supporting posts. The original style was faithfully copied. The bottom floor area has been replaced with dark red tile. The South wall of this room still retains the original ticket window with its gilt lettering. There is a small storage cabinet (24" x 20" x 6') on this wall under the old chimney that still has the original wood car siding and doors intact.

The old waiting room to the south remains basically the same, with the addition of a small bathroom in the N.W. corner of the room. All lighting fixtures in the rooms had to be replaced--with fixtures as near like those of the period as possible. The walls are a combination of tongue and groove car siding covered over with varnish (top) and upright boards that have been painted (bottom). The hardwood floors have been replaced and glisten with stain and varnish.

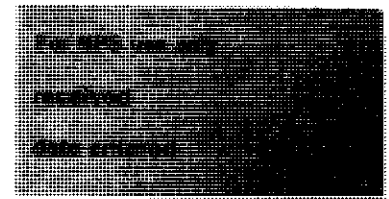
The outward appearance of the building, with the exception of the front door being moved to the center of the building (the old entrance was replaced with a window matching the others) remains exactly the same. The extreme curvature of the building that follows the entire east wall is architecturally rare. Mr. J. J. Coleman, a lifetime resident of Tamms, enjoyed talking about his many years with the railroad (60). He told many in Tamms (still living) that there were only two depots ever built anywhere with this curvature on an entire wall. He was blessed with an alert mind and memory until his death in 1980. Mr. David Wagner, Vice President of the G, M & O in 1983, said there were none like it on any of their lines. The original outside baggage doors on the north and northwest walls of the building that used to slide open are permanently fixed in place and covered by the new inner walls. Exact hand-made replicas of the old depot signs were made by a local carpenter.

The outside entrance area leading to the depot blends in with the time period of the early 1900's. A walkway, made of wood in staggered, stair-step heights leads to the entrance. The hand railing (wood) is also in staggered heights. Outside lighting resembles the old multiple globe-type candle/gas lamps of yesteryear. Patios and walkways are constructed of old cobblestones from the area. Landscaping has been completed and benches have been installed for those who wish to sit and reminisce about the depot's past history.

(See continuation sheet # 1).

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Depot

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(DESCRIPTION CONT'D)

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An old caboose from the line's early beginning has been added to the site as a tourist attraction. The caboose will remain on track next to the northwest corner of the depot. It is all original, although it does need some minor restoration work done. When this is finished it will be open to the public for their inspection. While it will not be attached to the depot itself, it is only a few feet from it.

The inside depot walls are covered with picture memorabilia from 1899 into the 1920s. There are numerous pictures of the interior/exterior of the depot before/after renovation. There is a picture of Oscar T.'s estate with an old passenger train passing by that has an interesting story behind it. The line ran directly in front of his beautiful estate, and as a courtesy and testimonial to what he had done for the railroads, all trains slowed down, blew a resounding blast of their whistle, and the people on the train waved to those on the estate.

Once again, as it was in the past, the depot at Tamms is a focal point of the community. The townspeople frequently take advantage of the outside benches to sit around and discuss current events and those of the past. It is now "home" to the City Hall, the City Clerk, and the Mayor's office and board room. The town council holds their meetings there, dignitaries come to visit, bills are paid at the clerk's desk, and tourist information is readily available.

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1900 -1936 **Builder/Architect** unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The town is named for its founder, Oscar T. Tamm. The first railroad, the Mobile & Ohio (which later became the Gulf, Mobile & Ohio) was completed in 1899, on land donated by Theodore Tamm, father of Oscar T. In 1900 Oscar T. had already inherited his property, and that year he donated land to the Chicago & Eastern Illinois Railroad to build another line through Tamms to further promote the growth of his town. This line was completed in 1904.

Oscar T. began building his town in 1900 with his house, the Yellow Dog Saloon, and the Alexandria Hotel. This magnificent 55 room creation was completed in 1901. The depot, these buildings, plus his plans to enlarge the size of his town, and the close proximity of the railroad all combined to put Tamms on the map. Oscar T. also owned 40 houses that he had built for his town. By the latter part of 1900 the town was thoroughly settled.

An interesting facet of this depot that makes it unique is that it was used by dispatchers of both railroads simultaneously! These gentlemen worked together, each on their own line and switches, in the same office at the same time! The "bay window" area that surveyed the tracks of both lines was approximately 16' x 10'. This room has a room under it of the same dimensions. It has the original 4" x 12 and 4" x 14" beams, plus a concrete I-beam anchored to the floor. A grown man can easily walk upright in this room. The sturdy floor beams were there to support the extremely long handles of the switches that came up through the floor directly into the dispatchers' office.

The depot was the focal meeting place of community residents, tourists, and guests alike until the passenger line was abandoned in 1955. From 1899 through the mid-50's this depot has played an important role in the development of Tamms. The farmers and townspeople alike would gather there (the hotel was only for guests) to discuss everyday happenings, news events, things being shipped out as well as those brought in. They always availed themselves of every opportunity to look over newcomers that arrived on the train. From its early inception, the depot had a large amount of freight and passenger traffic.

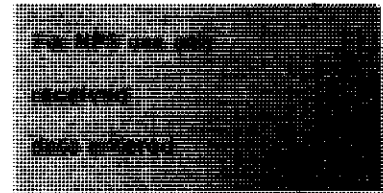
Among the freight shipped out was lumber, several kinds of produce, poultry, livestock, dairy products and bales of cotton. Passengers could purchase a ticket to anywhere in the United States from the little depot at Tamms. From the onlookers to the "talkers and doers" it was a beehive of activity. The weather was always a prime topic of conversation. Business deals were consummated here as well as at the Mercantile (built in 1907). Besides selling merchandise of all description, the store also gave loans, bank drafts, and cashed checks. For some reason, most of the railroaders preferred to cash their checks at the saloon!

The townspeople came to the depot to get a look at the opera stars as they arrived in this small downstate community. Oscar T. contracted for singers from all over the United States and Europe. The tourists flocked to this small town to view the magnificent Alexandria Hotel (billed as being as fine as any in Europe), an elegant 2-1/2 story edifice with pennants flying from its roof. The Opera House (built in 1907) itself was a cultural rarity in that area. The Mercantile, Opera House, and the saloon were all within walking distance of this sturdy little depot, and the hugh hotel was directly across the street.

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(Statement of Significance - Cont'd) 8 2

Oscar T. died in 1913, and the historic architectural and cultural buildings that he had built were all destroyed by fire between 1906 (the Alexandria Hotel) and 1948 (the store, Opera House, and the saloon).

Fortunately, life at the depot in Tamms went on without him. In November, 1921, a vestibule was constructed in the waiting room of the depot. The Johnson Bakery (built in the early 1920's) began shipping its wares via the railroad at this time, and the freight operations and passenger line continued to flourish.

At the time the passenger line was abandoned (1955) there still remained a "round house" (used to repair engines and cars, and "make-up" trains before they went out) that employed 100 people. This was operational until 1971, when it was phased out entirely. In its hey-day the railroads employed over 150 people in the Tamms area alone.

In 1982 the people of Tamms purchased the depot from the G M & O and obtained a 99 year lease on the adjoining property from the C & E I. They wanted to do something to preserve the little depot that had done so much to help their town thrive in its formative years. They did everything possible to retain a tangible resource of their early history. The town could never have continued to grow without the railroad and the depot it served.

When the people of Tamms began the renovation of the depot the exterior was in much better shape than the interior. Very few outside boards had to be replaced. Surprisingly, almost 97% of the exterior walls, the red tile roof and its decorative outside roof supports (it has a hipped roof), as well as the two baggage doors are original.

The other historic town buildings are all gone now, the majority of railroad tracks have been removed, the round house is deserted. Only memories and the sturdy little depot, alive once again at 87 years of age, stand as a reminder of a fascinating historical past. It is the last tangible resource and tourist attraction, beautifully preserved, left in Tamms from a bygone era at the turn of the century.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Building Record of Depot - 1899
Letter from David Wagner
Bill of Sale
Lease

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 2 acres

Quadrangle name Tamms, Illinois

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	16	2	9	18	6	16	10	4	11	2	13	2	10	10
Zone	Easting			Northing										

B

Zone	Easting			Northing										

C

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D

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Beginning at the point of intersection of the Northerly boundary line of Russell Avenue with the Westerly boundary line of Front Street in the original town of Tamms, Illinois, thence North from said point of beginning along said Westerly boundary line of said Front Street a distance (See continuation sheet #3.)

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

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Charlene Meier, Historical Coordinator

organization Southern Five Planning Commission date August 4, 1986

street & number P. O. Box 698 - 111 N. 5th telephone (618) 658-8364

city or town Vienna state Illinois

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 Director date 8-22-86

For NPS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

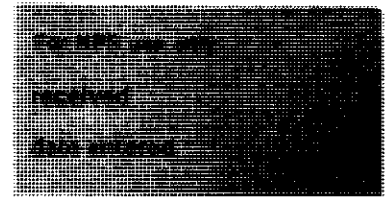
Chief of Registration

date

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(Verbal Boundary - Cont'd)		10	3

of 500 feet to the point of Intersection with the Southerly boundary line of West Street, thence West along the Southerly boundary line of West Street, and beyond, a distance of 194 feet to a point, which is 10 feet east of the center line of the existing Cairo Terminal Railroad track, thence in a Southerly direction on a line 10 feet East and parallel to the Center line of said railroad track, approximately 500 feet to the Intersection of said line with the Northerly boundary line of Russell Avenue; thence East along the northerly boundary line of Russell Avenue 194 feet to the point of beginning, all being situated in the Village of Tamms, County of Alexander, and State of Illinois.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

P.O. BOX 37127

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20013-7127

IN REPLY REFER TO:

NOV 14 1986

The Director of the National Park Service is pleased to inform you that the following properties have been entered in the National Register of Historic Places beginning November 2, 1986 and ending November 8, 1986. For further information call (202) 343-9552.

STATE, County, Vicinity, Property, Address, (Date Listed)

ALABAMA, Butler County, Greenville, East Commerce Street Historic District (Greenville MRA), Roughly bounded by Cedar, Chesnut, Commerce, and Hickory Sts. (11/04/86)

ALABAMA, Butler County, Greenville, Greenville City Hall (Greenville MRA), E. Commerce St. (11/04/86)

ALABAMA, Butler County, Greenville, Little--Stabler House (Greenville MRA), 710 Fort Dale St. (11/04/86)

ALABAMA, Butler County, Greenville, Post Office Historic District (Greenville MRA), W. Commerce and Fort Dale Sts. (11/04/86)

ALABAMA, Butler County, Greenville, Ward Nicholson Corner Store (Greenville MRA), 219 W. Parmer (11/04/86)

ARKANSAS, Monroe County, Brinkley, Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church, 409 S. Main St. (11/04/86)

DELAWARE, Kent County, Clayton, Clayton Railroad Station, Bassett St. (11/06/86)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, Washington, Buildings at 1644--1666 Park Road NW, 1644--1666 Park Rd., NW (11/06/86)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, Washington, Embassy Building No. 10, 3149 Sixteenth St., NW (11/06/86)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, Washington, McLachlen Building, 1001 G St. NW (11/06/86)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, Washington, Southern Aid Society--Dunbar Theater Building, 1901--1903 Seventh St., NW (11/06/86)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, Washington, Walsh Stable, 1511 (rear) Twenty-second St., NW (11/06/86)

FLORIDA, Manatee County, Palmetto, Palmetto Historic District, Roughly Bounded by Twenty-first Ave., Seventh St., Fifth Ave., and the Manatee River (11/06/86)

ILLINOIS, Alexander County, Tamms, Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad Depot, Front St. (11/06/86)

ILLINOIS, Champaign County, Urbana, University of Illinois Astronomical Observatory, 901 S. Mathews Ave. (11/06/86)

ILLINOIS, Cook County, Chicago, Legler, Henry E., Regional Branch of the Chicago Public Library, 115 S. Pulaski Rd. (11/06/86)

ILLINOIS, Cook County, Chicago, Uptown Broadway Building, 4703--4715 N. Broadway (11/06/86)

ILLINOIS, Montgomery County, Hillsboro, Blackman, George, H., 904 S. Main St. (11/06/86)

ILLINOIS, Williamson County, Marion, Goddard Chapel, Rose Hill Cemetery, Rt. 37 N. (11/06/86)

IOWA, Harrison County, Dunlap, Wheeler, John R., Jr., House, 407 S. Third St. (11/06/86)

IOWA, Ringold County, Maloy vicinity, Shay, Lee, Farmhouse, Off CR P-27 (11/06/86)

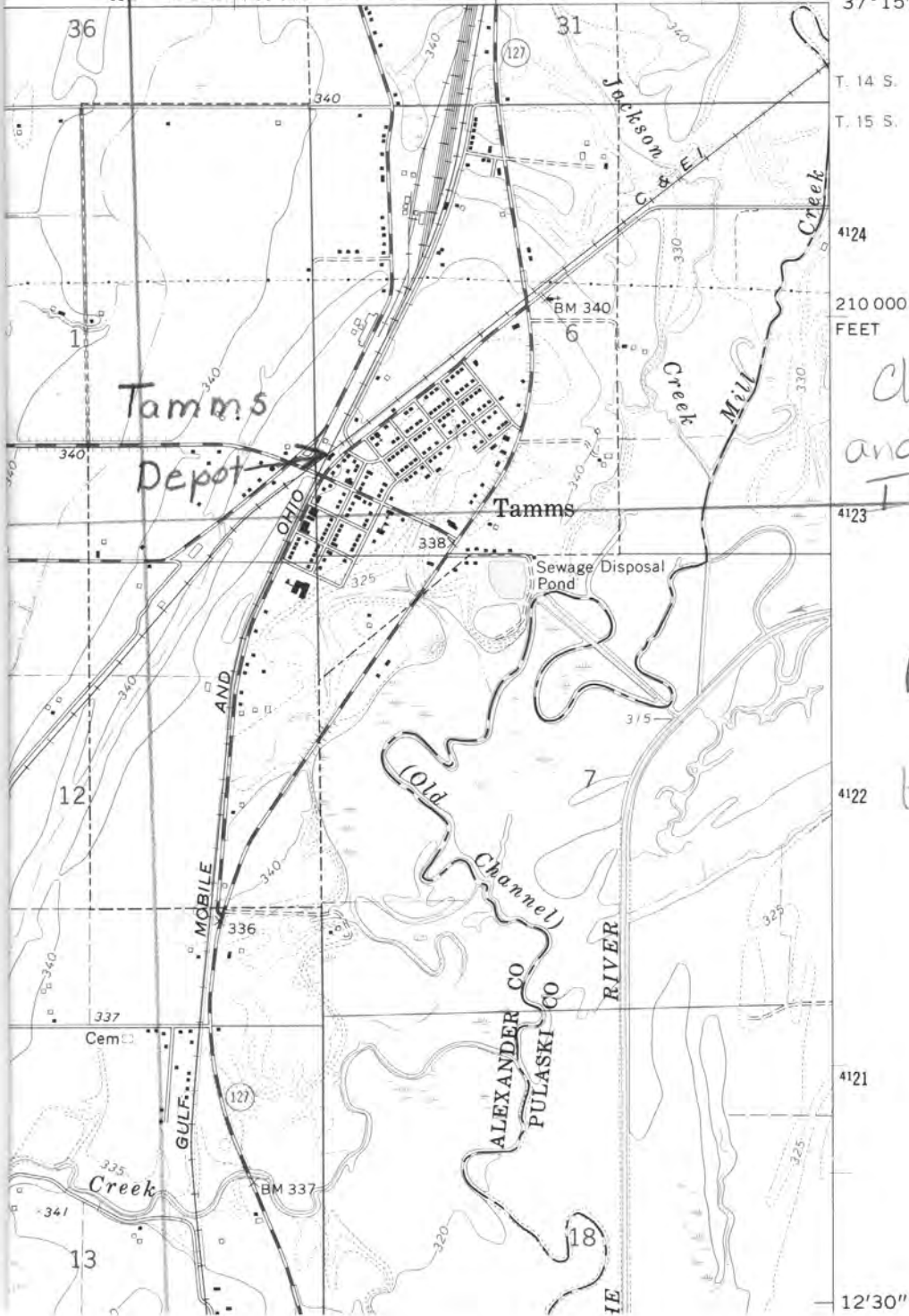
TAMMS QUADRANGLE
ILLINOIS
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

3158 (SW
(DONGOLA)

NE/4 THEBES 15' QUADRANGLE

298 R. 2 W. | 760 000 FEET R. 1 W. 300 89° 15' 37' 15'

JONESBORO 15 MI.
ELCO 4 MI.



Chicago
and Eastern
Illinois
Depot

N4123200

E298060

12'30"