

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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: Perry Rock Island Railroad Depot

Other names/site number: Perry Depot, Site #PE0007

Name of related multiple property listing:
Historic Railroad Depots of Arkansas, 1870-1940

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 8 German Road

City or town: Perry State: AR County: Perry

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

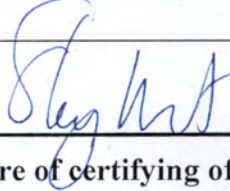
I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

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 ___ C ___ D

	<u>11-18-20</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>Arkansas Historic Preservation Program</u>	
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

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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:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION/rail-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

WORK IN PROGRESS

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER/Plain Traditional

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Walls: WOOD/Weatherboard

Foundation: OTHER/Concrete block

Roof: OTHER/Composition shingle

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

The Perry Rock Island Railroad Depot is located northeast of the intersection of Arkansas Highway 10 and Johnson Street, on the north side of the railroad tracks, in the small town of Perry. Built in 1918, the Perry Depot is a one-story, rectangular building measuring approximately 18 feet wide by 68 feet long with a bay window telegrapher's booth on its south side. The building is sheltered by a hipped roof with widely overhanging eaves supported by triangular knee braces and rests on a new concrete-block foundation. Two short, brick chimneys are centered on the ridge of the roof. The depot is clad in weatherboard and features a low wainscot of vertical and diagonal bead board. The north, south, and east elevations are fenestrated by a mix of two-over-two windows, paneled doors with divided transoms, and freight doors with multi-pane transoms. The west elevation, which is part of the freight room, was fenestrated by a two-pane slider window that has been boarded since at least 1980. Historically, the depot had segregated waiting rooms separated by the station agent's office - denoted by the projecting bay window on the track side - and the freight room was on the west end of the building. Because the Perry Depot faced imminent demolition, it was moved in February 2020 about 150 feet down the railroad tracks to the east of its original location. Although it has been

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moved, the Perry Depot retains its historic integrity and association with the railroad that formed the backbone of this small town. The Perry Depot is also significant as the last remaining wood-frame depot on the east-west main line of the former Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad through Arkansas.

Narrative Description

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Because the Perry Depot faced imminent demolition, it was moved in February 2020 about 150 feet down the railroad tracks to the east of its original location. Although it has been moved, the Perry Depot retains its historic integrity and association with the railroad that formed the backbone of this small town. The Perry Depot is also significant as the last remaining wood-frame depot on the east-west main line of the former Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad through Arkansas.

South / Front Elevation

The southern elevation of the Perry Depot faces the former Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad, now operated by the shortline Little Rock & Western Railway. This elevation can be divided into three bays. The eastern two-thirds of the building housed passenger waiting rooms separated by the station agent's office, which is denoted by a projecting bay window for the telegrapher's booth. The wall east of the bay window is fenestrated by a double-hung, two-over-two window and a single paneled door topped by a divided transom window. This door led into the "White" waiting room during the years of Jim Crow segregation. The bay window is fenestrated by three double-hung, two-over-two windows. The wall to the west of the bay window is fenestrated by a single paneled door topped by a divided transom window and a double-hung, two-over-two window. This door led into the "Colored" waiting room in the era of segregated rail transportation. The westernmost one-third of the building was used for the short-term storage of freight and Railway Express shipments. It is accessed on the southern elevation by a sliding freight door topped by a four-lite transom window.

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West / Side Elevation

The depot's west elevation is one bay wide and was historically the west end of the freight room. As such, the wall is fenestrated by a two-lite slider window with horizontal security bars on the interior. The window is centered on the elevation and positioned higher on the wall than the other windows on the depot as it was installed primarily for natural illumination. The security bars protected valuable freight items and Railway Express shipments stored in the freight room. The depot's freight room provided short-term storage for these items between the time goods were delivered by train and the time they were picked up by businesses and individuals. This window opening in the west elevation has been boarded since at least 1980. Upon closer inspection of the interior, the window is no longer present, but the original opening still exists - along with the horizontal security bars - behind the plywood and could be easily restored.

North / Rear Elevation

The northern elevation of the depot can be divided into three bays. The westernmost one-third of this elevation housed the freight room and is fenestrated by two sliding freight doors. The westernmost freight door was likely topped by a multi-pane transom window originally, but the opening is boarded and the window missing. The easternmost freight door is topped by a seven-lite transom window. Moving along the wall to the east, the next section of the depot housed the "Colored" waiting room in the Jim Crow era and is fenestrated by a double-hung, two-over-two window. The station agent's office was situated between the segregated waiting rooms and is fenestrated by a double-hung, two-over-two window. The easternmost portion of the elevation housed the "White" waiting room during the years of segregated transportation facilities. This room is fenestrated by a pair of double-hung, two-over-two windows.

In the 1980s, when the Perry Depot was in its original location just 150 feet down the tracks to the west, the Little Rock & Western Railway constructed a metal locomotive servicing facility on the north side of the depot. When this was built, the depot's overhanging eave and knee braces on the north side were cut off so the servicing facility could sit flush against the depot's north wall. After the depot was relocated to its present site in February 2020, emergency repairs were made to the building's roof decking and eaves, which included the reconstruction of the northern eave. The triangular knee braces have not yet been rebuilt on the northern elevation.

East / Side Elevation

The depot's east elevation is one bay wide and was historically the east end of the "White" waiting room. The east wall is fenestrated by a double-hung, two-over-two window. The window opening is situated toward the front, or south, side of the depot.

Integrity

Preserve Arkansas, the statewide nonprofit advocate for historic preservation, was alerted in early 2017 that the Little Rock & Western Railway planned to demolish the Perry Depot and

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replace it with a new building and so began a multi-year, cooperative effort to save the Perry Depot. The Little Rock & Western Railway, which operates a 79-mile stretch of the former Rock Island line west of Little Rock, constructed a locomotive servicing facility immediately north of the Perry Depot in the early 1980s. A separate office building was constructed nearby. Since then, the historic depot was used only for storage and suffered from deferred maintenance. By 2017, the Little Rock & Western wanted additional storage space for equipment, and the most ideal place to put it was right next to their locomotive servicing facility. The only way to save the depot was to move it, and thankfully, the railroad was willing to wait for the depot to be relocated. The depot's relocation was completed in spring 2020 and a new roof installed in August 2020.

Throughout the entire process of relocating the depot, the project team was mindful of keeping the depot near the railroad tracks to retain its historic integrity of setting, feeling, and association with the rail line that gave birth to the town of Perry, Arkansas. The depot's interior spaces remain intact with very minimal – and reversible – alterations like the installation of paneling over the original bead board in the station agent's office. Of particular interest are the handwritten names and seniority dates of Rock Island employees on the ceiling and walls of the depot's freight room.

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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.)

- 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.
- 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.
- D. 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

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance

1918-1967

Significant Dates

1918

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Rock Island Railroad, Builder

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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.)

Located northeast of the intersection of Arkansas Highway 10 and Johnson Street, on the north side of the railroad tracks at Perry, the Perry Rock Island Railroad Depot is being nominated for listing on the National Register of Historic Places with **local significance** under **Criterion A** for its association with rail transportation in Perry County. Built in 1918 by the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad, the Perry Depot is the last remaining wood-frame depot on the Rock Island's east-west main line through Arkansas, and it is one of the last wood-frame Rock Island depots in the state. The Perry Depot served its original purpose on the Rock Island line from the time of its construction in 1918 until 1980, when the Rock Island ceased operations. The period of significance covers the dates from the time that the Depot opened in 1918 until passenger service stopped in 1967. Since then, the shortline Little Rock & Western Railway has operated a 79-mile stretch of former Rock Island track between Little Rock and Danville to provide rail service to industries along the line. Although the Perry Depot was used for storage from the early 1980s until 2018, it was never abandoned. The Perry Depot is being nominated with **Criteria Consideration B** because it was moved 150 feet from its original location in order to save it from demolition. Although it has been moved, the Perry Depot is situated along the same railroad tracks and retains its historic integrity of setting, feeling, and association with rail transportation in Perry County. The depot is now owned by the Town of Perry and will be rehabilitated to serve as a community building and museum. This property is also being nominated under the Multiple Property Listing, "Historic Railroad Depots of Arkansas, 1870-1940."

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

HISTORY OF THE PROPERTY

Perry County was created on December 18, 1840, by an Act of the Arkansas Legislature from part of Conway County. The new county was named in honor of Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry, an American Navy captain who defeated the British at the Battle of Lake Erie during the War of 1812. Commodore Perry had no known connections to Arkansas.¹ Located in central Arkansas, Perry County is bordered on the east by the Arkansas River. The Fourche La Pave River bisects the county, running east and west, providing fertile bottomland for crop growth and an avenue for the transportation of people and goods in the county's early years. The southern part of the county is mountainous and designated as part of the Ouachita National Forest.²

Located in central Perry County, Perryville became the county seat in 1841 because of its location near the Fourche La Pave River. A 16-foot square log building was constructed to serve

¹ Perry County Historical and Genealogical Society, *Perry County, Arkansas: Its Land and People*. Conway: Arkansas Research, Inc., 2020, p. 8, 42.

² *Perry County, Arkansas: Its Land and People*, 26-27; Mike Keckhaver, "Perry County Map." *CALS Encyclopedia of Arkansas*. Found at: <https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/media/map-of-perry-county-6778/>.

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as the first courthouse at Perryville. Platted before 1850, "Old Perryville" was located near the Fourche La Fave River because the river was the primary means of transporting people and goods. But after the Civil War, a new courthouse was built about three-quarters of a mile north of the river, and the population gradually moved in that direction to "New Perryville," which is the present town site. Perryville incorporated in 1878. Although Perryville was bypassed by the railroad at the turn of the twentieth century, the town's location along Arkansas Highway 10 and its status as the county seat helped it to remain the commercial center of Perry County.³

Because of its mountainous terrain, Perry County was never a major cotton-producing county, but it did produce some. In the early twentieth century, the average Perry County farm "was about 80 acres with 30 acres planted in cotton, 15 acres in corn, 15 acres for hay, and the remainder left in timber."⁴ Farmers also grew a variety of livestock. Perry County experienced a significant period of growth from about 1900 to 1920 because of the timber industry. At the turn of the twentieth century, 60 percent of the county was covered in virgin timber, and with the arrival of railroad transportation, timber companies purchased land and built lumber mills to process the timber. The Fourche River Lumber Company at Bigelow, completed in 1907, quickly became the largest employer in Perry County with 300 to 400 employees. The Fort Smith Lumber Company owned thousands of acres in western Perry County and operated three mills near Casa and one at Adona that each processed 20,000 board feet of lumber per day. By 1920, most of the accessible timber had been exhausted, forcing the closure of the mills.⁵

In 1898, the Choctaw, Oklahoma & Gulf Railroad extended its line to the west of Little Rock through Perry County. Because the rail line was built to avoid the mountains in the southern part of the county and the seasonal flooding of the Fourche La Fave River Valley, it bypassed the county seat of Perryville. The railroad ran along the southern bank of the Arkansas River from Little Rock until it crossed the Fourche La Fave River at Fourche in Perry County. It continued to the northwest through the present-day communities of Bigelow, Houston, and Perry before taking a westward course along the current path of Arkansas Highway 10 toward Yell County.⁶

Prior to the construction of the railroad, the area immediately north of Perry Mountain was sparsely settled due to the difficulty in reaching the county seat via a steep mountain trail and the presence of a low-lying swampy area known as Cypress Lake nearby. The railroad changed everything. A temporary depot was set up at "North Perryville," just three miles north of the county seat, and quickly attracted businessmen and other professionals.⁷ When a post office was

³ *Perry County, Arkansas: Its Land and People*, 30, 35-44; Lynda Suffridge, "Perryville (Perry County)." *CALS Encyclopedia of Arkansas*. Found at: <https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/perryville-949/>; Rachel Silva, "Walks through History: Perryville Commercial Historic District," 9 April 2016. Found at: <https://www.arkansaspreservation.com/Learn-More/walks-through-history-archive>.

⁴ *Perry County, Arkansas: Its Land and People*, 43.

⁵ *Perry County, Arkansas: Its Land and People*, 35-37; Lynda Suffridge, "Perry County." *CALS Encyclopedia of Arkansas*. Found at: <https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/perry-county-796/>.

⁶ Van Zbinden, "Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway." *CALS Encyclopedia of Arkansas*. Found at: <https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/chicago-rock-island-and-pacific-railway-5101/>; Steven Teske, "Perry (Perry County)." *CALS Encyclopedia of Arkansas*. Found at: <https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/perry-perry-county-7225/>.

⁷ *Perry County, Arkansas: Its Land and People*, 167.

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established in 1899, the name had been shortened to Perry.⁸ In 1901, a “permanent” frame depot was built at Perry, measuring 18 feet by 68 feet, along with a large gravel platform, mail crane, outhouse, coal house, cotton platform, and single-pen stockyard.⁹ The 1900 Census recorded 382 residents at Perry.¹⁰ The Town of Perry was incorporated on February 20, 1914.¹¹

According to the 1914 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Perry, the town had a population of 855. The town boasted a public school, Methodist Church, restaurant, the Lakeside Hotel, six general merchandise stores, bank, post office, two drug stores, telephone exchange, barber shop, confectionery, livery, and a large cotton warehouse.¹² About this time, Perry’s streets were laid out by the Townsite Company, with east-west streets numbered as avenues running parallel to the railroad tracks and going in numerical order from north to south. The north-south streets were named after shareholders in the Townsite Company – Perry, Johnson, Adele, Colvin, High, Davis, and Reynolds.¹³ A two-story, red brick school was constructed in 1917 at the cost of \$12,000 and accommodated all grades at Perry until 1949, when the Perry School District consolidated with Casa, forming the Perry-Casa District. The Perry Elementary School remained open until 1978. The Perry-Casa District operated until the early 2000s and then joined the Two Rivers School District. Sadly, the two-story school at Perry was demolished, but the stone masonry gymnasium, built for the high school in the 1930s by the Works Progress Administration, remains standing and in use.¹⁴

Although the Arkansas Department of Transportation improved the roads through Perry in the 1920s, “Jitney drivers” transporting train passengers from the depot at Perry faced a daunting journey over Perry Mountain to the county seat of Perryville. In 1938, the road from Perry to Morrilton, which routinely flooded a few hundred yards north of the railroad tracks at Perry, was elevated, straightened, and black topped. In December 1938, the Arkansas Highway Commission approved the paving of the three-mile stretch of Highway 9 and 10 between Perry and Perryville. Work commenced in January 1939 and involved grading, curve elimination, and a new reinforced concrete bridge over Woods Branch. The project was completed in the summer of 1939, providing the first all-weather road from Perryville to the railroad at Perry and beyond to Morrilton, greatly enhancing commerce in Perry County.¹⁵

The population of Perry in 2010 was 272, about half the size of the town in 1920. The exodus of major timber companies, coupled with the Great Depression, delivered a blow to the town’s economy. Reforestation efforts have allowed the timber industry to thrive again in the modern era. With nearly 300,000 acres of Perry County covered in timber, the county’s major landowners in 2020 are timber companies and the U.S. Forest Service. The Potlatch Deltic

⁸ Teske, “Perry (Perry County).” *CALS Encyclopedia of Arkansas*.

⁹ Interstate Commerce Commission Valuation Docket #152 (Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railway), final engineering report, Valuation Section ARK-5 (Pulaski to Booneville), May 1916, sheet no. 1.

¹⁰ *Perry County, Arkansas: Its Land and People*, 167.

¹¹ Teske, “Perry (Perry County).” *CALS Encyclopedia of Arkansas*.

¹² Sanborn Map Company, “Perry, Arkansas.” April 1914, sheet no. 1.

¹³ *Perry County, Arkansas: Its Land and People*, 168.

¹⁴ *Perry County, Arkansas: Its Land and People*, 169; Teske, “Perry (Perry County).” *CALS Encyclopedia of Arkansas*.

¹⁵ *Perry County, Arkansas: Its Land and People*, 63-64.

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sawmill at Ola (Yell County) and Green Bay Packaging – Arkansas Kraft Division, a pulp and containerboard mill, at Oppelo (Conway County) are large employers. Today, Perry is a quiet town at the intersection of Arkansas Highways 9 and 10. The Little Rock & Western Railway continues to operate through Perry and maintains an office there.¹⁶

In 1902, the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad Company acquired the Choctaw, Oklahoma & Gulf Railroad in the Rock Island's bid to gain access to the Pacific Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico. This included the line built through Perry in 1898 by the Choctaw, Oklahoma & Gulf. By 1930, the Rock Island had purchased enough railroad lines to form a 700-mile network throughout Arkansas. The line serviced the Mississippi River Delta, Arkansas Grand Prairie, south Arkansas, central Arkansas, and the western part of the state, transporting agricultural products, oil, lumber products, and coal. Perry was on the Rock Island's Sunbelt Line, which ran from Memphis through Little Rock and into Oklahoma, eventually reaching Amarillo, Texas. From there, passengers could connect to another railroad and travel all the way to Los Angeles.¹⁷

The first "permanent" depot at Perry was built in 1901 by the Choctaw line and was a one-story, wood-frame building with a wood shingle roof. The 1901 depot measured 18 feet by 68 feet and rested on a "pile head foundation," or wooden piers. The depot was adjacent to a 4,800 square-foot gravel platform, mail crane, 5 x 10-foot outhouse, and 8 x 14-foot coal house. A cotton platform measuring 3,900 square-feet and a one-pen stockyard were located just down the tracks to the east.¹⁸

The present depot at Perry was constructed by the Rock Island Line in 1918 to replace the earlier structure. The one-story, frame depot measured 18 feet by 68 feet and had a widely overhanging eave supported by triangular knee braces. The roof was originally covered in pressed tin shingles. The 1918 depot housed segregated waiting rooms separated by the station agent's office as well as a freight room. It played an important role in the lives of Perry County residents.¹⁹ As Arkansas railroad historian Bill Pollard said,

This building is so much more than just a weathered old depot. Consider what a critical role this building played in years past - medicine, merchandise, and a variety of items not available locally were ordered by catalog and shipped in by Railway Express, yesteryear's version of United Parcel Service. The Western Union wire brought all kinds of news, good and bad, from baseball scores to declarations of war.

¹⁶ Suffridge, "Perry County." *CALS Encyclopedia of Arkansas*; Teske, "Perry (Perry County)." *CALS Encyclopedia of Arkansas*.

¹⁷ Zbinden, "Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway." *CALS Encyclopedia of Arkansas*; Michael Hibblen, "Plan Hopefully Coming Together, Fundraising Begins to Save Rock Island Depot." Hibblen Radio Blog, 2 June 2018. Found at: <http://hibblenradio.com/railroads/rock-island-in-arkansas/plan-coming-together-to-save-former-rock-island-depot-at-perry-arkansas/>.

¹⁸ ICC Valuation Docket #152, May 1916; Sanborn Map Company, "Perry, Arkansas." April 1914.

¹⁹ Bill Pollard, notes compiled from *Rock Island Lines, Insurance Property Record, Southern Division, 1961-1970*. Original document in the possession of John Baskin Harper, Omaha, NE; Sanborn Map Company, "Perry, Arkansas." March 1924, sheet no. 1.

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Western Union telegrams also brought news of a more personal nature, sometimes good news such as the birth of a child, but often bad news, such as a War Department notice that a soldier had been lost in combat. How many tearful farewells took place in that depot, and how many joyful reunions? Even the post office relied heavily on the railroad, and every passenger train, whether or not they stopped at Perry, would exchange mail. For the trains that didn't stop, a pouch of outbound mail was hung on a mail crane near the depot. A postal clerk in the railway post office car would snag the pouch as the train passed by at speed, while another clerk tossed out a pouch of mail destined for the Perry post office. People mailed letters and knew when to check their post office boxes based on train schedules. All mail sorted aboard the RPO received a distinctive postmark, and overnight letter delivery from Perry was the norm for a several state area. Watching all this activity was an enjoyable pastime, as well as giving people a reliable connection to the rest of the world. The Perry depot was a social and communication center of the town for many years.²⁰

The Perry Depot's significance in the everyday lives of county residents was somewhat diminished after 1967, when the Rock Island lost the federal government contract to carry mail and subsequently stopped passenger service the same year. However, the Rock Island continued to staff the Perry Depot for freight duties until 1980, when the bankrupt Rock Island ceased operations. After the closure of the Rock Island, former Rock Island employees formed the shortline Little Rock & Western Railway to service clients between Little Rock and Danville, Arkansas. The Little Rock & Western continues to operate a 79-mile stretch of the former Rock Island line west of Little Rock and primarily transports wood and paper products, grain, limestone slurry, cornstarch, salt, and pulp mill liquid today.²¹

In the early 1980s, the Little Rock & Western constructed a locomotive servicing facility immediately north of the Perry Depot, cutting off the depot's north eave to allow the new building to sit flush against the depot's north elevation. A separate office building was constructed nearby. Since then, the historic depot was used only for storage and suffered from deferred maintenance.²² By 2017, the Little Rock & Western wanted additional storage space for equipment, and the most ideal place to put it was right next to their locomotive servicing facility.

²⁰ Michael Hibblen, "Fundraising Progresses in Bid to Save Former Rock Island Depot, New Concern Raised." Hibblen Radio Blog, 1 July 2018. Found at: <http://hibblenradio.com/railroads/rock-island-in-arkansas/plan-coming-together-to-save-former-rock-island-depot-at-perry-arkansas/>.

²¹ Hibblen, "Plan Hopefully Coming Together." Hibblen Radio Blog; Teske, "Perry (Perry County)." *CALS Encyclopedia of Arkansas*.

²² Michael Hibblen, "Effort to Save Former Rock Island Depot in Perry, Arkansas from Demolition." Hibblen Radio Blog, 2 September 2017. Found at: <http://hibblenradio.com/railroads/rock-island-in-arkansas/effort-to-save-former-rock-island-depot-in-perry-arkansas-from-demolition/>.

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The only way to save the depot was to move it, and thankfully, the railroad was willing to wait for the depot to be relocated.

The Perry County Historical and Genealogical Society led the campaign to relocate the depot, and with the help of railroad historian Michael Hibblen, a fundraising effort was launched to cover the cost of moving the depot to a nearby site. The Town of Perry donated land on the north side of the railroad tracks about 150 feet from the depot's original location and agreed to take ownership of the depot. After much negotiation with the railroad, in September 2018, the depot was moved to a temporary location, where it would remain until a new foundation was built at its new site. In May 2019, the Town of Perry was awarded nearly \$10,000 in grant funds from the Arkansas Division of Rural Services to pay for floor joist repair and a new foundation for the depot. As part of the required grant match, Perry County donated labor and materials to raise the elevation of the new site above the flood plain. This turned out to be a very important detail, as the area where the depot now sits was inundated with flood waters during the historic Arkansas River flooding of summer 2019.

By February 2020, the depot's new site had been elevated with fill material and the new foundation partially constructed and ready for the depot's placement. The second leg of the depot's relocation was completed by the end of that month. With almost \$2,000 in reallocated grant funds and additional contributions from the Perry County Historical and Genealogical Society, emergency roof repairs were made to protect the depot's interior from water damage. Roof decking was repaired, and the missing north eave that had been removed in the early 1980s to allow the locomotive servicing facility to sit flush against the depot's north elevation was reconstructed. In-kind contributions from a local roofing company, along with a generous donation from the historical society, paid for a new composition shingle roof on the depot, completed in August 2020.

According to Arkansas railroad historians Bill Pollard and Michael Hibblen, the Perry Depot is the last remaining wood-frame depot on the Rock Island's former east-west main line through Arkansas. Many wood-frame depots once existed on the Rock Island line through the state but were either replaced with brick or stucco buildings or demolished after the cessation of passenger service and ultimately, the closure of the railroad line. Furthermore, the Perry Depot is one of only two known wood-frame Rock Island depots in the state, with the other being the Harrell (Calhoun County) Depot that was relocated to Camden (Ouachita County) by the East Camden & Highlands Railroad after the Rock Island ceased operations.²³

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPERTY

More than just an old building, the Perry Depot is significant to the people of Perry and Perry County because it functioned as an essential community gathering place during the heyday of rail transportation, as people journeyed to the depot to pick up merchandise, get the latest news, and bid farewell to loved ones. Because of its significance to the history of Perry, and because it is

²³ Bill Pollard, Michael Hibblen, and Rachel Patton. E-mail conversation. 25 August 2020; Kathy Boyette and Rachel Patton. E-mail conversation. 4 September 2020.

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one of the last wood-frame Rock Island depots in Arkansas and the last one on the east-west main line, the Perry Rock Island Railroad Depot is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **local significance** under **Criterion A**. The Perry Depot is being nominated with **Criteria Consideration B** because it was moved 150 feet from its original location in order to save it from demolition. Although it has been moved, the Perry Depot is situated along the same railroad tracks and retains its historic integrity of setting, feeling, and association with rail transportation in Perry County. The depot is now owned by the Town of Perry and will be rehabilitated to serve as a community building and museum. This property is also being nominated under the Multiple Property Listing, "Historic Railroad Depots of Arkansas, 1870-1940."

Perry Rock Island Railroad Depot
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9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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Hibblen, Michael. "Effort to Save Former Rock Island Depot in Perry, Arkansas from Demolition." Hibblen Radio Blog, 2 September 2017. Found at: <http://hibblenradio.com/railroads/rock-island-in-arkansas/effort-to-save-former-rock-island-depot-in-perry-arkansas-from-demolition/>.

Hibblen, Michael. "Fundraising Progresses in Bid to Save Former Rock Island Depot, New Concern Raised." Hibblen Radio Blog, 1 July 2018. Found at: <http://hibblenradio.com/railroads/rock-island-in-arkansas/plan-coming-together-to-save-former-rock-island-depot-at-perry-arkansas/>.

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Teske, Steven. "Perry (Perry County)." *CALS Encyclopedia of Arkansas*. Found at:
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Zbinden, Van. "Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway." *CALS Encyclopedia of Arkansas*.
Found at: <https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/chicago-rock-island-and-pacific-railway-5101/>.

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:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: Preserve Arkansas

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): PE0007

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property Less than one

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Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

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 NAD 1983

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 15 | Easting: 518781 | Northing: 3878516 |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

A parcel of land in the Northwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of Section 27, Township 5 North, Range 17 West, in the Town of Perry, Perry County, Arkansas, described as follows: Beginning at the intersection of the centerline of State Highway No. 9 and a line parallel with and 50 feet northerly of the centerline of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad Company's main track; thence westerly along said parallel line 400 feet; thence northerly at right angles 100 feet, more or less, to the northerly line of said Railroad Company's right-of-way as conveyed by the North Perryville Townsite Co. to the Choctaw, Oklahoma & Gulf Railroad Company in deed dated January 19, 1925 and recorded in Book 28, Page 37-38, in Perry County,

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Arkansas; thence easterly along said northerly right-of-way line 400 feet, more or less, to the centerline of said State Highway No. 9; thence southerly along the centerline of said State Highway No. 9, 100 feet, more or less, to the point of beginning. Subject to easement granted to the State of Arkansas dated September 17, 1938 for highway purposes.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The above-stated boundary description encompasses the Perry Rock Island Railroad Depot and its immediate surroundings.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Rachel Patton, Preserve Arkansas, edited by Ralph S. Wilcox, National Register & Survey Coordinator

organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

street & number: 1100 North Street

city or town: Little Rock state: AR zip code: 72201

e-mail: ralph.wilcox@arkansas.gov

telephone: (501) 324-9787

date: September 22, 2020

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.

Perry Rock Island Railroad Depot
Name of Property

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Photo Log

Name of Property: Perry Rock Island Railroad Depot

City or Vicinity: Perry

County: Perry County

State: Arkansas

Photographer: Mason Toms

Date Photographed: August 25, 2020

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

- 1 of 12. South façade of the Depot, looking north.
- 2 of 12. South and east façades of the Depot, looking northwest.
- 3 of 12. East façade of the Depot, looking west.
- 4 of 12. North and east façades of the Depot, looking southwest.
- 5 of 12. North façade of the Depot, looking south.
- 6 of 12. North and west façades of the Depot, looking southeast.
- 7 of 12. West façade of the Depot, looking east.
- 8 of 12. South and west façades of the Depot, looking northeast.
- 9 of 12. View of the freight room, looking west.
- 10 of 12. View of the Station Agent's Office, looking south.
- 11 of 12. View of the Telegrapher's Bay with the controls for the semaphore train order signals, looking southeast.
- 12 of 12. View of the "White" Waiting Room, looking southeast.

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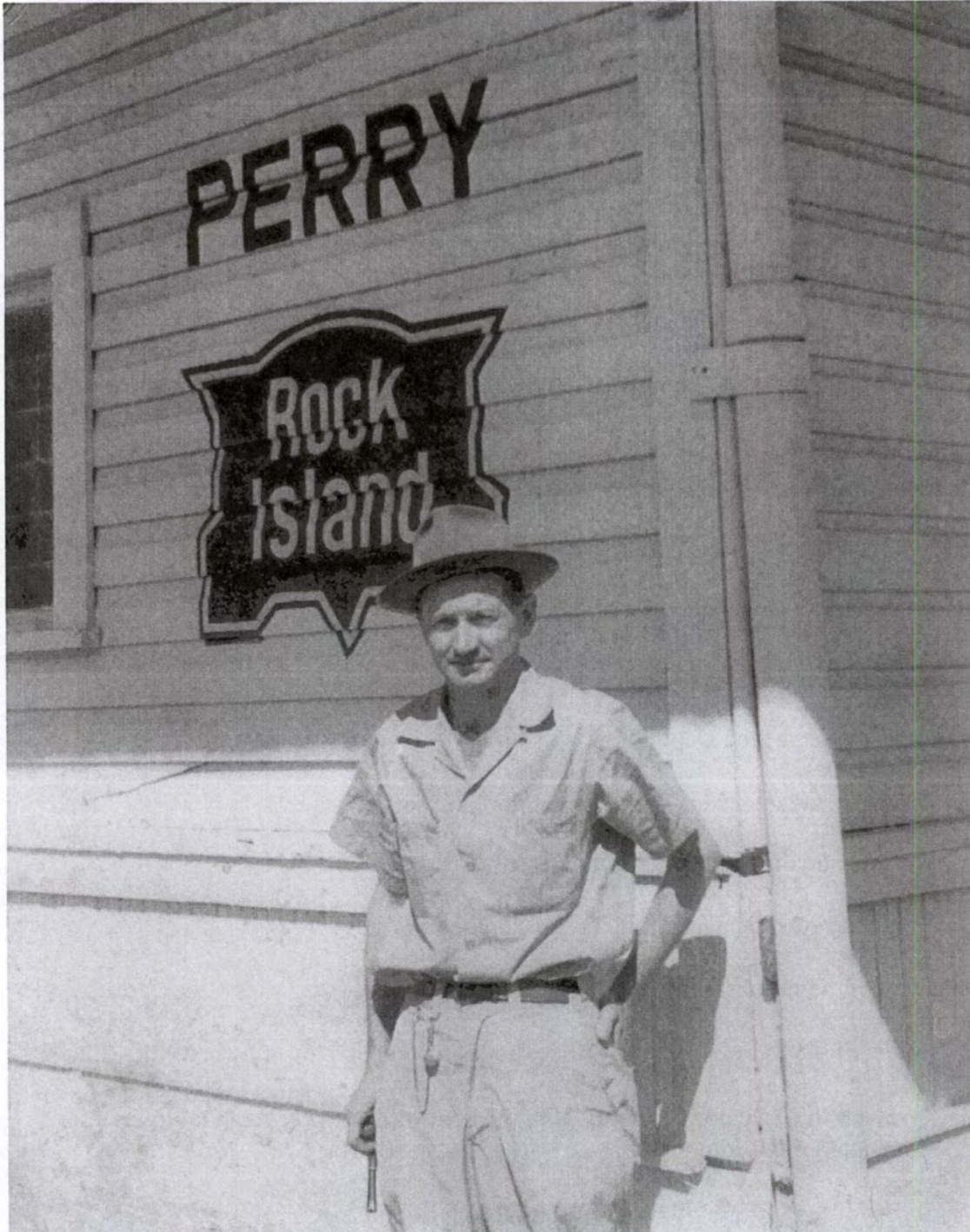


Figure 1: Longtime Perry Depot Agent Joe Majors with his pipe and pocket watch posing for a photo outside the depot probably in the 1950s. He worked here from about 1950 until the Rock Island shut down in 1980. Photo courtesy of his son Danny Majors.

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Figure 2: Perry Depot, looking north, February 1980.

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Figure 3: Perry Depot, looking northeast, May 1967.

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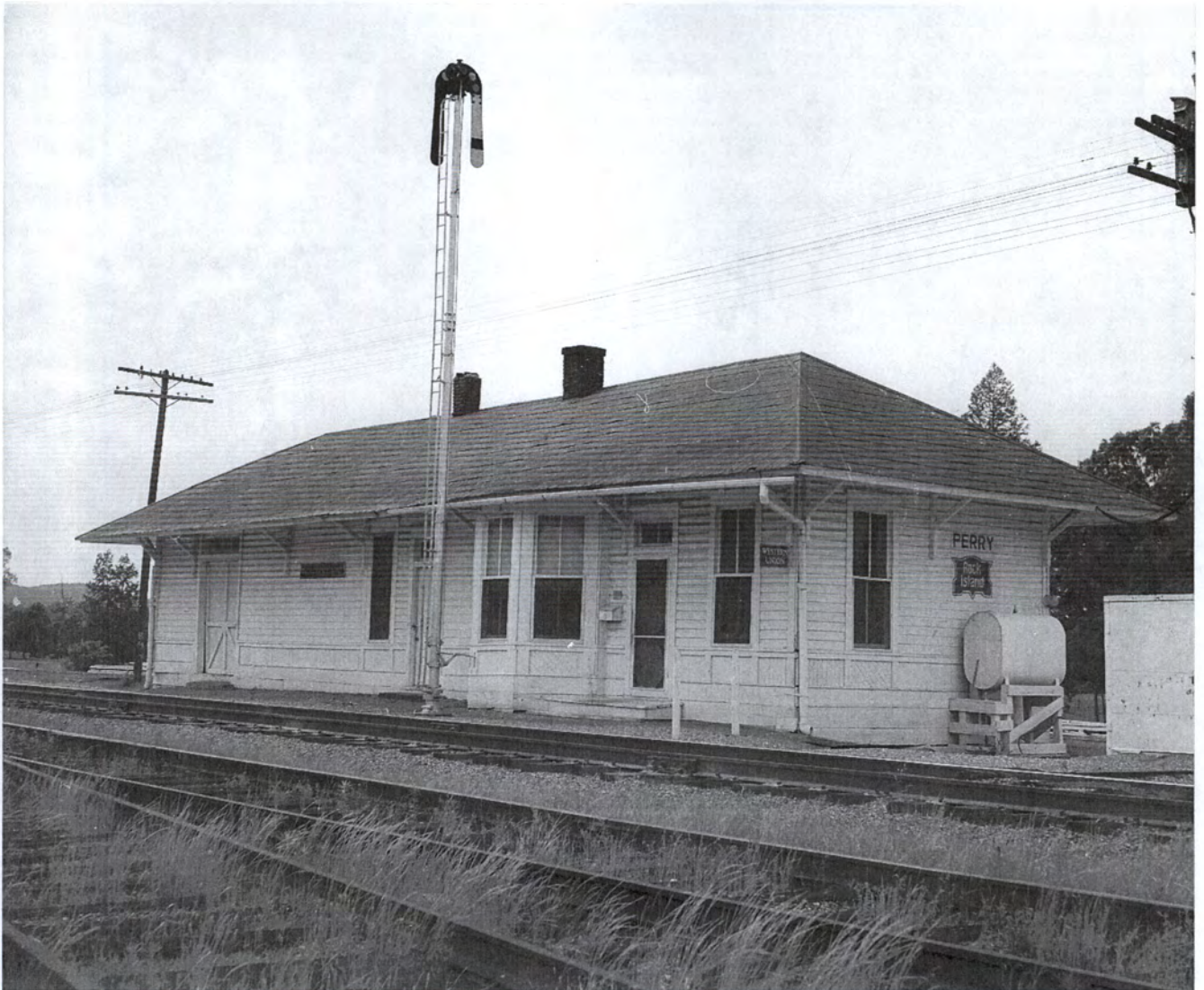


Figure 4: Perry Depot, looking northwest, May 1965.

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Figure 5: Perry Depot, looking west, 1960. A westbound passenger train approaches the Perry depot in 1960. This photo was taken from the cab of the RDC car by Rock Island company photographer Ed Wojtas.

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Figure 6: Perry Depot, looking east, March 25, 1976. A Rock Island freight blows up a cloud of dust as it passes the Perry depot on March 25, 1976. It would soon get a paint job with a clean white and a "The Rock" depot sign placed on each end. Photo by Bill Bailey.

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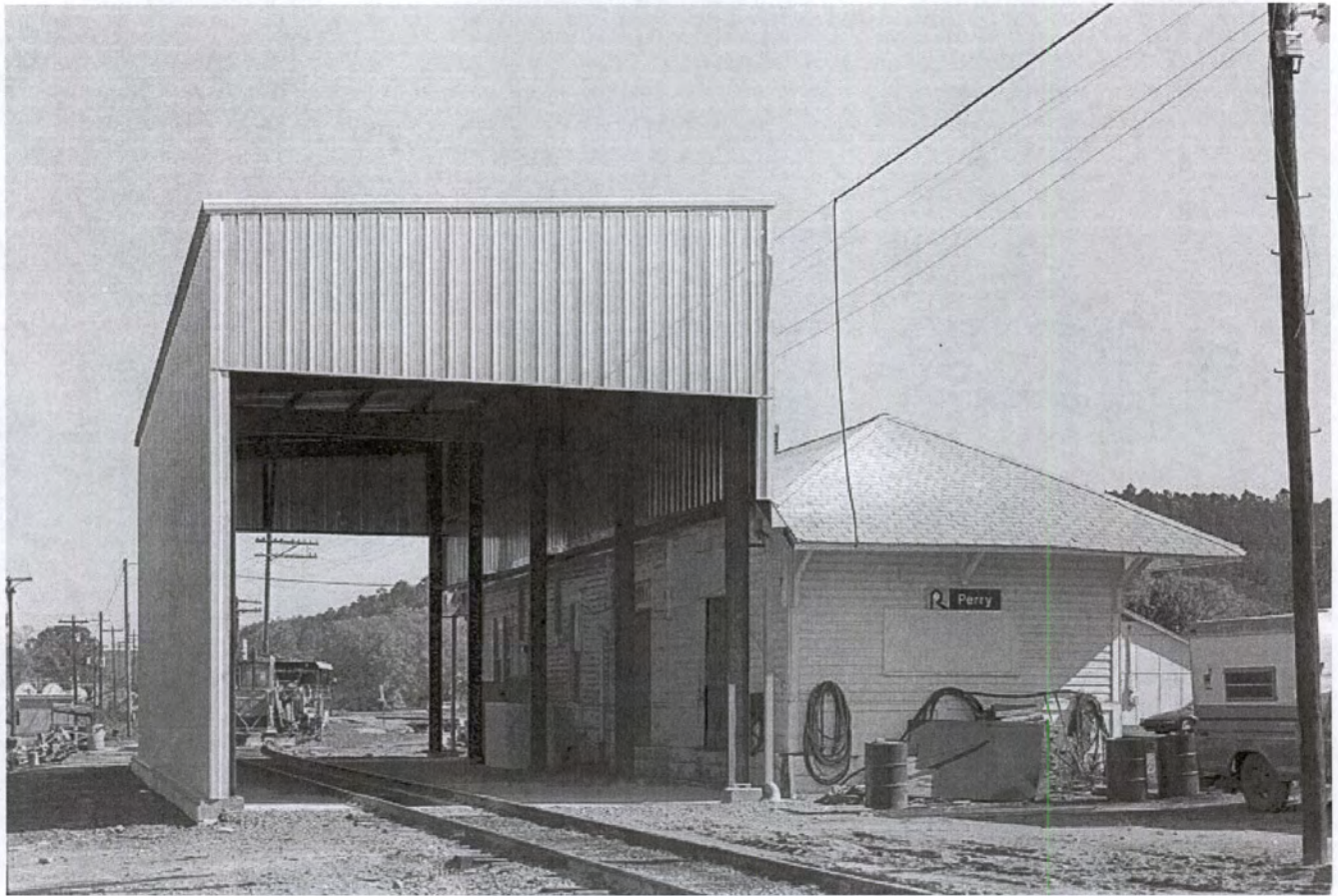
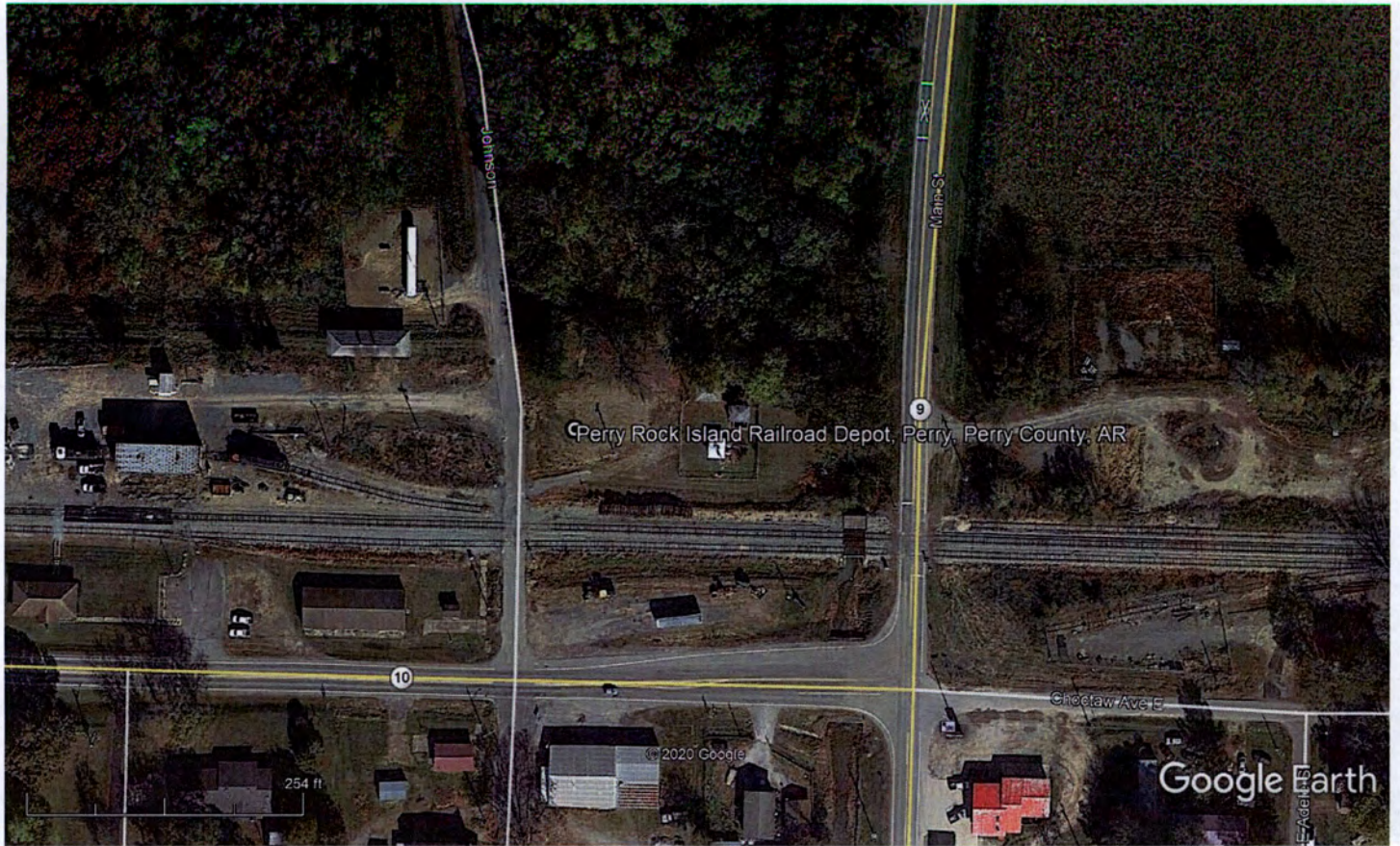


Figure 6: Perry Depot, looking southeast, November 3, 1984. The newly built locomotive servicing area behind the Perry depot on November 3, 1984.

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.



|-----254 feet-----|

Perry Rock Island Railroad Depot
Perry, Perry County, Arkansas

UTM: 15 518781E 3878516N

↑
North



|-----1759 feet-----|

Perry Rock Island Railroad Depot
Perry, Perry County, Arkansas

UTM: 15 518781E 3878516N

↑
North





















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