

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

Missouri Pacific Depot at Independence

AND/OR COMMON

Truman Train Station

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

600 South Grand

CITY, TOWN

Independence

— VICINITY OF

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

#4 - Hon. Ike Skelton

STATE

Missouri

CODE

29

COUNTY

Jackson

CODE

95

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY

— DISTRICT

☒ BUILDING(S)

— STRUCTURE

— SITE

— OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

— PUBLIC

☒ PRIVATE

— BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

— IN PROCESS

☒ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED

— UNOCCUPIED

— WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED

— YES: UNRESTRICTED

— NO

PRESENT USE

— AGRICULTURE

— MUSEUM

☒ COMMERCIAL

— PARK

— EDUCATIONAL

— PRIVATE RESIDENCE

— ENTERTAINMENT

— RELIGIOUS

— GOVERNMENT

— SCIENTIFIC

— INDUSTRIAL

☒ TRANSPORTATION

— MILITARY

— OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Missouri Pacific Railroad Company

STREET & NUMBER

210 North 13th Street

CITY, TOWN

St. Louis

— VICINITY OF

STATE

Missouri 63103

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Recorder of Deeds, Jackson County Courthouse Annex

STREET & NUMBER

308 West Kansas

CITY, TOWN

Independence

STATE

Missouri 64050

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

1. Independence Historical Survey

DATE

1975

— FEDERAL — STATE — COUNTY ☒ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Heritage Commission, City of Independence

CITY, TOWN

Independence

STATE

Missouri 64050

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MISSOURI PACIFIC DEPOT AT INDEPENDENCE

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ITEM NUMBER 6 PAGE 1

2. Missouri State Historical Survey  
1978  
Department of Natural Resources  
P.O. Box 176  
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

state

ITEM NUMBER 11 PAGE 1

2. Claire F. Blackwell, editor  
Department of Natural Resources  
P.O. Box 176  
Jefferson City

September 27, 1978  
314/751-4096  
Missouri 65102

# DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT  
☒ GOOD  
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED  
☐ RUINS  
☐ UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED  
☒ ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

---

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

The Missouri Pacific Depot at Independence is located southwest of Independence Square at 600 Grand Avenue, on the main line of the Missouri Pacific Railroad in Independence, Missouri. Oriented approximately to the south, the one-story, rectangular building is constructed of dark red brick punctuated with a limestone stringcourse at windowsill level. Its long, low lines are accentuated by a low, overhanging hip roof supported by triangular brackets. The style of the building is typical of Missouri Pacific Depots built in the Midwest between 1900 and 1920.<sup>1</sup>

## EXTERIOR

### Dimensions

The building measures approximately 118 feet in length (east-west), 32 feet in width (north-south), and 24 feet in height. The central, rectangular core is flanked on the east and west by smaller, rectangular wings. An open pavillion is incorporated in the west wing.

### Construction materials

The foundation is constructed of concrete with a cap of smooth-cut limestone just above grade. Exterior walls are constructed of dark red brick laid in common bond. A stringcourse of smooth-cut Bedford limestone forms a band of contrast at window-sill level. Dormer and chimney caps and corbels beneath the roof brackets are also of smooth-cut stone. The brackets and window and door trim are of wood painted white.

### Porches

Shelter is provided on all sides by virtue of the low roof's wide overhang. In addition, an open pavillion is located on the western end of the building.

### Chimneys

Two brick chimneys with cut-stone caps are contained within the fabric. The westernmost chimney was extended to its present height ca. the 1920's.

### Windows and Doors

Fenestration is regular and consists mainly of paired, double-hung sash windows with one-over-one lights and paired transoms above. The opening in the projecting southern end of the office (probably the original ticket window) differs in having a triple placement of similar windows.

Primary entranceways are centered on the north and south facades, originally providing access to either the main Missouri Pacific line on the south or the "Lexington Branch" on the north.<sup>2</sup> Baggage and express doors are concentrated on the eastern wing of the building.

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Roof

A hip roof covers the central core of the building, intersecting with slightly lower hip roofs which cover the east and west wings. The westernmost hip shelters an open pavillion, supported by two brick piers. The broad overhang of the roof is supported all around by triangular, wooden brackets. Originally capped with the Spanish-style red tiles characteristic of Missouri Pacific depots,<sup>3</sup> the roof is now covered with asbestos shingles. Stone-capped, brick ventilation dormers ornament the center of the north and south slopes.

INTERIOR

The interior of the depot has changed little since its construction ca. 1913. It consists of four main rooms: baggage room, express room, office and waiting room. Men's and women's restrooms occupy the area which was once solely the women's facility. The former men's restroom was converted into a coal storage area, with its exterior window bricked in to form a coal chute. During the 1960's a plywood partition was added in the waiting room for the purpose of expanding existing office space.<sup>4</sup>

Much of the original interior fabric remains, in varying states of repair. Most of the original woodwork remains; it is entirely covered with paint. The old red and black tile floor of the lobby remains, but has greatly deteriorated. It appears that the baggage and office areas have been little altered.

ALTERATIONS

The Missouri Pacific Depot at Independence has changed little since its original construction ca. 1913. The major alteration involved the removal of the Spanish-style, red tile roof. Other changes included the removal in 1971 of brick loading platforms which surrounded the building and the removal of original lamp posts.<sup>5</sup>

SITE

The depot is located in an area that is primarily industrial. It sits between the Missouri Pacific tracks and the former "Lexington Branch" of that line. Except for two frame section buildings to the northwest of the station, all associated buildings of the depot grounds have been razed. The section buildings are not included within the boundaries of the nominated property.

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CONDITION AND PRESENT USE

Retired as a passenger terminal in 1971,<sup>6</sup> the Missouri Pacific Depot at Independence presently serves only as a freight depot. It has recently been considered by Amtrak for revitalization as a "flagstop".<sup>7</sup> Local citizens have also expressed an interest in converting it into a museum. Though in need of refurbishing, the depot is basically in sound condition.

FOOTNOTES

1. M. Patricia Holmes, "Missouri Pacific Depot at Charleston" (National Register Inventory-Nomination Form, Office of Historic Preservation, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Jefferson City, Mo., 1972).
2. "Working on New Depot," The Independence Examiner, August 6, 1912.
3. Missouri Pacific Railroad Company, "Building Record: Independence Missouri Pacific Station, Independence, Missouri 1913-1971", St. Louis, Mo. The tile roof is clearly visible in a photograph published in: Independence Missouri Centennial 1827-1927 (Independence, Mo.: Independence Centennial Association, 1927).
4. "Building Record: Independence Missouri Pacific Station."
5. The tile roof was removed prior to 1940, as is evident in a 1940 photograph of the depot in the Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, Independence, Mo. A snapshot in the collection of the State Historical Society of Missouri, Columbia, Mo., shows the original brick loading platform and lamp posts.
6. Robert J. Pessek, "Independence Missouri Pacific Station Historic as Site of Harry Truman's 'Comings and Goings'," Jackson County Historical Society Journal 27 (November 1975), p. 7.
7. "Independence Officials Seek Amtrak Stop at Old Station," Kansas City Star, December 15, 1977.

# SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
00-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
00-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
00-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
00-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
00-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
00-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1912-1913 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Missouri Pacific Railroad Depot at Independence, Missouri, is typical of the small railroad depots built throughout the Midwest in the early years of the twentieth century, designed by the Missouri Pacific Railroad to project a cohesive company image.<sup>1</sup> A thriving transportation facility at the juncture of the Missouri Pacific and "Lexington Branch" lines, the Independence depot served the community for over fifty years as a passenger terminal. The most prominent individual associated with the depot was former President Harry S. Truman. Mr. Truman and his family made frequent use of the depot before, during and after his presidency. The strong association of Truman with the depot and the community led to its nickname, the Truman Train Station.

The existing Missouri Pacific Depot is the second station to occupy the site. Its predecessor had been in use for nearly fifty years, when it was finally retired and the present station built. Built ca. 1868, the original station was located directly east of the present station. Sometime after the construction of the present depot it was moved about 200 feet to the northwest and converted into a freight depot. It no longer exists.<sup>2</sup>

The new station, built ca. 1912-13, was the long-time dream of Independence Mayor Llewellyn Jones. Mayor Jones, whose term saw many public improvements in the Independence area, was able to secure a guarantee from the Missouri Pacific Railroad Company to build a new station in April of 1912, after four years of negotiations.<sup>3</sup>

During the period between 1900 and 1920, the Missouri Pacific Railroad Company replaced many of its earlier depots, constructed between 1860 and 1880, with new terminals. The new terminals, built throughout the Midwest, were designed in a uniform style in order to reflect a standard company image. The Missouri Pacific Depot at Independence was built to conform to this "image," incorporating such standard features as the low-slung hip roof capped with red tiles and simple brick construction highlighted only by stringcourse and other details in contrasting stone.<sup>4</sup>

Independence resident Harry S. Truman was a frequent passenger on the Missouri Pacific Railroad. President Truman made extensive use of the nation's railroads in his famous "Whistle Stop" campaign of 1948. Campaigning against Thomas E. Dewey of New York for the presidency of the United States, Truman covered the nation by rail, making 150 speaking engagements in approximately two months. Thousands of people gathered to meet Truman at the Independence Depot at the end of his "Whistle Stop" campaign.<sup>5</sup>

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From Independence, Truman made his famous pre-election radio address. Then, on November 3, 1948, he received notification of his election as President of the United States over Thomas E. Dewey in one of the biggest election upsets in the country's history. The following day, newly elected President Harry S. Truman boarded the train at the Missouri Pacific Depot at Independence for his triumphal return to Washington, D.C.<sup>6</sup>

Some persons able to recall their active roles in the President's comings and goings were interviewed by Mr. Robert Pesseck of the Kansas City Star in 1975. Harry Bergschneider, telegraph operator, recalled:

Truman--when he was President--as a rule would come in on his special car... ordinarily he would come in on number 15 (westbound) in the evening around 8:30. They would cut his car off there (at the Independence depot) and the next day a switcher would come out and take the private car into Union Station (in Kansas City).<sup>7</sup>

Another employee, Edward Bird, who worked at the depot in 1949-50, remembered Harry S. Truman as a family man, who would chat with the local citizens while waiting to pick up his daughter Margaret.

He'd loaf around the waiting room. He was a fellow who could be anything to anyone. He'd come up to the ticket window and shoot the bull when he was waiting on the train. He wasn't the kind of man that would turn his face from you.<sup>8</sup>

President Truman made an impressive return to his hometown of Independence, Missouri, upon leaving the presidency in 1953. Truman refers to his homecoming by train of January 1953 in his book Mr. Citizen.

I was completely unprepared for what was to happen when we arrived in Independence. I expected that there would probably be a reception of some kind, perhaps a hundred people or so. When we stepped off the train, the hundred had multiplied. There were people as far as you could see in every direction, shouting and waving. A band was playing the "Missouri Waltz," and everybody was yelling his head off.

I noticed a billboard beside the track. It read: "Independence - Home of President Truman." Someone had chalked in a big "Ex" before the word "President," and for some reason that seemed the only sensible down-to-earth thing in sight.<sup>9</sup>

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In addition to these more dramatic episodes, the station was used as a normal transport station by Mrs. Truman, the Trumans' daughter Margaret, and other members of the family, as well as the rest of the citizens of Independence, Missouri. Mrs. Truman was in the habit of accompanying her mother, Mrs. Madge Gates Wallace, home to Independence from Washington for summers.<sup>10</sup>

Harry S. Truman was the last President of the United States to make extensive use of the nation's rail system as a transportation option. His 1948 "Whistle Stop" campaign was undoubtedly the most extensive political use that particular mode of transportation has seen to date. It is safe to say that the 1948 campaign saw the last Presidential campaign by rail in the United States.

This is not to say that Truman used the railroads exclusively as a mode of transportation. Franklin Roosevelt had already begun to take advantage of air travel under the auspices of the Presidential aircraft nicknamed the "Sacred Cow." Truman made use of his Presidential plane the "Independence" in matters of national emergency or when time was of the essence, as exemplified by his trip back to Washington from Independence upon learning of the Chinese invasion of Korea. Such matters could not wait on the relatively slow movement of the train--in this case the President boarded the "Independence" at Kansas City Municipal Airport for the flight to Washington.<sup>11</sup>

But when crises were not in the offing, the Trumans preferred to travel by rail. The Presidential railroad car, the "Ferdinand Magellan," was used throughout the Truman Presidency. Truman had also used the nation's rail system to his political advantage in his 1944 campaign for Vice-President. The car "Henry Stanley" made political rounds with Truman in what might be called a "Prophetic warm-up" to the larger 1948 Presidential campaign.<sup>12</sup>

However, Truman's relationship with the railroads was not always a love affair. In 1933, as a junior Senator from Missouri, Truman lambasted the Missouri Pacific Railroad, taking exception with certain of their practices.<sup>13</sup> Truman had other confrontations with railroad unions and magnates after he became President. His well-known twenty-four hour ultimatum to the nation's railroads, mandating settlement of differences or consequent take-over by the federal government, is now nearly legendary.<sup>14</sup>

The Missouri Pacific Depot at Independence was retired as a passenger terminal in 1971. Used presently as a freight terminal, it has been recently considered by



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Amtrak for conversion into a flagstop for passenger service. The Missouri Pacific Depot at Independence represents a period of American history that is dramatic, colorful and not likely to be repeated. The station is important to the study and interpretation of the Truman era and is worthy of recognition and preservation.

The survey of Missouri's historic sites is based on the selection of sites as they relate to theme studies outlined in "Missouri's State Historic Preservation Plan." Therefore, the Missouri Pacific Depot at Independence is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as an example of the themes of "Architecture," "Political Affairs," and "Technology."

FOOTNOTES

1. M. Patricia Holmes, "Missouri Pacific Depot at Charleston" (National Register Inventory-Nomination Form, Office of Historic Preservation, Missouri Department of National Resources, Jefferson City, 1972).
2. "Working on New Depot," The Independence Examiner, August 6, 1912.
3. "New Depot Begins in July," The Independence Examiner, April 1, 1912.
4. Holmes, "Missouri Pacific Depot at Charleston."
5. The Independence Examiner, November 1, 1948; "Compilation of Whistle Stop Itinerary, September 6 to November 1, 1948", Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, Independence, Mo.
6. Margaret Truman, Harry S. Truman (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1973), pp. 39-42.
7. Robert J. Pessek, "Independence Missouri Pacific Station Historic as Site of Harry Truman's "Comings and Goings," Jackson County Historical Society Journal 27 (November, 1975), p. 6.
8. Ibid., pp. 6-7.
9. Harry S. Truman, Mr. Citizen: Harry S. Truman (New York: Bernard Geis Associates, 1953), pp. 23-24.

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ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 4

10. Alfred Stienberg, The Man from Missouri (New York: G.P. Putnam's Son's, 1962), p. 346.
11. Ibid., pp. 247, 376-77.
12. Ibid., pp. 223, 225, 323.
13. Merle Miller, Plain Speaking: An Oral Biography of Harry S. Truman (New York: Berkley Publishing Corporation, 1973), pp. 147-49.
14. Harry S. Truman, Memoirs, vol. 1: Year of Decisions (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1955), pp. 501-502; Margaret Truman, Harry S. Truman, pp. 306-307.

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Columbia, Missouri. State Historical Society of Missouri. Photograph files.
2. Holmes, M. Patricia. "Missouri Pacific Depot at Charleston." National Register Inventory-Nomination Form, Office of Historic Preservation, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Jefferson City, Mo., 1972.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.4 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME "Independence, Mo"

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 15 376380 4327170

B         

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C         

D         

E         

F         

G         

H         

### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

That portion of Sections 3 and 10, Township 49, Range 32 described as follows:  
Beginning at a point on the south right of way line of Pacific Street, said point  
being at the intersection of the south right of way line of Pacific Street and the

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

1. W. Patrick O'Brien, Administrator

June 1, 1978

ORGANIZATION

Heritage Commission

DATE

816/836-8300 ext. 287

STREET & NUMBER

103 North Main

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Independence

STATE

Missouri 64050

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE X

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

Fred A. Lohman 11/3/78

TITLE

Director, Department of Natural Resources and  
State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHEF OF REGISTRATION

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ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

3. The Independence Examiner. November 1-4, 1948.
4. \_\_\_\_\_. January 21-22, 1953.
5. Independence Missouri Centennial 1827-1927. Independence, Mo.: Independence Centennial Association, 1927.
6. Independence, Mo. Harry S. Truman Library and Museum. Harry S. Truman papers.
7. "Independence Officials Seek Amtrak Stop at Old Station," Kansas City Star, December 15, 1977.
8. Miller, Merle. Plain Speaking: An Oral Biography of Harry S. Truman. New York: Berkley Publishing Corporation, 1973.
9. Missouri Pacific Railroad Company. "Building Record: Independence Missouri Pacific Station, Independence, Missouri 1913-1971," St. Louis, Mo.
10. "New Depot Begins in July," The Independence Examiner, April 1, 1912.
11. O'Brien, W. Patrick and Proske, Davis. Notes of field inspection, 10-15 March 1978. Planning Department, City of Independence, Mo.
12. Pessek, Robert J. "Independence Missouri Pacific Station Historic as Site of Harry Truman's 'Comings and Goings,'" Jackson County Historical Society Journal 27 (November, 1975), pp. 6-7.
13. Stienberg, Alfred. The Man from Missouri: The Life and Times of Harry S. Truman. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1962.
14. Truman, Harry S. Memoirs. Vol. 1: Year of Decisions. New York: Doubleday and Company, 1955.
15. \_\_\_\_\_. Mr. Citizen: Harry S. Truman. New York: Bernard Geis Associates, 1953.
16. Truman, Margaret. Harry S. Truman. New York: William Morrow & Company, 1973.

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ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

17. U.S. President. Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States.  
Washington, D.C.: Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records  
Service, Harry S. Truman, 1948.
18. "Working on New Depot," The Independence Examiner, August 6, 1912.

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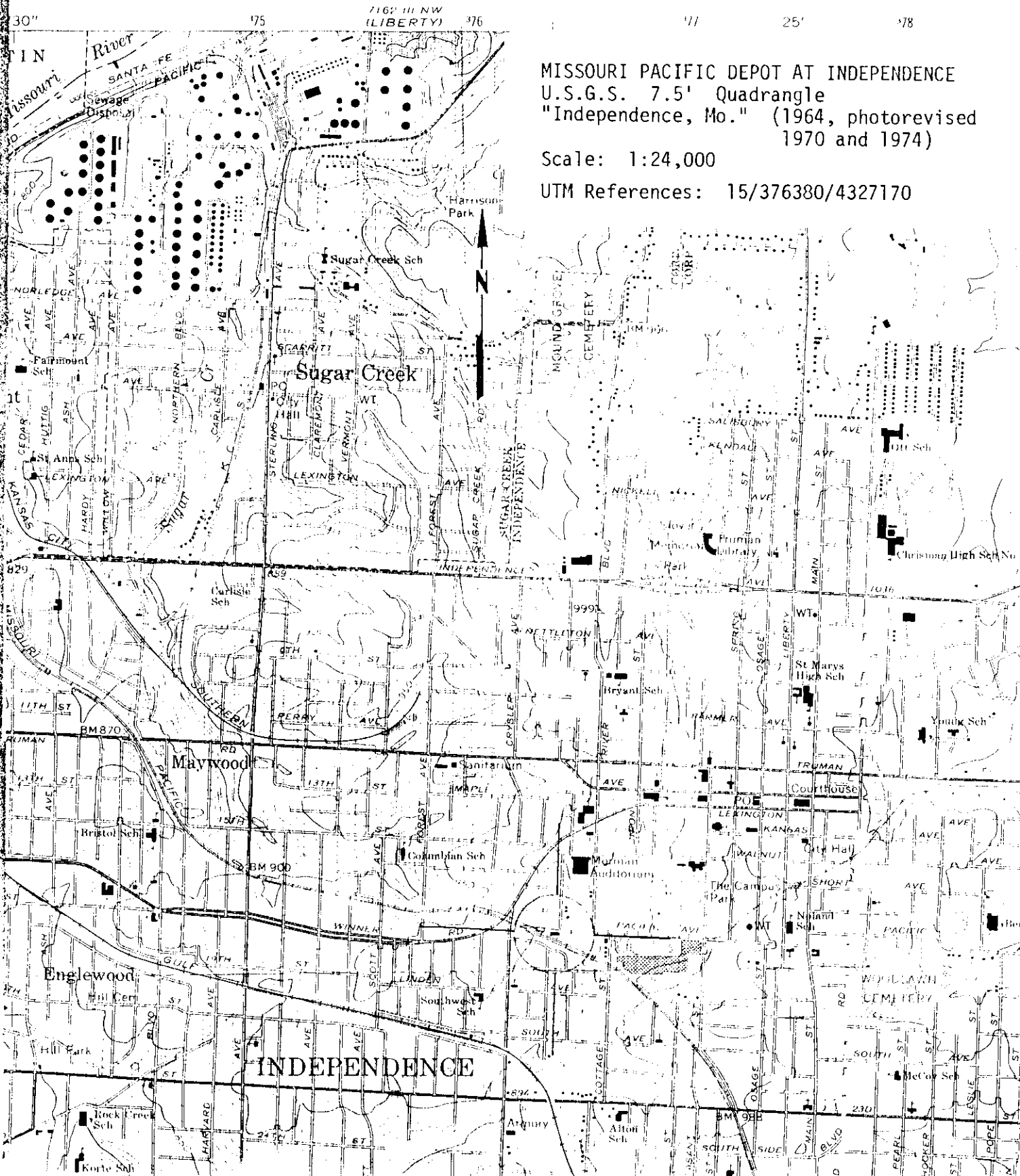
DATE ENTERED

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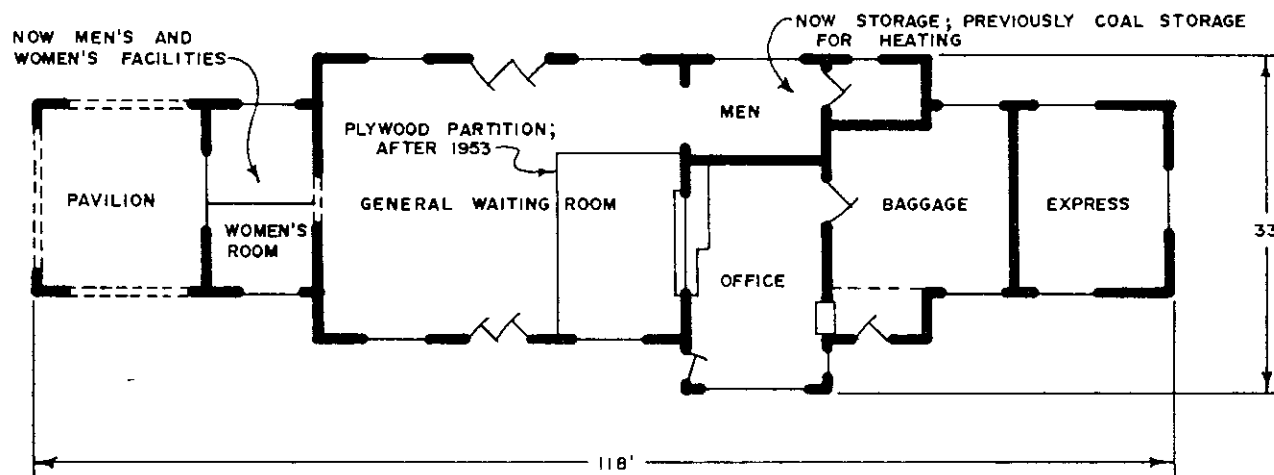
easterly line of the Depot Grounds, thence southwesterly 100 feet more or less along the east line of the Depot Grounds, to its intersection with the center line of the main line of the Missouri Pacific Rail Road, thence northwesterly along said center line a distance of 300 feet. Thence northeasterly at a 90 degree angle a distance of 200 feet, thence southeasterly at a 90 degree angle a distance of 300 feet more or less to its intersection with the east line of the Depot Grounds, thence southwesterly 100 feet more or less along the east line of the Depot Grounds, to the point of beginning, all being within the City of Independence, Jackson County, Missouri.



FLOOR PLAN  
MISSOURI PACIFIC DEPOT  
INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI



NOT TO SCALE





**Photo Log:**

Name of Property: **Missouri Pacific Depot**

City or Vicinity: **Independence**

County: **Jackson County** State: **MO**

Photographer: **Claire Blackwell**

Date

Photographed: **Aug. 1978**

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

1 of 6. View from SW.

2 of 6. View from SE.

3 of 6. View from NW.

4 of 6. View from SW.

5 of 6. Detail, S façade. View from SE.

6 of 6. President and Mrs. Harry S Truman depart for Washington, D.C. from the Missouri Pacific Depot at Independence, Missouri.













