

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: Tazewell Depot

Other names/site number: North Tazewell Depot; DHR No. 158-5052

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

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

Listed On:
VLR: 12/11/2014
NRHP: 2/17/2015

2. Location

Street & number: 135 Railroad Avenue

City or town: Tazewell State: Virginia County: Tazewell

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

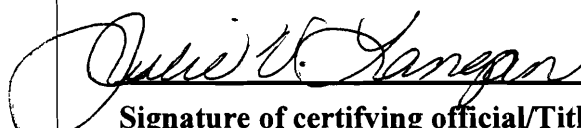
I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

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 x C D

	<u>12/20/17</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>Virginia Department of Historic Resources</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property <u> </u> meets <u> </u> 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>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION: Rail-Related: Train Depot

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

WORK IN PROGRESS

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

NO DISCERNABLE STYLE

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK; SLATE

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 Tazewell Depot is situated on Railroad Avenue at the center of North Tazewell, originally a village called Kelly's Mill that settled in an oxbow of the Clinch River, which in 1969 merged with the Town of Tazewell. The former passenger station stands vacant on the southern edge of the active rail line now operated by Norfolk Southern Corporation. The 1928 solid brick building retains a high level of historic integrity and is one of only two remaining depots on the former Norfolk and Western Railroad's Clinch Valley Line that ran the coal fields between Bluefield, West Virginia, and Norton, Virginia in the late 1880s. The first depot in this location was built in 1888, and due to heavy freight traffic was augmented by the 1928 passenger depot. The one-story Flemish bond brick building features a prominent slate-covered hipped roof with projecting bays, dormers, and deep, flared and bracketed eaves. With the rise of the automobile, railroad passenger service declined, and by 1957 the first depot was removed and the Tazewell Depot was converted to a combination station, with the formerly segregated 'colored' section converted to freight service. Passenger service was discontinued in 1959. However, the depot and its setting remain remarkably intact. The depot was decommissioned in 1974, and was used for storage until the Town of Tazewell purchased it from the Norfolk Southern Corporation in 2012. The

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Tazewell Train Station Research Committee and the Town of Tazewell are currently working together to reopen the depot to the public.

Narrative Description

The Town of Tazewell, a southern Appalachian town of less than 5,000 residents, lies in the middle of Tazewell County in southwest Virginia, at the headwaters of the Clinch River in the picturesque and mineral-rich Clinch Valley. The town is located 24 miles southwest of Bluefield, West Virginia, along the valley's State Route 19/460 corridor. Following the Clinch River, the current Norfolk Southern Corporation tracks extend east/west through what is referred to as North Tazewell, a community in the Town of Tazewell. Located in the core of this small commercial, yet rural community, the Tazewell Depot stands on the north side of Railroad Avenue and faces the rear elevation of early-twentieth-century warehouses across the railroad tracks. Metal silos accent the skyline on the east side of the depot and a concrete and gravel parking lot lies on its west side. On the south side of Railroad Avenue, an early-20th-century frame store, a stone hotel foundation, and a frame residence remain from the early economic railroad boom in Tazewell. Early 20th-century frame residences continue to line the south side of the street separated from the commercial locus by steep topography. The western terminus of Railroad Avenue is just beyond the depot, at Tazewell Avenue, the main two-lane route through North Tazewell.

The 1928 depot was built to augment the then existing 1888 depot, which was built as a frame passenger and freight depot on the Norfolk & Western Railroad's Clinch Valley Line [see historic images at end of Section 8]. The 1928 passenger depot was built to the west side of the one-story, board-and-batten depot, which continued as a Freight Station until ca.1957. The amount of freight generated from Tazewell County, particularly the lush Burke's Garden area, justified the atypical use of two depots operating at the same time.

The foundation of the approximately 28 x 84-foot passenger depot consists of poured-in-place concrete walls and footers. The floor is a concrete slab-on-grade in the majority of the building and an elevated poured-in-place floor over the basement area. The centrally located basement is accessed from an exterior concrete stairwell in front of the projecting bay of the south street elevation. The basement consists of poured-in-place concrete walls and floors with two hallways, a coal room, and a furnace room, with its original coal furnace.

The depot's exterior walls are constructed of a multi-wythe brick system in a Flemish bond pattern, with a rowlock-course water table. The south, street-facing elevation (*street elevation*), features a 5-foot deep x 14-foot wide projecting bay accented with a gable roof with elongated cornice returns, a decorative rowlock brick course, and a tripartite window with matching single-light transoms. The north, track-facing elevation (*track elevation*), features a more elaborate, 12-ft. wide polygonal-shaped bay with matching slate-covered roof, and 1/1 wood windows with single-light transoms on all three sides. Both bays feature extended roof eaves. The building's deeply-set roof eaves support a flared hipped roof covered in original slate shingles. Paired wooden scroll brackets support the eaves. Louvered hipped-roof dormers with extended eaves

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provide ventilation at both hipped roof ends. A centrally located, corbelled-cap brick chimney extends from the roof near the polygonal bay. The foundation and walls, including bricks and mortar, are in good condition. The eaves, soffits, and slate roof shingles on the track elevation have sustained moisture and mildew damage, while elsewhere the roof and soffit remain in fair condition.

All remaining windows in the building are the original 1/1 wood windows with cast-stone sills and brick soldier-course lintels, and excluding the smaller, single-light obscured glass bathroom windows (seven), all windows (ten) are accented with a single light transom. The entrance doors on the western half of the building, or 'white' section, on both the track and street elevations, are double-leaf wood doors with a raised-panel lower half and a single-light upper half. In addition, the one remaining track elevation door of the 'colored' section is more modest than those of the 'white' section, as it is a five-panel, double-leaf, wood door entrance, with no transom. All windows and doors are in good condition.

In 1957, just prior to the Norfolk & Western Railway discontinuing passenger service in 1959, the depot was converted for freight use only, and its eastern half, or its 'colored' section, was consequently modified. On the exterior, most of the door and window openings of this section were either in-filled with brick or replaced with freight doors. However, the replacement brickwork was done with such precision as to produce an almost seamless joinery, with no visible jamb lines. Further, the new bricks' type and size match the original bricks.

The ca. 1957 freight conversion modifications to the depot were limited to the segregated 'colored' section. All further descriptions of the 1928 depot are based on Norfolk & Western's 1928 floor plan [see historic images at the end of Section 8]. On the eastern-half street elevation, all fenestration, but one bathroom window, was in-filled, including: the double-leaf entrance door to the waiting room (the four rounded concrete entrance steps remain); two windows; and a double-leaf door entrance to the former baggage area. On the east end elevation, the three original windows were in-filled, and a sliding, wood batten door with a bumper guard that accommodated vehicular deliveries was centered on the elevation. On the track elevation, two windows were in-filled (a bathroom window remains), and the double-leaf entrance door from the baggage area to the then existing dock was converted into a sliding, wood batten door to further accommodate freight deliveries. And as mentioned above, the five-panel, double-leaf exit doors from the waiting room to then existing dock remain. All remaining original exterior windows (17), doors (five double-leaf and cargo), and brick and mortar in the building are in good condition.

The track-side loading dock for freight and passengers was removed for safety reasons as the railroad tracks were still active. Based on a historic photograph, the loading dock extended from the projecting bay eastward along the building and continued further east along where the 1888 depot once stood. The dock was accessed from inside the building and by a ramp at the eastern end of the dock.

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Accessed from Railroad Avenue, four, wide, rounded concrete steps lead up to the double-leaf entrance door and its flanking windows and transoms on the western half of the building that leads into the former 20 x 25-foot 'waiting room (white).' The openness of the room is complemented by its 14-foot tall ceiling and the matching symmetrical fenestration on the track elevation interior wall. The waiting room is trimmed with baseboard, chair rail, and crown moldings. Volunteers with the Tazewell Train Station Research Committee have sensitively stripped the paint from this trim. All door and window jambs are framed with four-inch trim and topped with a projecting cornice. A double-backed seating bench once lined the middle of the waiting room and single benches lined the interior room walls. Throughout the building, all the walls and ceilings are plastered (faded paint) (all ceilings are 14-feet tall), and the floors are unpainted poured concrete slabs, all in good condition.

The centrally located 'ticket office' (11 x 21-foot) (and telegraph office--as noted on other N&W plans of similar depots) features the 'white' ticket booth opening and its 3-inch-thick solid wood counter supported by two Norfolk & Western-associated designed curved brackets. Upon entering the office from a corner doorway near the track-side, the original 3-inch-thick, solid wood telegraph counter spans across the triple windows of the polygonal shaped bay. Both the ticket booth counters and the telegraph counter are angled slightly downward creating a deliberate ergonomic feature. The 'colored' ticket booth, however, was changed to a doorway when the depot was converted to freight; its outline still visible. The original 'circuit panel cabinet,' installed on the west side office wall with its circuit breaker inscriptions still visible, include the two marked 'colored' and 'white' waiting rooms. No trim is associated with this room. One of two original metal, commercial-grade overhead light fixtures that hung from the ceiling still remains, and is the only remaining light fixture in the building (outlines are still visible on the other ceilings).

The 'womens toilet' and its antecedent 'white womens retiring room' and a 'white mens toilet' are on the west end wall. The women's bathroom contains the two original metal stalls and toilets, but the corner sink has been removed; likewise, the benches that originally lined the three sides of the 'retiring room' have been removed, leaving only their shadow lines. The men's bathroom retains its paired urinals, two stalls, toilets, and porcelain sink. No trim is associated with these rooms.

Across the hall from the ticket office, the 6 x 12-foot record room is tucked into the projecting bay of the street elevation, and its tripartite windows and transoms light this small room and its open wood shelving units on both end walls. One exposed light bulb hangs from the center of the ceiling. No trim is associated with this room, although its original door remains. The door featured a matching tripartite single-light transom, which now has one end light of the transom covered by an added doorway in the adjoining hallway. This hall originally separated the white and the colored waiting rooms by a 'pipe rail' across its width.

The ca. 1957 freight modifications involved the removal of the 'waiting room (colored),' the 'col. women's toilet,' the 'col. men's toilet,' and the 'baggage & express room' that created one open space. A 3-foot tall concrete slab platform was then installed in the majority of this newly

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created room, and leaving only enough space for egress from the hallway to the loading dock through the existing double-leaf pedestrian doors. A thick metal pipe railing runs about 2/3 the length of the platform. The former 15 x 25-foot colored waiting room also once featured a double-back bench down the exact middle of the waiting room, and single-width benches lined the interior room walls. Although the platform obscures the original floor plan, the layout is mirrored on the plastered ceiling above, the walls of the baggage room and bathrooms clearly denoted. A foundation impression, perhaps from scales, is evident on the platform near the track-side freight door. The two original corner doors were converted to sliding freight doors, and three of the five window openings were in-filled and re-plastered on the interior, leaving the original fenestration outlines clearly visible.

The depot's 1928 floor plan also denotes the lighting fixtures; two overhead fixtures lighted each of the waiting rooms, the baggage and express room, and the ticket office, while one fixture lighted the women's bathroom, the retiring room, the men's bathroom, the record room, and the hall. In addition, a 50-Watt bracket fixture illuminated both ticket counters. However, while the white waiting room enjoyed 200-Watt lights, the slightly smaller colored waiting room had only 150-Watt lights. All four exterior corners of the building received 100-Watt light fixtures, and the exterior projecting bay of the ticket office received a 'Semaphore Light,' which is a signal arm with colored lights on it that provides communication to the oncoming train engineer.

In 1959, when the Norfolk & Western discontinued passenger service to its Clinch Valley Line, the depot had only served passengers for 30 years, during which the occurrence of the Great Depression and World War II deferred any updates, thus keeping the depot intact. Although consequently modified somewhat to include freight service ca. 1957, the Tazewell Depot, with the majority of its historic character-defining features, feeling, and fabric intact, is an excellent example of a small-town depot.

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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

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1928-1965

Significant Dates

1928

ca. 1957

1959

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Pettyjohn & Co., John P. (Contractor), Lynchburg, VA

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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 in Tazewell, a courthouse town in southwest Virginia, the Tazewell Depot is eligible at the local level of significance under Criterion A in the area of Transportation for its association with the Norfolk & Western Railway (Norfolk Southern Corporation), which was the driving economic force of Tazewell County and environs with the exploitation of the area's coal resources, beginning in the late 19th century. The depot is located 1.5 miles north of the courthouse in the bottomlands of the Clinch River. The brick passenger depot was constructed in 1928 to augment the existing frame, 1888 passenger and freight depot due to the heavy shipping of livestock, lumber, and coal from the area. Both depots operated side-by-side until ca. 1957, when the decline in passenger service negated the use of both depots, and the 1928 Depot was modified to include freight service. Passenger service on the Clinch Valley Line was discontinued in 1959, although the depot continued to accommodate freight until its closing in 1974. The Tazewell Depot is also eligible at the local level of significance under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a distinguishable Norfolk & Western designed depot, and as a significant landmark in the town. Its relatively late construction date and solid masonry construction contribute to its good condition. The depot is one of two remaining of the 29 depots that served the 103-mile long Clinch Valley Line from Bluefield, West Virginia, to Norton, Virginia. The Norfolk Southern Railway still operates freight on the single-line track. Its period of significance spans from its construction in 1928 to 1965, the 50-year period of significance cut-off mark.

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

Acknowledgments

The author wishes to thank the following for their contributions to this nomination: the Tazewell Town Council, Town Manager Todd Day and administrative assistant Robin Brewster, the Tazewell Depot Historical Committee, spearheaded by Town Councilman Dr. Terry Mullins, Jennifer Boyd, Susan Reaves, and Louise Leslie; the Tazewell Public Library, especially Reference Librarian Chris Wilkes; the volunteer staff of the Norfolk and Western Historical Society in Roanoke, Virginia, especially Harry Bunday and David Stephenson; and the staff of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, especially Michael J. Pulice, Architectural Historian of the Western Region Office, and Lena McDonald, Register Coordinator of the Richmond Headquarters.

Justification of Criteria

Criterion A – Transportation

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The Tazewell Depot is locally significant in the area of Transportation as a remarkably intact example of a standardized 1920s masonry depot of the Norfolk & Western Railway that served southwest Virginia from 1928 through the post-World War II prosperity era and into the early 1970s. The integrity of the building allows it to illustrate the industrial railroad features attributed to the Norfolk & Western Railway.

In the late 19th-century, Tazewell County, and particularly its courthouse town then known as Jeffersonville, and its associated Kelly's Mill community that was located in the bottomlands of the Clinch River, developed with the arrival of the Norfolk & Western Railroads' Clinch Valley Line in 1888. In order to take advantage of the rich coal fields of southwest Virginia and southern West Virginia, the line began at Bluefield, West Virginia, in 1887 and terminated at Norton, Virginia, in 1891. With this explosion of freight production, the village of Kelly's Mill along the Clinch River, which the railroad followed, became the site of the first passenger and freight depot for this area in 1888. Although it had doubled in size by the early 20th century, the frame depot eventually proved insufficient to carry the increased coal, cattle, and lumber traffic, and based on arguments from prominent citizens of the town, the State Corporation Commission forced the Norfolk & Western Railway to construct a second depot, thus the brick Tazewell Passenger Depot was built in 1928. Both depots then operated side-by-side until ca. 1957; the 1888 depot served freight use only, while the new depot catered to passenger and mail service. The post-World War II prosperity that hastened the popularity of the automobile and the emergence of the interstate highway system (with freight being delivered by trucks) also hastened the decline of stations across America. The Clinch Valley Division was no exception, and was the last railroad line in southwest Virginia to discontinue passenger service. Its last passenger train departed Bluefield, West Virginia, as a festive train excursion on Saturday, April 4, 1959. The Tazewell Depot had converted to freight by 1957, and served the Clinch Valley Line until it closed in 1974. The Norfolk Southern Railway continues to carry freight on the one-track line.

The Tazewell Depot was one of four brick depots on the Clinch Valley Line-- the three others served the larger communities of Richlands, St. Paul, and Norton-- and is one of only two depots that remain on the Clinch Valley Line, the other being a restored frame depot in the Town of Coeburn. Further, the Tazewell Depot is the only known depot on the Clinch Valley Line that was built to augment another operating depot. The Tazewell Depot design is comparable to others of the Norfolk & Western during the early 20th century. Of all the depots that were erected on the three lines that ran the coal-producing counties of Buchanan, Dickenson, Lee, Russell, Scott, Tazewell, and Wise counties of southwest Virginia and Bluefield, West Virginia, the Tazewell Depot is one of only four known surviving depots (Coeburn, Dante, and Dungannon) from the railroad era that dominated southwest Virginia from the late 1880s to the early 1970s.

Criterion C - Architecture

With its basic masonry construction, simple lines, flared hip roof, 1/1 windows, and projecting bays, the 1928 Tazewell Depot epitomizes the early-20th-century Norfolk & Western Railway depots. It stands as a lone landmark in the rural yet industrial community of North Tazewell, a

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reminder of a bygone era, and a symbol of its achievement as a viable community. The town recognizes the importance of this historic landmark and embraces its heritage and what the depot represents to the community and surrounding counties that once thrived on the coal production of the region, and are now struggling in the changing economy. The depots' future restoration symbolizes the towns' revitalization efforts.

The building remains in good condition with most of its historic material intact, although some fenestration and interior walls were changed when it was converted to freight use ca. 1957. The section of the depot that was modified involved the original segregated "colored waiting room;" the conversion included the demolition of these interior rooms, the removal of the colored ticket booth, and the infilling or replacement of exterior doors and windows. These modifications do not adversely affect the building's massing, scale, and feeling; the building still strongly conveys an early-20th century, small-town, southwest, Virginia, Norfolk & Western passenger depot. After the building closed in 1974, the railroad leased it for storage. With civic pride and determination, the Town of Tazewell purchased the building from Norfolk Southern on April 18, 2007, with plans of its future restoration to again serve the town, community, and county of Tazewell.

Historical Background

Railroad Background

The Norfolk and Western Railroad Company was organized in 1881 from the Atlantic, Mississippi and Ohio Railroad, which had been sold to the firm of E.W. Clark & Co., of Philadelphia, PA. Primarily a line carrying agricultural products, the Norfolk & Western (reporting mark NW) quickly became associated with the mineral development of southwestern Virginia and southern West Virginia. By mid-1881, it had acquired the franchises to four other lines, which became the basis for the N&W's New River Division, which ran to the coalfields to the west [<http://spec.lib.vt.edu/railroad/rrintro.htm>].

During the Civil War, Confederate General Gabriel Wharton of Montgomery County discovered huge coal deposits in southwest Virginia, and he envisioned the potential importance of exploiting these resources. In the early 1880s, he and other investors including Confederate Major General William Mahon secured charters to extend a line from a connection with N&W's main line near Radford and along the New River toward the coalfields of Bluefield and the Pocahontas area, but they lost control of the project to northern financiers, and in 1882, the project was incorporated into the newly organized N&W, who had also realized the coalfields' potential. [Worsham, *A Survey of Historic Architecture, Tazewell County, Virginia*. 1999:11; Wolfe, et al. *Norfolk & Western's Clinch Valley Line*, 2013:10].

By the end of 1881, N&W's first vice-president Frederick J. Kimball, a civil engineer and partner with E.W. Clark & Co., had based the company in a Virginia village on the Roanoke River called Big Lick (Roanoke) and was committed to "...reaching out into the coal fields." Kimball based his vision on his knowledge of several previous investigations of the untapped coal resources, including specific deposits of coal in the Clinch River Valley of Tazewell

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County. Based on this knowledge, Kimball decided that it was economically viable to build a railroad route to the coal fields, thereby supplying coal to eastern factories and domestic markets, as well as supplying the N&W with its own source of inexpensive fuel [Norfolk & Western Railway Freight Station, Roanoke, Virginia NRHP nomination, 2011:8].

Work on N&W's New River Division, which ran from the New River Depot in Radford to the newly created mining town of Pocahontas (Tazewell County), commenced in late 1881. By early 1883, the first coal car was loaded at its mine and bound for Norfolk, Virginia, on the Elizabeth River. The N&W realized that they would need a larger facility for loading the coal onto ships, and by 1886, constructed extensive piers and coal warehouses at Lambert's Point, (now home to Norfolk Sothern's' Pier 6, the largest and fastest coal exporting facility in the Northern Hemisphere) [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lambert_Point]. The N&W correctly predicted that its New River Division "will mark a new era of prosperity for this road and the county traversed by it." The completion of this branch line opened for exploitation one of the largest coal fields in the United States and set in motion events that would drastically transform life in that corner of the state. [Norfolk & Western Railway Freight Station NRHP, 2011:8; Eller, *Miners, Millhands, and Mountaineers: Industrialization of the Appalachian South, 1880-1930*, 1982:70].

Kimball served as N&W President from 1883 – 1895, and under his leadership, the N&W continued its westward expansion. After the completion of the N&W's New River Division from Radford to Pocahontas in 1883, the development of the Pocahontas—Flat Top coal fields escalated. In 1888, the line was extended into McDowell County, West Virginia, by tunneling 3,100 feet through Flat Top Mountain. And in 1889, Kimball began the N&W's Ohio extension in order to connect with the growing industrial markets of the Midwest. But coal transported to Norfolk became the N&W's primary commodity, and led to great wealth and profitability [Eller, *Miners, Millhands, and Mountaineers*, 1982:74].

The last major extension of the N&W during these feverish days of the railroad's growth was the extension into the Clinch Valley of southwest Virginia, where rich coal deposits had been discovered in Wise County along the Kentucky border. Prior to 1886, a charter had been obtained for the construction of a railroad called "The Clinch Valley Railroad," and at the annual meeting of the stockholders in 1886, a resolution was passed. By the terms of the charter, the N&W was given authority to locate and construct a road "Commencing in Tazewell County, at a point at or near the New River division of the Norfolk & Western Railroad Company, and running thence to a point on or near the Clinch River, Powell River, or either, or any branch thereof, in Russell, Wise, Scott, or Lee counties, and by such route as might be deemed most suitable to the directors of the said company." [Jack, et al. *The History of Roanoke County*, 1912:150; Tazewell County Deed Book 22:84].

On March 8 and May 2, 1887, the N&W and the Louisville & Nashville Railroad Company (LN) entered into contracts by which each agreed to construct and finish (each one respectively from its lines) this extension to a point in Wise County, Virginia, both connecting there. This extension into the Clinch Valley allowed for an outlet of its timber, livestock, and agricultural products, this area being one of the richest and productive of Southwest, Virginia [Jack: 150].

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Construction of the Clinch Valley Line, of the Pocahontas Division, began June 20, 1887, on a line running from Graham, West Virginia (Bluefield), on the New River Division, to Norton, Virginia, near the Kentucky state line, a distance of 103 miles. The tracks of the N&W reached Norton in April 1891, along with those of the LN, which had constructed a branch up the Powell River Valley from Cumberland Gap. And about this time, the Virginia and Southwestern was also completed from Bristol to Appalachia, Virginia, just below Norton; the completion of these three lines opened up markets for Wise County coal to be carried to the Southeast, the West, and the eastern seaboard [Eller: 75].

Although much of the early years of the N&W was a time of expansion and acquisitions of other lines, the nationwide economic depression of 1893-1894 forced the railroad into receivership in 1895. The N&W was sold under foreclosure and on September 24, 1896, emerged as the newly reorganized Norfolk and Western *Railway*. Henry Fink was elected president and Kimball was elected Chairman of the Board of Directors, with the company still based in Roanoke. The now 1,700 mile-long rail system remained committed to its role as a coal carrier, with one of its nicknames being “King Coal.” [<http://spec.lib.vt.edu/railroad/rrintro.htm>; Wolfe, et al, 2013:11].

The N&W was famous for manufacturing its own steam locomotives, which were produced at the Roanoke Shops, as well as its own hopper cars. Around 1960, they became the last major American railroad to convert from steam to diesel power. In December, 1959, N&W merged with the Virginian Railway, a longtime rival in the Pocahontas coal region. In 1982, N&W then merged with the Southern Railway to form the Norfolk Southern Corporation, and its subsidiary Norfolk Southern Railway. The former N&W trackage remains a vital portion of Norfolk Southern, the nation’s second largest railroad and a Fortune 500 company, headquartered in Norfolk, Virginia [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norfolk_and_Western_Railway].

Historical Background

The Town of Tazewell and the Depot

Settlement in what would become Tazewell County began in the late 1760s, and the area that would become its courthouse town was settled by William Peery in 1771. When the county was organized in 1800, Peery and Samuel Ferguson proposed a 23-acre site on land belonging to both of them. Joseph Moore offered to lay out quarter-acre lots for a fee and the town was formed, soon after named Jeffersonville for the newly elected U.S. President. A frame courthouse on the north side of Main Street was constructed by 1802 and was used until it burned in the 1830s, when it was replaced by a brick courthouse on the same site [Worsham, 8-9].

The Town of Jeffersonville (often referred to as Tazewell Court House) experienced sustained growth during the antebellum period (1831-1860). In 1835, the population was almost 150 and by 1852 it had doubled. Tazewell’s civic pride is deep-rooted as in 1851, Dr. Henry Fielding Peery established the Jeffersonville Historical Society, with its predecessor, the Tazewell County Historical Society still currently active. During the late 1830s, a regional turnpike company was incorporated to improve the route from Fincastle, Virginia through Jeffersonville, and unto the

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Cumberland Gap. (This route, still marked as the Fincastle Turnpike runs through downtown as part of Main Street). In the 1850s, other local turnpikes were completed and this further reinforced the county seat as the nexus of commerce for the locality and served as the only means of transportation until the coming of the railroad in 1888 [Worsham,11].

Jeffersonville experienced slow growth after the Civil War. The town was incorporated in 1866, and the current brick courthouse was constructed on the south side of Main Street in 1874. By 1880 the population had doubled again, with a small proportion being black. The principle industries were tanneries and mills. But that was all about to change. By 1877, plans were underway to develop a new depot town for Jeffersonville, to be located on the Clinch River 1.5 miles north of the courthouse. The vicinity of Kelly's Mill was laid out as a small community called North Tazewell with a park associated with the depot grounds, as was customary in the 19th century. Both Judge J.P. Kelly and his neighbor Captain C.A. Fudge owned land in the vicinity of the coming railroad, and in its anticipation, built commercial buildings and houses on their lots. Kelly already had a mill there (hence the community's name) and added a three-story planing mill [Ibid: 14]. However, it was C.A. Fudge and his wife M.J. who sold land to the railroad for the depot grounds.

On June 1, 1887, an Indenture made with the "Norfolk and Western Railway Company of the one part, and the Fidelity Insurance Trust and Safe Deposit Company of Philadelphia of the other part" that explained the N&W's charter from the Virginia General Assembly was filed at the Tazewell County Court House [TCDB 22:84]. On October 13, 1887, C.A. Fudge and his wife M.J. Fudge deeded parcels of their land to the Norfolk & Western Railroad Company for the 'station,' and on December 10, 1887, also exchanged two parcels when the position of the 'station' changed. [TCDB 22:500; TCDB 22:602].

Construction of the depot began on June 20, 1887, and was overseen by J.C. Rawn, Engineer in Charge, Clinch Valley Division, who reported to N&W Chief Engineer W.W. Coe. Initial projections called for completion of the line to Tazewell Court House, 22 miles, by July 1, 1888, and to Richlands, 42 miles, by September 1, 1888 [Wolfe: 15]. Newspapers throughout the Clinch Valley area, particularly Tazewell's *Clinch Valley News*, kept readers informed as to the construction progress. The June 17, 1887, editorial noted "...Today twenty-five miles of the Clinch Valley Railroad was let to contract—Maj. Walton securing the contract. He will put a force of hands to work Monday morning at Graham and during the next week another force, with headquarters at Kelly's Mills..." (All excerpts from the *Clinch Valley News* are from the Tazewell County Historical Society archives.)

The July 7, 1887 editorial boasted that "An order for ten new engines for the Clinch Valley Div. of the N & W R. R. has been received at the Roanoke Machine Works." And on September 16, 1887, the editorial noted that a survey of the railroad "puts the line through... Judge Kelly's new building..." And a week later on September 23, that "The grounds at Kelly's Mills are being graded for the depot building," and further that "As soon as the track of the Clinch Valley Railroad is laid this far Jeffersonville is to be made the depot of supplies for the entire line." And the October 7 edition exclaimed, "There is something of a stir about the vicinity of Kelly's Mills,

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the site of the Jeffersonville depot. Messrs. Peery and Higginbotham opened their new mercantile house there yesterday; a saw mill is being put in place, while other enterprises are being spoken of from time to time. This is to be the most important depot along the line of the Clinch Valley Division." Articles in the February 10 and 28, 1888, issues noted that "The Roanoke Machine Works" were constructing "four large iron plate girder bridges for the Clinch Valley Division of the Norfolk & Western railroad" and that "Mr. N. Hockman, of Salem, and proprietor of the Salem Planing Mills, has received contract from the (N&W) to build all depots on the line of the Clinch Valley Division." Other articles noted that Stratton & Stratton would also be building the depots.

As the town prepared for the train, the editor of the March 3, 1888, edition proposed that what if the passengers that stepped off the first train, "could step on to the cars of the Tazewell Street Railway..." The streetcar service became reality four years later, and it transported residents and visitors between the town and the depot, with a fare of 10 cents until 1933. The line ran from Main Street down the 'Car Line' (Carline Avenue today), the main road through the African-American area, to the depot and a waiting platform. Early service was by a horse drawn car. In 1904, Tazewell's power plant was expanded to provide electric streetcar service; the single track streetcar line operated with one car. This gave Tazewell the distinction of being the smallest town in America with an electric streetcar. However, with the advent of bus and automobile service, the streetcar line was abandoned. [Tazewell Depot PIF 2014, p.6; Wolfe, 44].

"Work has begun on the foundation at the Tazewell depot" noted the August 3, 1888 edition, and less than three weeks later on August 24, the description continued that "Messrs. John P. Pettyjohn & Co., of Lynchburg, the contractors, will rush to complete the Tazewell depot. This depot is to be of the 1st class, the only one on the line." And on September 14, 1888, "The railroad is completed from Graham, where it leaves the New River Division of the N&W to Tazewell C. H. depot." The 73 x 18-foot building was clad with board-and-batten siding and its gable roof was covered with standing-seam metal. "Substantial" cattle pens had already been erected. The new station was called Tazewell, and less than four years later, the town followed suit and the State Legislature changed the town's name of Jeffersonville to Tazewell.

Just two months later, the train was doing a "heavy" freight business, and by December a "good passenger business." Nearly two years later, the August 8, 1890, edition noted that "Freight service on the Clinch Valley Railroad has been doubled and the business is heavy." By August the following year, "The through freight business over the Clinch Valley Division seems to be increasing daily. It is said that arrangements are making to handle 300 cars daily. These cars are from all points in the West" and that "...through trains of sleeping cars will be put into service..." Tazewell became the business center for most of the county and the depot was a place of great activity, including telegraph service. In addition to hauling coal, the freight business was busy with forest products, livestock, crushed limestone, poultry, eggs, and butter.

The October 4, 1889, newspaper edition printed that "There are fifteen stations on the Norfolk & Western railroad in Tazewell County, eight of which are of the first class." The railroad was predicted to be completed to Norton by April 15, 1891. The 1894 passenger timetable had two

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daily trains. Freight and passenger service remained strong, and the one-story frame depot was expanded in 1904, and again in 1909. By 1913, the depot was twice as long as its original size, at a substantial 120 feet, with a 120 foot long covered freight platform [1913 Sanborn Map].

The 1897 Sanborn Map (the earliest Tazewell Sanborn map) depicts the depot and one main track flanked by two siding tracks. The map also notes numerous dwellings, stores, and small warehouses in the immediate vicinity. Located north across the tracks and on the north side of Wolfe Street (E. Riverside Drive/Route 61), were single dwellings on larger lots and a brick Lutheran Church (extant). The 1913 Sanborn Map first denotes 'North Tazewell,' and that it had a population of 500, which stayed unchanged for the successive maps. By 1913, the immediate area grew with more general stores, warehouses, a lumber yard, and the Standard Oil Company. Across the street from the depot on Railroad Avenue stood a poultry and produce building and a grocery store that were built on the stone foundations. This foundation still exists, and it was used for the ca. 1923 Clinchview Hotel that faced directly toward the 1928 depot. The 1913 Sanborn Map further depicts the one main track and three siding tracks (this remains constant), including one that branches off to a coal yard. Prior to 1917, passenger service had increased to four daily trains: Nos. 5, 6, 11, and 12. By 1923, larger warehouses were built across the tracks, on the south side of Wolfe Street (E. Riverside Drive), with an extended branch track to their rear elevations. Though now vacant, these warehouses remain.

According to a newspaper editorial in the Clinch Valley News (June 13, 1963) by L.L. Dickenson (a former 'Railroad Cashier'), shortly after WWI, members from the town's newly formed American Legion Post negotiated with N&W for a "commodious and modern depot" at Tazewell. At a hearing in Richmond with the State Corporation Commission, the N&W argued against a new depot, but with the demands 'of the coal operators, lumbermen, livestock shippers who resided at Tazewell...' the commission ordered that the new depot be built. The N&W unsuccessfully appealed to the Supreme Court of Appeals who argued that only the State Corporation Commission had jurisdiction over public utilities, and although the N&W sought to build a combination passenger and freight facility, they were forced to build a new passenger depot. Consequently, these two depots operated side by side until ca. 1957.

The 1929 Sanborn Map denotes both depots; with the 1928 'N&W RY Passenger Station' built at the west end of the former 1888 passenger and freight depot, which now featured a Freight Station on its western half, and an 'Express Office' on its eastern half. Four tracks served the depot; differing tracks for passengers, coal, and freight. The depot became a busy center in the county because of its proximity to Burke's Garden, which is a substantially productive agricultural area in Tazewell County that produced and shipped bountiful cattle and sheep wool.

Furthermore, the drawings of the 1928 N&W floor plans include a site plan that shows the 1888 depot, now 150 feet long with a 200 foot long frame platform that connected to a 75 x 100-foot 'stock pen.' The site plan also depicts the 'Elect. RY' running alongside both depots; it also depicts the Clinchview Hotel as a '3-Story Store.' The site plan further shows a grade-level, concrete 'platform' that was in-filled between the two main tracks. This platform no longer exists, although it shows in ca. 1940s photographs.

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Although this area was substantially built up with houses, warehouses, and stores, the 1929 Sanborn Map shows the ca. 1913 Clinchview Hotel building as vacant and flanked by a 'Drugstore' and a 'Store.' The 1945 Sanborn Map confirms that North Tazewell continued to thrive, and the Clinchview Hotel was open again with a Post Office on its eastern side, plus a restaurant and a movie theatre (the building is extant). Railroad Avenue, the street that the depot faces, was never named on the Sanborn maps as it was always listed as 'R.R. Right of Way.'

The 1945 Sanborn Map denotes that the 1888 depot operated as a Freight Station, and that it was connected to the 1928 depot by a 1500-Watt electrical circuit. However, the 1957 N&W site plan denotes only the 1928 depot at the location, including the concrete platform and the stock pens, but not the 1888 depot [see historic images at the end of Section 8]. Further, a Bluefield Daily News 'special' article of May 8, (unknown year) stated that the N&W... 'have begun the task of remodeling and adaptation of the brick passenger station at North Tazewell to combine its freight and passenger business.' The article continued that 'The plans for the project converts the space designed for the use of the Express Company and a waiting room, no longer required by law, into a freight warehouse, thus making possible the razing of the old station.' (This article never mentioned that the 'colored' section was the part being altered, but the timing of the depot being converted into freight would coincide with the U.S. Supreme Court's 1954 decision *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*.)

Between 1957 and 1959, only two passenger trains ran daily, the No. 5 (west bound from Bluefield), and the No. 6 (east bound from Norton). Additionally, the No. 6 operated only as a 'flag stop,' stopping at the depots if flagged down [Norfolk and Western Historical Society]. Just as the State Corporation Committee had forced the N&W to build a new passenger station in 1928, it also granted them permission to discontinue its passenger service of the remaining No. 5 and 6 trains of the Clinch Valley Line. The N&W had argued that they were losing money on the passenger service and that the revenue received from the mail and express service was insufficient to pay their operating expenses. Of the three lines that ran in southwest Virginia, the N&W was the last to carry passengers, and they ran their last passenger train, as an excursion train out of Bluefield, West Virginia, on Saturday morning, April 4, 1959.

The 1928 depot continued to run freight service until 1974, when it was permanently closed. In 1982, the N&W merged with Southern Railway to form the Norfolk Southern Corporation, headquartered in Norfolk, Virginia. Norfolk Southern continued to own the depot which they leased for storage, until the Town of Tazewell acquired the 2,472 square foot 'Tazewell Station Building' through a Deed of Donation from the Norfolk Southern Railway Company, a subsidiary of NS, in 2007 [TCDB 0999:0487].

While most of the original 29 depots that were built along the Clinch Valley Line were frame, four brick depots, including Tazewell's, were also constructed during the 1920s. The other three brick depots, which were more substantial, served the larger municipalities of Richlands (Tazewell County), St. Paul (Russell and Wise counties), and the western terminus of the line at Norton (Wise County); none of these three depots survive. The only other remaining depot along

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the Clinch Valley Line is the frame depot at Coeburn, which was renovated for public use and serves for Town Council meetings. The Tazewell Depot stands as a surviving symbol of a prosperous era associated with the N&W in a small southwestern Virginia town, and one that is becoming an increasingly rare sight across the Virginia landscape.

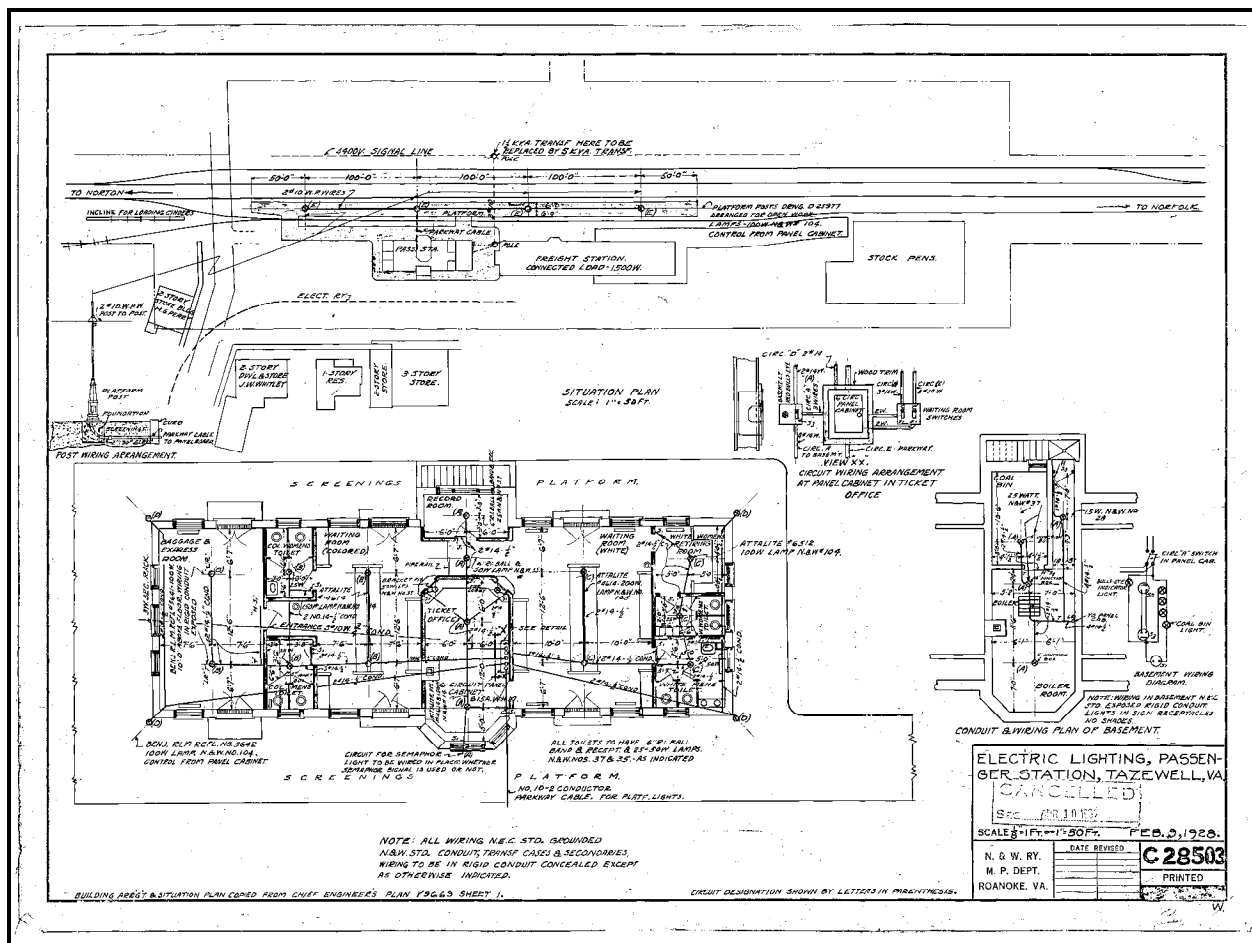


Figure 1: "Electric Lighting, Passenger Station, Tazewell, VA, Roanoke, VA, NO. C28503. Feb. 9, 1928."

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Figure 2: Late 1940s photograph depicting both depots and the Clinchview Hotel. View east from Tazewell Street.

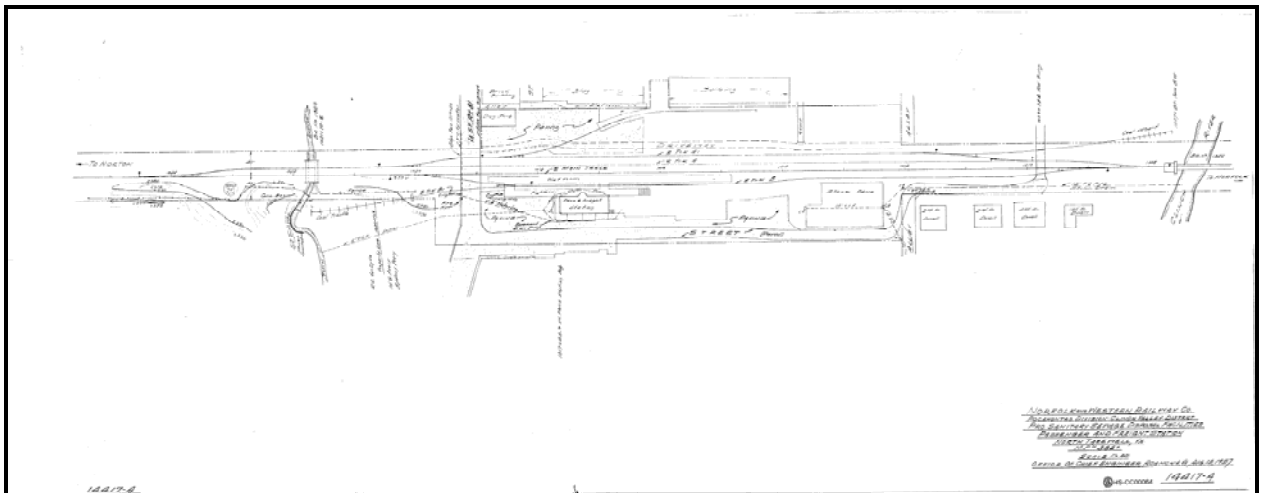


Figure 3: "Pro. Sanitary Sewage Disposal Facilities Passenger and Freight Station North Tazewell, VA, Office of the Chief Engineer, Roanoke, VA. August 15, 1957, Drawing No. 14417-A."

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Figure 4: Passengers awaiting the Saturday morning, April 4, 1959 Excursion Train of the last passenger run of Norfolk & Western's Clinch Valley Line. View east.

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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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Jack, George S. and Edward Boyle Jacobs. *The History of Roanoke County*. Stone Printing. Roanoke, VA. 1912.

Norfolk and Western Historical Society Archives: "Electric Lighting, Passenger Station, Tazewell, VA." M.P. Department, Roanoke, VA. Drawing C28503, February, 1928; "Pro. Sanitary Sewage Disposal Facilities Passenger and Freight Station North Tazewell, VA" Office of the Chief Engineer, Roanoke, VA. August 15, 1957, Drawing No. 14417-A. *Norfolk and Western Magazine*, December, 1951; *Norfolk & Western Railroad Annual Reports 1927-1938*; and conversation with Harry Bundy. Roanoke, VA. August 7, 2014.

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Worsham, Gibson. "A Survey of Historic Architecture in the Proposed Tazewell Historic District Town of Tazewell, Tazewell County, Virginia." 1999.

Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Preliminary Information Form, Tazewell Depot (DHR 158-5052), Richmond, VA.

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: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): DHR No. 158-5052

10. Geographical Data

Acres of Property Less than one acre

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: 37.132676 Longitude: -81.526316

2. Latitude: Longitude:

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3. Latitude: _____ Longitude: _____

4. Latitude: _____ Longitude: _____

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

The nomination applies only to the depot itself, as deeded to the Town of Tazewell by the Norfolk Southern Railway Company and recorded in Tazewell County DB0999:0488. The historic boundary is shown on the attached map entitled "Location Map, Tazewell Depot, Town of Tazewell, Tazewell County, VA."

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

As deeded to the Town of Tazewell by the Norfolk Southern Railway Company, the proposed National Register boundary includes only the building. There are no other resources (contributing or non-contributing) associated with the depot.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Anne Stuart Beckett, Architectural Historian

organization: _____

street & number: 1024 Hamilton Avenue

city or town: Roanoke state: VA zip code: 24015

e-mail: asbeckett@cox.net

telephone: 540-354-7827

date: September, 2014

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.)

Nomination Photographs

Photo Log: All photographs are common to:
Tazewell Depot, VDHR File Number 158-5052

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Location: Town of Tazewell, Tazewell County, Virginia.
Photographer: Anne Stuart Beckett
Date Photographed: July 28 and 29, 2014
Digital Repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia.

Photo 1 of 10: VA_TazewellCounty_TazewellDepot_0001
Street View: View east with NS tracks in front and Railroad Avenue and the former Post Office Building to the rear.

Photo 2 of 10: VA_TazewellCounty_TazewellDepot_0002
View: View southeast of track-side, north elevation.

Photo 3 of 10: VA_TazewellCounty_TazewellDepot_0003
View: View Northwest of street-side, south elevation along Railroad Avenue.

Photo 4 of 10: VA_TazewellCounty_TazewellDepot_0004
View: Detail of street-side elevation, projecting bay detail.

Photo 5 of 10: VA_TazewellCounty_TazewellDepot_0005
View: View of waiting room and bathrooms, towards street-side elevation.

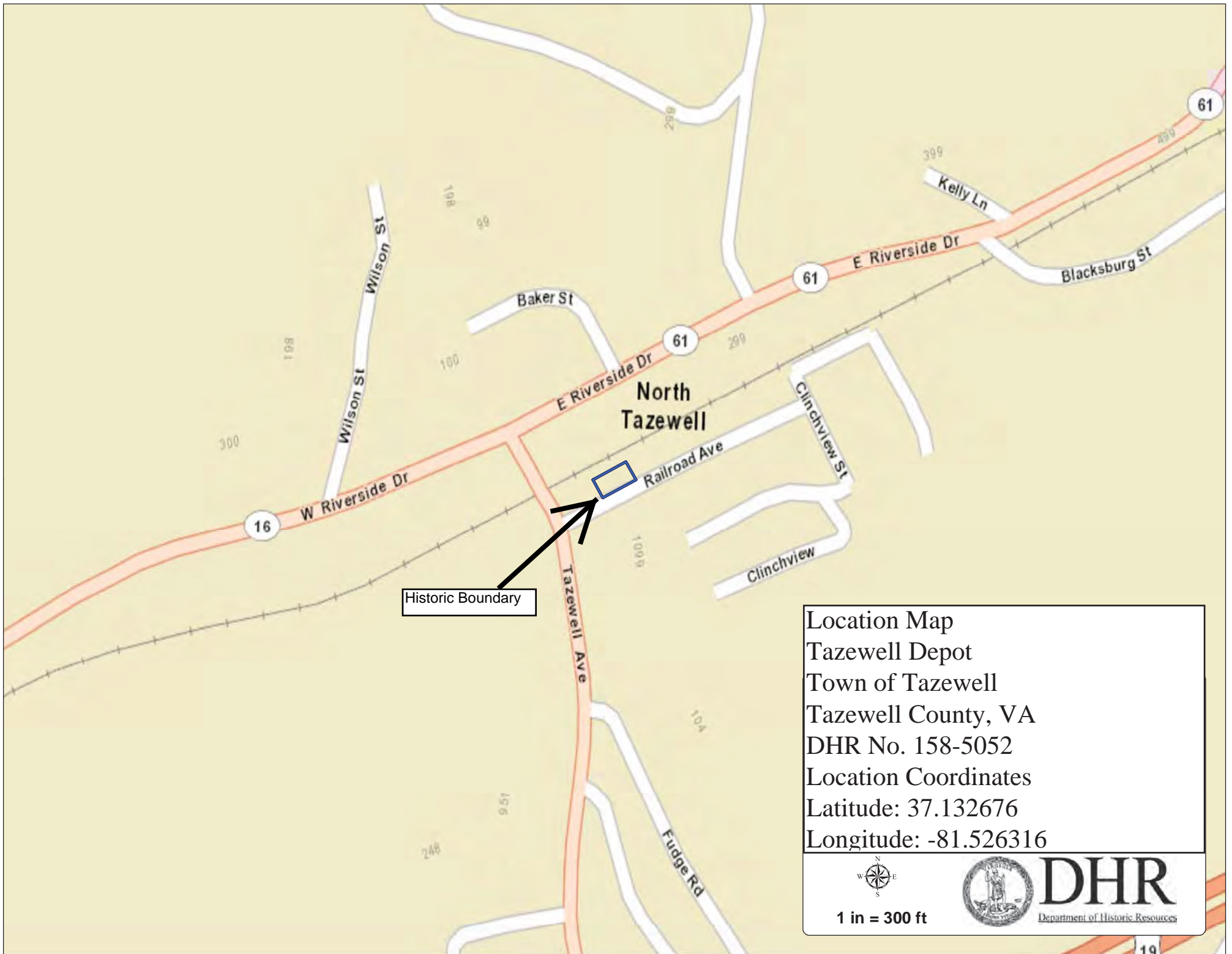
Photo 6 of 10: VA_TazewellCounty_TazewellDepot_0006
View: View of waiting room and bathrooms, towards track-side elevation, with bathrooms, and ticket booth.

Photo 7 of 10: VA_TazewellCounty_TazewellDepot_0007
View: View towards ticket booth, ticket office, and rear freight room. Note added platform.

Photo 8 of 10: VA_TazewellCounty_TazewellDepot_0008
View: Ticket booth counter detail.

Photo 9 of 10: VA_TazewellCounty_TazewellDepot_0009
View: View towards track-side of ticket office with telegraph counter.

Photo 10 of 10: VA_TazewellCounty_TazewellDepot_0010
View: View northeast of freight room with track-side door and rear elevation door.



Location Map
Tazewell Depot
Town of Tazewell
Tazewell County, VA
DHR No. 158-5052
Location Coordinates
Latitude: 37.132676
Longitude: -81.526316



1 in = 300 ft



DHR
Department of Historic Resources

Aerial View
Tazewell Depot
Town of Tazewell
Tazewell County, VA
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Google Earth 2014.

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PHOTO KEY—Ext.: Photograph number and direction as indicated by numbered arrows.



Tazewell Depot
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PHOTO KEY—Int.: Photograph number and direction as indicated by numbered arrows. (Plan drawing by Hill Studio, Inc., Roanoke, VA)

