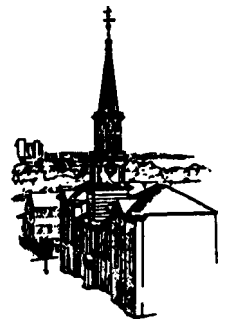


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The Alexandria Union Station

by Al Cox, AIA

The Alexandria Union Station is significant as the most visible remaining example of the dominant passenger and freight transportation system in the city of Alexandria between 1851 and the 1930s.



Union Station, ca. 1906. showing the original west portico historic photo courtesy William E. Griffin, Jr.

regional transportation. However, with the recent growth of commuter rail, Union Station is now being redeveloped as part of a multi-modal transportation center to serve Alexandria for the next century.

Unfortunately, physical evidence of the railroad's influence on the growth and development of Alexandria is rapidly disappearing. Although the Wilkes Street tunnel and Hooff's Run bridge are protected, very soon none of the railroad roundhouses or switching yards will remain to illustrate Alexandria's 18th-19th century history as Northern Virginia's industrial and transportation center. It is difficult to imagine today that the restored and protected historic district contained cement plants, fertilizer warehouses, steel foundries, auto-

mobile manufacturing plants and breweries up until the late 1960s.

Reasons for the railroad's decline are varied. Replacement of Alexandria's industrial base with a service economy and the widespread use of trucks, automobiles and airlines has radically altered local freight and passenger transportation systems since the mid-20th century. The opening of the George Washington Memorial Parkway in 1932 seemed to symbolize the demise of railroads as the most important means of local and

Transportation has played a central role in the growth and development of Alexandria since its inception. Located a few miles below the falls of the Potomac River, the city provided the northernmost port to access the rich interior farmlands of Virginia. The Potomac River put Alexandria in the mainstream of world commerce and by the mid-18th century, Alexandria had become one of the most important seaports in Colonial America. Hogsheads of tobacco came from nearby plantations over the "rolling roads." By the 1770s, wagons

brought their loads of corn and ground wheat from the grist-mills along Great Hunting Creek, Four Mile Run and other more distant tributaries of the Potomac's watershed.

At Alexandria these products were loaded on ships for export to the other colonies and foreign ports. In return trading ships from around the globe discharged their cargoes at the Alexandria wharfs and by the end of the 18th century, the city had become a regional center of culture and commerce. The inclusion of Alexandria as part of the District of Columbia, when the Federal City was established in 1791, seemed to secure its future.

That position faded quickly in the 1800s. During the War of **1812**, Alexandria surrendered to the British on August 29, 1814 after the British had previously burned Washington including the White House and U.S. Capitol. Subsequently, the city was forced to provide a ransom of cotton, grains, tobacco and ships to the British. These losses resulted in the decline of Alexandria as a major seaport. Furthermore, larger ships began to use the deep water port in Baltimore.

Canals linking the city with the Ohio River and the newly opened inland regions of the continent were seen as a

means of maintaining the economy of Alexandria. As a result, construction of a waterway connecting the Potomac with the Ohio River was initiated as early as 1785. In 1828, Alexandria invested heavily in the Chesapeake and Ohio (C&O) Company, a canal project jointly funded by the governments of the United States, Maryland and Virginia.

However, by 1850, before the canal could be completed as far as Cumberland, Maryland, a new, more efficient transportation system rendered it obsolete. The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad had been constructed to Cumberland much more quickly and at far less expense. Although the canal was successfully operated for several decades, the enormous maintenance costs ultimately rendered it unprofitable. The Alexandria Canal was abandoned in 1886.

The Arrival of the Railroads

(Note: The following section of this article is adapted in large part from the excellent book, *One Hundred Years of History Along the RF&P Railroad*, by William E. Griffin, Jr.)
With the increasing loss of river traffic to steamboats, and inland trade to the railroad, Alexandria stood to lose everything to Baltimore, its powerful commercial rival to the north. Therefore, in the

late 1840s Alexandria became directly involved in five major railroad construction projects. The first project was to build a railroad linking Alexandria with the West through the gap in the mountains at Harpers **Ferry**, West Virginia. The undercapitalized Alexandria and Harpers Ferry Railroad company was chartered in 1847 and reorganized as the Alexandria, Loudoun and Hampshire in 1853 but the line was only constructed as far as **Leesburg** by the outbreak of the Civil War. The same railroad was reorganized in 1870 as the Washington and Ohio Railroad and in 1884 as the Washington, Ohio and Western Railroad. In 1911, it was reorganized again as the Washington and Old Dominion railway and was finally abandoned in 1968.

The second major railroad project linked Alexandria with Gordonsville in the south by way of the old Piedmont Stage Route through Orange and Culpeper, Virginia. The Orange and Alexandria Railroad was chartered in 1848 and completed from Alexandria to Manassas by 1851.

The third project was to open a line to the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia through Manassas Gap. The Manassas Gap Railroad line was constructed from the Manassas Junction on the Orange and Alexandria

line to Strasburg by 1854. At the end of the Civil War, both **the** Orange and Alexandria and Manassas Gap railroads required major reconstruction. In 1867, these two lines were merged to form the Orange, Alexandria and Manassas Railroad, which later became a part of the Virginia Midland and, ultimately, the Southern Railway.

In 1854, the Virginia General Assembly chartered the Alexandria and Washington Railroad Company (A&W) to extend a rail line from Alexandria to Washington. The railroad was authorized to construct its tracks **from** a roundhouse and car shed located at the block bounded by Saint Asaph,

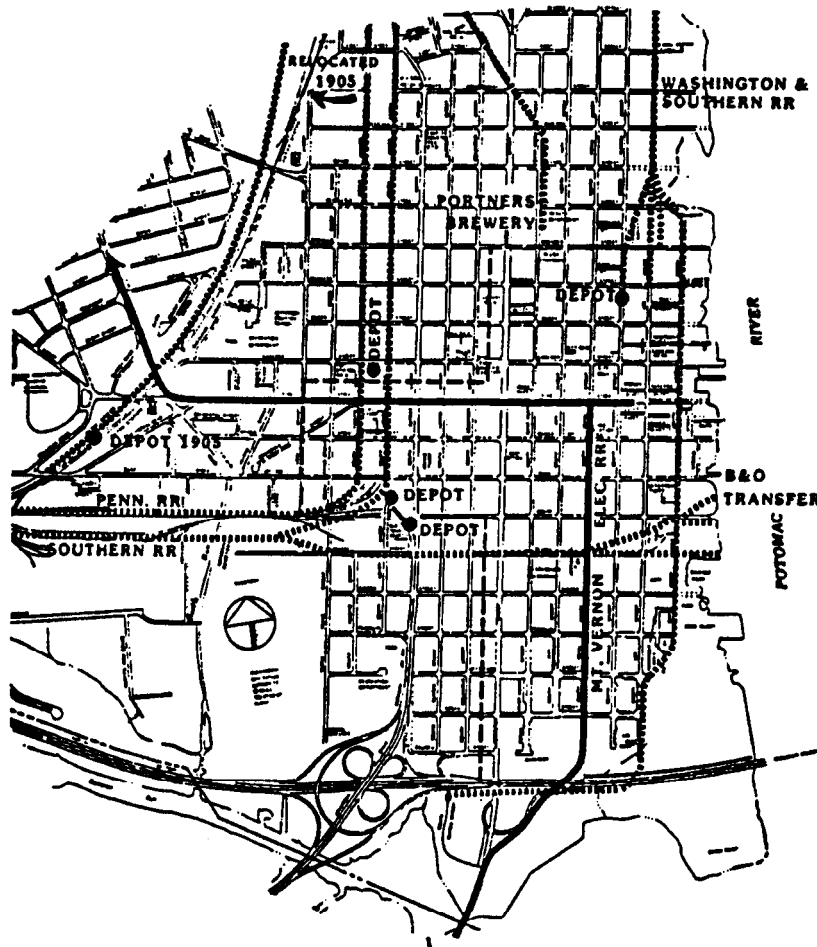
Pitt and Princess Streets, thence north on Saint Asaph to the Alexandria and Washington Turnpike, thence north to the south end of the old Long Bridge, now the 14th Street bridge. Permission was obtained from Congress in

1855 to extend from the north end of the bridge to the **B&O** station in the District of Columbia but not to cross the Potomac River. Passengers and freight were transported across the river by omnibus and wagon.

the Long Bridge and down Henry Street to connect with the Grange and Alexandria at Duke Street. In 1864, the reorganized railway became the Washington, Alexandria and Georgetown Railroad.

In 1872 the Pennsylvania Railroad acquired the Alexandria and Washington Railroad and also created the Alexandria and Fredericksburg Railway to complete the line from Alexandria south to Quantico to join with the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac (RF&P). The St. Asaph Street entrance to the city was abandoned in favor of the two acquired lines running down Fayette and Henry streets

which merged north of the city at a place known as St. Asaph Junction. The passenger and freight stations were located on property bounded by Henry, Cameron, Fayette and Queen Streets. At the south end of the city, the tracks



Railroad Activities 1900-1905

Old Town Small Area Plan, p. 6

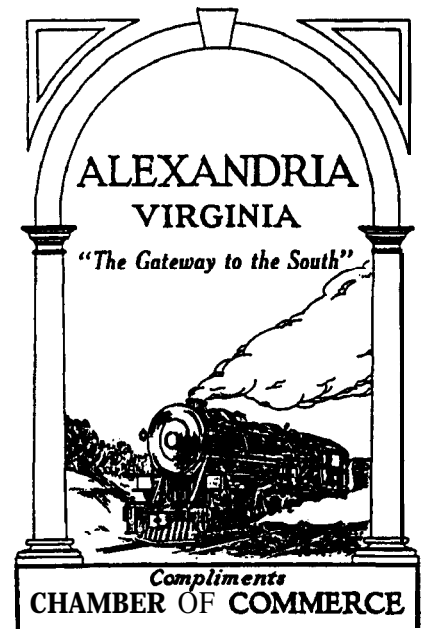
In 1856, the A&W established a passenger depot in Alexandria at the southeast intersection of Saint Asaph and Princess. The railroad was confiscated by the Federal troops in 1861. Tracks were laid by the U.S. Military Railroad across

joined those of the Virginia Midland railway at their passenger station at the southwest corner of Duke and Henry Streets and proceeded southwest on separate tracks running parallel to Duke Street.

In 1890 the two Alexandria lines were joined to create the Washington Southern Railway Company. In 1901 the Washington Southern Railway was obtained by the RF&P Railroad. The two railroads were operated as one but with separate accounts and reports until the Washington and Southern was officially merged into the RF&P in 1920.

On the other side of the Potomac River, at the turn of the twentieth century, south Washington was a maze of railroads. The increase of rail traffic and citizen agitation to remove grade crossings in the District led to substantial changes in railroad operations in the Washington/Alexandria area. During the same period, the City Beautiful movement was spawned by Daniel H. **Burnham's** grandly ordered plan for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. **Burnham** and others were therefore enlisted by the **McMillan Park Commission** in 1901 to revive and repair **L'Enfant's** original plan for the District.

As a result, the Washington Terminal Company was chartered in 1901 to build a Union Station for use by all railroads in the District of Columbia. The new Beaux Arts style Union Station in Washington was opened in 1907. In addition, the Richmond-Washington Company was formed in 1901 by the Pennsylvania Railroad, Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, Southern Railway, Chesapeake and Ohio Railway, Seaboard Air Line Railway and Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to handle traffic between Richmond and Washington. Their primary task was to eliminate the numerous freight yards in the District and devise a method to organize, classify and exchange freight among the six competing rail companies. An extensive new facility known as Potomac Yard was opened on August 1, 1906 between the **then-north-**em city limits of Alexandria and the Long Bridge. The original installation included roughly 450 acres, with 52 miles of track and a capacity for over 3,000 cars, reportedly the largest classification yard in the United States. In 1984, it covered 526 acres of land, with 136 miles of track. The rail structures in Potomac Yard were demolished in 1993 and the corridor tracks are being relocated in preparation for a new mixed-use development:



Brochure cover from the 1920s

Alexandria Union Station

The Richmond-Washington Company's 1901 plans also called for double tracking the Washington Southern Railroad and the construction of a new passenger station in Arlington County just west of Alexandria's city limits at that time. These changes resulted in a substantial relocation and consolidation of the existing tracks within Alexandria. The Henry Street track was sold to the Southern Railway. The Fayette Street track was retained for a time to access the old freight station. By 1907, the Washington **Southern** Railway had constructed an entirely new double track line linking the RF&P terminus in Quantico with the Long Bridge at the Potomac River.

New iron bridges were constructed over King Street and Commonwealth Avenue in 1903-4 and the Alexandria Union Station, costing **\$62,020.55**, was opened for service on September **15, 1905** (Valuation Docket no. 372, p. **239**)⁵. A new freight station, costing **\$25,086.11**, was built adjacent to the new passenger station on the east side of the tracks. The freight station was demolished in the early 1980s for construction of the present Metro station.

The station was operated as a joint facility serving C&O, Southern and **RF&P** trains until the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) took over these routes in 1971. In 1991, the CSX Corporation, the parent company of the **RF&P** Railway, split off its real estate holdings in this area and the **RF&P** Corporation was formed to manage and develop the real estate, of which the Potomac Yard and Alexandria's Union Station are a part, while ownership of the track is retained by the CSX.

At the present time, the station and all of the property is owned by the **RF&P** Corporation. **CSX/T** Corporation owns the right-of-way to the rail tracks that run through the site. Amtrak currently leases the station buildings and the west bound platform. The

transportation partnership of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) and PRTC, which operates the Virginia Railway Express (**VRE**), currently lease both the east bound and west bound platforms.

Surrounding Area

Because of its prominent location at the base of Shuter's Hill at principal street intersections, the station has become an important visual, as well as architectural, landmark for the city of Alexandria. It is immediately adjacent to the Rosemont National Register Historic District to the north, the George Washington Masonic National Memorial to the west with the Old and Historic Alexandria National Register District and the Metro station to the east. The building is immediately outside the almost medieval city portal formed by the railroad/Metro bridge which separates the dense 18th century urban form of Old Town from the more open and pastoral lawns of the station, the memorial, and the adjacent streetcar suburbs.

However, the area immediately **surrounding** Union Station has changed radically since it was constructed in 1905. As late as 1890, the *Alexandria Gazette* reported regarding King Street: "The **Leesburg** road for two or three miles from this city has been

greatly improved and is now one of the best pieces of roadway in this section of the state. A handsome stone bridge is soon to be erected over **Hooff's** Run at the **western** extremity of King Street which will connect the road with this city. By the time the bridge is completed, King Street from Peyton to **Hooff's** Run should be graded and shelled and then there would be a fine driveway from this city for several miles into the country - the need for which has long been felt by all citizens. Then, too, an electric light could be erected near the bridge which will light the way to this city at night. These improvements would, it is believed, add much to the taxable values of property in that section." (*Alexandria Gazette* : 8/8/1 890, hereafter **AG**)

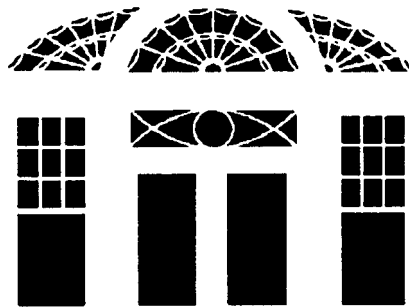
This area was not incorporated into the Alexandria city limits until 1915. **Hooff's** Run, immediately east of the station, was polluted and frequently overflowed its banks. Although it was buried in concrete conduits in the **1920s**, periodic flooding limited land uses here to warehouses and car sales lots through the 1980s. Substantial improvements and commercial development occurred in this area following the opening of the Metro station in 1983.

The most visually significant neighbor of the station is the 333' high George Washington Masonic National Memorial across Callahan Drive to the west. A Masonic memorial had been planned for this site in 1910 but was not dedicated until 1932. (*Rail - 0 - Gram*. Jan.-Feb., 1968: 10-14) Station Drive (now Callahan Drive) was relocated toward the station in the 1940s when the grounds of the memorial were regraded and terraced.

During the Civil War, the Union army recognized the strategic importance of Shuter's Hill and erected a fort on the site, named for Col. Elmer Ellsworth, the first officer killed in Alexandria during the conflict. The fort dominated *the* landscape to the west of the station area. Union camps dotted the hillside, and an 1864 Matthew Brady photograph taken from the summit of Shuter's Hill shows an encampment in the vicinity of what is now the Union Station property.

North of the Union Station, the streetcar suburbs of Del Ray and St. Elmo (platted in 1894) and Rosemont (first house built in 1908) were developed along the Washington, Alexandria & Mt. Vernon Electric Railway. This trolley was chartered in 1892 to run from Washington, D.C. down the Washington-Alexandria

Turnpike (Route 1) and Commonwealth Avenue to King Street, adjacent to Union Station. It then proceeded down King to Royal Street and south to the Mount Vernon estate. The rail line provided convenient transportation for commuters into Alexandria and D.C., provided farmers access to markets and took tourists to the Mount Vernon shrine. The trolley company went into receivership in 1923 when buses became the dominant form of local public transportation. The last trolleys ran in Alexandria on January 18, 1932. The tracks were removed in 1932 when some of the right-of-way was used for the George Washington Memorial Parkway. The *right-of-way* in the median of Commonwealth Avenue was planted with trees. (AG: 2/22/55, 2/25/55, 9/2/76, 9/24/92. *Washington Post*: 2/28/30, 1/18/32)



Architectural Description

The original designer is presently unknown and it is assumed that the station was designed and drawn by rail-

road employees in-house. Prints of the original construction drawings are stamped "Office of Chief Eng. M.W., Pennsylvania Railroad, Philadelphia, Pa, **Original** on File". Copies of the prints are available at the City of Alexandria Library, Lloyd House Architectural Drawing collection. Similar station designs by the Pennsylvania Railroad have been discovered in Chester, Irwin and Duncannon, Pennsylvania as well as Elizabeth, New Jersey. The one story brick station consists of the original main passenger depot and original baggage building, separated by a 20' wide open breezeway passage and connected by a 370 foot long shed-roofed loggia on the east side, adjacent to the tracks. Both buildings still serve their original function.

The architectural significance of the station stems from the unusual use of the delicate Federal Revival style for its design vocabulary. At the time, most depots were designed in bolder Victorian or Beaux Arts styles reflecting the nature of grandly scaled industrialized transport systems. The Federal Revival style is an early 20th century mixture of Neoclassical architectural details borrowed from buildings constructed just after the American revolution and is, therefore, particularly appropriate for Alexandria.

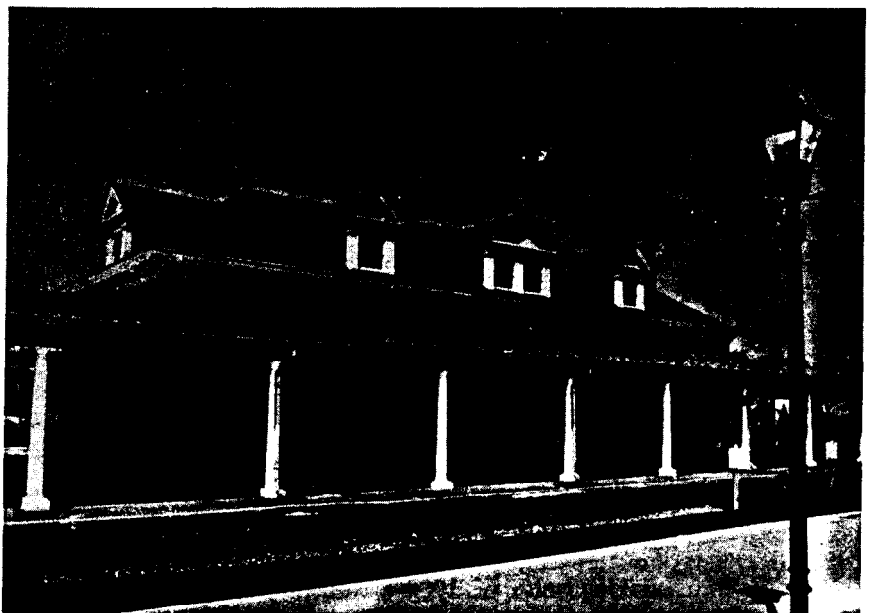
The distinguishing Federal Revival architectural details used here include: load-bearing masonry walls constructed with brick laid in a Flemish bond using dark headers, a low water table with a molded cap and projecting brick quoins at the comers. Pedimented dormers are framed with Tuscan pilasters, though the baggage building uses eyebrow vents on each of the four roof slopes in a manner more typical of the Victorian period. A brick chimney with recessed panels punctuates the north hip of the depot and a simple wood modillioned cornice crowns both buildings and the dormers.

The most impressive architectural features are the highly detailed semi-circular and elliptical brick arches with winged granite keystones and imposts surrounding the doors and windows. The four principal entries to the depot consist of double door units flanked by windows with elliptical, spider web fanlights above. Rusticated granite accents are also used as comers guards flanking the jambs of baggage loading doors. The schist fieldstone foundation is partially exposed as the site slopes down to the north, providing grade level access to the mechanical rooms in the half basement.

Station Exterior

Although numerous minor alterations have occurred, both buildings have remained essentially unchanged. A pedestrian tunnel below the tracks, connecting the east and west sides of the passenger platform, is located at the north end of the depot. A Railway Express Agency building, located south of the baggage building, was erected in 1943 and demolished in 1982.³

and north sides of the station and on the east platform were removed as part of the 1982 renovation and were not replaced⁴. Other exterior modifications include replacement of the slate roof and copper ridge flashing with black composition shingles and replacement of the north and west loggia's concrete floor and wrought iron railing. Neo-colonial light fixtures have replaced the original Victorian cast iron pole lights.



East Elevation ca. 1994

photo by author

A loggia, or portico, on the west side was reconstructed in 1982 using the same form, location and Tuscan style wood columns as the original loggia but with glue laminated beams and a stainless steel standing seam roof in lieu of the original 4x10 yellow pine joists and tin roof. The original loggias on the west

Interior

The interior spaces of the station and baggage buildings are slightly different from those shown on the original construction drawings dated October 27, 1904. The original rooms were identified as follows: General Waiting Room, Women's Waiting Room, White Women's

Waiting Room, Men's Toilet, Colored Women's Toilet, White Women's Toilet, Ticket Office, Closet. The original masonry interior partitions were 18'-6" high with a 6' high glazed brick wainscot and an elaborate terra cotta cornice. The interior walls stopped at the cornice to expose a vaulted, varnished wood ceiling and cased wood scissor trusses, visible throughout the space. Light filled the rooms from above through the seven dormer windows. The original flooring material is not noted on the plans.

The interior was substantially modified in 1929 (Alexandria Building Permit #603)¹ to eliminate the separate waiting rooms. The ticket office was expanded at this time with a square bay window for viewing the approaching trains and angled ticket windows into the

newly combined lobby. The toilets were revised and relocated. All renovation work was performed with masonry and millwork matching the original construction. The present black and white mosaic tile floor was also likely added at this time.

Other alterations to the interior since the 1929 remodeling include: painting the interior masonry walls and original varnished oak woodwork, installation of a flat plywood ceiling on metal bar joists at 18' above the floor and air conditioning equipment added in the original toilet room in the southwest corner. Recent wood frame partitions have reduced the size of the original waiting rooms for additional new toilets, vending and baggage storage. The Baggage, Mail and Express rooms in the baggage building are still used for storage.

Site Alterations

Although no photographs have yet been located of the original station interior, several exterior photographs give some indication of improvements to the site. The earliest known photograph of the station (see below) was taken ca. 1906 from the east platform facing north. The photo shows **horse-drawn hacks** waiting at the front of the station and passengers boarding from the covered portico on the east platform. This portico was demolished in 1982 and replaced by a contemporary portico in 1993 to serve VRE passengers.

The most notable features of this 1906 photograph are that the trim and columns of the station are painted a very light color with dark modillions on the portico, that there is no planting yet on the site and that the platform lights are a

East Platform Looking North, ca. 1906

historic photo courtesy William E. Griffin, Jr. from *100 years along the RF&P*, p. 120



Victorian shepherds crook head design on tall cast iron poles. There is a four foot tall wrought iron wicket fence separating the north and southbound tracks. A bracketed shed roof (removed for construction of the REA building) covers the south loading doors of the baggage building. The platforms are poured concrete. Finally, the portico gable ends are enclosed and the station sign, "ALEXANDRIA," is mounted on the frieze. A view of the station from the northwest taken about the same time confirms the color scheme and shows a gravel drive.

Another photograph was taken a short time later, ca. 1910, from the top of the earthen berm above the west platform looking north. By this time, landscape planting and new wooden electrical poles have been added within the site. Most significantly, the color of the station has changed from the light, Neoclassical scheme to dark, more Victorian colors for the columns and trim with the portico modillions now painted a contrasting lighter color. A photograph taken from the east platform in the 1940s shows the same color scheme. Microscopic paint analysis done last year found that all of the original exterior finishes had, unfortunately, been completely removed during previous renovations.

The present Union Station site is bounded generally by King Street to the northeast, Callahan Drive to the northwest and the tracks to the southeast. The site was originally much larger and extended beyond Callahan Drive on the northwest to Diagonal Road on the southeast but large portions were sold to the Washington Memorial Association in 1922 and Metro in 1976.

The existing concrete, limestone and granite Veterans of Foreign Wars memorial was erected on the lawn in front of the station in 19402. A World War I Renault tank was also installed on a concrete pad adjacent to the memorial. According to Amtrak officials, the tank was removed to a VFW museum in Huntington, West Virginia in the early 1980s where it was restored to running condition.

Other Rail-Related Structures

Three other structures remain within the present Alexandria city limits from the earliest period of the railroads: the Wilkes Street tunnel, **Hooff's** Run bridge and the Southern Railroad roundhouse.

The Wilkes Street Tunnel was constructed from 1851-55 by the Orange and Alexandria

Railroad between Royal and Lee Streets as part of their line to connect the Potomac River in Alexandria with Gordonsville, Virginia. The Smith Foundry was adjacent to the tunnel on the banks of the Potomac River.

The importance of the tunnel increased in 1872 when the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad acquired the Grange & Alexandria by merger. This company was denied access to the Long (14th Street) Bridge into the District because it was owned by a competitor, the Pennsylvania Railroad. The B&O Railroad, therefore, operated a rail car ferry across the Potomac River at this point between 1875 and 1906. The tunnel remained an active part of the rail line to the waterfront until the tracks were removed in 1975. (AG: 10/13/75) The Southern Railway's tracks were abandoned on Union Street on November 26, 1969. (Star & AG: 11/26/69)

In 1856, as part of this same line, the Orange and Alexandria also constructed a bridge over **Hooff's** Run just south of Duke Street. This grey sandstone structure is the last remaining of several bridges constructed across **Hooff's** Run, a small tributary of Hunting Creek. The Washington-southern Railroad (controlled by the Pennsylvania Railroad and the builder of

Alexandria's Union Station) widened the bridge between 1885-95 using a red Seneca sandstone. The tracks were removed from the roadbed of the bridge in 1990 and the structure was listed on the National Register in 1993. The bridge is a central feature of the Alexandria African American Heritage Park, part of the **Carlyle** mixed use development, a joint venture of the Carr and **Norfolk-Southern** companies.

Finally, a concrete frame roundhouse was constructed in 1916 by the Southern Railway near Duke Street and Holland Lane. This structure, now used as a wholesale lumber yard, is slated to be demolished in the near future for the **Carlyle** project.

1996 Station Renovation

In 1992 the City of Alexandria Department of Planning nominated the ca. 1905 Alexandria Union Station to the National Register of Historic Places, with the support of the property owners, the RF&P Corporation. In August of that year, following preliminary plans and cost estimates developed with the primary station tenant, Amtrak, the City of Alexandria applied to the Virginia Department of Transportation on behalf of the RF&P Corporation for enhancement funds for renova-

tion/restoration of the Station under the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (**ISTEA**). The State subsequently approved funding for 80% of the \$840,000 grant budget, with 10% being provided by RF&P and 10% by Amtrak. The City of Alexandria Department of Transportation and Environmental Services will administer the project under the terms of the grant.

The proposed scope of work for the **1995/96** phase of the project entails the complete functional and aesthetic restoration/renovation of the interior and exterior of the main building and glass enclosure of the breezeway to connect the existing lobby with the adjacent storage building to the south. Interior improvements will include rehabilitation of the passenger and ticket sales areas and new restrooms in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act Guidelines. All existing mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems within the building will be replaced or completely updated. Original architectural elements, such as glazed brick walls, mosaic tile floors, original furnishings and the wood cathedral ceiling - now covered by a flat plywood ceiling on metal bar joists - will be restored to their original appearance.

Proposed exterior improvements include repairing original windows, installing new doors and replacing existing paving in the breezeway and other pedestrian areas to provide easier access for patrons with disabilities. The original portico, removed in 1982, covered the front of the building and the stairway leading to the pedestrian tunnel to the east platform for the Virginia Railway Express. This portico will be restored to provide weather protection for the building and to rail patrons. The brick and stone walls will be cleaned and repointed where necessary.

The site will be further enhanced by additional native landscaping to screen service areas and historically appropriate site lighting. The high tension overhead electrical lines are scheduled to be buried through the site in 1996 as part of the development of the **Carlyle** project, south of Duke Street. Functional improvements will include new sidewalks with handicap ramps for pedestrians, as well as separate automobile access for patrons and taxis. The station will remain in operation throughout construction.

A second phase of the renovation project, financed by a future grant, will include additional operational improvements to the exterior of

the main building and construction of a new parking lot with up to 96 spaces on a presently unimproved portion of the station site, located at the south end along Callahan Drive near Duke Street. Phase two may also include platform extensions to the north and south, handicap access elevators and extension of the existing pedestrian tunnel to connect with the adjacent Metro station.

The station, therefore, continues to serve Alexandria for both long distance and commuter rail travelers and is an important intermodal facility with the adjacent bus and rapid rail stops at the King Street Metro station.

ENDNOTES

1. Permit #603 was issued on 9/24/1929 at the Alexandria Passenger Station RF&PRR for "Changing location of toilets and alterations in ticket office. Putting down a new floor". The architect was listed as C.E. Dare, 17 Rosemont Ave., Alexandria, Va. and the mechanic as J.E. Deutr Forresman, Carpenter. The estimated value of the improvements was \$5,000.

2. Permit #1730 was issued on 10/17/40 to erect a "Concrete, Limestone, Granite" "Memorial" by the Veterans-Foreign Wars. The architect and builder was D.E. Bayliss of 5 18 King Street, Alexandria, Va. The estimated value of the improvements was \$2,000.

3. Permit #3499 was issued on [?]/15/43 to construct an "Express Office" for the Railway Express Co. The architect was C.J. Dye and the contractor was Allen C. Minnix of 1416 F St. N.W., Washington, DC. The building was to be 75' long by 33'-71/2" deep, one story tall with no basement. The solid brick walls were 9" thick and the Mansard [sic] roof was covered with composition shingles. The estimated value was \$13,000. The permit file contains six sheets of detailed construction drawings.

Demolition Permit #1570 was issued on 4/26/82 to demolish "the Railway Express Agency (REA) Building". The file includes several letters between the City of Alexandria Code Enforcement Bureau and the RF&P Railroad Co. regarding the dangerous condition of the existing REA building and east platform passenger shed. The value of the demolition contract was \$22,500.

4. Permit #37972 was issued on 5/24/82 for "Modification to existing building as per plans". Ten sheets of detailed construction drawings are included in the microfiche file. The architect was Robert Ovelman of the Chief Engineer's office at Amtrak. The contractor was J.S.C., Inc., 2934 Patrick Henry Drive, Falls Church, Va. The work was valued at \$235,000.

5. The valuation hearing records from the RF&P files of May 1, 1925 indicate that J. P. Pettyjohn was paid \$27,911.23 for "Contract & Extras" as general contractor (?) for construction of the passenger station. Pettyjohn is not listed as a resident or contractor in the 1903 or 1907 Alexandria City Directories. Pettyjohn also received \$11,620 for "Contract" for construction of the adjacent Alexandria Freight Station in 1905.

The Interstate Commerce Commission set the freight rates for railroads in the early 20th century based on the value of the railroads assets. These records are often an excellent source of plans and photographs of rail properties. However, as the Washington & Southern track was less than 50 miles in length (32 mi.), all of the records of this railroad prior to acquisition by the RF&P were destroyed by the I.C.C. in an effort to reduce the amount of records in storage in the 1950s.

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