THE VISUAL CULTURE OF THE RAILROAD IN THE TEXAS PANHANDLE

by

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF HISTORY

Major Subject: Art History

West Texas A&M University

Canyon, Texas

May 2018

ABSTRACT

The arrival of the railroad to the Texas Panhandle was a foundational moment that connected the area to the rest of the state, the High Plains region, and the American nation. My thesis on the visual culture of the railroad in the Texas Panhandle will focus on the architecture of the railroad depot, and primarily on the Santa Fe Railroad company, given the availability of archives, the number of depots that are still standing, the use of traceable architects, and Harvey House connections with the Santa Fe line. The structures of depots were often altered as needs arose, and some were torn down and new ones were built in the same or in different locations. Therefore, tracing the development of railroad depot architecture is a daunting task, and the historian must reconstruct lost structures and observe the fluctuations of these buildings over time. Though early depot design was normally standardized, and depot construction was often not the work of a trained or named architect, there were some known architects who worked on depots, including Guy Carlander, E. A. Harrison, and Louis Curtiss. This thesis explores the stylistic innovations of Harrison and Curtiss, as Carlander's depot design has proven quite difficult to trace. My project aims to assess depot architecture as a visual language of great significance for the regional identity of the northwest portion of Texas.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my thesis adviser, Dr. Amy Von Lintel, and my thesis committee members, Dr. Elizabeth Morrow Clark and Dr. Brian Ingrassia, for their help and guidance. I would also like to thank the History Department and the Graduate School. Thanks to my family for their love and support, especially to my husband, Marcus, and my son, Duncan—this thesis is dedicated to them.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The arrival of the railroad to the Texas Panhandle was a foundational moment that connected the area to the rest of the state, the High Plains region, and the American nation. During the late 1880s, railroad companies laid tracks near farms and ranches in the area, making it easier to ship crops and cattle. My thesis on the visual culture of the railroad in the Texas Panhandle will focus primarily on the Santa Fe Railroad company, but there were three different rail companies building in the Panhandle in the late nineteenth century: the Fort Worth and Denver City Railroad, the Southern Kansas Railroad, and the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad. My focus on the Santa Fe Railroad stems from several aspects that include the availability of archives, the number of depots that are still standing, the use of traceable architects, and Harvey House connections with the Santa Fe line.

The coming of the railroad in the Panhandle also created new towns in the region. For instance, Amarillo, Canadian, and Pampa did not exist until the tracks brought people, goods, and jobs to the location, thereby establishing these cities.[1] Often, railroad depots were among the first structures built in these towns established by the railroad. Train depots were the initial aspect of the town that passengers would see upon arrival and they would thereby create an identity for the town or city. Depot architecture brought

[1] Hutchinson County Historical Commission, *Hutchinson County History* (Dallas: Taylor Publishing Company, 1980), 44-45.

a sense of solidity and permanence to the townscape, and both a social and commercial public space to the town. In addition to their practical function for the railroad companies, depots also often served as event centers for the townspeople. Many depots started out as simple wooden structures, but their import regularly dictated that they be restructured and updated over time. For instance, with updates on the Santa Fe Railroad in the 1910s and 1920s, a newly uniform identity of architectural styles of depot design emerged in the Panhandle. Depots could range from small one-room shacks to larger combination structures with as many as three rooms that handled passengers, shipped freight, and provided office space for railroad employees.[2] Between the 1880s and the 1950s, these depots functioned as a hub of Panhandle life. They provided economic and social centers where citizens received their news via telegraph, met train passengers, or were employed. Later, with the building of Harvey Houses and other hotels affiliated with the depots, as well as reading rooms in the depot structures themselves, they became increasingly used as space for socialization, institutional meetings, and cultural enrichment in the form of parties, banquets, and concerts.

The architectural style of a depot was often standardized by the railroad company: nevertheless, an art historical study of the aesthetics of depots is warranted because of their centrality to the regional townscapes, the care that went into their design, and the cultural values they embody. By 1872, even before the company had arrived in the Texas Panhandle, the Santa Fe Railroad had already established the basic features of their combination depots. The structures were required to have wooden frames, wooden roof

[2] Robert E. Pounds, Santa Fe Depots: The Western Lines (Dallas: Kachina Press, 1984), 14.

brackets, straight roof lines, semi-hexagonal-shaped bay windows, lintels over doors and windows, double sash windows with six panes of glass per sash, and other details that changed little over a sixty-year period. Though simple, these details afforded the buildings an aesthetically pleasing, organized, and even sophisticated design that embodied the stability and success the company wanted to convey to the public. Like so many American brands developing in the early twentieth century, American railroad companies wanted consumers to relate the style of depot architecture to the company identity. There were two wooden frame depot standards—the "1895" standard had the details mentioned above, as well as board and batten siding on the exterior, which consists of alternating wide boards and narrow strips of wood, called battens, that are placed horizontally or vertically, which you can see in the Canyon City depot (fig.1), and the "1910" standard, which was similar to the "1895" standard, but had shiplap siding, which is exterior wooden paneling with tight joints that are formed by overlapping boards on top of each other, and a separate gabled roof over the bay window, which you can see in the Borger depot (fig.2). [3]

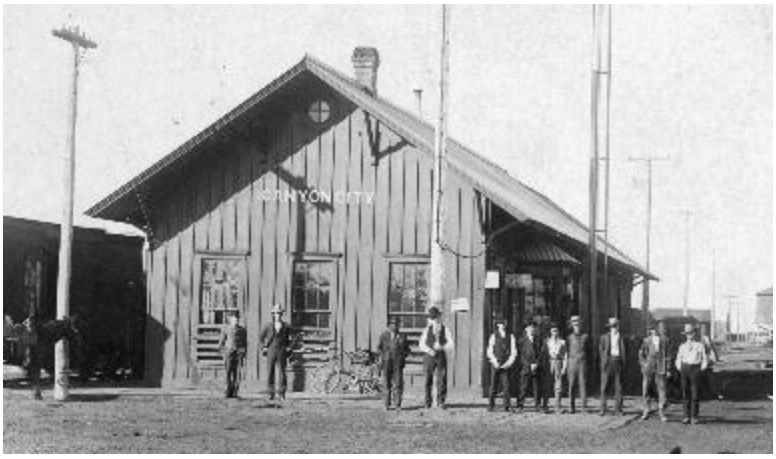

Fig.1. The Canyon City depot, an example of the "1895" wooden frame depot standard. Photo courtesy of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum.

[3] Pounds, *Santa Fe Depots*, 17.

Fig.2. The Borger depot, an example of the "1910" wooden frame standard depot. Photo courtesy of the Hutchinson County Historical Museum.

And yet, these structures were often altered as needs arose, and some were torn down and new ones were built in the same or in different locations. Therefore, tracing the development of railroad depot architecture is a daunting task, and the historian must reconstruct lost structures and observe the fluctuations of these buildings over time.

Early styles of depot architecture were rarely designed by trained, established, named architects. One of these untrained depot architects was Guy Anton Carlander, now a locally known architect in the Texas Panhandle, whose Art Deco, Prairie School, and Late Gothic Revival designs include the Natatorium, the Fisk Medical Arts Building, and the First Baptist Church in Amarillo. Carlander had a job in the architectural department of the Santa Fe Railroad before his service during the First World War. After the war, he returned to work for Santa Fe and moved to Amarillo in 1919. Carlander designed hospitals and other buildings for the Santa Fe Railroad, and it is possible that he might have worked with the named architects who designed the depots that were built in the Texas Panhandle.[4]

[4] Shanna Foust-Peeples, "Guy Carlander," for the website "History Makers of the High Plains," May 19, 2000: http://old.amarillo.com/stories/051900/his_carlander.html. Accessed 31 March, 2018. See also the Guy Carlander Papers at the Panhandle-Plains Historical Research Center and at the Amarillo Public Library, Downtown Branch.

One of the things that distinguishes the Santa Fe Railroad brand from the other railroad companies is its distinctive logo. The head of the Atchison, Topeka, and the Santa Fe Railroad ad campaign from 1900-1933, William Haskell Simpson, was searching for just the right emblem for the corporate logo.[5] There are several different versions of how the logo originated. However, J.J. Byrne, a Santa Fe Railroad passenger traffic manager in Los Angeles was given credit by Santa Fe for the creation of the emblem. Byrne claimed that while aboard a train brainstorming design ideas for a corporate logo, he used a silver dollar to trace the outline for the circle and drew a cross inside the circle. He said that the circle represented the wheel of transportation and the cross symbolized the four directions on a compass. Byrne, who was familiar with Southwest Native American culture, also stated that the circle and cross symbolized Zia, the Pueblo representation for the sun.[6]

Byrne's Santa Fe Railroad logo was first used in 1908. Sometimes, the circle and cross emblem are placed inside a square. Both versions of the logo are considered to be official. There are several color variations of the Santa Fe Railroad logo—blue and white, black and white, or red and yellow, among others. The iconic circle and cross corporate logo was used by the Santa Fe Railroad for ninety-five years, until the company's merger with Burlington Northern.[7] Many of the train depots that are standing today in the Texas Panhandle and other regions still bear the Santa Fe logo, such as the Panhandle depot, the

[5] Victoria E. Dye, *All Aboard for Santa Fe: Railway Promotion of the Southwest, 1890s-1930s* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 24-25.
[6] Steve Glischinski, *Santa Fe Railway* (Osceola, Wisconsin: MBI Publishing Company, 1997), 25.
[7] Glischinski, *Santa Fe Railway*, 25.

Fig. 3. The Miami depot, now the Roberts County Museum, still bears the black-and-white cross in a circle Santa Fe Railroad logo. Photo taken by the author on March 17, 2015.

Amarillo depot and Harvey House, and the Miami depot (fig.3).

Another distinguishable feature that set the Santa Fe Railroad apart from their competitors was the color scheme of their wooden train depots. The colors of the depots were standardized and the paint was supplied by the Santa Fe Railroad. Early Santa Fe depot exteriors, such as the depot in Miami, Texas, were painted barn red. Later on, a Santa Fe standard color called "Brown Mineral" replaced barn red. During the 1920s, the Santa Fe standardized color was colonial yellow with bronze-green trim and white window sashes. By the 1950s, depots were painted yellow with yellow trim. In the 1970s, the Santa Fe Railroad discontinued the wooden depot color standards and no longer supplied paint. From then on, depots were typically painted green, tan, white, or blue.[8]

[8] Pounds, *Santa Fe Depots*, 29.

The railroad is arguably the single-most important invention in modern American history for the way that it changed everyday life for Americans—it changed the way people moved from place to place, the way they saw the world, the way they bought and sold goods, and the way that their communities took shape. Railroad companies personified global capitalism, and the men who created and ran the transcontinental railroad—Leland Stanford, Collis P. Huntington, Jay Gould, Mark Hopkins, Charles Francis Adams—were notoriously power-hungry and corrupt. In his book, *Railroaded: The Transcontinental and the Making of Modern America*, Richard White examines the dark side of the railroad. He writes: "Transcontinental railroads were a Gilded Age extravagance that rent holes in the political, social, and environmental fabric of the nation, creating railroads as mismanaged and corrupt as they were long."[9] *The Octopus: A Story of California*, a novel written by Frank Norris in 1901, is based on the Mussel Slough Tragedy of 1880. Seven settlers were killed by law agents defending the Southern Pacific Railroad during a dispute over land titles. The central issue of the dispute was the ownership of the ranches. In the novel, the octopus represents the railroad monopoly (fig.4). California wheat growers from the San Joaquin Valley stand up against the Pacific and Southwestern Railroad. Norris' book is about the power that railroad monopolies have over individuals.[10]

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[9] Richard White, *Railroaded: The Transcontinental and the Making of Modern America* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 2011). See also Michael Kazin, "How the Robber Barons Railroaded America" *New York Times*, Sunday Book Review, July 15, 2011. http://www.nytimes.com. Accessed 18 May 2018.

[10] Kevin Starr, "Introduction," in Frank Norris, *The Octopus: A Story of California* (New York: Viking/Penguin, 1986).

Fig.4. Tinted lithograph by G. Frederick Keller of an octopus, "The Curse of California," *The Wasp*, Vol. 9 No. 316, 520-521 on August 19, 1882. Image from website accessed 18 May 2018. http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/gilded/power/text1/octopusimages.pdf.

Despite their large size, railroad companies needed to deal with real people in real communities, which the history of depot design clearly shows. Nevertheless, depots have rarely, if ever, been the focus of the vast literature about railroad history in the United States. The railroad station is where the railroad stands still and thus stations are where railroad companies have to deal with the public in a particular location. Depot history can tell us how the railroad companies surprisingly did not standardize all of their designs—instead, they assessed some of the needs of individual communities and the people who lived there. Architects employed by the railroad were sent out to these communities to impart an identity and a stylistic individuality to these spaces. Railroad depots represent an important instance of where the public and the private aspects of American life

collided. “Public sphere,” a term coined by Jürgen Habermas, a German sociologist and philosopher, is an area in social life where individuals can come together to freely discuss and identify problems in society, and through that discussion influence political action. Habermas defined the public sphere as “a virtual or imaginary community which does not necessarily exist in any identifiable space.” The public sphere, according to Habermas, emerged in the eighteenth century. Coffeehouses in London during this time period became centers for art and literary criticism, and later included economic and political disputes as matters of discussion. French salons became a forum for self-expression and a platform for sharing agendas and opinions for public debate.[11] One could see American railroad depots in the context of Habermas’s public sphere. Even as they were owned and operated by private companies, they were buildings for community use in the early years of many towns and cities, especially in the American West, where the depots were often one of the first significant structures built. More recently, communities have banded together to save their depots or have preserved them in other forms—photos, architectural drawings, or artifacts—after they have been demolished, given their centrality for community identity and their history of public use. Depots have been embraced, not because they belonged to the railroad, but because they were adopted by the communities as part of their civic pride and identity.

My study aims to do more than just trace styles and recognize talented architects for their contributions to regional design. Theoretically, I draw on critical regionalism to show trends that can be applied more broadly to the American scene in the early

[11] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1962 German, 1989 English).

twentieth century, when the depots I researched were built. Critical regionalism is a theory defined by Kenneth Frampton in his book, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*.[12] Critical regionalism looks at how local developments of architecture are not just regional sidelines to mainline narratives—we can learn from them on their own terms. Frampton proposed that critical regionalism should appreciate modern architecture, critically, for its universal, progressive qualities, but at the same time, value should be placed on the geographic and local context of the building. Emphasis should be on topography, climate, light; on tectonic form rather than visual form. Frampton draws on phenomenology, the philosophical study of architecture as it appears in lived human experience. Phenomenology helped give new legitimacy to the idea that historical buildings contained valuable, observational lessons for contemporary designers. My thesis is more than a regional history relevant only to local contexts; rather, depot architecture in the Texas Panhandle has elements that reflect national trends—both capitalist railroad development and the rise of a particularly American public sphere—where the local inflections are precisely where these two aspects come together in the most interesting ways.

Cultural geography is essentially the idea of mapping, geographically, a cultural development. My thesis employs this method of mapping out depots, but not just in geographic physical location, but also for their cultural meaning for western American communities. Cultural geography is the theory that cultures and societies develop out of

[12] Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2007). See also Kenneth Frampton, "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance," In, Foster, H. (ed.) *Postmodern Culture* (London: Pluto Press, 1983), 16-30.

their local landscape, but the landscape is also shaped by the cultures and societies. The interaction between the natural landscape and humankind creates the cultural landscape. Cultural geography, also known as human geography, is the study of humans and their built environments on earth.[13]

In addition to the railroad companies themselves, another private company had a significant impact on the cultural geography of the railroad, and of the aesthetics of depot architecture: the Fred Harvey Corporation. Beginning in the 1880s-1890s, the Santa Fe Railroad worked with the Fred Harvey Corporation in order to promote tourism by rail. The two companies collaborated to choose the locations of their Harvey House depots based on travel time, scenic beauty, and tourist attractions. A "Harvey House depot" included, variously, an expanded depot design with restaurants, banquet halls, hotel spaces, and living spaces for employees who served railroad customers. Thus, not only did depots become spaces with waiting rooms for the public, they became community social spaces based on the service industry for tourists and travelers on the railroad. In the Panhandle alone, there were three Harvey House Santa Fe depots located in Amarillo, Canadian, and Slaton. Unfortunately, the Canadian Harvey House was torn down in 1956. The Amarillo Harvey House depot is still standing but is currently vacant, and the Harvey House depot in Slaton has been restored and now functions as a railroad history museum and a bed and breakfast. The Santa Fe Railroad and the Fred Harvey Corporation made the decision to build structures that would reflect the look of the

[13] On cultural geography, see especially Carl O. Sauer, "The Morphology of Landscape," *University of California Publications in Geography*, and *Andean Reflections: Letters from Carl O. Sauer While on a South American Trip Under a Grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, 1942* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1982).

Southwest, giving these Texas communities an identity that linked them with tourists spots in the American West, from Santa Fe to the Grand Canyon. To be sure, these Harvey House Depots were key markers for tying the Texas Panhandle to the broader Southwest region more prominently than to the American South and the rest of Texas. The American Southwest had become a center for Harvey-sponsored tourism by the early 1900s. With this Harvey Corporation and Santa Fe Railroad partnership, the iconic Mission Revival style Santa Fe depot design was born. Mission Revival style depots were built throughout Kansas, Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas, giving these locations a distinctly "western" cultural identity that was seen as "American" and yet distinctly separate from eastern America.[14] This identity shaped the desire to experience a kind of "authentic American experience" that the railroads profited from, but that the public living in these communities also embraced as "homegrown" and genuine.

Fred Harvey's experience as an American immigrant and entrepreneur is worth reviewing here, especially for what it reflects about how his vision shaped western American identity. Harvey was fifteen in 1850 when he arrived in New York city from London and his first job was washing dishes at the Smith and McNeill Café. After spending a year or two in New York City, Harvey moved westward, to New Orleans.[15] He worked his way up in the kitchen and gained knowledge about the culinary arts and how to run a good restaurant. Harvey moved to St. Louis in 1853; he became a citizen of the United States in 1858. Harvey co-owned a restaurant with a partner, but the

[14] Pounds, *Santa Fe Depots*, 17.
[15] George H. Foster and Peter C. Weiglin, *The Harvey House Cookbook: Memories of Dining along the Santa Fe Railroad* (Lanham, Maryland: Taylor Trade Publishing, 2006), 12. See also Stephen Fried, *Appetite for America: Fred Harvey and the Business of Civilizing the Wild West—One Meal at a Time* (New York: Bantam Books, 2011).

partnership dissolved during the Civil War—his partner cleaned out their bank account and joined the confederacy in 1861—and the restaurant was closed. Harvey rebuilt his professional life after the war, working on a Mississippi river boat, and as a mail clerk for the railway post office, thus finding himself in the heart of the developing American trans-continental transportation networks. For the post office, he sorted mail in a moving railcar and made pick-ups and deliveries whenever the train stopped in towns along the way; he therefore saw American small towns along the railroad lines firsthand. By 1865, Harvey was promoted to general western agent for a railroad that later became part of the Burlington Company and was transferred to Leavenworth, Kansas where he learned about another key American industry: cattle. The Burlington Railroad was an important hauler of Texas cattle that shipped to markets in the Midwest and the East.[16]

Finding himself at the center of railroad networks in Middle America, he discovered the need for a service industry that collaborated with these networks. His history in the restaurant business had given him the knowhow to begin in 1873 developing eating houses, first along the Kansas Pacific Railroad, which later became part of the Union Pacific Railroad located in Lawrence and Wallace, Kansas and Hugo, Colorado. By 1875, Harvey had designed the first high quality restaurant chain in the American West.[17] His innovations included setting up an interstate restaurant chain along the railroad that would provide a meal stop food service that would attract passengers. Harvey first brought his plan to his railway employer, the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad, but was turned down. Next, he approached the Atchison, Topeka, and

[16] Foster and Weiglin. *The Harvey House Cookbook*, 16.
[17] Ibid.

the Santa Fe Railroad. The President of the Santa Fe Railroad, Thomas Nickerson, and Santa Fe Railroad Superintendent, Charlie Morse, were open to his idea. Negotiations between Harvey and the Santa Fe Railroad began in 1876. Harvey's first dining establishment was set up inside a two-story wooden frame depot located in Topeka, Kansas. It was an immediate and overwhelming success. Train passengers, railroad employees, and townspeople ate at the restaurant on a regular basis.

A second Harvey House was set up inside the Clifton Hotel in Florence, Kansas, and a third Harvey House opened in Lakin, Kansas in 1878.[18] By 1883, about seventeen Harvey Houses were serving customers. The Santa Fe Railroad made it to California in 1887—Harvey Houses followed the tracks along the way, popping up in New Mexico, Arizona, and California. In 1889, the Santa Fe Railroad made official the agreement with Fred Harvey by giving him exclusive rights to operate all of the railroad's eating houses and hotels west of the Missouri River. No rent was required by the railroad, and the railroad furnished the Harvey Houses with free coal, ice, supplies, water, and provided free transportation for personnel.[19] Each Harvey House was scheduled to serve two to six train meal stops every day.[20]

At the time of his death in 1901, Harvey owned and operated forty-seven restaurants, fifteen hotels, thirty dining cars, and a ferry in the San Francisco Bay.[21] After their father's death, Byron and Ford Harvey ran the family business. The Fred Harvey Company restaurant system had to change with the times—train travel declined

[18] Foster and Weiglin, *The Harvey House Cookbook*, 23.
[19] Ibid., 26.
[20] Ibid., 35.
[21] Rosa Walston Latimer, *Harvey Houses of Texas: Historic Hospitality from the Gulf Coast to the Panhandle* (Charleston: The History Press, 2014), 19.

after World War II due to cars becoming more affordable, diesel fuel replaced steam, so trains no longer had to make frequent stops for fuel, and "Meals by Fred Harvey" were introduced on dining cars. The Fred Harvey Company supervised the food service in the Santa Fe Railroad's dining cars in 1968. By this time, many Harvey Houses had been closed. About a dozen Harvey restaurants and gift shops were still operating in the late 1960s.[22]

Harvey Girls were the waitresses who were handpicked by the Fred Harvey Company to serve train passengers, railroad employees, and local residents in the Harvey Houses throughout the West. Fred Harvey recruited Harvey Girl hopefuls by placing advertisements in popular women's magazines and newspapers. Job candidates were required to be young women between the ages of eighteen to thirty years old, attractive, and intelligent.[23] The Fred Harvey Company only hired women who were well-educated, dressed neatly, spoke clearly, and had good manners. Twenty-four hours after being hired, Harvey Girls underwent intense training. They were required to sign a one-year contract, stating that they would forfeit half of their base pay and railroad passes if they got married before the first year of their employment had passed. Harvey Girls had to abide by a strict dress code—their uniforms were starched, long black skirts, black shirts with high collars, white bib aprons, black, opaque stockings, comfortable black shoes, hair nets, little or no make-up, and white hair ribbons (Fig. 5). The monthly earnings of the Harvey Girls started at $17.50, plus room and board, meals, and tips.[24] Their shifts began at seven o'clock every morning and ended at six or seven o'clock in the evening.

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[22] Latimer, *Harvey Houses of Texas*, 23.
[23] Foster and Weiglin, *The Harvey House Cookbook*, 75.
[24] Ibid., 75-77.

They were allowed a two-hour break and had one day off each week. Harvey Girls worked twelve hour shifts, six-seven days a week.[25] Their curfew was eleven o'clock every evening. Fred Harvey's strict rules standardized service in the Harvey Houses. Between 1883-late 1950s, an estimated 100,000 young women proudly wore the Harvey Girl uniform.[26] The Harvey Girls helped shape the public face of the railroad and forged new professional paths for women—many of them were the first to leave their hometowns, work outside of the home, and take on a role besides wife or mother.[27]

Fig.5. Typical Harvey Girl uniform. Some Harvey Houses had different uniform requirements. Photo taken by the author at the Galveston Railroad Museum on July 15, 2016.

This thesis employs the focus of railroad depot architecture in the Texas Panhandle to open onto a number of broader trends, from the unique ways the public and private spheres interacted in America, to the rise of community identities in the West centered on the railroad depots, to the histories of the people who worked there, ate there,

[25] Latimer, *Harvey Houses of Texas*, 65.
[26] Ibid., 18.
[27] Ibid., 14.

and used the space on a regular basis. In addition to my introduction, this thesis includes three chapters. My second chapter examines the styles, aesthetics, and cultural meanings of depots in the Texas Panhandle. Rather than an annotated list of the various structures and their stylistic characteristics, however, my project aims to assess depot architecture as a visual language for the regional identity. My third chapter takes a more focused look at the human makers of depot design, in particular the named architects E.A. Harrison and Louis Curtiss. While working not to overlook the many anonymous designers and builders who contributed to depot architecture over the years, the availability of information on these two named architects allows us to use their work as case studies of the visual culture of depots. My final chapter will assess the current state of preservation of the Panhandle depots, noting which have been destroyed, which have been moved and repurposed, and which are still standing in their original state or location. This chapter will explore the worth of preservation projects and make the case that the high cost and civic organization needed in preservation is in fact necessary given the import of depots for American history and regional identity.

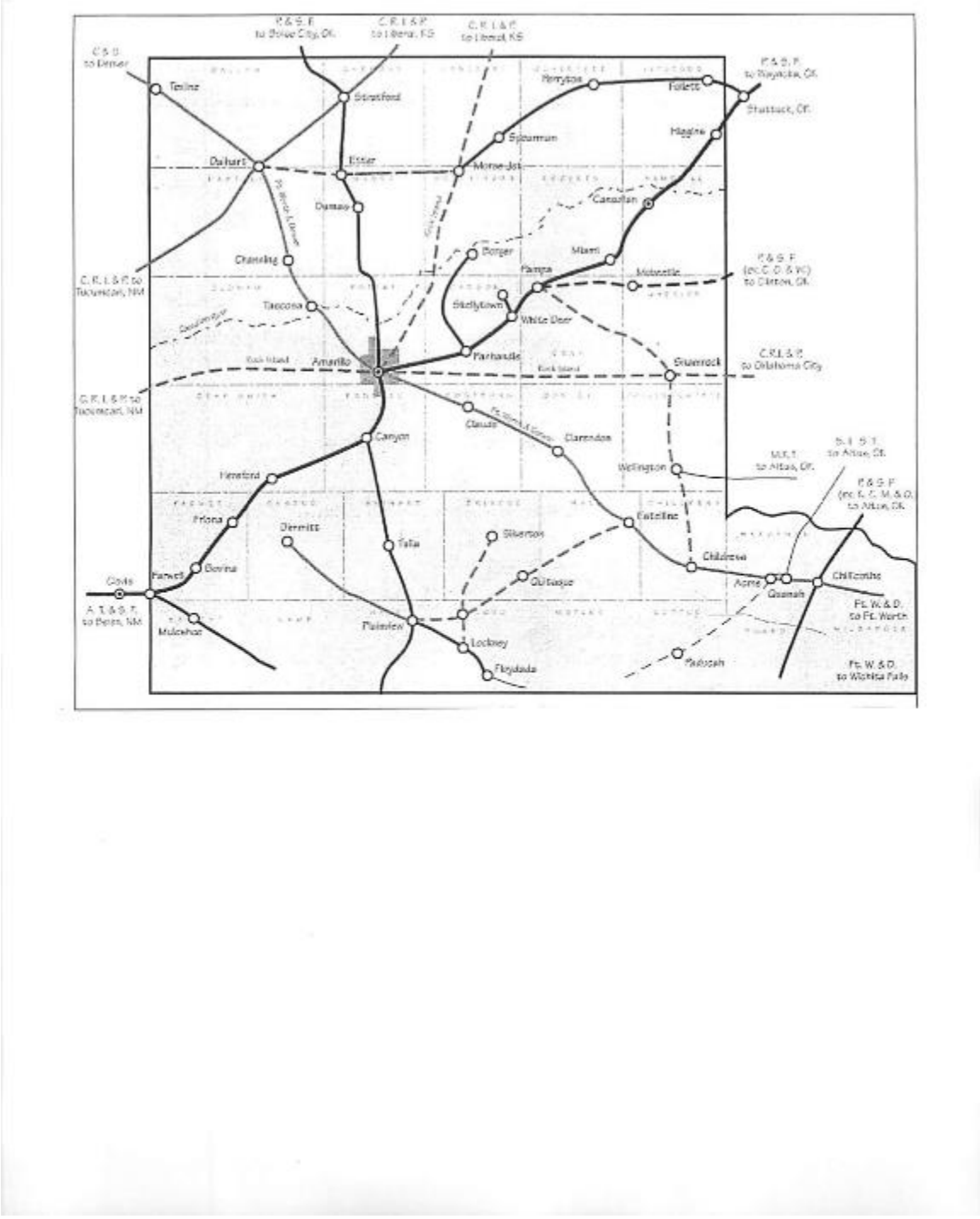
My research methods included an initial assessment of which depot buildings are still extant. I also undertook trips to several extant depots in the region for an on-site visit. During these visits, I took notes, photographs, and conducted interviews with local historians. I was unable to enter many of the structures that I visited for one reason or another—some were abandoned, closed, or too busy. However, I was able to go inside a few of the depots and other buildings, such as the Miami depot, the Post depot, and the Slaton Harvey House. I also visited a number of regional museums and explored their railroad history archives and exhibits, and took documentary photographs if I was

permitted to do so. Finally, I searched for any remaining blueprints of Santa Fe train depots, but many were missing and only a few were available to view.

The archives at the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum hold the blueprints of the Canyon depot that was built in 1925. I also travelled to Texas Tech University to view architectural drawings of the Panhandle depot and additions to the Amarillo Harvey House newsstand that are part of the Southwest Collection of the Special Collections Library. A few months ago, I spent a night in the historic Slaton Harvey House depot that had been saved from demolition and transformed into a bed and breakfast, event center, and railroad museum. While there, I visited with the innkeeper, the manager, and a retired teacher who was a member of the Slaton Railroad Heritage Association. Such conversations with local historians were a key component for my research, given that the stories often exist only in oral form at this time. They have not yet been recorded or published, so my work aims to begin putting some of these stories into writing, especially as we are losing more and more of these structures to time, deterioration, and lack of use.

In sum, train depots were the hub of the cities in the American West that functioned as cultural centers as well as economic and social centers. Depots were important for civic development; they were the brain and nervous systems that connected cities together by rail and they were the space where the fast-moving railroad came to stop and interfaced with specific communities. The story of train depots is not just the story of the railroad companies that owned the structures, but it is also the story of the general public who used them and embraced them as their own. Preserving them either in physical form or in other ways—such as digital reconstructions, archival collections, and

oral histories—allows them to be appreciated for their heretofore overlooked significance in American history.



CHAPTER II

DEPOT DESIGN

Three different architectural styles were used in the design of the Santa Fe depots built in the Texas Panhandle: wooden frame, Mission Revival Style, and Art Deco Style. The earliest, least expensive, and most common style of depots was the wooden frame. When the economy was thriving during the 1910s and 1920s, the more expensive Mission Revival Style and Art Deco Style depots designed by trained architects or architectural firms were the dominant designs. However, the economic impact of the Great Depression on the railroad industry caused a resurgence in the construction of the cheaper wooden frame standard depots.

Wooden Frame Standard Depots

In towns founded by the railroad, this style of depots were often the first structures built. These simple buildings were designed by unknown architects or builders, so there were rarely blueprints. Because of their simplicity, wooden frame depots were cheap and fast to build. Wooden frame depots were torn down, rebuilt, moved, or added onto as needs changed over time and as depot designs evolved. As mentioned in the

introduction, there were two categories of wooden frame depot standards—the "1895" standard and the "1910" standard.[28]

"1895" Wooden Frame Standard Depots

Miami

One of the first train depots built in the Texas Panhandle was located in the small town of Miami in the upper northeast portion of the region (fig. 2-1). This photograph shows a large gathering of people outside the structure, of varying social class: some in suits and some in work clothes, but mostly men. This image suggests the community use of the depot. Even if the photograph records a moment where many citizens posed to be included in the historical image, it still demonstrates the presence of the public in and around the structure. These depots are far from the abandoned buildings they became after the decline of passenger train traffic; they were clearing houses of economic, social, and cultural use. It was constructed in 1888 by an unknown builder. The simple, barn-red building reflects the "1895" wooden frame standard depot design—vertical board and batten siding (alternating wide boards and narrow strips of wood), wooden roof brackets, lintels over doors and windows, and a semi-hexagonal-shaped bay window. In 1943, the depot was shortened, rebuilt, and moved to a new location within the city. The board and batten exterior was later replaced by asbestos siding. The Miami depot was used by the Santa Fe Railroad until the 1970s.[29]

The use of asbestos dates back to as early as 4,000 B.C. The fibrous minerals are cheap and easy to mine. During the late 1800s, the first asbestos companies emerged.

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[28] Pounds, Robert E., *Santa Fe Depots: The Western Lines* (Dallas: Kachina Press, 1984), 17-19.
[29] Pounds, *Santa Fe Depots*, 125.

Asbestos is fireproof and resistant to chemicals, electricity, heat, and water, and was used in the railroad industry from the 1930s-1970s. It was used as insulation materials on steam and diesel locomotives, and could also be found on boilers, engine exteriors, under the train, inside boxcars, passenger cars, cabooses, pipe covering, and electrical panels. Asbestos was also used to insulate roadhouses, railroad shops, depots, and other railroad buildings. The presence of asbestos inside depots is one of the main reasons why so many of them have been demolished or relocated. However, the asbestos must be removed before a depot is demolished—why not remove the asbestos and leave the structure standing? Today, railroad workers are still at risk of exposure to asbestos if their companies are still using locomotive parts that were made before 1980. In 2005, the use of asbestos was banned by the European Union. The United States has not yet governmentally banned asbestos.[30]

Figure 2-1. The Miami depot, an example of the "1895" wooden frame standard depots. Photo taken by the author at the Roberts County Museum on March 17, 2015.

[30] On asbestos and its use in the railroad industry in the United States, see https://www.asbestos.com/occupations/railroad-workers/. Accessed 2 March, 2018.

Canadian

Canadian, along the same line as Miami in the northeast Panhandle, was one of the towns in the Texas Panhandle that was established by the railroad. The first Santa Fe Depot there was built in 1887 by the Southern Kansas Railway of Texas (fig. 2-2). The "1895" wooden frame standard style depot was designed by an unknown architect or builder. Like the nearby Miami depot, it features vertical board and batten siding, wooden roof brackets, and a bay window. Hemphill County's first sheriff, Thomas T. McGee, was murdered by members of the Bill Doolin Gang on the depot's platform on November 24, 1894 during an attempted robbery of the Wells Fargo Office. The gang fled the scene of the crime without the money.[31] In 1909, the wooden depot was retired when a brick-veneer depot was built.[32]

Figure 2-2. The first depot built in Canadian, an example of the "1895" Wooden Frame Standard. Photo taken by the author at the River Valley Pioneer Museum, Canadian, Texas, visited on October 15, 2016.

[31] Neal, Bill, *Getting Away with Murder on the Texas Frontier: Notorious Killings and Celebrated Trials* (Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2006), 74-83.
[32] Pounds, *Santa Fe Depots*, 124.

Canyon

The first Santa Fe depot in the town Canyon, in the central part of the Panhandle, south of Amarillo, was built by an unknown architect or builder in 1899, when the town was called "Canyon City" (fig. 2-3). The one-room depot was also used as a telegraph office. The Canyon depot was an example of the "1895" wooden frame standard and had features such as vertical board and batten siding, wooden roof brackets, and a bay window. The one-room depot was retired in 1906 and was rebuilt or replaced by a wooden frame combination depot that measured twenty-four feet by one-hundred-forty-three feet. The second depot was retired in 1925 when a brick and stucco depot was built (see fig. 2-17).[33]

Figure 2-3. Interior of Canyon City depot. Photo courtesy of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum.

[33] Pounds, *Santa Fe Depots*, 129,131.

Pampa

Pampa, along the same section of the Santa Fe line as Miami and Canadian, is another Texas Panhandle town that was created by the railroad. In 1887, the Southern Kansas Railway built a line from Miami to Panhandle. The White Deer Land Company gave land to the railroad for stations at Glasgow (Pampa) and Paton (White Deer). The railroad changed Glasgow's name to Pampa in 1892. In 1905, the Santa Fe Railroad built a "1895" wooden frame standard depot that was designed by an unknown architect or builder. The twenty-four-foot by forty-two-foot structure was retired in 1915. No photos are available of the 1905 Pampa depot.[34]

"1910" Wooden Frame Standard Depots

Booker

In 1920, the Santa Fe Railroad built a depot in Booker, a town in the upper northeast corner of the Texas Panhandle. The "1910" wooden frame standard combination depot was designed by an unknown architect or builder (fig. 2-4). The depot had shiplap siding, a bay window with a separate gabled roof, and wooden roof brackets. It also had unique features—two chimneys and a separate waiting area for women. The depot was rebuilt and moved in 1965. It was retired in 1983.[35]

[34] Pounds, *Santa Fe Depots*, 120.
[35] Ibid., 5.

Figure 2-4. Booker depot. Two men are posing by the ladies' waiting room. Photo from Mary Burchett Collection, featured in Robert E. Pounds' book, *Santa Fe Depots: The Western Lines*, page 5.

White Deer

A "1910" wooden frame standard Santa Fe depot was built in White Deer—a town on the same Santa Fe line as Panhandle, Pampa, Miami, and Canadian—by an unknown architect or builder (fig. 2-5). The combination depot featured wooden roof brackets, shiplap siding, and a bay window with a separate gabled roof. The structure measured twenty-four feet by ninety-eight feet. In 1972, the depot was shortened to twenty-four feet by forty-six feet.[36] It is interesting that the majority of the early depots in the upper northeast Panhandle look more generic middle-western; this is fitting because the Santa Fe line connected them directly to Kansas and especially Kansas City, the location of the primary cattle market of the Texas Panhandle. The aesthetic identity here looks toward the Midwest of the U.S. rather than the Southwest, a trend that changed with the rise of Fred Harvey depots and tourism in the Southwest through the Santa Fe line, when a number of these earlier wooden structures were replaced by Mission Style

[36] Pounds, *Santa Fe Depots*, 127, 129.

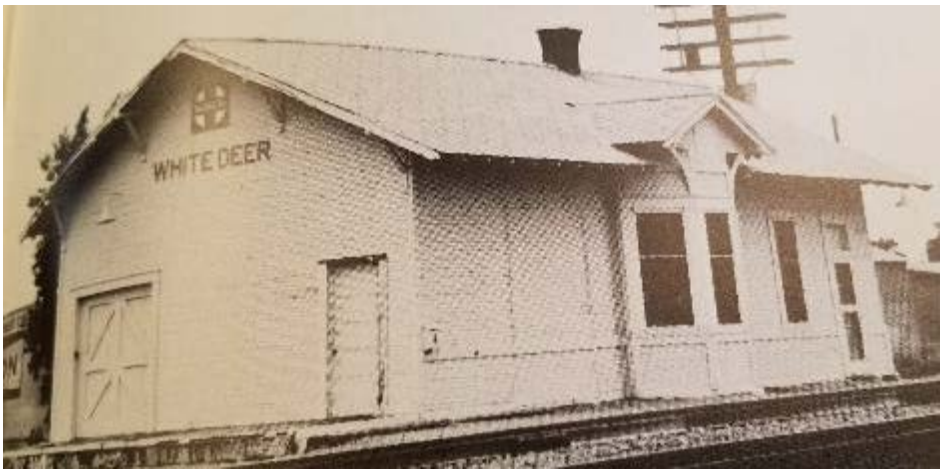

Figure 2-5. White Deer depot circa 1978, post 1972 shortening. Photo taken by K.B. King, from Robert E. Pound's book, *Santa Fe Depots: The Western Lines*, 127.

structures that became the predominant identity for the Santa Fe company as it connected further with tourism in the American Southwest.

Isom/Borger

In 1926 during Borger's oil boom, a "1910" wooden frame standard depot was built in the nearby town of Isom (fig. 2-6), which was northeast of Amarillo but off the main line of the Santa Fe running through Panhandle, Pampa, White Deer, Miami, and Canadian. This image shows the "boomtown" effect, where a large crowd is gathered around the station; it gives a similar feeling of explosive growth that Thomas Hart Benton captured in his painting *Boomtown* that was inspired by Borger. The Santa Fe depot featured shiplap siding, a chimney, a bay window with a separate gabled roof, and wooden roof brackets. It was built by an unknown architect or builder. The first train arrived at the depot on October 22, 1926. Isom was eventually absorbed by the growing city of Borger.[37] The Borger depot was once the longest combination depot on the Santa

[37] Hutchinson County Historical Commission, *Hutchinson County History* (Dallas: Taylor Publishing Company, 1980), 27.

Fe line and in the United States, measuring twenty-four feet wide by three-hundred-and-seventy feet long. It needed to be so long in order to accommodate the production of oil during Borger's boomtown days. The depot's freight dock was partially burned in 1947 In 1972, one-hundred and sixty-two feet was removed from the freight section. The Borger depot shipped barrels of oil and petrochemicals.[38]

Figure 2-6. A huge crowd welcoming the first train to arrive in Isom, later known as Borger, on October 22, 1926. Photo courtesy of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, call number Ph1 1980-251/784.

[38] Hutchinson County Historical Commission, *Hutchinson County History*, 37.

Figure 2-7. The Skellytown depot sitting in a pasture near Kingsmill, Texas (near Pampa). Photo from Robert E. Pounds' Book, *Santa Fe Depots: The Western Lines*, p.165.

Skellytown

A Santa Fe depot was built in the small town of Skellytown, just north of White Deer, in 1927 (fig. 2-7). The "1910" wooden frame standard depot was built by an unknown architect or builder. It had details such as shiplap siding, a chimney wooden roof brackets, and a bay window with a separate gabled roof. Like the Isom/Borger depot, the Skellytown depot shipped oil and petrochemicals. The structure was shortened in 1944 and the bay window was removed.[39]

[39] Pounds, *Santa Fe Depots*, 165.

Dumas

The Santa Fe Railroad built a "1910" wooden frame standard combination depot in Dumas in 1931, a town north of Amarillo in the upper central part of the Panhandle (fig. 2-8). The Dumas depot had a bay window with a separate gabled roof, wooden roof brackets, shiplap siding, and a chimney. The depot was designed by an unknown architect or builder. It measured twenty-four feet by sixty feet and had a fifteen foot freight extension for shipping wheat. The depot's retirement date is not known.[40]

Figure 2-8. The Dumas depot, one of the last wooden frame depots built in the Panhandle. Photo taken by a Santa Fe Company photographer, from Robert E. Pounds' book, *Santa Fe Depots: The Western Lines*.

Mission Revival Style Depots

Another style that predominates in Texas Panhandle depots is Mission Revival Style. Mission Revival Style originated in California and made its way to Texas by the 1900s. It is worth noting that the Spanish missions in Texas are fifty years older than the California missions founded by Junipero Sera in the 1770s.[41] The last mission built in California, Mission Solano, was constructed in about 1819 in Sonoma. The Mexican government decided to stop funding the California missions and to pull out the clergy during the 1830s. With no clergy or residents to maintain the buildings and land, the

[40] Pounds, *Santa Fe Depots*, 167.
[41] Jay C. Henry, *Architecture in Texas: 1895-1945* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993), 20.

Figure 2-9. The Castaneda Hotel is currently undergoing renovations. The Mission Revival Style Harvey House features curved gable parapets and brick arcade walkways. Photo posted March 6, 2018 on the Castaneda Hotel Facebook Page.

missions fell into ruin. During the 1860s, there was a renewed interest in mission architecture that led to the preservation of missions in the 1880s. The reconstruction and restoration of missions took place during the 1890s, 1920s, and 1930s.[42] A revival of Spanish Colonial and Mission Style architecture took place in the United States during the 1880s and 1890s. The architectural styles were especially popular in California, Florida, and the Southwest.[43] Beginning in the 1880s, the Southern Pacific Railroad and the Atchison, Topeka, and the Santa Fe Railroad adopted Mission Revival Style architecture and made it the corporate style for their depots and Harvey Houses, thereby connecting the Texas Panhandle depots to the Southwest not only through their railroad lines but through the aesthetics of their depots. One of the first Harvey Houses, the Castaneda Hotel (fig. 2-9), built in 1894 in Las Vegas, New Mexico, was designed in the

[42] Melba Levick, Stanley Young, and Sally B. Woodbridge, *The Missions of California* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1988), 3,8.
[43] John C. Poppeliers and S. Allen Chambers, Jr., *What Style is It?: A Guide to American Architecture* (Hoboken: John Wiley and Sons, Incorporated, 2003), 20-25.

Mission Revival Style.[44] The iconic Alamo, which features a curved gable parapet—a low, protective wall along the edge of a roof—influenced Mission Revival Style architecture in Texas. Curved gable parapet walls were one of the architectural features often used by the Santa Fe Railroad to establish its regional identity directed more toward the Southwest starting in the 1920s.[45] Mission Revival Style architecture symbolized Southwest regionalism and was used in the design of buildings associated with the cattle industry, ranching, tourism, and the railroad. Its characteristic elements are stucco, red tile roofs, arches, curved parapets, hipped roofs, bell towers, and exposed wooden beams called vigas. During the early 1900s, Mission Revival Style elements showed up on homes, apartment buildings, commercial buildings, and civic buildings in the West.[46] Spanish Colonial and Mission Revival Style architecture was vogue in the 1920s, a prosperous period when architectural beauty was considered necessary for everyday public buildings, such as gas stations, train depots, and pump houses.[47] It was during this time period when the Santa Fe Railroad built Mission Revival depots and other buildings in the Texas Panhandle.

[44] Henry, *Architecture in Texas*, 141.
[45] Ibid., 144-145.
[46] Arrol Gellner and Douglas Keister, *Red Tile Style: America's Spanish Revival Architecture* (New York: Viking Studio/Penguin Putnam Incorporated, 2002), 29.
[47] Gellner and Keister, *Red Tile Style*, 160.

Figure 2-10. The Amarillo Depot and Harvey House. Photo taken by the author March 20, 2015.

Amarillo

One of the best examples of Mission Revival Style architecture in the Texas Panhandle is the Amarillo Santa Fe depot and Harvey House (fig. 2-10) Construction of the depot was complete in 1910. The designer of the structure was Canadian architect E.A. Harrison, who will be further discussed in Chapter III. Harrison was also later hired by the Santa Fe Railroad to design their regional hub building in downtown Amarillo, which was completed in 1930 (fig. 3-4). The size of the Amarillo depot reflects the role of the structure as part of the city as an urban center of a broad regional area, in contrast to the small town depots like that in Miami. The brick building's passenger depot measured eighty-four feet by two-hundred-and-five feet, and the two-story freight depot measured thirty-two feet by sixty-two feet.[48] Stucco was applied to the brick exterior in 1927 to promote tourism in the Southwest, emphasizing that Mission Style regional identity even more prominently.

[48] Pounds, *Santa Fe Depots*, 130.

The use of adobe brick in Texas can be traced back to 700 A.D. Adobe bricks were made out of adobe mud—a mixture of clay, sand, grass or straw, and water. The mixture was poured into wooden forms and was left out in the sun to dry for two weeks. Exterior walls of adobe brick structures were coated with lime plaster, mud plaster, or whitewash. This traditional surface coating required reapplication every two years.[49] Cement stucco was available by the 1890s. It required less maintenance than traditional adobe brick and was easier to apply than lime plaster, mud plaster, or whitewash.[50] Cement stucco was also more durable and cost less to maintain than adobe, making it a popular building material, along with brick, for the construction of Mission Revival Style architecture beginning in the 1890s.[51] The Amarillo Santa Fe depot also had a connected Harvey House with a newsstand, a lunch room that seated fifty-one customers, and a dining room that could seat seventy-two. The depot and Harvey House were central to the history of Amarillo as a center of cattle trade, farming, business, industry, and culture. Organizations linked to cattle, business, and industry held dinner meetings at the Harvey House (Fig. 2-11). The manager of the Amarillo Harvey House, C.W. Weber, founded the Santa Fe Orchestra during the 1930s. The musicians were Santa Fe Railroad and Harvey House employees. When the Santa Fe Building was completed in 1930, it included a stage and a dance floor expressly for the orchestra's performances.[52] On

[49] Ralph Newlan, Texas Department of Transportation Environmental Affairs Division, *Adobe in Texas: An Historic Context, Annotated Bibliography, and Survey Methodology* (Coraopolis, Pennsylvania: Michael Baker, Incorporated, 2008), 3, 6-7.
[50] Newlan, *Adobe in Texas*, 17.
[51] Henry, *Architecture in Texas*, 141.
[52] Rose Walston Latimer, *Harvey Houses of Texas: Historic Hospitality from the Gulf Coast to the Panhandle* (Charleston: The History Press, 2014), 52.

January 31, 1940, due to the decline of train travel, the Harvey House closed.[53] The design and sophistication of the Amarillo Santa Fe depot and Harvey House reflect the high hopes that someday the city would grow to be a hub that connected the Middle American West to the Southwest.

Figure 2-11. 1915 dinner meeting inside the elegant Amarillo Harvey House. Photo courtesy of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, call number Ph.1 1981-109/1.

[53] Paul H. Carlson, *Amarillo: Story of a Western Town* (Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2006), 144.

Figure 2-12. The Canadian depot. Photo taken by the author on October 15, 2016 at the River Valley Pioneer Museum.

Canadian

A new Santa Fe depot was built in Canadian to replace the wooden frame depot in 1909 (fig. 2-12). The brick depot was designed by an unknown architect and was an example of Mission Revival Style.[54] The structure featured details such as arches and parapets. The Canadian depot is similar to the Plainview depot, which was built one year later by an unknown architect. Perhaps the two depots were designed by the same architect? A brick Harvey House of a similar design style was built near the depot (fig. 2-13). A roundhouse and a Mission Revival Style Santa Fe Reading Room were built as well—Unfortunately all of the railroad buildings in Canadian were lost (fig. 4-4, 4-5).


Figure 2-13. The Canadian Harvey House. Photo taken by the author on October 15, 2016 at the River Valley Pioneer Museum.

[54] Pounds, *Santa Fe Depots*, 124.

Figure 2-14. The Plainview depot. Photo courtesy of Dr. Amy Von Lintel.

Plainview

The Plainview depot is another example of Mission Revival Style architecture (fig. 2-14). The depot was built in 1910 and was designed by an unknown architect, yet it is similar in design to E.A. Harrison's Panhandle depot (fig. 2-18). The Plainview depot is constructed out of brick. It measures thirty-eight feet by one-hundred-and-six feet. The depot also has a unique feature—a "summer" outdoor waiting area on one end of the depot—that measures twenty-two feet by thirty feet (fig. 2-15).[55]

[55] Pounds, *Santa Fe Depots*, 26.

Fig. 2-15. Mission Revival Style arches form the wall of the Plainview depot's "summer" waiting area. Photo courtesy of Dr. Amy Von Lintel.

Pampa

The second Santa Fe depot in Pampa was built to replace the original wooden frame depot in 1915. The Mission Revival Style depot was designed by an unknown architect and is constructed out of brick and stucco (fig. 2-16). The outside of the building has a unique pebbled exterior. The depot features Mission Revival Style elements such as a red tile roof, parapets, and wooden beams. The design plan of the building is similar to E.A. Harrison's Canyon and Panhandle depots.[56]

[56] Pounds, *Santa Fe Depots*, 126.

Figure 2-16. The unique Pampa depot is still being used by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad. Photo taken by the author on March 17, 2015.

Canyon

A Mission Revival Style depot was built in Canyon in 1925 (fig. 2-17). The depot was designed by Canadian architect E.A. Harrison. It measures forty-two feet by one-hundred-and-ninety feet. The depot's design plan is similar to the Pampa depot and the Panhandle depot.[57] The building is constructed out of stucco and brick. There is unique brickwork on the corners and parapets. The Santa Fe logo is made out of brick as well. The Canyon depot has a red tile roof, wooden beams, and turquoise-painted doors and window trim. It also has wooden roof brackets, features from the Wooden Frame Standard depots that carried over into some Mission Revival Style architecture.

[57] Pounds, *Santa Fe Depots*, 129, 131.

Figure 2-17. The Canyon depot. Note the unique brickwork, including the Santa Fe logo. Photo taken by the author on April 10, 2015.

Figure 2-18. The Panhandle depot. Note the similarities to the Canyon depot above. Photo taken by the author on April 10, 2015.

Figure 2-19. Back view of the Panhandle depot. Photo taken by the author's husband, Marcus Miers, on May 12, 2018.

Panhandle

The Panhandle depot was designed by Canadian architect E.A. Harrison in the Mission Revival Style (fig. 2-18, fig. 2-19). The depot was built in 1928. It has a similar design plan to the Pampa depot and Harrison's Canyon depot (fig. 2-16, fig. 2-17). The Panhandle depot was one of the last brick depots built on the Santa Fe Railroad's western lines.[58] The depot is still standing.

Art Deco Style Depots

Even while the Santa Fe line was promoting a regional identity directed toward the Southwest through the use of Mission Style, the company was not entirely standardizing its depots in the Texas Panhandle. The lack of total standardization gave some of the architects the freedom to design personalized styles, even on the same railroad line. For example, four Art Deco Style depots designed by Canadian architect Louis Curtiss were built south of Amarillo in Lubbock, Post, Snyder, and Sweetwater. The individualized but modern "spur" of design that Curtiss brings in, showing the lack of severe standardization of Santa Fe depot styles, gives the Southern Panhandle its own identity through his unique train stations. Curtiss' Texas depots have a heavy blockiness that show an Egyptian or Meso-American influence. "Curtiss Style" is a blend of modern horizontally-oriented and Asian-inspired Prairie School Style with the linear and geometric Art Deco Style.

[58] Pounds, *Santa Fe Depots*, 129.

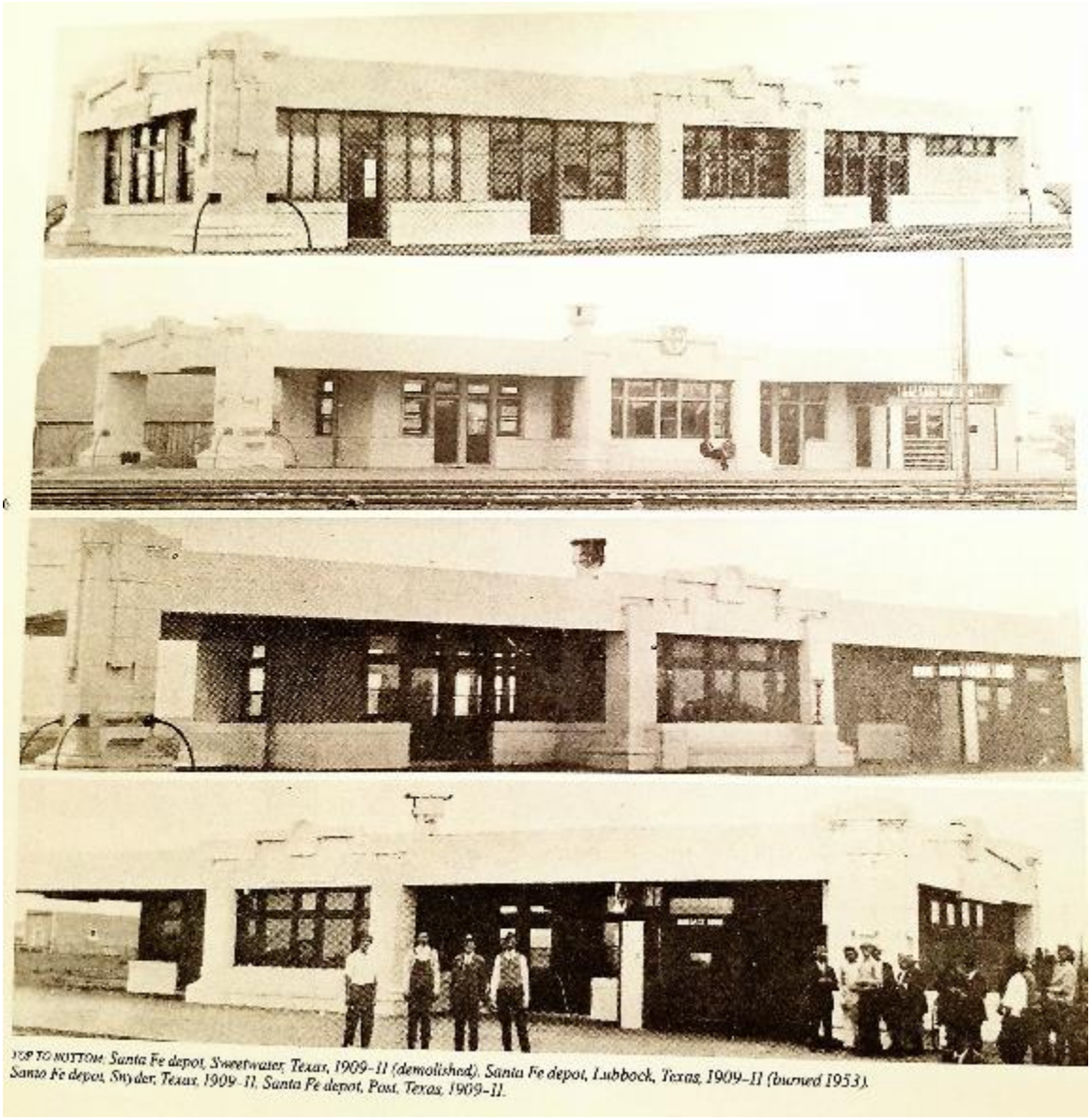

Figure 2-14. Louis Curtiss' Texas quartet of Art Deco "Curtiss Style" depots. Out of the four shown here, only the Post depot (bottom) remains standing. Photo from the book, *Stalking Louis Curtiss*, written by Wilda Sandy and Larry K. Hancks, p. 56.

Lubbock

The first of four Louis Curtiss designed Texas depots was constructed from 1909-1911 (fig. 2-14). Each depot was built from the same design plan for the Pecos and Northern Texas Railway, a subsidiary of the Santa Fe Railroad. The style of the buildings was Curtiss' interpretation of Art Deco Modernism. All four depots were constructed out

of concrete and were covered with interlocking white terra cotta tiles. The Texas depots resemble Curtiss' Joplin terminal (fig. 2-15). Each corner of the depots had two curved, metal hitching posts, a regional feature related to the cattle industry, that were either functional or decorative. Also, on each of the four corners sat a concrete urn, and one urn sat on the roof of each depot as well. An extension protruded from one end of the building covering a brick walkway. The Lubbock depot operated until it was destroyed by a fire in 1953.[59]

Figure 2-15. The Joplin, Missouri Union Terminal stands gutted and vacant. Note the similarities to Curtiss' Texas depots. Photo courtesy of Abe Ezekowitz.

[59] Sandy and Hancks, *Stalking Louis Curtiss*, 87.

Post

Like its sister depots, the Post depot was constructed between 1909-1911 (fig. 2-16). It was designed by Louis Curtiss in his interpretation of Art Deco Modern or "Curtiss Style."[60] Like his other Texas depots, the Post depot had a concrete frame covered in interlocking white terra cotta tiles. Each corner had two curved, metal hitching posts. The structure had one concrete urn on its roof and four corner urns. The urns were removed when the depot underwent renovations, and their whereabouts are unknown. Out of the four Texas depots designed by Curtiss, only the Post depot remains standing.

Figure 2-16. The back of the Post depot. From this view, one can see how the terra cotta tiles fit together. Note the cross-in-the-circle Santa Fe logo. Photo taken by the author on January 11, 2018.

[60] Sandy and Hancks, *Stalking Louis Curtiss*, 87.

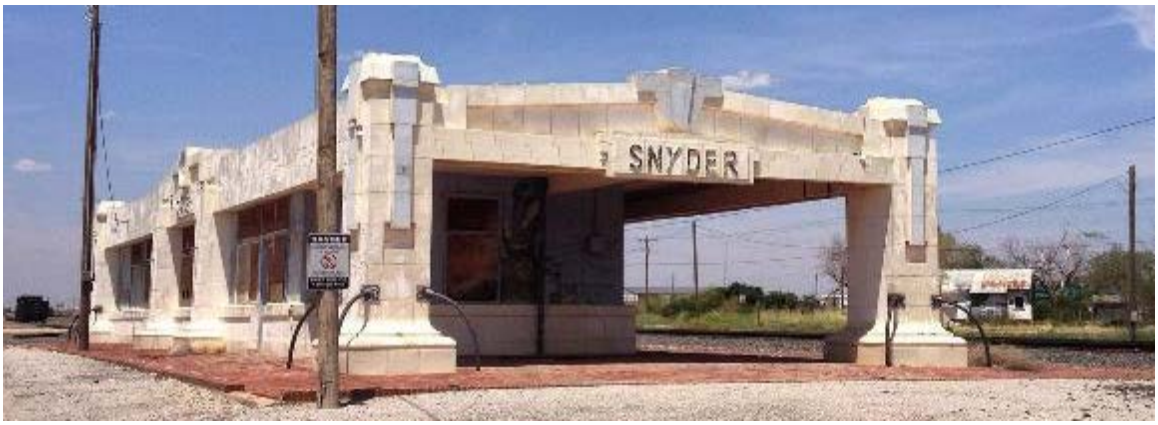

Figure 2-18. The Snyder depot. Note the cantilevered overhang and the curved hitching posts. Photo courtesy of the Scurry County Historical Commission.

Snyder

The Snyder depot was also constructed between 1909-1911 (fig. 2-18, 2-19). The structure was designed by Louis Curtiss and was his interpretation of Art Deco Modernism architecture.[61] The depot featured horizontal planes, one overhang, and right angles. Like the other Curtiss Texas depots, it was constructed out of concrete and was covered by interlocking white terra cotta tiles. The Snyder depot also had two curved, metal hitching posts and a concrete urn on each of its corners. Sadly, the structure was demolished in November 2017 despite efforts to save it.

[61] Sandy and Hancks, *Stalking Louis Curtiss*, 87.

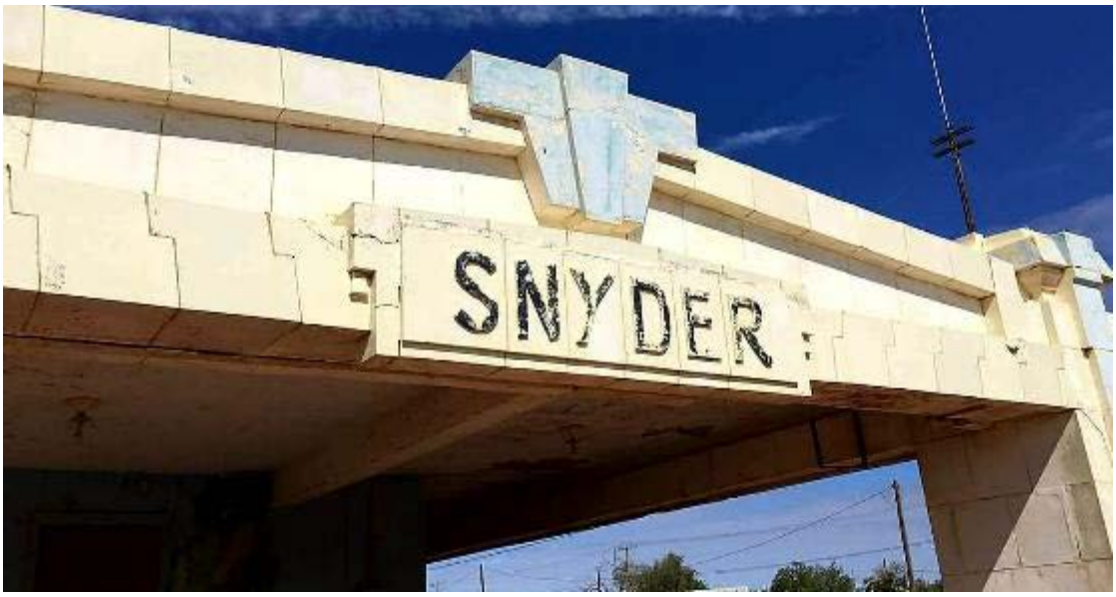

Figure 2-19. The Snyder depot. Photo courtesy of the Scurry County Historical Commission.

Sweetwater

The Sweetwater depot was built at the same time as the other three of Curtiss' Texas depots, between 1909-1911 (Fig. 2.14). The Art Deco Modern Style building was likewise constructed out of concrete and was covered in interlocking white terra cotta tiles. It also featured horizontal planes, one overhang, and right angles. Similar to its sister depots, the Sweetwater depot had two curved, metal hitching posts and a concrete urn on each corner. The Sweetwater depot was demolished, but the date of its demolition is unknown.[62]

[62] Sandy and Hancks, *Stalking Louis Curtiss*, 87.

CHAPTER III

THE ARCHITECTS: HARRISON AND CURTISS

Not all train depots were meant to stand out, or to stand up to the harsh elements of the Texas Panhandle and the High Plains over long periods of time. Many were built to serve a practical purpose and nothing more. However, there are a few depots that were designed to turn heads, to assert a cultural and economic sophistication for their respective Panhandle towns. The two principal architects responsible for designing these more impressive train depots are Edward Alfred (E.A.) Harrison and Louis Singleton Curtiss. Interestingly, both men were born in Ontario, Canada, but worked largely in the United States designing buildings for the American company of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad as well as the Fred Harvey Company of railroad based tourist development in their careers. Their training and styles as architects allowed them to produce depots of artistic quality and value, which has often saved these depots from demolition unlike the more humble wooden structures that have nearly all been destroyed. To be sure, the Panhandle depots located on the National Register of Historic Places are primarily the product of these two men. These now-repurposed depots and related structures currently serve the public as museums, business offices, city halls, or bed-and-breakfasts. This thesis argues that depot design, at least in some instances, was indeed "architecture" and deserves study for its aesthetic aspects, in addition to its crucial importance socially, economically, and culturally for western American communities.

E.A. Harrison

E.A. Harrison was born in 1869 in Hamilton, Ontario. Harrison studied under Canadian architect James Balfour. In 1887, Harrison worked as a draftsman for the San Francisco and San Joaquin Valley Railway, which was once part of the Santa Fe Railroad.[63] He later worked for the Santa Fe Railroad in Topeka, Kansas as the System Architect, who was often the approving official for work done by railroad staff members. For example, Harrison's signature appears on architect Mary Colter's design drawings for the El Navajo Hotel in Gallup, New Mexico as the approving railroad official. Colter and Harrison worked with each other for years, and his name has been found on many official drawings for her buildings. Because of this, sometimes he even got credit for her designs.[64] For instance, the design of El Navajo was credited to Harrison, who used Colter's designs to draw the working plans for the hotel sometime between 1917 and 1920. He also drew plans that were based on her designs for Bright Angel Lodge in the Grand Canyon. Colter was not a registered architect—she may not have had an architectural license. This might be why Colter did not receive credit for some of the official drawings that Harrison signed off on.

In 1902, Colter started working for the Fred Harvey Company as an architect, decorator, and designer. She was hired on a permanent basis by the Harvey Company in 1910.[65] Though Colter did not design any depots or railroad buildings in the Texas

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[63] Elmer T. Howson, D.A. Steel, and J.B. Tebo, *The Biographical Directory of the Railway Officials of America* (New York: Simmons-Boardman Publishing Corporation, 1922), 272.
[64] Virginia L. Grattan, *Mary Colter: Builder Upon the Red Earth* (Grand Canyon: Grand Canyon Natural History Association, 1992), 21-22.
[65] Arnold Berke*, Mary Colter: Architect of the Southwest* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2002), 73.

Panhandle that we know of, her connection to Harrison is worth noting. Among the two, Colter is the more studied architect by historians today, and thus it is in large part through Colter's scholarship that we can learn more about Harrison.

During his career, Harrison's architectural styles included Craftsman, Tudor Revival, Prairie Style, Mission Revival, Gothic Revival, and Art Deco. What is perhaps most interesting about this versatility is that the railroad sent a known architect to these Panhandle communities to design a building of aesthetic value and style. Indeed, these buildings represented some of the most aesthetically tasteful structures in these newly founded towns. They also served effectively as the gateway to the town; they were the first structure the railroad passengers entered when coming to the town. The City Beautiful Movement was a reform policy of North American architecture that intended to introduce beautification and monumental grandeur in cities, flourished during the 1890s and early 1900s. The movement promoted beauty, not only for its own sake, but also in the hopes that beauty could create moral and civic virtue in urban areas, such as Washington D.C., Chicago, and Detroit. In 1901, Charles Mulford Robinson wrote the first city planning guide, *The Improvement of Towns and Cities*. Then in *Modern Civic Art; or The City Made Beautiful*, he defined the "land approach" to a city in his fourth chapter as an approach specifically through the railroad. According to Robinson, therefore, the depot was a gateway to the city space that needed to be aesthetically pleasing as well as functional.[66] And so it is worth noting which towns received which

[66] See: Charles Mulford Robinson, *The Fair of Spectacle*, 1893, and *The Improvement of Towns and Cities*, 1901, and *Modern Civic Art; or The City Made Beautiful*, multiple editions 1903-1918.

styles, but also that single architects didn't overly standardize their style necessarily but had a range of stylistic designs.

Harrison, for example, designed twenty-seven known buildings for the Atchison, Topeka, and the Santa Fe Railroad, at least two of them co-designed with Chief Engineer C.F.W. Felt, the namesake of the town of Felt, Oklahoma. Some of Harrison's buildings are listed on the National Registry of Historic Places, which again shows that they are of architectural and cultural value.[67] At least three verified Harrison-designed train depots are located in the Texas Panhandle region. One of these is the Santa Fe Depot and Harvey House located in Amarillo (fig. 3-1).

Figure 3-1. Amarillo Santa Fe Depot/Harvey House.
Photo taken by the author on March 20, 2015.

The structure, built in 1910, was originally brick, but in 1927 stucco was applied to the exterior to give the building a Mission Revival Style look and promote tourism in the Southwest. As you can see in figure 3-1, his Mission Style depot features include arches, a red tile roof, wooden doors, metal decorations, wooden beams, and parapets. This mission style connected Amarillo, Texas to destinations of tourism in the Southwest. It gave a visual form to a space that

[67] National Register of Historic Places. https://www.nps.gov/nr/. See also https://www.gsa.gov>historic-preservation.

was renowned for its customer service and social value, given that it was a Fred Harvey depot. It hosted banquets for the leading cattlemen and ranchers of the region when Amarillo because the shipping hub for the American cattle industry. Cattle were shipped from the Panhandle ranges to market in Kansas City, which, thanks to the Santa Fe line, was closer than markets in Texas.[68] And it was the Amarillo depot that offered a physical location for the cattle deals in a way that epitomizes how these depots became hubs for public life in western America.

The second Harrison-designed depot is located in Canyon, Texas (fig. 3-2). Like its sister depot in Amarillo, it was constructed in the Mission Revival Style out of brick and stucco with a red tile roof. Harrison's signature is on the blueprints for the depot, which can be found in the archives at the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum. The date on the blueprints is 1924. The Canyon depot is not as grand as the Amarillo Harvey House depot, but it is a unique structure with decorative brick trim along the tops of some of the parapets and on the corners of the building. This structure, in its early days, resonated as both modern and southwestern, American and specifically western America. It is perhaps surprising to think of these small Panhandle towns as tourist destinations, but these structures reveal how they were in fact nodes on a network of passenger travel throughout the American southwest.

[68] On this relationship between Amarillo and Kansas City based on the cattle trade, see the exhibition *Cattle, Cowboys, and Culture: Kansas City and Amarillo, Building an Urban West,* at the Kansas City Public Library between Sept. 2017 and Feb. 2018.

Fig. 3-2. The Canyon Santa Fe Depot.

Harrison's third Texas depot still stands in the city of Panhandle (fig. 3-3). The brick-veneer combination depot is an example of Mission Revival Style architecture with some elements of Craftsman and Prairie Style architecture mixed in. Built in 1928, the eclectic Panhandle depot was one of the last brick depots built on the Santa Fe Railroad's Western Line.[69] At the time, these two styles were seens as genuinely American—with California craftsman coming from the West Coast, and Prairie Style coming from Frank Lloyd Wright's designs in the Midwest. They proclaim an up-to-date and national aesthetic that connects a small town like Panhandle to major trends across the nation. It was a gateway to the city that the townspeople could be proud of. It is perhaps not surprising that the town found a way to acquire the building from the Santa Fe Railroad and chose to preserve it as a key civic administration building: the town city hall.

[69] Pounds, *Santa Fe Depots*.

Figure 3-3. The Panhandle Santa Fe Depot. Photo taken by the author on April 10, 2015.

With Amarillo becoming a shipping hub for the cattle industry, it not only needed a large depot with Fred Harvey amenities; it also needed a headquarters building for the Santa Fe Railroad that could rival buildings in much larger cities, from Houston to Kansas City. This building shows Amarillo's aspirations for future growth as an urban space, many of which did not come to fruition, and the city never grew past 200,000 people. But the Santa Fe building is a true "skyscraper" that partnered with the nearby depot to show how the railroad was a leading shaper of urban spaces in the nation. This building, designed by Harrison, was regional headquarters for the Santa Fe between 1930 and the 1970s (fig. 3-4), and oversaw more than 5,800 miles of railway.[70]

[70] John Kanelis, "Santa Fe Depot may become a museum…soon," a report by News Channel 10 in Amarillo, published Aug. 11, 2015: http://www.newschannel10.com/story/29763260/santa-fe-depot-may-become-a-museum-soon. Accessed 6 March 2018.

Figure 3-4. The Santa Fe Building in Amarillo. Photo courtesy of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum.

Standing at fourteen stories high—again skyscraper height for the era—the building dominated downtown Amarillo's skyline until the 1970s, when other structures, such as the Chase Tower was built, not only with its height but also its prominent sign proclaiming the railroad company's importance for the urban development of the city. Now, it is the city's third tallest building. Harrison demonstrated his ability to construct and design according to the Late Gothic Revival style, which was still widely popular at the time; construction began in 1928 and was completed on January 18, 1930. European "Old World" styles were still seen as culturally tasteful, but here Harrison offered one of his most sophisticated designs, that went beyond a mere copying of Gothic design types. It included modern aluminum metal doors, elevators, a ballroom for social events among the employees and their guests, and decorative pointed finials and detail work on the roofline responding to a Gothic styling but with repeated linearity that also seems Art Deco or "moderne." Compared to the truer "Gothic" churches built in the same era nearby in the city, this skyscraper by Harrison demonstrates an embrace of the technologically-driven machine age of America, represented by the railroad, even while it stylistically shows tradition at the same time. The building is topped off with a setback

penthouse, similar to the Gothic Style Norwood Tower in Austin, Texas, which was built in 1929. Other Gothic Revival Style buildings like the Santa Fe Building include Midland's Petroleum Building, built in 1928, and The State National Bank Building located in Corsicana, built in 1926.[71]

Just down Polk Street from Harrison's Santa Fe Building is Guy A. Carlander's Fisk Building built in 1927, also Late Gothic Revival style. Like the Santa Fe Building, Carlander's Fisk Building shows a modern playfulness and independent interpretation of the style rather than a rote copying. Carlander was also trained as a depot architect for the Santa Fe Railroad and likely worked with Harrison on projects; this connection shows that some of the best regional architects were employed and trained by the railroad. The railroad influenced not just the transportation systems of American but also the aesthetic development of built structures in the urban landscape. Carlander's Fisk Building is more Baronial English style with Celtic interlace banner designs in the pointed arches along the bottom level. The Fisk Building looks like an English castle while the Santa Fe building resembles a Gothic cathedral. Both Harrison and Carlander created interesting and individualized architecture. Carlander set up his architectural firm in Amarillo, unlike the more nationally oriented Harrison. I have not found any specific depots credited to Carlander, but it is likely that he had a hand in a number of Panhandle depot designs. Some of Harrison's other Santa Fe Railroad buildings are still standing in other states, in addition to other civic buildings. In 1932, Harrison also designed the Santa Fe Building in Galveston (fig. 3-5).

[71] Jay C. Henry, *Architecture in Texas: 1895-1945* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993), 136-137.

Figure 3-5. Santa Fe Building, Galveston, courtesy of https://www.kshs.org/km/items/view/60354

It served as the headquarters of the Gulf, Colorado, and Santa Fe Railroad until the offices closed in 1964. The architectural style of the Galveston Santa Fe Building is Art Deco, demonstrating once again Harrison's versatility in his designs and the railroad company's interest in sending an architect to assess a place and to design something in response. Standarization was less important than uniqueness and tasteful designs.

Harrison also completed a Tudor Revival style Santa Fe depot and Harvey House restaurant located in Colorado Springs in 1917. Abandoned in the 1970s, the structures were purchased in the 1980s and were transformed into stores and an office complex (fig. 3-6). This design draws on the Tudor Revival designs promoted by Norman Shaw in England in the later 19th Century, and can be compared to his commercial designs for Bedford park, the first Garden Suburb of London.[72] This style was rapidly internationalized, and picked up by American architects during the City Beautiful Movement after the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. The first large scale elaboration of the City Beautiful Movement occurred during the Columbian Exposition of 1893. The City Beautiful Movement was a way to bring the charming English village aesthetic into

[72] See:http://www.guidedwalksinlondon.co.uk/blog/read129632/bedford-park-london-the-first-garden-suburb.html

American urban spaces, a form of "rurbanization" or rural urbanization and clearly Harrison draws on that trend here.[73]

Figure 3-6. Colorado Springs Depot and Harvey House.

Harrison and C.F.W. Felt additionally designed the Craftsman and Prairie style depot in Eureka, Kansas (fig. 3-7). The building was completed in 1917 and was used for train passenger service until the 1950s. The depot is constructed out of brick and stucco, has wooden corbels, and a tile roof. The Prairie Style elements include the emphasized horizontality, the overhanging eaves, the brick based with stone accents that could be compared to Frank Lloyd Wright's Robie House in Chicago, for instance, while Craftsman style can be noted in the wood accents without additional decoration. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

[73] On "rurbanization," see Arthur M. Edwards, *The Design of Suburbia: A Critical Study in Environmental History* (London: Pembridge, 1981).

Figure 3-7. 1917 Santa Fe Depot, Eureka, Kansas.

One of Harrison's later projects is the Art Deco Style Oklahoma City Santa Fe Depot that was built in 1934 (fig. 3-8). The building was constructed out of concrete or terra cotta. The Art Deco Style can be noted in the block-like structure with the stepped roofline and linear, geometric accents. The design of the Oklahoma City depot is similar to the Kimo Theater in Albuquerque and to the Potter County Courthouse in Amarillo, Texas, built during the same era in the 1930s. By this time, Art Deco Style was standard for buildings in the Southwest that desired an up-to-date, modern, and technologically advanced look. The Oklahoma City depot recently underwent a $28.4 million transformation and was reopened in 2017.

Figure 3-8. Oklahoma City Santa Fe Depot.

The oldest remaining fire station in Albuquerque was also designed by Harrison. Built in 1920, the Rustic Southwest style sandstone structure has unique architectural details, such as a sleeping porch and an asymmetrical tower that is decorated with tiled over-hangings, protruding beams, stone insignia, and ornamental globes. This building could be compared to the rustic stone aesthetic of Buffalo

Courts/Alumni Hall on the campus of West Texas A&M University. Heavy stone facing here has a similar look to the petrified wood facing of the Buffalo Courts building. It draws on a pioneer past that is particularly fitting for the American Southwest. The vacant fire station is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (fig. 3-9, 3-10).

Figure 3-9. Albuquerque Fire Station.
Photo courtesy of https://www.cabq.gov/planning/boards-commissions/landmarks-urban-conservation-commission/historic-landmarks

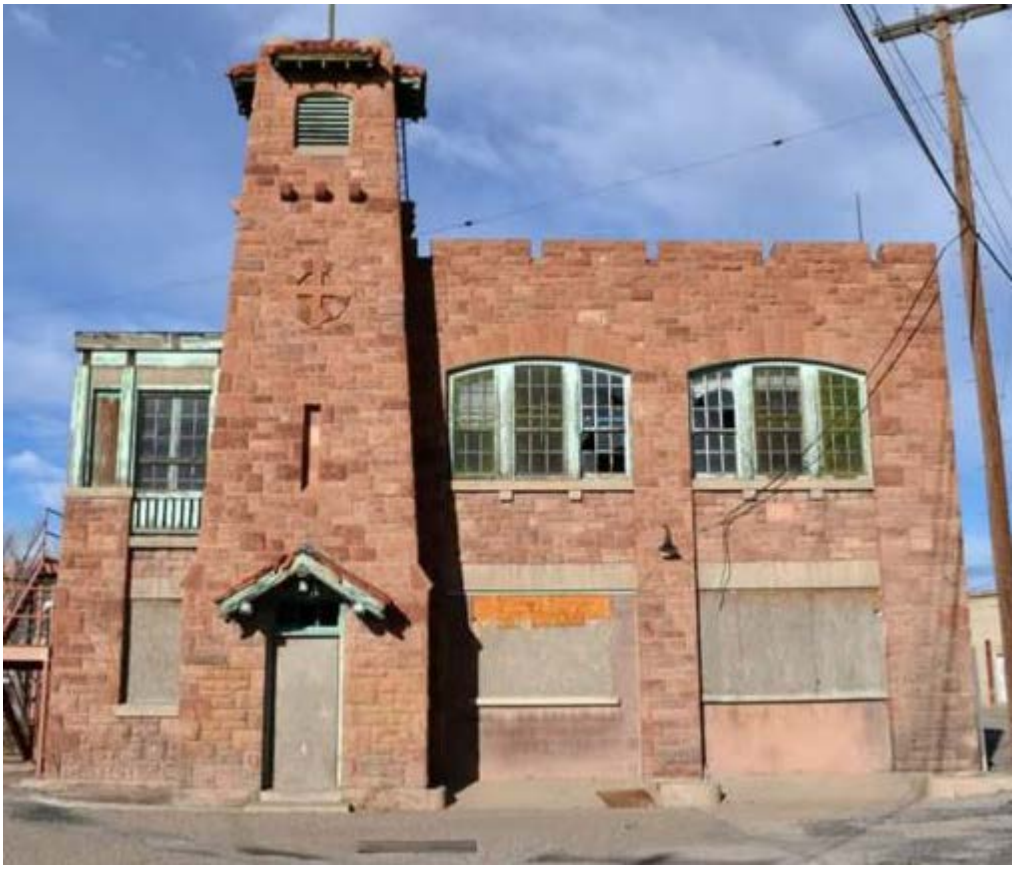

Figure 3-10. Recent photo of fire station taken by Jennifer James. Shared on Facebook March 11, 2018.

Another structure that has been credited both to E.A. Harrison and to Guy Carlander is the Santa Fe Memorial Hospital in Albuquerque, which has recently been reopened as the luxurious Hotel Parq Central (fig. 3-11).[74] According to at least one source, Harrison was the principal architect.[75] More research needs to be constructed on the history of this design and its contributors. It seems fitting, however, that the building continues to function as a space for the service industry, drawing on the legacy of the Fred Harvey contributions to railroad architecture.

In all, I have traced twenty-seven buildings designed by Harrison between 1910 and January 1, 1940, when he retired from the Santa Fe Railroad. His output as an architect was extensive, but historians have not yet done his career justice, and much research remains to be done on Harrison. As of 1948, his residence was listed as Dallas. His death date is unknown.

Fig. 3-11. The Santa Fe Memorial Hospital, Albuquerque. Now Hotel Parq Central.

[74] On this recent conversion, see, for example: http://www.hotelparqcentral.com/en-us ; http://www.bbc.com/travel/story/20130520-a-hospital-turned-hotel-in-new-mexico ; https://alibi.com/news/34721/A-Dose-of-History.html

[75] See for instance: https://www.cabq.gov/planning/boards-commissions/landmarks-urban-conservation-commission/historic-landmarks .

Louis Singleton Curtiss

Louis Singleton Curtiss was born on July 1, 1865 in Belleville, Ontario. Curtiss studied architecture at the University of Ontario and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris.[76] He moved to Kansas City, Missouri in 1887 at the age of twenty-two, where he worked as a draftsman at the Van Brunt and Howe Firm. Later, Curtiss was appointed as the Assistant to the Superintendent of Buildings in Kansas City. In 1890, he founded the Gunn and Curtiss Architectural Firm with his partner, Frederick C. Gunn. The duo designed churches, courthouses, and hotels, many of which are still standing, including the Tarrant County Courthouse located in Fort Worth. The red granite, Beaux-Arts style building, which was constructed from 1893-1895, underwent a restoration in 1983 (Fig. 3-12). Also in 1893, Gunn and Curtiss designed the Missouri State Building for the Chicago World's Fair. After ten years together and more than a dozen buildings later, the Gunn and Curtiss Firm was dissolved.

Fig. 3-12. Tarrant County Courthouse, Fort Worth, Texas. 1893-1895. Photo taken by Louis Reed on May 20, 2007. Shared on commons.wikimedia.org.

[76] Wilda Sandy and Larry K. Hancks, *Stalking Louis Curtiss: A Portrait of the Man and His Work* (Kansas City: Ward Parkway Press, 1991), 14.

Curtiss started his long and productive career working for the Santa Fe Railroad in 1905, designing depots and office buildings. During this time, he also designed hotels and restaurants for the Fred Harvey Company in the Midwest and the Southwest. Curtiss' influences were the Arts and Crafts Movement, the Chicago School's Prairie Style, and Spanish Colonial Style. Sometimes, he blended different architectural styles together into his designs and called it "Curtiss Style."[77] In this, he was like Harrison, willing to diversify his designs based on project needs. Curtiss' unique personality is arguably

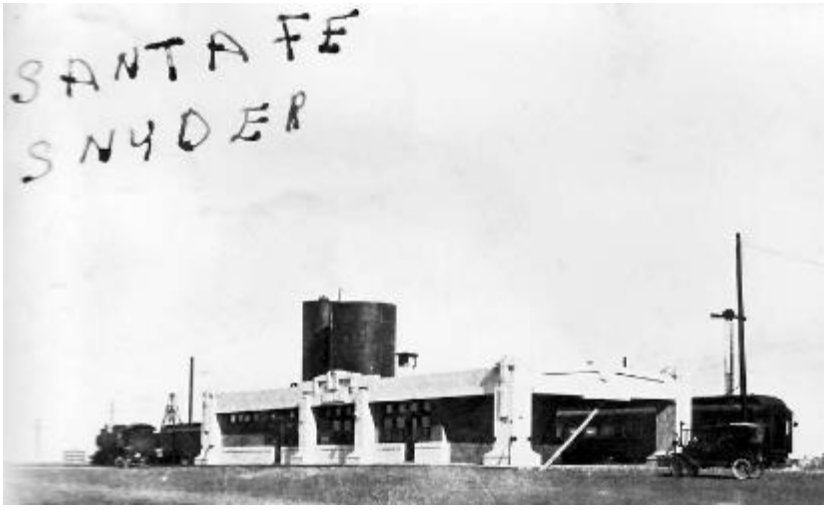

Fig. 3-13. The Snyder Depot, an example of "Curtiss Style" architecture, was one of a series of four West Texas Depots. Photo courtesy of the Scurry County Historical Museum in Snyder, Texas.

expressed in his architectural designs. He was viewed as eccentric by others—he dressed all in white from head-to-toe with the exception of a wide, black silk tie, smoked Turkish cigarettes, paid his rent in gold coins, and was one of the first automobile owners in Kansas City.[78]

Curtiss worked on projects for the Pecos and Northern Texas Railway, a subsidiary of the Santa Fe Railroad, that ran from Lubbock to Coleman, Texas. He

[77] Sandy and Hancks, *Stalking Louis Curtiss*, 24.
[78] Ibid., 21.

designed four depots in West Texas that were built from 1909-1911: Lubbock, Post, Snyder, and Sweetwater.[79] They became a kind of signature design that gave this spur of the Santa Fe a connected identity, and thus they are examples of what we might call "Curtiss Style." They can be seen as a blend of the modern horizontally-oriented and Asian-inspired Prairie School style with the linear and geometric Art Deco style. But the heavy, blockiness adds an Egyptian or Meso-American influence that makes these stand out from other depot designs, and shows Curtiss's creativity with designs that were not copies of any one style. Each depot was constructed out of concrete covered in terra cotta tiles (fig. 3-13).

In 1909, Curtiss completed the El Ortiz Hotel was in Lamy, New Mexico (fig. 3-14). This Fred Harvey Corporation Hotel was one of only two Pueblo Style buildings that Curtiss designed during his career but it shows that he could adapt his designs to the local landscape; unlike the Texas depots, this hotel fits with the Southwest regional style that connected New Mexico and Harrison's designs for the Santa Fe. The eleven-room El Ortiz is also the smallest hotel designed by the architect. The Pueblo Style features of the hotel included white stucco, parapets, and exposed wooden beams. The Southwest Style interior of the El Ortiz Harvey Hotel was decorated by Mary Colter. Sadly, the El Ortiz was demolished in 1943.[80]

[79] Sandy and Hancks, *Stalking Louis Curtiss*, 45.
[80] Ibid., 42.

Figure 3-14. A postcard of the El Ortiz Harvey Hotel. Photo courtesy of the New York Public Library. https://digitalcollections.nypl.org.

Curtiss designed another more unique-looking Harvey House, the Casa Ricardo Tourist Hotel, for the St. Louis, Brownsville, and Mexico Railway, also a part of the Santa Fe Railroad.

Figure 3-15. Rosendo Arce at the Casa Ricardo Hotel in Kingsville, Texas.
Photo taken by Ruby Terrill Lomax in September 1940.
From the John and Ruby Lomax Collection at the
United States Library of Congress.
In the Public Domain.
Posted on commons.wikimedia.org.

The Casa Ricardo, which Curtiss originally named The Casa Gertrudis, was built in Kingsville, Texas from 1911-1912 (fig. 3-15). The L-shaped, concrete building had a similar modern Art Deco design to Curtiss' Texas depots. At one time, the owners of the hotel submitted an application to place the Casa Ricardo on the National Register of Historic Places, but it did not make the list. Unfortunately, the hotel was demolished in 1970.[81]

[81] Rosa Walston Latimer, *Harvey Houses of Texas: Historic Hospitality from the Gulf Coast to the Panhandle* (Charleston: The History Press, 2014): 26.

The Louis Curtiss Studio Building was built 1908-1909 in Kansas City, Missouri. Note the architect's cartouche: the white terra cotta shield embellished with the initials "L.C." near the roofline (fig. 3-16). Two blocks away from the Studio Building sits another modern Curtiss design—the Boley Clothing Company Building, one of the world's first glass curtain wall structures. The futuristic-looking building was constructed in 1909 out of reinforced concrete (fig. 3-17). The Boley Clothing Company Building was restored in 1986 and is still standing.[82]

Curtiss designed several unique, modern-looking homes, some of which are still standing in Kansas City, Missouri. One of these homes, the Bernard Corrigan House, a reinforced concrete Prairie Style and Art Deco Style home, is in dialogue with the design of Curtiss' Texas depots. It was built between 1912-1913 and is still standing (fig. 3-18). Curtiss' last home design was an eclectic, early modern structure built for Harry G. Miller. The house, located in Kansas City Missouri, is also still standing (fig. 3-19).

In 1913, Curtiss' career started to decline, due to the First World War, and due to his architectural styles becoming unfashionable. Towards the end of his life, the once outlandish Curtiss became withdrawn and reclusive. Curtiss died while working in his Kansas City studio apartment on June 24, 1924, just one week before his fifty-ninth birthday (Fig. 3-16). Curtiss is buried in an unmarked grave in a cemetery located between Kansas City and Independence, Missouri. Sadly, out of the ninety-nine buildings—churches, stores, homes, clubs, theaters, courthouses, depots, and hotels—that he is credited with designing, only thirty-three are extant.[83]

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[82] Sandy and Hancks, *Stalking Lois Curtiss*, 21.
[83] Ibid., 12.

Figure 3-16. The Louis Curtiss Studio Building. Photo courtesy of commons.wikimedia.org

Figure 3-17.
The Boley Clothing Company Building, 1909.
Photo courtesy of commons.wikimedia.org.

Figure 3-18. The Bernard Corrigan House. Photo courtesy of Jack Boucher. http://hdl.loc.gov/locpnp/hh.mo114. See also: http://searinghouse.com/corrigan.php.

Figure 3-19.
Harry G. Miller Residence.
Photo courtesy of Kvonachen, posted on commons.wikimedia.org.

CHAPTER IV

PRESERVATION

After World War II, fewer railroad depots were needed or used in America due to a decline in railroad traffic. Mail and freight could be shipped via airplane or truck instead of by rail. Interstate highways and the growth of car culture made passenger travel by train nearly obsolete. Railroad companies moved, repurposed, or tore down depots. The train depots that are still standing today have become "old temples to American restlessness" that bring back memories of an earlier time and preserve the impact of the railroad and American cultural identities shaped by the railroad.[84]

The Texas Panhandle is a key region where the decline of railroad passenger traffic, and the impact on depot architecture, can be traced. Because they contain asbestos, abandoned depots are targeted for demolition by the companies that built them. Asbestos must be removed from the structures before they can be torn down—but the automatic destruction of these buildings seems unnecessary. Once the asbestos is removed by the railroad companies, who are liable for the structures since they funded them, could the companies then save on demolition costs and donate the buildings to their communities? Often the answer seems to be simply about efficiency and cost for the railroad company that wants nothing to do with the unused buildings any longer; but the

[84] Robert E. Pounds, *Santa Fe Depots: The Western Lines* (Dallas: Kachina Press, 1984), 14.

larger pictures of the community or public value of the structures has not been the concern for the railroad. For example, the Snyder depot was demolished by the owning railroad company in November 2017 because it contained asbestos and was too close to the railroad tracks. However, the Post depot has been restored despite the fact that it contained asbestos (fig. 4-1). The Post depot has undergone restoration and a $100,000 renovation in recent years. It has served the community as a Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center since December, 2010. Looking closely at the preservation and demolition history of Santa Fe depots can perhaps help America's railroad companies and communities work collaboratively to preserve important public spaces.

Figure 4-1. The Post depot. Photo taken by the author on January 11, 2018.

Figure 4-2. The Borger depot shortly before its demolition. Photo courtesy of the Hutchinson County Historical Museum.

In October 1991, Borger lost a piece of history when its Santa Fe depot was razed (fig. 4-2). The depot contained asbestos, had termite damage, and needed to be relocated given its lack of accessibility for the current population of the city. Santa Fe Railroad officials no longer had use for the dilapidated depot because they had built a new structure more functional for freight traffic earlier that year. The Hutchinson County Historical Commission wanted to save the old building, but when they tried to arrange a meeting with Santa Fe Railroad officials to negotiate for rights to the depot, they were told that the railroad company would only deal with the city. The Public Relations Director for the Santa Fe Railroad, Cathy Westphal, stated that she did not believe that historical committees could afford the upkeep of building like the Borger depot in the

long term. Westphal explained, "We only donate our structures to a city that has insurance or some sort of major capability of taking care of it. We have no desire to donate a structure to someone who can't maintain it."[85] Attitudes like Westphal's have been fatal for depots as historic buildings. The Santa Fe Railroad met with city officials to discuss the donation of the Borger depot. Alyn Rogers, the City Manager at the time, claimed that the railroad company "wanted some pretty heavy commitments out of the city about remodeling the building, or relocating it off their property. We just didn't have the funds for it."[86] Estimated costs for the depot renovation were $200,000, and asbestos removal would have totaled approximately $12,000. A meeting was held between Santa Fe Railroad representatives and Borger city officials that the Hutchinson County Historical Commission was not invited to attend. The depot's fate was decided at that meeting.[87] Sadly, all that remains are two roof brackets stored at the museum (fig. 4-3).

[85] David Stevens, *Amarillo Globe News*, October 4, 1991. Newspaper clipping courtesy of the Hutchinson County Historical Museum.
[86] Laura Frye, "Commission Seeks to Stop Depot Demolition: Santa Fe Confirms Building to Meet with Wrecker's Ball," *Borger News Herald*, Volume 65, Number 263, Page 1, October 2, 1991.
[87] NBC 4 and Channel 7 News Footage Videotaped October, 1991. Courtesy of Hutchinson County Museum.

Figure 4-3. Roof brackets salvaged from the Borger depot. Photo taken by the author on April 10, 2017 at the Hutchinson County Historical Museum.
Figure 4-4. One of two roundhouses lost in Canadian. Photo taken by the author at the River Valley Pioneer Museum on October 16, 2016.

The Santa Fe Railroad buildings in Canadian are likewise no longer standing. The roundhouse burnt down in 1908, just one year after it was built. Eleven locomotives and one oil tanker were destroyed in the blaze. A second roundhouse was constructed shortly after the fire (fig. 4-4). Unfortunately, on April 12, 1951, a fire started in the building after the boiler of a locomotive exploded, killing a railway mechanic who had been working on the engine at the time. The Santa Fe Reading Room that once served as a boarding house for railway workers and a cultural event center for the citizens of Canadian was demolished (fig. 4-5). The Harvey House closed June 15, 1939, and was torn down in 1956. The Canadian Santa Fe depot, retired since 1954, was razed in 1976

despite the community's effort to save it.[88]

[88] Pounds, *Santa Fe Depots*, 120, 124.

Figure 4-5. The Mission Revival Style Santa Fe Reading Room was Canadian's cultural center. Sadly, the building is no longer standing. Photo taken by the author on October 16, 2016.

Figure 4-6.

The Snyder depot before its November 2017 demolition.
Photo taken by Laurel Lamb, Curator of the Scurry County Historical Museum.

Out of the four Louis Curtiss designed Santa Fe depots in the Texas Panhandle, two remained standing until November 10, 2017: the Post depot and the Snyder depot (fig. 4-6). The Lubbock depot was destroyed by fire in 1953, and the Sweetwater depot was torn down on a date that was not recorded.[89] The depot in Snyder was placed on Preservation Texas' list of the Most Endangered Places in 2011.[90] Because it contained asbestos and was too close to the railroad tracks for current regulations, the demolition of the Snyder Depot was ordered by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad to take place on October 1, 2016. A petition postponed the depot's destruction until 2017.

The Snyder depot had been closed since 1982. Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad would have donated the building to the city, but it contained asbestos and needed to be relocated. Unfortunately, the concrete depot was too heavy to transport without causing

[89] Wilda Sandy and Larry K. Hancks, *Stalking Louis Curtiss: A Portrait of the Man and His Work* (Kansas City: Ward Parkway Press, 1991), 87.
[90] Preservation Texas, *2011 Texas' Most Endangered List*, www.preservationtexas.org.

damage to roads and bridges. It was decided that the depot would have to be cut into pieces in order to be moved.[91] William Osborn wanted to move the Snyder depot to Austin, where it and other historical buildings would be part of an event center. Osborn hired engineers to examine the structure to try and figure out the best way to cut it into sections. They realized that cutting up the depot would cause it to crumble and gave up on their plan.

On Saturday, November 4, 2017, Dr. Elizabeth Londen, a retired Texas Tech professor, used a 3D camera to take a three dimensional image of the Snyder depot that will be archived as computer files in the Southwest Collection at Texas Tech University. Engineering and architectural drawings can be made from the files, as well as a 3D model of the depot if enough funds are available. This project of documentation cost the city of Snyder nothing (fig. 4-7).

Figure 4-7. Dr. Londen and the Scurry County Historical Commission photographing the Snyder depot. Photo taken November 4, 2017, courtesy of the Scurry Historical Commission Facebook Page.

[91] Henry Ramos, News Story on Fox 34 Lubbock, October 4, 2017.

The Scurry County Historical Commission began its mission to save the Snyder depot in 2008, when the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad first announced their demolition plans. The Historical Commission and the Scurry County Museum negotiated with the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad and were given permission to take and preserve small items from inside the depot. The museum staff will archive, inventory, and store these items. Members of the Historical Commission met with the demolition supervisor to request salvaging some of the depot's unique architectural details, an expensive and specialized task to carry out. The Curtiss artifacts that were saved include the Santa Fe logo on the front façade, two five-hundred-pound concrete urns, the metal hitching posts from each corner, and 250 Coffeyville bricks from the outdoor passenger platform (fig. 4-8). The bricks were numbered and sold by the Scurry County Museum to raise funds for future preservation projects. The salvaged artifacts and 3D images aim to preserve the history of the Snyder depot in some form.

Figure 4-8. One of the concrete urns and metal hitching posts that were salvaged from the Snyder depot before its demolition. Photo courtesy of the Scurry County Historical Commission.

The demolition of the Snyder depot began at 7:45AM on November 10, 2017. Paula Hatfield, vice chairwoman of the Scurry County Historical Commission, emotionally watched and documented the demolition that took eight days to complete. Hatfield said, "As they began to dismantle it and everything, it was sort of like tearing down an engine to your car or something. To look and see how all of those pieces put together and made that building, it was phenomenal."[92] When the depot came down, new details were revealed of how the structure was designed.[93] For example, each thick terra cotta tile that covered the concrete skeleton of the depot was numbered on the back for assembly. Joe Faust, a spokesman for Burlington Northern Santa Fe, stated that the railroad company strives to conserve depots and other buildings if it is possible. "We value and treasure history," Faust said. "When we can, we do our best to work with communities to preserve that history."[94]

Not all of the railroad buildings in the Texas Panhandle and the High Plains Region have been lost. The Santa Fe depot in Miami is still standing (fig. 4-9). Currently, the former depot serves as the Roberts County Museum, which was dedicated in 1979. It contains a research library, paleontology exhibits, Clovis Era artifacts, High Plains History, and railroad history.[95] The example of Miami's depot shows how even the simplest structure can have a close connection with the town's identity, and has held continuous meaning across the decades even as it has changed from working depot to

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[92] Sarah Self-Walbrick, "End of the line: Train depot in Snyder demolished," *Amarillo Globe News*, November 19, 2017, A13-A14.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Ibid., A14.
[95] Pounds, *Santa Fe Depots*, 125. See also http://texasplainstrail.com/plan-your-adventure/historic-sites-and-cities/roberts-county-museum.

museum. The Santa Fe depot in Dumas was abandoned and in dire need of repairs (fig. 4-10). Recently, it was purchased and relocated to the Austin area. The depot has been restored and is now a gun shop in a complex of railroad buildings and railcars that have been refurbished.[96] Whether this is an appropriate preservation practice, and whether the story of the depot will be told for a new public in Austin, remains to be seen. The Santa Fe Depot and Harvey House in Amarillo is still standing and in good condition (fig. 4-11). In 2013, the city purchased the building for $2.6 million. The Amarillo City Council stated, "It is important to protect the historic structure that could figure into downtown redevelopment."[97] A tall iron fence was put up around the property after the city bought the depot and Harvey House. As of 2015, plans were made to turn the Amarillo Harvey House and depot into a museum, but so far little progress has been made.[98] The Santa Fe depot in Canyon is likewise still standing (fig. 4-12). However, it is currently abandoned and in need of repair—broken window glass and red roof tiles litter the parking lot. The depot is owned by the city of Canyon, but it not yet used as a public space. The building's future is unknown at this time. The Santa Fe depot located in Booker has been altered so much that it is unrecognizable as a railroad building. In 1965, the depot was moved and rebuilt. It was retired in 1983. The depot now sits in a field, abandoned and falling apart (fig. 4-13). The Santa Fe depot in Pampa is still standing and in continuous use. The busy

[96] John Carr, Texas Railroad History Facebook Page.
[97] Rosa Walston Latimer, *Harvey Houses of Texas: Historic Hospitality from the Gulf Coast to the Panhandle* (Charleston: The History Press, 2014), 53.
[98] http://www.atsf.railfan.net/depots/amarillo.html.net. See also recent developments: http://www.newschannel10.com/story/37989799/historic-santa-fe-depot-to-become-part-of-downtown-revitalization#.wtjp5xqQA6M.facebook.

depot is operated by Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad, one of the few original depots that still serves a purpose for the railroad company (fig. 4-14). Panhandle's Santa Fe depot is in good condition and now functions as the City Hall (fig. 4-15).

Figure 4-9. The Miami depot is now the Roberts County Museum. Photo taken by the author on March 17, 2015.

Figure 4-10. The Dumas depot in 2006. Photo taken by John Carr, Railroad History Facebook Group.

Figure 4-11. The Amarillo Santa Fe Depot and Harvey House.
Photo taken by the author on March 20, 2015.

Figure 4-12. The abandoned Canyon Santa Fe depot has broken roof tiles and boarded up windows.
Photo taken by the author on April 10, 2015.

Figure 4-13.
The Booker depot.
Photo taken by the author's husband, Marcus Miers, on September 30, 2016.

Figure 4-14. The Pampa depot is still used by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad.Photo taken by the author on March 17, 2015.

Figure 4-15. Side view of the Panhandle depot, now operating as the City Hall.
Photo taken by the author on March 17, 2018.

The Slaton Harvey House is also still standing and is an example of a preservation success story. The Harvey House, which opened in 1912, closed its doors after thirty years. During World War II, it was reopened to serve troops. After the war ended, the Harvey House was used as a passenger depot until 1969. It was converted into a freight depot and Santa Fe Railroad office space when passenger service was discontinued. The Harvey House was abandoned in 1980.[99] Bill Burks, a local plumber who grew up in Slaton, got a phone call one morning in 1990 to come turn off the water at the Harvey House. When he arrived, he was surprised to see a wrecking crew and a bulldozer preparing to demolish the building. The Santa Fe Railroad had not informed the city of its plan. Burks called Almarine Childers, a Slaton resident, retired teacher, and museum director, to let her know what was about to take place. Childers and other Slaton residents soon showed up and were able to stop the wrecking crew from tearing down the Harvey House. The Slaton Railroad Heritage Association, an organization born out of the near tragic event, purchased the building from the Santa Fe Railroad. Over the next five years, the Slaton Railroad Heritage Association sold memberships to raise money and gained support from the community. Restoration and renovation soon began—the roof was repaired and a new fence was put up.[100]

The total cost of restoration was $1.25 million. In 1996, the Slaton Railroad Heritage Association received a one million dollar grant from the Texas Department of Transportation. The remaining $250,000 was raised by donations, grants, memberships, and memorials. Keystone Architects, an architectural firm based in Austin, were hired in

[99] Latimer, *Harvey Houses of Texas*, 70.
[100] Informal interview conducted with Sue Davis at the Slaton Harvey House Bed and Breakfast on January 11, 2018.

1998. Interior demolition began in 1999. Prison trustees from the John T. Montford prison unit in Lubbock helped out with the Harvey House renovation. Principal architect A.J. Garza and his crew began construction in July, 1999.[101]

By 2005, the upstairs bedrooms, bathrooms, and sitting rooms were completed. The Slaton Harvey House opened as a bed-and-breakfast in 2006. In 2008, the Harvey House was recorded as a Texas Historical Landmark. On January 10, 2012, the Slaton Harvey House was finally paid off. A fourth upstairs bathroom was completed in 2014, and a first floor renovation that expanded the kitchen and created a fifth handicapped accessible bedroom and bathroom was completed in 2016. The Slaton Railroad Heritage Association is currently trying to raise funds to renovate the interior of the historic 1912 wooden caboose that sits on their property. Their goal is to raise ten thousand dollars. The caboose will become a meeting place or an additional sleeping area (fig. 4-16).

Figure 4-16. The Slaton Harvey House is currently taking donations and holding fundraisers to renovate the interior of this historic caboose. Photo taken by the author on January 11, 2018.

[101] Files courtesy of Sue Davis and the Slaton Railroad Heritage Association.

The Slaton Harvey House Bed and Breakfast is also an event center that hosts weddings, parties, showers, and bingo nights, harkening back to the original social uses of the depots and Harvey Houses. Events are held in the dining room where forty-two train passengers at a time were served meals by smiling Harvey Girls. The Harvey House is also a railroad history museum filled with photographs and artifacts. There is also a museum gift shop where the newsstand once was that sells railroad themed books and gift items.

While doing my research, I decided to book a night at the Slaton Harvey House Bed and Breakfast so I could experience the place in person rather than reading about it or looking at photographs (fig. 4-17). Upon arrival, I found out I was one of the only guests that night. The innkeeper, Lynn, was friendly and helpful. She took me on a tour of the inside of the building and loaned me files of papers and photos that I had requested to look through prior to our visit. Lynn stayed overnight in the downstairs bedroom in case I needed anything. I stayed in the Apache Room, which has a railyard view. The room had a private bathroom, but the other upstairs rooms do not. Guests who stay in those rooms share a bathroom. The downstairs bedroom where the innkeeper stayed also has a private bathroom and is handicapped accessible—it is the newest room in the Harvey House. A large sitting room located on the second floor can be shared by guests who want to watch television, movies, work on puzzles or play games at the game table, or just hang out on the comfortable sofa and chairs. There is also a small kitchen area with a coffee maker, microwave, mini-fridge, bottled water, snacks, and coffee. An elevator is available for guests who need it. The steep metal stairs that lead up to the second floor are the original ones used by the Harvey girls, the Harvey House manager,

and his family who stayed in the upstairs rooms. Late that night, trains chugged by and rattled the building. For guests who stay overnight at the Slaton Harvey House Bed and Breakfast, it is not hard to imagine what life was like for the Harvey Girls and other employees who lived and worked here. I would say this space offers a successful example of an experience of "living history;" the designers have largely preserved the construction while updating it with modern comforts so that the visitor desires a stay and can enjoy communing with regional history.

Figure 4-17. The Slaton Harvey House Bed and Breakfast. Photo taken by the author on January 11, 2018.

In the morning, manager Jessica Kelly made breakfast for me. We were joined by Sue Davis, a retired teacher and Slaton resident. Davis became a member of the Slaton Railroad Heritage Association in 1994. She shared her memories and gave me some printed materials for my research. After breakfast, Jessica showed me the basement, where the Harvey Girls used to roller skate in their spare time. I explored the inside and

outside of the building, noticing details and taking photos. Some features of the Harvey House have not changed. For example, one side of the laundry room was left untouched by renovation as a reminder of how bad the damage had gotten before the Harvey House was restored (fig. 4-18). Some of the original features remain and are in good condition, including two skylights that have been in place since the structure was built, the wooden swinging doors that lead to the kitchen, and one stained glass window (fig. 4-19).

Figure 4-18. Part of the laundry room wall that was left untouched by renovations. Photo taken by the author on January 11, 2018.

Figure 4-19. The only original stained glass at the Slaton Harvey House. Other stained glass windows were created to match this one. Photo taken by the author on January 11, 2018.

The Slaton Harvey House is a beautiful example of what can be accomplished if enough people care about what happens to the historic buildings in their communities. The residents of Slaton worked together to save their Harvey House, and now the Harvey House is helping the community by bringing money back into the local economy through historic tourism. For me, this is proof that depots and other railroad buildings in the Panhandle are worth saving and can still be functional public spaces. Fittingly, the Slaton Harvey House Bed and Breakfast has been repurposed to do what it was first built to do—to serve meals to guests and serve the community as a cultural center.

A successful depot and railroad building preservation strategy requires a blend of private and public funds and efforts. Private funds would come from entities such as the railroad companies, owners of the Slaton Harvey House Bed and Breakfast, and the owner of the gun shop that was once the Dumas depot. Public funds would come from the Texas Department of Transportation, City-paid ownership, tax payers, City Hall, and from local and State government. The 1976 Bicentennial of the United States raised some concern with preservation. The Bicentennial renewed interest in the history of buildings, places, and events. For example, in 1976, the citizens of Canadian banded together in an attempt to save their Santa Fe depot—unfortunately, it was torn down. Also, the Miami depot was repurposed as the Roberts County Museum in 1979, just three years after the Bicentennial. Not every historic building can be preserved, but efforts should be made to at least photograph, document, and archive artifacts to show the historical significance of these spaces and structures.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Although railroad depots have been overlooked by historians of the railroad and of westward development in the U.S., they are actually quite central to the story of the American West. My thesis has focused on a particular region—the Texas Panhandle—as a case study for the cultural geography of the depot. These structures show us how communities have constructed aesthetic and spatial identities, even through the buildings themselves were owned and operated by private companies; in a sense, they became one of the primary "public spheres" of late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century America. They were centers for telecommunications and transport, but they were also social and cultural centers; thus their stylistic design is not only a topic of interest for the formalist art historian, but also for the historian of culture more broadly.

The depots in the Texas Panhandle that I studied were built to last. Unfortunately, though, they have outlasted their use value for the railroad companies who own them. As the passenger traffic declined on the railroad in America, many of these stuctures have declined in their everyday use by the public, have been abandoned, and, ultimately, demolished. Yet, some depots have still proven valuable to the communities where they are located and have been preserved, some structurally and physically, others in museum archives or digital imagery. Certain towns have raised the money to purchase them as public property, for use as civic spaces, from government administration buildings to

museums. At the same time, private owners have bought the depot buildings from the railroads and converted them into businesses, like bed-and-breakfasts. Almost like today's Starbucks coffee houses—which are quasi-public spaces owned by private companies, but used by a public that embraces them as part of their everyday lives—railroad depots served this function in their heyday and thus should be considered worth preserving in some form as one of the key aspects of public life in America.

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