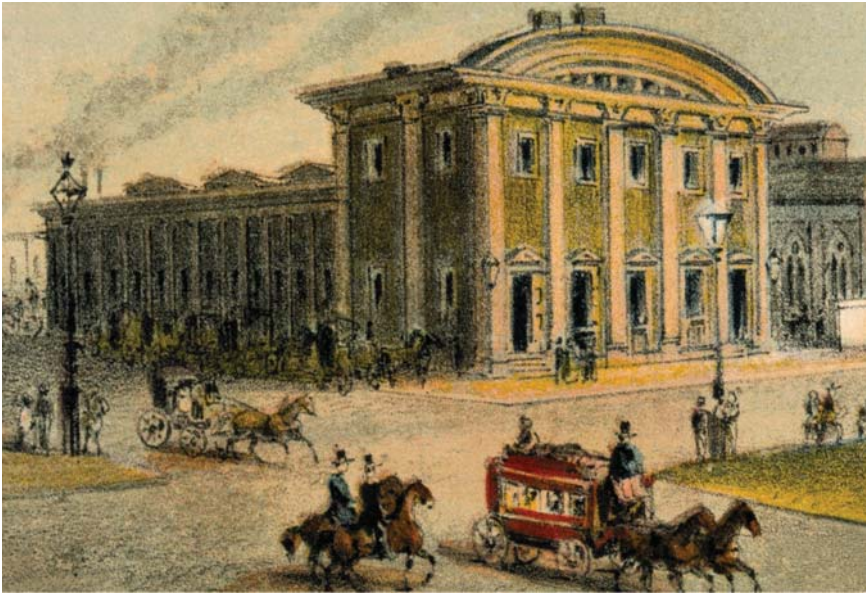


President Street Station

National Significance Evaluation for
Inclusion into the National Park System



President Street Station, 1861

Prepared for the Friends of the President Street Station, Inc.
601 President Street, Baltimore, MD 21202

Contents

Executive Summary	3
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background	4
1.2 The National Park System.....	6

2.0 Historic Context

2.1 Introduction	7
2.2 An Historic Structure.....	7
2.3 Development of Railroads	8
2.4 Abraham Lincoln and Baltimore Plot	9
2.5 The Civil War—First Blood	10
2.6 <i>Maryland, My Maryland</i>	12
2.7 The Civil War—Critical Transportation Links.....	12
2.8 The Underground Railroad	13
2.9 Immigration.....	17

3.0 Eligibility and Significance Evaluation

3.1 Introduction	18
3.2 National Criteria	18
3.3 Significance Evaluation.....	19
3.4 Suitability and Feasibility Evaluation	21

Bookmarks	23
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Appendices

Reference Materials.....	24
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Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to evaluate the President Street Station against criteria for designation of a historic site as a unit of the National Park System. The question to be addressed is whether the historic site is nationally significant and possesses exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States.

President Street Station was constructed in 1849-1850 for the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad (PW&B) as its Baltimore terminus. It is the oldest surviving big city railroad terminal in the United States and one of the first stations in the nation to take the traditional station form incorporating a huge train shed. The surviving head house is a two-story brick Italianate building with a unique barrel-vault roof.

The history of the station is fascinating and significant. President Lincoln traveled through the station on several occasions, including secretly on his way to his first inaugural to avoid an assassination plot. During the Civil War, it served as a vital transportation link and is considered the site of the first blood of the Civil War. On April 19, 1861, Massachusetts troops and Pennsylvania Volunteers bound for Washington, D.C. were attacked by an angry mob

of Southern sympathizers. This event inspired the composition of the Maryland state anthem, Maryland, My Maryland. Prior to emancipation the station served as an important connection for the Underground Railroad. Frederick Douglas, Ellen and William Craft, Henry Box Brown, Charlotte Giles, Harriet Eglin, and many others boarded PW&B trains at Baltimore to escape to freedom in the north. Emigrants from New York City and Philadelphia traveled by PW&B trains to make connections to the west. Emigrants also caught PW&B trains from Baltimore to go north.

President Street Station is nationally significant because it meets the four criteria to be considered for inclusion into the National Park System. First, the station is an outstanding example of a 19th Century train station. The roof of President Street Station was built with a single Howe arch for support, believed to be both the first example and the last survivor of this particular structural form. This first generation Howe arch is significant because with modifications in detail, this system was used for every train shed and roof of similar form for the subsequent 20 years. In addition to its unique architecture, the station is associated with the Civil War, an event that had a broad impact on national patterns of United States history. Most importantly, the riot that

many historians consider resulted in the first bloodshed of the Civil War started at, and was centered on, the station. During the Civil War, the station was a vital transportation link between Washington, D.C. and the North. President Street Station is importantly associated with the life of persons nationally significant in the history of the United States. Most significantly, it is associated with Abraham Lincoln, who transferred trains at the station on at least four occasions.

Second, President Street Station possesses exceptional value for illustrating or interpreting cultural themes of our Nation's heritage such as military campaigns (the Civil War), transportation (the growth of the railroad industry in the mid-19th Century), slavery (the Underground Railroad) and migration (Emigrant trains).

Third, it provides superlative opportunities for public use and enjoyment through interpretation of the stories related to early development of the railroad industry and station design, Abraham Lincoln's secret ride to his first inaugural, the Baltimore Riot and the First Blood of the Civil War, the lyrics of Maryland, My Maryland, the Underground Railroad, and emigrant transportation.

Finally, the station retains a high degree of integrity as a true, accurate,

and relatively unspoiled example of a mid-19th Century train station head house.

Based on the findings of national significance, it is recommended that national legislation be pursued authorizing a formal feasibility study by the National Park Service for designation of President Street Station as a historic site within the National Park System.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

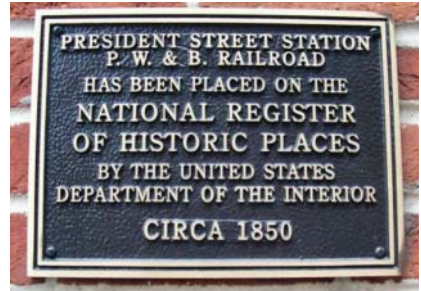
The purpose of this report is to evaluate the President Street Station against criteria for designation of a historic site as a unit of the National Park System. The question to be addressed is whether the historic site is nationally significant and possesses exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States in history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture, and possesses a high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling.

President Street Station was constructed in 1849-1850 for the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad (PW&B) as their Baltimore terminus. It is the oldest surviving big city railroad terminal in the United States and one of the first

stations in the nation to take the traditional station form incorporating a huge train shed. The surviving head house is a two-story brick Italianate building with a unique barrel-vault roof. It originally contained ticketing and passenger waiting facilities and offices for the PW&B. A track ran along Pratt Street to connect PW&B trains arriving from Philadelphia with Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (B&O) trains at Camden Station to Washington, D.C. Thus, it served as key link between Washington, D.C. and the Northeast.

President Street Station was largely replaced in 1883 by Union Station, but continued to have some passenger train usage until 1911. It was later used as a freight station and then as a warehouse, although the train shed was destroyed by fire, leaving only the present head house by 1970, when it was abandoned. The derelict building was acquired by the City of Baltimore in 1979 for a proposed extension of Interstate 83, which was never built. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on September 10, 1992. During the 1990s, the station was renovated and reopened as a Civil War Museum.

The history of the station is fascinating and significant. President Lincoln traveled through the station on several occasions, including secretly on his way to his first inaugural to avoid



National Register of Historic Places building marker

an assassination plot. During the Civil War it served as a vital transportation link and is considered the site of the first blood of the Civil War. On April 19, 1861, Massachusetts troops and Pennsylvania Volunteers bound for Washington, D.C. were attacked by an angry mob of Southern sympathizers. Four Massachusetts soldiers and 12 civilians were killed in the ensuing riot. This event inspired the composition of the Maryland state anthem, Maryland, My Maryland, by James Ryder Randall.

Prior to emancipation, the station served as an important connection for the Underground Railroad. Frederick Douglas, Ellen and William Craft, Henry Box Brown, Charlotte Giles, Harriet Eglin, and many others, boarded PW&B trains at Baltimore to escape to freedom in the north. Many of these escapes are described in William Still's 1871 seminal work, *The Underground Railroad*. The station was included in National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom on November 14, 2001.

Maryland was the site of the first railroad and first sea-rail link in the United States and Baltimore sustained strong commercial and industrial growth in the mid-19th Century, thus becoming an important railroad center. President Street Station and the PW&B were integral components of that railroad development and of Baltimore becoming a major southern railroad hub. Most trains from the North traveling to Washington, D.C. and points south went through Baltimore.

As a result of commercial development and as a major port, Baltimore was both a destination and departure point for emigrants. Emigrant trains provided low-cost, one-way fares to the west for newly arrived foreigners in New York City, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. Emigrants from New York City and Philadelphia traveled by PW&B trains to make connections to the west. Emigrants also caught PW&B trains from Baltimore to go north.

1.2 The National Park System

The National Park System preserves significant natural and cultural resources of the United States. Currently 384 units fall under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service (NPS). The National Park System includes an array of sites including parks, monuments, battlefields, and scenic rivers, as well as historic structures.

To be considered for inclusion into the National Park System, the President Street Station would have to meet the following criteria for national significance:

- It is an outstanding example of a particular type of resource.
- It possesses exceptional value of quality illustrating or interpreting the natural or cultural themes of our Nation's heritage.
- It offers superlative opportunities for recreation for public use and enjoyment, or for scientific study.
- It retains a high degree of integrity as a true, accurate, and relatively unspoiled example of the resource.



Adalbert Volck's caricature of Lincoln's secret passage through Baltimore

2.0 Historic Context

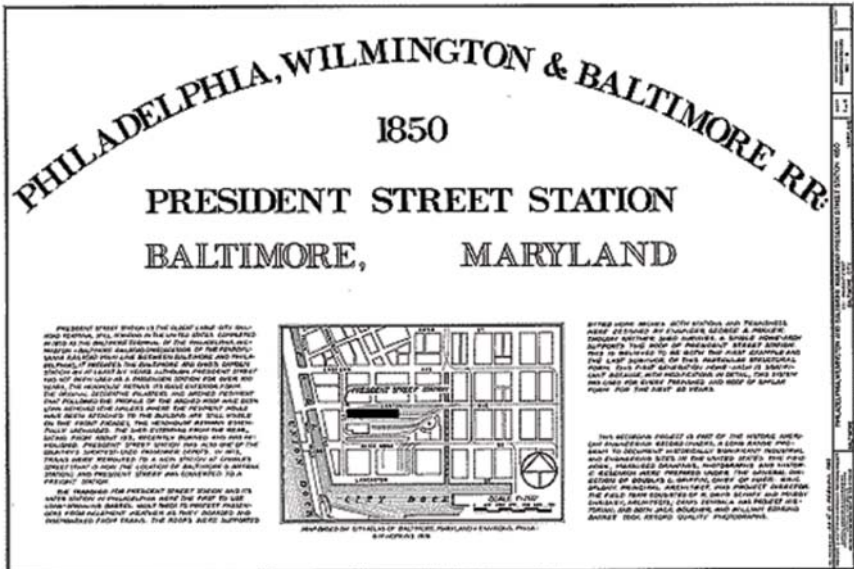
2.1 Introduction

The mid-19th Century was an era of great significance to American History. Railroads and industry developed into major economic engines in cities such as Baltimore. The Civil War had far-reaching effects on American society that are still being played out today. President Street Station’s place in that era is particularly interesting.

2.2 An Historic Structure

President Street Station was constructed in 1849-1850 for the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad (PW&B) as its Baltimore terminus. It is the oldest surviv-

ing big city railroad terminal in the United States and one of the first stations in the nation to take the traditional station form incorporating a huge train shed. The surviving head house is a two-story brick Italianate building with a unique barrel-vault roof. It originally contained ticketing and passenger waiting facilities and offices for the PW&B. A track ran along Pratt Street to connect PW&B trains arriving from Philadelphia with Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (B&O) trains at Camden Station to Washington, D.C. Thus, it served as the key link connecting Washington, D.C. with the Northeast.



Historic American Engineering Record

Map based on City Atlas of Baltimore, Maryland & Environs. Phila: G. M. Hopkins, 1876

As recorded in the Historic American Engineering Record: “The train shed for President Street Station and its sister station in Philadelphia were the first to use long-spanning barrel vault sheds to protect passengers from inclement weather as they boarded and disembarked from trains. The roofs were supported by tied Howe arches. Both stations and train sheds were designed by engineer George A. Parker. A single Howe arch supports the roof of President Street Station. This is believed to be both the first example and was the last survivor of this particular structural form. This first generation Howe arch is significant because with modifications in detail, this system was used for every train shed and roof of similar form for the next 20 years.”

2.3 Development of Railroads

President Street Station and the PW&B mirror the growth and eventual consolidation of the railroad industry. Maryland was the site of the first railroad and first sea-rail link (1831) in the United States and Baltimore sustained strong commercial and industrial growth in the mid-19th Century, thus becoming an important railroad center. President Street Station and the PW&B were integral components of that railroad development.

In the mid-19th Century railroads grew rapidly. Between 1830 and 1840, total rail mileage grew from 40 miles to near 2,800 miles. Rail lines were initially short and built by individual companies. Over time, lines and companies merged.

The Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad was formed by the merger of: 1) the Philadelphia and Delaware County Rail Road Company chartered in Pennsylvania on April 2, 1831; 2) the Delaware and Maryland Rail Road Company chartered in Maryland on March 14, 1832; 3) the Wilmington and Susquehanna Rail Road Company with chartered January 18, 1832 in Delaware; and 4) the Baltimore and Port Deposit Rail Road Company chartered in Maryland on March 5, 1832. The merger took place on February 5, 1838.

By the time of the Civil War, the City of Baltimore had become a major southern railroad hub. Most trains from the North to Washington, D.C. and points south traveled through Baltimore. In addition to the PW&B, Baltimore was served by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (B&O) with the Camden Street Station, and the Northern Central Railroad with the Calvert Street Station. As in other large cities, Baltimore restricted train travel through the central business district. Thus, passengers were shut-

tled on a track along Pratt Street, between President Street Station and Camden Street Station, for travel through Baltimore to other cities. The various railroad companies coordinated with each other and often operated over each others' tracks.

The Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR) began using PW&B tracks in 1873. In 1881, the PRR bought a controlling interest in the PW&B, making the PW&B its main line from Philadelphia to Baltimore. Due to conflict with the B&O, and to create a direct connection through Baltimore, a new station, the Union Station, was built in 1886. The current Pennsylvania Station replaced Union Station in the early 1900s. Some passenger service continued at President Street Station until 1911. Eventually it was converted to freight use only.

The old PW&B line is now part of Amtrak's Northeast Corridor.

2.4 Abraham Lincoln and the Baltimore Plot

Abraham Lincoln is associated with President Street Station since he traveled though it at least four times. On September 9, 1848, as a United States Congressman, he traveled through Baltimore to conduct a tour of New England. To avoid a suspected assassination attempt, he secretly passed through the station on February 23, 1861 on the way to his first inaugu-

ration. For an unannounced visit to General Winfield Scott at West Point on June 23, 1862, he transferred trains at the station. Finally, Lincoln went through the station to address the Great Central Sanitary Fair at Philadelphia on June 16, 1864. Had Lincoln traveled three weeks later on the PW&B, he could have been captured in Gilmor's Raid. Confederate Major Harry W. Gilmor and his cavalry detachment captured two trains and Union General William Franklin. Gilmor then burned a train on the PW&B Gunpowder River Bridge.

Of particular interest is the story of the Baltimore Plot. President-elect Lincoln left Springfield, Illinois on February 11, 1861, at the start of a whistle stop tour that was to end with his inauguration in Washington, D.C. on March 4, 1861. Prior to this whistle stop tour, Samuel Felton, President of the PW&B, hired Allan Pinkerton, a well known private detective, to investigate suspicious activities. Samuel Felton was concerned that southern sympathizers would damage railroad bridges and tunnels.

Pinkerton became convinced that a plot existed to ambush Lincoln's carriage between the Calvert Street Station of the Northern Central and the Camden Street Station of the B&O. Pinkerton tried to convince Lincoln to cancel his stop at Harris-

burg, PA and to go secretly straight through Baltimore. Lincoln insisted upon maintaining his schedule and appeared in Harrisburg as planned. However, afterward the President-elect was secretly taken to Philadelphia and smuggled aboard a late night regularly scheduled PW&B train for Baltimore. His sleeping car was uncoupled at President Street Station and drawn by horses to Camden Station to be taken to Washington. Once Lincoln's rail carriage had safely passed through Baltimore, Pinkerton sent a one-line telegram to the president of the PW&B: "Plums delivered nuts safely."

Many historians believe that Pinkerton was wrong and there was no assassination plot. Years later, Ward Hill Lamon, Lincoln's friend and traveling companion during the trip, stated, "It is perfectly manifest that there was no conspiracy -- no conspiracy of a hundred, of fifty, of twenty, of three; no definite purpose in the heart of even one man to murder Mr. Lincoln in Baltimore." Whether or not the assassination plot was true, the new President was embarrassed by the affair.

2.5 The Civil War—First Blood

The Baltimore Riot of 1861 occurred on April 19, 1861, between Confederate sympathizers and Union troops. Many historians regard it as the first

bloodshed of the Civil War. The Civil War had started one week prior to the riot, without any fatalities by the shelling of Fort Sumter in Charleston by Confederate batteries.

In response, President Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers to put down the rebellion. Thus, four companies of Pennsylvania militia left Harrisburg on April 18, 1861 for Washington, D.C., on the B&O. The militia was met by a hostile crowd in Baltimore that cursed and threw bricks at them. Nicholas Biddle, a free colored man serving one of the militia officers, was struck in the head with a paving stone. While not fatally wounded, he became the first casualty of the war. Throughout that day, Baltimore remained agitated, with rival factions clashing.

The next day, April 19, the Union's Sixth Massachusetts Regiment traveled south, towards Washington, D.C., on the PW&B through Baltimore. On the same train were seven companies of unarmed Pennsylvania volunteers. Because locomotives were prohibited between President Street Station and the B&O's Camden Station, the rail cars carrying the troops had to be transferred between the two stations by horses along Pratt Street. As the troops transferred between stations, a mob of secessionists and Southern sympathizers

attacked the train cars and blocked the route. The events were described the next day in the *Baltimore American*: “At the President Street Depot of the Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore Railroad yesterday morning, a large crowd was assembled in anticipation of the arrival of a large number of troops from New York and Massachusetts. Shortly after 11 o’clock the train from Philadelphia, comprising 30 cars, arrived at the depot. Without disembarking the soldiers from the train, the several cars and horses attached and about nine cars were drawn along Pratt Street to Camden Station, the first six being permitted to pass without any marked violence...” Violence then erupted and the crowd blocked tracks in the street. “This having been accomplished, they, with loud hurrahs, dared the troops to come on, but the latter, observing the posture of affairs, deemed it more prudent to turn back to the President Street Depot.” ... “At this point there still remained upwards of twenty cars filled with the troops, and five or

six cars which had been used for the reception of ammunition, baggage etc. After a lapse of a quarter of an hour, the command was given for the troops to disembark and form on the outside. While forming, they were surrounded by a dense mass of people, who impeded their march up President Street by every possible means, stones being thrown in great numbers.” ... “From the President Street depot to Pratt Street Bridge they were pursued by the excited crowd.”

Unable to distinguish rioters from bystanders, the soldiers fired in all directions. By the time the soldiers reached Camden Station, four were dead and 36 wounded. Luther Ladd, of Lowell, MA, is sometimes considered to be the first Union casualty of the war, though technically he was killed by civilians in a Union state. Twelve civilians died and an unknown number were wounded. The unarmed soldiers who remained at the President Street Station were at the mercy of the mob that killed the first Pennsylvanian, George Leisering, until they returned to Philadelphia by a special train. After the riot, and for the next month, some small skirmishes occurred throughout Baltimore between citizens and police. Confederate sympathizers burned all PW&B bridges to prevent the passage



Lexington of 1861 by Currier and Ives
Library of Congress

of more Federal troops. On May 13, 1861, the Union army entered Baltimore, occupied the city, and declared martial law.

Northern printmakers, Currier and Ives, commemorated the riot by publishing a lithograph entitled “Lexington of 1861,” portraying Baltimore Rioters in a decidedly unfavorable light while celebrating the heroism of the troops.

2.6 Maryland, My Maryland

The riots that started at President Street Station led to the writing of the poem that eventually became the Maryland state song. James Ryder Randall, a teacher in Louisiana, read about the Baltimore Riot and found a close friend and college roommate

was killed in the fighting. That night, he could not sleep and wrote a nine-stanza poem he called *My Maryland* for the Southern cause. The poem’s name was later changed to *Maryland, My Maryland* and set to the tune of *O Tannenbaum*. It soon became one of the most popular songs of the war in the South and, 78 years later, became Maryland’s state song. Like *The Star-Spangled Banner*, it is sometimes criticized. But, like the national anthem, it was written in a single night after a great historical event, both of which took place in Baltimore.

2.7 The Civil War— Critical Transportation Links

By the time of the Civil War, Baltimore was one of the largest industrial cities in the United States and a very important port and railroad center. Once the federal government occupied Baltimore, its assets were put to work to support the war effort. The railroads were used from the start.

President Street Station and the PW&B were integral components of Baltimore’s railroad network. Trains traveling to and from the North to Washington, D.C. traveled through Baltimore on the PW&B line. Troops and supplies were regularly shuttled through the Station. For instance, General Robert E. Lee’s 1863 invasion in the North prompted President Lincoln to call for 100,000 vol-

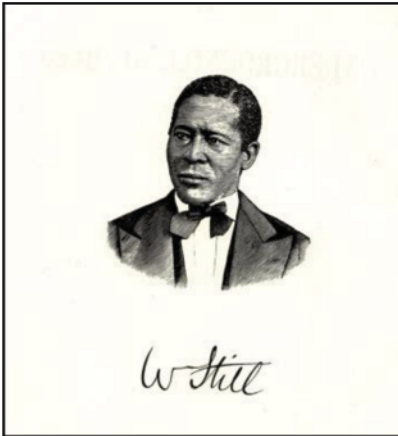


Maryland, My Maryland became the official State song in 1939

unteers to stop the invasion. The 7th New York National Guard heeded that call and arrived at President Street Station in cattle cars provided by the PW&B.

2.8 The Underground Railroad

Prior to emancipation, the station served as an important connection for the Underground Railroad. Frederick Douglass, Ellen and William Craft, Henry Box Brown, Charlotte Giles, Harriet Eglin, and many others, boarded PW&B trains at Baltimore to escape to freedom in the North. Many of these escapes are described in William Still's 1871 seminal work, *The Underground Railroad*. The station was included in National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom on November 14, 2001.



William Still

The Underground Railroad was an informal network of secret routes and safe houses used by slaves to

escape to Free states and Canada with the aid of abolitionists who were sympathetic to their cause. The operation of clandestine escape networks began in the 1500s and became connected with organized abolitionist activity in the 19th Century. It was neither “underground” nor a “railroad” but consisted of meeting points, secret routes, transportation, safe houses, and assistance provided by abolitionist sympathizers. From 1830 to 1865, the Underground Railroad reached its peak as abolitionists and sympathizers who condemned slavery aided large numbers of slaves escape to Freedom.

William Still, known as “The Father of the Underground Railroad,” helped hundreds of slaves escape, sometimes hiding them in his Philadelphia home. He was born in 1821 and taught himself to read and write. During one interview of an escapee, he discovered that the man, Peter Still, was his own brother. They had been separated since childhood. He kept careful records about the slaves he helped escape and maintained correspondence with many of them, often acting as a middleman in communications between escaped slaves and those left behind. He published these accounts in his 1871 book, *The Underground Railroad*.

The following chronology details many of the escapes associated with President Street Station and the

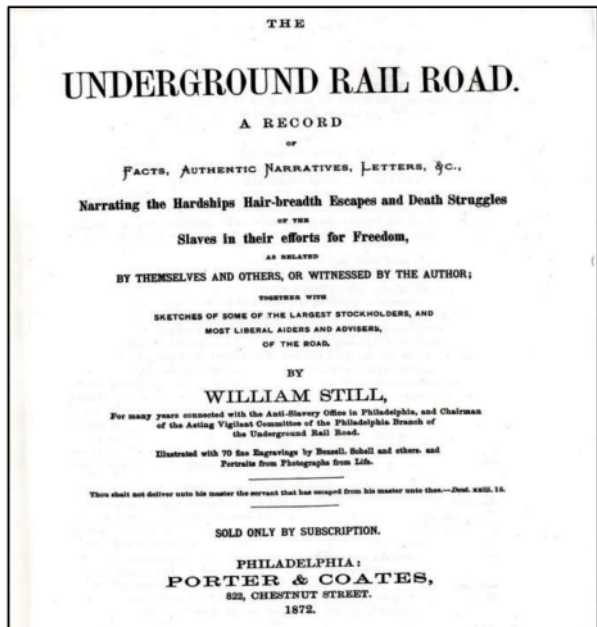
PW&B Railroad, most recorded by William Still:

FREDERICK DOUGLASS – September 3, 1838: He jumped aboard a PW&B train as it pulled away from a station (believed to have been east of Fells Point in Canton on Boston Street), disguised as a sailor and avoiding the ticket clerk. Issac Rolles, a hack driver friend of Douglass, brought his luggage past the station to Douglass. With borrowed seaman’s papers he paid onboard. He encountered several close calls of being discovered by acquaintances while traveling north by train and steamboat. He never disclosed in his early writings how he made his escape to protect others who would use the same route. He had obtained the names of white Quakers and fellow blacks who could be trusted to help him on his way.

WILLIAM AND ELLEN CRAFT – 1848: They were briefly detained by a PW&B agent at Baltimore on the way to Philadelphia.

Light-skinned Ellen posed as the gentleman owner of her husband, William. Her arm was in a sling so that “he” could not sign forms required of masters who traveled with slaves. Her hair was cut short and a bandage was wrapped under her chin and over her head as if she had a toothache. This helped her to disguise her voice. They came from Macon, GA.

HENRY BOX BROWN – 1849: He paid a white man, Sam A. Smith, to ship him in a 3’ x 2’6” box, by Adams (Railway) Express from Richmond, VA, through the PW&B’s Transportation Office on President Street in Baltimore



Title Page
The Underground Rail Road

to Philadelphia. He arrived safely in the hands of William Still and the Vigilance Committee. Sam A. Smith was arrested later that year after boxing two other slaves.

He was heavily chained for five months in a 4' x 8' cell during a very hot summer. While in prison, he was stabbed five times by a bribed assassin, but survived. He was released in 1856 and made his way to Philadelphia, possibly on the PW&B.

RACHAEL and ELIZABETH PARKER – 1851 to 1852: They were employed as house servants for Joseph C. Miller of East Nottingham, Chester County, PA, and then kidnapped by Tom McCreary and taken to Baltimore aboard a PW&B train to be sold as slaves. Mr. Miller pursued, arriving too late to rescue them from the slave pens. While he was waiting at the President Street Station to return to Pennsylvania, he was snatched from the platform of the train car, murdered, and left hanging from a tree at the Stemmers Run Station to appear as a suicide. The women were later proven to be free and returned to Chester, PA. A warrant was issued for McCreary, but the Governor of Maryland refused to allow his arrest.

JEFFERSON PIPKINS and FIVE OTHERS – April 1853: William Stills says they arrived in Philadelphia by very clever means.

JAKE, BOB and STEPHEN PENNINGTON – May 25, 1854: They were escapees from Baltimore, and were caught by slave hunters on the Camden & Amboy Railroad between Philadelphia and New York. They were returned to Baltimore by United States Marshals on a PW&B train. Their masters, David Smith & Jacob Grove of Washington County, met them at President Street Station.

June 22, 1854: J. Bigelow, of Washington, D.C., writes to William Stills of a shipment of three packages, two large and one small, to Philadelphia, PA, code for escaped slaves.

JANE JOHNSON and TWO SONS – July 30, 1855: They traveled to Philadelphia aboard a PW&B train with her master, Colonel Wheeler of Washington, D.C. While waiting to board a steamboat for New York, they were approached by Passmore Williamson from the Anti-Slavery office. He informed her of her right to be free. He pushed Wheeler aside, knocking him down. Then he helped her and

her sons to get off of the boat. He was arrested and charged with riot, forcible abduction and assault and battery. He served four months and was released. She was permitted freedom by a court.

CHARLOTTE GILES & HARRIET EGLIN- July 31, 1856: They escaped from Baltimore dressed in mourning clothes and boarded a PW&B train at President Street Station. They had been owned by Capt. William Applegarth and John Delahay. While the train was sitting in the station, one of the owners boarded to search the cars. When asked, the escapees gave false names. Even though he lifted their veils to see their faces, he did not recognize them and hurried on through the train. A male escapee named Johnson, who was on the same train, panicked and jumped from the moving train at Wilmington. He crushed his feet and died a year later. James Adams, a railroad employee and accomplice to the escape of Giles & Eglin, was arrested when the women sent for their clothes. Their masters sued him and the PW&B Railroad. The court ruled that the Railroad was not at fault.

EMELINE CHAPMAN, alias SUSAN BELL - September 23,

1856: Aided by J. Bigelow, she escaped her mistress, Emily Thompson of Washington, D.C. and went to Philadelphia by train.

CHARLES HOLLADAY - 1856: F. Smith was given a two year claim on Holladay as a slave. Holladay felt the claim was not binding as he had not been consulted. He escaped and walked to Philadelphia, refusing to have anything to do with the PW&B since it was too proscriptive (prohibiting, interdicting) and not worth his confidence.

HARRY GRIMES. GEORGE UPSHER & EDWARD LEWIS - November 25, 1857: Thomas Garrett wrote to William Stills that these three escapees had fled North Carolina and were to arrive in Wilmington on a schooner. He stated they were to be clothed there, sent by train to Philadelphia with a man named Johnson, and met at 11p.m. in Philadelphia at the PW&B Depot at Broad and Prime Streets.

NAME UNKNOWN - Winter 1857: A young female escaped slave was placed in a box by a white male companion to be shipped by train to Philadelphia. She was owned by a wealthy and fashionable Baltimore family

and worked as a seamstress and lady's servant. She used her scissors to punch an air hole in the box and remained in the box at the President Street Station over night in the winter. At Philadelphia, her companion, philanthropist Thomas Shipley, hired a horse wagon driven to pick up the box at the depot and transport it to a Mrs. Myers, originally from Baltimore. Weak from hunger, fear, and exposure to the cold, the young woman was speechless. Her name is unknown.

1858: The PW&B Railroad posted a notice that stated "All Colored People (Bond or Free) wishing to travel on the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad, will be required to bring with them to the Ticket Office, President Street Depot, some Responsible White Person, a citizen of Baltimore, known to the undersigned, to sign a bond to the company before they can proceed. Wm. Crawford, Agent."

JOSEPH G. JOHNSON - 1860: He was 23 and was owned by William Jones, a grocer on Pratt Street in Baltimore. Mr. Jones owned six slaves and was very good to them. Suddenly, for some reason unknown to Mr. Johnson, Mr. Jones sold all his slaves except Mr. Johnson. Three weeks later,

fearing he was about to be sold, Mr. Johnson fled from Baltimore (President Street Station) on the PW&B for Philadelphia. He was discovered at Wilmington, in the cars, by the son of Mr. Jones, who lived there. The son had been notified by telegraph to watch for Mr. Johnson. Mr. Johnson later succeeded in escaping to Philadelphia by water at the cost of \$25.00, a large sum for a slave.

2.9 Immigration

As a result of commercial development and as a major port, Baltimore was both a destination to and departure point for emigrants. Emigrant trains provided low-cost, one-way fares to the West for newly arrived foreigners in New York City, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. Emigrants from New York City and Philadelphia traveled by PW&B trains to make connections to the West. Emigrants also caught PW&B trains from Baltimore to go north.



Newly arrived emigrants board an Emigrant Train bound for the West. Baltimore, MD circa 1900

3.0 Eligibility and Significance Evaluation

3.1 Introduction

As stated in the beginning, the purpose of this report is to evaluate the President Street Station against criteria for designation of a historic site as a unit of the National Park System. The question to be addressed is whether the historic site is nationally significant and possesses exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States in history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture, and possesses a high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling. The criteria for inclusion into the National Park System are set forth in the following section, along with an evaluation of how President Street Station meets those criteria.

The National Park System preserves significant natural and cultural resources. Currently 384 units fall under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service (NPS). The National Park System includes an array of sites including parks, monuments, battlefields, and scenic rivers, as well as historic structures.

3.2 National Criteria

Regardless of economic considerations or other factors, a new national park area must meet criteria

for national significance, suitability, and feasibility.

National Significance

A proposed unit will be considered nationally significant if it meets all four of the following standards:

- Standard 1: It is an outstanding example of a particular type of resource.
- Standard 2: It possesses exceptional value of quality illustrating or interpreting the natural or cultural themes of our Nation's heritage.
- Standard 3: It offers superlative opportunities for recreation for public use and enjoyment, or for scientific study.
- Standard 4: It retains a high degree of integrity as a true, accurate, and relatively unspoiled example of the resource.

For a historic site, such as the President Street Station, the resource must possess exceptional value in illustrating or interpreting our heritage and possess a high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Specific examples include:

- a resource that is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to and are identified with, or that outstandingly represent the broad national patterns of United States history and from which

an understanding and appreciation of those patterns may be gained;

- a resource that is importantly associated with the lives of persons nationally significant in the history of the United States;
- a resource that embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen, exceptionally valuable for study of a period, style, or method of construction, or represents a significant, distinctive and exceptional entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- a resource that is composed of integral parts of the environment not sufficiently significant by reason of historical association or artistic merit to warrant individual recognition but collectively composes an entity of exceptional historical or artistic significance, or outstandingly commemorates or illustrates a way of life or culture; and
- a resource that has yielded or may be likely to yield information of major scientific importance by revealing new cultures, or by shedding light upon periods of occupation over large areas of the United States.

Suitability and Feasibility

An area that is nationally significant must also meet criteria for suitability and feasibility to qualify as a poten-

tial addition to the National Park System. To be suitable for inclusion in the System, an area must represent a natural or cultural theme or type of recreational resource that is not already adequately represented in the National Park System or is not comparably represented and protected for public enjoyment by another land-managing entity. Adequacy of representation is determined on a case-by-case basis by comparing the proposed area to other units in the National Park System for differences or similarities in the character, quality, quantity, or combination of resources, and opportunities for public enjoyment.

To be feasible as a new unit of the National Park System, an area's natural systems and/or historic settings must be of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure long-term protection of the resources and to accommodate public use. It must have potential for efficient administration at a reasonable cost. Important feasibility factors include landownership, acquisition costs, access, and threats to the resource, and staff or development requirements.

3.3 Significance Evaluation

President Street Station is nationally significant because it meets all four of the following standards:

Standard 1: The station is an outstanding example of a 19th Century

train station. It is the oldest surviving big city railroad terminal in the United States and one of the first stations in the nation to take the traditional station form incorporating a huge train shed. The surviving head house is a two-story brick Italianate building with a unique barrel-vault roof. The train shed for President Street Station, and its sister station in Philadelphia, were the first to use long-spanning barrel vault sheds to protect passengers from inclement weather as they boarded and disembarked from trains. The roof of President Street Station was built with a single Howe arch for support. This is believed to be both the first example and last survivor of this particular structural form. This first generation Howe arch is significant because with modifications in detail, this system was used for every train shed and roof of similar form for the next 20 years. The significance of the building is highlighted by the fact it is on the National Register of Historic Places, has been documented for the Historic American Buildings Survey and the Historic American Engineering Record, and declared a Landmark by the City of Baltimore.

In addition to its unique architecture, the station is associated with the Civil War, an event that had a broad impact on national patterns of United States history. The station was a vital transportation link

between Washington, D.C. and the North. Troops and supplies were shuttled through the station. Most importantly, the riot many historians consider resulted in the first bloodshed of the Civil War started at, and was centered around, President Street Station as southern sympathizers clashed with troops on their way to protect the nation's capital.

President Street Station is importantly associated with the life of persons nationally significant in the history of the United States. Most significantly it is associated with Abraham Lincoln. He transferred trains at the station at least four times, once as a Congressman, on the way to his first inauguration, and two times as President. To avoid a suspected assassination plot he was smuggled through the station on February 23, 1861, with the assistance of Allan Pinkerton, the famous private detective and Samuel Felton, President of the PW&B. In addition, the station is importantly associated with Frederick Douglass who escaped slavery by hopping a train at the station's precursor and with William Still who helped many slaves escape to freedom, some through President Street Station.

Standard 2: President Street Station possesses exceptional value of quality illustrating or interpreting cultural

themes of our Nation's heritage such as military campaigns (the Civil War), transportation (the growth of the railroad industry in the mid-19th Century), slavery (the Underground Railroad) and migration (Emigrant trains).

Standard 3: President Street Station offers superlative opportunities for public use and enjoyment through interpretation of the stories related to early development of the railroad industry and station design, Abraham Lincoln's secret ride to his first inaugural, the Baltimore Riot and the First Blood of the Civil War, the lyrics of Maryland, My Maryland, the Underground Railroad, emigrant transportation.

Standard 4: President Street Station retains a high degree of integrity as a true, accurate, and relatively unspoiled example of a mid-19th Century train station head house.

3.4 Suitability & Feasibility Evaluation

An area that is nationally significant also must meet criteria for suitability and feasibility to qualify as a potential addition to the National Park System. A detailed evaluation of suitability and feasibility is beyond the scope of this report and would be undertaken as part of a formal feasibility study by the National Park Service for inclusion of President

Street Station into the National Park System. However, the following preliminary conclusions provide a foundation for future consideration.

Suitability

To be suitable for inclusion in the national system the station must be found to represent a cultural theme that is not already adequately represented in the National Park System or is not comparably represented and protected for public enjoyment by another land-managing entity. President Street Station possesses exceptional value for illustrating and interpreting a unique combination of cultural themes, including military campaigns (the Civil War, the Baltimore Riot, Abraham Lincoln, Maryland, My Maryland), transportation (the growth of the railroad industry in the mid-19th Century), architecture (Howe arch), slavery (the Underground Railroad) and migration (Emigrant trains).

Feasibility

To be feasible as a new unit of the National Park System the historic setting of the station must be of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure long-term protection of the resource and to accommodate public use. The President Street Station head house exists in its original location and original building configuration. The

railroad tracks that led to the station ran down city streets, thus the track routes can be readily interpreted. Archeology at the site in March 1998 found evidence of original wooden tracks, providing opportunity for future research into early railroading.

The interior is designed to house a museum and associated book store and includes existing displays that interpret the Civil War in Baltimore and the Underground Railroad. Thus, it has potential for efficient administration at a reasonable cost.

The station is owned by the City of Baltimore. In March 2009, the Mayor of Baltimore stated the City does not have the funding available to operate a museum at the site, however, is interested in proposals to protect and operate the site into the future. This, combined with strong local support from a variety of organizations expressed to the Friends of the President Street Station to save the station, suggests the basis for future partnerships between the National Park Service and the local community to preserve and operate the site as a unit of the National Park System.



President Street Station, 2009

Bookmarks

- i National Register Listings in Maryland, President Street Station, 9/10/1992, Inventory no.: B3741
- ii *The Baltimore Sun*, May 26, 2009, City seeks tenant for landmark President Street Station, Julie Bykowski
- iii National Register Listings in Maryland, President Street Station, 9/10/1992, Inventory no.: B3741
- iv *The Baltimore Plot*, Michael J. Kline, 2008, p.15
- v Historic American Engineering Record, MD-8, Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore RR, President St. Station (1983)
- vi *The Baltimore Plot*, Michael J. Kline, 2008, p.15
- vii *Life of Abraham Lincoln*, Lamon, W, (James R, Osgood and Company, 1872), p.513
- viii *Baltimore During the Civil War*, Scott Sumpter Sheads, Daniel Carroll Toomey, (Toomey Press, 1997), p.13
- ix Ibid, p.40
- x Underground Railroad Special Resource Study (National Park Service 1995), p.15
- xi Sheila Dixon, Mayor, Letter to the President, NAACP Baltimore City Branch (March 4, 2009)

Appendix: Reference Materials

Blockson, Charles, *The Underground Railroad*, Hippocrene Books, 1994

Bykowski, Julie, City seeks tenant for landmark President Street Station, *The Baltimore Sun*, May 26, 2009

Dare, Charles, Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad Guide, 1856

Dixon, Sheila, Mayor, City of Baltimore, Letter to the President, NAACP Baltimore City Branch, March 4, 2009

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Josephson, Judith Pinkerton, Allan Pinkerton, Lerner Publications, 1996

Kline, Michael, *The Baltimore Plot*, Westholme Publishing, 2008

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Sheds, Scott Sumpter and Toomey, Daniel Carroll, *Baltimore During the Civil War*, Toomey Press, 1997

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