



(Postcard courtesy of William Prince)



(Photo by Tom Fahey)

AS IT WAS in the 1890's (left), Raymond's station master and a B&M conductor

stand at trackside beneath the eaves of the town's railroad depot. View at right shows

that little has changed since the turn of the century, as the historical society has taken

pains to preserve the depot's original appearance.

Raymond's Depot Finally Placed On the Good Ol' Historical Map

By TOM FAHEY

Sunday News Correspondent

RAYMOND, July 28 — Ten years after its formation, the Raymond Historical Society has succeeded in placing the town's Boston & Maine railroad depot on the National Register of Historic Places.

The depot was praised as an "outstanding, well-preserved example of late 19th century railroad architecture," in a notice sent by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

Designation to the national register marked the end of an uphill battle waged since 1973 by the historical society.

It was then that the building was purchased from Mrs. Pearl Eccleston. Over its 20 or so years of idleness, the sta-

tion had deteriorated badly. The two small rooms which make up the station, moreover, had accumulated a wide assortment of scrap generated by an upholstery shop.

With a thorough clean-up operation, and the installation of such authentic items as a baggage room gate, an old hand crank telephone, telegraph keys and station master's hats, the depot was restored as a railroad showpiece.

Ornate roof supports, window boxes and the old semaphore signals serve to dress up the outside of the structure, while early photos, maps and documents, and antique tools and artifacts provide the visitor with an idea of how life in Raymond was at the turn of the century.

As the Conservation Service memo stated, "The station and related buildings retain many of their original features . . . The depot and the railroad once served as an integral part of the town's manufacturing and tourist industries."

The depot was once a scene of daily activity, bustling with guests for Raymond's several hotels, alive with freight wagons taking on shipments of produce, or unloading cases of leather goods from the local tannery.

In an age when talk is turning to a revival of the nation's railroads while Congress is busy cutting Amtrak budgets, the future of rail transportation is uncertain.

Part of railroading's romantic, steam-powered past, though, is safe, thanks to Raymond's historians.