



C&O depot building at Farmer, Ky. was built of locally quarried Kentucky Blue Stone in 1911. Here it is about 1950. (C&OHS Collection, COHS 475)

The combination passenger/freight depot at Farmer, Ky. can be considered an oddity because of the materials used for its construction. At a time when most C&O depots were being built from wood, with a few of brick construction, the Farmer station was erected using Kentucky Blue Stone. This type of roughly faced ashlar stone was used by C&O mainly for bridge abutments and piers. The Farmer depot seems to be the only case when it was used for a station building.

Farmer was located about 66 miles west of Ashland and 58 miles east of Lexington, on C&O's Lexington Subdivision. It was 2-½ miles from the station location called Bluestone. The 1906 *C&O Official Industrial Guide and Shippers Directory* says this of Farmer:

"FARMER, KY., 66 miles from Ashland, is the location of several large quarries, planing-mill and lumber plants. The natural

resources abounding are excellent. Large quantities of railroad ties and logs are floated down Licking River to this point, where much lumber is manufactured and shipped hence over the C. & O. Ry."

The 1919 *Industrial Guide's* entry is:

"Farmer (P. O. Farmers), Rowan County. Ky., Population 500. Incorporated 1897. County seat, Morehead, Banking town, Morehead. Rural delivery service to Ramey and Bangor.

RAILROADS: Chesapeake & Ohio RIVER: Licking, not navigable.

TELEPHONE SERVICE: Local and long distance; Framers Telephone Co., main office here.

SCHOOLS: One grammar.

SURROUNDING COUNTRY is hilly and rough; freestone soil. Average price of improved land per acre is \$100.00; unimproved \$40.00. Principal crops raised in county are corn, wheat, and tobacco.

RAW MATERIALS: Building stone has been developed.

MANUFACTURING PLANTS AND

PRINCIPAL INDUSTRIES: Saw mills; stone quarries; hides, pelts, horse, mule live stock, tie and produce shipping."

There was little change in the description between 1906 and 1919. It was a typical small-town station on the C&O. The entries also make very clear why the railway's engineering department decided to build the depot from stone, since Blue Stone quarries were a principal industry. Shipment of this type stone was probably one of the main elements of outgoing freight in the early 1900s.

It appears C&O's engineers were attuned to the products of the towns/stations in Kentucky because they also built a number of stations of locally produced brick, another major product of the region.

The name of the station is one of those that is open to interpretation. The 1906 *Industrial Guide* entry gives us a clue about

this, noting the post office name as "Farmers." The drawing of the station accompanying this article lists it as Farmers, yet it appears in timetables, station lists, etc., as Farmer. This lack of standardization was common at many locations in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The station structure was built in 1911 according to C&O engineering drawing No. 2962-B, reproduced in this article. It shows the depot to be typical for a small town, with two waiting rooms divided by an agent's office with ticket windows opening to each. Although they are not labeled, this was probably to comply with Kentucky's segregation laws. Each room measured 15 x 15 feet. The freight room was 15 x 24 feet and had one loading door on an elevated wooden platform high as a box car door. The bay window was squared while the waiting room doors were rather fancy for a small station. They were adorned by an arch and side windows (see drawing).

The station is listed in the *C&O List of Officers, Agents, Stations, Etc.*, August, 1948, as having an agent, so at that time it was still actively providing both passenger and freight traffic sufficient to support services of an agent.

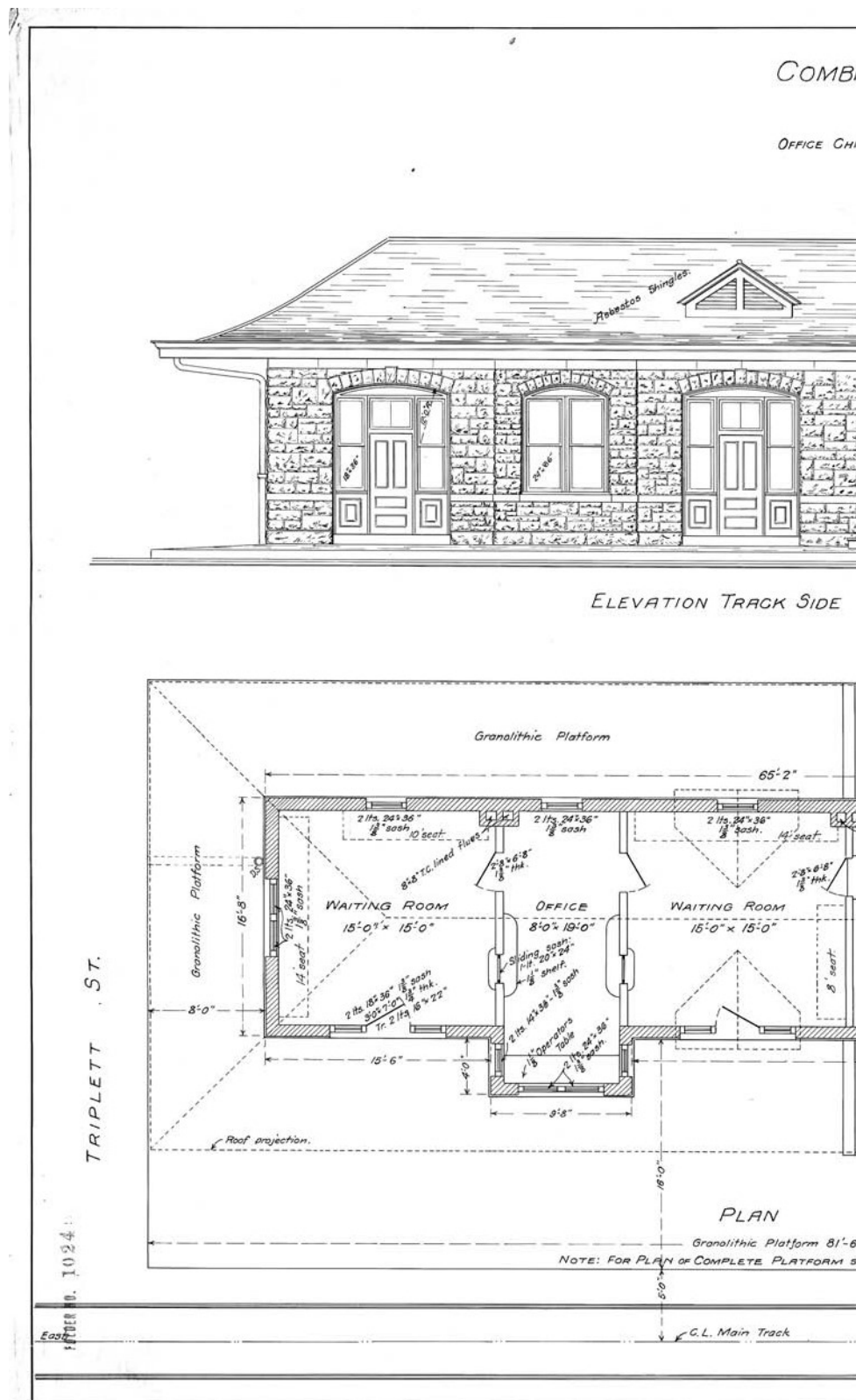
The 1950 *C&O Industrial Guide* lists a population of 230. Its team track had a capacity for 10 cars and a depot track with a two-car capacity. Two industrial shippers are listed: Greer Lumber Co., and C. Gullett Lumber Co., both using the team track for loading.

When the Farmer depot was built in 1911, the passenger timetable listed it as a regular stop for local No. 25 and through train No. 5, as well as a conditional stop for No. 1 westbound. Eastbound, local No. 26, and through trains 2 and 4 are listed as having regular stops at Farmer.

The 1927 timetable lists stops at Farmer for Ashland-Lexington locals Nos. 26 and 27, and through trains Nos. 23 and 24. Conditional stops are listed for Nos. 22 and 25.

Two through train sets were left on the line by 1950 and Farmer was listed as a flag stop for Nos. 23 and 24, with a conditional stop for No. 22. No. 21 did not stop at all. By 1955 only Nos. 21 and 22 were left on the Lexington Subdivision, and only No. 22 had a conditional stop at Farmer. All service to the station ended shortly thereafter.

In the latest U. S. Census (2010), Farmers has a population of 284. It is located on US Route 60, a highway that follows the C&O mainline through much of Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky. The Lexington Subdivision was largely abandoned and removed in the 1980s.



C&O engineering department drawing with construction details for the new Farmers combined depot. We don't know what kind of structure was used here before then. The station as pictured in the 1950s photograph does not have the platform and team track as shown in this drawing. This drawing was prepared 1/4-inch = 1-foot scale. This reduced reproduction is **NOT TO SCALE**.
(C&O Drawing No. 2962-B dated July 1911)

Copies of this drawing may be obtained from C&OHS by telephoning 540-862-2210 and requesting this drawing number. The drawing will be sent to you digitally via email or we can send a full-size paper print via U. S. Mail. Pricing will be quoted at the time of your request.

UNED FREIGHT $\frac{1}{2}$ PASSENGER STATION FARMERS, KY.

CHIEF ENG'R. M. OF WAY. C.&O.R.Y. RICHMOND, VA. JULY, 1911.
Scale $\frac{1}{4}" = 1'-0"$

This reproduction not to scale. See above.

