



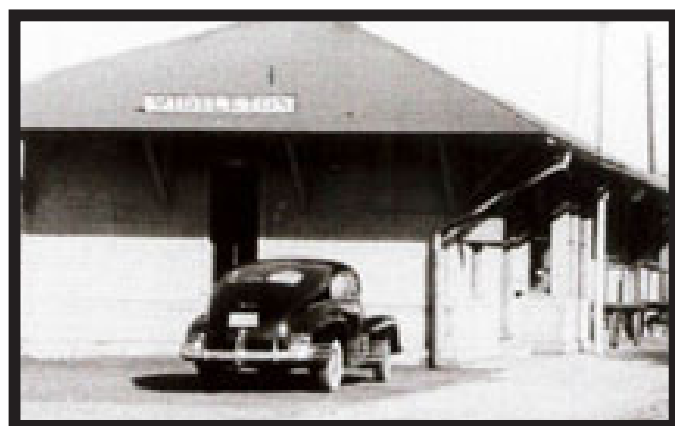
Historic Middleton *The Depot*

Middleton's first depot was built 150 to 200 yards west of the present depot site when the Milwaukee, Mississippi Railroad was built through the area in 1856. The railroad connected Milwaukee and Prairie du Chien. The original building had also served as a hotel restaurant and store. That building burned down in 1867. A second depot was built on the present day depot site in 1870 and served the community until 1894 when it also burned down and the present day depot was erected.

The arrival of the railroad marked the beginning of settlement, in the area surrounding the depot, that would eventually become the city of Middleton. With the arrival of the railroad, farmers could shipped their crops to other areas. At that time, Middleton's main commodity was wheat along with large shipments of livestock. A series of grain elevators and warehouses were constructed along side the tracks near the depot. As much as a half million bushels of grain were purchased and shipped in a single year. These shipments continued until the arrival of the Northwestern Railroad in Waunakee and the presence of the cinch bug in the mid-to-late 1800s which decimated wheat fields. Many farmers then turned to raising milk cows for their livelihood.

In 1901 two passenger and three freight trains, both east and west, traveled through Middleton each day. The railroad schedule was printed in the left upper corner on the front page of the Middleton Times Herald each week.

In the early 1900s, the railroad provided excursions from Middleton. In 1902 a special train left for Minocqua, Wisconsin. Many other excursions followed. Ticket prices for these trips in 1904 were listed at: to Wisconsin Dells, \$2.90; to St. Paul and return, \$8.30; and Minneapolis, \$8.60.



Middleton Area Historical Society, Middleton, Wisconsin
www.middletonhistory.org
 Rowley House Museum, 7410 Hubbard Avenue
 Middleton Depot Tourism Center, 1811 Parmenter Street



Interior of Middleton Depot

Sometime around 1957, passenger service was discontinued, but freight trains continued to run. The Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad continued using the depot until 1975 when the Wisconsin Public Service Commission permitted its closing.

Today the depot is owned by the city of Middleton, which purchased the building in 1976, and houses the Middleton Visitors Center in the front part of the building. The rear portion of the depot, which served as the freight area, contains The Museum at the Depot which is operated by the Middleton Area Historical Society. The museum contains artifacts and displays that depict the life of early Middleton area citizens.



A plaque has been placed at the entrance of the building noting that this building is on the National Register of Historic Places.

The depot is generally open Monday through Friday 9 - 5. It is recommended that you call to confirm hours or make group arrangements at 608-831-6350.