

THE DEPOT AT FLEMINGSBURG JUNCTION, KENTUCKY
by
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In 1872, the Maysville & Lexington Railroad (M&L) built a rail line from Maysville, Kentucky, on the Ohio River, to Paris, Kentucky. At Paris, M&L connected with the Kentucky Central Railroad (KCRR), which tied Paris with Cincinnati, Ohio, to the north, and Lexington, Kentucky, to the south. In 1875, M&L became part of KCRR. In 1887, KCRR was reorganized as Kentucky Central Railway (KCRy). Then in 1891, KCRy came under the control of the Louisville & Nashville Railroad (L&N).

In 1876, the Covington, Flemingsburg & Pound Gap Railroad (CF&PG) began to build east from KCRR at Johnson Junction for the Eastern Kentucky Coalfields. In 1910, when a new union depot was built at this location by the L&N, it was renamed Flemingsburg Junction.

The CF&PG, while it had great dreams, never got beyond Hillsboro, Kentucky, 17-miles east of its connection with L&N. In 1907, due to the collapse of a trestle east of Flemingsburg, CF&PG pulled its track back to Flemingsburg, Kentucky, the county seat of Fleming County. CF&PG, now in its final form, stretched 6-miles from Flemingsburg Junction to Flemingsburg. During its life, CF&PG went through a number of name changes before settling in 1920 on Flemingsburg & Northern Railroad (F&N). Until 1956, when F&N was sold by order of the bankruptcy court, the F&N twice a day met an L&N train at Flemingsburg Junction.

As stated, the 1910 Flemingsburg Junction Union Depot and adjacent railyard served both the L&N and the F&N. The 1910 wooden depot consisted of a general waiting room, ticket office, and baggage room. When the depot closed in 1956, it was turned over to the L&N's Signal Gang. The depot became a storage facility, and the two track siding was retained at the depot for storage of Maintenance-of-Way (MoW) equipment and an occasional freight car dropped off for unloading on the team track. The existing east siding at Flemingsburg Junction is the only portion of F&N track still in existence.

In 1978, L&N embargoed the Paris to Maysville rail line and requested permission from the Kentucky Railway Commission to abandon the line. Local interest, however, opposed this abandonment, and in 1979, the track from Paris to Maysville was sold by L&N to local investors. The investors formed an operating company named "Transkentucky Transportation Incorporated" (TTI). TTI's main rail service was and is moving hopper cars full of Eastern Kentucky coal dropped off at Paris by CSXT to Maysville for offloading at the CSXT Ohio River barges loadout.

In 1991, TTI became a wholly owned nonunion subsidiary of CSX Transportation. TTI continued to use the Flemingsburg Junction Depot for its Signal Gang and MoW crew until circa 2000. The depot was then offered for sale, but as part of the condition of sale, it had to be moved from the site. Unfortunately, a historic structure, once moved from its original site, is not eligible for restoration grant money. Once abandoned by TTI's Signal Gang, the depot building received no more maintenance and slowly lost parts of its roof and most of its windows to weather related incidents.

Surprisingly, the depot's name signs remained in place on both sides of the building until July 12, 2012. On that day, the author was visiting the depot to finalize the 2012 CSXT Historical Society Convention Tour. There I found a TTI MoW crew removing material from the depot's grounds. On talking to them, I learned that the depot was to be torn down. I made a quick phone call to Russell Rogers, President of TTI, and permission was granted by him for the MoW gang to give the two name boards to the author. Mr. Rogers, however, stated that I needed to find good homes for both name boards. This I did, and one name board is now on display at the Bluegrass Railroad Museum, Versailles, Kentucky, and the other is at the Mason County Museum at Maysville. The depot was torn down the next day.



The Flemingsburg Junction Depot as seen shortly before the station boards came down.



It is noon on July 12, 2012, and the TTI crew is on site beginning to clear the property. At the rear of the depot is the author's car.



The Flemingsburg Junction name board being accepted by the Bluegrass Railroad Museum



The Flemingsburg Junction Depot site today