



25 FORKS MARKET ROAD

**JOHNSTON TERMINAL BUILDING
(NATIONAL CARTAGE & STORAGE BUILDING)**

City of Winnipeg
Historical Buildings & Resources Committee
Researcher: M. Peterson
June 2019

25 FORKS MARKET ROAD – JOHNSTON TERMINAL BUILDING (NATIONAL CARTAGE & STORAGE BUILDING)

There is archaeological evidence that Indigenous groups came to The Forks 6,000 years ago. These groups, following game and seeking more sheltered locations in the winter, used the area for many generations.

Beginning about 3,000 years ago, the area was used for longer, more extended periods of habitation. It was an important stop in the seasonally based life of the area's population. Hunting, fishing and collecting berries and other foodstuffs were important activities taking place at The Forks. Because groups chose to camp in the area, activities such as clothes making, the fashioning of tools and weapons, and game playing also occurred.

With its wealth of food and its important location at the junction of two major rivers, The Forks was also the site of vital trading and meeting activities for the three distinct groups – Cree from the north and west, Anishinaabe (Ojibway) from the east and Nakota (Assiniboin) and Mandan from the south – that used the area extensively.

The area and its people saw significant change with the coming of the fur trade in the 18th century, traders rightly surmising that the confluence of the region's two major rivers would be the best place to set up trading posts. French explorer Pierre Gaultier de Varennes, Sieur de la Vérendrye arrived at what is now The Forks in 1737 and built the first post, Fort Rouge, the next year. The area began to fill with employees of the fur trade: French-Canadian voyageurs, Scottish and British traders as well as the distinct and fiercely independent offspring of Indigenous mothers and European traders – the Métis.

The fierce competition between the Montreal interests (North West Company) and that from London, England (Hudson's Bay Company - HBC) wasn't settled until the 1821 merger. The HBC took full control of the trade and also assumed administrative control of the population, which had grown to include the permanent non-Indigenous agricultural settlement 4 kilometres to the north founded by Lord Selkirk in 1812.

In 1835, the HBC decided to construct a modern fort near The Forks. Upper Fort Garry became the commercial and political centre of the growing region with its five-metre high stone walls surrounding its numerous buildings (Plate 1).¹

In 1870, Manitoba achieved Provincial status, replacing the HBC. This gave the people of the province, through its elected Legislature, the ability to negotiate for a wide range of improved services, the most important being the railway. Manitoba's first rail connection in Manitoba was established in 1878 with the Pembina Branch of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), running 100 kilometres from Winnipeg to Emerson, MB and then connecting to lines in the United States (Plate 2). Less than five years later, the main line of the CPR ran through Winnipeg on its way to the west coast, giving the City, its businesses and citizens, year-round, all-Canadian access to the rest of the country.

But the CPR's monopoly and its route through the southern plains precluded the construction of competing lines, halting the development of much of the newly occupied lands north of the CPR. The Manitoba government was at the forefront in the unsuccessful fight with the Dominion government to charter competing lines. In the fall of 1888, however, a competing line, the Northern Pacific and Manitoba Railway (NP&MR), was completed, providing passenger and freight service to the international border from Winnipeg.²

In terms of local facilities, the NP&MR rushed to build permanent buildings in 1889 (Plates 3-6) – a passenger station, offices and freight shed were constructed along Water Avenue east of Main Street. Because this was in a flood plain, the yards had to be filled and levelled prior to construction. Added to these were switching yards, repair shops, 10-stall roundhouse and Hotel Manitoba, a luxury establishment that was noted as one of the finest hotels in Canada.³

¹ The fort was expanded north in 1852 and all but the north gate was demolished in the 1880s to allow for the straightening of Main Street.

² S. Grover, "C.N.R. Bridges and Structures Building (Formerly N.P. & M.R. Engine House), C.N.R. East Yards," report for the Historical Buildings Committee, 1985.

³ Rodger Guinn, The Red-Assiniboine Junction: A Land Use and Structural History 1770-1980, Manuscript Report 355 Parks Canada, 1980, pp. 154-159.

But the NP&MR struggled financially and in 1901, after two years of negotiations, all assets of the company, including its rolling stock and all buildings at The Forks, were acquired by the Canadian Northern Railway (CNoR), a new Canadian railway venture.

In 1911, the CNoR and Canada's third transcontinental railroad, the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway/National Transcontinental Railway (GTP/NTR), jointly opened a new union station at the foot of Broadway on the western edge of the downtown rail yards (Plate 7). It took three years to build and was designed by New York City architects Warren and Wetmore, designers of that city's Grand Central Station (built 1903-1913).

A combination of national and international factors made the profitable operating of three transcontinental railway lines in Canada impossible in the 1910s. The government of Canada acquired numerous financially troubled railways, including the GTP/NTR and the CNoR, and created a single entity – the Canadian National Railway (CNR).

The government then moved to merge the operations of the former competitive lines by eliminating inefficient duplication. In 1921, an agreement was struck with National Cartage and Storage Limited, a wholly-owned CNR subsidiary, to assume the warehousing and hauling services formerly carried out separately by the CNoR and GTP/NTR. This firm soon required new storage space. In 1928, CNR's architectural branch planned a new, on-site warehouse building, for lease by the cartage company (Plate 8).

STYLE

The National Cartage and Storage Warehouse is a utilitarian structure with very modest classically-inspired architectural details. The design of this large structure focused on durability rather than aesthetics and the result was a minimal treatment of the clay brick exterior walls.

CONSTRUCTION

The original 4-storey warehouse of 1928 was a solid common clay brick structure with flat roof measuring approximately 46.3 x 24.8 metres and cost \$134,700.00 to build.⁴ The concrete foundation walls, according to the original plans, are 26.3 centimetres thick and an internal system of concrete piers supporting steel I-beams in the basement and wood beams and posts on the upper floors (Plate 9).⁵ A covered, open loading platform ran the entire length of the building on the west side.

In 1930, it was deemed necessary to expand the warehouse and an addition was built on the structure's south end, measuring approximately 29.3 x 22.9 metres.⁶

DESIGN

The original building and its addition were built similarly, all four façades featuring banks of large recessed windows on all floors separated by plain attached pilasters. The rectilinear window openings included concrete sills and brick heads. The fourth floor openings were topped by corbelled brick leading to the modest concrete cornice and brick and concrete capped parapet (Plates 10-13). Open metal fire escapes and covered loading platforms were also part of the original design.

INTERIOR

Plans for the original 1928 warehouse describe the interior with the basement with boiler room and coal room in north end and the ground to fourth floors divided by brick interior wall into heated storage in the north end and unheated storage in the remainder of the space. The building was serviced by two elevators and one set of stairs (Plate 14).

⁴ City of Winnipeg Building Permit (below as BP), #376/1928.

⁵ Architect's Plans, Historical Buildings and Resources Committee.

⁶ BP #151/1930.

No plans or descriptions have been found regarding the addition, it would likely have created additional undivided storage space on all floors.

In the early 1990s, the building's conversion into a mixed use, retail/office building necessitated major interior alterations (Plates 15-18).

INTEGRITY

The building stands on its original site and appears to be in good structural condition for its age. As mentioned previously, the building underwent a complete redevelopment in the early 1990s estimated to have cost \$9-million.⁷

Redevelopment included the enlargement of all window openings and the replacement of the original window units, construction of the Manitoba Tourism Centre on the north end, exterior elevators on the west façade and a metal canopy along the west and south façades (Plates 19-22).

STREETSCAPE

This warehouse was, for many decades, hidden within the large industrial complex known as the CNR East Yards, which included many kilometres of switching track and many related buildings including a powerhouse, roundhouse, various warehouses, stables and a station (Plate 23). Beyond railway employees and shipping personnel, it was virtually hidden from Winnipeggers.

But that changed with the development of The Forks and the building is now part of a new public streetscape that includes shops, restaurants, a theatre, office and other amenities (Plate 24).

ARCHITECT/CONTRACTORS

The CNR's Architectural Branch, responsible for the design of all its buildings, was responsible for the design of the original warehouse and its addition.

⁷ Winnipeg Free Press, November 26, 1992, p. A14.

The 1928 portion of the building was constructed by the Winnipeg firm Carter-Halls-Aldinger Company (see Appendix I for information). It is unknown what firm built the 1930 addition at present.

PERSON/INSTITUTION

The National Cartage and Storage Building became another busy structure in the large East Yards complex of the CNR from the 1930s to the 1950s. In 1957, the railway announced a new yard was to be built on the outskirts of St. Boniface, Symington Yards. It was completed in September 1962, significantly reducing the amount of traffic within the East Yards. The CNR also made the decision, in 1961 to create its own cartage operations and the National Cartage and Storage Building was taken over by a Vancouver, BC firm, Johnston Terminals and Storage Limited (Plate 25).⁸

This company occupied the building until 1977.⁹ By the early 1980s, little railway activity was occurring in the East Yards. In 1986, a \$3.5-million agreement was signed to create a national historic site, owned and operated by Parks Canada. Through the tri-level Winnipeg Core Area Initiative, funding became available to redevelop the site for public use. After a series of feasibility studies and public consultations, The Forks Renewal Corporation was established in 1987 by the Governments of Canada, Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg with a mandate to create "...a special and distinct, all-season gathering and recreational place at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, through a mixed-use approach including recreational, historical and cultural, residential, and institutional and supportive commercial uses." A five-year budget of approximately \$20-million was provided.

In 1988, the CNR agreed to turn over most of its land in the East Yards, paving the way for the redevelopment at The Forks. The Forks National Historic Site of Canada was officially opened in 1989 with a riverwalk, amphitheatre, boat dock, heritage adventure playground and

⁸ [Winnipeg Tribune](#), June 30, 1961, p. 52.

⁹ Manitoba Historical Society website, www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/johnstonterminal.shtml,

interpretive area, as well as The Forks Market, joined brick stable buildings providing two storeys of shops, restaurants and markets.

Development throughout the site continued in the early 1990s, and developer Marwest Management took the lead in developing the former cartage warehouse. Officially opened in June 1993 as the Johnston Terminal Building, the estimated \$9-million project created shops on the ground and second floors and offices on the upper two storeys.¹⁰

EVENT

There is no known significant historical event connected with this building.

CONTEXT

The National Cartage and Storage Building/Johnston Terminal Building is an important structure in terms of the continued expansion of railway activities in Winnipeg in general and in the downtown rail yards of the CNR specifically. Its construction in the late 1920s and early 1930s underlined the need for local warehousing/distributing facilities due to the growth of the local market. This large brick building served in this function for over 50 years.

LANDMARK

The building's conspicuousness has increased greatly since the redevelopment of The Forks and its own redevelopment in the early 1990s. It is now an integral part of one of Manitoba's most visited tourist attractions.

¹⁰ Winnipeg Free Press, November 26, 1992, p. A14.

APPENDIX I

Carter-Halls-Aldinger Company

The principals of the Carter-Halls-Aldinger Company (CHA) were William Henry Carter (1874-1962), a contractor; Frank Ernest Halls (1872-1950), a fire-proofing expert; and Albert Henry Aldinger (ca.1876-1942), a civil engineer.¹ CHA had its origins with the arrival in Winnipeg in 1903 of Carter, who was representing the William Grace Company, a Chicago contracting firm that was building the Bank of British North America, 436 Main Street. Carter worked for Grace until February 1907 when he joined with Halls and Aldinger to found the new firm. By 1915, CHA was well-known throughout Western Canada with such Winnipeg buildings to its credit as the McArthur (later Childs) Building, 211 Portage Avenue (1909 – demolished); Confederation Life Association Building, 457 Main Street (1912 – Grade II); the Winnipeg Electric Railway Building, 213 Notre Dame Avenue (1912-1913 – Grade II); the Manitoba Free Press Building, 300 Carlton Street (1913 – Grade II); the Olympia (later Marlborough) Hotel, 331 Smith Street (1913 – Grade II); and the Minto Armouries, 969 St. Matthews Avenue (1914). The firm also had contracts in Moose Jaw and Saskatoon, SA, Calgary and Edmonton, AB and Prince George, BC.

Their clients included the Dominion Government, as well as the Canadian Pacific, the Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Northern railways. They also worked on the new Hudson's Bay Company stores in Calgary (1912), Vancouver (1913), and Winnipeg (1926), the Banff Springs Hotel, Alberta and later the Winnipeg Civic Auditorium (1933). The firm specialized in bridges, subways, railway works, steel frame and other fireproof construction, as well as heavy masonry foundations and caisson work as found in the new Hudson's Bay Company store at Winnipeg. CHA was placed in voluntary liquidation in 1944, and was reorganized as two firms, Commonwealth Construction Company Limited and the Carter Construction Company of Toronto. This latter firm relocated to Winnipeg in 1950, being managed by W.H. Carter after his

¹ R.R. Rostecki, "450 Portage Avenue – Hudson's Bay Company Store," report for the City of Winnipeg Historical Buildings Committee, October 2002; Historical Buildings and Resources Committee files; and M. Peterson, personal files.

retirement from the Greater Winnipeg Transit Commission in 1956. Carter Construction remained in business until 1972 as a St. Boniface firm.

Major Winnipeg projects:

Security Storage Building, 583 Ellice Avenue (1909)
Campbell House, 140 Roslyn Road (1909)
Childs (McArthur) Building, 211 Portage Avenue (1909) – demolished
Casa Loma Building, 644 Portage Avenue (1909)
Oldfield, Kirby Gardner Building (North West Trust), 234 Portage Avenue (1909) – Grade II
Grand Garden Restaurant, 224 King Street (1910) – demolished
Hudson's Bay Co. Mail Order Building, 111 Fort Street (1910) – demolished
Sterling Bank Building, 283 Portage Avenue (1911) – List of Historical Resources
Richards and Brown Warehouse, 132 James Avenue (1911) – List of Historical Resources
Manitoba Agricultural College (St. Vital), 139 Tuxedo Avenue (1911) – portions designated
University of Manitoba (Manitoba Agricultural College), 1911-1913:
 Administration Building, 66 Chancellors Circle – List of Historical Resources
 Home Economics Building (Horticulture and Biology Building, now Faculty of Human Ecology), 35 Chancellors Circle
 Tache Hall, 150 Dafoe Road
 Agricultural Engineering Building, 75B Chancellors Circle
 Barn (Art School Barn), 21 Service Street 3S
 President's House (Chancellor's Hall, now National Centre for Truth & Reconciliation), 177 Dysart Road
 Earth Sciences Building (Fitzgerald Building, School of Art), 55 Chancellors Circle
 Dairy Building (Dairy Science), 110 Dafoe Road
 Stock Judging Building (Agriculture Lecture Block, now SIMTReC [Structural Innovation and Monitoring Technologies Resource Centre] Canada Building), 96 Dafoe Road
De Laval Co. Warehouse, 128 James Avenue (1912) – List of Historical Resources
Strand (Beacon) Theatre, 559 Main Street (1912) – demolished
Confederation Life Building, 457 Main Street (1912) – Grade II
Osborne Theatre, 108 Osborne Street (1912)
Western Glove Building (Finnie and Murray Block), 321 McDermot Avenue (1912) – Grade III
Turner-Walker Block, 425 Henry Avenue (1912) – Grade III
Winnipeg Electric Railway Co. Building, 213 Notre Dame Avenue (1912-1913) – Grade II
Quebec Bank Building (Montreal Trust Building), 216 Portage Avenue (1913) – demolished
St. Charles Hotel, 235 Notre Dame Avenue (1913) – Grade III
Marlborough (Olympia) Hotel, 331 Smith Street (1913) – Grade II
YMCA, 301 Vaughan Street (1913) – Grade II
Free Press Building, 300 Carlton Street (1913) – Grade II
Minto Armouries, 969 St. Matthews Avenue (1914)
Ford Motor Company Plant, 1181 Portage Avenue (1915)
Paris Building, 259 Portage Avenue (1915) – Grade II
Eaton's Mail Order Building (Eaton [City] Place), 333 St. Mary Avenue (1916)
Union Bank Building (Musker Engineering Institute), 1515 Main Street (1919) – demolished

Carter-Halls-Aldinger Company contracts (continued):

Santa Furs (former Merchants' Bank), 842 Corydon Avenue (1919)
Marshall-Wells Co. Warehouse, 490 Des Meurons Street (1919)
Portage Village Inn (Clarendon Hotel), 311 Portage Avenue (1920) – demolished
Grain Exchange Annex, 153 Lombard Avenue (1920) – demolished
Manitoba School for the Deaf, 500 Shaftsbury Boulevard (1921)
Nurses' Residence, 1 Morley Avenue (1921) – demolished
Union Bank Annex, 500 Main Street (1921) – Grade II
Joseph A. Lozo Locksmith Shop, 58 Albert Street (1921) – Commemorative List
Winnipeg Film Exchange Building, 361 Hargrave Street (1922) – Grade III
Hudson's Bay Company Store, 450 Portage Avenue (1926)
Johnston Terminal Building (National Cartage & Storage Building), 25 Forks Market Road
(1928) – Grade III
Power Building, 428 Portage Avenue (1928) – List of Historical Resources
Northern Electric Building, 65 Rorie Street (1928) – Grade III
SS Kresge Store, 368 Portage Avenue (1929)
Greater Winnipeg Gas Building (CGE Building), 265 Notre Dame Avenue (1930) – Grade III
Winnipeg Civic Auditorium, 200 Vaughan Street (1933)
Federal Building, 269 Main Street (1936)
Cinema Centre Building, 281 Colony Street (1937)
Mall Hotel, 465 Portage Avenue (1938)

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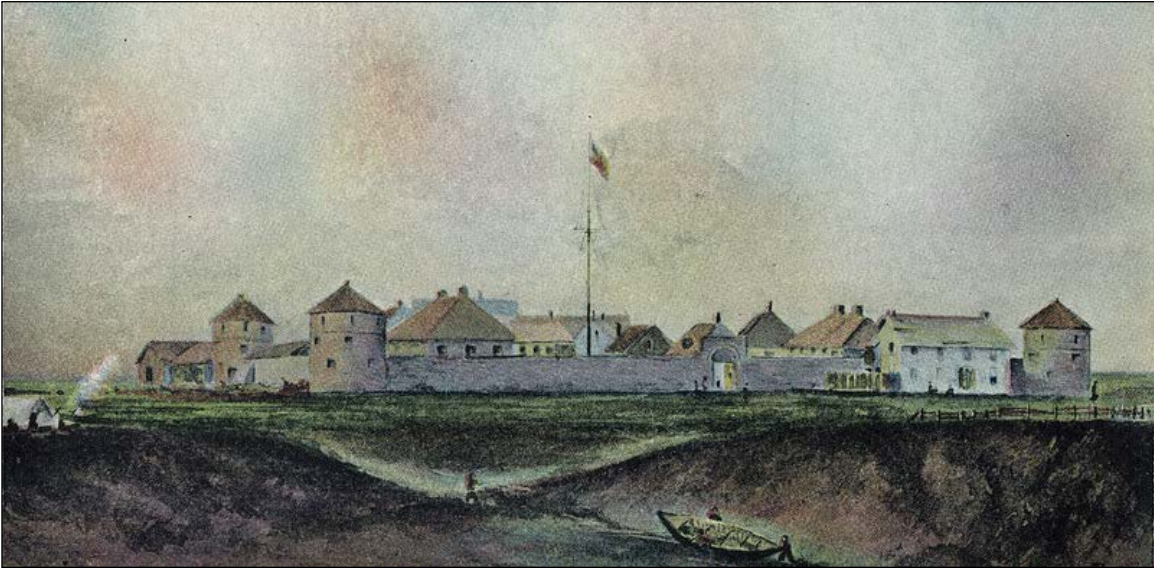


Plate 1 – Upper Fort Garry, 1870. (University of Alberta Libraries, Prairie Postcards Collection, No. PC001138.)

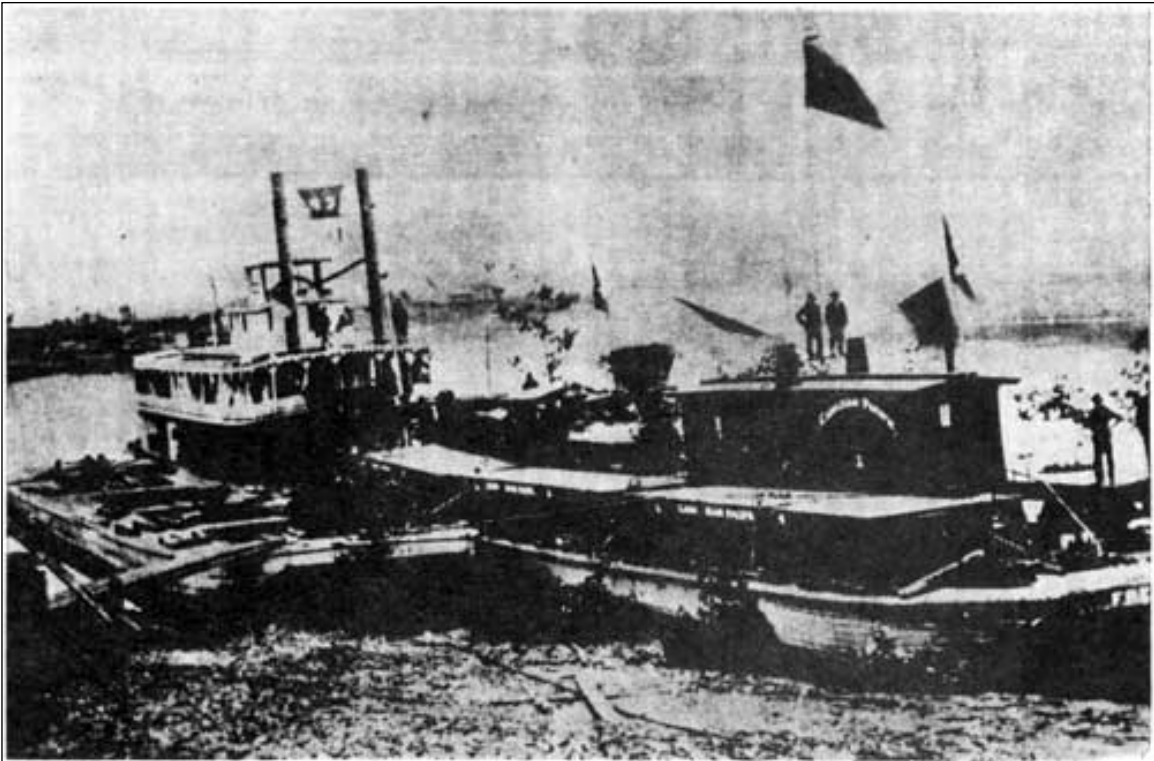


Plate 2 – Countess of Dufferin, the first steam engine in Western Canada, was transported by barge on the Red River from the United States in October 1877. (Canadian Pacific Railway.)

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Plate 3 – Looking south on Main Street from Portage Avenue, 1897. The tall Manitoba Hotel stands out in the background. The NP&MR Station, on Water Avenue, is the shorter building to the left. ([Archives of Manitoba.](#))

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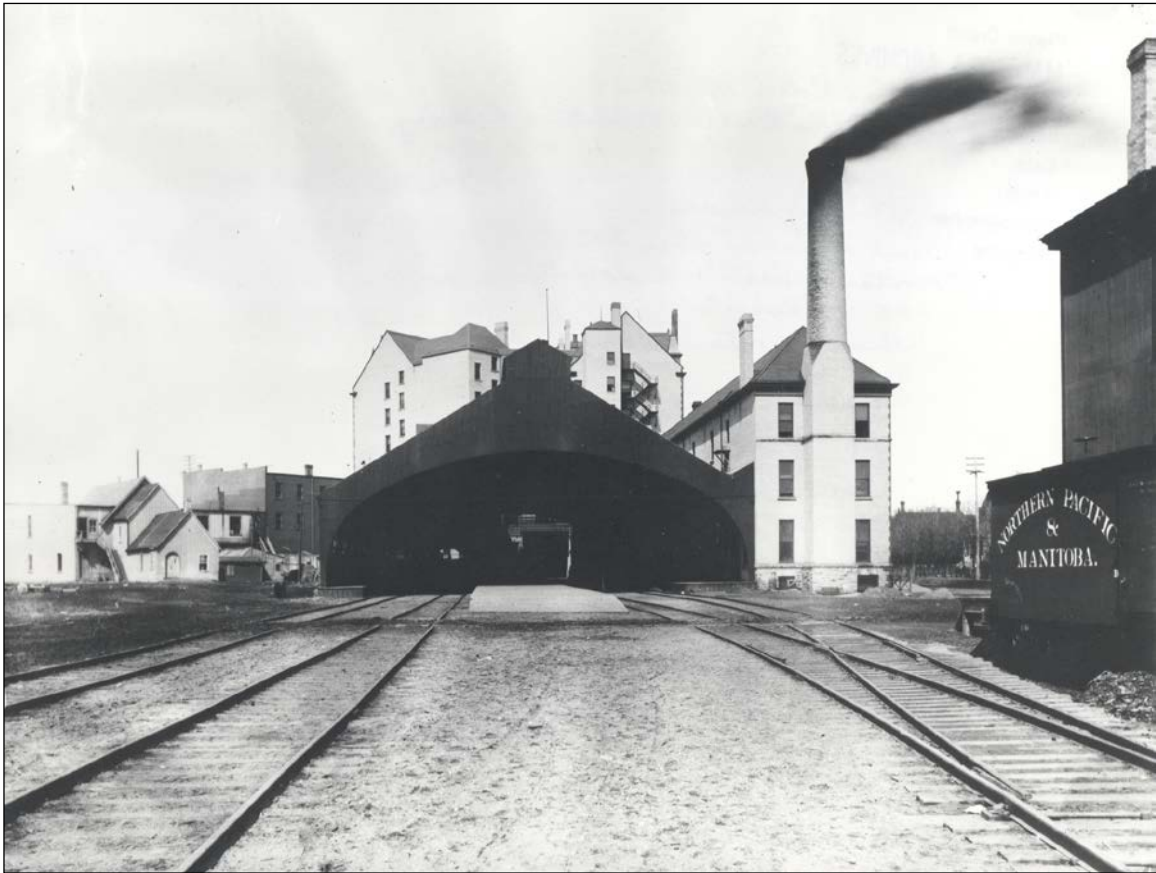


Plate 4 – This view looking west shows the NP&MR Station (right) with its covered track (centre) and the rear of the Manitoba Hotel in the background, ca.1895. (Montana Historical Society.)

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Plate 5 – The opulent Manitoba Hotel, 261 Main Street, ca.1895. It opened on New Year's Day, 1892 as one of the country's finest establishments. (Montana Historical Society.)

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Plate 6 – Manitoba Hotel, completely destroyed by fire on February 7, 1899. (University of Manitoba Archives, Winnipeg Tribune Collection, PC 18/7192/18-6236-123.)

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Plate 7 – Union Station, 123 Main Street, 1913. ([Archives of Manitoba, N10948.](#))

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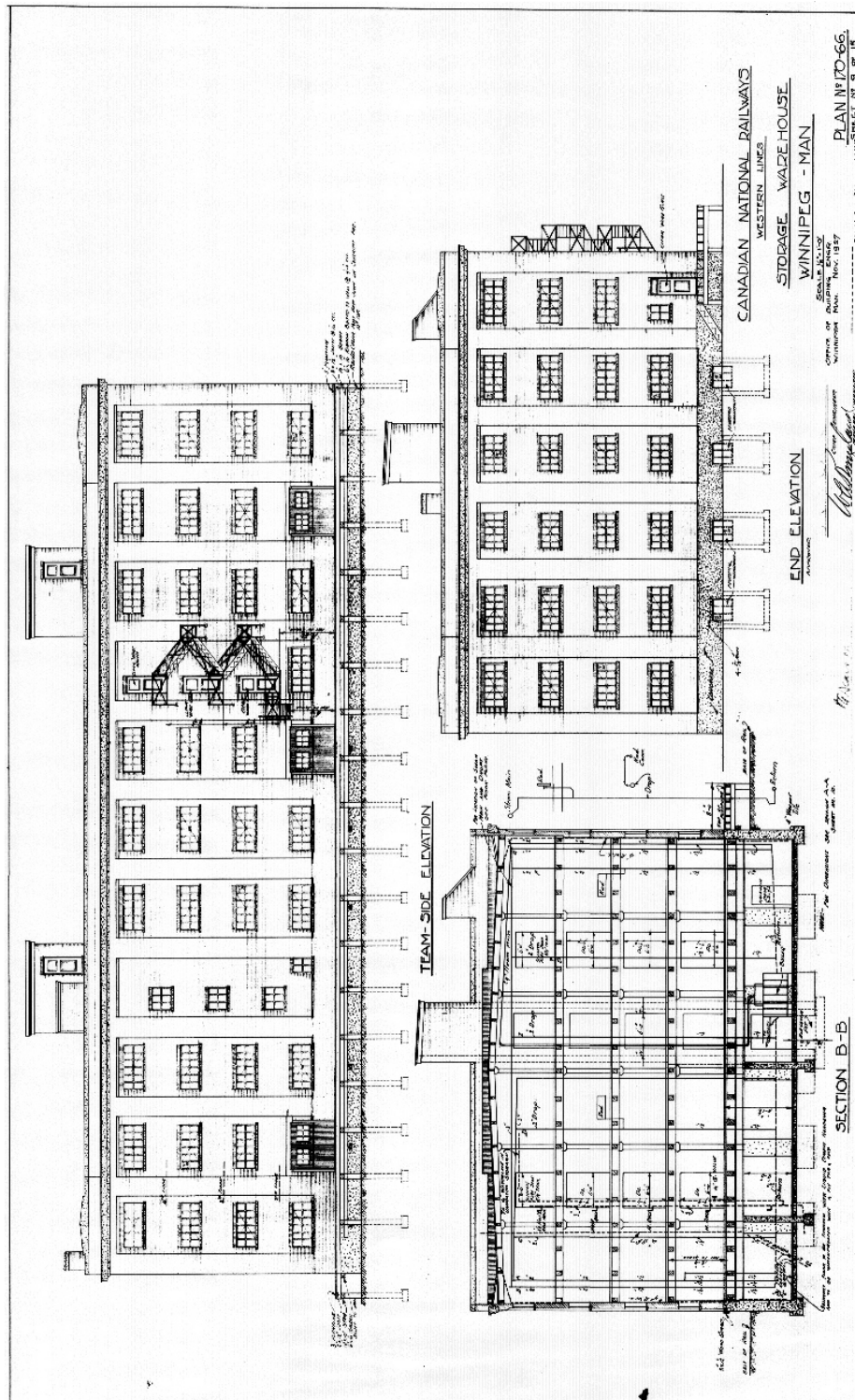


Plate 8 – Plans: “Team-Side Elevation” [west], “Section B-B” and “End Elevation” [north], Canadian National Railways, Storage Warehouse, 1927. (Historical Buildings and Resources Committee.)

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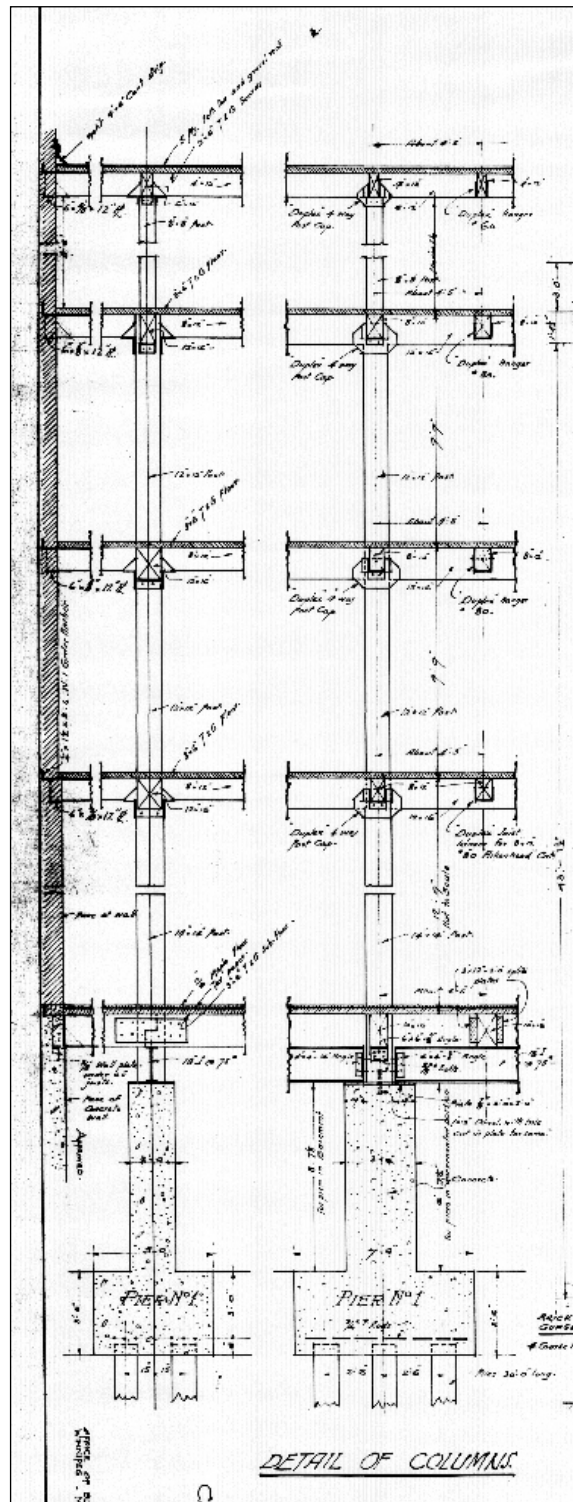


Plate 9 – “Detail of Columns”, showing internal structural system, Canadian National Railways, Storage Warehouse, 1927. (Historical Buildings and Resources Committee.)

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Plate 10 – Johnston Terminal Building, CNR East Yards, southeast corner and east façade, ca.1990. (M. Peterson.)



Plate 11 – Johnston Terminal Building, CNR East Yards, southwest corner, ca.1990. (M. Peterson.)

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Plate 12 – Johnston Terminal Building, CNR East Yards, southwest corner and west façade, ca.1990. (M. Peterson.)



Plate 13 – Johnston Terminal Building, CNR East Yards, northeast corner and north façade, ca.1990. (M. Peterson.)

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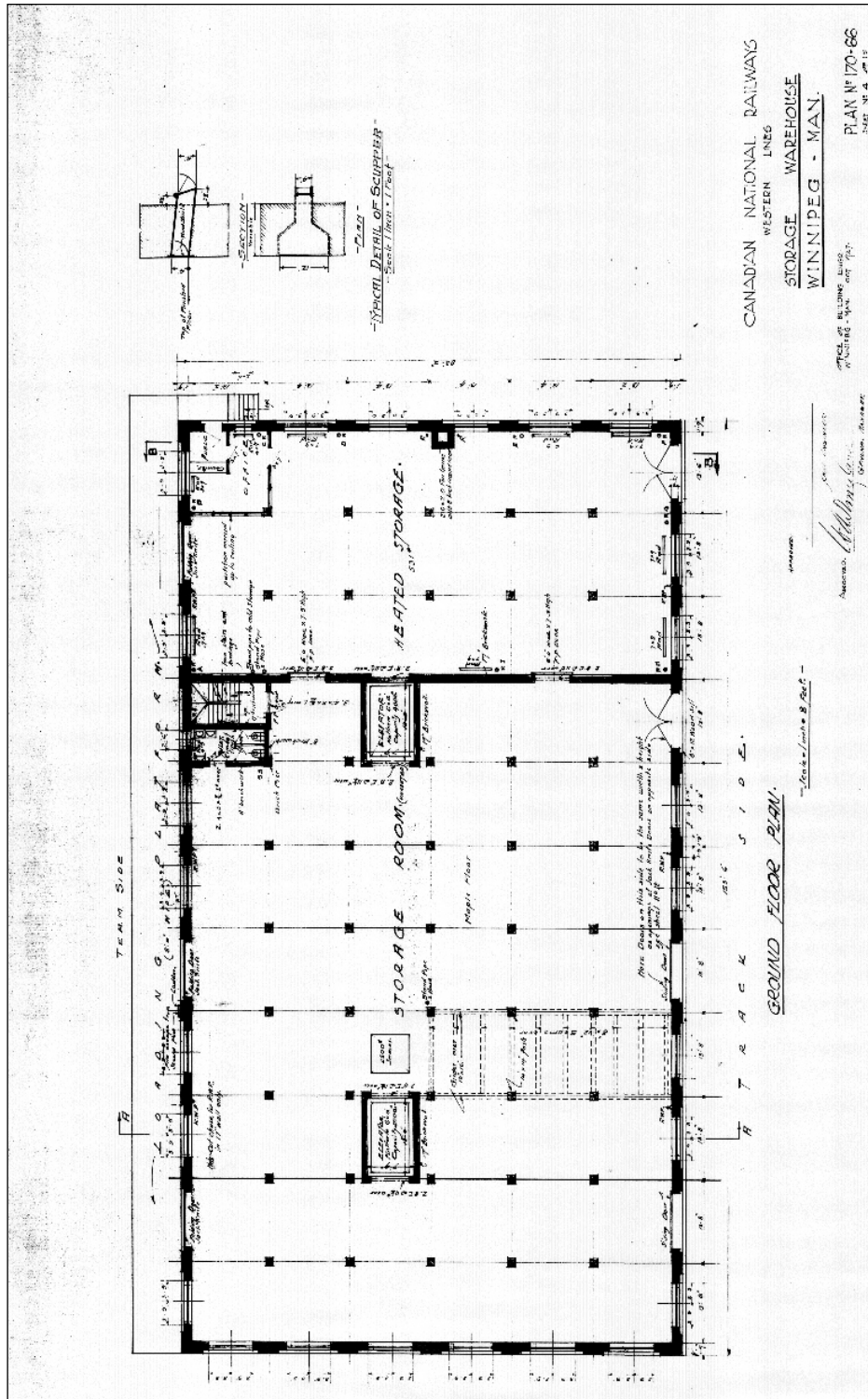


Plate 14 – “Ground Floor Plan”, showing internal structural system, Canadian National Railways, Storage Warehouse, 1927. (Historical Buildings and Resources Committee.)

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Plate 15 – Johnston Terminal Building, 25 Forks Market Road, basement retail space, showing concrete and steel support system, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)

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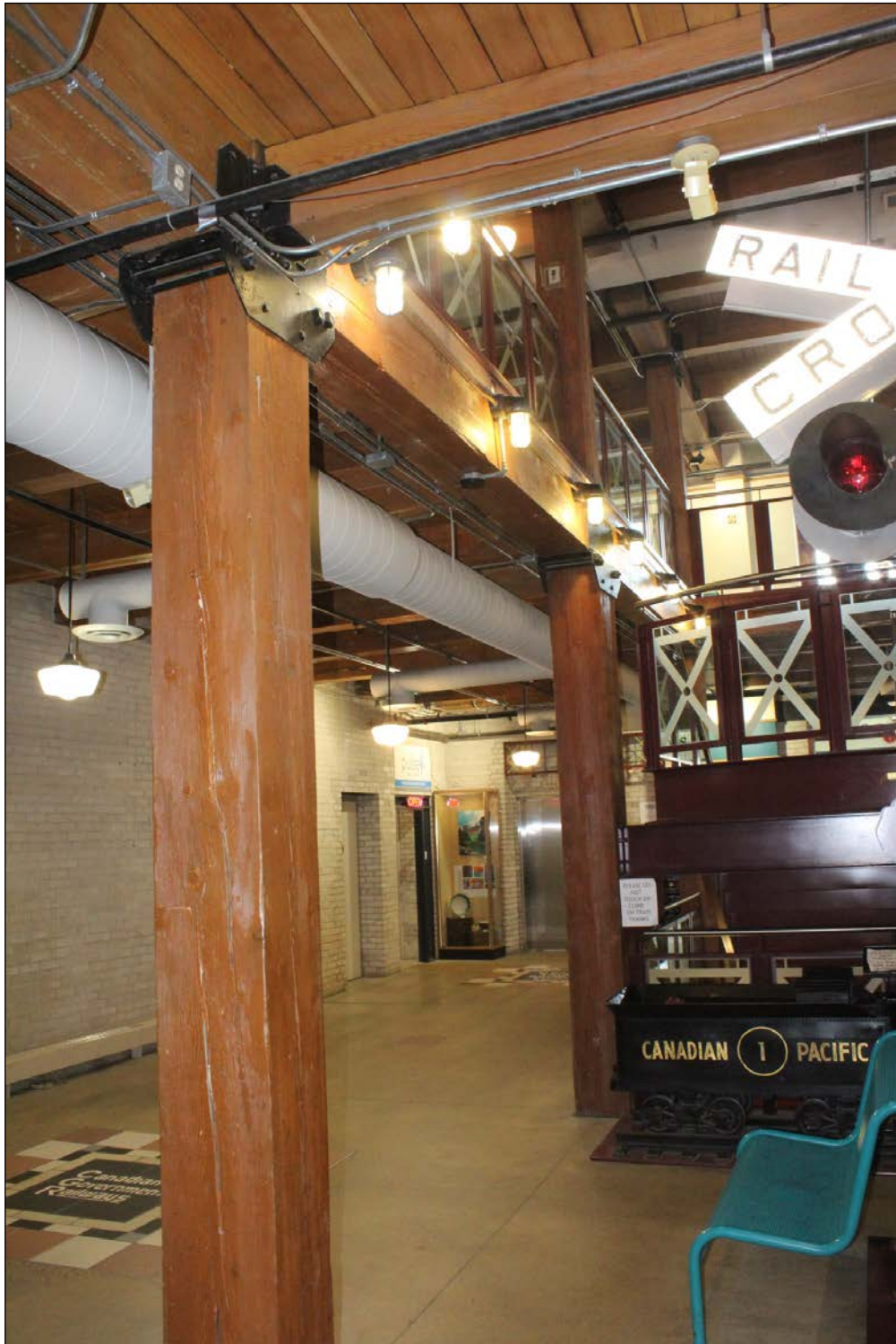


Plate 16 – Johnston Terminal Building, 25 Forks Market Road, main floor retail space, 2019.
(M. Peterson, 2019.)

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Plate 17 – Johnston Terminal Building, 25 Forks Market Road, third floor office space, 2019.
(M. Peterson, 2019.)

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Plate 18 – Johnston Terminal Building, 25 Forks Market Road, vacant fourth floor office space, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)

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Plate 19 – Johnston Terminal Building, 25 Forks Market Road, west façade, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)



Plate 20 – Johnston Terminal Building, 25 Forks Market Road, east and north façades, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)

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Plate 21 – Johnston Terminal Building, 25 Forks Market Road, west and south façades, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)



Plate 22 – Johnston Terminal Building, 25 Forks Market Road, south façade, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)

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Plate 23 – CNR East Yards, ca1970. Johnston Terminal Building at arrow. (University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections.)

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Plate 24 – The Forks, date unknown. Johnston Terminal Building at arrow. (Reproduced from The Forks website, www.theforks.com.)

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Plate 25 – Newspaper announcement detailing the transfer of work from National Cartage and Storage to Johnston National Storage Limited. (Winnipeg Free Press, June 23, 1961, p. 12.)