RAILWAY STATIONS OF MANITOBA

An Architectural History Theme Study

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Culture, Heritage and Tourism

On the cover:
Main elevation drawing of the Canadian Northern Railway Station at St. Boniface, now demolished.

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PREFACE

This booklet has been adapted from a larger publication developed in 1987 by the Historic Resources Branch of Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism. That study, *Railway Stations of Manitoba: A Building Ivnentory*, should still be available in public libraries.

That original study was intended to assist railway company and municipal authorities to gain a better understanding of the architectural heritage of this building type, and thus to undertake better educational, tourism, designation and conservation programs. To that end, this original work also contained a substantial inventory of 128 buildings in the province. A pdf copy of the original study and another of the inventory are available by contacting the branch:

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This present extract from the 1987 report contains the contextual essay that was developed after a close review of the inventory results, and an examination of documents and information from the various railway company archives. This essay presents the many important and interesting themes that have attended the development of railway station architecture in Manitoba, and will be useful for anyone interested in this important story.

INTRODUCTION

RAILWAYS AND RAILWAY STATIONS are essential aspects of Manitoba's historical development, and a popular focus for heritage attention. In 1987, recognizing the importance of these landmarks, the Historic Resources Branch of Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism undertook a major study of the building type. Through on-site explorations of the 128 extant railway stations across Manitoba, and then a careful review of historical information and academic and popular studies on the subject, the branch developed a study that focused primarily on the physical qualities of these buildings – on their settings, architectural character and material construction. The ultimate purpose of the study was to provide the necessary historical background that would help identify a handful of buildings that could be said to succinctly and effectively sum up the architectural history of the building type in the province. This focus ensures that other important aspects of the history of railways in Manitoba—corporate history, immigrant experience, grain trade, etc.—would more effectively be focused on buildings that are at once interesting and important.

RAILWAYS IN MANITOBA

The development of a sophisticated railway system in Manitoba has proved central for the transformation of what was once an empty pioneer territory into a vibrant, energetic province. The growth of Manitoba's railway system was not actually pre-planned, however, and the circumstances that encouraged the incredible amount of rail construction before World War I deserves some attention. Beginning with the Canadian Pacific Railway, the first of the large rail companies to cross Manitoba (the other two were the Canadian Northern and the Grand Trunk Pacific-National Transcontinental), a brief historical account of each major company will provide the basis for a more detailed discussion of their railway stations.

The Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), that great national project promoted by John a. Macdonald to link the far-flung territories of the Dominion into a cohesive unit, seemed to be a perpetual stall even before it reached the Manitoba-Ontario boundary. Under Macdonald, in the election of 1872, the contentious railway issue and apparently been resolved by the formation of a new company, the Canadian Pacific, that would build the line without American interests, within ten years, and in repayment would receive thirty million dollars in government assistance and a land grant of fifty million acres of public land.

However, just when it seemed like the railway project would finally proceed, the "Pacific Scandal" of 1873 suddenly upset the CPR's plans and Macdonald's government. The Liberal opposition, led by Alexander Mackenzie, had somehow become aware that the Conservatives had received $160,000 for election expenses from Sir Hugh Allan, the president of Canadian Pacific. Macdonald resigned in November of 1873 and the railway project continued to flounder.

Under Alexander Mackenzie's cautious approach, the rail project proceeded piece-meal. Rails were extended only gradually as funds became available and local traffic began generating revenue. Mackenzie's caution was not without adherents at this time. There were many people who supported his contention that the construction of a rail link from east to west would not be completed in the ten years that Macdonald had claimed, and furthermore, that a railway traversing the sparsely populated western provinces "would not pay for its axle grease" The entire population of the North-West at that time was only 170,000 and many eastern financiers considered the whole venture a very risky proposition.

Others, however, like John A. Macdonald, were undaunted by any of the more obvious problems. American expansionism, especially, was threatening the tenuous links of Confederation in the West. On the strength of his "National Policy" advocating railways, a new settlement and protective tariff for the development of the country and its resources, Macdonald was returned to power in 1878. The Dominion government assured British Columbia, which was threatening to withdraw from Confederation, that it would begin construction of the line in the spring of 1879. On the Prairies the completion of the section from Port Arthur to Winnipeg was also promised. By 1882, however, at the end of the ten year self-imposed deadline for completion of the rail link with the east, the main line was far from complete. Macdonald's government would be faced with financial ruin if called upon to continue sinking millions of dollars into the railroad and so, once again, it turned to the private sector. Investors willing to undertake the project had finally been found and the government was able to turn over the enterprise to a syndicate that consisted of George Stephen of Montreal and several international investors.

Under the terms of this agreement, signed in October of 1880, the government pledged a subsidy of twenty-five million dollars and a grant of Twenty-five million acres of land. The company was to be exempt from taxes on this land for a period of twenty years. No charters were to be granted for twenty years to any competitors

seeking to build within fifteen miles of the International Boundary. In return the company promised to build the line within ten years.

The new CPR syndicate quickly established itself in Manitoba. It duly took over 162 miles of track built in Manitoba. It duly took over 162 miles of track built in Manitoba during the Mackenzie years. By December of 1881 the entire section between Winnipeg and Brandon was operational. The close of 1882 saw trains running as far west as Regina and on August 18, 1883 the prairie section of the CPR was completed. By September trains were regularly using the line from Winnipeg to Calgary (Figure 1). Construction of the main line through the forbidding mountains of British Columbia was slower, but in July of 1886, the first train from Montreal arrived at the CPR's western terminus at Port Moody. Canada's first transcontinental was finally completed and its uncontested rule of transport in the West was consolidated.

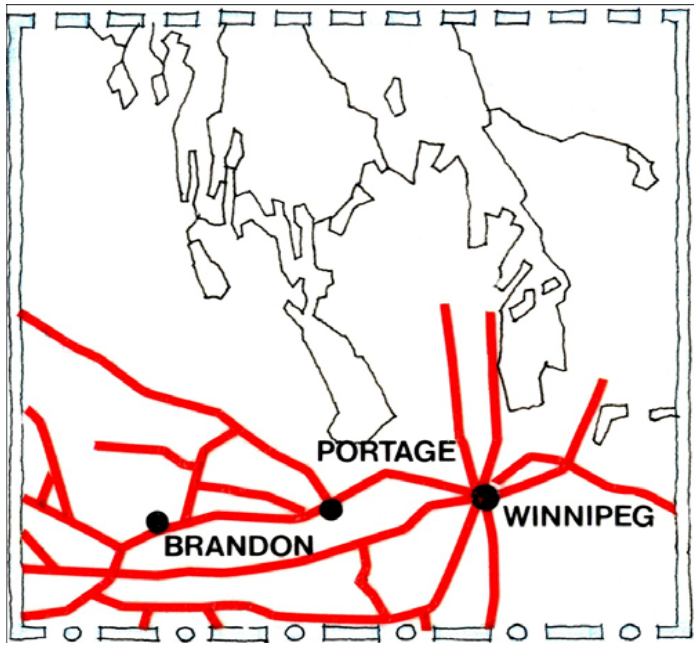


Figure 1
Canadian Pacific Railway lines in Manitoba, c1900.

By the 1880s it had become clear that the economy of the Prairies was going to depend on the production of cereal grains, particularly wheat. The CPR was in the enviable position of being the only means of transporting this produce to Vancouver or Lake Superior. However, the CPR's high freight rates were frequently denounced and quickly became the source for concern among farmers in the West. Moreover, as the West began to be developed, the CPR's mainline and its few small branch lines were proving inadequate. There were a few locally-financed lines and some Great Northern branches extending into Canada from the United States but, all together, the rail system, as it existed in 1900, could not hope to provide the transportation services needed to develop the Prairies.

This situation was exacerbated by the large increase in immigration into the West during the first decade of the twentieth century. Stimulated by a massive government advertising campaign, the end of the worldwide depression of the 1890s and the introduction of grains better suited to the severe Western Canadian climate, the prairies were becoming a desirable location for settlement. If its promise was to be fulfilled, new rail lines needed to be built.

The first of the new companies in the West, attracted by the promise of fruitful competition with the CPR, was Canadian Northern Railway. Led by William Mackenzie and Donald Mann, Canadian Northern was a Manitoba-based railroad that could more aptly be called a colonization railway. It was built cheaply into areas where traffic could be expected, and did not improve its lines until revenues could justify the cost of upgrading. The very first branch, from Gladstone to Winnipegosis, Manitoba, was completed, with backing from the provincial government, in 1897. A second line from Winnipeg to Port Arthur was completed in 1902. This line was especially important because it created a viable alternative to the CPR for moving wheat to Lake Superior.

By 1910 Canadian Northern was competing successfully with CPR throughout the Prairies. It had lowered freight rates and opened new areas for settlement with its many branch lines (Figure 2). The company gained considerable popular support in the West with these policies; the Province of Manitoba, in particular, became a strong supporter of Canadian Northern, whose system headquarters during this period was located in Winnipeg.

By the turn of the century, political and economic forces throughout the Dominion were pressing for the construction of a second transcontinental railway. This was not an impractical objective, in spite of the difficulties that had plagued the CPR. In the West, the branches of Canadian Northern were rapidly growing. In the East there was a solidly entrenched system comprised of the long-established Grand Trunk Railway and the Government-owned Intercolonial.

Logic suggested that some sort of agreement be worked out between Grand Trunk and Canadian Northern to create the second transcontinental. However, negotiations between Canadian Northern and Grand Trunk proved fruitless and, despite Prime Minister Laurier's intervention, a compromise could not be reached. The government finally threw support to both enterprises[i] and Canada began the process that would add two more transcontinentals to the already-existing lines of the CPR.

Unlike Canadian Northern, the Grand Trunk Pacific-National Transcontinental (the western section of the Grand Trunk past Winnipeg was known as the Grad Trunk Pacific; the eastern half became the National Transcontinental) was not a colonization road, but was built to rigorous standards right from the start. Indeed, today, almost all the Canadian National mainline from Winnipeg to the Yellowhead Pass makes use of the track originally laid down by the Grand Trunk Pacific.

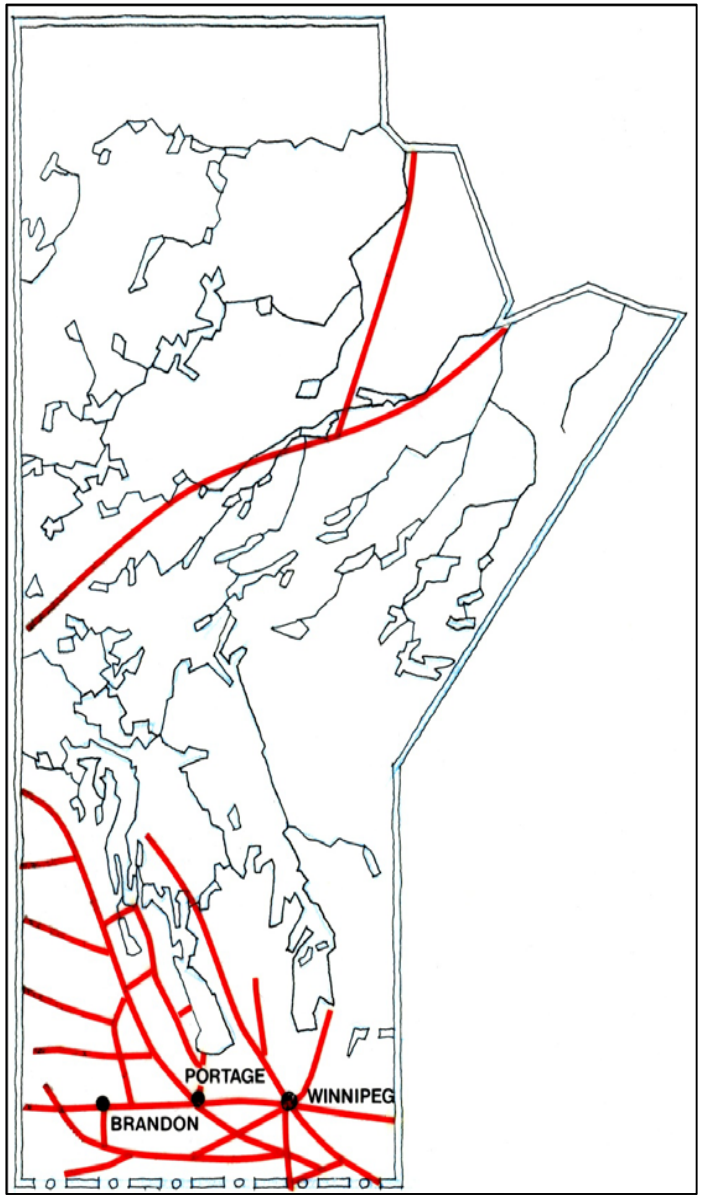


Figure 2
Canadian Northern Railway lines in Manitoba, c1910.

Unlike its two main competitors the Grand Trunk pacific had received no land grants from the government. Nevertheless, the company ventured into the real estate business, purchasing land for its own use as well as for the purpose of reselling it to prospective settlers. In 1906 a wholly-owned subsidiary was incorporated under the name of Grand Trunk Pacific Town and Development Company. Following this, dozens of townships were laid out on the Prairies, spaced in an orderly fashion every ten or fifteen miles along the projected route of the railway. Surveyors marked out the streets and located the station house and all major public buildings on their maps before moving on to the next site. The proposed communities were christened alphabetically; in Manitoba the place names progressed from Bagot to Wattsview (Figure 3).

Notwithstanding the heroic accomplishments in building their new transcontinental lines, both Canadian Northern and Grand Trunk Pacific were unable to adjust to oncoming traumatic political and economic events. Colonization of the Prairies had reached a threshold and, more significantly, the wheat boom had taken a downturn. By the onset of World War I, Canada could no longer support three separate trunk line systems.

Canadian Northern was the first to collapse. In spite of valiant efforts on the parts of Mackenzie and Mann to garner capital for their transcontinental, the desired volume of traffic never materialized. Heavy interest payments on past loans could no longer be met. Finally, the outbreak of the Great War and the diversion of British and American capital to the war effort accelerated the demise of Canadian Northern. Negotiations began in 1917 and 1919 Canadian Northern officially became part of the new Canadian National system.

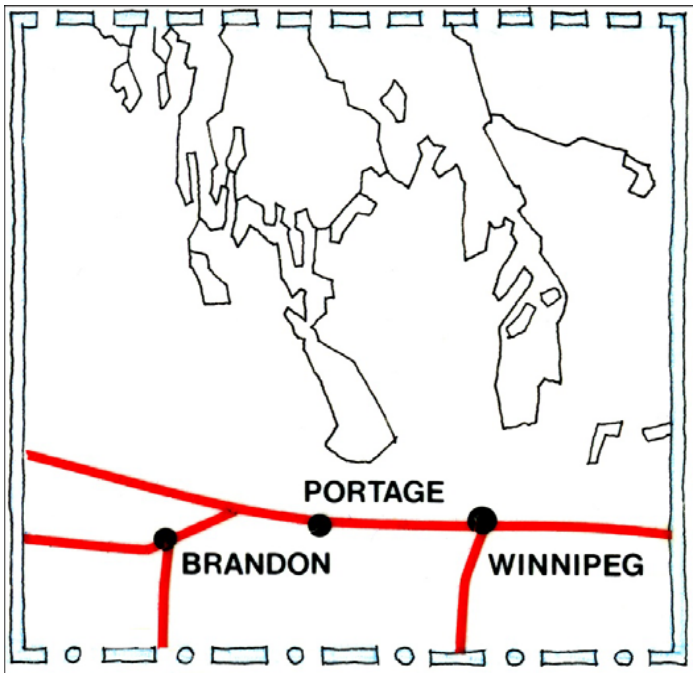


Figure 3
The mainline of the Grand Trunk Pacific-National Transcontinental with its branches to North Dakota, c1910.

Financial difficulties also plagued the Grand Trunk Pacific and its parent, the Grand Trunk throughout the War. The choice of Prince Rupert as the Pacific terminus proved to be a mistake. It never gained prominence over Vancouver as a shipping port. In the West, where few branch lines were built, the single main line was simply unproductive. Like the Canadian Northern, the Grand Trunk Pacific had over-extended itself at precisely the moment when settlement and production in the Prairies were both declining. In 1920, the Grand Trunk Pacific was transferred to the Dominion. The collapse of the Grand Trunk Pacific also pulled down the Grand Trunk, which itself became part of the new Canadian National in 1923.

The sort, but exciting, era of settlement and of railway construction was over. After the Great War the face of Canada was dominated by the two remaining railways, the privately-owned CPR and the Government's new CNR. This reduction in competition did not, however, end either company's problems. Faced with new and competitive transportation modes, both CN and CP have been forced to cut further at the once vigorous rail system of Western Canada, including that of Manitoba.

RAILWAY STATIONS IN MANITOBA

The competition between the three main rail companies between the late 1890s and just before World War I resulted in the construction of hundreds of railway stations throughout Western Canada. These depots were, primarily, the place where a railway could sell its services. The all-important grain shipments were processed through the station and the grain elevator. Newspapers, non-local produce, hardware and other manufactured items were all handled by the station agent and crew before ending up on the shelves of the general store. Mail came and went by rail, sometimes three or four times a day. Both incoming and outgoing telegraph messages were transcribed by the agent. In short, very few facets of life in a rural community were not in some way connected to the local railway station and its agent.

Railway stations were not only the economic, but also the physical and often the social foci of most rural towns. An early town plan proposal most rural towns. An early town plan proposal suggested by Canadian Pacific surveyor, Sandford Fleming, though never implemented, demonstrates that the station was the intended central focus of these plans (Figure 4). The actual town plan of Belmont, Manitoba, reveals similar focal intent (Figure 5). In fact, many railroad stations in Manitoba were tellingly situated at the corner of Main Street and Railway Avenue.

For incoming settlers the railway station played yet another role. It offered them the first physical evidence, as they descended from the train, of the kind of community they were entering. The impressive architectural statement the station itself made on the open prairie provided a note of reassurance to the apprehensive, if not frightened, immigrants. According to Archie Warren, a local historian in Tyndall, Manitoba, the station agent himself had a definite social responsibility for these new arrivals. He and his family introduced the newcomers to the rest of the townspeople and often found them accommodation. It is not surprising, then, that the design of station buildings, besides imparting a sense of importance, often conveyed a sense of hospitality as well.

J. Edward Martin, who wrote about Canadian Northern's earliest stations, has suggested that, in total "the station set a tone of quiet robustness, sensible economy, and welcoming friendliness that would be carried on in future depots of the company".

While there was often a desire to create, in the railway station, an object of civic pride, most railway stations in Western Canada were built according to various standard plans, with the size and importance of the town dictating which station design was to be used. Where a large community was already established, like Selkirk or Winnipeg, the railways were expected to provide stations of appropriate size. In many cases, however, the eventual size and importance of a town, and indeed its existence at all, was decided by the railroad's planning engineers. A typical rail line might consist of large stations at each terminal point, medium-sized stations relatively evenly distributed along the line and smaller stations filling in the gaps at ten mile intervals. These short intervals were deemed necessary to provide adequate service for the vast expanses of the West, where it was difficult for a farmer to go more than five or ten miles with his wagonload of grain.

To be sure, a "typical" line would be difficult to locate, owing to local deviations. A stone quarry at a strategic location, for example, or a good, reliable water supply for the steam engines often disrupted any theoretical organization. Nevertheless, this approach to settlement organization was common, as another CPR surveying proposal by Sandford Fleming indicates (Figure 6).

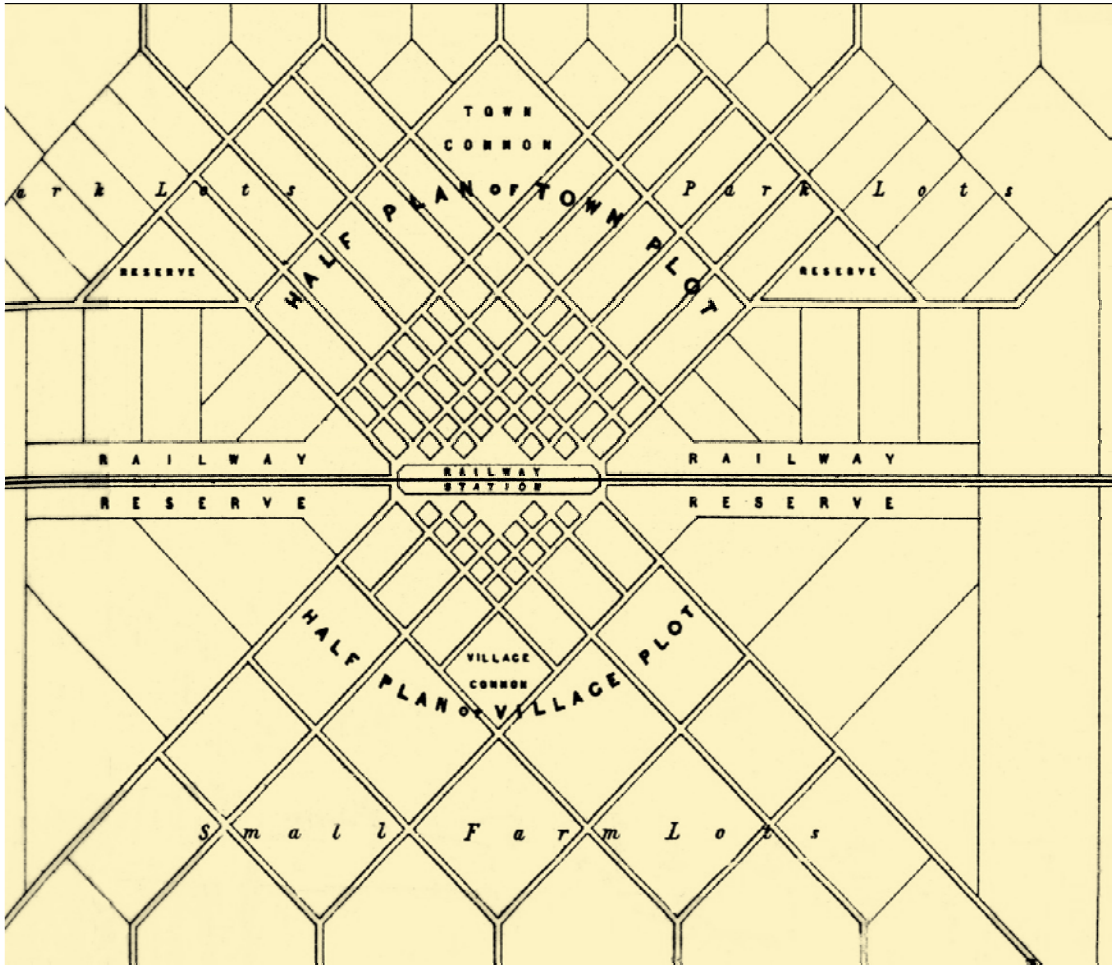
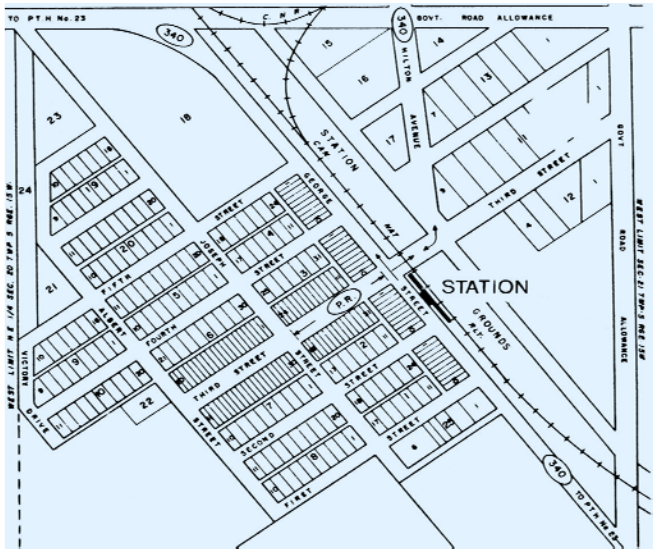


Figure 4
Sandford Fleming's
CPR town plan proposal.



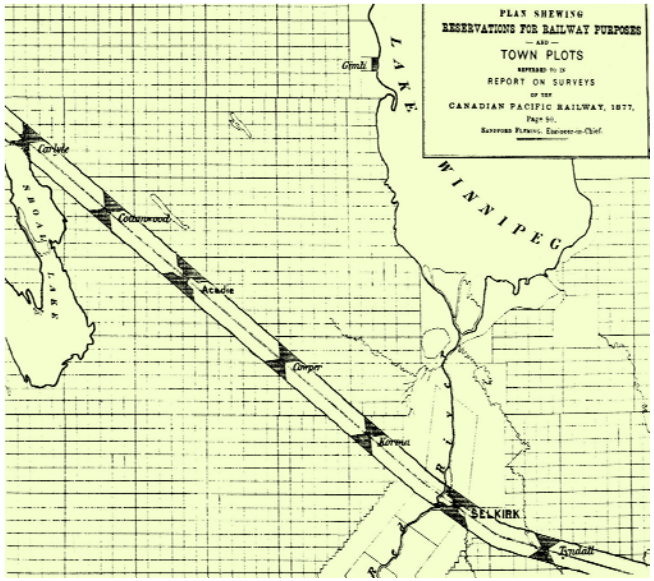


Figure 5

Belmont town plan.

Figure 6

Settlement planning proposal 1877. The smaller, simpler symbols indicate where a village was to be; the larger symbols denote a town. Typically, the latter would have had larger more imposing stations.

STATION TYPES

Throughout Western Canada station types can, in general, be categorized according to at least four distinct classifications. Almost all stations on lines now, or formerly, run by Canadian National Railways can be classified as first, second, third of fourth class stations, or as some form of portable station. Canadian Pacific designs have no such official built-in ranking, but similarities in size and luxury between the various designs are strong enough to discuss them according to CN's terms. Smaller companies can, with more latitude, be categorized in similar terms.

The most common type of station built in Manitoba can be specified, according to Canadian National's designation, as 3rd class. Most of the Canadian Pacific stations in Manitoba are roughly comparable to CN's 3rd class ranking. A 3rd class station is the kind that a "typical" small rural town would have. 2nd class stations, similar in functional terms to 3rd class stations, were larger. Built are more important centres, where business and traffic were heavier, a 2nd class station usually boasted a large waiting room and office, a separate ladies' waiting room and even extra baggage space. Still, 2nd and 3rd class stations were functionally linked by the inclusion of living quarters. Canadian Pacific stations, sometimes difficult to categorize in other terms as 2nd or 3rd class, can be more easily identified by this presence of living quarters.

The step above 2nd class is 1st class, specially designed stations located at very important business and divisional points. Unlike 2nd and 3rd class stations, these special stations did not contain any living quarters. 1st class stations were meant to be symbols of a company's wealth and sophistication. A dwelling above the station imparted to the building an informal atmosphere that was not desired.

The final general category of a station types, 4th class, had, like the special stations, no provision for family living quarters, although for quite different reasons. 4th class stations were usually built in remote areas of the province where traffic was light. As such, there was little need for a resident agent and these stations were typically small and simple.

3rd Class Stations

There are at least 75 railway stations in Manitoba that can be grouped according to Canadian Northern's 3rd class designation. 30 of these are officially 3rd class; the remaining 45 are 3rd class in nature and are comprised of Canadian Northern and Canadian Pacific designs. A few of the smaller company stations, now part of Canadian National, are also 3rd class. Because there is such a wide variety of stations that can be termed 3rd class designation was itself altered over the years, it would be useful to identify those station types that defy a strict 3rd class designation. Preceding this, however, an analysis of Canadian Northern's official 3rd class station is necessary.

The first official 3rd class station, used as a standard by Canadian Northern, was designed in 1901 by Ralph Benjamin Pratt (Figure 7). These buildings, with their neat, uncomplicated plans, were distinguished by a high pyramidal roof. This roofline was an imposing element, often visible on the flat prairie from a mile away. Over the baggage room a simple gabled roof flowed down to the front of the station facing the tracks to form a deep bracketed overhang that was typical of Canadian Northern depots. The rear of the freight shed was, likewise, covered with a wide overhang, also bracketed for support. The total effect of these 3rd class stations was of a clean, symmetrical building that was uncluttered by useless ornamentation.

This design was used extensively by Canadian Northern until late in the first decade of the century, when it was superseded by a more refined version of the first official 3rd class station (Figure 8). These stations, used extensively until 1914, were slightly longer than their predecessors. The extra length may have been the reason that a hip, rather than a pyramidal roof was used. To light the waiting room, a window was added to the front of the depot, between the waiting room door and the bay window. The windows on the waiting room were also set more closely together.

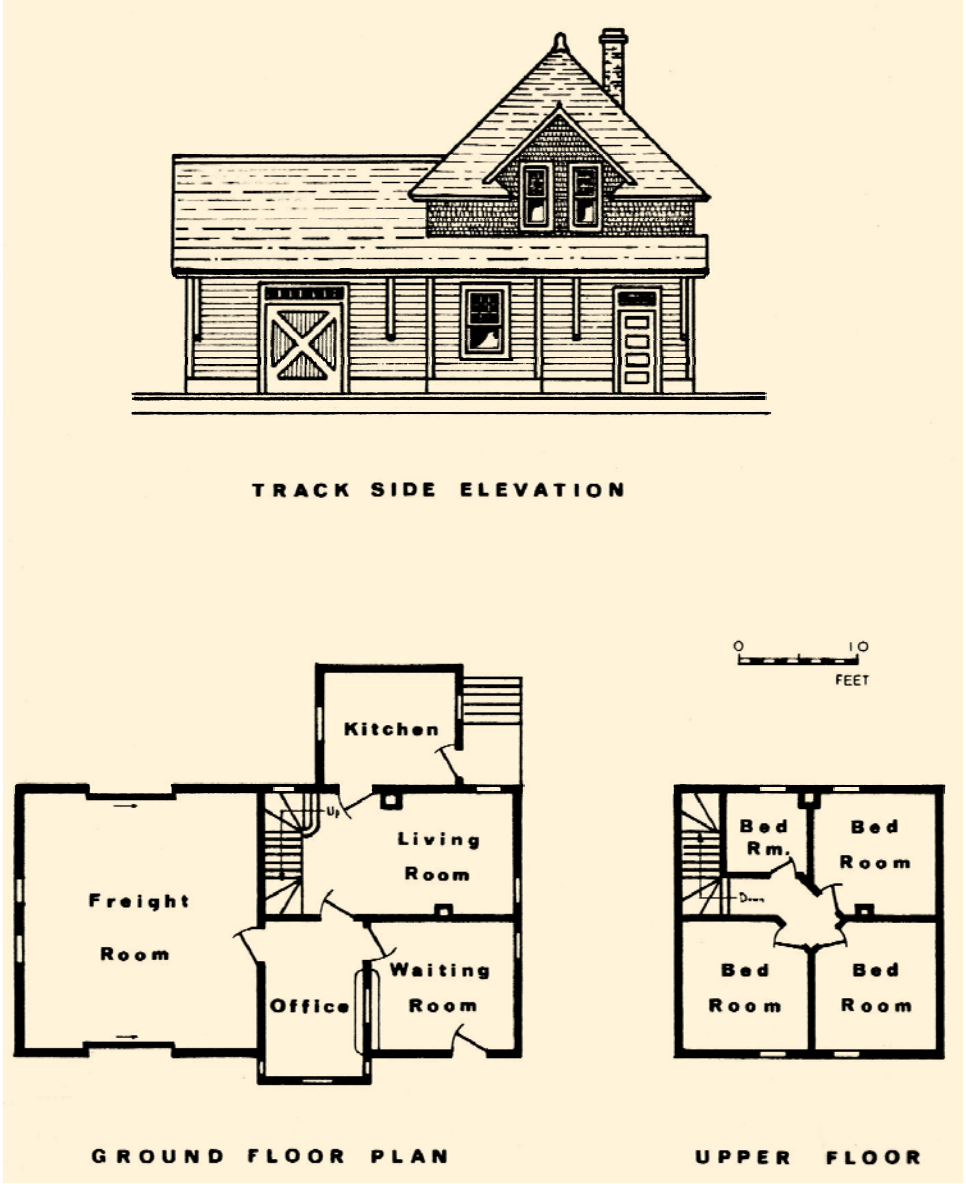


Figure 7

3rd class station, type 100-3. The first “official” 3rd class station design, used as a standard by Canadian Northern was designed in 1901 by Ralph Benjamin Pratt, probably the most prolific station designer in Western Canada.

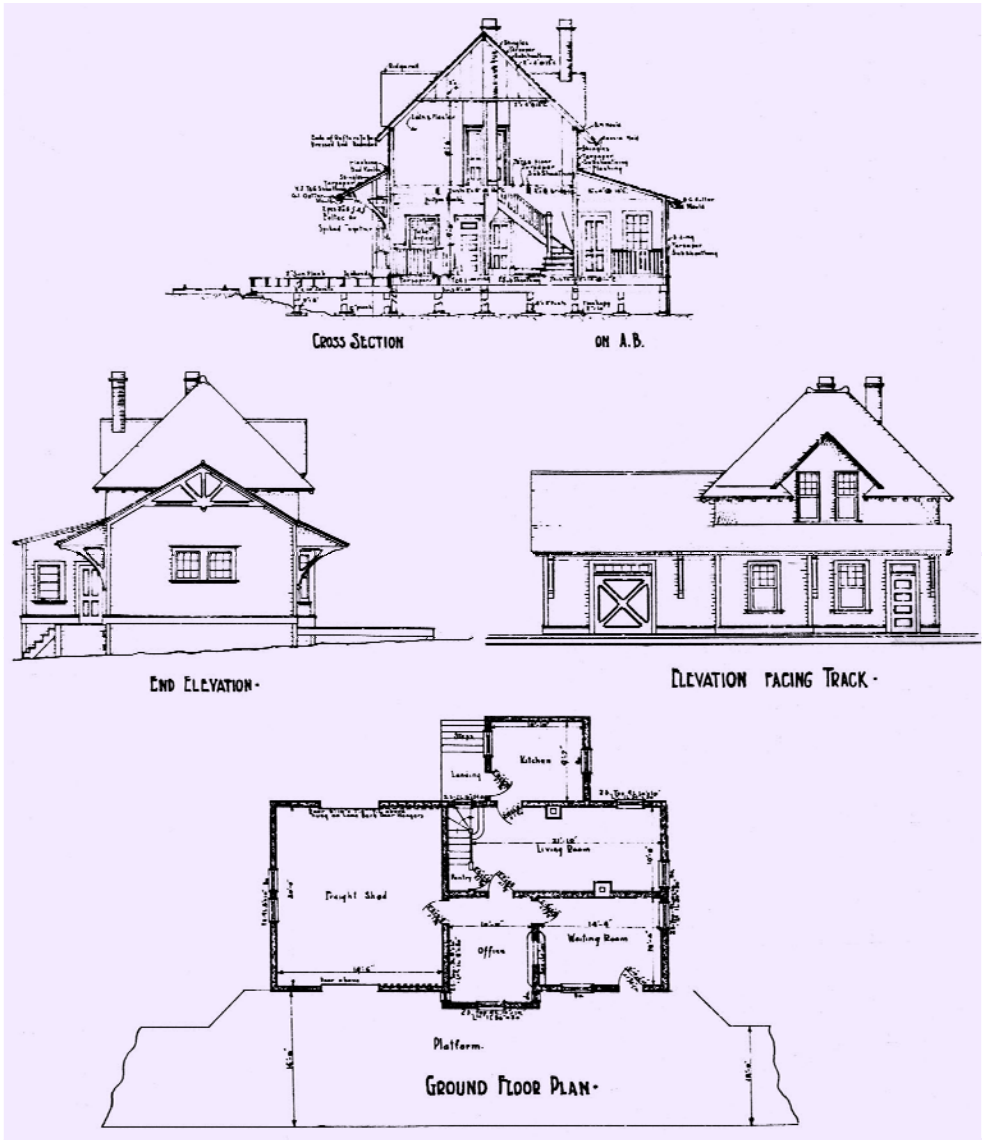


Figure 8

The more refined 3rd class station, type 100-29. The most obvious change incorporated in this second standard design is in the upper roof shape which, through a slight widening of the structure, went from pyramidal to extremely hipped, and in the addition of a waiting room window facing the tracks.

One final revision of the official 3rd class design resulted in a slightly different design. Almost identical in planning and size to its immediate predecessor, these stations, common after 1915, incorporated a few external revisions in their designs (Figure 9). Slight fenestration changes, the addition of a second chimney and the elimination of the large dormers constituted the most noticeable of these changes.

There were, of course, several standard Canadian Northern stations that were built before the introduction in 1901, of its official 3rd class design. In fact, those stations that Edward Martin, in an earlier reference, called "quiet … sensible … and welcoming" and which are also called "Bohi's Type A" throughout this report, (Charles Bohi's Canadian National's Western Depots categorizes a number of uncategorized Canadian Northern Grand Trunk Pacific and National Transcontinental stations) were the forerunners of Canadian Northern's official 3rd class type.

Type A stations can be identified by the long hip-gable roof over the first storey, and another hip-gable roof over the second storey running at right angles (Figure 10). A shingled awning, supported by large brackets, provided a measure of protection for customers and freight waiting for trains. Two windows and a door were usually located on the waiting room end, while the agent's office featured a rectangular bay with three tall windows facing the platform.

Also similar to the later, official 3rd class station, are those which Bohi calls "Type B" (Figure 11). The outward, physical differences that distinguish these stations from Type A or official 3rd class are further complicated by the difference in purpose and therefore in plan. Type B stations, typically built in remote areas at the turn of the century, included room for section workers but not for an agent's family. The agent's bedroom was completely separate from those of the workers.

Figure 9

The old Ste. Rose station. This kind of building accommodated living, kitchen and dining at the back of the ground floor.

Figure 10

The Winnipegosis station is an early Type A building.

Figure 11

The Woodridge station is one of Bohi's Type B.

Moving away from the former Canadian Northern lines to those other companies now integrated in the Canadian National system, classification according to the 3rd class designation is based more on functional than architectural similarities. The Northern Pacific station at Miami, for example, has all the common functions of a 3rd class station (Figure 12). It has a waiting room, office, and a freight shed along the front and living quarters at the rear and above. The architectural massing and detailing, however, are quite distinct in comparison to Canadian Northern. The building's compact form, abruptly truncated on the east side, includes a bay window that projects through the hipped gable roof to become a faceted dormer.

Figure 12
The Northern Pacific Station at Miami.

Grand Trunk Pacific stations, classified by Bohi as “Type D” and “Type E” are clearly 3rd class in nature (Figures 13 and 14). While Type E is smaller than Type D, the functions and planning for each type are similar. Both types of buildings are quite distinctive, with bay windows that extend up to the second floor where they are covered with hipped or bell cast hip roofs. Unfortunately, while there were once five Type D and twelve Type E stations in Manitoba, none are known to exist today.

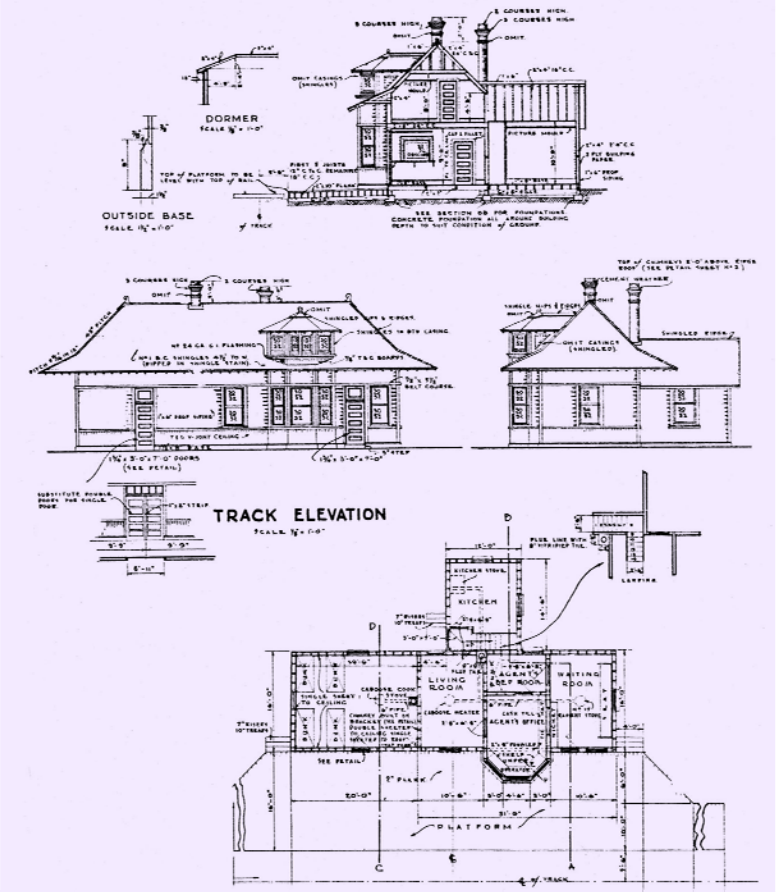


Figure 13
The Grand Trunk Pacific’s Type D station plan 100-54.

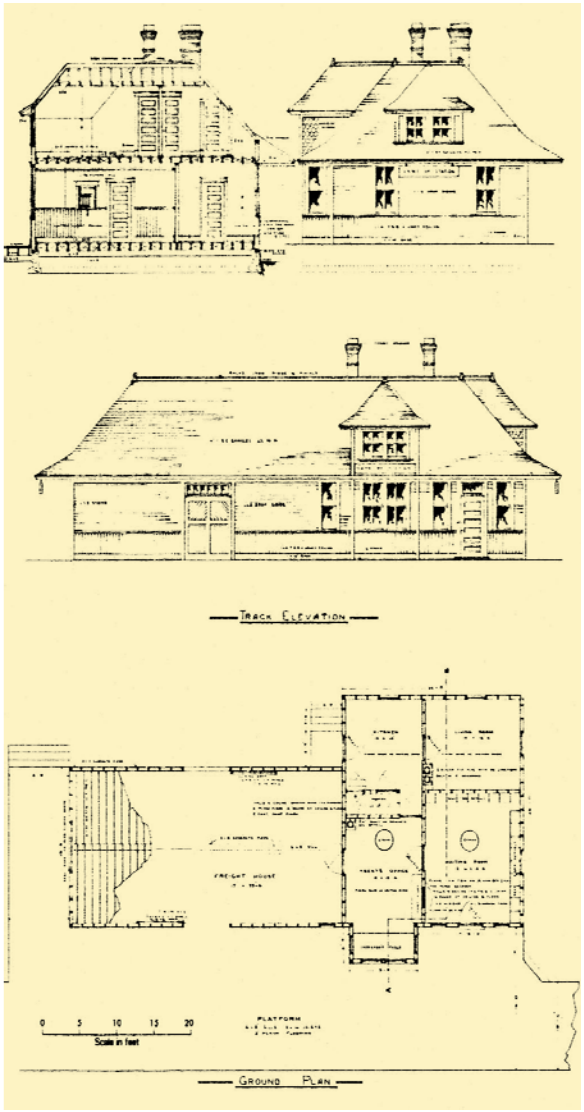


Figure 14
Grand Trunk Pacific Type E station plan 100-152.

The National Transcontinental also had its own distinctive 3rd class stations, although only two of the original number are still standing in Manitoba today. The station in Transcona, constructed around 1910, is the more substantial of the two (Figure 15). The characteristic second storey is present, although in this case it is not clear whether it served as living quarters. The strong symmetrical roof is animated by projecting hipped gable dormers. The other National Transcontinental Station at Anola features similar massing, with a less picturesque roof.

Figure 15
The National Transcontinental's Transcona Station.

The majority of all CPR stations in Manitoba can, with a few reservations, be compared to Canadian Northern's various 3rd class types. Indeed, one of the chief characteristics of the 3rd class designation, the inclusion of living quarters, was initiated by the CPR. The very first standard plan, used mostly along the CPR mainline, provided space in the second storey for the station agent and his family (Figure 16).

A long freight and baggage shed extending from the main building created, with the reiteration of gabled roofs, a rather long, uninteresting roof line. Architectural ornamentation was also minimal and consideration about dramatic massing was reserved, apparently in favour of simplicity and low costs. The distinctive bracketed overhang of other stations was also ignored. While there were a number of these earliest CP designs, today only the much renovated Poplar Point station remains.

Figure 16
CPR's earliest standard station design. The station was rather plain, lacking as it did the bracketed overhang and an interesting roof line, distinctive features of later, typical stations.

Another fairly popular CPR station design in Manitoba was used for the depot at Virden, among others (Figure 17). The design was drawn up by Ralph B. Pratt in 1899, before he left Canadian Pacific to work for Canadian Northern. The standard plan, somewhat larger than Canadian Northern's own 3rd class stations, combined all ground level functions into a neat, full rectangle. The broad overhanging eaves that encircle the whole building slope up to form part of the exceptional roof form. This distinctive design was repeated, using frame construction, in Morden, Kenton, Hartney and Boissevain (the latter has since been demolished, Hartney has been moved and Kenton has been considerably altered). The use of stone in the Virden station makes it unique among these designs. Indeed, there is only one other station (the Greater Winnipeg Water District station in St. Boniface) of any design extant in the province, besides the three main stations in Winnipeg and Brandon, that is built of stone.

Figure 17
CPR station at Virden.

The CPR's #10 design was another early example of that company's 3rd class station. A good example at Arborg, built in 1906, is still standing (Figure 18). Very similar in its massing and planning to Canadian Northern's official 3rd class station, CP's #10 reiterated the hipped roof form on both roofs and on the dormers as well. This design was also used for the Molson and the Beausejour stations, although the Beausejour station, rebuilt in part with logs for its current use as a museum, no longer retains its former appearance.

A series of CPR designs that proved very popular on the Prairies were the special "Western Lines" designs. The Western Lines "A" design, used during the first decade of this century, appears to be represented in Manitoba only by what little remains of the old Tilston station. However, the station at Mowbray, though undesignated in CPR records, looks very much like a W.L. "A" design (Figure 19). These buildings bear a striking resemblance to the first standard CPR station. The later station, however, was enlarged with a board dormer and a rectangular bay window. A shingled awning, supported by small brackets provides protection only on the platform side.

In the next decade a slightly different design, designated W.L. "A2" was developed. These buildings, which differ from their W.L. "A" predecessors only in some slight fenestration adjustments, appear to be represented in Manitoba only the abandoned station at Riverton (Figure 20).

Figure 18
The Arborg CPR station, now used as a museum, is a #10 design.

Figure 19
The old Mowbray Station resembles CPR's W.L. "A" design.

Figure 20
Former Riverton Station.

The 1920s saw widespread use of yet another of this series, W.L. "A3" (Figure 21). This attractive design, with its detailed and large gabled dormer and sweeping brackets often sported such decorative features as half-timbering. There are more surviving W.L. "A3" stations (seven) than any other standard type of CP station, and like the CN's official 3rd class stations, they have been particularly popular as residences.

One final group of standard CPR stations that have proved amenable for conversion to residences are the small #14 (or 14A) used at Fraserwood and Pettapiece (Figure 22). These designs, rendered asymmetrical by offset dormers feature large brackets that support a sweeping bell cast roof. The Pettapiece station, which has been enclosed on one side, retains its original size; the Fraserwood station has been considerably enlarged and renovated for its present use as a residence.

Figure 21
The St. Claude station is a good example of the W.L. “A3” design.

Figure 22
The Former Pettapiece Station.

2nd Class Stations

Like 3rd class stations in Manitoba, 2nd class stations include those officially designated as such in Canadian Northern's records (Figure 23) and those that, despite "Special" designation by the major companies, are of a somewhat humbler nature. The Canadian Northern station at Neepawa, built in 1902, is currently used as the Beautiful Plains Museum (Figure 24). Some minor renovations have obscured the original character of the building, but, in general, it is still a good example of the official 2nd class style. 2nd class stations were among the first of Canadian Northern depots to employ the roofline that was to become a trademark of that company. The complex, but symmetrical, roof is dominated by a high pyramidal section that is interrupted at both front and back by prominent gabled dormers. The Gladstone station features decorative woodwork in these dormers (Figure 25). Smaller hipped dormers break the medium hipped roof that covers the rest of the station.

CN stations that have been accorded Special status but are nevertheless still 2nd class include two very good examples at Portage la Prairie and Rivers. The others of this category, including Emerson and Virden, have been less fortunate, having been unsympathetically renovated or abandoned. The Portage la Prairie station, built in 1908 has no provision for living quarters, but its size, construction and appointments link it to the official 2nd class designation (Figure 26). The Rivers station, built later, in 1917, is similar to the previous buildings, although with less architectural ornamentation than the official types, or even the Portage station (Figure 27).

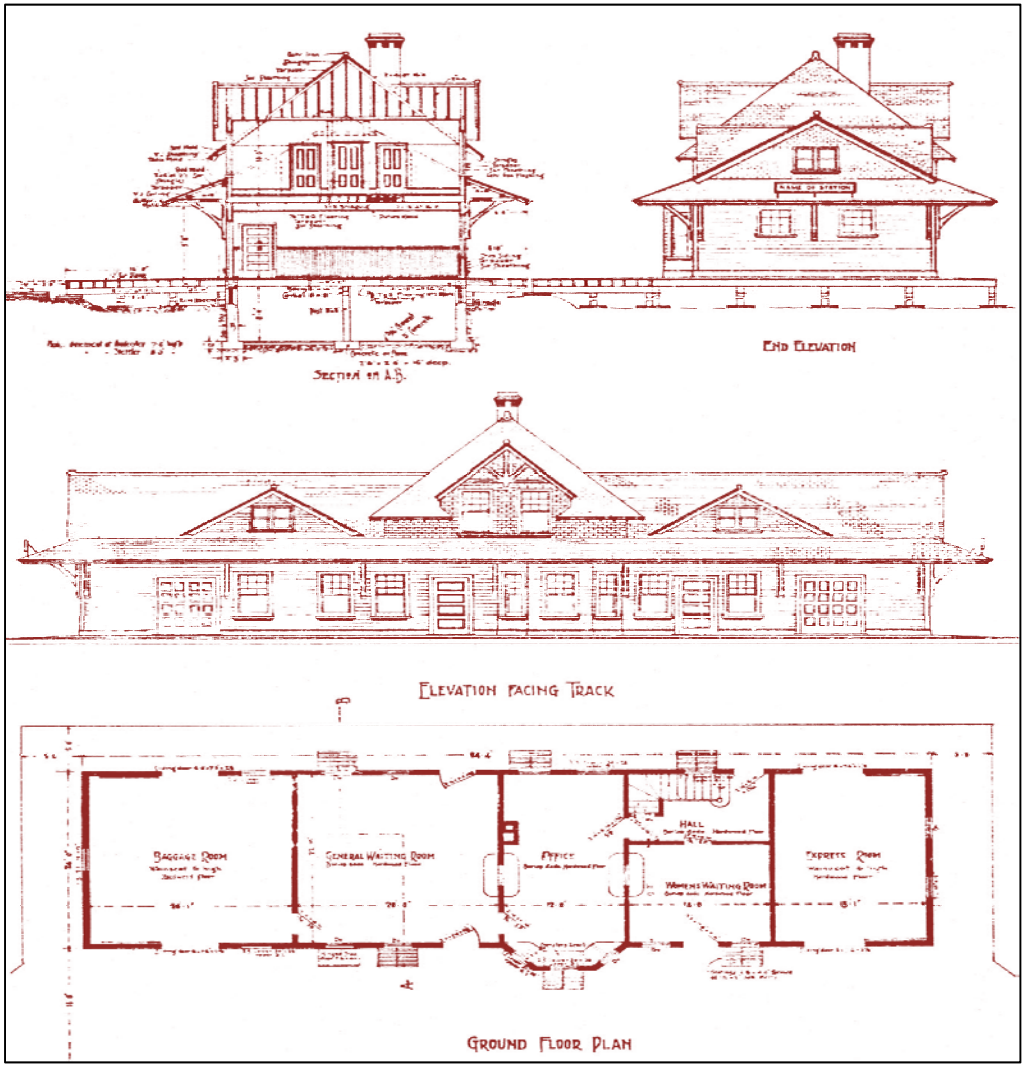


Figure 23
Canadian Northern's standard 2nd class station plan 100-39.

Figure 24
The former Neepawa station is a fine example of an “official” 2nd class design.

Figure 25
Canadian Northern’s Gladstone station.

Figure 26
The Canadian National Station in Portage la Prairie.

Figure 27
Rivers CN Station.

Those Special CPR stations of 2nd class nature are, like their CN counterparts, in varying states of upkeep. Of the four that may properly be considered 2nd class, the Minnedosa and Portage la Prairie stations, both still used, are the most outstanding. The Minnedosa station, constructed of brick, features a broad hipped gable roof that is interrupted by three dormers, the middle one with a faceted roof (Figure 28). The solid Portage la Prairie station boasts some interesting architectural features. The now, flared roof, supported with sweeping brackets, is accented at its midpoint by an interesting gable (Figure 29). The main entrance to the station is framed by a radiating voussoir arch constructed of large stones.

While the smaller railway companies in Manitoba constructed stations that were usually small and simple, some buildings to appear to be of a 2nd class nature. The Greater Winnipeg Water District Station in Saint-Boniface is the best of the few small company stations remaining (Figure 30). Built of stone, in 1929, this attractive building features excellent workmanship and some fine detailing, including arched windows and numerous ball lamps.

Figure 28

The CPR Station in Minnedosa.

Figure 29

Portage la Prairie CPR Station.

Figure 30
The Greater Winnipeg Water District Station in Saint-Boniface.

1st Class, Special and 4th Class Stations

1st class stations, or those designated "Special Designs" by both CN and CP, often represent the pinnacle of these companies' station designs. Rarely standardized, these elaborate buildings were typically built of substantial materials, like brick or stone.

Among Canadian Northern's 1st class designs in Manitoba, Winnipeg's Main Street station, which is an identified National Historic Site, ranks as the finest (Figure 31). The only other truly 1st class Canadian Northern station in Manitoba is the 1912 structure at Dauphin. Three storeys high, the building is animated with picturesque roofs, dormers, turrets and decorative brick and stonework (Figure 32). Having been one of the most important division points along Canadian Northern during its years of operation, the large floor plan provides ample space for dispatchers and other service personnel.

Among CP's seven Special stations, Winnipeg and Brandon are the largest still standing in Manitoba (Figures 33 and 34). The other four Special CP stations are, as already noted, more of a 2nd class nature. The two Special stations that are of a 1st class nature provide an indication of the diverse qualities that 1st class stations could achieve. The huge, grand station in Winnipeg is richly ornamented with large classically-inspired elements. While smaller and less ornate, Brandon's station is nevertheless an attractive building that, at the end of a street, commands attention.

Figure 31
CN's elaborate Union Station
on Main Street in Winnipeg.

Figure 32
Dauphin station nearing completion, c1912,
Courtesy Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

Figure 33
The Higgins Avenue station of the CPR.

Figure 34
Brandon's CPR station.

Both CN's and CP's Special status can often be misleading, as it includes all stations built for specific, local circumstances. As previously noted, several Special CP stations are actually of a 2nd class nature. CN's designation often overstates the design as well. The old Canadian Northern station at Victoria Beach is clearly not 1st class (Figure 35). Its Special designation owes more to its purpose than its form; Victoria Beach station, which actually resembles 3rd class, was designed to suit the community's special function as a summer resort.

Some Special stations, in fact, seem more closely related to Canadian Northern's 4th class designation. The humble 4th class station was quite different from other depots in the system (Figure 36). Notably, it did not have a second storey and had no provision for living quarters. These simple structures were covered by a low gable roof, unbroken by dormers. A shingled awning was absent and, in this simplified state, the iniquitous by a window assumed a more prominent role than in other designs. The former Canadian Northern station at Moosehorn, now used as a museum, is a good representative of the remaining nine 4th class station designs (Figure 37).

Figure 35
Canadian Northern's "Special" Victoria Beach Station.

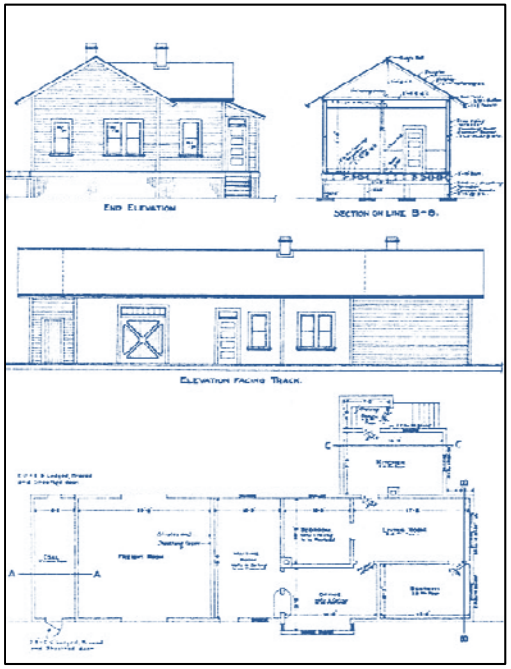


Figure 36
Canadian Northern's 4th class station, Plan 100-115.

Figure 37
Moosehorn Station.