

# 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 or 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.

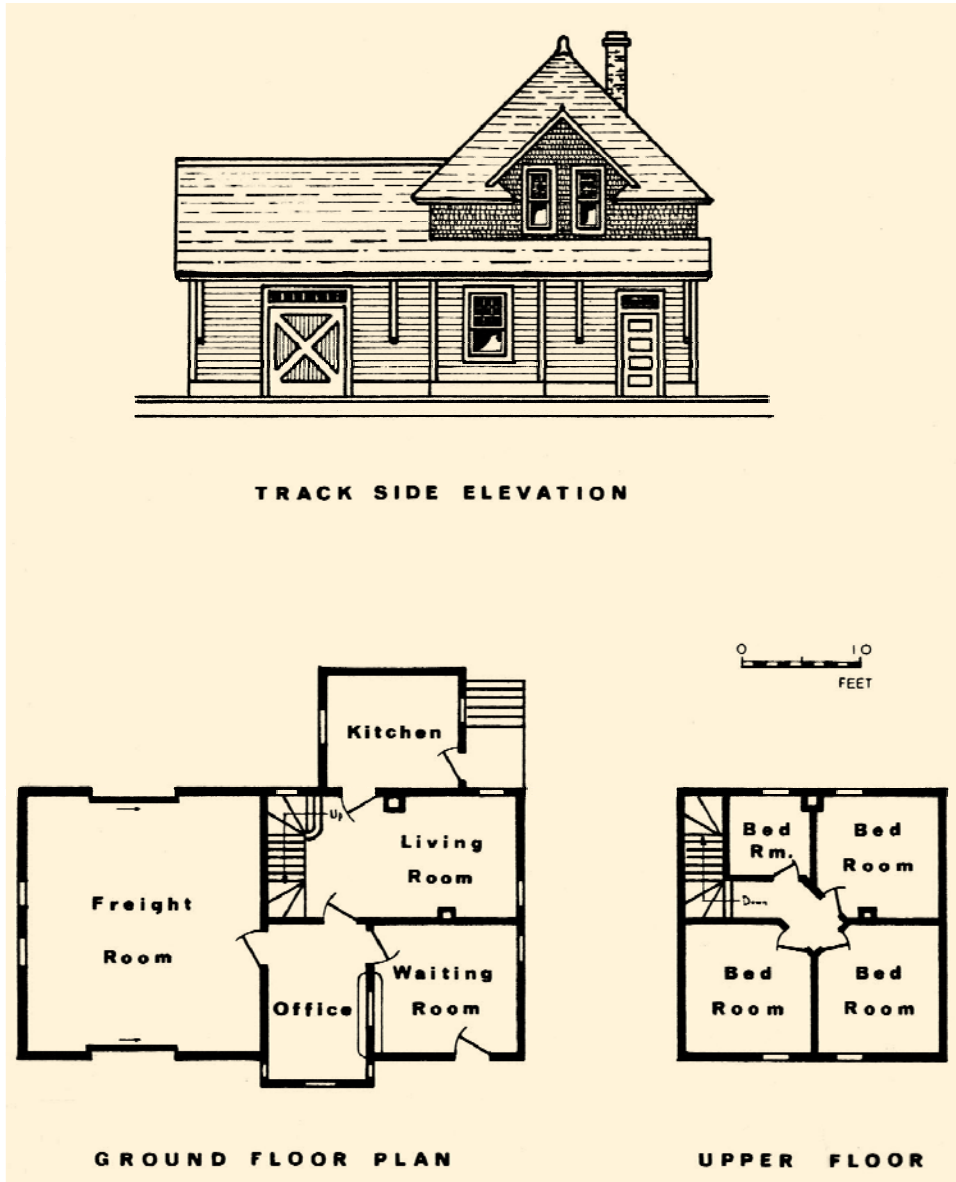
The final general category of a station types, 4th class, had, like the special stations, no provision for family living quarters, although for quite different reasons. 4th class stations were usually built in remote areas of the province where traffic was light. As such, there was little need for a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

## 3rd Class Stations

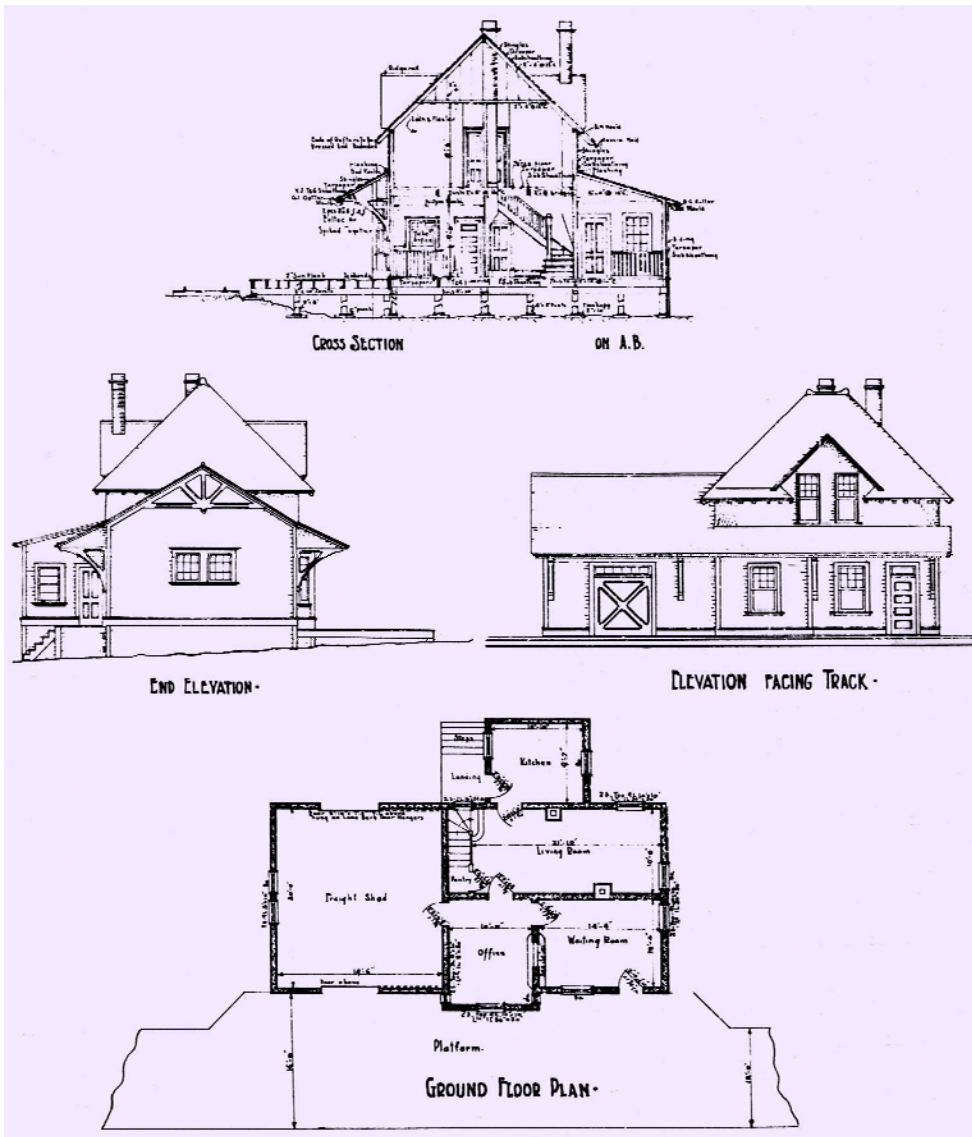
There are at least 75 railway stations in Manitoba that can be grouped according to Canadian Northern's 3rd class designation. 30 of these are officially 3rd class; the remaining 45 are 3rd class in nature and are comprised of Canadian Northern and Canadian Pacific designs. A few of the smaller company 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.

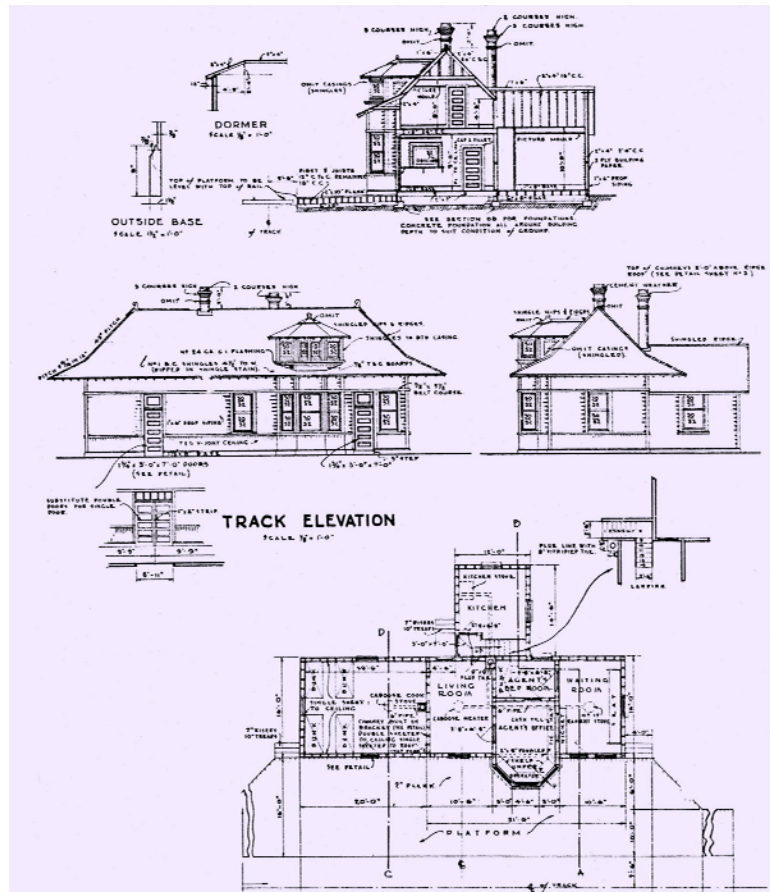
Moving away from the former Canadian Northern lines to those other companies now integrated in the Canadian National system, classification according to the 3rd class designation is based more on functional than architectural similarities. The Northern Pacific station at Miami, for example, has all the 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.



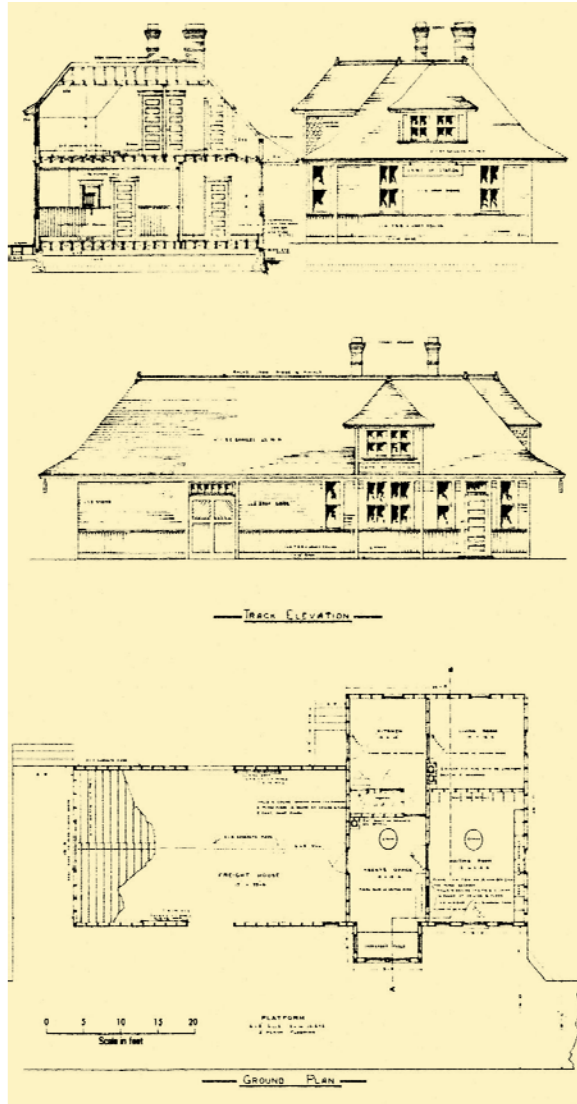
**Figure 12**  
The Northern Pacific  
Station at Miami.



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 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 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.



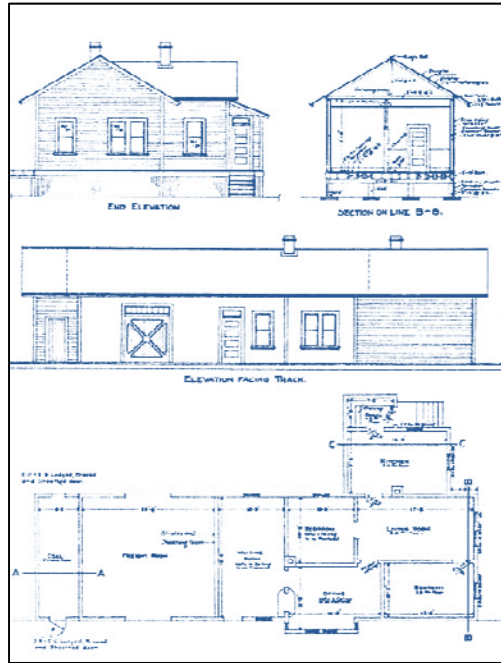
**Figure 34**  
Brandon's CPR station.

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.