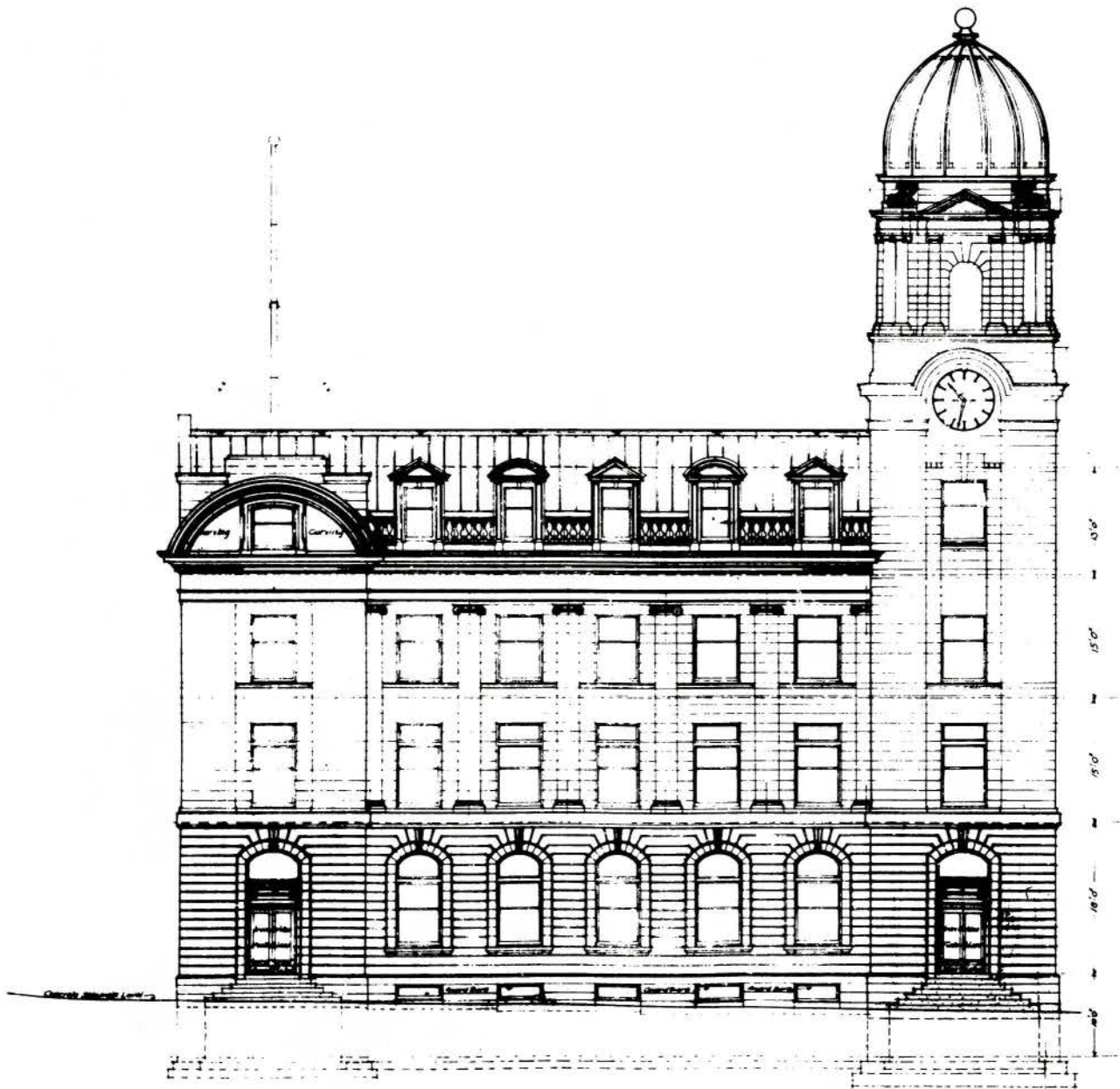


SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF ARCHITECTURE IN CANADA

BULLETIN

SOCIÉTÉ POUR L'ÉTUDE DE L'ARCHITECTURE AU CANADA



ALBERTA HERITAGE STRUCTURES

The Western Region of Public Works Canada (PWC) has recently completed a detailed inventory and heritage assessment of its properties in Alberta. The Alberta Heritage Structures Study covers PWC's sixteen pre-1945 buildings in the province and will be used as a guideline for the protection and heritage conservation of these federal government properties. Many of the buildings continue to function as conspicuous social and physical landmarks in their communities today, and several are valuable local or regional examples of particular architectural styles - for instance, the Lethbridge Federal Building and the Jasper Post Office.

The study is particularly significant for several reasons. First, it indicates a growing incorporation of heritage concepts into official government policy in response to increasing public concern about heritage issues. The Western Region of PWC formerly dealt with heritage properties on an ad hoc basis, but the understanding of this study marks the progression to a more pragmatic and consistent

approach. Second, the study is the first of its kind undertaken by any region of Public Works Canada, which is probably the largest single owner of heritage properties in the country. In conducting the study, Western Region employed heritage guidelines previously established by the national headquarters of Public Works to conduct a more comprehensive study of properties within its own subregion. The project commenced with Alberta due to the increasing pressure on heritage structures created by the province's rapid growth rates; corresponding studies are subsequently planned for the remainder of Western Region - Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and the Northwest Territories.

Third, the study is of interest since it goes beyond the specific immediate preservation concerns of the buildings by providing background information regarding the individual buildings, their architects, and the evolving role Public Works Canada played in shaping Canada's built environment. PWC's official heritage policy, as well as the practical



Prince of Wales Armoury Edmonton, 1914
Arch.: David Ewart

workings of the federal government's heritage program, are also described.

The report uses several graphics for each property including reproductions of historical photographs, recent documentary photography, floor plans, neighbourhood streetscape maps, and reproductions of original architectural renderings. The text investigates the importance of each building as a heritage structure incorporating four components of value, listed here in increasing order of importance: historical, contextual, architectural, and social. Assessments of overall heritage value were based on



Vegreville Public Building, 1929
Arch.: T.W. Fuller, Jr.



Jasper Post Office, 1939
Arch.: C.D. Sutherland



Lethbridge Post Office, 1912
Arch.: David Ewart

observational fieldwork combined with interviews conducted with local citizens including postmasters, caretakers, local officials, old timers, archivists, and members of local historical societies.

It is hoped that this study will serve as a pioneering example for other government departments, and organizations becoming involved in producing heritage reports. To this end, the report includes a list of information sources and contacts, an initial inventory of potential heritage properties of other federal government departments, summaries of local and provincial heritage programs, and a reproduction of the original fieldwork questionnaire used in recording and compiling information for each property.

An edition of the report is being made available to the public. The author of the study encourages those with enquiries regarding the study procedure, as well as those wishing copies, to contact him: Bob Longworth, 4715 - 117 A Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 3R9, (403) 434-3756.