

**25 FORKS MARKET ROAD – JOHNSTON TERMINAL BUILDING
(NATIONAL CARTAGE BUILDING)**
Canadian National Railways Architectural Branch, 1928, 1929



Increased freight traffic on the recently-formed Canadian National Railways led to construction in two stages of this massive, four-storey warehouse and freight-forwarding facility in the southern half of the CNR's East Yards.

The yards, at the confluence of the Assiniboine and Red rivers in downtown Winnipeg, were shared by Canadian Northern and Grand Trunk Pacific railways during the early 1900s. They were among five financially-troubled systems amalgamated into the publicly-owned CNR in 1917-23.

Part of this process involved eliminating inefficient duplicate operations. In 1921, an agreement was struck with National Storage and Cartage Limited to consolidate the warehousing and hauling services carried out separately by Canadian Northern and GTP. This firm, a wholly-

owned CNR subsidiary, soon required new storage space. In 1928, CNR's architectural branch planned a new, on-site warehouse building for lease by the cartage company.

The structure was erected by Carter-Halls-Aldinger Company at an estimated cost of \$134,700. A substantial addition was planned in 1929 with construction occurring the following year. The resulting facility, with more than 9,300 square metres of usable space, is one of the largest warehouses in Winnipeg and one of the few in Manitoba that is finished on all sides.

The free-standing warehouse features mill construction, a more common technique in pre-World-War-I Winnipeg than during the 1920s when steel framing or reinforced concrete was used.

The building rises from a concrete basement, with reinforced concrete columns supporting large timber purlins on steel beams. Buff-coloured exterior brick walls lead to a high parapet with concrete coping. The roof is designed to slope to drains. One corner of the building is notched to accommodate the turning radius of train cars that stop along the east wall.

The design is symmetrical, simple and utilitarian. Pilasters separate bays of mainly single horizontal windows, completed with stepped brick-work and a narrow cornice. The windows are of the industrial type with steel frames and single-paned wired glass.

There are four interior sections separated by masonry bearing walls. Each section has its own freight elevator; each floor has a number of offices along the west wall adjacent to steel fire stairs. The rest of the interior is open space with exposed heavy timber columns, beams and joists. The floors are of softwood planks overlaid in sections by hardwood.

National Storage and Cartage occupied the premises until 1961. For the next 15 years, the warehouse was leased to Johnston National Cartage Company, later known as Johnston Terminals Company. The building has been vacant since 1977.