

**300 PRINCESS STREET – CANADIAN FAIRBANKS MORSE COMPANY  
WAREHOUSE**  
*Brown & Vallance (1911)*



The Canadian Fairbanks Morse Company, a U.S.-based manufacturer founded in 1823, sought to expand its Canadian presence in 1911 by constructing this large, sturdily built warehouse on the northern edge of Winnipeg's warehouse district on one of its premier streets – Princess.

The four-storey brick and stone structure is designed in the Romanesque Revival style, very popular in the City's warehouse district and recognizable by its arched openings, rough brick and stone surfaces, flat roof line and minimal ornamentation. Unique to this building are the two main façades (east facing Princess Street and north facing Henry Avenue), the dark brick cladding with stone accenting around windows, the ornately carved terra cotta main entrance on Princess Street, attached brick pilasters ending at the roof in raised capitals embellished with terra cotta elements and painted signage on both sides of the northeast corner. The south façade is unadorned and the rear (west) of the building features open and closed loading facilities, metal fire escapes, painted

signage and exposed structural concrete. Alterations to the exterior of the building's main façades have been numerous, including window unit replacement and alteration of the ground floor windows. The upper storeys have seen only modest change.

The building, which measures approximately 35.8 x 29.6 x 17.4 metres and cost \$100,000 to complete, is built of solid brick exterior walls and concrete floors supported by a reinforced concrete skeleton. An accident during the pouring of the concrete in September 1911 caused part of the roof to collapse, killing two construction workers.

The original interior was laid out in traditional fashion: basement for mechanical and storage; ground floor for display and loading/unloading; second floor offices; and upper floors for storage. Major changes have occurred since the building was taken over and converted into a social services centre in the early 2000s with reception, kitchen and eating areas on the ground floor, modern sleeping facilities on the second floor and offices and meeting areas on the third floor.

The Montréal, PQ-based partnership of David Robertson Brown (1869-1946) and Hugh Vallance (1866-1947) was formed in 1907, design large and small structures across the country. In Saskatchewan, they were responsible for planning and designing much of the original University of Saskatchewan campus in Saskatoon, SA. In Winnipeg, only five City of Winnipeg Building Permits bear their names, this warehouse was their largest contract.

Contractor for the building was the local firm George H. Archibald Company, which operated in Winnipeg from 1908 to 1915 and built many fine structures across Western Canada.

The original owner/occupant continued to use the building until the 1940s. The warehouse was bought and occupied by farm implement manufacturer Massey-Harris Company in the 1950s and since 2005 has been the headquarters for the local Christian humanitarian agency, Siloam Mission.

Elements of the building that would require approval if alterations were planned are:

Exterior-

- Four-storey dark brick and stone building with a flat roof located on the southwest corner of Henry Avenue, its main facades facing east onto Princess Street and north onto Henry Avenue, its south façade facing a vacant lot (surface parking) and its rear façade facing west onto a back lane;
- Symmetrical front (east) and north facades with their windows in arched openings (ground floor) and centrally-located entrance set in an arched, terra cotta frame (east façade), the upper three floors divided by wide brick pilasters with stone accenting at the second floor and terra cotta geometric designs above the fourth floor openings, paired upper storey windows in rectilinear openings concrete sills and the flat roof with raised pilasters projecting above the roofline and lightly-hued terra cotta capping;
- Painted signage on both sides of the northeast corner;
- The south façade with dark brick on the top floor; and
- The rear (west) façade with its raised, uncovered loading platform running the entire width of the structure, metal fire escapes, exposed concrete structural elements, windows in rectilinear openings and painted signage.

Interior-

- Wood grill on the freight elevator.