

FEDERAL HERITAGE BUILDINGS REVIEW OFFICE

BUILDING EVALUATION REPORT

File No.2.5.10

IDENTIFICATION		Ad Hoc FHIBRO (CDA)	
BUILDING			
- City/Prov:	EDMONTON, Alta.	- Meeting:	84-07
- Name:	Grierson Centre	- Date:	17 JAN 85
- Address:	9530 - 101st Avenue	- BER No.:	84-21
- Owner:	CSC	- Date:	JUL 05 1985

HERITAGE CHARACTER

SUMMARY

The three surviving buildings of the former Mounted Police compound at Edmonton date from 1912 to 1957: a 1912-13 barrack block in the Baronial or Tudor Gothic Style; a sympathically designed addition in 1935-36; and a 1955-56 adjunct in Modern style. They offer an historical and architectural insight into the development of the Mounted Police in the 20th century. Historically, the inception and continuing additions to the Edmonton Compound reflect the evolution of the Force from frontier policing to national law enforcement. Architecturally, this complex contains two of a very few major pre-1950 structures designed especially for police purposes. This enclave exerted little historical environmental impact on the evolution of Edmonton.

ARCHITECTURE

The three remaining structures of the old Edmonton RCMP Compound have varying historic architectural value. The 1912-13 Barracks is a Tudor Gothic structure departing from previous mounted police construction practices. The main 1935-36 Collegiate Gothic addition is sympathetic to the 1912-13 original, and is itself a rare later example of major Mounted Police construction. The 1955-57 adjunct maintains the landscape form of the barrack square enunciated in 1912. Collectively, the styling, facilities and spatial arrangement of these three associated structures constitute a telling exposition of the building preferences and practices of the Mounted Police in their post-North West territorial era: the Edmonton compound is probably the only point in Canada at which such a progression could be illustrated.

The 1912-13 Barracks

The facade of this two storey L-shaped light-red brick building on a high rock-faced sandstone basement with a square three storey tower at its internal angle, contains many of the most salient formative and decorative elements of the Tudor Gothic style. These include its crenellated central and corner towers, crenellated parapet and frequent emphatic pilastering. The building is decorated only by a simple pattern of yellow brick in its central tower and by sandstone lintels and sills.

The 1935-36 Addition

The stone-trimmed two storey red brick addition is an L-shaped structure erected on the west side of the barrack square. The main block is designed in a well-detailed Collegiate Gothic Style, while the linking garage/gymnasium incorporates more austere elements of the same style. It features an inward-facing arcaded passageway between the two main buildings. Collegiate Gothic is here expressed in stone-capped wall pilaster, crenellated tower forms flanking the main entry and defining the corners of the structure, the detailing of the entrance, and the arcaded passage of the garage/gymnasium. The whole design is enlivened by the crenellation. This attention to up-scale decorative detailing is further reflected in the stained glass of its entryway windows.

FEDERAL HERITAGE BUILDINGS REVIEW OFFICE

BUILDING EVALUATION REPORT

File No.2.5.10

IDENTIFICATION	
BUILDING	
- City/Prov:	EDMONTON, Alta.
- Name:	Grierson Centre
- Address:	9530 - 101st Avenue
- Owner:	CSC
Ad Hoc FILBRO (CDA)	
- Meeting:	84-07
- Date:	17 JAN 85
- BER No.:	84-21
- Date:	JUL 05 1985
HERITAGE CHARACTER	
The 1955-57 Adjunct	
<p>While both the 1912-13 barracks and the 1934-36 addition were instructive rare examples of buildings designed specifically for police purposes, the 1955-57 adjunct was erected on the site of the old stables near the east end of the 1912-13 barracks.</p>	
HISTORY	
<p>The first northern Alberta detachment of the Northwest Mounted Police reached Hudson Bay Company's Edmonton House post on 27 October 1874; it wintered there before moving on to establish the district headquarters at Fort Saskatchewan, 20 miles to the east. The "G" Division headquarters remained at the Fort Saskatchewan post until its formal transfer to Edmonton in November 1909, although the bulk of the division remained at Fort Saskatchewan for several years because of a lack of adequate accommodation at Edmonton. By 1887, Edmonton had a 21 man Mounted Police detachment to patrol the town and a large surrounding district. Notwithstanding minor improvements made in the Edmonton detachment over the years, it proved totally inadequate to house the larger divisional staff after 1909. The defect was remedied in 1912 with the construction of a permanent brick barracks. The new Edmonton headquarters of "G" division continued virtually unaltered until the mid-1930s despite great intervening changes in the role, disposition and numbers of the Mounted Police. In 1919-20 the Force's mandate was changed to make it a national force for the enforcement of federal law, its name was changed to Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the headquarters was moved from Regina to Ottawa. The new RCMP, now scattered across the country, produced little pressure on existing police facilities in Western Canada. The situation changed abruptly in 1932 when the RCMP replaced five provincial police forces, including Alberta's. A thousand new members were absorbed nationally. The Edmonton headquarters staff, now responsible for administering all the more than 300 Mounted Police in Alberta, was immediately expanded far beyond the capacity of the existing facilities. The Commissioner's plea for larger quarters resulted in the construction of an addition to the existing barracks in 1936. The Compound was expanded once again in 1955-57, as part of a major capital construction program to upgrade RCMP facilities. The RCMP vacated this site for new quarters in 1975. Since then the property is used by the Correctional Service of Canada as a 'half way house' for paroled prisoners and other functions of that Service.</p>	
ENVIRONMENT	
<p>The functional, spatial and inward-facing structural insularity of the old Edmonton RCMP Compound makes it difficult to attribute any significant environmental impact to it. The Compound was developed as a self-sufficient para-military enclave isolated from its local environment and the development of the community at large. Although never an integral part of the downtown, and still somewhat removed from the eastward thrust of the highrises and other urban redevelopment, the site appears to fall within the ambit of these schemes as a prospective anchor for Jasper East development.</p>	