

Ottawa, Ontario
Cereal Building (#76)
Central Experimental Farm

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

The Cereal Building, Central Experimental Farm, was built in 1915-16 to designs prepared by the Department of Public Works under David Ewart, Chief Architect. It is under the care of Public Works. See FHBRO Building Report 84-04.

Reason for Designation

In October, 1984, the Cereal Building was designated Classified, with high scores under the history and environment, and a substantial score under architecture.

The Central Experimental Farm made an important contribution to Canadian history with the development of Marquis wheat in 1903; this building is associated with subsequent cereals research, of which the most famous is the search for resistant varieties of wheat after the rust outbreak of 1916. The building served as the centre of cereals research at the Farm until 1970. In its environs the building plays a strong supporting role; it and the great barn mark the symbolic and interpretive centre of the complex. The building is a simplified but pleasing and competent iteration of the shingle and board-and-batten vocabulary established for the Farm by the great barn. Its original plan was a clear expression of the dual responsibilities of the CEF, as a demonstration farm, and as a scientific establishment. The Central Experimental Farm has been designated of national historic significance; so has Charles E. Saunders, for his development of Marquis wheat and subsequent cereals research.

Character Defining Elements

This designation applies to the whole of the exterior of the building. The building gains its force from its generous massing and direct expression of natural materials. The addition of refined or glossy materials to this palette would be discordant. Openings are grouped and proportioned with care and regularity, and should remain. The ornamental quality of the building is a matter of texture and colour: this is a building built up of small pieces. Small-paned windows and doors which reveal their structural components are an essential complement to the shingle and board-and-batten.

Originally the dual functions of the building were largely separated by the drive floor, with offices and laboratories to one side, and the granary and threshing floor to the other. It would greatly aid the historical interpretation of the building if the generous volumes and related finishes intended for the threshing floor and granary were recovered.

.../2

Cereal Building (#76) Cont'd
Central Experimental Farm

The circulation patterns immediately adjacent to the building reflect its interior functions and its use during the hey day of cereals research. The immediate landscape appurtenant to this building is simple. Attempts to introduce modern paving materials or to drastically upgrade the immediate surroundings should be resisted.

1987.02.04