

Ottawa, Ontario
Willson Carbide Mill
Victoria Island

FHBRO 83-63

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

The Ottawa Carbide company built their plant on Victoria Island between 1899 and 1900. It bears the name of Thomas Leopold Willson, inventor of the process to produce calcium carbide and acetylene gas and founder of the Ottawa Carbide Company, who was declared a person of national historic significance by the Historic sites and Monuments Board of Canada. The four storey mill building which now remains was conceived by engineers for utilitarian purposes but was given some architectural features which soften its mainly industrial character. Its steel structure was clad with two feet thick limestone walls which are decorated with cut stone at the corners and in the window openings. The traditional appearance of the mill is typical of industrial buildings of the times. Yet its was innovative in its interiors layout which provided each process with its own specific and protected space. Because it is the last remaining building, it has become a landmark and continues to contribute to the architectural integrity of a former industrial area.

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