

# WINDSOR STATION

AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY

Don Thomas

REAL RAILS

October 17, 2025

# LE GARE WINDSOR

UN HISTOIRE ILLUSTRÉE

Don Thomas

REAL RAILS

le 17 octobre 2025



Windsor Station was:

- Canadian Pacific Railway's head office; and
- One of Montreal's principal rail terminals.

It is neither today, but remains an impressive presence downtown.



# Canadian Pacific's expansion into Montreal

- CP was headquartered in Montreal at its founding in 1881, occupying rented office in Place d'Armes and then Victoria Square. At the time, it owned no railway lines in the city.
- CP purchased a line from Montreal to Ottawa in 1882, and another to Quebec City in 1886. Both served Dalhousie Square station in the east of downtown Montreal.
- CP was building lines from Toronto and from eastern Canada and U.S. points. These would enter Montreal from the west, inconveniently far from Dalhousie Square.
- A new building in the west of downtown could be a terminal for these lines and provide office space for CP's rapidly growing administration.

**Canadian Pacific  
Lines around Montreal**

The map illustrates the Canadian Pacific railway network around Montreal. Key features include:

- Geographical Features:** St. Lawrence River, Lac des Deux Montagnes, Lac St-Louis, Ile de Salaberry, Ile Perrot, Ile Bizard, Ile Jesus, Ile des Prairies, and the Connel Canal.
- Railway Lines:**
  - TO OTTAWA:** A solid line passing through Pointe Fortune, McLaughlins, Rigaud, Dragon, Choisy, Altonvale, Hudson Heights, Como, Isle Cadieux, Dorion (Vaudreuil), and Brucy.
  - TO SMITHS FALLS AND TORONTO:** A dashed line branching off from the Ottawa line at Pointe Fortune.
  - Local Montreal Lines:** A solid line connecting stations from Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue to Westmount, including stops at Baie d'Urfe, Beaurepaire, Beaconsfield, Pointe Claire, Cedar Park, Pointe Claire (Lakeside), Valois, Strathmore, Pine Beach, Dorval, Summerlea, Lachine (Grovehill), Lachine, and St-Luc Yard.
- Other Labels:** "CANADIAN PACIFIC" is written multiple times along the routes. "MONTREAL" is prominently displayed. "QUEBEC" and "ONTARIO" are labeled in the bottom left corner.
- Scale and Orientation:** A scale bar at the bottom right shows distances from 0 to 20 km. A north arrow is located near the bottom right.



CP's new lines from west and south were connected to the earlier northern lines by a long circuitous route around Mount Royal.

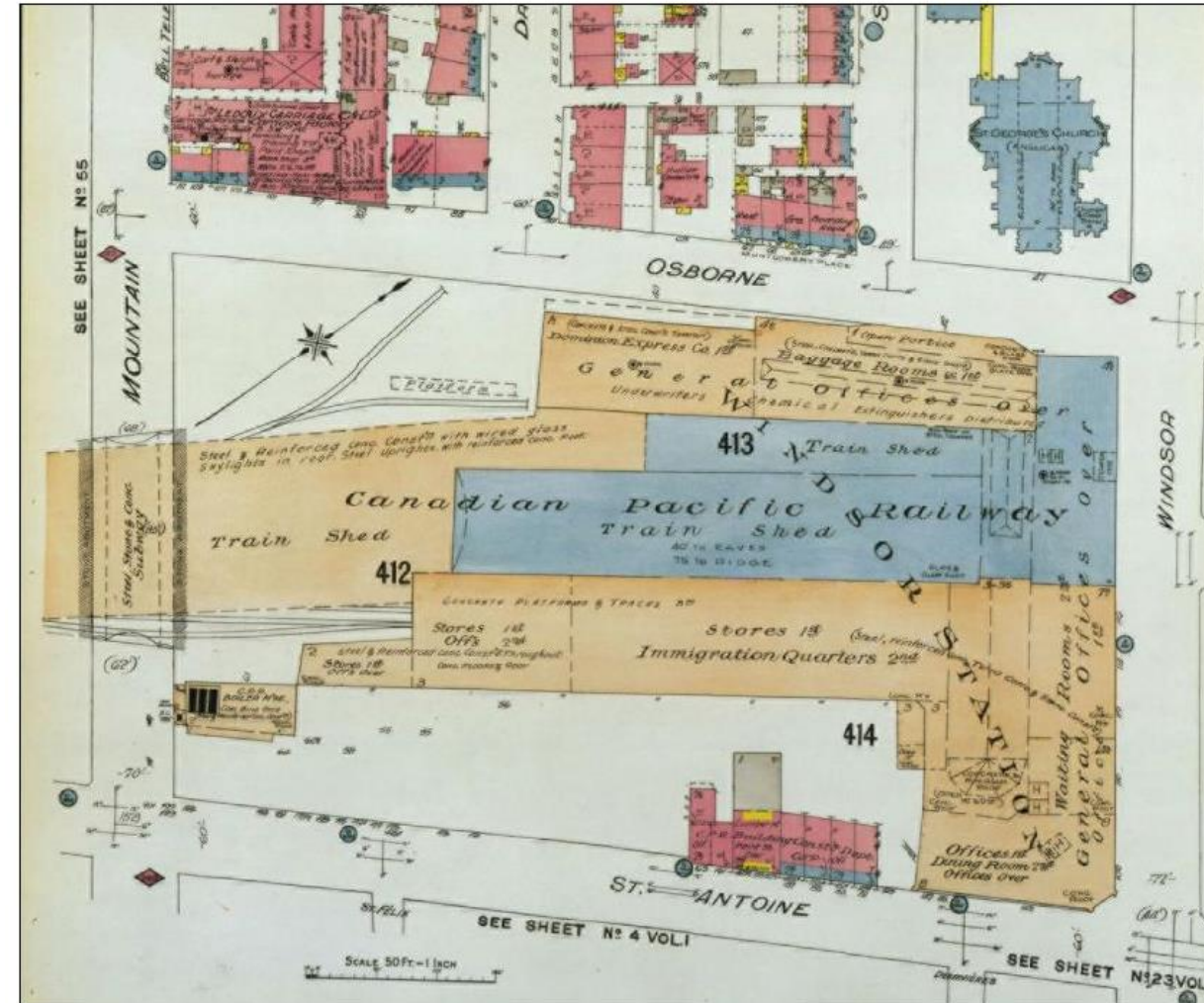
Passenger trains from west and south reached the city centre more directly using a new line from Montreal West to Windsor Station.



# A note on compass points in Montreal

Montreal street directions are given relative to the St Lawrence River, which runs diagonally with respect to compass directions. East-west streets roughly parallel the river. I will use this terminology.

This map notionally shows north on top. The arrow shows true north.



# Windsor Station's location

CP's route into Montreal ran along the side of a steep hill, sloping south.

At the new terminal, the tracks were at the level of, and parallel with Osborne Street, at the top of the hill.

The tracks and platforms were supported on high foundations over the lower land to the south.

- The new Windsor Street Station was just two blocks north, and many feet higher than rival Grand Trunk Railway's new Bonaventure Station.

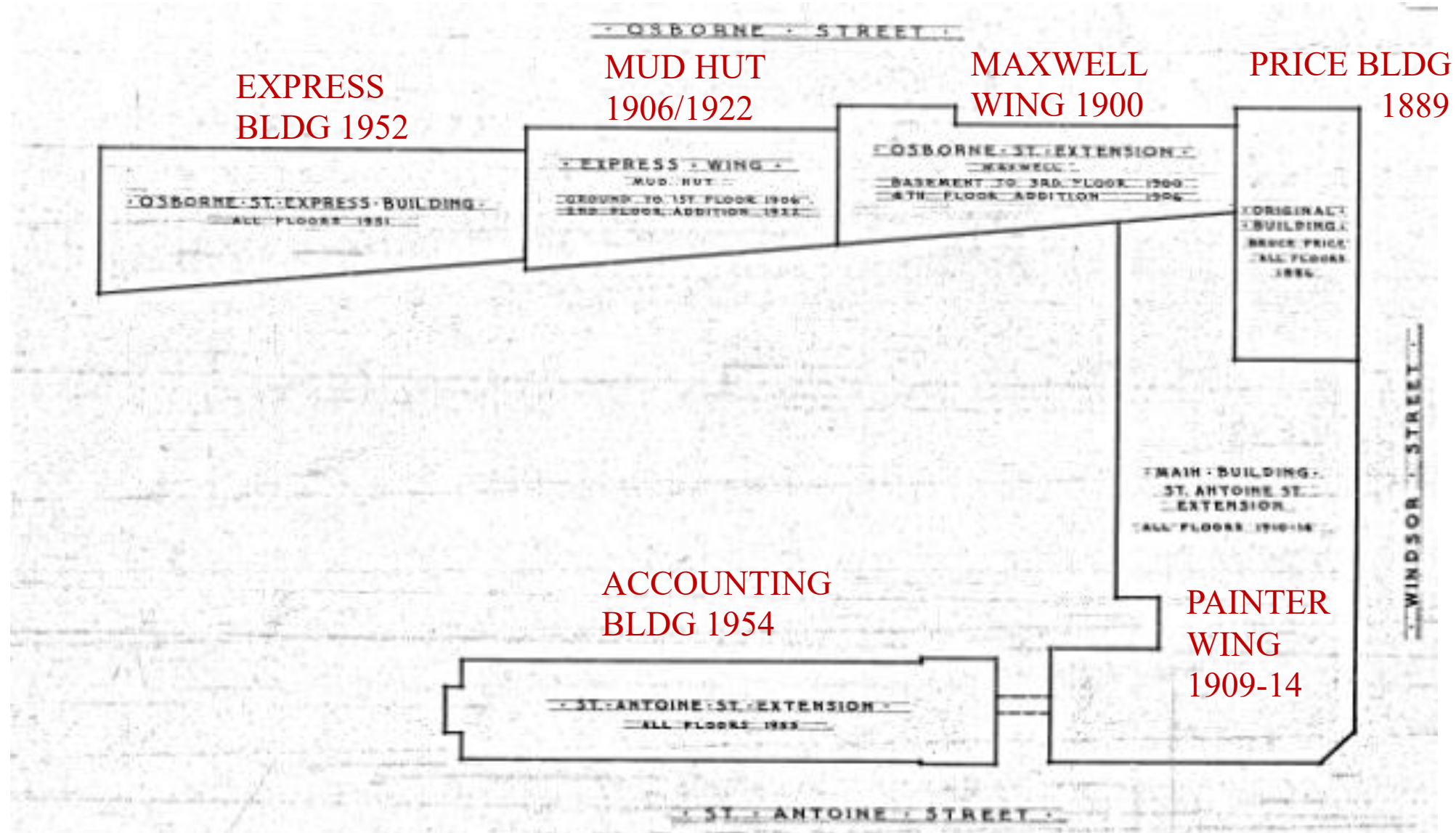
Bonaventure



Windsor



# Buildings forming the station complex

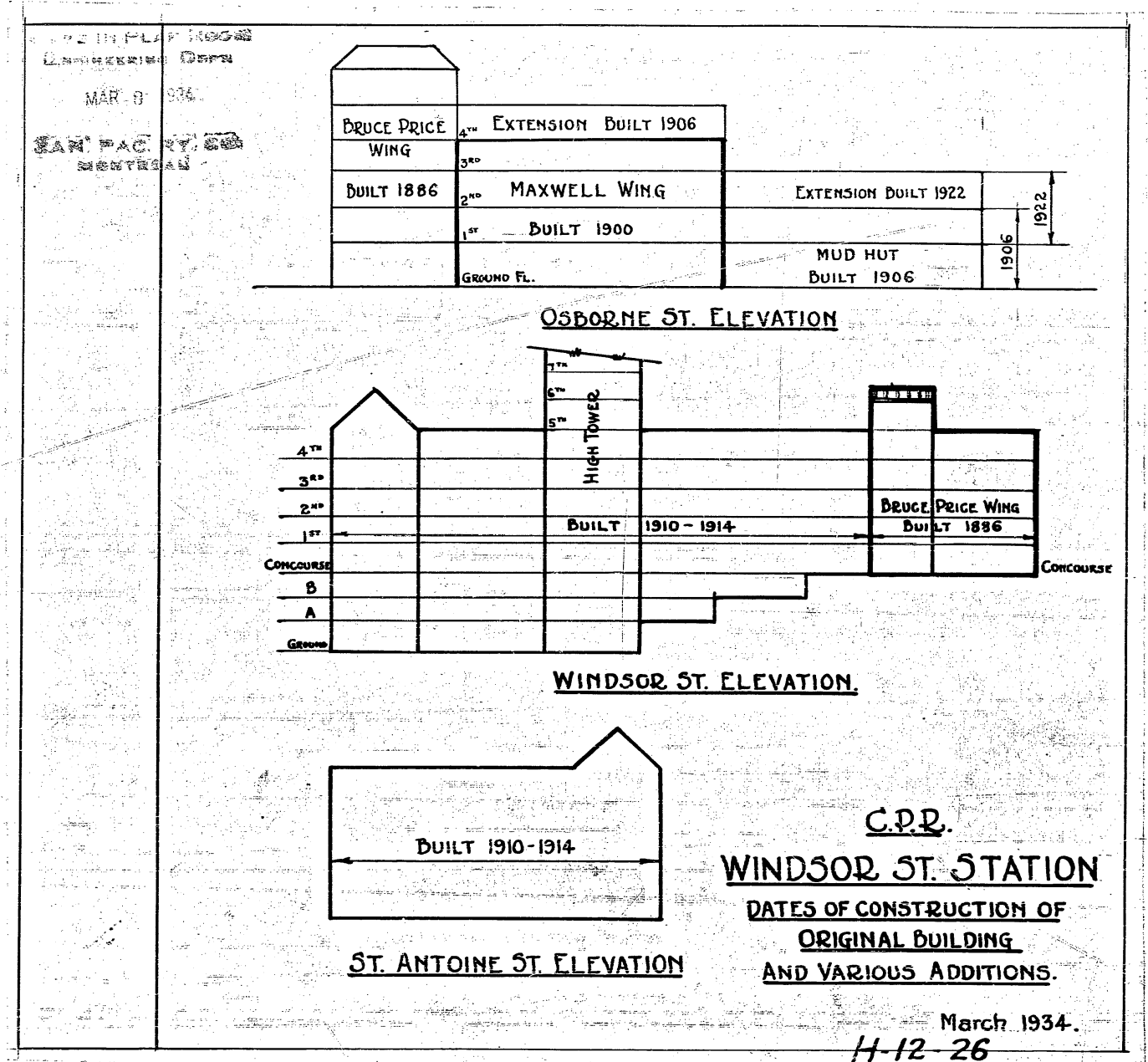


# Floor designations

The Concourse is on C-floor.  
Below are B, A and Ground  
(at St Antoine).

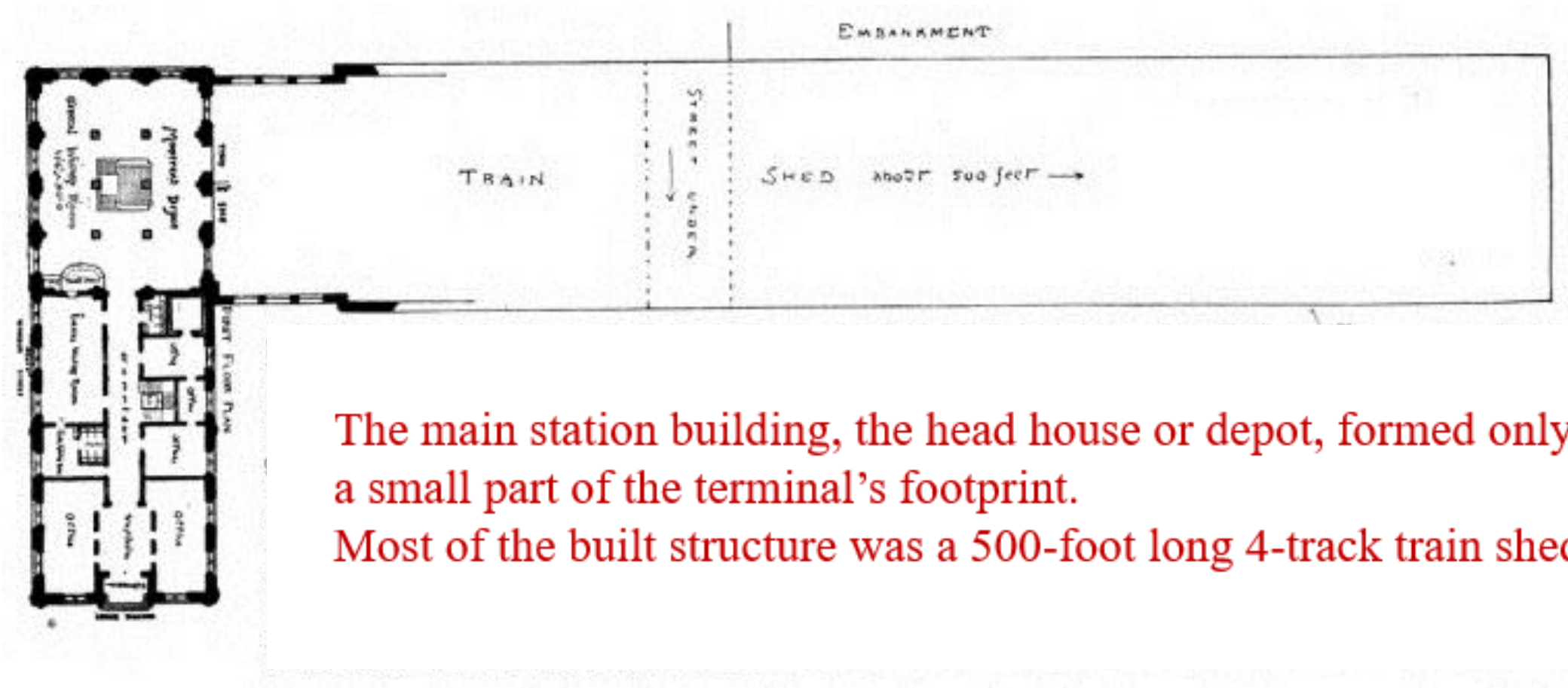
Above C are floors 1 to 11.

For easy reference, the row of  
wide arched windows around  
the building is on the second  
floor.





# The initial station layout



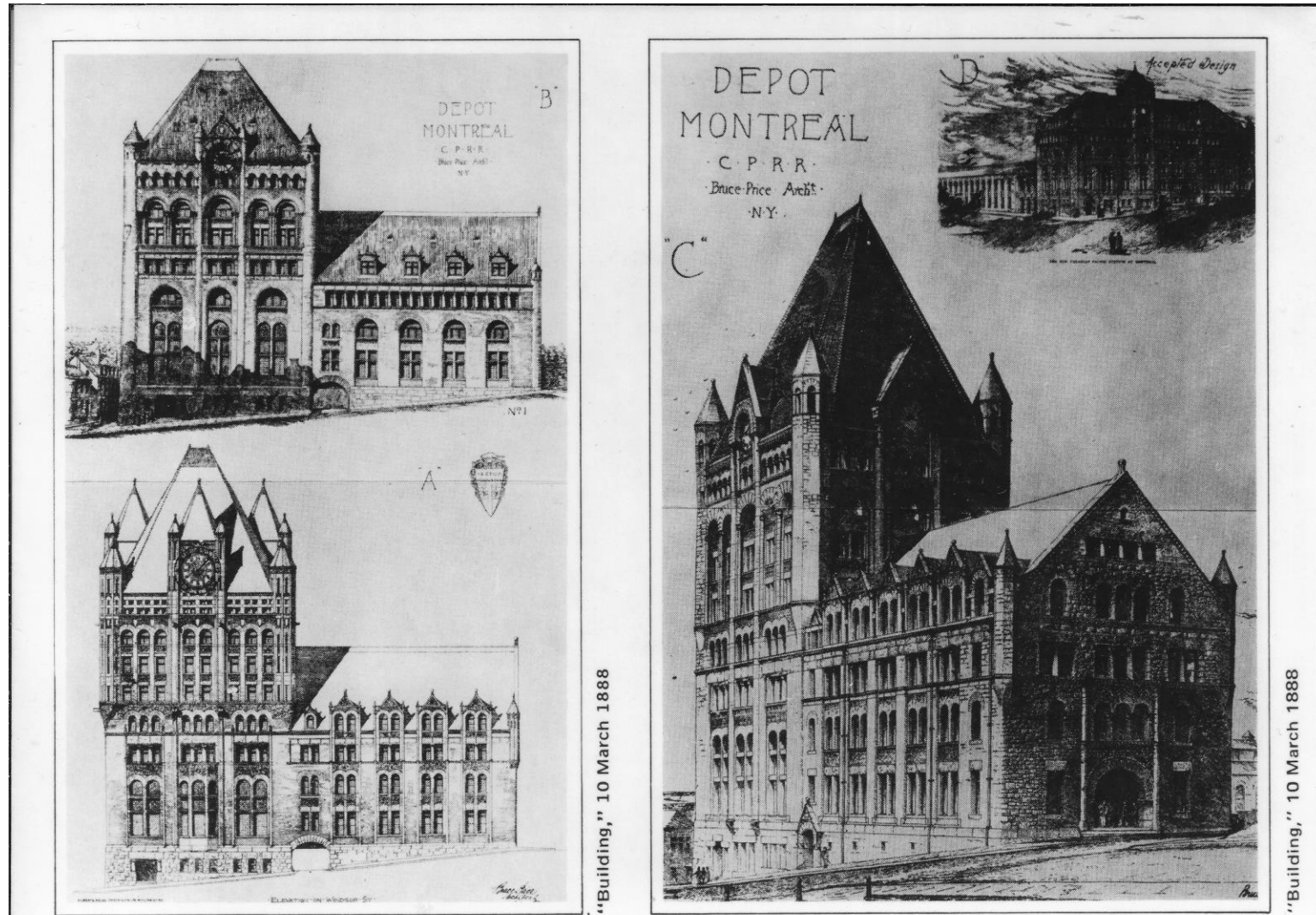
The main station building, the head house or depot, formed only a small part of the terminal's footprint.  
Most of the built structure was a 500-foot long 4-track train shed.

# The Bruce Price station 1889

New York architect  
Bruce Price designed the  
new building in the  
Romanesque style.

His first 2 designs used  
brick and terracotta.

CP's president William  
Van Horne insisted on  
grey limestone to blend  
with the surrounding  
houses.





The chosen design had a smaller tower.

The building was of masonry construction with load-bearing interior and exterior walls.

The floors were reinforced by steel channels between the walls.





The taller south end  
balances the lower  
basement.

Arches on the second  
and third floors unify  
north and south ends.

They were contained  
in groups of three 19-  
foot bays, each with  
a central dormer.



The train shed extended west, behind the houses on Osborne Street to the right.

Despite the intent for the station to blend with the surroundings, it clearly marked a change to the neighbourhood.





The north wall of the original train shed is visible in this 1899 photo taken after the houses on Osborne Street were removed to allow construction of the Maxwell wing.

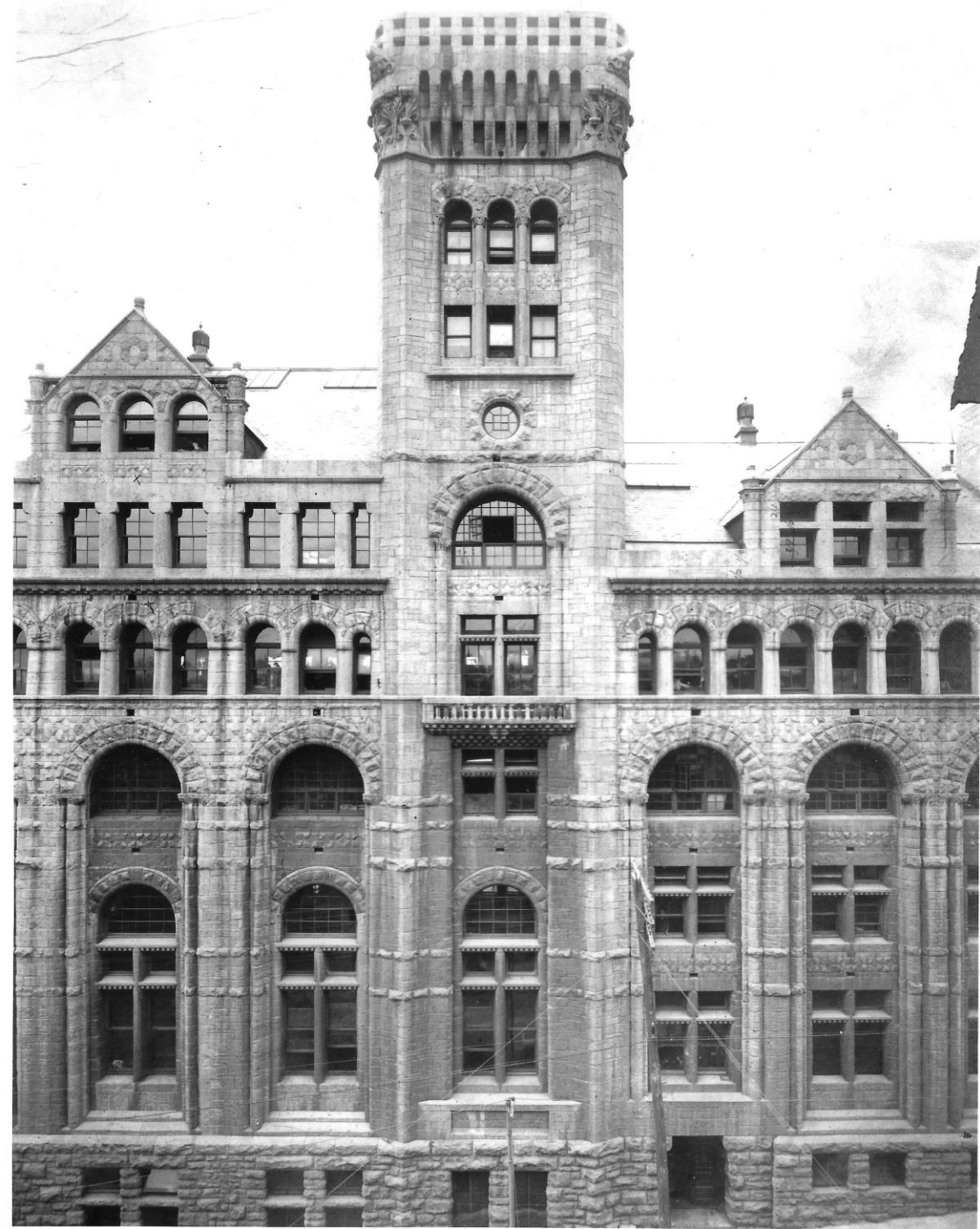
Saint George's Anglican Church faces the station's north front.



The south end of Price's station was one floor higher than the rest of the building.

The lower levels of Price's tower blend in with the rest of the façade, while the upper levels contrast more sharply with them.

The net effect is to distract attention from the differences between two sections of the façade facing Windsor Street.





The lower row of wide arches light the two-story main waiting room, extending under the tower.

The south wall of the trainshed and the elevated yard tracks are visible next to Donegani Street, at left.



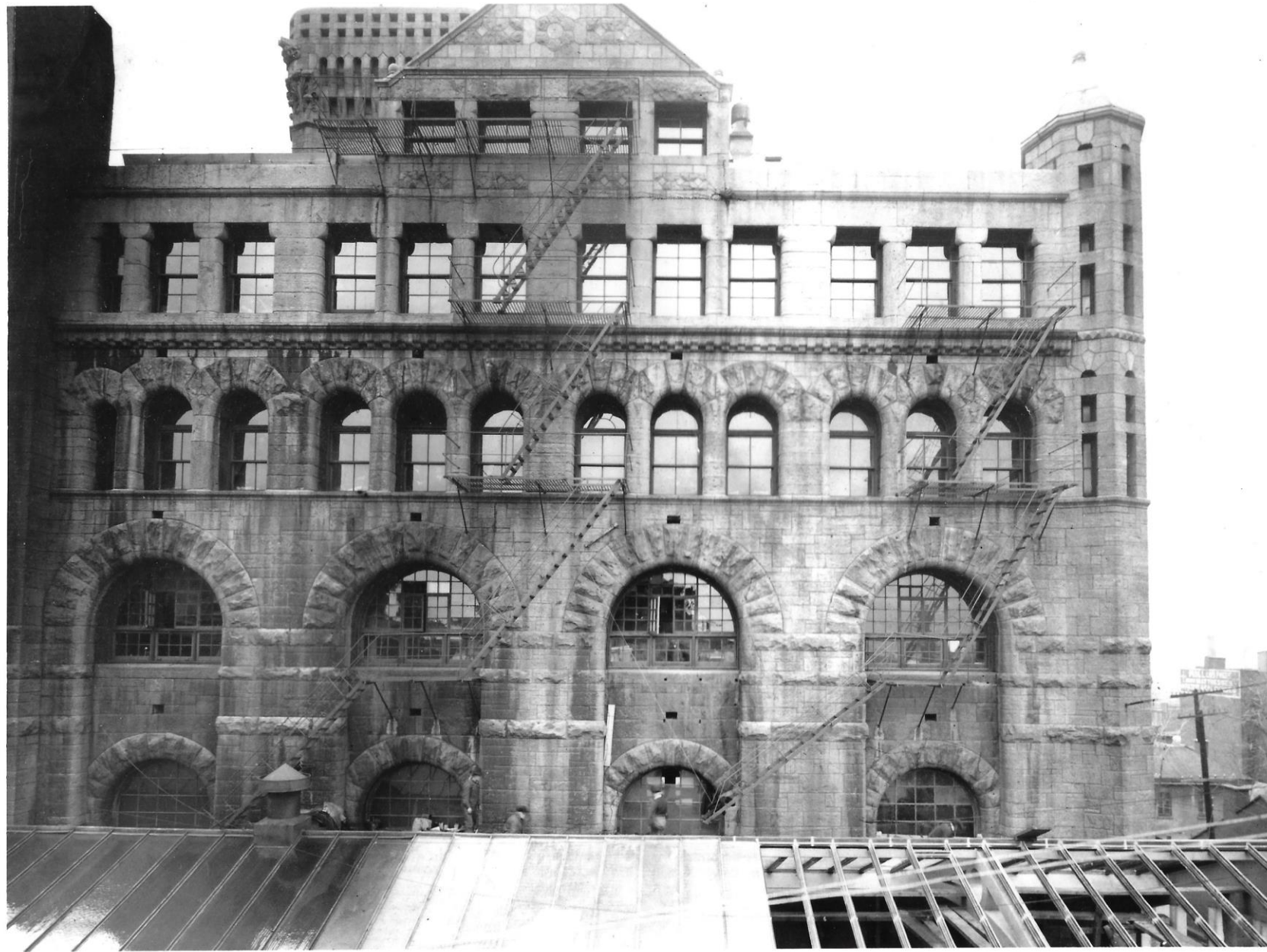


The south façade faced an alley between a printing plant and the backs of houses on Windsor Street.



The south end  
of the station's  
west side had  
two spindly  
fire escapes.

The tower did  
not extend to  
the west side.





The basement story  
was finished in  
rougher stone.

A small “midway”  
stood between the  
station building and  
train shed.

Passengers used the  
upper level. The  
lower was for  
baggage.



On March 17, 1909  
a train ran out of  
control into the  
trainshed, killing  
several people and  
destroying the  
midway wall and  
floor.



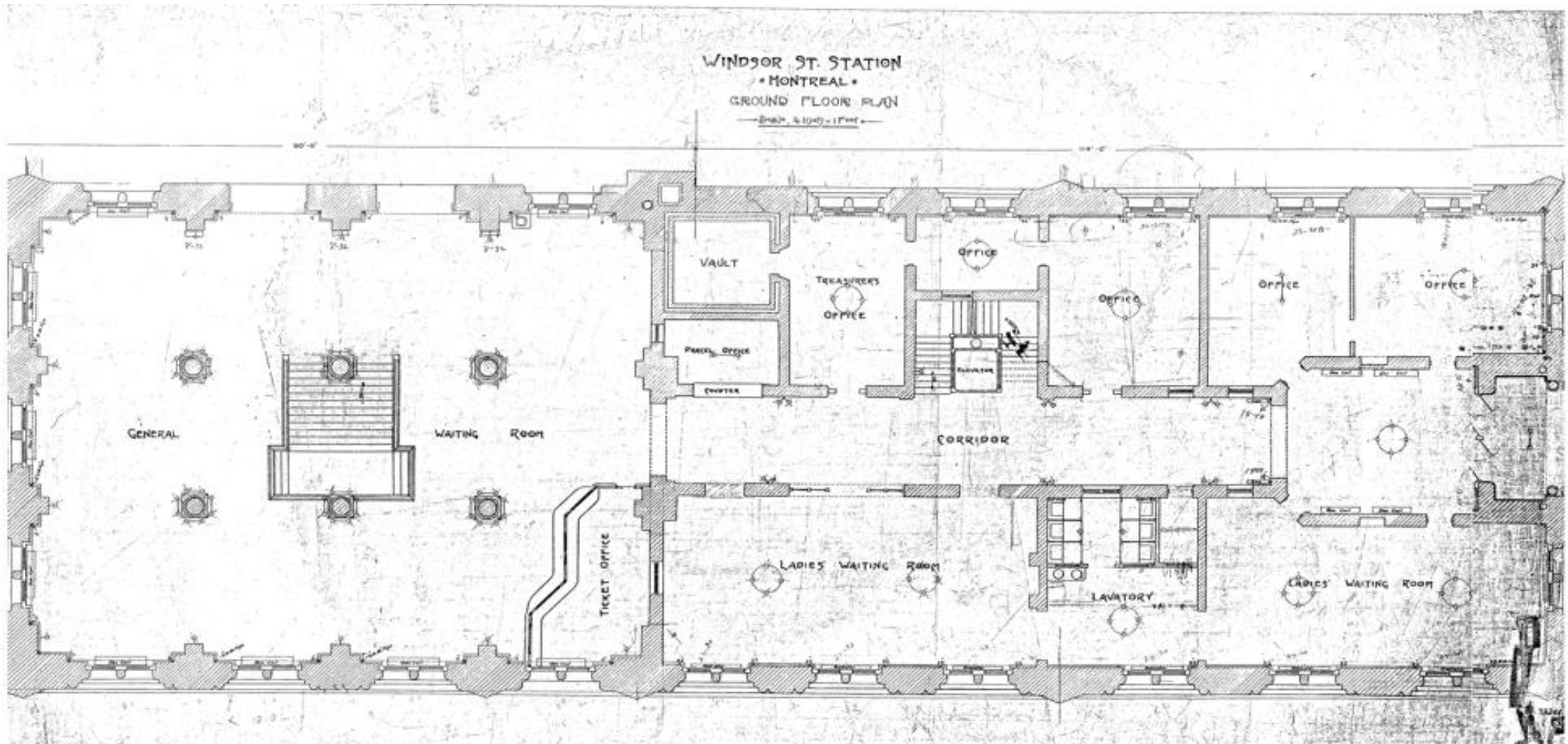
The midway was reconstructed with a glass roof and wall, even though total reconstruction of the station was to commence only months later.





The Price building main floor layout shows the main entrance facing Osborne Street to the right.

The central corridor led to the main waiting room, adjacent to the tracks.



Price's main waiting room was two stories high. An additional floor was placed through this space in 1961. Many of these arches are still in place above the modern dropped ceiling.

This view is toward the southeast.

The stairway leads to the station's southern entrance.



Price main waiting room looking northeast. Corridor to Osborne St. is at left centre.



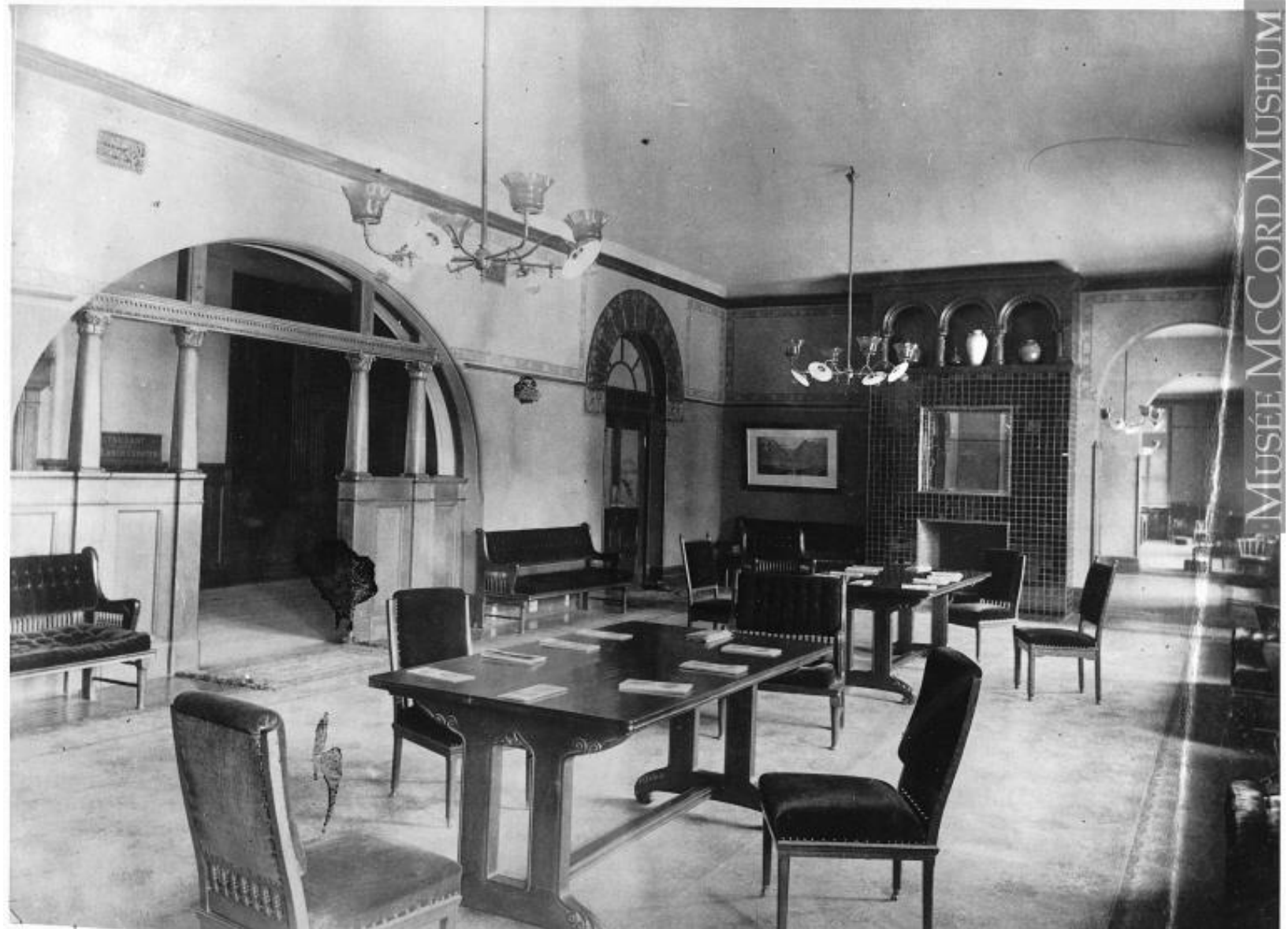
Price main waiting room looking southwest. Doors to train shed are visible through the arches.





The original women's waiting room was decorated by Edward Colonna, whose design work for CP included sleeping cars.

This view looks to the north.



South wall of the original trainshed and basement in December 1909.





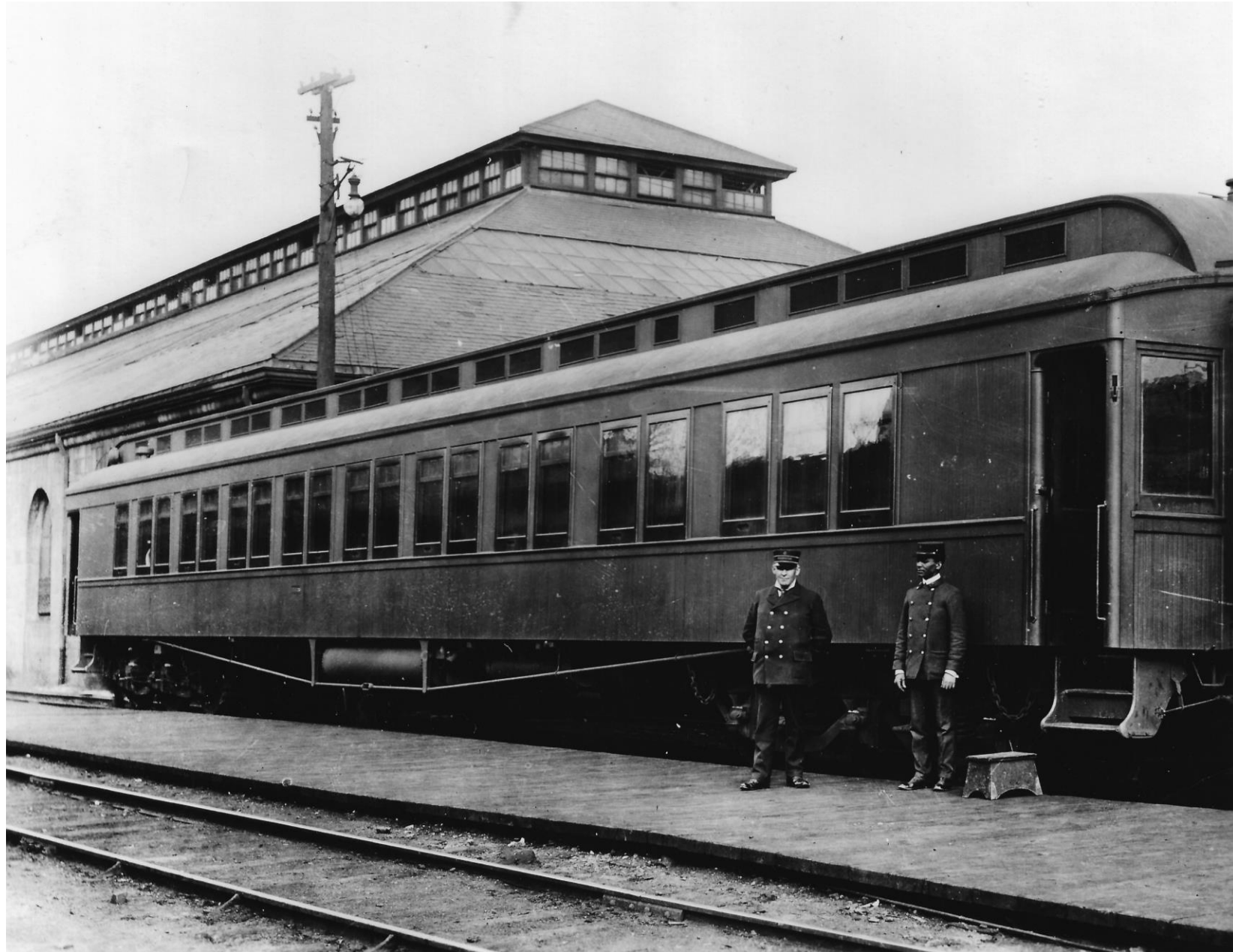
1911 view of original  
trainshed's west end.

Mud Hut and Maxwell  
wing are to left.

Painter wing is under  
construction in the  
background.



Wooden passenger car  
on track 3 next to west  
end of the original  
trainshed.





Interior of  
original train  
shed.

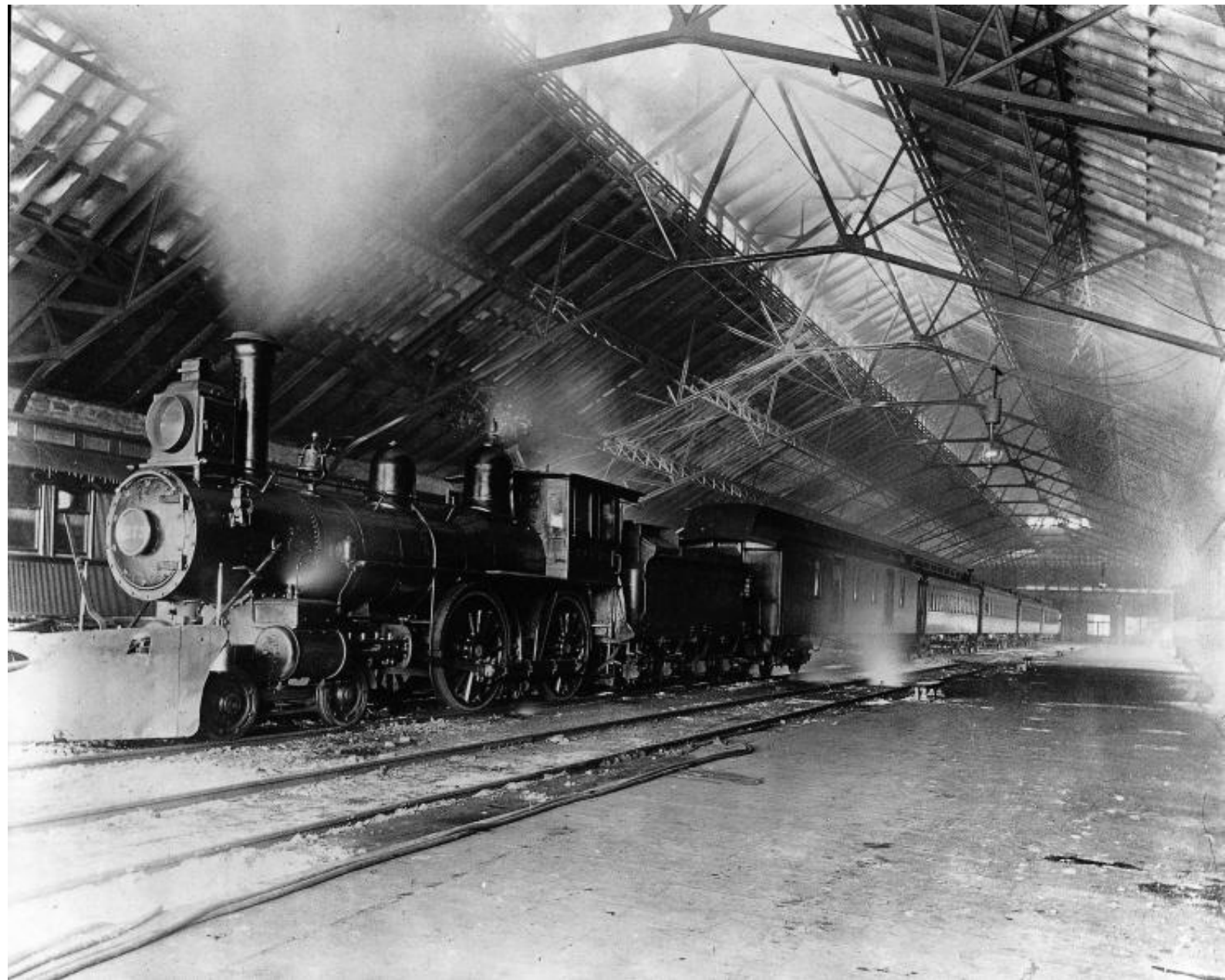
Said to be the  
first departure  
of the “Imperial  
Limited.”







Trainshed interior on  
a cold winter day,  
with snow on the  
skylights.



Foundation of the original  
trainshed after construction  
of the Bush trainshed on its  
site.

Presence of water on the  
floor was all too common  
in later years.





# The Maxwell Wing 1900

A large expansion of Windsor Station west along Osborne was constructed in 1900 to plans by Montreal architect Edward Maxwell.

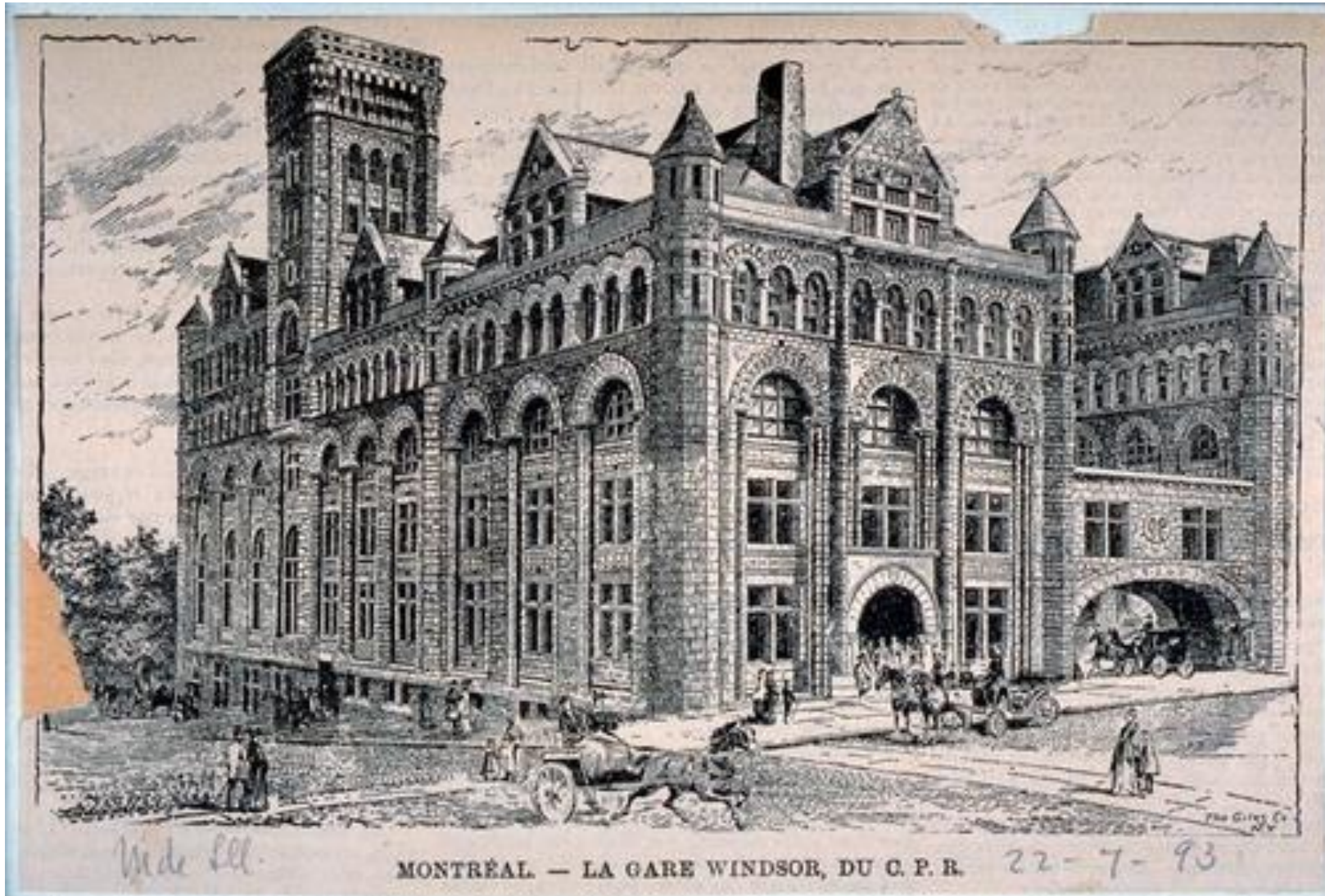
In contrast to Price, Maxwell's building was built on a steel skeleton.

The new wing copied exterior features of the Price building with some changes to fit the different circumstances of the site.

Notably, the level grade of Osborne Street lent itself to a symmetrical layout that would not have been feasible on the Windsor Street hill.

Maxwell's design included the north façade of the Price building as part of an integrated whole.

Expansion of Windsor Station was already being contemplated when it was only 4 years old. The carriageway would have accessed the tracks.





In 1899, architect Edward Maxwell illustrated a short extension to the west (right). A full height top story would have replaced the dormers, giving the building more of a square appearance.



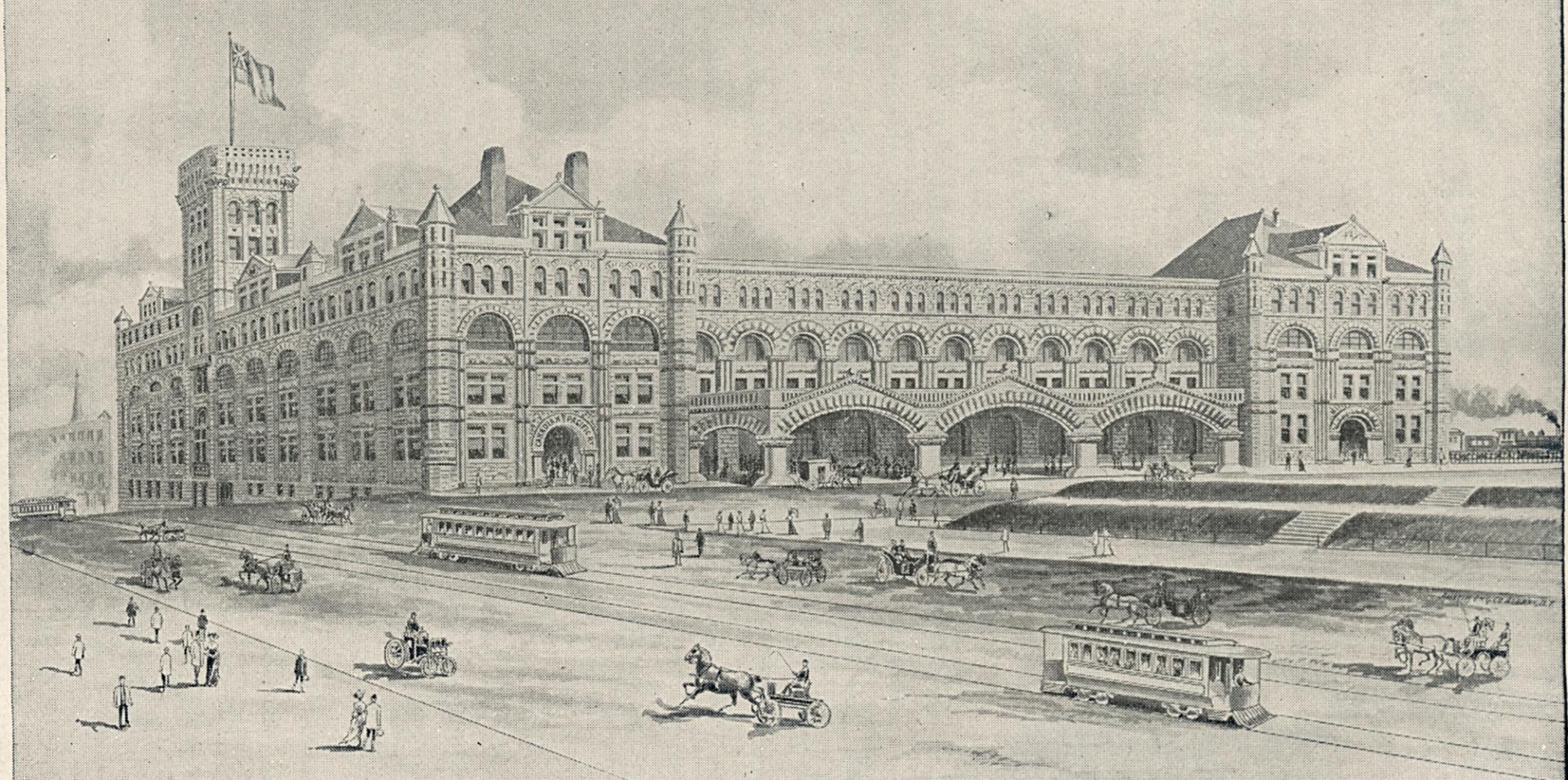


Next, Maxwell used the same treatment on a longer extension to the west. His designs added segmented (flattened) arches to the building. The Price building was integrated into a symmetrical front.





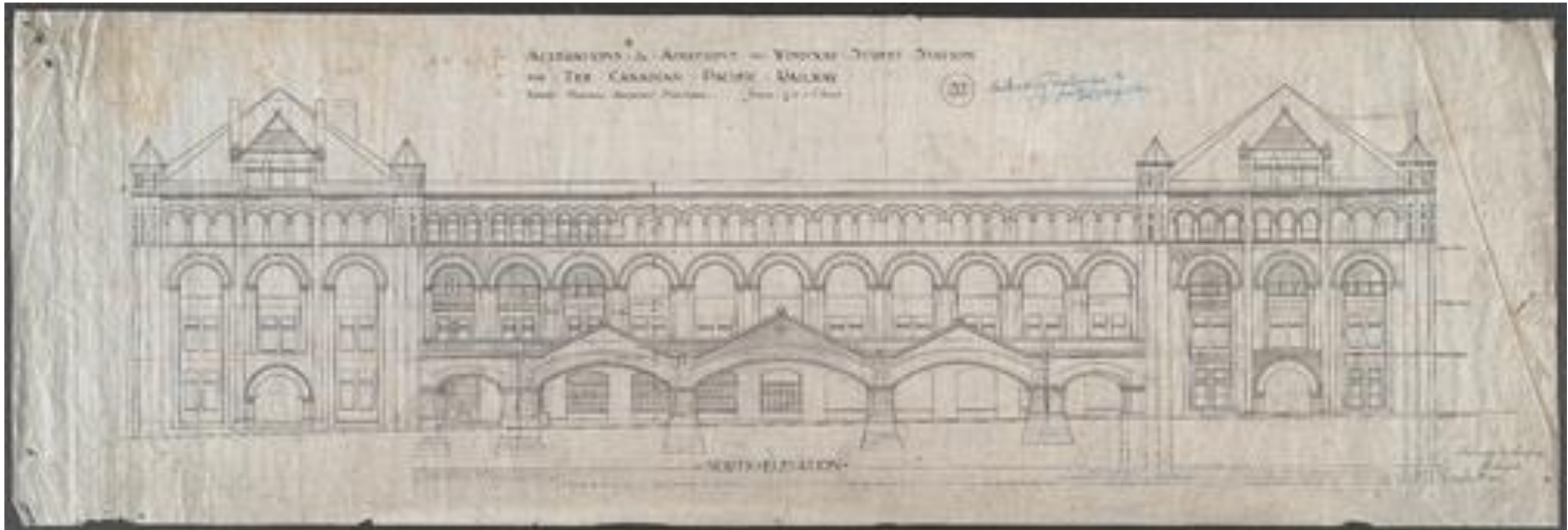
The chosen design deferred the fourth story except at the west end, on the projecting façade built to match the Price building's north front. The enlarged building provided space for growing rail traffic and office staff.





The main portion of Maxwell's wing had openings matching those on the Price building, but more closely and evenly spaced.

A covered carriageway allowed passenger to enter and leave vehicles. The eastern arch provided direct pedestrians access to and from trains.



Diagrams show arrangement of Windsor Station from 1889 to 1900, right, and from 1900 to 1910, left. In the latter year, construction was commenced on major extensions and rearrangement, as shown at page 39.

**1900**

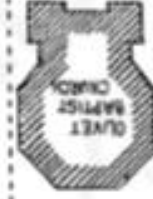
MOUNTAIN ST



Comparison of 1889 and 1900 station facilities.

**1889**

MOUNTAIN ST



1889 Station

WINDSOR ST

DONEGAN ST

OSBORNE ST

BISSON ST

DONEGAN ST

OSBORNE ST

WINDSOR ST

Windsor Station

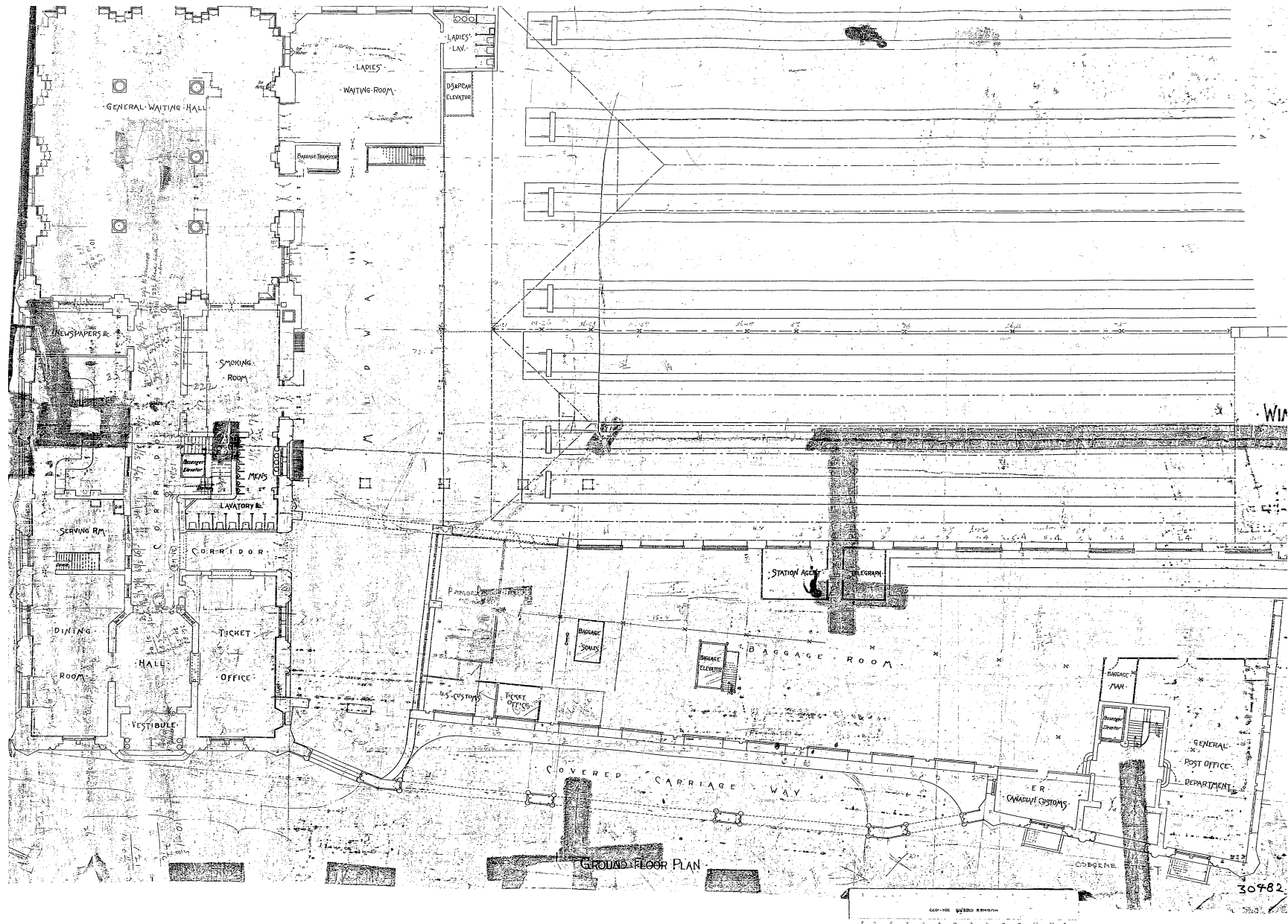




Main floor of the Maxwell wing showing the midway extended to Osborne Street.

Three new tracks were built between the Maxwell wing and the original Price-era trainshed.

Many functions in the Price building were relocated.



Maxwell wing as  
completed 1900  
without a full fourth  
floor.

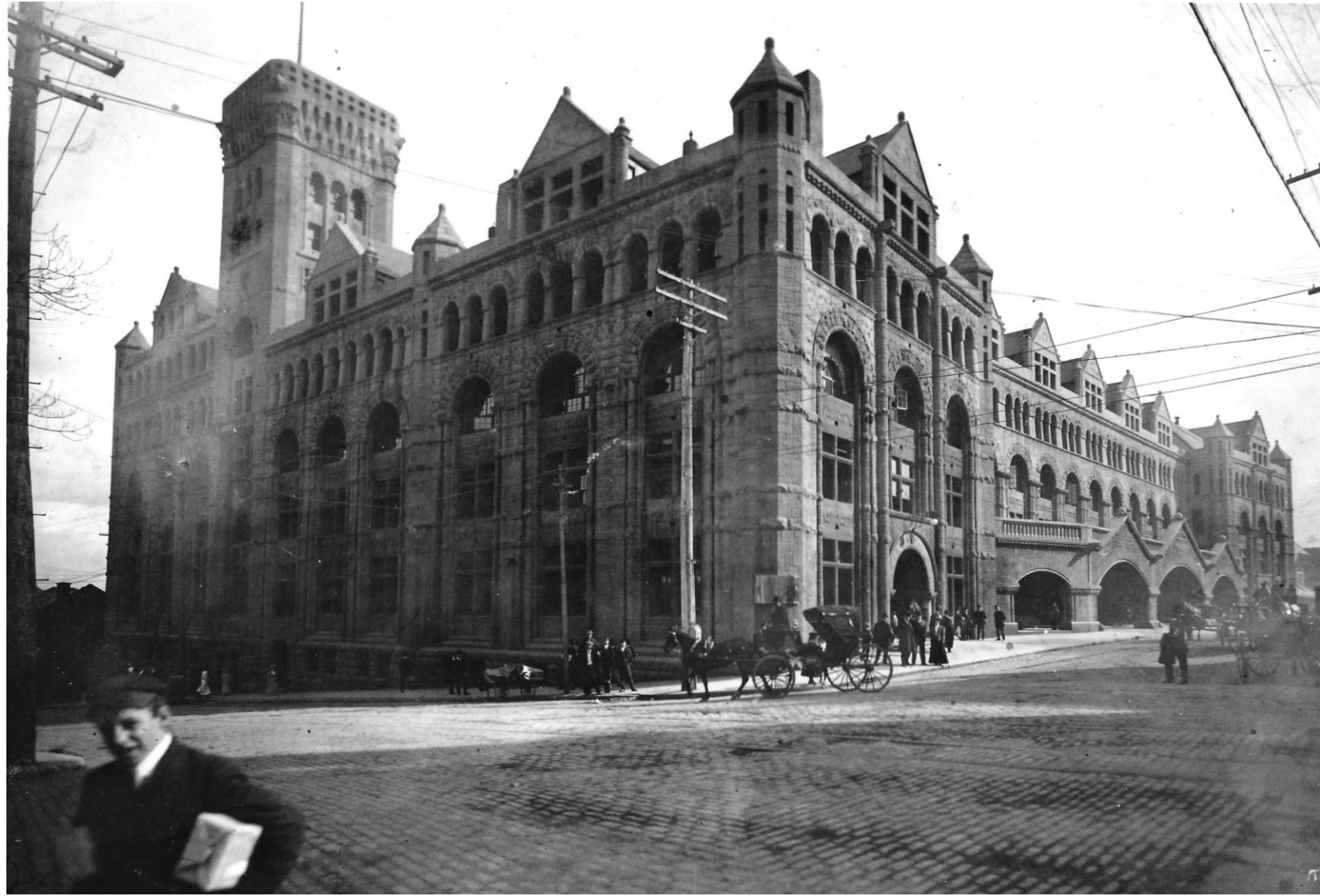
The Price building's  
front was not altered  
but some internal  
changes were made.





In 1906, under CP's chief architect Walter Painter, the Maxwell wing received a full fourth floor.

It featured 5 dormers over 11 bays, or one over every second bay.



The Maxwell wing's west end was only visible for 6 years before being covered for 91 years by a further extension.

It was restored to its present appearance in 1997.

The square opening in the lower right allowed rail cars to enter for handling of mail and express.





The Maxwell wing  
in the 1930s with the  
carriageway used for  
parking.

This led to partial  
enclosure of the  
carriageway and  
addition of a  
suspended marquee.



The Maxwell wing in  
the 1970s showing the  
carriageway partly  
filled with offices.

A suspended marquee  
protected the sidewalk  
but hid details of the  
façade.





# The Mud Hut 1900 & 1922

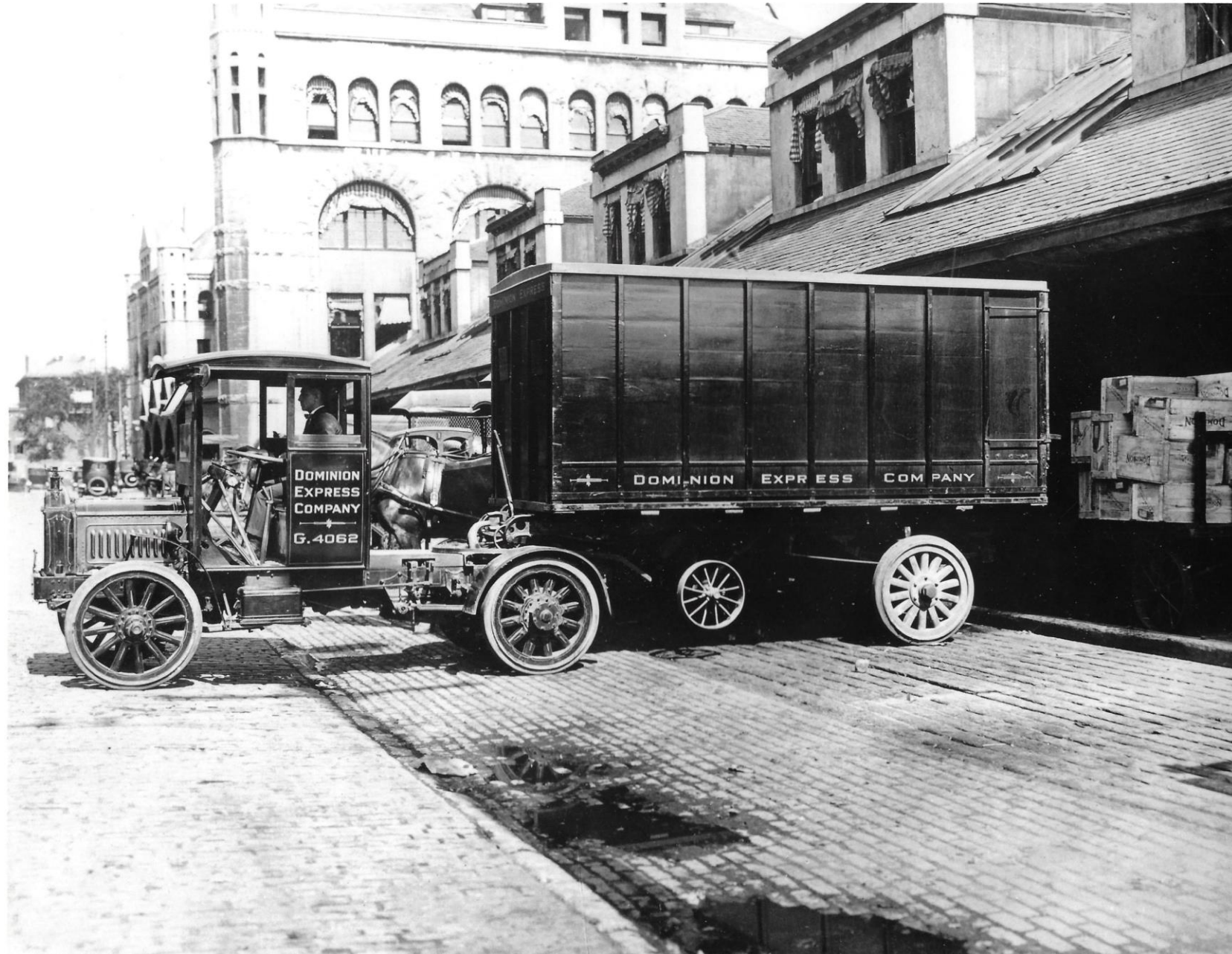
Continued growth of baggage, express and mail traffic prompted construction of a utilitarian structure for this business west of the Maxwell wing.

Originally named for CP's subsidiary, the Dominion Express Company, the building's plain design and stucco cladding led to its enduring name of the "Mud Hut."

In practice, the spaces devoted to baggage, express and mail were adjusted as needed between the Maxwell wing, Mud Hut and eventually yet a third building.

The Mud Hut provided trucking space that was absent at the Maxwell wing. Cobblestones gave traction to horses in the early years.

The roof had 5 dormers alternating over 11 bays, similar to the top story built on the Maxwell wing the same year.





In 1922 the upper half-story of the Mud Hut was demolished and 2 full stories were constructed.

The Painter wing and 1913 trainshed are seen beyond.



The rebuilt Mud Hut bore a variation of the window patterns on the main station buildings.

The west façade would be covered by yet another wing in 1952.

The Mud Hut was demolished in 1997.





# The Painter Wing 1909-1914

The booming Canadian economy of the early 1900s led to steady increases in passenger and express traffic and in CP's staff.

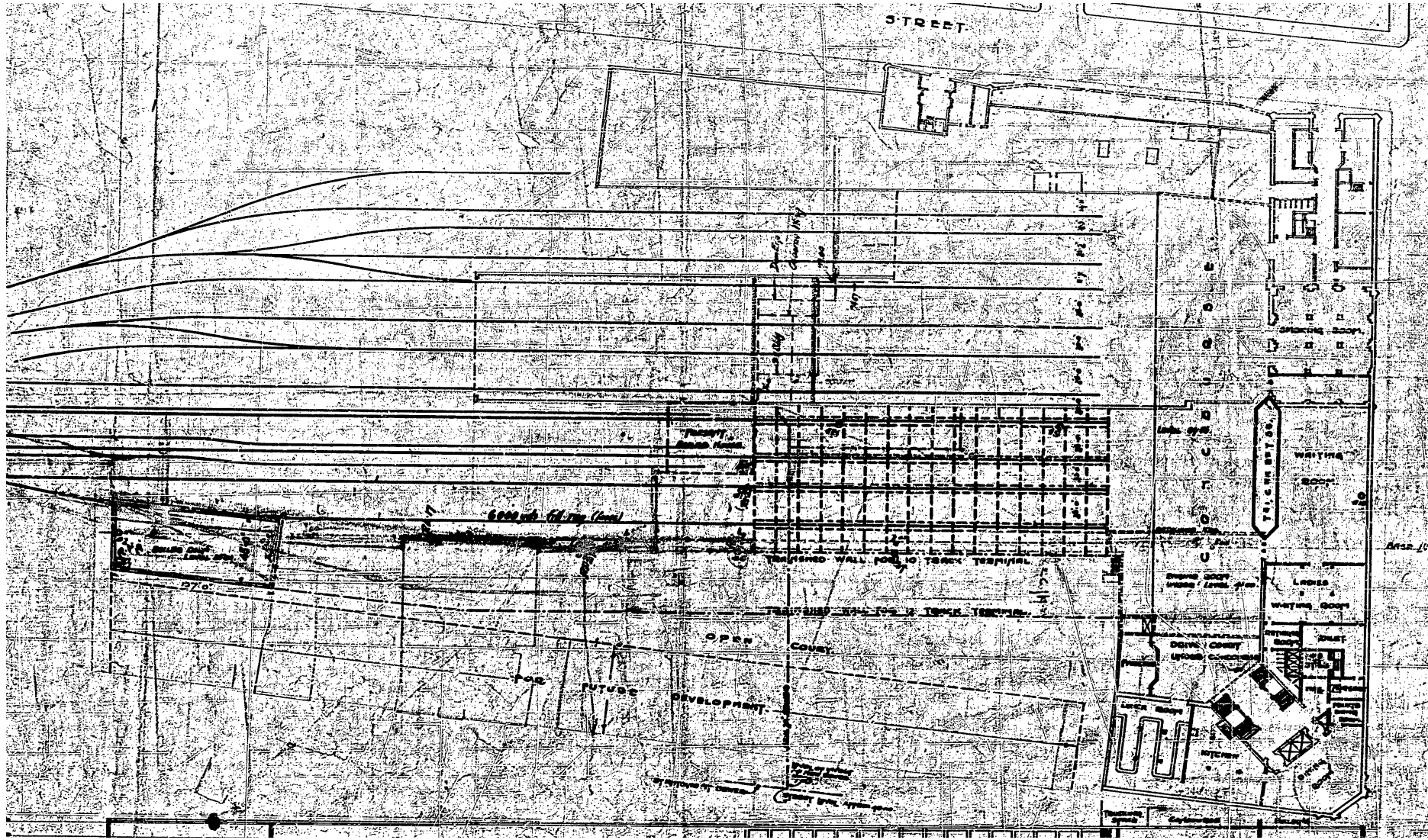
Further expansion of Windsor Station was necessary to accommodate this growth.

Walter Painter, CP's chief architect since 1906, initiated a massive expansion of Windsor Station's traffic and office facilities.

In 1910, after construction was underway, Francis Ellingwood of New York was hired to manage construction and retrofit the existing station. A number of changes were considered.

The initial concept plan for what became known as the Painter wing showed few changes to the existing station.

The new wing  
would have:  
4 new tracks  
wide concourse  
waiting rooms  
restaurants  
It extended  
south to St  
Antoine Street.





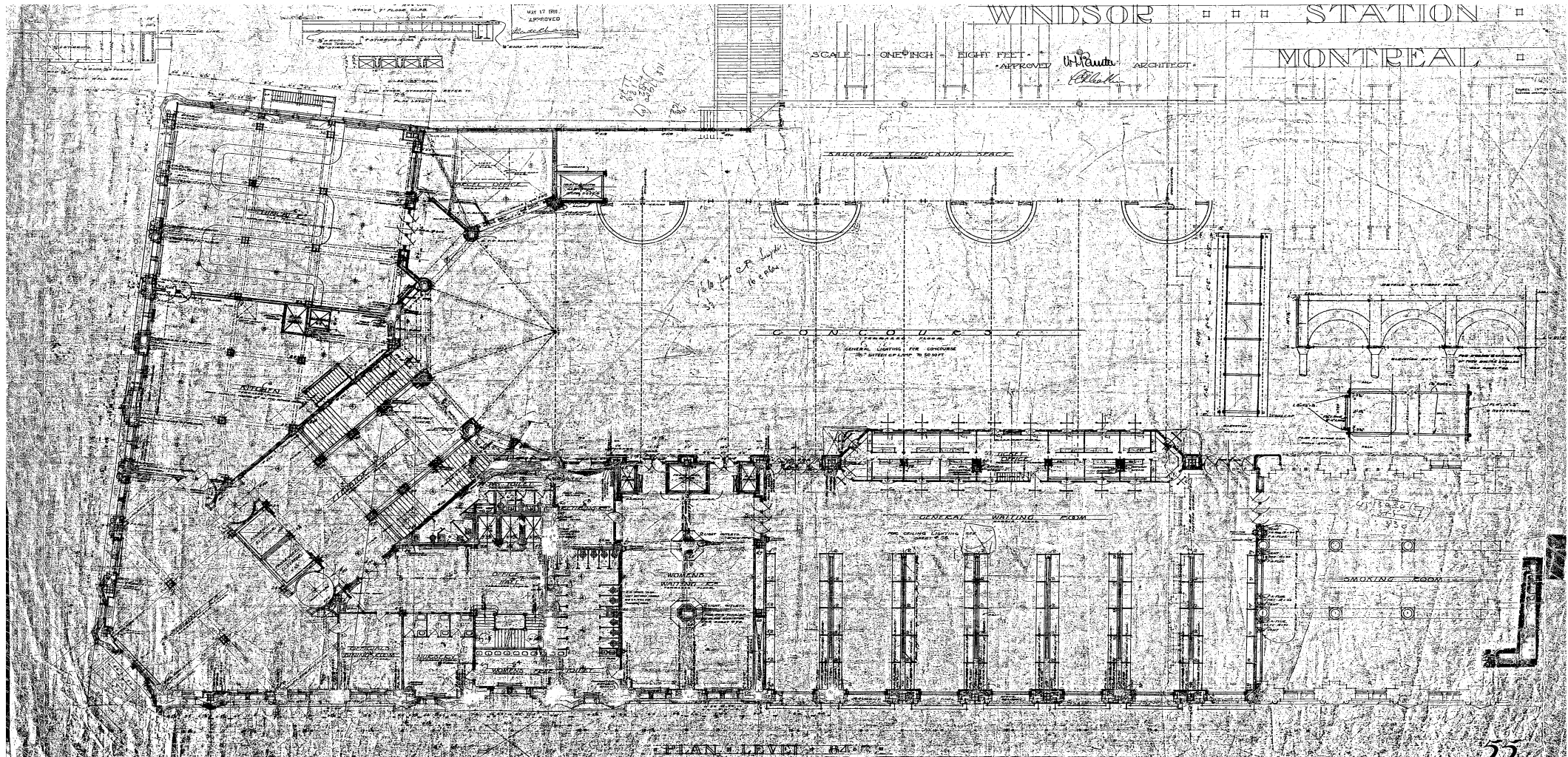
Several sources repeat an undocumented claim that the Painter wing was largely designed by John William Hurrell Watts and Lawrence Fennings Taylor, or alternatively by the purported architectural firm of Taylor, Watts & Painter.

The names of Taylor and Watts do not appear on plans of the Painter wing, nor in contemporary published accounts of the Windsor Station expansion. Taylor and Watts worked for Public Works in Ottawa but did not share an architectural practice.

The confusion may have arisen from the similarity of Watts' initials to those of CP designer John Wilson Wood, who drew some of the Windsor Station plans.

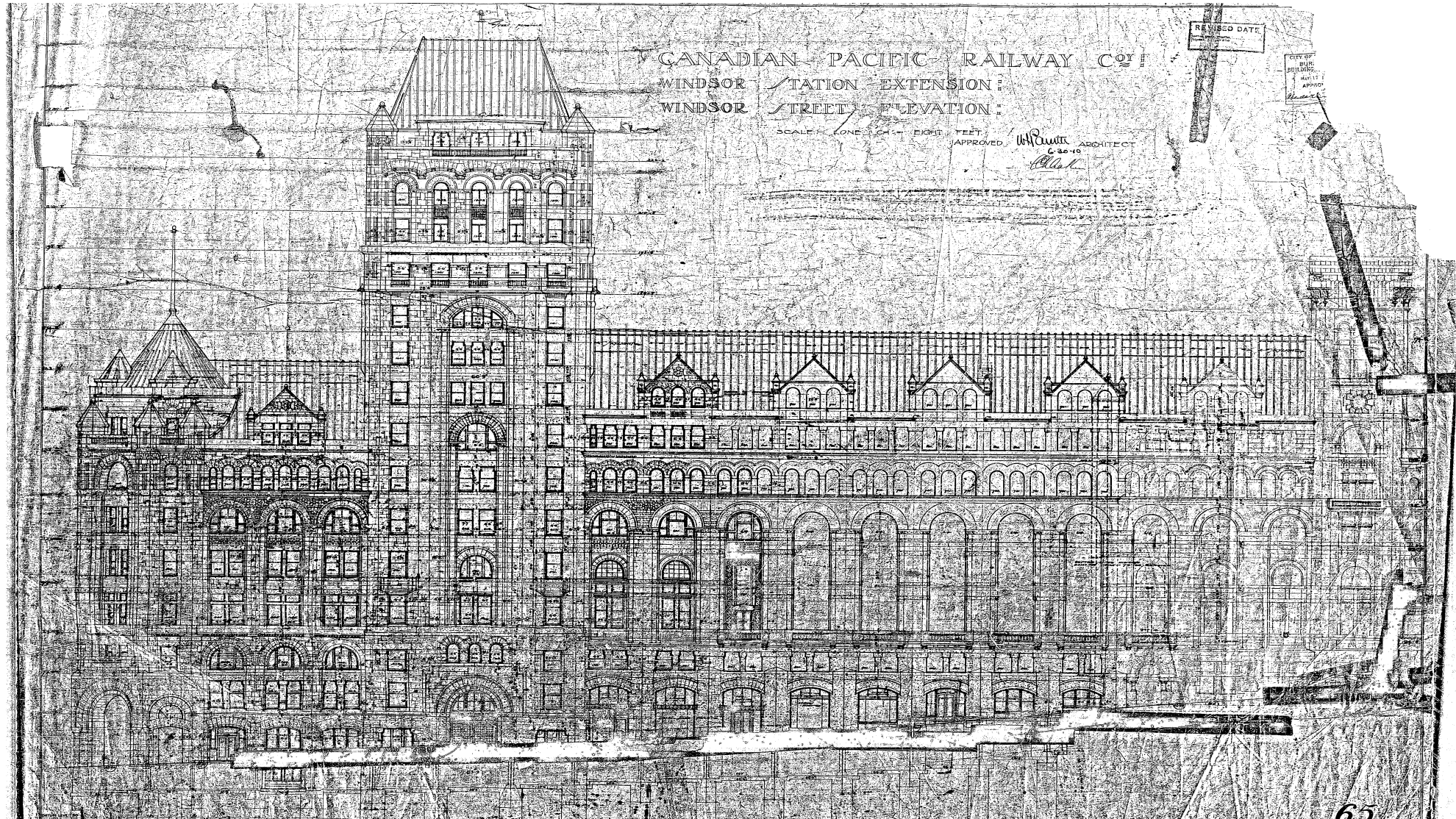
The proposed main floor plan of the Painter wing, 1910.

Many details would be changed during construction.



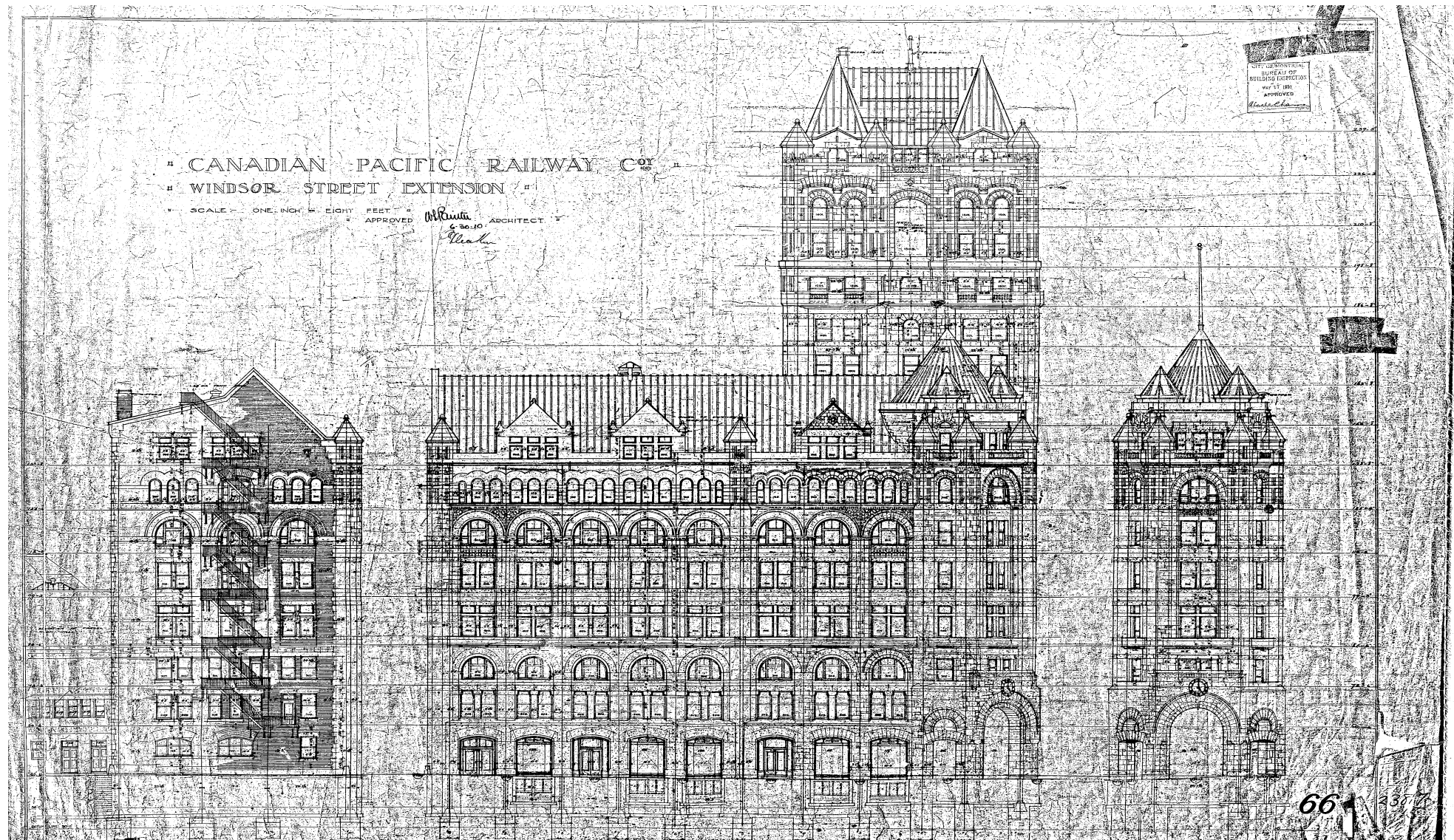


The Painter wing east elevation showing 5 dormers over 11 bays.



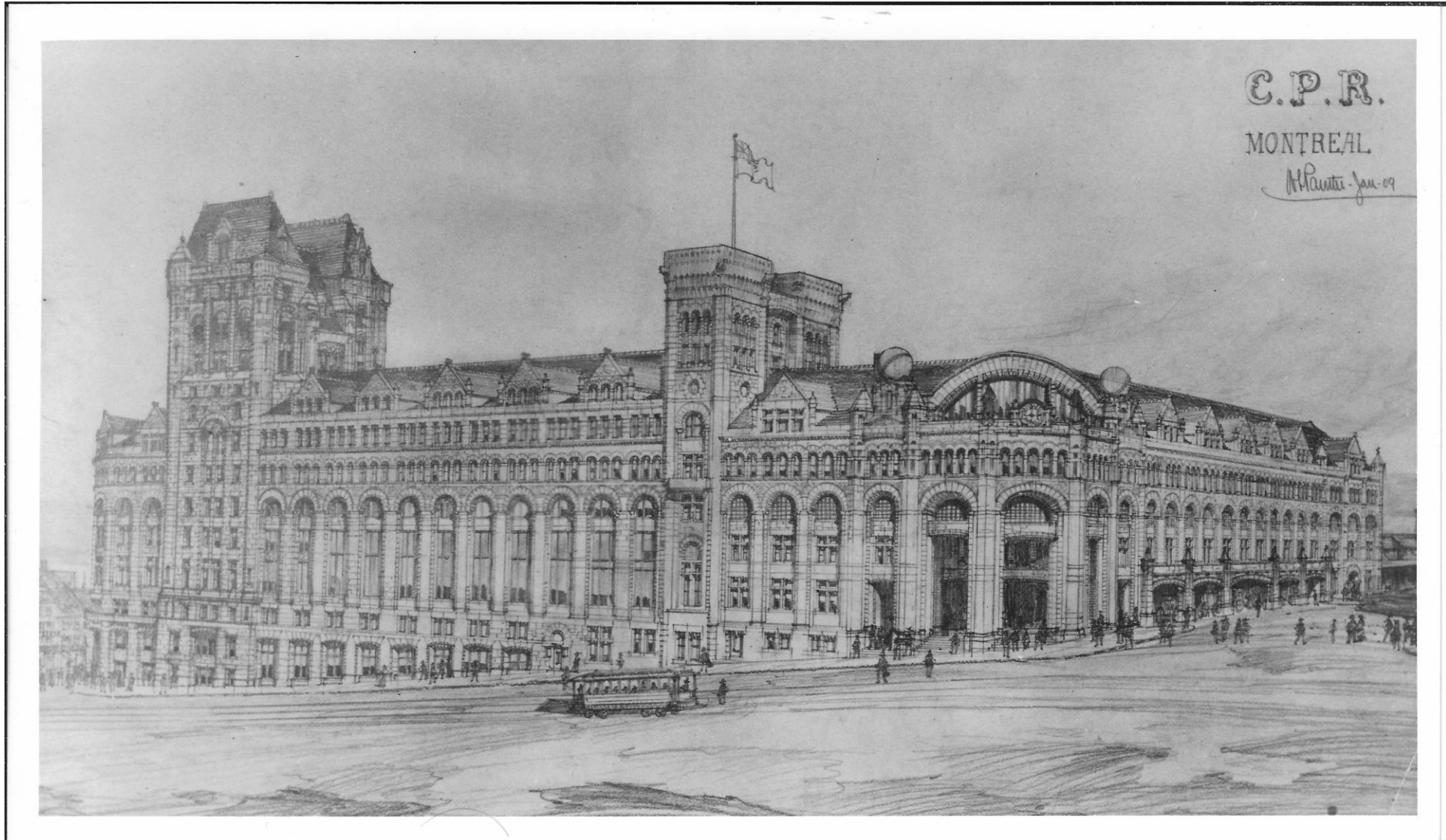


# The south end of the Painter wing.



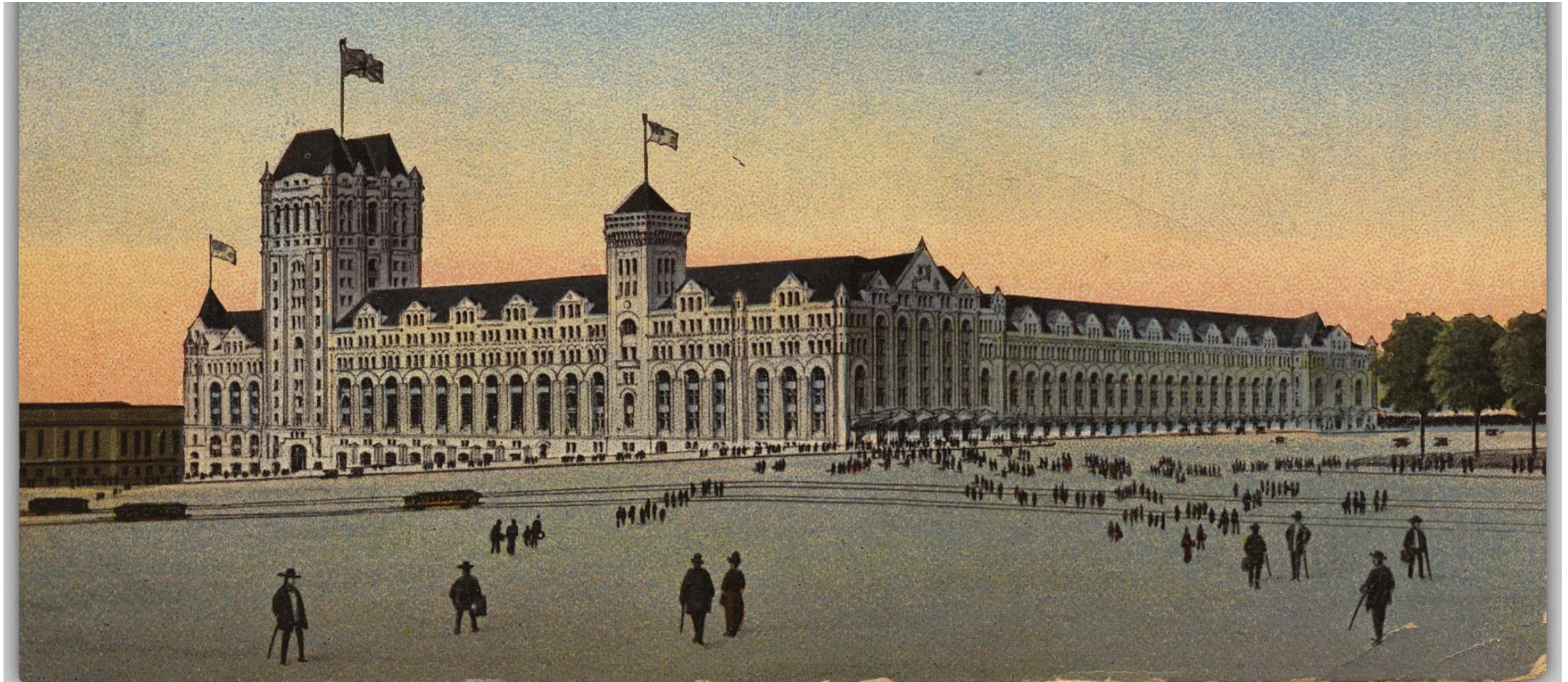


One proposal included a rounded northeast corner facing Windsor and Osborne Streets, and an enlargement of Price's tower.



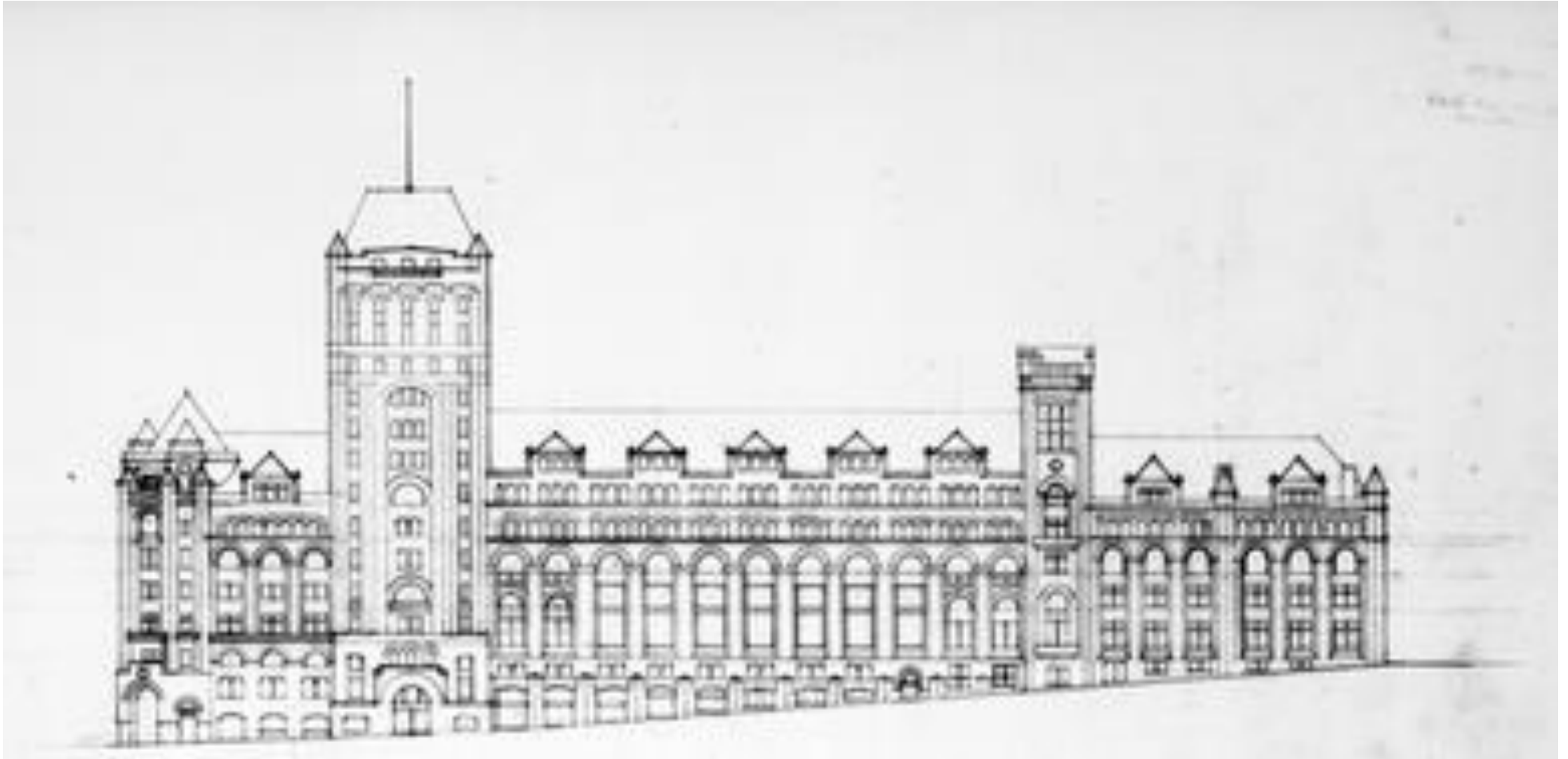


Detailed plans were prepared to raise the northeast corner; provide separate entrances for offices, waiting room and concourse; and extend the Maxwell wing farther west along Osborne Street. Some internal modifications were carried out, but the exterior was unchanged.

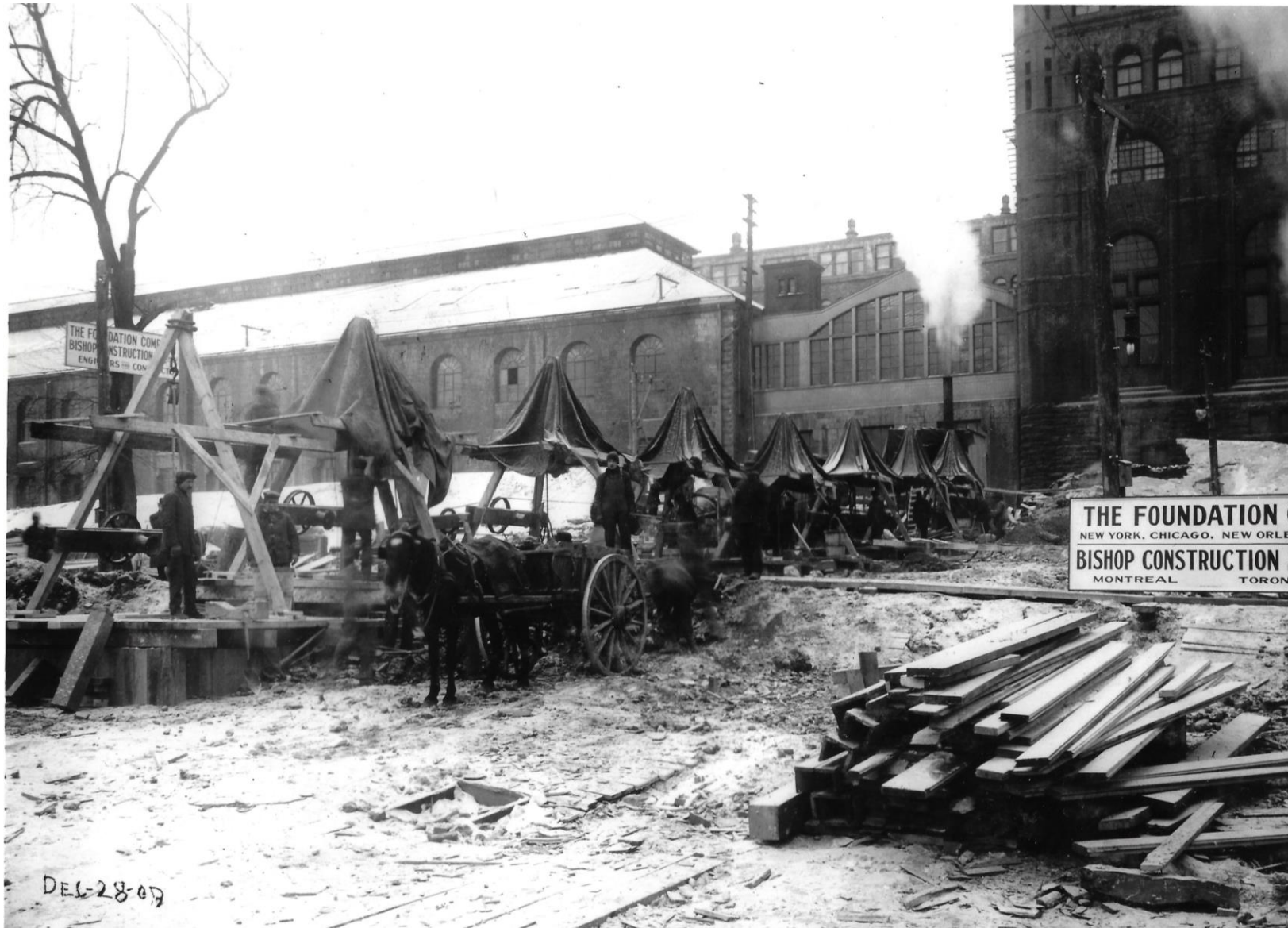




Windsor Station full east elevation. Central section between the towers is one story higher than the end sections.



Construction of the Painter wing foundation was already underway on December 28, 1909. View is north to the Price building and trainshed.





View north from St Antoine Street showing steel framing and the concrete foundations of the new tracks and trainshed (left).

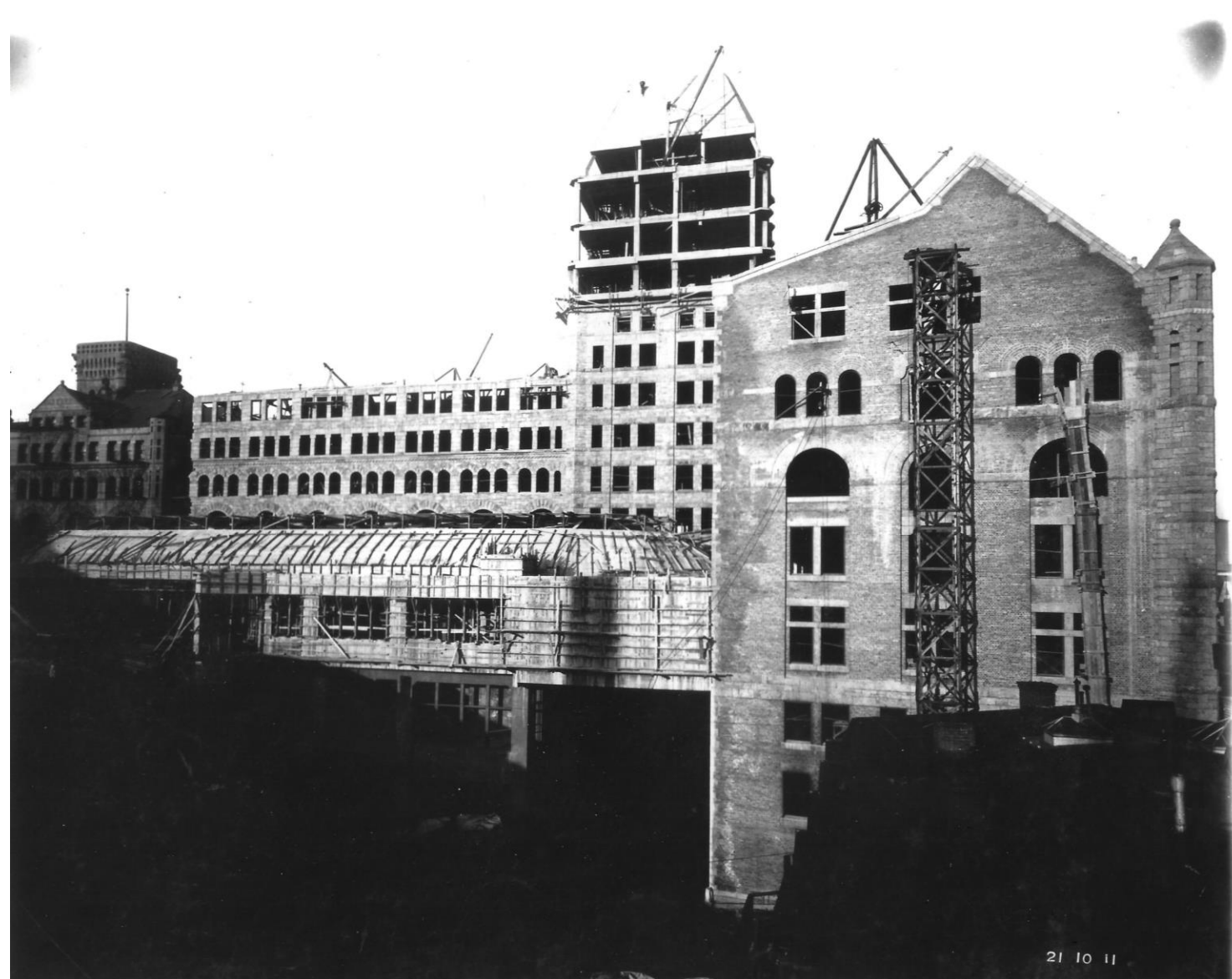


Looking east at steel and concrete structures of the concourse in 1911.  
Bridge trusses on the third floor can be seen.

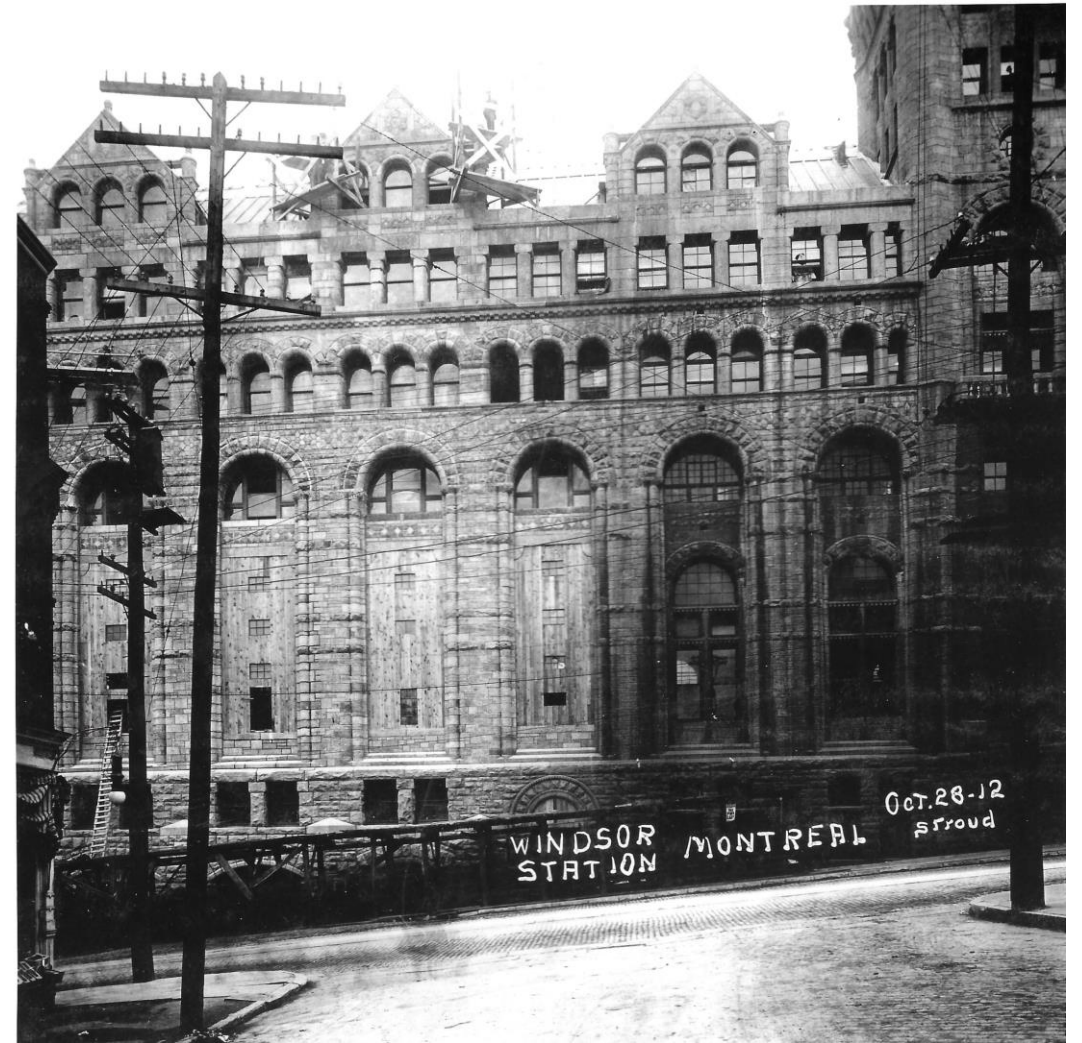
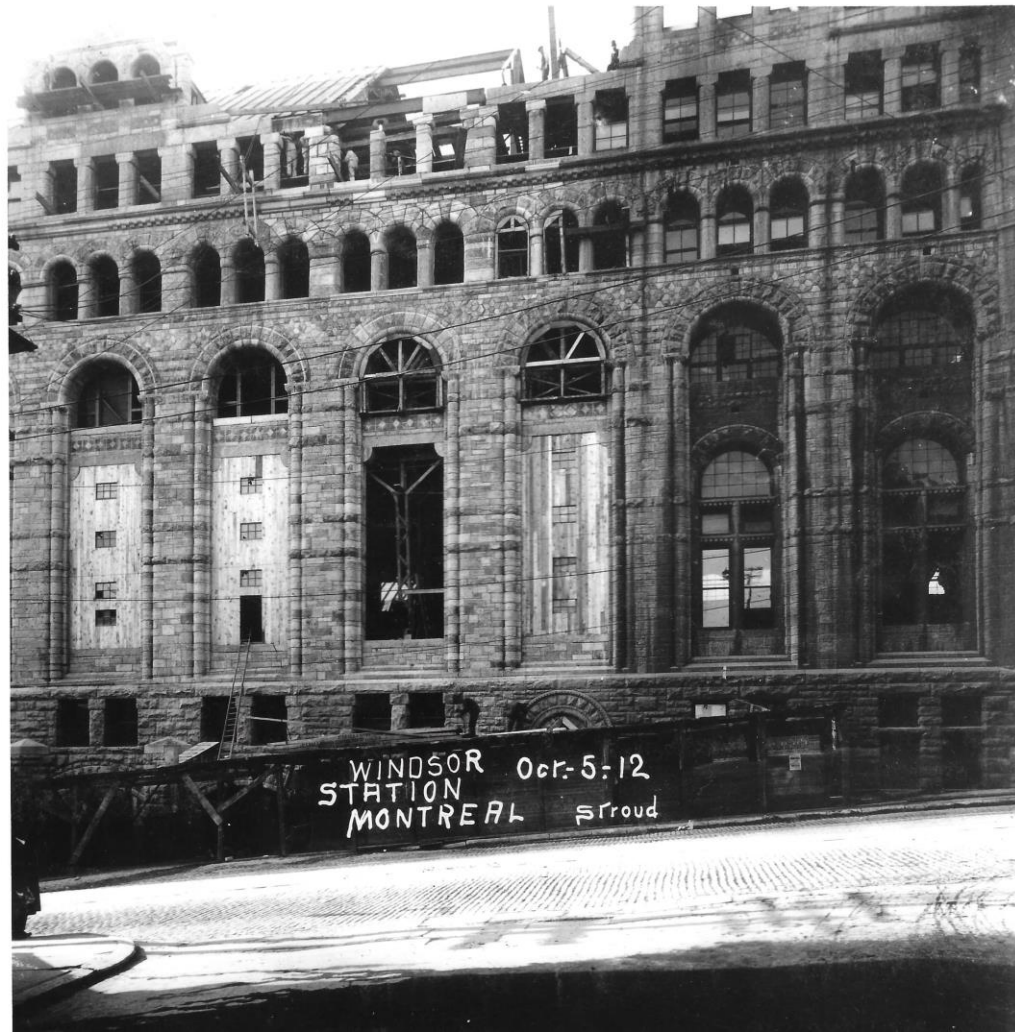




Exterior walls mostly complete. New building will settle for several months before its walls will be joined to the old one.



October 5 and 28 1912. Arrowed bay was part of Price building and was reconstructed as part of the Painter wing. Looking west.





Exterior stone work has been completed but waiting room windows have not yet been installed.





Looking west.

The arched doorway was in the south bay of the Price building. It was rebuilt to be in the north bay of the Painter wing.

The 2-story-tall windows lit Painter's main waiting room.





Looking west.

The arched doorway was in the south bay of the Price building. It was rebuilt to be in the north bay of the Painter wing.

The 2-story-tall waiting room windows were divided when the room's ceiling was lowered.



Painter, Price  
and Maxwell  
wings in 1912.

The Price wing  
shows the effect  
of 23 years of  
coal smoke.





Painter, Price  
and Maxwell  
wings in 1964.

Painter created  
symmetry in the  
11 bays between  
the two towers.



Note the symmetry of the 3 bays on each side of the corner block, each topped by a single dormer.

The entire Painter wing continues the Price building's line of heavier stonework below the level of Osborne Street.





Painter wing south end circa 2000. The lower row of rounded arches and the street-level segmented arches are clearly visible.



This view looking northwest from Windsor & St Antoine Streets show the trainshed and supporting vault structures.





Looking east

Painter wing  
and west  
wall of  
concourse.



Windsor Station,  
Montreal

Wrought Iron Fire Escape

Barott, Blackader & Webster,  
Architects

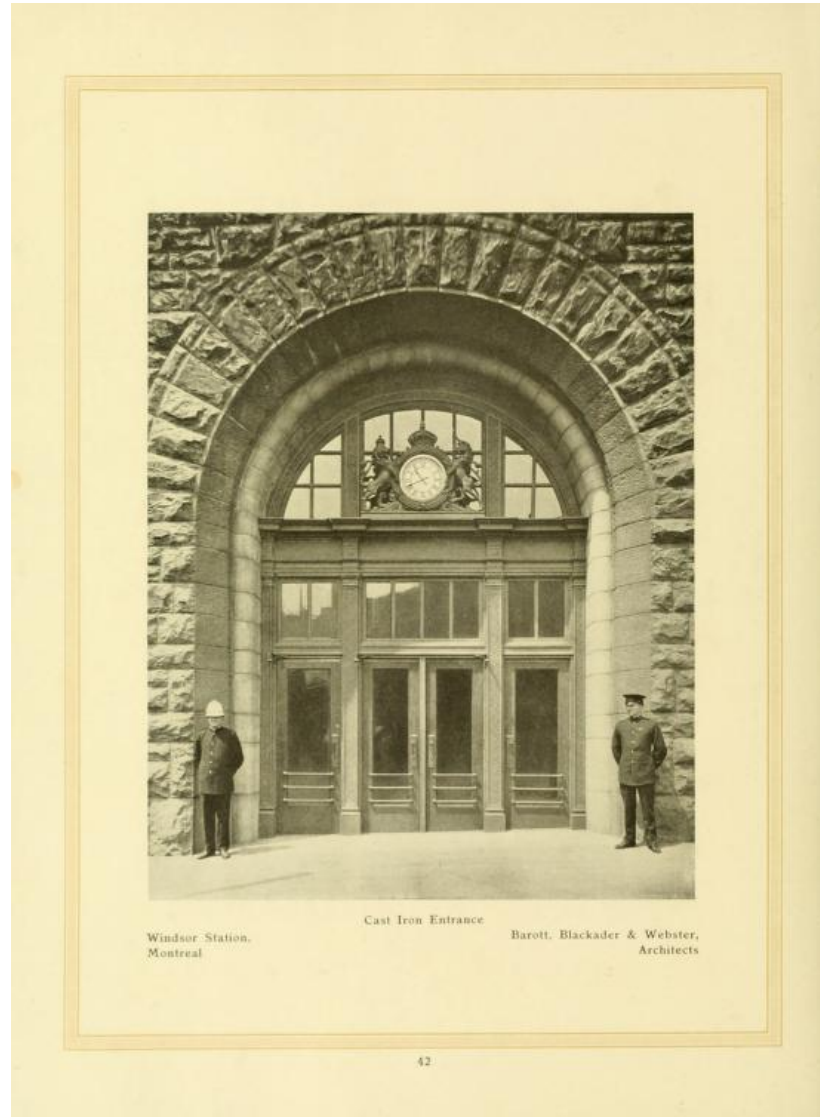
Looking east at  
parking lot along  
St Antoine  
Street.

Mis-labeled “Air  
Raid Drill,” this  
photo shows a  
demonstration of  
a Valentine tank  
manufactured by  
CP’s nearby  
Angus Shops.





Entrance at Windsor & St Antoine Streets.  
Elevators and stairs go up to the concourse level.





## Office entrance on Windsor Street. Lobby extends up to A-Floor.



Windsor Station,  
Montreal

Cast Iron Office Entrance  
(Hollow Steel Doors)

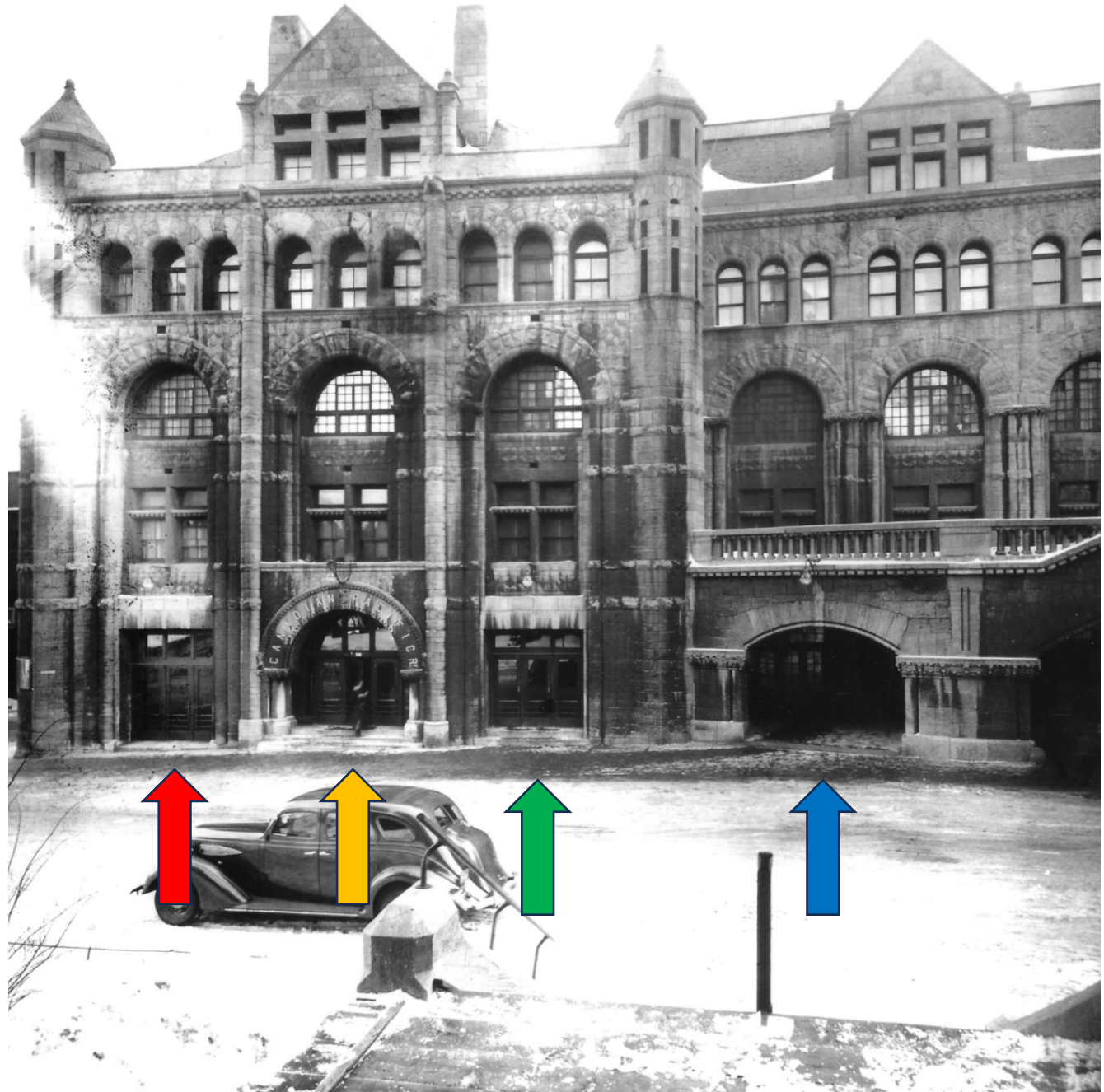
Barott, Blackader & Webster,  
Architect





Two new entrances were opened on Osborne to accommodate the revised internal layout of the Painter wing:

1. New office entrance.
2. Old main entrance.
3. New waiting room entrance.
4. Old concourse entrance.



# Painter interior

A new entrance and corridor led to the large Main Waiting Room in the Painter wing.

Various Canadian agricultural and natural products are displayed in the windows on either side.





The Main Waiting Room in the 1920s.

The ceiling and the building above are supported by 70-foot-long steel trusses on the third floor.

The statue of CP's founder George Stephen surveys the room from the south end.



The Main Waiting  
Room during the  
Second World War.

Heavy wartime  
traffic strained all  
railway facilities.





Models posing as passengers at the Information Desk.  
Timetables of connecting railroads are displayed on the racks.



The Women's Waiting Room  
was located immediately south  
of the Main Waiting Room.

The benches provided space for  
ladies to lounge.





A small nursery and playroom were available next to the Women's Waiting Room.



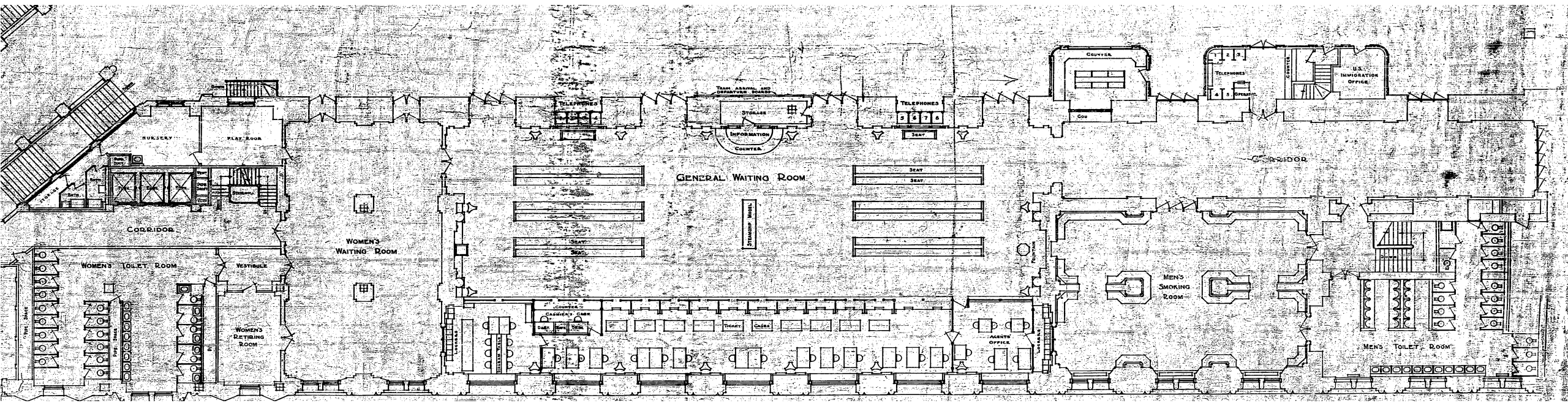
## Waiting rooms and associated facilities after 1924:

At left (south) are women's washroom, retiring room, waiting room and the nursery and playroom grouped around the office elevators and stairs.

The main waiting room contains the ticket office and information desk.

To the north are the men's waiting room (created from part of the Price waiting room) and men's washroom. Stairs led down to shower rooms.

Along the concourse wall a news stand and telephone booths.





A dining room  
was available to  
passengers and  
the public.

It proved so  
popular that in  
the 1920s it was  
expanded to the  
floor beneath, via  
the stairway at  
left.



The dining room  
was enlarged and  
renamed “The  
Alouette Room”  
in the 1950s.





The Lunch Room  
originally contained  
long counters with  
stools.

It shared a kitchen  
with the dining  
room.



After the addition  
of tables, the Lunch  
Room was renamed  
the Coffee Shop.





After closure of the Coffee Shop, the space was used for other functions, including the Corporate Library as seen here.



# The Concourse

As part of the Painter wing extension, the narrow Midway, between the station building and the Price and Maxwell trainsheds, was replaced by a wider and longer concourse serving all tracks. The existing tracks were cut back 30 feet to accommodate the concourse.

This new space included ticket offices, a news stand, a telegraph and telephone office, baggage room and restaurants.

Over time the concourse increasingly became the heart of the station as a public place.



As built, looking  
north.

Ticket offices, news  
stand and telegraph  
office to the right.

Train gates to left.



As built,  
looking east at  
ticket offices  
and entrance to  
main waiting  
room.





As built, looking  
east.

Steamship ticket  
office between  
doors to women's  
waiting room.



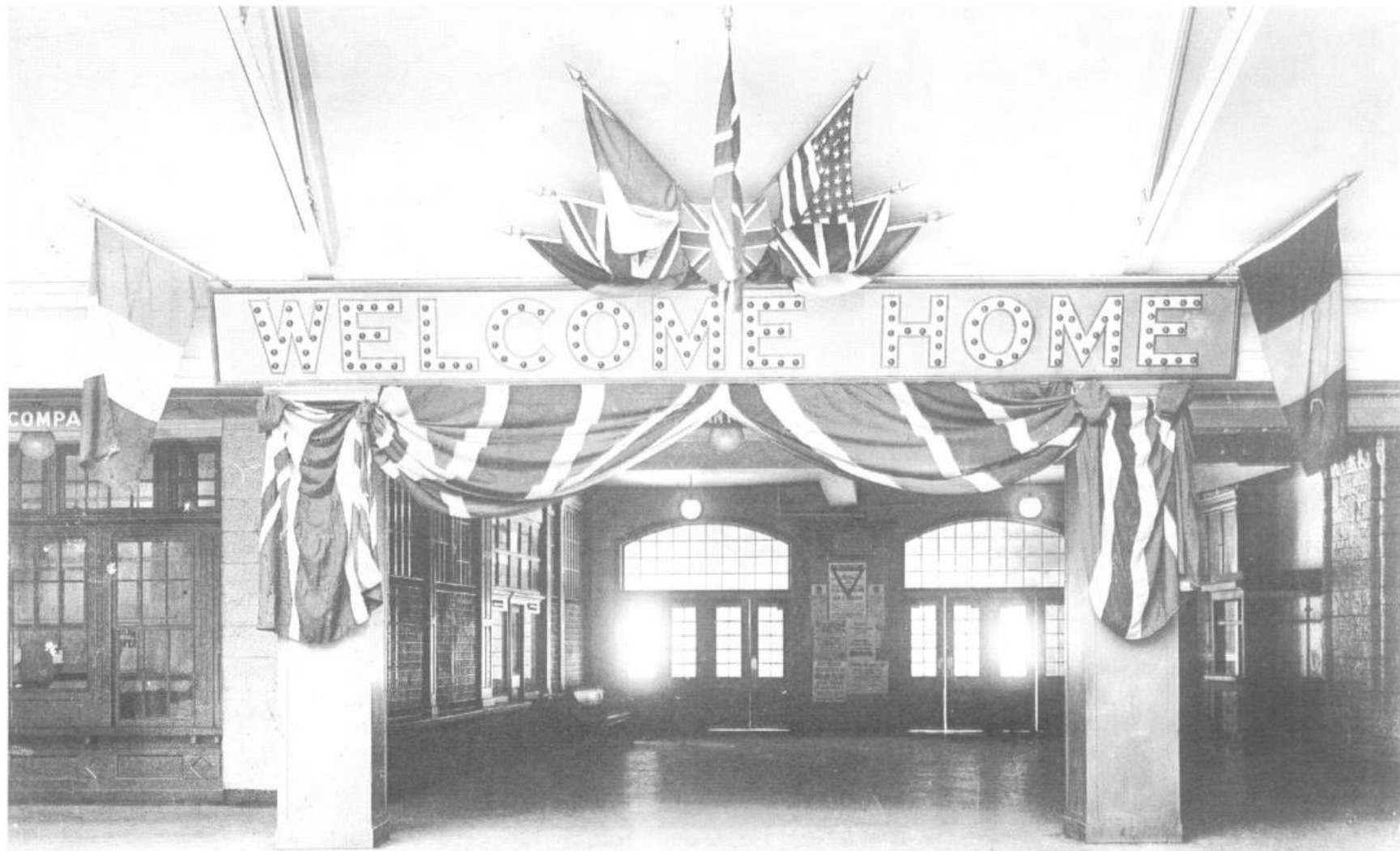
Looking south,  
1915.

Ticket office to  
left. Steamship  
ticket office was  
removed due to  
WW1 reduction  
in ocean travel.





Looking north at entrances from Osborne Street in 1919. The baggage room to the left was later removed and two more entrances opened.



Looking south from entrance from Osborne Street. The baggage room to the right was later removed and two more entrances opened.





Looking south after  
1924 relocation of  
ticket offices into  
main waiting room.

Telegraph &  
telephone office and  
news stand are to  
left.

New train bulletin  
board is on wall  
beyond news stand.



# The International League Montreal Royals at the train bulletin in 1932.





Looking south  
during WW2.

Sailors in transit  
dominate this  
view.

Flags of Allied  
nations hang in  
profusion.





Late 1940s view  
looking south,  
showing buffet.

Restaurants are  
beyond.





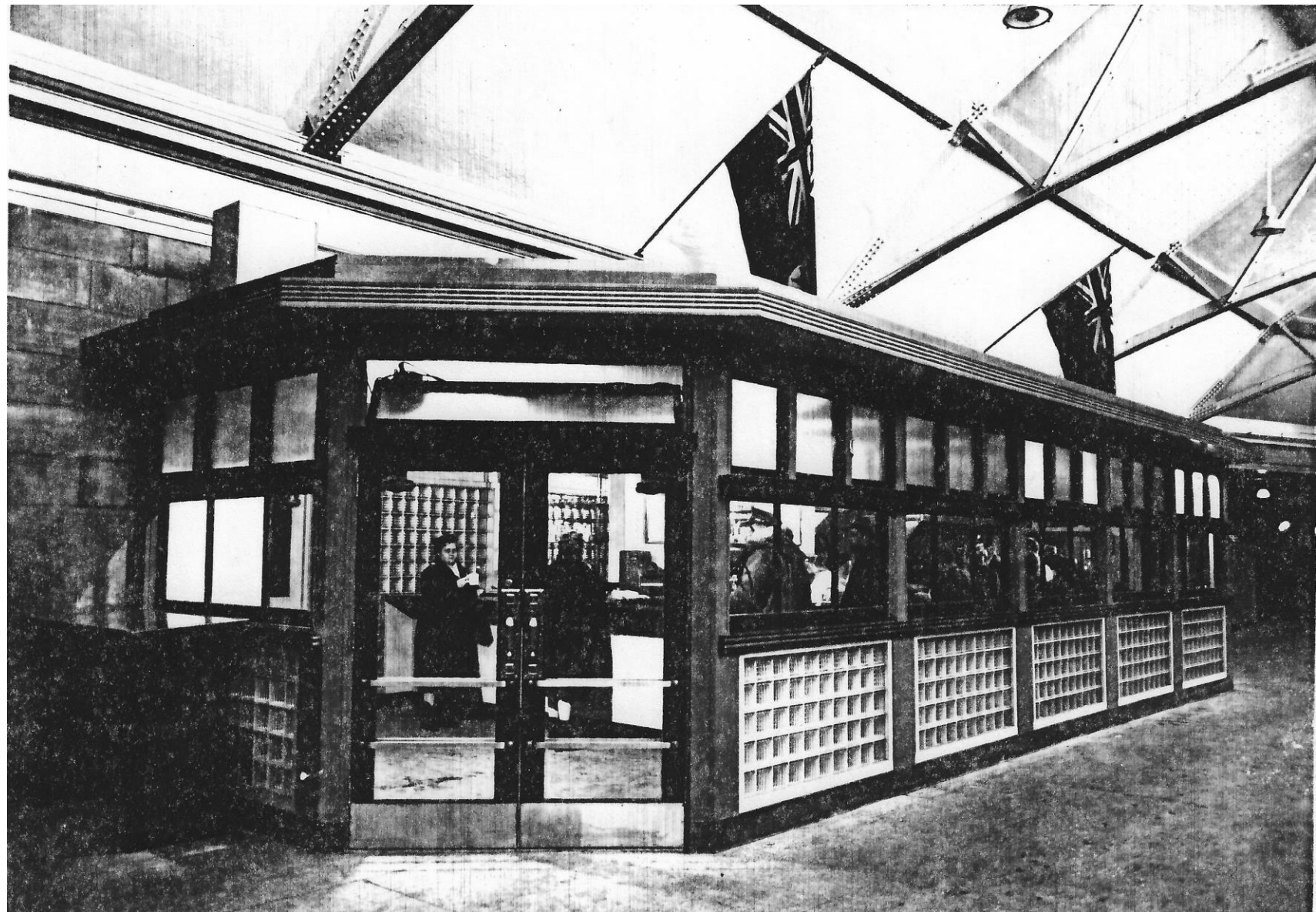
1962 view to  
south.

WW2 era  
structures by CP  
architect Colin  
Drewitt to left are  
news stand,  
information booth  
and buffet.





View of customers  
in the buffet.





In the 1940s, the  
telephone office  
was replaced by  
phone booths.



1962, looking north.  
Information booth  
and news stand to  
right.

The 1940 era phone  
booths have been  
updated.

Four entrances are  
now open across the  
north end of the  
concourse.





In 1943 Colin Drewitt widened the concourse entry at Osborne Street to four bays, and added an inner wall to create this vestibule.

“Electric Eye” door openers aid passengers with heavy suitcases.



The entrances  
in the former  
carriageway  
were also  
widened and  
modernized.





2nd World War soldiers rest by the memorial to the fallen of the 1st.



The restaurant corridor also leads to elevators to St. Antoine Street.

By 1960 the restaurant and lunch room have been renamed the Alouette Room and the Coffee Shop.





Lady in the 1940s  
prepares to board CP's  
top transcontinental  
train No. 7, the  
Dominion, for points  
west.



CP E-unit 1802  
arrives from  
Ottawa or  
Quebec.

The heavyweight  
commuter cars to  
the right will be  
replaced with bi-  
level cars within  
2 months.



1802  
Windsor Station  
1970-03-05  
John Sutherland©



In 1989,  
commuters  
dominate the  
concourse.

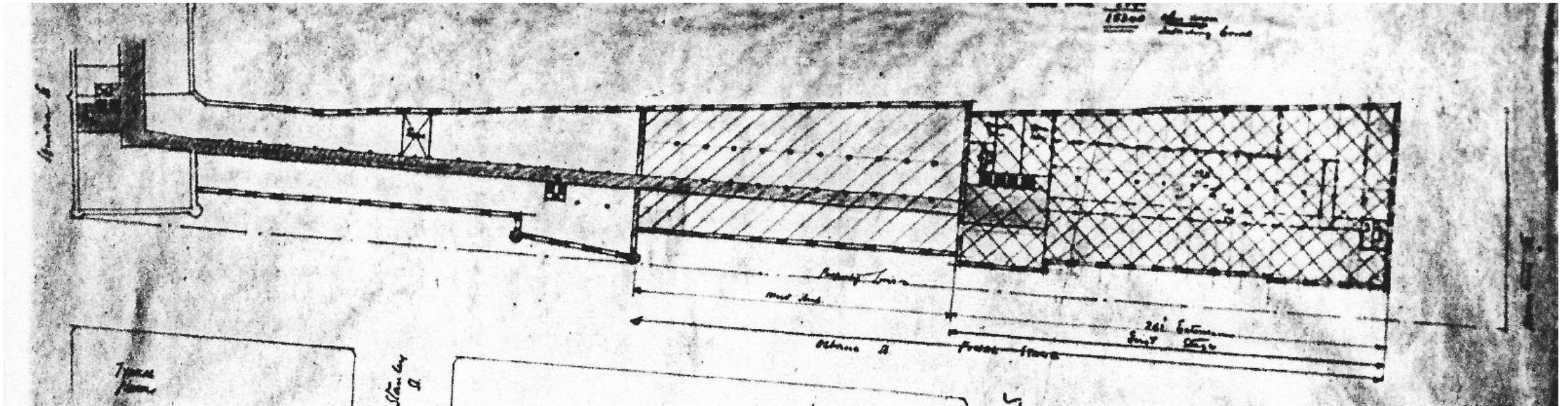


Phil Mason 1989

# The 1952 Express Building

By the late 1940s, CP's express traffic had increased almost fourfold, and the Mud Hut was not able to handle the load.

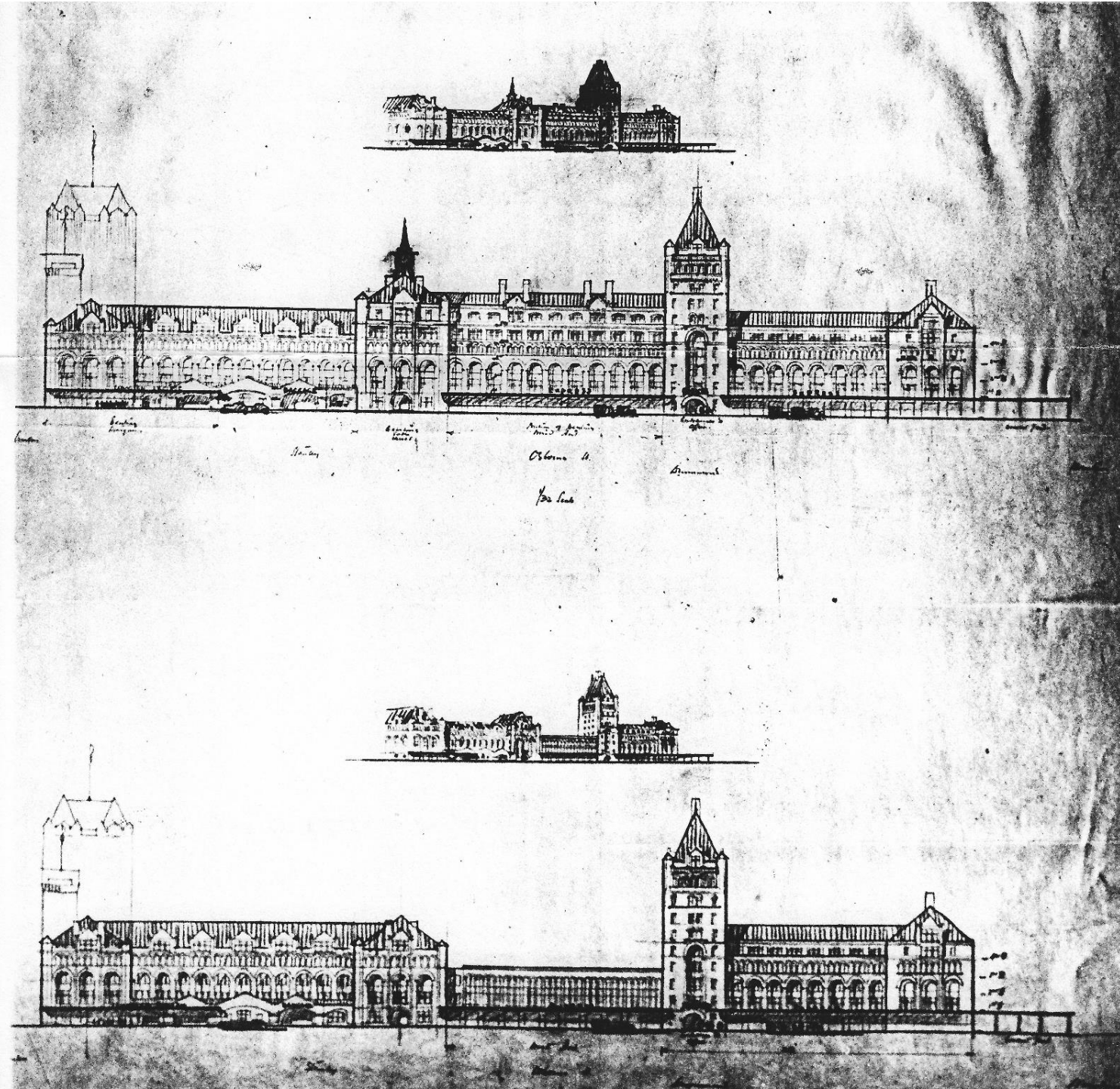
CP reviewed and revised plans for a third building using the available footprint on Osborne Street.





One proposal included a multi-story office block using “Chateau” style architecture.

Depending on needs and resources, the Mud Hut could be retained or replaced.



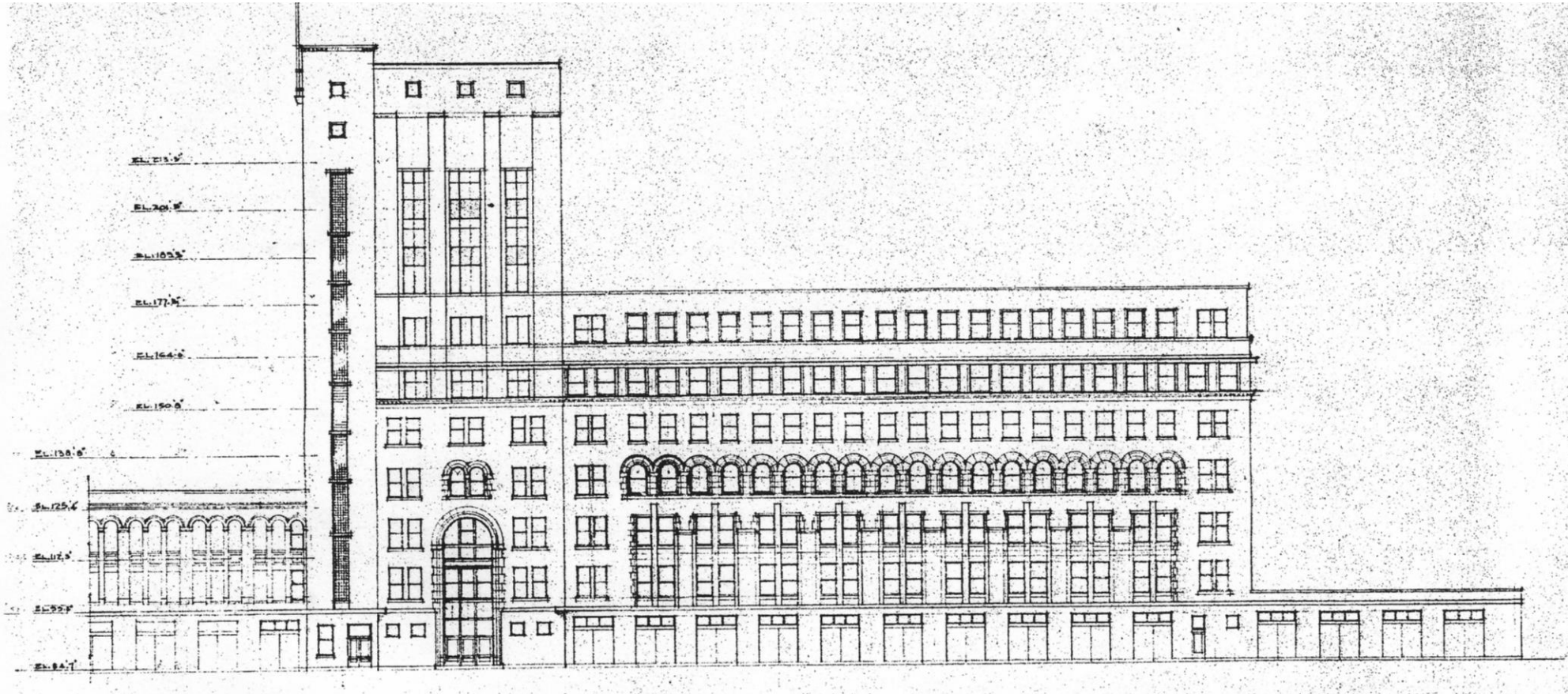


Future site of  
the Express  
Building  
showing the  
Mud Hut and  
trainshed.

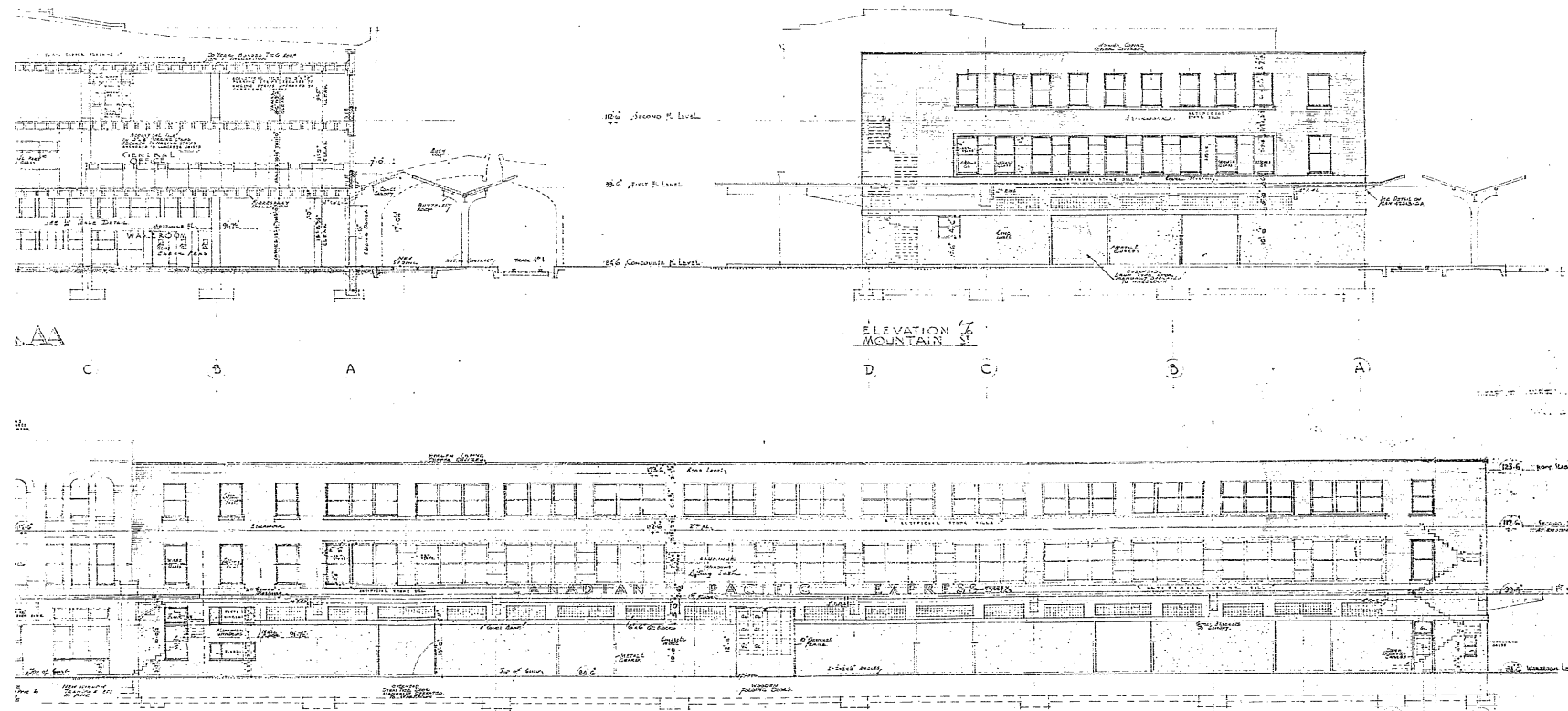




Another design from 1944 was an office block mostly in the Moderne style, but with anachronistic stone arches inserted as a reference to the main station complex.



The ultimate design chosen was a plain brick building of 3 stories.  
The express handling facilities were integrated with the Mud Hut.  
Upstairs were 2 stories of office space.





View south from the CIBC tower of the Express bldg before demolition.



# The Accounting Building

In the late 1940s, CP undertook a series of programs to modernize its outdated management.

One of the initiatives sought to reduce the number of rented office premises in downtown Montreal, which exceeded 20 locations.

The large undeveloped lot along St Antoine Street south of Windsor Station's trainshed was chosen as the site for a modern 7-story office building.

Since the Accounting department would be the principal occupant, the new structure was informally designated the Accounting Building.



The Accounting Building was characterized by horizontal strips of windows, set off by vertical lines at each end.

The new building continued the massing of the Painter wing, but not the style.

View looks northwest.



View east along St  
Antoine Street.

The Accounting  
Building absorbed  
some of the coveted  
employee parking  
spots.





Construction of what is now the Bell Centre arena required demolition of the west end of the Accounting Building.

Construction of the Deloitte tower has now claimed the rest of it.

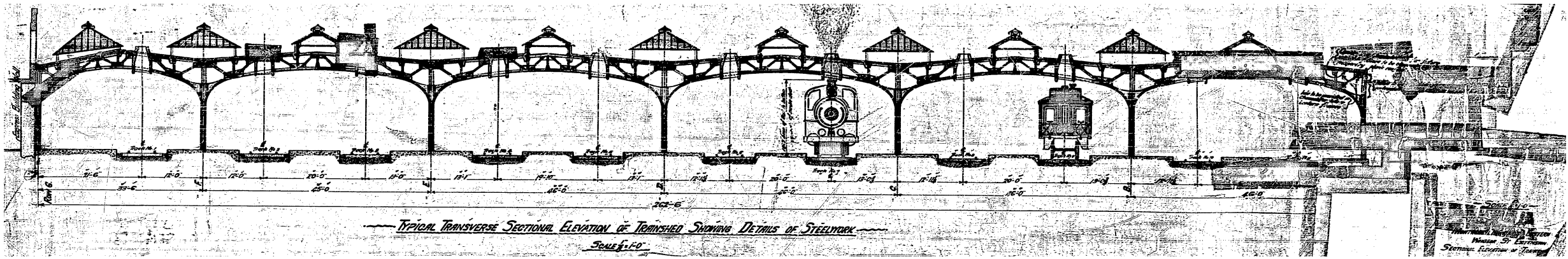


# Bush trainshed

The Bush trainshed was developed in 1907 by Lincoln Bush, Chief Engineer of the Lackawanna Railroad, for use in its passenger terminal at Hoboken, N.J. It was subsequently used at many stations in the USA and Canada.

The Bush shed places a tapering concrete exhaust slot above the centre of each track, funneling smoke out and limiting entry of ice and snow.

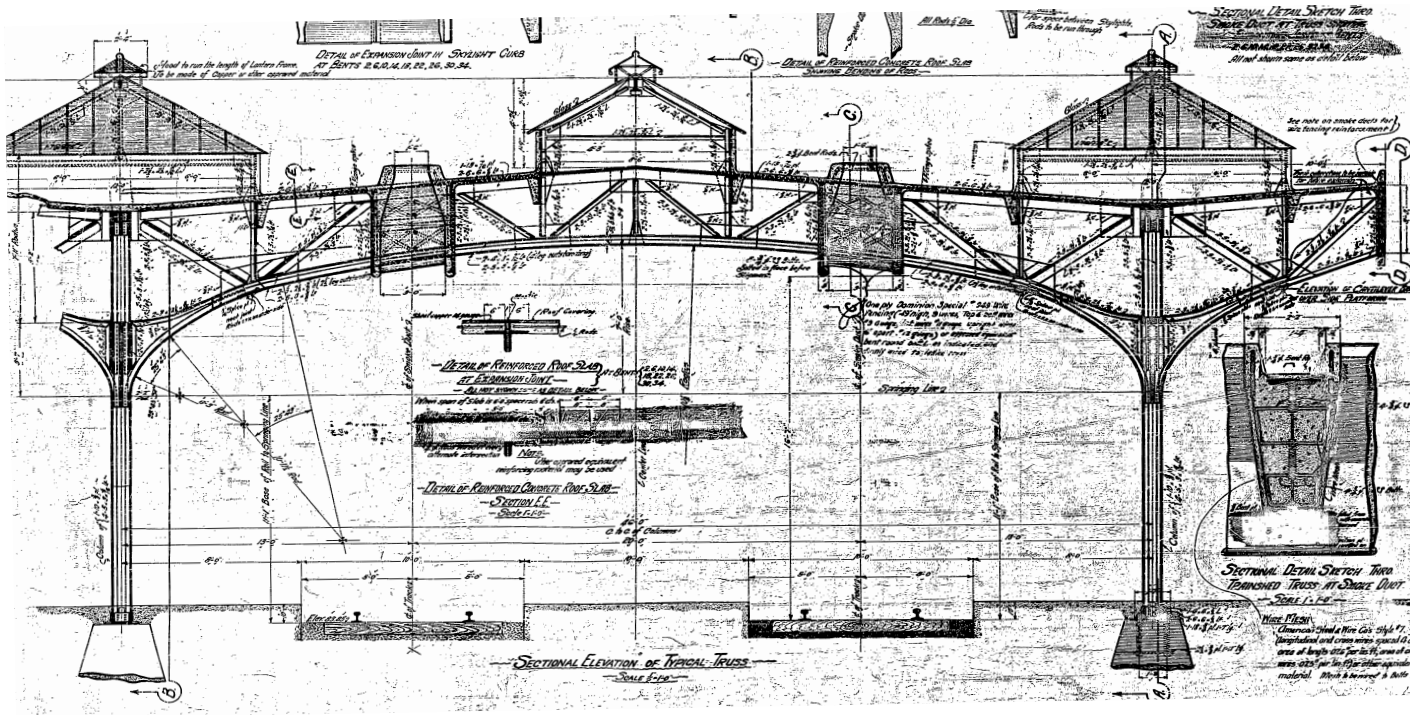
Skylights between the exhaust slots admit natural light.



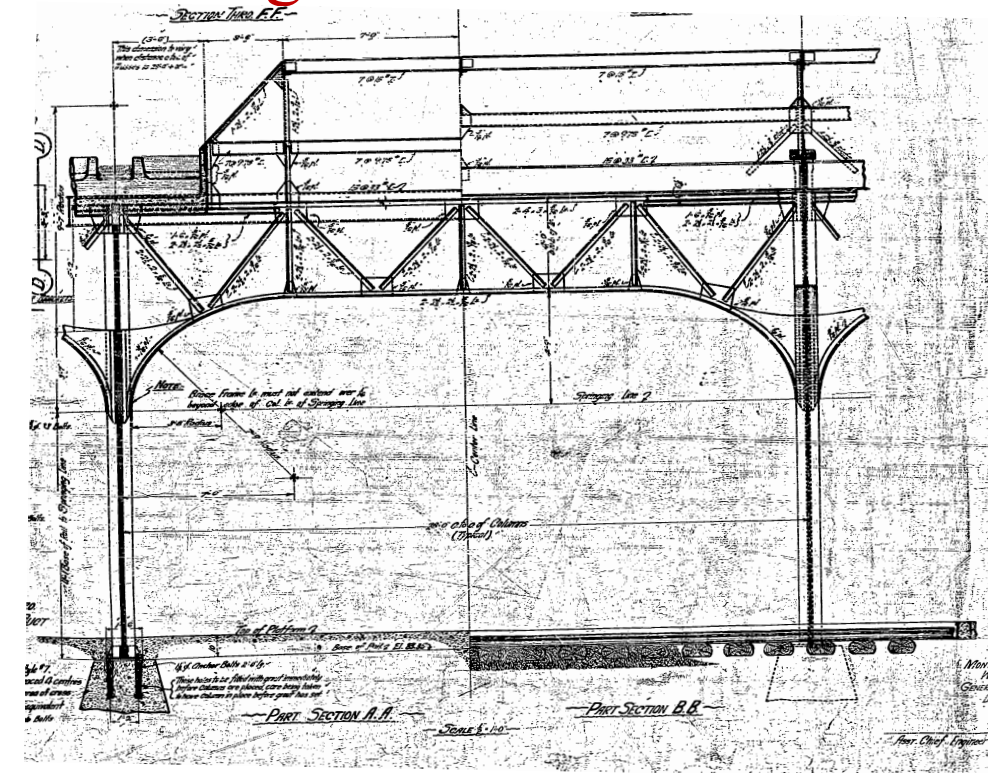


Windsor Station's Bush trainshed was made of rows of steel arches 46 feet wide, each covering two tracks, a baggage trucking platform and half of two passenger platforms. The arches average 28 feet apart.

# Transverse 46 ft arch



## Longitudinal section

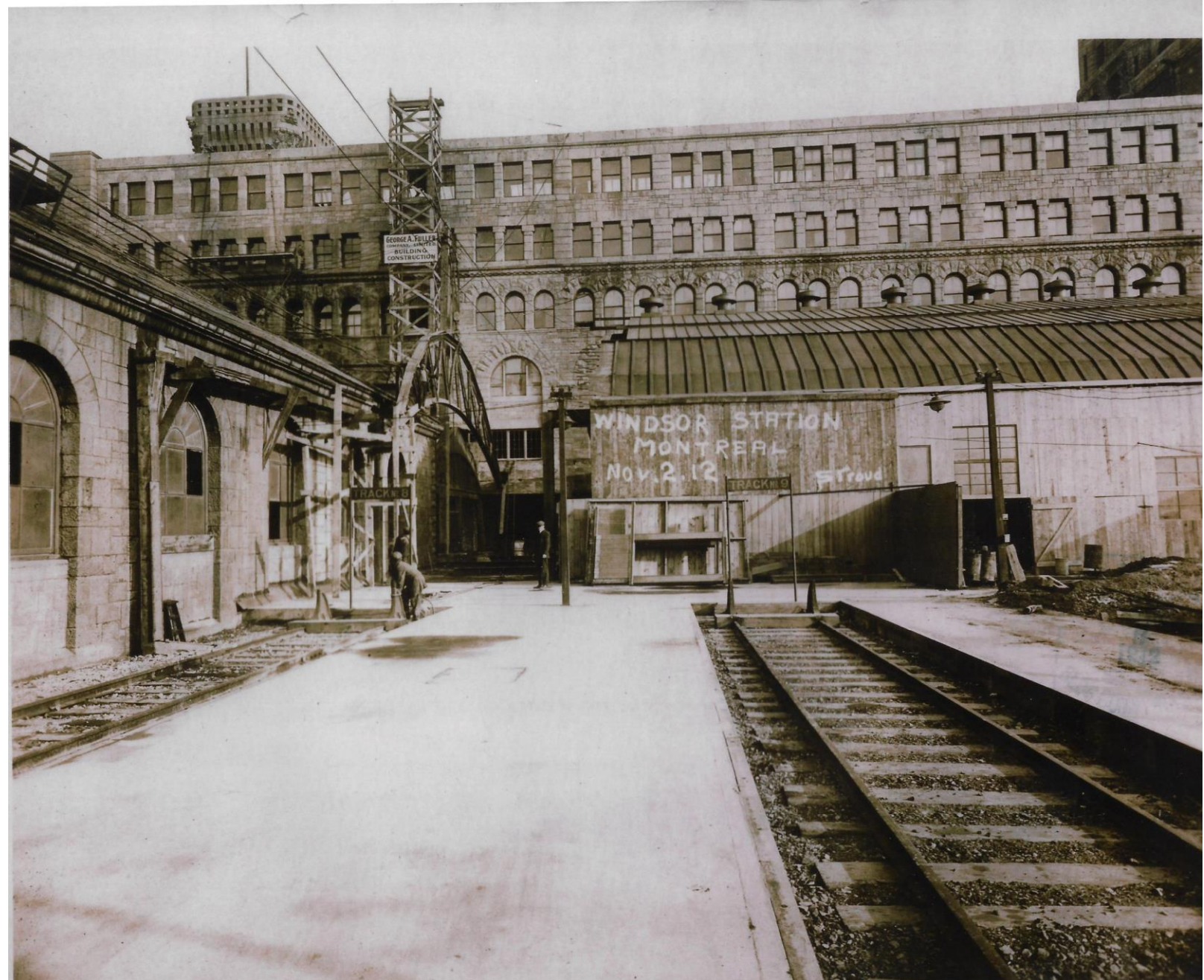




1912 looking east.

Price trainshed at left.  
New tracks on new  
structure at right.

Concourse under  
construction in front  
of completed west  
wall of Price and  
Painter wings.





November 30, 1912,  
looking east.

Addition of sub-  
structure to support  
an additional track  
(Track 11) at the last  
minute.

The property and  
concourse had space  
for a further 4  
tracks.



April 18, 1913,  
looking west.

Construction of the  
Bush trainshed has  
begun over the new  
southern tracks.

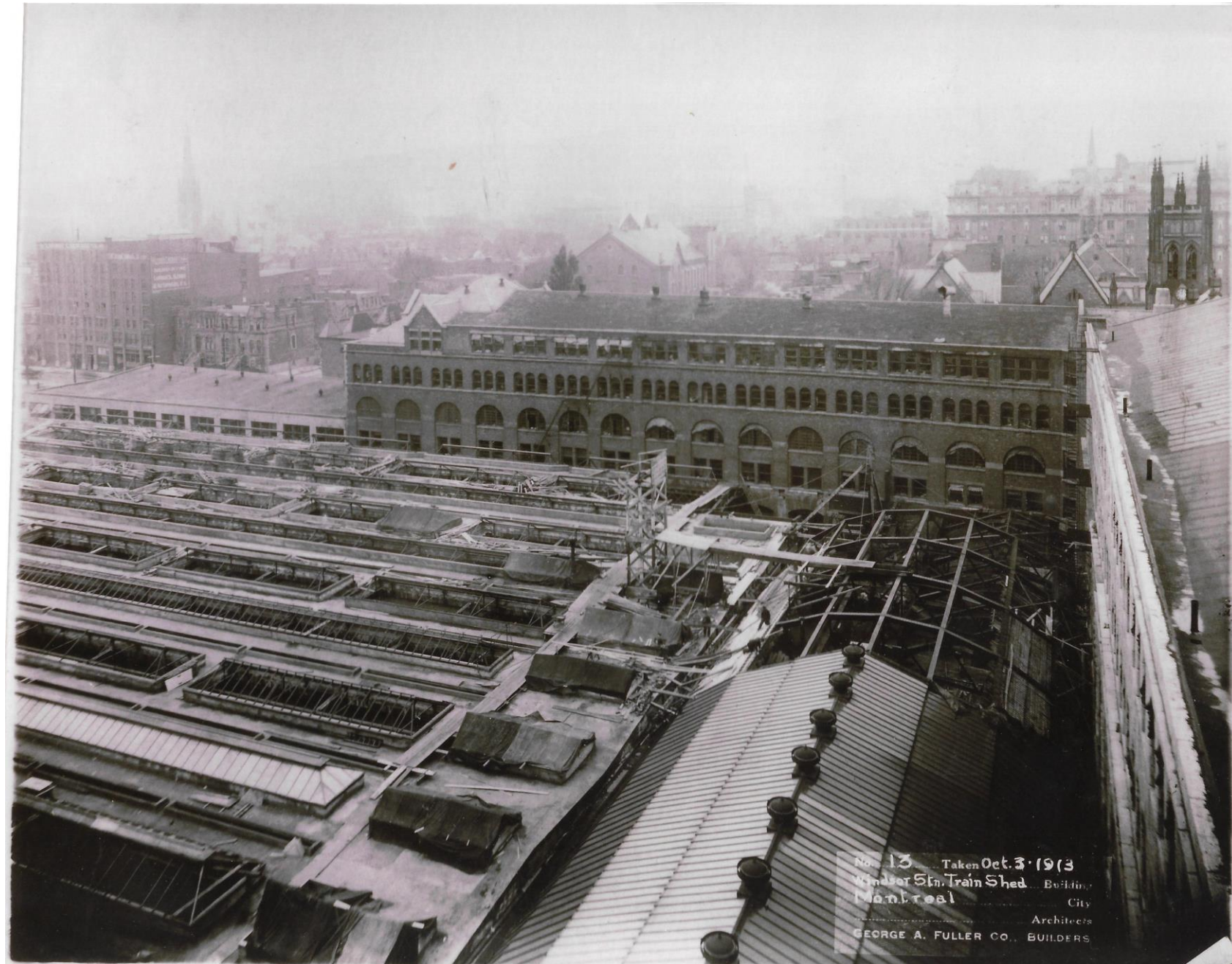




October 3, 1913,  
looking north.

Concourse and Bush  
trainshed under  
construction.

Rear of Maxwell  
wing in background.





November 14, 1913  
looking west.

Trainshed partially  
complete.

Northernmost tracks  
and west end are not  
covered yet.

The ladder track that  
originally served  
tracks 5 to 11 can just  
barely be seen to the  
right of the chimney.





Dec. 1, 1913,  
looking north.

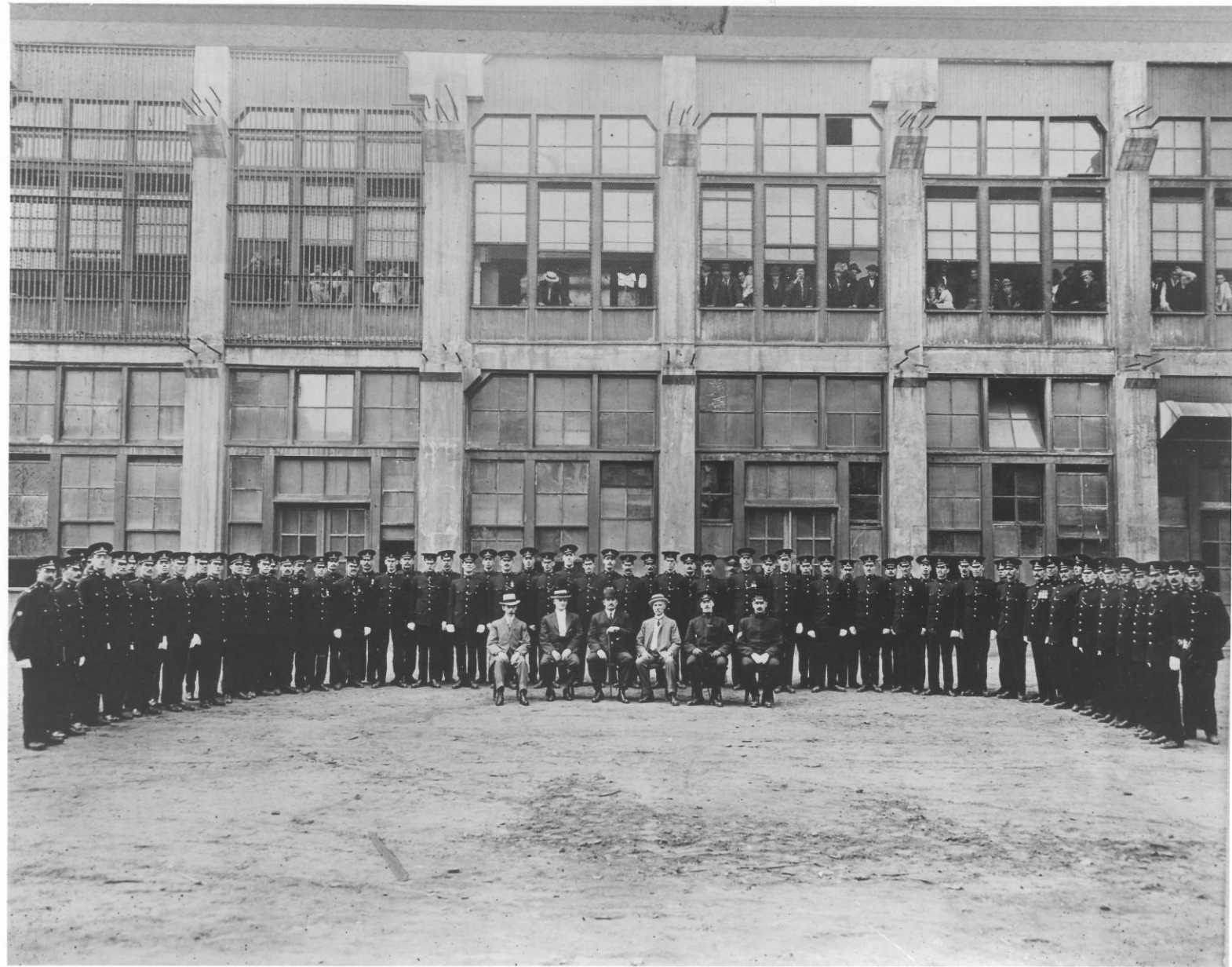
North end of  
concourse has  
been completed.



CP Police lined up  
before the “vaults”  
under the trainshed.

Chinese in transit wait  
behind bars in the two  
left bays of the top  
level.

Third class passengers  
awaiting passage west  
are housed in the area  
to the right.





Facilities for housing Chinese crossing Canada in bond.

CP was liable for the \$500 head tax payable if any Chinese passenger failed to leave the country.



The Bush trainshed exceeded 1,000 feet in length and covered 11 tracks at its widest extent. It stopped just short of Aqueduct Street.





The Bush trainshed  
before iron fences  
were built across the  
ends of track.

This night view looks  
west along the 10-  
foot-wide trucking  
platform between  
tracks 4 and 5.



An early view showing the natural light from the Bush trainshed skylights, looking west.

The train of wood coaches appears to be drawn by a D10 4-6-0.





Boston & Maine  
engine 3166 stands  
next to CP 2305 in  
the 1920s.

After the skylights  
were blacked out as  
an air raid precaution  
in 1940, the trainshed  
received little natural  
light.



A post-WW2  
view to the west,  
from an engine or  
car on Track 4.

The interlocking  
signal tower is  
visible between  
the columns to  
the right.





D&H RS2 4001 on  
a New York train  
on track 7.

CP G3 Pacific on  
track 5.

CP sleeping car on  
track 3.

Sign at track end  
warned passengers  
from using the  
trucking platforms.



Looking east along Track 5, perhaps on a Sunday morning.

The trainshed is shorter over the southern platform tracks to the right, to accommodate the ladder track formerly serving tracks 5 through 11.





It's 9:25 am October 6, 1950 as CP train 35 departs for Toronto on track 8. The southern sections of the trainshed set back to accommodate the ladder track that once served tracks 5 to 11.

Photo by Ron Ritchie. The portly man on the platform looks to be Omer Lavallee.



Looking east at the  
signal tower and the  
inner throat tracks.

The camera is aligned  
with Track 3.

Realigning the  
approaches to Tracks  
5 through 9 allowed  
for longer platforms  
and more concurrent  
switching moves.





View east in the  
late 1960s.

Track at right is  
the lead to tracks  
9 through 11.

The RDC is on  
Track 6.



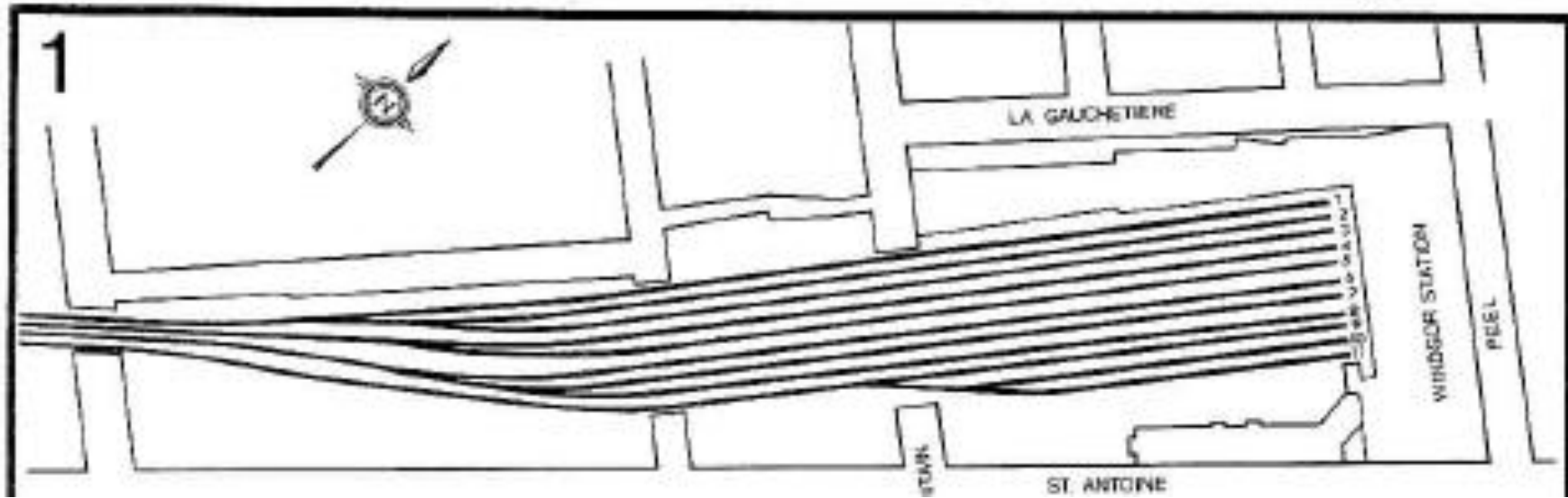
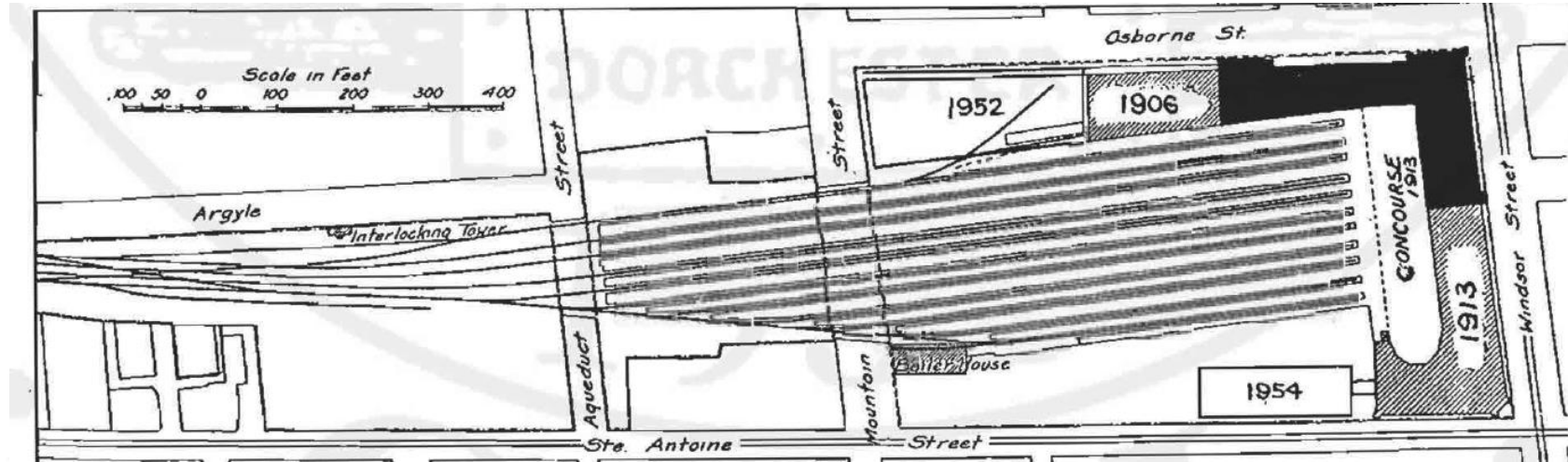


Outer throat tracks with double slip switches west of Guy Street.



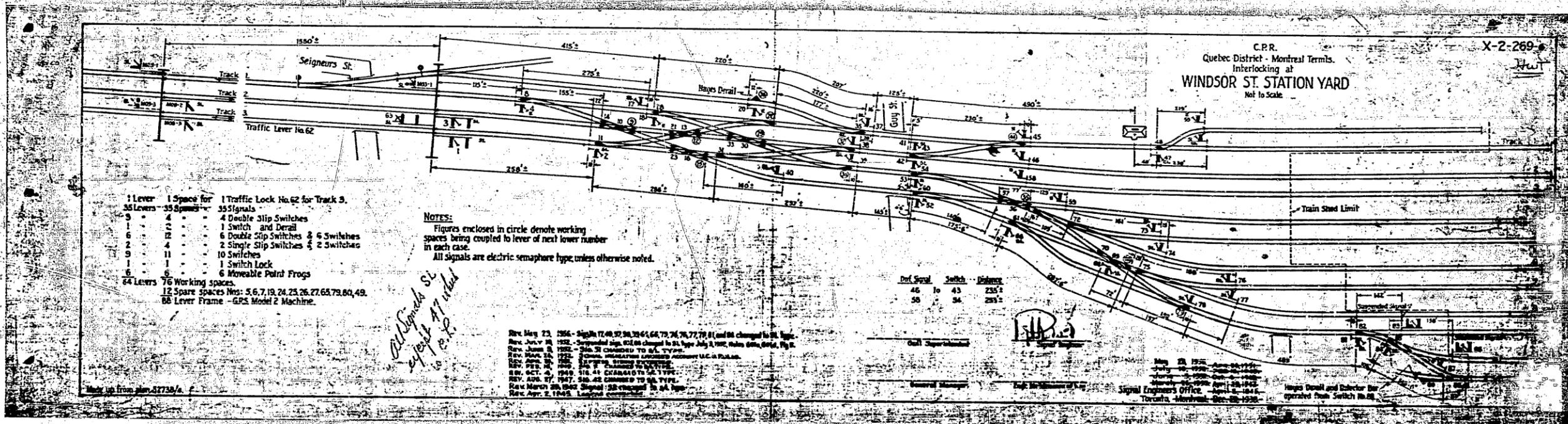


The 1913 track layout used a ladder track to reach tracks 5 through 11. The trainshed was cut back to accommodate this track. Tracks 5 to 9 were extended in 1930 but the trainshed was not changed.



# Windsor Station track and interlocking plan between 1930 and 1971.

## Switch and signal control was by an 88-lever GRS Model 2 machine.





# External developments

In 1967, CP opened Place du Canada east of Windsor Station.  
It comprised the Chateau Champlain hotel and an office building  
containing several CP departments.  
Hotel's windows echoed those of Windsor Station across the street.





# Reconstruction and redevelopment proposed

In 1970, CP announced a redevelopment project for the Windsor Station property and adjacent lands north of Lagauchetiere Street (renamed from Osborne in 1960). A 60-story skyscraper was proposed.

While few details were announced, it was expected that Windsor Station would be demolished, in whole or in part.

This created a storm of opposition and protest.

CP repeatedly modified the scope and nature of its proposed development until election of a separatist Quebec government in 1976 destroyed the Montreal development market for over a decade.

In anticipation of redevelopment, in 1971 CP removed the tracks in the trainshed, and the west half of the trainshed itself.

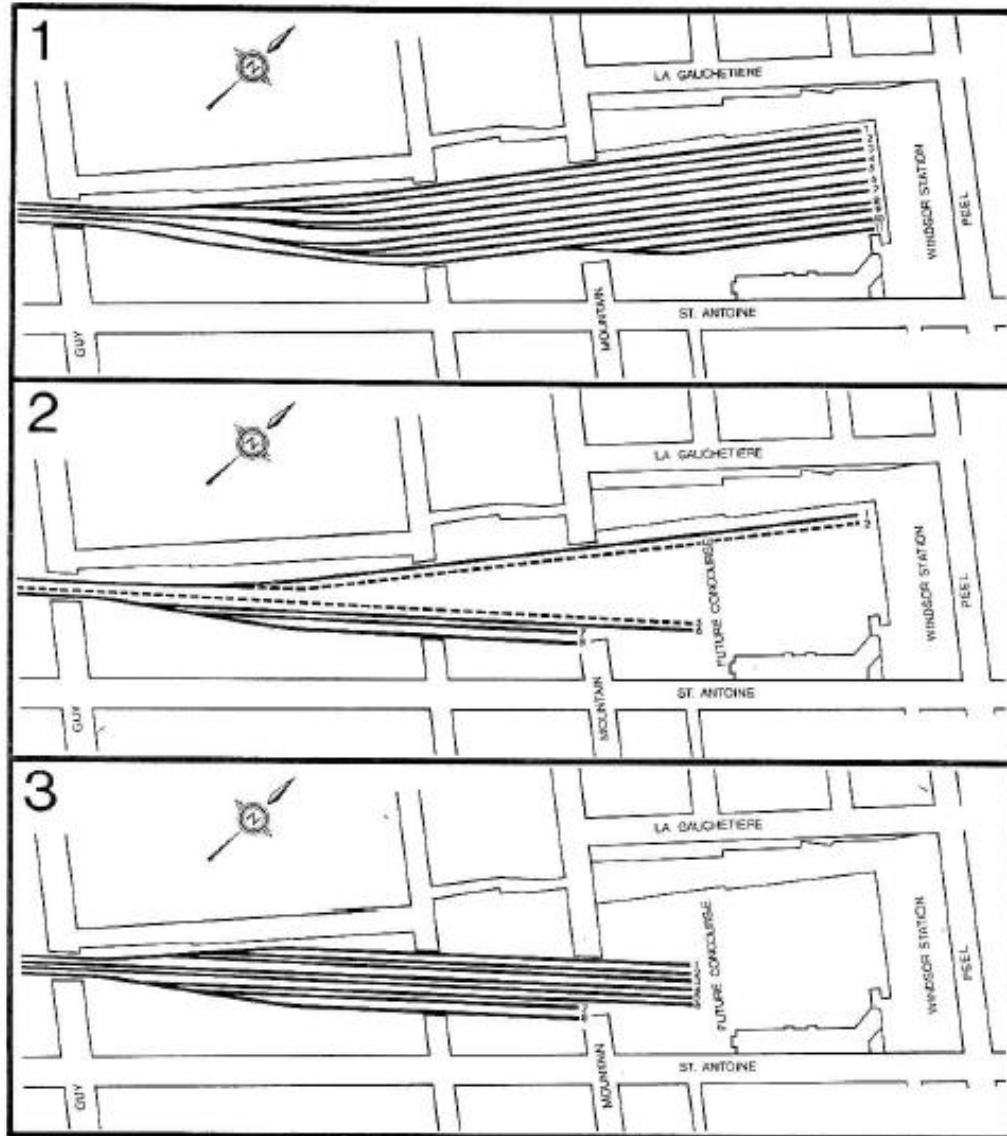
8 new tracks with 4 platforms were constructed on a new alignment. The new end of track was 450 feet from the concourse, accessed through the eastern remnant of the trainshed.

Track realignment served an additional purpose. Vertical clearance for vehicles on the Mountain and Aqueduct Street underpasses was inadequate at their north ends, where the streets ascended the hill which the tracks were built along. A federal subsidy

The 1952 Express building was removed in 1973. The Mud Hut was able to handle the dwindling express traffic.



In 1971 the UCRS Bulletin outlined the track realignment process.



In 1971, The Canadian uses old Track 1. Other tracks have been relocated out of this view to the south (right).





Looking south  
before 1973.

The eastern end of  
the trainshed is intact  
but derelict.

Beyond, tunnels for  
the Ville Marie  
Autoroute are being  
excavated.

CN's Bonaventure  
freight sheds are in  
the background.



Looking west, before  
1981.

Remnants of the Bush  
trainshed are used to  
walk to the new tracks.

An Amtrak Turboliner  
is on Track 6.

Tracks 7 & 8 had to be  
reached by a walkway  
over Mountain Street.





Looking west, before  
1981.

An RDC and Train #1,  
The Canadian await  
departure on a wet day.





Looking east, after 1981.

Remnants of the Bush trainshed provide shelter at the railhead.





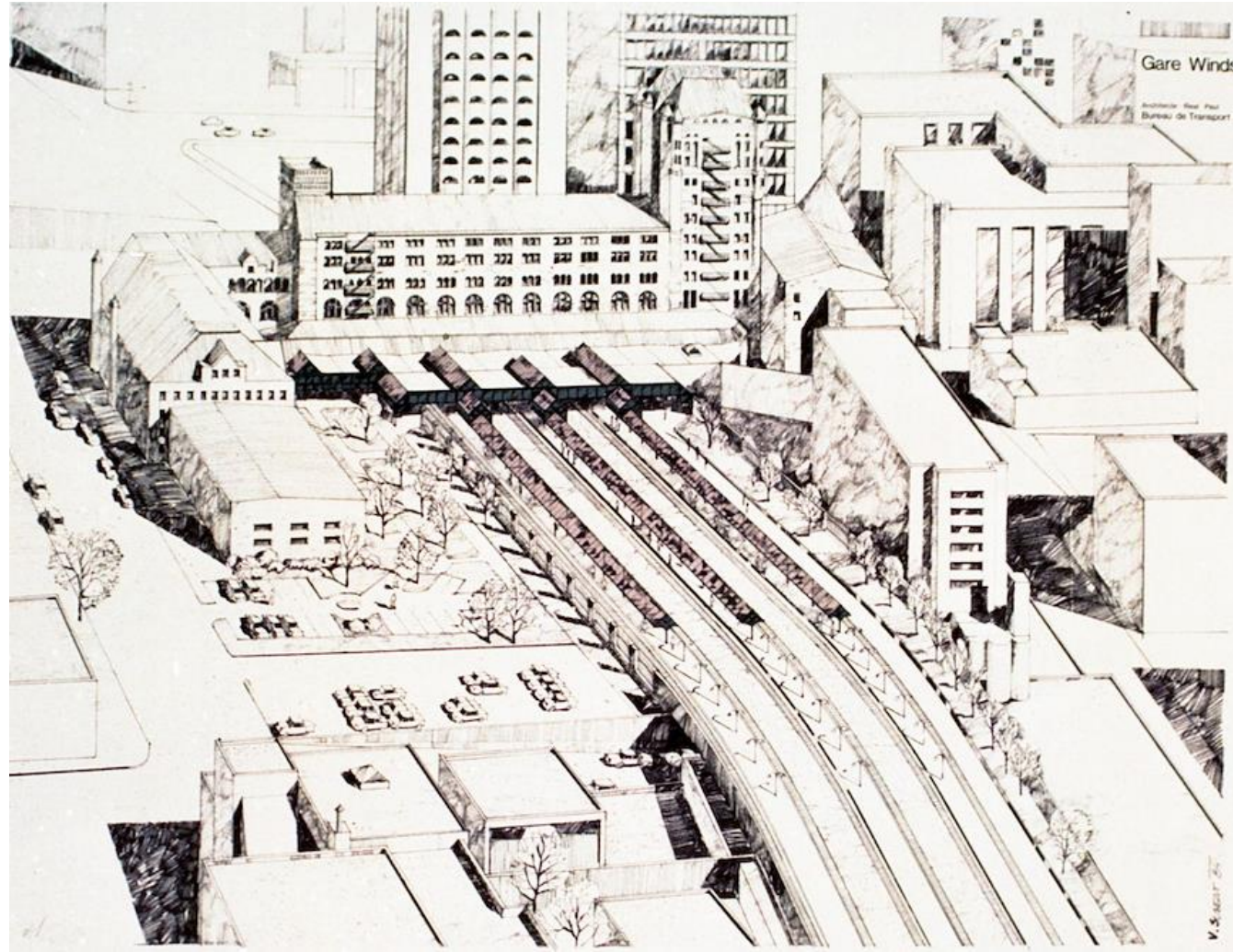
CP observed its centennial in 1981.

To accommodate the celebrations, most of the remaining train shed was removed and the space made into a park.



In 1984, Montreal's commuter authority proposed to extend 6 of the new tracks to the concourse.

They would curve on to the foundations of former Tracks 5 through 10.





# Reconstruction achieved, at length

Following failed attempts to demolish Windsor Station in the 1970s, CP changed course and modernized all aspects of the complex in the 1980s.

This work was largely complete by 1990 when the federal government legally protected the station under the Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act. Any significant change would require formal approval.

In the same year CP was approached by a developer and Le Club de Hockey Canadien to build a replacement for the storied Montreal Forum on the west side of the station property. Large commercial towers would be included. The railhead would be moved west to Mountain Street, where a small terminal for commuter trains would be placed.

CP's application for heritage approval covered many points, including:

- Removal of the Mud Hut and Accounting Building;
- Restoration of the second stairway from St Antoine Street;
- Reopening of the full Maxwell carriageway and relocation of the Bonaventure Metro entrance from the concourse lobby;
- Opening of a new public space beneath the concourse, connected to access to the Arena through the basement of the Price trainshed;
- Two openings in the concourse floor exposing the public space below;
- Removal of structures along the concourse east wall;
- Restoration of the original Price central entrance and the flanking windows on either side, and establishment of a new office lobby;
- And other works too numerous to mention.



After approvals were received, construction commenced in 1993 of what was then called the New Forum.

Construction blocked access between Windsor Station and the railhead. A temporary station was built next to the bridge over Mountain Street.

Completion of what was by now called the Molson Centre occurred in 1996. It included a small permanent station at the railhead, called Terminus Windsor (and now called Gare Lucien l'Allier).

At the same time, CP undertook the many permitted and promised changes to Windsor Station itself, completing them in 1997.

However, in 1995 CP announced it was moving its headquarters to Calgary. It would lease out most of Windsor Station to tenants.

In 2009 CP sold Windsor Station to Cadillac Fairview.



Gare Lucien-l'Allier serves the tracks and platforms built in 1971.  
These have been rebuilt, and recently provided with overhead canopies.





Dave Pottinger took the left photo of the trainshed in winter 1971, shortly before demolition commenced.

In October 2016 he took the right photo of the courtyard in nearly the same spot. The railing would have been just left of the bicycle.





Colin Drewitt's vestibule to the concourse has been restored and the stairway to the Metro removed.





The concourse can be a very quiet space when no event is being staged.  
The alternate circulating area on B Floor below is even quieter.





In 2016 the Deloitte Tower was completed, replacing the remnant of the Accounting Building and making a final addition to the courtyard that had been developing for 35 years.





Also completed in 2016 was Tour des Canadiens 1, a condominium project that completed the development of the Windsor Station block first proposed over 25 years earlier.

The site is now surrounded by clusters of skyscrapers that were hardly imaginable in 1990.





Thank you for joining me on this visit.  
Comments and questions would be welcomed.  
For follow-up questions: [thomasd@shaw.ca](mailto:thomasd@shaw.ca)

