

3. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Address: 835-837 Beatty Street, Vancouver, B.C.
Historic Name: Anglo-Canadian Warehouse
Original Owner: Anglo-Canadian Warehouse Company
Architect: Wright, Rushforth & Cahill
Date of Construction: 1911

Description of the Historic Place

The two-storey brick Anglo-Canadian Warehouse is located on Beatty Street in downtown Vancouver. The building exhibits an industrial vernacular design as part of an enclave of warehouse buildings located within the northern fringe of Yaletown.

Heritage Value of the Historic Place

Constructed in 1911, the Anglo-Canadian Warehouse is valued for its connection to the early twentieth century warehouse development in downtown Vancouver; for its longstanding warehouse, and later, commercial function; and for its Edwardian-era industrial vernacular style, as designed by Wright, Rushforth & Cahill.

The Anglo-Canadian Warehouse is valued as one of the surviving original warehouses in downtown Vancouver. During the great economic expansion of the Edwardian era, numerous warehouses were constructed near False Creek on the downtown peninsula, due to the rail spurs that were laid by the Canadian Pacific Railway across its Yaletown land holdings. The spurs proved to be an effective determinant of the resulting urban form, as warehouses were designed with loading bays to transfer goods directly to and from the rail lines. While the spurs no longer exist, the intact warehouse district in Yaletown and along Beatty Street illustrate the height of downtown Vancouver's early and leading position as an ideal locale for the processing, repackaging, and warehousing of a wide variety of goods. The Anglo-Canadian Warehouse is part of a particularly significant block ('Block 68') of warehouses, exemplifying the area's connection to the rail lines. Block 68 was located at the northern terminus of the rail spurs, indicated by the large, 17-metre wide alley, which could accommodate two parallel spurs, servicing each side of the block.

The building is significant for its longstanding usage as a warehouse, beginning with its original owner and occupant, the Anglo-Canadian Warehouse Company, which remained here until the early 1930s. A succession of other transfer companies, manufacturers agents, and food distributors subsequently moved into the building through the 1950s. As industrial companies gradually moved into new suburban areas following the Second World War, central cities including Vancouver were left with excess warehouse space. The expansive floor plates and heights, as well as the general adaptability of these warehouses, however, made them suitable for a variety of commercial tenants, who would eventually call 835-837 Beatty Street home.

The Anglo-Canadian Warehouse is valued additionally for its Edwardian-era industrial vernacular architecture, as designed and constructed by the firm of Wright, Rushforth & Cahill, which was headquartered in San Francisco. In order to capitalize on the immense development boom occurring in Vancouver in the early 1910s, the firm decided to open a branch office in the city, headed by William T.S. Hoyt, and it undertook commissions in the rapidly growing city, such as Holly Lodge on Jervis Street. George Alexander Wright was known for his construction expertise and Bernard J.S. Cahill was understood as the designer in the partnership. The firm designed the Anglo-Canadian Warehouse in a style similar to those in the historic Yaletown district, with brick pilasters and lintels, as well as banks of wooden-sash, multi-pane windows.

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Character-Defining Elements

The elements that define the heritage character of the Anglo-Canadian Warehouse are its:

- location along Beatty Street, in downtown Vancouver, as part of the northern terminus of the historic rail spurs;
- continuous commercial use since 1911;
- siting at property lines;
- warehouse form, scale and massing, as expressed by its two-storey height (three at rear), flat roof and stepped roof line along the side elevation;
- masonry construction;
- Edwardian-era industrial vernacular architectural style including its brick pilasters separating the front façade into five bays, and arched brick lintels;
- original wooden-sash windows, including banks of single, double, and triple assemblies, each with multiple panes, with the ground floor side lane elevation windows also featuring brick sills;
- recessed front entryway, along with rear loading bays.