



HUDSON'S BAY CO. DEPARTMENT STORE 10230 - JASPER AVENUE

Description of Historic Place

The Hudson's Bay Company Department Store is a three-storey Tyndall stone and black granite commercial building occupying an entire block-face on Jasper Avenue in downtown Edmonton.

Heritage Value

The Hudson's Bay Company Department Store is significant because of its association with the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), which played an essential role in the early development of Edmonton. Having been established as an HBC fort, Edmonton's growth was integrally linked to the growth of the company. The 1939 building's large size reflected the company's later retail growth and its strong presence in the city's downtown until the store was closed in 1984. The HBC has also always had a store on this site prior to its move in 1984.

The HBC Department Store is also significant because it is a rare and excellent surviving example of the Moderne style of architecture in Edmonton. Founded on smooth, clean and simple lines, the style paid tribute to the emerging machine age, which reflected optimism for the future. The design of the store was meant not only to herald in the new age of technology, but also to ride the wave of success associated with the new style and the economic recovery of the late 1930s and 1940s which fostered it.

The HBC Department Store is also significant for its association with the



Winnipeg architectural firm of Moody & Moore, formed in 1936, which was among the first western Canadian firms to introduce the International Style to the Prairies. They designed the HBC Stores (both new buildings and additions) in Edmonton, Saskatoon, Regina, Winnipeg and elsewhere.

The Hudson's Bay Company Department Store is valued as a landmark along Jasper Avenue. The former building occupies an entire block-face with minimal setback, sparsely articulated walls and little fenestration above the ground floor, which contribute to the building's imposing appearance, despite its low horizontal massing. The large scale and prominent carvings on the building ornament the exterior and contribute to its monumental scale and presence.

The Hudson's Bay Company Department Store is also significant because of its association with architects Kelvin C. Stanley & Company, who designed the north addition in 1955. Stanley was recognized for his prominent modern designs in Edmonton, including the 1957 Edmonton City Hall. He later became Director of Structures for Expo 67 and Chief Architect for the

federal Department of Public Works in Ottawa.

Character Defining Elements

The Hudson's Bay Company Department Store is defined by elements such as its:

- form, scale and massing;
- minimal setback from the street;
- projecting Tyndall limestone panels with hand-carved historical figures above the entrances;
- black granite panels along the street level and flanking the projections above the main entrances;
- stainless steel entry doors;
- large display windows with stainless steel frames and low bulkheads;
- retractable canvas awnings with stainless steel casements;
- Tyndall limestone panels on the upper storeys, including decorative inset panels on the second floor;
- glass block windows on the second floor with stainless steel frames;
- angled corners of the south façade with "speed lines" and a multi-coloured Hudson's Bay Company emblem and inscription on the second floor and a multi-paned window on the third floor;
- stainless steel Hudson's Bay Company signs on the main floor.

