HISTORIC SITES AND MONUMENTS BOARD OF CANADA

RAILWAY STATION REPORT

Title: **Canadian National Railways Station**
Merritton, Ontario

Source: **Analytica Associates, Edmonton, Alberta**

RSR-230

INTRODUCTION

The Canadian National Railways (CNR) station (Figure 1) at Merritton, Ontario (Figure 2), was erected by the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada (GTR) in 1898. A replacement for an earlier station constructed at the town by an erstwhile rival, the Great Western Railway (GWR), before its amalgamation with the GTR, the Merritton GTR station was a product of the GTR's active commitment to the upgrading of its facilities in Ontario during a period of intense competition with other railway companies.

The Merritton station, which incorporates several unusual features into a standardized third-generation GTR station plan, reflects the significance of the town as a key railway junction and thriving manufacturing centre on the Welland Canal system, during the period of rapid economic development which transformed the "Golden Horseshoe" of southern Ontario a century ago.

While the original exterior appearance of the Merritton station has been fairly well preserved over the years, in its main features, many decorative details have disappeared. The interior has been extensively altered in successive renovations, and consequently is of less interest. Nevertheless, the building has received a heritage designation from the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture, based on its historical and contextual significance.

Though passenger and freight facilities have long since been removed, and a modern CN Servocentre has been constructed nearby, the Merritton station, for the time being, continues to be used by CN Track Maintenance, CN Signals and CNCP Telecommunications. Its long-term viability in this role remains in doubt, however, and the best guarantee of the building's future may be the concern for its preservation demonstrated by the local community.

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

Thematic

The Merritton station is particularly rich in associations with key themes in the economic history of Ontario during the half-century of rapid expansion in the province prior to the First World War. The Hamilton - Niagara Falls line on which it stands was opened by the GWR in 1853, and effectively marks the beginning of the steam railway age in the province.[1] Thereafter, the multiplication of competing railway lines transformed southern Ontario, linking it into the larger east-west pattern of continental trade, and playing a crucial role in the industrialization and urbanization of the region.[2] The Niagara Peninsula, strategically located between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario along established trading routes by land and water, became a focus for much early railway and industrial development.[3]

Steam railways came relatively late to Ontario, where there had been heavy investment in improvements to lake and canal routes through the Great Lakes in the first half of the 19th century.[4] It was the threat posed to these routes by the advance of American railways already operating south of the border which eventually touched off a railway-building boom in Canada in the 1850s. From the outset, the GWR, like its chief rival, the GTR, was promoted as a through line which would connect with the larger network of American railways to become an integral part of the main route between the Atlantic seaboard and the burgeoning mid-West.[5] Running from the Niagara River, via Hamilton, to Windsor and Sarnia, the GWR route was substantially shorter than the American alternative around the southern shore of Lake Erie, and offered excellent connections with railways in both Michigan and New York. The GTR, with an eastern terminus on the Atlantic, connected Montréal with Toronto and Sarnia, in direct competition with the GWR both for the trade of the peninsula and for American transfer traffic.[6]

For almost 30 years the rivalry of the GWR and GTR was played out in southern Ontario as the two companies, and a host of smaller competitors, strove to generate sufficient traffic along their respective lines to stave off financial ruin. The building boom of the 1850s provided the region with more lines than it needed, "and more than it could afford,"[7] yet public expectations of the railways ran so high that the provincial government and many municipalities incurred massive financial obligations to subsidize construction of new lines.[8] In the Niagara Peninsula, the GWR main line, which followed an east-west route north of the Escarpment, was paralleled to the south of the Escarpment by the Buffalo and Lake Huron Railway, the Canada Southern, and the GWR's own "Air Line" Railway, converging on Fort Erie and Buffalo (Figure 3). In the end, the unprofitable duplication of through service led to crippling rate wars and, by the 1880s, to the

merger of all of these lines, except the Canada Southern (Michigan Central), into the GTR System.[9]

Meanwhile, shorter railways were also built north to south across the Niagara Peninsula. The continuing need for improved communications between the upper lakes and Lake Ontario, which led to the opening of a portage road between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario in the 1780s, the First Welland Canal in the 1820s, and the Second Welland Canal in the 1840s, resulted in the construction of a "portage railway" over the Escarpment in the 1850s.[10] Backed by subsidies from the town of St. Catharines, the Welland Railway (WR), connecting Port Dalhousie on Lake Ontario with Port Colborne on Lake Erie, was opened in 1859. For much of its length, the WR ran parallel to the Second Welland Canal along its eastern bank, and served as an auxiliary to it, sharing loads too heavy to traverse the shallow draft of the locks.[11] In the 1870s, with the construction of the Third Welland Canal over a new route, the role of the WR changed and took on new significance, as it provided an important stimulus to the industries which proceeded to develop along the stretch of the abandoned Second Canal from Thorold through Merritton to St. Catharines.[12]

Near Merritton, where the GWR main line crossed over the Second Canal, the WR crossed over the GWR (Figure 3). However, while the GWR leased running rights over part of the WR, the two railways did not interconnect directly until the late 1870s, when a link became necessary to facilitate work on the Third Canal.[13] Freight service on the WR thereafter improved, and considerable local traffic was generated, but loss of through traffic to the Third Canal and other routes undermined the railway's financial position, and finally led to the sale of the WR to the GTR in 1884.[14] With the earlier takeover of the GWR by the GTR, the American-owned Canada Southern remained the GTR's sole major competitor in the Niagara Peninsula until the opening of the Toronto, Hamilton and Buffalo Railway (TH&B) in 1896 broke new ground with a shorter, transverse route (northwest to southeast) between Hamilton and Buffalo via Welland.[15] The TH&B was owned jointly by the Canada Southern/ Michigan Central/New York Central system and the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), the latter already a growing threat to the GTR's dominance in southern Ontario.

In the era of rapid economic expansion in Canada before 1914, the policies pursued by the GTR, under the dynamic leadership of charles Melville Hays, were dictated by its rivalry with the CPR. Despite its precarious finances, the GTR moved to protect its territory from the CPR's depradations by acquiring a number of smaller lines and undertaking major improvements to physical assets and facilities throughout its system as traffic increased. Double- tracking began on the GTR main line in 1888, and gradually was extended. Faster, heavier rolling stock was purchased, curves and gradients on the tracks were reduced, and many stations, including Merritton's, were rebuilt in this period, as industrialization and urbanization transformed the economy of southern Ontario.[16]

A new railway boom ensued as the GTR upgraded its system in eastern Canada and, through a subsidiary, the Grand Trunk Pacific (GTPR), began construction on a transcontinental line of its own, to compete with the CPR and Canadian Northern (CNoR) routes to the Canadian West. The costs of the transcontinental project eventually ruined the company, and after World War I it was merged with the CNoR as part of the government-owned Canadian National Railways (CNR) system, which still operates over the GWR and GTR routes in Ontario. Though passenger service has been discontinued, Merritton station, a survival from the pre-1914 boom era, is still in use today, housing CN Track Maintenance, CN Signals, and CN/CP Telecommunications equipment.

Local Development

Though settlement in the vicinity of Merritton dates back to the arrival of United Empire Loyalists in Grantham Township in the 1780s, sustained development only began with the construction of the First Welland Canal, which opened in 1829.[16] Conceived and promoted by the St. Catharines mill-owner, William Hamilton Merritt, as a response to the evolving transportation requirements of the Niagara Peninsula, and to meet the challenge to Canadian trading routes posed by the American Erie Canal, the First Welland Canal and its successor gave rise to a string of bankside settlements.[17] The Canal offered not only a trading outlet, but, with its hydraulic raceway and locks, a source of water power, and by the 1840s a series of small milling operations formed a fledgling "industrial corridor" along the northern length of the canal system, from the Escarpment to Lake Ontario.[18] In 1850, four of the canal communities in the corridor, Centreville, Westport, Protestant Hill and Slabtown, amalgamated as Welland City, later renamed Merritton.[19]

Despite its proximity to St. Catharines, less than five miles to the northwest, Merritton developed independently, as a separate entity, competing with the larger centre for industrial and railway facilities.[20] A crucial factor in the early growth of the town was the establishment of the Welland Canal Loan Company in 1850, and its purchase of over 500 acres of land on both sides of the Second Canal at Merritton, "to found an industrial area and develop water power."[21] Further stimulus to development was provided by the arrival in 1853 of the GWR main line, which crossed the Canal at Merritton, and afforded the town, as a contemporary advertisement enthusiastically observed, "uninterrupted communication from the seaboard to the Western States and Canada, by land or water, throughout the year, altogether forming a combination of advantages to the Manufacturer, Miller, Mechanic or Man-of-business, not exceeded, if equalled, in any other locality."[22] The opening in 1859 of a second railway, the WR, parallel to the Canal on a north-south axis, reinforced Merritton's status as the chief railway junction point in the area (Figures 3 and 4), at the expense of St. Catharines, which was "effectively by-passed" by both lines.[23]

With the multiple advantages of rail and canal access, and the availability of plentiful supplies of water and water power, the industrial corridor along the stretch of the Second Canal from Thorold through Merritton to St. Catharines grew into "a major centre of manufacturing activities" in the second half of the 19th century.[24] The first cotton mill was built at Merritton in 1856, and a number of other factories of various types were established near the Canal in the 1850s and 1860s, but the most significant development was the opening of John Riordon's paper mill on the east side of the Canal at Merritton in 1863. Riordon, "the father of the Canadian pulp and paper industry," pioneered the sulphite pulping process which created a new demand for softwood as a raw material for the papermaking industry.[25] The Riordon paper mills would become the largest in Canada and, following Riordon's lead in recognizing the industrial potential of the Thorold - Merritton strip, half a dozen other paper mills were constructed in the same area before 1914.[26] The presence of the railways helped to consolidate this expansion, and when the Third Welland Canal was constructed along a different route in the 1870s, "industry did not follow the line of the new canal," but continued to develop near the railway line on the abandoned waterway.[27]

With its thriving industrial base, Merritton was sufficiently prosperous to warrant incorporation as a village in 1874. The continuing development of local industries in the 1880s and 1890s was closely linked to the excellent rail connections provided by the GTR system, which had absorbed both the GWR and the WR. Generating valuable local traffic, Merritton was an obvious candidate for a replacement station when the GTR undertook a system-wide upgrading of its lines and facilities in the 1890s. The station constructed in 1898 was to play an important part in the rapid growth of the town prior to the First World War; the larger passenger and freight facilities being required to meet the increased volume of traffic over the expanded GTR system in the pre-war boom years. Thereafter, in the face of growing competition from automobiles, buses and trucks operating over much-improved roads, the role of the railway and the station at Merritton gradually declined, though rail transportation long continued to underpin the town's economy.

Interurban electric railway service in the Niagara Peninsula had begun as early as 1887,[28] and though from the outset this was primarily a passenger operation, the takeover of the electric lines by the CNoR in 1908 led to competition with the GTR for freight traffic. Industrial spurs were constructed, including one to serve the paper industry at Merritton.[29] After the First World War, with the amalgamation of both the CNoR and the GTR into the CNR, the electric lines shared local traffic into the Peninsula with CNR steam trains. In 1924-25, the CNR electrified parts of the old WR line as well as four tracks in the yard at Merritton station.[30] The electric railway system continued in service until 1960, when it was converted to CNR diesel operations.

The population of Merritton more than doubled between 1875 and 1921,[31] and it was incorporated as a town in 1918. The pulp and paper industry continued to be the mainstay of the local economy, and sustained it through the Depression years.[32] In the decade after the Second World War, the population doubled again, and the town was forced to expand its boundaries.[33] In 1961, despite fierce opposition in Merritton, the burgeoning City of St. Catharines amalgamated with the towns of Merritton and Port Dalhousie, ending the independent existence of "the Factory Town."[34] The GTR station stands as a surviving link with the historical development of the community along the Canal, which played so important a role in the economic history of the region.

ARCHITECTURE

Aesthetic/Visual Qualities

The GWR constructed the first depot at Merritton in the early 1850s; the WR station was erected somewhat later, to the company's standard plan.[35] A more substantial GWR station, a two-storey, frame structure which included living quarters for the station master and his family (Figure 5), was built in 1880, and continued in service after the merger with the GTR until 1898.[36] The stately design and relative spaciousness of this GWR station are an indication of the growing importance of Merritton as a railway junction and burgeoning industrial centre in the last quarter of the 19th century. The standardized plans for this building were drawn up in the GWR Engineers' Office and signed by the Chief Engineer, Joseph Hobson, who retained that position within the newly-created Great Western Division of the GTR after 1882.[37] It is probable that the same Divisional Engineers' Office also was responsible for the standard station plan which the GTR adapted in designing the replacement station erected at Merritton in 1898, as part of a system-wide programme of improvements to the company's facilities in the decades prior to 1914.

Unlike the imposing stone or brick stations built on the Montréal-Toronto main line in the 1850s, most later GTR stations built west of Toronto were of frame construction, "like those of other contemporary railways."[38] Yet these frame structures were not without visual interest. The third generation of GTR stations in Ontario, dating from the last decade of the 19th century up to the First World War, exhibit in varying degrees that combination of "structural rationalism and visual romanticism" ascribed by architectural historians to a wide range of buildings of the period.[39] The gabled, bellcast hip roofs and deep-set eaves of the Merritton design (Figures 1 and 6), for example, are typical of a number of boom era GTR stations, and impart to these rather simple, functional structures a characteristic profile of some complexity, though with significant variations in detail from station to station.

The Merritton plan exhibits particularly close stylistic affinities with designs for Parkdale (constructed 1885; Figure 7) and Ingersoll, Ontario (1889; RSR 199, Figure 8),[40] and appears to derive from the same stock GTR plan as these earlier examples.

Whatever its antecedents, the basic formula focuses attention on the roofline of these buildings. The Parkdale and Merritton plans both incorporate a combination of heavy hipped roofs and decorated gables at different levels, which produces the GTR trademark silhouette, readily identifiable from a distance (Figures 1, 6 and 7). In each case, the roof of the main body of the building is bisected by prominent, transverse gables above the bay windows, and extended at either end by lower, narrower, gabled hip roofs, which reinforce the horizontal emphasis of the design (Figure 9). At Merritton, these lower roofs, supported on slender wooden posts, originally served to create graceful, open canopied shelters (Figures 6 and 10), which measured approximately 16' wide x 24' long, at each end of the building.[41] With these canopies, the Merritton station stretches in total almost 130' in length, as against a maximum width of about 25', and the impression of elongation conveyed by the original design has been further accentuated by the more recent enclosure of the shelters to form continuous, integral parts of the building (Figures 1, 9, 11 and 12).[42]

Like many GTR depots of the same vintage, the Merritton station originally had light-hued wooden roof shingles and board-and-batten exterior walls, set off by a much darker coloured base and trim (Figure 6). From the outset, the visual impact of the distinctive roofline at Merritton was heightened by conspicuous ornamented metal roof ridges, and by the common practice of painting the station's name in oversized white letters directly on the roof at both ends of the building, for added visibility up and down the track (Figure 6). Moreover, the exterior of the station, as built, was remarkable for a variety of picturesque embellishments, such as the highly ornate windows and decorative woodwork in the gables (Figures 6 and 13), the latter also a feature at Parkdale (Figure 7). Other noteworthy exterior details in the original design for Merritton include the series of unusually large and well-wrought wooden brackets intended to support the heavy eaves (Figure 14), and also to be found framing the unique station name-board under the south side cross gable (Figure 13). Taken as a whole, in fact, the architecture of the Merritton building, as well as its size, confirm that this was no ordinary country station, and underscore the GTR's confidence in the future prospects of this small but well-placed railway hub, which also had begun to generate valuable local traffic.

Inevitably, some features of the exterior appearance of the Merritton station have been altered since 1898, the most significant change being the walling in of the canopied shelters, which occurred in stages, mostly after 1944. This has resulted in the addition and relocation of a number of doors to

accommodate the successive extensions to the building.[43] The overall effect of these piecemeal alterations has been to disturb the elegant balance of the original; this imparts a ramshackle quality to the present structure, which now seems over-long (Figure 9). However,the original fenestration, notable for hexagonal bays on both north and south facades, has survived almost intact, only a few end windows having been lost in the enclosure of the shelters. The ornate window under the north side gable is still visible; its counterpart on the south side has been boarded over (Figures 15 and 16); all of the other windows have been encased in protective wire mesh.

Over the years, there have been other, largely cosmetic, changes to the exterior of the station, which have shorn it of much of its original decoration. The woodwork detail under the side and end gables has all been removed, as have the ornamented roof ridges and distinctive station name board. Dark asphalt tiles have long since replaced the original wooden roof shingles. The application of insulbrick, in varying shades of red, has obscured all traces of the original wooden siding along the main body of the station. Insulbrick has also been applied under the gables and on the east end extension; the more recent extension at the west end is clad only in grey-painted sheets of plywood (Figures 12 and 17). In the end, with the disappearance of so many elements of its original decorative scheme, the station's exterior appearance has been rendered relatively anonymous; nevertheless, it continues to convey something of the flavour of the 1898 plans, especially at the roofline.

The general condition of the exterior of the building is still fairly good, though there are obvious signs of wear and tear on the insulbrick, and the eaves, canopy brackets and several doors urgently require painting (Figures 14, 16 and 18). The asphalt shingles covering the roof are in poor condition in several areas and need to be replaced (Figure 19).

Functional/Technological Qualities

Built at grade on timber foundations, without a basement, the Merritton station is a one-storey structure. Unlike its GWR predecessor, it did not include living quarters for the station agent and his family, but as a "combination station" it was designed to provide both passenger and baggage/express facilities, as well as operational and general offices. In practice, however, the functional division of space inside the station did not remain static, but continued to evolve over the years in response to shifting traffic patterns and the changing requirements of the railway.

While the original floor plan does not appear to have survived, it is reasonable to assume that the inclusion of central bay windows on both sides of the station was intended to provide the operator with a clear view up and down each of the separate sets of tracks (of the Welland and Great Western Divisions), running

to the north and to the south of the building. Yet, by the 1940s, the south side bay alone continued to be used by the operator; the north side bay had been enclosed to create a ladies' waiting room (9' x 12'), opening on to the much larger, general waiting room (24' x 24'), immediately to the west (Figure 20). At the east end, the general office area (22' x 24') was subdivided to make room for the ladies' toilet as well as a small conductors' room next to the agent's office. At the west end, the baggage, express and bond rooms, as well as a coal storage area, were replaced by an expanded express office and express truck warehouse, complete with an overhead end door (Figure 20). Meanwhile, the enclosure, in stages, of the canopied shelter at the east end provided much-needed new space for coal storage and baggage facilities.

All of these changes in the original configuration of space within the depot inevitably necessitated extensive modification of the interior walls, doors, floors and fittings in the station, as is evident from the plans drawn up by the CNR in 1945 (Figure 20). Moreover, the floor plan has continued to evolve, in the years since the Second World War, to meet the changing needs of the railway resulting from the decline of passenger and freight traffic and the eventual termination of all passenger services at Merritton. Thus, for example, the open canopied shelter at the west end of the building has been walled in, albeit in a rudimentary fashion (Figure 21), to accommodate track maintenance equipment. This has stranded the former west end overhead door within the enclosed shelter, where it serves no practical purpose; access to the track is now provided by double doors on the south facade (Figure 22). With the final removal of all passenger, baggage and express facilities, the largest part of the station, from the central bays to the west end, is now occupied by CN Track Maintenance, while the east end of the building, blocked off from the rest, accommodates CNCP Telecommunications and CN Signals equipment.[44] The station presently remains open, on a limited basis, despite the construction of a modern CN Servocentre immediately to the west along the tracks, in 1974.[46] The Servocentre contains the operator's room for the still-active Merritton yard, as well as crew facilities and railway offices.[45]

In the end, successive renovations and refits of Merritton station have obliterated almost all vestiges of its original interior appearance. Some of the older walls, in the former express office, have been painted in contrasting shades of green so as to simulate a high, Victorian dado (Figure 23), and while the effect seems authentic, there is no hard evidence of any kind concerning such details. While several blocked off door openings can still be seen inside the station (Figure 24), most interior partition walls, doors and floors probably date back no further than the 1940s. The hardwood floor in the former express office was laid in 1945.[46] In recent years, there have been sporadic attempts to modernize the building; fluorescent lighting has been installed in several rooms, and, as recently as five years ago,

some parts of the station, which is heated by a series of stoves (Figures 23 and 24), were insulated. The most significant feature of the 1898 design still visible inside the building is the ceiling of the walled-in shelter at the west end, with the distinctive bracing system of the original canopy being particularly well-preserved (Figure 21). Otherwise, the station's interior contains relatively little historic fabric.[47]

While functional station fittings such as the oversized operator's table and the ticket counter and wicket have disappeared, the interior of the Merritton station has been fairly well-maintained, and is in good condition, for the most part, although the floors in the central bay area and former waiting room have deteriorated.

ENVIRONMENT

Setting

The Merritton CNR station is located just north of the intersection of Walnut and Bessey Streets in a largely residential section of what is now the Merritton ward in the City of St. Catharines. Situated along the original GWR right-of-way, on land sold to the GWR by William Hamilton Merritt himself, the station stands about a quarter of a mile east of the site of the depot erected by the GWR next to the Second Welland Canal in 1880 (Figures 25 and 26). The GTR's decision to relocate to the new site, at some distance from the Canal and its industries, is explained by the need to provide access to both the old GWR main line and the tracks of the former WR, which run almost parallel to one another at this point before diverging sharply (Figures 4 and 26). Thus, from the outset the station has been set apart on a narrow strip between two sets of tracks (Figures 27 and 28), those of the Great Western Division to the south, those of the Welland Division to the north.

The breadth of the railway yards also has contributed to the isolation of the station from the surrounding town over the years, though the residential streets to the south are visible beyond the tree-lined embankment (Figures 27, 28 and 29). To the north of the station, the sidings constitute an impenetrable barrier. To the west, a large railway water tower (Figure 6) was once a landmark (later shifted to the other side of the station), but this became obsolete with the dieselization of the CNR's Central Region, in 1959.[48] A parking lot, various railway outbuildings, and the modern CN Servocentre, clad in corrugated metal siding, now adjoin the station on the west (Figure 30). A redbrick church with a prominent steeple remains visible some yards further to the northwest (Figure 28). An old bridge over the tracks can be seen to the southwest, at Merritt Street (Figure 28). Immediately to the east of the station, there

stands a small metal shed housing electrical equipment, and beyond it a gabled storage shed, its red insulbrick siding echoing that of the station. Further east, a large open area stretches along the right-of-way (Figure 31), but the steep grade of the Niagara Escarpment, which creates an extremely difficult climb for trains bound for Thorold, only three miles away, is out of sight to the southeast.[49]

Community Status

For the time being, the Merritton station remains open, on a limited basis, despite published reports that it might be slated for closure and removal by the railway.[50] Though no final decision appears to have been taken yet regarding the building's future, there is evidence that the local community is aware of its historical importance and is committed to its preservation.[51] A report on the station was prepared for the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC) of St. Catharines as long ago as 1977,[52] and an article concerning its history appeared in the St. Catharines Standard in 1983.[53] The Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture has designated the building a Class C Heritage Site, that is, "historically and contextually significant."[54] While the future of the station remains uncertain, its best guarantee is likely to be the community's continuing interest in its history.

Endnotes

1 A. W. Currie, The Grand Trunk Railway of Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), pp. 161-163. See also C. A. Andreae, A Historical Railway Atlas of Southwestern Ontario (London, Ontario: The Author, 1972), pp. 5-6.

2 G. P. de T. Glazebrook, A History of Transportation in Canada (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1938), pp. 166-172. See also Douglas McCalla, Planting the Province: The Economic History of Upper Canada, 1784-1870 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), pp. 201-215; W. Randy Smith, Aspects of Growth in a Regional Urban System: Southern Ontario, 1851-1921 (Downsview, Ontario: York University, Department of Geography, 1982), pp. 106-119; and Donald Kerr, "The Emergence of the Industrial Heartland, c. 1750-1950," in L. D. McCann, ed., Heartland and Hinterland: A Geography of Canada (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall, 1987), pp. 71-81.

3 John N. Jackson, "The Niagara Peninsula: The Progressive Creation of Landscape," in Nick and Helma Mika, comp., The Shaping of Ontario From Exploration to Confederation (Belleville, Ontario: Mika Publishing, 1985), pp. 94-101.

4 John N. Jackson and John Burtniak, Railways in the Niagara Peninsula: Their Development, Progress and Community Significance (Belleville, Ontario: Mika Publishing, 1978), pp. 17-19, 25. See also John N. Jackson and Sheila M. Wilson, St. Catharines, Canada's Canal City (St. Catharines, Ontario: The Standard, 1992), p. 42; and Glazebrook, op. cit., p. 85.

5 Glazebrook, op. cit., p. 166.

6 Currie, op. cit., p. 165.

7 Joseph Schull, Ontario Since 1867 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1978), p. 24.

8 Glazebrook, op. cit., p. 175.

9 Currie, op. cit., pp. 218-245. See also Glazebrook, op. cit., pp. 288-289; Wayne Paddon, Steam and Petticoats: The Railway Era in Southwestern Ontario (St. Thomas, Ontario: The Author, 1977), pp. 78-81; and Robert W. Camm, "History of the Great Western Railway," (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1947), passim.

10 Jackson and Wilson, op. cit., pp. 87-88. See also Jackson and Burtniak, op. cit., pp. 59-91.

11 Jackson and Burtniak, op. cit., pp. 59, 67-73, 89.

12 Ibid., pp. 87-89. See also Jackson and Wilson, op. cit., p. 90.

13 Jackson and Burtniak, p. 83.

14 Ibid., p. 89.

15 Norman S. Helm, In the Shadow of Giants: The Story of the Toronto, Hamilton and Buffalo Railway (Cheltenham, Ontario: Boston Mills Press, 1978), pp. 20-22, 35-36, 44-53, 68-69. See also Currie, op. cit., p. 379.

16 Jackson and Burtniak, op. cit., p. 19.

17 Jackson, "Progressive Creation of Landscape," p. 97.

18 Jackson and Wilson, op. cit., p. 53. See also John N. Jackson, St. Catharines Its Early Years (Belleville, Ontario: Mika, 1976), pp. 218, 236; and Lincoln County, 1856-1956 (St. Catharines: Lincoln County Council, 1956), 95.

19 Nick Mika, Places in Ontario, Part II (Belleville, Ontario: Mika Publishing, 1981), p. 657. See also Merritton Centennial, 1874-1974 (St. Catharines, Ontario: The Standard, 1974), unpaginated; and Jackson and Wilson, op. cit., p. 137. Confusingly, in the 1850s, while present-day Merritton was known as Welland City, present-day Welland was called Merrittsville. The exchange of names appears to have occurred in 1858.

20 Jackson and Wilson, op. cit., pp. 86, 137.

21 Jackson and Burtniak, op. cit., p. 182. See also Merritton Centennial, loc. cit.

22 St. Catharines Journal, 4 October 1855, cited in Jackson and Burtniak, op. cit., p. 183.

23 Jackson and Burtniak, op. cit., pp. 177-183.

24 Jackson and Wilson, op. cit., p. 90.

25 Jackson and Burtniak, op. cit., p. 88. See also J. A. Blyth, "The Development of the Paper Industry in Old Ontario,1824-1867," Ontario History 62 (1970), p. 131.

26 Jackson and Burtniak, op. cit., p. 88.

27 Jackson and Wilson, op. cit., pp. 96-97, 133. See also Jackson and Burtniak, op. cit., pp. 87-88.

28 John M. Mills, History of the Niagara, St. Catharines and Toronto Railway (Toronto: Upper Canada Railway Society and Ontario Electric Railway Historical Association, 1967), pp. 3-7. See also Jackson and Burtniak, op. cit., pp. 123-127; and John N. Jackson, "St. Catharines," (Unpublished MS, Historical Society of St. Catharines, 1984), p. 21.

29 Mills, op. cit., p. 69.

30 Ibid., pp. 27, 70.

31 Town of Merritton: 75th Anniversary," (s.l., s.n., 1949), unpaginated.

32 St. Catharines Centennial History (St. Catharines, Ontario, 1967), p. 32.

33 Jackson and Wilson, op. cit., p. 324.

34 Ibid., p. 325.

35 Jackson and Burtniak, op. cit., pp. 82, 84.

36 Jackson and Wilson, op. cit., p. 86. The GWR station constructed in 1880 eventually was demolished in 1937.

37 Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, "VIA Rail/Former Canadian National Railways Station, Ingersoll, Ontario," Railway Station Report (RSR) 199 (1992), p. 38.

38 R. Greenhill, K. Macpherson and D. Richardson, Ontario Towns (Toronto: Oberon, 1974), unpaginated.

39 Ibid.

40 Elizabeth A. Willmot, Meet Me at the Station (Agincourt, Ontario: Gage, 1976), pp. 72-73. See also RSR-199, p. 41.

41 CNR, Central Region, Grimsby Subdivision, "Merritton, Plan of Station," 11 October 1944.

42 CNR, Central Region, Office of the Chief Engineer, Toronto, "Proposed Alterations, Station Building, Merritton Ontario, Plan, Elevations," 7 May 1945.

43 Ibid.

44 Mr. Dan Ash, CN Track Supervisor, Merritton, in conversation with the author, 13 December 1993.

45 CNR, "Servocentre, Merritton, Ontario," floor plan, as built, 25 November 1974.

46 "Proposed Alterations," 7 May 1945.

47 A similar conclusion was reached in 1987 by researchers preparing an inventory of Ontario's heritage railway stations for the Ontario Heritage Foundation (OHF) and the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture (MCC). See OHF and MCC, "Planning for Heritage Railway Stations, Volume 2, Inventory," (Unpublished MS, February 1987), "Merritton."

48 Andrew Panko and Peter Bowen, Steam in Niagara (Fonthill, Ontario: Niagara Rail Publications, 1983), pp. 45, 98.

49 Ibid., pp. 12-13, 25.

50 Ibid., p. 98.

51 Mr. Arden Phair, Senior Curator, St. Catharines Historical Museum, in a letter to the author, 2 February 1994. Mr. Phair observes that in St. Catharines, "three important railway buildings" have been lost in the past ten years, and expresses the hope that a study pointing out "the national importance of the Merritton station within the context of our local community will help prevent further losses."

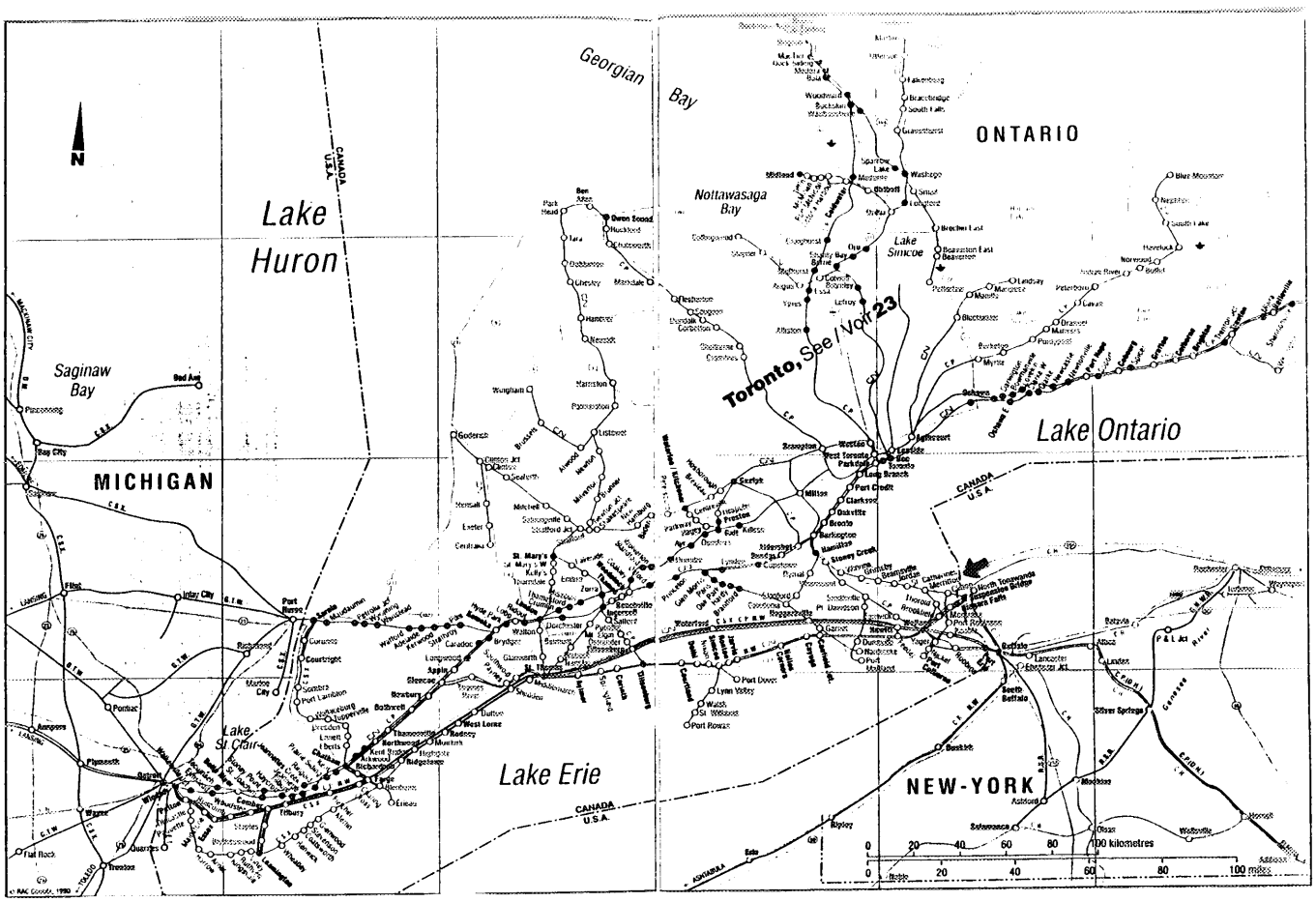
52 St. Catharines LACAC, "Architectural and Historical Buildings, St. Catharines, Ontario," (Unpublished MS, 1977).

53 "Glimpses Into Our Past, #98," St. Catharines Standard, Saturday, 10 September 1983.

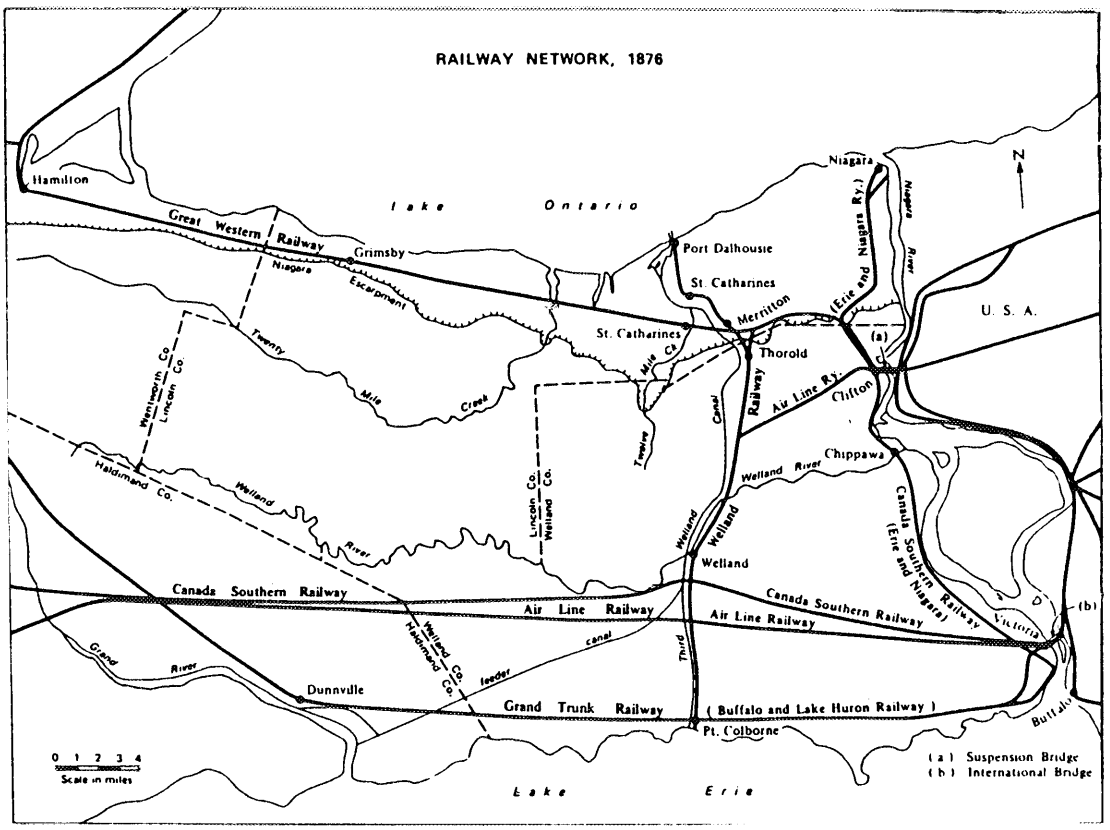
54 OHF and MCC, "Inventory," loc. cit.

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS STATION, MERRITTON, ONTARIO

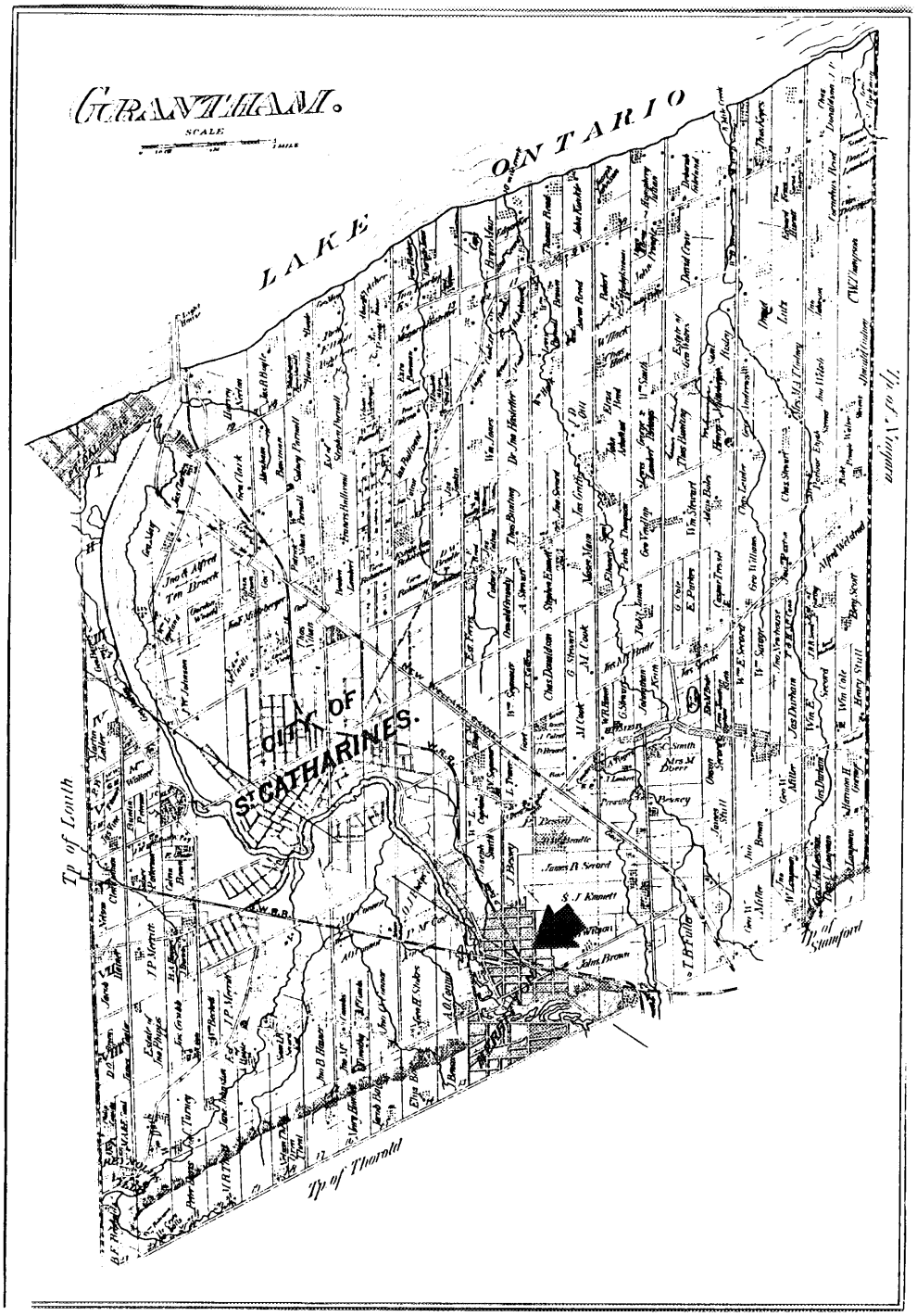
1 Canadian National Railways (CNR) station, Merritton, Ontario, built by the Grand Trunk Railway (GTR) in 1898, to a design adapted from a standard plan. South side elevation, showing characteristic roofline, with gabled, bellcast hipped roofs, and transverse central gable. (John L. Nicholls, Analytica Associates, 1993.)



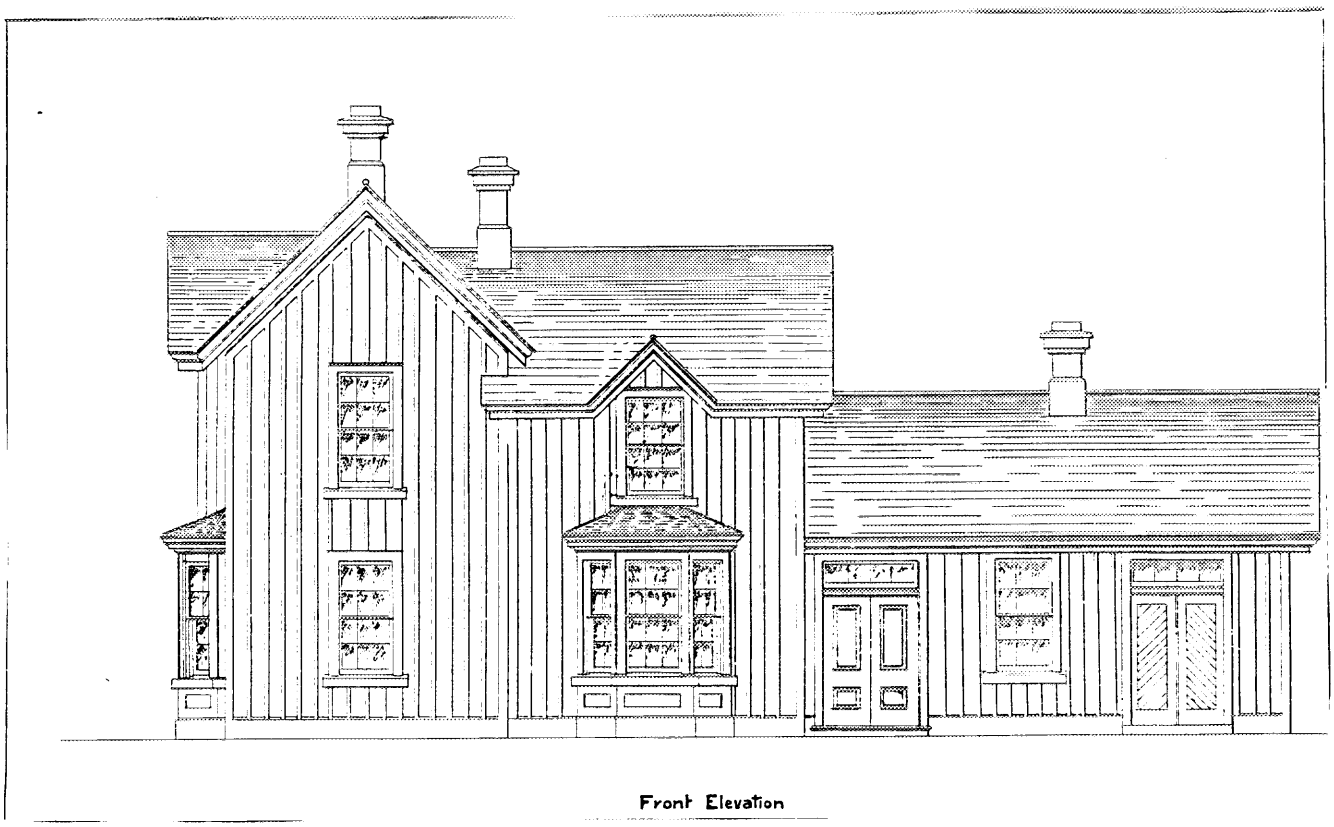
2 Railway map of south-central Ontario, 1990, detail showing location of Merritton. (Reproduced from Railway Association of Canada, Atlas: Canadian Railways, pp. 26-27.)



3 Map of the railway network of the Niagara Peninsula, 1876, showing the Welland Railway (WR) line crossing the Great Western Railway (GWR) main line, and the GWR line crossing the Welland Canal, at Merritton. (Reproduced from John N. Jackson and John Burtniak, Railways in the Niagara Peninsula, p. 29.)



4 Map of Grantham Township, 1876, showing the position of the GWR and WR lines, and the new Third Welland Canal, north from Merritton. (Reproduced from H. R. Page, comp., Illustrated Historical Atlas of the Counties of Lincoln and Welland, p. 42.)



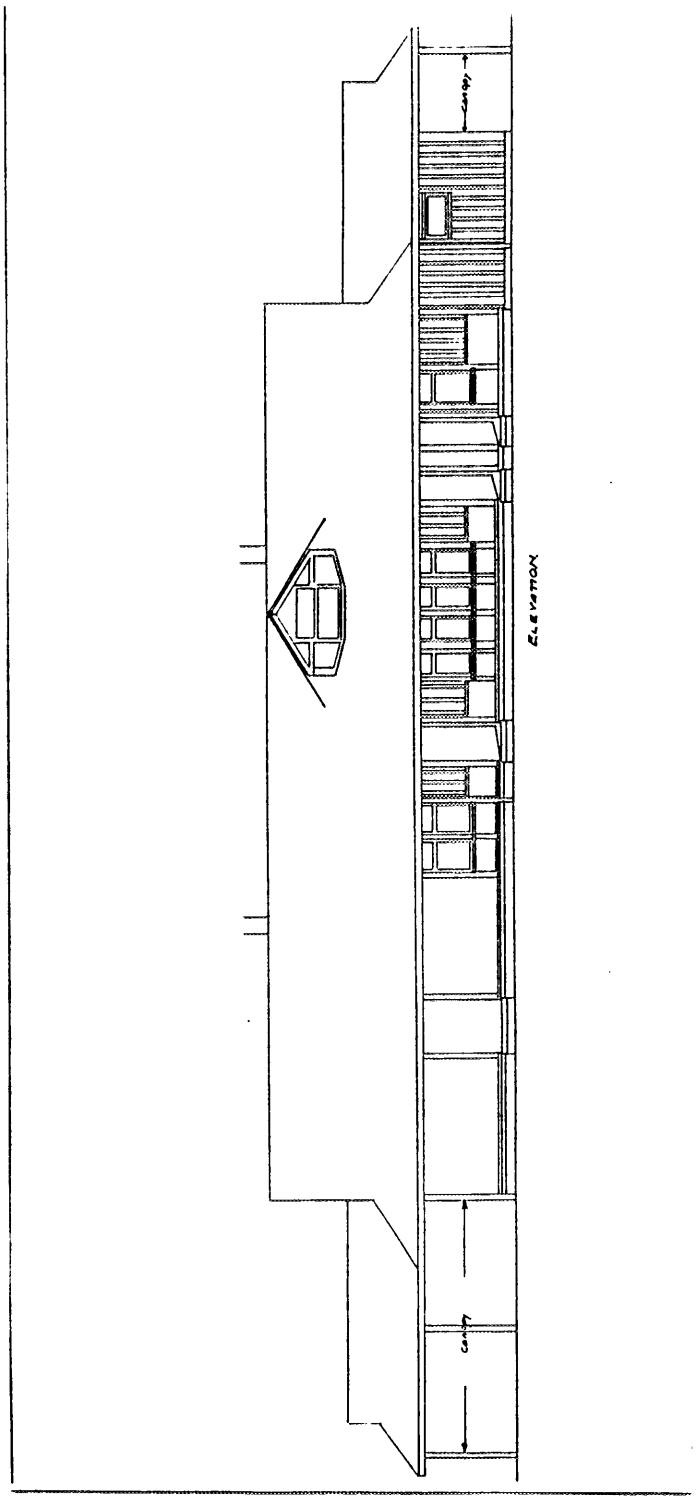
5 GWR station, Merritton, front elevation, drawing prepared in the GWR Engineer's Office, 11 February 1880; constructed in 1880, this station continued in active service until 1898, and finally was demolished in 1937. (National Archives of Canada, National Map Collection, RG30M Accession 78903/42/418, NMC 96791.)

6 GTR station, Merritton, three quarter view from the southeast, showing original finish, trademark gabled, bellcast hipped roof and deep eaves, open canopied shelters supported by wooden posts at either end of the building, and prominent water tower further to the west, no date, ca. 1900. (St. Catharines Historical Museum, N-1924.)

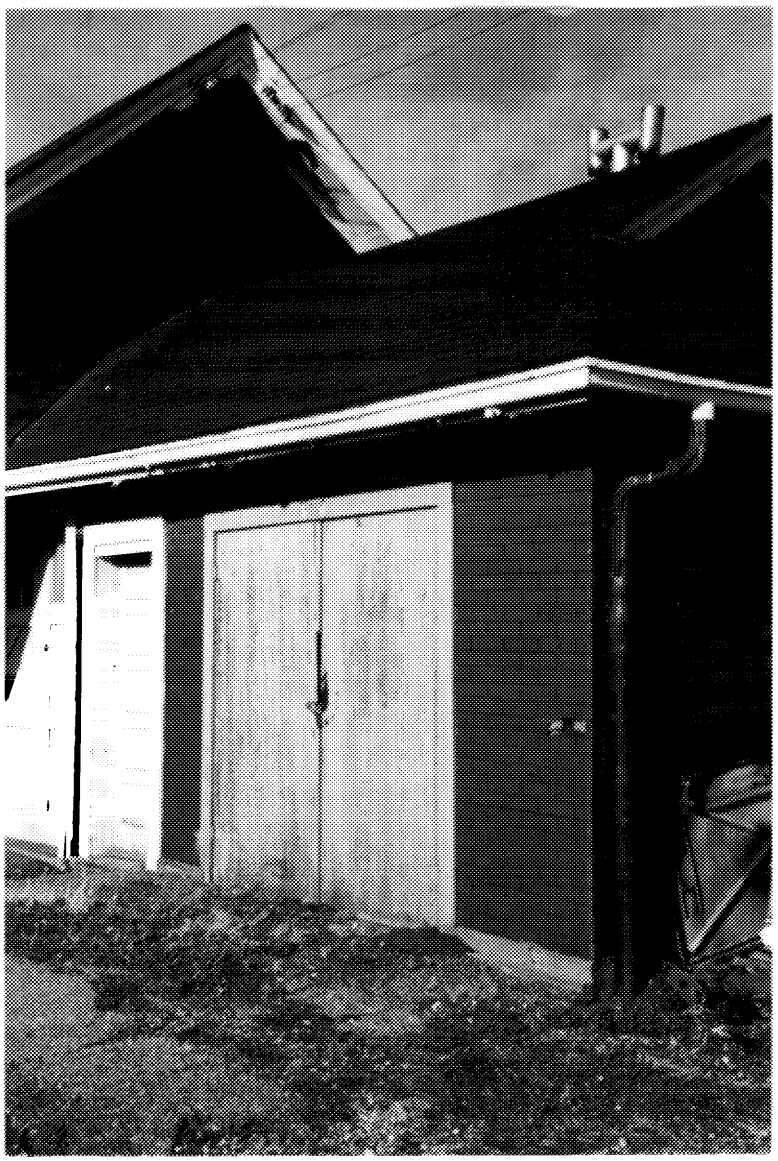
7 CNR station, Parkdale, Ontario, constructed by the GTR in 1885, demolished in 1976, track side elevation, showing similarities to Merritton station in basic design, especially at the roofline, no date. (Reproduced from Elizabeth A. Willmot, Meet Me at the Station, p. 73.)

8 CNR station, Ingersoll, Ontario, built in 1889, later remodelled, track side elevation, 1889, showing similarities with the later Merritton station plan, especially in characteristic roofline. (Reproduced from Elizabeth A. Wilmott, Faces and Places Along the Railway, p. 115.)

9 CNR station, Merritton, south side elevation, from Bessey Street, showing enclosed canopied shelters, originally open, at east and west ends of the building, creating an impression of elongation avoided in the 1898 design. (John L. Nicholls, Analytica Associates, 1993.)



10 CNR station, Merritton, south side elevation, drawing showing open canopied shelter at the west end, and partially enclosed shelter at the east end, 11 October 1944. (Courtesy of CN Engineering, Toronto, redrawn by Barbara L. Johnston, Analytica Associates, 1994.)



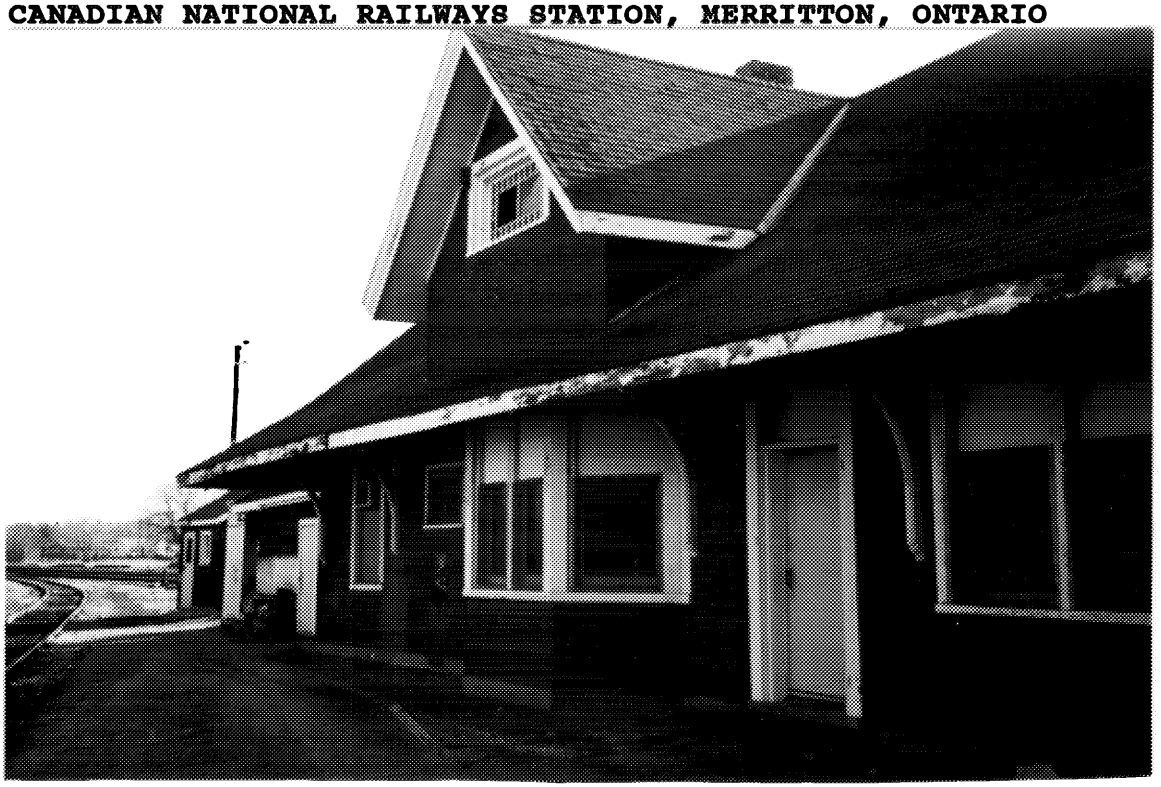
11 CNR station, Merritton, south side elevation, detail of canopied shelter at the east end, formerly open, walled in to become an integral part of the building, post-World War II, now clad in red insulbrick. (John L. Nicholls, Analytica Associates, 1993.)

12 CNR station, Merritton, south side elevation, three quarter view from the southwest, showing canopied shelter at the west end, formerly open, walled in to become an integral part of the building, post-World War II, clad only in sheets of plywood. (John L. Nicholls, Analytica Associates, 1993.)

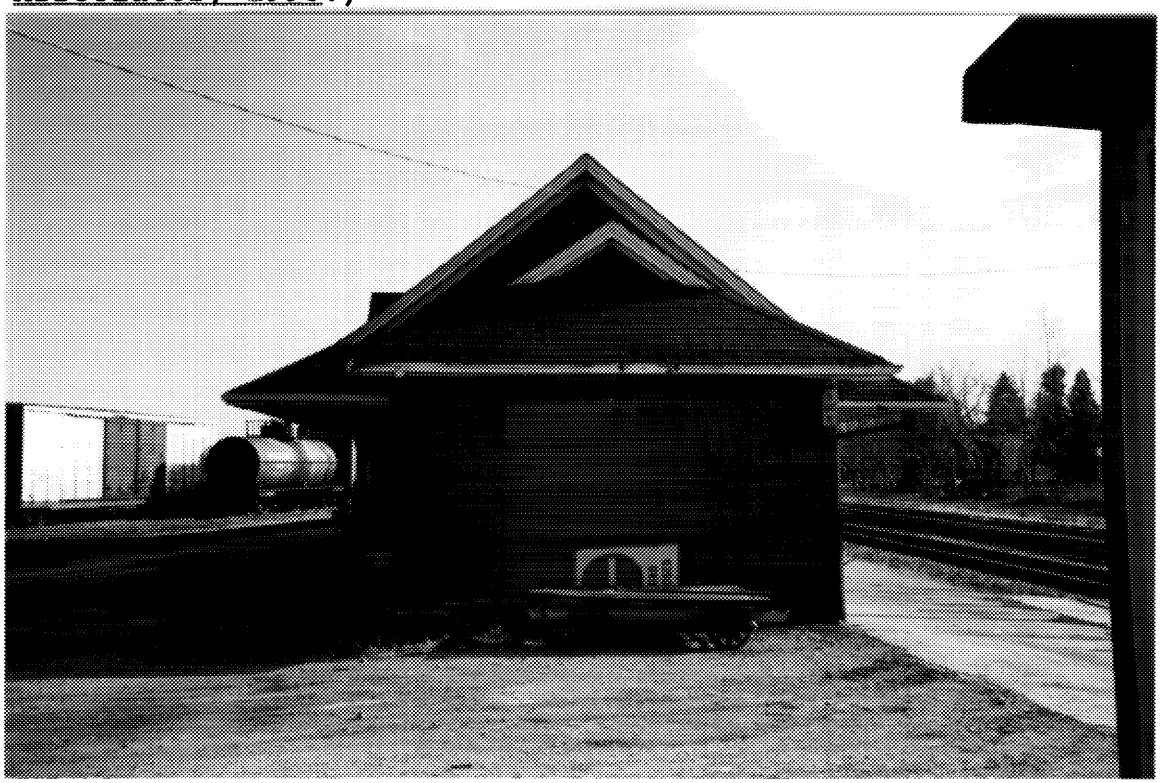
13 GTR station, Merritton, south side elevation, detail of central cross-gable, with highly ornate window, woodwork and name-board, as well as ornamented roof ridges and wooden roof shingles, no date. (St. Catharines Historical Museum, N-1368.)

14 CNR station, Merritton, south side elevation, detail of heavy wooden eaves with distinctive wooden brackets. (John L. Nicholls, Analytica Associates, 1993.)

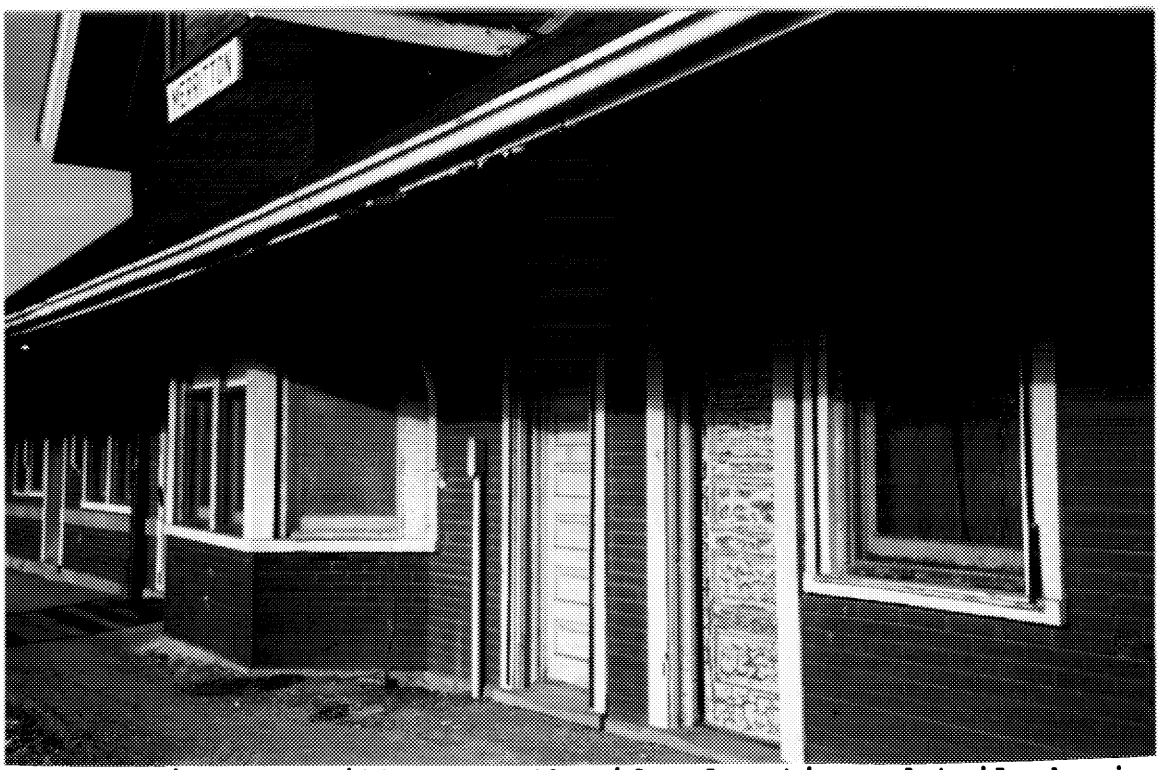
15 CNR station, Merritton, south side elevation, three quarter view from the southwest, showing largely original fenestration, windows covered in wire mesh, except for gable window, now boarded over. (John L. Nicholls, Analytica Associates, 1993.)



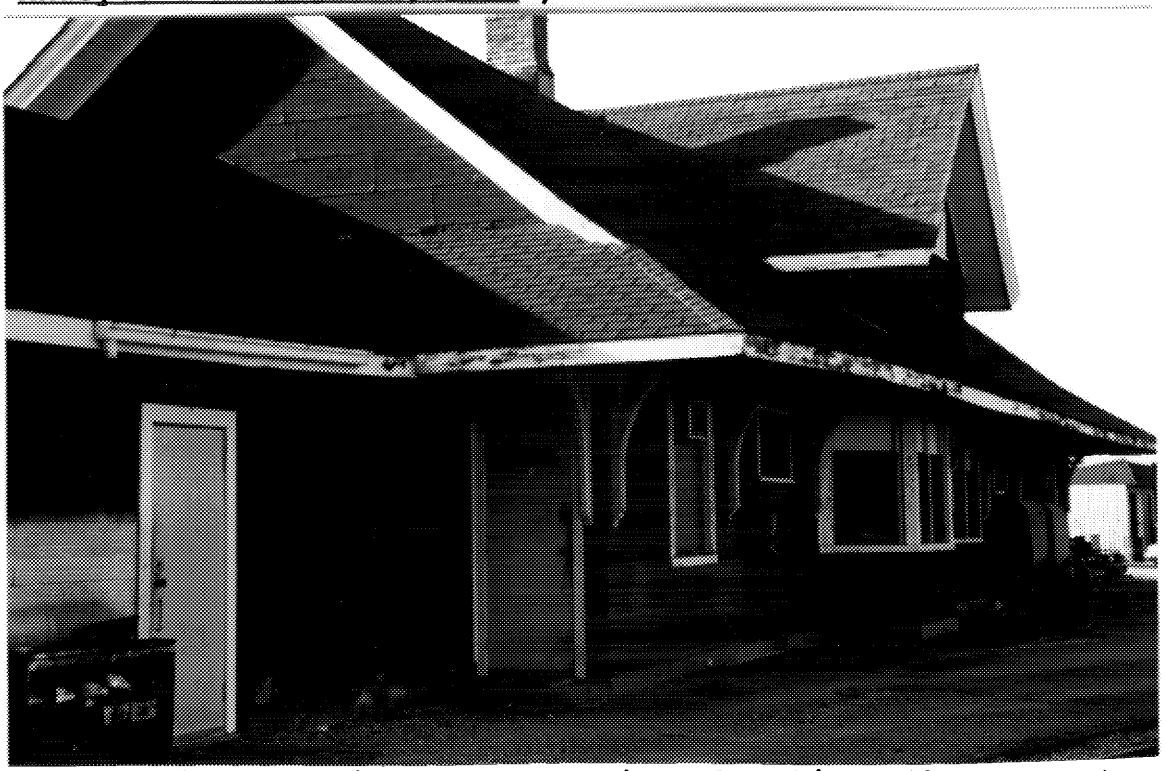
16 CNR station, Merritton, north side elevation, detail of the north side bay and cross-gable, showing surviving ornate window in the gable. (John L. Nicholls, Analytica Associates, 1993.)



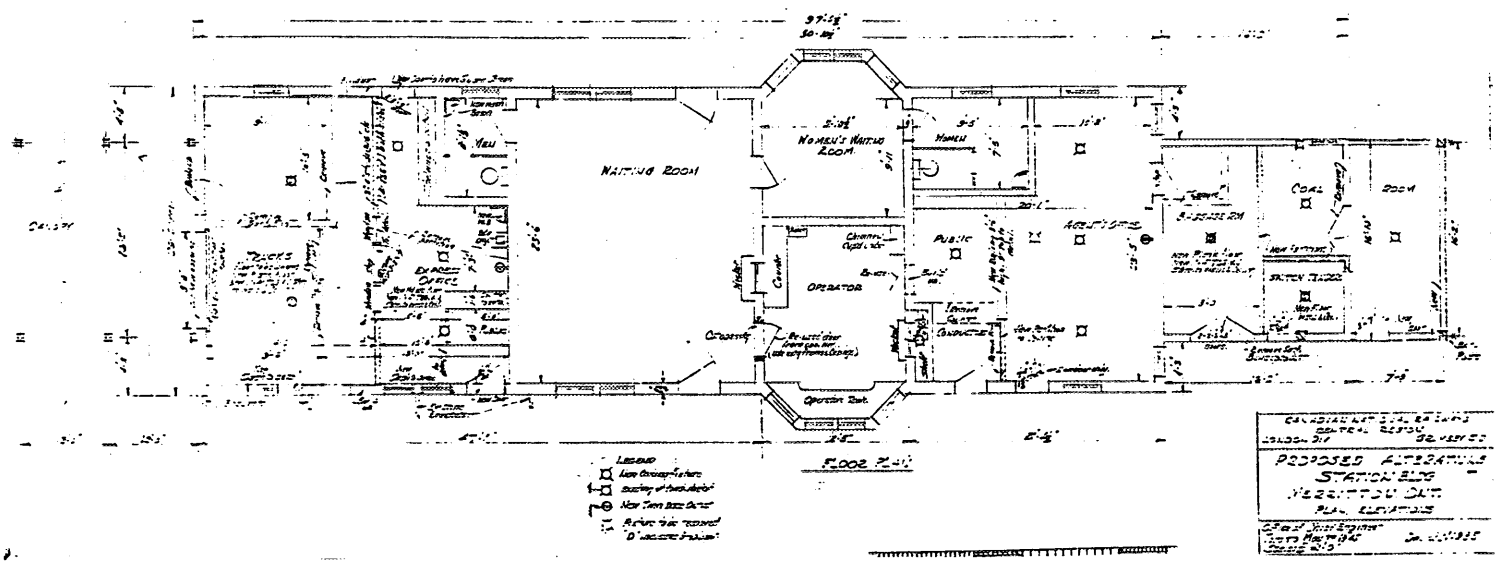
17 CNR station, Merritton, west end elevation, showing characteristic profile of gabled hip roofs over the enclosed canopied shelter, now clad in grey-painted plywood. (John L. Nicholls, Analytica Associates, 1993.)



18 CNR station, Merritton, south side elevation, detail showing the weathered condition of the insulbrick siding, with original doors requiring refinishing. (John L. Nicholls, Analytica Associates, 1993.)

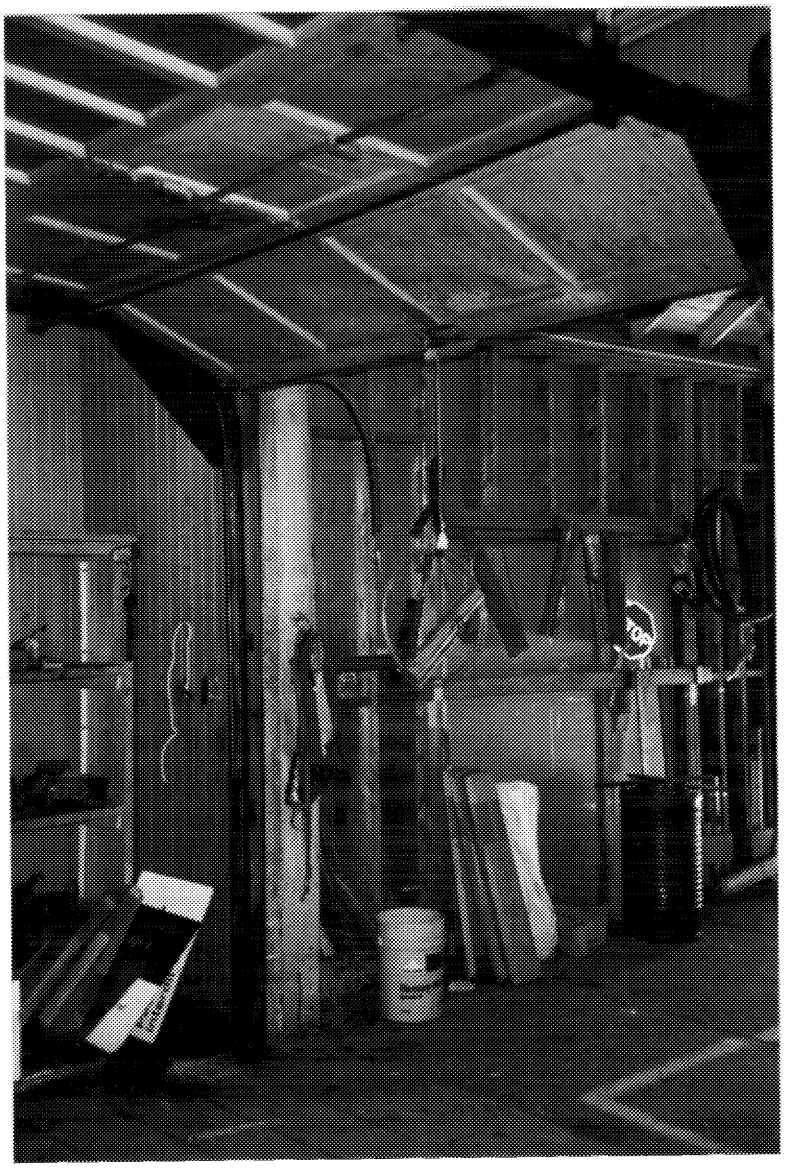


19 CNR station, Merritton, north side elevation, three quarter view from the northeast, detail showing weathered condition of roof tiles on the cross-gable, and general condition of the roof and siding. (John L. Nicholls, Analytica Associates, 1993.)

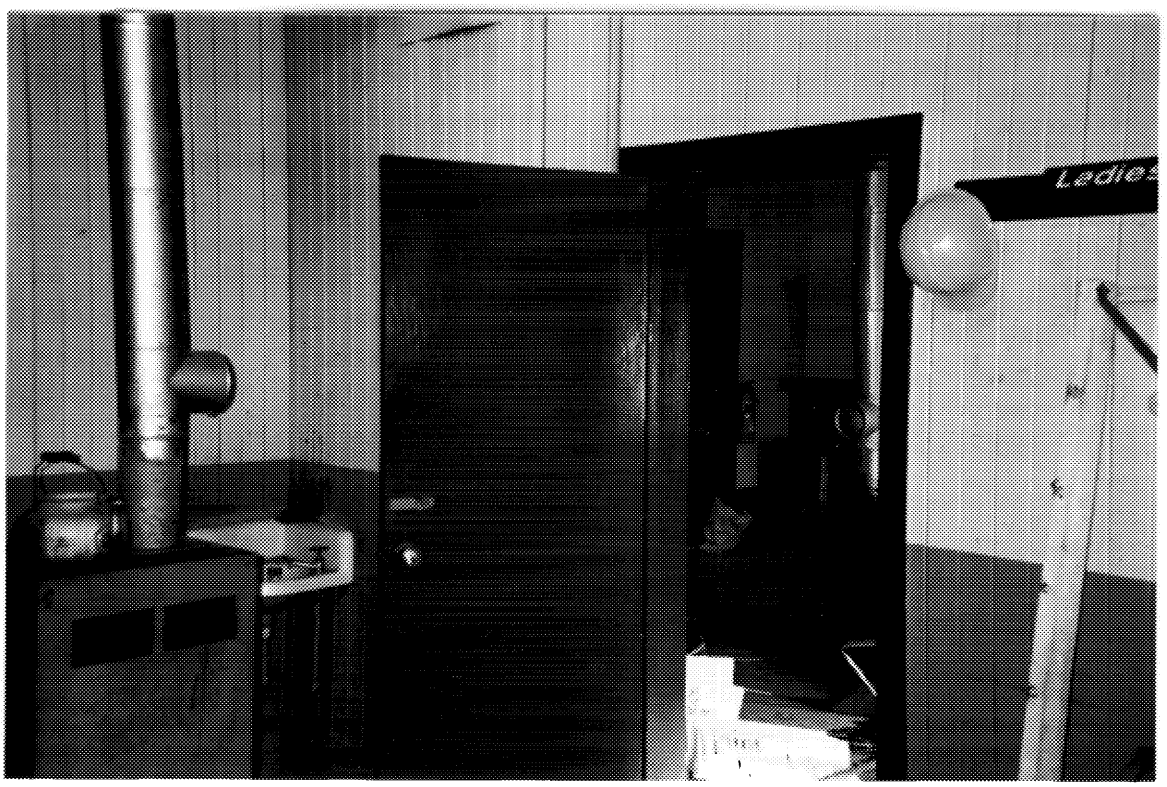


20 CNR station, Merritton, floor plan showing proposed alterations, including relocation of interior and exterior doors, new flooring, partitions and fittings, and complete enclosure of the east end shelter, 7 May 1945. (Courtesy of CN Engineering, Toronto.)

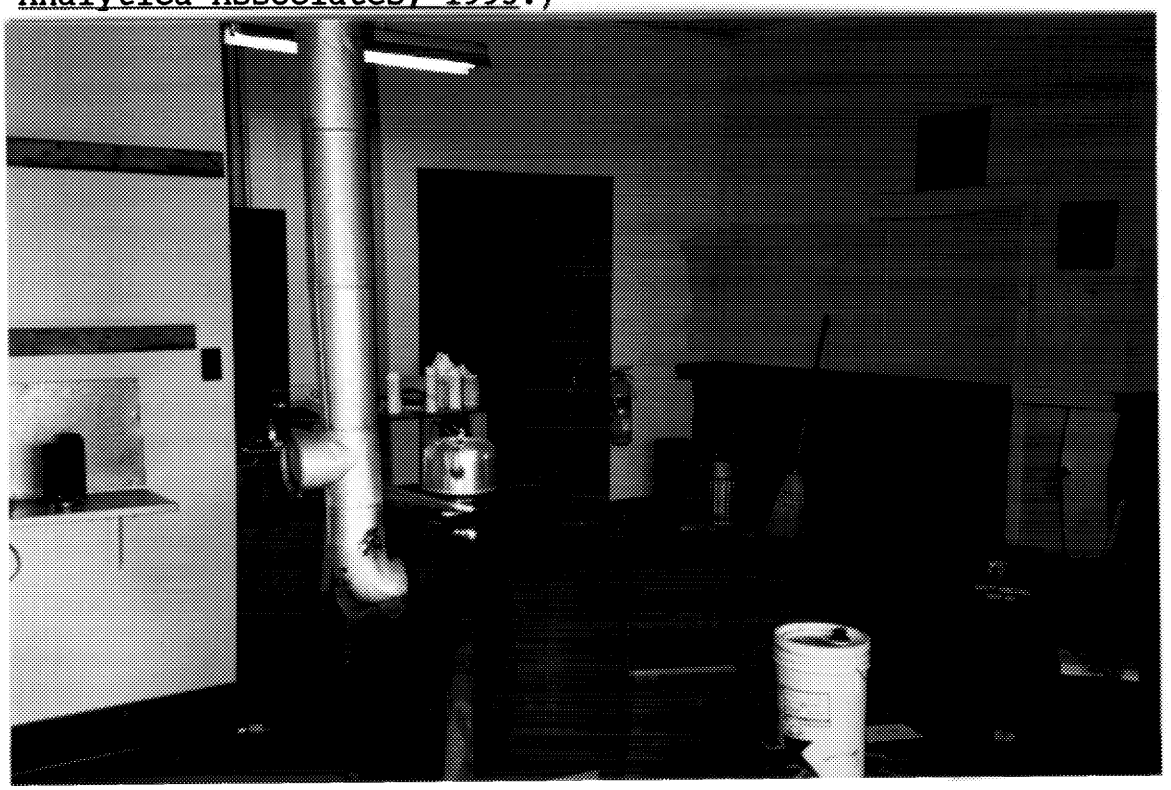
21 CNR station, Merritton, interior, enclosed west end shelter, detail showing the exposed original canopy, with its distinctive wooden bracing, above the plywood walls, with track maintenance equipment. (John L. Nicholls, Analytica Associates, 1993.)



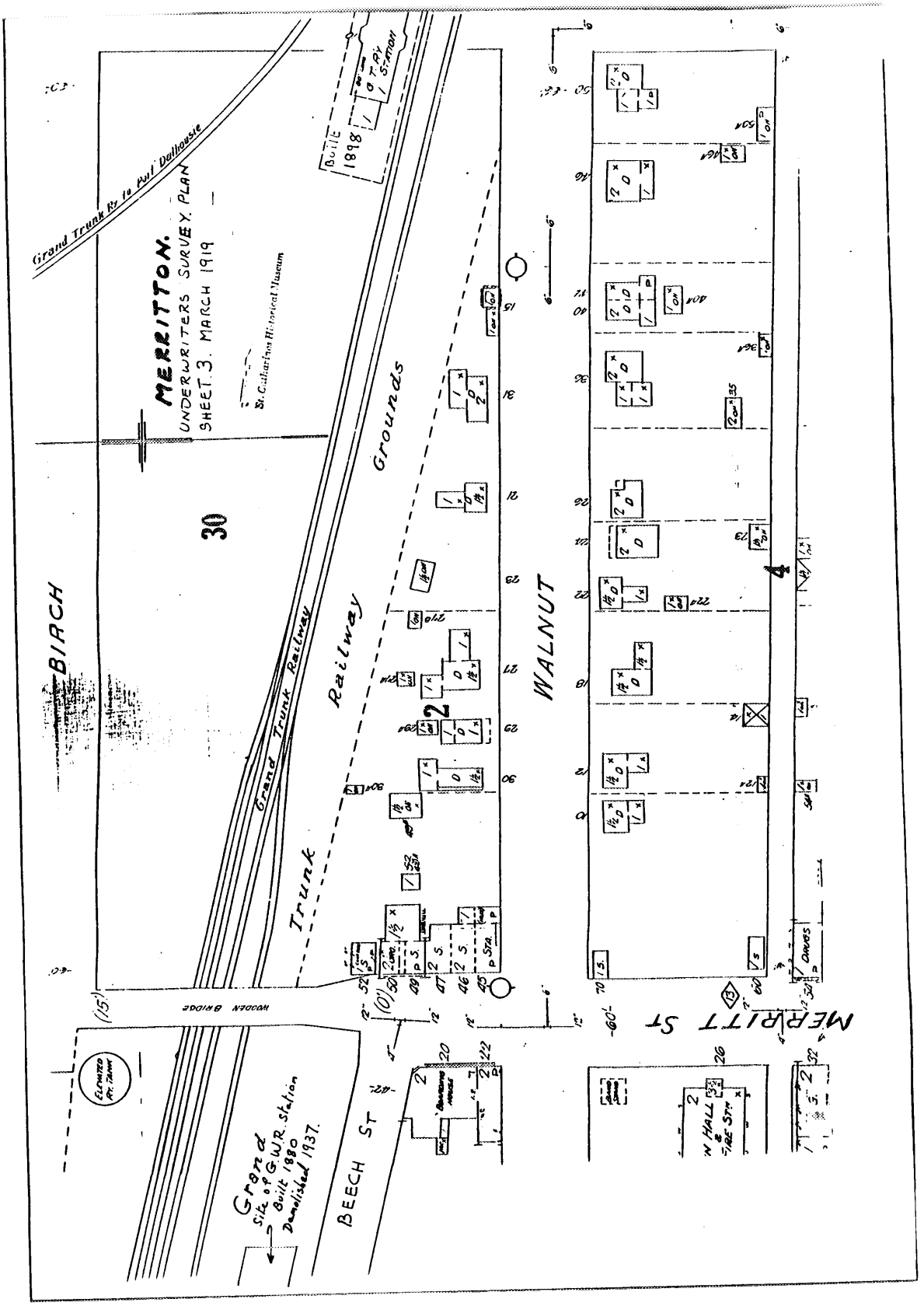
22 CNR station, Merritton, interior, detail of former west end of the building, with added overhead door, and more recent walls of the enclosed west end shelter. (John L. Nicholls, Analytica Associates, 1993.)



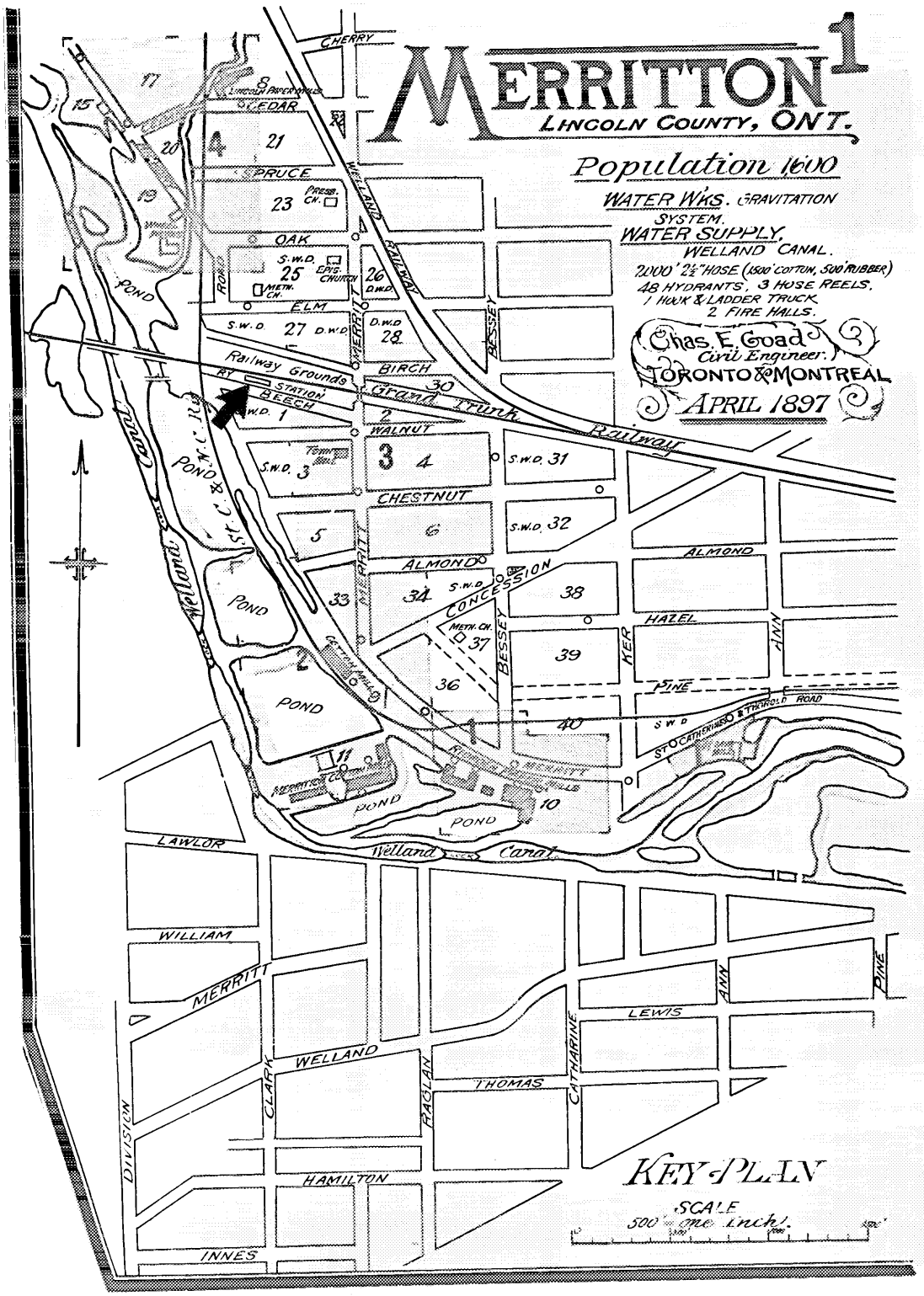
23 CNR station, Merritton, interior, former express room, looking into the former waiting room, detail showing two-tone paint scheme on partition walls, suggesting a dado, as well as two stoves for heating. (John L. Nicholls, Analytica Associates, 1993.)



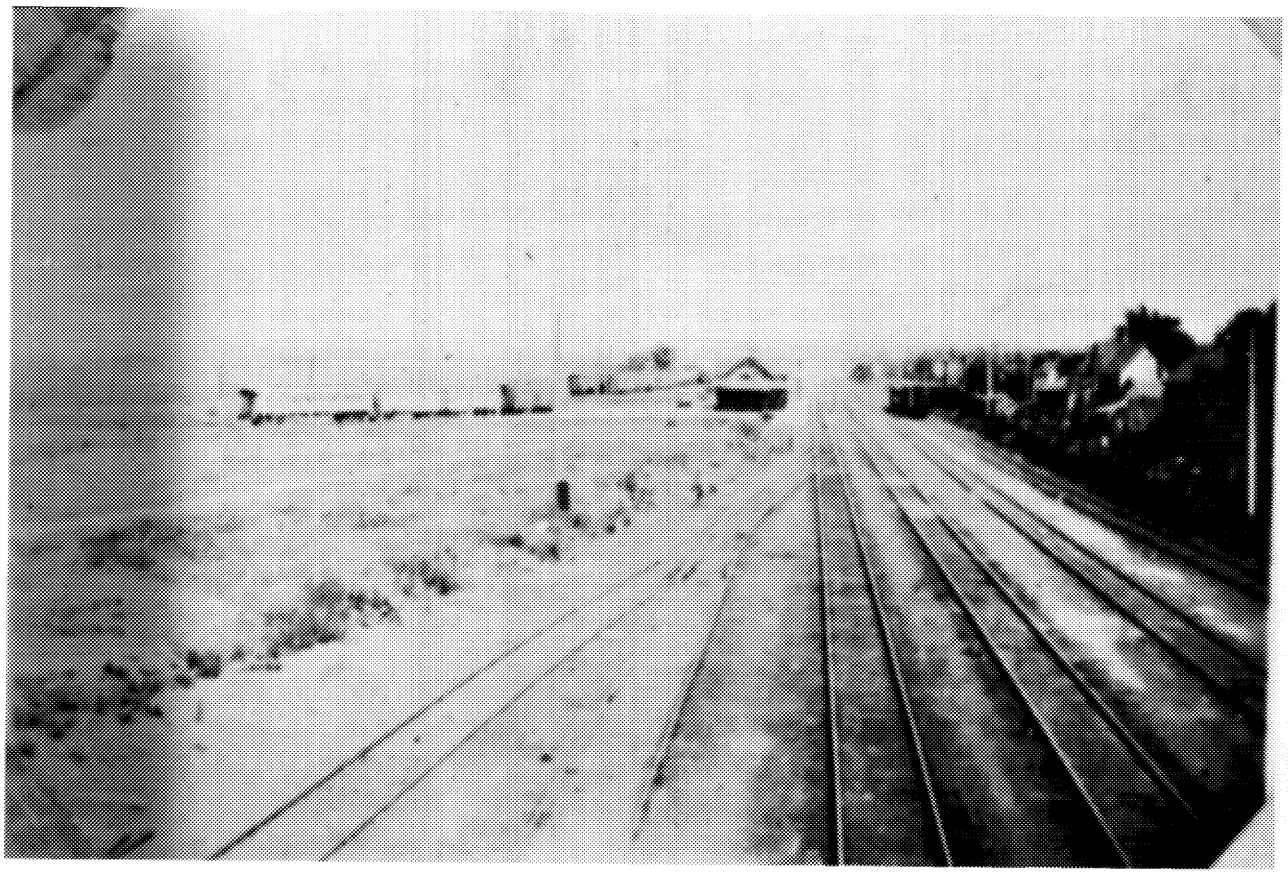
24 CNR station, Merritton, interior, former general waiting room, showing one of a number of blocked off door openings still visible in the building, partition walls added at different dates, heating stove, and fluorescent lighting. (John L. Nicholls, Analytica Associates, 1993.)



25 Detail of fire insurance plan of Merritton, showing location of the 1880 GWR station approximately a quarter of a mile to the west of the site of the present station, ca. 1919. (Underwriters' Survey Bureau, "Fire Insurance Plan, Merritton," March 1919, sheet 3, courtesy of St. Catharines Historical Museum.)

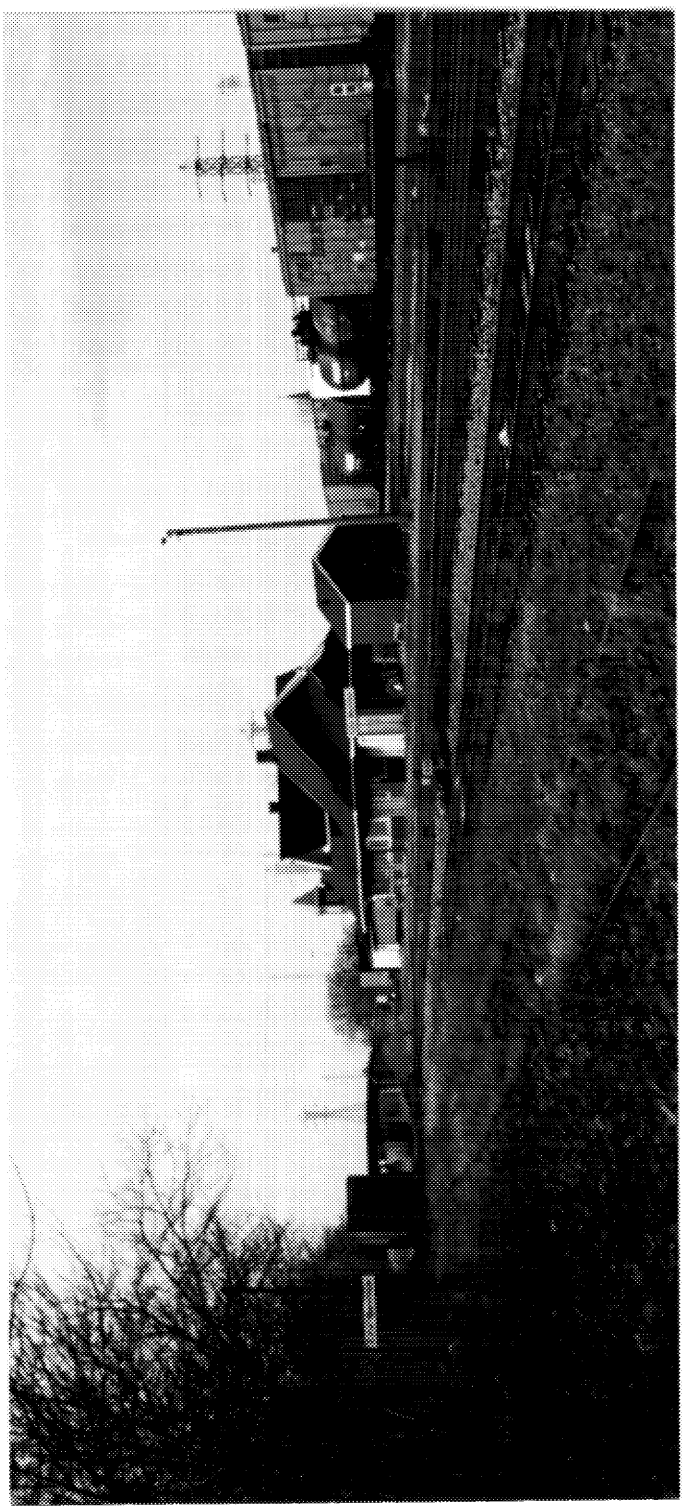


26 Map of Merritton, showing GTR (ex-GWR) and WR lines, and the old GWR station and grounds on Beech Street, with the industrial corridor of factories and mills laid out next to the Second Welland Canal, 1897. (Charles E. Goad, Fire Insurance Plan, "Merritton, Lincoln County, Ontario", April 1897, sheet 1, National Map Collection NMC 0009551.)



27 CNR station and yards, from the west, showing the isolation of the building on open ground between two sets of tracks, the old GWR main line to the south, the former WR line to the north, with a residential area visible south of the embankment, no date. (St. Catharines Historical Museum, N-5138.)

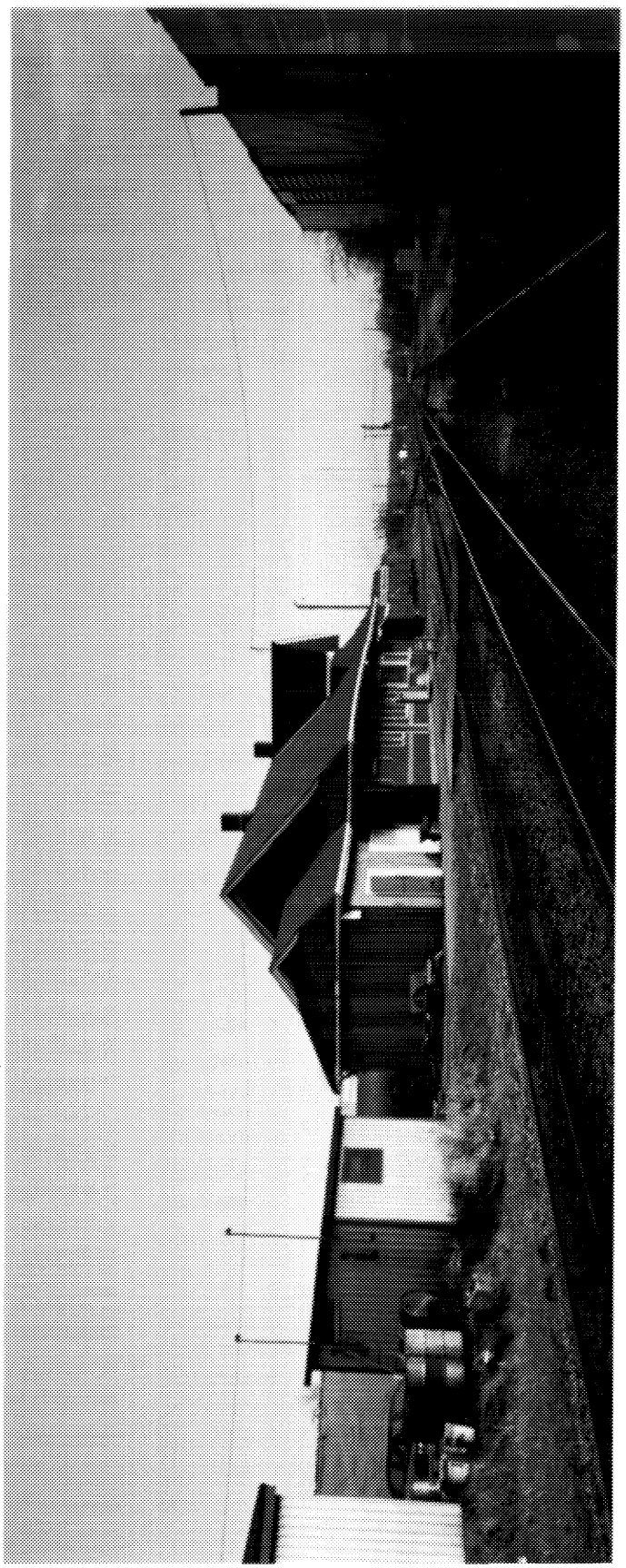
28 CNR station and yards, from the east, showing the isolation of the building on open ground between two sets of tracks, with a residential area visible south of the embankment, and a large church to the northwest. (John L. Nicholls, Analytica Associates, 1993.)



29 CNR station and yards, from the southeast, showing breadth of yards, with bridge over the tracks visible to the west, and tree-lined embankment to the south. (John L. Nicholls, Analytica Associates, 1993.)

30 CNR station, east end elevation, showing CN Servocentre, with corrugated metal siding, to the west, and an electrical shed and gabled outbuilding immediately to the east. (John L. Nicholls, Analytica Associates, 1993.)

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS STATION, MERRITTON, ONTARIO



31 CNR station and right-of-way, from the west, showing extended open area along the tracks to the east of the building. (John L. Nicholls, Analytica Associates, 1993.)