

130 JAMES AVENUE

BURROW, STEWART & MILNE WAREHOUSE

City of Winnipeg
Historical Buildings and Resources Committee
Researcher: M. Peterson
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130 JAMES AVENUE – BURROW, STEWART & MILNE WAREHOUSE

Winnipeg's early warehouse district of the 1870s was dispersed throughout what is now downtown Winnipeg, some businesses locating on the east side of Main Street, taking advantage of river transport, still an important transportation route, and some west of Main Street, locating closer to City Hall. Pockets of development, including warehouses, factories and mills, were also found along the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) main line in Point Douglas by the early 1880s.[1] By the late 1880s, the Northern Pacific and Manitoba Railway (NP&MR) had also developed a large industrial site (present-day The Forks), including a station, offices, freight sheds, repair shops, an engine roundhouse and, at the corner of Water Avenue and Main Street, the opulent Manitoba Hotel.[2]

In the summer of 1889, the Winnipeg Transfer Railway (WTR) was formed to build a rail line along the Red River north from the NP&MR main line to the CPR main line, hoping to provide modern rail service via spur lines to the warehouses in the area. City Council approved the plan in October, stating "…such [a] railway is a great advantage to the public interests of the residents of the city, and will increase the business to and from all parts of the country, by providing a cheap and convenient method of transferring merchandise between the above-named railways."[3] It would be three years before the WTR had purchased all the necessary land, obtained all the legal agreements and settled all the court cases. But by the mid-1890s, the line was attracting some of the continent's major manufacturers to the area and plans for spur lines running west to the Main Street were started (Plates 1-3).[4]

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1 L.K. Eaton, "Winnipeg: The Northern Anchor of the Wholesale Trade," Urban History Review, Vol. XI, No. 2 (October 1982), p. 28.

2 This enterprise, however, did not meet with the same early success as its competitor and in 1901 was sold to the Canadian Northern Railway (CNoR), soon-to-be Canada's second transcontinental railway, in 1901. In turn, the CNoR was taken over by the federal government after World War I to form part of its Canadian National Railways.

3 Manitoba Free Press, October 5, 1889.

4 Manitoba Free Press, various dates. It would not be until 1901 that the more established warehouse district west of Main Street and south of the CPR track was served by a spur line, known as the Princess Street Spur.

Soon, all the streets east of Main Street north of Portage Avenue were filling with large warehouses and factories as local and Eastern Canadian firms took advantage of the city's large workforce, its geographic location and the favourable freight rates (Plates 4 and 5).

In 1910, another Eastern Canadian firm, Burrow, Stewart and Milne Company of Hamilton, Ontario, purchased land in the Exchange District and built a large brick warehouse on the south side of James Avenue.

STYLE

This warehouse is a modest, three storey building with little ornamentation. Utilitarian in design, its exterior decoration was secondary to its ability to support the heavy loads handled and stored by a busy warehouse. Ornamentation was limited to varying construction materials rather than added elements. There are many examples of this type of building throughout the Exchange District.

CONSTRUCTION

The structure measures 15.3 x 28.7 x 15.3 metres and stands on the south side of James Avenue, between Lily and Bertha streets. The architect utilized the mill construction system – solid brick exterior walls supported by a system of square timber beams and posts and heavy wooden flooring. This system was very popular for warehouses for many decades and examples of it are found throughout the Exchange District.

Building measurements: [5]

	BEAMS (cm.)	**POSTS (cm.)**	**FLOOR**	**CEILING HEIGHT (m.)**
Basement	40.6 x 40.6	40.6 x 40.6	Cement	3.1
1st Floor	35.6 x 35.6	35.6 x 35.6	2 x 6 planks (on edge)	4.3
2nd Floor	30.5 x 35.6	30.5 x 30.5	2 x 6 planks (on edge)	3.7
3rd Floor	30.5 x 35.6	30.5 x 30.5	2 x 4 planks (on edge)	3.1

The warehouse rests on a foundation of brick and concrete, 63.5 centimetres thick with brick exterior walls 63.5 centimetres on the ground and second floors and 53.3 centimetres on the top floor. 450,000 bricks and 200 cubic yards of concrete were used during construction with a final cost to the company of $30,000.[6] Stone accenting was used on the lower level and around windows on the upper floors

DESIGN

As originally designed, the front (north) façade is divided into three vertical bays, the large spaces on the ground floor held a covered driveway at the east end, a large display window and above-grade basement windows in the centre bay and the main entrance, recessed and at the top of a short flight of stairs, in the west bay (Plate 6). The small window openings in the rusticated stone base were filled with "wire glass." The cladding of the ground floor featured layered bands of brick and limestone topped by a cut stone cornice separating the ground floor from the upper floors.

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5 City of Winnipeg Building Permit, #3193/1910.

6 Ibid.

The three bays of the second and third floors each contained three rectangular multi-paned windows set in wooden frames and topped by heavy stone lintels. The roof was flat; the only ornamentation at this level is a band of corbelled brick leading to the flat parapet finished with a metal sign fence and tall wood flagpole.

Both the east and west façades are shared with neighbouring buildings. The rear (south) elevation featured large, arched, multi-paned windows with brick heads and rusticated stone sills (Plate 7). A small metal-clad loading dock was located at the west end of this elevation.

This original exterior design, although the building's ownership and use changed over time, remained virtually unchanged into the early 2000s (Plates 8-11).

Extensive changes have been made to the building in the last decade, including the removal of the paint from the front façade (Plate 12), the replacement of all original window units on the two façades, the conversion of the interior loading dock into the main entrance and the closing of the original entrance (Plates 13 and 14). Rooftop terraces have also been built as part of the recent redevelopment.

INTERIOR

The original layout of the warehouse included an interior driveway along the east side, running approximately 17.0 metres from the sidewalk, stairs to the upper floors along the west wall and an elevator in the southwest corner of the building (Plate 15). The upper floors were designed as open warehouse space to store items until their shipment west.[7]

A major change in usage occurred in 1935 when new owners moved into the building and converted it into a factory, manufacturing animal feed. Parts of the roof and second and third floors were opened to accommodate the large machinery, including ovens, conveyor belts, grinders, compressing machines and metal chutes.[8] Because the equipment was steam-driven, it

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7 "Architect's Plans," Plan #3193/1910, courtesy of the City of Winnipeg.

8 Winnipeg Free Press, November 5, 1940, p. 10.

became obsolete in 1990 when the Amy Street steam plant was closed. The machinery was slowly removed and much of the interior was returned to its original open warehouse layout (Plates 16-18).

This building, along with the neighbouring structure, 132-134 James Avenue, has recently been converted into a 49-unit condominium complex; the interiors of both structures completely renovated (Plates 19 and 20) and operated as a single building.

INTEGRITY

The building stands on its original site and does not appear to have serious structural issues. Alterations to much of the building's original interior and exterior have been significant, although much of the original construction material has not been altered.

STREETSCAPE

This warehouse is on the northern edge of the Exchange District National Historic Site (EDNHS). It is an important part of this streetscape of James Avenue (Plate 21) and also contributed to the streetscape of the back lane (Elgin Avenue), identified as an important historic streetscape within the EDNHS (Plate 22). This back lane was the site of the most violent street fighting during the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike, when 27 strikers were injured in "Hell's Alley".[9]

Because all buildings within the EDNHS are essential parts of their historic streetscapes, the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee has given them 60 points.

ARCHITECT/CONTRACTOR

Alfred W. Peene (1860-1940) of Hamilton, Ontario was the designer of this warehouse. Peene had professional ties with one of the founders of the company, John Milne, through his work

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[9] Anna Penner, "Politics in the Park: Winnipeg's Victoria Park During the General Strike," in Manitoba History, No. 40 (Autumn/Winter 2000-2001), n.p.

designing the Hamilton Carnegie Public Library (see Appendix II for biographical information). This appears to be the only Peene-designed structure built in Winnipeg and is the first evaluated by the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee.

Responsibility for the local supervision of the project fell to David Wynyard Bellhouse (1861-1952), who had been a practicing architect in Western Canada since 1883. The British-born Bellhouse designed J.B. Somerset (Sacre-Coeur No. 2) School, 775 Sherbrook Street, with J.B. Mitchell in 1901 (Grade III - demolished) and would later design St. Edward's Roman Catholic Church, 836 Arlington Street, 1913 (Grade II).

The contractor for the building was Brynjolfsson and Company. The principal, Sveinn Brynjolfsson, was a native Icelander and was one of the men responsible for convincing thousands of his countrymen to immigrate to Manitoba in the early 1900s. He also became the Royal Danish Vice-Consul for Winnipeg in 1910.[10] The construction company was responsible for many buildings throughout the city, including Point Douglas United (Presbyterian) Church, McDonald Avenue (1905), the Ryan Building, 44 Princess Street, 1906 (Grade III) and the Warwick Apartments, 366 Qu'Appelle Avenue, 1908-1909 (Grade II).[11]

INSTITUTION

The Burrow, Stewart and Milne Company (Plate 23) was founded in Hamilton, Canada West (Ontario) in 1864 as a small-scale manufacturer. Growing quickly, the business concentrated on stoves and furnaces, first wood and coal and later gas. The Jewel brand of stoves became very popular in Southern Ontario and the business quickly expanded westward onto the prairies. By 1913, the company shipped, on average, two carloads of stoves to Winnipeg weekly, to be sold and/or distributed throughout Western Canada. The company also manufactured scales of various sizes and, after 1910, had the lucrative contract to supply scales for grain elevators with Saskatchewan Grain.[12]

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10 Manitoba Free Press, October 27, 1910.

11 M. Peterson, "Winnipeg Buildings Inventory."

12 Hamilton Herald, August 9, 1913, p. 5 (courtesy of G. Bugailiskis).

In ca.1924, the company vacated its premises on James Avenue, although it would continue to own the property until 1943.[13] Lionel Haney, the long-time western manager of Burrow, Stewart and Milne Company, operated a manufacturers' agency out of the building starting ca.1921. Other tenants during the 1920s included Alabastine Company Paris Limited, Lionel Haney, representative, and the Perfection Stove Company.

In 1935, Victor Fox Foods became the sole tenant (the company purchased the building in 1943), manufacturing, selling and shipping animal feed throughout Western Canada. This company was founded in 1935 by Olaf Krop Thomassen (1891-1978)[14] and Harry O. Black, manufacturing specialized animal feed in its James Avenue factory. It distributed its products throughout Western Canada from its Winnipeg headquarters and branch offices in Edmonton and Calgary, AL and Vancouver, B.C (Plate 24).[15] The company was taken over ca.1947 by James Elmer "Jim" Langtry (1894-1967) and then his son, James B. "Bud" Langtry (1927-2013).[16] The company now operates out of a building on Jarvis Avenue.

This building, and several other nearby warehouses, was bought by the Peter Nygård International Partnership in 2005 with ambitious plans for an $80-million "fashion village" that sought to create a mixed retail/residential space that included converting the back lane (Elgin Avenue) into a covered atrium (Plate 25).[17] The scheme was abandoned in 2007.

In 2011, the building was redeveloped by Streetside Development Corporation (part of the Qualico Group of Companies), combining and joining it and the neighbouring structure (#132-134 James Avenue) and operating them as a single, 49-unit condominium complex (readdressed 132 James Avenue).[18] It is known as District Condominiums, along with the other Streetside converted buildings: 110 James Avenue and 133, 139 and 145 Market Avenue.

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13 City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 712950-12-2, 1911-50; and Henderson's Directory, 1911-25.

14 Winnipeg Free Press, September 29, 1978, p. 60.

15 Winnipeg Free Press, November 5, 1940, p. 10.

16 Winnipeg Free Press, April 7, 1967, p. 26 and March 4, 2013, p. 26.

17 Nygård International Partnership, online, http://corporate.nygard.com, 2005.

18 City of Winnipeg, Planning, Property and Development Department.

EVENT

The back lane to the south of this building, which is actually Elgin Avenue, originally stretched from Main Street south of Bertha Street and onto what is today Waterfront Drive but was originally the right-of-way of the Winnipeg Transfer Railway. A spur line ran up the middle of this stretch of Elgin Avenue allowing for the loading and unloading of goods to the warehouses on both James Avenue and Market Avenue (Plate 26).

It was also the location of one of the most important events of the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919. It became known as "Hell's Alley," the site of a violent clash between strikers and mounted North West Mounted Police Officers that ended in the deaths of two strikers, 27 injuries and 94 arrests on June 21st, "Black Saturday." The Strike Committee called an end to the strike only days later.

CONTEXT

This building is representative of the growth of the Exchange District after 1900 on the east side of Main Street. It is the type of structure often built by both newly arriving companies and local firms expanding to meet increased demand.

The fact that the original owners were from Eastern Canada is also reflective of the growth of Winnipeg's warehousing sector. Although some of the businesses in the Exchange District were local firms, the majority were established Eastern Canadian manufacturers who opened facilities in Winnipeg to take advantage of the favourable freight rates offered by the major.

Its conversion into residential space is reflective of the modern evolution of the Exchange District and its warehouse stock.

LANDMARK

This building is a conspicuous structure in the Exchange District.

HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE
THE CITY OF WINNIPEG

APPENDIX I

CITY OF WINNIPEG - Preliminary Report

Assessment Record

Building Address: 130 James Avenue Building Name: Burrow, Stewart & Milne Warehouse

Original Use: warehouse Current Use: residential condominiums

Roll No. (Old): 712950 (12030) RSN: 152916

Municipality: 12 Ward: 2 Property or Occupancy Code: 50

Legal Description: 9^{E} St. John, Plan 1245, east part of Lot 21: west part of Lot 22

Location: south side between Bertha and Lily streets

Date of Construction: 1910 Storeys: 3 and basement

Heritage Status: ON NOMINATED LIST

Construction Type: Mill (brick and stone foundation)

Building Permits (Plans available: **[CS]** City Storage):
- 3193/1910 **[CS]** $30,000 (original); 9123/1950 $1,000 (construct loading platform); 132096/2011 $83,000 (repair masonry on #130, #132 & #134 James Ave.); 136927/2012 $5,500,000 (convert to 49-unit residence); 177054/2013 $30,715 (convert residential unit to art gallery)

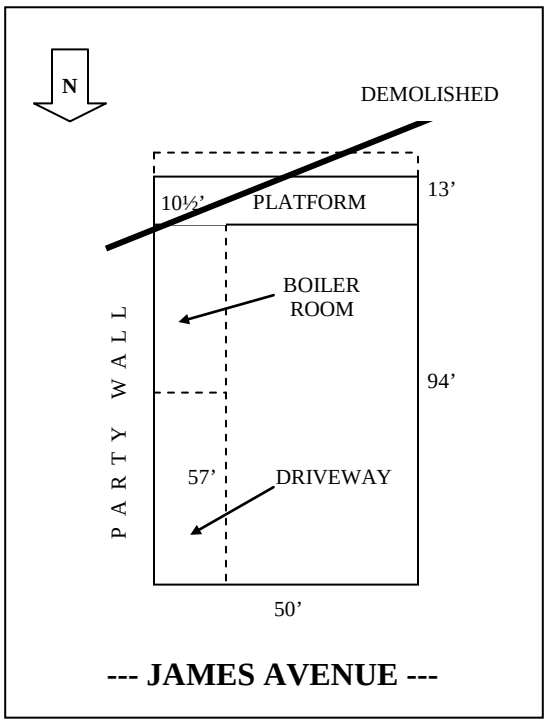
Information:

-50 x 94 x 50 = 235,000 cu. ft.

- flat roof, tar & gravel (new roof in 1957)

- B- 25" brick & concrete walls, 10' ceilings; 1st- 25" brick walls, 14' ceilings; 2nd- 25" brick walls, 12' ceilings; 3rd- 21" brick walls, 10' ceilings

- North (front) façade- rough-cut stone to floor of 1st, balance of 1st heavy pilasters of brick/stone layering, double stone belt at heads of 1st, sills of 2nd, 2nd/3rd- clay brick, stone sills & heavy stone heads, stone-capped brick cornice/parapet



ARCHITECT: A.W. PEENE (HAMILTON, ON) & D.W. BELLHOUSE (WINNIPEG)

CONTRACTOR: S. BRYNJOLFSSON & CO.

APPENDIX II

Alfred W. Peene

A.W. Peene was a prominent Hamilton, Ontario architect who worked for many years as a designer and teacher. He was born in Hyde, Kent, England and came to Hamilton with his family as a child.[1] He received his public education in that city and his architectural degree in Cincinnati, Ohio. Upon returning to Hamilton, Peene taught at its Art School before embarking on an extremely successful private practice. The Burrow, Steward and Milne Company Warehouse, 130 James Avenue (1910) appears to be his only Winnipeg commission.

An incomplete list of his works in Hamilton, ON includes:[2]

Stinson Street School, Stinson Street at Grant Avenue (1894)
Hamilton City Jail, Barton Street East (1895)
Emerald Street Methodist Church, Emerald Street North (1896)
Hamilton & Toronto Sewer Pipe Company Building (1897)
Meriden Britannia Company Building, Wellington Street North (1899)
Conservatory of Music Building (1904)
W.G.E. Boyd House, Inglewood Avenue (1905)
Coppley, Noyes and Randall Warehouse, MacNab Street North (1906)
Hamilton Technical School, Stinson Street (1908)
Adelaide Hoodless School, Maplewood Avenue at Springer Avenue (1911-1912)
Carnegie Public Library, Main Street West at MacNab Street (1911-1913) – Plate 27
Queen Mary Public School, Cannon Street East at Province Street North (1913)
Royal Royal Connaught Hotel, King Street East and John Street South (1914-1916)
Grant's Spring Brewery, Bay Street North (1920-1921)

Peene retired and moved to Florida in the mid-1920s and died in Miami on May 23, 1940.[3]

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1 Hamilton Spectator, May 25, 1940.

2 Loc. cit.; and "Peene, Alfred W." in R.G. Hill, Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800-1950, online edition, 2014.

3 Hamilton Spectator, May 25, 1940.

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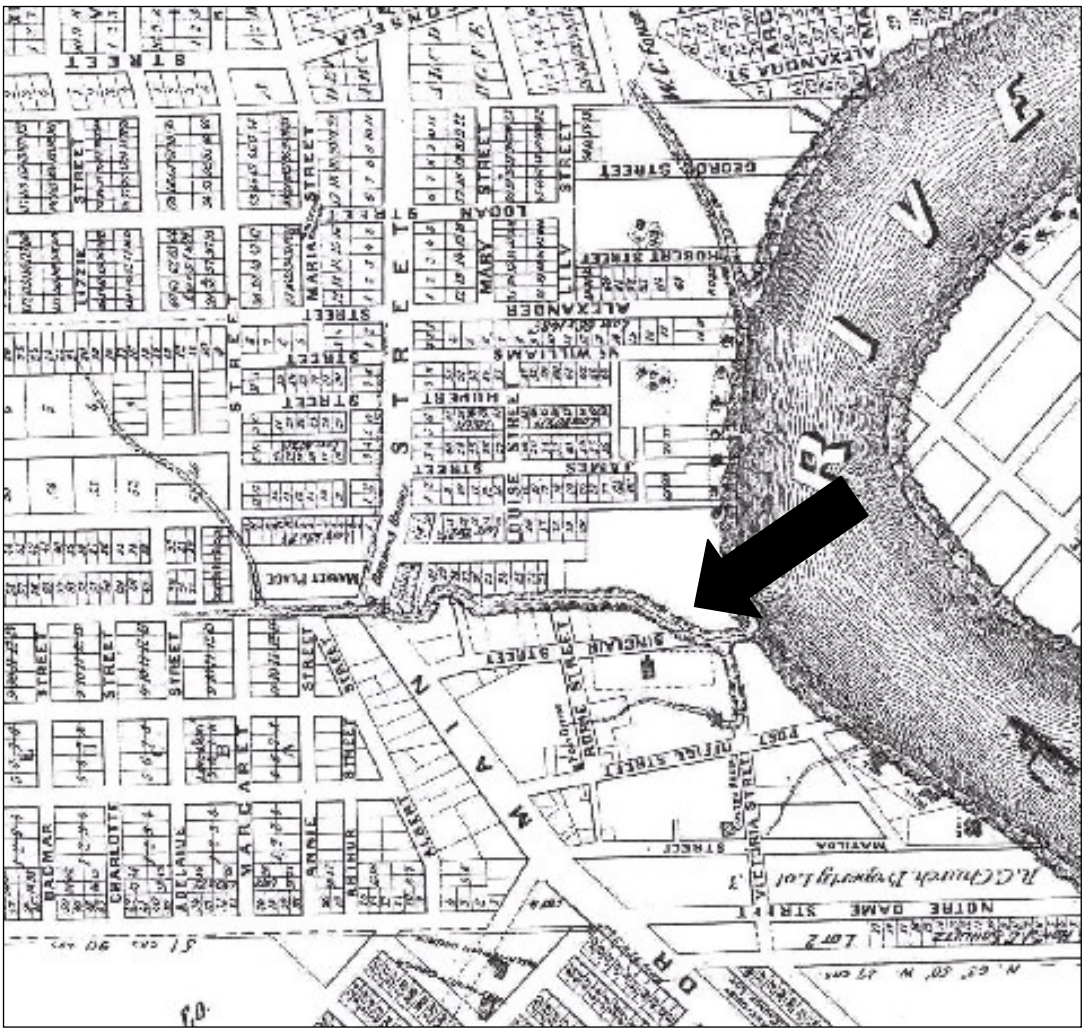


Plate 1 – Portion of J.D. Parr's Map of what would become downtown Winnipeg and the Warehouse District, 1874. Note the extensive surveying of lots on both sides of Main Street north of Brown's Creek (arrow) and the lack of surveying to the south and the creeks running into the Red River including Brown's Creek (south) and Logan's Creek (north) (City of Winnipeg.)

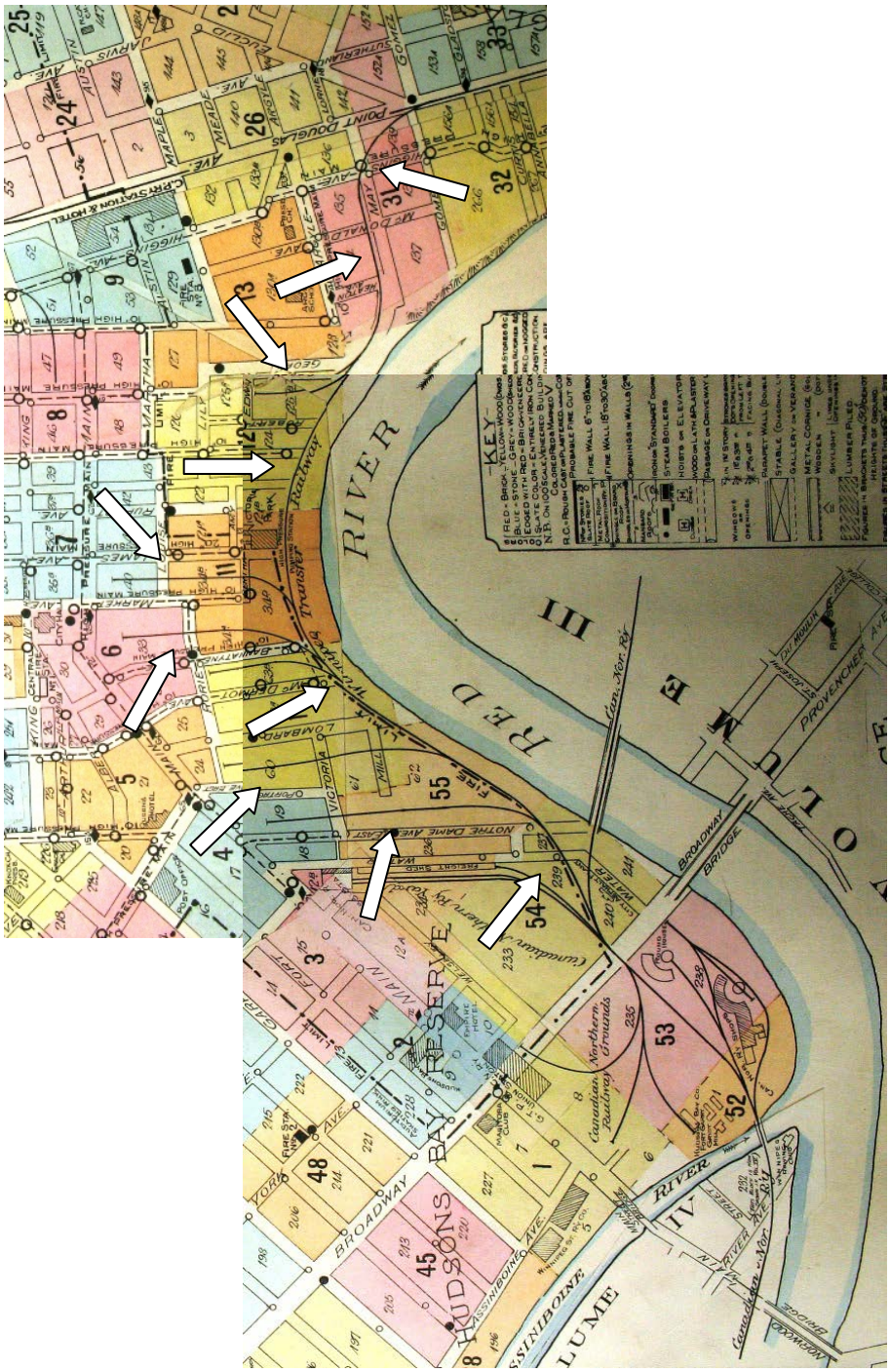


Plate 2 – City of Winnipeg Fire Atlas, Overview Map, 1906-1914. The completed Winnipeg Transfer Railway and its many north-south spur lines into the warehouse district runs from Water Avenue to Point Douglas Avenue (arrows). (City of Winnipeg.)



Plate 3 – Portion of McPhillip's Map of the City of Winnipeg, 1911, showing the Warehouse District and the Winnipeg Transfer Railway and spur lines running westward. (City of Winnipeg.)

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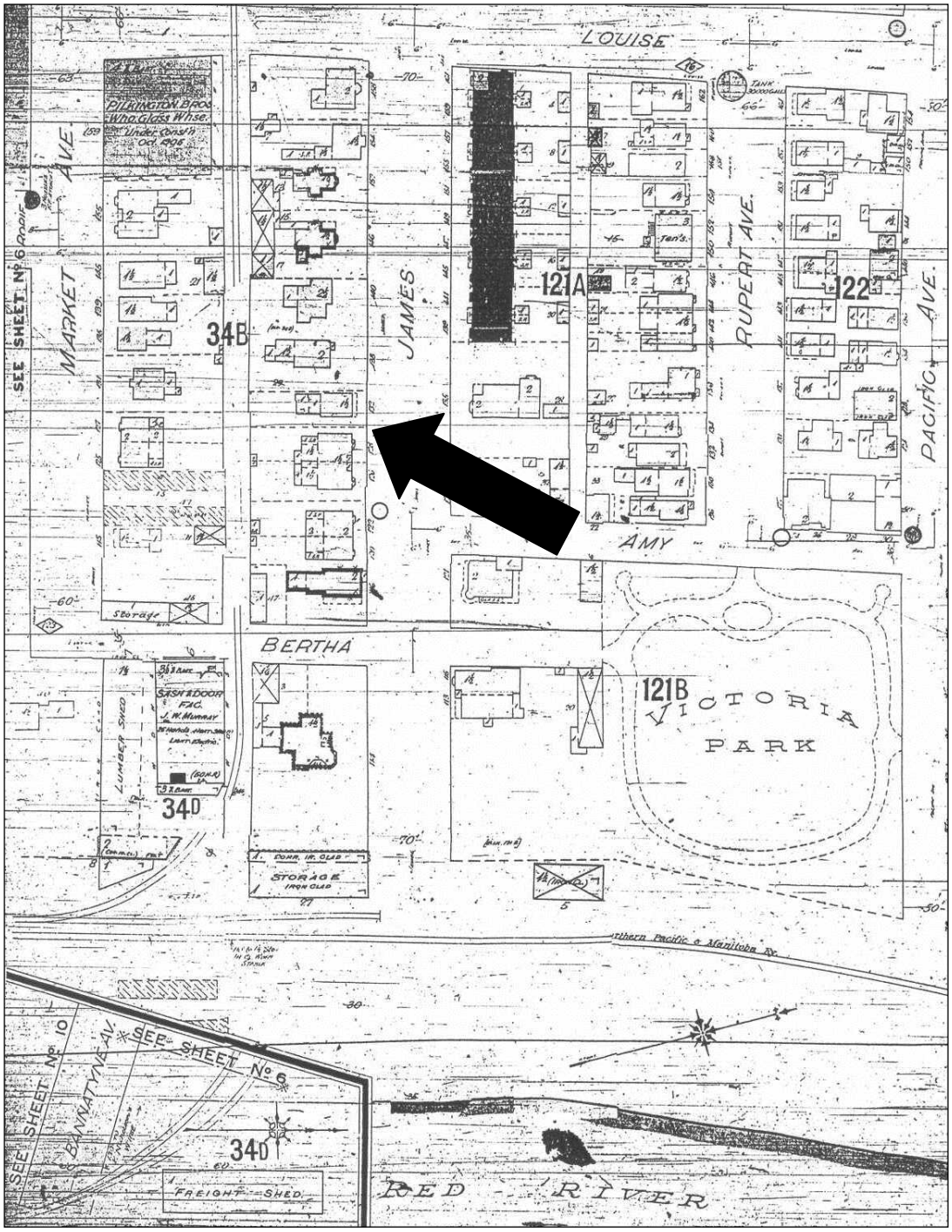


Plate 4 – Charles Goad, Fire Atlas of the City of Winnipeg, 1895 (revised 1905), Sheet 11. Future location of the Burrow, Stewart and Milne Warehouse (arrow) and the entire block of James Avenue is occupied by single family houses and duplexes. (City of Winnipeg Archives.)

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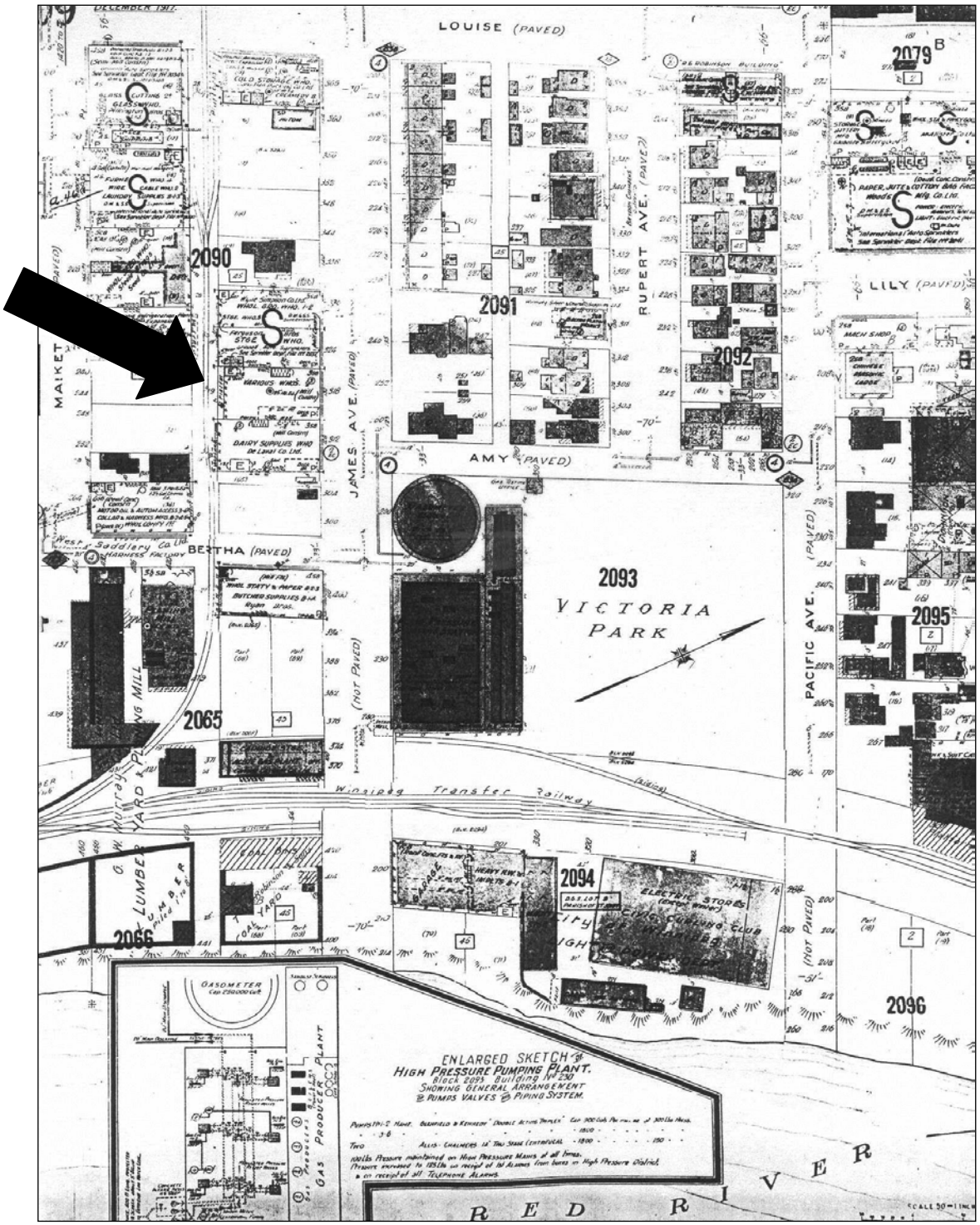


Plate 5 –Fire Atlas of the City of Winnipeg, December 1917, Vol. II, Sheet 209. Burrow, Stewart and Milne Warehouse (arrow) and several other large warehouses have replaced the older residential property. (City of Winnipeg Archives.)

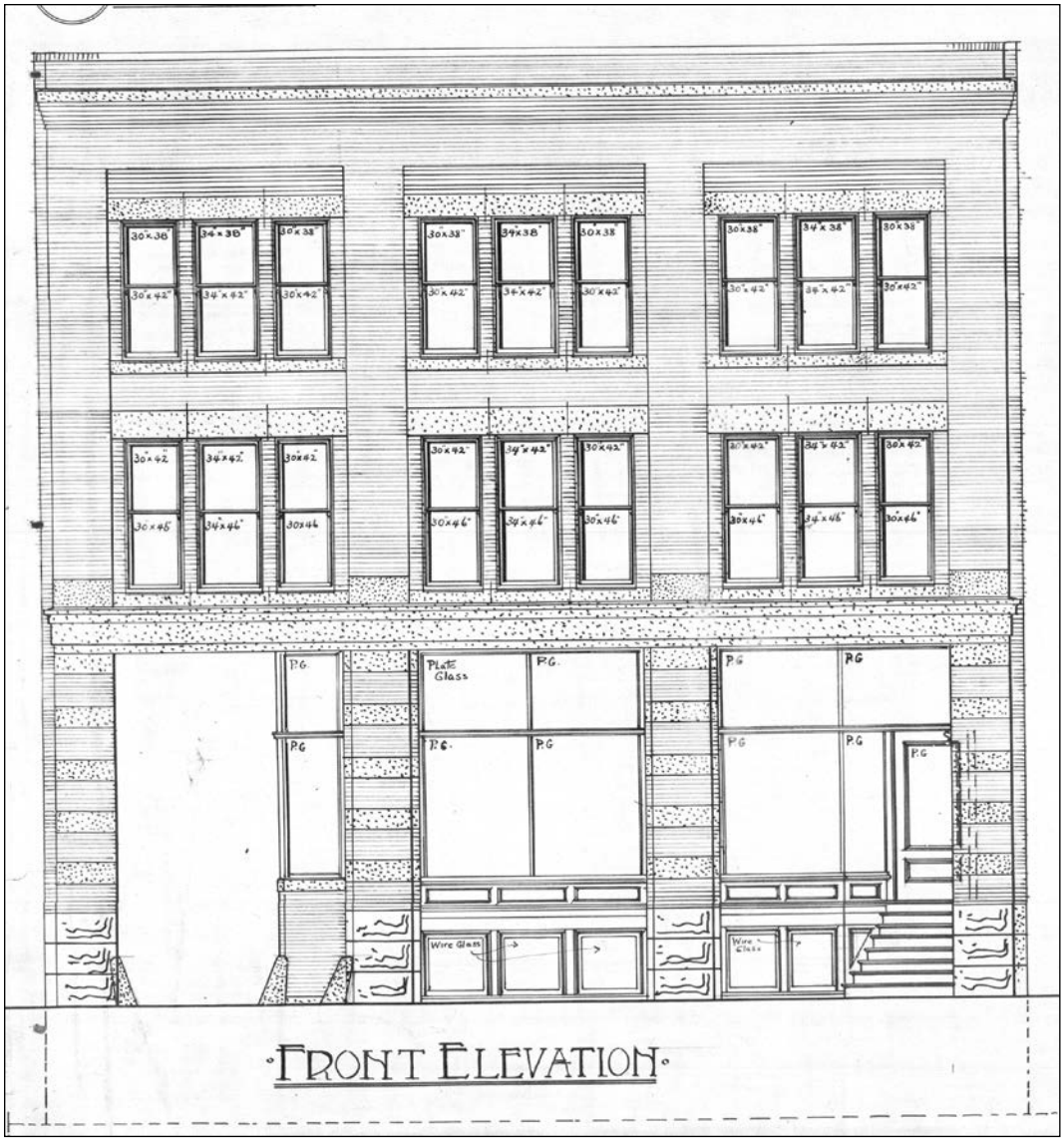


Plate 6 – Architect's plans #3193/1910, "Front Elevation". (Courtesy of City of Winnipeg.)

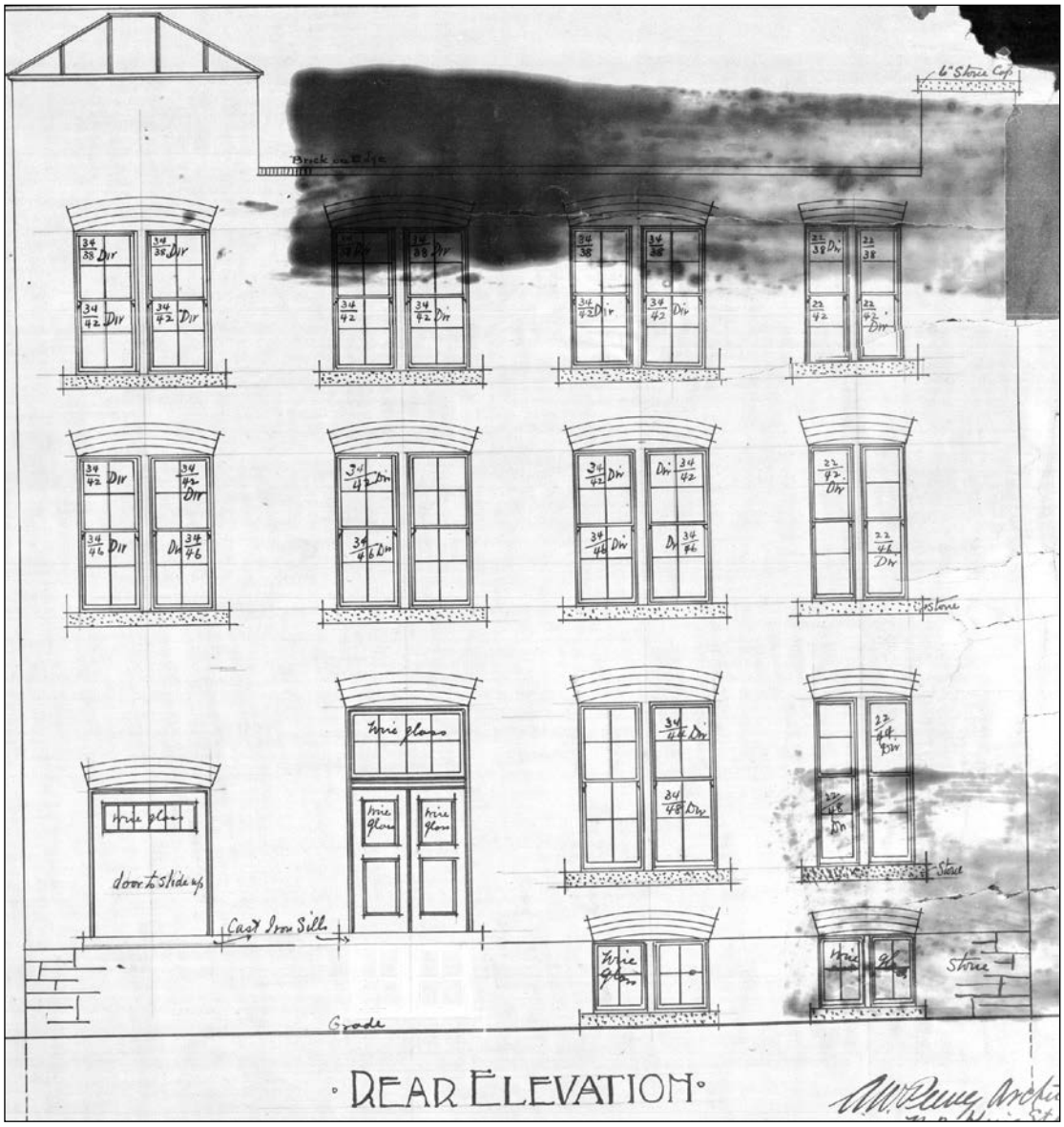


Plate 7 – Architect's plans #3193/1910, "Rear Elevation". (Courtesy of City of Winnipeg.)

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Plate 8 – Burrow, Stewart and Milne Warehouse, 130 James Avenue, ground floor, 2002. (M. Peterson, 2002.)



Plate 9 – Burrow, Stewart and Milne Warehouse, 130 James Avenue, ground floor entrance, 2002. (M. Peterson, 2002.)

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Plate 10 – Burrow, Stewart and Milne Warehouse, 130 James Avenue, upper floors, main (north) façade, 2002. (M. Peterson, 2002.)



Plate 11 – Burrow, Stewart and Milne Warehouse, 130 James Avenue, rear (south) façade, 2002. (M. Peterson, 2002.)



Plate 12 – Removing paint from brick façades, 130 and 132-134 James Avenue, 2012. (M. Peterson, 2012.)

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Plate 13 – Burrow, Stewart and Milne Warehouse, 130 James Avenue, main (north) façade, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)

130 JAMES AVENUE – BURROW, STEWART & MILNE WAREHOUSE



Plate 14 – Burrow, Stewart and Milne Warehouse, 130 James Avenue, rear (south) façade, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)

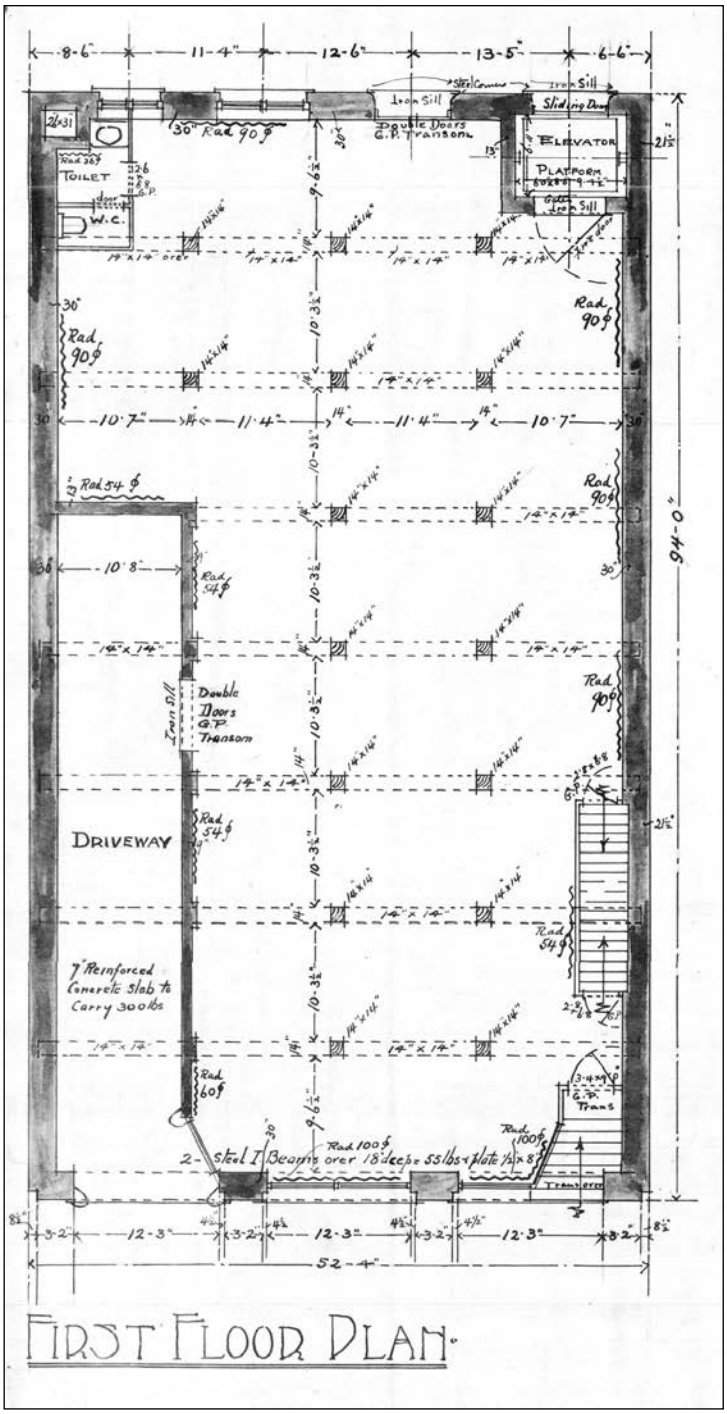


Plate 15 – Architect's plans #3193/1910, "First Floor Plan". (Courtesy of City of Winnipeg.)



Plate 16 – Burrow, Stewart and Milne Warehouse, 130 James Avenue, ground-floor showroom/office, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2002.)

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Plate 17 – Burrow, Stewart and Milne Warehouse, 130 James Avenue,, ground-floor warehouse space, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)



Plate 18 – Burrow, Stewart and Milne Warehouse, 130 James Avenue, third floor. (M. Peterson, 2002.)



Plate 19 – Burrow, Stewart and Milne Warehouse, 130 James Avenue, third floor suite, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)



Plate 20 – Burrow, Stewart and Milne Warehouse, 130 James Avenue, third floor suite, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)

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Plate 21 –James Avenue looking east from Lily Street, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)

130 JAMES AVENUE – BURROW, STEWART & MILNE WAREHOUSE



Plate 22 – Back lane (Elgin Avenue) looking west from Bertha Street, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)

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Plate 23 – Burrow, Stewart and Milne Company foundry, Hamilton, Ontario, 1892. (Courtesy of the Hamilton Public Library.)



Plate 24 – Advertisement for Victor Fox Foods, 1938. (Reproduced from Manitoba Free Press, December 5, 1938, p. 30.)

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Plate 25 – Artist's rendition of Nygård Village with the atrium over what was the back lane (Elgin Avenue) between the buildings on the north side of Market Avenue and the south side of James Avenue, 2005. (Reproduced from Nygård International Partnership, online, http://corporate.nygard.com/scf/News.aspx?id=305, 2005.)

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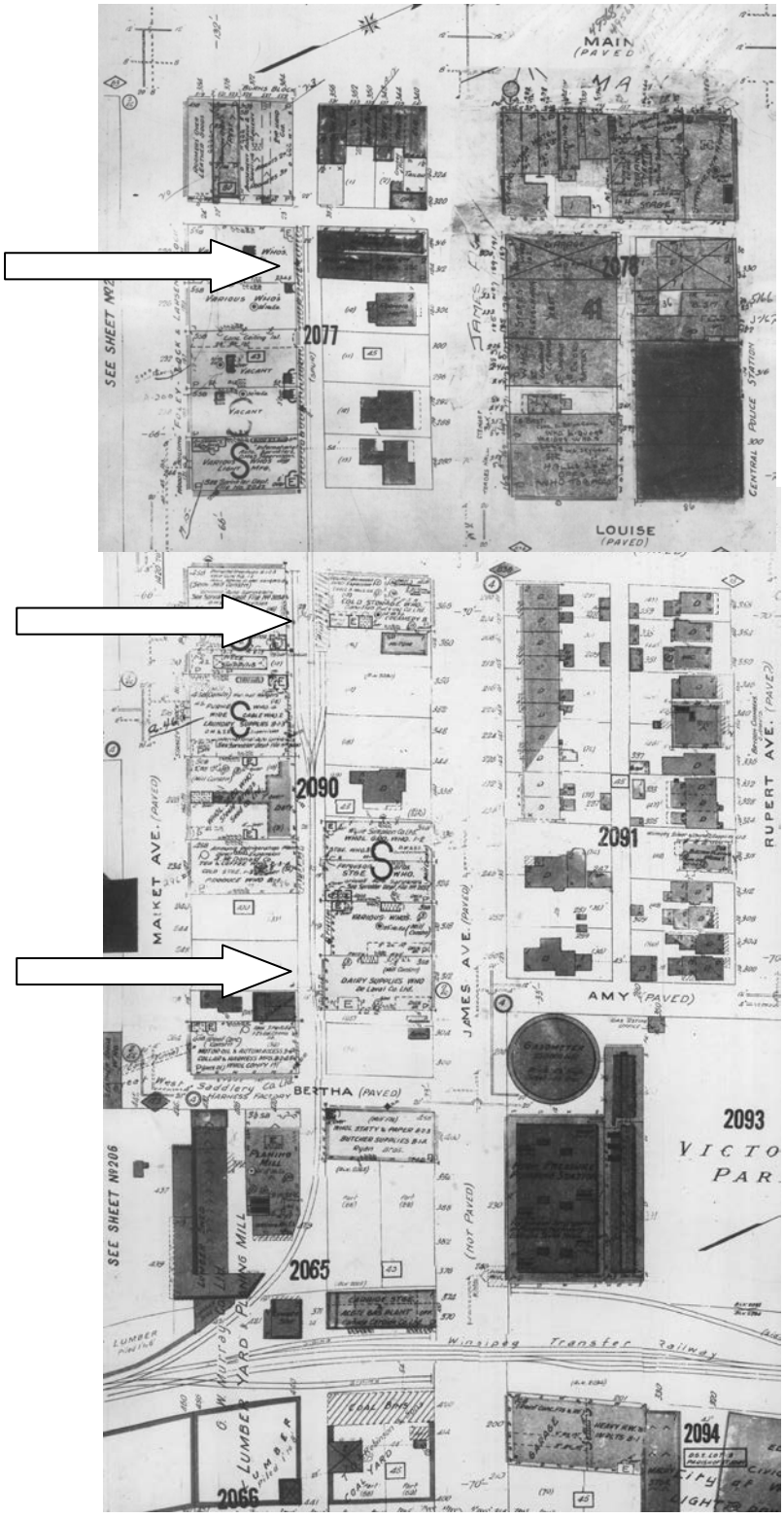


Plate 26 –Fire Atlas of the City of Winnipeg, December 1917, Vol. II, Sheets 207 and 209. Elgin Avenue is at arrows. (City of Winnipeg Archives.)

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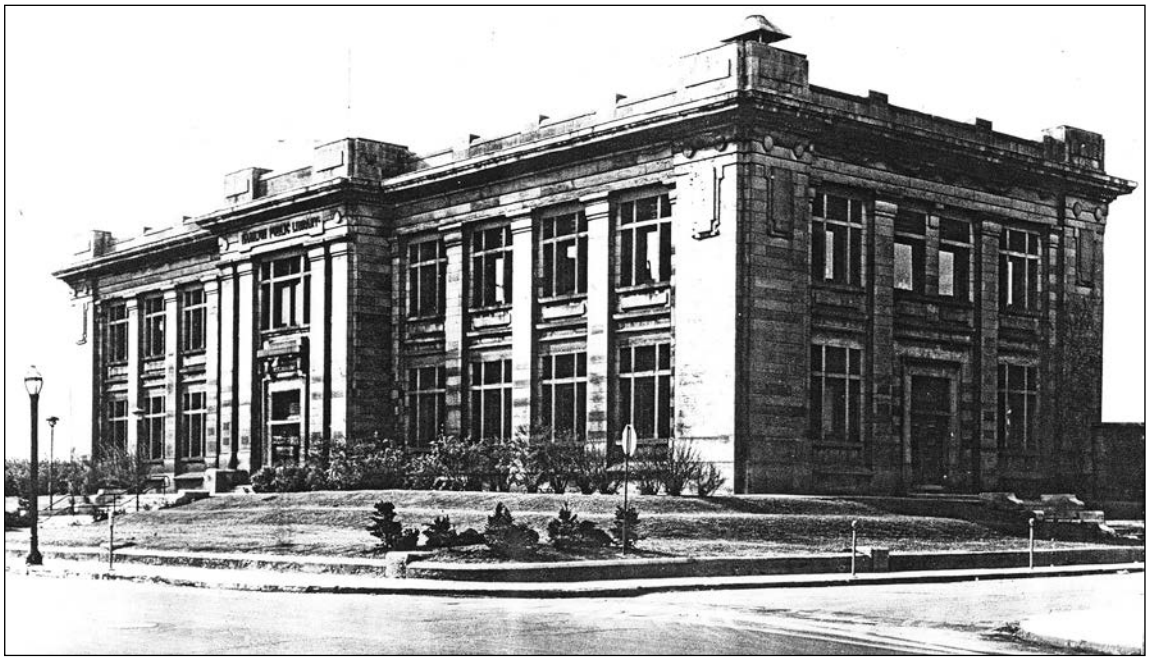


Plate 27 – Hamilton Public Library, built 1913, designed by A.W. Peene, no date. (Courtesy of the Hamilton Public Library.)