

306 ROSS AVENUE

LEADLAY BUILDING

City of Winnipeg
Historical Buildings & Resources Committee
Researcher: M. Peterson
May 2019

306 ROSS AVENUE – LEADLAY[1] BUILDING

The growth of Winnipeg's warehouse district in the early 1880s, spurred on by the completion of Canada's first transcontinental railway, the Canadian Pacific, was a process of creation – solid brick warehouses began replacing the small wooden shacks that dotted the mud streets and avenues east and west of Main Street (Plates 1 and 2). Various districts of the city – residential, commercial and industrial – and their specific buildings established and became the foundation of the growth in the early 20th century.[2] The huge advance in land prices along Main Street north of Portage Avenue necessitated the replacement of the earlier residential development with large commercial structures. Investors chose to locate near one of the most important buildings, City Hall, from which would come assistance in advancing both singular business interests and those of the community at large.

The second growth phase, from 1900-1914, was characterized by expansion. Especially in the warehouse district, local, national and international firms recognized the geographic and economic importance of locating in Winnipeg, resulting in the construction and/or enlargement of dozens of warehouses both on the more established area west of Main Street (Plate 3 and 4) and the new area to the east (Plate 5). Approximately $5 million was spent on the construction and enlargement of warehouses in what is now the Exchange District between 1900 and 1914,[3] housing such successful ventures as R.J. Whitla, G.F. and J. Galt, Stobart, Eden and Company, George D. Wood, A.F. Gault and Company and J.H. Ashdown.[4]

In 1905, Harry Leadlay, a local fur and hide dealer, decided to construct a large warehouse next door to his place of business of many years. Initially intending to occupy one of the floors with his

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1 There are several different spellings of "Leadlay" used in local published material.

2 R.R. Rostecki, "The Growth of Winnipeg, 1870-1886," unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1980, pp. 112-14.

3 City of Winnipeg Building Permit Ledger Books, 1900-1914.

4 Manitoba Free Press, September 3, 1904, p. 14.

new business venture, he found that demand was high enough that when completed, he rented the entire building to other companies (Plate 6).[5]

STYLE

The warehouse is an excellent example of the Romanesque Revival style, very popular in warehouse districts throughout North America from the 1880s well into the 20th century. The buildings were nearly always solid brick with a raised basement clad in rusticated stone, a material often used for accenting around windows and doors and at roof level. Other elements included towers flanking the main façade, quoins, belt courses, corbelled brick panels, chevrons and flat rooflines, with or without cornices and entablatures. The most obvious feature of these structures was the use of the arch above windows and doors. Often, straight-topped windows located on the middle storeys were grouped under large arches on the upper floors.[6] Although the style was applied to private residences and on large public buildings, in Winnipeg it was almost exclusively used in the warehouse district, where the designs were somewhat more subdued. The massiveness and sturdiness of the style appealed to wholesalers looking to promote their businesses and portray the stability of their firms through the design of the structures they occupied.

CONSTRUCTION

Although the original City of Winnipeg Building Permit lists the building as four storeys in height, it was built as a five-storey warehouse, solid brick with stone accenting resting on a heavy rubblestone foundation (see Appendix I for construction information). The building, located just west of Princess Street on the south side of Ross Avenue, measures approximately 16.9 x 31.1 metres and cost $35,000 to build. Wall thicknesses were listed as 66.0 centimetres in the basement

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5 Manitoba Free Press, October 30, 1905, p. 42.

6 L. Maitland, et al., A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 1992), p. 84; and Identifying Architectural Styles in Manitoba (Winnipeg, MB: Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, Historic Resources Branch, 1991), p. 14.

(stone), 43.2 centimetres on the first and second floors (brick) and 33.0 centimetres on the third and fourth floors (brick).[7]

This warehouse was built using a common construction method of the time – heavy wood beam and post. This structural system supports the solid wood flooring and brick exterior walls and had the advantage of sustaining fire damage and still providing building support.

DESIGN

The front (north) façade begins at grade with a rusticated stone base that rises to the level of the ground floor windows (Plate 7). Basement windows in rectilinear openings are located in this raised stone base. Originally, entrances were located at each end of the ground floor covered by a wide stone arch with keystone. Four windows in rectilinear openings are also found on the ground floor. Above, the upper floors are divided into a number of vertical bays, all holding windows in rectilinear openings – the middle bay holding the narrowest openings and the outer two bays the widest (Plate 8). All the window openings are embellished with wide, rusticated stone sills and heads. Brick corbelling is used to highlight the otherwise plainly designed flat roofline.

The west wall is completely hidden by the neighbouring building, constructed at the same time as the Leadlay Building, the east façade's ground floor is covered by the neighbouring structure and the upper floors are visible and have windows in arched opening with stone sills on each level. Painted signage is also found on this façade (Plate 9).

The rear of the building faces south onto a back lane and features a raised open loading dock, windows of similar design to the east side openings and a metal fire escape (Plate 10).

INTERIOR

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7 City of Winnipeg Building Permit, #959/1905.

Contemporary descriptions of the building's interior include "handsomely finished" offices on each floor and electric passenger and freight elevators[8] – much like the interior layout of many warehouses in the district.

Today, the building is used for clothing manufacturing and remains mostly undivided (Plates 11-13). Ornamental tin ceiling clads much of the ground floor (Plate 14). A metal fire door on the third floor gives access to the neighbouring building (312 Ross Avenue) – Plate 15.

INTEGRITY

The building stands on its original site and appears to be in fair structural condition for its age – cracks are visible on the rear façade. Alterations to the exterior have been minimal except for major alterations to the two main entrances with the partial filling of the east opening with glass block and the closure and recladding of the west entrance and conversion of a window into an entrance. The exterior brick has also been painted.

STREETSCAPE

The Leadlay Building is an important contributor to an intact, turn-of-the-century streetscape that includes: its neighbour, 312 Ross Avenue, Trees-Spriggs Building; the Toronto Hide & Wool Company Building, 200 Princess Street; the Boyce Carriage Company Building, 318 Ross Avenue; the Paulin-Chambers Building, 311 Ross Avenue; and the McLaughlan Carriage Company Building, 208 Princess Street (Plates 16 and 17).

Although the boundary of the Exchange District National Historic Site was drawn to exclude this building, it would, nonetheless, be considered an integral part of Winnipeg's historic warehouse district.

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[8] Manitoba Free Press, October 30, 1905, p. 42.

ARCHITECT/CONTRACTORS

The designer of this warehouse was James H. Cadham (1850-1907). Cadham was one of the City's most prolific late 19th and early 20th century architects, designing dozens of downtown warehouse as well as office buildings, stores and apartment blocks throughout the city (see Appendix II for biographical information). He has been given 20 points by the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee.

The contractors listed were J.A. Girvin (carpentry) and W.J. Hodgins (masonry).[9]

John Alexander Girvin was born near Goderich, Canada West (Ontario) in 1853 (also given as 1851), coming to Winnipeg in May 1877 where he first worked for the Canadian Pacific Railway. He formed his own business later organized as the J.A. Girvin Company. He died in Winnipeg on May 6, 1931.[10] Among his larger local commissions were:[11]

Central Congregational Church, Hargrave Street (1882) – demolished
Y.M.C.A. Building, 276 Portage Avenue (1900, with P. Burnett) – Grade II
Bank of Hamilton, 395 Main Street (1901, with P. Burnett) – demolished
Tees & Persse Co. Warehouse, Princess St. (1904, at Point Douglas Ave.) – demolished
Leadley Warehouse, 306 Ross Avenue (1905)
Fairchild Company Warehouse, 110 Princess Street (1907) – Grade II
W.R. Allen House, 6 Roslyn Road (1907) – Grade III
G.F. & J. Galt Warehouse, 334 McDermot Avenue (1909)
Enderton Block, Portage Avenue (1909) – demolished
Foley Brothers Warehouse, 185-187 Market Avenue (1918, alterations) – demolished
Congdon Marsh Building, 86-88 Princess Street (1920, 2 additional storeys) – Grade III
Tees & Persse Warehouse, 315 William Avenue (1924, alterations)

William J. Hodgins was born in Ontario in 1854.[12] He came to Winnipeg shortly after 1900 and City of Winnipeg Building Permit Ledger Books include commissions for him and in partnership with a number of well-known local builders from 1902-1906, at which point his whereabouts are unknown.

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9 Manitoba Free Press, April 26, 1905, p. 11.

10 Manitoba Free Press, May 7, 1931; and Cochrane, Rev. William, Hopkins, John Castell and Hunter, W. J., The Canadian Album: Men of Canada (Brantford, ON: Bradley, Garretson & Company, ca.1893), p. 69.

11 Compiled from Manitoba Free Press, various dates; author's files; and Ledgers, 1899-1926.

12 Census of Canada, 1901.

A list of his work would include:

G.F. Bryan House, 49 Kennedy Street (1901 with William Horner & C.H. Simpson) – demolished
Waterous Engine Works Warehouse, 157 Higgins Avenue (with William Horner) – demolished
Porter & Company Building, 368-370 Main Street (1902 with William Horner) – demolished
A.M. McCutcheon House, Edmonton Street (1902 with William Horner) – demolished
Bromley & Company Factory, 242 Princess Street, 3-storey addition (1903)
Codville Company Spice Mill, Lombard Avenue East (1903 with William Horner) – demolished
J. Wilkes Stable, McDermot Avenue (1903 with W.H. Fraser) – demolished
T.S. Ewart House, 567 Stradbrook Avenue (1903) – demolished
American Abell Machinery Company Warehouse, Dufferin Avenue (1903 with S.B. Ritchie) – demolished
Telfer Brothers Warehouse, 156 Lombard Avenue (1904) – demolished
W.J. Hodgins House, 122 Margaretta Street (1904) – demolished
Young Men's Liberal Club, 310 Notre Dame Avenue (1904 with W.H. Fraser) – demolished
Tees and Persse Warehouse, 315 William Avenue (1905 with T.E. Thompson)
Robinson & Company Store, 45-49 Albert Street (1905) – demolished
Scott Furniture Company Building, 272 Main Street (1905 rebuild after fire)
Somerset Building, 294 Portage Avenue (1906)
Lee Court, 217 Donald Street (1906 with T.E. Thompson) – demolished

PERSON/INSTITUTION

The building was originally owned by merchant Harry Leadlay. Leadlay was born in Toronto, Canada West (Ontario), in 1866 and came to Winnipeg in 1886, working in the fur sector as the western manager of the Toronto Hide and Wool Company, one of the region's largest fur and wool concerns in the last decade of the 19th century. In 1893, it was reported that 136,000 kilograms of the total of 225,000 kilograms of wool shipped east from Western Canada was handled by the Toronto Hide and Wool Company out of its modest warehouse, 298 Ross Avenue.[13]

Leadlay worked for the company until the early 1900s when he began his own business, H. & A. Leadlay. He planned to move next door into his new Ross Avenue warehouse in 1905 but initially chose to rent out the space and remain in the 298 Ross Avenue building. Early tenants

[13] Manitoba Free Press, November 4, 1893, p. 4.

included W.L. McKenzie and Company, manufacturing agents, Kingdon Printing Company and the Mooney Biscuit Company.[14] An important part of the popularity of this warehouse to prospective tenants would have been the construction of a spur railway line of the Canadian Pacific Railway located along its east wall, completed in 1905 and accessed from the building's open rear loading dock (Plates 18 and 19).[15] Some of the track is still in place (Plate 20).

By 1913, however, Leadlay's new venture, Leadlay Manufacturing Company, manufacturers of overalls, sweaters, suspenders and shirts, was occupying a floor of the Ross Avenue Building.[16] Leadlay's company had financial issues by the early 1920s, filed for bankruptcy in 1922 and in 1923, he retired. He died in Winnipeg in 1953, his estate continued to own the building into the 1960s.[17] By 1970, the building was owned jointly by Winnipeg Leather Goods Manufacturing Limited, Michael Hirsch and Leon Raber, all occupants of the building.[18] Other tenants of the building included: Peel Printing, #310 (1930-1960); Acme Paper Box Company, #310 (1930-1960); Electrical Supplies Limited, #306 (1930-1960); Winnipeg Leather Goods Manufacturing Company, #310 (1970); Central Sportswear Manufacturing Company, #310 (1970s to 1980s); Sabina Sportswear Manufacturing Company, #310 (1970s); and Crown Cap Manufacturing Company, #310 (1980s).[19]

EVENT

There is no known important historical event connected with this building.

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14 Henderson's Directory (below as HD), 1906-1910.

15 Manitoba Free Press, November 14, 1905, p. 7.

16 HD, 1910-1920. It appears that the ground floor of the building was designated as #306 Ross Avenue and the upper floors, accessed by the western entrance, were #310. Manitoba Free Press, March 1, 1913, p. 21. Leadlay's nephew, Ernest Leadlay, incorporated Leadlay Limited, manufacturers' agent, in 1913.

17 Manitoba Free Press, May 6, 1922, p. 2 and April 13, 1953, p. 16; and City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 13-071826000, 1920-1990.

18 Loc. cit.

19 HD, 1910-1980.

CONTEXT

This large warehouse is an extant example of Winnipeg's major early 20th century expansion phase that lasted from 1900 to World War I. This expansion included every facet of the city's economic, political and social sectors and transformed it into a leading North American centre. The warehouse district was crucial to this expansion. Warehouses like the Leadlay Building, located just off a major downtown thoroughfare, Princess Street, and connected to the transcontinental railway system by a spur line, were found throughout the downtown.

The fact that it was used as a rental property for many decades is another part of the history of the area – successful businessmen investing profits into the safe local real estate sector.

LANDMARK

This large building is located on a relatively quiet downtown street but would be familiar in the neighbourhood.

Historical Buildings & Resources Committee
THE CITY OF WINNIPEG

APPENDIX I

CITY OF WINNIPEG - Preliminary Report

Building Address: 306 Ross Avenue (#306-310) Building Name: Leadlay Building

Original Use: warehouse Current Use: warehouse

Roll No. (Old): 13071826000 (12163) RSN: 155611

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

Legal Description: 8/9 St. John, Plan 32336, Lot 5; 9 St. John, Plan 1537, Lot 8

Location: south side west of Princess Street

Date of Construction: 1905 Storeys: 5 & B

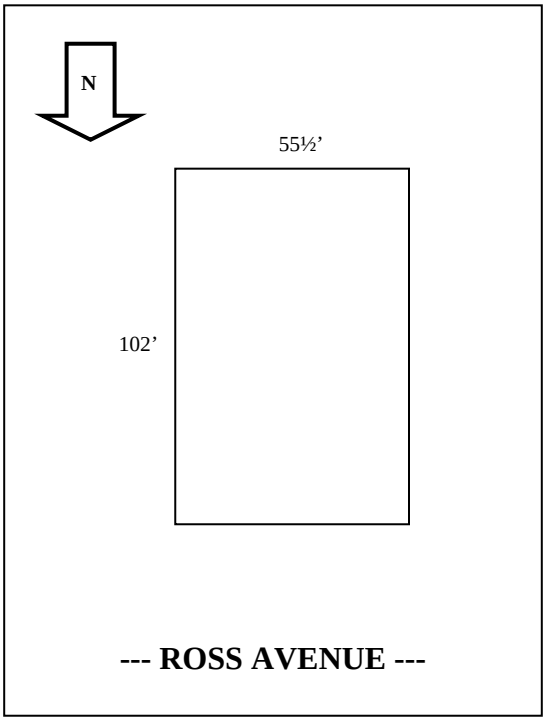
Heritage Status: NOMINATED LIST

Construction Type: brick and stone foundation

Building Permits (Plans available: **[CS]** City Storage; **[M]** Microfilm):
- 959/1905 $35,000 (original); 3244/1927 **[CS]** (construct in-ground storage tanks); 6957/1953 **[CS]** (interior alteration to #306); 4220/1954 **[CS]** (addition); 3071/1957 **[CS]** (interior alteration to #306); 7549/1962 **[CS]** (interior alteration to #310); 1777/1997 $3,000 (interior alteration to 49th Apparel)

Information:

- 55½ x 102’



ARCHITECT: CADHAM, JAMES H.

CONTRACTOR: GIRVIN & HODGINS

APPENDIX II

James Henry Cadham

James H. Cadham was born near London, Canada West (Ontario), on August 31, 1850, the son of Thomas and Eliza Cadham, both English-born settlers of the area. Thomas operated a sash, door and blind factory in London. J.H. Cadham left public school at the age of 16 to learn the carpenter's trade.[1] In 1870, Cadham answered the call to arms in Eastern Canada by the Dominion government to protect its rights in the recently ceded territory that would become the Province of Manitoba. He was a private in No. 1 Battalion under Captain Cooke, part of the 1,200-man force that included 400 British Regulars and 800 Ontario and Quebec militiamen and would become known as the Wolseley Expedition.[2]

Cadham arrived with the rest of the force in late August to find the uprising led by Louis Riel and his followers had ended. Cadham, unlike many of the other militiamen, decided to stay after his discharge on March 4, 1871 and began working as a carpenter and contractor, under the name Blackmore and Cadham. Little is known about his early work in the city, although he apparently had enough experience by the mid-1890s to begin practice as an architect. In this capacity, Cadham had a profound effect on Winnipeg's skyline. He was responsible for many warehouses in the district before and after 1900. So highly regarded was Cadham that builders would often consult him about a new structure even though he was not the architect of the building.[3] He was an ardent hunter and was a Mason and a member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. Cadham continued to work up until a few weeks before his death from pneumonia on December 10, 1907. He left a wife, three sons and two daughters.

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1 Biographical information on Cadham from: Manitoba Free Press, December 11, 1907, p. 5; Winnipeg Telegram, December 11, 1907, p. 11; Manitoba Library Association, Pioneers and Early Citizens of Manitoba (Winnipeg, MB: Peguis Publishers, 1971), pp. 39-40; F.H. Schofield, The Story of Manitoba (Winnipeg, MB: S.J. Clarke Publishing, 1913), Vol. II, pp. 331-32; and G. Bryce, A History of Manitoba (Toronto, ON: The Canada History Company, 1906), pp. 493-94.

2 Canadian Encyclopedia (Edmonton, AB: Hurtig Publishers, 1988), Vol. 3, p. 1837.

3 Manitoba Free Press, December 11, 1907, p. 5.

A partial list of his work includes many of the Exchange District's most outstanding structures:[4]

Merchants Bank, Main and Post Office Street (now McDermot Avenue), 1875 (carpenter with Mr. Blackmore) – demolished [5]
Paulin, Chambers & Co. Biscuit Factory, 311 Ross Avenue, 1899[6]
McIntyre Block, 416 Main Street (contractor – demolished)
W.F. Alloway Building, 179 McDermot Avenue, 1898 (Grade III)
Whitla Building, 70 Arthur Street, 1899 (Grade II)
G.D. Wood & Company Building (Merchants Building), 250 McDermot Ave., 1898 (Grade II)
Daylite Building, 296 McDermot Avenue, 1899 (Grade II)
Imperial Dry Goods Building, 91 Albert Street, 1900 (Grade III)
G.F. Stephens Warehouse, 176 Market Avenue, 1901 (and additions) - demolished
Alloway & Champion Block, Portage Avenue, 1901 (demolished)
Moss (Kantor) House, 218 Roslyn Road, 1901
Arthur (Blue Ribbon Company) Building, 88 Arthur Street, 1901
Jerry Robinson Department Store, 49 Albert Street, 1902
McLaughlin Carriage Building, 206-210 Princess Street, 1902 & 1906 addition
Gregg Building, 52 Albert Street, 1903 (Grade III)
Elim Chapel (St. Stephens Presbyterian Church), 546 Portage Avenue, 1903
R.J. Whitla Factory, 371 Hargrave Street, 1903
Dingle and Stewart Warehouse, 263 Stanley Street, 1903
Robinson, Little and Company Building, 54 Arthur Street, 1903 (Grade II)
Prairie Lumber Company Warehouse, foot of Henry Avenue, 1903
Rat Portage Lumber Company Warehouse, 101 Higgins Avenue, 1903
Gaylord Block (Kemp Building), 111 Lombard Avenue, 1903
Winnipeg Saddlery Building, 284 William Avenue, 1903
Galt Building Annex, 92 Arthur Street, 1903 (Grade II)
Bedford (Stobart) Building, 275 McDermot Avenue, 1903 (Grade III)
Scott Furniture Building, 272 Main Street, 1904 (Grade III)
Stobart Company Overall Factory, 327 Cumberland Avenue, 1904
G. Velie Warehouse, 183-87 Portage Avenue E, 1904
Miller, Morse and Company Warehouse, 317 McDermot Avenue, 1904
Telfer Brothers Warehouse, 156 Lombard Avenue, 1904
Avenue Block, 261 Portage Avenue, 1904

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4 Compiled from local newspaper building lists, 1874-1908; The Exchange District. Part 1: A Property Survey (Winnipeg, MB: City of Winnipeg, 2001); and City of Winnipeg Building Permit Ledger Books, 1900-1907.

5 Manitoba Free Press, September 23, 1875, p. 3.

6 Manitoba Free Press, March 14, 1899, p. 3.

J.H. Cadham designs (continued):

M. Fortune and Company Block, Smith Street, 1904
G.F. and J. Galt Building, 103 Princess Street (addition), 1904
Alloway and Champion Building, 667 Main Street, 1905 (Grade III)
Genser's Furniture Building, 289 Portage Avenue, 1905
West Hotel, 786 Main Street, 1905
Leadley Building, 306 Ross Avenue, 1905
Manitoba Medical College, Bannatyne Avenue (corner Emily Street), 1905 – demolished
Trees-Spriggs Building, 312 Ross Avenue, 1905
J.H. Cadham House, 336 River Avenue, 1906
Grose and Walker Warehouse, 261 Stanley Street, 1906

306 ROSS AVENUE – LEADLAY BUILDING



Plate 1 – McDermot Avenue looking west from Main Street, ca.1881. Note the extensive number of homes in the area. (Archives of Manitoba.)



Plate 2 – The same view of McDermot Avenue as in Plate 1. This ca.1910 photograph shows the change in the area over 30 years. (Archives of Manitoba.)

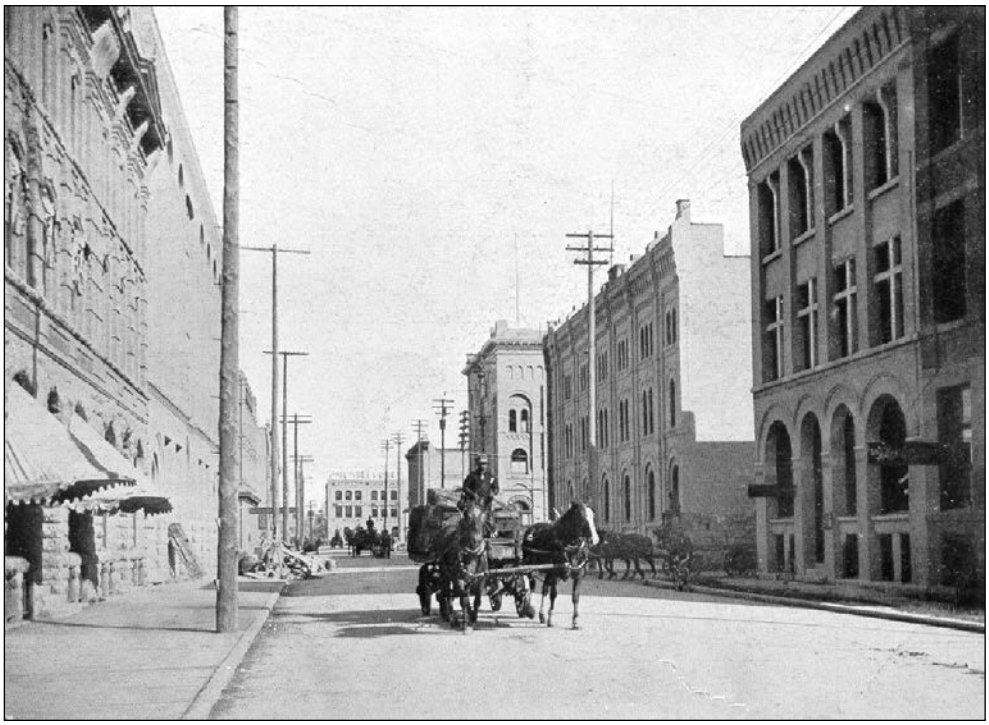


Plate 3 – Princess Street, filled with substantial warehouse buildings, looking north from McDermot Avenue, ca.1903. (M. Peterson Collection.)



Plate 4 – Busy Princess Street looking south from Ross Avenue, ca.1903. (M. Peterson Collection.)



Plate 5 – Bannatyne Avenue East, looking west towards Main Street, ca.1903. The Ashdown Warehouse is on the right. (Courtesy of the Archives of Manitoba, N3585.)

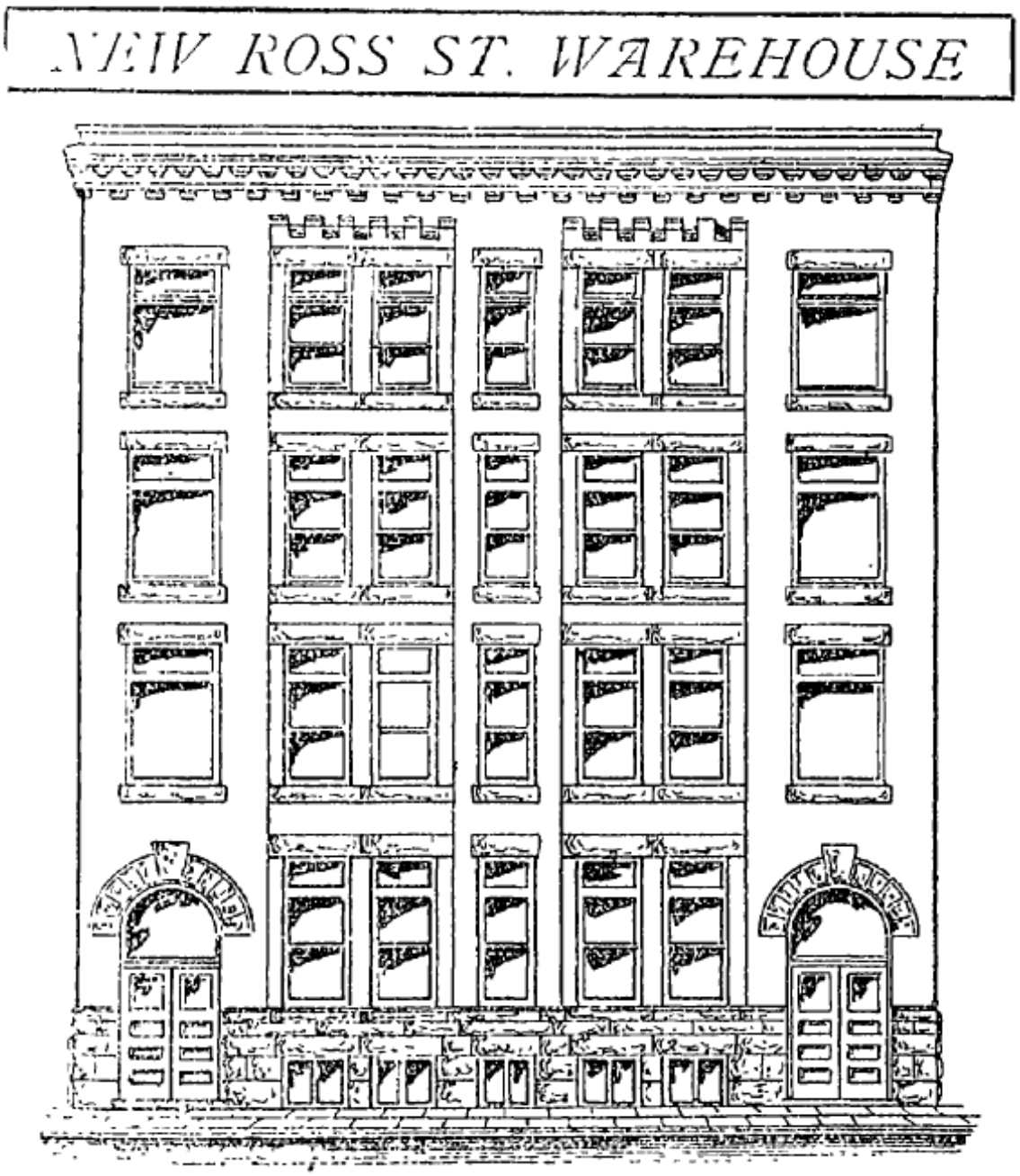


Plate 6 – Rendering of the new Leadlay Warehouse, Ross Avenue. (Reproduced from the Manitoba Free Press, April 26, 1905, p. 11.)

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Plate 7 – Leadlay Building, 306 Ross Avenue, front (north) façade, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)

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Plate 8 – Leadlay Building, 306 Ross Avenue, detail of front (north) façade, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)

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Plate 9 – Leadlay Building, 306 Ross Avenue, rear (south) and east façade, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)

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Plate 10 – Leadlay Building, 306 Ross Avenue, rear (south) façade, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)



Plate 11 – Leadlay Building, 306 Ross Avenue, basement, 2016. (M. Peterson, 2016.)



Plate 12 – Leadlay Building, 306 Ross Avenue, main floor, 2016. (M. Peterson, 2016.)

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Plate 13 – Leadlay Building, 306 Ross Avenue, fourth floor, 2016. (M. Peterson, 2016.)



Plate 14 – Leadlay Building, 306 Ross Avenue, main floor, ornamental tin ceiling, 2019. (G. Menzies, 2019.)

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Plate 15 – Leadlay Building, 306 Ross Avenue, third floor connecting doorway to 312 Ross Avenue, 2016. (M. Peterson, 2016.)

306 ROSS AVENUE – LEADLAY BUILDING

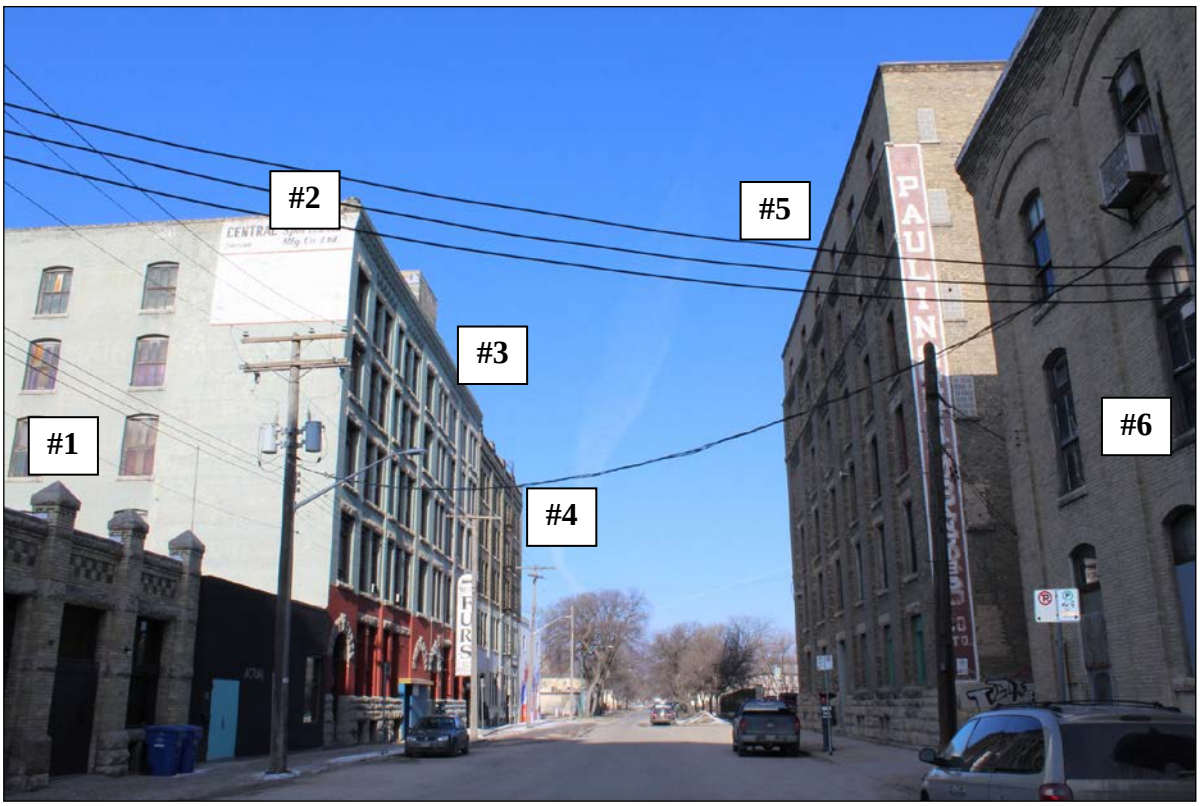


Plate 16 – Ross Avenue looking west, 2016. Buildings on the block: #1- Toronto Hide & Wool Company Building, 200 Princess Street (built 1893); #2- Leadlay Building, 306 Ross Avenue (built 1905); #3- 312 Ross Avenue, Trees-Spriggs Building (built 1905); #4- Boyce Carriage Company Building, 318 Ross Avenue (built 1905) - now part of The Boyce Lofts on Ross, 316 Ross Avenue; #5- Paulin-Chambers Building, 311 Ross Avenue (built 1899-1920); and #6- McLaughlan Carriage Company Building, 208 Princess Street (built 1902). (M. Peterson, 2016.)

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Plate 17 – Ross Avenue looking east, 2019. (M. Peterson, 2019.)

306 ROSS AVENUE – LEADLAY BUILDING

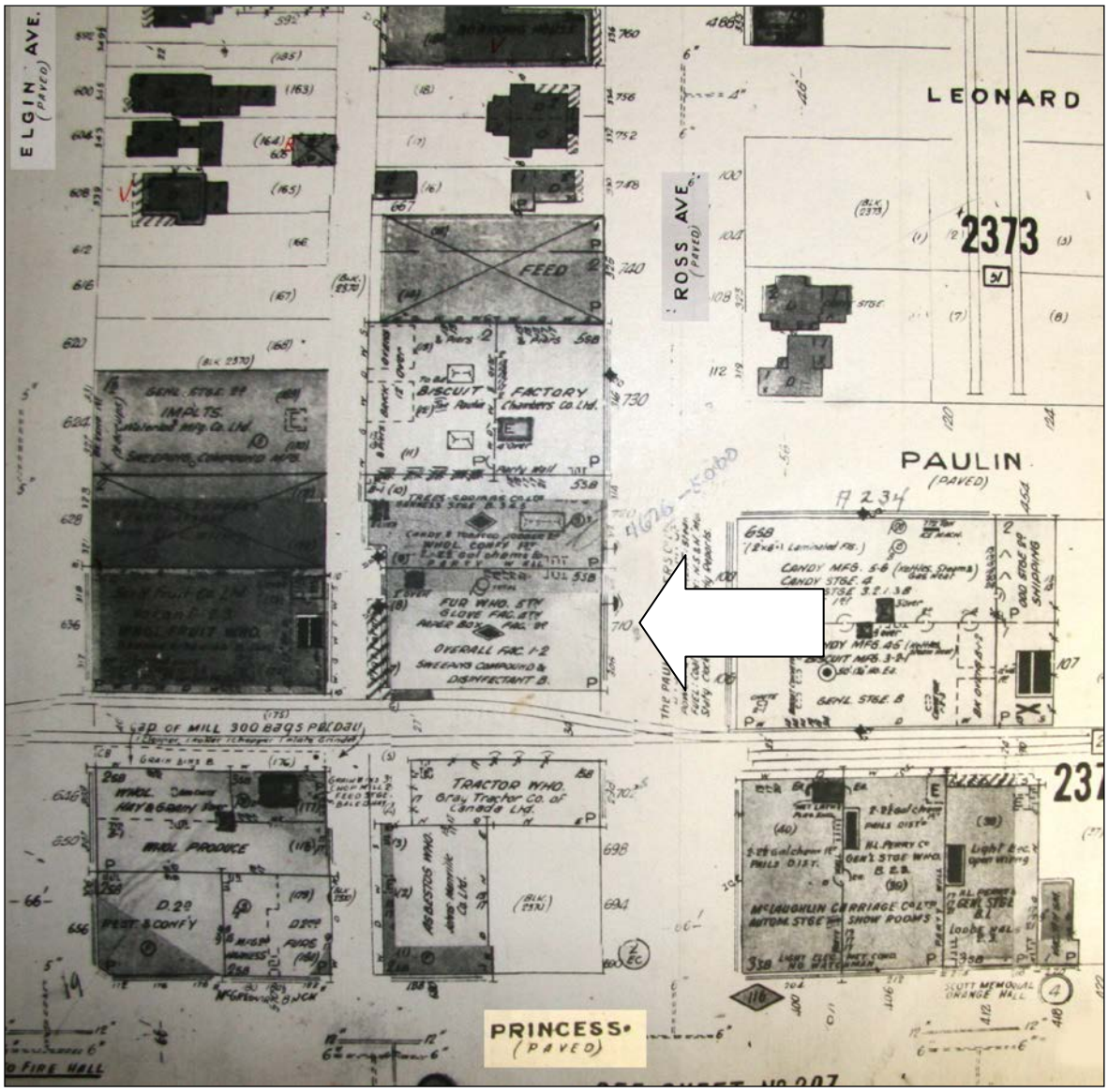


Plate 18 – Winnipeg Fire Atlas, Vol. II, Sheet 237 (December 1917), Leadlay Building at arrow. (City of Winnipeg.)

306 ROSS AVENUE – LEADLAY BUILDING



Plate 19 – Advertisement for the Leadlay Building, including “track privileges,” 1908.
(Reproduced from the Manitoba Free Press, April 14, 1908, p. 2.)



Plate 20 – Spur line track, back lane, rear of 306 Ross Avenue, 2016. (M. Peterson, 2016.)