



200 PRINCESS STREET

TORONTO HIDE & WOOL COMPANY BUILDING

City of Winnipeg
Historical Buildings & Resources Committee
Researcher: M. Peterson
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The trade in furs and wools was Western Canada's first industry. Beginning on Hudson Bay in the 17th century with the Hudson's Bay Company and moving inland, the activity was responsible for the exploration and permanent settlement of the entire West.

By the 1880s, the sector had evolved, utilizing improved transportation – the transcontinental railway system in both the United States and Canada – to efficiently move raw hides and furs from the West to markets in the East. Winnipeg continued to occupy a central role in the trade, headquarters to fur auction houses, hide dealers and retail fur companies.

In 1887, the Toronto Hide and Wool Company, founded in 1866 by Toronto Alderman John Hallam (1833-1900) – Plate 1,¹ opened a branch in Winnipeg, located at 88 Princess Street and advertising the purchase of wool.² Five years later, Hallam's business was booming and as a result, he built a new warehouse³ in the heart of the growing warehouse district west of Main Street, near the corner of Princess Street and Ross Avenue.

STYLE

The 1890s structure, although small in scale, features unique elements not seen in other buildings in the warehouse district. Not specifically based on any style, the building has been an unusual structure in the district for well over 100 years.

¹ Website "Libraries Today" (<http://www.uoguelph.ca/~lbruce/photos/Hallam.htm>), 1997 (modified 2013).

² Manitoba Free Press, May 14, 1887, p. 4.

³ Manitoba Free Press, August 4, 1892, p. 8, August 18, 1892, p. 8, August 27, 1892, p. 8 and September 14, 1892, p. 8.

CONSTRUCTION

The 1892 building, which faces north onto Ross Avenue, measures 10.1 x 27.3 x 7.9 metres and features solid brick walls resting on a stone foundation (see Appendix I for more construction information).

In 1947, a large brick, hollow tile and reinforced concrete addition was built on the east side of the building, fronting Princess Street.

In 1994, a concrete block addition was completed on the west side of the 1892 building, located where the original spur line ran.

DESIGN

The original 1893 section (which was known for many years as 298 Ross Avenue) features a heavy rusticated base at grade leading to the brick building above (Plate 2). Three bands of rusticate stone, the lower interrupted by the windows and doors and middle forming continuous heads above these openings and the top at the roofline accent the cream coloured brick walls of the superstructure. These openings are recessed, separated by brick pilasters that rise above the roofline and are finished with pyramidal shaped stone caps (Plate 3). Brick laid in a patchwork pattern accents the areas above the window and door openings. The rear (south) brick wall is also exposed and plain, openings have been closed with brick or concrete block (Plate 4).

The 1947 addition is unadorned except for a band of brick above the window openings and another at the roofline (Plate 5). The northeast corner is angles and holds the entrance. There is a large display window in the east wall and a smaller opening on the north. Sometime after 1978, two large loading doors were bricked in on the west end of the north façade (Plate 6) and its dark brick walls have been painted (Plate 7).

A large addition, measuring 10.4 x 33.8 metres, was completed on the west side of the original building in 1994 (Plates 8 and 9), designed by engineer G.S. Kowalchuk and consulting structural engineers William Hanuschak and Associates.⁴

INTERIOR

According to contemporary records, the original interior featured an office in the front (north) end of the building, with loading/unloading space to the rear. The basement was designed with sloping concrete floors to facilitate the storage and handling of raw hides and furs.⁵

At present, the only original area of the 1893 section is the wood beam/posts in the basement (Plate 10). The upper floor of this area has been subdivided, the additions on either side are open and used for showroom and gallery space (Plate 11 and 12).

INTEGRITY

The building stands on its original site, appears to be in good structural condition for its age and maintains many of its original design features and materials.

STREETSCAPE

This small, unique building has been part of the streetscape of Ross Avenue/Princess Street for over 100 years (Plate 13). It is on the western boundary of the Exchange District National Historic Site (EDNHS). Because all buildings within the EDNHS are essential parts of their historic streetscapes, the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee has given them 60 points.

⁴ Plans No. 1644/1994, courtesy of the City of Winnipeg.

⁵ City of Winnipeg Tax Collection Roll, 1892, quoted in R.R. Rostecki, "298 Ross Avenue," in Early Buildings In Winnipeg, Parks Canada, Manuscript Report No. 389, Vol. VII (1974-1977), pp. 167-172.

ARCHITECT/CONTRACTORS

The original architect of this building was George C. Browne (1852-1919) – Plate 14.⁶ Browne came to Winnipeg 1882 and set up his practice that saw him design some of the City’s finest early buildings (see Appendix II for biographical information). He has been given 10 points by the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee.

The 1947 addition was designed by local architect H. Lloyd Finch (1904-1967) and built by Smith and Fredborg.⁷ Finch was a graduate of the University of Manitoba’s School of Architecture (1926) and after working in Chicago, Illinois for six years, started a practice in Winnipeg that lasted until his death in 1967. Finch’s work after World War II concentrated heavily on the design of innovative residential structures and neighbourhood development, for example, the Grant Park Plaza neighbourhood developed in the mid-1950s.

Among his larger commissions are:⁸

Lions’ Club Residence for the Aged Blind, 1031 Portage Avenue, 1946
 Professional Building, 401 Graham Avenue, 1947
 Cosman Furniture Building, 200 Princess Street, 1947
 Apex Building (“The Mall”), 200 Osborne Street North, 1947-1948
 Dalton Baptist Church, 397 Dalton Street, 1953
 Niakwa Hotel, St. Anne’s Road, 1960
 Carlton Inn, 220 Carlton Street, 1960-1961 (demolished)
 Kildonan Motor Hotel, 2100 Main Street, 1961
 Royal Globe Insurance Building, 52 Donald Street, 1961
 Charleswood Motor Hotel, 3425 Roblin Boulevard, 1962
 Windsorian Motor Hotel, 1034 Elizabeth Road, 1963
 Dental Arts Building, 225 Vaughan Street, 1965
 Balmoral Motor Hotel, 621 Balmoral Street, 1965
 Sutton Place, 115 Wellington Crescent, 1968

He has not been evaluated by the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee.

⁶ Manitoba Free Press, August 4, 1892, p. 8.

⁷ Winnipeg Architecture Foundation website, <http://www.winnipegarchitecture.ca>.

⁸ Compiled from Historical Buildings & Resources Committee files; Winnipeg Free Press, various; and Winnipeg Architecture Foundation website, <http://www.winnipegarchitecture.ca>.

PERSON/INSTITUTION

The Toronto Hide and Wool Company was 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.⁹ Locally, the branch was run by Harry A. Leadlay, who ultimately opened his own business, H. & A. Leadlay, hides operating out of the Ross Avenue warehouse.¹⁰ Representatives of John Hallam, Toronto Hide and Wool Company founder, continued to own the property in the 1940s.¹¹

During the post-World War I era, tenants of the property included Kerr Albert Company, hides, wools and furs, the Port Nelson Fish Company and Jansen Brothers, c/o Karel Jansen (1889-1974), wholesale market gardeners, who operated farms in North Kildonan, Rosser and St. François-Xavier.¹² It was during the ownership/occupancy of Jansen Brothers that the east side addition was completed. Cosman's Furniture took ownership of the property in the 1970s and continues to use the building as part of their retail operations.¹³ This firm was founded by Charles Cosman in 1916, located at 327-331 Carlton Street (present-day Air Canada Building site) before the North Portage redevelopment project forced them to move.¹⁴

EVENT

There is no known significant historic event connected with this building.

⁹ Manitoba Free Press, November 4, 1893, p. 4.

¹⁰ Leadlay's business expanded and in 1905 he built a large warehouse immediately west of this building at 306-310 Ross Avenue. Note: there are several incidences of his name spelt "Leadley."

¹¹ City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 718222-12-2, PC 30 (below as ARo), 1890-1950.

¹² Winnipeg Free Press, August 13, 1974, p. 31.

¹³ ARo, 1890-1980; and Henderson's Directory, 1890-1980.

¹⁴ Interpretive plaque, 200 Princess Street.

CONTEXT

This building is relevant to a number of contextual themes in Winnipeg's history. It was part of the fur trade sector that was one of the earliest and most important to the economy and European-based settlement of Western Canada. The warehouse was also an early occupant of the growing warehouse district that would, by World War I, stretch of dozens of blocks on both the east and west sides of Main Street.

The building's expansion in the late 1940s was representative of the growth of the local economy coming out of World War II and the worldwide economic depression of the 1930s. Many local businesses looked to modernize and expand their facilities, including this warehouse.

LANDMARK

The scale of this building and its location set back from the intersection reduce its conspicuousness.



APPENDIX I

CITY OF WINNIPEG - Preliminary Report Assessment Record

Building Address: 200 Princess Street

Building Name: Toronto Hide & Wool Company Building

Original Use: fur and hide warehouse

Current Use: furniture store & warehouse

Roll No. (Old): 718222 (12160-61)

Merged from Roll No's 718220, 718240 and 718221

Municipality: 12

Ward: 2

Property or Occupancy Code: 30

Legal Description: 8/9 St. John, Plan 32336, Lots 6:8 (Original: 9^W St. John, Plan 1537, Lots 1: 3 (except south 60'): 4: 5 (except west 10')

Location: south side, Princess Street & Ross Avenue

Date of Construction: 1893/1947

Storeys: 1

Construction Type: Brick – ordinary

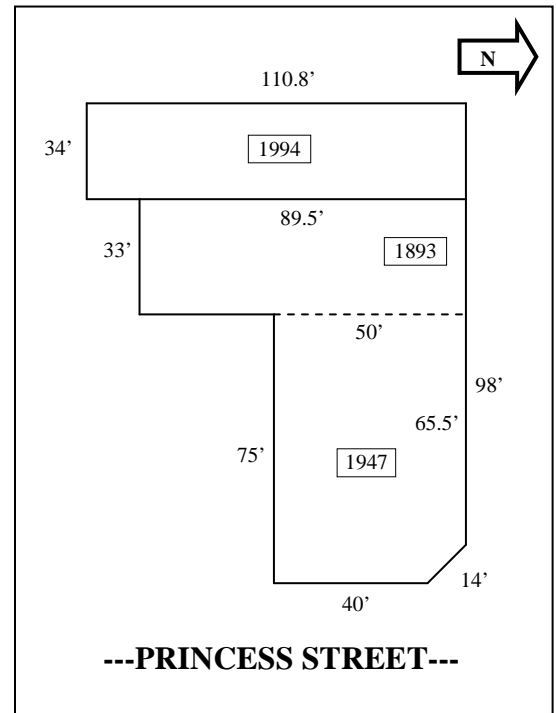
HERITAGE STATUS: ON NOMINATED LIST

Building Permits (Plans available: [CS] City Storage; [M] Microfilm):

- 2152/1947 \$13,000 (addition); 7/1957 \$200 (Oil Burner & Tank); 7925/1953 \$233,000 (interior/exterior alterations); 7925/1983 \$233,000 (alterations); 1644/1994 [M] \$78,000 (addition)

Information:

- 33 x 89 ½ x 26+ = 76,791 cu. ft.
- Front – rough face stone to sills - balance common clay brick
- Wall Thickness – 21-17” brick, basement – 30”-24” stone
- 1944 – Building weathered, doors/windows poor condition
- 1948 – windows bricked in on west side. Install Peerless A/C furnace. 8 x 8 lam. beams & columns added in basement
- 1960 “Poor condition” – considerable settlement
- 1978 – New double doors, services discontinued except electrical, used for furniture storage. Purchased in 1977 by Cosman’s
- 1984 – Basement coolers removed. Area used for storage. New 3” conc. topping on old conc. floor. All wiring in basement new, fluorescent fixtures. Main floor windows closed-up, new fluorescent lighting, suspended ceiling, unit heaters and asphalt tile floor.
- 50 x 75 x 16 portion of building (1947):
- Front – 4” Face Brick north and east walls, double glazed windows
- Wall Thickness – 8” hollow tile, 4” brick (south, west walls), reinforced concrete foundation
- 1984 - Suspended ceiling, flooring, HVAC system, windows/doors



APPENDIX II

George Browne

George Browne was born in Montreal in 1852, the son of architect George Browne, a prominent designer and major real estate holder. After finishing high school, he immediately went to work in his father's office. At the age of eighteen, he went to New York and worked for Russell Sturgis, one of that city's leading architects. After three years, Browne resigned and left for Europe to study design history.¹

He spent over three years in England, Ireland, France, Italy and Switzerland, and won an international design competition in England. He returned to Montreal in 1877² and in 1879 he inexplicably gave up architecture to homestead on 129.5 ha (320 acres) of land in the Tiger Hills district south of Holland, Manitoba.³

Browne moved to Winnipeg in 1882⁴ and set up a private architectural practice. He continued to design buildings throughout Manitoba and Western Canada into the new century, although by 1904 City of Winnipeg Building Permits show little work attributed to his office. In 1907, he had his name officially changed from George Browne to George Creford Browne.⁵ His work ranged from small houses and cottages to major office structures and warehouses. He moved to New York City ca. 1910.⁶ Perhaps his two most famous designs were the Public Market Building behind City Hall, built in 1889-90 (demolished in 1964), and Wesley College (University of Winnipeg), Portage Avenue, built in 1895 and still standing. It was announced in 1904 that he was retiring and moving to New York State.⁷ He died in South Nyack, New York on March 12, 1919.⁸

¹ G. Bryce, A History of Manitoba (Toronto, ON: The Canada History Company, 1906), pp. 483-84.

² W.P. Thompson, "Browne, George, Jr." The Canadian Encyclopedia (Edmonton, AB: Hurtig Publishers, 1988), Volume 1, p. 289.

³ Winnipeg Daily Tribune, August 1, 1891, p. 13.

⁴ Men of Canada, p. 222 (unidentified article in the Department of Culture and Heritage, Historic Resources Branch files).

⁵ Statutes of Manitoba, 1907, Chapter 51, p. 11 (Historic Resources Branch files).

⁶ W.P. Thompson, op. cit., p. 289.

⁷ Canadian Architect and Builder, Vol. 17 (1904), Issue 5, p. 85.

⁸ Ibid., p. 289.

A list of his varied work includes:⁹

Massey Building, 294 William Avenue, 1885, Grade II
Miller, Morse and Co. Warehouse, 86 Princess Street, 1887 – Grade III
City of Winnipeg, Public Market Building, City Hall, 1889-1890 – demolished
Mackenzie and Powis Warehouse, 78 Princess Street, 1891 – Grade III
Toronto Hide & Wool Company Building, 200 Princess Street (298 Ross Avenue), 1892
Euclid (or North Central) School, Euclid Avenue, 1892 - demolished
Manitoba College, major addition, Broadway, 1892 - demolished
Mulvey School, Broadway, 1893 (and 1895 replacement) - both demolished
Aberdeen School, Salter Street, 1893 - demolished
Court House and Jail, PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE, 1894-1895
Masonic Temple (Mother Tucker's Restaurant), 335 Donald Street, 1895
Presbyterian Indian Mission residence, REGINA, SA, 1895
Presbyterian Indian Mission residence, PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE, MB, 1895
Hudson's Bay Co. store, CALGARY, AB, 1895
Hudson's Bay Co. store, PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE, MB, 1895
Hudson's Bay Co. warehouse, York Avenue at Fort Street, 1895
Wesley College (University of Winnipeg), with S.F. Peters, 1895
Trust and Loan Co. Building, Portage Avenue, 1898 - demolished
Victoria Jubilee Wing, Winnipeg General Hospital, 1898
Strevel Terrace, Donald Street, 1899 - demolished
Union Bank, NEEPAWA, MB, ca. 1899
Young Men's Christian Association Building (Birk's Building), 276 Portage Avenue, 1900
(Grade II)
Gault Building, 92-104 Arthur Street, 1900, Grade II
Gurney Foundry Co. warehouse, Owen (McDermot) Avenue, 1902
Strathcona Block, Main corner Broadway, 1902-1903 - demolished
American Able Machinery Company, Dufferin Avenue - warehouse, 1902; factory, 1902-03; and
offices and warehouse, 1903
Hudson's Bay Co. stables, York Avenue, 1903
Forman Block, Fort Street, 1903
Toronto Type Foundry warehouse, major addition, 175 McDermot Avenue, 1904 (Grade III)

⁹ This list is compiled from: personal files of the author; various local newspapers' building issues, 1879-1911; Canadian Architect and Builder, 1896-99; City of Winnipeg, Building Permits, 1899-1904; Giles Bugailiskis, "Quiet Dignity," unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, 1990, p. 156; and files of the City of Winnipeg, Heritage Planner.

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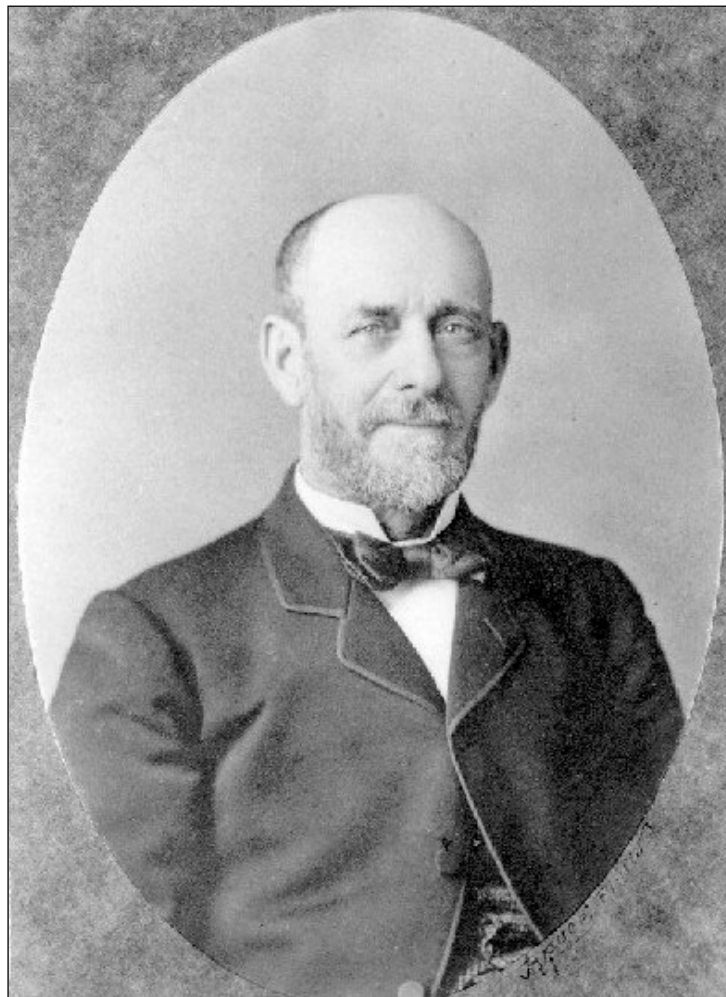


Plate 1 – John Hallam (1833-1900), Toronto Alderman and founder of the Toronto Hide and Wool Company, no date. (Reproduced from Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library, T-13698.)

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Plate 2 – Toronto Hide and Wool Company Building, 200 Princess Street, front (north) façade, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)



Plate 3 – Toronto Hide and Wool Company Building, 200 Princess Street, detail of front (north) façade, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)

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Plate 4 – Toronto Hide and Wool Company Building, 200 Princess Street, rear (south) façade, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)



Plate 5 – Toronto Hide and Wool Company Building, 200 Princess Street, 1947 addition, north and east façades, 2016. (M. Peterson, 2016.)

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Plate 6 – Toronto Hide and Wool Company Building, 200 Princess Street, north façade, 1978. (City of Winnipeg.)



Plate 7 – Toronto Hide and Wool Company Building, 200 Princess Street, 1947 addition, north façade, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)

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Plate 8 – Toronto Hide and Wool Company Building, 200 Princess Street, 1994 addition, north façade, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)

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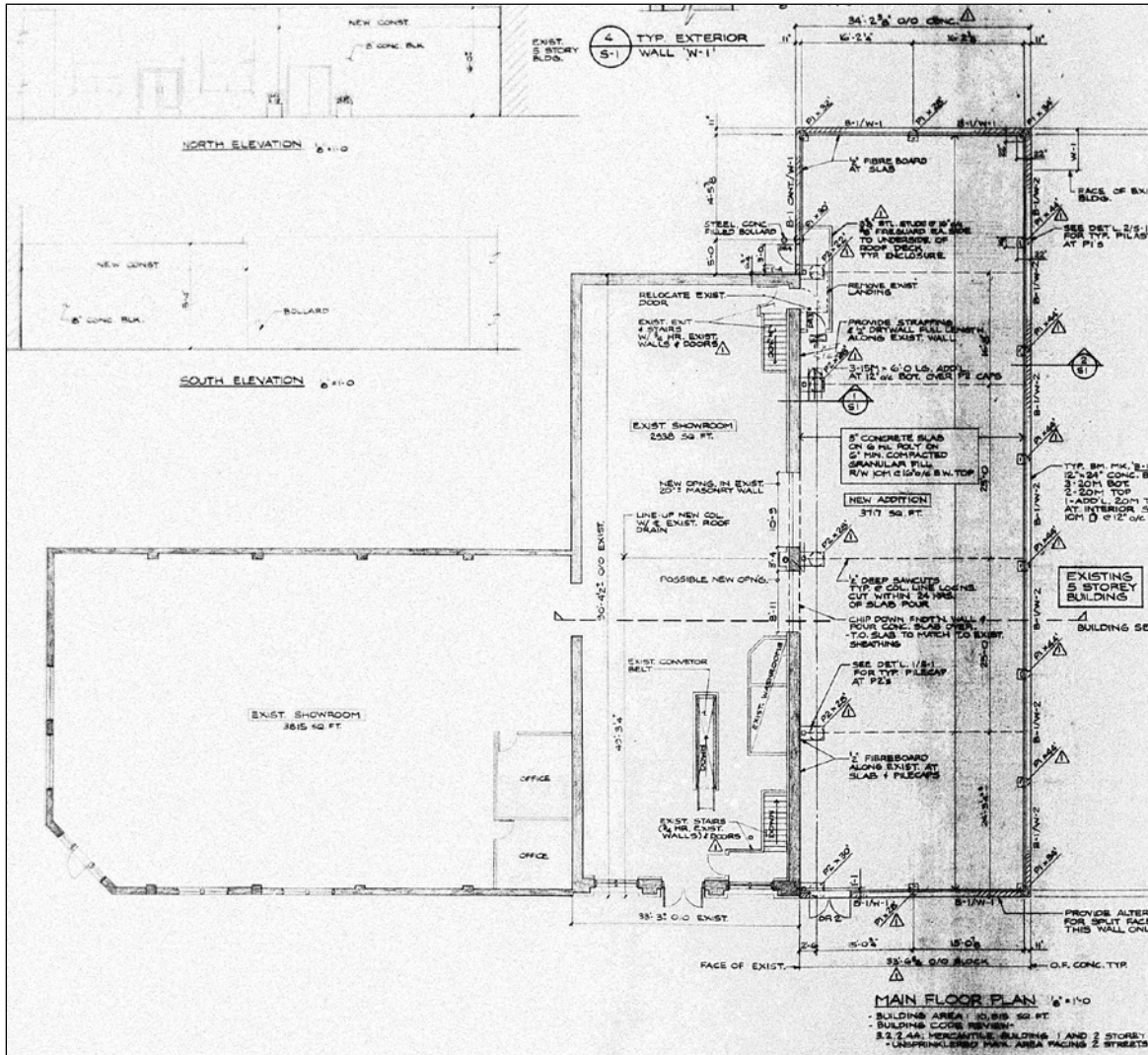


Plate 8 – Plan No. 1644/1994, “Main Floor Plan.” (Courtesy of the City of Winnipeg.)

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Plate 10 – Toronto Hide and Wool Company Building, 200 Princess Street, basement, 2016. (M. Peterson, 2016.)

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Plate 11 – Toronto Hide and Wool Company Building, 200 Princess Street, 1893 section, 2016. (M. Peterson, 2016.)



Plate 12 – Toronto Hide and Wool Company Building, Princess Street, 1947 section, 2016. (M. Peterson, 2016.)

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Plate 13 –Princess Street looking south from Ross Avenue, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)

200 PRINCESS STREET – TORONTO HIDE & WOOL COMPANY BUILDING



Plate 14 – George C. Browne, ca.1902. (Reproduced from Representative Men of Manitoba, 1902 [Winnipeg, MB: Tribune Publishing Company, 1902].)