

**54 DONALD STREET – PATERSON BLOCK**  
*J.D. Atchison, 1909*



This structure represents an excellent example of a luxury apartment block built in Winnipeg between 1905 and 1915, a period of time when hundreds of multi-tenant structures were erected in the city— more than anywhere else in Canada during this time — due to factors such as the weather, the economy and the high concentration of mobile, single workers needing lodgings.

For a growing number of members of Winnipeg's elite society, luxury apartments like the Paterson Block were increasingly popular. Retired couples, widows, widowers and professionals chose apartment living because it provided many of the amenities associated with the finest mansions including servant's quarters, delivery entrances and luxuriously appointed interiors.

The Paterson Block is located in the heart of one of Winnipeg's earliest and most exclusive residential districts, known as the Hudson's Bay Reserve or "The Reserve," so named because of its long association with the fur trading company. Filling first with mansions on manicured lawns, apartment blocks built in the area after 1905 could be large and elegant or small and luxurious, with roomy suites and features to make them more comfortable.

Built in the Tudor style in 1909, the Paterson Block was small and designed to blend into its residential surroundings. Tudor-style homes were constructed throughout North America from the 1890s until World War II and was loosely based on a number of late Medieval English structures ranging from thatch-roofed cottages to grand mansions. In North America, the style developed several distinctive elements – ornamental half-timbering, steeply pitched roofs, front-facing gables, bay or oriel windows, leaded glass, drip moulding and stucco, masonry or masonry-veneered walls.

The Paterson Block features an asymmetrical front (east) façade with the main doorway framed in ornamental cut stone. Large windows are found throughout this elevation, embellished with brick heads and cut stone sills. The upper two floors feature stucco-clad oriel windows, topped by front facing gable ends with oversized carved wooden brackets, half-timbering and stucco in-fill. This exterior design is not greatly altered from the original.

The interior of this building was laid out to provide comfort and luxury to the tenants of the six suites, two on each of the three upper floors. At present, the suites in the block are a mixture of original and altered spaces. Many of the dining rooms have remained intact including original burlap wall covering in one suite.

J.D. Atchison (1870-1959), one of the city's most accomplished architects, designed the Paterson Block, as well as many of Winnipeg's finest buildings. Educated and trained in Chicago, Illinois, Atchison came north to Winnipeg in the early 1900s, opening a permanent office in 1905. The block was built and named for Hugh S. Paterson, a grain

dealer who came to Winnipeg in 1897 and was a leading figure in Paterson Grain, founded in 1908 by son Norman McLeod Paterson who became a Canadian Senator. The company continues today as Paterson GlobalFoods Inc., with H.S. Paterson's grandson Donald S. its Chairman of the Board) and great-grandson Andrew B. its President and Chief Executive Officer.