



**80 LOMBARD AVENUE**

**THOMAS BLACK BUILDING**

City of Winnipeg  
Historical Buildings & Resources Committee  
Researcher: M. Peterson  
September 2016

## 80 LOMBARD AVENUE – THOMAS BLACK BUILDING

Winnipeg's early warehouse district was dispersed throughout what is now downtown Winnipeg, some businesses locating on the east side of Main Street, taking advantage of river transport (Plate 1), and some west of the Main Street. Pockets of industrial development were also found along the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) main line in Point Douglas by the early 1880s – the railway's station, freight sheds and right-of-way developing quickly. By the late 1880s, the Northern Pacific and Manitoba Railway (NP&MR) had also developed a large industrial site, 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.<sup>1</sup>

While these two developments effectively defined the north and south boundaries of the warehouse district east of Main Street, it was a third project that solidified and guaranteed the success and growth of this area. 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 approve 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."<sup>2</sup> It would be three years before the WTR had purchased all the necessary land and 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 (Plate 2).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> Manitoba Free Press, October 5, 1889.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

In 1895, a new venture, the Union Shoe and Leather Company was incorporated<sup>4</sup> and after a fire in its tannery at the east end of Lombard Avenue in June 1895, it built a modest brick warehouse the following year near the same location (Plates 3-5).

## STYLE

Because this building is comprised of several buildings of different ages, its style is also a mixture. The original section in the northeast corner shows little ornamentation that could be attributed to a specific architectural style, the same going for the southeast and southwest sections. The exception is the northwest corner, built in 1907 with a wealth of classical detailing, including a pedimented entrance, attached columns and heavy metal cornice. It was an unusually ornate main façade for a warehouse, but given its use as a rental property by the original owner, the use of architectural detailing was likely used to promote the property.

## CONSTRUCTION

The original, 1896 brick warehouse measured 9.2 metres wide by 19.5 metres long; two storeys tall on a raised basement (see Appendix I for more construction information).<sup>5</sup> According to City of Winnipeg records, the structure along its south side was built in 1898 and was, according to a 1905 source, originally three storeys tall.<sup>6</sup> A 22.9-centimetre interior fire wall divides this south building and a fourth floor was built at an unknown date. The 1907 building is solid brick on a raised rubblestone foundation includes stone accenting and measures 18.9 metres wide and 18.8 metres deep.

All portions of this warehouse were built using the most common construction method of the time – the mill system – a square timber beam and post support network where beams were attached to the solid brick exterior walls and covered by wood plank flooring and often a

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<sup>4</sup> Manitoba Free Press, January 14, 1895, p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> City of Winnipeg Assessment Record, Roll No. 606620-12-2, PC 50.

<sup>6</sup> Goad's Fire Atlas of Winnipeg, 1895 (updated to 1905), courtesy of City of Winnipeg Archives.

hardwood finish. This was a very popular system in warehouse districts throughout North America because of its sturdiness, the ease of adding additional storeys and its ability to suffer fire damage and not collapse. The Thomas Black Building is one of many mill construction structures in the Exchange District.

Uniquely, because of the different years of the construction of the three parts of this building, the mill construction ranges from modest in the oldest section, to more robust in the 1898 and 1907 sections, including large beams and posts, metal post-to-beam connectors and heavy plank flooring.

A City of Winnipeg Building Permit was taken out in 1904 for \$10,000; however, it is unknown what work was completed under this Permit.<sup>7</sup>

## **DESIGN**

The original 1896 warehouse is an unadorned, modest warehouse similar to many in the Exchange District. Ornamentation on the front (north) façade is sparse – broken course, rough cut stone base, ornamental brick work around main floor openings, stone lug sills, radiating brick heads above window openings and a brick cornice with raised central area, corbelling and open geometric shapes (Plate 6-8). The building's east side is a continuation of the basic design of the main façade (Plate 9) and the rear (south) and west walls are covered.

The south building's east wall features large windows with lug sills and radiating brick heads on all floors and a metal fire escape. A band of corbelled brick, presumably the original roofline, is found below the fourth floor windows (Plate 10). The south elevation of this section boasts three raised loading entrances at the level of rail cars on the spur line, large expanses of brick wall broken by small window openings still exhibiting their original wood and glass units (Plate 11). Again, a corbelled brick band is found below the upper storey windows and painted signage is

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<sup>7</sup> City of Winnipeg Building Permit, #1477/1904.

found on the third and fourth floors. The west side of the south portion continues this design (Plate 12).

The northwest building of 1907 is the most ornate, beginning at grade with its rough stone cladding (Plate 13) and centrally-placed main entrance with its smooth stone surround, pediment and stone accented second storey windows (Plate 14). The metal grated raised basement windows are topped by the large arched windows with keystones of the main floor. The stone cladding ends below the second storey with a smooth cornice leading to the brick walls above. Windows on the upper floors are square headed. Another modest cornice divides the third and fourth floors. This upper storey includes attached, unfluted brick columns with modest capitals between the squared window openings (Plate 15). Originally, a heavy overhanging metal cornice finished the block (Plate 16) but it has since been removed.

## **INTERIOR**

The interior of this warehouse is, as the construction history suggests, complex. The original 1896 portion features high ceilings and open warehouse space (Plates 17 and 18).

The 1898 addition, built to the rear (south) of the original building, features heavier timber beams and posts, metal connectors and a loading area at the back. The building is divided into two sections with metal fire doors protecting the openings (Plates 19 and 20).

The newest portion of the building, the northwest corner, was built in 1907 and features the heaviest structural system (Plate 21 and 22).

Ornamental tin ceiling is found on the ground floor of the 1907 section and portions of the third floor (Plate 23).

## **INTEGRITY**

The structure stands on its original site, appears to be in good structural condition and does not appear to have suffered extensive alteration to its exterior elements or design.

## **STREETSCAPE**

This structure is just outside the official boundaries of the Exchange District National Historic Site, but stands as an important defining structure for Lombard Avenue at the south end of Winnipeg's warehouse district (Plates 24 and 25).

## **ARCHITECT/CONTRACTORS**

It is unknown at the present time, who was responsible for the design and construction of the original 1896 building or its 1898 addition. The local architectural firm of Hooper (Samuel) and Walker (Charles H.) were responsible for the 1907 addition. The firm enjoyed modest success from ca.1905-1908, designing several fine homes, warehouse and other structures (see Appendix I for biographical information). Hooper and his various partnerships have received 20 points from the Historical Buildings Committee.

Pattinson, Eilbeck and Dandernaud were the 1907 contractors.<sup>8</sup>

## **PERSON/INSTITUTION**

The original owners/occupants of the building, the Union Shoe and Leather Company,<sup>9</sup> did not remain long in the building or in business. They had sold and vacated the property by 1900 and in 1903 it was purchased by Thomas Black (1856-1914), who had arrived in the city in 1879, working as a buyer and then general manager for the hardware company of J.H. Ashdown prior

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<sup>8</sup> City of Winnipeg Building Permit, No. 1731/1907.

<sup>9</sup> City of Winnipeg Assessment Roll, Roll No. 606620 (10004), Ward 2 (below as ARo), 1890-1900.

to setting up his own hardware manufacturers' wholesale business in 1894.<sup>10</sup> Black (Plate 26) was an example of the type of businessman that flourished in Winnipeg in the 1895-1915 period – learning a trade, working his way up and then successfully launching his own venture. He was also the vice-president of an Ontario gold mining company,<sup>11</sup> was able to build a large addition to his Lombard Avenue building as a rental property (Plate 27) and was elected a director of the Winnipeg Builders' Exchange. By 1910, Black had also moved into the automobile sector, selling delivery trucks, operating a garage on Smith Street and a tire factory in St. Boniface. At the time of his death in August 1914, his estate was worth nearly \$½ million.<sup>12</sup>

Over the next 30 years, tenancy of the “Thomas Black Building” as it was often referred to, was varied and included: Scarfe and Company, wholesale paints (1914-1940); Great Western Wire Fence Company (1914); J.C. McLaren Belting Company (1914-1920); L. Haney and Company, manufacturers' agents (1935-1940); and Gurney North West Foundry (1935-1940). The most recent tenant of the structure, the Scott-Bathgate Company, took over the building in ca.1945.<sup>13</sup>

## **EVENT**

There is no known event connected with this building.

## **CONTEXT**

This building, given its numerous additions, fits into several developmental periods of Winnipeg's history. The pre-1900 structures were part of the early development of the warehouse district. Supported by the construction of a transfer railway on the east side of Main Street, this area saw show growth in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The 1907 addition is part of the district's major growth phase. Similar to the expansion of the rest of the city, the economic success of this era translated into new

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<sup>10</sup> Manitoba Free Press, August 22, 1914, p. 2; and Henderson's Directories, 1890-1905.

<sup>11</sup> Manitoba Free Press, February 8, 1897, p. 3.

<sup>12</sup> Manitoba Free Press, February 27, 1915, p. 48.

<sup>13</sup> Henderson's Directory, 1910-1990.

warehouses throughout the district as companies sought to take advantage of Winnipeg's transportation advantage.

**LANDMARK**

This warehouse is located at the foot of Lombard Avenue in the redeveloped area of Waterfront Drive and the Winnipeg Goldeye's Baseball Stadium. This redevelopment has heightened citizens' contact with this once secluded industrial area and this building would be familiar to many Winnipeggers.



# APPENDIX I

## CITY OF WINNIPEG - Preliminary Report Assessment Record

Building Address: 80 Lombard Avenue

Building Name: Thomas Black Building

Original Use: warehouse

Current Use: warehouse

Roll No. (Old): 606620 (10004)

RSN: 154111

Municipality: 12

Ward: 2

Property or Occupancy Code: 50

Legal Description: 6&7<sup>E</sup> St. John, Plan 66, Lot 64/8

Location: south side between Mill and Victoria streets

Date of Construction: 1896 (northeast corner); 1898 (rear); 1907 (northwest corner)

Storeys: 3 & 4

### Heritage Status: NOMINATED LIST

Construction Type: Mill

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

- 1477/1904 \$10,000 (work unknown); 1731/1907 \$35,000 (addition); 426/1912 [CS] \$5,000 (powerhouse); 1294/1924 \$500 (repairs); 329/1945 [CS] \$8,500 (alterations); 1682/1962 \$1,800 (alterations);

### Information:

- "Bldg. A": front- ashlar to 2<sup>nd</sup> storey, plain clay brick with stone sills, stone trim & metal cornice. Walls: B- rubblestone; 1<sup>st</sup>- rear/east, 13" brick, west, 17" brick; 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>- 13" brick; 4<sup>th</sup>- rear, 9" brick, east/west, 13" brick. 62 x 61½ x 63'

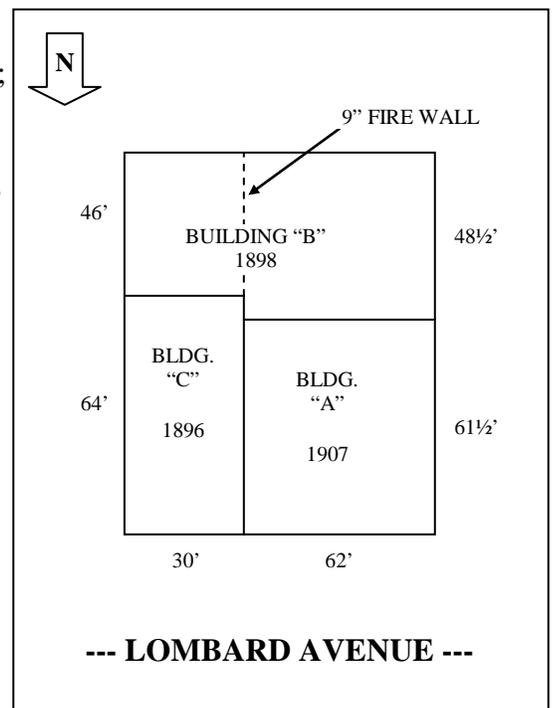
- "Bldg. B": 62 x 48½ x 63' +; Ceilings- B- 9½', 1<sup>st</sup>- 14½', 2<sup>nd</sup>- 12', 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>- 11'. Walls 13" brick throughout.

- "Bldg. C": 30 x 64 x 38', ceilings- B- 9'4", 1<sup>st</sup>- 14½', 2<sup>nd</sup>- 10'

- mill construction throughout

**ARCHITECT: UNKNOWN (1896 & 1898), HOOPER & WALKER (1907)**

**CONTRACTOR: UNKNOWN (1896 & 1898), PATTINSON, EILBECK & DANDERNAUD (1907)**



## APPENDIX II

### Samuel Hooper & Charles H. Walker

One of Manitoba's most prolific and well-known architects, Samuel Hooper, was born in Hatherleigh, County Devon, England, in 1851. After attending school, he became an apprentice architect for his uncle. In 1869 the Hooper family immigrated to Canada, settling in London, Ontario. After nine years, the entire family returned to their native England but the 27-year old Samuel came back to Canada the next year, choosing Emerson, Manitoba, as his new home. The lure of opportunities in the big city prompted his move in 1881 to Winnipeg.

Hooper, over the years, was associated with a number of partnerships including the Hooper Marble and Granite Company with David Ede in 1881, with Albert Lee Houkes ca.1905, and with son Samuel Lawrence Hooper, ca.1911. In 1893, Hooper became an architect in the public works department of the provincial government and in 1904 was appointed Manitoba's first Provincial Architect. He died in England in 1911.

Perhaps his most successful partnership came in ca.1906 with Charles H. Walker. Walker was born in Canada West (present-day Ontario) in 1855, arriving in Manitoba in 1879, later become Hooper's chief draftsman and then becoming a full partner shortly after Hooper's provincial appointment. Walker left Manitoba for Victoria, B.C. after 1911, where he continued a private practice. He died there in January 1927.<sup>1</sup>

A list of work completed by Hooper and Walker:

Addition (veranda) to the Winnipeg General Hospital, Bannatyne Ave. (1905)

R.C. McDonald House, 26 Amherst (now Avonherst) St. (1905) – considered to be the first house built in the new subdivision of Crescentwood<sup>2</sup>

Marshall-Wells Warehouse, 136 Market Ave. (1905-1906) – Grade III

Icelandic Good Templars Lodge, 635 McGee St. (1906)

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<sup>1</sup> Robert G. Hill, Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800-1950, online version, at [www.dictionarofarchitectsincanada.org](http://www.dictionarofarchitectsincanada.org), © Robert G. Hill, Architect, FRAIC, Author & Editor, 2009-2014.

<sup>2</sup> R.R. Rostecki, Crescentwood. A History (Winnipeg: Crescentwood Home Owners Association, 1993), p. 113.

Hooper and Walker designs, continued:

St. Joseph's Orphanage, Portage Ave. (1906) – demolished  
Sherwin-Williams Warehouse, Catharine Ave. (1906)  
Central Police Station, Rupert Ave. (1906) – demolished  
St. Jude's Church, Wellington Ave. (1906) – demolished  
Adelaide Block, 107 Osborne St. (1906)  
Thomas Black Building, Lombard Ave. (1907)  
George Maxwell House, McMillan Ave. (1908)  
Addition to Carnegie Library, 380 William Ave. (1908)  
Hon. Robert Rogers House, 197 Roslyn Road (1908) – demolished

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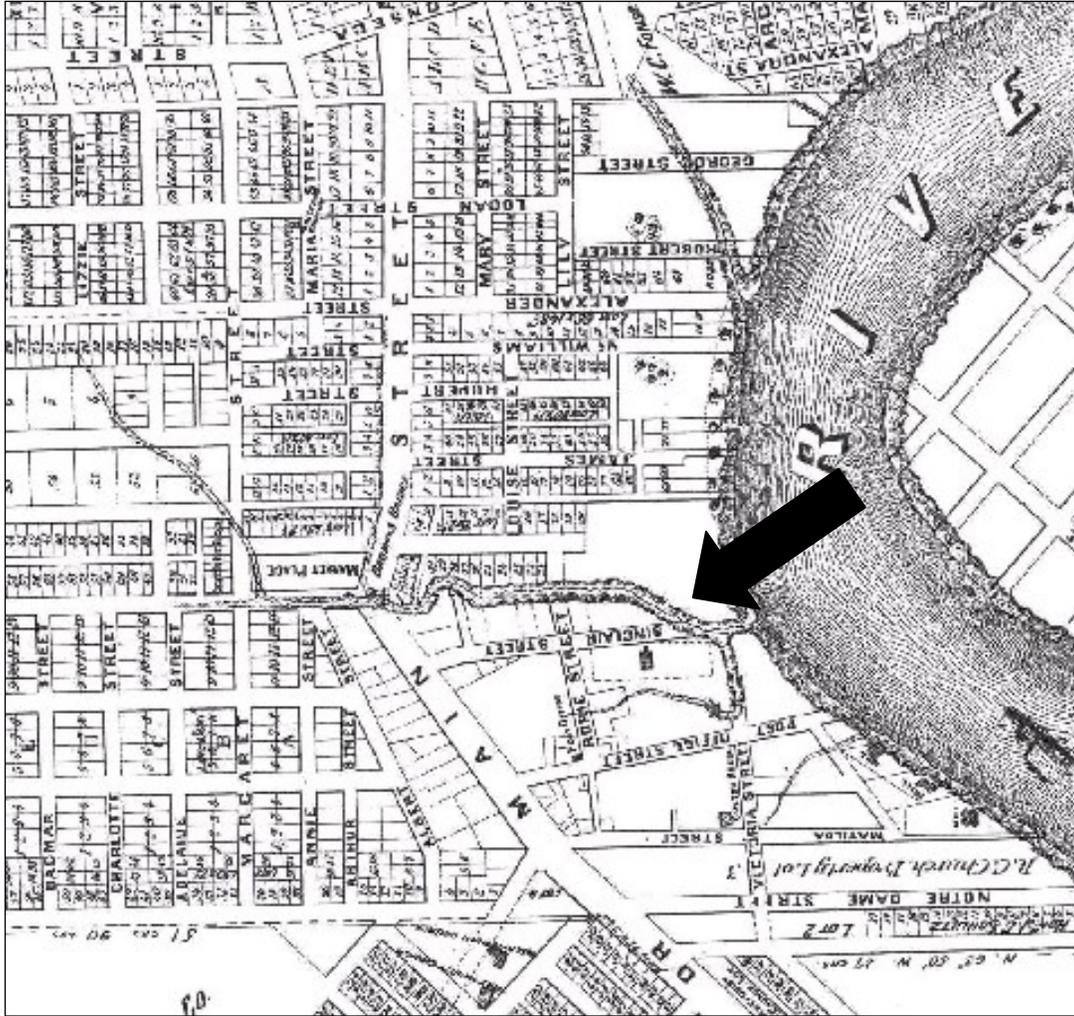


Plate 1 – Portion of J.D. Parr's Map of what would become downtown Winnipeg and the Warehouse District, 1874. Note the extensive surveying of lots on both sides of Main Street north of Brown's Creek (arrow) and the lack of surveying to the south and the creeks running into the Red River including Brown's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

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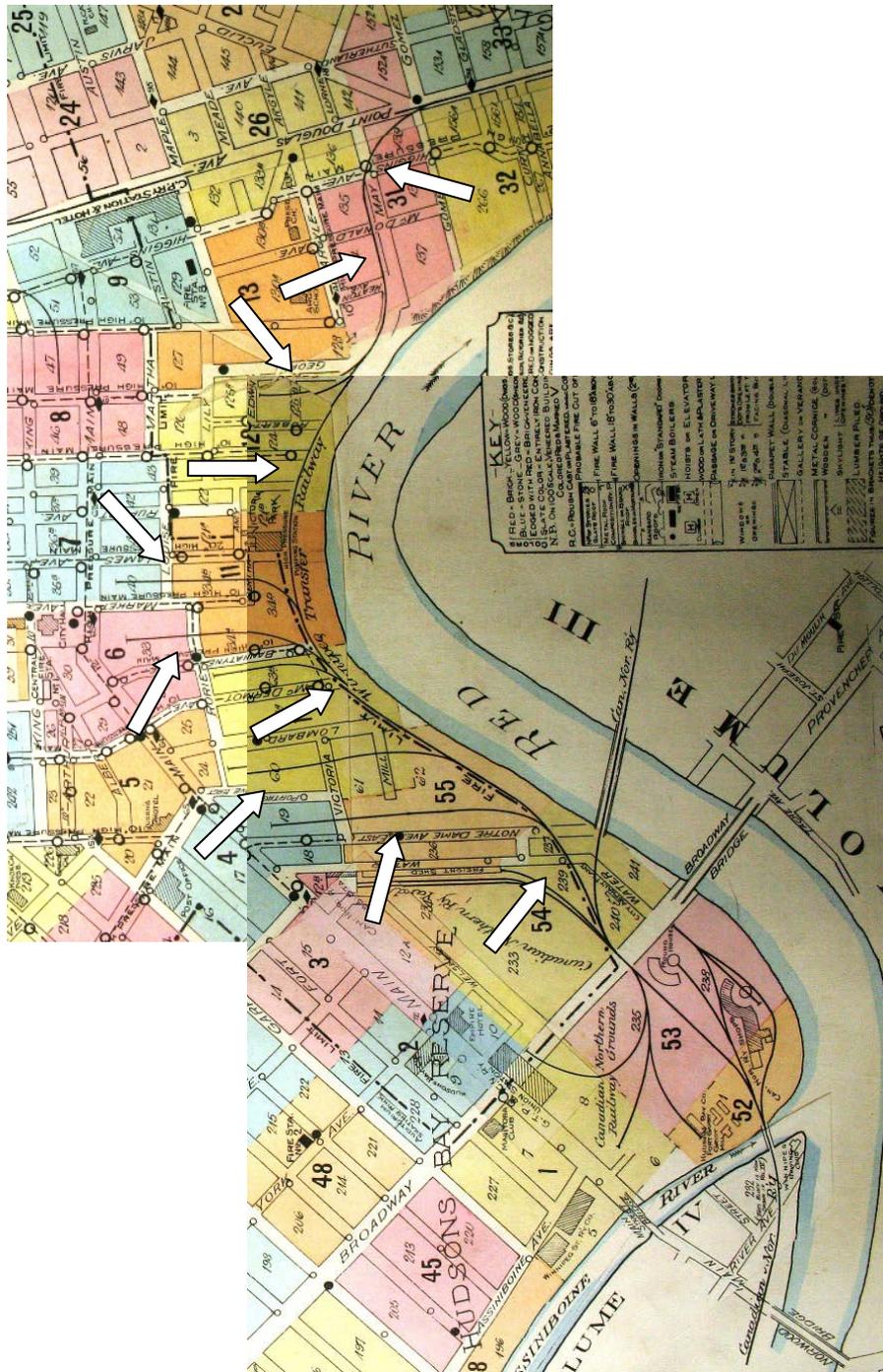


Plate 2 – City of Winnipeg Fire Atlas, Overview Map, 1906-1914. The completed Winnipeg Transfer Railway and its many north-south spur lines into the warehouse district runs from Water Avenue to Point Douglas Avenue (arrows). (City of Winnipeg.)

**80 LOMBARD AVENUE – THOMAS BLACK BUILDING**

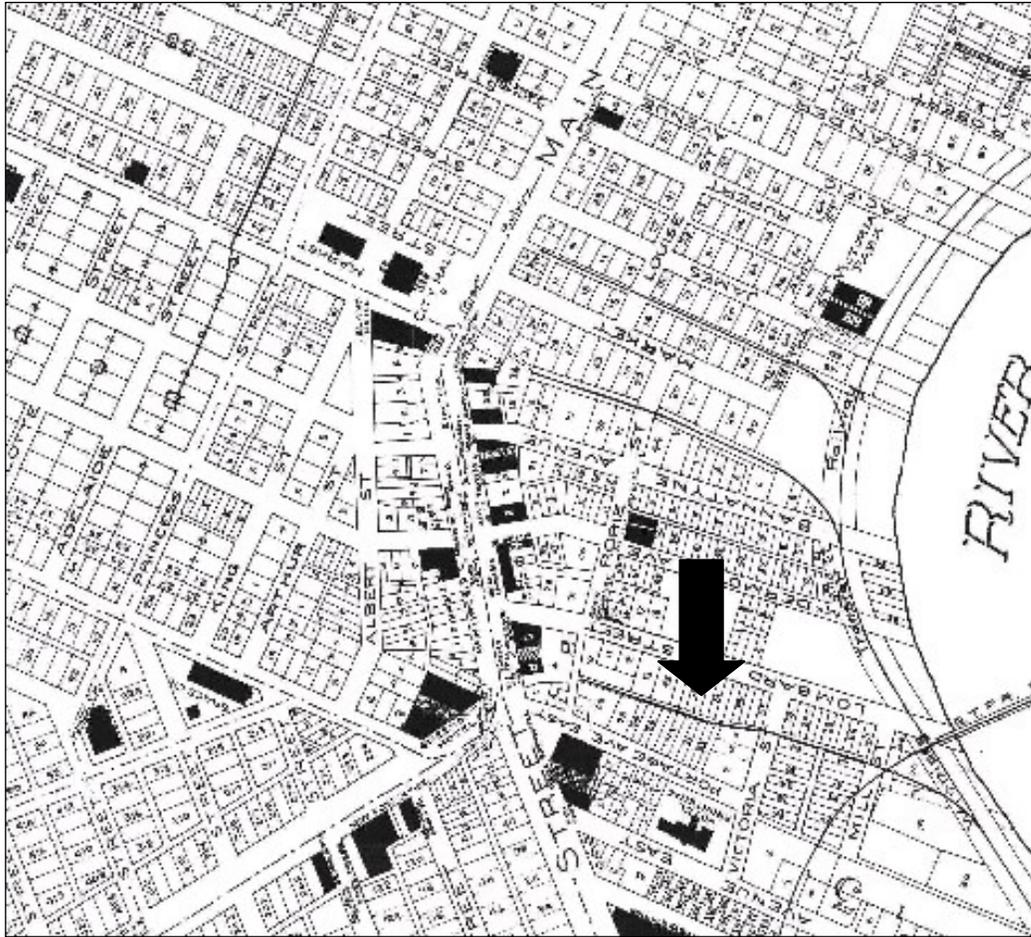


Plate 3 – Portion of McPhillip's Map of the City of Winnipeg, 1911, showing the Warehouse District. The spur line running south of the Thomas Black Building, Lombard Avenue, is at the arrow. (City of Winnipeg.)

# 80 LOMBARD AVENUE – THOMAS BLACK BUILDING

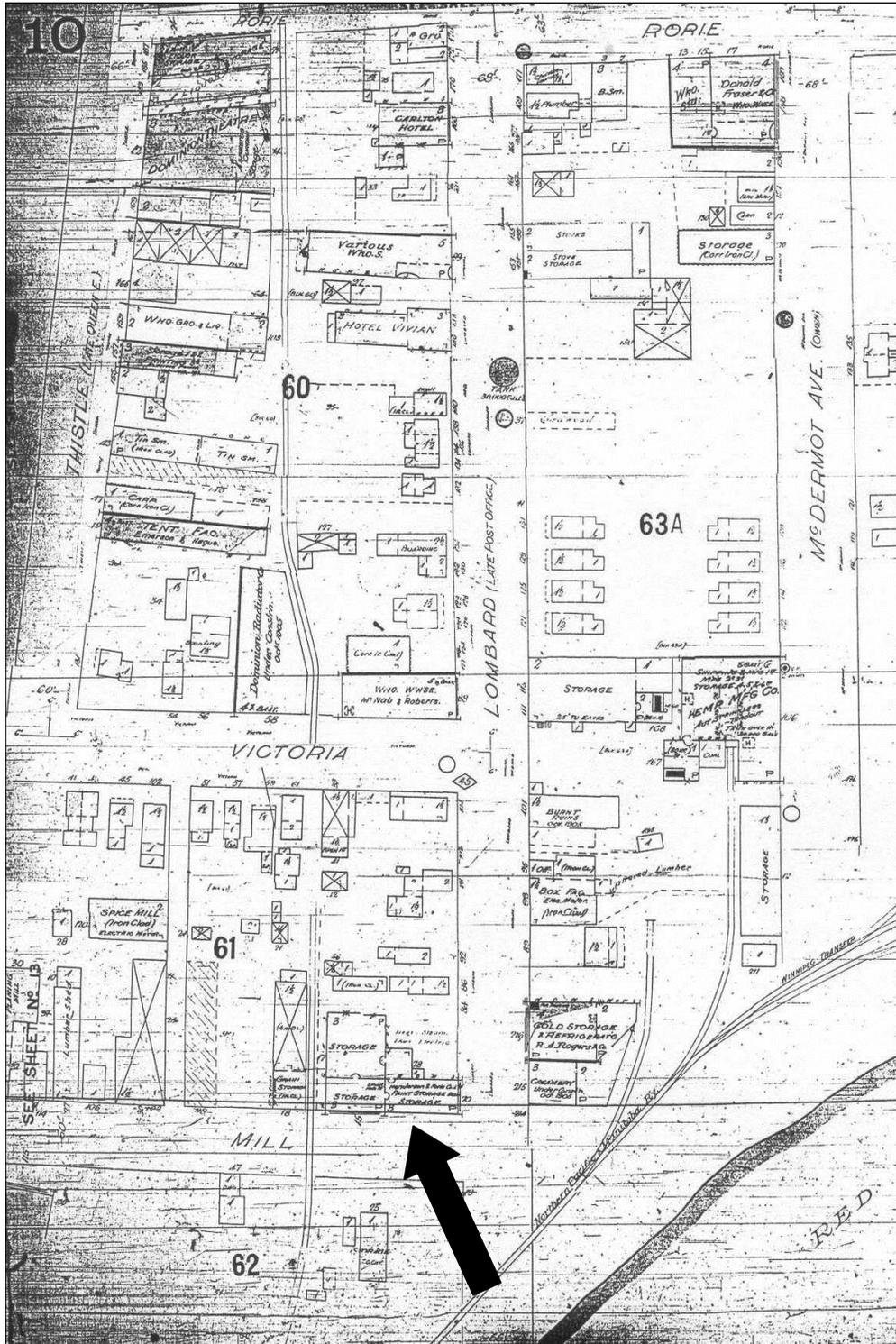


Plate 4 – Charles Goad, Fire Atlas of the City of Winnipeg, 1895 (revised 1905), Sheet 10. Thomas Black Building at arrow. (City of Winnipeg Archives.)

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Plate 5 – Looking southeast from William Avenue, ca.1900. The Thomas Black Building is at the arrow. (Reproduced from W.H. Carre, Art work on Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, 1900, Part 10, No. 2.)

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Plate 6 – Thomas Black Building, 80 Lombard Avenue, detail of front (north) façade of the northeast building, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)



Plate 7 – Thomas Black Building, 80 Lombard Avenue, detail of front (north) façade of the northeast building, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)

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Plate 8 – Thomas Black Building, 80 Lombard Avenue, detail of front (north) façade of the northeast building, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)



Plate 9 – Thomas Black Building, 80 Lombard Avenue, east façade of the northeast building, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)

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Plate 10 – Thomas Black Building, 80 Lombard Avenue, east façade of the south building, 2014.  
(M. Peterson, 2014.)

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Plate 11 – Thomas Black Building, 80 Lombard Avenue, south façade of the south building, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)



Plate 12 – Thomas Black Building, 80 Lombard Avenue, west façade of the south building, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)

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Plate 13 – Thomas Black Building, 80 Lombard Avenue, detail of north façade of the northwest building, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)

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Plate 14 – Thomas Black Building, 80 Lombard Avenue, detail of north façade of the northwest building, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)

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Plate 15 – Thomas Black Building, 80 Lombard Avenue, detail of north façade of the northwest building, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)

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Plate 16 – Thomas Black Building, 1978. (City of Winnipeg.)



Plate 17 – Thomas Black Building, 80 Lombard Avenue, 1896 building, first floor, 2016. (M. Peterson, 2016.)

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Plate 18 – Thomas Black Building, 80 Lombard Avenue, 1896 building, second floor, 2016. (M. Peterson, 2016.)

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Plate 19 – Thomas Black Building, 80 Lombard Avenue, ground floor, 1898 section, 2016. Note the high ceilings, metal connectors and subfloor planks set on end. (M. Peterson, 2016.)

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Plate 20 – Thomas Black Building, 80 Lombard Avenue, third floor, 1898 section, 2016. Metal fire doors are visible to the east portion of the building (#1) as well as to the 1907 building (#2). (M. Peterson, 2016.)

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Plate 21 – Thomas Black Building, 80 Lombard Avenue, ground floor, 1907 section, 2016. (M. Peterson, 2016.)

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Plate 22 – Thomas Black Building, 80 Lombard Avenue, fourth floor, 1907 section, 2016. (M. Peterson, 2016.)

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Plate 23 – Thomas Black Building, 80 Lombard Avenue, tin ceiling, third floor, 2016. (M. Peterson, 2016.)

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Plate 24 – East end of Lombard Avenue, 1970. Winnipeg Transfer Railway right-of-way and tracks still run along the banks of the river, the old Crescent Creamery Building, 85 Lombard Avenue, still stands across the street from the Thomas Black Building. (City of Winnipeg.)

**80 LOMBARD AVENUE – THOMAS BLACK BUILDING**



Plate 25 – Looking east along Lombard Avenue from Westbrook Street, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)



Plate 26 – Thomas Black (1856-1914), ca.1914. (Reproduced from the Manitoba Free Press, August 22, 1914, p. 2.)

**TO LET**



Storage and Warehouse Space to let, with or without office room. Central location. Track facilities. Electric elevator.

**THOMAS BLACK** 76-82 Lombard Street  
Winnipeg - Man.

Plate 27 – Advertisement for leasing new warehouse and storage space. Note the liberties taken in the size of the building. (Reproduced from the Manitoba Free Press, October 26, 1907, p. 15.)