586 MAIN STREET

MAYCOCK BLOCK

City of Winnipeg
Historical Buildings & Resources Committee
Researcher: M. Peterson
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During the decades leading up to 1900, Winnipeg's Main Street was transformed from a muddy track bordered mainly by wood-frame buildings into a paved thoroughfare with imposing brick and stone structures along its walkways (Plates 1 and 2). The small premises that served as shops and residences were replaced by modern buildings, offering commercial, office and residential space for the ever-growing population and local service industry.

Development of the transcontinental railway had created an entirely new situation by connecting Winnipeg with both eastern manufacturing interests and a burgeoning population to the west. The city actively promoted itself as the middleman between eastern supply and western demand. Its success had far-reaching economic, political and social effects. It also resulted in rapid physical change in what became downtown Winnipeg.

New residential districts extended the outer boundaries of the built-up area, while new warehouse, banking halls, offices and shops popped up throughout the downtown. Three distinct sectors developed around Winnipeg's large, imposing City Hall on Main Street: a warehouse district to the west, a financial section from Portage Avenue north to Bannatyne Avenue along both sides of Main Street and a commercial/retail area running north from City Hall to Higgins Avenue and eventually beyond.

This last area was dominated by smaller firms selling everything from shoes and boots to harnesses and fruit. They generally were housed in two- or three-storey commercial blocks with retail space on the ground floor and offices, suites or storage space above. This type of combined or mixed-use structure became increasingly popular as demand grew for downtown office and residential space. It also was a perfect small-scale investment for the new group of successful businessmen inhabiting the city.

In 1885, merchants Edward and Annie E. Maycock translated four years of successful business into the construction of one of the City’s finest new buildings, the Maycock Block on the northwest corner of Main Street and Alexander Avenue (Plates 3 and 4).
STYLE

The Maycock Block is designed in the High Victorian Italianate style, very popular in the late 19th century and used on commercial and residential buildings.1 A picturesque style, buildings displayed a wealth of ornamentation, especially evident around window and door openings and at the roofline. The use of the segmental arch was extensive and the buildings could be either symmetrical or asymmetrical. Accenting was achieved through the use of pronounced mouldings, quoins, eaves and other detailing. Window openings were often paired and bays and towers were common features on residential structures where the style was most popular.2

In Winnipeg in the early 1880s, the combination of British-trained architects, available capital and the popularity of the style produced a number of fine Italianate structures. Extant buildings (or main façades) include: the Benson Block (146 Princess Street), the Bawlf Block (150 Princess Street), the Harris Block (154 Princess Street) and the Telegram Building (70 Albert Street), all built in 1882. All these examples are found within the Exchange District, the Maycock Block represents one of the few remaining buildings of its style in downtown Winnipeg outside the Exchange District and one of its most ornamentally complex.

CONSTRUCTION

This building rests on a stone foundation, 50.8 centimetres thick; the solid brick exterior walls 43.2 centimetres thick on the ground floor and 33.0 centimetres thick on the upper two floors (see Appendix I for additional construction information).3 The building features a rounded southeast corner with two main façades, the east facing Main Street is 13.9 metres in length and the south facing Alexander Avenue is 21.4 metres long. According to one report, a new stone foundation was built in 1898.4

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3 City of Winnipeg, Assessment Record, Roll No. 13081385000.
DESIGN
The building has two main façades, south and east, and the detailing and materials are used similarly on both elevations. The block is constructed of lightly coloured common clay brick walls with modest stone accenting on the upper floors. The ground floor features two doors on the south side (Plate 5) and one on the east (Plate 6), as well as the original corner entrance, with its ornate carved stone framing, that has been converted into a window (Plate 7). Newer window units have replaced original elements on the ground floor.

The space between the ground and second floor windows, originally used for commercial signage (Plate 8), is now covered in metal. The second floor window openings are arched and topped by ornate metal hood moulding (Plate 9). Two thin bands of metal visually separate the second and third storeys and act as continuous sills for the rectangular upper floor window openings which also boast metal hood moulding. A band of brick corbelling leads to the metal-clad entablature which features a wealth of ornamental detailing (Plate 10).

The north wall abuts the neighbouring two storey building; the exposed wall is void of openings or detailing (Plate 11). The rear (west) façade includes arched and rectilinear door and window openings and a metal fire escape (Plate 12).

INTERIOR
The building, as described in a local newspaper, originally housed retail space on the ground floor. The second storey was originally home to the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA), accessed from the Alexander Avenue doors. The space was divided into private offices, parlours, a reading room and a 7.2 x 11.3-metre lecture hall. The last three spaces were separated by folding doors which, when opened, provided an open room capable of holding approximately 300.5 The entire building was lit with gas lighting. The top floor was not described and it is unclear from other contemporary sources how it was originally used.

5 Manitoba Free Press, January 28, 1886, p. 4.
In 1902, a City of Winnipeg, Building Permit was taken out to convert some of the space into residential suites, the ground floor was altered by the jeweller in 1906 and in 1913 extensive alterations were completed on the ground floor to convert the space into a bank.

Extensive renovations have been completed as tenancy changed and today, very little of the original building layout and finishes remain (Plates 13 and 14) beyond the Alexander Avenue staircase bannister (Plates 15 and 16), several walk-in safes and some ceiling mouldings on the ground floor (Plate 17).

**INTEGRITY**

The building stands on its original site and appears to be in good structural condition for its age. Alterations, as mentioned previously, have occurred to both the interior and exterior, although much of the original design, ornamentation and materials remain intact. The ground floor exterior brick walls were sandblasted.

**STREETSCAPE**

This building is located on an extremely busy downtown intersection and at the south end of a block of several turn-of-the-century business blocks (Plate 18). Its corner location (Plate 19) means the building is an important contributor of two historic streetscapes.

**ARCHITECT/CONTRACTORS**

The architect for the 1885 building was James Chisholm (1840-1920), an Ontario-born designer who was responsible for many fine buildings before and after 1900(see Appendix II for biographical information). He has been given 20 points by the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee.

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6 City of Winnipeg, Building Permit (below as BP), #842/1902, cost of alterations was $2,000.
7 BP #460/1906, cost $3,500.
8 BP #3408/1913, cost $12,000.
The contractor for this building is unknown at this time.

Other influential architects, S. Frank Peters (1902 alterations) and Darling and Over (1906 alterations), were also involved in the early design of this structure.

**PERSON/INSTITUTION**

This structure was built as an investment property by Edward and Annie E. Maycock, wholesale/retail merchants originally from Woodstock, Ontario. The couple came to Winnipeg in the early 1880s; part of the flood of former Ontarian coming as the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway opened the West. First locating in quarters at the corner of Main Street and Alexander Avenue (590 Main Street), the business, known as E. Maycock, opened a second store in the McIntyre Block, 414 Main Street in 1884, filling both with furniture, wools, canvases and other “useful and ornamental goods.” By 1890, the McIntyre Block store was known as A.E. Maycock and sold wholesale and retail toys (Plate 20). The business had moved to another Main Street location, #364, by 1900 and by 1904 it disappeared from local papers.

The primary tenants of the building after construction were D.R. Dingwall, jeweller, on the ground floor (Plate 21) and the Young Men’s Christian Association on the second floor (addressed as 205 Alexander Avenue). The building was actually referred to as the Y.M.C.A. Block in early newspaper stories.

Donald Ross Dingwall was born in Scotland in 1851 and learned the jewellery trade in Montreal. He relocated to Winnipeg in 1882 and shortly thereafter opened the Dingwall Manufacturing Jewellery Company with a retail store near the corner of Main Street and Alexander Avenue. The

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10. During the 1890s, she was referred to as “Miss” Annie E. Maycock or “Miss” Maycock in several published sources.
business expanded into several downtown locations, remaining in the Maycock Block into the 20th century.

The second owner of the building, A.R. McNichol, converted the upper floors into four residential suites in 1902, known as the Holt Block. In 1906, the Canadian Bank of Commerce moved into part of the ground floor space with Dingwalls and the upper floors were further divided to create 18 suites, used for a time as both offices and apartments. In 1913, the Bank (which owned the structure) took over the entire ground floor, renamed the building the Canadian Bank of Commerce Chambers and again altered the upper floors, by 1918 they held three physicians’ and a dentist’s office and a caretaker’s suite. The bank remained in the building into the late 1970s (Plate 22).

**EVENT**

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

**CONTEXT**

The Maycock Block was constructed after the early 1880s boom/bust brought on by the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway. This period saw heavy land speculation and the construction of many modern buildings in the downtown. Although the bust was economically devastating, Winnipeg had entered the national consciousness and its geographic location and favourable freight rates ensured its future success.

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13 City of Winnipeg Building Permit (below as BP), #842/1902. S. F. Peters designed the alterations, T. Ritchie was the contractor and the work cost $2,000. **Henderson’s Directory**, 1904.
15 BP #3408/1913: Victor D. Horsburgh, architect, Fraser and McDonald, contractors, $12,000. **Henderson’s Directory**, 1918.
16 **Henderson’s Directory**, 1918.
17 City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 13-081385000, 1890-1990.
Structures like the Maycock Block began springing up all over the growing downtown as local and transplanted businesses sought more modern headquarters.

**LANDMARK**

Its downtown corner location and the wealth of ornamentation make the Maycock Block a conspicuous structure.
APPENDIX I

CITY OF WINNIPEG - Preliminary Report
Assessment Record

Building Address: 586 Main Street    Building Name: Maycock Block

Original Use: mixed use    Current Use: mixed use

Roll No. (Old): 13081385000 (---)    RSN: 108

Legal Description: 9/11 St. John, Plan 32065, Lot 40

Location: Northwest corner Alexander Avenue

Date of Construction: 1885    Storeys: 3 and basement

Heritage Status: ON NOMINATED LIST

Construction Type: Brick and stone

- 842/1902 $2,000 (interior alteration); 460/1906 $3,500 (interior alterations); 3408/1913 $12,000 [PPD] (conversion to bank)

Information:
- 70 x 45½ ft.
- Permit 842/1902- architect S.F. Peters, contractor T. Ritchie, convert part of upstairs space into residential apartments
- Permit 460/1906- architects Darling & Over, contractor Claydon Bros., store and office alterations
- Permit 3408/1913- architect V. Horsburgh, contractor Fraser & Mcdonald, conversion into Canadian Bank of Commerce branch
- ceilings: (floor to floor) - B- 8½’; 1st- 14’4”; 2nd- 11’11”; 3rd- 10’- 13½’
- walls: B- 20” (stone); 1st- 17” (brick); 2nd & 3rd- 13” (Brick)

ARCHITECT: CHISHOLM, JAMES

CONTRACTOR: UNNAMED
James Chisholm

James Chisholm was born in Paris, Upper Canada (Ontario) in 1840, where he attended public school. He married Elizabeth Goodfellow at Brantford on February 22, 1864 and together they had six children. The pair lived for a time on a farm in Glengarry County before moving to London where James worked for a plough manufacturer but also took up the study of architecture. After moving back to Paris, Chisholm met a family acquaintance, the Hon. John Sifton, who talked him into moving to Winnipeg for both his health and his future, which he did in the spring of 1877, leaving his wife and three children at home.¹

His first job was as a timekeeper on the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway between Winnipeg and Whitemouth. He also spent one summer in Norway House, attempting to improve his poor health. Shortly thereafter, he began his architectural career in earnest, and became involved in the City Hall construction scandal when he was hired to replace C.A. Barber as the architect for the project.

The family moved to Superior, Wisconsin in 1892 and James became a naturalized citizen of the United States in 1896. He worked during this period as a preacher for the Methodist Episcopal Church, travelling great distances every week.² In 1900, the family returned to Winnipeg, James taking his place among the growing number of talented architects practising their trade in the city and throughout western Canada. James Chisholm was a member of the Winnipeg School Board and an avid curler, being an honorary member of the Manitoba Curling Association and long-time member of the Granite Curling Club.

Colin Campbell Chisholm was James Chisholm’s youngest child, born in Winnipeg on September 17, 1883. He moved south with the family and received his early education in Madison, Wisconsin

¹ Family information courtesy of Jim Chisholm, grandson of James and son of Colin C. Chisholm.
before returning to Winnipeg. He officially joined his father’s architectural firm ca.1906, became its active manager in 1910 and eventually took over the practice. 3 About 1911, James Chisholm and his wife began wintering in Santa Monica, California because of continued poor health and they moved there permanently in 1914. He died on October 14, 1920 in Ocean Park, California. 4

James Chisholm and his son were responsible for designing many buildings throughout Western Canada and an incomplete list of their Winnipeg structures includes: 5

**James Chisholm:**
- Hochman (formerly Harris) Building, 154 Princess Street (1882) – Grade III
- Grace Methodist Church, Notre Dame and Ellice avenues (1883) – demolished
- Maycock Block, 586 Main Street (1885)
- A. Wilson House, Charlotte Street (1900)
- Addition to J. Ryan Building, 678-680 Main Street (1900)
- J.H. Turnbull House, Edmonton Street (1900)
- C.N. Bell House, Carlton Street (1900)
- D. Horn House, Edmonton Street (1901)
- J. Watson House, River Avenue (1901)
- C.H. Nix Building, Ross Avenue (1901)
- Rev. J.A. McClung House, Balmoral Street (1902)
- W.G. Moyse House, Langside Street (1902)
- G.N. Jackson House, Langside Street (1902)
- Waterous Engine Works Company Warehouse, Higgins Avenue (1902)
- Coleclough Company Building, Logan Avenue (1902)
- W.J. Guest Building, 598 Main Street (1902)
- N. Page House, Spence Street (1902)
- J.W. Harris House, 26 Edmonton Street (1902) – Grade III
- A. McCormack House, Edmonton Street (1902)
- Wright and Stewart Building, Alexander Avenue (1902)
- J.D. McArthur House, Cumberland Avenue (1902)
- G. Forsyth House, Carlton Street (1903)
- Hotel, Notre Dame Avenue East (1903)
- A. MacDonald Company Warehouse, Market Avenue (1903)
- C. Lilt House, Hargrave Avenue (1903)
- Dr. Clarke House, Furby Street (1903)
- D.A. Stewart House, Wardlaw Avenue (1903)
- C.E. Young House, Mayfair Place (1903)

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4 *Manitoba Free Press*, October 18, 1920, p. 15.
5 Compiled from Ibid., pp. 723-24; *Winnipeg Tribune*, September 5, 1936; *Winnipeg Saturday Post*, June 8, 1912, p. 39; and *City of Winnipeg Building Permits*, 1900-26.
James Chisholm (continued):
Zion Methodist (then Zion Apostolic) Church, 335 Pacific Avenue (1904), destroyed by fire 1970
M. Woodlinger House, Pacific Avenue (1904)
Young Men’s Liberal Club, Notre Dame Avenue (1904)
Manitoba Cartage Company stable, Henry Avenue (1905)
W.J. Guest Fish Warehouse, 98 Alexander Avenue (1905 & 1910)
Exeter Apartments, 76 Lily Street (1905)
Shipley Block, 614-18 Portage Avenue (1906)

James Chisholm and Son:
Woods Building Company Warehouse, Robinson Avenue (1907)
W.J. Guest House, 75 Academy Road (1907)
Jobin-Marrin Warehouse, 158-62 Market Avenue (1907)
Young Methodist (United) Church, 222 Furby Street (1907, 1910) – Grade II (only tower left after fire)
Strathcona Curling Rink, Furby Place (1908) – demolished
Kipling Apartments, 534-36 Langside Street (1908-09)
J.T. Gordon House, Wellington Crescent (1909)
House for St. John’s Methodist Church, Polson Avenue (1909)
G.F. Galt House, Wellington Crescent (1910)
J. Ryan Sr. House, Central Avenue (1910)
Semmons Warehouse, 468 Ross Avenue (1910)
I.O.O.F. (Odd Fellows') Temple, 293 Kennedy Street (1910) – Grade III (façade only remains)
Sterling Bank Building, 283 Portage Avenue (1910-11)
F.S. Parlee House, Canora Street (1911)
E.C. Marrin House, Dorchester Avenue (1911)
Gowans, Kent, Western Building, Market Avenue (1911-12)
Granite Curling Club, 22 Mostyn Place (1912) – Grade III
Sparling Methodist Church, Elgin Avenue (1912)
Thistle Curling Club, McDonald Avenue (1912)
Grandstand for Stampede Amusement Company, Sinclair Street (1913)
B. Shragge Warehouse, Sutherland Avenue (1913)
Marlborough Hotel, 331 Smith Street (1913) – Grade II
La Salle Hotel, 346 Nairn Avenue (1914)
City Light and Power, additional storey to power house, 54 King Street (1915)
City Light and Power, additions to terminal station, McFarlane Street (1918)
City Light and Power, show room, rear of 54 King Street (1919)
City of Winnipeg garage, Elgin Avenue (1919)
Walter Woods Warehouse, Sutherland Avenue (1920)
Clarendon Hotel, 311 Portage Avenue (1920) and fire repairs (1923) – demolished
Plate 1 – Looking north on Main Street from William Avenue, 1886. Pictured here are: #1- the second City Hall; and #2- Police Courts, James Avenue. (Archives of Manitoba, Winnipeg-Streets-Main, 1886-#1.)

Plate 2 – Looking north from the roof of City Hall, ca.1895, from the roof of City Hall. (Courtesy of the Archives of Manitoba.)
Plate 3 – Alexander Avenue with the Maycock Block on the right, 1903. (Reproduced from Illustrated Souvenir of Winnipeg [Winnipeg, MB: Wm. A. Martel & Sons, 1903], p. 132.)
Plate 4 – Main Street at Alexander Avenue, 1903, with Maycock Block at arrow. (Reproduced from Illustrated Souvenir of Winnipeg [Winnipeg, MB: Wm. A. Martel & Sons, 1903], p. 63.)
Plate 5 – Maycock Block, 586 Main Street, south and rear (west) façades, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)
Plate 6 – Maycock Block, 586 Main Street, east façade, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)
Plate 7 – Maycock Block, 586 Main Street, southeast corner entrance, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)
Plate 8 – Winnipeg parade, 1918, with the Maycock Block, in the background. (Reproduced from Peel’s Prairie Provinces, University of Alberta Libraries, Post Card No. 2085.)
Plate 9 – Maycock Block, 586 Main Street, detail of front (east) façade, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)
Plate 10 – Maycock Block, 586 Main Street, detail of roof, south side, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)
Plate 11 – Maycock Block, 586 Main Street, front (east) and north façades, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)
Plate 12 – Maycock Block, 586 Main Street, rear (west) façade, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)
Plate 13 – Maycock Block, 586 Main Street, second floor hallway, 2015. (M. Peterson, 2015.)
Plate 14 – Maycock Block, 586 Main Street, second floor office space, 2015. (M. Peterson, 2015.)

Plate 15 – Maycock Block, 586 Main Street, rear staircase, second floor landing, 2015. (M. Peterson, 2015.)
Plate 16 – Maycock Block, 586 Main Street, rear staircase looking towards Alexander Avenue, 2015. (M. Peterson, 2015.)
Plate 17 – Maycock Block, 586 Main Street, main floor retail space with its high ceilings and mouldings, 2015. (M. Peterson, 2015.)
Plate 18 – Main Street, west side from Alexander Avenue to Higgins Avenue, 2014. Buildings (left to right): Maycock Block, 586 Main Street, built 1885; Singer Building, 590 Main Street, built 1939; Allman Block, 594 Main Street, built 1904 (List of Historical Resources); Guest Block, 598 Main Street, built 1902-1909; McKerchar Block, 600 Main Street, built 1902. Not pictured to the north of these buildings are two empty lots (surface parking) and Royal Bank of Canada Branch, 618 Main Street, built 1946. (M. Peterson, 2014.)
Plate 19 – Main Street looking north past Alexander Avenue, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)

Plate 20 – Advertisement for A.E. Maycock, McIntyre Block, 1890. (Reproduced from Manitoba Free Press, December 3, 1890, p. 3.)
Plate 21 – Advertisement for D.R. Dingwall, Maycock Block, 1886. (Reproduced from Manitoba Free Press, June 7, 1886, p. 3.)

Plate 22 – Maycock Block, 586 Main Street, 1978. (City of Winnipeg.)