

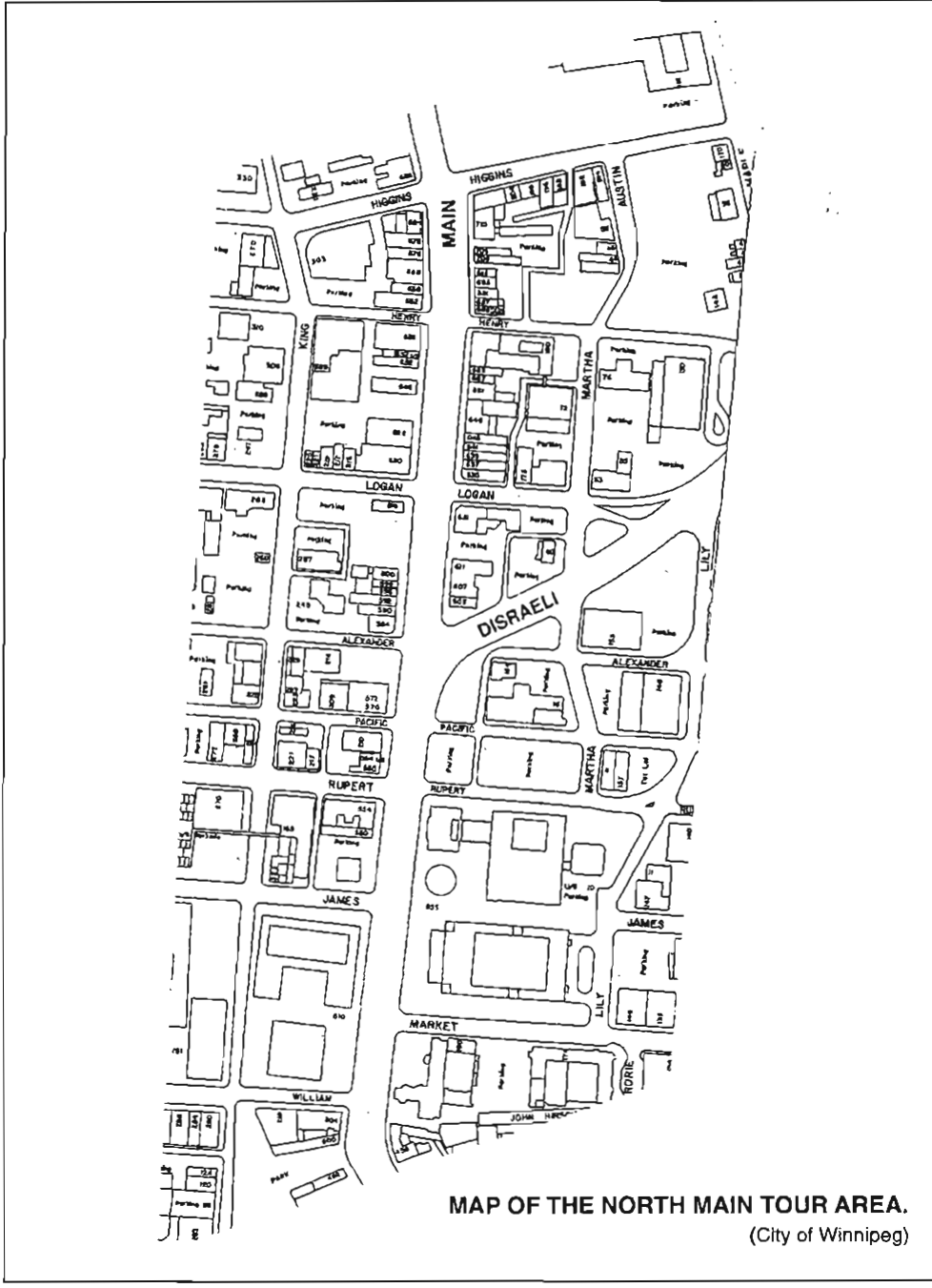
# NORTH MAIN WALKING TOUR

William Avenue  
to the  
Subway



*D.M. Lyon*  
for the City of Winnipeg  
*Historical Buildings Committee*

*June 1998*



MAP OF THE NORTH MAIN TOUR AREA.  
(City of Winnipeg)

## **Part A: OVERVIEW**

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### **NORTH MAIN IN THE PRE-1900 PERIOD**

When the Province of Manitoba was established in 1869-70, North Main Street between present-day City Hall and the subway under the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) line was little more than a rudimentary mud trail.

It was one link in a long corridor that followed the west bank of the Red River between Upper Fort Garry at The Forks and settlements at St. John's, Kildonan, Middlechurch, St. Andrew's, and points further north. Where development had occurred, it tended to be located east of the road near the river. It also tended to be of a quasi-rural residential and agricultural nature.

The portion of Main that is the focus of this tour cut through the river lots of two prominent Red River Settlement families — the Rosses and Logans — and through the Point Douglas Common (Plate 1). The latter was a 270-hectare (667.2-acre) tract that had been set aside in the early days of the settlement for haying and grazing purposes. Point Douglas proper eventually was divided into large acreages and smaller town lots that were claimed by some of the settler families and by later arrivals such as W.G. Fonseca, E.L. Barber and J.C. Schultz.

Those interests vied in the 1870s with other Winnipeg-area property owners “to have possession of the ‘golden milestone’ around which future circles of trade should revolve.”<sup>1</sup> The prize was not to be North Main's, however. Early investment in buildings and businesses was concentrated instead along Central Main between Graham and William, including the Portage Avenue intersection where commerce had taken tentative root in the 1860s.

Some investment impetus began to spill north toward Rupert and McWilliam (Pacific) avenues by the late 1870s. Further north again were found a few shops and services, including boarding houses and at least one hotel. Manitoba College spent several years from 1874 onward at north-west Main and Common (Henry). As well, the North Ward public school occupied a rented facility on Main between Logan and Common in 1874-76.

The street frontage was far from fully occupied, however, and much of the development that had taken place, both on and adjacent to North Main, was of a low-density residential character (Plate 2).

That was about to change. During the late 1870s, Winnipeg's leadership spared no effort to ensure that the CPR's transcontinental line was routed through Point Douglas. The railway's arrival in 1881 became a defining influence on land use. Light and heavy industries and wholesalers who relied on ready access to rail transport began to congregate near the line. So too did the hoteliers, saloon-keepers and many other entrepreneurs who were eager to provide goods and services to the CPR's passengers and employees.

Point Douglas was transformed over the next two decades into a higher-density, mixed-use area. For North Main, this meant accelerated commercialization supported by infill construction, building conversions and redevelopment (Plates 3 to 5). What emerged was a bustling secondary business district with several strengths.

Location clearly was one. Proximity to the CPR Station, associated immigrant reception facilities, and a rapidly growing residential population north of the CPR line exposed the area's businesses to incoming settlers, commercial travellers, visitors, and high volumes of locally generated pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

North Main also had a substantial resident market in its immediate environs. The hotels that appeared on the street not only accommodated short-term occupants, but also provided intermediate and long-term housing for businessmen and tradesmen. Other commercial premises doubled as shelter for shopkeepers' families, boarders and apartment tenants. Rows of houses stretched to the west of Main. New houses also continued to be built for a period to the east of the street even though competitive industrial and warehouse uses were being established there as well.

A third North Main strength was its entrepreneurial energy. Lower land prices and rents relative to Central Main enabled commercial enterprises to enter the marketplace with less capital. In essence, North Main became a business incubator — one that was funded primarily by local rather than external sources of investment.

This was where jeweller D.R. Dingwall, shoe merchant and livestock dealer James Ryan, saddlery wholesaler E.F. Hutchings, dry goods and furniture dealer A.F. Banfield, the Paulin and Ward (later Paulin Chambers Co.) bakery, the Kilgour-Rimer shoe partnership, and Moses Haid's Winnipeg Shirt and Overall manufacturing company (later the Western Shirt and Overall Co.) took early steps toward regional or national prominence. This was where in later generations the Cohen family's Gendis Inc., the Cristalls' Stylerite Inc. and the Micays' Athletes Wear Co. came to the fore.

North Main also served as an entry point for Jewish immigrants, including refugees from pogroms in Czarist Russia who were first brought to Winnipeg in the early 1880s. The Abremovichs, Diners, Finkelmanns, Finkelsteins, Goldstines, Lechtziers, Mindesses, Portigals, Ripsteins, Rosenblats, Udows, and Zimmermans, among others, found places in the district for their shops, synagogues and other community organizations.

In combination, factors such as these created North Main's ultimate markers:

- the diversity of its people, languages and businesses;
- the lure and dynamism which that diversity sparked; and yet also
- the image of a place that was different, full of 'strangers,' somewhat makeshift or impermanent, and that sometimes functioned on the very margins of economic security and propriety.

It did not help that much of North Main lacked the attributes of an aesthetic showpiece. Many of its buildings were no more than two storeys in height and of frame construction (Plates 6 to 8). It was not unusual to find two or more businesses crammed into one small structure with residents living at the rear or on an upper floor.

It also did not help that the district had a concentration of hotels (Plates 9 and 10), bars, liquor stores, billiard halls, 'shooting galleries,' burlesque theatres, second-hand dealers, and pawnbrokers. These uses reinforced a sense of North Main as a transient, congested area ripe with the potential for unseemly, if not illicit, behaviour.

## **NORTH MAIN AFTER 1900**

The next boost to the district's prospects occurred at the turn of the nineteenth century. A subway was constructed under the CPR main line to free the flow of traffic along Main Street. As well, the railway redeveloped the northeast corner of Main and Higgins into the Royal Alexandra Hotel and adjoining station-office complex (Plate 11). Such was the success of the hotel that its capacity was expanded from 320 to 450 rooms within a decade and it remained one of the city's premier social gathering spots through to the 1950s.

The CPR project symbolized the almost continuous growth that Winnipeg experienced, both internally and as a regional power, between 1900 and 1915. For North Main, this period produced three major changes:

- the redevelopment of nearly three dozen sites, many of them to the north of Alexander;
- substantial upgrading of the hotel sector through new construction and renovation or expansion of established outlets; and
- the addition of branch banks and movie theatres to the business mix.

Most of the new construction involved replacement of frame buildings by solid brick structures (Plates 12 and 13), some of which were designed by the period's leading architects. Redevelopment was far from complete, however. This meant that there continued to be a number of pre-1900 buildings on the streetscape, especially on the east side of Main and on both sides of the street north of Henry. As well, the scale of development remained less dense than on Central Main, although there were the seven-storey McLaren and six-storey Strathcona hotels at Main and Rupert, the five-storey Concordia (Bon Accord) Block at northeast Main and Logan, the four-storey Club and Bell hotels north of Logan, and the seven-storey Royal Alexandra and large, related Dominion Express complex north of Higgins.

Although many of the new structures were intended to accommodate retail and office occupants, North Main retained a strong upper-storey residential presence. It was one that grew over time, reflecting the persistence of housing shortages in Winnipeg, as well as the vulnerability of the district to shifts in economic conditions that could quickly make portions of the built environment redundant as commercial space.

The appearance of branch banks further signalled North Main's coming of age. The Dominion Bank was the first to enter the district, leasing space in 1899 on East Main north of Henry. Private bankers Alloway and Champion followed in 1905 on East Main south of Henry. The Canadian Bank of Commerce went into the Maycock Block at Main and Alexander in 1906. A year later, the Dominion began to build its own premises at 678 Main.

The period's other notable change was the arrival of a series of movie theatres on West Main near Logan — namely, the Columbia, Starland, Colonial, and Rex. The Starland and Rex, in particular, were among the city's more opulent and respectable entertainment facilities, important attributes at a time when the safety of such buildings and the morality of theatre-going were matters of public concern.

North Main attained a peak in 1900-15. New investment, including the more obvious influence of outside capital and extensive physical upgrading, gave the district a more substantive image, but did not fundamentally change its character as established in the formative 1880s and 1890s. North Main did not become Winnipeg's principal business district, but it was a close competitor. Moreover, it offered certain specialty shops and services, a concentration of entertainment facilities, and an ambience not found to the south on Main. As described by one observer in 1911:

On Saturday night both Portage avenue and Main street are thronged, but it is between Market street and the station that you feel the crowd: here the people move slower; the many foreigners loitering on the left sides or in the centre of the walk, impede the regular traffic and, as the folk have less to spend, they take a correspondingly long time in doing it; careful planning and much consultation go to the buying of a Sunday dinner for a large family when the available fund may be written without the dollar mark. Then, too, the less chance there is of purchase the greater the fascination exercised by delectable articles offered for sale. There is no hurry anyway; the day's work is over and home offers no attraction stronger than the lights and sounds of a busy street and the human companionship there enjoyed. (2)

For North Main, the next three decades of the 1900s were not as kind as the first 15 years had been. Wars and depressions reduced the inflow of immigrant-settlers and the economic spin-offs they created. As well, the prohibition era (1916-28) cut into the hotel and liquor trades. The number of operating hotels on Main between Rupert and the subway fell from 19 in 1914 to 15 in 1920 and 13 by 1930.

Not all was lost. Investments continued to be made in infill construction at sites that either were ready for redevelopment or had been struck by fire. North Main also retained a dynamic quality to its mix of businesses and land uses, including people-oriented hubs such as the hotels, billiard halls and movie houses. Both sides of the street remained packed with long-standing enterprises, many of them run by successive family generations of clothiers, grocers, hardware dealers, confectioners, jewellers, and restaurateurs, among others (Plates 14 and 15). As well, North Main continued to draw new uses such as bowling alleys, dance halls, social clubs, and auto service stations. It also attracted some well-established interests such as the F.W. Woolworth Co., Singer Manufacturing Co., Royal Bank of Canada, and banks of Montreal and Nova Scotia.

Nonetheless, the seeds of decline had been sown. Property assessment values became depressed on both sides of Main between Market and the subway during the interwar years. The area's physical fabric, while intact, became increasingly worn and dated. The residential, warehouse and industrial sectors to the east and west similarly showed signs of deterioration and obsolescence. Rail passenger traffic gradually was diverted to competing modes of transport, in

turn lessening the CPR's traditional role in the district. Moreover, when prosperity returned in the 1950s, much of the new investment that flowed into downtown Winnipeg went, not to Main Street, but south and west to Broadway, Osborne, Graham, Portage, and the Central Park area.

North Main's first major modern-era project was the Disraeli Freeway (1958-60). Its construction was intended to address regional, not local, objectives, yet it had significant local impacts. It disrupted the East Main streetscape between Pacific and Alexander, and it caused the displacement of businesses and residents along its route through Point Douglas.

The full force of urban renewal was felt during the next decade as entire blocks of buildings and businesses on and to the east and west of Main between William/Market and James/Rupert were removed by governments to make way for a new City Hall, Public Safety Building and Manitoba Centennial Centre.

Projects such as these were promoted as a means of stemming, if not reversing, North Main's physical and socioeconomic decline. Yet increasingly during the 1960s and 1970s, the district became known as the Main Street strip — a place occupied by transients, runaways, prostitutes, homeless people, and single pensioners; a place of poverty, crime, exploitation, and substance abuse.

Significant numbers of businesses began to move or close, including the Royal Alexandra Hotel which discontinued operations in 1967 and was demolished in 1971. Residential tenants also began to leave their upper-storey rooms and apartments, or were forced out when landlords failed to meet life safety upgrading requirements. Buildings were boarded up, destroyed by fire or otherwise demolished. Cleared lots were left undeveloped. Residential and business uses to the east and west of Main also continued to erode. In short, the district lost its vitality as reflected in its commercial diversity, its supporting residential base and the physical continuity of its streetscape.

Despite all this, most of the chartered banks — institutions that generally are seen as bell-wethers of the health of older neighbourhoods — kept their North Main outlets until the 1980s. Their withdrawal coincided with continued decline of the commercial sector and with a growing realization that funds allocated to the district through the Winnipeg Core Area Initiative, the period's major urban revitalization effort, were not going to stimulate physical and economic renewal.

By the 1990s, the predominant active uses left on North Main, other than the City Hall and Manitoba Centennial Centre, were the surviving hotels and their bars, soup kitchens, church missions, a new Salvation Army complex, Jack's residence for pensioners, and a few shops and services (including the stalwart Mitchell Fabrics store and a new Royal Bank branch at Main and James).

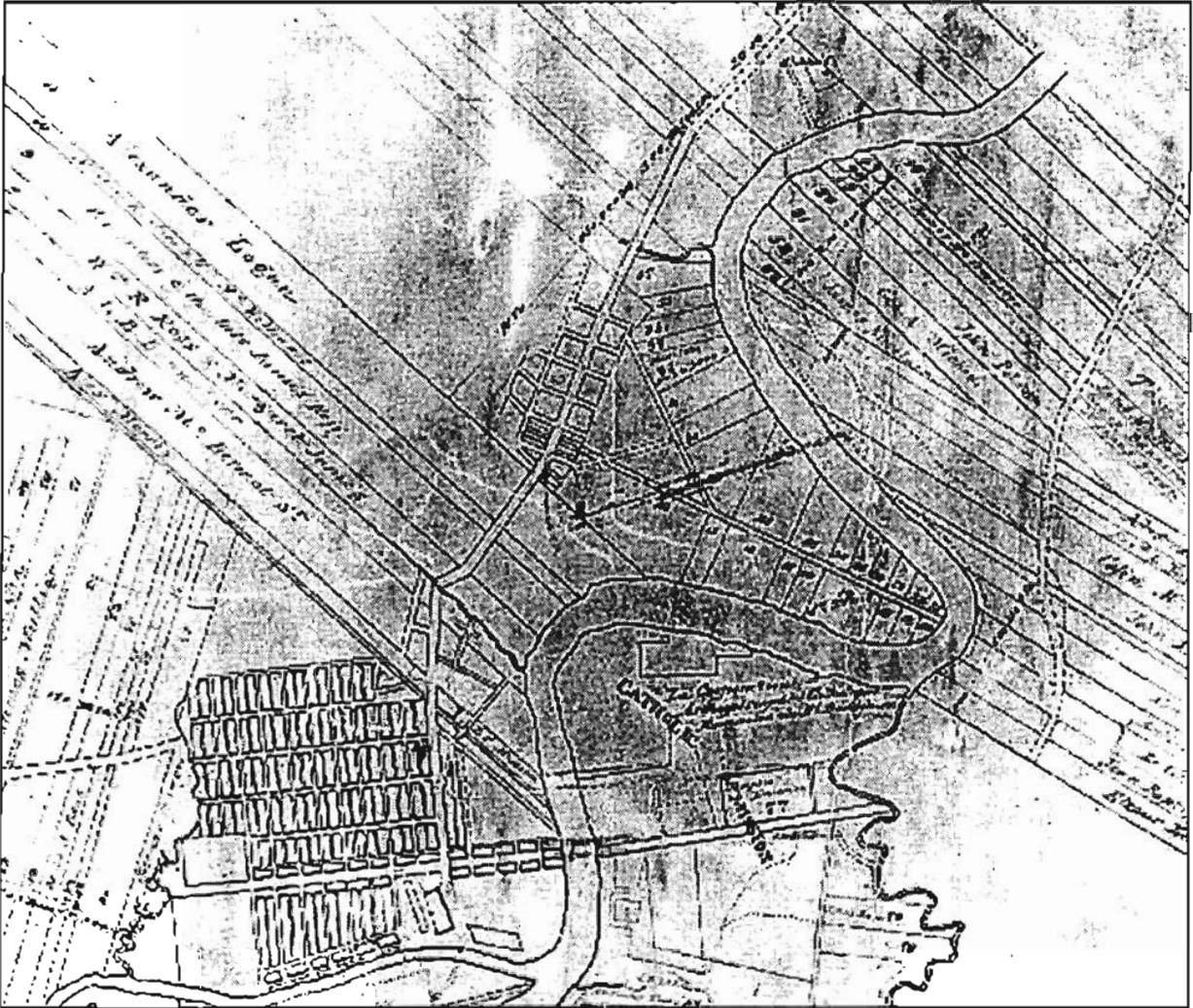
Most recently, a City task force drew on previous proposals for North Main to produce a conceptual plan for phased streetscaping and conversion of the area to Aboriginal, Ukrainian and Scottish cultural districts (Plate 16). The Aboriginal district would extend north from the Disraeli Freeway, with an initial focus on the Main-Maple-Henry-Higgins area immediately adjacent to the former

CPR Station, now the Aboriginal Centre of Winnipeg. Included in the concept, known as Neeginan or Our Place, are plans for new spiritual, cultural, health, justice, residential, recreational, and commercial facilities.

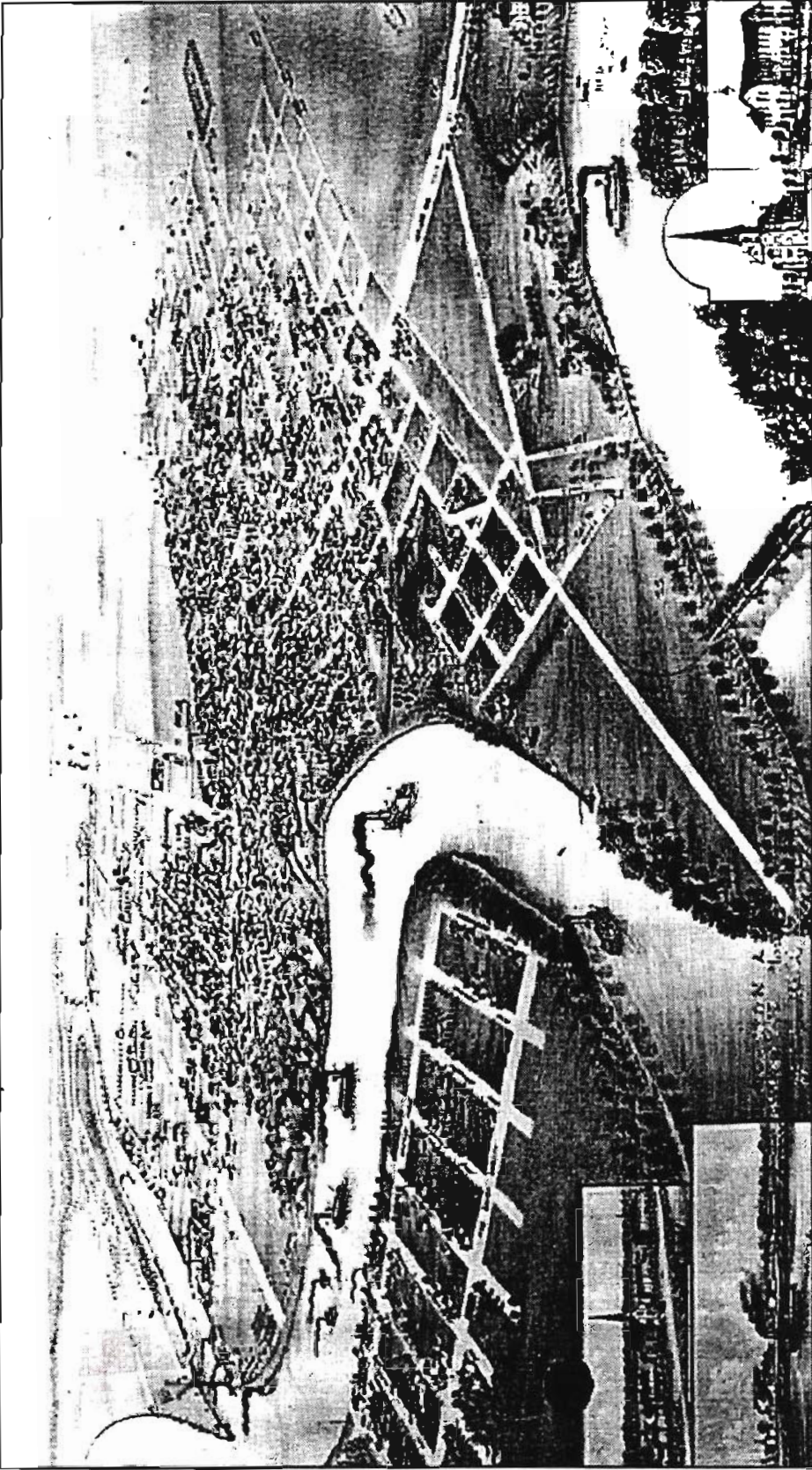
**Notes**

1. George Bryce, A History of Manitoba — Its Resources and People (Toronto/Montreal: The Canada History Co., 1906), p. 180.
2. "On Winnipeg's Busy Thoroughfares: Main Street-Night," Manitoba Morning Free Press, Magazine Section, August 19, 1911, p. 2.

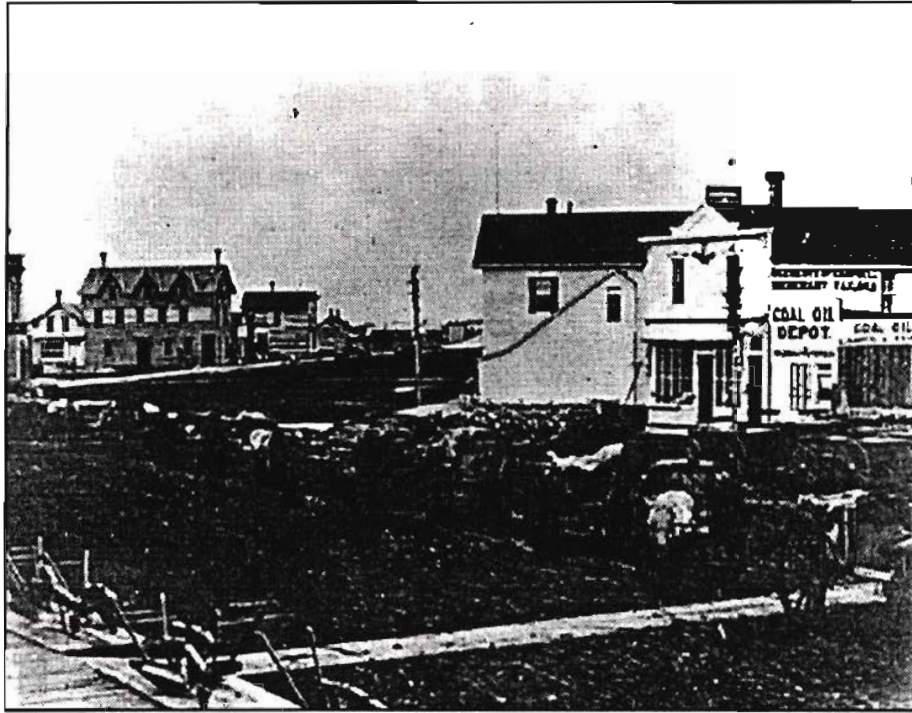




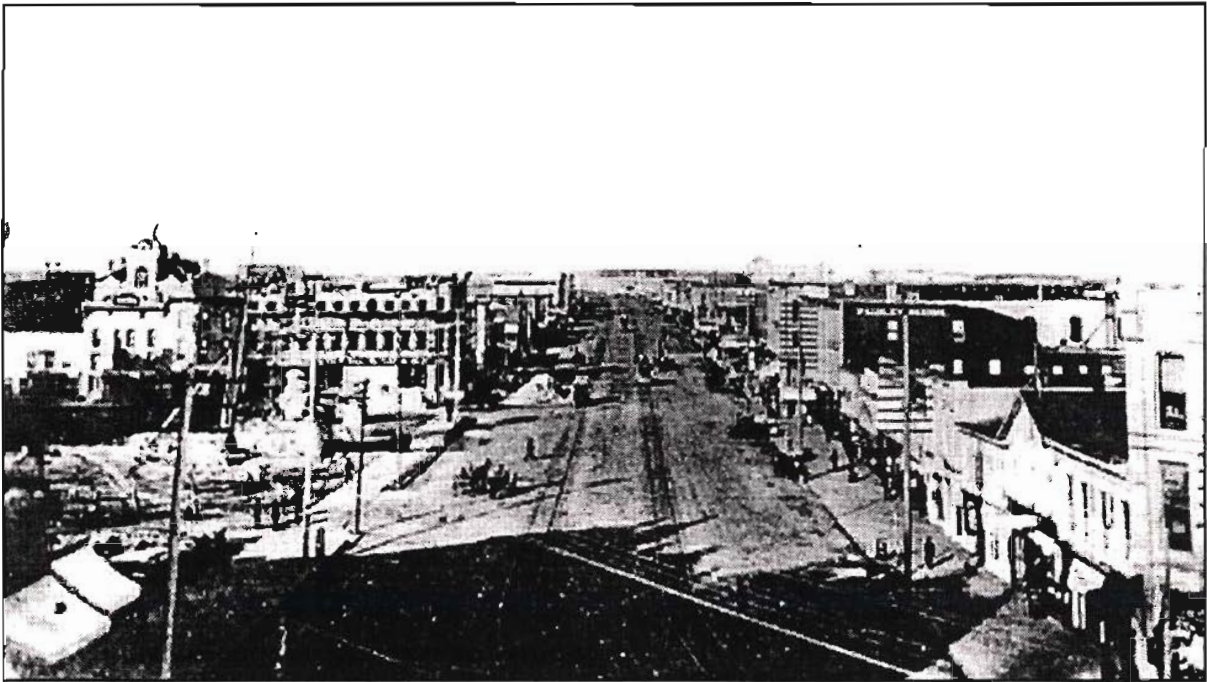
**PLATE 1:** Survey map from c.1872 showing the Point Douglas Common and river lots that extended across Main Street. River lot owners were (north to south): Alexander Logan, Martin Heaton and William McWilliams, the estate of James Ross, W.R. Ross and Margaret James, A.G.B. Bannatyne, Andrew McDermot, and Alexander Morris. (Provincial Archives of Manitoba [PAM], Map Collection, H9 614.11 gbbd, Series 1, #10)



**PLATE 2:** Bird's eye view of Winnipeg, 1880, showing limited development in the vicinity of the Point Douglas portion of Main Street compared to the area to the south. (PAM, Photograph Collection, Elswood Bole Collection, #9)



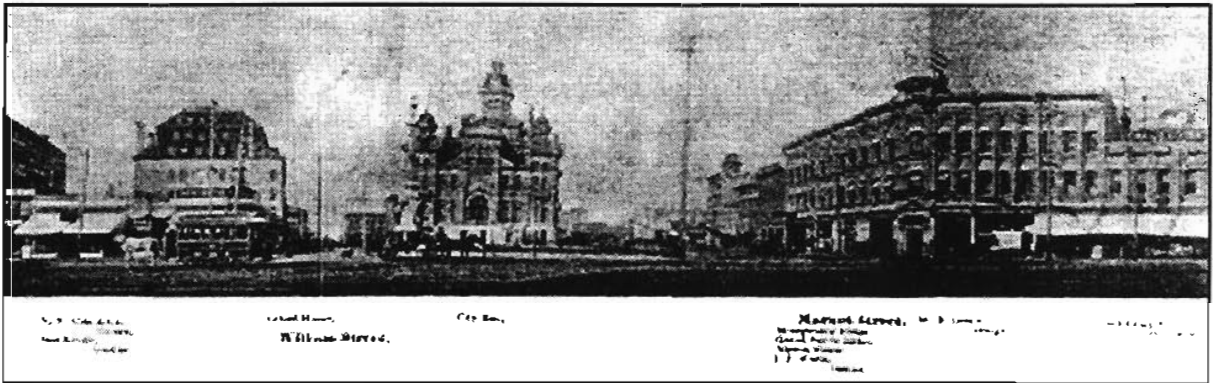
**PLATE 3:** An example of the state of development on Main as of c.1878, in this case to the north of Bannatyne. A corner of the first City Hall is visible at the far left centre of the photo. To its north is the gable-roofed Windsor House at Main and Market. (PAM, Photograph Collection [cf. Swinford Collection], Winnipeg-Streets-Main, c.1878, #1)



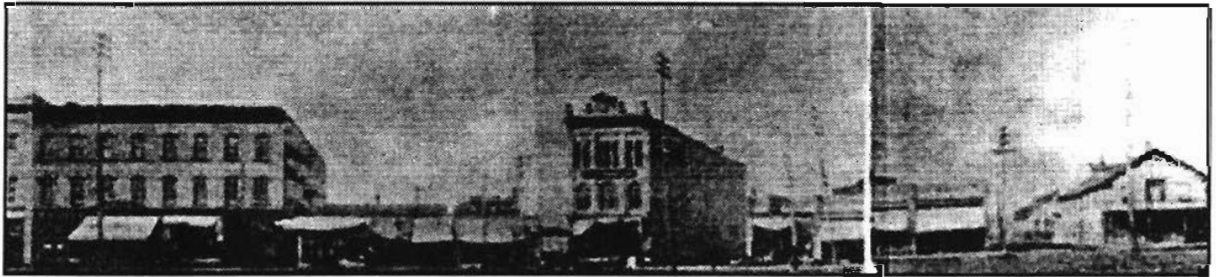
**PLATE 4:** North Main from about William, 1886. Construction activity is evident on the site of the second City Hall. As well, the Foulds Block is being built at Main and Market in place of Windsor House and adjacent commercial buildings which were destroyed by fire in 1886. (PAM, Photograph Collection, Winnipeg-Streets-Main, 1886, #1)



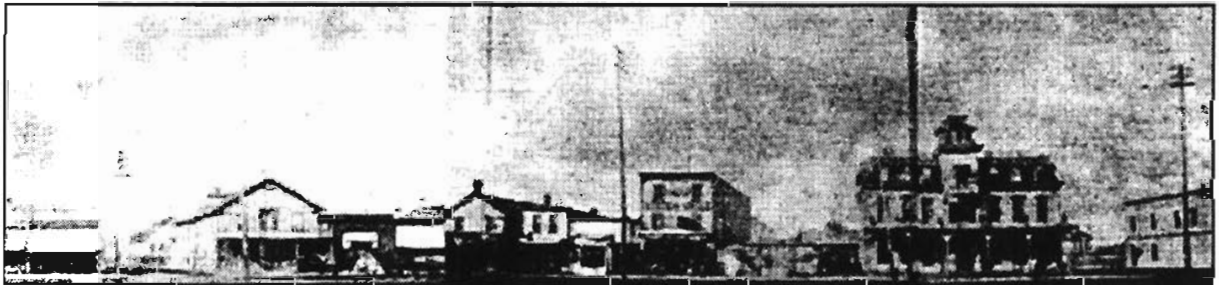
**PLATE 5:** North Main from a point south of James, c.1900. Most evident on the east side of the street (south to north) are the frame buildings leading up to Rupert, the Brunswick Hotel (1881) at northeast Main and Rupert, the adjacent Brunswick Block, a further series of frame structures between Pacific and Alexander, and Edwin Doidge's hotel (c.1882) at northeast Main and Alexander, known variously over the years as Hastings House and the Delmonte, New Douglas, National, and Imperial Hotel. (PAM, Photograph Collection, Winnipeg-Views, c.1900, #7)



**PLATE 6**

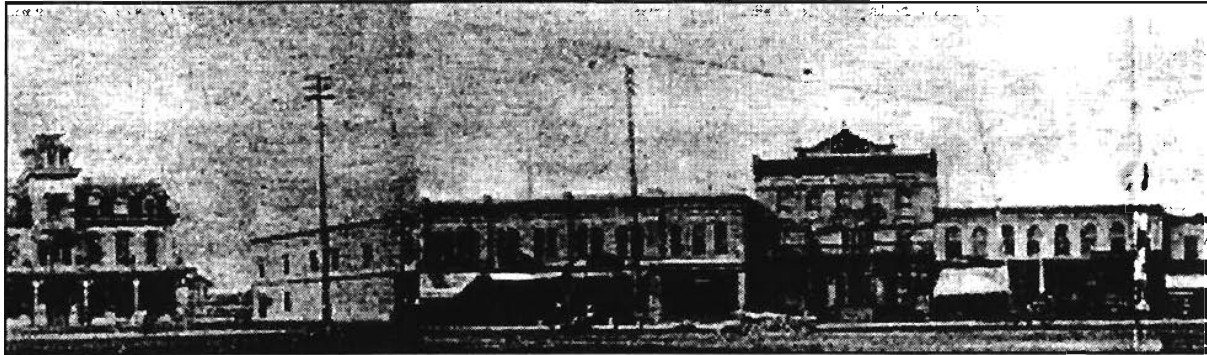


**PLATE 7**



**PLATE 8**

**PLATES 6 TO 8:** These 1892 views of the west side of North Main indicate the range that then existed in the scale and quality of the built environment. Plate 6 shows the more substantial type of construction undertaken in the vicinity of Winnipeg's second City Hall. Plate 7 captures a portion of West Main between Logan and Common (Henry), showing two three-storey buildings (the Foulds Block/Standard Theatre and Baskerville hardware store) flanked mostly by one-storey frame shops. Plate 8 shows a similar limited state of development on West Main between Common and Fonseca (Higgins) with the exception of the Second Empire Clifton House. (PAM, Photograph Collection, [Winnipeg Streets-Main Street Views, 1892](#), from a publication by Clarence E. Steele entitled [Main Street Views, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1892](#).)

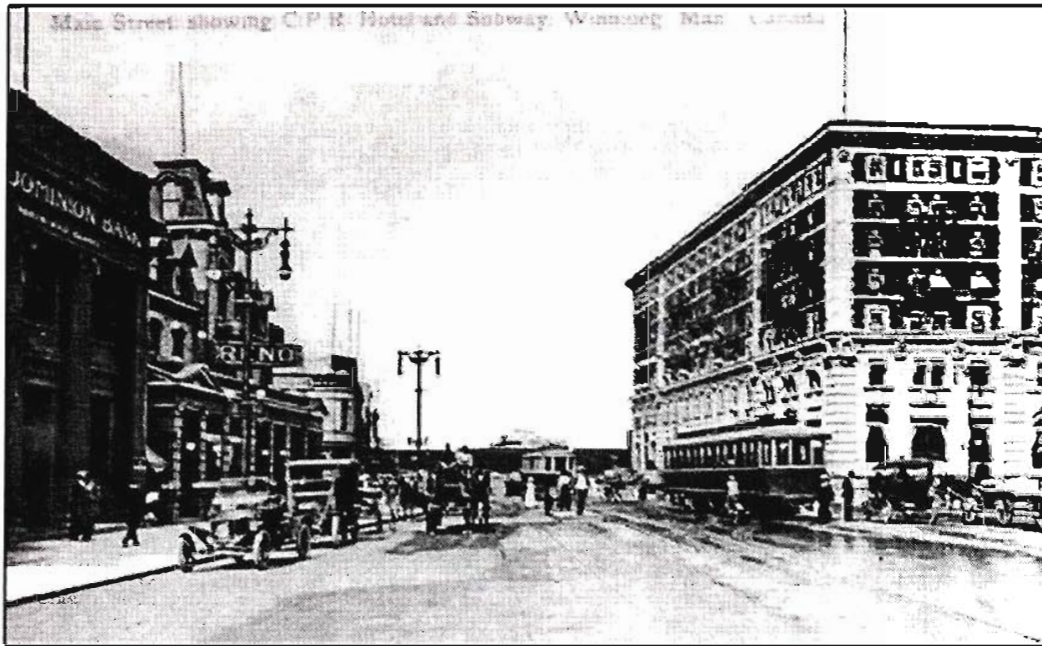


**PLATE 9**



**PLATE 10**

**PLATES 9 TO 10:** West Main across from the CPR Station, 1892. Clifton House is at southwest Main and Fonseca, then to the north of the Sproule Block on the northwest corner are the Manor, Oriental, Scandinavian, and Tecumseh hotels. Buildings in between were used on occasion as boarding houses. The station itself on East Main between Fonseca and Point Douglas avenues was accompanied by hotels as well. (PAM, Photograph Collection, Winnipeg-Streets-Main Street Views, 1892, from a publication by Clarence E. Steele entitled Main Street Views, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1892.)



**PLATE 11:** North Main near Higgins, c.1910. The Dominion Bank, Reno Hotel (Clifton House) and Sproule Block are on the left; the CPR's Royal Alexandra Hotel is on the right. (PAM, Photograph Collection, Winnipeg-Streets-Main, c.1910, #1)

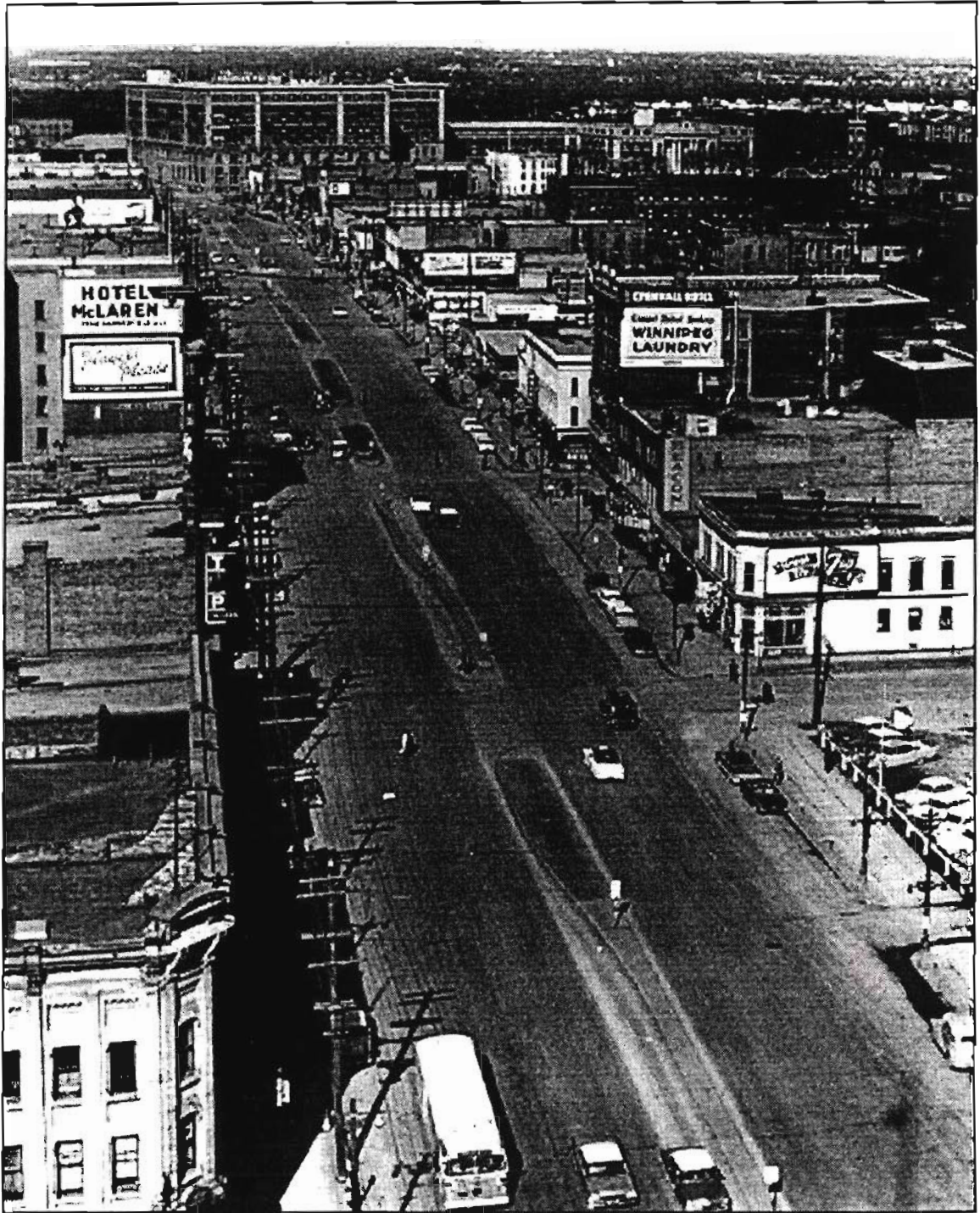


**PLATE 12:** Main north of William, c.1910. The effects of post-1900 development are evident when a comparison of the skyline in this scene is made with Plate 4. (PAM, Photograph Collection, Winnipeg-Streets-Main, c.1910, #4)



**PLATE 13:** East Main between Henry (left) and Logan (right), 1918. This block was almost completely redeveloped in the 1900-15 period. Exceptions were the boom-time Albion Hotel (far left) and Maple Leaf Hotel, known previously by other names, immediately north of the five-storey Concordia Block. (PAM, Photograph Collection, Winnipeg-Streets-Main, 1918, #1)





**PLATE 14:** North Main from Market, 1958. This view was taken prior to the demolitions associated with the Disraeli Freeway, City Hall and Manitoba Centennial Centre projects. Evident on the east side of the street (south to north) are a portion of an auto service station established in 1926 at southeast Main and James, the Grand Union Hotel (former Lake of the Woods Milling Co. Building) on the northeast corner, the Beacon (originally Strand) Theatre, and the Cornwall (originally Strathcona) Hotel. (PAM, Photograph Collection, Winnipeg-Streets-Main, 1958, #4)



**PLATE 15:** North Main from the Royal Alexandra Hotel, 1956. The still-intact state of the west side of the street is evident. (PAM, Photograph Collection, Winnipeg-Streets-Main, 1956, #1)

# Plan calls for replacement of run-down buildings

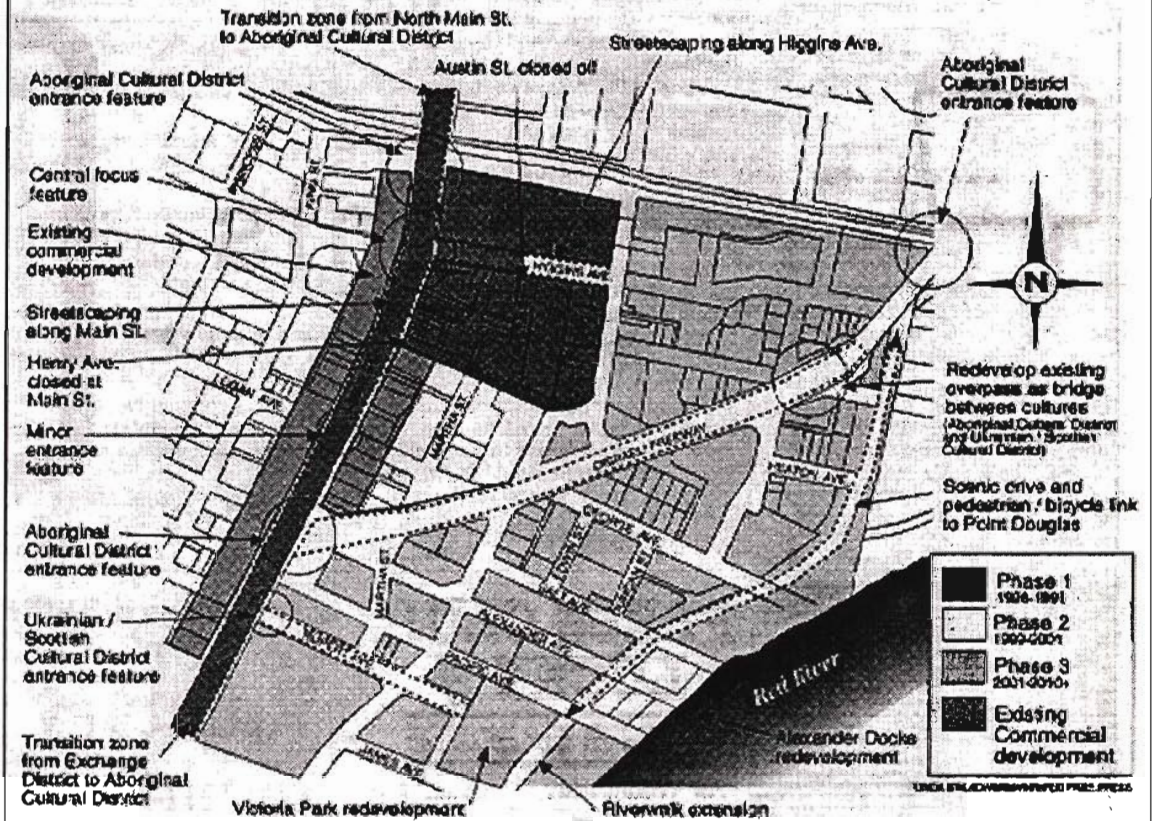
A GROUP looking to revitalize Main Street is pitching a \$12.5 million proposal to city hall today.

The ambitious plan would replace vacant and run-down buildings with an aboriginal-themed development as the centrepiece of an urban reserve. Among the details are plans for a youth centre, a park, an aboriginal hall of justice, student housing and short-term housing for travellers to Winnipeg, such as those who

come for medical treatment.

The city is hoping to use public money — from all three levels of government — to leverage private contributions for the development.

There are also plans for more parking and a new Scottish cultural centre and expanded Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre, as well as improvements to the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature.



**PLATE 16:** The North Main Task Force's concept plan for redevelopment of North Main and its environs. (Winnipeg Free Press, December 3, 1997)

## **Part B: WALKING TOUR and BUILDING INVENTORY**

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Forty-two (42) pre-1960 buildings remain on North Main between William Avenue and the subway.

Most are two or three storeys in height and of solid brick construction on stone or concrete foundations.

By age, they represent four phases of Winnipeg's physical development:

12	originated in the 1880-1900 period
18	in 1901-15
6	in 1916-45
6	in 1946-60
<u>42</u>	

By historical status:

2	are on the City's Buildings Conservation List.
4	have been evaluated for historical designation, but have not been added as yet to the Buildings Conservation List.
16	are included in the City's Historical Buildings Inventory.
20	are not in the City's Inventory.
<u>42</u>	

A number of the buildings are one- or two-part commercial structures with modest classical detailing. Many have undergone various façade alterations, especially at the ground-floor level, over the years. Examples nonetheless remain of the Italianate, Romanesque Revival, Neoclassical, Chicago School, and Art Deco styles.

The surviving buildings indicate that several notable local architects had a hand in shaping North Main, including John D. Atchison, Max Blankstein, James Cadham, Walter Chesterton, James Chisholm, H.S. Griffith, James McDiarmid, Alexander Melville, G.W. Northwood and C.W.U. Chivers, John H.G. Russell, Charles H. Wheeler, and the Winnipeg office of Darling, Pearson and Over.

Others known to have undertaken work on the surviving buildings include C.S. Bridgman, engineer J.C. Caldwell, the Eade Brothers, F.R. Evans, Lloyd Finch, William Fingland, J.A. Hudon, George MacPherson, S.F. Peters, John Schofield, John Schwab, and Daniel Smith.

Also represented are the designs of two non-residents, H.C. Stone and S.G. Davenport, both of Montréal.

A brief profile of each building is presented in the following inventory which is organized by five streetscapes:

- William to Rupert,
- Rupert to Alexander,
- Alexander to Logan,
- Logan to Henry, and
- Henry to the subway.

The following modern buildings are not included in the inventory:

180 Market Avenue (SE Main & Market), Pantages Playhouse Theatre Extension, 1992-93  
510 Main Street (West Side), Winnipeg City Hall, 1962-64  
540 Main Street (W), Royal Bank of Canada, 1992  
555 Main Street (E), Manitoba Centennial Centre, 1965-69  
564 1/2 Main Street (W), Original Food Bar, 1979  
210 Pacific Avenue (SW Main & Pacific), Yee's Grocery (Chyna Gifts and Food), 1985  
180 Henry Avenue (SE Main & Henry), Booth Centre, 1987-88

## **WILLIAM TO RUPERT**

This part of North Main has been fundamentally changed by urban renewal projects in the late 1950s and 1960s, and by subsequent site clearances and redevelopment. Only two pre-1915 buildings still exist — the former Manitoba Clothing store and the McLaren Hotel (Plate 17).

City Hall, and its associated Market Building and police and fire halls, were key influences on land use in this area. Another important force prior to his death in 1898 was investor George Foulds who owned and developed for rental purposes several lots on West Main north of Market and James.

Early physical development was of a modest scale and quality. Considerable investment was made, however, during the 1880s and 1890s in new and upgraded buildings and in the businesses that occupied them (Plates 18 to 20). Indeed, the character of this area was more consistent with that found in the central business district south of William than on Main north of Rupert. The William-James section, in particular, contained a mix of some of the city's more prominent retailers, business-oriented services such as lawyers, architects and real estate agents, and other services that appealed to city-wide markets such as physicians, dentists, druggists, and undertakers. Also of note was the constant presence of several hotels. Some were directly on Main; others were to the west around City Hall and Market Square.

Among the local businesses prior to 1900 were saddlery wholesaler E.F. Hutchings, J. Thomson and Co. undertakers, Ede and Hooper marble works, the Lake of the Woods Milling Co., the Wellband family of shoe retailers, dry goods merchant George Craig, jeweller W.W. Matthews, the J.J.H. McLean and Co. piano/organ store, stationers R.D. and C.J. Campbell, several hardware dealers, fruit seller Benjamin Frank, and the vertically integrated Kilgour, Rimer and Co. shoe enterprise.

The 1900-15 period brought a new land use — movie theatres, including one of Winnipeg's earliest such facilities, the Elite (Unique) Theatre (1903) on East Main between Market and James. The era also brought projects such as the McLaren and Strathcona hotels and Strand Theatre (Plate 21). The interwar years saw some selective site redevelopment, including the arrival of an auto service station at southeast Main and James in 1926.

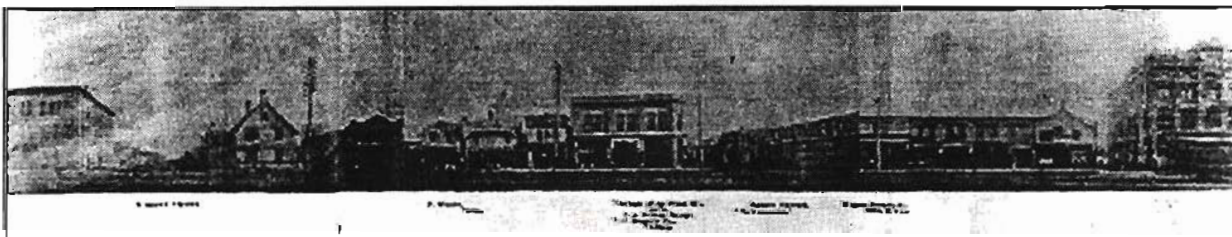
Among long-standing businesses that continued in the district were the Manitoba Clothing Co. and Colin J. Campbell's men's furnishings store. Post-1900 newcomers that became fixtures included the Guest Shoe Co., Birt Saddlery Co., Club Billiard Parlour and its associated cigar and barber shops, the Empire Photo Studio, the McLean and Garland (later R.J. McLean Ltd.), Windsor, Macy's, and Samuel Cristall clothing stores, the Klasser Brothers second-hand store (later Klasser Mail Order), the Reliable, Goodwear and G & B mail order houses (later the Goodwear and G & B Starlight clothing stores), Stanley's Cafe, jeweller F.W. Dudley, and Campbell's Bowling Alley.



**PLATE 17:** Manitoba Clothing Co. Store and McLaren Hotel, West Main at Rupert, 1998. (D.M. Lyon, 1998)



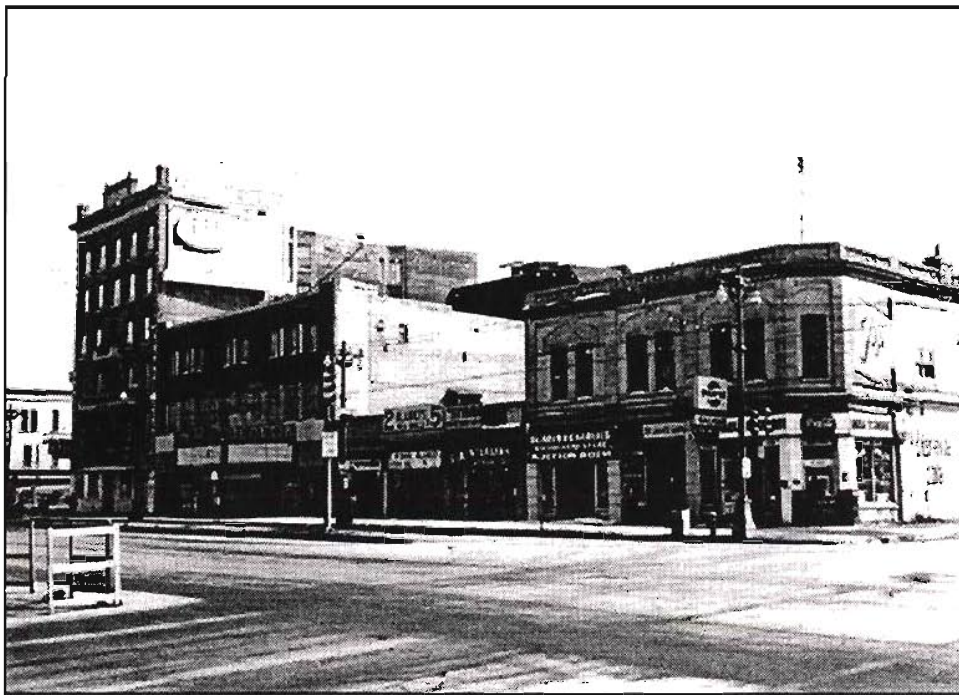
**PLATE 18:** West Main from south of James to Rupert, 1892. (PAM, Photograph Collection, Winnipeg-Streets-Main Street Views, 1892, from a publication by Clarence E. Steele entitled Main Street Views, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1892.)



**PLATE 19:** East Main, Rupert to south of James, 1892. (PAM, Photograph Collection, Winnipeg-Streets-Main Street Views, 1892, from a publication by Clarence E. Steele entitled Main Street Views, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1892.)



**PLATE 20:** Main north of Market, c.1905. (PAM, Photograph Collection, Winnipeg-Streets-Main, c.1905, #3)



**PLATE 21:** Beacon (Strand) Theatre and Cornwall (Strathcona) Hotel (left side of scene) as they appeared in 1965 prior to demolition for the Manitoba Centennial Centre project. (PAM, Photograph Collection, uncatalogued, negative #65-746)



**550 MAIN STREET (W)  
Manitoba Clothing Co. Store**

**Date:** 1899  
**Status:** Not in the Historical Buildings Inventory.

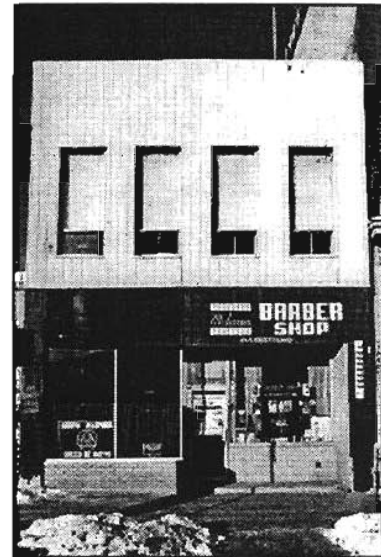
**Construction:** Two storeys; solid brick on a stone foundation; original façade of red brick.

**Integrity:** Rear addition, 1906. Various interior and façade alterations over the years.

**Architect:** Charles H. Wheeler  
**Contractor:** Spencer Brothers; Brydon and Co.

**Use/Ownership:** The Manitoba Clothing Co. was a men's and children's wear enterprise incorporated in 1895. Its president, A.J. Andrews, was a local politician and lawyer who served as mayor of Winnipeg in 1898-99. The shop initially was managed by Max Goldstine who had operated clothing outlets on North Main since the mid-1880s. Manitoba Clothing continued on this site until the 1960s. It was succeeded by the McLaren Barber Shop, joined at various points by Christie's Bargain Mart, the Nordic Athletic Club and McLaren Pawn Ltd., among others.

**Other Notes:** This is the only known surviving project by architect Wheeler (1838-1917) on Main between The Forks and the subway. F.R. Evans designed the 1906 addition.



**554 MAIN STREET (W)  
McLaren Hotel**

**Date:** 1910-11  
**Status:** In the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** Seven storeys; stone foundation on reinforced concrete footings; reinforced concrete superstructure and floors; two façades finished with Tyndall stone, Menomenee brick and a bracketed metal cornice.



**Integrity:** Numerous interior alterations, including fire repairs and changes to the beer parlour and commercial space, over the years.

**Architect:** J.C. Caldwell  
**Contractor:** C.W. Sharp and Son

**Use/Ownership:** This hotel was built and initially operated by the McLaren brothers — Archibald (1856-1918), John Angus (1860-1912) and Alexander Stewart (1866-1921). They belonged to an experienced family of Ontarian hoteliers that entered the trade in Winnipeg in the late 1870s and subsequently managed the Brunswick, Empire and Strathcona hotels. After Alexander's death in 1921, the McLaren was briefly run by A.S. McGregor, then sold to John J. Gray. He was succeeded from the late 1930s to early 1960s by F.W. Dangerfield and various partners. For a period up to the mid-1930s, the McLaren was one of two downtown hotels used as terminals for inter-urban bus service. Commercial tenants over the years included Wagner's Taxi, the Bank of Nova Scotia and a Salisbury House restaurant.

**Other Notes:** Caldwell was a civil engineer and construction superintendent with C.W. Sharp and Son.

## **RUPERT TO ALEXANDER**

As with the William-Rupert sector, the historic streetscape between Rupert and Alexander avenues has been virtually eliminated by urban renewal and site clearance or redevelopment. Three pre-1960 buildings remain, all on West Main — #560 (1955) and #570/#572-74 (1915) (Plates 22 and 23).

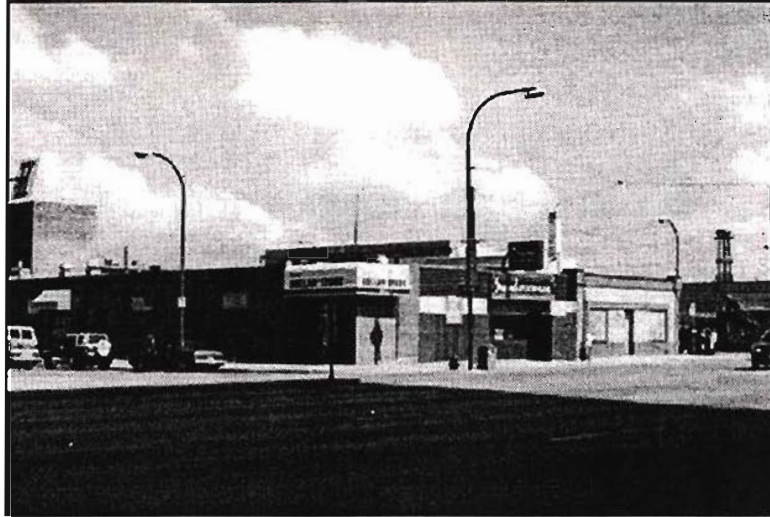
Some commercial activity was housed in this area in the 1870s. But the first major period of development occurred in the early to mid-1880s when the Brunswick Hotel (east side) and McNee, Brown and Carruthers blocks (west side) were built, along with other, smaller-scale structures (Plate 24).

Their storefronts attracted and for many decades continued to be occupied by clothiers, second-hand and pawn shops, hardware, grocery, dry goods, jewellery, and shoe merchants, tailors, druggists, confectioners, tobacconists, and eateries. While the types of uses were relatively constant over the years, proprietorships turned over with some frequency. Among them, nonetheless, were some well-established businesses that spent periods elsewhere on North Main or south of City Hall — e.g., clothiers E.H. Taaffe, T.D. Deegan and George Hobday, jeweller W.W. Matthews, grocer W.B. Francis, Porter and Co.'s China Hall, shoe merchants William Wellband and the Union Shoe Co., Gardiner and Co. undertakers, saddlery wholesaler E.F. Hutchings, dry goods merchant (later furniture dealer) A.F. Banfield, and dry goods retailer/wholesaler George Rodgers.

During 1900-15, the south and north corners of East Main at Pacific were redeveloped, as was the northwest corner of Pacific (former Brown Block site). Other facilities, such as the Brunswick Hotel and Carruthers Block, received additions and/or upgrading.

The area's longer-standing occupants after 1900 included the Public Drug Co., Udow Brothers' clothing store (later Hub Clothiers), Coney Island Lunch (later the Original Food Bar), Boston Hat Works, Gilmer and Co. hardware, Claire's Ltd. ladies' wear, David Portigal's Brunswick Clothes Shop (later Top Notch Clothes Ltd.), merchant Peter Cristall, the Boston Clothing Co., a United Cigar store, Skinner's social club, and the Simon Poons billiard hall (in the former St. Nicholas/Belmont Hotel).

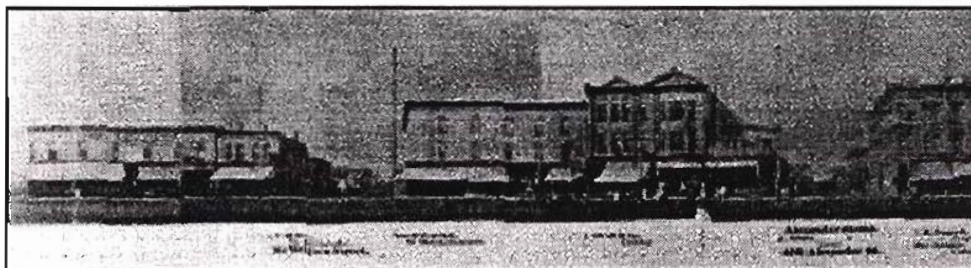
The first major break in the streetscape occurred on East Main with construction of the Disraeli Freeway in the late 1950s. The Brunswick Hotel subsequently was demolished in 1976, although plans for the site (a new parking facility and offices for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corp.) were never realized. On West Main, fires in the 1970s resulted in the demolition of the Carruthers Block at Alexander, the former Boston Hat Works (McBain grocery) outlet at Pacific, and an earlier version of the Original Food Bar.



**PLATE 22:** West Main between Rupert and Pacific, 1998. (D.M. Lyon, 1998)



**PLATE 23:** West Main between Pacific and Alexander, 1998. (D.M. Lyon, 1998)



**PLATE 24:** West Main from Rupert to Alexander, 1892. Left to right are the McNee Block, former McBain grocery store and, north of McWilliam (Pacific), the Brown and Carruthers (Cheapside) blocks. Also evident is part of the Maycock Block at northwest Main and Alexander. (PAM, Photograph Collection, Winnipeg-Streets-Main Street Views, 1892, from a publication by Clarence E. Steele entitled Main Street Views, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1892.)

**560 MAIN STREET (W)  
Public Drug Store**

**Date:** 1955  
**Status:** Not in the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** One storey; concrete foundation; concrete block walls faced with brick.

**Integrity:** Exterior changes, 1988.

**Architect:** no data

**Contractor:** no data

**Use/Ownership:** A drug store and factory occupied this corner site for about a century, first in the McNee Block, then in this 1955 building erected after a fire the previous year. The drug company originated in the latter 1880s when Walter Pulford began to make and distribute pharmaceuticals and toiletries on a wholesale and retail basis. After his firm was sold in 1910 to Hall and Whyard, it became the Public Drug Co. W.G.H. Whyard managed the business well into the 1930s, followed by Herbert J.R. Bond (to the late 1950s), Walter E. Popiel (into the 1970s) and Joseph Burak (until the late 1980s).



**570 MAIN STREET (W)  
Boston Clothing Co. Store**

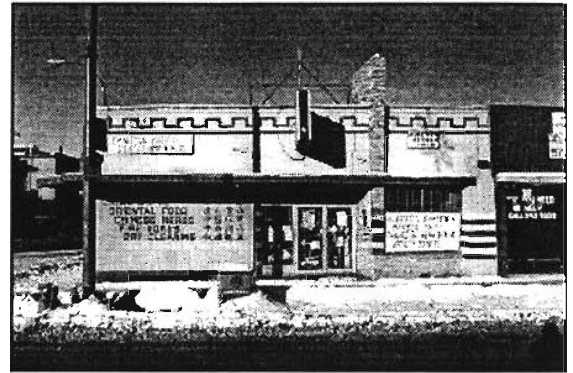
**Date:** 1915  
**Status:** Not in the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** One storey; solid brick on a concrete foundation.  
**Integrity:** Addition, 1941. Various storefront and interior changes over the years.

**Architect:** John Schofield  
**Contractor:** John Gunn and Sons

**Use/Ownership:** This commercial outlet, along with 572-74 Main Street, was built for a Miss A. Brown who previously maintained a three-storey block on the site. The Boston Clothing Co., joined later by Udow Clothiers Ltd. manufacturers' agents, was at 570 Main from completion of construction through to the latter 1960s, managed by Jacob, then by David and Lawrence Udow. Subsequent occupants included the Main Loan Office, Payless Surplus Sales, Chinatown Variety Centre, and Albert's Pawn Shop.

**Other Notes:** Schofield principally was an architect with the Canadian Northern Railway (later the Canadian National Railways), based in Toronto and Montréal.



**572 MAIN STREET (W)  
Commercial Building**

**Date:** 1915  
**Status:** Not in the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** One storey; solid brick on a concrete foundation.

**Integrity:** Front altered in 1934 and 1941.

**Architect:** John Schofield  
**Contractor:** John Gunn and Sons

**Use/Ownership:** This structure originally was part of one holding that included 570 Main Street. Initial occupants were the Western News Agency (#572), which had been on this part of Main since c.1908, and Metropolitan Lunch (#574). Assorted businesses followed — confectioners, other restaurants, a jeweller, Arcade Coney Island, Sobie's Silk Shop, and the Main Loan Office. The longest-standing occupant was Claire's Ltd., a ladies' clothing store at 572 Main from the mid-1930s into the 1960s.



## ALEXANDER TO LOGAN

Parts of this streetscape have been marred by fire losses and the Disraeli Freeway. An interesting collection of buildings remains nonetheless (Plates 25 to 28).

Most notable is the group on West Main north of Alexander. These buildings date from 1885 to 1939 (Plate 25). Across the avenue are the 1901 Corbett Block and two buildings constructed in 1925 after fire destroyed the Imperial Hotel (originally Hastings House/Hotel Delmonte; c.1882) (Plate 27). At southeast Main and Logan is the White Rose (Occidental) Hotel (Plate 28) which continues a use of the site that began in 1873.

A sparse mix of commercial and residential development existed on this streetscape in the 1870s, including the Eureka (Ottawa) Hotel at southeast Main and Logan. The next decade brought intensified land use, notably the Maycock and Landerkin blocks on West Main and Hastings House at northeast Main and Alexander (Plates 29 and 30).

The character of occupancy was similar to that found on the Rupert-Alexander streetscape. As well, turnover was fairly frequent, although it often involved established businesses that were housed at other North Main addresses over the years. Notable pre-1900 occupants in addition to the hotels included clothiers J. and M. Goldstine, shoemaker Thomas Lyons, tailor Philip Brown (earlier Brown and Coblentz), dry goods merchant George Frankfurter, and the Young Men's Christian Association. Among the businessmen who were here in both the pre- and post-1900 periods were jeweller D.R. Dingwall, grocer J.A. McKerchar and general merchant Leon Abremovich. Also of note is that a portion of the Landerkin complex was converted to hotel use by the latter 1880s.

The years 1900-15 brought significant change (four new buildings on West Main, including the Columbia Theatre, and two on East Main). As well, the Canadian Bank of Commerce opened a branch in the Maycock Block and the Occidental Hotel was expanded (Plate 31). In the interwar period, spot redevelopment took place on East Main (including an auto service station at Alexander) in 1925-26 and on West Main with construction of the Singer Manufacturing Co. store (1939). The Royal Bank of Canada, attracted to southwest Main and Logan in 1921, redeveloped the site in 1946.

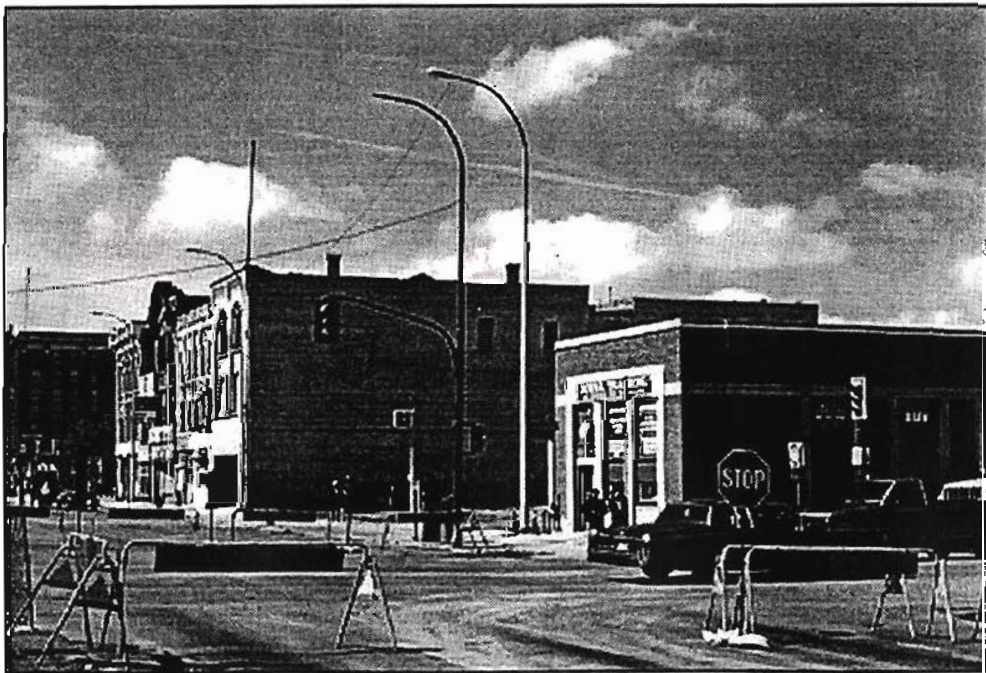
Among the post-1900 occupants were clothiers D.F. Allman, Hyman Waldman and Louis Mindell, grocer A.F. Higgins, the Castran family's Winnipeg Candy Kitchen (later the Castran Cafe), pioneer theatre operators W.S. Jones and later Samuel Weiner, the Exchange and Modern cafes, Central Billiard Parlour, Union Shoe Co., jeweller David Berman (earlier Adilman and Berman), the F.W. Woolworth Co., City Meat and Sausage (later Norman's Meats), Ralph's Ltd. men's furnishings, the Cut-Rate Department Store, Service Grocery, Central Exchange, and Mall Foods. In addition, most of the non-hotel buildings in this sector had residential apartments or rooms.

Fires led to demolition of the Stanley Block on East Main in 1969 and the Columbia Theatre and remaining sections of the Landerkin Block in the mid-1980s.





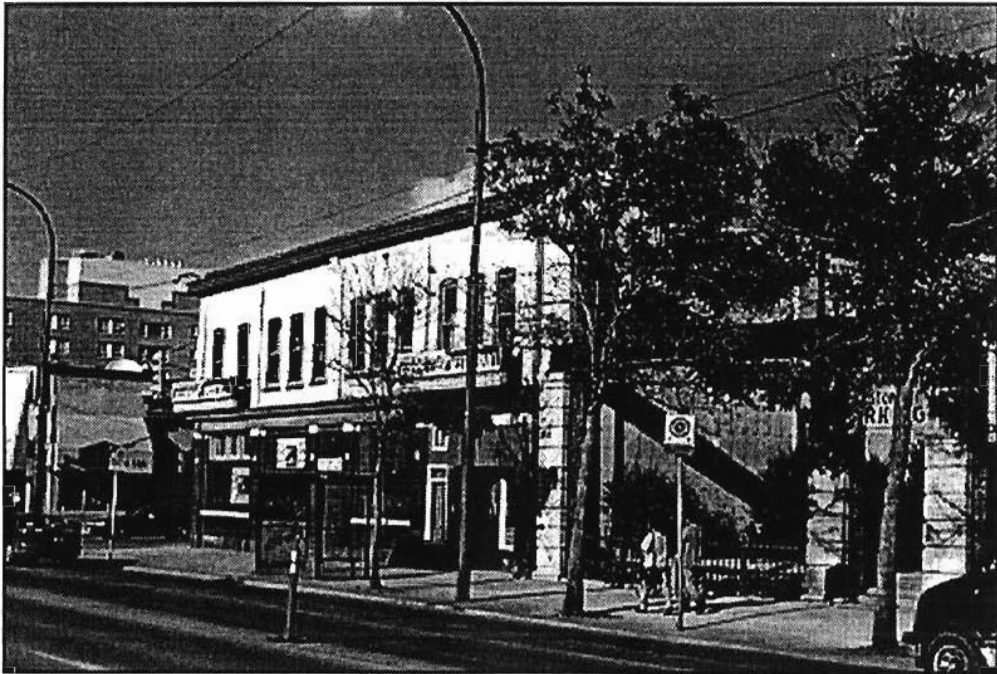
**PLATE 25:** West Main north of Alexander, 1998. (D.M. Lyon, 1998)



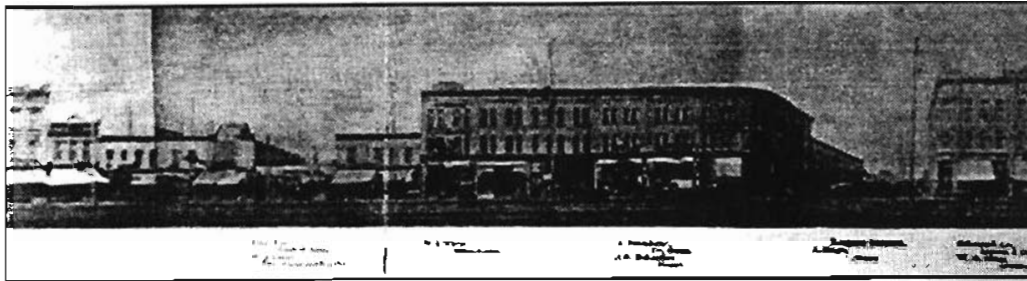
**PLATE 26:** West Main south from Logan, 1998. (D.M. Lyon, 1998)



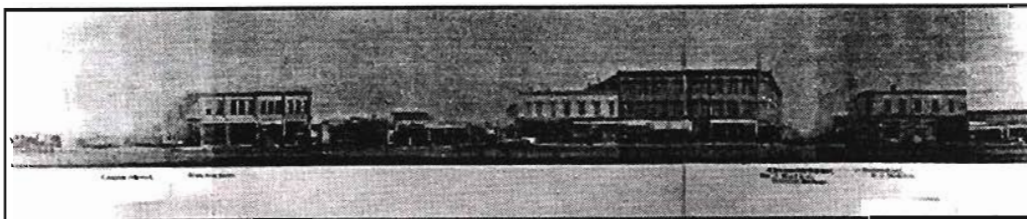
**PLATE 27:** East Main south toward the Disraeli Freeway, 1998. (D.M. Lyon, 1998)



**PLATE 28:** East Main north toward Logan, 1998. (D.M. Lyon, 1998)



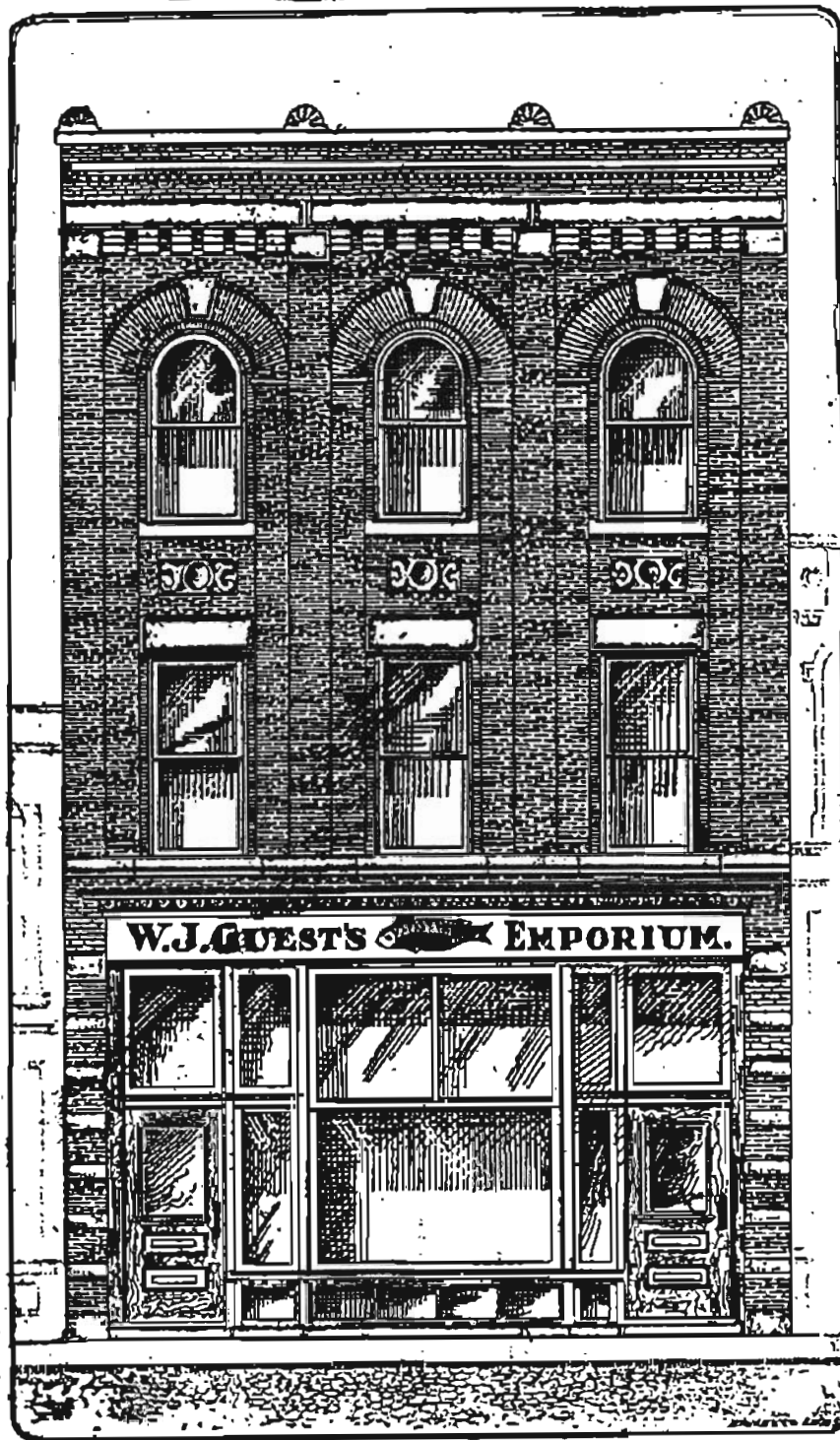
**PLATE 29:** West Main from a corner of the Maycock Block at Alexander to the Landerkin and Higgins blocks on the south and north sides of Logan, respectively, 1892. (PAM, Photograph Collection, Winnipeg-Streets-Main Street Views, 1892, from a publication by Clarence E. Steele entitled Main Street Views, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1892.)



**PLATE 30:** East Main from the White Rose Hotel at Logan to the New Douglas (Imperial) and St. Nicholas hotels on the north and south corners of Alexander, respectively, 1892. (PAM, Photograph Collection, Winnipeg-Streets-Main Street Views, 1892, from a publication by Clarence E. Steele entitled Main Street Views, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1892.)



**PLATE 31:** Occidental Hotel, 1918. (PAM, Photograph Collection, Winnipeg-Streets-Logan, 1918, #2)



NEW WAREHOUSE OF W. J. GUEST.  
No. 600 Main St., Winnipeg.

**PLATE 32:** Sketch of the 1902 Guest Block, now 598 Main. (The Commercial, November 8, 1902)

**584 MAIN STREET (W)  
Maycock Block  
(Dingwall Block/Canadian Bank of Commerce Chambers)**

**Date:** 1885-86

**Status:** In the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** Three storeys; solid brick on a stone foundation; brick façades with stone and brick detailing; ornate metal cornice and hood moulds.

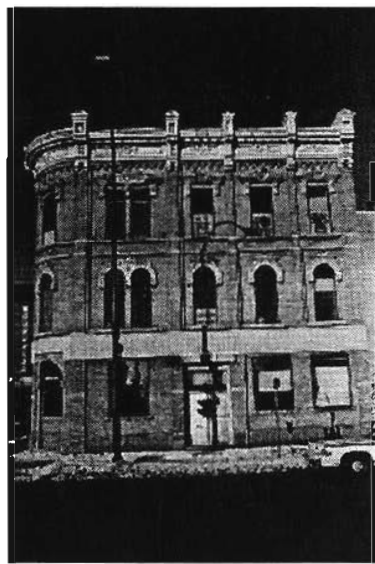
**Integrity:** New stone foundation, 1898.  
Numerous alterations, especially in the interior, over the years.

**Architect:** no data

**Contractor:** no data

**Use/Ownership:** This block was an investment by merchants Edward and Annie E. Maycock of Woodstock, Ontario who sold toys, china, woollens, and fancy goods from various Main Street addresses between late 1880 and c.1904. The principal occupants of 584 Main in the 1880s and 1890s were the Young Men's Christian Association and jeweller Donald Ross Dingwall. By the early 1900s, the property was owned by insurance agent and investor A.R. McNichol who converted the upper floors to residential use. Then in 1906, the Canadian Bank of Commerce opened a branch on the site. It later made extensive alterations in 1913 after Dingwall moved his store north to 614 Main. The bank remained at this location until the late 1970s. Its successors included the Ken Wong Agencies (real estate, insurance, investment) and House of Travel.

**Other Notes:** Architect S.F. Peters planned conversion of the upper floors to residential use in 1902. Bank alterations were designed in 1906 by Darling, Pearson and Over (Toronto and Winnipeg) and in 1913 by Victor D. Horsburgh (Toronto).



**590 MAIN STREET (W)  
Singer Building**

**Date:** 1939  
**Status:** Not in the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** Two storeys; a concrete foundation and superstructure of brick and reinforced concrete; a front façade of smooth-cut limestone and granite.  
**Integrity:** Some alterations over the years.

**Architect:** Northwood and Chivers  
**Contractor:** Fraser and McDonald Co. Ltd.

**Use/Ownership:** The New York-based Singer Manufacturing Co. (sewing machines), which had occupied various premises on Main Street since 1880, established and continued to occupy this building well into the 1960s. It was followed by manufacturers' agents; Mostoways Ltd.; Summit Personnel, a temporary employment agency; and a City police community office.



**Other Notes:** City inspectors twice noted on the building permit for 590 Main that it was a first-class structure throughout.

**592 MAIN STREET (W)  
Allman Block**

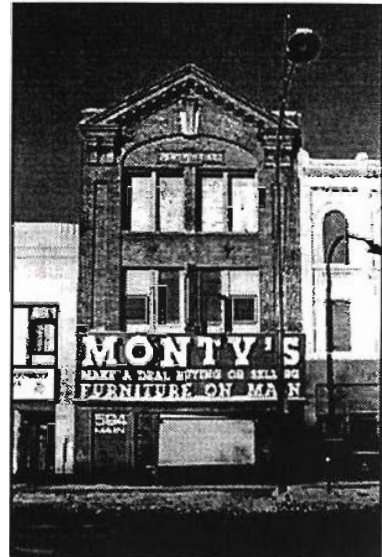
**Date:** 1904  
**Status:** In the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** Three storeys; solid brick on a stone foundation; a brick façade with stone, brick and metal detailing; an ornate metal cornice.

**Integrity:** Numerous storefront and interior alterations, including fire repairs in 1955.

**Architect:** John H.G. Russell  
**Contractor:** D. Bruce; Saul and Irish

**Use/Ownership:** Clothier Daniel F. Allman, who operated a local shop from 1899 to 1924, built this block. In addition to his own business, early occupants included the Shamrock Pool Rooms, Bentley Portrait Co., solicitor Max Steinkopf, realtor S.C. Wilson, and residential tenants. Among later commercial occupants were dentist Joseph M. Benson; clothier George Hobday ( who had shops at various sites on North and Central Main over many years); the Manhattan Billiard Parlour Ltd.; Beau Monde Club; Jewel Stores Ltd. (grocer A.F. Higgins); barrister Arthur M. Doyle; realtor J.G. Kimmel and Co.; Genser's Ltd. furniture; the Main Street Project; Action Pawn Shop; and Monty's Furniture on Main.

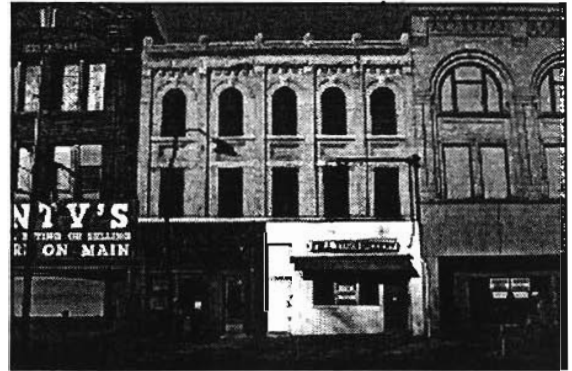


**596-98 MAIN STREET (W)  
Guest Block**

**Date:** 1902 (#598) & 1909 (#596)  
**Status:** In the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** Three storeys; solid brick on a part stone/part concrete foundation; a brick façade with stone and brick detailing.

**Integrity:** Numerous interior and exterior alterations, mainly to 598 Main; fire repairs in 1948 (#598) and 1956 (#596).



**Architect:** James Chisholm (1902);  
G.W. Northwood (1909)  
**Contractor:** Davidson Brothers (1902); J.G. Latimer (1909)

**Use/Ownership:** Ontarian William John Guest, a founder of the Northern and W.J. Guest fish companies, invested in 598 Main to house the retail side of his integrated fish harvesting, distribution and cold storage business. He occupied the site for only a few years, however, before establishing much larger quarters on Alexander Avenue. His early successors at 598 Main included Innis and Co. fish dealers, the Western Art Gallery photography studio and residential tenants. The 1909 addition was built for property agents Robinson and Black. Both sections were then occupied through to the 1920s by the Winnipeg Candy Kitchen (later Castran's Cafe) operated by James, Gus and Angelos Castran, among other family members. Their business subsequently was consolidated at 596 Main through to the late 1950s, followed by the Golden Wheel Cafe and Country Girl Restaurant. Occupants of #598 from the 1920s onward included the Imperial, Blue Eagle, Cameo, and Julius cafes and Stein's jewellery store.

**Other Notes:** The two sections of this building have separate property assessment roll numbers.



**600 MAIN STREET (W)  
McKerchar Block**

**Date:** 1902  
**Status:** In the Historical Buildings Inventory.

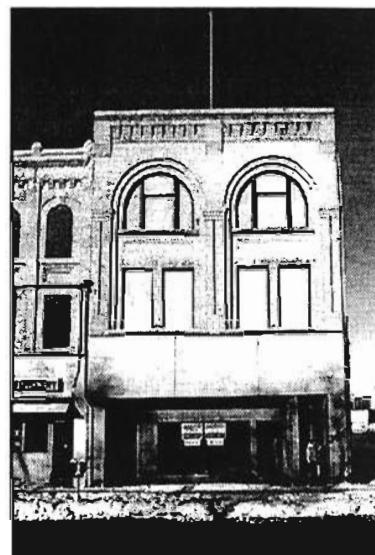
**Construction:** Three storeys; solid brick on a stone foundation; a brick façade with stone and brick detailing.

**Integrity:** Rear addition, 1911; various alterations, including fire repairs in 1973 and changes to the main-floor front.

**Architect:** John H.G. Russell  
**Contractor:** E. Cass; J. Vopni

**Use/Ownership:** Ontarian John Archibald McKerchar maintained grocery shops on North Main from the early 1880s through to 1919 when he switched into the photography business. He also was a City alderman from 1921 to 1934 and a school trustee for 23 years. He was succeeded on the main floor of 600 Main by another grocer, A.F. Higgins Co., followed in 1929 by the American-based variety retailer, F.W. Woolworth Co. The latter remained until the mid-1950s when it built new premises at Main and Logan. The McKerchar Block became a social action centre in the 1960s and 1970s when it housed the People's Opportunity Service outreach program, self-help groups and a legal aid clinic initiated by municipal politician Joseph Zuken and fellow lawyers Norman Larson and Roland Penner (who later became Manitoba's attorney-general).

**Other Notes:** The 1911 addition was designed by F.R. Evans.



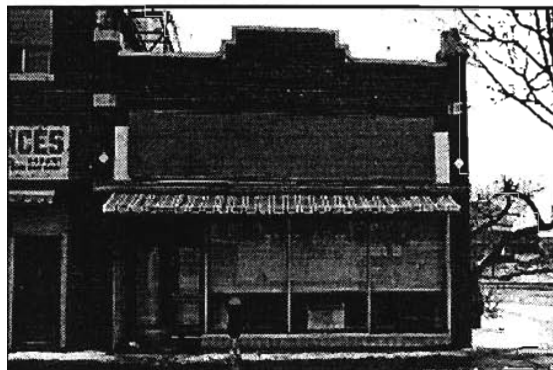
**605 MAIN STREET (E)  
Commercial Building**

**Date:** 1925  
**Status:** Not in the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** One storey; solid brick on a reinforced concrete and stone foundation with concrete footings; a red brick front façade with stone trim.

**Integrity:** Modest repairs and storefront alterations over the years.

**Architect:** no data  
**Contractor:** H. Sigurdson



**Use/Ownership:** David Berman operated a jewellery store at 605 Main from World War I through to 1925 when a fire razed that and other premises located between 599 and 609 Main. While Berman rebuilt #605, he did not remain on site, but instead moved his American Jewellery Co. to McDermot Avenue. He continued as the firm's president until his death in 1960 at age 74. Occupants of 605 Main included clothier Hyman Waldman, Safeway Stores Ltd., the Canada Grocery, Jimmy's Grocery, Curly Haas Sportswear Ltd., Market Sales and Sporting Goods Ltd., and the Gospel Fellowship.

## 607 MAIN STREET (E) Mindell Block

<b>Date:</b>	1925
<b>Status:</b>	In the Historical Buildings Inventory.
<b>Construction:</b>	Two storeys; solid brick on a reinforced concrete foundation with concrete footings; a red brick front façade with stone trim.
<b>Integrity:</b>	Minor alterations over the years.
<b>Architect:</b>	Max Blankstein
<b>Contractor:</b>	Fraser and McDonald

**Use/Ownership:** Clothier Louis Mindell, who had been on East Main near Alexander Avenue since the mid-1910s, established this block after a fire destroyed his previous shop. A business in his name continued on site well into the 1950s. Subsequent occupants included tailor J. Fox, William's Men's Wear, Central Clothing, Central Pawn Brokers, the Cut-Rate Department Store, Home Welfare Association, and Winnipeg Domestic Appliances Co. The upper floor initially housed a Gospel Hall and eventually (c.1940) the Union Gospel Mission. It later was named the Norman Bethune Hall and contained the offices of the Labour Progressive Party and Communist Party of Canada.

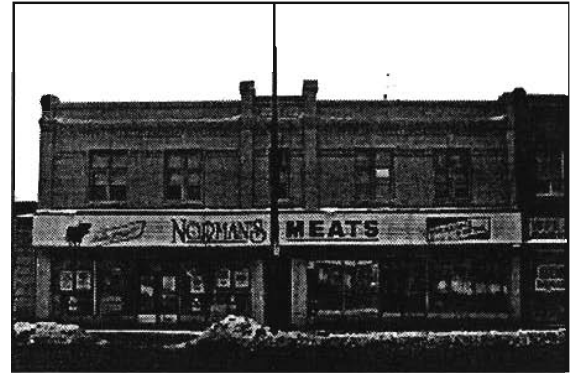


**611 MAIN STREET (E)  
Corbett Block**

**Date:** 1901  
**Status:** In the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** Two storeys; solid brick on a stone and concrete foundation; a brick (originally red; now painted) front façade with stone trim.

**Integrity:** Rear addition, 1948. Numerous interior and storefront alterations over the years; fire repairs 1921 and 1937; struck again by fire in 1997.



**Architect:** James McDiarmid  
**Contractor:** J. and J. McDiarmid, the Alsip Brothers, and G. Alsip

**Use/Ownership:** Physician Samuel C. Corbett co-owned this property with Andrew McKenzie for several years before investing in its redevelopment. Corbett, an Ontarian, had practised in Winnipeg since 1882 and was made a Dominion health officer in 1901. Among his early co-occupants at 611 Main were barrister W.A. Corbett, clothiers, dressmakers, a liquor dealer, realtor Alfred Inglehart, a provincial Immigration, Employment and Information Bureau, a Canadian Northern Railway employment agency, and residential tenants. A considerable mix and turnover of commercial occupants followed through to the 1930s when the City Meat and Sausage Co. (later Norman's Meats) became a long-standing presence. It was joined by the Imperial Barber Shop (1930s, 1940s), Progress Cap Manufacturing (1940s), Standard Wholesale and Standard Giftware (1950s), and Cheni-Wool Manufacturing Co. (1960s). Unlike some other mixed-use blocks on North Main, this facility appears to have retained a strong residential occupancy into the 1980s.

**618 MAIN STREET (W)  
Royal Bank of Canada**

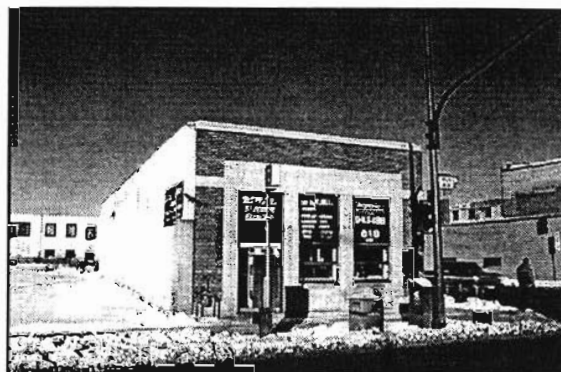
**Date:** 1946  
**Status:** Not in the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** One storey; solid brick on a concrete foundation; front façade of brick and limestone.

**Integrity:** no data

**Architect:** S.G. Davenport (Montréal)

**Contractor:** Commonwealth Construction Co.



**Use/Ownership:** The Royal Bank first opened a branch on this corner in 1921 after previously being located for a couple of years in the Bon Accord Block at northeast Main and Logan. After redevelopment of the site in 1946, the bank remained until the early 1980s. It was followed briefly by the Shanghai Restaurant, then by the Royal Pawn Shop.

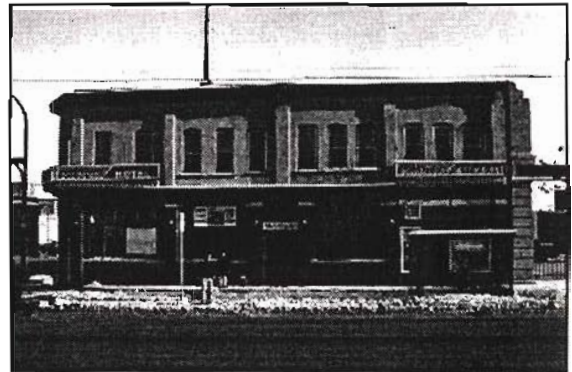
**Other Notes:** S.G. Davenport (1877-1956) served for a period as the Royal Bank's chief architect. He also co-designed the Bank of Canada in Ottawa (1937-38) with the Toronto firm of Marani, Lawson and Morris.

**631 MAIN STREET (E)  
White Rose (Occidental) Hotel**

**Date:** pre-1894  
**Status:** Not in the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** Two-storey front section, three-storey rear; both of solid brick construction on stone foundations; original façades finished with brick.

**Integrity:** Additions in 1903-04, 1907; numerous interior and exterior repairs and alterations over the years.



**Architect:** no data  
**Contractor:** no data

**Use/Ownership:** A hotel known as the Eureka, then as the California and the Ottawa, was developed at southeast Main and Logan in 1873. The property was leased to various hotel-keepers by owner Alexander Logan, the son of prominent Red River Settlement family and a four-term City mayor. During the early or mid-1880s, Logan built an additional structure immediately to the south of the hotel. He later (c.1890) divided the lot in half and sold the northern part on which the 1873 hotel stood. Renamed the White Rose, those premises were soon upgraded or totally rebuilt causing their assessed value to more than double between 1893 and 1894. This change occurred under the management of David Ripstein. He later acquired Logan's half of the property, returning the lot and its two buildings to single ownership. In 1901, he had a stone foundation installed under part of the complex. He subsequently invested in substantial interior alterations and a three-storey addition, built in 1903-04, to the rear along Logan. Ripstein was still managing the hotel when he died in 1923 at 72 years of age. He was succeeded by Max Bjalín (also spelled Bjloin) who remained in charge until the 1950s. Various commercial tenants occupied storefront spaces over the years, including pawn shops, a taxidermist, bicycle shop, tobacconists, barbers, clothing and dry goods merchants, a mail order house, and restaurants.

**Other Notes:** Architect H.S. Griffith designed the 1903-04 addition.

## **LOGAN TO HENRY**

This streetscape is primarily a post-1900 one although the age profile of its buildings stretches over a century from the 1880s to 1980s (Plates 33 to 35).

Six of the existing structures were erected in 1900-15. One is from the interwar years, another is from the mid-1950s, and the Salvation Army's Booth Centre was built in the latter 1980s. The remaining three buildings have pre-1900 dates of origin. The east side of the street has maintained physical continuity, but the west side has been broken by demolition of the Colonial Theatre (634-38 Main) in the mid-1970s and Stone Block (#648-50) in the latter 1980s, both after fires.

Scattered development existed on this streetscape as of the 1870s, including at least one boarding house and other residential uses. The early to mid-1880s saw construction of a number of small frame shops adjacent to the period's more substantial buildings — the Higgins Block, Foulds Block/Standard Theatre and Nickel Plate Hotel on West Main; and Walker House (Manwin Hotel) and the Albion Hotel on the east side.

Part of West Main south of Common (Henry) was cleared in 1886 when fire struck the Nickel Plate Hotel and several nearby shops. The resulting redevelopment produced the Phoenix Block at southwest Main and Common, the three-storey Baskerville hardware store (Plate 36), and later (1899) a two-storey building now numbered 652 1/2 Main.

Early occupants along the streetscape included butcher George Brown, blacksmith William Jennings, furniture dealer H.S. Maw, jobber A.H. Pulford, fruit seller George Anderson, stationer Mrs. M.A. Parmenter, and grocers R. and A. Weidman and the Bell Brothers. Among the businessmen who maintained a significant presence in both the pre- and post-1900 periods were liquor dealer J.E. Beliveau, grocer W.H. Stone, hardware merchants C.A. Baskerville and Nathan Rosenblat and his family, pawnbroker/loan agent Isaac Ripstein, and ticket and employment agent Alex Calder.

In 1900-15, many of the boom-time buildings on East Main gave way to new construction — namely, the five-storey Concordia (Bon Accord) Block at Logan, and the Calder Block, Alloway and Champion Bank, and two mixed-use buildings erected by the Zimmerman family further north. The west side of the street experienced two phases of redevelopment. Some one-storey commercial outlets were built early in the period, only to be later expanded and converted to new uses, or replaced by higher-density projects. The result was the appearance of three movie houses — the New Starland, Colonial and Rex (Regent) — plus the Stone Block and Club Hotel.

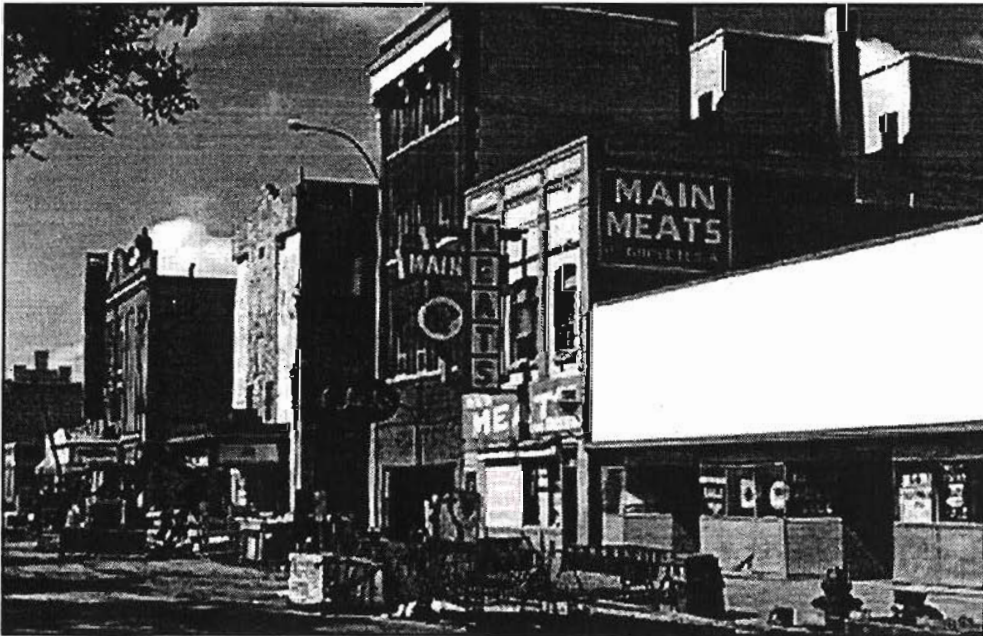
Four major physical changes followed in succeeding decades: The Starland was greatly expanded and upgraded (1921); the upper floors of the Concordia Block were removed (1935); the Higgins Block was replaced by an F.W. Woolworth Co. variety store (1954); and Booth Centre was built on the frontage once occupied by the Albion Hotel (demolished in 1972) and the 1903 Zimmerman Block. As well, the Club (Jack's) Hotel was converted in the latter 1970s to senior citizens' housing.

Post-1900 fixtures, in addition to the hotels, theatres and personalities already noted, included the Alloway and Champion Bank, various pawn shops, jewellery stores and other businesses operated separately by brothers Benjamin and William Zimmerman, pawnbroker/jeweller Max Ripstein, general merchant (later auctioneer) Max Steiman, the Royal Candy Kitchen, a Louis K. Liggett Co. drug store, the New Main, Fox and Kay's cafes, Sonia's Restaurant, the Schachters' Bon Accord clothing store, J. Mindess and Co. clothiers and jobbers, Mitchell Fabrics and its predecessors, clothier S. Faintuch, the City Billiard Parlour, Winnipeg Musical Supply, Ukrainian Booksellers and Publishers Ltd., the Oak Theatre (at northeast Main and Logan), Bill's Dyers and Cleaners, the Woolworth's store, and Main Meats and Groceteria. This part of North Main, like the area immediately south of Logan, also had a substantial resident population on the upper floors of most of its buildings.





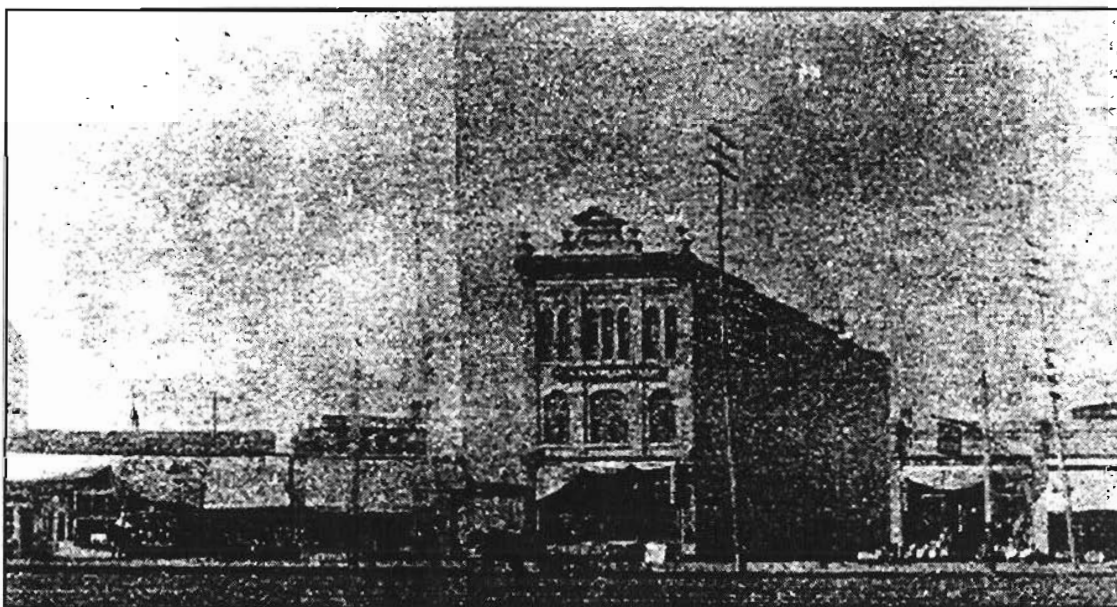
**PLATE 33:** West Main north of Logan, 1998. (D.M. Lyon, 1998)



**PLATE 34:** West Main south toward Logan, 1998. (D.M. Lyon, 1998)



**PLATE 35:** East Main south toward Logan, 1998. (D.M. Lyon, 1998)



**PLATE 36:** Part of West Main near Common (Henry), 1892. The three-storey Baskerville Building (1891) is right of centre. Part of the Phoenix Block is on the far right. (PAM, Photograph Collection, Winnipeg-Streets-Main Street Views, 1892, from a publication by Clarence E. Steele entitled Main Street Views, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1892.)

**620 MAIN STREET (W)  
F.W. Woolworth Co. Store**

**Date:** 1954  
**Status:** Not in the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** One storey; concrete block on a rubble-stone and concrete foundation; brick facing.

**Integrity:** Alterations in 1986; premises struck by fire in 1983.

**Architect:** F.W. Woolworth Co. Ltd., Toronto District Office (plans stamped by W.J. Wilson, engineer [Ontario] and Northwood, Chivers, Chivers and Casey of Winnipeg)

**Contractor:** no data

**Use/Ownership:** Woolworth's, a 'five-and-dime' variety store chain established in 1879 in Pennsylvania, was the initial and only occupant of this structure up to the early 1980s. Assorted discount and second-hand shops followed. The last major commercial occupant was Mostoways Ltd. The F.W. Woolworth Co. entered Winnipeg in 1912 and maintained two outlets on Portage Avenue before opening a branch at 600 Main in 1929.



**626 MAIN STREET (W)**  
**Starland Theatre**

**Date:** 1911 & 1921  
**Status:** In the Historical Buildings Inventory. Evaluated as a Grade III building, but not designated.

**Construction:** One storey; a superstructure of brick and reinforced concrete on a foundation of concrete and perhaps some brick; a front façade of cut stone, brick and two metal cornices. The 1921 work greatly expanded and upgraded the 1911 version of the theatre.



**Integrity:** Extensive interior alterations in 1967 following a fire and conversion to retail use.

**Architect:** A. and W.N. Melville (1911); George MacPherson (1921)  
**Contractor:** A. Jamieson (1911); Sutherland Construction Co. (1921)

**Use/Ownership:** A Starland Theatre operated on this part of Main from c.1908 through to the mid-1960s. The first version opened in converted retail premises and was known briefly as the Royal Theatre before being renamed. Adjoining redevelopment in 1911 produced the New Starland, followed in 1921 by substantial upgrading to bring 626 Main to its final physical form. In all instances, the property was owned by Andrew Robert McNichol, an insurance agent and investor who acquired a chain of local movie theatres in the 1910s and 1920s. Trustees of his estate continued to control the Starland until the 1940s when it became part of a group operated by Samuel Weiner and Western Theatres Ltd., including the nearby Rex (Regent) and Columbia (Fox) theatres. Post-1967 occupants of 626 Main were the Starland Department Store, Starland Flea Market, and a soup kitchen and outreach program operated by the Mission House Community Ministries Inc.

**635-45 MAIN STREET (E)  
Concordia (Bon Accord) Block  
(Mitchell Fabrics Store)**

**Date:** 1906  
**Status:** Not in the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** Originally five storeys; a superstructure of brick, steel and timber on a stone foundation; two façades finished with brick and Tyndall stone.  
**Integrity:** Upper floors removed in 1935; numerous exterior and interior alterations over the years.

**Architect:** John D. Atchison  
**Contractor:** William Grace Co. (Chicago and Winnipeg)

**Use/Ownership:** This retail-office-residential building was established by Arthur Matheson Fraser, a Scottish-trained lawyer who became an active local property investor and company director after he moved to Winnipeg from London, England in 1898. His Concordia Block was trumpeted by the Manitoba Morning Free Press as an example of the improved character of construction stimulated on North Main by development of the Canadian Pacific Railway's station-office-hotel complex (1904-06) on Higgins. However, the Concordia was not a complete success. It suffered from vacancies, especially in its office space, and from a frequent turnover of ground-floor retail tenants. Occupancy stabilized after the upper storeys were removed in the mid-1930s. Longer-standing uses included the Oak Theatre; Mitchell Fabrics Ltd. (the roots of which stretched back to a wholesale jobbing partnership known as Mindess and Gilfix in the 1920s); the New Main Cafe; J. Mindess and Co. clothing; and the Union Gospel Mission.

**Other Notes:** The 635-41 and 643-45 sections of this building have separate property assessment roll numbers.



**646 MAIN STREET (W)  
Rex (Regent/Epic) Theatre**

**Date:** 1912  
**Status:** In the Historical Buildings Inventory. Evaluated as a Grade II building, but not designated.

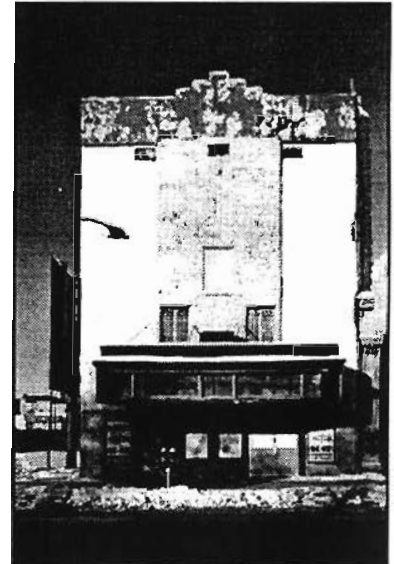
**Construction:** Two storeys; solid brick with a steel infrastructure and stone and concrete foundation.

**Integrity:** Original Coney Island façade covered by a false front in 1938; numerous interior alterations.

**Architect:** Alexander Melville  
**Contractor:** day labour

**Use/Ownership:** This theatre was developed by Robert Lorne Richardson, an Ontarian who helped organize the Winnipeg Sun and later the Winnipeg Tribune after he settled in the city in 1882. His family retained the property until 1929. It then passed to Samuel Weiner who equipped it as the first Main Street theatre — and the third in city after the Metropolitan and Capitol — to feature talking pictures. Weiner also held interests at various times in the adjacent Colonial and Starland and nearby Columbia (Fox) movie houses. He was followed at 646 Main by a succession of individual and corporate owners. Efforts were made in the 1970s to revive the facility as a specialty theatre for art films and retrospectives. By the mid-1980s, however, pornographic productions dominated the playbill. The building has been vacant since the late 1980s.

**Other Notes:** The Rex and Montréal's Corona Theatre are believed to be Canada's oldest surviving structures built exclusively as movie houses. The Rex also is an early example of a deluxe theatre designed to attract patrons through use of opulent fittings and other special amenities.



**649 MAIN STREET (E)**  
**Walker House**  
**(Windsor/Maple Leaf/National/Manwin Hotel)**

**Date:** c.1882  
**Status:** Not in the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** Two-storey front of frame and brick veneer construction on a stone foundation; two-storey solid brick main wing (1907) on a stone foundation with concrete footings and brick finish.

**Integrity:** Additions in 1904, 1907, 1962, 1963; numerous interior and exterior alterations over the years.

**Architect:** no data  
**Contractor:** no data



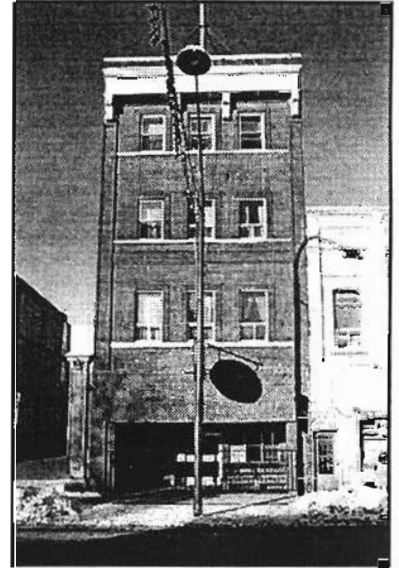
**Use/Ownership:** Built during or shortly after Winnipeg's 1881-82 realty boom, this hotel was first known as Walker House, then as the Britannia and the Windsor. Its commercial spaces were leased by jobbers, a clothing store, second-hand dealer, and steamship agent. In the 1890s, hardware merchant Nathan Rosenblat, who occupied a separate building immediately to the south, extended his operations into the Windsor. Shortly after the turn of the century, he installed a stone foundation under the building and began investing in a series of additions and other major alterations. He also eventually renamed the hotel as the Maple Leaf. Up to the early 1920s, he was assisted as manager by Charles B., Pearl and Alan (or Allan) Rosenblat, W.W. Whaley and David Hayes, among others. Charles later concentrated on the family's hardware business, while Nathan, then Alan directed the hotel through the 1930s. The premises subsequently became known as the Roosevelt, then as the National and the Manwin. The Rosenblats' hardware business remained until the mid- or late 1950s, followed by the Traders' Discount Corporation, Mel's Hardware, National Billiards, and restaurants.

**Other Notes:** Architect F.R. Evans redesigned the façade in 1904. The Eade Brothers planned the 1907 addition and interior alterations.

**652 MAIN STREET (W)  
Club (Jack's) Hotel**

- Date:** 1912  
**Status:** In the Historical Buildings Inventory.
- Construction:** Four storeys; solid brick on a concrete foundation with concrete footings; interior steel frame and concrete floors; red-brown brick façade with stone trim.
- Integrity:** Numerous interior alterations; altered ground-floor front; converted in 1977 to a senior citizens' residence.
- Architect:** Daniel B. Stilwell (a contractor)  
**Contractor:** as above

**Use/Ownership:** The Club was built for local hotelier W.W. Whaley. At the time, the land was owned by C.A. Baskerville, although it was soon transferred to A.N. McDonald. Baskerville was a hardware dealer who had been on North Main since the early 1880s and had built his own three-storey block at 652 Main in 1891. Assessment records indicate, however, that part of his building remained unfinished for most of the 1890s. Numerous hotel managers and owners followed Whaley. The business was renamed as Jack's Hotel in the latter 1940s. It continued to have a men's-only beer parlour until it was sold in 1975 and converted to a residence for single pensioners. That project was organized by Jack's Group Inc., a voluntary, non-profit agency formed by the Main Street Project and other social services to provide secure, independent shelter to older, low-income persons being displaced by building closures and demolitions in the Main Street area.





**652 1/2 MAIN STREET (W)  
Coltart Grocery Store  
(Beliveau Block)**

**Date:** 1899  
**Status:** Not in the Historical Buildings Inventory.

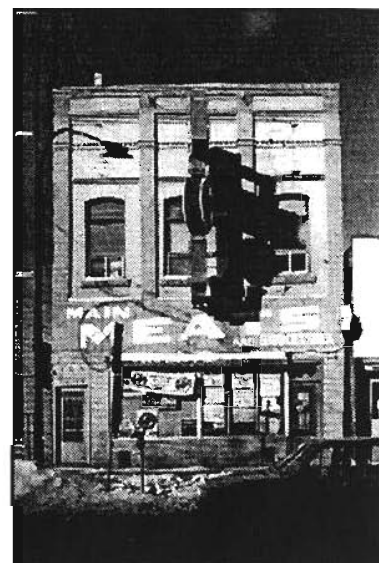
**Construction:** Two storeys; solid brick on a part stone and part concrete foundation; a brick façade with modest stone trim.

**Integrity:** Addition, 1912; numerous interior and exterior alterations over the years.

**Architect:** no data

**Contractor:** no data

**Use/Ownership:** Grocer John Coltart had worked on North Main for about a decade before he leased this building at the turn of the nineteenth century. The property was developed during the ownership of long-time hardware merchant, C.A. Baskerville, whose own shop was immediately south of Coltart's. By 1903, Baskerville had subdivided his lot and sold the northern portion containing 652 1/2 Main to liquor dealer Joseph E. Beliveau. The latter had been in the Higgins Block at northwest Main and Logan since the early 1890s. His business remained at 652 1/2 Main through to the prohibition era which began in mid-1916. Beliveau died soon after, but his estate continued to own this property for some years. Tenants included Royal Crown Soaps Ltd., the Young Women's Christian Association, dentists, physicians, clothier S. Faintuch, photographer S.W. Higgins, and residents. In the latter 1950s, a food store known as Main Meats and Groceteria took up the ground-floor space. It was one of three businesses, including Superior Sausage and Famous Meats, begun by Dr. George Chubaty, a native of the western Ukraine who came to Canada in 1950.



**656-60 MAIN STREET (W)  
Phoenix Block**

**Date:** c.1889  
**Status:** In the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** One storey; solid brick on a part stone and part concrete foundation.

**Integrity:** Additions in 1924 and 1928; fire repairs, 1956; numerous interior and exterior alterations over the years.

**Architect:** no data  
**Contractor:** no data



**Use/Ownership:** This building was developed by property owner John Freeman after a disastrous May 1889 fire cleared a considerable portion of West Main south of Henry. Early occupants included fruit dealer George Anderson, hardware merchant C.A. Baskerville, pawnbroker Isaac Ripstein, and realtor/ticket agent Alexander Calder. Similar uses persisted through to the early 1920s when the Ukrainian Booksellers and Publishers Ltd., soon joined by Winnipeg Musical Supply, became the principal occupants. Both businesses were started by Frank Dojacek who emigrated to Canada from Czechoslovakia in 1903 and within a few years began publishing books and newspapers in various East European languages. He died in 1951, but his firms remained at 656-60 Main through to the 1980s. A second-hand shop, then Auto-Rite Sales (custom vehicle supplies), followed.

**661 MAIN STREET (E)  
Calder (Kaplan) Building**

**Date:** 1912  
**Status:** In the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** Two storeys; solid brick on a part stone and part concrete foundation; brick walls (front section); cement block and brick walls (rear); brick front façade with some stone trim.

**Integrity:** Some storefront and interior alterations over the years.



**Architect:** no data  
**Contractor:** Nelson and Foster

**Use/Ownership:** This building was developed in two stages by Alexander Calder, the owner of a private employment and railway/steamship ticket agency which had operated from addresses on Main near Henry since the 1880s. Calder was an Ontarian who entered Winnipeg in 1879 to market carriages and agricultural implements. He later became a ticket, employment, insurance, and real estate agent, forming partnerships in 1898 with John McNaughton and in 1912 with one of his sons, Arthur B. Calder. The family's firm remained on site until the early 1950s. Prior to then (c.1940), the building's name was changed following the appearance of J. and B. Kaplan dry goods and the Kaplan Manufacturing Co. among its occupants. Other long-term tenants included the Hallberg Realty Co.; barrister C.T. Wyrzykowski; the Traders' Discount Corporation; Jimmy's Food Market; and various clothing wholesalers and manufacturers.

**Other Notes:** This was the first electrically heated commercial building in Winnipeg.

**667 MAIN STREET (E)  
Alloway and Champion Bank**

**Date:** 1905  
**Status:** Grade III, Buildings Conservation List

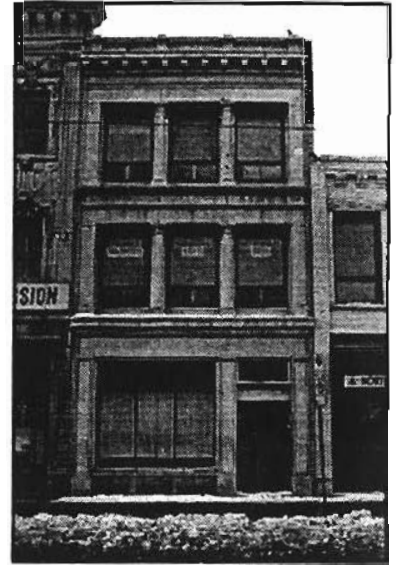
**Construction:** Three storeys; solid brick on a rubble-stone foundation with concrete footings; brick walls; a limestone front façade.

**Integrity:** Some interior and exterior alterations over the years.

**Architect:** James H. Cadham  
**Contractor:** Imperial Plumbing and Building Co.

**Use/Ownership:** William Forbes Alloway and Henry Thompson Champion, both veterans of Wolseley's 1870 Red River Expedition, formed one of the most successful private banking partnerships in Winnipeg. They also were among the earliest financial institutions to break out of Bankers' Row south of City Hall to establish a branch on North Main. Following Champion's death, Alloway sold the business to the Canadian Bank of Commerce in 1919. However, the original name was retained and Alloway continued to direct operations until his death in 1930. He also provided a major endowment to the Winnipeg Foundation. Other early occupants of 667 Main included residential tenants and Max Steinkopf, the first Jewish lawyer called to the Manitoba Bar. After the Bank of Commerce left the site in the mid-1930s, the ground floor was converted to restaurant use.

**Other Notes:** This is one of only a handful of pre-1914 buildings on North Main that were given stone façades.



**669 MAIN STREET (E)  
Zimmerman Block  
(Lighthouse Mission)**

**Date:** 1913  
**Status:** Grade II, Buildings Conservation List

**Construction:** Three storeys; solid brick on a stone foundation; an elaborately ornamented and prefabricated stone façade.

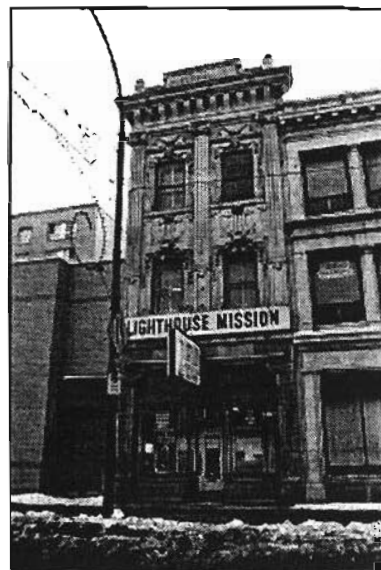
**Integrity:** Some alterations over the years.

**Architect:** Max Blankstein

**Contractor:** G. Martin

**Use/Ownership:** William Zimmerman, son of a Jewish refugee family, erected this block immediately to the north of another three-storey structure developed a decade earlier by his brother Benjamin (671-73 Main; demolished). The two buildings' upper floors were connected by stairs and fire doors, allowing them to be managed as a single rental property. William traded under the names S. and W., then L. and W. Zimmerman Ltd. with his eldest son Louis and with Samuel Zimmerman. The business evolved from a general and second-hand clothing store, to a loan office and pawn shop, then to a jewellery store and diamond brokerage. It remained at 669 Main until the early 1970s. It was succeeded by a temporary labour agency, then by the Lighthouse Mission Evangelistic Centre. The latter was organized in Winnipeg in 1911.

**Other Notes:** This is one of only a handful of pre-1914 buildings on North Main that were given stone façades.



## **HENRY TO THE SUBWAY**

The most intact part of this streetscape is West Main between Henry and Higgins. The buildings here date from the 1880s to 1910 (Plates 37 and 38). The east side of the block has been more affected by fire, site clearances and redevelopment (Plates 39 to 41). North of Higgins, only the 1890 Sproule Block/Savoy Hotel (Plates 42 and 43) remains out of an area once packed with hotels, shops and services, supplemented in 1911 by the Dominion Express Warehouse which also housed the Royal Alexandra's heating plant, laundry and staff residence.

Some commercial and residential uses appeared in this area in the 1870s. As well, an educational institution — Manitoba College — occupied a former W.G. Fonseca hotel at northwest Main and Common (Henry) from the mid-1870s to early 1880s.

As with most other parts of North Main, the first major period of urban development occurred in the early to mid-1880s following the arrival of the CPR. Small-scale frame shops were built, as were the Sutherland Block at northeast Main and Henry and several hotels, especially north of Fonseca (Higgins) adjacent to, and across from, the CPR Station on East Main.

Notable investments continued to take place in the 1890s, resulting in the Weir and Sproule blocks, plus some other commercial improvements, on the west side of the street, and new revenue properties erected by Lady Agnes Schultz and W.G. Fonseca on the east side. The latter two projects followed settlement of a long-standing legal challenge over ownership of lots on East Main south of Higgins. Once that issue was resolved by the Supreme Court of Canada in 1889, the successful parties, including Fonseca and Lady Schultz, were able to subdivide the land and invest with confidence in new, more substantial buildings. The Schultz project attracted the Dominion Bank as a tenant, the first branch of a chartered bank on North Main.

The post-1900 subway and CPR hotel/station projects stimulated further new construction (Plates 44 and 45). Much of West Main between Henry and Higgins was replaced in the 1900-15 period. To the north, the Sproule Block was converted to hotel use, other hotels that survived the subway project were expanded and upgraded, and some new commercial space and the Dominion Express complex were added to the streetscape. East-side developments included the new Cleland Block and Nugget Hotel, plus expansion and conversion of Fonseca Hall to the Alberta Hotel.

Among the long-standing early business personalities in this area were druggist J.C. Gordon, shoe merchant James Ryan, restaurateur William Magee, dry goods merchant James Dresser, grocer, contractor and municipal politician J.C. Sproule, jobber Elias Tapper, merchants Abraham and Moses Lechtzier, and hotel-keepers such as W.W. Carter and J.F. Campbell.

Post-1900 fixtures, other than the hotels and Dominion Bank, included the Weir family of hardware merchants; the Ultra, Gray's, Sun, and Regal drug stores; liquor wholesalers Ripstein and

Co. and Carey and Co.; clothiers Bernard Portigal and Abraham Marantz, along with the Standard and Staniloff clothing companies; the City Loan Office; confectioner Jack (Jacob) Weisman; the Bank of Montreal; Brighton Cafe; the Stoyko family's Alexander Cafe; the Blue Danube dance and banquet hall; Kossuth Sick Benefit Society; and Providence Church Goods.

Site redevelopment occurred on East Main between Henry and Higgins in the 1920s and 1940s in response to fire damage and physical obsolescence. As well, the Bank of Montreal made a substantial investment in 1948 to upgrade its branch at 676 Main (the former Gordon Block).

Demolition activity in the 1970s took the Nugget and Royal Alexandra hotels from the east side of the street and the former Oriental Hotel from West Main north of Higgins. The Dominion Express Warehouse followed in the 1980s. To date in the 1990s, demolitions have affected the Manor Hotel next to the Savoy, surviving fragments of the former Mansion House on East Main north of Henry, and another modest commercial building on the south side of the Cleland Block.



**PLATE 37:** West Main north of Henry, 1998. (D.M. Lyon, 1998)



**PLATE 38:** West Main toward Higgins, 1998. (D.M. Lyon, 1998)





**PLATE 39:** East Main north of Henry, 1998. (D.M. Lyon, 1998)



**PLATE 40:** East Main toward Higgins, 1998. (D.M. Lyon, 1998)



**PLATE 41:** Southeast Main and Higgins, 1998. (D.M. Lyon, 1998)



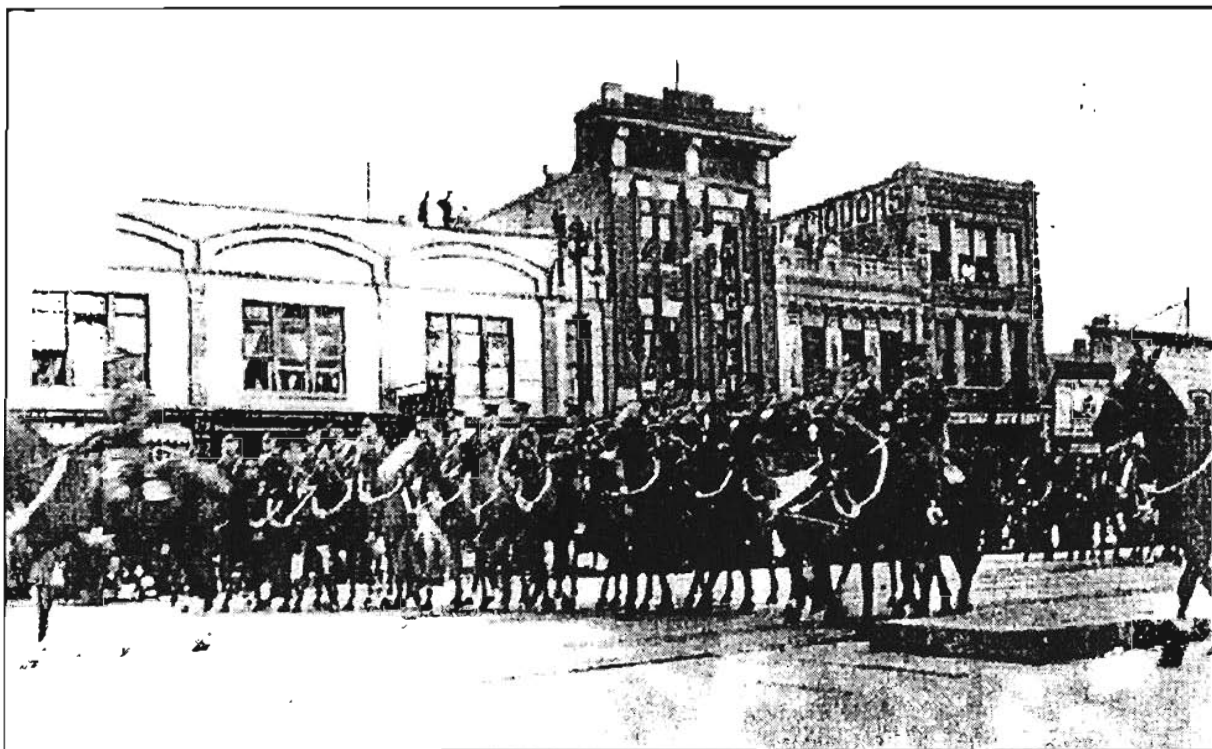
**PLATE 42:** Sproule Block/Savoy Hotel at northwest Main and Higgins, 1998. (D.M. Lyon, 1998)



**PLATE 43:** Historic sign on the north wall of the former Sproule Block, 1998. The sign advertises some of the block's early tenants. It was exposed when the Manor Hotel was demolished in the early 1990s. (D.M. Lyon, 1998)



**PLATE 44:** Main Street as viewed south from the subway, c.1904. (PAM, Photograph Collection, Winnipeg-Streets-Main, c.1904, #2)



**PLATE 45:** A part of East Main south of Higgins, 1915. Visible (left to right) are the Alberta and Nugget hotels, 709 Main (the former Dominion Bank), the Cleland Block, a small commercial building, and a corner of Mansion House. The scene is a parade of Fort Garry Horse troops en route to the CPR Station and Valcartier, Québec. (PAM, Photograph Collection, World War I, #121)

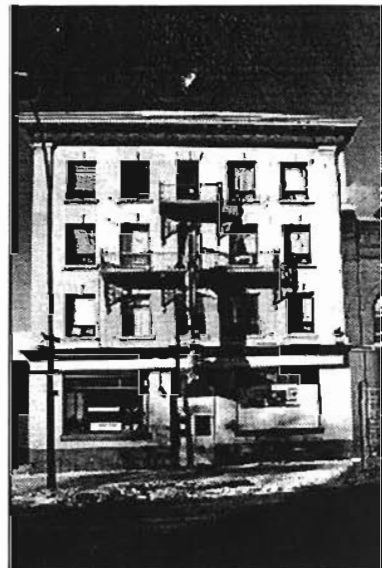
**662 MAIN STREET (W)**  
**Bell Hotel**

**Date:** 1906  
**Status:** In the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** Four storeys; solid brick on a stone foundation; brick front façade with brick, stone and metal detailing.  
**Integrity:** Numerous, mostly interior, alterations over the years.

**Architect:** Daniel Smith  
**Contractor:** A.B. Desrochers and Co.

**Use/Ownership:** Veteran hotelier Joseph Bernhart, who had been in Winnipeg since 1881, developed this building and leased its initial management to brothers Harry and Thomas Bell. They were succeeded in 1913 by Samuel Bronfman, a member of a Jewish immigrant family that during the 1910s and 1920s actively invested in the hotel and liquor trades, setting the foundation for what became an international liquor and entertainment enterprise known today as Seagram Co. Ltd. The Bell weathered prohibition (1916-28), the Great Depression and the physical and economic decline of North Main to remain among the handful of historic hotels that still operate on the avenue.



**666 MAIN STREET (W)  
Weir Block**

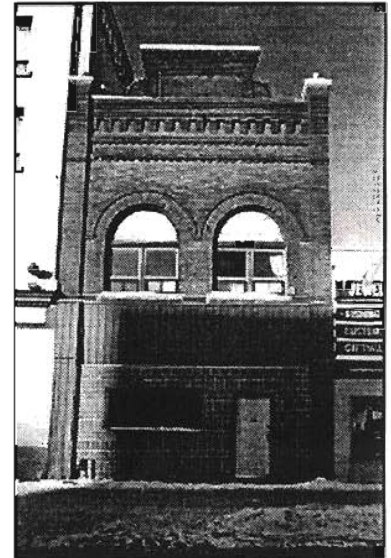
**Date:** 1899  
**Status:** In the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** Two storeys; solid brick on a stone foundation; red-brown brick façade with brick and stone detailing.

**Integrity:** Rear addition, 1929; some alterations over the years.

**Architect:** no data  
**Contractor:** no data

**Use/Ownership:** F.W. Weir and Hugh Jepson, hardware merchants operating under the name F.W. Weir and Co., developed and occupied this building. The firm was organized in 1893. Jepson left the partnership in 1905. His successors included J.M. Wilson, Henry Simmons and F.G. Weir. Later principals were Morley, Stanley and Fred W. Weir. By the early 1940s, Morley had emerged as the sole manager and a second branch of the store had been opened on Corydon Avenue. Weir Hardware remained at 666 Main until the early 1950s. Bell Hardware followed through to the 1980s. Over the years, the upper floor was occupied by physicians, realtors, a quarry company, an architect, the Atlas Athletic Club, and residential tenants.



## 668 MAIN STREET (W) Commercial Building

**Date:** 1909  
**Status:** Not in the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** One storey; solid brick on a concrete foundation and footings; original brick façade.

**Integrity:** Additions in 1912, 1919; some interior and storefront alterations over the years.

**Architect:** J.R. Clements (owner)  
**Contractor:** day labour



**Use/Ownership:** This was one of the more modest of several commercial buildings developed and/or owned by merchant-investor John Richard Clements on Main Street south and north of the subway from the 1880s onward. Clements was an Ontarian who entered Winnipeg via the U.S. in 1874 to market sewing machines, pianos and organs. He subsequently developed the Robertson Block, Brunswick Hotel, and West and East Clements blocks, among other premises on Main and other streets. A property management firm bearing his name continued to operate in the city into the 1940s, if not somewhat later. His tenants at 668-72 Main included Max Steiman's Busy Bee Jewellery store, the Corona Cafe and Sun Drug Co. The drug store remained until the 1950s, followed by Dee's Variety Store and Hallmark Jewellery. The (New) Corona Cafe continued until the 1980s and was succeeded by other restaurants. Clothiers, Athletes Wear Co. and the Midwest Wrestling Alliance also occupied some of the space over the years.

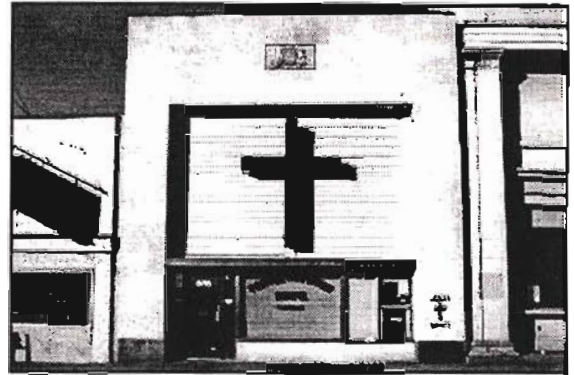
**676 MAIN STREET (W)  
J.C. Gordon (Gordon Mitchell) Building  
(Bank of Montreal)**

**Date:** 1904  
**Status:** Not in the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** Three storeys; solid brick on a stone foundation and footings; original front façade of brick.

**Integrity:** An addition, substantial interior alterations and the installation of a stone façade occurred in 1948.

**Architect:** Darling, Pearson and Over (Toronto and Winnipeg)  
**Contractor:** T. Powell; J. Girvin



**Use/Ownership:** Druggist J.C. Gordon, an Ontarian, began practising in Winnipeg in 1879. For many years, he maintained a shop on West Main just north of Higgins. Around the time that he built his own premises at 676 Main, he also formed a partnership with another pioneer pharmacist, W.J. Mitchell. Their firm went on to operate five retail outlets — three on Main, two on Portage — with a staff of 125 and a policy to have “new and fresh goods always, and not to sell trashy goods of any description....” The Louis K. Liggett Co. took over the enterprise in 1912. By 1920, it had left 676 Main to be succeeded by the Dominion Construction Co., Gelin Brothers wholesale dry goods, and B. Kaplan and Sons wholesale confectioners. The Bank of Montreal subsequently leased the premises in 1929 and continued as the principal occupant well into the 1980s.

**Other Notes:** The 1948 work was planned by Northwood and Chivers in conjunction with the Bank of Montreal's architect-in-chief. Malcom Construction Co. was the contractor.

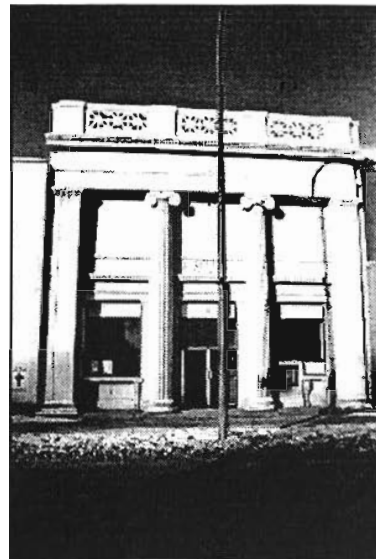


**678 MAIN STREET (W)**  
**Dominion Bank**

- Date:** 1907  
**Status:** In the Historical Buildings Inventory.
- Construction:** Two storeys; solid brick with a stone foundation on concrete footings; an ornamented terracotta front façade.
- Integrity:** Some, mainly interior, alterations over the years.
- Architect:** Howard C. Stone (Montréal and Winnipeg)  
**Contractor:** Claydon Brothers

**Use/Ownership:** The Toronto-based Dominion Bank was a relative latecomer to Winnipeg. After arriving in the city in 1897, it established offices and a banking hall at southwest Main and McDermot. It soon (March 1899) became the first chartered bank to open a branch on North Main. The premises at #709 were leased from Lady Agnes Schultz, widow of Sir John Christian Schultz, a prominent Manitoba politician and landowner. Despite initial plans to use its new building at 678 Main exclusively, the Dominion soon rented some of the space to non-bank tenants, including the Wallin and Johnson Land Co., several physicians, coal contractors Thomas Harland and Roland McMillan, and the Great North-Western (later the Canadian National) Telegraph Co. The bank was renamed the Toronto-Dominion after a 1955 merger. It stayed at 678 Main until the first half of the 1980s.

**Other Notes:** This is the only known building with a terracotta façade to be erected on Main between City Hall and the subway. It also is one of the few pre-1914 buildings on North Main to be planned by a non-resident architect. Stone (d.1918) also designed the Bank of Toronto, Walker Theatre and Stanley Block (619-25 Main; demolished).



**684 MAIN STREET (W)  
Murray/Clifton House  
(Reno/Empress/New Brunswick Hotel)**

**Date:** c.1882  
**Status:** In the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** Three-storey tiered front of frame and brick veneer construction on a stone foundation; a one-storey rear section (1913) of solid brick construction on a concrete foundation.

**Integrity:** Consecutive additions in 1911-14; numerous interior and exterior alterations and repairs over the years.



**Architect:** no data  
**Contractor:** no data

**Use/Ownership:** This hotel began its life at Martha and Henry as the Murray House. It was moved to Main and Higgins in 1885, overhauled and refitted, and then operated by W.W. Carter for several years as Clifton House. He was followed by Samuel Leach, then Chris O'Connell. The premises, which were renamed as Tecumseh House, then as the Reno and the Empress, had a distinctive Second Empire style, complete with a mansard roof and centre tower. In 1911, the main-floor verandah was turned into a brick-on-concrete addition that housed commercial rental space. Two years later, a one-storey brick pool room was added to the rear. Tenants over the years included tobacconists Joseph Pollock and H.W. Ditlove, telegraph offices, S.M. Golden and Co., the Golden Travel Service, jewellers, barbers, news-stand operators, and assorted restaurants. The hotel was closed in 1996 after its owner failed to comply with the City's fire safety by-law.

**Other Notes:** Architect C.S. Bridgman planned the 1911 verandah replacement. J.A. Hudon designed the 1913 pool room.

## 685 MAIN STREET (E) Commercial Building

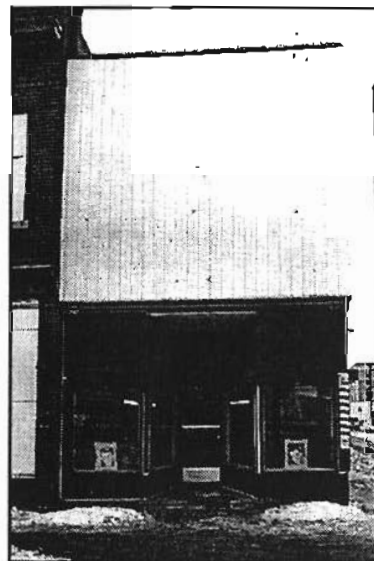
**Date:** pre-1886  
**Status:** Not in the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** Two storeys, frame construction on a stone foundation.

**Integrity:** Numerous interior and exterior alterations and repairs over the years, including fire repairs in 1916 and 1923.

**Architect:** no data  
**Contractor:** no data

**Use/Ownership:** This structure is a fragment of a two-storey retail/office block developed in the early or mid-1880s by Senator John Sutherland. It originally extended the full 20-metre (66-foot) frontage of his lot up to 693 Main. The property was subdivided in c.1896 into four parts under the separate ownership of various Sutherlands. Tenure became quite diversified over the next quarter-century as titles to these sections were sold to other parties. As well, a number of additions and alterations were made to parts of the complex over the years. It appears, however, that 685 Main survived a fire that resulted in redevelopment of the adjacent 687 and 691 Main in 1923. Occupants of #685 prior to 1900 included an auctioneer, grocer, Dominion Government immigration office, North-West Mounted Police recruiting office, barbers, jeweller J.R. Ormand, and jobber D. Gofine. Among the post-1900 tenants were the Portugal Brothers and several other clothiers, a wine wholesaler and, from the latter 1910s well into the 1960s, the City Loan Office Ltd. The Italia Barber Shop arrived in the 1970s after being displaced by fire from the nearby Midland Building (Albion Hotel).



**686 MAIN STREET (W)  
Sproule Block  
(Savoy Hotel)**

**Date:** 1890  
**Status:** In the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** Two storeys; solid brick on a stone foundation; brick façade with stone and brick detailing.

**Integrity:** Additions in 1905, 1911; numerous interior and exterior alterations over the years.



**Architect:** no data  
**Contractor:** J. Curl

**Use/Ownership:** The developer of this block, John C. Sproule, was a contractor, grocer and City alderman (1893-96). Among his early tenants were a provincial immigration office, dry goods merchant James Dresser, grocer A. Hallonquist, and some residents. Dresser remained for about a decade before moving to a shop a few doors to the north, while the government's immigration office became a Salvation Army shelter for transient men in the mid-1890s. Conversion to the Savoy Hotel occurred in c.1905 following the displacement of several older hostelries that stood on both sides of Main north of Higgins prior to construction of the subway and the Canadian Pacific Railway's Royal Alexandra Hotel (1904-06).

**Other Notes:** The 1911 addition was designed by Daniel Smith and built by Dunn and Wallace.

**687 MAIN STREET (E)  
Commercial Building**

- Date:** 1923  
**Status:** In the Historical Buildings Inventory.
- Construction:** Two storeys; solid brick on a concrete foundation and concrete footings; front façade of red-brown brick with stone and brick detailing.
- Integrity:** Fire damage, 1980.
- Architect:** Max Blankstein  
**Contractor:** Fraser and McDonald
- Use/Ownership:** This structure was developed by H. Werlinsky and Bernard Portigal, long-time clothing merchants on this part of Main. They occupied the building for a number of years, trading by the late 1920s under the name Quality Clothing Co. Later occupants included another established clothier, Abraham Marantz, whose business continued on site from the latter 1930s into the 1960s. One or more tenants followed. However, the building mostly has been vacant since the 1970s.



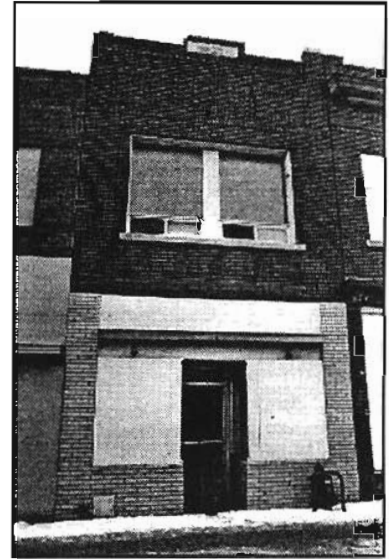
**691 MAIN STREET (E)**  
**Commercial Building**

**Date:** 1923  
**Status:** Not in the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** Two storeys; solid brick on a stone foundation; front façade of red-brown brick with stone and brick detailing.  
**Integrity:** Some alterations over the years.

**Architect:** no data (*possibly Max Blankstein*)  
**Contractor:** Fraser and McDonald

**Use/Ownership:** This structure was developed by M. Finkelman and occupied by a succession of retail and wholesale clothing merchants into the 1950s. Among them were J.S. Finkelman, Ben Adilman, S. Faintuch, Stan's Clothiers, Schachter's School Wear Co., and Bessborough Merchandisers Ltd. The Veteran's Jewellery and Novelty store subsequently took over the space after previously being located for several years at 703 Main. It continued at #691 into the 1980s, after which it appears the building has largely been vacant.



## **693 MAIN STREET (E) Commercial Building**

**Date:** 1946  
**Status:** Not in the Historical Buildings Inventory.

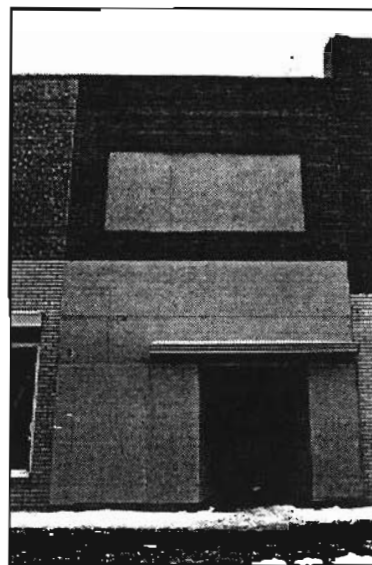
**Construction:** Two storeys; solid brick on a concrete foundation; a brick façade.

**Integrity:** no data

**Architect:** no data

**Contractor:** Pollack Construction Co.

**Use/Ownership:** As with 685 Main, a fragment of the two-storey frame Sutherland Block (1880s) may have remained at 691 Main until 1946. If so, the building was in a much-altered state, having undergone a 1911 addition, a new storefront in 1912, and various interior alterations over the years. The 1946 permit was intended to cover the rebuilding of the structure's first floor. However, a subsequent inspector's note stated that the building had totally collapsed and could not be rebuilt using frame construction. Owner Max Staniloff appears to have then redeveloped the site. His clothing wholesale business remained in the premises through to the mid-1960s. Other occupants included the Alexander Fur Co., National Mineral Co. of Canada, Helene Curtis Industries, Bessborough Merchandisers Ltd., and Schachter's School Wear Co.



**695 MAIN STREET (E)  
Commercial Building**

**Date:** 1946  
**Status:** Not in the Historical Buildings Inventory.

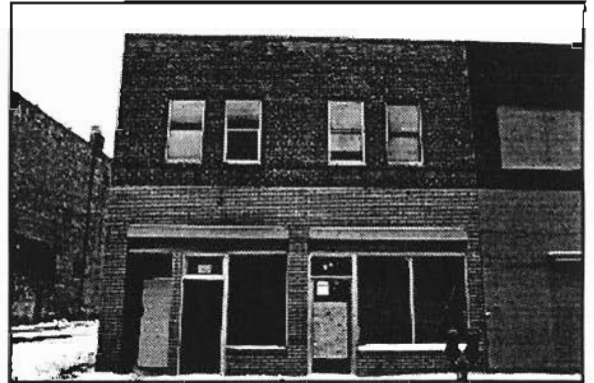
**Construction:** Two storeys; tile and brick walls on a concrete foundation; a brick façade.

**Integrity:** Front altered in 1960; some interior alterations.

**Architect:** Lloyd Finch

**Contractor:** no data

**Use/Ownership:** J. Halprin erected these premises in two stages in 1946. The early, if not original, occupants were Page Electric and Anders Construction at #695 and the Cohen family's Saan Stores Ltd. at #697. Subsequent tenants included an upholstery service; Main News; barristers N.M. and R.B. Zimmerman; Limoges Enterprises of Canada Ltd. (a nylon distribution company); and a photo studio. The site was vacated in the mid-1980s.





## 705 MAIN STREET (E) Cleland Block

**Date:** 1901  
**Status:** In the Historical Buildings Inventory. Evaluated as a Grade III building, but not designated.

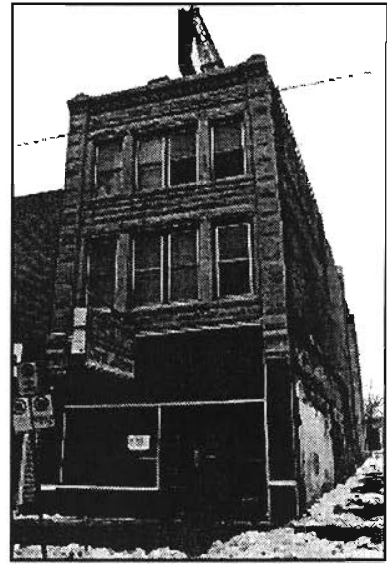
**Construction:** Three storeys; solid brick on a stone foundation; a front façade of rusticated native limestone.

**Integrity:** Numerous interior and exterior alterations over the years.

**Architect:** James McDiarmid  
**Contractor:** J. and J. McDiarmid; the Alsip Brothers

**Use/Ownership:** Liquor dealer David Cleland developed this block to accommodate his business and warehouse on the main floor and residential rooms on the upper storeys. Carey and Co. wholesale liquors took over the storefront space from c.1906 to c.1918. Later occupants included a confectioner and various restaurateurs, including the Stoyko family's Alexander Cafe from the mid-1930s to the 1980s. Residential use of the block declined after the 1950s. In 1989, the premises were purchased and occupied by the Siloam Mission, Korean Church of the Nazarene.

**Other Notes:** This is one of the few pre-1914 buildings on North Main with an original stone façade.



**709 MAIN STREET (E)  
Commercial Building**

**Date:** c.1898  
**Status:** Not in the Historical Buildings Inventory.

**Construction:** Two storeys; solid brick on a stone foundation.

**Integrity:** Addition, 1910; fire repairs, 1926; new brick front, 1960; other interior and exterior alterations over the years.

**Architect:** no data

**Contractor:** no data

**Use/Ownership:** This property was owned and developed by Lady Agnes Schultz, widow of Sir John Christian Schultz, a prominent Manitoba politician and landowner. It was occupied in March 1899 by a branch of the Dominion Bank, the first chartered bank to set up an outlet on North Main. After the Dominion built its own premises across the avenue at 678 Main in 1907, Charles Portigal operated a confectionery, then a clothing store at #709. He remained into the latter 1920s. Successors included A. Posner, Standard Clothing (1930s to 1950s), Fit-Well Clothing (mid-1950s to latter 1970s), Right Clothing of Winnipeg Ltd., and Fit-Rite Clothing and Footwear.



**Other Notes:** The 1910 rear addition was designed by architect John Schwab.

**713 MAIN STREET (E)  
Fonseca Hall  
(Alberta/Patricia Hotel)**

**Date:** 1896 & 1911  
**Status:** In the Historical Buildings Inventory. Evaluated as a Grade III building, but not designated.

**Construction:** Two-storey front (1896); three-storey rear wing (1911); both of solid brick construction on stone foundations; both originally faced with brick.

**Integrity:** Numerous interior and exterior alterations, especially to the 1896 section.

**Architect:** Walter Chesterton (1896); William Finland (1911)  
**Contractor:** 1896 contractor unknown; Saul and Irish (1911)

**Use/Ownership:** William Gomez Fonseca, a merchant who arrived in the Red River Settlement in 1860 and subsequently became a prominent businessman, politician and landowner, developed Fonseca Hall as a revenue property. Among his longer-standing tenants were Thomas Lee's Western Cigar Factory, barber Edward Prout and clothiers I. Cohen and Son. Six years after Fonseca's death, a large rear addition was built and the complex was converted into the Alberta Hotel. This facility was managed initially by Walter Waddy, then briefly by Harry Bronfman, one of the members of a Jewish immigrant family that went on to establish Seagram Co. Ltd., a contemporary international liquor and entertainment enterprise. A number of managers followed; the hotel's ownership also changed frequently from the mid-1940s onward. Long-time occupants of the building's commercial space included confectioner Jack (Jacob) Weisman and the Brighton Cafe.



**725 MAIN STREET (E)**  
**(also 206-08 Higgins Avenue)**  
**Regal Drug Store**

**Date:** 1949  
**Status:** Not in the Historical Buildings Inventory.  
**Construction:** One storey; masonry construction.  
**Integrity:** no data  
**Architect:** Lloyd Finch  
**Contractor:** no data

**Use/Ownership:** A drug store known as Ultra Druggists, then as Gray's, occupied a frame building at southeast Main and Higgins from c.1911 into the 1940s. Redevelopment of the site was undertaken by Regal Drugs Ltd., a pharmacy managed by Harry, then by Myer Shapiro through to the 1970s. Later uses included the Our Place - Chez Nous Drop-In Centre.

