

**123 DONCASTER STREET – MANITOBA AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING & POWER HOUSE**

Samuel Hooper (1905)



By 1900, Manitoba was in the midst of an unprecedented settlement and development boom based on a blossoming agricultural economy. To further encourage productivity and diversification, government officials recognized the need to support agricultural research and education.

In 1894, the Manitoba Department of Agriculture began a dairy school, followed in 1903-1904 by establishment of the Manitoba Agricultural College to provide a broad range of courses in crop and livestock production, farm management and, eventually, home economics. Two undeveloped river lots (47 hectares) were selected for this purpose south of the Assiniboine River and west of Winnipeg in an area later incorporated as the Town of Tuxedo.

When the College officially opened in November 1906, it was the first of its type in the West and only the third such institution in Canada. Full-time and short-course enrolment from across the Prairies grew quickly, resulting in the need for additional teachers, departments and land for expansion.

Unable to secure sufficient property in Tuxedo, the Province opted in 1910 to acquire 243 hectares

for a second campus in St. Vital (later known as Fort Garry). A substantial investment was required to prepare for the College's move to this site in 1913. A decade later, legislation was passed to merge the College with the University of Manitoba, followed in the 1930s to 1960s by relocation of various university faculties and affiliated colleges from central Winnipeg to the Fort Garry campus.

The College was succeeded at the Tuxedo site in 1914 by the Manitoba School for the Deaf. However, its tenure was unexpectedly short-lived. By 1917, the facilities had been acquired by the Dominion government for use as a convalescent and rehabilitation centre for World War I veterans. This military hospital was later re-established across the river at Deer Lodge, enabling the campus to be converted to the army's main Winnipeg area base, first called Tuxedo Cavalry Barracks and then Fort Osborne Barracks.

These rapid changes in ownership and function resulted in substantial but not irrevocable alterations to the original site plan and buildings designed for the Agricultural College by Samuel Hooper, Provincial Architect. Indeed, this project resulted in Manitoba's first coordinated campus scheme and served as a precursor for the layout, orientation and building types used at Fort Garry.

The English-borne Hooper studied architecture in his uncle's office before immigrating to Canada in 1869. He worked as a stone carver in London, Ontario for several years and later resettled in Emerson, Manitoba. In 1881, he formed a partnership with David Ede, Winnipeg's leading monument maker. Hooper continued in this trade until 1895 when he returned to architecture. He was appointed Provincial Architect in 1904, the first position of its type in the West, and continued in this office until his death in 1911.

Hooper initially designed five structures for the College - a main building with classrooms, offices, assembly room and dormitory; a dairy building; stock judging amphitheatre and stables; power house; and residence for Principal W.J. Black. Construction began in 1905, followed in 1906-1911 by work on a horticulture building; an engineering and mechanical facility; Roblin Hall, a new dormitory; and reconstruction of the dairy building after a 1909 fire.

These facilities were placed in a formal Edwardian setting on the northerly six hectares of fenced

College property overlooking the river. Turning north off Piper Boulevard (later Tuxedo Avenue), visitors entered the southern end of the campus through stone gate posts and travelled along a lozenge-shaped gravel driveway to the Administration Building at the opposite end. The driveway enclosed spacious open grounds and was flanked by ancillary buildings. To the south of Piper, a second set of gates marked access to the stock judging pavilion, barns and farmer's cottage.

The College buildings were remodelled to accommodate the School for the Deaf, but major changes awaited the army's arrival. Under the Canadian Military Hospitals Commission, existing facilities were converted, and temporary structures of wood frame and stucco were erected, to provide wards for 600 patients, offices, classrooms, shops and staff quarters. As well, the grounds were altered for outdoor sports. Construction of other facilities continued into the late 1920s.

In all, the military added some 19 buildings to the campus, eliminating much of the site's open space to the north of Piper. While the external designs of the main College structures were preserved, the stock judging pavilion and other farm buildings were demolished in the mid-1920s.

The army had outgrown Fort Osborne by the 1950s. Development of a new base (Kapyong Barracks) began on property to the south of the original complex. Several provincial government services moved to Fort Osborne as buildings were vacated by the military. The Province regained full occupancy of the site in 1968. Roblin Hall, the College's engineering and mechanical building and most military structures subsequently were demolished. Ten buildings were retained, five each from the College and military eras. The demolitions enabled restoration of the campus layout by re-opening the central grounds. In 1997, the complex reopened as the Asper Jewish Community Campus.

The College's Administration Building was clearly intended to dominate the Tuxedo campus in both form and function.

The Italian Palazzo styling of this three-storey building is distinguished by an octagonal cupola and a double-tiered stone portico. The cupola has a metal roof and walls lined with large windows. The portico's first tier is supported by Ionic order uprights; above, more dominant Doric order

columns appear under a classical metal pediment. A stone balustrade outlines the second-floor balcony, while the pediment is adorned with a circular opening, running moulds and scrollwork.

The structure, which was built in 1905-1906 for \$102,000, has a raised basement faced with rough and smooth-cut stone up to the first-floor windows. This rusticated effect continues with a series of horizontal recesses in the main-floor masonry. The yellow brick walls rise to a stone frieze, metal cornice and low-pitched roof with metal sheathing. While the front (south) façade is flat, the other elevations contain brick pilasters. To the rear is a less elaborate, one-storey stone portico and a metal pediment at the roof-line.

Fenestration is provided by single rectangular windows. Ornamental details include stone and brick courses that wrap around the front and side facings, stone sills, some pedimented openings and sculptured stone over the main entrance.

While numerous alterations have been made to the building's interior, the original exterior is largely intact (although a portion of the rear of the building is now on the interior of a large addition).

The Power House, also built in 1905-1906, is located immediately to the east of the Administration Building, this utilitarian structure provided steam heat to the Tuxedo complex. Of fireproof construction, it has solid brick and stone walls on a stone foundation. Its projecting two-storey, gable-roofed centre section is flanked on the north and south sides by one-storey, shed-roofed wings containing single dormers. The large brick smoke stack that rose from an addition to the north side has been removed.

The front (west) façade of the centre section has a rough-cut stone base. Its double entrance door is highlighted by fluted Doric pilasters and a plain dressed entablature with a date stone and triangular head. Above, continuous stone sills mark a quartet of windows. A rough-cut stone frieze leads to the metal cornice, while a circular stone element adorns the gable. The austere wings are relieved by brick belt courses and stone cornices which end in floriated scrolls.

Construction of a second power house and attached laundry was completed in 1921. Generally sympathetic to the original in materials, scale and design, this one-storey building has a larger brick stack, a gable roof with wide bracketed wooden eaves, and large industrial windows with segmental brick heads.

Elements of the building that would require approval if alterations were planned are:

Administration Building:

Exterior-

- Large 3½-storey brick and stone building completed in 1906 on axis with the formal central gates at the south end of a large open space on the north side of Tuxedo Avenue west of Doncaster Street with its front façade facing an open field, its north façade facing Wellington Crescent, its east façade facing Doncaster Street and its west façade facing Edgeland Boulevard;
- The symmetrical front (south) façade with its rusticated stone clad raised basement, wide smooth-cut stone bands, light coloured brick laid with deep grooves on the ground floor, wide stone cornice separating the second and third floors, stone belt course as continuous sills for the third storey windows, rectilinear window openings throughout, centrally placed double-tiered stone entrance portico with Ionic order columns on the lower level supporting a curved pediment with carved stone detailing and second level with Doric order columns under a classically-detailed metal pediment with a circular opening, running moulds and scrollwork and stone balustrade, and low-pitched roof with complete entablature with metal cornice and cupola;
- The symmetrical north façade with its stone clad raised basement, brick superstructure with stone accenting and windows in rectilinear openings and one-storey stone entrance portico with Doric order columns; and
- The east and west façades with their stone clad raised basement, brick superstructure with stone accenting and windows in rectilinear openings.

Interior-

- Coved ceiling on main floor.

Power House (1906):

Exterior-

- One-storey brick and stone structure with its front façade facing the original Administration Building, its north façade facing Wellington Crescent, its east façade facing Doncaster Street and its south façade facing an open field; and
- Its west façade with its central, projecting gable area with fluted Doric pilasters, plain entablature and carved stone door head with the year “1905”, windows in rectilinear openings and gable ends with stone capping and floriated stone scrolls at the four corners.

Interior-

- None

Power House (1921):

Exterior

- One-storey brick and stone structure, its north façade facing Wellington Crescent, its east façade facing Doncaster Street and its south façade facing an open field and its west façade covered by an addition; and
- Three uncovered façades featuring brick walls with stone accenting, windows in arched openings and wide bracketed wooden eaves on the east slope of the gable roof.

Interior

- None