

## 128 JAMES AVENUE – DELAVAL WAREHOUSE

*Carter-Halls-Aldinger Company, 1912*



This three-storey structure, completed in 1912, was the first Winnipeg headquarters for the DeLaval Company, suppliers of cream separators and dairy supplies. The DeLaval cream separator revolutionized the dairy industry in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century by allowing farmers to process their own product at the farm and the company's national growth necessitated a presence in Winnipeg, Western Canada's premier city.

The building's front (north) façade features dark brick walls with stone and concrete accenting. Large, squared window openings give the interior spaces ample natural light and ventilation. A modest smooth stone belt course visually divides the bottom floor from the top two levels. This main façade has seen extensive alteration, including window unit replacement, closure of the original west entrance and the conversion of the east end interior loading dock into the main entrance.

The west wall is a party wall and the lower portion of the east wall is covered by a one-storey, concrete block addition completed in 1979. The rear façade faces the back lane (Elgin Avenue) and includes a loading door at its east end, open metal fire escape and newer window units set in the original arched window openings with radiating brick heads on each floor.

The finishes and layout of the original interior have been lost due to the building's conversion into office space (ground floor and part of basement) and residential condominiums throughout the rest of the building.

The nationally renowned construction firm Carter-Halls-Aldinger Company was responsible for both the design and construction of this warehouse. Founded in 1907 by William Henry Carter (1874-1962), a contractor; Frank Ernest Halls (1872-1950), a fire-proofing expert; and Albert Henry Aldinger (ca.1876-1942), a civil engineer, the company grew to one of Western Canada's major builders. Their list of projects is extensive, including the McArthur (later Childs) Building, 211 Portage Avenue (1909 – demolished); Confederation Life Association Building, 457 Main Street (1912); the Winnipeg Electric Railway Building, 213 Notre Dame Avenue (1912-1913); the Manitoba Free Press Building, 300 Carlton Street (1913); and the Olympia (later Marlborough) Hotel, 331 Smith Street (1913). The firm ended in 1944.

Contextually, this warehouse was another example of local capital being used to supply the demand for modern warehouse space by Eastern Canadian firms looking to establish regional headquarters in the West.

The location of this warehouse is also important historically. The back lane originally held a spur line of the Winnipeg Transfer Railway, a crucial tool that allowed many of the country's largest businesses to connect to the transcontinental railway lines to the north and the south, simplifying the shipping of goods in and out of their warehouses.

The back lane became known as "Hell's Alley," and was the site of a violent clash between strikers and mounted North West Mounted Police Officers during the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike. Two strikers died, 27 were injured and 94 arrested on June 21<sup>st</sup>, "Black Saturday."

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

Exterior:

- Three-storey brick and stone warehouse with raised rusticated stone basement with its primary façade facing north on James Avenue
- Symmetrical main (north) façade with large entrance openings at its east and west ends framing the large ground floor door and windows in openings, smooth cut stone belt course at sill level of second storey windows, rectangular paired windows in openings with stone sills on the second and third floors separated by brick pilasters with carved stone capitals, concrete diamond accents on the upper floors and flat roof
- Rear (south) façade with a raised loading door at its east end, open metal fire escape and arched windows on all three floors
- Unadorned east masonry load-bearing wall

Interior:

- Heavy timber mill structural system
- West masonry load-bearing demising wall