

272 MAIN STREET – SCOTT BLOCK

*James H. Cadham, 1904 & 1905(reconstruction after fire);
Pratt & Ross, 1915 (reconstruction after fire)*



This large retail/office block was built in 1904, becoming another of the fine turn-of-the-century buildings along Main Street, Winnipeg's premier thoroughfare at the time.

The front (east) façade features a recessed, centrally-located main entrance framed by large display windows and supported by metal columns. A modest metal cornice visually separates the ground floor from the upper storeys, four in total, clad in rough cut red (Port Wayne) sandstone. The middle three floors are interrupted by paired square headed windows while the top floor features two large arched openings flanking another set of square headed windows in the centre of the façade. The side elevations (constructed of common clay brick) are plainly adorned with modestly arched windows and window wells. The rear (west) façade includes loading and entrance doors and arched windows on all levels.

This building has suffered two major fires: one in June 1905 after a lightning bolt struck the building and the resulting fire completely destroyed the rear and side walls of the structure and all of its contents; and another on March 23, 1914, which again completely destroyed the side and rear walls and all the contents. The 1915 reconstruction added an internal concrete frame to which the existing exterior walls were attached, left off the original top storey and added window wells to the north and south walls starting at the second floor.

Architect for the original building was James H. Cadham (1850-1907), a prolific local designer responsible for a large number of warehouses in the Exchange District and other structures throughout the city. The 1915 reconstruction, based on the original plans, were overseen by local design partnership Ralph Benjamin Pratt (1872-1950) and Donald Aynsley Ross (1877-1956), who were also well-known architects in the city.

The building was the long-time headquarters of the Scott Furniture Company, founded in 1874 by Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Scott (1841-1915). After his death, Fred W. Scott, a son, took over control of the company and ran the business for many years, occupying this building into the 1930s. Tenants in the upper storey offices have been extremely varied, from dentists to lumber dealers and insurance agents to oil companies.

For many years, the original design of this building was hidden by metal cladding added to “modernize” the exterior. Recent renovations have removed this cladding and brought the front façade back, including the recessed entrance. The interior is being completely upgraded.

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

Exterior:

- The east facing structure with main façade fronting Main Street
- Irregular plan with window wells on the 2nd -5th floors on the north and south façades
- The primary (east) façade featuring roughly dressed red (Port Wayne) sandstone, regularly placed square headed window openings on the second to fourth floors, and square headed and arched window openings on the fifth floor
- Recessed main (east) storefront entrance with ornate metal (cast iron?) columns flanking the doorway

- Details throughout including regularly placed arched windows with roughly dressed limestone sills, loading doors on the rear (west) façade, etc.