

**238 PRINCESS STREET – COCKSHUTT PLOW COMPANY BUILDING**  
*S. Frank Peters, 1902 & 1906*



This seven-storey brick and stone warehouse was built as a four-storey structure in 1902, just four years later the upper three storeys were completed, another of the many examples in Winnipeg's warehouse district of a company building a modern warehouse early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, only to be forced to expand the facility as the business it housed expanded.

The Cockshutt Plow Company was formed in Brantford, Ontario in 1877 and was at the cutting edge of farm equipment design. Incorporated in 1883, it opened its Winnipeg branch eight years later. It operated out of the Princess Street warehouse until 1951 when it moved to a new facility on Notre Dame Avenue. J. Werier and Company presently occupies the building and has been connected with it since the early 1970s.

The original four-storey building included a rusticated stone base and a common clay brick superstructure. The arched main entrance is located atop a short flight of stairs and windows in rectilinear openings are located on the ground, second and third floors. The original top floor was finished with arched window openings and modest brick cornice.

To this was added three more storeys, continuing the materials of the original warehouse, but considerably altering the design, originally all window openings were small and arched, with stone lug sills and keystones, as are still extant on the north façade. At some point in its history, the upper floor windows of the east façade were heavily altered and enlarged to their present state. The addition floors were topped by a heavy overhanging metal cornice.

The windowless south façade is hidden except for the upper three storeys by the neighbouring warehouse and features painted commercial signage. The rear (west) façade features a raised stone foundation wall, two large raised metal loading doors and a metal fire escape. The second to fourth floors have paired windows in arched openings with stone lug sills while the upper three floors include the same short arched window openings with keystones found on the upper floors of the north façade. Alterations to the main façades have not been extensive except for the upper floors of the east façade.

The warehouse is a fine example of the Romanesque Revival style, very popular in warehouse districts throughout North America from the 1880s well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Key elements of the style found in this building include the use of brick and stone, corbelled brick, flat roofline and arched openings. Its use of the mill structural system - square timber beam and post support network where beams were attached to the solid brick exterior walls and covered by wood plank flooring – is also common in Winnipeg's warehouse district.

The warehouse and addition were designed by S. Frank Peters (1847-1926), a local architect born in England and educated in Ontario. He set up a Winnipeg office in 1892 and by 1902 it included his brother, W.A. Peters. Over his career, he designed many fine buildings, including many in the warehouse district: Ashdown Warehouse, 167 Bannatyne Avenue, built 1896

(Grade II); F.W. Alloway Building, 179 McDermot Avenue, built 1898 (Grade III); McClary Block, 185-187 Bannatyne Avenue, built in 1899 (Grade III); and Miller & Richard Type Foundry Building, 121 Princess Street, built 1904 (Grade III).

Contractors for the original warehouse were Robert Watson and John Girvin.

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

Exterior-

- Seven-storey brick and stone structure with flat roof with its main (east) façade facing Princess Street, its north façade facing Alexander Avenue, its south façade mostly hidden by a neighbouring building and its rear (west) façade facing a back lane;
- The main (east) façade with its rusticated stone base with rectilinear basement window openings, central raised entrance in arched opening, display windows on the ground floor, modest cornice, upper three floors with five bays of windows, rectilinear on the lower two levels and arched on the fourth floor, brick and stone cornice and top three floors with five bays of windows in rectilinear openings and complete entablature with a metal-clad cornice at roofline;
- The north façade with rusticated stone base with rectilinear basement window openings, rectilinear window and loading door openings on the ground floor and cornice above, bays of windows in rectilinear openings on the second and third floors, arched window openings on the fourth floor, cornice above, small, arched window openings with keystones on the fifth and sixth floors and small windows in rectilinear openings on the top floor and complete entablature with a metalclad cornice at roofline;
- The south façade hidden except for top three floors, windowless with painted signage; and
- The rear (west) façade with rusticated stone base with rectilinear basement window openings, two large raised metal loading doors and a metal fire escape, second to fourth floors with paired windows in arched openings and the upper three floors with small, arched window openings and an unadorned roofline.

Interior-

- Examples of the heavy timber construction;
- Cast iron columns on main floor; and
- Millwork in the main (east) entrance foyer.