

Authority: Toronto East York Community Council Report No. 6, Clause No. 44,  
as adopted by City of Toronto Council on July 24, 25 and 26, 2001  
Enacted by Council: July 26, 2001

**CITY OF TORONTO**

**BY-LAW No. 678-2001**

**To designate the property at 511 King Street West (American Watch Case Company Building) as being of architectural and historical value or interest.**

WHEREAS authority was granted by Council to designate the property at 511 King Street West (American Watch Case Company Building) as being of architectural and historical value or interest; and

WHEREAS the *Ontario Heritage Act* authorizes the Council of a municipality to enact by-laws to designate real property, including all the buildings and structures thereon, to be of historical or architectural value or interest; and

WHEREAS the Council of the City of Toronto has caused to be served upon the owners of the land and premises known as 511 King Street West and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation, Notice of Intention to designate the property and has caused the Notice of Intention to be published in a newspaper having a general circulation in the municipality as required by the *Ontario Heritage Act*; and

WHEREAS the reasons for designation are set out in Schedule "A" to this by-law; and

WHEREAS no notice of objection to the proposed designation was served upon the Clerk of the municipality;

The Council of the City of Toronto HEREBY ENACTS as follows:

1. The property at 511 King Street West, more particularly described in Schedule "B" and shown on Schedule "C" attached to this by-law, is designated as being of architectural and historical value or interest.
2. The City Solicitor is authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be registered against the property described in Schedule "B" to this by-law in the proper Land Registry Office.
3. The City Clerk is authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be served upon the owners of the property at 511 King Street West and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation and to cause notice of this by-law to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the City of Toronto as required by the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

ENACTED AND PASSED this 26th day of July, A.D. 2001.

CASE OOTES,  
Deputy Mayor

JEFFREY A. ABRAMS,  
Acting City Clerk

(Corporate Seal)

**SCHEDULE “A”  
HERITAGE PROPERTY REPORT**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report is the “Long Statement of Reasons for Designation” for the designation of the property at 511 King Street West (American Watch Case Company Building) under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. It contains the Heritage Property Profile, as well as sections on the Historical Occupancy, Architectural Description and Significance of the property. The introduction, below, forms the “Short Statement of Reasons for Designation”, intended for publication.

The property at 511 King Street West is recommended for designation for architectural reasons. The first phase of the American Watch Case Company Building was completed in 1893 according to the designs of Toronto architect G. W. Gouinlock who designed a complementary addition in 1910.

The American Watch Case Company Building incorporates the rusticated stone finishes and round-arched motifs popularized in the Romanesque Revival style of the late 19th century. The front (north) office portion of the building, designed in two phases, is included in the Reasons for Designation. Rising four stories from a stone base with window openings, the building is constructed with brick and cast iron, clad with brick and stone, and trimmed with brick, stone, and wood. The four-bay east and west sections display complementary designs, with the west portion slightly wider than the east. Rusticated stone piers organize the first-storey openings. The main entry, located in the east bay, features double doors with a flat transom. Seven large commercial display windows, divided by half-columns with decorated capitals, have panelled aprons. Above a wood cornice, sandstone rosettes separate round arches that spring from brick piers to organize the flat-headed window openings in the second and third stories. The second- storey openings have tripartite transoms and stone lintels and sills, while those in the third floor have multi-paned fanlights, stone sills, and brick corbels and voussoirs. The fourth floor displays double window openings divided by piers and linked by a continuous sill and a band course. Above corbelled brickwork and an extended and decorated wood cornice, a stepped brick parapet with copper trim extends the wall. A brick chimney rises from the flat roof. The west wall abuts the neighbouring building, while the east elevation has flat-headed window openings with stone sills. The rear (south) wing and its extensions are not included in the Reasons for Designation.

The property at 511 King Street West is located on the south side of the street in the block between Spadina Avenue and Portland Street. Designed by an architect of national significance, the American Watch Case Company Building is an excellent example of Romanesque Revival styling and an important feature in the King-Spadina neighbourhood as it emerged as the city’s industrial centre at the turn of the 20th century.

## 1.1 HERITAGE PROPERTY PROFILE

**AMERICAN WATCH CASE COMPANY BUILDING**

ADDRESS:	511 King Street West (south side of King Street West, between Spadina Avenue and Portland Street)
WARD:	20 (Trinity-Spadina)
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY:	King-Spadina
HISTORICAL NAME:	American Watch Case Company Building
CONSTRUCTION DATE:	1893
ORIGINAL OWNER:	American Watch Case Company of Toronto Limited
ORIGINAL USE:	Industrial (offices and factory)
CURRENT USE: *	Commercial (* <i>this does not refer to permitted use(s) defined by the Zoning By-law</i> )
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/CRAFTSMAN:	G. W. Gouinlock, architect
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE:	Romanesque Revival
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION:	Brick and cast iron construction with brick, stone, and wood detailing
ALTERATIONS:	1910, west and south additions; date unknown, original (north) doors replaced
HERITAGE CATEGORY:	Category B
RECORDER:	Kathryn Anderson, Heritage Preservation Services:
REPORT DATE:	February 2001

## 2.0 HISTORICAL OCCUPANCY AND SIGNIFICANCE:

## 2.1 KING-SPADINA NEIGHBOURHOOD

Following the establishment of the Town of York in 1793 as the capital of the Province of Upper Canada, the lands west of the townsite were retained as a military reserve. In 1797, government administrator Peter Russell extended the community west to Peter Street to create New Town. The latter area developed as a select residential enclave where the official residence of the Lieutenant-Governor, Upper Canada College (1831), and the third Parliament Buildings (1832) were also located. When the City of Toronto was incorporated in 1834, the western limit of the municipality was redrawn at Bathurst Street. In 1837, William Hawkins prepared a plan of a further portion of the military reserve, extending the existing street pattern west from New Town and introducing new streets and squares.

In the 1850s, the character of the neighbourhood changed again with the arrival of the railways along the waterfront. The Grand Trunk Railway, the third railway to extend its tracks across the military reserve, built its yards near Spadina Avenue and, after 1900, acquired the razed site of the former Parliament Buildings for additional yards and a spur line. The railways, and the extension of the street railway along King Street West to Bathurst Street in 1862, brought industrialization to the area. The Gurney Stove Factory, opening at 500 King Street West in 1872, was one of the first industries to move into the district.

Following the destruction of the central industrial core in the Great Fire of 1904, industries congregated in the area centered at King Street West and Spadina Avenue. The first generation of warehouses was augmented in the 1920s by the construction of large lofts that applied the steel frame and concrete construction developed in Chicago. In the World War I era, the area attracted the growing Jewish immigrant population who secured employment in the clothing industry. Street signs later identified the neighbourhood as the Fashion District in recognition of the dominant character of the area in the first decades of the 20th century. The introduction of the King-Spadina Part II Plan in 1996 removed the zoning restricting the properties to industrial purposes, opening the district to new uses.

## 2.2 AMERICAN WATCH CASE COMPANY BUILDING

In 1893, a building was completed on the site of 511 King Street West for the offices and factory of the American Watch Case Company of Toronto Limited. As shown on Goad's Fire Insurance Atlas for 1900 (revised to 1903), the construction included the four east bays of the current building plus the extended south wing. By 1913, an updated version of Goad's indicates that the four west bays on King Street were completed, as well as extensions at the southwest and southeast corners of the wing.

The American Watch Case Company was established on Adelaide Street West in 1885. According to the book, Toronto Illustrated 1893, "the gold, gold-filled and silver watch cases manufactured by the American Watch Case Company are unrivalled for finish, elegance of design and reliability, and have no superiors in the United States or Europe" (page 76). In its new premises, the company had offices and machine shops on the first floor, with facilities for melting and refining gold and silver in the basement, and turning, engraving and plating on the upper stories. The American Watch Case Company, one of only two in the country, was headed by a Canadian president, John N. Lake.

The American Watch Case Company occupied the property at 511 King Street until 1939. City Directories indicate that the facility stood vacant until 1943 when the Canada Decalcomania Company, manufacturers of signs and transfers, moved into the premises. The property had numerous tenants until 1970 when the Bader Brothers, distributors of photographic equipment, began a long-term occupancy. The property at 511 King Street west was listed on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties in 1981.

## 3.0 ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND SIGNIFICANCE:

### 3.1 ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

The American Watch Case Company Building is designed in the Romanesque Revival style, identified by the rough stone finishes and the use of round arches. The style, recalling the round-arched forms of the Roman Empire, was developed in 9th-century Europe. Revived in the 19th century, University College (1856) at the University of Toronto is the best-known early example in the city. American architect H. H. Richardson popularized his own version of the style, inspiring the designs for Toronto's Fourth (Old) City Hall, completed in 1899.

### 3.2 ARCHITECT/BUILDER/CRAFTSMAN

Toronto architect George Wallace Gouinlock (1861-1932) designed the original portion of the American Watch Case Company Building as well as its additions. While little is known about his architectural training, G. W. Gouinlock evidently apprenticed with Hamilton architect C. W. Mulligan and with the Winnipeg firm of Barber, Bowes and Barber. After working in the United States (purportedly in Milwaukee and Chicago), Gouinlock moved to Toronto in 1886 where he joined the architectural firm of Kennedy and Holland. He entered into a partnership with architect George W. King that lasted from 1888 to 1892, during which time the firm designed a commercial building (1889) at 728 Yonge Street.

In 1895, Gouinlock completed the most important commission of his early career after winning a design competition for the North American headquarters of the Independent Order of Foresters. The Temple Building, located on the northwest corner of Bay and Richmond Streets until its demolition in 1970, was once the tallest building in the British Empire. Its construction using steel columns, albeit with thick brick and stone supporting walls, marked one of the earliest applications of steel in Toronto. Based on this success, Gouinlock was appointed the official architect for the Canadian National Exhibition Association where he was charged with rebuilding the exhibition grounds on Strachan Avenue after a devastating fire in 1906. He reorganized the site and supervised the construction of 16 buildings, 15 according to his own designs and inspired by Beaux-Arts styling. Surviving structures designed by Gouinlock range from the Press Building (1905), the earliest remaining building on the grounds, to the Government Building (also known as the Arts and Crafts Building and dating to 1912), one of several identified by the Government of Canada as National Historic Sites.

While Gouinlock prepared the plans for the Charles Steinle Meat Packing Plant on King Street East in 1890, his commission in 1893 for the offices and factory of the American Watch Case Company at 511 King Street West is among his early warehouse designs. In 1901, Gouinlock entered into a short-lived partnership with Francis S. Baker to complete the Stone Limited Building (later known as the Salada Tea Building) at 461-465 King Street West. Gouinlock's other commissions in the King-Spadina neighbourhood included the complementary Dominion Paper Box Company Building at 469 King Street West in 1903, and the Warwick Brothers and Rutter Publishing Company Building at 401-409 King Street West in 1905. His work in King-Spadina evolved from the more retained Classicism of the late 19th century to elaborate edifices displaying Beaux-Arts styling.

After World War I, Gouinlock designed the Ontario Hydro-Electric Power Commission's headquarters at 610 University Avenue (now part of the Princess Margaret Hospital complex). The library extension to the Ontario Legislature in 1931 was one of his final commissions. All of the above noted properties are listed on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties.

### 3.3 ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER: DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

The American Watch Case Company Building rises four stories and extends eight bays along King Street West. On the main (north) portion of the building, designed for offices, the four bays on the east were completed in 1893, while the four bays to the west are part of the 1910 extension. The front (north) portions of the building are included in the Reasons for Designation, while the rear

(south) wing and additions, designed for the factory, are excluded.

The American Watch Case Company Building is constructed of brick and cast iron, clad with brick and stone, and trimmed with brick, stone, and wood. The structure rises from a stone base with window openings. On the principal (north) façade, the first floor is divided into east (left) and west (right) sections by rusticated stone piers. The west section is slightly wider. The main entrance is found in the easternmost bay where a flat transom surmounts double doors. West of the entry, seven large flat-headed commercial display windows with panelled wood aprons are separated by half-columns with decorated capitals. Above a wood cornice, the upper stories feature red brick cladding. In the second and third floors, two-storey piers spring into round arches. A sandstone rosette is positioned between each arch. In the second storey, flat-headed windows have tripartite transoms and stone lintels and sills. The third-floor window openings feature recessed two-part windows, multi-paned fanlights, brick voussoirs, and stone sills with brick corbels. The pairs of flat-headed windows in the upper storey are divided by piers and linked by continuous sills and a band course. Above a wide course of corbelled brickwork, an extended wood cornice has mouldings, dentils and brackets. A stepped brick parapet with copper trim extends the north wall. A brick chimney rises from the flat roof.

The west wall abuts the neighbouring building, apart from the fourth floor that extends above it. The east elevation, facing a laneway, has flat-headed window openings with stone sills. The rear (south) wall is partially covered by the south wing, which is not included in the Reasons for Designation.

### 3.4 ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The American Watch Case Company Building is an excellent example of Romanesque Revival design applied to an industrial building. G. W. Gouinlock was an architect of national importance with his designs for the Canadian Birkbeck Investment and Savings Company (1907) at 10 Adelaide Street East, and his projects on the grounds of the Canadian National Exhibition prior to World War I. The American Watch Case Company Building was one of the earliest industrial buildings commissioned on King Street West, prior to the establishment of the area as Toronto's main industrial district after the Great Fire of 1904.

## 4.0 CONTEXT

### 4.1 CONTEXT AND SETTING

The American Watch Case Company Building is located on the south side of King Street West, midway between Spadina Avenue (east) and Portland Street (west). The American Watch Case Company Building shares its setback with its neighbours, but rises above the adjacent buildings.

In the immediate vicinity, the above-noted properties at 401-409, 461-465 and 469 King Street West are included on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. On the opposite side of King Street West, the Richardson House (Spadina Hotel, 1875) at 460 King Street West, Gurney Stove Factory at 500-520 King Street West, William Shannon Company (1900) at 600 King Street West, and the Dominion Bank (1902) at 668 King Street West are also recognized on the Inventory. The Samuel Building (1908) at 431 King Street West, Imperial Bank of Canada Building (1906) at

441 King Street West, Brown Building (1905-1906) at 445 King Street West, Toronto Pharmacol Building (1904) at 455 King Street West, Samuel and Benjamin Building (1913) at 468 King Street West, Gurney Stove Factory (1873 ff.) at 500 King Street West, Davis and Henderson Building (1904) at 578 King Street West, Canadian Kodak Building (1902) at 582 King Street West, Parisian Laundry Building (1904) at 602 King Street West, and Ideal Women's Wear Building (1904) at 662 King Street West were identified by the former Toronto Historical Board in the King-Spadina Survey of 1991 as properties meriting recognition.

#### 4.2 CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

With its location on King Street in the block between Spadina Avenue and Portland Street, and its size and detailing in relation to the surrounding buildings, the American Watch Case Company Building is contextually significant as an important feature of the King-Spadina neighbourhood.

#### 5.0 SUMMARY

The American Watch Case Company Building is architecturally significant as an excellent example of Romanesque Revival styling designed by an architect of national importance in the King-Spadina neighbourhood, the city's industrial centre at the turn of the 20th century.

#### 6.0 SOURCES

Arthur, Eric. Toronto. No Mean City. 3rd ed. Rev. and ed. by Stephen A. Otto. Toronto: University of Toronto, 1986.

Blumenson, John. Ontario Architecture. Toronto: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1990.

City of Toronto Directories, 1890 ff.

Dendy, William. Lost Toronto. 2nd ed. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1993.

Goad's Fire Insurance Atlases, 1894, 1900 updated to 1903, and 1910 updated to 1913.

Kalman, Harold. A History of Canadian Architecture. Vol. 2. Toronto: Oxford University, 1994.

King-Spadina Area Survey. Toronto Historical Board, June 1991.

McHugh, Patricia. Toronto Architecture. A City Guide 2nd ed. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1989.

Scadding, Henry. Toronto of Old (1873). Reprint. Edited by F. H. Armstrong. Toronto: Oxford University, 1966.

Toronto Illustrated 1893. Reprint. Toronto: Ontario Genealogical Society, Toronto Branch, 1993.

Subject: By-law: Designation of premises 511 King Street West (American Watch Case Company Building) under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act (Ward 19 –Trinity-Spadina)  
File: K2-H2

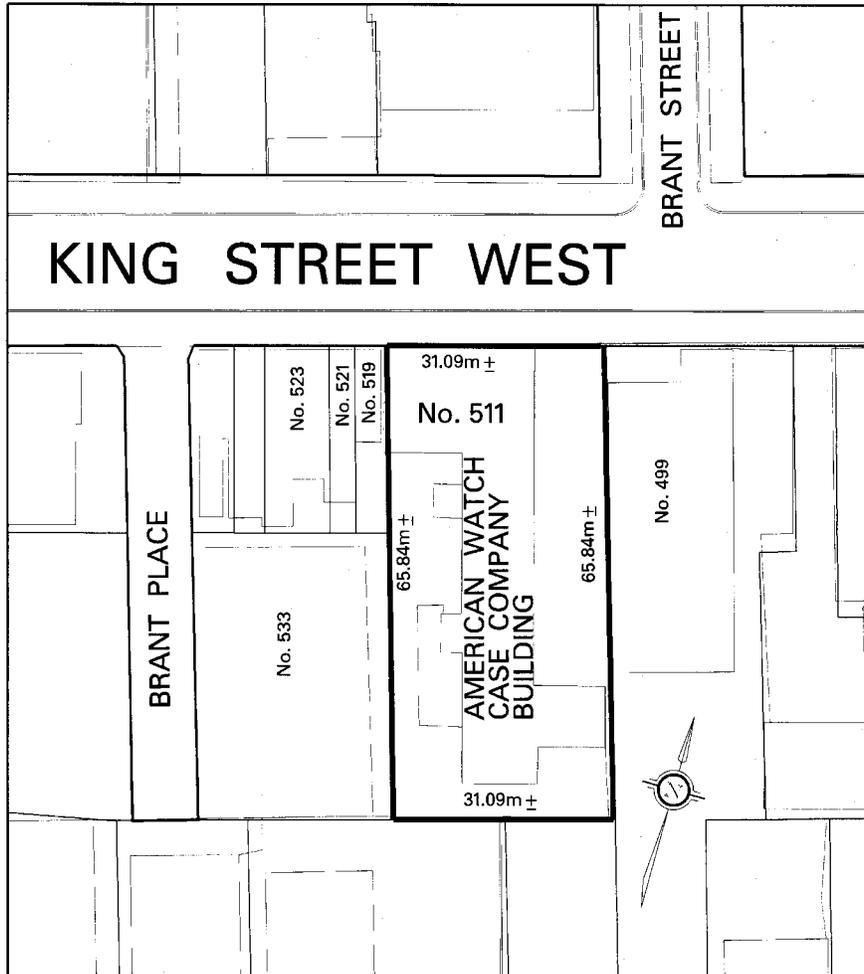
### **SCHEDULE “B”**

In the City of Toronto and Province of Ontario, being composed of Lot 5 on the south side of King Street West in Section “F” on the Plan of the Military Reserve registered in the Land Registry Office for the Metropolitan Toronto Registry Division (No. 64).

The said land being most recently described in Instrument CA426451 (FIRSTLY).

The hereinbefore described land being delineated by heavy outline on Sketch No. PS-2001-046 dated July 11, 2001, as set out in Schedule “C”.

SCHEDULE "C"



**Toronto**

WORKS & EMERGENCY SERVICES  
TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION  
SURVEY & MAPPING

NOTE:  
THIS SKETCH IS NOT  
A PLAN OF SURVEY  
AND HAS BEEN COMPILED  
FROM SURVEY NOTES AND  
OFFICE RECORDS, IT SHALL  
NOT BE USED EXCEPT FOR  
THE PURPOSE INDICATED  
IN THE TITLE BLOCK

PROPERTY INFORMATION SHEET

No. 511 KING STREET WEST  
(AMERICAN WATCH CASE COMPANY BUILDING),  
LAND DESIGNATED AS BEING OF  
ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL  
VALUE AND INTEREST

(NOT TO SCALE)

WARD 19 TRINITY-SPADINA  
DATE: JULY 11, 2001

SKETCH No. PS-2001-046