



**STAFF REPORT  
ACTION REQUIRED**

**Intention to Designate under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act – King Street East Properties (Leader Lane to Church Street)**

<b>Date:</b>	June 14, 2012
<b>To:</b>	Toronto Preservation Board Toronto and East York Community Council
<b>From:</b>	Director, Urban Design, City Planning Division
<b>Wards:</b>	Toronto Centre-Rosedale – Ward 28
<b>Reference Number:</b>	P:\2012\Cluster B\PLN\HPS\TEYCC\September 11 2012\teHPS34

**SUMMARY**

---

This report recommends that City Council state its intention to designate under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act the properties identified in Recommendation No. 2. The properties are located on the south side of King Street East between Leader Lane and Church Street and contain a series of commercial and institutional buildings dating from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The City has received an application for a zoning by-law amendment for the redevelopment of this block. Following research and evaluation, staff have determined that the King Street East properties meet Ontario Regulation 9/06, the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation under the Ontario Heritage Act. The designation of the properties would enable City Council to regulate alterations to the sites, enforce heritage property standards and maintenance, and refuse demolition.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

---

**City Planning Division recommend that:**

1. City Council include the following properties on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties:
  - a. 71 King Street East (with a convenience address of 73 King Street East)
  - b. 75 King Street East (with a convenience address of 77 King Street East)
  - c. 79 King Street East (with a convenience address of 81 King Street East)

- d. 83 King Street East
  - e. 85 King Street East (which is a convenience address)
  - f. 91 King Street East (with a convenience address of 93 King Street East)
  - g. 95 King Street East
2. City Council state its intention to designate the following properties under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act:
- a. 71 King Street East (with a convenience address of 73 King Street East)
  - b. 75 King Street East (with a convenience address of 77 King Street East)
  - c. 79 King Street East (with a convenience address of 81 King Street East)
  - d. 83 King Street East
  - e. 85 King Street East (which is a convenience address)
  - f. 91 King Street East (with a convenience address of 93 King Street East)
  - g. 95 King Street East
3. If there are no objections to the designations in accordance with Section 29(6) of the Ontario Heritage Act, City Council authorize the City Solicitor to introduce the bills in Council designating the properties under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.
4. If there are objections in accordance with Section 29(7) of the Ontario Heritage Act, City Council direct the City Clerk to refer the designations to the Conservation Review Board.
5. If the designations are referred to the Conservation Review board, City Council authorize the City Solicitor and appropriate staff to attend any hearing held by the Conservation Review Board in support of Council's decision on the designation of the properties.

### **Financial Impact**

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

### **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

The City has received an application for a zoning by-law amendment to develop the properties on the south side of King Street East between Leader Lane and Church Street as a high-rise mixed use development incorporating a proposed 47-storey tower. The block currently contains a collection of seven buildings dating to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> through the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, including the last surviving component of the 1843 "Victoria Row" and the historic Albany Club.

The properties are not currently listed on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. To refuse the demolition of the properties and encourage the retention of their heritage values and attributes, City Council must state its intention to designate them under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. Location maps and photographs of the properties are attached (Attachments Nos. 1-7).

## **COMMENTS**

Staff have completed the attached Heritage Property Research and Evaluation Reports (Attachments Nos. 15-20) for the King Street East Properties. As a result of these assessments, staff have determined that the properties identified in Recommendation No. 2 of this report meet Ontario Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed for municipal designation.

The Reasons for Designation for the properties identified in Recommendation No. 2 are found in Attachments Nos. 8-14. The properties are worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for their cultural heritage value, and meet the criteria for municipal designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the three categories of design, associative and contextual values. Located on the south side of King Street East between Leader Lane and Church Street, the properties contain a collection of commercial buildings, one of which was converted for the historic Albany Club, that date from the mid 1800s to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and reflect the historical development of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood as the original commercial and institutional centre of Toronto. The Reasons for Designation (Statements of Significance), which are the Public Notices of Intention to Designate, will be advertised on the City of Toronto's web site in accordance with the City of Toronto Act provisions and served on the property owners and on the Ontario Heritage Trust according to the provisions of the Ontario Heritage Act.

## **CONTACT**

Mary L. MacDonald, Acting Manager  
Heritage Preservation Services  
Tel: 416-338-1079  
Fax: 416-392-1973  
E-mail: [mmacdon7@toronto.ca](mailto:mmacdon7@toronto.ca)

## **SIGNATURE**

---

Robert Freedman  
Director, Urban Design  
City Planning Division

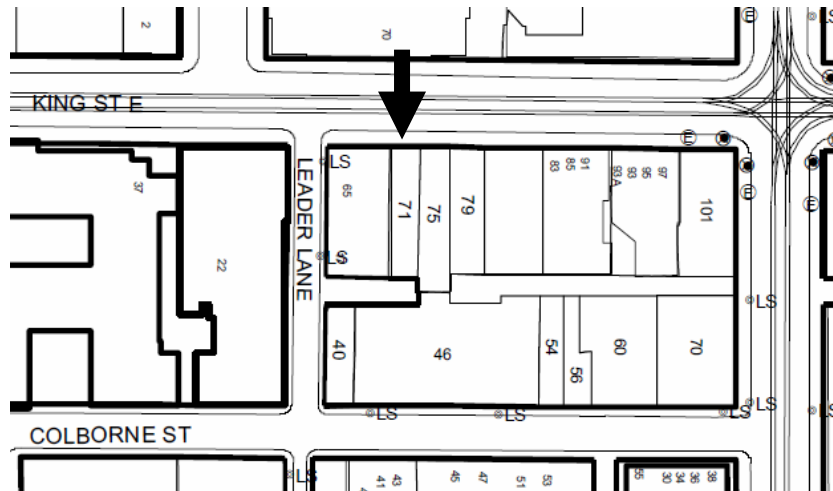
## **ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment No. 1 – Location Map and Photograph, 71 King Street East
- Attachment No. 2 - Location Map and Photograph, 75 King Street East
- Attachment No. 3 - Location Map and Photograph, 79 King Street East
- Attachment No. 4 - Location Map and Photograph, 83 King Street East
- Attachment No. 5 - Location Map and Photograph, 85 King Street East
- Attachment No. 6 - Location Map and Photograph, 91 King Street East
- Attachment No. 7 – Location Map and Photograph, 95 King Street East
- Attachment No. 8 – Reasons for Designation, 71 King Street East
- Attachment No. 9 – Reasons for Designation, 75 King Street East
- Attachment No. 10 – Reasons for Designation, 79 King Street East
- Attachment No. 11 – Reasons for Designation, 83 King Street East
- Attachment No. 12 – Reasons for Designation, 85 King Street East
- Attachment No. 13 – Reasons for Designation, 91 King Street East
- Attachment No. 14 – Reasons for Designation, 95 King Street East
- Attachment No. 15 – Heritage Property Research and Evaluation Report, 71 King Street East
- Attachment No. 16 – Heritage Property Research and Evaluation Report, 75 King Street East
- Attachment No. 17 – Heritage Property Research and Evaluation Report, 79 and 83 King Street East
- Attachment No. 18 – Heritage Property Research and Evaluation Report, 85 King Street East
- Attachment No. 19 – Heritage Property Research and Evaluation Report, 91 King Street East
- Attachment No. 20 – Heritage Property Research and Evaluation Report, 95 King Street East



LOCATION MAP AND PHOTOGRAPH:  
71 KING STREET EAST

ATTACHMENT NO. 1



This location map is for information purposes only;  
the exact boundaries of the property are not shown.

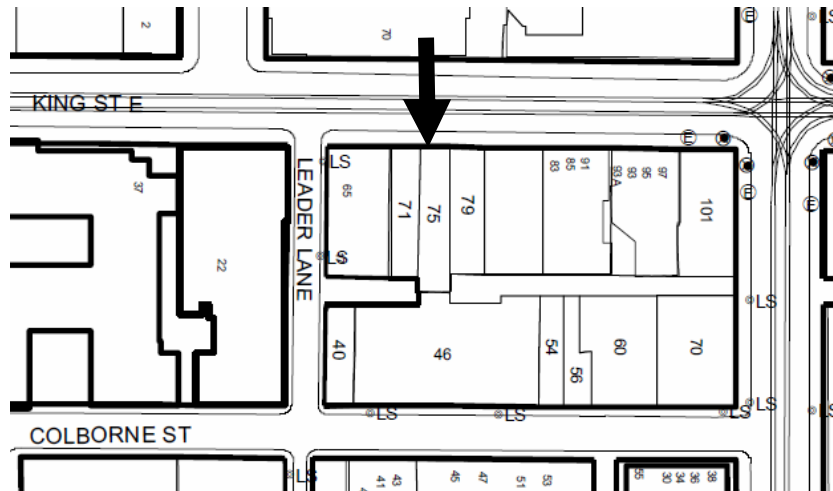
The **arrow** marks the site.



North façade of the E. Harris Company Building  
(Heritage Preservation Services, April 2012)

LOCATION MAP AND PHOTOGRAPH:  
75 KING STREET EAST

ATTACHMENT NO. 2



This location map is for information purposes only;  
the exact boundaries of the property are not shown.

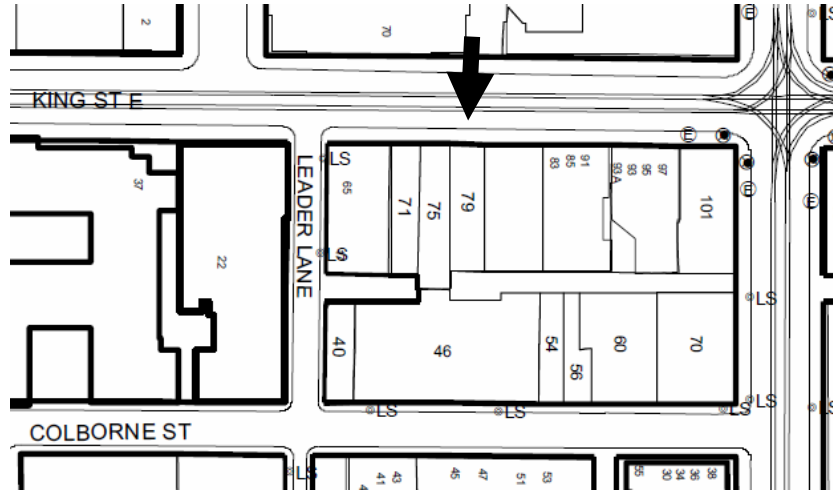
The **arrow** marks the site.



North façade of the John F. Smith Building  
(Heritage Preservation Services, April 2012)

LOCATION MAP AND PHOTOGRAPH:  
79 KING STREET EAST

ATTACHMENT NO. 3



This location map is for information purposes only;  
the exact boundaries of the property are not shown.

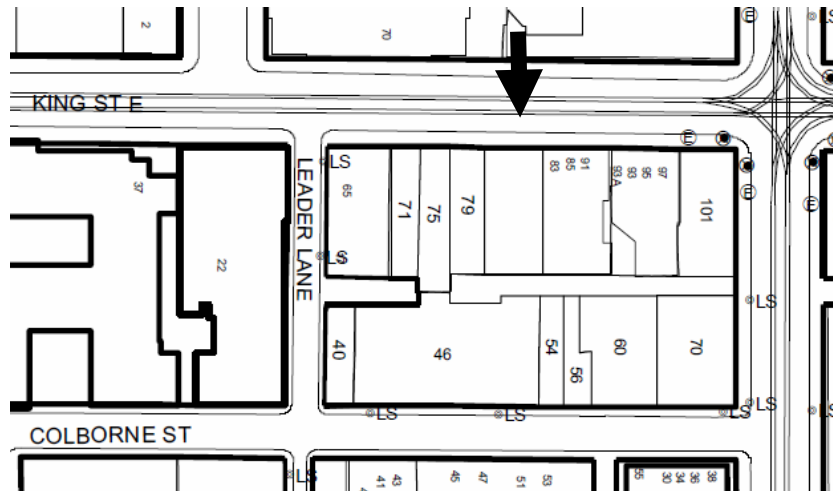
The **arrow** marks the site.



Principal (north) façade of the James McDonnell Building  
(Heritage Preservation Services, April 2012)

LOCATION MAP AND PHOTOGRAPH:  
83 KING STREET EAST

ATTACHMENT NO. 4



This location map is for information purposes only;  
the exact boundaries of the property are not shown.

The **arrow** marks the site.

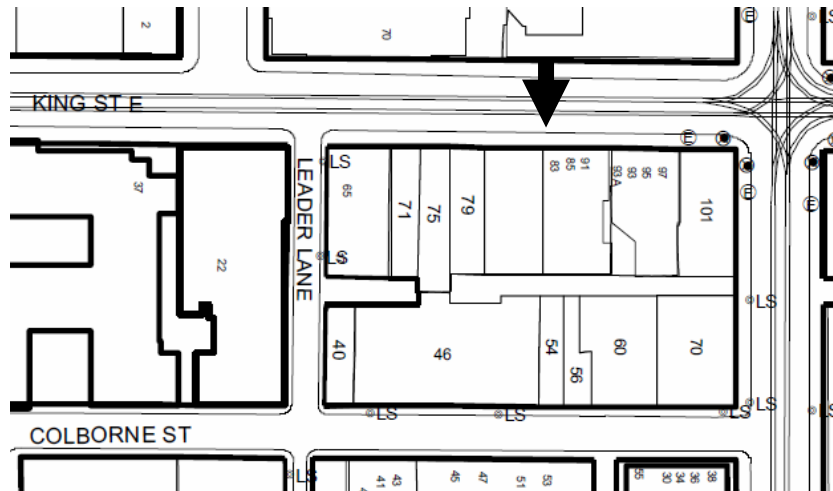


Principal (north) façade of the James McDonnell Building  
(Heritage Preservation Services, April 2012)



LOCATION MAP AND PHOTOGRAPH:  
85 KING STREET EAST

ATTACHMENT NO. 5



This location map is for information purposes only;  
the exact boundaries of the property are not shown.

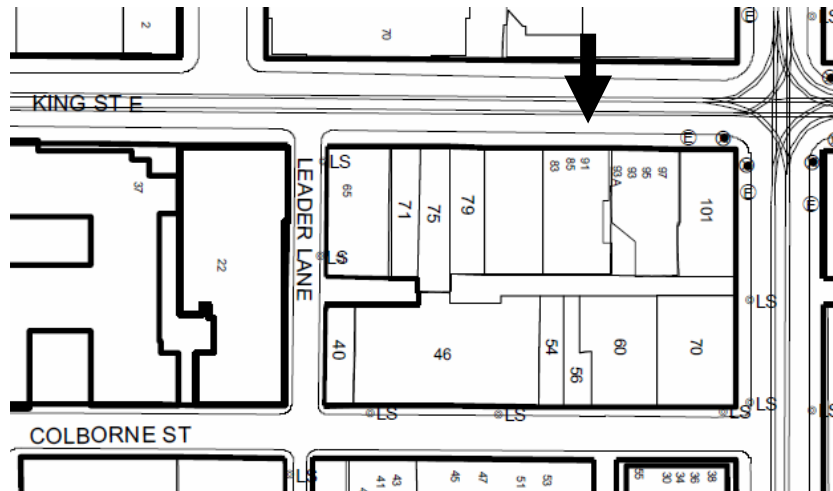
The **arrow** marks the site.



Principal (north) façade of Victoria Row  
(Heritage Preservation Services, April 2012)

LOCATION MAP AND PHOTOGRAPH:  
91 KING STREET EAST

ATTACHMENT NO. 6



This location map is for information purposes only;  
the exact boundaries of the property are not shown.

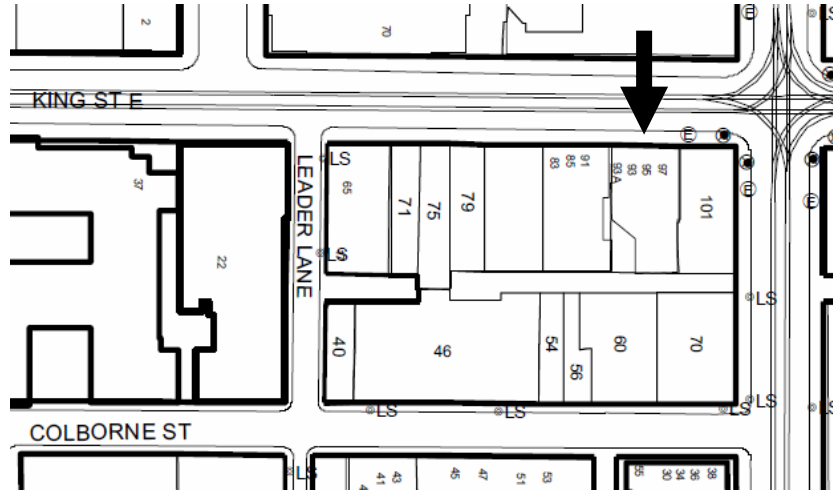
The **arrow** marks the site.



Principal (north) façade of the Albany Club  
(Heritage Preservation Services, April 2012)

LOCATION MAP AND PHOTOGRAPH:  
95 KING STREET EAST

ATTACHMENT NO. 7



This location map is for information purposes only;  
the exact boundaries of the property are not shown.

The **arrow** marks the site.



The principal (north) façade of the Tyrrell Building  
(Heritage Preservation Services, April 2012)

## E. Harris Company Building

### Description

The property at 71 King Street East (with a convenience address of 73 King Street East) is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meets the criteria for municipal designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the categories of design, associative and contextual values. Located on the south side of King Street East, east of Leader Lane, the E. Harris Company Building (1839, with a new façade added c. 1900) is a three-storey commercial building.

### Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The E. Harris Company Building is a fine representative example of a commercial edifice updated in the 20<sup>th</sup> century with an Edwardian Classical design. While it shares its scale and setback along King Street with the neighbouring commercial buildings and the Albany Club at #91 King, the E. Harris Company Building is distinguished by its elaborate classical detailing that is also applied to the oriel windows with glass transoms that highlight the upper stories.

The property at 71 King Street East contributes to an understanding of the development and significance of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood as it evolved from its origins as "Old Town," survived the Great Fire of 1849 as the commercial and institutional heart of Toronto, and withstood the economic downturn of the area in the 20<sup>th</sup> century before it was revitalized in the 1960s. The E. Harris Company Building pre-dates the Great Fire and, through its remodelling in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, contributes to the continuing vitality of the city's oldest neighbourhood.

Contextually, the E. Harris Company Building is significant in defining, maintaining and supporting the historic character of King Street in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, which is identified by the low scale and appearance of the surviving stores, hotels, banks, warehouses and institutional edifices. As a commercial building dating to the mid 1800s that was undated at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the E. Harris Company Building remains a significant component of a group of surviving commercial and institutional edifices that represent the evolution of King Street East as the Town of York's original "main street".

The E. Harris Company Building is also physically, visually and historically linked to its surroundings on King Street East between Leader Lane and Church Street where it anchors the west end of a collection of commercial and institutional buildings from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that includes some of the oldest surviving structures in Toronto.



Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the property at 71 King Street East are:

- The three-storey commercial building that shares its scale, massing and setback with the adjoining buildings to the east
- The materials on the principal (north) façade
- Along the north roofline, the cornice that extends above the roof
- The symmetrical organization of the three-bay north façade above the first-floor store front (which has been altered)
- The fenestration in the second and third floors, with oriel windows with decorative detailing in the centre bay and, in the outer bays, single flat-headed openings that are organized by piers with capitals and surmounted by decorative panels
- The Edwardian Classical detailing

John F. Smith Building

Description

The property at 75 King Street East (with a convenience address of 77 King Street East) is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meets the criteria for municipal designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the categories of design, associative and contextual values. Located on the south side of King Street East between Leader Lane (west) and Church Street (east), the John F. Smith Building (1839) is a 3½-storey commercial building.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The John F. Smith Building is a representative example of a commercial building that is related through its provenance, scale and setback to the group of extant structures on the south side of King Street East between Church Street and Leader Lane. Although altered, it stands as one of the earliest surviving buildings in the neighbourhood and the city with the pattern of fenestration in the upper stories and the gable roof with firebreaks identifying its early 19<sup>th</sup> century vintage.

The property at 75 King Street East contributes to an understanding of the development and significance of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood as it evolved from its origins as "Old Town," survived the Great Fire of 1849 as the commercial and institutional heart of Toronto, and withstood the economic downturn of the area in the 20<sup>th</sup> century before it was revitalized in the 1960s. Predating the Great Fire, the John F. Smith Building contributes to the continued vitality of the city's oldest neighbourhood.

Contextually, the John F. Smith Building is significant in defining, maintaining and supporting the historic character of King Street in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, which is identified by the low scale and appearance of the surviving stores, banks, hotels, warehouses and institutional edifices. As a commercial building dating to 1839, the John F. Smith Building remains a significant component of a group of surviving commercial and institutional edifices that illustrates the evolution of King Street East as the Town of York's original "main street".

The John F. Smith Building is also physically, visually and historically linked to its surroundings on King Street East between Leader Lane and Church Street where it is placed near the west end of a collection of commercial and institutional buildings from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that includes some of the oldest surviving structures in Toronto.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the property at 75 King Street East are:

- The 3½-storey commercial building that shares its scale, massing and setback with the adjoining buildings on the east and west
- The surviving detailing on the gable roof with firebreaks
- The symmetrical organization of the three-bay north façade above the first-floor storefront (which has been altered), where the original pattern of the fenestration has flat-headed window openings organized by piers with capitals

## James McDonell Building

### Description

The property at 79 King Street East (which includes the property with a convenience address of 81 King Street East) is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meets the criteria for municipal designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the categories of design, associative and contextual values. Located on the south side of King Street East between Leader Lane (west) and Church Street (east), the McDonell Building (1843) is a four-storey commercial building.

### Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The James McDonell Building is an important representative example of a commercial building from the early 1840s (with subsequent updates) that contributes through its vintage and scale to the group of extant structures that remain on the south side of King Street East between Church Street and Leader Lane. Predating the Great Fire of 1849, the James McDonell Building is one of the oldest extant structures in the city.

The property at 79 King Street East contributes to an understanding of the development and significance of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood as it evolved from its origins as "Old Town," survived the Great Fire of 1849 as the commercial and institutional heart of Toronto, and withstood the economic downturn of the area in the 20<sup>th</sup> century before it was revitalized in the 1960s. The James McDonell Building pre-dates the Great Fire and, through its updating in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and afterward, contributes to the continuing vitality of the city's oldest neighbourhood.

The James McDonell Building is associated with the career of the notable early Toronto architect John Howard, who undertook the project as a private commission while serving as the City of Toronto's official surveyor and engineer. This structure (although altered) stands with the neighbouring commercial buildings at 83 and 85 King Street East as important surviving examples of Howard's work.

Contextually, the property at 79 King Street East is significant in defining, maintaining and supporting the historic character of King Street in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, which is identified by the low scale and appearance of the surviving stores, banks, hotels, warehouses and institutional buildings. As a commercial building dating to the mid 1800s that was updated over time, the James McDonell Building remains an integral component of a group of surviving commercial and institutional edifices that illustrates the evolution of King Street East as the Town of York's original "main street".

The James McDonell Building is also physically, visually and historically linked to its surroundings on King Street East between Leader Lane and Church Street where it stands as part of a collection of commercial and institutional buildings from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that includes some of the oldest remaining structures in Toronto.

#### Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the property at 79 King Street East are:

- The four-storey commercial building, which shares its scale, massing and setback with the neighbouring buildings to the west and east
- The materials, with brick cladding and stone trim on the principal (north) facade
- The roof detailing with decorative corbelling along the cornice that dates to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when the structure was remodelled with Second Empire detailing
- The principal (north) facade, which is symmetrically organized into three bays above the first-floor store front (which has been altered)
- The fenestration in the second through the fourth stories, where flat-headed window openings have stone lintels and sills

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION: 83 KING STREET EAST ATTACHMENT NO. 11  
(STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE)

James McDonell Building

Description

The property at 83 King Street East is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meets the criteria for municipal designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the categories of design, associative and contextual values. Located on the south side of King Street East between Leader Lane (west) and Church Street (east), the McDonell Building (1843) is a four-storey commercial building.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The James McDonell Building is an important representative example of a commercial building from the 1840s (with subsequent updates) that contributes through its vintage and scale to the group of extant structures that remain on the south side of King Street East between Church Street and Leader Lane. Predating the Great Fire of 1849, the James McDonell Building is one of the oldest extant structures in the city.

The property at 83 King Street East contributes to an understanding of the development and significance of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood as it evolved from its origins as "Old Town," survived the Great Fire of 1849 as the commercial and institutional heart of Toronto, and withstood the economic downturn of the area in the 20<sup>th</sup> century before it was revitalized in the 1960s. The James McDonell Building pre-dates the Great Fire and, through its updating in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and afterward, contributes to the continuing vitality of the city's oldest neighbourhood.

The James McDonell Building is associated with the career of the notable early Toronto architect John Howard, who undertook the project as a private commission while serving as the City of Toronto's official surveyor and engineer. This structure (although altered) stands with the neighbouring commercial buildings at 79 and 85 King Street East as important surviving examples of Howard's work.

Contextually, the property at 83 King Street East is significant in defining, maintaining and supporting the historic character of King Street in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, which is identified by the low scale and appearance of the surviving stores, banks, hotels, warehouses, and institutional edifices. As a commercial building dating to the mid 1800s that was updated over time, the James McDonell Building remains an integral component of a group of surviving commercial and institutional edifices that illustrates the evolution of King Street East as the Town of York's original "main street".

The James McDonnell Building is also physically, visually and historically linked to its surroundings on King Street East between Leader Lane and Church Street where it stands as part of a collection of commercial and institutional buildings from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that includes some of the oldest remaining structures in Toronto.

#### Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the property at 83 King Street East are:

- The four-storey commercial building, which shares its scale, massing and setback with the neighbouring buildings to the west and east
- The materials, with brick cladding and stone trim on the principal (north) facade
- The roof detailing with decorative corbelling along the cornice that dates to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when the structure was remodelled with Second Empire detailing
- The principal (north) facade, which is symmetrically organized into two bays above the first-floor storefront (which has been altered)
- The fenestration in the second through the fourth stories, where flat-headed window openings have stone lintels and sills

## Victoria Row

The property at 85 King Street East (which is a convenience address) is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meets the criteria for municipal designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the categories of design, associative and contextual values. Located on the south side of King Street East between Leader Lane (west) and Church Street (east), Victoria Row (1842) is a 3½-storey commercial building.

### Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

Victoria Row is an important representative example of a commercial building from the 1840s that was updated later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and continues to contribute through its vintage and scale to the group of commercial buildings that remain on the south side of King Street East between Church Street and Leader Lane. Predating the Great Fire of 1849, Victoria Row is among the oldest extant structures in the city.

The property at 85 King Street East contributes to an understanding of the development and significance of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood as it evolved from its origins as "Old Town," survived the Great Fire of 1849 as the commercial and institutional heart of Toronto, and withstood the economic downturn of the area in the 20<sup>th</sup> century before it was revitalized in the 1960s. Victoria Row pre-dates the Great Fire and, through its updating in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and afterward, contributes to the continuing vitality of the city's oldest neighbourhood

Victoria Row is linked to the career of the important early Toronto architect John Howard, who undertook the project as a private commission while serving as the City of Toronto's official surveyor and architect. The surviving unit of Victoria Row (although altered) remains an important surviving example Howard's work.

Contextually, the property at 85 King Street East is significant in defining, maintaining and supporting the historic character of King Street in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, which is identified by the low scale and appearance of the surviving stores, hotels, banks, warehouses and institutional edifices. As a commercial building dating to the mid 1800s, Victoria Row remains a significant component of a group of surviving commercial and institutional edifices that illustrates the evolution of King Street East as the Town of York's original "main street".

The Victoria Row is also physically, visually and historically linked to its surroundings on King Street East between Leader Lane and Church Street where it stands as part of a collection of commercial and institutional buildings from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that includes some of the oldest surviving structures in Toronto.



Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the property at 85 King Street East are:

- The 3½ storey commercial building, which shares its scale, massing and setback with the neighbouring buildings to the west and east
- The materials, with brick cladding and stone trim on the principal (north) facade
- The mansard roof (which was a late-19<sup>th</sup> century alteration) with a pair of round-arched dormers
- The principal (north) façade, which is symmetrically organized into three bays above the first-floor store front (which has been altered)
- The fenestration in the second through the fourth stories, where flat-headed window openings have stone lintels and sills

## Albany Club

### Description

The property at 91 King Street East (which includes the property with a convenience address of 93 King Street East) is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meets the criteria for municipal designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the categories of design, associative and contextual values. Located on the south side of King Street East between Leader Lane (west) and Church Street (east), the Albany Club (1930) is a four-storey institutional building that replaced two units of the five-part Victoria Row, a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century commercial block.

### Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The property at 91 King Street East has design value as an excellent example of an institutional building designed in the Modern Classical style that was influenced by the gentlemen's clubs introduced in England and North America. Its stone-clad facade with classical detailing inspired by Italian Renaissance designs contributes to its architectural significance.

The Albany Club is an institution of significance in Toronto, which was founded in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the Conservative Party as a political club with links to both federal and provincial politics. Regarded as the last surviving political club in Canada, the Albany Club has retained an active and visible presence on King Street East for over a century.

The property at 91 King Street East contributes to an understanding of the development and significance of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood as it evolved from its origins as "Old Town," survived the Great Fire of 1849 as the commercial and institutional heart of Toronto, and withstood the economic downturn of the area in the 20<sup>th</sup> century before it was revitalized in the 1960s. The Albany Club has contributed to the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood for over a century since it established its premises on King Street East in the oldest part of the city.

The updates to the Albany Club were designed by one of its members, the Toronto architect C. J. Gibson, who was known for his residential commissions in the city's upscale neighbourhoods. The Albany Club was one of a select number of institutional commissions accepted by Gibson, along with the Earls Court Library (which is recognized on the City of Toronto's heritage inventory).

Contextually, the property at 91 King Street East is significant in defining, maintaining and supporting the historic character of King Street in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, which is identified by the low scale and appearance of the surviving stores, banks, hotels, warehouses and institutional edifices. As an institutional building that was remodelled in 1930, the Albany Club is an integral component of a group of surviving commercial and institutional edifices that illustrates the evolution of King Street East as the Town of York's original "main street".

The Albany Club is also physically, visually and historically linked to its surroundings on King Street East between Leader Lane and Church Street where it is placed near the east end of a collection of commercial and institutional buildings from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that includes some of the oldest surviving structures in Toronto.

#### Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the property at 91 King Street East are:

- The four-storey institutional building, which relates its scale, setback and massing to the neighbouring buildings on the west and east
- The materials, with stone cladding and trim on the principal (north) facade
- The tripartite organization of the north façade with a base, shaft and cornice
- The base, where the main entrance is placed in the west half of the wall in an elaborate stone surround with paired wood doors and classical detailing
- The flat-headed window openings flanking the north entry and in the east half of the base
- The second and third floors, where the flat-headed window openings are separated by two-storey stone piers with classical detailing
- The fourth storey with an arcade of round-arched openings
- The roof detailing with a scrolled pediment, and the piers with decorative balls that mark the outer corners of the roof
- On the interior, the dining hall with the ceiling beams and brackets, wood paneling and minstrel's gallery

## Tyrrell Building

### Description

The property at 95 King Street East is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meets the criteria for municipal designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the categories of design, associative and contextual values. Located on the south side of King Street East, west of Church Street, the Tyrrell Building (1912) is a five-storey commercial building.

### Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The Tyrrell Building is a fine representative example of a commercial building with Edwardian Classical styling from the pre-World War I era. It displays the classical detailing and the tripartite arrangement of the stories that are hallmarks of the style, yet its design is set apart by the oriel windows and roof detailing. The Tyrrell Building contributes through its vintage and setback to the group of commercial and institutional buildings that mark the south side of King Street East between Church Street and Leader Lane.

The property at 95 King Street East contributes to an understanding of the development and significance of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood as it evolved from its origins as "Old Town," survived the Great Fire of 1849 as the commercial and institutional heart of Toronto, and withstood the economic downturn of the area in the 20<sup>th</sup> century before it was revitalized in the 1960s. Dating to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Tyrrell Building contributes to the continuing vitality of the city's oldest neighbourhood

Contextually, the property at 95 King Street East is significant in defining, maintaining and supporting the historic character of King Street in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, which is identified by the low scale and appearance of the surviving stores, banks, hotels, warehouses and institutional edifices. As a commercial building introduced to the block in the World War I era, the Tyrrell Building stands as a significant component in a streetscape of surviving commercial and institutional edifices that illustrates the evolution of King Street East as the Town of York's original "main street".

The Tyrrell Building is also physically, visually and historically linked to its surroundings on King Street East between Leader Lane and Church Street where it anchors the east end of a collection of commercial and institutional buildings from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that includes some of the oldest surviving edifices in Toronto.

### Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the property at 95 King Street East are:

- The five-storey commercial building, which relates its scale, setback and massing to the neighbouring buildings on the west
- The materials, with brick cladding and stone trim on the principal (north) facade
- The classical organization of the principal (north) façade, with a base, three-storey shaft and attic, and a cornice at each level
- Centered in the first floor (where the storefronts have been altered), the main entrance that is placed in a round-arched surround with classical detailing in brick and stone
- The symmetrical organization of the second through the fourth stories into three bays by stone piers with classical detailing
- The fenestration in the second through the fourth floors, where oriel windows with decorative detailing are inset in the centre bay, with large flat-headed tripartite windows in the outer bays
- The stone detailing on all of the window openings, including those in the attic level that display keystones

**HERITAGE PROPERTY RESEARCH AND EVALUATION REPORT**



**E. HARRIS COMPANY BUILDING  
71 KING STREET EAST, TORONTO**

Prepared by:

Heritage Preservation Services  
City Planning Division  
City of Toronto

May 2012

## 1. DESCRIPTION



Cover: principal (north) façade & west elevations; above: detail of the upper two floors on the north façade (Heritage Preservation Services, April 2012)

<b>71 King Street East: E. Harris Company Building</b>	
ADDRESS	71 King Street East (south side, east of Leader Lane); including convenience address of #73 King
WARD	Ward 28 (Toronto Centre-Rosedale)
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	Plan D151, Lot 7
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	St. Lawrence Neighbourhood
HISTORICAL NAME	E. Harris Company Building
CONSTRUCTION DATE	1839 (& subsequently remodelled)
ORIGINAL OWNER	Mary Ann Musson
ORIGINAL USE	Commercial (stores and offices)
CURRENT USE*	Commercial (stores and offices) * This does not refer to permitted use(s) as defined by the Zoning By-law
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	John Howard, architect
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION/MATERIALS	Brick cladding with brick, stone & glass trim
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	Edwardian Classicism
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	c. 1900, north façade altered; 1940, store front altered
CRITERIA	Design/Physical, Historical/Associative & Contextual
HERITAGE STATUS	Cultural Heritage Evaluation
RECORDER	Heritage Preservation Services: Kathryn Anderson
REPORT DATE	May 2012

## 2. BACKGROUND

This research and evaluation report describes the history, architecture and context of the property at 71 King Street East, and applies evaluation criteria to determine whether it merits inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties and designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The conclusions of the research and evaluation are found in Section 4 (Summary).

### i. HISTORICAL TIMELINE

Key Date	Historical Event
1819	Representatives of the Anglican Diocese of Toronto receive the patent for Lot B under the Plan of York
1825	Trustees for the Bank of Upper Canada purchase Lot B
1831	William Andrews leases Lot B <sup>1</sup>
1830s	Architect John Howard designs a store on King Street East for “Mrs. Musson”
1839	William Musson is identified on the tax assessment rolls as the occupant and owner/lessee of present-day 71 King Street East
1853	William Andrews subleases the parcel at present-day #71 King to Mary Ann Musson, “widow lady”
1860s	Crockery merchant Grover Harrison is Musson's long-term tenant in the ground-floor shop
1866	The trustees of William Andrews's estate transfer the lease for Lot B to Reverend Henry J. Grasett <sup>2</sup>
1868	The Bank of Upper Canada, which remains the legal owners of the site, relinquishes its claim to Lot B to Grasett
1873	Grasett registers Plan D151 on Lot B, and extends the lease for Lot 7 (with the building at #71 King) to Mary Ann Musson
1900	After Mary Ann Musson’s death, the Toronto Mortgage Company reassigns the lease to the E. Harris Company, which occupies the property for nearly 60 years
c.1900	The building is altered <sup>3</sup>
1928	The Incorporated Synod of the (Anglican) Diocese of Toronto sells Lot 7 & neighbouring Lot 10 to Urban Properties Limited (the sale is later revoked)
1940	A building permit is issued for a new storefront on the E. Harris Company's paint store
1973	The building with "stores and dwellings" is converted to a restaurant

<sup>1</sup> Andrews was identified on the tax assessment roll on King Street East in St. Lawrence Ward for the first time in 1838; he was listed as the “owner or lessee” of a building directly west of the subject property

<sup>2</sup> Spelling in legal documents

<sup>3</sup> A significant increase in the assessed value of the building, along with the E. Harris Company's assumption of a long-term lease, suggests the changes were made at this time. Unfortunately, with a seven-month-long gap in the building permits over 1899-1900, the specific date and the potential name of an architect remain unknown. A further search of newspapers and periodicals provided no further details at the time of the writing of this report



## ii. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### St. Lawrence Neighbourhood

Following the founding of the Town of York in 1793, a townsite was established in the ten-block area between George Street, Palace Street (now Front Street East), Berkeley Street, and a line north of present-day Adelaide Street East. The rapid growth of the community, particularly after the War of 1812, led to the westward extension of “Old Town” and moved the community’s west boundary beyond Jarvis Street. When the City of Toronto was incorporated in 1834, King Street East was described as “the main street through the centre of the town.”<sup>4</sup> The first St. James’ Church (forerunner to today’s St. James’ Cathedral) marked the northeast corner of King and Church Streets, with the courthouse and jail placed on the northwest side of this intersection. Apart from the institutional buildings, King Street was lined with shops, offices and houses (Image 14).

Old Town was devastated by the Great Fire of 1849, resulting in the rebuilding of St. James’ Church on its original site, with St. Lawrence Hall (containing offices, a market and the “Great Hall” for public gatherings) completed in 1851 further east on King Street.<sup>5</sup> Part of the commercial district along King Street East survived the fire, with the remainder rebuilt with structures ranging from one to four stories, the latter being the maximum height deemed rentable in the decades before elevators were available.

King Street East retained its prominence as the city’s “main street” through much of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, although many of the commercial buildings were either rebuilt or remodelled in the elaborate architectural styles identified with the Victorian era. In 1884, King Street was enthusiastically described as having “the most brilliant and long-extended series of first-class stores of which Toronto can boast, her Palais Royal, her Regent Street.”<sup>6</sup> However, at this time the new “department stores” opened by entrepreneurs Timothy Eaton and Robert Simpson on Yonge Street near Queen Street began to draw commercial traffic away from the King Street corridor. In an attempt to stave off this movement, the upscale King Edward Hotel opened on King Street east of Yonge Street (with the first phase completed in 1902). By the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, the area now known as the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood remained a largely commercial and manufacturing district. The City of Toronto’s restoration of St. Lawrence Hall and the revitalization of St. Lawrence Market in the 1960s were complimented by the conversion

---

<sup>4</sup>George Walton, Commercial Directory, Street Guide and Register, 1833-34, 1834

<sup>5</sup> Only three original buildings from the pre-1834 Town of York have been identified as survivors: the Bank of Upper Canada (1827) and the neighbouring First Post Office (1834) at 252 Adelaide Street East, and Campbell House (c. 1822), which originally stood at Adelaide and Frederick Streets before it was relocated to 160 Queen Street West in 1974. After the Great Fire, the Second City Hall was built at 91 Front Street East, where a portion is retained at South St. Lawrence Market. The latter properties are designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act

<sup>6</sup> Dendy, 95

of many of the surviving warehouses and stores for restaurants, offices and shops as part of the renaissance of the area.

### King Street East between Leader Lane and Church Street

The intricate history of the properties on King Street East between Leader Lane and Church Street can be traced through land records, maps, directories, tax assessment rolls and other archival records, with part of the documentation reproduced in Section 6 below. Atlases from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries illustrate the changes in the block (Images 4-12).

The lands along the south side of the street were subdivided according to the Plan of York as Town Lots A and B (Image 13) with Lot B found east of Leader Lane (originally Berczy Lane). In 1819, the patent for Lot B was granted to Reverend James Strachan, the Anglican Bishop of York, and other representatives of the Diocese of Toronto, who transferred the tract to the trustees of the Bank of Upper Canada six years later. Beginning in 1831, Lot B was leased by William Andrews, who was described in city directories as a church sexton with the “English Church” on Richmond Street.<sup>7</sup> Andrews’ name was first recorded on the tax assessment roll for St. Lawrence Ward in 1838 as the “owner or lessee” of tenanted property on King Street East. According to land records, William Andrews’ estate transferred the lease for Lot B to Reverend Henry J. Grasett in 1866. The trustees of the Bank of Upper Canada relinquished their claim to the land two years later, enabling Reverend Grasett to register Plan D151 on the tract in 1873 (Image 17).

### 71 King Street East (E. Harris Company Building)

When the first city directory was published in 1834, only five buildings were recorded on the south side of King Street East from Church Street west to Henrietta Street.<sup>8</sup> The building at present-day 71 King Street East was in place by 1839 when the property was first recorded on the tax assessment roll for St. Lawrence Ward with William Musson named as the occupant as well as the “owner or lessee”. Prior to this date, the papers of architect John Howard reveal that he designed a store for “Mrs. Musson” on King Street in the 1830s.<sup>9</sup> It is likely that the plans were similar to those Howard devised for James W. McDonell’s neighbouring property on Church Street near King (Image 15). By 1850, Mary Ann Musson, a “widow lady” was listed as the owner/lessee of the site, which was occupied by a series of tenants. Land records indicate that, in 1853, William Andrews subleased to Mrs. Musson the portion of Lot B extending 20 feet on King Street and “commencing 23 feet west on the east side of said lot (Lot B) and running west”.

---

<sup>7</sup> When Brown’s Toronto City and Home District Directory, 1846-47 was published, Andrews was listed as a parish clerk at St. James’ Cathedral

<sup>8</sup> By the time Cane’s Map of the City and Liberties of Toronto was produced in 1842, Henrietta Street had disappeared (Image 3)

<sup>9</sup> In 1840, Howard designed Victoria Row for McDonell. Completed by 1843 at present-day 85-95 King Street, the westernmost unit is extant at #85 King (while his name was spelled in various ways in different archival documents, “McDonell” was used on Howard’s architectural plans)

Mary Ann Musson's building is illustrated in a photograph from 1856 that is attached as Image 16.

After Andrews' demise in the 1870s when Reverend Grasett acquired Lot B and subdivided it under Plan D151, the subject building was surveyed on Lot 7. Mary Ann Musson continued to lease the site along with neighbouring Lot 10.<sup>10</sup> She rented the premises to a series of commercial and residential tenants, the most prominent being merchant Glover Harrison who operated a crockery business on-site before moving to nearby China Hall. In 1900 following Mary Ann Musson's death, her executors released the lot to the Toronto Mortgage Company, which transferred it to the Incorporated Synod of the Diocese of Toronto the next year. As a result, after a century the original patentees reacquired the tract.

The Synod entered into a new lease with the E. Harris Company of Toronto, importers and dealers of paints, oil varnishes and artists' supplies as well as window glass, which occupied the premises for over half a century. The company was founded in 1852 by Dr. F. H. Simpson, who had a series of partners prior to 1875 when "E. Harris" joined him in business. After Harris's death in 1881, his last partner Henry Burden took over the company. It appears that the building was altered about 1900 when its assessed value underwent a significant increase.<sup>11</sup> The gable roof was changed after 1921; prior to that date the original roofline is recorded in archival photographs (Images 18 and 19). The changes to the building are shown on the Underwriters' Insurance Bureau's survey of 1921 updated to 1943 (Image 11).

### iii. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The E. Harris Company Building at 71 King Street East is shown in current and archival photographs found on the cover and in Sections 1 and 6 of this report. While the E. Harris Company Building and the adjoining John F. Smith Building at #75 King are the oldest extant structures in the block, both were updated in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This was typical of "many early Georgian-style buildings, both high style and vernacular, (which) were either completely rebuilt or remodelled according to the latest fashions from London, New York or far-away India."<sup>12</sup>

The original north façade on the E. Harris Company Building was altered with features associated with early 20<sup>th</sup> century Edwardian Classicism, the most popular style of the post-Victorian era that focused on the symmetrical placement of elements and decorative classical detailing. The large oriel windows with glass transoms and the applied classical decoration support a remodelling date of circa 1900 when the stylistic excesses of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century were supplanted by the more restrained designs and the new materials and technologies available by the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

---

<sup>10</sup> Lot 10 extends south from the laneway behind #71 King to Colborne Street, as shown in Image 6

<sup>11</sup> The assessed value of the property rose between August 1899 and July 1900. However, there is a gap in the building permits between Oct 1899 and the end of May 1900. A search of the tax assessment rolls found no further increase in building values in the period up to World War Two

<sup>12</sup> Blumenson, 5

Above the shop front (which has been altered over time), the upper floors of the E. Harris Company Building are organized into three bays by two-storey piers with capitals. The narrow flat-headed window openings in the outer bays have glass transoms and are surmounted by carved panels with dentils and garlands. In the centre bay, oriel windows have elaborate classical detailing and transoms, including a fan transom in the uppermost oriel. The flat roofline is marked by a cornice with brackets.

The east wall adjoins the neighbouring building at #75 King, and the west elevation is exposed following the removal of the neighbouring structures.

#### iv. CONTEXT

The property at 71 King Street East is shown on the location maps attached as Images 1 and 2. It anchors the west end of a group of surviving buildings from the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that fills most of the block on the south side of King Street from Church Street (east) to Leader Lane (west). The commercial shops between the E. Harris Company Building and Leader Lane were removed in 1929 for the proposed "Toronto Hotel".<sup>13</sup> To the east, the adjoining commercial blocks date to the late 1830s (#75 King) and early 1840s (#79, 83 and 85 King), but complement the E. Harris Company Building in height and setback. The Albany Club at 91 King Street East and Tyrrell Building at #95 King represent the remodelling or replacement, respectively, of early 1840s edifices and mark the east end of the group. Earlier buildings at the southwest corner of King and Church Street were demolished in 1940 (Image 11).

With their placement near the southwest corner of King Street East and Church Street, the E. Harris Company Building and its neighbours overlook the intersection with St. James' Cathedral (1849-53 with later additions) on the northeast and the City Buildings at #107-125 King Street (dating to the 1840s), on the southeast.<sup>14</sup> Further west along the south side of King Street East at Victoria Street, the King Edward Hotel (1902) with its east addition (1920) is another local landmark that is designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. Behind the subject property, the buildings that once occupied the north side of Colborne Street were removed, but the opposite side of the street contains a warehouse (c. 1892) at #41-43 Colborne that is recognized on the City's heritage inventory (and shown in Image 22).

### 3. EVALUATION CHECKLIST

The following evaluation applies Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the Ontario Heritage Act: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. While the criteria are prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario

---

<sup>13</sup> Designed by Toronto architect N. A. Armstrong in 1928, the City Directory for 1929 (published in 1930) described the hotel as "under construction". Likely a casualty of the Great Depression, the project was not completed and the vacant parcels became a parking lot

<sup>14</sup> St. James Cathedral at 106 King Street East and the City Buildings, opposite, are designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act

Heritage Act, the City of Toronto uses it when assessing properties for inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. The evaluation table is marked “N/A” if the criterion is “not applicable” to the property or X if it is applicable, with explanatory text below.

<b>Design or Physical Value</b>	
i. rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method	<b>X</b>
ii. displays high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	<b>N/A</b>
iii. demonstrates high degree of scientific or technical achievement	<b>N/A</b>

**Representative Example of a Style and Type** – The E. Harris Company Building is a fine representative example of a commercial edifice updated in the 20<sup>th</sup> century with an Edwardian Classical design. While it shares its scale and setback along King Street with the neighbouring commercial buildings and the Albany Club, the E. Harris Company Building is distinguished by its elaborate classical detailing that is also applied to the oriel windows with glass transoms that highlight the upper stories.

<b>Historical or Associative Value</b>	
i. direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community	<b>N/A</b>
ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	<b>X</b>
iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	<b>N/A</b>

**Community** – The property at 71 King Street East contributes to an understanding of the significance of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood as it evolved from its origins as "Old Town," survived the Great Fire of 1849 as the commercial and institutional heart of Toronto, and withstood the economic downturn of the area in the 20<sup>th</sup> century before it was revitalized in the 1960s with the restoration of the landmark St. Lawrence Hall and St. Lawrence Market, among other projects. The E. Harris Company Building pre-dates the Great Fire and, through its remodelling in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, contributes to the continuing vitality of Toronto's original "main street" in the city's oldest neighbourhood.

**Architect** – Although the eminent Toronto architect John Howard prepared the plans for this building in the late 1830s, the structure was remodelled at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the roof subsequently changed, thus removing the vestiges of his design. While the changes to the north façade of the E. Harris Company Building have design value in their own right, the edifice cannot be included among the remaining extant examples of Howard's work.<sup>15</sup> At the time of the writing of this report, no information had been

<sup>15</sup> While many of Howard's projects, including the former Provincial Lunatic Asylum on Queen Street West, were demolished, his High Park residence named "Colborne Lodge" (now a museum operated by the City of Toronto), the surviving portion of Victoria Row at 85 King Street East, and the neighbouring James McDonnell Buildings at #79 and 81 King are among a small group of surviving examples

uncovered naming an architect for the early 20<sup>th</sup> century updates to the E. Harris Company Building.

Contextual Value	
i. important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area	<b>X</b>
ii. physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings	<b>X</b>
iii. landmark	<b>N/A</b>

**Character** – The property at 71 King Street East is significant in defining, maintaining and supporting the historic character of King Street in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, which is identified by the low scale and appearance of the surviving stores, banks, hotels, warehouses and institutional edifices. As a commercial building dating to the mid 1800s that was undated at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the E. Harris Company Building remains a significant component in a streetscape of surviving commercial and institutional edifices where it contributes to the evolution of Toronto's oldest neighbourhood.

**Surroundings** – The E. Harris Company Building is physically, visually and historically linked to its surroundings on King Street East in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood where it anchors the west end of a collection of commercial and institutional buildings from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that contains some of the oldest surviving structures in Toronto.

#### 4. SUMMARY

Following research and evaluation according to Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the property at 71 King Street East has design, associative and contextual values. Located on the south side of King Street East between Church Street (east) and Leader Lane (west), the E. Harris Company Building is an important surviving example of a commercial building from the mid 1800s that was updated about 1900. With its neighbours in the block, the E. Harris Company Building contributes to an understanding of the evolution of King Street East from its 19<sup>th</sup> century origins, to its development as Toronto's commercial centre for most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and its renaissance during the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Contextually, the property at 75 King Street East assists in supporting, maintaining and defining the historic character of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood where the E. Harris Company Building is historically, visually and physically linked to its surroundings on the Town of York's original “main street.”

#### 5. SOURCES

##### Archival Sources

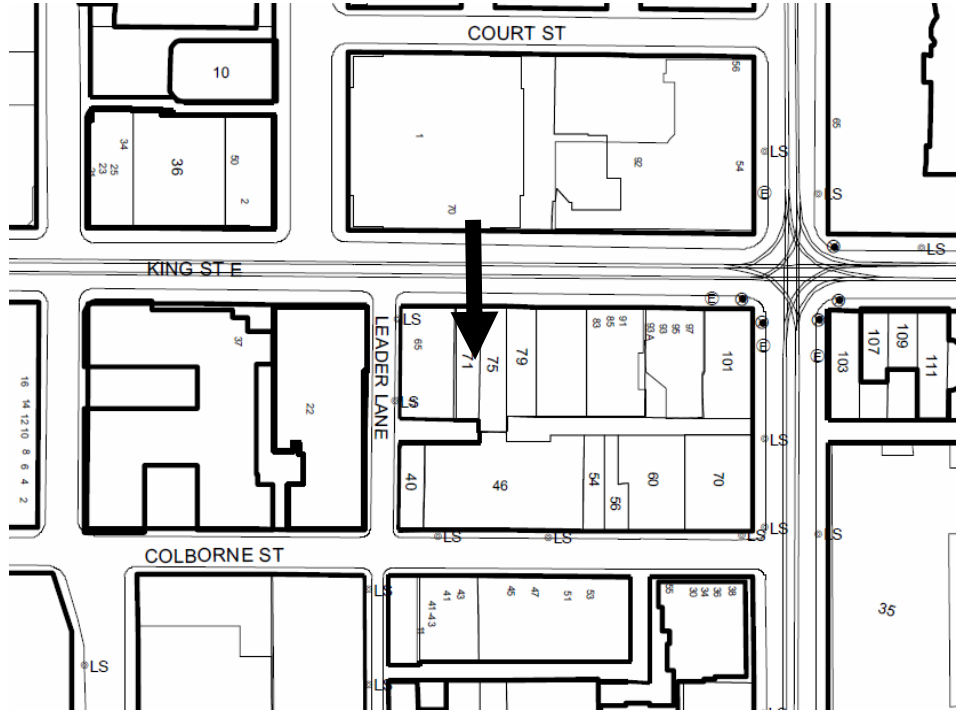
Abstract Indices of Deeds, Town of York, Lot B, and Plan D151, Lot 7  
 Assessment Rolls, City of Toronto, St. Lawrence Ward, and Ward 3, Division 1  
 Boulton's Atlas of the City of Toronto, 1858  
 Building Records, City of Toronto, Toronto and East York, #70552 (1940) and #49762 (1958)

Cane's Map of the City and Liberties of Toronto, 1842  
City of Toronto Directories, 1834 ff.  
Goad's Atlases, 1880-1923  
Photographs, City of Toronto Archives and Toronto Reference Library  
(citations with images below)  
Underwriters' Insurance Bureau Surveys, 1921 revised to 1943 and 1954 revised to 1964

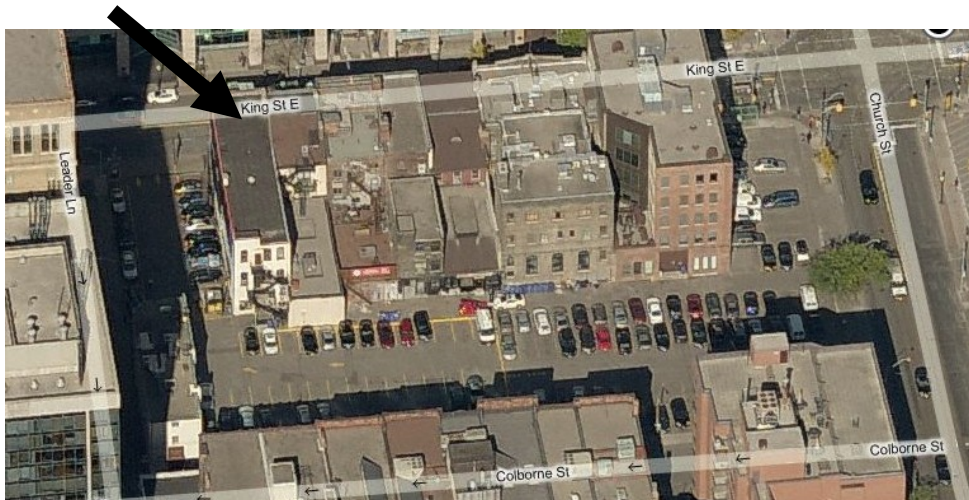
### Secondary Sources

Arthur, Eric, Toronto: no mean city, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. revised by Stephen A. Otto, 1986  
Baine, Richard p., and A. Lynn McMurray, Toronto: an urban study, 1970  
Blaubergs, Ellen, "Glover Harrison and China Hall," Arch Notes (July-August 1992), 4-9  
Blumenson, John, Ontario Architecture, 1990  
Careless, J. M. S., Toronto to 1918, 1984  
Dendy, William, Lost Toronto, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., revised 1993  
Dendy, William, and William Kilbourn, Toronto Observed, 1986  
MacKinnon, Steve, Karen Teeple and Michele Dale, Toronto's Visual Legacy, 2009  
McHugh, Patricia, Toronto Architecture: a city guide, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1989  
Mulvany, C. Pelham, Toronto Past and Present Until 1882, 1884  
Scadding, Henry, Toronto of Old (1873), reprint 1966  
"The Textures of a Lost Toronto: John Howard's Documentary Art and Drawings, 1830s-80s, <http://www.toronto.ca/culture/howard.htm>

6. IMAGES – Historical atlases, followed by archival records and contemporary photographs; **arrows** mark the location of the subject property

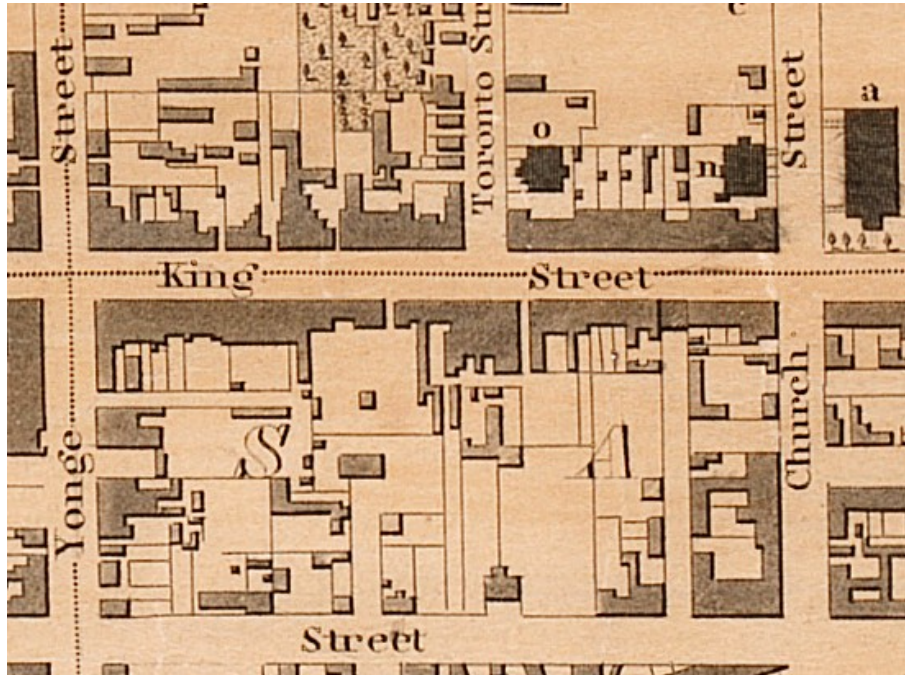


1. City of Toronto Property Data Map: showing the location of the property at 71 King Street East

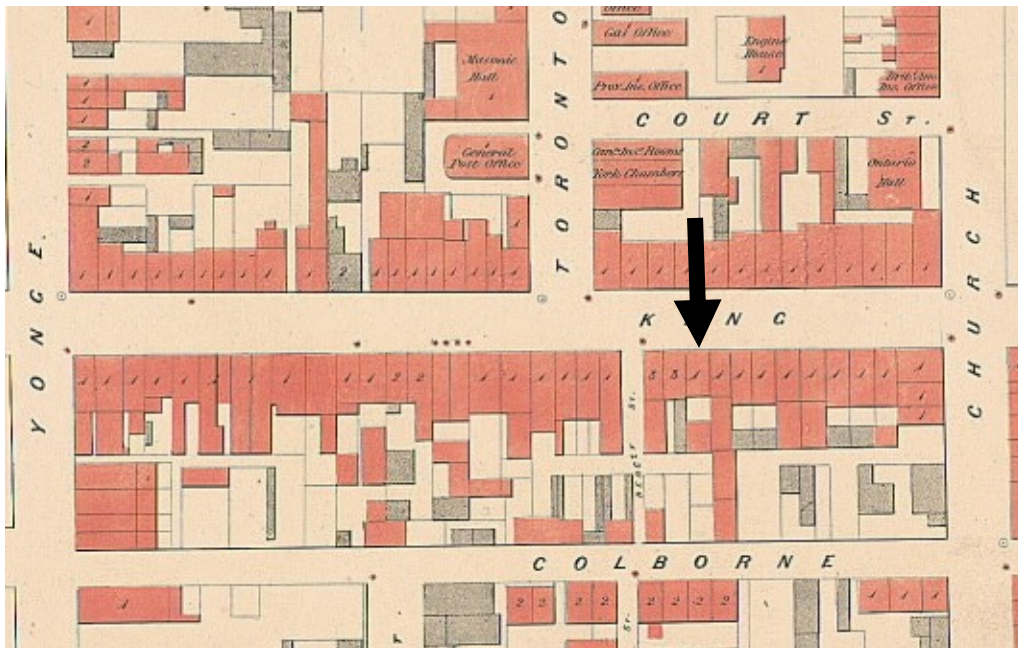


2. Location Map: showing the roofs and rear (south) walls and additions of the buildings in the block between Leader Lane (left) and Church Street (right), including the subject building (<http://www.bing.com/maps>)

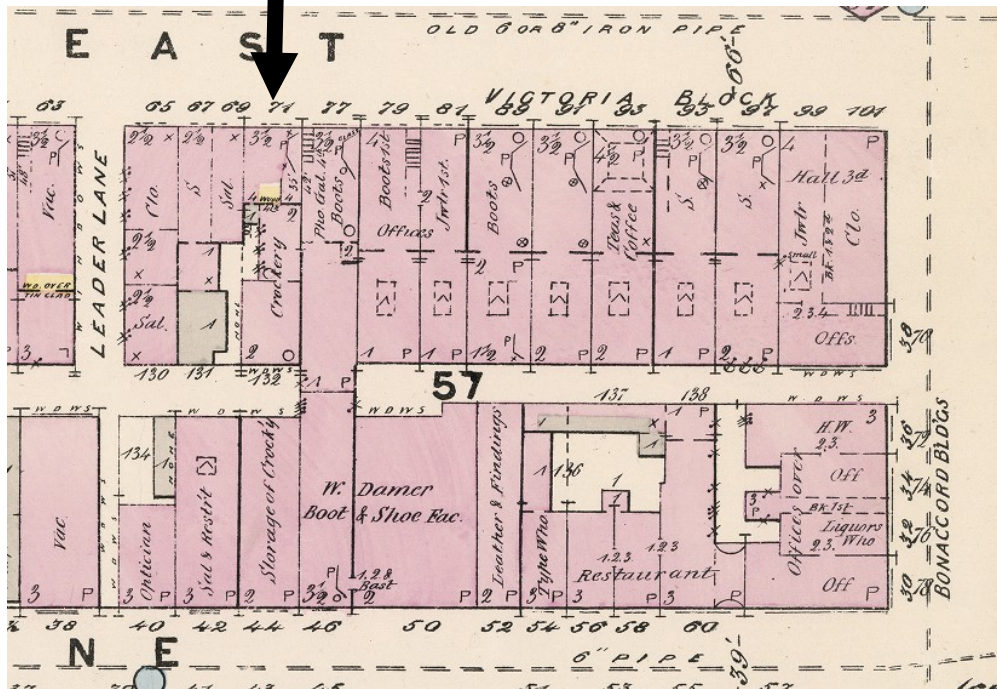




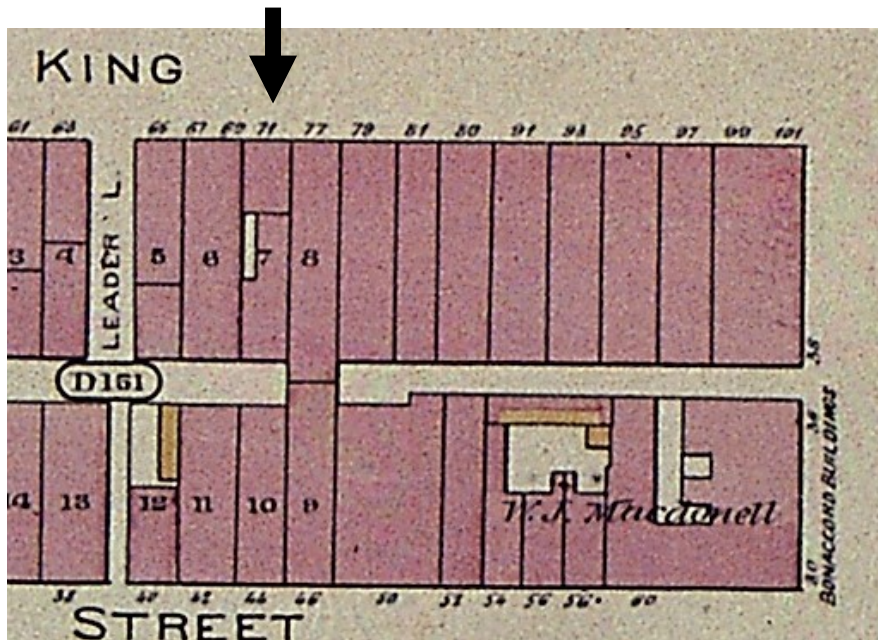
3. Cane's Map of the City and Liberties of Toronto, 1842: showing the commercial blocks along both sides of King Street East (including the subject property) prior to the Great Fire of 1849



4. Boulton's Atlas of Toronto, 1858: showing the location of the subject property on the south side of King Street East, west of Church Street

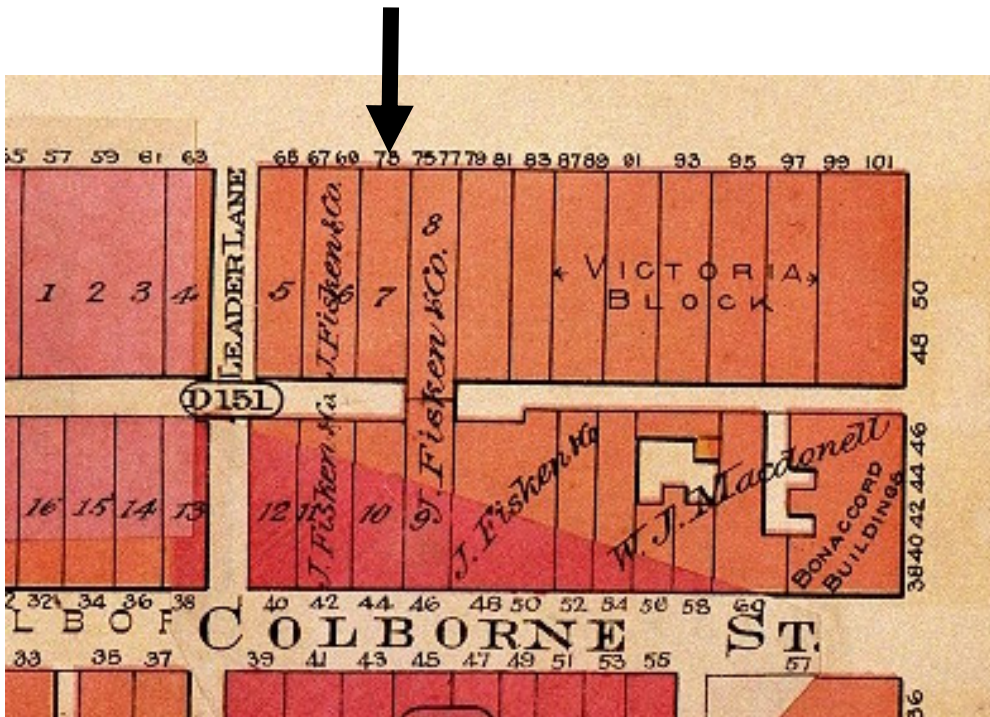


5. Goad's Atlas, 1880: showing the subject property, then occupied by Glover Harrison's 'crockery' shop and other changes in the block since 1858

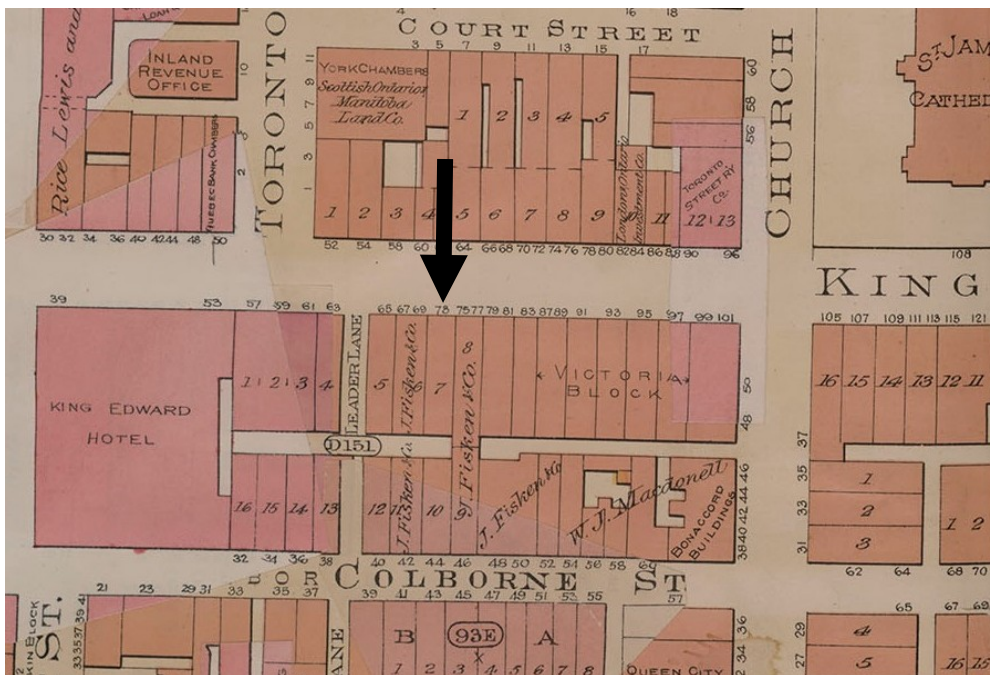


6. Goad's Atlas, 1884: on the next update, Plan D151 is shown, with the subject property occupying Lot 7

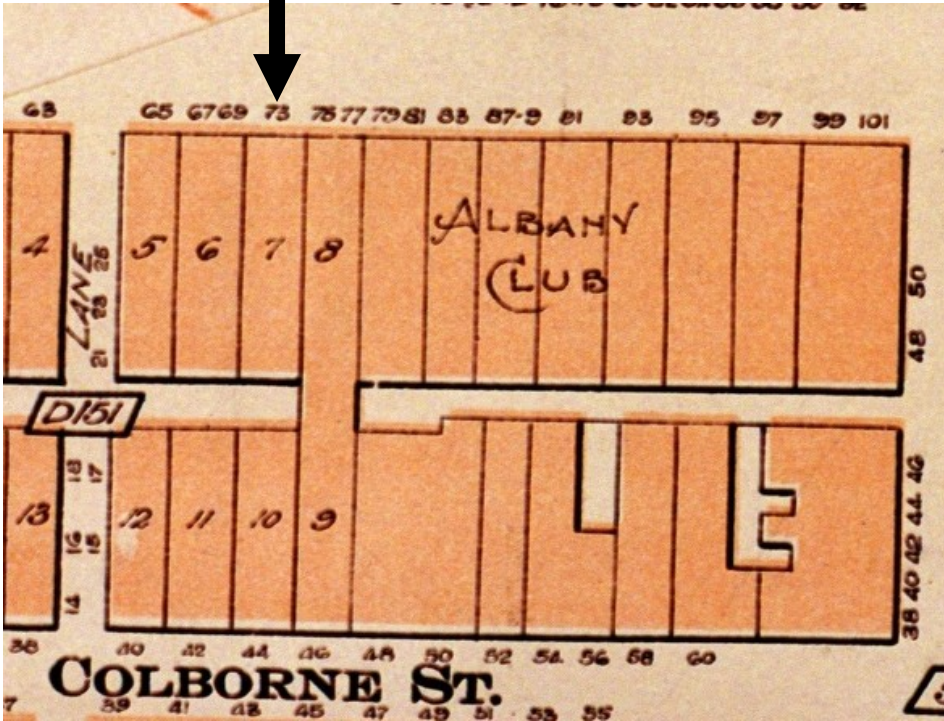




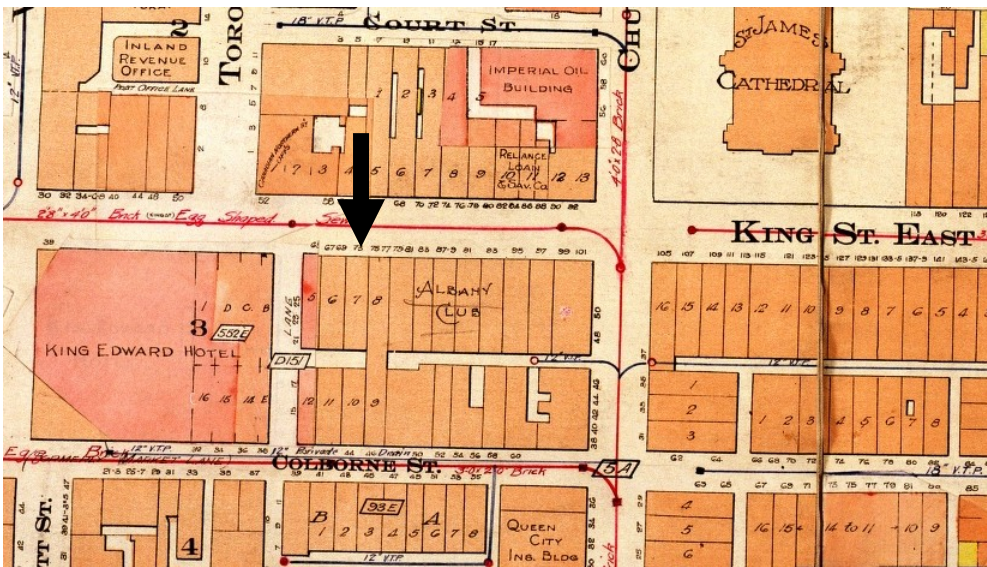
7. Goad's Atlas, 1890: showing the labeling of some of the buildings in the block between Church Street (right) and Leader Lane where the subject property is numbered "73" King Street East



8. Goad's Atlas, 1890 revised to September 1903: on this update, there are no changes shown to the group of properties east of Leader Lane, but the first phase of the King Edward Hotel (1902) is in place further west on the southeast corner of King and Victoria Streets



9. Goad's Atlas, 1910 revised to 1912: where the Albany Club occupies part of the block east of the subject property



10. Goad's Atlas, 1910 revised to 1923: showing the status of the block on the last update to Goad's

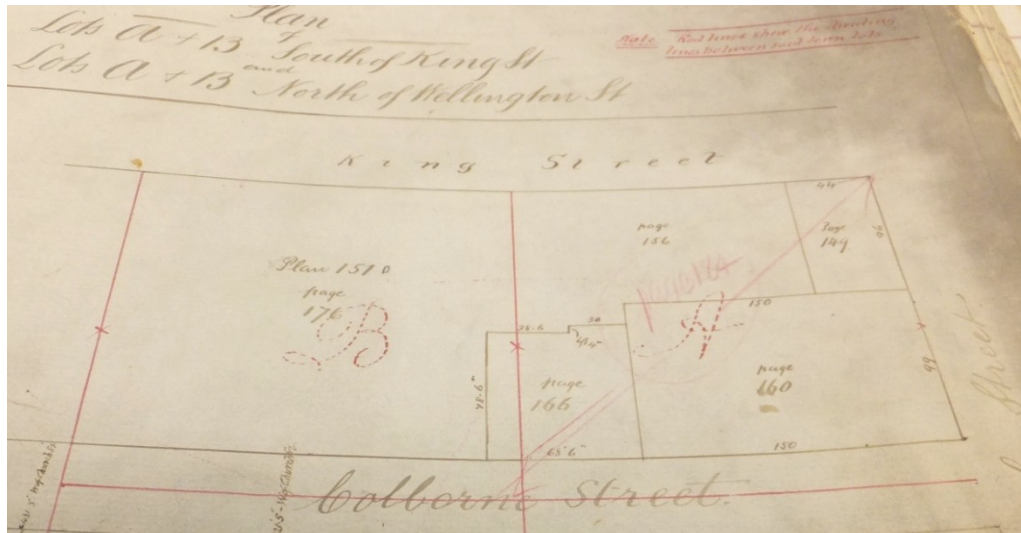




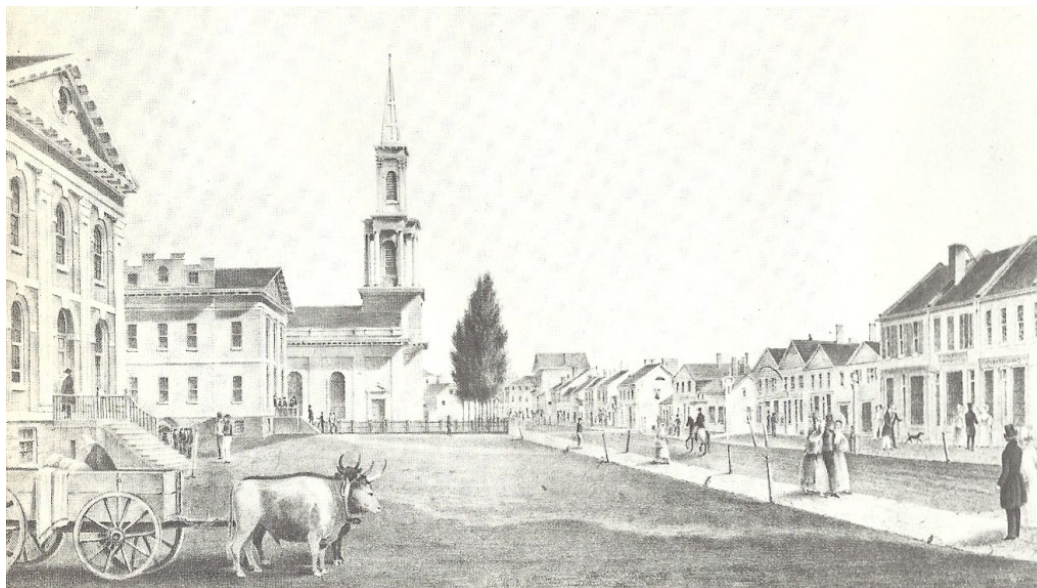
11. Underwriters' Insurance Bureau Atlas, January 1921 updated to January 1943:  
 showing the removal of the buildings west of the subject site



12. Underwriters' Insurance Bureau Atlas, July 1954 updated to January 1964; showing  
 the status of the block

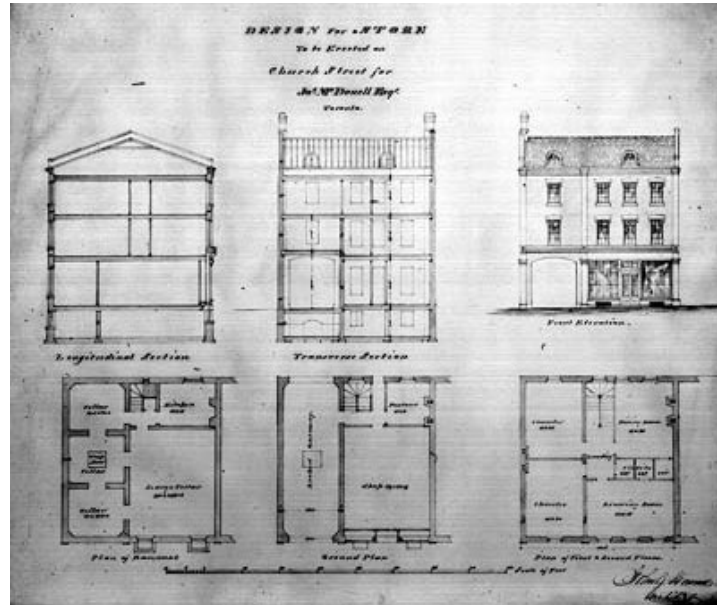


13. Extract, Plan of York: showing the location of Town Lot B on the south side of King Street East, west of Church Street, which was later subdivided under Plan D151 (Toronto Land Registry Office)



14. Illustration, William Young, c. 1835: showing King Street East, looking east toward St. James' Church with the courthouse and jail on the north (left) and commercial buildings on the south side of the street (right) (Baine and McMurray, 24)

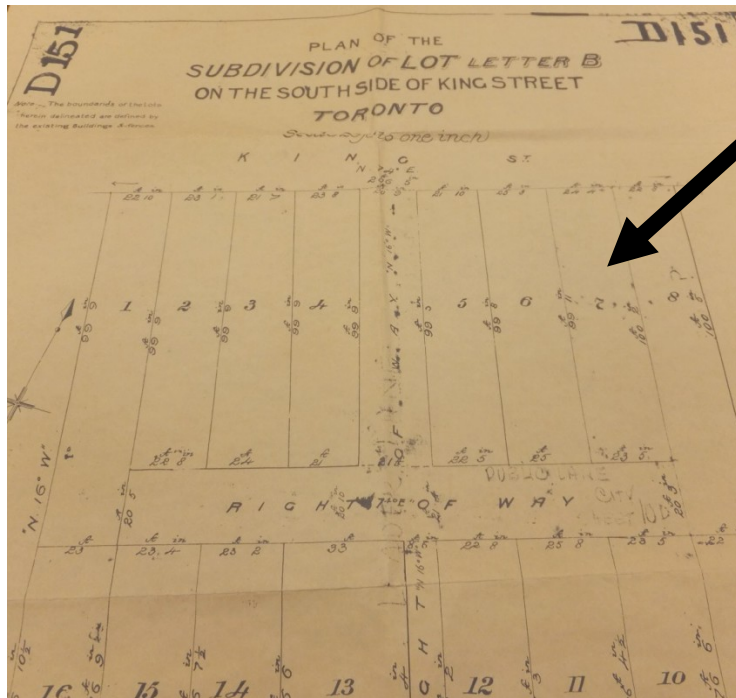




15. Drawing, Church Street Store for James McDonnell, c.1839: according to archival records, Howard also designed a store for “Mrs. Musson”, which was similar in appearance to the one illustrated above with its symmetrical flat-headed openings and gable roof with dormers. Photographs of Mary Ann Musson’s building are shown in the archival images that follow (Toronto Reference Library, Howard Collection, #248)



16. Archival Photograph, 1856: view east along the south side of King Street East from Leader Lane (underneath the “Paper” sign) showing the subject property with the gable roof and dormers (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1498, Item 2)

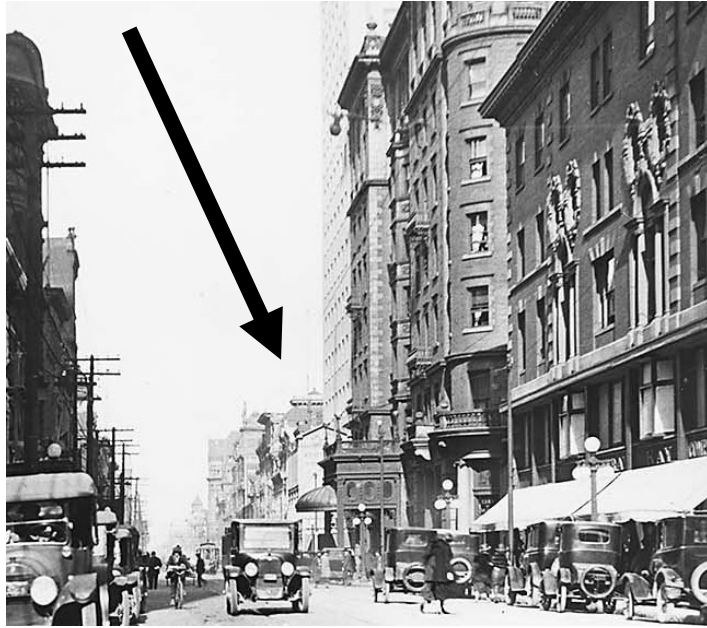


17. Plan D151, July 1873: subdividing part of Plan of York, Town Lot B where the property at 71 King Street East is located on Lot 7



18. Archival Photograph, 1919: showing the south side of King Street between the King Edward Hotel and St. Lawrence Hall where the west wall of the E. Harris Company Building has a sign reading "paints" (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1231, item 1129)





19. Archival Photograph, 1921: looking east along the south side of King Street East past the King Edward Hotel where the building at 71 King Street East retains its gable roof (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1244, Item 2522)



20. Photograph, 1977: showing the south side of King Street East between Church Street (left) and Leader Lane (right) with the E. Harris Company Building on the right (Toronto Historical Board)



21. Photograph, 71-73 King Street East, 1977: showing the existing condition (Toronto Historical Board)



22. Photograph, 71 King Street East: showing the vacant lot on the west side of the building, with Colborne Street in the background (Heritage Preservation Services, April 2012)

**HERITAGE PROPERTY RESEARCH AND EVALUATION REPORT**



**JOHN F. SMITH BUILDING**  
75 KING STREET EAST, TORONTO

Prepared by:

Heritage Preservation Services  
City Planning Division  
City of Toronto

May 2012



## 1. DESCRIPTION



Cover and above: principal (north) facade, 75 King Street East  
(Heritage Preservation Services, April 2012)

<b>75 King Street East: John F. Smith Building</b>	
ADDRESS	75 King Street East (south side, west of Church Street); Includes convenience address at #77 King
WARD	Ward 28 (Toronto Centre-Rosedale)
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	Plan D151, Lot 8
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	St. Lawrence Neighbourhood
HISTORICAL NAME	John F. Smith Building
CONSTRUCTION DATE	1839
ORIGINAL OWNER	John F. Smith
ORIGINAL USE	Commercial (store and offices)
CURRENT USE*	Commercial (store and offices) * This does not refer to permitted use(s) as defined by the Zoning By-law
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	None identified
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION/MATERIALS	Artificial stone cladding added
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	See Section 3
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	1948: storefront altered; 1956: alterations
CRITERIA	Design/Physical, Historical/Associative & Contextual
HERITAGE STATUS	Cultural Heritage Evaluation
RECORDER	Heritage Preservation Services: Kathryn Anderson
REPORT DATE	May 2012

## 2. BACKGROUND

This research and evaluation report describes the history, architecture and context of the property at 75 King Street West, and applies evaluation criteria to determine whether it merits inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties and designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The conclusions of the research and evaluation are found in Section 4 (Summary).

### i. HISTORICAL TIMELINE

Key Date	Historical Event
1819	Representatives of the Anglican Diocese of Toronto receive the patent for Lot B under the Plan of York
1825	Trustees for the Bank of Upper Canada purchase Lot B
1831	William Andrews leases Lot B and begins to sublease portions
1839	Present-day 75 King Street East is first identified on the tax assessment rolls with John F. Smith of Montreal identified as the “owner/lessee”
1866	The trustees of William Andrews's estate transfer the lease for Lot B to Reverend Henry J. Grasett <sup>16</sup>
1868	The Bank of Upper Canada, which remains the legal owners of the site, relinquishes its claim to Lot B to Grasett
1873	Grasett registers Plan D151 & leases the property including Lot 8 with #75 King to John Fiske
1948	The Incorporated Synod of the (Anglican) Diocese of Toronto sells part of Lot 8 to William Duncan, who receives a permit to alter the storefront

### ii. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

#### St. Lawrence Neighbourhood

Following the founding of the Town of York in 1793, a townsite was established in the ten-block area between George Street, Palace Street (now Front Street East), Berkeley Street, and a line north of present-day Adelaide Street East. The rapid growth of the community, particularly after the War of 1812, led to the westward extension of “Old Town” to Jarvis Street and beyond.<sup>17</sup> When the City of Toronto was incorporated in 1834, King Street East was described as “the main street through the centre of the town.”<sup>18</sup> The first St. James’ Church (forerunner to today’s St. James’ Cathedral) marked the northeast corner of King and Church Streets, with the courthouse and jail placed on the northwest side of this intersection. Apart from the institutional buildings, King Street was lined with shops, offices and dwellings (Image 14).

Old Town was devastated by the Great Fire of 1849, resulting in the rebuilding of St. James’ Church on its original site, with St. Lawrence Hall (containing offices, a market

<sup>16</sup> Spelling in legal documents

<sup>17</sup> George Williams’ Plan of the Town of York in 1813 sets the west boundary at New (Jarvis) Street

<sup>18</sup> George Walton, Commercial Directory, Street Guide and Register, 1833-34, 1834

and the “Great Hall” for public gatherings) completed in 1851 further east on King Street.<sup>19</sup> Part of the commercial district along King Street East survived the fire, with the remainder rebuilt with structures ranging from one to four stories, the latter being the maximum height deemed rentable in the decades before elevators were available.

King Street East retained its prominence as the city’s “main street” through much of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, although many of the commercial buildings were either rebuilt or remodelled in the elaborate architectural styles identified with the Victorian era. In 1884, King Street was enthusiastically described as having “the most brilliant and long-extended series of first-class stores of which Toronto can boast, her Palais Royal, her Regent Street.”<sup>20</sup> However, at this time the new “department stores” opened by entrepreneurs Timothy Eaton and Robert Simpson on Yonge Street near Queen Street began to draw commercial traffic away from the King Street corridor. In an attempt to stave off this movement, the upscale King Edward Hotel opened on King Street east of Yonge Street (with the first phase completed in 1902). By the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, the area now known as the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood remained a largely commercial and manufacturing district. The City of Toronto’s restoration of St. Lawrence Hall and the revitalization of St. Lawrence Market in the 1960s were complimented by the conversion of many of the surviving warehouses and stores for restaurants, offices and shops as part of the renaissance of the area.

#### King Street East between Leader Lane and Church Street

The intricate history of the properties on King Street East between Leader Lane and Church Street can be traced through land records, maps, directories, tax assessment rolls and other archival records, with part of the documentation reproduced in Section 6 below. Atlases from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries are illustrated in Images 4-12.

The lands along the south side of the street were subdivided according to the Plan of York as Town Lots A and B (Image 13), with Lot B found east of Leader Lane (originally Berczy Lane). In 1819, the patent for Lot B was granted to Reverend James Strachan, the Anglican Bishop of York, and other representatives of the Diocese of Toronto, who transferred the tract to the trustees of the Bank of Upper Canada six years later. Beginning in 1831, Lot B was leased by William Andrews, who was described in city directories as a church sexton with the “English Church” on Richmond Street.<sup>21</sup> Andrews’ name was first recorded in the tax assessment roll for St. Lawrence Ward in 1838 as the “owner or lessee” of tenanted property on King Street East. According to

---

<sup>19</sup> Only three original buildings from the pre-1834 Town of York have been identified as survivors: the Bank of Upper Canada (1827) and the neighbouring First Post Office (1834) at 252 Adelaide Street East, and Campbell House (c. 1822), which originally stood at Adelaide and Frederick Streets before it was relocated to 160 Queen Street West in 1974. After the Great Fire, the Second City Hall was built at 91 Front Street East, where a portion is retained at South St. Lawrence Market. The latter properties are designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act

<sup>20</sup> Dendy, 95

<sup>21</sup> When Brown’s Toronto City and Home District Directory, 1846-47 was published, Andrews was listed as a parish clerk at St. James’ Cathedral

land records, William Andrews' estate transferred the lease for Lot B to Reverend Henry J. Grasett in 1866. The trustees of the Bank of Upper Canada relinquished their claim to the land two years later, enabling Reverend Grasett to register Plan D151 on the tract in 1873 (Image 16).

### 75 King Street East

When the first city directory was published in 1834, only five buildings were recorded on the south side of King Street East from Church Street west to Henrietta Street.<sup>22</sup> The building at present-day 75 King Street East was in place by 1839 when the property was first recorded in the tax assessment roll for St. Lawrence Ward with Duncan McDonell listed as the tenant to "owner or lessee" John F. Smith, who was identified as a resident of Montreal. It seems probable that both McDonell and Smith were related to James M. McDonell, patentee and developer of adjoining Lot A (Samuel Smith McDonell and Sarah Smith McDonell were among the trustees of James M. McDonell's estate at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century). The building is shown in an 1856 photograph with signage for the "Colonist", the newspaper published by Smith's tenant, Samuel Thompson (Image 15). During the 1860s, Charles Thompson operated a grocery store on the ground floor of #75 King. The building was described in the 1864 tax assessment roll as a "store and warehouse extending to Colborne Street," which was previously illustrated on Boulton's 1858 atlas (Image 4).

After Reverend Grasett subdivided Lot B under Plan D151 in 1873, the property at 75 King was placed on Lot 8. Prior to the formal registration of the plan, John Fiske secured the lease for Lot 8 along with other neighbouring allotments (as shown on the Goad's Atlases attached as Images 7 and 8).<sup>23</sup> Fiske (1844-1910) founded a produce and commission company in Toronto, which was subsequently incorporated as an oil marketing enterprise. Apart from his family firm, Fiske was actively involved in the real estate and mortgage lending businesses during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Fiske rented the premises at #75 King to a series of tenants. Part of the building is shown in an illustration dated 1876 (Image 17). By September 1880 when the tax assessment roll was recorded, merchant John Damer was the tenant in the store front at #75 King, while another member of the Damer family operated his business on the Colborne Street end of the property. The J. Fiske Company subleased Lot 8 twice in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, but the family retained its presence on the site until the Synod sold the property in 1948. The new owner acquired a building permit to alter the first-floor storefront. As of the date of the writing of this report, no application or building permit has been uncovered for the alterations to the principal (north) facade.<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> By the time Cane's map of the City and Liberties of Toronto was produced in 1842, Henrietta Street had disappeared (Image 3)

<sup>23</sup> J. Fiske and Company received a building permit in 1882 for a brick addition to the company's store at neighbouring #69 King (Lot 6); the latter building was demolished in 1929

<sup>24</sup> The recladding is typical of the early 1960s, a period when the assessed value of the building increased

### iii. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The John F. Smith Building at 75 King Street East is shown in current and archival photographs found on the cover and in Sections 1 and 6 of this report. While the John F. Smith Building and the adjoining E. Harris Company Building at #71 King are the oldest extant structures in the block, both were updated in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As originally designed, the John F. Smith Building was typical of the commercial edifices of the early- to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century that featured Georgian designs with symmetrically-placed flat-headed window openings. The subject property has been reclad, but retains the pattern and placement of the fenestration and (apart from the removal of the dormers and additional glazing in the attic storey) the gable roof with firebreaks, as shown in the archival photograph from 1856 (Image 15).

### iv. CONTEXT

The property at 75 King Street East is shown on the location maps attached as Images 1 and 2. It is placed near the west end of a group of surviving buildings from the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that fill most of the block on the south side of King Street from Church Street (east ) to Leader Lane (west). The commercial shops between #71 King and Leader Lane were removed in 1929 for the proposed "Toronto Hotel".<sup>25</sup> Adjoining #75 King, the commercial blocks that date to the late 1830s (#71 King, with updates in the 20<sup>th</sup> century) and early 1840s (#79, 83 and 85 King) complement the John F. Smith Building in height and setback. The Albany Club at 91 King Street East and Tyrrell Building at #95 King represent the remodelling or replacement, respectively, of early 1840s edifices and mark the east end of the group. Earlier buildings at the southwest corner of King and Church Street were demolished in 1940 (Image 11)).

With their placement near the southwest corner of King Street East and Church Street, the John F. Smith Building and its neighbours overlook the intersection with St. James' Cathedral (1849-53 with later additions) on the northeast and the City Buildings at #107-125 King Street (dating to the 1840s), on the southeast.<sup>26</sup> Further east along the south side of King Street East at Victoria Street, the King Edward Hotel (1902) with its east addition (1920) is another local landmark that is designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. Behind the subject property, the buildings that once occupied the north side of Colborne Street were removed, but the opposite side of the street contains a warehouse (c. 1892) at #41-43 Colborne that is recognized on the City's heritage inventory.

---

<sup>25</sup> Designed by Toronto architect N. A. Armstrong in 1928, the City Directory for 1929 (published in 1930) described the hotel as "under construction". Likely a casualty of the Great Depression, the project was not completed and the vacant parcels became a parking lot

<sup>26</sup> St. James' Cathedral at 106 King Street East is designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, along with the City Buildings at #107-125 King



### 3. EVALUATION CHECKLIST

The following evaluation applies Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the Ontario Heritage Act: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. While the criteria are prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, the City of Toronto uses it when assessing properties for inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. The evaluation table is marked “N/A” if the criterion is “not applicable” to the property or X if it is applicable, with explanatory text below.

<b>Design or Physical Value</b>	
i. rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method	<b>X</b>
ii. displays high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	<b>N/A</b>
iii. demonstrates high degree of scientific or technical achievement	<b>N/A</b>

**Representative Example of a Type** – The John F. Smith Building is a representative example of a commercial building dating to the 1840s that contributes through its vintage, scale and setback to the group of extant structures on the south side of King Street East between Church Street and Leader Lane. Although the storefront has been altered and the north façade reclad, the pattern of fenestration in the upper stories is retained and the gable roof with firebreaks remains visible from King Street. It remains one of the oldest surviving buildings in Toronto.

<b>Historical or Associative Value</b>	
i. direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community	<b>N/A</b>
ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	<b>X</b>
iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	<b>N/A</b>

**Community** – The property at 75 King Street East contributes to an understanding of the significance of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood as it evolved from its origins as "Old Town," survived the Great Fire of 1849, emerged as the commercial and institutional heart of Toronto, and withstood the economic downturn of the area in the 20<sup>th</sup> century before it was revitalized in the 1960s with the restoration of the landmark St. Lawrence Hall and St. Lawrence Market, among other projects. The John F. Smith Building pre-dates the Great Fire and, through its remodelling in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, contributes to the continued vitality of Toronto's original "main street" in the city's oldest neighbourhood.

<b>Contextual Value</b>	
i. important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area	<b>X</b>
ii. physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings	<b>X</b>

**Character** – The property at 75 King Street East is significant in defining, maintaining and supporting the historic character of King Street in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, which is identified by the low scale and appearance of the surviving stores, hotels, banks, warehouses and institutional edifices. As a commercial building dating to the mid 1800s, the John F. Smith Building remains a significant component in a streetscape of surviving commercial and institutional edifices that contributes to the evolution of Toronto's oldest neighbourhood.

**Surroundings** – The John F. Smith Building is physically, visually and historically linked to its surroundings on King Street East in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood where it is placed near the west end of a group of commercial and institutional buildings from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries where it remains one of the oldest surviving structures in Toronto.

#### 4. SUMMARY

Following research and evaluation according to Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the property at 75 King Street East has design, associative and contextual values. Located on the south side of King Street East between Church Street (east) and Leader Lane (west), the John F. Smith Building is a representative example of a surviving commercial building dating to 1839 that, while altered, stands as one of the oldest remaining structures in Toronto. With its neighbours in the block, the property contributes to an understanding of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood where the John F. Smith Building was constructed on the community's major thoroughfare, survived the Great Fire of 1849, witnessed the development of King Street East as Toronto's commercial centre for most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and remained through its renaissance at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Contextually, as one of the oldest surviving commercial buildings on King Street that forms part of an important group of properties, the John F. Smith Building assists in supporting, maintaining and defining the historic character of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood where it is historically, visually and physically linked to its surroundings on the Town of York's original "main street."

#### 5. SOURCES

##### Archival Sources

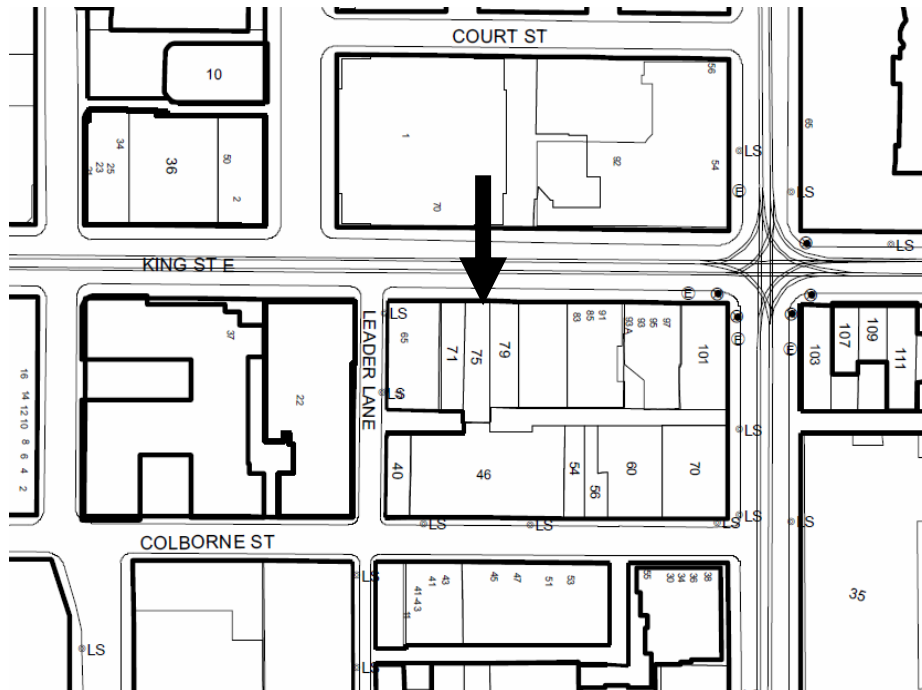
Abstract Indices of Deeds, Town of York, Lot B, and Plan D151, Lot 8  
 Assessment Rolls, City of Toronto, St. Lawrence Ward, 1834-91, and Ward 3, Division 1, 1892 ff.  
 Boulton's Atlas of the City of Toronto, 1858  
 Building Records, City of Toronto, Toronto and East York, #99238 (1948) and #39347 (1956)  
 Cane's Map of the City and Liberties of Toronto, 1842  
 City of Toronto Directories, 1834 ff.  
 Goad's Atlases, 1880-1923

John Fiske Fonds, Archives of Ontario, Fonds 164  
Photographs and Illustration, City of Toronto Archives and Toronto Reference Library  
(citations with images below)  
Underwriters' Insurance Bureau Atlases, January 1921 updated to July 1943, and July  
1954 updated to July 1964

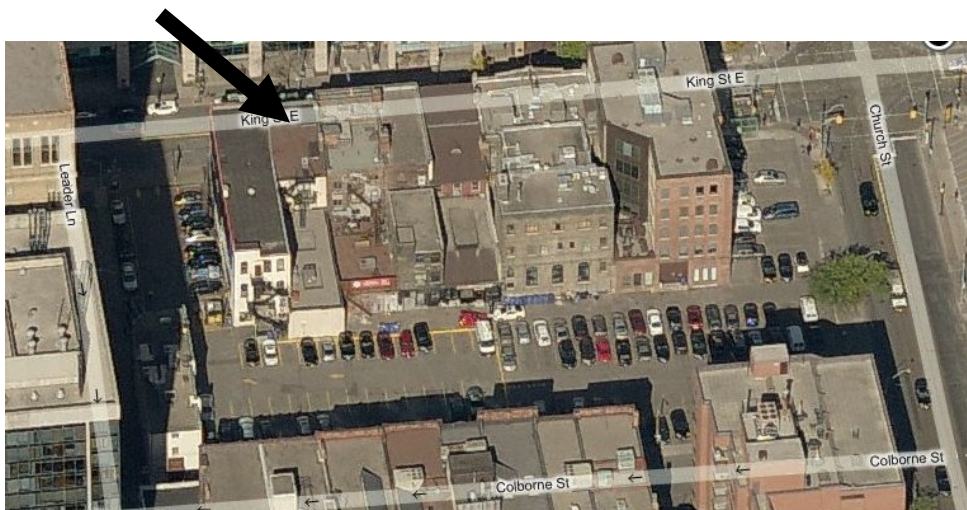
### Secondary Sources

Arthur, Eric, Toronto: no mean city, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. revised by Stephen A. Otto, 1986  
Baine, Richard p., and A. Lynn McMurray, Toronto: an urban study, 1970  
Blumenson, John, Ontario Architecture, 1990  
Careless, J. M. S., Toronto to 1918, 1984  
Dendy, William, Lost Toronto, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., revised 1993  
Dendy, William, and William Kilbourn, Toronto Observed, 1986  
"Early Toronto Newspapers, 1793-1867,"  
<http://www.edunetconnect.com/cat/oldnewspap/pap2.html>  
MacKinnon, Steve, Karen Teeple and Michele Dale, Toronto's Visual Legacy, 2009  
McHugh, Patricia, Toronto Architecture: a city guide, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1989  
Scadding, Henry, Toronto of Old (1873), reprint 1966

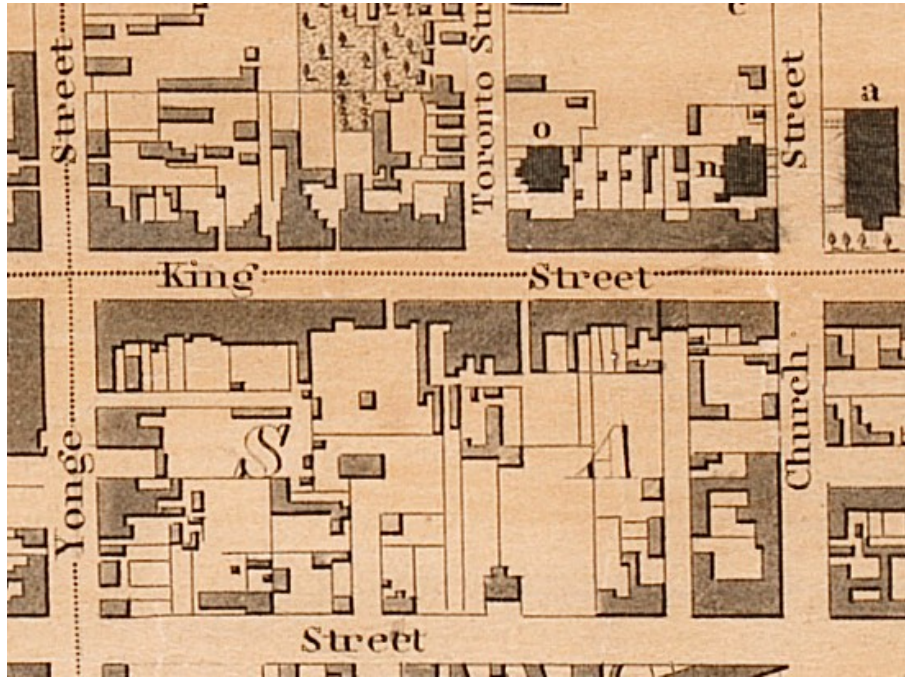
6. IMAGES – Historical atlases, followed by archival records and contemporary photographs; **arrows** mark the location of the subject property



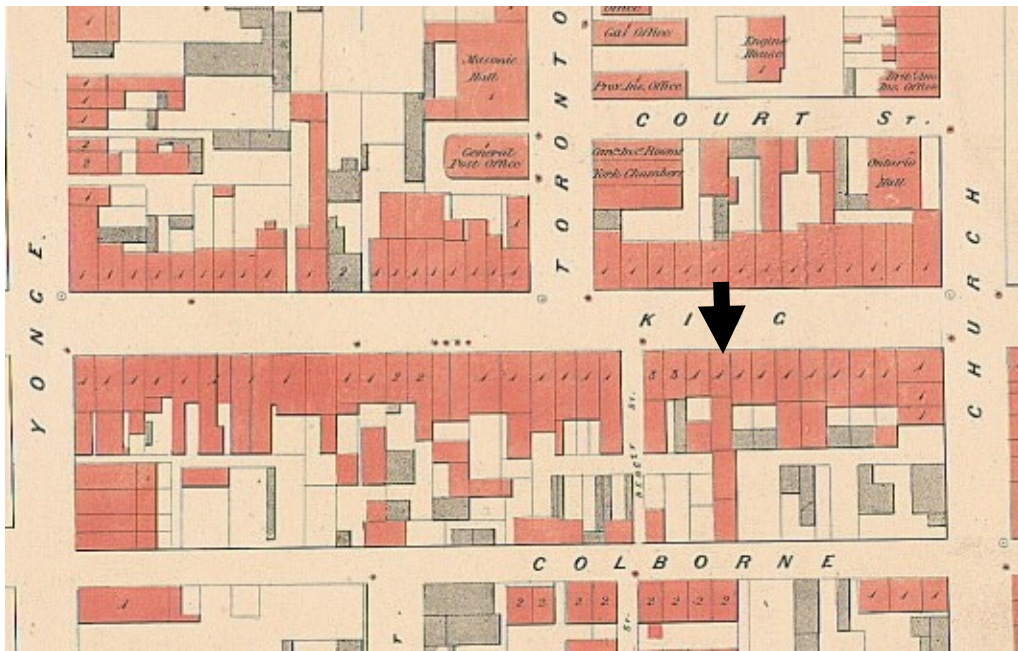
1. City of Toronto Property Data Map: showing the location of the property at 75 King Street East



2. Location Map: showing the roofs and rear (south) walls and additions of the buildings in the block between Leader Lane (left) and Church Street (right), including the subject building (<http://www.bing.com/maps>)

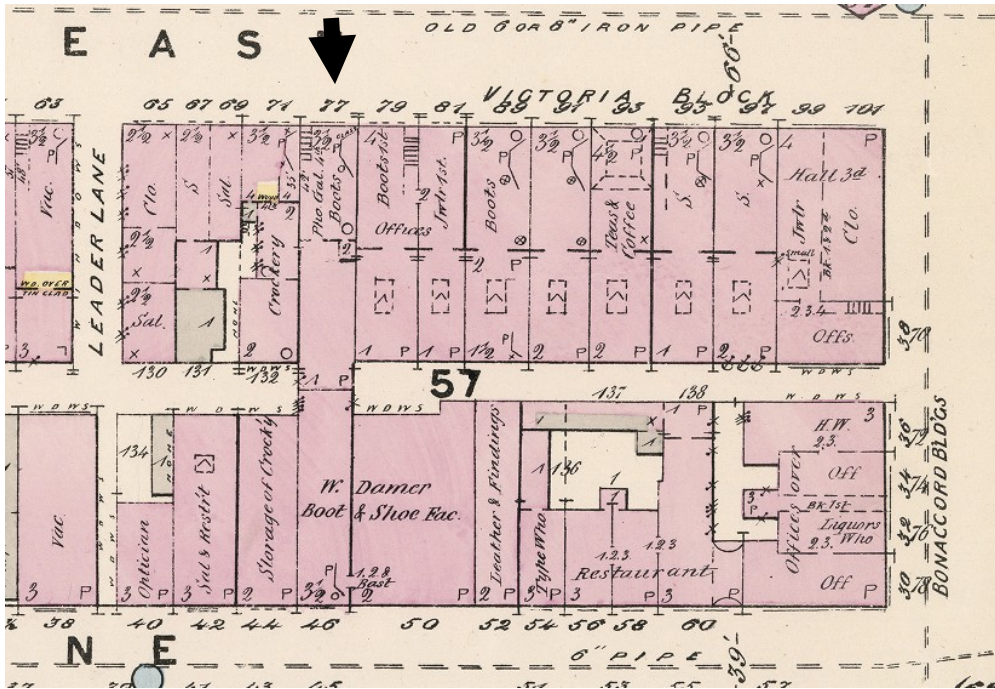


3. Cane's Map of the City and Liberties of Toronto, 1842: showing the commercial blocks along both sides of King Street East (including the subject property) prior to the Great Fire of 1849

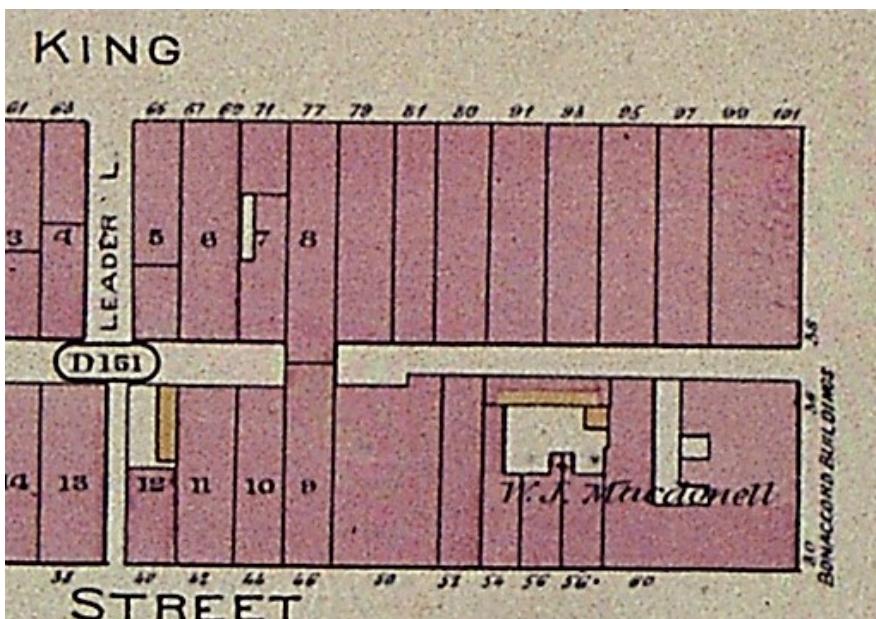


4. Boulton's Atlas of Toronto, 1858: showing the development of the block following the Great Fire of 1849

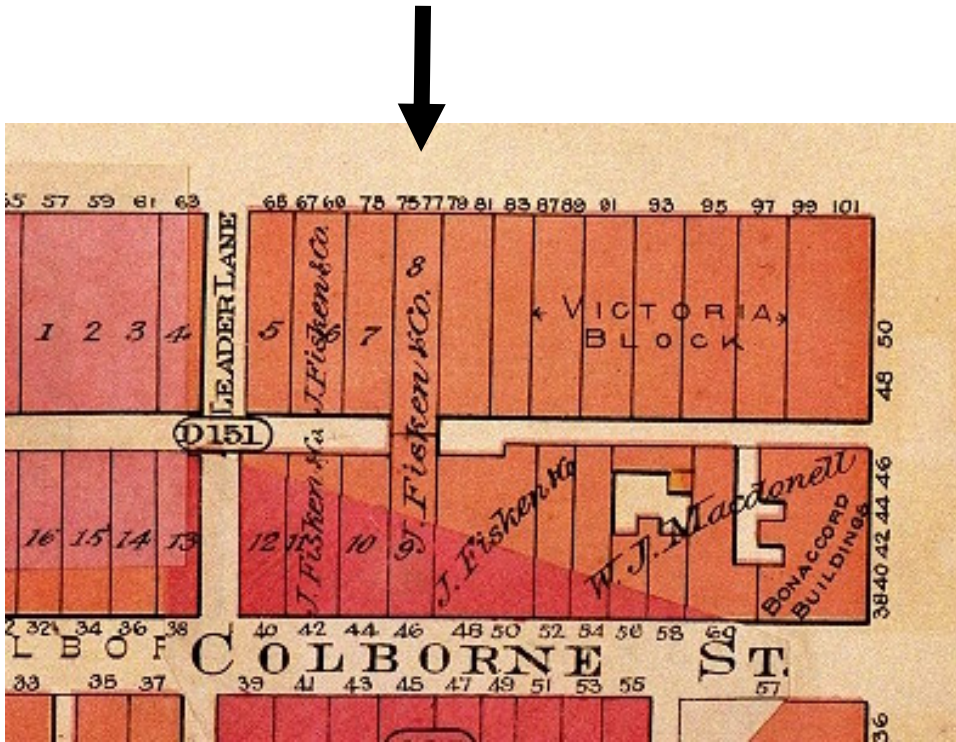




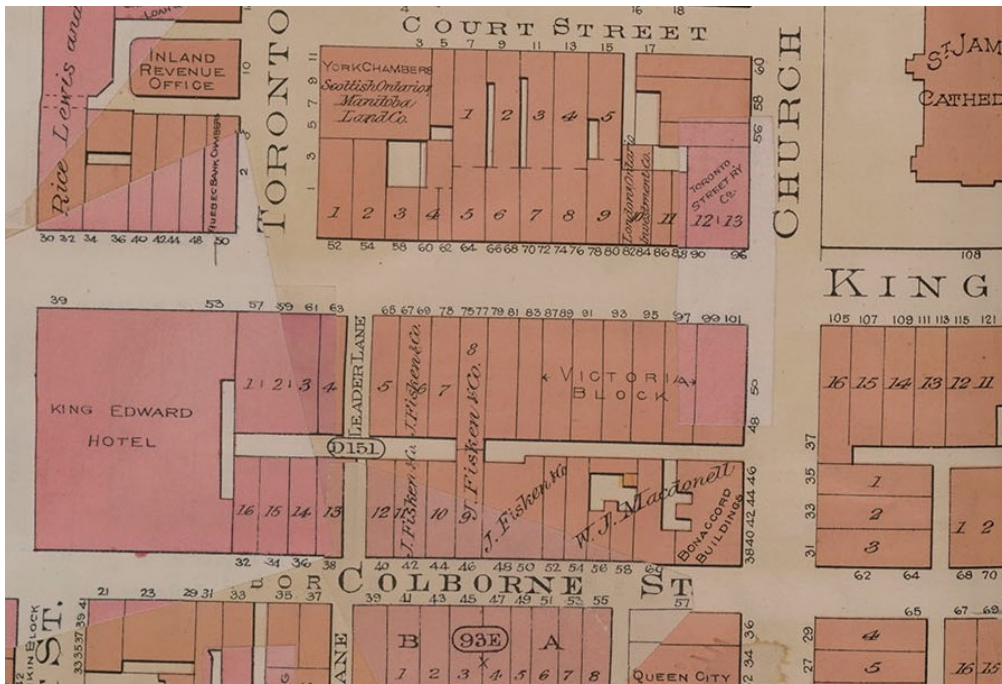
5. Goad's Atlas, 1880: showing the development of the block since 1858 where the subject property is marked "77" King



6. Goad's Atlas, 1884: the next update to the atlas shows the subdivision of Plan D151, where the John F. Smith Building is placed on Lot 8

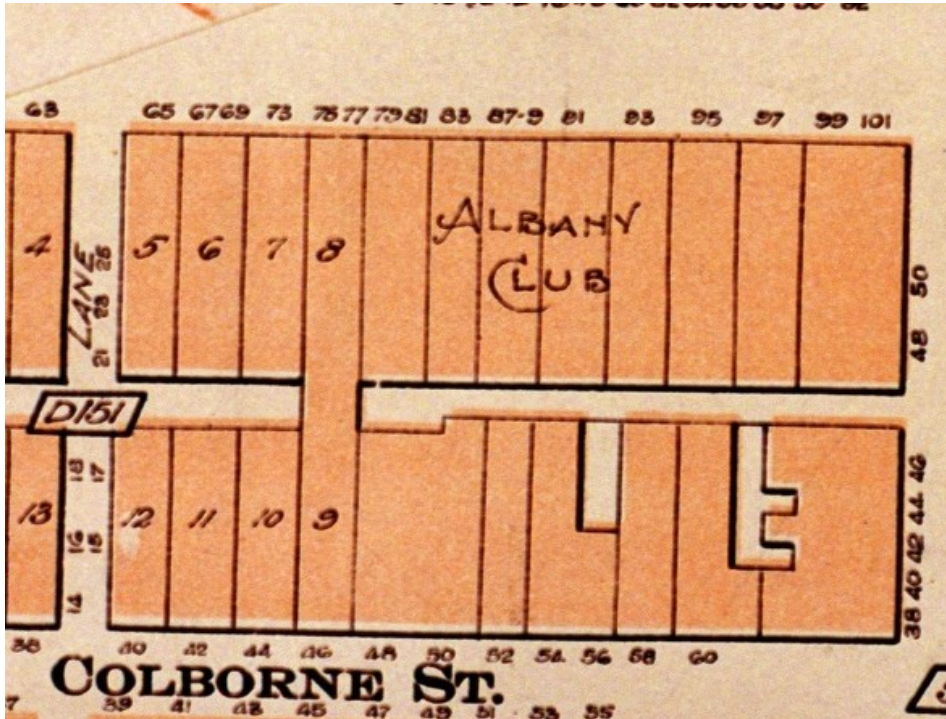


7. Goad's Atlas, 1890: showing the labeling of the lots associated with John Fiskens, where the subject property is marked "75-77" on Lot 8

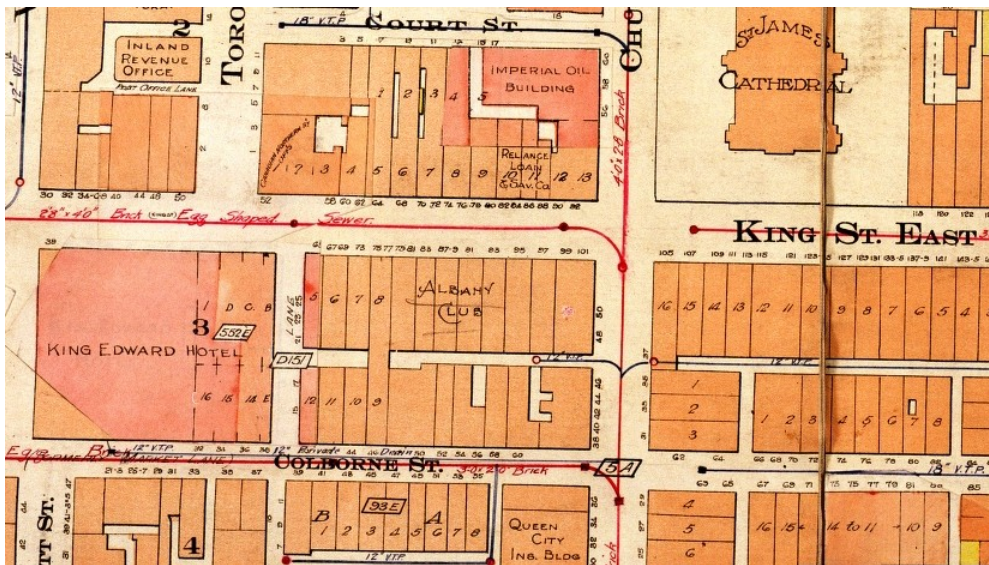


8. Goad's Atlas, 1890 revised to September 1903: on this update, there are no changes shown to the group of properties east of Leader Lane, where the King Edward Hotel was completed in 1902 (first phase) to the west on the southeast corner of King and Victoria Streets





9. Goad's Atlas, 1910 revised to 1912: where the Albany Club has been introduced mid-block, east of the subject property

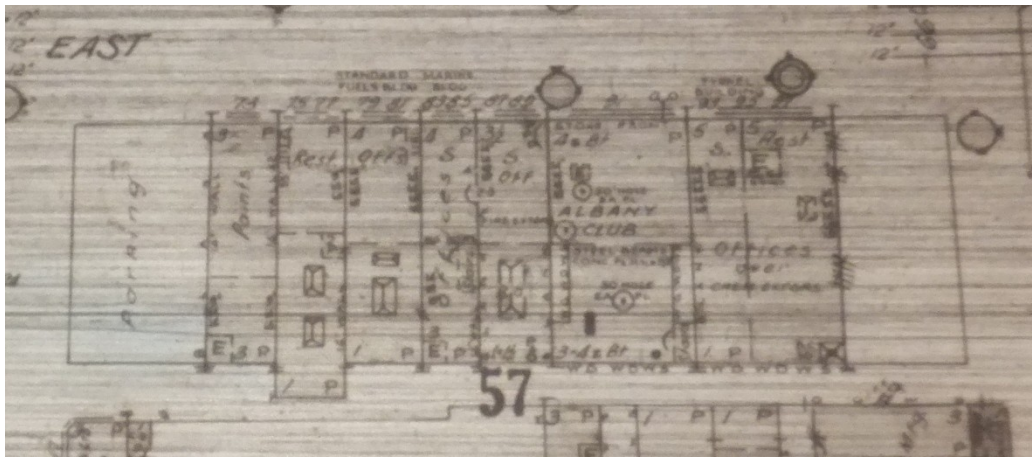


10. Goad's Atlas, 1910 revised to 1923: showing the status of the block on the last update to Goad's

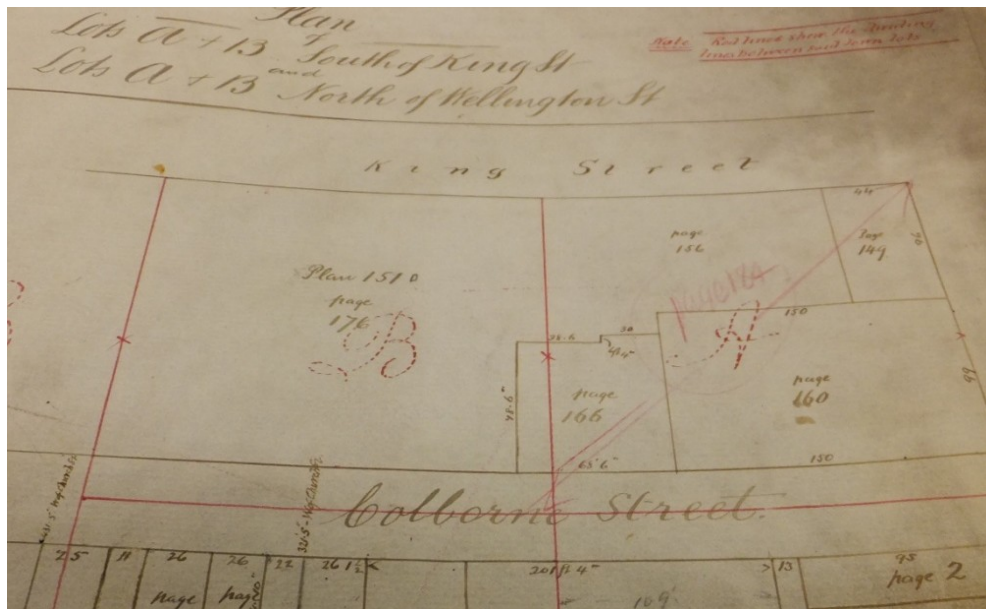




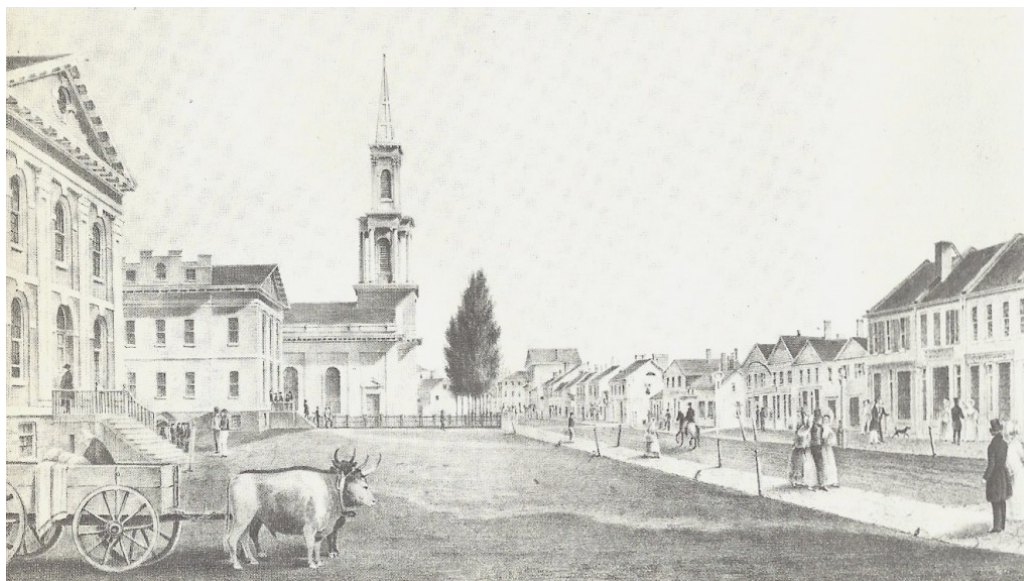
11. Underwriters' Insurance Bureau Atlas, January 1921 updated to January 1943:  
 showing the subject property marked #77 King



12. Underwriters' Insurance Bureau Atlas, July 1954 updated to January 1964:  
 showing the status of the block

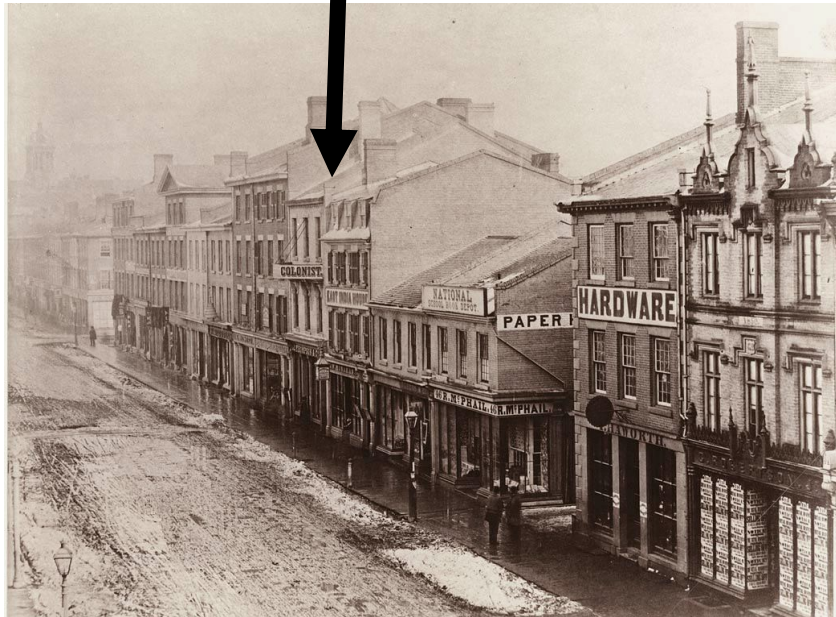


13. Plan of York: showing the portion of the plan with Town Lots A and B on the southwest corner of King Street East and Church Street (Land Registry Office)

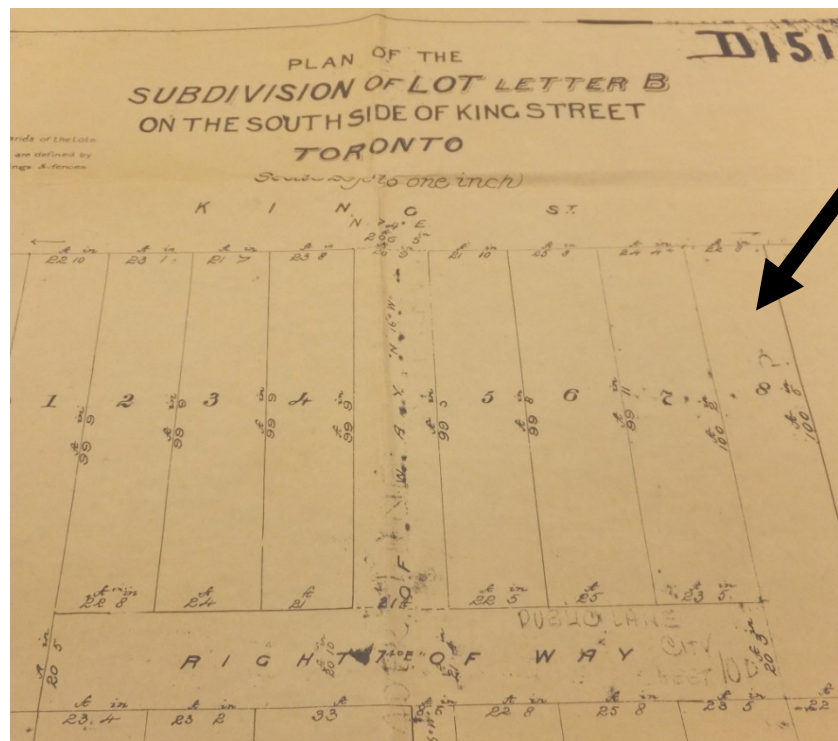


14. Illustration, William Young, c. 1835: showing King Street East, looking east toward St. James' Church with the original buildings on the south side of the street (right) (reproduced in Baine and McMurray, 24)





15. Archival Photograph, 1856: view east along the south side of King Street East from Leader Lane (underneath the “Paper” sign) showing the subject building at #75 King (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1498, Item 2)



16. Plan D151, July 1873: subdividing part of Plan of York, Town Lot B where the property at 75 King Street East is located on Lot 8 (right)



17. Lithograph, 1876: showing part of the building at #75 King on the right (Toronto Reference Library, #12409)



18. Archival Photograph, 1919: view of the south side of King Street, east of Leader Lane with the building at present-day #75 King (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1231, item 1129)



19. Archival Photograph, 1921: looking east along the south side of King Street East (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1244, Item 2522)



20. Photograph, 1977: showing the south side of King Street East between Church Street (left) and Leader Lane (right) (Toronto Historical Board)



**HERITAGE PROPERTY RESEARCH AND EVALUATION REPORT**



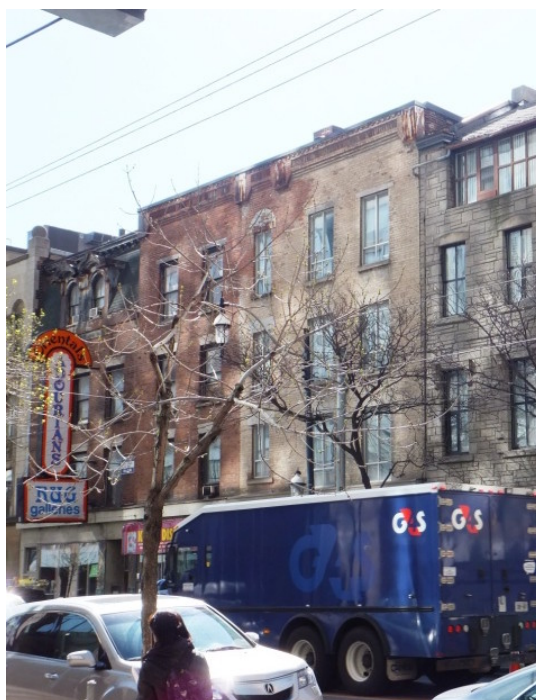
**JAMES MCDONELL BUILDINGS  
79 AND 83 KING STREET EAST, TORONTO**

Prepared by:

Heritage Preservation Services  
City Planning Division  
City of Toronto

May 2012

## 1. DESCRIPTION



Cover: north facades of 79 King Street East (right) & 83 King Street East (left);  
Above: the placement of the James McDonell Buildings in the block between Church Street and  
Leader Lane (Heritage Preservation Services, April 2012)

<b>79 and 83 King Street East: James McDonell Buildings</b>	
ADDRESS	79 and 83 King Street East (south side, west of Church Street); includes convenience address at #81 King
WARD	Ward 28 (Toronto Centre-Rosedale)
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	Plan of York, Part Lot A
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	St. Lawrence Neighbourhood
HISTORICAL NAME	James McDonell Buildings
CONSTRUCTION DATE	1843
ORIGINAL OWNER	James W. McDonell
ORIGINAL USE	Commercial (store and offices)
CURRENT USE*	Commercial (store and offices) * This does not refer to permitted use(s) as defined by the Zoning By-law
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	John Howard, architect
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION/MATERIALS	Brick construction, with brick and stone detailing
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	Georgian
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	79 King Street East: 1960, store front altered; 83 King Street East: 1951, store front altered
CRITERIA	Design/Physical, Historical/Associative & Contextual
HERITAGE STATUS	Cultural Heritage Evaluation
RECORDER	Heritage Preservation Services: Kathryn Anderson
REPORT DATE	May 2012

## 2. BACKGROUND

This research and evaluation report describes the history, architecture and context of the properties at 79 and 83 King Street East, and applies evaluation criteria to determine whether they merit inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties and designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The conclusions of the research and evaluation are found in Section 4 (Summary).

### i. HISTORICAL TIMELINE

<b>Key Date</b>	<b>Historical Event</b>
1811 Oct	John McDonell receives the patent for Lot A, Plan of York
1837	Architect & surveyor John Howard surveys McDonell's King Street tract
1838	James W. McDonell's name first appears in the tax assessment rolls as the owner of vacant land on Henrietta Street <sup>27</sup>
1839	The tax assessment rolls show James W. McDonell as the "owner or lessee" of nine buildings on the south side of King Street East, west of Church Street
1840	John Howard designs the five-unit "Victoria Row" and two adjoining commercial buildings at the west end (the subject properties)
1842	According to the tax assessment roll, six lots owned by James McDonell on King Street East stand vacant <sup>28</sup>
1842 Oct	James W. McDonell inherits his father's King Street East properties
1843	"Four vacant houses" stand on McDonell's parcel according to the tax assessment rolls
1844	McDonell is assessed for seven buildings comprising Victoria Row and its neighbours at present-day 79 & 83 King Street East
1865	James M. McDonell dies & Margaret L. McDonell becomes the executrix for his estate
1876	An illustration of the James McDonell Buildings shows the Second Empire detailing on #83 only
1880 Apr	Margaret L. McDonell mortgages "all lot letter A" for \$20,000
1880 Sept	The tax assessment roll describes the neighbouring "91 King" (part of Victoria Row) as an "unfinished building", suggesting that the alterations to the group were ongoing
1897	The property at #83 King is transferred to Emily McWilliams, one of the McDonell heirs
1912	William Fox acquires #83 King, retaining it until 1950
1921	James G. McDonell conveys the property at #79 King to Noel Marshall, who immediately transfers it the Standard Fuel Company (owners until 1956)
1951	A permit is issued to made changes to the store front at #83 King
1960	An application is made to alter the ground-floor store front at #79 King

<sup>27</sup> Located west of and parallel to Leader Lane, the street does not appear on maps after the 1830s, including Cane's (Image 3)

<sup>28</sup> The 1842 tax assessment roll for St. Lawrence Ward is undated



## ii. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### St. Lawrence Neighbourhood

Following the founding of the Town of York in 1793, a townsite was established in the ten-block area outlined by George Street, Palace Street (now Front Street East), Berkeley Street, and a line north of present-day Adelaide Street East. The rapid growth of the community, particularly after the War of 1812, led to the westward extension of “Old Town” to Jarvis Street and beyond.<sup>29</sup> When the City of Toronto was incorporated in 1834, King Street East was described as “the main street through the centre of the town.”<sup>30</sup> The first St. James’ Church (forerunner to today’s St. James’ Cathedral) marked the northeast corner of King and Church Streets, with the courthouse and jail placed on the northwest side of this intersection. Apart from the institutional buildings, King Street was lined with shops, offices and houses (Image 14).

Old Town was devastated by the Great Fire of 1849, resulting in the rebuilding of St. James’ Church on its original site, with St. Lawrence Hall (containing offices, a market and the “Great Hall” for public gatherings) completed in 1851 further east on King Street.<sup>31</sup> Part of the commercial district along King Street East survived the fire, with the remainder rebuilt with structures ranging from one to four stories, the latter being the maximum height deemed rentable in the decades before elevators were available.

King Street East retained its prominence as the city’s “main street” through much of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, although many of the commercial buildings were either rebuilt or remodelled in the elaborate architectural styles identified with the Victorian era. In 1884, King Street was enthusiastically described as having “the most brilliant and long-extended series of first-class stores of which Toronto can boast, her Palais Royal, her Regent Street.”<sup>32</sup> However, at this time the new “department stores” opened by entrepreneurs Timothy Eaton and Robert Simpson on Yonge Street near Queen Street began to draw commercial traffic away from the King Street corridor. In an attempt to stave off this movement, the upscale King Edward Hotel opened on King Street east of Yonge Street (with the first phase completed in 1902). By the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, the area now known as the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood remained a largely commercial and manufacturing district. The City of Toronto’s restoration of St. Lawrence Hall and the revitalization of St. Lawrence Market in the 1960s were complimented by the conversion

---

<sup>29</sup> George Williams’ Plan of the Town of York in 1813 sets the west boundary at New (Jarvis) Street

<sup>30</sup> George Walton, Commercial Directory, Street Guide and Register, 1833-34, 1834

<sup>31</sup> Only three original buildings from the pre-1834 Town of York have been identified as survivors: the Bank of Upper Canada (1827) and the neighbouring First Post Office (1834) at 252 Adelaide Street East, and Campbell House (c. 1822), which originally stood at Adelaide and Frederick Streets before it was relocated to 160 Queen Street West in 1974. After the Great Fire, the Second City Hall was built at 91 Front Street East, where a portion is retained at South St. Lawrence Market. The latter properties are designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act

<sup>32</sup> Dendy, 95

of many of the surviving warehouses and stores for restaurants, offices and shops as part of the renaissance of the area.

### King Street East between Leader Lane and Church Street

The intricate history of the properties on King Street East between Leader Lane and Church Street can be traced through land records, atlases, directories, tax assessment rolls and other archival records, some of which are reproduced in Section 6 below. The lands along the south side of the street were subdivided according to the Plan of York as Town Lots A and B (Image 13). Located at the southwest corner of King and Church (where it extended south to Wellington Street East), Lot A was patented to John McDonell in 1811.<sup>33</sup> This tract encompassed the buildings at present-day 79-95 King Street East, as well as others that were subsequently altered, replaced or demolished. The development of Lot A is illustrated on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century maps and atlases (Images 4-12).

### 79 and 83 King Street East

When the first city directory was published in 1834, only five buildings were recorded on the south side of King Street East from Church Street west to Henrietta Street.<sup>34</sup> John McDonell's properties were first referenced in the tax assessment roll for St. Lawrence Ward in 1838 when his son, James M. McDonell was recorded as the "owner or lessee" of nine buildings along King Street East. These original buildings appeared the year after James M. McDonell engaged Toronto architect and surveyor, John Howard to survey the land. While early city directories described James as a government clerk, by the 1840s he had assumed the position of "inspector of licenses" for the Home District. This increase in status coincided with his father's death in 1842 when James M. McDonell inherited Lot A. James immediately demolished the existing structures on King Street East and mortgaged the land.<sup>35</sup> This enabled him to construct "Victoria Row," a five-part block with shops, offices and residential units that included at the west end a pair of taller commercial buildings (the subject properties). The entire group had been designed by John Howard two years earlier. The plans and an archival photograph dated 1856 show the James McDonell Buildings on the right (Images 15 and 16).

Following James W. McDonell's death, his King Street properties were rented to a series of tenants. An archival photograph taken about 1890 (Image 18) illustrates how Victoria Row and the subject buildings were "altered in the fashionable Second Empire style, making it one of the first commercial examples of this style in Toronto."<sup>36</sup> While it is suggested that the changes were made in the mid 1860s, an illustration from an 1876 directory that captures the buildings at present-day 79 and 83 King Street East (Image 17)

---

<sup>33</sup> While there are different spellings of his surname in various archival sources, legal documents use "McDonell"

<sup>34</sup> By the time Cane's Map of the City and Liberties of Toronto was produced in 1842, Henrietta Street had disappeared (Image 3)

<sup>35</sup> The site stood vacant according to the tax assessment roll for 1842 (undated) and, in May of that year, McDonell entered into a mortgage with Christopher Widmer

<sup>36</sup> Dendy, 96

shows Second Empire detailing on #83 only.<sup>37</sup> Margaret L. McDonell mortgaged “all lot lettered A” for \$20,000 in April 1880 and less than six months later part of the site contained an “unfinished building”, indicating that the alterations to the group were ongoing.<sup>38</sup> The Second Empire style remained popular through the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, following the introduction of the design to Toronto with Henry Langley’s Government House (the Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario’s official residence at King Street West and Simcoe Street) in 1873.<sup>39</sup>

Margaret L. McDonell retained and rented the James McDonell Buildings until the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when members of her family began to disperse their land holdings.<sup>40</sup> Another McDonell heir, Emily McWilliams received the McDonell Building at #83 King in 1897 and, after her death in 1912 William Fox acquired it and its neighbour at #85 King (his estate relinquished the sites in 1950). In 1920, James G. McDonell sold the property at 79 King Street East to Noel Marshall, who immediately transferred it to the Standard Fuel Company of Toronto (which retained it until 1956). The store fronts at 79 and 83 King Street West were altered in 1960 and 1951, respectively.

#### Architect John Howard

The eminent Toronto architect John Howard prepared the plans dated 1840 for the commercial buildings at present-day 79 and 83 King Street East, along with Victoria Row (where a single unit remains at present-day #85 King). Born in England where he received his architectural training, Howard immigrated to Canada in 1831. With the support of Sir John Colborne, Howard accepted a position as a drawing master at Upper Canada College. Howard was appointed the first Surveyor and City Engineer for the newly incorporated City of Toronto in 1834. For the next 21 years, Howard laid out the municipality’s sewage system and networks of roads and sidewalks. He also supervised the surveying of building lots, the most extensive of which were plans for the expansion and development of the Toronto Harbour and Ashbridge’s Bay. While serving the corporation, Howard accepted both public and private architectural commissions, including the landmark Provincial Lunatic Asylum (later demolished) and extant projects such as St. John’s Anglican Church in York Mills, and his High Park residence named Colborne Lodge (now a city-run museum). Before preparing and executing his plans for Victoria Row, Howard had designed a store for “Mrs. Musson” (Mary Ann Musson) on King Street East (which remains in altered form at #71 King) and along the Church Street frontage of James McDonell’s property.

---

<sup>37</sup> Dendy, 96

<sup>38</sup> Building permits do not survive prior to 1882

<sup>39</sup> Named for the reign of Napoleon III, the Second Empire style emerged in France during the mid 1800s with the unveiling of the New Louvre in a scheme blending features from Italian Renaissance architecture with classical French designs

<sup>40</sup> The western-most section of the five-part Victoria Row survives today at #85 King. The two neighbouring units to the east were acquired by the Albany Club, which remodeled the King Street façade in 1930. The two units of Victoria Row at the east end were demolished in 1912 and replaced by the Tyrrell Building at #95 King

### iii. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The James McDonell Buildings at 79 and 83 King Street East are shown in current and archival photographs found on the cover and in Sections 1 and 6 of this report. The elevation drawn by architect John Howard (Image 15) indicates that the buildings were originally designed in the Georgian style favoured for commercial buildings in Toronto in the early- to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and "characterized by uncluttered designs based on an adherence to conventional rules of symmetry and proportion."<sup>41</sup> These structures were updated in the later 19<sup>th</sup> century in the popular Second Empire style, characterized by the distinctive mansard or double-gable roof. The illustration from 1876 (Image 17) and the photograph dated about 1890 (Image 18) show the changes to #83 King. Today, a 'shadow' of a pediment survives in the third-floor opening in the east bay of #79 King.

The James McDonell Buildings rise three stories above storefronts that have been altered. Clad with brick, 79 King Street East extends three bays, while its neighbour at #83 King is narrower at two bays. In each building, the upper two stories feature symmetrically placed flat-headed window openings with limestone lintels and sills. Although the mansard roofs with dormers identified with the late 19<sup>th</sup> century updates to the buildings have been removed, the classical detailing along the flat rooflines survives.

### iv. CONTEXT

The adjoining properties at 79 and 83 King Street East are shown on the location maps attached as Images 1 and 2. The James McDonell Buildings are placed near the centre of the collection of surviving buildings from the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that fill most of the block on the south side of King Street from Church Street (east) to Leader Lane (west). At the east end, the commercial shops between #71 King and Leader Lane were removed in 1929 for the proposed "Toronto Hotel".<sup>42</sup> On either side of the James McDonell Buildings, the properties at #71, 75 and 85 King contain commercial blocks dating to the late 1830s or early 1840s that complement the subject sites in scale and setback. Further east, the Albany Club at 91 King Street East and Tyrrell Building at #95 King represent the remodelling or replacement, respectively, of early 1840s edifices and mark the east end of the group. Earlier buildings at the southwest corner of King and Church Street were demolished in 1940 (Image 11).

With their placement near the southwest corner of King Street East and Church Street, the James McDonell Buildings and their neighbours overlook the intersection with St. James' Cathedral (1849-53 with later additions) on the northeast and the City Buildings at #107-125 King Street (dating to the 1840s), on the southeast.<sup>43</sup> Further west along the south side of King Street East at Victoria Street, the King Edward Hotel (1902) with its

---

<sup>41</sup> Blumenson, 5

<sup>42</sup> Designed by Toronto architect N. A. Armstrong in 1928, the City Directory for 1929 (published in 1930) described the hotel as "under construction". Likely a casualty of the Great Depression, the project was not completed and the vacant parcels became a parking lot

<sup>43</sup> St. James' Cathedral at 106 King Street East, along with the City Buildings from the 1840s at #107-125 King are designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act

east addition (1920) is another local landmark that is designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. Behind the subject properties, the buildings that once occupied the north side of Colborne Street were removed, but the opposite side of the street contains a warehouse (c. 1892) at #41-43 Colborne that is recognized on the City's heritage inventory.

### 3. EVALUATION CHECKLIST

The following evaluation applies Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the Ontario Heritage Act: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. While the criteria are prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, the City of Toronto uses it when assessing properties for inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. The evaluation table is marked "N/A" if the criterion is "not applicable" to the property or X if it is applicable, with explanatory text below.

<b>Design or Physical Value</b>	
i. rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method	<b>X</b>
ii. displays high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	<b>N/A</b>
iii. demonstrates high degree of scientific or technical achievement	<b>N/A</b>

**Representative Example** – The James McDonell Buildings are important representative examples of commercial buildings from the 1840s (with subsequent updates) that contribute through their vintage and scale to the group of extant structures that remain on the south side of King Street East between Church Street and Leader Lane. They are among the oldest remaining buildings in Toronto.

<b>Historical or Associative Value</b>	
i. direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community	<b>N/A</b>
ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	<b>X</b>
iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	<b>X</b>

**Community** – The properties at 79 and 83 King Street East contribute to an understanding of the significance of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood as it evolved from its origins as "Old Town," survived the Great Fire of 1849, emerged as the commercial and institutional heart of Toronto, and withstood the economic downturn of the area in the 20<sup>th</sup> century before it was revitalized in the 1960s with the restoration of the landmark St. Lawrence Hall and St. Lawrence Market, among other projects. The James McDonell Buildings pre-date the Great Fire and, through their updating in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and afterward, have contributed to the continuing vitality of Toronto's original "main street" in the city's oldest neighbourhood.



**Architect** - The James McDonell Buildings are associated with the career of the notable early Toronto architect John Howard, who undertook the projects as private commissions while serving as the City of Toronto's official surveyor and engineer. With the demolition of much of Howard's portfolio, these structures (although altered) remain important surviving examples of his work.

<b>Contextual Value</b>	
i. important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area	<b>X</b>
ii. physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings	<b>X</b>
iii. landmark	<b>N/A</b>

**Character** – The properties at 79 and 83 King Street East are significant in defining, maintaining and supporting the historic character of King Street in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, which is identified by the low scale and appearance of the surviving stores, banks, hotels, warehouses and institutional edifices. As commercial buildings dating to the mid 1800s that were updated over time, the James McDonell Buildings remain integral components in a streetscape of surviving commercial and institutional edifices where they contribute to the evolution of Toronto's oldest neighbourhood.

**Surroundings** – The James McDonell Buildings are physically, visually and historically linked to their surroundings on King Street East in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood where they stand as part of a collection of commercial and institutional buildings from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that includes some of the oldest remaining structures in Toronto.

#### 4. SUMMARY

Following research and evaluation according to Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the properties at 79 and 83 King Street East have design, associative and contextual values. Located on the south side of King Street East between Church Street (east) and Leader Lane (west), the James McDonell Buildings are representative examples of surviving commercial buildings dating to the early 1840s that, while altered, are among the oldest surviving structures in Toronto. With their neighbours in the block, the James McDonell Buildings contribute to an understanding of the evolution of King Street East from its origins as the city's founding neighbourhood that survived the Great Fire of 1849, its development as Toronto's commercial centre for most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and its renaissance at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Contextually, the properties at 79 and 83 King Street East assist in supporting, maintaining and defining the historic character of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood where the James McDonell Buildings are historically, visually and physically linked to their surroundings on the Town of York's original "main street."

## 5. SOURCES

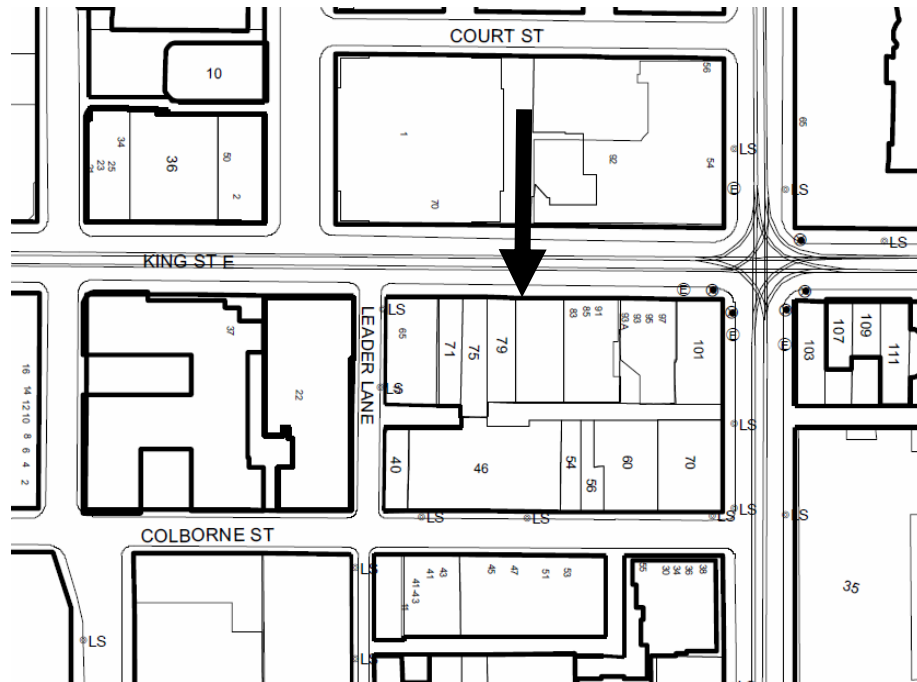
### Archival Sources

Abstract Indices of Deeds, Town of York Plan, Lot A  
Assessment Rolls, City of Toronto, St. Lawrence Ward, 1834-91, and Ward 3, Division 1, 1892 ff.  
Boulton's Atlas of the City of Toronto, 1858  
Building Records, City of Toronto, Toronto and East York, #12231 (March 1951) and #60214 (June 1960)  
Cane's Map of the City and Liberties of Toronto, 1842  
City of Toronto Directories, 1834 ff.  
Goad's Atlases, 1880-1923  
Photographs and Illustration, City of Toronto Archives and Toronto Reference Library (citations with images below)  
Underwriters' Insurance Bureau Atlases, January 1921 updated to July 1945, and July 1954 updated to July 1964

### Secondary Sources

Arthur, Eric, Toronto: no mean city, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. revised by Stephen A. Otto, 1986  
Baine, Richard p., and A. Lynn McMurray, Toronto: an urban study, 1970  
Blumenson, John, Ontario Architecture, 1990  
Careless, J. M. S., Toronto to 1918, 1984  
Dendy, William, Lost Toronto, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., revised 1993  
Dendy, William, and William Kilbourn, Toronto Observed, 1986  
"John George Howard," entry in the Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800-1950, <http://www.dictionarofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1532>  
MacKinnon, Steve, Karen Teeple and Michele Dale, Toronto's Visual Legacy, 2009  
McHugh, Patricia, Toronto Architecture: a city guide, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1989  
Scadding, Henry, Toronto of Old (1873), reprint 1966  
Smith, William Henry, Smith's Canadian Gazetteer, 1846  
"The Textures of a Lost Toronto: John Howard's Documentary Art and Drawings, 1830s-80s," <http://www.toronto.ca/culture/howard.htm>

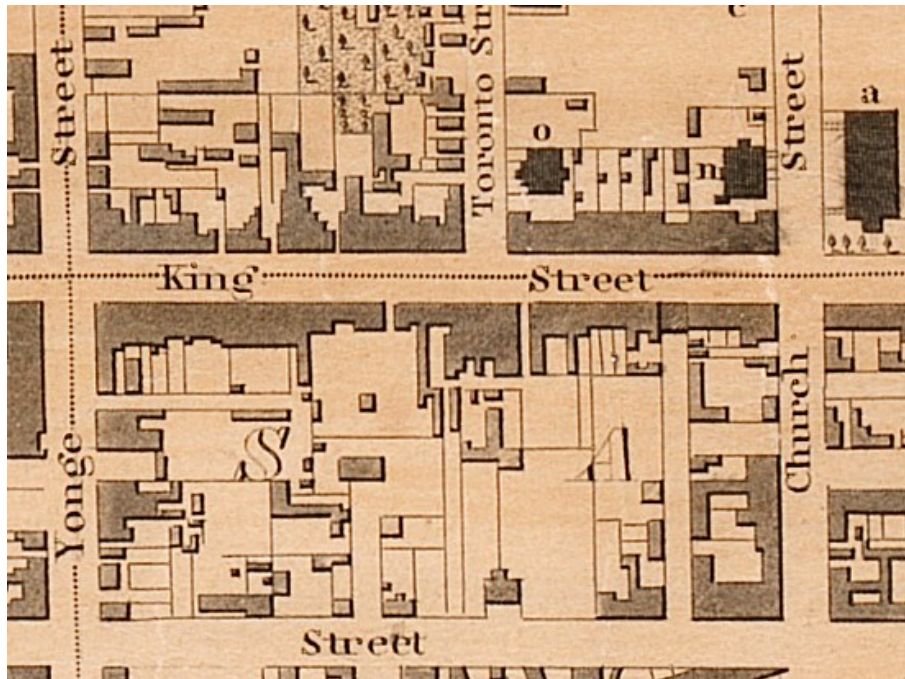
6. IMAGES – Historical atlases, followed by archival records and contemporary photographs; **arrows** mark the location of the subject property



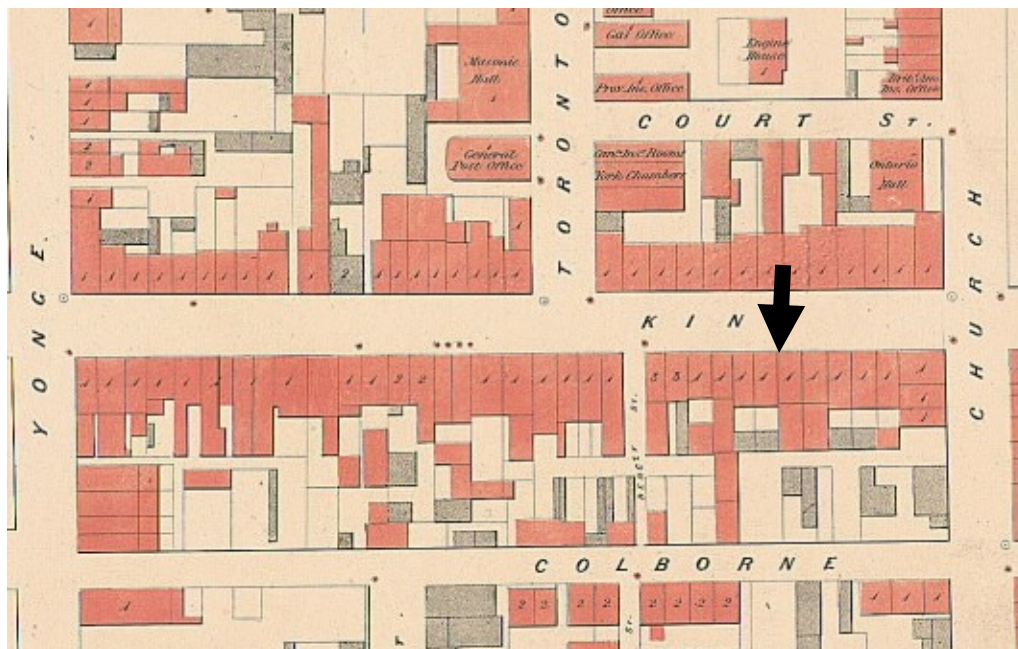
1. City of Toronto Property Data Map: showing the location of the properties at 79 and 83 King Street East



2. Location Map: showing the roofs and rear (south) walls and additions of the buildings in the block between Leader Lane (left) and Church Street (right), including the subject buildings (<http://www.bing.com/maps>)

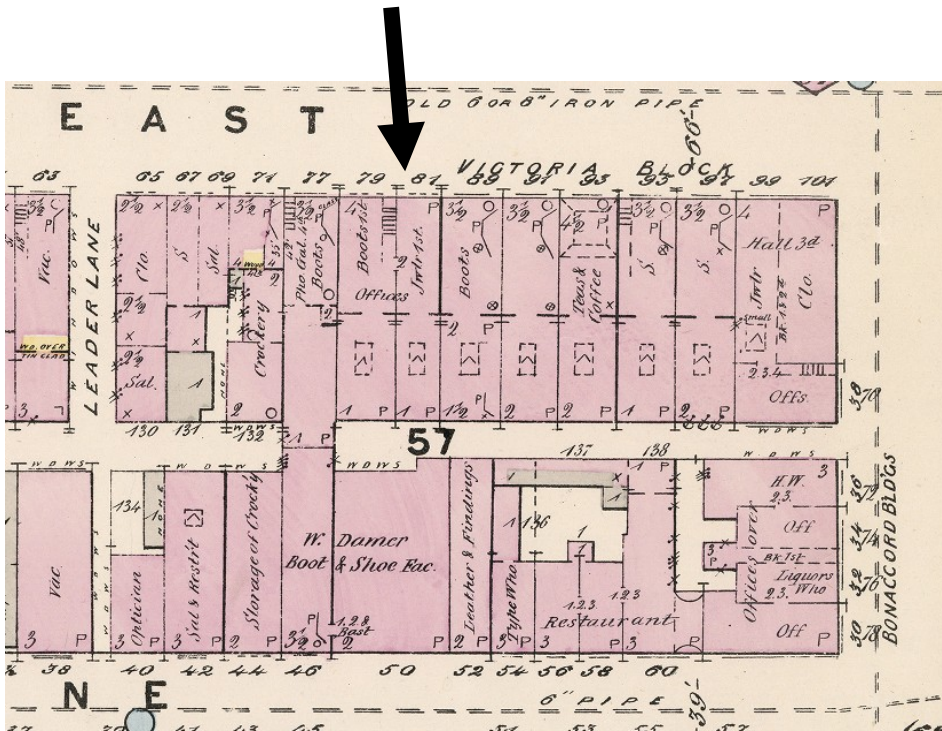


3. Cane's Map of the City and Liberties of Toronto, 1842: showing the commercial blocks along both sides of King Street East (including the subject properties) prior to the Great Fire of 1849

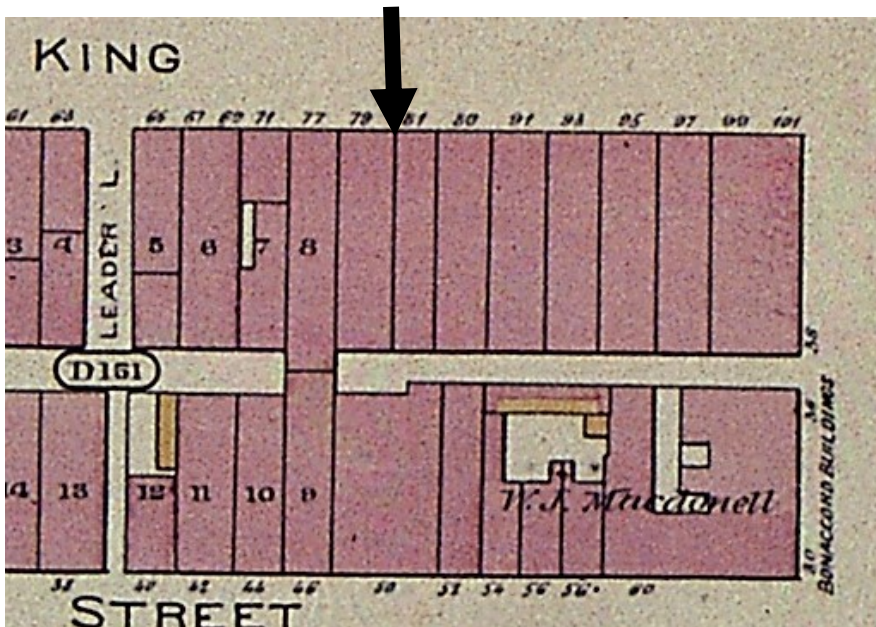


4. Boulton's Atlas of Toronto, 1858: showing the James McDonnell Buildings on the south side of King Street East, west of Church Street



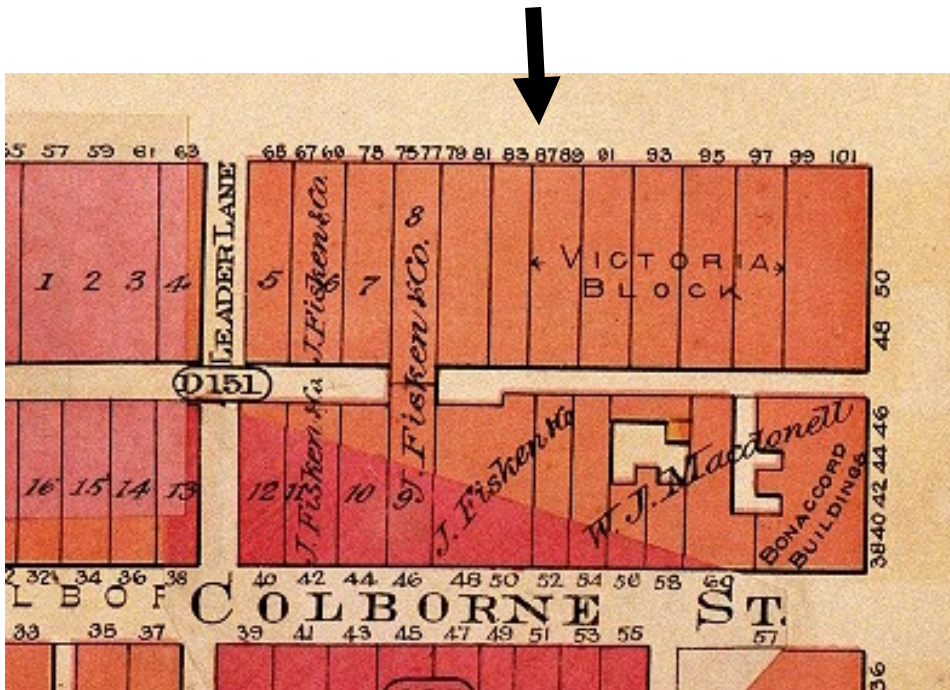


5. Goad's Atlas, 1880: showing the development of the block since 1858 where the subject properties stand at the west end of "Victoria Block"



6. Goad's Atlas, 1884: the subject properties are located west (right) of Lot 8, and the labeling "W. J. Macdonnell" refers to James W. McDonell's properties along King, Church and Colborne Streets

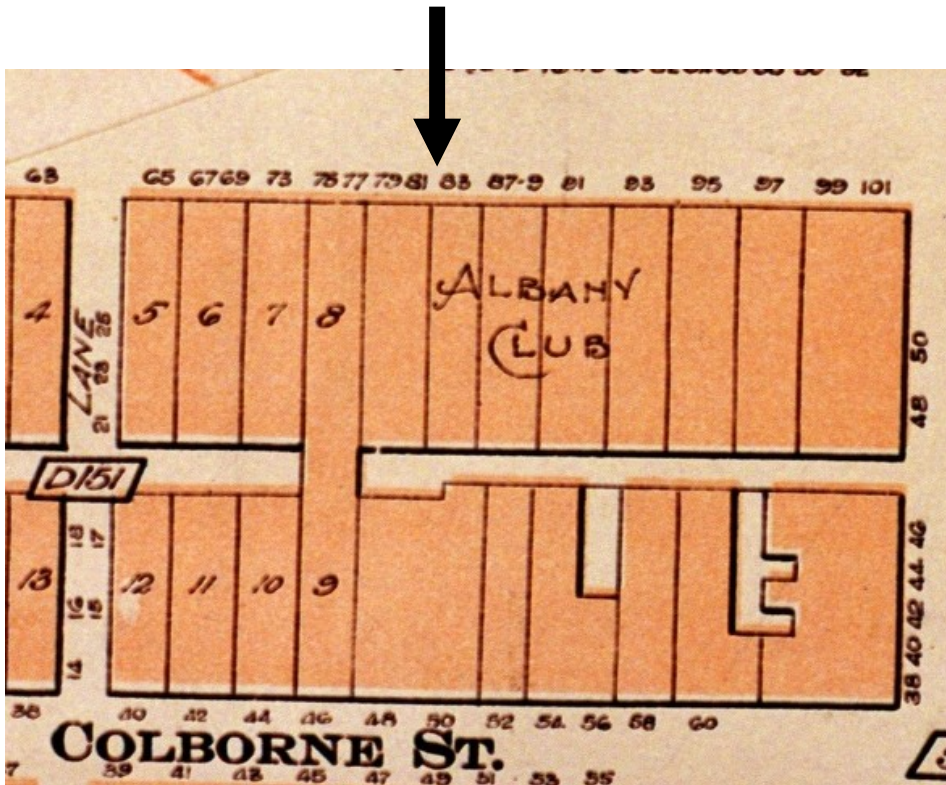




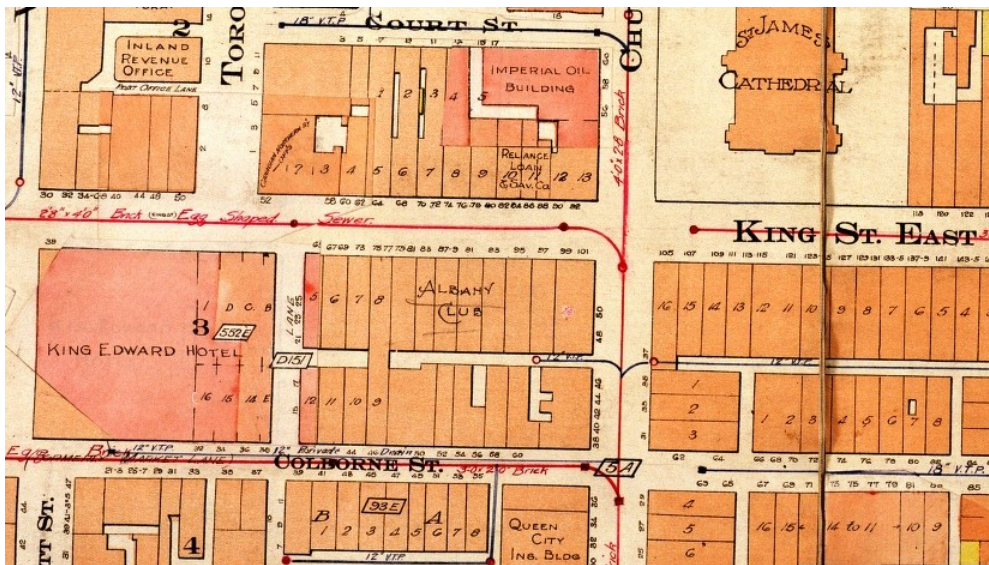
7. Goad's Atlas, 1890: Victoria Row is labeled as “Victoria Block”, with the James McDonell Buildings on the west at #79-81 and #83 King



8. Goad's Atlas, 1890 revised to September 1903: on this update, there are no changes shown to the group of properties east of Leader Lane, where the King Edward Hotel was completed in 1902 (first phase) to the west on the southeast corner of King and Victoria Streets



9. Goad's Atlas, 1910 revised to 1912: part of the block is labeled the “Albany Club”, which acquired parts of Victoria Row east of the subject properties



10. Goad's Atlas, 1910 revised to 1923: showing the status of the block on the last update to Goad's

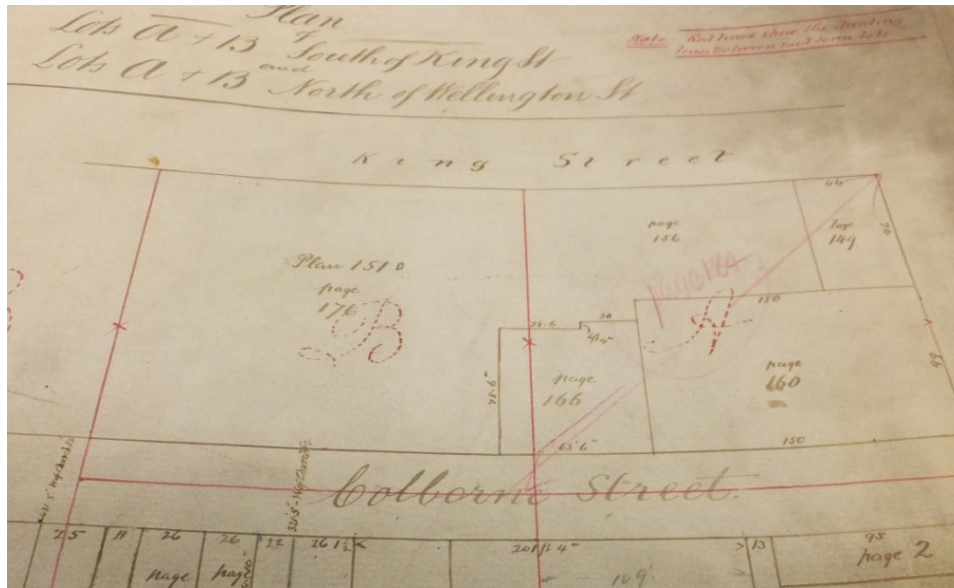




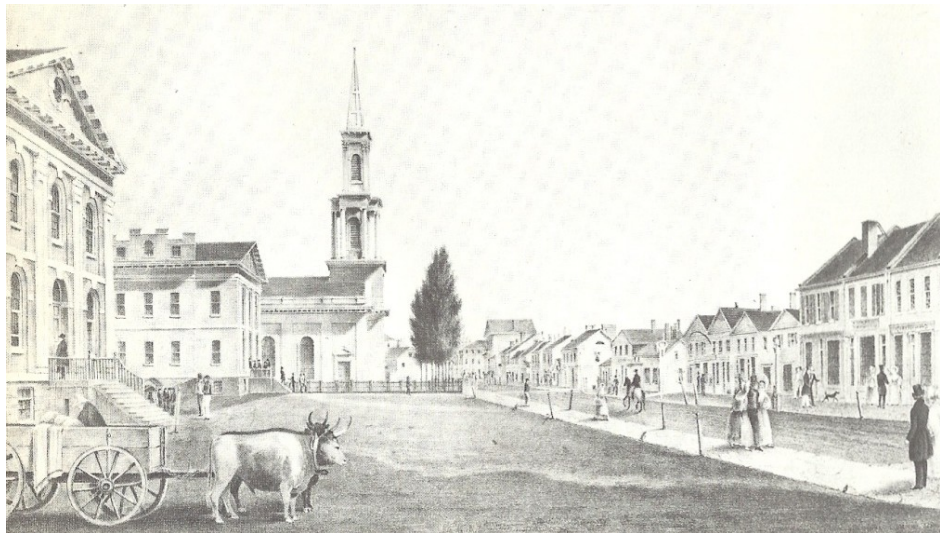
11. Underwriters' Insurance Bureau Atlas, January 1921 updated to January 1943:  
 showing the subject properties marked #79-81 and #83-85 King



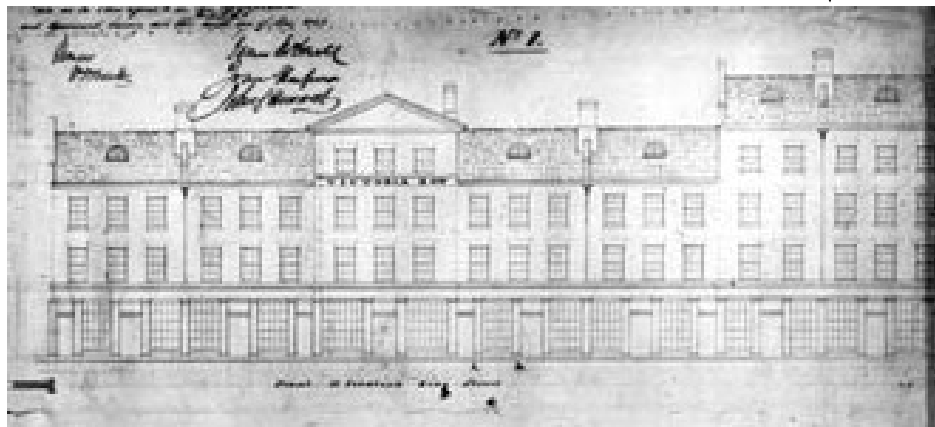
12. Underwriters' Insurance Bureau Atlas, July 1954 updated to January 1964: the  
 buildings at either end of the block were demolished and have stood vacant since



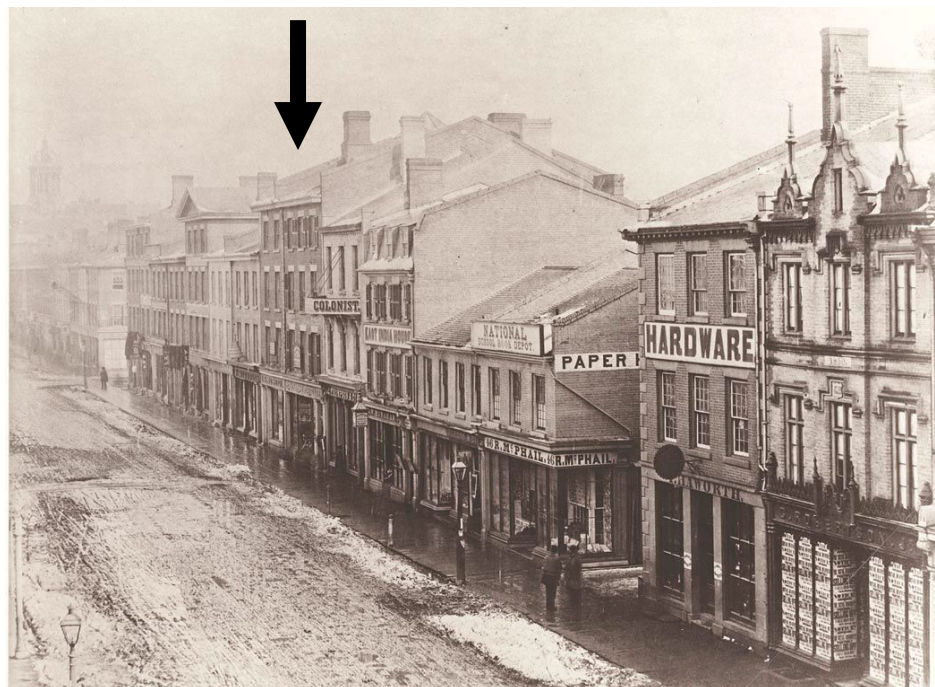
13. Plan of York: showing the portion of the plan with Town Lots A and B on the southwest corner of King Street East and Church Street (Land Registry Office)



14. Illustration, William Young, c. 1835: showing King Street East, looking east toward St. James' Church with the original buildings on the south side of the street (right) (reproduced in Baine and McMurray, 24)



15. Drawing, Victoria Row, 1842: plans by architect John Howard for the five-unit Victoria Row and the two commercial blocks at the west end representing present-day 79 and 83 King Street East (Howard Collection, Toronto Reference Library, #221)



16. Archival Photograph, 1856: view east along the south side of King Street East from Leader Lane (underneath the “Paper” sign) showing the James McDonnell Buildings at #79 and 83 King (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1498, Item 2)

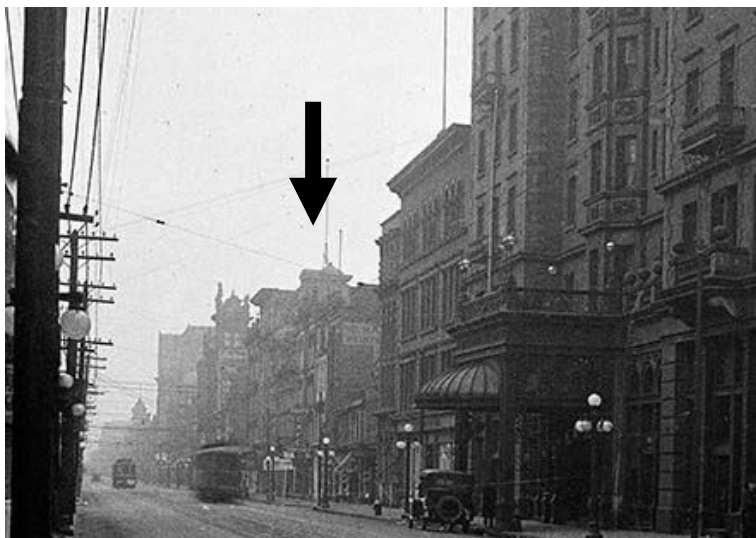




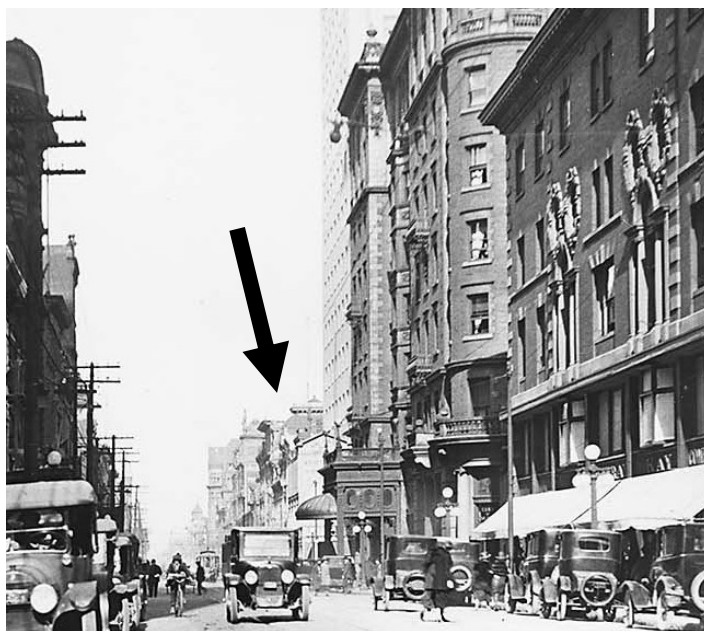
17. Lithograph, 1876: showing 79 King Street East in the centre, with part of #83 King on the left (Toronto Reference Library, 12409)



18. Archival photograph, Victoria Row, c. 1890: showing the alterations to Victoria Row, encompassing the neighbouring James McDonell Buildings (with #83 King visible on the extreme right end of the image) (Toronto Reference Library, #12658)



19. Archival Photograph, 1919: showing the south side of King Street, east of Leader Lane, where the James McDonnell Buildings are located west (right) of Victoria Row (identified by the tower with a mansard roof) City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1231, item 1129)



20. Archival Photograph, 1921: looking east along the south side of King Street East where the subject properties are placed beside the building with the mansard roof (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1244, Item 2522)



21. Photograph, 1977: showing the south side of King Street East between Church Street (left) and Leader Lane (right) where the subject properties are found mid-block (Toronto Historical Board)



22. Photograph, 1977: showing the property at 79 King Street East (right) with its neighbour at #81 King (right) (Toronto Historical Board)

**HERITAGE PROPERTY RESEARCH AND EVALUATION REPORT**



**VICTORIA ROW**  
85 KING STREET EAST, TORONTO

Prepared by:

Heritage Preservation Services  
City Planning Division  
City of Toronto

May 2012



## 1. DESCRIPTION



Cover: north facade of 85 King Street East; above: view of the rear (south) wall with the surviving round-arched dormer window from the 1840s  
(Heritage Preservation Services, April 2012)

<b>85 King Street East: Victoria Row</b>	
ADDRESS	85 King Street East (south side, west of Church Street) (in the City of Toronto's street numbering system, #85 King is an entrance address for 83 King Street East)
WARD	Ward 28 (Toronto Centre-Rosedale)
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	Plan of York, Part Lot A
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	St. Lawrence Neighbourhood
HISTORICAL NAME	Victoria Row
CONSTRUCTION DATE	1843
ORIGINAL OWNER	James W. McDonell
ORIGINAL USE	Commercial (store and offices)
CURRENT USE*	Commercial (store and offices) * This does not refer to permitted use(s) as defined by the Zoning By-law
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	John Howard, architect
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION/MATERIALS	Brick construction, with brick and stone detailing
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	Georgian
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	March 1951: store front altered
CRITERIA	Design/Physical, Historical/Associative & Contextual
HERITAGE STATUS	Cultural Heritage Evaluation
RECORDER	Heritage Preservation Services: Kathryn Anderson
REPORT DATE	May 2012



## 2. BACKGROUND

This research and evaluation report describes the history, architecture and context of the property at present-day 85 King Street East, and applies evaluation criteria to determine whether it merits inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties and designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The conclusions of the research and evaluation are found in Section 4 (Summary).

### i. HISTORICAL TIMELINE

Key Date	Historical Event
1811 Oct	John McDonell receives the patent for Lot A, Plan of York
1837	Architect & surveyor John Howard surveys McDonell's King Street tract
1838	James W. McDonell's name first appears in the tax assessment rolls as the owner of vacant land on Henrietta Street <sup>44</sup>
1839	The tax assessment rolls show James W. McDonell as the "owner or lessee" of nine buildings on the south side of King Street East, west of Church Street
1840	John Howard designs the five-unit "Victoria Row" for McDonell, as well as the adjoining commercial blocks at #79 and 83 King
1842	According to the tax assessment roll, six lots owned by James McDonell on King Street East stand vacant <sup>45</sup>
1842 Oct	James W. McDonell inherits his father's King Street East properties
1843	"Four vacant houses" stand on McDonell's parcel according to the tax assessment rolls
1844	McDonell is assessed for seven buildings comprising Victoria Row and its neighbours at present-day 79 & 83 King Street East
1865	James M. McDonell dies & Margaret L. McDonell becomes the executrix for his estate
1880 Apr	Margaret L. McDonell mortgages "all lot letter A" for \$20,000
1880 Sept	The tax assessment roll describes the neighbouring "91 King" (part of Victoria Row) as an "unfinished building", suggesting alterations to the group are underway
1897	The property at present-day #85 King is transferred to Emily McWilliams, one of the McDonell heirs
1912	William Fox acquires #85 King, retaining it until 1950
1951	A permit is issued to make changes to the store front at #85 King

### ii. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

#### St. Lawrence Neighbourhood

Following the founding of the Town of York in 1793, a townsite was established in the ten-block area between George Street, Palace Street (now Front Street East), Berkeley Street, and a line north of present-day Adelaide Street East. The rapid growth of the community, particularly after the War of 1812, led to the westward extension of "Old

<sup>44</sup> Located west of and parallel to Leader Lane, the street does not appear on maps after the 1830s

<sup>45</sup> The 1842 tax assessment roll for St. Lawrence Ward is not dated

Town” to Jarvis Street and beyond.<sup>46</sup> When the City of Toronto was incorporated in 1834, King Street East was described as “the main street through the centre of the town.”<sup>47</sup> The first St. James’ Church (forerunner to today’s St. James’ Cathedral) marked the northeast corner of King and Church Streets, with the courthouse and jail placed on the northwest side of this intersection. Apart from the institutional buildings, King Street was lined with shops, offices and dwellings (Image 14).

Old Town was devastated by the Great Fire of 1849, resulting in the rebuilding of St. James’ Church on its original site, with St. Lawrence Hall (containing offices, a market and the “Great Hall” for public gatherings) completed in 1851 further east on King Street.<sup>48</sup> Part of the commercial district along King Street East survived the fire, with the remainder rebuilt with structures ranging from one to four stories, the latter being the maximum height deemed rentable in the decades before elevators were available.

King Street East retained its prominence as the city’s “main street” through much of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, although many of the commercial buildings were either rebuilt or remodelled in the elaborate architectural styles identified with the Victorian era. In 1884, King Street was enthusiastically described as having “the most brilliant and long-extended series of first-class stores of which Toronto can boast, her Palais Royal, her Regent Street.”<sup>49</sup> However, at this time the new “department stores” opened by entrepreneurs Timothy Eaton and Robert Simpson on Yonge Street near Queen Street began to draw commercial traffic away from the King Street corridor. In an attempt to stave off this movement, the upscale King Edward Hotel opened on King Street east of Yonge Street (with the first phase completed in 1902). By the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, the area now known as the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood remained a largely commercial and manufacturing district. The City of Toronto’s restoration of St. Lawrence Hall and the revitalization of St. Lawrence Market in the 1960s were complimented by the conversion of many of the surviving warehouses and stores for restaurants, offices and shops as part of the renaissance of the area.

### King Street East between Leader Lane and Church Street

The intricate history of the properties on King Street East between Leader Lane and Church Street can be traced through land records, atlases, directories, tax assessment rolls and other archival records. The lands along the south side of the street were subdivided according to the Plan of York as Town Lots A and B (Image 13). Located at the southwest corner of King and Church (where it extended south to Wellington Street

---

<sup>46</sup> George Williams' Plan of the Town of York in 1813 sets the west boundary at New (Jarvis) Street

<sup>47</sup> George Walton, Commercial Directory, Street Guide and Register, 1833-34, 1834

<sup>48</sup> Only three original buildings from the pre-1834 Town of York have been identified as survivors: the Bank of Upper Canada (1827) and the neighbouring First Post Office (1834) at 252 Adelaide Street East, and Campbell House (c. 1822), which originally stood at Adelaide and Frederick Streets before it was relocated to 160 Queen Street West in 1974. After the Great Fire, the Second City Hall was built at 91 Front Street East, where a portion is retained at South St. Lawrence Market. The latter properties are designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act

<sup>49</sup> Dendy, 95

East), Lot A was patented to John McDonell in 1811.<sup>50</sup> This tract encompassed the building at present-day 85 King Street East, as well as others that were subsequently altered, replaced or demolished. The development of Lot A is illustrated on 19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> century maps and atlases (Images 4-12).

### 85 King Street East

When the first city directory was published in 1834, only five buildings were recorded on the south side of King Street East from Church Street west to Henrietta Street.<sup>51</sup> John McDonell's properties were first referenced in the tax assessment roll for St. Lawrence Ward in 1838 when his son, James M. McDonell was recorded as the "owner or lessee" of nine buildings along King Street East. These original buildings appeared the year after James M. McDonell engaged Toronto architect and surveyor, John Howard to survey the land. While early city directories described James as a government clerk, by the 1840s he had assumed the position of "inspector of licenses" for the Home District. This increase in status coincided with his father's death in 1842 when James M. McDonell inherited Lot A. James immediately demolished the existing structures on King Street East and mortgaged the land.<sup>52</sup> This enabled him to construct "Victoria Row," a five-part block with shops, offices and residential units that included at the west end a pair of taller commercial buildings (the latter remain at present-day #79 and 83 King). The project was designed by John Howard two years earlier. The plans and an archival photograph dated 1856 show Victoria Row, where present-day #85 King is the westerly unit of the five-part block (Images 15 and 16).

Following James W. McDonell's death, his King Street properties were rented to a series of tenants. An archival photograph taken about 1890 (Image 18) illustrates how Victoria Row was "altered in the fashionable Second Empire style, making it one of the first commercial examples of this style in Toronto."<sup>53</sup> While it is suggested that the changes were made in the mid 1860s, the neighbouring McDonell Building at #79 King (also designed by Howard at the same time as Victoria Row) was not updated by 1876 when it was depicted in a commercial directory (Image 17).<sup>54</sup> Margaret L. McDonell mortgaged "all lot lettered A" for \$20,000 in April 1880 and less than six months later part of the site contained an "unfinished building", indicating that the transformation of the block was ongoing.<sup>55</sup> The Second Empire style remained popular through the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, following the introduction of the design to Toronto with Henry Langley's Government

---

<sup>50</sup> While there are different spellings of his surname in various archival sources, legal documents use "McDonell"

<sup>51</sup> By the time Cane's Map of the City and Liberties of Toronto was produced in 1842, Henrietta Street had disappeared (Image 3)

<sup>52</sup> The site stood vacant according to the tax assessment roll for 1842 (undated) and, in May of that year McDonell entered into a mortgage with Christopher Widmer

<sup>53</sup> Dendy, 96

<sup>54</sup> Dendy, 96. The photograph shows the sculpture of Queen Victoria placed above the main entry to the block

<sup>55</sup> Building permits do not survive prior to 1882

House (the Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario's official residence at King Street West and Simcoe Street) in 1873.<sup>56</sup>

Margaret L. McDonell retained and rented Victoria Row until the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when members of her family began to disperse their land holdings.<sup>57</sup> Emily McWilliams (another McDonell heir) received the property at present-day 85 King Street East, along with the neighbouring McDonell Building at #83 King in 1897. Following her death in 1912, William Fox acquired both sites (his estate sold the parcels in 1950). The store front at #85 King was altered in 1951 with the addition of travertine cladding.

### Architect John Howard

The eminent Toronto architect John Howard prepared the plans dated 1840 for the Victoria Row, one unit of which survives at present-day 85 King Street East. Born in England where he received his architectural training, Howard immigrated to Canada in 1831. With the support of Sir John Colborne, Howard accepted a position as a drawing master at Upper Canada College. Howard was appointed the first Surveyor and City Engineer for the newly incorporated City of Toronto in 1834. For the next 21 years, Howard laid out the municipality's sewage system and networks of roads and sidewalks. He also supervised the surveying of building lots, the most extensive of which were plans for the expansion and development of the Toronto Harbour and Ashbridge's Bay. While serving the corporation, Howard accepted both public and private architectural commissions, including the landmark Provincial Lunatic Asylum (later demolished) and extant projects such as St. John's Anglican Church in York Mills and his private residence, Colborne Lodge, now a city-owned museum in High Park. Before preparing and executing his plans for Victoria Row, Howard had designed a store for "Mrs. Musson" (Mary Ann Musson) at present-day 71 King Street East and along the Church Street frontage of James W. McDonell's property.<sup>58</sup>

### iii. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Victoria Row at 85 King Street East is shown in current and archival photographs found on the cover and in Sections 1 and 6 of this report. As indicated by the drawing and archival photograph (Images 15 and 16), Victoria Row was designed in the Georgian style favoured for commercial buildings in Toronto in the early- to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and "characterized by uncluttered designs based on an adherence to conventional rules of symmetry and proportion."<sup>59</sup> The entire row (and the two adjoining commercial blocks at present-day 79 and 81 King Street East) was updated in the later 19<sup>th</sup> century according to

---

<sup>56</sup> Named for the reign of Napoleon III, the Second Empire style was introduced in mid 19<sup>th</sup> century France with the appearance of the New Louvre that combined elements of Italian Renaissance architecture with classical French designs

<sup>57</sup> East of the subject property, the two adjoining units of Victoria Row were acquired by the Albany Club, which replaced the King Street façade in 1930. The two easterly units of Victoria Row were demolished in 1912 and replaced by the Tyrrell Building at #95 King

<sup>58</sup> Toronto Reference Library, Howard Collection #248

<sup>59</sup> Blumenson, 5

the popular Second Empire style, characterized by the distinctive mansard or double-gable roof. A photograph from about 1890 (reproduced in Image 18) illustrates the changes, including the ornamental pediments adorning the window openings in the upper stories. This window detailing was still in place on the unit at 85 King Street East in 1931 when part of the building is shown in a photograph of the neighbouring Albany Club at #91 King (Image 22).

Victoria Row rises 3½ stories and retains its mansard roof with a pair of round-headed dormers and detailing along the roofline. Clad with brick, the north façade extends three bays. Above the storefront (which has been altered), the second and third floors display symmetrically organized flat-headed window openings with limestone lintels and sills.

#### iv. CONTEXT

The property at 85 King Street East is shown on the location maps attached as Images 1 and 2. Victoria Row is placed near the centre of the group of surviving buildings from the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that fill most of the block on the south side of King Street from Church Street (east) to Leader Lane (west). At the west end, the commercial shops between #71 King and Leader Lane were removed in 1929 for the proposed "Toronto Hotel".<sup>60</sup> West of Victoria Row, the properties at #71, 75, 79 and 83 King contain commercial blocks dating to the late 1830s or early 1840s that complement the subject site in scale and setback. The Albany Club at 91 King Street East and the Tyrrell Building at #95 King are found east of Victoria Row where they represent the remodelling or replacement, respectively, of early 1840s edifices and mark the east end of the group. Earlier buildings at the southwest corner of King and Church Street were demolished in 1940 (Image 11).

With their placement near the southwest corner of King Street East and Church Street, Victoria Row and its neighbours overlook the intersection with St. James' Cathedral (1849-53 with later additions) on the northeast and the City Buildings at #107-125 King Street (dating to the 1840s), on the southeast.<sup>61</sup> Further east along the south side of King Street East at Victoria Street, the King Edward Hotel (1902) with its east addition (1920) is another local landmark that is designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. Behind the subject property, the buildings that once occupied the north side of Colborne Street were removed, but the opposite side of the street contains a warehouse (c. 1892) at #41-43 Colborne that is recognized on the City's heritage inventory.

---

<sup>60</sup> Designed by Toronto architect N. A. Armstrong in 1928, the City Directory for 1929 (published in 1930) described the hotel as "under construction". Likely a casualty of the Great Depression, the project was not completed and the vacant parcels became a parking lot

<sup>61</sup> St. James' Cathedral at 106 King Street East, along with the City Buildings at #107-125 King are designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act



### 3. EVALUATION CHECKLIST

The following evaluation applies Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the Ontario Heritage Act: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. While the criteria are prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, the City of Toronto uses it when assessing properties for inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. The evaluation table is marked “N/A” if the criterion is “not applicable” to the property or X if it is applicable, with explanatory text below.

<b>Design or Physical Value</b>	
i. rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method	<b>X</b>
ii. displays high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	<b>N/A</b>
iii. demonstrates high degree of scientific or technical achievement	<b>N/A</b>

**Representative Example** – Victoria Row is an important representative example of a commercial building from the 1840s that was updated later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and continues to contribute through its vintage and scale to the group of commercial buildings that remain on the south side of King Street East between Church Street and Leader Lane. Victoria Row is among the oldest surviving structures in Toronto.

<b>Historical or Associative Value</b>	
i. direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community	<b>N/A</b>
ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	<b>X</b>
iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	<b>X</b>

**Community** – The property at 85 King Street East contributes to an understanding of the significance of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood as it evolved from its origins as "Old Town," survived the Great Fire of 1849, emerged as the commercial and institutional heart of Toronto, withstood the economic downturn of the area in the 20<sup>th</sup> century before it was revitalized in the 1960s with the restoration of the landmark St. Lawrence Hall and St. Lawrence Market, among other projects. Victoria Row pre-dates the Great Fire and, while remodelled in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, has contributed to the vitality of Toronto's original "main street" in the city's oldest neighbourhood.

**Architect** – Victoria Row is linked to the career of the important early Toronto architect John Howard, who undertook the project as a private commission while serving as the City of Toronto's official surveyor and architect. With the demolition of much of Howard's portfolio, the surviving unit of Victoria Row (although altered) remains an important surviving example of his work.

<b>Contextual Value</b>	
i. important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area	<b>X</b>
ii. physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings	<b>X</b>
iii. landmark	<b>N/A</b>

**Character** – The property at 85 King Street East is significant in defining, maintaining and supporting the historic character of King Street in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, which is identified by the low scale and appearance of the surviving stores, hotels, banks, warehouses and institutional edifices. As a commercial building dating to the mid 1800s, Victoria Row remains a significant component in a streetscape of surviving commercial and institutional buildings that contributes to the evolution the city's oldest neighbourhood.

**Surroundings** – The Victoria Row is physically, visually and historically linked to its surroundings on King Street East in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood where it is placed near the west end of a collection of commercial and institutional buildings from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries where it remains one of the oldest surviving structures in Toronto.

#### 4. SUMMARY

Following research and evaluation according to Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the property at 85 King Street East has design, associative and contextual values. Located on the south side of King Street East between Church Street (east) and Leader Lane (west), Victoria Row is a representative example of a commercial building dating to 1843 that, while altered, stands as one of the oldest extant structures in Toronto. With its neighbours in the block, the property contributes to an understanding of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood where Victoria Row was constructed on the community's major thoroughfare, survived the Great Fire of 1849, witnessed the development of King Street East as Toronto's commercial centre for most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and remained through its renaissance at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Contextually, as one of the oldest surviving commercial buildings on King Street that forms part of an important group of properties, Victoria Row assists in supporting, maintaining and defining the historic character of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood where it is historically, visually and physically linked to its surroundings on the Town of York's original "main street."

#### 5. SOURCES

##### Archival Sources

Abstract Indices of Deeds, Town of York Plan, Lot A  
 Assessment Rolls, City of Toronto, St. Lawrence Ward, 1834-91, and Ward 3, Division  
 1, 1892 ff.

Boulton's Atlas of the City of Toronto, 1858

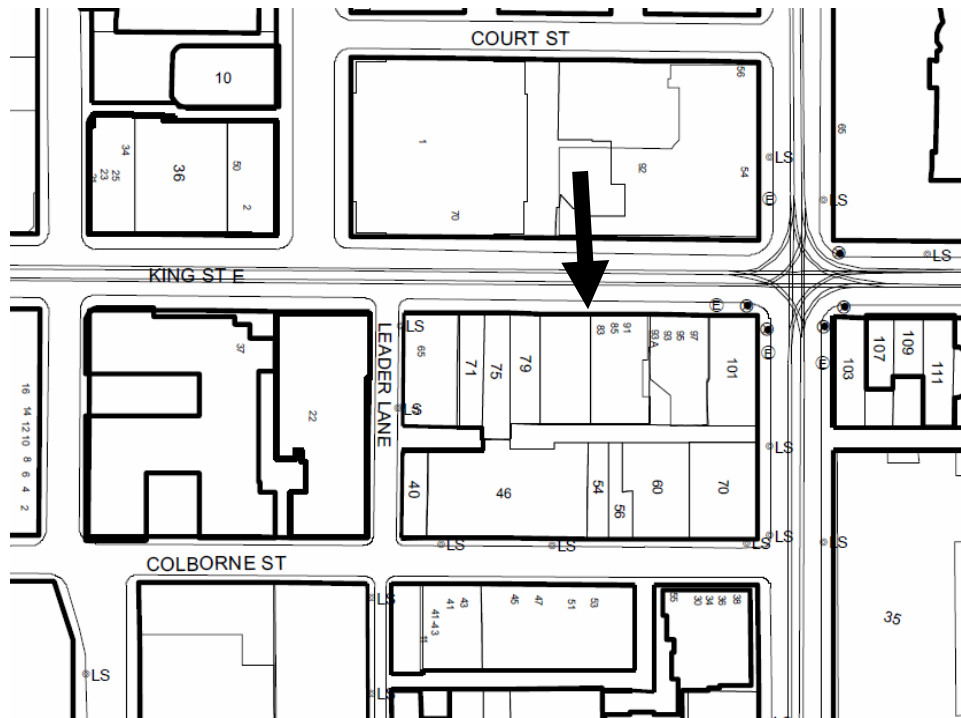
Building Records, City of Toronto, Toronto and East York, #12371 (March 1951)

Cane's Map of the City and Liberties of Toronto, 1842  
City of Toronto Directories, 1834 ff.  
Goad's Atlases, 1880-1923  
Photographs, City of Toronto Archives and Toronto Reference Library  
(citations with images below)  
Underwriters' Insurance Bureau Atlases, January 1921 updated to July 1943, and July  
1954 updated to July 1964

### Secondary Sources

Arthur, Eric, Toronto: no mean city, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. revised by Stephen A. Otto, 1986  
Baine, Richard p., and A. Lynn McMurray, Toronto: an urban study, 1970  
Blumenson, John, Ontario Architecture, 1990  
Careless, J. M. S., Toronto to 1918, 1984  
Dendy, William, Lost Toronto, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., revised 1993  
Dendy, William, and William Kilbourn, Toronto Observed, 1986  
Filey, Mike, A Toronto Album, 1970  
"John George Howard," entry in the Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800-1950, <http://www.dictionarofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1532>  
MacKinnon, Steve, Karen Teeple and Michele Dale, Toronto's Visual Legacy, 2009  
McHugh, Patricia, Toronto Architecture: a city guide, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1989  
Scadding, Henry, Toronto of Old (1873), reprint 1966  
"The Textures of a Lost Toronto: John Howard's Documentary Art and Drawings, 1830s-80s," <http://www.toronto.ca/culture/howard.htm>

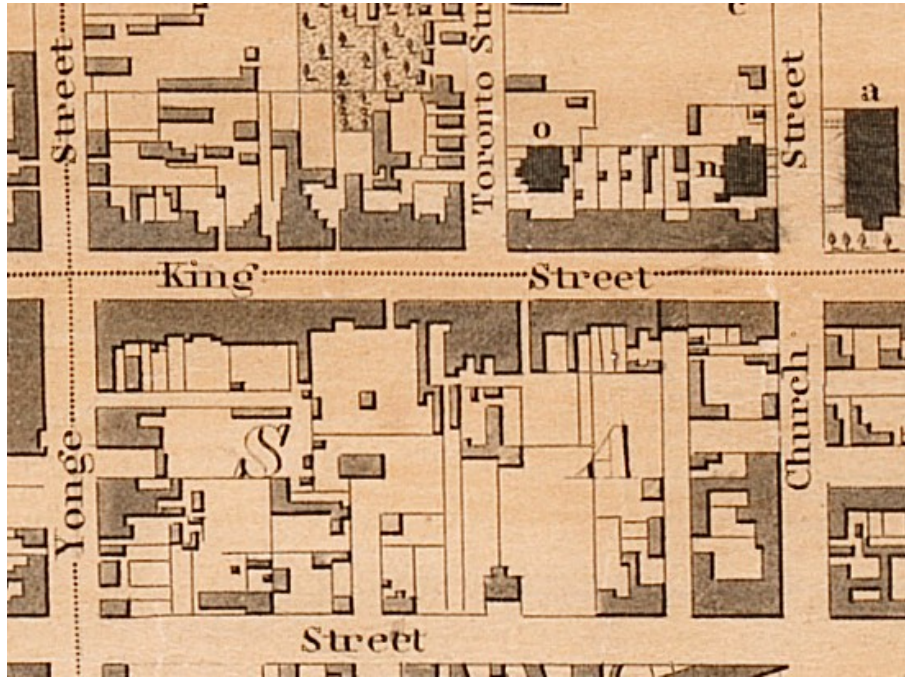
6. IMAGES – Historical atlases, followed by archival records and contemporary photographs; **arrows** mark the location of the subject property



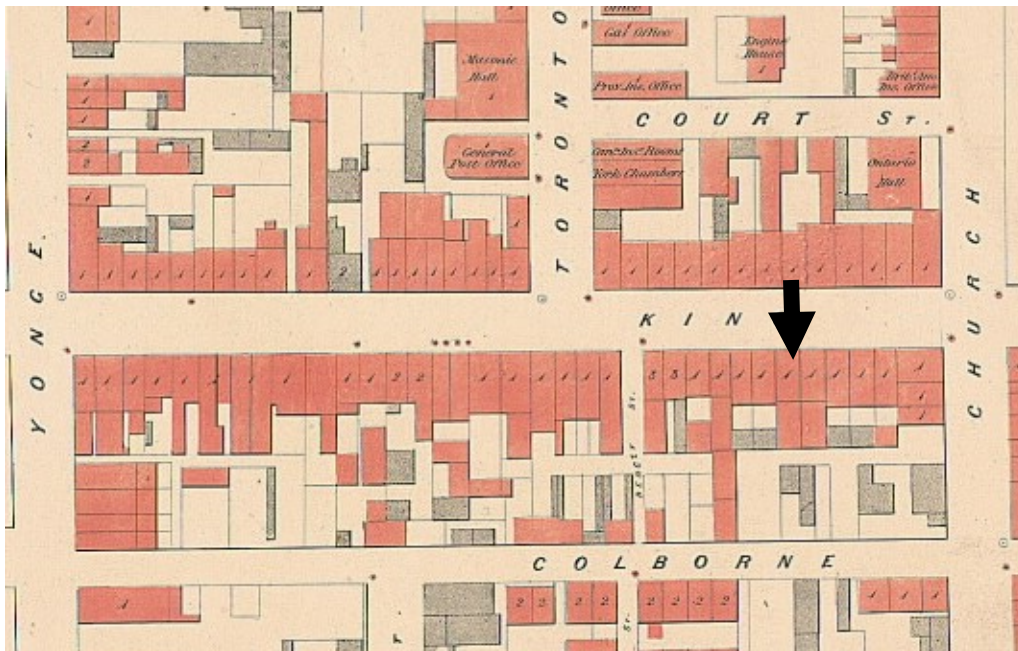
1. City of Toronto Property Data Map: showing the location of the property at present-day 85 King Street East



2. Location Map: showing the roofs and rear (south) walls and additions of the buildings in the block between Leader Lane (left) and Church Street (right), including the subject building (<http://www.bing.com/maps>)

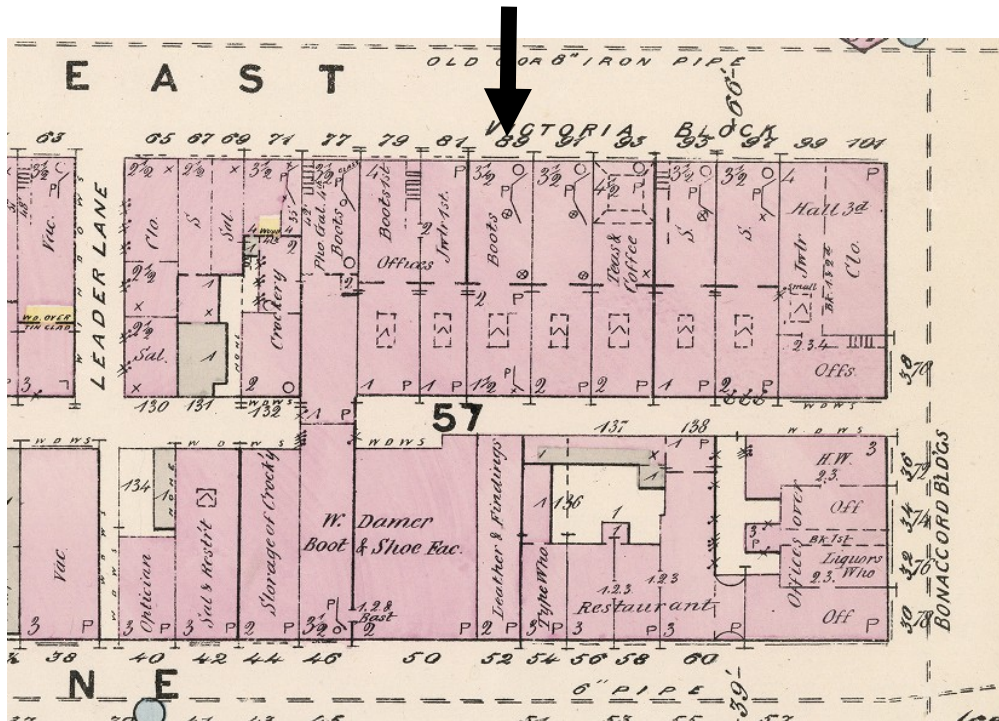


3. Cane's Map of the City and Liberties of Toronto, 1842: showing the commercial blocks along both sides of King Street East (including the subject property) prior to the Great Fire of 1849

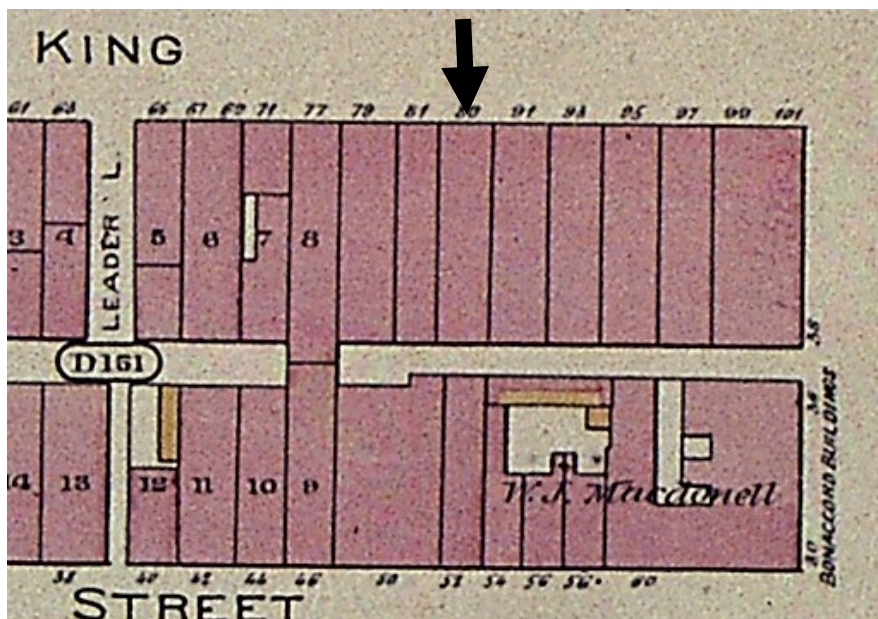


4. Boulton's Atlas of Toronto, 1858: showing Victoria Row on the south side of King Street East, west of Church Street

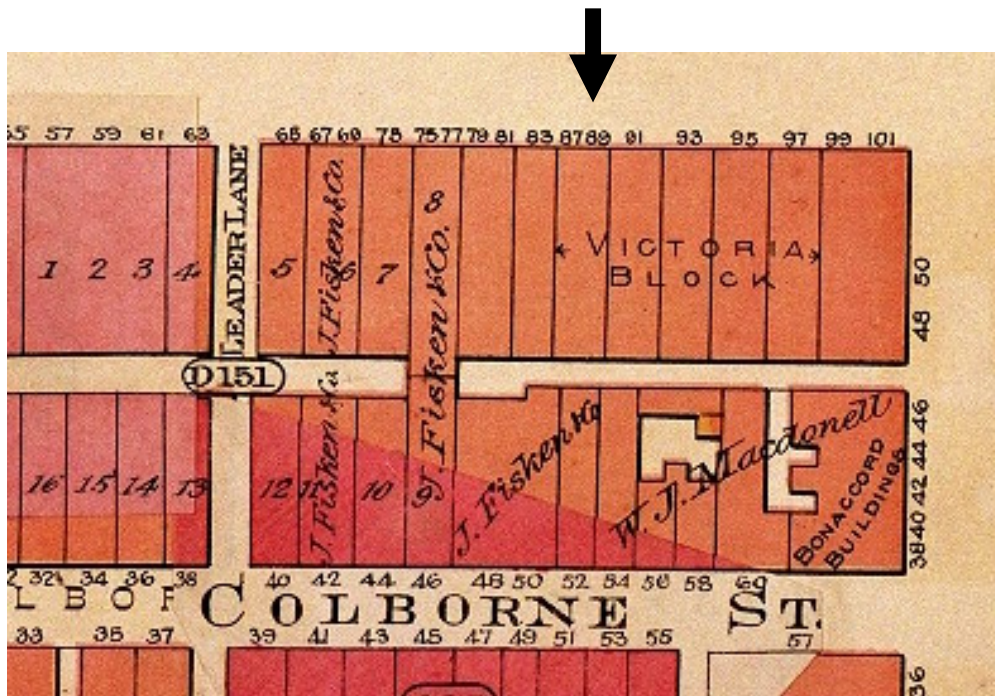




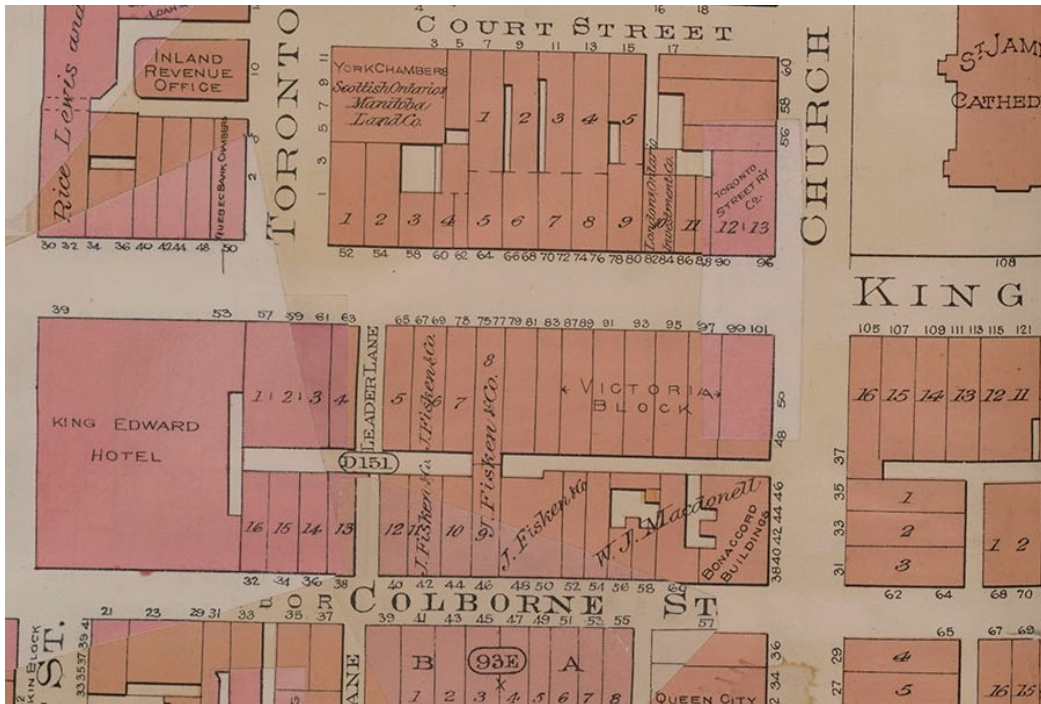
5. Goad's Atlas, 1880: showing Victoria Row (marked "Victoria Block"), where the surviving unit at present-day #85 King is the westernmost of the five units



6. Goad's Atlas, 1884: the labeling "W. J. Macdonell" refers to James W. McDonnell's properties along King, Church and Colborne Streets, including Victoria Row

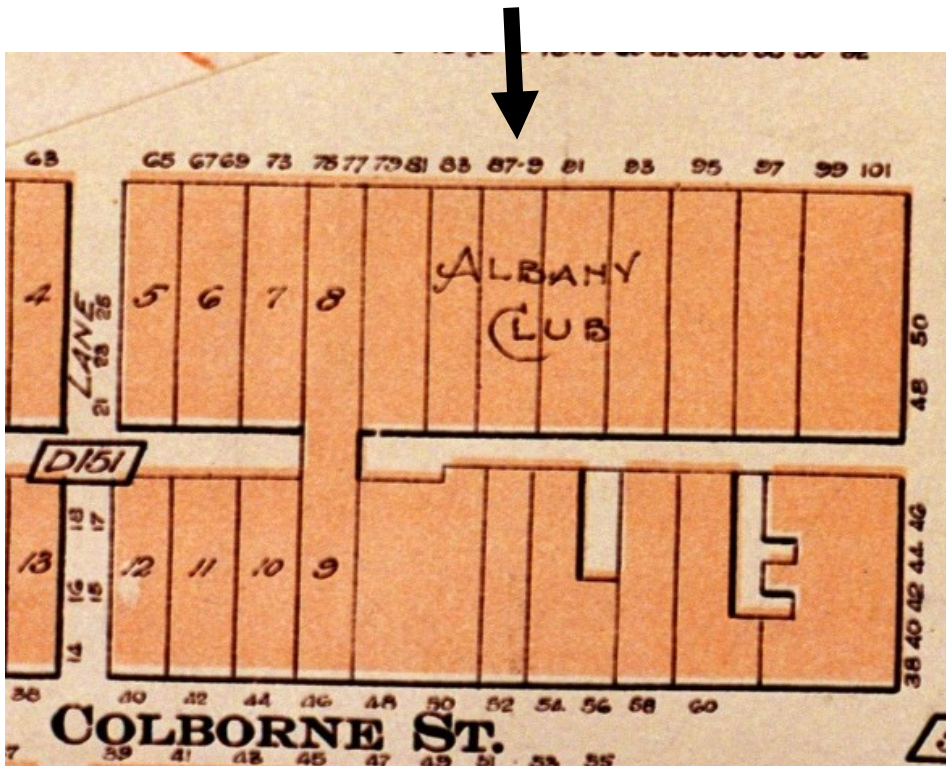


7. Goad's Atlas, 1890: Victoria Row is labeled “Victoria Block” where the surviving unit is marked “87-89” King

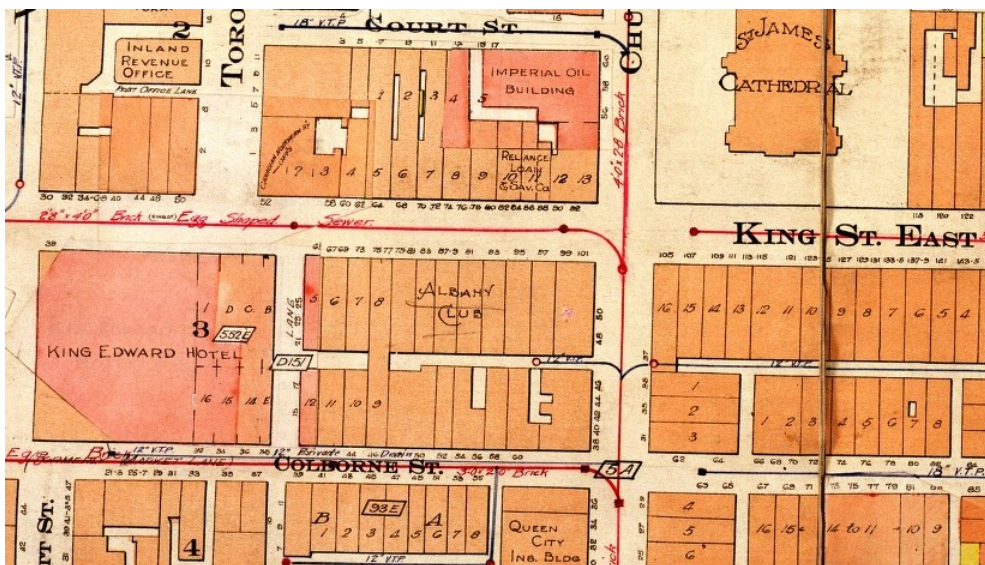


8. Goad's Atlas, 1890 revised to September 1903: on this update, there are no changes shown to the group of properties east of Leader Lane, where the King Edward Hotel was completed in 1902 (first phase) to the west on the southeast corner of King and Victoria Streets





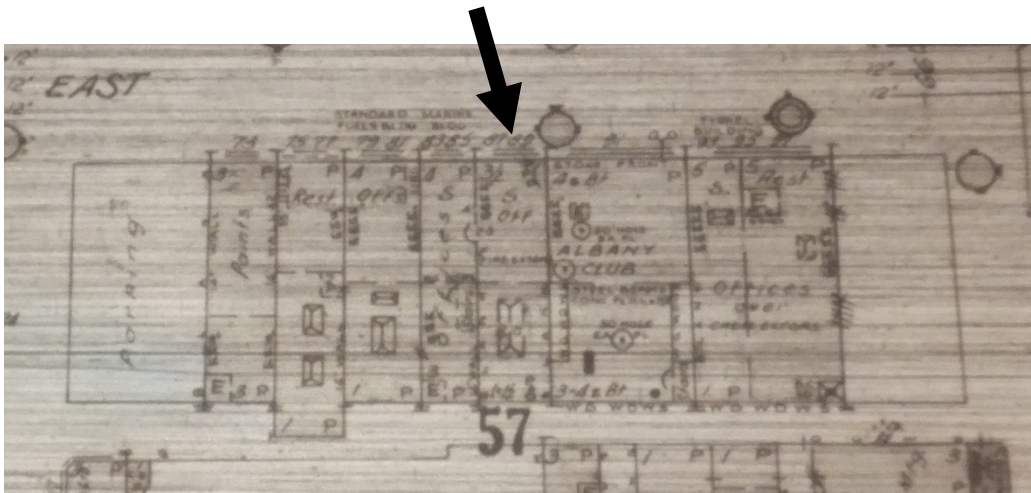
9. Goad's Atlas, 1910 revised to 1912: showing the Albany Club, which acquired parts of Victoria Row east of the subject property



10. Goad's Atlas, 1910 revised to 1923: showing the status of the block on the last update to Goad's

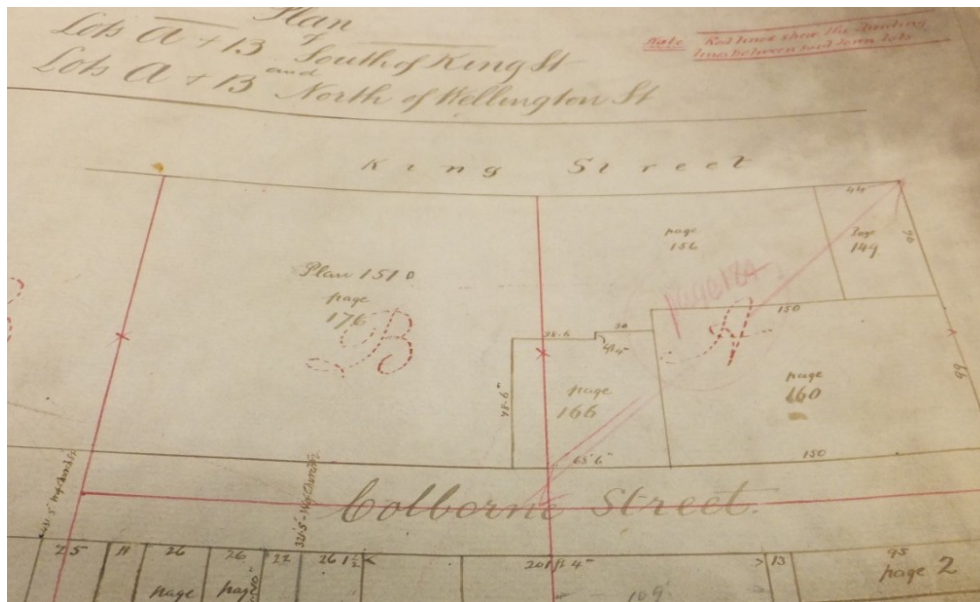


11. Underwriters' Insurance Bureau Atlas, January 1921 updated to January 1943: showing the subject property marked #87-89 King beside (west of ) the Albany Club

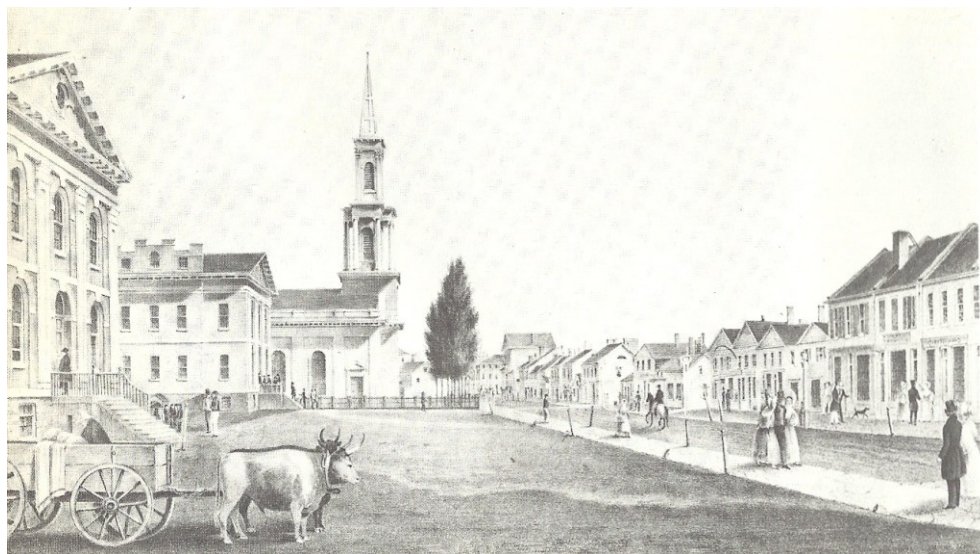


12. Underwriters' Insurance Bureau Atlas, July 1954 updated to January 1964: the buildings at either end of the block were demolished and have stood vacant since



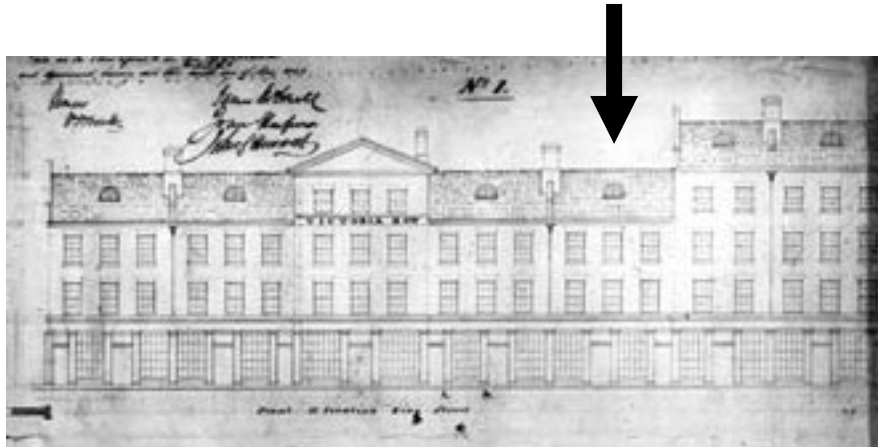


13. Plan of York: showing the portion of the plan with Town Lots A and B on the southwest corner of King Street East and Church Street (Land Registry Office)

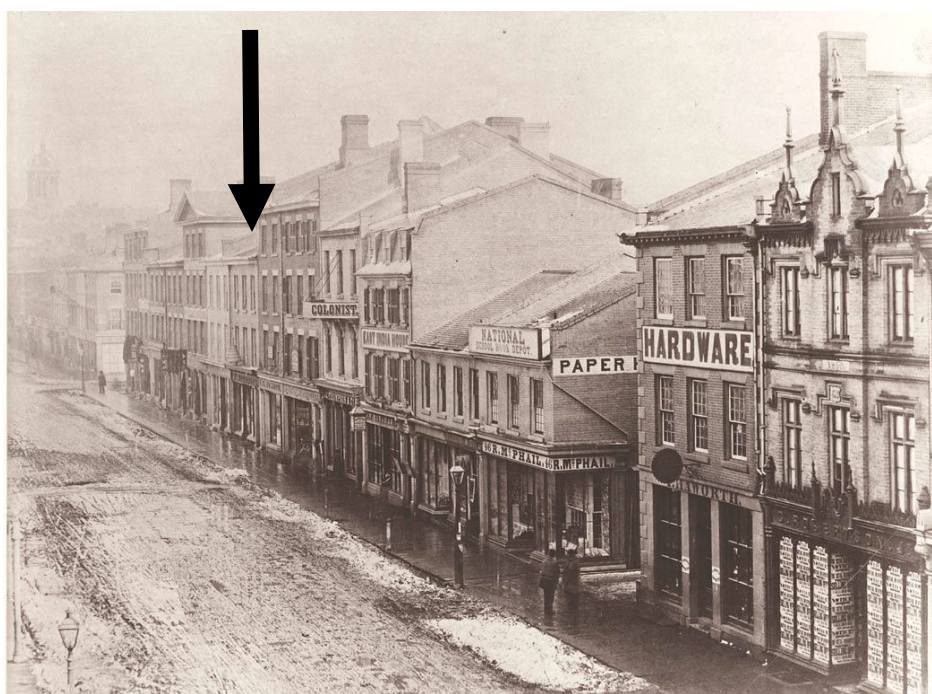


14. Illustration, William Young, c. 1835: showing King Street East, looking east toward St. James' Church with the original buildings on the south side of the street (right) (reproduced in Baine and McMurray, 24)





15. Drawing, Victoria Row, 1842: plans by architect John Howard for the five-unit Victoria Row and the two commercial blocks at the west end. The subject property is the westerly unit of the three-storey row (Howard Collection, Toronto Reference Library, #221)



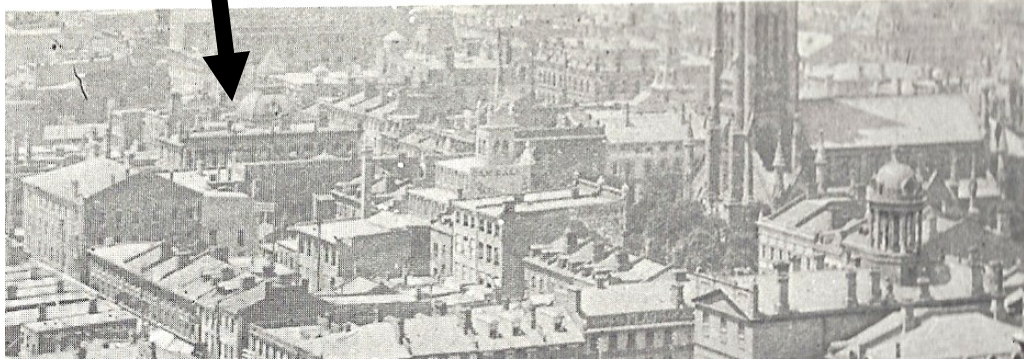
16. Archival Photograph, 1856: view east along the south side of King Street East from Leader Lane (underneath the “Paper” sign) showing Victoria Row where present-day #85 King is the westernmost unit (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1498, Item 2)



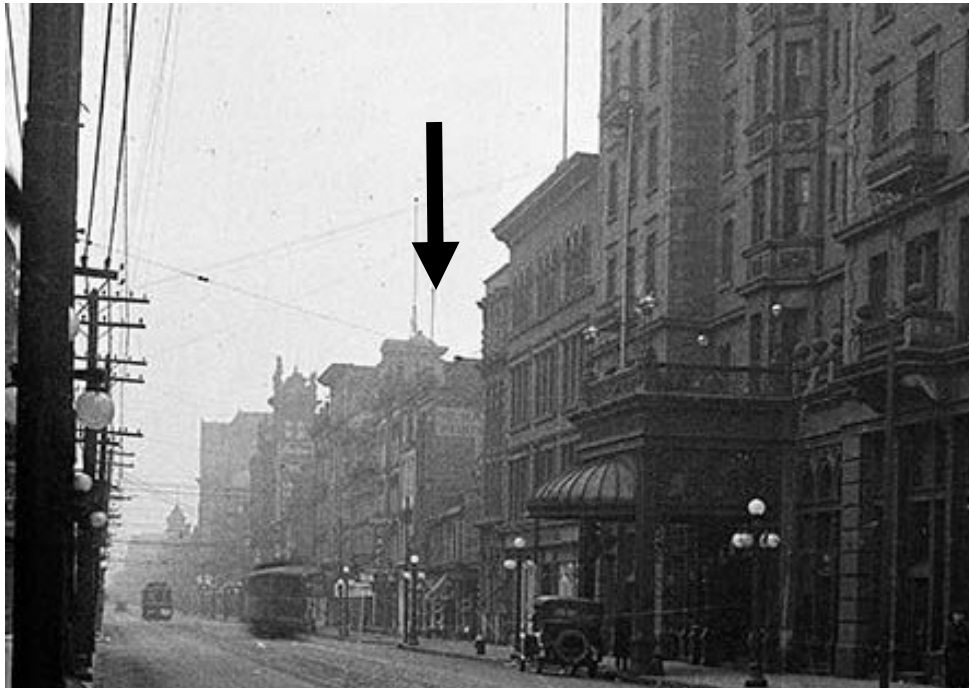
17. Lithograph, 1876: showing Victoria Row’s neighbours at 79 King Street East (centre) and part of #83 King on the left, which were designed at the same time (Toronto Reference Library, 12409)



18. Archival photograph, Victoria Row, c. 1890: showing the alterations to Victoria Row, including the addition of the mansard roof and dormers that survive on present-day #85 King (Toronto Reference Library, #12658)



19. Archival Photograph, 1894: showing St. James Cathedral on the right with Victoria Row with its distinctive mansard roof on the left. The surviving unit at present-day #85 King is directly west (left) of the tower (A Toronto Album, 23)

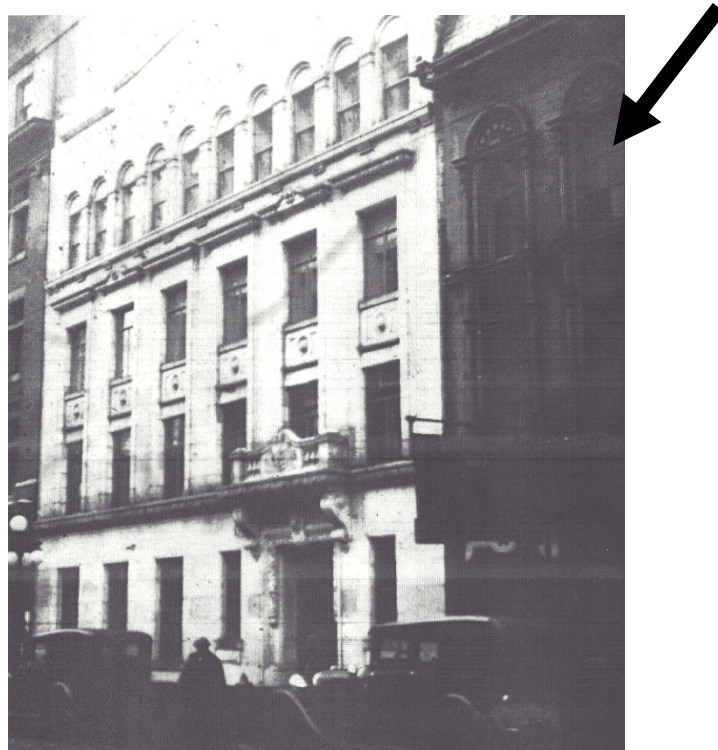


20. Archival Photograph, 1919: view of the south side of King Street, east of Leader Lane, where the property at present-day 85 King Street East stands as part of Victoria Row (marked by the tower with the mansard roof) (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1231, item 1129)





21. Archival Photograph, 1921: looking east along the south side of King Street East where the tower with the mansard roof identifies Victoria Row (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1244, Item 2522)



22. Archival Photograph, 1931: showing the surviving section of Victoria Row at present-day 85 King Street East (right) beside the Albany Club (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1266, Item 22928)





23. Photograph, 1977: showing the south side of King Street East between Church Street (left) and Leader Lane (right) (Toronto Historical Board)



24. Photograph, 1977: showing the property at present-day 83 King Street East (Toronto Historical Board)

**HERITAGE PROPERTY RESEARCH AND EVALUATION REPORT**



**ALBANY CLUB**  
91 KING STREET EAST, TORONTO

Prepared by:

Heritage Preservation Services  
City Planning Division  
City of Toronto

May 2012

## 1. DESCRIPTION



Cover: north facade of the Albany Club at 91 King Street East; above: view of the stone detailing on the north entrance (Heritage Preservation Services, April 2012)

<b>91 King Street East: Albany Club</b>	
ADDRESS	91 King Street East (south side, west of Church Street)
WARD	Ward 28 (Toronto Centre-Rosedale)
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	Plan of York, Part Lot A
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	St. Lawrence Neighbourhood
HISTORICAL NAME	Albany Club
CONSTRUCTION DATE	1930 (north facade & other alterations & additions)
ORIGINAL OWNER	Albany Club
ORIGINAL USE	Institutional (political club)
CURRENT USE*	Institutional (political club) * This does not refer to permitted use(s) as defined by the Zoning By-law
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	C. J. Gibson, architect
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION/MATERIALS	Stone cladding with stone and wood detailing
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	Modern Classicism
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	1963 & 1965: interior alterations
CRITERIA	Design/Physical, Historical/Associative & Contextual
HERITAGE STATUS	Cultural Heritage Evaluation
RECORDER	Heritage Preservation Services: Kathryn Anderson
REPORT DATE	May 2012

## 2. BACKGROUND

This research and evaluation report describes the history, architecture and context of the property at 91 King Street East, and applies evaluation criteria to determine whether it merits inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties and designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The conclusions of the research and evaluation are found in Section 4 (Summary).

### i. HISTORICAL TIMELINE

<b>Key Date</b>	<b>Historical Event</b>
1811 Oct	John McDonell receives the patent for Lot A, Plan of York
1837	Architect & surveyor John Howard surveys McDonell's King Street tract
1838	James W. McDonell's name first appears in the tax assessment rolls as the owner of vacant land on Henrietta Street
1839	The tax assessment rolls show James W. McDonell as the "owner or lessee" of nine buildings on the south side of King Street East, west of Church Street
1840	John Howard designs the five-unit "Victoria Row" for McDonell and two adjoining commercial buildings at the west end
1842	According to the tax assessment roll, six lots owned by James McDonell on King Street East stand vacant <sup>62</sup>
1842 Oct	James W. McDonell inherits his father's King Street East properties
1843	"Four vacant houses" stand on McDonell's parcel according to the tax assessment rolls
1844	McDonell is assessed for seven buildings comprising Victoria Row and its neighbours at present-day 79 & 83 King Street East
1865	James M. McDonell dies & Margaret L. McDonell becomes the executrix for his estate
1876	An illustration shows the commercial building adjoining Victoria Row at #83 King updated with Second Empire features
1880 Apr	Margaret L. McDonell mortgages "all lot letter A" for \$20,000
1880 Sept	The tax assessment roll describes "91 King" (part of Victoria Row) as an "unfinished building", suggesting alterations to the group are ongoing
1898 Aug	Sarah Smith McDonell leases a parcel with 51-foot frontage on King Street West to the Albany Club, comprising the central unit of Victoria Row and the adjoining unit to the west
1898	Toronto architect Vaux Chadwick designs alterations to the Albany Club, including a new north entrance and interior changes
1913 Jan	The Albany Club purchases the property at present-day #91 King
1929	Charles J. Gibson, a Toronto architect and club member, prepares the plans for a new (north) facade, a rear (south) addition, and other interior and exterior alterations
1930 Sept	The tax assessment rolls record an "unfinished building being built" on-site

<sup>62</sup> The 1842 tax assessment roll for St. Lawrence Ward is not dated



## ii. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### St. Lawrence Neighbourhood

Following the founding of the Town of York in 1793, a townsite was established in the ten-block area between George Street, Palace Street (now Front Street East), Berkeley Street, and a line north of present-day Adelaide Street East. The rapid growth of the community, particularly after the War of 1812, led to the westward extension of “Old Town” to Jarvis Street and beyond.<sup>63</sup> When the City of Toronto was incorporated in 1834, King Street East was described as “the main street through the centre of the town.”<sup>64</sup> The first St. James’ Church (forerunner to today’s St. James’ Cathedral) marked the northeast corner of King and Church Streets, with the courthouse and jail placed on the northwest side of this intersection. Apart from the institutional buildings, King Street was lined with shops, offices and dwellings (Image 14).

Old Town was devastated by the Great Fire of 1849, resulting in the rebuilding of St. James’ Church on its original site, with St. Lawrence Hall (containing offices, a market and the “Great Hall” for public gatherings) completed in 1851 further east on King Street.<sup>65</sup> Part of the commercial district along King Street East survived the fire, with the remainder rebuilt with structures ranging from one to four stories, the latter being the maximum height deemed rentable in the decades before elevators were available.

King Street East retained its prominence as the city’s “main street” through much of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, although many of the commercial buildings were either rebuilt or remodelled in the elaborate architectural styles identified with the Victorian era. In 1884, King Street was enthusiastically described as having “the most brilliant and long-extended series of first-class stores of which Toronto can boast, her Palais Royal, her Regent Street.”<sup>66</sup> However, at this time the new “department stores” opened by entrepreneurs Timothy Eaton and Robert Simpson on Yonge Street near Queen Street began to draw commercial traffic away from the King Street corridor. In an attempt to stave off this movement, the upscale King Edward Hotel opened on King Street east of Yonge Street (with the first phase completed in 1902). By the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, the area now known as the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood remained a largely commercial and manufacturing district. The City of Toronto’s restoration of St. Lawrence Hall and the revitalization of St. Lawrence Market in the 1960s were complimented by the conversion

---

<sup>63</sup> George Williams' Plan of the Town of York in 1813 sets the west boundary at New (Jarvis) Street

<sup>64</sup>George Walton, Commercial Directory, Street Guide and Register, 1833-34, 1834

<sup>65</sup> Only three original buildings from the pre-1834 Town of York have been identified as survivors: the Bank of Upper Canada (1827) and the neighbouring First Post Office (1834) at 252 Adelaide Street East, and Campbell House (c. 1822), which originally stood at Adelaide and Frederick Streets before it was relocated to 160 Queen Street West in 1974. After the Great Fire, the Second City Hall was built at 91 Front Street East, where a portion is retained at South St. Lawrence Market. The latter properties are designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act

<sup>66</sup> Dendy, 95

of many of the surviving warehouses and stores for restaurants, offices and shops as part of the renaissance of the area.

### King Street East between Leader Lane and Church Street

The intricate history of the properties on King Street East between Leader Lane and Church Street can be traced through land records, atlases, directories, tax assessment rolls and other archival records. The lands along the south side of the street were subdivided according to the Plan of York as Town Lots A and B (Image 13). Located at the southwest corner of King and Church (where it extended south to Wellington Street East), Lot A was patented to John McDonell in 1811.<sup>67</sup> This tract encompassed the building at present-day 91 King Street East, as well as others that were subsequently altered, replaced or demolished. The development of Lot A is illustrated on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century maps and atlases (Images 4-12).

### 91 King Street East

When the first city directory was published in 1834, only five buildings were recorded on the south side of King Street East from Church Street west to Henrietta Street.<sup>68</sup> John McDonell's properties were first referenced in the tax assessment roll for St. Lawrence Ward in 1838 when his son, James M. McDonell was recorded as the "owner or lessee" of nine buildings along King Street East. These original buildings appeared the year after James M. McDonell engaged Toronto architect and surveyor, John Howard to survey the land. While early city directories described James as a government clerk, by the 1840s he had assumed the position of "inspector of licenses" for the Home District. This increase in status coincided with his father's death in 1842 when James M. McDonell inherited Lot A. James immediately demolished the existing structures on King Street East and mortgaged the land.<sup>69</sup> This enabled him to construct "Victoria Row," a five-part block with shops, offices and residential units that included at the west end a pair of taller commercial buildings. The project was designed by John Howard two years earlier. The plans and an archival photograph from 1856 showing Victoria Row are attached as Images 15 and 16.

Following James W. McDonell's death, his King Street properties were rented to a series of tenants. An archival photograph taken about 1890 (Image 17) illustrates how Victoria Row and the neighbouring commercial buildings were "altered in the fashionable Second Empire style, making it one of the first commercial examples of this style in Toronto."<sup>70</sup> While it is suggested that the changes were made in the mid 1860s, an illustration from an 1876 directory shows the commercial block at #83 King (which was designed by

---

<sup>67</sup> While his surname is spelled differently in various archival sources, legal documents use "McDonell"

<sup>68</sup> By the time Cane's Map of the City and Liberties of Toronto was produced in 1842, Henrietta Street had disappeared (Image 3)

<sup>69</sup> The site stood vacant according to the tax assessment roll for 1842 (undated) and, in May of that year, McDonell entered into a mortgage with Christopher Widmer

<sup>70</sup> Dendy, 96

Howard at the same time as Victoria Row) updated with Second Empire features.<sup>71</sup> Margaret L. McDonell mortgaged “all lot lettered A” for \$20,000 in April 1880 and less than six months later part of the site contained an “unfinished building”, suggesting that the transformation was underway.<sup>72</sup> The Second Empire style remained popular through the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, following the introduction of the design to Toronto with Henry Langley’s Government House (the Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario’s official residence at King Street West and Simcoe Street) in 1873.<sup>73</sup> As indicated by its name, Victoria Row featured a prominent statue of Queen Victoria in the second storey of the central unit (which is visible in Image 17).

Margaret L. McDonell retained and rented Victoria Row until the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when members of her family began to disperse their land holdings.<sup>74</sup> In August 1898, Sarah Smith McDonell leased a parcel with over 50 feet frontage on King Street East (comprising the central unit of the Victoria Row with the distinctive tower and the portion directly west) to the Albany Club.<sup>75</sup>

The Albany Club was founded in 1882 by the political supporters of Sir John A. Macdonald and named for the Duke of Albany, a son of Queen Victoria and the brother-in-law of Canada’s Governor General, the Marquis of Lorne. According to the rules of membership, “No person shall become a member of the club unless a Conservative.”<sup>76</sup> With the political success of the provincial party in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the membership of the Albany Club nearly doubled in size and enabled its relocation to King Street East near the fashionable King Edward Hotel. In 1898, the Albany Club engaged Vaux Chadwick, an architect and the son of a club member to design a new entrance that replaced the storefront on the central unit, as well as interior accommodations (the redesigned entry is visible in Image 20). The demand for space continued to grow, with the club renting additional rooms in the neighbouring buildings at present-day #83 and #85 King.

In 1929 and 1930, C. J. Gibson, a Toronto architect who was a member of the Albany Club prepared drawings and specifications for a new north facade, a rear (south) wing, and other alterations inside and out (Image 21). Architectural periodicals traced the progress of the project, which was described as costing between \$85,000 and \$200,000. On the interior, an addition was made for a new dining room with a minstrel’s gallery

---

<sup>71</sup> Toronto Reference Library #12409

<sup>72</sup> Building permits do not survive prior to 1882

<sup>73</sup> Named for the reign of Napoleon III, the Second Empire style was introduced in mid 19<sup>th</sup> century France with the plans for the New Louvre, which blended elements of Italian Renaissance architecture with classical French designs

<sup>74</sup> The two easterly units of Victoria Row were demolished in 1912 and replaced by the Tyrrell Building at #95 King. The westernmost unit survives at #85 King, along with the two adjoining commercial buildings at #79 and 83 King that were completed at the same time as Victoria Row according to John Howard’s plans

<sup>75</sup> However, on the tax assessment rolls, Samuel Smith McDonell is recorded as the “owner or lessee”

<sup>76</sup> <http://www.albanyclub.ca/About-Us/History.aspx>

described as “as impressive today as it was in 1930.”<sup>77</sup> The club entered into an agreement with the City of Toronto in 1930 concerning the elaborate cornice over the entry that encroached on King Street East (as shown in Image 22). Later in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as the popularity of political clubs waned, the Albany Club rebounded under the guidance of publisher Roy H. Thomson (the future Lord Thomson of Fleet) and federal politician David J. Walker. In 1998, the Albany Club celebrated a century at 91 King Street East.

### Architect C. J. Gibson

Toronto architect Charles John Gibson prepared the plans for the alterations to the Albany Club in 1930. After a short-lived partnership with Henry Simpson, in 1890 Gibson embarked on a solo practice where he designed innumerable residential buildings in the upscale Toronto neighbourhoods of Rosedale, the Annex, Parkdale, and Forest Hill, as well as factories, banks and churches. The Earls court Public Library (1920) on Dufferin Street near St. Clair Avenue West is among Gibson’s commissions noted on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. Gibson's designs for the Albany Club represent a select example of his institutional work in Toronto.

### iii. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Albany Club at 91 King Street East is shown in contemporary and archival photographs on the cover and in Sections 1 and 6 of this report. The design was inspired by the English gentleman's clubs of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a type that the architect C. J. Gibson would have been aware of through his studies and experiences working in New York City.<sup>78</sup> His final plans for the Albany Club's remodelling conform to the Modern Classical style of the interwar era that incorporated "symmetrical main facades, flat or nearly flat roofs, a monumental order of pilasters (but no columns) across the front, and prominent plinths and entablatures, all executed in white stone or artificial cast stone."<sup>79</sup> The King Street façade features the typical horizontal organization with a base, shaft and attic level.

Rising four stories, the north façade of the Albany Club is faced and detailed with stone. At ground level, the base is organized into two sections, with three symmetrically-placed flat-headed window openings in the left half of the wall. To the right, the main entrance to the building is centered between two smaller flat-headed openings. A pair of panelled wood doors and a flat transom are placed in a stone surround that incorporates elaborate classical detailing and a monumental keystone. Over the entry, a cornice supported on monumental brackets forms the base for a pediment that incorporates a balustrade and crest at the second-storey level. The shaft extends two stories with flat-headed openings

---

<sup>77</sup> <http://www.albanyclub.ca/About-Us/Architectural-Comments.aspx>, unpaginated

<sup>78</sup> The prototypical example is Charles Barry's Travellers' Club (completed in 1832) in London, which was inspired by Italian Renaissance palaces. Gibson worked in New York City during the period when notable American firms such as McKim, Mead and White and Warren and Wetmore were designing clubhouses based on Renaissance precedents for universities, business associations and the like

<sup>79</sup> Maitland, 132



organized by piers and separated by decorative panels. The windows are surmounted by triangular pediments in two of the bays in the fourth storey. Above the cornice, an arcade of 10 openings is separated by piers and surmounted by rondelles. The north façade is capped by a scrolled pediment with ball ornaments near the outer corners of the wall.

On the interior, the dining room is described as "representative of Gibson's careful attention to detail and understanding of the need for a grand room in the Club."<sup>80</sup> Its classical detailing with ceiling beams and brackets, wood panelling and a minstrels' gallery are shown in the photograph attached as Image 24.

#### iv. CONTEXT

The property at 91 King Street East is shown on the location maps attached as Images 1 and 2. The Albany Club is placed near the east end of the group of surviving buildings from the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that fill most of the block on the south side of King Street from Church Street (east) to Leader Lane (west). At the west end, the commercial shops between #71 King and Leader Lane were removed in 1929 for the proposed "Toronto Hotel".<sup>81</sup> West of the Albany Club, the properties at #71, 75, 79, 83 and 85 King contain commercial blocks dating to the late 1830s or early 1840s that complement the subject site in scale and setback (with the north facades of #71 and 75 King updated in the 20<sup>th</sup> century). With the adjoining Tyrrell Building at #95 King, the Albany Club represents the replacement or remodelling, respectively, of early 1840s edifices at the east end of the group. Earlier buildings at the southwest corner of King and Church Street were demolished in 1940 (Image 11).

With its placement near the southwest corner of King Street East and Church Street, the Albany Club and its neighbours overlook the intersection with St. James' Cathedral (1849-53 with later additions) on the northeast and the City Buildings at #107-125 King Street (dating to the 1840s), on the southeast.<sup>82</sup> Further east along the south side of King Street East at Victoria Street, the King Edward Hotel (1902) with its east addition (1920) is another local landmark that is designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. Behind the subject property, the buildings that once occupied the north side of Colborne Street were removed, but the opposite side of the street contains a warehouse (c. 1892) at #41-43 Colborne that is recognized on the City's heritage inventory.

### 3. EVALUATION CHECKLIST

The following evaluation applies Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the Ontario Heritage Act: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. While the

---

<sup>80</sup> <http://www.albanyclub.ca/About-Us/Architectural-Comments.aspx>, unpaginated

<sup>81</sup> Designed by Toronto architect N. A. Armstrong in 1928, the City Directory for 1929 (published in 1930) described the hotel as "under construction". Likely a casualty of the Great Depression, the project was not completed and the vacant parcels became a parking lot

<sup>82</sup> St. James' Cathedral at 106 King Street East, along with the City Buildings at #107-125 King are designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act

criteria are prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, the City of Toronto uses it when assessing properties for inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. The evaluation table is marked “N/A” if the criterion is “not applicable” to the property or X if it is applicable, with explanatory text below.

<b>Design or Physical Value</b>	
i. rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method	<b>X</b>
ii. displays high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	<b>X</b>
iii. demonstrates high degree of scientific or technical achievement	<b>N/A</b>

**Representative Example** – The property at 91 King Street East has design value as an excellent example of an institutional building designed in the Modern Classical style that was favoured during the interwar period when the Albany Club was remodelled. The distinctive design of the north façade is distinguished by the attention to detail with the individual treatment of each storey with classical motifs.

<b>Historical or Associative Value</b>	
i. direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community	<b>N/A</b>
ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	<b>X</b>
iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	<b>X</b>

**Institution** – Described as “an active political club, likely the last of its kind in Canada, and one of the few remaining ones in the world,”<sup>83</sup> the Albany Club is a significant institution in Toronto, with historical ties to provincial and federal politics. In existence in the city for 130 years, the Albany Club has been an active and visible presence on King Street East for over a century.

**Community** – The property at 91 King Street East contributes to an understanding of the significance of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood as it evolved from its origins as "Old Town," survived the Great Fire of 1849, emerged as the commercial and institutional heart of Toronto, withstood the economic downturn of the area in the 20<sup>th</sup> century before it was revitalized in the 1960s with the restoration of the landmark St. Lawrence Hall and St. Lawrence Market, among other projects. The Albany Club has been an important institution in Toronto's oldest community for over a century since establishing its premises on King Street East.

**Architect** – The Albany Club is linked to the career of C. J. Gibson, who prepared the plans in his capacity as a Toronto architect and club member. It remains one of the few

<sup>83</sup> <http://www.albanyclub.ca/About-Us/history.aspx>, unpagged

institutional buildings from Gibson's portfolio, along with the Earls court Branch of the Toronto Public Library, a recognized heritage site.

Contextual Value	
i. important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area	<b>X</b>
ii. physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings	<b>X</b>
iii. landmark	<b>N/A</b>

**Character** – The property at 91 King Street East is significant in defining, maintaining and supporting the historic character of King Street in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, which is identified by the low scale and appearance of the surviving stores, hotels, banks, warehouses and institutional edifices. As an institutional building that was remodelled in 1930, the Albany Club is an integral component in a streetscape of surviving commercial and institutional edifices that contributes to the evolution of the city's oldest neighbourhood.

**Surroundings** – The Albany Club is physically, visually and historically linked to its surroundings on King Street East in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood where it is placed near the east end of a collection of commercial and institutional buildings from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that includes some of the oldest surviving structures in Toronto.

#### 4. SUMMARY

Following research and evaluation according to Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the property at 91 King Street East has design, associative and contextual values. Located on the south side of King Street East between Church Street (east) and Leader Lane (west), the Albany Club is a fine representative example of an institutional building from the 1930s designed in the Modern Classical style that took its design inspiration from English gentlemen's clubs. The property is associated with the career of Toronto architect C. J. Gibson, who remodelled two existing units of the historic 1840s Victoria Row for the club's premises. Purportedly the oldest surviving political club in Canada, the Albany Club also contributes to an understanding of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood where it has been part of the evolution of King Street East since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Contextually, as an integral part of an important group of extant buildings, the Albany Club assists in supporting, maintaining and defining the historic character of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood where it is historically, visually and physically linked to its surroundings on the Town of York's original "main street."

#### 5. SOURCES

##### Archival Sources

Abstract Indices of Deeds, Town of York Plan, Lot A  
 Assessment Rolls, City of Toronto, St. Lawrence Ward, 1834-91, and Ward 3, Division  
 1, 1892 ff.

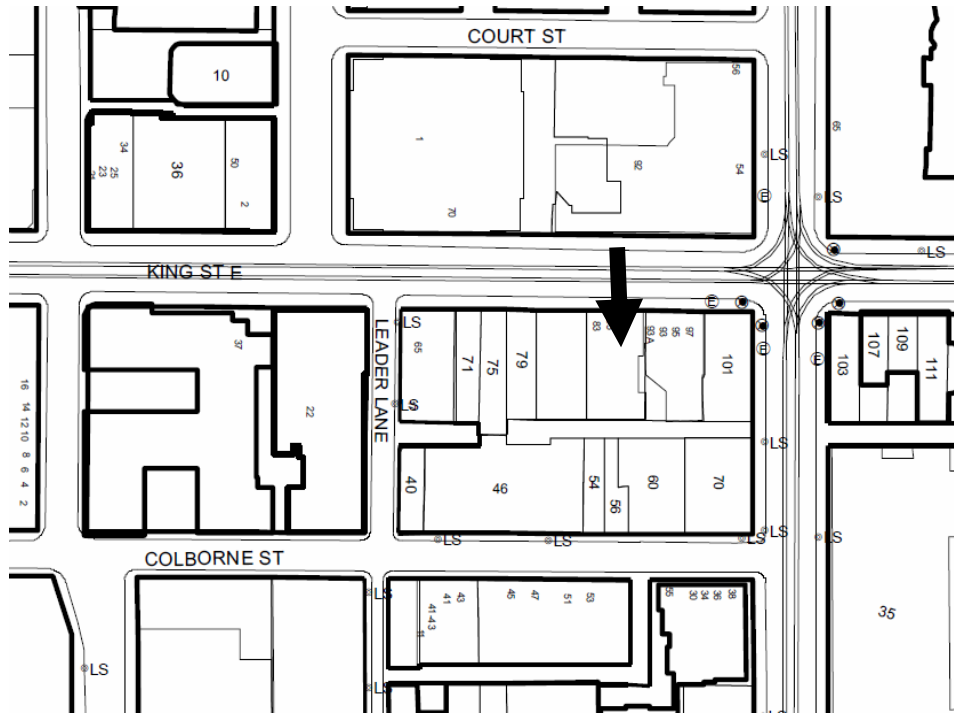
Boulton's Atlas of the City of Toronto, 1858  
Building Records, City of Toronto, Toronto and East York, #14737 (specifications, 1929;  
plans, 1931)  
Cane's Map of the City and Liberties of Toronto, 1842  
City of Toronto Directories, 1834 ff.  
Goad's Atlases, 1880-1923  
Photographs, City of Toronto Archives and Toronto Reference Library  
(citations with images below)  
Underwriters' Insurance Bureau Atlases, January 1921 updated to July 1943, and July  
1954 updated to July 1964

### Secondary Sources

Arthur, Eric, Toronto: no mean city, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. revised by Stephen A. Otto, 1986  
Baine, Richard p., and A. Lynn McMurray, Toronto: an urban study, 1970  
Blumenson, John, Ontario Architecture, 1990  
Careless, J. M. S., Toronto to 1918, 1984  
"Charles John Gibson," entry in the Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada,  
1800-1950, <http://www.dictionarofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1588>  
"Contracts Awarded," Contract Record, 14 November 1928, 15 Jan 1930, 16 April 1930,  
25 June 1930, and 27 July 1932  
Dendy, William, Lost Toronto, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., revised 1993  
Dendy, William, and William Kilbourn, Toronto Observed, 1986  
Filey, Mike, A Toronto Album, 1970  
Greer, William N., "Architectural Comments,"  
<http://www.albanyclub.ca/About-Us/Architectural-Comments.aspx>  
"John George Howard," entry in the Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada,  
1800-1950, <http://www.dictionarofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1532>  
MacKinnon, Steve, Karen Teeple and Michele Dale, Toronto's Visual Legacy, 2009  
Maitland, Leslie, Jacqueline Hucker and Shannon Ricketts, A Guide to Canadian  
Architectural Styles, 1992  
Martin, Joe, "History," <http://www.albanyclub.ca/About-Us/History.aspx>  
McHugh, Patricia, Toronto Architecture: a city guide, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1989  
Scadding, Henry, Toronto of Old (1873), reprint 1966  
"The Textures of a Lost Toronto: John Howard's Documentary Art and Drawings, 1830s-  
80s," <http://www.toronto.ca/culture/howard.htm>  
Toronto of Today, Morang and Company, 1913



6. IMAGES – Historical atlases, followed by archival records and contemporary photographs; **arrows** mark the location of the subject property



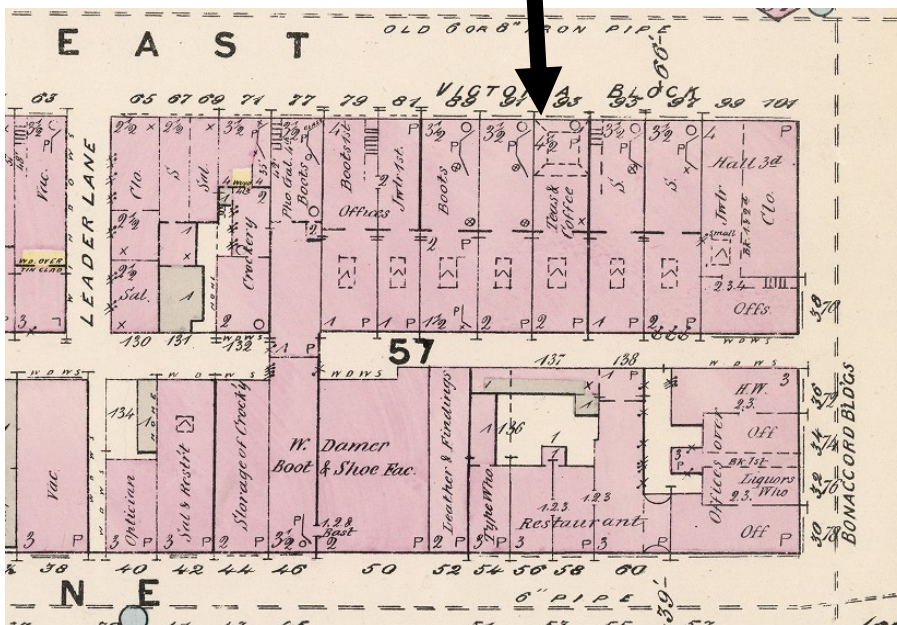
1. City of Toronto Property Data Map: showing the location of the property at 91 King Street East



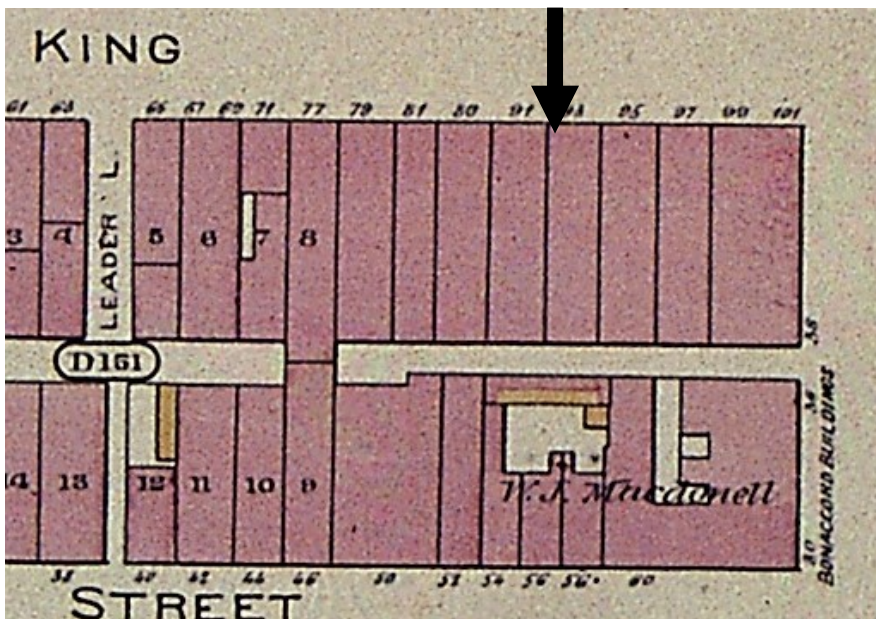
2. Location Map: showing the roofs and rear (south) walls and additions of the buildings in the block between Leader Lane (left) and Church Street (right), including the subject building (<http://www.bing.com/maps>)



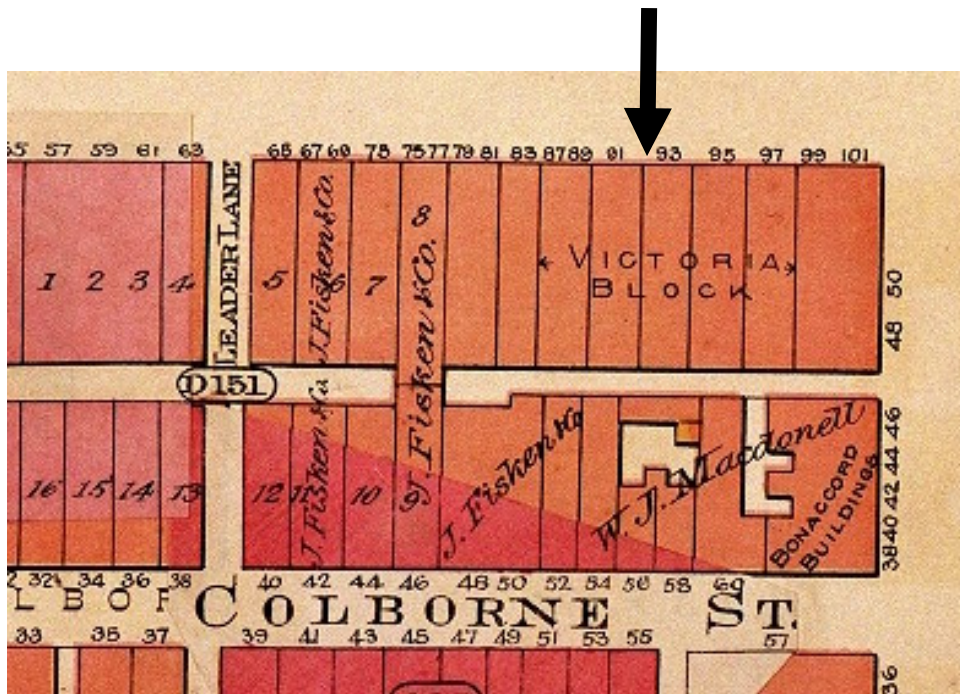




5. Goad's Atlas, 1880: showing Victoria Row, where the four-storey portion was later remodeled (along with the adjoining section to the west) for the Albany Club



6. Goad's Atlas, 1884: the update to the atlas shows the status of the block where the subject property is labeled "91-93"

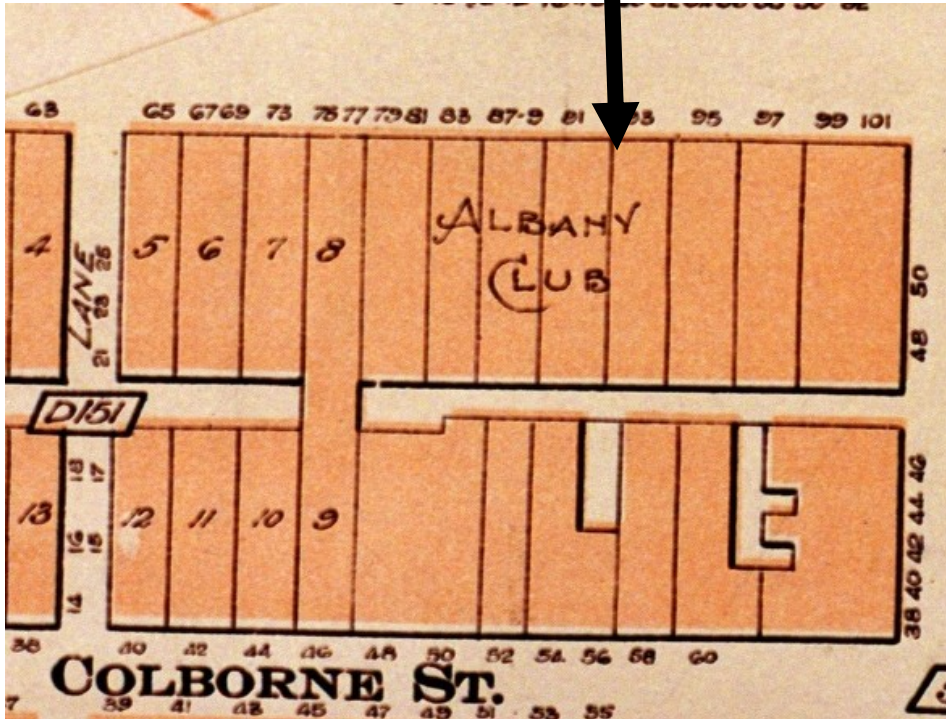


7. Goad's Atlas, 1890: Victoria Row is labeled as “Victoria Block” where two units at #91-93 were subsequently remodeled for the Albany Club

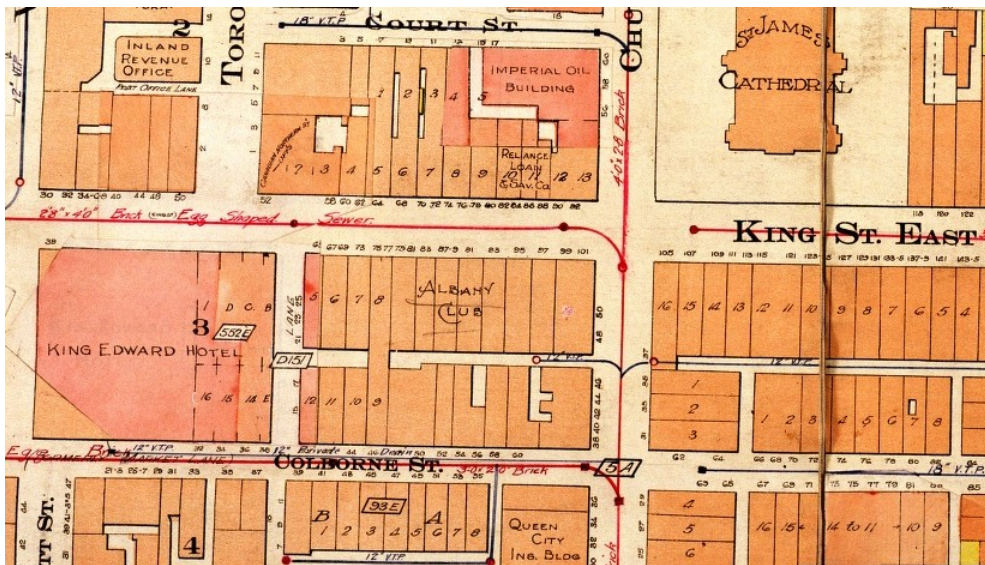


8. Goad's Atlas, 1890 revised to September 1903: on this update, there are no changes shown to the group of properties east of Leader Lane, where the King Edward Hotel was completed in 1902 (first phase) to the west on the southeast corner of King and Victoria Streets





9. Goad's Atlas, 1910 revised to 1912: where the Albany Club acquired parts of Victoria Row and rented additional space in the neighbouring properties



10. Goad's Atlas, 1910 revised to 1923: showing the status of the block on the last update to Goad's

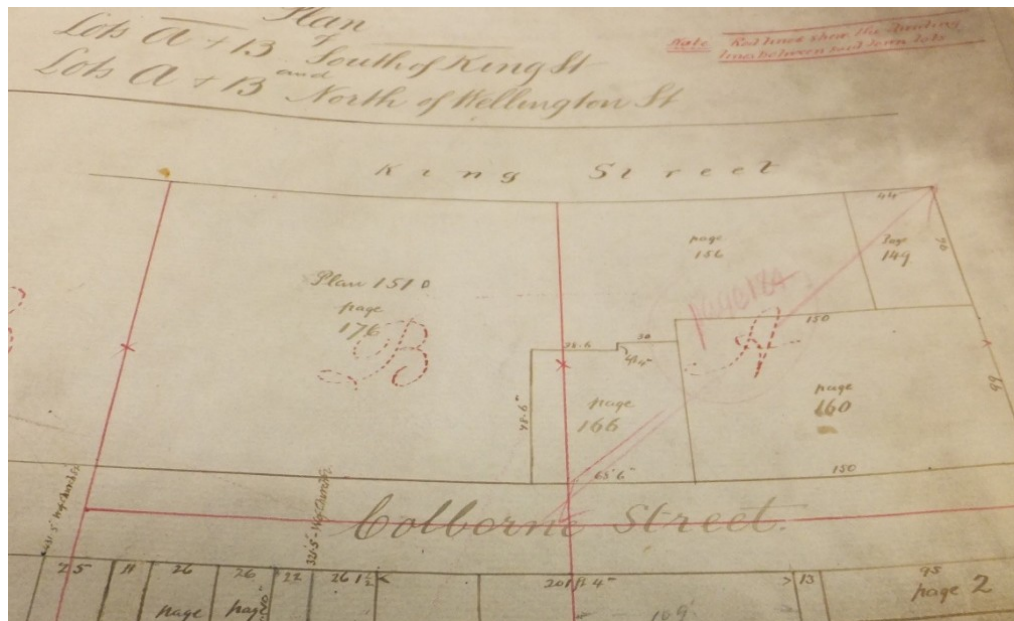




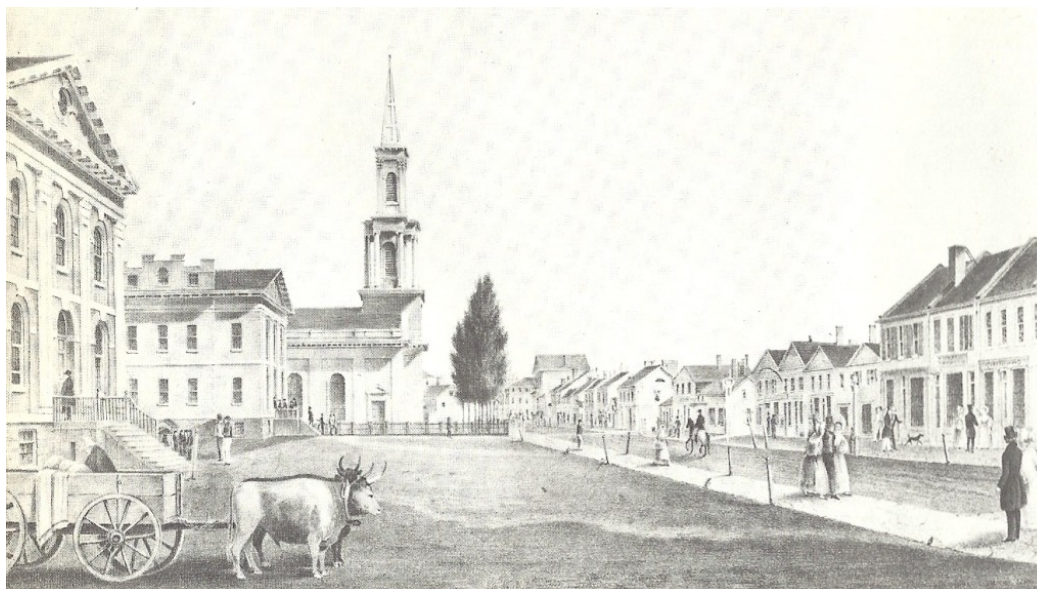
11. Underwriters' Insurance Bureau Atlas, January 1921 updated to January 1943: showing the remodeled Albany Club extending along King Street East



12. Underwriters' Insurance Bureau Atlas, July 1954 updated to January 1964: the buildings at either end of the block were demolished and have stood vacant since

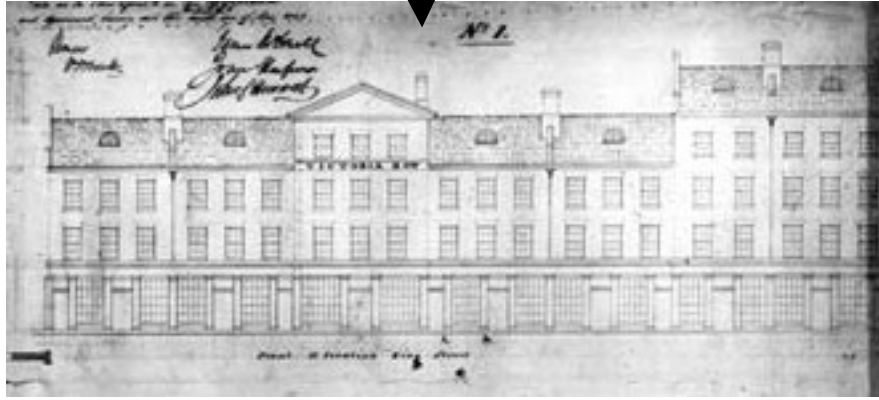


13. Plan of York: showing the portion of the plan with Town Lots A and B on the southwest corner of King Street East and Church Street (Land Registry Office)

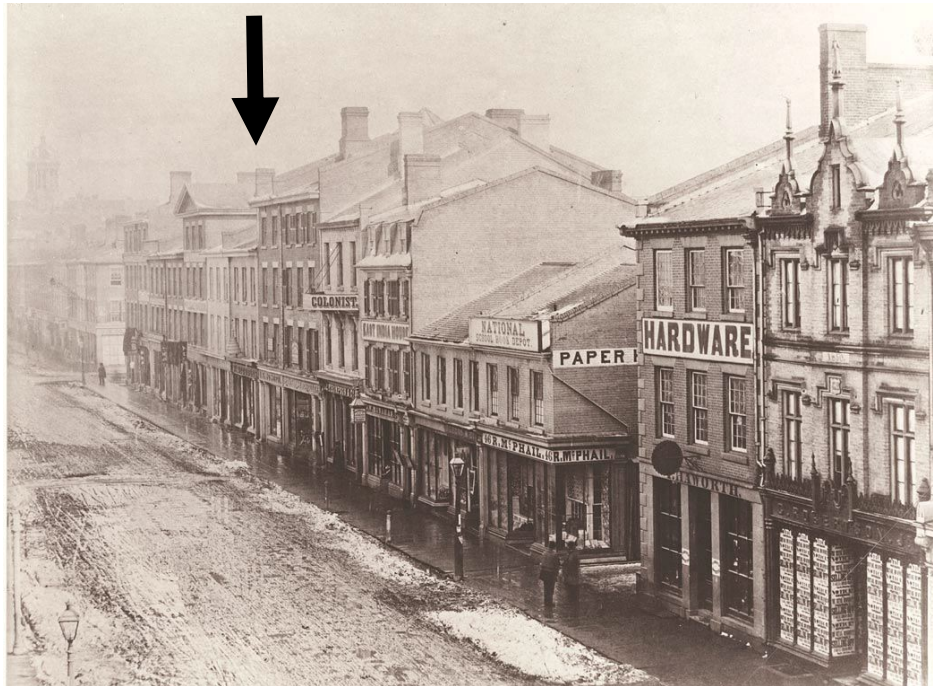


14. Illustration, William Young, c. 1835: showing King Street East, looking east toward St. James' Church with the original buildings on the south side of the street (right) (reproduced in Baine and McMurray, 24)





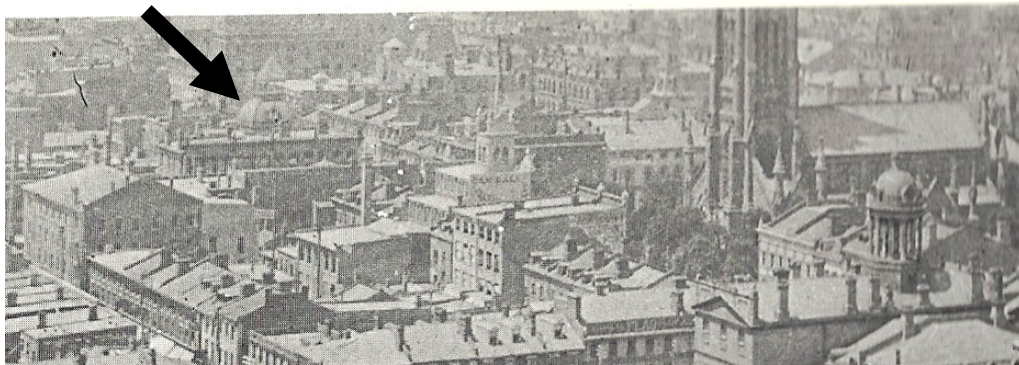
15. Drawing, Victoria Row, 1842: showing the plans by architect John Howard for the five-unit Victoria Row and the two commercial blocks at the west end. The central portion under the pediment and the unit to the west (right) were later remodeled for the Albany Club (Howard Collection, Toronto Reference Library, #221)



16. Archival Photograph, 1856: view east along the south side of King Street East from Leader Lane (underneath the “Paper” sign) showing Victoria Row with the pedimented centre section that was remodeled with the neighbouring unit for the Albany Club (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1498, Item 2)



17. Archival photograph, Victoria Row, c. 1890: showing the alterations to Victoria Row in the Second Empire style, where the central unit with the tower (and the statue of Queen Victoria) and the one directly west (right) were later remodeled for the Albany Club (Toronto Reference Library, #12658)



18. Archival Photograph, 1894: showing St. James Cathedral on the right with the Victoria Row with its distinctive mansard roof on the left (one of the two units that were later remodeled for the Albany Club) (A Toronto Album, 23)





19. Archival Photograph, c. 1910-12: looking east along King Street East (with the King Edward Hotel in the bottom right corner) and showing Victoria Row where the Albany Club occupied two units, including the one with the distinctive tower under a mansard roof (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1244, Item 605)



20. Archival Photograph, 1913: showing the main entrance to the Albany Club at the base of the central unit under the tower following the remodeling of the former storefront in 1898 (Toronto of Today, 75)



21. Drawing, Albany Club, 1929: showing a section of the principal (north) façade (City of Toronto Building Records, Toronto and East York, #14737)



22. Archival Photograph, 1931: showing the Albany Club with its new stone-clad north façade (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1266, Item 22928)





23. Photograph, 1977: showing the Albany Club at present-day 91 King Street East (Toronto Historical Board)



24. Photograph, 2000: showing the interior of the dining hall with the wood paneling, ceiling detailing, and (on the right) the minstrels' gallery (<http://www.albanyclub.ca/About-Us/Architectural-Comments.aspx>)

**HERITAGE PROPERTY RESEARCH AND EVALUATION REPORT**



**TYRRELL BUILDING**  
95 KING STREET EAST, TORONTO

Prepared by:

Heritage Preservation Services  
City Planning Division  
City of Toronto

May 2012



## 1. DESCRIPTION



Cover: north facade of the Tyrrell Building at 95 King Street East; above: east elevation (left) & north facade (right) (Heritage Preservation Services, April 2012)

<b>95 King Street East: Tyrrell Building</b>	
ADDRESS	95 King Street East (south side, west of Church Street)
WARD	Ward 28 (Toronto Centre-Rosedale)
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	Plan of York, Part Lot A
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	St. Lawrence Neighbourhood
HISTORICAL NAME	Tyrrell Building
CONSTRUCTION DATE	1912
ORIGINAL OWNER	William Tyrrell
ORIGINAL USE	Commercial (store and offices)
CURRENT USE*	Commercial (store and offices) * This does not refer to permitted use(s) as defined by the Zoning By-law
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	R. A. Abraham, architect
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION/MATERIALS	Brick cladding with brick & stone detailing
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	Edwardian Classicism
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	1943, 1969 & 1982: store front altered
CRITERIA	Design/Physical, Historical/Associative & Contextual
HERITAGE STATUS	Cultural Heritage Evaluation
RECORDER	Heritage Preservation Services: Kathryn Anderson
REPORT DATE	May 2012

## 2. BACKGROUND

This research and evaluation report describes the history, architecture and context of the property at 95 King Street East, and applies evaluation criteria to determine whether it merits inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties and designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The conclusions of the research and evaluation are found in Section 4 (Summary).

### i. HISTORICAL TIMELINE

<b>Key Date</b>	<b>Historical Event</b>
1811 Oct	John McDonell receives the patent for Lot A, Plan of York
1837	Architect & surveyor John Howard surveys McDonell's King Street tract
1838	James W. McDonell's name first appears in the tax assessment rolls as the owner of vacant land on Henrietta Street
1839	The tax assessment rolls show James W. McDonell as the "owner or lessee" of nine buildings on the south side of King Street East, west of Church Street
1840	John Howard designs the five-unit "Victoria Row" and two adjoining commercial buildings at the west end
1842	According to the tax assessment roll, six lots owned by James McDonell on King Street East stand vacant <sup>84</sup>
1842 Oct	James W. McDonell inherits his father's King Street East properties
1843	"Four vacant houses" stand on McDonell's parcel according to the tax assessment rolls
1844	McDonell is assessed for seven buildings comprising Victoria Row and its neighbours at present-day 79 & 83 King Street East
1865	James M. McDonell dies & Margaret L. McDonell becomes the executrix for his estate
1876	An illustration in a commercial directory shows the building at #83 King (which as designed at the same time as Victoria Row) updated with Second Empire features
1880 Apr	Margaret L. McDonell mortgages "all lot letter A" for \$20,000
1880 Sept	The tax assessment roll describes "91 King" (part of Victoria Row) as an "unfinished building", suggesting alterations are ongoing in the group
1900	Following Margaret L. McDonell's death, Margaret Martha Robinson McCarthy is identified as the "owner/lessee" on the tax assessment rolls of the easterly units of Victoria Row at #95 & 97 King
1911 Sept	The tax assessment roll describes 95 King Street East as a vacant lot, with the adjoining building at #97 King occupied by William Tyrrell and Company, booksellers
1912 Aug	William Tyrrell is issued a building permit for an office building with Robert A. Abraham identified as the architect
1912 Sept	The building at #97 King is described as "unfinished" with Wilbur Irwin as a tobacconist on the ground floor and vacant flats above
1943	A permit is issued to alter the store front

<sup>84</sup> The 1842 tax assessment roll for St. Lawrence Ward is undated

## ii. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### St. Lawrence Neighbourhood

Following the founding of the Town of York in 1793, a townsite was established in the ten-block area between George Street, Palace Street (now Front Street East), Berkeley Street, and a line north of present-day Adelaide Street East. The rapid growth of the community, particularly after the War of 1812, led to the westward extension of “Old Town” to Jarvis Street and beyond.<sup>85</sup> When the City of Toronto was incorporated in 1834, King Street East was described as “the main street through the centre of the town.”<sup>86</sup> The first St. James’ Church (forerunner to today’s St. James’ Cathedral) marked the northeast corner of King and Church Streets, with the courthouse and jail placed on the northwest side of this intersection. Apart from the institutional buildings, King Street was lined with shops, offices and houses (Image 14).

Old Town was devastated by the Great Fire of 1849, resulting in the rebuilding of St. James’ Church on its original site, with St. Lawrence Hall (containing offices, a market and the “Great Hall” for public gatherings) completed in 1851 further east on King Street.<sup>87</sup> Part of the commercial district along King Street East survived the fire, with the remainder rebuilt with structures ranging from one to four stories, the latter being the maximum height deemed rentable in the decades before elevators were available.

King Street East retained its prominence as the city’s “main street” through much of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, although many of the commercial buildings were either rebuilt or remodelled in the elaborate architectural styles identified with the Victorian era. In 1884, King Street was enthusiastically described as having “the most brilliant and long-extended series of first-class stores of which Toronto can boast, her Palais Royal, her Regent Street.”<sup>88</sup> However, at this time the new “department stores” opened by entrepreneurs Timothy Eaton and Robert Simpson on Yonge Street near Queen Street began to draw commercial traffic away from the King Street corridor. In an attempt to stave off this movement, the upscale King Edward Hotel opened on King Street east of Yonge Street (with the first phase completed in 1902). By the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, the area now known as the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood remained a largely commercial and manufacturing district. The City of Toronto’s restoration of St. Lawrence Hall and the revitalization of St. Lawrence Market in the 1960s was complimented by the conversion of many of the surviving warehouses and stores for restaurants, offices and shops as part of the renaissance of the area.

---

<sup>85</sup> George Williams’ Plan of the Town of York in 1813 sets the west boundary at New (Jarvis) Street

<sup>86</sup>George Walton, Commercial Directory, Street Guide and Register, 1833-34, 1834

<sup>87</sup> Only three original buildings from the pre-1834 Town of York have been identified as survivors: the Bank of Upper Canada (1827) and the neighbouring First Post Office (1834) at 252 Adelaide Street East, and Campbell House (c. 1822), which originally stood at Adelaide and Frederick Streets before it was relocated to 160 Queen Street West in 1974. After the Great Fire, the Second City Hall was built at 91 Front Street East, where a portion is retained at South St. Lawrence Market. The latter properties are designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act

<sup>88</sup> Dendy, 95

## King Street East between Leader Lane and Church Street

The intricate history of the properties on King Street East between Leader Lane and Church Street can be traced through land records, atlases, directories, tax assessment rolls and other archival records. The lands along the south side of the street were subdivided according to the Plan of York as Town Lots A and B (Image 13). Located at the southwest corner of King and Church (where it extended south to Wellington Street East), Lot A was patented to John McDonell in 1811.<sup>89</sup> This tract encompassed the building at present-day 85 King Street East, as well as others that were subsequently altered, replaced or demolished. The development of Lot A is illustrated on 19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> century maps and atlases (Images 4-12).

### 91 King Street East

When the first city directory was published in 1834, only five buildings were recorded on the south side of King Street East from Church Street west to Henrietta Street.<sup>90</sup> John McDonell's properties were first referenced in the tax assessment roll for St. Lawrence Ward in 1838 when his son, James M. McDonell was recorded as the "owner or lessee" of nine buildings along King Street East. These original buildings appeared the year after James M. McDonell engaged Toronto architect and surveyor, John Howard to survey the land. While early city directories described James as a government clerk, by the 1840s he had assumed the position of "inspector of licenses" for the Home District. This increase in status coincided with his father's death in 1842 when James M. McDonell inherited Lot A. James immediately demolished the existing structures on King Street East and mortgaged the land.<sup>91</sup> This enabled him to construct "Victoria Row," a five-part block with shops, offices and residential units that included at the west end a pair of taller commercial buildings. The project was designed by John Howard two years earlier. The plans and an archival photograph dated 1856 show Victoria Row (Images 15 and 16).

Following James W. McDonell's death, his King Street properties were rented to a series of tenants. An archival photograph taken about 1890 (Image 17) illustrates how Victoria Row was "altered in the fashionable Second Empire style, making it one of the first commercial examples of this style in Toronto."<sup>92</sup> While it is suggested that the changes were made in the mid 1860s, an illustration from 1876 shows only one of the commercial buildings adjoining Victoria Row (which were designed by Howard at the same time) with Second Empire detailing.<sup>93</sup> Margaret L. McDonell mortgaged "all lot lettered A" for \$20,000 in April 1880 and less than six months later part of the site contained an

---

<sup>89</sup> While his surname is spelled differently in various archival sources, legal documents use "McDonell"

<sup>90</sup> By the time Cane's Map of the City and Liberties of Toronto was produced in 1842, Henrietta Street had disappeared (Image 3)

<sup>91</sup> The site stood vacant according to the tax assessment roll for 1842 (undated) and, in May of that year, McDonell entered into a mortgage with Christopher Widmer

<sup>92</sup> Dendy, 96

<sup>93</sup> Dendy, 96, and Toronto Reference Library, Item 12409



“unfinished building”, suggesting that the transformation was ongoing<sup>94</sup> The Second Empire style remained popular during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, following the introduction of the design to Toronto with Henry Langley’s Government House (the Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario’s official residence at King Street West and Simcoe Street) in 1873.<sup>95</sup> As indicated by its name, Victoria Row featured a prominent statue of Queen Victoria in the second storey of the central unit (which is visible in Image 17).

Margaret L. McDonell retained and rented Victoria Row until the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when members of her family began to disperse their land holdings.<sup>96</sup> Margaret Martha Robinson McCarthy (a McDonell heir) is listed on the tax assessment roll of 1900 as the owner of the two easterly units of Victoria Row. This site was redeveloped under the direction of John Leckie, president of Overdale Investments Limited.<sup>97</sup> In September 1911, one of the two parcels was described as a vacant lot in the assessment rolls, with the William Tyrrell and Company, booksellers, as the principal tenant on the other. Mr. Tyrrell was issued a building permit in August 1912 for an office building valued at \$30,000, a month before the structure was described as “unfinished” in the tax assessment rolls and after some of the tenants were already installed (Image 19). By 1913, the Tyrrell Building was almost fully occupied, with a tobacconist on the ground floor and a variety of occupants in the upper stories, including the Toronto architects Chapman and McGiffin and the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company. By the 1920s, the premises attracted an array of tenants, ranging from the Workers’ Party of Canada and Empire Securities to architect John Fisher.

#### Architect Robert Austin Abraham

The Tyrrell Building was designed by Toronto architect Robert Austin Abraham, who was in practice in the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Between 1903 and 1910, Abraham worked as a draughtsman with the local architectural firm of Symons and Rae, which was best known for its residential commissions in the city’s upscale neighbourhoods. In solo practice beginning in 1910, Abraham is credited with the plans for the Palmerston Apartments and the Tyrrell Building. He evidently worked as a staff architect at Ontario Hydro beginning in 1920 but, eight years later Abraham “appears to have abandoned the profession.”<sup>98</sup>

### iii. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

---

<sup>94</sup> Building permits do not survive prior to 1882

<sup>95</sup> Named for the reign of Napoleon III, the style was introduced in 19<sup>th</sup> century France with the designs for the New Louvre that combined elements of Italian Renaissance architecture with classical French prototypes

<sup>96</sup> West of the subject property, the two adjoining units of Victoria Row (including the portion updated with the tower) were acquired by the Albany Club, which replaced the King Street façade in 1930. The westernmost unit of Victoria Row survives at #85 King, along the two adjoining commercial buildings at #79 and 83 King that were also designed by John Howard

<sup>97</sup> Overdale Investments leased the track according to land records

<sup>98</sup> <http://www.dictionarofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/5>, unpagged

The Tyrrell Building at 95 King Street West is shown in contemporary and archival photographs on the cover and in Sections 1 and 6 of this report. The structure was designed with features of Edwardian Classicism, the most popular style for all building types prior to World War I. "Simply articulated with a selective distribution of strong Classical elements," Edwardian architecture "provided a transitional style from 19<sup>th</sup> century eclecticism..."<sup>99</sup> In sharp contrast to the units of Victoria Row that it replaced, the design for the Tyrrell Building rejected the excesses of the Second Empire updates and returned to the symmetrical placement of relatively restrained classical elements associated with this style.

The Tyndall Building rises five stories to a flat roofline.<sup>100</sup> Featuring buff brick cladding and stone trim and divided into three bays, the principal (north) façade features the classical tripartite organization with a base, shaft and attic with robust cornices above each level. In the first floor, the main entrance is centered in the wall in a round-arched surround with an oversized keystone that is flanked by piers with capitals. Beneath a cornice with modillion blocks, the first-floor storefronts have been altered. Three-storey piers with stone detailing organize the window openings in the shaft, with flat-headed stone-trimmed openings in the outer bays and a series of oriel windows in the centre. An extended cornice with dentils separates the shaft from the attic above where stout piers divide the single flat-headed window openings that display brick flat arches and stone keystones.

#### iv. CONTEXT

The property at 95 King Street East is shown on the location maps attached as Images 1 and 2. The Tyrrell Building anchors the east end of the group of surviving buildings from the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that fill most of the block on the south side of King Street between Church Street (east) and Leader Lane (west). At the west end, the commercial shops between #71 King and Leader Lane were removed in 1929 for the proposed "Toronto Hotel".<sup>101</sup> Within the block, the properties at #71, 75, 79, 83 and 85 King contain commercial blocks dating to the late 1830s or early 1840s that complement the subject site and setback (with the north facade of #71 King updated in the 20<sup>th</sup> century). With the adjoining Albany Club at #91 King, Tyrrell Building represents the remodelling and replacement, respectively, of early 1840s edifices and marks the east end of the group. Earlier buildings at the southwest corner of King and Church Street were demolished in 1940 (Image 11).

---

<sup>99</sup> Blumenson, 166

<sup>100</sup> The building has a distinctive irregularly shaped plan designed to allow light in-between the west elevation and the adjoining building (originally the central unit of Victoria Row and since 1930 the remodelled Albany Club), which can be seen in Image 2

<sup>101</sup> Designed by Toronto architect N. A. Armstrong in 1928, the City Directory for 1929 (published in 1930) described the hotel as "under construction". Likely a casualty of the Great Depression, the project was not completed and the vacant parcels became a parking lot

With its placement near the southwest corner of King Street East and Church Street, the Tyrrell Building and its neighbours overlook the intersection with St. James' Cathedral (1849-53 with later additions) on the northeast and the City Buildings at #107-125 King Street (dating to the 1840s), on the southeast.<sup>102</sup> Further east along the south side of King Street East at Victoria Street, the King Edward Hotel (1902) with its east addition (1920) is another local landmark that is designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. Behind the subject property, the buildings that once occupied the north side of Colborne Street were removed, but the opposite side of the street contains a warehouse (c. 1892) at #41-43 Colborne that is recognized on the City's heritage inventory.

### 3. EVALUATION CHECKLIST

The following evaluation applies Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the Ontario Heritage Act: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. While the criteria are prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, the City of Toronto uses it when assessing properties for inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. The evaluation table is marked "N/A" if the criterion is "not applicable" to the property or X if it is applicable, with explanatory text below.

<b>Design or Physical Value</b>	
i. rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method	<b>X</b>
ii. displays high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	<b>X</b>
iii. demonstrates high degree of scientific or technical achievement	<b>N/A</b>

**Representative Example** – The Tyrrell Building is a fine representative example of a commercial building dating the era before World War I with Edwardian Classical styling that demonstrates a high degree of craftsmanship. The Tyrrell Building displays the tripartite horizontal arrangement of the stories and the classical detailing that are hallmarks of the style, yet is set apart by the oriel windows, tiers of cornices and roof detailing. It contributes through its vintage and setback to the group of commercial and institutional buildings that mark the south side of King Street East between Church Street and Leader Lane.

<b>Historical or Associative Value</b>	
i. direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community	<b>N/A</b>
ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	<b>X</b>
iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	<b>N/A</b>

<sup>102</sup> St. James' Cathedral at 106 King Street East, along with the City Buildings at #107-125 King are designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act

**Community** – The property at 95 King Street East contributes to an understanding of the significance of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood as it evolved from its origins as "Old Town," survived the Great Fire of 1849, emerged as the commercial and institutional heart of Toronto, and withstood the economic downturn of the area in the 20<sup>th</sup> century before it was revitalized in the 1960s with the restoration of the landmark St. Lawrence Hall and St. Lawrence Market, among other projects. The Tyrrell Building was an early 20<sup>th</sup> century addition to Toronto's original "main street" in the city's oldest neighbourhood where it represents the ongoing revitalization of the community.

<b>Contextual Value</b>	
i. important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area	<b>X</b>
ii. physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings	<b>X</b>
iii. landmark	<b>N/A</b>

**Character** – The property at 95 King Street East is significant in defining, maintaining and supporting the historic character of King Street in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, which is identified by the low scale and appearance of the surviving stores, banks, hotels, warehouses and institutional edifices. As a commercial building introduced to the block in the World War I era, the Tyrrell Building stands as a significant component in a streetscape of surviving commercial and institutional edifices where it contributes to the evolution of Toronto's oldest neighbourhood.

**Surroundings** – The Tyrrell Building is physically, visually and historically linked to its surroundings on King Street East in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood where it anchors the east end of a collection of commercial and institutional buildings from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, which includes some of the oldest surviving edifices in Toronto.

#### 4. SUMMARY

Following research and evaluation according to Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the property at 95 King Street East has design, associative and contextual values. Located near the southwest corner of King Street and Leader Lane Club, the Tyrrell Building is a fine representative example of a commercial building dating to the pre-World War I that is distinguished by its well-crafted Edwardian Classical styling. Built to replace two units of Victoria Row (a five-unit commercial block), the Tyrrell Building represents the evolution of King Street East from its origins as the city's oldest community that survived the Great Fire of 1849, to its development as Toronto's commercial centre for most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and its endurance until its renaissance at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Contextually, the property at 95 King Street East assists in supporting, maintaining and defining the historic character of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood where the Tyrrell Building is historically, visually and physically linked to its surroundings on the Town of York's original "main street."



## 5. SOURCES

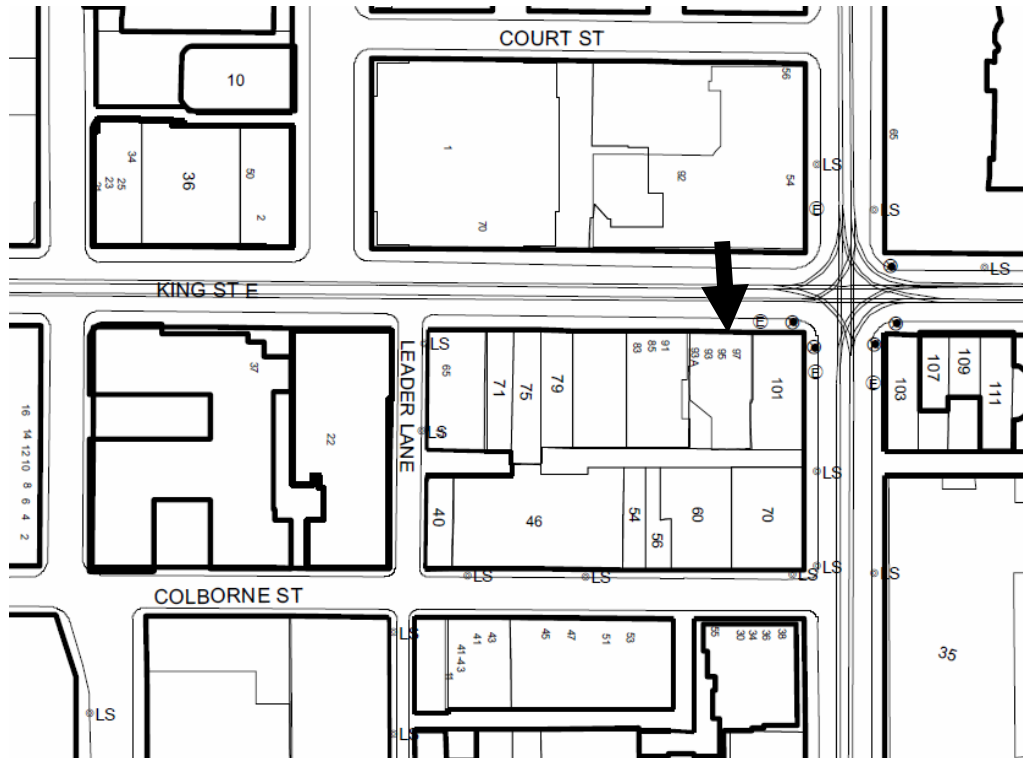
### Archival Sources

Abstract Indices of Deeds, Town of York Plan, Lot A  
Assessment Rolls, City of Toronto, St. Lawrence Ward, 1834-91, and Ward 3, Division 1, 1892 ff.  
Boulton's Atlas of the City of Toronto, 1858  
Building Permit #36490 (August 8, 1912), City of Toronto Archives  
Building Records, City of Toronto, Toronto and East York, #14737 (specifications, 1929; plans, 1931)  
Cane's Map of the City and Liberties of Toronto, 1842  
City of Toronto Directories, 1834 ff.  
Goad's Atlases, 1880-1923  
Photographs, City of Toronto Archives and Toronto Reference Library  
(citations with images below)  
Underwriters' Insurance Bureau Atlases, January 1921 updated to July 1945, and July 1954 updated to July 1964

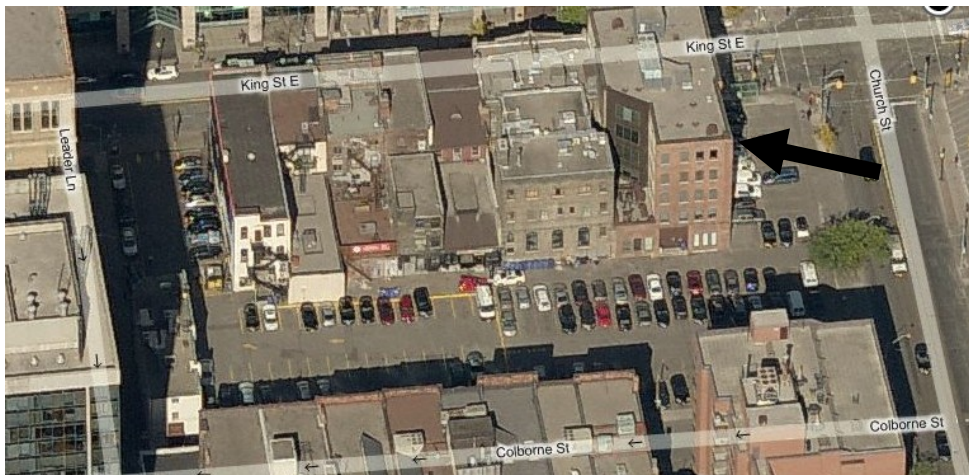
### Secondary Sources

Arthur, Eric, Toronto: no mean city, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. revised by Stephen A. Otto, 1986  
Baine, Richard p., and A. Lynn McMurray, Toronto: an urban study, 1970  
Blumenson, John, Ontario Architecture, 1990  
Careless, J. M. S., Toronto to 1918, 1984  
Dendy, William, Lost Toronto, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., revised 1993  
Dendy, William, and William Kilbourn, Toronto Observed, 1986  
Filey, Mike, A Toronto Album, 1970  
"John George Howard," entry in the Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800-1950, <http://www.dictionarofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1532>  
MacKinnon, Steve, Karen Teeple and Michele Dale, Toronto's Visual Legacy, 2009  
McHugh, Patricia, Toronto Architecture: a city guide, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1989  
Robert Austin Abraham, entry in The Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada 1800-1950, <http://www.dictionarofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/5>  
Scadding, Henry, Toronto of Old (1873), reprint 1966  
"The Textures of a Lost Toronto: John Howard's Documentary Art and Drawings, 1830s-80s," <http://www.toronto.ca/culture/howard.htm>

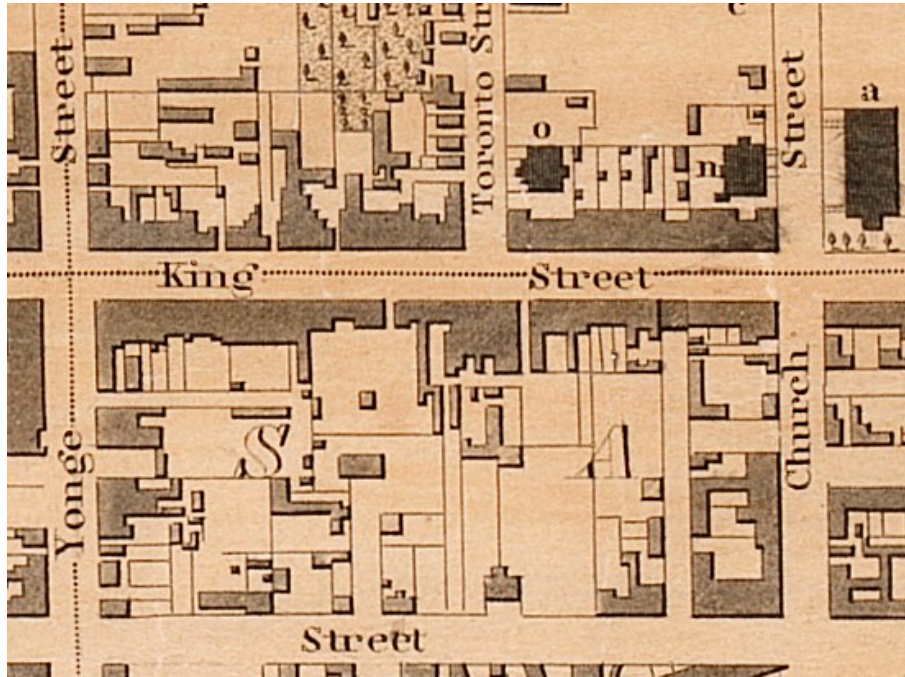
6. IMAGES – Historical atlases, followed by archival records and contemporary photographs; **arrows** mark the location of the subject property



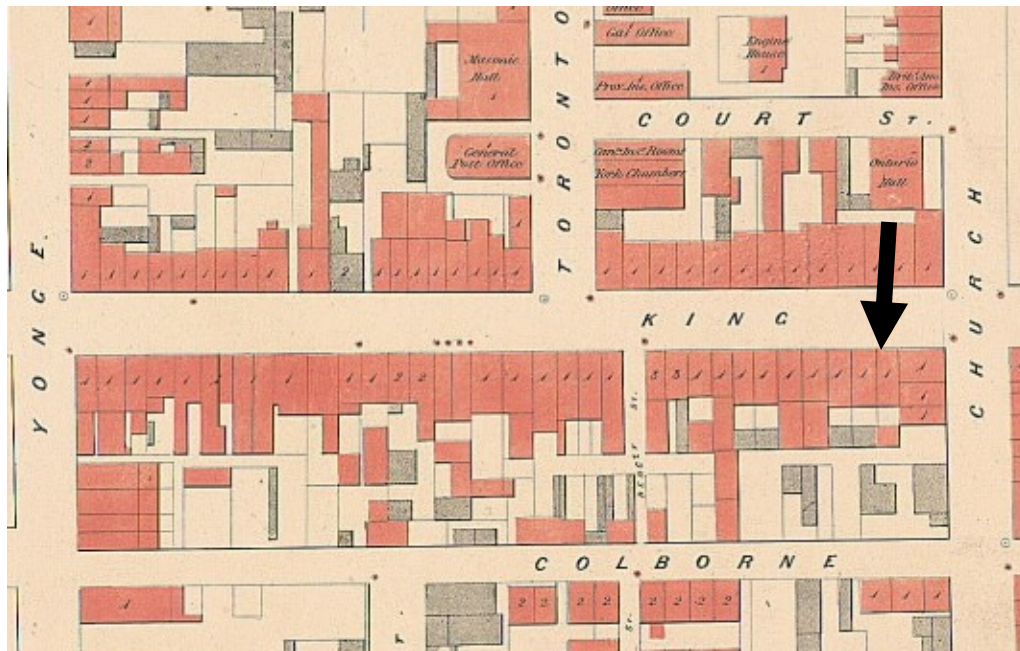
1. City of Toronto Property Data Map: showing the location of the property at present-day 85 King Street East



2. Location Map: showing the roofs and rear (south) walls and additions of the buildings in the block between Leader Lane (left) and Church Street (right), including the subject building (<http://www.bing.com/maps>)

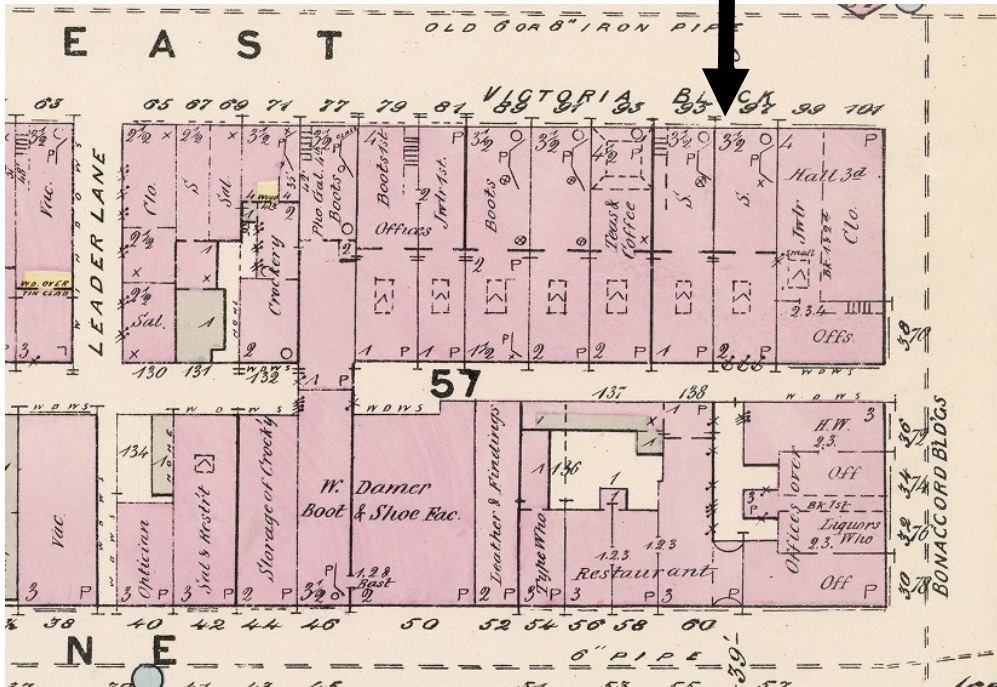


3. Cane’s Map of the City and Liberties of Toronto, 1842: showing the commercial blocks along both sides of King Street East (including the subject property) prior to the Great Fire of 1849

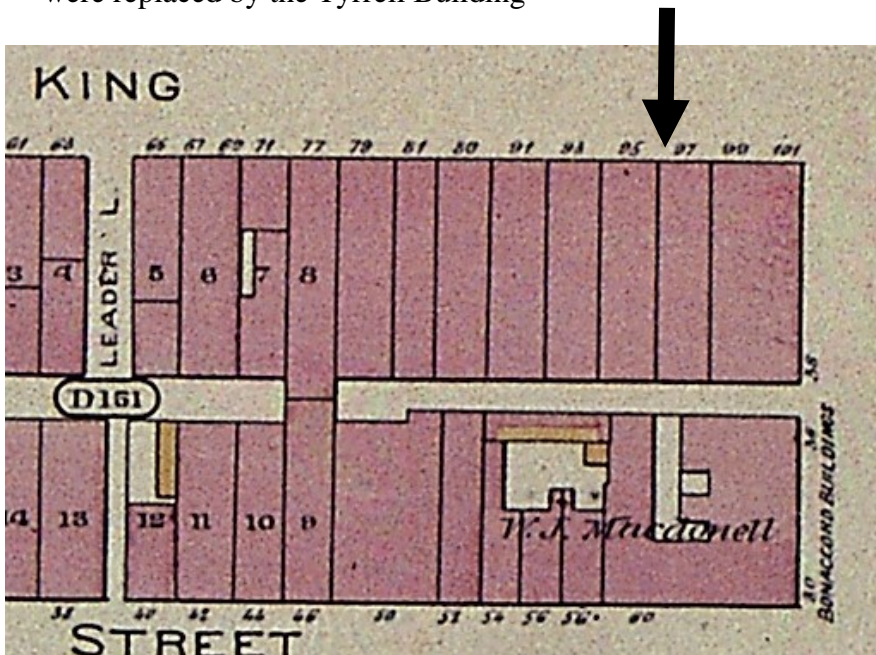


4. Boulton’s Atlas of Toronto, 1858: showing the Victoria Row on the south side of King Street East, west of Church Street



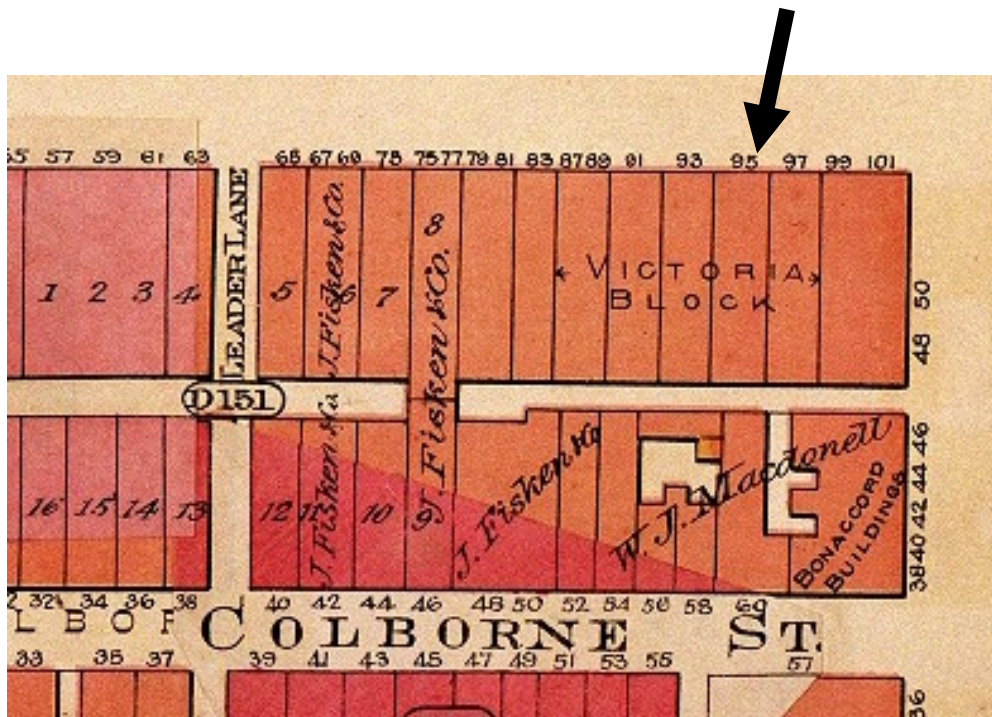


5. Goad's Atlas, 1880: showing Victoria Row, where the units marked “95 and 97” were replaced by the Tyrrell Building



6. Goad's Atlas, 1884: the labeling “W. J. Macdonell” refers to James W. McDonell’s properties along King, Church and Colborne Streets

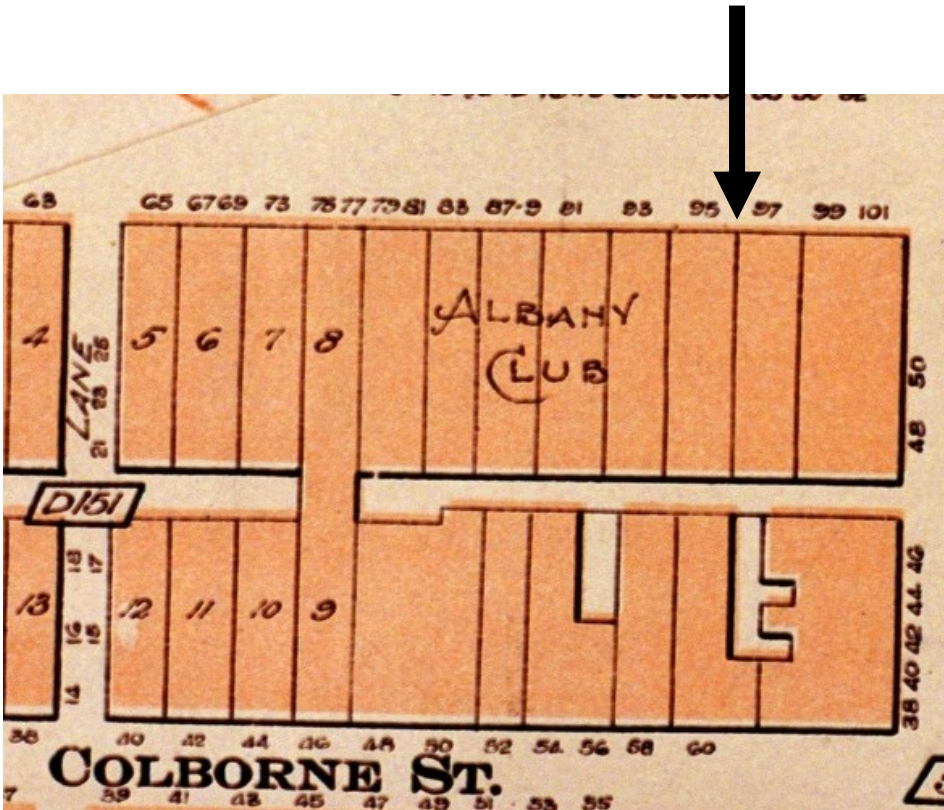




7. Goad's Atlas, 1890: Victoria Row is labeled as "Victoria Block" with #95 and 97 King subsequently replaced by the Tyrrell Building



8. Goad's Atlas, 1890 revised to September 1903: on this update, there are no changes shown to the group of properties east of Leader Lane, where the King Edward Hotel was completed in 1902 (first phase) to the west on the southeast corner of King and Victoria Streets

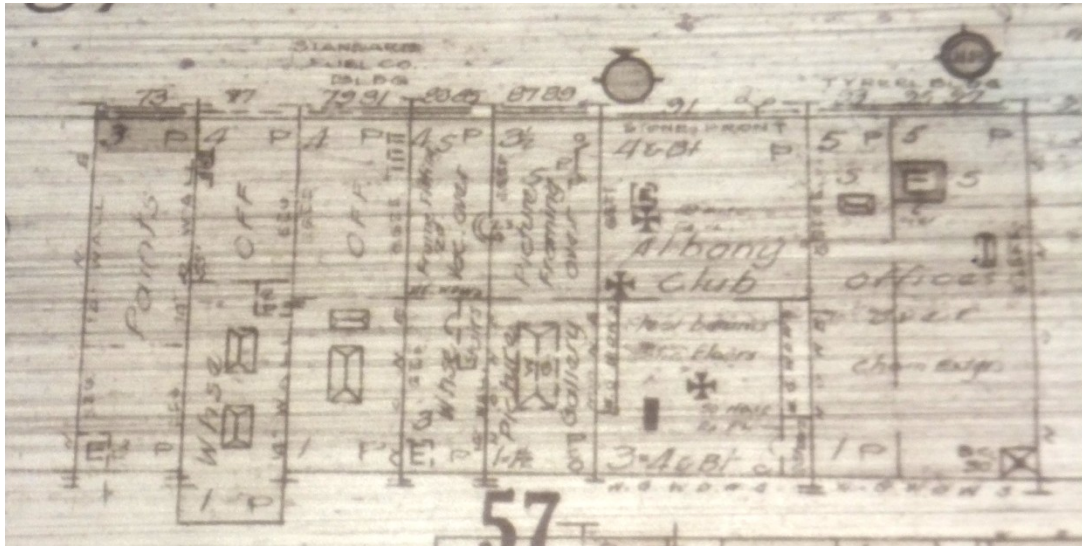


9. Goad's Atlas, 1910 revised to 1912: where the Albany Club acquired parts of Victoria Row beside those units replaced by the Tyrrell Building after this atlas was updated



10. Goad's Atlas, 1910 revised to 1923: showing the status of the block on the last update to Goad's

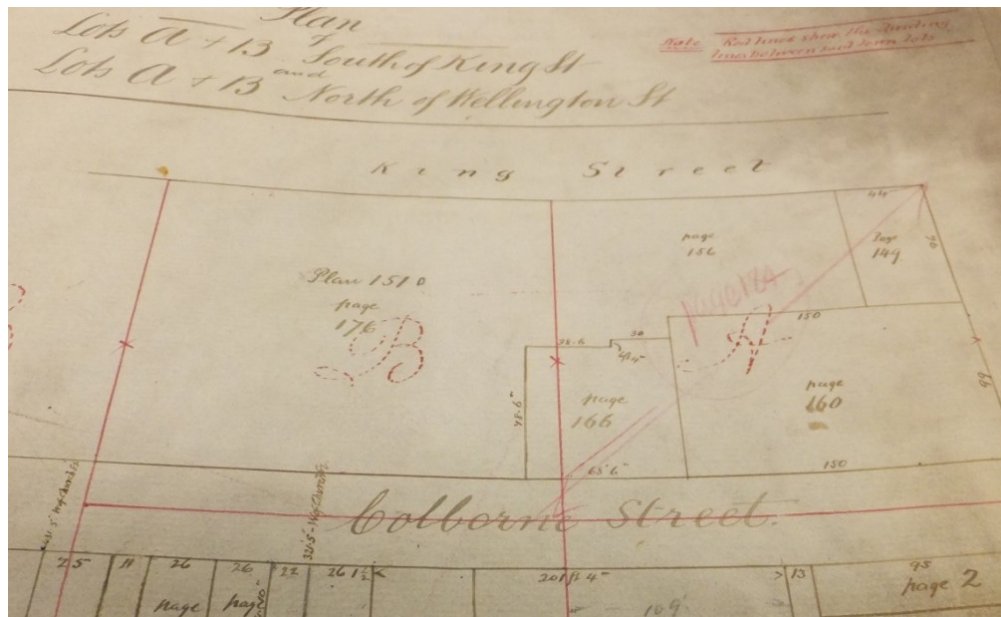




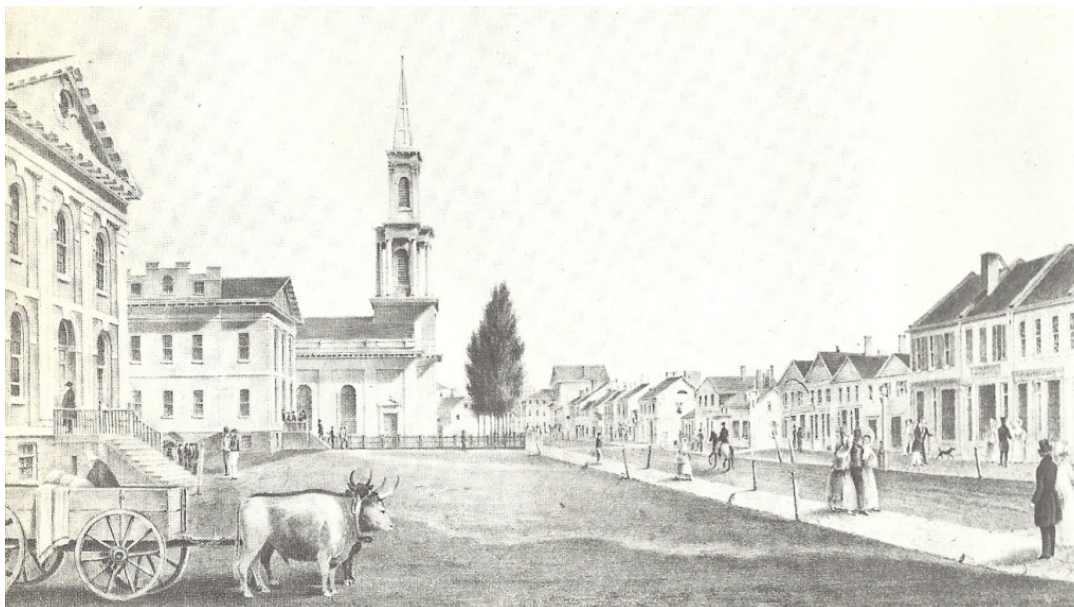
11. Underwriters' Insurance Bureau Atlas, January 1921 updated to January 1943: showing the subject property at the east end of the block (the adjoining Furlong Building at #99-101 King was demolished in 1940)



12. Underwriters' Insurance Bureau Atlas, July 1954 updated to January 1964: the buildings at either end of the block were demolished and have stood vacant since

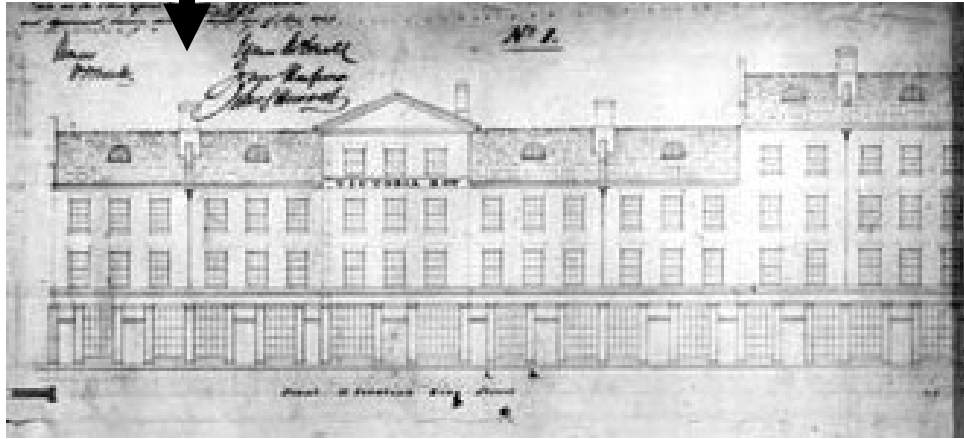


13. Plan of York: showing the portion of the plan with Town Lots A and B on the southwest corner of King Street East and Church Street (Land Registry Office)

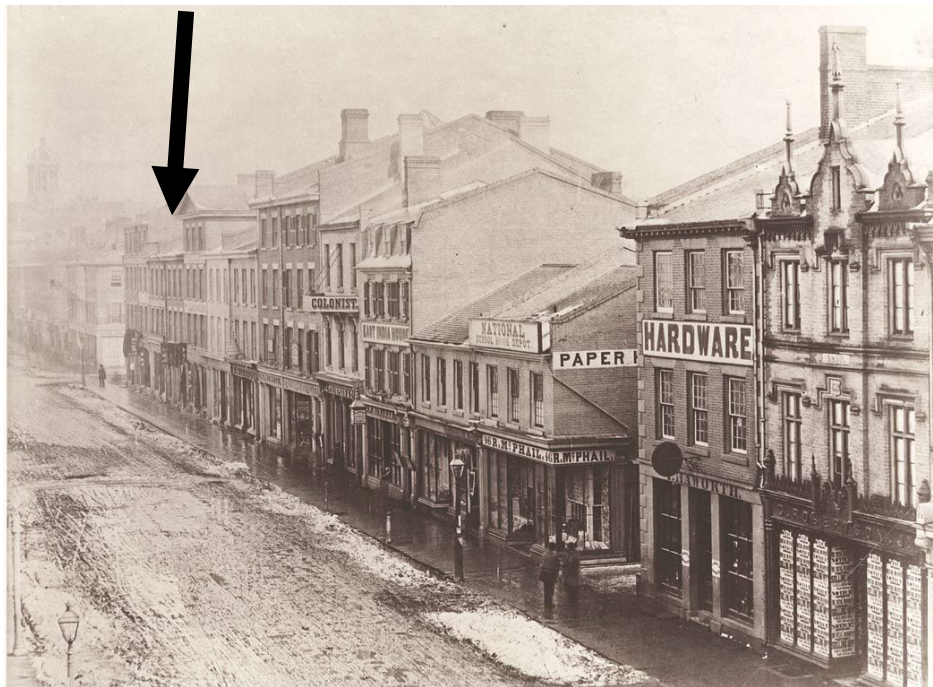


14. Illustration, William Young, c. 1835: showing King Street East, looking east toward St. James' Church with the original buildings on the south side of the street (right) (reproduced in Baine and McMurray, 24)





15. Drawing, Victoria Row, 1842: plans by architect John Howard for the five-unit Victoria Row and the two commercial blocks at the west end. The subject property replaced the two easterly units on the left (Howard Collection, Toronto Reference Library, #221)



16. Archival Photograph, 1856: view east along the south side of King Street East from Leader Lane (underneath the “Paper” sign) showing Victoria Row where present-day 95 King replaced the two units east of the section with the pediment (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1498, Item 2)



17. Archival photograph, Victoria Row, c. 1890: showing the alterations to Victoria Row, where present-day #95 King replaced the two easterly units. On the extreme left, the Furlong Building was in place by 1870 and removed in the 1940 (Toronto Reference Library, #12658)



18. Archival Photograph, 1894: showing St. James Cathedral on the right with the Victoria Row and its distinctive tower with a mansard roof on the left. The Tyrrell Building replaced the two units east (right) of the tower (A Toronto Album, 23)

**BUILDING PERMIT**

No. 36490

Plan No.
Lot No.

Toronto, *Aug 8* 191*2*

Permit granted to

Mr. *Wm. Tyrrell* *11 King St. E.*

To erect a *2 story brick office Building.*

on *near, Block 28*  
*11 King St. E.*

Architect *R. G. Abraham*

Builder *Witchell & son.*

Cost of Building, \$ *30,000*

Plans and Specifications approved by

No. of Block Plan *6*

Limit *WA* Water, \$

This Permit does not include any openings in sidewalks or encroachment past line of street

19. Building Permit #36490, August 8, 1912: for the Tyrrell Building at present-day 95 King Street East



20. Archival Photograph, 1931: showing the Tyrrell Building (left), east of the Albany Club (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1266, Item 22928)





21. Photograph, 1977: showing the south side of King Street East between Church Street (left) and Leader Lane (right), with the Tyrrell Building at the east end of the group (Toronto Historical Board)



22. Photograph, 95 King Street East, 1982: showing the appearance of the building prior to the proposed changes to the storefronts (City of Toronto Building Records, Toronto and East York, #177762)