

HERITAGE PROPERTY RESEARCH AND EVALUATION REPORT – 120 PETER ST.



JOHN HOLDFORD HOUSE
120 PETER STREET, TORONTO

Prepared by:

Heritage Preservation Services
City Planning Division
City of Toronto

June 2018

1. DESCRIPTION



Cover: east elevation of 120 Peter Street (Heritage Preservation Services); above: archival photograph, 120 Peter Street (right), 1973 (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 2043, File 26)

120 Peter Street: John Holdford House	
ADDRESS	120 Peter Street (west side, between Adelaide and Richmond streets)
WARD	Ward 20 (Trinity-Spadina)
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	Plan 1B, part Lot 5
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	King-Spadina
HISTORICAL NAME	John Holdford House
CONSTRUCTION DATE	1885 ¹
ORIGINAL OWNER	John Holdford, contractor
ORIGINAL USE	Residential (semi-detached house form building)
CURRENT USE*	Residential and Commercial* This does not refer to permitted use(s) as defined by the Zoning By-law
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	John Holdford, contractor (attrib.)
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION/MATERIALS	Brick cladding with brick, stone and wood detailing
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	Second Empire
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	See Section 2
CRITERIA	Design/Physical, Historical/Associative and Contextual
HERITAGE STATUS	Listed on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register
RECORDER	Heritage Preservation Services: Kathryn Anderson
REPORT DATE	June 2018

¹ In 2017, the subject property at 120 Peter Street was listed on the City's Heritage Register as one of the sites identified as a contributing heritage property in the King-Spadina Heritage Conservation District Plan [2016] that was not previously listed or designated. The date of construction in the listing report (1879) was taken from information in the HCD Plan. Additional research conducted for the proposed designation of the property at 120 Peter Street revises the construction date to 1885

2. BACKGROUND

This research and evaluation report describes the history, architecture and context of the property at 120 Peter Street and applies evaluation criteria to determine whether it merits 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
1797	Four years after the founding of York (Toronto), the town is expanded west to Peter street
1811	Block "H", a 10-acre parcel west of Peter Street in the Town of York Plan, is patented to John Macdonell, who immediately sells it to George Crookshank (Images 2a-c)
1831	Crookshank registers a 25-lot subdivision under Plan 1B, which includes Lot 5 on the west side of Peter Street (Image 2d)
1858	On Boulton's Atlas, the north part of Lot 5 (the subject property) remains vacant (Image 2e)
1884 Oct	The tax assessment rolls record a vacant frame house on the subject site, which is owned by James Dunn, who sells the north part of Lot 5 to John Holdford the same year (Holdford acquires the south half of the lot in a separate transaction)
1884	Goad's Atlas illustrates the wood frame building on the subject property, prior to the redevelopment of the site (Image 3a)
1885 Sept	When the next tax assessment rolls are compiled, the site contains a pair of vacant houses with no street numbers owned by John Holdford (the northernmost dwelling is the subject building) ²
1885 Dec	Charles Powell acquires all of Lot 5 from Holdford, including the subject building
1886 Sept	According to the tax assessment rolls, the pair of semi-detached houses are numbered at 116½ and 118 Peter Street, owned by Charles Powell and occupied by tenants, including John A. Wilkinson, a gentleman, at 118 Peter Street (present-day 120 Peter) ³
1890	The pair of semi-detached houses at present-day 118 and 120 Peter Street are illustrated on the update to Goad's Atlas (Image 3b)
1910	David Lavine purchases Lot 5, including the subject property
1949	An archival photograph shows the subject property (Image 4a)
1954	The semi-detached house at 120 Peter Street is illustrated on the updated Underwriters' Survey Bureau's atlas amongst the neighbouring industrial and commercial buildings (3c)
1973	Archival photographs show the subject property (Section 1 and Image 4b)
2016	120 Peter Street is identified as a contributing heritage property in the King-Spadina Heritage Conservation District Plan [Draft]

² In the Assessment Rolls, the buildings are described as "2 (stories) and mansards"

³ In 2018, the adjoining semi-detached house at 118 Peter Street was designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act

2017 Oct	The King-Spadina Heritage Conservation District (HCD) is designated under Part V of the <i>Ontario Heritage Act</i> ⁴
2017 Dec	The property at 120 Peter Street is listed on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register

ii. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

King-Spadina Neighbourhood:

The property at 120 Peter Street is in the King-Spadina neighbourhood, which is named for the major intersection of King Street West and Spadina Avenue. Following the founding in the late 18th century of York (Toronto), the expansive area west of the town site was set aside for the Military Reserve where (Old) Fort York guarded the entrance to the harbour. With the rapid growth of the community, by 1797 York was extended westward to the edge of the Reserve as "New Town" where major institutional buildings included the original campus of Upper Canada College, the third Provincial Parliament Buildings and the first General Hospital. These landmarks were adjoined by residential buildings that ranged from impressive mansions near the waterfront to more modest detached, semi-detached and row houses along the side streets. The continuing demand for housing resulted in the subdivision and sale of part of the Military Reserve, an action that coincided with the incorporation of the City of Toronto in 1834.

Historical maps and atlases (including those in Section 6 below) trace the development of King-Spadina from the mid-19th century when the arrival of the first steam railways began the transformation of the neighbourhood from an institutional and residential enclave to Toronto's manufacturing centre.⁵ This process was accelerated after the Great Fire of 1904 destroyed the city's original industrial district, leading to its relocation to the area adjoining the intersection of King Street West and Spadina Avenue. King-Spadina experienced a decline after World War II when many manufacturers relocated to Toronto's suburbs. Beginning in the 1990s with the removal of the restrictive industrial zoning, King-Spadina has been revitalized as a popular mixed-use neighbourhood. With its surviving collection of late-19th century residential buildings and early-20th century industrial warehouses, in 2017 the King-Spadina Heritage Conservation District (HCD) was designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

120 Peter Street

The subject property at 120 Peter Street is located on land that was surveyed under the Town of York Plan in the late 18th century (and illustrated on the 1818 Plan attached as Images 2a-2b). In 1811, George Crookshank acquired Lot "H," a ten-acre parcel on the west side of Peter Street adjoining the Military Reserve (Image 2c). Crookshank laid out a 25-lot subdivision on his allotment, registering it as Plan 1B in 1831 (Image 2d). At this time, he began selling individual lots, including the north and south portions of

⁴ Designated by By-law 111-2017 as amended by By-law 1241-2017, in 2018 the King-Spadina HCD is under appeal to the Local Planning Appeals Tribunal

⁵ Additional maps tracing the historical development of the area are found at <http://oldtorontomaps.blogspot.com/p/index-of-maps.html>

Lot 5. By mid-century, the north part of Lot 5 (the subject property) remained undeveloped, a situation that continued when Boulton's Atlas was published in 1858 (Image 2e). Archival sources indicate that by the 1870s a wood frame building was in place on the subject property, which was illustrated on the first Goad's Atlas covering the area in 1884 (Image 3a).

In 1884 John Holdford, a Toronto contractor acquired the subject property and the construction of the pair of semi-detached houses at 118 and 120 Peter Street is attributed to him.⁶ The residences were completed by the end of 1885 when Charles Powell, a realtor, acquired the sites.⁷ The dwellings, including present-day 120 Peter Street, were illustrated on the update to Goad's Atlas in 1890 (Image 3b). Powell retained the property at 120 Peter Street until 1910, after which it underwent multiple changes in ownership.

With its location in the King-Spadina neighbourhood, the property at 120 Peter Street was studied as part of the potential Heritage Conservation District (HCD) for the area where, as a surviving example of a late-19th century semi-detached house, it was identified as a contributing heritage property. It was listed on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register in 2017.

iii. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Current photographs of the property at 120 Peter Street are found in Section 6 of this report.

The John Holdford House at 120 Peter Street is a semi-detached house form building with the Second Empire features identified with one of the most popular styles of the late Victorian era. Distinguished by its prototypical mansard (double slope) roof and elaborate decorative detailing, the style was inspired by the mid-19th century reign of Napoleon III when the design of the New Louvre in Paris was unveiled with its blend of features from Italian Renaissance and classical French architecture. While introduced in institutional buildings in North America, the Second Empire style was particularly favoured for residential designs. In Toronto, the Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario's official residence (1870) at King and Simcoe streets in the King-Spadina neighbourhood was one of the first Second Empire designs in Toronto, influencing the appearance of both upscale mansions and more modest dwellings, including the subject property.

The property at 120 Peter Street is among the few sites in the King-Spadina neighbourhood with a surviving house form building with Second Empire styling. In addition to the attached dwelling at 118 Peter Street, others are identified at 137-139 Bathurst Street (1890), 118-122 John Street (1885) and 135 Portland Street (1870) and included on Toronto's Heritage Register.

⁶ There is a gap in the building permits for the construction period, and the property is not referenced in the *Globe's* tender calls

⁷ Presumably this was the same Charles Powell who served as the manager of the Temperance Colonization Society, the enterprise established in 1881 by a group of Toronto Methodists who founded an alcohol-free settlement at Saskatoon the next year

The John Holdford House at 120 Peter Street rises 2½-stories on a rectangular-shaped plan above a stone base (the opening has been altered). It features red brick cladding on the east elevation with brick, stone and wood detailing (the brickwork has been covered with stucco, but is seen in archival images and on the semi-detached house at 118 Peter Street). The mansard roof has flared eaves with brackets, string course and cornice, and contains on the east slope a pair of pedimented dormers. The principal (east) elevation is organized into two bays with the main entrance raised in the left (south) bay in a flat-headed opening with a transom and beneath a single flat-headed window opening in the second storey. The right (north) bay projects slightly as a frontispiece with a polygonal bay window in the first floor and a large flat-headed window opening above. The north side elevation has no openings and is viewed from Peter Street. The south side elevation adjoins the semi-detached house at 118 Peter Street, which is designed on the east elevation as a mirror image with the placement of the openings and the detailing. The rear (west) elevation and wing are not identified as heritage attributes.

iv. CONTEXT

Shown on the location map attached as Image 1, the property at 120 Peter Street is found on the west side of the street between Adelaide Street West and Richmond Street West. It is adjoined on the south by the neighbouring semi-detached house form building at 118 Peter Street, to which it is attached. To the north and northwest, the properties at 122-124 Peter Street and 357-359 Richmond Street West contain pairs of semi-detached houses dating to 1871 and 1889, respectively, which are also recognized on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register. Together, the subject properties and their neighbours form an enclave of surviving late-19th century residential buildings in the King-Spadina neighbourhood, which are identified as contributing heritage properties in the King-Spadina Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Plan that was adopted by Toronto City Council in 2017.

3. EVALUATION

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's Heritage Register. 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.

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

The property at 120 Peter Street has cultural heritage value for its design as a surviving residential building with Second Empire styling associated with the first wave of development in the King-Spadina neighbourhood in the 1800s.

The semi-detached house represents a key typology in King-Spadina, which originated in the 1800s as a residential and institutional enclave where the side street and many of the main streets were lined with detached, semi-detached and row houses. The subject property survived the replacement of much of the residential building stock during the second phase of development of the community in the 20th century when King-Spadina became Toronto's industrial centre. The building at 120 Peter Street is among the few sites in the King-Spadina neighbourhood with a surviving house form building designed in the Second Empire style, and it is particularly distinguished by the prototypical mansard roof with the pedimented dormers.

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

The associative value of the property at 120 Peter Street is through its role in the historical development of the King-Spadina neighbourhood, which emerged in the late-19th century as a residential and institutional community the third Provincial Parliament Buildings, the inaugural Upper Canada College campus and the first General Hospital were adjoined by house form buildings that ranged from elaborate mansions to modest workers dwellings. Following the transformation of King-Spadina after the Great Fire of 1904 as Toronto's new manufacturing district, the John Holdford House was amongst the surviving house form buildings repurposed for mixed residential and commercial uses as part of the ongoing revitalization of the area.

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

Contextually, the property at 120 Peter Street is valued for the role of the John Holdford House in defining, supporting and maintaining the historical character of the King-Spadina neighbourhood, reflecting its evolution from the first phase of development as a 19th-century residential and institutional enclave, to Toronto's manufacturing centre in the 20th century, and its ongoing transformation as a mixed-use community.

As a surviving 19th-century residential building, the semi-detached house at 120 Peter Street is historically, visually and physically linked to its setting on the west side of Peter Street where it is part of a surviving enclave of late-19th century house form buildings, with the other half of the pair at 118 Peter Street, the semi-detached houses at 122-124 Peter Street (1872) directly north, and the adjoining pair a 357-359 Richmond Street West (1889), all of which are recognized on the City's Heritage Register.

4. SUMMARY

Following research and evaluation according to Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the property at 120 Peter Street has cultural heritage value for its design, historical associations and context. Located on the west side of the street between Adelaide Street West and Richmond Street West, the John Holdford House (1885) at 120 Peter Street is valued as a surviving late-19th century semi-detached house with well-crafted Second Empire styling that forms a pair with the neighbouring building at 118 Peter Street. The house form building is historically associated with the development in the late-19th century of the King-Spadina neighbourhood where the John Holdford House contributes contextually to its heritage character and is linked to its setting on Peter Street where it is part of an enclave of surviving residential edifices.

5. SOURCES

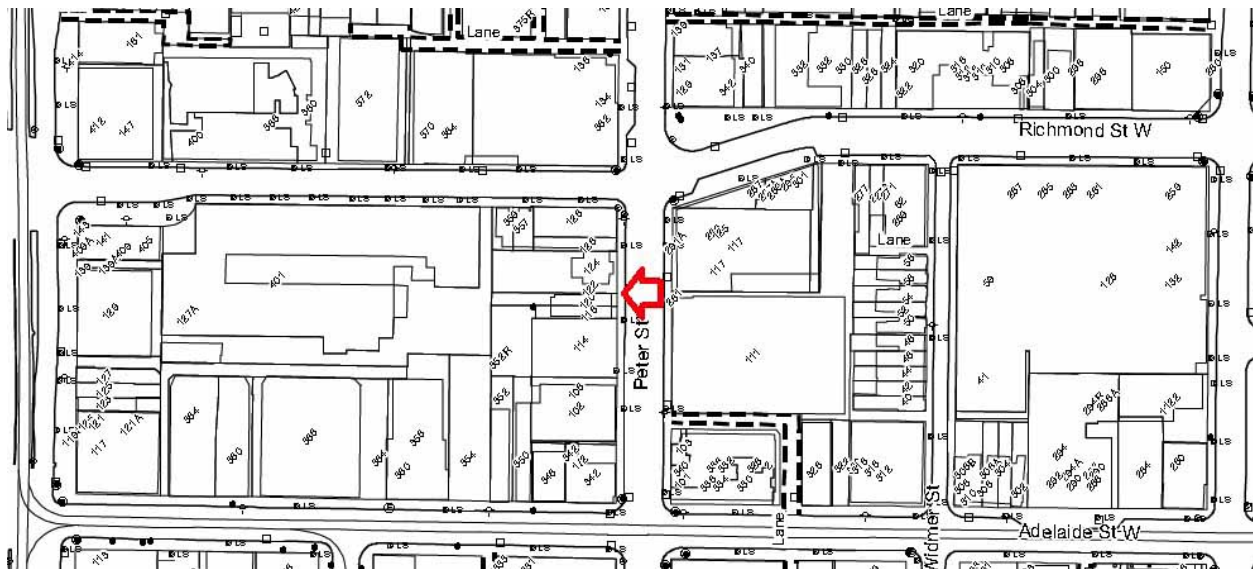
Archival Sources:

Abstract Index of Deeds, Toronto Military Reserve, Section H, and Plan 1B, Lot 5
Archival Maps, 1797-1842, <http://oldtorontomaps.blogspot.ca/p/index-of-maps.html>
Archival Photographs, City of Toronto Archives, Series 371, Item 1962 and Fonds 2043, File 26
Archival Plan, Toronto Public Library
Assessment Rolls, City of Toronto, St. Andrew's Ward, 1850-1892, and Ward 4, Division 1, 1893 ff.
Boulton, Atlas of the City of Toronto, 1858
Building Records, City of Toronto, Toronto and East York
City of Toronto Directories, 1850 ff.
Decennial Censuses of Canada, 1881 and 1891
Goad's Atlases, 1884-1903 and 1912-1923, Volume 1
Underwriters' Insurance Bureau Atlas, 1921 revised to 1932, and 1954 revised to 1964

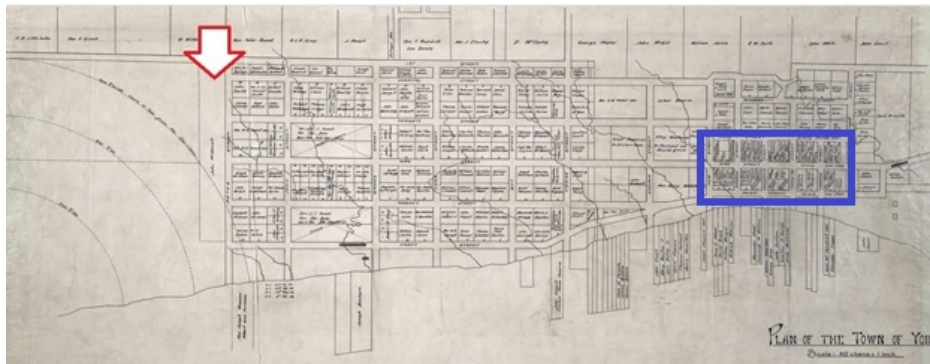
Secondary Sources:

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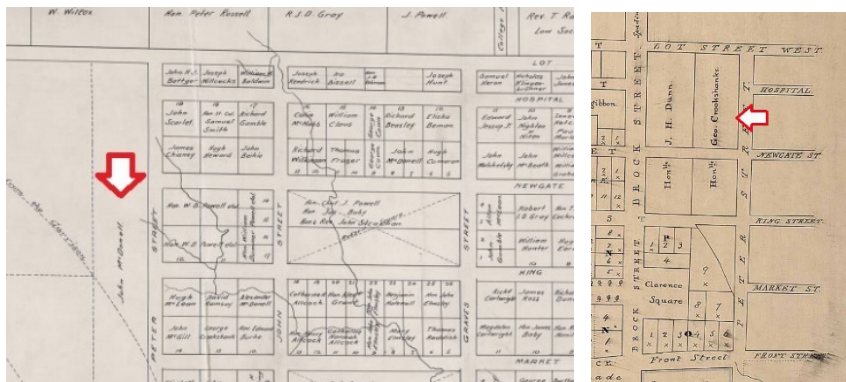
6. IMAGES – maps and atlases are followed by other archival images and current photographs. The arrows mark the location of the subject property. All images are oriented with north on the top unless indicated in the captions.



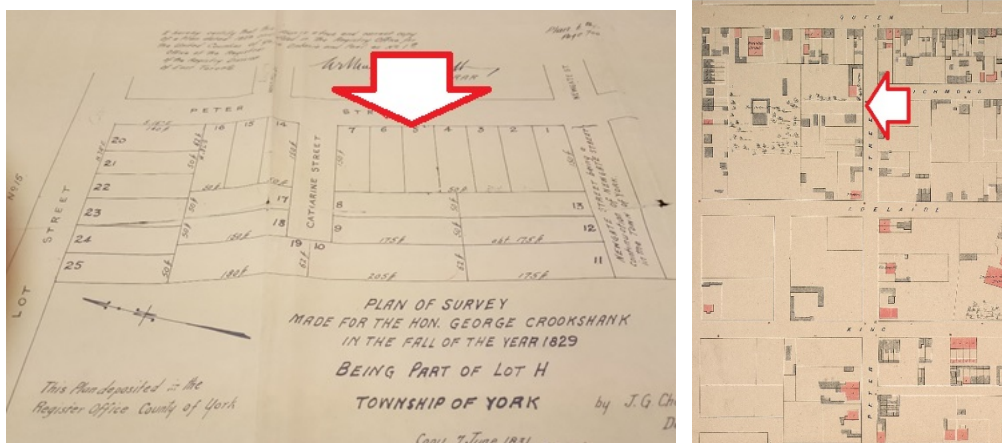
1. Location Map, 120 Peter Street: showing the property on the west side of the street between Adelaide Street West and Richmond Street West (City of Toronto Property Data Map).



2a. Plan, Town of York, 1818: showing the Town of York (the 10-block townsite is outlined) extended westward to Peter Street, with Block H (the subject property) on the west side of the street adjoining the Military Reserve

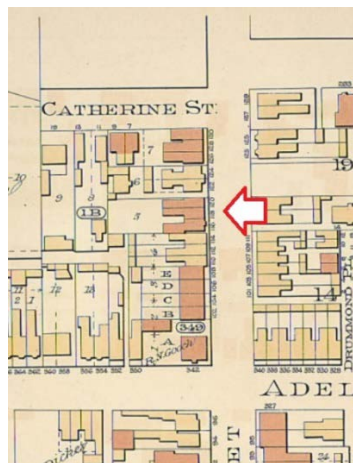
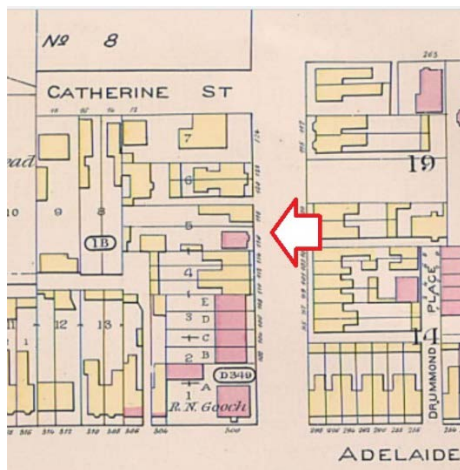


2b. Plan, Town of York, 1818, detail, with the naming of the original patentee;
2c. Crookshank's Plan, Block H, subdivided

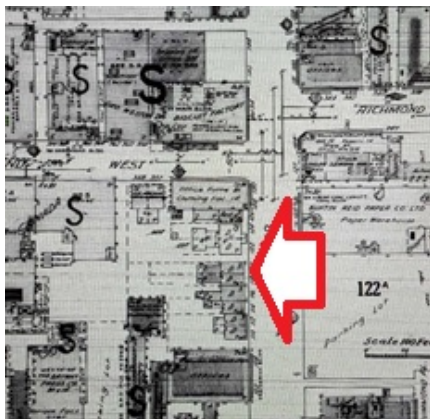


2d. Plan 1B, 1831, showing Lot 5 (the image is aligned with north on the left);
2e. Boulton's Atlas, 1858, showing the vacant site

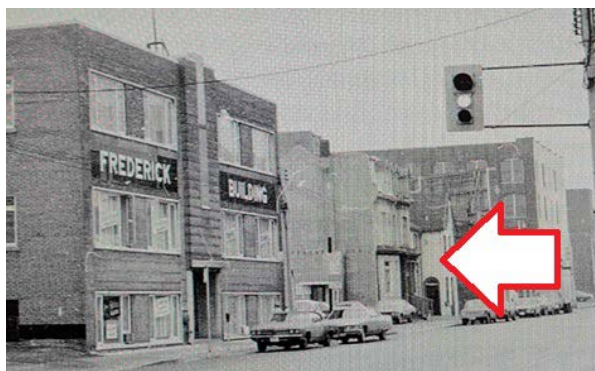
2. Archival Images, 120 Peter Street: 1818 Plan and 1858 Atlas, <http://oldtorontomaps.blogspot.com/p/index-of-maps.html>; Crookshank's Plan, Toronto Public Library; Plan 1B, Ontario Land Registry Office, Toronto.



3a. and 3b. Goad's Atlases, 1884 (left) and 1890 (right): showing Lot 5 prior to and after the redevelopment of the north half with the subject building

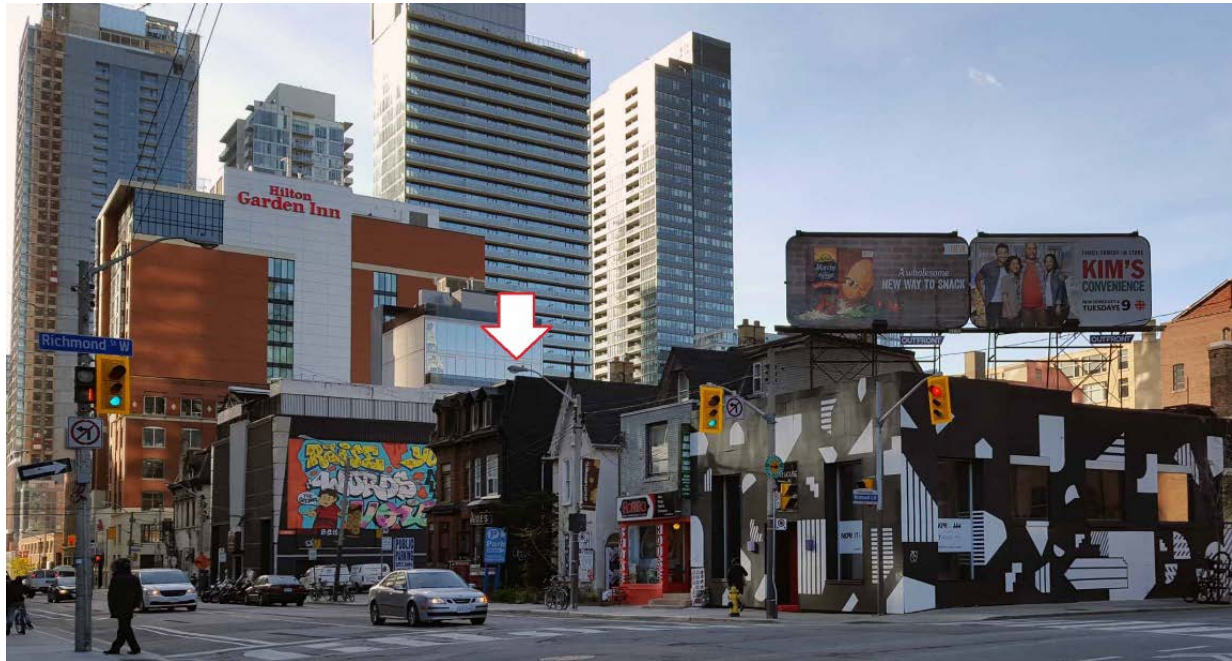


3c. Underwriters' Survey Bureau Atlas, 1954 (left), showing the house form buildings adjoined by industrial complexes, and 1949 photograph (right), with the view north from Adelaide Street West



3d. archival photograph, 1973

3. Atlases and Archival Photographs: Goad's Atlases, <http://oldtorontomaps.blogspot.com/p/index-of-maps.html>; Underwriters' Survey Bureau Atlas and archival photographs, 1949 and 1973, City of Toronto Archives.



4. Current Photographs, 120 Peter Street: Heritage Preservation Services, 2018.