

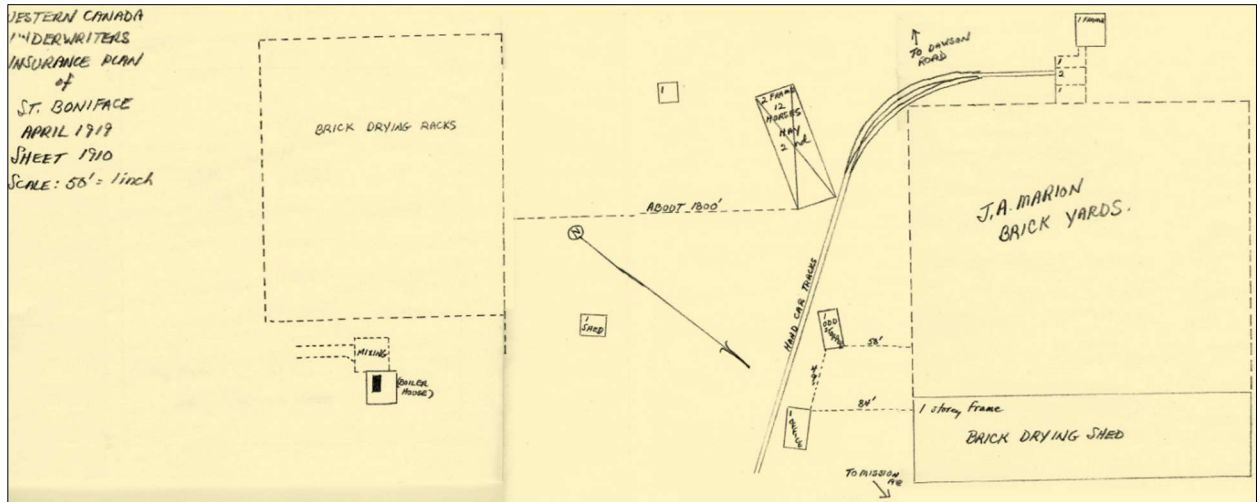
## COUTURE AND MARION

This firm picked up the story started by Cartier and Lamontagne in 1882. Joseph Alderic Marion and his brother-in-law, Elzear Couture, had bought out the Lamontagne Estate brick yard in 1905. Marion and his father, Zoel, had worked for Lamontagne, possibly as early as the 1880s. J.A. Marion had been manager of the yard for 10 years at the time of Lamontagne's death in November 1904. The yard was situated at the foot of Plinquet Street. In May 1910, Marion reflected that he had seen the start of the Seine River brick-making area, and had followed it to a point where they were producing 38,000,000 bricks annually. That scale of production naturally exhausted the clay bed at this yard, and so, in late May 1910, Couture and Marion bought out the Landry brick yard at Somerset. As that plant closed by 1913, it is believed that Somerset became a clay source for Couture and Marion's plant at St. Boniface. Elzear Couture retired from the firm in 1916, and died in May 1925. The firm became J.A. Marion in the spring of 1919, and remained that way until it was shut down in late 1937. It was sometimes known as the "Marion Brick Company", and continued to use the slogan "The Oldest Operating Brick Yard in Manitoba," as a nod to its Cartier and Lamontagne origins. J.A. Marion helped his son Paul establish the Marion Brick, Tile and Clay Products, Ltd. at Templeton and McGregor, Winnipeg, in 1946. That firm closed in 1949. Joseph Marion died as the result of an accident in February 1954.<sup>1</sup>

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> See "Cartier and Lamontagne Yard." In this report; Henderson's Directory, 1905, p. 53; "Familiar Faces in Old St. Boniface.", Manitoba Free Press, 6 May 1910, p. 2; See "Somerset." In this report; Heinrich Ries and Joseph Keele. Preliminary Report on the Clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces. (Memoir 24E). (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1912.), p. 26; "Pioneer of St. Boniface Dies After Long Illness." MFP, 22 May 1925, p. 5; Winnipeg Telephone Directories, January 1919; July 1919; July 1937; January 1938;"Grand Old Man.", Winnipeg Free Press, 6 November 1946, p. 3; MTS, January 1947; July 1949; January 1950; "Street Mishap Fatal to Dr. J.A. Marion.", WFP, 4 February 1954, p. 1.



Site Plan of S.A. Marion plant, traced from original Western Canada Underwriter's Insurance Plan, 1919.

**Ready To Meet Your Requirements For Dependable  
Uniform Quality Common Brick**

**MARION BRICK COMPANY**

*The Oldest Operating Brick Yard in Manitoba*

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**GET OUR SAMPLES AND PRICES BEFORE BUYING**

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<p>Plant and Office at end of Plinquet St. <b>ST. BONIFACE - MANITOBA</b></p>	<p><i>Railway Trackage Facilities for Prompt Shipment to Outside Points</i></p>	<p><b>PHONE 201 067</b> <b>RESIDENCE PHONE 202 493</b></p>
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## FOXLEY AND DISBROWE YARD

This yard was a reincarnation of Manitoba's first brick yard, that of Charles Land in 1860. W.H. Disbrowe was a recently-arrived Ontario seedman who had come to Winnipeg in August 1876. He soon acquired the old three-acre brick yard on 73 St. James, on the north side of Portage Avenue between present-day Langside and Furby streets. Going back home for the winter, Disbrowe returned in March 1877, having found a partner in Mr. Foxley, a brick-maker in long standing. Foxley had 25 years' experience in England, the Eastern Provinces, British Columbia and the United States, and came highly recommended by Bulmer and Shepherd, a large firm of Montreal brick-makers. The Foxley and Disbrowe yard could sell "all round brick" for \$10.00 per thousand; veneer brick for \$12.00; and pressed brick, "an extra "quality expressly for fronts" at \$15.00 per thousand. A specimen brick dropped off at the Free Press office that summer was referred to as "handsome" and as one "which will compare favourably with anything in the brick line in the world." Eventually, Disbrowe sold his brick yard property in 1879, having leased it the year before to S.C. Biggs of the Portage Road Brick Yards.<sup>1</sup>

## GATE CITY WORKS COMPANY, LTD.

This firm was the successor to the Standard Brick and Tile Company, Ltd. Gate City was incorporated in March 1910. One of its principal officers was brick-maker Arthur C. Osborne, who had been the manager at Standard. Gate City used the same site as Standard – that is, at the western end of Lot 13 Kildonan, on the northeast corner of Kildonan (now Kingsbury) Avenue and McPhillips Street. Its products were evidently the same as those of its predecessor. It is believed that Gate City Bricks Works went out of business in the summer of 1915, after having supplied brick for the West Kildonan Fire Hall in 1914. The site later became a land fill and is presently occupied by the Garden City Shopping Centre and the Garden City Community Centre.<sup>2</sup>

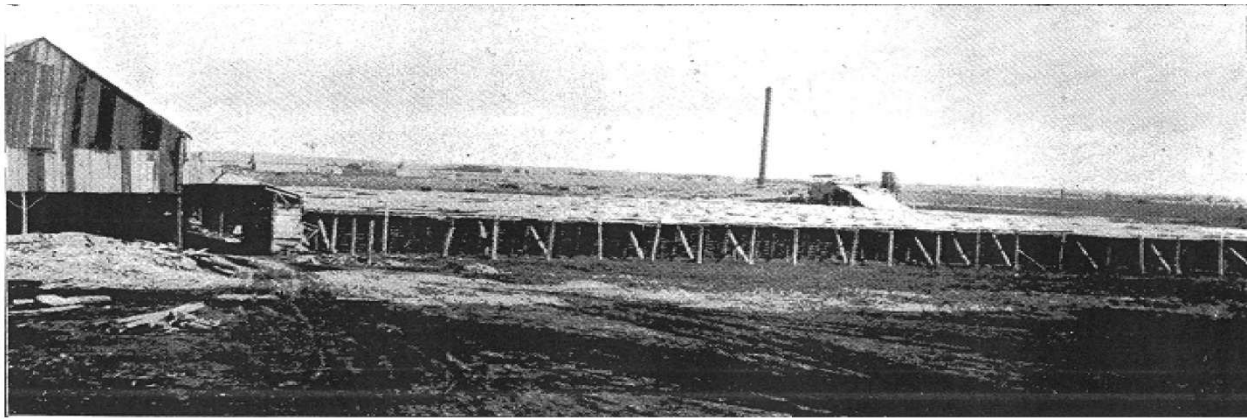
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### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Manitoba Free Press, 28 August 1876, p. 3; 26 March 1877, p. 3; 13 April 1877, p. 3; 16 April 1877, p. 3; "A Specimen Brick.", MFP, 1 August 1877, p. 1; City of Winnipeg Archives. City of Winnipeg Assessment Roll, 1879, South Ward, p. 22; 1880, South Ward, p. 23; Steen and Boyce. Winnipeg, Manitoba and Her Industries. (Winnipeg: Steen and Boyce, 1882.), p. 52.

### ENDNOTES

<sup>2</sup> Manitoba Gazette, 19 March 1910, p. 326; Winnipeg telephone Directory, June 1915; December 1915.



Gate City Brick Works Company, Ltd, Winnipeg. Drying racks for Soft Mud Bricks. (Heinrich Ries and Joseph Keele. Preliminary Report on the Clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces (Memoir 24E). Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1912. P. 20, Plate II.)

S. HECTOR FOSTER, PRESIDENT      THE WELL WILL BRICK WORKS LTD.      ARTHUR C. OSBORNE, MANAGER

SUCCESSORS TO  
THE STANDARD BRICK CO.  
McPhillips St. & Kildonan Av.

OFFICE PHONE, MAIN 6894  
YARD PHONE, MAIN 6266

**THE STANDARD BRICK COMPANY.**

BRICK WORKS  
KILDONAN WEST  
OFFICE  
213 NOTRE DAME AV.

MANUFACTURERS AND DEALERS IN  
**BRICK AND BUILDERS SUPPLIES**

*Winnipeg* MANITOBA August 22nd 1910

Messrs The Board of Control,  
CITY.

The Gate City Brick Works Ltd, Kildonan, hereby make application for water supply connection from McPhillips to their brick yards at Kildonan. The well lately in use by the above having run dry it has become absolutely necessary for this connection to be made & the result of noncompliance to the request would mean the closing down of the entire plant.

The Gate City Brick Works Ltd,  
*Arthur C. Osborne* Manager.

What to do when the well runs dry. (City of Winnipeg Archives. Board of Control Correspondence, 05642/1910.)

## WILLIS GOODENOW BRICK YARD

This operation was situated on Lot 28, St. Boniface, on both sides of Woodward Avenue east of Osborne Street. Willis Goodenow had run the McDonald and Holley brick yard east of the Seine River in St. Boniface during 1882. It is unknown when Goodenow leased the Woodward property, as he was not listed as a tenant in the 1887-1890 Assessment Rolls. The area of the brick yard was termed “swampy” by assessors. Goodenow’s lease was available in the spring of 1890 because of his death. It is unknown exactly what kind of bricks he produced at this yard, or who took it over.<sup>1</sup>

## T.J. JONES AND COMPANY

This yard was located in the western end of Winnipeg, on 20 acres of Lot 44, St. James, near the Manitoba and South-western (CPR) railway line. T.J. Jones arrived in Winnipeg during September of 1881 to scout out a location for a brick yard. With his 30 years of experience, Jones knew what he was looking for, and so also visited Brandon, Portage la Prairie and Selkirk. He finally settled on the St. James location because the clay was two to three feet deep and lay near the surface. He bought the site in the spring of 1882, and then set up his “brickery.” He brought in Townsley brick machines from Toronto that were powered by a 25 horsepower Waterous steam engine. The yard began making bricks on 1 August 1882, and turned out 10,000 per day to the point where Jones’ first kiln fired 200,000 bricks, with another kiln in mid-September of 350,000 bricks. Jones planned to turn out one million white bricks before winter, using his 30 to 40 workers, who laboured from 7:00 AM to 4:30 PM. All the hakes (racks) for bricks were covered, thereby ensuring product protection from the elements. Nothing else is known of the longevity of Jones’s yard. It is assumed that this yard succumbed in the post-boom depression of 1883.<sup>2</sup>

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> “Lease of a Valuable Brick Yard. . .” Manitoba Free Press, 3 April 1890, p. 8; “Bricks By the Million/” MFP, 10 June 1882, p. 2; City of Winnipeg Archives. City of Winnipeg Assessment Roll, 1887, Ward 1, p. 3; 1888, Ward 1, p. 4; 1889, Ward 1, p. 4; 1890, Ward 1, p. 4.

### ENDNOTES

<sup>2</sup> “A New Steam Brickery.” Winnipeg Times, 9 September 1882, p. 2; “A New Brick Yard.”, Manitoba Free Press, 9 September 1882, p. 1.

**BRICK MACHINES.**

**BRICK MACHINES.**

Parties wishing to purchase the well-known

**TOWNSLEY**

**BRICK MACHINES**

Will please send their orders at once. These  
Machines are the Best and Most Reliable in  
the Market.

For particulars, apply to

deql5-lawtf

**F. A. TOWNSLEY.**  
**Box 133, Yorkville P. C.**

The T. J. Jones and Company brick yard used machines of this make. (Winnipeg Times, 11  
June 1883, p. 7.)

# KEIZER BRICK MACHINE AND MANUFACTURING COMPANY, LTD.

This operation centred more around a novel brick-making machine than actual brick manufacture. Incorporated in January 1901, its principal was David Anthony Keizer, a consulting engineer who claimed to have organized the Lac du Bonnet Brick Company a couple of years earlier. Another promoter was Winnipeg grain buyer George Leary, who was soon to enter the world of brick-making on his own account. Keizer had been working on his brick machine for 28 years, and claimed that one machine could manufacture 20 million bricks in 100 days. With that nebulous figure, the company expected to “be able to command a good (!) share of the trade of 15-20 million brick sold in Winnipeg annually.” Any unsold brick was going to be used in business blocks and houses which the company would build and then offer for rent or sale. The brick machine was said to be able to convert 1000 cubic yards of clay into 435,000 brick per day, though the Keizer Company would guarantee a mere 200,000 at the outset of operations. The Keizer machine could also turn out 24 different types of ornamental and ordinary bricks and combined old and new (soft and dry) pressed methods of brick making.<sup>1</sup>

By late May, the firm had purchased 100 acres of land in St. Paul Municipality, on Lot 20 St. Paul, to the north of the Middlechurch Indian School. It was chosen because it had ample room for trackage, as well as shipping facilities on the Red River. There, in addition to their \$40,000 factory, Keizer planned to start a brick yard. How any of this plan fared is unknown – the firm did not begin selling stock until the autumn of 1901. According to a report in “The Commercial,” the firm already had its own brick plant built at Middlechurch and were doing the stock promotion in order to finance a machine shop to manufacture the brick machine. As of mid-October, it had not yet been decided if the machine was to be in Middlechurch, or Winnipeg. It is not believed that this venture was successful, for the company stock was still being offered in April 1908. An additional feature was that one-acre parcels of Lot 20 St. Paul were thrown in with the deal if one bought stock in the firm! A newspaper advertisement showed the subdivision in question, along with the location of the Keizer brick yard, and a map showing how to get to the site. A rendering of the brick machine looked quite impressive. It is not known if this was the last gasp of the Keizer Company or if the machine actually existed, or even if they turned out any brick. Possibly the Keizer machine was viewed with the same scepticism that later investors would view perpetual motion machines. Keizer did have a long career in Winnipeg which ran from as early as 1883 to as late as 1926.<sup>2</sup>

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Manitoba Gazette, 2 February 1901, p. 66; “A New Industry.” Winnipeg Tribune, 14 March 1901, p. 8 “Brick Kiln for North End.”, Winnipeg Telegram, 31 May 1901, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> “Brick Kiln.”, loc. Cit.’ “Real Estate Transactions.”, Tribune, 3 June 1901, p. 2; Commercial, 5 October 1901, p. 115; “A New Brick Machine.”, Commercial, 12 October 1901, p. 133; “Sound Finance.”, Winnipeg Free Press, 4 April 1908, p. 11.



# SOUND FINANCE

Buy Stock in the Keizer Brick and Manufacturing Company, Limited.

YOUR INVESTMENT COVERED BY AN EQUAL VALUE IN LAND

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
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LOT 19.

## NO RISKS--BIG DIVIDENDS

### This is Our Proposition:

We have the most economic brick machine ever invented—a machine that will turn out 1,000,000 bricks of the best quality and at a lesser cost than any other machine in existence. Will turn out positively 20,000 bricks per hour from clay, sand, puddled clay or sand and cement. Its main and lateral auxiliary cylinders are so designed to enable it to dispense entirely with wheelbarrows, men only being required to transfer 20,000 bricks per hour from the machine to the kilns, which may be located at almost any distance.

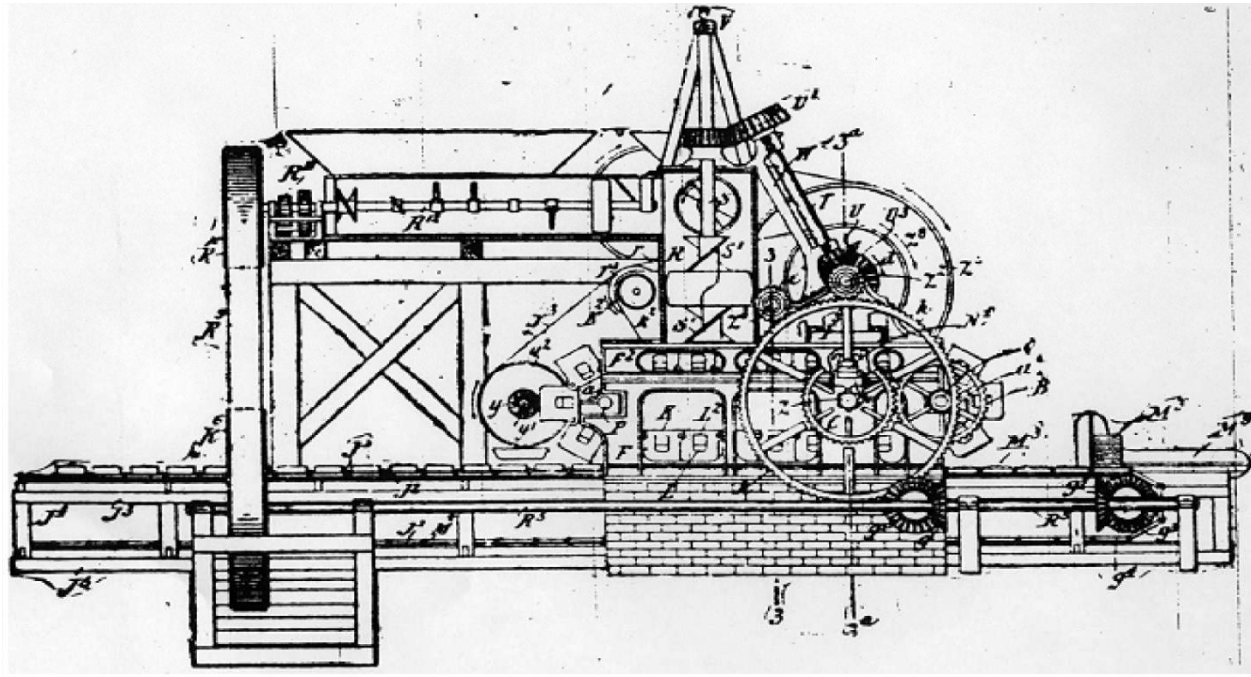
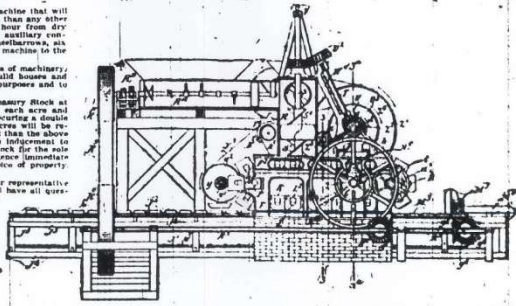
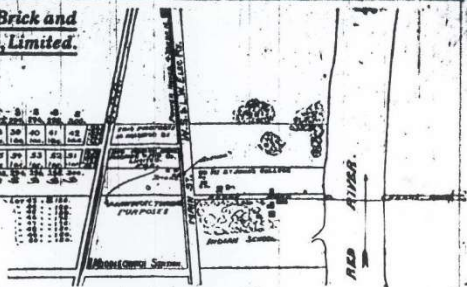
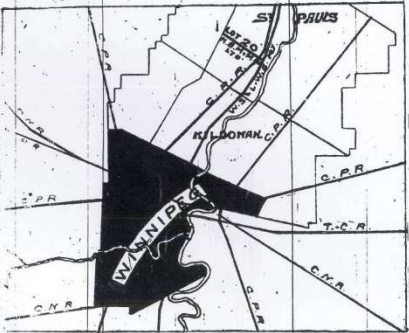
The company's charter covers the right to manufacture all kinds of machinery, to erect machine shops and factory work, to make brick, to build houses and blocks and to sell same, to buy and sell lands for the company's purposes and to do general stock business in connection therewith.

We are offering the public 125,000 worth of the Company's Treasury Stock at 10¢ in parcels equivalent to the prices marked on plan opposite each acre and other lot, each lot to be placed free to purchasers of stock, thus securing a double investment. The company also offers 100 acres, of which seven acres will be reserved for the manufacturing site and whilst they have other stock that the above mentioned to sell, they will have no further funds to offer as an inducement to the public to purchase same. The funds are accompanying this stock for the sole purpose of enabling some ready cash to enable them to commence immediate operations. So get in on this. Apply early and secure your choice of property. Terms can be arranged to extend over a period of one year.

We wish you to ask for more particulars. Ring up 940, and our representative will call upon you. Interested parties residing in the country will have all questions answered and fuller information furnished through the mail.

## LIDDLE BROS.

Phone 940 43 Merchants Bank



The Keizer Brick Making Machine. (Manitoba Free Press, 4 April 1908, p. 11.)

# KELLY BROTHERS

Thomas Kelly, an Irish-born building contractor, arrived in Winnipeg during 1878. In the next two years, he established himself in the local contracting scene. In 1880, he took his brother Michael into the firm to become Kelly Brothers. With the growing building boom, the Kellys got into the brick-making business at St. Boniface in the spring of 1882. They started in a rather large fashion, having five brick machines and expecting to make three million bricks that season. Their first kiln of 250,000 bricks was ready by mid-June. At the time, they employed 34 workers and 18 horses, with an output of 30,000 bricks per day. Their single Henry Martin machine was being worked by a single gang of men and produced 10,000 bricks in a day. It was said that a double gang could produce 18,000 in the same period. About a month after this, they began operating a brick plant at Stony Mountain. There, Kelly's crew would set a production record.<sup>1</sup>

Kelly Brothers brick-making skills are probably best known from their 1882 contract on McKenzie's (later Clarendon) Hotel. While excavating the foundations, a fine deposit of brick clay was discovered. Thomas Kelly "saw the advantage of utilizing this and thus affecting a substantial saving in the cost of brick for that building." Michael Kelly also took credit for this discovery, stating that the clay was "mighty good stuff." Regardless of who found the clay, a Martin brick machine was quickly set to work as the basement was excavated. By September, a kiln of 200,000 bricks was being burned at the site. A Free Press reporter was given to reflect that "it is a somewhat novel idea to use the material for the erection of a building manufactured from the clay being taken out of its foundation." The Kellys took in their brother Martin in 1884 to form Kelly Brothers and Company. This nomenclature would last until 1903. During that time, in the early 1890s, they would buy a tract of land north of Portage Avenue on 44 St. James that had once been the brick yard of T.J. Jones and Company in the early 1880s, and subsequent to that the yard of E.T. Hooker, c1885-1886, who would later turn up in Selkirk. The Kelly's St. James brick yard reached 68 acres in extent by 1899. That spring, they moved their machinery from this property to their St. Boniface yard. This probably meant that the St. James yard was closed, possibly because of clay depletion. That yard would correspond with present-day Sanford Street, along with the nearby CPR tracks.<sup>2</sup>

In 1903, the Kelly firm became the Manitoba Construction Company, and two year later, Kelly Brothers and Mitchell, Ltd. A final change of name, to Thomas Kelly and Sons, Ltd. came in 1908. Throughout the above time period, the brick-making end of the business was almost inseparable from the rest of the firm's building contracting efforts, and was likely their main supply source in contracting. Under the Thomas Kelly name, the firm obtained the ill-fated contract to build the Manitoba Legislative Building. While Thomas Kelly went to jail for his failings in the dealings of his company, and the brick

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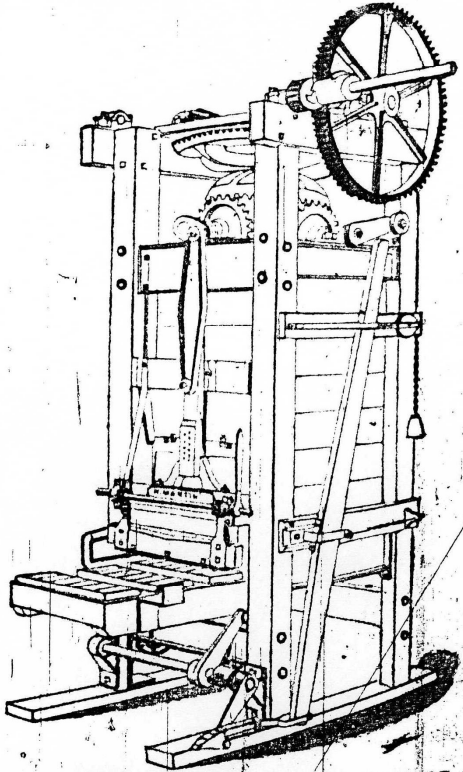
## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> "Thomas Kelly.", in F.H. Schofield. The Story of Manitoba. Volume III. (Winnipeg; S.J. Clarke, 1912.), p. 135; Winnipeg Times, 9 May 1882, p. 4; 13 June 1882, p. 4; "Bricks y the Million.", Manitoba Free Press, 10 June 1882, p. 2; Times, 15 August 1882, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Schofield, loc. cit.; "Building Winnipeg For Thirty-Five Years.", MFP, 27 September 1912, p. 12; MFP, 6 July 1882, p. 8; 15 September 1882, p. 8; City of Winnipeg Archives. Winnipeg Assessment Roll, 1899, Ward 3, p. 4; 1885, Ward 3, p. 4; 1886, Ward 3, p. 4; 1895, Ward 3, p. 4; Winnipeg Tribune, 21 April 1899, p. 4.

manufacturing faltered after 1915, the firm was back in business by 1919 and remained in the directories, possibly as a distributor of brick, until 1925.<sup>1</sup>

HENRY MARTIN  
LATEST IMPROVED  
**BRICK MACHINE**  
Steam and Horse power—either 5 or 6 brick.



**THE STRONGEST BRICK MACHINE MADE**  
**SOLID IRON BOTTOMS AND RAILS**  
Practical Brick Makers pronounce it the most  
perfect Stock Brick Machine now in use.  
*Send for Catalogue.*  
**The Gurney-Tilden Co., Limited,**  
**AGENTS WINNIPEG.**

Kelly Brothers probably used a machine similar to this to make the brick for the Clarendon Hotel, on site. (*Manitoba Free Press*, 10 February 1894, p. 2.)

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ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Schofield, loc. cit.; *Canada Business Directory*, 1914, p. 599; 1919, p. 582; 1925, p. 547.

## KELLY-McCUTCHEON VITRIFIED BRICK

This was a project floated through the combined efforts of Winnipeg building contractor Thomas Kelly and brick-maker Albert Ney McCutcheon in 1895. A proposal was made to Winnipeg's Board of Works by the pair to manufacture vitrified (glazed) brick for paving streets, if the City would guarantee them a contract to supply a set number of bricks per year. If so, they would construct a plant costing \$25-\$50,000. Their clay source was 150 miles away, probably in the Souris Valley where McCutcheon had an interest. Should the City go through with the deal, then the partners would get the clay tested. They estimated that they could make the brick for less than \$20 per thousand. While the Board of Works entertained the notion, it was not passed on to City Council as a whole. Instead, the proposal was filed for future consideration after the tests were completed. It is not known if the tests were ever done, and that was the last of the Kelly-McCutcheon proposal.<sup>1</sup>

## LaLIBERTE'S BRICK YARD

In the autumn of 1883, auctioneer J.S. Coolican sold, under a chattel mortgage, 100,000 manufactured bricks at a place called LaLiberte's brick yard. Evidently, the place was so well known to locals that Coolican only supplied that information, and nothing regarding address or location. A search of [Winnipeg Assessment Rolls](#) and [Henderson's Directories](#) has proven fruitless, and illustrates the anonymity of some of the smaller yards. The number of bricks sold was not small and leads one to wonder who LaLiberte was, and to whom he sold.<sup>2</sup>

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> "Vitrified Brick.", [Manitoba Free Press](#), 23 May 1895, p. 8; "Paving Wanted.", [MFP](#), 24 May 1895, p. 1; "Vitrified Brick.", [Nor'Wester](#), 25 May 1895, p. 2; [Tribune](#), 11 September 1893, p. 8.

### ENDNOTES

<sup>2</sup> Ale of Bricks." [Winnipeg Times](#), 16 October 1883, p. 5.

## CHARLES LAND YARD

Traditionally, Charles Land (c1820-1907) has been known as the first brick-maker in Manitoba. He had come to the future Manitoba in 1846 with the 6<sup>th</sup> Yorkshire Regiment. At some unknown date he was said to have built brick kilns outside of Upper Fort Garry, on the site of the old Hudson's Bay Company store on the southwest corner of Main Street and York Avenue. There he made the first bricks ever fired in Manitoba. Around 1856, Land purchased Pensioners' Allotments 47 and 48 from Mr. Thomas on the east side of what would later become River Lots 80 and 73 St. James – two long, narrow tracts on the east side of Furby Street. Of particular interest was 73 St. James, on the north side of the Portage Road (now Avenue), for that was where Land set up his brick yard. In August 1870, the New Nation proclaimed that "everybody is building and everybody wants bricks." Charley Lang (sic) had just burned a "splendid lot" of over 50,000 brick, making them "Yorkshire fashion." Alexander Begg revealed in 1879, however, that "Land's bricks were principally used for chimneys," as opposed to other, more structural uses. Land sold 73 St. James to Gilbert McMicken in 1874 and resettled in St. Charles. His former yard had a number of revivals a few years later—notably Foxley and Disbrowe, and then the Portage Road Brick Yards, owned by S.C. Biggs—as later operators sought to squeeze the last of the clay out of this small yard.<sup>1</sup>

## J. AND P. LYONS YARD

This firm's business was mainly that of a building contractor which operated a St. Boniface brick yard after October 1881, making bricks for their own use. According to a June 1882 account, the Lyons yard had five slop machines and one Martin brick-making machine, though they planned to soon add another Martin machine. A recent flood that spring had destroyed their four Red Wing brick machines, but the yard still employed 20 workers and used 12 horses. They planned to make three million bricks that year, and their product was used in the Kennedy Street Legislative Building, Government House and the new Stobart and Eden Building, (SW-Portage Avenue and Smith Street). Their office, from where they took orders for brick from "contractors and others," was located next to this latter structure. They also maintained a large supply of veneering brick, "always on hand." It is unknown how long this yard was in operation.<sup>2</sup>

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> "lived Sixty-One Years in Winnipeg.", Manitoba Free Press, 10 June 1907, p. 5; "Obituary.", Winnipeg Tribune, 10 June 1907, p. 7; Manitoba Archives, Parish Files, Reel M1008, 73 St. James, Deed, 1856; "Brick's! Brick's!" New Nation, 6 August 1870, p. 2; Alexander Begg and Walter Nursey. Ten Years in Winnipeg. (Winnipeg: Times, 1879.), p. 56; Parish File, loc. cit., Deed, 14 January 1874.

### ENDNOTES

<sup>2</sup> Winnipeg Sun, 17 October 1881, p.5; "Bricks by the Million," Manitoba Free Press, 10 June 1882, p. 2; rick For Sale." Winnipeg Times, 8 July 1882, p. 3.

## A. McCUTCHEON AND COMPANY YARD

Albert Ney McCutcheon (1858-1934) operated a brick yard in St. Boniface from 1884 to 1910. This was located on the north side of Mission Street, in an area where many other brick yards had been located since the late 1870s. During the 1890s, McCutcheon burned clay from the Souris Valley in his yard to produce light red brick. These bricks did not take as much burning as his St. Boniface brick, and were hard and tough in quality. At the same time, Bergen of St. Boniface also produced some “tile pipe” from two varieties of clay taken from the Valley. It is believed that this was the same clay source suggested when Thomas Kelly and McCutcheon made a proposal involving vitrified brick to the City of Winnipeg in 1895. Little else is known of the McCutcheon yard, except that he sold part of the property to the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway in 1910 for their right of way (high line) through Elmwood. Another part of his property was sold to the City of Winnipeg as a nuisance ground, the clay having been worked out some time earlier. McCutcheon later became interested in other ventures, including the brick plants at Morris and Whitemouth.<sup>1</sup>

## ANDREW McDERMOT

In the summer of 1870 this pioneer Red River merchant and entrepreneur produced a number of bricks that the local newspapers extolled. The New Nation suggested that with the “necessary outlay for the proper manufacture of bricks on a large scale,” McDermot’s brick yard would be a great success. Unfortunately, this was the last ever heard of McDermot’s bricks, as it is not believed that he proceeded with “the necessary outlay.”<sup>2</sup>

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Winnipeg Tribune, 11 September 1893, p. 8; “Pioneer Brick Manufacturer Dies, Aged 76,” Tribune, 26 February 1934, p. 6; “Death of A.N. McCutcheon.”, Winnipeg Free Press, 26 February 1934, p. 3; City of Winnipeg Archives. Board of Control Correspondence, 04727/1909.

### ENDNOTES

<sup>2</sup> “Manufacturing enterprise.” New Nation, 8 July 1870, p. 2.

# McDONALD AND HOLLEY YARDS

James G. McDonald was known around Winnipeg as the “King of the Contractors,” mainly because of the large scale of his operations during the early 1880s. He had come to Winnipeg in January 1880 from Pictou, Nova Scotia via Ottawa, to bid on the contract for the Louise Bridge. Possibly through political connections, he quickly became the biggest operator in Manitoba, garnering contracts to build not only the railway bridge, but also prominent buildings such as the Bank of Montreal, Morris Block, the Hudson’s Bay Company store and Ogilvie’s Mill. It would appear that the nature of his operations were fully integrated, and that he relied very little on subcontractors or outside suppliers.<sup>1</sup>

One example of this self-reliance was his purchase of the Manitoba Brick and Pottery Company’s brick yard on Lot 32 St. John, in Point Douglas. McDonald purchased the 10 42/100-acre site for \$410 an acre in May 1880. By mid-June, McDonald was installing a brick machine obtained from E. and C. Gurney of Hamilton, Ontario. This was said to be capable of producing 25-30,000 bricks per day. By mid-July, a 250,000-brick kiln was under construction, while his brick machine turned out 50 bricks per minute, or 20,000 per day. He also had three slop machines, each of which produced 10-12,000 bricks per day, with more machines planned to be added. In all, the 10-acre site with its barbed-wire fence employed 30 workers. By early September, McDonald had started brick-laying at the Bank of Montreal and at the Hudson’s Bay store. He had already burned two kilns of brick – one of 160,000 and a recently-opened one of 270,000 brick. He was getting ready to burn another 260,000 as well as one after that of 50,000. It was said that he had purchased a kiln of 300,000 brick from S. C. Bigg’s Portage Road Brick Yard. He also had a number of brick layers recently arrived from Saint John, New Brunswick, with more on the way from New York. And so it would appear that 1880 was a very successful year for the enterprising McDonald.<sup>2</sup>

In the early spring of 1881, McDonald took a partner in his brick yard in the person of Samuel J. Holley, who was proposing starting a gas works on another part of the Point. It was said that “Mr. Holley’s well-known business ability will be a guarantee for the character of the material which he supplied.” Holley probably also brought in extra capital with which to expand the brick plant. It was planned to install two steam brick machines that would turn out 60-70,000 bricks per day. By late June, one of these machines, from Willoughby, Ohio, had been in use for three weeks, and another was expected soon. Each had a capacity of 50,000 bricks per 10-hour day. McDonald’s yard also featured a 350-foot long drying shed for the brick, as well as a boarding house for the 60 employees, a blacksmith shop and a stable for the horses. The Times reporter also indicated that McDonald owned a half-interest in a brick yard at Duluth, Minnesota. He was also said to be involved with a stone quarry and brick plant at Stony Mountain, and a brown-stone quarry at Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. A month later, McDonald and Holley had completed the burning of a second kiln of brick—350,000—the first batch being 260,000 in number and already sold. Another month showed the yard putting out 70,000 bricks per day, with about 1.5 million bricks on hand for sale. McDonald also had a carload of Duluth red brick on hand, which he

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Manitoba Free Press, 20 January 1880, p. 1; 28 January 1880, p. 1; Tribune, 21 January 1880, p. 4; “J. G. McDonald.”, in Steen and Boyce, Winnipeg, Manitoba and Her Industries (Winnipeg: Steen and Boyce, 1882), p. 62.

<sup>2</sup> “Auction Sales.”. Winnipeg Times, 8 May 1880, p. 4; 10 May 1880, p. 4; 23 June 1880, p. 4; “A New Industry.”, Times, 16 July 1880, p. 4; Emerson International, 2 September 1880, p. 2.

sold for half the cost of the St. Louis variety which cost \$0.75 per brick put down at Winnipeg. Late September 1881 saw the yard sending three carloads of brick to Portage la Prairie.<sup>1</sup>

McDonald claimed to have produced over four million bricks during 1881, and planned to manufacture 10 million in 1882. With his building, brick, lime and stone quarry lines, he employed about 400 workers. Like all construction in Winnipeg, the year 1882 would prove to also be McDonald's watershed year. Some five million dollars worth of building took place in the city that year, and according to McDonald, he employed an average of 500 men in 1882 at wages from \$2.50 to \$6.00 per day, for a payroll of \$37,500 per month.

McDonald and Holley expanded their brick-making into St. Boniface during April. By early June, under the management of Willis Goodenow, the new yard had two Penfold brick machines turning out 70,000 perforated bricks per day, while their two Martin machines turned out 30,000. The yard was 250' x 415' in size and was said to contain 1.4 million manufactured bricks. The brick shed was 415' x 23' in size, and could contain 2.5 million bricks which were awaiting the kiln. On 28 July 1882, the St. Boniface yard made 105,000 bricks, considered a one-day record at a time when the yard employed 70 men. McDonald and Holley produced about six million bricks that year, between the Winnipeg, St. Boniface and Stony Mountain yards. Some of the buildings which used this brick were the Court House, Hargrave Block, the Bathgate Block, as well as the C.P.R Roadhouse and workshops. After the spring of 1882, the land boom began to rapidly collapse, though the Winnipeg construction boom carried on into 1884 at a gradually diminishing state. A year after the above glowing account was published the St. Boniface yard was under a chattel mortgage sale. The enumeration of the chattels involved in the sale was quite impressive. This was probably the beginning of the end for the "King of the Contractors." At the time, McDonald was building Holy Trinity Anglican Church. The project was left to the Building Committee when McDonald suddenly departed Winnipeg in the summer of 1884. Work was also suspended on Winnipeg's new Post Office, as well as the new sewer system. He returned to Winnipeg in March 1885, but things were no longer the same after the failure of his business empire.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Winnipeg," International, 24 March 1881, p. 3; "Industrial Enterprise. Times, 27 June 1881, p. 1; 26 July 1881, p. 4; Sun, 29 August 1881, p. 5; 30 September 1881, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Steen and Boyce, loc. cit.' City of Winnipeg Archives/ Council Communications, Series I, 03110; Times, 18 April 1882, p. 4; "Bricks By the Millions.", MFP, 10 June 1882, p. 2; Times, 29 July 1882, p. 4; "McDonald and Holley.", MFP, 31 December 1882, pp. 2-3; "Auction Sale.", Times, 11 June 1883, p. 5; MFP, 6 August 1884, p. 4; Times, 20 August 1884, p. 4; 5 March 1885, p. 4.

**AUCTION SALE**  
OF  
**Brick Manufacturing Machinery,**  
Plant, Tools, &c.

Under and by virtue of the power of sale contained in a certain chattel mortgage made by James G. McDonald and Samuel J. Holley to the Imperial Bank of Canada, bearing date the third day of July, A.D. 1882, and which will be produced at the time of sale, there will be sold by public auction at the brickyard of McDonald and Holley, situate in St. Boniface,

**On Tuesday, the 12th day of June,**

1883, at the hour of ten o'clock in the forenoon, the following goods and chattels, namely:

- 1 Engine House, 13x18x25 feet, board.
- 1 Engine House, 13x20x9 feet, board.
- 1 Boarding House, 48x23x16 feet, board.
- 1 Office, 13x10x8 feet, board, roof shingled.
- 1 Stable, 40x18x15 feet, board, roof shingled.
- 3 Small Outbuildings.
- 2 Martin Brick Machines.
- 2 Penfield Brick Machines.
- 500 feet Iron Piping.
- 210 feet Iron Shafting.
- 78 Kiln Doors.
- 7 Fire Pokers.
- 2 Engines, complete.
- 38 Shovels.
- 3 Picks.
- 1 Large Hammer (10 lb.)
- 1 Broadaxe.
- 2 Crowbars.
- 21 Iron Brick Moulds.
- 29 Wooden Brick Moulds.
- 1 Cook Stove, complete, and outfit for 60 men.
- 7 Carts.
- 7 Sets Cart Harness.
- 4 Wheelbarrows.
- 45 Brick Trucks.
- 10 Pails.
- 1 Buck Saw.
- 1 Axe.
- 2 kegs Nails.
- 12 M. Laths.
- 2 M. Shingles.
- 250 M. ft. Lumber.
- 1 Steam Pump.

Terms and Conditions of Sale—One-third of the purchase money at the time of sale, balance to be paid within three months, secured by approved endorsed promissory notes.

For further particulars apply to

**AIKING, CULVER & HAMILTON,**

Vendors' Solicitors.

29th May, 1883.

may 21 junell

The end of McDonald and Holley's St. Boniface brick yard. (Winnipeg Times, 11 June 1883, p. 5.)

## MADILL AND COMPANY

This firm was located on the east side of the Seine River, much like many of its St. Boniface contemporaries. In the summer of 1882 it used four slop machines and a Toronto-made Excelsior brick machine—apparently a prototype—which produced a brick only slightly inferior to St. Louis brick, a preferred product of the period. The power plant was a 16 horsepower Abell engine, and the yard had 20 men working to produce the 250,000 to 300,000 bricks on hand by 1 July. Madill hoped to produce three to four million bricks in 1882, and much of this was for sale to the public.<sup>1</sup>

## MANITOBA BRICK AND POTTERY COMPANY

This was a firm managed by building contractor Robert Patterson, and was started in 1871. It brought in machines from Chicago which proved useless for Winnipeg's clay, forcing them to produce hand-made brick. It had a 10-acre yard in Point Douglas, on Lot 32 St. John. By early August of 1873, two large kilns of brick had been burned. According to the Free Press, the brick was "hard, well-shaped and of a beautiful and uniform colour," which was very similar to the cream-coloured brick of Milwaukee, another sought-after product. Despite the earlier set-back with the brick machines, the Company was able to declare a four per cent dividend to its stock holders in 1873. Little is known of this firm's production, nor its usage, though one would suspect that most of the brick buildings constructed in Winnipeg up to 1875 came from this yard. As late as 1877, Patterson was offering to buy "refuse brick" that was found behind the City Hall or trade these for three thousand clean brick from the Company's yard. The yard was sold to J. G. McDonald in May 1880.<sup>2</sup>

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> "Bricks by the Million." Manitoba Free Press, 10 June 1882, p. 2; Winnipeg Times, 23 June 1882, p. 4.

### ENDNOTES

<sup>2</sup> Alexander Begg and Walter Nursey. Ten Years in Winnipeg, (Winnipeg; Times, 1879.), p. 32; "Bricks.", Manitoba Free Press, 9 August 1873, p. 5; Manitoba Gazette and Trade Review, 3 December 1873, p. 3; Manitoban, 6 December 1873, p. 3; City of Winnipeg Archives. Council Communications, Series I, 01178; Times, 10 May 1880, p. 4.

## J.B. MORE'S BRICK YARD

John Byron More was one of Winnipeg's first aldermen, as well as a local entrepreneur. In July 1879, he advertised brick for sale from his kiln which was located in the vicinity of Dufferin Park Race Track (Logan Avenue and Gunnell Street area.) His product was "Cheap for cash." His bricks were apparently awarded a diploma at the Toronto Industrial Exhibition of that year.<sup>1</sup>

## J.E. MOULD AND COMPANY YARD

John E. Mould was a plastering contractor who purchased six lots adjoining the Manitoba Rifle Association's range early in 1879. He began operations that April, with 20 employees turning out 18,000 bricks per day. By early June, Mould and Company was preparing to burn 200,000 bricks in their kiln. According to the Times, W.H. Lyon's new store on McDermot Avenue used Mould's bricks. This brick yard continued in business for a couple more years, burning two kilns of 250,000 and 300,000 bricks in 1880, and 175,000 and 200,000 in 1881 at their Point Douglas yard. By 1881, they had a second yard at St. Boniface where they had burned a kiln of 801,000 bricks as of late June.<sup>2</sup>

## PION AND CHARTIER

Pierre Chartier started a brick yard on the bank of the Seine River in the spring of 1879. He apparently had an immediate order of 30,000 bricks for the new St. Boniface College building. By 1880 he had taken a partner, Joseph Pion, who would make bricks at La Broquerie a decade later. Pion took the yard over in 1881 or 1882. In June 1882, Pion had four slop machines in operation, with two more to be installed. His staff consisted of 12 men and six horses, and used the Seine River as his water supply. He expected to manufacture 1.5 million bricks that year.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Winnipeg Times, 19 July 1879, p. 4; "The Brick Making Industry around Winnipeg." Manitoba Free Press, 11 November 1905, p. 20.

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<sup>2</sup> "Brick Making.", Winnipeg Times, 6 June 1879, p. 4; 19 July 1880, p. 4; 25 June 1881, p. 4.

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<sup>3</sup> Manitoba Free Press, 19 May 1879, p. 1; Henderson's, 1880, p. 218; "Bricks By The Million.", MFP, 10 June 1882, p. 2.

## ROURKE AND CASS YARD

William Rourke and Edward Cass were building contractors who owned a small brick yard on Toronto Street, north of Portage Avenue in the late 1880s and early 1890s. Realizing that their yard was limited in size at a time when they were building the gargantuan Manitoba Hotel on Main Street, the firm sought more land in 1890. The City of Winnipeg owned all the lots surrounding their plot, and the contractors approached the City to buy four to 10 more lots. The City was unwilling to sell the lots, though they recommended leasing them to Rourke and Cass.<sup>1</sup>

## JOSEPH ROYAL YARD

This brick plant was started in May 1882 by this pioneer St. Boniface politician, and was one of the Seine River yards. It employed 10 men and six horses and used six slop machines. As of June 1882, the plant was preparing to burn its first kiln of 200,000 bricks. The operators hoped to produce one million bricks that year.<sup>2</sup>

## ST. BONIFACE BRICK AND POTTERY COMPANY

The only reason anything is known about this firm is through an 1891 bankruptcy notice where the trustee was selling off its plant, along with \$2000 worth of pottery items, as well as 600,000 bricks. This was a firm which escaped the notice of the directories, and may have been short-lived. Nothing is known of its output, products nor the parties behind it.<sup>3</sup>

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Winnipeg Tribune, 3 May 1890, p. 4.

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<sup>2</sup> "Brick by the Million." Manitoba Free Press, 10 June 1882, p. 2.

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<sup>3</sup> "For Sale by Tender." Manitoba Free Press, 5 March 1891, p. 4; Commercial, 9 March 1891, p. 619.

## DAVID SAUL BRICK YARDS

David Saul was a building contractor who sometimes partnered with his brother John in various building ventures. The brick-making division was established in 1878 under the name Saul and Harrier, taking on Charles Wellman as a partner about 1880. At the end of 1881 Saul assumed sole ownership of the firm that was sometimes known as Saul Brothers. In June 1881 the Sauls had a brick yard at Point Douglas where they had just burned a kiln of 250,000 bricks, with another similar number awaiting firing. Some of these bricks were for sale, though the Sauls used many for the 10 building contracts they had underway. Two weeks later the second kiln was being burned, while another 250,000 bricks awaited firing. By late July the Saul's had 900,000 bricks in the yard moulded and ready for firing. They planned to make 1.5 million bricks that year, though the Point Douglas Brick yards fell slightly short of this mark at 1.3 million.<sup>1</sup>

By April 1882 the Sauls had exhausted the clay at the Point Douglas yard. David Saul leased a piece of ground from St. John's Anglican Church east of Main Street. Two months later their new operation consisted of four slop-brick and two Martin brick machines, employing 32 men and 14 horses. They were producing about 40,000 bricks per day, and expected to make between four and five million bricks. The kiln shed, which was then under construction, was 300' long and 33' wide. The clay was procured from the west side of Main Street. The drying bed for the brick was 300' x 75'. At the time, they were prepared to make three million bricks in 1883. By July of the following year the firm had dissolved.<sup>2</sup>

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> "David Saul." In Steen and Boyce. Winnipeg, Manitoba and Her Industries. (Winnipeg: Steen and Boyce, 1882.), p. 48; City of Winnipeg Archives. Winnipeg Assessment Roll, 1880, North Ward, p. 1; Winnipeg Times, 23 June 1881, p. 4; 8 July 1881, p. 4; 29 July 1881, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Times, 27 April 1882, p. 4; "Brick By the Million.", Manitoba Free Press, 10 June 1882, p. 2; Times, 17 June 1882, p. 4; Commercial, 22 May 1883, p. 691; 15 July 1884, p. 825.