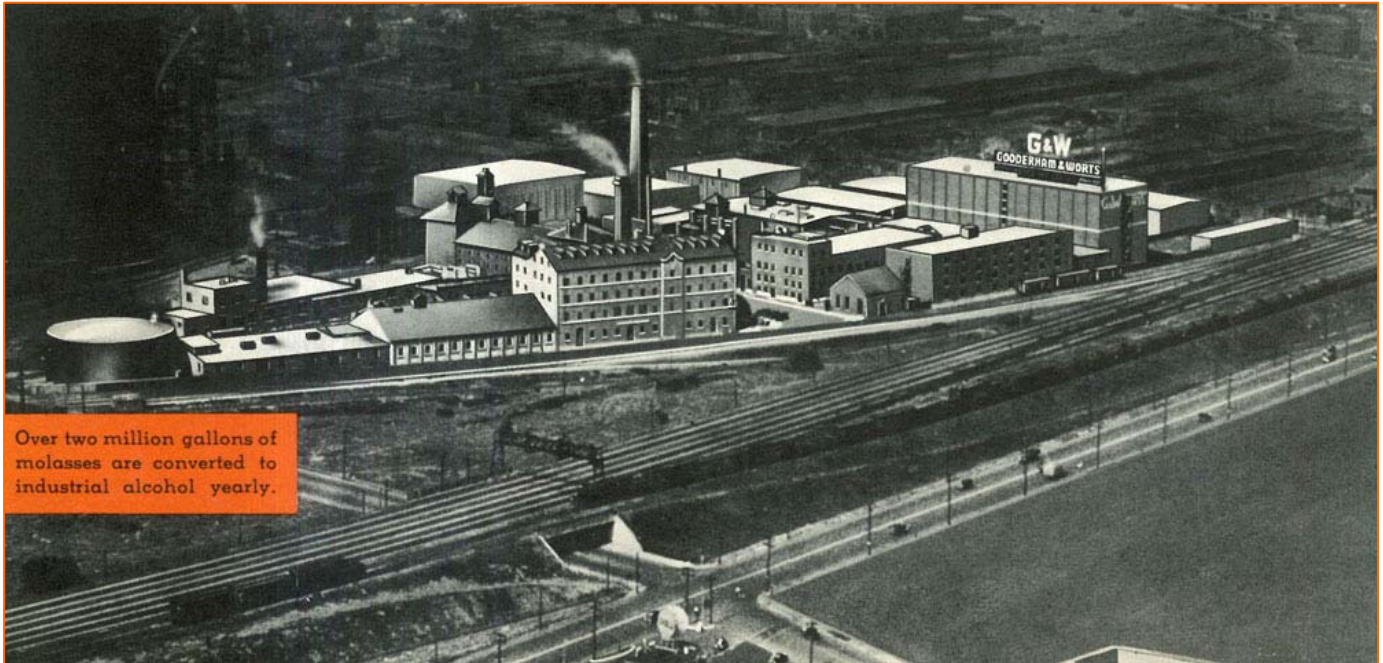


Building Histories

Building 74: Case Goods Warehouse



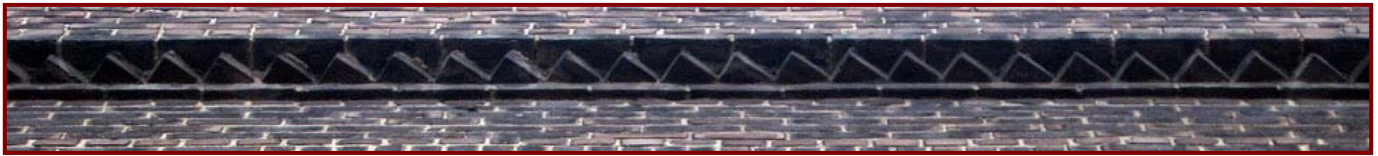
Rare view of the distillery in 1938, before the Gardiner Expressway opened

*B*uilt in 1927, the Case Goods Warehouse occupies a place of special importance in the history of the Distillery District. It was part of the final expansion of the distillery, which occurred after [Harry C. Hatch](#) and associates had scooped up both the Gooderham & Worts Distillery in 1923 and the Hiram Walker Distillery in 1926. When Ontario's Prohibition era ended in 1927, Hatch et al were ready, willing, and very able to reap huge rewards, both in Ontario where the booze business was moving under government control (Ontario Liquor Control Board) and across the Lake where federal Prohibition remained in effect until the end of 1933.

Designed by Toronto architect V. L. Gladman, at an estimated cost of \$72,000, the four-storey warehouse followed the architectural style bestowed on the rest of the site by Victorian architects [David Roberts Sr.](#) and [David Roberts Jr.](#) It is essentially a large, brick box, set on a concrete (rather than stone) base, with walls divided into a system of piers and recessed panels. A decorative sawtooth brick course defines the heads of the panels, repeating a distinctive Roberts' touch. The darker colour of the brick, and the long façade defining the south side of Case Goods Lane give the building a distinct presence on the site. When it was built, a railway track ran close to the southern façade so that railcars could be loaded.



From 3rd floor bridge



Decorative sawtooth brick course under roofline

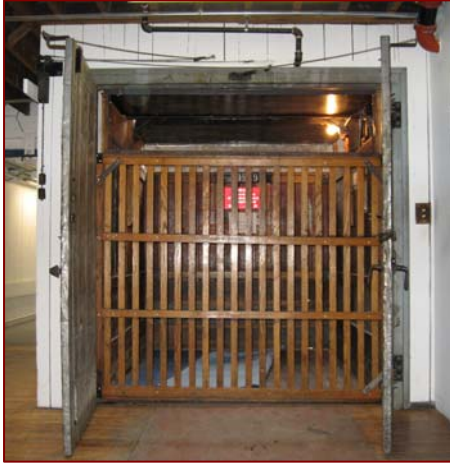
The interior of the building featured exposed brick walls and three-east-west rows of timber posts and beams. The ground floor was poured concrete, with upper floors being wood planking. The third floor was the only one that remained unpainted; the brick walls of the other floors were painted grey and the timbers a combination of blue, white and red. Apart from a few enclosed areas, the floors contained open space where cases of goods (wooden in the early days, cardboard later on) could be stored and manouevered easily.



Case Goods Warehouse, 1st floor looking west toward spiral slide in the distance *Larry Turner*

As its name implies, the Case Goods Warehouse was created to process and store cases of alcoholic goods, both beverage alcohol like whisky and rum, and industrial alcohol like anti-freeze. These products were bottled or canned in Buildings 58 and 59 (The Cannery) directly across Case Goods Lane and dispatched to the Case Goods Warehouse through a third-floor bridge. Within Building 74, goods were moved by *freight elevator* and a conveyor system comprising a two-storey *spiral slide* of rollers rather than polished metal and connected to a *horizontal roller conveyor* that led to a

freight door. The large open floors allowed case goods to be stored and moved around as required.



Freight Elevator



3rd floor Bridge from Cannery



Spiral case goods slide

When the Gooderham & Worts distillery was closed down in mid-1990, all case goods were quickly moved out and the building awaited new developments. Like other buildings on the site, it was occasionally used as a film location. It was also used to store various heritage artifacts, such as the *1880s wooden desk* that is now on display. This desk is one of the oldest surviving Gooderham & Worts artifacts. It represents a much earlier era in the life of the distillery and was probably used in one of the offices in Building 32.



1880s Desk (Artifact 74-1-6)

In 2001, Cityscape Development purchased the distillery National Historic Site. Determined to transform the industrial complex into a vibrant centre for arts and culture, the new owners contacted Artscape, a non-profit, cultural developer then engaged in buying and redeveloping heritage buildings into affordable work studios for artists. Cityscape agreed to lease the building for 20 years at below-market rent to Artscape, which in turn converted the building into about 60 work and retail studios, offices, rehearsal and performance spaces. Today, these painters, potters, dancers, photographers, theatre groups and other creators enjoy the 50,000 square feet of space redesigned by Zeidler Partnership Architects, and the many links to the past still evident in the building and its heritage artifacts. As you explore the building, note the still working 1927 elevator, the timber pier-and-post construction, the giant spiral slide, the “ghost signs” and warm brick walls ... and celebrate the transformation of Building 74 from case goods to art goods.



Elevator shaft

Construction, March 3, 2003 *Thane Lucas*

**Window on Art
2nd floor studios**

The 1938 stylized aerial photograph of Gooderham & Worts is reproduced from Gooderham & Worts' own publication, *Alcohol in Industry*.

Please send your comments or questions to Manager of Heritage Services, Sally Gibson, sg@thedistillerydistrict.com.

For more about the history of the Distillery District, visit www.distilleryheritage.com.