

## DICK, David Brash (1846 – 1925)

**D**avid Dick was active in the design of buildings in Toronto for the last quarter of the nineteenth century. He quickly established himself among prominent Torontonians after emigrating to Canada, working for such clients as James Austin the president of Consumers' Gas, William Mulock the president of the Dominion Bank, as well as E. B. Osler, Sir Henry Pellatt and Joseph Flavelle. Dick was an important player in the architectural establishment, as he was a founding member of the Toronto Architectural Guild in 1887, which fostered the creation of the Ontario Association of Architects two years later. He served on the first council of the O.A.A. and its President in 1893.

Dick was born in Scotland in 1846 and studied at the Edinburgh School of Design before entering the offices of architects W.L. Moffatt and then the firm of Peddie & Kinnear. Moffatt, who had returned to Edinburgh after practicing in England for several years. Dick came to Canada in 1873, settling in Toronto where he formed a partnership with Robert Grant, an established builder. Their collaboration from 1874 to 1876 resulted mainly in designs for residential buildings, with the notable exceptions of the flamboyant United Empire Clubhouse, King Street, Toronto (1875, demolished) and the Consumers' Gas offices at 19 Toronto Street, Toronto (1876). It is interesting to note the range of styles he could command as he presented three identical schemes for this commercial block but clothed in different decorative styles. The design actually built, demonstrates his skill, as the robust renaissance revival facade has rich carved decorative motifs.

When Dick's association with Grant ended he retained Consumers' Gas as his client and he later designed a conservatory for its president, James Austin, at his Spadina estate, Toronto (1879). He also designed other buildings for the Gas company including the gasworks structures on Berkeley

Street at Eastern Avenue, Toronto (1887-88) which are decorated with stone capped piers, pinnacles, and stepped gables. In addition he designed company offices at 17 Toronto street in 1876 and 1899 as well as several residences for the Austin family. Dick also designed many houses for other notable Toronto families including: William Mulock, Jarvis Street at Gloucester (1881), W. J. Gage, Bloor Street at Walmer Road, (1886), George Laidlaw, Brock Street at Wellington Place (1879), E.B. Osler, Rosedale, (1880), S.M. Jarvis, Rosedale (1881) and J. Flavelle, Jarvis Street, (1894) to name a few of the more prominent residential commissions he executed. From his connections to these families he designed many bank branches throughout the country including branches for the Canadian Bank of Commerce, Dominion Bank, Bank of Hamilton and Quebec Bank. His bank buildings combined the design elements of the Scottish Baronial and Renaissance revival styles, giving his works a distinctive appearance.

David Dick designed few public or educational buildings before Wycliffe College, Hoskin Avenue, Toronto (1888). Wycliffe College was executed in spartan Richardsonian Romanesque style that is almost Jacobean in its effect with its gabled pavilions, banding of rough cut stone and prominent entrance bay set off by bartizans on the corners. Other University of Toronto commissions followed including the Biological Institute (1890), the Library (1891), the Royal College of Dental Surgeons (1895), and the restoration of University College after the fire of 1890. The library's design was to echo the style of University College but its crisp detailing, apsidal termination and its entrance tower are original interpretations of the Richardsonian Romanesque style.

David Dick designed many other fine buildings before retiring to England in 1902, he died there and is buried in Woking, Surrey.