



400 ASSINIBOINE AVENUE

CAMELOT APARTMENTS

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – FEBRUARY 2008



400 ASSINIBOINE AVENUE CAMELOT APARTMENTS

Date of Construction: 1929

Building Permit: 661/1929 (Plans on file at City Archives)

Architect: Unnamed on Plans

Contractor: Unnamed on Plans

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

One of a large number of three-storey brick and stone apartment blocks built in Winnipeg after World War I is the Camelot Apartments, located on the south side of Assiniboine Avenue on the north banks of the Assiniboine River.

The front (north) façade is symmetrically designed with a centrally-placed stone framed entrance atop a short flight of stairs. Brick pilasters, larger window openings and a raised, stone topped cornice accentuate this central bay. The remainder of the elevation features a rhythmic layout of square-headed window openings in the raised basement and the upper three floors. The basement openings are set in smooth-cut stone frames with a continuous band of stone visually dividing the basement from the ground floor. Upper storey windows feature lug stone sills and dark brick heads. Bands of dark brick also embellish the area



Front (north) and east façades, 2007

above the third storey windows and the building is finished by a plain, stone capped parapet.

The building is designed in a common “I” shape, thereby increasing the amount of natural light and ventilation available to the suites. The dark brick cladding of the front façade wraps around and is used on a small portion of the side elevations (east and west). Both side elevations include five three-storey wood clad glazed porches for the use of the upper floor tenants. Except for the front portion, the side elevations are built of common clay brick interrupted by numerous plain windows on all levels. The rear (south) façade is also finished in clay brick and also includes similar glazed porches as well as a centrally located raised entrance.

There are no names of either an architect or contractor on the original plans held at City Archives.



East façade, 2007

HISTORICAL INTEREST:

The original and long-time owner of this block was the Petursson family.¹ This was a common occurrence during this period; many Icelandic immigrants became small- to medium-scale contractors in the city and built a number of apartment blocks as rental property. Original owners were: Rögnvaldur Pétursson (1877-1940), clergyman with the Icelandic Unitarian Church in America and founder and first president of the Icelandic National League;² Olafur Pétursson Sr., builder; and Hannes Pétursson, agent. In 1950, Holmfrindur Pétursson had replaced Rögnvaldur and by 1960, P.M. Pétursson et al was listed as the owners. During the 1960s, the building was finally sold out of the family.³

The over 40 suites of the Camelot Apartments have been filled with a variety of tenants with varying backgrounds and employment.⁴



Rear (south) façade, 2007

RECOMMENDATION TO HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE:

Under the Historical Buildings By-law, this building meets a number of important criteria:

- its historical importance- one of large number of three-storey modest brick and stone apartment blocks built between the world wars in Winnipeg;
- its associations- its long-term connections to several members of the Pétursson family, an influential and early Icelandic family that settled in Manitoba;
- its design- an good example of a modest apartment block;
- its architect- N/A;
- its location- contributes to its streetscape; and
- its integrity- its main façades continue to display many of their original elements and design.



Front (north) façade, 1978

ENDNOTES:

- 1 City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 12-092708000 (below as ARo), 1930-1950.
- 2 Biographical information from <http://www.inlofna.org/INL-Presidents.html>
- 3 ARo, 1950-1970.
- 4 Henderson's Directory, 1930-1990.