



434 ASSINIBOINE AVENUE

L.A. HAMILTON HOUSE (CHALET APARTMENTS)

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – FEBRUARY 2008



**434 ASSINIBOINE AVENUE
L.A. HAMILTON HOUSE (CHALET APARTMENTS)**

Date of Construction: 1894

Building Permit: N/A

Architect: Unknown

Contractor: Unknown

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

This large, 2½-storey single family home is located on the banks of the Assiniboine River in what was, when it was built, Winnipeg's most prestigious residential neighbourhoods. Known as The Reserve, it stretched from Main Street west to Kennedy Street on both sides of Broadway, the wide tree-lined thoroughfare that cut through the neighbourhood.

The symmetrical front (north) façade features two projecting areas finished with front-facing gables and a recessed area with an open porch on the ground floor and a glazed porch on the second floor. Rusticated stone clads the raised foundation wall; stucco is used for cladding of the superstructure. While the stuccoing on the ground floor is solid, the second floor includes half-timbering, both plain and ornamental, in gable ends, the front-facing gable dormer and the remainder of the wall surface. Windows with many small panes of glass and other wood accenting heighten the English manor-like appearance of the



Front (north) and east façades, 2007

structure. The side elevations feature a continuation of the design of the front, with stucco walls and half-timbering on the upper floor. The rear (south) façade is similarly designed with entrances on the first and second floors, an open staircase serving both doors and a large shed dormer on the rear slope of the truncated hip roof.

Tudor style homes, like this one, were constructed throughout Winnipeg and North America from the 1890s until World War II, although the decades of the 1920s and 1930s saw an explosion in Tudor style house construction on this continent. The style is loosely based on a number of late Medieval English examples ranging from thatch-roofed cottages to grand mansions. In North America, the style developed several distinctive elements - ornamental half-timbering, steeply pitched roofs, front-facing gables and walls clad in stucco, masonry or masonry-veneer.¹

The most common feature of Tudor homes is a steeply pitched central roof with cross gables. Tall, narrow windows in multiple groups, and massive chimneys crowned by chimney pots, are other common elements. About half of all examples of the style contain decorative (non-structural) half-timbering with stucco or brick infill.²

It is unknown at the present time who designed and built this home. The structure stands on its original site and appears to be in good structural condition and appears to be in a fairly good state of originality.



Front (north) and west façades, 2007

HISTORICAL INTEREST:

Lauchlan Alexander Hamilton was the original owner/resident of this house. Born in 1852 in Penetanguishene, Canada West (Ontario), he apprenticed as a surveyor and was among the party that originally surveyed the international boundary (49th parallel) across Western Canada between 1872 and 1874. In 1881 he joined the Canadian Pacific Railway as its land commissioner, travelling ahead of the rails, surveying town sites and plotting out streets, including Regina, Moose Jaw, Medicine Hat and Calgary. He arrived in Vancouver in 1884 and is credited with not only mapping out most of the downtown (still mostly forest) but also naming the streets. Hamilton was transferred by the railway to Winnipeg in 1888 to work as land commissioner. He moved to Ontario in 1901 and died in Ontario in 1941.³

Frank H. Phippen, barrister, was the next owner of this house. Phippen had joined with J.S. Tupper and Hugh J. Macdonald to form Macdonald, Tupper and Phippen in 1886. This firm lasted until 1899 when it was reformed as Tupper, Phippen and Tupper, which lasted until 1906. Phippen appears to have remained in this home until about 1915, although he remained its owner until the mid-1920s.⁴

It was converted into a three-suite apartment block known as the Chalet Apartments in the 1940s.⁵



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 the older of the dwindling number of representative single-family dwellings located in The Reserve, one of Winnipeg's oldest prestige neighbourhoods;
- its associations- its connections to early and influential railway surveyor L.A. Hamilton and barrister F.H. Phippen;
- its design- an excellent example of the Tudor style;
- 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 V. and L. McAlester, A Field Guide to American Houses (New York-1984), p. 358.
- 2 Ibid., pp. 355-356.
- 3 Vancouver Courier, March 3, 2006.
- 4 City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 12-092702100, 1890-1950.
- 5 Henderson's Directory, 1920-1990.