



106 BALMORAL STREET

HON. NOÉ E. CHEVRIER HOUSE

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – FEBRUARY 2008



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Date of Construction: 1910

Building Permit: 1272/1910

Architect: Atchison, John Danley

Contractor: Cross, W.W.

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

This solid brick two-storey single-family home was built in the middle of a well-to-do neighbourhood; its long-time owner was one of the province's influential francophone businessmen and politicians.

The front (east) façade features a one-storey wrap around screened porch located at the southeast corner of the main building. The heavy brick posts are accented with stone and a low-pitched roof with heavy overhanging eaves finishes this element. A squared bay window is also found on this elevation, finished by a narrow belt course of stone that also acts as continuous sills for the second storey windows and encircles the entire structure. The home is topped by a low-pitched hip roof with wide overhanging eaves.



Front (east) and south façades, 2007

The north elevation continues the materials and architectural language of the front façade and includes a wide attached chimney and a two-storey bay window. Window frames are plain and wood, the same as on the front. The south elevation features a large ornate brick and stone chimney. The rear (west) façade includes a one-storey enclosed entrance porch (clad in shingles) with open deck above.

The building sits on its original site and appears to be in good structural condition with few alterations made to the original layout or materials.

This home's low-pitched, flattened roof, heavy overhanging eaves and modest classical detailing are all elements of the Prairie School style. As the name suggests, the style grew out of the wide spaces and vast horizons of the American Midwest, making it essentially a North American phenomenon. It developed in the 1910s and remained popular until the 1930s.¹

The most noticeable feature of the style is its horizontal emphasis: low-pitched roofs, windows grouped to form horizontal bands, flat wall surfaces with little projecting embellishments and very wide eaves all combine to give the style its unique characteristics. The buildings can be clad in stucco, stone or brick, and historical ornamentation is rejected in favour of clean lines and simple designs. Much of its use in Canada came through the use of house plans in magazines and journals and the rise in popularity of the bungalow also grew from this style.² The Wardlaw Apartments, 544 Wardlaw Avenue (built in 1905), is another Prairie School style structure also designed by J.D. Atchison.

J.D. Atchison, designer of this home, was born in Monmouth, Illinois in 1870. Educated in Chicago, he studied architecture at the Chicago Art Institute and the Chicago Manual Training



Front (east) and north façades, 2007

School.³ In 1895, he opened his own practice in Chicago that continued until the early 1900s. He worked on the staff of the World's Columbian Exposition and for the Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad. His commissions brought him to Winnipeg and by 1905 the city's prosperity and future prospects prompted him to relocate his business there.⁴

A list of some of the more prominent local buildings designed by J.D. Atchison over his career includes: Wardlow Apartments, 544 Wardlaw Avenue (1905, Grade II), Kennedy Building (Mitchell-Copp), 315 Portage Avenue (1906, Grade II), Dennistoun House, 166 Roslyn Road (1908, Grade III), N.W.C.T.A. Building, 291 Garry Street (1908, Grade III), Paterson Block, 54 Donald Street (1909, Grade II), Oldfield, Kirby and Gardner Building, 234 Portage Avenue (1909, Grade II), Canada Permanent Building, 296-98 Garry Street (1909, Grade II), Maltese Cross Building, 66 King Street (1909, Grade III), Chamber of Commerce Building (Great-West Life Building), 177 Lombard Avenue (1911, Grade II) Carlton Building, 354 Portage Avenue (1912, Grade III), Boyd Building, 388 Portage Avenue (1912, Grade III), Union Tower, 191 Lombard Avenue (1912-13, Grade II), Merchants' Bank Branch, 1386 Main Street (1913, Grade III), Curry Building, 233 Portage Avenue (1915, Grade II) and the Bank of Hamilton Building, 395 Main Street (1916-18, Grade I).⁵

Atchison also designed structures in other western provinces. He won the design competition for the Moose Jaw City Hall, c.1912-13 (not built) and planned the Moose Jaw Collegiate (1908-10), Saskatchewan Presbyterian Boys' College and Principal's Residence (1911-12), and Hammond Building, Main St., Moose Jaw (1912). In 1923, Atchison left Winnipeg for Pasadena, California, and continued to practice there, adopting the Spanish Colonial style for his residential work. He died in 1959.⁶ He has been given 20 points by the Historical Buildings Committee.



Rear (west) and north façades, 2007

HISTORICAL INTEREST:

The Hon. Noé E. Chevrier, businessman, senator and leading Manitoba francophone, and his family lived in this house for many decades.⁷ Chevrier was born in Rigaud, Canada East (Quebec) in 1846 and came west from the Ottawa area in 1871. He was married in Ottawa in 1880 to Isabella, nee. Johnson, born ca.1850. The pair had three children – Lorena Aglae (a activist in the United States, businessperson, world traveller and suffragette), Horace (St. Boniface M.L.A., 1903, champion of Métis rights and the first member to speak Cree in the Manitoba Legislature, 1904) and Eudore (one of North America’s top dog breeders at his Avondale [or Avandale] Kennels, and credited for introducing the English Springer Spaniel breed to this continent). It is reported that the Methodist Mrs. Chevrier had to travel to Ottawa to give birth to the children because Roman Catholic Church authorities in St. Boniface disapproved of her faith. Mrs. Chevrier’s died in 1881 and Mr. Chevrier married Anne, a Grey Nun, who was given special dispensation from her vows.⁸ The pair had a son and a daughter.

Chevrier was the successful owner of well-known clothing store The Blue Store (*Le Magasin Bleu*), located at 452 Main Street between 1872 and 1927. The business traded goods as far north as the Great Slave Lake region. Chevrier’s personal friendship with Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier led to an appointment to the Senate in 1909. His son Eudore built the house next door (#104 Balmoral Street) to his father’s home in the same year, 1910. The Hon. N.E. Chevrier died in 1911.

Canada Census records for 1911 show Chevrier and his wife Anne and their children Isabella (born 1872) and Laurina (born 1882) living at 106 Balmoral Street, along with 21-year-old domestic servant Liza Moss.



Rear (west) façade, 2007

The Chevrier family maintained ownership of the home until World War I, when it was sold to Lewis C. Marr, manager. Marr owned the property until the early 1930s, although he only lived in the home for a short time in the late 1920s. Wilhelmina B. and Elizabeth Carruthers, both nurses, owned and lived in the home until ca.1939 (Elizabeth's death). W.B. Carruthers continued on in the house until her own death ca.1946. In the 1950s, it was converted into a four-suite facility.⁹



Chevrier family, 1900. Back row, left to right: Rene, Lorena Aglae (Dollee), Marguerite Gingras Chevrier, Horace, Annie, Bella. Second row, left to right: Agnes Champagne-Chevrier, Judge Napoleon Champagne, Agnes McMillan-Chevrier, Noé, Aldie Chevrier-Champagne, Rodolphe. Front row, seated: Eudore, Anita Champagne, Maurice Champagne, Agnes Camille Chevrier, Beatrice Champagne.

Source: Rose-Marie Trudel (reproduced from Diane P. Payment, “Dollee” Chevrier (1878-1948): A Franco-Manitoban Suffragette and “Modern” Woman’ in Manitoba History, No. 44 (Autumn / Winter 2002-2003)

RECOMMENDATION TO HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE:

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

- its historical importance- an example of a single-family dwelling built for an influential and well-to-do family shortly before World War I;
- its associations- its long-term connections to early and influential francophone businessman and leader N.E. Chevrier;
- its design- an excellent example of the Prairie School style;
- its architect- J.D. Atchison was a respected and important practitioner;
- its location- contributes greatly to its extensive historic streetscape; and
- its integrity- its main façades continue to display many of their original elements and design.



Front (east) façade, 1978

ENDNOTES:

- ¹ L. Maitland, et al., A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1992), p. 172; and Identifying Architectural Styles in Manitoba (Winnipeg: Manitoba Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, Historic Resources Branch, 1991), pp. 24-5.
- ² L. Maitland, op. cit., p. 172; and Identifying Architectural Styles in Manitoba, op. cit., p. 24.
- ³ Winnipeg Telegram, September 18, 1906, p. 55; and F.H. Schofield, The Story of Manitoba (Winnipeg: S.J. Clarke, 1913), Vol. II, p. 374.
- ⁴ F.H. Schofield, op. cit., p. 374.
- ⁵ Compiled from City of Winnipeg Historical Buildings Files; J. Wade, Manitoba Architecture to 1940 (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1976); Winnipeg Telegram, September 18, 1906, p. 55; Winnipeg Tribune, December 21, 1907; and F.H. Schofield, op. cit., pp. 374-75.
- ⁶ The Emerson Court House and Town Hall Building (Winnipeg: Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Recreation, Historic Resources Branch, 1985), pp. 8-11.
- ⁷ While there is a good deal of biographical information on the Chevrier family, much of it is contradictory. See C. W. Parker, editor, Who's Who in Western Canada: A Biographical Dictionary of Notable Living Men and Women of Western Canada, Vol. 1 (Vancouver: Canadian Press Association, 1911); Pioneers and Early Citizens of Manitoba (Winnipeg: Manitoba Library Association, 1971); and Diane P. Payment, "'Dollee' Chevrier (1878-1948): A Franco-Manitoban Suffragette and 'Modern' Woman" in Manitoba History, No. 44 (Autumn / Winter 2002-2003).
- ⁸ D.P. Payment, op. cit.
- ⁹ City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 610000-12-2, 1915-1990; and Henderson's Directory, 1915-1990.