



195 COLLEGIATE STREET

ST. JAMES ANGLICAN CHURCH

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – DECEMBER 2009



195 COLLEGIATE STREET ST. JAMES ANGLICAN CHURCH

Date of Construction: 1922

Building Permit: N/A

Architect: Unknown

Contractor: Unknown

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

This stucco-clad structure is part of the Anglican Parish of St. James, one of the oldest organized parishes in Western Canada. The group's second church building, the "New Church" and its connected Parish Hall were built in the early 1920s in response to the general movement of the population west into St. James and the need for larger, more modern facilities.

The front (west) façade features a large crenellated tower in the southwest corner with the main entrance to the church located in the south side of this element. Modest buttresses are found on the tower's corners as well as on the north and south façades, used to separate the space. The remainder of the front façade is finished in a gable end embellished with a large triple pointed arch window. The north and south façades are similarly designed, with buttresses and square headed windows. Small gable dormers with windows are found on



Front (west) and south façades, 2009

both slopes of the gable roof. A one-storey addition was completed on the southeast corner of the building.

The church is particularly proud of its many stained glass windows. Meikle Studios of Toronto was asked to submit a design for the large east window but it was suggested that stained glass also be installed in the 14 aisle windows. The large east window was unveiled in November 1945, with others following. Meikle Studios created most of the windows, Westmacott Art Glass Studio of Winnipeg created two of the aisle windows as well as the large West Window in the gallery and behind the Baptismal Font, at the nave entrance, is a double paneled Baptistry Window designed and created by Winnipeg's Leo Mol.¹

The building stands on its original site, appears to be in good structural condition and does not appear to have suffered major exterior alteration.

This church is a reduced example of the Late Gothic Revival style, popular in the country for the first half of the 20th century.² The style grew as a reaction to the highly decorative styles of the late 19th century and favoured subdued ornamentation and simple plans. Educational and religious structures most often used the style in western Canada but other public structures and residences displayed it as well.³ It was the architecture of the pointed arch, flying buttress, and rib vault coupled with the conscious attempt to reduce or at least interrupt flat wall space. Used in concert, these elements represented “a system of skeletal structure with active, slender, resilient members and membrane-thin infilling or no infilling at all.”⁴

In Winnipeg, the Anglican, Baptist and Lutheran churches all raised buildings that exhibited similar Gothic elements, borrowing from their common Protestant background. By the 20th



East façade detail, 2009

century, technological advances in building materials and engineering and the rise of an affluent population in urban centres pointed towards more monumental structures, heavily ornamented with Gothic elements. Following the lead of eastern Canada and the United States, Winnipeg saw numerous monumental Gothic-inspired churches built after the late 1890s. There are many local examples of the style still being used as religious facilities; most are older and more ornately finished than St. James Anglican.

HISTORICAL INTEREST:

The congregation was organized to see to the religious life of the community in 1849 as this area west of the Red River Settlement began to fill with permanent residents, many of whom were ex-Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) employees and their families. The Parish of St. James was founded June 17, 1851 on a provisional land grant from the HBC to serve settlers, military pensioners, and retired HBC personnel. It extended for seven miles along the Assiniboine River, covering 115 hectares.

The original church still stands at 540 Tylehurst Street (both a provincial heritage site [along with the cemetery] and on the City of Winnipeg Historic Building Inventory) and was consecrated in 1855. This log structure was condemned in 1936 but the parish and the City of St. James restored the building as a Canadian Centennial project, re-dedicating on June 21, 1967 (the church is still used occasionally for summer services). This original church served the parish until the official opening of the "New Church" on Collegiate Street on November 26, 1922.



East façade, 2009

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 relatively rare 1920s community churches built in the growing area of St. James after World War I and part of one of Western Canada's earliest Anglican parishes;
- its associations- its long-term connections to the people of St. James and its Anglican parish;
- its design- a reduced example of the Late Gothic Revival style;
- its architect- N/A;
- its location- a conspicuous building that contributes to its neighbourhood streetscape; and
- its integrity- its main façades continue to display many of their original elements and design.



East window (left), designed by Meikle Studios of Toronto, 1945 and Leo Mol windows (right)
(Reproduced from St. James Anglican Church website, no date)

ENDNOTES:

- 1 Information on the glass from St. James Anglican Church website, http://www.stjamesanglicanchurch.ca/Stained_Glass_Windows.html, no date.
- 2 Identifying Architectural Styles in Manitoba (Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, 1991), pp. 20-21.
- 3 Mathilde Brosseau, Gothic Revival in Canadian Architecture, Canadian Historic Sites: Occasional Papers in Archaeology and History, No. 25 (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1980), pp. 28-29.
- 4 John Fleming, et al., The Penguin Dictionary of Architecture, Third Edition (London: Penguin Books, 1908), p. 142.