



177 COLONY STREET

ST. ELMO APARTMENTS

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – FEBRUARY 2008



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Date of Construction: 1910

Building Permit: 1195/1910

Architect: Teeter, George G.

Contractor: Claydon Brothers

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

Another fine brick and stone apartment block in Winnipeg's West Broadway district is the St. Elmo, built just before World War I and utilizing the latest design features and a wealth of ornamental elements to attract tenants.

The front (west) façade is symmetrically designed, clad in a dark brick with a central section holding the main entrance and large arched windows with concrete accents on the second and third floors. Framing this area are bay windows with rough hewed stone cladding on the lower level and windows with lug concrete sills and heads above. At both corners, the building projects out to create more surface area to allow for more windows. This was a common feature of many blocks, the use of bays, indents and projections to increase the amount of window space and thereby providing more light and ventilation to



Front (west) and north façades, 2007

the suites within. The ornate roof is embellished with a heavy overhanging cornice and stone capped brick parapet.

The dark stone cladding runs a short distance along both the north and south façades; the remainder of the elevations are finished in common clay brick. Both sides are interrupted at the front, back and middle by squared projecting areas (some topped with small sections of cornice) and windows are found on all floors.

The rear (east) façade features the same basic design as the front with clay brick rather than the darker material and with no cornice and parapet.

The building cost \$88,500 to complete in 1910 and measures approximately 12.8 x 48.5 metres.¹ The block stands on its original location, appears to be in good structural condition and has not suffered major exterior alteration.

G.G. Teeter, the designer of this block, was a distinguished Winnipeg architect whose practice spanned four decades. Born in St. Annes, Ontario, Teeter received his architectural degree in Toronto. After graduation he moved to North Bay, Ontario and became a junior partner in a large local firm. He moved to Winnipeg by 1907 and set up a private practice. After World War I, he became Chief Draughtsman for the Manitoba government while continuing his private practice.² At one time, he was also the president of the Manitoba Association of Architects. He died in Winnipeg in 1949.³ Some of his more prominent local designs include: Salem Reformed Church, 235 Andrews Street (1907); Trinity Baptist Church, 549 Gertrude Avenue (1907-09); Windermere Apartment Block, 224 Kennedy Street (1909); Knechtel Furniture Warehouse, Henry Avenue at Lulu Street (1909); St. Elmo Apartments, 177 Colony Street (1910); King Edward Memorial Hospital, Morley Avenue (1910-11,



South façade (left) and rear (east) façade (right), 2007

demolished); Ellesmere Apartments, 74 Carlton Street (1911); Conway Court Apartments, 165 Kennedy Street (1912); Elmwood Presbyterian Church, Cobourg Avenue (1912); W.L. Copping House, McMillan Avenue (1912); and the Christie, Brown and Company Biscuit Factory, Notre Dame Avenue (1931-32).⁴ He has been given 5 points by the Historical Buildings Committee.



Rear (east) and north façades, 2007

HISTORICAL INTEREST:

Manufacturer Leonard Van Praagh is listed as the original owner of this block, although it was sold shortly after construction to barrister A.J. Andrews, who owned the block until 1947. Andrews sold the property to physicist E.L. Armi and his wife Erita D. who continued this ownership into the 1960s. Tenants have been varied; working in all sectors of Winnipeg's economy.⁵



Rear (east) and south façades, 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 oldest warehouses in the Exchange District and its illustration of the expansion of business that occurred in the City and especially in the Exchange District throughout much of the pre-World War I era;
- its associations- its long-term connections to early and influential retail/wholesale personalities G.F. and J. Galt;
- its design- an excellent example of the Richardsonian Romanesque style;
- its architect- C.H. Wheeler was a respected and important practitioner;
- its location- defines an important intersection and contributes greatly to the historic streetscape of two major arteries within the Exchange District; and
- its integrity- its main façades continue to display many of their original elements and design.



Front (west) façade, 1978

ENDNOTES:

- 1 City of Winnipeg Building Permit, #1195/1910. The average construction cost of the 16 blocks completed in 1910 was slightly over \$100,000
- 2 S.C. Grover, "Morley Avenue - Winnipeg Municipal Hospitals," report for the Historical Buildings Committee, p. 5.
- 3 Winnipeg Citizen, February 17, 1949.
- 4 Compiled from City of Winnipeg, Building Permits; and D. Spector, Apartment House Architecture in Winnipeg to 1915 (Winnipeg: City of Winnipeg, 1980).
- 5 City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 12-091482000, 1920-1990.