



221 RUE DUMOULIN

FRANÇOIS GINGRAS HOUSE

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – FEBRUARY 2009



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Date of Construction: ca. 1882

Building Permit: N/A

Architect: Gingras, F. (owner)

Contractor: Gingras, F. (owner)

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

One of the more unique façades is this two-storey frame single-family dwelling with its corner tower, its mansard roof interrupted by pedimented dormers and its full-width open porch with squared columns connected by a wood balustrade.

Stylistically, this house includes elements from a number of styles and as such, is a good example of the Queen Anne style, which borrowed from many of the picturesque styles to create lively, animated structures. The desired asymmetry was achieved through a number of combinations of porches, bay windows, projecting wings, balconies and other devices. Roofs were usually irregular and complex, with dormers, gables and ornamental chimneys. Variations in materials and colours were also used to animate the façades. Given this freedom of design, however, accomplished designers were still able to create balance in the structures, offsetting busy surfaces by placing calmer elements nearby.¹



Front (south) and east façades and detail of roof, 2009

The popularity of the style in Canada began in the 1880s and lasted until World War I. On the prairies, pre-1900 examples of the style were not numerous because large-scale development occurred after the turn of the century. Post-1900, it was quickly adopted for use in the growing residential districts, especially the more affluent neighbourhoods where its showy qualities were greatly admired.

The house appears to be in good structural condition and does not appear to have suffered major exterior alterations, although the ground floor has been stuccoed.

The original owner, merchant François Gingras, is believed to have designed and built this structure.

HISTORICAL INTEREST:

The Gingras Family were prominent Métis merchants, the grandfather of the original owner of this house had come west as a voyageur for the North West Company and died a wealthy man in 1894. François Gingras seems to have built this home in the 1880s with the profits from a store which his father had operated on Main Street in Winnipeg.² Other residents of this home included teamsters Joseph Hogue (1905) and Fidele Mondor (1915).³



Front (south) and west façades, 1978

RECOMMENDATION TO HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE:

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

- its historical importance- an older, single-family dwelling located in the heart of St. Boniface;
- its associations- its early connections to the Gingras family;
- its design- an excellent example of the Queen Anne style;
- its architect- N/A;
- its location- contributes greatly to its historic streetscape; and
- its integrity- its main façades continue to display many of their original elements and design.

ENDNOTES:

- ¹ L. Maitland, The Queen Anne Revival Style in Canadian Architecture (Ottawa: Environment Canada, 1990), p. 98.
- ² S.C. Grover, "Old St. Boniface: A Study of Its Urban Growth and Historic Built Environment," report for the Historical Buildings Committee, 1991, p. 98.
- ³ Henderson's Directory, 1900-1920.