



**22 EDMONTON STREET**

**WILLIAM A. BLACK HOUSE**

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – JANUARY 2007



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## 22 EDMONTON STREET WILLIAM A. BLACK HOUSE

**Date of Construction:** 1893

**Building Permit:** N/A

**Architect:** Unknown

**Contractor:** Unknown

### ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

This eclectic single-family dwelling was built in 1893 as the area developed into a prestigious residential neighbourhood full of large homes, many on sizeable, well-tended pieces of property.

Most conspicuous on the front (east) façade of this 2½-storey structure is the tall crenellated corner tower, curved on the ground floor (southeast corner). Windows in the tower are square headed with stone lug sills. Quoins are used to accent the corners of the tower and the rest of the building as well. The main entrance, located up a small flight of stairs, is plain and now includes a canopy. A round bay window occupies much of the remainder of the ground floor; multi-paned transoms top the large windows. Above the bay window is a pair of square headed windows on the second floor, linked by delicate brick drip moulding. The front facing gable end is finished with a small rectangular



Front (east) and south façades, 2006



South side bay window, 2006

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window with a stone lug sill and is capped by ornamental tinwork. The entire building is finished in smooth stucco.

The south side also includes a large rounded bay window on the ground floor, a tin capped gable end and quoins. An enclosed one-storey entrance porch is located in the southwest corner. The north side is plain by comparison, the flat wall surface is interrupted by square headed windows with stone lug sills on both floors. A gable end embellishes the roof and includes a small window. The rear (west) façade, because of alterations, is an odd mixture of elements. Unmatched windows with lug sills are found on both floors and a large dormer topped by a segmental arch is located in the centre of the rear roof slope. Also on the roof is a small addition with an unusual sloping roof, gable end and small opening.

The home stands on its original site, appears to be in good structural condition and is one of the more unusual designs in the downtown. At the present time, it is unknown who the architect and contractor were.

### HISTORICAL INTEREST:

This area was known, starting in the 1880s, as The Hudson's Bay Reserve or The Reserve, and developed into one of Winnipeg's earliest prestigious residential neighbourhoods. It filled with the mansions, large homes and manicured grounds of Winnipeg's business and social elite. For the next several decades, it was one of the most desirable addresses in all of Western Canada, with tree-lined Broadway running down its centre. This residential



Front (east) and north façades, 2006

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activity fostered the development of related facilities such as churches, schools and terraces.

As Winnipeg's downtown expanded, many of the city's elite chose to relocate further away in rapidly developing neighbourhoods such as Armstrong's Point, River Heights, Fort Rouge, Crescentwood and Wolseley. Many of The Reserve's original properties were subdivided, allowing more modest infill housing to dot the streets and avenues. Many of the larger dwellings were converted into boarding houses, their interiors seriously altered. A relatively new form of housing, the apartment block, also found expression in The Reserve through the construction of luxury blocks on both sides of Broadway and on cross streets. Again, as time progressed, smaller, less ostentatious blocks were built in the area.

William A. Black worked for the Ogilvie Mills Company, one of Western Canada's most influential milling firms, when he moved into this house on Edmonton Street in 1895. He would rise in the company to become its western general manager by 1902 and then in 1911 returned to his native Montreal to fill the position of national general manager. A year later, he took over the position of vice president and managing director, which he held until he became the president following the death of C.R. Hosmer. Black would fill this position until his retirement in 1935.<sup>1</sup>

After Black's departure, the home was owned by various people, renting out the property in the 1930s-1950s.<sup>2</sup> John (employee at Standard Knitting) and Martha Bonic owned and lived in the house in the 1970s and in the 1980s, the building was converted into Joan's Boutique (owned by Joan E. Druxman), a fate suffered by many of the large homes in the downtown.<sup>3</sup>



Rear (west) façade, 2006

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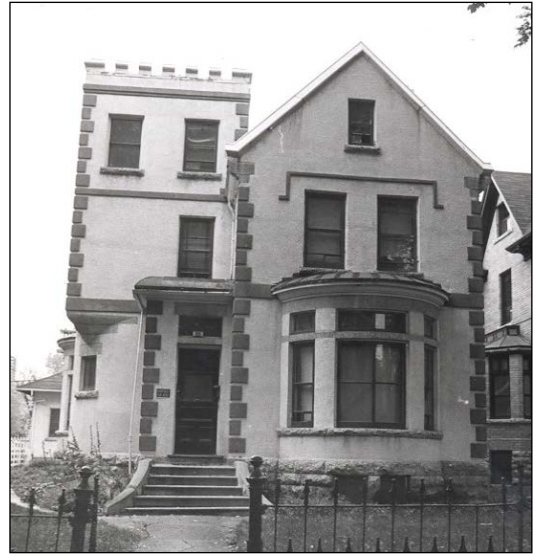
RECOMMENDATION TO HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE:

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

- its historical importance- one of a handful of pre-1915 built single-family dwellings in the east Broadway area known as The Reserve and an excellent example of a home built for an affluent family before the turn of the century;
- its associations- its long-term connection to early and influential businessman William A. Black;
- its design- an unusual collection of classically-based ornamentation and design;
- its location- contributes greatly to the historic streetscape of Edmonton Street; and
- its integrity- its façades continue to display many of their original elements and design.



Looking north on Edmonton, ca.1905, with 22  
Edmonton Street in the foreground  
(M. Peterson Collection)



Front (east) façade, 1978

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ENDNOTES:

- 1 Biographical information courtesy of [http://umanitoba.ca/libraries/units/archives/collections/complete\\_holdings/ead/html/Ogilvie.shtml#a2](http://umanitoba.ca/libraries/units/archives/collections/complete_holdings/ead/html/Ogilvie.shtml#a2).
- 2 City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 12-092675000 (below as ARo), 1910-1960; and Henderson's Directory, 1900-1960.
- 3 ARo, 1960-1990; Henderson's Directory, 1960-1990.