



**45 EDMONTON STREET**

**MICHAEL KELLY HOUSE**

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – JANUARY 2007



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## 45 EDMONTON STREET MICHAEL KELLY HOUSE

**Date of Construction:** 1908

**Building Permit:** 1202/1908

**Architect:** Kelly, Michael (owner)

**Contractor:** Kelly, Michael (owner)

### ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

Another of the fine single-family dwelling built in the East Broadway area before World War I during its development into a prestigious residential neighbourhood full of large homes, many on sizeable, well-tended pieces of property.

On this building we see many of the classic details associated with one of the most popular styles of residential architecture of the day – Queen Anne Revival. The front (west) façade of this solid red brick building features a rusticated stone base and an open wrap around porch in the northwest corner finished with wood columns with plain bases and capitals and a roofline accented with dentils. The ground floor window is covered by a shingled roof supported by oversized wood brackets with pendants. Above this element is a pair of second storey windows with a smaller opening located above in the gable end. The gable



Detail of ornamental bargeboard, front (west) side, 2006

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end is highly decorated with wood bargeboard embellished with florets and geometric shapes, ornamental bracing and pendants. Even the metal downspouts are ornately treated.

The north façade continues much of the design of the front, including decorative bargeboard in the westernmost gable end and arched window openings with radiating brick heads and stone lug sills. The rear gable end in the projecting area is unadorned and there is a small newer wooden deck and enclosed stuccoed entrance porch located in the northeast corner of the building. The rear of the building includes a rusticated stone base, several arched windows and openings and a metal fire escape.

The home was built at a cost of \$6,500 and measures approximately 8.5 x 17.1 metres (28 x 56 feet).<sup>1</sup> The building appears to be in good structural condition and stands on its original site.

Stylistically, this house is a good example of the Queen Anne Revival style that borrowed heavily from English architecture of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, blending classical and medieval motifs into a picturesque form.<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup>

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



Detail of ornamental bargeboard, north side, 2006

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growing residential districts, especially the more affluent neighbourhoods where its showy qualities were greatly admired.

The original owner of the house, well-known contractor Michael Kelly, was its designer and builder. Kelly was born in Roscommon, Ireland in 1844 and arrived in Winnipeg in 1877 after residing in the state of New York for about thirteen years. In 1881, the Kelly Brothers (Michael, Thomas and Martin) entered the contracting business with Michael initially as senior partner.<sup>4</sup> The firm prospered and was responsible for erecting some of the principal buildings in Winnipeg. Michael Kelly retired in 1910 and died at his home on Edmonton Street on January 29, 1923. A list of his/their more prominent contracts includes: 88 Adelaide, Kelly Residence (1883, Grade III); Woods/Dryden Bag Company Building, 148 Alexander Avenue (1884); First Grain Exchange Building, 164 Princess Street (1892, Grade II); the Law Courts Building, Kennedy Street near Broadway (1893, demolished ca.1964); Baker Block, 468 Main Street (1901, Grade III); Second Grain Exchange Building, 160 Princess Street (1898, Grade II); Isbister School, 310 Vaughan Street (1898, Grade II); Gregg Building, 52 Albert Street (1902, Grade III); and the main Post Office, 240 Portage Avenue (1905, demolished). He has been given 40 points by the Historical Buildings Committee.

#### 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 prestige residential neighbourhoods. It filled with the mansions, large homes and manicured grounds of Winnipeg's business and social



Rear (east) and north façades, 2006

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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 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.

Original owner Michael Kelly lived in this house until his death in 1923.<sup>5</sup> Since that time, the house has followed the trend of other large homes in the neighbourhood – a series of non-resident and resident owners and its ultimate conversion into offices (the Canadian Department of the Solicitor General rented space in the building in the 1990s).<sup>6</sup>



Rear (east) and south façades, 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 shortly after the turn of the century;
- its associations- its long-term connection to early and influential contractor Michael Kelly;
- its design- an excellent example of the Queen Anne Revival style;
- its architect/contractor- Michael Kelly designed and built this house for himself and was a very important early builder in Western Canada;
- 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.



Front (west) and north façades, 1978

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ENDNOTES:

- 1 City of Winnipeg Building Permit, #1202/1908.
- 2 Identifying Architectural Styles in Manitoba (Winnipeg: Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, 1991), p. 17; L. Maitland et al., A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1992), p. 102; and L. Maitland, The Queen Anne Revival Style in Canadian Architecture (Ottawa: Environment Canada, 1990), p. 64.
- 3 L. Maitland et al., op. cit., p. 98.
- 4 N. Einarson, "88 Adelaide Avenue, Kelly House," report for the Manitoba Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, Historic Resources Branch, January 1979, n.p.
- 5 City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 12-092648000, 1910-1930.
- 6 Ibid., 1930-1990; and Henderson's Directory, 1930-1990.