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## 160 ETHELBERT STREET SAINT MARGARET'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

**Date of Construction:** 1912

**Building Permit:** 2043/1912 (Plans at City Storage)

**Architect:** Nichols, David William Fair & West, James Pender

**Contractor:** Hinds, T.

### ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

Located at the northwest corner of Ethelbert Street and Westminster Avenue, the church building has served its congregation in the Wolseley neighbourhood for nearly 100 years. The solid brick building with stone accents rests on a concrete foundation. Measuring approximately 19.5 x 23.2 metres, it cost \$30,000 to complete in 1912.<sup>1</sup>

The building stands conspicuously on its corner lot, its scale and the red brick walls and light limestone accenting adding to its visual impact. Highlights of the main façades (south facing Westminster Avenue) and east facing Ethelbert Street include corner buttresses, windows with pointed arches and tracery and a large glass window on the south façade.

The church has elements of the Modern or Late Gothic Revival style that rose in popularity after 1900 as a reaction to the highly ornamented buildings of the earlier Gothic Revival



Rear (north) and east façades, 2009

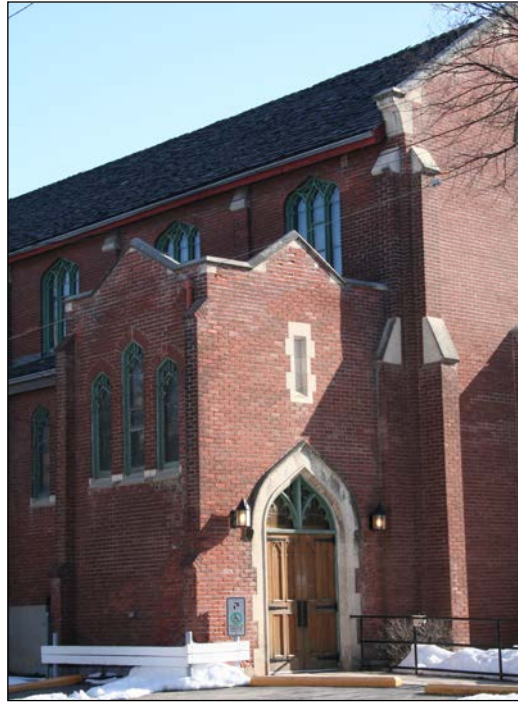
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style. The newer version opted for much simpler silhouettes and subdued ornamentation, in the words of one author, “a calm, disciplined monumentality.”<sup>2</sup>

Flat surfaces were preferred; buildings were often long, low symmetrical masses embellished with crenellated towers and the distinctive pointed arch of the Gothic style. Construction material was monochromatic, usually brick or stone, again a departure from the multi-hued façades of the Gothic Revival style. Inspiration for the detailing of the new style was found in the English Perpendicular Gothic design of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Because Modern Gothic found widespread expression on the campuses of many North American universities, it has also been referred to as Collegiate Gothic.<sup>3</sup>

The design of this church was the joint effort of two local British-born architects – transplanted Torontonians David William Fair Nichols and recently arrived James Pender West. Nichols was born in Leeds, England on February 28, 1881. After immigrating to Canada, he served for five years (1897-1902) as an apprentice with the architectural firm Burke and Horwood of Toronto. From 1906 until 1907, he worked in Winnipeg as a draftsman for J.H.G. Russell and John D. Atchison, two well-known architects. He formed a short-lived partnership with Lindsay Alexander Wardell (1907 to mid-1909).

Nichols remained alone, although periodically he worked with other designers including Norman M. Moffatt (1873-1970)<sup>4</sup> under the name Nichols and Moffatt (1910) and with James Pender West (Nichols and West- 1912 and 1913).<sup>5</sup> The last City of Winnipeg Building Permit with D.W.F. Nichols listed as architect is dated September 20, 1915 (#1075/1915). By 1917, Nichols had relocated to Windsor, Ontario where he stayed for the remainder of his career. He died on November 1, 1951 in Windsor.<sup>6</sup>



Southwest corner detail, 2009

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James Pender West was born in Suffolk, England and apprenticed as an architect. He spent 10 years practising his profession in the Cape Colony, South Africa before coming to Winnipeg in 1909, joining the architectural staff of the City's Power Department. He is credited with designing Hydro Sub-Station No. 1 at 54 King Street (1910-1911). His whereabouts after 1913 are unknown.<sup>7</sup>

Major work designed by the men include: J.C. Falls House, 36 Roslyn Road (1907, Wardell and Nichols); E.F. Lang House, Middle Gate (1909, Wardell and Nichols); L.D. Beard House, Warsaw Avenue (1909, Nichols); Assiniboine Bowling Club Clubhouse, Wolseley Avenue (1910, Nichols and Moffatt); Skjaldbreid Apartments, 745 Wolseley Avenue (1912, Nichols and West); St. Margaret's Anglican Church, 160 Ethelbert Street (1912, Nichols and West); City of Winnipeg Public Baths, Cornish Avenue (1914, Nichols); and St. Alban's Anglican Church, 486 Rathgar Avenue (1915, Nichols).<sup>8</sup>



Front (south) façade, 2009

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HISTORICAL INTEREST:

In 1907, a new Anglican congregation was formed in the growing residential district west of downtown known as Wolseley. Meeting first in a private home, the group incorporated in 1910 and raised the money to built their fine church just two years later. It has continued to serve its community ever since.<sup>9</sup>

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 older church buildings in West Winnipeg and Wolseley and an excellent example of a fairly affluent congregation's first church building constructed in the pre-World War I era;
- its associations- its long-term connections to its Anglican congregation;
- its design- a good example of the Modern or Late Gothic style;
- its architect- D.W.F. Nichols and J.P. West were respected and important practitioners;
- its location- defines an important intersection and contributes greatly to the historic streetscape of two major arteries within its neighbourhood; and
- its integrity- its main façades continue to display many of their original elements and design.



South and east façades, 1994

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ENDNOTES:

- 1 City of Winnipeg Building Permit, #2043/1912.
- 2 L. Maitland et al., A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles (Peterborough: Broadview Press Ltd., 1992), p. 166.
- 3 Ibid., p. 166; and Identifying Architectural Styles in Manitoba (Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, Historic Resources Branch, 1991), p. 20.
- 4 National Archives of Canada, Historical Resources Branch. Norman McNabb Moffatt became the prairie architect for the Union Bank of Canada in 1919, holding the same position when it was merged with the Royal Bank of Canada in 1925. He remained with the company until 1933.
- 5 Ibid., 1909-1919. A second structure designed by Nichols and West in 1913 was cancelled.
- 6 Windsor Star, November 2, 1951, p. 5.
- 7 Biographical information on J.P. West from J.M. Bumsted, Dictionary of Manitoba Biography (Winnipeg, MB: University of Manitoba Press, 1999); and The South African Built Environment at [www.artefacts.co.za/index.html](http://www.artefacts.co.za/index.html), no date.
- 8 City of Winnipeg Building Permit Ledger Books, 1899-1926.
- 9 Information on the congregation from [www.saintmargarets.ca/about.html](http://www.saintmargarets.ca/about.html), no date.