



90 GERTIE STREET

FRONTENAC (RIZAL) APARTMENTS

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – DECEMBER 2009



90 GERTIE STREET FRONTENAC (RIZAL) APARTMENTS

Date of Construction: 1906

Building Permit: 1909/1906

Architect: Rugh, Herbert Bell

Contractor: Rugh, Herbert Bell

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

This large, three-storey apartment block on a raised foundation is one of the earlier multi-tenant blocks in Winnipeg, built just at the beginning of this building-type's rise in popularity in the city.

The front (east) façade is symmetrically designed with a raised foundation and basement windows. The solid brick superstructure features large square headed window openings on all three floors with keystones and lug sills. Ornamental detailing includes various brick patterns, attached brick pilasters with plain heads and capitals and ornate and a complete entablature with a tin cornice featuring geometric shapes. A stone capped stepped parapet finishes this façade. The other outstanding feature of this elevation is the front door-framed in an ornately designed frame (the material of this element is unknown).



Front (east) and north façades, 2009

The other three elevations are plainly designed and finished in common clay brick. A wealth of windows is found all floors on all elevations and there are open wood fire escapes on the building's north and south façades.

The block stands on its original site and appears to be in fair structural condition. Alterations to the building's classically treated main façade have not been significant. The block cost \$35,000 to complete in 1906,¹ a considerable amount for early in the 20th century.

Architect H.B. Rugh practiced in Winnipeg from 1904 to ca.1912, and in that time established himself as one of the city's finest architects, although his forte appears to have been designing middle- to upper-income homes. Born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa on May 16, 1879, he took his formal training at the Amour Institute of Technology in Chicago, Illinois, graduating in 1901. He then went to work in Racine, Wisconsin, relocated to Michigan two years later and came to Winnipeg in 1904.² Rugh's work over the next eight years was varied and extensive and included factories, apartment blocks, office buildings and dozens of houses,³ many of their plans found their way onto the pages of trade magazines like Construction.⁴ Rugh's houses used a variety of styles including Georgian, Tudor and Colonial in his pursuit of the "picturesque." He also experimented with various materials, including concrete block, rough-cast plaster and terra cotta.

In 1912, Rugh became the local representative of the Montréal firm Ross and MacFarlane. He oversaw the construction of both the Fort Garry Hotel, 1911-12 (his name is found on the City of Winnipeg Building Permit)⁵ and the now demolished King George Municipal Hospital, Morley Avenue, 1912.



Front (east) and south façades, 2009

An incomplete list of his major local projects would include: Wesbrook and Fairchild Warehouse, 110 Princess Street (1907 – Grade II); Y.W.C.A. Building, Ellice Avenue (1908); Hotel Fort Garry, 222 Broadway (1911-1913 – Grade II, supervising architect); King George Municipal Hospital, Morley Avenue (1912 – supervising architect, demolished).⁶

HISTORICAL INTEREST:

Agent and merchant Enoch Winkler was listed as the early owner of this block. Winkler and his family (wife Helen and six children – 3 sons and 3 daughters) were living in Gretna, Manitoba in 1901 and by 1911 were living in Winnipeg on Wellington Crescent.⁷ Winkler died in the late 1920s, his widow and Dr. D.V.S. Winkler (relationship unknown), continued to own the block until her death in 1937. The family continued to own the block into the late 1950s.⁸



Front (east) façade detail, 1978

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 apartment block in Winnipeg;
- its associations- N/A;
- its design- a good example of a large multi-tenant block with classical detailing;
- its architect- R.B. Rugh was a respected and important practitioner;
- its location- contributes greatly to its historic streetscape; and
- its integrity- its main façades continue to display many of their original elements and design.



Front (east) façade, 1978

ENDNOTES:

- 1 City of Winnipeg Building Permit, #1909/1906.
- 2 Winnipeg Telegram, September 18, 1906, p. 55; and Who's Who and Why in Canada, 1913, p. 712. Information supplied by Robert G. Hill, Editor of the Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800-1950.
- 3 City of Winnipeg Building Permit Ledger Books (below as Ledgers), 1900-1915.
- 4 See, for example, Construction, March 1910, July 1910, July 1914 and June 1915.
- 5 City of Winnipeg Building Permit (below as BP), #3033/1911.
- 6 Ledgers, 1904-1912; and M. Peterson Building Database.
- 7 Canada Census, 1901, 1906 and 1911.
- 8 City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 13061208000, 1920-1990.