



73 HARGRAVE STREET

ALBERT A. GILROY HOUSE

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – JANUARY 2007



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Date of Construction: 1902

Building Permit: 654/1902

Architect: MacDonald, Archibald

Contractor: MacDonald, Archibald

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

This 2½-storey solid brick home was built shortly after the turn of the century, another of the many fine single family dwellings in one of Winnipeg's early up-scale residential districts – The Reserve. Many of these fine homes have been demolished, while others, like this house, have suffered severe alteration and have been converted into other uses, in this case offices.

The clay brick walls of the superstructure rest on the rusticated stone base. The front (west) façade features a centrally located entrance accessed by a short flight of stairs. Originally, a full width porch with wooden railing, lattice and a unique enclosed second storey room graced the front of the building. This element was removed sometime after 1978. Windows on the main façade are slightly arched with radiating brick heads and lug stone sills. A front facing gable dormer is located on the front slope of the truncated



Front (west) façade, 1978, with ornate porch

hipped roof and includes three small windows and ornamental woodwork, including sunburst style bargeboard. Exposed rafters highlight the modestly overhanging eaves.

The north side features an arched triplet window on the ground floor and a single window on the upper level. A small gable dormer is embellished with similar sunburst motif. The south side is similar in design, with a triplet window and two gable dormers on the roof. Much of the original rear (east) façade has been covered by a large, two storey stuccoed addition (date of construction unknown).

The building is nearly square, measuring approximately 10.4 x 11.0 metres (34 x 36 feet) and cost \$4,500 to complete in 1902. It stands on its original site and appears to be in good structural condition. As mentioned previously, the two-storey front porch, an integral part of the original design, has been removed and has severely affected the structure's appearance, as has the rear addition.

The building, with the porch, was a good example of the Queen Anne Revival style as applied to a residential structure.ⁱ The style borrowed heavily from English architecture of the 15th century, blending classical and medieval motifs into a picturesque form. Asymmetry was achieved through 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.ⁱⁱ

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



Front (west) and north façades, 2006

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.

Archibald MacDonald was not only the original owner but also the designer and builder of this home. MacDonald, born in Scotland in 1851, came to Winnipeg in 1883 at the age of 32 and established himself as a builder. His career would span several decades and consisted mainly of the design and construction of small, single family homes that he built throughout the city until his retirement ca.1906.ⁱⁱⁱ He died in 1921.^{iv}

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 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



Rear (east) and north façades, 2006

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.

A. MacDonald owned and lived in this house with his wife Helen and their six children in 1902.^v The MacDonald family lived in the home for only a short time, selling the property to Albert A. Gilroy, the managing director of the T. Eaton Company in Winnipeg. Gilroy, an Ontarian, had worked in the company's head office in Toronto from 1892 and was picked by them to manage the massive new Winnipeg store when it opened in 1905. Gilroy successfully managed the local and regional affairs of the retail giant until his death in 1919.^{vi}

A retired couple, Arthur and Rose Rivard, owned and occupied the house from the 1940s to the 1970s and used it as a boarding house for part of this time. In 1978 and 1979, the house was operated by the Y.W.C.A. as a home for battered wives, which operated under the name "Osborne House."



Rear (east) and south façades, 2006

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 example of a home built for an affluent family at the turn of the century;
- its associations- its connections to early contractor A. MacDonald and T. Eaton Company manager A.A. Gilroy;
- its design- an example of the Queen Anne Revival style;
- its architect/contractor- A. MacDonald was a known contractor and designer;
- its location- contributes to its historic streetscape; and
- its integrity- displays some of its original exterior elements and design.



Detail of south side, 2006

ENDNOTES:

- i 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.
- ii L. Maitland et al., *op. cit.*, p. 98.
- iii City of Winnipeg Building Permit Ledger Books, 1899-1913.
- iv Manitoba Free Press, October 10, 1921.
- v City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 12-092563000, 1900-1910.
- vi Manitoba Free Press, December 29, 1919.