



318 HOME STREET

HOME STREET UNITED (PRESBYTERIAN) CHURCH (HOME STREET MENNONITE CHURCH)



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Date of Construction: 1920

Building Permit: 65/1920

Architect: Russell, John Hamilton Gordon

Contractor: Home Street Presbyterian Congregation (owners)

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

Costing \$50,000 to complete in 1920,¹ this church has served this area of west Winnipeg for over 80 years.

The front (east) façade begins at grade with a raised stone foundation, rough-cut and laid in a broken course pattern. The light coloured brick superstructure rises from this base, which also includes square windows to light the basement area. The centrally-placed entrance is set in a smooth-cut stone frame and is covered by stylized drip moulding that is also found above all top floor openings. Two double doors give ample access to the interior. A modest stone belt course acts as continuous sills for the upper storey square headed windows. The central portion of this elevation is further highlighted by attached pilasters



Front (east) and north façades, 2005

running from the belt course to the stepped and stone capped parapet. The recessed fenestration of the central area includes arched openings at the top and delicate wood framing. Behind the front parapet rises the gable end of the higher roof above the sanctuary. The north and south façades continue the raised stone base and brick walls and are interrupted by tall, thin pointed arch windows with stone accenting. It is a very handsome building that fits well in this neighbourhood.

Building designer J.H.G. Russell (1862-1946) was born in Toronto, Canada West (Ontario), in 1862, the son of a dry goods dealer. After attending school in that city, he went to work for H.B. Gordon, a prominent area architect. Russell was with Gordon from 1878 until his departure for Winnipeg in 1882. From 1886 to 1893, Russell travelled throughout the United States, learning civil engineering, surveying and architecture in centres such as Chicago, Illinois, Spokane and Tacoma, Washington, and Sioux City, Iowa.

In 1895, two years after returning to Winnipeg, he set up his private practice, coinciding with the city's period of unbridled growth. His designs were (and are) scattered throughout the city, province and Western Canada, covering a variety of building types, sizes, costs and uses. His business continued to be steady during World War I and after, when many architects struggled to find commissions.

Russell was president of the Manitoba Association of Architects (1925) and served for three terms as the president of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (1912-15). His chairmanship of the Presbyterian Church Board of Managers and his devotion to Presbyterianism partially explain the large number of churches he designed for the denomination in Winnipeg and Western Canada. Russell died in 1946.



Front (east) façade, 1978

A complete list of his designs would be very lengthy, included among his more notable local projects would be J.H. Ashdown Warehouse additions, 157-179 Bannatyne Avenue, (1899-1911, Grade II), Lake of the Woods Building, 212 McDermot Avenue (1901, Grade II), Hammond Building, 63 Albert Street (1902, Grade III), Adelman Building, 92-100 Princess Street (1903, Grade II), Franklin Press, 168 Bannatyne Avenue (1904, Grade III), R.R. Wilson, 545 Broadway (1904, Grade III), J.H. Ashdown Store, 211 Bannatyne Avenue (1904, Grade III), Porter Building, 165 McDermot Avenue (1906, Grade III), Child's (McArthur) Building, Portage Avenue (1909, demolished), Casa Loma Building, Portage Avenue (1909, Grade II), Glengarry Block, 290 McDermot Avenue (1910, Grade III), Westminster Presbyterian (United) Church, 745 Westminster Avenue (1910-12, Grade II), Dingwall Building, 62 Albert Street (1911, Grade III), YMCA, 301 Vaughan Street, with Jackson and Rosencrans of New York (1911-13, Grade II), J.H. Ashdown, 529 Wellington Crescent (1913, Grade II) and St. John's Presbyterian (United) Church, 250 Cathedral Avenue (1923, Grade III). He has been given 20 points by the Historical Buildings Committee.

HISTORICAL INTEREST:

The church belonged to the Presbyterian congregation, who amalgamated in 1925 to become the United congregation, who worshiped in this facility until the early 1970s when the building was sold to a Mennonite group.²

RECOMMENDATION TO HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE:

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

- its historical importance- a rarer 1920s era church built in an established residential neighbourhood west of downtown;
- its associations- its long-term connection to the Presbyterian/United and Mennonite church followers of west Winnipeg;
- its design- an excellent example of a modest church building;
- its architect- J.H.G. Russell 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.

ENDNOTES:

- ¹ City of Winnipeg Building Permit, #65/1920.
- ² City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 13-030922000, 1920-1990.