



790 HONEYMAN AVENUE
BROADWAY FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – DECEMBER 2009



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Date of Construction: 1906 & 1914

Building Permit: 2868/1906 & 1237/1914 (Plans at City Storage)

Architect: Darling and Pearson (1906)¹ & Jordan and Over (1914)

Contractor: Claydon Brothers (1906 & 1914)

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

Built in 1906 and then enlarged in 1914, this church has served the area Baptists for over 100 years.

The red pressed brick structure is rectangular in plan, its front (north) façade features a wide set of stairs leading to the double set of entrance doors with overhanging hoods. Round-headed windows with tracery are located above the two entrances and then in the gable end above. A stepped gable end finishes the façade. The east and west elevations are similarly designed with modest brick buttresses, pointed arch windows and square basement window openings with stone heads. The structure is modestly designed to fit into its residential neighbourhood.



Front (north) façade, 2009

The original structure, reported built “partially of a permanent and partially of a temporary nature”² cost \$4,000 to complete in 1906 while the enlargement in 1914 totalled \$31,000.³ A large building, the Christian Education Building, was completed in 1959 attached to the rear (south) end of the building.

This church is a good example of the Late Gothic Revival style, popular in the country for the first half of the 20th century.⁴ The style grew as a reaction to the highly decorative styles of the late 19th century and favoured subdued ornamentation and simple plans. Educational and religious structures most often used the style in western Canada but other public structures and residences displayed it as well.⁵ It was the architecture of the pointed arch, flying buttress, and rib vault coupled with the conscious attempt to reduce or at least interrupt flat wall space. Used in concert, these elements represented “a system of skeletal structure with active, slender, resilient members and membrane-thin infilling or no infilling at all.”⁶

In Winnipeg, the Anglican, Baptist and Lutheran churches all raised buildings that exhibited similar Gothic elements, borrowing from their common Protestant background. By the 20th century, technological advances in building materials and engineering and the rise of an affluent population in urban centres pointed towards more monumental structures, heavily ornamented with Gothic elements. Following the lead of eastern Canada and the United States, Winnipeg saw numerous monumental Gothic-inspired churches built after the late 1890s.

Frank Darling and John A. Pearson began working together in Toronto in 1889 when Pearson joined the staff of the well-established, nine-year-old firm of Darling and Currie. Within three years Pearson had become a full partner and in 1897 these two men embarked upon a



Front (north) and east façades, 2009

remarkably successful career spanning more than a quarter of a century and the entire Dominion of Canada.

Frank Darling was born the son of a rector of the Church of the Holy Trinity in 1850 and trained with Henry Langley after his graduation from Upper Canada and Trinity colleges. He practiced for three years in the London, Ontario offices of G.E. Street and Arthur Blomfield before returning to Toronto. After a year on his own, he formed a one-year partnership with Henry Macdougall. From 1875 to 1878, Darling again worked alone, although this was the last time he was without at least one partner for the rest of his career.

Darling was architect to Trinity College, Toronto, for 45 years and was the long-standing architect for both the Bank of Commerce and the Bank of Montreal. Several Anglican congregations in Toronto also used him exclusively. He was the first overseas winner of the Gold Medal of the Royal Institute of Architects of England in 1915 and died in 1923.⁷

John Andrew Pearson, born at Chesterfield, England on June 22, 1867,⁸ came to Toronto in 1889 and joined the staff of Darling and Samuel George Currie. He began his Canadian career by working on plans for the Victoria Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. From 1892-95 he spent much of his time in St. John's, Newfoundland assisting in its rebuilding after a major fire. Undoubtedly, a high point came in 1916 when Pearson was hired, along with J. Omer Marchand, to reconstruct the Parliament Buildings. He died in 1940.⁹

Together, Darling and Pearson designed a wide array of buildings throughout Canada, varied in scope, style and use. In Winnipeg, the firm opened a branch in 1902 and sent fellow Torontonian W. Percy Over to run the office, for which he hired Lewis J. Jordan as an assistant. Over worked for several years in the city, was the president of the Manitoba



West façade, Christian Education Building, 2009

Association of Architects (1915) and was a regular contributor to the journal, Canadian Architect and Builder, with his “Northwest Letter” which described construction throughout the West.¹⁰ The Winnipeg branch fostered the opening of offices in Regina and Moose Jaw, prior to the closing of the western branches ca. 1910. At this time, the firm Jordan and Over began, operating locally until 1925 when Jordan returned to the United States, setting up offices in Chicago and Detroit with partner Albert Kahn. He worked there for several years, and the MAA lost track of his whereabouts.¹¹ Much of the finished work in Winnipeg produced by the Darling, Pearson and Over firm would have been designed by Over or Jordan.¹²

The major work of these interconnected men would include: A.M. Nanton Residence, 229 Roslyn Road (1900-01, demolished 1935, gates and gatehouse survive – Grade II); Royal (Union) Tower, 504 Main Street (1903-04, Grade I); Travellers’ Building, 283 Bannatyne Avenue (1906-07, Grade II); Imperial Bank of Canada, 441 Main Street (1906-07, Grade II); Grain Exchange Building, 167 Lombard Avenue (1906-08, Grade II); and Canadian Bank of Commerce (Millennium Centre), 389 Main Street (1910-12, Grade I). They have been given 40 points by the Historical Buildings Committee.

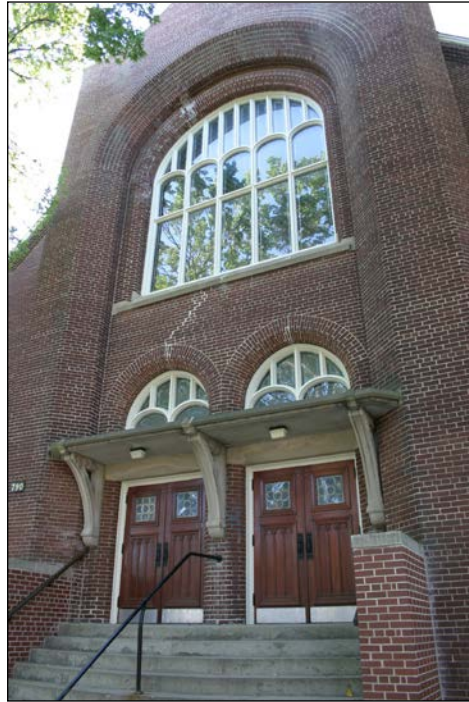


West façade, 2009

HISTORICAL INTEREST:

Representatives of the Ontario Baptist clergy first visited Fort Garry during June 1869 but missionary activity in the area did not begin for another four years with the arrival of Reverend Alexander McDonald.¹³ The first permanent chapel was opened at the corner of Rupert Avenue and Maria (now King) Street in June 1875. By the early 1890s, a modern church was required for the growing congregation and First Baptist Church, a large red brick and sandstone edifice was completed in 1893 at the corner of Charlotte (now Hargrave) Street and Cumberland Avenue (demolished).

On May 11, 1906, a small group of Baptists met in a private home to organize a new congregation and take over the land at Broadway and Walnut Street in the possession of the Baptist Convention of Manitoba and the Northwest. Moving quickly, a call for tenders for the new church edifice was published in mid-June and the completed church, with seating for 350, was dedicated on November 4, 1906, designed to allow for an enlargement when numbers warranted. The enlarged facility was rededicated on November 8, 1914.¹⁴



Front (north) façade detail, 2009

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 Baptist churches standing in Winnipeg and illustrative of the growth of Winnipeg's residential neighbourhoods and their need for religious facilities;
- its associations- its long-term connections to the Baptist church;
- its design- a good example of the Late Gothic Revival style;
- its architect- Darling and Pearson and Jordan and Over were both respected and important partnerships;
- its location- defines an important intersection and contributes to the historic neighbourhood streetscapes; and
- its integrity- its main façades continue to display many of their original elements and design.



Front (north) and east façades, 1978

ENDNOTES:

- 1 "Tenders," Manitoba Free Press, June 12, 1906, p. 2.
- 2 Manitoba Free Press, June 13, 1914, p. 20.
- 3 City of Winnipeg Building Permit, #2868/1906 and #1237/1914.
- 4 Identifying Architectural Styles in Manitoba (Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, 1991), pp. 20-21.
- 5 Mathilde Brosseau, Gothic Revival in Canadian Architecture, *Canadian Historic Sites: Occasional Papers in Archaeology and History*, No. 25 (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1980), pp. 28-29.
- 6 John Fleming, et al., The Penguin Dictionary of Architecture, Third Edition (London: Penguin Books, 1908), p. 142.
- 7 E. Arthur (revised by S.A. Otto), Toronto. No Mean City (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), pp. 244-256.
- 8 The Canadian Encyclopedia, Vol. 3 (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers Limited, 1985), p. 1635.
- 9 E. Arthur, op. cit., p. 256.
- 10 Canadian Architect and Builder, 1902-03.
- 11 Files of the Manitoba Association of Architects.
- 12 R.R. Rostecki, "Salvation Army Men's Social Service Centre, 175-81 Logan Avenue," Report for the City of Winnipeg Historical Buildings Committee, March 1991, pp. 13, 17-19.
- 13 R.R. Rostecki, "549 Gertrude Street – Trinity (Nassau Street) Baptist Church, report for the Historical Buildings Committee, October 1991.
- 14 Manitoba Free Press, November 2, 1906, p. 5; November 5, 1906, p. 12; and November 9, 1914, p. 14.