



## 23 KENNEDY STREET

### ALEXANDER REID HOUSE & COACH HOUSE

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – FEBRUARY 2007



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**Date of Construction:** 1912

**Building Permit:** 1065/1912

**Architect:** Reid, Alexander (owner)

**Contractor:** Reid, Alexander (owner)

### ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

This eclectic single-family dwelling was built in 1912, towards the end of the first development phase of this prestigious residential neighbourhood that after 1880 filled with large homes, many on sizeable, well-tended pieces of property owned by some of Winnipeg's leading families.

The main (west) façade of the house begins at grade with a rough-cut stone foundation rising several metres above grade and interrupted by paired basement windows. Centrally located is the entrance within an open porch with stone and brick accenting and a second storey balcony with wood railing. The main floor is clad in dark brick.

On either side of the entrance porch are bay windows, slightly curved with three windows each. A modest, dentilled cornice tops these elements and separates the ground and second



Front (west) and north façades, 2006



Rear (east) and north façades of house and coach house, 2006

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floors. The curves of the bays are carried to the second floor windows. The second floor is clad in its original stucco and oversized wood brackets support the overhanging eaves. The unique flared hipped roof includes a front-facing dormer with curved pediment accented with dentils. The north side of the home continues all the architectural language of the front façade, with stone, brick and stucco cladding, oversized wooden brackets and a pair of pedimented dormers. A brick chimney runs up this elevation. The south side features a two-storey rectangular bay window and other elements and materials found elsewhere on the house. The rear (east) façade is again similar to the other elevations, although the addition of mechanical equipment on the roof has caused some alteration. A second floor door is accessed by a flight of wooden stairs.

The building is a classically accented four-square design, a common layout for residential structures throughout North American residential districts. The basic premise of the style is one of balance and symmetry, and the use of bays, side porches and asymmetrical fenestration does not affect this overriding principle. The horizontal emphasis created by eaves and other elements produces a subtle massiveness in these homes, often accentuated by the use of stone or cement walls.<sup>1</sup>

The four-square plan was one of the most popular to be found in mail-order pattern books used by many local contractors and builders. In their purest form, the homes stood two or 2½ storeys on a raised basement, with a front, full-width porch and a low pyramidal roof with at least one dormer.<sup>2</sup> In its many variants, the porch could be smaller, gable or cross-gable roofs could be added and window openings could be accented and in some cases arched. Overall ornamentation depended on the amount of capital involved, the skill of the builder and the personal tastes of the owner. Examples of this style are extremely numerous in Winnipeg.





Front (west) and south façades, 2006

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The building and coach house stand on their original site and appear to be in good structural condition. Exterior alterations seem to be few and have not seriously affected the appearance of these structures.

The owner, businessman Alexander Reid, is listed on the original City of Winnipeg Building Permit as the architect and contractor and it is likely that he obtained the plans from a catalogue or plan book and used day labour to construct the building. It measures approximately 11.6 x 12.8 metres (38 x 42 feet).<sup>3</sup> At a final cost of \$15,000, it represents an expensive pre-World War I single family dwelling.

To the rear of the building is the coach house, a very unusual structure of stucco, brick and stone. Highly ornate, the two-storey building includes a rounded turret with pyramidal roof and wood finial at its northeast corner, hipped roof interrupted by gable dormers and topped by a widow's walk with metal railing, wooden brackets and large, ornate lights on either side of the large wooden garage doors. A permit was taken out by owner Alexander Reid in 1912 for the construction of a metal garage measuring 6.7 metres square (22 x 22 feet), designed and built by S.M. Cameron.<sup>4</sup> It is unknown whether this represents the present building as it now stands.



Rear (east) and south façades (left) and north side detail, 2006

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#### 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 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.

Alexander Reid was the president of the Western Elevator Company when he built this home. Reid was a major figure in the regional grain trade and was also a founding member of the North-West Grain Dealers' Association (incorporated 1904 and renamed the North-West Line Elevators Association) and president and manager of the Western Terminal Elevator Company Limited.



Rear (east) façade of house, east and south facades of the coach house, 2006

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He and his family lived in the home until the early 1920s when it was occupied by Jean Henri Bourgoïn, consular agent for France and branch manager of the Credit Foncier Franco-Canadian. By the mid-1930s, physician Dr. John A. Bourgoïn (relationship unknown) was listed as the owner/resident of the home. By the 1950s, retired couple Daniel and Wladislawa Regusz were listed as owners and occupants. The Progressive Conservative Party of Manitoba has occupied this building as offices since the 1970s.<sup>5</sup>





West and south façades of the coach house, 2006

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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 excellent example of a home built for an affluent family before the turn of the century and its unusual coach house/garage;
- its associations- its long-term connection to early and influential grain businessman A. Reid and the Progressive Conservative Party of Manitoba;
- its design- an excellent example of a classically-detailed four-square home and its unique coach house;
- its architect- original owner A. Reid is listed as the home's architect and contractor;
- 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 (west) façade, 1978

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ENDNOTES:

- 1 Alan Gowans, The Comfortable House (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, Second Edition, 1987), p. 84.
- 2 Identifying Architectural Styles in Manitoba (Winnipeg: Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, Historic Resources Branch, 1991), p. 47.
- 3 City of Winnipeg Building Permit (below as BP), #1065/1912.
- 4 BP #2782/1912. Cost was \$1,000.
- 5 City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 2-092683100, 1915-1990.