



**392 NOTRE DAME AVENUE
WARBURTON BLOCK (ELECTRO BUILDING)**

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – DECEMBER 2009



392 NOTRE DAME AVENUE WARBURTON BLOCK (ELECTRO BUILDING)

Date of Construction: 1906

Building Permit: Unknown

Architect: Unknown

Contractor: Unknown

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

The Warburton Block, now the Electro Building, is another example of an early mixed-use block, so familiar in all parts of the city, with retail space at grade and two floors of residential suites above.

The ground floor of the front (north) façade is a mixture of original elements (the limestone cladding) and renovated space (the black tile cladding and the newer entrances and large display windows). Visually dividing the ground and upper floors is a thin stone belt course leading to the dark brick of the upper two storeys and acting as continuous sills for the second floor windows. All upper storey windows are square headed with stone keystones, the top floor openings have stone lug sills. A modest metal cornice and brick parapet finish the building.



Front (north) and east façades, 2009

The east side is plain with a window well on the second and third floors to maximize the natural light and ventilation to the suites. The rear (south) elevation features an enclosed exterior staircase.

The building stands on its original site and appears to be in good structural condition. Beyond the alteration to the ground floor retail space, the building does not appear to have suffered major exterior alteration.

The building is an example of the Two-part Commercial style, popular throughout North America's urban centres. Buildings could use a combination of stylistic elements or include no ornamentation depending on the developer and the available capital. The most obvious feature was the visual division of the ground floor and the upper floors, reflecting the division of use of the interior – most often commercial on the ground floor and residential on the upper floor or floors. There are examples of this style throughout the city.



Rear (south) and east façades, 2009

HISTORICAL INTEREST:

Originally known as the Warburton Block, it was renamed the Manitoba Apartments in the 1920s and the Electro Building in the 1950s. It has been owned by a series of short-term owners for most of its history. Retail tenants have included Benjamin Lapin, tailor (1915), G.R. Taylor Limited, trunks (1935) and Grosney Electric and the Remis Sign Company (1945). Tenants of the residential space have been from varied backgrounds, lawyers, butchers, carpenters, salesmen all calling this building home.¹

RECOMMENDATION TO HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE:

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

- its historical importance- a mixed-use retail/residential block built after 1900 in the growing residential/commercial district west of the Exchange District;
- its associations- N/A;
- its design- an example of the Two-part Commercial style;
- its architect- N/A;
- its location- defines an important intersection and contributes greatly to the historic streetscape of two major arteries within its neighbourhood; and
- its integrity- its main façades continue to display most of their original elements and design.



Front (north) façade, 1978

ENDNOTES:

- ¹ City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 13052699000, 1920-1990.