



201 REGENT AVENUE WEST
TRANSCONA POST OFFICE

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – DECEMBER 2009



201 REGENT AVENUE WEST TRANSCONA POST OFFICE

Date of Construction: 1929-1930

Building Permit: N/A

Architect: Department of Public Works, Ottawa

Contractor: Unknown

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

An important public building constructed by the federal government to provide modern postal facilities for the established and growing community of Transcona.

The front (south) façade of this dark brick building is symmetrically designed with a central entrance set in an ornamental stone frame with bracketed hood. A heavy cornice runs along the front façade and is discontinued above the entrance. A plain brick parapet rises above the cornice and is raised in the centre to hold a carved stone shield with the stylized date “1929” and the word “TRANSCONA” below. The east façade is a continuation of the materials, layout and ornamentation of the front. The west side appears to have been added to on two occasions and the rear (north) elevation includes a continuation of the cornice along part of its east side and a loading dock at the west end.



Top: Front (south) and east façades; Bottom: Rear (north) and east façades, 2009

The building stands on its original site, appears to be in good structural condition and has not suffered major exterior alteration.

This building is a reduced example of the Classical Revival style. Popular in North America from 1900-30, the style ranged from simple, small-scale neo-classical structures, such as this building, to Beaux-Arts Classicism with its grand scale and heavy ornamentation, for example the Legislative Building.¹ Elements of the classical revival style include columns, pediments, flat, unadorned roof lines, symmetrical facades, and Greek or Roman orders. Door and window openings are often lintelled rather than arched, although both spanning methods can be present.²

The use of classical elements, especially for public buildings, became a popular ornamental device for banks, other financial institutions, railway stations, commercial buildings and office blocks. Because of Winnipeg's importance in the early growth of western Canada's economy, the city became the headquarters of many firms doing business throughout the West. These firms often chose classically-inspired ornamentation to portray an image of respectability and stability. Many excellent examples of the style, representing both early and late phases of its popularity, adorn a wide range of structures.

HISTORICAL INTEREST:

This building was opened as Transcona's modern post office in 1930 and it operated until 1995 when the building was converted into commercial space.³



Front (south) 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- an important institutional building in Transcona and illustrative of its growth and the need to support the increased demand for expanded services;
- its associations- its long-term connections to postal service in Transcona;
- its design- a reduced example of the Classical Revival style;
- its architect- N/A;
- its location- defines an important intersection and contributes to the historic streetscape of two major arteries in Transcona; and
- its integrity- its main façades continue to display many of their original elements and design.



Front (south) façade, no date

ENDNOTES:

- 1 Identifying Architectural Styles in Manitoba (Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, Historic Resources Branch, n.d.), p. 18.
- 2 Ibid., p. 18.
- 3 City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 09000371500, 1920-1990.