

100 ROSLYN ROAD - BLACKSTONE APARTMENTS

Charles S. Bridgman (1927)



Roslyn Road, running a short distance along the south banks of the Assiniboine River, became one of early Winnipeg's exclusive neighbourhoods; some of the largest, most opulent homes set on large manicured properties were built by Winnipeg's elite in the decade before and after 1900. But as the 20th century progressed, the area saw a considerable amount of evolution – the mansions were demolished and replaced by comfortable apartment blocks, a building type more popular in Winnipeg than almost any other Canadian city.

The Blackstone Apartments were constructed in 1927 and features elements of both the Tudor Revival and Spanish Colonial/Mission Revival styles. The ornamental half-timbering, steeply pitched irregular roofs, front-facing gables, asymmetrical massing and stucco and brick walls are elements of the Tudor Style, the arched openings, coloured stucco and flat surfaces are elements of the Spanish Colonial or Mission Revival Style.

The dark brick and painted stucco three-storey building sits on a raised foundation, cost \$45,000 to complete and was built on the south side of Roslyn Road east of Osborne Street. The symmetrical front (north) façade features an entrance covered with an ornate metal and glass hood attached to the main building with chains. The doorway is topped by a stone panel holding the carved word “BLACKSTONE”. The east and west ends of the façade rise higher than the central portion and are finished with hipped gable roofs. Brick archways with metal gates are located at both the northeast and northwest corners. All openings are rectilinear, although some ground floor openings on the front and side elevations feature arched brickwork. The east and west side elevations are similarly designed and clad. The rear façade is clad in common clay brick and includes an open wood fire escape. Alterations to the exterior of the block have been minimal.

The interior is arranged into one- and two-bedroom suites, six per upper floor, with the basement used for storage and mechanical equipment. Many of the original layouts and finished remain.

Charles S. Bridgman (1875-1965) is the architect who designed this block. Bridgman was born in Toronto, ON but studied and practiced architecture for many years in New York City prior to moving to Winnipeg in 1903. His local practice, which spanned 35 years, was extremely successful, Bridgman responsible for the design of a number of fine buildings including: St. Luke’s Anglican Church, 130 Nassau Street North (1904); St. Giles Presbyterian (United) Church, 294 Burrows Avenue (1908) – Grade III; Anvers Apartments, 758 McMillan Avenue (1912) – Grade II; Highgate (originally DeBary) Apartments, 626 Wardlaw Avenue (1912) – Grade II; Canadian Ukrainian Institute Provista, 777 Pritchard Avenue (foundation, 1918; superstructure, 1921) – Grade II; and Dawson-Richardson Publishing Company Warehouse, 171 McDermot Avenue (1921) – Grade III.

William Moxam (1882-1950), a well-known local contractor, was the builder and original owner of the Blackstone. Moxam partnered with his twin brother to form Moxam Brothers contractors, working mainly in the residential sector from ca.1904 until William’s move to Calgary, AB in 1911.

The Blackstone Apartments continue to supply comfortable housing for its tenants, which have

been a diverse group over the years.

Elements of the building that would require approval if alterations were planned are:

Exterior-

- Three-storey brick and stucco apartment block with raised foundation with sloped and flat roofs located on the south side of Roslyn Road, its front façade facing north onto Roslyn Road, its east and west façades facing residential structures and parking lots and its rear (south) façade facing a back lane;
- The main (north) façade with its central entrance covered by a metal and glass hood supported by chains, entrance with sidelights and carved stone panel with the word “BLACKSTONE” and triplet windows on the second and third floors, taller east and west ends with ground floor windows in arched openings, hipped gable roofs and ornamental brickwork and ornamental metal eavestroughing and downspouts;
- Brick archways with metal gates at the northeast and northwest corners;
- East and west façades with two arched main floor window openings, stucco cladding with brick accenting and ornamental metal eavestroughing and downspouts; and
- Rear (south) façade with common clay brick cladding and windows in rectilinear openings on all levels.

Interior-

- Bannister and newel posts of the north staircase;
- Heavily textured plasterwork in public spaces; and
- Examples of rounded arches and original brick and tile fireplaces in suites.