



186 SPENCE STREET H. ROSS HOUSE

Date of Construction: 1902

Building Permit: 615/1902

Architect: Bouche, V.L.

Contractor: Bouche, V.L.

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

Built at a cost of \$2,800 in 1902, this 2½-storey frame home rests on a foundation of stone and was originally clad in horizontal wood siding.¹

The front (east) façade features an entrance covered by a plain overhang (replacing the original glazed porch). An oriel window is found on the second floor above the entrance. A front-facing gable end includes a pediment, a small window and brackets. The north façade includes a one-storey glazed porch and a gable end similar to the front element.

The building is a reduced example of a Queen Anne style structure.² The style borrowed heavily from English architecture of the 15th century, blending classical and medieval motifs into a picturesque form. Asymmetry was achieved through combinations of porches, bay windows, projecting wings, balconies and other devices. Roofs were usually irregular and



Front (east) and north façades, 2009

complex, with dormers, gables and ornamental chimneys. Variations in materials and colours were also used to animate the façades. Given this freedom of design, however, accomplished designers were still able to create balance in the structures, offsetting busy surfaces by placing calmer elements nearby.³

The popularity of the style in Canada began in the 1880s and lasted until World War I. On the prairies, pre-1900 examples of the style were not numerous because large-scale development occurred after the turn of the century. Post-1900, it was quickly adopted for use in the growing residential districts, especially the more affluent neighbourhoods where its showy qualities were greatly admired.

V.L. Bouche was responsible for the design and construction of this house. Little is known biographically about Bouche, it is believed he began his practice before 1900. City of Winnipeg Building Permit Ledger Books, have him listed from 1900-1908. He worked on dwellings exclusively – almost all were owner/Designed and built by him and almost all were in the low- to medium-price range.

The home sits on its original location and appears to be in good structural condition. The stuccoing of the building and the replacement of the front entrance porch and many of the windows has negatively affected its appearance.



Rear (west) façade, 2009

HISTORICAL INTEREST:

H. Ross, real estate agent, owned and resided in this home until ca.1920. Also listed in the home during his tenure were Donald A. Ross (engineer of terminals, Canadian National Railways, 1905, relationship unknown) and Dr. Charles H. Walsh, dentist (1915). Another source has Dr. Walsh, his mother Jane and his brother C.N. Walsh in the home in 1911). City clerk Wilfred Lawson is listed in the home in 1945.⁴

RECOMMENDATION TO HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE:

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

- its historical importance- a turn-of-the-century modest single-family home built in one of Winnipeg's growing residential neighbourhoods on the outskirts of the downtown;
- its associations- N/A;
- its design- a reduced example of the Queen Anne style;
- its architect- V.L. Bouche was a known practitioner;
- its location- contributes to its historic streetscape; and
- its integrity- N/A.



Front (east) façade, 1978

ENDNOTES:

- 1 City of Winnipeg Building Permit, #615/1902.
- 2 Identifying Architectural Styles in Manitoba (Winnipeg: Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, 1991), p. 17; L. Maitland et al., A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1992), p. 102; and L. Maitland, The Queen Anne Revival Style in Canadian Architecture (Ottawa: Environment Canada, 1990), p. 64.
- 3 L. Maitland, op. cit., p. 98.
- 4 City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 12-091335000, 1905-1940; Canada Census, 1911; and Henderson's Directory, 1905-1950.