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## 362 ST. CHARLES STREET CARON HOUSE

**Date of Construction:** 1915

**Building Permit:** N/A

**Architect:** Unknown

**Contractor:** Unknown

### ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

This large brick single-family dwelling is one of the oldest in west Winnipeg and a fine example of a World War I era home.

The front (west) façade of this solid, red-brick house is symmetrically designed with a central entrance and full-width open porch with second storey deck with wood railing supported by square wood columns connected by wood balustrades. The large windows are square headed and there is a door on the second floor. The steep pitched hipped roof includes hipped gable dormers with windows. The overhanging eaves of the roof have ornamental wood brackets.

The north and south façades are plain with large windows on both floors and dormers on the roof slopes. The rear (west) façade features a one-storey brick lean-to with an attached





Front (east) and north façades, 2009

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enclosed wood entrance porch. The entire building rests on a raised rusticated stone foundation.

This house stands on its original location and appears to be in good structural condition. There does not appear to be any major exterior alterations. The house is almost identical to a home just to the north, #400 St. Charles Street.

This home is an excellent example of a Four Square style structure, one of the most popular styles used for residential architecture in North America from the late 1880s until the 1930s. Its square massing and boxiness made it affordable to build and perfect for small urban lots where space was at a premium. The roofline was usually pyramidal or hipped and a front porch and small dormer on the second floor were familiar details. Usually built without the benefit of an architect, the foursquare was often detailed by the owner and could be highly ornamental or very plain. On the interior, the foursquare featured a second floor with four square rooms above three square rooms and an entrance hall with stairs tucked unobtrusively to the side on the first floor.<sup>1</sup>



Front (east) and south façades, 2009

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HISTORICAL INTEREST:

Because of its location, it is very difficult to uncover the history of this home, much more research is required. It appears that A.C. Caron owns and farms Lots 43/45 in 1916. He and his wife Amandina are still listed on the property in 1923; A.C. Caron is still listed in 1936. It is unclear from these records whether or not the couple lived in this house. Alexander M. and Christina Boyd are listed as the property owners in 1985.<sup>2</sup>

The Caron family was one of the earliest to settle in what became the St. Charles area, arriving from the town of Yamachiche, Québec in 1880.<sup>3</sup> The two couples, George Caron and his wife Virginie and her brother and distant cousin of George's, Charles Caron and his wife Amadine Lafleche. They purchased 2,400 acres of land south o the Assiniboine River and began their successful farming. The family rose to prominence within the community and in the province at large, assuming many public offices and positions of leadership. George Caron built his house at 50 Cass Street (formerly 71 Xavier Drive) in 1901 (designated by the City of Winnipeg as a Grade III structure).





Rear (west) and south façades, 2009

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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 the oldest houses in west Winnipeg and one of two similarly designed and built homes on St. Charles Street completed in the World War I era;
- its associations- its long-term connections to the Caron family;
- its design- an excellent example of a Four Square style;
- its architect- N/A;
- its location- contributes greatly to its streetscape; and
- its integrity- its main façades continue to display many of their original elements and design.



Front (east) and south façades, 2009

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ENDNOTES:

- 1 Information from <http://www.realviews.com/homes/forsq.html>.
- 2 City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 07205802000, 1916-1990.
- 3 S.C. Grover, "The Caron House, 50 Cass Street (Formerly 71 Xavier Drive)," report for the City of Winnipeg Historical Buildings Committee, February 1980.