



484 WARDLAW AVENUE

MELVILLE BOYD HOUSE

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – DECEMBER 2009



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Date of Construction: 1907

Building Permit: 2043/1907

Architect: Unknown

Contractor: Unknown

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

One of Fort Rouge's many comfortable single-family dwellings is this 1907 structure built on the south side of Wardlaw Avenue.

The front (north) façade of this wood-clad frame structure features a full-width open porch with unadorned squared wooden posts connected by wood railing. A two-storey bay window is also part of this elevation. Windows on both levels are squared headed. The steeply pitched, complex roof includes cross gables, the front-facing gable is embellished with decorative half-timbering and stucco cladding.

The east side is plainly finished and includes a newer open wood staircase from the second floor. The west side features an oriel window on the second floor and newer doorways giving access to the suites within.



Front (north) and west façades, 2009

The building stands on its original site and appears to be in good structural condition. Because of its conversion to a multi-tenant complex, alterations have been made to the exterior including the creation of several new doors and staircases.

This house is a reduced example of the Tudor Style, popular for residential designs throughout Winnipeg and North America from the 1890s until World War II, although the decades of the 1920s and 1930s saw an explosion in Tudor-style house construction on this continent. The style is loosely based on a number of late Medieval English structures ranging from thatch-roofed cottages to grand mansions. In North America, the style developed several distinctive elements - ornamental half-timbering, steeply pitched roofs, front-facing gables, and stucco, masonry or masonry-veneered walls.¹

The most common feature of Tudor homes is a steeply pitched central roof with cross gables. Tall, narrow windows in multiple groups, and massive chimneys crowned by chimney pots, are other common elements. About half of all examples of the style contain decorative (non-structural) half-timbering with stucco or brick infill.²



Front (north) and east façades, 2009

HISTORICAL INTEREST:

Melville Boyd (born 1854), his wife Mary E. (born 1863) and their daughter Minnie A. (born 1882) were the original residents of this house.³ Mr. Boyd worked for many years for the Grain Growers Grain Company and then as an inspector for the United Grain Growers. He died ca.1927 and his wife continued to live in the home into the 1930s.⁴ Their daughter was a well-known musician and teacher and was one of the founders of the Canadian Federation of Music Teachers' Associations in 1935 (she became its first Secretary-Treasurer).⁵

The house was converted into a multi-tenant facility ca.1967.



Front (north) 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 excellent illustration of the type of home built for a middle-income family in Winnipeg in the pre-World War I era;
- its associations- its long-term connections to grain trade employee M. Boyd and his family;
- its design- a good example of the Tudor Style;
- its architect- N/A;
- its location- contributes greatly to the historic streetscape of its neighbourhood; and
- its integrity- its main façades continue to display many of their original elements and design.



Front (north) façade, 1978

ENDNOTES:

- 1 V. and L. McAlester, A Field Guide to American Houses (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984), p. 358.
- 2 Ibid., pp. 355-356.
- 3 Census of Canada, 1911.
- 4 City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 12021679000, 1920-1990.
- 5 Canadian Federation of Music Teachers' Associations website, no date.