



264 WELLINGTON CRESCENT

WELLINGTON APARTMENTS

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – DECEMBER 2009



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Date of Construction: 1910

Building Permit: 1026/1910 (Plans at City Storage)

Architect: Northwood, George W.

Contractor: Hicks, J.C.

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

This massive apartment block is located in the middle of one of Winnipeg's well-to-do neighbourhoods on its premier street, Wellington Crescent. Costing \$100,000 to complete in 1910, it measures approximately 73.8 x 19.5 metres.¹

The front (north) façade of this three-storey solid brick and stone structure features several entrances set in ornamental stone surrounds, three storey glazed porches, gable ends with stucco and half-timbering and banks of windows allow for the maximum amount of natural light and ventilation into the suites. The side elevations are also clad in the dark brick of the front, while the rear façade (south) is built of common clay brick. The south elevation includes numerous intents to increase wall surface area and to hold the open wood staircases.



Left: Front (north) façade entrance detail; Right: Metal structural supports, 2009

The block also includes a large, 2½-storey brick, stone and shingle house now attached to the west end of the block (#280 Wellington Crescent). More research is required to discover the history of this house and when it became part of the apartment block.

The building stands on its original site and does not appear to have suffered major exterior alteration. Metal squares and hardware on the exterior of the building along the basement wall suggest structural problems with the foundation that date back several decades. This remedial work appears to have solved the problem as structural issues have not seriously affected the upper floors (although some repointing of the brick has occurred and some signs of deterioration are present).

This apartment block is designed in the Tudor style, most popular in the design of single family dwellings constructed throughout Winnipeg and North America from the 1890s until World War II, although the decades of the 1920s and 1930s also 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.²

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.³



Rear (south) façade, 2009

This structure was designed by Major George W. Northwood (1876-1959), one of Winnipeg's fine 20th century architects. Northwood was a distinguished Winnipeg veteran who worked for several decades in the city, both alone and in partnership with other architects. A partial list of his more notable designs would include: the second pavilion at the Assiniboine Park and Zoo, 55 Pavilion Crescent (1929-30 with Cyril W.U. Chivers, Grade II), the Riverbend School for Girls Junior School, now Balmoral Hall School, 630 Westminster Avenue (ca.1930 with Cyril W.U. Chivers), Greater Winnipeg Gas Building, 265 Notre Dame Avenue (1930 with Cyril W.U. Chivers, Grade III) the Women's Tribute Memorial Lodge, 200 Woodlawn Street (1931 with Cyril W.U. Chivers, Grade II), the Civic Auditorium, 444 St. Mary Avenue (1932 with Cyril W.U. Chivers), the Bank of Toronto Branch on Academy Road (1934) and the Federal Building, 269 Main Street (1935 with Cyril W.U. Chivers).⁴ They have been given 20 points by the Historical Buildings Committee.

HISTORICAL INTEREST:

Notre Dame Investment Company, a local group, owned this block from 1910-1929 and from 1930-1949 it was owned by two England residents. Samuel Werier, local businessman, owned the property in the 1950s and 1960s.⁵



280 Wellington Crescent, attached to the west end of the apartment block, 2009

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 large apartment blocks in the city built in the pre-World War I era and located in an exclusive neighbourhood;
- its associations- N/A;
- its design- an excellent example of the Tudor style;
- its architect- G.W. Northwood was a respected and important practitioner;
- its location- defines two important intersections and 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, 1961

ENDNOTES:

- 1 City of Winnipeg Building Permit, #1026/1910.
- 2 V. and L. McAlester, A Field Guide to American Houses (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984), p. 358.
- 3 Ibid., pp. 355-356.
- 4 City of Winnipeg, Historical Buildings Committee, files.
- 5 City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 12022188500, 1920-1990.