



**25 CORNISH AVENUE**

**DONALD A. MacDONALD HOUSE**

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – DECEMBER 2009



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## 25 CORNISH AVENUE DONALD A. MacDONALD HOUSE

**Date of Construction:** 1907

**Building Permit:** 1147/1907 (2 houses, #25 and #29 Cornish Avenue)

**Architect:** Germain and Son (owners)

**Contractor:** Germain and Son (owners)

### ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

This frame single-family dwelling sits on a busy neighbourhood intersection, just north of one of Winnipeg's earliest exclusive residential districts – Armstrong's Point.

The front (south) façade features a newer full-width screened porch with wood accenting and covered by a modest overhanging roof. The second floor includes two large square headed window openings and the soffits of the hipped, cross gable roof boast exposed rafters. Two dormers, one gable and one shed, are located on the front slope of the roof as well.

The east side of the building faces Langside Street and includes a projecting section in the middle of the façade. After renovations, there are now two entrances on this façade, at the north and south ends. A hipped gable dormer is located on the east slope of the home. The



Rear (north) and east façades, 2009

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rear (north) façade also includes two entrances and west side is fairly plain, with no doors but windows on all levels.

The building stands on its original site and appears to be in good structural condition. The entire building has been reclad, the windows have been replaced, the porch is newer and several new entrances have been located on the building's east and north sides, in response to its reorganization as a multi-tenant block.

This home is a good example of a Foursquare 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>

Local contracting firm Germain and Son were responsible for the design and construction of this house.



Front (south) and west façades, 2009

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HISTORICAL INTEREST:

The home was built by Germain and Son, contractors, along with the house next door (#29) and then sold. Physician Dr. R.D. Fletcher and his wife Isabel G. Fletcher were early owners/residents. The couple remained in the house into World War I, when it was bought by Donald A. MacDonald, manufacturers' agent at the Board of Trade. He and his wife Clare W. MacDonald lived in the house until the early 1940s, when it was sold and converted into a three suite block.<sup>2</sup>

RECOMMENDATION TO HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE:

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

- its historical importance- a good example of a modest house built in the pre-World War I era in one of the city's more exclusive neighbourhoods;
- its associations- N/A;
- its design- a good example of the Foursquare style;
- its architect- Germain and Son were known local practitioners;
- its location- defines an intersection and contributes to its historic streetscape; and
- its integrity- its main façades continue to display some of their original elements and design.



Front (south) and east façades, 1978

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ENDNOTES:

- 1 Information from <http://www.realviews.com/homes/forsq.html>.
- 2 City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 12090766000, 1915-1950; and Henderson's Directory, 1915-1950.