



**121 EUCLID AVENUE**

**MATAS GROCERY STORE & RESIDENCE**

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – JANUARY 2007



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## 121 EUCLID AVENUE MATAS GROCERY STORE & RESIDENCE

**Date of Construction:** 1899 (house); 1911 (store)

**Building Permit:** N/A (house); 1469/1911 (store)

**Architect:** N/A (house); Abramovich, David (store)

**Contractor:** N/A (house); Goldstein, B. (store)

### ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

Frequently found on corners in residential neighbourhoods is the local grocery store. Found on the northwest corner of Euclid Avenue and Grove Street, this building is more ornamentally complex than most example of this building type in Winnipeg and continues to fill this mixed-use role today.

In front is the one-storey retail store/pool hall built in 1911. This brick building has been stuccoed over and features an angled southeast corner holding the entrance. Large display windows are found on the building's south façade and the main ornamental elements are found at the roofline, with its recessed panels, modest cornice and unusual parapet with chimney-like projections and raised, arched area above the entrance. The east façade



South façades of store and house, 2006

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features a few minor openings. The rear portion of the store was built in 1937, also of brick.<sup>1</sup>

Behind is the 2½-storey brick house, built in 1899, that although partially hidden, still exhibits a wealth of ornamentation. The only visible original detailing on the front (south) façade is the exposed rafters under the modest eaves – the windows having all been replaced and the exterior stuccoed. The complex truncated hipped roof features a gable dormer in the south slope and also features a corner tower with conical roof interrupted by an ornate brick chimney on the north side. The tower is finished with a wood finial. The east side is also hidden by the retail structure on the ground floor but as with the front, the complexity of the roof, with its cross gables and dormers and ornamental brick chimneys, is very evident. The west side is plain, with newer windows and stucco cladding. The rear (north) includes a one-storey lean-to.

Stylistically, this turn-of-the-century house is a good example of the Queen Anne Revival style that borrowed heavily from English architecture of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, blending classical and medieval motifs into a picturesque form.<sup>2</sup> The desired asymmetry was achieved through a number of combinations of porches, bay windows, projecting wings, balconies and other devices. Roofs were usually irregular and 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.<sup>3</sup>



Rear (north) and east façades, 2006

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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.

The architect and contractor for the 1899 house are unknown at this time. Architect for the 1911 retail addition was David Abramovich.<sup>4</sup> Also spelt Abramovitch, D. Abramovich designed and built only a few homes during his short career in Winnipeg (he is only found from 1907-1915 in the City of Winnipeg Building Permit Ledger Books). His name is also found as the contractor for the Winnipeg Canoe Club clubhouse in River Park built in 1910.<sup>5</sup>

The building appears to be in good structural condition and sits on its original site. Alterations, including the window replacement and stuccoing, have seriously affected the exterior appearance of the residence, although its mixed-use function continues.



Detail of corner tower, 2006

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HISTORICAL INTEREST:

The house was built for the McKiechan family, with Estella O. McKiechan listed as the owner and occupant 1902-1905. It was sold to J.A. Dart, agent, ca.1911 who rented it out to various tenants until it was taken over by Simon and Annie Matas and their family and the retail space built. It then operated as Matas Brothers Grocery and Pool Hall (Simon and Max Matas, proprietors). The Matas family would continue to live in the house and run the shop on Euclid Avenue into the 1950s.<sup>6</sup> In the 1960s it was sold to Walter Tarnowski who renamed the business the Euclid Meat Market and it became Metro Meat (its present name) in the 1970s.<sup>7</sup>



Rear (north) and west façades, 2006

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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- its continuous use as a residential/retail complex and an important neighbourhood institution for over 100 years;
- its associations- its long-term connection to the Matas family;
- its design- an example of the Queen Anne Revival style;
- its architect- D. Abramovich is a known local designer/contractor;
- its location- defines an important intersection in Point Douglas; and
- its integrity- its main façades display some of their original elements and design.



Front (south) façade, 1978

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ENDNOTES:

- 1 City of Winnipeg Building Permit (below as BP), #646/1937 (plans available at City Archives). The architect of the addition was Peter Dobush.
- 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 et al., op. cit., p. 98.
- 4 BP #1469/1911.
- 5 City of Winnipeg Building Permit Ledger Books, 1899-1926.
- 6 City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 14-000457000, 1900-1950.
- 7 Ibid., 1950-1990; Henderson's Directory, 1900-1990.