



251 PROVENCHER BOULEVARD

BERTRAND THEOPHANE HOUSE

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – DECEMBER 2009



251 PROVENCHER BOULEVARD BERTRAND THEOPHANE HOUSE

Date of Construction: 1890

Building Permit: N/A

Architect: Unknown

Contractor: Unknown

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

This large, frame house has sat on the north side of Provencher Boulevard, one of St. Boniface's premier thoroughfares, for over 100 years.

The front (south) façade includes a glazed porch with pediment above the entrance that extends beyond the east side of the home. The second floor features plain, square headed window openings while the gable end is embellished with ornamental shingles and ornate wood moulding. The remainder of the building is plainly finished, clad in the same horizontal wood siding as the front. There is an open wood fire escape attached to the east side of the home and a one-storey lean-to attached to the rear (north) façade.

The building stands on its original site, appears to be in good structural condition and does not appear to have suffered major exterior alteration.



Front (south) and east façades, 2009

The structure is an example of the Queen Anne style which borrowed heavily from English architecture of the 15th century, blending classical and medieval motifs into a picturesque form.¹ 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.²

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.



Front (south) and west façades, 2009

HISTORICAL INTEREST:

Although the exact date of construction for this home is unknown, the house was owned and occupied for many years by Theophane A. Bertrand (1844-1921), his wife Alexina (nee. Pariseau, 1856-1947) and their nine children.³ Bertrand was born in Vercheres, Quebec and came to Manitoba in 1886 and took up a job with the provincial government. After resigning, he became secretary-treasurer of St. Boniface. He would then practice law before serving two terms as Mayor of St. Boniface (1907-1908). He died in 1921.⁴



Maison Bertrand, no date
(Société Historique de Saint-Boniface)



Theophane Bertrand,
no date

RECOMMENDATION TO HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE:

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

- its historical importance- an excellent example of the type of home built for an influential citizen and his large family in St. Boniface before 1900;
- its associations- its long-term connections to early and influential lawyer and politician T. Bertrand and his large family;
- its design- an excellent example of the Queen Anne style;
- its architect- N/A;
- its location- contributes greatly to its historic streetscape; and
- its integrity- its main façades continue to display many of their original elements and design.



Front (south) façade, 1978

ENDNOTES:

- 1 Identifying Architectural Styles in Manitoba (Winnipeg, MB: Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, 1991), p. 17; and L. Maitland et al., A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 1992), p. 102.
- 2 L. Maitland et al., op. cit., p. 98.
- 3 City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 06060994000, 1920-1990.
- 4 Biographical information from Census of Canada, 1901, 1906 and 1911; “Former Mayor of St. Boniface Dies,” Manitoba Legislative Library, Biographical Scrapbook B7; and Manitoba Free Press, August 25, 1921 and July 24, 1947, p. 17.