



**20 RUSKIN ROW**

**FREDERICK W. STEVENS HOUSE**

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – DECEMBER 2009



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## 20 RUSKIN ROW FREDERICK W. STEVENS HOUSE

**Date of Construction:** 1905

**Building Permit:** 1300/1905

**Architect:** Stevens, Fred W. (owner)

**Contractor:** Lidue, L.C.

### ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

One of the earlier houses built in the Ruskin Row area was the F.W. Stevens House, completed in 1905, this unique structure includes a wide driveway with formal stone and metal gates.

The front (west) façade features a main entrance set in a small enclosed porch with ornamental metal lights on either side of the arched opening. The ground floor is clad in rough-cut stone while the upper storey is finished in stucco and decorative half-timbering. The hipped roof is complex and features a number of dormers, cross gables and other elements. There is a small, detached car port located just north of the house. The other elevations continue the general design, layout and materials found on the front.



Front (west) and south façades, 2009

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

This home 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.<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup>



Front (west) façade, 1978

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HISTORICAL INTEREST:

Federal Customs clerk F.W. Stevens, his wife Bessie and their teenage son and daughter were the first residents of this house.<sup>3</sup> The family continued to live in the home into the 1930s. After Mr. Stevens died, Mrs. Stevens remained in the house. Mrs. Lillie H. Stevens is listed as the resident in 1955 and 1965.<sup>4</sup>

RECOMMENDATION TO HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE:

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

- its historical importance- one of Crescentwood's and Winnipeg's well-appointed pre-World War I single-family dwellings;
- its associations- its long-term connections to federal employee F.W. Stevens;
- its design- an excellent example of the Tudor style;
- its architect- N/A;
- its location- contributes greatly to its historic streetscape and the neighbourhood; and
- its integrity- its main façades continue to display many of their original elements and design.



Front (west) façade, 1978

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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, 1906.
- 4 City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 12040452000, 1910-1970.