



830 WOLSELEY AVENUE

HUGH BUXTON LYALL HOUSE

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – DECEMBER 2009



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## 830 WOLSELEY AVENUE HUGH BUXTON LYALL HOUSE

**Date of Construction:** 1909

**Building Permit:** 775/1909

**Architect:** Gent, Alfred

**Contractor:** Toye, Smith

### ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

Another fine single-family dwelling in the Wolseley neighbourhood is this 2½-storey brick veneer and stone house on the south side of Wolseley Avenue.

This brick veneer structure rests on a raised stone foundation; the front (north) façade features a wrap around one-storey open veranda on the northeast corner. The building also features a unique bay window on the second floor finished with a pyramidal roof. Windows throughout the home are unmatched and the complex roof includes cross gables and dormers.

The building stands on its original site, appears to be in good structural condition and does not appear to have suffered major exterior alteration. The windows have been replaced by newer, single pane units that have negatively affected the home's appearance.



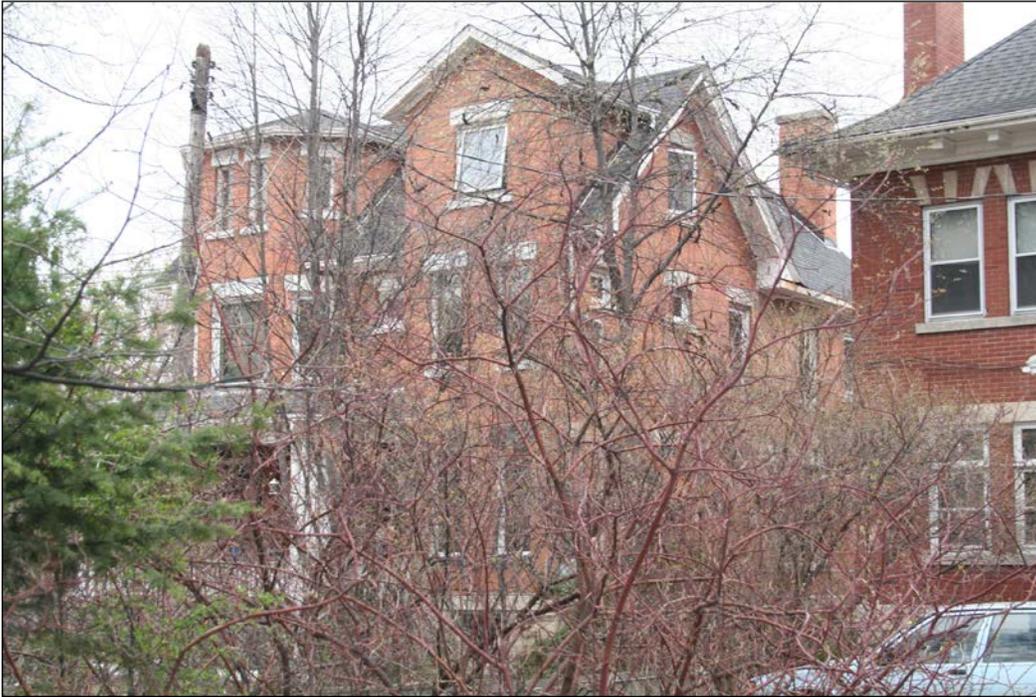
Front (north) and east façades, 2009

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

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.

A. Gent, an estimator for Manitoba Bridge and Iron, is listed on the original City of Winnipeg Building Permit as the architect. Gent does not appear in the City of Winnipeg Building Permit Ledger Books, 1899-1926 except for this entry and it is likely that he used a pattern book for the plans for this structure.



Front (north) and west façades, 2009

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HISTORICAL INTEREST:

This house and the one immediately to the east, #826 Wolseley Avenue, were built at the same time by S. Toye. The original owners were also connected, both co-founders of Manitoba Bridge and Iron. The original owner of this house was Hugh Buxton Lyall, the vice-president and general manager of the foundry.

Lyall belonged to the large group of Ontario-born businessmen who formed the dominant group in Manitoba's public life before World War I. He belonged to the Winnipeg Board of Trade, the Manitoba Council of Industry and chaired the western caucus of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association.<sup>3</sup> To ensure materials for his foundry, Lyall was also president and general manager of the Manitoba Rolling Mills. Iron and steel had become a substantial industry in Manitoba in the early twentieth century, as building technology changed. Winnipeg alone produced 25,000 tons of iron and steel in 1919.<sup>4</sup>

Lyall sold the house in 1916 to Henry Finesilver, a chemist who had a drug store in the North End known as the Euclid Avenue Medicine Store. From 1923 to 1929, real estate agent John Burgoyne owned the house. In the 1940s and 1950s, this house was the manse for Holy Trinity Church.<sup>5</sup> During this time, the house was divided into an upper and lower suite and by the early 1960s, it has contained four apartments.



Northeast corner detail, 2009

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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- a good example of the type of up-scale single-family dwelling built in one of Winnipeg's finer neighbourhoods for an important businessman and his family in the pre-World War I era;
- its associations- its long-term connections to influential businessman H.B. Lyall;
- its design- an example of the Queen Anne style;
- its architect- A. Gent was the named architect;
- its location- 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) and east façades, 1978

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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 Winnipeg Free Press, March 3, 1948.
- 4 Manitoba Free Press, May 12, 1920.
- 5 City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 12082890000, 1920-1970.