191 KINGSWAY AVENUE

FRED J. MARRIN HOUSE

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – FEBRUARY 2009

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Date of Construction: 1912

Building Permit: 2241/1912

Architect: Holyoke, Thomas Gannett

Contractor: Wells Brothers

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

This well-designed 2½-storey single-family home was built shortly before the First World War and at a cost of $15,000,[1] would have been considered an expensive property at the time.

The ground floor of the front (south) façade is clad in rough-cut limestone laid in a broke course pattern. Near the southwest corner is the main entrance up four steps from grade and in a stone deck with low stone walls. The doorway is protected from the elements by a small roof with ornamental bracketing, half-timbering in the gable end. The second floor is clad in stucco with half-timbering and plain, square headed windows. The medium-pitched gable roof is interrupted on the front slope by a large and a small gable dormer, both with windows, the larger including stuccoing and half-timbering.

Front (south) and east façades, 2009

Tudor-style homes were constructed throughout Winnipeg and North American from the 1890s until World War II, although the decades of the 1920s and 1930s 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.[2]

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.[3]

The house stands on its original site, appears to be in good structural condition and has not suffered major exterior alteration.

The original City of Winnipeg Building Permit lists Thomas Gannett Holyoke as the architect. Holyoke was born on April 1, 1866 in South Natwich, Massachusetts and moved to St. Paul in 1877.[4] He studied architecture in Paris, France and then returned to St. Paul to set up his own practice, which concentrated mainly on residential design, Tudor Revival his favourite style. His practice lasted until the mid-1920s.[5] This is the only Winnipeg structure credited to him in the Building Permit Ledger Books, 1899-1926.

Rear (north) and east façades, 2009

HISTORICAL INTEREST:

Fred J. Marrin, credit manager for Jobin-Marrin Company, wholesale grocers, was the original owner of the house. He was listed as secretary-treasurer of the company by 1925 and remained in the home until the mid-1940s.[6]

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 a luxurious home built in Winnipeg's economic heyday in one of the more exclusive residential neighbourhoods of the time;
- its associations- its long-term connection to businessman F.J. Marrin;
- its design- an excellent example of the Tudor Revival style;
- its architect- T.G. Holyoke was a respected and important practitioner;
- 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	City of Winnipeg Building Permit, #2241/1912.
2	V. and L. McAlester, A Field Guide to American Houses (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984), p. 358.
3	Ibid., pp. 355-356.
4	Biographical information from University of Minnesota Library Archives.
5	Information from L.A. Martin, "Thursday Night Hikes: Architecture Notes - St. Paul Architects 1859-1903," (2001).
6	City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 12-040379000, 1920-1990.