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LOCAL
HISTORY

CITY AND SUBURB

HOUSING IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY WINNIPEG



Local History

DAVID G. BURLEY



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CITY AND SUBURB HOUSING IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY WINNIPEG

**An Exhibition Sponsored by the Winnipeg Real Estate Board,
March 2003**

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Department of History
University of Winnipeg**

Cover Photograph Credit: University of Manitoba, Elizabeth Dafoe Library, Department
of Archives and Special Collections, Winnipeg, TRINITE Coll., PC18352718-1300-004

Acknowledgements

In June of 2002 Linda Sawkins and Tom Fulton of the Winnipeg Real Estate Board asked if I would be interested in putting together a photographic exhibition on the history of housing in Winnipeg over the last hundred years. They explained that, although the exhibition would mark the Board's centenary, the Board did not want a celebration of its own history, but preferred a presentation, inclusive and with achievements and problems, of a wide range of housing developments in the city. I enjoyed taking on the project and working with Linda and Tom and later with Peter Squire, the Board's Director of Public Affairs. I also appreciated the complete intellectual freedom that I was permitted in the project.

Not all of the text and photographs included in his book appeared in the exhibition. Judicious selection, faithful to the general meaning, was exercised by Candace Hogue who was responsible for the exhibition's design and production. Her professionalism and gentle guidance made for an ideal working relationship. Absent from this book are the text and photographs for one panel in the exhibition on the history of the Winnipeg Real Estate Board that Peter Squire put together.

Without the assistance of the staff members of several archival facilities, my research would not have been possible. I am grateful to the archivists of the Archives of Manitoba, the Department of Archives and Special Collections at the Elizabeth Dafoe Library of the University of Manitoba, and the City of Winnipeg Archives. As well, I thank Lawrence Poirier of Kinew Housing for discussing the corporation's history and permitting me to use pictures of its houses.

The exhibition, entitled "City and Suburb: Housing in Twentieth-Century Winnipeg", was installed at the Home Expression Show in the Winnipeg Convention Centre from 5 to 9 March 2003 and was positively reported in the local newspapers. Later it was briefly put up at the Winnipeg City Hall and subsequently it has been displayed at a number of venues, including the St. Vital Mall, where the public has had easy access to view it.

Despite the research that went into this exhibition, I have only touched on a few of the issues in the history of housing and shelter in Winnipeg. Hopefully I have done so with some accuracy, but I do take responsibility for the errors that may have occurred. Much remains to be discovered about the history of housing in Winnipeg. I shall be pleased if this exhibition leads people to view the city's houses and streets with an inquiring eye and to explore the history more fully.

David G. Burley, Winnipeg, September 2003

Cover Photograph Credit: University of Manitoba, Elizabeth Dafoe Library, Department of Archives and Special Collections, *Winnipeg Tribune* Coll., PC18/3567/18-2800-004

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Introduction City and Suburb

Through the twentieth century, Winnipeg has grown and matured as a city. In 1901 it was a small, dynamic city of more than 42,000 people. A hundred years later the population of metropolitan Winnipeg exceeded 660,000, with almost 620,000 of those people living inside the boundaries of the city itself.

Housing that growing population has been an impressive and challenging undertaking. In 1901 there were approximately 8,000 family dwelling units, included single-family and multifamily houses and apartments. Now there are more than 260,000 private dwellings within the city.

The history of that growth in Winnipeg housing reveals a number of changing trends, but also some constant forces. The most notable difference over a hundred years has been the increase in home ownership, which has more than doubled from about thirty per cent of households at the beginning of the century to sixty-four per cent at the end. Along with that has come a decline in the number of people in the average household, as families have fewer children and are much more unlikely to take in boarders. The development of new suburbs has driven these changes, while some inner areas of the city have experienced declining populations.

With all of this change, some things have remained the same. The tension between suburban development and the central city has existed from before the First World War. The suburbs have changed, and we may no longer recognize Crescentwood or Elmwood, to mention just two of many, as suburbs. But, when first developed, they were on the edge of the city. Observers early in this century remarked that central neighbourhoods were declining as families who could afford new suburban houses moved out. Their old houses and their old neighbourhoods were left to those who could not afford to move. Houses have a life span and a life cycle, and the history of many houses has been one of deterioration.

Another constant has been the effort of government, often a reluctant concern, to provide decent housing for those people who cannot afford to purchase it in the private market. The experiments in public support for housing have been provoked most often in times of crisis, during the Depression of the 1930s, in the 1950s and 1960s when serious slum problems contrasted with economic prosperity, and in the last decade and a half as boarded-up houses, arson, and poverty in the inner-city made deterioration too visible to ignore.

The history of housing in Winnipeg can be seen in the changing and constant relationship between the city and its suburbs.

Chapter 1 Housing in a Divided City: The Early Twentieth Century

Historian Alan F. J. Artibise has described Winnipeg in the years before World War One as a "divided city", a city of contrasts.

During the pre-war boom years, as Winnipeg prospered in its role as gateway to the West, the families of the business elite and the middle class lived comfortably in houses, terraces, and apartment buildings that replicated the more established forms of older cities of eastern North America. However, the city's rapid population growth, more than quadrupling from 42,340 in 1901 to 179,087 by 1921, strained the city's housing stock so that many working-class families could not find decent and healthy shelter. Through the first two decades of the century the city divided geographically along class and ethnic lines: European immigrant working families congregated in the North End; British and Canadian working families resided in the centre, Fort Rouge, and West End; while wealthy and upper middle-class families lived south of Portage Avenue and across the Assiniboine River in Crescentwood.

Many economic, political, and workplace issues contributed to the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919, when from the 15th May to the 26th June somewhere between 25,000 and 30,000 of striking workers shut down the city. But the cost of living, including shelter costs, and the quality of housing exacerbated already strained relations between workers and employers.

Two Streets

Few streets in Winnipeg could have been more different from one another than Broadway Avenue in the centre of the city and Jarvis Avenue in the North End. The contrast in housing on and near these two streets brought the divisions in Winnipeg into stark relief.

Many recent immigrants to Canada found accommodation on Jarvis Avenue, close to the Canadian Pacific Railway mainline. Small frame houses and shanties of various dimensions stood beside larger two and two and a half storey dwellings.

The peddlers' wagons, the small workshop, and the children playing on the street suggest not just the bustle of daily life, but also the close association of places of work and residence, something quite foreign to the Broadway area. Many of the itinerant traders who lived in this area were Jewish immigrants from Russia and Eastern Europe. Just as they had peddled their wares in the old country, they journeyed on foot or by wagon through the working-class suburbs of Winnipeg and nearby rural areas. Their visits and the credit that they extended were crucial for women running households on the margins of the city and unable to make regular shopping visits downtown.

Figure 1.1 Jarvis Avenue, south side between Main and King streets, ca. 1908

Influenced by the "City Beautiful" approach to urban planning, the City of Winnipeg had in 1896 undertaken a campaign of tree planting along major streets, including Broadway. City planners advised municipal officials across North America



1.1: Jarvis Avenue, ca. 1908

that "visitors to a city are impressed as much by the city's trees as by its buildings and are influenced by them in deciding if a city is a desirable one in which to live. [As well], trees are an asset, adding to property." The objective was to present an aesthetically pleasing view in which public and private buildings of importance would be framed with greenery.

In the first decade of the twentieth century, Broadway Avenue became Winnipeg's showpiece, a tree-lined boulevard linking the Union Station on the east and the government and university buildings to the west. Along or near it resided many of the city's business and professional leaders. As well, they met, dined, and discussed civic affairs in the Manitoba Club, seen in the left foreground of this picture. Prominent in the picture are the new luxury apartment buildings.

Figure 1.2 Broadway Avenue ca. 1910

But even as Broadway reached its height of prominence, the attraction of more private and exclusive homes in suburban Crescentwood, under development from 1902, was drawing the wealthy out of the city centre.

Two Living Rooms

Figure 1.3 Middle-class Parlour, ca. 1900

The parlour in middle-class households could be, like this example, a place of comfortable clutter. Treasured china, figurines, and other *objets d'art* and curiosities were displayed proudly on the mantel; prints decorated the walls; and houseplants brought a bit of nature indoors. At a time when some dogs in the city still worked, hauling fuel, newspapers, and groceries, this family pet enjoyed a cosy place by the hearth.

Figure 1.4 Interior of immigrant home, ca. 1915

At first glance we cannot help being struck with the congested conditions. Four men and five young children pose in this room used as kitchen, living room, and sleeping space. In the first decades of the twentieth century, overcrowding of living quarters most often occurred when single men, either new to the country or returning to the city after seasonal employment on railroad construction, agricultural work or other labouring jobs, bunked down with relatives or countrymen. A curtain could be draped from the clothesline strung across the room. But social reformers criticized the close proximity and lack of privacy among unrelated adults and children in immigrant and working-class households.

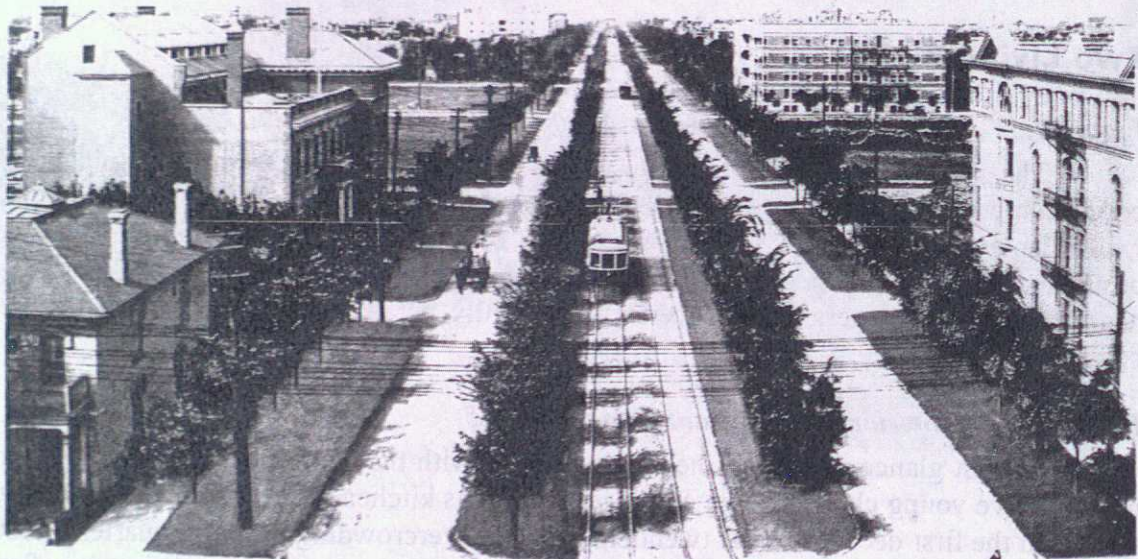
Despite the number of residents, the room is neat, clean, and well tended. Clothes, for which there were no closets or chests of drawers, hung on the walls; kitchen utensils were in their places. Pictures on the wall, included the second from left, which portrays Christ being taken down from the cross, show an effort to decorate and make the room a respectable home. Still, not much would have to get out of place, and the children would not have to become too excited, for the order to collapse and tempers to strain.

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Figure 1.2: Broadway Avenue in 1910

But even as Broadway retained its sight of prominence, the situation of middle private and exclusive homes in suburban Winnipeg deteriorated from 1905, was drawing the wealthy out of the city centre.



1.2: Broadway Avenue, ca. 1910

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Conspicuous Homes

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1.3: Middle-class Parlour, ca. 1900

the Canadian Pacific Railway. His plans to develop Fort Rouge (Winnipeg) in the mid-1880s and in financial embarrassment he gave up his house on Roslyn (as it was originally called) Road about 1890. Commonly purchased of the house again associated the place with business activities.

Terraces

Accommodation in any of the several stylish terraces in Winnipeg before World War I appealed to middle and upper middle income families who were sufficiently established in their jobs or professions to be able to afford a comfortable home, but still perhaps not interested in home ownership. In the early twentieth century many who could afford it never decided to buy their own homes, and the rate of home ownership in Winnipeg at the beginning of the last century was about thirty per cent of households.



1.4: Interior of Immigrant Home, ca. 1915

(Where is the mother of these children? Perhaps she was away at work or on errands. Or, perhaps she was too modest to want her picture taken.)

Conspicuous Homes

Large multi-storied houses, designed by architects and solidly built of brick, declared the success of their owners. Centrally located, but perhaps a dignified step removed from the business district, these impressive residences were just as evocative monuments to Winnipeg's material progress as the government and other public buildings, warehouses and financial institutions, and railway stations.

Figure 1.5 Residence of James H. Ashdown, 337 Broadway Avenue, 1900

James H. Ashdown arrived in Winnipeg in 1868. What began as a small tinsmith shop grew into Western Canada's most extensive wholesale hardware business and made Ashdown one of Winnipeg's wealthiest men. As he prospered, he moved his family to larger residences in more elegant neighbourhoods, from Point Douglas to Broadway Avenue in 1897, and finally to Wellington Crescent in 1913.

Figure 1.6 Residence of Nicholas Bawlf, 11 Kennedy Street, ca. 1907

Nicholas Bawlf, Winnipeg's leading grain merchant until his death in 1914, built this grand house on corner of Kennedy Street and Assiniboine Avenue in 1897. As his business and his wealth had grown from his arrival in Winnipeg in 1877, Bawlf and his family had moved several times from their first small house on Main Street North before residing here.

Figure 1.7 Residence of D.C. Cameron, 65 Roslyn Road, ca. 1910

Douglas C. Cameron, a successful businessman involved with lumber and flour milling companies and Manitoba's Lieutenant Governor from 1911 to 1916, moved into this Roslyn Road mansion about 1905. Dunross, as the house was originally called, had been built in 1882 by Arthur Wellington Ross and was the first substantial residence south of the Assiniboine River. An ambitious lawyer and land speculator from Ontario, Ross became a Member of Parliament and advocate and secret employee in land deals for the Canadian Pacific Railway. His plans to develop Fort Rouge collapsed in the mid-1880s and in financial embarrassment he gave up his house on Rosslyn (as it was originally called) Road about 1890. Cameron's purchase of the house again associated the place with business achievement.

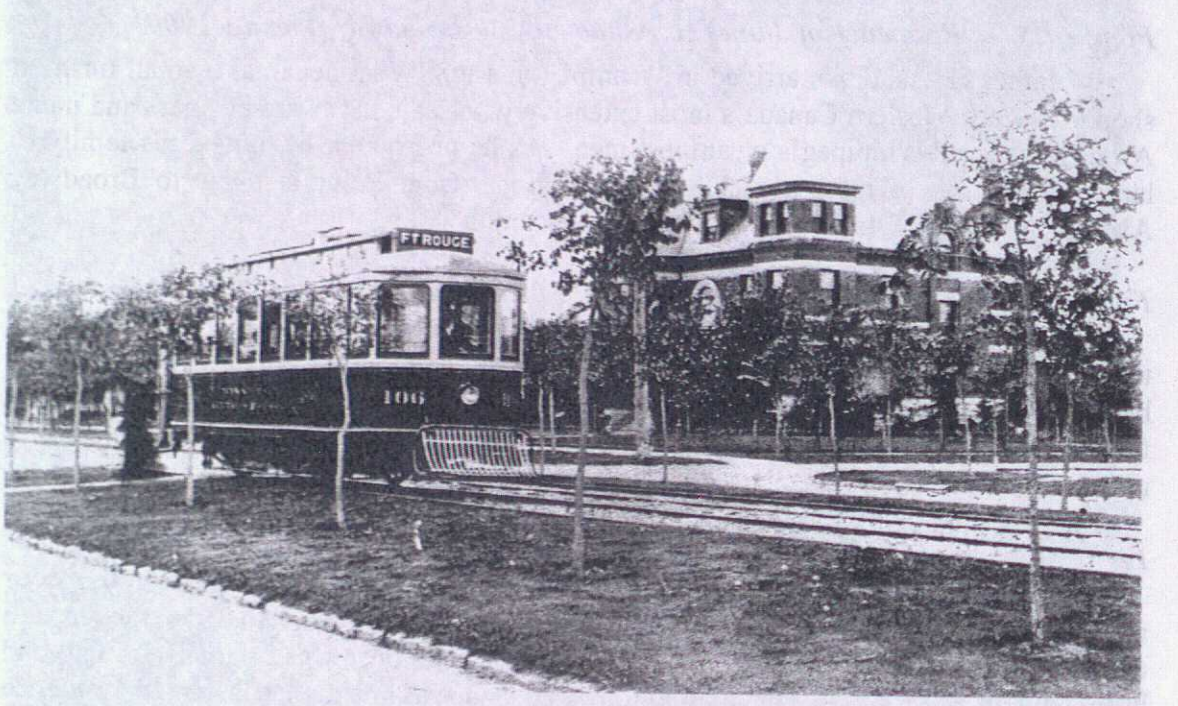
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Conspicuous Homes

Large multi-storied houses, designed by architects and solidly built of brick, displayed the success of their owners. Centrally located, but perhaps a dignified step removed from the business district, these impressive residences were just as exclusive as the mansions in Winnipeg's residential areas. The government and other public buildings were also located in this area.



1.5: Residence of James H. Ashdown, 1900

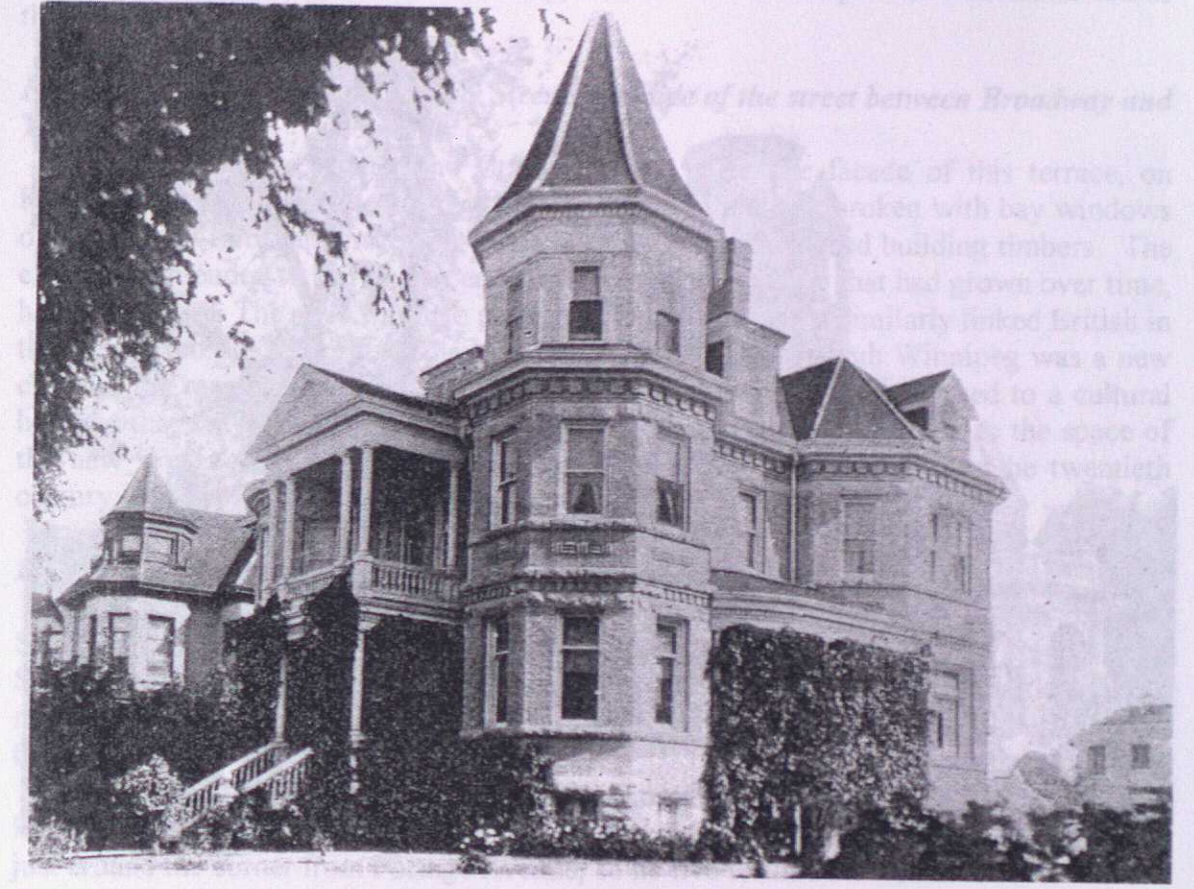
The Canadian Pacific Railway gave up its house on Rosslyn in 1880 and in financial embarrassment he gave up his house on Rosslyn in 1880. Originally called Ross Road about 1880, Cameron's purchase of the house again associated the place with business achievement.

Terraces

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Why should they purchase? Good housing in pleasant and centrally located neighbourhoods was easily affordable.

The terrace was a common form of dwelling before the First World War, for all income groups. With small front yards and more space in the rear, it was an efficient use of valuable space in central areas of the city. As well, common interior walls and a continuous foundation reduced building costs. Size of units and the detailing of the facade might distinguish more expensive terraces from less expensive ones, but the floor plans were very similar. Side halls in upper and lower floors provided access to rooms



1.6: Residence of Nicholas Bawlf, ca. 1907

their places of employment. The tenants in 1907 were a freight agent, an accountant, a foreman, a barrister, and a journalist, and they had an average income of \$1900 a year, which put them approximately in the middle of the wage and salary employees in Winnipeg.

Figure 1.10 Unidentified terrace, ca. 1900

The elevated ground floor permitted a higher basement with windows that let in light and air. In some smaller terrace designs, a kitchen was located at the front and a sitting room at the back of this basement space; on the ground floor was the formal parlor for receiving guests and the dining room.



1.7: Residence of D.C. Cameron, ca. 1910

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Figure 1.8 *Terrace on Kennedy Street (east side of the street between Broadway and York)*

Built in the 1880s in the Gothic Revival style, the facade of this terrace, on Kennedy Street, was divided into visibly differently units and broken with bay windows on the second floor and projecting gable ends with mock exposed building timbers. The effect was intended to be reminiscent of a medieval streetscape that had grown over time, house by house. The style was also popular in Ontario, where it similarly linked British in the “new” and “old” worlds. This look declared that, even though Winnipeg was a new city and the residents of these dwellings were recent arrivals, they adhered to a cultural heritage that stretched back hundreds of years to Europe; it was a claim to the space of the new West. This terrace continued to be a fashionable address into the twentieth century.

Figure 1.9 *Strevel Terrace, 1899*

Designed in the “Bay-N-Gables” style by Winnipeg architect George Browne, Strevel Terrace was built in 1899 by George H. Strevel and owned by his wife, Margaret Strevel. The building had five two-and-a-half-storey rental units, each with a living room, dining room, and kitchen on the ground floor and three bedrooms, a nursery, and bathroom on the second.

In 1902 the property was assessed, supposedly at market value, at \$2250 for the land and \$9000 for the building. The building was located at 260 to 270 Carlton Street, just around the corner from Portage Avenue, so its five tenants did not have far to walk to their places of employment. The tenants in 1902 were a freight agent, an accountant, a foreman, a barrister, and a journalist, and they had an average income of \$1900 a year, which put them approximately among the top five per cent of waged and salaried employees in Winnipeg.

Figure 1.10 *Unidentified terrace, ca. 1900*

The elevated ground floor permitted a higher basement with windows that let in light and air. In some smaller terrace designs, a kitchen was located at the front and a sitting room at the back of this basement space; on the ground floor was the formal parlour for receiving guests and the dining room.

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Figure 1.8: Terrace on Kennedy Street, ca. 1900. The terrace was built on the site of the former brewery and distillery.



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Figure 1.10: Unfinished terrace, ca. 1900. The elevated ground floor permitted a higher basement with windows that let in light and air. In some smaller terrace designs, a kitchen was located in the front and a sitting room in the back of this basement space. On the ground floor was the common parlour for receiving guests and the dining room.

Apartment Buildings

Apartment housing became popular in Winnipeg. Before the First World War the city had over three hundred blocks, more than Toronto, which was almost three times its size.

Many of the early apartment buildings were in the downtown area. The Broadway Court, Broadway Court, the Keamore, the Strathmore, and the St. James were all additions to upper middle class tenants. Elsewhere in the city, in Fort Rourke and here and there downtown and in the West End, similar buildings catered to an exclusive clientele.

Figure 1.11: Broadway Avenue, ca. 1915. The Broadway Court was one of the first apartment buildings in Winnipeg.



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1.9: Strevel Terrace, 1899

1.10: Unfinished terrace, ca. 1900



1.10: Unidentified Terrace, ca. 1900

Apartment Buildings

Apartment housing became popular in Winnipeg. Before the First World War, the city had over three hundred blocks, more than Toronto, which was almost three times its size.

Along Broadway a number of luxury apartment buildings—Devon Court, Fort Garry Court, Broadway Court, the Kenmore, the Strathmore—offered luxury accommodation to upper middle class tenants. Elsewhere in the city, in Fort Rouge and here and there downtown and in the West End, similar buildings catered to an exclusive clientele.

Figure 1.11 Broadway Avenue, ca. 1915

In the foreground is the Kenmore Apartments (renamed the Princeton in 1928). Built in 1909 for \$200,000, it contained fifty-five suites and was one of the first apartment buildings to have a reinforced concrete frame structure. Beside it is the Strathmore.

Figure 1.12 Devon Court, ca. 1910

Devon Court, built in 1908 for \$200,000, was one of the grandest. Its fifty-seven suites, a mix of one and two bedroom units and bachelor apartments, provided homes for a range of tenants from professionals and businessmen to better paid white-collar workers, such as commercial travellers and accountants. Residents and their guests could take their meals at the O'Devon Court Café on the fifth floor. After dining they could relax in the top floor loggia, which looked out on the front court yard. A doorman, on duty twenty-four hours a day, assured security and privacy.

Figure 1.13 The Vogel Block, Atlantic Avenue

More representative of Winnipeg's apartment buildings was the Vogel Block on Atlantic Avenue in the North End. Like it, most other blocks were medium-sized, twenty to thirty unit blocks of three stories. Built in 1914 for \$45,000, the first tenants of the Vogel's twenty-one suites were for the most part office workers, salesmen, and skilled blue-collar workers. The mock roof overhangs and the raised brick corner detailing broke the rather stark façade.

Apartment Buildings

Apartment housing became popular in Winnipeg. Before the First World War the city had over three hundred blocks, more than Toronto, which was almost three times its size. During the war a number of luxury apartment buildings were built. The Standard, the Grand Court, Broadway Court, the Kenmore, the St. James, the St. George, and the St. Andrew, all in the city, in Fort Rouge and elsewhere, were of the upper middle class. Elsewhere in the city, in the West End, smaller buildings catered to an exclusive clientele.



1:11: Broadway Avenue, ca. 1915

"Many Splendid Apartment Buildings"

Winnipeg has made many wonderful strides in its progress during the past twelve months. In no other city in the world has so much been accomplished in so short a time. It is not necessary to go into details of the progress made in the various branches of the city's development. It is sufficient to say that the city has made a great stride forward in many directions.

apartment blocks. To some extent, small though it may be, they represent the extension of ordinary house building. It would be probable that a young married couple would think twice before taking a house at \$50 a month when by living in a flat they could pay only \$15 a month. And so it



DEVON COURT - BROADWAY

sections, separated from each other by solid walls so that in the event of fire one part would be completely shut off from the rest. Certainly no grounds for comparison can be found with our enterprising architects and builders for the general accommodation that they have provided.

Of course there is, as in most things, something to be said against the erection of

such a house. It must indeed be a house in an unbroken housewife in fact, a house in a house in a house. Of course, the flat must remain unbroken. There is also another advantage which will appear in time, namely, the trouble saved by having heating arrangements provided.

Abridged from *Mountain Free Press*, 6 December 1906

1.12: Devon Court, ca. 1910



1.13: The Vogel Block, Atlantic Avenue

"Many Splendid Apartment Buildings"

Winnipeg has made many wonderful strides in its progress during the past twelve months, but in no direction more than that of providing living accommodation for its middle class inhabitants at a comparatively small cost.

This has been achieved by the erection of a large number of apartment blocks in various parts of the city.

It must be remarked, on reviewing the suite accommodation here, that the builders have done wonders in providing everything that goes for comfort. For instance they have given steam heating, electric lighting, gas ranges, and back and front entrances for each set of rooms. Moreover in providing comfort they have not neglected artistic details. Tenants are pleased with such things as full plate glass mirrors inset in the clothes closet doors, elaborate electric chandeliers, fireplaces, buffets for the dining rooms and handsome interior finishings in either oak, birch, fir or maple. Some of the buildings contain quite extraordinary features, as for example the placing of a mechanism in each suite, which will open the front door no matter how far the rooms may be from the entrance. Then there is the provision of enamel washing tubs for those who do their laundry work at home, and the building of a block in two sections, separated from each other by thick walls so that in the event of fire one part would be completely shut off from the other. Certainly no grounds for complaint can be found with our enterprising architects and builders for the general accommodation that they have provided.

Of course there is, as in most things, something to be said against the erection of

apartment blocks. To some extent, small though it may be, they retard the extension of ordinary house building. It would be probable, for instance, that a young married couple would think twice before taking a house at \$50 a month when by living in a suite they could save \$15 a month. And so it is that the ordinary house-builder loses a tenant.

Another disadvantage of living in a suite is the noise created by one's fellows in the same block. Many are the jokes, pictorial and otherwise of the sufferings of a flat-dweller by the piano practicing of a neighbor's daughter, or from the inharmonious sounds of voices raised in the still of night at some convivial evening party.

Then there is hardly the same privacy for one living in a suite as in a house.

Still it would seem that in a rapidly advancing place like Winnipeg the "pros" for apartment blocks far outweigh the "cons". House rent is undoubtedly high here and, if money can be saved by taking a suite, and spent in the shops, they would appear to be a distinct benefit from an economic standpoint. Such families, too, who cannot afford hired help reap an advantage for there is less housework in a suite than in a house. It must indeed be a boon to an unaided housewife to have no stairs to run up and down and, of course, the convenience of having one's "house" on one flat must remain undoubted. There is also another advantage which will appear to men, namely, the trouble saved by having heating arrangements provided.

Abridged from *Manitoba Free Press*, 6 December 1906

Winnipeg's Second Real Estate Boom

Winnipeg's real estate first attracted the interest of speculators in the early 1880s as the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway promised to inflate property values. After the collapse of that boom, interest languished for several decades until the turn of the century. Increasing immigration, advancing agricultural settlement, strong commodity prices, and a prosperous international economy made Winnipeg a dynamic centre of regional growth. Investors wanted a piece of the action.

For those with some cash to spare, investing in real estate in the early twentieth century was like investing in the stock market today: they pursued capital gains. Some times for only a few dollars the speculator could buy a lot in one of many attractively promoted subdivisions and hope that the demand from prospective home builders and other speculators would drive up prices in the area. Only a few buyers had any intention of building a home. Most of the developments promoted during the second boom were on the edges of the city; the first boom (and bust) had spread real estate ownership in central areas of the city widely among many (often disappointed) owners, so that land assembly for large-scale promotions was expensive.

Figure 1.14 Real Estate Advertisements

The developments advertised below in 1906 were typical of pre-war promotions. Some offered "a millionaire's advice" to investors, promising "a chance to make a fortune". Because of their distance from the city centre, what most anticipated was the demand for working-class housing that would derive from railroad and industrial development.

The boom burst in the recession of 1913. As construction activity stalled, business failures increased, and unemployment rose, real estate values, especially in outlying districts plummeted, again hurting many small investors gambling on the future.

Homes for the Middle Class

Figure 1.15 Unidentified middle-class house, 1915

This unidentified house, built according to a side-hall floor plan repeated over and over again through the West End, Fort Rouge, and the North End, was a standard style for lower middle-class and better-off working-class families. Such dwellings had wide screened-in verandas and full basements with furnaces. On the main floor were the living room, dining room and kitchen, while upstairs were three bedrooms and bathroom, and often an attic finished for another two bedrooms. In 1906, depending on location, a house like this would have sold for \$3,000 to \$5,000 and rented for \$40 to \$50 a month.

Figure 1.16 Street in the Wolseley neighbourhood

Development began in the Wolseley area in 1906 and 1907. The houses typically cost between \$5,000 and \$8,000 for those built according to standard builders' plans, which were repeated frequently through the district, while larger and more elegant houses specially designed, of course, sold for more.

COMMERCIAL CENTRE

JUST WHAT YOU ARE AFTER
THE GOLDEN NUGGET OF THE WEST

LOOK, HERE IT IS:

\$40
PER
LOT

\$2.00
CASH
—
\$2.00
PER
MONTH

TORRENS
TITLE

\$40
PER
LOT

\$2.00
CASH
—
\$2.00
PER
MONTH

TORRENS
TITLE

Study the map, it speaks for itself, and you will see how favorably this subdivision is located.

HERE'S A CHANCE TO MAKE A FORTUNE

This is what we want to teach you. Take \$3.00 and buy a lot in Commercial Centre, in this the best situated new subdivision, which is located just north of the C.P.R. shops and yards and close to Jim Hill's transfer tracks and the following factories, which are already located here (and there are hundreds more coming) The Dominion Bridge Co., Sherwin William Paint Co., McGregor Wire Fence Co., Northwestern Foundry Co., Western Canneries Co., Ltd., and with the C.P.R. enlarging their shops, at the least there will be twenty thousand men employed within easy walking distance of COMMERCIAL CENTRE.

Fancy in nineteen months you will have a Torrens Title to one of these lots by a payment of \$2.00 per month; and at the very lowest estimate, by then, they will be worth at the very least double. What bank would pay you interest like this.

ACT QUICK! FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED.
WRITE OR WIRE AT OUR EXPENSE.
LOTS WILL BE ALLOTTED IN ORDER AS RECEIVED.

These lots are only on offer AT THIS PRICE for FOURTEEN DAYS. Office open from eight to nine o'clock evenings.

THE HACKETT LAND CO.

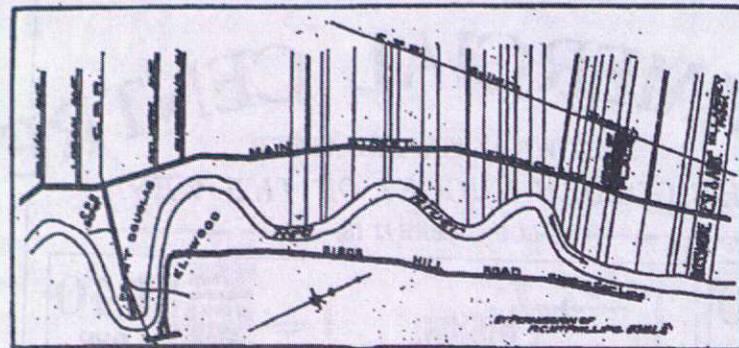
DAVID REID & COMPANY

828 UNION BANK
TELEPHONE 807

22 STANLEY BLK.
TELEPHONE 3074

1.14: Real Estate Ad, 1906

AINSLIE PLACE



Prices \$80.00, \$90.00, and \$100.00

Terms \$10 Cash and \$5 Per Month; or One-Third Cash, Balance 8, 12 and 18 Months

No Interest on Deferred Payments. No Taxes for '06 and '07

YOU do not need to be told the desirability of investment in good real estate in rapidly developing localities. Always recognized as the safest and most conservative of investments, it is now regarded as one of the most profitable as well.

A MILLIONAIRE'S ADVICE to young men: "If I were a young man anxious for independence, I would invest my savings in a small piece of Real Estate. When I had it paid for I would put the deed away and forget I had it. Then I would begin paying on another."

AINSLIE PLACE not only meets the wishes of the WAGE-EARNER, seeking a home of his own, but is also an attraction for the INVESTOR, who wishes to turn his purchase over quickly at a reasonable margin of profit, or later on at a still greater advance.

AINSLIE PLACE fronts on Main Street, and is served by an electric car line passing the property. The lots are all 26 feet in width and 124 feet (a splendid depth), to a 18-foot lane. The streets are standard width, 60 feet, and the farthest lot is not more than two blocks from the street cars on Main.

WE ARE GLAD to announce being able to place these lots upon the market at prices 20 per cent. less than at first proposed, and 50 per cent. less than similar property within the same radius.

OUR REFERENCE: Thousands of satisfied clients, men and women, in all walks of life, who in the last fifteen years have put their trust in us. Their investments have proven profitable, and they are quite willing to speak of the satisfactory outcome of their dealings with us. They are still not only our friends but our patrons, as we shall be glad of an opportunity to number you among them.

WE STILL REQUIRE a few more energetic agents in leading towns throughout the Dominion, both east and west, and are now open to receive applications for these positions.

FOR THE WHOLESALE

We have some splendid propositions in warehouses with truck facilities, and warehouse sites in desirable wholesale and shipping locations. Ask us for particulars.

Prospective Buyers in AINSLIE PLACE

Applications for lots in this subdivision will be treated strictly in the order in which they are received, and our best judgment will be exercised in filling those from outside points.

FOR THE HOMESSEEKER

An excellent choice of residences ranging in value from \$1,000 to \$20,000; and building lots from \$80 to \$5,000. Shall be glad to know your particular requirements.

D. A. MACKENZIE CO.

409 ASHDOWN BLOCK, PHONE 1814 P.O. Box 596 WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

NOTRE DAME AVENUE
IS INDUSTRIAL WINNIPEG'S MAIN
THOROUGHFARE

ALANDALE IS ON NOTRE DAME AVENUE

Within 15 Minutes

from C. P. R. Shops, from G. N. R. Shops, from the Dominion Bridge Co., from The Manitoba Ceylon Co., and from several other important factories, projected and now under construction.

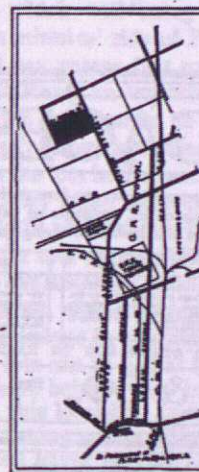
Thousands of families must find homes in this centre of industry. It is the best-located spot for a working man's home. Get in now at far less than half the price you will have to pay in 12 months. These lots are having a rapid sale, simply because they are the best property value in this district.

Block Pavement

is now built up in this estate, and Street Cars are carried next season.

Double Car Track

on Notre Dame is slated for next season, and this splendid thoroughfare will be asphalted, 72 feet wide, right out to city limits.



West in Winnipeg

is attracting more attention from shrewd investors than any other part of the city. Why? Because industrial property always yields a better return than is got from purely residential districts.

Street Railways

converging or crowding to have provide manufacturers with better shipping facilities than any other spot in the city, and consequently property here is in great demand, and it will not be available at all in the course of a few months.

Street Improvements

are being hastened with all the energy the city can command. In fact the Works Department cannot keep pace with the demands of the district. Every possible improvement and convenience is being rapidly carried into this essentially working-class quarter.

The Manufacturing Centre of Winnipeg Must Move Westward

Truck facilities can be obtained near the Alandale Estate, where larger blocks of land are available for industrial establishments than in any other section of the city. In this part of Winnipeg there will shortly be found, in full operation, a distinct railway system, viz. the C. P. R. and G. N. R. (which have been in existence for some time). The C. P. R. has bought a right-of-way, and in its progress westward the outstanding Grand Trunk Pacific must surely find its way through this promising neighborhood.

Prices \$90 up; Terms \$10 Cash, \$5 Per Month
Or 1/3 Cash, Balance in 1 and 2 Years. Special Prices to Purchasers of 10 or More Lots

STANBRIDGE, McKIM & CO.
ROOM 12 GRUNDY BLOCK
432 MAIN STREET

[illegible]

Aptly described, owing to its beautiful oak trees, a choice residential subdivision, lying between the **BIRD'S HILL ROAD** and the **RED RIVER**, being part of D. G. S. 48 St. John, in the city of Winnipeg. **OAKVILLE** is located in the best part of **ELMWOOD**, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the post office, and adjacent to the projected **REDWOOD BRIDGE**, which will bring this property within ten minutes' ride of Portage avenue. The street car passes this property on the Bird's Hill Road, an important main thoroughfare, too well known to need description. This frontage is offered from \$21 per foot, while the lots in the rear thereof, which are beautifully treed with oak, are priced at \$17 and \$18 per foot frontage.

The river lots on the **RED RIVER**, and facing the **CRESCENT ROAD**, are for sale at \$675 per lot, without question the cheapest River frontage in Winnipeg. Several of the inside lots can be had at \$12 and \$13 per foot frontage, being away below anything for sale in this locality. Inside lots are 25x 108, those facing on the **Bird's Hill Road** and the **Red River** varying from 30 to 35 ft. frontage to 130 to 200 ft. in depth.

Terms are one-third cash, balance in one and two years; or one-quarter cash, balance in 6, 12 and 18 months at 6 per cent. per annum. **TORRENS TITLE.** Agreement and transfer free. Plans can be seen at the offices of the Company, and will be forwarded to outside points on request.

Offices open for remainder of week in the evening from 8 to 10 o'clock.

**First National Realty
Co., Ltd.**

485 Main Street.

Phone 1733.

1.14: Real Estate Ad, 1906

1.14: Real Estate Ad, 1906



1.15: Unidentified Middle-class House, 1915



1.16: Street in Wolseley Neighbourhood

The families in the neighbourhood were comfortably well-off, as the majority of family heads were better-paid commercial workers, followed in number by professional men, merchants, and managers. Not surprisingly, at least two thirds of single-family dwellings were owner-occupied by World War One. As well, ninety-five per cent of family heads were Canadian, British, or American background.

Housing for Working People

Finding affordable shelter challenged many working people in the years before the first war. In 1913 social reformer J.S. Woodsworth estimated that the most basic accommodation, a five-roomed cottage without a basement, rented in Winnipeg for \$240 a year and cost another \$100 for heat, light, and water. Skilled workingmen, especially those with better paying jobs with the railroad, could settle their families into bungalows and two storey houses, but many labourers and seasonally employed workers, Woodsworth estimated, earned barely half of what they needed for shelter, food, and clothing.

Housing options for the working-class varied throughout the city.

Figure 1.17 *Along the Red River in the North End, ca. 1900*

North of the tracks, working families found cheap lots and often cheaply built dwellings. This view, near the place where the Redwood bridge now crosses the Red River, shows how thinly developed this edge of the city was at the beginning of the century. In this picture the houses are a mix of small and larger frame dwellings, a reflection of the socially diverse population in the area. Residents included employees of the Redwood Brewery, which was located a bit farther north, as well as labourers, tradesmen, and a few small businessmen. Over the next decade the area filled in with housing and linked up with another residential cluster.

Figure 1.18 *Self-built shanty in the North End, 1910*

Behind the milk wagon stands a small shanty. Neatly clad in clapboards, the main section probably was a later addition to the rear part. A small garden may have separated the dwelling from the even smaller shack that served as a boot and shoe repair shop.

Figure 1.19 *Typical working-class housing in the North End, Burrows Avenue*

The real estate boom touched the North End as it did the rest of the city. In 1906 the *Manitoba Free Press* explained:

Lots ... were inexpensive, and numbers of workmen secured locations, erecting such structures as their limited means would allow. The demand was also for an inexpensive house which could be rented for a small sum, the result being that large numbers of small buildings were erected on every street from the tracks northward. In the years 1904 and 1905 entire blocks of cottages were built and were immediately rented to the hundreds of workmen who made their homes in this portion of the city.

Manitoba Free Press, 6 December 1906



1.17: Along the Red River in the North End, ca. 1900



1.18: Self-built Shanty in the North End, 1910



1.19: Burrows Avenue

Figure 1.24 "Pretty Little Cottages," Simcoe Street
Whether these are the "casualty arranged" homes on Simcoe Street described in a
Free Press article in 1905 is not certain. But they are of the same sort: small cottages
constructed as rental units. Speculative builders like J.H. Alexander, erected such
dwellings to let and used the cash flow from the rent to finance the construction of other
properties for sale or rent.

Many were built in developments intended for working-class buyers or tenants.
South and West Ends of the city, almost three quarters of them modern frame dwellings.
World War One Between 1900 and 1912 approximately 2750 houses were built in the
In the West and South Ends of the city new housing construction boomed before

Figure 1.20 Collapsed Brick Foundation, 1912
Many houses for working-class occupants were built quickly and cheaply during
the prewar boom with little regard for safety or sound construction. Over a thousand
were built between 1900 and 1912 without foundations. A foundation, however, did not
guarantee sound construction. The City of Winnipeg Department of Health captioned this
photograph with these words: Collapsed brick foundation, 1912. "Cellar walls of single
brick set on edge 2 ft in thick. Caved in shortly after construction. Plumbing froze
House closed in January. Collapsed."

Figure 1.20 *Collapsed Brick Foundation, 1912*

Many houses for working-class occupants were built quickly and cheaply during the prewar boom with little regard for safety or sound construction. Over a thousand were built between 1900 and 1912 without foundations. A foundation, however, did not guarantee sound construction. The City of Winnipeg Department of Health captioned this photograph with these words: Collapsed brick foundation, 1912: "Cellar walls of single brick set on edge (2 ½ in. thick). Caved in shortly after construction. Plumbing froze. House closed as insanitary. Cellar since rebuilt."

Figure 1.21 *Redwood Avenue*

But farther north larger homes were increasingly built on streets like Redwood, Mountain, and College, among others. "Redwood avenue is rapidly being converted into one of the most attractive residential streets in the north end." (*Manitoba Free Press*, 6 December 1906.)

Housing in older areas, in the centre of the city, quickly became overcrowded and deteriorated. Few owners were willing to put money into rental properties that could soon be redeveloped as commercial property. The City's Department of Health regularly exposed the congestion and dangers of working-class housing.

Figure 1.22 *Twelve-room Dwelling, 1913*

"Dwelling consisting of 12 small rooms; found occupied by five families and boarders – 12 adults and 11 children. Two water-closets and two sinks; three water taps placed in bedrooms for extra plumbing. Mean height of upper rooms 6 ft. 7 ins. Closing notices served."

Figure 1.23 *Six Rooms, Fifteen Residents, 1914*

"Old six-roomed dwelling, found occupied by four families—eight adults and seven children; premises overcrowded. Cases of scarlet fever and diphtheria have occurred in this house. Occupants reduced once previously."

In the West and South Ends of the city new housing construction boomed before World War One. Between 1900 and 1912 approximately 2750 houses were built in the South and West Ends of the city, almost three quarters of them modern frame dwellings. Many were built in developments intended for working-class buyers or tenants.

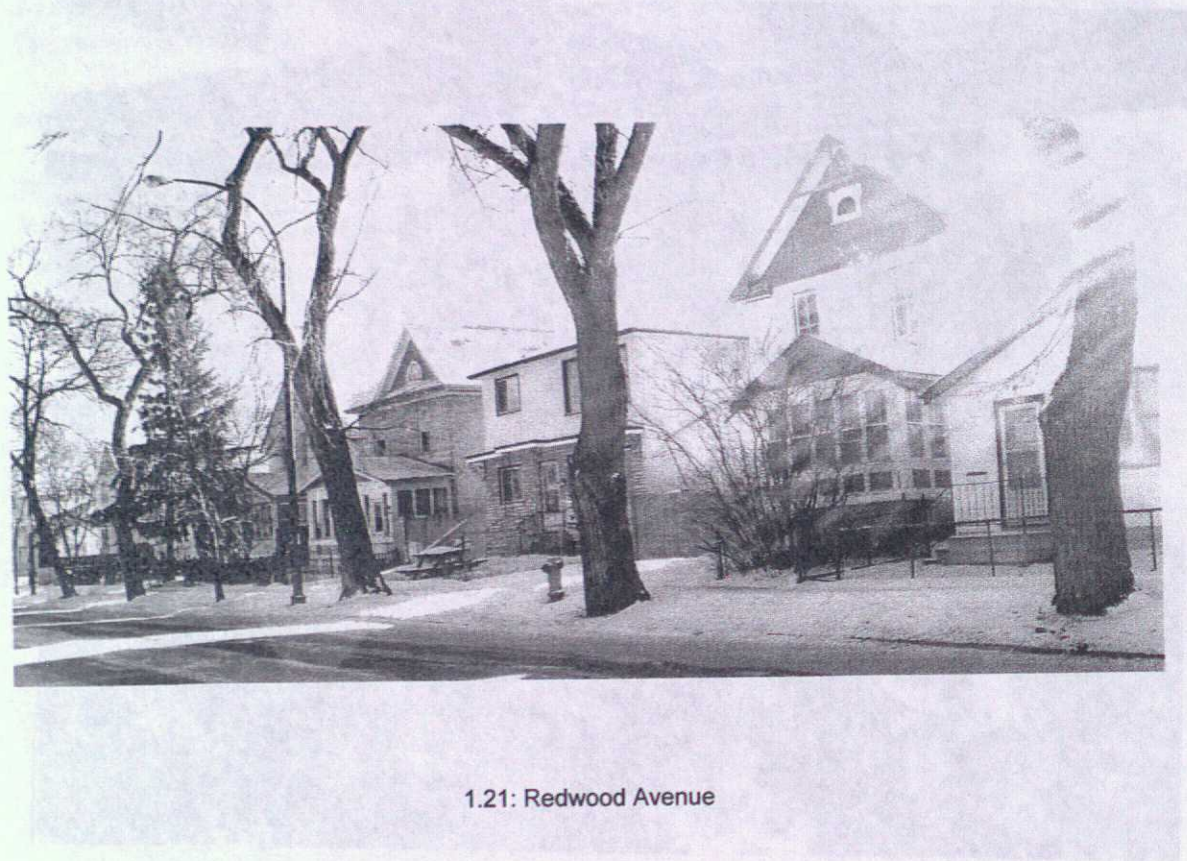
Figure 1.24 *"Pretty Little Cottages", Simcoe Street*

Whether these are the "tastily arranged" homes on Simcoe Street described in a *Free Press* article in 1906 is not certain. But they are of the same sort: small cottages constructed as rental units. Speculative builders, like J.H. Alexander, erected such dwellings to let and used the cash flow from the rent to finance the construction of other properties for sale or rent.



1.20: Collapsed Brick Foundation, 1912

1.22: Twelve Room Dwelling, 1913



1.21: Redwood Avenue



1.22: Twelve Room Dwelling, 1913



1.23: Six Rooms, Fifteen Residents, 1914



1.24: "Pretty Little Cottages", Simcoe Street

"Good Houses at Moderate Cost"

J.H. Alexander, of 332 Simcoe street, a well known contractor and builder of the city, has just completed a row of pretty little cottages on Simcoe street of which he is justly proud and which he is not afraid to recommend to families desiring comfortable and inexpensive homes. These cottages are eight in number and are built on 25 foot lots. Each one is divided into six conveniently laid out apartments, consisting of parlor, dining room, hallway, kitchen and two bedrooms. There is besides this a full-sized basement. The cottages are fitted up with sewer, water, electric light and all modern conveniences. The interiors are built and arranged for comfort and the same idea has been kept prominently in view in arranging the outside surroundings. Each of these handsome little homes is provided with a neatly sodded front door yard giving to them a cosy and homelike appearance. They will rent for \$22 a month.

Mr. Alexander has been building homes in Winnipeg now for some years and in different parts of the city. He is convinced, however, that greatest need of the city is for small tastily arranged homes at small cost. This idea he has followed out in the cottages referred to above, and he declares it to be his intention to do more of this class of building in the future.

Manitoba Free Press, 6 December 1906.

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Chapter 2 In the Suburbs

Planned or unplanned, within the city limits or just outside, suburbs have been parts of Winnipeg almost from its beginning. Families who could not afford accommodation within the city proper, or who rejected its quality of life, have sought alternate housing and different life styles beyond what had already been built. Farther from the centre, they more easily bought homes, even if for a time they gave up in exchange some services and amenities and accepted longer journeys to work and greater isolation for women raising children and maintaining the household.

This suburban bargain has more or less been a constant over the last century. What have changed are the characteristics of those families willing to accept the terms and the types of housing that were built in the suburbs.

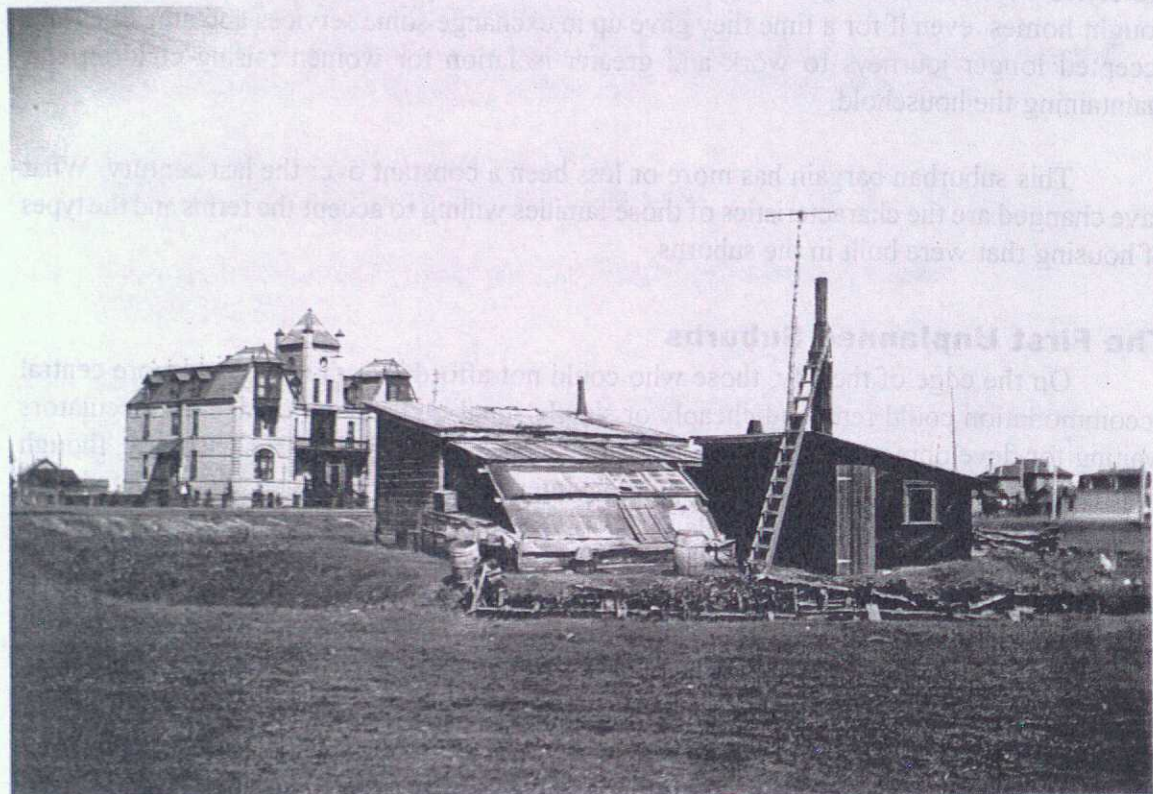
The First Unplanned Suburbs

On the edge of the city, those who could not afford it or did not want more central accommodation could rent land cheaply or simply squat on property owned by speculators waiting for development to expand outwards. Small self-built shacks such as these, though unattractive, could be relatively warm in the winter, heated with a stove and insulated with earth banked against the outside walls.

Figure 2.1 *Shanty on Portage Avenue between Sherbrook and Maryland Streets, ca. 1900*

This shanty, across from the Provincial Institute for the Deaf and Dumb, was the home of Francis Ambler, an immigrant from England, who lived here from the mid-1880s into the first decade of the next century. Originally just the structure on the left, he added on to it in the 1890s and in 1902 the City assessed its value as just \$100. The trenches provided drainage since the dwelling was below the road grade; a ladder leaned against the building was a precaution against chimney fires. A market gardener, Ambler rented the six acres upon which his self-built shack rested from John A. Hick, a local dry goods dealer.

Figure 2.2 *Shack built of scavenged materials, ca. 1906*



2.1: Shanty on Portage Avenue between Sherbrook and Maryland Streets, ca. 1900



2.2: Shack Built from Scavenged Material, ca. 1906

Source: *The Voice*, 30 March 1906 (Abridged)

SHACK

In Fort Rouge, lot and all, for sale on easy terms. Only \$450. A nice investment.

Batten & Co.
227 Curry Building

Figure 2.3 Facsimile of Real Estate Advertisement 1919

Moving out, Moving up

Modest as this self-built house is, its owners' pride is obvious from their desire for this family portrait and in the landscaping and well-tended garden. The location of this house is unknown, but hundreds like it were built—and remain—throughout neighbourhoods in the northeast, north, and west of the city that were suburbs before World War One.

Figure 2.4 Unidentified couple in front of their home, ca. 1910

This house had an electrical service, but many did not. Indeed, for many homeowners the attraction of building on the city's edge or just beyond was the freedom to avoid building regulations, city water and sewer services, and restrictions on keeping animals. Not having to conform to rules put the cost of owning and maintaining a house within the reach of many working-class families.

With time residents in neighbourhoods just outside the Winnipeg limits became divided in their opinions of urban services: some wanted them, some did not. The Municipality of Kildonan, for example, was only too glad in 1906 and 1907 when the City annexed Elmwood on the east side of the Red River and the Lincoln and Dominion Park subdivisions just north of Inkster Boulevard on the west side. Not all residents welcomed joining the city, however.

THEY WILL COME IN Lincoln Parkites Vote for Annexation with City

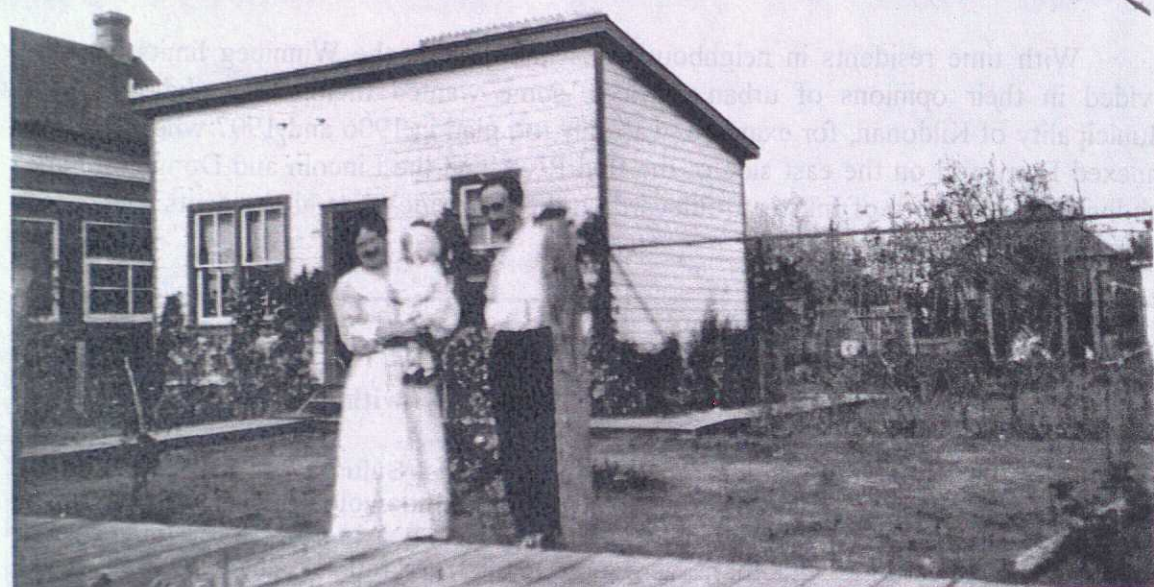
The vote of the Lincoln and Dominion park residents last Saturday on the questions of annexation was decisive. They will come in. The effect of the vote will be to cut a slice off Kildonan, but this the Kildonan municipal council will not regret, as its duties and responsibilities toward the settlement were more than a rural municipality cares for.

There were doubtless a considerable number of residents opposed to joining with the city. These were principally the smaller property owners. Quite a few have during the past year bought a lot in the Lincoln Park district and their house hauled from different portions of the north end. This has been done in order to evade the demand for immediate installation of plumbing etc. These, of course, were opposed to joining the city as they will again come within the sweep of the health officer's notices.

Source: *The Voice*, 30 March 1906. (Abridged)

Figure 2.5 The Osler residence, 485 Wollington Crescent

Hugh F. Osler, an investment banker, spent \$30,000 to have 485 Wollington Crescent built in 1909. After he returned from military service in the first war, he and his wife moved



2.4: Unidentified Couple in Front of their Home, ca. 1910

During October and November we were threatened with what might be termed an epidemic of cows in Elmwood. No fewer than 33 persons who had kept cows out on the prairie during the summer brought them into their own premises and stabled them in old sheds, poultry houses and other buildings quite unsuitable for such a purpose. It therefore became necessary for the Department to insist that these animals be removed and they were removed except in one case where the owner made his stable comply with the by-law. Forty-two cows, twenty-nine horses and three goats were removed during the year.

Source: City of Winnipeg, Department of Health. *Annual Report for 1917*. pp. 40-1.

Crescentwood: Winnipeg's First Planned Suburb

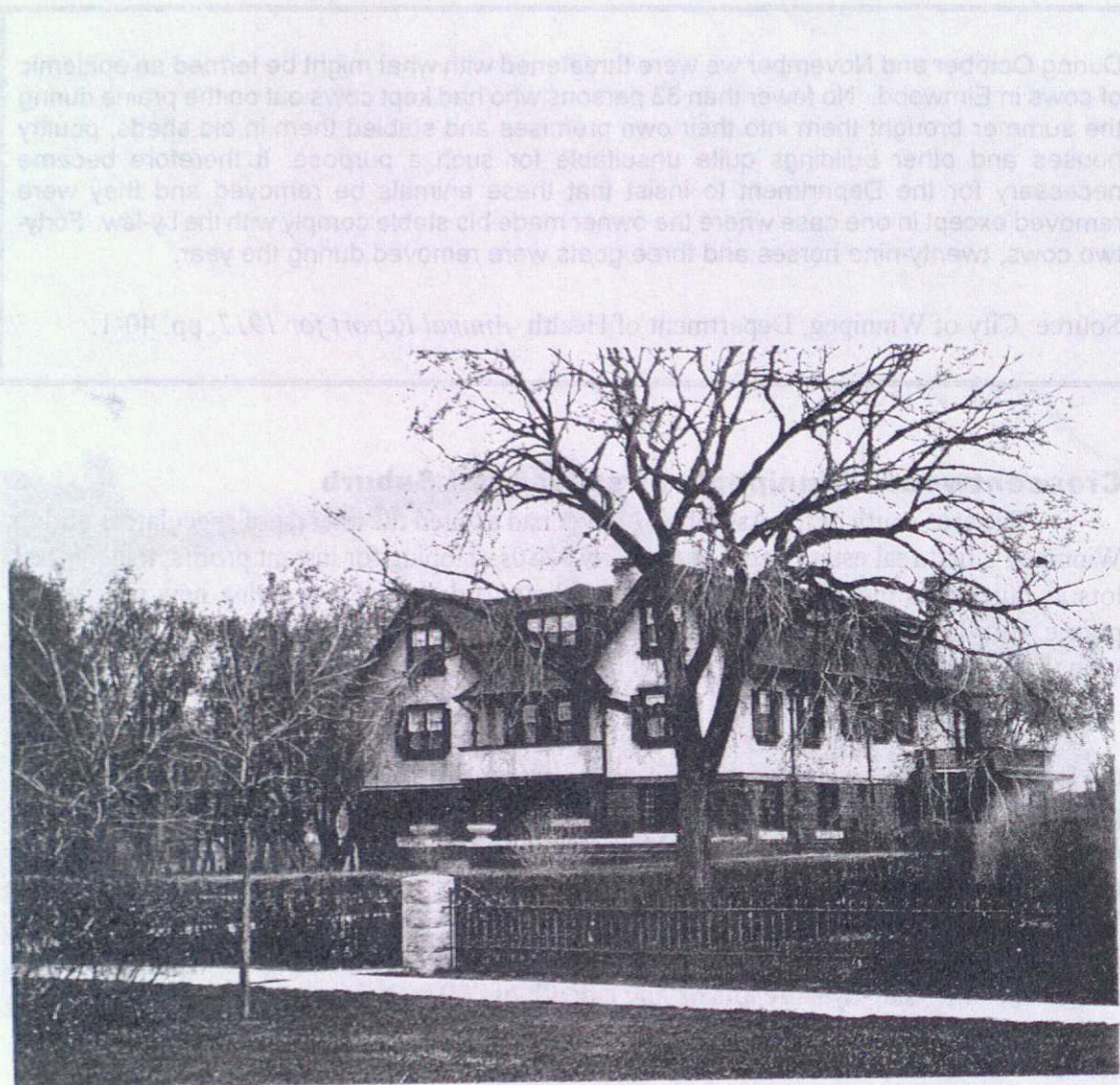
The area south of the Assiniboine River had excited the interest of speculators during Winnipeg's first real estate boom in the early 1880s. Hoping for instant profits, they flipped lots as quickly as they could, encouraging others to dream of a growing new city on the prairie. But the bubble burst in 1882 and many were left financially ruined and disenchanted with the immediate prospects for profits in real estate.

In 1902 C.H. Enderton decided that the time was right to revive interest in development in this area of the city. His project, Crescentwood, was Winnipeg's first suburb planned and developed on a grand scale and the first one to be given a name. The *Manitoba Free Press* of 13 September 1902 described the ambition of its developer to fill the neighbourhood with "the most attractive residences of Winnipeg." The report went on: Wellington Crescent "is being widened to a hundred feet. For its whole distance of about two miles this Avenue will be lined on one side by river lots having a depth of 300 feet or more, and on the other side by large lots having a depth of 200 to 300 feet, which will be sold with building conditions." Those conditions required houses to be built well back from the street and set minimum construction costs of at least \$10,000 for houses on 300 foot lots, \$6,000 for houses on the other side Crescent and no less than \$4000 to \$3,500 elsewhere in the development, depending on location.

These restrictions, Enderton hoped, would maintain the exclusive character of his suburb. Optimistically he had expected sales and building to proceed quickly. While speculators soon bought up many of the lots, construction developed more slowly and after the First World War inflation meant that builders could satisfy the conditions on construction costs with much smaller, though still up-market, houses.

Figure 2.5 The Osler residence, 485 Wellington Crescent

Hugh F. Osler, an investment banker, spent \$20,000 to have 485 Wellington Crescent built in 1909. After he returned from military service in the first war, he and his wife moved



2.5: The Osler Residence, 485 Wellington Crescent

to a larger residence on Roslyn Road. The house was demolished in 1981.

Figure 2.6 Ground Floor Plan, 485 Wellington Crescent

The room arrangement provided space for formal entertaining, family intimacy, and separation from the servants. The central hall tied together the living room and the dining room, combining a large space to receive guests on formal occasions with a cozy nook beside the fireplace for quiet relaxation. The large living room opened to a tiled terrace and verandah where guests could mingle in the warmer months. The working space—the pantry, kitchen, storage room and service entry—was in a separate wing, where the servants could remain in their hall until called. A stairway off the kitchen led up to the servants' bedrooms on the top floor.

Figure 2.7 First Floor Plan, 485 Wellington Crescent

The sleeping quarters for the family assured private space for relaxation in the den or in the summer on one of several balconies. The nursery at the back may seem rather distant from the master bedroom, but the family probably employed a nursemaid who slept in the nursery and thus needed to be at a respectable distance.

Figure 2.8 Living Room, 485 Wellington Crescent

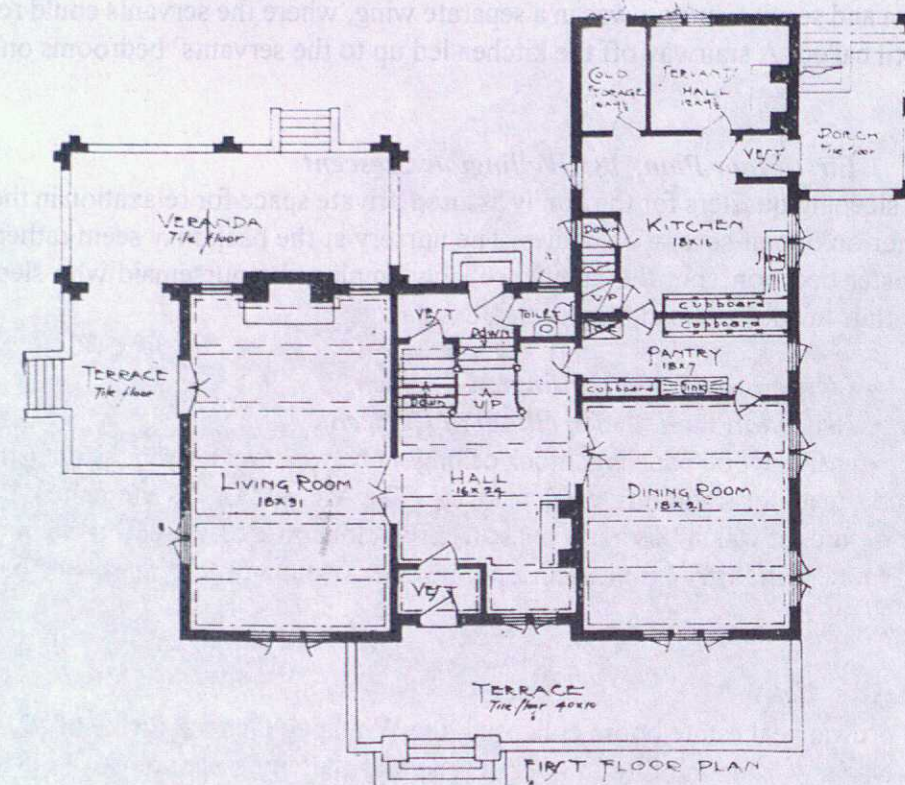
Figure 2.9 Reception Hall, 485 Wellington Crescent

The extensive wood paneling, mock ceiling timbers, and joinery in the balustrade trim and expressed a taste for traditional craftsmanship. The Arts and Crafts Movement in interior and exterior design, of which this house was an expression, offered those whose affluence was a product of modern industrial capitalism a domestic environment that hearkened back to an earlier era.

Between the Wars

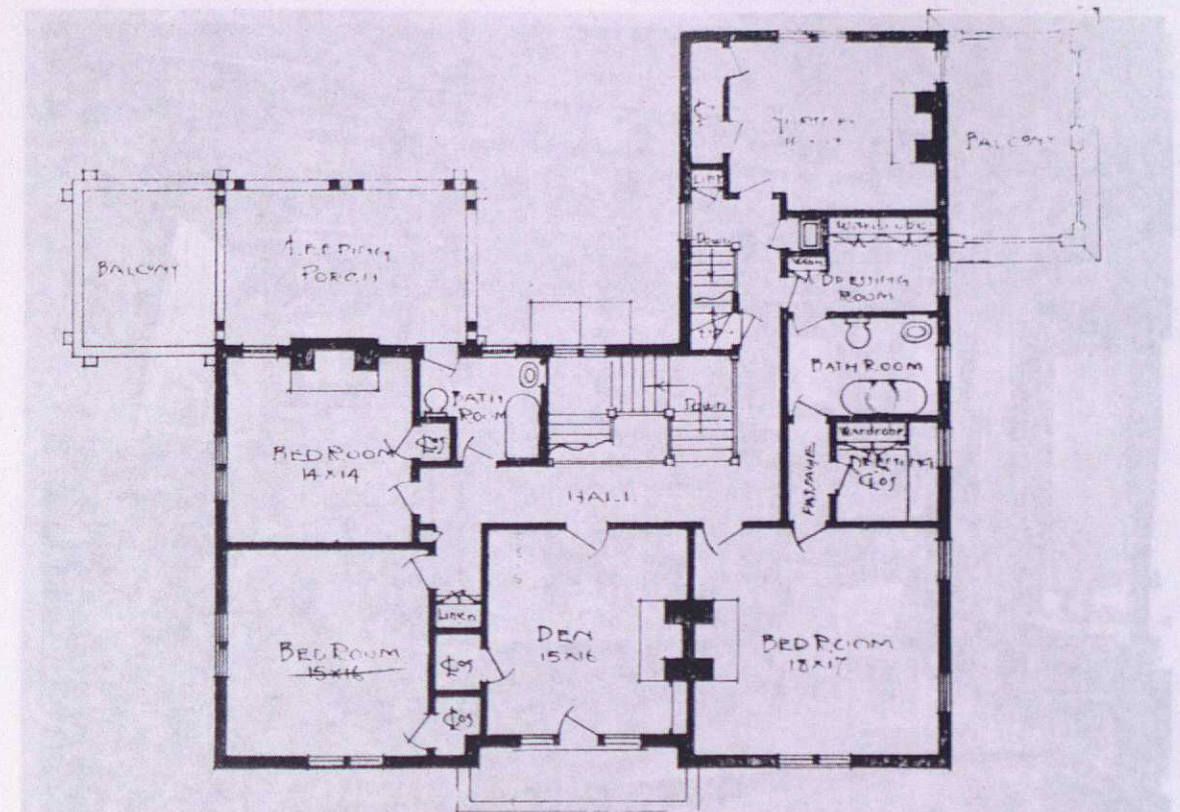
The prewar real estate boom collapsed, the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919 deeply divided the city's workers and its business class, and the city's economy, like that of the country, struggled into the Depression of the 1930s. Recovery came only with the stimulus of massive government expenditures during the Second World War and the prosperity that followed it.

Despite the difficult economic times, the suburbs, inside and outside the city boundary, still attracted a wide range of residents, from prosperous businessmen and professionals to the marginally employed and struggling working people, and all sorts in between. But even though Tuxedo—promoted before the first war as the "Suburb Beautiful"—continued to appeal to "the most discriminating citizens of this generation", its developers sadly found fewer buyers than they had hoped for. Winnipeg's economy in the twenties and thirties just was not producing enough wealth to support a class like that which had populated Crescentwood earlier. Much more common suburban residents were the working-class and middle-class families who lived in small bungalows not far from the street car lines that extended to and beyond the city limits.



Ground Floor Plan, Residence of Hugh F. Osler, Winnipeg.
Herbert B. Rugh, Architect.

2.6: Ground Floor Plan, 485 Wellington Crescent

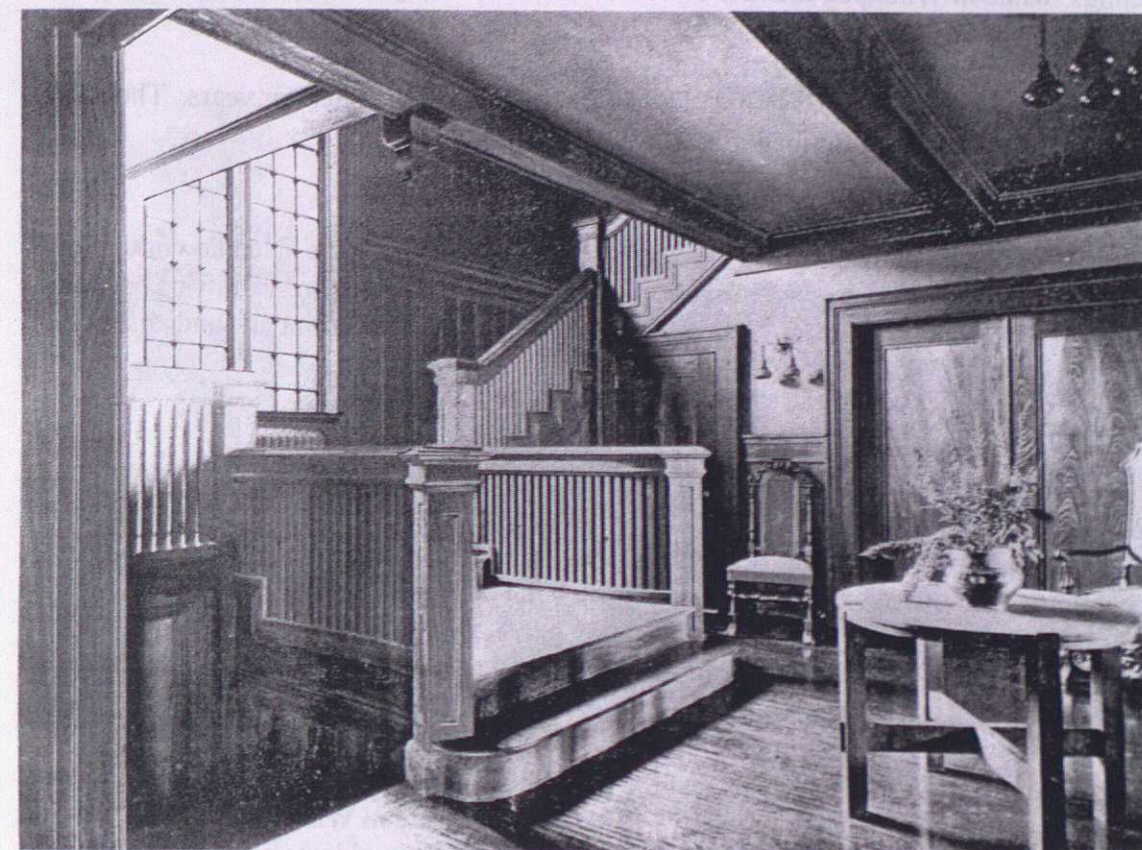


First Floor Plan, Residence of Hugh F. Osler, Winnipeg.
Herbert B. Rugh, Architect.

2.7: First Floor Plan, 485 Wellington Crescent



2.8: Living Room, 485 Wellington Crescent



2.9: Reception Hall, 485 Wellington Crescent

Extensive suburban development in Winnipeg, which was followed by a demand for the installation of public improvements, street grading and sidewalks, the installation of water and sewer services. In most of these suburban municipalities seventy-five per cent of the dwellings are assessed at less than \$1,000 in value, and it has been abundantly clear that these small houses cannot provide sufficient revenue to cover the public expenditures they necessitate.

Source: A.G. Datzell, *Housing in Canada*, vol. 1, *Housing in Relation*

In the suburbs, which now seem part of the city, families hoping for more security of shelter and lower costs could buy small houses, some no more than 600 or 700 square feet in living space, built on cheap land and taxed at lower rates than in the city. By 1941, despite the effects of the depression, suburban rates of home ownership were much higher than in Winnipeg. In Brooklands, perhaps the most unassuming of suburbs, eighty per cent of households were owner occupied. In East Kildonan, Fort Garry, St. James, and St. Vital owners occupied almost two-thirds of dwellings, while in Winnipeg the rate of home ownership was just forty-four per cent.

In the Suburbs

In neighbourhoods such as East and West Kildonan or St. Vital or Fort Garry, which now seem part of the city, families hoping for more security of shelter and lower costs could buy small houses, some no more than 600 or 700 square feet in living space, built on cheap land and taxed at lower rates than in the city. By 1941, despite the effects of the depression, suburban rates of home ownership were much higher than in Winnipeg. In Brooklands, perhaps the most unassuming of suburbs, eighty per cent of households were owner occupied. In East Kildonan, Fort Garry, St. James, and St. Vital owners occupied almost two-thirds of dwellings, while in Winnipeg the rate of home ownership was just forty-four per cent.

Figure 2.10 "Show Home", 1922

The bungalow was the symbol of home owner pride in the interwar years. The owner of this one built in 1922 described it as a "Show Home".

Figure 2.11 Living Room, 1944

This 1944 living room was a private space to share with guests. Needlework pillows and floral arrangements displayed the skill of the woman of the house in beautifying her home. Family portraits and a crucifix over the door reminded family members and visitors of important values.

Figure 2.12 Front Yard, 1940

A well-trimmed lawn, young shade trees, border shrubs, and floral window boxes demonstrated an orderly and respectable home life to all who passed by this house in 1940. As lovely as this front yard was, viewers could appreciate how much discipline and hard work were required to command nature to bring forth such beauty in a harsh climate.

Figure 2.13 West Kildonan Bungalows built in 1920 and 1930

Figure 2.14 West Kildonan Bungalows built in the 1920s

So popular were the suburbs that the population of the suburban municipalities grew by more than forty per cent from 1921 to 1931, twice the rate in Winnipeg proper. But the tax base in those communities and the incomes of many of the residents remained too low to fund schools and municipal operations. One expert explained:

Excessive suburbanization and surplus of building lots has resulted in scattered building development [in Winnipeg], which was followed by a demand for the installation of public improvements, street grading and sidewalks, the installation of water and sewer services. In most of these suburban municipalities seventy-five per cent of the dwellings are assessed at less than \$1,000 in value, and it has been abundantly clear that these small houses cannot provide sufficient revenue to cover the public expenditures they necessitate.

Source: A.G. Dalzell, *Housing in Canada, vol. 1, Housing in Relation*



2.10: "Show Home", 1922

2.12: Front Yard, 1940
2.11: Living Room, 1944



2.11: Living Room, 1944



2.12: Front Yard, 1940

2.14: West Kildonan Dungeons built in the 1920s



2.13: West Kildonan Bungalows Built in 1920 and 1930



2.14: West Kildonan Bungalows Built in the 1920s

to Land Development. (Toronto: Social Service Council of Canada, 1927), p. 20.

In 1921 because of financial deficits, Transcona was placed under provincial administration. In 1925 so too were St. James, St. Vital, and East Kildonan. Even Tuxedo, which retained its autonomy, experienced difficulties in collecting taxes from its ratepayers.

Figure 2.15 St. Vital bungalows built in the 1920s

Figure 2.16 St. Vital bungalows built in the 1920s

Figure 2.17 Two of the thirty-two houses built in north Tuxedo between 1927 and 1929

"Heard of Rooster Town? It's Our Lost Suburb" *Winnipeg Tribune*, 20 December 1951

In the early years of the Depression of the 1930s, a number of homeless families, many of whom were destitute Métis, built small shacks illegally on the Canadian National Railways property and adjoining City-owned land just off Grant Boulevard. As well, as suburban development advanced in River Heights, other shack dwellers re-located to this area. The neighbourhood, now roughly between Weatherdon Avenue and the tracks from Cambridge to Rockwood Streets, became known as Rooster Town.

Figure 2.18 View of Rooster Town, March 1959

Over the next quarter century the number of squatters varied with economic conditions. By the 1950s at least thirty to fifty people clustered there in more than a dozen shacks. Many owned their homes, but some paid \$15 to \$20 a month rent. Most of the men worked seasonally as labourers, cutting sod, delivering coal, or performing other casual work, and collected relief from the City when unemployed. Their wives raised their children in two or three room shacks without running water, sewer connections, or other services.

Rooster Town became a public issue in the early 1950s. Parents moving into newly built homes in River Heights grew concerned about the infectious diseases to which Rooster Town children exposed their children attending Rockwood School.

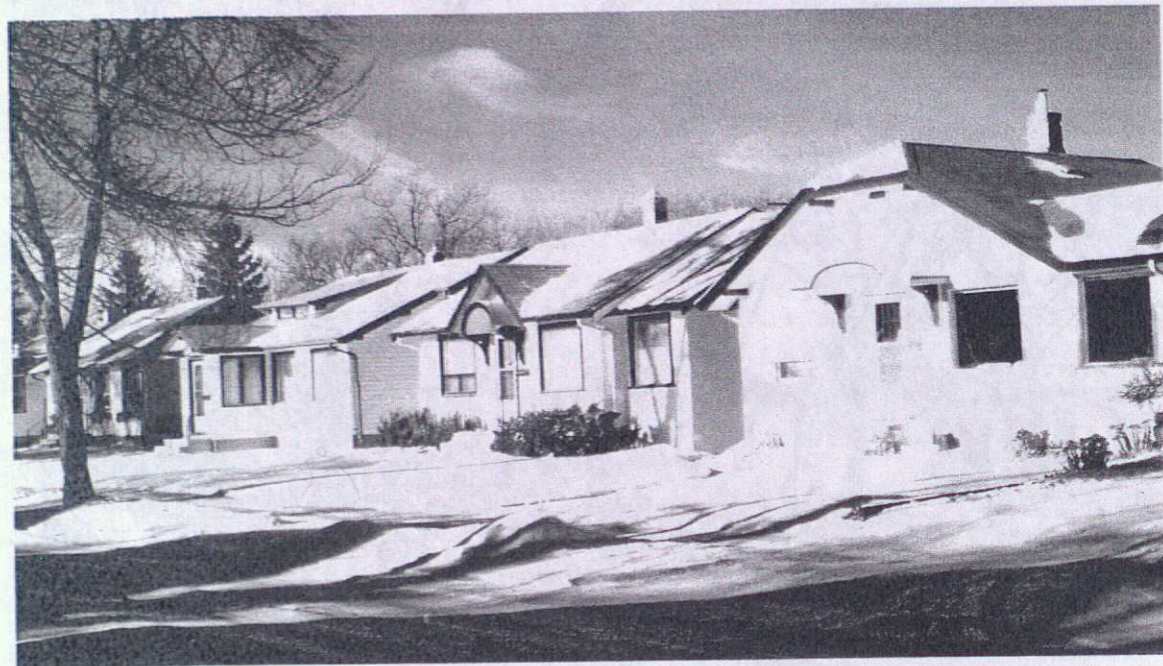
After fourteen children came to school with the skin disease impetigo in late 1951, a *Winnipeg Tribune* reporter wrote that parents warned their children, "Whatever you do..., don't touch the Rooster Town children. You might get a skin disease.' So the teacher calls for a group game and tells the children to join hands. Nobody would dare join hands with Rooster Town children."

In response, the City directed public health nurses and social workers to the community. Alternate housing was found for six or seven families in 1952, but many preferred to stay where they were.

Figure 2.19 Hauling Water in Rooster Town, December 1951



2.15: St. Vital Bungalows Built in the 1920s



2.16: St. Vital Bungalows Built in the 1920s



2.17: Two of the Thirty-two Houses Built in North Tuxedo between 1927 and 1929



2.18: View of Rooster Town, 1959

Figure 2.20 Rooster Town Water Cart, 80 cents a barrel, December 1951

The absence of running water made keeping clean and healthy difficult in Rooster Town. Families had to haul water three-quarters of a mile from a standpipe at the corner of Cambridge and Dudley. One mother confided that fetching water in winter was hard on her sons: "Last night they were pulling the sleigh home and crying with the cold and somebody on the way asked them is to get warm. The nine-year-old walked right in but the seven-year-old wouldn't—he's proud. When he got home his mitts were frozen stiff."

Figure 2.21 Standpipe in Brookland, January 1953

Many suburban areas like Rooster Town had no water services. Homeowners had to rely upon standpipes for drinking water. The standpipes were often located in the middle of the block around one of the houses. The standpipes were often considered an eyesore by the residents.

Figure 2.22



2.18: View of Rooster Town, 1959

Figure 2.24 South End of Rooster, 1953

After the Second World War the suburban municipalities around Winnipeg grew much more rapidly than did the city itself. The population of the suburbs more than tripled between 1941 and 1971, and by the latter year more people lived in the suburbs outside the city than in it.

Figure 2.25 Evening Rush-hour Traffic on Portage Avenue, November 1954

But many of suburbanites still worked in the city. Improved roads and bridges aided the automobile in pushing suburban development farther and farther. At the same time the



2.19: Hauling Water, 1951

Figure 2.20 *Rooster Town Water Cart, 80 cents a barrel, December 1951*

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Figure 2.21 *Standpipe in Brooklands, January 1960*

Many suburban areas, like Rooster Town, lacked water services. Householders had to rely upon standpipes for drinking water. The Brooklands municipal council responded to complaints about the hardship of filling pails in the winter cold by placing an old outhouse around one standpipe. Residents were deeply offended and refused to use what they considered an unsanitary and inappropriate enclosure.

Figure 2.22 *Some of the Last Residents of Rooster Town*

As new suburban tracts were built in the 1950s, housing conditions like in Rooster Town—and throughout the city there were similar, if smaller clusters of such homes—became socially and aesthetically unacceptable to property developers and new suburbanites. In the summer of 1959 the City offered the last fourteen families cash payments of \$50 to \$75 to move or face eviction proceedings. With the scheduled opening of Grant Park High School in September 1959 and plans for surrounding park area, Rooster Town and its social problems had no place in Winnipeg's suburbs.

The Postwar Suburban Dream

Figure 2.23 *Centennial Street, River Heights, 1951*

Rooster Town demonstrated that the edges of the city were not necessarily open prairie when middle-class subdivisions spread outwards. In many areas new development came into close contact with older, often deteriorating houses. Now we see the uniformity of developer-planned subdivisions, not the more diversified streetscapes that were replaced.

Figure 2.24 *South End of Kildonan Drive, June 1952*

After the Second World War the suburban municipalities around Winnipeg grew much more rapidly than did the city itself. The population of the suburbs more than tripled between 1941 and 1971, and by the latter year more people lived in the suburbs outside the city than in it.

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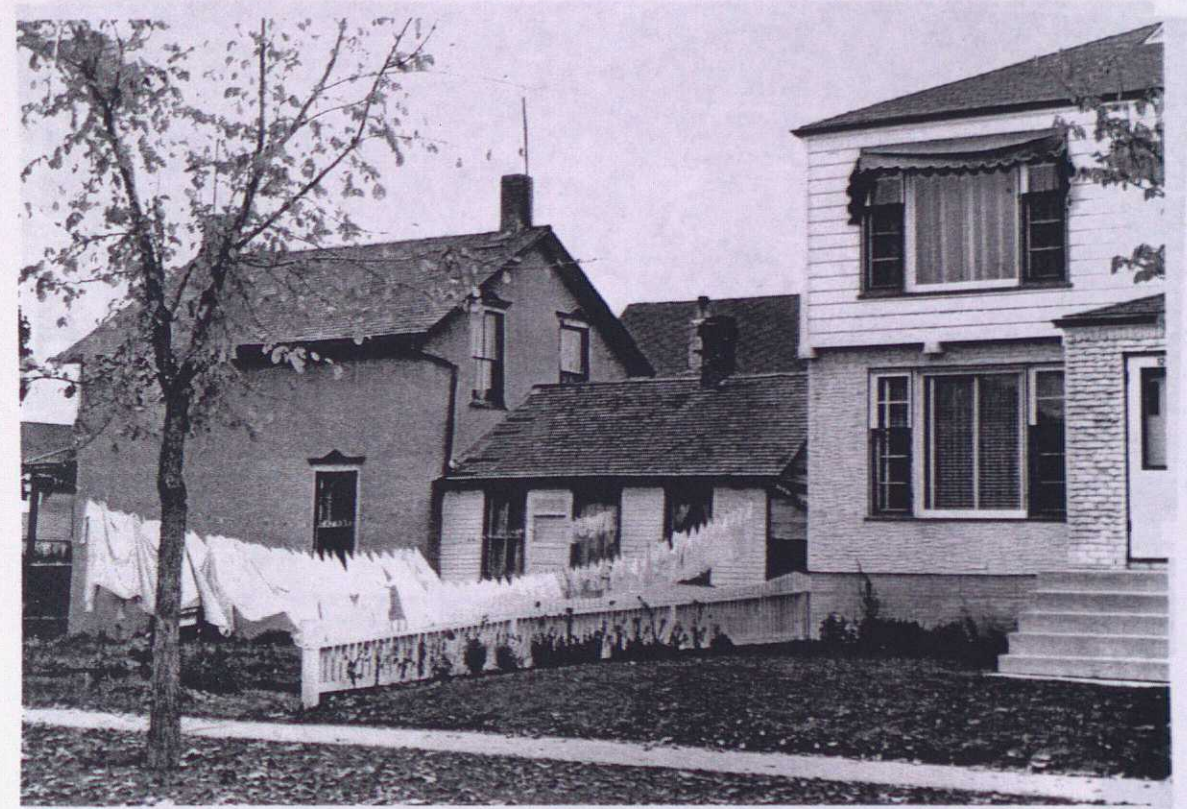
2.20: Rooster Town Water Cart, 1951



2.21: Standpipe in Brooklands, January 1960

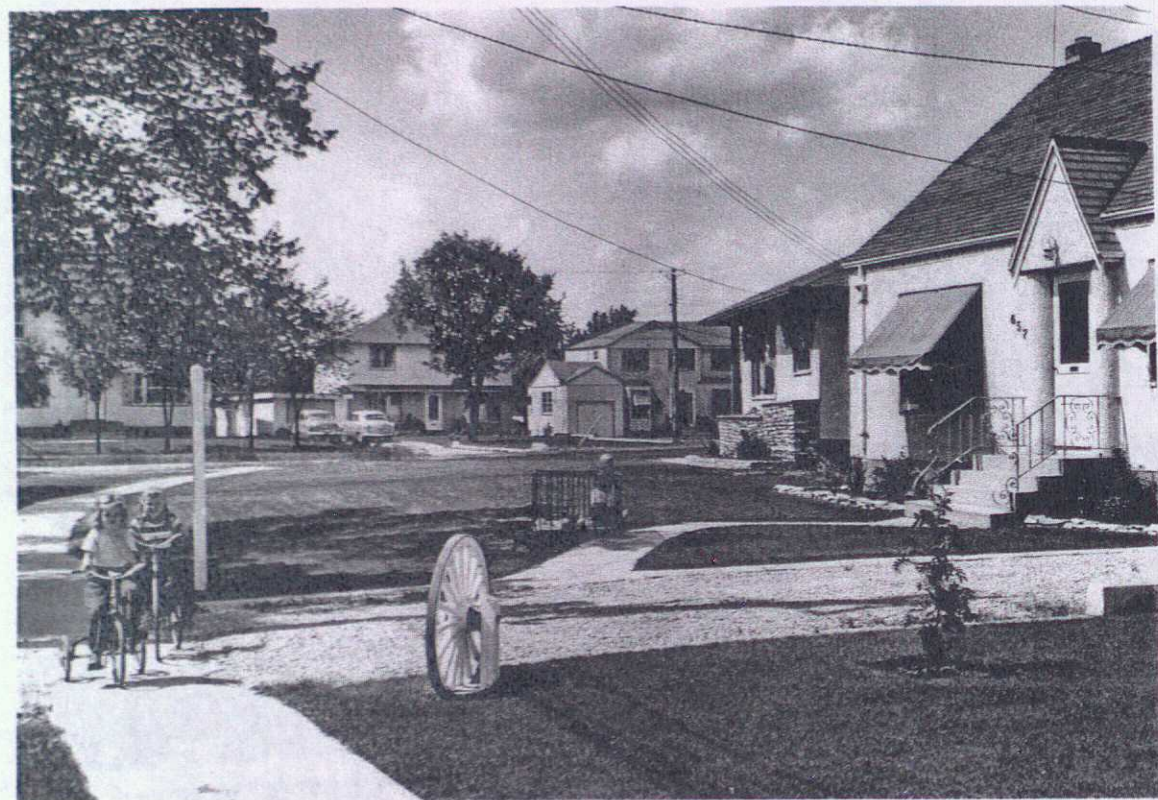


2.22: Some of the Last Residents of Rooster Town



2.23: Centennial Street, River Heights, 1951

2.25: Portage Avenue Rush Area, November 1954



2:24: Kildonan Drive, June 1952



2:25: Portage Avenue Rush Hour, November 1954

automobile made the journey to work a private time for car drivers. The traffic of commuters coming into the core by automobile in the morning and returning to outlying neighbourhoods and suburbs in the evening so congested Winnipeg's core that at the end of November 1954 the City introduced parking restrictions. Parking was banned on the south side of Portage Avenue from 7:00 to 9:00 AM and on the north side of the street from 4:00 to 6:00 PM.

Figure 2.26 *Aerial View of River Heights, 1949*

Much of Winnipeg, like other Canadian cities, was surveyed as a rectangular grid plan, interrupted only by rivers, train tracks, arterial roads, or natural barriers. Though simple and, perhaps to some, unimaginative, the grid with its mathematical regularity of straight lines and right angles imposed a human rationality on the natural landscape. The rectangular form was the easiest to survey when relatively small blocks of land were added to the city and when developers most often were in the business of selling lots rather than building homes. As a result, the stages in the spatial expansion of the city are not easily discerned: one block seems to flow into the next, as can be seen in the view of River Heights.

Figure 2.27 *Street in River Heights, 1949*

The limited number house plans, with variations in detail but few in design, also seem to display a uniformity. Yet, today when we walk along streets like these, the individual landscaping and maturing trees mute the similarities of construction and design. Houses grow with their owners and the memories that their residents share transform built space into lived space.

In the postwar era, suburbs increasingly became self-contained enclaves, refuges from the city in which families could enjoy their home life. Developers, now more likely to be engaged in house construction and sales, as well as land assembly and the sale of building lots, attempted to create privacy in their subdivisions by limiting access points for traffic and by laying out curving crescents and residential bays.

Figure 2.28 *Aerial View of Wildwood Park, 1950*

Figure 2.29 *View of Wildwood Park, 2003*

Figure 2.30 *View of Wildwood Park, 2003*

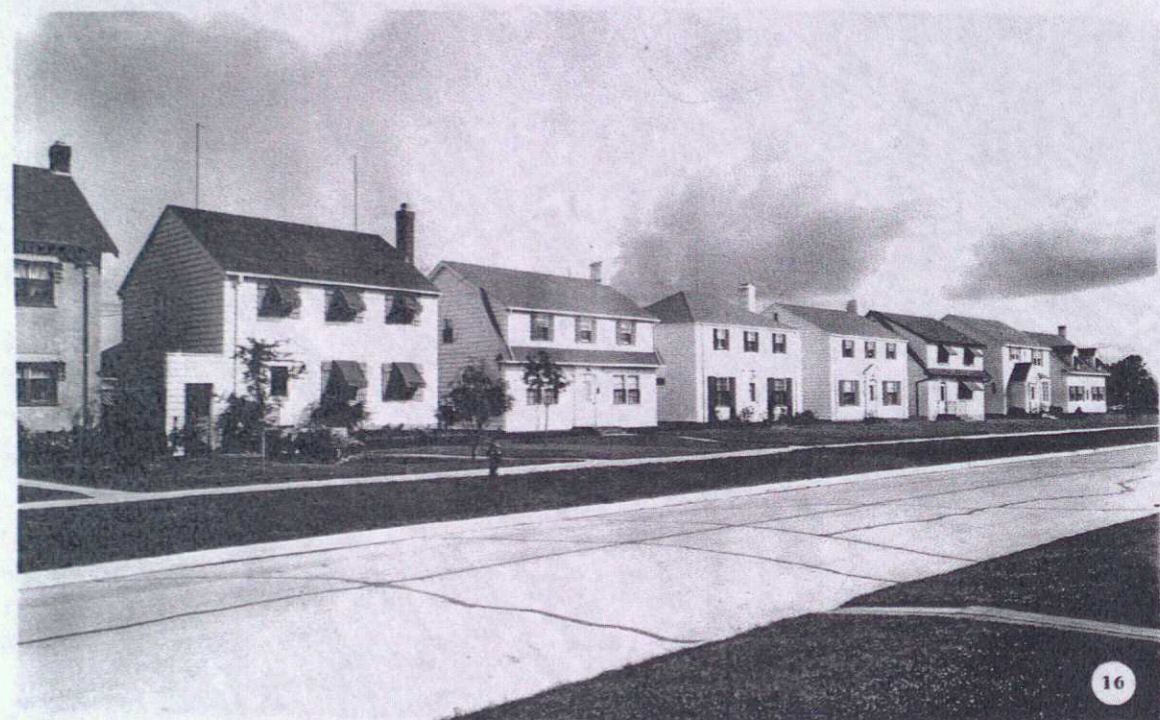
Wildwood Park, developed in the late 1940s, reversed what had conventionally been public and private to create a strong, inward sense of community. Rather than let the street set the public face of houses, homes were built in a series of bays to look across pedestrian walkways and parks at one another.

Figure 2.31 *Aerial View of Windsor Park, 1961*

The plan for Wildwood Park, innovative as it was, was not picked up in other major developments. More common was the survey for Windsor Park. The aerial view revealed an alternative to the rectangular grid. A series of bays and crescents were tied together with a limited number of main entry roads, only a few of which went straight through the subdivision. As a result, even such a large development as this remained apart from the



2.26: River Hieghts, 1949



2.27: River Heights, 1949



2.28: Wildwood Park, 1950



2.29: Wildwood Park, 2003

surrounding city. This form, separated subdivisions strung along major traffic arteries, characterize many developments from the 1950s and 1960s.

Figure 2.32 Cherry Crescent, Windsor Park, 1957

"PARADE OF HOMES: Windsor Park's Cherry Crescent will be all dolled up Saturday in readiness for a full week of Winnipeggers seeing at first hand what's new in construction. A special layout gives a selection of homes ranging in price from \$11,500 to \$18,000 on the same street."

Source: Winnipeg Tribune, 20 September 1957



Source: Winnipeg Tribune, 21 November 1963

Figure 2.35 Apartment buildings on Grant Boulevard, July 1966

The arterial roads that tied suburbs to the city developers became prime locations for apartment buildings. Busy streets were unattractive for owner-occupied housing, but suited to handle the traffic generated by high-density housing.

Figure 2.36 Southdale Subdivision, St. Boniface, 1966

The Southdale development introduced a new feature to suburban living, lake-front property. These houses, part of the 1966 Parade of Homes, ranged in price from \$20,000 to \$30,000, and besides their location they included such innovative features as private sun decks, saunas, baths, coloured bathroom fixtures, and screened patios. The real estate section of the



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Source: *Winnipeg Tribune*, 20 September 1957

Figure 2.33 *Recreation room hospitality -- card games and drinks*

Figure 2.34 *"The 'Tavern' recreation room captures atmosphere of old world hostelry." Winnipeg Tribune, 28 November 1962.*

In many suburban homes, the basement recreation room, often built by the "man-of-the-house" in his spare time, provided additional space for young children to play. As well, with its informality and space for games, high fidelity sound equipment, televisions and entertaining it provided casual time for families and friends to gather in evenings or on weekends. Sheltered downstairs the recreation room was both physically and psychologically a place of retreat.

"AN UNFINISHED BASEMENT CAN BE A HIDDEN ASSET:

A practical way to ensure that the rumpus room fills the needs of all family members is to call a family conference where each member of the family can give an opinion."

Source: *Winnipeg Tribune*, 28 November 1962.

"TODAY'S RECREATION ROOM SERVES ALL AGES:

Yesterday's box-like 'rumpus room' is giving way to something best described as a family fun centre, with a larger floor area and more facilities catering to all age groups. The family fun centre is not a room in the truest sense, but a multipurpose living area with the emphasis strictly on open planning."

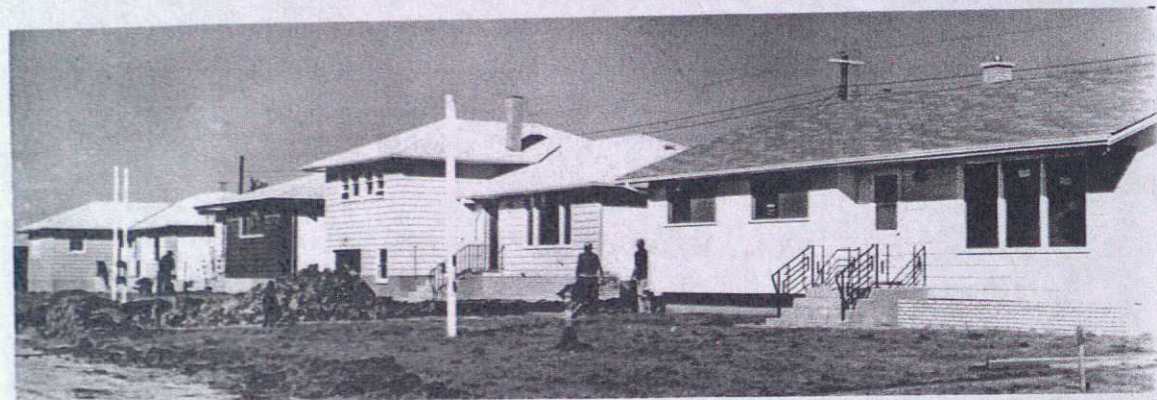
Source: *Winnipeg Tribune*, 21 November 1963.

Figure 2.35 *Apartment buildings under construction on Grant Boulevard, July 1966*

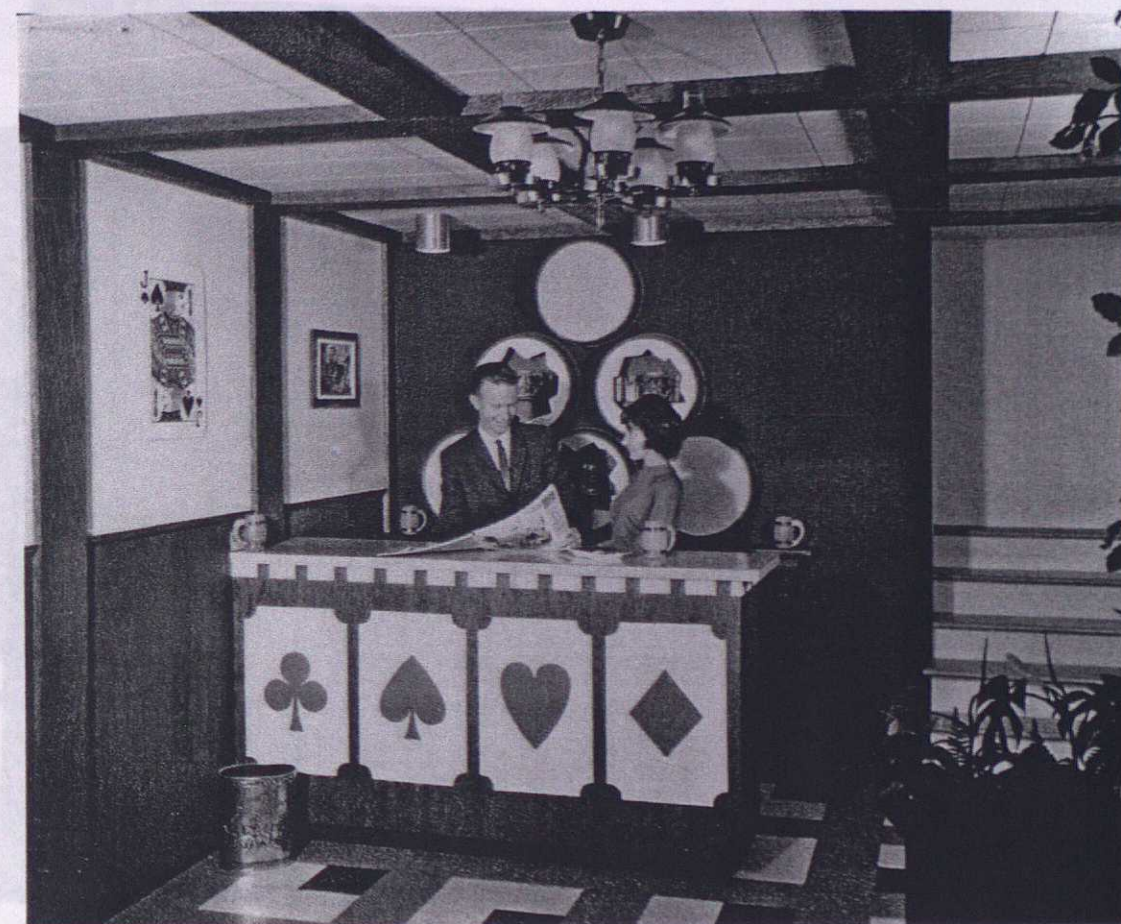
The arterial roads that tied suburbs to the city developers became prime locations for apartment buildings. Busy streets were unattractive for owner-occupied housing, but suited to handle the traffic generated by high-density housing.

Figure 2.36 *Southdale Subdivision, St. Boniface, 1966*

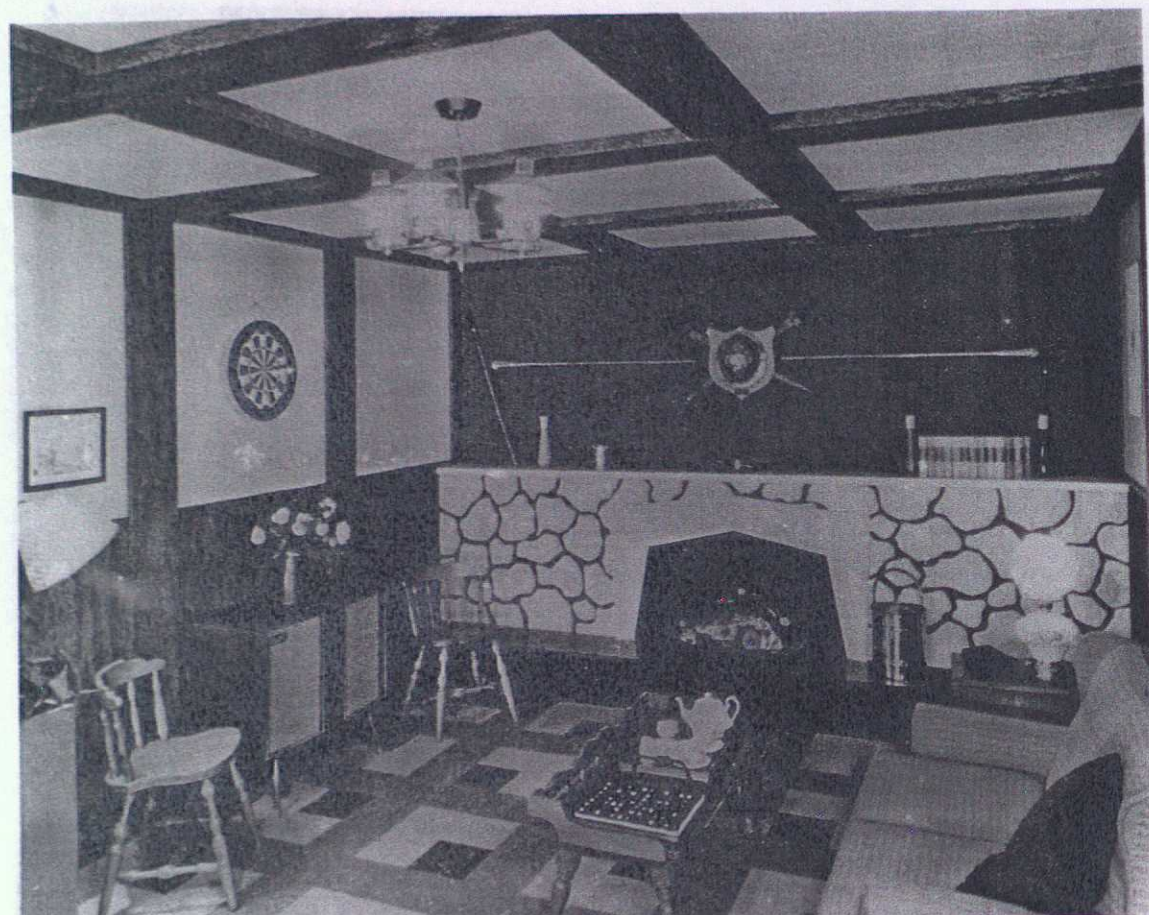
The Southdale development introduced a new feature to suburban living, lake-front property. These houses, part of the 1966 Parade of Homes, ranged in price from \$20,000 to \$50,000, and besides their location they included such innovative features as private sundecks, sauna baths, coloured bathroom fixtures, and screened patios. The real estate section of the



2.32: Cherry Crescent, Windsor Park, 1957



2.33: Recreation Room Hospitality



2.34: "The 'Tavern' recreation room"



2.35: Apartment Buildings, Grant Boulevard, July 1966



2.36: Southdale Subdivision, St. Boniface, 1966

Winnipeg Tribune was impressed with the style of the subdivision: "These new homes in Southdale give Greater Winnipeg a Riviera-like look." (*Winnipeg Tribune*, 2 June 1966.)

A house on the lake offered outdoor recreation just beyond the backdoor. Boating, without outboard motors, was a possibility, as was angling since the lakes had been stocked with fish. Swimming was not allowed, however — a wise precaution since the artificial lakes were also tied into the storm sewer system to catch the spring melt and rain run-off.

Retention ponds not only provided a marketable view and leisure opportunities, thereby creating locational value, they also were an imaginative way to bring one necessary service, storm sewers, to distant areas of the city.

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Chapter 3 In the City

With the coming of World War One, new housing construction came almost to a complete stop. After the war, construction revived, but never at the same pace in the 1920s, and in the 1930s the Depression slowed residential building down once again. The economy had started to recover by the outbreak of war in 1939, but even though public expenditure on the war effort brought back employment, the allocation of raw materials for military production meant many shortages, especially in building materials. In 1946 the City was unable to help the 15,000 Winnipeg families who applied for, but did not receive emergency housing. Through the middle decades of the twentieth century, from the 1920s through the 1960s, politicians, City officials and social reformers grew more aware and concerned about the city's housing problems, to be specific, the shortage of affordable accommodation and the deterioration of central neighbourhoods. The two problems went hand-in-hand.

Unlike the situation before 1914, when single men in search of work crowded houses and apartments, after the war the source of congestion was families occupying a room or two in what had been single-family dwellings. Difficulties in finding housing led families to double up in what had been single-family dwellings.

By the 1920s many central neighbourhoods were already thirty or forty years old and often were a mix of solid, substantial dwellings and other frame buildings that had been poorly constructed on wooden post foundations. High-density residency and frequent turnover among tenants increased the wear and tear, and need for maintenance, on already old buildings.

But even in newer central districts decline had started. A 1921 City Housing Survey reported, for example, that the area west of Main Street and south of Portage Avenue, once "was the most exclusive and desirable residence district of the City. Since the movement to Crescentwood and other districts commenced it has gradually deteriorated until today we find a district of apartment blocks (not of the newest type), boarding and rooming houses and other single family dwellings." Over forty per cent of what were originally single-family dwellings had become multiple family houses.

And such conditions were spreading. By 1942 the neighbourhood from Ellice to Notre Dame avenues between Balmoral and Furby streets had joined the list of the worst sections of Winnipeg and the City's Medical Health Officer warned of an increasing number of overcrowded but as yet isolated houses on Canora, Walnut, Chestnut, Ethelbert, Home and Arlington streets in Wolseley and on Wardlaw, Gertrude, Macmillan, and Jessie avenues in Fort Rouge. Landlords interested in turning large residences in boardinghouses even targeted Crescentwood from the early 1940s to the 1950s. In the mid-1960s the West Broadway area, stable since the second war, began to decline.

The difficult housing conditions in the city were reflected in the growth and then decline in the rate of home ownership through mid-century. City officials regretted that "Wage earners who wish to build small cottages for themselves prefer the suburbs

surrounding the city. Cannot something be done to encourage the building of cottages within the city?"

Home ownership did increase in the city from the turn of the century when thirty per cent of occupants rented their residences. By 1931, forty-seven per cent of occupants were owner. But, thereafter, rates of ownership fluctuated, reflecting the low income of many of those who lived in the city and the higher property values there in relation to those in the suburbs. Through the hard times of the Depression, ownership dropped to forty-four per cent of households in 1941. After the war, ownership increased to fifty-three per cent in 1961 and fifty-seven per cent in 1971, before falling to the pre-war level of forty-seven per cent in 1971.

Figure 3.1 Unidentified Neighbourhood, 1920

The two and a half story houses of very similar design were typical of the houses built before the First World War throughout much of the city. Landlords, often in contravention of city building by-laws, converted larger residences to multiple unit tenements when their previous occupants left the city or moved to the suburbs. The conversion to multiple occupancy could require little more than some quickly assembled interior partitions and rubber tubing to connect each a gas burner in each suite to the houses main gas line for heat and cooking. Separate toilets, baths, and sinks were luxuries.

Figure 3.2 West side of Martha Street, Looking Northwest from the Southeast Corner of Alexander, 1918 [Now very near the intersection of Main Street and the Disraeli Freeway]

These frame houses, probably built before 1900, appear to have no foundations. The house in the left foreground is boarded up. Behind it there was an auto mechanics shop: the small sign nailed to its corner reads, "AUTO REPAIRING DONE HERE", and on both front corners of the neighbouring house are signs warning of "DANGER" from cars. In the middle of the photograph is a restaurant, operating out of what was probably also a dwelling. Beside the three-unit wooden terrace are two newer brick warehouses. As commercial premises spread within the city centre, owners found little incentive to maintain and improve their properties, which might soon be sold for business use.

Figure 3.3 House Farm, 1914

"This is an old frame building on surface foundation, and is typical of a 'farmed out' house. There are 13 rooms, one sink and one bathroom in the house. The lessee rented the premises for \$60.00 per month, and by sub-letting to eight separate tenants obtained a revenue of \$126.00 per month in addition to living rent free himself. One of the upper rooms was used as a common kitchen by the tenants on this floor. There were three gas ranges with slot meters in this room. The tenants on the first floor had gas ranges with slot meters in their rooms. Closing notices were served and the families reduced. ... The practice of 'farming out' houses is a most objectionable one. There are still too many people who are content to crowd together in this way. It is extremely



3.1: Unidentified Street, 1920

difficult to control infectious disease when this occurs, and to rear healthy children under such conditions is well-nigh impossible."

House farming became a serious concern from the 1920s through the 1940s. A City Housing Survey in 1921 detailed a twenty-one-room house leased for \$125 a month, which through subletting brought in \$326 to the lessee. Fourteen families, totaling twenty-seven people, lived in the house. Two families had their own toilet and bath, the remaining twelve families shared a single toilet in a dark and unventilated room and two baths. Two rooms were vacant or awaiting tenants.

Figure 3.1: Terrace, 139-161 Edmonton Street, ca. 1955

Figure 3.2: Parking Lot, 139-161 James Street, 2003



3.2: Martha Street, 1918

Figure 3.7: Bluffs Terrace, 139-161 James Street

Figure 3.8: Parking Lot, 139-161 James Street, 2003

In 1901 small businessmen and office workers resided in this terrace a block and a half off Main Street (behind what is now the site of the Centennial Concert Hall). Later it became home to immigrants, most of whom were unskilled workers. It was demolished in the 1960s.

Faded luxury

Many of the large, conspicuous residences built for Winnipeg's elite, especially in the downtown area, deteriorated through the 1920s and 1930s. As the original owners



3.3: House Farm, 1914

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Figure 3.4 *Terrace, 218-228 Edmonton Street, ca. 1955*

Figure 3.5 *Parking Ramp on Edmonton Street between St. Mary's and Graham Avenues [former site of terrace]*

Built in the Second Empire Style that had been made popular during the redevelopment of Paris in the mid-nineteenth century, this 1880s-era brick terrace must have seemed sophisticated and grand to its first occupants. Already in the early twentieth century, it had moved down market and the tenants of its six units included decently paid skilled workmen. Through the interwar years, however, it was typical of the overcrowded tenements criticized in the press and by Health Department inspectors.

By the 1950s were unskilled shop and warehouse workers. The terrace was demolished in the 1960s and replaced with a parking ramp.

Figure 3.6 *“The Ship”: Tenement House at 116 Grove Street, Point Douglas, 1909*

Almost thirty years after this photograph was taken, “The Ship” remained a notorious slum tenement. In 1937 a *Free Press* exposé on slum conditions, written by James H. Gray, reported that thirty-five adults and sixteen children lived in its sixteen cockroach-infested suites. A wood stove heated each of the two to four room units, but there was no fire escape, only a rickety set of wooden stairs leading to the second floor. There was not a single bath in the building and just one toilet for every four families, which was accessible only by the outside veranda. For this accommodation, tenants paid \$10 to \$15 monthly.

Built in 1908, “The Ship” was knocked down in 1958. Throughout its history it was home to mostly Eastern European tenants, of whom a few were widows and most men were labourers and unskilled construction workers.

Figure 3.7 *Biggs Terrace, 139-161 James Street*

Figure 3.8 *Parking Lot, 139-161 James Street, 2003*

In 1901 small businessmen and office workers resided in this terrace a block and a half off Main Street (behind what is now the site of the Centennial Concert Hall). Later it became home to immigrants, most of whom were unskilled workers. It was demolished in the 1960s.

Faded luxury

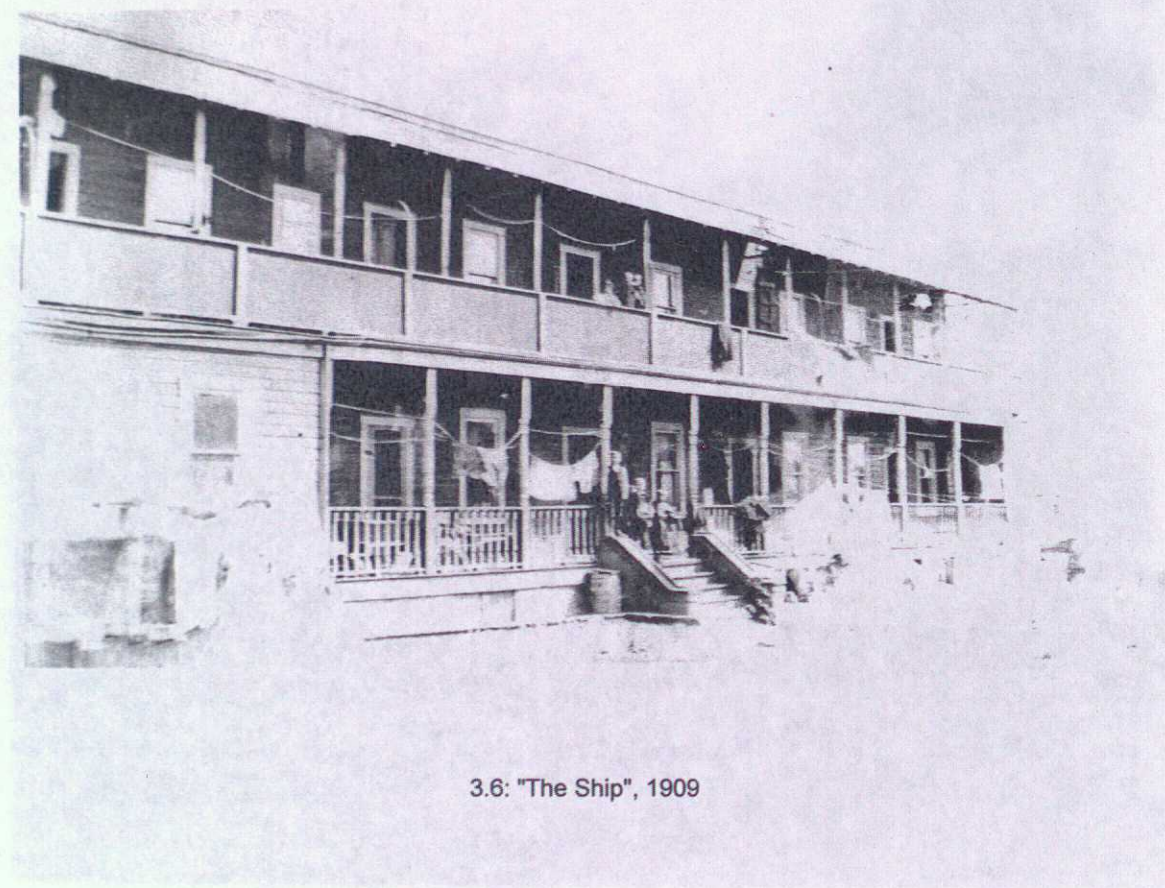
Many of the large, conspicuous residences built for Winnipeg's elite, especially in the downtown area, deteriorated through the 1920s and 1930s. As the original owners



3.4: Terrace, 218-228 Edmonton Street, ca. 1955



3.5: Parking Ramp, Edmonton Street, 2003



3.6: "The Ship", 1909

3.5: Parking Ramp, Edmonton Street, 2003

left the city, died, or moved to Crescentwood and other suburbs, buyers were scarce for aging homes in less popular neighbourhoods. Similarly, the comfortable terraces and apartment suites that had housed well-off middle-class and upper middle-class families could not compete with suburban developments. Older buildings were becoming expensive to maintain and through the Depression high taxes discouraged potential buyers.

Figure 3.9 Restored as Heritage Home, 1970-4: Dalnavert, 61 Carlton Street

Dalnavert, at 61 Carlton Street just off Broadway Avenue, was described in the *Winnipeg Tribune* as "a perfect home" when it was built in 1895. One of the first houses in Winnipeg to be wired for electricity, the house cost \$11,000 to construct and boasted imported red brick, oak panelling and wainscoting, brass hardware, stained glass windows, and many other conveniences innovative for their day.

Its owner, Hugh John Macdonald was the son of Canada's first prime minister and a successful lawyer who served briefly as a federal cabinet minister and Conservative Minister from 1899 to 1900. Knighted in 1911, he and his wife lived in Dalnavert until his death in 1929. When his widow then moved into an apartment,



3.7: Biggs Terrace, 139-161 James Street

tenants, had times on hard times.

Built in 1902 at a cost of \$140,000 for Donald Smith, Lord Strathcona, the Strathcona Block as it was originally named was Winnipeg's first apartment building. Its interior courtyard, with its own garden, was a rare feature. The building had seventy suites, which varied from bachelor units to four-bedroom suites with 1689 square feet of floor space. In the basement were banquet and dining halls and on the main floor a reception hall and dressing room for guests arriving for formal functions. The first tenants included corporate managers, professionals, businessmen, and a railroad vice-president in the larger suites, and office workers, both male and female, in the bachelor flats.

In the interwar years, several businesses moved into the basement space, and the larger apartments were divided into smaller suites. Already in serious decline by the 1930s, the original ninety or so rooms had been transformed by the 1960s into 223 furnished rooms with shared bathroom facilities and just five full suites. Despite structural problems, a decaying façade, and shabby interior, in 1965 the property returned an income of \$75,000 before expenses.



3.8: Parking Lot, 139-161 James Street, 2003

left the city, died, or moved to Crescentwood and other suburbs, buyers were scarce for aging homes in less popular neighbourhoods. Similarly, the comfortable terraces and apartment suites that had housed well-off middle-class and upper middle-class families could not compete with suburban developments. Older buildings were becoming expensive to maintain and through the Depression high taxes discouraged potential buyers.

Figure 3.9 Restored as Heritage Home, 1970-4: Dalnavert, 61 Carleton Street

Dalnavert, at 61 Carlton Street just off Broadway Avenue, was described in the *Winnipeg Tribune* as "a perfect home" when it was built in 1895. One of the first houses in Winnipeg to be wired for electricity, the house cost \$11,000 to construct and boasted imported red brick, oak panelling and wainscoting, brass hardware, stained glass windows, and many other conveniences innovative for their day.

Its owner, Hugh John Macdonald was the son of Canada's first prime minister and a successful lawyer who served briefly as a federal cabinet minister and Conservative premier of Manitoba from 1899 to 1900. Knighted in 1911, he and his wife lived in Dalnavert until his death in 1929. When Lady Macdonald then moved into an apartment, the house remained vacant or used as boarding house until its sale in 1940. Dalnavert, divided into seventeen suites, remained a boarding house until 1970. That year the house was sold for \$85,000 to a developer who planned its demolition and replacement with an apartment building.

Its purchase that year by Manitoba Historical Society saved Dalnavert. Restoration as a museum took four years and cost \$520,000.

Figure 3.10 Destroyed by Fire, 1976: Fort Garry Court, Northwest Corner of Main Street and Broadway Avenue

Figure 3.11 Parking Lot: Site of Fort Garry Court, 2003

During the night of the 2nd of February 1976, the approximately 150 residents of Fort Garry Court fled their burning building. The apartment block, like many of its tenants, had fallen on hard times.

Built in 1902 at a cost of \$140,000 for Donald Smith, Lord Strathcona, the Strathcona Block as it was originally named was Winnipeg's first apartment building. Its interior courtyard, with dance pavilion, provided access to the seventy suites, which varied from bachelor units to four-bedroom suites with 1689 square feet of floor space. In the basement were banquet and dining halls and on the main floor a reception hall and dressing room for guests arriving for formal functions. The first tenants included corporate managers, professionals, businessmen, and a railroad vice-president in the larger suites, and office workers, both male and female, in the bachelor flats.

In the interwar years, several businesses moved into the basement space, and the larger apartments were divided into smaller suites. Already in serious decline by the 1930s, the original ninety or so rooms had been transformed by the 1960s into 223 furnished rooms with shared bathroom facilities and just five full suites. Despite structural problems, a decaying façade, and shabby interior, in 1965 the property returned an income of \$75,000 before expenses.

left the city, died or moved to Greenwood and other suburbs. Buyers were scarce for aging homes in less popular neighbourhoods. Similarly, the comfortable tenures and apartment suites that had housed well-off, middle-class and upper middle-class families could not compete with suburban developments. Older buildings were becoming expensive to maintain and through the Depression high taxes discouraged potential buyers.

Figure 3.9 Restored as Heritage Home, 1970s. Dubuque St. Carleton Street



interior courtyard with a large lawn provided access to the seventy acres, which varied from pastures to four-bedroom suites with 1089 square feet of floor space. In the basement was a billiard room and on the main floor a reception hall and a large dining room for guests. The first tenants included corporate managers, professionals, businessmen, and a retired vice-president in the larger suites and office workers, both male and female, in the smaller flats.

3.9: Dalnavert, 61 Carleton Street

In the interim, several business owners moved into the basement space, and the larger apartments were divided into smaller suites. Already in serious decline by the 1930s, the original ninety or so rooms had been transformed by the 1950s into 229 furnished rooms with shared bathroom facilities and just five full suites. Despite structural problems, a decaying facade, and shabby interior, in 1962 the property returned an income of \$22,000 before expenses.

In its last decades the Fort Garry Court was home mostly to single men with low incomes, elderly tenants and transients who had crossed Main Street from the train station. Forty per cent of residents in 1976 had been there less than six months; only a third had been there for more than two years. Fires had been a problem for several years before the final blaze and some residents carried themselves with "fire bags" and one resident reported that his included his wallet, a chequebook, a 38 revolver, and some beer for refreshment.

Figure 3.12 Demolished, 1950: Ravenscourt, 158 West Gate, Armstrong's Point



STRATHCONA BLOCK
WINNIPEG, MAN.

A.M. Nanton, who for a time lived in a terrace on Kenilworth Avenue, the first location of Ravenscourt built 1892-1894, wrote in 1924 that though his friends thought he had made a mistake in moving so far out of the city, Nanton, a successful financier and arguably the wealthiest man in Winnipeg at his death in 1924, had his mansion expanded and extensively renovated. Sir Augustus (knighted in 1917 for his aid in financing the war) and Lady Nanton entertained the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII) during his 1924 visit to Winnipeg.

3.10: Fort Garry Court

After her husband's death, Lady Nanton kept the house going until 1935 when, because of maintenance and high taxes, she had it demolished. Other large houses were knocked down during the Depression for similar reasons, including that of Sir David McMillan, a grain and lumber merchant, at 645 Wellington Crescent, that of Arthur Stewart, a trust company manager, at 57 Harvard Avenue, that formerly occupied by Michael Long, an insurance company manager at 97 Academy Road.



3.11: Site of Fort Garry Court, 2003

In its last decades the Fort Garry Court was home mostly to single men with low incomes, elderly tenants and transients who had crossed Main Street from the train station. Forty per cent of residents in 1976 had been there less than six months; only a third had been there for more than two years. Fires had been a problem for several years before the final blaze and some residents readied themselves with "fire bags": one resident reported that his included his wallet, a chequebook, a .38 revolver, and some beer for refreshment.

Figure 3.12 Demolished, 1950: Ravenscourt, 158 West Gate, Armstrong's Point

Started in 1881 by A.G.B. Bannatyne, a successful merchant in Red River and later Winnipeg, this house was not fully finished when its owner was financially ruined in the collapse of Winnipeg's first boom in the mid-1880s. J.S. Tupper, a successful lawyer, purchased the house in 1899 and named the completed mansion, Ravenscourt. From 1929 to 1935 Ravenscourt was home to a private boys school, and then until 1949, the Convent of the Order of the Sacred Heart and its school for girls. In 1949 the City took over the property for tax arrears and sold it for demolition for \$1500.

Other conspicuous residences were turned to educational purposes. From Ravenscourt, the convent and school moved to "Helenlea", the former residence of a hardware merchant at 86 West Gate (now Westgate Mennonite Collegiate). After its owner's death in 1929, Riverbend, the eighteen-acre estate of lawyer J.A.M. Aikins at the foot of Balmoral Street, became a private girls' school (now Balmoral Hall School). St. John's College occupied J.H. Ashdown's Broadway residence from 1933 until its demolition in 1963. The Canadian Mennonite Bible College moved into 515 Wellington Crescent in 1949 and stayed there until the building was demolished in 1960.

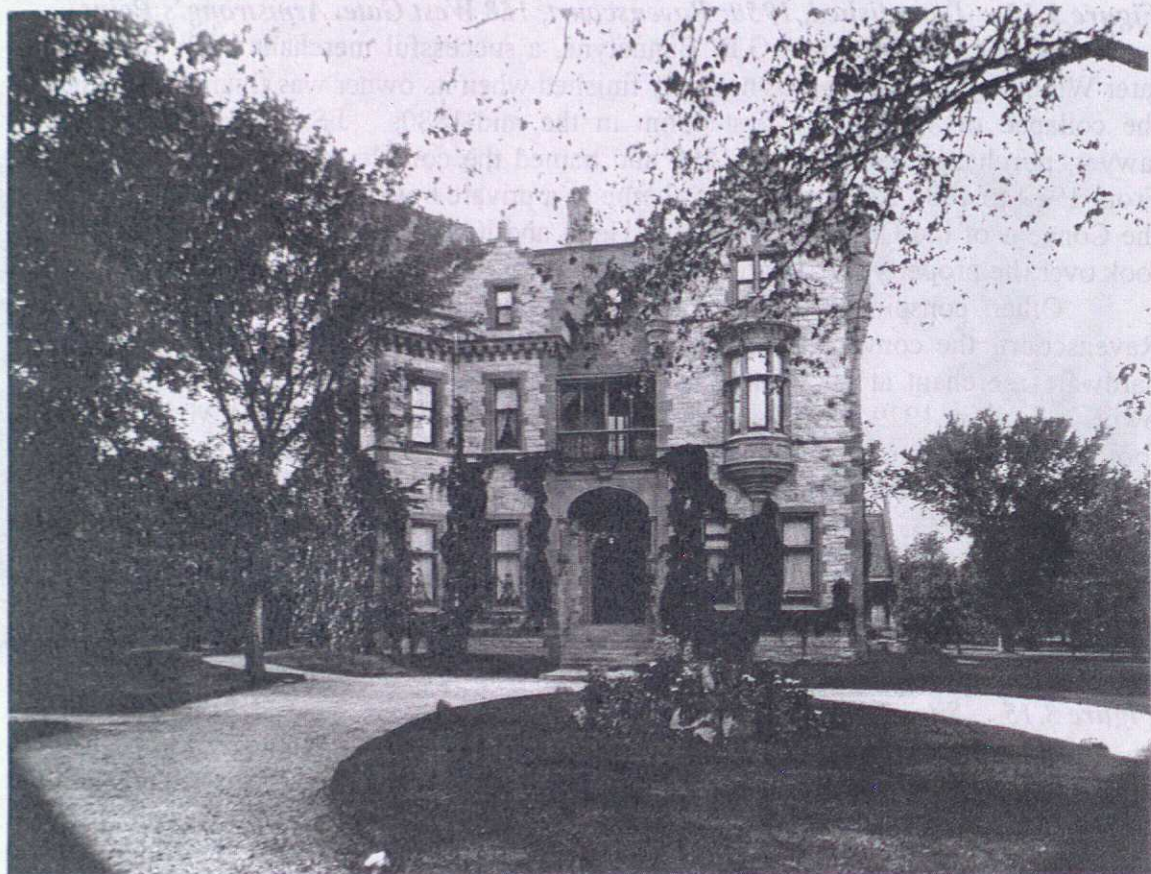
Figure 3.13 Demolished, 1935: Kilmore, 229 Roslyn Road

Figure 3.14 Demolished, 1935: Music Room, Kilmore, 229 Roslyn Road

Figure 3.15 Site of Kilmore, 2003

A.M. Nanton, who for a time had lived in a terrace on Kennedy Street, had the first section of Kilmore built on Roslyn Road in 1900, even though his friends thought he had made a mistake in moving so far out of the city. Nanton, a successful financier and arguably the wealthiest man in Winnipeg at his death in 1924, had his mansion expanded and extensively renovated after the first war. Sir Augustus (knighted in 1917 for his aid in financing the war) and Lady Nanton entertained the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII) during his 1924 visit to Winnipeg.

After her husband's death, Lady Nanton kept the house going until 1935 when, because of maintenance and high taxes, she had it demolished. Other large houses were knocked down during the Depression for similar reasons: including that of Sir Daniel McMillan, a grain and lumber merchant, at 645 Wellington Crescent, that of Arthur Stewart, a trust company manager, at 67 Harvard Avenue, that formerly occupied by Michael Long, an insurance company manager at 97 Academy Road.



3.12: Ravenscourt, 158 West Gate

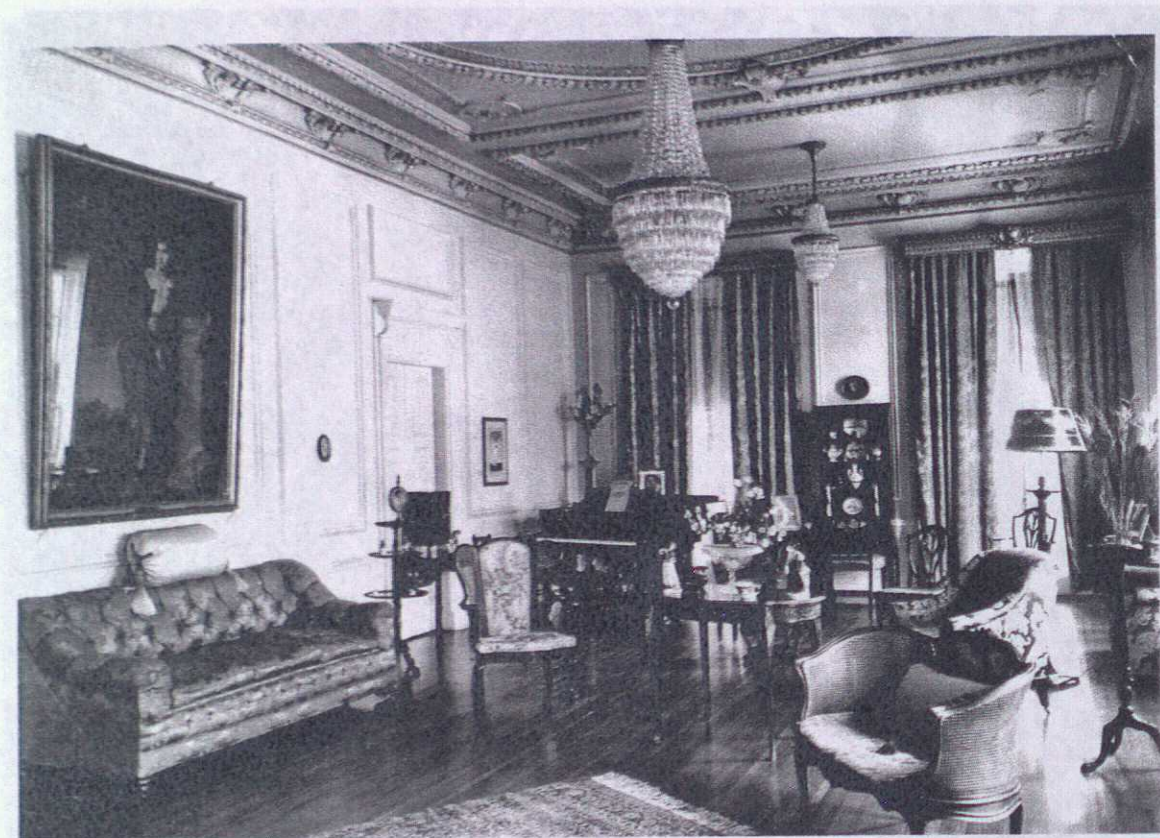
After her husband's house going into 1923 when because of maintenance and lightness she had it demolished. Other large houses were knocked down during the Depression for similar reasons, including that of Sir Daniel McMillan, a grain and lumber merchant, at 412 Wellington Crescent, that of Arthur Stewart, a real company manager, at 57 Harward Avenue, that formerly occupied by Michael Long, an insurance company manager at 97 Academy Road.

In its last decades the Port Garry Court was home mostly to single men with few incomes, elderly tenants and tenants who had crossed Main Street from the train station. Forty per cent of residents in 1970 had been there less than six months, only a third had been there for more than two years. Piers had been a problem for several years before the first drive and some residents resented themselves with "the pigs" and one resident reported that his included his wallet, a checkbook, a 32 revolver, and some beer for refreshment.



3.13: Kilmore, 229 Roslyn Road

3.14: Main Road, Kilmorie



3.14: Music Room, Kilmore



3.15: Site of Kilmore, 2003

financial limits on the size of house that families could afford to buy. The Second World War, Winnipeg houses on the average were smaller than those in Canada's other major cities. Its languishing economy and consequently lower incomes, its higher construction costs and interest rates, and its higher heating costs, all imposed financial limits on the size of house that families could afford to buy. Overcrowding, a consequence of limited incomes as much as housing shortage, convinced Ernest W.J. Hague, the City's Assistant Chief Health Inspector and one of Winnipeg's first housing reformers, that "there are plenty of old houses in Winnipeg, but they are too large." The age of a house of a limited number of rooms has arrived; that is the home of the 1919 and the future will be three to five rooms in place of six, eight, ten or more." Hague understood what the market could deliver. By the Second World War, Winnipeg houses on the average were smaller than those in Canada's other major cities. Its languishing economy and consequently lower incomes, its higher construction costs and interest rates, and its higher heating costs, all imposed financial limits on the size of house that families could afford to buy.

Downtown Redevelopment
After the World War Two urban renewal of the dimensions required in the core most adjacent to the business district would have been impossibly expensive at the market values for property. Large-scale land assembly would simply have cost too much for government to bear. The post-war prosperity, which permitted governments to consider redevelopment, also made real estate much more valuable. Hence, piece-meal development proceeded as government acquired space for a growing bureaucracy, as financial and other corporations built new office facilities, and as developers bought up decaying residential properties to hold in anticipation of future development.

Figure 3.15: Demolition for Apartment Complex at Smith Street and St. Mary's

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Figure 3.16 *Demolition for Apartment Complex at Smith Street and St. Mary's Avenue, 1969*

The demolition reveals how frame additions had been built on to the front and rear of an older Victorian brick dwelling. All of the interior doors give an impression of the space had been divided up to increase tenancy.

Figure 3.17 *Regency Towers on Central Park, 1964*

High-rise apartment buildings maximized the rental revenue that could be generated on expensive downtown real estate.

Figure 3.18 *"Close to the heart of the city without actually being in it. A view of the Assiniboine River from a penthouse."*

In 1970 the caption to this *Winnipeg Tribune* photograph expressed the growing ambivalence to downtown living and suggested that high-rise apartments offered geographical proximity and social distance.

City neighbourhoods outside the core

As places to live, the most central areas of Winnipeg have suffered from the first war. City neighbourhoods a bit removed have fared better, in part because of their more recent construction and in part because of the actions of their residents, as homeowners and as citizens.

Often the houses built in the city from the 1920s through the 1950s were smaller than had been typical earlier. Overcrowding, a consequence of limited incomes as much as housing shortage, convinced Ernest W.J. Hague, the City's Assistant Chief health Inspector and one of Winnipeg's first housing reformers, that "there are plenty of old houses in Winnipeg, but they are too large. ... The age of a house of a limited number of rooms has arrived; that is the home of the 1919 and the future will be three to five rooms in place of six, eight, ten or more." Hague understood what the market could deliver. By the Second World War, Winnipeg houses on the average were smaller than those in Canada's other major cities. Its languishing economy and consequently lower incomes, its higher construction costs and interest rates, and its higher heating costs, all imposed financial limits on the size of house that families could afford to buy.



3.16: Demolition, Smith Street and St. Mary's Avenue, 1969



3.17: Regency Tower, 1964



3.18: "Close to the heart of the city"

Figure 3.22 Apartment building built in the heart of the city. The presence of two or three vacant lots here and there through city concerned existing homeowners that some developer might put up an apartment building in their midst. In the 1920s residents in Crescentwood, Wolsley, and west Elmwood availed themselves of the provisions of a bylaw, passed in 1913 to prevent the undesirable use of space in Armstrong's Point, allowing them to petition City Council to prevent the location of apartment buildings on their street.

Figure 3.23 Newly built North End houses. These unidentified houses, probably in the North End, represent one of the strategies adopted by many families, especially immigrants, to achieve homeownership.

Most of the housing constructed between the wars and after was built by owners or by builders for potential occupants. Other than apartment blocks very little new accommodation was constructed for tenants, and between the wars the number of apartment suites did not increase as quickly as the number of houses.

Figure 3.19 Bungalows in Wolsley from the 1920s. The City's 1929 report on new housing construction explained that "in the last few years... all new houses were built either for their owner's own occupation or for sale. Very few houses were built for rent."

Overcrowding and the shortage of affordable rental accommodation were recognized. It was pointed out that the shortage of rental accommodation was a problem for the first time in the history of the city. The report also noted that the shortage of rental accommodation was a problem for the first time in the history of the city.

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Figure 3.19 *Bungalows in Wolseley from the 1920s*

The City's 1929 report on new housing construction explained that "in the last few years ... all new houses were built either for their owner's own occupation or for sale.... Very few houses were built for rent."

Overcrowding and the shortage of affordable rental accommodation persuaded families who could put together down payments to buy their own places.

After the first war few large tracts of building lots were available for development and one of the opportunities of real estate agents was to organize the sale of lots in the area, held by different owners. The result was that in-fill building occurred on older streets throughout the city, and on many blocks houses built before the first war stand beside those built in the 1950s.

Figure 3.20 *Street in Elmwood, West of Henderson Highway, 2003*

This streetscape is typical of housing development within the city between the wars. On the right are houses built between 1920 and 1924; both were financed through the Winnipeg Housing Commission, a semi-private body established to administer the federal-provincial housing scheme of 1918-9. The two houses on the left were built in 1940 and 1941.

Figure 3.21 *Vegetable Garden on the Corner of Sargent Avenue and Spence Street, ca. 1912*

Corner lots were suited to apartment building development since they permitted windows on two sides to face the street. When the building boom collapsed in 1913, many corner lots through the centre of the city were left undeveloped and were used for gardens, as their owners hoped for a recovery in the real estate market to restore the value of their property. When the demand for lots recovered in the 1920s, these bits of green space, and others that had been playgrounds for children, were built upon.

Figure 3.22 *Apartment Building in Wolseley*

The presence of two or three vacant lots here and there through city concerned existing homeowners that some developer might put up an apartment building in their midst. In the 1920s residents in Crescentwood, Wolseley, and west Elmwood availed themselves of the provisions of a bylaw, passed in 1913 to prevent the undesirable use of space in Armstrong's Point, allowing them to petition City Council to prevent the location of apartment buildings on their street.

Figure 3.23 *Newly built North End houses*

These unidentified houses, probably in the North End, represent one of the strategies adopted by many families, especially immigrants, to achieve homeownership.



3.19: Wolseley Bungalows



3.20: Street in Elmwood



3.21: Garden, Sargent Avenue and Spence Street, 1912



3.22: Apartment Building in Wolseley
321, Garden Avenue and Police Street, 1913

Both appear to have been adapted from the same pattern-book, though in one the front porch area has been enclosed. Built under a permit for a single-family dwelling, their owners were charged with bylaw infractions when health inspectors discovered that an extra sink had been installed in the top floor of each so that the space could be rented. Illegal though it was, the practice helped many families pay for their homes. From the 1920s homeownership increased as families grew, owners

Parsonizing as the city noted the improvement in housing. After the war, they adopted more modern housing, and even the poorest families could afford to own a house. The city's housing program was successful in providing a better living environment for its residents.



the purchase price of a house. To encourage the construction of smaller houses, the city published model designs; their appeal can be seen on many streets through Winnipeg.

From the end of the second war to 1950, 14,000 houses were built in the city. Many were small dwellings, a semi-detached house and a half. In 1950 the *Winnipeg Tribune* observed, "In the city itself the number of available lots serviced by water and sewer has shrunk drastically. Undeveloped lots within the city's boundaries have also diminished so that Winnipeg is 'filled up' today." Certainly an exaggeration, the report nonetheless expressed a sense that development was reaching its limits.

3.23: New North End House



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Patronizing as their comments were, City Health Inspectors noted the improvement in immigrant living conditions after the first war. A report dated 1919 explained, "After living in Canada for some years and in proportion as their means admit, they adopt more approximately our modes of living as regards cleanliness, house furnishings, dress, etc.... It is quite a contrast to go into the rooms occupied by many of even the poorest of these persons today and to note the cleanly conditions of their rooms as compared with the conditions obtaining say ten years ago." More succinctly, in 1921 a City housing survey noted that North Enders here were "hard-working, thrifty people".

Figure 3.24 Point Douglas Street

In some neighbourhoods in the city—Point Douglas is a good example—residents developed and retained a strong sense of community. Despite a drop in population of 27 per cent from the second war to 1971, many householders remained committed to the area and home ownership increased to 72 per cent in that latter year. Ironically, the flood of 1950, which so devastated the city, benefited the neighbourhood in the long run: 400 dwellings were flooded, but afterwards money from the Flood Relief Fund financed the improvement of many homes.

Figure 3.25 Postwar Housing in Elmwood

These neat, small 600 square foot houses, with no basement, in Elmwood were typical of those built immediately after the war to ease the housing crisis in Winnipeg.

Figure 3.26 Design for a Small House, 1949

The Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation was established in 1948 to administer the federal government's National Housing Act. In co-operation with financial institutions, the government provided mortgage funds to cover eight per cent of the purchase price of a house. To encourage the construction of smaller houses, CMHC published model designs; their appeal can be seen on many streets through Winnipeg.

From the end of the second war to 1950, 14,000 houses were built in the city. Many were small dwellings, a single storey or a story and a half. In 1950 the *Winnipeg Tribune* observed, "In the city itself the number of available lots serviced by water and sewer has shrunk drastically. Undeveloped lots within the city's boundaries have also diminished so that Winnipeg is 'filled up' today." Certainly an exaggeration, the report nonetheless expressed a sense that development was reaching its limits.



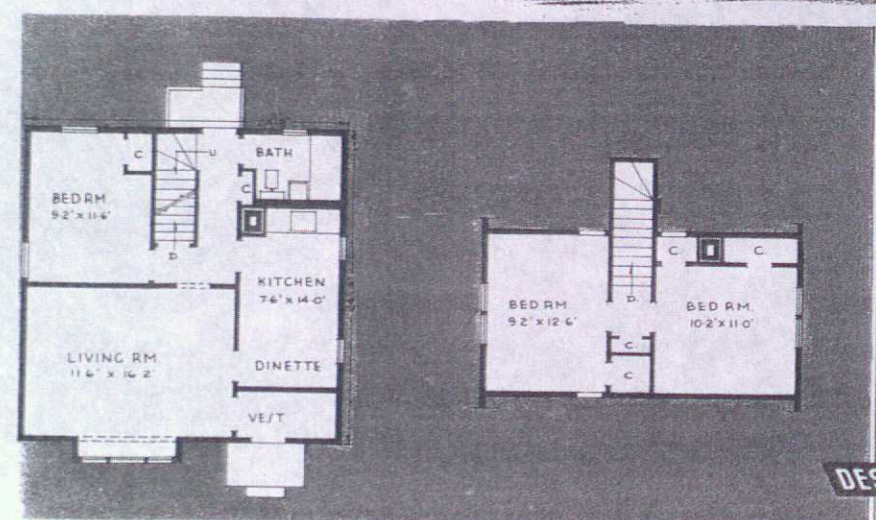
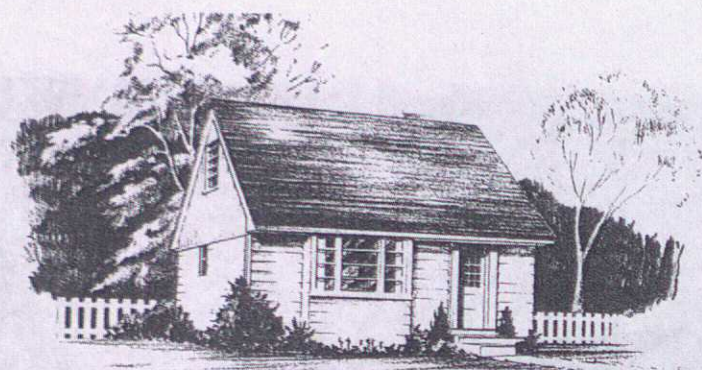
3.24: Point Douglas Street



3.25: Postwar Housing in Elmwood

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Area:
1st Floor: 615 sq. ft.
2nd Floor: 349 sq. ft.
Total: 957 sq. ft.
Cubic Contents:
13,975 cu. ft.
Minimum lot width:
with drive: 38'-8"
without drive: 36'-8"

DESIGN NO. 49-54

3.26: Design for Small House, 1949

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Chapter 4

Housing and Government

We thoroughly approve the principle of endeavouring to make this a city of home owners, but in every large city we have to deal with a large proportion of persons who cannot afford to buy....

What I have in mind is a district laid out in an attractive manner with good streets, boulevards, trees, park, school site, library, picture theatre, and a few necessary stores, all built and designed as part of one harmonious plan. The houses need not be large, but the architectural features should be just as pretty as those of the Crescentwood district, in fact it would be a wage-earners' Crescentwood. People say, "Oh, but the working man does not want to live in a segregated area." One does not hear the Crescentwood or Armstrong's Point residents objecting to segregation, though they none the less are so.

Ernest W.J. Hague, Assistant Chief Health Inspector, *Report on Housing Survey of Certain Selected Areas, made March and April 1921*. (Winnipeg: City of Winnipeg Health Department, 1921), p. 100.

At the time few in municipal government, save the labour politicians who were regularly elected to, but seldom controlled Council, shared Hague's enthusiasm for social housing. Through the interwar years government and private interests argued that increasing home ownership would free older housing stock for the rental market. When governments did consider housing policy, they preferred to encourage middle-income families in their pursuit of home purchase. Only when housing conditions became so severe during World War Two did governments undertake emergency measures to provide rental accommodation. After the war, ownership remained the top priority; however, the unmistakable decay of Canadian cities provoked a willingness to promote public housing as one method of urban renewal.

A 1930s Experiment in Home Ownership

In the autumn of 1937, more than 20,000 curious visitors toured the City of Winnipeg Housing Company's demonstration house at 804 Ashburn Street in the city's West End. From personal experience, many who viewed the house knew that housing conditions in Winnipeg, bad in some neighbourhoods since the First World War, had worsened during the Great Depression and both working-class and middle income families confronted a shortage of decent, affordable housing.

Earlier in the year the Winnipeg City Council, encouraged by the federal government, set up the City of Winnipeg Housing Company as a joint public/private venture to construct and finance the purchase of affordable housing under the provisions of the Dominion Housing Act of 1935. Investments from prominent citizens, such as James A. Richardson and Harry Ashdown, local building supply and real estate

companies, and Eaton's and the Hudson's Bay Company provided working capital, while the City contributed building lots that it had taken for tax arrears.

The City of Winnipeg Housing Company solicited plans and tenders for affordable housing from local builders and chose the "modern" design of Winnipeg architect Gordon Ritchie submitted by contractors Henry Borger and Son. With interest and some debate over the merits of government involvement in housing development, city newspapers reported on the progress of construction at 804 Ashburn Street.

The company proposed to contract the construction of affordable houses that it would then sell to buyers who made a twenty per cent down payment. The buyers would, then, qualify for a twenty-year mortgage, at five per cent interest per year, for the balance with the federal government contributing twenty per cent of the purchase price and private mortgage companies the remaining sixty per cent. Most private mortgages, at higher rates, were usually for no more than sixty per cent of the price and only for five years with no guarantee of renewal.

In January 1938 Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Crook put down \$400 toward the purchase price of \$3820 and agreed to monthly payments of \$32.70 for the next twenty years. Their mortgage payments compared very favourably with what rent would have been for accommodation of lesser quality. By spring another forty families had selected lots and were looking forward to purchasing their own homes on similar terms.

Hopeful buyers were disappointed. In April 1938 the provincial government refused to allow the City to invest in the company, which as a result collapsed.

Figure 4.1 *Dominion Housing Act: Architectural Competition; Low-Cost House Design*

Figure 4.2 *Demonstration House, 804 Ashburn Street, 1937*

Designed for living

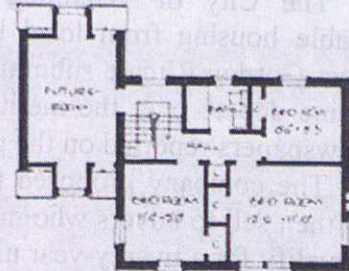
This house is of the most modern type, laid out for convenience with no waste space. The result is an exterior of simple lines and an interior of comfort and convenience. All possible care has been taken to provide an efficient and economical plan for pleasant living.

All rooms are spacious, and space is conserved by means of built-in features.

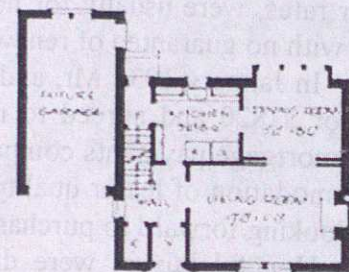
Every room is lighted by corner windows, a modern development which more efficiently lights the rooms and at the same time allows more wall space for better arrangement of furniture.... The in-built electric fixtures give semi-direct light, preventing eye strain.

The whole home provides for an easy flow of home life, maximum comfort and minimum labour, making for true dignity of family life....

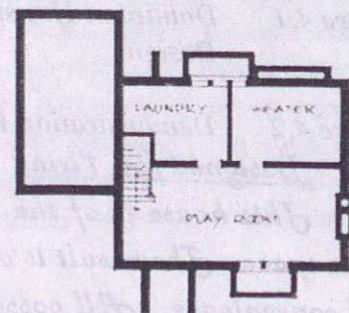
DOMINION HOUSING ACT



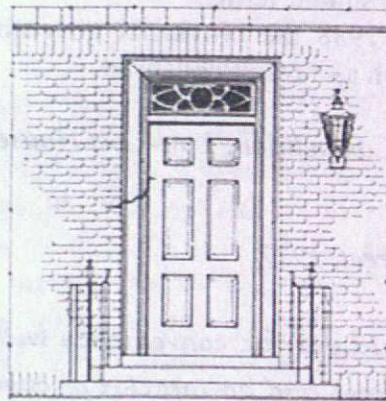
SECOND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

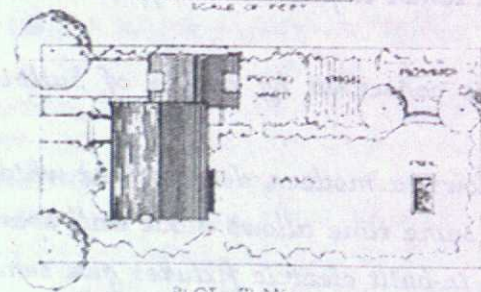


BASEMENT PLAN



DETAIL OF ENTRANCE
SCALE OF FEET

MASS	22' x 32' x 12'	16,512
LAND	22' x 32' x 12'	14,784
CONCRETE	22' x 32' x 12'	14,784
ASPHALT DRIVE	22' x 32' x 12'	14,784
TOTAL CUBIC	22' x 32' x 12'	59,864



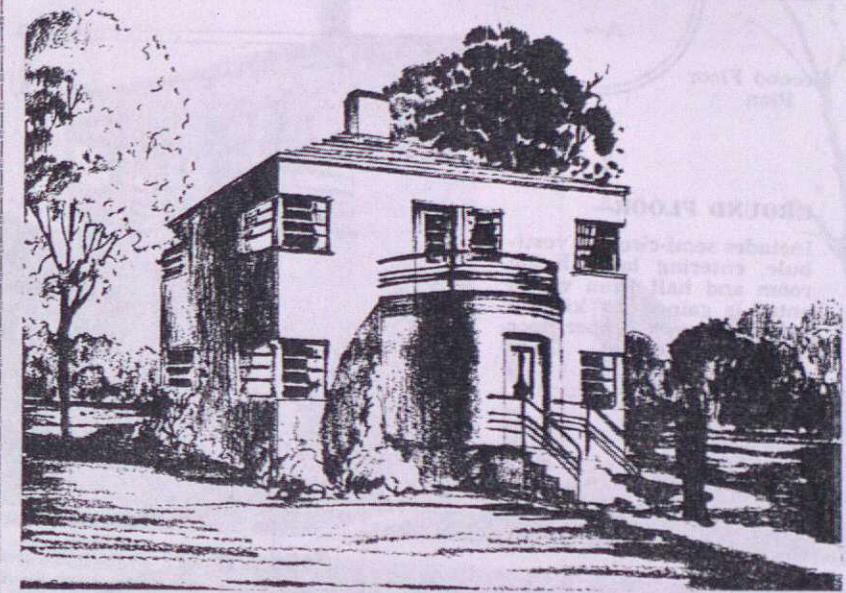
PLOT PLAN
SCALE OF FEET



REAR ELEVATION
SCALE OF FEET

4.1: Low-Cost Housing Design

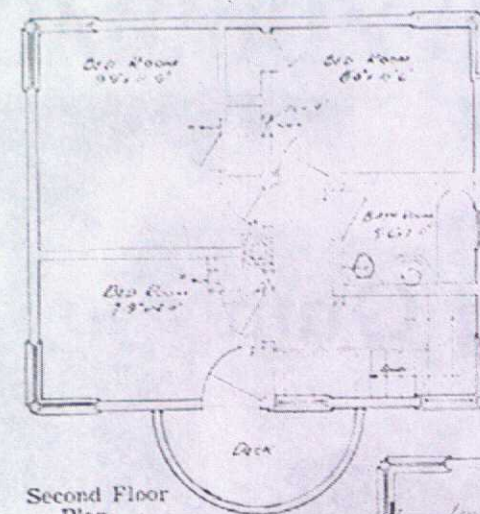
A Home You May Own



and Pay For Monthly

DEMONSTRATION HOME
BUILT BY
THE CITY OF WINNIPEG
OCTOBER, 1937

4.2: Demonstration House, Pamphlet Cover



Floor Plans of DEMONSTRATION HOME Size 24x21 feet

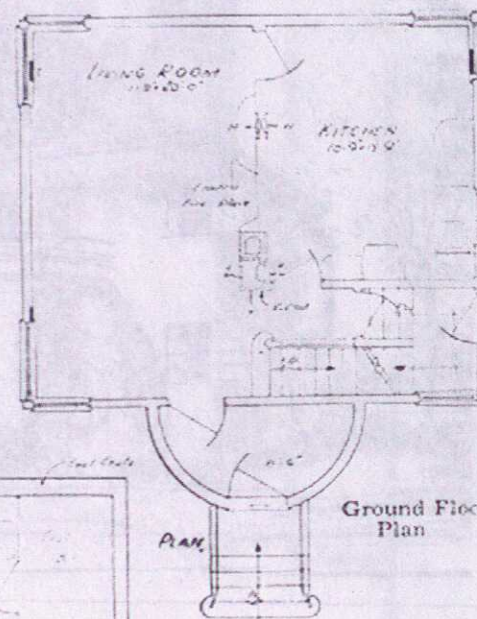
SECOND FLOOR—

Includes one large and two smaller bedrooms, and bathroom located conveniently to all three. Also balcony deck opening from bedroom. Note cupboard space in all bedrooms.

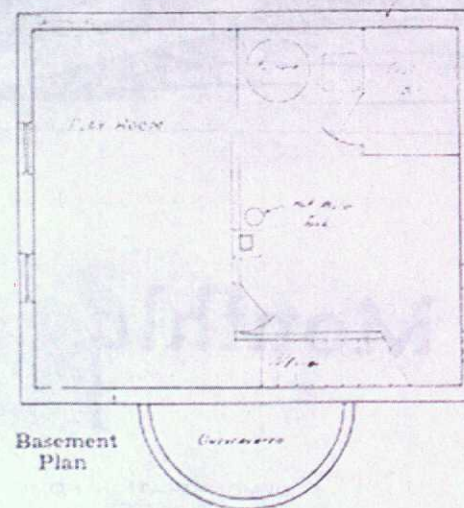
Second Floor
Plan

GROUND FLOOR—

Includes semi-circular vestibule, entering large living room and hall from which entry is gained to kitchen and stairways to upper floor and to basement. Note roominess of kitchen. Corner windows throughout.



Ground Floor
Plan



Basement
Plan

BASEMENT—

Laid out to accommodate most modern type heating plant, laundry tubs and storage space, and still leave half the floor space for recreation room. Dry and well ventilated — reached from outside, or inside without going through kitchen.

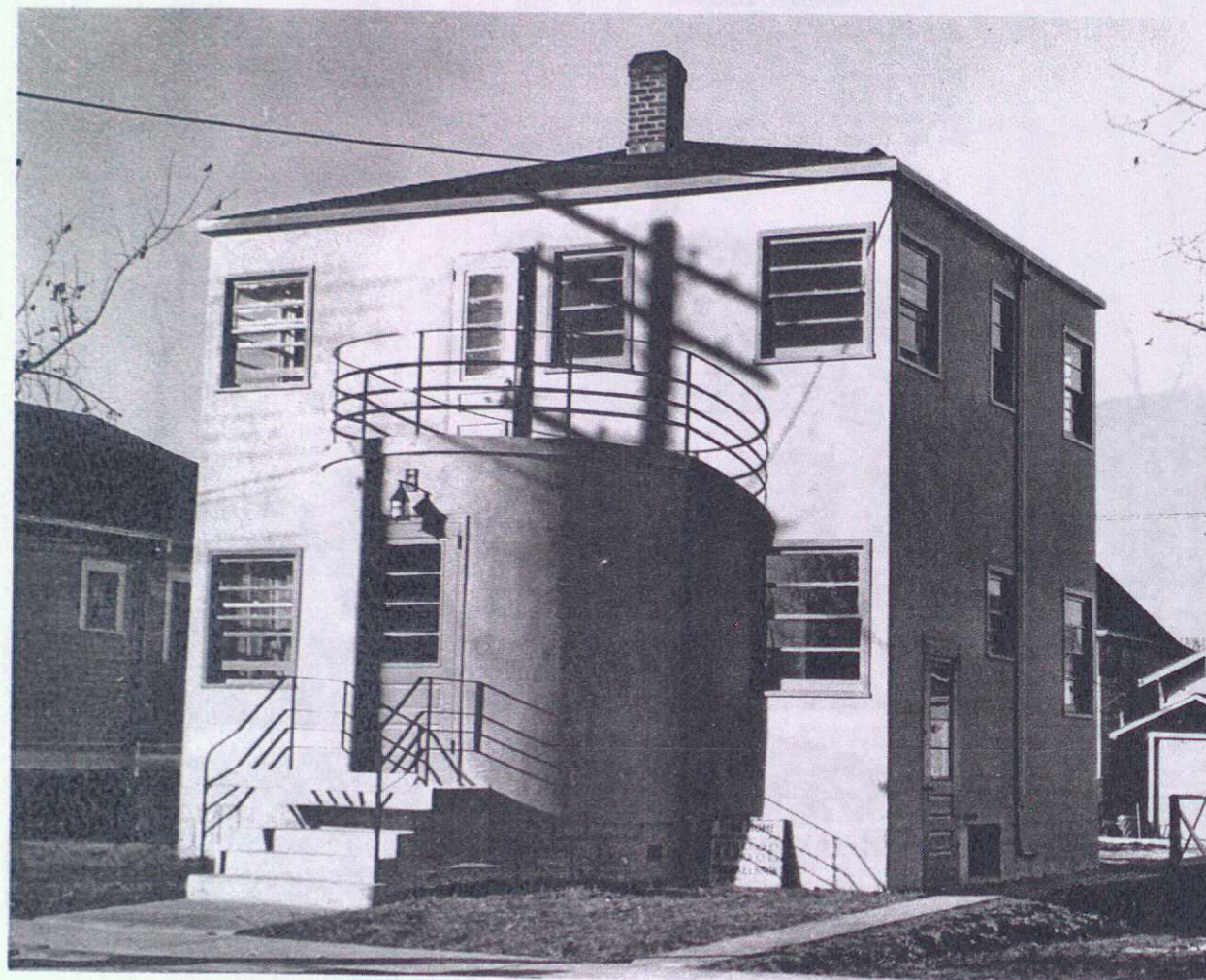
4.2: Demonstration House, Floor Plan

Every room has been laid out in such a way that it may be kept neat and clean with a minimum of effort.
A Home You May Own and Pay for Monthly (Winnipeg, 1937), pp. 7-13

Figure 4.3 Living Room, 804 Ashburn Street, 1937



4.2: Demonstration House, Street View



4.2: Demonstration House, Street View

Every room has been laid out in such a way that it may be kept neat and clean with a minimum of effort.

A Home You May Own and Pay for Monthly (Winnipeg, 1937), pp. 7-13.

Figure 4.3 Living Room, 804 Ashburn Street, 1937

Lovely Living Room

Dignity and comfort are the keynotes of this room - a room admirably adapted to graceful entertaining - large enough for dancing.

A Home You May Own and Pay for Monthly (Winnipeg, 1937), p. 13.

Figure 4.4 Living Room with Electric Fire Place, 804 Ashburn Street, 1937

The Comforts of Electricity

On chilly evenings in spring and fall, the cosy comfort of an electric fire-place may be used when the furnace would be unnecessary.

A Home You May Own and Pay for Monthly (Winnipeg, 1937), p. 13.

Figure 4.5 Kitchen, 804 Ashburn Street, 1937

No Lost Steps in the Kitchen

The kitchen is a masterpiece ... easy to keep clean.

A Home You May Own and Pay for Monthly (Winnipeg, 1937), p. 13.

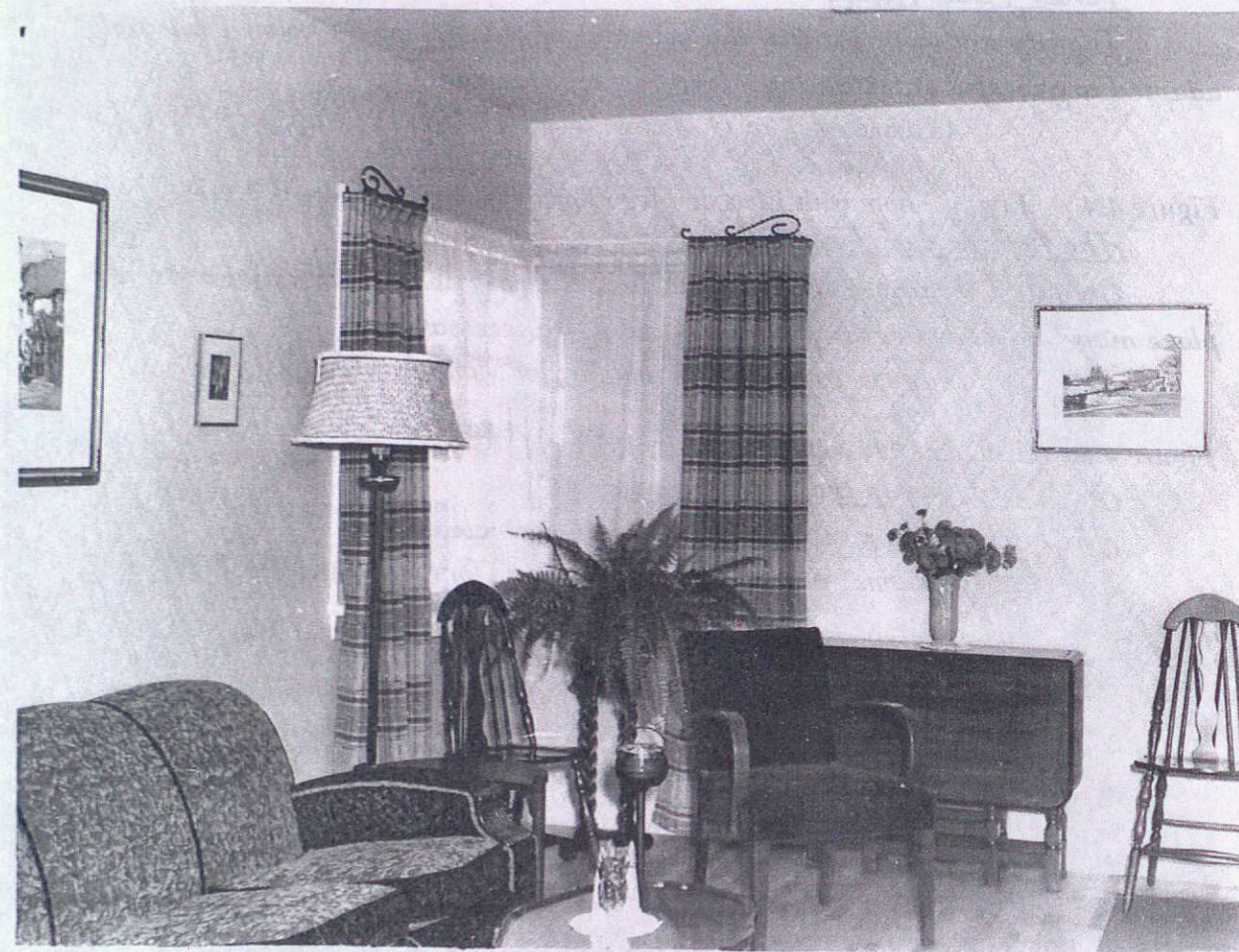
Call in Experts

Build Woman's Viewpoint into City's Model House

The woman's viewpoint is being built into and not tacked onto the City of Winnipeg's new model house. Ald. Margaret McWilliams had cast an eye over the plan for placing kitchen equipment and found it wanting.

The result was that Wednesday Ald. McWilliams and Ald. R.A. Sara took a small party of women out to the house. They inspected the house from basement to top storey, scaling ladders and leaping sacks of cement and boards. The meticulous attention mere men had given to details such as having cupboards wide enough for dress hangers, brought exclamations of admiration. But when it came to planning the kitchen arrangement the women had opinions plenty. Placement of refrigerator, stove, sink, cupboards were threshed out to the last detail and the party left well content that the convenience of the women in the kitchen will be considered while the house was still in the making.

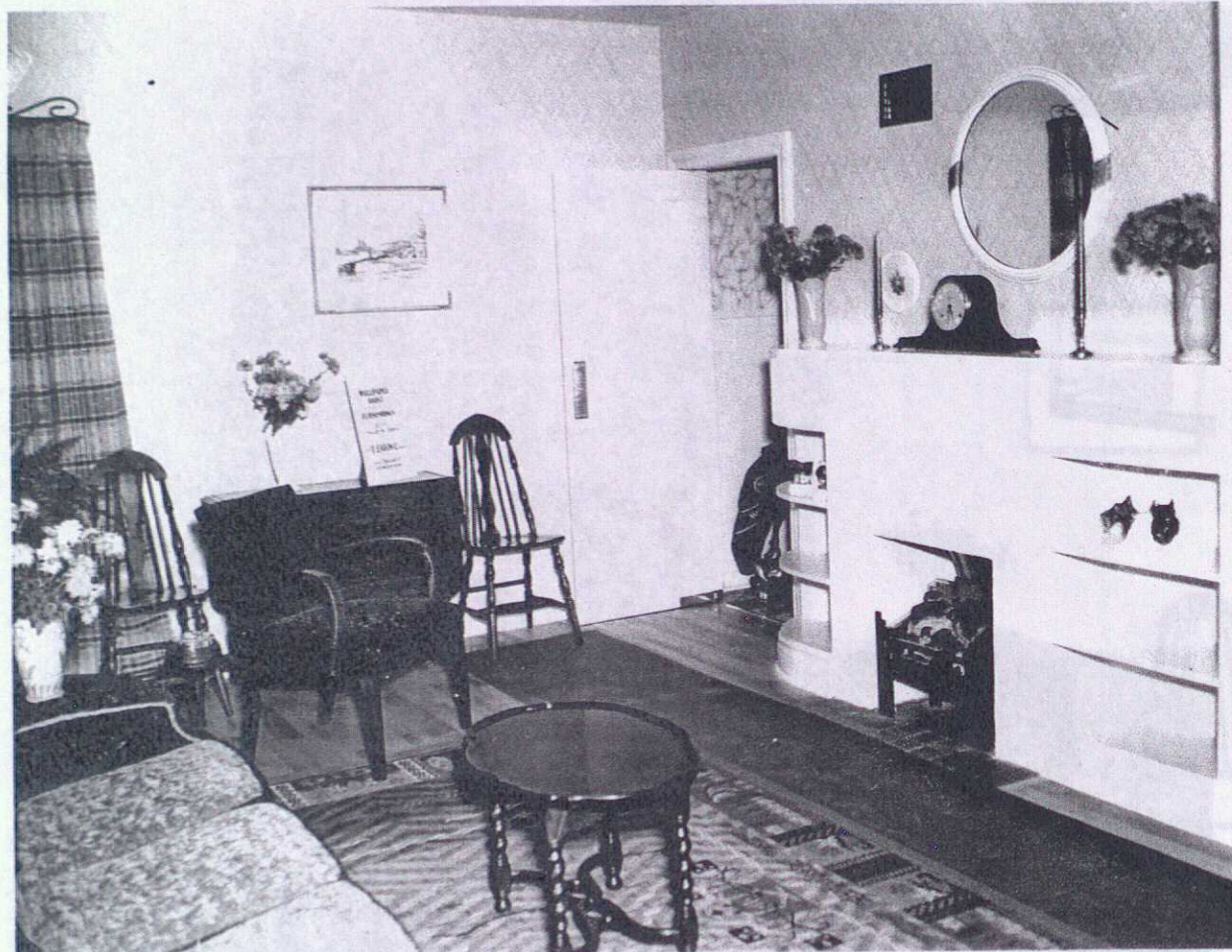
Winnipeg Free Press, 25 September 1937. (abridged)



4.3: Living Room, 804 Ashburn Street, 1937



4.3: Living Room, 804 Ashburn Street, 1937



4.4: Living Room with Electric Fire Place



4.5: Kitchen, 804 Ashburn Street, 1937

In 1937, the results of one such company in the mother of a winter in a care of the C spent days, places that for human beings. Finally, she found a six room unit in the townhouse project and although the rent was more than her welfare allowance, the City's welfare department treated her as a special case so that her family could be re-united.

4.5: Kitchen, 804 Ashburn Street, 1937



4.5: Kitchen, 804 Ashburn Street, 1937

Figure 4.6 Basement Play Room, 804 Ashburn Street, 1937

Plenty of Room for Play

Children cannot play without a litter – neither can adults. That is why the modern house has a play room.

A Home You May Own and Pay for Monthly (Winnipeg, 1937), p. 13.

Emergency Housing

The severe housing shortage of the 1930s only got worse during World War Two. In 1941 Mayor John Queen complained that Winnipeg needed 9,000 housing units. That year the federal government established Wartime Housing Ltd., a crown corporation, to build and rent accommodation. Its operations continued after the war until it was taken over by Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, in which the federal government consolidated its housing programmes.

Figure 4.7 Emergency housing still in use: Flora Place, 2003

In Winnipeg Wartime Housing constructed 100 dwellings at Flora Place. Considered a temporary measure, the two-bedroom, twenty by twenty-four foot dwellings, were built on concrete blocks with plywood interior walls and heated with stoves. With the end of the war surplus military buildings on Jameswood Place were converted to dwellings. At the end of 1948, 1,518 people in 370 families lived in emergency shelter.

Philanthropic housing

The earliest assisted housing in Canada was privately promoted. Concerned citizens formed corporations to erect and operate projects for low-income families or individuals with a return to their investors below normal market rates. Under amendments to the National Housing Act in 1948, such limited dividend companies could receive loans at three per cent interest from Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (renamed Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation in 1979).

Figure 4.8 “Low rental housing did it: Mother of seven finds a new life.”

In 1959 the *Winnipeg Tribune* reported favourably on the results of one such company in Elmwood that local businessmen had set up. The subject of the story was a mother of seven whose husband had abandoned their family. After spending a cold winter in a run-down flat on Machray, she reluctantly placed five of her children in the care of the Children’s Aid Society and with the other two moved in with her parents. “We spent days, my father and I, looking for a place and it was a terrible job,” she said. “The places that were suitable were far too expensive. The places I could afford were not fit for human beings.” Finally, she found a six-room unit in the Elmwood project and, although the rent was more than her welfare allowance, the City’s welfare department treated her as a special case so that her family could be re-united.



4.6: Basement Play Room





4.8: "Low rental housing ... mother of seven finds a new life."

The Projects

Public housing had been a matter of official discussion in Winnipeg since 1914, when the City's Health Department recommended that "it might be well for a city such as this to buy land and erect houses for the workers and let them at rents within the reach of the working man."

But for decades the majority on City Council usually remained unsympathetic to what they perceived as a socialist issue that would involve government in activities better left to the private sector. Admittedly, World War Two had created exceptional hardships that had required emergency responses, but in peacetime, especially with post-war prosperity, they were reluctant to assume new public responsibilities and expenditures. In 1953 a public housing proposal was put to ratepayers, and rejected in a referendum.

The balance was tipped in 1956 when the federal government amended the National Housing Act to permit the funding of slum clearance and urban renewal. The linkage of public housing with non-residential redevelopment promised economic stimulus and an improvement in the quality of urban life, all with federal and provincial funding. In 1958 the City established the Urban Renewal and Rehabilitation Board to draw up plans for a large area northwest of the city core. In the original scheme, 108 acres between Sutherland and Selkirk Avenues from Main to Salter Streets, which became the Lord Selkirk Park area, were slated for a twenty-year redevelopment project. Along with the Selkirk renewal, in 1959 the City undertook the Disraeli Project, which cleared areas of Point Douglas for the construction of multi-lane freeway to connect the northeast of the city and its suburbs to the core.

Figure 4.9 "Big step out of the slums into a bright new world," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 17 October 1963.

The completion of the 165-unit Burrows-Keewatin complex—Winnipeg's and Manitoba's first government-sponsored low rental homes—provided accommodation for people dislocated by the Selkirk redevelopment. The first families moved in at the end of September 1963. Now a family of seven, which had paid \$70 a month for a two-room suite on Magnus Avenue, rented a three-bedroom unit with full basement for \$45.

Figure 4.10 "Most homes are neatly kept in the Burrows-Keewatin development." *Winnipeg Tribune*, 15 October 1966.

After it had been in operation for several years, the *Winnipeg Tribune* investigated conditions in the complex that had already come to be called "the project":

Burrows-Keewatin is not a poverty ghetto. Segregation has prevented it. Many poor families—the hard core poor—have been kept out. Burrows-Keewatin is not, however, a normal community. It is planned. It is controlled by strict rules. All houses look alike and are cheaply built. Burrows-Keewatin is a goldfish bowl. The Big Brother of the Winnipeg Housing Authority is looking in everyone's window. All 900 people are



4.9: "Big step out of the slums into a bright world"



4.10: "Most homes are neatly kept."

Figure 4.11 "Shining housing project rises from a city slum" Winnipeg Tribune, 14 December 1967

Figure 4.12 "Older housing is gentler along Henry Ave near the 24th Street viaduct" Winnipeg Tribune, 1971

This neighbourhood, and much of the central area south of the tracks, would have been bulldozed and been replaced with tracts of low-rental row houses and high-rise apartment blocks, according to a 1968 renewal plan. But late that year the federal government stopped its support for large-scale urban renewal projects. Complaints from community groups about insensitive, top-down decision-making persuaded the federal

looking in each other's windows too. Gossip is the principal social activity of Burrows-Keewatin. Everyone knows the most personal intimate details about other residents. This lack of privacy has its benefits. Crime has been virtually wiped out because... there are no dark corners. The emotional climate of the project is high voltage. Racial prejudice plays a significant part. Several of the families are Indian or Metis.

Figure 4.11 "Shining housing project rises from a city slum." *Winnipeg Tribune*, 14 December 1967.

The Lord Selkirk Park housing development was the second low-income complex cooperatively undertaken by the three levels of government. Nineteen row house units and a seven-storey apartment took in their first residents at the end of 1967. Covering 11.6 acres, the complex was planned to be a much larger project. Changes in the federal government's policy on major urban renewal stopped its further development.

Urban Renewal

In the early 1950s government first targeted the area between Princess and Sherbrook streets, and from Notre Dame Avenue to the CPR tracks and a few streets beyond, for slum clearance and urban renewal. This was the most severely overcrowded area with sixty per cent of dwellings having single or family lodgers.

The worst area, between Logan and Higgins avenues from Princess to Sherbrook streets, suffered from such deterioration that in 1955 forty-five per cent of its housing was judged in need of major repair or demolition and another fifty per cent requiring minor repairs. But controversy over the use of public funds for housing and calls for resident participation in planning delayed progress.

The Lord Selkirk Park area seemed a better place to start since it was a more concentrated area in which more of the housing stock could be rehabilitated. The improvement of older housing and the opening of new housing projects would provide space for the subsequent dislocation of the residents of even worse areas.

Figure 4.12 *Corner of Henry Avenue and Laura Street, 1955.*

Figure 4.13 *Brick terrace on Henry Avenue, 1959*

More than half of the families who lived in the central area of the city did not want to move away from it, even though they would have preferred better accommodation.

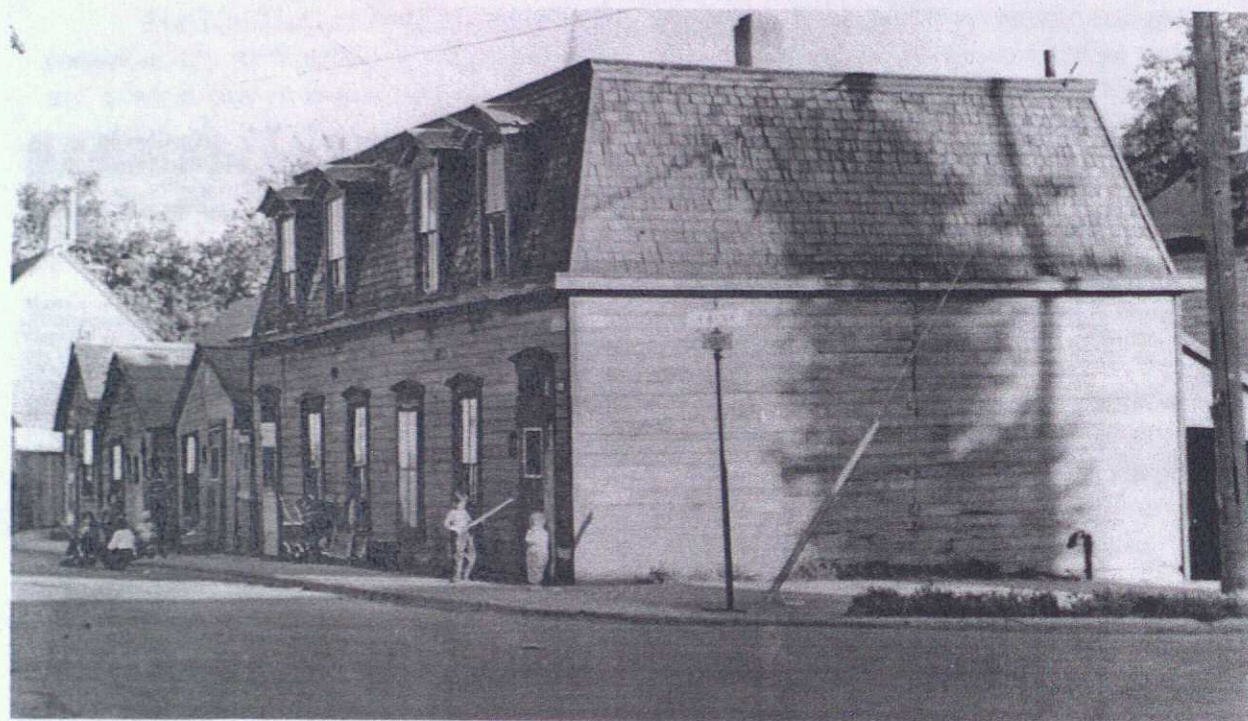
Figure 4.14 "Older housing is general along Henry Ave. near the Salter Street viaduct," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 1971

This neighbourhood, and much of the central area south of the tracks, would have been bulldozed and been replaced with tracts of low-rental row houses and high-rise apartment blocks, according to a 1968 renewal plan. But late that year the federal government stopped its support for large-scale urban renewal projects. Complaints from community groups about insensitive, top-down decision-making persuaded the federal



4.11: "Shining housing project" -- Lord Selkirk Park

4.13: Brick Terrace on Henry Avenue



4.12: Corner of Henry Avenue and Laura Street, 1955



4.13: Brick Terrace on Henry Avenue



4.14: Older Housing along Henry Avenue, 1971

government that redevelopment must involve area residents as much as possible in the planning process.

This neighbourhood was later redeveloped in the 1980s under the Core Area Initiative at the time of the construction of the Slaw Rebchuk Bridge.

Figure 4.15 Jarvis Avenue, 1963

"This row of houses, displaying broken windows, sagging porches, and a need for a coat of paint, will be one of the first to fall under the wrecker's hammer." (*Winnipeg Tribune*, 1963)

One local resident, an elderly Ukrainian man who had lived on Charles Street near Jarvis Avenue since the end of second war, told a *Winnipeg Tribune* report in 1963, "It's good here. I'm near Main St., the market and the hotel." Another resident, active in neighbourhood associations, was ambivalent about the effect of redevelopment; "It's where all our ties are."

But a Jarvis Street resident, sitting on his front porch in the accompanying photograph, hankered for something better; "I'd like to move into some place where it would be warm in the winter, but I've got no job." Likewise, one mother looked forward to leaving with no regrets or sentimentality; one struggle she "always had was to keep our kids clean so that people wouldn't think we didn't care. We lived there because of our income not because we liked it." [Note the dirt boulevards and front lawns in the accompanying picture.]

Not long afterwards demolition displaced 2000 people from the Jarvis area.

Co-operative Housing: Willow Park, 1966

In January 1960 representatives of the labour and the co-operative movements got together to form the Co-operative Housing Association of Manitoba. Its goal was to promote a new form of home ownership, co-operative ownership. Drawing upon earlier studies of staff at the University of Manitoba, who had investigated various models of co-operative housing, the association developed the Willow Park Housing Co-operative. The project was owned by co-op members and operated on a non-profit basis.

Figure 4.16 Willow Park Housing Co-operative, Dorset Street

Despite some early hesitation, Winnipeg City Council agreed to lease land adjacent to its Burrows-Keewatin Project to the co-operative for a nominal charge. The Manitoba Federated Co-operatives and Co-operative Credit Society of Manitoba provided sufficient funding to qualify Willow Park for funding from the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (renamed Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation). When it opened in 1966, Willow Park was the first continuing co-operative housing project in Canada. By 1978 Willow Park consisted of three separate projects with 450 homes in total sharing a community centre and co-op store.



4.15: Jarvis Avenue, 1963



4.16: Willow Park Housing Co-operative

Provincial housing

Premier Edward Schreyer's NDP government made housing a major priority when it took office in 1969. The Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation, a crown corporation that had been established two years earlier by the Conservative government of Duff Roblin in a re-organization of the province's housing activities, became a major participant in residential construction and the rental market.

Previously social housing programmes had shared the cost between the three levels of government, with the federal government picking up half and the province and the city splitting the balance. The Schreyer government believed that municipalities had been reluctant to commit to the large expenditures that significant projects required and so social housing had progressed slowly. He pledged the province to pay half the cost. By mid-1972 the corporation had built 8,000 units and was the province's largest landlord.

Figure 4.17 *Tuxedo, 1971: "Publicly-built town houses are being scattered throughout residential areas of Winnipeg."*

Critics charged that the public housing "saps the morale of people and makes them permanent wards of the government." But defenders pointed out that only thirty per cent of tenants were on welfare and rents were graduated, reflecting what each family could afford to pay. A husband and wife without children who in 1971 earned \$192 a month paid \$32 a month in rent, sixteen per cent of their income. If their earnings increased to \$500 a month, then their rent increased to \$125 or twenty-five per cent.

The Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation attempted to minimize the residential segregation of low-income families by locating smaller complexes of housing in various neighbourhoods in Winnipeg and the suburbs.



4.17: Public Housing in Tuxedo, 1971

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- 4.9 "Big step out of the slums into a bright new world," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 17 October 1963. (University of Manitoba, Elizabeth Dafoe Library, Department of Archives and Special Collections, *Winnipeg Tribune* Coll., PC18/3585/18-2814-050)
- 4.10 "Most homes are neatly kept in the Burrows-Keewatin development." *Winnipeg Tribune*, 15 October 1966. (University of Manitoba, Elizabeth Dafoe Library, Department of Archives and Special Collections, *Winnipeg Tribune* Coll., PC18/256/18-256-079)
- 4.11 "Shining housing project rises from a city slum." *Winnipeg Tribune*, 14 December 1967. (University of Manitoba, Elizabeth Dafoe Library, Department of Archives and Special Collections, *Winnipeg Tribune* Coll., PC18/256/18-256-080)

- 4.12 *Corner of Henry Avenue and Laura Street, 1955* *Corner of Henry Avenue and Laura Street, 1955* (University of Manitoba, Elizabeth Dafoe Library, Department of Archives and Special Collections, *Winnipeg Tribune* Coll., PC18/3585/18-2814-036)
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Chapter 5

The Old and the New

Introduction

From the early twentieth century the relations between city and suburbs had divided what really was one community.

Municipal boundaries created opportunities for developers and homeowners to avoid some of the costs of living in the city by moving just outside, but still close enough to share its various services and amenities. On some issues, such as building the aqueduct (1913), providing sanitary and sewer services (1935), operating the airport (1937), and coordinating transit (1953), Winnipeg and the suburban municipalities cooperated with one another. But planning for development proved more difficult since gains for one area meant losses for another.

In 1960 the Manitoba government created a second tier of municipal government, the Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg, with authority over a number of interurban services. But planning and urban redevelopment split the new government from the old ones. Metro planners, who described the city as "a bombed out site" by 1968, grew frustrated with what they perceived as lack of cooperation on several downtown initiatives. To resolve the impasse, in 1972 the provincial government responded to a growing consensus of business opinion and citizens' groups calling for more participation in municipal affairs by amalgamating the city and its suburbs into a single entity, Unicity.

Urban boundaries and government have changed, but the relationship between city and suburb has been a continuing force in the Winnipeg's housing markets.

Figure 5.1 *Old and New: A small apartment block and a high-rise stand beside a stately house on Wellington Crescent*

Figure 5.2 *Old and New: A nineteenth-century terrace seems to push against a Manitoba Housing Authority block*

The look of age

Old houses command respect, some for the enduring good taste of their design and style, others because they conjure up images of other times. They give to their residents an air of permanence, stability, and heritage. Their very existence seems to declare a respect for the past and its achievements.

Figure 5.3 *Built in the middle of the Depression to look old, this Wellington Crescent mansion, with its furnishings, was offered for sale in 1979 for \$625,000.*



5.1: Old and New, Wellington Crescent



5.2: Old and New: Terrace beside Manitoba Housing Authority Block

Figure 5.4 Old buildings put to new uses become fashionable. Perhaps there is some irony in turning functional, working commercial space into comfortable living quarters. The Ashdown Warehouse has become a symbol of the possibilities for many unused buildings in the Exchange District.

Figure 5.5 The Manitoba government invested in schools and teacher training facilities, like the Normal School (built in 1905-6), to help Canadianize the children of the thousands of immigrants who arrived in the province.

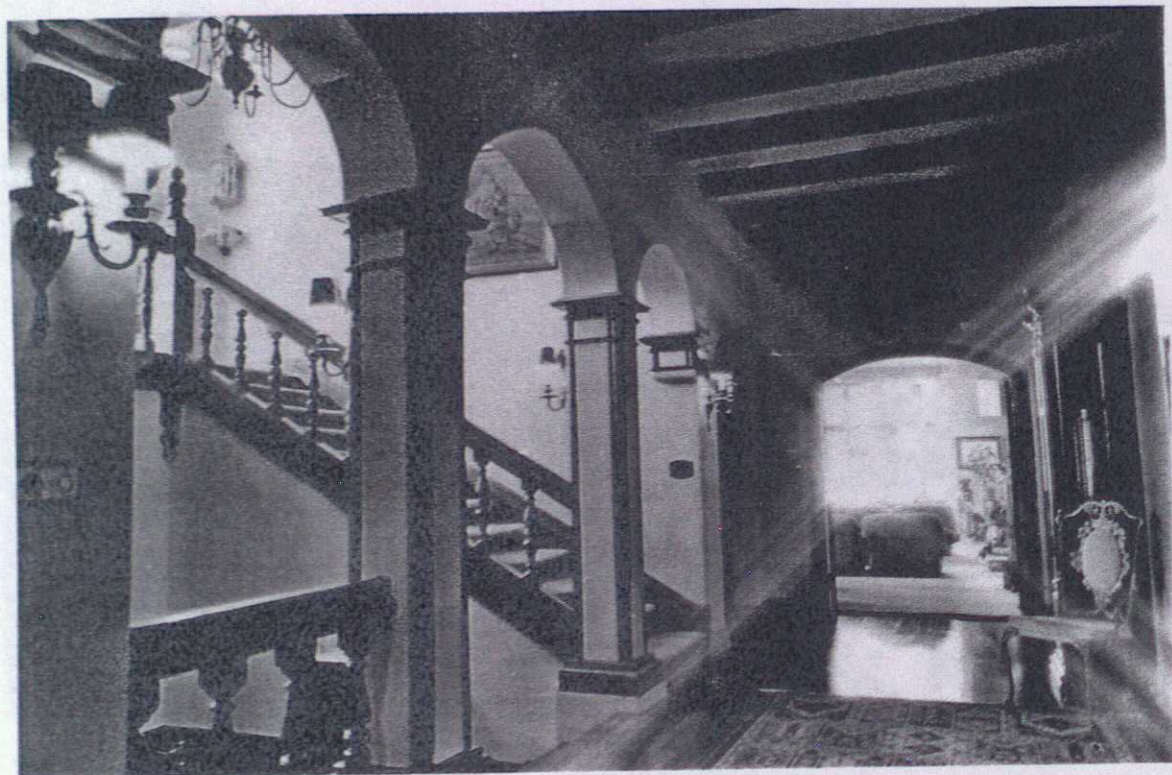


5.3: Wellington Crescent Mansion, 1979

suburban malls they make shopping trips downtown. The Exchange District, with a population of 4,445 in 1996, has become the fastest growing retail area in the city.

Developers have offered a range of housing choices to both buyers and renters. Architectural restrictions, which have been a concern for many years, help to support property values. The growth of the suburbs has promoted the growth of homeownership from fifty-nine per cent in metropolitan Winnipeg in 1971 (forty-seven per cent in the city proper) to sixty-four per cent of households in 1996. In a hundred years the proportion of Winnipeggers living in their own homes has doubled.

Figure 5.7 Front garages testify to the importance of the automobile in suburban development. This use of space and also a concern for family privacy have shifted the focus of the house to backyard, to decks, pools, and gardens.



5.3: Wellington Crescent Mansion, 1979

Figure 5.4 *Old buildings put to new uses become fashionable. Perhaps there is some irony in turning functional, working commercial space into comfortable living quarters. The Ashdown Warehouse has become a symbol of the possibilities for many unused buildings in the Exchange District.*

Figure 5.5 *The Manitoba government invested in schools and teacher training facilities, like the Normal School (built in 1905-6), to help Canadianize the children of the thousands of immigrants who arrived in the province before World War One. In 1992 members of the Filipino community rehabilitated the aging building on William Avenue, turning it into Filcasa Housing Co-op.*

Figure 5.6 *In 1993 the Winnipeg Housing Rehabilitation Corporation converted the St. John's Telephone Exchange, built in 1910-11 by the Manitoba Government Telephone System, to housing. In 1977 the City of Winnipeg had established the WHRC as a non-profit housing company to acquire and rehabilitate older buildings for rental, sale, or lease-to-purchase. It maintains an active presence in the inner city.*

Cities within the City

In the last thirty years Winnipeg's suburbs have continued to grow and on a scale not seen before.

The largest and oldest have experienced several stages of development for more than two decades. Lindenwoods, for example, is twenty-one years old and in 1996 had the population of a small town of almost 6,500. River Park South, started more than a quarter century ago, with almost 11,000 residents in 1996, would be one of Manitoba's largest towns. Big box stores and many smaller retail operations have been planted at the major intersections and along traffic arteries leading into the suburbs; along with suburban malls they make shopping trips downtown unnecessary. Whyte Ridge, with a population of 4,445 in 1996, has become the fastest growing retail area in the city.

Developers have offered a range of housing choices to both buyers and renters. Architectural restrictions and separation of houses of different size help to support property values. The growth of the suburbs has promoted the growth of homeownership from fifty-nine per cent in metropolitan Winnipeg in 1971 (forty-seven per cent in the city proper) to sixty-four per cent of households in 1996. In a hundred years the proportion of Winnipeggers living in their own homes has doubled.

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From garages built to the importance of the automobile in suburban development. This use of space and also a concern for family privacy have shifted the focus of the house to backyard, to decks, pools, and gardens.

Figure 2.4

Figure 2.5



5.5: Filcasa Housing Co-op



5.6: St. John's Telephone Exchange



5.7: Front Garages

Figure 5.8 Large houses backing on the main-made lakes appear almost to be in the country rather than the city.

Figure 5.9 Houses of different sizes and in different price ranges are separated in suburban development.

Figure 5.10 Condominiums were a new, modern type of housing in 1979 and called for a modern architectural design. Before building these dwellings, the developer commissioned a market survey to gauge buyer interest.

declining populations in the inner city. Between 1971 and 1996 neighborhoods such as Brooklands, Shaughnessy Park, West North Point Douglas lost roughly a third of their residents, while other districts have experienced even more drastic reductions—almost half in Lord Selkirk Park and two thirds in the Logan CTR neighbourhood.

The political and popular reaction against the large-scale slum clearance programmes of the late 1950s and 1960s demanded that the people who lived in inner city neighbourhoods should participate in the redevelopment process. The persistent campaign to stop the Sherbrook-McGregor Overpass, successful by 1981, demonstrated the effectiveness of inner city residents when they opposed development. Subsequent government efforts at renewal, most recently the Winnipeg Homelessness and Housing Initiative, have paid more attention to local opinion and have attempted to involve neighbourhood associations.

Figure 5.8 *Large houses backing on the man-made lakes appear almost to be in the country rather than the city.*

Figure 5.9 *Houses of different sizes and in different price ranges are separated in suburban development.*

Figure 5.10 *Condominiums were a new, modern type of housing in 1979 and called for a modern architectural design. Before building these dwellings, the developer commissioned a market survey to prove buyer interest. "Condominium living," he concluded, is "the coming thing."*

Figure 5.11 *In 1978 the developer built these fourplex units to look like distinctive single-family luxury dwellings.*

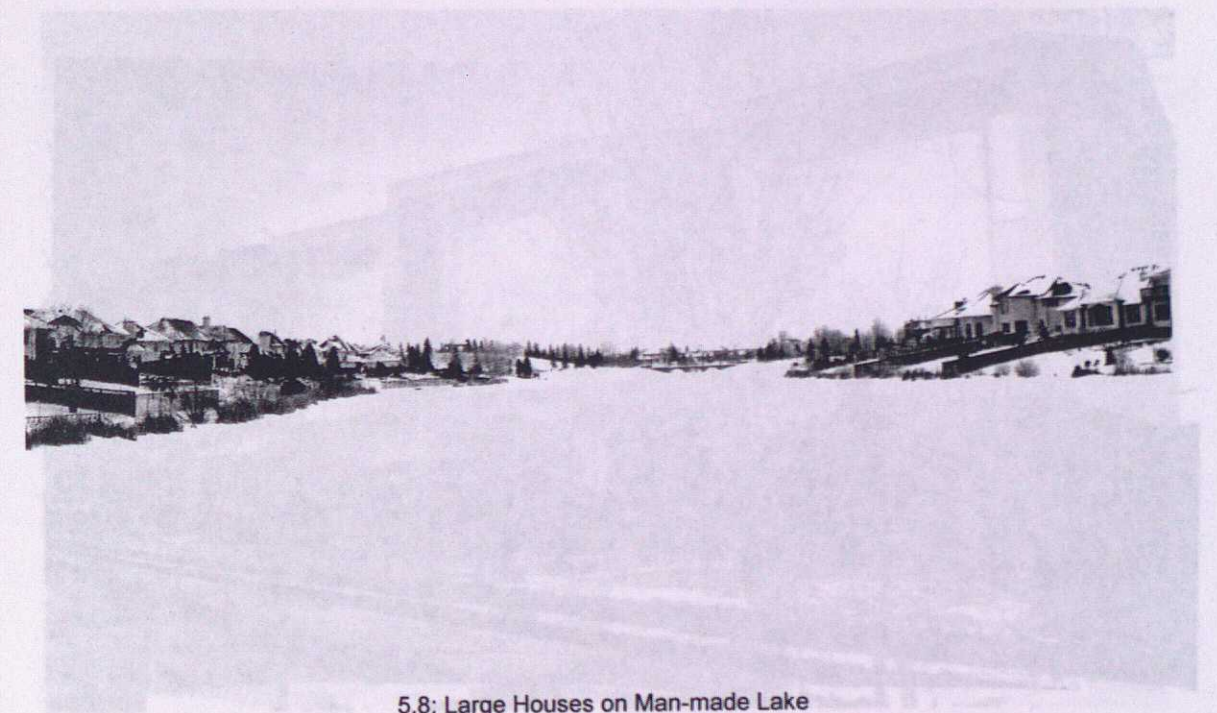
Figure 5.12 *Garden apartments offered low-density rental accommodation in the suburbs. An innovation in 1979, they were advertised as providing "privacy for freespirts". The manager of this property explained, "People like to feel close to nature....I really don't think people can be comfortable, not truly comfortable, on the 17th floor of a high rise." Winnipeg Tribune, 24 March 1979*

Inner city neighbourhoods

Many neighbourhoods, new and old, have well maintained properties and stable populations. But Winnipeg is second only to Montreal in having the largest stock of old, poor quality housing. In some neighbourhoods in the core and in the north end, housing values dropped by as much as fifty per cent between 1988 and 1998. In consequence, the combined cost of acquisition and renovation has exceeded the potential market value of many dwellings. Some houses, often more than a hundred years old, have gone beyond recovery; between 1983 and 2000 an average of 153 houses a year were demolished, although the actual number has been declining.

The deterioration of housing and the attraction of the suburbs have contributed to declining populations in the inner city. Between 1971 and 1996 neighbourhoods such as Brooklands, Shaughnessy Park, West Alexander, and North Point Douglas lost roughly a third of their residents, while other districts have experienced even more drastic reductions—almost half in Lord Selkirk Park and two thirds in the Logan CPR neighbourhood.

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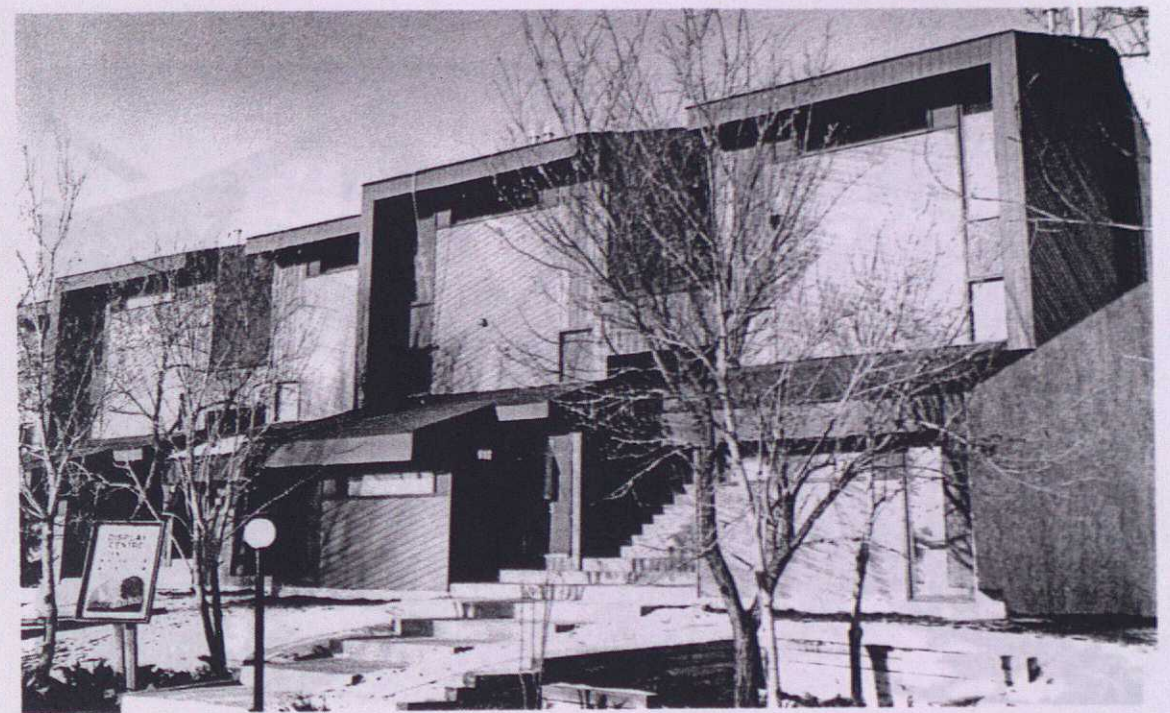


5.8: Large Houses on Man-made Lake

5.9: Separation of Building Values
5.10: Condominiums



5.9: Separation of Building Values



5.10: Condominiums

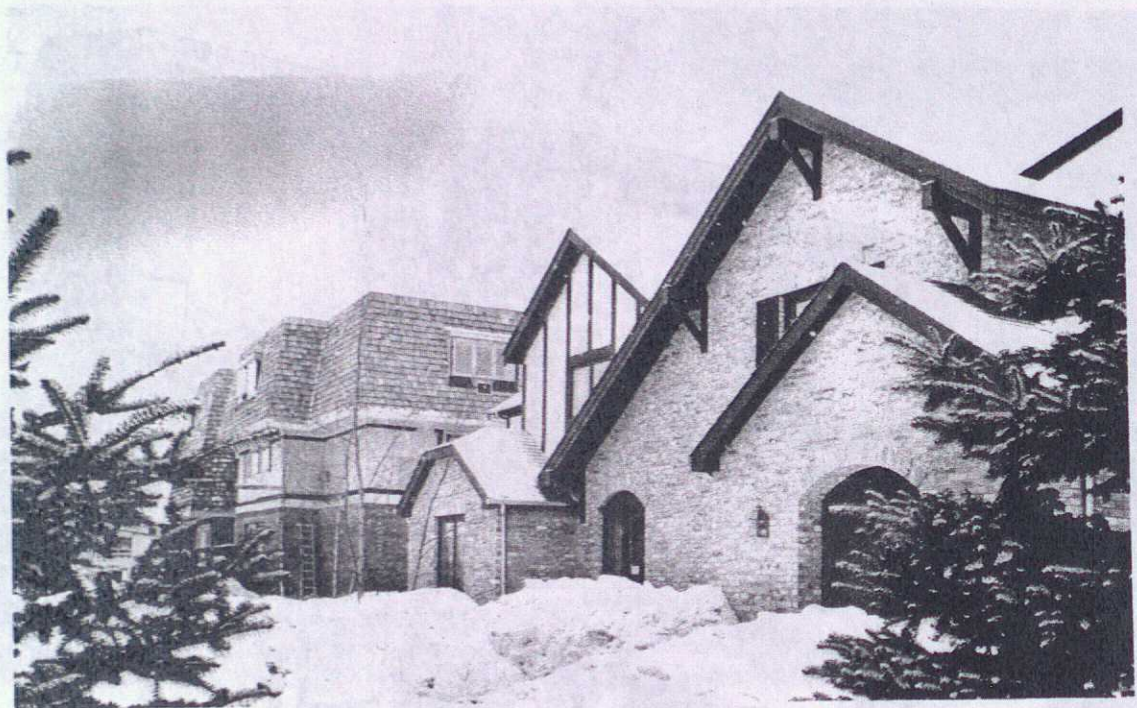


Figure 5.13 Many inner city residents remain committed to their neighbourhoods.

Figure 5.14 New apartment blocks in the centre of the city.

Figure 5.15 Newer infill housing built beside two houses from the first decade of the last century.

Figure 5.16 An older boarded-up house down the street from newer rental accommodation.

Figure 5.17 Boarded-up houses, ordered vacant by City Inspectors for being insanitary. Dealing with landlords unwilling to maintain their properties has been a constant problem. Abandoned properties invite mischief and even arson. After a huge jump in the arson rate in 1998, Winnipeg gained the title of arson capital of Canada for several years.

Figure 5.18 A boarded-up house stands beside a well-maintained dwelling and another under renovation.

Figure 5.19 Three houses undergoing renovation: the three levels of government, through various programmes, have tried to encourage rehabilitation of old but good housing.

Figure 5.20 As part of its plan for the city for the next twenty years, the City has identified neighbourhoods that will have priority for renewal.

Housing for Aboriginal People: The Kinew example

Moving to the city has never been easy, especially for people whose culture is different and who do not much money. So it has been for many immigrants and so it continues for many aboriginal people.

From the 1950s the aboriginal population of Winnipeg has grown dramatically. The 1951 census probably under reported their numbers at 210. But the trend has been unmistakable, from just under 5,000 in 1971 to almost 56,000 in 2001.

Concerned that aboriginal people confronted discrimination in finding decent housing and problems in adjusting to urban life, in 1970 a number people supported by the Indian-Métis Friendship Centre and advised by the Institute of Urban Studies at the University of Winnipeg, formed Kinew Housing Inc. It was the first non-profit social housing corporation in Canada owned and managed by aboriginal people.

Funded by the federal government's Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (renamed Canada Mortgage and Housing), Kinew Housing purchased houses needing repairs and hired aboriginal workers to do the work. In acquiring properties the company made sure not to concentrate residences in one neighbourhood, but located them throughout the city. Thereby they avoided segregation and also helped tenants to get



5.13: Inner-city Neighbourhood



5.14: Apartment Blocks in the City Centre



5.15: In-fill Housing

5.17: Boarded-up House

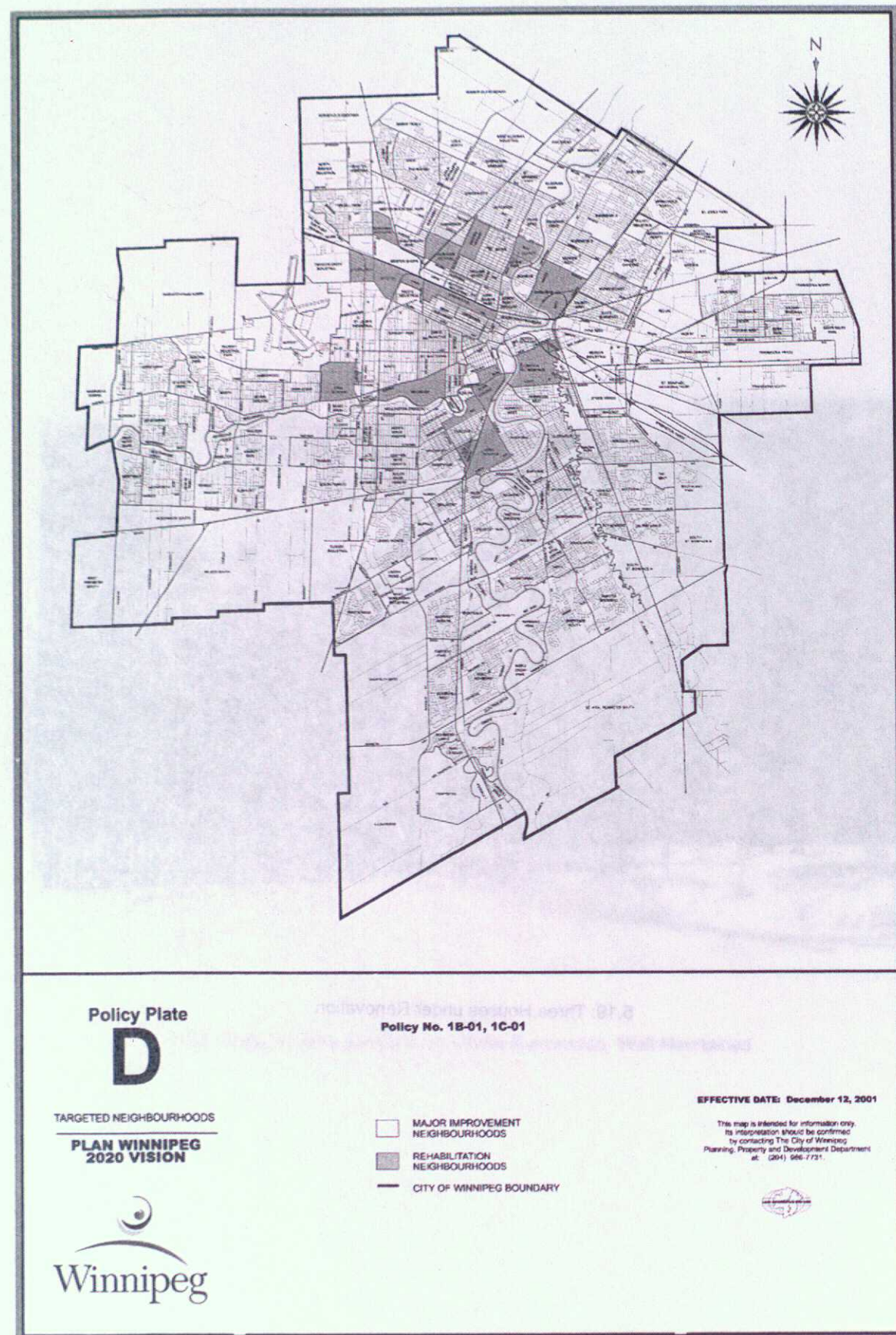


5.16: Boarded-up House beside Newer Rental Housing



5.17: Boarded-up House





used to the city. In its first two years of operation, Kinew acquired fifty houses. More followed in subsequent years, with the 1980s being the years of greatest expansion. By the mid-1990s the company had approximately 400 housing units, mostly single-family dwellings. When the federal government ended its support for social housing in 1994, Kinew concentrated on the management of its properties.

Since Kinew's establishment, other aboriginal corporations across Canada and in Winnipeg (including Kanata Housing and Aiyawin Corporation) have begun to offer family housing.

Figure 5.21 Kinew Housing, before and after.

Figure 5.22 Kinew Housing, before and after.

Figure 5.23 Kinew Housing, before and after.



5.21: Kinew Housing, Before



5.21: Kinew Housing, After



5.22: Kineu Housing, Before

5.22: Kineu Housing, After



5.22: Kineu Housing, After



5.23: Kineu Housing, Before



5.23: Kineu Housing, After

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