



STOVEL BLOCK

10327 - 97 STREET NW

CITY OF EDMONTON HISTORIC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Edmonton

DESCRIPTION OF HISTORICAL PLACE

The 1912 Stovel Block is made up of two related, but separate, Edwardian-style commercial buildings on the southeast corner of 97 Street NW and 103A Avenue NW in Downtown Edmonton. The main building is a three-storey structure of brick construction. The smaller annex building is also of brick construction, but only two storeys in height.

HERITAGE VALUE

The Stovel Block is significant for its Edwardian style commercial influences in Downtown Edmonton and its association with builders and businesses.

The three-storey building is built on a rectangular plan facing onto 97 Street. The building has a flat roof, with a shallow parapet that originally had decorative brick dentilation detailing with a matching arched pediment with 'Stovel Block 1910' inscribed on the west elevation. Portions of the parapet have been replaced with concrete block. The storefronts wrap around the corner of the building and are largely original in layout. There are two entrances onto 97 Street, and a third entrance at street level on the west elevation is surrounded in brick, and leads to the apartments above. Windows around the structure are set into stone lintels and sills. Many of the original windows would have likely have been single-hung in style. The east side of the three storey building features an "Army & Navy" painted ghost sign prominently at the top corner of the wall. The original metal fire escape has been removed and replaced with small balconettes.

The two-storey annex building is also constructed on a rectangular plan, with the narrow front facade facing 97 Street. The building has a flat roof with a shallow parapet. A brick cornice runs along the length of the facade featuring corbelling details and a row of dentilation below. Similar to the main building, the windows are set into stone lintels and sills. The original windows would likely have originally been single-hung in style. It appears that a pressed metal cornice likely ran along the top of the ground floor across the width of the west elevation, but it has been removed to accommodate a modern awning. The storefront on the ground level remains largely original in design and materials.

The Stovel Block is also valued for its association with builders and businesses. Like other buildings constructed before the First World War, the Stovel Block was constructed by local contractors or family members, who were often doing that work outside of their normal day-to-day activities. No architect appears to have been involved, although builders William Slyman undertook the foundation work on the building and the building firm Beals, Hoar & Beals was the main contractor. Brothers James and Oswald Van Buskirk were both employed by the firm. The company was owned by Colin (father) and Ray (son) Beals, and Robert Hoar. Colin Beals was born in Prince Edward Island in 1861, and was referred to by the Edmonton Bulletin at the time of his death in 1942 as one of Edmonton's "best known pioneers." He arrived in Edmonton in 1891, and worked as a blacksmith until 1898, when he founded the construction business. He was a charter member and the last survivor of the original three trustees of First Baptist Church, which was founded in 1892. He was the first choir conductor at First Baptist, and





organized and conducted the Edmonton Fire Brigade Band, which claimed to be the first brass band in Edmonton. Robert Hoar, the other associate of the firm, came west from Ontario in 1902, using his resources from his implement and construction company to purchase a lot and build a home in the new subdivision of Groat Estate. Hoar died in 1964; his wife, Carolyn, who passed away in 1967, was well known in music circles in Edmonton, and was president of the Canadian Handicraft Guild for a time.

The Stovel Block is significant for its associations with the Stovel family, who were active in the burgeoning commercial industry in Edmonton in the early 1900s. James Stovel was noted as being one of the first two hardware merchants in Edmonton. While James managed the hardware store, his wife Mary took a direct role in obtaining the required permits and overseeing the Stovel Block project itself. Mary took ownership of the property and managed the range of tenants over the years, which included retail businesses on the main floor, and apartments on the second and third floors. The first retail tenants in 1912 appear to have been the Royal Bank of Canada and Aitken & Fulton, who provided “men’s furnishings.”

Designated as a Municipal Historic Resource through Bylaw 18979 in October 2019.



CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS

The character-defining elements of the 1910 Stovel Block include:

Three-Storey Building:

- + form, scale and massing;
- + Edwardian-style commercial design;
- + location on 97 Street NW and 103A Avenue NW;
- + rectangular plan;
- + flat roof with a shallow parapet;
- + brick construction and decorative brick cornice with dentilation pattern (original, but removed);
- + original window openings on upper floors with stone lintels and sills;
- + original storefront configuration on 97 Street, with two retail entrances and one entrance to the upper floor apartments;
- + metal cornice running above ground floor storefronts; and
- + “Army & Navy” painted ghost sign.

Two-Storey Annex:

- + form, scale and massing;
- + Edwardian-style commercial design;
- + location on 97 Street NW and 103A Avenue NW;
- + rectangular plan;
- + flat roof with a shallow parapet;
- + brick construction and decorative brick cornice with corbelling and dentilation below;
- + original window openings with brick lintels and sills; and
- + original storefront configuration on 97 Street, with one retail entrance.

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