

Statement of Significance - 522 St. Charles Street

Description

522 St. Charles Street is a large, two and one-half storey plus basement house located in the Rockland neighbourhood of Victoria. This Arts & Crafts home with multiple, rough cast stucco and half-timbered roof gables, is clad in wood shingles with distinguishing features including, heavy timber eaves support brackets and dentil trim work. The west addition keeps with the original wood shingle and trim cladding while exposed rafter tails supersede the heavy brackets.



Heritage Value

522 St. Charles Street, originally 422 St. Charles Street, was constructed in 1910 by George C. Mesher for Herbert William Ruthven Moore and his wife Emma Alice. Founded in 1886 by George Mesher Sr., George C. Mesher and Co. offered both architectural and contractor services on commercial and residential buildings throughout Victoria. A pioneer in the use of reinforced concrete on the West Coast, George C. Mesher and Co. is credited for the design and construction of the Pemberton and Sayward Buildings in Victoria and the bold Arts & Crafts bungalow at 610 St. Charles St.

The original Owner, H.W.R. Moore, was born in London in 1873 and studied law at Cambridge. One year after being called to the bar, he emigrated to Canada to manage a gold mine in the Yukon. In 1902 he moved to Victoria and worked as a crown prosecutor and a sports columnist for the Seattle Post-Intelligencer. After serving time in WW1, he returned to Victoria to resume practising law first with William H. Langley in the Pemberton Building and then with Charles E. Wilson in the Central Building. The final years of his life were spent living in the Union Club.

Following the successful establishment as a prominent doctor in London, England, Dr. Harold Edward Ridewood emigrated to Victoria in 1911. Shortly after, in 1913, he became one of the founding members of the American College of Surgeons. After serving in WWI, he returned to Victoria in 1919 to marry Mary Meld. The following year he would purchase 422 St. Charles Street from H.W.R. Moore and move in with his wife while starting his own medical practice. Dr. H.E. Ridewood was associated with the development of both Royal Jubilee and St. Joseph's Hospitals being chief of staff of both. He was president of the Victoria Medical Society and the British Columbia Medical Association. Always eager to be on the cutting edge of medicine, he would eventually practise from his home on St. Charles street. In

1952 he travelled to England to seek relief from a malignant disease. Following his untimely death there, his wife returned home and lived in the house until 1973.

522 St. Charles Street is an example of a moderate, Arts & Crafts home, typical of its pre-WWI era and Rockland district location. The recently restored front entrance highlights the prominent gabling of the east elevation while the shingle cladding, rough-cast stucco gables and heavy brackets all accentuate the Craftsman style. The west addition continues the wood shingle cladding while the roof eaves terminates with exposed rafter tails.

Character Defining Elements

The key elements that define the heritage character of 522 St. Charles Street and support its heritage values are:

- its multi-gabled roof profile with the three main gables, the gabled front entrance roof and the gabled dormer
- the historic exterior finishes dating to the time of construction including the wood shingles and rough cast stucco with wood trim
- the Craftsman detailing including heavy eaves brackets, dentil trim, and exposed rafter tails
- the front entrance with the broad steps and porch beneath the gable roof
- the bow window on the front elevation
- an original stained glass window on the north elevation
- the clay brick chimneys with a number of original chimney pots
- its continued use as a private residence