



# WOOD RESIDENCE

12530 - 109A AVENUE NW

CITY OF EDMONTON  
HISTORIC RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



## DESCRIPTION OF HISTORICAL PLACE

The 1923 Wood Residence is a one- and one-half storey dwelling with Arts and Crafts design influences in the Westmount neighbourhood. The dwelling is clad in metal siding which is covering the original wood siding, and features wooden shake cladding skirting around the house. The front (south) elevation features a wide, enclosed verandah. The Wood Residence is situated beside two designated Municipal Historic Resources: the Griffith Residence at 12526 - 109A Avenue NW (designated in 2018) and the Hunt Residence at 12520 - 109A Avenue NW (designated in 2016), both of which were constructed in 1922.

## HERITAGE VALUE

The Wood Residence is valued for its association with the early residential development in Edmonton's Westmount neighbourhood. It is further valued for its position along 109A Avenue NW beside the two designated Municipal Historic Resources mentioned above.

The land now occupied by the City of Edmonton was used for thousands of years by Indigenous peoples. In 1670 the Hudson's Bay Company received a royal charter for the vast Rupert's Land (most of what is now western Canada) without any regard for the sovereignty of Indigenous nations. The Dominion of Canada purchased Rupert's Land in 1870 and in 1876 signed Treaty 6 with Indigenous leaders in what is now Saskatchewan. The following year Indigenous chiefs in the Edmonton region signed adhesions to the treaty. The Edmonton area was subsequently legally divided into a series of river lots oriented towards the North Saskatchewan River and surrounding agricultural townships.

Just north of River Lot 2 (which became known as the Groat Estate because it was owned by former Hudson's Bay Company

employee Malcolm Groat) and just west of the Hudson's Bay Company Reserve was land that was originally owned by John Norris. Born in Scotland in 1827, John entered HBC service in 1849 and learned to speak fluent Cree. In 1854, while at Fort Pitt in what is now Saskatchewan, he married Marie Kayatowin Pelletier, the daughter of a Cree father and Métis mother. They had a large family and by the early 1860s were living in the Edmonton region. After Treaty 6, Marie received treaty annuities as a Edmonton and District Straggler – an administrative category created for First Nations people who were not part of a particular band. John claimed the land north of River Lot 2 in 1882 and it became known as the Norris Estate. In 1885, Marie withdrew from treaty in order to receive Métis scrip. After her death in 1891, John had a number of additional children with Euphrosine Plante, a Métis woman from Lac Ste. Anne. One of these children was Malcolm Norris, one of the "Big Five" who in 1932 founded the Métis Association of Alberta (now called the Otipemisiwak Métis Government).

John Norris sold part of the Norris Estate to real estate interests who began marketing it as the Inglewood subdivision in 1905.





Extension of the city's streetcar network up Edward (later 124) Street prior to World War I stimulated development in the area but a severe depression devastated Edmonton's real estate market in 1913. Very little construction occurred until the early 1920s. The area was marketed towards young professionals. It was a popular location due to its proximity to the downtown and location near the streetcar. The Wood Residence is an example of development in Edmonton's west end after World War I when market demand was tentative and resources were limited. It wasn't until after World War II that the area was fully built out. When the City of Edmonton formalized neighbourhood boundaries across the city in the early 1980s, the portion of the Inglewood subdivision where the Wood Residence was located became part of the Westmount neighbourhood. The original Westmount subdivision, registered in 1906, applied to land west of 127 Street and north of 109 Avenue and was likely named after the Westmount suburb of Montréal.

In 1922, Albert A. Hunt, a clerk with the Alberta Provincial Government, registered a resubdivision of two west-east residential parcels (Plan RN39B, Block 50, Lots 19-20) facing 126 Street into three north-south residential parcels (Plan 1697CL, Lots A-C) fronting 109A Avenue with a narrow alley to the north. In addition to giving Hunt one more saleable parcel, the resubdivision created shallow lots (50 x 90 foot in an area where the original lots were 50 x 150 foot) that may have better met home-buyers' needs in the difficult economic circumstances emerging from the world war.

N. Madsen lived down the street at the Hunt Residence (12520 - 109A Avenue) for a time. Madsen obtained a permit to construct the dwelling at 12530 - 109A Avenue in June 1923. Albert A. Hunt was listed on the permit application as the contractor, so he may have sold the property on which he built the Wood Residence to Madsen. Hunt also constructed the Hunt Residence mentioned above, located two houses east where Madsen was residing at the time that the permit was issued.

Ernest and Margaret Wood were the home's first residents. Born in England in 1899, Ernest emigrated to Canada in 1918 with his brother Sydney. In 1921 the brothers were both at university, Ernest studying commerce, presumably at the University of Alberta, which had started an accounting program in 1916, and Sydney studying law. In October 1923, Ernest married Margaret (Motty) Robertson. Margaret was the daughter of Harry H. Robertson, a prominent local criminal lawyer. The 1924 Henderson Directory listed Ernest at the residence and him being an assistant accountant at the Edmonton Bulletin newspaper. In October 1924, the couple moved to Portland, Oregon. Within a few years they moved to England, which had been Ernest's birthplace. Ernest died in 1968 and Margaret in 1990, both in Findon, near England's south coast.

John Starky moved into the home after the Woods' departure. Starky was employed by the Crown Coal Company Limited for the year that he occupied the dwelling.





George Riach is the third resident listed in the Henderson's Directory from 1926 until 1936. George was the manager of Motordome Limited, the Chrysler motor car franchise for Edmonton and other parts of Alberta north of Red Deer. The Motordome company was the oldest distributor of Chrysler cars in Western Canada, having commenced operations in 1921. George was long connected to the business since it was franchised in this territory in 1914. Also in 1914, Riach occupied another Inventory home that now carries his name, located at 10988 - 125 Street NW. The Wood Residence was named after Ernest Wood instead of George Riach to avoid confusion between these two Inventory resources, located a block away from each other.

Everett Burnett, employed at the Hudson's Bay Company, is listed as the resident after 1937. William Lumsden, employed as an Assistant Accountant at the Bank of Commerce, is listed from 1940 onwards.

The Wood Residence exemplifies a vernacular building with Arts and Crafts influences as well as some Craftsman design influences. The one- and one-half storey dwelling has a rectangular plan oriented from south to north. The dwelling has wooden shake skirting on the first metre of the house and around the verandah, and wood siding which is covered with metal siding above. Many of the windows have been replaced over the last century; however they include some decorative elements that are characteristic to the Westmount historical area (i.e., mullions).

Throughout its history, this area west of 124 Street between 107 and 111 Avenues has retained a strong sense of architectural character and is noted for its large collection of original homes, many of which were built between 1911 and 1925. This architectural landscape was captured in the Westmount Heritage Character Area and Zoning, which was established in the 1980s and updated in 2018.

*Designated as a Municipal Historic Resource through Bylaw 21432 in April 2026.*

## CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS

The character defining elements of the 1923 Wood Residence include:

- + Form, scale, and massing;
- + Arts and Crafts and Craftsman design influences;
- + One- and one-half storey built form;
- + Side-facing, medium-pitch gable roof with lower pitch over the verandah, with projecting eaves and verges, with open wood soffit along the verges;
- + Centre front dormer with gable roof, exposed brackets, projecting eaves and verges and double window opening with 8-pane windows on each side;
- + Clapboard siding hidden under metal siding on all elevations and front dormer;
- + Wooden shingle skirting on all elevations;
- + Front verandah along the length of the house;
- + Offset front entrance open and the remainder of the verandah is closed, with three stuccoed pillars and wood shingle cladding;
- + Original fenestration pattern with several original windows and storm windows in various configurations;
- + Embedded brick chimney on southeast corner of the house; and
- + Two small extensions on west elevation at north end of building - one with front-facing gable roof and one with a shed roof.

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