

# Earl Kitchener School



Date of Construction	1916-1917
Address	211 - 4 (Montreal) Street SE
Original Owner	Medicine Hat School District #76
Architect	Walter H. Bourne
Contractor	Horton and Willets
Neighbourhood	Downtown/SE Hill
Legal	636M;81;1-5

## Description of Historic Place

Earl Kitchener School is a one and one half-storey red brick Classical Revival-style school occupying the west half of a city block on 4th Street SE in the City of Medicine Hat. The school is identifiable by its front and rear facades' banked fenestration, projecting rotunda on the rear façade, and low-hipped roof with central projecting front pediment with oxeye window and central entryway. The school is surrounded by a large expansive yard, mature deciduous trees planted parallel to the primary façade, and a low profile pressed concrete block wall.

## Heritage Value of Historic Place

Earl Kitchener School is significant as an excellent example of an intact historic Medicine Hat school built during the First World War as a component of a school building program that began in 1909. The school was named after the first Earl of Khartoum and Broome, Horatio Herbert Kitchener, who served as Britain's Secretary of State for War during the First World War. At the time of its construction in 1916, Earl

Kitchener School was the only primary school (grades one through four) in Medicine Hat; previously primary school-aged children were educated with secondary school children. The construction date of the school during the First World War is rare and reflects the stability of the Medicine Hat economy and importance local community leaders placed on early education. As Canada re-focused its labour, production, and manufacturing efforts towards the war, effectively putting a halt to all new civic construction endeavors; Medicine Hat recognized the need to provide suitable education facilities, even at this tenuous time. Earl Kitchener School is representative of the continued growth and development of Medicine Hat during this time and reflects Medicine Hat's stable economy due to its positioning along the CPR railway and the locally available natural resources and manufacturing industries. The early value the city placed on education is reiterated by the construction of several schools during the First World War including six cottage schools and a second brick school, Riverside (1917). Earl Kitchener School, with its intact original exterior and interior fabric, provides a tangible link to this important period of school development in the city.

Earl Kitchener School is also valued as a rare and intact example of Classical Revival style architecture in an educational facility. The Classical Revival style of architecture was fueled by the improved understanding of Greek and Roman buildings attained through the study of archaeology. The style was concerned with applying Classical Greek form, scale, and massing to civic buildings. During the Edwardian era, civic buildings were frequently built in this architectural style due to its ability to convey a sense of security and permanency. Earl Kitchener School exhibits such elements through its projecting front gable with central pediment, prominent cornice and central oxe-eye window, a handsome brick rotunda, and overall symmetrical form. The plan of Earl Kitchener School is similar to that of the Elizabeth Street School (constructed 1913) with variation in its main entry, fenestrations, and student entry vestibules. The school was designed by noteworthy British architect, W.H. Bourne and was constructed for a cost of \$34,000 by Horton and Willets; this building is one of only two known Medicine Hat buildings attributed to this architect. Walter Hardgreaves Bourne was born in Darlington, England, in 1874. A registered architect with

the Royal Institute of British Architects, Bourne immigrated to Canada in 1912, arriving in Medicine Hat in October of that year. In 1916, in addition to Earl Kitchener School, Bourne prepared plans for a large Technical School; however, its construction ceased after only the basement was completed. In 1920 Bourne left Canada and continued practicing in the Straits Settlement in Singapore; Baghdad in Iraq, and finally, until his death, in Hong Kong.

1940s view of the rear of Earl Kitchener School and rotunda

*Kitchener School Med. Hat I-XL Brick.*  
Esplanade Archives, Medicine Hat, Alberta.  
0442.0789.





## Character-Defining Elements - Earl Kitchener School (211 - 4 Street SE)



- Prominent location situated mid-block on 4th Street SE in a residential neighbourhood in Medicine Hat



- Minimal setback from 4th Street SE on a large open lot occupying the western portion of the block



- Low decorative block concrete retaining wall with molded cap spanning length of frontage; large landscaped yard and mature tree-lined street parallel to the front façade



- Form, scale, and massing as expressed by its: one and one-half storey height; rectangular plan with rear rotunda; low-hipped roof



- Masonry construction as expressed by its: red pressed brick with regular coursing and flush grey mortar; Tyndall stone window sills; concrete foundation



- Classical Revival-style elements such as: symmetrical form; central projecting gable with pediment; pressed tin cornice with modillions and central oxye window



- Original fenestration such as: original banked window openings on rear and front facades and door openings



- Additional elements such as: separate boys and girls' entrances; interior red brick chimney; wooden cupola

- Interior features such as: wood trim, chair rail, balustrade, newel post; black boards; boys and girls' cloakrooms



## Statement of Integrity - Earl Kitchener School (211 - 4 Street SE)

### Applicable Significance Criteria

*This site is significant because...*

**Theme / Activity / Cultural Practice / Event** ☒ Yes ☐ No

Earl Kitchener School is significant as an excellent example of an intact historic Medicine Hat school built during the First World War as a component of a school building program that began in 1909 (**Theme Value - Education in Medicine Hat**).

**Institution / Person** ☐ Yes ☒ No

**Design / Style / Construction** ☒ Yes ☐ No

Earl Kitchener School is also valued as a rare and intact example of Classical Revival style architecture in an educational facility. During the Edwardian era, civic buildings were frequently built in this architectural style due to its ability to convey a sense of security and permanency (**Theme Value - Built in Medicine Hat**).

**Information Potential** ☐ Yes ☒ No

**Landmark / Symbolic Value** ☐ Yes ☒ No

### Period of Significance

1914 to 1918 World War One

### Chronology of Alterations

No additions have been made to the building's exterior

### Aspects of Integrity

**LOCATION** ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

The location of the building on 4th Street SE has not changed.

**DESIGN** ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

The design of the building has not been altered, except for the replacement of the original wood windows.

**ENVIRONMENT** ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

The building continues to be situated in a residential neighbourhood, surround by mature trees and expansive schoolyard.

**MATERIALS** ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

The authentic materials of the building have not changed, except for the addition of new windows, and exterior doors.

**WORKMANSHIP** ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

The high quality of the workmanship of the building is evident in its building materials, detailing, and condition.

**FEELING** ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

The feeling of the building has not changed. The school continues to convey a strong aesthetic and historical sense.

**ASSOCIATION** ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

The association of the building has not changed; however, it is no longer an operating educational facility.

### Statement of Integrity

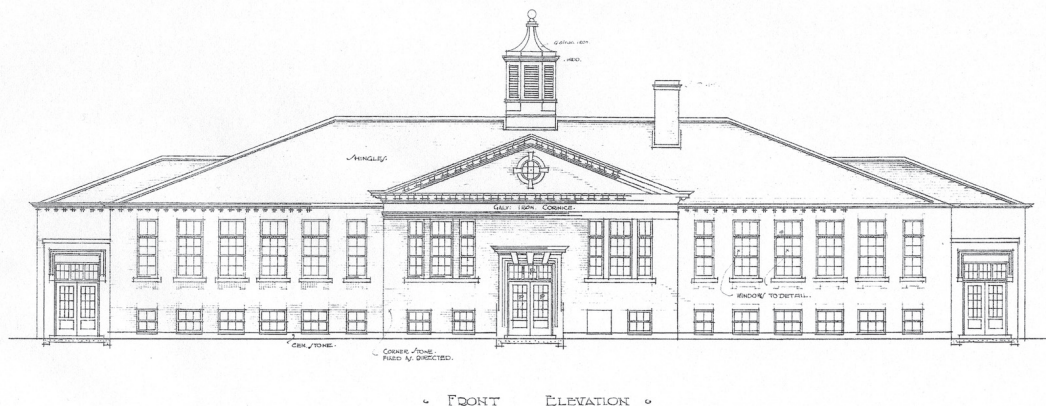
*Earl Kitchener School maintains all the aspects of integrity necessary for it to convey its significance / heritage value.*

Earl Kitchener School is an intact historic resource and rare example of a Classical Revival educational institution situated in a residential Medicine Hat neighbourhood. Overall, the building is in good condition; however, a number of areas of the building's envelope require repair. Evidence of water egress is present at the school's entrances and gutter/rainwater leader transitions. Brick staining, mortar deterioration, and wood rot can be attributed to overflowing gutters and leaking rainwater leaders. Damage to the building's envelope should be addressed immediately to mitigate any further impact to exterior and interior elements. The cedar shingle roof exhibits shingle loss and damage that should be further investigated to determine the roof's condition and remaining life expectancy, if any. The paint on the tin cornice of the pediment is failing and bats were observed entering the school's attic through holes in the cornice. The failing paint should be removed to a stable base layer; the holes patched; and cornice repainted to restore this architectural element to its original condition. Portions of the brick façade on the school's side and rear elevations have been painted, presumably to cover graffiti. The window fenestration remains intact; however, the original wooden-sash windows have been replaced with aluminum-sash windows.



## Additional Images - Earl Kitchener School (211 - 4 Street SE)

Architectural drawing of the front elevation of Earl Kitchener School from April 1916



Primary School for the Medicine Hat School Board District No. 76.  
McCoy & Levine Engineering Company, 1916.  
Courtesy of Andy Christie, Medicine Hat School District No. 76

Exterior view of the east corner of Earl Kitchener School


Donald Luxton & Associates  
September 2012



Donald Luxton & Associates  
February 2013

Interior view of a main floor classroom of Earl Kitchener School

## Heritage Evaluation Form - Earl Kitchener School (211 - 4 Street SE)

 <b>Medicine Hat</b> <b>The Gas City</b> <b>Heritage Evaluation Form</b>	Site Number	Category A
	Community District Southeast Hill	
	Designation	

<b>Site Name(s):</b> Earl Kitchener School			
<b>Municipal Address:</b> 211 - 4 Street SE		Date of Construction:	Y 1916-17
<b>Consultant(s):</b> Donald Luxton & Associates Inc.		Evaluation Date:	Y 12 M 09 D 06
<b>Heritage Committee:</b> Heritage Resource Committee			
<b>Heritage Planner:</b> Jeanie Gartly			
		<b>Total</b>	
		90	

History (H)	E	VG	G	F	P		(H) SCORE
H.1 Associations/Patterns	X					40	40
H.2 Age		X				10	
<b>Comments:</b> H.1 Component of an organized school building program and rare First World War construction date. H.2 Construction 1916-1917.							

Architecture (A)	E	VG	G	F	P		(A) SCORE
A.1 Style/Type/Design	X					40	30
A.2 Designer/Builder		X				10	
A.3 Construction Technology				X		3	
A.4 Interior Details	X					15	
A.5 Alterations		X				-5	
<b>Comments:</b> A.1 School is an excellent example of Classical Revival style. A.2 Architect – Walter H. Bourne. Contractor – Horton and Willets. A.3 Red pressed brick with Tyndall stone elements. A.4 Wooden trim, chair rail, balustrade, cloakrooms and blackboards intact. A.5 Windows have been changed.							

Urban Context (C)	E	VG	G	F	P		(C) SCORE
C.1 Landmark/Character		X				10	20
C.2 Streetscape/Landscape	X					25	
<b>Comments:</b> C.1 Component of a school building program and rare educational example of Classical Revival style. C.2 Dominates the character of the block.							