

APPENDIX ‘D’: Research Reports

RESEARCH REPORT



James and Louisa Robinson House

Centre Part, Lot 12, Concession 7

Markham Village

4 Homestead Court

1876

Heritage Section

City of Markham Planning & Urban Design

2023

History

The James and Louisa Robinson House is located within Markham Township Lot 12, Concession 7, in Markham Village.

The Robinson family were significant in the nineteenth century development of Markham Village. The patriarch, William Robinson, was a United Empire Loyalist from Pennsylvania who came to Upper Canada after the American Revolution. He was a member of Butler's Rangers during the war, according to family tradition. The Robinson family had an Irish background. William Robinson first settled in Queenston, near Niagara in the 1790s, then relocated to the Town of York (later known as Toronto) in about the year 1800. He was a tanner by trade. Tanners process animal hides into leather. He initially operated a tannery in York, at the corner of King and Bay Streets, then moved to Markham Township in 1805. In 1806, he purchased Lot

14, Concession 8 from Timothy Street. In 1810, he purchased Lots 12 and 13, Concession 8, and sold his property on Lot 14 to Abraham Ramer, which became the Ramer homestead in an area that later became known as Mount Joy. The Robinson and Ramer families had known each other in Pennsylvania. William Robinson established a tannery on Lot 13, Concession 8. The location is now the north east corner of Main Street and Ramona Boulevard.

William Robinson was married to Elizabeth Willson of New Jersey. One of their sons, John, was born in the Town of York in 1804. In 1832, he purchased 87 ½ acres in the centre of Markham Township Lot 12, Concession 7. This property was located next to the western boundary of old Markham Village. It is said that William Robinson purchased this property because of its access to water power provided by a tributary of the Rouge River.

John Robinson's first wife was Hannah Armstrong. She was the sister of Captain William Armstrong, an English immigrant from Cumberland, England who was a prominent early resident in the vicinity of Markham Village. She was the widow of Thomas McCallum when she married John Robinson in approximately 1833. John and Hannah Robinson had three children: James, William, Elizabeth and Mary.

Hannah Robinson died in 1843. John Robinson's second wife was Rosalie Wilson. They had one child, Henry, who became a prominent merchant in Markham Village. In the 1851 census, the Robinson family was noted as residing in a one-storey log house. John Robinson was listed as a farmer. The 1861 census does not contain any information about their residence.

James Robinson, born in 1834, was the eldest son of John and Hannah Robinson. In 1854, he started to operate a tannery owned by his father, John Robinson, on the west bank of a tributary of the Rouge River that is now known as Robinson Creek. This was at the eastern end of the Robinson family farm on Lot 12, Concession 7. William Flummerfeldt was also involved in the business. The tannery was one of a cluster of industries in the hollow on the west side of Markham Village. In the early days, there was a foundry where bells were made on the north side of a lane that was once known as Foundry Lane, but in time became Robinson Street. The Robinson tannery was later operated by John Frank Robinson, one of James and Louisa Robinson's sons who later moved to Hoboken, New Jersey. A pond that provided water power to the industries was located north of the lane. On old maps it was labelled "Tannery and Foundry Pond." The business continued until about 1900.

According to the 1861 census, before he married, James Robinson was living in Hamilton Hall's hotel on Main Street, along with a number of other unmarried young tradesmen. He was 26 years of age, and his occupation was "tanner." Perhaps the Robinson family home was not large enough to comfortably accommodate all of the adult children.

In 1863, James Robinson married Louisa Hockridge (also spelled Hawkrige) of Scarborough Township. Their children were John Frank (who went by Frank), William, Edward, Jennie and Clara. The Robinson's brick house, on the top of the west side of the valley, was built in 1876. The house overlooked the valley and the tannery. At the west end of Foundry Lane, across a

bridge over the creek, was the Robinson farm lane that curved to the north to reach this dwelling and an older Robinson family residence with farm buildings. In 1884, James Robinson purchased 30 acres of Lot 11, Concession 7, to the south of his property, to increase his land holdings. According to the 1881 census, James Robinson was a farmer and a tanner.

In 1886, Frederick Clarry of Toronto, a member of an early Markham Township family of English origin, built a large brick woollen mill on the east side of the creek, opposite the Robinson tannery. James Robinson was a partner in this business, which became known as the Maple Leaf Woollen Mills. In the 1891 census, James Robinson's occupation was listed as "Woollen Manufacturer" rather than tanner. The woollen mill operated under a series of owners until 1917, when it was destroyed by fire following a lightning strike.

In addition to his business pursuits, James Robinson played a number of other important roles in the community. In 1863, he was the Chief of the Markham Village Fire Brigade. He served as Reeve of Markham Township from 1868 to 1872, and again from 1874 to 1878. In 1877, James Robinson was Warden of York County. From 1885 to 1887, he was Reeve of Markham Village. James Robinson was a member of the Markham School Board for several years and Secretary-Treasurer of the Markham Agricultural Society for more than a quarter of a century.

James Robinson died in 1902. A detailed tribute appeared in the December 26, 1902 edition of *The Markham Economist*. His obituary described him as "an esteemed and public spirited citizen." Edward Robinson took over the operation of the family farm. His brother William was a solicitor. Clara, the youngest child of James and Louisa Robinson, was unmarried and continued to reside in the family home for the rest of her life. In the 1950s, she began selling off portions of the Robinson farm for the development of residential subdivisions, thus contributing to the post-World War II growth of Markham Village. In the mid-1950s, she sold land west and south west of her residence to residential developers. A north-south street within one plan of subdivision (Plan 4949) was named Hawkrige Avenue in honour of Clara Robinson's mother, Louisa Hawkrige. An elementary school on the former Robinson farm, built in 1956, was named after James Robinson, and the neighbourhood itself is locally known as the Robinson community.

Clara Robinson lived in the old family home until her death in 1960 at the age of 80. In 1962, her older brother Edward W. Robinson created a small subdivision of lots on the east side of Hawkrige Avenue (Plan 6584). These lots were in the rear yard of the Robinson House. By the early 1980s, the old house was threatened with demolition when the last remaining portion of the farm was sold and subdivided for development. Fortunately, the Robinson House was left *in situ* and renovated rather than demolished. Its old address was 114 Robinson Street. On its new street, it is addressed 4 Homestead Court.

Architecture

The James and Louisa Robinson House is a two-storey brick dwelling with a sideways-oriented, T-shaped plan. It is dramatically sited at the top of a terraced slope on a cul-de-sac that follows

the general direction of the old farm lane that historically was a continuation of Robinson Street. The building rests on a raised fieldstone foundation that provides a basement.

The unusual dichromatic brickwork of this house is a prominent feature. According to renovation plans from 1982, the walls are of solid brick construction, even though the use of stretcher bond suggests brick veneer. The lower storey of the west volume of the building is made of buff-coloured brick, while the upper storey is made of red brick. Before the brick was cleaned in the early 1980s, the buff brick was dyed to match the red brick, thereby creating a consistent colour of masonry. It is not known why two different colours of brick were used in the construction. Perhaps the bricks were left over from other jobs and were obtained at a discount for reasons of economy, or the house was built in two stages and enough buff brick to finish the job was not available. In any case, it would be feasible to re-tint the buff brick to replicate the original treatment.

Another unusual feature of the house is a triangular bay window on the street-facing gable end. The bay has a hipped roof and shallow eaves with flat soffits, decorated with scrolled wooden brackets. There are no other extant examples of this particular form of bay window known in Markham.

There is a hip-roofed, enclosed veranda in the street-facing ell that wraps around a portion of the south side wall. The veranda has a stone base and banks of 3/1 paned fixed windows with narrow, multi-paned transom lights above. The north end of the veranda is open to provide unobstructed access to the front entrance. The entrance has a pair of glazed and panelled doors with a segmentally-headed transom light above. Construction notes accompanying the 1982 renovation plans suggest that the existing entrance has been widened from its original condition. No archival photographs showing the details of the front of the house are known to exist to provide information about how the entrance has changed. On the second storey wall directly above the front entrance is a tall window that was originally a door leading into a second storey sunroom which has been removed. There is a small, non-historic wooden porch on the north side of the house which shelters a side entrance that has a single-leaf door with a segmentally-headed transom light above.

The roof is a medium-pitched cross gable with projecting, open eaves. The eaves of the front and south gables are decorated with curvilinear bargeboards in the Gothic Revival style. There is a single-stack brick chimney on the south gable end, and another single-stack brick chimney on the north wall, which is integrated with the brickwork of the wall. Neither of these chimneys are historic, based on evidence from a pre-renovation photograph.

The placement of window openings is ordered. Window openings are rectangular in shape and segmentally-headed. They contain modern, 1/1 single hung windows which are replacements for the original 2/2 window configuration. The window openings are ornamented with Italianate-style "eyebrow" arches in buff brick with cut limestone keystones. The windows have cut limestone lugsills ornamented with small-scale brackets. The use of keystones and limestone sills is unusual in Markham and indicates a building of fine construction.

In the early 1980s, an attached garage was added to the rear gable end of the north volume of the house. The garage has a single, wide door and is clad in a combination of wood and brick veneer.

The James and Louisa Robinson House is a vernacular dwelling designed with the influences of the Gothic Revival and Italianate architectural styles. The Gothic Revival influence is seen in the form of the building and in the treatment of the gables with their curvilinear bargeboards. The Italianate style is reflected in the window treatment with buff brick “eyebrow” arches and bracketed sills, and the bracketed eaves of the unusual triangular bay window. The existing enclosed front veranda is an early twentieth century feature that likely replaced an open veranda in a style characteristic of the 1876 date of construction of the house.

Context

The James and Louisa Robinson House is located just outside of the Markham Village Heritage Conservation District. The house has been integrated into a suburban street of custom homes that was created in the early 1980s, aptly named “Homestead Court.” The house overlooks the shallow valley of Robinson Creek and the former sites of the Robinson Tannery and Maple Leaf Woollen Mills.

Sources

Deed Abstracts for Lots 11 and 12, Concession 7, Markham Township.

Deed Abstracts for Lots 12, 13, and 14, Concession 8, Markham Township.

Register Plans 4949 and 6584, Markham Village.

Canada Census: 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901, 1911, and 1921.

Markham Township Directories: Walton (1837), Brown (1846-47), Rowsell (1850-51), Mitchell (1866), Nason (1871), 1892 Directory, 1918 Directory.

Maps of Markham Township: McPhillips (1853-54), Tremaine (1860), Historical Atlas of the County of York (1878).

Fire Insurance Maps of Markham Village, 1910, updated 1927. Underwriters’ Survey Bureau Limited.

Renovation Plans dated September 23, 1982, in the property file, Heritage Section, City of Markham Planning and Urban Design.

“Fire at Tannery.” *The Rural Economist*. January 5, 1865.

“James Robinson Dead.” *The Markham Economist*. December 26, 1902.

Jennie Robinson Obituary. *The Markham Economist & Sun*. November 22, 1956.

“James Robinson.” *History of Toronto and York County, Ontario*. Volume II, Biographical Notices. (Toronto: C. Blackett Robinson, 1885). Page 322.

Robinson Family Files: Heritage Section, City of Markham Planning and Urban Design, and Markham Museum.

Champion, Isabel (ed.). *Markham 1793-1900*. Markham: Markham Historical Society, Second Edition, Revised, 1989. Pages 77, 78, 120, 249, 254, 257, 259, 342, 343, 351.

Champion, Mary B. (ed.). *Markham Remembered*. Markham: Markham Historical Society, 1988. Pages 192, 193 and 229.

Compliance with Ontario Regulation 9/06, as amended – Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.

The James and Louisa Robinson House has design value and physical value as a locally unique example of a vernacular dwelling designed with the influence of the Gothic Revival and Italianate architectural styles, noteworthy for its dichromatic brickwork and triangular bay window.

The property has historical value or physical value because it has direct association with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.

The James and Louisa Robinson House has historical value or physical value, representing the theme of immigration, particularly the arrival of United Empire Loyalists in Markham following the American Revolution. The property has additional historical value and associative value, representing the theme of industry, innovation and economic development for its association with the Robinson tannery and the Maple Leaf Woollen Mills. The property has further historical and associative value for its association with James Robinson, long-time member of Markham Township Council and former Reeve of Markham Village.

The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.

The James and Louisa Robinson House has contextual value as it remains on its original site overlooking the valley of Robinson Creek, where it has stood since 1876. Further, the property is historically linked to its surroundings for its association with the nearby farming and industrial activities of the Robinson family.

RESEARCH REPORT



John and Christina Ramer House South-West Corner, Lot 31, Concession 8 99 Dickson Hill Road

c.1898

**Heritage Section
City of Markham Planning & Urban Design
2023**

History

The John and Christina Ramer House is located within the south-west corner of Markham Township Lot 31, Concession 8, in the historic community of Dickson Hill.

John Long received the Crown patent for the entire 200 acres of Lot 31, Concession 8, Markham Township, in 1825. He was the son of Elias and Christina Lang (earlier spelling) who were noted as residing on this property in William Berczy's 1803 census of Markham settlers. Although the Long family settled here early in Markham's history, there is no evidence to suggest that they were associated with the Berczy settler group. One month after receiving the Crown patent, John Long sold the property to Abraham Ramer, beginning a long association of the Ramer/Raymer family with this property. The spelling of the surname varies in historical records.

Abraham Ramer Jr. was the son of Abraham Ramer Sr. and Magdalena (Groff or Grove) Ramer of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, who arrived in Markham Township in 1809 with five of their eight children. Three children temporarily stayed behind in Pennsylvania. The Ramers settled on Lot 14, Concession 8 in an area which became known as "Mount Joy," named in remembrance of their home in the United States. In 1822, Abraham Ramer Jr. and his sisters, Barbara and Susannah, joined their family in Markham. The Ramers were a prominent Pennsylvania-German Mennonite family that are considered the founders of the Mount Joy community at the north end of old Markham Village.

Shortly after his arrival in Markham Township, Abraham Ramer Jr. purchased Lot 32, Concession 8 (the farm immediately to the north of their property). In 1825, Abraham Ramer Jr. and his wife, Frances (Lehman) Ramer, enlarged their land holdings with the purchase of Lot 31, Concession 8, from John Long. Their son, John Ramer, was 12 years old when he came to Markham with his parents in 1822.

John Ramer married Elizabeth Sophia Breuls, the daughter of English immigrants, in 1832. They raised a family of 11 children on the Ramer family's south farm on Lot 31, Concession 8. According to the 1851 census, the family resided in a one-storey log dwelling. By the time of the 1861 census, they lived in a two-storey stone house. That house still stands at 6278 Nineteenth Avenue.

John Ramer was a farmer but also had a sawmill on his property which utilized a tributary of the Rouge River. This sawmill was operated by John Armstrong in the early 1850s. There was a frame dwelling occupied by the sawyer and his family according to the 1851 census. The sawmill was shown on maps of Markham Township dated 1853-54, 1860, and 1878.

In 1853, John Ramer Sr. purchased Lot 31, Concession 8, from his father. When John Ramer died in 1896, the farm was willed to his sons John Breuls Ramer and Joseph Ramer.

John B. Ramer, a farmer, married Christina Brillinger in approximately 1870. Based on a review of the 1871 census, it appears that the family lived in a separate location on the Ramer family farm. Their residence may have been the frame dwelling occupied by the sawyer in the 1851 census. That house could be the existing board and batten dwelling at 6074 Nineteenth Avenue.

In 1897, John B. Ramer transferred one acre at the south-west corner of Lot 31, Concession 8, to his wife, Christina. The house at 99 Dickson Hill Road stands on a portion of that parcel. Its suggested date of construction is 1898. Jesse Hoover Raymer, a carpenter and builder based in Mount Joy, is believed to have been the builder. He constructed a house with very similar details at 250 Main Street North in 1896.

John B. Ramer was listed as a retired farmer at the time of the 1901 census. He died in 1908. Christina Ramer continued to reside in the family home. In 1910, the west half of the Ramer

farm was sold by Joseph and Mary Ramer to Margaret A. Campbell. In 1917, Margaret Campbell sold a parcel of land to Christina Ramer, increasing the size of her holdings to 2 ¼ acres.

Christina Ramer died in 1934. She willed the property to her son, John F. A. Ramer, and her great-granddaughter Glenna M. Davis. In 1946, Glenna M. Abel (formerly Davis) sold the property out of the family, after which it was sold to a series of other owners and eventually subdivided into smaller parcels.

Architecture

The John and Christina Ramer House is a one-and-a-half storey frame dwelling with an irregular plan. The front, or west elevation of the building, has a rectangular plan, and is the part of the dwelling that is considered to be of heritage significance. Additions to the rear of the dwelling, dating from 1997 and 2006, have modified or rebuilt an older rear wing that may have been part of the original construction. The 1997 addition consisted of an attached garage with loft that was added to the north side of the rear wing.

The western portion of the dwelling rests on a parged fieldstone foundation that provides a crawlspace. The house is sided in vertical V-groove wood siding, a type of siding that was commonly used in Markham Township from the 1870s until the early 1900s. Earlier examples have a beaded joint. This siding differs from board and batten, another common type of wood siding used in old Markham Township, by having a narrower board width and not having an applied batten over the joint. The material is also thinner, typically about ¾ of an inch.

The house has a three-bay façade with a centre door flanked by flat-headed, rectangular, 1/1 single-hung windows with simple trim and projecting lugsills. Shingled window hoods with a decorative sawtooth fringe along the eaves cap each of the front windows. The single-leaf glazed and panelled wood door is sheltered by a small porch with a shallow mansard roof that forms a balcony accessed by a glazed and panelled second-storey door centred above the main entrance. The upper portion of the balcony door is contained within a shed-roofed dormer. The eaves of the dormer have a sawtooth fringe similar to the window hoods that appears to have been added during recent renovations as it does not appear in archival photographs. The front porch has lightly-proportioned chamfered wood posts and is decorated with elaborate fretwork brackets and spandrels. The balcony railing has light, turned balusters that appear to have been installed relatively recently.

Stacked, square bay windows are located on the north and south gable ends. The upper bay windows are smaller in proportion than those on the ground floor. The transition between them is a flared pent roof with a sawtooth fringe along the eaves. The windows consist of a large, fixed plate glass sash with a narrow transom light above. Historically, these were called “cottage windows.” Cottage windows were typically used for parlours and dining rooms. In many Markham examples, the transom lights contained coloured leaded glass.

The medium-pitched gable roof has clipped, or jerkinhead gables, a type of roof treatment that is locally rare. There are a few other examples in Markham, most notably the MacDonald House

at 250 Main Street North. The clipped gables of 99 Dickson Hill Road and 250 Main Street North have solid bargeboards with applied trim. There are no historic chimneys remaining.



99 Dickson Hill Road, showing additions.



99 Dickson Hill Road: Detail of porch and window treatment.

The John and Christiana Ramer House is a vernacular rural dwelling with a balanced, symmetrical form that displays elements of the Georgian architectural tradition, embellished

with elements of the Queen Anne Revival style. The three-bay configuration of the west (primary) elevation, simple rectangular plan, and general sense of symmetry in the original portion of the dwelling reflect the persistence of the formal, conservative Georgian model of domestic architecture in rural communities within Markham Township long after the Georgian period ended. To this rationale plan, the builder added elements characteristic of the Queen Anne Revival which was a highly decorative, eclectic style that became popular in the 1880s. The popularity of Queen Anne Revival coincided with the prevalence of planning mills that mass-produced a diverse range of wooden elements for construction. Planning mills in Mount Joy, Stouffville and Unionville supplied Markham's builders with ready-made materials that eliminated the time-consuming hand labour of earlier decades, resulting in the generous application of wooden ornament to gables and verandas that typifies the exuberance of late Victorian domestic architecture. In this example, the Queen Anne Revival elements include the fringed window hoods, the stacked square bay windows with their large plate glass sash topped with narrow transom lights, the solid bargeboards with applied decoration, and the richly-decorated front porch. The clipped or jerkinhead gables are also associated with the Queen Anne Revival, but represent an unusual and uncommon variant. The jerkinhead roof treatment originated in rural southern Germany during the Middle Ages, and was brought to America through European immigration.

Context

The John and Christina Ramer House is one of several heritage buildings that make legible the nineteenth century development of Dickson Hill. The house is located at the northern end of the hamlet, a residential enclave which has evolved since the mid-twentieth century into a suburban community within a primarily rural context. The John and Christina Ramer House is historically linked to the Ramer House at 6074 Nineteenth Avenue, and the John and Elizabeth Ramer Farmhouse at 6278 Nineteenth Avenue.

Sources

Abstract Index of Deeds for Lot 31, Concession 8, Markham Township.

Canada Census: 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901, 1911.

Markham Township Directories: Walton (1837), Brown (1846-47), Rowsell (1850-51), Mitchell (1866), Nason (1871), 1892 Directory, 1918 Directory.

Maps of Markham Township: McPhillips (1853-54), Tremaine (1860), Historical Atlas of the County of York (1878).

Property Files for 99 Dickson Hill Road, 6074 and 6278 Nineteenth Avenue, and 250 Main Street North. Heritage Section, City of Markham Planning & Urban Design.

Rootsweb.com: Breuls Family Tree. – Ramer family connection.

History of Toronto and York County, Ontario, Volume II, Biographical Notices. Toronto: C. Blackett Robinson, 1885.

Champion, Isabel (ed.). *Markham 1793-1900*. Markham: Markham Historical Society, Second Edition, Revised, 1989. 50, 52.

Milhorean, Mary Ann. "Dickson Hill." *More Pioneer Hamlets of York*. Kitchener: Pennsylvania German Folklore Society of Ontario, 1985. Page 76.

Compliance with Ontario Regulation 9/06, as amended – Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.

The John and Christiana Ramer House has design value and physical value as a unique example of a vernacular rural dwelling. It displays a balanced symmetrical form that displays elements of the Georgian architectural tradition, embellished with elements of the Queen Anne Revival style, in particular an unusual clipped or jerkinhead gable treatment.

The property has historical value or associative value because it is associated with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.

The John and Christina Ramer House has historical value and associative value, making legible the nineteenth century layer of development within the hamlet of Dickson Hill, specifically the creation of building lots on farms intended for the use of family members.

The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.

The John and Christina Ramer House has contextual value as one of a number of nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings that define the character and extent of the historic hamlet of Dickson Hill.

The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.

The John and Christina Ramer House has contextual value because it is historically linked to the Ramer House at 6074 Nineteenth Avenue and the John and Elizabeth Ramer Farmhouse at 6278 Nineteenth Avenue, and has stood on this site since 1898.

RESEARCH REPORT



Irving Wood Ford House East Half, Lot 26, Concession 1 234 Steeles Avenue East 1940

**Heritage Section
City of Markham Planning & Urban Design
2023**

History

The Irving Wood Ford House at 234 Steeles Avenue East is located near the north-west corner of Bayview Avenue and Steeles Avenue, on a portion of the east half of Markham Township Lot 26, Concession 1. William Ladner Willson received the Crown patent for this Township lot in 1801. The property originally consisted of 190 acres. Willson was a member of a family from New Jersey whose property was confiscated during the American Revolution. After the American Revolution, the Willsons came to York County via New Brunswick.

William Ladner Willson sold off portions of the property beginning in 1828. In 1831, the eastern 100 acres, which included a tributary of the Little Don River, were sold to James Robinson. A small additional parcel was sold to Robinson in 1844. The property was east of the community of Steele's Corners, and adjacent to a node of local industry that harnessed the power of the Little Don River. The industries included a grist mill, a sawmill, and a distillery which were all established by Benjamin Fish, an American immigrant, between 1828-1830. The grist mill continued under different operators until the early twentieth century.

James Robinson sold the property to William Robinson in 1847. According to the 1851 census, William Robinson, a farmer born in Ireland, lived in a one-storey frame house with his wife Sarah Munshaw and their four children. William Robinson was appointed Lieutenant of the First Regiment of York Militia in 1818. By the time of the 1861 census, Robinson had evidently prospered and had constructed a fine, two-storey brick house. This house still stands at 18 Rayneswood Court (formerly addressed as 186 Steeles Avenue East).

In May 1938, a 4-acre parcel of the former Robinson farm was purchased by Irving Wood Ford, a resident of North Toronto and an executive at the T. Eaton Company. A Tudor Revival style house was designed for Irving W. Ford by Harold Savage in 1938, and constructed in 1940. This fine residence was built on the periphery of Bayview Heights, a semi-rural area of country estates centred on Bayview Avenue, north of Lawrence Avenue, in an architectural style identified with the business elite of Toronto. This affluent area took advantage of the picturesque setting of the Don Valley and its proximity to Toronto. Described by the media as “Millionaires’ Valley” or “Millionaires’ Row” in its heyday, this community mainly developed in the 1920s through the 1930s. Some of the noteworthy original residents included E. P. Taylor, E. R. Wood, Frank P. Wood, J. J. Vaughan, and James McLean.

Harold James Savage was an American-born architect. His family moved to Toronto in the 1920s. Harold Savage attended Central Technical School, where he studied architectural drafting. He worked in the offices of Molesworth, West and Secord, and briefly for Chapman and Oxley. Molesworth, West and Secord’s best known work is Glendon Hall (1924) in North York, now part of York University’s Glendon College campus. In 1946, Harold Savage became a partner in the firm Molesworth, Secord and Savage. The firm designed houses, schools and churches.

In the 1930s, Harold Savage independently submitted house designs for architectural competitions sponsored by the T. Eaton Company. In 1930, he won the competition for “The Ideal Home,” and in 1936 won first prize for “A Medium House.” It’s possible that Irving W. Ford’s decision to employ Harold Savage to design his residence at Bayview and Steeles Avenues was based on the architect’s involvement with these architectural competitions.

Irving W. Ford and his wife, Winnifred, owned the property until 1964, when it was sold to Edmund Peachey and his wife, H. Deane MacKay. Edmund Peachey was a real estate developer who mainly worked in the residential sector, but is best remembered for constructing the innovative Valhalla Inn (1963) in South Etobicoke, designed by architect George Robb (demolished 2009).

In 1993, the property was purchased from Mrs. Peachey by the Saint Germain Foundation of Toronto, a religious organization based in Illinois. The Foundation was established by the late Guy Ballard in the 1930s. Many St. Germain Foundation temples and sanctuaries are located in the United States, but there are others worldwide. At the Markham location, a chapel was added to the rear of the Irving W. Ford House in 1994, in a style and materials that complement the architectural character of the residence.

Architecture

The Irving W. Ford House is a one-and-a-half storey estate house in the Tudor Revival style. The house is irregular in plan and is oriented south-east rather than being positioned to directly face Steeles Avenue. It is a solid masonry building with its lower storey faced in a colourful mixture of split granite and limestone and its upper storey finished in false half timbering and stucco. The ground floor is close to grade. At the west end of the house is a two-bay attached garage.

The house has a steeply-pitched hipped roof with projecting, boxed eaves. Two cross-gables are prominent features of the façade. The main entrance is located in a recessed bay below the gable on the right-hand side and contains a single-leaf plank door with a small rectangular light and long, decorative strap hinges. There is a large, plain stone lintel above the entrance. The roofline of the attached garage is positioned lower than the ridge of the main roof. Flat-roofed wall dormers are located on the front slope of the main roof and on the garage. Additional flat-roofed dormers are located on the east and north slopes of the main roof, and on the west slope of the garage roof. A large shed-roofed dormer is located on the north side of the garage. Massive, stone-clad chimneys are prominent features of the façade. One is positioned on the front wall, to the right of the main entrance, and the other is on the west wall of the projecting bay to the left of the main entrance.



234 Steeles Avenue East – Detail of Façade.

The dominant front gables are richly decorated with false half timbering and stucco infill, wide, plain bargeboards, and stout kingposts. The gable over the main entrance bay has a shallow faux jetty, visually supported by false projecting girders.

Window openings are flat-headed and contain a mixture of modern single hung and casement windows which have grilles to create a multi-paned effect. Windows are symmetrically arranged in groups of two to three and appear in a variety of sizes. Single window openings are also present. Window units are separated by plain mullions. There is a large three-unit, shallow box bay window on the ground floor within the front projecting bay. Octagonal accent windows

appear to the left of the main entrance and on the east side of the main entrance bay. On the east wall there is a hip-roofed, canted bay window with a stone-faced base.

At the rear of the house there is a hip-roofed chapel that is an extension of an original rear wing. Its architectural treatment echoes that of the original portion of the dwelling. This chapel is not visible from the front of the house. It was designed by Denis Bowman Architect and built in 1994.

The Irving Wood Ford House is a locally rare example of an estate house in the Tudor Revival style, one of the preferred architectural style of Toronto's affluent classes in the early twentieth century. Very few estate houses were constructed in Markham and this is the only one rendered in the Elizabethan mode of Tudor Revival which features false half-timbering. The style was generally based on old English manor houses, which represented the position and lifestyle of the English gentry, thereby appealing to the predominantly anglo business elites of Toronto and surrounding areas in the early to mid-twentieth century. The style of this house was described by Denis Bowman as "Tudorbethan" in his architectural proposal for the chapel addition. This style has also been aptly described as "Stockbroker Tudor."

Context

The Irving W. Ford House is located in on a well-treed, large lot that borders the valley of the Little Don River. The house is set well back from Steeles Avenue and due to its position on the property and extensive landscaping, it is not readily visible from the street thereby giving it a secluded setting in spite of the surrounding suburban growth.

Other homes of distinction and character were built in the general area as the Irving W. Ford residence during the same time period. One of these is "Aldebarron," at 7070 Bayview Avenue, built for c.1937 James Murray (designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, By-law 2002-36). Further north on Bayview Avenue is the C. George McCullagh estate, built in 1937 and now part of Shouldice Hospital. This property is listed on the City of Markham's Heritage Register.

Sources

Deed Abstracts for Lot 26, Concession 1, Markham Township.

Markham Township Assessment Rolls and Collector's Rolls: 1939, 1940, 1944, 1946, 1948.

Canada Census: 1851, 1861.

Markham Township Maps: McPhillips (1853-54), Tremaine (1860), Historical Atlas of the County of York (1878).

Property Files for 234 Steeles Avenue East and 18 Rayneswood Court, Heritage Section, City of Markham Planning & Urban Design.

Building Specifics Notes in architectural submission for chapel addition to 234 Steeles Avenue East by Denis Bowman Architect, 1994.

Biographical Dictionary of Canadian in Canada 1800-1850. Entries for Harold James Savage and George Nepean Molesworth.

Leblanc, David. "Home builder a quiet man of quotations." *The Globe and Mail*, July 7, 2006.

Compliance with Ontario Regulation 9/06, as amended – Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.

The Irving Wood Ford House has design value and physical value as a locally rare example of a suburban estate house in the Tudor Revival style, one of the preferred architectural styles of Toronto's affluent classes in the early twentieth century. Very few estate houses were constructed in Markham, and this is the only one rendered in the Elizabethan mode of the Tudor Revival which features false half-timbering.

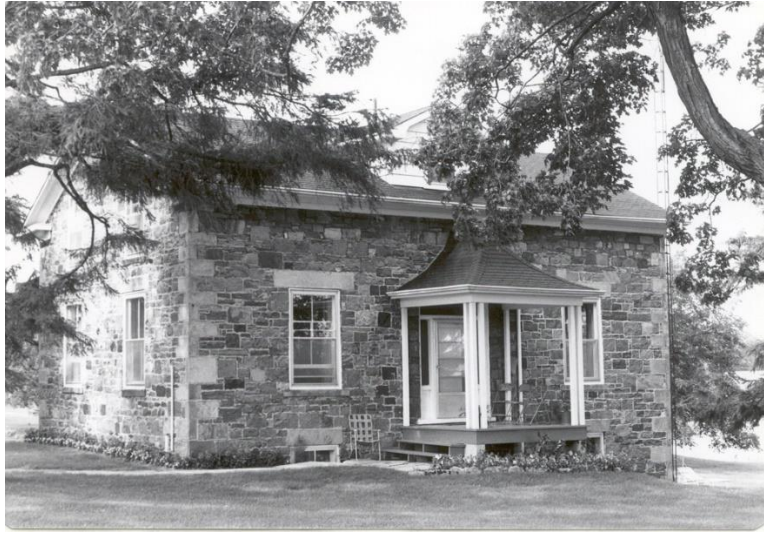
The property has historical value or associative value because it is directly associated with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.

The Irving Wood Ford House has historical value and associative value as part of "Millionaire's Valley". Located adjacent to Bayview Avenue, it consisted of a series of estates built by Toronto's business elite in the early twentieth century, and represented an early layer of suburban growth within North York and Markham.

The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.

The Irving Wood Ford House has contextual value for its picturesque site overlooking the valley of the Little Don River, where it has stood since 1940, and for its historical linkages to "Millionaire's Valley" which includes the properties within Markham historically known as Aldebarron (1937) and the George McCullagh estate (1937), located at 7070 and 7750 Bayview Avenue, respectively.

RESEARCH REPORT



McKinnon Homestead

**Lot 26, Concession 5
4044 Elgin Mills Road East
c.1858**

**Heritage Section
City of Markham Planning & Urban Design
2023**

History

The McKinnon Homestead is located near the centre of Markham Township Lot 26, Concession 5, west of the historic hamlet of Cashel.

Christopher Hovel received the Crown patent for the entire 200 acres of Markham Township Lot 26, Concession 5, in 1809. The larger portion of Lot 26, Concession 5, consisting of 130 acres, was purchased from Christopher Hovel by members of the Pearson family in 1810. In 1814, Hovel sold a 70-acre parcel of the property to James Fenwick, a Scottish immigrant who played an important role in the establishment of a crossroads community centred around Kennedy Road and Elgin Mills Road East, first known as Crosby's Corners, and later, Cashel.

In 1832, William Pearson sold 130 acres of Lot 26, Concession 5, to Allan McKinnon. Allan McKinnon was a son of Neil McKinnon, a native of the Isle of Mull, Argyllshire, Scotland. Neil McKinnon was a member of Lord Selkirk's settlers who left Scotland in 1812 to found a settlement near the junction of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers in an area then known as Rupert's Land. The Kildonan settlement was located near the heart of present-day Winnipeg,

Manitoba. After three years of struggle, the community dispersed. Some of the Selkirk settlers, including Neil McKinnon's family, decided to relocate to Upper Canada.

Neil McKinnon settled on Lot 26, Concession 5, in Markham Township. The McKinnon family were tenants on William Pearson's land in the early years of their residency. This Neil McKinnon should not be confused with another Neil McKinnon who was an early resident of Unionville who worked with Ira White to establish a sawmill c.1839. The Neil McKinnon associated with the subject property died in 1829. He was interred in the cemetery of Richmond Hill Presbyterian Church.

In 1832, their son Allan McKinnon purchased the 130-acre property that the family had been living on since the mid-1810s. The family may have experienced financial hardships after formally purchasing the McKinnon Homestead because the land was sold to Horace Grant in 1833, and passed through the ownership of two other presumed non-residents until it was sold back to the McKinnon family in two parts in 1843. Allan McKinnon purchased a 65-acre parcel, and his brother, Angus, a 70-acre parcel.

Angus McKinnon married Mary Anthony, who was born in Ireland. According to the 1851 census, Angus McKinnon, a farmer with no church affiliation, lived on Lot 26, Concession 5, with his wife, Mary, their three young children, and his older brother, Allan, who was unmarried. There was no notation about the dwelling in which they resided. By the time of the 1861 census, the family of Angus and Mary McKinnon had grown to include eight children between the ages of 2 and 16. The family were members of the Presbyterian Church. They would have attended St. Helen's in Cashel, the first Presbyterian Church in Markham Township. The McKinnons lived in a one-and-a-half storey stone house. Allan McKinnon was also listed as residing in the same household. The house was built c.1858. There is a local tradition that Scottish stone masons, a number of whom settled in Scarborough and Pickering Townships, were the highly-skilled builders of many of the stone houses in Markham.

In 1881, Allan McKinnon transferred ownership of his 65 acres to his younger brother, Angus. According to the 1891 census Angus McKinnon, age 81, was a widower. He lived in a two-storey stone house containing nine rooms with his youngest sons Allen and Angus, along with a farm labourer, Austin McKinnon (likely a relative).

In 1893, Angus McKinnon transferred ownership of the homestead to his sons, Allen H. McKinnon and Angus D. McKinnon. In 1915, Angus and Bertha McKinnon sold their share of the farm to Allen and Ida McKinnon. The property was sold out of the family in two parts in 1932 and 1933. In 1966, the former McKinnon Homestead was purchased by Romandale Farms Ltd.

Architecture

The McKinnon Homestead is a one-and-a-half storey fieldstone dwelling with a rationale rectangular plan. There is a small, hipped-roofed porch sheltering the front entrance which faces south. The presence of basement windows indicates a usable cellar. This house likely had

a kitchen wing that has since been removed given that the dwelling does not currently contain the nine rooms as noted in the 1891 census.

The walls are constructed of coursed random rubblework composed of multi-coloured, split fieldstone: white limestone, grey and red granite, and black basalt. This material was transported to this region by continental glaciation during the Ice Age and was likely gathered from the land when it was cleared for agricultural use. Some of the stone has been squared. Cut limestone was used for quoins and lintels over door and window openings. The lintels are noticeably wider than the width of the window openings which is an usual design feature. The use of cut stone is rare in Markham. This type of limestone is not indigenous to the area and would have been transported from another region at some expense.

The primary (south) elevation of the house consists of three bays. Along this elevation there is a centre doorcase with a single-leaf door, flat-headed transom light, and sidelights. Windows are typically flat-headed, regularly placed, and contain 2/2 single hung windows, likely a later nineteenth century update of the previous windows which likely consisted of smaller panes. The gable end walls are two-bay. Second storey windows are smaller in proportion to those on the ground floor. The front porch, a twentieth century addition designed in a sympathetic historical style, has a hipped, bellcast roof supported on slender wood posts.

The medium-pitched gable roof has eave returns with a boxed cornice composed of Classical mouldings. There is a twentieth-century gable-roofed dormer on the front slope. No historic chimneys remain.

The McKinnon Homestead is a modest-sized fieldstone farmhouse displaying the symmetry and formality typical of Georgian architecture combine with elements of the Classic Revival style, namely a moulded wood cornice and doorcase with a rectangular transom and sidelights. The McKinnon Homestead is typical of farmhouses built in Markham and other parts of York County during the prosperous years of the 1850s when wheat was commanding a high price due to the Crimean War. Farmhouses designed in the Georgian architectural tradition embellished with classical detailing were the norm for this area in the mid-nineteenth century. Most were one-and-a-half storeys in height and had a single-storey kitchen wing at the rear (absent in this example). Stone or brick construction were typical. In this house, the formal Georgian design principles of balance and proportion is relieved by multi-coloured stonework accented with cut limestone quoins and lintels. The use of cut limestone speaks to a level of refinement in the construction of this rural dwelling.

Context

The McKinnon Homestead is one of a number of nineteenth century dwellings located within the vicinity of the historic hamlet of Cashel. The house is in an agricultural setting, set well back from Elgin Mills Road East, and located to the west of a pond along a tributary of the Rouge River. Across the road is the William Summerfeldt House, c.1855, at 4075 Elgin Mills Road East, another fieldstone farmhouse of similar proportions. Most stone houses remaining in Markham

are located in the eastern area of old Markham Township, so the McKinnon and Summerfeldt houses are locally rare in this context.

Sources

Abstract Index of Deeds for Lot 26, Concession 5, Markham Township.

Canada Census: 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891.

Directories of Markham Township: Walton (1837), Brown (1846-47), Rowsell (1850-51), Mitchell (1866), Nason (1871), 1892 Directory, 1918 Directory.

Maps of Markham Township: McPhillips (1853-54), Tremaine (1860), Historical Atlas of the County of York (1878).

McKinnon Family File, Heritage Section, City of Markham Planning and Urban Design.

"Angus McKinnon." *History of Toronto and County of York, Ontario*. Volume II – Biographical Notices. Toronto: C. Blackett Robinson, 1885. Page 295.

Champion, Isabel (ed.). *Markham 1793-1900*. Markham: Markham Historical Society, Second Edition, Revised. Pages 72, 141.

Compliance with Ontario Regulation 9/06, as amended – Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.

The McKinnon Homestead has design value and physical value as a representative example of a vernacular fieldstone farmhouse designed with the influences of the Georgian architectural tradition and the Classic Revival style. It is also a locally rare example of the use of cut limestone accents on a fieldstone structure.

The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.

The McKinnon Homestead has historical value and associative value, representing the religious and cultural mosaic theme of Scots Presbyterians who settled in the vicinity of Cashel in the early nineteenth century, and for the property's association with the Selkirk settlers of western Canada.

The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.

The McKinnon Homestead has contextual value for being physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings as one of a number of nineteenth century dwellings located in the general vicinity of the historic hamlet of Cashel, and for its long-standing association with the agricultural tradition of Markham Township. Further, most stone houses remaining in Markham are located in the eastern area of old Markham Township, so the McKinnon Homestead is locally rare in this context.

RESEARCH REPORT



Joseph and Helen Freeman House

West Half Lot 1, Concession 9

6470 Steeles Avenue East

c.1885

Heritage Section

City of Markham Planning & Urban Design

2023

History

The Joseph and Helen Freeman House is located on a portion of the west half of Markham Township Lot 1, Concession 9, in the community of Cedar Grove.

William Carpenter received the patent from the Crown for Lot 1, Concession 9, in the year 1816. One year later, he sold the entire 200 acres to Michael Shank, who sold the west 100 acres to David Eyer in 1817. The west half of Lot 1, Concession 9 passed through the hands of several other non-resident speculators until 1834 when Jacob Doner sold to Peter Milne Jr. Peter Milne Jr. was the son of Alexander Milne, the owner of Milneford Mills in East York, and Jane Gibson. He initially worked as a book-keeper in his uncle Peter Milne's mills near Markham Village, then as a store- keeper, sawmill owner, and first postmaster of the hamlet of Milnesville (Highway 48, north of Major Mackenzie Drive). Like the previous owners of the west half of Lot 1 Concession 9, Peter Milne Jr. did not reside on the subject property. In addition to this property, Milne acquired considerable acreage within the east parts of Lots 1, 2 and 3 in

the Eighth Concession. A sawmill owned by Peter Milne Jr. was established on the Rouge River, south of the hamlet of Sparta (later known as Box Grove).

Peter Milne Jr. was a noted Reformer and supporter of William Lyon McKenzie. Following the Upper Canadian Rebellion of 1837, he was arrested for his role in the uprising and held at Fort Henry. He was later pardoned. His wife, Hannah McKay, is said to have ridden on horseback to Kingston carrying her young child to petition for the release of her husband. A photographic portrait of Peter Milne Jr. is found on page 191 in *Markham 1793-1900*.

Peter Milne Jr.'s property was occupied by tenant farmers and by employees of the sawmill. The 1851 census records several log houses present on Lot 1, Concession 9 at that time, the homes of William Stover, yeoman; Alex Blyth, farmer; John Hayden, farmer; and a number of unrelated labourers residing in one household. The labourers were likely employed by the sawmill operation. At the time of the 1861 census, William Stover was listed as a labourer residing in a frame house. Joseph Hope, a farmer, and Benjamin Lehman, a sawmiller, were also listed. Lehman may have lived in the Stover household, while Hope was in a separate frame house. The Milne operation also seems to have included a shingle mill as two shingle makers were listed in the 1871 census. By the time of the *Historical Atlas of the County of York* map of 1878, the sawmill was no longer shown.

Peter Milne Jr. died in October of 1878. The west half of Lot 1, Concession 9 was left to his daughter Helen. Helen Milne (1835-1918) married Joseph Gage Freeman (1827-1919) in 1858. It is not known where the couple resided when they were first married, but by the time of the 1881 census, they were living on the subject property with their children Hannah, Catherine, Helen, Peter, George M., and Eliza. Also in the household was Peter Milne Jr.'s widow, Hannah (McKay) Milne. According to family tradition, Joseph and Helen Freeman lived in a modest frame house on the property that was substantially enlarged in the 1880s, at around the same time as the Ontario & Quebec Railway was negotiating the purchase of a right-of-way through the Milne-Freeman land holdings. While Joseph Freeman was in the process of building an addition to his existing house in 1885, a legal ruling in favour of the Milne-Freeman family resulted in sufficient financial resources to build a more commodious house than what was originally contemplated. The result was the substantial Italianate dwelling that we see today at 6470 Steeles Avenue. An estimated construction date of 1885 for this house is proposed based on both the family history and the style and materials of the building.

George Milne Freeman, a son of Joseph and Helen Freeman, married Nellie Ann Dimma in 1902. Family history records that in 1901, in expectation of the establishment of a new household, the original house that formed the east wing of Joseph and Helen Freeman's residence was removed and relocated a short distance to the east. A brick wing in the Queen Anne Revival style was added to its west end to create the house at 6472 Steeles Avenue East.

George M. Freeman's brother, Peter Freeman, established himself as a farmer on the family's holdings on the west side of Ninth Line. About 1907, he built a large Queen Anne Revival style

house (6402 Steeles Avenue East) out of moulded concrete block. The house was demolished in 1997.

In the history book, *Markham, 1793-1900* (1989), it was noted that “*Peter Milne...owned a considerable acreage and a mill south of Sparta, where his descendants still live.*” In 2023, at the time this report was written, that statement remains valid as Barry Glenn Little continues to farm a remnant of the Milne-Freeman farm. In the 2000s the farm known as Meadow Lawn was one of the last dairy farms in Markham. It ceased operation in 2008.

The parcel of land containing the c.1885 house is currently owned by Remington Steeles 9 Inc., while the larger parcel containing the 1901 house and the farm buildings remains in the ownership of Barry G. Little.

Architecture

The Joseph and Helen Freeman House is a two-storey brick veneered dwelling with a square plan. The ground floor is set only slightly above grade, and due to landscaping, the foundation material is not readily visible. There are two flat-roofed, canted bay windows on the south elevation facing Steeles Avenue, and a one-storey hip-roofed addition along the east elevation. This side addition incorporates small open porches supported on slender wood posts at its north and south ends. The south porch is where the principal entrance is located. Centred on the east wall is a shallow, projecting bay that may contain a more formal entranceway which is concealed by the addition. There is another exterior door on the west wall, not visible from the street. It is curious that the main entrance to this substantial residence was not placed by the builder between the bay windows on the south wall, where it would traditionally be located.

Exterior cladding consist predominately of a red-orange local brick, laid in common bond, trimmed with buff brick quoins, a belt course between the second storey windows, and segmental “eyebrow” arches over window openings. The window arches and belt course are raised slightly from the wall face. The bay windows are entirely clad in buff brick.

On the east wall, the brickwork shows the scar of where the frame portion of the dwelling was located prior to being relocated in 1901 to serve as part of a separate dwelling. The shallow, projecting centre bay on the east wall is superimposed upon this brick scarring, so it was added after the removal of the frame structure.

The roof has an unusual form. It is a truncated, medium-pitched hipped roof. If the pitch was steeper, it would resemble a mansard roof. On the south wall is a pair of open gables trimmed with simple kingposts and robust, simple bargeboards with a series of cut circular motifs. No historic chimneys remain.

Windows openings are tall and narrow in proportion with segmental heads and projecting lugsills. The segmentally-headed, 1/1 single-hung windows have flat-arched storm windows which obscure their segmental heads. Window placement is regular and balanced. Within the south-facing gables, the windows are paired, separated by a narrow column of brick. The bay

windows have a simple, projecting wood cornice. It is possible that there was once iron cresting above the cornice, based on the style and period of the house.

The main entrance within the east side addition has a glazed and panelled single-leaf door with a flat-headed, boarded-up transom light above. The entrance faces south.

The Joseph and Helen Freeman House is a unique vernacular expression of the Italianate style. Its square plan, two storey height, hipped roof, segmentally-headed windows with “eyebrow” arches, and patterned brickwork are characteristic of this picturesque architectural style inspired by the rural architecture of Renaissance Italy. This architectural style was popular in Markham Township in the 1870s and 1880s. Although many Italianate style buildings remain in Markham, this residence is unique for its distinctive south façade, which features twin bay windows and twin gables, but does not have an entrance door in the wall space between them. The boldly-designed bargeboards of the twin gables are also noteworthy as they aren’t found in other examples of this style in Markham, as is the truncated hipped roof, not typical of this time period in Markham’s history.

It is possible that the east side addition began as a full-width open veranda, and was later partially enclosed to create an entrance vestibule. It is not clear why the shallow, projecting bay centred on this same wall was added. Perhaps it was intended to accentuate an east-facing entrance topped with a gable that has since been removed, or was never constructed.

Context

The Joseph and Helen Freeman House is one of a number of nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings that are located in the vicinity of the historic hamlets of Box Grove and Cedar Grove. It is historically associated to the George and Nellie Freeman House at 6472 Steeles Avenue East. The property remains in a rural context, and is adjacent to the Rouge National Urban Park. This house is located on a one-acre parcel which is now separate from the larger acreage owned and farmed by Milne family descendant Barry G. Little.

Sources

Deed Abstracts for Markham Township Lot 1, Concession 9, and Lots 1, 2 and 3 Concession 8.

Canada Census: 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901, 1911 and 1921.

Markham Township Directories: Walton (1837), Brown (1846-47), Rowsell (1850-51), Mitchell (1866), Nason (1871), 1892 Directory, 1918 Directory.

Maps of Markham Township: McPhillips (1853-54), Tremaine (1860) and Historical Atlas of the County of York (1878).

Meeting Notes: Site Visit Meeting with Barry Little, December 3, 2003, Heritage Section, City of Markham Planning & Urban Design.

Property Files for 6470 and 6472 Steeles Avenue, Heritage Section, City of Markham Planning & Urban Design.

Designation Report on the Freeman House, 6402 Steeles Avenue East, Heritage Section, Town of Markham Planning & Urban Design, 1996.

Adler, Mike. “Last stand for dairy farmers.” *The Markham Economist & Sun*, May 25, 2004.

McLean, Adam. "Dairy farm sends in the cows – Oldest Jersey herd in Canada sold off." *The Markham Economist & Sun*, April 17, 2008.

Genealogical and Historical Records of the Mills and Gage Families 1776-1926, Compiled by Stanley Mills, 1926: Descendants of Catherine Gage Freeman.

Champion, Isabel (ed.). *Markham 1793-1900*. Markham: Markham Historical Society, Second Edition, Revised, 1989. Pages 75, 76, 122, 123, 189-193, 249, 277.

Compliance with Ontario Regulation 9/06, as amended – Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.

The Joseph and Helen Freeman House has design value and physical value as a unique vernacular expression of the Italianate architectural style within the Markham context.

The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.

The Joseph and Helen Freeman House has historical value and associative value for its association with the Milne-Freeman family, whose members played significant roles in the economic and political history of York County during the nineteenth century.

The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.

The Joseph and Helen Freeman House has contextual value as one of a number of nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings that define the character and extent of the historic community of Cedar Grove.

The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.

The Joseph and Helen Freeman House has contextual value as a remnant of Cedar Grove's agricultural community and because it is historically linked to the George and Nellie Freeman House at 6472 Steeles Avenue East.

RESEARCH REPORT



William and Sarah Reynolds House

East Half, Lot 11, Concession 9

7482 Highway 7

c.1840

Heritage Section

City of Markham Planning & Urban Design

2023

History

The William and Sarah Reynolds House is located on a portion of the east half of Markham Township Lot 11, Concession 9, west of the historic hamlet of Locust Hill.

This property is historically associated with a locally significant early settler family of United Empire Loyalists. Samuel Reynolds and his wife, Margaret Van Rensselaer (also known as Peggy), were from Dutchess County, New York. As Loyalists, they first went to New York City in 1777, and then to New Brunswick in 1783, having been displaced as refugees of the American Revolution. In 1779 or 1780, Samuel Reynolds petitioned the Crown for a land grant and received Lot 10, Concession 10, Markham Township.

Samuel and Margaret Reynolds arrived in Markham Township around 1800. They were listed on Lot 10, Concession 10, William Berczy's 1803 census of Markham settlers. The family included

their five sons John, Azariah (also known as Asa), William, Henry, and Justus (also known as Justice, depending on the source).

The property where 7482 Highway 7 is located, Lot 11, Concession 9, was originally a Crown Reserve lot that was leased by Asa Reynolds. In 1819, Asa Reynolds assigned his lease on the west half of the property to James Osburn. In 1828, King's College (later known as the University of Toronto), received the Crown patent for the entire 200 acre lot. In 1841, King's College sold the west half of Lot 11, Concession 9, to Edward Wheeler. A review of the deed abstracts does not provide a clear indication of how the east half of Lot 11, Concession 9 came into the ownership of the Reynolds family as there is no instrument of deed included.

Brown's directory of Markham Township, 1846-47, lists Henry Reynolds on the property, but his brother William appears to have been the owner. In 1847, William Reynolds sold the north-east quarter of Lot 11, Concession 9 to William Truman Reynolds. William Truman Reynolds, who went by Truman, was the son of William Reynolds and Sarah (Crosby) Reynolds. When he died in 1849 the property was willed back to his father once again placing the ownership of the entire east half of Lot 11, Concession 9 in the hands of William Reynolds.

The 1851 census lists William and Sarah Reynolds at this location, residing in a one-storey stone dwelling, while William's younger brother Henry Reynolds and his wife Mary Ann (Parker) Reynolds, were living on the family homestead on Lot 10, Concession 10. An estimated date of construction for the stone house at 7482 Highway 7 is c.1840

In addition to his property on Lot 11, Concession 9, William Reynolds inherited the family homestead, minus the 9 acres owned by his brother Justus, after the death of Samuel Reynolds in 1843. In 1855, William Reynolds donated an acre of land for a Wesleyan Methodist chapel and cemetery.

William Reynolds sold the east half of Lot 11, Concession 9 to his brother Henry in 1852. When Henry Reynolds died in 1861, the property was willed to his son, another William Truman Reynolds, who was one of the six children of Henry and Mary Ann Reynolds. William Truman Reynolds sold 10 acres off the west end of the lot to Francis Pike in 1875. The rest of the property was sold out of the family in 1878 when it was purchased by William Boyd.

William Boyd sold to James Clarke in 1880. In 1910, James Clarke sold the east 80 acres to Robert D. Clarke. Robert D. Clarke sold to Alexander Torrance in 1917, after which the property remained in the ownership of the Torrance family well into the twentieth century until portions of the farm began to be sold off in the early 1960s. John Alexander Torrance was the last to farm here, retiring in 1965.

Architecture

The William and Sarah Reynolds House is a one-and-a-half storey fieldstone dwelling built in the Ontario Cottage style. The walls are of coursed, split random rubblework made of glacially-deposited stone gathered from the fields, including basalt, red and grey granite, and light grey

limestone. Larger stones were used at the corners of the building as informal quoins. The hipped roof has a medium pitch with projecting, boxed eaves. Large hipped-roofed dormers were added in the early twentieth century. One entrance door faces east onto Reesor Road. This entrance is centrally located with plain wood trim and a flat-headed, multi-paned transom. The south entrance door is similarly treated. The window openings are rectangular in shape and flat-headed. Significantly, most still contain early wooden, single-hung windows with a 12/12 pane division. Window openings have plain wood trim, splayed arches in red brick, and projecting lugsills. Currently, the windows are boarded up as the building is vacant.

The William and Sarah Reynolds House was built into a natural slope. Large, 8-paned windows on the south foundation wall suggest a basement kitchen may have part of the original plan. There is a partial second storey addition which extends over the original roofline in the form of large, hip-roofed dormers and appears to date from the twentieth century. A one-and-a-half storey frame addition, clad in narrow clapboard, was constructed on the west side of the structure later in its history. There are two non-historic exterior chimneys, one on the south side of the building and the other on the north side. The original dwelling remains easily discernable in spite of the later additions.



7482 Highway 7 from Reesor Road

The William and Sarah Reynolds House is a locally rare example of an Ontario Cottage constructed of fieldstone. Most other remaining examples of this house form in Markham were built of brick.

The Ontario Cottage is a form of domestic architecture characteristic of old Ontario, with roots going back to other British colonies, but most particularly those with warm climates. According to the classic work, *The Ancestral Roof, Domestic Architecture of Upper Canada* (Adamson and Macrae, 1963, pg.240),

"The one-and-a-half storey house with a cottage roof, or hip-roof, has always been built in Ontario. Owing to the popularity of the Regency style with encircling verandahs, this one-and-a-half storey house, rare in the northeastern United States but very common in Ontario, has been termed here the Ontario Cottage."

Based on the above reference, the term Ontario Cottage seems to have originated with authors Anthony Adamson and Marion Macrae, and describes a particular form of low, hip-roofed dwelling constructed in the province from the first to third quarters of the nineteenth century. In examples where numerous large windows, French doors and verandas are part of the design, the term Ontario Regency Cottage is applied to reflect the influence of picturesque Regency architecture. In the case of the William and Sarah Reynolds House, which did not appear to have a veranda, the building is better termed an Ontario Cottage due to its simple design, even though it does have numerous large windows that suggest a Regency stylistic influence.

The estimated date of construction, c.1840, is a conservative one. The house may be older, since Reynolds family members were residing on this land at an early date. A similar fieldstone house in the area, known as the Wurtz-Pike House, stands at 8847 Reesor Road. It has been dated c.1835, and has been designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act (By-law 2004-100).

Context

The William and Sarah Reynolds House is an early dwelling associated with the hamlet of Locust Hill, and is a landmark building at the north-west corner of Highway 7 and Reesor Road. It stands opposite the western gateway to the Rouge National Urban Park and is therefore an important cultural heritage resource at this key entry point into the park.

The William and Sarah Reynolds House, listed on the Markham Register of Property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest, is one of 14 cultural heritage resources identified in the Cornell Secondary Plan. A nearby property of cultural heritage significance is the Justus Reynolds House, c.1840, located at 7635 Highway 7 East, east of Reesor Road.

Sources

Deed Abstracts for Lots 9 and 10, Concession 10, and Lot 11, Concession 9.

Canada Census: 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891.

Directories of Markham Township: Walton (1837), Brown (1846-47), Rowsell (1850-51), Mitchell (1866), Nason (1877).

Maps of Markham Township: McPhillips (1853-54), Tremaine (1860) and Historical Atlas of the County of York (1878).

City of Markham Heritage Section Property Files with Research: 7482 Highway 7 and 7482 Highway 7.

Cemetery Transcriptions, Locust Hill United Church, Markham Museum.

Reynold Family File, Markham Museum.

Champion, Isabel (ed.). *Markham 1793-1900*. Markham: Markham Historical Society, Second Edition, Revised, 1989. Pages 160 and 246.

Armstrong, Mrs. R. J. "Locust Hill." *Pioneer Hamlets of York*. Kitchener: Pennsylvania German Folklore Society of Ontario, 1977. Pages 63 and 64.

Historical Sketch of Locust Hill United Church – Centennial 1856-1956. Page 2.

The Reesor Family in Canada 1804-2000. Page 758.

Compliance with Ontario Regulation 9/06, as amended – Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.

The William and Sarah Reynolds House is a locally rare example of a one-storey, fieldstone farmhouse in the Ontario Cottage style.

The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct association with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.

The William and Sarah Reynolds House has historical value and associative value, representing the theme of immigration to Markham Township, particularly the arrival of United Empire Loyalists following the American Revolution.

The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.

The William and Sarah Reynolds House has contextual value for being historically linked to its location west of the historic hamlet of Locust Hill, where it has stood since c.1840. The date of construction is also of historical significance, helping make legible an early layer of growth within Markham Township.

The property has contextual value because it is a landmark.

William and Sarah Reynolds House has contextual value as a landmark at the north-west corner of Highway 7 and Reesor Road, opposite the western gateway of the Rouge National Urban Park.

RESEARCH REPORT



William Henry Meyer House **South-east Quarter Lot 25, Concession 6** **10690 McCowan Road** **c.1893**

Heritage Section
City of Markham Planning & Urban Design

History

This late-Victorian brick farmhouse was built on the south-east quarter of Markham Township Lot 25, Concession 6. The Crown patent for Lot 25, Concession 6 was issued to John Nicholas Steffons in 1804. Steffons (also spelled Stephens) was a member of the Berczy settler group, German immigrants who arrived in Markham in 1794 under the leadership of William Berczy. Steffons was associated with the property from as early as 1794 and was listed as residing upon it in Berczy's census of 1803. He sold to Henry Ort in 1805.

In 1815, Lot 25, Concession 6 was sold to James Fenwick, a Scottish immigrant who was an important early resident of Crosby's Corners, later re-named Cashel. The 200-acre property was sold to a series of real estate speculators between 1819 and 1844, when Alexander R. Rose sold the northern 100 acres to Archibald H. Fenwick, and the southern 100 acres to Samuel Eakin. Samuel Eakin, an Irish immigrant, did not live on this property. His residence was nearby on the eastern part of Lot 24, Concession 5. His sons William and George were wagon makers at Cashel before they moved to Unionville in the mid-1850s. Both were to play significant roles in the economic, administrative, and political development of that community.

Samuel Eakin sold the south-east 50 acres of Lot 25, Concession 6 to his son, George Eakin, in 1861. Ten years later, the property was sold to Christian Hoover, a member of a Pennsylvania-German Mennonite family. By 1875, the Hoover family had acquired ownership of the entire eastern 100 acres of Lot 25, Concession 6. The map of Markham Township in the *Historical Atlas of the County of York, 1878*, illustrates a dwelling at the centre of the property, well back from the McCowan Road.

Christian Hoover died in 1881 and his properties were divided among family members. The south-east quarter of Lot 25, Concession 6 was willed to his married daughter, Elizabeth Frisby. In 1886, Elizabeth Frisby and her husband sold to Christian L. Hoover. Christian L. Hoover was a son of Christian Hoover Sr. and Anna (Lehman) Hoover, and Elizabeth's brother. According to the 1891 census, Christian Hoover, his wife Susannah, and their four children resided in a two-storey frame house. That house is no longer standing.

In 1892, the farm was sold by Christian and Susannah Hoover to their son-in-law, William Henry Meyer (commonly known as Henry Meyer). Henry Meyer was married to their daughter, Annie Hoover. The Meyers were a Mennonite family with a similar cultural background to the Hoovers. Henry Meyer's parents were born in Switzerland. Prior to the purchase of the farm in Markham, the family lived in Pickering Township, as confirmed by the 1891 census. Sadly, Annie (Hoover) Meyer died in 1893, shortly after moving back to the family homestead.

One of the children of Henry and Annie Meyer, Reuben (born 1888), went to Pambrun, Saskatchewan to work on his brother-in-law's farm. After a brief time in the west, he returned to the family farm and worked as a carpenter, including barn construction. He drove a truck for O. B. Hisey of Mount Joy, picking up milk cans from local dairy farms and delivering them to Toronto dairies and on his return trips from the city, he delivered goods to Markham locations. He later worked at the Markham Planing Mill at Mount Joy, and was a member of the Lions Club.

Henry Meyer re-married in 1894. His second wife was Matilda Hoover, the daughter of Daniel G. Hoover and Sarah (Burkholder) Hoover. It may be that the present brick farmhouse at 10690 McCowan Road was built around the time as Henry Meyer's second marriage. Alternatively, the house could have been built a little earlier in the 1890s, when the family relocated from Pickering. According to the 1901 census, the Meyer family lived in a brick dwelling containing 10 rooms. Interestingly, a David Meyer was a carpenter and builder in Markham Village at the time this house was constructed. It is not known if he was the builder of the house at 10690 McCowan Road but since he was a relative, it is possible that this was the case.

In 1917, the farm was sold to Christian G. Hoover. George Hoover, the son of Christian and Adeline Hoover, was willed the property in 1923. From 1950 to 1953, the parents of Lorne Smith, Markham's Official Historian, rented the farm. The Hoover family were the owners until 1953 when the property was purchased by Lyman Kennedy, who had previously farmed in Agincourt, Scarborough Township. The land was sold to real estate investors in 1960.

Architecture

The William Henry Meyer House is a one-and-a-half storey brick dwelling with an L-shaped plan. The building has a raised fieldstone foundation. There are extensions at the rear of the main block, not readily visible from the McCowan Road. The walls are clad in greyish-buff brick with a projecting brick plinth. Greyish-buff brick came into use in Markham in the 1870s, but became more common in the 1890s. In previous decades, most brick was locally produced and was a variegated brick with a mixture of pink and orange. More research is required to determine the source of the greyish-buff brick. Was it brought in from another area or was there a local clay deposit that produced a brick that differed from the pink-orange Markham standard?

A hip-roofed veranda is located in the street-facing ell. It is supported on slender turned posts which are decorated with small fretwork brackets. A two-storey canted bay window is centred on the street-facing gable wall. The roof is a steeply pitched gable with open eaves. The roof of the cross-gable extends to cap the two-storey bay window. A Gothic Revival style gable containing a pointed-arched 2 over 2 window is located on the street-facing roof slope over the veranda. No historic chimneys remain.

Windows are wood, single-hung style, with either 2-over-2 or 1-over-1 glazing, depending on their width. They have projecting lugsills and radiating brick arches in the same masonry colour as the body of the house. The windows have segmentally-arched heads but these are partially hidden by storm windows that have flat-headed panes of glass. This is a rather late example of the use of segmentally-headed windows, a design that was locally most popular in the 1870s. The window placement is regular and the size of the openings differ according to the location on the building; for example, the second storey window openings are smaller than those on the ground floor.

The front door is tucked into the corner of the veranda. Adjacent to the front door, which faces the street, there is a secondary door opening that would have historically led directly into the parlour. This door does not seem to be in present-day use.

The William Henry Meyer House is a good representative example of a late-nineteenth century L-shaped farmhouse designed with the influence of the Gothic Revival style. Few significant alterations have been made to the exterior with the original windows and veranda still in place. Significant exterior alterations appear to be limited to the removal of the original chimneys and the possible removal of decorative woodwork in the gables.

The L-shaped plan is a departure from the formal symmetry of the Georgian architectural tradition. It was associated with the picturesque Gothic Revival and Italianate architectural styles that were popularized through architectural pattern books beginning in the mid-nineteenth century. In rural areas such as Markham Township, stylistic innovations were late to be adopted in vernacular architecture, therefore it was not until the last quarter of the nineteenth century that the architecture of the Picturesque began to have a significant influence upon architecture within the Township. According to Marion MacRea and Anthony Adamson in their classic book, *The Ancestral Roof – Domestic architecture of Upper Canada:*

“The L-plan...allowed for a choice of gable and roof pitch, a piece of verandah with the front door entered off it, a kitchen tail – an asymmetrical house which could be extended in every direction, and which obviated the necessity to balance room sizes around a centre hall in order to give Classical order to a façade.”

Context

The William Henry Meyer House is located in a rural setting, east of the historic crossroads hamlet of Cashel, in an area that will soon be subject to urban development. A traditional Swiss-German bank barn formerly stood on the property to the west of the farmhouse. This barn is believed to have been constructed for the Meyer family c.1890. Unfortunately, the barn was not well-documented and was completely destroyed by fire in 2003.

Sources

Abstract Index of Deeds, Markham Township Lot 25, Concession 6.

Canada Census: 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891, and 1901.

Markham Township Directories: Walton (1837), Brown (1846-47), Rowsell (1850-51), Mitchell (1866), Nason (1871), 1892 Directory, 1918 Directory.

Markham Township Maps: McPhillips (1853-54), Tremaine (1860), Historical Atlas of the County of York (1878).

Lorne R. Smith. “Fire destroys Historic Meyer/Hoover Barn.” *Remember Markham*, September, 2003.

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Champion, Isabel (ed.). *Markham 1793-1900*. Markham: Markham Historical Society, Second Edition, Revised, 1989. Pages 45,46, and 327.

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Compliance with Ontario Regulation 9/06, as amended – Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.

The William Henry Meyer House has design value and physical value as a representative example of a late nineteenth century L-plan farmhouse designed with the influence of the Gothic Revival style.

The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.

The William Henry Meyer House has historical value and associative value, representing the agricultural foundation of Markham Township, specifically the improvement of nineteenth century farmsteads as the agricultural community progressed past the early settlement phase.

The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.

The William Henry Meyer House has contextual value as a former farmhouse that has stood on this site since the early 1890s, helping make legible the dominant agricultural character of Markham Township.

RESEARCH REPORT



James and Jane Stoutenburgh House

East Half, Lot 25, Concession 3

10748 Victoria Square Boulevard

(Formerly 10748 Woodbine Avenue)

c.1865

Heritage Section

City of Markham Planning & Urban Design

2023

History

The James and Jane Stoutenburgh House is located on a part of the eastern half of Markham Township Lot 25, Concession 3, in the historic hamlet of Victoria Square.

Lot 25, Concession 3, was initially drawn by Berczy settler Henry Pingel in 1798. Pingel evidently did not complete the required process to obtain the Crown patent. The property remained in the ownership of the Crown as a Clergy Reserve Lot, and was leased to Francis La Coulier in 1818. In 1830, John Heise, a member of a Pennsylvania-German settler family, received the Crown patent for the west 100 acres of Lot 25, Concession 3. In 1842, Martin Stoutenburgh (sometimes spelled Statenburgh or Stantinburgh) received the Crown patent for the east 100 acres. He resided on the property as early as 1837 according to Walton's Directory of that date.

Martin Stoutenburgh (1794-1850) was of Holland Dutch origin, rather than Pennsylvania German (sometimes referred to as Pennsylvania Dutch). The family originated in New York

State and came to Upper Canada in 1805. Martin Stoutenburgh, one of the thirteen children of Luke Stoutenburgh and Elizabeth (Case) Stoutenburgh, married Sarah Button. Their son, James Stoutenburgh, became a successful and prominent member of the community that began as Read's Corners but was later renamed Victoria Square after the establishment of a post office in 1854. James Stoutenburgh was a farmer, a general merchant, the first postmaster, and a license inspector. He was Captain of the local militia and thereby earned the title "Captain James Stoutenburgh."

The Stoutenburgh family were strong supporters of the Methodist Church. Early services were held in their home, and in the home of the Read family prior to the construction of a church building. Martin and James Stoutenburgh provided land at the front of their farm for a Wesleyan Methodist Church and cemetery (now the Victoria Square United Church).

James Stoutenburgh's first wife was Mary Nichols. She died in 1845. His second wife was Jane Grundy. In the 1851 census, the family was noted as residing in a hewn log house. James' widowed mother lived in a frame dwelling. By the time of the 1861 census, the second residence was described as a one-and-a-half storey frame dwelling.

The present brick dwelling on the property reflects the status of the James Stoutenburgh family in the community. It was built after the 1861 census, perhaps c.1865. The frame house on the property became the home of a shoe-maker, and later, a tenant farmer.

James Stoutenburgh died in 1894, and bequeathed the Stoutenburgh homestead to his son, Anson Franklin Stoutenburgh. When Anson Stoutenburgh died in 1908, his executors sold the farm to Levi B. Heise. In 1918, Levi Heise sold to William B. Heise all of the western half of Lot 25, Concession 3, except for the church property and another small lot that was sold to Abraham Horner in 1858. William and Ida Heise contributed to the growth of the south-west quadrant of the hamlet of Victoria Square by severing their property to create building lots in the mid-1930s.

William and Ida Heise sold to Clark E. Johnson, another Markham farmer, in 1946. In 1951, Clark and Mary Johnson sold the property to James S. and Helen K. Burnett, who in turn sold to Douglas F. Kent in the same year. Douglas Kent sold the farm off in pieces over several years. The portion of the property containing the former Stoutenburgh House was sold to John Evans in 1955. John and Ruth Evans sold to Stephen B. Roman in 1956. Stephen Roman, a cousin of former Markham Mayor Tony Roman, was a mining magnate and owner of Romandale Farm. In 1958, Stephen and Betty Roman sold the property to long-time owners Phyllis and Partrick Ottaway. The Ottaways undertook renovations and remodeling leading to the distinctive appearance of this house today.

Architecture

The James and Jane Stoutenburgh House is a two-and-a-half storey brick dwelling with a T-shaped plan. Based on the age of the building, the foundation is likely to be fieldstone, but the front portico and landscaping obscures view of the foundation material. The ground floor is set

about two steps above grade. There is a one-storey frame addition at the rear of the “T,” and a sunroom in the south-facing ell. The cross-gabled roof has a medium pitch and projecting, open eaves. There is an exterior, red brick, single-stack chimney against the south gable-end wall.

The brick walls are made of variegated local brick in shades of red, orange, and buff, in a polychromatic pattern. The brick was laid in Flemish bond. Decorative accents in buff brick (or white brick as it was historically referred to) includes raised quoins at the corners, flush quoin-like framing on the front entrance, a plinth course, a raised belt course along the second floor, checkerboard banding below the eaves on the front wall, and splayed brick arches over the window openings. On the north, south and west gable-end walls there is brick banding with a cross-shaped motif. This house is one of Markham’s most elaborate examples of mid-nineteenth century polychromatic or patterned brickwork, a style that originated as a revival of the colourful brickwork of Medieval Venice that was in vogue in Southern Ontario from the mid-1840s to the 1880s.

A monumental but non-original two-storey classical portico is a dominant feature of the front (east) elevation. It has a flat roof supported on four, slender, full-height columns. The front doorcase has a simple modern wooden surround with double-leafed, glazed doors topped by a flat-headed transom. The doors have a mid-century modern design, almost institutional in character, with horizontally-oriented glass panels. A pair of French doors on the second floor is aligned above the doorcase.

Window placement is ordered and balanced, with the window openings on the ground floor being larger than those on the second floor. The windows have projecting lugsills. Multi-paned casement windows have been installed within the original window openings. Non-functional louvered shutters flank the front windows. Pointed-arched attic windows are located in the south and north gable ends.

The James and Jane Stoutenburgh House is the most elaborate residence to have been constructed in the hamlet of Victoria Square, and remains so to this day. Its current architectural character is different from the builder’s original vision, which is documented in an archival photograph taken in 1915 and now held by the Markham Museum. The archival photograph shows architectural detailing that has been removed to create the current appearance of the building. A copy of this photograph appears on page 74 of *Markham Remembered*.

In its original form, the Stoutenburgh House was a vernacular dwelling that displayed an eclectic mix of stylistic influences superimposed upon a formal Georgian form. The archival photograph shows that the house once had a Gothic Revival centre gable, trimmed with curvilinear bargeboards. The existing pointed arched attic windows in the gable ends are vestiges of the Gothic Revival detailing that once adorned this fine old house.

The front doorcase once had a single-leaf, 4-panelled door with a transom and sidelights. The sidelights had complex, geometric glazing and paneled aprons. The glazing of the transom light had a variation of the pattern used in the sidelights. The overall design of this entranceway reflected the Classic Revival style.



Archival photograph of 10748 Victoria Square Boulevard, taken in 1915.
Markham Museum Archival Collection

The front veranda in the archival photograph had a central section composed of a Classical Revival portico with a robust cornice, supported on stout Doric columns above which was a sunroom with Italianate glazing accessed by French doors on the second floor. This sunroom, with arcaded, round-topped windows and decorative brackets was similar to a feature that still exists on a commercial building at 34-36 Main Street North in the Markham Village Heritage Conservation District. On either side of the portico were bellcast-roofed verandas supported on turned posts decorated with large, scrolled fretwork brackets.

The windows were originally single-hung with a 6/6 glazing pattern and were equipped with operable, louvered shutters. These windows were still in place at the time when the photographs were taken for the 1982 and 1991 editions of the Markham Inventory of Heritage Buildings.

In its current form, the eclectic character of the Stoutenburgh House remains, but with relatively contemporary alterations such as the addition of the portico. The basic form of the c.1865 brick structure, however, is little changed from its mid-nineteenth century character. Fortunately, most door and window openings have not been altered which would reduce the scope of potential future restoration work should a future owner wish to reinstate original detailing. The removal of the Gothic Revival centre gable has had the effect of emphasizing the essential Georgian form of the building.

Context

Victoria Square is a former Heritage Conservation District Study Area that contains 44 properties, 22 of which are listed on the *Register of Property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest*. Of these 22 properties, two are individually designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

The James and Jane Stoutenburgh House is a local landmark at the south-west corner of Victoria Square Boulevard and Elgin Mills Road. It is one of a grouping of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century buildings that contribute to, and define the character and extent of, the historic hamlet of Victoria Square.

Sources

Abstract Index of Deeds for Lot 25, Concession 3, Markham Township.

Canada Census: 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891.

Markham Township Assessment Rolls: 1853, 1860. 1886.

Markham Township Directories: Walton (1837), Brown (1846-47), Rowsell (1851), Mitchell (1866), Lovell (1871), 1892 Directory.

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Compliance with Ontario Regulation 9/06, as amended – Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.

The James and Jane Stoutenburgh House is a unique example of mid-nineteenth century eclectic residential design and a noteworthy example of polychromatic brickwork.

The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.

The James and Jane Stoutenburgh House was built in the 1860s as the home of James Stoutenburgh, a prominent resident of Victoria Square who was a successful farmer, a general merchant, Victoria Square’s first postmaster, and a license inspector. He was Captain of the local militia, earning him the title of “Captain James Stoutenburgh.”

The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.

The James and Jane Stoutenburgh House is one of a grouping of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century residences that contribute to and define the character and extent of the historic hamlet of Victoria Square.

The property has contextual value because it is a landmark.

The James and Jane Stoutenburgh House is a local landmark at the south-west corner of Victoria Square Boulevard and Elgin Mills Road.

RESEARCH REPORT



Thomas and Sarah Hasty House

East Half Lot 30, Concession 6

11482 McCowan Road

c.1829

Heritage Section

City of Markham Planning & Urban Design

2023

History

The Thomas and Sarah Hasty House is located on the eastern half of Markham Township Lot 30, Concession 6, near to the historic hamlet of Almira.

Markham Township Lot 30, Concession 6 was originally a Crown Reserve lot. The property was leased to Asa Jones from 1803 to 1815. From 1815 to 1836, the property was leased to George Mustard. During George Mustard's lease, Irish immigrants Thomas Hasty and Sarah (Mitchell) Hasty lived as tenants on the eastern half of Lot 30 and constructed a fine frame house in the Neo-classical style c.1829. They came to Canada in 1818 from Strabane, County Tyrone, Ireland with six children and Thomas's brother, Robert Hasty. The family home in Ireland was named "Grey Stone." Their children born in Ireland included Mary, John, Sarah, James, Jennet and one other. In Canada, they had several more children: Margaret, Jane, Thomas, Cunningham, Maria and William.

Thomas Hasty died in 1837. In 1849, his widow, Sarah Hasty, received the Crown patent for the eastern 100 acres of Lot 30, Concession 6. Samuel Kendrick received the Crown patent for the

western 100 acres of Lot 30, Concession 6, in 1843. The family were initially members of the Presbyterian Church, but later became Methodists and were associated with Peach's Primitive Methodist Church.

Thomas Hasty Jr. changed the spelling of his surname to "Hastings" by the time of the 1871 census. He married Matilda Jane Thompson in 1857. Their son, Thomas Edward Hastings, known as Edward, farmed the property during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Edward and Helen Hastings' son, also named Thomas Edward Hastings, was willed the farm in 1941. Thomas E. Hastings and his wife, Kathleen or Kay (Wurm) Hastings, undertook upgrades to the family home in the mid to late 1940s. The house was placed on a new foundation and remodeled. They began selling off parts of their property in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The Hastings family resided here until the 1960s.

Of particular historical interest is the association of this property and family with Dr. Charles John Colwell Orr Hastings, Toronto's Medical Officer of Health from 1910 to 1929. He was a strong proponent of clean drinking water, the pasteurization of milk, and vaccinations. Due to his efforts, Toronto was the first city in Canada to pasteurize milk. Charles Hastings was born in Markham in 1858 to John and Maria Hasty, and grew up on Lot 3, Concession 6, Whitchurch Township. He was the grandson of Thomas and Sarah Hasty and since he was born in Markham, he was likely born in this house. Charles Hastings was educated at Victoria College at the University of Toronto, graduating in 1885. He opened an obstetrician practice on Toronto in 1906. When he died in 1931, the following tribute appeared in the Canadian Medical Association Journal:

"It may be said, without the slightest exaggeration, that as a public health administrator, Charles Hastings was without a peer on this continent."

Architecture

The Thomas and Sarah Hasty House is a one-and-a-half storey frame dwelling with an L-shaped plan. It is composed of a rectangular main block and a rear wing extending from the rear (west) elevation. The building rests on a modern concrete foundation that dates from the 1940s. The house is clad in wide clapboard. The medium-pitched gable roof has overhanging boxed eaves and eave returns. The roof pitch appears to have been steepened as part of the 1940s remodeling to provide a higher ceiling on the second floor. A series of gable-roofed dormers were likely added at the same time.

The house has a symmetrical three-bay façade. There is a centrally-placed doorcase flanked by two modern three-part windows with horizontal pane divisions typical of the 1940s. In the absence of archival photographs or a close examination of the wall framing, it is not possible to determine if the house had a three-bay or five-bay front prior to the twentieth century renovations.

The doorcase consists of a glazed and panelled single-leaf door that originally consisted of eight panelled but was altered by the insertion of a glazed upper portion. The door is flanked by

multi-paned sidelights with panelled aprons. The door surround has moulded, flat pilasters and a finely-detailed entablature in the Neo-classical style. It is the focal point of the building's façade and fortunately it has not been altered other than the alteration to the panelled door.



11482 McCowan Road – Front doorcase detail.

The north gable end has an exterior fireplace chimney of painted brick that is consistent with the 1940s period of remodeling. There are rectangular, single-hung windows on either side of the chimney. The window openings on the second floor are smaller in proportion to those on the ground floor. There are two rectangular window openings on the north wall of the rear wing. The windows of the rear wing are somewhat larger in proportion to those of the main block, suggesting that this part of the house may date from a later period than the front section.

The Thomas and Sarah Hasty House is a locally rare, early example of a frame dwelling in the Neo-classical style, altered in the mid-to-late 1940s in the Colonial Revival style. Dating from c.1829, it is one of the oldest buildings remaining in Markham. The door surround is one of the finest examples of its kind in Markham, comparable in design and quality of workmanship to the front door surround of the Eckardt-Stiver House (c.1829) at 206 Main Street, Unionville. Although its exterior materials and selected design elements mainly date from the 1940s, the essential character of the house remains intact since the renovations were done with a measure of sensitivity to the historical character of the original structure.

The Neo-classical architectural style was built on Georgian precedents of symmetry, simplicity of form, and a formal sense of proportion. Few examples remain in Markham. The style originated in England in the mid-1700s but did not appear in Canada much before the 1810s. Ornamentation was based on the surviving buildings of ancient Rome, but interpreted in a lightly-proportioned and stylized manner. In many examples in Ontario, the semi-elliptical fanlight over the front door is a defining feature, along with numerous multi-paned windows, a low-pitched roof with eave returns and a finely moulded cornice, and a building height of one-and-a-half to two-storeys. Locally, the front doorcase typically lacks the fanlight and instead has sidelights within an elegant door surround composed of flat pilasters and an entablature with finely-proportioned layered mouldings, as seen in this example.

With respect to the Colonial Revival remodeling of the 1940s, this approach was a complimentary way of updating a house of this age and style. This nostalgic style originated in the United States but was influential in Canada as well. The style was derived from the Georgian houses of early New England and the Southern United States built during the 1700s to early 1800s. The style reflected a desire for tradition and a sense of continuity, particularly after the tumultuous times of the Second World War. The Colonial Revival style was particularly popular for post-war suburban development prior to the development of large-scale residential subdivisions in the 1950s which instead embraced a Modernist approach to domestic architecture.

Context

The Thomas and Sarah Hasty House is located in a rural setting east of the historic hamlet of Almira. A gambrel-roofed barn dating from the late nineteenth to early twentieth century and a detached garage stand to the west of the dwelling. This is one of a number of farm properties containing nineteenth century residences in the north-central part of Markham. It is the oldest house in the area, and is historically linked to 11534 McCowan Road, a late nineteenth century farmhouse on the eastern half of Lot 31, Concession 6 constructed as a tenant farmer's dwelling during Thomas Hastings Jr.'s ownership 1872-1890.

Sources

Deed Abstracts for Lot 30, Concession 6, Markham Township.

Canada Census: 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901.

Markham Directories: Walton (1837), Brown (1846-47), Rowsell (1850-51), Nason (1871), 1892 Directory, and 1918 Directory.

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Hastings Family History: Don Miller, via Lorne Smith, City of Markham Official Historian, 2015. Champion, Isabel (ed.). *Markham 1793-1900*. Markham: Markham Historical Society, Second Edition, Revised, 1989. Page 155.

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Compliance with Ontario Regulation 9/06, as amended – Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.

The Thomas and Sarah Hasty House has design value and physical value as a locally rare, early example of a frame dwelling in the Neo-classical style, altered in the mid-to-late 1940s in the Colonial Revival style. Dating from c.1829, it is one of the oldest buildings remaining in Markham.

The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.

The Thomas and Sarah Hasty House has design value and physical value because of its front door surround in the Neo-classical style, one of the finest examples of its kind in Markham.

The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.

The Thomas and Sarah Hasty House has historical value and associative value, representing the theme of immigration, particularly the significant wave of British families who came to Markham Township in the early nineteenth century, and for its association with Dr. Charles Hastings, Toronto's distinguished Medical Officer of Health from 1910 to 1929, who was a strong proponent of clean drinking water, the pasteurization of milk, and vaccinations.

The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.

The Thomas and Sarah Hasty House has contextual value as a former farmhouse within the rural area east of the historic hamlet of Almira, and has stood on this property since c.1829.

RESEARCH REPORT



Milton and Ann Kester House

**Lot 31, Concession 10
11584 York-Durham Line**

c.1870

**Heritage Section
City of Markham Planning & Urban Design
2023**

History

The Milton and Ann Kester House is located on the eastern part of Markham Township Lot 31, Concession 10, at the boundary between the City of Markham and the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

The Caster/Castor or Kester family were early residents of the north-east corner of Markham Township. They were of German cultural origin, but as Baptists, were not members of the Pennsylvania German Mennonite community. They are, however, considered by historians to be a Pennsylvania German family since their cultural origin was German, and they were from Pennsylvania.

In the early nineteenth century, Leonard and Catherine Caster came to Markham from Mount Bethel, North Hampton County, Pennsylvania, with their three sons, Michael, Jacob, and Philip.

The family settled on three adjoining properties. Leonard Caster obtained the Crown patent for Lot 31, Concession 10 (the subject property), in 1816, and for Lot 32, Concession 10 (now within the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville) that same year. His eldest son, Michael Caster, leased Lot 30, Concession 10 from the Crown in 1805, and obtained the Crown patent in 1836.

Catherine Caster died in 1816 at the age of 60, and was laid to rest in Boyle's Cemetery, in the rural community that later became known as Mongolia (now part of the Rouge National Urban Park). Hers is the earliest marked burial there.

In 1821, Leonard Caster, at the age of 75, sold Lot 31, Concession 10 to his son, Jacob Caster. In 1826, he sold Lot 32, Concession 10, to his other son, Philip. Walton's Directory of Markham Township (1837), placed Michael Castor on Lot 30, Jacob Castor on Lot 31, and Philip Castor on Lot 32. Leonard Caster presumably resided with one of his sons. He died in 1839 and was interred beside his wife, Catherine, at Boyle's Cemetery.

Members of the Caster family were Reformers in their politics. Michael and Jacob Caster were among the supporters of William Lyon Mackenzie in the election of 1832.

Jacob Caster was married to Canadian-born Mary Polly Brown. According to the census of 1851, Jacob Caster was a farmer, born in the U.S., and a member of the Baptist Church. The family resided in a one-and-a-half storey frame house. There were eight children in the family ranging in age from 5 to 23. Around the same time, most members of the Caster family changed the spelling of their surname to "Kester."

In 1853, Jacob and Mary Kester sold the farm to their son John Milton Kester. According to the 1861 census, in 1861 Jacob Kester was a widower living in the household of his son John Milton Kester (known as "Milton"), his wife Ann (Williamson) Kester, and their two young daughters. Their residence was described as a frame dwelling, and their religion was Wesleyan Methodist rather than Baptist.

Milton and Ann Kester built a new brick farmhouse sometime after the 1861 census (11584 York-Durham Line). Similarities between this house and the home of Captain William Marr Button at 20 Locust Hill Lane (1865), suggest that the same builder may have constructed the Kester House during the same general time period. A construction date of c.1870 is suggested.

In 1893, Milton Kester purchased a building lot on Main Street, in the village of Stouffville, adjacent to the public school. Milton and Ann Kester built a frame house on this lot and retired there in 1895 (6351 Main Street). Milton Kester died at the age of 66 in 1897. The farm on Lot 31, Concession 10 was willed to their son, Orville/Orvil Kester. Ann Kester lived on in the Stouffville house until her death in 1926. At the time she was reported to be Stouffville's oldest resident in her obituary in *The Stouffville Tribune*.

Orvil Kester was married to Sarah Elizabeth Phillips. They sold the farm to Milton O. Harris in 1914 and moved to Toronto. According to the 1921 census, Orvil and Sarah Kester resided at 383 Keewatin Avenue in North Toronto. Orvil Kester was employed as a chauffeur.

In 1925, Milton Harris willed the property on Lot 31, Concession 10, Markham Township to his wife Mary A. Harris for life, and to James H. Harris. In 1971, Milton and Winnifred Harris transferred ownership to Harrison Farms Ltd., who sold to Diane Passafiume in 1972.

Architecture

The Milton and Ann Kester House is a one-and-a-half storey brick-veneered dwelling with a complex plan. The brick portion of the building is cruciform in shape and rests on a raised fieldstone foundation that provides for a basement. At the west gable end is a one-and-a-half storey rectangular frame wing that runs north-south. The frame wing is clad in modern siding. On the north side is an enclosed porch within the ell, and on the south side is an open porch within the ell.

The brick veneer consists of a body of locally-sourced red-orange brick, with buff-coloured brick (historically referred to as “white brick”) accents consisting of alternating quoins and radiating arches above door and window openings. The arches are bordered in raised buff brick.

The steeply-pitched, cross-gabled roof has projecting open eaves. There are additional gables on the north and south sides of the western section of the cruciform plan. The gables are ornamented with kingposts with turned pendants and curvilinear bargeboards with a lacy, Gothic Revival pattern. There may have once been finials as extensions of the kingposts.



11584 York-Durham Line. East view facing the road.

The projecting bay on the east (primary) elevation has a single-leaf centre door flanked by windows. A nailing strip in the wall above the ground floor openings suggests the former existence of a veranda. Windows are single-hung style with 2/2 glazing and projecting lugsills.

Window openings have a flattened segmental arch but the windows themselves appear to be flat-headed. Operable louvered wood shutters are flat-headed. On the second storey is a pair of tall, narrow, round-arched windows separated with a narrow brick mullion. The windows are single-hung with 1/1 glazing and have round-headed, operable louvered shutters. The window treatment on the north and south elevations matches those described above.

The south side of the house has a projecting bay with a single 2/2 window centred on the wall of the ground floor, and a pair of tall, narrow, round-arched windows above. There is a single 2/2 window on the south wall of the front projecting bay. In the ell is a centrally-placed, single-leaf door flanked by windows which are sheltered within a shed-roofed porch supported on turned wood posts. The porch is further ornamented with fretwork brackets. In the gable above the door is a pair of tall, narrow round-arched windows matching those in the south projecting gable. The south gable end wall of the gable-roofed frame wing has no window openings on the ground floor. There is a round window in the gable. The openings on the west wall of the frame wing are unknown as there are no photographs on file.



11584 York-Durham Line. South side view.

The north side of the house has a projecting bay with a single 2/2 window centred on the wall of the ground floor, and a pair of tall, narrow round-arched windows above. This treatment matches that of the south side of the building. There is an enclosed, shed-roofed porch in the ell which obscures the view of the north wall. As such, the nature of the openings within that space is unclear. Another exterior door is presumed to exist there. The north gable end wall of the frame wing has two segmentally-headed windows with 2/2 glazing. The shutters associated with these windows do not appear to be functional and do not exactly fit the shape of the openings, therefore they must have been added later.

The Milton and Ann Kester House is a locally rare example of a vernacular, patterned brick farmhouse of the Confederation period designed with elements of the Gothic Revival and Italianate architectural styles. It displays a high degree of artistic merit in its cruciform plan and

picturesque design which remains remarkably intact. The frame wing appears to be an addition of the mid-1870s to early 1880s based on the style of its windows. A closer examination of the building would be required in order to determine if any portion of the existing dwelling incorporates the earlier frame house on the property.

Context

The Milton and Ann Kester House remains in an agricultural setting at the north-east corner of the City of Markham. To the south is the Rouge National Urban Park and the historic crossroads community of Mongolia, and to the immediate north is recent suburban residential development within the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. Historically, this property was associated with Stouffville as one of the farms in the vicinity of the village. The property contains a barn and driveshed.

Sources

Deed Abstracts for Markham Township Lots 30, 31 and 32, Concession 10.

Canada Census: 1851,1861,1871,1881,1891,1901 and 1921.

Markham Township Directories: Walton (1837), Brown (1846-47), Rowsell (1850-51), Mitchell (1866), Nason (1871), 1892 Directory.

Maps of Markham Township: McPhillips (1853-54), Tremaine (1860), and Historical Atlas of the County of York, Ontario (1878).

Caster/Kester Family Research by F. Robbins, Stouffville Historian, using Ancestry.ca and other sources.

Boyles Cemetery Transcriptions.

Obituary of Ann Kester in *The Stouffville Tribune*, April 29, 1926.

Champion, Isabel (ed.). *Markham 1793-1900*. Markham: Markham Historical Society, Second Edition Revised, 1989. Page 188.

Compliance with Ontario Regulation 9/06 – Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.

The Milton and Ann Kester House has design value and physical value as a locally rare example of a vernacular, patterned brick farmhouse of the Confederation period designed with elements of the Gothic Revival and Italianate architectural styles.

The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.

The Milton and Ann Kester House displays a high degree of artistic merit in its picturesque design, and fine craftsmanship which has been remarkably well conserved .

The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.

The Milton and Ann Kester House has historical value and associative value, representing the religious and cultural mosaic theme of Pennsylvania Germans being attracted to Markham Township in the early nineteenth century, and representing the theme of improvement of nineteenth century farmsteads as the agricultural community progressed past the early settlement phase.

The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.

The Milton and Ann Kester House has contextual value as one of a number of nineteenth century farmhouses located in the general vicinity of the historic communities of Mongolia and Stouffville, and is historically linked to the farm property where it has stood since c.1870.

RESEARCH REPORT



John and Elizabeth Rowbotham House

East Part, Lot 26, Concession 3

2972 Elgin Mills Road

c.1890

Heritage Section

City of Markham Planning & Urban Design

2023

History

The John and Elizabeth Rowbotham House is located on the east part of Markham Township Lot 26, Concession 3, and more particularly on Lot 4, Plan 404, in the hamlet of Victoria Square.

John Edmond Rowbotham was an Ontario-born carriage maker of English origin. He was from Dixie, a small community in what is now the City of Mississauga. At the age of 16, he began an apprenticeship in the Eakin brother's Unionville Carriage Factory, a business established by the brothers in the late 1850s. The site of the carriage factory was 147A Main Street. They manufactured a wide variety of horse-drawn vehicles until the business closed down in the early 1870s when William Eakin turned his attention to building and operating the Unionville Planing Mill. In the 1871 census, John Rowbotham was listed as a carriage-maker, age 18, living in the household of his employer, William Eakin, carriage-maker.

In 1875, John Rowbotham purchased Lot 4, Plan 404, from Christopher Heise. This plan of 11 village lots was laid out by Peter S. Gibson, P.L.S., in 1875. Plan 404 formalized a lot pattern that had been informally established before the creation of the plan through the sale of parcels of varying sizes at the eastern end of the Heise farm. Christopher (also known as Christian) acquired the eastern 75 acres of his father Jacob Heise's farm on Lot 26, Concession 3, in 1867. He and his wife Leah lived in a brick farmhouse further west on the property that still stands at 2730 Elgin Mills Road. Christopher Heise helped develop the northwestern quadrant of Victoria Square by selling lots and by building houses at the crossroads. In addition to houses, this area of Victoria Square contained a general store, blacksmith shop, carriage factory, and temperance hall.

When John Rowbotham purchased the property, it already contained a carriage and wheelwright shop that had been established as early as the 1850s. A dwelling for the operator of the business was likely located next to the shop. John Cook was a wheelwright in the late 1850s, followed by Thomas Kempton, wagon maker in 1860, then Joseph Hall from the mid-1860s into the early 1870s. John Rowbotham purchased the business from Joseph Hall. Rowbotham's occupation was variously described in census records or assessment rolls as wheelwright, carpenter, or wagon maker.

The existing house at 2972 Elgin Mills Road assumed its present form c.1890. It was either an expansion of an earlier dwelling or a completely new structure. In the 1891 census, the Rowbotham residence was described as a two-storey, frame house containing five rooms. In the 1901 census, the number of rooms in the house had grown to seven, suggesting an addition had been made by that time. John Rowbotham and Elizabeth Curtis married about the year 1874. They had four children. One of their sons, Walter, worked in the family business.



An excellent archival photograph of the Rowbotham house and wagon shop, dated 1893, is in the collection of the Markham Museum (above). The photograph appears on page 312 of *Markham 1793-1900*.

Elizabeth Rowbotham died in 1892. John Rowbotham sold the property out of the family in 1915. He moved to Stouffville, where, according to biographical notes in his obituary and data

in the 1921 census, he still continued in his trade at the age of 69 and beyond. Many of his customers from Victoria Square sought him out in his new location. He lived in Stouffville until his death in 1943 at the age of 89. His obituary provides some interesting details about John Rowbotham and the work that he did:

"The late Mr. Rowbotham was of a very retiring disposition, but had a wide circle of acquaintances in his business life where he proved himself a master mechanic in the making of wagons, buggies, sleighs and cutters and in woodwork repair which he continued to the day of his passing. Although he had come to Stouffville intending to retire, he was so besieged with requests from old customers he continued to ply his trade at the bench which he had made when he began his own business seventy years ago."

"The passing of this nonagenarian marks the end of an era of hand craftsmanship in which the workman with his wood and hand tools fashioned the finished product from beginning to end and with a perfection of quality seldom equaled by modern methods, as was proven by the fact that the late Mr. Rowbotham was never called upon to replace one of his wagon axles although he could stand by any local country mill and point to wagons made by himself and his cousin, the late William Frisby, whose blacksmith shop adjoined the carriage shop."

Later owners of the former Rowbotham House included the Boynton and Corcoran families. Percy Bennett was a tenant in the 1940s. In more recent times, a townhouse development has been constructed immediately to the west of the former Rowbotham property.

Architecture

The John and Elizabeth Rowbotham House is a one-and-half storey frame dwelling with an irregular plan. The main block generally has an L-shaped plan, with the main entrance tucked into the ell on the south-east side of the building, sheltered under a porch. The ground floor is set close to grade, therefore the foundation material is difficult to determine. Based on the age of the building, the material is likely fieldstone. The house is sided in narrow clapboard which may cover the vertical tongue-and-groove siding seen in the archival photograph of c.1893. The roof is cross-gabled, with the portion at the rear running east-west having a medium pitch, with overhanging, open eaves, and the portion at the front running north-south having a steep pitch, with overhanging, open eaves. There are single-stack brick chimneys on the street-facing gable end, and on the west-facing gable end which are in the same position as two of the three brick chimneys shown in the archival photograph.

The open porch in the ell has a shed roof with a closed gable end. It is supported on plain, square wooden posts. A photograph from the Markham Inventory of Heritage Buildings, 1986, shows the same porch roof supported on wood columns resting on brick pedestals with concrete caps, a typical detail from the first quarter of the twentieth century. A single-leaf front door is within the porch, on the east-facing wall. The archival photograph taken c.1893 shows a slightly shallower porch with a bellcast roof, supported on turned posts, and decorated with fretwork brackets and spandrels.

Window openings are regularly placed and flat-headed, with simple trim. The gable-end windows of the rear portion of the house are squatter in shape than the windows of the front section, which are more vertical in orientation. The overall differences in window proportions and roof slope between the two sections of the house suggests that the rear portion may be earlier, and the front portion projecting toward the street was added later, some time between 1891 and 1893. The wider window openings contain 2/2, single-hung windows. Narrower window openings on the front wall contain 1/1 windows. A significant decorative feature is the canted bay window on the front wall which is capped with a mansard roof clad in fishscale-shaped wood shingles.

There is a single-storey wing on the rear or north wall which may have housed the dwelling's kitchen. It has a single-stack brick chimney at the north end of the gable roof.

The John and Elizabeth Rowbotham House is a vernacular building that does not neatly fit into any stylistic category. The L-shaped plan, steep roof pitch of the projecting front section, and the canted bay window, are features often associated with the Gothic Revival style, but there are no specific Gothic Revival decorative details such as pointed-arched windows or bargeboards. The previous porch shown in the c.1893 photograph was a prominent feature, along with the bay window, that provided some decorative relief to an otherwise modest village dwelling. Overall, the house retains much of its historic character.

Context

Victoria Square is a former Heritage Conservation District Study Area that contains 44 properties, 22 of which are listed on the *Register of Property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest*. Of these 22 properties, two are individually designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

The John and Elizabeth Rowbotham House is located on a village property in the north-west quadrant of the historic crossroads hamlet of Victoria Square. The Frisby blacksmith shop was formerly located immediately to the east at 2982 Elgin Mills Road. It was relocated to the Victoria Square United Church property in 2003 and replaced by a new, two-storey residence. Another nearby property listed on the *Register of Property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest* is the William and Mary Frisby House at 2992 Elgin Mills Road. It is architecturally similar to the John and Elizabeth Rowbotham House and retains its ornate Late Victorian porch.

Sources

Abstract Index of Deeds for Markham Township Lot 26, Concession 3.

Abstract Index of Deeds for Plan 404, 1875, Markham Township.

Canada Census Records 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901, 1911 and 1921.

Obituary for John Rowbotham in the *Stouffville Tribune*, February 11, 1943.

Historical Photograph Collection, Markham Museum Archives.

Victoria Square Heritage Conservation District – Historical Background and Inventory, by Su Murdoch, Heritage Consultant, 2010. Pages 40-43.

Property File, 2972 Elgin Mills Road, City of Markham Heritage Section.
Research Report on 2730 Elgin Mills Road, Heritage Section, City of Markham Planning & Urban Design, 2002.
Markham Inventory of Heritage Buildings, 1986 edition.
Champion, Isabel, ed. *Markham 1793-1900* (Revised Edition). Markham: Markham Historical Society, 1989, pages 311-313.

Compliance with Ontario Regulation 9/06, as amended – Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction.

The John and Elizabeth Rowbotham House has design value and physical value as a representative example of a vernacular, village tradesman's dwelling of the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community

The John and Elizabeth Rowbotham House has historical value and associative value, representing the theme of industry, innovation and economic development, as the former residence John Rowbotham, a wheelwright, carpenter and wagon maker who operated his business in Victoria Square from 1875 to 1915.

The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.

The John and Elizabeth Rowbotham House has contextual value as one of a number of nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings that help to define the character and extent of the historic crossroads hamlet of Victoria Square.