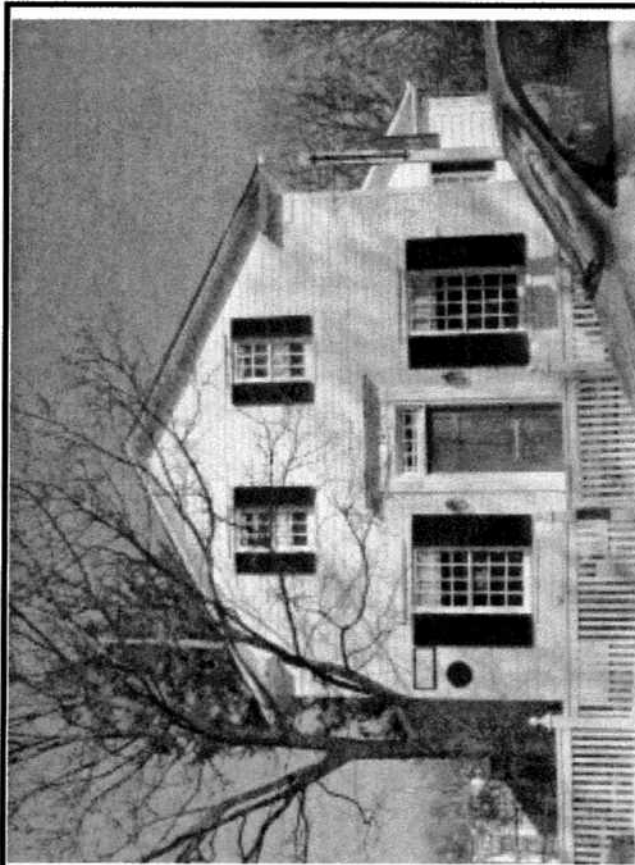


Thornhill Heritage Conservation District Inventory of Buildings



Thornhill Village Library

Location: 10 Colborne Street
 Year Built: 1851
 Style: Classical Revival
 Storeys: 2
 Classification: A, Designated Part IV, 1981

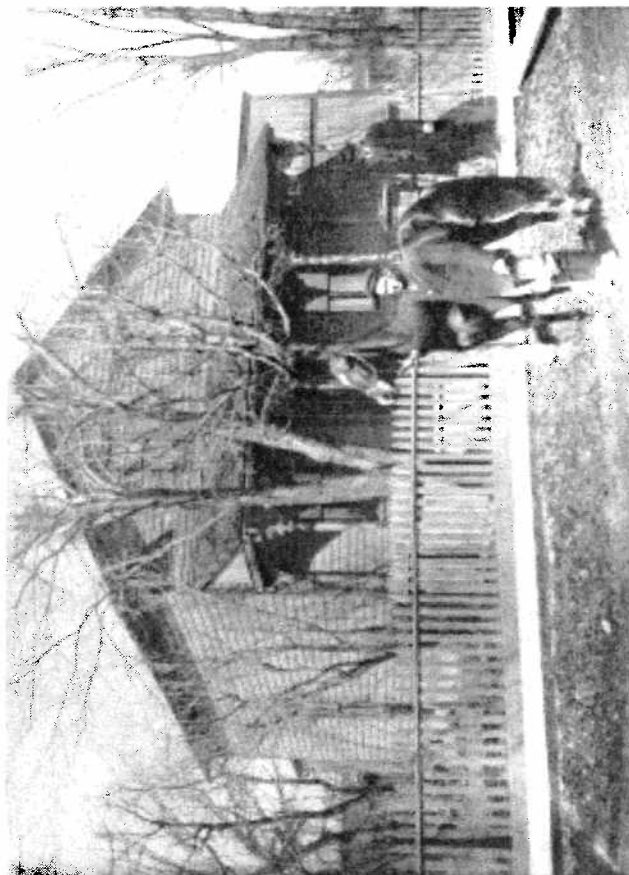
Foundation:
 Cladding: Clapboard
 Roof: Front Gable, Asphalt Shingles.
 Windows: Georgian double-hung. 12/12 lower, 6/6 upper.

Description: Fine Classical Revival house with deep, low-slope pediment and generous eaves returns. Proud entrance, with strongly projecting flat cornice and unevenly divided transom window. Cross and Bible door painted a striking red. Flanking brass coach-lights. Sympathetic addition. Wood fence with heavy top and bottom rails and inset pickets. Ball finials on fence posts. Good-size tree to the west-front. Yard paved with red interlock.

Archives: Designation Statement, Weaver 84,85,86

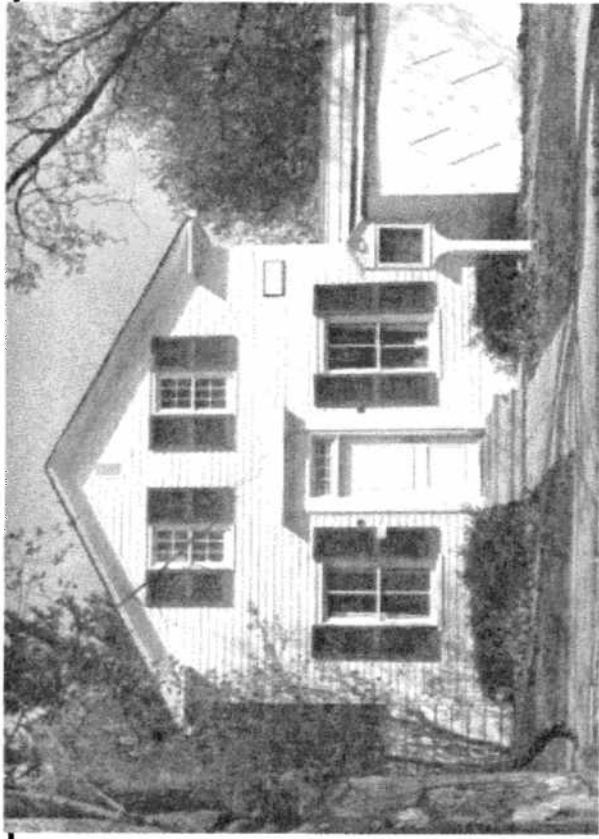
History: The house was built for Mrs. Ellen Ramsden nee Frizzell. She died two years afterwards, and the house was deeded to her infant son John A. Ramsden. There is a gap in the record, but it is known that John Grice Jr. operated a grocery store in the building in the 1890s until around 1902. Veterinarian John Campbell rented it for a while, and in 1911 it was again a residence, home to the Murdock McDonald family who occupied it for 20 years. It subsequently housed The Jim Tutt family, Bill and Mae Tucker, and finally Frank Tucker, who was a village trustee. Mr. Tucker sold the house to the Library Board in 1959, for \$16,000. The branch was scheduled to be closed in 1971, but public outcry reversed the decision, and portables were added at the rear as expansion space. In 1977 the property was turned over to the Town of Markham. Napier Simpson designed a restoration, including excavation for replacement foundations. In 1992 the portables were replaced with a new addition, which provided wheelchair access, and more space and amenities.

Comments: Very well-preserved and maintained building. An iconic gateway into the district from Yonge Street.

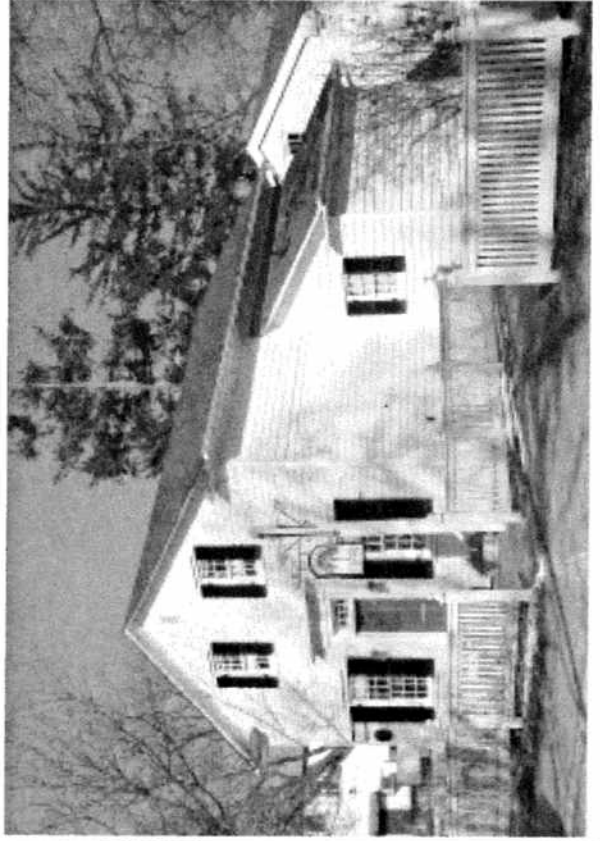


Murdock McDonald's son Bill in front of 10 Colborne Street
 The Weaver Collection #84, 1912

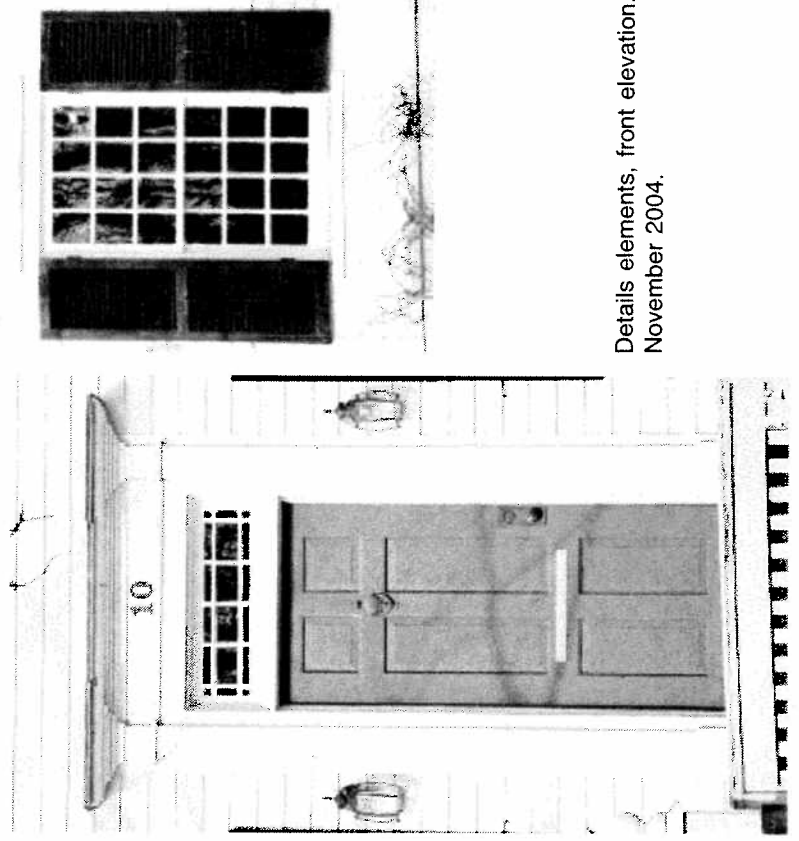
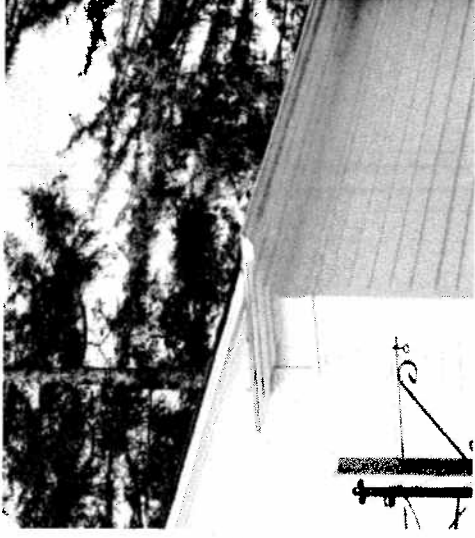
Thornhill Heritage Conservation District Inventory of Buildings



The Library before Napier Simpson's restoration. Note that the door and the ground floor windows are later replacements, and that the upstairs shutters are too wide for the windows. The Weaver Collection #86, May 1969



View from the Southeast, March 2004.



Details elements, front elevation.
November 2004.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The Thornhill Village Library is an outstanding example of adaptive re-use of a heritage structure. This frame, Classic Revival style building was originally constructed as a dwelling for Mrs. Ellen Ramsden, in 1851. The former house also served as a grocery store in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. After reverting to residential use for several decades, in 1959 the Ramsden House became a public library serving the local community. The logo that appears on the sign for the Thornhill Village Library was designed by Thoreau MacDonald, a Thornhill resident, who was the son of Group of Seven artist J. E. H. MacDonald. The building is representative of Thornhill's early history as a rural mill village.

The Thornhill Village Library is an outstanding example of a gable-fronted frame dwelling in the Classic Revival style. The low-pitched roof, graceful cornice mouldings and Classical door surround are characteristic features of this style. The gable fronted orientation of the building, sometimes called "temple fronted," is rare in Markham and York Region generally. The building underwent restoration under the direction of noted local architect, Napier Simpson Jr.

Description of Heritage Attributes

Exterior character-defining attributes that embody the cultural heritage value of 10 Colborne Street include:

- rectangular plan of the original building
- one and a half storey height
- clapboard siding with corner boards and water table
- low-pitched gable roof with wood cornice, associated mouldings, and eave returns
- 6 panelled wood "cross and bible" front door with Classical door surround and multi-paned transom light
- restored 12/12 and 6/6 wood sash style windows
- wood door and window surrounds
- louvered wood shutters
- wood picket fence in the front yard.