MUNICIPALITY OF PORT HOPE

HERITAGE DESIGNATION

Address: 82 Victoria Street South

Known as: Arthur Trefusis Heneage Williams House (Penryn Park)

Architectural Style: Gothic Revival

Date Built: Circa 1859

Date Designated: August 9, 1983 to By-Law No. 2070, SCHEDULE B-1

Lot Description: CON 1 BF PT LOT 9



Architectural Description

Penryn Park constructed in 1859 and extended in 1861 by the original owner is an excellent example of the Cottage Gothic house. It includes details such as bargeboard trim truer to the medieval pattern in their cusped and carved form than the lacy interpretation common to other buildings of the period. The house has the details common to the Gothic Revival of the day including hood moulds to openings and the deviations and deceits such as a Chinese pagoda roof over a rear second-storey window and a tower at the entrance, which might be expected of the mid-nineteenth century Picturesque. Fine finials and pendants adorn the gables. A long verandah with chamfered pillars runs along the south side of the house; originally narrow, it was widened by three feet in 1895. The house is constructed of local bright red brick with woodwork painted the appropriate period colour of Tuscan red. The front steps display interesting cast-iron risers. The oldest chimney is a joined chimney with six flues.

The interior contains a generous entrance hall containing a grand staircase with a heavy pierced balustrade. The plasterwork of the cornices and medallions are good examples of the style in which the house was conceived. Mantelpieces on the main floor have special interest; most are painted slate. The dining room mantelpiece came from the Forsyth House in Kingston and probably dates from circa 1820. It is in the Loyalist neo-classical style. A good example of an 1890's mantle is in the nursery.

The brass chandelier in the hall, originally for candles, has since been electrified. It is believed to be the original fixture since it was found in the attic on a high shelf and black with tarnish. Stained and etched glass at the main entrance is original. The panels on the double doors bear the initials of Col. and Mrs.Williams. The William's family crest and motto in Cornish ("with God everything - without God nothing") is in the panel over the door. In other windows of the main floor can be found the few remaining pieces of the stained and etched glass.

Historical Abstract

Penryn Park was built for one of Port Hope's most famous citizens - Colonel Arthur Trefusis Heneage Williams. His father, John Tucker Williams, came to Canada during the War of 1812 and later settled in Port Hope to become its first Mayor. Arthur T.H. Williams was born in Port Hope in 1837. Arthur attended Upper Canada College in Toronto and Edinburgh University in Scotland.

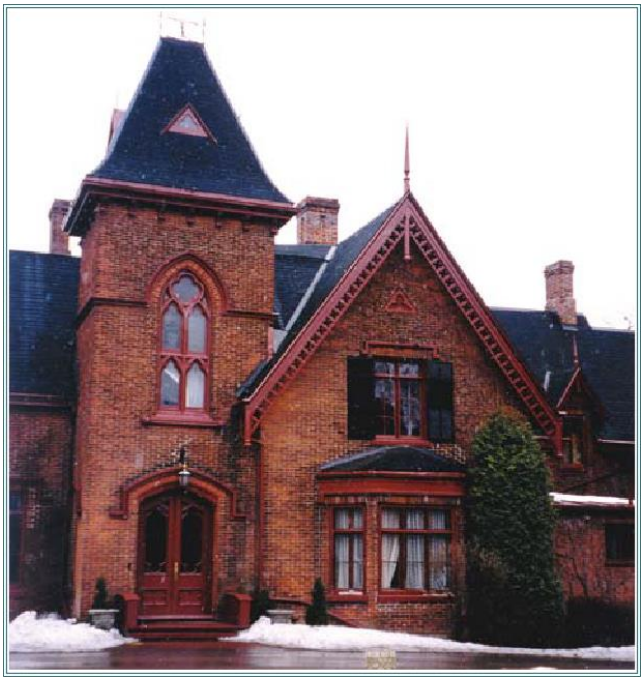
Like his father, he held many responsible positions in the town in addition to managing the family's business enterprises that included large land holdings and investments in timber and mines. His political career included being elected several times to the Ontario legislature from 1865 to 1875, and later holding the position of Conservative MP in Ottawa from 1878 to 1885.

A.T.H. Williams is best remembered for his military career. He was Colonel of the 46th Regiment and saw service during the Fenian Invasion. As Commander of the Midland battalion during the Riel rebellion of 1885, he led a daring charge against the Metis that resulted in victory at Batoche, Saskatchewan. Williams was acclaimed as the "Hero of Batoche". Before he could return to Port Hope

victorious, he died suddenly of pneumonia. In 1889, Sir John A. MacDonald unveiled a statue in his memory placed in front of Town Hall. (56 Queen Street)

After his marriage to Emily Seymour in 1859, Colonel A.T.H.Williams commissioned architect Edward Haycock to design his house named Penryn Park on the vast acreage adjacent to his father's house, Penryn Homestead (82 Victoria Street).

After the death of A.T.H. Williams in 1885 (his wife Emily had died in 1882), the house was sold to Henry H. King, an American lawyer from Pittsburgh who had extensive real estate and business holdings. He became aware of the Port Hope area as one of the many Americans who spent their summers in the area. He purchased Penryn Park as his summer residence. In recent years, it has been used as a private club and restaurant and the grounds have been used as a golf course.



Architectural Detail

The house has the details common to the Gothic Revival of the day including bargeboard trim and hood moulds to openings. Fine finials and pendants adorn the gables.