MUNICIPALITY OF PORT HOPE

HERITAGE DESIGNATION

Address: 86 John Street

Known as: The Bank of Upper Canada

Architectural Style: Italianate

Date Built: Circa 1857

Date Designated: May 25, 1981 to By-Law No. 34/81, SCHEDULE B

Lot Description: TOWN PLOT LOT 48 TO 50 & 58



Architectural Description

The three-storey brick structure (as built) was almost square in plan and measured forty-five feet by forty-two feet. It is a good example of Italianate architecture popular in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Italianate buildings are often square, massive and blocky. In this example, the Italianate is further distinguished by the flat roof, the protruding eaves supported by ornamental moulded brackets, the tall and round-headed windows (sometimes grouped together) and the decorative window trim.

The exterior walls are articulated with recessed panels in the brickwork and the white brick, manufactured in Toronto, was laid in the Flemish bond pattern. A stone band course separates the coursed rubble foundation from the brick structure. On the main (east) façade, there are nine openings, two windows and one entranceway on the first storey, and three windows on each of the second and third floors. The first storey windows are round-headed and six over three double hung with a round-headed centre pane and five surrounding panes over three vertical panes. These windows are surmounted by moulded wooden "pedimental" surrounds. Double pilasters on each side are formed out of the brick. The second storey windows are flat six over nine double hung sash, surmounted by moulded "entablature" surrounds with a central flourish, and bordered by single brick pilasters. The centre window has been replaced by French doors, and opens out to the cast iron railed balcony on top of the front porch. The original cast iron balconies of the other second storey windows have been replaced by plain modern iron rails. Three projecting rows of brick form the sills on the second storey fenestration. The third storey segmental windows were originally three over six double hung sash, but in many sash the lower portion has been replaced by a double casement sash. These windows carry segmental moulded wood heads, and again have brick pilasters at the sides, and wooden lugsills with supporting brackets.

The original ashlar block front porch contained a round-headed central entranceway with a door and semi-circular radiating fan transom, and a keystone in the surrounding arch. On either side was a long round-headed window. The porch now existing is similar in size, is in brick, and contains a modern door. The fenestration on the second and third stories of the south wall follows the same pattern as on the main facade. On the first storey, however there remains one of the two original triple grouped windows. The central window is a round-headed six over three double hung sash, like those on the first storey of the main facade, and on either side is a tall round headed narrow one over one double hung sash. This triple sash has a moulded wood, flat entablature head and sill, with narrow brick pilasters dividing the windows and bordering the grouping. The north wall has four windows, four over four double-hung sash. Although the interior has been completely altered, a small room remains on the north side, which originally served as the bank's vault. Two thick pine structural supporting pillars have been uncovered on the first floor.

Historical Abstract

The Bank of Upper Canada was established in York (Toronto) in 1822 with the first official Bank building being constructed in 1826 on Duke (Adelaide) and George Street. Until its demise in 1866, the bank was one of British North America's leading banks. It played a significant role in the financial development of Upper Canada.

The Bank of Upper Canada established a branch in Port Hope in 1840 originally located on Walton Street (118 Walton Street). In 1855, three parcels of land on John Street were purchased from Almon Harris, lumber merchant and grandson of Myndert Harris, one of the first settlers of Port Hope; John Roche, provincial land surveyor; and Sidney Smith, lawyer and son of John David Smith for the purposes of erecting a new building to be used for the Bank of Upper Canada. For many years the bank's Manager was Elias P. Smith, son of John D. Smith.

Cumberland & Storm, a prominent Toronto architectural firm, was commissioned by the Bank of Upper Canada to design the Port Hope branch. Previously they had designed two other branches of the bank; Windsor, 1855; and Sarnia, 1857. Cumberland had an association with Port Hope through his brother-in-law T. G. Ridout, owner of lot 8, concession 1 of Hope Township. He had previously completed designs for the harbour works in Port Hope circa 1847-1850 that included crib work of piers and pier heads although the extent of the work is not specifically known. Additionally, in the Horwood Collection is a set of specifications for grading and levelling of rural roads on lot 8, concession 1, the property owned by T.G. Ridout dated circa 1847. Cumberland advertised his services as a civil engineer and architect in the Port Hope paper beginning in 1847.

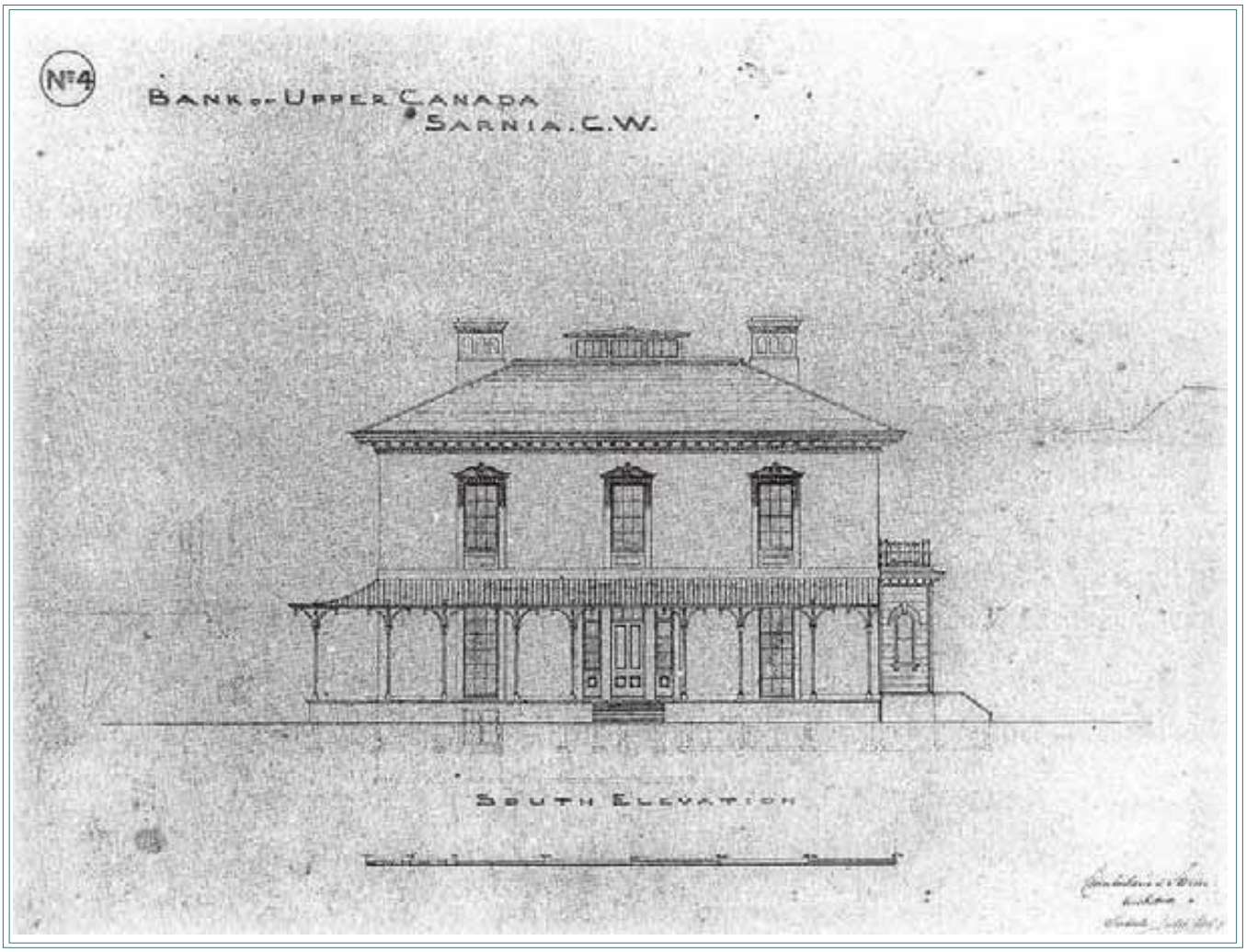
After the demise of the Bank of Upper Canada in 1866, the building was sold in 1868 to the Ontario Bank and remained a bank branch until 1881 (the Ontario Bank survived into the 1900's). John Smart was manager in the late 1860's, and by 1880, G.H.G. McVitty was manager.

In 1881, Dr. Robert Astley Corbett, M.D. for the Township of Hope formerly residing at lot 6, concession 15 in Perrytown, purchased the property for his home and medical practice. Born in Ontario in 1837, he is best remembered for construction of a dam (named Corbett's Dam) on the Ganaraska River about a mile from the downtown core near the Molson Mill (46 Molson Street) that facilitated delivery of electric power by the installation of a generator on Cavan Street. He was president of the Port Hope Electric Light Company having succeeded J.W. Quinlan in the role of delivering electric power to Port Hope in the late 1880's.

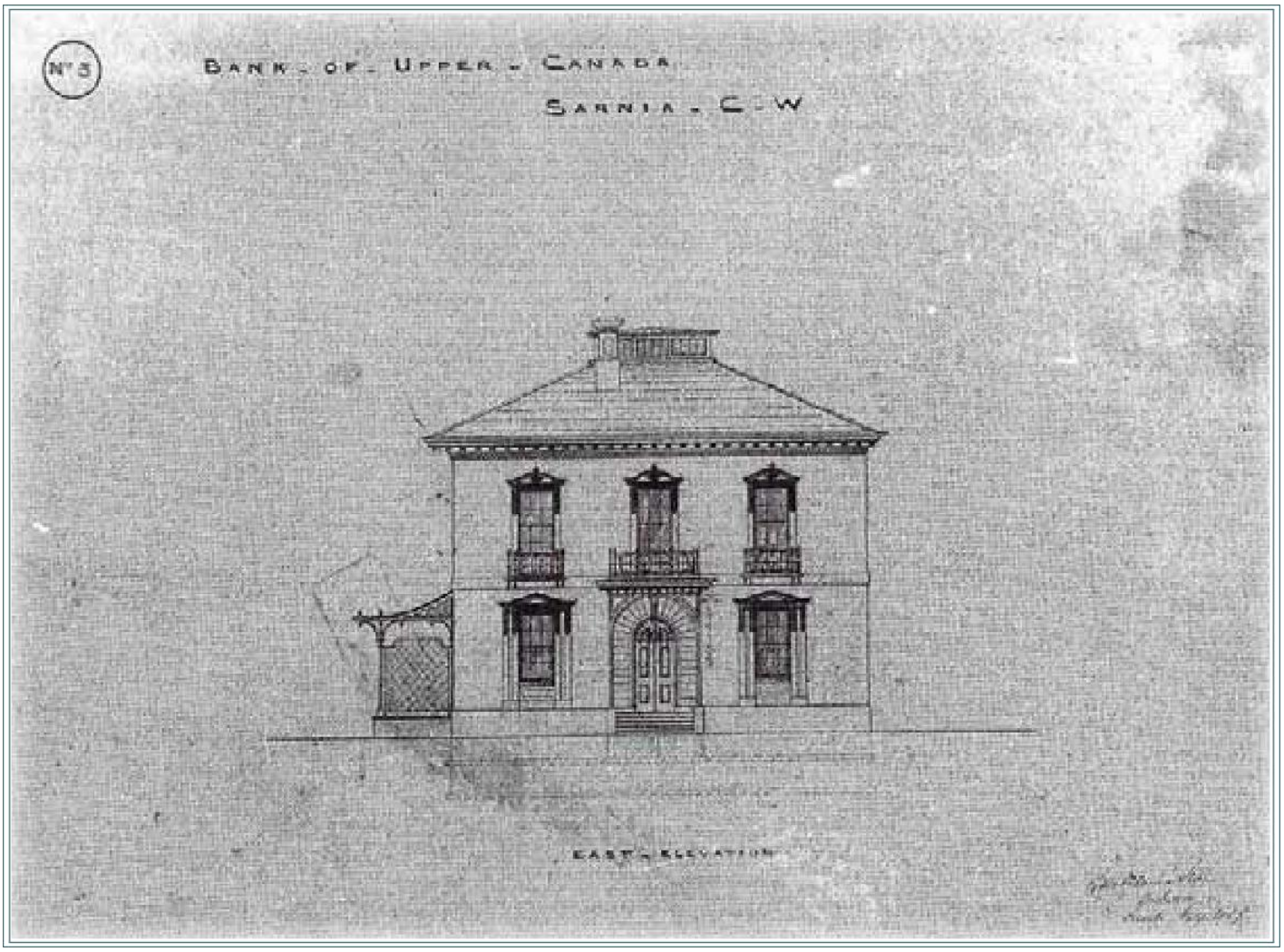
Florence Corbett, Dr. Corbett's daughter, sold the property to Norman Burr Gould, owner of Gould's Shoe Store in 1912, and then Herbert and Fred Lingard established a dairy on the premises in 1921 called the Port Hope City Dairy. It changed hands several times before being purchased by the Downey family in 1937, and they continued to run a dairy on the premise until the late 1970's. Since the 1940's additions have been made to the rear (north and west) to accommodate modern dairy facilities. In 1986, it was converted to an inn

known as the Carlyle, and now known as Dr. Corbett's Inn.

Archival Drawings



Cumberland & Storm, Bank of Upper Canada, Sarnia, 1857 Drawing of East Elevation, The Horwood Collection, Archives of Ontario



Cumberland & Storm, Bank of Upper Canada, Sarnia, 1857 Drawing of East Elevation, The Horwood Collection, Archives of Ontario



Bank of Upper Canada, circa 1857