MUNICIPALITY OF PORT HOPE

HERITAGE DESIGNATION

Address: 217 Walton Street

Known as: Englishtown Firehall

Architectural Style: Classic Revival

Date Built: Circa 1850

Date Designated: October 23, 1989 to By-Law No. 91/89, SCHEDULE B-11

Lot Description: TOWN PLOT LOT 66



Architectural Description

This is a large two-storey brick structure with a sloping shed-style roof. The lot slopes to the rear, leaving the casement exposed at the back of the property. The block adopts a commercial form (not unlike the stores further down Walton Street) with its brick-pilastered facade (finished in Flemish bond). In lieu of shop fronts the ground floor boasts two wide bays, which presumably owe their form to the building's original function as a fire hall. The upper storey boasts two tall evenly spaced windows with six-over-six sash. The west elevation also sports six-over-six windows at regular intervals, although the openings are noticeably smaller than the facade. The east wall composes a party wall with adjacent, later house.

Historical Abstract

The building is best remembered as the Englishtown Fire Hall. Its date is uncertain but the property changed hands among several Port Hope bricklayers and builders, notably Robert Youdan and John Marshall in the early 1850's.

Organized by members of the community, the fire company was comprised of volunteers. During this period, only manual pumps were available and these required large crews to keep the handles that operated the pumps manned. There were no horses connected with this fire hall. The pumpers had handles at each end and were pulled and pushed by firemen.

The Firehall is located on the western most section of Walton Street in the area referred to as Englishtown near where the street name changes from Walton to Ridout. Many of the lots in this area of town were part of the Baldwin or Ridout Plans. Subdivision of the Ridout land holdings and sale of the lots began in 1847. Extensive sale of the Baldwin lots commenced in the 1840's. Many houses began to be built in the area by the 1850's consequently the need for a neighbourhood fire station became apparent. Local builders and residents Robert Youdan and John Marshall may have participated in the creation of the Englishtown Fire Hall.

This fire hall was converted to a residence in the 1920's but evidence of its earlier function is still visible as the entrance and front windows replaced the fire hall doors. The facade is a brick pilastered composition similar to the commercial structures in the area with large symmetrically placed windows, giving this modest building a distinguished presence on the street.



Archival Photo



The volunteer fire company of the Englishtown Firehall.