MUNICIPALITY OF PORT HOPE

HERITAGE DESIGNATION

Address: 258 Ridout Street

Known as: John Lynn House

Architectural Style: Classic Revival

Date Built: Circa 1857

Date Designated: October 29, 1984 to By-Law No. 52/84, SCHEDULE B-7

Lot Description: RIDOUT PLAN LOT 5



Architectural Description

This brick house displays a collection of forms from various building styles and cannot really be defined as pure style. The gable peak on the main roof line would point to the Ontario Cottage form, and the wide eaves belong to the Greek Revival, while the roof line is Regency. The brick of the house is in the stretcher bond and the house built on a limestone foundation. The steeply pitched, hipped roof with its centre gable has wide projecting eaves. The cornice is plain and boxed with tongue in groove soffits below. This is a three-bay house, with a centre-hall plan. The large windows are two-over-two and double-hung. They sit on either side of the central opening on both storeys. The second-storey, centre window is narrower, to balance the height and slimness of the main entrance below, and to fit aesthetically into the lines of the gable peak above. All the windows have wooden lugsills below, a soldier course of brick above and horizontally louvred shutters. The circular window in the gable peak, apart from decorating the main facade, allows light into the attic storey of the house.

The main entrance has a set of panelled and windowed doors with a mullioned transom above. The door surround is moulded and the transom recessed. The impressive verandah on the main facade has a flat roof. Its roof railing is comprised of simple, squared spindles with thick, square, tooled posts as supports. Except for the triple posts at the corners, the supports sit in pairs. The verandah is quite deep and is supported by paired columns. At the corners of the verandah, these columns are also tripled. They rest on rusticated block piers and therefore suggest this is an addition to, and not part of, the original structure. Between the block piers is a handrail supported by squared spindles. The east façade of the house has a two storey projecting bay that is five sided and capped with a hipped roof. The bay has three windowed sides which all have cast stone lugsills, a soldier course of brick above and leaded glass in the upper portion of the opening.

At the back of the house is a large hipped-roof addition with hipped-roof dormers. It is dressed in clapboard. Apart from this, another addition at the back is the one-storey sunroom that has leaded glass in the top panes of its windows.

Historical Abstract

The Weekly Guide of November 17, 1857 mentions this house in an article called “Improvements in Port Hope”. Among other new houses listed as being recently built, “the large and handsome, brick dwelling house erected by John Lynn” is mentioned.

“It is not yet entirely completed. Workmen are at present engaged in putting up a verandah at the front which will add greatly to its appearance.”

John Lynn previously lived on Ward Street. In 1845, the decision was made by the town “not to continue the building of the sidewalk on Ward Street past the home of John Lynn, but rather carry it on northward”.

In 1847, Lynn, who was originally from Ireland, was the fire warden for Port Hope. He is best known for building and running the North American Hotel on Walton Street (28-32 Walton Street), which was constructed in 1844. A disastrous fire destroyed the original hotel in the spring of 1850, which burned the structure and its neighbour to the ground. A new building

was erected shortly after the fire. By 1857, Mr. Lynn is listed in business directories as a distiller on Cavan Street with the business name of Lynn and White and residing on Ridout Street. In the census of 1861, he provides his age as 57.

Lot 5 of the Ridout Plan on which the house is situated was part of the original land acquired by Toronto banker, Thomas Gibbs Ridout. Subdivision of the property and sale of the lots began in 1847. As this area of Port Hope developed, it was commonly referred to as “Englishtown”.



Architectural Detail

This is a house with very simple trim and woodwork and the front door case has sidelights. Vernacular in architectural expression, it makes use of local forms and materials, and incorporates familiar forms.