MUNICIPALITY OF PORT HOPE

HERITAGE DESIGNATION

Address: 33-37 John Street

Known as: Midland Hotel

Architectural Style: Classic Revival

Date Built: circa 1850 (RESTORED)

Date Designated: April 15, 1985 to By-Law No. 21/85, SCHEDULE B-4

Lot Description: STEWART P PT TOWN PLOT 55



Architectural Description

The facade to John Street is a very formal design in the Greek Revival with particularly well-expressed architrave treatment to openings set against a plain stucco finish.The eaves were trimmed with a built-in cornice gutter. There is a carriageway through the building - the south building being the earlier with original stairs and trim. Excellent classical (Greek Revival) facade of a frame building in the core of Port Hope. Original architrave treatment.

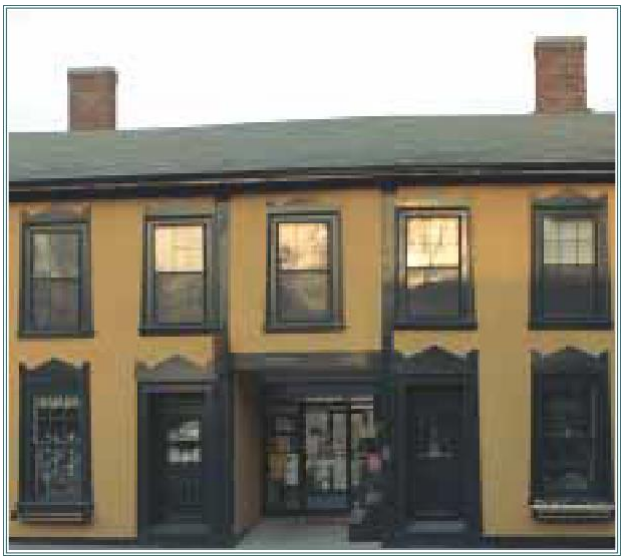
Historical Abstract

Erected circa 1845, the south half of this building was erected as freestanding. When the Midland Railway was constructed in the early 1850's, the northern half was added with a carriageway through the centre. The building was used as an Inn and named the Midland Hotel after the Midland, Lindsay, and Beaverton Railway. The railway originated in Port Hope and travelled north to Lindsay, Beaverton, and Midland onto Georgian Bay.

The intention of this railroad was to open the northern part of the province and facilitate transportation of produce and lumber to the Great Lakes System and to bring in finished goods. Port Hope boasted one of the finest harbours on the north shore of Lake Ontario and it was natural that the Town would become a terminus for major railway lines travelling north and south, east and west. To cope with the influx of passengers, towns along the railway line erected hotels geared for the railway passenger trade. Local hotels such as the Midland served rail passengers as well as travellers from the numerous lake steamers that visited Port Hope for day trips or en route to another destination.

At the time the Midland Hotel was erected, Port Hope was very prosperous and John Street was a busy thoroughfare running from the commercial core to the harbour. Two other hotels were later located south along John Street, Blackham's at the corner of Robertson Street (43-45 Dorset Street West) and a hotel that stood at the corner of Park and John (now demolished). By 1857, there were thirteen hotels or inns listed in local business directories, some located on Mill, Walton and Queen Street. The Midland Hotel was a small modest inn catering to passengers who would travel on the train from the country, rent a room for the day, attend to personal duties, and then at the end of the day take the train home. They had a place they could rest during the day if required.

The Midland Railway ceased construction before it reached Georgian Bay thereby preventing a transportation route linking Lake Ontario and Huron. With the advent of automobile travel, there was a major decline in the number of hotels and inns in Port Hope. By 1917, the building was converted into three apartments. The building underwent extensive restorations in 1984 at which time the carriageway that had been covered up was revealed.



Architectural Detail

The facade to John Street is a very formal design in the Greek or Classic Revival style with particularly well-expressed architrave treatment to openings set against a plain stucco finish. The building underwent extensive restorations in 1984 at which time the carriageway that had been covered up was revealed.