MUNICIPALITY OF PORT HOPE

HERITAGE DESIGNATION

Address: 114-116 Walton Street

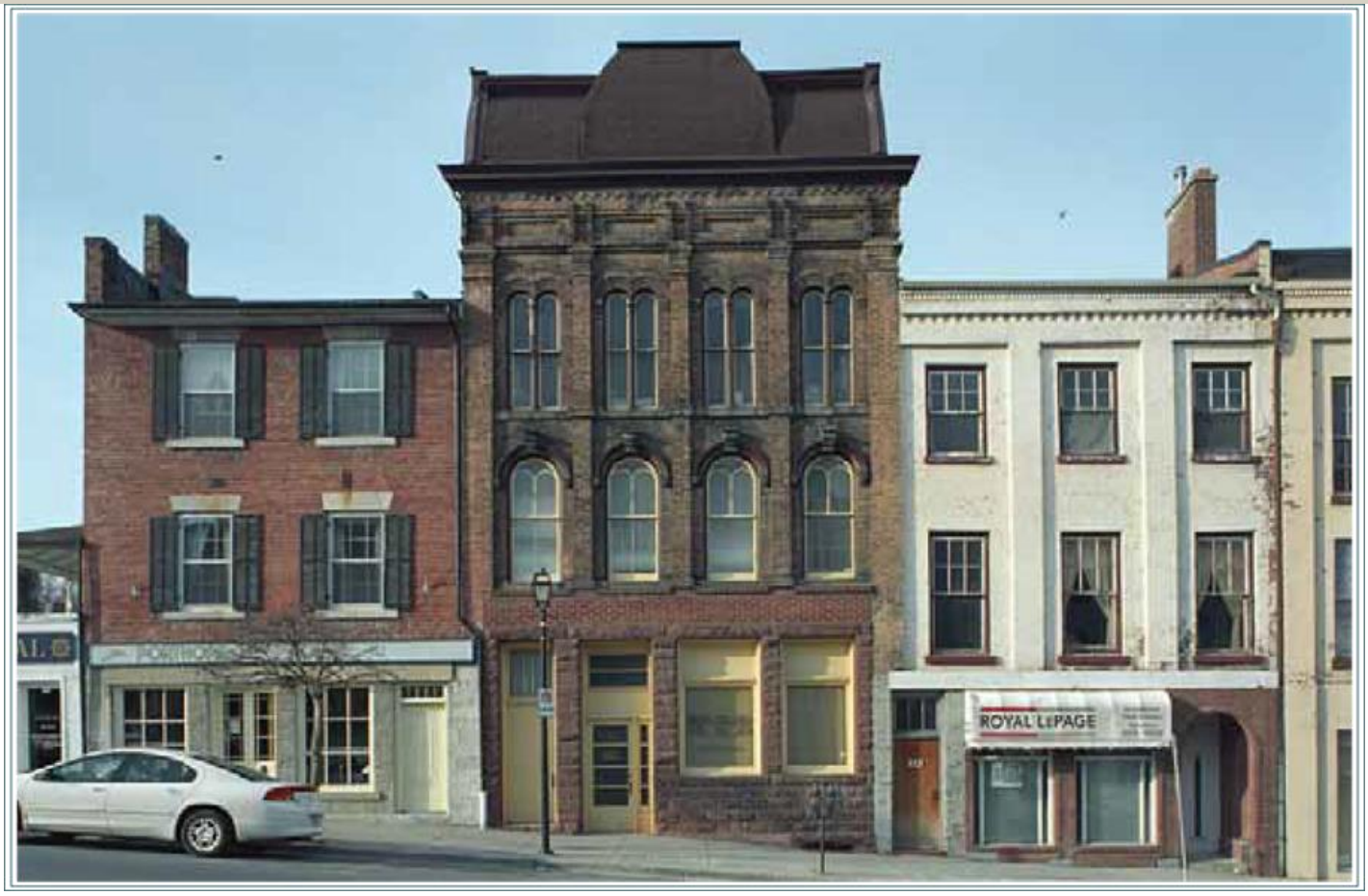
Known as: Russell Block

Architectural Style: Walton Street Heritage District - Second Empire

Date Built: Circa 1875

Date Designated: October 6, 1997 to By-Law No. 44/97

Lot Description: PT 56



Architectural Description

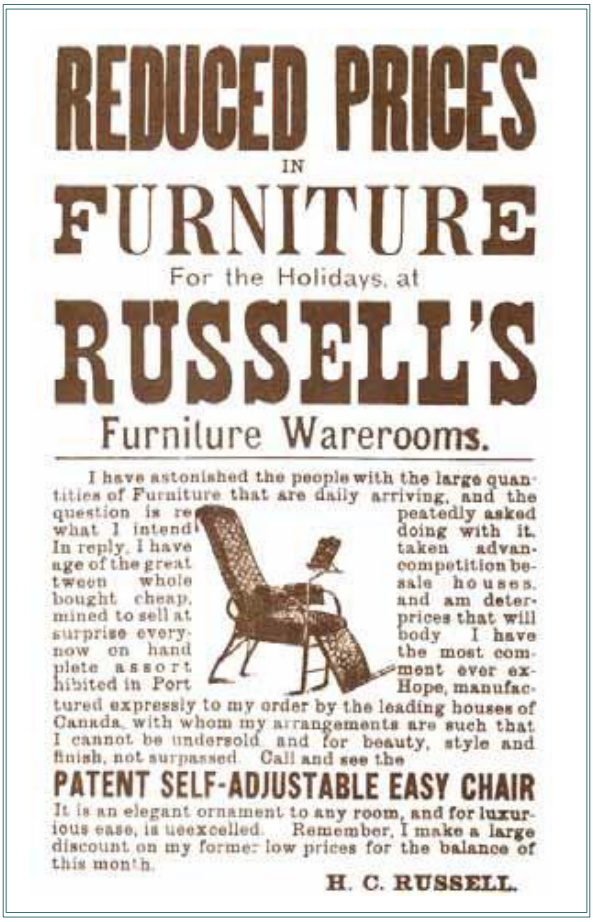
This block is a three-storey Second Empire brick building, four bays wide with a false mansard roof. The second storey bays have semi-circular structural openings with decorative cast iron lintels. The third storey bays are twin semi-circular bays separated by narrow columns and featuring decorative brick lintels. The facade of the block is pilastered from the second storey to about one and a half feet above the third storey bays. There are two large pilasters on either end, beginning in the upper third quarter of the first storey and topped with decorative brick capitals. The three inside pilasters are located between the bays and are relatively narrow and broken by lines of concrete directly below each set of bays. The facade also features a machicolated brick cornice with recessed panels below the wooden cornice of the roof.

Historical Abstract

In 1817, Elias Smith and Jonathan Walton sold four acres of Crown land that was granted to them in 1797 to James Hawkins. Hawkins settled in the area in 1801 originally from Montpelier, Vermont. He was a master of many trades including blacksmith, joiner, carpenter, bricklayer, and stonemason, and respected for his mechanical prowess. During the next decade, Hawkins split up the parcel through a series of land transactions. Three quarters of an acre of land was sold to Dr. Samuel Gilchrist. The Gilchrist property was situated on Walton Street, running westward from Cavan Street to about the centre of the Walton Street block south of Pine Street. The parcel was referred to as the Gilchrist property for many years.

In 1835, Gilchrist sold his land to merchant, Mark Burnham, and over the next two decades the property changed ownership several more times until in 1871, James Smith sold a plot measuring twenty-four feet by one hundred feet to Henry C. Russell (1834-1911), a cabinetmaker and furniture dealer. The Russell family, originally from Ireland, had been in the furniture making business in Port Hope since 1850. W.F. Russell advertised the following prices for household furnishings in 1854: cane seat chairs, 78 cents; extension

Historical Ad



REDUCED PRICES
IN
FURNITURE
For the Holidays, at
RUSSELL'S
Furniture Warerooms.

I have astonished the people with the large quantities of Furniture that are daily arriving, and the question is re peatedly asked what I intend doing with it. In reply, I have taken advantage of the great competition between whole sale houses, bought cheap, and am determined to sell at prices that will surprise everybody I have now on hand the most complete assortment ever exhibited in Port Hope, manufactured expressly to my order by the leading houses of Canada, with whom my arrangements are such that I cannot be undersold and for beauty, style and finish, not surpassed. Call and see the

PATENT SELF-ADJUSTABLE EASY CHAIR

It is an elegant ornament to any room, and for luxurious ease, is unexcelled. Remember, I make a large discount on my former low prices for the balance of this month.

H. C. RUSSELL.

From the Clayton Collection of historical posters.

tables, $12; wood seat chairs, 40 cents; mahogany chairs with horse hair seats, per set $3.40; and a bedstead, $1.52. Henry, in business directories of the late 1860's, advertised cabinetmaking, upholstery, and organ and melodeon manufacturing as his specialty.

The Russell Block was constructed circa 1875. Russell claimed insolvency in 1879 and a bankruptcy sale was advertised in the September 25, 1879 issue of the Port Hope Times. Russell then either convinced his creditors that he could make a go of it or he managed to generate some capital from the sale of his other lands, as he advertised in October of that year that he was pleased to announce that he was resuming business in his old stand on Walton Street.

During this period, Henry Russell also purchased two residential properties. In 1870, Russell purchased a house on Augusta Street (72 Augusta Street). In 1871, he also purchased a cottage on Baldwin Street (31 Baldwin Street) that he later sold in 1879. In 1886, Henry Russell issued a quitclaim deed to the Midland Loan and Savings Company for $1. Apparently his business had failed once again. The Midland Loan and Savings would later be known as the Canada Permanent Mortgage Corporation. Midland Loan was later located in this block. George M. Furby (61 Bramley Street North) was manager of the Midland Loan and Savings in 1890.



Architectural Detail

The building incorporates Italianate details on the second floor windows, brackets to pilaster caps and elaborate cornice supporting the broken front to the false mansard hiding a shed roof. The building has original sash in the upper storey with elaborate cast iron labels with keystones to the second floor. The ground floor has been substantially altered earlier in this century. The mansard is now faced in asphalt shingle and lacks the ornamental dormers, probably oval lights originally.