MUNICIPALITY OF PORT HOPE

HERITAGE DESIGNATION

Address: 92 King Street

Known as: Smith House

Architectural Style: Classic Revival

Date Built: Circa 1845

Date Designated: October 6, 1997 to By-Law No. 44/97, SCHEDULE B-9

Lot Description: SMITH PLAN LOT 183, PT TOWN PLOT LOT 25



Architectural Description

The exterior is a two-storey brick front (three storey back split) of a town-house style with a low pitch gabled roof parallel to King Street. The building has parapet walls at the north and south ends with four prominent chimneys extending from the parapet walls, which are also capped in a cast iron. Three of the chimneys were originally working, the fourth is strictly decorative. On the north and south gabled walls is an oval shuttered roof vent, which is mainly for decorative purposes being almost entirely bricked in the attic space.

The five bay front is presented as three above and two below with the third opening at the extreme left being the doorway. Windows on street level have either stone or concrete sills with brick lintels. Originally shuttered, there are wrought iron shutter brackets incorporated into the brick to hold the shutters open. The doorway is an elaborate one consisting of blocked corners and a lintel decoration on the outside below the transom. The lintel is either a stone or concrete one with the sill being a replacement of oak. The transom and sidelights consist of a large brick of glass surrounded entirely by small bricks of glass. The mouldings consist of a wide oval and two side mouldings each side of this. Together these form a column which is terminated by corner blocks which separate transom, door and sidelights. The door was originally a four panel one with heavy mouldings echoing that found in the surrounding trim. A box-lock was originally on this door as well as all interior doors. All the detailing is repeated on the inside doorway with the exception of the lintels below the outside transom. Also, below the sidelights is a heavy panel matching that of the door and trim.

The exterior rear description is as follows. A three-storey back split with a limestone foundation, which is exposed at the first storey at the rear. The upper two storeys are brick with a decorative brick treatment between the uppermost windows and the roof line, forming a diamond pattern in darker brick. There are six bays distributed over three stories with a central doorway on the lowest level. This gives only two bay openings as opposed to three at the front. This doorway enables direct access to the kitchen at the rear from outside. The lowest windows consist of limestone sills, on the next floor are stone or concrete sills, and the uppermost floor has wood sills. All windows are double hung wooden sashes with muntins in a 6-over-6 pattern. Again shutters were originally present. The south wall has a single window on the upper storey, which lights the landing of the upper staircase. All windows on the north wall are new, added for the apartment now present; except a barred window in the basement which is not closed on the inside. The main floor consists of a large parlour at the front containing a Greek Revival fireplace, very similar to the one found in the Bluestone dining room. It has a Greek-key motif in the corners and an oval with moulded columns extending down from the "key" design to a block at floor level. The other room originally was a large dining room directly opening to the parlour with a fireplace and mantle (now sealed up).

The rear doorway leads into a large room with a (covered) large cooking hearth. The other building present is an attached two-storey

garage. It is attached to the south wall of the house and is approximately fifty years old.

Historical Abstract

In 1844, Robert Needham Waddell purchased a block of land fronting on Mill and King Street from John David Smith. This land was referred to as the Waddell Lot. In 1845, the southerly one-half of this plot was severed. In 1849, the Smith Estate Plan subdivided the surrounding lands between King and Mill, and Peter and Dorset (extension), into approximately twenty-four foot frontages along King and Mill and at the halfway point a back-lane was included sixteen and a half feet wide. The Waddell land, not belonging to the Smith Estate plan was not subdivided.

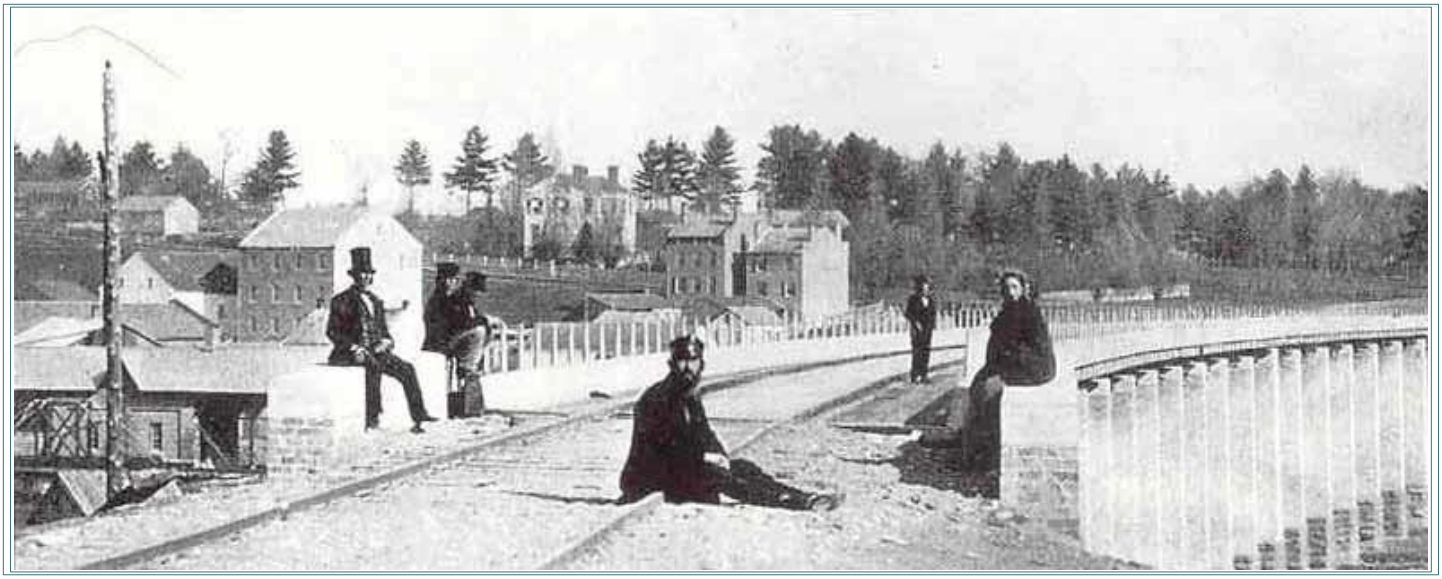
From this information, it is presumed that the building at 92 King Street was built in 1844 or 1845. There are however, many details in the home that suggest an earlier date and an association with the two other Smith family residences in the vicinity, the Bluestone (21 Dorset Street East) and the Little Bluestone (117 King Street). As mentioned in the description above, a fireplace surround in the parlour has Greek Revival elements and incorporates a Greek key motif similar to those found in the Bluestone (21 Dorset Street East).

In 1844, after severing off the southerly one half of this plot, R.N. Waddell retained the northerly one half until his death. On the Wall & Forrest Map of 1853, the house to the north of 92 King is identified as R.N. Waddell's; there is however no named assigned to this house, which is shown. In 1895, Waddell's wife Angeline E. Waddell sold the northerly one half. Archival photos from the 1800's from the railway viaduct clearly show 92 King Street and its neighbour to the north, the Waddell property and the Bluestone (21 Dorset Street East).

Robert Needham Waddell (1814-1889) came to Canada in the 1840's, and held several important positions in Port Hope. In 1845, Waddell had the prominent corner block at Mill and Walton Street (1-3 Walton Street) constructed having commissioned the talented British born architect, William Thomas, to design the building. In 1851, he was the agent for the Bank of Montreal, which was located in the Waddell Block, and he had a dry goods, grocery and hardware store. In the early 1850's, he had a flouring and gristmill on Mill Street capable of producing two hundred barrels a day with six runs of stone. His operation included two frame buildings, one four storey and one five storey building. He became a director of the Port Hope, Lindsay and Peterborough Railway in 1853. He was the local sheriff for many years and later became the sheriff of Northumberland and Durham, residing in Cobourg.

While the early history of this house is obscure, perhaps built by a Smith and sold to R.N. Waddell or built by R. N. Waddell at the time of purchase of his land providing easy accessibility to his gristmills on Mill Street, it is a fine example of the townhouse style that became prevalent in Port Hope in the 1840s.

Archival Photo



People sitting on the Grand Trunk Railroad tracks. Note the Bluestone in the background and the R.N. Waddell and Smith House to the right of the Bluestone. The mills to the left are probably the flour mills of R.N. Waddell since the buildings are four and five storeys in height. Photo from the National Archives, Ottawa.