MUNICIPALITY OF PORT HOPE

HERITAGE DESIGNATION

Address: 131 Walton Street

Known as: St. Paul's Presbyterian Church

Architectural Style: Walton Street Heritage District - Romanesque Revival **Date Built:** Circa 1906 (RESTORED)

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

Lot Description: PT OF TOWN PLOT LOTS 56 & 67 & 68



Architectural Description

This monumental composition in brick over a cast stone base is, essentially, of the Romanesque Revival. Massive towers frame the front with an arcaded porch between sheltering the tower entrances and above, the gabled front to the sanctuary and its rear gallery. Small gabled wings contain side entrances and behind a half octagon shape encloses the attached Sunday-School wing.

The building is notable not only for its rusticated east stone base but also for the smoother cast stone bases and plinth course to the towers, the same material used in the porch. Windows to towers display simple stained glass in Art Nouveau designs, the taller west tower with louvred openings to the bell stage and with a short spire above. The shorter east tower on the lower end of the slope has a hipped roof though steeper than the similar form to the half octagon back of the church. The chimney is a massive shaft very much contributing to the architectural silhouette. A fine rose window, also exhibiting Art Nouveau designs, dominates the front gable but lights only the loft space above the sanctuary.

Brickwork exhibits considerable ornamenta-tion in hood moulds over windows, a corbelled frieze and pilasters. Some cast stone ornament has been lost, namely the cornice terminating the cast stone at the towers and across the porch possibly never restored after perishing in the weather as other cast in situ ornament in the arcading of the porch is beginning to do.

The roofs are at present a miscellany of finishes, the tower caps being covered in asphalt shingle, possibly replacing an original wood shingle cover, the main roof over the Sanctuary and Sunday School in a cement asbestos tile, a fire-resistive replacement of the earlier twentieth century, but no longer used and difficult to repair satisfactorily. A more permanent metal covering could be entertained providing that its patterning is discreet and/or traditional, a low-rib batten-seam or standing-seam appropriate, an imitation tile to be discouraged for the roofs are important components of the silhouette. The eyebrow dormers serving as ventilators to the roof space are significant details. Also important to the design are the parapets to gables and the massive chimney stack, which rises through the roof towards the south-east corner.

Historical Abstract

The first Presbyterian Church in Port Hope was completed in 1831. The building was a modest frame structure constructed by builders William Brogdin and William Lee located on Baldwin



Street. When the church was first constructed it stood in a pathless wood that was separated from the main road by a deep gully. It had to be approached from the west until a bridge was built across the ravine and then later filled in to form Church Street. As the congregation grew, the need for a larger church became apparent.

In 1854, the frame church was replaced by a brick church that was capable of accommodating one thousands persons (view below). The new church construction occurred during the tenure of the very popular Reverend John Cassie who resided on nearby Julia Street (Cassie Cottage, 15 Julia Street).

There were two secessions from the church, one in 1858, and another in 1872. The latter was the result of the choice of minister after the death of Reverend Cassie and difficulty that arose between the Irish and Scottish members. The Irish members left the parish and built their own church that was later relocated to Mill Street.

In 1905, Dr. L.B. Powers donated a strip of land to the rear of the church beside his residence (127-129 Walton Street) and along with lots previously owned by Clarke and Skitch, a new Presbyterian Church was constructed at 131 Walton Street. W.R. Chislett and Thomas Garnett were hired as contractors with the cornerstone for the new building being laid on September 25, 1905. The Presbyterian Church would now be called St. Paul's.

Two notable memorial windows enhance the church; one in memory of the Craick family, and the other in memory of Senator Mulholland who married into the Craick family. The church recently underwent extension exterior restoration.



Architectural Detail

The Romanesque Revival was a style popular in the latter part of the 19th century. The roof has recently been restored and the interior of the church has been restored under the guidance of Peter Stokes, restoration architect. The space is renowned for its acoustics.