MUNICIPALITY OF PORT HOPE

HERITAGE DESIGNATION

Address: 284 Ridout Street

Known as: Thomas Spry Cottage (Forge Cottage)

Architectural Style: Classic Revival

Date Built: Circa 1850

Date Designated: November 6, 1978 to By-Law No. 3164/78, SCHEDULE B-1

Lot Description: PLAN 1 LOT 12



Architectural Description

The house is a good example of local Georgian styling of the one and a half storey cottage design with a centre hall plan, constructed of two course local brick. Some of the features are the brick pilasters, the entrance sidelights and transom. The window above the main door is known as an eyebrow window, which was to provide light to the upstairs hallway.

Woodwork and mouldings are typical of the 1850-1880 era, flooring of two and three quarter inch pine, the hardwood floors having been added at a later date. The original pine flooring can be seen in the downstairs hallway and upstairs bedrooms.

The rear section of the house which was at one time the summer kitchen is believed to have been added some twenty-five years after the house was built. The entrance door from the hall to what is now the den was originally the back door.

A number of features of the house are the large twelve paned windows affording excellent lighting and ventilation most of which is still the original glass. The living room fireplace and chimney is of original construction with a peculiar feature that operates on the principle of a forge. This fireplace is noted for its excellent function and is still in constant use. The windowsills outside are tooled and picked faced stone.

Historical Abstract

Lot 12 of the Ridout Plan on which this house is situated was part of the original land acquired by Toronto banker, Thomas Gibbs Ridout. Subdivision of the Ridout property and sale of lots began in 1847. As this area of Port Hope developed, it was commonly referred to as "Englishtown". Thomas Spry purchased the lot from T.G. Ridout in 1850.

Forge Cottage was built by Thomas Spry circa 1850. The name of the cottage is a reference to his trade. He also purchased the neighbouring lot to the east, lot 11, in 1848 before he purchased this one. (282 Ridout Street)

Thomas Spry (1811-1884) was a local blacksmith who had his shop on Cavan Street in the 1850's. Originally from England, he appears on local assessments in the mid 1840's. By 1853, he is mentioned in an article in the local paper about successful businesses in Port Hope. He is credited with completing the ironwork of the schooners "Leander, Admiral and one or more others".

Built circa 1850, during Port Hope's most prosperous period, the cottage is a well-preserved house and another example of a fine dwelling being built by a local craftsman. Its attention to detail differentiates it from more modest contemporary dwellings - elegant corner pilasters, a Palladian proportioned front entrance with transom and sidelights, and a unique fanlight window.

In 1874, the property transferred to George Holdaway, father of Thomas Spry's wife Adaline. From 1878 to 1901, the entire lot is further subdivided and sold in one sixth of an acre parcels to the brother and sisters of Adaline Holdaway Spry.



Architectural Detail

Rectangular multi-paned sidelights and a transom of the same style and dimension flank the fine Palladian proportioned front entrance. A unique fanlight window that provides light to the upper storey appears to rest on the door lintel.