MUNICIPALITY OF PORT HOPE

HERITAGE DESIGNATION

Address: 1-3 Walton Street

Known as: Waddell Block

Architectural Style: Walton Street Heritage District

Date Built: Circa 1845 (RESTORED)

Date Designated: January 20, 1992 to By-Law No. 05/92, SCHEDULE B-1

Lot Description: PT 20



Architectural Description

An 1845 brick ell-shaped commercial block with residential space above, believed to have been a hotel originally, three storeys in single unit with fronts to Walton and Mill Streets. This is one of the most significant blocks, architecturally speaking, on Walton Street and one of the earliest. Its handsome facades facing Walton and Mill Streets include stone columns, pilasters and lintels at the ground floor level, rusticated stone quoins, eared wood window surrounds with cornices to architraves at the second floor, and a simpler treatment with wood surrounds to openings on the third storey. The roof is gabled and turning the corner forms a hip. Original sash occur in the upper floors.

The ground floor, except for the south section on Mill Street, has been considerably changed, however, with mutilation of the one remaining commercial front when original glazing bars, reported to be walnut, were removed. Further alterations however established commercial fronts to the Walton Street side, but did not seem to be inspired by the original detail of the block, but this has been readdressed recently.

This building deserves such special consideration because of its quality and prominent position. The balcony was reported to be a later addition and probably early 20th century. The building had been converted to apartments in the upper floors in the early twentieth century, for some time occupied by older people with long tenancy but recently has been gutted ready for more appropriate renovation. The balcony was also removed.

Historical Abstract

The Ganaraska River originally divided into two streams around the present Walton Street Bridge and the area where this building now stands was formerly an island. When the river was re-channeled the entire Mill Street area was built up from marsh and became another access route to the harbour. In 1844, Robert Needham Waddell purchased eight acres of land from John D. Smith, a parcel of land that extended from King Street to Mill Street to Walton Street.

In 1845, Waddell had this prominent corner block constructed having commissioned the talented British born architect, William Thomas, to design the building. Thomas had arrived in Canada in 1843 and immediately began work on a number of significant buildings. In 1844 and 1845 alone, he designed the Commercial Bank of Midland District, Toronto; St. Michael's Cathedral, Toronto; St. Lawrence Hall, Toronto; Bishop's Palace, Toronto; and the Waddell Block in Port Hope.

Part of the Waddell Lot included the area where the two townhouses on King Street are located (92 King Street). While the early history of the southern townhouse is obscure, the northern property remained in the Waddell family until after the death of Robert in 1889.

Robert Waddell (1814-1889) who was born in Ireland in 1814, came to Canada in the 1840's, and held several important positions in Port Hope. 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.

The Waddell Block was designed as a hotel with ground floor retail space. The hotel could be accessed by a central doorway on the Walton Street façade that led to the lobby of the hotel in the southern section of the building. Two banks were located in the Waddell Block with a Mill Street entrance located on the southeast section of the building. The Bank of Montreal was the first bank in the block, then later the Bank of Toronto.

James and Richard O'Neill established a dry goods and grocery store in the Waddell Block mid-century. In 1866, after they purchased the St. Lawrence Hotel (87-97 Walton Street), the O'Neill's relocated their store to the St. Lawrence Block establishing a stylish dry goods store, and a grocery and liquor store. The O'Neill's then built the neighbouring Music Hall - Opera House Block in 1871 (85 Walton Street).

After the death of R.N. Waddell in 1889, the building was sold in 1891 to John Hume who then sold to Emma Henderson in 1892. The Henderson family had possession of the block until 1905, when they sold to Frederick Outram who had established the File Works in 1888. Frederick Outram and then his son George Alfred owned property on Brown Street (71 Brown Street) in 1889. George Alfred had a hardware store in the Knowlson Block (98-106 Walton Street) from 1911 until his death.



Architectural Detail

The rooftop lantern had been removed and has now been restored. The Great Farini began a daring high wire walk across the Ganaraska River starting at the lantern of the Waddell Block in May 1861.