

JOHN TURNER, HIS ARCHITECTURE AND
AN EVALUATION OF HIS ARCHITECTURE IN TERMS OF
ARCHITECTURAL TRENDS IN ONTARIO, 1840-1885

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PREFACE

While working for the Brantford Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee with assistance from the Ontario Ministry of Culture and Recreation, Heritage Administration Branch and the City of Brantford, during summer 1977, I found that a number of buildings I was researching, were designed by John Turner, architect. It was not until I found unexpectedly an end-of-year building appraisal (1870) in The Brantford Expositor microfilm collection that I realized how important a role John Turner played in the shaping of the design of early Brantford, today the downtown area. Paul Walker, librarian at the Main Public Library in Brantford, and member of the Architectural Committee interested me in pursuing the study of John Turner's architecture after my summer job was completed. He found me an article dealing with Turner's architecture, written by Constance Pole Bayer in 1963. That article led me to find John Turner's obituary; the search would therefore extend past Brantford. Contacts in various parts of the Province, my summer research, and more specific primary microfilm and secondary sources research this fall provide the basis for this brief, incomplete record and evaluation of the work of John Turner.

There are many people whom I would like to thank. First of all, I would like to thank the Heritage Administration Branch, the City of Brantford and the Brantford Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee for last summer's employment opportunity and the Brantford Planning Board staff for their assistance at that time. I would like to thank Paul Walker for inspiring me to

develop this theme into a project, for supplying me with information and acting as a liaison between another contact and myself. I would like to thank Professor Leo Johnson of the University of Waterloo for allowing me to use this theme for my term paper in History 386. I would like to extend thanks to John Starkey for locating and printing historical photographs of Turner's renovated and demolished buildings. I would like to thank Geoffery Hunt at the Heritage Administration Branch for guidance in the approach of this project. I would also like to thank James Anderson, Archivist for the County of Perth for research work, T. Bonanno of the Local History Department of the St. Thomas Public Library for research and extensive photocopying, various architectural societies, C.F. Buckingham, Clerk-Treasurer for the County of Bruce for research and James McEwan, student of the third year Urban and Regional Planning class, University of Waterloo for photography of the Walkerton Courthouse.

INTRODUCTION

The paper is organized into two parts--the first dealing with John Turner and his architecture, and a second part which summarizes trends in architectural styles in the Province of Ontario during the period of John Turner's career. If the reader is unfamiliar with the architectural styles of 1840-1885 Ontario, he should refer to these notes before reading the section on John Turner. A glossary of architectural terms used in the paper has been provided in appendix.

PART I - JOHN TURNER AND HIS ARCHITECTURE

A BIOGRAPHY OF JOHN TURNER

John Turner was born in Wales in 1806.

He first found employment in the trades. When he developed his artistic talents sufficiently, he joined the architectural firm Cubitts of London, "perhaps the most remarkable, prosperous and skilful firm of architects in the English speaking world"¹ at that time.

The Cubitts of London was organized by a Thomas Cubitt (1788-1855), one of the first Britishers to combine several trades in a "builders" business. The Cubitts built the London Institution, Belgrave and Lowndes Squares, the District of South Belgravia, the palace at Osborne for Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, and so on.

John Turner married Elizabeth Marsh of London when he was 21. They came to Brantford, Ontario soon after. In 1839, they bought Lot 7 south of Nelson Street, upon which is now sited a cottage typical of the 1840's. He and Elizabeth had several children of which only a few survived. (He married a second time.)

John Turner served as chief of Brantford's first fire department and as town councillor from 1850 to 1846. "He was one of the mere 328 voters on the Brantford roll in 1847, when the town was incorporated."²

His greatest contribution, of course, lies in the many buildings, especially public buildings, which he designed for Brantford and in other towns of south-western Ontario. A selection of these buildings survive today.

In 1855, we know that a Mr. Porter and he operated an architect's

office at the corner of Colborne and Market Streets. He reserves the distinction of being listed as an architect within The Canada Directory, 1857. In 1865, under The Brantford Expositor heading "Yates' New Villa," John Turner is referred to as "architect of this town."

His practise provided him with a very decent living, somewhat better than what was customary for a skilled labourer of the period (comparable to the economic status of a public school teacher, today). He owned property other than Lot 7 south of Nelson Street. In 1872, his taxable income amounted to 800 dollars.

John Turner died January 21, 1887 at his home on Nelson Street. He is survived by descendents who live in the Toronto area.

THE WORK OF JOHN TURNER

Houses He Has Designed

At least two cottages designed by John Turner survive. The Eliza Carey House (Fig. 1)³ in Brantford, built in 1870 is a yellow brick, one-storey cottage with a central "gothick" peak. Below the peak is the main doorway with transom light and sidelights. To either side of the doorway is a French window. One of the original tall chimneys exists. The verandah has been removed.

The Robert Morton Cottage (Fig. 2) on Charlotte Street in Brantford has received dormers in addition to Turner's design but the fine brickwork, Classical Revival doorway, ornate chimneys and delicate symmetrical arrangement still remain. The Robert Morton Cottage also dates from 1870.

A third cottage which may be attributed to Turner is found on Nelson Street in Brantford (Fig. 3). The lot upon which the house

stands was bought by the architect in 1839. The style and setback of the house indicate an early construction date. The frame cottage (now covered in aluminum siding) with Picturesque Gothic detailing, including the north windows and the "gothick" peak with a pointed-arch window has grown in size over time in the "saltbox" tradition, a popular way to add space in a Loyalist house of the early part of the nineteenth century.

Wynarden, (Fig. 4) dubbed Yates' Castle was built in 1864. This Elizabethan-Gothic Revival mansion not only bespeaks a rich architectural heritage but an interesting personal and social history. A second storey crest bearing the letters "HEY" refers to Henry and Emily Yates, financiers and first owners of the house. Henry Yates, a railway magnate had Turner design him a fitting home overlooking his investment and life's work, the Grand Trunk Railway. An old photograph (Fig. 5) describes the prestigious role Wynarden once had. Henry and Emily, and Herbert Yates and his wife could entertain inside (equipped with wine cellar, billiard room and pantries) and then move their guests to the terraced garden, if weather permitted. The terraces, all but gone are said to have given the Terrace Hill district in Brantford its name. Quality features still remain including detailed brickwork and stonework, bay and oriel windows with interior box shutters, two towers, ornate dormers, a slate roof, wide ogee-curved doorways, cherry ceiling paneling, plaster cornice ventilation, an underground tunnel, and north of the mansion itself, the private schoolhouse.

Another mansion, the W.H. Brethour House (Fig. 6) built in 1870 is found on Brant Avenue, Brantford. It cost 7,000 dollars to build. This elegant, yellow brick Italianate building has a flat-roofed

porte-cochere supported by wooden Doric columns plus vermicuiated key-stones, huge stone pediments over windows, a central Palladian window, deep bracketed eaves, four large double chimneys and an attached coach house. The immaculate condition of the building and grounds compares favourably with Wynarden. The W.H. Brethour House is now used as a funeral home.

A Dr. H.C. Allen commissioned Turner to build him a large house near the major commercial streets of downtown Brantford. The house (Fig. 7) also built in 1870 belongs to the Second Empire style with its mansard roof and bay windows. Particularly outstanding are the Darling Street first storey windows. Each window is divided into four panes by wide, grooved mullions, a pane of leaded amethyst-coloured glass spans above three vertically-oriented panes and the segmental arch is decorated with an inscribed wooden medallion.

His Commercial Buildings

In 1861, the Pepper House (Fig. 8) opened on the north side of Market Square in Brantford. The brick, three-storey hotel was purchased by J.C. Palmer in 1869 when it became known as the Commercial

Hotel. Improvements to the Commercial Hotel were carried out under the guidance of John Turner. It is likely that Turner designed the original Pepper House. An old photograph (Fig. 9) pictures the Hotel in much the same manner as it appears today except that

the contrasting-coloured brick has been submerged under coats of paint, many chimneys have been removed and the first storey, like so many nineteenth century commercial buildings, has been drastically altered. The length of the building is accentuated by repetition of window design and their equal spacing, and was emphasized by the bands of contrasting brick.

Connected to the Pepper House is the Commercial Buildings (Fig. 10), erected in 1881. This large block extends around a downtown corner. The upper two storeys remain much as they used to, except for the first storey alterations and for the paint. What makes the Commercial Buildings so attractive is the repetition of fine detail. The tiered brick repeating-arch design cornice extends from a parapet on Dalhousie Street to a parapet on George Street. Each third storey window has a segmental-arch hood-mould that links with the next. Similarly, the second storey windows have joined round-arch hood-moulds with identical keystones. Other fine features of the original design include the rounded corner, the belfry and the main doorway with brick arch supported by granite Corinthian pillars.

What is now known as the home of Quinlan's clothing shop and Pacific Finance Loans company on Colborne Street in Brantford (Fig. 11) was designed by Turner in 1870. While the first storey has been altered, the second storey sports two side-by-side oriel windows decorated with stained glass and the third storey has two huge side-by-side round-arch windows. The cornice is deep and decorative.

The Second Union Station, Toronto (Fig. 12) was built in 1873. To meet increased demand, the station was extended during the 1893-1895 period, and it was demolished for the present Union Station erected in 1927. John Turner is said to be the designer of the 1873 Station.⁴

At the time of its construction, the new station was considered one of the most modern and handsome edifices on the North American continent. It included three tracks covered by a long trainshed, with three waiting rooms and offices on the south side surmounted by three towers, with a clock resident in the taller middle one.⁵

Churches Designed By Him

Brantford was once referred to as the "City of Angels" for its abundance of fine churches. John Turner is responsible for the design of many of them.

In 1854, he designed the Wesleyan Methodist Church (now no longer standing) (Fig. 13). The very flat brick facade was interrupted by two prominent truncated turrets on either side of the projecting vestibule. There were also smaller turrets with spires and a central finial. Both the vestibule and main gable were decorated with a repeating arch design cornice. The windows divided by delicate tracery, and the doors had stone pointed-arch hood-moulds.

A Gowans in Building Canada: an architectural history of Canadian Life acknowledges Grace Anglican Church (Fig. 14) built in 1856 as one of Canada's best examples of the accepted nineteenth century Church of England church building form. Many changes have occurred (Fig. 15) including the placement of a truncated stone tower by Barry Cleveland in 1917 over the Albion Street facade (Fig. 16), however many of the original stone-capped buttresses and pointed-arch windows with delicate tracery and stone hood-moulds still remain.

North-east of Grace Anglican, on the same street, stands the First Baptist Church (Fig. 17). John Turner and his family were members of the congregation. This, the mother church for the Brant Baptists, was built in 1857 to replace the 1855 Chapel which had burnt in January 1857 with debt still on it. The Italianate-styled building has a pleasant arrangement of parts and achieves unity of design by repetition of features. A central truncated tower thrusts itself beyond the gable peak of the assembly space. Identical pairs of round-arch

windows with stone hood-moulds are recessed from the principle surface and are found on three sides of the church. The paired window design is reflected by the Palladian-like window grouping in the tower. The tiered repeating-arch design cornice is found on the sides perpendicular to the street, the gable side facing the street and the tower. Plain triangular caps cover turrets rising from the assembly space and the tower.

The bottom lengths of the windows were covered over by vestibule additions in 1887 (Fig. 18).

St. Basil's Roman Catholic Church (Fig. 19) was nearing completion in 1875. The style (as The Brantford Expositor emphasized in 1875) is derived from Second Period Gothic (Early English). The Palace Street side of this large yellow brick building consists of a wide gable set between corner towers, one of which is a storey shorter than the other. The gable contains a 12 x 22 foot pointed-arch stained glass window within which is a wheel pattern plus a statue of St. Basil, cut in Guelph stone, and a tiered repeating-arch design cornice. The taller truncated tower has two pairs of Gothic windows above which are 'port-hôle' windows with tracery and pointed-arch stone hood-moulds. Buttresses separate Gothic windows on the Crown Street side.

The third Baptist church, Park Baptist (Fig. 20) which opened in 1882 in an Eclectic Gothic Revival statement, usually the preference of Anglicans and Roman Catholics. Perhaps the success of St. Basil's was too obvious not to transfer into the Baptist context. Also, it must be remembered that the design of this church does not try to aim for purity of style. Situated on a corner, like Grace Anglican and St. Basil's, and opposite Victoria Park, Park Baptist is an ornate

red brick landmark. Like St. Basil's, Park Baptist has two towers, one a storey shorter than the other and a large gable between them. The central gable is decorated with a huge but finely-detailed wheel window. Both the north and south sides have smaller-sized wheel windows. The two entrances on the George Street side have arches supported by squat Ionic pillars. This decorative, rather complicated building also has stone-capped buttresses and tar-dipped brick bands.

The Public Buildings of John Turner

In 1849, Brantford was graced with a Classical Revival town hall designed by John Turner. In keeping with the simplicity of the style, the Brantford Town Hall (Fig. 21) exposed plain brick facades with a deep, undecorated cornice, pediments and multi-paned windows of which some, like the doors were decorated with elliptical transoms. The importance of the building was emphasized by double flights of stairs from the ground to the second floor and by a cupola containing clocks. The Town Hall was demolished in 1967 in anticipation of new development. The site now serves as a parking lot.

In 1852, Turner built another Classical Revival administrative building. The Brant County Courthouse of 1852 (Fig. 22) was a square-shaped, three storey building with a low-pitched roof. The plain design was embellished with a stepped pattern around the first storey windows, elaborate keystones, window pediments, Doric pilasters, a rounded false front addition with the British Coat of Arms at the central portion of the roof line and a cupola.

The identical design with minor modification was accepted by the Elgin County Council in 1853 for their Courthouse (Fig. 23). Sculpted

faces of Lord Elgin and perhaps John Turner were placed on the St. Thomas building.⁶

Both the Brant and Elgin County Courthouses were incorporated into later designs.

By 1886, more space was needed for Brant County Council requirements. John Turner was again appointed architect for the renovations. This assignment, secured by the architect when 79 years old, was probably the last work before his death in 1887. To counteract against leaking, the original roof line was converted into a large pediment. The main doorway was enlarged. The original section thus modified became the centre of the new building with two, three-storey, stone wings and two brick towers (Figs. 24,25). The walls of the wings carefully paralleled the pattern set in the original section but the towers were executed in a Picturesque, Eclectic manner. A Gowans in Building Canada: an architectural history of Canadian life comments that the towers represent a Victorian attempt to modernize the building to standards of taste then popular. Other notable features of the 1886 Courthouse are the double and triple chimneys with stone wreath decorations and the slate roof.

In 1898, Elgin County Courthouse suffered a fire. N.R. Darrach, architect for the new Courthouse which opened in 1899, incorporated Turner's facade which had survived the fire, remodelled the roof line such as Turner had in 1886 for Brant County Courthouse, added a balcony, placed on two wings with pediments in sympathy with Turner's solution and adorned the roof with a large dome. (Fig. 26). Darrach did not repeat the towers. Darrach's design was very much aware of the 1886 Brant County Courthouse, for an Elgin County Council Committee

had investigated that design.

The Caledonia Town Hall (Fig. 27) built in 1857 represents a transition between the Classical Revival public buildings Turner had designed prior, and the more Romantic exuberant buildings he planned thereafter. Classical Revival details such as the shape, pilasters, wide plain entablature and the pediments are found along side narrow Italianate windows with vermiculated keystones. The charming building is characterized by a certain bluntness achieved by the narrowness of the plan and the exaggerated height created by the second storey Palladian window, wide entablature, uninterrupted pilasters and cupola.

In 1863, the second Norfolk County Courthouse (Fig. 28) was erected in Simcoe in a full Italianate style. Turner's design overcame the problem of designing the central focus of the square, the Courthouse around existing buildings including the 1848 and 1861 Registry Offices and the Gaol which encroached upon the central location of the square. The solution consisted of height gradation of the architectural parts of the square and varying the degree of embellishment. The two Registry Offices act as frames for ^{the} background action of the stage. The plain brick two storey jail links with a somewhat higher stone section whose north-facing windows resemble the jail's. The section adjoins the elegant, projecting three-storey section of the Courthouse (Fig. 29). The smooth cut Ohio stone has been shaped into doorway pilasters, a British Coat of Arms resting upon the entablature above the doorway, the many vermiculated blocks that edge the section and frame the first storey windows and the long round-arch windows with rope-like framing and round-arch hood-moulds. Finally, there comes the less prominent yellow brick five-storey tower at the

southernmost part of the square.

In 1872, Turner was commissioned to draw the plans for the Asylum for the Blind (Fig. 30) which stood on the site of the Ontario School for the Blind in Brantford until it was demolished for a modern facility in the late 1960's. The Eclectic-styled institution had Elizabethan first storey windows, Italianate second storey windows, a tall, projecting tower with basically Gothic apertures and a mansard roof with dormers.

John H. Stratford, a business partner of Henry Yates employed Turner to build a hospital (Fig. 31) across the road from the Asylum for the Blind. In 1884, Stratford donated the building to the city. This, the last entire building Turner designed is extremely complex and decorative, so common to late nineteenth century taste. The three storey facades were finished in yellow brick through which was added five double rows of red brick and red brick medallions. Almost every pointed window had heads made of alternating yellow and red brick. There were large verandahs and a porte-cochere. From the crest of the roof rose massive, decorative chimneys, iron cresting and two cupolas. The roof was done in patterned slate. Via a series of additions, the size and nature of Turner's hospital has been altered and recently these remainders were torn down.

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE ARCHITECTURE

OF JOHN TURNER

John Turner designed cottages, mansions, stores, a hotel, a railway station, churches of different denominations, at least one school, a hospital, town halls and county courthouses. He worked in these

styles: Gothic Revival, Elizabethan-Gothic Revival, Classical Revival, Italianate, Second Empire and Eclectic variations.

His versatility is attributable to four things. First, "British-trained architects could usually work in more than one idiom."⁷ Second, there were only a handful of patrons who would require architect-built buildings, especially in mid-western Ontario at this time, and there would be a great variety of tastes and needs to satisfy among them. Third, the era was characterized by a rapid succession of styles. By comparing the styles Turner was employing to style trends across the Province, a definite correlation exists. In 1864, Turner designed an Elizabethan-Gothic Revival mansion and in 1870, an Italianate mansion and a Second Empire house. The plainer design of his 1861 hotel is succeeded by a bold Italianate store constructed in 1870. In 1881, the commercial block he designed is a representative example of the exuberant decoration of the last quarter of the century. His Romantic, fanciful train station is characteristic. As most churches in the Province were Gothic Revival, the selection of his church designs in Brantford are also mainly Gothic Revival. There is a predictable Italianate Baptist church. (The one Eclectic, Gothic Revival Baptist church was most likely motivated by the success of St. Basil's Gothic Revival style.) John Turner's public buildings from mid-century to shortly before the 1860's followed the Classical Revival look. In 1857, he designed a Classical Revival-Italianate town hall and by 1863 had planned a beautiful Italianate courthouse. His latter years are preoccupied with Eclectic styles, as was the Province in general during this time. Finally, Turner was a versatile designer because style to Turner meant a vehicle for effecting a Picturesque

appearance. His predilection for Picturesque architecture is seen from his earliest known public building through to the rather incongruous towers of the Brant County Courthouse. While the goal of Classical Revival and "official" Gothic Revival was to reproduce the spirit of the antiquated style, features on Turner's buildings in these styles worked to produce a visual delight. On the Classical Revival Brantford Town Hall, Turner added stone pilasters which were tooled the length of one storey, to a smooth brick facade and topped the roof with a cupola with clocks resident within it. St. Basil's is not so much "Second Period Gothic" as a purposely decorative and expressive arrangement, with an overpowering corner tower and the large pointed-arch window with wheel pattern contained, located centrally in the gable and directly below the statue and the peak. The variety of devices and design features used to achieve the Picturesque effect include contrasting brickwork and colours of brick, stone detail applied to brick facades, granite pillars, vermiculated stones, quoins, vented apertures in towers, turrets, double and triple chimneys, pattered slate roofs, cupolas, bargeboard, brackets, wheel windows, window tracery, leaded and stained glass and marked window framing. All of these represent the Victorian love of decoration.

John Turner has become an obscure architect in Ontario. Perhaps, his obscurity has resulted because the greatest amount of his buildings were not built in Toronto where documentation has been extensive. But John Turner was a popular architect in his time. He was preferred over W. Thomas and K. Tully of Toronto for the design of the Norfolk County Courthouse⁸ and over W. Thomas for the design of the Norfolk County Courthouse even though Thomas had designed the Gaol. He

received many public building contracts throughout his career. His many governmental contracts may have been conditioned upon political patronage. Regardless, John Turner was appreciated as a fine architect as his eloquent designs bear witness.

John Turner not only is very important to Brantford's architectural heritage but to southwestern and central Ontario as well. Research to date suggests there are other buildings left to be discovered within newspaper microfilm reels and upon trips to other centres. But given what already is known, the amount of buildings and the expertise by which they were designed, warrant that John Turner be taken out of obscurity and be recognized as one of the great architects of nineteenth century Ontario.

ENDNOTES

The Brantford Expositor, "The Death Roll, John Turner, Esq. J.P.", 22 January, 1887.

The Brantford Expositor, "John Turner Left His Mark on Brantford", 5 June, 1963.

Present-day photographs were taken by the author. John Starkey reproduced the old photographs. The photograph of the Second Union Station (Fig. 12) is a photocopy from R. Bebout, The Open Gate: Toronto Union Station (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates, Ltd., 1972). The sketch of First Baptist Church (Fig. 18) is a photocopy from M. Macrae, Hallowed Walls (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Co., Ltd., 1975), p. 227. The sketch of the Elgin County Courthouse, 1853 (Fig. 23) is a photocopy from Elgin County Historical Atlas (Toronto: H.R. Page & Co., 1877). The photograph of the 1899 Elgin County Courthouse (Fig. 26) is a photocopy from K. McKay, The Courthouses of a Century (St. Thomas: Elgin Historical and Scientific Institute, 1901), p. 18.

Constance Pole Bayer, John Turner's great granddaughter who wrote "John Turner Left His Mark On Brantford" for The Brantford Expositor, 5 June, 1963 clarifies the construction date of Turner's railway station as 1873, while the obituary only mentions that he was architect of Toronto's Union Station. Given that the paper was printed in 1887 when the existing station would be the 1873 one, most likely John Turner designed Toronto's Second Union Station. An 1858 Union Station predates the Second Union Station.

R. Bebout, The Open Gate: Toronto Union Station (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates. Ltd., 1972, pp. 22-23.

K. McKay, The Courthouses of a Century: A Brief Historical Sketch of the Courthouses of the London District, the County of Middlesex and County of Elgin (St. Thomas: Elgin Historical and Scientific Institute, 1901), p. 11.

J.A.S. Evans, "The Classical Tradition in Ontario Architecture" Canadian Geographical Journal, February 1962, p. 68.

K. McKay, p. 10.

PART 2 - ARCHITECTURE IN THE PROVINCE FROM THE 1840'S
THROUGH TO THE 1880'S
GENERAL TRENDS IN STYLE

Nineteenth century Ontario architecture is characterized by its association with the past. During the 1840 to 1885 time span, when John Turner was designing, Ontario experienced several 'revival' styles including Classical Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Renaissance Revival and the Second Empire style.

The early revival styles from this period, Classical and Gothic Revival which lasted to about 1855 are imitative of forms from antiquity. Paralleling the Romantic trends in literature and art in Europe, architectural styles in Ontario in the middle of the century were used for their symbolic connotations. In other words, the more precise the representation of the ancient style, the more worthy was the piece of architecture, symbolically. For example, unlike the Neoclassic style in the early nineteenth century, Classical Revival aimed at reproducing an actual Graeco-Roman building. The other use of style which grew popular during the latter half of the century was not concerned with exactness of reproduction but emphasized the picturesque qualities and decorative values a style deriving from the past could procure. Thus, if mixing styles meant a better visual effect, the architect-builder would mix. Thus the development of an eclectic¹ architecture.

Both branches of Classical Revival that influenced the Province, the British and American versions, were inspired by the rediscovery through archaeology of ancient Greek and Roman architecture

and popularized by Romantic paintings that captured the contemporary Greek struggle from the Ottoman Empire. American-based Classical Revival served as a nationalistic expression.² The architecture of the ancient Roman Republic and Fifth Century B.C. democratic Greece was a model for the architecture of the democratic American republic. While some American architects diffused Classical Revival in Upper Canada, Classical Revival was considered a suitable British North American style for British architects, presumably without democratic-republican sentiments were carrying Classical Revival from where it was popular in Britain to Upper Canada.

While Classical Revival became a nationalistic style for the Americans, Gothic Revival emerged as an expression of the British national consciousness. Experiments into a return to the Gothic style (and its variations, thereof) proved to be quite interesting to the minds of eighteenth century Britishers. Gothic Revival to a Britisher represented fantasies about a Medieval heritage - knights in shining armour, the good-hearted Robin Hood and in 1841, the pure spirit of Christianity. In 1841, Professor Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin published The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture. Students belonging to the Cambridge Camden Society absorbed Pugin's ideas and wrote them into the monthly journal, The Ecclesiologist.³ The Society recommended the church at Long Stanton, Cambridgeshire (constructed 1250) as the ideal small rural parish church.⁴ William Thomas, the architect who arrived in Toronto in 1841 with knowledge of this popular British style, has been attributed

with spreading Gothic Revival in Upper Canada. Gothic Revival began as a church style in Upper Canada but "Picturesque" derivatives of it evolved in house, school and civic architecture. Gothic Revival was very popular in Upper Canada for its association with the Mother Country.

Italianate, a composite form ranging from Romanesque to Tuscan to Norman to Lombard styles, was an ideal vehicle for the first demonstration of the use of architecture for the Picturesque effect it produced. The style permitted a freedom of execution, unlike Gothic Revival with its connotations of Britain and the Church of England. It also offered a serene, romantic silhouette. The Second Empire style, characterized by the mansard roof, originated from the architecture created by Mansard for King Louis XIV of France. The Second Empire style, Picturesque Gothic, Renaissance Revival and Eclectic styles are other types of architecture from the third and last quarters of the nineteenth century.

While the Revival styles greatly influenced nineteenth century Ontario architecture, native twists have created a vernacular architecture, especially for domestic buildings. Thus there are one and one-and-a-half storey cottages, one type with a hip roof and small "Gothick" peak, and a plenitude of Georgian boxes trimmed with Gothic bargeboard or Italianate brackets etc. and punctured by a Georgian symmetric arrangement of windows and door. The railway station is a peculiar type of building that did not conform to the Revival styles.

DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE

Some General Characteristics

Before the War of 1812, well-to-do Loyalists were building Georgian houses. The Georgian house was box-shaped, had a sensible centre hall plan and had a balanced, symmetrical spacing of windows to the main doorway. Upon the Georgian volume and in a Georgian sense of arrangement has been added revival style features to a great many of Ontario's nineteenth century houses.

The verandah has been added to many houses of the period. It is found originally in the vernacular architecture of northern Portugal. The verandah was exported to Portuguese colonies. British possessions closest to Portuguese territory adopted them. By the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, it became popular in English circles, especially when the Prince Regent favoured the verandah. Ontario builders incorporated the verandah into their houses, unlike American counterparts.

If the funds for architecture were scarce, the builder would funnel the money he had into the embellishment of the doorway. American mid-century pattern books produced a substantial effect on Ontario domestic architecture of the period. The pattern books gave guidelines for the bourgeois suburban or for the rural house.

The Classical Revival House, 1835-1855

The Greek or Roman temple effect was produced by a large central portico with classical columns or pilasters and a heavy entablature, facing the street (or river, etc.). (Fig. 1)⁵ Other features of the Classical Revival house include corner

quoins, flat or pedimental window heads, a twelve-pane sash and a rectangular transom. The cost of construction of the large versions and their impractical use of space made the temple hall Classical Revival house a rare domestic type. However, the orientation of the gable end to the street and the classical design features were popular during the 1835-1855 period. (Fig. 2).

The Gothic Revival and Gothic Picturesque House, 1850-1870

The Gothic castle or cottage had a sustained popularity in Ontario because of its association with England. The Gothic Revival and Picturesque style is the predominant style of Ontario house buildings that have survived from the nineteenth century. (Figs. 3, 4)

In its pure forms, the style is characterized by asymmetry and complication and in all examples, by silhouette and decoration. Features of the style include finely-scaled bargeboard, possible because of the availability of easy-to-curve white pine, pointed-arch openings, sharply-pitched gables, finials, hood-moulds and the use of patterned brick or board-and-batten.

The Elizabethan-Gothic Revival version is identified by gables with stepped sides, squared hood-moulds and ogee-curved openings. (Fig. 5).

The Italianate Villa, 1845-1870

The Italianate-styled houses were usually large and for those with money. They eventually became too expensive to build. Smaller versions of the Italianate villa survive; these houses are two-storey cubes with hip roof, wide, bracketed eaves, round-arch window heads and a main door to one corner of the street facade.

The Italianate villa was modelled, naturally on the Italian country house. It is characterized by an asymmetrical plan, imposing towers, protruding bracketed eaves, high-ceilinged verandahs and balconies, groups of round-arch windows, a low pitched roof, and elaborate brick patternwork. (Fig. 6).

The Renaissance Revival House, 1860-1875

This revival style, a rare but handsome style is characterized by flat-topped windows or windows with triangular or circular pediments over them, shaped gables and a low rising roof. (Figs. 7, 8)

The Second Empire House, 1855-1880

The Second Empire, or Mansard style is easily identified by the mansard roof, a steep scalloped roof topped by a hip roof extension. Other features include ornamental dormers, bay windows, deep window and door transoms, end pavillions, a projecting centre tower, bracketed eaves and iron cresting on the roof.

The Second Empire style merged into the eclectic style of the 1880's and 1890's.

The Ontario Cottage

The Ontario Cottage is not unique to Ontario, but is found throughout the English-speaking world, except for the United States.

The Ontario Cottage is a small rectangular or square box, rising one to one-and-a-half storeys. It has a hip roof and usually a small centre peak with a small shuttered window. Decoration varies from quoins to elaborate doorways. (Fig. 10)

COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURE

Stores (Fig. 11)

Nineteenth century store buildings are uniform in height; height was restricted to three or four storeys because upper storeys had to be reached by climbing stairs. Nineteenth century stores are narrow and deep. Low gable or flat roofs are common. The use of cast-iron supports on the ground floor since the 1850's opened up the first storey facade for window space. Open window space served to display goods and emit light into the deep interior space. Italianate rounded windows were preferred prior to the 1870's after which segmentally-arched windows were installed. Characteristic of post-1870 nineteenth century stores is a wide, decorative cornice. Window frames were often cast-iron or stamped tin. The spacing and heads of second and third storey windows are often identical. The upper storeys often were used for living quarters. Brick and stone became the common building materials after the 1850's; many frame stores had been lost to fire.

Banks

Banks were executed in the Classical (Greek or Roman) style. (Fig. 12).

Railway Station Houses

A new style of architecture emerged beginning in the 1850's: the grand era of railway station houses.

The Grand Trunk stations between Montreal and Toronto are masonry buildings with low-pitched roofs having a marked overhang, with a chimney in each corner and with round-arch openings

outlined in large blocks. This design was suggested by a R.M. Stephenson, who in Railways: An Introductory Sketch, with Suggestions in Reference to their Extension to British Colonies recommended a style adaptable to increasing demand.⁵ The rectangular box with round-arch apertures was considered a flexible structure. (Fig. 13)

The majority of stations west of Toronto, in contrast, were constructed in frame.

In the last third of the century, the stations became asymmetrical and fanciful. Late nineteenth century railway stations have towers and turrets, wings, porte-cocheres and big bands of projecting brick masonry.

CHURCH ARCHITECTURE

As there was a variety of fervid, disparate sects in Christianity, there resulted a variety of church architecture related to differences in the tastes of the denominations.

Upon recommendation by the Cambridge Camden Society, the Church of England in Ontario accepted the Gothic Revival style as an appropriate church style. (Fig. 14)

Since the style of church buildings before the Reformation had been Gothic, the Roman Catholic Church supported the use of Gothic Revival. However the Ultramontanists of the late nineteenth century, encouraged parishes to return to the Roman basilica for inspiration. (Fig. 15)

The Methodists and Baptists in towns preferred the Italianate style, because being a composite style, it did not connote Anglican sentiments. The Italianate also permitted freedom of

execution and with barrel vault and dome, it contained the most efficient assembly space. (Fig. 15).

The Church of Scotland preferred the Classical Revival style, fashioned after Scottish and New England churches. (Fig. 16).

The Mennonites and Quakers rejected all the revival styles as showy and built frame square meeting-houses. (Fig. 17).

Rural congregations built Picturesque versions of the Gothic (Fig. 18) and Italianate styles. The Gothic or Italianate influence would be achieved in the window design.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Courthouses

Often the first public building erected in the county seat would be the Courthouse. The grandest of all the buildings in the town would be the Courthouse.

By and large, most Courthouses follow the Classical style. (Fig. 19). To name a few, the Courthouses in Picton, Belleville, Welland, Cayuga, Brantford, Whitby and St. Thomas were executed in the Classical style. In the 1860's, Courthouses, for example in Simcoe and Brampton, used the Italianate style. (Fig. 20). Castellated styles are rare. Castellated-styled Courthouses may be found in London and Milton.

Registry Offices

In 1868, a brick, rectangular, and vaulted building with cast-iron doors, window sills and lintels was approved by Order-in-Council as a standard type of Registry Office. (Fig. 21).

Town Halls

There are a variety of nineteenth century town hall styles but most buildings are two storeys high with a projecting centrepiece

topped by a central clock tower.

Educational Institutions

In the first half of the century, Classical Revival was used but afterwards, Gothic Revival became popular.

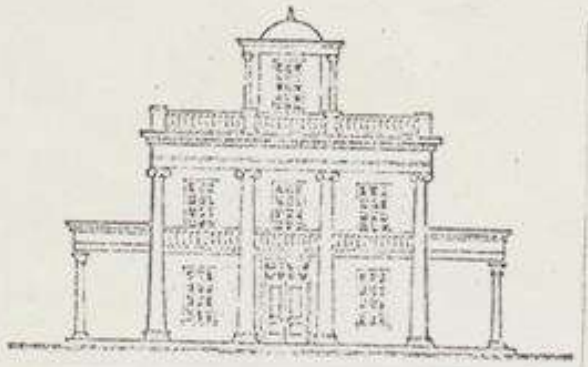


FIG. 1



FIG. 2



FIG. 3



FIG. 5



FIG. 4

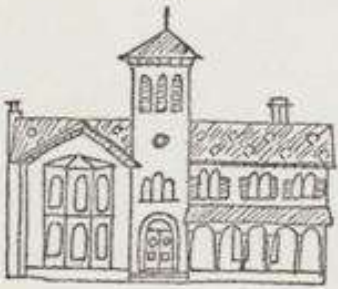


FIG. 6



FIG. 7



FIG. 8



FIG. 9



FIG. 10

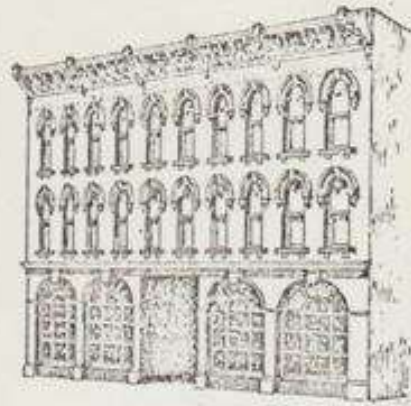


FIG. 11



FIG. 12



FIG. 14



FIG. 13



FIG. 15



FIG. 17



FIG. 16



FIG. 18



FIG. 19



FIG. 20



FIG. 21

ENDNOTES

1. Eclectic means drawing from many sources. The composite styles became most evident in the 1880's and thereafter into the twentieth century.
2. The nineteenth century was a time of intense nation and/or empire building.
3. M. Macrae, Hallowed Walls (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Co, Ltd., 1975), p. 145.
4. M. Macrae, p. 281.
5. Diagrams consist of photocopies from B.A. Humphreys and M. Sykes (M. Middleton, illustrator) "The Buildings of Canada: A guide to pre-20th-century styles in houses, churches and other structures" The Reader's Digest, 1974 plus the author's own sketches.
6. R. Greenhill, K. Macpherson and D. Richardson, Ontario Towns (Ottawa: Oberon, 1974), np.

APPENDIX

GLOSSARY OF ARCHITECTURAL TERMS¹

- A BALUSTRADE is a balcony or roof railing.
- BARGEBOARD or gingerbread is the projecting boards that cover up the ends of roof timbers in a gable. In Gothic Revival architecture, bargeboard became very fancy.
- A BAY WINDOW is a projecting container for windows. It must extend to the ground.
- BOARD-AND-BATTEN is a finish characteristic of Gothic Revival houses. Batten is the strip covering the space between two vertical boards.
- A BRACKET is a small wooden, stone or brick supporting device found especially under eaves.
- A BUTTRESS is made of stone or brick and projects from a wall to give the wall extra strength.
- The CASTELLATED style is characterized by a flat roof line with indentations. It looks like a mouth with teeth regularly missing.
- Three of the CLASSICAL ORDERS include the DORIC which is very plain, the IONIC whose capital (top) looks like a ram's horn and the CORINTHIAN which is very decorative.
- A COLUMN is an upright structure which is cylindrical and conforms to a Classical order.
- A CORNICE is the projecting moulding along the roof line.
- A CUPOLA is a small circular or polygonal dome on a roof.
- CRESTING is an ornamental finish on the ridge of a building or the edge of a balcony.
- The ENTABLATURE is a decorated band below which are found columns.
- A FINIAL is the ornament found at the apex of a gable.
- A FRENCH window reaches to the floor and opens in two leaves like a pair of doors.
- A GABLE is the triangular upper wall space formed by a pitched roof.
- A "GOTHICK" PEAK is a colloquialism that refers to a little peak found on the Ontario cottage.
- A HIP ROOF is sloped on all four sides.
- A HOOD-MOULD (dripstone, label) is a projecting moulding to throw off the rain, found above an arch, doorway, or window.
- A KEYSTONE is the central stone of an arch.
- A series of MULLIONS serve to divide a window into panes.
- An OGEE-CURVE looks like the letter 's' joined to an inverted letter 's'. It is an Elizabethan feature.
- An ORIEL WINDOW is a bay window that begins on an upper storey.
- A PALLADIAN WINDOW is a group of three windows, the centre one being larger and with an arched head.
- A PARAPET is a low wall along the edge of a roof.
- A PAVILLION is a projecting wing of some larger building, usually square and often domed.
- A PEDIMENT is an outlined triangular decoration ornamenting a door, portico, window or a gable.
- A PILASTER is a pillar that only projects slightly from the wall.

1. Adopted from J. Fleming, H. Honour and N. Pevsner, A Dictionary of Architecture (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1974); B. Humphreys and M. Sykes, "The Buildings of Canada" The Reader's Digest, 1974; and, R.A.J. Phillips, Up the Streets of Ontario (Ottawa: Heritage Canada, 1976).

A PILLAR, unlike a column needn't be cylindrical or conform to a Classical order.

A PORTE-COCHERE is a porch large enough for wheeled vehicles to pass through.

A PERTICO is a porch with columns that serves as the main entrance-way. It often has a pediment.

QUOINS are the dressed stones at the corners of buildings, usually laid so that their faces are alternately large and small.

A SALTBX house is a traditional New England dwelling that has a shed roof extending from a pitched roof.

SIDELIGHTS are decorative doorway windows.

A SHAPED GABLE has multi-curved sides.

A TRUNCATED TOWER has a flat roof.

A TRANSOM LIGHT is the window directly above the doorway.

A TURRET is a very small and slender tower.

VERMICULATION refers to the decoration of masonry blocks with irregular shallow channels like worm tracks.

The VESTIBULE is the inner enclosed porch behind the outside door and an interior door.

WINDOW TRACERY is the ornamental intersecting work in the upper part of a window.

A WHEEL WINDOW is a circular window with tracery arranged like the spokes of a wheel.

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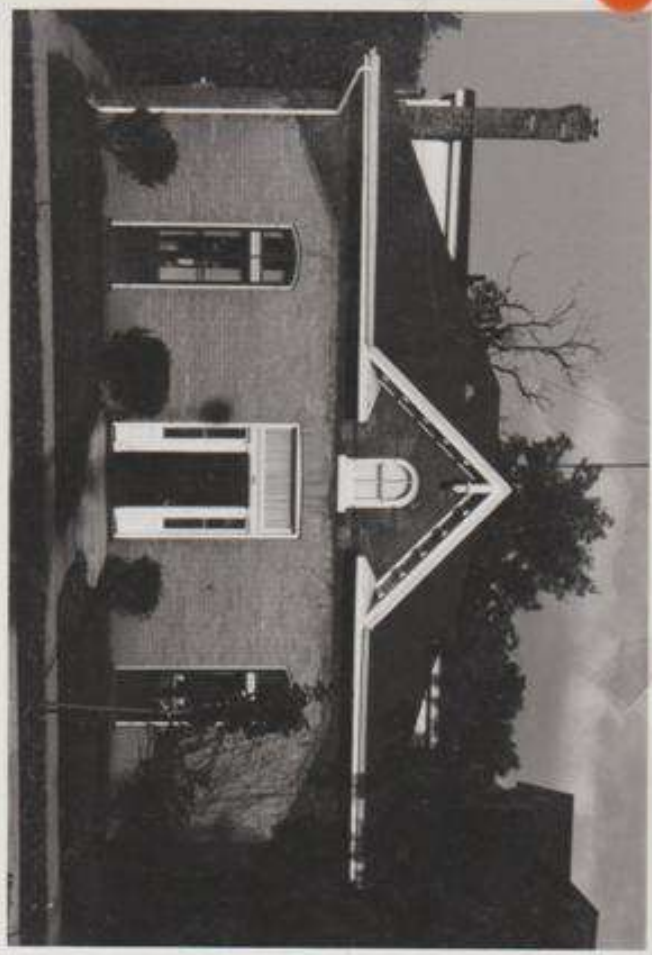
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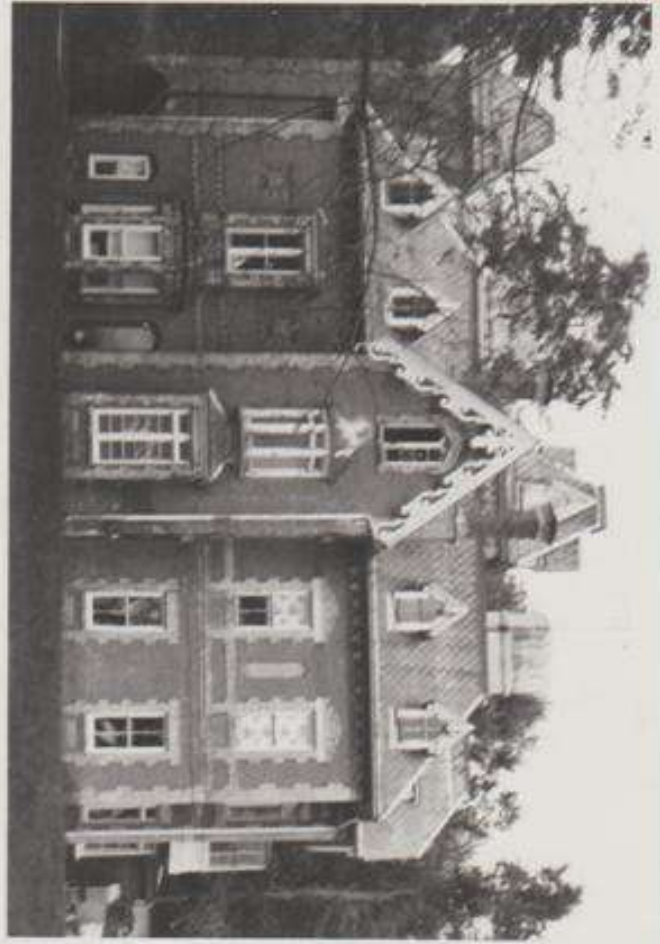
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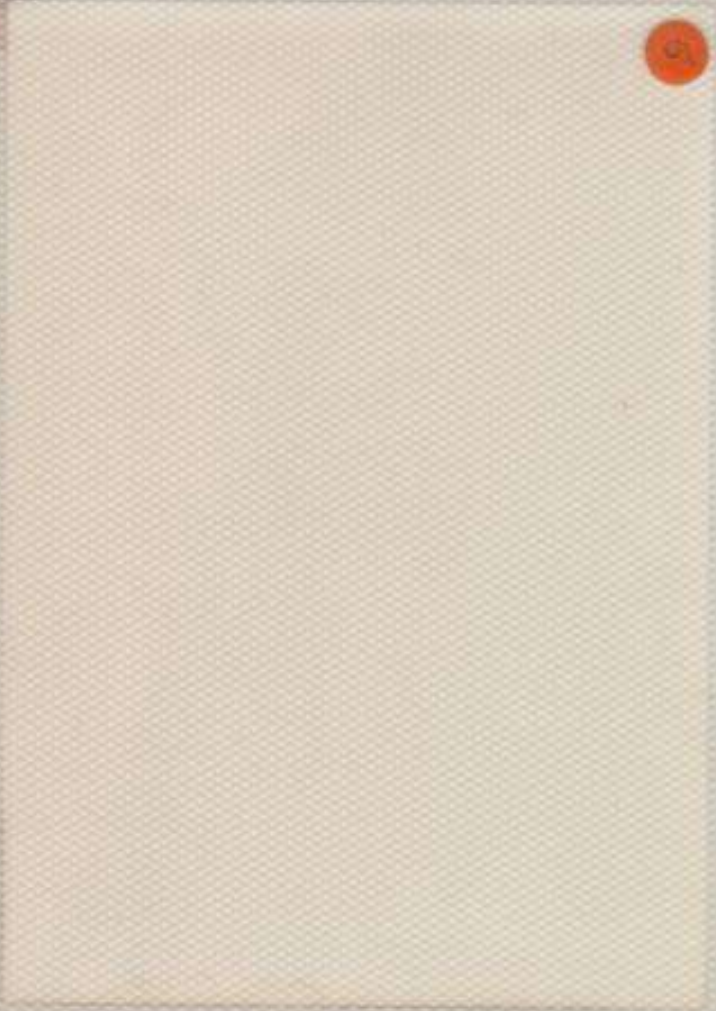
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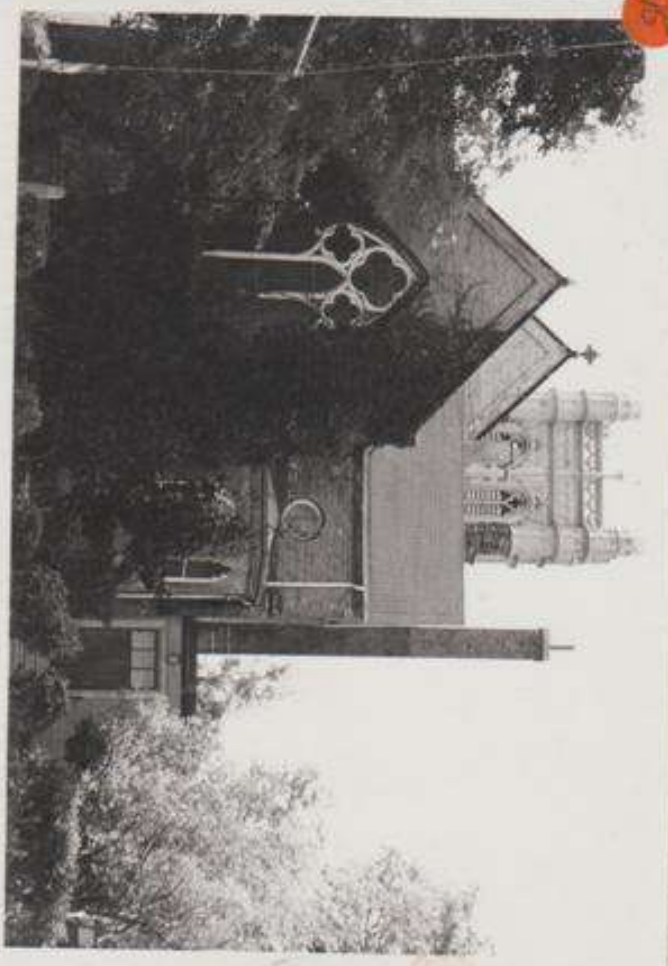


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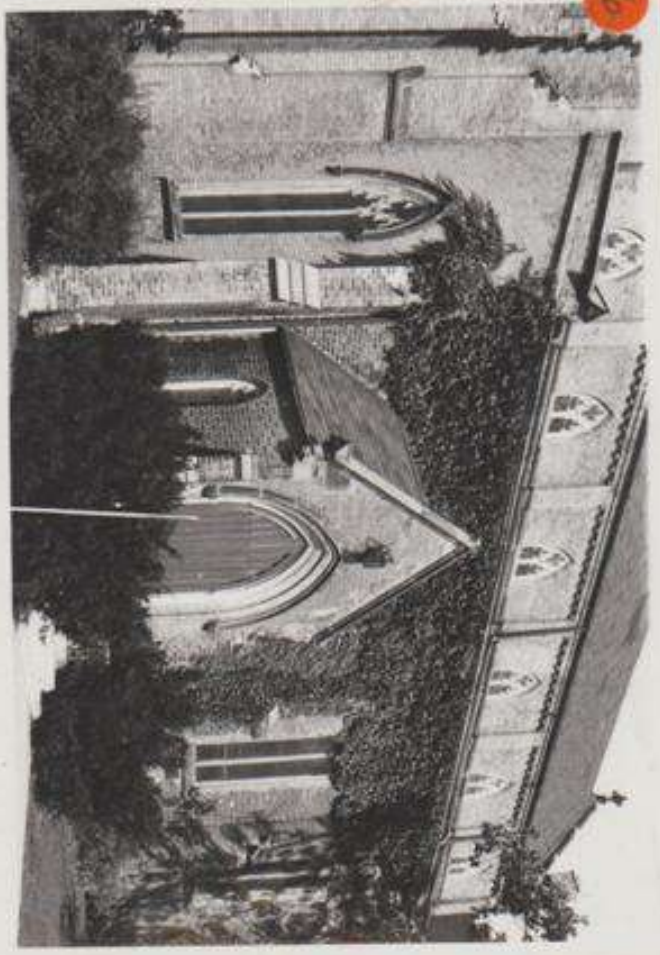
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Grace Church, Brantford, Ont.



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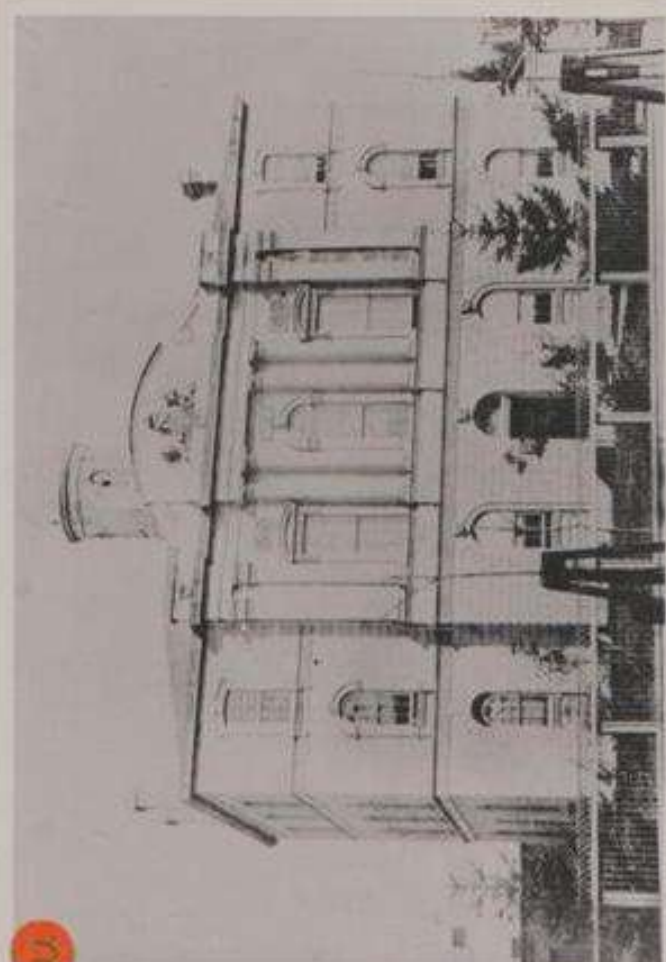


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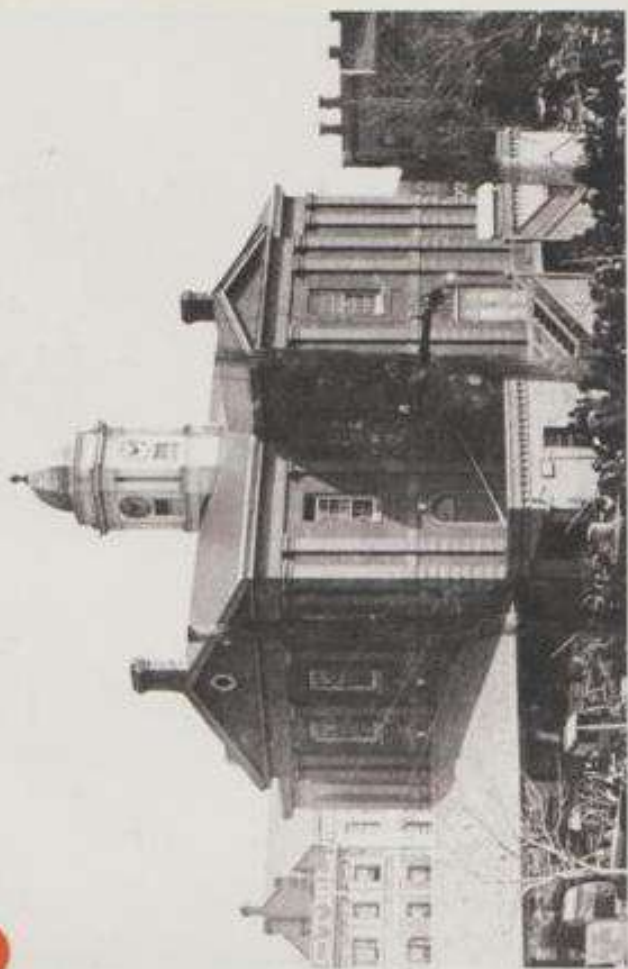
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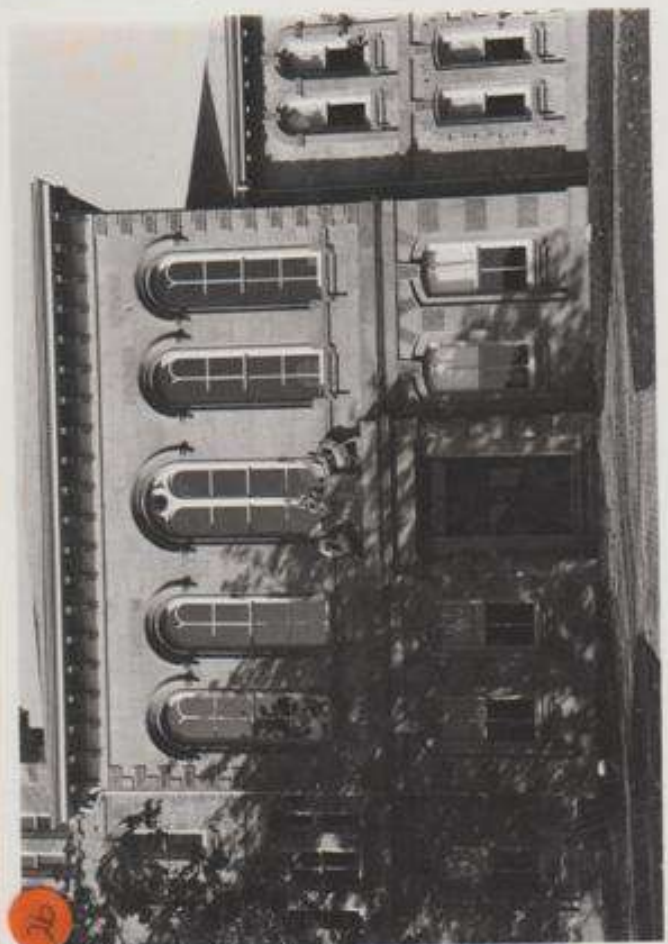
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