

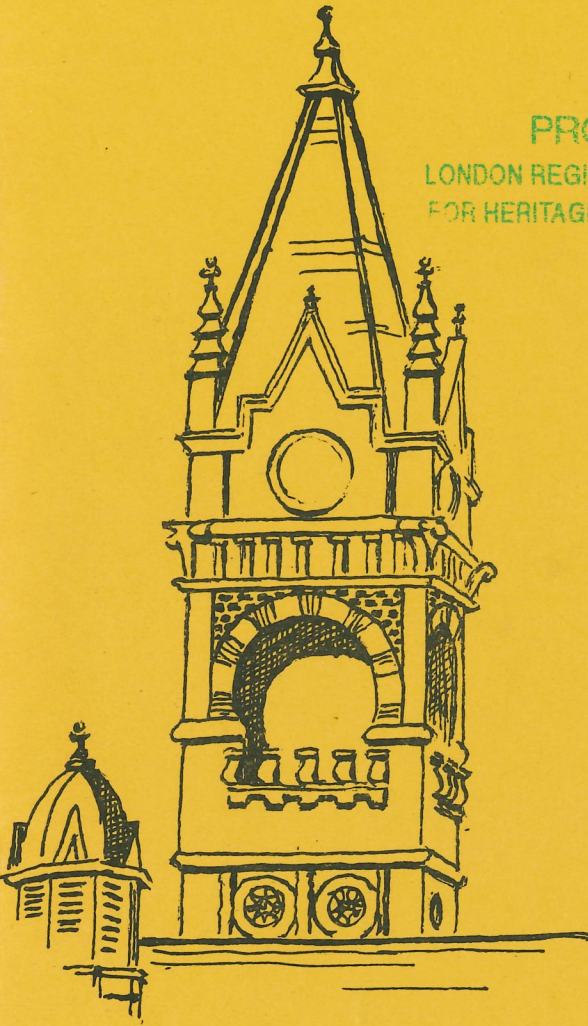
# A SOUTHERN STROLL

GERANIUM WALK XII

PROPERTY OF  
LONDON REGIONAL RESOURCE CENTRE  
FOR HERITAGE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Sunday  
June 2  
1985

1 - 5 p.m.



*Sponsored by:*

*Architectural Conservancy of Ontario*

*London Region Branch*

## "A Southern Stroll"



London South began to grow as early as the middle of the last century, but was never incorporated as a separate village. Known variously as "New Brighton", "St. James Park" and "Askin Village", it remained a part of Westminster Township until annexed by the City of London in 1890. Its reputation as a comfortable residential suburb was established early in its history when wealthy Westminster Township officials and London merchants were granted or purchased country estates south of the Thames River and constructed large mansions. A description of London South that appeared in a London newspaper of 1888 still applies:

*In a sketch of "London the Lovely", we must say something about our beautiful suburb to the south. It makes one of the finest drives imaginable in summer, to go along its shady streets and catch fine views which are here and there obtainable. There are many splendid residences on it with magnificent grounds surrounding them.*

The houses, "normal school" and church that are open to view today were not chosen to provide a showcase of buildings in perfect condition. Three of the houses were, in fact, purchased by their present owners only a year of two ago and are now being restored. We make no apology for this. Each building has architectural significance and in many ways it is an advantage to be able to show a house while it is being restored.

We have been saddened to see that many houses in London South, and in other parts of the city, have been sandblasted. Almost invariably it is houses built of soft white bricks that have been treated in this way. We feel sure that those who decided to have their homes sandblasted did not know this process can damage the mortar and remove the hard, outer layer of the bricks, leaving the soft inner material prone to attack by the weather. As you walk along the streets today look carefully at the white brick houses. You may decide that a well kept house looks very attractive when the bricks retain the darker tone they have acquired with age. If you really prefer "clean bricks" remember that other methods of cleaning bricks, which do not do the damage that sandblasting does, are now available in London.

The tour starts at

1



**165 Elmwood Avenue, 1898 - 1900**  
**"The Monsignor Feeney Centre for**  
**Catholic Education"**

This imposing building was erected as the London Normal School (teachers' college). It was used for this purpose until 1958 when it became first, a junior high school and then, in 1963, an "Education Centre" for the London Board of Education. In 1985 it was acquired by the London and Middlesex County Separate School Board for administrative offices.

The school's second principal was John Dearness, a noted educator and naturalist. Under his auspices the extensive grounds - they occupy a whole city block - were planted with shrubs, hedges and trees, including many species unique in the city.

Architecturally, it can best be described as late High Victorian, combining elements of the Gothic Revival and Romanesque Revival styles. Mr. Francis R. Heakes, architect, with the Ontario Department of Public Works, was the designer. It has a T-shape plan, with a main facade 150 feet wide and a 18-foot square central tower rising 132 feet above the ground. The stonework at the basement level is Credit Valley brownstone. The walls and chimneys are of salmon coloured brick trimmed with Ohio greystone; it has a slate roof.

The main entrance hall is dominated by an imposing grand staircase with intricately carved newel posts. Extensive restoration is now being carried out in this area.

The building is rich in details, blended harmoniously together. **Guides will conduct group tours** of the exterior and point out the highlights of the entrance hall.

**On leaving the old Normal School, proceed west along Elmwood Avenue, crossing Wortley Road.** The jog in the intersection is a reminder of the Col. Askin estate, which once was situated at the northwest corner of Elmwood and Wortley. The houses and mature trees, mainly maples, on the section of Elmwood Avenue from Wortley Road to Wharncliffe Road South provide one of the finest streetscapes in the entire city.

**Turn right (north) on Cathcart Street** and note "Fernleigh Cottage" at number 23. This attractive white brick dwelling, which has been designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, was built in 1884 for the Rev. Thomas Cosford, a Methodist minister. The hipped roof, well-defined bays, and centrally placed, ample doorway are important elements of the Regency style. The typically regular Regency plan is modified by a cross gable on the south side, reflecting the later Victorian predilection for irregularity in plan and elevation. The coloured and etched glass in the transom of the entrance doors is a major design feature.

**Return to Elmwood Avenue and continue westward.**

The apartment buildings at 116 Elmwood, "Elmview" constructed in 1923, and 113 Elmwood, the particularly handsome "Monica Apartments" erected in 1929, appear to be London South's earliest multiunit structures built specifically for this use.

Many of the houses along Elmwood possess interesting details in their design. Note the bracketing and bargeboards of 110 Elmwood and the complimentary similarities of 106 and 104 - the fretwork and fishscale shingles of the gable, the decorative use of cement blocks as a contrast to the dominant brick construction, the double leaf doors and the classical verandahs.

Among the more prominent Londoners who built their homes along Elmwood was Col. F. B. Leys. His house, erected in 1877, was used as a private residence until in 1925 when it was purchased by a group that separated from Knox Presbyterian congregation at the time of Church Union (see building 5). Elmwood Avenue Presbyterian Church, designed in the Gothic Revival manner, was built on the west lawn of the former Leys estate with the house utilized as a Sunday School and meeting centre.

Observe 103 Elmwood with its balanced double bays, capped by sharply pointed gables; the overall size and irregular plan of 96 Elmwood; and the unusual rounded corner oriel above the verandah of 77 Elmwood.

The corner of Elmwood Avenue and Edward Street is anchored by three mansions, each of which is a significant architectural asset to the city's heritage. All three - numbers 63, 64 and 70 - have been designated under the Ontario Heritage Act. The public is invited to tour number 64.



## 64 Elmwood Avenue East, 1886

The house at 64 Elmwood Avenue, set well back on a corner lot, is a fine example of High Victorian architecture with Italianate features. Details which provide variety to the overall design include the cross gables of the roof, single and double bay windows, a second storey oriel window and variously shaped windows with cut stone lintel surrounds. The original porch and verandah on the south and east elevations respectively have been removed.

The interior is noteworthy for its handsome staircase and five fireplaces, three being downstairs. The baseboards are unusually high. Several different woods were used for the staircase; cherry for the bannister, oak for the spindels and a combination of mahogany, black walnut, oak and crotch-grain black walnut in the newel post. The fireplace in the living room, to the left of the hall, is faced with tiles depicting Aesop's fables. Originally, the door near the fireplace in the present family room led on to a verandah.

The residence was erected in 1886 for Hugh Stringer, a manufacturer and dealer in carriages and stoves. His son, Arthur (1874 - 1950), was one of Canada's most noted poets and novelists. There is a collection of his works on the living room fireplace, and outside the initials of members of the Stringer family can still be seen carved into the sill of the south bay window.

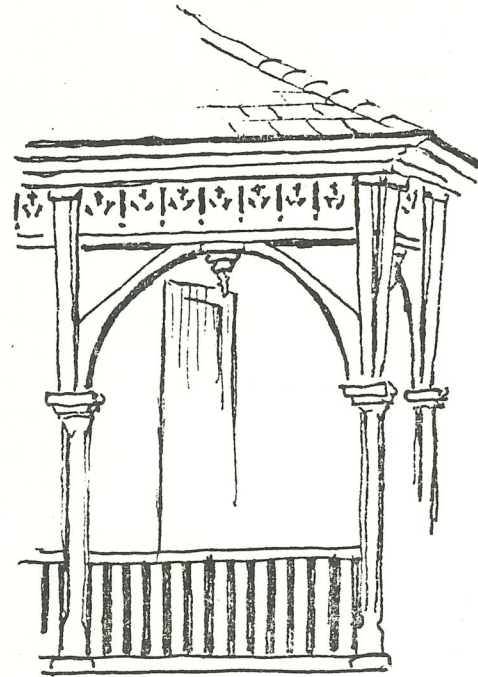
The present owners purchased the house two years ago after it had been used for several years as a rest home. They are in the process of restoring it.

### **Please leave by the back door.**

Across the street from 64 Elmwood and likewise located on a sizeable corner lot, the large High Victorian house at 63 Elmwood Avenue, erected in 1879, was designed by the London architectural firm of Craddock and Weekes. The 2½ storey white brick house is distinguished by a high pitched cross gable roof; magnificent bargeboards, some of the finest in London; and a gingerbread verandah that extends along three sides of the building.

Examine carefully the intricate exterior features of 70 Elmwood Avenue. Built in 1894 for Robert D. Millar, Secretary Treasurer of the now defunct London Advertiser newspaper, the 2½ storey, white brick, late Victorian domestic structure is noteworthy for the corner orientation of its design. This is achieved by the angled two storey bay, which is topped by a roof pavilion, and by a sweeping classical bandshell verandah, which was added early in the 20th century.

### **Proceed north along Edward Street.**



63 Elmwood Avenue



64 Elmwood Avenue

**3**

### 16 Edward Street, circa 1892

At one time there was a verandah on the front and on the south side of this attractive, little house. Unfortunately, it was replaced with the present porch which obscures the transom over the front door. When the house was duplexed in 1951 changes were made to the interior and finally, a few years ago, it was sandblasted. The present owners bought the property less than two years ago but already they have done much to restore the house to its former charm.

Like most houses built in the late nineteenth century, it combines several styles: note the mansard roof, the band of dichromatic brickwork below the roofline, the square bay on the south side and the long windows. It was erected in 1892, two years after Edward Street opened, and may be the only surviving example in London of a small nineteenth century house with a mansard roof.

Enter the house through the double leaf door. The graceful staircase with a curved bannister is a delightful surprise. The deep baseboards evident on the staircase, the pine floors and the original door and window trim have been retained through most of the house.

The second floor, where renovations are only just starting, is open to view to indicate the work that is being done. The fireplace in the living room, to the left of the hall is still used. Move into the dining room and notice not only the generous light provided by the long windows, but the pleasing effect of the squareheaded windows fitted with round-topped sashes.

The present kitchen, with some of the original wainscoting, was once the summer kitchen. **After leaving the house by the back door**, pause to observe how the bricks and mortar suffered when the house was sandblasted.

16 Edward Street is one of many substantial dwellings along Edward and Bruce Streets. Numbers 17, 15 and 13 Edward form a matching trio; they make an interesting contrast to 20 Edward.

**Continue north along Edward then make a slight detour eastward (right) on Bruce Street** to note numbers 68 and 50. Number 68 is one of the prettiest frame cottages in London South. Observe the saw-tooth fretwork of the gables of the front and east elevations. Columns in threes support the porch which, along with the centre bay, is decorated with cresting. 50 Bruce is among the oldest in the vicinity. It was built in the late 1870's for Alfred Ray, a messenger for the Merchants Bank in London. Of frame construction, this pleasing 1½ storey cottage is given vitality and grace through its decorative detail of paired brackets, frieze and gable bargeboards.

Note the sunburst effect which forms part of the bargeboard of number 53 Bruce. A group of four similar houses are found at 47, 45, 43 and 41 Bruce. Although all in some way altered, they feature centre gables characteristic of the Ontario Cottage and the same dichromatic brickwork.

The massive 2½ storey house at 35 Bruce Street is constructed of cement blocks. It was one of many built of this type of material in London between 1900 and 1920, the principal era of cement block construction in Canada. The cement was poured (often on the building site) into forms that on the exposed surface imitated carved stone blocks.

**Follow Cynthia Street north to Askin Street.** Cynthia and its parallel street to the east, Teresa Street, were named for the daughters of the aforementioned Col. Askin, whose estate extended to the south. Note the rubble stone verandah (a rare phenomenon in London) of 26 Cynthia and the precast concrete columns of 22 and 24 Cynthia.

Askin Street is unusually wide considering its light traffic load; the extra width was an allowance for streetcar tracks. The street formed a segment of one of the two "Belt-Lines" that serviced London South in the streetcar era. (pre 1940).

The next stop is the double house

**4**

### 40 - 42 Askin Street, 1890

The present day town house or condominium architect, wishing to take advantage of the economies of building adjoining houses, has a problem to overcome. This is the unfortunate aesthetic duality or "double vision" look of standard semi-detached housing. He might be interested to see how it was done before the turn of the century at numbers 40 - 42 Askin Street.

Erected in 1890 for Edward J. Powell, the house stands on the north side of Askin Street between Cynthia and Teresa Streets and is for London highly unusual architecturally. Although this residence has the outward appearance of a detached, single family dwelling, it was in fact designed as a double occupancy house, cleverly disguising by its asymmetrical structural arrangement the one windowless wall between the two addresses. Built of white brick, this 2½ storey, double house possesses such design features as a steeply pitched, cross gable roof; single eaves brackets; and an arrangement of vertical, horizontal and diagonal boards applied at the gable ends. However, it is particularly noteworthy for the gingerbread fretwork of its gable bargeboards and its two verandahs on the front and west side elevation. These verandahs served as separate entrances for the two dwellings.

The interior of the residence is standard for the period. At one time a doorway has been opened up in the dividing wall separating the two houses. This can be seen on the left as one enters from the front verandah. Visitors may continue through to the back of the house, leaving by a recent enclosed porch addition. By walking back to Askin Street around the west side, the second entrance verandah can be seen.

The gingerbread fretwork on both porches has deteriorated over the years, but plans for restoration work are in process by the present owners.

The house has been designated under the Ontario Heritage Act.

### **Walk east on Askin Street.**

The intersection of Askin and Teresa Streets is particularly noteworthy. 86 Askin (the northwest corner) is an exceptionally handsome example of a 1½ storey dwelling that was popular in London in the late 19th century. The northeast corner was once one of London's finest terraces. Consisting of four units, 88 - 94 Askin Street was built in circa 1877. Its balanced massing is enhanced by several bays and gables, and by the red brick coursing which wraps three sides of the building in a band immediately beneath the eaves. Opposite is Wesley-Knox United Church. It was erected in 1880 as the Askin Street Methodist Church. After Church Union in 1925, the congregation assumed the name Wesley United Church. In 1972, the members of nearby Knox United Church joined with Wesley to form Wesley-Knox United Church. This rather squat, white brick building, with many Gothic details is dominated by a square tower at its northwest corner, the spire was removed after a fire in 1918.

On the southwest corner of Askin and Teresa, 87 Askin Street, is a 2½ storey white brick house which recently has undergone considerable restoration. It was built for William Hunter who, before the first streetcar appeared on London South streets in 1889, provided the area with public transit in the form of a cart which left the corner of Bruce Street and Wortley Road at regular hours. For many years Herbert operated a livery stable behind the house.

### **Proceed south along Teresa and then turn east again on Bruce Street.**

Facing Teresa Street, there is red brick, 2½ storey Late Victorian house (87 Bruce Street) which was formerly the manse for Knox United Church, now St. Stephen of Hungary Roman Catholic Church (and the next stop on the walk). Other dwellings of note along this section of Bruce are 101, 105 (a double leaf door) and in particular 132 with its beautiful window and door surrounds, corner pilasters and centre gable bargeboard.

Wortley Road from Bruce to Askin-Craig Streets was the traditional centre of New Brighton. The Wortley-Askin intersection was called "Shaw's Corners" after Shaw's Grocery, now a hardware store. Although many stores in this block are in converted residences or new buildings, the old village atmosphere remains. Several old store fronts survive: 134 Wortley (the northeast corner of Wortley and Craig), formerly a grocery; 156 Wortley, from 1854 until recently Wm. Westland & Son, paints; 158 Wortley, previously a drug store; and 160 Wortley (the northeast corner of Wortley and Bruce), also a grocery. On the opposite corner (now the site of a gas station) was the G. T. Trebilcock grocery where, in the spacious second storey hall, the Westminster Township Council occasionally met before the 1890 annexation.

5

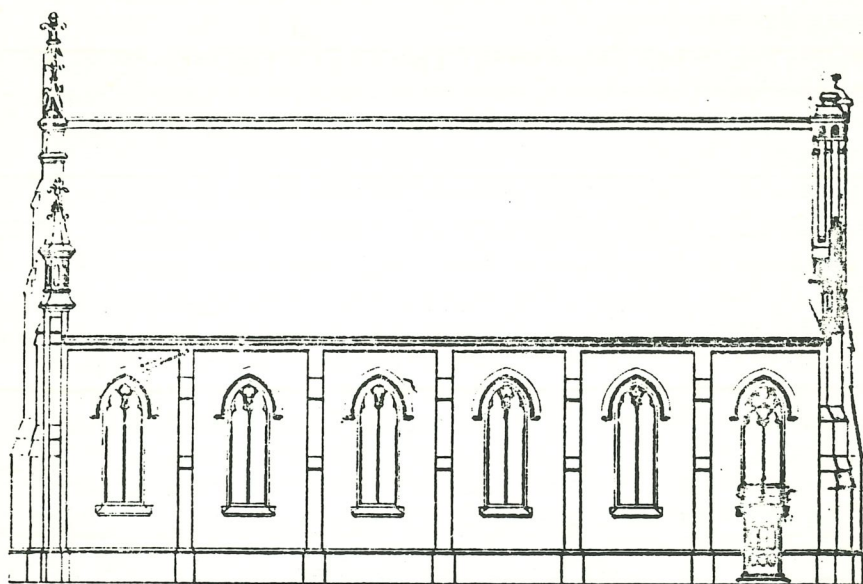


### **St. Stephen of Hungary Roman Catholic Church, 1883**

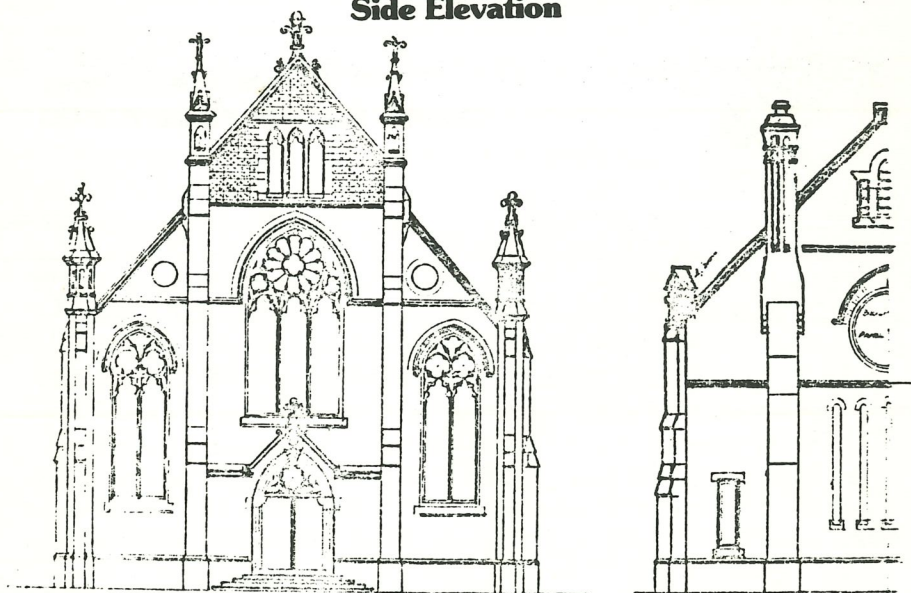
Knox Presbyterian Church, later Knox United and now St. Stephen of Hungary Roman Catholic Church, was built in 1883 to plans prepared by George Durand. The white brick building with cut stone trim was built in the Gothic Revival style. Its simple rectangular form was lightened by pinnacles, detailed brickwork and ample windows using pale stained glass. A Sunday school was added on the east side in 1888 and a south transept in 1895.

In 1923, more additions - a north transept, a church hall and a new vestibule. The regrettable use of red brick for the additions and a cladding of grey "angel stone" over the original white brick destroyed all exterior sense of the Durand design.

Inside, an ornate moulded metal balcony rail replaced the simple ironwork designed by Durand which is still visible on the stairs. Originally, the pulpit faced the centre aisle and stood in front of the choir loft; above the choir, on the east wall, was a large rose window. The organ was in the balcony with a large stained glass window above it. Despite this series of changes, it is still possible to imagine what the interior of Durand's church was like - some of the windows, the balcony and other features remain.



**Side Elevation**



**Front Elevation**

**1/2 Rear Elevation**

**Knox Presbyterian Church  
(now St. Stephen's)  
from Architect's drawings**

The congregation of Knox United joined with Wesley United, two blocks away, in 1972. Some of the original Presbyterian members moved at Church Union to form Elmwood Avenue Presbyterian Church.

The St. Stephen's community raised \$100,000. to make further changes to the building. They take pride in regarding the church as a place of worship and as a community centre where Hungarians new to Canada can be welcomed.

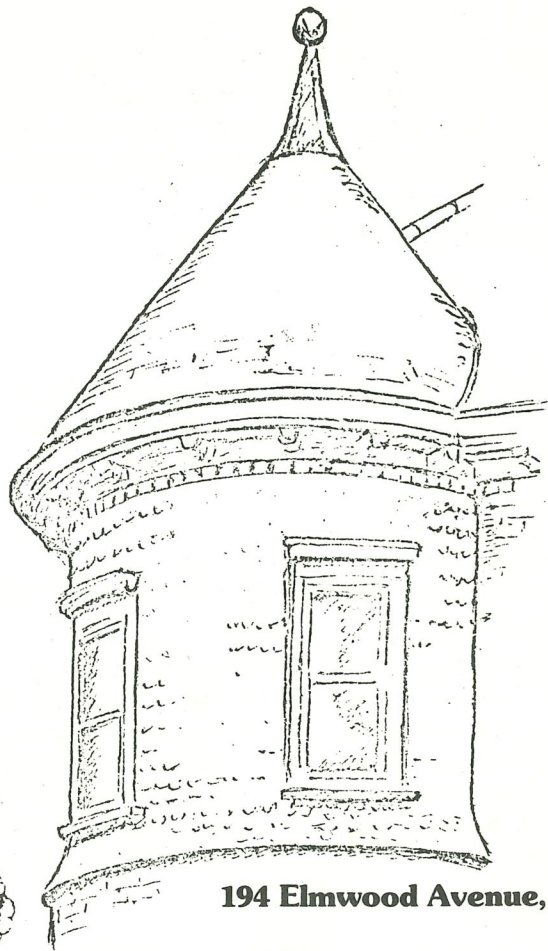
**Please leave by the side door, leading to Bruce Street then continue walking east or pause at this point, instead of waiting until the end of the tour, for tea.**

Bruce Street east of the church likewise has a number of fine frame and brick Ontario cottages. Observe in particular numbers 156 and 176.

The former Fire Station No. 3 at 160 Bruce Street was built in 1890-91 to fulfil one of the provisions of the annexation agreement of 1890. The city had agreed to provide the newly annexed suburb with adequate fire protection in the form of appropriate fire fighting equipment and trained personnel. The Italianate design features red brick banding and cut stone heads over the second storey windows which are arranged neatly in three balanced groups of two. The tall hose-drying and observation tower has long had its glassed-in observation booth and balcony removed.

**Marley Place (turn right off Bruce) from Bruce to Elmwood** presents a streetscape of considerable architectural interest. In terms of size, 10 Marley Place dominates the block. Although its architecture is exceedingly plain for its period (1872), it presents a pleasing balance of five bays across the front elevation. The charming frame cottage at 5 1/2 Marley is notable for its narrow frontage and the intricate gingerbread decoration of its centre gable, bay window and porch. 16 Marley, a 1 1/2 storey, L-shaped, frame villa set on a spacious lawn, is a pleasing combination of Gothic Revival and Italianate features, built in 1880 or earlier. Note the various shapes of the windows, the cresting and the fretwork of the bargeboards and verandah. The red brick mansion with the sweeping verandah at 25 Marley Place is a fine example of the Late Victorian period (note the "fishscale" slate roof).

**On rejoining Elmwood Avenue, turn east (left).**



**194 Elmwood Avenue, circa 1914**

**6**

Built circa 1914, this is the only red brick house on the tour today. It incorporates many forms and motifs that were popular in the Edwardian and earlier periods. One gets the impression that the original owner knew what he wanted in his new home and incorporated modified but familiar forms to produce a very pleasing house. The tower that dominates the exterior is heavier than those in London's Edwardian houses. The doorway is approached through a porch bounded by two simple Romanesque arches trimmed in stone.

Purchased recently from a family who had owned it for more than forty years, it is now being renovated gradually and is used for bed and breakfast accommodation.

**Upon entering go straight upstairs** where two bedrooms and a bathroom are on view. Note the unusual tendril carving on the newel posts. The main bedroom, with a fireplace and three tower windows fitted with curved glass, is particularly attractive.

**Return to the main floor by the same staircase** and proceed to the living room where you will see a high, unusual red brick fireplace. It is ornamented with classical motifs, but like exterior of the house they have been modified to suit the tastes of the original owner. A band of egg and dart moulding runs below the mantel and two well separated bands of beading surround the opening to the fire-box. The curved walls of the tower add additional charm to the room. The beamed ceiling and interesting windows set off the dining room.

**Proceed through the office** with its own fireplace and into the kitchen from where you may exit by the rear door.

As you walk down the side of the house to return to Elmwood Avenue you will notice that the kitchen and the sunroom above it are an early addition. The bricks are a very slightly different colour but the sills and window headings have been carefully blended.

**Turn east (left) when you return to Elmwood Avenue.**

195 Elmwood Avenue has been handsomely restored (although sandblasted). Italianate in architecture, it features an intricately carved bargeboard, paired brackets and decorative brickwork that forms a frieze beneath the eaves.

It is believed that 198 Elmwood was erected in 1848 or 1849 for James Hamilton (1792 - 1858), Sheriff of the London District and later of Middlesex County. The property consisted of 106 acres and was known as "Sheriff Hamilton's Bush". The house remained a single family dwelling until it was divided into apartments in approximately 1940. Although two storeys in height, the house, in keeping with its Regency style, presents a low profile, somewhat heightened by the belvedere. Until early in this century it faced Ridout Street; a new foundation was then laid and the house was rolled around on logs to its present site on Elmwood.

**Make a slight jog south on Ridout Street South to 157 Ridout.**

**7**



**157 Ridout Street South, 1920**

In 1920, a Post-War desire for change led to the cozy, low-roofed, stucco California-style bungalow. Smoothly-rounded river stones are used beside the steps, and face the entire foundation of the house. Casement windows and the garden-style door contain countless small panes of glass. The street facade is brightened by the little eyebrow window in the roof, the open porch, and sunroom. Note the small office to one side, and in the sunroom an inlaid border design in the hardwood floor.



French doors connect to the living room, which is further lighted by a south-facing bay window, and has a stone fireplace. Along the hall, you find built-in storage spaces. The bedroom closets also conceal units of drawers. Pastel carpeting and restrained light paint are used throughout for the fairly small spaces.

The exception is the dining room, where vivid walls and the beamed ceiling complement well-scaled Sheraton-style furniture. When you reach the kitchen, look back into the dining room to see the built-in china cabinet of cherry wood.

The kitchen country dresser displays interesting old blue china. The porch to the garden affords another delightful area for meals.

From the driveway, one can appreciate the whole size of this house, for the upper half-storey provides two larger bedrooms and complete bathroom, reached from the hall by a completely enclosed stairway. The charming colour of Bermuda pink is a fairly recent inspiration.

McGugan Contracting built this 1920 bungalow for Alex Parsons, who was the widely-known owner of the Belvedere Hotel (now in its last year as the Talbot Inn). He is also remembered for his harness-racing horses at his later farm home on Dundas Street East.

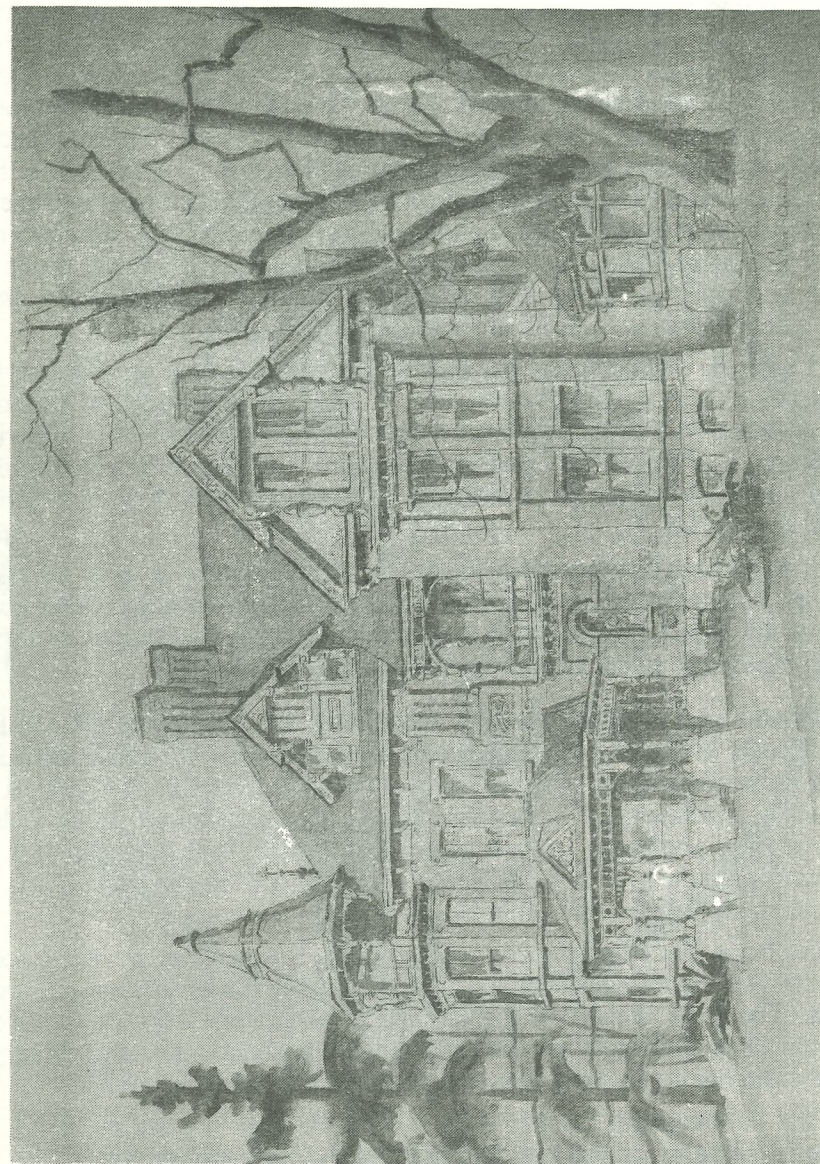
The bungalow looks down into Grand Avenue which at one time was truly "a grand avenue". At the turn of the century, it was dominated by six large mansions of which only two remain today: "Waverley" at 10 Grand Avenue, now the Shute Institute (on today's tour) and "Idlewyld" at 36 Grand Avenue. Those demolished were 17 Grand Avenue, "The Beeches" (1959, the site of the Capri Apartments across from "Waverley"); "Woodlands" at 30 Grand Avenue (in 1960s where the London Gospel Temple stands); the massive McCormick mansion (1914, on the south side of Grand between Belgrave and Gerrard Avenues); and lastly "Parkwood" (1951, the site of Parkwood Hospital further east on Grand).

8



### "Waverley" - 10 Grand Avenue, 1881

As you enter the grounds of "Waverley" stop for a moment and imagine the building in its long ago setting - spacious grounds, great trees, a sweeping driveway leading to the west entrance, once the main entrance and then, to the west of the house, a creek rambling through the grounds with a picturesque stone bridge.



"Waverley"

As you move toward what is now the main entrance, there is a wealth of architectural detail to observe. The varied roof line with its steep-pitched slate roof, massive corbelled chimneys, gables, dormers and towers. The towers on the west side are not identical and because of their variety of detail are well worth a closer study. Before entering "Waverley", note the carving under the arched bottled glass window. Above the porte-cochere you can see the name "Waverley" carved in stone. As you enter the vestibule be sure to note the wealth of wood carving details in the arched door frames, window frames and ceilings. Throughout the viewing area are parquet floors. Each room features beautiful woodwork details and each room has its own lovely fireplace. In the Blue Room, added by T. H. Smallman after 1900, is a beautiful marble fireplace that had been sent back to Italy to be enlarged to fit this addition. Mrs. Claude Morgan, daughter of Mr. Smallman added the bottle glass windows in London, England when she occupied the house. The window on the stair landing features the Smallman family crest with its motto "My word is my bond".

This finely crafted house was built by Charles Goodhue, son of George Goodhue, London's first millionaire. It was later enlarged and further embellished by T. H. Smallman and then later by his daughter Mrs. Claude Morgan. Fortunately for London, "Waverley" has been maintained since 1948, first by Dr. Evan Shute and since his death by the Medical Institute he had established.

You will have an opportunity to view the vestibule, then the great hall and library before passing through the anteroom to the Blue Room. After you leave the Blue Room pause to look at the staircase, the window above it and the dining room. **Leave by the main entrance.**

**While returning to St. Stephen of Hungary Roman Catholic Church, via Elmwood Avenue and Wortley Road, for refreshments,** note 156 Elmwood Avenue (northwest corner of Marley), an interesting Gothic villa with an elaborately carved centre gable bargeboard and lovely stained glass in the transom and sidelights of the main door. Note too the wide Ontario cottage at 173 Wortley, now used as accountants' offices, and other buildings along the way.

We hope you have enjoyed today's walk. It is seven years since the annual walking tour was held in London South so it was time for a return visit. The local branch of the Architectural Conservatory of Ontario continues to be grateful for the generosity of those who open their homes and churches to us each year and so make these walks possible.

The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario was founded in 1933 for "the preservation of the best examples of the early architecture of the Province and for the protection of its places of natural beauty".

We welcome new members. For more information enquire at the A.C.O. table at St. Stephen's Church or call 672-3124.

