

# ARCHITECTS ON VIEW

Geranium Walk XIII



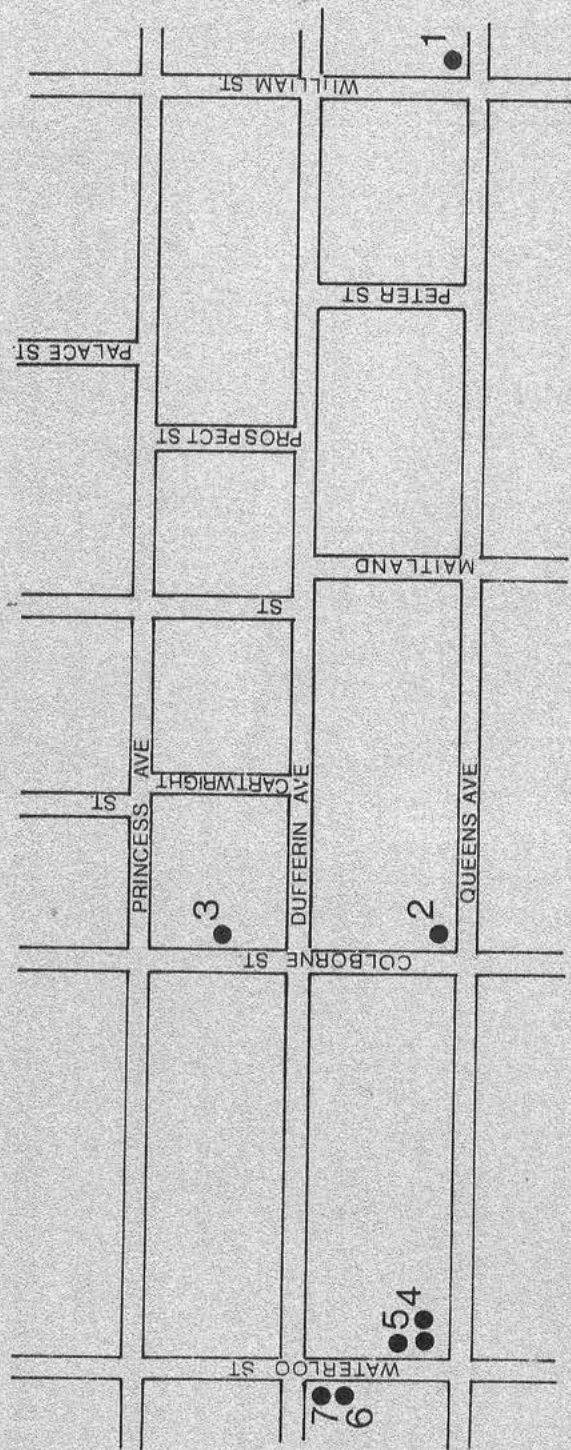
**478 Waterloo Street**

Sunday, June 1, 1986 — 1 - 5 p.m.

*Sponsored by :*

*Architectural Conservancy of Ontario*

*London Region Branch*



1. 536 QUEENS AVE. (Murray House)
2. 400 QUEENS AVE. (McClary House)
3. 504 COLBORNE ST. (McBride House)
4. First St. Andrews United Church & Manse
5. 478 WATERLOO St. (Muir House)
6. 477 WATERLOO St. (Reid House)
7. 471 WATERLOO St. (McDonald House)

## Architects on View

Geranium Walk XIII is privileged to share in the unique exhibition of the London Regional Art Gallery commemorating the work of the London architectural firm which dates from 1857 - 1930. The original firm was called Robinson, Tracy, Durand and Company.

*"George F. Durand (1850 - 1889) was the most important Victorian architect in Southwestern Ontario during the late nineteenth century"*<sup>1</sup> according to Dr. Lynne Di Stefano of Brescia College.

The firm has been known under a variety of names during its complicated and long history which divides easily into three eras, namely, Robinson and associates (Fairbairne, Durand and Tracy, 1857 - 1879); Durand (assisted by Tracy and Moore at times, 1880 - 1889); Moore and associates (Henry and Munro, 1890 - 1914). John M. Moore continued with the firm until his death in 1930. A brochure, *"Symbols of Aspiration"*, compiled for the exhibition of the same title (which is to be seen at the London Regional Art Gallery), will clarify the involved history of the firm, 1857 - 1914+.

William Robinson was the teacher and mentor of Tracy and Durand. Robinson left the firm and the office of City Engineer in 1879. Thomas H. Tracy then inherited Robinson's job as City Engineer. In 1891 he went to Vancouver as City Engineer and London lost his talents as architect.

The four leading members of the firm (Robinson, Tracy, Durand and Moore) were assisted by Fred Henry, J. Vicar Munro and Richard P. Fairbairne at various times. Durand and Moore were semi-partners, 1883 - 1889. Moore, a land surveyor (licensed c. 1879) trained as a civil engineer under Robinson. In later years the firm remained under his name and guidance.

Upon Durand's death in 1889, Fred Henry entered the firm. He and John M. Moore worked separately, 1890 - 1891. Between 1891 and 1910 they were more closely associated. Henry, like Durand, was noted for his excellent taste.

*"The firm eventually passed back into the hands of John M. Moore . . . After O. Roy Moore's death in 1958, the firm was continued by Ronald E. Murphy, who is its present representative."*<sup>2</sup> He now has his own practice at 775 Waterloo Street (O. Roy Moore was associated with his father for some years).

Examples of the work of these talented architects (Robinson, Tracy, Durand, Henry, Moore and Munro) are to be found in the extensive files of architectural drawings in the Regional Collection of the D.B. Weldon Library, U.W.O..

Mr. Ronald Murphy's gift includes plans, elevations, sections and details for businesses, industries, churches, clubs, private residences and public buildings in London and in the cities, towns and villages of Southwestern Ontario. This collection is a valuable treasure-trove of London architecture.

It is hoped that the current exhibition and this Walk "will provide an opportunity for people to enjoy and appreciate the richness and value of their Victorian heritage . . ." which requires constant vigilance and effort if Londoners are to retain it.

Londoners are indebted to Lynne Di Stefano and Nancy Tausky for their dedicated research and organization of examples of the firm's work, which are to be seen at the London Regional Art Gallery. Their forthcoming book, "Symbols of Aspiration", will complement the exhibition and provide the valuable study of the firm's members and their buildings. The book is to be published in the fall by the University of Toronto Press.

On a sunny afternoon in June, 1909, London's leading architect, John M. Moore, decided to view some of the buildings which he and his fellow architects had designed in the central area of London.

An approachable and pleasant man, he made a name as architect, surveyor and civil engineer. From 1926 - 1927 he served as Mayor of London. His portrait hangs in the Mayor's Gallery in City Hall (Second Floor - East)

He strolled along the tree-lined avenue of fine homes until he came to



### 536 Queens Avenue

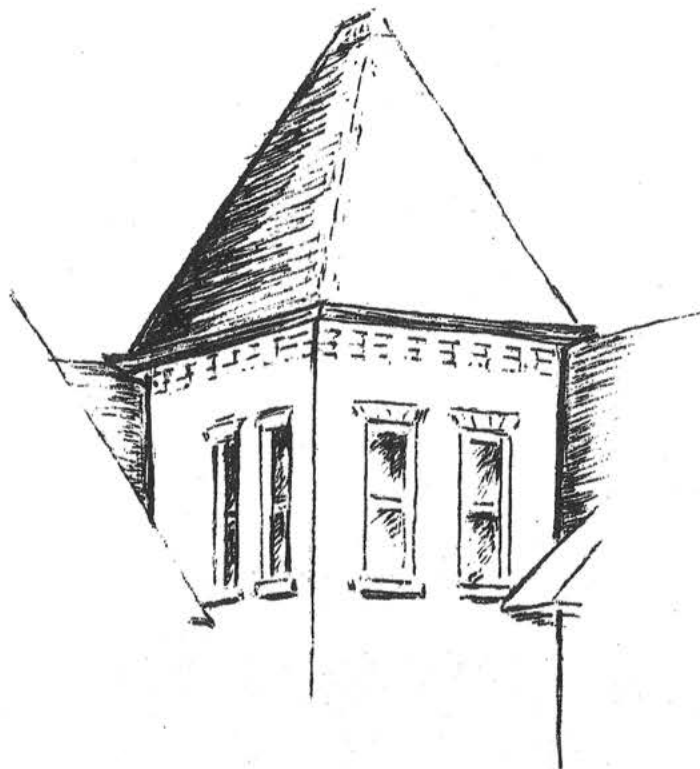
Northeast corner of William Street,  
beyond Bishop Cronyn Memorial Church.

**Be careful of the raised inner doorstep**

Begin your Walk at this fine large mansion in the high-income district of Victorian London. Notice similar ones showing degrees of grandeur and wealth as you follow Mr. Moore.

Durand, working for Robinson and Tracy, designed this 1878 house. Its High Victorian, eclectic style contains elements of various origins making for much interest as it stands in a trio of white and red brick houses in this Queens Avenue streetscape.

The house was built for Charles Murray, manager of the short-lived Federal Bank of Canada (1874 - 1882). His successor was George T. Hiscox (horse dealer, livery stable owner and real estate promoter) in



**536 Queens Avenue**

1888. He gave it the suitable name of "Worthy Place" in honour of his father's birthplace on a Somersetshire farm in England. From 1899 -1939 the prominent Betts family of lawyers enjoyed the house. In 1940 the spacious house was divided into apartments of which there were nine in 1980. Now health care services, an insurance broker and petroleum businesses have offices here.

The imposing house sits on a corner lot behind a cast iron fence with pineapple posts, symbolic of "hospitality". It displays "a large square central tower, a two storey bay, crowned by a conical roof, and a small highly ornate, picturesque porch with a field stone base, which stretches around to the west side to support a two storey verandah".<sup>4</sup> Earlier conservatories were removed c.1940. A small verandah and sun rooms are on the west side. Neighbouring 540 Queens Avenue presents a contrast with its plain appearance.

Enter through the ornate two-leaf door into the vaulted hallway to see a curving staircase with decorated newel post, a floral transom in clear glass, a pressed-tin ceiling in the diaper pattern, an iron and marble radiator cover, interior shutters on high, deep windows in a nearby room, an ornate light in bronze gilt and decorated door knobs.

An original white marble fireplace remains as an example of

Victorian comfort. The house, however, had a coal furnace when it was built. All the houses built by the firm after 1878 were equipped with heating. In the 1890's steam or hot air replaced coal for the heating system.

Gas lighting and indoor plumbing with ornate bathrooms were to be found in this house. Many changes in the interior and in use have come to this mansion, which still stands as part of an eye-catching streetscape on London's finest avenue.

2



**400 Queens Avenue**  
Northeast corner of Colborne Street



**400 Queens Avenue**

In 1909 Mr. Moore designed this detached Edwardian house for his brother-in-law, Arthur E. McClary, a member of the stove-company family, McClary Manufacturing Company.

This splendid house, which forms part of the Colborne Street - Queens Avenue streetscape, was enjoyed by the owner until his death in February, 1920. His widow, Ellen, lived here for some years. In 1957 her daughter, Mrs. Louisa E. Gray, took over the house until 1966 when the London Blue Print Service under W.G. Ostafijczuk moved in. Heighway Personnel Ltd. was the next occupant in 1981. New owners, Caltan Corp. now have established fine facilities catering to an Executive Centre, and to commercial real estate and land development.

This Late Victorian house utilized the talents of Moore, Henry and Munro, as seen in the framed drawings displayed in the front room on the left side.

They made use of "red brick with a large classical verandah and two large pediment gables encasing Palladian windows . . . its architecturally similar neighbour, the double house at 408 - 410 Queens, was also designed by Moore".<sup>5</sup> These three houses provide a red brick streetscape which now faces a demolished area.

The McClary house offers "Neo-classical details in the partially fluted Ionic style columns and the dentils of this style and its two-storey gently curved bay with a wide moulded cornice of simple design following the curve."<sup>6</sup> "The serenity of the classical Greek pediment of the porch and capital design of the pillars is continued through the double entry door with simple design in bevelled, leaded glass."<sup>7</sup> Watch for other examples of this glass, brackets, dentils, etc. on this Walk.

Enter the house and observe the dark wood panelling beneath the windows, elegant ceiling and fireplace with columns in the former drawing room. "Classical dentils underline the mantel and top the door frames. In the smaller left room, the wood panelling is to chair height, and the fireplace has warm red tile"<sup>8</sup> with green floral design which contrasts with the dark blue rug and the continuing pattern of the floor tiles.

Go up the staircase to see "the richly coloured glass skylight"<sup>9</sup> The colours - yellow, blue, green and brown in a rounded design give an air of richness and a pleasant light to the second floor.

Bright light from curved glass windows adds to the interior of the left rear room, with its simple wood-framed fireplace. The centre rear room has a similar fireplace, as well as higher wood panelling and a beamed ceiling suitable to its original use as the dining room.

This lovely, treasured house is a good example of careful restoration and recycling to office use. Contrast its restrained, quiet elegance with the exuberant grandeur of its neighbour, 468 Colborne Street (Mocha Mosque) which Mr. Moore, in 1903, designed for J.B. Smallman, oil refiner and partner in Smallman & Ingram's department store.

Next Mr. Moore would inspect the handsome white brick house . . .

3



### 504 Colborne Street

East side between Dufferin and Princess Avenues

This Italianate house was designed by Robinson for Alex McBride c.1872 - 1874. He was in a firm manufacturing stoves and tinware. In 1902 it was occupied by Edmund Meredith, a lawyer. On his death it was sold to Hugh Shuttleworth, a member of a hat-manufacturing company. The next owner was Dr. Roger Rossiter, vice-president of U.W.O.. The present owners, who purchased it from Mrs. Helen Rossiter, must be happy to see the renovations taking place across the street where the red brick double house and the sturdy white brick home at Dufferin Avenue are to have a new life and to be part of a pleasing streetscape once again. Mr. Moore would have seen this corner in happier times when these houses were fine residences of Edwardian London.

Look up at the gable with double brackets, circular or bull's-eye window in the pediment and its moulded surround, the ornamented cornice with decorative paired brackets, the semi-circular or arched windows with decoration, keystones and brackets on the second floor, the three Tudor-style chimneys, and brick quoins on the side of the house.

Enter the impressive doorway with its moulded pattern which skillfully repeats the bull's-eye design of the pediment's window on exterior and interior of the door. The triple-headed door has two sidelights and a decorative transom which give light to the hallway.

Enjoy the spacious hall with its plastered arch and the curving staircase with polished handrail, scroll work and graceful spindles. A lovely fixture and ceiling medallion add to the charm of the hall.

Replacement of windows in the downstairs is to be noticed. Originally they matched the upstairs windows. Deep rounded mouldings have been copied in the replaced windows in the living room. Similar mouldings appear around doors and windows in the other rooms.

The ceilings in the dining room, den and living room originally were as high as the hall ceiling. Later they were lowered as styles and heating needs changed.

In the pleasant living room, the fireplace is not centred. No doubt the room was two rooms at an earlier time!

Across the hall there is a second fireplace in the den. It is unique with its floral corners, decorated posts, iron fire box and blue tiles which contrast with the chestnut-coloured walls. This is a favourite room of a lovely house which has traditional Victorian features.

Proceed towards the back of the hall passing the cool, green dining room with its white woodwork and air of serene elegance.

**Leave by the side door off the modernized kitchen. As you go out the side gate, notice the coach house where earlier residents kept their horses and carriages for business and pleasure.**

4



### First-St. Andrew's United Church

350 Queens Avenue at Waterloo Street.

On approaching his own corner Mr. Moore saw two handsome buildings associated with the firm.

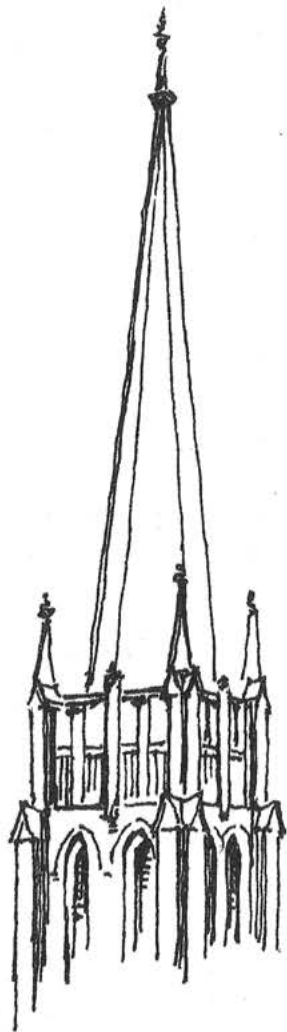
On the green lawn of the church is a blue and gold plaque commemorating REVEREND WILLIAM PROUDFOOT 1788 - 1851. Read the text concerning this "outstanding Presbyterian missionary and church leader" who "made numerous preaching tours and organized congregations and missionary stations throughout Upper Canada and in the United States". The plaque was erected by the Ontario Heritage Foundation, Ministry of Citizenship and Culture, in 1982. Assistance with the text was given by the Historic Sites Committee of the London Public Library Board.

Proudfoot never ministered in this perpendicular Gothic church. His son, the Rev. J.J. Proudfoot of First Presbyterian Church led in prayer at the laying of the cornerstone, in May, 1868.

*"For over a century one of the most pleasing sights in London has been the little square of green in the northeast corner of Queens Avenue and Waterloo Street, with the magnificent towered Gothic structure of St. Andrew's rising to the north and the fine old Manse guarding the lawn on the east. Our Scottish Presbyterian forefathers knew how to build for both permanence and dignity".<sup>10</sup> At night the lighted spire is a beacon in downtown London as it soars into the dark sky.*

The church was dedicated in 1869, replacing an earlier one. The architect was William Robinson, City Engineer, 1859 - 1879. He was an Irish immigrant who had been "trained as a carpenter and licensed as an architect after studying with Thomas Young, who was the city engineer and among the most talented of Toronto architects. The style chosen was middle-period, or Decorated Gothic, with simple lines and a single central tower at the front. It cost about \$25,000."<sup>11</sup>

Many young architects trained under Robinson, namely George F. Durand, Thomas H. Tracy and John M. Moore. "St. Andrew's Church is his monument."<sup>12</sup> He also designed First Presbyterian Church.



### **First-St. Andrew's United Church**

*"The present congregation has its origins in the first two Presbyterian groups in the city: that organized in 1833 by the Rev. William Proudfoot, which eventually built the First Presbyterian Church, and these Kirk of Scotland Presbyterians who were to gradually evolve into the congregation which was to build the present Church and Manse."<sup>13</sup> By 1850 the Kirk of Scotland Presbyterians were able to call a permanent pastor, the Rev. John Scott who ministered for 25 years and was "the guiding spirit behind the present edifices."<sup>14</sup>*

In 1842 a Crown grant of the land was obtained. The 1868 church was named after the earlier name of Queens Avenue and so it was called the North Street Presbyterian Church. Leading Scottish merchants raised the money needed to replace the first building.

In 1925 St. Andrew's Church and First Presbyterian Church voted to join the newly formed United Church of Canada. In 1938 the First Church and St. Andrew's Church united as First-St. Andrew's Church. First Presbyterian Church was demolished to provide London Life with a parking lot! *"Yet, despite the years and the many changes, the peaceful atmosphere remains and the congregation possesses a certain Scottish atmosphere to this day."<sup>15</sup>*

Inside the church there is a restrained elegance and a touch of austerity in the creamy white plaster and dark beams. The warm colours of the stained glass windows, blue ceiling and brown tones of pulpit, lectern, font and the Lord's Table relieve the austerity. Notice also the beautiful leaded and bevelled glass of the wide main door and in the vestibule and the carved woodwork. The shining organ in the balcony is a Casavant, with tracker action, 3 manuals and 36 stops; it dates from 1969. The well-trained choir now uses the balcony (instead of the earlier congregations) for Sunday services and concerts. An attractive chapel for small services and weddings should be seen.

**After having refreshments in the church** step outside and admire *"the lofty spire, the under-eaves brick design (most effectively lit at night), deep stone entrances, high stone foundation into which are let Tudor style arched openings, and may other Gothic elements (which) result in an effective over-all design of considerable dignity and grace."<sup>16</sup>*

Look also at the attached St. Andrew's Hall with its circular effect in white brick, and the nearby white brick Manse. The Hall was needed to take care of a growing congregation. It was added in 1905 and now provides space for class rooms, meeting rooms, auditorium-gym, the Eleanor Somerville Music Library, store rooms and kitchen for a busy downtown church.

The original church lacked a chancel and an organ, in keeping with its simplicity and austerity. Durand, however, designed the chancel addition as the church's concepts changed.

**The Manse - 356 Queens Avenue (not open)** was built by Robinson and was completed in the early 1870's, when church-manse or church-rectory was a common feature in Ontario. The porch is not original and it was a later addition to an Italianate house. The porch, however, has an interesting bas-relief treatment of the pediment. Windows are symmetrically placed and ornamentation is controlled. *"Note the fine paired chimneys and the mouldings over the windows. The curved window of the door is repeated in the curved upper hall*

window. *The generously proportioned doorway with sidelights and transom, opens into a central hall with large rooms on either side. Three fireplaces are on the ground floor.*"<sup>17</sup> Ceilings are 10 feet high, the baseboards 13 inches deep, door frames 6 inches wide, and the banister 4 inches wide with scroll work, glass door knobs and newel-post light. (No structural changes appear to have been made in the house).

The Manse no longer serves as the minister's residence. It has become Farquhar House (named in honour of a former minister, the Rev. Alex Farquhar) - a community centre for such groups as Community Church Outreach Project (First-St. Andrew's United Church), Youth Resource Centre, London Folk Arts Multicultural Council and Self Value Education Centre.

Downtown churches such as First-St. Andrew's United Church adapt their buildings to new demands of people. But they continue to offer citizens cool and pleasant oases of beauty in green grass, trees, bushes and flower beds which show off the architecture of the buildings. Serenity, dignity and elegance are to be found in our church complexes from Queens Avenue to Richmond Street, (and along Dufferin Avenue too). Their spires and heritage features raise our hearts and spirits.

Before going north on Waterloo Street, look at the corner's streetscape of appropriate houses, trees and green lawns. The "semi-rural location (of the original church) on the northern outskirts gradually evolved into a focal point on the finest avenue in London."<sup>18</sup>

Prior to 1918, Queens Avenue was "a quiet, tree shaded, residential street. To the east of Wellington, much of the former fashionable character and atmosphere of Queens Avenue and the connecting streets is still apparent today. A good number of the mansions are still standing, and many are well maintained, although they no longer fulfill high income single family residential functions. Most of the magnificent churches yet survive, providing impressive focal points. The streets are boulevarded and are still lined with magnificent trees."<sup>19</sup> in spite of recent removals of old trees here and there.

The trio of large houses to the left of the Manse were built around the turn of the century. "Its occupants were variously a cigar manufacturer, an engine builder and boiler manufacturer, and doctors. They are now occupied by prestige office space. They are all examples of sturdy, monumental, Late Victorian architecture."<sup>20</sup> Notice 360 Queens Avenue (c.1894 - 1895) which has an "immense three storey, octagonal turret."<sup>21</sup> It was designed by Moore and Henry for Charles Leonard, the manufacturer of boilers.

Notice the mixture of red and white brick in these Victorian and Edwardian homes, such as 442 Waterloo Street (a square white brick

house) and the neighbouring red brick homes at 436 and 430-432 (doctor's offices and a dance-theatre studio respectively). The lower brown brick of the Canadian Bible Society nestles beside its older neighbours. Lawyers' offices occupy the gray painted brick (444 Waterloo Street) where Durand himself lived in the late 1880's. It has a lovely rounded newel post in the hall. Doctors, dentists, lawyers, etc. and apartments have taken over many of the old homes. On the west side of Waterloo Street there is a mixture of businesses and apartments.

Follow Mr. Moore north to . . .



## 478 Waterloo Street

This Italianate house, which is occupied by insurance and legal offices, was built c.1876 for Thomas Muir, a foundry manager. In 1893 Mr. Moore took over the house to which he made "additions and alterations" in 1908. Assisted by Fred Henry he made substantial changes to "the building's basic Italianate architecture. The house, as originally designed, possessed a tower as a prominent feature. In the style of the period, this Moore had removed and replaced by a pretentious classical portico. The house was also given a new wing and a different roof line."<sup>22</sup> An upper porch now serves as a glassed-in office. The small conservatory no longer houses plants or flowers.

Enter the triple-arched doorway with its two sidelights and transom. During renovations, ceilings had been lowered and new doors and new floors added. Partitions also have been moved to form new rooms.

A half-panelled reception room has an interesting fireplace with a high mantel in dark wood as well as side bookcases. There are four fireplaces including a low white marble one with a "heraldic shield" in an upstairs room, as well as ones in the basement and in a second office.

Upstairs, one small room has kept its original hardwood floors with its border of inlaid crosses. Carpet now covers most of the old floors. A third floor has not been renovated yet.

Mr. Moore and his son Clare, (who later lived in the house), would be amazed at the changes to their comfortable home which new owners are preserving and enjoying.

An Italianate neighbour, 484 Waterloo Street, was built c.1875 - 1881

for Robert Hunt, a retired gentleman. Later owners were the Maras of the dry goods store (1893) and Dr. and Mrs. H.O. Foucar (1930-1980). In recent years exterior and interior changes have come to the house. The Family Group Corporate Head Office (Mortgage and Investments) inhabits a completely gutted interior. Gone are the spacious, elegant and serene rooms with fine mouldings, ceilings and marble fireplaces. The appropriate windows with their shutters and the back verandah have been replaced.

These matching white brick houses still stand in contrast to their neighbour at 496 Waterloo Street, a red brick dwelling of Romanesque style. The massive house is notable for *"the three storey conical tower, the two storey bay topped by a large gable, and the classical verandah which wraps itself around two sides of the house"*.<sup>23</sup> The 1893 owner, a real estate man, was succeeded by a number of doctors, such as the late Dr. W.R. Quinn.

Other interesting styles of architecture around this Waterloo Street corner are described in earlier Walks.

Along Dufferin Avenue, buildings of different styles and features add to the streetscape, such as 348 Dufferin Avenue, a double house which has been made into five apartments. Notice the parapet of this plain, tall house. A gable-parapet is to be found at 370 Dufferin Avenue. This house and 368 Dufferin Avenue are known as the Sister Houses, built by Alexander McLean for his daughters in the mid-nineteenth century. Look for other streetscapes of styles, designs, details and materials in the area of the Walk.

Mr. Moore would have been aware of the sparkle of bevelled and leaded glass doors and windows at 477 and 504 Waterloo Street, and at 496 Waterloo Street, with *"exquisitely patterned bevelled leaded glass window panels"*<sup>24</sup> and his own house at 478 Waterloo Street with its *"bevelled glass sidelights and transom."*<sup>25</sup>

The 1909 houses on the northwest side of Dufferin Avenue were demolished when Central Collegiate was built.

Crossing the street Mr. Moore would admire the two corner houses.

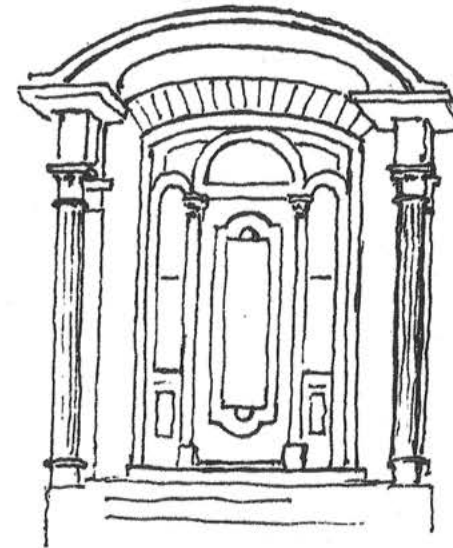


**477 Waterloo Street**  
 Offices of Siskind, Cromarty Legal Firm  
 Enter by way of the walkway from  
**471 Waterloo Street**

Fifteen partners and six associate lawyers, as well as articling students, para-legal help and secretarial staff (over 75 people) now

work in these "attached" houses which have been put together as modern, spacious and efficient offices.

The original builder of the Regency style cottage at **477 Waterloo Street** was Nathaniel Reid of Manchester, England, who came to London in 1842. The Reid family became the proprietors of a well-known china and glass firm of importers, wholesalers and retailers. By 1890, W.J. Reid and Co., Crystal Hall, Dundas Street, was famous in London and area.



### **477 Waterloo Street**

In 1876, Nathaniel Reid acquired the property for a retirement home. The Reid family owned the house from c.1876 until 1928. The cottage is attributed to Robinson as architect.

On the death of Nathaniel Reid in 1889, the cottage passed to his son, William John, who rented it out. It was occupied by his son, Frank A. Reid, and later by John H. Carling, Helen Gibbons and Christopher A. Whitman of Hobbs Hardware. In 1928 the Reid family sold the house to Ernest Victor Little who then rented it to Alice Louise Leonard, widow of Frank E. Leonard. In 1936 it was purchased by Dr. Frank Kennedy, oral surgeon, who lived in the cottage and carried on his dental practice on the Dufferin Avenue side of the house. In 1961 he sold the cottage and practice to Doctors D.C. Stiles and A.J. Harris.

*"Stiles and Harris built the rear wing on the house, matching the older part both in the white brick and the general design of the windows. The partnership rented part of the building first to the*



Alcoholism and Drug Addiction Research Foundation for its Education Division, and then to the Sisters of St. Joseph. In 1977 Stiles retired, selling out to Harris, who in turn sold the property to Siskind, Cromarty shortly afterwards."<sup>26</sup>

Londoners are grateful to Siskind, Cromarty for retaining, restoring and preserving the two houses as fine examples of nineteenth century architecture.

The exterior is to be admired for its "single centre gable over the doorway . . . hooded roof dormers and the decorated frieze beneath the cornice. A large wing has been added to the rear."<sup>27</sup> Notice "the fluted Diric-style columns and pilasters . . . the delicate curve of the porch roof, the handsome door and its framing, with a gable over all, suggest a thoughtfully planned interior."<sup>28</sup> Plain design and appropriate proportions give a balanced, elegant appearance.

On entering **via the walkway**, be aware of the very high ceilings, the deep, elaborate ceiling mouldings, the ceiling medallions and the high baseboards. "The hallway is divided by a bracked arch with the same helmeted heads as are found in the upstairs arch at 471 Waterloo. Proceed down the hallway towards the front door with its lovely etched glass inner doors."<sup>29</sup> "Long windows, symmetrically placed in the classical tradition, provides ample light for the 14 foot ceiling rooms within."<sup>30</sup>

The room on the right has a filigree wrought iron ceiling moulding, ceiling medallion and an elaborately decorated marble fireplace. The rooms on the south side have been carefully restored. Ceilings have been raised to expose original mouldings. The elegance and antique beauty of this splendid cottage have been recaptured in a successful office concept.

In contrast to this plain white brick exterior is that of

7



### 471 Waterloo Street

This red brick mansion of unique grandeur was the work of Moore, Henry and Munro.

In 1881 James Priddis, a dry goods merchant, purchased the land

and built "a large, long, two and one-half storey building; it was probably constructed of white brick and rather plain in design, like the contemporary houses which still stand on the block".<sup>31</sup>

The property later was acquired by Robert D. McDonald of Line, McDonald & Co., cigar manufacturers. "Cigar manufacturing was an extremely important industry in the city at the turn of the century. London was the second largest Canadian centre of production . . ."<sup>32</sup> The factory was on Clarence Street. In 1909 McDonald purchased the Priddis house, demolished it and had Moore build him a mansion suitable to his position. Mr. Moore would have been pleased by the design of "the present two and one-half storey mansion with its massive monumental portico, paired Corinthian columns and magnificent detail of classical wood carving. The red brick, had just then become the height of style, had to be imported from Hamilton or Milton."<sup>33</sup>

Today this house, with the finest verandah in London, reminds us of a gracious plantation home. Look also at "the Neo-Classical pediment supported by paired, fluted columns supporting the roof of the porch. To the south you can see a Palladian window grouping."<sup>34</sup>

Enter the wide doorway and note "the wrought iron decoration on the sidelights and transom and beautiful bevelled and leaded glass decorating the inner door frame . . . the dentil motif in the ceiling moulding in the vestibule which continues as part of the door frame detail throughout the house . . . the fluted columns partially infilled with beading, the capital treatment of the columns, the ceiling mouldings, and the bas-relief carving on the newel post of the wide stairway."<sup>35</sup> A handsome brass light sits on the newel post.

Beautiful wood is to be found in the wainscoting and mahogany-looking pillars in the hallway.

A dividing arch at the top of the staircase contains helmeted heads on the base of the arch, which also appear at 477 Waterloo Street! Go up to the top of the stairs and look at "a large bowed, coloured, textured and painted leaded glass window"<sup>36</sup> with the initials KAD. The seated lady with a musical instrument is looking out at clouds, pillars and trees and the picture is framed with intertwining grapes and leaves. The pleasant colours of maroon, blue and green are part of the Edwardian style.

Interesting fireplaces are to be seen in the former dining room and in the room at the top of the stairway, which has a white marble fireplace with brass fittings. The latter may have come from the Priddis house of 1881.

**Return to the main floor by the back stairs and turn to the right for entrance into the connecting walkway into 477 Waterloo St.**

McDonald enjoyed his Moore house from 1909 until 1929 when he sold it to Major Alexander C. Spencer, a mechanical engineer and a member of the oil refining family. In 1937 the Shriners purchased it for their "*Mocha Mosque*". In 1955 they sold it to the North American Auto Association and moved to 468 Colborne Street, just north of Queens Avenue. Other businesses moved in as the area changed from residential to office use. Finally, in 1965, the handsome house found new and sympathetic guardians in the Siskind, Cromarty law firm.

**Leave the neighbouring cottage by the Dufferin Avenue entrance.**

Stroll to the corner of Queens Avenue and Waterloo Street and observe the changing pattern of the next six houses, which have ceased to be residences and become offices of businesses, insurance firms and health care facilities, as well as apartments. The "*modernization*" of some facades are not in keeping with the Victorian and Edwardian architecture of the area.

Be grateful that parking lots and modern office buildings have not replaced all the old houses.

During the Walk, you, like Mr. Moore in 1909, will have had the opportunity to see groups of houses which are gratifying to the eye. In a sequence these houses may be complementary or contrasting in their styles, designs, details or materials. Like a landscape these streetscapes give variety, interest and richness to our architectural heritage. Our architects (Robinson, Tracy, Durand, Henry, Moore and Munro) were aware of such matters as they designed houses and churches in the Woodfield area.

Such streetscapes are to be found on Queens Avenue, Dufferin Avenue, Waterloo Street and Colborne Street and on neighbouring ones such as Princess Avenue, Central Avenue and William Street. These architectural vistas of the old residential area add to citizens' pleasure in their city.

The traditions of architectural excellence established by Robinson and his fellow architects were carried on by the firm members and staff throughout its long life (1857 - 1914+).

In later years, Mr. Moore's firm also built the original London Life Insurance Co.'s Head Office, opposite Victoria Park, Hotel London, and the Bell Telephone Co.'s building on Clarence Street. Notice the elegance, permanence and classical restraint of these two buildings as you finish the Walk.

Then go on to admire the Rectory of St. Peter's Cathedral Basilica which was designed by Robinson. It is of white brick in contrast to the

Gothic grandeur of the Cathedral Basilica, which is of brown Ohio cut stone. The Rectory of c.1870 served as the Bishop's Palace until c.1912 when it was replaced by "*Blackfriars*" at 90 Central Avenue. The Rector and staff now occupy Robinson's handsome structure of "*Mansardic roof and Classical proportions of the Second French Empire, but with Gothic detail around the windows and doors, a typical Victorian mixture of styles which is to be found in many buildings of the era.*"<sup>37</sup>

Mr. Moore also would have admired Robinson's work as he turned towards his home at 478 Waterloo Street after a satisfying walk on "so rare as a day in June." Be sure to see additional examples of our "*Architects on View*" at the London and Regional Art Gallery's display, "*Symbols of Aspiration.*"

## REFERENCES

- 12 Advertiser Job Printing Limited. "*London and Its Men of Affairs*". London, Ont. Advertiser Job Printing Ltd. (1900)
- 7, 8, 9 Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, London Region Branch. "*Prospect Promenade*". London, Ont. Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, London Region Branch. 1980
- 29, 34, 35, 36 Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, London Region Branch. "*Victoria Park Promenade*". London, Ont. Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, London Region Branch. 1982
- 6, 16, 17, 24, 25, 30 Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, London Region Branch. "*Victorian Fancies*". London, Ont. Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, London Region Branch. 1974
- 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 18, 37 Armstrong, Frederick H. and Daniel J. Brock. "*Reflections On London's Past*". London, Ont. The Corporation of the City of London. 1975
- 26, 31, 32, 33 Armstrong, Frederick H. and John H. Lutman. "*471/477 Waterloo Street*". (London, Ont. 1980)
- 1, 2, 3 Di Stefano, Lynne. "*The Architecture of George F. Durand, 1850-1889*". (London, Ont. 1978)
- 4, 5, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 27 Lutman, John H. "*The Historic Heart of London*". London, Ont. The Corporation of the City of London. 1977
- 28 The University of Western Ontario. "*Two Walking Tours of London, The Woodfield Walk and the Talbot Trail*". London, Ont. The University of Western Ontario. 1978. (Compiled by Mrs. Susan Wilson and Mrs. Peggy Reuber)

## NOTES

Discover London's heritage of architecture and history in the collections of the London Room (Central Branch) London Public Libraries and the Regional Room (Weldon Library) U.W.O.

## NOTES

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

London Region Branch welcomes new members. For information about membership and programs please call Mrs. Julia Beck, 1986 President, at 672-3124.

*"If contemporary man destroys the best of the past, no standard remains by which to design a better future."*

George Faure

Glossary of Architectural Terms — Booklet published by ACO, Port Hope Branch, is available at the Sales Desk, 536 Queens Avenue.