

20th Annual Geranium Walk

St. George-Grosvenor



A Good Address

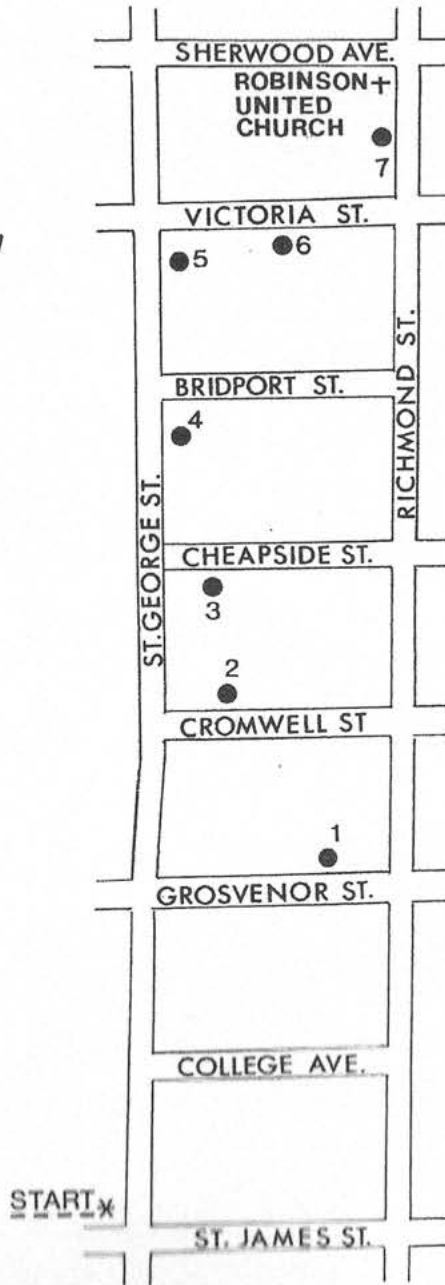
Sunday, June 6, 1993

1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Tea served at
Robinson Memorial United Church
2:45 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

THE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVANCY OF ONTARIO INC.
London Region Branch

Houses with geraniums on front lawn are open for viewing.



The Neighbourhood

The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario (London Region Branch) welcomes you to its Twentieth Annual Geranium Walk. This year we revisit a part of London North which is rich in architecture and history.

The physical features of the St. George-Grosvenor area attracted wealthy Londoners looking for sites which would provide the appropriate setting for their substantial residences. It was on dry land, far

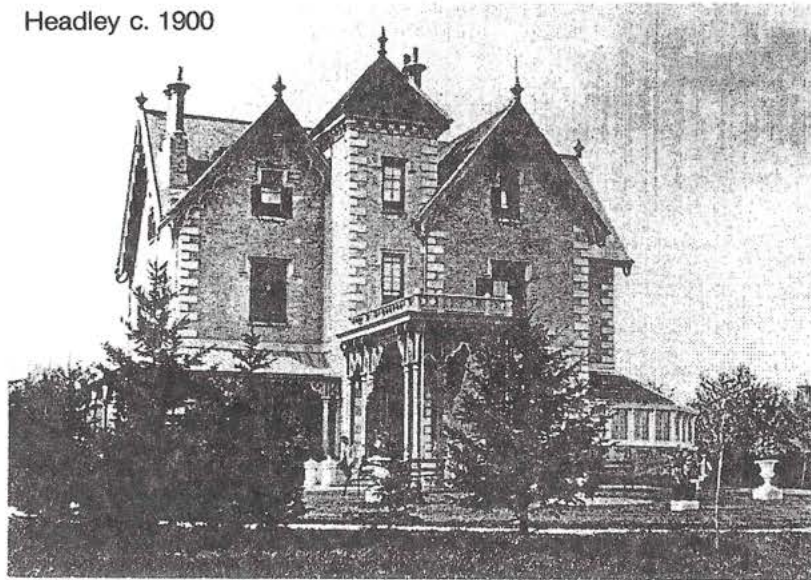
Location of Some Early Estates of London North

1	Henry C.R. Becher	"Thornwood" 1852	
2	Lionel Ridout	"Rough Park" 1856	
3	William P.R. Street	1878/79	Later Huron College
4	William Barker	1854	Later St. Joseph's Hospital
5	Bishopstowe	1886/87	Later Mount Hope
6	Ellis W. Hyman	"Elliston" 1861/62	Later Matthews School Later "Headley"

above the flood plain of the Thames River. A gentle rise of over 40 feet from Oxford Street to Grosvenor provided an impressive view of the city and gave the residents freedom from the smoke and noise below. Even today it is not difficult to envision a country-like view from the banks of the Thames River above Gibbons Park.

The area's character was established in the mid-nineteenth century when five of London's wealthiest citizens located their mansions north of Oxford Street. Surrounded by large park lots, these considerable dwellings were: "Thornwood", "Elliston", "Rough Park" and the Barker and Street residences. Of these residences, "Thornwood" remains. It was built on St. George Street in 1852 for H.C.R. Becher, one of London's leading lawyers. You will discover more about this very significant residence later on in the tour.

Headley c. 1900



"Elliston", c. 1861-62 was the Richmond Street home of Ellis W. Hyman, a noted tanner, whose factory was located a short distance to the south astride Carling's Creek. The property was sold in 1901 to Sir Adam Beck and re-named "Headley". "Headley" was demolished in 1990 and later recreated as part of the Sir Adam Beck Condominiums by Sifton Properties.

"Rough Park" was erected on St. James Street in 1856 by Lionel Ridout, a prosperous hardware merchant. The estate was sold to the Diocese of Huron and became Huron College. During the early 1950s a new college building was constructed on Western Road and the old Huron College buildings were sold and demolished to make way for an

apartment development, "Grosvenor Gate".

The Barker house, with its Italianate detailing and massive cupola framed by a widow's walk, was located on the west side of Richmond Street between Grosvenor and College Avenue. It was built in 1854 for William Barker, a grocer who was London's second mayor. The 3½ acre property was acquired by the Roman Catholic Diocese of London for the Academy of the Sacred Heart in 1857 and was named Mount Hope. Later this property was placed under the care of the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1869 for use as an orphanage. In 1877, a large Gothic Revival style addition was opened. In 1899, Mount Hope was renamed The House of Providence when it became solely a residence-hospital for the elderly and eventually became Marion Villa and St. Mary's Hospital. The Barker house was demolished in 1963. The addition succumbed to the wrecker's hammer in 1980.

Mt. Hope Orphanage
1870s
(Barker House)



St. Joseph's Hospital also started life as a residence. The original building was Judge William P.R. Street's mansion at Richmond and Grosvenor. He was a noted London jurist and earlier a member of the respected legal firm of Becher, Street and Becher. He was appointed Justice of the High Court of Ontario, Queen's Bench Division, in 1887. Justice Street sold the property to the Sisters of St. Joseph who converted it into a hospital in 1888.

These estates acted as magnets for other high-income citizens who built their homes in the blocks north of Oxford. By 1880 a more or less contiguous grouping of houses, many of which were considerable in size, grew up in the blocks bounded by Talbot, Wellington and Grosvenor

Streets. Even the lesser dwellings were sizable solid brick cottages and smaller two-storey town houses occupied by the more prosperous members of the middle class. Most of the people were civil servants, accountants, travellers, minor executives, college professors or small merchants.

Settlement in this neighbourhood was greatly aided by the London Street Railway, which in 1875 laid tracks along Richmond Street as far north as St. James Street. Although the area was distant from downtown, the journey to work was shortened considerably by the horse-pulled trams. Another phase of high-income development was spurred by the extension of the Richmond Street trolley line (electrified in 1895) to Regent Street in 1900. Before the age of the automobile, some of the "best" residential areas were along the main transportation arteries.

Between the wars, growth continued as high-grade housing continued to be built. In the areas that had been developed earlier, much infill took place. These factors led to an eclectic mix of house styles reflecting a long period of development.

Although the neighbourhood is not without its problems - increased traffic, possible high-rise intensification and expansion of institutions - its residents have demonstrated a respect for the history and architecture of the area and have exhibited the tenacity and will to preserve it.

The tent from which we are starting the walk is on the site of "Bishopstowe", built in 1886/87 as the official residence of the Bishop of the Diocese of Huron (Church of England). It was built at the corner of St. James and St. George, at that time part of the Huron College grounds. It remained in use as the Bishop's residence until 1952. In 1953 it became the home of Miss Matthews School, a private school.

Bishopstowe
150 St. James



159 St. James, on the southwest corner of St. James and St. George, is in a style very similar to the Ontario Farmhouse style that started to appear in the 1870s. This house was occupied from 1906 until 1942 by Dr. N.C. James, president of Western from 1908 to 1914.

Note the heavily timbered gables on 177 St. James on the southeast corner.

The decorated gables and dormers of the houses on St. George across from the tent at 230-238 St. George (built c. 1900) have the type of shingling and decorative wooden detailing that survive on many London houses built at the turn-of-the-century.

Walk north on St. George.

The houses at 234-238 St. George were possibly built at the same time as they exhibit similar porches, projecting gables on the south side and dormers on the north side. However, by varying the patterns on some of the elements such as the fascia boards on the gable and the shingling, each house is provided with some originality.



The exterior cladding of 240 St. George, (c. 1909) is unusual for London. Brick extends to the top of the first storey and the rest of the building is covered with wooden shingling which flares out over the top of the brick walls.

242 St. George is an Ontario cottage built c. 1880 and first occupied by Michael Connor, an employee of the Great Western Railway.

Cross Grosvenor at the gates to Gibbons Memorial Park, cross St. George, and proceed along Grosvenor.

28 Grosvenor is an Italianate style house, built in the 1880s. A typical feature of the Italianate is the projecting frontispiece, created by pushing out the centre bay and providing it with its own gable roof. Here the projection has been located to the right of centre and its lower storey has been made wider on the ground floor than it is on the upper storey. This design may have been the work of William Tytler, a contractor who was

the building's first occupant, and probably its builder. A true Italianate would have paired wooden brackets along the eaves. They may have been removed from this building.

32 Grosvenor is a large home probably built in the 1890s, using local white brick, slates and decorative wood. There is a Palladian-style window in the gable. The porch is likely a later addition as it uses simple classical detailing not the decorative wood popular with the late Victorians.

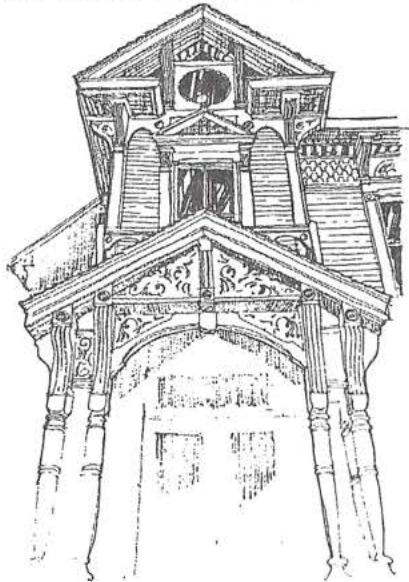


1

36 Grosvenor Street - 1886
Designated under the Ontario Heritage Act

The house at 36 Grosvenor, one of the few substantial frame houses within the old city boundaries, was built in 1886 for William Percival and has subsequently been the residence of prominent Londoners; The Carling family (brewers), Scott's, the Clothiers, and Stevens of Empire Brass (EMCO).

In the middle of the nineteenth century, North America began to produce a unique form of domestic architecture expressive of wood framing techniques combined with the newly available machine technology. The builders' pattern books that began to emerge absorbed many styles of the past and gave rise to inventive house designs: the more substantial the house, the more eclectic and exuberant the architecture.



6

36 Grosvenor is an excellent example of the genre. Asymmetrical in plan, the house exhibits, in its basic design, traces of Italianate, Greek and Gothic Revival styles with some other interesting elements added. The house is founded upon an ashlar stone base and is capped by a decorative slate roof. The linear nature of the framing is emphasized by the vertical corner trim and horizontal banding surrounding the siding infill. This application of horizontal, vertical and diagonal sticks to suggest the structural frame is characteristic of the Stick Style of architecture (also called Carpenter Gothic). This siding is 2" thick double tongue and groove; no mere applied clapboard here. Immediately over the porch roof and below each of the upper windows, the siding is placed diagonally to create a pattern change. Over the line of the window heads and between the eaves brackets there is a frieze of scalloped shingles or siding. Note how the brackets have been restricted in placement and are used as extensions of window jamb trim and the corner trim.

One clever design element should be noted. The overhang of the porch roof is not extensive, presumably to allow more light into the house, but the porch verandah extends some 3 or 4 feet beyond the roof. Without this extension, the front of the house would have had a somewhat mean and stilted appearance. The generous verandah, however, provides a gracious transition to the front lawn.

The house interior is of consistent architectural quality in materials, workmanship and detail. The floral and fretted design motifs are carried through in the stained glasswork, fireplace, tiling and mantelpiece ornamentation, brass hardware fittings and ceiling medallions. The inlaid wood floor and finished woodwork (painstakingly restored by paint removal) is a delight and is beautifully executed.

The shape of 38 Grosvenor, built 1912, is similar to other houses in the neighbourhood, with a projecting bay on the left and a centrally located entry. The asymmetrical plan makes the building essentially Queen Anne. However, the full play of shapes, including towers and decorative brickwork or wood detailing is all but gone.

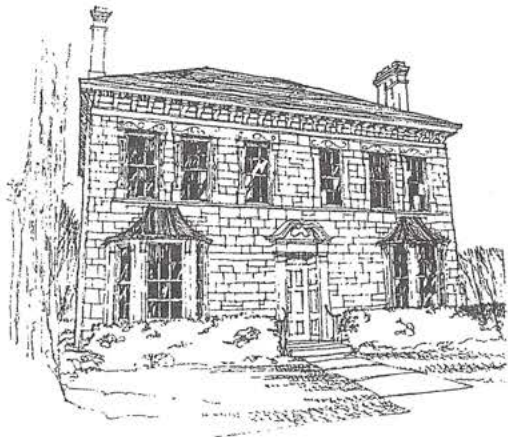
Turn left at Richmond and proceed north.

Another simplified Queen Anne is around the corner at 887 Richmond, built 1907. Here a single gable roof covers the whole building, rarely seen on the Queen Anne. However, decorative half-timbering fills the gable.

Similarly, 893 Richmond (built 1908-9) displays the irregular plan, but here there is no gable treatment at all. The only adornment is the variety of window treatments on the projecting wing. The house was built for William Gorman, president of Gorman, Eckert (now Club House Foods Inc.).

7

895 Richmond is an early Georgian Revival, many examples of which can be seen in this neighbourhood, and elsewhere in London North. The house has a symmetrical facade covered with stone, and a hip roof. Each of the window surrounds on the upper storey has a unique design in the lintel. The bracketed eaves and the two lower storey bays are unusual in a Georgian Revival. 887, 893 and 895 Richmond are all used by St. Joseph's Health Centre as offices or patient examination areas.



903 Richmond appears to be two buildings joined with a boomtown front. The south half is likely the earliest and was possibly a house. The north half, extending down Cromwell, probably dates from the post-war period. A grocery store occupied the site and possibly the south half of the present building as early as 1878.

Turn left onto Cromwell.

194 Cromwell is a hip-roofed Italianate possibly built in the 1870s.



2

186 Cromwell Street - 1902

Listed in the Inventory

Our hosts this afternoon are perhaps the third or fourth generation of McLeishs to occupy this site. The lot upon which the house was built is first mentioned in the record of 1888 when it was sold for an undisclosed price. The first indication of a house at 186 Louisa (as it was then known) comes from the London City Directory of 1902.

The house is identical to the one at 190 Cromwell (built in 1897) though a reverse image of it. Minor exterior alterations to the porch

and side door have done little to obscure their common ancestry.

This wood frame house is set upon a cut limestone foundation. It is clad in one layer of locally derived yellow brick. Red mortar is visible, though faded, between the bricks above all the windows and doors.

While the porch railings are of a later date, this house and its neighbour are well preserved. The iron hitching post is original, though it would have been further from the house when used to secure horses.

The front door, with ornate cast hinges, is original as is the stained glass panel above the transom. The moulding around the doors has bull's-eyes in the corners. Notice the stained glass panel to the right of the door in the vestibule. It is beginning to buckle with age.

The downstairs floors are oak, and have recently been refinished. Because visitors to the house would not have seen them, the upstairs floors are pine which was less expensive. The baseboard moulding is much wider than current style (and wood) allows for. Continue through the dining room to the kitchen. Little of the original kitchen can now be seen. Please exit by the back door. **On your return to Cromwell visit the barn at the back.**

The barn in the back yard dates back to the time when horses had to be housed and cared for on the property. This is one of the few remaining examples from this period. It is of post-and-beam construction. The hayloft above the stable is now used for storage.

The laneway behind the house would have served as an important corridor for the movement of children, goods and gossip around the neighbourhood.

Notice the rusticated brick courses used in the house at 182 Cromwell and 328 St. George next door. Starting in the late 1890s this type of brick was often used as decorative detailing around windows and in string courses where stone would once have been used.

Turn right onto St. George. Look across the road at "Thornwood". **PLEASE DO NOT GO ONTO THE PROPERTY.**

"Thornwood" at 329 St. George is a Victorian structure of great charm. It was constructed in 1852 to replace an earlier wooden house that had been destroyed by fire. It was built by Henry Corry Rowley Becher, a barrister. The youngest son of a British naval officer, Henry Becher had come to the New World in 1835 to seek his fortune.

The house is carefully sited on its cliff-top position above what is now Gibbons Park. The fact that this romantic situation and

picturesque style of architecture were greatly favoured by many writers of the time likely influenced Mr. Becher in his choice of both.

Becher knew many of the major political and literary figures of his time and "Thornwood" was a focal point for London's busy social life. Some of the important people who have visited "Thornwood" in the course of its history include Sir John A. Macdonald, Sir Robert Borden, the Prince of Wales (later Edward VII), Winston Churchill (who planted a birch tree between the main house and coach house) and several Fathers of Confederation and Governors General.

The house itself exemplifies an unusually sophisticated and interesting treatment of the Gothic Revival style. Instantly striking are the Tudor hoodmolds over the windows and the full-height gabled entrance bay surrounded by a drop pinnacle bracketed to the eaves.



The front entrance includes a carved wooden door with Gothic detailing, two sidelights with carved wooden panels at the bottom, three lights above in a lancet pattern and a rectangular transom with carved wood and glazing inset in a gothic arch with carved moulded surround. One of "Thornwood's" most attractive architectural elements is the verandah. Constructed in 1856, it is composed of chamfered porch supports connected with Tudor arches with pendant attachments. The pointed Tudor arches are echoed in the main entrance way and interior stairway.

Two major additions to "Thornwood", to the east and north of the original block, date in part from the late nineteenth century. An effort

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Please check your areas of interest:

- Inventory research
- Architectural history
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- Publicity
- Volunteer work at *London Regional Resource Centre for Heritage and the Environment (Grosvenor Lodge)*
- Geranium Walk
- Bus tours

ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVANCY OF ONTARIO - LONDON BRANCH

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was made to render the additions sympathetic by repeating certain details, such as the drop pinnacles and decorative bargeboards of the gables. In 1858 the coach house was also built in the Gothic Revival style to complement the main building.

The grounds of the "Thornwood" estate used to include most of what is now Gibbons Park but now include only the hillside west of the house. The extent of the estate will be further diminished by a future development that is planned for the site. Discussions on the future of the house are ongoing.

Continue along St. George.

330 and 332 St. George were both built at the turn-of-the-century using local white brick. A large addition has been made to the rear of 330 in a very unobtrusive manner.

As you approach Cheapside notice the garage on your right which belongs to the house on the corner of Cheapside and St. George (101 Cheapside). The garage occupies a former stable.

Turn right onto Cheapside.

101 Cheapside was built in 1891 for Peter W. D. Brodrick, manager of the London branch of the Molson's Bank. This house is in a unique style for its period. When it was built, an open porch joined the gable and the tower, both simply detailed. The open porch has since been enclosed and a new window installed. The wood siding and the large slate shingles ensure a smooth transition from wall to roof.





3

191 Cheapside Street - 1909 *Listed in the Inventory*

191 Cheapside was built in 1909 for Frank Lawson, the owner of a printing firm founded in 1882 with H. J. Jones. The business prospered through the development of specialty products starting with pre-gummed druggists' labels followed by advertising calendars and cigarette boxes. Following Frank's premature death in 1911, his son Ray (later Lt.-Gov. of Ontario) took over the business and lived here for several years. Today the house is occupied by Frank's great-grandson, William Kennedy, and his family.

In scale and detailing the Lawson/Kennedy House is somewhat reminiscent of the Queen Anne style then passing out of favour. On the whole the facade is more balanced and less elaborately detailed than most Queen Annes. What might have been a turret, a key feature of the Queen Anne style, is now a mere dormer. However, the highly decorated gable with a Palladian-style opening and half-timbering would not have been out of place on a Queen Anne. Another important element of the street facade is the large porch featuring classical columns and capitals set on stone piers.

Most of the exterior detailing is in very good shape including the slate roof. The porch's second storey balustrade is the only significant loss. On the west side, a large sunroom with an upper storey has replaced a smaller sunroom.

The main entrance is composed of two separate leaded glass doors each complete with sidelights and transom. They bring visitors into a hall featuring beamed ceilings, panelled walls and columns with Ionic capitals similar to those used in the porch. The pattern in the wood on the floor of the room on the left is worth noting, as is the fireplace. More classical detailing can be found on the mantelpiece in the room across the hall.

The sunroom is one of the most interesting features of the house. The fixture in the sunroom has been moved from the dining room next door. Notice the interesting carvings on the dining room mantle. It, along with the beamed ceiling, built-in sideboard and multi-paned windows, are all original. The second level of the sunroom is visible through the doorway of the master bedroom. An interesting window composed of bits of coloured glass is visible from the foot of the stairway to the third floor.

The house at 199 Cheapside was remodelled extensively, c. 1940, by London architect O. Roy Moore who extended it into the lot to the west

formerly occupied by 197 Cheapside (which had been moved off the property). The original basement and upper level of 199, built c. 1881, still exist within the remodelling. The house which had been at 197 was also built in the 1880s and probably had a similar appearance to 195 which is now the oldest untouched building on the block, built in 1885.

Return along Cheapside.

192 Cheapside was built in the same year as the Lawson/Kennedy house and provides an interesting contrast to it. It was built for W.E. Greene, Secretary of Greene-Swift, a clothing wholesaler and manufacturer. Its overall shape resembles the four-square house which would become popular in the 1920s, but with a tower attached. Another interesting feature is the unusual carbuncle-like brick.

180 Cheapside is a Georgian Revival built in 1938 for a descendant of the cigar maker, John McNee. Of particular interest is the doorway surmounted by a finely scrolled pediment. As you pass the house, look for the white fountain in the side yard.



The house at 100 Cheapside was built c. 1898 for Cy Warman and his wife. Warman, (1855-1914) was a railway man who in the course of his career moved from the engine to the advertising department.

The firm of Moore and Henry, London architects, chose the American Shingle style for the house, possibly at the insistence of the owner. The dominant element of this style is the shingling that appears in the huge gables and on the walls of the upper storey. The visual impact of the wood shingling which would have been the original roof covering must have been considerable.

In 1948 the house became the Chapter House of Kappa Alpha Theta Sorority. The addition on the east side was made in the 1960s.

Turn right onto St. George. Notice the fine example of a Tudor Revival across the street at 381 St. George.



Half-timbered gable,
381 St. George

Proceed north on St. George.

4

428 St. George Street - c. 1913

Listed in the Inventory

The setting of this Tudor Revival home with its well-treed raised lot establishes its position of prominence on its corner lot. This home has a wealth of fine exterior architectural elements that are well worth studying before you enter. For example, the brickwork is unusual having an alternating pattern of dark and light bricks. As well, many of the characteristics of the Tudor Revival style are included in the design of this house, such as the half-timbering above the first storey. The gables have an attractive design in the timbering at the peak. The narrowed windows in groupings of either three or four give the illusion of casement windows and this is another characteristic of the Tudor Revival style. Most of the windows have leaded glass panes. The oriel window on the north wall has a hooded lintel and the sill is supported by simple wood brackets. Rusticated stone is used for the foundation, window sills and lintels. Notice the three clay chimney pots.

The entrance porch sets the tone for the interior. The roof supports

for the porch feature roughly-hewn timber pieces in keeping with the style of the building.

The interior of this home features a number of interesting elements that add to the charm and style of this well-built structure. Throughout the main floor the hardwood floors have been laid with a border which follows the outline of the rooms. On the left, as you enter this home, is the living room with a modified inglenook that directs the eye to the beautiful white marble fireplace with its grape and vine decoration. (The inglenook is the arched area at the fireplace end). The wood trim in all the rooms reflects the Arts and Crafts style also popular during this period. The entrances to both the living room and the dining room have pocket style doors in a design that again reflects the Arts and Crafts style. The landing of the stairway has a leaded and coloured glass window with colours of green, yellow and orange. The dining room can be viewed from the entrance to the kitchen. The kitchen has had a very recent addition. When you leave by the rear door, note the care that has been taken to match the patterned brick work and rusticated stone foundation of the addition with that of the original. You may leave the property by the steps that lead to Bridport Street or by the driveway. Be sure to stop a moment to study the north facade of this handsome home.

Proceed down Bridport to St. George and turn right.



5

438 St. George Street - 1919

Listed in the Inventory

According to Lutman's book *The North and the East*, the house at 438 St. George Street was designed and built in 1919 by the firm of Watt and Blackwell with their associate W.E. Murray, whose house was around the corner at 193 Bridport. The one-storey stucco over brick design is strongly reminiscent of Ryerson School three blocks east on Victoria, also designed by Watt and Blackwell.

The home was built for Hugh McCrimmon and then for many years was the home of Oliver Keene, the Secretary-Treasurer of Ontario Furniture, Limited, a London based company whose store at 80 Dundas Street is now the home of Duthler Textiles. In the fifties, the house was purchased by William Scott of Scott's of London.

This home is an example of the California Spanish style of architecture, often found in the United States but quite rare in London, Ontario.

Set high on a hill overlooking the Thames, the original approach was

by a steep stair flanked by square gateposts. The present owners recently have had the hill down to the sidewalk completely landscaped and also plan to improve the side hill flanking Victoria Street.

Inside, a unique feature and one rarely found in London is the long narrow atrium containing a pool. This no doubt kept the home cool in the summertime before the advent of air-conditioning. Skylights admit needed light to the centre of the square building.

Exit by the back door, turn right and then immediately left. Walk along the lane and look for the geranium next to the white garage on your left. Enter 199 Victoria through the back gate. Take a look inside the tongue-and-groove garage as you pass by it. It was built prior to 1929 and contains some ingenious shallow cupboards.



6

199 Victoria Street - 1910-11
Listed in the Inventory

The house at 199 Victoria was listed as a new house in the 1910-11 *City Directory*. It was then (and for several years afterwards) the only house on the block; with its substantial appearance, the house must have looked like the manor on a small country estate. The house appears to have been built for Harry Rechnitzer, who owned the wholesale flour and provision establishment, H. Rechnitzer & Co. Rechnitzer's tenancy was very brief, however. By 1913, 199 Victoria was inhabited by John and Mary Bindner, who remained until 1951; in his later years, at least, John worked as a real estate agent. Since 1951, the house has been home to five other families.

As you approach the house, notice the building materials used in constructing the addition at the back. The current owners have made a conscientious effort to select materials sympathetic to the style of the house: pink mortar, relatively smooth bricks, stone facings and, on the roof, a synthetic slate material. This is also evident in the use of pine wainscotting inside the sunroom.

Classical detailing and some concern for classical symmetry is evident inside the house. The doors and windows, both upstairs and down, are surmounted by lintels with dentil and egg-and-dart mouldings. The same motifs are displayed on both the main newel post and on the smaller paired posts of the landings; it is also of interest that the balusters reflect the design of those on the porch. On the second floor, the hall flows away from the stairs in a T-shape, with doors placed at symmetrical points. In

the sitting room, one can see a fireplace with its original Art Nouveau screen; visitors should also note the varicoloured tiles of the fireplace surround.

The house has undergone many changes as various owners left their mark. An attempt has been made to maintain the original character of the house by introducing pine elements to match the old workwork: the living room mantelpiece and the hall flooring, both late additions, are in pine.

As you leave the house, stop to study its exterior. The house is a good example of a stylistic type popular in London during the decade before World War I. It retains some characteristics of the earlier Queen Anne style. These include the classical details (for example, the Doric columns, the balustrade, the pediment of the porch, and the Palladian window in the gable), the asymmetrical design of the facade (with its protruding gable wing), and a tendency towards a picturesque roofline (with two gables and high chimneys accentuated by corbelled brickwork). But, as with other typical houses of the Edwardian period, the irregular and potentially flamboyant elements of the Queen Anne design have been treated in a restrained, simplified way: the protrusion is shallow, the gables are of the same height as the hipped roof behind, and the elaborate shinglework of earlier gables has been replaced by small slates, shaped like those on the roof.

Proceed to Richmond and turn left onto Richmond.



7

1055 Richmond - c. 1886
Listed in the Inventory

The house at 1055 Richmond may well have been built for a Miss Fannie Saunders about 1886. She occupied the house from 1886 to about 1931. After this Louise and Charlotte Shelton bought the house. They ran a stationery supplies shop (LC&J Shelton) at 715 Richmond.

Many elements of the facade of this house are very well preserved, especially the extensive gable treatment which includes bargeboards and a peak filled with decorative cutwork, behind which can be seen a pattern of applied boards echoing the gable treatment. Two substantial bay windows, one on the front and one on the side, survive, complete with iron cresting. The horizontal wood siding visible to the right of the front door under the porch roof probably covers the entire house and has since been plastered over.

This building's compact side-hall plan allows the formal rooms to be quite spacious. Both the parlour and dining rooms are well-lit by their respective bay windows. The impact of the entryway is strengthened by the elaborate plaster detailing to either side of the entry arch near the stairway. Note that most of the original woodwork remains intact.

What is now the kitchen has been created by removing a wall that divided the space into what was probably a summer and a winter kitchen. A large amount of new living space has been added above the kitchen. On the side, a small sitting room has been recently added.

Enter the back garden through the kitchen door and return to Richmond through the gate at the side of the house.

1057 Richmond, built in 1891, is almost identical to its neighbour at 1055 in lay-out and arrangement of exterior elements. The porch, which exhibits a fair amount of decorative wood detailing compared to the porch at 1055, is undoubtedly original. The shingling and the window in the gable are both reflective of a later time period. The gable is not likely to have had bargeboards originally.

The former parsonage at 1059 Richmond, built in 1909, is similar to the modified Queen Annes elsewhere on the walk and, like them, features two projecting gables with half-timber detailing. The houses from 1055 to 1059 Richmond show an interesting transition in style among three houses of similar size over a span of about 25 years.



8

**Robinson Memorial
United Church - 1912
1051 Richmond Street**

Robinson Memorial United Church was dedicated for service on March 17, 1912, replacing a small white wooden church with a small steeple that had served worshippers since 1891. The North Richmond church, known as the North End or Richmond Mission, was sponsored by First Methodist Church, now Metropolitan United Church, in downtown London. The land was the gift of Thomas McCormick, and the wooden building was contributed by George Robinson and T.G. Whiskard. Open air services were held on the site in the summer of 1890. George Robinson also contributed towards the present church building fund.

When Robinson Memorial was built, the competition to design the church was won by London architect William G. Murray. The challenge

facing Murray was to build an inspiring edifice on a 68-foot-by-124-foot lot next to an already-standing Parsonage. Murray handled the challenge by designing a tall tower at the outermost corner, the height of which seems to be increased by the very long, narrow windows and the crenelated top. When looking at the church, the eye is carried down by the gabled roof and much shorter tower on the southeast corner. The entryway has since been altered. On the north side, depth is achieved by a series of diminishing gabled roofs. Buttresses decorate and support the main corners and the wall space is broken by an interesting arrangement of windows.

The interior also gives the impression of height with the domed ceiling and the light-coloured wood in the pulpit and pews. The new church had a seating capacity of 700 and the auditorium and Sunday School were separated by a sliding door which could be raised to create one room. It was heated by three furnaces. The pulpit was in a corner of the auditorium. The former Sunday School is now the choir loft; its street entrance from Sherwood Ave. is now the library. The meeting rooms in the basement were entered from a door in the south tower.

By 1950, the Robinson Memorial congregation was again finding itself cramped for space. At the same time, members Mr. and Mrs. H.T.N. Reynolds donated \$20,000 towards the \$155,000 cost of enlarging the Church and Sunday School and renovating the church auditorium. In June 1952, Reynolds Hall was dedicated and services held in the gymnasium until dedication of the remodelled sanctuary in October 1952.

In addition to Robinson Memorial's interesting architecture, it also features some outstanding stained glass windows. In 1912, Hobbs Glass Company made the rose window and the upper side windows. Then in 1953, to complete the building program, Edwards Glass Co. Ltd. of London installed a large stained glass window in the chancel. All the remaining stained glass windows in the Church were installed in the 1960s and 1980s and are the work of artist Christopher Wallis of London, noted for his fresh uncluttered style and originality of design.

DESIGNATION

Many of the buildings described or noted in this booklet are on the City of London's *Inventory of Heritage Resources*. The *Inventory* is a list, compiled by London's Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC), of nearly 2,000 buildings and structures located throughout the city which have architectural or historical importance. All of them are eligible for designation under the provisions of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. Owners of listed properties can request designation by City Council through LACAC and the City of London's Heritage

Planner. Designation, which is done through passage of a bylaw, provides some protection for the building against alterations and demolition. (Copies of the *Inventory* are available from the City Clerk for \$5.00).

The preservation of historically and architecturally important structures provides all citizens with an understanding of how their community has developed. ACO London Region offers grants for the restoration of listed buildings provided the owner agrees to designate. This walk is one way which the ACO has of raising funds for this important work.

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Historical Map: Base map - *Map of the City of London, Canada West* by Samuel Peters, 1855. (Regional Collection, D.B. Weldon Library, U.W.O.). Modifications - Maureen Ryan.

Photos: Regional Collection, D.B. Weldon Library, U.W.O.

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The following publications were consulted in the preparation of this booklet:

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