



1396 Winchester Road East
Hancock Home

City of Oshawa

Prepared For: Heritage Oshawa
By: Melissa Cole, Researcher

melissadave@rogers.com

March 2008

**1396 Winchester Road East
Hancock Family Home
Oshawa, ON**

I. LOCATION

The subject property is on the south ½ of Lot 1 and Lot 2, Concession 6 of East Whitby Township, now within the City of Oshawa. The dwelling at 1396 Winchester Road East is located on the northeast corner of Winchester Road East and Grandview Street North on the boarder of Oshawa and Clarington.

II. EARLY LOT HISTORY

The 200 acres of Lot 2, Concession 6, East Whitby Township were patented from the Crown on May 17, 1802 by Deborah Medanch. On June 7, 1830 Deborah Medanch sold the 200 acres of Lot 2, Concession 6 to Ezra Gifford. Ezra Gifford sold the S ½ property to Lyman Gifford on April 10, 1835. The property remained in the Gifford family until November 6, 1917 when John Hutchings purchased the property. See details below for the south ½ of Lot 1, Concession 6.

The 100 acres of the south ½ of Lot 1, Concession 6 were patented from the Crown on August 10, 1801 by James Carscaller (spelling?). On September 23, 1826 Thomas Miller purchased the S ½ from Peter Orr. On December 3, 1834 Thomas Miller sold the S ½ to Elijah Ketchum. On January 1, 1846 Elijah Ketchum sold the S ½ of the property to Lyman Gifford. The S ½ of the property remained in the Gifford family until October 6, 1917 when John Hutchings purchased the property & house from Everitt A. Gifford (Lyman's son) for \$7900. On November 3, 1922 John Hutchings sold the S ½ of the property to his son Horace Hutchings for \$8000. On March 25, 1949, Helen Addie Marie Hancock purchased the property from her mother Mrs. Rhoda Hutchings (Horace Hutchings widow – he passed away and in his Will bequeathed the property to his wife) for \$8000. Portions of the property have been sold over the years for various purposes. A portion of the lot was expropriated by Ontario Hydro by the Minister of Energy and portions of the property were expropriated by the City of Oshawa, to form part of the public highway known as Winchester Road East.

The home is currently owned by the Hancock family and it has been in this family since approximately 1917.

Note:

There is a possibility that the land in which this property sits may be expropriated to form part of the 407. See appendix 1a and 1b.

INDIVIDUALS/OWNERS/COMPANY SIGNIFICANCE

Gifford Family

The present dwelling, located at 1396 Winchester Road East, was possibly built by East Whitby Township Farmer Lyman Gifford or his son William Gifford in approximately 1850 - 1860¹.

The 1881 East Whitby Township Census lists Lyman Gifford age 69, who was head of the household and his wife Hanna age 75. Also listed as living in the residence is William Gifford age 40 who was a farmer, and his wife Hilda age 39 and two children Lyman L. age 14 and Hiram E. age 15. William Gifford is the son of Lyman and Hanna Gifford. The Gifford's had a small dairy business which was operated from their farm.² There is a possibility that a small dairy business was run out of the north addition of the home.

Lyman and Hanna had a total of 9 children.³ One of their daughters was Margaret Gifford who married Thomas Conant. Margaret and Thomas Conant had a son named Gordon Conant who was mayor of Oshawa from 1916 - 1917, a solicitor, founding member of the Oshawa Utilities Commission, Ontario Attorney - General from (1937-1942), Premier of Ontario (1942 - 1943), and Senior Master of the Ontario Supreme Court. Gordon Conant married Verna Smith, daughter of E.D. Smith who was associated with the famed jam and fruit company. Mr. Gordon D. Conant passed away on January 2, 1953 in Oshawa. His wife, Mrs. Verna Conant was a well known and respected individual in Oshawa. She formed the first Girl Guides branch in Oshawa, and was one of the founding members of the Oshawa Historical Society, where she had the honour of being the first president. In 1949, she co-founded the Oshawa Little Theatre. Mrs. Conant was also involved in hospital services. She was the first vice-president of the Oshawa Hospital Auxiliary and served on the Board of Governors of the Women's College Hospital.

Hancock Family

The Hancock family has lived in the home since approximately 1917. The home and property were purchased in 1917 by John Hutchings, the current owner's great grandfather. The property was purchased by Horace Hutchings in 1922, the current owners grandfather, for \$8000. Horace Hutchings died in September 1948. Shortly after his widow Rhoda Hutchings sold the property to her daughter Helen Addie Marie Hancock in 1949. The purchase price was \$8000. The property is currently owned by Joyce Hancock, daughter of Helen Addie Marie Hancock. Joyce Hancock runs a successful and award winning Teaching and Sewing Studio out of the home.

IV. ARCHITECTURE

Style and Construction Date

The subject dwelling is architecturally significant as it is an example of a small gothic revival cottage with a 3-bay design (centre door, flanking windows). This particular design was promoted in the 19th century by American landscape architects Andrew J. Downing (1815-1852), as well as the Canadian Farmer in 1865 where it was featured complete with drawings for the farmer to build. The Canadian Farmer identified this style of Gothic Revival Cottage as a "cheap country dwelling house".

This is a 1½ storey, stone dwelling with a steep roof pierced by tall chimneystacks. This dwelling has a small centre-gable and simple verge boarding. It appears that there may have been a front verandah that extended across the front of the house on the north façade. There is an extension on the north façade, which appears to be original to the structure, although additions have been made to this extension. The original purpose of this addition may have been a dairy farm. See Gifford family history above.

Entranceway

The centre entrance door case, which is hidden by the enclosed porch, is classical in design, with sidelights and transom that surrounds the door case. The door is paneled. The panes of glass in the sidelights and transom appear to be original.

Masonry

The dwelling is clad in stone/slate. The foundation is fieldstone.

Window Openings

The window openings are flat, simple sash windows with stone heads. The frames and lugsills appear to be made of wood. The existing sash has 6x6 panes. The windows are symmetrically placed on the ground level with segmented brick heads over the windows reflecting the vernacular style of the era. The south façade features an arched lancet window in the small centre-gable. The east and west façade feature 6x6 sash windows on the upper and lower storey. It appears that the windows and the glass panes are original.

Roof

The characteristic component of the Gothic Revival style is the steep roof with centre gable, which is reflected in this dwelling. This particular dwelling contains two tall chimneys on the north and south ends of the roof; they appear to be original to the structure. The roof cladding is modern with black asphalt shingles.

Addition and Outbuildings

The north façade features an addition/extension which may have been added by the original owner. There is a possibility that the Gifford family used this addition to run a small Dairy Business, although this is not a known fact. The portion of the addition built directly off the home was where the summer kitchen was located. The other portion of the building was a drive shed and at one time a McLaughlin Buggy was stored in this building⁴.

The interior of this addition has been modified, although the original wooden beams are still intact and exposed. On the north and south side of the structure, a 17 foot addition was added by the current owners. (This portion of the building includes windows on the north side). The current owner runs a successful and award winning sewing business out of the extension of the home.

There are outbuildings on the site of unknown date. They were on the site when the Hutchings family purchased the property from the Gifford family.

Interior

Most of the interior is appears to be original and it has been lovingly restored by the current owners. See photos in appendix 2.

V. HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

This residence, constructed in the Gothic Revival style in approximately 1850/1860, based on the architectural design, was possibly built by Lyman Gifford or his son William Gifford; both were East Whitby Township farmers. The home has been owned by the same family Hutchings/Hancock for approximately 91 years, almost a century. It is a well-designed structure built in a style that was promoted in the 19th century by academics J.C. London and Andrew J. Downing, as well as the Canadian Farmer in 1865 where it was featured complete with drawings for the farmer to build. The Canadian Farmer identified this style of Gothic Revival Cottage as a “cheap country dwelling house”. This beautiful Gothic Revival Cottage survives on a large lot with mature vegetation. The current owners run a successful business out of this picturesque home.

ENDNOTES

¹ These dates are based on architectural details and census findings.

² Gifford Genealogy File, Oshawa Community Archives Genealogy File, Notes from a donation of artifacts that were donated by Owen Gifford. Lyman Gifford was his great grandfather and William Gifford was his grandfather.

³ Gifford File, Oshawa Community Archives Genealogy File, Family Tree

⁴ Interview with Helen Addie Marie Hancock and Joyce Hancock, the current owner of the home.

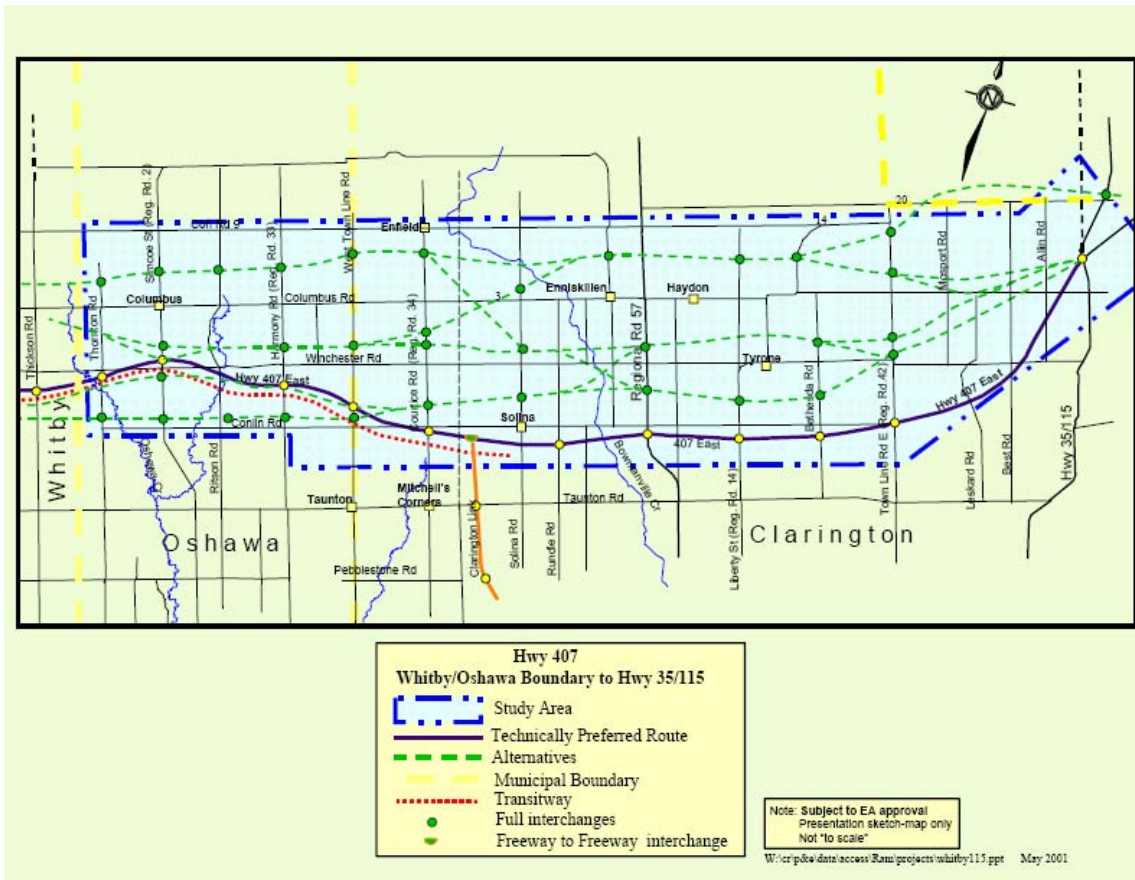
**APPENDIX
1a**



Reference:

Highway 407 East Completion, Historical Overview, Route Planning & Environmental Assessment Studies 1989-1994, Ontario Ministry of Transportation. October 17, 2002

1b



Reference:

Highway 407 East Completion, Historical Overview, Route Planning & Environmental Assessment Studies 1989-1994, Ontario Ministry of Transportation. October 17, 2002

2. Photos of the interior of the home.



Built in Cupboard – Original to the home



Stair case – Original to the home



Fireplace Mantel and stone work – Original to the home (gas insert was added at a later date)

Photos taken February 2008

3. Early photo of the home.



1395 Winchester Road East, circa 1930 – The north extension can be seen in this photograph. The porch has been removed from the front of the home.

4. Current photographs of the home



1396 Winchester Road East, South Façade - February 2008



1396 Winchester Road East, East Façade (Photo courtesy of www.joycehancock.com)



1396 Winchester Road East, Entranceway - February 2008

SOURCES

Blumenson, John. *Ontario Architecture: A Guide to Styles and Building Terms 1784 to the Present*. Toronto 1990.

Conveyances Abstract. Durham Regional Land Registrar's Office, Whitby.

Conant, Subject File, Oshawa Community Archives

Gifford, Subject File, Oshawa Community Archives

Highway 407 East Completion, Historical Overview, Route Planning & Environmental Assessment Studies 1989-1994, Ontario Ministry of Transportation. October 17, 2002

Joyce and Helen Addie Marie Hancock, Home Owners, Interview February 23, 2008

Ontario Architecture. www.ontarioarchitecture.org