

RESEARCH REPORT



452 Simcoe Street North
Oshawa

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Historical Attributes

Summary

The dwelling at 452 Simcoe Street North was most likely built between 1920 and 1923. A dwelling in this location has been a landmark since the early twentieth century. This home is a representative of the late Georgian Revival style. The house survives on a medium sized lot with mature vegetation.

This home is located on a street that was laid out as early as 1822 and was originally known as the Reach Road (Beer's Atlas 1877:1). Today that road is Simcoe Street which lies on a north and south axis and leads directly to the lakefront and harbour where Oshawa's first settlements began. Simcoe Street became the preferred location for the main commercial, institutional and residential buildings of the early settlement.

Early Lot History

The subject property is currently located within Lot 11, Part 10 Concession 2 within Plan number 201, Lot 11, Part 10, OS133684, Oshawa. The dwelling at 452 Simcoe Street North is on the west side of Simcoe Street North, south of Buckingham Street and north of Adelaide Avenue.

John Borlese Warren owned the original 200 acres of Concession 2, Lot 11 in 1836. Warren began the earliest subdivision of this land into $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ acre lots beginning in May 1837. The value of the land increased substantially during the first half of the nineteenth century rising from 125 pounds in 1816 to 1500 pounds by 1836 (Whitby Abstract Index volume "A" p.26).

Plan 201 was filed on December 8 1919. R.S. McLaughlin owned the lot and sold it to *Modern Dwellings Limited* in 1920 who in turn sold it to Alice M. Houston on August 20, 1920. Little information is known about Alice M. Houston.

Herbert E. Smith

Colonel Herbert Smith purchased the home from Alice M. Houston in 1930. Herbert Smith was associated with the military for numerous years prior to and up to 1916. A *Toronto Star* article from 1916 reports that "a Lieut. H.E. Smith reported missing overseas after he had joined the 37th Battalion, later to be transferred to another". He was not residing at 452 Simcoe Street North during this time.

The *1924 City of Oshawa Directory* indicates a Herbert E. Smith residing at 452 Simcoe Street North.

An article from the *Toronto Star*, September 1, 1927 states that Major H. E. Smith purchased the local branch of *Parkers Dye Works*, a cleaning, pressing and dyeing business. The *1928 Vernon's City Directory* lists H.E. Smith as the manager of the Parkers Dye works that was located at 22 ½ King Street East Oshawa.

Herbert E. Smith was the first president of the Rotary club in Oshawa. He passed away in 1939.

Dr. Archibald Francis MacKay

The Smith Family sold 452 Simcoe Street North to Dr. Archibald Francis MacKay and his spouse Nina Louisa MacKay in 1939. Dr. MacKay was born September 12, 1895, in Truro, N.S., he was the son of John D. MacKay. His ancestors were Scottish and settled in Pictou N.S., in 1820. He was Captain in the C.E.F., 85th Highlanders from 1915-1919. He was educated at Colchester Academy, Dalhousie and Toronto Universities; he received his Degree M.B. in 1924. He began his practice in Oshawa in 1925 at 258 King Street East. He belonged to the Masonic Club, Delta Upsilon Fraternity and was a member of the Oshawa Golf Club. The 1936 City Directory lists Archibald Francis MacKay as the Medical Officer of Health, residing at 452 Simcoe Street North phone 3-8684. The home remained in the MacKay family until 1958 when it was sold to a Russell Gill.

Recent and Current Owners

[REDACTED] M. F. I. P.P.A. Sec. 14 (1) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Architectural Attributes

Architectural Background/Date of Construction

The exact date of construction is not known. It has been noted as being constructed in 1915 although the land registry documents and city directories do not indicate this. The Subdivision plans located at the Whitby Land Registry Office indicate that this house sits within Plan 201. This plan was established in 1919, it featured a long strip of building lots that were laid out on the west side of Simcoe Street between Hospital Court and Buckingham Avenue. *The 1921 Vernon's City of Oshawa Directory* does not have a listing for 452 Simcoe Street North. *The 1924 Vernon's City of Oshawa Directory* does have a listing for the address 452 Simcoe Street North. This indicates that the home was most likely built between 1921 and 1923.

Its symmetrical composition, simple detailing of the facade with the horizontal emphasis and the grouped windows are typical of the Georgian revival style.

Style and Form

This is a stately, 2 ½ storey rectangular form home that has a shallow gabled bell cast roof and a simple cornice. The arrangement of the windows and door create a symmetrical three bay facade typical of Georgian architecture.

The main facade faces east onto Simcoe Street North and features a three bay design with a central entranceway. The main entranceway, classical in design, is sheltered under a small gabled roof porch supported by wooden posts. A two storey extension is built off the south facade with archways located on the first storey that enclose an open verandah.

Architectural Details

Foundation

The foundation is cement and would most likely house a basement level originally containing a fruit cellar, laundry, coal and boiler or furnace rooms and storage rooms or even a billiard room.

Wall Cladding

The exterior is cladded in stucco that has been painted a blue-gray colour.

Roof

The bell cast roof is a unique feature of this home and the integrity of the roof has been maintained with a replacement cedar shingle roof. The roofline is side gabled with simple cornice moldings. There is one chimney that peeks the roofline on the west facade.

Window Openings

All window openings are flat with stone lugsills and stone/cement headers, which are contrasting in colour to the rest of the home. The home features casement windows that contain mainly multiple (double, triple and four) window compositions with narrow sashes

- this is a 20th century adaptation. This also indicates that the home was most likely built during the early 20th century.

Entranceways

One of the many outstanding features of this house is the extension that springs from the south side of the house that is a double storey porch, enclosed upper storey with an entranceway leading out from the first floor to a porch featuring archways which open to the driveway and the front and rear yards.

The front entranceway featuring double doors is sheltered under a small gabled roof porch supported by wooden posts that lead out to dual staircases on the north and south side. The gabled roof porch/portico is classical in design, but not original to the home. A photograph of 452 Simcoe Street North was featured in the *1928 Oshawa Reformer, Special Homes Edition*, the front entranceway was simpler in design containing a single door, with sidelights and a transom. There was no gabled roof or dual stair case leading to the front porch. The window openings featured awnings above each window.

Condition

The current owner has been conscientious in the repair and maintenance of this dwelling. All modifications are in keeping with the original style and incorporate historic materials. Original elements have been retained, where possible, and infilled or replaced only as needed. Care has been taken when introducing custom made reproductions such as moldings, and other elements.

Summary of Significant Heritage Attributes

Historical Significance

A dwelling in this location has been a landmark since the early twentieth century. During this time the subdivision where this house sits was surveyed and the lots were sold for building purposes in 1919. With McLaughlin's industrial empire as the catalyst, Oshawa boomed following the First World War, especially with the expansion of McLaughlin's factory into General Motors of Canada, and the impact which this had upon the lands which this home stands. The area of Oshawa where this house sits on Simcoe Street North was home to many junior executives, business owners, doctors and other professionals. Between 1920 and 1929, much of Oshawa between present day Adelaide Avenue and Rossland Road evolved from farm to residential property.

452 Simcoe Street North has been the home of two local business owners (H. E. Smith & M.F.H. M.F.H.) and local doctor & surgeon Dr. MacKay. This Georgian Revival style home survives on a medium sized lot with mature vegetation and is surrounded by similar homes that were built after World War I during the 1920's, while Oshawa's economy was booming.

Significant Architectural Attributes

- Two storey Georgian revival design, 3-bay design with centrally positioned main entrance
- Shallow gabled bell cast roof with side gables clad in cedar shingles
- Smooth stucco unadorned exterior walls with straight stone window accents
- Uniform fenestration with casement windows
- Simple cornice moldings
- Edwardian double height porch on the south side gable
- Separate garage located to the side/behind the house (this garage is shared with the property located to the south of 452 Simcoe Street North and the driveway is shared as well)

Contextual Attributes

The M. F. I. P.P.A. Sec. house is a good representation of early twentieth century Georgian architecture. It sits in an area of that Oshawa that has changed minimally since its initial construction and has been well maintained throughout the years. Its most outstanding features are the bell cast roof and two storey porch on the south end of the dwelling that contains an enclosed upper storey with casement windows and opened verandah on the lower level with archways that lead to the driveway and back and front yards. The M. F. I. P.P.A. Sec. House is one of many high quality residential buildings from the early 20th century which sit along Simcoe Street North. This area of homes reflects an important part in Oshawa's history.

Resources

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

Toronto 1990.

Beers, J.H. & Co. *Illustrated Historical Atlas of County of Ontario*. Toronto: 1877

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

Doctors of Ontario County. Edited by Dr. T.E. Kaiser, 1934

East Whitby Township census, 1901. www.collectionscanada.ca/archivianet

Genealogy Files, Oshawa Community Archives

Oshawa Daily Times 1928, Special Oshawa Homes Edition

Vernon's, City of Oshawa Directory, 1921, 1924, 1939, 1960

www.ontarioarchitecture.com

M. F. I. P.P.A. Sec. 14 (1)

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Appendix

