

# 317 Kent Street West, Town of Lindsay (Elmholme)

## Heritage Designation Evaluation

Lindsay

PT E1/2 LT 20 CON 4 OPS PT 1, 2, 3 57R8586; S/T R389432; S/T INTEREST IN  
R421686; KAWARTHA LAKES  
2024



## Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The subject property has been researched and evaluated in order to determine its cultural heritage significance under Ontario Regulation 9/06 of the Ontario Heritage Act R.S.O. 1990. A property is eligible for designation if it has physical, historical, associative or contextual value and meets any two of the nine criteria set out under Regulation 9/06 of the Act. Staff have determined that 317 Kent Street West has cultural heritage value or interest and merits designation under the Ontario Heritage Act.

### 1. The property has design value or physical value because it:

#### i. is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material, or construction method:

The property is a representative example of a Gothic Revival residential property in Kawartha Lakes. Constructed around the mid-1860s, the property displays key characteristics of the domestic version of this style, including its steeply pitched gables, decorative bargeboard, stacked chimneys, arched windows and polychromatic brickwork. The property is one of the largest examples of this architectural style in Lindsay.

#### ii. displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit:

The property displays a high degree of craftsmanship through its retained decorative features, particularly its decorative bargeboard.

#### iii. demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement:

There are no specific technical or scientific achievements associated with the subject property.

### 2. The property has historical or associative value because it:

#### i. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution that is significant to the community:

The property has direct associations with Albert Edward Matthews, the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario between 1937 and 1946, as his childhood home. The property was purchased by his father in 1876 and Matthews, who was born in Lindsay, grew up here. He was, until recently, the longest-serving Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. He was also a prominent Baptist, both in Ontario and Canada more broadly, and made significant contributions to the church in the first half of the twentieth century. It also has direct historical associations with his father, businessman George Matthews, who established a highly successful meat packing business in Lindsay in 1868 which would eventually grow into a national enterprise. It also has important historical associations to the Gull River Lumber Company through its next owner, James Peel.

ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture:

The property yields information regarding the history of the Baptist church in Lindsay through George Matthews, a key member of Lindsay's Baptist church throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and Albert Matthews who became a prominent figure in the Canadian Baptist Church in the first half of the twentieth century.

iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to the community:

The designer or builder of the property is now known.

### 3. The property has contextual value because it:

i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area:

The property does not specifically support the character of the area as it is surrounding primarily by modern commercial development.

ii. is physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to its surroundings:

The property is not specifically linked to its surroundings as it is surrounding primarily by modern commercial development.

iii. is a landmark.

The property is a landmark as well-known and recognized former residential property in Lindsay. It is located at a prominent location at the intersection of Kent Street West and Angeline Street North.

## Design and Physical Value

317 Kent Street West has design and physical value as a representative example of a Gothic Revival residential property in Kawartha Lakes.

Constructed around the mid-1860s, the property displays key characteristics of this domestic architectural style including its steeply pitched roofs, decorative bargeboards, polychromatic brickwork, stacked chimneys, rounded windows and wide verandah. It is one of the largest examples of this style of architecture within Lindsay and demonstrates a high degree of craftsmanship through its extant decorative elements.

The beginnings of the Gothic Revival style came in the second half of the eighteenth century in English architecture. As part of the Romantic movement, which sought to push back at rationalism and reintroduce emotion and a glorification of the domestic past, there was an increased interest in the medieval past as architects and their clients sought to break from the rational Classical forms of the Enlightenment and began to look more to the Middle Ages for inspiration. This shift, which occurred not just in architecture but also art, music, and literature, emphasized aesthetic experience, but also pushed back at modern social changes including urbanization and industrialization as it looked to the past for authentic modes of cultural expression.

The application of Romantic principles to architecture was underpinned by aesthetic theory, specifically that of the picturesque. The picturesque took its cues from the natural world and rejected formal symmetry and precision in favour of asymmetry, variety and irregularity. The picturesque was understood as a counter balance to the two other primary aesthetic expressions: the sublime, which was viewed as the terrifying, awesome, and vast, and the beautiful, characterized by beauty, smoothness and regularity. In contrast to these, the picturesque was the counterbalance between the two, irregular without being extreme and gentle without being highly rationalized. The picturesque was more frequently expressed through landscape painting depicting pastoral scenes and ruins, but the aesthetic theory was well-embedded in other types of visual expression. In architecture in the English-speaking world, the picturesque was strongly associated with what were seen as rustic and natural forms, specifically medieval and Tudor-era architecture which was seen as embodying a naturalistic built form and traditional artistic expression.

The Gothic Revival emerged in relation to these two broader trends in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century thought as a medieval revival style. The earliest example of medieval forms integrated into architecture of this period came in domestic architecture, with early examples such as Inverary Castle in Argyle (1746) and Strawberry Hill House in Twickenham (1749) applying medieval decorative features onto heavy eighteenth century forms. The trend

continued throughout the Georgian period, even as Classical forms retained their predominance.

The style rose to prominence in the 1840s with its wholesale adoption as the preferred mode of design for ecclesiastical architecture. The Romantic view of the medieval past had, by this period, spread to theological circles where the question of what architectural style was most appropriate for Christian worship was hotly debated. However, under the direction of architects such as A.W.N. Pugin, church architecture firmly turned to medieval style as it was seen being distinctly Christian and overwhelming more suited to the promotion of belief than Classical forms. Although a specific ecclesiastical style for church architecture developed separate from domestic design, its application to ecclesiastical forms helped cement its popularity from the 1840s throughout the middle decades of the nineteenth century; in church design, this style was used well into the twentieth century as the preferred style for the majority of new Christian worship spaces. Although originating in Europe, the style quickly spread to North America, and other parts of the world, with the expansion of colonial empires and the patterns of immigration throughout the nineteenth century.

In parallel, domestic Gothic Revival architecture also flourished in the middle decades of the nineteenth century with the increased awareness of the style and a strong preference for Romantic architecture throughout this period. Domestic Gothic Revival shared many of the same theoretical bases of its ecclesiastical counterpart, such as its Romantic underpinnings and allegiance to pre-Renaissance stylistic forms, but was visually different; whereas ecclesiastical Gothic generally hewed closely to historic precedent and tended to replicate medieval forms more closely, domestic Gothic was a freer interpretation of medieval architecture, mixing architectural forms and decorative elements to create pleasing and eclectic compositions that sat comfortably within the broader picturesque aesthetic.

One of the largest influences in the spread of the Gothic Revival style in domestic architecture was the pattern book. Although pattern books existed from at least the eighteenth century, the most influential of these with regard to domestic Gothic architecture was Scottish landscape architect J.C. Loudon's 1833 text, *Encyclopedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture* which provided patterns for domestic architecture in a range of popular architectural styles of the late Regency era. Loudon was, however, particularly influenced by the picturesque and included a large number of designs in early Gothic Revival styles and included an range of features that would become firmly associated with domestic Gothic design including: asymmetrical massing, steeply pitched roofs, decorative bargeboard, finials, bay windows, double and stacked chimneys, decorative window hoods, and pointed and rounded arches in doors and windows.

Louden's text was particularly influential in North America which, in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, was undergoing a period of substantial growth with increased immigration and the expansion of non-indigenous settler communities away from the areas of late eighteenth century settlement. Other influential texts, such as *Cottage Residences* (1842) and *The Architecture of Country Houses* (1850) by American architect and theorist Andrew Jackson Downing, contributed to its spread throughout North America.

Although the Gothic Revival style was readily adopted in urban settings, the majority of pattern books that promoted Gothic architecture were aimed primarily at rural settings. There were several reasons for this. On one hand, there was a strong rural association with the picturesque aesthetic movement and the Romantic movement which often strongly rejected urbanization and tended to romanticize the rural English countryside; as a result, there was a tendency to focus on rural bucolic locations and the placement of architecture within them. As both of these movements also had a strong associated landscape architecture tradition, architectural design often incorporated buildings, their decorative features and massing, and their location in picturesque landscapes that were generally either rural agricultural areas or designed estates. Parallel to this aesthetic focus was a significant focus in English, and by extension North American, thought regarding the improvement of the dwellings of agricultural workers as part of the broader nineteenth century social improvement movements. As a result of these two parallel trends in western thought and the significant expansion of rural settlement in mid-nineteenth century North America, the domestic Gothic style became particularly popular in rural areas for farmhouses and dwellings in smaller villages and hamlets.

The first Gothic Revival houses appeared in Ontario in the 1830s. Most of these early Gothic Revival houses were large estates, but, by the middle of the nineteenth century, the style gained substantial popularity as the go-to style for small and mid-sized farmhouses as farmers looked to pattern books and architectural precedent from their country of origin to design their new homes; while most settlers originally constructed small log cabins as their first dwelling, these were usually quickly replaced with larger and more permanent homes, overwhelmingly in the domestic Gothic style. The style was even promoted by the publication *The Canadian Farmer* as the most appropriate architectural style for farmhouses and this periodical even provided elevations and designs for farmers to copy throughout the 1860s.

By the time the style reached its peak in the 1860s, the core elements of the style in Ontario had been established. Generally constructed on rectangular or L-shaped plan with a gable roof, the front façade of these houses generally features one or more steeply pitched gables and a wide verandah. The

massing and layout of the front elevation of the property largely depended on its size. The smallest examples, known as Ontario Gothic cottages, were rectangular in massing with a single central gable while large examples often employed an L-shaped or other asymmetrical plan and often incorporated additional gables and elements such as bay windows. While the majority of windows were rectangular sash windows, most Gothic homes also contained a feature window or windows with pointed or rounded arches. The other primary decorative motif was generally in the form of decorative bargeboard along the gables of the house with pierced or applied moulding in a variety of motifs and often incorporating a finial or drop finial at the peak of the gables. Ornate woodwork of this type was also incorporated into verandahs for additional visual interest. However, the style was, at its core, a very flexible style, accommodating buildings of a range of different sizes and varying degrees of decoration.

The mid-nineteenth century also saw the introduction of brick as the material of choice for new farmhouses. Most early pattern books advocated for the use of either stone or wood for Gothic farmhouses but, by the 1850s, brick was readily available and relatively inexpensive in most agricultural areas in southern Ontario and it was quickly adopted as the preferred construction material. Cheaper and easier to work with than stone and seen as more permanent than wood, brick also had a specific decorative appeal through the addition of structural polychromy to the architectural vocabulary, alongside different patterns of coursing. Through combinations of red and buff brick, decorative features such as bold coursing, contrasting window hoods and quoins, and geometric motifs were quickly integrated into the vocabulary of domestic Gothic across the province.

The extensive use of the Gothic Revival style in domestic architecture continued across Ontario – and particularly rural Ontario – well into the late nineteenth century, although its popularity was at its height in the third quarter of the century. Despite its declining popularity after this time, examples continued to be erected until around 1890s when it was supplanted by the Queen Anne style as the Romantic style of choice; this also marked a period of decreasing settlement in rural areas and, in many places, a gradual rural exodus for larger urban centres meaning less construction on farms and in smaller communities where the style was at its most popular. Nevertheless, the style's impact on the provincial architectural landscape was immense and, particularly in rural Ontario, the Gothic house was a ubiquitous part of the nineteenth century landscape.

When understood within this wider architectural context, 317 Kent Street West is representative example of this architectural style, displaying many of its key characteristics. It is also a particularly large example of this style in Lindsay. While other examples certainly exist, most are smaller example, such as the

array of Gothic Revival cottages in the town, and there are few other examples that have retained their integrity with regard to decorative features as has the subject property.

The subject property is believed to have been constructed around the mid-1860s, the height of the domestic Gothic style in Ontario. The property was owned as early as 1861 by William Corley who appears to have been issued the Crown Patent for the property in that year. He appears to have taken out a mortgage on the property in 1867 and it is likely that this mortgage was intended to pay for the construction of the current house. A house that appears similar to the subject property appears on the 1875 Bird's Eye View Map of Lindsay at the intersection of Angeline Street South and what was then the end of Kent Street West; a street extends slightly beyond the subject property but ends just beyond it. At the time of its construction, this was a farmhouse, not a property within the town of Lindsay and its layout and aesthetic reflects that.

The house is characterized by its front elevation, facing onto Angeline Street South, which features two large, steeply-pitched bay and gables flanking a central entrance. Both bays include grouped rounded windows on the second storey, while one also features a large bay window on the ground floor. The entrance is contained within a wide verandah and includes an upper storey sunroom, likely an addition from the early twentieth century when these features became common. The other elevations of the house also include large gables, including two corresponding gables on the rear of the property.

In addition to the steeply pitched gables – a key feature of the Victorian style – the house's stylistic allegiance is also demonstrated in its decorative elements. These include its four polychromatic stacked double chimneys and its polychromatic brickwork where the quoins and windows hoods are executed in buff brick to contrast the red brick of the house itself. However, the property's most striking decorative feature is its ornate bargeboard which is found on all of the gables except those on the rear of the building where the bargeboard appears to have been removed. This decorative bargeboard is highly typical of the Victorian domestic style and is particularly well-executed on this property. The property is highly representative of this architectural style as executed throughout the 1860s and 1870s.

In addition to its value as a representative example of this architectural style, the property also holds uniqueness within the specific context of Lindsay. As it was originally built as a farmhouse, the property is different from other example of the style within the town which were built in the urban context; Lindsay grew to surround the house, as opposed to purposeful construction within the town limits. The house is broader and more spacious than houses constructed within the urban context, likely due to the original size of the lot



which did not have the same constraints as a lot within the nineteenth-century Lindsay subdivisions. Similarly, while Gothic Revival houses can be found within town context, they were more popular for farm houses and rural areas and the style evolved to develop a specific rural, agricultural form that this property demonstrates.

### Historical and Associative Value

317 Kent Street West has historical and associative value through its associations with the Matthews family, specifically father and son George and Albert Matthews, the elder of which owned the property from 1876 to 1899. George Matthews was a local businessman who established a highly successful meat packing business in Lindsay in 1868 which would eventually grow into a national enterprise. Albert, one of his ten children, became Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario between 1937 and 1946, and was the province's longest serving Lieutenant Governor. Both father and son were heavily involved in the Baptist Church and, through them, the property yields significant information regarding the growth and development of the Baptists in Lindsay and on a more national level. The property also has direct associations with the lumber industry in Lindsay through its subsequent owner, James Peel, the early twentieth century owner of the Gull River Lumber Company.

The subject property, the northeast corner of Lot 4 Concession 20 in Ops Township, was first issued from the Crown in 1861 to William Corley, a farmer born in Ireland in 1810 and who arrived in Canada in 1832. Little is known about Corley before he purchased the 100 acres that comprised the east half of Lot 4 in 1861; Corley continued to farm a portion of this property well into his nineties alongside his sons and it appears he died in 1907. The portion of the original property on which the house sits was severed from the main portion of the farm in the mid-1870s and conveyed in 1876 to Ann Matthews, the wife of George Matthews. The rationale for Ann receiving the deed for the property is not known and the remainder of the transactions related to the property are in the name of her husband. The reason for Corley selling the farmhouse is not known but it was directly on what was then the western side of Lindsay and Corley sold several lots along what is now Angeline Street throughout the late 1870s and 1880s.

The property was owned and occupied by George Matthews, his wife Ann and their eleven children between 1876 and 1899. Matthews was born in Warwickshire in 1834 and came to Canada at some point as a young man, before marrying Ann Smithson of South Monaghan Township in 1859. By the 1860s, the couple had moved to Lindsay with their growing family where George Matthews established his pork packing business in 1868.

The meat packing industry was new in the 1860s, a decade where most food manufacturing was still relatively primitive and not substantially industrialized.

In the mid-century, the majority of animals were slaughtered on the farms upon which they were raised and then sold to a local butcher for sale in the community or, sometimes, export elsewhere. However, the late 1850s and 1860s saw an increased desire for the export of Canadian pork, and bacon in particular, and savvy businessmen jumped at the opportunity; one of the oldest industrial facilities for meat packing for export was constructed in 1860 by William Davies who would go on to be one of the major players in the Canadian meat packing industry. By the end of the century, meat packing had become one of Canada's major economic drivers and pork packing in particular was an central Ontario industry with hundreds of thousands of hogs slaughtered and processed annually for consumption domestically and abroad.

Matthews' company began in a small facility on Cambridge Street North and eventually grew into one of the largest pork packers in Canada, with branches in Peterborough, Ottawa, Toronto, and Brantford. It was, at the end of the nineteenth century, only one of four Canadian pork packers large enough that slaughtered its own hogs. The largest of its operations was established in Peterborough in 1882 and would go on to become one of the city's largest industries; Matthews would eventually move his company headquarters there but he remained a Lindsay resident for the rest of his life, with his son Frank Matthews spearheading the Peterborough operations.

The George Matthews Company's business was partially domestic, but, by the turn of the century, sixty percent of its trade was with the United Kingdom; the majority of this pork for export was packed in Peterborough. A profile of the company was included in the April 1899 *Canadian Journal of Commerce, Finance and Insurance* and reported the following:

The George Matthews Company, Limited, is one of Peterborough's best and oldest concerns. Pork packing is the line of the industry....In the European markets, these products are known as "Matthews" Canadian Bacon, every piece being branded on the skin side so that error upon the part of the dealers or the public is impossible. The factory is one of the best equipped in Canada, and additional equipment is now being put in in the shape of a mechanical refrigerating apparatus, known as the Cold Air Circulation System, equal to cooling capacity to the melting of 80 tons of ice daily. It is being put in in duplicate. This is the first packing house on this continent to adopt this system.<sup>1</sup>

Matthews' business was clearly an international concern and continued to be into the early twentieth century. However, the early decades of the twentieth

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<sup>1</sup> "The George Matthews Company Limited," *The Canadian Journal of Commerce, Finance and Insurance* 48, no. 17 (April 28, 1899), 609.

century saw the gradual consolidation of the meat packing industry to increase profitability and to compete against larger American packers. Matthews eventually merged his business with that of Charles Blackwell, also originally of Lindsay, to form Matthews-Blackwell in 1912, although business continued to be brisk. In particular, business surged during the First World War with the need for rations abroad and, by 1916, two companies – Matthews-Blackwell and Toronto's William Davies Company – supplied over 80% of Canadian pork exports. In 1919, Matthews was bought out by the American company Allied Packers which, in 1927 merged with three other Ontario pork packers – Davies, Gunns Limited, and the Harris Abattoir Company – to form Canada Packers, Canada's largest food processor until the late 1980s. Canada Packers merged with Maple Leaf Mills in 1991 to form Maple Leaf Foods.

Several of George Matthews' sons followed him into business, including Frank, who coordinated operations in Peterborough, William who moved to Ottawa to expand the business there, and George Jr., the director the Brantford plant. The fifth of George and Ann's six sons, Albert Edward Matthews, also moved to Ottawa in the late 1890s to work in his father's business but moved to Toronto by 1909 to manage Matthews and Company, a Toronto investment house.

A prominent figure in Toronto's business, political and charitable circles, Matthews was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario in 1937. Matthews held the office through two challenging periods for the province – the Great Depression and the Second World War – which saw a reduction in the perks and privileges of the office of Lieutenant-Governor under premier Mitchell Hepburn and general austerity throughout the province. This included the closure of Chorley Park, the official residence of the Lieutenant-Governor, leaving Matthews with a suite of offices in Queen's Park and his own private residence for conducting official business and entertaining. While in office, Matthews oversaw a number of key events in the province's history, including the visit of King George VI and his wife Queen Elizabeth in 1939, the first visit by a reigning British monarch to North America. Matthews also used his tenure to support charitable causes, giving away vast sums of his own money to charities to help ease the burden of the Depression and the War. He was Ontario's longest-serving Lieutenant-Governor, serving for nine years and one month, only surpassed recently by Elizabeth Dowdeswell who served just a few months longer from 2014 to 2023.

However, the Matthews' – both father and son – most important impact was not in business or politics, but rather in the Baptist Church. George Matthews and his family had first joined the Baptist Church in Lindsay in 1867 around when they moved to the town. At this time, the congregation in the community was still in its infancy. The first services for residents of both Ops and Lindsay had been held in 1862 in a private home and soon after the small

congregation secured two building sites, at Reaboro and in Lindsay at Sussex and Wellington Streets. As the funds for the buildings on these two sites were raised, the congregation met in a property on Cambridge Street South near the livery stables as well as in the Lindsay Town Hall. The first frame chapel was erected for the Reaboro congregation in 1866 and, in 1867, a second frame church, which is still extant, was raised on the Lindsay site. The new Lindsay chapel was formally opened on January 13, 1868.

From the time of his joining the church, George Matthews was actively involved in the church and its activities, bringing his family up within the Baptist community and supporting the church as an active lay person and financially. Becoming a deacon in 1872, he served in this role until his death in 1916 as well as the church clerk. In 1885, in need of additional space, the congregation purchased the Bible Christian Church on Cambridge Street North. The church had been vacated by the latter congregation in 1883 with their amalgamation with the Methodists and the transfers of ownership to the Baptists was made that year. The purchase of the church itself, now known as Cambridge Street Baptist Church, and the renovations required were expensive for the congregation and Matthews paid for a substantial portion of it himself to ensure a space for the Baptist congregation to worship, and where they continue to do so.

George Matthews' commitment to service to the church was passed on to his son Albert. As with his siblings, Albert grew up in Lindsay's Baptist community and retained his affiliation and service to the church when he moved away, first to Ottawa and then to Toronto where he and his wife, Margaret Whiteside also of Lindsay, were members of the congregation that is now Yorkminster Park Baptist Church. He was recognized during his lifetime and during tenure as Lieutenant-Governor as one of the leading Baptist laypeople in Ontario for his important leadership role within the church and its early twentieth century activities. Matthews always retained a lay role within the church, but rose to important positions within Baptist organizations to help guide the church and its activities and spread the values of the church throughout the broader community. Throughout the early twentieth century, he served as the chairman of the Baptist Home Mission Board, the western world treasurer and Canadian Chairman of the Baptist World Alliance, and in various leadership positions of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec. He was also president of the Lord's Day Alliance, a non-denominational Christian organization that opposed the secularization of the Sunday Sabbath. His faith drove extensive charitable giving, something that continued when he served as Lieutenant-Governor, and support of various Christian social causes.

However, the younger Matthews' most prominent, and memorialized, position within the Baptist community was his role on the board of governors for McMaster University. McMaster was formed as a result of initiatives by

Canadian Baptists to establish Baptist postsecondary education from the early nineteenth century. In 1881, Toronto Baptist College was opened in Toronto and, with a bequest by Senator William McMaster and sponsorship from the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, merged with Woodstock College, another Baptist-affiliated postsecondary, to form McMaster University in Toronto in 1890. Although admitting students from non-Baptist backgrounds, McMaster was, and remained until 1957, a Baptist-affiliated university with an associated theological school.

Matthews joined the University's Board of Governors when he moved to Toronto in 1908 and remained a member until his death in 1949, serving as the Chair of the board for twenty-five years. As Chair, he oversaw the university's challenges throughout the 1910s and 1920s, including the First World War, controversy within the Baptist Church related to the university, and the overcrowding of McMaster Hall in Toronto where the university was based for the first forty years of its existence. Most importantly, however, Matthews oversaw the removal of the university to Hamilton in 1930, performing the ceremonial sod turning on the future site of the new campus in 1928. Throughout his lifetime, Matthews was also one of the university's major benefactors, investing large sums of his own fortune, gained through his own and his family's business enterprises beginning in Lindsay, in the school and supporting its growth throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Several buildings at McMaster are named for Matthews, including the Matthews Memorial Tower at McMaster Divinity School, recognizing his long service to the school, his role as a prominent Baptist layperson and his donations to the university throughout his lifetime.

The house has additional historical value through its relationship to its early twentieth century owner, James Albert Peel, who purchased the property in 1904. Peel, who was born in Bexley Township in 1874, was a well-known Lindsay lawyer in the early twentieth century and, like George Matthews, a lay leader at Cambridge Street Baptist Church; the two men would have known each other well. He also co-founded the Gull River Lumber Company along with his brother Charles and, through him, the house yields information regarding this key industry in Lindsay in the first half of the twentieth century.

For much of the second half of the nineteenth century, the harvesting and processing of lumber drove the Kawartha Lakes economy. The harvesting and processing of timber, particularly for squared timber for export, had taken off throughout eastern Ontario in the early decades of the nineteenth century when the appetite for pine in Britain and the United States created a steady and significant demand for Ontario pine. It became one of Ontario's most important industries throughout the nineteenth century and had a profound impact on the growth of the province, its economy and its environment, particularly in areas with extensive pine forests where the harvesting, transport

and processing of wood products became a major economic driver and lynchpin of many local economies.

With its prime location on the Scugog River in close proximity to significant timber stands, Lindsay, like many other communities throughout central and eastern Ontario, quickly became a lumbering town and the processing of timber became a major sector of the local economy. Lindsay's first mill was constructed in the 1830s, alongside its early grist mill, to process wood for local building, but the processing of lumber in the community quickly expanded to include a range of mills producing different wood products, from building lumber to shingles to decorative millwork. The arrival of the Port Hope, Lindsay and Beaverton Railway in the town in 1857 was also a boon to its lumber businesses, as the railway allowed for processed timber products to be transported out of the community by rail; although most railways in Ontario at this time carried passengers, their primary function was to carry freight and, in Kawartha Lakes, the primary freight was wood products. The ability to process and transport lumber out of the community, particularly as Lindsay grew into a regional railway hub, cemented the community's status as an important lumbering centre.

Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, there were at least fifteen separate lumbering businesses established in Lindsay, all of which were significant features in both the local economy and the built landscape of the town. These did not all operate at the same time, but as a whole, over time, show the overwhelming importance of the lumber industry on Lindsay's local economy. By the early twentieth century, however, only two major milling operators remained in operation as part of Lindsay's industrial economy: the Carew Lumber Company and the Gull River Lumber Company.

The Gull River Lumber Company was established by the Peels in Coboconk in 1913 and its primary milling operations remained there. Its offices, managed by James Peel, were located in Lindsay. The company was a major employer in Coboconk, processing millions of board feet of lumber annually and included both a sawmill and veneer factory that primarily produced fruit baskets. However, while the lumber industry was still profitable in the early decades of the twentieth century, it was in a regional decline with the depletion of pine and other forests in the northern part of Kawartha Lakes, northern Peterborough County and Haliburton County. The last log drive came through Coboconk in 1929 with its logs sawn by the Peels' company, and soon after the company was shuttered.

However, the Peels pivoted to new endeavours within the lumber industry, from sawing logs directly from the log drives to the creation of more finished products. Anticipating this need, James Peel established the Kawartha Lumber Company to dress lumber in 1922. The mill was located at the corner of Kent

Street West and Victoria Avenue in the former Sylvester Manufacturing Company building. At the same time, a second enterprise, the Gull River Veneer Company, was established in Coboconk to continue in veneer manufacturing. James Peel, along with his sons Walter and Stewart, continued to operate both businesses until the early 1950s when both were sold, the Coboconk mill to the Wilberforce Veneer and Lumber Company and the Lindsay operation to Beaver Lumber which would eventually be absorbed into Home Hardware.

Overall, the property holds historical and associative value through several of its occupants – George Matthews, Albert Matthews, and James Peel – who each were significant figures in Lindsay and yield information regarding business activities in the town in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The activities of its occupants in both business and the church yield information on the history of Lindsay, as well as information on important events in Ontario more broadly, particularly through the roles undertaken by Albert Matthews as an adult.

### Contextual Value

317 Kent Street West has contextual value as a local landmark. Originally constructed as a farmhouse in rural Ops Township, the property has since been absorbed into the urban fabric of the west side of Lindsay and has lost much of its original context. However, it remains a very well-known and easily recognized structure in Lindsay for its distinctive architecture and prominent location at the southwest corner of the intersection of Kent Street West and Angeline Street South.

317 Kent Street West was constructed in the mid-1860s, around a decade after Lindsay was incorporated. At both the time of Lindsay's incorporation in 1857 and the construction of the house, the property was just outside the bounds of the town in rural Ops Township. The property originally comprised the entire 100 acres of the east half of Lot 4 Concession 20, and its directly adjacent lot, Lot 5 in Concession 20, was within the town boundaries. The siting and context of the house just after it was constructed can be seen in the 1875 Bird's Eye View map of Lindsay on which the house appears in the top left hand corner, surrounded by trees and fields and with few immediate neighbours. The lot was subsequently subdivided with the house sold as a separate parcel from the original farm in 1876. Additional parcels along the east side of Lot 4 were sold throughout the late nineteenth century but still remained outside of Lindsay proper forming a transition zone between the growing town and the surrounding rural area.

The situation of the house on the current lot, including its orientation and landscaping, reflects its origins as a farmhouse, as does its architecture which is specific to rural domestic architecture from the third quarter of the

nineteenth century. The house is set back significantly from the Angeline Street South, towards which the house faces, with a long approach, large lawns and mature trees. The name of the house - Elmholme - is derived from the large stands of mature elms that, at one point, surrounded the house.

At present, the property is now surrounded by more modern and commercial development and is well within the urban boundary of Lindsay which extended to include this area of Ops Township in the twentieth century. This includes large box stores and restaurants as well as several low rise apartment buildings, the modern iteration of Ross Memorial Hospital, and the Government of Ontario building at 322 Kent Street West. There are several historic homes to the south of the subject property on Angeline Street South, but these are of a later date than the subject property and built in an urban context, as opposed to the rural setting of the house when it was originally erected. As a result, the historic context of this property has effectively been lost.

However, in many ways as a result of its location out of context, the property is extremely recognizable within Lindsay and can be considered a local landmark. It is located at the busy corner of Kent Street West and Angeline Street South and is highly visible from the roadway and sidewalks. Its distinct architecture places it apart from its immediate surroundings as does its placement on a large and landscaped lot, particularly when compared with the box store development directly to the west along Kent Street West. The property is well-known and readily recognized within Lindsay.



## Summary of Reasons for Designation

The short statement of reasons for designation and the description of the heritage attributes of the property, along with all other components of the Heritage Designation Brief, constitute the Reasons for Designation required under the Ontario Heritage Act.

### Short Statement of Reasons for Designation

#### **Design and Physical Value**

317 Kent Street West has design and physical value as a representative example of a Gothic Revival residential property in Kawartha Lakes. Constructed around the mid-1860s, the property displays key characteristics of this domestic architectural style including its steeply pitched roofs, decorative bargeboards, polychromatic brickwork, stacked chimneys, rounded windows and wide verandah. It is one of the largest examples of this style of architecture within Lindsay and demonstrates a high degree of craftsmanship through its extant decorative elements.

#### **Historical and Associative Value**

317 Kent Street West has historical and associative value through its associations with the Matthews family, specifically father and son George and Albert Matthews, the elder of which owned the property from 1876 to 1899. George Matthews was a local businessman who established a highly successful meat packing business in Lindsay in 1868 which would eventually grow into a national enterprise. Albert, one of his ten children, became Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario between 1937 and 1946, becoming the province's longest serving Lieutenant Governor. Both father and son were heavily involved in the Baptist Church and, through them, the property yields significant information regarding the growth and development of the Baptists in Lindsay and on a more national level. The property also has direct associations with the lumber industry in Lindsay through its subsequent owner, James Peel, the early twentieth century owner of the Gull River Lumber Company.

#### **Contextual Value**

317 Kent Street West has contextual value as a local landmark. Originally constructed as a farmhouse in rural Ops Township, the property has since been absorbed into the urban fabric of the west side of Lindsay and has lost much of its original context. However, it remains a very well-known and easily recognized structure in Lindsay for its distinctive architecture and prominent location at the southwest corner of the intersection of Kent Street West and Angeline Street South.

### Summary of Heritage Attributes to be Designated

The Reasons for Designation include the following heritage attributes and apply to all elevations, unless otherwise specified, and the roof including: all façades, entrances, windows, chimneys, and trim, together with construction

materials of wood, brick, stone, stucco, concrete, plaster parging, metal, glazing, their related building techniques and landscape features.

### **Design and Physical Attributes**

The design and physical attributes support the value of the property as a representative example of a mid-nineteenth century Gothic Revival farmhouse.

- Two-and-a-half storey construction
- Limestone foundation
- Gable roof
- Bays with gables
- Double stacked chimneys
- Red brick construction
- Polychromatic brickwork including:
  - Window hoods
  - Quoins
  - Pillars
- Fenestration including:
  - Sash windows
  - Rounded arch windows
  - Window hoods
  - Oval windows
- Decorative bargeboard
- Wide verandah including:
  - Brick knee walls
  - Pillars
  - Brackets
  - Stairs
  - Pediment
- Upper storey sunroom including windows
- Entrance with transom

### **Historical and Associative Attributes**

The historical and associative attributes support the value of the property in its connections to several prominent Lindsay citizens who owned the house in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

- Association to George Matthews, Albert Edward Matthews and the George Matthews Company
- Association with James Peel and the Gull River Lumber Company
- Association with the Baptist Church in Lindsay and Ontario more broadly

## Contextual Attributes

The contextual attributes support the value of the property as a local landmark.

- Location at the intersection of Kent Street West and Angeline Street South
- Orientation towards Angeline Street South
- Wide lawns
- Views of the property from Angeline Street South, Kent Street West, and surrounding properties
- Views of Angeline Street South, Kent Street West and surrounding properties from the property

Images







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