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REGISTERED MAIL

IN THE MATTER OF THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT, R.S.O. 1990,
CHAPTER O.18;

AND IN THE MATTER OF THE LAND AND PREMISES IN PART OF LOT
15, CONCESSION 7, KNOWN MUNICIPALLY AS 50 PETER STREET,
MARKHAM, IN THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO.

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE

TO: The Ontario Heritage Foundation
77 Bloor Street West
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2R9

TAKE NOTICE THAT the Council of The Corporation of the
Town of Markham intends to designate the property,
including land and building, known municipally as 50 Peter
Street, Markham, as a property of architectural and/or
historic interest or value under Part 1V of The Ontario
Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter O.18.

A Statement of the Reasons for the Proposed Designation of
The John Smith House is attached.

NOTICE OF OBJECTION to the designation may be served
on the Town Clerk within thirty (30) days of January 22nd,
1997.

Bob Panizza
Town Clerk
The Corporation of the Town of Markham
101 Town Centre Boulevard
Markham, Ontario
L3R 9W3



STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

The John Smith House is recommended for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act because of its historical and architectural significance.

Historical Reasons

The John Smith House was built c.1891 for the family of John Smith and his wife Sarah (Cooper) on Lot 9, Concession 5, mid-way between the communities of Brown's Corners and Unionville.

It is believed that the Smith family came to Canada from England in approximately c.1849, when John Smith would have been 29 years of age.

In the 1851 Census of Markham Tsp. John Smith was living with his family in a frame house on Concession 6, Lot 4, near the village of Hagermans Corners. John Smith is listed as a farmer, aged 31, and a member of the Methodist Church. He was living on the property with his wife, Sarah, aged 32, and sons George (13), Thomas (6), daughter Mary (4) and son William (1). William is shown as being born in Canada, while the other children were born in England. John's family is shown to have originated in England while Sarah's family were of Irish origin.

Over the years five more children were born to the Smiths, John (born 1853), Hannah (born 1854), Henry (born 1857), Margaret (born 1859) and James (born 1862)

It was in Hagermans Corners that the Smiths met William McPherson, the first storekeeper in the village, and the person from whom the Smiths would acquire their first property in Markham Township, on Lot 9, Concession 4. McPherson received the crown grant for 100 acres on the east half of the property at Lot 9, Concession 4, in 1856, but based on evidence from historic maps, had apparently occupied the land for a number of years previous to that. John Smith had evidently had business dealings with McPherson concerning the property as early as 1860, but it was not until January 1866 that he purchased the property outright for \$4800.00.

Three years later, in February 1869, John Smith purchased 125 acres of property, immediately across the road on Lot 9, Concession 5 from Alexander Bradburn for \$4750.00. It was on this property that the house, which now stands at 50 Peter Street was later built.

It is believed that for most of their time in the vicinity, the Smiths were residing in a frame house on Lot 9, Concession 4, while they used the land on Lot 9, Concession 5 as additional farming land. The earliest evidence of a house on the property is seen in the Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of York, 1878. This structure was set back considerably further from the road, however, so it is not believed to be the subject house.

The most conclusive evidence for the date of construction of the house is found in the Census of 1891 (conducted in April) where it is revealed that John Smith and his family were living in a wooden house, 2 storeys high with 6 rooms, but that a brick house, 2 storeys high with 10 rooms was under construction. It can be assumed that the brick house mentioned in the Census was the house which now stands at 50 Peter Street.

The 1891 Census reveals that John Smith was 70 years old at the time, while his wife was 71. Thomas, the eldest son at 44 years of age was living with the family. He is listed as married, but there is no mention of his wife. Other children living on the property include John age 37, Henry age 32, Margaret J. Age 31 and James age 29. All sons are listed as farmers and presumably all worked together to farm the large Smith land holdings which by that time totalled over 300 acres.

Also listed in the household are Sarah, a domestic servant and Lorne and Horace who are grandchildren ages 8 and 6 respectively.

Two of the daughters of John and Sarah Smith had left the household by this point to be married. Mary, born 1849 married the Reverend William Hanson, and later died at Big Flats, New York State. Hannah, born in 1854 married Alexander McGregor and together they had four children, William, John, Alexander and a daughter who would marry Allan Johnston. Hannah died on January 23, 1940.

By the time of the 1901 Census John Smith (jr.) was living on the property at Lot 9, Concession 5 in the brick house. He was there with his wife Lavina, sons William and Clifford and brother in law, William Breeton, who was working as a labourer on the farm for \$18 per month.

Members of the Smith family are buried in the Hagerman Cemetery, Town of Markham.

In 1993, after years of abandonment, the John Smith House was relocated to 50 Peter Street in Markham Village, where it is being restored by its present owners.