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City of



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21-03-2003

Orillia

file

ORILLIA CITY CENTRE
50 ANDREW ST. S.
ORILLIA, ON.
L3V 7T5

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
MANAGER OF COUNCIL SERVICES/CLERK

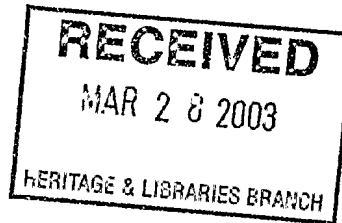
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March 19, 2003

VIA REGISTERED MAIL

The Ontario Heritage Foundation
10 Adelaide Street East
Toronto, ON M5C 1J3



Dear Sirs:

Re: City of Orillia Designation By-laws
2003-26 – Gribbin (McMaster) Building – 45 Mississaga Street East
2003-27 – Kean's Block – 19-27 Mississaga Street East

Please find enclosed the following:

1. Copy of By-law Number 2003-26, being a by-law to designate the Gribbin (McMaster) Building – 45 Mississaga Street East as being of architectural and historical value or interest, together with a copy of the Reasons for Designation. ✓
2. Copy of By-law Number 2003-27, being a by-law to designate the Kean's Block – 19-27 Mississaga Street East as being of architectural and historical value or interest, together with a copy of the Reasons for Designation. ✓

These documents are served on you pursuant to the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter 0.18, section 29(6).

Sincerely,

Laura S. Lee, B.A., A.M.C.T.
Manager of Council Services/Clerk

LSL:hr
Attach. (2)

Handwritten initials

BY-LAW NUMBER 2003- 26 OF THE CITY OF ORILLIA

A BY-LAW TO DESIGNATE THE GRIBBIN (McMASTER) BUILDING – 45 MISSISSAGA STREET EAST AS BEING OF ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL VALUE OR INTEREST

WHEREAS the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. 0.18, authorizes the Council of a municipality to enact by-laws to designate real property, including all buildings and structures thereon, to be of architectural and historic value or interest;

AND WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the City of Orillia has caused to be served on the owners of the lands and premises known as 45 Mississaga Street East and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation, notice of intention to so designate the aforesaid real property and has caused such notice of intention to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the municipality;

AND WHEREAS no notice of objection to the proposed designation has been served on the Clerk of the municipality.

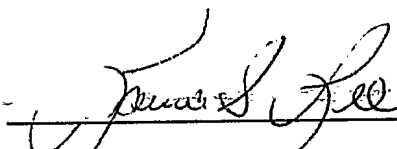
NOW THEREFORE THE COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF ORILLIA HEREBY ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. THAT the Gribbin (McMaster) Building located at 45 Mississaga Street East, more particularly described in Schedule "A" attached hereto, be and it is hereby designated as being of architectural and historic value or interest.
2. THAT the Clerk is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be registered against the property described in Schedule "A" attached hereto in the Registry Office for the division of Simcoe.
3. THAT the Clerk is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be served upon the owner of the aforesaid property and on the Ontario Heritage Foundation and cause notice of the passing of this by-law to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the municipality.

BY-LAW read a first, second and third time and finally passed this 3rd day of March, A.D. 2003.



MAYOR



CLERK

SCHEDULE "A" TO BY-LAW NUMBER 2003-26 OF THE CITY OF ORILLIA

GRIBBIN (McMASTER) BUILDING – 45 MISSISSAGA STREET EAST

Parcel 3-S-Miss-1, Section 51 – 12 being Part Lot 3, South side of Mississaga Street, Plan 12, designated as Part 1, on Plan 51R-15214, City of Orillia, County of Simcoe.
Being PIN 58667-0090(LT)

GRIBBIN (MCMASTER) BUILDING
45 MISSISSAGA STREET EAST
CITY OF ORILLIA

PART LOT 3, SOUTH SIDE, MISSISSAGA STREET EAST, PLAN 12

EARLY LOT HISTORY

The first registered transaction for Lot 3, Plan 12, south side, Mississaga Street East (as a village lot) is April 1854 when John Grantham Hall and others sold a half acre to Thomas H. Portas of Oro township. Portas bought Lots 3 and 2 for £40. Within months, Portas sold to Edward Shortiss, Esq., of Toronto for £52. With the railway already reaching Allandale (at Barrie in 1853), Shortiss speculated that Orillia would be the next area of development. He bought several building lots in the village.

JOHN WORLD

In January 1858, Shortiss sold Lots 2 and 3 to John World of Orillia for \$500.¹ On the sale transaction, World is identified as a yeoman (farmer). The *Canada Directory* for 1857-58 lists a John World as a cabinet maker.² On Mississaga Street, he established himself as a dry goods and grocery merchant. The 1867 plan of the village of Orillia by Albert Fowlie indicates J. World with two buildings on Lot 3. The 1869 directory lists him as a general merchant.

John World was one of forty-seven charter members of the Muskoka Junction Railway Company. This was incorporated in December 1869 to undertake the extension of the Northern Railway from Barrie to Orillia and beyond. Orillia needed the railway if it was to capitalize on distant markets and become the supply centre for the newly opened Muskoka district. The railway reached Orillia the following year. The Muskoka branch was completed in November 1871, shortly followed by the extension of the Midland Railway from Beaverton to Midland at Georgian Bay.

For John World and others in Orillia, the arrival of the railway and the boost to the local economy was short lived. On an August morning in 1872, fire broke out in John Dunn's bakery on

¹ Approximately £100.

² By the end of the century, the World Furniture Company was distributing catalogues.

Mississauga Street. Dunn's store and dwelling were soon consumed and the flames spread east and west along the south side of Mississauga. According to the *Expositor* of August 29, 1872:

Mr. World's brick block, containing two stores and dwellings, the former occupied by Mr. World and Mr. Elwell, Medical Hall; Slaven's Drug Store, Gribbin's Exchange, and Mulcahy's California Store – the buildings owned by Mrs. Hunter – were completely destroyed.

World's losses were estimated at \$10,000 for building and "stock-in-trade." He opened a temporary location in a building opposite the English Church on Peter Street.

Orillia was not alone in its devastation. The frame and wood clad buildings erected during the province's early period of development were vulnerable to fire. The town of Barrie had suffered so many fires in the early 1870s that a bylaw was passed to prohibit the erection of frame buildings in the downtown. Many communities, including Orillia, experienced delays in reconstruction due to a shortage of brick.

FRANCIS JOSEPH GRIBBIN

In what may be the legal confirmation of an earlier agreement, on October 2, 1873, John and Jane World sold the east part of Lot 3 (parcel a) to another Orillia merchant, Francis Joseph Gribbin. The purchase price for the 26'x90' parcel plus a right of way was \$1400. On the same day, the Worlds sold a 38'x212' parcel (b) to John Dunn for \$1900. Dunn was a baker.

Gribbin was born in Ireland. His spouse Mary was born in Ontario but was of Scottish ancestry. They were Roman Catholic. According to the 1869 directory for Orillia, Gribbin was associated with Orillia's Royal Hotel. The 1871 tax assessment roll lists him as a tenant in the store owned by Mrs. Hunter on part Lot 4, south side Mississauga. Gribbin's Exchange was still there in 1872 but he had acquired part Lot 5, south Mississauga, valued at only \$150. Gribbin was aged 33 that year and listed in the 1872 directory as a grocer who also sold "gents' furnishings, etc."

Gribbin's losses were estimated at \$10,000 when his clothing store was destroyed by the Mississauga Street fire of August 1872. The *Expositor* of September 5, 1872, noted that: "He is having a store put up on the site of his clothing store, destroyed." It was to be frame, one and a half storeys, 26'x40'. "This store will be used during the winter, and it is expected that next spring will be converted into a back shop for a fine brick building which Mr. Gribbin contemplates having erected then." The 1873 tax roll is missing, but in 1874, Gribbin's part Lot 3 was valued at \$200 and part Lot 5 at \$700. This suggests that the frame building was on Lot 5, not Lot 3.

In March 1873, it was reported that Gribbin of the Orillia Exchange had opened a store in Beaverton providing "groceries, liquors, etc."

On May 31, 1873 (before the paperwork was signed in October between Gribbin and World for the sale of Lot 3), Gribbin and John Dunn signed an agreement regarding the party or common wall of their buildings:

Whereas the said Francis J. Gribbin is owner in fee simple of part of Lot Number Three on the South side of Mississauga Street in said village of Orillia immediately adjoining to and on the Eastern side of the land owned by the said John Dunn in fee simple -

And Whereas the said parties hereto are contemplating building on their respective Lots -

And Whereas it will be for the mutual benefit advantage and saving of expense to the parties hereto if the wall about to be erected be built half on the Lot of the said Francis J. Gribbin and the other half of the said wall on the Lot of the said John Dunn and be a party wall along the boundary line between their respective lands -

And Whereas it is doubtful who shall first commence to build it is agreed that whoever shall first commence he shall build half of the foundation wall as well as half of the wall itself on the lot of the other party and half of the said wall on his own lot and that so soon as the other party makes use of the said wall he shall pay to the party building such party wall half of the expense and costs of such wall whatever it may happen to cost. (Inst. 73432)

The Orillia Exchange was advertised in a November 1873 newspaper. The *Expositor* reported on March 5, 1874, that "Mr. F.J. Gribbin is making preparations for an early start on his new brick store." This is believed to be the subject building at 45 Mississauga Street East. On August 13, 1874, it was ready for roofing, and in October nearly ready for occupancy. The 1875 tax assessor valued Gribbin's part Lot 3 at \$3000, suggesting the completion of the building.

In the 1882 directory for Orillia, Gribbin is still listed as a proprietor of a general store. It was about that date that the building was occupied by the McMaster & Co. store.³ A photograph dated 1884⁴ indicates signage for McMaster. The 1887 tax roll lists William McMaster as the tenant of 45 feet of part Lot 3. This was valued at \$5000 and owned by Gribbin. According to the *Toronto Mail* newspaper of January 7, 1888, store manager William McMaster was "attracted to Orillia by its reputation as a good enterprising town, and he carried with him there such a knowledge of the wholesale and retail dry goods business as gave him and his firm the confidence of the public at once." Selling dry goods for cash only and keeping minimal stock allowed him to sell at near

³ McMaster & Co. is not listed in the 1882 or 1890 Orillia directories.

⁴ Photograph is in the William Frost Collection, Simcoe County Archives.

wholesale prices. The store also offered dress goods and in 1888 had "recently" added a "gents' furnishing department."

On January 12, 1888, the *Orillia Times* reported: "Messrs Gribbin & Son who have been away from Town for some time past have returned to their early love." The 1888 tax roll indicates that William McMaster had relocated to Thomas Main's building on part Lot 8, south Mississauga East.

JOHN NORTHWAY

In April 1891, following Gribbin's death, Edward R.C. Clarkson of Toronto "as assignee in trust of the estate of Francis J. Gribbin" sold the Mississauga Street parcel to Catherine Northway, wife of John Northway. For \$7000, the Northways acquired the easterly part of the lot (parcel a) and a right of way over parcel c. John Northway was an Orillia merchant, owner of John Northway & Company general store. The business is listed in the 1890 Orillia directory. In 1916, the business sold dry goods, groceries, boots, shoes, and furnishings.

In January 1917, Catherine, the wife of John Northway of Toronto, sold the parcel to John. According to the 1923 directory, Northway-Grant Co. Ltd. was a department store at 45-47 Mississauga East. John's estate sold the property in January 1948 to John H. Northway of Toronto. By 1951, the business was known as Northway Co. Ltd. dry goods. The Northways remained the owners until August 1960 when the estate of Arthur G. Northway of Toronto sold to Bartor Holdings Ltd., also of Toronto.

RECENT AND CURRENT OWNERS

Bartor Holdings sold in July 1970 to Crosley Realty. The current owner, Anchor Rock Construction Ltd., bought from Crosley in 1976. A second smaller parcel was sold by Crosley to Anchor Rock in March 1982. Until 1980, the building was used as a Sears store, with regional offices on the upper floors.

ARCHITECTURE

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION

Although the local tradition is that Francis J. Gribbin erected this building in 1873, the date of construction is 1874. On May 31, 1873, Gribbin and his neighbour John Dunn agreed that since both intended to build, the first to start would be compensated for the cost of the party or

common wall of the two structures. The *Expositor* of March 5, 1874, noted that "Mr. F.J. Gribbin is making preparations for an early start on his new brick store." In October 1874, the building was nearly ready for occupancy.

STYLE AND FORM

This is a three storey, red and buff-yellow brick structure that is typical of the commercial buildings erected throughout Ontario in the second half of the nineteenth century. It is described as measuring 26'x90'. The lane along the east side led to stables, now a rear parking lot. The west wall is shared with a two storey, nineteenth century commercial building.

In an 1884 photograph and an 1887-88 sketch of the building, the type of roof cornice differs from the current. Between the storefront and second storey there is a railing for a balcony, presumably accessed from the middle opening of the second storey. The window openings have shutters.

MASONRY

The red-orange brick is accented with buff-yellow brick used as quoins (corners), voussoirs or heads over each window opening, and Greek or battlement-style and plain banding. The brick is laid in common bond.

ROOF AND CORNICE

The edges of this flat roof are capped with limestone. The roof cornice of the north facade may be metal. It is composed of an upper moulded band, mid band of dentiling, plain frieze, and a lesser moulded band. Each end has a bracket with a crest and finial. (The original cornice was elevated several feet above the roof line and featured four large brackets.)

WINDOW AND DOOR OPENINGS

The fenestration has three, third storey, segmental window openings on the street (north) facade. These are aligned with three, semi-circular openings on the second storey. The middle opening of the second storey has a shortened upper sash. This is above a door opening that leads to a balconette with a metal railing.

The buff-yellow brick voussoirs (heads) are similar in design but are shaped to accommodate the segmental and semi-circular openings. The sashes are 2x2 panes with moulded wood frames. Each opening has a wood lugsill accented below by a continuous Greek or battlement-style band in buff brick.

The east facade has shaped window openings.

STOREFRONT

The storefront cornice, signband, display windows, and entranceway have been altered.

CONDITION AND USE

The structural integrity of the building is unknown. There is some brick deterioration and a need for routine maintenance.

SIGNIFICANCE

This three storey commercial building was built in 1874 as a general store for Francis J. Gribbin. It is one of the structures erected within the first years following the 1872 fire on the south side of Mississauga Street East. The original dichromatic (red and buff) brick patterning survives, without overpaint. Although a replacement, the attractive roof cornice is typical of this once common architectural element. The original window openings, in segmental and semi-circular shapes, have 2x2 sashes and are still ornamented with buff brick voussoirs or heads. In continuous commercial use since its construction, the street level storefront has undergone several changes. This is an important traditional building in the commercial streetscape of Orillia.