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THE TOWN OF VAUGHAN BY-LAW

BY-LAW NUMBER 228-89

RECEIVED

JUL 12 1989

ONTARIO HERITAGE
FOUNDATION

A By-law to designate the Thomas Wright House located on the property known municipally as 8161 Kipling Avenue, Woodbridge, in the Town of Vaughan, Regional Municipality of York as being of architectural value or interest.

WHEREAS Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1980, 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/or historic value or interest; and,

WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Vaughan has caused to be served on the owners of the lands and premises known as the Thomas Wright House, 8161 Kipling Avenue, Woodbridge, being Part of Lot 8, Concession 7, in the Town of Vaughan, in the Regional Municipality of York, more particularly described in Schedule "A" attached hereto; and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation, notice of intention to designate the aforesaid real property and has caused such notice of intention to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the municipality once for each of three consecutive weeks; 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 Town of Vaughan ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. There is designated as being of architectural value or interest the building known as the Thomas House, 8161 Kipling Avenue, Woodbridge, being Part of Lot 8, Concession 7, in the Town of Vaughan, in the Regional Municipality of York, more particularly described in Schedule "A" attached hereto.
2. The reasons for designation are set out in Schedule "B" attached hereto.
3. The Town Solicitor 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 proper land registry office.

4. The Town Clerk is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this By-law to be served on the Owner of the aforesaid property and on the Ontario Heritage Foundation and to cause notice of the passing of this by-law to be published in the same newspaper in which notice of intention to so designate was published once of each of three consecutive weeks.

READ a FIRST and SECOND time this 26th day of June, 1989.



M. Di Biase, Acting Mayor



R.A. Panizza, Town Clerk

READ a THIRD time and finally passed this 26th day of June, 1989.



M. Di Biase, Acting Mayor



R.A. Panizza, Town Clerk

REGISTRY OFFICE DESCRIPTION

SCHEDULE "A" TO BY-LAW 228-89

DESCRIPTION OF LANDS

All and singular that certain parcel or tract of land and premises situate, lying and being in the Town of Vaughan, in the Regional Municipality of York in the Province of Ontario and being composed of Part Lot 8, Concession 7, more particularly described as Part 7 on Plan 65R-8881.

THOMAS P. WRIGHT HOUSE



8161 Kipling Avenue
Woodbridge
Part of Lot 8, Concession 7

Kathryn Anderson
Heritage Resources Department
Town of Vaughan

February 1989

PROPERTY: Thomas P. Wright House

ADDRESS: 8161 Kipling Avenue
Part 1, Plan 65R
Woodbridge

ORIGINAL OWNER: Thomas P. Wright

CONSTRUCTION DATE: circa 1881

REASONS FOR
DESIGNATION:

The Thomas P. Wright House is recommended for designation for historical and architectural reasons.

The house was built about 1881 by Thomas P. Wright, who occupied the site for a 10-year period. Wright, a local carpenter, was responsible for the construction of many residences and churches in the vicinity.

The dwelling is an excellent example of a traditional Ontario House, embellished with pattern brick detailing (hood labels and string course), wooden ornament (king posts, ornamental brackets, and chamfered verandah posts) and a Gothic opening in the central peak. The house is an integral part of a group of four houses of a similar vintage that share a common setback and display similar features.

8161 KIPLING AVENUE: THOMAS P. WRIGHT HOUSE

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In March, 1884 Thomas P. Wright, a local carpenter, sold part of . . . age Lot 12 on Kipling Avenue to Michael Brown and othe . . . for \$100. Despite the apparently low purchase price, . . . elling had been constructed on the parcel sometime . . . between 1881, after Wright acquired two-and- . . . e-quarter acres of land, and 1883, when he was assessec /00 for 2.9 acres, including a building.

Michael Brown (born 1829), who evidently purchased the site with a number of others for speculative purposes, apparently rented the house to Wright for two years, at which point the carpenter acquired the property. During an ongoing "building boom" in Woodbridge and vicinity, Wright was also involved in the construction of two landmarks. In 1886 Wright, a trustee of the Woodbridge Methodist Church, served on the building committee during the construction of a new house of worship in the aftermath of the union between the Wesleyan and Primitive Methodist congregations in 1884.¹ Wright, in conjunction with David Johnson, a brick mason from Maple, directed the construction of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church on the 7th Concession in 1888. Thomas Wright (born 1852), his wife Mary (born 1854), and four children occupied the Kipling Avenue residence until 1891 when William McClure purchased the property for \$2000.

William McClure (1849-1921) was the fourth son of Andrew McClure, an Irish carpenter who immigrated to Upper Canada in 1833 and subsequently acquired a farm in Lot 14 of Concession 8. William, a harness maker, received the 100-acre homestead, adding 62 acres in adjacent Lot 15 to his holdings. In 1881 the York Herald reported that a 24th of May "Pic-nic" would be held at William McClure's Grove, two-and-one-half miles from the Village of Woodbridge.² While McClure "retired" to his Kipling Avenue residence at age 42, he continued to hold the two farms, eventually returning to the homestead. It is possible that McClure and his wife, Ellen Nesbitt (1850-1919) moved into the village to facilitate the schooling of their four children, the eldest of whom was born in 1881.

In 1921 Mary Eby, the youngest child and executrix of the estate of William McClure, sold the Kipling Avenue property to Edward Hicks, husband of another McClure heir, for \$800. In 1924 the Reverend Alexander Crow and his wife, Agnes, bought the site, which was assigned an assessed value of \$1400 (\$1100 for the dwelling alone) for tax purposes the next year.³

The property at 8161 Kipling Avenue was held by members of the Mackie family for over half a century. The most recent change of ownership occurred in August, 1988.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Thomas Wright House located at 8161 Kipling Avenue, follows the outlines of the traditional Ontario House, so named for the proliferation of the type throughout the province in the 19th century. Ontario Houses evolved in reaction to the assessment of buildings for taxation purposes according to the number of stories and structural openings, and the materials employed. An extra half-storey was "hidden" from the assessor by placing windows in the end elevations. With the passage of time, another gable was introduced on the facade -- breaking the horizontal eaves -- to enclose a door or window, and to protect the entry below.

The Thomas Wright House displays the typical features of the Ontario House, with the principal entry symmetrically located between two windows. The late 19th century construction date is reflected in the narrow plan, the height of the exterior walls, the segmental openings, the steepness of the central gable, and the exaggerated shape of the Gothic opening. Constructed in solid masonry, the orange-red facades are enlivened with contrasting buff brick applied in hood labels over all structural openings and a double string course.

Although the gable roofline is missing its decorative bargeboard, significant surviving features include king posts in the end elevations, and an open full-length verandah, its roofline supported on chamfered posts with mock classical capitals and ornamental brackets. The Gothic-inspired opening in the half-storey displays radiating muntins; an examination of the brickwork suggests that the original doorway was transformed into a window. The removal of the second storey entry explains the presence of a shed roof, rather than a customary bell-cast version, on the verandah.

The house, extended by a single storey wood frame tail, is recessed from the roadway behind a large perimeter of trees.

The Thomas Wright House shares the setback, materials and massing of its neighbours along Kipling Avenue. As the most restrained dwelling in the group in colour and ornamentation, it serves as an introduction to the series of historical properties.

NOTES

- 1 In 1884 most branches of Methodism (of which there were at least five) united to form The Canada Methodist Church. The union resulted in the closure of many small churches and, as in the case of Woodbridge, the building of new ones to house a larger single congregation. In 1925 again, most Methodist congregations joined with Congregationalists and the majority of Presbyterian churches to form the United Church of Canada.
- 2 The York Herald, 19 May 1881.
- 3 It is possible that Alexander Crow was connected with the Reverend W.W. Crow, who served as the minister of Nashville Presbyterian Church from 1910 to 1921.

February 1989

SOURCES

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- Reaman, G. Elmore. A History of Vaughan Township. 1971.
- Richmond Hill Liberal. 1884.
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History of Vaughan Township Churches. 1984.
- Wood, Mary I. Personal Records. Woodbridge Public
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- York Herald. 1881.