

THE BOOK HOUSE

167 BOOK ROAD EAST ANCASTER ONTARIO

HERITAGE REPORT



Prepared by:
Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee

Prepared for:
Roman Catholic Diocese of Hamilton

March 2007

Introduction



This report examines the heritage attributes of the residence located at 167 Book Rd. E., referred to as the Book House. It was prepared for the benefit of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Hamilton to determine whether or not the property is worthy of heritage designation. This paper shows that the house is an important part of Ancaster's history, significant due to its early date, due to the use of brick at this early date and due to its connections with the Book and Smith families.

For the purposes of this report, the property has been evaluated according to a set of criteria which was endorsed by the City of Hamilton Municipal Heritage

Committee on June 19, 2003, and is used to identify the cultural heritage values of a property and to assess their significance. This evaluation assists in determining a property's merit for designation under the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, C.O. 18. The property has also been evaluated in compliance with the Ontario Heritage Act, Ontario Regulation 9/06: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest.

A Cultural Heritage Assessment Report is prepared by the Cultural Heritage Planners of the City of Hamilton when designation is requested by the owner(s) of the subject property. This report on the Book House, however, has been prepared by members of the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee and follows to the greatest possible extent the same format that would be used for designation.

Due to the fact that the interior of the building was not made available for documentation, the interior has not been assessed in this report.

Contents of this Report

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A. Property Location

The subject property is located at 167 Book Rd. E. on the north side in the Municipality of Hamilton, formerly in the Township of Ancaster.

B. Physiological Context

The residence at 167 Book Road East is located on a prominent tree-covered ridge above Book Rd. to the south. The ridge is related to the Lake Erie moraine and the effects of glacial Lake Warren.



C. Settlement Context

First Nation Settlement: The elevated position of the property, its proximity to water, and the existence of known archaeological sites nearby suggest that the area in which the Book House is located is one of high archaeological potential for aboriginal native settlement.

Euro-Canadian Settlement: The area was chosen as a European settlement site as early as 1789 when 22 families, including the Books, squatted in the area and started land clearance. In 1793 the first survey of the Township of Ancaster was undertaken and laid out in the "single front system" comprising 200-acre lots, 440 yards in width by one and a quarter miles in depth. The lots, bounded by concession roads to the north and south, were broken by side roads every fifth lot east of Fiddlers Green Road.

As a result of the township survey in 1793, twenty-two of the early squatters, known as "James Wilson and Associates", petitioned the Land Board to grant them lands that they had cleared and settled. John Book and his family were granted approximately 700 acres of land which included all of Lots 44 and 45, Concession IV.

Concurrently, several miles to the north of the Book property, the Village of Ancaster was established with James Wilson constructing several mills in the area of the present-day intersection of Rousseau and Wilson Sts.

D. History of Ownership

The Book Family: The house at 167 Book Rd. E. was built as the home of Adam Book. The Book family are representative of the ingenuity, persistence and courage of the early European immigrants who settled on uncleared land in Upper Canada in the late eighteenth century and who established a thriving agricultural community in Ancaster Township.

The Book family emigrated from Germany to New Jersey in 1786. They arrived at 12 Mile Creek (St. Catharine's) in 1788 and settled in the Ancaster area in 1789. John Book (1754-1827), the patriarch of the family, was the eighteenth of the original 22 petitioners for Crown land and was granted the 700 acres on which the family had settled prior to the 1793 survey. John and Charity Book had twelve children, born between 1775 and 1797.

During the War of 1812, the residents of the Township of Ancaster, including the Books, were involved in military service and/or the provision of supplies to the British Army.

By 1831, the Book property was comprised of three distinct sites. The Book Family Cemetery on an eastern portion of the land was established in 1815 with death of John Book's son, Henry. The cemetery now contains eighty-eight burials, including nine of John and Charity Book's children and is maintained by the City of Hamilton. The earliest Book house which survived into the twenty-first century was constructed circa 1817 for John Book at 209 Book Rd. E. This building was destroyed by fire in 2005.

The subject property, the residence at 167 Book Rd. E. was built by John's son, Adam, in 1831, making it the oldest brick dwelling in Ancaster.

Harmanus Smith: In 1847, Adam Book's house and land was sold to Dr. Harmanus Smith (1790-1872) and his wife Elizabeth Filman (1792-1858). Dr. Smith had received his certificate to practice medicine on October 5, 1819, from the Upper Canada Medical Board at which time he lived in Barton Township at the north-east corner of the present West 5th St. and Fennel Ave.

During the Smith's tenure, a lane ran through the property connecting the present Garner Rd. at the White Brick Church on the north to the Book Rd. on the south. The house, which contained seven bedrooms, often served as a hospital with patients staying there until a cure was effected.

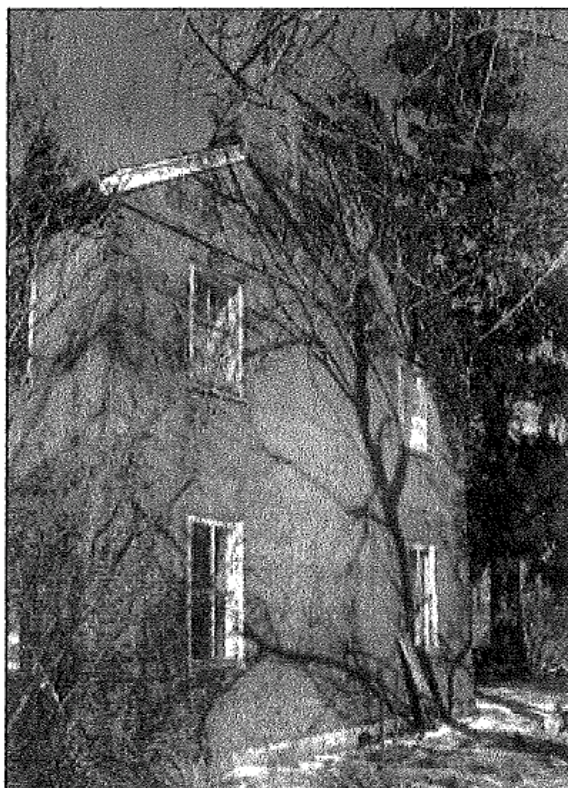
In 1834, Harmanus Smith entered politics and was elected to the Legislative Assembly. He was defeated by Sir Allan MacNab in 1837 but elected again in 1841, 1844 and 1848. He ran against John Ogilvie Hatt in 1856 for a seat on the Legislative Council and won after a bitterly-fought campaign. However, he lost to Harcourt Bull in 1860, being labeled "Yankee revolutionary and Republican rabble-rouser". He was a Reformer, advocating an elected Upper House and representation by population. One of his election cards reads as follows: "Vote for Dr. Smith, the straightforward and tried friend of equal rights and reform, who is not ashamed to sympathize and associate with the working man."

Harmanus and Elizabeth Smith had seven children, three of whom died in infancy. Dr. Smith's family continued to occupy the property until the death of his grandson Stuart Smith, ending well over a century of Smith ownership.

E. Building Description

The Book House is a two-storey brick residence. Early settlers of modest means had few sources of building construction materials aside from those readily available, namely timber and stone. The use of timber was a natural by-product of land clearance and agricultural settlement. Simple timber 'shanties' and more substantial log structures were often replaced in relatively short order with timber clad and timber frame structures or masonry where stone was easily available. Notable examples of frame and stone construction are scattered throughout the Municipality.

The use of brick was a far more complex affair than simply cutting trees or hauling stone. Brick is a manufactured product and demands a variety of conditions for production of sufficient quantities to build a shelter, let alone as substantial a residence as the Book house. Prerequisites included a readily available source of suitable clay (preferably on the site of construction) and a production 'crew' necessary for forming large quantities of units from moulds. Particularly important were skills in forming and firing a temporary kiln that would produce a



constantly high temperature over a sustained period of time to produce consistently good quality masonry units from the unfired or 'green' bricks.

A tentative area of clay extraction has been identified on the ridge slope to the east of the Adam Book house. Archaeological survey may be able to confirm this and the location of the kiln. It has been assumed that this area was the source of clay for the 1817 house. It is highly probable that it was also the source of raw clay for the 1831 Book house.

The Book House is an excellent, early example of Georgian architecture. The Georgian style of architecture was common throughout Ontario at the end of the eighteenth century, into the first few decades of the twentieth century.

Characteristics such as the regularity, symmetry, formal layout, double-hung sash windows and gable roof were all employed in the design of the Book House.

The residence is a two-storey building oriented east-west. The south and north facades are almost identical in the location of the doors and in the fenestration, although the south facade, that facing Book Road, is the main facade, denoted by the prominent door opening with sidelights. A one-storey kitchen wing on the west end of the building is perhaps a later addition. Built of brick, the building is set on a rough-cast, irregularly-coursed fieldstone foundation and the gable roof is covered in asphalt shingles. The original wood shingles or shakes may remain under the asphalt.

The main facade is divided into five bays, the central bay being the location of the front entrance door, while on the second floor, the central bay is defined by a window with sidelights. The remainder of the regularly-placed windows, on both the first and second floors, are double-hung sash windows. The window frames are wood as are the sills (most likely original). The lintels above the windows are a simple decorative course of soldier bricks. The eaves and fascia are also of wood.

The simplicity of the facade is emblematic of the Georgian style of architecture, especially for early examples such as this one. The only ornamentation of note is in the wood door surround. Fluted pilasters frame the door and the sidelights, and the wood lintel is further detailed with a soldier course of brick.

The east and west (side) elevations would have originally been identical prior to the addition of the kitchen wing on the west end. The east facade is defined by the gable end and has four regularly-placed double-hung sash windows. The building is unique in that the brick is continued up onto the gable and then extends above the roofline to the massive double chimneys, an architectural idiom which reflects earlier Georgian houses encountered by the Book family on their journey from New Jersey through Pennsylvania, New York and the Niagara area en route to Ancaster.



The west facade of the kitchen addition has one window, but is dominated by a substantial chimney - one

that would have provided for the hearth for the kitchen within.

Access to the interior was restricted due to the boarding up of all window and door openings. The plan of the building is, however, readily readable from the exterior and is standard for early Georgian design - that is, the centrally-located entrance would lead to a centre hall with the main, public rooms flanking either side. It is believed that heritage elements such as wood mouldings, original doors, a bake oven, etc., are still present in the house, and since it has been occupied until recently, the heritage value of the interior of the buildings can be assumed to be of considerable merit despite surface vandalism. A future report on the heritage attributes of the interior could be prepared if access to the interiors is made possible.

Remarkably, the building has gone through minimal changes over the course of 176 years. The majority of the original building materials are still intact, including the fieldstone foundation, the brick walls, the wood windows and sills and the brick chimneys. As is typical of this age, the brick has suffered some damage and loss of mortar joints due to shifting, freeze-thaw cycles and neglect. Shoring up the foundation and repointing of the brick is the standard course of action. The wood window frames can be repaired and/or replaced with materials in kind.

F. Conclusion

1. Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee Evaluation Criteria:

In this report the subject building has been evaluated against the criteria developed by the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee for determining the cultural heritage value of a property and its prospective merit for designation under the Ontario Heritage Act. and has successfully met the following criteria:

1.1 Archaeology: The building stands on a site of known aboriginal activity. It also occupies a site of original settlement of European settlers and agricultural development in the Township of Ancaster. The agricultural and domestic use of the property has remained consistent, and there has, therefore, been minimal disturbance of the land, likely preserving much of the archaeological evidence which remains.

1.2 Historical Associations: The subject property is associated with original European settlement in Ancaster Township and with the formative activity of early nineteenth century agricultural settlement in the Municipality.

It is associated with the Book family, a family representative of the first settlers to occupy Ancaster Township.

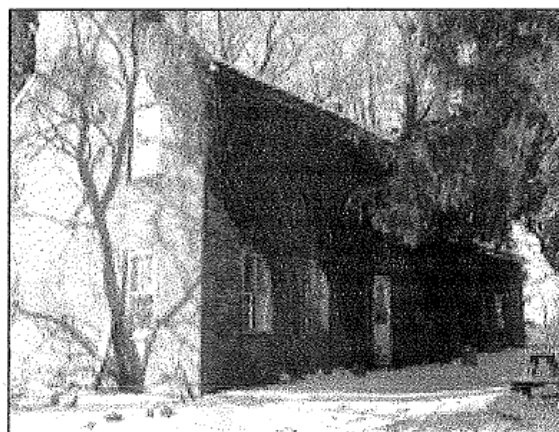
The residence is also associated with the practice of medicine in early Canada and with Dr. Harmanus Smith, a prominent nineteenth century political figure in Upper Canada.

1.3 Architectural Merit: The subject building in its composition, design and materials is an early and rare example of residential Georgian architecture dating to 1831. While brick became a common building material later in the nineteenth century, at this early date brick was not readily available. The use of brick in the Book House is thus highly significant architecturally.

1.4 Functional Merit: The building has consistently served a residential function since its construction until the completion of the most recent tenancy in 2006.

1.5 Location Integrity: The subject building remains in its original location on the north side of Book Rd. E., standing as a concrete reminder of early settlement and architecture in the Municipality.

1.6 Built Integrity: The building retains its original architectural configuration of a two-and-a-half storey brick building with side gable roof, two sets of double chimneys at either end, and a one-storey kitchen wing to the west. The building also retains original window and door frames. The original inte-



rior configuration, woodwork, floors, etc., are most probably still in tact. Given its very early date of 1831, the building is a remarkably well-preserved example of Georgian architecture.

1.7 Environmental Context: The setting of the subject building has been somewhat altered from its original context. The 1817 Book house to the east has been lost to fire thus damaging the continuity of the historical landscape. However, the building is still surrounded by a rural and agricultural landscape and is a landmark on the ridge which runs parallel and north of the Book Rd., a situation unchanged since its time of construction. The Book Family Cemetery nearby documents the many members of the Book family who contributed to the clearing and cultivation of the Book lands. The Book House, thus, in large part, retains its historic character and contributes to the overall character of the landscape.

1.8 Social Value: The Book property has been a subject of interest and concern to many residents of Hamilton, to members of the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee and to descendants of the Book family for many years.

2. Compliance with Ontario Heritage Act, Ontario Regulation 9/06: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest:

According to Subsection 1 (2) of Ontario Regulation 9/06, Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest, a property may be designated under section 29 of the Act if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

2.1 Design Value: The property has design value or physical value because it:

- is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method
- displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit, or
- demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.

2.2 Historic Value: The property has historic value or associative value because it:

- has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community
- yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture, or
- demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to the community.



2.3 Contextual Value: The property has contextual value because it:

- is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area
- is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings, or
- is a landmark.

The subject property, the Adam Book house, has design value because it is a rare and early example of an architectural style, and construction material and method; it has historical value because it has direct associations with a theme, persons and activities that are significant to the community, and because it yields and has the potential to yield information that

contributes to the understanding of the community; it has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining and supporting the character of the area, because it is physically, visually and historically linked to its surroundings, and because it is a landmark.

G. Recommendations

The Adam Book house at 167 Book Rd. E. is a valuable heritage resource in the Municipality of Hamilton and more than meets the criteria for designation under criteria established by the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee and the Ontario Heritage Act.

The owner is encouraged to consider Heritage Designation in order that this important building may be preserved for the future. Designation would increase awareness of the importance of the property thus bringing recognition to the site and its owner. Interest-free loans are also available through the Municipality for designated properties.

The vulnerability of the building to vandalism is of immediate concern. Steel coverings to door and window openings could be installed to ensure security of the building. These may be installed in such a manner as to allow openings at the top of each to provide air circulation, vital in preventing damage from damp.

A secure lock on the gate at the base of the driveway would also be helpful in preventing access.

These measures would be beneficial to the owners of the building in preventing unnecessary costs incurred by further damage to the building by vandalism.

Members of the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee would be pleased to provide information on how to obtain a complete structural report on the Book House by a qualified heritage professional and to assist in any manner which would ensure the preservation of this building.

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