

270 Sherman Avenue North, Hamilton

STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST AND DESCRIPTION OF HERITAGE ATTRIBUTES

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The Cotton Factory, municipally known as 270 Sherman Avenue North, is a former industrial complex that consists of a combination of one to three storey early 20th century buildings built with a Gothic architectural influence. The complex is situated on an approximately 3 acre parcel of land located on the east side of Sherman Avenue North between Landsdowne Street and Biggar Street in an industrial area within the City of Hamilton.

DESIGN / PHYSICAL VALUE

The Cotton Factory has design and physical value as a representative example of a turn-of-the-century industrial building with Gothic architectural influence. While the complex consists of a patchwork of buildings, the Gothic style of influence is apparent throughout in the symmetrical rhythm of the building elevations, shallow buttressing, and the large, arched, multi-paned windows. The interior of the mill building demonstrates the typical industrial construction of the time using metal posts and timber beams to create large open spaces.

HISTORICAL / ASSOCIATIVE VALUE

The industrial complex was constructed in 1900 for the Imperial Cotton Company due to the collaborative efforts of a Yarmouth bookkeeper (name unknown), investment of the '5 Johns', access of the land by John Patterson, architectural design of Edmond Patterson, and direction of James M. Young as its first President. There is insufficient evidence to determine if Young was also a part owner, but the Young family was significant in the textile industry as they had holdings in textile mills across New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario.

Specializing in heavy duct cotton used for boat sails and building awnings, the Imperial Cotton Company was instrumental to the formation of the early textile industry in Hamilton. Orders were taken from all over the world using telegraphic code. The Imperial Cotton Company had its own codebook to simplify orders. Classes of cotton duck manufactured were "once & sail", "harvester" & "hydraulic", "hose, bootleg and tennis", and "filter and press". Archival records show that the Imperial Cotton Company manufactured the sailcloth of the iconic Canadian Bluenose. In 1924 the Imperial Cotton Company was amalgamated with a Nova Scotia firm owned by the Young Family, to form the Cosmos-Imperial Cotton Company.

CONTEXTUAL VALUE

The Cotton Factory is a landmark as its smoke stack and tower are some of the few vertical elements in the North End of Hamilton. The building is located in close proximity to other industrial buildings that developed in the neighbourhood due to its proximity outside the city centre and connections to rail. The Textile industry in Hamilton in the early 20th century is functionally and historically linked to its surroundings. It employed more than 300 workers, mainly women, and it can be assumed that the residential area developed around the factory to house the workers.

Description of Heritage Attributes

The cultural heritage value of the Cotton Factory, known as 270 Sherman Avenue North, resides in the following heritage attributes that are related to the Industrial, Gothic influenced style and the complex's industrial use and context including (excluding the 1946 addition between the Mill and Office Buildings):

Landscape Attributes:

- Organic layout of buildings to accommodate the function of the original and evolved industrial use;
- Proximity to railway line; and,
- High concrete platform on south elevation of the Store House.

Exterior Attributes:

- Rectangular shape of buildings;
- Red brick construction;
- Varied rooflines with heights ranging from one to three stories;
- Brick corbelling;
- Original window and door openings including brick voussoirs and stone sills;
- Original wood windows where they exist;
- Bays separated by shallow buttressing;
- Iron tie rod anchor plates (located where the buttress and interior floors meet);
- Original wood doors where they exist;
- Tower including window openings and corbeling, bracketing and crenelation details; and,
- Smoke stack including corbeling.

Interior Attributes:

- Timber post and beam construction where it exists;
- Original wood floors and exposed wood ceilings where they exist; and,
- Original metal fire doors of the interior.