

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

Description of Property

The 0.17-hectare property at 7 Ravenscliffe Avenue is comprised of a two-and-one-half-storey stucco-clad brick residence constructed circa 1911, located in the Durand neighbourhood of the City of Hamilton.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The cultural heritage value of the property lies in its design value as a representative example of residential Italian Renaissance Revival architectural style in Hamilton, as demonstrated by its low hipped roof with red clay tiles, stucco façade, paired bracketed eaves, balconets, belt course, pilasters, and Tuscan columns. The property displays a high degree of craftsmanship as demonstrated by the interior wood and plaster features in the front foyer, library, and first and second storey staircase, and the exterior features including the moulded entablature, double bracketed eaves, and Tuscan columns.

The historical value of the property lies in its direct association with Harry Blois Witton (1865-1927), the original owner of the building. Witton worked as a lawyer in Hamilton for 11 years before he was named the vice-president of Tuckett Tobacco Company Ltd. In 1896, and president in 1915. Witton also served on the Hamilton City Council from 1911-1927, and the Board of Education’s appointment to the Library Board. Additionally, the historical value of the property also lies in its direct association with the prominent Hamilton architectural firm of Stewart & Witton, which was operated by Walter Stewart (1871-1917) and William Witton (1871-1947), Harry Blois Witton’s brother, from 1904-1917. The pair designed a number of recognizable residential and institutional buildings in Hamilton, including 6 Ravenscliffe Avenue, Herkimer Apartments, King George Public School, and St. Giles Presbyterian Church.

The contextual value of the property lies in its role in defining the historic character of Ravenscliffe Avenue and the Durand neighbourhood. The building is visually and historically linked to its surroundings as part of the surviving late-nineteenth to early-twentieth century residential streetscape that makes up one of Hamilton’s most prominent and distinguished neighbourhoods.

Description of Heritage Attributes

The key attributes that embody the cultural heritage value of the property as a representative example of the Italian Renaissance Revival style of architecture, with a high degree of craftsmanship, and its historical association with previous owner Harry Blois Witton and architectural firm of Stewart & Witton include:

- All four elevations and roofline of the two-and-one-half storey stucco-clad brick structure including its:
 - Front hipped roof with flanking projecting bays with its:
 - Flanking stucco-clad decorative chimneys;
 - Red clay tiles;
 - Two hipped-roof front dormers;
 - Entablature with modillioned eaves cornice, carved soffit, moulded frieze and architrave, with paired carved brackets;
 - Smooth stucco façades;
 - Flat-headed window openings with one-over-one hung wood windows and storms and plain lug sills;
 - Belt course between the first and second storeys;
 - Five-bay front (west) elevation with its:
 - Flanking balconets in the outer second-storey projecting bays with wrought-iron railings, corbels beneath and decorative keystones in the window below;
 - Central entrance with enclosed portico, plain architrave and pilasters, balcony with balustrades, and arched entryway with French doors;
 - Covered porch in the side (south) elevation with entablature, pilasters, and Tuscan columns;
 - Decorative copper downspouts; and,
 - Coal chutes in the side (north) elevation.
- The interior and original first and second storey features, including the:
 - Front foyer with its segmentally arched front entry way with double doors with wood carved leaf and acorn design, wood paneled walls with carved wood pilasters and double brackets, and cross vaulted ceiling;
 - First-floor library with its ornately decorated plaster ceiling with plaster rosettes, wood carved crown moulding and dentils, wood paneled walls

with built in shelves, fluted square wood columns with Ionic capitals, and fireplace with moulded wood and marble detailing;

- Oval shaped dining room with its ornately decorated plaster ceiling with wood carved crown moulding and dentils, curved wood paneling and curved wood doors; and,
- First and second storey main staircase with carved wood handrail and newel post, carved wood paneling, and alcove with carved wood keystone, fluted pilasters, and fluted Tuscan columns.

The key attributes that embody the contextual value of the property as a defining feature of the historical character of Ravenscliffe Avenue and the Durand neighbourhood include its:

- Moderate setback from Ravenscliffe Avenue with grassed lawn and central walkway to the front entrance.