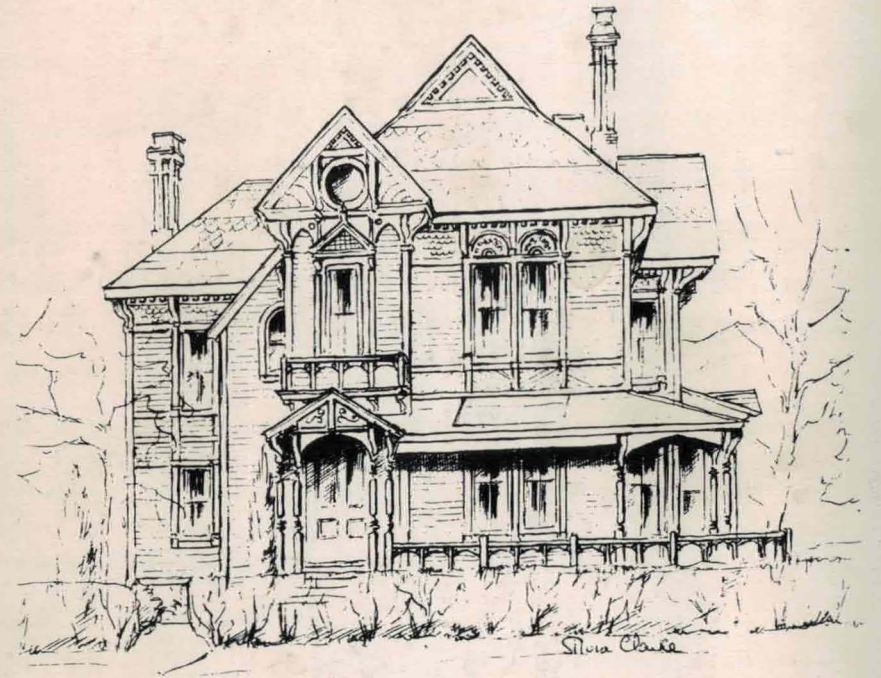


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Old North Walkabout Geranium Walk 8

SUNDAY, JUNE 7, 1981

1:30 - 4:30 p.m.



SPONSORED BY LONDON REGION BRANCH OF
THE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVANCY OF ONTARIO

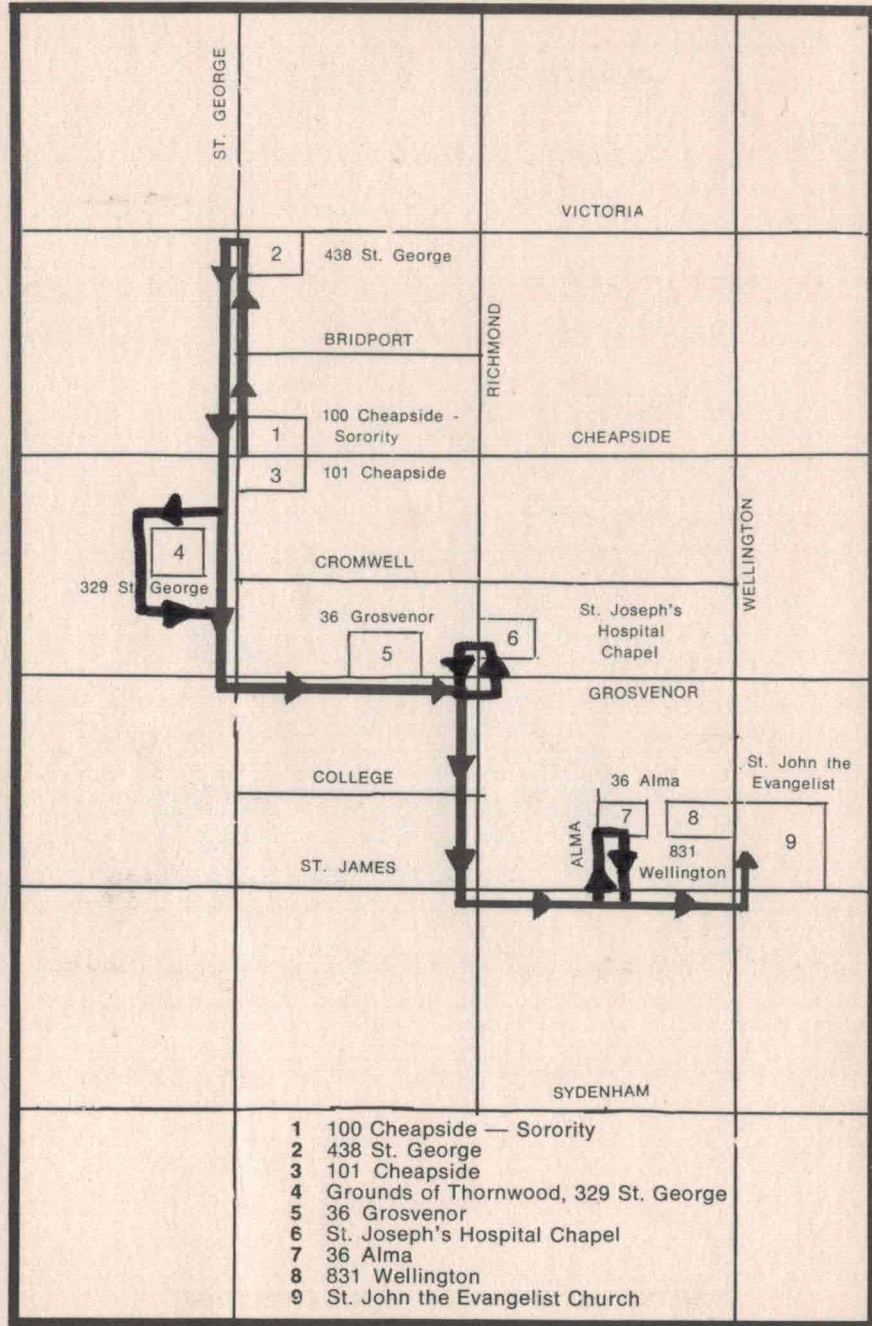
'OLD' LONDON NORTH

It is a surprising fact about 'Old' London North that, despite being within the boundaries of London for over 140 years, its historical development is relatively recent. The area, defined as Huron on the north, Oxford on the south, the Thames on the west and Adelaide on the east, was annexed in 1840 and was called the "New Survey". The town fathers expected that growth would proceed northwards. Instead, London expanded eastward along the C. N. Railway line, toward London East. Northerly development was prevented by the Military Garrisons, around Victoria Park, and by the swath of the C. P. R., laid in 1887.

The image of Old North — a mixture of mansions and institutions — was dictated by four large residences, built in the 1840s and 1850s: "Thornwood" and "Headley" to be seen yet, and "Rough Park" gone from St. George St. and the Barker house formerly on the Marian Villa site. These estates acted as magnets for wealthy homes to be built north of Oxford St., although development was slow, with only scattered houses until after World War I, and infill in the 1950s and 1960s.

Institutions whose history is woven through London North include the Western Fair, Hellmuth Boys' College, Huron College and early Western University, Mount Hope Orphanage, (which yielded to St. Mary's Hospital and Marian Villa), the Protestant Orphans' Home, (Merrymount Children's Home), St. Joseph's Hospital and the McCormick Home. Significantly, almost all have remained and merged comfortably with the fine residential nature of the area. They are regarded as strong fibres in the fabric of Old London North.

—Introduction by John H. Lutman, author of "The North and the East" which will be published in summer 1981, augmenting his earlier books on London.



OLD NORTH WALKABOUT begins at 100 Cheapside, Chapter House for Kappa Alpha Theta Sorority since 1948. This one-and-a-half storey, buff-brick residence of c. 1899 has the resort-style gabled roof as seen in Newport, Rhode Island, where a casual and relatively unassuming look was desired for the very spacious homes of the elite. Six double bedrooms are accommodated within. The interior is distinguished by red-and-light oak parquet floors laid in three different patterns plus an elaborate Greek Key border. Very fine wood carvings enhance three fireplaces, now painted but formerly of stained finish. French doors lead to the former porch, now enclosed. Floral motifs dominate the dining room, and the very tall doorways have upper transom windows.

New York State is shown as a fine carpenter's delight in myriad, intricate constructions of gables, upper window shapes, and varying shingles, herringbone and fretwork finish on the walls. The fancy slate roof and heavily moulded brick chimneys of cruciform shape lend importance and solidity, as does the stone base.

Recent restoration has removed a pergola and trellised porch, and has seen the house painted in the recessive, darker colours, for an air of careful understatement. Enter by carved outer doors, frosted glass inside doors, and archway.

Once inside, the woodwork had been black, but now reveals warm and glowing natural colour. The same floral motif carved in the newel post and fireplace appears as a cutout on the brass, (formerly gas) chandelier. Notice the original brass hardware on doors, with black porcelain doorknobs, and large ornate brass heating grates.

On the right, a former front parlour is now the dining room, with a moulded polychromed plaster ceiling medallion. Large windows are an asset. The present den was originally the dining room with butler's pantry adjoining. All fireplaces are original with decorative ceramic tiles.

Climb the prominent staircase past the arched, leaded window with a rose design. Houses of this period had a small, front sewing room. All the bedrooms have stencilled transoms and plenty of daylight.

Please exit by the rear or servants' stair and the side door and proceed to the corner of Grosvenor and Richmond where the Sisters of St. Joseph operate both St. Mary's Hospital, (for chronic care,) and St. Joseph's Hospital (since 1888). Each began with large older residences on the sites — the Barker house and Judge Street's residence respectively, as a 10-bed hospital.

CHAPEL OF ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL Enter through the centre glass doors on Richmond St., and up the stairs immediately to the right. (Please allow room for others coming down to exit.)

This beautiful Chapel of Neo-classic architecture, Romanesque in design, with details in Palladian style, holds crystal chandeliers, basically Maria-Theresa in design, with metal frames and pendalogue prisms; 1940 McCausland matched stained glass memorial windows; life-size statues of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of St. Joseph, on ornamental pedestals above small marble-topped altars.

The pews and floor (now covered with tile flooring) are of oak. The Stations of the Cross are of alabaster, carved in relief and in oval gilt frames. Suspended on heavy

chain behind the marble Altar of Repose is a large Crucifix, bound by highly polished brass. The background, to which the Corpus is affixed, is of white marble with a regular black marble design.

Three smaller statues — the Infant of Prague, St. Roch, and St. Jude, and a large painting of Our Mother of Perpetual Help — symbols of hope and healing, are also in evidence.

Eleven circular windows by The N. T. Lyon Co. of Toronto remain intact from 1915. (This firm amalgamated with McCausland in 1939). They depict at the front — Crowned Heart with Flames, and Chalice, and on the west side — Bishop's Hat, Chalice, Monogram M, Crown of Thorns, and on the east side — stylized CR, Cross I H S, Pope's Tiara and Crossed Keys (St. Peter). The large and small memorial windows are clearly marked, and a list of subjects and donors is available.

Delicate blue walls, offset by white fluted Ionic pilasters, and the regularly-spaced windows all provide an atmosphere for repose and spirituality.

Go south one block along Richmond, and turn left onto St. James St., viewing "Headley", previous home of Sir Adam Beck whose career is described on a plaque, but built in 1862 for Ellis W. Hyman, a tanner and entrepreneur. Tower, porte-cochere, and other porches were added later. The interesting stables and carriagehouse along St. James have become fine housing. Turn left on Alma St., which was named for a Crimean War victory.

36 ALMA is believed to be 125 years old, with the ground having built up around it through the years. Its light, double brick was stuccoed in the 1920s fashion. Two Doric columns support the porch, of which the roof shows nailholes suggesting an earlier storm porch enclosed. The two flanking cottages were built slightly later.

The central hall originally went to the rear, because the part behind the present living room was added later. Some wide, old doors have been split to half-leaf for convenience of opening. The furnace grates differ from room to room. There probably was no original fireplace. The present one of red brick is wooden-encased with marble insert. The plain ceilings are 10 feet high.

The living room was formerly divided as front and back parlours. A sketch of Matthews' Hall is a reminder of its recent demolition. The cherry settee c. 1810 is appropriate.

In the dining room, (built in 1900 with smaller windows) can be seen the English pine table c. 1830, a child's sleigh c. 1832, and a fine pine jam cupboard with pieces



of old Royal Doulton. When leaving by the sunroom, you can see the original light brick now exposed as an interior wall of the addition.

Retrace Alma to St. James and east to Wellington St., turn north just to **831 Wellington St.**

This cottage retains echoes of the Regency style in its square plan, balanced chimneys and placement of the windows. However, the front gable is elaborately decorated and the front windows have patterned leaded glass at the top, features usually found in later two storey houses. Also, the roof from the street appears to be the usual cottage type but from the rear the broad gable with return eaves indicates a storey and a half house. The house number in the glass over the door is an individual touch also of a later date.

When the present owners took over the house two years ago, it was covered with ivy which had to be removed because of the amount of old dead wood beneath the new growth. Traces of the vine can be seen on the brickwork and the wood trim.

The main rooms open off the box hall and into each other, making the rooms light and suited to contemporary living. The house was originally heated with stoves. When the old wallpaper was removed, the stovepipe holes could be seen in the inside walls below the ten foot ceilings. The rooms contain some of the owners' collection of early and Victorian butternut furniture and their collection of Japanese and contemporary prints.

The mantelpiece with the green tile surround and hearth is Edwardian and was fitted with a gas grate. The pine mantelpiece in the library is probably older than the house but matches the decorative motif and moulding of the door frames. With the bookshelves it was installed recently by the present owners.

The diningroom furniture is Canadian of the Regency and Victorian period. The enclosed stairway to the bedrooms is along the outside wall in the southwest corner off the diningroom.

The breakfast room was formerly the downstairs bedroom. The butternut dresser displaying a collection of old ironstone is an early piece from Elgin County. The draw table is from Waterloo County. The walnut chairs are Victorian.

The old shrubbery of the perennial border provides privacy in the garden. The dozens of peonies should be blooming in June.

This house seems to have had only a few owners, all of whom appreciated and preserved the structure almost intact.



Go directly across Wellington Street, to admire the sanctuary and to enjoy tea in the Hall of

The Church of St. John the Evangelist.. In 1888 this church was opened by Bishop Baldwin and Dean Innes. The congregation had been growing since 1864, using the Chapel of the same name at old Huron College, and then the Anglican Chapter House on Piccadilly, which is now threatened with demolition. On vacant land purchased from Hellmuth College, London architect Charles F. Cox's design of Victorian Gothic soars to a row of pointed dormers in the steep roof. Later additions include the Church School Building in 1895, the Kent spire atop the tower in 1897, and the Chancel screen in 1905. The parish hall was extended, the Sanctuary and Reredos built in, and some north extension added at later dates. Lives of dear ones devoted to the parish are remembered by stained glass, plaques, furnishings, and liturgical vessels, all described in G. W. Bartram's book on the parish history. Lists are available of the seven rectors whose service covers the 93 years. The Toronto McCausland firm made the chancel windows depicting St. John the Baptist, the Good Shepherd, and the Virgin Mary. In the north nave, the Dorcas window of 1974 is by Canadian artist Yvonne Williams. London artist C. Wallace designed the clerestory (upper) Lamb of Resurrection, Eagle as symbol of St. John, and Dove, to mention only a few. Note also the Two World Wars' memorial window of 1950 at the rear, the unique rood screen, stone font, and lighting fixtures. London artists P. J. Aziz designed the Communion vessels, and Ray Robinson the terra cotta panels behind the altar.

Soaring arches and the inverted "ship" of the ceiling, lit by the high trefoil windows, all testify to worship in love and joy, that being the Christ-centred purpose of the Gothic style. The West Rose Garden is also a memorial.

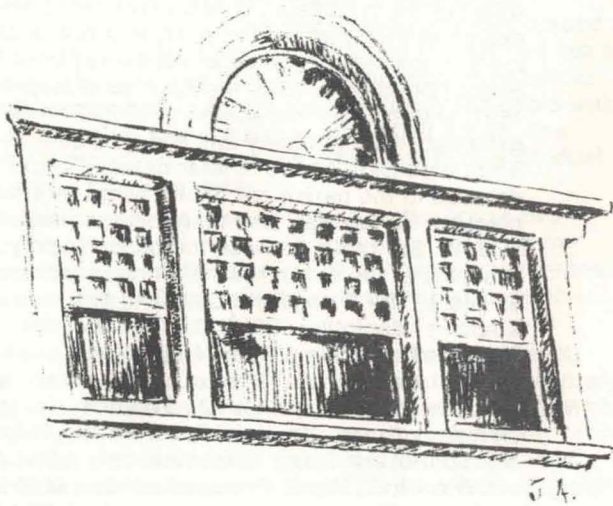
After tea, and to end your Walkabout, you might go south on Wellington and right on Sydenham St. for the other side of Headley, and two former residences on the opposite side redeveloped by Cambarex, mid-block the former Judge Macbeth house, and on the corner — 784 Richmond — a gem of a Gothic villa of 1871, also used as Miss Matthews' School, and now office and apartment above and executive suite in carriagehouse.

Alternatively, if your Walkabout returns along Cheapside, notice 180 Cheapside, a gracious 1938 Late Georgian Revival house, and, across the road, 191 Cheapside, the imposing Lawson Family home since 1909, of late Victorian design with a variety of detail.

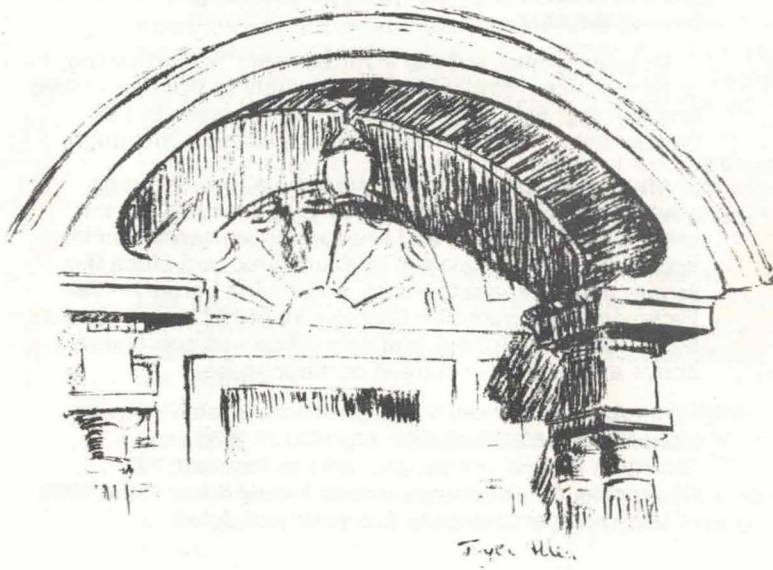


In "TOWARD HUMAN ARCHITECTURE" Lewis Mumford declared, "... when the spirit enters into a work and seizes hold of the entire problem, what was once a practical matter becomes what we finally see, a real work of art."

and again Lewis Mumford— "Many older buildings have qualities which we no longer are able to install in modern buildings. You feel the touch of the human hand ... and you feel somebody's ideas of life."



36 Alma



438 St. George

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

- NEW \$7.50 Individual
 RENEWAL \$10.00 Couple

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