

5.6 John Street, west side

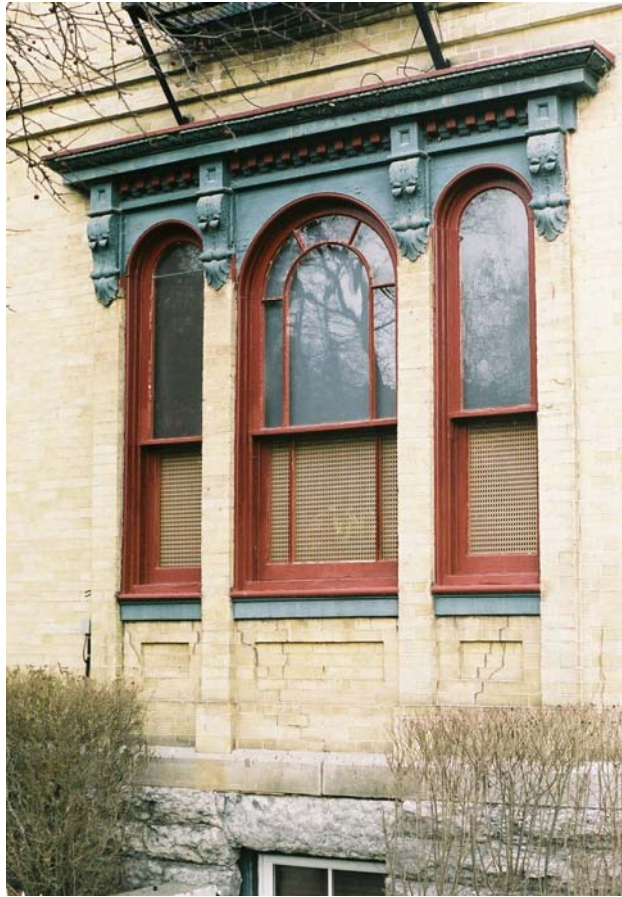


86 John Street

- Imposing, three-storey, Victorian buff-brick palazzo, with fabulous, metal window entablatures (1857). Former Bank of Upper Canada, apparently by F.W. Cumberland, is **Designated** under O.H.A. Part IV.
- General Description – Towering Victorian corner house has main 3-bay façade towards John Street, and similarly decorated, 2-bay elevation to south. Property is enclosed on two sides by low stone wall built of local rubble stone (now rendered and painted), with triangular-section, ashlar copings having inset spikes at approximately two-inch centers along top. (An old photograph in exists which shows the original, ornate cast-iron railings). Building masonry is of buff brick laid in Flemish bond throughout, built off limestone plinth with bevelled upper edge, set on local, coursed-rubble limestone foundation. Pair of bold brick stringcourses articulate each of floor levels above.
- Front Elevation, Vestibule – Symmetrical front façade has palace-like aspect, with buff-brick vestibule reached by broad stair and landing now clad in rustic limestone pavers and with plain brass railings at center and sides built into stone copings. Vestibule is c. 1950s addition comprising two brick piers, curved glass-block corner panels and simple, painted metal cornice above. In contrast to fifties theme, front door is recent but traditional in style, with two round-headed windows over two vertical panels. Transom window is blocked with plywood bearing address of property. Buff brick above, laid in common bond, is also assumed to date from 1950s, with simple boarded soffit and plain wooden fasci, the latter supporting traditional ogee gutter leading to corrugated downspout. Small balcony above, however, has period cast-iron railing with ornate corner posts with finials (original assumed to be at LH side) and balustrade of iron panels with round-headed arches housing various decorative elements.
- Front Elevation, Ground Floor – Ground floor has round-headed apertures either side of vestibule, with double-hung windows having taller upper sashes; both sashes having peripheral panes within vertical muntins set some 6” in from sash styles. Windows are framed by paired, narrow brick pilasters built off modest bases. Recessed brick spandrel panels exist below rounded wooden fascias and sills. Pilasters rise to pedimented, Beaux-Arts, cast-iron entablatures supported on paired brackets cast in form of stylized foliage, each bracket having double leaves over large acanthus. Entablature comprises band of multiple dentils spanning between brackets, with cladding below concealing voussoirs of arches. Low-pitch, triangular pediments have bead-and-reel ornament at upper edge.
- Front Elevation - continued on next page.

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- **Front Elevation, Second Floor** – Second-floor fenestration is variation of that described at ground floor. Three symmetrically placed apertures have single pilaster at either side, rising to single iron brackets and pediments as described, though here with scroll-type or Chippendale pediment having central wheat-sheaf-type ornament with small fleur-de-lis above. Windows are combination of (at right) original 6/9 (with metal storms), (at left) six-pane sash over two-pane casement windows (with metal storms), and (at centre) pair of five-pane French doors (with wooden screen doors) and more glass block above. Outer windows have small metal balconies with iron balustrades as over vestibule.
- **Front Elevation, Third Floor** – Top Floor has windows framed by brickwork as at second floor, but with differing trim. Metal sills have robust rolled edge and profiled fascia below, and are supported by iron brackets cast with typical foliage pattern. Brackets span between upper and lower band-courses near floor level. Entablatures are segmental-arched, dropping at sides to modest moulding set above brackets similar to those below sills. Entablatures are decorated with fine, classically-derived leaf motif framed by roll mouldings. Windows at this level have three-pane, segmental-headed transom windows with (apparently altered - see old photograph) windows below being pair of 1/1 sashes with central mullion in each aperture (behind metal storms).
- **Cornice** – Impressive, Italianate wood cornice is over modest metal cornice crowning masonry. Frieze has closely spaced, fluted scroll-type brackets with roundels between, while soffit has similarly shaped modillions with small pendant finials and plain coffers between. Cymatium has wide *cyma recta*, which is somewhat obscured by deep metal flashing above. Flat roof is invisible from street.
- **South Elevation and Comments** – see next page.

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- **South Elevation** – South elevation generally has elements as described at front, but is separated by central pilaster into two bays. **Ground floor** - Ornate window at RH side is divided by narrow pilasters and has recessed brick panels in spandrels below. Window comprises three, round-headed lights with wider central unit having sashes as at front, with inner muntins forming smaller peripheral panes. All units are double-hung, with taller top sashes having textured, translucent coloured glass. **Entablature** above comprises elements as at front; pilasters rise to cast-iron entablature supported on brackets cast with stylized, scrolled foliage. Entablature has also band of multiple dentils spanning between brackets, over painted cladding which conceals voussoirs of arches below. Continuous corona is crowned by *cymatium* embellished with classical, leaf-type motif, with (rusty) metal flashing above. **Upper Floors** have entablatures, doors and windows as at front elevation, with differences as follows: second floor has plain metal balconies and two small windows inserted to right of central pilaster - 2/2 at second floor and casement at third - both with concrete sills and angle-iron lintels. Mouldings at top cornice fascia change dramatically near center of building, with flashing above also varying.
- **South Addition** – Modest, one-storey, flat-roofed brick addition at southwest corner has brick sills and headers on hidden lintels and 2/2 windows with horizontal muntins (c. 1950). Large pitched-roof addition (2006) beyond is largely glazed at south side and encloses former patio.
- **North Addition** – Post Modern, glazed, framed verandah fronts deep one-storey buff-brick 1950s wing.
- **Comments** – An ornate and impressive building in good repair, with various alterations and additions which do not generally detract from appearance of the original. Removal of 1950s elements at front porch would be unfortunate, though perhaps justifiable. Other additions are more expendable, but less obvious. Later windows at upper south elevation are unobtrusive. New pitched-roof addition over former patio is sympathetic to the overall building. At wall on SE corner, painted coping and render below do not reflect original finishes, and might be removed if desired. Similarly, cast-iron railings might one day be reinstated. Any development of parking lot should be discouraged if this intrudes on building.