

# 73 MILL STREET SOUTH

*Classic Revival*



TURNER HOUSE  
*circa 1880*

*Date Designated: February 27, 1989 to By-Law No. 21/89, SCHEDULE B-1*

*Lot Description: STEWART P PT TOWN PLOT 27*

## — ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION —

This is a three-storey block, prominent as the tallest building in the vicinity and located at a main intersection. In size and scale, it is obviously a commercial building, thought to have been built as a hotel. The main facade faces Mill Street dominated by a central front door (note heavily moulded panels) with sidelights. In the corner toward the intersection is a second, less prominent entrance that opens to a small shop. Large shop windows are notable. The rest of the fenestration is more domestically scaled, adopting the tall narrow proportions of the Victorian era, topped with flat brick arches.

The main floor facing Mill Street has five bays, the upper floor four, and the Peter Street

elevation has three per floor. The building is constructed in brick, laid in stretcher bond. The building is not quite rectangular in plan; rather it conforms to the oblong shape of the adjacent intersection of streets. The cornice offers decorative bands of brick. Remnants of chimneys can be seen along the roof line, but the roof itself, a shed form, can only be seen from the rear.

A large one-storey concrete block wing has been added at the rear, and should not be considered in this designation. This block at Mill and Peter ranks as a good representative of commercial architecture separate from the more 'urban' look of Walton Street. It is prominent as a component of the streetscape.

## HISTORICAL ABSTRACT

This building is known historically as Turner House or Turner's Tavern, named after the owner who presided over the building in 1881. John James Turner, or J.J. as he was called, came to Port Hope from England in 1875 and established a tent and awning business. He was born in London in 1850 and had apprenticed as a sail maker for seven years. He located his business on the East Pier at Port Hope offering manufacture of not only sails, but tents, ensigns, hammocks and awnings as well. He also rented boats and boathouses.

By 1881, he had decided to venture into the tavern business. He purchased the property at Mill and Peter Street. A barn on the property burned shortly after the purchase. With the proceeds of the insurance, he built Turner House. In 1882, he sold his canvas business to concentrate on the tavern business. Another fire occurred in the same year damaging the south half of the building. By 1884, he had given up on the hospitality trade and moved to Peterborough where he established a very successful canvas business that survived into the 1950's. The J.J. Turner Building on George Street in Peterborough is named in his honour.

## ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL



*The building is not quite rectangular in plan; rather it conforms to the oblong shape of the adjacent intersection of streets*

## HISTORICAL DIRECTORY AD

**J. J. TURNER,**  
SAIL,  
**TENT AND AWNING MAKER**

Having had his work thoroughly tested by Vessel Owners and Merchants in Port Hope and Cobourg, refers parties requiring anything in his line to those using his goods, confident they have given satisfaction.

**TENTS and AWNINGS, any size, MADE TO ORDER**

**Boats to Rent by the Day, Week or Month.**  
Estimates promptly furnished, and all work warranted first-class.

**J. J. TURNER,**  
Sail Maker, Rigger and Ship Chandler,  
East Pier, Port Hope, Ontario.

*This ad appeared in a business directory of 1880. The Turner House is thought to have been constructed circa 1880.*