

# 134-136 WALTON STREET

Walton Street Heritage District - Classic Revival



METCALFE TERRACE  
circa 1852-53

*Date Designated: April 11, 1988 to By-Law No. 39/88, SCHEDULE B-7*

*Lot Description: PT 56*

## — ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION —

This handsome terrace embraces most of the features typical of the Greek Revival style: brick pilasters, heavy entablature punctuated by stomachers in the frieze (similar to [29-33 Walton, the Gillett Paterson Block](#)), and eared trim on the middle door. It is a striking example of a particularly urban style of building and accommodates itself to the rising ground of Walton Street in a similar fashion to the St. Lawrence Hotel ([87-97 Walton Street](#)).

This two-storey terrace is constructed of brick laid in Flemish bond and is divided by painted

brick pilasters into three sections of irregular size. The middle section has three bays on both storeys of the main facade; the door headed by an eared surround and windows of six over six-sash type with flat surround, stone lintels, and lugsills. Well-fitting shutters enhance the appearance of the facade.

The side of the building fronting on Brown Street shows evidence of earlier window openings that have been bricked over. The decorative cast-iron work around the areaways signifies a full basement.

## HISTORICAL ABSTRACT

As with so many of the other properties on this section of Walton Street, James Smith of the Grange (*33 South Street*) acquired the parcel of land in 1841. It had been part of a three-quarter acre purchase from James' brother, William and referred to as the Gilchrist property, named after Samuel Gilchrist who had purchased the same three-quarters of an acre from Allan Wood in 1830.

James Smith (1811-1874) third son of John David Smith, and grandson of Elias Smith, was a member of one of the founding families of Port Hope who were instrumental in settling the Town and establishing the first mill. James, like many of the sons of J.D. Smith, was very active in local politics and business. He was a distinguished town lawyer, and later a Judge for Victoria County. He was a Member of the Legislative Assembly in 1848-54 holding the office of Mayor of Port Hope concurrently in 1851. He was actively involved in the development of the railway and was appointed President of the Railway Company in 1853. As Mayor of Port Hope in 1851, he oversaw the proceedings of the laying of the cornerstone of the Town Hall and Market Building in September 1851 (*56 Queen Street*). Along with his brother, John Shuter Smith, James was responsible for the construction of the Smith Block erected on Walton Street (*16-26 Walton Street*) in 1851. The block was designed by Rochester architect Merwin Austin. Austin had also been commissioned to design the Town Hall in 1850 (*56 Queen Street*).

Six years later Smith and his wife sold a quarter of an acre of this parcel to Port Hope merchant, Tristram Walker Metcalfe. In January 1850, T.W. Metcalfe established a new hardware store in the Robertson Block (*41-51 Walton Street*) known as being at "the Sign of the Golden Anvil" importing stock from England. The Metcalfe Block was erected in 1852 or 1853 when the Commercial Bank and the Hon. S.H. Cameron held mortgages on the Metcalfe property. The Commercial Bank is listed in business directories from 1857 as being located on the corner of Brown and Walton Streets (the site of the Metcalfe Block) with W. E. Harper, Esq. as agent.

It has been suggested that this stylish terrace may have been designed by Merwin Austin, the

## ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL



*Metcalfe Terrace incorporates many details of the Classic or Greek Revival style including the boldly scaled pilasters with capitals, plain deep cornice pierced with stomacher windows lighting the attic storey under a hipped roof. Of particular note are the two handsome doorcases with transoms and Greek eared architraves and the cast iron fence perhaps of local manufacture.*

## HISTORICAL NEWSPAPER AD

## DWELLING HOUSES,

Situated on Walton Street, in the Centre of the Town of Port Hope.

These houses are most substantially built, and well adapted for Stores and Public Offices, being in the immediate vicinity of the Banks and Business Part of the Town.

Also, A FRAME DWELLING HOUSE, situated on Brown Street, in the rear of the above.

The Brick Buildings will be sold in three separate lots.

T. W. METCALFE.

*A for sale notice that appeared in the paper in 1855 when T.W. Metcalfe was selling his properties in the area to move elsewhere. He was also selling land on Toronto Road and his own residence.*

Rochester architect responsible for designing the Town Hall (*56 Walton Street*), E.P. Smith Block (*34-46 Walton Street*), the Smith Block (*16-26 Walton Street*) and St. Lawrence Hotel (*87-97 Walton Street*) due to its architectural prowess evident in Merwin Austin's other commissions.

This handsome terrace has had a stable existence, providing elegant quarters for both commercial enterprises and private individuals. Ownership of the terrace transferred to Edith Lang in 1926 and she sold it in 1935 to Dr. R. McDerment in whose possession it remained until 1985.