

VITTORIA LECTURE ROOM

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VITTORIA TOWN HALL

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1870

Lot B, Block 17, Plan 29B,
Court House Square,
Village of Vittoria
Part Lot 20, Concession 3,
Township of Charlotteville
Township of Delhi

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

Prepared for Delhi L.A.C.A.C.

History by: D. Walker

Architecture by: V. Harker

VITTORIA TOWN HALL

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LOCATION: Lot B
Block 17, Plan 29B
South side of Brock Street
Village of Vittoria
Part Lot 20, Concession 3
Geographical Township of Charlotteville
Township of Delhi

HISTORY OF THE BUILDING

In May 1802, the Crown granted John Gustin 200 acres of land known as Lot 20, Concession 3, Charlotteville.¹ Gustin sold 50 acres at the north end of this lot to S. Mabee, who in turn, sold the property to Robert Nichol.² Nichol deeded a portion in the northern part of the 50 acres to be "in trust for public uses of the District of Talbot." This portion of land was known as the Court House Square.³

Part of Lot 20, Concession 3, Charlotteville, then known as Lot B, Block 17, Vittoria was sold to Thomas Lamport by the Clerk of the Peace for Talbot District, William Wilson.⁴ This sale was registered in June, 1841. The piece of land involved was described as "being composed of part of the lot of land upon which Gaol and Court House was formerly erected."⁵

On June 20, 1862, a subscription list was issued of citizens who promised to donate certain sums for the purpose of building a Public Hall in Vittoria. The building was also to be used for meetings of the Division Court. The following conditions were included with the subscription list:
"Site to be given by Mr. Thomas Lamport and building to be erected within six months from date to be ready for next Township meeting, to be held in January next, 1863."

The publishing of this subscription list coincides with the deeding of "part of the south end of Lot 20, Concession 3, Charlotteville, better known as Village Lot B (Block 17)" by Thomas Lamport and his wife Lydia, to the Vittoria Lecture Room Company. This transaction was registered in December, 1862.⁷

The subscription list for the building of the Public Hall contained the following names:⁸

P. E. Young, in materials	200
Henry Anderson	100
J. B. Woolnough	50
Henry Lamport	50
N. Nevett	20
Joseph McCall	10
O. M. Smith	25
Thomas Lamport	50
W. Hewitt	20

Samuel Swayze	10
D. M. White	10
William Dawson	10
J. E. Hackett	10
George Hewitt	5
J. Williams	10
E. L. Potts	25
Alex Clark	5
William Finlay	40
William Wilson	25
James Wilson	4
John Machon	5
Henry Finch	20
William Thomas Salmon	5
H. J. McKenna	10
Peter W. Tisdale	5
David W. Hager	5
Alex Teeple	5
Frank Gill	1
O. Mabee	25
Frank Potts	5
J. E. Potts	5
George D. McCall	60
Jacob Potts	20
Thomas Lamport, in land for site valued at	150
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	\$1055

This first Public Hall in Vittoria was destroyed by fire. The fire occurred sometime before March 5, 1870, for on this date a number of "members and subscribers of the Vittoria Lecture Room Joint Stock Company" pledged support to rebuild the Vittoria Public Hall or Lecture Room. The Hall was to be "rebuilt with brick as soon as possible." Included with the list of subscribers was a sketch of the Town Hall as it was to be built and same what as it looks today. The subscribers were as follows:

P. E. Young	100
Henry Anderson	100
E. L. Potts	50
William Hewitt	25
Oliver Mabee	30
H. Lamport	50
D. L. Beemer	25
William Dawson	25
J. E. Hackett	25
Francis Walsh	10
John Machon	10
George Hewitt	15
Thomas Haskett	15
L. H. Montross	15
Joseph McCall	15
George Boulter	10
H. L. McKenna	5

R. E. Young	50
Peter L. Hager	20
W. C. Doyle	5
A. L. Potts	25
	<hr/>
	\$ 625

These members were to pay their subscribed amount to William Finlay of Vittoria as Treasurer, half on the 1st day of May and the rest on the 1st of October. The building was "to be erected and finished according to the site plan and elevation as agreed upon by a majority of five persons chosen by ballot" as a building committee.⁹ The building therefore, was most likely completed by the end of 1879.

On December 1, 1915, the Vittoria Lecture Room Company leased the Town Hall property (Village Lot B, Block 17) to the Trustees of the Police Village of Vittoria for a period of 999 years. The Trustees were to pay the sum of one dollar each year of the lease and were to be responsible for the taxes and the maintenance of the property. The building, according to the lease, was "to be always used for the purposes of a public hall--or a place for exhibitions or by said Village for any other necessary purpose."¹⁰ This lease is still in effect today. Since that time the interior of the hall has been greatly changed to accommodate other functions. Presently, it is used primarily as a centre for senior citizens activities but also for other public functions of the town.

HISTORICAL REFERENCES

1. Vittoria Plan 29B Instrument Grant
2. Ibid. Instrument 312 and 1087
3. Ibid. Instrument 1087
4. Ibid. Instrument 3242
5. Ibid.
6. Walsh Papers from the Collections of the Norfolk Historical Society
Eva Brook Donly Museum - pp. 2522, 2527 re Public Hall Vittoria
7. Vittoria Plan 29B Instrument 17825
8. Walsh Papers from the Collections of the Norfolk Historical Society
pp. 2522, 2527 re Public Hall Vittoria
9. Ibid.
10. Vittoria Plan 29B Instrument 134577

Note: The history and references were copied almost in total from the files of the University Women's Club of Norfolk at the Eva Brook Donly Museum.

File: Vittoria Town Hall, Charlotteville, Concession 11, Lot 20

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The basic form of the 1870 Vittoria Town Hall is that of a simple, functional box-like structure. Stylistically, it derives from the neo-classic building tradition, with its emphasis on nicety of proportion.¹ The north front particularly, displays neo-classic features in its complete symmetry, its tall round-headed windows and door, the multiple mouldings beneath the eaves and its "returns." The cupola too, follows the same style with its fine-louvred openings at the base and its double, round-headed openings above.² However, its flattened ogee roof seems a late-Victorian fancy, as do the curved muntins in the transom over the doorway below. The sharp pitch of the gable roof also indicates a later ear.³ The doorway itself, composed of double doors, flanked by recesses in the brick had a very practical purpose; they allowed the doors, when swung open, to be securely fastened.⁴

The side elevations continue the over-all symmetry of the building with three windows centered in each. But these are larger and more classical-revival in proportion than the front ones; they are double hung, of 12/12 panes with thin glazing bars. In the rear elevation, one of these same windows is centered at a higher level. It is flanked by two smaller openings below. at present, one is covered with a shutter, the other forms a doorway. However, these both appear to have originally been windows. Two small brick chimneys rise from the roof at this end of the building.

The brick work is of some interest; the front elevation is of common bond in Flemish variation, while the other walls are of common bond. A plinth of four courses of brick encircles the building above a stone foundation.

The interior of the building has been greatly altered. At one time, a balcony extending from the front entrance wall and with a sloped floor, opened into the hall. The building was floored with wide pine boards. A dado, four feet in height, parts of which can still be seen, encircled the hall. It is composed of vertical tongue-and-groove boards, five inches wide, which are topped with a bull-nose moulding. Seating was provided in the balcony by benches with backs of horizontal slats.

GLOSSARY

- Return - the right-angled change of direction of a moulding or group of mouldings terminating the run
- cupola - a terminal structure, square or round in plan, rising from a roof
- ogee - an arch consisting of two opposed concave and convex curves meeting in a point at the top
- gable - the upper part of a terminal wall under the ridge of a pitched roof
- Palladian window - a round-headed window, flanked by narrower square-topped openings
- brick work of - common bond Flemish variation: courses of stretchers breaking the joints with each sixth course (or variation) one of alternate headers and stretchers in each course
- Common bond: courses of stretchers, breaking joints with each sixth course (or variation) one of headers
- bull-nose - convex rounding of a member, such as the front edge of a stair tread

ARCHITECTURAL REFERENCES

1. MacRae, Marion and Adamson, Anthony, Cornerstones of Order, Courthouses and Town Halls of Ontario 1784-1914, Toronto Clarke Irwin, 1983, pg 202
2. Ibid. - pg 258
3. Ibid. - pg 202 (8-6)
4. Ibid. - pg 203
5. Research sheet from files of the University Women's Club of Norfolk, "Inventory of Historic Buildings of Norfolk" at the Eva Brook Donly Museum, Simcoe

Note: MacRae and Adamson are mistaken in the date of the building; they have it completed in 1850; our research shows 1870

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

The Vittoria Town Hall is one of three important buildings completing the courthouse square--the heart of Vittoria. It is a good example of the early, simple, functional, box-like structure built to accommodate the town's business and to house the court sessions at intervals. Its style is derived from the neo-classic building tradition and is designed with a high regard for its niceties of proportion.

Historically, the building has been intimately associated with the life of the town since its erection in 1870.

For these reasons, this building warrants designation as a property of architectural and historic importance in the Township of Delhi and protection under The Ontario Heritage Act, 1974.

RECOMMENDATION FOR DESIGNATION

The Township of Delhi Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee recommends that the Vittoria Town Hall on Lot B, Block 17, Plan 29B, Village of Vittoria be designated under The Ontario Heritage Act, 1974 and that the following features be specifically noted for their architectural significance:

- all four elevations including doorways
- all windows and the returns of the eaves
- the roof line and the cupola