

125 Lydia Avenue _ Alexander Sproat Willmott House



Legal Description

Lot 96 and 97 Plan 95, John B. Bruce Survey, Halton County (20), Halton Plan 95

Description of Property

Physically,

Statement of Cultural Value and Interest

The two-storey house, built by Alexander Sproat Willmott in 1921, holds significant cultural heritage value. Its physical and historical uniqueness is evident in its representation of the Edwardian and Craftsman/ Bungalow style, with a medium gable roof and red brick exterior. Historically, it was the residence of Alexander Sproat Willmott and currently the home of retired Honourable Mr. Justice Theo Wolder. The property's contextual value is further enhanced by its contribution to the heritage character of the matured neighbourhood of Downtown Milton.

Historical Value

Historically, most of the land in this area was part of the property owned by Hugh Foster. Five years following his death in 1892, John B. Bruce and others in the area owned these lots. Alexander Sproat Willmott purchased the lots from John T. Moore in 1921 and started constructing this house. Alexander was the son of Margaret (nee Sproat) and Robert Willmott. He was born on the old Willmott homestead just south of town (near Milton Sports Centre), known as "Rose Hill." He moved into this house with his sister, Marion Elizabeth, in November 1921.

Alexander and his partner, Mr. Wilson, were grain merchants who sold flour, feed, and coal. This business was later taken over by the Halton Co-op when it was first created. Mr. Willmott never

married. Following his death in 1940, the home was sold to Susan Mary (nee McIntyre) and Charles Stuart Hatley. The couple had two children, Robert and Molly. In 1950, the year following Mrs. Hatley's death, Charles sold the home to Elma Eileen Browne. Her husband, Humphrey Browne, formerly of Yorkshire, England, had died. Elma then married Henry Dewar Thomson, whose first wife, Roberta, had died in 1939. The couple had one son, Charles.

The home was sold in 1972 to Gladys M. and Lachlan R. McKersie, who operated the McKersie Funeral Home on Main Street from 1953 to 1977. They sold the property in 1978 to Ronald Garrett and Margaret Elizabeth Dodds. Ronald Garrett was the principal of the E.C. Drury School for the Deaf. He and his second wife, Margaret Anne, resided in this home and built an addition in 1988.

Physical or Design Value

Physically, the design of this house has both Edwardian and Craftsman/ Bungalow influences. It's plain, unembellished form reflects the influence of Edwardian styling that was popular in the early 20th Century. Its one-and-a-half-storey form with a pitched roof extending over the front porch reflects the influence of Craftsman and bungalow styles. This house is particularly distinguished by its deep-pitched roof, its long, prominent front porch with original windows, and its use of stone for the window sills and lintels.

The three-bay, one-and-a-half-storey building with smooth red brick and a concrete foundation is in excellent condition. The pitched gable roof has three front gabled hip dormers, projecting eaves, verges, plain soffit, and fascia. The long, prominent front porch features wood Doric piers on brick pedestals, open railing, straight wood steps and three over-one windows with moulded trims. The original house had two bays; a third bay was added in 1988. Two of the verandah bays are now enclosed. The east and west windows are three over one window with stone lug sills and lintel. A semicircular window with a flat matching brick voussoir and stone lug sill completes the west elevation. A one-storey horizontally clad extension has been added to the house at the rear, which is not historical.

Contextual Value

This property has contextual value as it contributes to the heritage character of this neighbourhood in Downtown Milton, further emphasizing its importance and the need for its preservation.

Character Defining Elements/Heritage Attributes

Key attributes that reflect the cultural heritage value of the property include:

- Massing of the three bays, one and a half storey Edwardian and Craftsman Style brick house with a concrete foundation.
- A medium deep pitched gable roof with three front gabled hip dormers, projecting eaves, verges, plain soffit, fascia.
- Single Flue Brick Chimney
- Long prominent front porch with wood Doric piers on brick pedestals, open railing, straight wood steps and moulded trims.
- Three over one windows with moulded trims at closed-in portion of verandah
- Three over one windows with stone lug sills and lintel and semi-circular window at west elevation
- Off-centre single leaf two panels front door with upper glass insert
- Semicircular window with flat matching brick voussoir and stone lug sill
- Small wooden window with arch brick voussoir and stone lug sill, stained glass window.
- Off-centre main door with single wood leaf, four panels with glass, stone lintel.
- Historical and contextual significance as a farm featured in the 1877 Country Atlas with an estate-like setting surrounded by large outbuildings, livestock and orchards.