



Andrew Toshack House
2982 Ramsay Conc 8

2003

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE

LUMSDEN HOUSE

SW 1/2 Lot 24 and part SW 1/2 Lot 25
Concession 8
Ramsay Township
Lanark County
Ontario

Reasons for Designation

This house is one of two fine stone residences built by the Toshacks, who were some of the first settlers in Ramsay Township. The house is an excellent example of vernacular Classic Revival architecture of the mid-nineteenth century in Lanark County. It has survived with very few alterations, and has an appropriate setting.

Detailed Description

History:

1. Ownership:

In 1842 William Toshack received the Crown patent for 100 acres in the west half of lot 24, concession 8. Andrew Toshack bought the land in 1844 for \$100. The property, including a house and shed, was left in his will to his wife Margaret and son William. In 1904 William Toshack died, leaving the property and about 12 acres in the west 1/2 of lot 25 to his wife and children. His son Andrew and daughter Euphemia sold the land in 1917 to William G. Phillip in 1917, for \$4000. Mr. Phillip sold the property to James Snedden in 1941 for \$4200. James Snedden sold the property as well as part of lot 23 to Philip and Hildegard Corbet in 1966, for \$19,000. The Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority bought the property from the Corbets in 1973. Their intention was to use the house as offices, and the land as part of the Mill of Kintail property. These plans did not work out, and the house was rented for a time. In 1986 the property was surveyed and subdivided, and in 1987 approval was given to sell a 40 acre section with the stone house and two frame sheds to Terrence and Mary Lumsden.

2. Date of erection:

There is evidence of the house being on the property in 1861, but before that it is uncertain. The house was probably built about 1860.

3. Architect or builder:

Unknown. Members of the Toshack family may have been the builders.

4. Alterations and additions:

There have been very few changes made to this structure over the years. The rear kitchen wing with its brick chimney, and the garage shed behind it, is a later addition. A side door on the south facade of the house has been filled with stone, and the windows to the basement are new.

5. Historical events or persons:

John Toshack and his family were some of the first settlers in Ramsay Township. They arrived in the area in 1821. John Toshack was a Congregationalist who zealously led house gatherings for religious purposes. He was a subscription agent for one of the first papers in the area - the Bathurst Independent Examiner.

The following quote from a letter written by John Toshack to a friend in Glasgow is taken from A Pioneer History of the County of Lanark by Jean S. McGill:

...William, John and James Bennie, and I have got each 100 acres together in a square. It is most beautiful land and resembles Dalmarnock haughs, and according to what I have seen on other land, it will produce abundantly all of which is necessary to support a family.....I have got a house 22 x 16 feet, which will do to begin with...

Courtney Bond, in his book The Ottawa Country, describes the Toshack sons as follows:

Close to the Mill of Kintail is a group of three stone houses built for the sons of John Toshack, who came into the area with the group of Lanark settlers. North west of the entrance to the Mill of Kintail was the home of A. Toshack. On the west side of highway 29, just north of the Indian River, was the home of G. Toshack, built in 1860. In the south-west angle of the road that leads to Blakeney, and highway 29, was the home of John Toshack.

Greville Toshack ran a carding mill near Bennie's Corners on the Indian River, and at one point the Toshacks also owned a shingle factory. Andrew Toshack was a farmer who, over the years,

acquired quite a variety of livestock and crops. They included wheat, hay, potatoes, oats, beans, peas, apples, maple sugar, horses, cows, bees, swine, sheep, home made chees and butter.

Architecture:

1. Architectural character:

The stone house is representative of vernacular Classical Revival design, in the Georgian tradition. Its overall symmetry, medium pitch gable roof, centre gable with broken pediment, returned eaves, and main entrance with rectangular transom and sidelights, are all characteristics of Classical Revival influence. The simple formality of the house is reinforced by its setting, with the gentle slope of land away from the front entrance.

The house is in good condition.

2. Exterior:

The stone house is 1 1/2 storeys. It is 11 metres (3 bays) wide and 7 metres (2 bays) deep. The foundation is stone, and is deep enough to provide for a full basement. The walls are of above average quality for this area, with regular coursed dressed stonework on the front facade and random coursed rubble work on the other facades, with quoins at the corners and openings. There are stone chimneys in each gable end.

The front entrance has a transom with rectangular panes and sidelights with triangular panes in a diamond pattern. The door is a single leaf with six panels. The ground floor window sash are 12 over 12.

The roof is a medium pitch gable roof, with a centre gable on the front facade. The eaves and verges have a plain fascia, a moulded soffit, and a plain frieze. The present roof covering is metal roofing over wood shingles.

3. Site:

The house faces west on the 8th line of Ramsay. It is set well back from the road, with a gently sloping lawn up to the house. There are two wooden barns behind the house, one with a centre cupola.

Sources of Information:

1. North Lanark Registry Office. Almonte, Ontario
2. Province of Ontario census for the township of Ramsay - 1861, 1871, and 1881.
3. Elizabeth Kelly Library Archives. Almonte, Ontario.
4. Bond, Courtney C.J., The Ottawa Country. Ottawa: Information and Historical Division, National Capital Commission, 1968.
5. Brown, Howard Morton, Lanark Legacy. Ottawa: K.G. Campbell Corporation, 1984.
6. McGill, Jean S., A Pioneer History of the County of Lanark. Bewdley, Ontario: Clay Publishing Company, 1968.

Project Information:

Compiled by Sue Martin under the auspices of the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee of Almonte and Ramsay Township. Almonte, Ontario. August 1987.