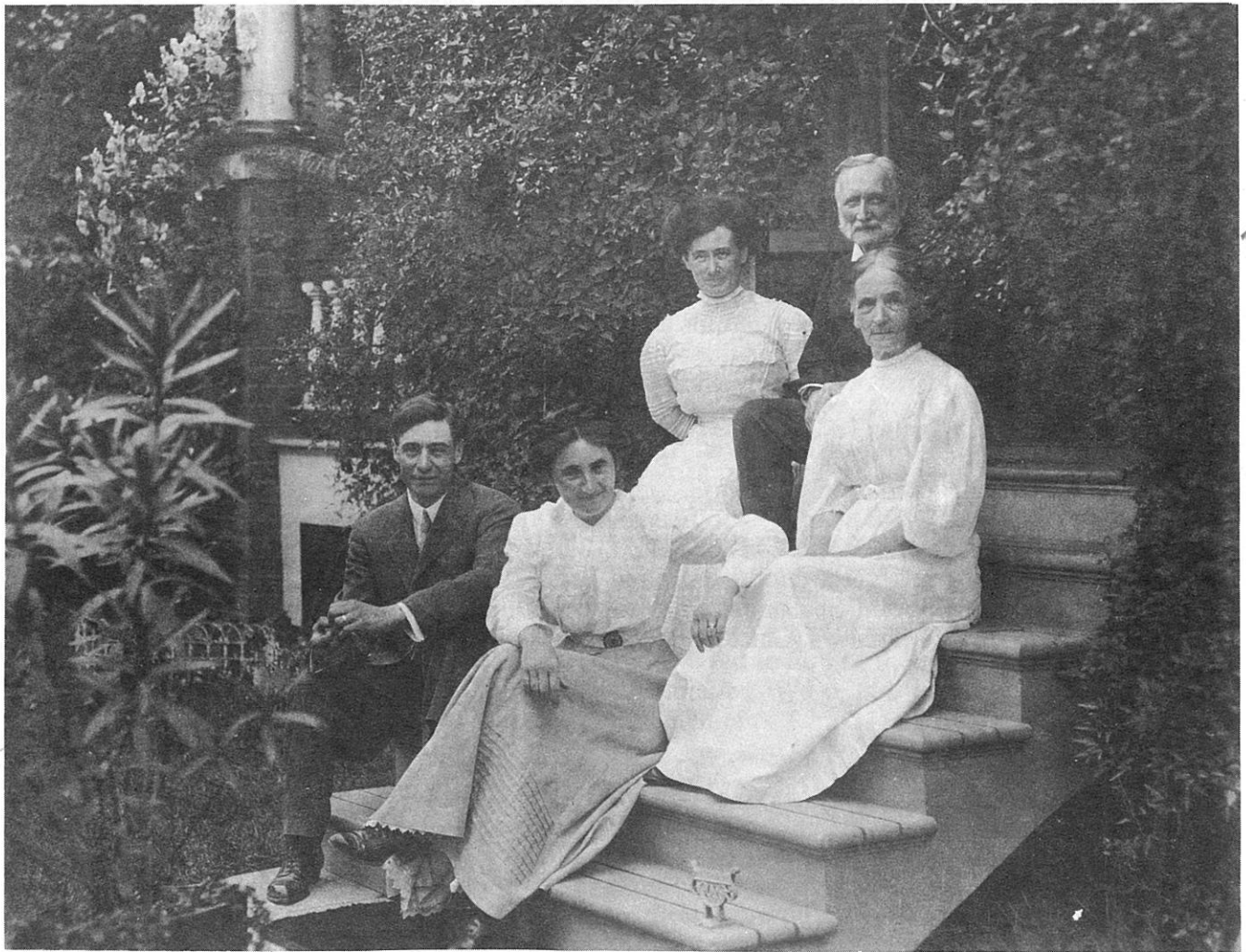


# A STUDY OF RUSHOLME ROAD

PRODUCED BY THE

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## Toronto Region Architectural Conservancy



**The Wilson's at 254 Rusholme Road circa 1908-09**

[Photo: J. R. Biette, Courtesy of Mr. & Mrs. W. L. Sloan]

### Quotation from Alice T. Friedman

The following has been taken from, *House and Household in Elizabethan England: Wollaton Hall and the Willoughby Family* (Chicago & London, The University of Chicago Press, 1989); "Introduction", p. 4.

"... anyone who tries to write the social history of architecture must eventually confront the fact that the lives of buildings and the lives of human beings are timed by different clocks. The form of a building embodies a contradiction: it is the actualization of the social relationships, material resources, needs, and talents of a particular patron, architect, household, or group of builders at a fixed point in time, but it is expected to outlive them and to remain useful and meaningful long after they are gone. Buildings are expected to last. Men and women are relatively short-lived by comparison, yet – unlike buildings – they are constantly changing. The passage of time for human beings is fast, bringing with it new ideas, new relationships, new ways of behaving. The shifts are not only experienced from one generation to the next, but also in the daily lives of individuals as experience unfolds and consciousness evolves. Thus each generation both changes the buildings that it inherits and builds new ones of its own, expressing and accommodating the relationships, habits of mind, and beliefs which are all part of their distinctive culture."

[accompanying footnote on p. 189: C. Geertz, "Art as a Cultural System", in, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (New York, 1983), 94-120. The discussion of historical time owes a great deal to Fernand Braudel's work; see "History and the Social Sciences: The Longue Durée", in *On History*, trans. by S. Matthews (Chicago, 1980), 25-54.]

### Forward

TRAC believes that we must always consider architecture in relation to the men and women who built it as well as to those who subsequently live in it. To view buildings in isolation from real life is to see them as under a bell jar placed on a pedestal that itself rests upon a turntable – like some collection of stuffed birds surrounded by human-hair flowers. From that perspective it is no doubt easier to see the whole without the distraction of its many parts. Granted that there would be fewer distractions to contend with by taking this studied approach to the history of building, in the end these buildings seem intangible, devoid of atmosphere. Under that bell jar a building may serve as a pristine exhibit in some intellectual debate over architectural pedigrees; it may act as the ideal movie set for a period drama; or it may merely stand pretty as an eye-catching or amusing *objet d'art*. But it will not seem functionally "real".

TRAC tries to avoid this bell-jar syndrome by first stressing the facts, hence section 3, but also by exploring history, within as well as behind the buildings. Not surprisingly, the human element enlivens buildings giving them that touch of reality. Take E. G. Wilson and family for example. As seen in the cover photo on the front steps of 254 Rusholme they epitomize the ease and comforts of home. In large part, this booklet is as much about them and for them as for all future residents of Rusholme Road.

Who better to start with then when coming to terms with this Edwardian neighbourhood? Keep referring back to the cover photograph when reading about Rusholme. For although a thorough social history is not part of our mandate, the smiling Wilsons, relaxed yet proud in their front-porch finery, have much to tell us that relates to the exquisite details of their home, details such as the intricately sashed windows or the turn of their stairspindles. No facet of their life existed in isolation. We're not looking at period pieces, but at interdependent elements which, taken together, express a period.

We're a long way from the Wilsons and their pre-War world. Yet their home remains as valid and vital as ever. It's monetary value for instance, has increased far beyond the Wilsons' wildest imaginings. This is but one measure of the success of their society as builders. It continues to illustrate their search for a better quality of life. Eighty years later number 254 remains accommodating, flexible, and attractive – as in varying degrees do Rusholme's other buildings. Architecture is the living art. Good architecture not only attracts us, but enhances our lives. Poor architecture does neither.

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### The Setting

Most visitors are impressed by Rusholme Road. Even those not usually moved by turn-of-the-century developments can't help but enthuse over the quality of the streetscape between Bloor and College. Although the homes tend to be large, even massive, their size does not detract from the park-like setting.

Most buildings share a generous setback from the front property line. Some retain the luxury of a side yard, and these openings allow the rising and setting sun to penetrate the street — thereby ensuring a healthy green.

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View to the north from Hepborne, Rusholme Rd. numbers 316 and 318 appearing on the right — Photo: City of Toronto Archives (SC 157-3)

Compare this with other streets of the time. Some boast homes as impressive as those on Rusholme. But with their density, their lack of side-yard openings, they seem to present a solid wall of masonry to the street. So tightly packed are the houses that they appear to be in grandiose competition with each other, often inhibiting our ability to "read" the individual homes.

Not so on Rusholme. Here, the "breathing spaces" between the buildings erase any conflicts in style.

Seventeen houses were constructed on these three blocks of Rusholme between 1884 and 1901, evenly distributed on lots between Bloor and College. These lots had been subdivided in 1883 and recorded at the Land Registry Office as "Registered Plan Number 405."<sup>1</sup> Of these homes some surely designed by architect A.R. Denison — a scion of this area's founding family — only 12 survive. Two that didn't — numbers 125 and 149 — are included in this publication (see pages 6 & 7.) The eight houses north of Hepbourne were influenced by their proximity to Bloor Street. None has been demolished, although many have been enlarged or extensively rebuilt. Note that 30 houses were demolished in 1965 to make way for the apartment blocks at 323 and 347 Rusholme Rd. The absence of any photographs of Number 98, and Number 204; that of Caroline Denison Kirkpatrick, is keenly felt. Long-time residents described them as massive and detailed — quintessentially Victorian.

[Footnote #1: Plan 405 was surveyed on April 03, 1883, and registered on April 24. Rusholme Rd. south of College St. is in Plan 313, surveyed on Nov. 27, 1879 and registered on Nov. 29. Had we included 313 in this study we could not have published it in 1991. This decision was not intended to suggest that the buildings in 313 are in any way inferior.]



Photo of 125 Rusholme Rd.: Courtesy, Women's College Street Archives

The original number 125, the Clarence Denison House, built in 1884 and designed by A.R. Denison, was demolished in 1937. It was replaced by Number 125. The Women's College Street Hospital relocated here in 1915, and stayed at this location until their current Grenville St. address was constructed in 1936.



Photo of 149 Rusholme Rd.: Courtesy, Women's College Hospital Archives

The original number 149, the Herbert Langois house built in 1894, designed by Gordon & Helliwell, was demolished in 1935. It was replaced by Numbers 139 through 147. Many years prior to the relocation of Women's College Hospital to the downtown core, this was a nurse's residence.



144 Rusholme Rd.

You can't relate the history of lot development on Rusholme Road without acknowledging the role of the Denison family. As Rosedale was to the Jarvises, the Grange area to the Boultons and the Annex to the Baldwins, so was Rusholme to the Denisons. They were the principal landowners in the area bounded by Ossington, Bloor, Queen and Dufferin.



332 Rusholme Rd.

In 1837 Richard Lippincott Denison married Susan Hepbourne, hence Hepbourne Street. The next year his younger brother, George Taylor Denison II, married Mary Ann Dewson (Dewson Street's namesake) and immediately began building his own homestead at the northwest corner of Dundas Street and the lot-line he named Rusholme Road for "Rush Holme," his wife's uncle's residence in Manchester, England.<sup>2</sup>

[Footnote #2: This and other background notes about Toronto's "squirearchy" can be found in the published works of Lucy Booth Martyn.]



232 Rusholme Rd.

Rusholme Road between College and Bloor streets is Edwardian in its genesis and architectural styling. Over half its surviving structures were built between 1901 and 1910; only 10 survive from the preceding Victorian period.

Many of Rusholme Road's Edwardian homes fall into one of two architectural categories: centre-hall floorplan or cottage. In reverting to the centre-hall plan of the early Victorians, Edwardian families were seeking more formal, compartmentalized living spaces than those they had known in the previously typical High Victorian home. Cottage-plan houses, on the other hand, were more relaxed. Rooms flowed into each other, and the best way from front parlour to kitchen, for instance, was probably through the dining room, where papa could be found reading his newspaper at the dining room table — unless the table was already set for dinner.



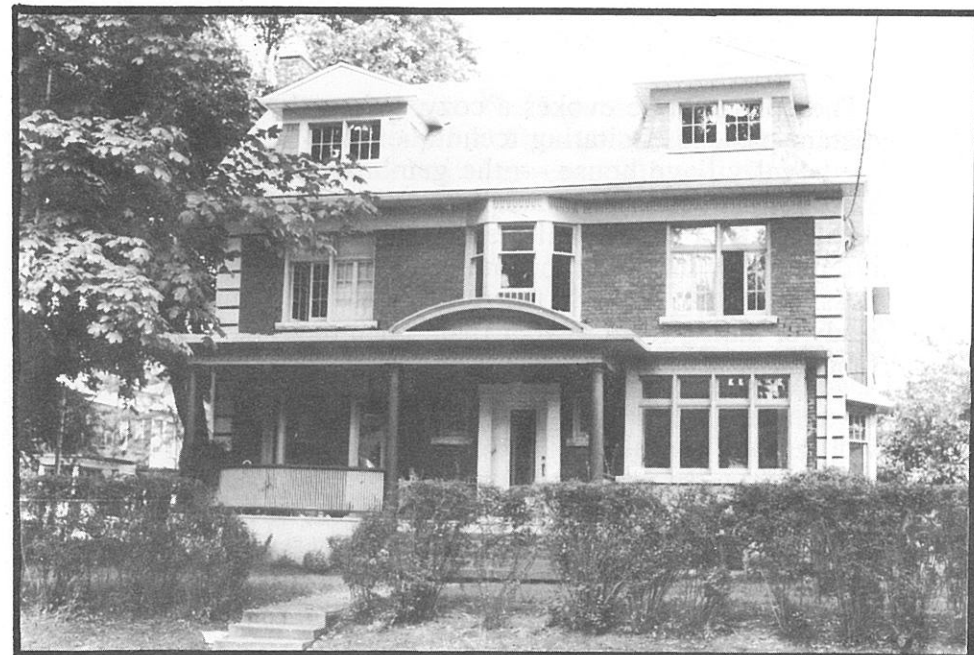
225 Rusholme Rd.

The cottage style evokes a cozy, informal ambience from a distant past, resuscitating techniques and materials from the medieval village house — the gambrel roof and board-and-stucco construction, for example. When you called upon a home designed to a centre-hall plan home, however, the threshold offered few glimpses of the family activities within. Instead, you possibly might see only the front parlour to your left and the study or dining room to your right. Each room had an exclusive function — separate and decidedly “specialized.”



180 Rusholme Rd.

Rusholme also had Edwardian homes that were cottage/centre-hall hybrids. To add to the confusion, some cottages are as large as or larger than the centre-hall homes. Nevertheless, after examining Rusholme Road you're still likely to conclude that its Edwardians were dynamic individualists who were striving to produce a society and built-form that could accommodate all their myriad tastes, interests and aspirations.



167 Rusholme Rd.

## The Data

### Building Permit Data and Maps

This section presents the maps and building-permit information that relate to the construction of the 141 addresses on Rusholme Road between Bloor and College streets. It includes, whenever possible, information about accessory buildings such as stables, coach houses and garages, but not about alterations nor about houses since demolished. Information about a building is only mentioned once when the building was erected as part of a group of structures authorized by a single permit. An "R" has been added to permits that refer to outbuildings: stables, coachhouses, garages, etc.. A bracket "[" at the beginning of a line indicates that the permit was for more than one address. A complementary bracket "]" appears at the end of the group.

The following is a guide (using a real example) to reading a building's data line.

Lot Number	Year built: 05 (05=1905; 89=1889)	Architect's Name or Firm	
↓	↓	↓	
<b>254;73;#1731;05;E.G. Wilson;J.Hunt STANFORD; \$4,000</b>			
↑	↑	↑	↑
Street Address: 254 Rusholme	Permit Number (one to five digits)	Person the Permit was issued to	Dollar Value of permit

It was sometimes necessary to attribute a permit to a particular building even when no proof of such a permit existed. The need for these educated guesses occurred only rarely. Every care was taken to ensure that all attributions will withstand future scrutiny.



346-344-342 Rusholme Rd.

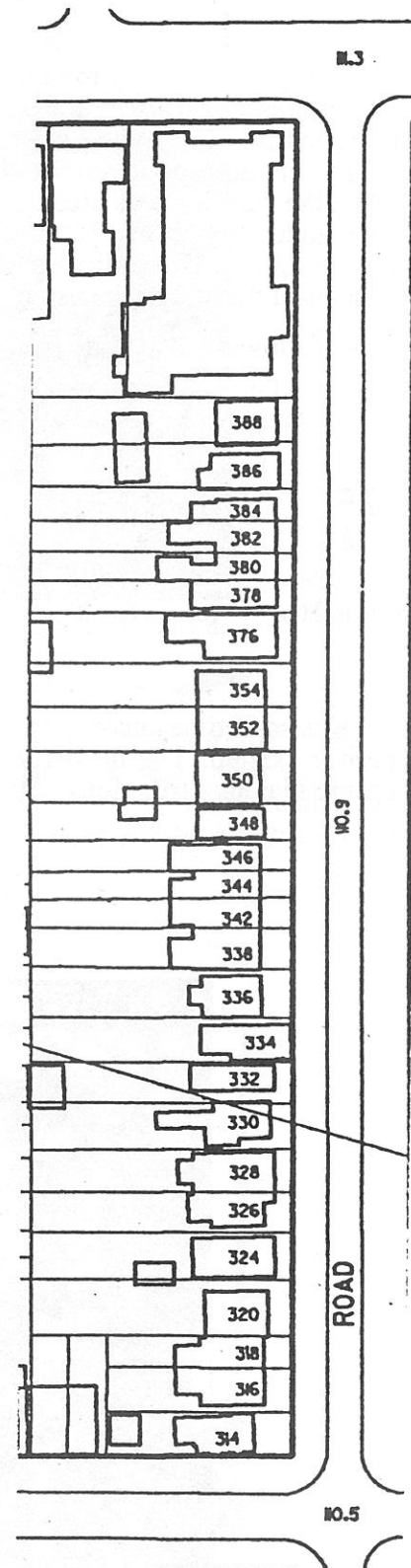
## Rusholme Road

West Side between Hepbourne and Bloor<sup>3</sup>

{ 388; 55; # 42167; '20; E.W. Corby; J. Hunt STANFORD; \$ 9,500  
 386; 56; # 42167; }  
 { 384; 56; # 348; '91; J. Peacock; [ ]; \$10,000  
 382; 56; # 348;  
 380; 56+57; # 348;  
 378; 57; # 348; }  
 376; 57; # [N/A]; '84; C. Schmidt; [ ]; [\$ ]  
 { 354; 58; # 7592; '07; W.A. Cesar; \$5,600  
 352; 58; # 7592; }  
 350; 59; # 307; '04; D. McCurdy; [ ]; \$1,800  
 348; 59; # 51827; '21; C. Welstead; [ ]; \$4,000  
 { 346; 60; # 139; '01; R. Milligan; F. SAUNDERS; \$7,000  
 344; 60; # 139;  
 342; 60; # 139; }  
 338; 61; # 9830; '08; D. McCurdy; J. Hunt STANFORD; \$2,500  
 336; 61; # 7616; '07; Wm Saunderson; [ ]; \$3,000  
 334; 62; # [N/A]; '86; Ed Broom; [ ]; [\$ ]  
 332; 62; # [N/A]; '98; N.M. Oliphant; [ ]; [\$ ]  
 330; 63; # 61; '01; F.P. Soloman; G.F. PRICE; \$1,000  
 328; 63; # 27958; '11; D. McKinney; P.H. FINNEY; \$3,000  
 326; 64; # 1187; '04; R.H. Smith; [ ]; \$1,800  
 324; 64; # 193; '98; H. Baker; J. TULLOCH; \$1,500  
 320; 65; # 7300; '07; A. Wright; J. Hunt STANFORD; \$4,000  
 { 318; 65; # 697; '05; R.H. Smith; [ ]; \$3,600  
 316; 66; # 697; }  
 314; 66; # 6116; '06; R.H. Smith; [ ]; \$2,700

[3 Footnote: Although its address 1037 Bloor St. W. St. Anthony's Church disqualifies it from inclusion we feel it only fair to provide you with permit information -

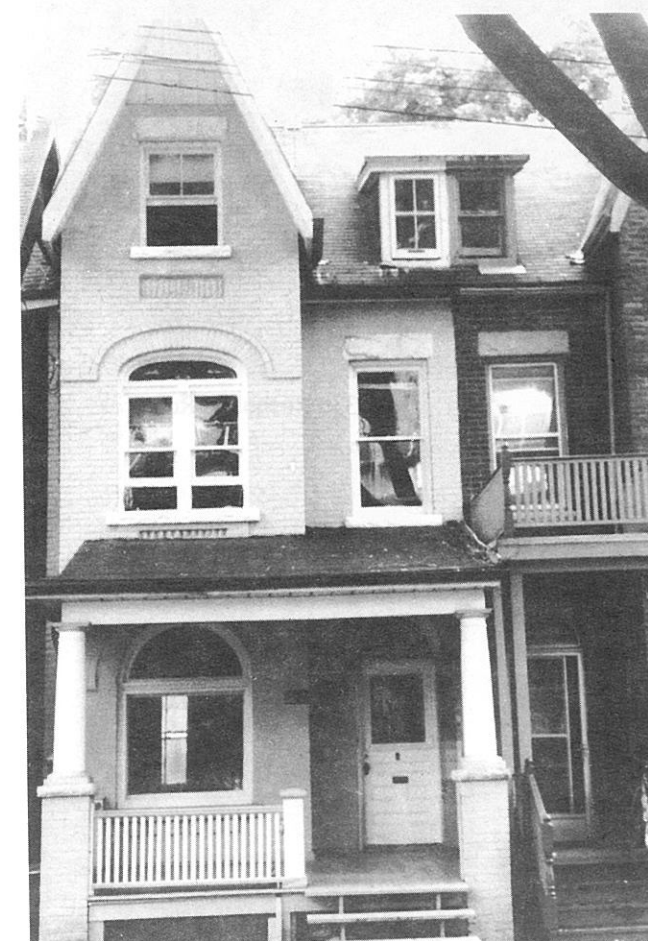
1037; 52+53+54; #52135; St. Anthony's RC Church [J.M. Cowan]; \$102,000



Portion of Property Data Map



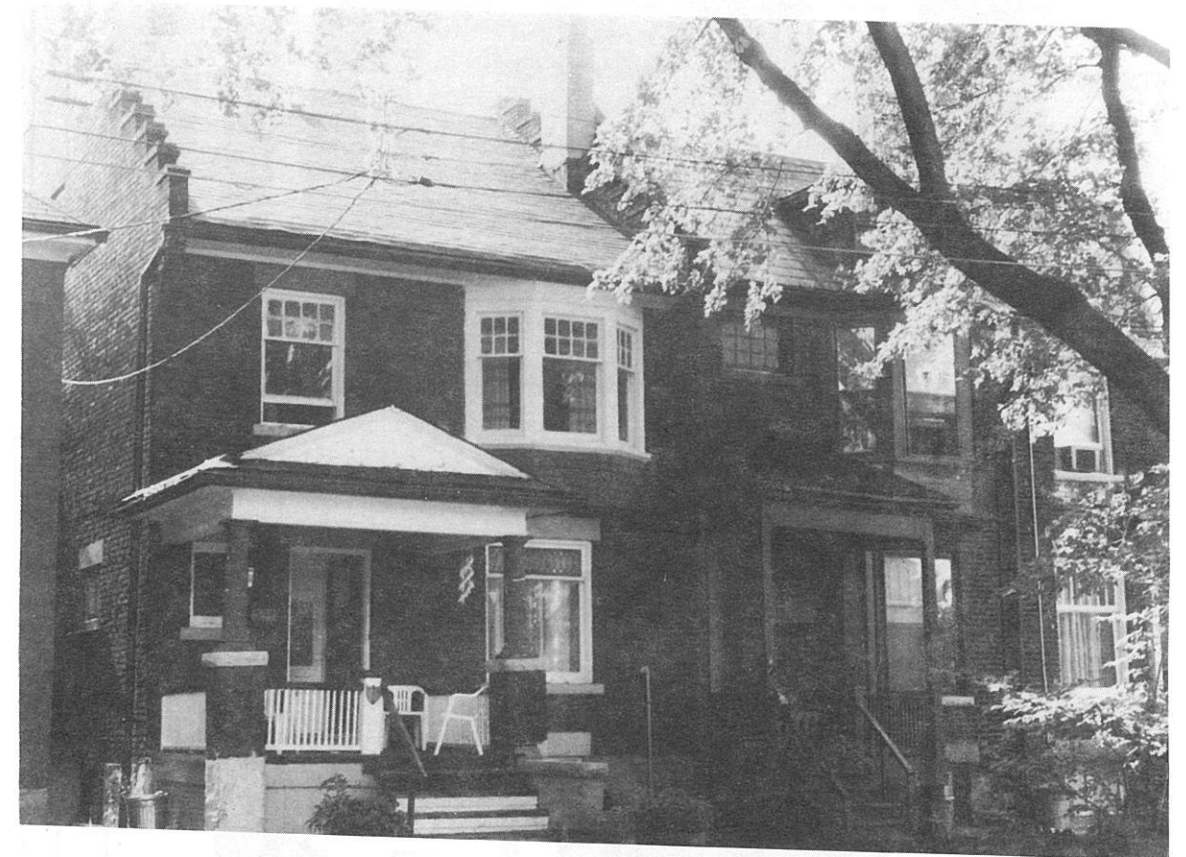
324 Rusholme Rd.



382 Rusholme Rd.



330 Rusholme Rd.



338 Rusholme Rd.

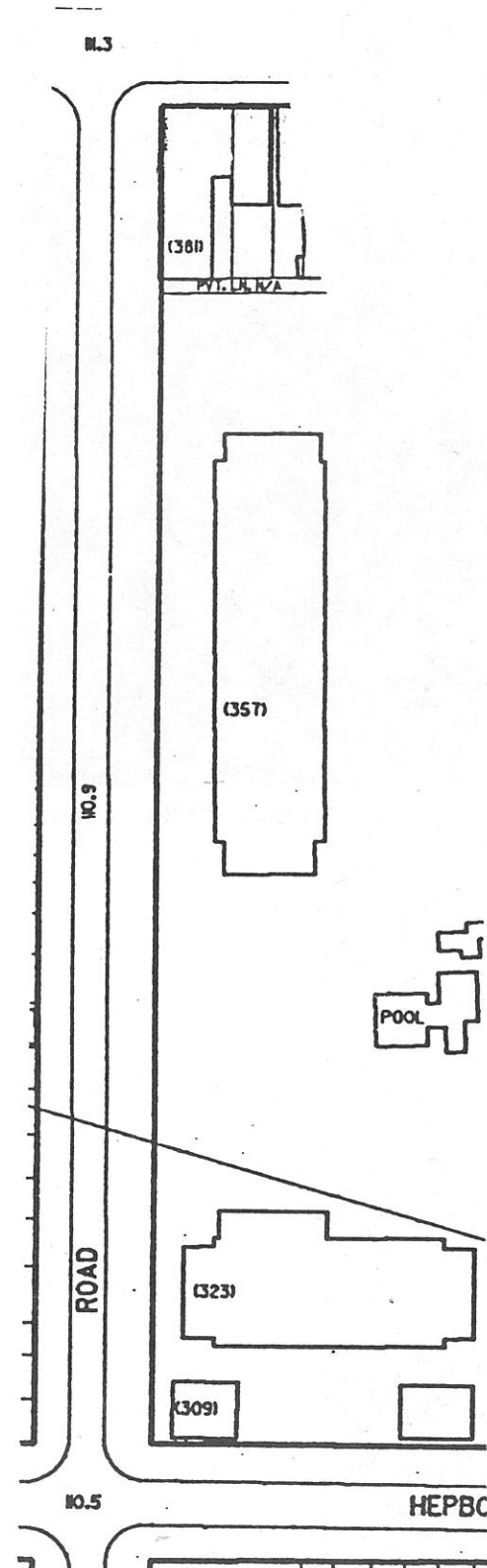


323 Rusholme Rd.



323 Rusholme Rd.

**Rusholme Road**  
*East Side between Hepbourne and Bloor*



381;[ ]; # 17177; '28 ;United Construction Co.;H.C. ROBERTS;\$75,000

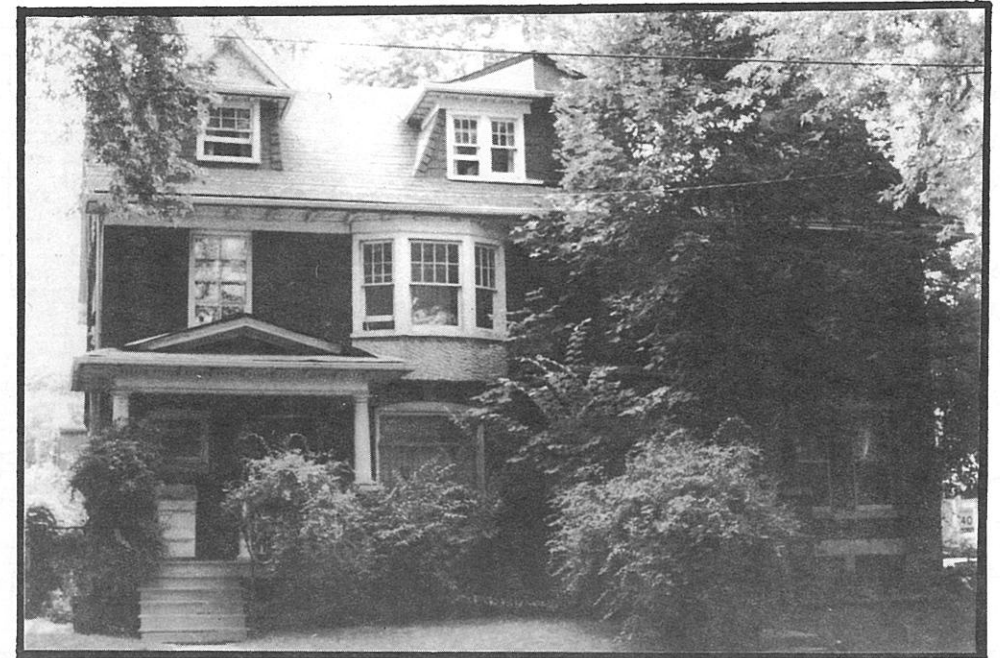
323;[ ]; # 88191 + 88192; '65;Belmont Const.;G.A. JAROSZ; \$3,600,000

309;36+37; # 695; '05;Messrs. White + Co.;[ ]; \$8,000

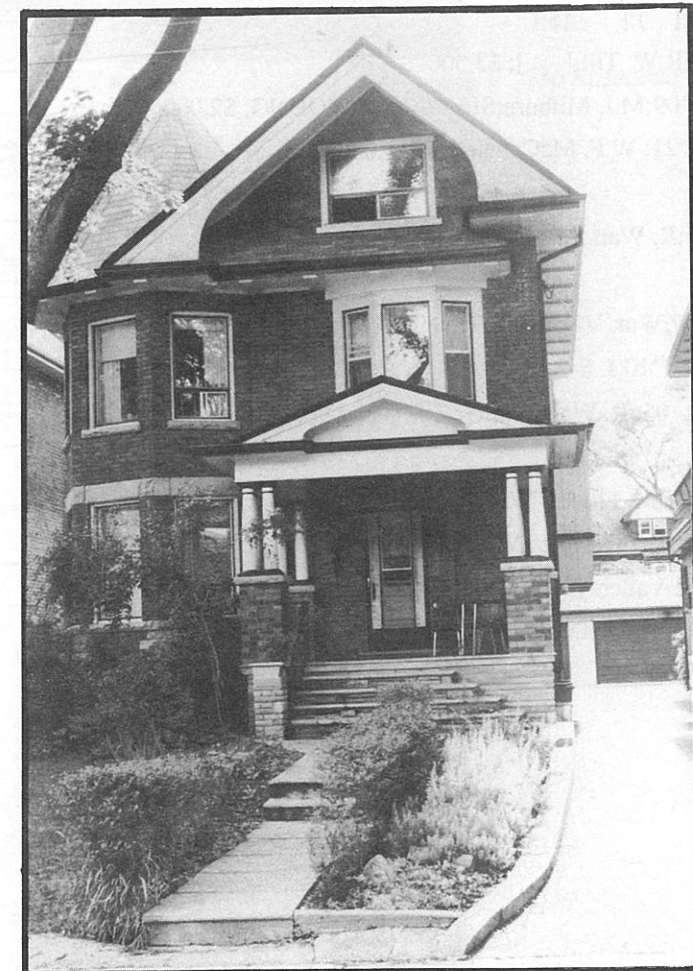
Portion of Property Data Map



Entrance, 323 Rusholme Rd.



274 and 276 Rusholme Rd.

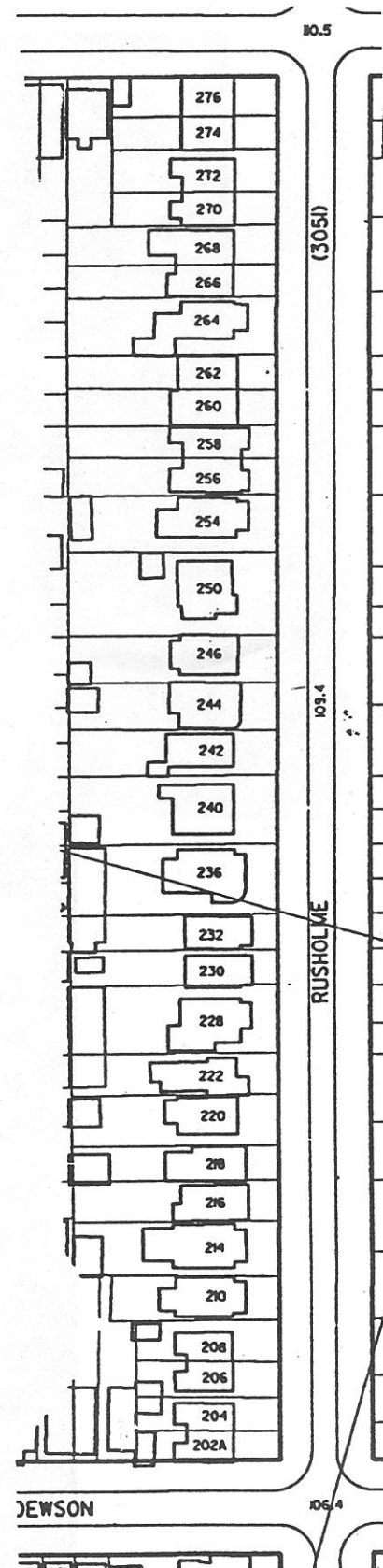


244 Rusholme Rd.

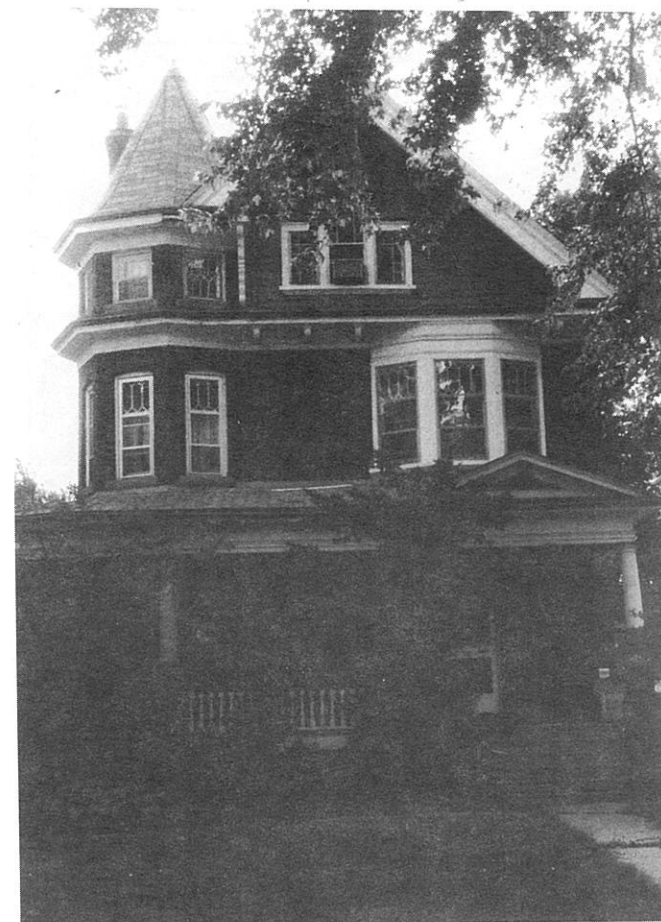
## Rusholme Road

West Side between Dewson and Hepbourne

{ 276; 67; # 1463; '05;T. Sproule;W. CONNERY; \$11,600  
 274; 67; # 1463;  
 272; 68; # 1463;  
 270; 68+69; # 1463; }  
 { 268; 69; # 1405; '05;A. Walker + J. Kemp;J.A. HARVEY \$6,000  
 266 ;69+70; # 1405; }  
 264; 70; # 1781; '05;D. Campbell;R.S. HAMBLETON; \$5,000  
 { 262; 71; # 28; '04;W.K. Cook;J.A. HARVEY; \$6,000  
 260; 71; # 28; }  
 { 258; 72; # 8891; '07;Biette Bros.;Jas. THOMPSON; \$6,000  
 256; 72; # 8891; }  
 254; 73; # 1731; '05;E.G. Wilson;J.Hunt STANFORD; \$4,000  
 250; 74+73;#N/A; '87;G. Ridout;[ ];\$ ]  
 246; 75; # 2062;[ ' ];R.E. McCall;R.S. Hambleton; \$3,000  
 244; 75+75; # 922; '04;W.J. Kirby;J.A. HARVEY; \$5,000  
 242; 76; # 468; '02;R.F. Rowland;R. FORTUNE; \$2,800  
 240; 77; #N/A;[ ' ];[ ];\$ ]  
 236; 78; # 842; '03;R.W. Tilt;[ ];\$3,500  
 236R; 78; # 14643; '09;M.J. Milburn;SIMPSON & YOUNG; \$2,000  
 { 232; 79; # 42830; '21; W.F. McCutcheon; \$11,000  
 230; 79; # 42830 }  
 228; 80; # 1173; '05;R. Watt;S.B. COON; \$5,500  
  
 222; 81; # 26263; '17;Wm. Vokes;W.CONNERY; \$6,000  
 220R;81+82; # 20174; '10;J. Sword;[ ];\$400  
 { 220;81+82;# 1822; '05; R. Watt;Wm.G. HUNT; \$4,000  
 218; 82; # 1822 }  
 216; 83; # 583; '05;H.M. Flock;J.W. SIDDALL; \$3,200  
 214; 84+83; # 127; '01;G.G. Miles;Wm.H. MALLERY; \$3,200  
 210; 84; # 69; '01;T. Vallentyne;J.A. HARVEY; \$3,500  
 { 208; 85; # 78345; '42;J. Diamond;E.I. RICHMOND; \$18,000  
 206;85+86; # 78345;  
 204; 86; # 78345;  
 202A; 86; # 78345; }



Portion of Property Data Map



236 Rusholme Rd.



246 Rusholme Rd.



264 Rusholme Rd.



216 Rusholme Rd.



269 Rusholme Rd.



271 and 273 Rusholme Rd.



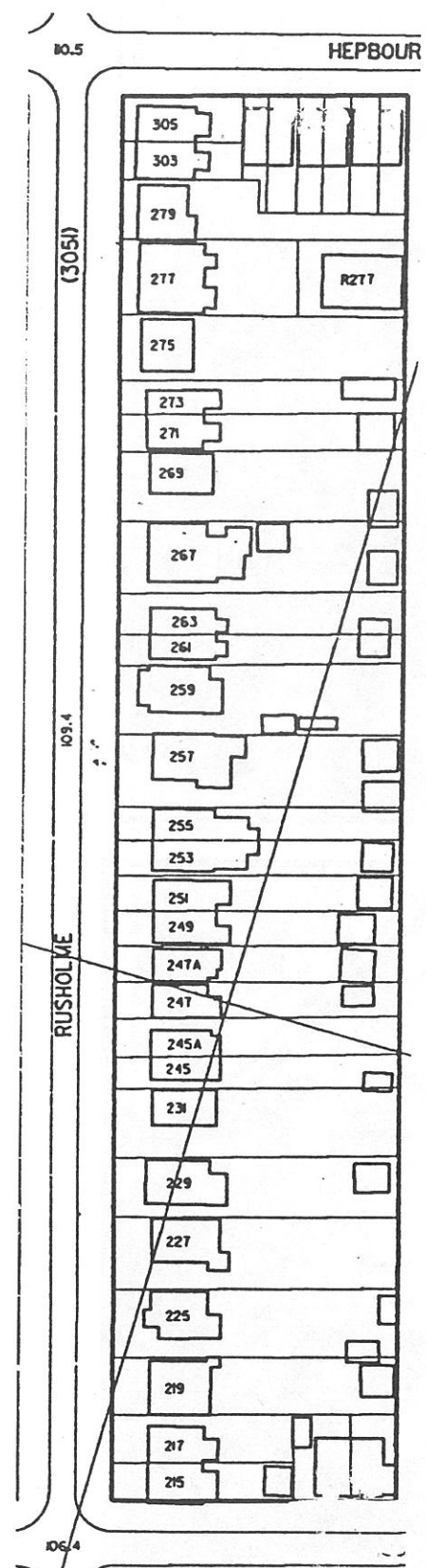
229 Rusholme Rd.



231 Rusholme Rd.

## Rusholme Road

East Side between Dewson and Hepbourne

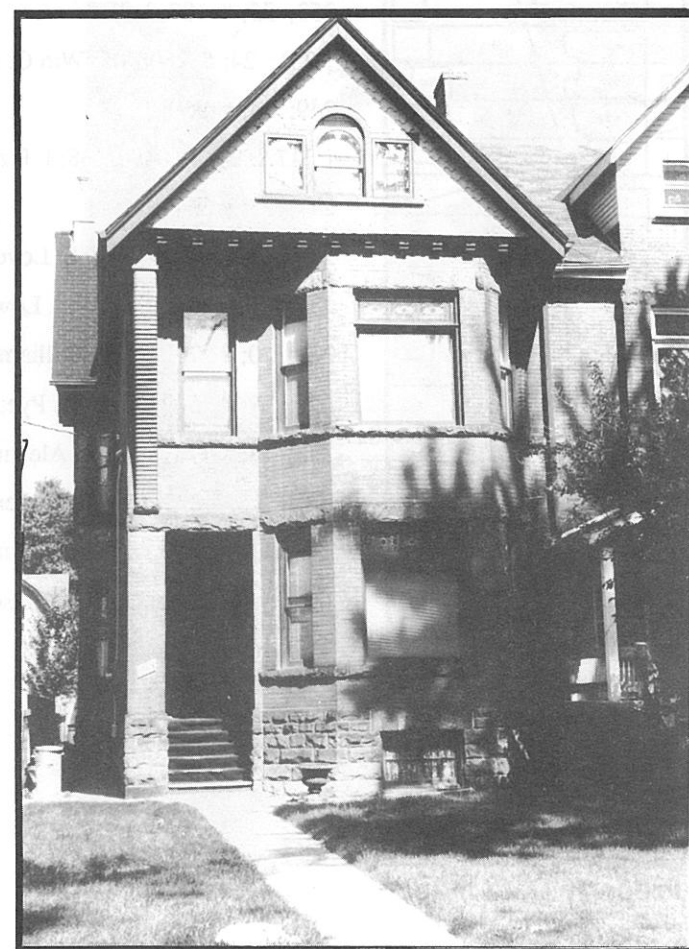


- { 305; 35; # 15435; '09; J.G. Kent; J. Hunt STANFORD; \$6,000  
303; 33+34; # 15435; }
- 279; 33+34; # 28054; '11; Wm. Holtby; Hy. SIMPSON; \$6,000
- 277; 32+33; # 30102; '11; J.C. Holtby; F.H. HERBERT; \$8,500
- 277R; 32+33; # 1657; '05; J.C. Holtby; Hy. SIMPSON; \$2,500
- 275; 32; # 31171; '11; J.D. Holtby; Hy. SIMPSON; \$6,000
- { 273; 31; # 6337; '07; Haman + Nelson; ELLIS & CONNERY; \$6,000  
271; 31; # 6337; }
- 269; 30; # 50; '97; Eliz. Gordon; H. GORDON; \$2,100
- 267; 29; # [N/A]; '90; T.A. Greg; [ ]; [\$ ]
- 267R; 29; # 452; '04; Jas. Fleming; [ ]; \$550
- { 263; 28; # 75052; '43; J. Shatkovey; E.I. RICHMOND; \$8,800  
261; 28; # 75052; }
- 259; 27; # 552; '04; J. Malcomson; J. Hunt STANFORD; \$4,700
- 257; 26; # 27; '98; T. Roden; Rd. SMITH; \$2,800
- { 255; 25; # 187; '98; Walker + Rowland; Rd. SMITH; \$5,000  
253; 25; # 187; }
- { 251; 24; # 960; '05; Wm.G. Burns; Wm.G. BURNS; \$6,000  
249; 24; # 960; }
- { 247A; 23; # 60492; '38; I. Freeman; E.I. RICHMOND; \$9,000  
247; 23; # 60492; }
- 245; 22; # 7406; '07; G.E. Loveys; Jas. WALKER; \$5,000
- 231; 21; # [N/A]; '85; W.S. Lowe; [ ]; [\$ ]
- 229; 20; # 7; '97; Hy. Williams; GORDON & HELLIWELL; \$3,600
- 227; 19; # 2549; '05; H.A. Pye; H.G. PAULL; \$5,000
- 225; 18; # 4761; '06; Jn. Alexander; DESIGNING & DRAUGHTING CO.; \$5,000
- 225R; 18; # 2289; '06; A. Robertson; DESIGNING & DRAUGHTING CO.; [\$ ]
- 219; 17; # 9620; '07; Jn. Alexander; DESIGNING & DRAUGHTING CO.; \$5,800
- { 217; 16; # 3835; '06; A. Hutson; J.A. HARVEY; \$6,500  
215; 16; # 3835; }

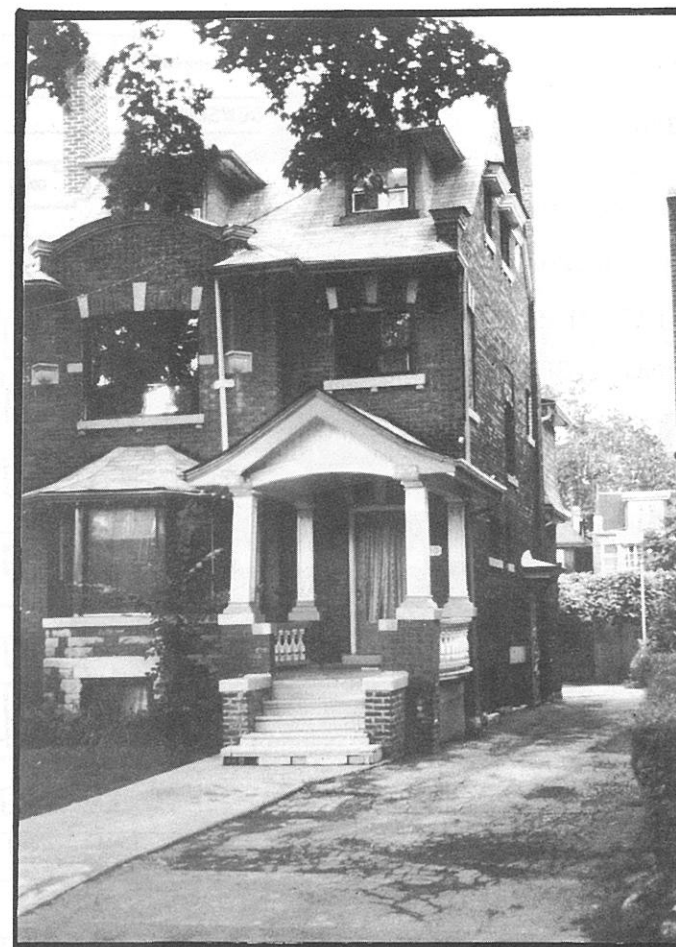
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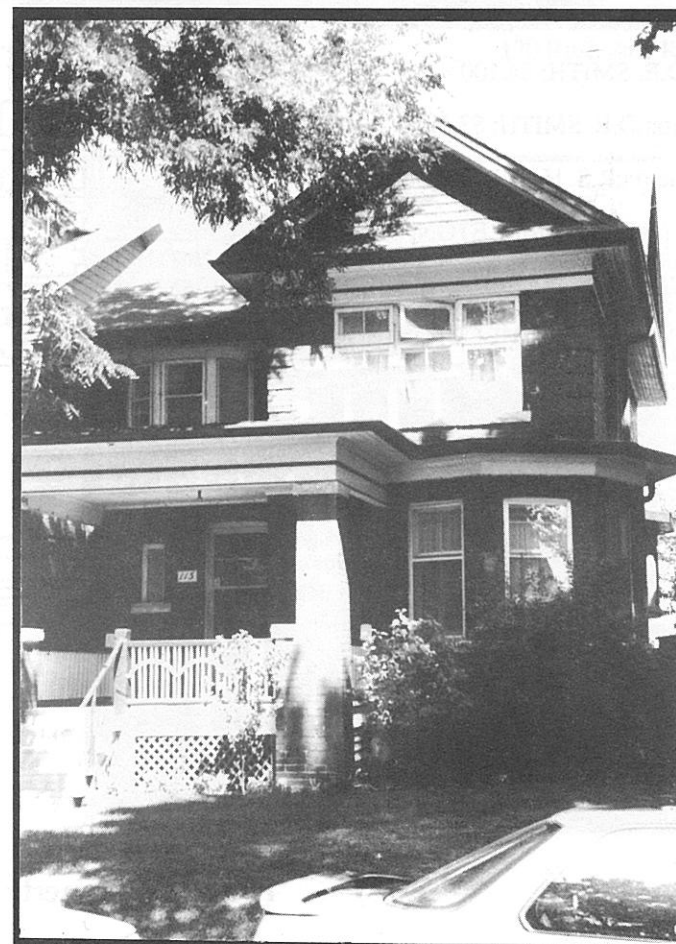
257 Rusholme Rd.



255 Rusholme Rd.



160 Rusholme Rd.

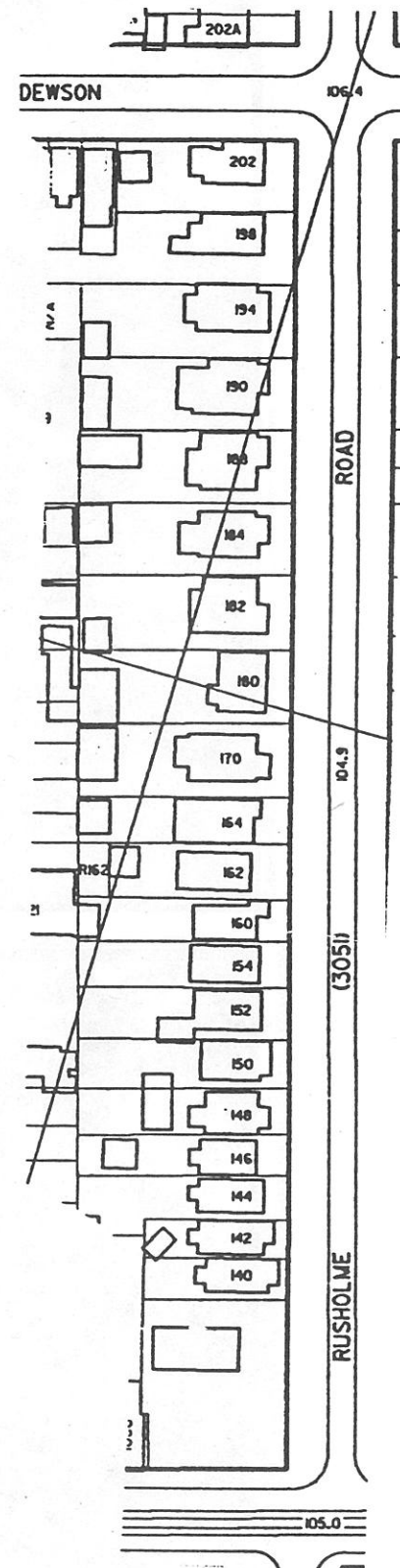


115 Rusholme Rd.

## Rusholme Road

West Side between College and Dewson

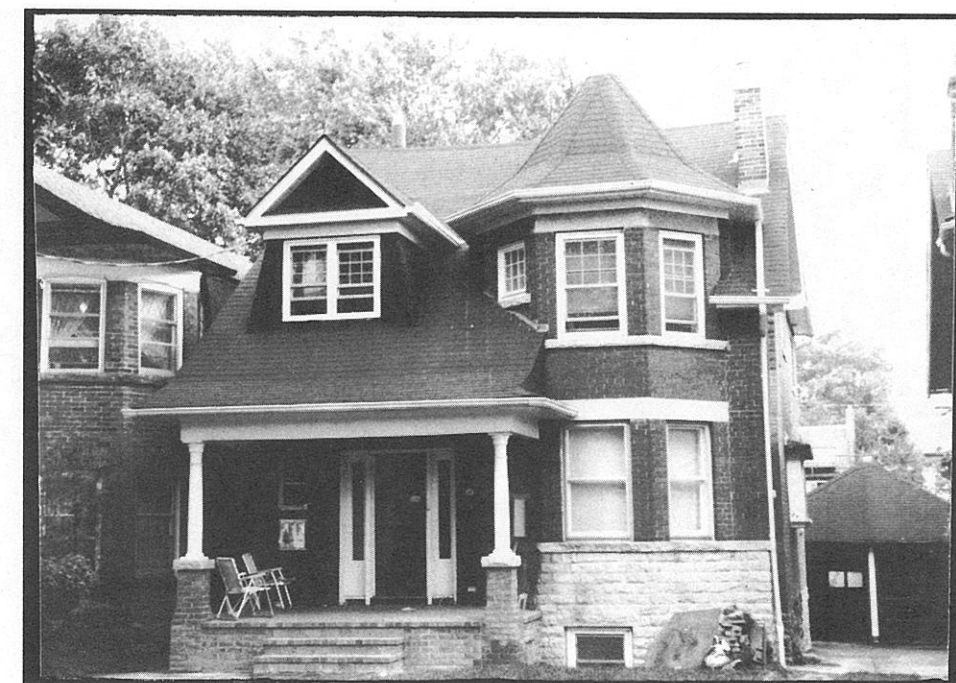
202; 87; # 966; '04;J. Davis;S.M. DAVIS; \$2,500  
 198; 88; # 6885; '07;W.G. Chilsom;[ ]; \$4,000  
 194; 89; # 2532; '05;F.B. Ward;[ ]; \$3,500  
 190; 90; # 3819; '06;A.C. Hutson;J.Hunt STANFORD; \$5,800  
 186; 91; # 16053; '09;R. Burkell;[ ]; \$4,000  
 184; 92; # 7603; '07;R.H. McKerihen;[ ]; \$4,000  
 182R; 93; # 35188; '12;J.H. Stowe;J.Hunt STANFORD; \$1,000  
 182; 93; # 19559; '10;Geo. Henry;GEO. HENRY; \$5,000  
 180; 94; # 67630; '23;Wm.C. McBrien;Wm.G. HUNT; \$7,500  
 170R; 95; # 30726; '11;J. Williams;Wm.G. HUNT; \$500  
 170; 95; # 15252; '09;J. Williams;Wm.G. HUNT; \$5,400  
 164; 96; # 70384; '23;J.D. Young + Son;[ ]; \$12,000  
 162; 96; # 75973; '42;S. Blackstein;J. SUGARMAN; \$6,800  
 160; 97; # 29957; '11;J.D. Young + Son;[ ]; \$5,000  
 154; 98; # 7802; '07;J.A. Harvey;J.A. HARVEY; \$5,000  
 152; 98+9; # 8456; '07;J.A. Harvey;J.A. HARVEY; \$4,500  
 150; 99; #151301; '09;D.E. Smith;D.E. SMITH; \$4,100  
 148; 100; # 24362; '10;J.A. Hambleton;D.E. SMITH; \$3,500  
 146;100+1; # 30158; '11;J.A. Hambleton;R.S. HAMBLETON; \$3,900  
 144; 101; # 30160; '11;J.A. Hambleton;R.S. HAMBLETON; \$4,000  
 142;101+3; # 30159; '11;J.A. Hambleton;R.S. HAMBLETON; \$4,000  
 140;101+3; # 30151; '11;J.A. Hambleton;R.S. HAMBLETON; \$3,800



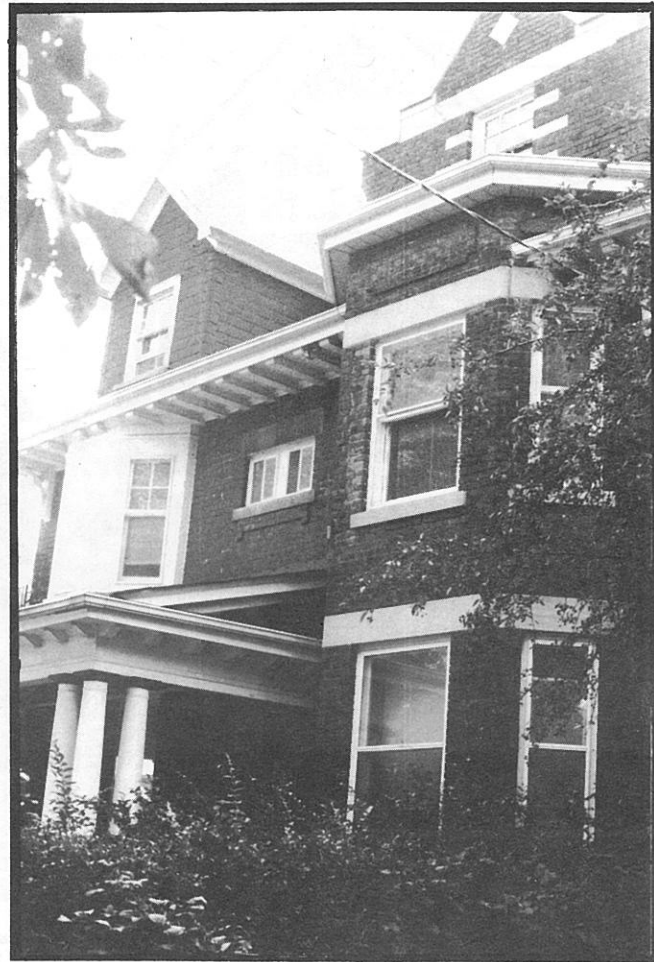
Portion of Property Data Map



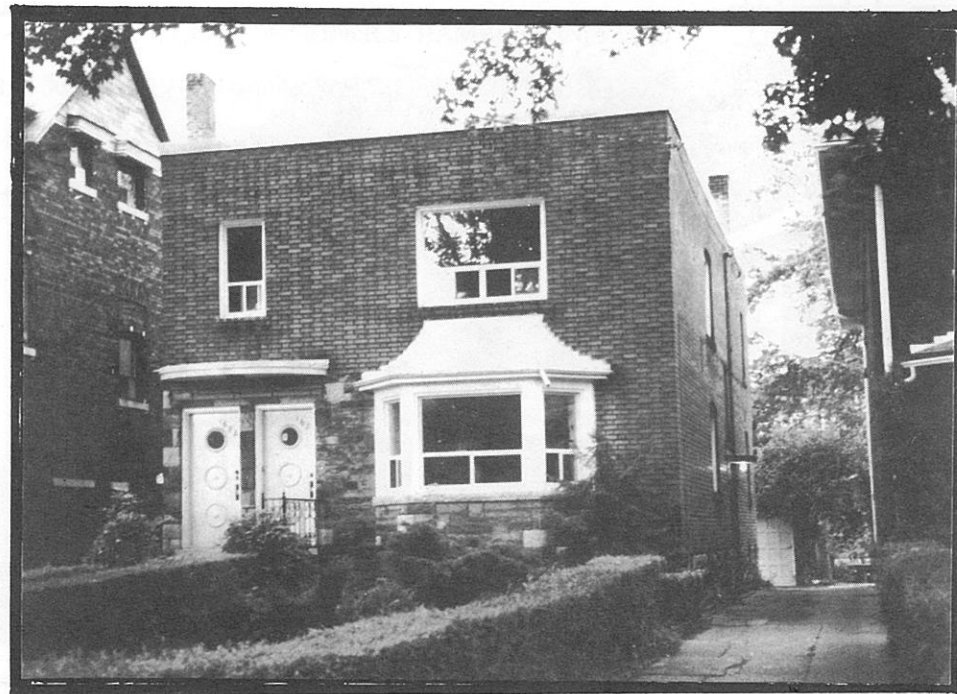
170 Rusholme Rd.



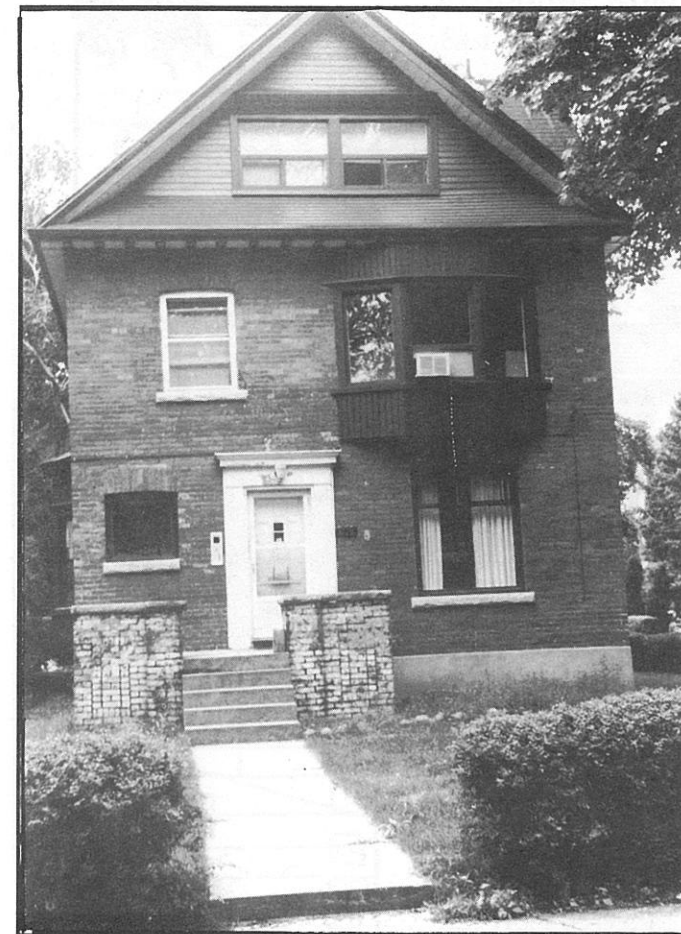
148 Rusholme Rd.



182 Rusholme Rd.



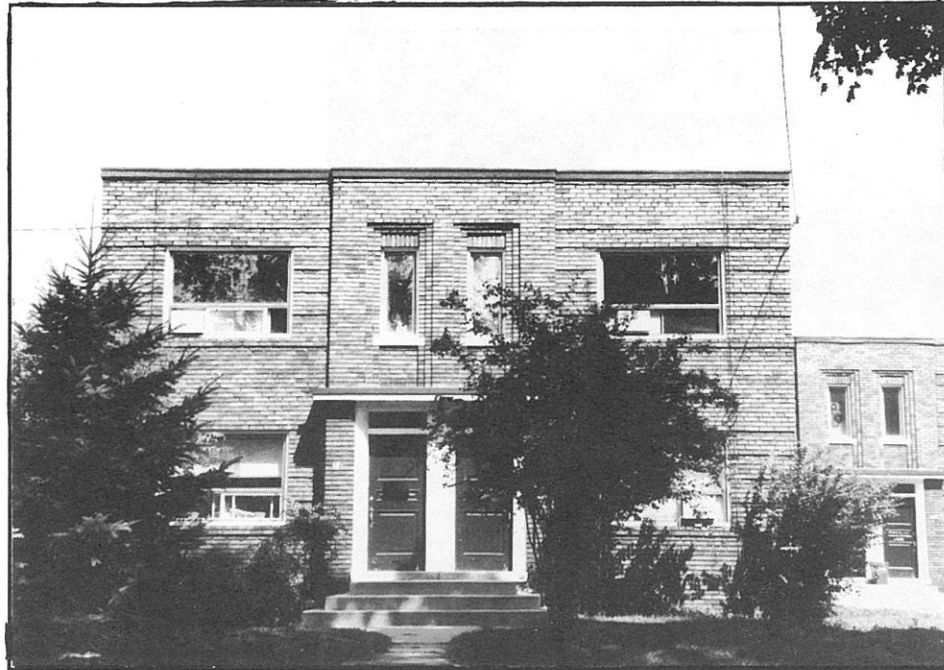
162 Rusholme Rd.



202 Rusholme Rd.



150 Rusholme Rd.



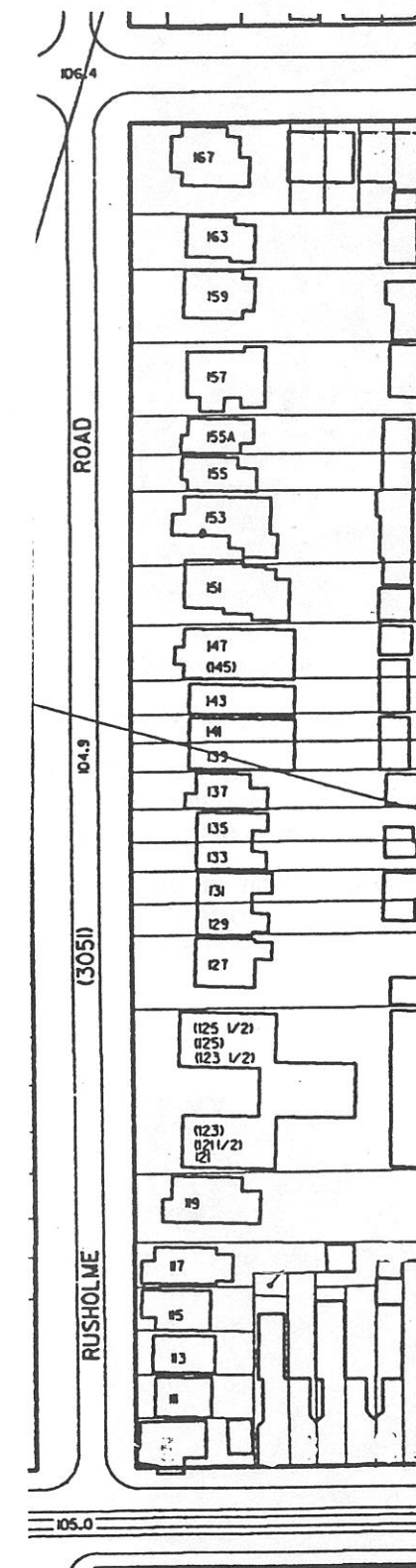
The second 125 Rusholme Rd.



145 and 147 Rusholme Rd.

## Rusholme Road

East Side between College and Dewson



- 167; 14+15; # 9878; '08; H. Hutson; J. Hunt STANFORD; \$4,000
- 163; 14; # 8554; '07; R.W. Campbell; R.J. EDWARDS; \$5,000
- 159; 13; # 6469; '07; R.B. Hayhoe; Geo. HENRY; \$5,500
- 159R; 13; # 4439; '13; R.B. Hayhoe; Geo. HENRY; \$500
- 157; 12; # 7776; '07; W. Heintzman; H.G. PAULL; \$4,000
- { 155A; 11; # 60914; '36; Davis + Freeman; E.I. RICHMOND; \$9,400
- 155; 11; # 60914; }
- 153; 10; # 19559; '10; G. Henry; Geo. HENRY; \$5,000
- 151; 9; # 6561; '07; G. Henry; Geo. HENRY; \$5,000
- { 147; 8+9; # 51198; '36; Davis + Freeman; E.I. RICHMOND; \$33,000
- 145; 8; # 51198;
- 143; 8; # 51198;
- 141; 7; # 51198;
- 139; 7; # 51198; }
- { 137; 6+7; # 25499; Davis + Freeman; '31; E.I. RICHMOND; \$21,000
- 135; 6; # 25499;
- 133; 5+6; # 25499;
- 131; 5; # 25499;
- 129; 4+5; # 25499; }
- 127; 4; # 1983; '05; Edm. Hardy; H.G. PAULL; \$3,000
- 125; 2+3; # 69136; '38; I. Freeman; E.I. RICHMOND; \$33,000
- 119; 1; # 6896; '07; S. Jardine; S. Hamilton TOWNSEND; \$6,000
- 117; 1; # 6510; '07; J.A. Harvey; J.A. HARVEY; \$6,000
- 115; 1; # 6224; '07; J.A. Harvey; J.A. HARVEY; \$4,000
- 113; 1; # 7472; '07; J.A. Harvey; J.A. HARVEY; \$4,000
- 111; 1; # 5819; '06; J.A. Harvey; J.A. HARVEY; \$4,000

Portion of Property Data Map



186 Rusholme Rd.



186 Rusholme Rd.

### Four Buildings Considered

303 + 305

267

250

245

Although each structure on Rusholme Road deserves an architectural description, such a laudable aim is beyond the scope of this publication. Instead, we have focused on one or two building types that exist in close proximity to each other. This will offer you some handy reference points from which to view the entire street and identify buildings designed according to centre-hall or cottage-style floor plans. We have also included brief description of four noteworthy buildings.

#### 303 and 305 Rusholme Road

J. Hunt Stanford at his best? Corner lots challenge the ablest designer. Here, the question is how do you build an attached pair of large homes that do not dominate the street nor flaunt their togetherness. There are at least three answers.

First: Use a sound roof structure, but give it a fairly steep "rake" to keep the observer's eye busy.

Second: Place one entrance on the flanking side street in a matter-of-fact fashion. Its mate on the Rusholme front, however, masquerades beneath an infinitely more elegant porch. Who's to know that this isn't really a single home?

Finally: Break up the north and west elevations with irregularly placed facade designs, each serving to keep the eye in motion. Although the building seems quiet in its general design, the individual components of style entertain.



303 and 305 Rusholme Rd.

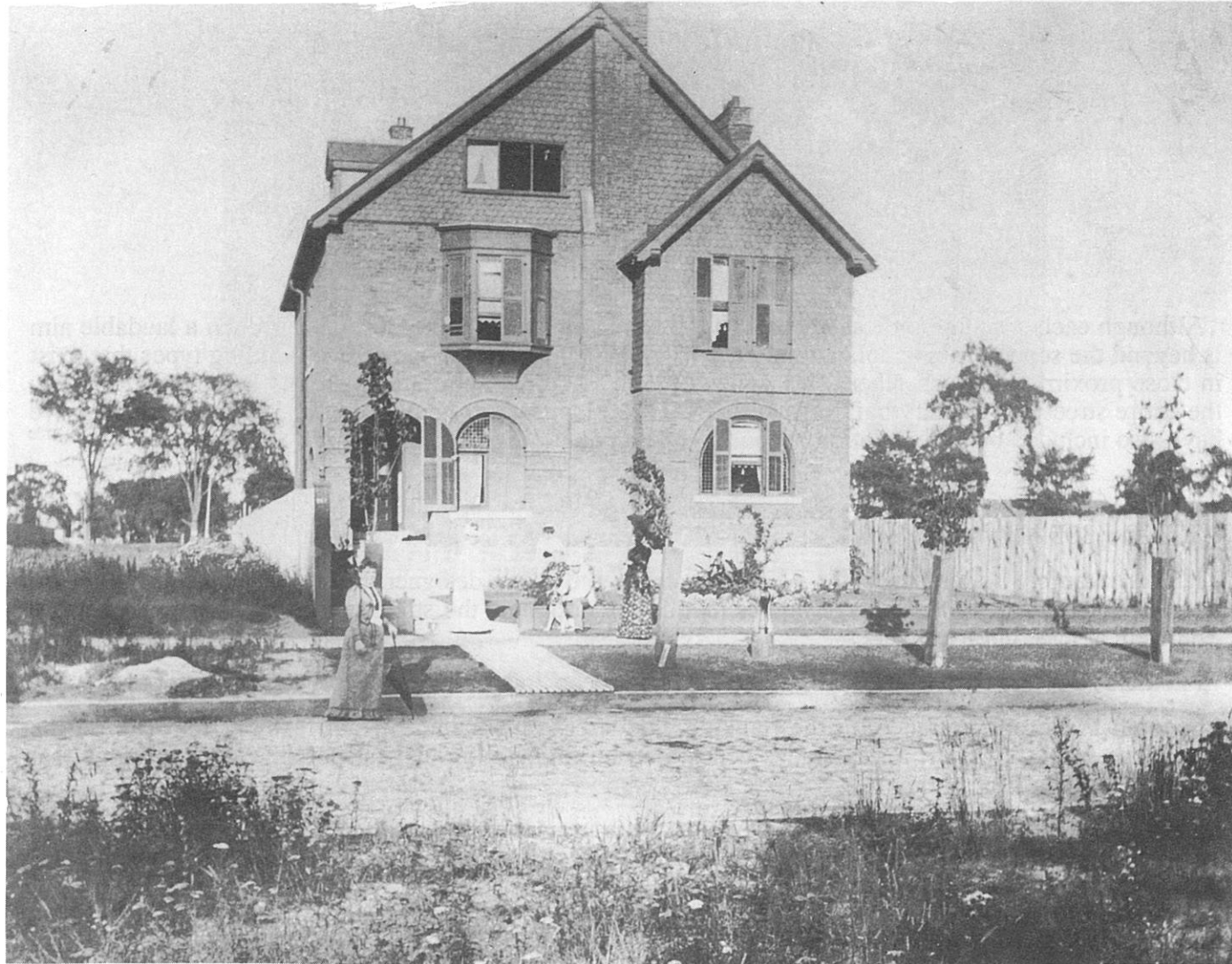


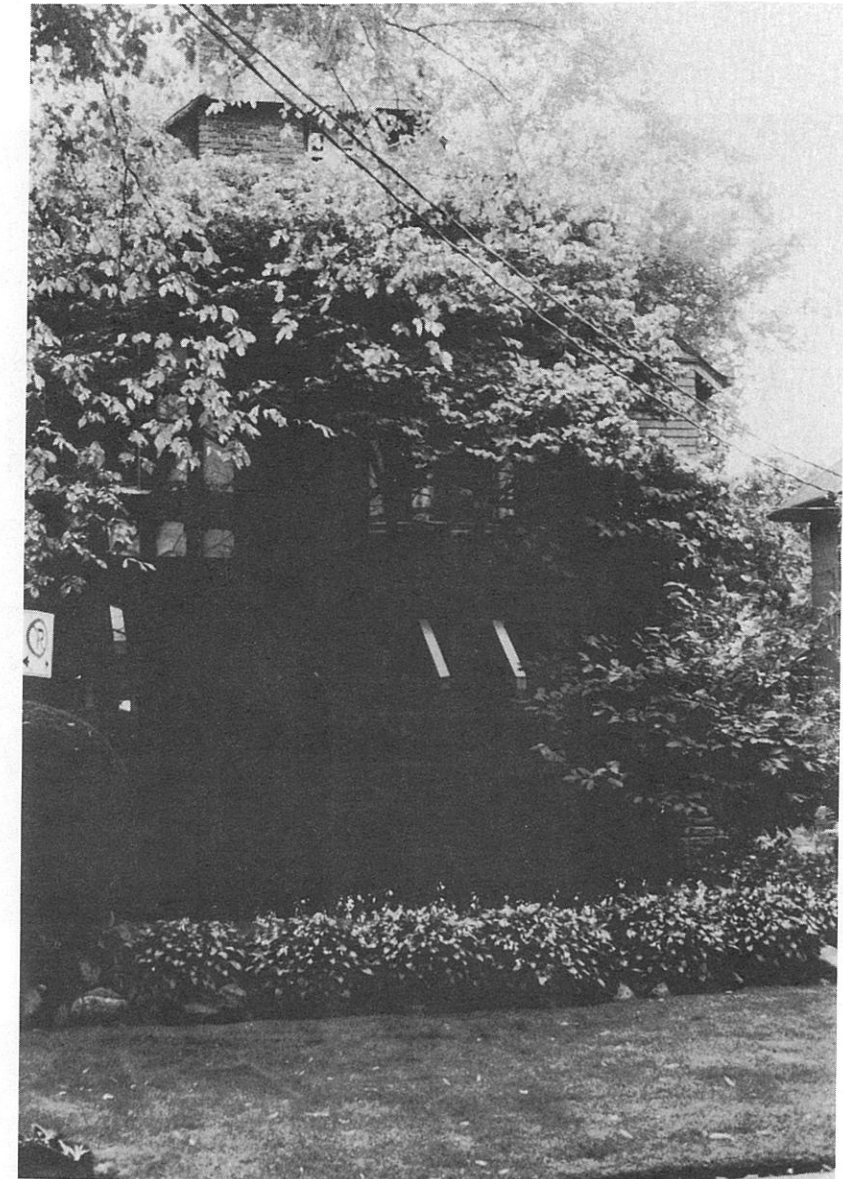
Photo of 267 Rusholme Rd.: City of Toronto Archives (SC 534-7)

### 267 Rusholme Road

Given the High Victorian's near obsession with intricate surface designs, this home is startling in its simplicity and directness. Not one element of the facade is superfluous; nothing here is a mere add-on. This is an exemplar of the Queen Anne style that has more in common with Queen Anne houses of the American northeast coast than with those found in Toronto. The architect of Number 267 (still unknown, but possibly A.R. Denison, Hy Gordon, Herbert Hancock or S. Hamilton Townsend) proved extremely selective when borrowing from illustrations of the history of British architecture.

The boxiness and overall smoothness of the building's front are refreshing. Although the southerly third is deliberately intended to be seen as a projecting element that breaks up the mass of the whole, it results instead in an understated byplay, leading one to assume that the designer was trying to prevent the whole "cube" from boring the viewer's eye. The principal and secondary gables are covered by one of the best ever local displays of terra cotta tiles.

The Flemings, who owned this home from 1891, were important contributors to the natural sciences in Toronto. James Fleming Sr. was the city's first and most prominent seedsman and florist. He likely selected many of the plants and trees that still grace its generous grounds. James Jr. was a self-styled naturalist and the first Canadian to attach an identification band to a bird — a red robin (caught on Sept. 24, 1905 in the yard at 267).



250 Rusholme Rd.

### 250 Rusholme Road

The dense shrubbery around number 250 shrouds one of the more complicated architectural stylings on the street.

In its major elements, number 250 is number 267's twin, though built a year earlier. Number 267 is an architectural essay on clay products; bricks and tiles were direct and honest. Unlike Number 267's gables, though, which were clad in terra cotta tile, number 250's received a more typical choice: an Elizabethan-style board-and-stucco. It's not clear whether the cladding was altered shortly after the building's construction, or much later. But the end result is a surface design that is perfectly compatible with the building's main framework. Number 250's board-and-stucco successfully breaks up the front elevation. The surface design for Number 267 also succeeds, albeit with an opposite purpose: the terra cotta tiles stitch together the centripetal elements of the facade. The two design choices underline the significance of properly selecting surface finishes.



245 Rusholme Rd.

### 245 Rusholme Road

Conflicting architectural intentions and domestic desires, unless absolutely incompatible, can sometimes result in superior designs that are both visually stimulating and functionally satisfying. Take Number 245. Although a rational, centre-hall house, it — and many of its Edwardian contemporaries — retained many of the structural elements and visible design facets of the previous generation's Queen Anne-style buildings.

After all, who could fail to appreciate the light that flooded into front parlours through polygonal windows. There were other pragmatic design carryovers. For example, the complex roofscapes of the houses built in the 1880s and '90s were not merely picturesque; they also functioned as shields against the elements, ably withstanding wind, rain and snow. The form remained subservient to the function. These and other practical design elements were welcomed by the Edwardians.

Architect James Walker's design for Number 245, of necessity conservative, nevertheless displays such a clever collation of borrowings that it is easy to overlook the ultimate impact of the building's general appearance: brown bricks; elegant roof-lines that curve subtly down to their soffits; and especially that porch — so strong and sober. Without intruding onto the property, note the attractive tile floor of the porch — a magnificent synthesis of design and inherited function.

### The Centre-Hall Plan



277 Rusholme Rd.



275 Rusholme Rd.



279 Rusholme Rd.

### 275, 277, and 279 Rusholme Road

The Holtby clan — father J.C. and sons J.D. and William — were instrumental in the erection of hundreds of commercial and industrial buildings through their construction company. They worked alongside many notable Toronto architects, including Hy Simpson, who designed Number 277R Rusholme. Built by J.C. Holtby in 1905, it also served as his firm's office.

Six years later J.C. Holtby built Number 277 using plans drawn up by F.H. Herbert, architect. Herbert's building designs are often so showy they're almost self-conscious. Nevertheless, those that survive are a joy to behold — ever exuberant! Number 277, with its eclectic front porch sporting elements of an Italian loggia, is quintessential Herbert. Even modern metal siding over its soffits and eaves can't disguise the theatricality of his creation.

Numbers 275 and 279 were also built in 1911 by Holtby's, albeit by J.D. and William. For both these houses the "boys" and architect Hy Simpson orchestrated such a graceful reworking of the Elizabethan town-manor-style house — that they obscured the centre-hall plan. No such deliberate artistic confusion reigned at Herbert's 277 Rusholme. It is direct, even authoritarian — no doubt in keeping with its resident's dominant position in the family firm.

### The Cottage Plan



127 Rusholme Rd.



219 Rusholme Rd.

### The Cottage

Number 127 show architect H.G. Paull's version of cottage architecture, although the ground-floor front facade has likely been reworked. On these houses the roof attracts our attention first: gambrels are in friendly competition with gables. Also consider Number 219.



142 Rusholme Rd.

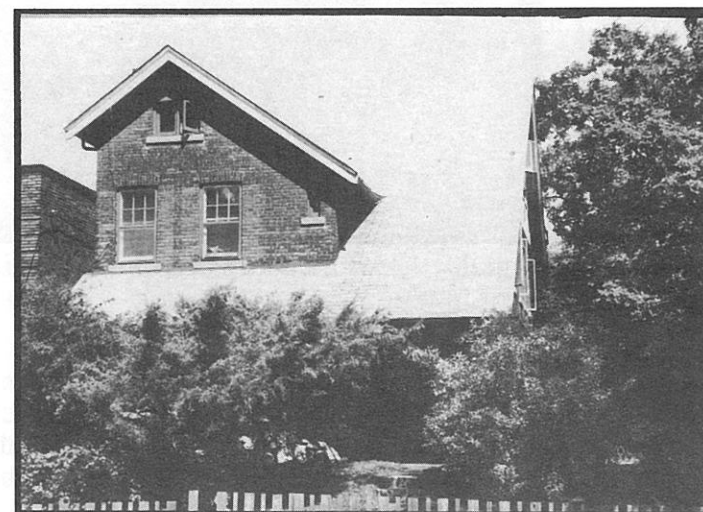
Numbers 142 through 146 are variations on the same theme. All sport identical silhouettes, although minor variations give each a sense of here is individuality. Architect R.S. Hambleton.

And then there's 119 Rusholme (also on the east side), with architect S. Hamilton Townsend's equally interesting version of the cottage. On the surface Number 119 looks like an unassuming gambrel-roofed cottage. A quick peek at its south facade, however, reveals that this is not a small house. The gambrel roof engages in most of this "creative deception." Notice how it dissolves into the sky, becoming almost invisible. The masonry wall that breaks through the second floor roof-line at the northwest aspect is Townsend winking at you, letting you know that not everything is as it seems. Townsend could have resorted to functional dormer windows — as did most of his contemporaries — thereby letting light into the upper floors. Their absence shows the hand of a clever architect with a different design intention.<sup>4</sup>



146 Rusholme Rd.

[4 Footnote: Those interested in the career of Townsend should see P. McHugh's, *Toronto Architecture: A City Guide*, Revised Edition.]



119 Rusholme Rd.

## Biographies

We conclude our survey of Rusholme Road with biographies of four people who determined the street's evolution: the Flemings at 267 Rusholme, builder J.A. Hambleton, architect/developer J.A. Harvey and architect/designer J. Hunt Stanford. By focusing on these key players, we hope to show how and why Rusholme's different building designs developed.

### James Fleming (Sr.)

James Fleming (deceased) may be mentioned among the well-known and highly-esteemed business men of Toronto of the past generation. He was born in Aberdeen, Scotland, in 1812, and in his native land learned the seed business. In 1834 he came to Montreal, whence he made his way to Toronto two years later, beginning seed growing on three acres of land on Yonge, south of College. Mr. Fleming built a seed store and greenhouses for the sale of plants and seeds.... He was the pioneer seed grower of the County of York, and made a decided success in his line, accumulating a handsome competency. His original place, established in 1837, is still in the possession of the family.

Mr. Fleming was not only well known as a successful seedsman, but as a leader in public affairs. In 1864 he was commissioned a justice of the peace in Toronto, and in 1888 was tendered the same position for the County of York. In 1877 he was elected an alderman for St. John's Ward, and was re-elected for three consecutive elections. He was a director of the Horticultural Society and of the Industrial Exhibition Association. In political sentiment he was a Reformer, in religion a member of the Presbyterian Church.

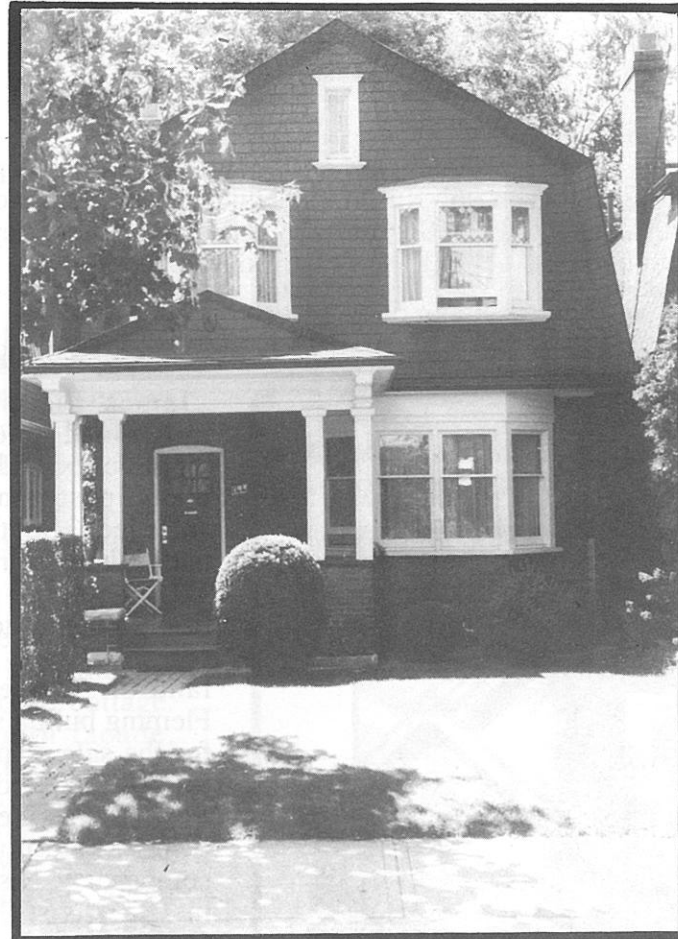


267 Rusholme Rd.

Mr. Fleming was twice married, his first wife bearing the maiden name of Margaret Geddes. She is now deceased, as are the children of that marriage. Mr. Fleming was united in marriage to Miss Mary E. Wade, daughter of the late John Wade, who was born in England in 1803.... Mrs. Fleming survives her husband and resides at No. 267 Rusholme Road.

To James and Mary E. Wade Fleming came one son, James H., a naturalist of the city of Toronto, born in that city in 1872, who was educated at Upper Canada College, completing the course in 1889. He further pursued his studies in Europe, and since returning has been engaged in his profession, that of naturalist, in the city of Toronto. He married Miss Christine Mackay Keefer, now deceased....

[Source: J.H. Beers & Co. (1907), Toronto; pp.107-108.]



144 Rusholme Rd.

### John Albert Hambleton

For a number of years active in the construction work of the city, and now prominent as an estate and business broker, John A. Hambleton is identified with the physical progress and growth of Toronto. He is a son of John Hambleton, a resident of Norfolk county, Ontario, who was born in the State of Pennsylvania in 1850, and came to Ontario with his family in 1854....

John Albert Hambleton was born in Norfolk county, Ontario, March 20, 1883, and received a thoroughly practical education in the public schools of that section, after which he spent several years with his father on the farm. In the year 1906 Mr. Hambleton came to Toronto, and opened offices in the Cosgrave building, on Yonge Street. For ten years he was very active in the building world, specializing in the erection of homes. A great number of pleasant and comfortable dwellings owe their existence to his energy and far-sighted faith in the prosperity of the city. With the necessary restrictions in building during the World War, Mr. Hambleton laid aside his interests in this field entirely, then, in 1919, entered his present business, which comprises brokerage in both real estate and business properties. He is meeting with gratifying success, and largely confines his operations to the sale of residential properties, including apartments.

Mr. Hambleton married, in 1910, Alice Ford, of Barrie, Ontario, and they have one child, Emerson Stacey. The family reside on Albany Avenue.

[Source: Middleton's Toronto, Volume III (1923); pp.223-224.]



259 Rusholme Rd.

### J.Hunt Stanford

With comprehensive preparation for his chosen field of effort, and broad experience therein, Joseph Hunt Stanford, of Toronto, has long held a leading position among the architects of this city, and many fine buildings stand to his credit.

This branch of the Stanford family comes from the Stanfords of Worcestershire, England, who, from 1600 until 1750, were sheep farmers in the district known for centuries as Stanford Bridge. Members of this family served under Cromwell, in England and Ireland.

Mr. Stanford is a son of Jonathan and Hannah Stanford, both of whom were born in Tipton, England. The father...was also an architect by profession....

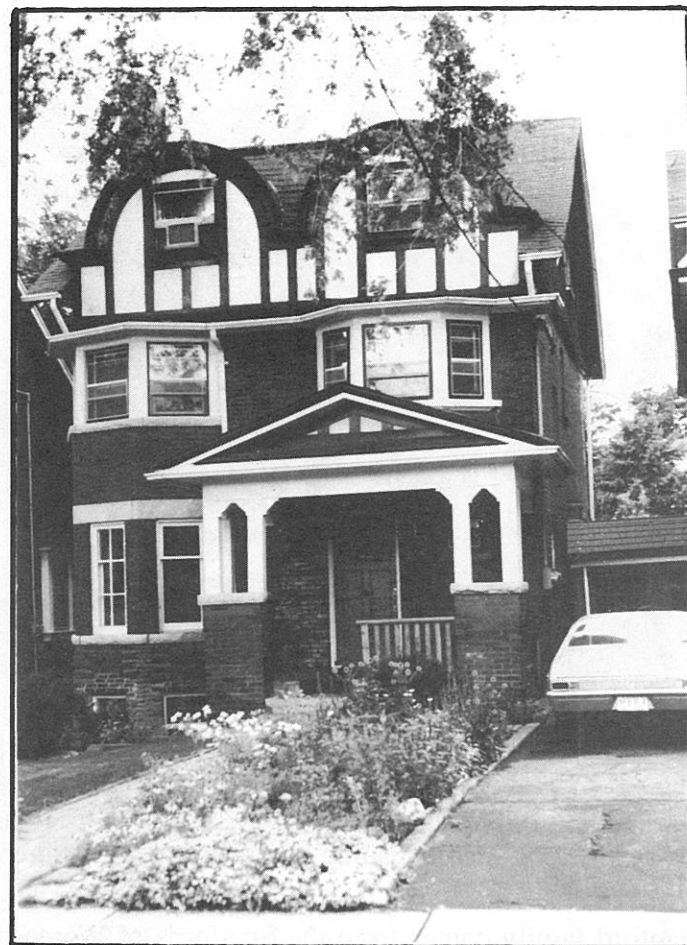
Joseph Hunt Stanford was born in Tipton, Staffordshire, England, in the year 1871, and after the course at the elementary schools near his home, attended Wesleyan Commercial School at Dudley and London. Early choosing the profession of architect, Mr. Stanford took a course at Onslow College of Art, in London, taking a further course at the South Kensington School of Art in London. He then entered actively upon his profession in London, England, remaining until 1902, when he came to Canada. Still following the profession of architecture in the city of Toronto, Mr. Stanford commenced practice on his own account in 1904, and opened an office.

He has been very successful and won his way to the front rank in the profession, specializing in the designing of apartment houses. Among these may be mentioned Hampton Court Apartments, St. Charles Court Apartments, the Aldgate Apartments, Ardrey Court Apartments, and King Edward Apartments of Toronto. Mr. Stanford's experience has covered a period of nearly thirty-five years, his first entrance into his chosen field being in the year 1888. He was elected a Licentiate of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1911....

Mr. Stanford is a member of the Toronto Theosophical Society, and of the Dickens Fellowship. Politically he is an Independent, and his religious faith is that of the Buddhist.

Mr. Stanford married Una A.E. Rigg, of Cambridge, England.... Mr. and Mrs. Stanford have four children....

[Source: Middleton's Toronto Volume III (1923), p.244]



152 Rusholme Rd.

### Noted Architect Called by Death

#### J.A. Harvey Made Many Improvements

James A. Harvey of "Harcroft," 15 Olympus Avenue, well-known architect, and the first Reeve of the Village of Swansea at the time of its incorporation in 1926, died in the Private Patients' Pavilion, Toronto General Hospital yesterday. Many of the local improvements and developments of Swansea were the result of Mr. Harvey's foresight. He had the distinction of founding one of the first wild flower and bird sanctuaries in Canada, known as "Harcroft," which is recognized as one of the beauty spots of Toronto.

Born in Whitby in 1870, he received his education in Whitby schools, and graduated from the University of Toronto School of Science. Several subdivisions were developed by Mr. Harvey, who had the honour of naming a number of Toronto's streets.

He was a member of the Alpha Lodge, A.F. & A.M.[:] the Parkdale Canoe Club [:] and a charter member of the Briars Golf Club, Jackson's Point. He was interested in bowling and yachting.

Surviving are his widow and three daughters, Mrs. H.H. Chapman of Bombay, India, Mrs. L.A. Macklin of Stratford, and Mrs. H.B. Bell of Toronto. Two sisters, Miss Esther Harvey of Whitby and Mrs. H.H. Hayes of New York, and two brothers, Frank Harvey of Toronto and Walter Harvey of Vancouver, also survive.

[Source: The Globe and Mail, Mar. 07, 1933, TPL Scrapbook, Vol. 7, p. 97.]

### Miscellaneous References to James Fleming

(Compiled by Pleasance Crawford, July 1991)

1845

Advertisement in *British Colonist*, March 1845:

Yonge Street / Nursery and Flower Garden. / -/ James Fleming./ Seedsman and Florist./ Offers for Sale his usual and well-assorted Stock of Garden, Field and Flower Seeds, all of which he can recommend as fresh and genuine in their sorts.

Country Dealers and Gardeners supplied on the most reasonable terms. Also - a large stock of Green-house Plants, Double Dahlias, Flower Roots, Fruit and Ornamental Trees, &c. &c. Cabbage, Cauliflower, and Celery Plants, in their season, carefully packed and sent to any part of the country, according to order. Cash for Timothy, Grass and Clover seeds./ Toronto, March 24, 1845.

1849

Letter from James Fleming, Yonge Street Nursery, Toronto, C.W., [Canada West] Feb. 14, 1849 on best mode of cutting asparagus, published in *Canadian Agriculturalist* 1, 3 (Mar. 1, 1849): 73

1849

List of 30 "varieties of roses exhibited and cultivated by Mr. Jas. Fleming of the Yonge-street nursery", which received an award as "best collection of Roses" in the June 28, 1849, show of the Toronto Horticultural Society. Published in *Canadian Agriculturalist* 1, 7 (July 2, 1849): 183. Same item reported that Fleming had a second best collection of mixed flowers in the same show.

1851

Item in *Canadian Agriculturalist*, 3, 3 (Mar. 1851): 71:

FRUIT TREES, SEEDS, etc. As the season for spring operations has arrived, we observe, in answer to some inquiries, that all kinds of Agricultural & Garden seeds, flowers, &c., may be obtained of Mr. James Fleming, Yonge Street Nursery: Seedsman by appointment, to the Agricultural Association of Upper Canada; who has a large assortment of imported and native seeds.

1854

Item in *Canadian Agriculturalist*, 6, 4 (Apr. 1854): 127:

AGRICULTURAL SEEDS. We beg to call attention of our readers to Mr. Fleming's advertisement in the present number. Mr. Fleming has on hand an extensive stock, selected with care and judgement from some of the most respectable Seedsman in Great Britain; and he makes a practise of testing the vitality and purity of his seeds before offering them for sale, the public may safely calculate on being well served.

1855

James Fleming. *Catalogue of Garden, Agricultural, and Flower Seeds for Sale*, by James Fleming. (Toronto, W. R. Robertson; 1855) [11] pp. Metropolitan Library [MTL]; BR 631.5212 F47

1855

"The Garden" column by James Fleming, in *Canadian Agriculturalist*, 7, 5 (May 1855): 150-52: "Hints" as originally published in Mr. Franks' (another Toronto seedsman) catalogue, reprinted in their entirety. Fleming writes: "They are adapted to the soil and climate of this part of Canada, and as Mr. Franks ranks a A No. 1, as a gardener and seedsman, we publish his directions with much confidence.

1859

Programme of the Provincial Exhibition, Toronto, 1858. Metro Toronto Library; BR(S) 606.A33.11, p. 2:

ADVERTISEMENTS./ SEED STORE/ AND/ FLOWER GARDEN./ YONGE STREET, TORONTO/ -/ JAMES FLEMING./ (SEEDSMAN TO THE AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF U. C.)/ Whole sale and Retail Dealer in all kinds of/ Garden, Field, and Flower Seeds./ DUTCH BULBOUS FLOWER ROOTS./ Gardening Tools, Books on Agriculture, Horticulture, &c./ Grows a LARGE ASSORTMENT OF/ GREEN-HOUSE PLANTS./ Double Dahlias, Flowering Shrubs./ Hardy Roses, Herbaceous Plants, Grape Vines, &c.//

1859-60

Frequent items on gardening and horticulture by James Fleming in *Canadian Agriculturalist*.

1861

Item in *Canadian Agriculturalist*: Announcement by James Fleming and George W. Buckland, dated Toronto, Jan. 1, 1861, of their "partnership as seedsmen and dealers in all kinds of agricultural and horticultural implements", under the name of "James Fleming & Co.". N.B.: for more on Buckland, see the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. XI, pp. 132-33.

1864

Frontispiece of *Transactions of the Board of Agriculture and the Agricultural Association of Upper Canada, 1860 to 1863* Vol. V, Toronto, 1864: Engraving of "Agricultural Hall (Erected 1862), office of the Board of Agriculture and the Agricultural Association of Upper Canada, corner of Yonge and Queen streets, Toronto", showing "J. Fleming & Co." on sign at corner.

1868

James Fleming's greenhouses, etc.. Four original prints of photography by Octavius Thompson, 1868.

City of Toronto Archives, The Fleming Collection; SC 534-3, 4, 5, 6.

1868

James Fleming, Seedsman, Florist, 368 Yonge Street at Elm Street. Photograph of building and sign by Octavius Thompson, 1868.

City of Toronto Archives, The Fleming Collection; SC 534-1,2

1871

"Mr Fleming's Nursery" *The Ontario Farmer* 3 (May 1871): 147-48: An extensive description of a visit to Fleming's Yonge Street establishment, with its ten greenhouses.

1872

Advertisement for "James Fleming & Co., SEED MERCHANTS, FLORISTS, AND DEALERS IN ALL KINDS OF GARDEN, FIELD AND FLOWER SEEDS, &c. ... AGRICULTURAL HALL, CORNER OF YONGE & QUEEN STS., TORONTO."

1874

Wholesale Price List of Seeds, OFFERED BY GEORGE W. BUCKLAND & CO., (Late JAMES FLEMING & CO.) Established 1836. SEED GROWERS AND IMPORTERS, 180 Yonge Street, and 4 Queen Street, Toronto. Royal Botanical Gardens Library, Centre for Canadian Historical Horticultural Studies.

1879-81

James Fleming represented St. John's Ward, City of Toronto, as an alderman.

1880s

Photograph of James Fleming, c. 1880s, by Eldridge Stanton. City of Toronto Archives, The Fleming Collection; SC 534-8

1885

Biographical note on James Fleming published in C. Blackett Robinson's *History of Toronto and County of York*, Vol. II, p. 50.

### Why Have We Prepared this Study?

The primary reason for undertaking this booklet is to begin evaluating our existing urban builtform and resources. Studies such as this one represent the first phase in what can eventually lead to residents taking the responsibility for managing change on their street. Of course, that's possible only where neighbours can get to know one another and earn one another's trust such that change and renewal can proceed in a congenial manner.

The first step in any evaluation is to discover what you possess: not simply in terms of the structure's age, dimension, and other statistics, but how it relates to other buildings.

Changes will occur – they always do. But there are ways to ensure that when they happen in your part of town they happen fairly and equitably. You and your neighbours could well take the steps needed to manage change. Most neighbourhoods – including yours – have the players and the talent to start to produce a study, similar to this one for example.

For subsequent studies (Phase Two and Three) you'll probably need logistical and financial support from at least one level of government. And why seek to control and manage these inevitable changes? If we care about our cities, our neighbourhoods, and our buildings, then we have no other choice – for our architectural resources are finite, imperilled, and crucial to our social well-being.

At present the only real help available with Phase two or Phase three of neighbourhood preservation lies with the current Heritage Act.

### Ontario Heritage Act

Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1980 (Chapter 337)

September 1986

#### Part V

#### Heritage Conservation Districts

40. – (1) The council of a municipality may by by-law define the municipality or one or more areas thereof as an area to be examined for future designation as a heritage conservation district and the council may, after such examination is completed, prepare official plan provisions with respect to such designation.

ACO is currently working with the Advisory Committee of Honourable Karen Haslam, Minister of Culture and Communication, toward developing a New Heritage Act. We have every right in the future to expect more substantial assistance toward efforts at neighbourhood stabilization.

... We'll keep you posted.



254 and 256 Rusholme Road circa 1908-09

[Photo: J. R. Biette, Courtesy of Mr. & Mrs. W. L. Sloan]

PUBLISHED BY

TRAC

The  
Toronto Region  
Architectural Conservancy

DECEMBER 1991

This study has been printed on 100% recycled paper