



BENJAMIN SEYMOUR HOUSE
circa 1855

Date Designated: April 2, 1991 to By-Law No. 30/91, SCHEDULE B-2

Lot Description: RP 18 LOT 24 TO 27

— ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION —

This is a commodious two-storey painted-brick structure with a hip roof. It comprises a central block of three bays with a symmetrically placed front door. Centre bay projects noticeably from the facade and is topped by a gable; the gable rises higher than the ridge of the main roof. To the rear is a two-storey wing of lesser importance.

The house has endured any number of changes; today it presents an eclectic mix of styles. It continues to be altered (notably the windows). Nonetheless, there are enough historic features, not to mention the basic silhouette, which make the structure worthy of designation. The chimneys are triple-flue

design with projecting sill and panelled base. In line with the windows below, these appear to "float" over the windows in an unusual manner. Each corner of the facade has Ionic pilasters that stretch the full height of the house. The pilaster at left is missing. Front door (glazing is new) and pilastered door case fit within a fanlight opening. Fanlight glazing is of note.

Windows and balcony door are outlined with elaborate mouldings; glazing, while perhaps energy efficient, is glaringly new. Portico over front door boasts six turned posts (of Doric derivation) and two pilasters. Railing on second-storey balcony is plainly appointed. Gable window trim with disproportionate cornice, thin pilasters and heavy spandrel panel perhaps best expresses the building's inherent eclecticism. Fire escape lean-to at left of main block should not be considered part of this designation, nor should lean-to addition in front of the back wing; merits of frame addition to south are debatable. This house, once home to the influential Seymour family, is an eclectic mix of various periods,

*circa 1855**Classic Revival*

but much of the historic fabric stands intact. It is worthy of designation as one of Port Hope's grand old homes, and as a complement to the streetscape.

— HISTORICAL ABSTRACT —

Seymour House is situated on Lot 24 to 27 on the north side of Seymour Street, part of Lots 74 of the original Town Plots, part of the original land that was granted to Elias Smith and Jonathan Walton in 1797. John P. McDermot and James B. Walsh, local businessmen, acquired many of the lots in Town Plot Lot 74 in 1852. Benjamin Seymour purchased lot 25, 26, and 27 in 1853 from McDermot and Walsh.

71 Pine Street North was constructed circa 1855 with its principal façade facing east towards Seymour Street providing a view of the Ganaraska River to the south. Other houses in the area positioned facing east include the Grange (**33 South Street**) and Hill and Dale (**47 Pine Street South**).

An archival photo shows a verandah on the east façade. The front of the house was probably approached from the street to the east by a laneway located to the north of the coach house that is situated on Bedford Street. The west front was made into the principal entrance when alterations occurred circa 1905, which also included alterations to the front gable roof and an addition of a decorative window in the attic level.

71 Pine Street North was built for Benjamin Seymour (1806-1880), Member of the Legislative Council in 1857 and later a Senator. His only son Charles married Emma Williams, a daughter of John Tucker Williams and resided at their estate, Idalia on Victoria Street South. His daughter, Emily, married J. T. Williams's eldest son, A.T.H. Williams and resided at Penryn Park (**82 Victoria Street**). After the death of Benjamin Seymour in 1880, John Smart purchased the property in 1884. John Smart was an agent for the Bank of Upper Canada prior to its demise in 1866. He was briefly an insurance agent in 1865, and then by 1868, he was Manager of the Ontario Bank that had been established in 1857. In 1867, he was appointed Town Clerk Treasurer. John Smart had previously resided at the townhouse located at **202 Walton Street**. By the time of

— ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL —



Photo Credit: Port Hope Old Boys Reunion Souvenir, 1901

View of 71 Pine Street North before alterations were made to the house. The west front was made into the principal entrance when alterations occurred circa 1905.

John Smart's death in 1891, he had acquired a considerable amount of property in Port Hope including numerous lots on Merritt, Thomas and Sherbourne Streets, **69-71 Walton Street**, and this residence, which he named "Medalta".

In 1908, the children of John Smart sold the property to Hiram Thomas Bush, Mayor of Port Hope in 1913-15. The house was now known as "Inglebush".