

STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE

DESCRIPTION

Municipal Address: 1560 King-Vaughan Road
Legal Description: Pt Lt 1 Con 3 King Pt 1 65R-15586
Brief description: 2-Storey Late Georgian

OVERVIEW

The cultural heritage value of the property known as 1560 King-Vaughan Road meets the criteria set out by the *Ontario Heritage Act* under Province of Ontario Regulation 9/06 for the categories of design/physical, historical/associative and contextual value.

Name: The Brown House
Date Built: 1906-1907
Location: North side of King-Vaughan Road, between Dufferin and Keele St. (closest to Dufferin St.)
Condition: good

DESIGN OR PHYSICAL VALUE

The house at 1560 King-Vaughan Road is a 2-storey Late Georgian residence, with red brick cladding. It was built between 1906 and 1907 by James Brown, and likely with the assistance of his son, William James Brown. Prior to the building of the residence, the subject property was solely used for farming and agricultural purposes. James Brown was a descendant of Brown family members who emigrated from Pennsylvania. This simple, Georgian style was popular with Pennsylvanian settlers¹.

Georgian style architecture was particularly prominent in Ontario between 1784-1860, and has a symmetrical façade, with formally arranged windows and doors². The subject property has been labeled *Late Georgian* due to its build date being in the early 1900s, well after the general era. It has a side-gabled roof, and is symmetrical, with a chimney on the left and right side of the house. The front door is simple, with moulded surrounds and a half-round fanlight over the door. Each side of the house has a quarter fan light window beside the chimney, near the roofline of the house.

HISTORICAL / ASSOCIATIVE VALUE

This property has an especially interesting story in that prior to 1971, it was part of King Township. Much of its social and cultural history is based in King Township, yet now that it is a part of The City of Vaughan, the city takes on the stewardship of this shared piece in history. Since the townships bordered each other, there could also be crossover with family names and land ownership.

The Browns

William Brown

Initially, all 200 acres of Lot 1 Concession 3 were sold in 1802 by the Crown to Alexander Gardner. It then passed through a few hands, mostly men who were purchasing land for investment and then had it severed in to parcels of land. In 1847, William Brown, a Weaver,

¹ Georgian, Ontario Architectural Style Guide, University of Waterloo, 2009

² Georgian, Ontario Architecture, A Guide to Styles and Building Terms 1784 to present, John Blumenson, 1989

purchased and registered the subject property, which was then considered the SE ¼ of Lot 1 Con 3, totalling 29 acres. Brown's ancestry traces to four Quaker brothers who emigrated from Pennsylvania in 1830, who had initially settled in Schomberg, King Township³.

Although there isn't evidence of a house or dwelling on the subject property at this time, there is clearly land being cultivated as well as working animals being cared for⁴. Census records indicate crop growth and animal value. In 1865, William's sons show up in the tax assessment records as 'first class service', while William is still the freeholder⁵. There is a possibility of a dwelling existing on an adjoining portion of the property for workers/families, as well as animal dwellings.

James Brown

James Brown had just married Hannah Dibb from the Township of Vaughan in 1872 and was ready to start a family. His farming business would take care of them financially. During a period of about 20 years, tax assessment records indicate that Brown continued to be a tenant, farming on his father's property, and then a new tenant, Matthew Morton and his father appear in the 1880s, farming on the property until around 1895. In 1896, James Brown is now the registered Freeholder of the subject property at 46 years old and he chooses to turn it into the area in which he wished to reside⁶.

The tax assessment records for 1907⁷ show a significant jump in property value, which usually indicates that something has been built upon, likely a house. James Brown at this time is in his early 50s and his son William is in his late 20s. Together, they (or hired help) would have erected the house at 1560 King-Vaughan Rd. After a few years of living there, the Brown's moved and continued to rent until selling to Charles Carlton Crossley in 1920⁸.

Charles Carlton Crossley (1920-1976)

Charles Carlton Crossley was born in 1891 in King City to William James and Florence (Roadhouse) Crossley⁹. Tax assessment records show Crossley as the freeholder and taxpayer of the subject property since 1920, but the historic land title books show the Grantee being *His majesty the King* from 1920 until 1938, when Charles Carlton Crossley is registered. Either way, he is living and working as a farmer on the property¹⁰. He married Mary Sturdy in 1922, and together they started their life and family at Lot 1 Con 3.

³ William Brown (information), City of Vaughan Archives; Brown's ancestry traces to four Quaker brothers who emigrated from Pennsylvania in 1830, and they are credited with being the founders of Schomberg (originally called Brownsville, but since that was already the name of a Town in Vaughan it was renamed in 1862). The four brothers were Thomas, who built the first mill, Garrett, who opened the first bank, and John and Robert, farmers.

⁴ Census Records of Canada, Ancestry.ca

⁵ 1864 Tax Assessment Records, King Township Archives

⁶ 1874-1896 Tax Assessment Records, King Township Archives

⁷ 1907 Tax Assessment Records, King Township Archives

⁸ Ontario Land Title Records, www.onland.ca

⁹ Charles Carlton Crossley, King Township Library

¹⁰ Lot 1 Concession 3 NS, Ontario Land Titles, www.onland.ca

Much of the produce grown at the Crossley farm provided food for the community. For example, Crossley Hall¹¹ was used commercially for a time, starting in the 1920s, and onions¹² from the farm would get sent to the hall for pickling and eventual distribution.

But Crossley wasn't your ordinary farmer and has a very interesting story. Aside from also being a highly active community member, he was an experienced pilot with a great passion for flying. He had enlisted in WW1 in 1917 as a Probationary Flight Officer¹³ and then in 1918 he joined the Royal Naval Air Force (RNAS, precursor to RAF), where he logged 118 hours of flight time before being discharged in 1919¹⁴. In 1926, Crossley became a mechanic for the newly formed Ontario Provincial Air Service and was posted to Sioux Lookout. He was there for a short while and then in 1928, he returned to flying and continued to log hundred of hours flying as a pilot and engineer¹⁵. In 1940, he enlisted in Ottawa for World War Two. Initially, he was a Link Trainer at Rockcliffe and Trenton and eventually returned to flying on April 24, 1940.¹⁶

After the war, there isn't much information of the whereabouts for Crossley, but it seems that he isn't in King City for a bit. On May 19, 1956, at the age of 60, he disappeared off the radar while en route from Churchill to a DEW Line¹⁷. Then, 10 days later May 29, a 407 Squadron Lancaster spotted him on an ice floe near Southampton Island. Crossley helped in his rescue by gathering a signal from a small, hand-powered 'Gibson Girl'¹⁸ radio transmitter that he carried¹⁹. Newspapers recorded this incident far and wide as it became an important news event. But on the morning of June 1, 1956 "at his farm home on the corner of the Townline and the 3rd concession of King"²⁰ Crossley was re-united with his family. Even after this life changing event, Crossley continued flying for some companies until he later retired. He died peacefully in 1974.

There is mention of the Veteran's Land Act decades later in the Land Title records for King Township. It appears that Crossley's children were receiving their father's pension payout following the deaths of both their parents.

Crossley's son Allan and his wife took on the ownership of the house and continued the family legacy at this property for many years to come. There isn't evidence of Land Title changing until 1991, but newspaper records indicate that from as early as 1953, where "a family gathering was

¹¹ *Old Landmark Being Wrecked*, The Liberal, Richmond Hill, 1963 (ourontario.org)

The Crossley name is/was a pertinent name to the history and development of King City. In 1899, Crossley Hall was built and opened January 1, 1900. It was a popular community hall run by William James Crossley. The hall was witness to several dances, performances, gatherings and functions for the Town. In 1963, Charles Carlton Crossley was the owner of the building, and was demolishing it slowly to make way for the demands of the growing town.

¹² *Early Settlements of King Township, Ontario*, Elizabeth McClure, 1975

¹³ UK, Navy Lists, 1880-1970; www.ancestry.com

¹⁴ *Marooned on the Ice*, Online Exhibit, King Township Museum; <https://story.treasured.ca/exhibit/4ad73051-e8df-4f2b-af35-444aad1961d0/story/8377d665-13c5-4dc5-a41c-6e9dd1f8799d>

¹⁵ Charles Carlton Crossley, King Township Library

¹⁶ *Ibid*

¹⁷ DEW Line - The Distant Early Warning Line, also known as the DEW Line or Early Warning Line, was a system of radar stations in the northern Arctic region of Canada, with additional stations along the north coast and Aleutian Islands of Alaska, in addition to the Faroe Islands, Greenland, and Iceland; Wikipedia.org

¹⁸ Nicknamed the Gibson Girl because of its hourglass shape, it was supplied with a fold-up metal frame box kite, and a balloon with a small hydrogen generator, for which the flying line was the aerial wire. Power was provided by a hand cranked generator; Wikipedia.org

¹⁹ Charles Carlton Crossley, King Township Library

²⁰ *Lost 12 days, C. Crossley is Re-United with Family*, The Liberal, June 7, 1956

held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Allan Crossley, 3rd con., King on Sunday"²¹. The Crossley name and legacy lived on for several more years.

CONTEXTUAL VALUE

Though this property was not part of Vaughan Township until 1971, it carries similar history and context to those which were always part of Vaughan Township. This structure, although built well after its general era, also serves as a fine example of Georgian architecture, which has also been in its original location since the early 1900s.

There is relation to agricultural history and practises. Archival evidence shows that the Crossley farm specifically provided food to the community, by having certain produce brought to Crossley Hall where they were pickled and distributed to the community. Prior to the Crossley farm, the Brown farm was active and producing much crop and food.

SUMMARY OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE

Physical/Design Value

Contributing

- Late Georgian house, 2-storey
- Symmetrical footprint
- Side gabled roof, with a chimney on each side
- Half moon fanlight above door and quarter moon fanlights on each side of the chimneys
- Wood frame construction
- Red-brick Cladding

Historical/Associative Value

- connection to significant archaeological resources both of early settler and indigenous peoples
- connection to specific historic settler families, such as the Browns and the Crossleys
- connection to Charles Carlton Crossley, who was an RAF pilot and recreational pilot as well. His story and journey are truly one of incredible feat and courage.
- connection to 20th century farming practices
- connection to early Ontario settlers and architectural styles

Contextual Value

- the subject property is contextually linked to Vaughan's/King's agricultural history from initial settlement and land clearing, early 19th farming practices.
- farming and livestock farming linked to early settler/Quaker practises.

²¹ King City News, The Liberal, 1953; ourontario.org