

Heritage Designation Brief

“The C.H. Rogers House”



408 Belmont Avenue

Peterborough Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee

November 2018

Heritage Designation Status Sheet

Street Address:	408 Belmont Avenue
Roll Number:	030050186000000
Short Legal Description:	LT 7 & PT LT 8 S WELLER ST & N HUNTER ST, PL 65 AMENDED BY PL 79 AMENDED BY PL 88 PETERBOROUGH AS IN R606261 ; PETERBOROUGH
PACAC Application Review Date:	November 1, 2018
Heritage Type:	Built Structure
Designation Type:	Ontario Heritage Act – Part IV
Designation Brief Completion Date:	October 2018
Designation Brief Completed by:	Emily Turner
Comments:	

STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST

The subject property has been researched and evaluated in order to determine its cultural heritage significance under Ontario Regulation 9/06 of the Ontario Heritage Act R.S.O. 1990. A property is eligible for designation if it has physical, historical, associative or contextual value and meets **any one** of the nine criteria set out under Regulation 9/06 of the Act. Staff have determined that 408 Belmont Avenue has cultural heritage value or interest and merits designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

1. The property has design value or physical value because it:

i. is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method:

408 Belmont Avenue is an excellent and representative example of the English Cottage style, which developed out of the Arts and Crafts movement and was popular in the early decades of the twentieth century. Featuring an asymmetrical cross gable plan and decorative half timbering, it illustrates the key design tenets of the English Cottage style which aimed to integrate the rustic picturesque into suburban dwellings for the growing upper middle class in the early twentieth century.

ii. displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit:

408 Belmont displays a high degree of craftsmanship in its overall execution and design by architectural firm Bond and Smith of Toronto. One feature of particular note is the unique recessed entranceway with an ogee arch.

iii. demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement:

There are no specific technical or scientific achievements associated with this property.

2. The property has historical value or associative value because it:

i. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community:

The property has important historical associations with Peterborough businessman, Claude H. Rogers, the first owner of the house. Rogers was the son of James Z. Rogers, one of the founders of the Ontario Canoe Company and later managing director of the Peterborough Canoe Company. The younger Rogers took over a management role in the Peterborough Canoe Company in 1909 and, between 1926 and 1928, oversaw the successful merger of the Peterborough Canoe Company, New Brunswick's Chestnut

Canoe Company, and the Canadian Canoe Company into Canadian Watercraft Limited.

ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture:

408 Belmont has the potential to yield information about the development of upper and upper middle class suburban Peterborough. Specifically, the use of the English Cottage style speaks to the preoccupations of early twentieth-century urban professionals to create a retreat away from industrial city life in nearby suburban areas, an increasing trend during this period.

iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community:

408 Belmont Avenue was designed by the Toronto architectural firm Bond and Smith, founded by English architect Charles Herbert Acton Bond and Sandford Fleming Smith, a Peterborough native and the nephew of Sir Sandford Fleming. The firm, which was operational between 1897 and 1914, was both successful and prolific, completing commissions throughout Eastern Canada, including a number of commercial and domestic buildings in Peterborough. The firm became particularly well-known for large private residences for the Toronto elite. They executed a significant number of houses in the English Cottage style in the early 1910s and 408 Belmont Avenue is an excellent example of their work in this style.

3. The property has contextual value because it:

i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area:

The property is important in supporting the character of the neighbourhood as a upper and upper middle class suburb in the developing west end of Peterborough in the early twentieth century. The area has a significant collection of period revival homes of which 408 Belmont is one. It also supports the overall character of the neighbourhood through the placement of the home on a large landscaped lot with mature trees and significant setbacks.

ii. is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings

408 Belmont is historically and visually linked to its surroundings as part of the suburban development of the Old West end neighbourhood in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It is visually linked to its surroundings through its use of a period revival style, a prominent feature in the streetscape.

iii. is a landmark. O. Reg. 9/06, s. 1 (2).

408 Belmont Avenue is a landmark in the local area due to its distinctive English cottage style, its longstanding presence in the neighbourhood, and its siting at the corner of Belmont Avenue and Hunter Street West, making it visible from a wide range of vantage points.

Design and Physical Value

408 Belmont Avenue, constructed around 1911, is an excellent, representative example of the English Cottage style of architecture, a popular style for domestic buildings in the early twentieth century. The property is a representative example



of this style because it retains its original form, details, and massing executed to a high degree of craftsmanship and exemplifies this style of domestic architecture in Peterborough.

The style was born out the Arts and Crafts movement in the late nineteenth century which developed as a reaction to the increasing industrialization of nineteenth-century society and sought to

reintroduce handmade and authentic elements into architecture, decorative arts, and design. The English Cottage style specifically looked to the rural vernacular architecture of England's medieval villages for inspiration which were seen as having both an intrinsic connection to the non-industrial landscape through their location and materiality and an informal, picturesque aesthetic from their asymmetrical massing and handmade qualities. The style also drew on emerging trends within the Gothic Revival movement that increasingly looked away from historic replication of primarily ecclesiastic forms and towards buildings techniques and styles more closely associated with medieval domestic design.

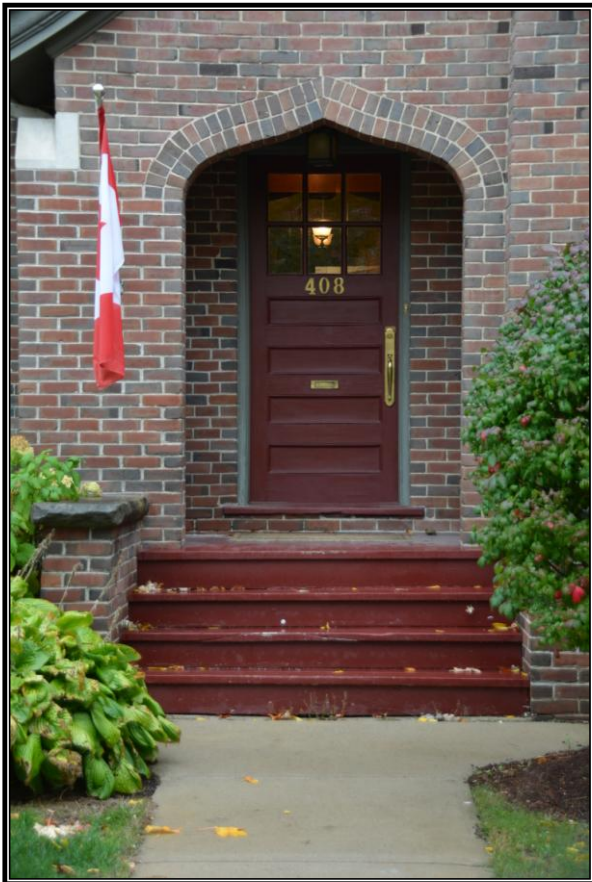
Features such as cross gables, half timbering, and red brick were used within an asymmetrical massing intended to recreate the picturesque and rustic aesthetic seen in vernacular buildings in order to suggest, but not directly replicate, medieval design. Pioneered by English architects such as C.F.A. Voysey and Philip Webb, the style was popularized in Canada in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century by Toronto architect Eden Smith, originally from Birmingham, whose vast numbers of domestic commissions in the style can be found throughout Toronto's early twentieth-century suburbs. Charles Herbert Acton

Bond and Sandford Fleming Smith, the architects who designed 408 Belmont Avenue, were associated with Eden Smith through Toronto's Architectural Eighteen Club, later the Toronto Society of Architects, where both Eden Smith and Bond served on the executive board.

While the cottage, as an architectural form, had historically been associated with England's farming population, it had, by the eighteenth century, shifted to become a fashionable form with many upper class patrons who looked increasingly to architects to design cottages that integrated the aesthetic features of vernacular housing types into relatively substantial buildings for countryside retreats from genteel society. By the nineteenth century, the form had been adopted by the Arts and Crafts movement and became increasingly popular with the suburban upper middle class who also saw the vernacular cottage as a place for retreat, but rather from urban industrial life with their cottages located within quiet tree-lined suburbs. The architect-designed cottage was intended to create a house that was both homey and authentic without sacrificing the modern comforts and well-

envisaged design that clients of this social class expected in the early twentieth century.

408 Belmont exemplifies many of the important characteristics of the English Cottage style. Its most prominent feature is its steeply pitched asymmetrical gable on the west elevation of the building facing Belmont Avenue, a key element of the style. Its overall massing is asymmetrical, creating a rustic aesthetic which is further emphasized by the use of brick and stucco on all elevations of the house, the irregular heights of the chimneys, and the asymmetrical placement of small windows throughout the house. The brick, particularly, speaks to the rustic feel of the English Cottage style through its tonal



variations. As a whole, the front elevation of the house further contributes to the asymmetrical, vernacular aesthetic of the house through its irregular massing, a large bay window offset from the centre of the house, and the large chimney which bisects the asymmetrical gable.

The gables on all elevations of the house feature mock half-timbering – exposed wooden beams in-filled with stucco – a specific feature of the English Cottage style drawn directly from medieval English construction. It also features a number of particularly well-executed decorative details included oriel windows on the north and west elevations and the recessed entrance with a distinctive ogee arch. 408 Belmont Avenue is an excellent example of an early twentieth century English Cottage style house in Peterborough.



The architectural plans for the house still survive and indicate that the exterior of the house has changed little since the design phase. The house's southern porch is a later addition but has been designed to fit the overall aesthetic of the house

and integrates half timbering into its gable end. The rear verandah has also been enclosed and enlarged to form a sunroom.

Historical and Associative Value

408 Belmont Avenue has important historical and associative value through its first owner, Claude Henry Rogers. Rogers came from the prominent Rogers family which had significant business interests in Ashburnham throughout the nineteenth

century through his grandfather R.D. Rogers. His uncle, Richard Birdsall Rogers, designed the Peterborough Liftlock. R.D. Rogers' oldest son, James Zacheus, was Claude Rogers' father and trained in his father's retail store and sawmill. However, his primary commercial achievement was the establishment of the

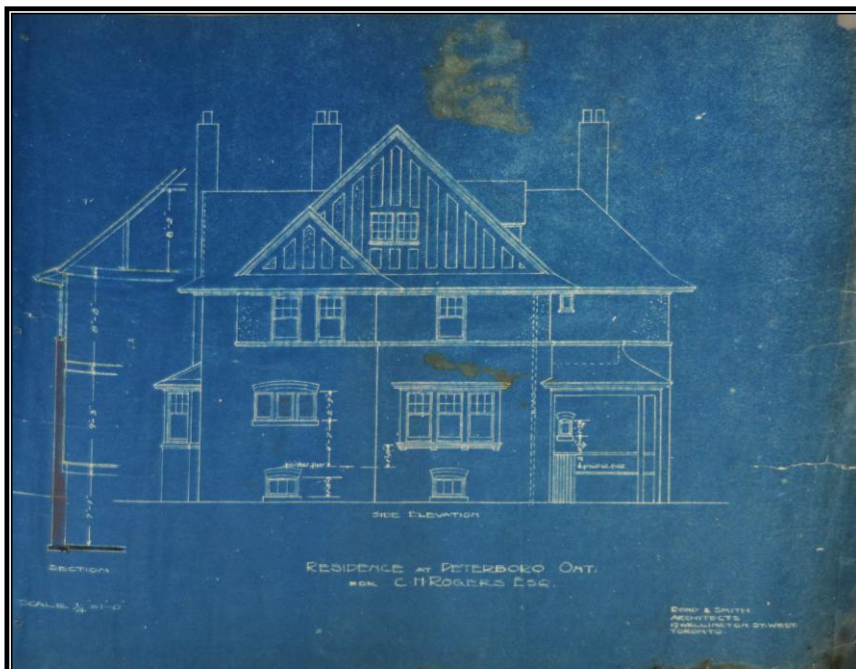


Ontario Canoe Company which was incorporated in 1883. J.Z. Rogers was the president and general manager of the company and later manager of its successor, the Peterborough Canoe Company.

J. Z. Rogers died in 1909 and his son Claude, an engineering graduate, took over the management of the manufacturing end of the business. By 1913, he was listed as the vice president of the company, a role he resumed after returning from the First World War in 1919. A key aspect of C.H. Rogers' legacy in the canoe industry was his role in the merger of the Peterborough Canoe Company with two of its key competitors, New Brunswick's Chestnut Canoe Company and the Canadian Canoe Company, also located in Peterborough, under the banner of Canadian Watercraft Limited. After the merger, all three companies continued to operate as separate entities with Canadian Watercraft Ltd acting as a holding company. This effectively allowed all three companies to market extremely similar models of canoes without the fierce competition between canoe companies faced by Rogers' father in the late nineteenth century. Rogers remained in the role of vice-president of the Peterborough Canoe Company until 1946.

Rogers commissioned the home from Toronto architectural firm Bond and Smith in 1910, on a piece of land which had formerly belonged to the Cox estate. He married

Eherma Elizabeth Wells in 1911 and they moved into the newly-constructed home. Their four children were born between 1912 and 1920 while they lived in the house. The Rogers family occupied the property until 1925.



The property also holds historical importance as work of the firm Bond and Smith. The firm, which was both successful and prolific during its period of operation between 1897 and 1914, was founded by architect Charles Herbert Acton Bond and Sandford Fleming Smith, the latter of whom was a Peterborough native and the nephew of Sir Sandford Fleming. The firm completed a wide range of designs for different types of buildings throughout their partnership in southern Ontario and throughout Eastern Canada. While most of their work was completed in and around Toronto, they completed a number of domestic and commercial designs in Peterborough. Other designs executed by the firm in Peterborough

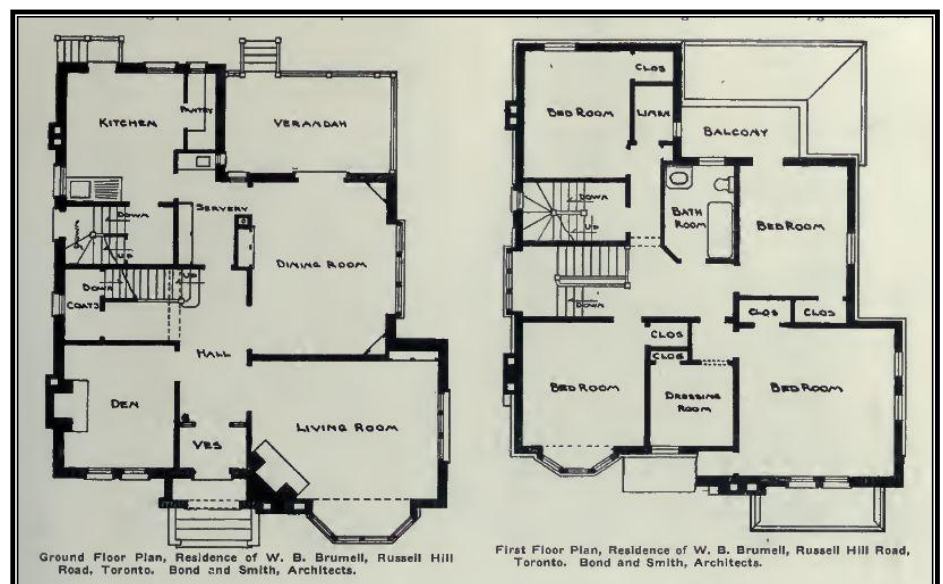
include a set of row houses constructed for Sir Sandford Fleming at what is now 1, 5, and 11 Fleming Place and the factory and storefront for Barrie's Furs at 312 George Street North.



By 1910, however, the firm had become well-known as the designer of houses for Toronto's wealthy elite, mostly located in the Rosedale, Forest Hill and Annex neighbourhoods and mainly executed in the related Tudor Revival and English Cottage styles. Many of these were featured in architectural publications, most often *Construction: A Journal for the Architectural, Engineering, and Contracting Interests of*

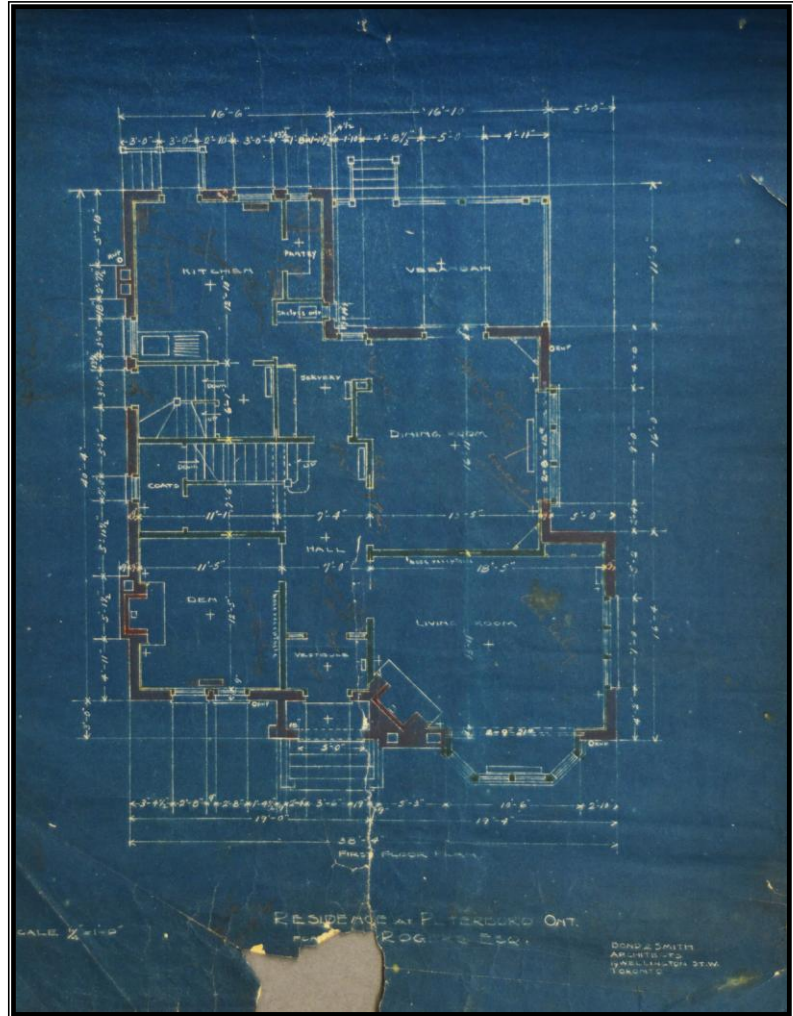
Canada, which provided plans and photographs of Bond and Smith's various commissions, beginning with the journal's first issue in 1907. Many of the houses featured similar design elements to those at 408 Belmont Avenue as the firm adapted the English Cottage style to fit the varying needs of their clients. In particular, the asymmetrical gable is an important feature in a number of their designs, making 408 Belmont Avenue both consistent with the wider design principles of the English Cottage style and demonstrative of the firm's domestic work around 1910. Similar work includes a design for a home on Russell Hill Road, Toronto, completed in 1910, which employs the same asymmetrical gable on the street facing elevation, stucco on the upper storey, and oriel windows; the floor plans for this house and 408 Belmont Avenue are virtually identical. 408 Belmont Avenue is one of the firm's few residential commissions completed outside of Toronto.

From a broader perspective, the property has the potential to yield important information with regard to the development of upper middle class suburban



Peterborough in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In particular, the use of the English Cottage style is directly related to some of the larger ideas driving the development of upper and upper middle class suburbs in the early twentieth century and the property at 408 Belmont is an excellent example of this

trend. The English cottage style, specifically, was seen as a style which exemplified a retreat from urban society in newly-developing suburbs where upper and upper middle class people could escape the hustle and bustle of city life because of its associations with rural vernacular architecture. As cities industrialized and expanded, the idea of retreat to suburban areas became increasingly important as upper and upper middle class people desired their domestic space to be located within more naturalistic settings that included wide roads, large gardens, and trees. From a social perspective, the move to suburban neighbourhoods such as the Old West End also underlined a class divide as people of the lower and working classes could not afford to move to these areas and remained in more



concentrated urban settings; areas such as the Old West End, therefore, became genteel neighbourhoods defined by their built and natural landscape which were intended to communicate a specific domestic ideal. For a prominent businessman such as Rogers, whose work was intimately tied to Peterborough's growing industrial base, a house constructed in this style in the Old West End neighbourhood communicated this ideal, placing it within the wider context of urban growth as it developed along social lines in the early twentieth century.

Contextual Value

408 Belmont Avenue has good contextual value as part of the growing upper and upper middle class suburban development taking place within the Old West neighbourhood during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Historically and visually linked to its surroundings, which include a significant



number of period revival homes constructed in the early twentieth century, the property contributes to the overall character of the streetscape within an historic neighbourhood and is aesthetically linked to its surroundings through construction materials and design features.

The house maintains the character of the neighbourhood through the use of a period

revival style consistent with many others within the local neighbourhood and its placement within a large landscaped lot containing mature trees. It fits within the overall streetscape of both Weller Street and Belmont Avenue. The house is placed in a prominent location within the local area and is a landmark corner property that can be seen from multiple vantage points within the neighbourhood. It is a unique design within the neighbourhood, despite the area's overall stylistic coherence.

"The short statement of reason for designation, including a description of the heritage attributes along with all other components of the Heritage Designation Brief constitute the "Reasons for the Designation" required under the Ontario Heritage Act. The Heritage Designation Brief is available for viewing in the City Clerk's office during regular business hours."

SHORT STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

408 Belmont Avenue is an excellent and representative example of an English Cottage style house dating from the early part of the twentieth century. Constructed in 1911, it was designed by the Toronto architectural firm Bond and Smith, whose principals included Sandford Fleming Smith, a Peterborough native and the nephew of Sir Sandford Fleming. It features asymmetrical massing with a unique front half-timbered gable, both of which are characteristic of the style, along with other intact architectural elements inspired by English vernacular architecture. The property also has important historical links to the community through its first owner, Claude H. Rogers whose father, James Rogers, founded the Ontario Canoe Company and was later manager of the Peterborough Canoe Company. As his father's successor, Claude Rogers successfully oversaw the merger of the Peterborough Canoe Company with the Chestnut Canoe Company and the Canadian Canoe Company to form Canadian Watercraft Limited and was an important member of Peterborough's early twentieth century business community. 408 Belmont Avenue is an important part of the overall landscape of Peterborough's Old West End neighbourhood.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE ATTRIBUTES TO BE DESIGNATED

The Reasons for Designation include the following heritage attributes and apply to all elevations and the roof including all façades, entrances, windows, chimneys, and trim, together with construction materials of wood, brick, stone, stucco, concrete, plaster parging, metal, and glazing, their related building techniques and landscape features:

Exterior Features

- Two-and-a-half storey red brick residential building
- Asymmetrical massing
- Half-timbered gables
- Steeply pitched cross gable roof
- Asymmetrical front gable
- Brick chimneys on north and west elevations
- Soffits and fascia
- Recessed entranceway including:
 - Brick ogee arch
 - Knee walls
- Stucco on second story and in gable ends

- Imitation buttresses
- Second storey coursing
- Rear porches
- Decorative brickwork including:
 - Arched window surrounds
- Western bay window with sloped roof
- Oriel windows with brackets and moulding
- All original fenestration including:
 - Six-over-six sash windows
 - Leaded casement windows
 - Original window openings
 - Window openings and their associated elements including sash, mould jambs, and trim
 - Original wooden windows
 - Asymmetrical placement of windows
- View of the house from Weller Street and Belmont Avenue
- Views of the surrounding of the Old West End neighbourhood from the house
- Orientation of the house with regard to the street and gardens