

Heritage Designation Brief

“Bellevue”



239 Burnham Street

Peterborough Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee

April 2019

Heritage Designation Status Sheet

Street Address:	239 Burnham Street
Roll Number:	040110003000000
Short Legal Description:	PT BLK B PL 124 PETERBOROUGH CITY PT 2 45R2642 T/W R330221 S/T ORNAMENTAL RESERVE PL 124 ; PETERBOROUGH CITY
PACAC Application Review Date:	April 4, 2019
Heritage Type:	Built Structure
Designation Type:	Ontario Heritage Act – Part IV
Designation Brief Completion Date:	March 2019
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 239 Burnham Street 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:

239 Burnham Street is an excellent, representative example of an Italianate villa in Peterborough, a style that was popular in Ontario during the mid- to late-nineteenth century. It demonstrates the characteristic asymmetrical massing of the style and retains many Italianate features including: a hipped roof; rustication; chimneys; and two-storey bays. It demonstrates the mid-nineteenth century connection between Italianate villas and the aesthetic theory of the picturesque through its overall design and placement within a garden landscape.

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

The property displays a typical degree of craftsmanship for a house of this type.

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:

239 Burnham Street has important connections to the Burnham family through its first owner, John Burnham. The Burnham family was an significant family in mid-nineteenth century Ashburnham and Peterborough and John Burnham himself held important positions in the community, including serving as the Reeve of Ashburnham and as MP for Peterborough East in the late nineteenth century.

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

The property yields additional information about the development of Ashburnham in the mid-nineteenth century, particularly regarding the role of the Burnhams in the community 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:

The designer of the building is not known.

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 maintaining the character of this residential area of Ashburnham as part of a broader historic landscape defined primarily by the large number of extant nineteenth century homes.

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

The property is historically linked to its surroundings as part of the mid-nineteenth century development of residential Ashburnham. It is historically linked to a number of properties in the immediate vicinity which were constructed around the same period for relatives of its first owners, John Burnham and his wife, Maria Rogers. The house is also historically linked to its surroundings as one of the remaining built features of the Burnham Estate.

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

The property is a landmark in the community due to its prominent location on a corner lot, distinctive architectural forms, longstanding presence in the area, and connections with important historical figures in the Village of Ashburnham.

Design and Physical Value

239 Burnham Street, also known as Bellevue, was constructed in 1866 and is a good example of a mid-nineteenth century Italianate villa, a popular style of residential architecture during this period. Possessing many of the key features of this style, including its asymmetrical massing and Classical details, it is representative of Italianate domestic architecture in Peterborough and Ontario during the middle of the nineteenth century.

The Italianate domestic style developed during the middle of the nineteenth century as an extension of the Classical picturesque style which had emerged

during the Georgian and Regency periods as a popular architectural style for residential buildings, both large and small. There were a number of housing types which developed within this style, including the Italianate villa. Based on

the rural villas of the Italian Renaissance, this house type used asymmetrical massing and stylized classical details a way that was loosely based on historic models, unlike the Georgian and Regency styles which were more rigid in their adoption of Classical models. Elements and details prevalent in buildings of this style included rustication, hipped roofs, columns, wide eaves, and brackets which were based on models from the Italian Renaissance but did not directly



replicate them. As a result, the Italianate villa was a flexible building form that could be modified to suit both its site and the needs of the patron.

Italianate villas were also linked to the aesthetic landscape theory of the picturesque which developed during the eighteenth century in Britain and, by the nineteenth century, had made its way to Ontario. The picturesque focused on cultivated, rural, or naturalistic settings and the place of human activities, particularly architecture, within them in order to emphasis the pictorial qualities of human-influenced, romantic landscapes. Particular emphasis was placed on the relationship between building and landscape as well as irregularity and naturalism in form. The Italianate villa fit within this aesthetic model because of its move away from the strictly rational forms of other Classical styles, such as the Georgian or Regency, as well as because of the associations of the villa, as a building type, with rural life. The emphasis of the picturesque on irregularity and flexibility was also consistent with the architectural vocabulary of the Italianate villa style which drew from a variety of Classically-inspired elements, but was essentially ahistorical, to create an aesthetic that was a romantic interpretation of the architecture of Renaissance Italy.



239 Burnham is an excellent example of this housing type, displaying both the architectural features of the Italianate villa and the overall aesthetic of the



picturesque. The house has the characteristic massing of an Italianate villa constructed on a relatively unconstrained lot, the result of its placement on the larger Burnham estate where the size and layout of the house was not limited by the size and orientation of an urban lot, as is the case in other Italianate houses throughout Peterborough. The buff brick dwelling was originally constructed on an L-shaped plan including the main, two-storey section of the house and a two-storey kitchen wing

at the northeast corner of the property, since demolished. It retains many of the key architectural features associated with the Italianate style. These include: asymmetrical massing; a hipped roof; chimneys; rusticated quoins; and two-storey bays.

When the property was originally constructed, the house also featured a one-storey Classical verandah on the east elevation of the house with Doric columns and an entablature. The main entrance was originally through this verandah, although it has since been relocated to the south elevation of the house. In 1917, extensive changes were made to the layout of the building including the removal of the kitchen wing and the reorientation of the house towards Charles Street by its owner at the time, Alfred Ernest Dawson. This included the addition of a two-storey entrance porch which includes an upper-storey sleeping porch, a popular architectural feature during this period. The current verandah and sleeping porch are modern reconstructions. Nevertheless, despite these changes, the house retains its overall classical character and remains an important example of mid-nineteenth century Italianate architecture.





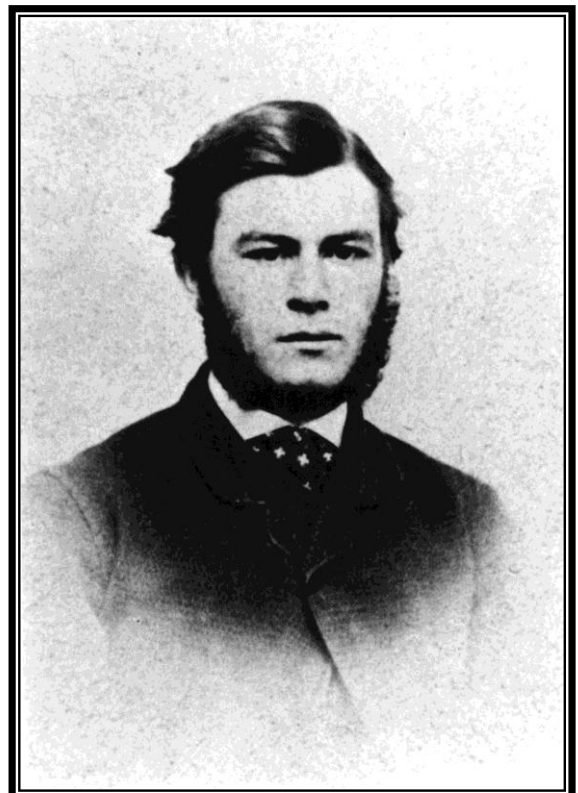
In the nineteenth century, the house was surrounded by wide and expansive gardens, the Burnham estate, consistent with the mid-nineteenth century placement of picturesque villas within cultivated, pictorial landscapes. The Burnham property was a 25-acre estate which included the Rev. Mark Burnham's house, Engleburn, and Bellevue which he constructed for his son, John Burnham. The two properties were connected by a garden landscape which included trees, walkways, and more formal gardens, as well as architectural elements. It has been even reported that the two properties were connected by a trellised walkway, which no longer survives. It also would have commanded views of the estate itself, as well as Little Lake and the Otonabee River because of its elevated placement, an essential element of the picturesque. The placement of the house within the garden setting emphasized its picturesque qualities and relationship with the surrounding landscape, despite its placement within the

context of the growing Village of Ashburnham. Although most of the property was subdivided and developed into housing in the early twentieth century, the house nevertheless retains a sizable garden.

Historical and Associative Value

239 Burnham Street has important historical and associative value with the Burnham family, one of Peterborough's important early families. The house was originally occupied by John Burnham, the son of the Rev. Mark Burnham, and his family from its construction in 1866 until 1903. Its historical and associative value is derived from its connections to its early inhabitants and their important role in the development of mid-nineteenth century Peterborough.

Peterborough's earliest connection with the Burnham family came in the early nineteenth century with the acquisition of land throughout the region by the Hon. Zaccheus Burnham whose work surveying the Newcastle District





allowed him to become the largest land owner in the district. Burnham's son, Mark, was appointed the rector of St. John's Anglican Church in Peterborough in 1852, and he moved with his family to Ashburnham from St. Thomas where he had previously served with the Anglican Church. Their house, now located at 260 Engleburn Avenue, was constructed in 1853 in the Classical style on a 25-acre estate, known as Engleburn, which stretched eastwards from Little Lake and the Otonabee River. Burnham was an important figure in mid-nineteenth century Peterborough, making significant contributions to the community through his involvement with the Anglican Church.

Mark Burnham had houses constructed for three of his sons who remained in the Peterborough area, including 239 Burnham, for his son John, who was born in St. Thomas in 1842. Bellevue, as the house was known, was constructed adjacent to Mark Burnham's house on the Burnham estate; it is believed that the two houses were connected by a covered trellised walkway. They were certainly connected through their expansive, landscaped grounds which extended from Bellevue to the river.

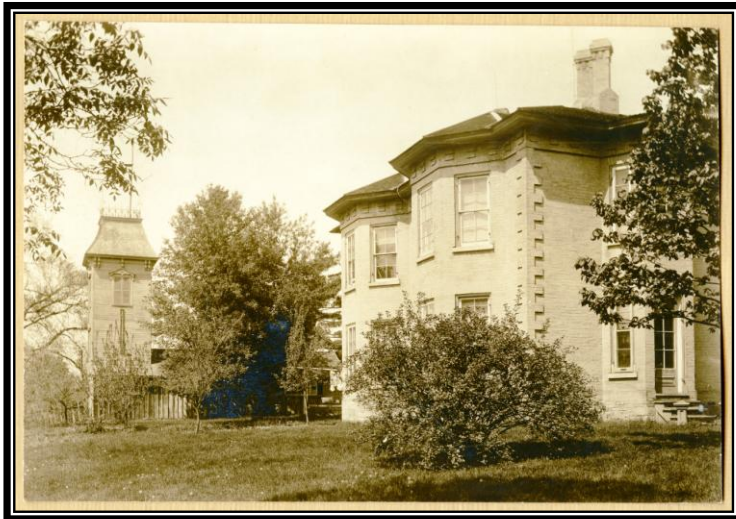


John Burnham, who occupied the house from its construction in 1866 to his death in 1897, had studied law under Judge Charles A. Weller and practiced law in Peterborough beginning in 1865. His role as a lawyer made him a prominent member of the community and he was also heavily involved in other municipal affairs, serving as Reeve of Ashburnham between 1875 and 1896 and County Warden between 1877 and 1880. He also served as the Conservative MP for Peterborough East between 1878 and 1887 and again between 1891 and 1896. He was also a Captain in the local militia, the 57th Regiment, known as the Peterborough Rangers.



The house also has historical connections to the Rogers family of Ashburnham, though Burnham's wife, Maria McGregor Rogers, the daughter of successful local businessman, Robert D. Rogers, and older sister to Richard Birdsall Rogers who designed the Peterborough Lift Lock. Maria Rogers married John Burnham in 1868 and they had five children together. The Rogers family was an important family in early Ashburnham through their contributions to the development of business and industry in the community and the development of the Trent-Severn Waterway. The connection of these two families through the marriage of

John Burnham and Maria Rogers is typical of the kinds of unions formed between prominent families during the mid-nineteenth century.



In the middle of the nineteenth century, the Burnhams were a dominant force in Ashburnham and the development of their properties in this area, in fashionable mid-nineteenth century Classical styles, speaks to their wealth and prominence within the community. The family, as whole, was important and influential in the early

development of Peterborough through their political, religious, commercial, and philanthropic activities. 239 Burnham Street, constructed on some of the lands acquired by John Burnham's grandfather, Zaccheus Burnham, forms an important part of the historic Burnham estate and provides insight into the activities of the Burnhams, and John Burnham himself, in the middle of the

nineteenth century. It also speaks to the architectural preoccupations of Peterborough's upper class during this period, with its style, size, and location reflecting the image this successful family wanted to project. The use of a Classical style in a large estate house during this period was very popular among Ontario's upper classes during this period as it was seen to reflect the refinement and taste, as well as financial success, of its owner and occupants.

Contextual Value

239 Burnham Street has important contextual value as part of the wider residential landscape of nineteenth century Ashburnham. It is surrounded by other stately homes of a similar age with historical and visual connections to the surrounding properties and landscape. It also forms a part of the historic Burnham estate which once encompassed a significant portion of the local area.



The historic residential area in the southern part of Ashburnham near Little Lake began to be developed in the mid-nineteenth century and contains a significant number of nineteenth century homes. This area forms an important cultural landscape related to the development of the Village of Ashburnham during the nineteenth century, prior to its annexation to Peterborough in 1904. 239 Burnham Street is one of the oldest and largest properties in this residential area and is an important contributing feature to its overall historic character. Its longstanding presence and location on a corner lot also make it a landmark in the local community.

The house has specific historical connections to a number of historic properties in the immediate vicinity which were constructed for relatives of Bellevue's first owners. This collection of properties together forms an important nineteenth-century landscape of stately homes and demonstrates the familial connections between Ashburnham's prominent citizens, and its resultant impact on the built environment, during this period. For example, 27 Charles Street, located across the street from 239 Burnham Street, was constructed in 1860 for Henry Thomas Strickland and his wife Margaret Rogers, the latter of whom was a cousin of both

John Burnham and Maria Rogers. Margaret Rogers' brother, Harry C. Rogers, also purchased a property near by, constructing a house at 266 Burnham Street, a designated property known as the Pines, in 1876.

However, the most important contextual link to surrounding properties is with Engleburn, the house constructed by John Burnham's father, the Rev. Mark Burnham in 1853, now located at 260 Engleburn Avenue. Engleburn was constructed on the lands granted to Mark Burnham's father, Zaccheus Burnham, the Burnham estate which extended from Little Lake and the Otonabee River to the east and covered around 25 acres. It was a prominent landholding in mid-nineteenth century Ashburnham and a key part of the development of the local area. Engleburn and Bellevue were two of the primary built attributes of the estate and linked through their familial ties and the outdoor landscape of the property. Anecdotally, a covered walkway was said to have connected this property with Engleburn, although this does not survive. 309 Engleburn Avenue, a house built on the estate for Mark Burnham's steward, Absalom Ingram, was located nearby. All three houses are still extant and in their original locations, although the estate has now been subdivided and early-twentieth century houses constructed around them. Nevertheless, the retained historical connections between the three surviving properties form an important local context related to the establishment and the development of the Burnham estate.



"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

239 Burnham Street has cultural heritage value or interest as an excellent example of a mid-nineteenth century Italianate villa in Peterborough. Constructed in 1866, the house demonstrates the characteristic asymmetrical massing of this housing type as well as many of its classically-inspired features including the hipped roof, rustication, and two-storey bays. Historically, the house has important connections to the Burnham family through its first owner, John Burnham, the son of the Reverend Mark Burnham. John Burnham was a local lawyer who was heavily involved in the development of both Peterborough and Ashburnham, particularly through his involvement in municipal and federal politics. Constructed on the former Burnham estate, the house has contextual value as part of the mid-nineteenth century landscape of Ashburnham and has specific historical connections to a number of the surrounding estate houses that were constructed for relatives of John Burnham and his wife, Maria Rogers.

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-storey buff brick residential building
- Hipped roof with overhanging eaves
- Paired single stack chimneys
- Buff brick rusticated quoins
- Raised brick frieze with dentils
- Boxed cornice eaves
- Two-storey bays on west and south elevations
- Two-storey entrance porch including:
 - Upper storey sleeping porch with flush board siding
 - Banks of three windows on the sleeping porch
 - Brackets along the roofline of the sleeping porch
 - Projecting classical entryway
 - Brackets along roofline of projecting entryway

- Wooden columns
 - Entrance with transom, sidelights and wooden moulding
- Verandah on the east, south and west elevations of the house including:
 - Wooden columns
 - Pediment on the east elevation
 - Rail and spindles
- Fenestration including:
 - Original window openings
 - Four over four sash windows
 - Window openings and their associated elements including sash, mould, jamb and trim
 - Original wooden windows
- Views of the property from Burnham and Charles Street
- Views of the surrounding neighbourhood from the property
- Historic relationship with Engleburn (260 Engleburn Avenue)