

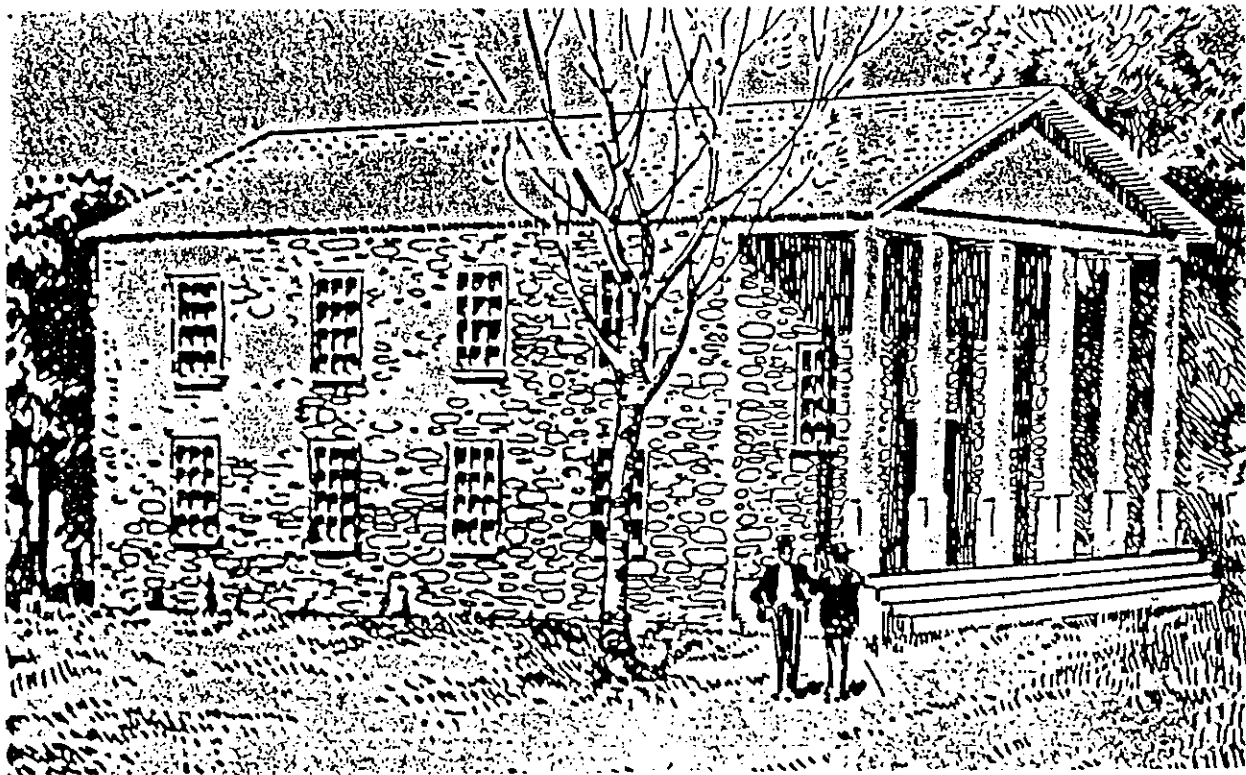
By-law #184-91
July 23/91

HERITAGE BROCKVILLE DESIGNATION REPORT

THE LOCAL ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WALL STREET WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH

NOW: WALL STREET UNITED CHURCH



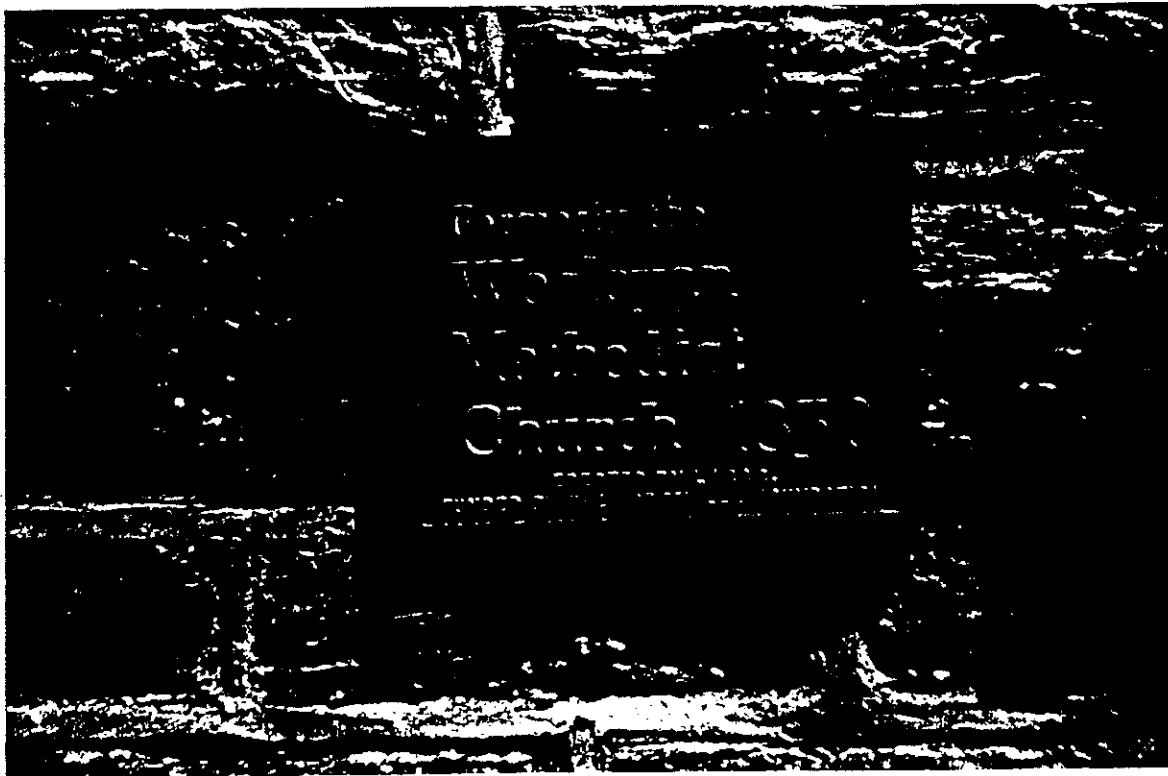
5 WALL STREET, BROCKVILLE, ONTARIO.

LOTS 61 AND 62 AND PART OF LOTS 60,66 AND 67 - BLOCK 31

MAY 7, 1991

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

The former Wall Street Wesleyan Methodist Church is being recommended for designation for its architectural, historical and contextual significance.



HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

On the condition that a church be erected on this land it was given by William Buell in 1831 and an additional parcel was purchased from his son Andrew Norton Buell in 1868.

On Sunday February 14, 1830, the Wall Street Methodist Church was dedicated and the collection taken on that day together with previous donations enabled the church to start its life debt free.

The home of Paul and Barbara Heck became the birthplace of Methodism in Canada during the late 1700's. They settled in this district in 1785 and were among the first white inhabitants in the area. The building of Wall Street Church must have been influenced by their inspiration and therefore its historic significance and impact on the community helps to solidify the evolution of Brockville itself.

In 1843 Mr. William Holmes and his wife became members of the Church. Mr. Holmes was an architect and contractor and one of his first projects after he moved to Brockville was to carve the figure of "Sally Grant" and place it on the top of The Court House.

At a meeting of the Trustees held on January 18, 1862 Mr. Holmes was requested to prepare plans and specifications for enlarging the first church building. At a meeting held on March 12 of the same year, the lowest tender for the work, also submitted by Mr. Holmes was accepted. This contract included the entrance lobby and tower at the south end of the church.

A contract was given to A.V. Heart on September 14th, 1872, to build an extension to the north end of the church towards the parsonage.

On September 10, 1880, the Board of Trustees approved plans of Mr. James P. Johnston's, the Ogdensburgh architect, for the erection of a new spire to the top of the tower.

The services of J.W. Powers, an architect from Kingston, were acquired to prepare plans and specifications for an enlargement of the church, according to a report of the Board of Trustees dated October 24, 1895. The lowest tender was from William G. Tomkins and the contract was awarded to him as reported at a similar meeting held on March 10, 1896.

In that same year, Senator George T. Fulford asked permission to erect a memorial window in memory of his mother, and it was eventually decided that a pulpit and altar railing would be more suitable as no window openings were placed satisfactorily for such a memorial. The present day altar, altar railing, and furnishings are the result of these discussions. The church service of December 13, 1896 was the initial viewing of this memorial and it is recorded that at least 1500 were in attendance.

There are many other interesting and historical facts about this Church but their inclusion in this report would be somewhat impractical.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

EXTERIOR FEATURES

The large and dominant structure standing at the north east corner of Court House Square is the result of a blending of six major construction stages which have occurred since the original church was erected in 1828-1830. Local quarry stone was used to construct the original church, as well as the subsequent additions, with the exception of the 1960 building of the northern addition known as "Fellowship Hall".

The westerly facade includes the most visible portion of original 1830 church. A copy of a sketch of the original church is attached as addendum "A" of this report. Note the rectangular windows in the sketch. Most of the lower window openings in the masonry on the west facade are still remaining. The windows within the present openings are not the same as in the sketch and they likely were installed in 1862.

The second period of re-construction was completed in 1862. This effort saw the roof raised and the building of double lancet windows set into similar shaped gothic arches in the stonework. Each of these openings are crowned with a hood-mould or dripstone finished with a ball like end piece. The original pillars and pediment were replaced with a new elevated entrance and bell tower. This addition is shown on a copy attached as addendum "B".

The third and fourth phases of re-construction are shown on addendum "C" and were completed in 1881. The later addition was a new spire on top of the bell tower and an elongation of the building to the north allowing for two more lancet openings for windows and also an arched door at the north end. It appears from the photo that the new spire was covered with a slate roof which remains. The photo shows an ogee arch dripstone over the south west entrance which is a very different style than the other arches on the building.

The fifth re-construction, carried out in 1896, was quite large as it was the addition of the present day sanctuary to the east and a major alteration to the west facade at the north end. The facade change eliminated three of the previously mentioned lancet openings and saw the addition of a large window using panel tracery design. Evidence of the lancet openings are easy to see on the present western facade. A photo of the church taken from the south west as existing this year is attached as the second page.

The sixth addition came in 1960 and was constructed on the north end of the property. The design includes a flat roof with walls of a more modern granite chip and concrete block design. It is a different style than that of the rest of the church.

A minor addition consisting of a wheel chair access ramp was added in 1990. This was located in front of the 1960 addition.

The easterly view of the structure is not as appealing to the eye as the south and west facades but a clay brick boiler room of unknown vintage is nested against the north wall of the 1896 sanctuary.

INTERIOR FEATURES

The interior of the church has many fine features and those included in this report have been described with the aid of photos in an attempt to enhance and clarify the unique qualities therein.

Within the main sanctuary under the organ pipes there are several wooden panels separated by wooden buttresses or columns supporting the main organ pipes. The choir-loft is separated from the pulpit area by a low wooden wall with intricate brass scroll work along the top. The pulpit and altar rail are constructed of oak and the underside front piece of the pulpit is most impressive with its detailed woodwork.

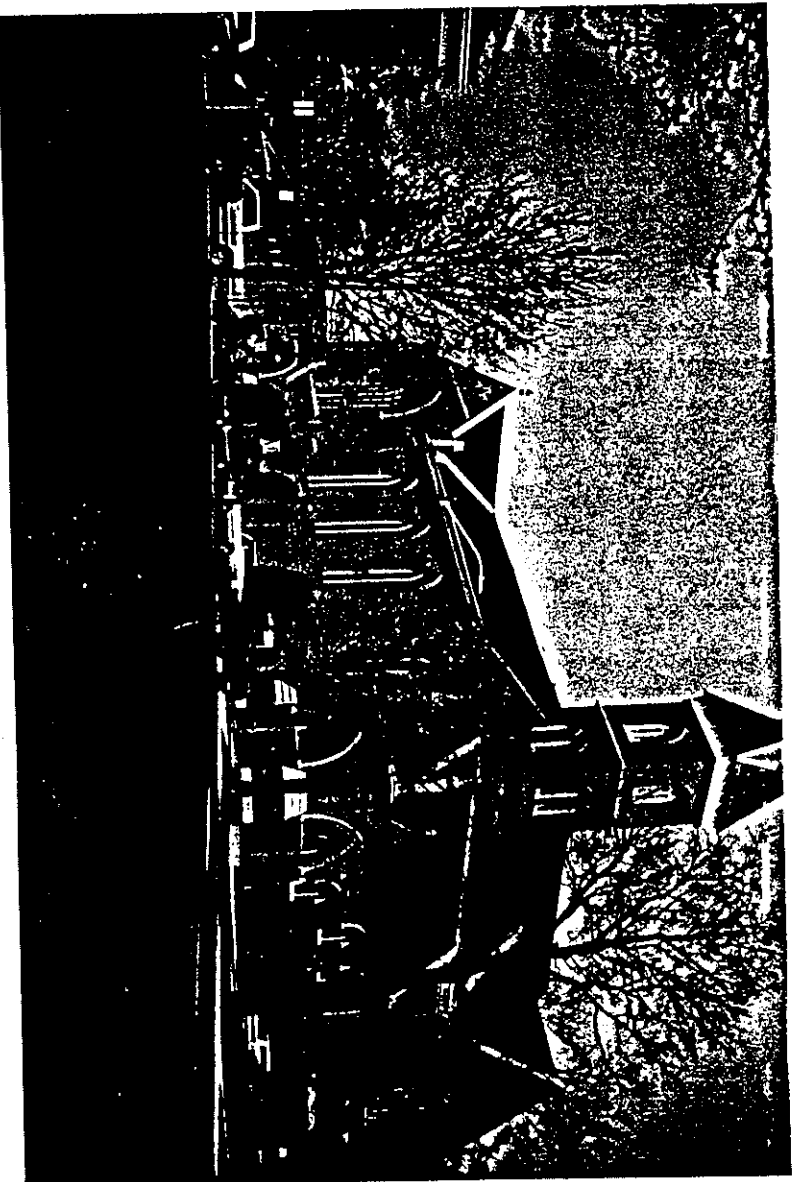
The main sanctuary has a vaulted ceiling supported by columns. The intersecting edges of the vaulting is covered with ribs, and where these ribs intersect, bosses cover the joint. The capitals of the columns are adorned with scrollwork and/or bosses depending on the column size.

The balcony in the 1862 re-construction, located in what is presently referred to as "Heritage Hall", is a fine display of a simplistic design common to the meeting houses of the early nineteenth century. The lower floors of "Heritage Hall" have been renovated to allow for present day uses.

RECOMMENDATION

Heritage Brockville (The Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee) recommends that the Wall Street Wesleyan Methodist Church presently known as Wall Street United Church be designated under the Ontario Heritage Act.

The original structure and its subsequent additions have occupied a prominent corner of Court House Square in keeping with Brockville's founder William Buel's concept of a town square with the Court House dispensing justice, the surrounding churches expressing faith and piety, the Square itself, a meeting place for all citizens.



May 1991.

REFERENCES

Church records as supplied by Edgar Clow, Archivist.

Extracts from "The Life and Times of Anson Green, D.D."
Toronto, 1877

Extracts from a booklet " A Memento of the 125th Anniversary
of the Founding of Wall Street United Church "
November 20th - 27th 1955.

Extracts from a booklet " Tour Guide Church Historic Sites "
from United Church Archives, Victoria
University, Queen's Park, Toronto.

Various conversations with Edgar Clow, Archivist.