

# THE LACAC OF BROCKVILLE

May 8, 1987

## DESIGNATION REPORT

Designation Recommendation  
and Description for

### Jones - Harding Block

41, 45 King St West  
47 Broad Street

Block 29, Lot 8

#### a. Reasons for Designation

The Jones-Harding Block is being recommended for designation for both historical and architectural reasons.

The structure is a striking example of commercial Georgian architecture situated on the prominent intersection of King and Broad Street since 1832. During its life the ground floor, of the building, has been occupied by a succession of businesses, one of which may include Brockville's first Post Office.

The first owner, Henry Jones, was the Post Master in Brockville from 1826 and was elected to represent Brockville in the Upper Canada Assembly in 1830.

## b. Architectural Description

This solid stone building is located at the south east corner of King and Broad Streets. Its dimensions are approximately 50' along King Street and 95' on Broad Street.

The front wall is made of limestone ashlar with raised dressed limestone quoins on each corner. These originally started at the street level, rising to the metal cornice. Presently they are partly covered by the storefront facades. The other walls are constructed of quarry-faced sandstone with limestone sills.

The seven bay front facade is most impressive. At street level there are two modern shop fronts separated by a central entrance to the offices on the upper floors. The central doorway has a panelled reveal which may date back to 1832. Above the door there is a three light transom window and a portion of a wooden signband, capped with a dentil moulded cornice. The upper storey windows are grouped to accommodate the stairway. These windows have smooth dressed lintels and tooled stone sills. Completing the front elevation is an elaborate metal cornice. Worked into the centre pediment of this cornice is the inscription 1904 Harding Block.

The cornice is composed of a foot moulding followed by a festooned frieze, then a row of dentil blocks, a lookout supported by a row of brackets and finally a colonnade supporting an entablature. A central pediment separates the colonnade. A pilaster at each end completes the cornice.

The fenestration on the west elevation was originally regular. A variety of openings have been added over

the years. The three third floor windows set the original pattern, the second storey has two additional windows and the ground floor has a single window plus two newer display windows. Broad Street, sloping down to the river, allowed the addition of two basement doors and a window. The newer openings have concrete sills and lintels.

Above the third floor, on the west and east elevations, is a parapet wall containing a double chimney separated by a half round opening. A stone arch over the opening has a raised keystone in its centre.

The addition to the south is generally quite sympathetic to the rest of the building. The west wall is three stories high containing four bays. It rises to a stepped parapet wall capped with a metal coping and supporting one chimney. The third storey has regular fenestration unlike the second storey which has an oriel window and a doorway to break up the rhythm. Above the door and one window are small rectangular openings, presently covered by plywood.

At the streetlevel there is at present a display window and a 1987 storefront. This storefront has a cornice and signboard supported by four pilasters.

The six bay south elevation has regular fenestration. The double-hung windows have individual voussoirs and concrete sills. Three of these may have been moved from the front as they have 9 over 9 sash as seen in an 1851 drawing(9). Presently five windows are filled with plywood as are the five basement ones. A metal fire escape leads to the roof. There are three rear entrances, the two lower ones have solid wooden doors and small wooden porches. The roof is flat, sloping away from the main building and contains a skylight.

Because of the building's impressive proportions and important location, the Jones-Harding Block adds greatly to the streetscape along King and Broad Streets.

### c. Historical Background

In 1831 James Smith sold this lot (1) to Henry Jones for £525. The Brockville Recorder (2) reported on July 7th that "this day at 12 o'clock, a lot 50' front by 100' in depth, cornering on Main and Court House Street, on which there is an old building of little value, was sold at auction for £525." Jones built this structure and used a part of the building as a Post Office. The other side was occupied by M Maynard & Company. An 1832 advertisement in the Brockville Recorder stated: "Messrs Moses Maynard & Co have removed to the new stone building, front of the Court House where they will be happy to see their old customers, as usual."

The building has housed a variety of tenants who have played an active part in Brockville's mercantile past. These include George Barnart, hatter (1840); Henry & Sidney Jones, forwarders (1848); Brockville Recorder, newspaper (1851); Henry Jones, postmaster (1851); Ford L Lothrop, auctioneer (1851); H S Humphrey & Co , chemists and druggists (1857).

In 1868 (3) Thomas J. B. Harding bought the property for \$7,000. He advertised himself as a chemist, druggist and exchange broker (4). He operated his business there until 1899 (5) but sold the property to his son, William E. Harding in 1895 (6). In 1905

Dr. W.E. Harding modernized the building (7) by altering the roof, installing a large Victorian-style metal cornice, creating new window openings in the west elevation and constructing a large sandstone addition to the back of the building.

In 1947 the property passed to his son, Thomas E. Harding (8) and his estate sold it to G. Alex Swan and Harold B. Swan in 1952. The property is now owned by Brockville Investments Ltd.

Unlike many commercial main street buildings, the two upper floors were built to provide office space. The Brockville Recorder, in January 1833 edition advertises; "To Let - two offices in the second story of the new stone building of the subscribers on Main St - Moses Maynard & Co." Presently the two upper floors contain the offices of The Investors Group; Ward Mallette, Arnett, Kennedy, Riddell & Jason Surveying Ltd.; Tidewater Inc. and Brockville Investment Ltd.

## d. Recommendation

The Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee recommends that the building at 41, 45 King St West and 47 Broad St., also known as the Harding Block, be designated under the provisions of the Ontario Heritage Act, 1980.

It is recommended that the present attractive original features of the facade be preserved. Our committee wishes to examine and comment on any proposals affecting the exterior of the building, such as signage, paint colours, masonry repairs and cleaning, window and door design etc.

## References:

- 1) Copy of DEED registered in Leeds County Registry office dated July 7, 1809
- 2) Brockville Recorder, July 7, 1831 edition
- 3) Copy of DEED registered in Leeds County Registry office dated April 22, 1868
- 4) Fuller's Directory, 1867 edition
- 5) Brockville Assessment Roll, 1899 (lot 8, King & Broad st)
- 6) Copy of DEED registered in Leeds County Registry office dated July 4, 1895
- 7) Brockville Times, August 16, 1905 edition, notice of Tender for remodelling of Harding Block, Architect: Benjamin Dillon
- 8) Copy of DEED registered in Leeds County Registry office dated October 27, 1947
- 9) Ten Cate, A G ; Brockville A Pictorial History, Kingston, Hanson & Edgar Ltd , 1972 ( page 37)