

Church Street, Church-Wellesley Village Neighbourhood: Heritage Property Nominations

Adam Wynne

adam.g.wynne@gmail.com

19 September 2020

Presentation Prepared for the Board of Directors of the Church-Wellesley
Neighbourhood Association

City of Toronto Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

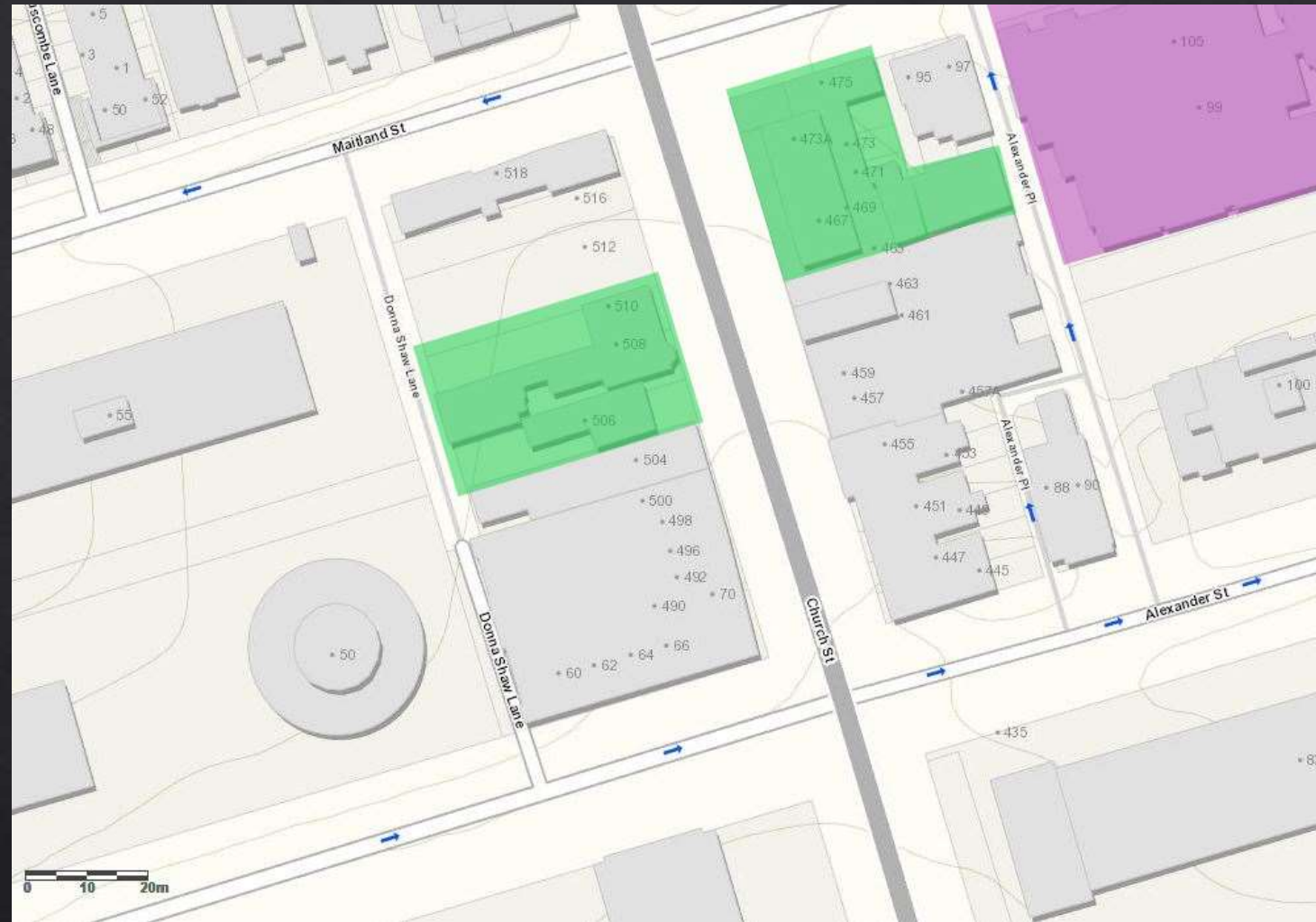
- ◆ *We acknowledge the land we are meeting on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit.*

Background

- ◆ Thank you to Paul Farrelly for inviting me to give a brief presentation about my heritage research on potential Church Street heritage properties in the Church-Wellesley Village neighbourhood
- ◆ I am a recent undergraduate graduate of the University of Toronto. My academic background is not in architecture or urban planning, though I have a keen interest in local history, Toronto's architecture, and urban environments / urban planning – I am hoping to pursue this further hopefully through involvement with *Toronto and East York Community Preservation Panel* and *Toronto Preservation Board* (if openings become available)
- ◆ I have submitted Heritage Property Nominations for 9 properties (in 3 nomination packages) on Church Street in the context of the Church-Wellesley Village neighbourhood since May 2019: 467-475 Church Street; 506 Church Street; and 508-510 Church Street
 - ◆ I am hoping to submit some more Heritage Property Nominations – I have been working on this in my free time
 - ◆ I have sent in several other nominations for various properties around downtown, including one for 34 Maitland Street (another property in the Church-Wellesley Village neighbourhood)
- ◆ A note: I have a few data gaps from 1970 to 2007 at present as physical archival collections (including ArQuives and the City of Toronto Archives) are closed due to COVID-19 – some materials (Directories, etc.) have not been fully digitized (including post-1969 City of Toronto Directories)

Church Street Heritage Properties

- ◆ Church Street Heritage Property Nominations which I have submitted since May 2020:
 - ◆ 506 Church Street (c. 1872)
 - ◆ Submitted Heritage Property Nomination on 16 August 2020
 - ◆ 508-510 Church Street (c. 1857/1858)
 - ◆ Submitted Heritage Property Nomination on 15 May 2020
 - ◆ 467 – 475 Church Street (c. 1864, 1894)
 - ◆ Submitted Heritage Property Nomination on: 15 September 2020



Church Street between Maitland Street and Alexander Street.
The properties which I have nominated for Heritage Evaluations are highlighted green.
Pre-existing heritage listed/designated properties are highlighted purple.
North is to the top of the map.

Church-Wellesley Village: Early History and Background

- ◇ Church-Wellesley Village neighbourhood is on traditional Indigenous lands (see *Indigenous Land Acknowledgement* on Slide 2)

- ◇ Moss Park Creek previously existed where present-day Church Street is in the Church-Wellesley Village
 - ◇ The creek flowed under what is now present-day Church Street south from Isabella Street to Wood Street before meandering southwest then southeast before it re-intersected present-day Church Street around Dundas Street East and Gould Street (essentially around or under present-day Ryerson University); then meandered further southeast; before merging with Taddle Creek just south of Moss Park (Moss Park Creek was a tributary of Taddle Creek)
 - ◇ A branch of Moss Park Creek flowed under Gloucester Street
 - ◇ Maple Leaf Stream intersected at Carlton Street
 - ◇ The creeks were entirely buried and/or redirected by 1868 (potentially even before 1858)
 - ◇ It would be interesting to bring the history of these creeks forward into the modern neighbourhood narrative similar to the Garrison Creek and Taddle Creek natural heritage initiatives and projects further West in Downtown Toronto
 - ◇ The Garden District is potentially exploring their 'lost creeks' as part of their Heritage Conservation District interpretation

- ◇ Church-Wellesley Village situated on Park Lots 6, 7, and 8 – various Estate owners, divisions, and partitions over time
 - ◇ Church Street is roughly in the middle of Park Lot 7 which was granted to John McGill on 4 September 1793
 - ◇ Potential origin of McGill Street street name – may also be from Andrew and Ann McGill

Church-Wellesley Village: Early History and Background

- ◇ Earliest map of Church Street is from either 1793 or 1797 (the 18th century maps depict the section of Church Street closest to Lake Ontario); extended further north over time
 - ◇ Church Street's northern terminus was essentially Carlton Street from the early 1840s until approximately 1855
- ◇ Church Street is likely named after early landmarks in the Town of York (specifically the Town's Church(es))
 - ◇ *Toronto Street Names* (1st edition) by Leonard Wise and Allan Gould (2000) reference the street being named for the Town of York's first Church (built 1807), though the name Church Street appears on maps a decade before then (c. 1797) – however, the Church was allotted 4 acres near the Market during the late 18th century – the street name may have originated before the first Church was actually built
- ◇ The 1810 Alexander Wood (Sexual) Scandal - well-known historical event associated with Town of York – also a statue of Wood at northwest corner of Church Street and Alexander Street – Wood is sometimes referred to as a pioneer of Toronto's Gay Village – Wood purchased the land consisting of present-day Church-Wellesley Village (core area) in 1826 – was then a meadowed and forested area – area became known as Molly Wood's Bush – Molly was a derogatory term for gay man – unclear if the Molly Wood's Bush name continued in general usage for area after the 1840s (once Church Street was created north of Carlton Street).

Early Residential Development

- ◇ Early Residential Development occurred in the present-day Church-Wellesley Village neighbourhood in the 1840s and 1850s
 - ◇ Oldest extant properties in Church-Wellesley Village neighbourhood are 70 Gerrard Street East (c.1847, altered 1885); 97-97A Granby Street (c. 1848); and 37 Maitland Street (1853)
 - ◇ 70 Gerrard Street East is at the northeast corner of Church Street and Gerrard Street East
 - ◇ Several other extant properties in area from 1850s

- ◇ According to historical maps, Church Street north of Carlton Street was not built until the 1850s with the northern terminus of Church Street being Carlton Street until approximately 1855
 - ◇ Earliest resident data for Church Street north of Carlton Street in City of Toronto Directories is from from 1856
 - ◇ 1856: Only 3 residents on Church Street itself north of Carlton Street
 - ◇ Samuel Carr (Glue Manufacturer); James Denhern (Labourer); and Hugh Corr (General Dealer)
 - ◇ 20 properties built on Church Street by 1858 - including several corner properties – many of the early Church Street properties in this area were unfortunately demolished, though a few remain

Church Street Heritage Properties: Current Situation

- ◇ ~ 41 Heritage Properties on Church Street between Bloor Street East and Gerrard Street East as of 19 September 2020
 - ◇ 22 municipally listed as heritage properties
 - ◇ 19 provincially designated as heritage properties
 - ◇ Additional Heritage Properties in broader Church-Wellesley Village neighbourhood
- ◇ Note: Some properties have multiple heritage listings/designations associated with them due to having several registered addresses
 - ◇ Example: The property at the northeast corner of Church Street and Wellesley Street East has 10 designation markers appearing as associated with it in the City of Toronto Heritage Register Map due to the range of addresses of the property – 6 of these are on Wellesley Street East and 4 on Church Street.
 - ◇ Also several noticeable clusters of heritage properties around intersection corners

Church Street Heritage Properties: Current Trends

- ◇ Many (though not all) of the heritage listings/designations on Church Street in the Church-Wellesley Village neighbourhood date to the 1970s; some of these 1970s heritage listings were later designated in early 2010s
- ◇ No pre-existing heritage designated or listed properties on Church Street between Wellesley Street East and Wood Street
 - ◇ This is important as heritage resources are present between Wellesley Street East and Wood Street and there are increasing re-development pressures present in the area
 - ◇ Comparatively Church Street between Gloucester Street and Wellesley Street East has 14 pre-existing heritage designated or listed properties; and Church Street between Charles Street East and Gloucester Street has 11 pre-existing heritage designated or listed properties
- ◇ Additional heritage resources present both on Church Street and in broader Church-Wellesley Village neighbourhood which would benefit from further research



506 Church Street, Toronto

506 Church Street, Toronto

- ◇ Largely associated with its contemporary usage as *Boutique Bar* and *House of Glo* beauty parlour and spa
- ◇ Dates to 1871/1872 – noticeably set back from Church Street and is a detached house - has had modifications to its external and internal structure, including removal of ground floor bay window; re-cladding of house with ashlar brick and aluminum or vinyl siding; and creation of ground floor patio linked to the internal bar space – original brick fireplace appears to be extant next to ground floor bar.
 - ◇ Connie Langille (CWNA) identified during the 19 September 2020 presentation that 1872 was the same year Church Street Public School first opened, in the vicinity of 506 Church Street
- ◇ Requires further research to determine architectural style – has a plainer appearance than some of the other 19th century properties in area
- ◇ Developers are proposing the demolition of this property in the early-to-mid 2020 proposals for the 15 storey, 173 unit condominium project by Graywood Developments at 506-516 Church Street, Toronto
- ◇ Was originally home to the How family
 - ◇ Thomas Ferguson How (1811-1876) and Katherine How (c. 1819 -1910) are first residents as of ~1872
 - ◇ Thomas Ferguson How was an accountant and bookkeeper, originally from Ireland
 - ◇ Thomas and Catherine How had 3 or 4 children
 - ◇ One of the children was Frances Esther How (aka Hester How and HESSIE How) resided here between 1875/1876 and 1910 – one of the most important and influential women in the history of Toronto and Ontario - 506 Church St. should be preserved as an important historical site due to this connection
 - ◇ Another of the How children – James Black How – became a prominent dentist in Toronto and Waterloo

Frances Esther How

- ◆ Born circa. 29 January 1848 in Ireland; emigrated to Canada as young child (alongside family)
- ◆ Died on 22 September 1915 of tuberculosis
- ◆ Described as the *Jane Addams of Toronto* - was an educationist, settlement worker, social reformer, social worker, school principal, and teacher who worked with some of Toronto's poorest children and families in the neighbourhood known as the Ward (St. John's Ward)
- ◆ Also known as Aunt Hessie, Hessie How, and Hester How – Frances Esther How never married
- ◆ Resided at 506 Church Street with her widowed mother between approximately 1875/1876 and 1910 – family owned property for several years after moving out in 1910 (after the death of Catherine How) – the How family were first occupants of 506 Church Street (c. 1871/1872)
- ◆ The How family is entirely omitted from ERA Architect's *Heritage Impact Assessment* for 506-516 Church Street issued 16 July 2020
 - ◆ ERA Architects identified property dated to early-to-mid 1870s, but only provided occupant data from 1929 onward¹³
 - ◆ Heritage Preservation Services has asked ERA to rewrite HIA to include How after receiving my Heritage Property Nomination

- ◇ Described as the *Jane Addams of Toronto* – Frances Esther How was instrumental (directly involved) in the establishment and/or management of the following initiatives and programs during her tenure at the Elizabeth Street Public School and while residing at 506 Church Street. Many of these were the first in Toronto and/or Ontario and were created by How or as a response to How’s initiatives between the 1870s and 1913.
 - ◇ Juvenile Court System
 - ◇ Special classes for students who were delinquent, homeless, truant, and/or expelled from other institutions (physical discipline from the principal and teachers was specifically prohibited in these classes, it was not used unless a severe issue arose, and it was only conducted via an external board administrator, not the principal or teachers of the school – this was significant in the 19th century).
 - ◇ Fresh Air Funds / Summer Camps / Summer Trips / School Picnics (alongside John Joseph Kelso (1864-1935))
 - ◇ The first (Supervised) Playground in Toronto (circa 1905 – created at Elizabeth Street Public School by a coalition of activists).
 - ◇ School Lunch Programs
 - ◇ After School Programming (Arts and Crafts Programs, etc.)
 - ◇ Daycares, Day Nurseries, & Crèches – parallels to development of public Kindergarten programs in 1880s.
 - ◇ Community and School-based Clothing Drives (some charities had previously explored this, though not in a school setting)
 - ◇ Business and Business Ethics Classes; Home Economic Classes; and Domestic Science Classes (notably before Adelaide Hunter Hoodless’ 1897 textbook)
 - ◇ North America’s first school-based *Little Mother’s League* to teach young girls and women who had childcare responsibilities how to care for young children.
 - ◇ Bootblack (Shoeshiner) and Newsboy Classes – special half day classes for students with employment.
 - ◇ English as a Second Language and Newcomer classes
 - ◇ Night School Classes for adult members of the Ward in a neighbourhood of largely immigrant families
 - ◇ Parent-Teacher and School Advocacy associations in a neighbourhood of largely immigrant families
 - ◇ School Dental Clinics and Health Clinics
 - ◇ Special Education Classes for students with learning disabilities and physical disabilities (including hearing and vision related disabilities)
 - ◇ Toronto’s First *Anti Tobacco League* – discouraged students and youth from using tobacco products. Over 90- students signed pledge at 1st meeting.
 - ◇ Set-up a Temperance Library
 - ◇ Other initiatives, including the *Lady Teacher’s Association of Toronto*; utilizing the school as a community center in off hours; school bath facilities (many homes in the school’s catchment area did not have indoor or private baths – this was important for children’s hygiene); etc.



MISS FRANCES ESTHER HOW,
popularly known as "Aunt Hessie"
How, called the Jane Addams of To-
ronto, who died early to-day after a
lingering illness.



~ Frances Esther How ~

Sources:

Left: *City Mourns Death of "Aunt Hessie" How* – The Toronto Daily Star, 22 September 1915, Page 11

Right: Toronto District School Board's *Radical Reform: Education and Society 1845-1945* Online Exhibit and Project

- ◆ Frances Esther How became a Governess at a Jarvis Street based Girls' School in the early 1870s; was hired by Toronto Public School Board as a replacement (substitute) teacher in 1874
- ◆ In 1879-1881, How was asked by James Laughlin Hughes and William Holmes Howland to teach a class of delinquent, homeless, and truant students in the Ward (St. John's Ward) neighbourhood. These students could not be directly integrated into the general school system – first class had 70 students – known as “Mission Union School.”
- ◆ First classes were held in a room at Grace Anglican Church – school moved several times around the Ward during 1880s as enrollment grew - Mission Union School merged with Elizabeth Street Public School around 1889/1890
- ◆ Appointed Principal of Elizabeth Street Public School in 1889/1890 – held position until retirement in 1913.



Above: John Wycliffe Lowes Forster's 1913 portrait of¹⁶ Frances Esther How, unveiled during her 1913 retirement ceremony.

Legacy of Frances Esther How

- ◆ Described as *Jane Addams of Toronto* during her retirement ceremony and in her obituary – significant legacy of social welfare and social work programs (see Slide 14) – Elizabeth Street Public School became well known across Canada
- ◆ Her work with the *Lady Teacher's Association of Toronto* (established 1888) included diverse foci such as the right to sick pay, municipal suffrage, and representation on councils
- ◆ Elizabeth Street Public School renamed Hester How Public School when new building opened in 1912 – school was demolished during Hospital for Sick Children expansion in mid-1950s
- ◆ The daycare facility at Toronto City Hall is named the Hester How Daycare / Hester How Early Learning Centre – has been active since the early 1980s
- ◆ Some controversy around missionary activity at Elizabeth Street Public School in early 20th century – Jewish students were being targeted by Christian missionaries in schoolyard, etc. (during How's tenure as Principal) – a large Presbyterian Mission (which later evolved into the Scott Mission) was across the street from school – missionaries ended up banned from school property after a riot on Dundas Street West (then Agnes Street) in 1911
- ◆ Potential for further commemoration of How, including preservation and restoration of 506 Church Street (comparisons to Jane Addams site(s) in Chicago); potential to add a heritage marker / heritage plaque in front of 506 Church Street; potential to create a Frances Esther How postage stamp; potential to create Frances Esther How⁷ Historica Canada *Heritage Minute*; potential naming of a laneway or street; a statue; fundraising for a grave marker/stone; etc.



Above: Frances Esther How teaching in a classroom at Elizabeth Street Public School, circa. 1890s. ¹⁸
Source: Toronto District School Board's *Radical Reform: Education and Society 1845-1945* Online Exhibit and Project



Above: Frances Esther How (in the black dress with spectacles clipped on front) with a group of teachers, circa. early 20th century

Source: Toronto District School Board's *Radical Reform: Education and Society 1845-1945* Online Exhibit and Project



Above: Frances Esther How with students on a summer excursion, circa. early 1910s.
Source: Toronto District School Board's *Radical Reform: Education and Society 1845-1945* Online Exhibit and Project



City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1257, f1257_s1057_it0220

Above: Hester How Public School (built 1912), formerly known as the Elizabeth Street Public School. The school – located near Elizabeth Street and Walton Street - was demolished in the mid- 21
1950s during an expansion of the Hospital for Sick Children.

Source: City of Toronto Archives.

506 Church Street: After the Hows

- ◇ After 1910, home to several tenants who rented from the Hows as family continued to own property – further research required to determine when they sold it
- ◇ In the late 1920s, the *General Plating Company* – an electroplating and metal plating company – opened at 506 Church Street; ran their operations here until 1950; appears to have maintained a residential component at this point in time with 1-2 staff members of company living on site in various years
- ◇ In 1950s, 506 Church Street was home to the *Morton Fields / Mills Ice Cream Freezers and Cabinets* company run by Morton Fields and *The Norit Sales Company of Canada* which sold chemicals and was run by Bernard Vriezen – neither Fields nor Vriezen lived on site; *Morton Fields* was here until the mid-to-late 1960s
- ◇ The *Boutique Bar* opened at 506 Church Street in 2010; was also recently (2000s) *Veda* restaurant
- ◇ It would be great to find old photographs of 506 Church Street before it was used as a bar or restaurant – I have not come across any of these yet – property is set-back from street and does not appear clearly in historic streetscape photography



506 Church Street, Toronto



506 Church Street, Toronto: July 2020



506 Church Street, Toronto: July 2020

Note: The large tree provides lovely greenery and shade, though obscures a direct view of the property from across the street.



The Rear (West Elevation) of 506 Church Street, Toronto: 3 May 2020.



508-510 Church Street, Toronto

508-510 Church Street, Toronto

- ◇ Largely associated with its contemporary usage as *Crews & Tangos* bar and entertainment venue
 - ◇ *Crews* has been here since mid-1990s; *Tangos* opened in 2004; bars operated by same management team
- ◇ Property appears in W. S. Boulton's 1858 Map of Toronto and Vicinity - constructed c.1857/1858 – first resident data available in 1859 Directory – 508-510 and 518 Church Street may be oldest extant properties on Church Street north of Carlton Street
- ◇ Originally a wooden frame structure, was re-clad with brick on Church Street elevation between 1904 and 1913
- ◇ In the Romanesque Revival style of architecture - details visible underneath the mural and layers of paint
- ◇ Originally part of a row of houses between 508 and 518 Church Street
 - ◇ 512-516 Church Street was demolished around the 1960s to create a parking lot
 - ◇ 518 Church Street – presently *O'Grady's* and *The Lodge* – requires further research for Heritage Potential
 - ◇ These properties have been renumbered on several occasions – current addresses used since 1890
- ◇ Has had internal modifications (508 & 510 Church Street have been combined into 1 internal space); external modifications include removal of covered porches; painting of Church Street frontage of property with large mural by Elicser Elliott in 2014 (property had been painted before 2014 as well)

508-510 Church Street, Toronto

- ◆ March 2020: Re-Development Plans submitted for site by Graywood Developments for a 15-storey, 173 unit condominium building at 506-516 Church
- ◆ Community response – over 31 000 signatures to save *Crews and Tangos*
 - ◆ Petition does not acknowledge or address the age of the building though important as acknowledges the history and community importance of the *Crews and Tangos* bar; entertainment venue; and performance space
- ◆ Follow-up information from developers indicate that 508-510 Church Street will be preserved and restored – potential future for *Crews and Tangos* on site – further information required regarding anticipated evolution of venue at this site
- ◆ Important to acknowledge these properties have over 100 years of community and neighbourhood history associated with them before their contemporary use as a gay bar and entertainment venue

508-510 Church Street, Toronto: Early Residents

◆ The Holmested Family

- ◆ Consisted of Arthur Holmested (c. 1809 – 1883); Elizabeth Holmested (c. 1814 – unknown); and George Smith Holmested (1841-1928)

- ◆ Arthur and Elizabeth Holmested had 8 children; emigrated from England to Canada in 1857; several of their children also emigrated to Canada and Australia

- ◆ Holmesteds resided at 508 Church Street in 1859-1860, then moved next door to 510 Church Street; resided at 510 Church Street between 1861 and 1892

- ◆ Arthur Holmsted (father) and George Smith Holmested (son) were prominent barristers and involved in the administration of Osgoode Hall (Court of Chancery, etc.)

- ◆ Arthur Holmested began employment at Osgoode Hall in 1857

- ◆ The 2 Holmesteds had a combined service of no less than 70 years in the administration and history of Osgoode Hall

- ◆ George Smith Holmsted later moved to Maitland Street and then to St. Albans Street (now Wellesley Street West) - lived in the area until his death

508-510 Church Street, Toronto: Early Residents

◆ William Sladden

- ◆ William Sladden resided at 510 Church Street between 1859-1860 (first resident of property – unclear why he moved after only 1 year)
- ◆ Sladden was the Secretary and Treasurer of the *Ontario, Simcoe, and Huron Railroad Union Company* in the early-to-mid 1850s ; also had connection to Montréal
- ◆ Sladden also worked as an attorney and parliamentary agent who specialized in real estate – published a guide to real estate laws in Upper Canada in 1857

◆ Benjamin Morton (1832-1902) and Mary Swanwick Morton (1830-1906)

- ◆ Husband and wife Benjamin Morton and Mary Swanwick Morton resided at 508 Church Street between 1862 and 1865
- ◆ Benjamin Morton was an accountant and shareholder at Bank of Upper Canada
- ◆ The Mortons were one of the largest property owners in the East End of Toronto (Danforth Avenue and Main Street; The Beaches; etc.) during the mid-to-late 19th century – several buildings and streets named after them in the East End (Morton Road, Swanwick Avenue, etc.) – they spurred early development in this area of city

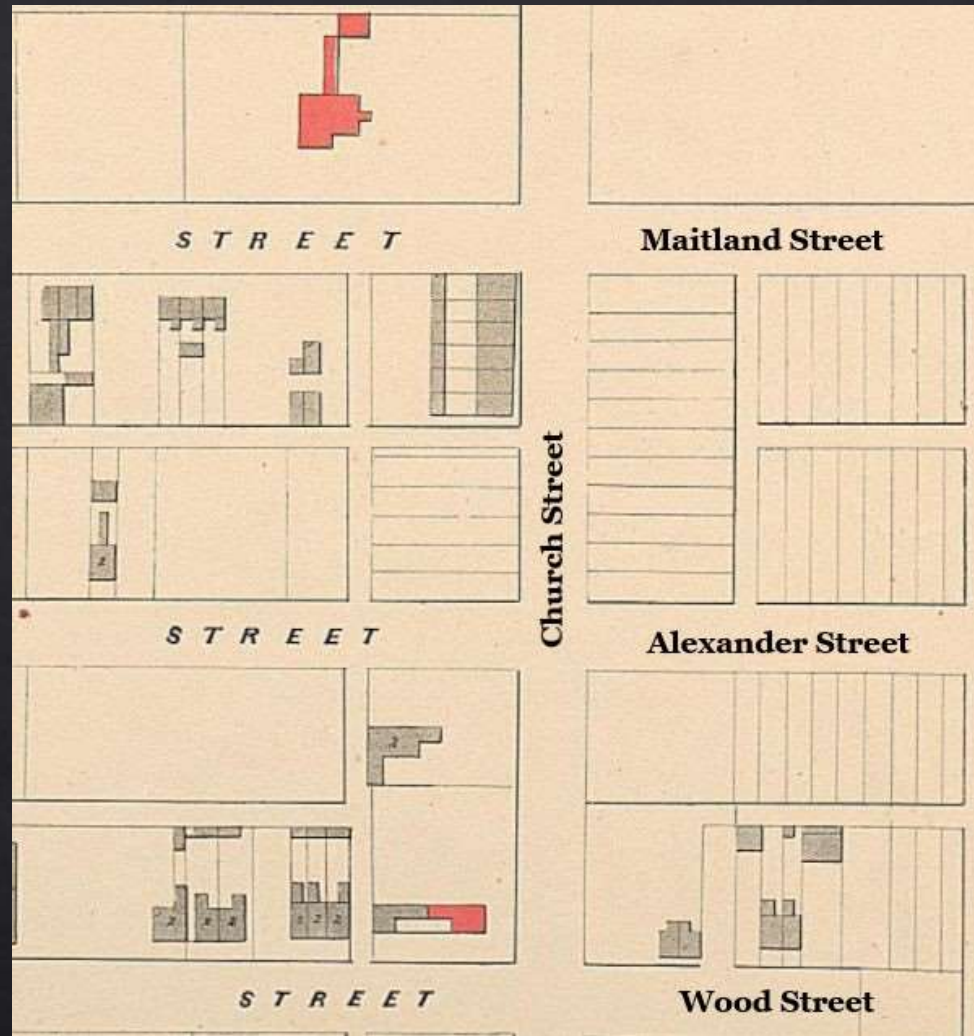
508-510 Church Street, Toronto: Early Residents

◆ The Butler Family

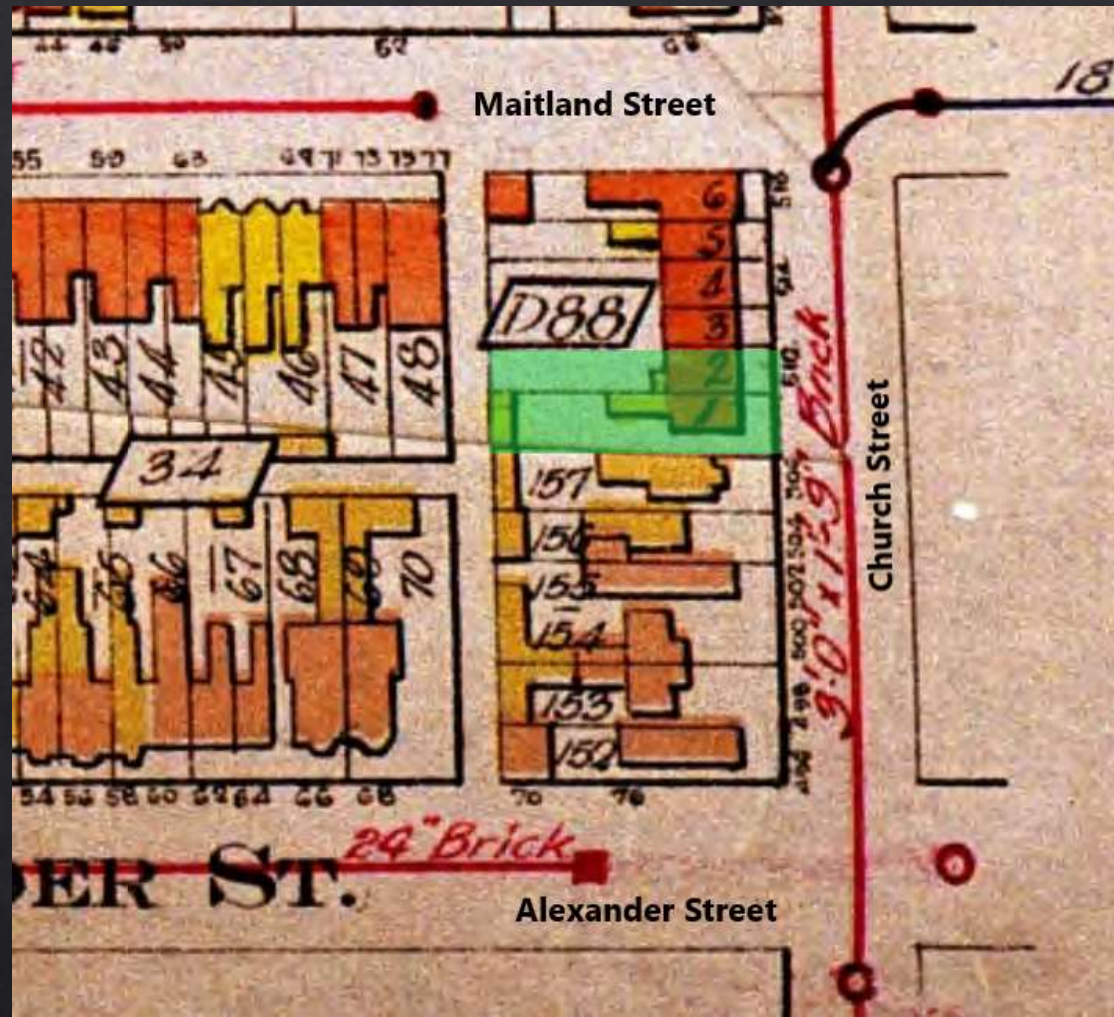
- ◆ Consisted of William (Wilkin) Bromilow Butler (1820-1880); Janet Butler (1825-1909); and Ernest William David Butler (1853/1854 – 1935) – originally from Dublin, Ireland
- ◆ The Butlers resided at 508 Church Street between 1872 and 1885
- ◆ William (Wilkin) Bromilow Butler was a house, land, and mercantile agent for the Division Court; wife was Janet Butler (née McEwan) – engaged in this field since 1860
- ◆ Ernest William David Butler was the son of William (Wilkin) and Janet
 - ◆ Intermittently lived here between 1872 and 1885
 - ◆ Developed, purchased and managed properties, also involved in life and fire insurance business
 - ◆ Butler's clients included some of the most wealthy and influential citizens and land corporations in Toronto (including in Parkdale and Rosedale); as well as in England and USA
 - ◆ President of the *Canadian Savings, Loan, and Building Association* in 1891
 - ◆ Significantly involved in a number of prominent and influential political and social societies
 - ◆ Ernest Butler is specifically noted to be supporter of Equal Rights in a 1891 biographical sketch

508-510 Church Street: Other Residents and Uses

- ◆ Methven (Methuen) J. Cairncross (1876 - 1967)
 - ◆ Builder and carpenter by trade; later leased laneway building to *Lindsay Welding* in 1960s
 - ◆ Likely lived here with his wife Edith (née Le Vallee) (1874 – unknown): married on 6 January 1897 and 2 daughters: Louise (born 1900) and Edna (born 1902)
 - ◆ Notably resided at 508 Church Street for 59 years (1907-1966) – longest tenure of any resident at property
- ◆ Properties had been used as boarding houses and rooming houses in the late 1880s; early 1900s; and 1960s (potentially 1970s-1980s (see below))
- ◆ Use of the properties had converted mostly to commercial spaces by mid-to-late 1960s
 - ◆ Initially used by commercial photographers and graphic designers in late 1960s
 - ◆ Residential use may have continued into 1970s-1980s – further research required
 - ◆ Has been associated with a bar and entertainment venue since mid-1990s
- ◆ This summary list of former residents and uses is not comprehensive – many others historically associated with properties



Above: Church Street between Maitland Street and Wood Street in 1858



Above: 508-510 Church Street, Toronto (highlighted in green) and surrounding properties as of 1924.



506 and 508-510 Church Street, Toronto: May 2020



508-510 Church Street, Toronto: May 2020



Details of Upper Levels, 508-510 Church Street, Toronto: May 2020



Looking Southeast at North (Side) and West (Rear) elevation of 508-510 Church Street, Toronto: May 2020
39



Rear Outbuilding 508-510 Church Street, Toronto: May 2020

Note: This rear outbuilding may date to 19th century. It is slated for demolition as part of the upcoming⁴⁰ re-development project.



508-510 Church Street, Toronto prior to the 2014 Mural Installation (image circa. 2011) ⁴¹



Church Street at Maitland Street – Looking Southwest - circa. 1950.

42

Note: Maitland Street had a streetcar track for streetcars to turn around on during this period.



Church Street at Maitland Street, Toronto – Looking Southwest - circa. 1950.
508-510 Church Street, Toronto have been highlighted in green.



467-475 Church Street, Toronto

467-475 Church Street, Toronto: Overview

- ◇ Presently associated with commercial uses, including the gay bar *Woody's and Sailor* (*Woody's* is in 467 Church Street and connected to 465 Church Street on the interior); *The Churchmouse: A Firkin Pub* (475 Church Street); and several other businesses
 - ◇ *Woody's* opened on 26 July 1989; *Sailor* opened in 1994; and *the Churchmouse* opened in approximately 2002
 - ◇ *Jingles* - a gay piano bar – also associated with 467 Church Street in 1970s-1980s
- ◇ Properties date to 1864; were first occupied in 1866
 - ◇ 467-473 Church Street was originally a wooden frame structure and was converted to a brick structure in 1894
 - ◇ 473 Church Street was severed into 2 properties: 473 and 473 ½ (now 473A) Church Street in 1894
 - ◇ Despite severing of 473, the original design of 4 houses (467-473 Church St) appears to be extant with a symmetrical exterior design – note the 4 2nd floor balconies may indicate how the property was originally divided
 - ◇ The properties have been renumbered several times and have used current numbering since 1890

467-475 Church Street, Toronto: Overview

- ◇ (I think) 467-473 Church Street may be Gothic Revival with Bay-and-Gable and Romanesque Revival elements
 - ◇ Note: I am waiting on confirmation from an architectural historian on this, as I am hoping to seek insight from an expert on the architectural style.
- ◇ 475 Church Street is in the Second Empire style
- ◇ The exterior 19th century design is largely intact on this row of properties, though has had modifications including the enclosure of several of the 2nd floor balconies; the creation of basement commercial units; the covering and/or painting of the masonry; replacement of the fish scale gable shingles and slate roof with asphalt shingles; and rear additions fronting the Alexander Place laneway
- ◇ Interiors of the property have been modified for commercial usage
- ◇ No re-development applications presently (19 September 2020) associated with 467-475 Church Street, though efforts should be made to evaluate these heritage resources as to encourage their retention and potential restoration as neighbourhood heritage assets
- ◇ There is a private laneway behind 471-475 Church Street between Church Street and Alexander Place – Further research is required to determine who owns this space.

467-475 Church Street, Toronto: Early Residents

- ◇ 467-473 Church Street have historically had an interestingly frequent turnover of occupants, with a few long-term occupants
- ◇ The first residents of 467-475 Church Street, Toronto in 1866 were:
- ◇ 467 Church Street: James Watson (1833/1834 - 1891) – founder of *Wills and Watson* – a biscuit, coffee, and spice importer and manufacturer based at the corner of Bay Street and Adelaide Street West – established business in 1867 - later renamed company to just *James Watson*. Watson lived at 467 Church Street with his wife (Mary Isabel Young (1837-1899)) and young children in 1866 – moving to Ann Street (now Granby Street) in 1867.
- ◇ 469 Church Street: Robert Hill – Hill resided here in 1866 and was a bookkeeper by trade. Further research is required to find out more information about Hill.
- ◇ 471 Church Street: Harriett Hutton – widow of George C. Hutton - lived here in 1866. She may have operated a Boarding House at this address, as earlier years indicate she operated boarding houses in the Ward neighbourhood. Her daughter (Marianne Hutton (c. 1842 – 1910)) was also married in Toronto in 1866.
- ◇ 473 Church Street: William Saunders – Saunders resided here in 1866-1867 and was a bookkeeper by trade. Saunders later moved to Denison Avenue in Alexandra Park. Further research is required to find out more information about Hill.
- ◇ 475 Church Street: George Ferrier Burns (c. 1834 - 1911) – originally from Scotland. Burns was a bookkeeper and Post Office⁴⁷ Clerk – he lived at 475 Church Street between 1866 and 1870 (likely with his wife (Jennie Smyth (1858-1939)) (married 1896) and daughter (Esther Maria Burns (1868-1946)) – the Burns later moved to Isabella Street

467-475 Church Street, Toronto: Early Residents

- ◇ The first residents of 467-473 Church Street, Toronto after its 1894 conversion from a wooden frame structure to a brick structure were:
- ◇ 467 Church Street: Isabella McRae resided here in 1895 and moved out by 1896. No further information about McRae is available at present.
- ◇ 469 Church Street: John W. Wark resided here in 1895 and moved out by 1896. Wark was a clerk at the *Robert Simpson Company*.
- ◇ 471 Church Street: Sarah Theresa Reeve resided here in 1895 and had moved out by 1896. Sarah Theresa Reeve was the widow of William Albert Reeve – a prominent criminal law barrister and administrator at Osgoode Hall who died suddenly and unexpectedly of heart failure in 1894.
- ◇ 473 Church Street: George A. Kingston resided here in 1895 and had moved out by 1896. Kingston was a barrister with *Lount, Marsh & Cameron* – a legal firm based on Toronto Street.
- ◇ 473 ½ Church Street: Captain Jeremiah Vanderbilt Ditmars, Josephine Ditmars, and William Ditmars resided here in 1895 and had moved out by 1896. Captain Ditmars was a master mariner who sailed the Atlantic Ocean and Great Lakes. William Ditmar was prominently involved in an infrastructure building company and moved to Vancouver shortly after 1896. William Ditmar is also credited with bringing the first car to Vancouver.

475 Church Street, Toronto

- ◇ 475 Church Street, Toronto (1864) has been associated with a number of uses over its history:
 - ◇ Post Office (mid-to-late 1860s)
 - ◇ George Robertson's Confectionary Shop and Refreshment Parlour (1870)
 - ◇ William Hornshaw's Blacksmith Shop (1871-1878)
 - ◇ Various Grocers (1879-1907)
 - ◇ J. A. Humphrey & Son – Funeral Home and Undertakers (1908-1912)
 - ◇ Thorndike Butchers (1914-1946/1947)
 - ◇ Bud Burner Company – Heating Equipment and Stoves (1947 – 1970s)
 - ◇ Also a laundromat at side/rear in 1960s
 - ◇ Vagara Bistro (approximately 1980s through 1990s)
 - ◇ The Churchmouse: A Firkin Pub (2002 onward)
- ◇ 475 Church Street, Toronto included upstairs residential spaces for many years, but was renovated around the early 21st century to convert the upper floors to commercial (restaurant and restaurant, office) space

467-475 Church Street, Toronto: Other Residents and Uses

- ◆ 3 separate Melodeon makers in a 10 year period (1864-1874): John Scott (467 Church Street, 1867-1869), Frederick Fisher (471 Church Street, 1870); and Henry Dixon (473 Church Street, 1873)
- ◆ Samuel J. Moore (1859-1948) – Moore was a prominent publisher, businessman, and industrialist who resided at 469 Church Street in 1881. Moore manufactured carbon copy bill books, business forms, business supplies, etc. Moore later founded The Metropolitan Bank in 1902, which merged with The Bank of Nova Scotia (now Scotiabank) in 1914. Moore then became the President of the Bank of Nova Scotia after this merger. He financed the construction of the Great Hall at Queen and Dovercourt in 1889, among many other philanthropic ventures. Samuel J. Moore was also significantly associated with the Baptist Church. He had become one of the wealthiest individuals in Canada by the 1920s. Moore's company – founded in 1882 – is still operating in 2020 (as the *Moore Corporation Ltd.*), now being a multibillion dollar corporation.
- ◆ The Consulate of Cuba was briefly based at 473A Church Street in 1916
- ◆ Please note this list is not comprehensive and there are many additional former residents and tenants associated with these properties.



467-475 Church Street, Toronto
1864

467-473 Church Street was converted from a wooden frame structure to a brick structure in 1894.



467-473A Church Street, Toronto

Constructed as a wooden frame structure in 1864 and converted to a brick structure in 1894



Looking southeast from Church Street and Maitland Street toward 475-467 Church Street, Toronto ⁵³



Looking south at the North (Maitland Street) Elevation of 475 Church Street, Toronto.



City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 2032, Series 841, File 17, Item 9

Looking southeast at 467-475 Church Street, Toronto in 1972.



475 Church Street, Toronto between 1908 and 1912, during its tenure as *J. A. Humphrey & Son Funeral Home* and Undertakers.



Right: Building details – including 2nd Floor Balcony – on 467 Church Street, Toronto.

Right Source: Google Streetview Imagery, 2019.

Left: Decorative archway on entrance of 473-473 ½ Church Street. This has been painted black or dark grey in recent years.

Left Source: Google Streetview Imagery, May 2014.



East (Alexander Place / Rear Laneway) Elevation of 467-471 Church Street, Toronto.

Other Notes

- ◇ George Harcourt (1820-1889) – who established the robemaking and tailoring firm *Harcourt's* in 1842 resided on the west side of Church Street just south of present-day 506 Church Street in the mid-1860s. *Harcourt's* is still an active business as of 2020, specializing in the making of robes, regalia, etc. predominantly for formal academic, legal, and religious purposes. Harcourt's also makes garments for the British Royal Family and has clientele across the Commonwealth. Harcourt's is now North America's oldest robemaking business. George Harcourt's former house on Church Street has since been demolished.
- ◇ Reverend John Langtry (1834-1906) – who founded the Bishop Strachan School for Girls in Toronto in 1867 - resided on the west side of Church Street just south of present-day 506 Church Street in the 1860s. Reverend Langtry was also a prolific religious writer. Reverend Langtry's former house on Church Street has since been demolished.

Future Directives

- ◇ I am waiting to hear back from the City of Toronto's Heritage Preservation Services in further detail about these Heritage Property Nomination (beyond receipt of property nomination forms)
- ◇ Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam (Ward 13 – Toronto-Centre) and the Church-Wellesley Village BIA have been sent copies of the Heritage Property Nominations
- ◇ Would the CWNA be willing to send Letters of Support if these Heritage Property Nominations proceed further?
- ◇ Conducting a Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment for Church Street (recommended by Paul Farrelly (CWNA) during this presentation)
- ◇ Does the CWNA want to be cc'd on future Heritage Property Nominations?
 - ◇ There are additional heritage assets and properties to research in further detail throughout the Church-Wellesley Village neighbourhood
- ◇ Please feel free to reach out to me at adam.g.wynne@gmail.com