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ARCHITECTS JOHN AND JOSEPH POWER WALKING TOUR

A tour that highlights some of the fine architectural contributions of two prominent Kingston architects to Old Sydenham Ward. Architects naturally designed houses for the well-to-do. Other than the courthouse, it is not surprising that all the remaining buildings on this tour are what might be called “mansions.”

APPROXIMATELY 45 MINUTES Please be respectful of private property.
Architects John and Joseph Power

“John Power of Devonshire came to Kingston in 1846 and died here in 1882, aged 66. He was City architect and associate architect for the Psychiatric Hospital. He designed every kind of structure from a swing bridge over the Cataraqui River to hotels, churches and many fine dwellings.” (Volume V, Buildings of Architectural and Historic Significance, Kingston, Ontario, page 1)

“Joseph Power, eldest son of John, entered partnership with his father in 1873. He was an Associate of the Royal Canadian Academy, a President of the Ontario Association of Architects and a Fellow of the Architectural Institute of Canada as well as a superintending architect for the Department of Public Works and the Department of Defence.” (Volume V, Buildings of Architectural and Historic Significance, Kingston, Ontario, page 1)

Start your tour at the corner of King St. E. and Lower Union St.

1 157 King St. E. — Joseph Power, built in 1882. This large brick Victorian mansion, built for Dr. Edward Horsey (second son of the architect Edward Horsey), is an excellent example of the work of Joseph Power. The house was sold to the government in 1887, when the doctor moved to Montréal. It served for many years as a residence for army commanding officers. This is a slightly larger and more elaborate version of 49 King St. E., built three years earlier.

2 141 King St. E. Joseph Power, built in 1880. This elaborate house had a very stylish plan, scale and decoration. It was built for John Hinds and, after he went bankrupt, it was owned by Dr. Kenneth Neander Fenwick. Note the use of both brick and stone, and the slate mansard roof with dormers.

3 95 King St. E. (Hendry House) — Joseph Power, built in 1886. This is a high Victorian brick corner house, built in 1886 in Queen Anne style. The first owner was James A. Hendry, a wholesale grocer. It was described in the British Whig as “probably the handsomest residence in the city this year”. An excellent example of asymmetrical design, it has a variety of roof heights and construction materials. The terra cotta panels are noteworthy. It sits on an important corner facing City Park and Sir John A. Macdonald’s monument.

4 85 King St. E. — Power & Son, built in 1877. This Victorian mansion was built by Richard Tossell for Rybert Kent, who was, for 20 years, proprietor of the British American Hotel (at King and Clarence Streets), and a partner in the Canadian Express Company. The three-storey stone house has some of the finest ironwork and carpenter trim work in Kingston. The design details show the best work of Joseph Power and the siting of the building is excellent.

5 31 King St. E. (Parkview House) — John Power, built in 1853. This two-storey stone dwelling is important to the streetscapes of both Emily St. and King St. With its neighbours, it is an interesting study of the cottage orné style.
popular in the 1850s. The site is part of the Murney property subdivided in the 1840s. This house was built for Robert Gaskin, a ship owner and ship builder. It was sold in 1855 but Gaskin’s granddaughter, Isabella Gaskin Waldron, and her husband bought it in 1909. Gaskin was a British patriot. For instance, two of his vessels were named St. George and British Lion. The Gaskin family donated the cast-iron British lion that now stands in the park just to the south. The residences at 7-9 Emily St. are part of the original rear wing, coach house and servants’ quarters of the house.

6 20-24 Barrie St. — Joseph Power, built in 1889. The main architectural feature of this red brick terrace is three large projecting angled bays, which rise two stories to balconies protected by truncated gable roofs. Stone and brick string courses and carved tiles, plus the rectangular transoms in all windows and doors, moderate the vertical thrust of the bays. This three-dwelling block was built for Robert Crawford, owner of fuel yards which had been established in 1875. He occupied 24 and rented out the two other dwellings.

7 72-74 Barrie St. — Power & Son, built in 1879. This large brick dwelling has a central entrance flanked by large projections, edged with quoins, which rise three stories to sharply peaked gables with decorative bargeboards. Windows on each storey are set under decorative cornices. The house was built for Richard Thomas Muir Walkem, a barrister, and his wife, Emily Henderson, who had bought the lot in 1875. The building was occupied for a few years around 1903 by the Kingston Ladies College. It was divided into apartments in 1938. The property was sold to Kingston General Hospital in 1974 and is now the site of Hospice Kingston.

8 5-21 Court St. (Frontenac County Court House) Built in 1855, architect: Edward Horsey. Rebuilt under supervision of Power & Son. Early in his career, John Power worked under Edward Horsey. After a fire, the Powers used Horsey’s original plans for the court house’s reconstruction. The Powers’ major addition was an enhancement of its dome. Their work on the court house appears to have gained them a reputation for successful large buildings. He went on, in 1888, to rebuild St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church after it was destroyed.
by a fire. He also expanded St. George's Cathedral in 1891 including a large dome, and again after an 1899 fire. The Courthouse fountain was built in 1903 as a memorial to Sir George Kirkpatrick, MP for Frontenac, Speaker of the House of Commons and Lt. Governor of the Province of Ontario.

9 24 SYDENHAM ST. Power & Son, built in 1879. Built of red brick, this house has a tower, many gables and a mansard roof. At one time it was owned by the Bank of Montreal as a place for visiting executives to stay. Its name, "Hochelaga", comes from an Iroquoian village located where the city of Montréal is now. It was later converted to apartments, and became an inn in 1985. Its design includes extensive decorative touches in wood and brick. There are heavy mouldings, many brackets under the eaves, some leaded glass windows, a prominent double chimney on the north side, Corinthian columns and delicate ironwork on the very top of the octagonal tower.

10 65 WEST ST. — Power & Son, built in 1879. This brick corner house, part of a whole block of brick dwellings, was built after Westbourne Terrace (57-63) was completed. The round corner tower, bay window and central two-storey umbrage are notable aspects of architecture for the period.

11 57-63 WEST ST. (Westbourne Terrace) — Power & Son, built in 1874. This red brick, four-dwelling terrace was built for George M. Wilkinson and three of his eight children. The row of three similar two-storey dwellings with single-storey bay windows is dominated by the fourth end dormer. Westbourne Terrace constitutes the major section of this important streetscape facing City Park.

12 23 ONTARIO ST. (the Pump House Steam Museum) — Original building, circa 1850; John Power addition, 1890. Following the establishment of the City of Kingston Water Works in 1849, a simple low-roofed limestone industrial structure housed the first water pumps. The City purchased the company in 1887 and expanded the structure with a substantial Romanesque-style brick addition containing two new water pumps. The water works operated until 1952 and has housed the Pump House Steam Museum since 1973.

Follow Ontario St. back to downtown.