

FEDERAL HERITAGE BUILDINGS REVIEW OFFICE

BUILDING EVALUATION REPORT

File No. 2.5.6.1

I IDENTIFICATION

BUILDING

- City/Prov: WAKEFIELD, Qué.
 - Name: Maclaren House
 - Address: Gatineau Park
 - Owner: NCC

FHBRO (NCR)

- Meeting: 85-01
 - Date: 85-04-23
 - BER No.: 84-26
 - Date: JUN 17 1985

II HERITAGE CHARACTER

SUMMARY

The Maclaren House was built between 1861 and 1871 by John Maclaren who became reasonably well known in the context of the Ottawa business community. It is located in the township of Masham.

The building has heritage features associated with its architecture, its history, and its environment, which are relatively important without being particularly unique.

ARCHITECTURE

In building his house, John Maclaren chose the "Picturesque" approach to design that encouraged eclecticism and individuality. The design represents a combination of the Italianate and the Gothic Revival styles which were popular in domestic architecture in the middle decades of the nineteenth century.

The house is a two storey red brick structure resting on a stone foundation with a truncated hipped roof and a large gable roofed frontispiece that divides the front facade symmetrically, and is flanked by identical verandahs accessible from side doors. A main door, with round headed sidelights and a segmental arched transom is located on its front facade. The verandah's roofs are slightly bell-cast and supported by square wooden posts with decorative fretworks. One notable feature is the contrasting brickwork on the frontispiece which is laid in a pattern radiating from the arch, a technique that requires fairly sophisticated bricklaying skills.

HISTORY

The Maclaren House should be viewed in the context of the settlement of the Gatineau River and the eventual dominance of the business of the area by the Maclarens. Since the house is located in the township of Masham, immediately adjacent to the township of Wakefield, the building's history is closely associated with the development of both townships.

The Maclaren family acted as community leaders to spearhead settlement and development of the area. They owned the general store and the largest industrial complex in the area, including a grist mill and oatmill in one building, and a sawmill. It provided farmers with a conveniently close outlet for their agricultural surplus, in addition to providing jobs.

ENVIRONMENT

The Maclaren House is picturesly located on a hill beside the La Pêche River. Together with the simpler cottage of the miller that remains, and the grist mill located slightly downstream on the other side of the river, it stands as a reminder of early industrial development along the Gatineau and its tributaries. It is probably this relationship between the buildings that prompted the NCC to include information on the house in their interpretive brochures.