

HERITAGE PROPERTY RESEARCH AND EVALUATION REPORT



**WICKETT-TURNER HOUSES
32 AND 34 HOWARD STREET, TORONTO**

Prepared by:

Heritage Preservation Services
City Planning Division
City of Toronto

May 2010

1. DESCRIPTION



Photographs, above and on cover, April 2010

32 & 34 Howard Street: Wickett-Turner Houses	
ADDRESS	32 & 34 Howard Street (north side, east of Glen Road)
WARD	Ward 28 (Toronto Centre-Rosedale)
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	Plan 360, Part Lot 2
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	Howard Street Neighbourhood
HISTORICAL NAME	Wickett-Turner Houses
CONSTRUCTION DATE	1901
ORIGINAL OWNER	32: James, John & Eli Wickett 34: Edith Turner
ORIGINAL USE	Residential (semi-detached houses)
CURRENT USE*	Residential (#32: City Hostel) * This does not refer to permitted use(s) as defined by the Zoning By-law
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	Wickett Brothers, contractors (attribution) ¹
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION	Red brick cladding; brick, stone & wood detailing
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	Transitional with Queen Anne Revival features
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	32: 1985, 2 nd storey addition
CRITERIA	Design/Physical & Contextual
HERITAGE STATUS	Cultural Heritage Evaluation
RECORDER	Heritage Preservation Services: Kathryn Anderson
REPORT DATE	May 2010

¹ A building permit was not located for these properties

2. BACKGROUND

This research and evaluation report describes the history, architecture and context of the properties at 32 and 34 Howard Street, and applies evaluation criteria to determine whether they merit designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The conclusions of the research and evaluation are found in Section 4 (Summary).

i. HISTORICAL TIMELINE

Key Date	Historical Event
1881	Edgar Jarvis registers Plan 360, subdividing the lands on the north side of Howard Street, east and west of Glen Road
1900 Jan	Representatives of St. Simon the Apostle (Anglican) Church purchase Lot 2
1900 Dec	The trustees sell part of Lot 2 flanking Howard Street to Toronto contractor Eli Wickett and builders James and John Wickett
1901 Apr	The Wickett Brothers transfer part of their allotment to Edith Turner
1901 June	"Unfinished buildings" at 32 & 34 Howard Street are owned by the Wickett Brothers and Edith Turner and recorded in the tax assessment rolls
1902 June	Edith and Ernest Turner occupy #34 Howard, while its neighbour is now owned by Edna Howe and rented to William Fraser
1912	The semi-detached houses are illustrated on Goad's Atlas

ii. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Howard Street Neighbourhood

The properties at 32 and 34 Howard Street are located in the Howard Street neighbourhood, which developed as part of the residential enclave southeast of Bloor Street East and Sherbourne Street. The origins of the area date to the late 18th century when it was one of the 100-acre "Park Lots" extending between present-day Queen Street and Bloor Street that were awarded to associates of the Provincial government as the setting of country estates. Park Lot 4 was granted to John White and, following his death in a notorious duel with John Small, his estate transferred the acreage to members of the Ridout family. Working with the neighbouring landowner, in 1845 Thomas Gibbs Ridout authorized construction along the west boundary of a road that became Sherbourne Street. This opened the area to residential development, and part of the tract was subdivided in 1852 when surveyor and architect John Howard laid out building lots northeast of Sherbourne Street and East (now Howard) Street. The earliest surviving houses in the area date to the 1870s. The 1884 Goad's Atlas (an extract of which is reproduced in Section 6 of this report) shows the build up of the Howard Street neighbourhood to that point. By the early 20th century a dozen plans of subdivision – some of which were further divisions of earlier registered plans – were in place for the lands as development spread east of Sherbourne Street to Parliament Street. During this era the area was among the desirable upscale residential neighbourhoods accessible to downtown Toronto, and its buildings reflected contemporary architectural styles. Within the community, St. Simon the Apostle (Anglican) Church (1888) was joined by a school and fire hall (later demolished). The Howard Street neighbourhood provided a link to Rosedale via the "iron bridge" on Glen Road north of Howard Street.

With the construction of the Prince Edward (Bloor Street) Viaduct during World War I, Bloor Street was extended east of Sherbourne Street. While this development brought streetcar service directly to the Howard Street neighbourhood, it also removed the ravine setting that had previously formed the north edge of the area (as illustrated in Goad's Atlases), as well as some of the residential buildings. Following World War II and the growth of middle class suburbs around the city, the neighbourhood along Howard Street went into a decline and many of the single family residences were converted into rooming houses. This situation coincided with trends in post-war planning that favoured the replacement of low-scale dwellings with high-rise buildings to meet the demand for rental housing in Toronto. Beginning in the 1950s, a development consortium acquired the majority of the properties in the area bounded by Bloor, Sherbourne, Wellesley and Parliament as the site of St. Jamestown, a collection of nearly 20 publicly and privately owned apartment towers. The proximity of St. Jamestown to the Howard Street neighbourhood is illustrated on the maps reproduced in Section 6 of this report. With the removal of the majority of the building stock, the semi-detached houses at 32 and 34 Howard Street are surviving reminders of the historical setting of the area.

32 and 34 Howard Street

The properties at 32 and 34 Howard Street are located on the north side of the street, east of Glen Road, on land that was subdivided under Plan 360 in 1881 by Edgar Jarvis. As a nephew of Sheriff William Botsford Jarvis, the original settler of Rosedale, Edgar Jarvis became a prominent developer in the neighbourhood. Extending his holdings south of the Rosedale Ravine, Jarvis oversaw the construction of the first iron bridge on Glen Road to connect the two areas. While Jarvis sold Lot 2 under Plan 360 in 1882, the land remained undeveloped in January of 1900 when it was acquired by the trustees of the neighbouring St. Simon the Apostle (Anglican) Church. By the end of the year, James, John and Eli Wickett purchased part of the lot flanking Howard Street.

The Wickett Brothers were well known Toronto masonry contractors whose projects included work for the Toronto Board of Education and, in 1905, the expansion of the Ottawa Armories. In the spring of 1901, the Wickett Brothers transferred part of their Howard allotment to Edith E. Turner. This transaction presumably coincided with the beginning of construction, because the tax assessment rolls compiled in June 1901 recorded two "unfinished buildings" on the sites. Following the completion of the structures, Edith Turner and her husband, Ernest, occupied #32 Howard, while the Wickett Brothers sold #34 to Edna Howe.

iii. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The semi-detached houses at 32 and 34 Howard Street are indicative of the transitional architecture of the turn of the 20th century when the richly detailed styles of the late Victorian era gave way to designs that were simpler and restrained by comparison. The dwellings at #32 and #34 Howard display the variety of materials, exaggerated front (south) gable with a monumental bay window, and mixture of decorative elements identified with Queen Anne Revival, which was the most fashionable style for residential building in the late 1800s and continued in popularity until World War I. However, the symmetry of the design and the repetition of the porches and window types link it to the new century.

The semi-detached houses at 32 and 34 Howard Street extend 2½ stories above a raised stone base with window openings. Clad with red brick and trimmed with brick, stone and wood, the structure is covered by a cross-gable roof. Attention is focused on the principal (south) façade where an oversized gable projects as a frontispiece and displays decorative wood strapwork, shingles, brackets and diminutive window openings. Beneath the gable, the centre of the wall is marked by a wide bay window with flat-headed window openings. A wood cornice extends across the second-floor window openings, while those in the lower storey are highlighted with stone lintels and band courses. The entrances to the units are placed in the outer bays where they are protected by single-storey open porches with classical detailing. #34 Howard retains its wood door with a glass insert. The side elevations (east and west) are identical, with segmental-arched openings with single and double windows, as well as two-sided oriel windows (the alterations to the side elevations made when the buildings were converted to multi-residential uses are not identified as heritage attributes).

iv. CONTEXT

Found in the Howard Street neighbourhood, the properties at 32 and 34 Howard Street are located on the north side of the street, where they are the only surviving residential buildings in the block that extends east from Glen Road to Edgedale Road. On the west, the Roslyn Apartments at 1 and 7 Glen Road anchor the northeast corner of Howard Street and Glen Road, while the St. Simon the Apostle (Anglican) Church precinct is found directly north. The semi-detached houses at #32 and #34 Howard face south toward St. Jamestown.

3. EVALUATION CHECKLIST

The following evaluation applies Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the Ontario Heritage Act: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. While the criteria are prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, the City of Toronto uses it when assessing properties for inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. The evaluation table is marked “N/A” if the criterion is “not applicable” to the property or X if it is applicable, with explanatory text below.

Design or Physical Value	
i. rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method	X
ii. displays high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	X
iii. demonstrates high degree of scientific or technical achievement	N/A

Well-crafted and Representative Example of Style and Type with a High Degree of Craftsmanship – The properties at 32 and 34 Howard Street contain well-designed examples of early 20th century semi-detached house form buildings that are indicative of the transitional architecture of the era, where evocative Queen Anne Revival elements are balanced in a symmetrical composition that identifies the post-1900 date of the structure.

Historical or Associative Value	
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i. direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community	N/A
ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	N/A
iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	N/A

No historical or associative values have been identified for the properties at 32 and 34 Howard Street.

Contextual Value	
i. important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area	X
ii. physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings	X
iii. landmark	N/A

Character – The semi-detached houses at 32 and 34 Howard Street are part of the collection of surviving heritage buildings dating to the late 19th and early 20th centuries that characterizes the Howard Street neighbourhood as it originated as a desirable upscale residential enclave east of Sherbourne Street and south of Bloor Street East. With St. Simon the Apostle (Anglican) Church as the centerpiece of the historic community, the development of the area along Howard Street and the adjoining streets from the 1870s to World War I can be traced through the remaining built form, of which the Wickett-Turner Houses are integral parts.

Surroundings – The properties at 32 and 34 Howard Street are visually and historically linked to their surroundings in the Howard Street neighbourhood. Constructed after 1900 in the last phase of the historical development of the area, the Wickett-Turner Houses are highly visible features on Howard Street where they are the sole surviving buildings on the north side of the thoroughfare between Glen Road and Edgedale Road.

4. SUMMARY

Following research and evaluation according to Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the properties at 32 and 34 Howard Street have cultural heritage value as well-crafted early 20th century semi-detached houses that represent the transitional architecture of the era. In addition to their individual design merit, the Wickett-Turner Houses contribute contextually to the historical character of the Howard Street neighbourhood as the surviving late 19th- and early 20th- century residential enclave southeast of Sherbourne Street and Bloor Street East to which the semi-detached houses are visually and historically linked.

5. SOURCES

Archival Sources

Abstract Indices of Deeds, Plan 360, Part Lot 2

Assessment Rolls, City of Toronto, Ward 2, Division 2, 1900 ff.

Building Records, plans for alterations and additions to 32 & 34 Howard Street, 1963-86

City of Toronto Directories, 1901 ff.

Goad's Atlases, 1903, 1910 revised to 1912, 1910 revised to 1923, and 1931 revised to 1941

Secondary Sources

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-----, Jacqueline Hucker, and Shannon Ricketts, A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles, 1992

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“Public School Board,” The Globe (August 30, 1898), 2

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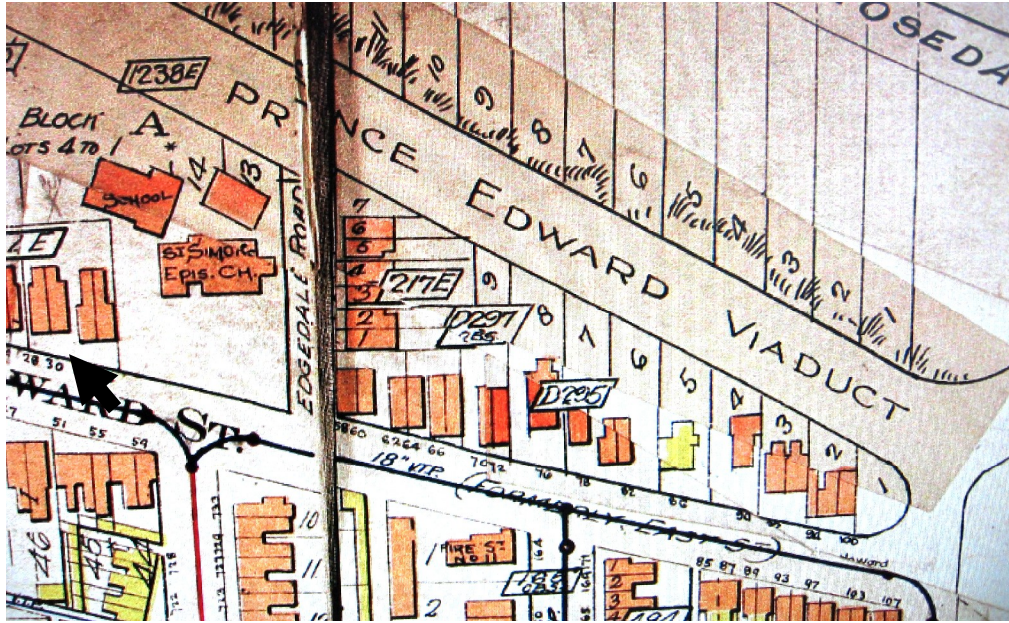
6. IMAGES



Photograph of the west elevation of 32 Howard Street, April 2010



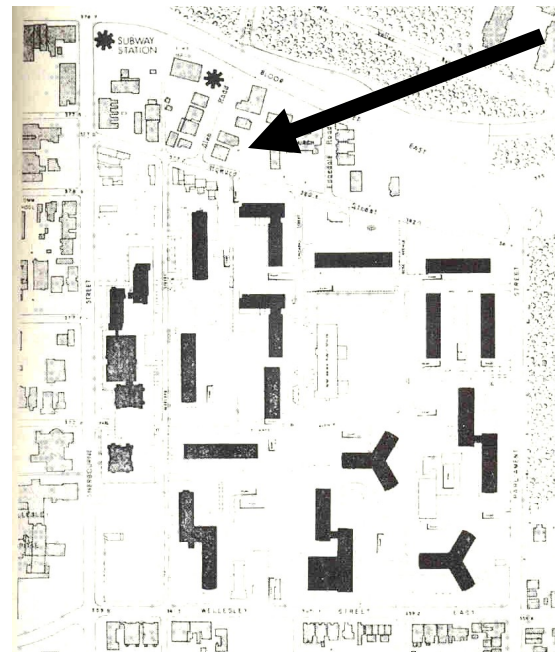
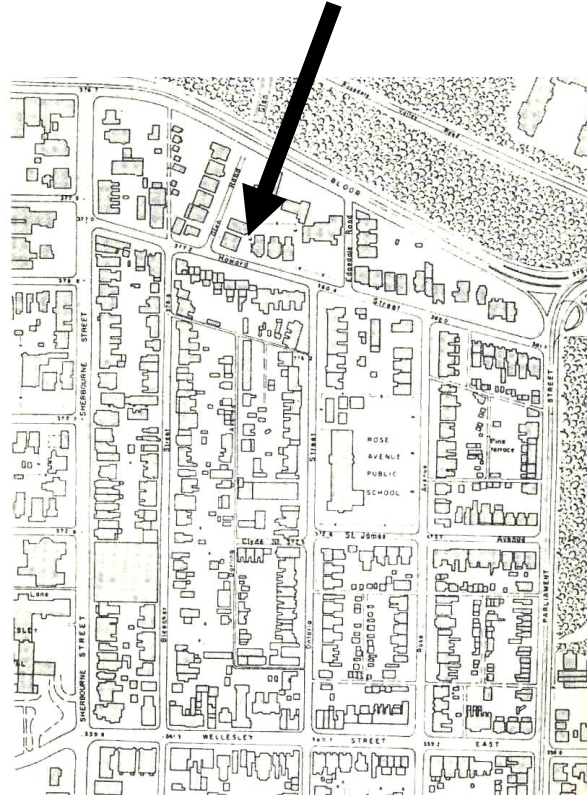
Extract from Goad's Atlas, 1884, showing the development of the Howard Street neighbourhood to date (Source: City of Toronto Archives)



Extract, Goad's Atlas, 1910 revised to 1923, showing the placement and context of the houses at 34 and 34 Howard Street (source: City of Toronto Archives)



Extract, Underwriter's Insurance Atlas, 1931 revised to 1941, showing the Properties at 32 and 34 Howard Street in the context of the immediate neighbourhood (Source: City of Toronto Archives)



Property data maps, showing the context of the properties at 32 and 34 Howard Street prior to and following the development of St. Jamestown (Source: Sewell, 164-165)