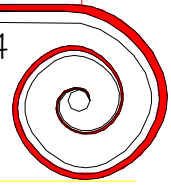

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McGILLIVRAY - ARCHITECT



Friday, October 05, 2012

EVALUATION

PROJECT: Wesley Methodist United Church

Address 2 Station Road, Mimico (Etobicoke), Ontario

Registered: Registered with the City of Toronto. Application for designation submitted.



1. **Physical Description**

- 1.1. **Building type:** Church, institutional
- 1.2. **Present use:** Church
- 1.3. **Foundation: Basement** Yes
- 1.4. **Number of storeys above grade:** 2 plus loft/tower
- 1.5. **Main structural materials:** Brick, steel frame(?)
- 1.6. **Cladding materials:** Brick

- 1.7. **Roof type:** Gable, asphalt shingles
- 1.8. **Existing condition:** Solid, but needs work.

2. **Context**

The property has contextual value because it, i) is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area, ii) it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings, or iii) is a landmark.¹

- 2.1. **Siting:** At the North-west corner of Station Road (secondary) and Mimico Avenue (primary).
- 2.2. **Neighbouring Properties Known to Have Heritage Significance:** Adjacent properties are residential, low rise, not exceeding 3 storeys with the majority 2 storeys or less. Many of the buildings are of the same period as the church. The appendix lists many of the adjacent local businesses.
- 2.3. **Significant Landscape Features (Natural and Built):** Large, mature tree at front sidewalk. Smaller, mature trees at sidewalk, east side.
- 2.4. **Traditional Views to and From the Property :** Prominently located on the Corner of Mimico Avenue and Station Road and central to the community, this building is a landmark building. The church is an important focus for the immediate neighbourhood.
- 2.5. **Traditional Linkages:** The church has strong social linkages to the beach area where many of its most prominent members had properties. The church is also central to the community.
- 2.6. **Distinctive Neighbourhood Features:** This is an established low rise neighbourhood of similar buildings with a cohesive community. In scale and construction the church is appropriate to the local area.

¹ O. Reg. 9/06 made under the ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT, Criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest, Criteria 1.(2)3.

3. **History**

“The property has historical value or associative value because it, i) has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community, ii) it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture, or iii) demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.”²

3.1. **Construction Date, Date of additions and Architect(s):** Constructed 1922 John Charles Batstone Horwood of Burke, Horwood & White. Addition 1958 extended front of church towards Mimico Ave. by Eric Horwood.

3.2. **Mimico Heritage**

Refer to the appendix for more information on the history.

The history of this church dates back to the original church built in 1863 and it was an integral part of the community. It contains memorials to its many members who served in the World Wars including David Hornell, the first Canadian airman to be awarded the Victoria Cross. Memorials include the Organ Chimes and stained glass windows.

3.3. **The architects**

Apparently J.C.B. Horwood undertook the building after the excavation had commenced. He had a reputation for designing solid foundations and the existing building shown no evidence of failure from poor foundation design.

Refer to the appendix for more information on the architects.

J.C.B. Horwood was a very significant architect and educator in Canada’s architectural history with a record of developing new and progressive architecture methods and building types., and he was involved in many of Toronto and Mimico landmark buildings.

Eric Horwood also has made a very significant contribution to the history of Mimico and the province through the contribution of the J.C.B. and Eric Horwood Collection to the Archives of Ontario.

3.4. **Original Owner**

Wesley Methodist Church
Current Owner Wesley United Church

3.5. **Builder:** Unknown

3.6. **Historic Themes, Patterns, People, or Events Associated with the site**

² O. Reg. 9/06 made under the ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT, Criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest, Criteria 1.(2)2.

Albert Benjamin Ormsby, Industrialist
Ormsby was a significant landowner in the Town of Mimico and a prominent business person and industrialist in the city of Toronto. He was a generous man and opened his estate to many community events. Ormsby made Ormscliffe/Myrtle Villa Estate his permanent residence (now 2523 Lake Shore Blvd W.) which is a significant waterfront property in Mimico.. They often played hosts there to groups from Wesley United Church and there are still a good many young people living in Mimico today who can recall attending Young Peoples' society parties at the Ormsby estate

Edwin Eland: founder of The Advertiser (Mimico).

The church was built by the firm Horwood & Burke was the successor firm to Langley, Langley and Burke, Wm. G. Storm and D.B. Dick., formed by Charles Batstone Horwood, and Edmund Burke. The firm eventually became Burke, Horwood & White architect, Eric Horwood, the son of C.B. Horwood continued the firm. The firm's work includes drawings for department stores, including the rebuilding of the Robert Simpson Company store in Toronto after the 1894 fire; churches, especially Methodist and Baptist denominations; residences and summer homes of numerous prominent figures; banks and commercial buildings; school facilities, hospital buildings and sanatoria; an observatory building, and cemetery facilities. C.B. Horwood was a charter member of the Arts & Letters Club of Toronto and a member of Wesley Methodist Church.

3.7. Historic Uses: Church

4. Design

"The property has design value or physical value because it, i) is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method, ii) displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit, or iii) demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement"³

- 4.1. **Design Description** : The church is a later Romanesque Revival building with an arcaded entrance, round headed windows, relatively plain, flush brickwork with stone detailing. The building has a symmetrical arrangement around the front entrance and a lack of enrichment except for the central window and doors. The stepped tower, which was probably part of the first phase of construction, is an appropriate feature of the style and incorporates more decorative features in the projecting corbel and spire.

Refer to the appendix for a description of the exceptionally unique design of this building. There are very few buildings with this type of suspended construction . Unique elements include a suspended floor, an innovative steel frame design to support the roof and a minimum of pillars.

^{3 3} O. Reg. 9/06 made under the ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT, Criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest, Criteria 1.(2)1.

4.2. **Integrity:** There have been no significant modifications to the exterior envelope of this building other than the 1958 addition by Eric Horwood. This addition is very compatible to the original design.

4.3. **Additions to Original Wing or Portion:** 1958 addition by Eric Horwood.

5. **Proposed Statement of Significance**

5.1. **Description of Historic Place**

Wesley United Church is prominently located in the centre of the original community of Mimico at the North-West corner of Mimico Avenue and Station Street.

The church consists of a 2 to 3 storey red brick building with gabled roofs located on residential streets with 2 to 3 storey detached housing and low rise construction.

The church is a registered property and has been submitted for heritage designation for its historical, architectural and contextual value.

5.2. **Heritage Value of Historic Place**

The historical value of the church lies in its association with prominent early members of the Mimico community and its design by the father-son team of C.B Horwood and Eric Horwood with their firms Horwood and Burke, later Horwood and White. These firms were well known for commercial buildings (Robert Simpson's store at Yonge and Queen and several Hudson bay Company stores), churches (Headquarters of the Methodist Church of Canada now the CHUM City building), residential buildings (including 4 estates in Mimico) and for the use of modern materials and methods of construction⁴. Eric Horwood is known for donating a very significant collection of drawings including drawings by earlier architects and predecessor firms, to the Ontario Archives. The Horwoods were active residents in Mimico and members of the church for many years.

The church is one of Mimico's remaining historic structures and includes memorials to those who lost their lives in the First and Second World Wars, including Flying Officer James Steward Ferrier (organ chimes), Flying Officer Charles Wesley Miller and Flight-Lieutenant David Hornell (windows) – the first Canadian airman to be awarded the Victoria Cross (posthumously).⁵

Prominent members of the congregation included: Albert Benjamin Ormsby, industrialist; John Charles Batstone Horwood, architect; Eric Horwood, architect; Edwin Eland, founder of the Advertiser, the local newspaper; Hugh Griggs, last mayor of Mimico; Lieut. David Hornell, Awarded the Victoria Cross in WWII (posthumously); Albert Odgen, solicitor ; plus many others.

The church is a later Romanesque Revival building with a symmetrical façade and an arcaded entrance, round headed windows, plain, flush brickwork with stone detailing. The building has a 3 arch front entrance, large 3 section stone window with tracery. The stepped tower, part of the original construction, is an appropriate

⁴ Information from Eric Code

⁵ ibid

feature of the style and incorporates more decorative features in the projecting corbel and spire.

Contextually, as a church placed on a corner lot at a major intersection in the neighbourhood, Wesley United Church is a landmark in the Mimico community. It is an integral part of the institutional corridor of Mimico Avenue with its public schools. Wesley United Church is historically, visually and physically linked to its surroundings.

5.3. Character Defining Elements

Exterior

- Symmetrical arrangement of the front façade, with a dark red brick, simple arrangement of gable roofs with low slope gables with stone caps.
- Wide processional front steps.
- Large, central 3 section stone window with stone tracery and surrounding tracery, decorative brickwork and stone band course.
- 3 arch front entrance doors with multi pane leaded glass transoms
- Circle head windows with multi pane leaded glass on south façade, second floor.
- Flat head windows with leaded glass on South façade, ground floor.
- East tower with circle head leaded glass windows on second level 3 sides, an open 3 bay round arch arcade around the bells level, stepped out brick corbels, stepping in to a smaller continuation of the tower with centre louvred dormers 4 sides and spire. At ground level there is a large single arch with stepped in brick enclosing a pair of flat head leaded glass windows.
- Flat head windows with leaded glass on East façade ground floor and circle head windows with multi pane leaded glass on second floor.
- Datestone, on tower north corner, east face.
- Stained glass windows are memorials (see appendix).

Interior⁶

- Unique suspended floor design
- Unique structural steel roof support system
- Use of structural steel girders to eliminate pillars in church sanctuary.
- Church floor constructed of solid joists laminated together.



Ian McGillivray
B.A., B.Arch, OAA, FRAIC
CAHP

⁶ Information from Eric Code

SOURCES:

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www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/articles/horwood-and-white-burke
David Monteyne

Heritage Property Nomination Form, Heritage Preservation Services
As prepared by Michael Harrison

Archives of Ontario, Burke & Horwood (firm) (Internet search). This provides various lists of items in the Horwood Collection and includes a biographical sketch of the firm(s).
Fonds C 11 J.C.B. and E.C. Horwood collection

Information provided by Eric Code. **Appendix attached.**

The Significance of Wesley Mimico United Church

Thoughts and information for consideration

October 9, 2012



by Eric Code

The Significance of Wesley Mimico United Church

As the great grandson of the architect of Wesley Mimico United Church, I respectfully provide the following information for consideration. While I believe the church should be preserved for a number of reasons, this document focuses on the following four:

1. Architecture by notable Mimico residents
2. Unique design
3. Mimico heritage
4. Memorials to local war heroes

1. Architecture by notable Mimico residents

Wesley Mimico United Church was designed by two Mimico residents. The original building was designed by John Charles Batstone "J.C.B." Horwood, of the renowned architectural firm Horwood and White. His son, Eric Horwood, designed the 1958 addition.

As summarized below, these two residents made extraordinary contributions to Canadian architecture, art and education. Their work shaped our country – and still benefit the day-to-day lives of people across Canada.

The magnitude of these contributions and their direct association with Mimico is of great significance to our community. Wesley Mimico United Church is of special importance, as it is the greatest symbol of these achievements in Mimico.

About J.C.B. Horwood, one of the most influential architects of his time:

- **Mimico resident**

The Horwood estate was located on the south side of Lake Shore Boulevard between Superior Avenue and Albert Avenue, within walking distance of the church.

- **Helped bring steel-frame construction to Canada**

J.C.B. Horwood was exposed to new steel-frame technology¹ while apprenticing in New York² in the early 1890s. This technology had only recently been perfected in Chicago³ and was currently being used to build New York's first skyscrapers.^{4,5}

Meanwhile in Toronto, Edmond Burke required steel-frame technology to realize his ambitious design for the Robert Simpson Store. However, he was not familiar with the engineering challenges, since loadbearing walls were still the rule in Canada.⁶

J.C.B. Horwood helped Edmond Burke overcome those challenges via correspondence.⁶

- **Co-designed Canada's first 'skyscraper'**

J.C.B. Horwood partnered with Edmond Burke upon returning to Toronto in 1894, and they immediately began work on their firm's first commission: rebuilding the Robert Simpson Store.

The original building had been destroyed by fire, so their new design featured the state-of-the-art fireproofing methods and steel-frame technology that J.C.B. Horwood had learned in New York.^{1,2,7}

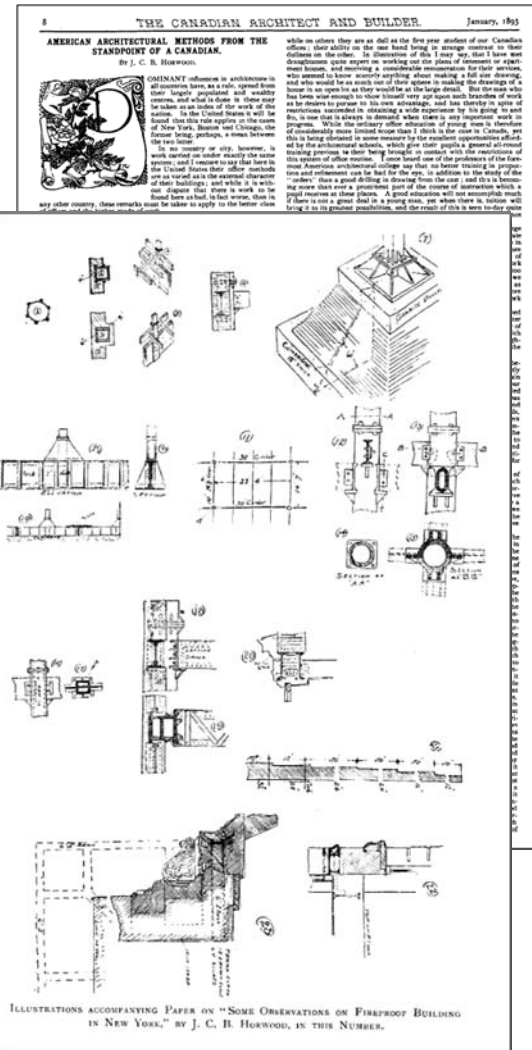
The result was the first building in Canada with all three defining characteristics of a skyscraper: a steel frame, elevator and above average height. *Canadian Architect and Builder* described it as "towering up at the corner of Yonge and Queen Streets."³

It was likely the first Canadian building to use curtain wall construction⁷ and was a major turning-point in Canadian architecture. After years of resistance, the Canadian architectural community accepted and adopted skyscraper technology, which led to the economical aesthetic of modernism in Canada.⁶

- **Pioneered modern construction methods**

While J.C.B. Horwood designed buildings in a variety of historic styles, he pioneered advanced construction methods and materials, such as glazed terra cotta, iron-reinforced concrete frames and new forms of fire protection.^{1,7}

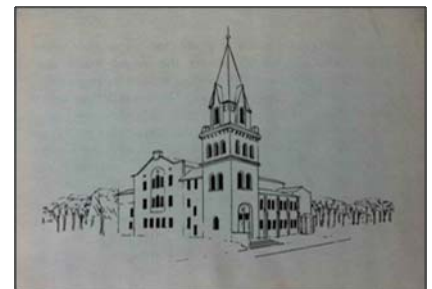
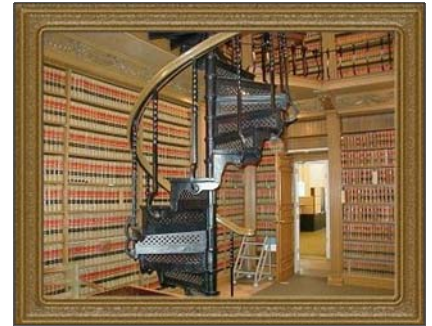
He was also recognized as an expert on structural engineering problems, including drainage and foundations. As buildings rapidly became larger and more complex, he embraced technological advances and shared his knowledge with the architectural community^{1,7,8} in articles such as these:



- **Shaped the face of Toronto and Canada**

J.C.B. Horwood was involved in the design of many significant Canadian buildings^{9,10,11}, including:

- **The Bay Queen Street** (originally the Robert Simpson Store), 1895
- **Osgoode Hall**, American Room, 1895
- **Bathurst Street Theatre**, additions, 1900
- **The Toronto School of Architecture** (originally the Royal College of Dental Surgeons), 1908
- **University of Toronto Admissions Office**, 1908
- **The Robert Simpson Company Warehouse**, 1910
- **Royal Conservatory of Music**, South Pavilion (originally McMaster Hall), 1910
- **Covenant House** (originally Willard Hall), 1912
- **Toronto West-End YMCA**, 1911
- **Toronto Central YMCA** (demolished), 1912
- **The Ryrie Building**, 1913-15
- **The Ontario College of Art**, classroom and studio building, 1921
- **Four Mimico estates**, 1921-37
- **Wesley Mimico United Church**, 1922
- **Trinity St. Paul's United Church**, Sunday school, 1922
- **The CHUM-City Building** (now the Bell Media Building, originally the Wesley Building), 1925
- **Jarvis Street Baptist Church**, renovations, 1938-39
- **The Hudson's Bay Company Department Stores** in Vancouver (1920-30), Calgary (1929), Edmonton (1929) and Regina (1927-28)



Above: J.C.B. Horwood

(left) and family

Right side, top to bottom: The Robert Simpson Store, Osgoode Hall American Room, CHUM-City Building, Artist's rendering of the Vancouver Hudson's Bay Company Store repurposed for condominiums, architectural sketch of Wesley Mimico United Church.

- **Influential educator**

J.C.B. Horwood believed that developing a unique Canadian style would inspire Canadian architects to achieve greatness and was dedicated to realizing his vision through education.^{1,8,12}

His contributions to education in Canada include:

- Conserving tens of thousands of architectural drawings and records for use by students, which are still studied in universities today^{10,12}
- Being a Charter Member of the Arts & Letters Club, which supported the development of the Group of Seven⁸
- Being a member of the Toronto Architectural Sketch Club, the Toronto Architectural 18 Club and the Toronto Society of Architects⁸
- Sharing his expertise through lectures and publications^{1,7,8}

About Eric Horwood, who donated The Horwood Collection to the Archives of Ontario:

- **Mimico resident**

As a child, Eric Horwood spent his summers in Mimico at his family's lakefront estate. As an adult, he and his wife raised their family just across the street. Years later, he moved to Stanley Avenue, where he resided the rest of his life.

- **Active member of Wesley Mimico United Church**

Eric Horwood attended Wesley Mimico United Church for 56 years.¹³ As a member of the Church Improvement Committee, he helped raise \$132,000 over the course of six years, which was enough to pay for an addition and free the church of all debt.¹⁴ When Eric Horwood passed away in 1984, his funeral was held at Wesley Mimico United Church.

- **Designed the church addition**

In 1958, Eric Horwood added a new main entrance and a balcony overlooking the sanctuary. The design seamlessly matches the original building.

- **Donated the J.C.B. and E.C. Horwood Collection to the Archives of Ontario**



In 1979 at a ceremony attended by Premier Bill Davis, Eric Horwood donated over 32,000 valuable architectural records to the Archives of Ontario. These records document 225 years of Canadian architectural history and were carefully preserved by J.C.B and Eric Horwood during their training and practice with over 85 firms.

The J.C.B. and E.C. Horwood Collection includes original drawings for Heritage Buildings in Toronto and throughout Canada. When Bill Davis accepted the collection, he described it as "...one of the most significant gifts ever made to the Archives of Ontario...possibly the largest and one of the richest collections of architectural drawings in Canada."¹⁵

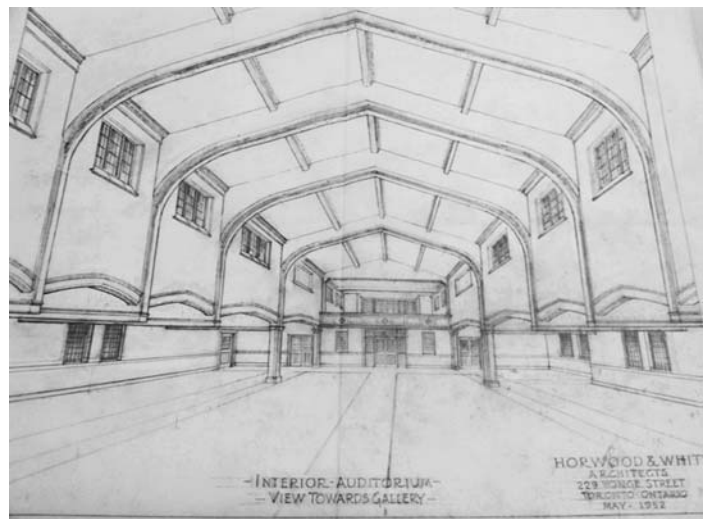
Above: Eric Horwood donating the J.C.B. and E.C. Horwood Collection to the Archives of Ontario before Premier Bill Davis.

2. Unique design

Wesley Mimico United Church possesses a number of unique design features, including:

- **The floor above the gymnasium is hung from the roof**¹³
By hanging the floor from the roof with steel bars, J.C.B. Horwood was able to make a large gymnasium on the lower level that would not be obstructed by pillars. While an interior wall was added along the side of the gymnasium at a later date, it is not structural.¹³
- **Only two pillars support the roof over the sanctuary**
When viewed from below, it does not seem possible that the roof could support itself. The ceiling slopes down from the peak, transitions into a vertical wall, and becomes horizontal before meeting the exterior walls. Only two pillars support the ceiling where the horizontal and vertical sections meet. Based on the shape of the arches, it is likely that J.C.B. Horwood supported the roof with an innovative steel-frame design.
- **Laminated-joist floors**¹³
The church's floors are built entirely of joists – each one directly beside the next. There are no gaps between them and they are laminated together to form a single, solid unit. From below, the floor looks like a tongue-in-groove ceiling. Above, no subfloor is required.¹³

Since J.C.B. Horwood pioneered steel frame construction in Canada, the roof and suspended floor may have been significant architectural innovations and warrant further investigation.



Top right: Architectural drawing of the church sanctuary by Eric Horwood, facing the back.

Bottom right: The church sanctuary today, facing the front along the right side.

3. Mimico heritage

The story of Wesley Mimico United Church began in 1863 when pioneers built Mimico Methodist Church on what is now Royal York Road. The congregation grew rapidly as Mimico was settled, and by 1922, the original building could no longer meet their needs. So, they built a larger church in the heart of town among the storefronts of Mimico Avenue. The original church became Mimico Town Hall.¹⁴

As the new church grew, Mimico grew around it. Mimico Avenue became lined with businesses and schools that supported the growing community. In fact, almost anything a family needed could be found within a 500-meter radius of the church, at the following local businesses¹⁶:

- Rosevear's Confectionery, 6 Mimico Avenue
- Warner & Fordyce's "Electrical Store", 20 Mimico Avenue
- Dr. W.G. Snodgrass McLennan's Dentistry, 34 Mimico Avenue
- Mimico Orange Hall, 46 Mimico Avenue
- Herod's Butcher Shop, 52 Mimico Avenue
- George Vaughan Tailors, 54 Mimico Avenue
- Hamblin's Meat Market, 60 Mimico Avenue
- Parr's Pharmacy, 62 Mimico Avenue
- G.H. Hogle Funeral Home, 63 Mimico Ave (formerly the church's manse)
- Mechin's Bakery, 64 Mimico Avenue
- Hillside Dairy, 78 Mimico Avenue
- Mimico High School, 95 Mimico Avenue
- Sanitary Barber Shop, 118 Mimico Avenue
- Quinn's Grocery, 120 Mimico Avenue

The church became an important community hub and was attended by a number of significant local figures, including:

- The Hendry family¹⁴, who's farm stretched from Royal York Road to the lake
- The English family¹⁴, including the first Methodist preacher and Principal John English, after whom John English school is named
- The Gauld family¹⁴, including Superintendent George R. Gauld, after whom Mimico's second elementary school was named
- The Davidsons family¹⁴, including the developer of the Humber Bay neighbourhood
- Amos Waites¹⁷ (Town of Mimico's longest serving Mayor, during periods from 1936–1948, after whom Amos Waites Park at the bottom of Mimico Avenue is named.)

4. Memorials to local war heroes

80 members of Wesley Mimico United Church fought in the Great World Wars and seven lost their lives, including Flight-Lieutenant David Hornell: the first Canadian Airman to be awarded the Victoria Cross.¹⁴

Memorials within the church include:

- Stained glass window in remembrance of Flight-Lieutenant David Hornell, awarded the Victoria Cross
- Organ chimes in remembrance of Flying Officer James Steward Ferrier
- Stained glass window in remembrance of Flying Officer Charles Wesley Miller
- Two large stained glass windows honouring all those who served

Sources:

1. J.C.B. Horwood, "Architecture in New York", Canadian Architect & Builder, Volume 4 (January 1891), Issue 1, page 6; "American Architectural Methods from the Standpoint of a Canadian", Canadian Architect & Builder, Volume 6 (January 1893), pages 8-6; "Some Observations on Fireproofing Building in New York", Canadian Architect & Builder, Volume 6 (March 1893), pages 36-38.
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