

HERITAGE PROPERTY RESEARCH AND EVALUATION REPORT



MARY REID HOUSE
4200 EGLINTON AVENUE WEST, TORONTO

Prepared by:

Heritage Preservation Services
City Planning Division
City of Toronto

January 2015

1. DESCRIPTION



Cover: south entrance to the property on Eglinton Avenue West;
above: south elevation of the Mary Reid House (Heritage Preservation Services, 2014)

4200 Eglinton Avenue West: Mary Reid House	
ADDRESS	4200 Eglinton Avenue West (northwest corner of Royal York Road)
WARD	Ward 4 (Eglinton Centre)
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	Plan 2476, Part Lot 1
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	Richview
HISTORICAL NAME	Mary Reid House
CONSTRUCTION DATE	1939
ORIGINAL OWNER	Mary Reid
ORIGINAL USE	Residential (single detached house form building
CURRENT USE*	Residential * This does not refer to permitted use(s) as defined by the Zoning By-law
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	None found
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION/MATERIALS	Brick cladding with brick, stone, and wood detailing
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	Period Revival
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	None found ¹
CRITERIA	Design/Physical and Contextual
HERITAGE STATUS	Listed on City of Toronto's heritage register
RECORDER	Heritage Preservation Services: Kathryn Anderson
REPORT DATE	January 2015

¹ Building permit records do not survive for Etobicoke, and reference to the property was not found in a search of periodical indices for the period (including Cameron Index, Canadian House and Gardens, 1980)

2. BACKGROUND

This research and evaluation report describes the history, architecture and context of the property at 4200 Eglinton Avenue West, and applies evaluation criteria to determine whether it merits 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
1924 May	Part of Lot 17, Concession B, west of the Humber is subdivided as Plan 2476 and registered the following year
1925 Aug	Mary J. Reid purchases Lot 1 for \$3000
1925 Dec	Reid's property is first recorded in the tax assessment rolls, with the vacant site valued at \$500
1937 Feb	Mary J. Reid conveys part of the west half of Lot 1 to one of her sons, Randolph Calvin Reid, but the property remains undeveloped according to the assessment rolls
1939 Dec	An unfinished building valued at \$1300 is recorded on Mary Reid's property
1941 Apr	Mary J. Reid transfers the remainder of the west part of Lot 1 with the house to Randolph Calvin Reid, and all of the east part of Lot 1 to her second son, Leonard Roger Reid
1950	Randolph Calvin Reid owns all of Lot 1 after acquiring the east part of the parcel
1959	Reid briefly leases the east end of the property to the Sun Oil Company
1987	Reid's widow, Frances Maud Reid inherits the property
1989	Frances Reid sells the site, ending over 60 years of family ownership
1990	The City of Etobicoke acquires Reid's property
2006	The property at 4200 Eglinton Avenue West is listed on the City's heritage register

ii. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Richview

The property at 4200 Eglinton Avenue West is located in the Richview neighbourhood of Etobicoke, which extends north of Eglinton between Royal York Road (east) and Highways 27 and 427 (west). The origins of the community dated to the early 19th century when a blacksmith shop opened near the intersection of Richview Side Road (Eglinton) and the Third Line (Highway 27) to provide services to local farmers. The hamlet that developed around the crossroads was named "Richview" when the first post office opened in 1852.²

² Richview Cemetery, located on a parcel of land now outlined by Eglinton Avenue West and Highways 27 and 427, is the last physical reminder of the 19th century community and is designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act

The York County Atlas of 1878 showed the development of Richview to date and illustrated the farm lots adjoining it (Image 4). East of the hamlet, at present-day Eglinton Avenue West and Islington Avenue, Lots 17 and 18 in Concession B west of the Humber River were owned by Daniel La Rose (Image 2). La Rose acquired most of Lot 17 in 1845, and commissioned the surviving brick house (c. 1861) that is recognized on the City's heritage register (Image 3).³ Members of the La Rose family occupied the farm until the early 20th century, after which the southeast corner of the lot was severed for a residential enclave.

The transformation of Richview and other Etobicoke communities from farming hamlets to residential subdivisions was forecast during the World War I era when developer Robert Home Smith began his acquisition of vast tracts of land along the Humber River between The Queensway and Richview Side Road (Eglinton). His ambitious plans for the region were encompassed in the Humber Valley Surveys, a series of self-contained neighbourhoods laid out according to the principles of the English Garden City Movement, including fine residences designed by in-house architects as "a little bit of England far away from England" (Image 6).⁴ North of the famed Kingsway enclave, Home Smith's subsequent developments adjoined the Royal York Golf Club (now St. George's Golf and Country Club) and were connected via Royal York Road.⁵ As the last of the communities to be completed after World War II, Humber Valley Village was extended to the south side of Richview Side Road. The latter street was proposed as a connector road for the 400 series of highways introduced to the metropolitan Toronto area in the 1960s. As Eglinton Avenue was extended west of the Humber River, land along the Richview Side Road was expropriated for the six-lane "Richview Expressway" (which remained unbuilt), including part of the former La Rose farm where the property at 4200 Eglinton Avenue West is located (Images 9-10).

Mary Reid House

The subject property at 4200 Eglinton Avenue West occupies lands adjoining the northwest corner of Royal York Road, which were subdivided under Plan 2476 in 1924 (Image 5). Although the expansive lot sizes were designed for large-scale houses similar to the Humber Valley Surveys directly south, the remoteness of the area delayed its development, with most of the tract resurveyed as part of a smaller subdivision after World War II (Image 8). However, as one of the first purchasers in 1925, Mary Jane Todd Reid acquired Lot 1, the corner parcel at Royal York Road.⁶ With the onset of the Great Depression of the 1930s, the site remained vacant until December 1939 when an

³ Built to face west onto Islington Avenue, the property is now known municipally as 322 La Rose Avenue, with the latter street named for the family

⁴ Heyes, 130

⁵ This road was the northward extension of Church Street to the golf course, which was originally owned by Toronto's Royal York Hotel in a partnership with the R. Home Smith Company

⁶ When her son Randolph Calvin Reid was born in 1908, Mary Jane resided on Church Street (future Royal York Road) in Etobicoke where her husband, Randolph Reid, Sr. was described as a gardener in Humber Bay

"unfinished building" was identified in the tax assessment rolls. The development of the area is shown in the archival photographs attached as Images 7-8.

The first occupants of the house were Mary Reid's son, Randolph Calvin Reid (born 1908) and his wife. In 1941, land records indicate that Calvin Reid received the west part of the lot with the house when his mother subdivided the property.⁷ Reid and his family continued to occupy the house, which was retained by his widow until 1989 and acquired by the City of Etobicoke the following year. The Mary Reid House was listed on the City's heritage register (then known as the Inventory of Heritage Properties) in 2006.

iii. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Current photographs of the property at 4200 Eglinton Avenue West are found on the cover and in Section 6 of this report. The Mary Reid House is a well-crafted example of Period Revival design, which was among the most popular styles for residential architecture in the early 20th century.⁸ Inspired by the domestic buildings of medieval England and the late 19th century Arts and Crafts Movement, Period Revival houses display "generally picturesque, asymmetrical massing" and were "especially popular in certain affluent suburbs of Toronto, Vancouver and Victoria."⁹ In Etobicoke, the style first appeared in large numbers in R. Home Smith's distinctive Kingsway neighbourhood and included the George Skelding House (1932) at 12 King George's Road, the first house in the community individually designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act (Image 11).

The Mary Reid House rises 2½ stories on an L-shaped plan that is created by the projecting wing on the south elevation. Beneath a cross-gable roof with a chimney at the east end, the structure is clad with red brick and trimmed with brick, artificial stone, and wood. Distinctive features of the cladding are the detailed corbelled brickwork beneath the eaves and the sporadic clinker bricks (partially vitrified broken bricks) that reflect Period Revival styling. On the principal (south) elevation, the single-storey entrance block is highlighted with a stone band course and contains the main entry, which is comprised of a single panelled wood door with a stone surround with quoins that is placed off-centre in the wall. The flat-headed openings with multi-paned sash windows found on all of the elevations are hallmarks of Period Revival design, including the narrow single openings on the south wall and the distinctive oriel window with brackets in the second storey of the south wing. On the rear (north) wall, the secondary entrance to the building is protected by a gable roof with wood detailing and oversized brackets. A low stone wall extends along the south end of the property and incorporates gate posts at the two entrances to the semicircular drive leading to the house. The detached garage is not a heritage feature.

⁷ In 1950, Randolph Calvin Reid acquired the remainder of the lot from his brother, Leonard Roger Reid

⁸ The variant of the Period Revival style identified by mock half-timbering (exposed wood beams with stucco infill) is known as Tudor Revival

⁹ Maitland, 156

iv. CONTEXT

The property at 4200 Eglinton Avenue West is shown on the location map attached as Image 1. Placed on the north side of the street, west of Royal York Road, the Mary Reid House is set back from the roadway behind a low stone wall with gate posts marking the east and west entrances. Further west on Eglinton near its intersection with Islington Avenue, the Sidney Screation House (1934) is another fine example of Period Revival design from the same era (Image 12).¹⁰ As Etobicoke country houses with Period Revival styling, the Reid and Screation Houses are linked to the Arthur Crumpton House (1925) at 55 St. Phillip's Road near Royal York Road and Lawrence Avenue West, which is designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act (Image 11).¹¹

In the extended block north of Eglinton Avenue West between Royal York Road (east) and Islington Avenue (west), the former farmhouses at 322 La Rose Avenue (c. 1861) and 30 Norgrove Avenue (c. 1850) are listed on the City of Toronto's heritage register.

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 Example of a Style and Type – The Mary Reid House is valued for its design as a fine and well-crafted representative example of the Period Revival style applied to a country house in Etobicoke. Identified by the mixture of elements drawn from English medieval architecture, its design is particularly distinguished by the asymmetrical plan with projecting horizontal and vertical planes, the fenestration that includes an oriel window typical of Period Revival styling, and the application of corbelled brickwork and clinker bricks. The appearance of the Mary Reid House is

¹⁰ The property at 4480 Eglinton Avenue West, which is currently occupied by the First Church of Christ, Scientist, Etobicoke, was identified as a potential heritage resource in a Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment Report (2010) prepared for the Eglinton Crosstown LRT (see Section 5)

¹¹ While the design of the Arthur Crumpton House is also reminiscent of the residences introduced in the Kingsway and other R. Home Smith enclaves, it is further distinguished by its setting adjoining the Weston Golf and Country Club and overlooking the Humber River

reminiscent of the houses designed for nearby Kingsway Park (south of St. George’s Golf and Country Club) and the other 20th century residential enclaves developed by the R. Home Smith Company along the Humber River, all of which featured architecture and landscaping inspired by the English Garden City Movement.

Historical or Associative Value	
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 associative values are identified at the time of the writing of this report. The architect or builder was not found.

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 property at 4200 Eglinton Avenue West also has cultural heritage value related to its contextual importance in maintaining and supporting the historical character of the area as it developed at the corner of Eglinton Avenue West and Royal York Road. Originally associated with the farming community of Richview, the land adjoining this intersection (northwest) was divided in the early 20th century as a small residential enclave characterized by large lot sizes. While the remainder of the subdivision did not develop as envisioned, with its scale, landscaped setting, and setback on a corner lot, the Mary Reid House is a reminder of the intended appearance of this part of Etobicoke.

Surroundings – Contextually, the Mary Reid House is also valued for its links to its setting on the north side of Eglinton Avenue West, west of Royal York Road where it is placed in and viewed across open space, set back from the thoroughfare, accessed via a semicircular driveway, and separated from the street by a low stone wall with stone gate posts.

4. SUMMARY

Following research and evaluation according to Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the property at 4200 Eglinton Avenue West has design and contextual values as a well-crafted example of Period Revival styling to a house form building that is historically and visually linked to its surroundings and reflects the historical character of the area adjoining the northwest corner of Eglinton and Royal York Road.

5. SOURCES

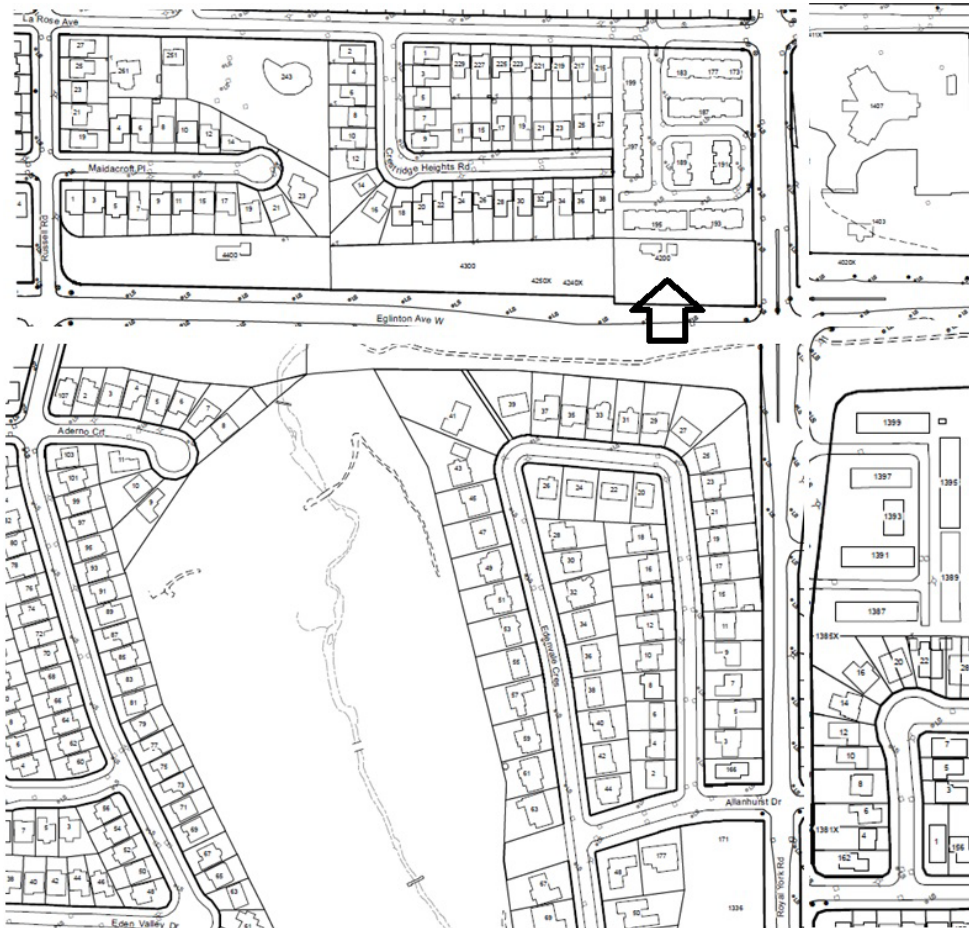
Archival Sources

Abstract Indices of Deeds, Plan 2476, Part Lot 1
Aerial Maps, City of Toronto, 1947 ff.
Archival Photographs, Toronto Reference Library (citations in Section 6)
Assessment Rolls, Etobicoke Township, Division 8, 1928 ff.
City of Toronto Directories, 1930 ff.
Decennial Census of Canada, 1921
Historical Atlas of the City of Toronto and County of York, 1878
Map of the Township of Etobicoke, 1856

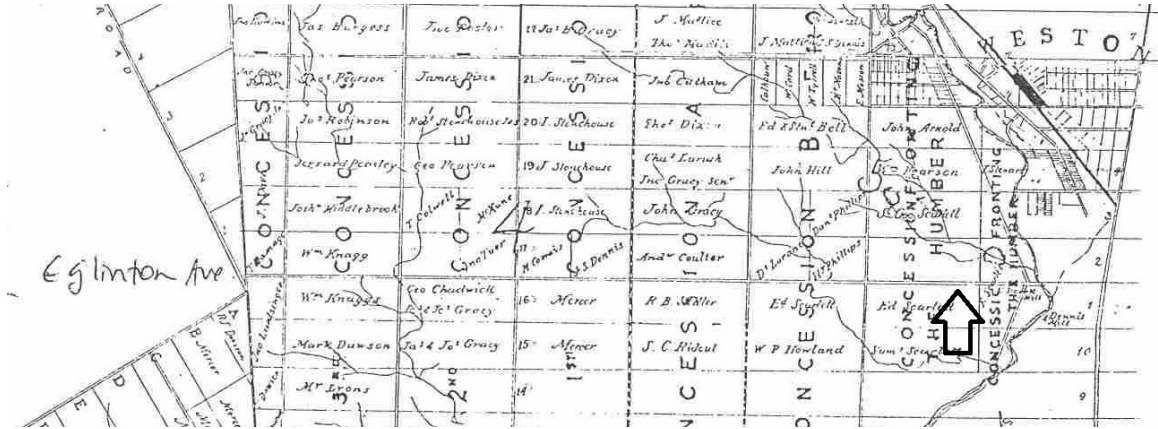
Secondary Sources

Baine, Richard P. and A. Lynn McMurray, Toronto: an urban study, 1970
Blumenson, John, Ontario Architecture, 1990
Brown, Ron, Toronto's Lost Villages, 1997
Crawford, Bess Hillery, The Kingsway, 2005
Cruikshank, Tom, and John de Visser, Old Toronto Houses, 2003
Given, Robert, Etobicoke Remembered, 2007
Kalman, Harold, A History of Canadian Architecture, Vol. 2, 1994
Maitland, Leslie, Jacqueline Hucker, and Shannon Ricketts, A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles, 1992
"Obituary," Leonard Reid, Toronto Star, February 23, 2001
Reid Family Records, www.genealogy.ca
Sidelights of History, Etobicoke Historical Board, 1975
Unterman and McPhail, "Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment Report," Eglinton Crosstown Light Rapid Transit (LRT), February 2010
<http://thecrosstown.ca/sites/default/files/pdf/reports/Crosstown-LRT-Environmental-Project-Report/appendixc-cultural-heritage-resource-assessment-report.pdf>

IMAGES – maps and atlases are followed by other archival images. The **arrows** mark the location of the property at 4200 Eglinton Avenue West



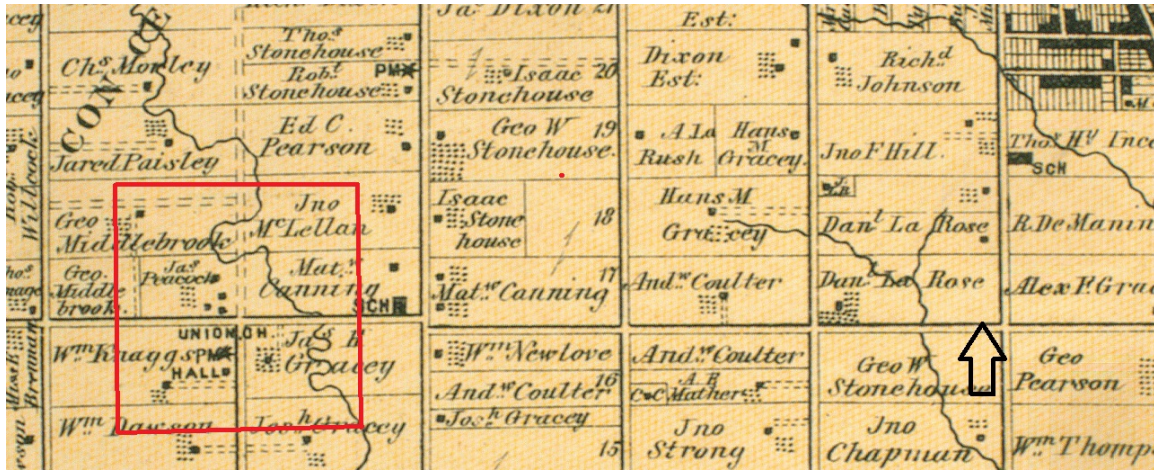
1. City of Toronto Property Data Map: the subject property at 4200 Eglinton Avenue West is marked on the northwest corner of Eglinton Avenue West and Royal York Road



2. Map of Etobicoke Township, 1856: showing the future location of the property at 4200 Eglinton Avenue West in Concession B, Township Lot 17 (present-day Eglinton Avenue is indicated on the map)



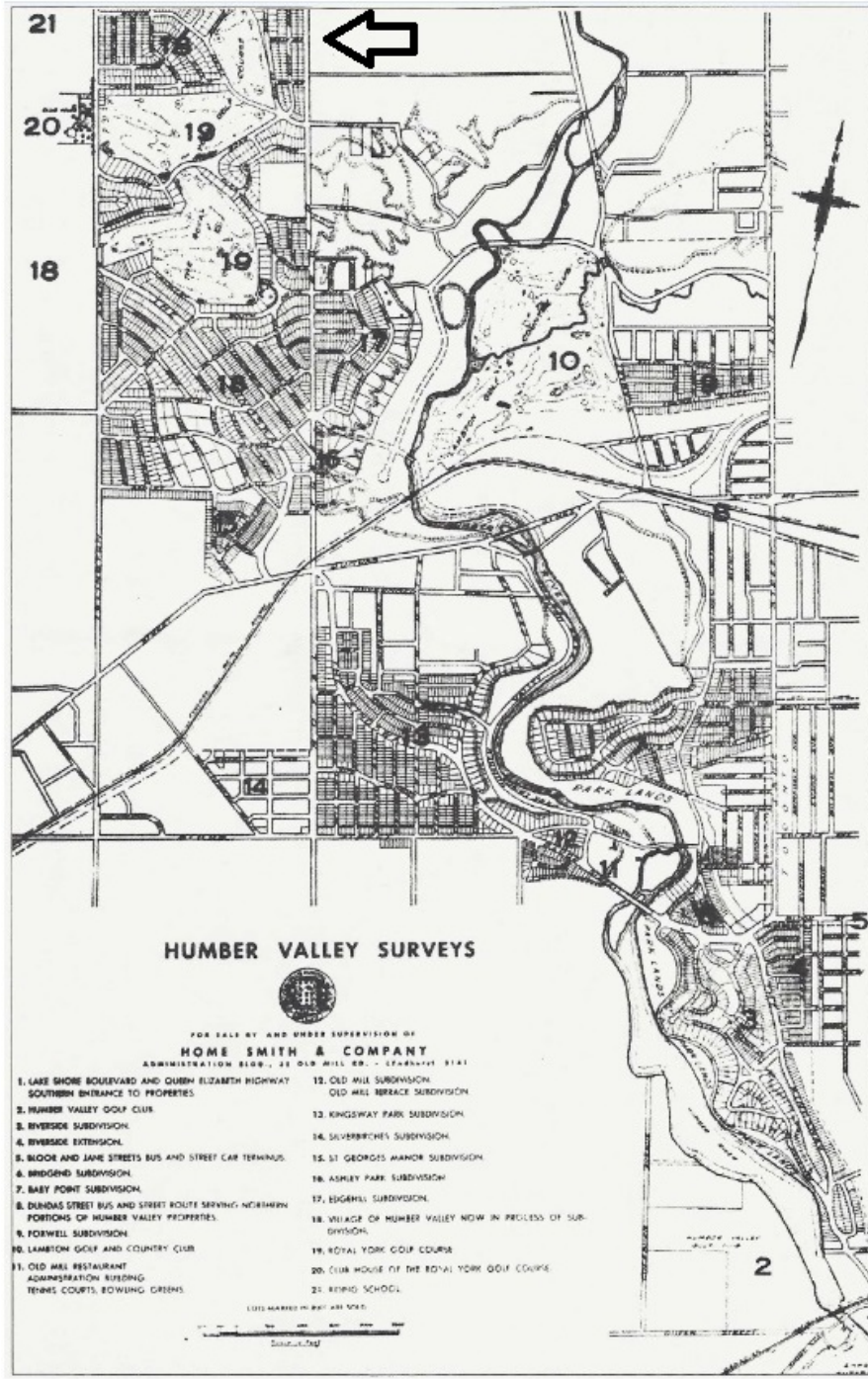
3. Sketch, Daniel La Rose House, c. 1861: showing the surviving house form building at 322 La Rose Avenue that was commissioned in the 19th century for the farmer who owned the subject lands at that time (Sidelights of History, 68)



4. Extract, Historical Atlas of York County, 1878: showing the cross-roads community of Richview (within the red lines on the left) as well as Daniel La Rose's farm lot and residence (on the right)



5. Plans of Subdivision, 4200 Eglinton Avenue West, 1925: showing Plan 2476 where the property was built on Lot 1 near the northwest corner of present-day Royal York Road (Toronto Land Registry Office)



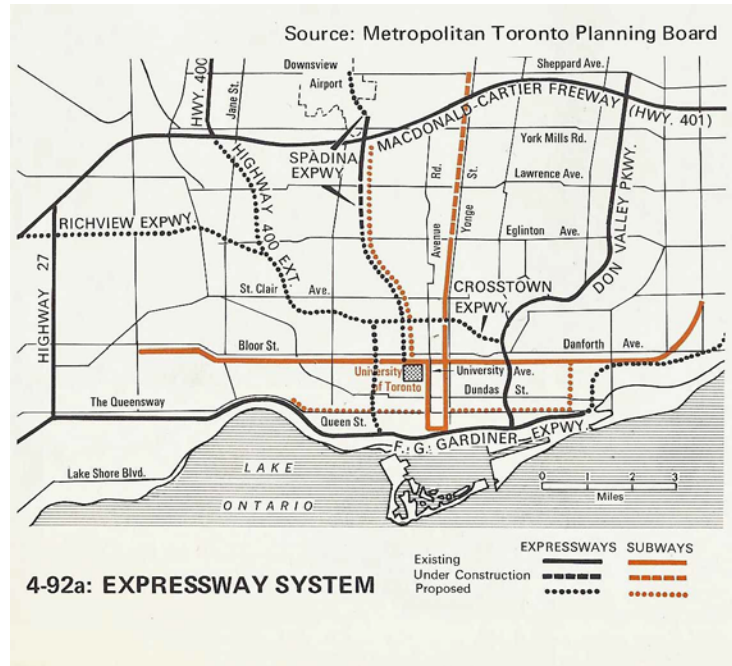
6. Humber Valley Surveys: showing the location of the subject property at the north end of the Home Smith and Company's list of residential developments adjoining the Humber River (reproduced in The Kingsway, 148)



7. Archival Photographs, Royal York Road, 1956: looking north from Richview Side Road (Eglinton), above, and south from the same vantage point (below) and showing the rural appearance of the area following the construction of the Mary Reid House (not shown) (Toronto Reference Library Items 4254 and 4987)



8. Aerial Photographs, 1947 (above) and 1962 (below): showing the subject property set in open space and accessed via the semicircular driveway prior to and after the construction of the adjoining subdivision to the northwest (City of Toronto Archives)



9. Diagram, Expressway System, 1970: showing the planned location of the "Richview Expressway" linking Eglinton Avenue west of the Humber and the Richview Side Road to the 400 Series of highways (Baine, 87)



10. Bing Maps, 2014: showing the location of the property at 4200 Eglinton Avenue West where the treed open space along the road was reserved for the planned six-lane Richview Expressway (<http://www.bing.com/maps/>)



11. Photographs, 12 King George's Road (above) and 55 St. Phillip's Road (below): showing other local examples of Period Revival styling applied to high-end residential properties, which are designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act (Heritage Preservation Services)



12. Photograph, 4480 Eglinton Avenue West, 2014: showing the Sidney Screamon House (1934), which was converted for the First Church of Christ, Scientist, Etobicoke (Heritage Preservation Services)



13. Photograph, 4200 Eglinton Avenue West, 2006: showing the south elevation and west wall (right) at the time the property was listed on the City's heritage register (Heritage Preservation Services)



14. Photographs, 4200 Eglinton Avenue West, 2006: showing the detailing of the south elevation with the main entrance (above left) and the oriel window (above right), the east elevation (below left), and the west elevation (below right) (Heritage Preservation Services)



15. Photographs, Mary Reid House, 2006: showing the rear (north) wall (above) and the north entrance (below) (Heritage Preservation Services)