

CULTURAL HERITAGE EVALUATION REPORT

Building Name and Address: Jamieson House, 2764 Rowatt Street

Construction Date: circa 1873

Original Owner: John Cameron Jamieson



Northeast corner of 2764 Rowatt Street, Source: Google Maps, 2019

Executive Summary

2764 Rowatt Street is a “T” shaped two and a half storey cottage located in Britannia, Ottawa. The building was likely already built by 1873, when the plan for Britannia was created, making it one of the earliest cottages in the village. The house has Late Victorian features, in that it has elements that suited the owner’s needs, as well as Queen Anne Revival and Italianate influences, demonstrated by the massing, form, ornate wraparound verandah, the box bay window, segmental windows with lug sills. The incorporation of a transitional indoor-outdoor space as a verandah with its detailing and use of natural materials, became important features in the vernacular cottage style in Britannia. The larger massing and its brick cladding demonstrate the original homeowner, John

Cameron Jamieson's wealth, which predominantly came from his land holdings and apartments he managed in Britannia. J. C. Jamieson significantly contributed to Britannia's popularity as a cottage community, and his son, Gerald, continued to manage his local properties and serving the community into the 1950s. For several generations, the Jamieson family lived at 2764 Rowatt Street.

The property has cultural heritage value for its design, associative and contextual values. It meets four of the nine criteria for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

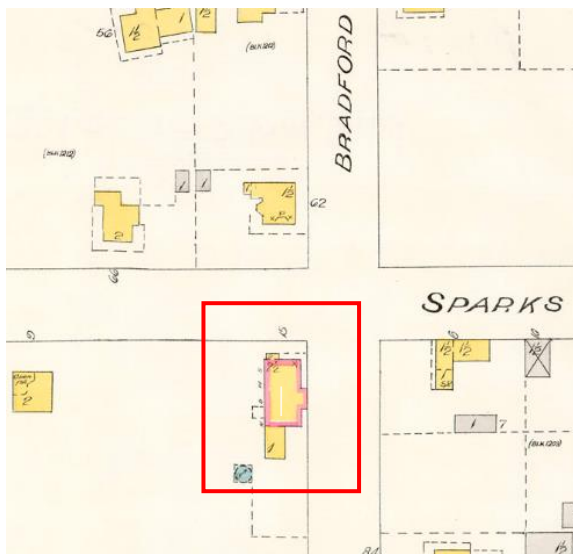
Architecture

2764 Rowatt Street is a two and a half storey red brick running bond clad house with a stone foundation likely built circa 1873 as a residence. The architect or building of the house is unknown. The property is located on the southwest corner of Bradford Street and Rowatt Street. The structure was built as a detached house, and it continues to be used for residential purposes.



2764 Rowatt Street, north and east façade, Source: City of Ottawa, 2016

2764 Rowatt Street was constructed circa 1873, around the time that Britannia as a cottage community was slowly being developed (the plan for Britannia was made in 1873). This would make the house one of the earliest buildings in the neighbourhood, thereby predating the peak of Britannia's established vernacular cottage style from 1900 to 1914. However, it does still have some of what become characteristic features of Britannia's vernacular cottage style. Vernacular residences typically feature one and a half storeys, a simple box or L-shaped form, horizontal lap siding or shingle cladding, a verandah on the front façade or wrapping around multiple facades, and ornamentation focused on the roof and verandah. At the same time, Britannia buildings were also designed in high styles including Late Victorian, Queen Anne Revival, and Shingle Style. The high style cottages still incorporated aspects of the local vernacular style including a verandah, similar cladding and construction materials, ornamentation, and massing. 2764 Rowatt Street was built in the Late Victorian style combining Italianate and Queen Anne Revival influences.



15 Sparks Street (2764 Rowatt Street), Source: 1912 Ottawa Fire Insurance Plan, p 168



15 Sparks Street (2764 Rowatt Street), Source: 1922 Ottawa Fire Insurance Plan, p 168

The house has a cross gabled roof with a T-shaped plan, with the shallow “T” arm on the east façade where the cross gables meet. A two to three storey

building with a “T” shaped form is typical of Italianate style, which was popular in Ontario from 1840 to 1885, with a subgroup near the end of this period referred to as “high Victorian Italianate”.¹ This simple form can also be seen elsewhere in the community, for example 195 Bradford Street. The second floor features a prominent box bay window with a decorative alternating wood pattern with a central herringbone design. The 1912 Fire Insurance Plans shows a second storey wood framed projection, which may suggest it was original to its brick form.² The box bay window can be seen in a photograph of the house circa 1961 to 1965,³ which appears to have the same shape, materials, and colour as today. A façade that is asymmetrical, predominantly clad in brick with intricate woodwork featuring bay windows are characteristic of the Queen Anne style.⁴ However a porch above the entrance and uniform with the elevation of the windows is an Italianate characteristic.⁵

¹ “Ontario Architectural Style Guide,” University of Waterloo Heritage Resources Centre, last modified January 2009, <https://www.therealtydeal.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Heritage-Resource-Centre-Achitectural-Styles-Guide.pdf>, 10; Thomas Durant Visser, *Porches of North America*, (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2012), 199.

² Ottawa Fire Insurance Plans, 1912, 168; Note: a photograph circa 1950s possibly found in Tweedsmuir Histories Volume 6 at the City of Ottawa Archives shows the prominent bay, along with the northeast wraparound verandah and its decorative elements including the gabled end with wood features.

³ Page 5. Note: date is an estimate using GeoOttawa (geoottawa.ca) to determine the houses south of 2764 Rowatt Street was built between 1958 and 1965, the land register Plan 40 ½ Book 69 page 4 showing starting in 1961 several parts of block A are mortgaged indicating the development of the rest of the block, given the streetcars were closed in 1958 and the bus stop sign on the hydro pole, and the appearance of the cars, it can be suggested the photo was taken circa 1961 and 1965.

⁴ “Ontario Architectural Style Guide,” 12.

⁵ Visser, *Porches of North America*, 199.



2764 Rowatt Street, north façade with prominent box bay window, Source: City of Ottawa, 2024

In Eva Taylor's 1982 *Ottawa's Britannia*, neighbourhood residents recalled the building was originally known as the "Green house" and that it was clad in brick around 1901 to 1902.⁶ This suggest that the original building may have been clad in horizontal lap siding painted green, which would reflect the original materials used in the vernacular cottage style. Using green as a colour scheme and to highlight architectural features can be seen in other early residences such as 66 Bradford Street (circa 1878), 154 Britannia Road (circa 1895), 195 Bradford Street (circa 1898), and came to be used in many of Britannia's vernacular style cottages such as 127 Britannia Road (circa 1902) and 73 Britannia Road (circa 1912).

⁶ Eva Taylor, *Ottawa's Britannia*, (Ottawa: Britannia Historical Association, 1983), 73.



2764 Rowatt Street, east gable end, Source: Google Maps, 2021. Note: vertical stain on the wall correlates to likely water damage from a downspout seen in the 1961-65 photo

Above the box bay window as well on the top of the east gable end, there is a small semi-circular voussoir and a lug sill, suggesting originally there were small semi-circular windows present. The windows were removed before the beginning of the 1960s as they are bricked in the photo of the house that is circa 1961 to 1965.



J. C. Jamieson residence, circa 1961-1965, Source: City of Ottawa Archives, MG165-01-06, CA027943

The house had a combination of narrow multi-paned sash windows. The windows have curved segmental arch openings with decorated segmental arch trim, brick voussoirs with upper dentil voussoir, and lug sills. The original windows on the building appear to have been upgraded to casement or fixed windows. However, the window openings and flat transom with multi-coloured geometric stained glass have remained on the five first storey windows and above the main door.



2764 Rowatt Street, flat transoms with stained glass windows on first floor windows and above main door, Source: City of Ottawa, 2024

This asymmetrical façade, along with the larger massing, the bay window, and the ornate detailing on the verandahs lend to Queen Anne Revival influences which emerged in Ontario in the 1870s.⁷ A characteristic feature of this style includes wide, wrapping, ornate verandahs. This is demonstrated at 2764 Rowatt Street with its wrapping verandah on the north and east façades, along with a smaller verandah on the west side of the house. Both are raised with stairs and heavily feature wood materials. The current wraparound verandah was built between 1979 and 1990.⁸ The wraparound verandah has thin, turned square based columns, wood banisters and a balustrade with similar turned balusters as the columns, spindlework valance, and decorative brackets. The ornate verandah brackets are a key feature to the Italiante style,⁹ however the turned columns,

⁷ “Queen Anne Revival Style (1870-1910),” Ontario Architecture, accessed November 2, 2023, <http://ontarioarchitecture.com/QueenAnne.htm>.

⁸ Most colour slides are labelled “1979” in “Ottawa Heritage Planning Study 00: Britannia” which is dated 1979 to 1990. There are two slides for 2764 Rowatt: one labelled “2764 Rowatt” featuring the same verandah balustrade as in the circa 1959-1965 Tweedsmuir Volume 6 photograph; and another incorrectly labelled “2778 Rowatt” with the current verandah balustrade and spindlework trim. City of Ottawa Archives, P01-OTT1-HD-0. City building permits indicate the verandah was restored in 1990 however only the joint and girder beams were installed.

⁹ Visser, *Porches of North America*, 197-198.

balustrade, and spindlework valances are more Queen Anne Revival features,¹⁰ therefore both styles are present. The verandah before this period seen in the circa 1961-1965 photo, had a similar appearance, with turned square based columns, with Queen Anne Revival influences with a wooden balustrade with a geometric pattern, and a thin, horizontal, intricate valance. The verandah style and detailing suggest they may have been built circa 1901-02 when the residence was bricked.



West verandah, 2764 Rowatt Street,
Source: Google Maps, 2012



Bargeboard and gable apex panel, 119
Bradford Street, Source: Google Maps, 2016



The verandah gable ends and the pediment like false gable above the east entrance of the verandah have a wooden feature that has an incised lozenge motif and concave circles in the centre of the lozenge. The verandah on the west

¹⁰ Visser, *Porches of North America*, 218.

façade has a cross gabled roof is similar to the end of the east portion of the wraparound verandah, and the same wooden detailing on the gable end and the pediment like false gables on the sides. This pattern of detailing can be seen at other buildings in Britannia including on the gable apex at 119 Bradford Street which was built circa 1904, This suggests the early ornamentation at 2764 Rowatt Street influenced later construction and focus on wood detailing in the vernacular style come the turn of the 20th century. The detailed ornamentation on the house throughout its history, demonstrates the pride in craftsmanship that was prevalent Britannia vernacular cottages and residences.



South façade, 2764 Rowatt Street, Source: Google Maps, 2019



South façade, 2764 Rowatt Street, Source: Google Maps, 2021

Between 1912 and 1922, the second storey porch was added to the south one storey portion of the house. The porch is enclosed by windows with flat surrounds and a flat roof. Paired windows are typical of Italiante style (1840-1885), also demonstrating the combination of styles in the house to suit the owner's aesthetic and needs.¹¹ In 2020, the homeowners built an attached garage to the south façade.

¹¹ "Ontario Architectural Style Guide," 10.

Other than the recent garage addition and the restoration of the front verandah detailing between 1979 and 1990, the exterior of 2764 Rowatt Street has likely retained its 1901-02 appearance with its Late Victorian style in its combination of Italiante including Queen Anne Revival styles, with features that came to be popularized by Britannia's vernacular style cottage, such as the wide wraparound verandah, wood detailed decoration, and original green colour scheme.

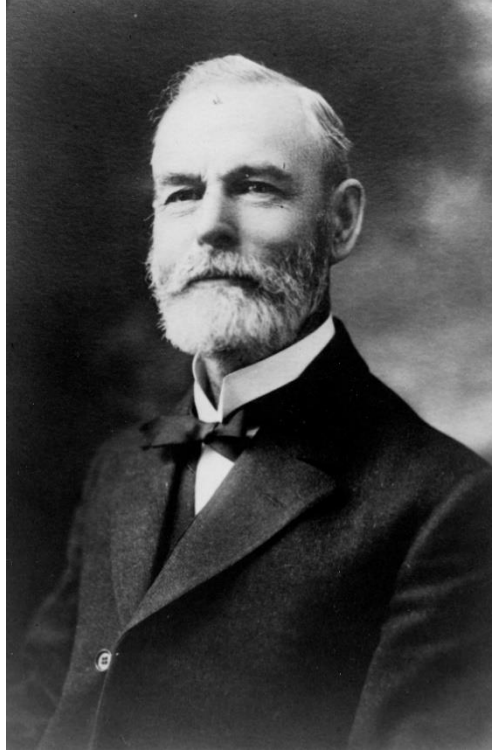
History

2764 Rowatt Street is located on Block A part Bradford west of Plan 40 ½ (Book 69) in Nepean Lot 20 Concession 1.¹² The lot was deeded to John Cameron (J. C.) Jamieson in February 1873, a month after the plan for Britannia was made, and is therefore one of the first buildings of the planned cottage community. Britannia at the time was composed of a mix of tents, camps, and seasonal cottages. Like other landowners in Britannia, J. C. Jamieson built 2764 Rowatt Street and originally used it as a seasonal cottage, as the city directories indicate his address was on Duke Street, Cambridge Street, then Primrose Avenue (currently Burland Avenue in Bayshore-Belltown neighbourhood, immediately west of Britannia Village) into the 1880s.¹³ Then from around 1886 until his death in 1926, J. C. Jamieson and his family lived at 15 Sparks Street (now 2764 Rowatt Street) year round.¹⁴ This makes this house one of the early year-round residences in the community.

¹² "Ottawa-Carleton (04), Nepean, Book 69, Plan 40Y, Britannia," Ontario Land Registry Access, accessed November 2, 2023, <https://www.onland.ca/ui/4/books/80451/viewer/688925336?page=4>, 4-10.

¹³ Ottawa City Directory, 1872-73, 141; Ottawa City Directory, 1876, 131; Ottawa City Directory, 1877, 36; Ottawa City Directory, 1878, 163; Ottawa City Directory, 1879, 166; Ottawa City Directory, 1880, 166; Ottawa City Directory, 1881, 152; Ottawa City Directory, 1882, 128; Ottawa City Directory, 1883, 164; Ottawa City Directory, 1884, 58; Ottawa City Directory, 1885, 181; Ottawa City Directory, 1886, 182; Ottawa City Directory, 1887, 196; Ottawa City Directory, 1888-89, 264.

¹⁴ "Second Member of Old Ottawa Family Passes: Mr. J. C. Jamieson Dies at Britannia Home," *The Ottawa Citizen*, April 13, 1926, accessed November 22, 2023, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/456408272/>.



John Cameron Jamieson, Source: City of Ottawa Archives, MG165-01-06, CA015157

When Britannia's plan was created, J. C. Jamieson and his brother, Robert Edwards Jamieson, purchased several lots such as Block A which included the sawmill on the waterfront, which they intended to convert into a flour mill.¹⁵ J. C. operated the sawmill for approximately five years, however the conversion plan never came to fruition, and the attempt to revitalize Britannia as an industrial hub failed.¹⁶ R. E. Jamieson left the partnership, selling his portions of the land to his brother,¹⁷ which is reflected in the land register as R. E. Jamieson deeded Block A to J. C. Jamieson in 1887.¹⁸ The brothers continued to be partners in other ventures including taking over their father William's popular bakery on Wellington Street in 1870, and R E & J C Jamieson, dry goods and grocery, also located on Wellington Street throughout the 1870s to 1890s.¹⁹ After the mill ventures, J. C.

¹⁵ "Old Time Stuff," *The Ottawa Citizen*, November 24, 1923, accessed October 17, 2023, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/455775065/?match=1>.

¹⁶ "Second Member of Old Ottawa Family Passes: Mr. J. C. Jamieson Dies at Britannia Home."

¹⁷ "Old Time Stuff," *The Ottawa Citizen*, November 24, 1923.

¹⁸ "Ottawa-Carleton (04), Nepean, Book 69, Plan 40Y, Britannia," 4.

¹⁹ "Old Time Stuff," *The Ottawa Citizen*, November 24, 1923.

Jamieson moved into politics, serving in 1881 as an alderman in the Dalhousie Ward,²⁰ and also sat on Ottawa's Board of Health and Committee of the Board of Works.²¹

J. C. Jamieson owned several lots at Britannia and was considered the principal developer of the village, and at his time of death was still considered one of the largest landowners of the neighbourhood.²² An *Ottawa Citizen* article about the Jamieson family from 1923 credited J. C. with putting Britannia "on the map."²³ He built cottages and rented them, installed a windmill and provided running water to summer cottagers, and some lots he sold to other resorters to build their own cottages.²⁴ His holdings included "The Grove," located between Jamieson Street and Rowatt Street on the waterfront and surrounded by pine trees, which was a former office for the mill that he converted into a summer cottage.²⁵ In the late 1880s, Jamieson converted his old sawmill into apartments, and in 1887 when the Britannia Aquatic Club formed, he allowed members to use his mill in the bay as a meeting place and to their store boats.²⁶ Jamieson also constructed new rentals such as the Terrace built around 1910 which was two floors with ten units, located at the west end of Jamieson Street in line with the Old Mill.²⁷

²⁰ "Ex-ald. J. C. Jamieson Dies At Age Of 82," *The Ottawa Journal*, April 13, 1926, accessed February 6, 2024, <https://cityofottawaarchives.newspapers.com/image/43803470/>.

²¹ Taylor, *Ottawa's Britannia*, 71.

²² Andrew Waldron, Harold Kalman, and Peter Coffman, *Exploring the Capital: An Architectural Guide to the Ottawa-Gatineau Region*, (Vancouver: Figure 1 Publishing: 2017), 210; "Second Member of Old Ottawa Family Passes: Mr. J. C. Jamieson Dies at Britannia Home;" "J. C. Jamieson Will Estate Valued \$69,072," *The Ottawa Citizen*, May 3, 1926, accessed November 29, 2023, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/456410564/>.

²³ "Old Time Stuff," *The Ottawa Citizen*, November 24, 1923.

²⁴ "Old Time Stuff," *The Ottawa Citizen*, November 24, 1923; Taylor, *Ottawa's Britannia*, 72. Note: the windmill was located near the waterfront between Cassels Street and Rowatt Street. Additionally, a water tank can be seen on 2764 Rowatt's property on the 1912 Ottawa fire insurance plans, page 168.

²⁵ Tweedsmuir Histories, City of Ottawa Archives, MG165 Britannia Women's Institute Volume 10; Note: The Grove was demolished in 1961 and replaced with housing.

²⁶ "The Britannia Yacht Club History," Britannia Yacht Club, last modified,

²⁷ Taylor, *Ottawa's Britannia*, 96. Note: Terrace apartments were demolished in 1960.

J. C. Jamieson died in 1926,²⁸ and his wife Margaret nee Rowatt predeceased him in 1910.²⁹ Margaret was the daughter of John Rowatt, who lived at 66 Bradford Street in Britannia, and it was their family's contribution to the community's development that Sparks Street was renamed Rowatt Street at the time of amalgamation with the City of Ottawa in 1950.³⁰ It should also be noted that when the plan for Britannia was created in 1873, likely due to his significant land holdings which included Block A, the road south of Block A was named Jamieson Street, and is still named such today.

After J.C. Jamieson's death, his son Gerald Jamieson lived at 2775 Rowatt Street.³¹ Gerald was officially granted the lot in 1933, and he resided at the house until his death in 1953. Gerald was born in Ottawa and moved to Britannia around the turn of the century, and prior living at 2764 Rowatt, he resided on Bradford Street.³² Also known as the "Squire of Britannia," he continued his father's summer cottage business and owned and rented several cottages, with some tenants renting for forty years.³³ In 1927 when he acquired the properties, he advertised in the summer resorts section of *The Ottawa Citizen*, "Jamieson Estate Cottages, various sizes and ideal locations...also apts. in Old Mill and New Mills."³⁴ He maintained Britannia public areas including a playground in the Old Mill boundaries which served as a rest stop by the shoreline, and he

²⁸ "Second Member of Old Ottawa Family Passes: Mr. J. C. Jamieson Dies at Britannia Home."

²⁹ "Funeral of Mrs. Jamieson," *The Ottawa Citizen*, July 29, 1910, accessed November 15, 2023, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/455717078/>.

³⁰ "Individually Designated Properties," City of Ottawa, accessed November 15, 2023, https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/documents/files/individually_designated_properties_en.pdf.

³¹ Ottawa City Directory, 1928, 830; Ottawa City Directory, 1929, 1193; Ottawa City Directory, 1930, 294; Ottawa City Directory, 1931, 281; Ottawa City Directory, 1932, 275; Ottawa City Directory, 1933, 268; Ottawa City Directory, 1934, 269; Ottawa City Directory, 1936, 273; Ottawa City Directory, 1937, 291; Ottawa City Directory, 1938, 269; Ottawa City Directory, 1939, 277; Ottawa City Directory, 1941, 314; Ottawa City Directory, 1942, 340; Ottawa City Directory, 1943, 322; Ottawa City Directory, 1944, 314; Ottawa City Directory, 1950, 385; Ottawa City Directory, 1951, 372; Ottawa City Directory, 1952, 351.

³² "Summer Resorts: Britannia," *The Ottawa Citizen*, April 2, 1927, accessed November 23, 2023, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/456412658/>; "Dies On Way To Ottawa From Florida," *The Ottawa Citizen*, March 28, 1953, accessed November 23, 2023, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/456993314/>.

³³ "Dies On Way To Ottawa From Florida."

³⁴ "Summer Resorts: Britannia."

continued to offer water services to cottagers into the 1950s.³⁵ After residing in Britannia for half a century and his service to the community, his tenants held a picnic in honour of Gerald and his family.³⁶

Gerald's widow, Ida nee Beaton continued to live at the corner of Rowatt and Bradford until her death in 1970.³⁷ Gerald and Ida's daughter, Mrs. Lois G Fletcher (nee Jamieson) was a social scientist and she lived with her mother in 1960.³⁸ Then from at least 1972 to 1980, Lois Fletcher resided at 2764 Rowatt Street.³⁹ Lois was a lifelong member of the Britannia Yacht Club.⁴⁰ The land register also indicates that the lot was deeded to Lois's child, Blair Fletcher in 1974. The house was known in the community as the Jamieson House, and into the 1980s, a descendant of J. C. Jamieson resided at 2764 Rowatt Street.

Neighbourhood History

The village of Britannia slowly emerged in the first half of the 19th century due to early settlers moving to farmland along the south side of the Ottawa River, and the completion of the Richmond Road connecting Bytown to Richmond in 1818, resulting in the establishment of nearby communities.⁴¹ Around 1819, the shores of Lake Deschênes was granted to Captain John LeBreton, and the following year he settled and built a log cabin, and in 1826 he constructed a grist mill

³⁵ Taylor, Ottawa's Britannia, 73; "Water Deal For Britannia," *The Ottawa Citizen*, May 1, 1952, accessed November 23, 2023, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/456697167/>.

³⁶ "Dies On Way To Ottawa From Florida."

³⁷ Ottawa City Directory, 1953, 372; Ottawa City Directory, 1955, 389; Ottawa City Directory, 1956, 395; Ottawa City Directory, 1958, 397; Ottawa City Directory, 1959, 408. Note: the address changed from 15 Sparks Street on the 1948 Fire Insurance Plans, likely to 15 Rowatt Street in 1950 due to amalgamation, to 114 Bradford Street in 1960 according to Ottawa City Directory (the houses south of 2764 Rowatt Street were built 1961 and later according to land register Plan 40 ½ Book 69 page 4), then to 2764 Rowatt in 1972.

³⁸ Ottawa City Directory, 1960, 294.

³⁹ Ottawa City Directory, 1972, 221; Ottawa City Directory, 1973, 237; Ottawa City Directory, 1974, 251; Ottawa City Directory, 1975, 249; Ottawa City Directory, 1976, 252; Ottawa City Directory, 1977-78, 252; Ottawa City Directory, 1979, 255; Ottawa City Directory, 1980, 302.

⁴⁰ "Fletcher, Lois," *The Ottawa Citizen*, April 20, 2001, accessed November 22, 2023, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/466792070/>.

⁴¹ Harold Kalman and John Roaf, *Exploring Ottawa: An Architectural Guide to the Nation's Capital*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983), 154.

situated west of Main Street (currently Britannia Road), and called the area “Britannia.”⁴² Combined with the access to the Ottawa River, the growth of the lumber industry, and in 1848 the opening of the Bytown and Britannia Railway Line, Britannia became a small industrial suburb of mill workers.⁴³ Nepean lumberman, Nelson G Robinson purchased LeBreton’s grist mill in 1846 and converted it into a carding mill by 1851, and operated a sawmill around the same time.⁴⁴

In 1873, John McAmmond [or McAmmond] Jr purchased fifty-four acres of Concession 20 Lot 1, and had it surveyed and divided into sixty-five lots to sell as cottage properties.⁴⁵ Nelson G. Robinson’s mills, one by the rapids and one along the bay, were included in this purchase. A month later, John Cameron Jamieson, a baker on Wellington Street, purchased a large amount of McAmmond’s land, including Block A and the sawmill by the bay with the intention of revitalization the mill operations.⁴⁶

⁴² Kalman and Roaf, *Exploring Ottawa*, 154; Tweedsmuir Histories, City of Ottawa Archives, MG165 Britannia Women’s Institute Volume 7, Pioneer Settlers Nelson G Robinson, 2.

⁴³ City of Ottawa, “Neighbourhood Heritage Statement, Britannia – Crystal Bay,” 1.

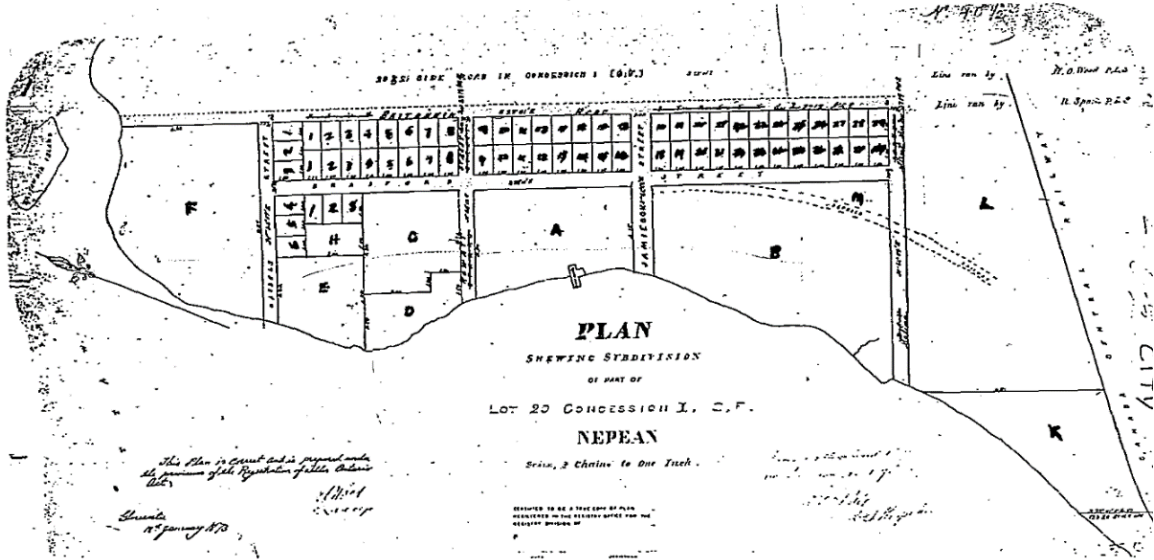
⁴⁴ Kalman and Roaf, *Exploring Ottawa*, 154; William Henry Smith, *Canada: Past, Present and Future: Being A Historical, Geographical, Geological and Statistical Account of Canada West*, Volume II, (Toronto: 1851), accessed October 30, 2023, 356, https://www.google.ca/books/edition/Canada_Past_Present_and_Future/zjETAAAAYAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=Smith,+W+H.,+Canada,+Past,+Present+and+Future&printsec=frontcover.

⁴⁵ Taylor, *Ottawa’s Britannia*, 38.

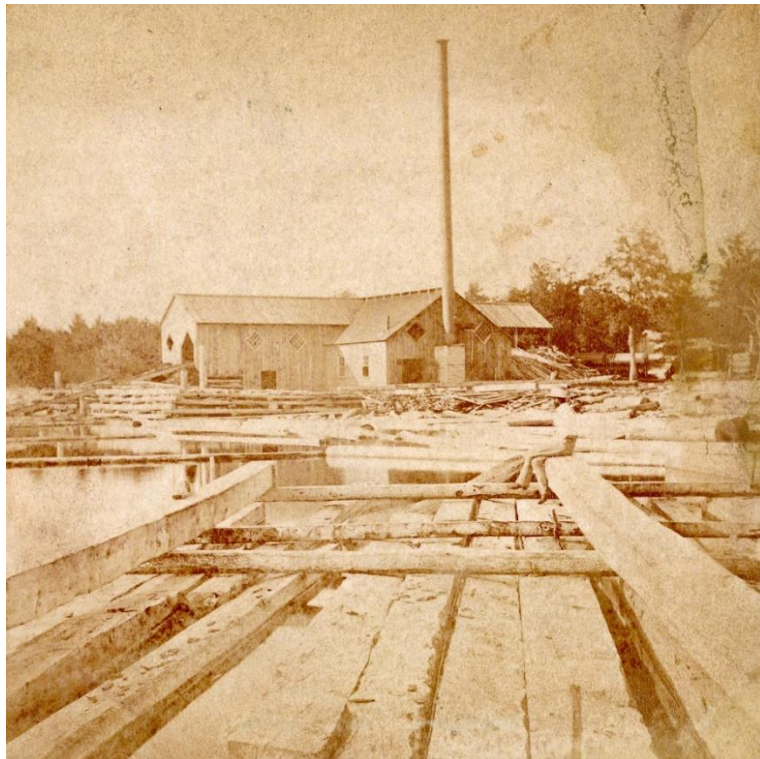
⁴⁶ Taylor, *Ottawa’s Britannia*, 38, 12, 96. Note: J C Jamieson’s brother, Robert E Jamieson also owned Block A from 1874 to 1887, and it was when J C Jamieson took over his share that he began developing Britannia as a summer resort. “Ottawa-Carleton (04), Nepean, Book 70, Plan 40Y; Bradford; Cassels; Railway,” Ontario Land Property Records Portal; “Old Time Stuff,” *The Ottawa Citizen*, November 24, 1923, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/455775065/?match=1>.

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"CAUTION"
THIS ILLUSTRATION IS INTENDED
AS A VISUAL AID ONLY,
AND MAY NOT BE TO SCALE.
J. W. ARMSTRONG
Land Registrar



Block A located between Rowatt Street (formerly Sparks Street) and Jamieson Street. The existing structure on Block A may be Nelson G Robinson then J. C. Jamieson's mill. Source: "Ottawa-Carleton (04), Nepean, Book 70, Plan 40Y; Bradford; Cassels; Railway," Ontario Land Registry Access



Old Mill, Jamieson's, Britannia, 1870, Source: City of Ottawa Archives, MG165-01-06, CA027942

Jamieson's attempt to revitalize the industries failed, likely due to the competition in Bytown's saturated lumber industry and the economic depression of the 1870s, so the mills closed in the 1880s.⁴⁷ With industrial operations ceased, J. C. Jamieson converted his sawmill, referred to as the "Old Mill," located on the lakefront between Jamieson Street and Sparks Street (currently Rowatt Street)⁴⁸ into residential apartments, along with one room on the second storey dedicated to a meeting space for the Britannia Aquatic Club with storage for boating craft on the first level.⁴⁹ The Old Mill even before the turn of the century was a community hub for social activities and events.



Flood waters at J. C. Jamieson's mill, Britannia, circa 1893,
Source: City of Ottawa Archives, MG165-01-06, CA025473

⁴⁷ Taylor, *Ottawa's Britannia*, 41, 43, 62.

⁴⁸ Donald S. Kirby, *Historical Sketch of Britannia Yacht Club 1891-1967*, (Ottawa, Ontario: Britannia Yacht Club, 1967), 2. Noted that the sawmill was located 75 yards north of Jamieson Street, and the area bounded by Jamieson, Rowatt, and Bradford, was used as a piling ground.

⁴⁹ Taylor, *Ottawa's Britannia*, 12, 43, 96.

Boating enthusiasts formed the Britannia Aquatic Club in 1887, renamed themselves the Britannia Nautical Club in 1891 and hosted their first annual regatta, incorporated in 1895 as the Britannia Boathouse Club, renamed to Britannia Boating Club in 1907, and adopted their current name the Britannia Yacht Club in 1950.⁵⁰ Club activities continued operating out of the “Old Mill” until 1896 when a new clubhouse was built on the current location, on the north side of Cassels on the west end. The club remains an integral part of the Britannia neighbourhood.



Britannia Club House circa 1896, Source: William James Topley, Library and Archives Canada, Topley Studio fonds, Item ID number: 3325416

With Jamieson’s holdings in Britannia, he became the principal developer. He subdivided and sold land as cottage properties, constructed, and rented cottages and apartments, helped establish water infrastructure, and can be credited with Britannia’s development.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Taylor, *Ottawa’s Britannia*, 43-44; John Grover, *Britannia Yacht Club: Historical Highlights 1887-1982*, (Ottawa: Runge Press, 1982), 16.

⁵¹ “Old Time Stuff,” *The Ottawa Citizen*, November 24, 1923.

Many prominent individuals from Ottawa purchased land in Britannia and built cottages were also highly involved in the boat club such as John Cameron Jamieson, Edwin Lester Brittain, William Wyld, Thomas Halder Kirby, Dr. Mark G McElhinney, and Edmond Ebenezer Stockton.⁵²

Two churches opened, St. Stephen's Anglican in 1892 and St. Bonaventure's Roman Catholic in 1894, along with summer hotels such as the Chateau Von Charles in 1894 to serve the community and the summer resort visitors.⁵³

Britannia's popularity in the late 19th century can be linked to Late Victorian views of a healthy lifestyle that including getting fresh air and physical activity found in the country or resort settings. Some individuals set up tents along the waterfront, others seasonally rented cottages, whereas Ottawa's wealthy bought property and built summer or year-round residences and took horse-drawn carriages or the Canadian Pacific Railway into the city for work.⁵⁴

The Ottawa Electric Company (OER) operated its first streetcars in Ottawa in 1891, and in 1896, there were proposals to extend the line from the western end on Holland Avenue to Britannia.⁵⁵ Local residents initially opposed to the new line after witnessing how popular termini, such as Rockcliffe Park, were overwhelmed with summer visitors which would result in the area losing its tranquility and quaint atmosphere.⁵⁶ Come 1898, Britannia residents were not satisfied with the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) service and formed a committee to bring the streetcars to Britannia.⁵⁷ The committee consisted of community members

⁵² Taylor, *Ottawa's Britannia*, 44.

⁵³ Bruce S. Elliot, *The City Beyond: A History of Nepean, Birthplace of Canada's Capital, 1792-1990*, (Nepean: City of Nepean, 1991), 213-214.

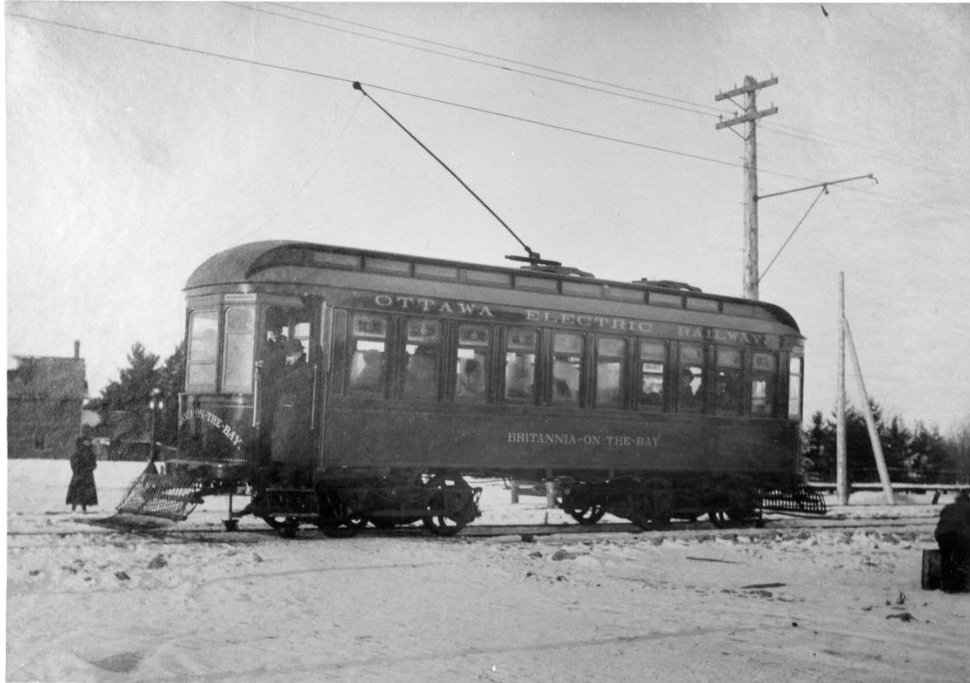
⁵⁴ Elliot, *The City Beyond*, 191.

⁵⁵ Taylor, *Ottawa's Britannia*, 59.

⁵⁶ Taylor, *Ottawa's Britannia*, 59.

⁵⁷ "Britannia Ambitious: Residents Take Steps to Secure Electric Railway Extension," *The Ottawa Journal*, August 8, 1898, accessed October 17, 2023, <https://cityofottawaarchives.newspapers.com/image/43078065/>.

including J. C. Jamieson, William Howe, A. N. McNeil, and F. W. Harmer.⁵⁸ Consensus was determined and the OER extended the tracks thirteen kilometers to the new Britannia-on-the-Bay station, running generally south of Richmond Road and parallel with the CPR.⁵⁹



Streetcar, Britannia Village Stop, circa 1900-1909,
Source: City of Ottawa Archives, MG165-01-02, CA018366

The public opening of the OER streetcars to the new end of the line at Britannia occurred on May 24th, the Victoria Day weekend in 1900.⁶⁰ To encourage weekend visitors to use their services, the OER built a fifty acre amusement park with extensive facilities and a T-shaped pier at “Britannia-on-the-Bay.”⁶¹ Across North America in the early 20th century, amusement parks built at the terminus of

⁵⁸ “Britannia Ambitious: Residents Take Steps to Secure Electric Railway Extension.”

⁵⁹ Bryan D. Cook, *Ahearn and Soper: The Electrification of Ottawa*, (Ottawa: The Historical Society of Ottawa, 2023), 39, accessed October 23, 2023, <https://dam-oclc.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/296291c4-db44-4afc-beba-130e9aded6b4>.

⁶⁰ Waldron, Kalman, and Coffman, *Exploring the Capital: An Architectural Guide to the Ottawa-Gatineau Region*, 183, 211.

⁶¹ Lisa Horwitz and Mark Horwitz, *The Natural Charm of Britannia: A Heritage Character Statement*, (Ottawa: City of Ottawa, 1996), 4.

streetcar lines were gaining popularity, and they were known as “electric parks.”⁶² Britannia Park included an auditorium seating seven hundred people, changing rooms, bathing houses, and two pavilions with concession stands.⁶³ The auditorium hosted a variety of concerts, dances, and themed events such as “Venetian Nights” which brought thousands to the Park.⁶⁴



Postcard, Britannia On The Bay, circa 1900-1918, Source: City of Ottawa Archives, MG366, CA027935. Note the beach, two octagonal pavilions, and the dense forest in the background

The OER extended the pier and added a new, larger “T” shape pier end, which now measured approximately 1000 feet in length and was electrically lit.⁶⁵ At the end of the pier, the OER built the new three storey building for the Britannia Boathouse Club that included boat storage below and a grandstand and a large

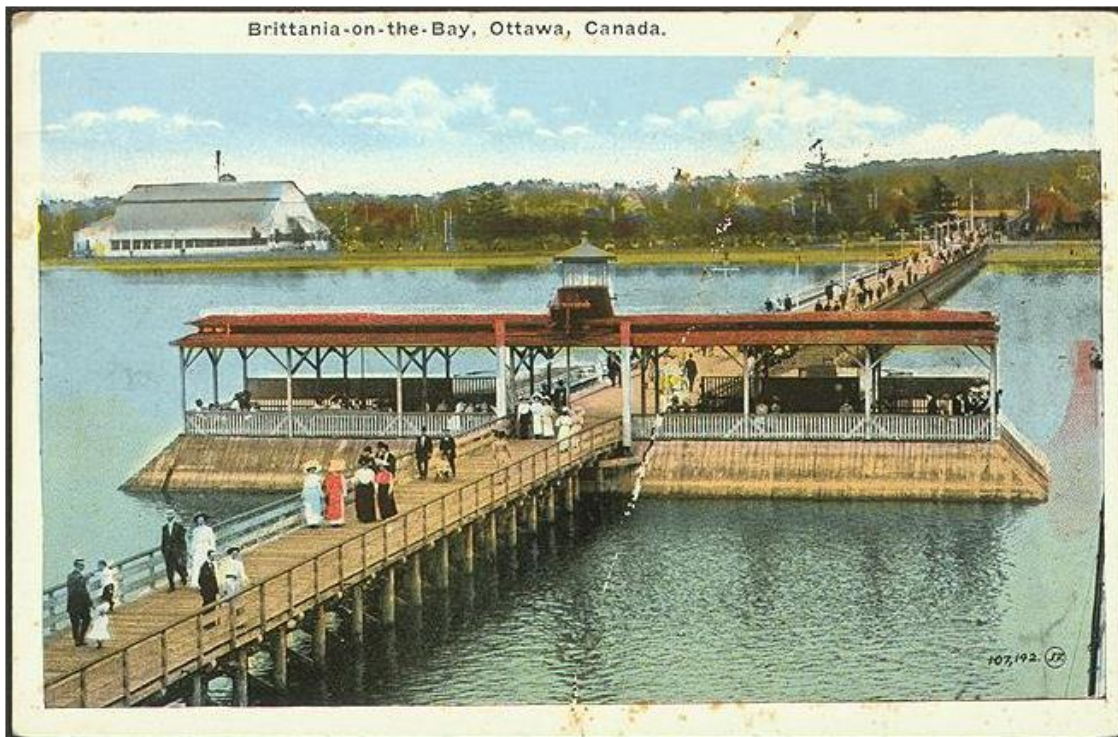
⁶² James Powell, “Britannia-on-the-Bay,” The Historical Society of Ottawa, accessed October 17, 2023, <https://www.historicalsoctaw.ca/publications/ottawa-stories/significant-technological-changes-in-the-city/britannia-on-the-bay-75>.

⁶³ Ottawa Neighbourhood Study, “Britannia Village,” accessed October 17, 2023, <https://www.neighbourhoodstudy.ca/906britannia-village/>.

⁶⁴ Taylor, *Ottawa’s Britannia*, 346.

⁶⁵ Cook, *Ahearn and Soper: The Electrification of Ottawa*, 39.

ballroom above, which hosted a variety of social events.⁶⁶ Construction was complete in 1905, however due to ice damage in the spring of 1906, it was not until 1907 that club activities fully resumed at the new facility.⁶⁷ Unfortunately, a fire in August 1918 destroyed the clubhouse and all two hundred watercraft being stored there, so the club resumed activities in the 1896 clubhouse, today's current location.⁶⁸

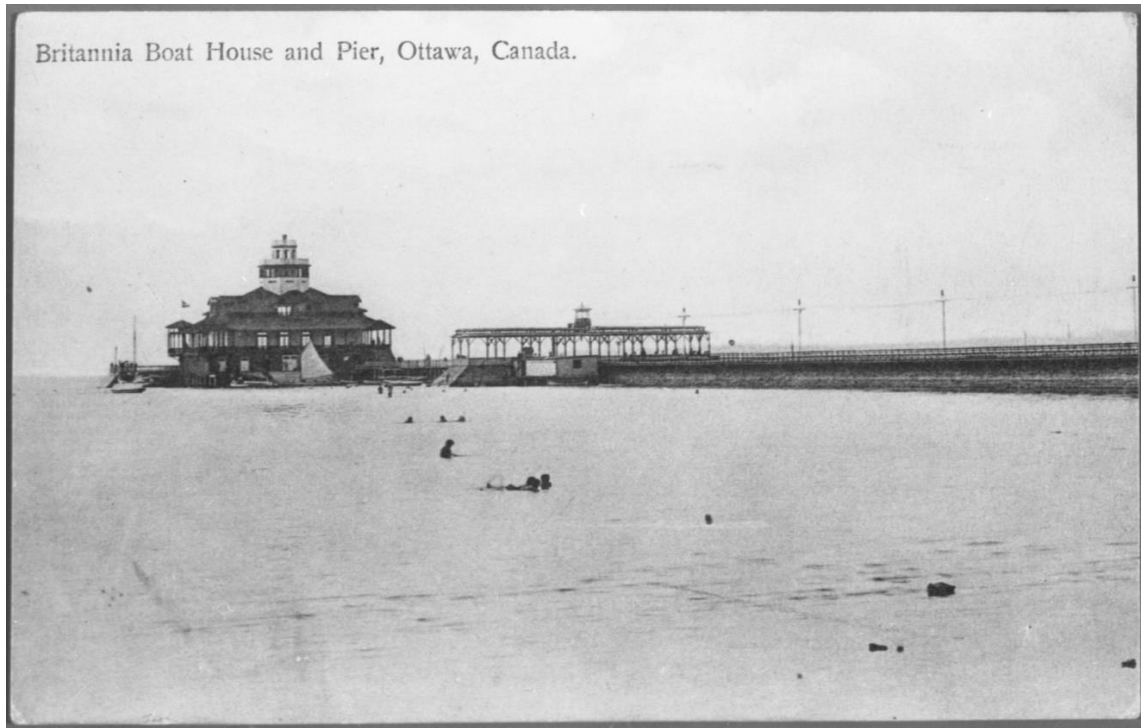


Postcard, Britannia-on-the-Bay, 1910, Source: Valentine & Sons, Toronto Public Library, Baldwin Collection of Canadiana, PCR-1980. Note in the foreground the original “T” shaped pier end built circa 1900 that was extended in 1905, with the Britannia Park auditorium in the background.

⁶⁶ Horwitz and Horwitz, *The Natural Charm of Britannia*, 4.

⁶⁷ Kirby, *Historical Sketch of Britannia Yacht Club 1891-1967*, 4-5.

⁶⁸ Horwitz and Horwitz, *The Natural Charm of Britannia*, 4



Britannia Boat House and Pier, Ottawa, Canada.

Postcard of Britannia Boat House clubhouse and pier, circa 1905-1918,
Source: City of Ottawa Archives, MG237, CA015165



Britannia Canoe Club, circa 1905-1918. Source: City of Ottawa Archives, MG341, CA018975.

See passenger steamer *G. B. Greene* in the right background.

The advent of the streetcars stimulated suburban development as the working class could commute daily between Britannia and Ottawa. Alternatively, those working in Ottawa would reside in the city Monday to Friday, then take the streetcar to visit their family for the weekend who permanently lived in Britannia. The OER was also accessible to the general public, and it is estimated ten thousand visitors took the streetcar to Britannia on opening day, and up to six thousand visited daily throughout the summer, especially for social events.⁶⁹ The popularity of Britannia as a resort and Britannia Park resulted in higher membership at the Britannia Boathouse Club. Around the turn of the century, the boating club was steadily growing and had approximately 120 members,⁷⁰ with about 200 members (resident and non-residents) in 1904,⁷¹ and membership reached its peak before the First World War with over 600 active members in May 1913, and combined with social and associate memberships was over two thousand.⁷² Therefore the popularity of Britannia as a summer resort is often associated with the period between 1900, when the streetcars were extended to the village, Britannia Park was constructed and open to the public, and the Britannia Boating Club had its largest membership, to before the First World War, and are known as its golden years.⁷³

Between the World Wars, despite amusement parks becoming unfashionable, people still frequented the Britannia Park and the boat club.⁷⁴ However, with the accessibility of cars after the Second War, Britannia's popularity as a summer resort decreased. Britannia retained its predominant cottage makeup until the mid 20th century when many early structures were demolished to build residential infill

⁶⁹ Ottawa Neighbourhood Study, "Britannia Village."

⁷⁰ Grover, *Britannia Yacht Club: Historical Highlights 1887-1982*, 9-10; Kirby, *Historical Sketch of Britannia Yacht Club 1891-1967*, 4.

⁷¹ Anson A. Gard, *The Hub and the Spokes: Or the Capital and its Environs*, (Ottawa: Emerson, 1904), 14.

⁷² "History of Britannia Boat Club," *The Ottawa Journal*, May 17, 1913, accessed October 17, 2023, <https://cityofottawaarchives.newspapers.com/image/43190648/>.

⁷³ Kalman and Roaf, *Exploring Ottawa*, 155.

⁷⁴ Horwitz and Horwitz, *The Natural Charm of Britannia*, 4.

for affordable housing for veterans.⁷⁵ Only a collection of original summer cottages remain today which define the neighbourhood's early character.

In 1950, Britannia was annexed to the City of Ottawa, and in 1951 the city took over management and improvements to Britannia Park, which sparked a renewed popularity.⁷⁶ Although Britannia's popularity no longer compares to its golden years from 1900 to 1914, the area remains a summer destination for city residents, which harkens back to its early roots as a resort community.

Context

Britannia is a unique neighbourhood in Ottawa, for its roots as a summer resort, its geography as a peninsula which led to connections to recreation and the Ottawa River, and its unique architectural character.

As noted above, Britannia's roots as a summer resort outside of the city developed in the 1880s to 1890s as a mix of camps, seasonal cottages, and year-round residences, and became an established community around the turn of the century. The Late Victorian desires of enjoying the outdoors for recreational purposes promoted the creation of summer resorts on both sides of the Ottawa River. In J. L. Gourlay's 1896 *History of the Ottawa Valley*, he documents, "Britannia of to-day is a small riverside retreat where distinguished citizens resort to for fresh air and bathing."⁷⁷ People were drawn to its natural surroundings and the ease of access to recreational activities on the water and land. This enticed many civil servants working in downtown Ottawa looking to leave the dusty city for Britannia's picturesque environment.

The growth and success of Britannia as a summer resort soared in 1900 onwards with the extension of the OER line, allowing working class people to

⁷⁵ Ottawa Neighbourhood Study, "Britannia Village."

⁷⁶ Horwitz and Horwitz, *The Natural Charm of Britannia*, 4.

⁷⁷ John Lowry Gourlay, *History of the Ottawa Valley: A Collection of Facts, Events and Reminiscences for Over Half a Century*, Ottawa: 1896, 62, <https://archive.org/details/historyofottawav00gouruoft/page/62/mode/2up>.

move permanently to the growing suburb, along with the opening of Britannia Park which was patronized by thousands of visitors annually. Interestingly, the OER's Britannia Park and its streetcar line was unprofitable, however it was successful with the growth of Britannia Village as a suburb and its daily use by commuters travelling into the city.⁷⁸



Postcard, Britannia-On-The-Bay, 1910, Source: Toronto Public Library, Baldwin Collection of Canadiana, PCR-1978. See mature pine trees in foreground and background and pier on the left.

Archaeological evidence demonstrates the presence of arrowheads of Algonquin First Nations near the Britannia peninsula.⁷⁹ The Old Indian Trail ran between the Rideau River and Ottawa River from Black Rapids [Lock 13] through what is now referred to as Hog's Back, to the head of the Deschênes Rapids.⁸⁰ Known as the "village by the rapids," Britannia peninsula is located west of Ottawa on the Ottawa River, at the southwest end of Lac Deschênes, with the Deschênes

⁷⁸ Cook, *Ahearn and Soper: The Electrification of Ottawa*, 40.

⁷⁹ Harold Kalman and John Roaf, *Exploring Ottawa: An Architectural Guide to the Nation's Capital*, 154.

⁸⁰ "Britannia Once Enlivened by Songs and Shouts of Rivermen: Quiet Old Village Was Busy Place Half a Century Ago," *The Ottawa Citizen*, May 19, 1934, accessed October 12, 2023, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/456442917/>.

Rapids to the north. Given its geographical location, the peninsula was likely used by voyageurs and loggers alike to portage the rapids.⁸¹ The original landscape was largely wooded with pine trees with swampy areas, a landscape that can be still seen today in the mature trees and in nearby Mud Lake, a provincially significant wetland.

Britannia Bay with its harbour, gently sloped shoreline, and calm waters provided a suitable area for recreational activities such as bathing, fishing, a variety of boating, with a wonderful view of the Gatineau Hills. Many campers and residents set their tents or cottages by the shore among the pines, owned watercraft, and spent their leisure time on the water. This portion of the Ottawa River was a popular destination for summer leisure activities and from 1896 to 1916, the steamer *G. B. Greene* regularly took passengers between Britannia and Alymer and Chat's Falls.⁸²

Britannia's growth as a community corresponds to the popularity of water activities and the formal organization by local residents of the Britannia Aquatic Club in 1887. In 1891, the club had enough interest to organize races and events including an annual regatta, which continued until 1918.⁸³ The formation and popularity of the boating club correlates to Britannia's development in the early 1890s which saw the construction of seasonal and year-round cottages, two churches, and boarding houses and summer hotels.⁸⁴ In the summer of 1896, the new boating clubhouse was completed located on its current site, and Britannia's summer resident list was the largest yet,⁸⁵ and the following summer the

⁸¹ Britannia Yacht Club, *Britannia Yacht Club: A History of Water, Place And People, 1887-2012*, (Ottawa: Britannia Yacht Club, 2013), 18.

⁸² Bill McKeown, *Ottawa's Streetcars: An Illustrated History of Electric Railway Transit in Canada's Capital*, (Pickering: Railfare DC Books, 2006), 75.

⁸³ Britannia Yacht Club, *Britannia Yacht Club: A History of Water, Place And People, 1887-2012*, 40.

⁸⁴ Taylor, *Ottawa's Britannia*, 53-55.

⁸⁵ "Still Has A Charm: Britannia Holds Its Own As A Summer Resort," *The Ottawa Journal*, August 5, 1896, accessed October 10, 2023, <https://cityofottawaarchives.newspapers.com/image/43432067/>.

community is called, “one of the best known and generally patronized resort of Ottawa citizens.”⁸⁶

The architectural character of Britannia’s early buildings is unique in Ottawa. Characteristics of Britannia’s vernacular cottages include a simple box or L-shaped form, one and a half storeys, and horizontal lap siding and shingle cladding. The turn of the century vernacular cottage style included the addition and significance of a verandah on the front façade or wrapping multiple facades, which can be seen by comparing early versions such as 48 Bradford Street, constructed circa 1863, to several properties built around the turn of the century such as 195 Britannia Road, 73 Britannia Road, 2775 Rowatt Street, and 95 Kirby Road. Verandahs provided an enlivened addition to the simple form and fulfilled the Late Victorian desire to get fresh air and have transitional living spaces between the interior and exterior.⁸⁷

Architectural styles evident in Britannia include Late Victorian (127 Britannia Road), Queen Anne Revival (154 Britannia Road, 66 Bradford Street, and 84 Bradford Street), and Shingle Style (175 Britannia Road, and 95 Kirby Road). Both the vernacular and high style architecture found in Britannia have related approaches in that they feature a verandah, use similar construction materials, and ornamentation features. Since Britannia was a recreational community that gradually formed rather than being a planned development, most buildings constructed in the early 20th century during Britannia’s peak are on large property lots with mature trees, have informal landscaping, and irregular setbacks, which also contributes to the area’s character.

2764 Rowatt Street is linked to all three of these contextual values through its role initially as a summer cottage and later a permanent residence, its Late

⁸⁶ “At Cool Retreats: Those Out for The Summer, Resorts Convenient to Ottawa are Popular,” *The Ottawa Journal*, August 19, 1897, accessed October 10, 2023,

<https://cityofottawaarchives.newspapers.com/image/43908553/>.

⁸⁷ Horwitz and Horwitz, *The Natural Charm of Britannia*, 6.

Victorian and vernacular architectural style, old growth landscaping, and the owner's involvement in and development of Britannia as a community.

Evaluation using Ontario Regulation 09/06

1	<p><i>The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.</i></p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>The property at 2764 Rowatt Street has design value as a unique and one of the earliest cottages built in Britannia as it was emerging as a cottage community in the 1870s. It is a rare example of a year-round residence, built decades before Britannia's peak as summer resort from 1900-1914. Its Late Victoria "T" shaped form, along with its prominent verandahs, a focus on verandah ornamentation, and the use of natural materials, came to influence Britannia's vernacular cottage style.</p>
2	<p><i>The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.</i></p>	<p>No</p>

3	<i>The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of technical or scientific merit.</i>	No
4	<i>The property has historical or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.</i>	<p>Yes</p> <p>The property was associated John Cameron Jamieson, who is considered the principal developer of Britannia. He purchased several lots when the plan was created in 1873, and he sold several lots but retained and developed many properties with the intention of creating a summer resort, which was highly successful. Britannia was known as one of the most popular summer resorts around Ottawa, and its golden years were from 1900 to 1914. J. C. Jamieson's son, Gerald continued his father's cottage industry and maintained Britannia's summer resort amenities.</p>

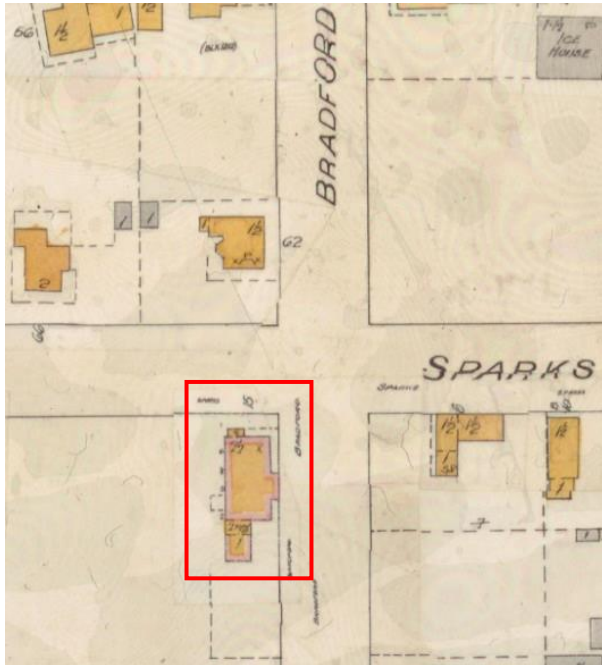
5	<i>The property has historical or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.</i>	No
6	<i>The property has historical or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.</i>	No
7	<i>The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.</i>	<p>Yes</p> <p>The property is important in maintaining Britannia's early stock of cottages from the 1870s. It was built shortly after the plan for Britannia was created and illustrates the purpose-built structures built as summer cottages. The house's combination of styles illustrates owner's use of different elements to suit their needs, while incorporating elements such as the wraparound verandah and its detailing will come to be a part of Britannia's vernacular cottage style at the turn of the century. 2764 Rowatt's architectural</p>

		<p>styles of its time, ornamental detailing, setback, casual approach to landscaping, and retention of its historic form and materials, contribute to supporting Britannia's early cottage character.</p>
8	<p><i>The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings</i></p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>2764 Rowatt Street was built shortly after Britannia's plan was made in 1873, making it one of the earliest buildings in the community. Although owned by the principal developer of Britannia, J. C. Jamieson, the house still exemplifies the transition of simple summer cottages into year-round residences as it was bricked around 1901-02. The Jamieson family is closely tied growth and success of Britannia as a summer resort during its golden period from</p>

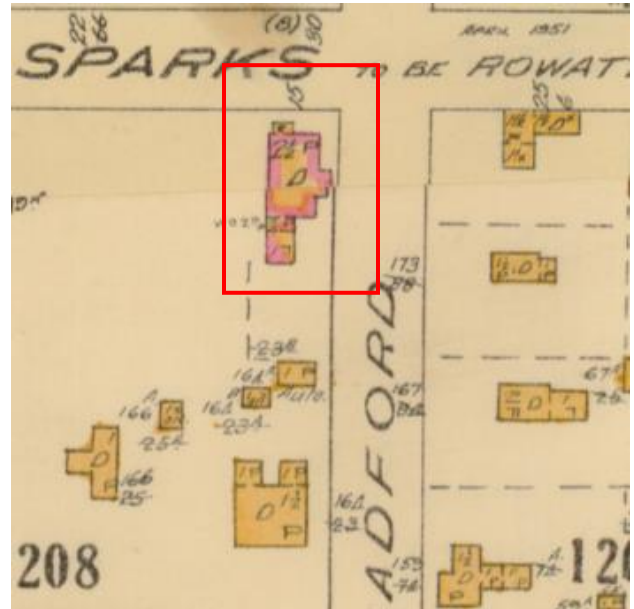
		1900 to 1914, and three generations of Jamieson's lived at this prominent corner lot.
9	<i>The property has contextual value because it is a landmark.</i>	No

Supplementary Photos And Maps

Ottawa Fire Insurance Plan,
1922, page 168, (15 Sparks
Street)



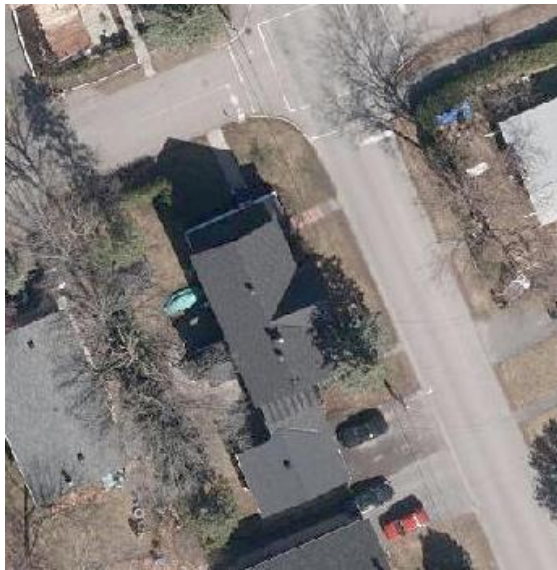
Ottawa Fire Insurance Plan,
1948, page 167 (15 Sparks
Street)



Aerial view of 2764 Rowatt Street,
Source: GeoOttawa, 1991



Aerial view of 2764 Rowatt Street,
Source: GeoOttawa, 2021



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