

CULTURAL HERITAGE EVALUATION REPORT

Building Name and Address: Graham Cottage or Turret Cottage; 205 Bradford Street

Construction Date: circa 1900

Original Owner: Frederick William Harmer



205 Bradford Street, west and north façade, Source: City of Ottawa, 2024

Executive Summary

205 Bradford Street is an asymmetrical, vernacular cottage in the Queen Anne Revival style built circa 1900 in Britannia, Ottawa. The house was built at the beginning of Britannia's peak as summer resort from 1900-1914. The first homeowner was Frederick William Harmer, a clerk for the Township of Nepean, and one of the pioneer residents of Britannia Heights. F. W. Harmer's daughters, Marion and Gertrude then owned the property for a few years following. The building was known in the community as the Graham cottage after Maxwell H Graham and his wife Elizabeth, who owned and resided at 205 Bradford Street from 1913 to 1928. This building exemplifies Britannia's high style and vernacular architecture and contributes to the character of Britannia as a summer cottage

community after the turn of the 20th century.

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

205 Bradford Street is a one and a half storey vernacular house built circa 1900 as a summer cottage. The architect or builder of the house is unknown. The property is located on the east side of Bradford Street north of Salina Street in Britannia Village. The structure was built as a detached house, and it continues to be used for residential purposes.

Around the turn of the century, Britannia's established vernacular cottage style residences typically featured 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 façades, 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. The building was constructed near the beginning of Britannia's golden years as a summer resort, from 1900 to 1914, and towards the peak of the Queen Anne Revival style in Canada and Ontario (late 1870s to 1910s).¹

¹ Harold Kalman, *A History of Canadian Architecture*, Volume 2, (Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press, 1994), 612; "Queen Anne Revival Style (1870-1910)," Ontario Architecture, accessed November 2, 2023, <http://ontarioarchitecture.com/QueenAnne.htm>.



205 Bradford Street, northwest corner with turret, Source: City of Ottawa, 2024

205 Bradford Street is a good representation of the Queen Anne Revival style with its asymmetrical façade, elaborate massing, prominent decoration, and a tower or turret. This can also be demonstrated by the multiple projections from the verandah and the bay on the south of the west façade, an irregular cross gabled roofline, a high hip dormer, decorative millwork on the front gable on the gable apex panel and a bull's eye window, and most characteristic, the large corner turret with a conical roof with metal shingles. The turret is a distinguishing and rare feature in Britannia, and the building was also referred to as Turret Lodge.²

² “Maxwell H. Graham Died On Tuesday,” *The Ottawa Journal*, July 6, 1927, accessed October 31, 2023, <https://cityofottawaarchives.newspapers.com/image/48293035/>.

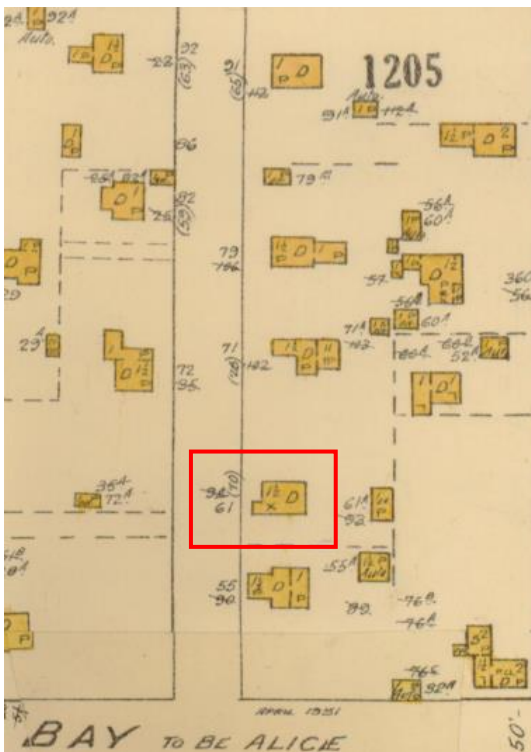


205 Bradford Street, southwest corner, front gable with millwork detailing,
Source: City of Ottawa, 2024

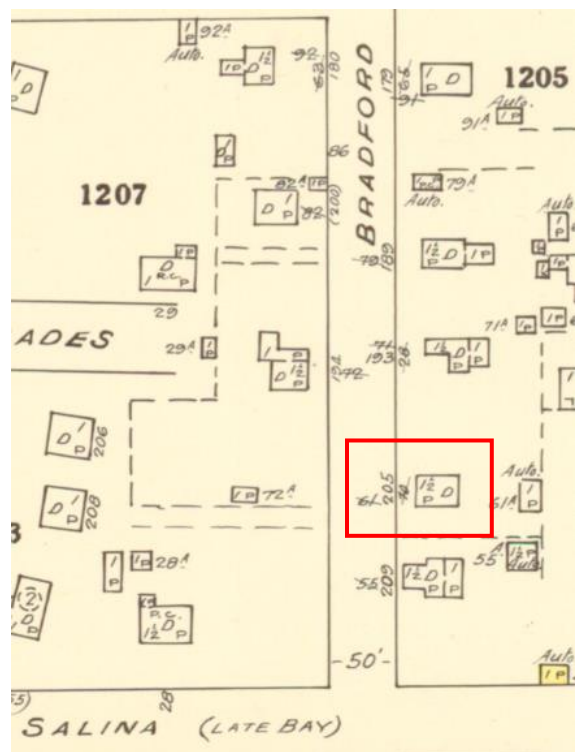


205 Bradford Street, southwest corner, front gable with millwork detailing and bull's eye window,
Source: City of Ottawa, 2024

Queen Anne Revival style in Ontario typically is two or more storeys, with steeply pitched roofs, with complexity in its form and ornamentation. Therefore, the house demonstrates the merging of both the Queen Anne Revival combined with Britannia's vernacular cottage style as demonstrated by the vernacular height, smaller massing, and medium gables. The house includes other aspects of the local vernacular style including the prominent verandah wrapping around the west and north façades (originally also on the east façade), which mimics the shape of the turret, , and gable ornamentation.



61 Bradford Street, Source: Ottawa Fire Insurance Plans, 1948, page 333



205 Bradford Street, Source: Ottawa Fire Insurance Plans, 1965, page 333

Between 1948 and 1965, the wraparound verandah was enclosed on the north side,³ and between 1968 and 1996, the verandah on the west façade, including the corner

³ Ottawa Fire Insurance Plans, 1948, 333; Ottawa Fire Insurance Plans, 1965, 333.

portion below the turret, was also enclosed.⁴ Between 1996⁵ and 2007,⁶ the verandah was restored to its original open form, with thin, square based columns with central detailing. During this same period, the shutters were removed, and windows replaced, and the horizontal lap siding possibly replaced with vinyl siding. Additionally in 1997, a one storey addition was constructed on the rear of the building, on the east façade where the verandah originally wrapped around.⁷



Northwest corner with turret and enclosed porch, 205 Bradford Street,
Source: Horwitz and Tumak, Heritage Survey and Evaluation Form, 1996

⁴ “Maxwell Graham Cottage,” 1968, reference code: MG165-01-04 CA025470, Box A2012-0446, Evelyn Mary Taylor fonds, Ottawa Archives, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

⁵ Tumak and Horwitz, Heritage Survey and Evaluation Form, 1996

⁶ Google Maps, 2007, accessed October 31, 2023, https://www.google.com/maps/@45.3672203,-75.7988496,3a,63.6y,113.55h,90.46t/data=!3m7!1e1!3m5!1sWrXyHoydG8_t6VrYE1sleg!2e0!5s20071001T000000!7i3328!8i1664?entry=ttu.

⁷ Ottawa Fire Insurance Plans, 1912, 168; Ottawa Fire Insurance Plans, 1922, 167.



Northwest corner with enclosed porch and southwest corner with previous windows and shutters, 205 Bradford Street, Source: Horwitz and Tumak, Heritage Survey and Evaluation Form, 1996

History

205 Bradford Street is located on lot 27 of Plan 40 ½ (Book 70) in Nepean Lot 20 Concession 1. The lot was deeded to F. W. Harmer in 1890 who deeded the property to his son, Edward Harmer in 1899, who in turn, sold the entire lot back to his father in 1900 for \$1050.⁸ This would suggest the house was constructed circa 1900. F. W. Harmer then sold the lot to his two daughters, Marian and Elizabeth Gertrude in 1904.

The Harmer family emigrated from England to Canada in 1858⁹ and in the 1861 Census of Canada, the family is living in a one and a half storey log home in Nepean.¹⁰ F. W.

⁸ "Ottawa-Carleton (04), Nepean, Book 70, Plan 40Y, Bradford; Cassels; Railway," Ontario Land Registry Access, accessed November 2, 2023,

<https://www.onland.ca/ui/4/books/82342/viewer/185731483?page=75>, 75-76.

⁹ "Death Occurs of Miss M. Harmer," *The Ottawa Journal*, September 11, 1939, accessed October 24, 2023, <https://cityofottawaarchives.newspapers.com/image/46286888/>.

¹⁰ "1861 Census of Canada: Canada West, Carleton," Ancestry, Statistics Canada, accessed November 2, 2023, <https://www.ancestry.ca/sharing/7430527?mark=7b22746f6b656e223a227265762f486f744b4642776231300646d513467646e746747472b4241537752787071456b5765556e3747553d222c22746f6b656e5f76657273696f6e223a225632227d>.

Harmer was a farmer until he was the Clerk of the Division Court and operated the toll gate on Richmond Road, then served as the Township Clerk for Nepean from 1866 to 1905 during the township's evolution into an urban municipality.¹¹ With the township offices in Bell's Corners, F. W. moved his family there until their home was destroyed by the Great Fire of 1870.¹² The Harmer's built a new home known as Bleak House, on Richmond Road south of Britannia, and was known as the oldest stone building in the community.¹³ Formerly referred to as Mosgrove and currently as Britannia Heights, the Harmers became one of the pioneer families of the area. This can also be demonstrated by two of F. W. Harmer's sons, Arthur and Fred, marrying Ellen and Margaret Robinson respectively, the daughters of Nelson G. Robinson (owner of Britannia's mills from the 1840s to 1870s).¹⁴ F. W. Harmer's brother Walter, also operated a store at Cassels and Britannia to serve the early mill workers.¹⁵ F. W. Harmer was highly involved in the community and in 1898, he was the secretary for a local committee that petitioned the Ottawa Electric Railway (OER) to bring streetcars to Britannia.¹⁶ In November 1900, the Harmer's new residence at 205 Bradford Street in Britannia-on-the-Bay was complete and they family moved in for the winter months, indicating this was a year-round residence rather than a summer cottage.¹⁷

¹¹ "Thought Nothing Of Walking Ten Miles To Attend A Philharmonic Concert," *The Ottawa Citizen*, November 26, 1955, accessed November 2, 2023, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/456962500/>; "A Tribute to Late F. W. Harmer," *The Ottawa Journal*, August 14, 1906, accessed November 2, 2023, <https://cityofottawaarchives.newspapers.com/image/41898591/>; Bruce S. Elliot, *The City Beyond: A History of Nepean, Birthplace of Canada's Capital, 1792-1990*, (Nepean: City of Nepean, 1991), 193.

¹² "Thought Nothing Of Walking Ten Miles To Attend A Philharmonic Concert."

¹³ "Death Occurs of Miss M. Harmer."

¹⁴ Eva Taylor, *Ottawa's Britannia*, (Ottawa: Britannia Historical Association, 1983), 33.

¹⁵ Eva Taylor, *Ottawa's Britannia*, (Ottawa: Britannia Historical Association, 1983), 40.

¹⁶ "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/>.

¹⁷ "Mosgrove," *The Ottawa Journal*, November 12, 1900, accessed November 2, 2023, <https://cityofottawaarchives.newspapers.com/image/42371681/>.



Mr & Mrs Frederick William Harmer, in front of their home, Bleak House on Richmond Road in Britannia Heights built in 1870, Source: City of Ottawa Archives, MG165-01-06, CA027941.

F. W. Harmer passed away in 1906,¹⁸ however his family continued living in Britannia. His daughters Marian and Gertrude owned and resided at 205 Bradford Street; daughter Bertha McElhinney (nee Harmer) lived immediately next door at 195 Bradford Street; son William M Harmer also resided in Britannia from 1905 to 1913;¹⁹ and son Edward Harmer, who for a short period owned the property, lived in Britannia Heights.²⁰

¹⁸ “Frederick W Harmer,” *The Ottawa Journal*, August 13, 1906, accessed November 3, 2023, <https://cityofottawaarchives.newspapers.com/image/41898387/>.

¹⁹ Ottawa City Directory, 1905, 317; Ottawa City Directory, 1906, 316; Ottawa City Directory, 1907, 318; Ottawa City Directory, 1908, 344; Ottawa City Directory, 1909, 361; Ottawa City Directory, 1910, 394; Ottawa City Directory, 1911, 415; Ottawa City Directory, 1912, 436; Ottawa City Directory, 1913, 444.

²⁰ “Edward Harmer Dies in 85th Year,” *The Ottawa Journal*, October 6, 1947, accessed November 8, 2023, <https://cityofottawaarchives.newspapers.com/image/48680016/>.



William Rowatt, Mrs. E Harmer, Mrs. Rowatt, Mariam Harmer, Bertha McElhinny (nee Harmer),
Source: City of Ottawa Archives, MG165-01-07, CA027944.

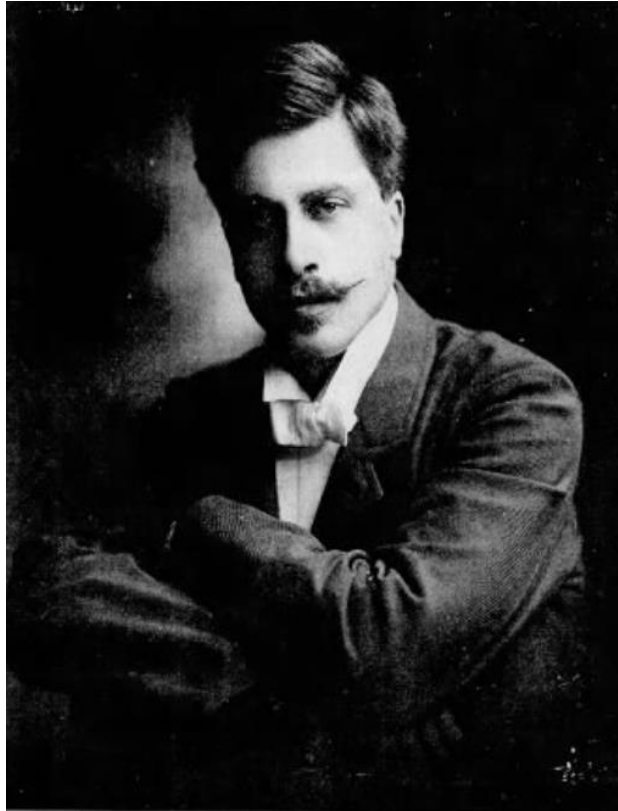
In 1904, F. W. Harmer sold the property to his daughters, Marion and Gertrude Elizabeth, and in 1908 they sold to William Jamieson, a successful baker on Wellington Street, and his wife Maggie, who were early property owners and residents of Britannia.²¹ Immediately following, Jamieson sold the lot to Albert Carter, a salesman at Cleghorn & Beattie, "Ottawa's Carpet Store," and he resided at 205 Bradford Street in 1909 and 1910.²² In 1913, Albert Carter sold to Maxwell H Graham, who came to be most associated with the house, as it was known as the Graham cottage in the community. The Graham family resided at 205 Bradford Street from 1913 to 1928.²³ In the first few years of ownership, the Graham's appear in the personals sections of local newspaper indicating the family summered in Britannia and wintered elsewhere in the

²¹ "Old Time Stuff," *The Ottawa Citizen*, November 24, 1923, accessed October 17, 2023, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/455775065/?match=1> "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/>.

²² Ottawa City Directory, 1909, 232; Ottawa City Directory, 1910, 248.

²³ Ottawa City Directory, 1912, 929; Ottawa City Directory, 1913, 1053; Ottawa City Directory, 1914, 1127; Ottawa City Directory, 1915, 1130; Ottawa City Directory, 1916, 1161; Ottawa City Directory, 1917, 1030; Ottawa City Directory, 1918, 1093; Ottawa City Directory, 1920, 1076; Ottawa City Directory, 1921, 1137.

city, suggesting they lived there seasonally for a period, then converted the house into a year-round residence.²⁴



Maxwell Henry Graham, Source: Times Colonist, September 22, 1991, page 34

Maxwell Henry Graham was born in England, emigrated to Canada as a young man, studied at the Ontario Agriculture College in Guelph, Ontario, and entered government service in 1906.²⁵ Dominion Parks (now Parks Canada) was founded in 1911, the first national parks service to be established in the world.²⁶ In 1912, Graham became a clerk

²⁴ “Mr. and Mrs. Maxwell Graham and their daughters have returned from Britannia and have taken an apartment at the Cumberland for the winter” in “Personal,” *The Ottawa Citizen*, December 25, 1915, accessed November 8, 2023, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/455667343/>; “Mr. and Mrs. Maxwell Graham have removed to their summer cottage at Britannia.” in “Personal,” *The Ottawa Citizen*, May 11, 1916, accessed November 8, 2023, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/455633453/>.

²⁵ “Maxwell H. Graham Died Last Evening,” *The Ottawa Citizen*, July 6, 1927, accessed November 8, 2023, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/456692199/>; Nigel Brooks, “Max Saved the Pronghorns,” *Times Colonist*, September 22, 1991, accessed November 9, 2023, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/508703158/>.

²⁶ Kevin McNamee and Maxwell W. Finkelstein, “National Parks of Canada,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, last modified November 9, 2022, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/national-parks-of-canada>; “Creation of the Dominion Parks Branch National Historic Event,” *Designations of National Historical Significance*, Parks Canada, accessed November 9, 2023, https://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/dfhd/page_nhs_eng.aspx?id=12876.

then head of the Wild Life Division in the Department of the Interior branch, and was promoted to chief of the division in 1921, responsible for all park animals.²⁷ Between 1921 and 1923, Maxwell became the chief of the Wild Life Division of the Northwest Territories and Yukon branch, and likely resided there, as he is not present on the Ottawa City Directory in Britannia again until 1924 until his death in 1927.²⁸ Maxwell was one of the pioneers in the field of wildlife conservation in Canada. His work helped protect big game such as the wood buffalo in the Northwest Territories and northern Alberta, and prevented the pronghorn antelope from becoming extinct with the creation three new national parks in Alberta and Saskatchewan between 1915 and 1922.²⁹ Maxwell's widow, Elizabeth sold 205 Bradford Street the year following his death in 1928.³⁰ Before moving, Elizabeth was involved in the Britannia community attending and hosting events, such as a garden party and fundraiser in 1916 that was to be held at their house.³¹

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.³² Around 1819, the shores of Lake Deschênes was granted to Captain John LeBreton, and the following year he settled and built a log

²⁷ Ottawa City Directory, 1912, 417; Ottawa City Directory, 1913, 425; Ottawa City Directory, 1914, 451; Ottawa City Directory, 1915, 458; Ottawa City Directory, 1916, 467; Ottawa City Directory, 1917, 412; Ottawa City Directory, 1918, 442; Ottawa City Directory, 1920, 436; "Maxwell H. Graham Died On Tuesday."

²⁸ Ottawa City Directory, 1924, 455; Ottawa City Directory, 1926, 284; Ottawa City Directory, 1927, 312; "Maxwell H. Graham Died On Tuesday."

²⁹ Dan Kraus, "Tales of Recovery: Pronghorn," Nature Conservancy Canada, last modified April 29, 2020, <https://www.natureconservancy.ca/en/blog/archive/tales-of-recovery-pronghorn.html>; W.F. Lothian, "Chapter 7: Preserving Canada's Wildlife," in *A History of Canada's National Parks, volume IV, Parks Canada*, accessed November 6, 2023, <http://parkscanadahistory.com/publications/history/lothian/eng/vol4/chap7.htm>; Brooks, "Max Saved the Pronghorns."

³⁰ "Ottawa-Carleton (04), Nepean, Book 70, Plan 40Y, Bradford; Cassels; Railway," <https://www.onland.ca/ui/4/books/82342/viewer/185731483?page=75>, 75-76.

³¹ "Personals," *The Ottawa Journal*, June 16, 1916, accessed November 6, 2023, <https://cityofottawaarchives.newspapers.com/image/42041160/>; Note: due to rain, the event was moved to the Britannia Auditorium.

³² Harold Kalman and John Roaf, *Exploring Ottawa: An Architectural Guide to the Nation's Capital*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983), 154.

cabin, and in 1826 he constructed a grist mill situated west of Main Street (currently Britannia Road), and called the area "Britannia."³³ 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.³⁴ 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 into the 1860s.³⁵

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.³⁶ 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 mill by the bay with the intention of revitalization the mill operations.³⁷

³³ Kalman and Roaf, *Exploring Ottawa*, 154; Tweedsmuir Histories, City of Ottawa Archives, MG165 Britannia Women's Institute Vol 7, Pioneer Settlers Nelson G Robinson, 2.

³⁴ City of Ottawa, "Neighbourhood Heritage Statement, Britannia - Crystal Bay," 1.

³⁵ 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, 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, 356; "In Memoriam: A Tribute to the Late Nelson G. Robinson ex-Warden of Carleton," *The Ottawa Journal*, September 14, 1893, accessed November 2, 2023, <https://cityofottawaarchives.newspapers.com/image/43906613/>.

³⁶ Taylor, *Ottawa's Britannia*, 38.

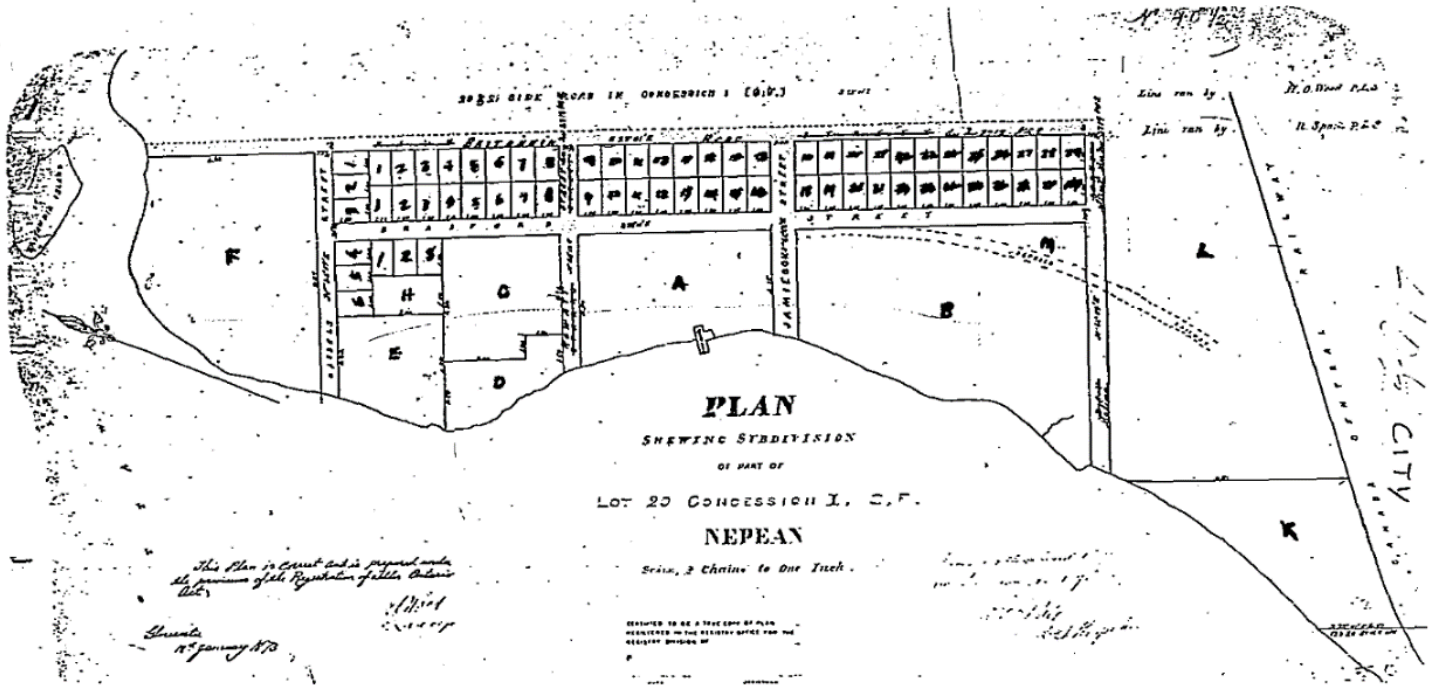
³⁷ Taylor, *Ottawa's Britannia*, 38, 12, 96. Note: J C Jamieson's brother, Robert E Jamieson also owned Block A from 1874 to 1887, and it was when J C Jamieson took over his share that he began developing Britannia as a summer resort. "Ottawa-Carleton (04), Nepean, Book 70, Plan 40Y; Bradford; Cassels; Railway," Ontario Land Property Records Portal; "Old Time Stuff."

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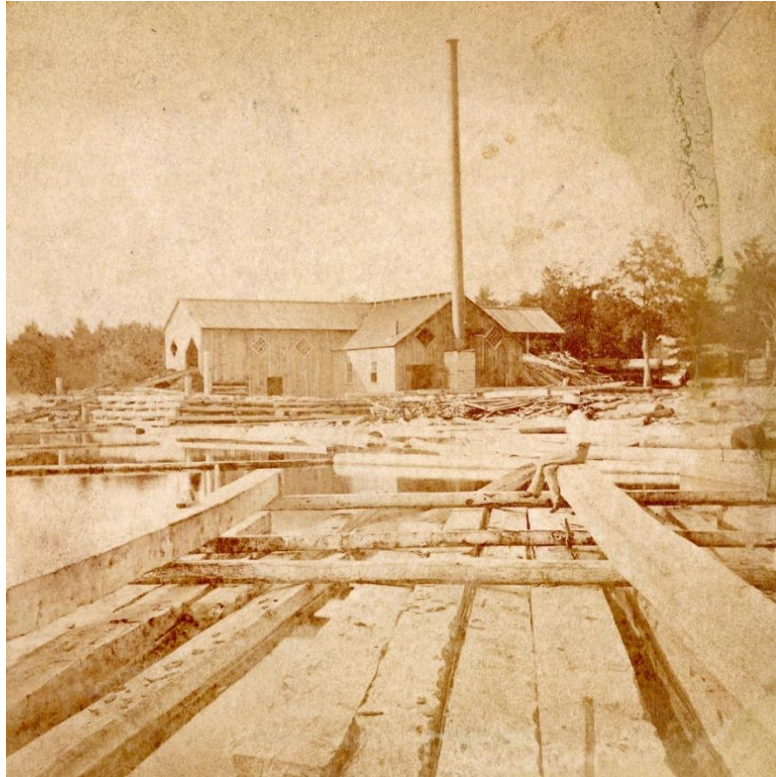
"CAUTION"

**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.³⁸ 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)³⁹ 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.⁴⁰ The Old Mill even before the turn of the century was a community hub for social activities and events.

³⁸ Taylor, *Ottawa's Britannia*, 41, 43, 62.

³⁹ 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 Street, Rowatt Street, and Bradford Street, was used as a piling ground.

⁴⁰ Taylor, *Ottawa's Britannia*, 12, 43, 96.



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

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 1950.⁴¹ 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.

⁴¹ Taylor, *Ottawa's Britannia*, 43-44; John Grover, *Britannia Yacht Club: Historical Highlights 1887-1982*, (Ottawa: Runge Press, 1982), 16.



“Britannia Club House” by William James Topley, circa 1896.

Source: Library and Archives Canada, 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.⁴²

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.⁴³

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.⁴⁴

⁴² “Old Time Stuff,” *The Ottawa Citizen*, November 24, 1923.

⁴³ Taylor, *Ottawa’s Britannia*, 44.

⁴⁴ Elliot, *The City Beyond: A History of Nepean, Birthplace of Canada’s Capital, 1792-1990*, 213-214.

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.⁴⁵

The Ottawa Electric Company 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.⁴⁶ 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.⁴⁷ Come 1898, Britannia residents were not satisfied with the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) service and formed a committee to bring the streetcars to Britannia.⁴⁸ The committee consisted of community members including J. C. Jamieson, William Howe, A. N. McNeil, and F. W. Harmer.⁴⁹ 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.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Elliot, *The City Beyond*, 191.

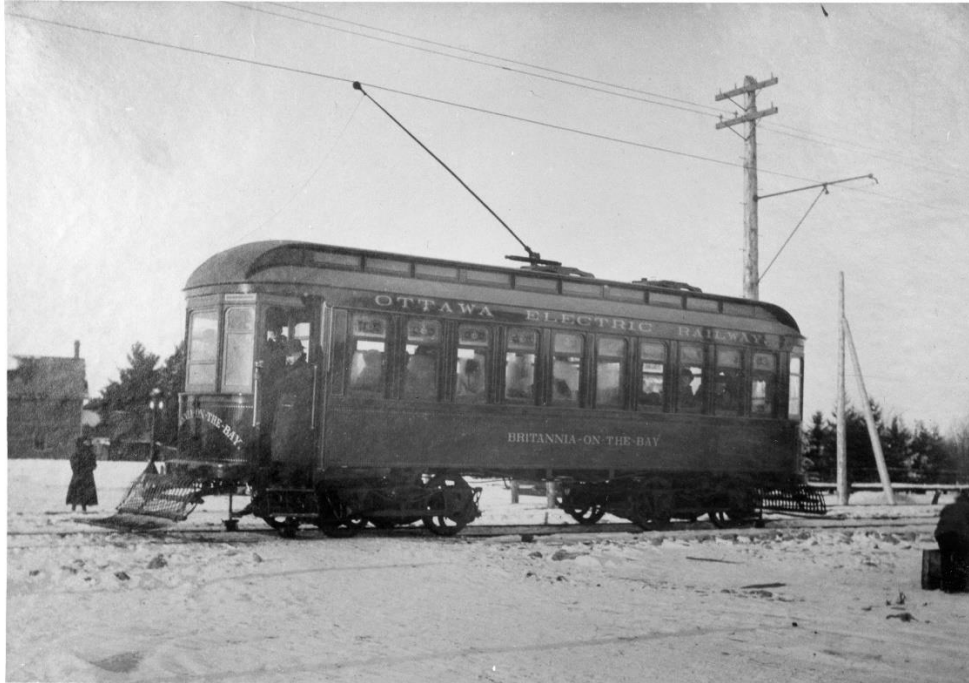
⁴⁶ Taylor, *Ottawa's Britannia*, 59.

⁴⁷ Taylor, *Ottawa's Britannia*, 59.

⁴⁸ "Britannia Ambitious: Residents Take Steps to Secure Electric Railway Extension."

⁴⁹ "Britannia Ambitious: Residents Take Steps to Secure Electric Railway Extension."

⁵⁰ 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>.



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 1900.⁵¹ 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.”⁵² Across North America in the early 20th century, amusement parks built at the terminus of streetcar lines were gaining popularity, and they were known as “electric parks.”⁵³ Britannia Park included an auditorium seating seven hundred people, changing rooms, bathing houses, and two pavilions with concession stands.⁵⁴ The auditorium hosted a variety of concerts, dances, and themed events such as “Venetian Nights” which brought thousands to the Park.⁵⁵

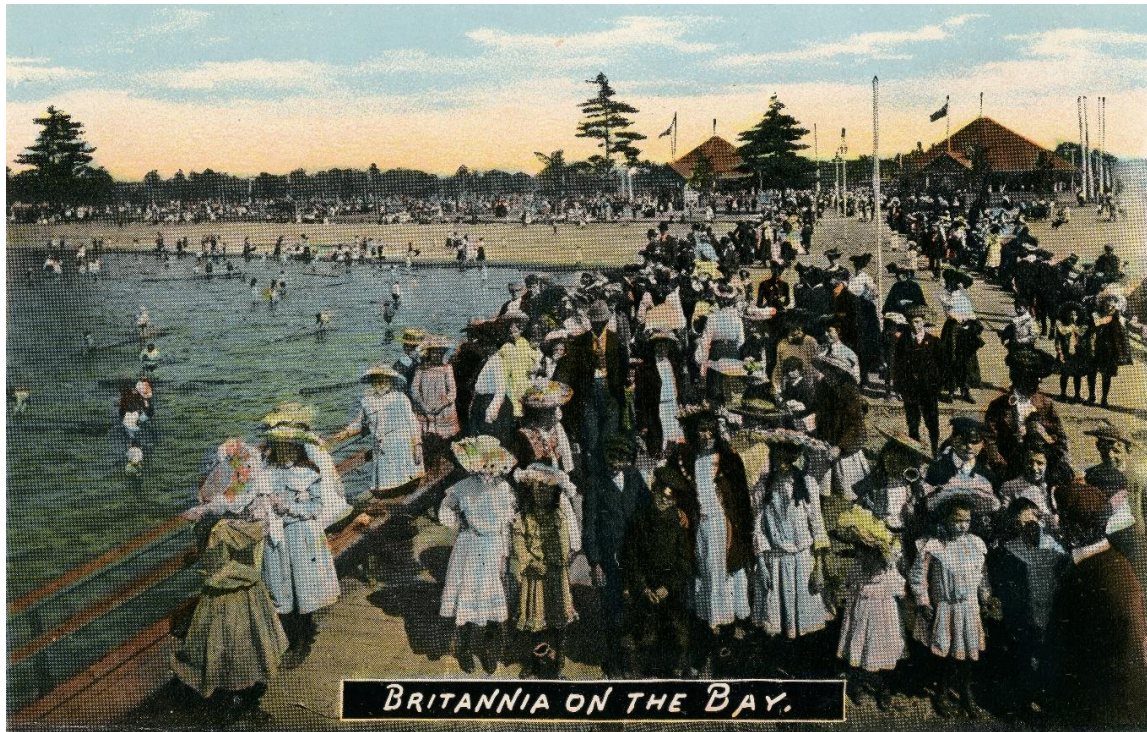
⁵¹ Andrew Waldron, Harold Kalman, and Peter Coffman, *Exploring the Capital: An Architectural Guide to the Ottawa-Gatineau Region*, (Vancouver: Figure 1 Publishing: 2017), 183, 211.

⁵² Lisa Horwitz and Mark Horwitz, *The Natural Charm of Britannia: A Heritage Character Statement*, (Ottawa: City of Ottawa, 1996), 4.

⁵³ James Powell, “Britannia-on-the-Bay,” The Historical Society of Ottawa, accessed October 17, 2023, <https://www.historicalsocietyottawa.ca/publications/ottawa-stories/significant-technological-changes-in-the-city/britannia-on-the-bay-75>.

⁵⁴ Ottawa Neighbourhood Study, “Britannia Village,” accessed October 17, 2023, <https://www.neighbourhoodstudy.ca/906britannia-village/>.

⁵⁵ Taylor, *Ottawa’s Britannia*, 346.



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

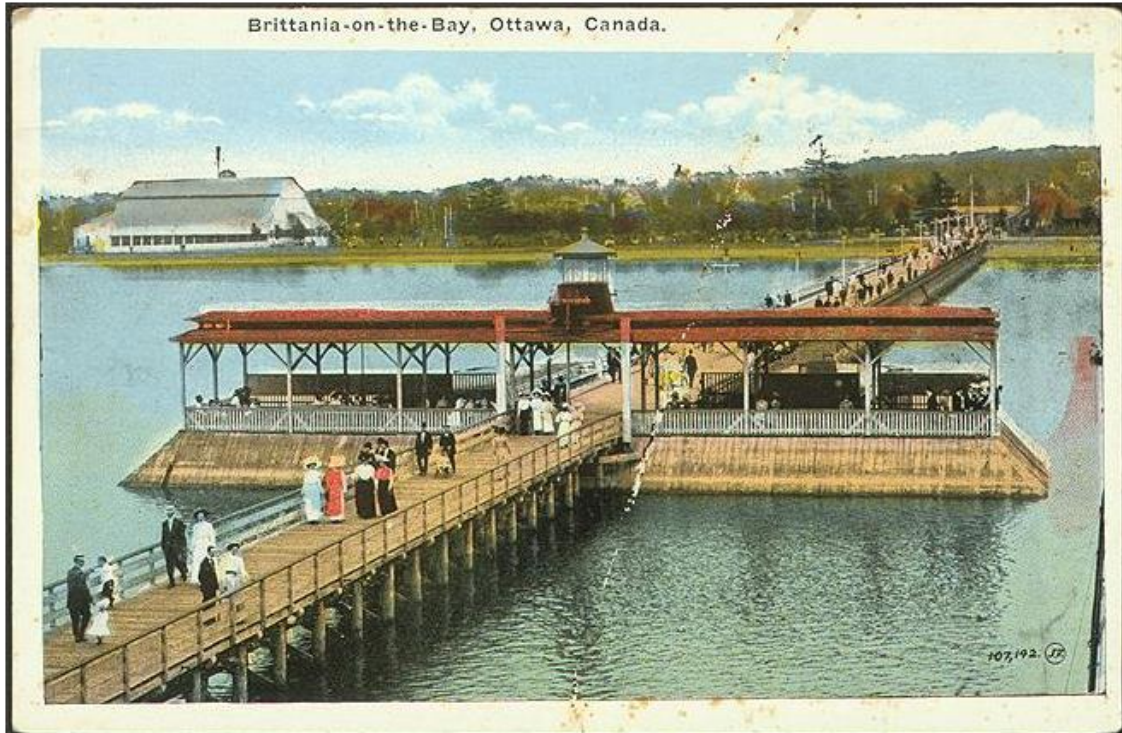
The OER extended the pier and added a new, larger “T” shape pier end, which now measured approximately 1000 feet in length and was electrically lit.⁵⁶ At the end of the pier, the OER built the new three storey building for the Britannia Boathouse Club that included boat storage below and a grandstand and a large ballroom above, which hosted a variety of social events.⁵⁷ 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.⁵⁸ 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.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Cook, *Ahearn and Soper: The Electrification of Ottawa*, 39.

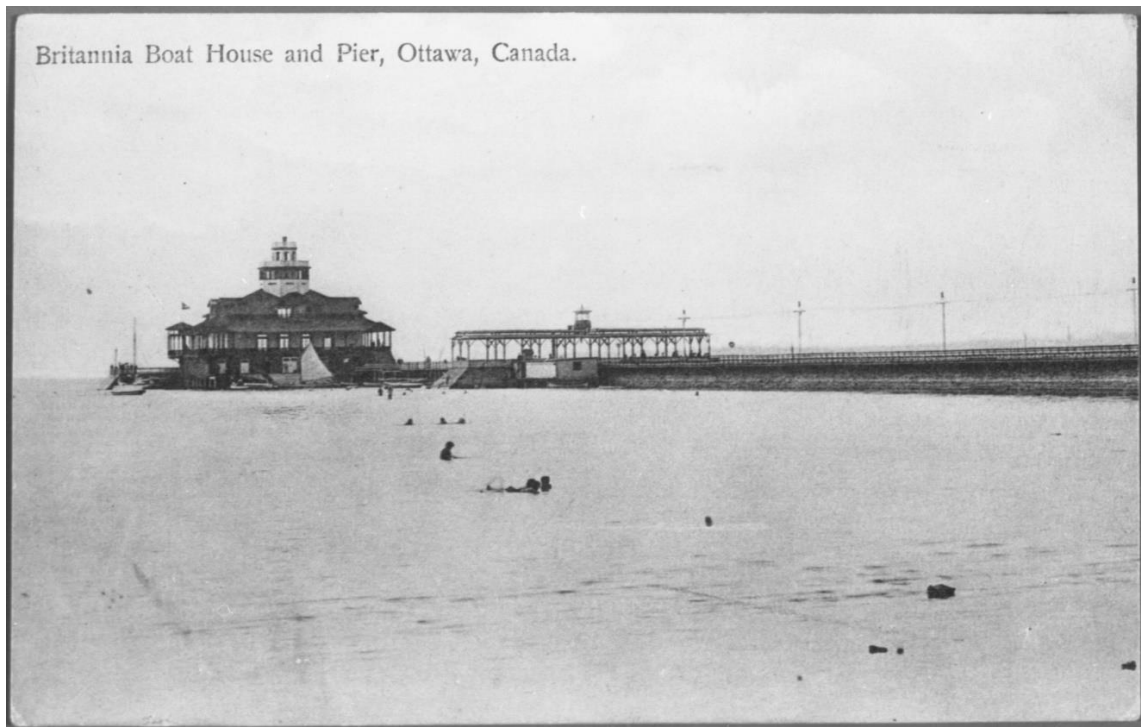
⁵⁷ Horwitz and Horwitz, *The Natural Charm of Britannia*, 4.

⁵⁸ Kirby, *Historical Sketch of Britannia Yacht Club 1891-1967*, 4-5.

⁵⁹ Horwitz and Horwitz, *The Natural Charm of Britannia*, 4



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.



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.⁶⁰ 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,⁶¹ with about 200 members (resident and non-residents) in 1904,⁶² 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

⁶⁰ Ottawa Neighbourhood Study, "Britannia Village."

⁶¹ Grover, *Britannia Yacht Club: Historical Highlights 1887-1982*, 9-10; Kirby, *Historical Sketch of Britannia Yacht Club 1891-1967*, 4.

⁶² Anson A. Gard, *The Hub and the Spokes: Or the Capital and its Environs*, (Ottawa: Emerson, 1904), 14.

thousand.⁶³ 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.⁶⁴

Between the World Wars, despite amusement parks becoming unfashionable, people still frequented the Britannia Park and the boat club.⁶⁵ However, with the accessibility of cars after the Second World 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 for affordable housing for veterans.⁶⁶ 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.⁶⁷ 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

⁶³ "History of Britannia Boat Club," *The Ottawa Journal*, May 17, 1913, accessed October 17, 2023, <https://cityofottawaarchives.newspapers.com/image/43190648/>.

⁶⁴ Kalman and Roaf, *Exploring Ottawa*, 155.

⁶⁵ Horwitz and Horwitz, *The Natural Charm of Britannia*, 4.

⁶⁶ Ottawa Neighbourhood Study, "Britannia Village."

⁶⁷ Horwitz and Horwitz, *The Natural Charm of Britannia*, 4.

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."⁶⁸ 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 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.⁶⁹



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.

⁶⁸ 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>.

⁶⁹ Cook, *Ahearn and Soper: The Electrification of Ottawa*, 40.

Archaeological evidence demonstrates the presence of arrowheads of Algonquin First Nations near the Britannia peninsula.⁷⁰ 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.⁷¹ 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 Rapids to the north. Given its geographical location, the peninsula was likely used by voyageurs and loggers alike to portage the rapids.⁷² 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.⁷³

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 1918.⁷⁴ 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.⁷⁵ In the summer of 1896, the new boating clubhouse was completed located on its current

⁷⁰ Harold Kalman and John Roaf, *Exploring Ottawa: An Architectural Guide to the Nation's Capital*, 154.

⁷¹ "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/>.

⁷² Britannia Yacht Club, *Britannia Yacht Club: A History of Water, Place And People, 1887-2012*, (Ottawa: Britannia Yacht Club, 2013), 18.

⁷³ Bill McKeown, *Ottawa's Streetcars: An Illustrated History of Electric Railway Transit in Canada's Capital*, (Pickering: Railfare DC Books, 2006), 75.

⁷⁴ Britannia Yacht Club, *Britannia Yacht Club: A History of Water, Place And People, 1887-2012*, 40.

⁷⁵ Taylor, *Ottawa's Britannia*, 53-55.

site, and Britannia's summer resident list was the largest yet,⁷⁶ and the following summer the community is called, "one of the best known and generally patronized resort of Ottawa citizens."⁷⁷

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 façades, 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.⁷⁸

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.

205 Bradford Street is linked to all three of Britannia's contextual values. The house was built circa 1900 around the same time the OER came to Britannia and the community's peak as a summer resort. It is likely one of the owners, Maxwell Graham, used the streetcars to commute daily into Ottawa.⁷⁹ The house was initially used as a summer

⁷⁶ "Still Has A Charm: Britannia Holds Its Own As A Summer Resort."

⁷⁷ "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/>.

⁷⁸ Horwitz and Horwitz, *The Natural Charm of Britannia*, 6.

⁷⁹ Ottawa City Directory, 1912, 417; Graham worked at the Birks Building on Sparks Street.

cottage and later became a permanent residence, which is reflected in its architectural features and informal landscaping, contributing to the cottage atmosphere. 205 Bradford Street is a rare and good example of Queen Anne Revival style in Britannia, combined with the local vernacular style.

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>Constructed circa 1900, the building at 205 Bradford Street is a representative example of a Queen Anne Revival vernacular cottage style found throughout Britannia, built during a time when the area was a summer resort destination. These buildings typically feature a simple form, wood horizontal lap siding, a wraparound verandah, and ornamentation on roof elements. There were also some cottages that were designed in high styles including Late Victorian, Queen Anne Revival, and Shingle Style. The high style cottages still incorporated aspects of the local vernacular, however, display the added intricacies of the high style.</p>
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		<p>These physical characteristics demonstrate the Late Victorian desire for modest and functional seasonal cottages outside the city, that had a strong focus on transitional spaces from the exterior to the interior. The property exemplifies these elements in its asymmetrical form, elaborate massing, wraparound verandah, steeply pitched roof, and one and a half storey height. Most notably, the building features a turret, a rare feature in Britannia, giving the name Turret Lodge to the building. The building features decorative millwork in the gable apex panel and a bull's eye window. This ornamentation demonstrates the pride in</p>
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		craftsmanship that was prevalent during this period of construction.
2	<i>The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.</i>	No
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 is associated with Frederick William Harmer, the first homeowner and clerk for the Township of Nepean. The Harmer family was one of the pioneer residents of Britannia Heights. Harmer was instrumental in the community and was part of the committee that petitioned the Ottawa Electric Railway (OER) to bring streetcars to Britannia. Harmer sold the property to his daughters, Marion and Elizabeth Gertrude in 1904. They lived next door to their sister, Bertha McElhinney at 195 Bradford</p>

		<p>Street, and their sibling, William Harmer, also lived in Britannia for nine years during the community's peak as a summer resort.</p> <p>The property is also associated with Maxwell H Graham, who lived in the house between 1913 to 1927. Graham was clerk, head, and later chief of the Wild Life Division in the Department of the Interior. He was a pioneer bureaucrat in wildlife conservation who contributed to the early protection of park animals in Canada.</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>	Yes

		<p>The property has contextual value as it maintains the summer resort character of the area. Known locally as Turret Lodge, the building was constructed during Britannia's golden period from 1900 to 1914. Its architectural style, along with its large lot and casual landscaping, setback, and retention of its original form and materials, contribute to supporting Britannia's early cottage character. Numerous other remaining cottages in Britannia are also designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, including 48, 154 and 175 Britannia Road.</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>The property is historically linked to the growth and success of Britannia</p>

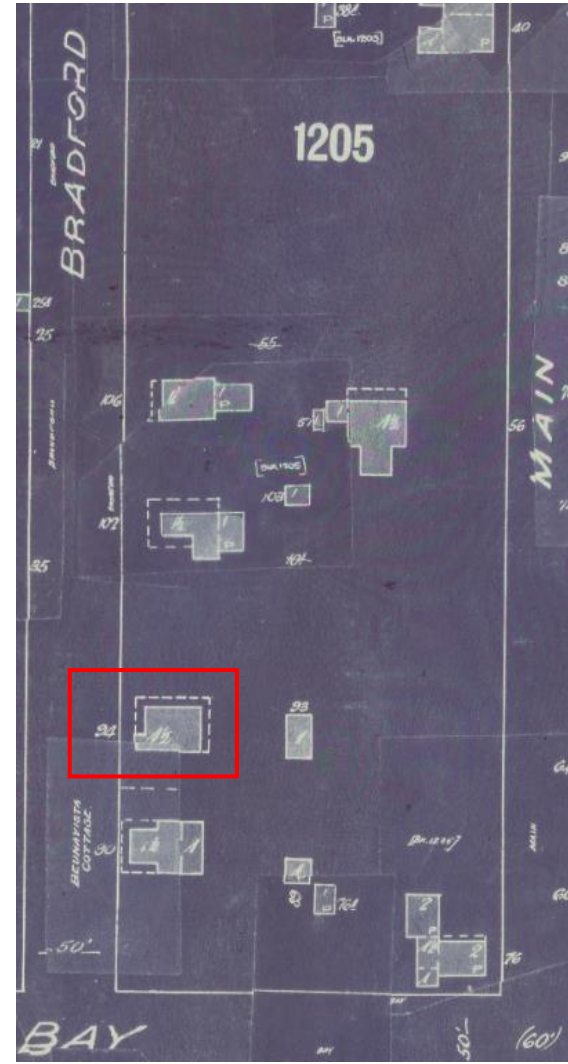
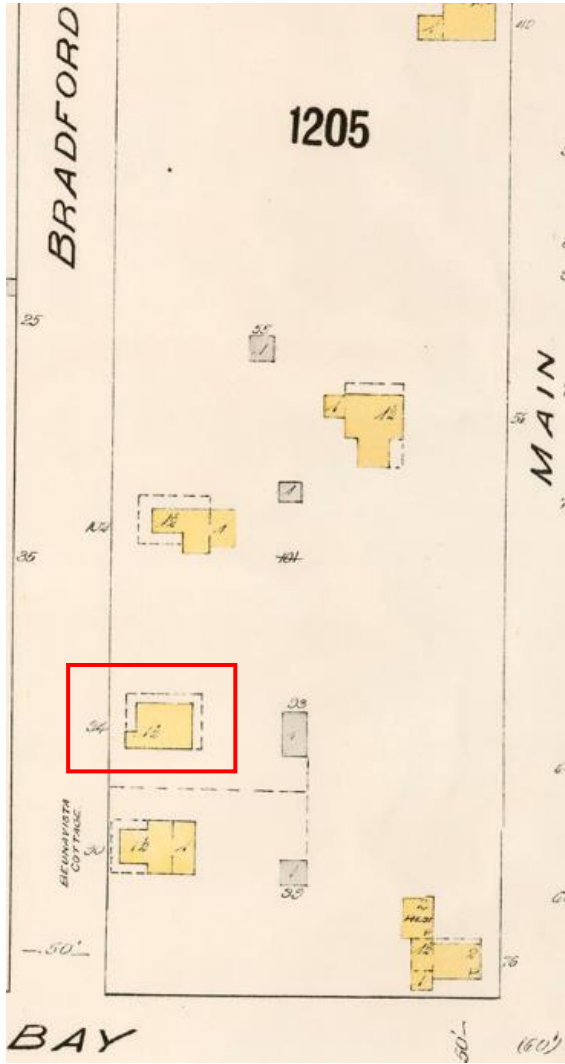
		<p>Village as a summer resort, with the extension of the Ottawa Electric Railway reaching Britannia in 1900 allowing working class people to move permanently to the growing suburb. The expansion of the OER's Britannia line coincided with the opening of Britannia Park, stimulating thousands to visit the village annually. However, it was the daily commuters travelling on the streetcar to the city who made it a success. 205 Bradford Street was built around 1900 as a year-round residence for the Harmer family, at a time where seasonal summer cottages and cottage rentals were popular.</p>
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		<p>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. 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 summer hotels.</p>
9	<i>The property has contextual value because it is a landmark.</i>	No

Supplementary Photos and Maps

Ottawa Fire Insurance Plan,
1912, page 168, 94 Bradford
Street

Ottawa Fire Insurance Plan,
1922, page 167, 94 Bradford
Street



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