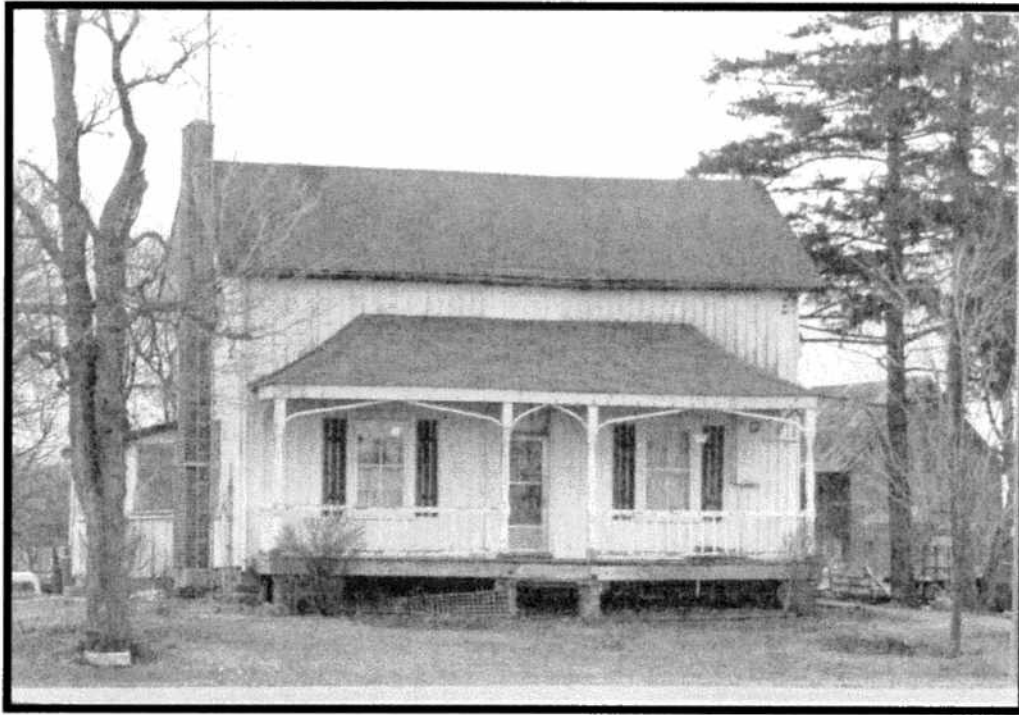


The John Koch House

c.1865

10044 Highway 48

East ½ of Lot 21 Concession 7



The John Koch house in a 1992 photograph with its original bell-cast roof verandah.

Historical Background:

The 200 acres of Lot 21 Concession 7 was originally set aside by the Crown as a reserve. In 1791 one of every seven lots was set aside as a reserve to support the Protestant clergy so it would not have to depend on the Legislative Assembly for funding. In 1792 John Graves Simcoe issued a proclamation in Quebec that another 7th of the land be set aside for the disposition of the Crown. Lot 21 Concession 7 happened to be one of these Crown's reserves. The reserve lands were often leased to settlers for a period of 21 years. If in that 21 years, the settler fulfilled his obligations of building a house and clearing the road; he could sell his lease and be compensated for his work. On January 3 1828 the remaining clergy and Crown reserves were turned over to King's College, the forerunner of the University of Toronto to be gradually sold off. The dispersal of these lands often proved controversial, contributing to the grievances that lead to the Rebellion of 1837. In 1844, King's College sold the east half of Lot 21 Concession 7 to Andrew Wideman.

The Widemans were Mennonites who originally came from the Swiss canton of Zurich and fled to Baden Germany. From there they immigrated to Philadelphia in 1733. Members of the Wideman family arrived in Markham in 1803 and so many settled and farmed around the intersection of Major Mackenzie Drive and Highway 48, that it was once known locally as Wideman's Corners. In 1849 Andrew Wideman sold his 100

acres to his son-in-law John Koch, who recently married his daughter Mary Wideman, after the death of his first wife.

John Koch Jr. was the grandson of John Koch, another Mennonite farmer who made the trip from Pennsylvania to Markham shortly after the arrival of the Berczy settler's in the late 1700's. The 1851 census indicates that the Kochs were living on Lot 21 Concession 7 in a 1 storey frame house. However this lot is now occupied by two very similarly detailed frame houses that might have been described as being one storey in the nineteenth century, although they are actually 1 ½ storeys tall. The house described in the 1851 census is most likely the more northerly of the two, judging from its earlier architectural styling.

In 1871 John Koch sold the house and all of lot 21 Concession 7 to his brother-in-law Jacob Wideman except for a 3 acre lot on the south east corner. On this smaller parcel, there is a 1 ½ storey frame house built circa 1865, which is assumed to have been built by John Koch prior to selling the land to his brother-in-law. To this day, there is an obvious visual relationship between this house and the one to the north that indicate they were both built for the same family. They have almost identical verandahs, and are very similar in form and orientation. The north house is clad in clapboard while the southern house is clad in board and batten. The north house is distinguished by second floor belly flop windows and a front entrance with transom and sidelights, while the southern house has no belly flop windows and only a transom light above the front entrance. The architectural details of the southern house, both inside and out, point to a later construction date than the northern house and the southern house also features a Gross Doddy wing. The Gross Doddy was an addition built by Mennonite farmers to house elderly members of the family under the same roof. The style of windows found on the Gross Doddy, are slightly later in style to those of the rest of the house, indicating it was likely a later addition. Perhaps John Koch built this southern house for his retirement, planning to spend his later years helping out on his brother in law's farm. The Gross Doddy may have been added to eventually house him and his wife, while his adopted daughter Elizabeth Wagner and her husband William Stiver, the noted school master, lived in the main part of the house.

Architectural Description:

The John Koch House is one and a half storey frame house with a Pennsylvania German Gross Doddy addition. The house is located on the northwest corner of Highway 48 and Major Mackenzie Drive, facing east towards Highway 48. It is closely related in style and details to the house immediately to the north which may have also been built for John Koch.

The house is roughly U-shaped in plan with a tail wing connected to the Gross Doddy addition at the rear. The house rests on a granite fieldstone foundation and is clad in vertical board and batten siding. The principal façade is symmetrically divided into three bays with a central door with a transom light above. Flanking the door are two 6 over 6

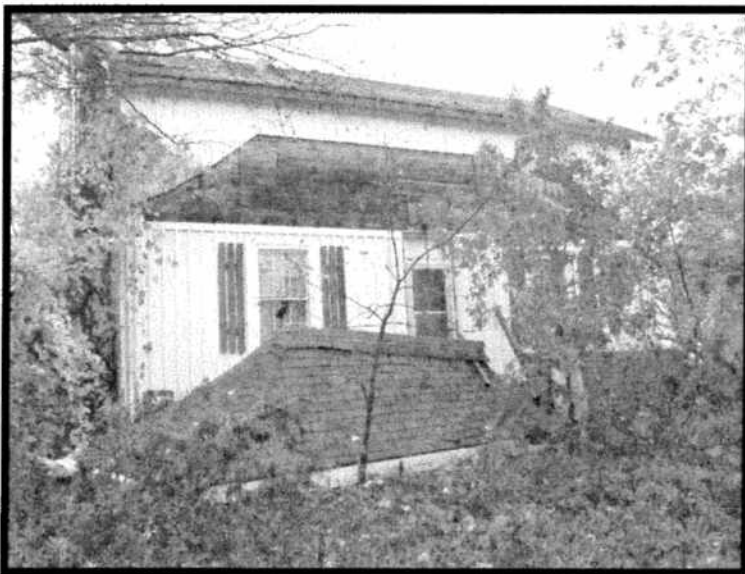
single hung windows. The front of the house was originally graced with bell-cast roof verandah with turned posts, which has recently collapsed due to neglect. The whole house has 6 over 6 windows with the exception of the Gross Doddy addition, which was constructed slightly later and has two over two single hung windows. The house has moderately pitched roofs, delineated by a wooden frieze board at the eaves. It appears that the Gross Doddy addition was designed to share the large kitchen of the main house, with the rest of the rooms being devoted to entertaining or sleeping.

Stylistic Analysis:

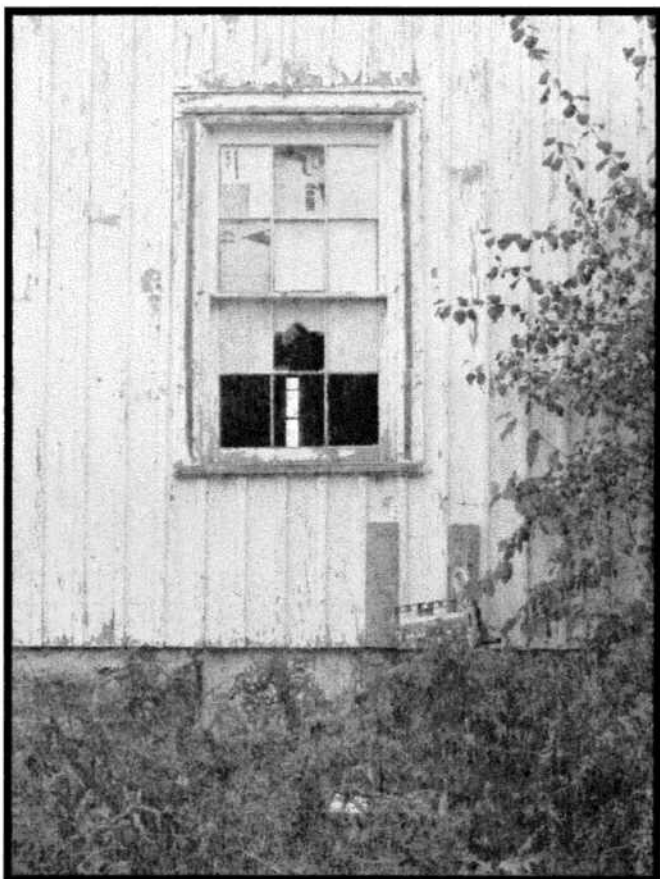
The John Koch house could be described as a late, Georgian influenced, vernacular house. It has the form, symmetry, and proportions of Georgian architecture, but is almost devoid of any ornamentation such as eave returns, elaborate trims, and fanlight windows found on Classic Revival dwellings. With the exception of the verandah, the house reflects the no nonsense practical nature of its original Pennsylvania German farmer occupants in a clean, crisp forthright manner.

Architectural Features to be Preserved:

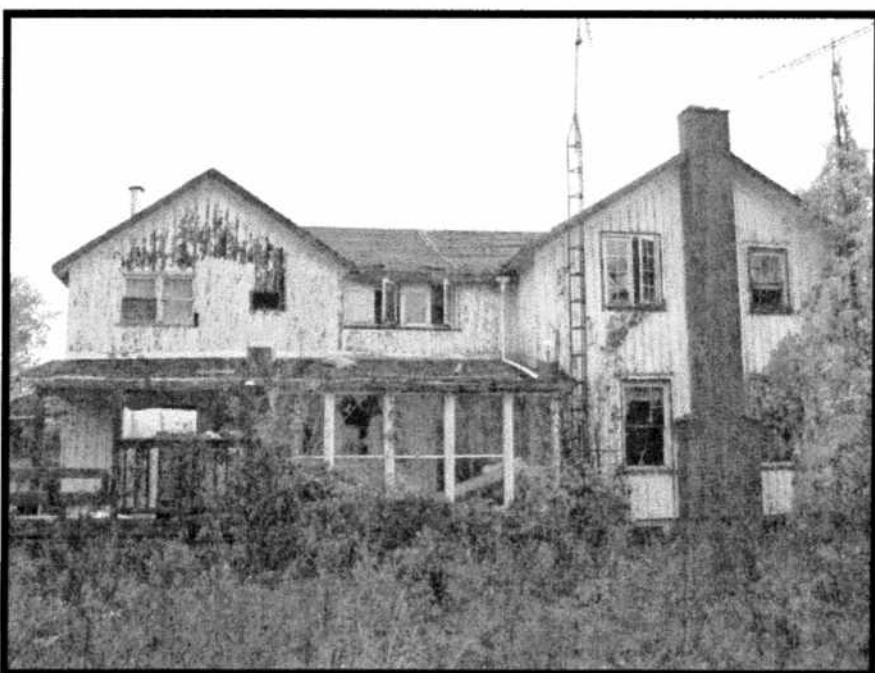
- Original Foot print and form including Gross Doddy addition;
- Moderately pitched roofs;
- Board and batten siding and frieze board;
- Original window and door openings;
- Original front door, and 6 over 6 and 2 over 2 windows;
- Bell-cast roof veranda with turned posts, brackets and railing



East elevation of the John Koch house with collapsed bell-cast verandah in front



Original six over six window in the north side of the John Koch House.



The south elevation of the John Koch House, showing the Gross Diddy addition to the rear and the shared kitchen wing.



The northeast corner of the John Koch house as seen today. Note the missing verandah, broken windows and Gross Doddy addition at the rear.

Markham Heritage Estates Study 2004

Municipal Address: 10044 Highway 48

Photograph:



Legal Description: Lot 21, Concession 7

Building Name: J. Ramer House (est.)

Date of Construction: c.1860

Current Owner: Deros Developments Limited, 2357 Finch Avenue W, Suite 201, Weston, ON

Inventory Code: G3 -1

Roll Number: 03023648000000

Architectural Style: Georgian Vernacular - Mennonite Influence

Style Description: A 1½ storey vernacular residence, built with the influence of the Georgian Style. The house is similar in scale and design to its twin house to the north. The house is clad in board and batten siding, has wood, double hung windows with a 6/6 pane division and has veranda detailing very similar to that seen on the house to the north.

Exterior Wall Material: Wood – Board and Batten

Type: Residential

Markham Heritage Estates Study 2004

Preliminary Rating: "A"

Status: Occupied – Severely Neglected

Conclusions:

The Ramer house appears to be a very early dwelling built along the Markham to Toronto Road. The house exhibits influences of early Mennonite architecture, and much original detailing.

The house has been one of the most severely neglected houses in recent years and has deteriorated significantly. As a frame house it would appear that it would be only a matter of time before significant elements are lost or even the building itself.

Development is likely not going to occur in the area for a considerable time. Anticipated road widening to accommodate Big-Box development to the south could further compromise the house.

While the house and its twin to the north are significant landmarks along Markham Road, and allowing relocation could be seen as rewarding the severe neglect that these houses have faced in recent years, it appears inevitable that they would have to be relocated to be preserved.

Significant: Yes **Threatened:** Yes - Severe Neglect

Recommendations:

1. That the owner of the property be requested by Council to properly repair and maintain this significant heritage landmark.
2. That given the threat of loss of this resource due to neglect and the apparent architectural significance of the dwelling, that it be declared eligible for relocation to the Markham Heritage Estates.
3. That if and when the house is relocated to the estates, that it be relocated to a lot facing eastwards to the south of the twin dwelling at 10062 Highway 48.
4. The building should be designated Under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

HERITAGE MARKHAM
EXTRACT

DATE: November 21, 2006

TO: R. Hutcheson, Manager of Heritage Planning

EXTRACT CONTAINING ITEM #15 OF THE TWELVETH HERITAGE MARKHAM
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 8, 2006

15. HERITAGE ESTATES
10044 HIGHWAY 48, HENRY EBY HOUSE
POTENTIAL CANDIDATE FOR MARKHAM HERITAGE ESTATES (16.11)
Extracts: R. Hutcheson, Manager of Heritage Planning
-

The Senior Heritage Planner gave a presentation on this application. There was some discussion about whether or not it was premature to determine that on-site preservation in the future is not possible.

HERITAGE MARKHAM RECOMMENDS:

THAT Heritage Markham recommends to Council that the Henry Eby House at 10044 Highway 48 be declared eligible for relocation to Markham Heritage Estates due to its cultural heritage significance as an excellent example of a Pennsylvania German dwelling with an intact "doddy haus" and its precarious state of long-term vacancy and deterioration;

AND THAT Heritage Section staff contact the property owner to seek their cooperation in the advertising and availability of the building.

CARRIED.

Note:

Further research since the date of the Heritage Markham meeting indicates that this building should be known as the John Koch House, rather than the Henry Eby House.