

CLAYTON SCHOOL (SS #4, Ramsay, Clayton, Ontario)

Location: Lot 23, Concession 2, Ramsay, Lanark County, Ontario.
Lot 12, Clayton Plan 248.

Present owner: Jack Wilkinson, 1824 Playfair Drive, Ottawa.

Present occupants: None

Present use: None

Statement of significance:

SS #4 is an archetypal example--in orientation and plan--of published designs for one-room rural schools made popular in the 1860-1870's through the Journal of Education for Upper Canada. The frame school also exemplifies the Classical Revival style of architecture. Although over 100 years old, the structure is in good condition and care has been taken to maintain its original style and character.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

- A. 1. The Crown patent for 100 acres, west half of Lot 23, concession 2, was awarded to the Canada Company in the spring of 1836. The land was immediately sold to Edward Bellamy for \$150. Early in the year of 1849, David Campbell, "assignee of the estate and effects of Edward Bellamy," sold to the District Council of the Bathurst District (school Board) a one half acre lot for 5 shillings. It is suspected that the original schoolhouse was built in that same year.

The building which exists today was constructed at a later date (c.1860) and, in 1971, the Lanark County Board of Education sold the property, plus additional land, to Larry Pleet for \$3,000. In the following year, John and Michele Harding purchased the property but sold to the present owner, Jack Wilkinson, in 1974.

2. SS #4 is constructed under the guidelines of published designs which influenced one-room rural schools dating from 1860 to the 1870s. This frame school is also an excellent example of the Classical Revival style which was popular in the period 1830 to 1860. SS #4 was constructed around 1860, close to the end of that period.
3. Architect: Unknown
4. Recent work such as parging the west side of the foundation, painting, and surfacing the roof with metal has not upset the original character of the building. The wing extending to the back may or may not be original.

B. The first Clayton school, built about 1849 on a one-half acre lot, was located in an area which was surveyed as Plan 248 of the Village of Clayton, June, 1855. A second school, SS #4 which exists today, was constructed on the same lot about 1860. Apparently a growing population demanded more school facilities since both schools were then used. The old school was torn down in the early 1900's, probably corresponding to a decline in the rural population; the lumber was used to build a farm house. The other school, sold in 1971, was then over 100 years old.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

- A. 1. SS #4, Ramsay, is an archetypal example of published designs for one-room rural schools. These designs influenced schools dating from 1860 to 1870. "When practicable, the building should front south, with a dead wall to the north, and windows on the east and west." The usual plan consisted of three bay sides and front, the door centered on the gable facade, and on the roof peak; a chimney at the back, and a school bell at the front. Each of these design recommendations is followed in SS #4. Details such as returned eaves, pediment-shaped window heads, and tapered shutters reveal the Classical Revival style popular around 1830 to 1860.
- A. 2. Recent maintenance work such as pointing is evidence that the structure is in good condition.
- B. 1. This one-storey frame building is three bays wide by three bays long. A wing which is not as high as the main part of the building extends from the back.
2. The rubble stone foundation has been parged on the west side.
 3. Horizontal shiplap and vertical corner boards painted gray form the wall exterior.
 4. Frame construction supports the structural load.
 5. Porches: None.
 6. There is a single brick chimney at the back on the roof peak.
 7. a. The main entrance is in the center bay of the front (south end). It has white wood trim; a moulded shelf, broad lintel, and sides surround. Within a recess, a single light flat transom heads the six panel green door. Outside the door is a worn wood landing and step. A plain door located towards the back on the west side is boarded up. Entrance to the wing is also on the west side.
 - b. Windows are nine-over-nine double-hung sash, with shaped heads, plain surround, slip sills, and large plain tapered shutters; these wooden features are painted white. The lower half of the front (south) windows are finished with shutter-like slats over the glass.

8. a. The gable roof surfaced with metal has projecting boxed returned eaves. At the top of the walls a simple frieze is formed by two boards. On the peak at the front there is a bell steeple constructed of a square wood base and four six-sided columns supporting a pyramidal roof with simple bargeboard at its base. All wood is painted white.
- b. Dormers: None.
- C. Description of interior: Not done.
- D. Site: 1. General setting and orientation:
Located parallel to the road, the school faces south.
2. Outbuildings: None.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

1. North Lanark Registry Office, Almonte
2. Conversation with Jimmy Shane and with Margaret Bellamy, residents of Clayton.

PART IV. Report prepared by Jane Tosh, August, 1982.