



The present Davenport family homestead was built by William John Davenport for his family in or about the year 1902.

The Davenports were the first settlement family in the Township of Flos. William and Benjamin Davenport, brothers, and William's wife Sarah entered Upper Canada from the United States about 1810. After a period of several years in the southern part of the colony (some of which was spent at Amherstberg), the Davenports settled in Flos Township in 1819, in

conjunction with the Wilberforce Street settlement of Black refugees. From that date to the present the family has never lost its association with the Township of Flos, and particularly the community which is now Hillsdale.

In the early years, the family farmed just south of Hillsdale and provided hospitality to other immigrant families, but the building trade soon became the family vocation.

George Davenport, son of William and Sarah, farmed on the Old Second Line of Flos Township, and his only son William John Davenport was a farmer, thresher and builder. After William John Davenport moved from the farm to Hillsdale, he followed the trades of carpenter and plasterer. Local tradition and William John's diaries and records show that he built dozens of houses in the area.

The Davenport home, subject of this designation, was built by William John for his own residence in 1902, and has been owned and occupied by his family to the present date. The building has an important association with the first settlement family and its location on the historic Penetanguishene Road is also important.

The structure is a frame building, with a lathe and plaster interior finish. The exterior finish, a stucco "pebble dash" with a broken-glass decorative feature in the gable was a Davenport trademark. The house remains virtually as built, with only very minor alterations. Much of the interior finish remains. The plans, specifications and material lists for the house survive as most of the tools used to build it. The verandah, a notable feature of the house, is believed to have been built a year or two after the house itself.

In addition to the characteristic exterior finish, there are interior features which have special associations with the Davenport family:

- Two stamped tin ceilings. William John Davenport was the local sales agent for a Toronto stamping company;
- A pieced-wood ceiling in the parlour, hand made by William John Davenport with some tin components.

## **Designated Features**

The important characteristics and features worthy of designation and protection are:

- Original room layout and building perimeter plan;
- Location, size and designs of the doors and windows;
- Exterior stucco finish and the accompanying wood trim;
- Roofline and chimneys;
- Location and elevation of the building;
- Interior painted wood trim, mouldings, doors, painted wooden floors and dados;
- Door latches, hinges and builder's hardware throughout;
- Lathe and plaster interior finish;
- Wooden window sash; and
- Unobscured views of the east and the east parts of the north and south sides of the house.

It is recognized, however, that minor changes to the room layout will be required and allowed to provide for plumbing and heating facilities.