



## Heritage Property – *The Old Post Office*



35 King St. N.

Designed by D. Ewart, chief architect for Canada; built 1911-1913 by L.B. Lachance, Ottawa, contractor at a tendered cost of \$36,975; addition, 1944

Designated Oct. 24, 1988: bylaw 88-183, “The Old Post Office”

Waterloo’s first purpose-built post office was erected on land donated to the Crown in 1909 by the Dominion Life Assurance Co. The architect’s description of his proposal reads, in part, “The basement of the main portion only is to be excavated. The basement and ground- floor walls are to be made of stone, those of the first-floor brick with stone dressings and those of the attic wood. There is a brick vault on each floor of the main building but the attic. The basement is for heating furnaces, fuel and other stores; the ground floor of the main portion is for the post office, entrance hall and vestibule of the wing, examining warehouse, mail entrance, weights and measures office, three regimental C.O. rooms, toilet room, vestibule and stairway; the first floor of the main portion is for Customs and Inland Revenue offices, toilet room and store room, of the wing one infantry armoury, O.M. store,



toilet room and stairway; the attic of the main portion for caretaker's apartments and of the wing for men's recreation room, store room and stairway hall."

In its first years, prior to the First World War, army cadets used the large, rear-portion of the building for armoury and drill work. In 1967, the building became privately owned; users have since included an optometry school (until 1975), a restaurant and a physics research institute.

The Romanesque style of Canadian federal post offices at that time was followed in Waterloo. Typical of that design are rusticated sandstone for the ground floor (a shortage in stone supply caused a delay in construction – enough came eventually from New Brunswick) and around upper-floor windows, red brick for the upper floors, semicircular arches for windows and entranceways (lowest level). On the top storey was a steeply-sloped copper-clad face over two corbelled courses of stone and tall stone dormers below a flat roof.

A corner tower declares the landmark status of the building. The original tower deteriorated because of a fire – it was removed and then rebuilt shorter in 1969, while the present clock dates from 1987. A classical order is followed for the tower's superposed window openings from the second to the fourth levels: one large window, two medium and three small. The pediment over the clock echoes that of the dormers and the gable end of the northern wing.