

# Hamilton's Architectural Heritage: The Influences of Geography, History, and Culture on the Built Environment

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# Outline

- I. Introduction
- II. The Town of Hamilton: 1816-1846
- III. The City of Hamilton: 1846-1867
- IV. Hamilton: The Birmingham of Canada  
1867-1920
- V. The Modern City of Hamilton: 1920-1946
- VI. Conclusion

# I. Introduction

- Purpose:

To examine the influence of geography, history, and culture on Hamilton's architectural landscape from 1816 to 1946

# I. Introduction (cont.)

- Premise:
  1. Various factors (e.g., social, economic, political, geographical, etc.) combine to produce the context within which cities evolve
  2. Architecture (the built environment) is one manifestation of the links between the form of city and the processes that shape the city
  3. Buildings are: (i) functional, i.e., they serve a purpose; and (ii) symbolic, i.e., they reflect the “spirit of the age” (zeitgeist) and the “spirit of the place” (genius loci)

# I. Introduction (cont.)

- “Without buildings, a city does not exist.”  
(Carter, 1986, 267)
- “Architecture mattered because it was the most eloquent of all witnesses to the moral and physical condition of a city or a nation.” (Saint, 1995, 273)
- About the dates of the time periods

## II. The Town of Hamilton: 1816-1846

- 1816 Creation of District of Gore  
Population = 668 (Barton Twp.)
- 1818 Log court house; jail
- 1826 Burlington Canal  
Population = 1,195 (Barton Twp.)
- 1828 Stone courthouse
- 1832 Cholera epidemic
- 1836 Population = 2,846 (Hamilton)
- 1837 Allan Napier MacNab knighted
- 1845 Board of Trade

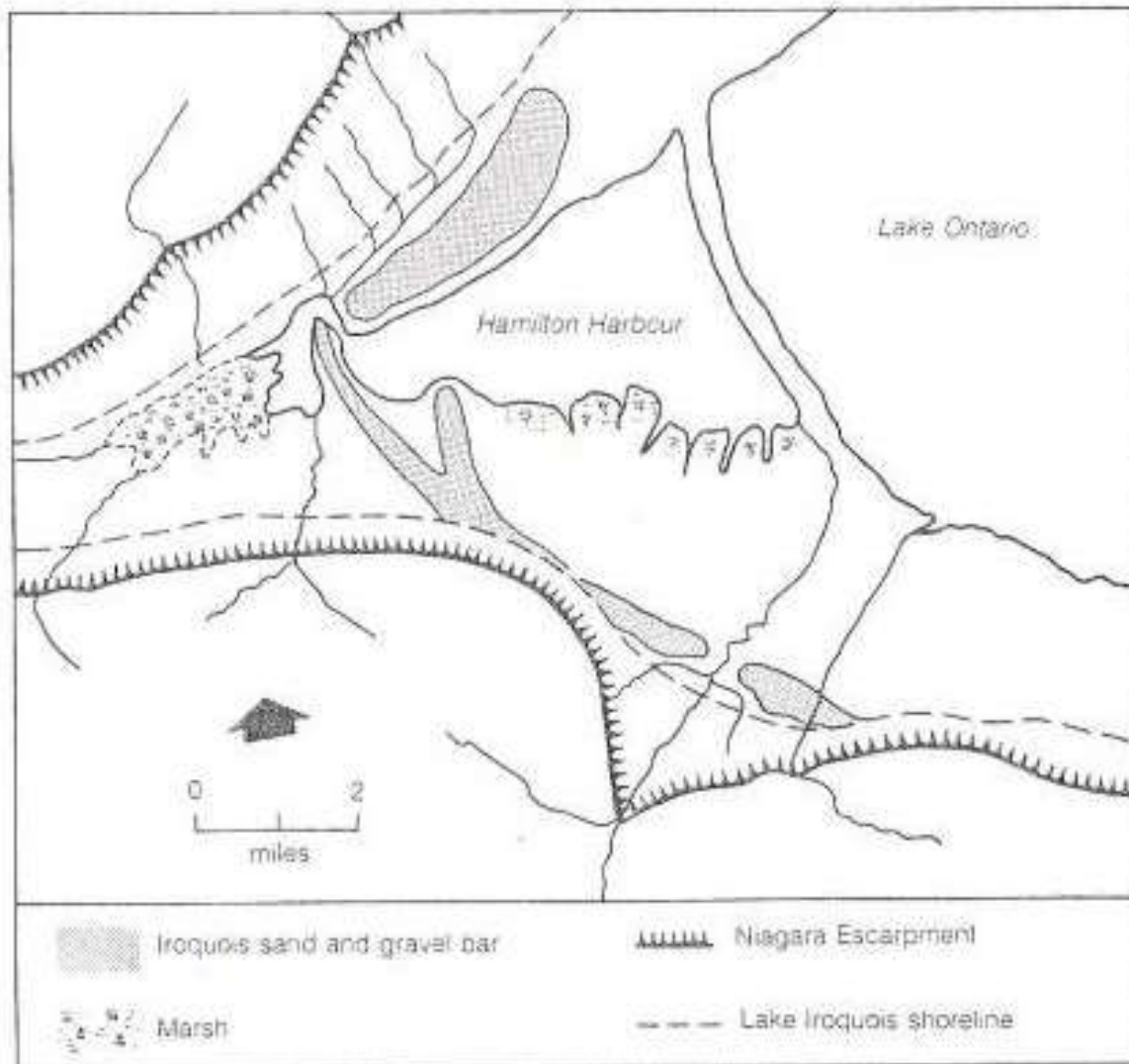
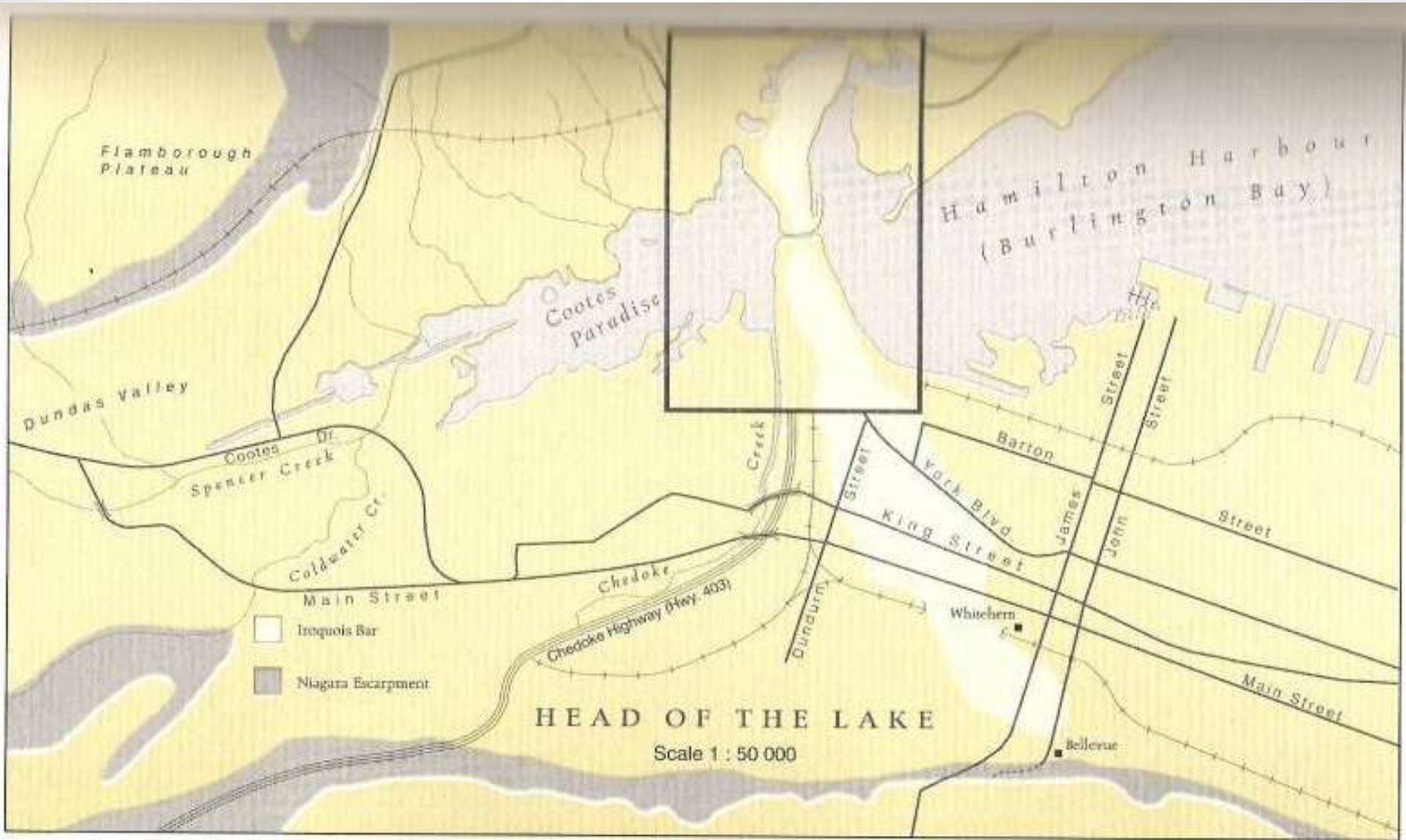


FIGURE 8.1 Site of Hamilton.

Source: H.A. Wood, "The site of Hamilton and its influence on the development of the city".

The Site of Hamilton - Original town site not located on water.  
 Higher elevations – setting for elite residences.  
 Growth (until WWII) east and west due to influence of harbour and escarpment.



## The Iroquois Bar

Shoreline of post-glacial Lake Iroquois.

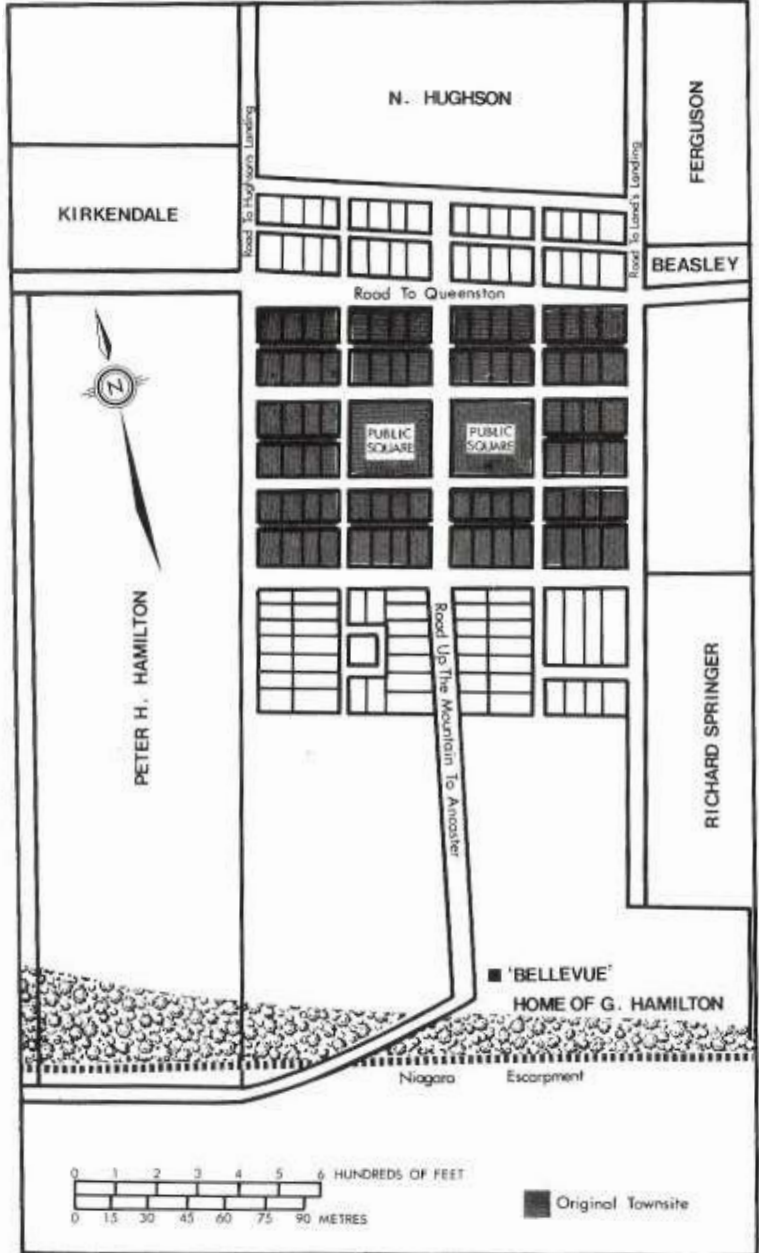
Site of many elite residences including Dundurn Castle (see slide 12), The Scottish Rite and Wesanford (see slide 20), and Arkledun (see slides 21-23).



# The Original Town Site

Hamilton – first speculative town site to evolve into major city in Canada (John Weaver).

George Hamilton – land speculator.

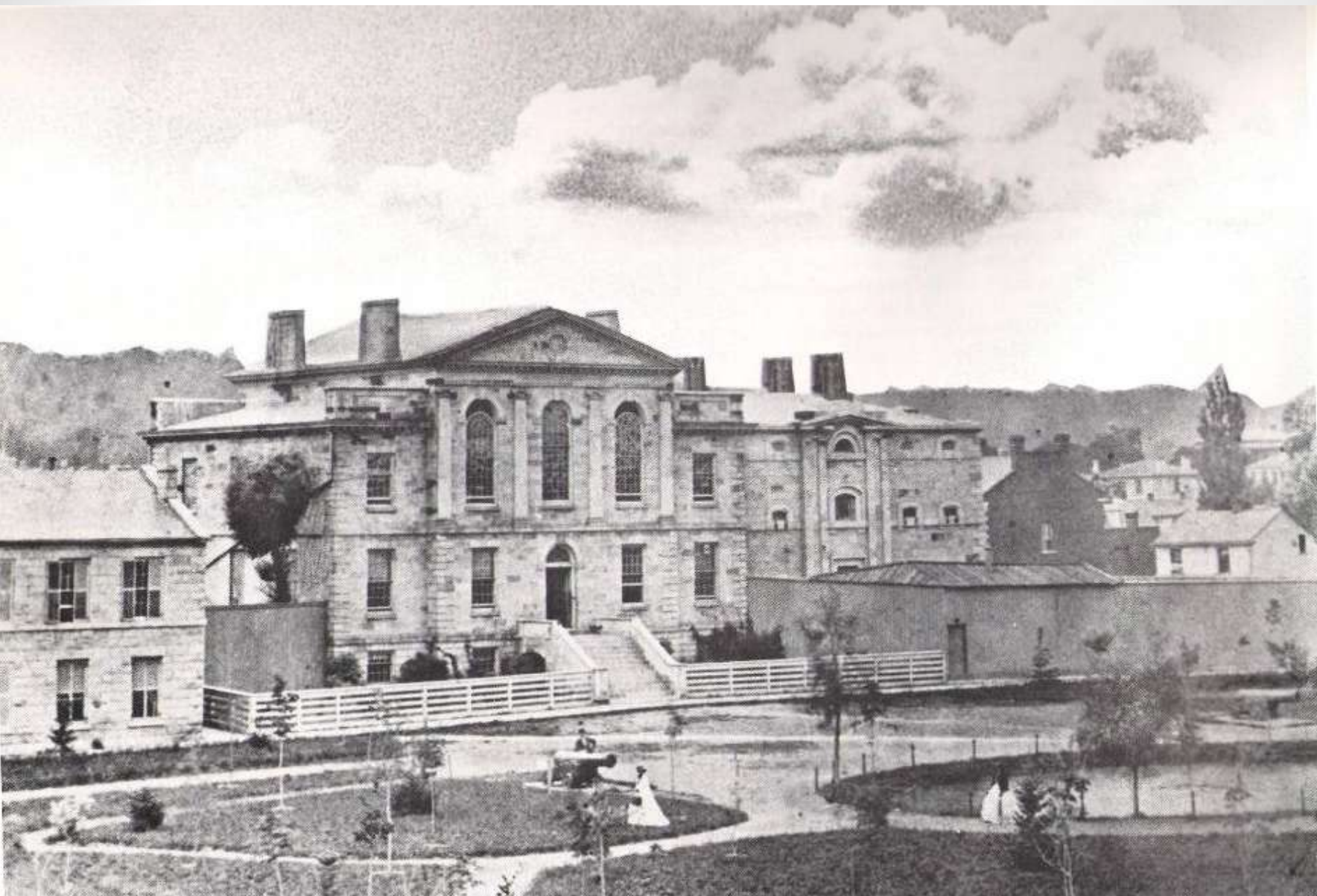


1 Major Property Owners and George Hamilton's Townsite, 1816-1829.



*This 1842 map shows the original features of the escarpment, creeks, and inlets of the bay.*

Plan of the Town of Hamilton, District of Gore, Canada. 1842  
Note Iroquois Bar (white diagonal line), escarpment (dark vertical line).



District of Gore Courthouse  
Built 1832; replaced 1878-79.  
Photo c. 1870



DUNDURN CASTLE, HAMILTON, CANADA WEST.

From *The Illustrated London News*, April 28, 1849.

Dundurn Castle. Built 1835. Robert Wetherell, Architect. National Historic Site. 1967 – Hamilton's Centennial project – restoration of Dundurn.

# III. The City of Hamilton: 1846-1867

1846 Hamilton incorporated as a city

Population = 6,832

1854 Great Western Railway

Cholera epidemic

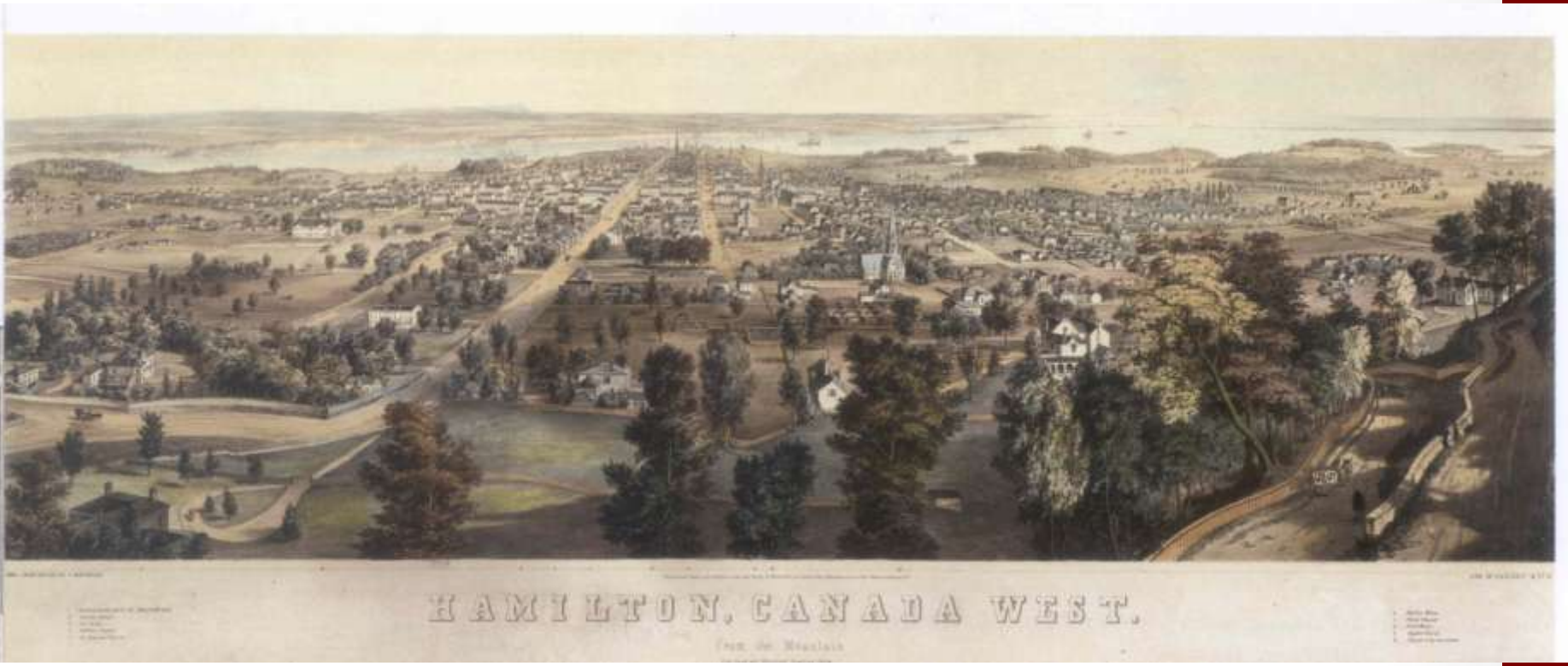
1856 Population = 21,855

1859 GWR shops

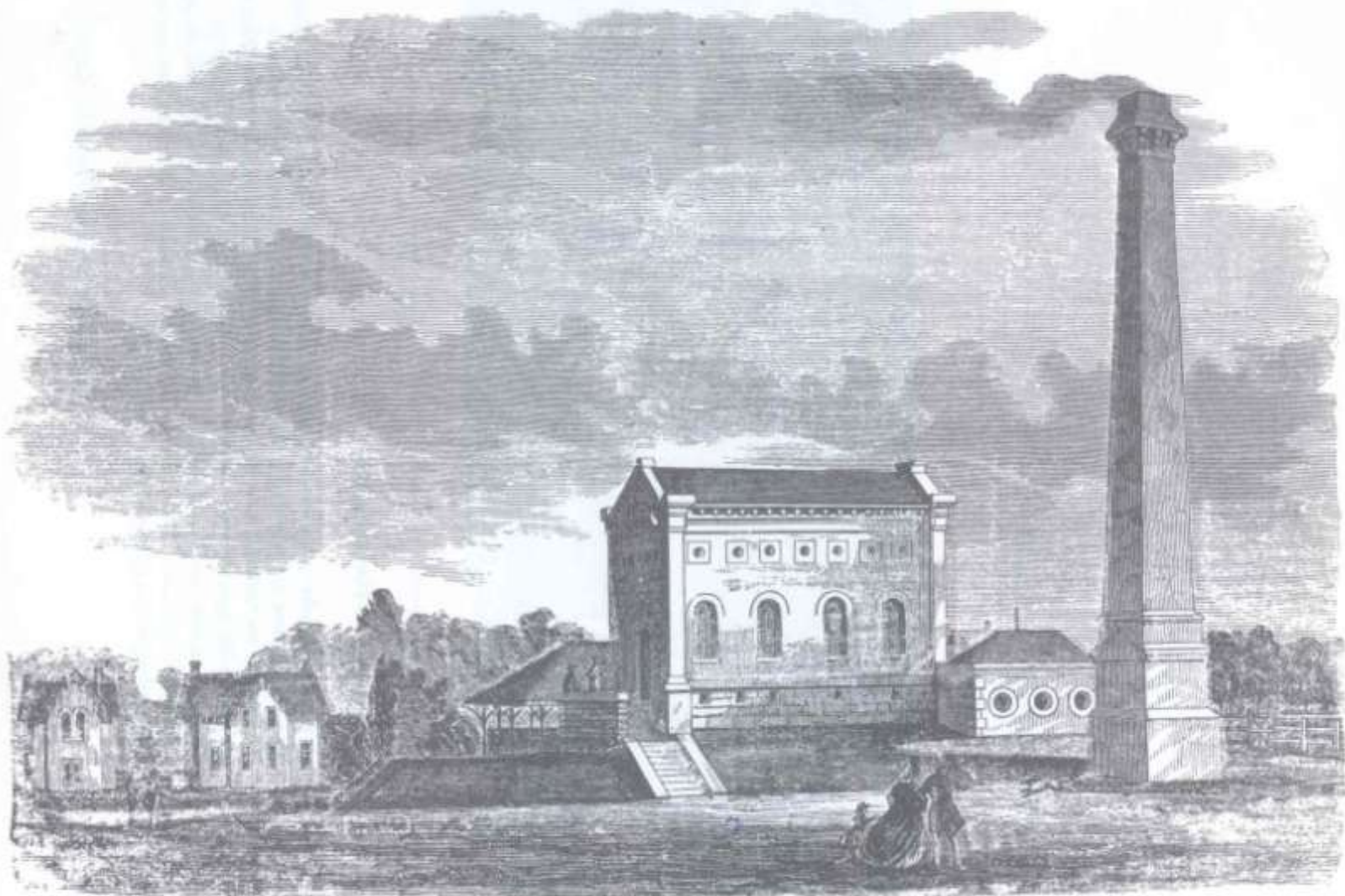
1860 Visit of Prince of Wales

1862 Death of MacNab

1866 Population = 21,485

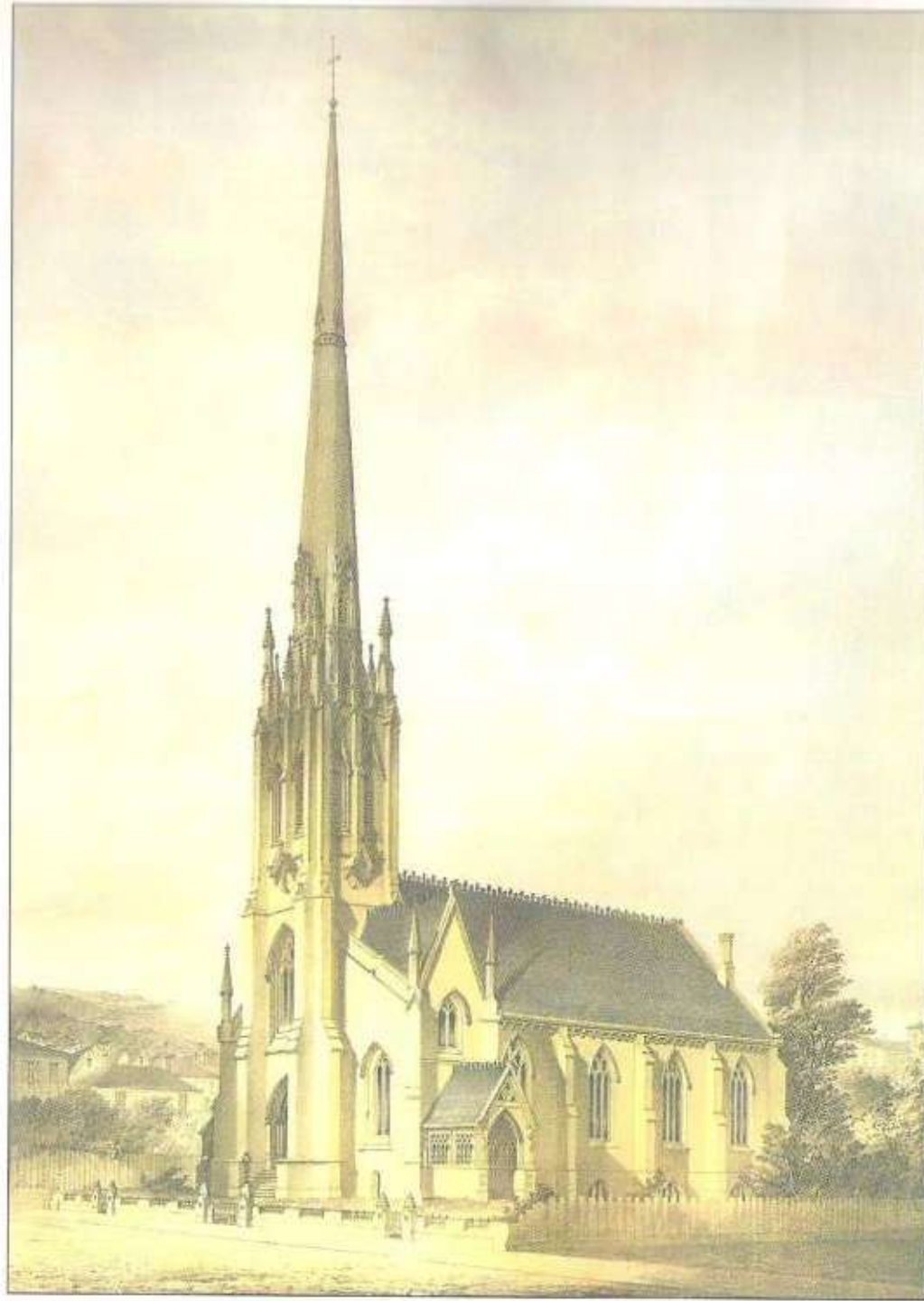


Hamilton, Canada West. 1854  
Painted by Edwin Whitefield  
Arkledun in lower right (see also slides 21 – 23)



ENGINE AND BOILER HOUSE OF WATERWORKS.

- Hamilton Waterworks. Built 1858 -59. National Historic Site.
- Officially opened by Prince of Wales (later Edward VII) in September 1860.
- Engines built by John Gartshore, Dundas.



St. Paul's (formerly St. Andrew's)  
Presbyterian Church

Built 1854 – 57.

William Thomas, Architect.

Only stone spire in Ontario.

National Historic Site.



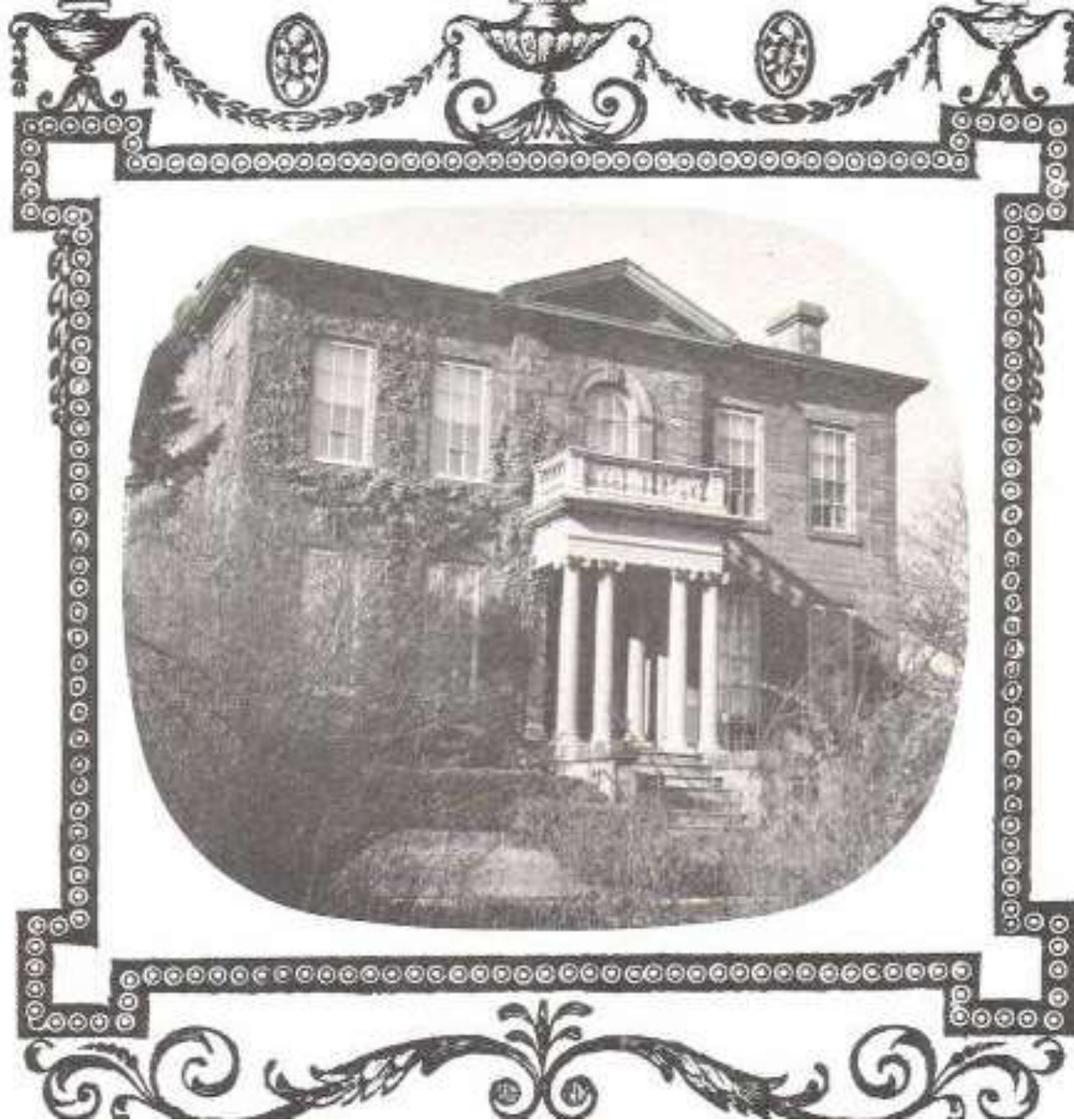


Custom House. Built 1858 – 60. National Historic Site.



*The Crystal Palace at Victoria Park was constructed to help arrest Hamilton's sliding economic fortunes by attracting provincial fairs.*

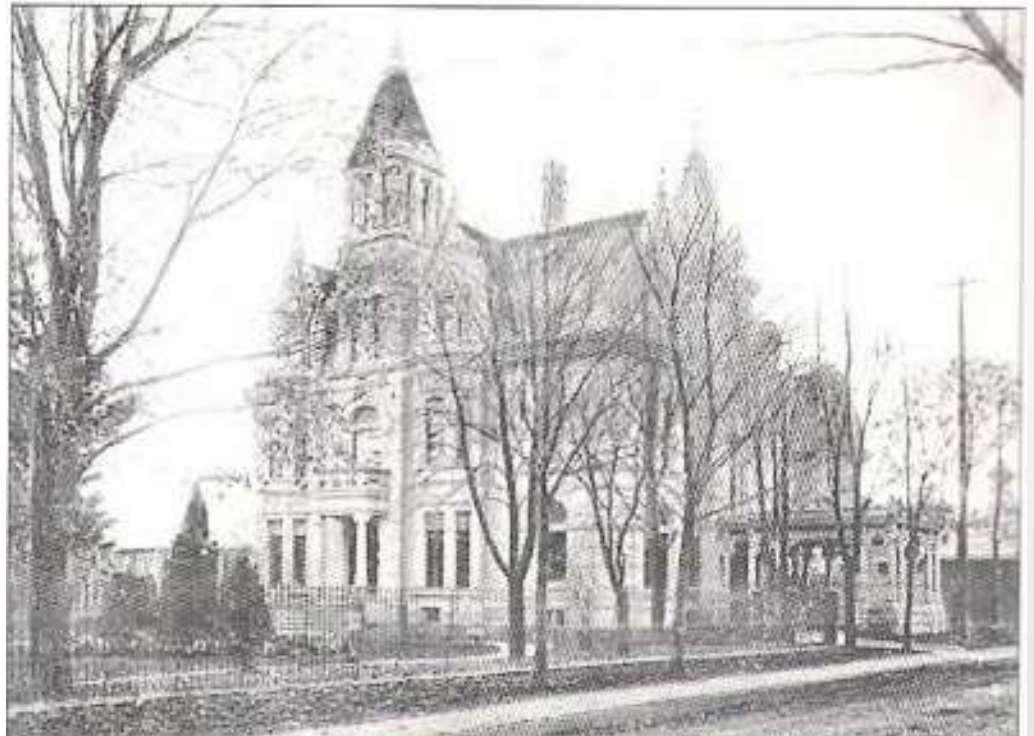
Crystal Palace. Built 1851; demolished 1891. Albert Hills, Architect.  
Site of present-day Victoria Park (King St. W. at Strathcona ).



Whitehern. Built 1848. National Historic Site.  
Original owner – Oliver Duggan; later purchased by Calvin McQuesten.



Top: Scottish Rite;  
former home of George Tuckett



Bottom: Wesanford;  
home of Senator William Sanford

(Both of these homes built on  
elevated ridge (Iroquois Bar))



View from escarpment  
showing Arkledun

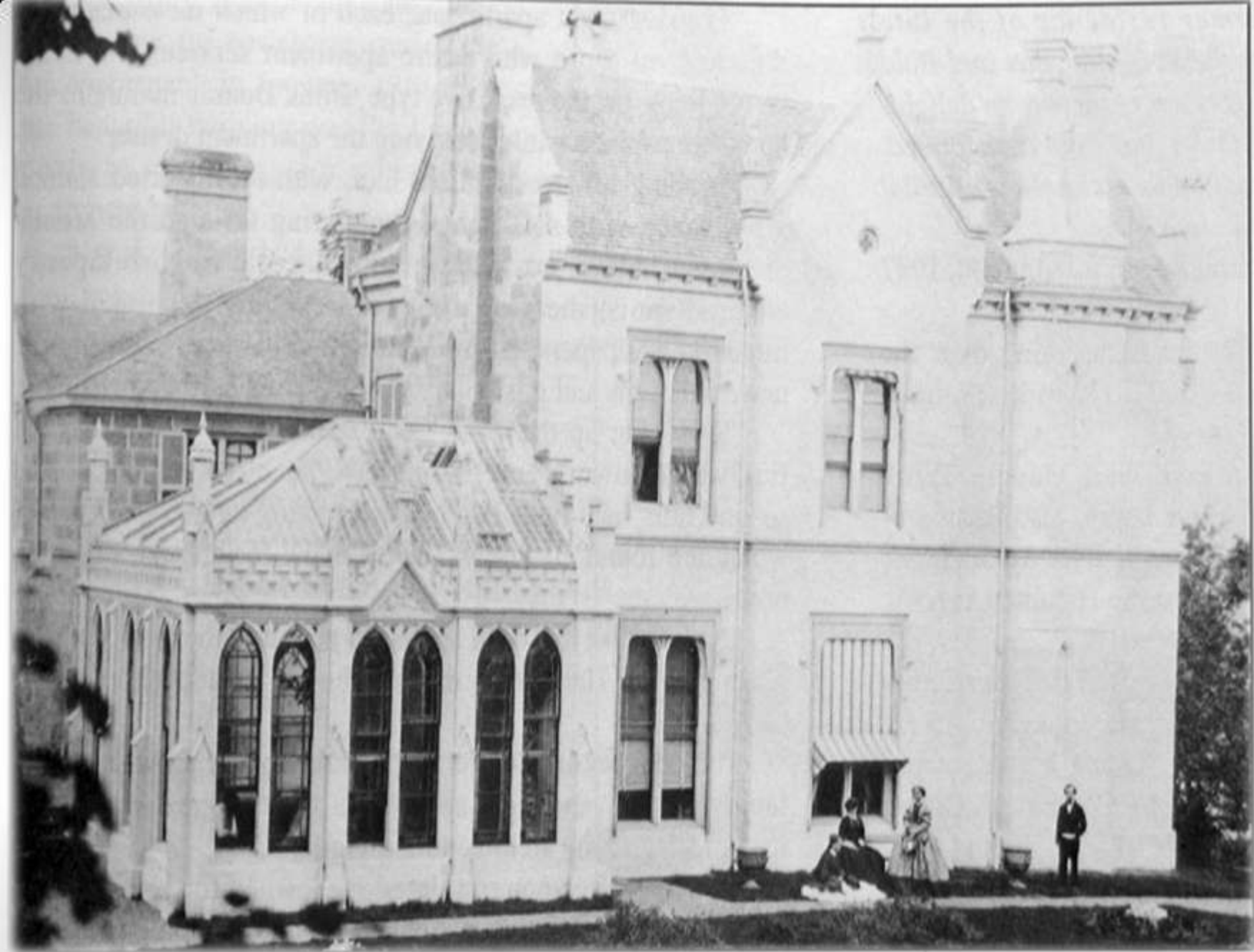
Arkledun  
– home of Richard Juson

Built c. 1846; demolished  
1930.

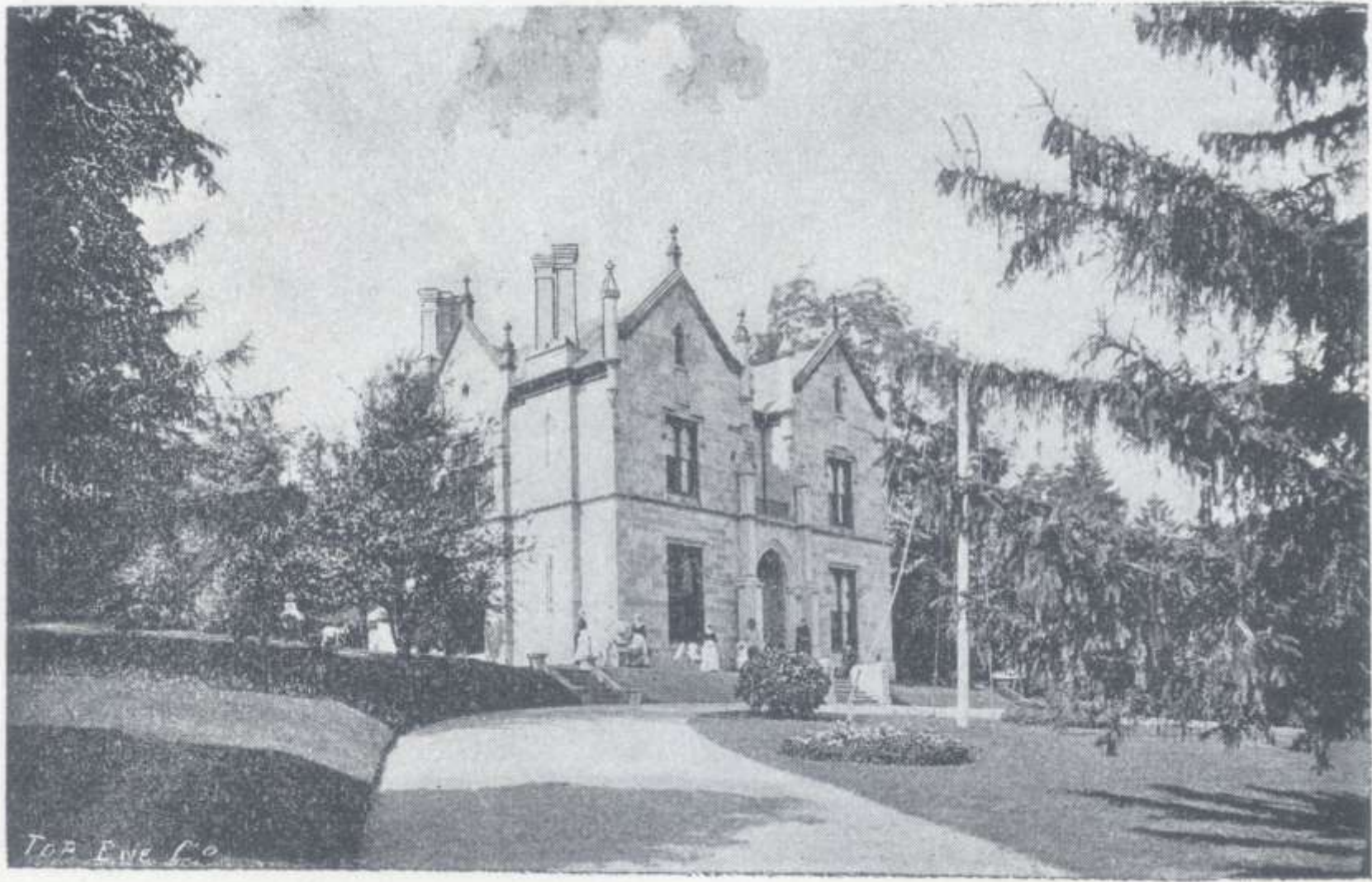
William Thomas, Architect.

Prince of Wales (later Edward  
VII) stayed here during first  
royal visit to Hamilton in 1860.

(South of present-day St.  
Joseph's Hospital at the head  
of John Street South)



Arkledun East façade. Photo c. 1862.



“ARKLEDUN,” Residence of MR. JAMES TURNBULL.

Arkledun North (front) façade. Photo c. 1900. Arkledun was demolished in late 1930. This is the only known photograph of Arkledun's front façade.

Arkledun's owners: Richard Juson (c. 1846 – 1867); Edward Browne (1868 – 1888); James Turnbull (1888 – 1914); and E.D. Cahill (1914 – 1930).

## IV. Hamilton: The Birmingham of Canada: 1867-1920

1867 Confederation

1876 Population = 32,641

1886 Population = 41,712

1890 Hamilton Public Library

1896 Population = 51,527

1898 Hydro-electric power (DeCew Falls)

1910 Steel Company of Canada

1912 Dominion Foundries and Steel Co.

1916 Population = 104,330



City Hall  
Built 1890; demolished 1959-60.  
James Balfour, Architect.



The City Hall.



James Street, North.

Corner of King St. and James St. Photo c. 1900.



Court House.



The Royal Hamilton Yacht Club.

Royal Hamilton Yacht Club Located on Burlington Beach next to canal.  
Built 1891; destroyed by fire 1915.



The Post Office.

Post Office  
Built 1893; demolished 1930.

Corner of King St. E. and  
John St. S.



Canada Life Assurance Co. Building.

Canada Life Assurance Co.  
(later Birks Building)

Built 1883; demolished 1972  
(citizen protest).

Richard Waite, Architect (based  
in Buffalo).



Hamilton Public Library.

## Hamilton Public Library

Built 1890; demolished 1958.

Located on north side of Main Street between James Street and MacNab Street



The Hamilton Bridge & Tool Company's Works  
and Merrison's Engine & Boiler Works.



Canada Screw Co.  
South Street.



For Queen & Harbour Sts.



Hamilton Forge Works.



THE ONTARIO ROLLING MILLS COMPANY

Various Industrial Establishments  
From "Hamilton: The Birmingham of Canada" published in 1892.



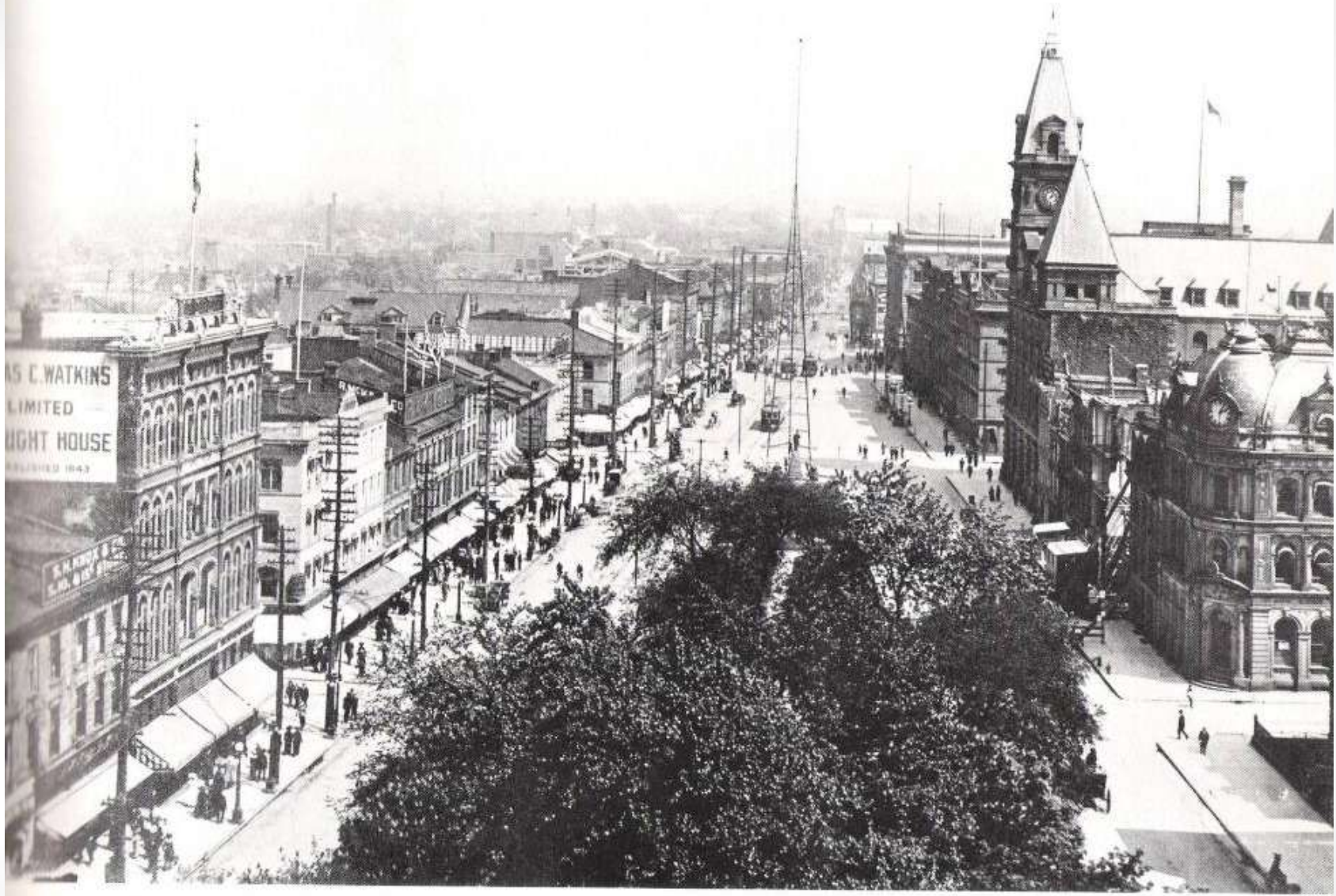


Hamilton Public (Carnegie) Library    Built 1911-12.  
Currently – Unified Family Court.  
Located at corner of Main Street and MacNab Street (southwest corner).



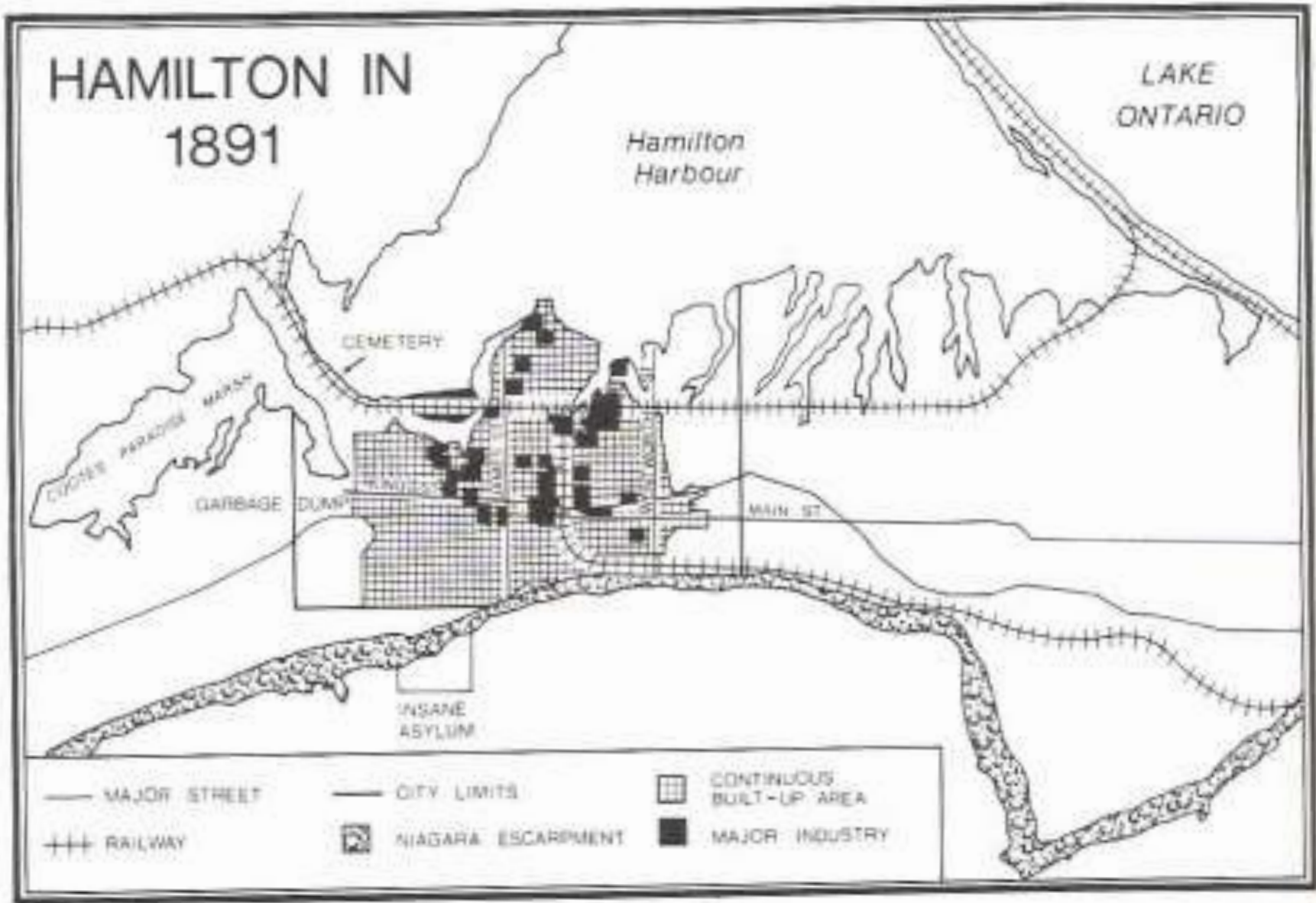
*The Toronto, Hamilton and Buffalo Railway's "gingerbread castle" at the corner of James and Hunter streets, here seen in the 1890s, initially served a dozen passenger trains a day.*

Toronto, Hamilton and Buffalo Railway Station Built 1895; demolished 1933.  
Located on north side of Hunter St. between John St. S. and James St. S.

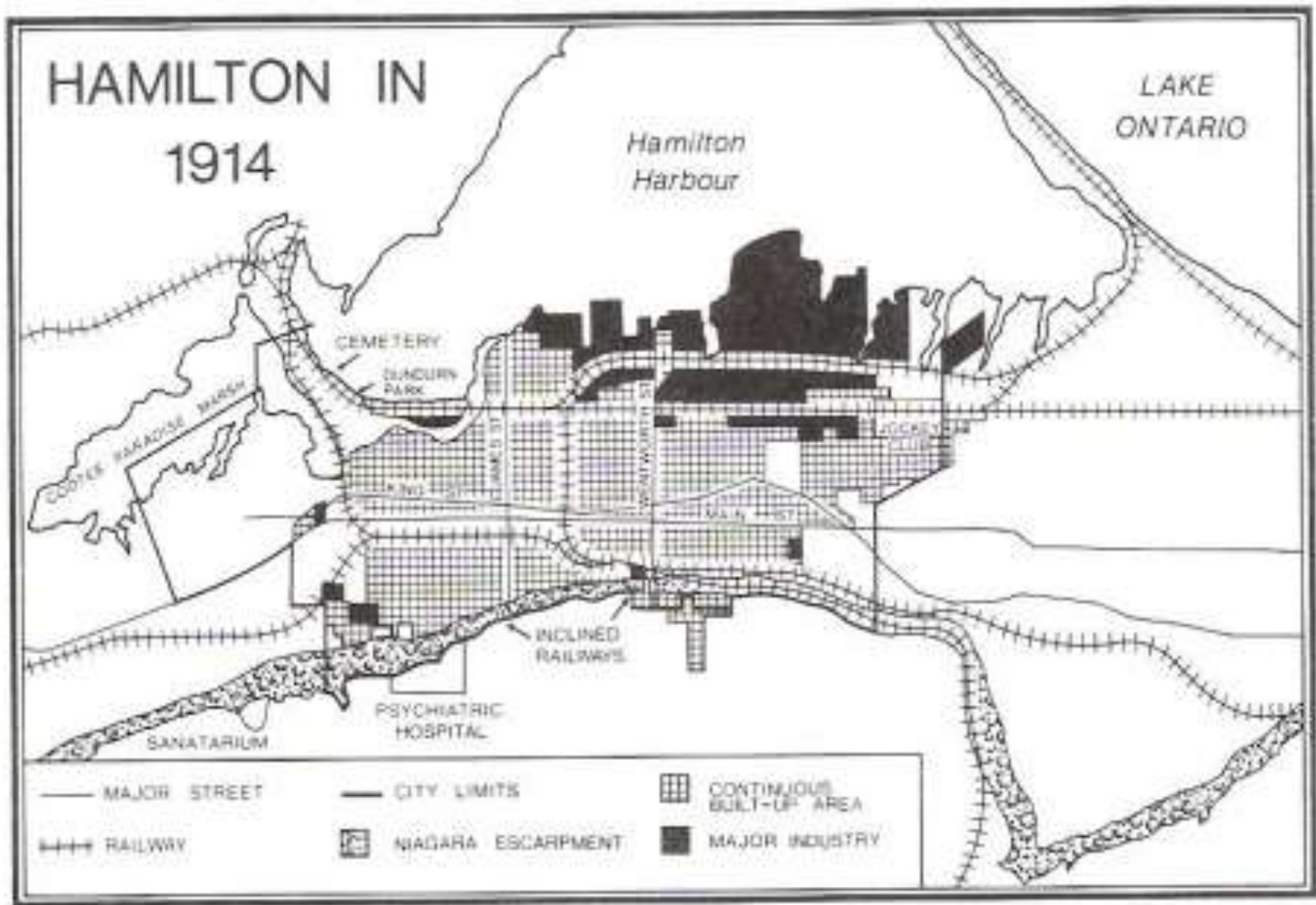


*Gore Park and King Street in the early 1900s, looking east.*

King Street East (looking east from James Street) Photo c. 1900.



Note compact form of the city; no development above escarpment.



Note eastward and westward expansion of city (vs. 1891 map);  
development of waterfront sites for heavy industry.

## V. The Modern City of Hamilton: 1920-1946

1926 Population = 128,875

1930 First British Empire Games

McMaster moves to Hamilton

1936 Population = 153,358

1939 Royal Visit – King George V and Queen Elizabeth

1946 Population 175,000

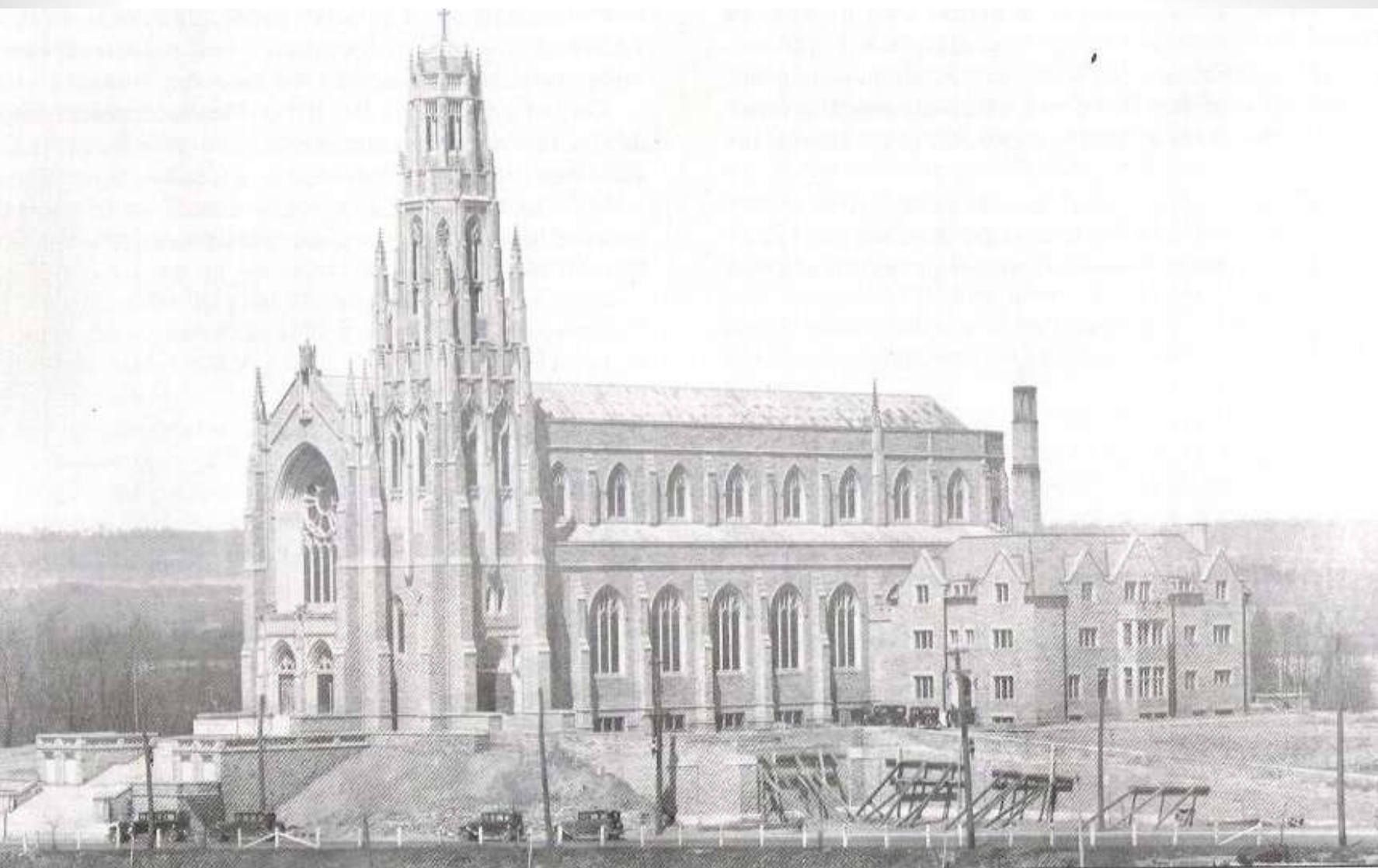
Hamilton's Centennial



Hamilton Post Office  
Built 1936.

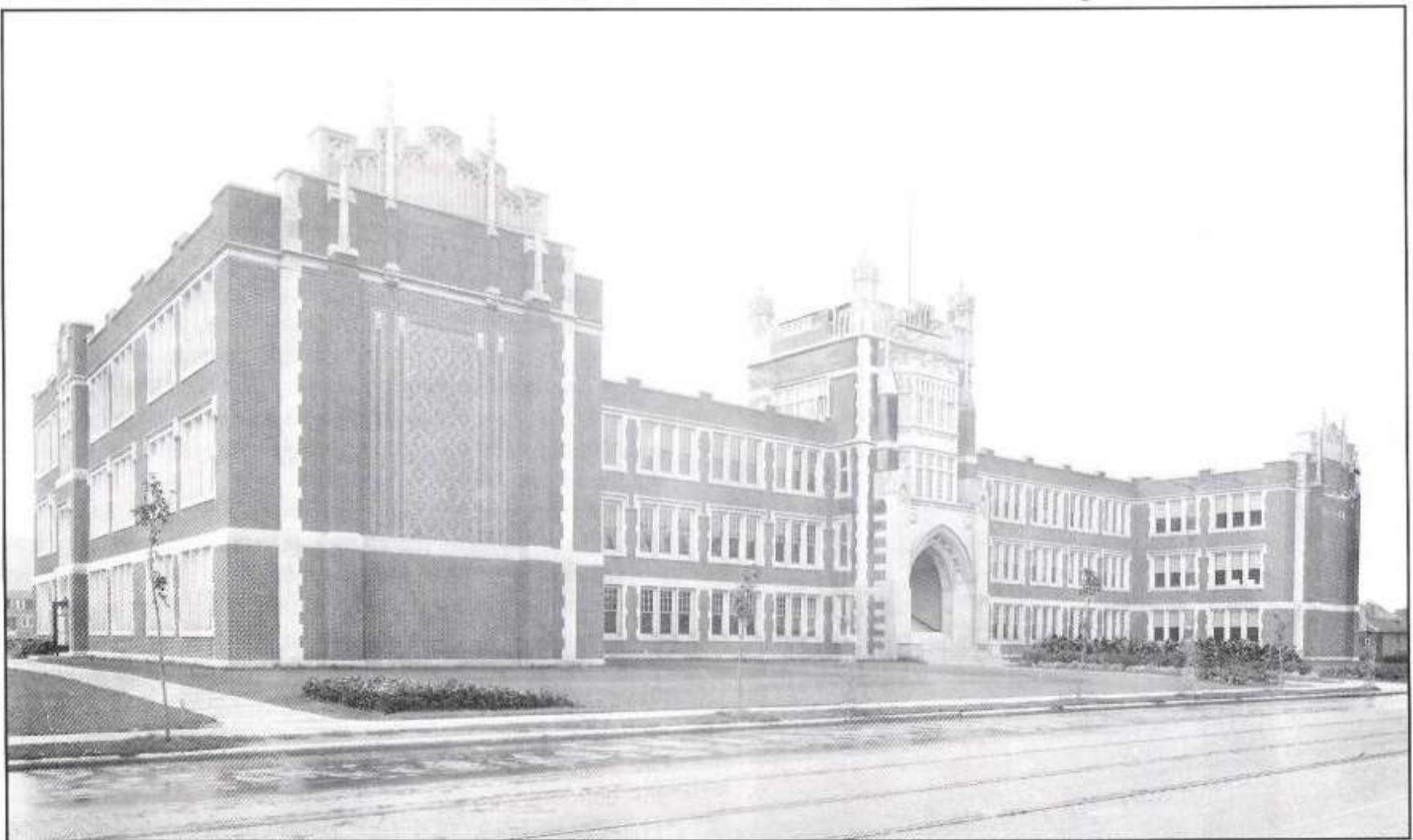
Currently – John  
Sopinka Courthouse.

Hutton & Souter,  
Architects.



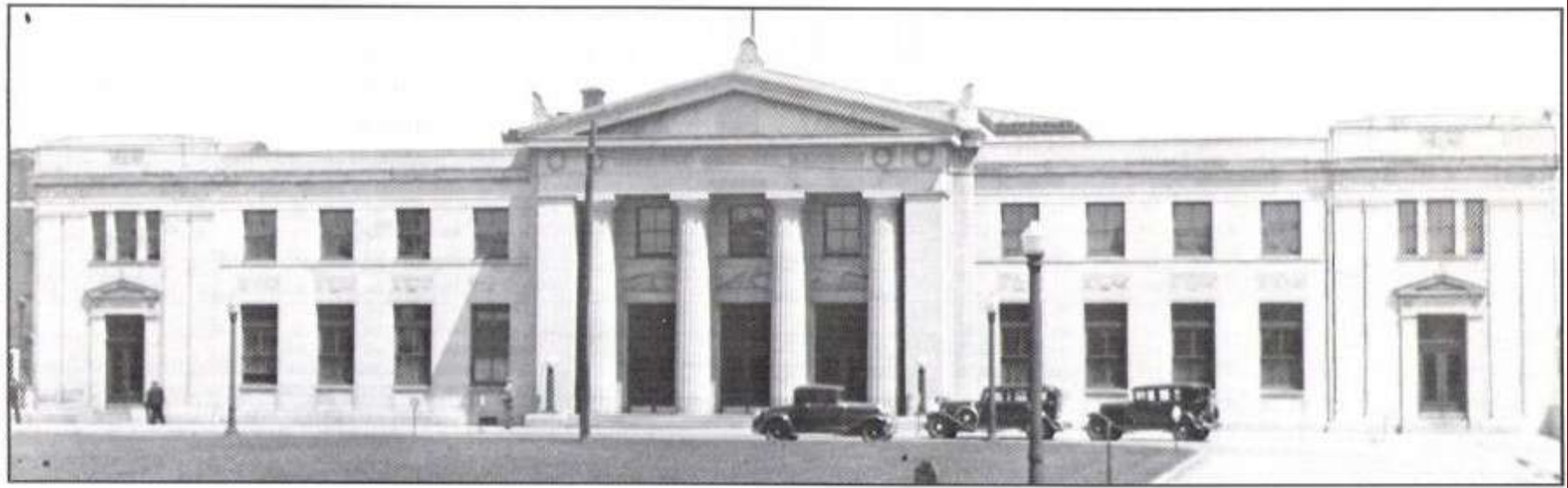
Basilica of Christ the King    Built 1931-33.  
Hutton & Souter, Architects.





*Tudor Gothic design of Delta Collegiate is highlighted by its impressive stonework.*

Delta Secondary School    Built 1924.  
Hutton & Souter, Architects.



Canadian National Railway Station      Built 1933.  
Currently LIUNA Station.  
National Historic Site.



## Pigott Building

Built 1929

Converted to condominiums 1980s.

Prack & Prack, Architects.

Hamilton's first skyscraper (18 storeys).



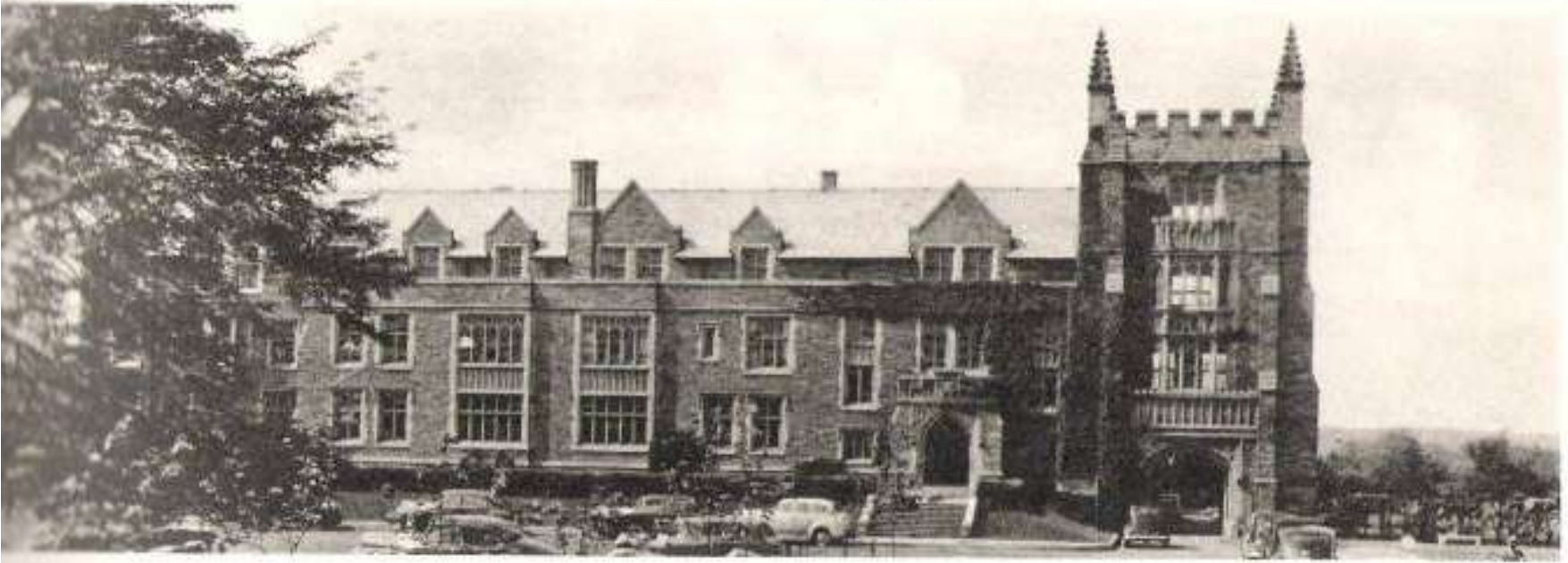
Bank of Montreal Built 1929. Currently law offices.  
Kenneth Rea, Architect (whose signature is engraved in the cornerstone – southeast corner of building)



T. H. & B. Railway Station, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

Toronto, Hamilton and Buffalo Railway Station  
Built 1933; currently GO Station.  
Style – Art Deco/Arte Moderne

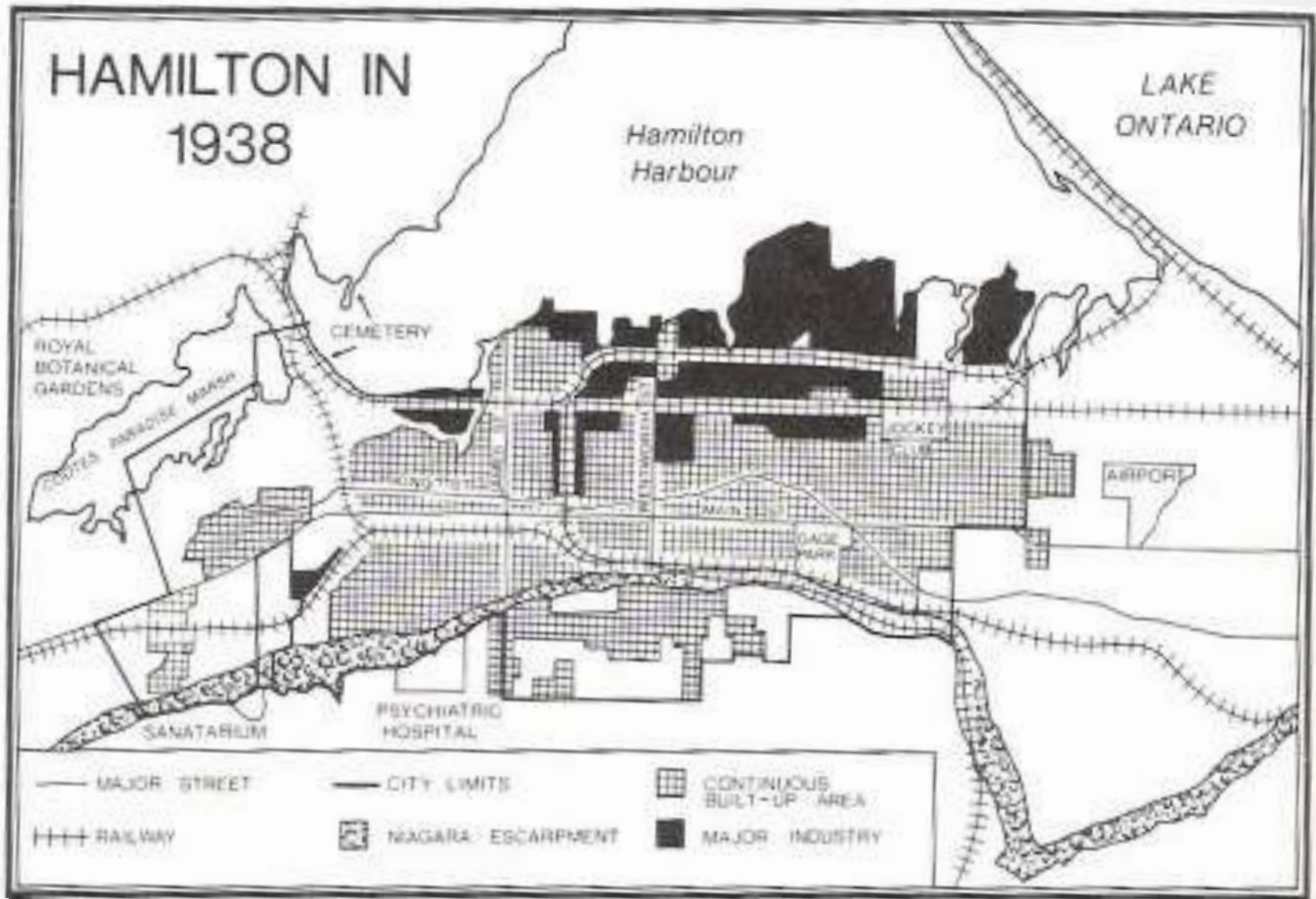
McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.



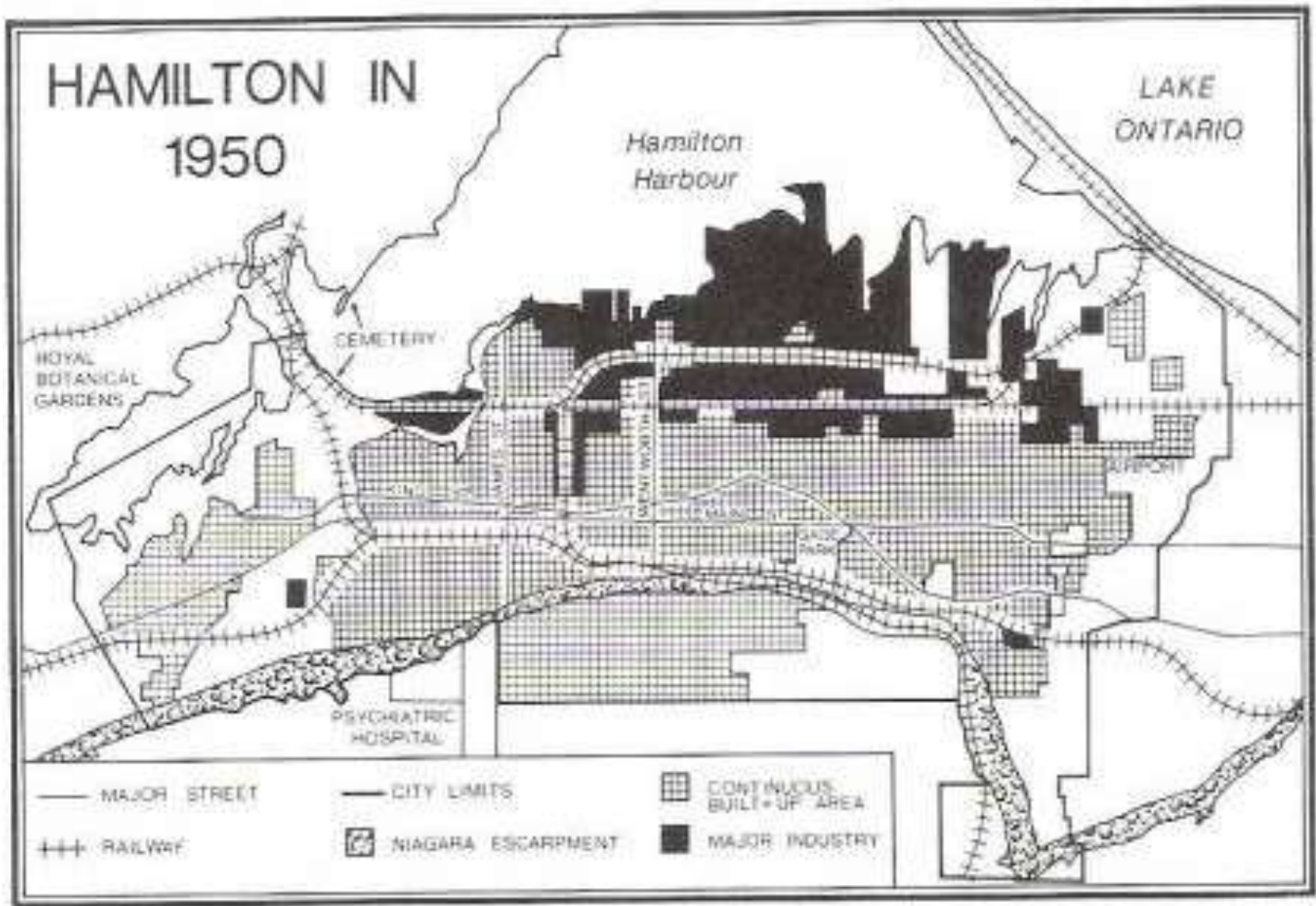
Hamilton Hall, McMaster University    Built 1930.

William Somerville, Architect.

Tower design based on Founder's Tower, Magdalen College, Oxford University.

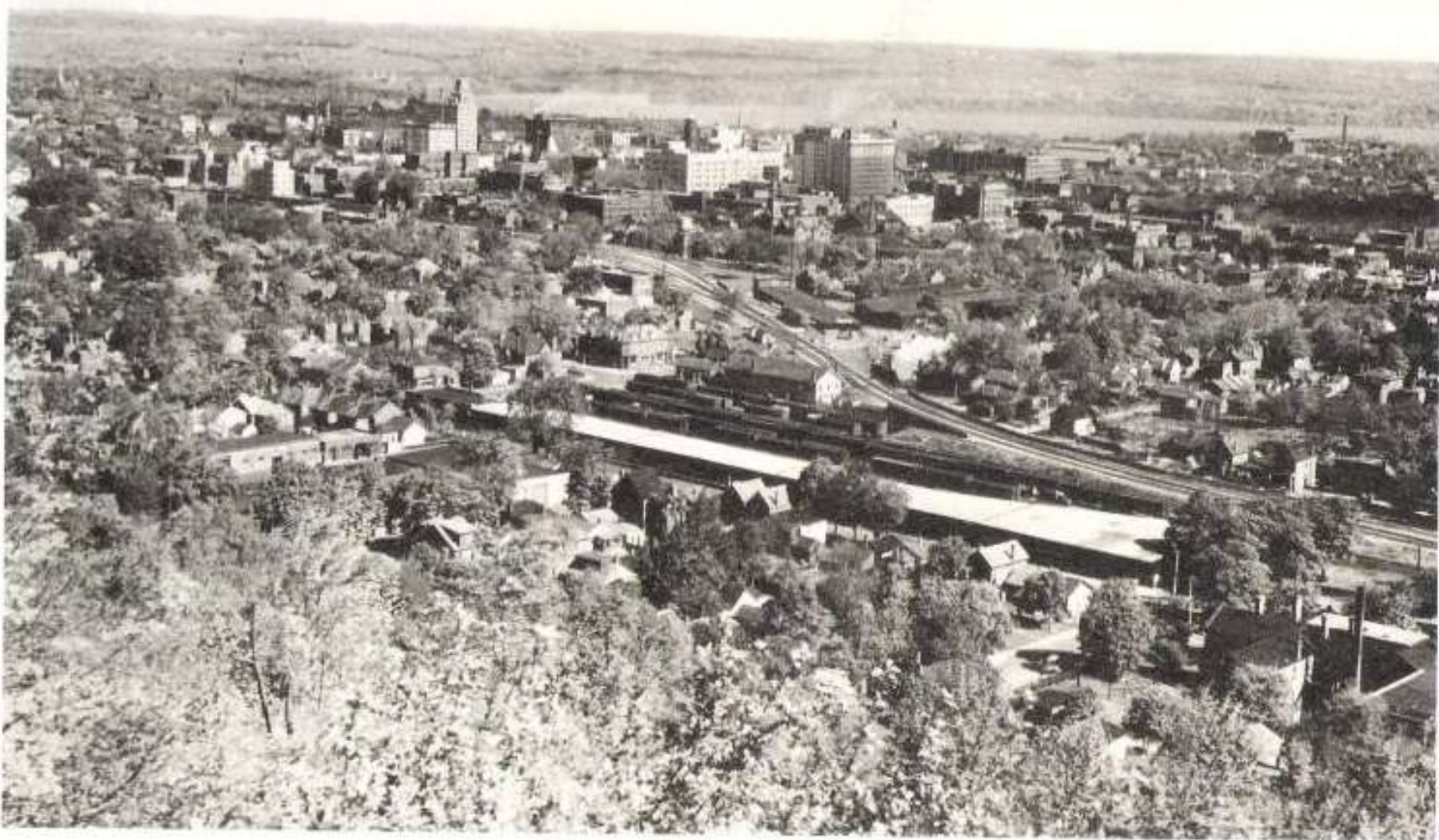


Note continued east/west growth as well as the beginning of development above escarpment. Population above escarpment: 1945 = 10,000.



Population above escarpment : 1952 = 25,000; 1960 = 50,000; 1970 = 100,000.





Hamilton from the Mountain, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

View of Hamilton  
Photo c. 1950.

# VI. Conclusion

- “Hamilton’s cityscape on closer examination tells a vivid romantic story. And a city is its buildings. They are the outward expression of ideals, of affluence and speculation, of pride and prejudice.” (McKay, 1967, 27)
- “How will we know it is us, without our past?”  
Steinbeck, The Grapes of Wrath

# Hamilton's “Must See” Buildings

1. Dundurn
2. Pump House
3. University Hall, Hamilton Hall, McMaster
4. St. Paul's Presbyterian Church
5. Whitehern

# Hamilton's "Most Influential" Citizens

1. Sir Allan MacNab (1798-1862)
2. Thomas Baker McQuesten (1882-1948)
3. Sir John Morrison Gibson (1842-1929)

# “Must Read” Books about Hamilton

1. C.M. Johnston (1958) The Head of the Lake
2. A.G. McKay (1967) Victorian Architecture in Hamilton
3. J.C. Weaver (1982) Hamilton: An Illustrated History
4. R. Kosydar (1999) Hamilton: Images of a City
5. J. Terpstra (2002) Falling Into Place
6. S. Otto (2004) Robert Whetherell and Dundurn: an Early Architect in Hamilton
7. M. Anderson (2011) Tragedy and Triumph: Ruby and Thomas B. McQuesten