



c. 1982 Built Heritage Inventory

11 Pleasant Street – “Ashland”

While today the historic homes along Pleasant Street seem to stop at Pleasant Street’s intersection with Phoenix Street, less than a decade ago, they did not. A house once stood where the Lutheran Church parking lot is now, one so old that it would have instantly filled the street with character.

Robert West, a merchant notable enough in early Bridgewater to have been described in Judge DesBrisay’s History of the County of Lunenburg, was the original occupant. He acquired the land on the northwest corner of Pleasant and Dufferin streets in 1857, and likely had the house built shortly afterwards, circa 1860. This would have made it amongst the few homes in Bridgewater still standing that could be over 150 years old.

West owned the home – commonly called the *Robert West Cottage* or the *West Cottage*, but reference in the A. F. Church Map of 1883 as *Ashland* – until 1891. It was then bought by Israel Wharton, listed as a merchant and mariner. In 1899, it was acquired by the Harrington family, which was to own be its longest owners

Meade Perley Harrington, from Liverpool and of a longstanding pre-loyalist Queens County family, bought it. Harrington had graduated from Liverpool High School

and worked in a drug store for four years before travelling to the United States to attend the Pennsylvania College of Dentistry. He returned to Nova Scotia and set up a practice in Bridgewater, eventually converting Robert West's cottage into a dual-purpose residence and surgery. He was a well-known, prominent citizen in Bridgewater, though by 1920 he was forced to winter in Trinidad due to illness, eventually moving there full time and handing over the practice – and Ashland - to his son, Ross Harrington, trained at Dalhousie University, and also a very prominent town citizen.

The house itself was a perfect Gothic Revival cottage with a few modifications. It was a one and half storey structure, with a large, prominent, central Gothic dormer, complete with a peaked Gothic window. The Gothic window also had labelled hood moulding, accentuating the peak. As of the early 1980s, it also had shutters. In a stroke of lavishness not common with other Gothic cottages, it also had peaked Gothic windows on the attic level of the two gable ends of the house. The two first-floor windows on the front and the four on each side were all large, four-paned sash windows. Though additions obscured the first floor side windows in both photos, the upper level ones have lovely, prominent cornice mouldings, alluding to the *early* Gothic Revival style, as well as nice, contrasting, dark shutters. The left (south) side addition, with sufficiently old windows itself, was added between 1906 and 1944, though the wing on the right (north) side was put on later, after 1955.

The main body of the cottage also boasted a pair of lovely brick chimneys, likely original. Unfortunately with its conversion to a hybrid residence/dental surgery, the doorways were altered, with the central one being altered, though still showing the remains of a sidelight and transom, and a new one put in on the far-left side of the front of the original cottage. Also added, though very tasteful, was the veranda, which as of the 1980s (but not 1996) still retained its original turned posts and turned balusters. The veranda's sloping roof with a peak over the stairway and preferred entryway, hinted at a Queen Anne Revival era style, likely dating the its addition to Israel Wharton or Meade Harrington's ownership period. The ells in the back, dating between 1883 and 1906, also contained at least one projecting, pedimented dormer. While the pediment was more in keeping with elements of Queen Anne Revival styling, the projection of a dormer, and its appearance through the eaves at such a low level, allude to overhanging towers of the castle-like structures Gothic Revival design tended to imitate.

Though it likely survived its 140th anniversary, on March 1st and 2nd 2001, the upper level was dismantled, and the main body was moved to Green Bay.