

Heritage Research and Evaluation Report



10350 Yonge Street - Andrew Newton House

c. 1894

Part of Lot 48, Concession 1, Vaughan Township

Prepared by: Heritage & Urban Design, Planning & Building Services, 2024

History:

10350 Yonge Street

The property at 10350 Yonge Street originated as part of Lot 48, Concession 1, in Vaughan Township. It was patented from the Crown in 1823 by Edward Stookes in return for his military service. The Stookes family sold the lot to Miles Langstaff in 1830. Over several decades, the property was subdivided into building lots and sold for speculation or development.

Land Registry records indicate that in June 1867 (registered 1876), Alfred and Peter Patterson bought a ten-acre parcel of Lot 48, Concession 1 from William and Mary Ann Cooper. The Pattersons then subdivided this large parcel, and sold the subject property, identified as the half-acre Village Lot 32 on Gibson's Plan (Figure 2), to Andrew Newton for \$1300 on June 30, 1886 (registered August 13, 1887).

Census records and voters lists from 1891 indicate that Andrew Newton, his wife Ella, and adopted son John Earle ("Earl"), were living in a one-storey wooden house with

seven rooms¹ on village lot 38 in Richmond Hill.² However, by 1894, Andrew Newton had moved into the subject dwelling on village lot 32,³ dating the existing house to between 1891 and 1894. The 1901 census also records Andrew and his family living in the subject dwelling, a single-family, brick house with fourteen rooms located on the half-acre village lot 32. The house's combination of Queen Anne and Richardsonian Romanesque architectural elements are typical of the 1890s.

Following Andrew Newton's death in 1912, the property was inherited by his son, Earl. Earle Newton was a musician, and left Richmond Hill in 1923 to become Director of Music at the New Jersey College for Women.⁴ A Fire Insurance Map of Richmond Hill from 1923 shows the subject property (then addressed at 254 Yonge Street) and its surrounding residential context on Yonge Street at the time. The map notes that the property contains a two-and-a-half-storey brick dwelling (the existing residence), as well as two frame outbuildings in the rear (Figure 3).

Land Registry records indicate that in September 1923, the same year that the Newton family relocated to New Jersey, John Earle Newton, and his wife, Emma ("Georgia"), mortgaged Lot 32 to Bessie and Daisy Walton. By December 1942, the Newtons had been in default of the mortgage for over a year, and on December 29 of that year, the Waltons sold the property under Power of Sale to Clara Winter for \$3500. This transaction ended the Newton family's over-50-year ownership of the property.

Land Registry records indicate that in 1966 Clara Winter sold the property at 10350 Yonge Street to Douglas Allen, Cecil R. Williams, Donald Plaxton, and W. E. Neil Mann. In 1970, the property was then sold to Richmond Hill Professionals, who incorporated the Andrew Newton House into a new four-storey office building in 1974. The Andrew Newton House and the adjoining office building now exist as an early example of the adaptive reuse of a heritage building in Richmond Hill, demonstrating a recognition of the building's design and historical value.

Andrew Newton and the Newton Tannery of Elgin Mills

Andrew Newton was born on July 5, 1837, and was the third son of James Newton Sr., and Agnes Wilkie. James Sr. had migrated from Scotland in 1833 and eventually settled in Elgin Mills, where he became a noted architect and builder, and founded a successful tannery.⁵ James Newton Sr. is credited with building the Richmond Hill Public School (1849; now demolished) and High School (1873; destroyed by fire in 1896), as well as "many of the best residences of that time" in the village.⁶ James Newton Sr. died at his home in Elgin Mills on January 7th, 1892.

Andrew Newton started his career as a joiner and carpenter with his father and siblings. In 1866, he formed a partnership with his brother, Henry, as general merchants in Elgin

¹ *Census of Canada*, 1891.

² *List of Voters for the Village of Richmond Hill*, 1891.

³ *List of Voters for the Village of Richmond Hill*, 1894.

⁴ "Former Resident Mrs. J. E. Newton Laid to Rest in Richmond Hill," *Liberal*. Mar 20, 1958.

⁵ "Died in his 86th year," *Liberal*. Jan 14, 1892.

⁶ *Ibid.*

Mills, but the business was dissolved the following year.⁷ About 1872, Andrew and another brother, James Jr., took over Newton & Bros., tanners, from their father, and Andrew travelled around the United States “picking up useful information regarding the manufacture of leather.”⁸ Newton & Bros. became leaders in tanning and leather manufacturing in Ontario, and significantly contributed to Richmond Hill’s economic growth in the late 19th century. Due to its proximity to Richmond Hill, many of the tannery’s workers resided in the village, and rode their bicycles to work in Elgin Mills⁹ (Figure 1).

Andrew Newton married Ella Peirsen on October 26, 1882. Ella was born in New York State and immigrated to Canada in 1881. She was of Methodist faith, rather than Andrew’s Presbyterian, and the couple likely met when Andrew was travelling in the United States learning the leather manufacturing trade.

Archival newspaper records indicate that from the 1870s to 1890s, the Newton Tannery was destroyed by fire on multiple occasions. Likely as a result of these repeated financial setbacks, the Newtons restructured their business in 1899, which resulted in Andrew transferring all his corporate and personal assets, including the house at 10350 Yonge Street, to the newly incorporated Newton Tanning Company Limited.¹⁰

It was not until June 20, 1911, that Andrew bought the property at 10350 Yonge Street back from the Company for \$3000.¹¹ He died the following year on February 11, 1912. As a major local employer in Richmond Hill, Andrew was a key figure in the community. He also served as one of the managers of the Presbyterian Church, President of the Liberal Association for Richmond Hill, and a Director of the Upper Canada Bible Society.¹² As a member of the Richmond Hill Board of Education in the 1890s, Andrew Newton was also involved in building the “new” High School (now located at 10268 Yonge Street) in 1897.¹³

John Earle Newton and ‘Rock Haven’

Andrew’s son, John Earle (“Earle”) Newton, was one of Richmond Hill’s most eminent musicians.¹⁴ Born in 1886, he became a concert pianist, music supervisor, instructor, and examiner.¹⁵ Earle founded the Richmond Hill School of Music, and hosted music lessons and performances out of his home at 10350 Yonge Street during the first decades of the 20th century. During this period, the subject building was known as ‘Rock Haven’. In 1923, Earle and his family moved to New Brunswick, New Jersey, where

⁷ Su Murdoch Historical Consulting, *Andrew Newton House: 10350 Yonge Street* (2001), 2.

⁸ “Obituary,” *Liberal*. Feb 22, 1912.

⁹ “Elgin Mills – Newton Family File,” Richmond Hill Public Library, Local History and Genealogy Collection.

¹⁰ “The Elgin Tannery,” *Liberal*. Jun 29, 1899.

¹¹ *Ontario Land Registry Abstract/Parcel Register Book*, York Region, Lot 48, Concession 1, Vaughan Township (Richmond Hill).

¹² “Obituary,” *Liberal*. Feb 22, 1912.

¹³ “Locals,” *Liberal*. Aug 12, 1897.

¹⁴ G. Elmore Reaman, *A History of Vaughan Township* (Toronto: City of Toronto Press, 1971), 215.

¹⁵ “Elgin Mills – Newton Family File,” Richmond Hill Public Library, Local History and Genealogy Collection.

Earle became the Director of Music at the New Jersey College for Women.¹⁶ After the Newtons defaulted on a mortgage they had taken out on the subject property when they left Canada in 1923, the property was sold through Power of Sale in 1942.

Earle Newton died on July 6, 1943,¹⁷ followed by his wife Emma (“Georgia”) Newton on March 14, 1958.¹⁸

Architecture:

Dating to circa 1894, the Andrew Newton House at 10350 Yonge Street is a rare example of late-Victorian residential architecture in Richmond Hill that combines elements of both the Queen Anne and Richardsonian Romanesque styles.

The dwelling at 10350 Yonge Street is a two-and-a-half-storey brick building with an irregular plan, form and massing, approximating a T-plan. The subject building features a central hipped-roof component, with gable-roofed extensions to the south, east, and north. The roof is finished with slate shingles, and the central hipped-roof component is topped with a metal ball finial. East and south gables feature paneled bargeboard detailing topped by wood trim in a dentil pattern. Complex, irregular building and roof forms such as this one are typical of both Queen Anne and Richardsonian Romanesque architecture. The rear of the building is now embedded in an office building dating to the 1970s.

The subject building is constructed of dark red brick (now painted) laid in stretcher bond, on a brick and stone foundation. The building’s principal Yonge Street (east) elevation features a slightly projecting, narrow bay topped by a gable. The building features decorative masonry stringcourses on all visible elevations, comprised of a raised stretcher course of bricks overhanging rows of angular-cut masonry.

Most of the building’s window openings are flat-headed with rock-faced stone lintels and lugsills, and are organized in pairs or balanced groupings. At ground level, the building’s eastern projecting bay features a large, round-arched window opening typical of the Richardsonian Romanesque style. Its rock-faced voussoir with a keystone is accented by the masonry stringcourse detailing. This window also features a period wood window unit, whose leaded art-glass transom is divided from the lower sash by a course of wood trim in a dentil pattern. The same elevation also features a half-round attic window with a rock-faced stone sill, voussoir, and keystone. This attic window is surrounded by the same angular-cut masonry detailing as present in the stringcourses, and also features a period wood unit divided in three sections, with multi-paned quarter-round sidelights.

The building’s south elevation features a square window opening with a leaded art-glass window. Each corner of this window is punctuated by a terra cotta tile depicting a stylized maple leaf. Terra cotta detailing such as this is also representative of the Richardsonian Romanesque style. The building’s south gable also contains a pair of

¹⁶ “Former Resident Mrs. J. E. Newton Laid to Rest in Richmond Hill,” *Liberal*. Mar 20, 1958.

¹⁷ “Died,” *Liberal*. Jul 8, 1943.

¹⁸ “Former Resident Mrs. J. E. Newton Laid to Rest in Richmond Hill,” *Liberal*. Mar 20, 1958.

angular, near quarter round window openings with rock-faced stone lugsills and brick voussoirs.

At foundation level, the building features flat-headed windows with brick voussoirs and rock-faced sills, in addition to a small round window opening on the house's north elevation, which is partially obscured by the 1970s office building addition.

Context:

The Newton House at 10350 Yonge Street is located on the west side of Yonge Street, south of Benson Avenue. The house is now merged at the rear into a modern (1970s) four-storey office building addition.

The shrubbery, trees, and gardens in front of the house create an enclave of green space within the surrounding streetscape on Yonge Street. While this property is located on the northern edge of Richmond Hill's historic village core, surrounding built form is now typified by a mix of low-density commercial buildings and plazas, higher-density residential development, and remnant historical house-form buildings, such as the Matthew McNair House at 10312 Yonge Street (c. 1870; Part IV Designated), and the Austin Maffey House at 10329 Yonge Street (c. 1912; Listed).

Compliance with Ontario Regulation 9/06 – Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest:

The following evaluation applies Ontario Regulation 9/06, the prescribed provincial *Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest* under Part IV, Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. There are a total of nine criteria under O. Reg. 9/06. A property may be designated under Section 29 of the Act if it meets two or more of the provincial criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest.

Criteria applicable to the property are outlined below, along with explanatory text.

1. The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.

Dating to circa 1894, the Andrew Newton House at 10350 Yonge Street has design and physical value as a rare example of late-Victorian residential architecture in Richmond Hill combining elements of both the Queen Anne and Richardsonian Romanesque styles. The building's original scale, form, massing, and orientation are still legible, despite being incorporated into a modern (1970s) office building. Further, many of the house's original architectural details representative of both the Queen Anne and Richardsonian Romanesque styles have been conserved, including the complex building and roof forms, bargeboard trim, rounded windows with rock-faced lugsills, voussoirs, and keystones, original wood and leaded art-glass window units, and masonry detailing including decorative stringcourses and terra cotta tiles.

2. The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.

The Andrew Newton House also has design and physical value for the high degree of craftsmanship and artistic merit displayed in a number of its features, including the rock-faced window surrounds, decorative stringcourses, leaded art-glass windows, and terracotta detailing.

3. The property has design value or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.

N/A

4. The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.

The Andrew Newton House has historical value for its direct associations with both Andrew and John Earle Newton. Andrew Newton was one of the owners of the Newton Tannery in Elgin Mills; he built the existing dwelling circa 1894, and resided there until his death in 1912. "Earle" Newton was one of Richmond Hill's most eminent musicians; he founded the Richmond Hill School of Music, and used the subject dwelling (then known as "Rock Haven") to host music lessons and performances during the 1910s and 1920s. The house remained under the ownership of the Newton family until 1942. As local business leaders, employers, and active citizens, the Newton family were significant members of the community who contributed to the early development of Richmond Hill in the 19th century. The grand house at 10350 Yonge Street is also a rare surviving testament to the success of both the Newton family and the industrial hamlet of Elgin Mills during this period.

5. The property has historical value or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.

N/A

6. The property has historical value or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.

N/A

7. The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.

N/A

8. The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.

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The Andrew Newton House has contextual value because it is functionally and historically linked to its surroundings on Yonge Street. Located at the northern edge of historic Richmond Hill village, the house features a prime Yonge Street address representing the success of Andrew Newton, while also being proximate to both the amenities of the village and the family tannery business to the north in Elgin Mills.

9. The property has contextual value because it is a landmark.

N/A

Maps and Photographs



Figure 1 1898 photograph of the employees of the Newton Tanning Company, Elgin Mills. Andrew Newton is shown standing in the front row, eighth from the left, with the white beard and bowler hat. (Source: Richmond Hill Public Library, Digital Archive).

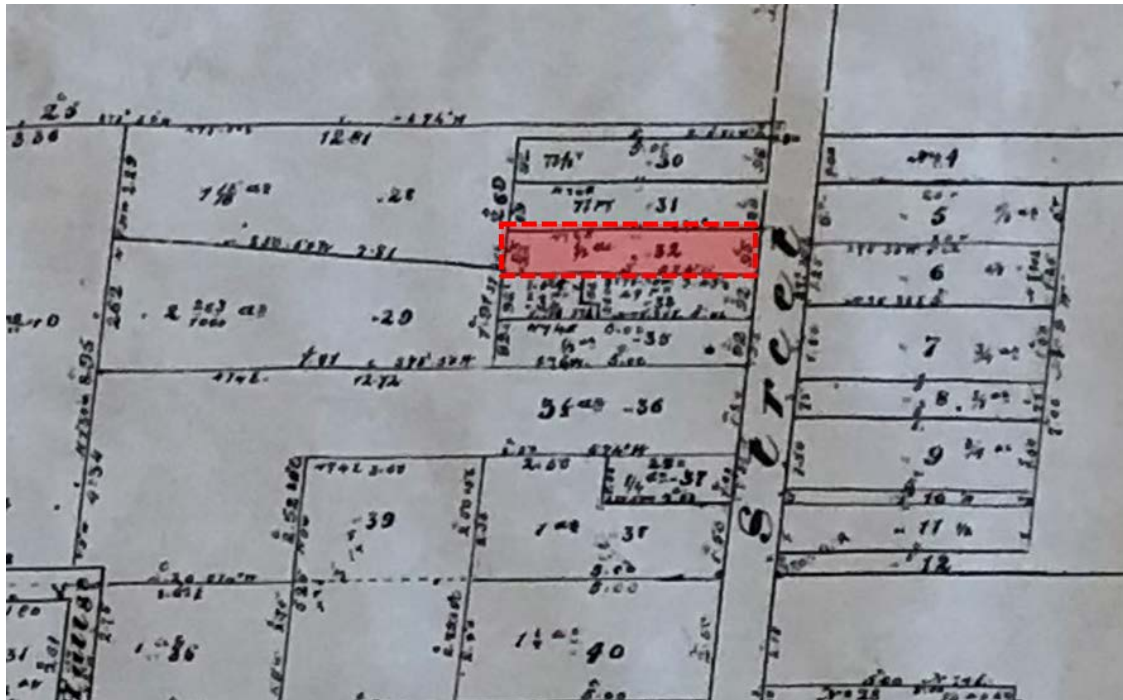


Figure 2 Detail of Gibson's Plan of the Village of Richmond Hill, 1879, with the approximate location of the Andrew Newton House on Village Lot 32 indicated in red. (Source: Richmond Hill Public Library Local History and Genealogy Collection).

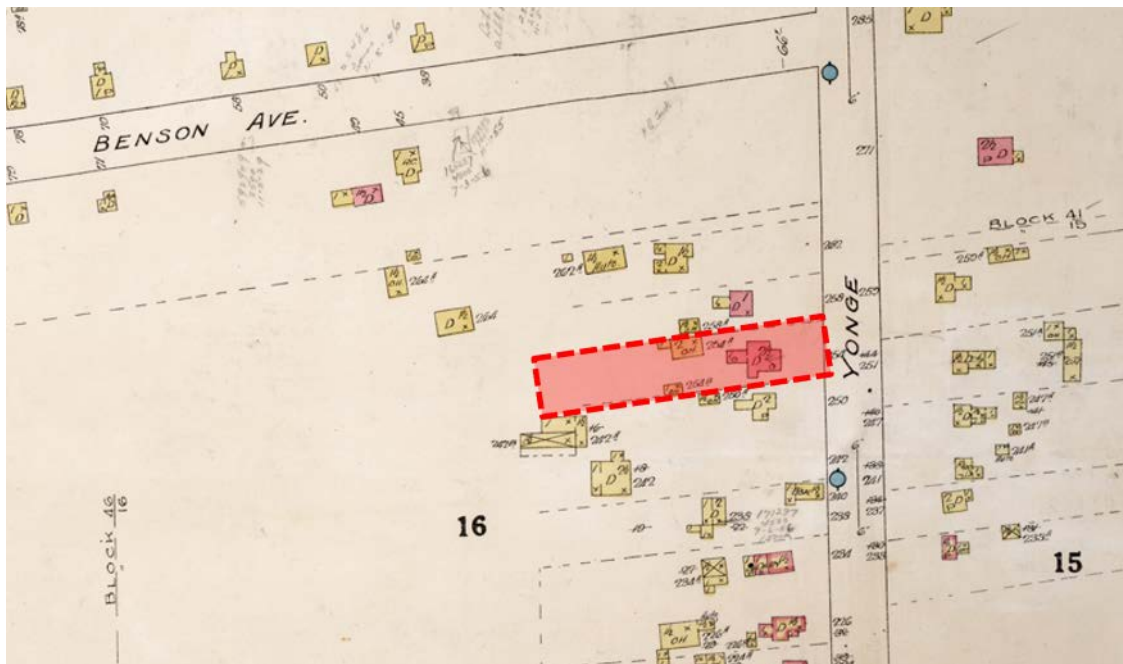


Figure 3 Detail of the 1923 *Underwriter's Survey Bureau Limited Fire Insurance Plan of Richmond Hill*, with the approximate location of the Andrew Newton House indicated in red. At the time, the property was addressed as 254 Yonge Street, and was surrounded by fine-grained residential development on Yonge Street. (Source: University of Toronto Library)



Figure 4 Circa 1967 photograph of the Andrew Newton House at 10350 Yonge Street, prior to the house being incorporated into a modern (1970s) office building. (Source: Richmond Hill LACAC File - 10350 Yonge Street).



Figure 5 Current photograph looking southwest, showing the principal (east) and side (north) elevations of the Andrew Newton House at 10350 Yonge Street. Note the projecting front-gabled bay on the principal (east) elevation with paneled bargeboard trim, round-arched windows with rock-faced voussoirs and keystones, and decorative masonry stringcourses. (Source: HUD, 2023).



Figure 6 Current photograph looking north, showing the side (south) elevation of the Andrew Newton House at 10350 Yonge Street. Note the side gable with paneled bargeboard trim, quarter-round attic windows with rock-faced stone lugsills and brick voussoirs, and the metal ball finial surmounting the central hipped roof. (Source: HUD, 2023).



Figure 7 Detailed photograph showing the round-arched window opening at ground-floor level of the Andrew Newton House's principal (east) elevation, with a rock-faced lugsill, voussoir and keystone, topped by masonry stringcourse detailing, and containing a period wood window unit, with a leaded art-glass transom and dentiled trim. (Source: HUD, 2023).



Figure 8 Detailed photograph showing the front (east) gable of the Andrew Newton House, with paneled bargeboards topped by dentiled trim, and half-round attic window opening on the principal (east) elevation, with a rock-faced lugsill, voussoir and keystone, surrounded by angular-cut masonry detailing, and containing a period wood unit divided in three sections, with multi-paned sidelights. (Source: HUD, 2023).



Figure 9 Detailed photograph showing the square, leaded art-glass window on the Andrew Newton House's south elevation, with corners punctuated by terra cotta tiles depicting stylized maple leaves. (Source: HUD, 2023).



Figure 10 Context photograph looking west from Yonge Street, and showing the Andrew Newton House and surrounding built form on the east side of Yonge Street. (Source: HUD, 2023).

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