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Item No. 9.1.2
Heritage Advisory Committee
June 18, 2025

TO: Chair and Members of Heritage Advisory Committee

FROM: Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: May 6, 2025

SUBJECT: HRTG-2024-01522: Request to include 2316 Maynard Street, Halifax in the Registry of Heritage Properties for the Halifax Regional Municipality

ORIGIN

Application for heritage registration by the property owners, Elizabeth Ross and William Russell, dated July 4, 2024.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Property owners initiated the heritage registration request.
- The dwelling at 2316 Maynard Street (i.e., Porters House) was constructed in 1863.
- Porters House is associated with the Roache and Davis families and the Halifax civil rights movement.
- Porters House was built by local carpenter Fredrick Warner and is identified as a Halifax Box style house with some Italian influence. The property has a moderate level of architectural integrity.
- Porters House has strong physical and historical connections with the surrounding area.
- There are no financial implications identified.

RECOMMENDATION

Should 2316 Maynard Street, Halifax score 50 or more points on evaluation as a heritage property under the HRM Heritage Property Program, the Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC) recommends that Regional Council:

1. Set a date for a heritage hearing to consider the inclusion of the subject property in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality; and
2. Approve the request to include 2316 Maynard Street, Halifax, in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality, as shown on Map 1, as a municipal heritage property under the *Heritage Property Act*.

BACKGROUND

The property owners applied to include their property located at 2316 Maynard Street, Halifax (Map 1) in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality. The subject property is situated on the western side of Maynard Street, in the section between Woodill Street and Cunard Street. The subject property contains a wood-framed, semi-detached building constructed in 1863. For the purposes of this report, the property will be referred to as the Porters House, as it is locally known.

This application is being considered in accordance with Sections 14 (Recommendation as municipal heritage property) and 15 (Registration as municipal heritage property) of the *Heritage Property Act*.

HRM's Heritage Property Program

The purpose of the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) Heritage Property Program is to help protect and conserve significant heritage resources, including buildings, streetscapes, sites, areas, and conservation districts that reflect the rich heritage found in local communities throughout HRM. A principal aim of the Heritage Property Program is to recognize significant heritage resources through the inclusion of properties into the Municipal Registry of Heritage Property.

Under the Heritage Property Program, all registration applications for heritage buildings are evaluated by the HAC using "The Evaluation Criteria for Registration of Heritage Buildings in Halifax Regional Municipality" (Attachment A). The Evaluation Criteria for scoring a property and building are broken down into six categories as follows:

Criterion	Highest Possible Score
1. Age	25
2. Historical or Architectural Importance	20
3. Significance of the Architect/Builder	10
4. Architectural Merit	20
5. Architectural Integrity	15
6. Relationship to Surrounding Area	10
Total	100

Should the HAC score a property with more than 50 points on evaluation as a heritage property, a positive recommendation will be forwarded to Regional Council.

Nova Scotia Heritage Property Act

HRM's Heritage Property Program receives its authority from the *Heritage Property Act* which seeks:

"to provide for the identification, designation, preservation, conservation, protection and rehabilitation of buildings, public-building interiors, structures, streetscapes, cultural landscapes, areas and districts of historic, architectural or cultural value, in both urban and rural areas, and to encourage their continued use".

Sections 14(2) and 15(1) under the *Heritage Property Act* require that notice of recommendation is given to the property owner at least thirty (30) days prior to any Council decision to include the property in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality. The property owner is also given an opportunity to address Council before they decide on the registration request. Should a positive recommendation be forwarded to Council, heritage staff will ensure the required notices are sent to the owners and deposited at the Registry of Deeds.

DISCUSSION

Heritage registration applications are evaluated by the HAC relative to six evaluation criteria outlined previously, and described in greater detail in Attachment A. To assist the HAC in their evaluation and scoring, staff offer the following comments based on the staff's research report (Attachment B).

1. Age:

Porters House was constructed in 1863, as one of the first buildings on Maynard Street. In 1862, Fredrick Warner, a carpenter, purchased a vacant lot to the south of Woodill Field. Two years later, Joseph Coombes acquired the lot at an auction. In January 1864, Joseph sold the southern portion of the aforementioned lot to William Coombes, a cabinet maker. In the deed recording this transition, the division wall of a double cottage was used as the boundary line. Porters House is one half of this double cottage, which indicates that the dwelling was constructed before January 1864. Porters House was depicted on the 1865 Church's Map, and the Hutchinson's 1864-1965 Directory lists William Coombes living on 90 Maynard Street (now 2316 Maynard Street) and Elizabeth Coombes, widow of Joseph, living on the adjoining property of 92 Maynard Street (now 2320 Maynard Street).

Given its 1863 construction date, staff recommend a score of 16 points for Age.

2. Historical Or Architectural Importance:

Porters House has historical associations with multiple individuals and the railway porter community.

George Roache (1862-1918) was a successful African Nova Scotian businessman and active advocate in the Creighton's Field community. Following his stepfather's footsteps, George became a cook. In 1890, George married Blanche Russell, one of the first Black students at Halifax County Academy. The couple lived in Massachusetts until Blanche's death in 1899. George returned to Halifax in 1905, married Josephine Webber, and in 1906 purchased Porters House. Using his experience as a cook and steward, George successfully operated two restaurant businesses in Halifax. Beyond business, Roache was active in community life, serving as Vice President of the Atlantic Advocate and leading Union Lodge 18 of the Black Freemasons. His support for his daughter Blanche's musical education further strengthened his family's legacy.

Blanche (Russell) Roache (1868-1899) was a pioneering and award-winning student, and advocate for educational equality in Halifax. While she was raised near Porters House, she never lived at the property.

Blanche (Roache) Davis (1894-1970) continued her family's legacy of educational and community leadership. Born in Massachusetts to George and Blanche (Russell) Roache, she was raised in Halifax after her mother's death. Blanche attended Alexandra School and Halifax Academy, later becoming the first Black woman to graduate from the Halifax Conservatory of Music's piano and vocal teaching programs. She began her teaching career as head of the Music Department at Slater State Normal School in North Carolina. Following George Roache's death, Blanche returned to Halifax to teach piano in Porters House. In 1919, she married Morris Davis, and the couple moved into Porters House in 1926. Blanche later purchased the adjoining property at 2320 Maynard Street.

Morris Davis (1905-1988) and **Booker Roache (1882-1948)**, both residents of Porters House, were individuals in Halifax's Black railway porter community. In the early twentieth century, porters faced systemic discrimination, including exclusion from unions and limited employment advancement. Despite these barriers, both men built distinguished careers with Canadian National Railways (CNR). Morris Davis worked as a porter for 36 years, rising to the position of porter instructor in 1941 - a notable achievement given the lack of union protections for Black workers at the time. His career exemplified perseverance in a racially segregated industry. Booker Roache, who inherited Porters House in 1953, also advanced within CNR, becoming a porter instructor by 1945. Beyond his railway service, Booker played a leadership role in

advocating for porters' rights. In 1952, he served as Local Chairman of Division 132 of the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Transport and General Workers (CBRT), the same union that had historically excluded Black workers.

Porters House has intimate associations with George Roache, Blanche (Roache) Davis, Morris Davis and Booker Roache, who were all locally prominent figures. In addition, Porters House has minor relationship with Blanche (Russell) Roache, who influenced Nova Scotia's education system. Given these reasons, staff recommend a score between 11-15.

3. Significance of Architect or Builder

The builder of Porters House was likely Fredrick Warner, or possibly a combination of Warner and William Coombes. Fredrick Warner, a carpenter, purchased 2316 and 2320 Maynard Street in 1862 and secured a mortgage from the Nova Scotia Building Fund the same year. The mortgage terms, consistent with the Fund's purpose, suggest Warner was advanced funds for construction. William Coombes, a cabinetmaker, may have contributed interior finishings, but likely did not build the structure's frame or foundation.

Staff haven't identified other houses built by Frederick Warner or William Coombes. For this reason, staff recommend a score between 1-3.

4. Architectural Merit

Construction Type or Building Technology:

Porters House is one side of a wood-framed, semi-detached dwelling (or double cottage) built on a brick and rubblestone foundation, partially parged with concrete. The structure uses combination framing, with timber framing evident in the bracing and lighter balloon framing in the wall studs.

Timber construction, characterized by large beams and wooden joinery, was the primary building method in Halifax prior to the mid-nineteenth century. As nails became cheaper and more available, balloon framing gained popularity in the late nineteenth century. Combination framing, a hybrid of the two methods, emerged during this transition.

Given the rare example of combination framing, staff recommend a score between 7 to 10.

Style:

Porters House is an early representation of a Halifax Box style from the mid-nineteenth century with some Italianate influences.

The character-defining elements of Porters House include, but are not limited to:

- Two-storey Halifax Box style dwelling with a two-bay façade and a nearly flat roof;
- Central single-stack brick chimney;
- Flat and narrow wood windows with wood trim;
- Paired windows on the façade's second storey;
- Projecting eaves with wood detailing (soffit, plain frieze, and plain fascia);
- Wood shingle cladding;
- Wood moulded corner boards;
- Elevated front entrance with enclosed porch, moulded sill, and a wood side door; and
- Minimal front yard setbacks.

Halifax Box style is a popular style in the Halifax and Dartmouth area. For this reason, staff recommend a score between 4-6.

5. Architectural Integrity

Porters House maintains a moderate architectural integrity in terms of overall plan and character-defining elements. Based on historical maps, Porters House's overall footprint remains the same. The rear ell appears to be either an original component or an early alteration; it has since undergone expansion and the addition of an external chimney. Staff also observed some recent changes, including enlarged rear windows, siding replacement, first-floor window modification, and window sashes replaced with vinyl in different locations.

Given the moderate architectural integrity, staff recommend a score between 6 to 10.

6. Relationship to Surrounding Area

Porters House has physical, visual, and historical associations with the surrounding area. Porters House is one of the earliest properties on Maynard Street, constructed at the beginning of the housing construction surge in the mid-nineteenth century. The property is consistent with the architectural form in the Maynard Street / Creighton's Field area. The individuals associated with Porters House were deeply connected to the local history and contributed to the civil rights movement.

Porter House is compatible with the surrounding area and maintains its heritage character, staff recommend a score between 1-5.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The HRM costs associated with advertising and processing this application can be accommodated within the approved 2025/2026 operating budget for C340 - Heritage and Planning Information Services.

RISK CONSIDERATION

No risk considerations were identified.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The community engagement process for heritage registrations is consistent with the intent of the HRM Community Engagement Strategy. The level of community engagement was information sharing achieved through public access to the required Heritage Advisory Committee meeting. As a provision of the Heritage Property Act, no registration of a municipal heritage property shall take place until Regional Council has given the owner of the property an opportunity to be heard.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no significant environmental implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

ALTERNATIVES

The Heritage Advisory Committee may choose to refuse the application to include 2316 Maynard Street, Halifax, in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality if the property scores less than 50 points based on the evaluation criteria. In doing so, the application will not proceed to Regional Council for evaluation.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The *Heritage Property Act*.

ATTACHMENTS

Map 1: Location Map

Attachment A: Evaluation Criteria




Attachment B: Staff Research Report

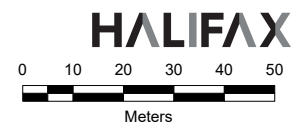
Report Prepared by: Shaoqiu Gong, Planner I - Heritage, 902.233.9826



Map 1 - Location Map

2316 Maynard Street,
Halifax

-  Creighton's Field Heritage District (Proposed)
-  Registered Heritage Property
-  Subject Property



HRM does not guarantee the accuracy of any representation on this plan.

Attachment A

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY HERITAGE PROPERTY PROGRAM EVALUATION CRITERIA

**EVALUATION CRITERIA
FOR REGISTRATION OF HERITAGE BUILDINGS (Revised 2004)**

1. AGE

Age is probably the single most important factor in the popular understanding of the heritage value of buildings. The following age categories are based on local, national and international occasions that may be considered to have defined the character of what is how the Halifax Regional Municipality and its architecture.

Date of Construction	Points	Timeline
1749 - 1785	25	Halifax Garrison Town to the Loyalist migration
1786 - 1830	20	Boom period following construction of Shubenacadie Canal
1831 - 1867	16	From Boom to Confederation
1868 - 1899	13	Confederation to the end of the 19 th century
1900 - 1917	9	Turn of the Century to Halifax Harbour Explosion
1918 - 1945	5	The War Years
1945 - Present	3	Post-War

** Maximum score of 25 points in this category*

2. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE

A building can receive points for:

- A) Having specific associations with important occasions, institutions, personages and groups,
OR
 B) For being architecturally important unique/representative of a particular period.

2A) Relationship to Important Occasions, Institutions, Personages or Groups

Nationally	Points	Comments
Intimately Related	16 - 20	
Moderately Related	11 - 15	
Loosely Related	1 - 10	
Provincially	Points	Comments
Intimately Related	11 - 15	
Moderately Related	6 - 10	
Loosely Related	1 - 5	

Heritage Property Program**Evaluation Criteria**

Locally	Points	Comments
Intimately Related	11 - 15	
Moderately Related	6 - 10	
Loosely Related	1 - 5	
No relationship to important occasions, institutions, personages or groups.	0	

** Maximum score of 20 points in this category, scoring from one of the three categories only*

2B) Important/Unique Architectural Style or Highly Representative of an Era

Importance	Points	Comments
Highly important, Unique, or representative of an era	16 - 20	
Moderately important, Unique, or representative of an era	11 - 15	
Somewhat important, or representative of an era	10 - 1	
Not important, Unique, or representative of an era	0	

** Maximum score of 20 points in this category.*

3. SIGNIFICANCE OF ARCHITECT/BUILDER

Is the structure representative of the work of an architect or builder of local, provincial or national importance?

Status	Points	Comments
Nationally	7 - 10	
Provincially Significant	4 - 6	
Locally Significant	1 - 3	
Not Significant	0	

** Maximum score of 10 points in this category.*

4. ARCHITECTURAL MERIT

The assessment of architectural merit is based on two factors:

A) Construction type/building technology: which refers to the method by which the structure was built (early or rare uses of materials), and building techniques;

AND

B) Style: which refers to the form or appearance of the architecture.

Construction Type/Building Technology		
A) Construction type	Points	Comments
Very rare/ early example	7 - 10	
Moderately rare/ early	4 - 6	
Somewhat rare/ early example	1 - 3	
Not rare/ common example	0	
B) Style	Points	Comments
Very rare/ early example	7 - 10	
Moderately rare/ early	4 - 6	
Somewhat rare/ early example	1 - 3	
Not rare/ common example	0	

** Maximum score of 10 points for Construction Type, and a maximum score of 10 for Style - a total maximum of 20 points in this category.*

5. ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY

Architectural Integrity refers to the extent to which the building retains original features/ structures/ styles, not the state of the building's condition.

Architecture	Consider any additions/ removal/ alterations to windows, doors, porches, dormers, roof lines, foundations, chimneys, and cladding.	
Exterior	Points	Comments
Largely unchanged	11 - 15	
Modest changes	6 - 10	
Major changes	1 - 5	
Seriously compromised	0	

** Maximum score of 15 points in this category.*

6. RELATIONSHIP TO SURROUNDING AREA

Points	Comments
6 - 10	The building is an important architectural asset contributing to the heritage character of the surrounding area.
1 - 5	The Architecture is compatible with the surrounding area and maintains its heritage character.
0	Does not contribute to the character of the surrounding area.

** Maximum score of 10 points in this category.*

SCORING SUMMARY

Property	Date Reviewed	Reviewer

Criterion	Highest Possible Score	Score Awarded
1. Age	25	
2. a) Relationship to Important Occasions, Institutions, Personages or Groups OR 2. b) Important, Unique Architectural Style, or Highly Representative of an Era	20	
3. Significance of Architect or Builder	10	
4. a) Architectural Merit: Construction type/building technology	10	
4. b) Architectural Merit: Style	10	
5. Architectural Integrity	15	
6. Relationship to Surrounding Area	10	
Total	100	

SCORE NECESSARY FOR DESIGNATION**50****Designation Recommended?****YES****NO****COMMENTS:**

Attachment B

Research Report

2316 Maynard Street, Halifax

Prepared by:

HRM Planning & Development
Alex Kitson, Heritage Planning Researcher

April 22, 2025



HALIFAX

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Age

The dwelling at 2316 Maynard Street, Halifax - as also known locally as Porters House - was one of the first buildings on the street. Based on G. J. McKenzie Plan from 1841, the street had not yet been laid (see Figure 1). In 1862, Fredrick Warner, a carpenter, purchased a lot to the south of what was then known as Woodill Field (Book 136, Page 380) for \$600.00 Nova Scotian Dollars (see Table 1). Fredrick then redeemed some of his shares with the Nova Scotia Building Society to take out a mortgage using this lot as collateral (Book 134, page 192) for the advance of 360 pounds. Unfortunately, the conversion rate from British Pounds to Nova Scotian Dollars is difficult to determine but the increase in lot price still indicates it was appreciating in value. On November 28th, 1863, Joseph Coombes purchased the lot at public auction for \$1,448. The public auction was authorized by the Halifax Supreme Court after the Nova Scotia Building Society brought action against Fredrick Warner to sell the property for “payment to them of the monies due” (Book 143, page 22).

Joseph Coombes is listed as an attorney in the Hutchinson 1864 Business Directory and in the 1863 deed granted by Warner through Public Auction (Book 143, Page 22). In late January 1864, Joseph Coombes granted William Coombes, cabinet maker, a deed for the southern portion of the lot, which contained Porters House, for \$1,000 (Book 143, Page 176). The deed uses the division wall of the original building, which was constructed as a semi-detached dwelling (or a double cottage), as a property boundary line. This suggests that the building likely existed when Joseph Coombes purchased the deed, which would also explain the value increase for the same lot from when Warner purchased it in 1862 (see Table 1).

According to Church’s 1865 Map of Halifax (see Figure 2) the sole building depicted on the west side of Maynard Street stands in the approximate location of the Porters House. This is further supported by the 1877 survey of Woodill field which shows only two subdivided and owned plots on the west side of Maynard Street, Coombes and Harris (see Figure 3). The Hutchinson’s 1864-1865 Directory also lists William Coombes, cabinet maker, living at 90 Maynard and Elizabeth Coombes, widow of John, living at the adjacent property of 92 Maynard along with a Joseph Coombes, barrister (Hutchinson, 1864). William and Elizabeth remain neighbours on Maynard or City Street until her death in 1869 (Halifax County Death Registration, 1869).

William Coombes continued to live at the same property until 1906 when it was sold to Josephine Roache, George Roache’s wife (see Table 1). It remained within the Roache family until the 1980s. Throughout that time the property is listed consistently in City directories and fire insurance plans. Given its form as a double cottage and the history of Maynard Street, the dwelling’s construction likely began between 1862-1863 and was complete by 1864.

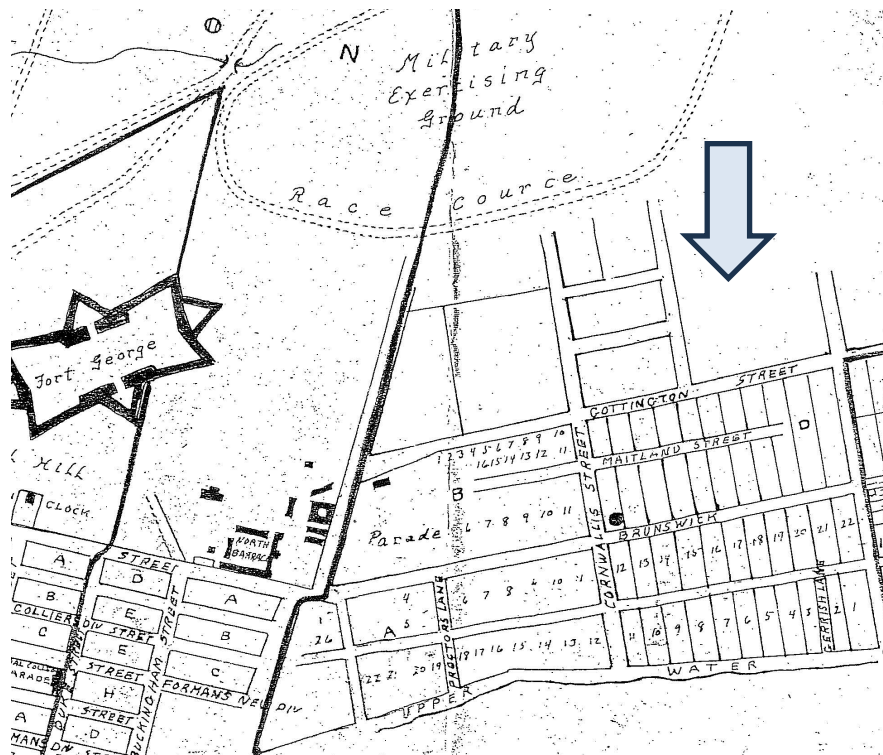


Figure 1: 1841 Plan of Halifax by G.J. McKenzie shows Maynard Street has yet to be fully laid, the approximate location of Porters House indicated by the blue arrow (McKenzie, 1841).

Name	Year Received	Year Released	Occupation	Deed	Cost	Approx. Lot
				Bk, Pg		
William Woodill	1843	1862	Butcher	74, 352		
Fredrick Warner	1862	1863	Carpenter	136, 380	\$600	
Joseph Coombes	1863	1864	Barrister	143, 22	\$1448	
William Coombes	1864	1906	Cabinet Maker	143, 176	\$1000	
Josephine (Webber) Roache	1906	1984	Caterer	378, 224	\$1700	

Table 1: Deed History Porters House with Price and Approximate size of lot, image a cutting of Woodill 1877 Survey (Hendry, 1877)



Figure 2: The 1865 Church Map of Halifax County shows one building on the west side of Maynard, in the approximate location of Porters House (Walling, 1865)

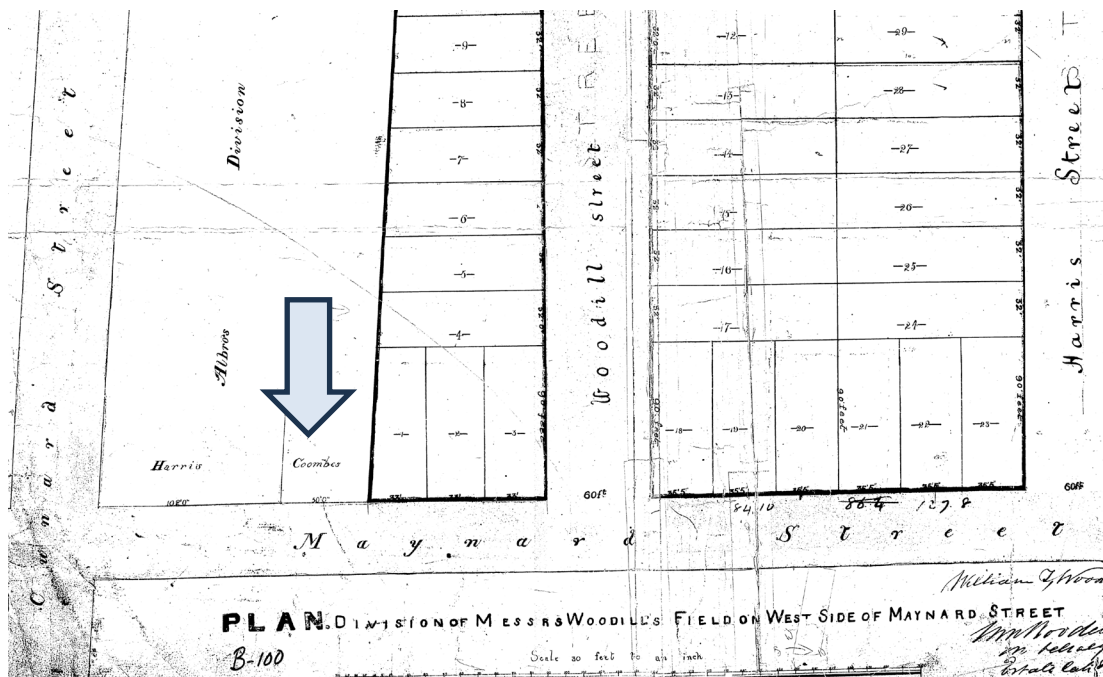


Figure 3: 1877 Survey of Subdivision of Woodill's Field, an arrow points to the location of Porters House (Hendry, 1877)



Figure 4: 1878 Hopkins Halifax Plan - Porters House is shown at 98 Maynard Street, its previous civic number (Hopkins, 1878)



Figure 5: Photograph of Porters House and adjacent double house on Maynard Street; Porters House identified by the arrow (Staff visit, May 9th, 2025)

Historical or Architectural Importance

Relationship to Important Occasions, Institutions, Personages or Groups

George Roache (1862-1918) and the Atlantic Advocate

George Roache was born in Halifax in 1862 to Adelaine and Robert Roache, both African Nova Scotians. Robert worked as a seaman and died when George was young, his mother then remarried James Martin, who was originally from Antigua and worked as a ship steward and cook (Fingard, 1995). George followed in his stepfather's footsteps and became a cook. George married Blanche Russell in 1890 (Fingard, 2021) – she was one of the first black students to attend the Halifax County Academy Secondary School after a long fight with the Halifax School Board for admittance throughout 1883-1884 (Fingard, 1995). George lived and worked in Boston at the time of their marriage, and the newlyweds lived in Massachusetts until Blanche's death in 1899 (Fingard, 2021).

In 1905, George Roache returned to Halifax and married Josephine Webber, the daughter of a mariner from Hantsport (Fingard, 2021). In 1906, George and Josephine purchased Porters House from William Coombes (Book 378, 224). George's experience as a steward and cook allowed him to start his own venture as a restaurateur and caterer at a time where opportunities were limited for black residents (Fingard, 1995). Roache became proprietor for two businesses: Roache's Lunch Rooms on the corner of

Gottingen and Gerrish Street; and New England Café on Argyle Street (see [Figure 7](#)). He was also a successful caterer; for example, in 1910 he was commended for first class catering of the Licensed Victuallers Association annual Hoge Podge at McNabs island to over 70 guests (see [Figure 8](#)).

George's businesses must have been successful as he was able to support local ventures, serving as Vice President of the Atlantic Advocate, the first African Nova Scotian Newspaper. He also supported his daughter Blanche who obtained a post secondary education (see **Blanche (Roache) Davis**) at the Halifax Music Conservatory. He was also involved at the local Union Lodge 18 of the black freemasons. He was president of the Lodge from 1909-1910 and a member of the committee organizing Booker T. Washington's visit to Halifax in 1915 who his son was named after (Fingard, 2025; Williams personal communication).

George Roache died of heart attack in 1918, a few months after the Halifax Explosion. George Roache's death clearly impacted the family; Josephine Roache, his widow, moved to Gottingen Street and lived above the Lunch Room restaurant; however, according to Alpine's Directories (1918-1922), Josephine ran a grocery store and bakery from the former Lunch Room storefront (rather than a restaurant). His daughter, Blanche, returned from the US where she had been teaching and began giving piano lessons from Porters House. Shortly afterwards, it seems Porters House was rented out until 1924 when Blanche Roache and her new husband move back in. The Gottingen Street storefront became a restaurant again in 1926 - renamed Robert Dick's Restaurant - with Josephine staying on as a cook (Royal Print & Litho Ltd, 1926; Census of Canada, 1930).

During the short time he lived at Porters House, George had a large impact on Halifax and Nova Scotia more broadly through his businesses, community engagement in the Atlantic Advocate, and time at the Freemason Lodge. His support for his wife and daughter's education also facilitated a much broader legacy for the Roache family.



Figure 6: Picture of George Roache from copy of Atlantic Advocate (n.n., 1915)

LICENSED VICTUALLERS

Hold annual hodge-podge at McNab's Island, and have a delightful time.

The Licensed Victuallers' Association held their annual hodge-podge at McNab's Island yesterday, and another great success has to be chronicled—one of the best they have ever held. They are a jolly sociable crowd, men who know how to have a good time, who thoroughly enter into the spirit of a day's outing in a jolly, but at the same time in a quiet way. There were about 70 in the party, including members and guests, and they played baseball, football, quoits and other games, and there was not a moment which was not thoroughly enjoyed.

The hodge podge, supplied by Caterer Roche, was admirable—one of the best, and all the other good things produced were of the same high class. T. D. Chalmers made an excellent presiding officer.

Figure 8: Newspaper Clipping from 1910 Acadian Recorder describing event Roache catered (Acadian Recorder, 1910)

ROACHE'S LUNCH ROOMS
 GEO. ROACHE, Prop.
Meals at all Hours
 PREPARED LUNCHES A SPECIALTY
 Maple Leaf Ice Cream Parlor Fruit and Confectionery
 IN CONNECTION WITH LUNCH ROOMS
 168-168½ GOTTINGEN STREET

ROACHE'S
"Little Gem" Lunch Room
 AND,
Ice Cream Parlor.
 (GEORGE ROACHE.)
 OYSTERS AND CLAMS SERVED IN ALL STYLES.
 Steaks, Chops, Salads, Meats and Fish cooked to order
 and to take out.
 OPEN 8 A. M. TO 12 P. M. 168 GOTTINGEN ST. COR. GERRISH.

Figure 7: Advertisements from Alpine's Directories for Roache's Lunch Room (Royal Print & Litho, 1913 & 1914)

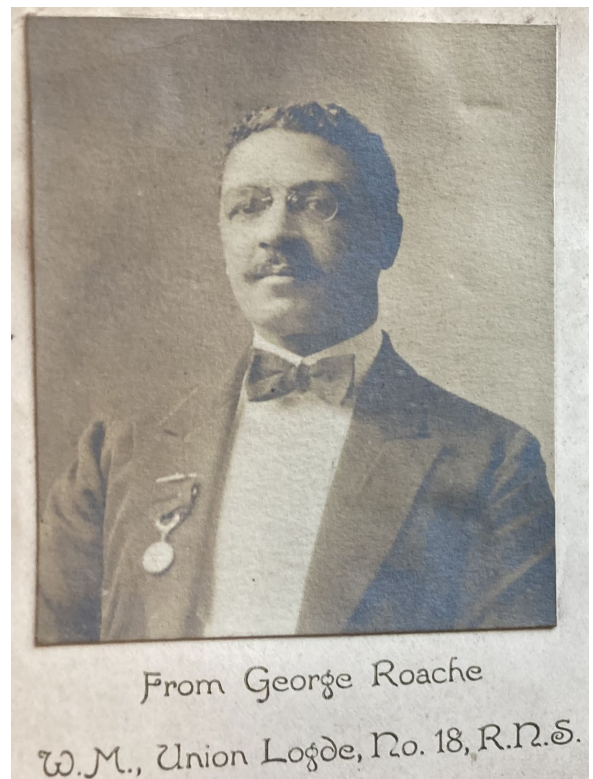


Figure 9: Picture of George Roache (Curtesy of J. Fingard)

Blanche (Roache) Davis (1894-1971)

Blanche (Roache) Davis was the daughter of George Roache and Blanche (Russell). Her education mirrored her mother's, as she attended Alexandra School (the successor to the Brunswick Street school) and then the Halifax Academy (Fingard, 2021). She set a record of her own by being the first black woman to attend the Halifax Music Academy where she took additional classes. She graduated from their piano teaching program in 1916 (Fingard, 1995) and vocal teaching program in 1917 (Fingard, 2021). Her first teaching position came in North Carolina where she was head of the Music Department of the Slater State Normal School (Fingard, 2021). When her father, George Roache, died in 1918, she returned to Halifax and conducted private piano lessons. An example of her recital pamphlet can be seen in 10. Descendants have letters from Portia White and remember the famous opera singer being a family friend (Personal communication with family member, March 10th, 2025).

Blanche Roache married Morris Davis in 1919, and they moved into Porters House as newlyweds in 1926 (Royal Print & Litho Ltd, 1926). Morris, son of James and Florence Maud Davis (Province of Nova Scotia Marriage Register, 1919), was a sleeping car porter and related to the civil rights champion Viola Desmond, who stayed with them during visits to Halifax. Blanche and Morris had three surviving children, George, Corland, and Vera - all born while they lived at Porters House (Census of Canada, 1930; Royal Print & Litho Ltd, 1926). In 1929, Blanche took out a mortgage for the adjoining unit at 2320 Maynard Street from their neighbour Hazel Gorman through a mortgage agreement with them (Book 628, page 207) and was granted a deed for the property the subsequent year (book 654, Page 725). Both Blanche (Russell) Roache and Blanche (Roache) Davis had to blaze a path to obtain an education in Halifax, both of which helped remove barriers for other black women in Halifax.

Booker Roache (1905-1988) and Morris Davis (1882-1948) - Railway Porter Community in Halifax

The Roache and Davis families were associated with the local porter community, along with the national fight to end racial discrimination amongst railway workers and obtain union membership. Porters were service workers on railways and one of the few positions available to black men in Canada in the early 20th century (Foster, 2019). In 1908, the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees (CBRE) imposed a colour ban restricting union membership to white workers only (Mathieu, 2001; Foster, 2019). This not only denied black employees union contracts, but it also reduced employment opportunities for non-white railway workers to solely porter positions (Foster, 2019; Ruck, 2014; Grizzle, 1998; Mathieu, 2001). Porters began organizing nationally and pushed to be granted full union protections and the ability to progress in their employment (Mathieu, 2001; Foster, 2019). The Halifax porter community contributed to

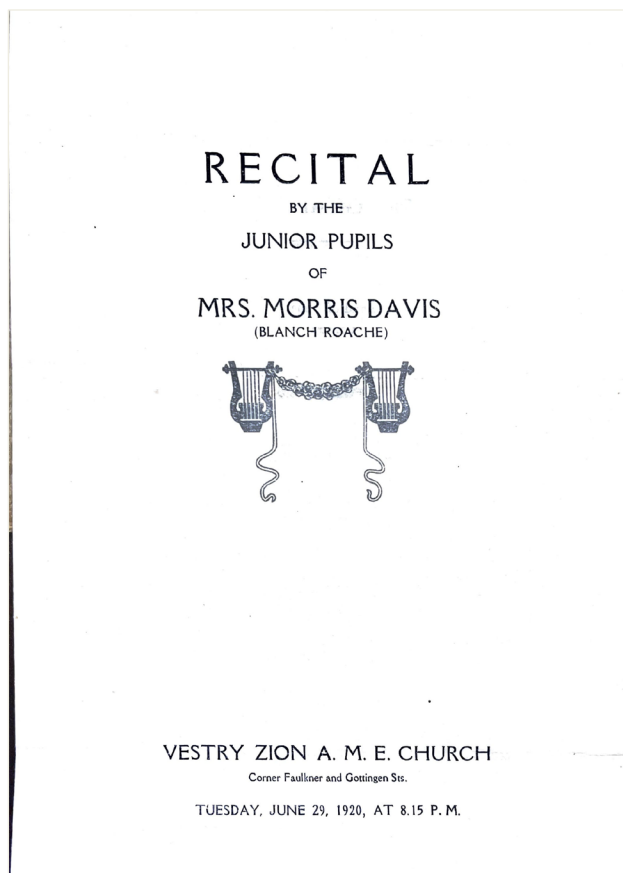


Figure 6: Image of Program for Student Recital for Blanche (Roache) Russell (Courtesy of M. Williams)



Figure 11: Photograph of Blanche (Roache) Davis, from 1940 (Courtesy of M. Williams)

Miss Blanche Roache, daughter of Mr. George Roache is the first coloured young lady to enter the Conservatory of Music at Halifax. By a singular coincidence Miss Roache's mother, who died some years ago was the first coloured lady to enter the Halifax Academy.

Figure 12: Newspaper Clipping from the 1916 Atlantic Advocate announcing Blanche's graduation (*Atlantic Advocate*, 1916).

this movement, and the Maynard Street / Creighton's Fields neighbourhood was home to important players from both sides of the fight to desegregate the union (Mathieu, 2001; McAlpine, 1917). Both equal union representation and workplace advancement were finally accomplished nationally in 1964 through the amalgamation of the dining car and porters' locals of the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Transport and General Workers (CBRT), a later version of CBRE (Calliste, 1987).

Some of the Davises and Roaches who lived at Porters House were heavily involved in the Halifax porter community during this time. Morris Davis built a distinguished porter career; he worked with CNR for 36 years, where he ultimately became a porter instructor in 1941 and was awarded a medal before retirement (a success all on its own given the lack of employment protections for porters) (Dominion Civil Services, 1947; Canadian National Railways, 1957). Booker Roache who inherited Porters House following the death of his mother, Josephine Roache, in 1953 (Province of Nova Scotia, 1953) also had a distinguished porter career. By 1930 Booker worked with CNR as a porter (Census of Canada, 1930) and by 1945 he too advanced to an instructor position

(Might Directories Atlantic Ltd, 1947). Booker was heavily involved in the local porter's union, serving as local chairman of Division 132 of the CBRT in 1952 (Bishop & Pachai, 2006), the same union that had for decades denied porters equal status as workers or union members (Mathieu, 2001). Moreover, his brothers Robert and Joseph also worked as porters for significant portion of their working lives (Might, 1945; Royal Print & Litho, Ltd, 1926; Census of Canada, 1931). The porters' fight for civil rights was important victory for black Canadians in the workplace and it broke some barriers preventing racialized communities from professional and economic advancement (Foster, 2019).



Figure 7: Image of porter helping passengers disembark (Ingenium Archives, 1936).



Figure 8: Image of Morris Davis from his 1940 CNR Pass (courtesy of M. Williams).



Figure 9: Sleeping Car Porters, Left to right Eugene Williams, Ernie Grosse, Coulter Slates, Tom MacDonald, and Booker Roache (Slaunwhite, 1950)

Important / Unique Architectural Style or Highly Representative of an Era

Built in the early 1860s, Porters House's construction coincided with a period of great expansion on the Halifax peninsula, and this industrialization led to a surge in housing construction. Latremouille (1988) noted that early in the 19th century, south end Halifax / Schmidville was the neighbourhood for working families. By the mid 19th century, the working class were moving northward to the Maynard Street / Creighton's Fields area, as economic conditions allowed for speculative investments to help spur building construction:

From the 1860s on, the majority of industrial workers in Halifax could not afford to own their own homes. The two and three storey frame tenements, as well as the small row housing units in Maynard / Crighton area were the responses of speculators to the predicament of wage earners whose wages could not buy the necessities of life. A recurring theme for editorialists and pamphleteers in the later half of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries was the shortage of low rent housing, despite the spread of the city north and westward. (p.50)

Porters House is an early example of the Halifax Box style with some Italianate influences. The Halifax Box is described by Stevenson and Archibald as a "flat roofed boxy two-storey house" with varying decoration (Archibald & Stevenson, 2003). The style of Porters House is consistent with Halifax Box through its square plan, minimal street setbacks, two-storey height, elevated basement, nearly flat roof, and asymmetrical entryway. The influence of the Italianate style is also evident through the nearly flat roof as well as its narrow, and paired, windows. It is possible that a bracketed cornice, which is another characteristic of the Italianate style, may have originally been present (though this could not be verified).

The Halifax Box design was an economical choice and often used for speculative building and working-class homes. The Halifax Box style was commonly linked to late Victorian architectural styles, which makes Porters House's Italianate influence an interesting feature. Porters House is also unique as it used combination construction framing; Halifax Box homes generally used balloon framing made possible by industrialization. Porters House in many ways is a representation of the transitional nature of the time it was built, using new and familiar construction and styles built in an expanding then suburb of the city, now a central area.

Significance of Architect or Builder

The builder of the Porters House was either Fredrick Warner, or a combination of Warner and William Coombes. Fredrick Warner was a carpenter who purchased and sold multiple lots in Halifax. As previously discussed, Fredrick Warner purchased the original deed in 1862 for the land encompassing both 2316 and 2320 Maynard for 600 dollars (Book 136, Page 380). The same year he took out a mortgage with the deed for the property as collateral from the Nova Scotia Building Fund for three shares amounting to 360 pounds (Book 136/ Page 383). The language of the mortgage, and the building society's mandate (Nova Scotia Archives, n.d.) suggests Warner advanced money for building construction so the mortgage likely covered building materials and some of the land costs. While the different currencies make it difficult to compare the mortgages, the difference between what Fredrick paid for the land (\$600) and what Joseph paid for the lot in November 1863 (\$1,448) (Book 143, Page 22) indicates Fredrick Warner had already started construction of the building. As does the mention of a division wall in a double cottage in the deed granted to William Coombes just two months later in January 1864 (Book 143, Page 176).

Certainly, the timber construction could speak to an experienced craftsman. As Pacey (1988) explains "... Carpenters were responsible for the frame and cladding while the joiners (later called cabinetmakers) did the fancier finishing touches like mouldings, pilasters and window sashes" (p. 103). William Coombes, being a cabinet maker, could have added finishings to the property, but it's highly unlikely that he built the foundation or frame. Thus, the Porters House builder was almost certainly Fredrick Warner, possibly in combination with William Coombes.

Architectural Merit

Construction Type or Building Technology

Porters House is one side of a wood framed, semi-detached dwelling. The house stands on a brick and rubblestone foundation that has been partially parged with concrete. The builder used a combination building frame, with timber framing evident in the structure's bracing and lighter balloon framing used for the wall studs.

The timber construction method involved larger beams of wood to form a structure using wooden joinery. This was the main construction method used prior to the mid-19th century and hence found more commonly in earlier Halifax neighbourhoods such as Schmidville (Latermouille, 1988). Balloon frame construction became the favoured construction method later in the 19th century as nails became less expensive and more readily available (Rempel, 1967). Herman and Lanier (1997) describe combination framing as a hybrid of the two during the transition to balloon framing in the mid century. Halifax began expanding into the North Suburbs just as balloon frame construction was

becoming more common. Therefore, combination framing is a unique construction method just by lieu of its transitional nature and limited time period.



Figure 10: Photograph of a portion of uncovered foundation of The Porters House (Staff visit, September 19th, 2024)



Figure 11: Photograph of corner foundation of 2320 Maynard as viewed from sidewalk (Staff visit, September 19th, 2024)



Figure 12: Image of interior foundation of Porters House during interior work, showing timber framing style (Provided by applicant)



Figure 13: Image of striped interior wall in Porters House, showing lighter uniform studs with nail marks showing utilization of lighter balloon style framing methods (Image from applicant)



Figure 14: Image of house foundation from interior (Provided by applicant)

Style

Porters House has a square plan with a short façade. The overall structure and plan have remained consistent in historical fire insurance plans and mapping dating back to the 1860s.

Based on the plan and architectural elements, Porters House is an early example of the Halifax Box style. The dwelling's two-storey square massing, original square plan, and elevated front door with an asymmetrical elevated entrance are key characteristics of the style. The narrow-paired window openings indicate that the dwelling may also be influenced by the Italianate style. The bays are symmetrical, which is common in smaller dwellings of the Italianate style (Penny, 1989). The projecting eaves and verges are consistent along both units and could indicate wood brackets may have originally been incorporated into the design, (however, this could not be verified as fact). The Porters House retains a simple frieze, simple fascia, and plainly moulded soffit along its large eaves and verges.

Character Defining Elements

The character defining elements of 2316 Maynard Street include, but are not limited to:

- Two-storey Halifax Box style dwelling with a two-bay façade and a nearly flat roof;
- Central single-stack brick chimney;
- Flat and narrow wood windows with wood trim;
- Paired windows on the façade's second storey;
- Projecting eaves with wood detailing (soffit, plain frieze, and plain fascia);
- Wood shingle cladding;
- Wood moulded corner boards;

- Elevated front entrance with enclosed porch, moulded sill, and a wood side door; and
- Minimal front yard setbacks.



Figure 15: Image of Porters House facade viewed from Maynard Street (Provided by applicant, taken in 2024)



Figure 16: Photograph of Porters House of south elevation of storm porch (Staff visit, September 19th, 2024)



Figure 17: Photograph of Porters House from the west elevation (Staff visit, September 19th, 2024)



Figure 18: Picture of Porters House from south elevation showing the flat pitch of the roof with projecting verges and portion of house with vinyl siding (Staff visit, September 19th, 2024)

Architectural Integrity

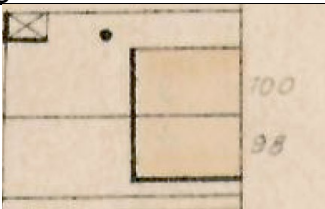
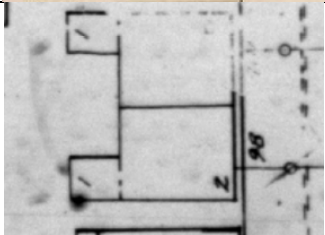
Based on the deed descriptions of the house, the fire insurance plans, and aerial photography, Porters House's overall structure has remained the same.

The 1889 Hopkins map shows both units have one-storey rear wing, likely original to the structure given their uniformity (see [Table 2](#)). Sometime between 1889 and 1895 Coombes expanded Porters House's rear wing pushing the south wall all the way to the south property line and a very short addition on the north wall, possibly an entrance or

porch to the rear. This was likely when an external chimney was added to the rear to facilitate a wood stove (see [Figure 25](#)).

The above ground basement and subsequent elevated doorway would have required an entrance stairway for both units. However, the storm porch present at the Porters House entrance is not repeated at 2320. It is in keeping with Italianate style influence and other Halifax Box style double houses in the neighbourhood (see [Figure 27](#)). Local memory of a long-time neighbourhood resident is the porch was there since before the 1960s. When all taken into consideration, knowing too that most other additions on Porters House took place in the late 19th century, its probable the porch is a historic architectural change. The projecting eaves (see [Figure 24](#)) are consistent along both units as well; it's possible that the properties may have originally had wood decorations such as brackets or corbels.

More recent changes to the property are the modification of the first-storey window of the façade, enlargement of rear windows, filling in of the rear extension, and the replacement of wooden siding along the south facing elevation. Visual inspection during the staff site visit indicates the rear windows have been expanded and the second storey level windows on the west-facing elevation had their original wooden frames replaced with vinyl. The one-storey rear wing was extended sometime after the 1950s to the rear wall, forming a rectangle instead of the ell created in the late Victorian era (see Table 2 and [Figure 23](#)). The wooden shingle cladding has been maintained along the west and east facing elevations, though along the south facing elevation some wood shingles have been replaced with vinyl at the lower level. The original Porters House almost certainly featured wooden shingle siding as the adjacent property also shows very similar wood shingle siding underneath the modern application of vinyl siding (see [Figure 26](#)). Though likely replaced through maintenance, Porters House's wooden shingle siding is overall consistent with the architectural integrity.

Changes to Building Documented by Plans		
Year	Image from Fire Insurance Plan	Changes
1878		
1889		Both units show a one-storey extension in the rear which may have been an addition since 1878, or a detail missed in the previous plan

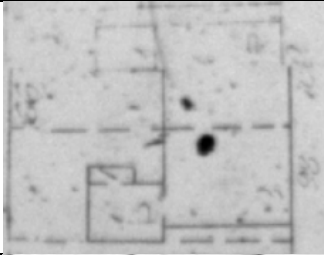

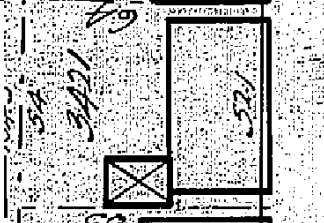
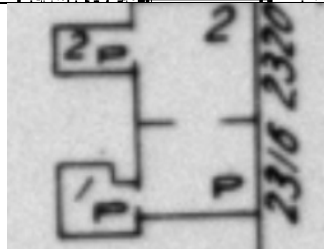
1895		A rear addition to Porters House extends towards the rear property line and adds an entrance or bay on the north facing side
1911		No changes
1918		2320 unit removes their rear addition
1952		2320 has added a two-storey rear addition ell

Table 2: Changes in plan of The Porters House from Fire Insurance Plans for Halifax over the years (Image sources from top to bottom: (Hopkins, 1878; Goad, 1889, revised 1895, 1911; Pickings, 1918; Canadian Underwriters Association, 1952).



Figure 19: Photograph of rear addition of Porters House with second exterior chimney (Staff visit, September 19th, 2024)



Figure 20: Photograph of siding on north elevation of 2320 Maynard showing underneath new vinyl siding (Staff visit, September 19th, 2024)

Relationship to Surrounding Area

Porters House has strong connections to the surrounding neighbourhood from both an architectural and historical point of view. Based on the 1865 Church Map it was one of the first houses on the block (See [Figure 2](#)). Moreover, pictures of the dwelling's frame indicate it is a combination wooden construction house, rare in the Halifax North End (Latremouille, 1988); this construction type may have contributed to it being one of the shortest buildings on the street. Another unique architectural characteristic is the Porters House's wooden storm porch entrance, which distinguishes the property from its neighbours along the streetscape, while maintaining compatibility in terms of placement within the built form (see [Figure 27](#)).

Porters House is located within the proposed Heritage Conservation District of Creighton's Field. The closest heritage property to it is the Armoury to the south of Cunard Street built in 1899. If accepted for registration the property would be the first

registered property on this block of Maynard. While one of the first houses on the street, many of its neighbours appear to be a similar age and were likely constructed during the mid-to-late expansion of north end Halifax. Porters House is also consistent with the Creighton's Field's streetscape pattern of 1 ½ to 3 storey residential houses, either single detached or semi-detached often in different variations of the vernacular Halifax Box style.



Figure 21: Photograph looking north from Porters House from Maynard Street (Staff visit, September 19th, 2024)



Figure 22: Photograph looking west up Harris Street from Maynard, showing similar two-storey Halifax Box styles with covered porche entryways (Staff visit, September 19th, 2024)

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