

REPORT
1993 May 03

CITY OF BURNABY

HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND COUNCILLORS

RE: W. J. Walker House, circa 1908;
5255 Sperling Avenue

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT Council authorize staff to review the conservation options and costs associated with the retention of the W. J. Walker House at 5255 Sperling Avenue as a heritage property.

REPORT

The Heritage Advisory Committee, at its meeting of 1993 April 28, adopted the attached report advising that the City has recently acquired a potential heritage resource within Deer Lake Park.

Staff have evaluated the site as being a potential heritage building and as such are requesting Council's approval to conduct a detailed cost study to determine the cost of retaining the house for residential rental purposes. The Walker House is essentially the oldest remaining building on Deer Lake and represents an important historic theme in Burnaby's history. As such it is the Committee's hope that Council will concur with the Committee's view that it is important to take this opportunity to determine the possibility for keeping this building within the Deer Lake Park Heritage Precinct.

: COPY - CITY MANAGER
- DIRECTOR ENGINEERING
- DIRECTOR FINANCE
- DIR. PLNG. & BLDG.
Members: - DIR. REG. & CULT. SERV.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor D. Lawson,
Chair

Mrs. M. Canessa
Mr. A. Diamond
Mr. D. Johnston
Mrs. P. McGeachie
Mr. H. Pride
Ms. R. Richards
Mr. J. Ross

Councillor D. P. Drummond,
Member

TO: HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE 1993 APRIL 22
FROM: ACTING DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING
SUBJECT: RECENT LAND ACQUISITION, DEER LAKE PARK
W.J. WALKER HOUSE CIRCA 1908; 5255 SPERLING AVENUE

PURPOSE: The purpose of this report is to advise the H.A.C. of the recent acquisition of a potential heritage resource and to provide the committee with information regarding the building's heritage value.

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RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT the Heritage Advisory Committee advise Council that the recently acquired property at 5255 Sperling Avenue (known as the W.J. Walker House) has been evaluated as being a potential heritage building.
2. THAT staff be requested to review the conservation options and costs associated with the retention of the W.J. Walker House at 5255 Sperling Avenue as a heritage property.
3. THAT a copy of this report be sent to the Parks & Recreation Commission for their information.

R E P O R T

1.0 BACKGROUND:

1.1 Description of property:

In late 1992 the City purchased a house and lot at 5255 Sperling Avenue immediately north of the existing Deer Lake Park beach area as part of the Deer Lake Park land acquisition program (see Figure 1).

The house is composed of a small 1908 cottage sited close to Sperling Avenue with a derelict garage and aviary built circa 1935. At present the house is vacant and boarded up. The house is listed in the "Preliminary Inventory of Heritage Buildings" adopted by the H.A.C.

1.2 City Heritage Policy for new property acquisitions:

The existing policy for the management of City-owned buildings and sites approved on 1991 July 08 states that we should:

"Review all future acquisitions of potential heritage buildings for their heritage value, inclusion on the heritage inventory and possible further protection."

The purpose of this report is to review the heritage value of this recent land acquisition.

2.0 HERITAGE REVIEW:

2.1 History of Site:

Mr. and Mrs. William J. Walker purchased his small waterfront parcel of acreage at Deer Lake from their close friend and Deer Lake resident Maud S. Woodward in 1907. It appears from all available historic evidence from local directories and assessment rolls that the house was constructed in 1907. Lumber for the house was milled by the Deer Lake Lumber Company which had operated on the lot adjacent to this property since 1906. A photograph taken from the top of the Sperling Avenue hill towards Deer Lake in 1908 shows the completed house with an adjacent barn (see Figure 2).

2.2 Historical Context:

The 1909 local directory lists William J. Walker as being a "rancher". This is a common description for a local resident engaged in operating small scale market gardens and poultry farms. From the early 1890's until 1909 this was the most common type of residential development in the Deer Lake area before the real-estate boom transformed the area into "Burnaby's Shaughnessy" creating the upper-class country estate character around the lake.

It should be noted that this home is essentially the oldest intact building on Deer Lake. The Woodward Cottage at 5141 Sperling Avenue, although constructed in 1904, has been completely renovated and modernized to such a degree that its architectural qualities from a heritage view have all but disappeared.

2.3 Architecture:

This small house can be described architecturally as a Craftsman-styled cottage or bungalow. The home's exterior has modern additions and treatments which have changed the appearance of the original building. The south facade of the house is obscured by a enclosed verandah and small furnace room addition. Also on the south facade a large incompatible dormer window has been added to the second floor roof shed. The entire building has been recovered with 1930's styled raked cedar shingles over the original fir tongue and groove siding. Despite these additions the original form and materials of the home remain substantially intact (see Figures 3 and 4).

The interior of the house includes some quality "Craftsman" style details that add considerably to the architectural interest of the house (see Figure 5). The large main living room is the principal room of the cottage and offers the potential for a future new community use. The room features a high ceiling which is beautifully coffered with fir beams and panels which are still finished with original varnish. Projecting into the center of the room also is a fireplace which has survived with its original "Clayburn" brick hearth. Although it is now covered with synthetic bricks these can be easily removed and the hearth restored. A central hallway also retains its original Craftsman styled wall panelling (see Figure 6).

The outbuildings include a garage and attached aviary apparently built circa 1935 by the Knight family who operated the "Lakeview Aviaries". Both buildings, although typical of similar structures once found throughout Burnaby do not adhere to any particular design style or offer any unique building forms. Also these structures were not built with any degree of foundation supports and as a result are in an extremely poor state of repair. Therefore, it has been recommended by the Engineering Department that these structures should be removed from the site.

2.4 Deer Lake Park Heritage Precinct:

The Deer Lake Park area has been identified as one of Burnaby's primary heritage precincts containing a large grouping of heritage buildings, landscapes and archaeological sites. The policy for the management of city-owned sites states that Burnaby should:

"Undertake a review of the Deer Lake Park Heritage Precinct with a view to coordinating conservation actions with the park's development plans."

In the 1977 study of Deer Lake Park conducted by Charles Torrence and Associates for Burnaby noted that some of the oldest residences in the City were dotted around the lake and recommended that these be retained and recycled as a link to the past and to provide space for a variety of public activities.

On-going discussion about the role of these heritage buildings and resources such as the Walker House within Deer Lake Park needs to take place. A detailed study of all the potential resources in the Park area would provide a useful framework for decision making, and for assistance in setting priorities.

3.0 POTENTIAL FOR ADAPTIVE RE-USE:

3.1 Parks and Recreation Department Comments:

Burnaby's Parks and Recreation Department Staff have reviewed the potential for retaining the Walker House and have concluded that their Department does not foresee any potential use or need for the house at this time. It was noted that this property was acquired as part of the parkland acquisition program and was intended to increase the boundaries and open space for park users.

3.2 Finance Department Comments:

The Finance Department has completed a property inspection and rental review of the Walker House. A summary of their findings appears below. The Department has also expressed concern that the present unoccupied condition of the house has generated the potential for vandalism and disruption to the adjacent residents. It is recommended that the derelict outbuildings be removed immediately.

3.2.1 Repair costs:

The Engineering Department has prepared a preliminary estimate of the scope of work and costs to bring the dwelling up to City residential rental standards as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| Outbuildings & pool | - demolish, drain pool and fill in (pool filled in) |
| Foundation | - structural report required |
| Roof | - replacement |
| Windows | - repair |
| Doors | - replace both exterior doors |
| Wood siding | - repair for weather proofing |

Flooring	- replace carpet and vinyl
Interior	- repair and repaint completely
Fireplace	- not operative
Bathroom	- replace tub surround and repair pipes
Wiring	- upgrading required for safety
Furnace	- service and repair
Insulation	- required

TOTAL \$48,000

Not included in this estimate is the costs associated with upgrading the existing foundation. A structural evaluation of the foundation is estimated to cost \$2,000.

3.2.2 Costs for Rental:

Residential rental would require immediate repair on the order of \$48,000, subject to a structural foundation survey. Income is estimated by the Finance Department at approximately \$600 to \$700 per month or \$7,200 to \$8,400 per year.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS:

The Walker House represents an important historic theme in Burnaby's history in that it remains as the only farmhouse in Deer Lake Park built during its early development period before estates replaced the "fruit ranches and market gardens". It is essentially the oldest remaining building on Deer Lake and should be added to the list of significant buildings in the Deer Lake Park heritage precinct.

The house is located within the open space area of the park. It is suggested that as the house is very close to Sperling Avenue that the present deep lakeside rear yard be added to the park as soon as possible by relocating the fence and that a small rear yard be provided for the house.

At this time it is requested that a more detailed cost study be undertaken to determine the cost of retaining the house for residential rental purposes. Heritage resources such as the W.J. Walker House are rare survivors. Its inclusion in the Deer Lake Park Heritage Precinct will add to the special character and historic interpretation potential which currently exists.



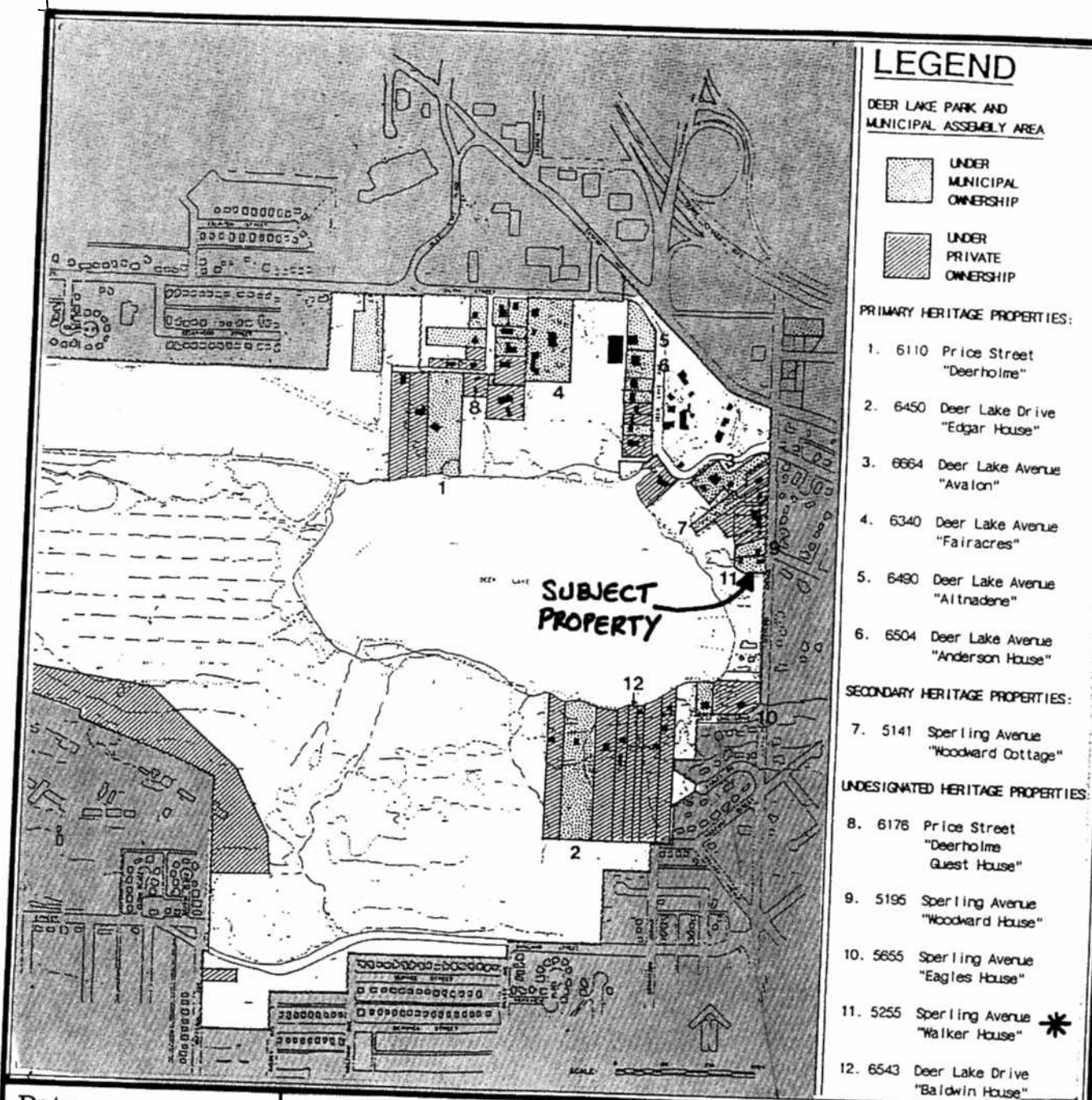
D.G. Stenson
Acting Director
Planning & Building

JW:yg/ds

cc: Director Recreation & Cultural Services
Director Engineering
Director Finance

DEER LAKE PARK

HERITAGE PROPERTIES



LEGEND

DEER LAKE PARK AND MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY AREA



UNDER MUNICIPAL OWNERSHIP



UNDER PRIVATE OWNERSHIP

PRIMARY HERITAGE PROPERTIES:

1. 6110 Price Street "Deerholme"
2. 6450 Deer Lake Drive "Edgar House"
3. 6664 Deer Lake Avenue "Avalon"
4. 6340 Deer Lake Avenue "Fairacres"
5. 6490 Deer Lake Avenue "Aitnadene"
6. 6504 Deer Lake Avenue "Anderson House"

SECONDARY HERITAGE PROPERTIES:

7. 5141 Sperling Avenue "Woodward Cottage"

UNDESIGNATED HERITAGE PROPERTIES:

8. 6176 Price Street "Deerholme Guest House"
9. 5196 Sperling Avenue "Woodward House"
10. 5655 Sperling Avenue "Eagles House"
11. 5255 Sperling Avenue "Walker House" *
12. 6543 Deer Lake Drive "Baldwin House"

Date:
93/04/19

Scale:
N.A.

Drawn By:
J.W.



City of Burnaby
Planning & Building Dept.

FIG. 1 W.J. WALKER HOUSE
5255 SPERLING AVENUE

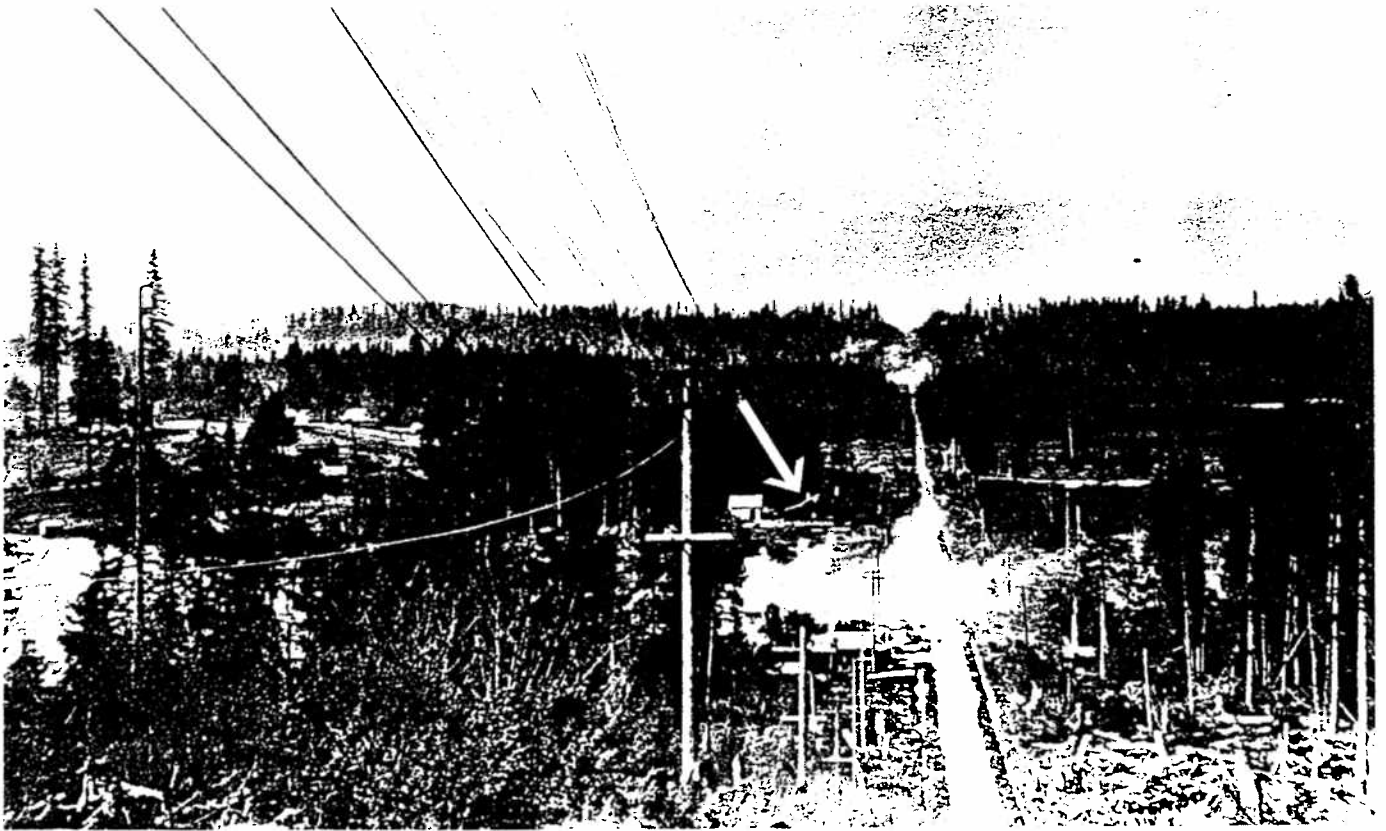


Fig. 2 View looking north from Sperling Avenue Hill, c. 1908.
Note W.J. Walker House in center of photograph.



Fig. 3 W.J. Walker House, West facade.



Fig. 4 W.J. Walker House, Rear yard.

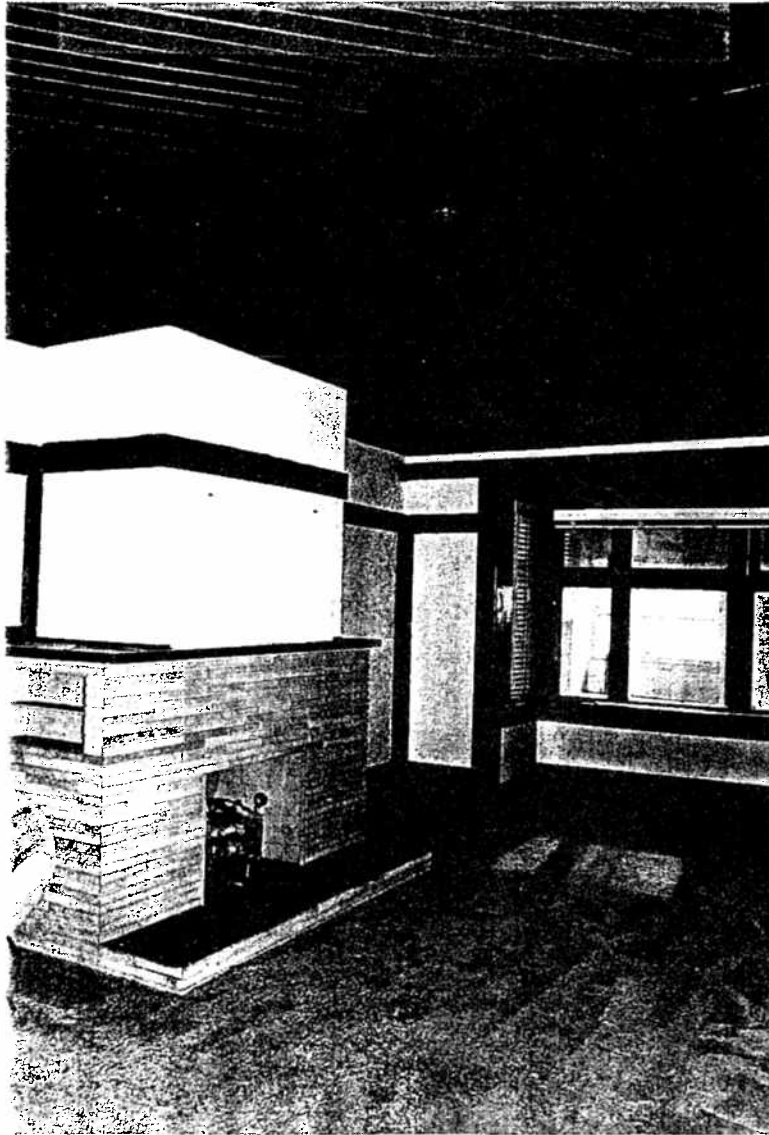


Fig. 5 Living Room

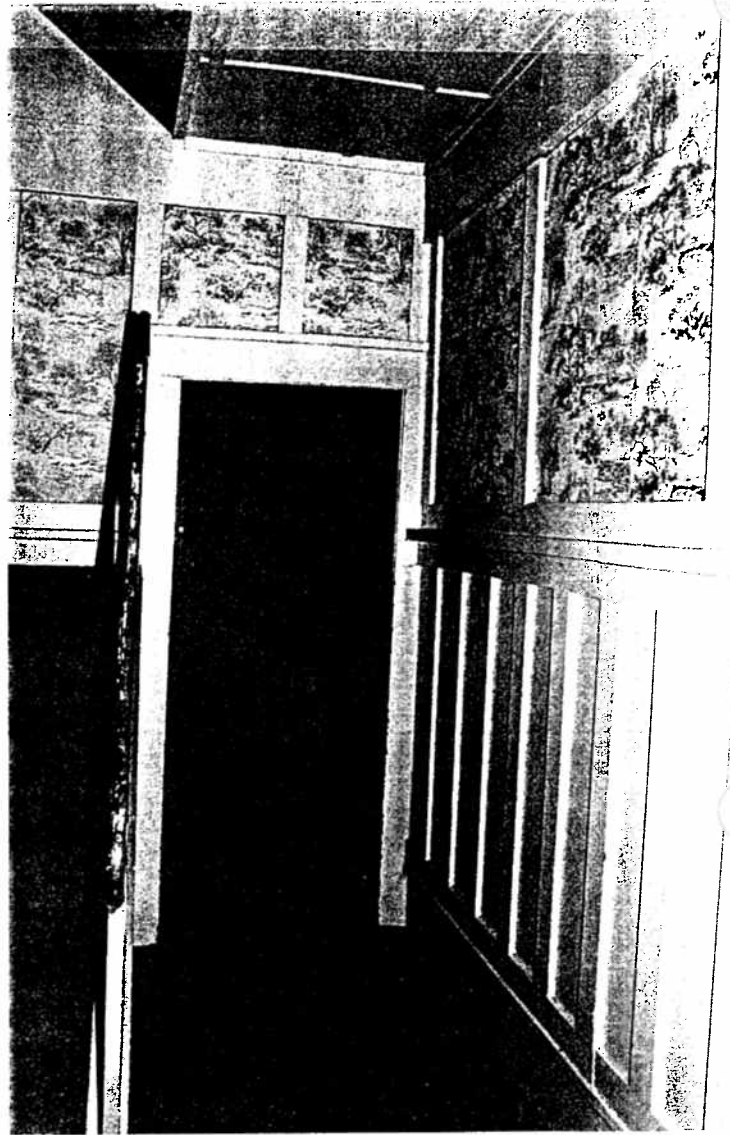


Fig. 6 Hallway