

Heritage Research Report 5222 Second Concession Rd.

Humberstone Township Lot 4 Concession 3

NOTE: There has been extensive research done on the Sherk family, this location, and the contributions of the Sherk family to the development of the community, most notably, the work done by author Don Anger, in his book, *Casper Sherk (1750-1813) and the Story of 'Sherk's Mills': Site of the Antique Power Association* (Port Colborne Historical and Marine Museum, 2004).

Architectural Features:

The 1861 Humberstone Township Census indicates that the original portion of the home at 5222 Second Concession Rd. was built in 1854 by Andrew Sherk. The one-and-a-half-storey, five bay, red brick building has a simple, rectangular layout and symmetrical façade. It is built in the Georgian style with some Classical Revival elements, the latter of which are most apparent in the detailed wooden door-surround, which features pilasters and dentils. The simplicity of the Georgian façade was favoured by groups like the Mennonites after it had gone out of style elsewhere in Ontario.¹ The trace of a small peaked roof can be seen in the brickwork over the door, indicating a no longer extant porch or overhang. There are curved, bonded-arch voussoirs over the windows and door on the original portion of the building, but the windows and door themselves are replacements. The brick would have been handmade at this date, possibly by John C. Deterling, who opened a brickyard in the nearby second concession in approximately 1850, just a few years before Andrew Sherk built his house.

The four dormers on the roof of the main building are recent additions and were not present in the 1979 survey photographs. In the 1979 survey photographs and in the 1930s air photograph, a small, stone extension is visible on the east end of the building. This was probably not an original structure, as evinced by the semi-coursed stone, and was replaced with a much larger, one-storey, brick extension following the 1979 survey (See Appendices 2 to 4). There was a chimney on either end of the building in the 1979 survey photos, but both have since been removed.

Where the extension meets the main part of the house, the original exterior brick wall, with its voussoir-topped door openings, has been preserved, and is visible from the interior of the new extension. What appear to be the original wooden floors, ceiling beams, and possibly, a corner cupboard also remain (See Appendix 4). The two bedrooms on the upper storey also retain what appear to be the original, double-panelled wooden doors.

There is a barn with board and batten siding on the property southeast of the home that is believed to have been built in the 1860s (See Appendix 4). The low-slung roof of the barn indicates that this is a reasonable time frame for its construction.

¹ Ontario Architectural Style Guide, HPI Nomination Team, University of Waterloo, January 2009
<<https://www.therealtydeal.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Heritage-Resource-Centre-Achitectural-Styles-Guide.pdf>>

History:

In 1797, the patent for the 200 acres comprising Lot 4 Concession 3 was issued to the Loyalist settler, Frederick House, and his wife, Margaret. They were already in possession of the property earlier than 1797, however, as the Houses are recorded as releasing the south half of the lot, amounting to 100 acres, to Casper Sherk (variant spellings include Gasper, Gasher, Caspar, and Shirk, Scherch) in 1790 – nine years before he is recorded as purchasing this land for £40 New York Currency (See Appendix 1). In 1790, or very soon after, Casper built a log cabin and began to farm this land. In 1810, along with his third son, Jacob, he built Saw and Grist Mills, taking advantage of the natural waterpower source provided by Black Creek which flowed in a northeast direction across the lot. Dams built across the creek to manage the waterflow created a large millpond which extended south into lot 4, concession 2, and the road between concessions 2 and 3 was diverted to go around the end of the pond.²

Upon his death in 1813, Casper left the farm and mill to Jacob, who in 1844 built a larger, plank house on the lot (Anger, p. 16). At Jacob's death in 1847, the southern 25 acres of lot 4, which included the mill, were left to his fifth son, Andrew (See Appendix 1). Jacob's seventh son, Peter, inherited the plank house and the rest of the portion of Lot 4 that had been in Jacob's possession. For several years prior to Jacob's death, Andrew and his wife, Eleanor, and their children, had been living in Casper's old log cabin, and continued to do so until Andrew built the new brick house in 1854. Andrew only had charge of the mills for a brief period, as they went out of business between 1848 and 1851, when the flow of the Black Creek diminished due to the loss of forests and wetlands.³ Much of the machinery from the Sherk saw and grist mills apparently went to the new mill built nearby by Peter Troup in 1848, in the second concession.⁴ After the Sherk mills were shut down, the dams creating the millpond were removed. In 1851, by which time the millpond had disappeared, the Humberstone township council voted to close the "old road" which had gone around the pond.⁵ Andrew continued to live there and farm the property until he and his son, Andrew N. Sherk, sold the property to Isaac Haun, farmer, in 1897, within whose family it stayed until 1938 (See Appendix 1).

In 1867, Andrew subdivided a quarter acre in the southwest corner of Lot 4 and gave the trustees of School Section No. 7 a ninety-year lease of it for eight dollars (See Appendix 1). The 1861 Census for Humberstone township lists the schoolteacher as residing in the log cabin on the property along with Jacob's widow, Sarah, and her daughter and son-in-law; it is highly likely that they boarded other teachers who came and went from the school as well.⁶ The original schoolhouse was a timber frame building, but this was replaced with a brick building in 1955, built with materials from both Sherk Lumber Co. Limited and Beam Building and Supply Co.

² See Don Anger, *Casper Sherk (1750-1813) and The Story of 'Sherk's Mills'*, 2004, pps. 7-21.

³ Don Anger, *Casper Sherk (1750-1813) and The Story of 'Sherk's Mills'*, 2004, p.16.

⁴ Don Anger, *Casper Sherk (1750-1813) and The Story of 'Sherk's Mills'*, 2004, pps. 20-21.

⁵ Humberstone Township Minutes, 1850-60.

⁶ Don Anger, *Casper Sherk (1750-1813) and The Story of 'Sherk's Mills'*, 2004, p. 21.

Limited (See Appendix 1). It remained in operation as a school until approximately 1965.⁷ This brick building still stands, but is now a private residence.

Architectural and Historical Significance:

The home at 5222 Second Concession Road is both architecturally and historically significant in the early history of the community. It was built in 1854 by a member of one of the earliest pioneering families in Humberstone Township. Casper Sherk and his family played a highly significant role in shaping the landscape of the area; their saw and grist mills bolstered the economic development of what was then called Sherk's Crossing, providing immensely important services to the local agricultural population. Sherkston, as it later became known, continued to grow, drawing other agricultural, industrial, educational, and commercial activity, all of which contributed to creating a unique community. The Sherk family, by providing land for a school, and housing for early teachers, were also instrumental in the development of education for local families. Further adding to the property's heritage value is the presence of an unmarked family burial ground near the location of the original log cabin, containing the graves of Casper Sherk, his wife, Feronica, his son, Jacob, and other family members.⁸

The home's architectural style and character reflects the Sherk family's Mennonite heritage in its simplicity. Although additions and changes have been made to the Georgian-style farmhouse, they are largely sympathetic to the character and design of the original 170-year-old building. The home still retains much of its early appearance and features, including its Classical Revival-style ornamental door trim and handmade brickwork. The home's interior has also undergone few changes, with much of its original wood trim well-preserved.

⁷ *History of Education in Port Colborne*, pps. 127-128.

⁸ Don Anger, *Casper Sherk (1750-1813) and The Story of 'Sherk's Mills'*, 2004, p.10.

Appendix 1 Abstract Lot 4 Concession 3 Humberstone Township

TOWNSHIP OF HUMBERSTONE, LOT No. 4 in 3 rd Concession from Lake Erie									
No. of Abstract	No. of Volume	No. of Instrument	INSTRUMENT	IN DATE	DATE OF REGISTRY	GRANTOR	GRANTEE	QUANTITY OF LAND	CONSIDERATION OR AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE
1	"	"	Patent	Mar 16 th 1797	"	Crown	Fredrick House	all 200 acres	
2	A 247	17	Release	Mar 22 nd 1790	11 th July 1801	Fredrick House and Margaret his wife	Jasper Sherk 1/2 Lot 4	100 acres the S. side of said Lot	
3	A 489	12	B.V.S.	Mar 30 th 1803	Nov 22 nd 1803	Fredrick House and Margaret his wife	Alexander Douglas 1/2 Lot 4	100 acres	
4	A 3332	75	B.V.S.	Nov 22 nd 1799	Nov 4 th 1819	Fredrick House and Margaret his wife	Jasper Sherk 1/2 Lot 4	100 acres 1/40 " N.Y. currency	
5	A 8618	192	B.V.S.	Apr 7 th 1832	Nov 21 st 1832	Alex. Douglas	Jacob Sherk	50 acres 1/81. 5. 1/2 of 1/4 Lot 4, con 3	
6	A 8951	218	Will	Feb 1 st 1813	Dec 19 th 1832	Jasper Sherk	Jacob Sherk	This form whereon he has and to his heirs and assigns the 1/4 of 1/4 Lot 4, con 3	
7	A 392	21	Will	17 Sept ^r 1847	18 Nov ^r 1847	Jacob Sherk	Jacob Sherk	25 acres S. end of 1/4 con 3	
8	A 392	21	Will	17 Sept ^r 1847	18 Nov ^r 1847	Jacob Sherk	Jacob Sherk	25 acres S. end of 1/4 con 3	
9	A 10689	21	Last Will	21 Jan ^y 1852	9 Sept ^r 1862	Alexander Douglas	Jacob Sherk	50 acres 1/81. 5. 1/2 of 1/4 Lot 4, con 3	
10	A 10830	31	B.V.S.	10 Oct ^r 1862	6 Nov ^r 1862	Ex ^r s. of Alex. Douglas	Jacob Sherk	50 acres 1/81. 5. 1/2 of 1/4 Lot 4, con 3	

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TOWNSHIP OF HUMBERSTONE, LOT No. 4 in 3^d Concession from *W. L. MacFarlane page 70*

No. of Abstract	No. of Volume	No. of Instrument	INSTRUMENT	DATE OF RECORD	GRANTOR	GRANTEE	QUANTITY OF LAND	CONSIDERATION OR AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE	REMARKS
11	Q	2299	Lease 8 days	23 days	Andrew Sherk	Trustees of School	1/4 of acre	\$ 00	
324			For 1887	1888		Section 18 of Township 36 North Range 10 East except one lot govt. in Office	School Sect		
12	72	3343	BTD 7 Jan	7 Jan	Peter Sherk	Allen R. Sherk	125 a	\$ 50	
			1888.	1888.			100 ft on 3		
13	R	3344	Lease 7 Jan	7 Jan	Allen R. Sherk	Peter Sherk	Acres	\$ 100	
			1888.	1888.			12.000 9		
14	R	3371	BTD 19 Feb	19 Apr	Jacob S. Remmen	Albert Remmen	20 a	\$ 200	
			1888.	1888.			2 1/2 of 2 1/2		
15	R	3372	BTD 2 Apr	10 Apr	Jacob S. Remmen	Abt Remmen	20 a	\$ 200	
			1888.	1888.			5 1/2 of 2 1/2		
16	O	3394	M 11 May	14 June	Albert Remmen	Geo Grim	20 a	\$ 100	
			1888.	1888.			2 1/2 of 2 1/2		
17	O	3456	Dec 7 Nov	15 Jan	George Grim	Albert Remmen	1/2 of 1/2	\$ 394	
			1888.	1889					
18	O	3560	Lease 27 May	24 July	Andrew Sherk	Peter McLenn	Indiv Div	\$ 50	
			1889	1889			2 1/2		
19	O	3626	Lease 1 June	3 Sept	Allen Sherk	Peter McLenn	125 a		
			1889	1889	Peter Sherk		Andrew		
20	O	3686	Lease 28 May	4 Sept	Abt Remmen	Peter McLenn	20 a		
			1889	1889			Sept 2 1/2		
21	P	3860	Assess 27 June	11 July	Pm Lenn	Pm G. & H. Co	of 3560	1	
			1890	1890			3686. 3626.		
22	R	4117	Lease 14 Aug	3 Sept	George Loe	P. H. G. & Co	Indiv Div	\$ 100	
			1891	1891			1/4 - 1/4 - 1/4		
23	L	4193	Lease 20 Oct	7 Nov	John Loe	P. H. G. & Co	2 1/2 a. 8 1/2	\$ 1	
			1891	1891			2 1/2		
24	R	4494	Lease 23 Nov	2 Dec	Peter Sherk	Pro. H. G. & Co	125 a	\$ 1	
			1892	1892	Allen Sherk		bankrupt 103626		
25	R	4876	Lease 28 Oct	15 Dec	John Loe	Pro. H. G. & Co	125 a	\$ 5	
			1894	1894			8 1/2 1/4 1/4		
26	S	4939	Btd 15 March	27 March	Andrew Sherk	Andrew S. Sherk	Indiv Div	\$ 100	
			1895	1895			125 a		
27	S	4940	Btd 16 March	27 March	Andrew S. Sherk	Andrew S. Sherk	Indiv Div	\$ 100	
			1895	1895			125 a		
28	S	4942	Lease 15 March	27 March	Andrew S. Sherk	Andrew S. Sherk	Indiv Div	\$ 1	
			1895	1895			125 a		
29	S	5373	Btd 2 July	11 July	Andrew S. Sherk	Andrew S. Sherk	Indiv Div	\$ 100	
			1897	1897			125 a		
30	S	5382	Btd 30 July	28 July	Andrew S. Sherk	Andrew S. Sherk	Indiv Div	\$ 100	
			1897	1897			125 a		

TOWNSHIP OF HUMBERSTONE, Lot No. 14 in 3 ^d Concession From Part A 71									
No. of Mortgage	No. of Volume	No. of Instrument	Instrument	Its Date	Date of Registry	GRANTOR	GRANTEE	QUANTITY OF LAND	CONSIDERATION OR AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE
31	5385	35 May 4 March	Pro. Ant. Part A 71	1896	1897	Andrew Stark	Indulcia	2.5 acres	\$1.00
32	5646	15 Jan 27 Jan	Alexander Benner	1898	1898	Samuel S. Carroll	2.5 acres	2.5 acres	\$1.00
33	5587	15 Jan 27 Jan	George Levee	1898	1898	Samuel S. Carroll	2.5 acres	2.5 acres	\$1.00
34	5661	15 Jan 27 Jan	Pro. Ant. Part A 71	1898	1898	Alex Benner	2.5 acres	2.5 acres	\$1.00
35	5658	15 Feb 22 Feb	William Stark	1898	1898	Pro. Ant. Part A 71	2.5 acres	2.5 acres	\$1.00
36	5935	15 Jan 27 Jan	James Stark	1899	1899	Andrew Stark	2.5 acres	2.5 acres	\$1.00
37	6043	15 Jan 27 Jan	James Stark	1899	1899	Andrew Stark	2.5 acres	2.5 acres	\$1.00
38	7136	8 May 11 May	Isaac Hawn	1908	1908	Harvey E. Hawn	2.5 acres	2.5 acres	\$1.00
39	7137	9 May 11 May	Harvey E. Hawn	1908	1908	Harvey E. Hawn	2.5 acres	2.5 acres	\$1.00
40	8400	13 Feb 5 Oct	Albert Benner	1890	1910	John Levee	2.5 acres	2.5 acres	\$1.00
41	8500	14 Feb 16 Feb	Allen R. Sherk	1911	1911	James Hawn	2.5 acres	2.5 acres	\$1.00
42	8501	14 Feb 16 Feb	James Hawn	1911	1911	Allen R. Sherk	2.5 acres	2.5 acres	\$1.00
43	8523	15 March 16 March	Allen R. Sherk	1911	1911	James Hawn	2.5 acres	2.5 acres	\$1.00
44	8524	12 March 16 March	James Hawn	1911	1911	Allen R. Sherk	2.5 acres	2.5 acres	\$1.00
45	8553	20 Apr 27 Apr	Allen R. Sherk	1911	1911	James Hawn	2.5 acres	2.5 acres	\$1.00
46	8554	20 Apr 27 Apr	James Hawn	1911	1911	Allen R. Sherk	2.5 acres	2.5 acres	\$1.00
47	8815	16 Apr 17 Apr	Alfred Benner	1912	1912	B. G. Matthews	2.5 acres	2.5 acres	\$1.00
48	9465	16 Feb 22 Feb	Alfred Benner	1915	1915	Alfred Benner	2.5 acres	2.5 acres	\$1.00
49	9466	15 March 22 March	Harvey E. Hawn	1915	1915	Harvey E. Hawn	2.5 acres	2.5 acres	\$1.00
50	9467	15 March 22 March	Harvey E. Hawn	1915	1915	William E. Hawn	2.5 acres	2.5 acres	\$1.00
51	10015	25 Feb 12 Oct	Alfred Benner	1916	1917	Benjamin Sherk	2.5 acres	2.5 acres	\$1.00

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Appendix 2 1930s Air Photograph



Appendix 3 1979 Heritage Inventory and Assessment Project Contact Prints





Appendix 4 Current Photographs of 5222 Second Concession Road

Taken from <https://youriguide.com/5222-second-concession-rd-port-colborne-on/>





Appendix 5 Bibliography

Anger, Don. *Casper Sherk (1750-1813) and the Story of 'Sherk's Mills': Site of the Antique Power Association*. Port Colborne Historical and Marine Museum, 2004.

History of Education in Port Colborne,