



ENDIANG 750 PEMBERTON ROAD STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

NOVEMBER 2016

DONALD LUXTON
AND ASSOCIATES INC



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE



Address: 750 Pemberton Road, Victoria, British Columbia

Historic Name: *Endiang*

Construction Date: 1900

Original Owner: John and Alice Mara

Architect: William Ridgway-Wilson (attributed)

Description of Historic Place

Endiang, located at 750 Pemberton Road in the Rockland neighbourhood of Victoria, is a large, Foursquare mansion situated on a 0.13-hectare lot. Two and one-half storeys in height, *Endiang* is a grand estate house located in an area of similar mansions, including Government House and Craigdarroch Castle, and is distinguished by its traditional Foursquare architecture, accentuated by a two-storey octagonal tower, angled bays, porches, and original fenestration. A carriage house, designed in a complementary vernacular style, and a backdrop of mature foliage, complete the estate setting.

Heritage Value of Historic Place

Endiang is significant for its association with the turn of the century development of the Rockland neighbourhood of Victoria, its association with the Mara family, and the Foursquare design of the main house and modest vernacular design of the carriage house, attributed to architect William Ridgway-Wilson.

The Rockland neighbourhood began to develop in the 1860s, following first colonial land surveyor Joseph Despard Pemberton's endorsement of the area during his work there in the prior decade. Pemberton eventually owned most of the eastern portion of what is now Rockland, while the western section was subdivided from lands owned by Governor James Douglas. Designed to be a prestigious neighbourhood, Rockland became known as Victoria's "Nob Hill"; its elevated, open landscape offered newcomers spectacular views of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the Olympic Mountains, and the rest of Victoria itself. The wealthy elite commissioned architects to design mansions that would reflect their cultural values. Among the successful early residents was entrepreneur and politician John Mara, who commissioned the construction of the *Endiang* estate in 1899. Popular architects for the area included Samuel Maclure, Francis Rattenbury, John Teague, Thomas Hooper, and William Ridgway-Wilson, to whom design of the *Endiang* estate is attributed. In the 1940s, a wartime housing shortage led to the conversion of many mansions into apartments, a trend that continued into the postwar years; *Endiang* was converted into apartments in 1948.

Endiang was constructed for original owners John and Alice Mara in 1900. John Andrew Mara (1840-1920), originally from Toronto, settled near Kamloops in 1869 and established the first fleet of steamboats in the area. Mara became interested in politics and was a staunch supporter of Confederation. He ran for the first Legislature and was elected in the Kootenay region, and later in Yale. John was Speaker from 1883-86 before being elected to the House of Commons for Yale, remaining until 1896. A frequent visitor to Victoria, John had this house built on a parcel of his wife's family property. John was an active member of the Victoria Board of Trade, Royal Jubilee Hospital, and the Anti-Tuberculosis Society. Alice passed away in 1906, while John continued to live in the house until his death in 1920.

Endiang is valued additionally as an excellent example of Foursquare architecture, expressed through its hipped roof, symmetrical square design, symmetrical hipped-roof dormers, efficient layout and use of natural materials. The Foursquare was created as a reaction to the more ornate Victorian-era styles, and marked a transition to the classically-inspired styles of the Edwardian era. The design of *Endiang* is attributed to local architect, William Ridgway-Wilson, well-known for his boxy Foursquare-style homes. Ridgway-Wilson was born in Hong Kong, China in 1862 and his family moved to England shortly after his birth, where he later trained as an architect. He relocated to Victoria in 1887, and over the course of his long and prolific career, designed numerous and significant institutional, commercial, and residential buildings.

Character-Defining Elements

The elements that define the heritage character of *Endiang* include:

Site:

- large 0.13-hectare property in the centre of the Rockland neighbourhood of Victoria; and
- mature plantings and mature trees.

Main House:

Exterior

- siting in the centre of the property encircled by a formal driveway;
- continuous residential use;
- residential form, scale and massing, as expressed by its two and one-half storey height; full basement; bellcast hipped-roof structure with hipped-roof dormers on all elevations;

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- wood and stone construction including bellcast cedar shingle siding, double-bevelled wooden siding, wooden trim, including dentil and belt coursing, and tuck-pointed granite and sandstone foundations;
- characteristics of the Foursquare style including: its square plan and generally symmetrical elevations; bellcast hipped roof structure with wide eaves and closed soffits and four bellcast hipped-roof dormers with wide eaves and closed soffits;
- transitional Edwardian-era design features such as a two-storey octagonal turret located on the west side of the front (south) elevation; the front elevation features two inset corner porches at its eastern corner each with angled bays, the porch on the first storey features one large robust square corner column clad in double-bevelled siding with a large square capital, while the porch on the second storey features three turned columns with round capitals; recessed front entryway (south elevation) with projecting flat roof, accessed by a flight of west-facing stone steps; and one octagonal bay on the east elevation;
- original wooden-sash windows including: single, paired, and tripartite double-hung windows with multi-paned upper sashes and wooden horns as well as one-over-one double-hung windows; and an elaborate bank of stained glass stairwell windows with Art Nouveau insets on the rear (north) elevation;
- entry wood doors with triple horizontal lights and wooden vestibule doors with large stained glass lights; and
- three towering internal corbelled red brick chimneys;

Interior

- original cedar woodwork of the entrance hall, including wood strapping along the walls, full wood ceiling with herringbone pattern and exposed wood beams;
- original wooden square spiral staircase with wooden turned balustrade and square newel posts with carved caps, and upper level newel posts with dropped carved bases; and
- original hardwood floors and wooden throughout.

Carriage House:

- siting at the rear of the *Endiang* property;
- residential form, scale and massing, as expressed by its one and one-half storey height; side gabled roof structure with large shed roof dormer;
- wood construction including cedar shingle siding and double-bevelled wooden siding on its front and side elevations, and wooden trim, including belt coursing;
- vernacular design including: its rectangular plan; large rooftop cupola with flared cedar shingle clad base, open vents, and bellcast pyramidal roof topped by a finial; and front entryway sheltered by an awning roof and accessed by a small wooden staircase;
- original wooden-sash windows including: multi-pane assemblies, with projecting lintels and sills, on the rear elevation; and
- one internal brick chimney.

RESEARCH SOURCES

Subject Property: 750 Pemberton Road, Victoria, British Columbia

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Directories:

- John Mara not in Names before 1902
- 1901 – J. A. Mara on Pemberton Road, no house numbers
- 1900–01, Henderson's – no Mara on Pemberton
- John Mara not in Streets until 1904

City of Victoria:

Assessments – Section 68, Pt 1, 1 7/10 acre,

- 1902–03: land value \$3,400, improvements \$6,500
- 1904–05: no change

British Columbia Archives:

PR-1651 – John Andrew Mara fonds

- Biographical history – Born in Toronto, John Andrew Mara came to B.C. with the Overlanders in 1862. He was a miner and steamboat owner in the Kamloops area and ultimately became involved in federal and provincial politics, representing Yale from 1871 to 1896.



Carriage House, *Endiang*

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West and south elevations



North elevation

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East Elevation



***Endiang* South Elevation, 1968, Hallmark Society**

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Endiang South and East Elevations, circa 1970s, Hallmark Society



Carriage House, *Endiang*, circa 1950s, Hallmark Society