

SUBURBAN & COUNTRY LIFE SUPPLEMENT

Homes and Gardens of Canada

6—Country Residence of Mrs. Schwartz, Port Hope

By ARTHUR CONRAD

THE possibilities lying inherent in many of the old estates which at one time belonged to leading Canadian families are familiar to most people. Though in a state of decay, their walls crumbling, and their grounds unkempt, it does not require very much outlay to convert them into picturesque modern residences, with all the twentieth century comforts and yet with the charm of a nineteenth century environment. Old farmhouses admit of similar treatment and fortunate is the man who can pick up a piece of country property to-day on which stands one of the old-time homesteads in its setting of wood and stream, and turn it into his country home.

To wealthy Americans, hailing from the large cities of the south, belongs the credit for pointing out to Canadians the possibilities of such treatment in the case of the old family mansions that are to be found here and there throughout old Ontario and the older portions of the Dominion. Purchasing these estates in the first place at a mere song, they have transformed them into fine, modern residences, which are the show-places of the towns where they stand.

An interesting case in point is to be found in the town of Port Hope, where a beautifully situated house, built some thirty or more years ago by a wealthy Torontonian, has passed of late years into the hands of a wealthy Pittsburg lady and has been remodelled by her son in such a way as to make it one of the handsomest residences in the countryside.

A Fine Site.

Standing on a wooded bluff two hundred and fifty feet above the level of the lake and commanding an extensive view, east, west and south for many miles, this house, Hillcrest as it is called, may well lay claim to occupy the finest site on the north shore of Lake Ontario. On three sides the land falls away abruptly, affording unimpaired views of great beauty far over the hills and valleys surrounding Port Hope and out across the blue waters of the lake. The sloping grounds are plentifully covered with oaks and are beautified by walks, drives, a Georgian summer-house, a rustic bridge, etc., while the Corinthian columns of the portico, the white verandahs and the red brick of the house itself lend a cool and charming appearance to the place.

Hillcrest was built originally by the late J. G. Worts, of Toronto, and was presented by him to his daughter on the occasion of her marriage to the late David Smart, of Port Hope. On Mr. Smart's death it remained vacant for some time and then passed through several hands until it came into the possession of its present owner, Mrs. J. E. Schwartz, who now spends most of the year under its roof. Similar fates have befallen many of the old mansions in Port Hope, Cobourg and other lake

towns, the former owners either dying off or their families falling into poor circumstances and being compelled to sell the property.

In its original form, Hillcrest was L-shaped and without any pleasing architectural features. It has now been remodelled in the Georgian style. First a wing was added at the north side to correspond with the south wing and a verandah with Ionic columns was built between the two, forming the east front. Later a north front was made by adding to the west end and erecting a portico of Corinthian columns. All the windows were altered to conform to the Georgian style, as were all the other details of the exterior—cornice, doors, etc.

Apart from the charm of the situation, the main point of interest about Hillcrest is the magnificent collection of antique furniture which it contains, of great variety, value and beauty. Mrs. Schwartz's son, Mr. J. L. Schwartz, is a connoisseur and has

gathered together one of the finest collections in America. Ninety per cent. of the pieces are good American specimens of the eighteenth century. The presence of this furniture in the house harmonizes with the general scheme of decoration and the architectural design.

Entering the east door, the drawing-room is found at the right of the hall and the dining-room to the left. The latter is a room twenty-seven feet in length and sixteen and one-half feet in width. The woodwork is white, as is the general scheme throughout the house, with the exception of the library. The wall paper as shown in the illustration is ivory-white with patterns in green, a copy of a design in an old house in North Carolina. The furniture is principally in the Sheraton style, the chairs, dining table, one side-board and a cellaret belonging to that period; two other side-boards are Hepplewhite, a style harmonizing with the Sheraton. On the side-boards almost all the pieces are genuine old specimens of Georgian silver and Sheffield plate.

The drawing-room measures thirty-six feet by sixteen and a half. It has a large white mantel-piece and window seats at both ends. The woodwork is white and the wall paper a plain rich green, the upholstery and hangings being of the same colouring. The furniture consists of a variety of harmonious designs of the Georgian era. On either side of the fireplace is a large Dresden Mayflower vase, between which stands an old brass fender five and a half feet long.

English Furniture.

The library, reached from the drawing-room, is a magnificent apartment, in shape and style resembling an old Jacobean hall, forty-eight feet long and sixteen and a half feet wide. The woodwork is quartered oak, stained a very dark colour, while the wall covering is a plain rich red; the hangings are of mohair damask of the same colour. Most of the furniture was imported from England, being old pieces of the seventeenth century. A fine olive-wood chest, beautifully carved and dating from the same century, is one of the treasures in this book-lovers' paradise.

The other rooms in the house all follow the colonial style and contain many fine specimens of old furniture.

All along the northern shore of Lake Ontario, notably at Cobourg and Port Hope, there has been an influx of United States citizens looking for country homes. To these wealthy citizens from the warmer regions of the middle and southern States, the Great Lake regions have great attractions. Here they have built summer cottages and country homes—some preferring one class and some another. Some of these families are living here all the year round; others only during the months when the heat is most intense at home.



A COUNTRY HOME, REMODELLED IN GEORGIAN STYLE.
This is the North Front Showing the Added Portico with Corinthian Columns.



The East Front of the Same House—"Hillcrest," Port Hope.