

BRICK ENTRANCE ARCHWAYS
PARKWAY and NIAGARA STREET
WELLAND, ONTARIO

Prepared for City of Welland Heritage Advisory Committee
(Heritage Welland)

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ARCHITECTURE

Style and Construction (Figs.1-3)

This pair of archways marks the entrances to the sidewalks on Parkway off Niagara Street in Welland. They are constructed of “tapestry” brick¹ which likely refers to the pattern of varying colours throughout the brickwork. Each consists of two square brick pillars with a stringcourse (decorative horizontal band) of projecting bricks three rows from the top extending around all sides.

Each set of pillars supports a hipped roof that spans the pillars and covers the sidewalk between the pillars. The roofs are additionally supported by four triangular brackets that rest on the stringcourses of each pillar. These brackets have a slight concave curve on the undersides. Currently the roofs are covered with what appears to be wooden shakes. On the underside of the roof between the pillars of each arch above the sidewalk is a wooden ceiling. (Fig.4)

Age

The archways were completed sometime between January and September of 1913. An article in the local People's Press on January 14th of that year, “Parkway Heights on the Market” gave a detailed description of the entrance with brick pillars and gateway planned for the new Parkway Heights subdivision. Later that year, on September 25th, the Welland Tribune reported that the main entrance to Parkway Heights, “...Welland's choicest residential section...” was through “...the handsome gateway into Parkway Drive...”² It is reasonable to assume that construction of the arches, which were part of a larger gated entrance (see Alterations below) was completed sometime during the summer of 1913.

Architect, Contractor and Builder

The Laughlin Realty Company was owner and developer of the subdivision. The names of the designer and builder contracted by the Realty Company to build the archways are not known at this time. It is known that a “Contractor Mason” built three of the new homes constructed on Parkway that year³ and he may also have constructed the arches and gateway.

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Alterations

The People's Press issue of January 14, 1913 described the planned entrance for the subdivision (note: North Main was later renamed Niagara Street):

A beautiful entrance is planned at the junction of Parkway boulevard and North Main street. It will be built of tapestry brick with tile roofing and wrought iron lights and gateway.⁴

The Welland Tribune later that year reported that the main entrance to the subdivision, which by that time had several new houses built, was "...through the handsome gateway into Parkway Drive..."⁵ If we assume from this reference to a gateway that the entrance feature was built as originally planned, then the alterations over the last century include the loss of the wrought iron gateway across the road, loss of the wrought iron lights on the archway pillars and replacement of the tile roofing with other material, most recently wooden roofing shakes approximately two years ago.⁶

Evidence for the position of the original wrought iron lights may be the holes on the pillars on the Niagara Street side nearest Parkway on both archways about six brick courses from the top (Figs.5 & 6). There is also a wooden patch on the outer pillar on the Niagara Street side of the north archway indicating there may have been something removed (Fig. 6).

The City of Welland owns the archways as they sit on the Parkway Drive road allowance and continues to maintain and repair the brick archways.⁷

Condition

Aside from the losses described above, the archways appear to be in reasonably good condition.

HISTORY

Event

The archways that mark the entrance to Parkway were constructed as part of a new subdivision called "Parkway Heights" (Plan 598), developed by Laughlin Realty in 1913. When the subdivision plan was approved the property was owned by C.E. Laughlin, C.J. Laughlin and Laughlin Realty (Figs. 11-12). As part of the development, the company also extended the street railway all the way down Niagara (then called North Main) to the new subdivision.⁸

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Welland Historical Society's publication What's In a Name describes Parkway Heights as "... an "elite" development, with a boulevard down the centre of Parkway Drive, and brick arches over the sidewalk on Niagara Street. This is where many of Welland's prominent industrialists, business people and merchants lived." Parkway Drive was named for the subdivision. This street was known as the "showplace" of its day.⁹ A front page article that appeared in The Peoples Press on January 14, 1913 when lots in the subdivision went on sale¹⁰ described the subdivision plans in glowing terms:

**PARKWAY HEIGHTS
ON THE MARKET**

Sale Opens Thursday—Beautiful Subdivision in Ward 6

Real estate opportunities in Welland have come and gone, but there is still one opportunity to come and that is Parkway Heights. This is the beautiful subdivision owned by the Laughlin Realty Co. in Ward 6, and it will be put on the market on Thursday next, January 16th. For residential purposes this gives excellent promise of being the most valuable land in Welland.

Parkway Heights is all situated inside the corporation limits where sewers, waterworks, electric lights, and street railway service are available. As all old residents know this is located at the highest point in the town of Welland and is destined to be Welland's residential section.

Restrictions are placed on the property fixing the distance that houses must be built from the street, and also the minimum cost of houses. This is done solely to enhance the value of the property.

The streets are all well graded and the land laid out and surveyed to conform with and take advantage of the natural beauty of the property. Parkway boulevard is 75 feet wide and a 20 ft. parkway runs through the centre of the avenue with a roadway on either side. This parkway takes in a row of beautiful old trees that could not be placed there now.

There is an alley in the rear of each lot to take care of all sewer and water pipes, telephones and electric light poles, etc., and the streets here will have no unsightly objects which are so much in evidence in other parts of the town.

A beautiful entrance is planned at the junction of Parkway boulevard and North Main street. It will be built of tapestry brick with tile roofing and wrought iron lights and gateway.

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Similar praise came from the press after the development was well under way, and an article (reproduced in entirety below) in the Welland Tribune in September of 1913 describing it as a "...tempting residential spot..." and "...Welland's choicest residential section..."¹¹

1913 \$1 a Year. [Canada or Great Britain]

STREET RAILWAY EXTENSION TO NORTH WARD BEING RUSHED

Line Out North Main Street and Through Parkway Heights Will be Finished Before Snow Flies

The Laughlin Realty Co., which has been selling hundreds of lots in the beautiful Parkway Heights subdivision during the past year, commenced this week the construction of the street railway from West Main street out to and through Parkway.

The line branches off West Main at North Main, and follows North Main to Elm street, thence west along Elm to Edgar street, thence north along Edgar street to Norway street, and thence west to the Industrial Home.

The N.W. & L.E. Railway company have concentrated their entire construction gang on the work, and expect to have it completed before winter.

Parkway Heights, which is Welland's choicest residential section, is rapidly being improved by the company.

The main entrance is through the handsome gateway into Parkway Drive, which is going to be a delightful drive, with its thirty foot roadway on each side and fifteen foot park down the centre, lined with fine large shade trees.

Besides the hundreds of good old trees in the park, the company has set out hundreds of young maples, which are growing nicely and all of which are protected with wooden guards.

The company would not allow any unsightly poles to be placed on Parkway Drive, and consequently the Hydro wires are strung on the same neat class of steel poles as are used for the trolley wires on East Main street.

Contractor Mason has just completed the construction of three handsome residential houses on Parkway, and Engineer Cummings has also recently finished his home built on the same drive. These four residences, together with Mr. C.J. Laughlin's picturesque home, make Parkway already a tempting residential spot, with its graded streets and concrete walks.

When the Laughlin Realty Co. put the Parkway Heights subdivision on the market last spring, they stated that the street railway would be extended into the subdivision within a year, and in building this extension the company are carrying out the point on which they pride themselves most, and that is NEVER TO MAKE A PROMISE THAT THEY DO NOT CARRY OUT.

Persons

The Price family

The original farm that became the Parkway Heights subdivision was owned by Adam Spencer, who may have constructed the farm house on the property (now 165 Edgar Street) as early as 1850. In 1870 the house and farm passed to James H. Price, descendant of a Welsh U. E. Loyalist family. Price came to Thorold Township about 1800. During the War of 1812 he built transport ships and in the 1837 rebellion served with the militia. He was a Welland Town Councillor and Reeve, on the County Agricultural Society executive and a

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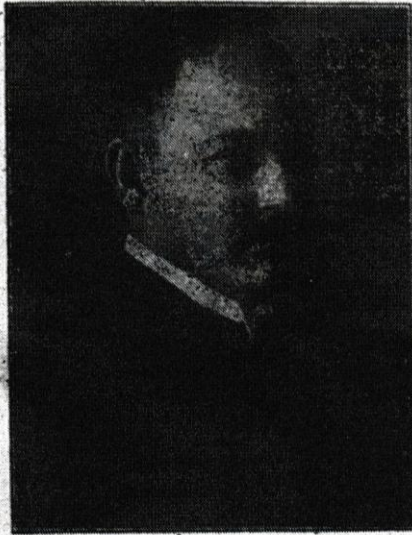
Welland magistrate for over 30 years. Another early member of the family, Harmon Price, was also a magistrate.

The Price farm extended all the way to the Welland River. The family also owned a large sugar plantation in the West Indies. James and Adelaide Price's children sold the farm to American real estate developer and president of Laughlin Realty, Cyrenius Laughlin in 1910.¹²

Cyrenius J. Laughlin

Parkway Heights was owned and developed as a subdivision by the Laughlin Realty Company whose President was Cyrenius J. Laughlin. C.J. Laughlin was known as a "town builder". The People's Press reprinted an article about him from the "Realty Review" on the front page of its December 17, 1912, reproduced below :

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C. J. LAUGHLIN, Jr., "TOWN BUILDER."

(From the Realty Review.)

With an unshakable belief in the potential future of Welland; sustained by years of experience in community development, C. J. Laughlin, Jr., president of the Laughlin Realty Co., has played an all-important part in the wonderful growth of the "Canal City" as an industrial and residential centre.

It is an inspiration to any man to study Mr. Laughlin at close range. His physical bigness, his keen power of perception, his genial disposition, and other sterling qualities clearly indicate that he is the right man in the right place.

Like all big men, Mr. Laughlin is modestly personified, when it comes to talking of himself, and it was only by intimating that a recital of his early experiences in the realty field might benefit others, that he was induced to describe how, as a railway clerk in a small Ohio town, he had sold his one cherished possession, a horse and buggy, in order to purchase fifty feet of land, and had then borrowed enough money to erect two small houses on his property, from the sale of which he had realized a substantial profit, substantial enough as he expressed it, to equal an entire year's salary.

The success of Mr. Laughlin's first venture aroused his progressive spirit and, resigning his position as railway clerk, he determined to devote his energies to realty development. How well he carried out his resolution is attested to by his activities in Florida, Ohio, Connecticut, Wash-

ington, California, and other American States, which had earned for him his reputation as a "Town-Builder" before he came to Canada.

It means something to any community to have attracted a type of man such as this realty expert, whose one dominating policy is to make money for his clients through the development and selling of high-class subdivisions only; a feature which is very much in evidence in Welland, as was observed by the writer, and it is of more than passing interest to note the absence of brass band methods in connection with the unprecedented growth which has marked the development of Welland, a growth by the way, which Mr. Laughlin himself thinks remarkable, as he states that never in his experience can he recall an instance when industrial and general community development has been so pronounced as in Welland.

As a producer of results C. J. Laughlin, Jr., has proven an invaluable asset to Welland. The Metal Chemicals Co., one of Welland's largest industries, located there through his efforts, and he has been instrumental in bringing other large plants to town.

The local trolley service stands as a monument to his activities. He has stimulated interest in civic pride and has brought to the city a goodly percentage of its population. His associates in the Laughlin Realty Company, of which he is president, are among the largest manufacturers of Canada.

After purchasing the property from the Price family, in 1911 C. J. Laughlin "renovated, reconstructed, repaired and improved" the original Price farm house at 165 Edgar Street for his family to reside in.

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Daniel Lathrop

In 1923 Daniel W. and Hildegard Lathrop moved into 165 Edgar Street and it remained in the Lathrop family for the next forty years. Daniel Lathrop was born in Jackson, Mich. And came to Welland as the first manager of the Atlas Crucible Steel Company.¹³

Vernon's Town of Welland Directory for 1915 directory lists two other early residents of the Parkway Heights subdivision with houses on Parkway: George T. Wright, proprietor of the Quality Bakery on River Road West, who resided four lots west of Niagara Street (then Main Street North) and Ebenezer Carnegie, Vice President and General Manager of the Electric Steel and Metals Co. Ltd. in Crowland, who lived on the north side of Parkway just west of Edgar Street.¹⁴

Context

The Parkway Heights subdivision came into being during a period of rapid growth and industrial development for Welland between 1905 and 1915. The first large multinational industry to come to Welland and Crowland, Plymouth Cordage, located a branch plant here in 1905. This was followed closely by the Electric Steel and Metals Co. Ltd. in 1907, Page Hersey Iron Tubes and Lead Company in 1909 and Union Carbide in 1914.

Established in 1907, the Electric Steel and Metals Co. Ltd., later known as the Electro Metallurgical, was a major Welland industry that flourished until the end of the century. It produced the first ferroalloys and electrodes in Canada.¹⁵ As noted above, one of the early residents on Parkway Drive was Ebenezer Carnegie, Vice President and General Manager of the Electric Steel and Metals Company.

Setting

The presence of these archways in this location has been important to establishing and maintaining the character of the Parkway Heights area for more than 100 years.

Landmark

For over 100 years these archways have been a landmark at the junction of Parkway and Niagara Street that is not replicated anywhere else in the streetscapes of the City.

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INTEGRITY

Site

The archways occupy their original site and have not been moved.

Ownership

The archways sit on the road allowance of Parkway and are owned by the City of Welland.¹⁶

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Figures 1 & 2. South and north archways looking toward Parkway from Niagara Street. (Photos N. Reid Oct. 8, 2016)



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Figure 3. South archway looking toward Niagara Street. (Photo N. Reid Oct. 8, 2016)



Figure 4. South archway wood ceiling. Photo N. Reid Oct. 8, 2016

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Figure 5 South archway Photo N. Reid Oct. 8, 2016



Figure 6 North archway Photo N. Reid Oct. 8, 2016

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Figure 7. South archway. Photo N. Reid Oct. 8, 2016



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Figure 10 North archway Photo N. Reid Oct. 8, 2016

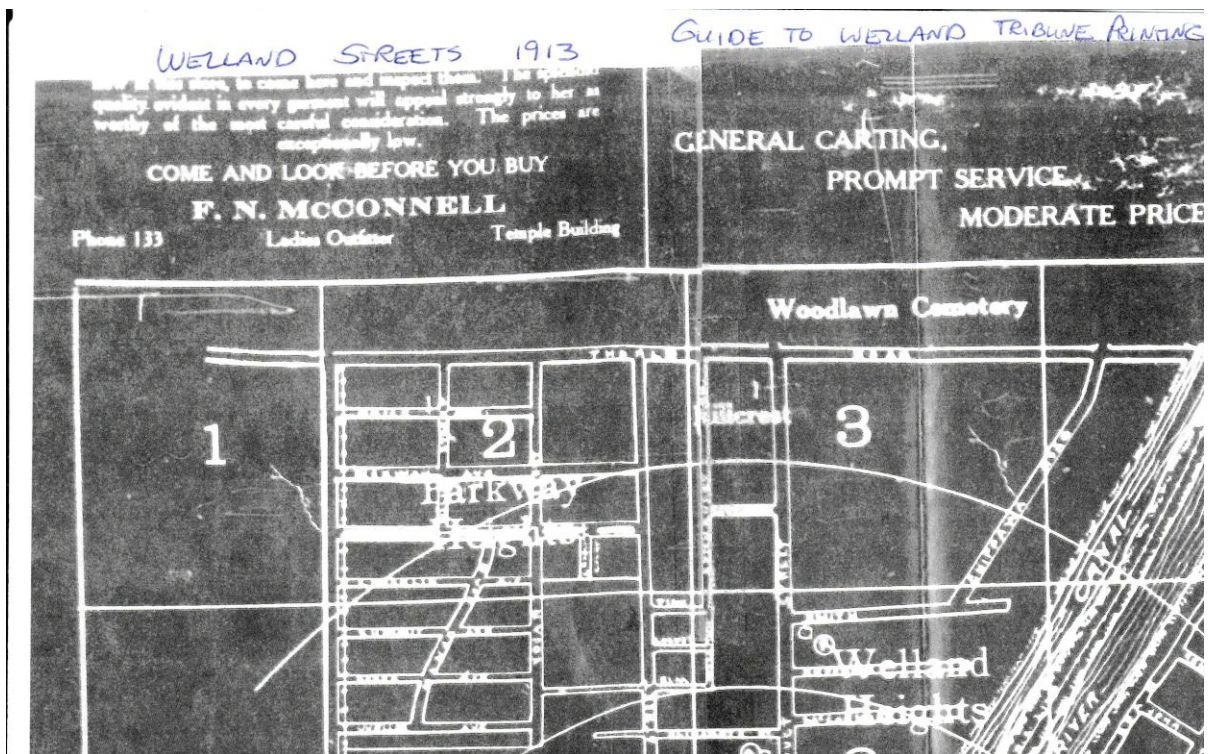


Figure 11 Parkway Heights Subdivision from Welland Streets 1913. Guide to Welland, Tribune Printing Co. 1913

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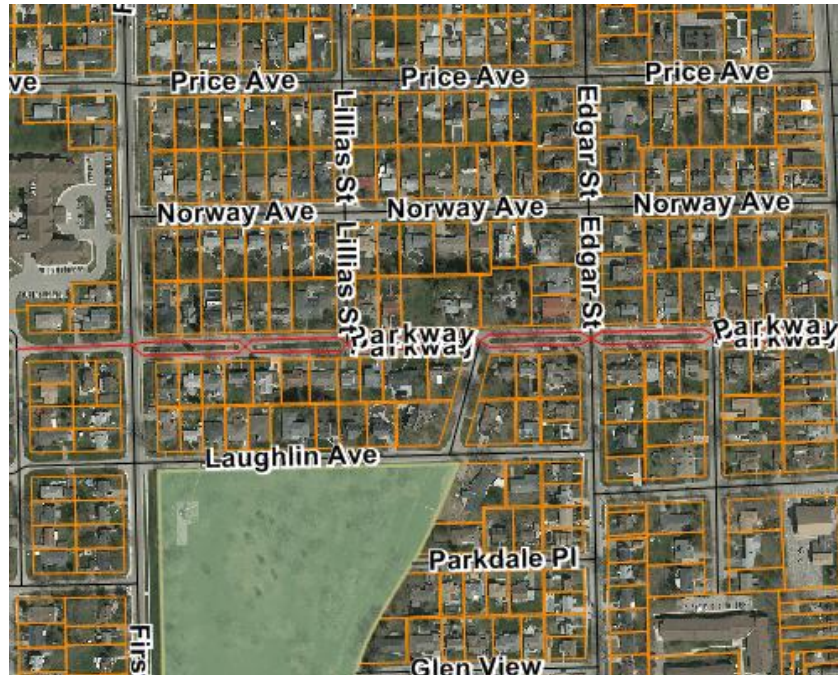


Figure12. Current map of Parkway Heights area. City of Welland website, 2016.

References

¹ "Parkway Heights on the Market", The Peoples Press, Welland ON, Tuesday January 14, 1913, p.1

² "Parkway Heights on the Market" People's Press, Jan. 14, 1913.

"Street Railway Extension to North Ward Being Rushed", Welland Tribune, Thursday September 25, 1913, p.1

³ "Street Railway Extension to North Ward Being Rushed" Welland Tribune, September 25, 1913

⁴ "Parkway Heights on the Market" People's Press, Jan. 14, 1913.

⁵ "Street Railway Extension to North Ward Being Rushed" Welland Tribune, September 25, 1913

⁶ Interview, Jerry Boc, Manager of Public Works, City of Welland, Feb. 27, 2017

⁷ Interview, Jerry Boc, Manager of Public Works, City of Welland, April 3, 2017

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⁸ "Street Railway Extension to North Ward Being Rushed" Welland Tribune, September 25, 1913

⁹ Welland Historical Society What's In a Name. The Origins of the Street Names for the City of Welland (2004), p. 43.

¹⁰ "Parkway Heights on the Market" People's Press, Jan. 14, 1913

¹¹ "Street Railway Extension to North Ward Being Rushed" Welland Tribune, September 25, 1913

¹² Theo Fortner, "Street Names of Welland" monograph, Welland Library, circa 1958.

Research from Nora Reid for Welland Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee Heritage House Tour 2001.

¹³ See note 12.

¹⁴ Henry Vernon and Sons, Directory of the Town of Welland 1915, various.

¹⁵ Electro Metals History, Welland Public Library website.

¹⁶ Further to investigation done by City of Welland engineering dept. as to location of archways vis a vis road allowances for Niagara Street (Regional Road) and Parkway Drive. From Jerry Boc, Manager of Public Works, City of Welland, March 2017.