Wilcock Farmhouse
Built 1892 by William Wilcock
734048 West Back Line, Ceylon
Map Link: http://goo.gl/maps/jMF1P
(private residence)

History: Upon arriving 1871 from Yorkshire, England, William Wilcock purchased 3rd Conc. lots 158/159 from William K. Flesher, an early settler and entrepreneur for whom Flesherton is named and whom Wilcock had known “back home”. Flesher had paid $500 to H. Moore, Wilcock paid $600, some of which he recouped when Flesher paid $322 in 1892 for rights to a flume to provide water from Wilcock Lake for the mills in Flesherton. In 1872, Wilcock married 16 year old Catharine Bentham and took her to live in his log cabin. By 1876, he added lots 160/161 to his holdings. Their typically large farm-family of nine children eventually outgrew the cabin, leading to the 1892 construction of the large stone house. The original log cabin remained attached to the back and was used as a woodshed, until converted to a sunroom in 1976. After William’s death in 1916, Catherine sold the farm. By 1926 the land was owned by Luther Duckett who farmed it for almost 40 years. In 1948 he sold off waterfront lots for $4800 around what is now called Wilcox Lake. In 1963 the remaining farm acreage and rather dilapidated house was purchased by the Matthew & Pippa Gaasenbeek who lovingly restored the building and have carefully maintained the property ever since.

Architecture: The generously proportioned fieldstone house is typical Ontario Gothic, with high-peaked gables adding much needed headroom to the upstairs rooms in the storey-and-a-half structure. The decorative gingerbread trim along eaves and bracketing porch pillars is a reproduction using local patterns. Although this sort of trim should have been part of the original design, it is unknown if any ever existed. The T-shaped floor plan is not common to Gothic farmhouses but Wilcock probably needed the space for his large family, so in true Victorian fashion he borrowed the design for Victorian era brick farmhouses while maintaining his preference for Gothic appearance and detailing. The construction is of double fieldstone walls filled between with rubble. The exterior wall is of “ashlar” construction i.e. a mason squared off the stones. In a 1974 book by Jean Brownbridge, the house is pictured with no veranda but the author speculated there was evidence that at least one had existed. The two present verandas are reasonably styled replicas and are located where the structure indicates a veranda was planned.