

# Advisory Committee of Council Information Report



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Committee	Heritage Guelph
Date	Monday, May 6, 2024
Subject	<b>19 Fountain Street West: Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report</b>

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## Executive Summary

### Key Findings

19 Fountain Street West is listed as a non-designated built heritage resource in the City of Guelph’s Municipal Register of Cultural Heritage Properties under Part IV, Section 27 of the Ontario Heritage Act. This report has determined that the property meets four of the prescribed criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest, according to Ontario Regulation 9/06. The heritage attributes of 19 Fountain St W display design or physical value, historical or associative value, and contextual value.

## Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report

### Location

The subject property is located at 19 Fountain Street West, south of Gordon St, east of Nottingham St, and north of Dublin St. The legal description is Part Lot 173, Plan 8, AS IN RO786757; GUELPH. The subject property is located within the territory covered by Treaty No. 3 of 1792, negotiated between the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and the British Crown, and within long established traditional hunting grounds of Six Nations of the Grand River.

Figure 1 ArcGIS Map of 19 Fountain Street West.



## Background

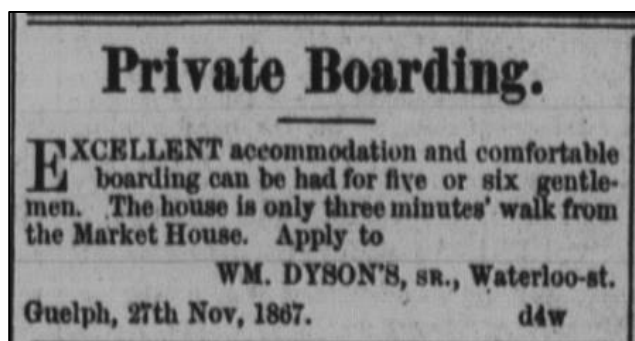
The house at 19 Fountain is a rare, unique, and early example of a stone residence built in the vernacular style with a façade clad in Flemish bond, red brick. The property possesses direct and well-documented historical association with William Dyson, who played a significant role in the early development of Guelph.

William Dyson was born in Yorkshire, England in 1808 and emigrated to Guelph with his parents and brothers in 1833, just six years shy of Guelph's founding by John Galt and the Canada Company (Attachment 1, Figure 21). William Dyson was, among other things, a carriagemaker, an innkeeper, and a miller. Dyson's impact on Guelph's history extended beyond the subject property. In 1841, Dyson built Preasant's Mill, later called Victoria Mills, which has the distinction of being Guelph's first flouring mill. Additionally, Dyson is credited with the construction of the Red Lion Inn on the corner of Fountain St W and Gordon Street. The Inn bore many names throughout history: the Dyson Building, the Suffolk Hotel, the Red Lion Tavern/Inn, and, most recently, the "Fountain Hotel/Apartments/House" (Attachment 1, Figure 23 and 24). The Inn was an important feature in the community, and multiple sources corroborate that the magistrate court leased a portion of the Inn until the completion of the courthouse on Woolwich Street (Attachment 1, Figure 23 and 24).

The house at 19 Fountain St W (formerly Waterloo Street) likely dates from the mid-1850s, as William acquired the lot in 1855. Additionally, the building's façade is constructed of bricks produced by William Dyson's brother Joseph, who owned Guelph's first brickmaking business and was active in the mid-nineteenth century. Joseph was one of the first brickmakers in Guelph and was involved in the building of the Victoria Mill, the Red Lion Inn, Stone's Store and numerous other buildings. There are very few remaining buildings constructed using Dyson brick, as the brick contained too many lime particles and deteriorated quickly. Remaining buildings constructed of Dyson brick include 1 Waterloo Avenue, 26 Wilson Street, and 355 Woolwich Street, each showcasing distinct Flemish bond construction with jack arch head lintels in coursed brick, suggesting construction by the same mason.

Dyson's primary profession was a carriagemaker, and his workshop was located between 19 Fountain St W and the Red Lion Inn. A Guelph Mercury article from September 12, 1867 notes that "Dyson's wagon shop was wrapped in devouring flames. The building was a rough-cast one, erected on a stone foundation..." (Attachment 1, Figure 23). The article details that Dyson had no insurance on the building or its contents, and the fire represented a loss of \$2000, an immense sum in the mid-nineteenth century. It appears that around this time, Dyson began renting 19 Fountain St W and relocated to a house at the corner of Paisley and Glasgow Streets. Dyson died in July 1881, and his obituary describes that he withdrew from business soon after the fire at his carriage shop due to "softening of the brain" (Attachment 1, Figure 21).

Figure 4 [Guelph Mercury boarding advertisement](#), with William Dyson as contact.



## Building Description

The subject property is a one and a half storey stone and red brick detached residential dwelling with a modern rear addition. The subject property embodies the Victorian vernacular style. It is characterized by a square footprint sitting upon a stone foundation with a side-gabled roof. The front dormer is positioned in the center of the roof, in-line with the front entrance. The central entry door is topped by a transom window. The entrance is flanked by a tall rectangular single-sash windows with stone sills and jack arch heads in coursed brick. There is a Queen Anne style porch with an inverse descending staircase. This porch is not original to the subject property based on fire insurance plans and construction materials. There is a rear addition on the subject property clad in vinyl siding.

The most significant architectural feature of the property is the red brick façade, which is of Flemish bond construction. This style is mainly characterized by the use of alternating stretcher and header bricks, which serves both structural and design purposes. The brick is presumed to be interlocked with the stone siding, underscoring the structural integrity of the property. The side elevations to the east and west are rubble stone walls, constructed with a pink-tinted mortar likely intended to match the red brick.

In its original form, the subject property featured a wraparound veranda on its front and east side, visible in the 1881 FIP (Attachment 1, Figure 11). The removal of the veranda was likely motivated to create space for a laneway after the advent of the automobile. The former east-facing door entering the veranda has since been turned into a window.

## Statement of Significance

The subject property is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act because it meets four of the nine prescribed criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest, according to Ontario Regulation 9/06 as amended by Ontario Regulation 9/06. The heritage attributes of 19 Fountain Street West display: design/physical, historical/associative, and contextual value.

## Design/Physical Value

The subject property meets Criterion 1 because it is rare, early, and unique example of a mid-nineteenth century stone and brick residential dwelling in the City

of Guelph. It is particularly unique and rare due to the façade, which displays an early red brick produced in Guelph, of which there are very few extant examples.

The subject property meets Criterion 2 because it exhibits a high degree of craftsmanship in the stone masonry and Flemish bond construction of the brick façade.

### **Historical Associative Value**

The subject property meets Criterion 4 because it has direct associations with William Dyson, an early Guelph settler who made significant contributions to the development of Guelph. Dyson is directly associated with the property, as it served as his primary residence and was located in close proximity to the Red Lion Inn and his carriage shop.

### **Contextual Value**

The subject property meets Criterion 8 because it is physically, functionally, visually, and historically linked to its surroundings. The subject property is linked to 'the Red Lion Inn' at 11 Fountain Street West, which was constructed, owned, operated by William Dyson. The Inn was constructed of the same red brick, which is why Dyson named it the "Red Lion Inn."

### **Attachments**

Attachment-1 Historical Documentation and Photos

Attachment -2 Current Photographs

### **Report Author**

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