

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF OAKVILLE

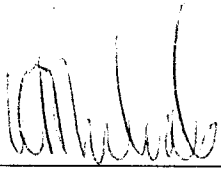
BY-LAW 1994-176

A by-law to designate 76 Thomas Street as a property of historical, architectural, and contextual value and interest.

THE COUNCIL ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. The property municipally known as 76 Thomas Street is hereby designated as a property of historical, architectural, and contextual value and interest pursuant to the Ontario Heritage Act for reasons set out in Schedule "A" to this by-law.
2. The property designated by this by-law is the property described in Schedule "B" attached to this by-law.

Passed by Council this 21st day of November, 1994.



MAYOR


CLERK

SCHEDULE "A" TO BY-LAW 1994-176

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The house at 76 Thomas Street was built in 1870 by John Williams, a successful innkeeper in Oakville. John Williams originally came to Oakville in the 1840's as a mariner. He was later joined by his younger brother Hirham, who would later make a successful career for himself on the lakes as the Captain of the 175 ton ship the Dauntless, and Commodore of the Doty Ferry Line in Toronto Harbour.

John Williams eventually gave up his career on the lakes in 1852 to become the proprietor of the Oakville House Hotel, located on the north-east corner of Navy and Colbourn Streets (Lakeshore Road East). His sailing career served him well, however, as his hotel became popular with sailors and farmers alike.

According to Hazel Chisholm Matthews in her book, *Oakville and the Sixteen*:

"When he took over the Oakville House, he informed his customers that he would be happy to cater to their appetites. His money, mostly in silver, he kept in a pint measure behind the bar, as drivers of grain wagons were also accustomed to entrust to him large sums of grain money for safekeeping over night. Williams had a number of secret caches about the hotel. Improved methods of transportation seemed to have rendered Oakville's hotel facilities inadequate, for at the time of the opening of the railway in December, 1855, a traveller wrote to the Sentinel: "There is one thing much needed, which is a good building for a hotel." John Williams forthwith supplied this need by building two hotels, one close to the railway, and the other on Navy Street. The Railway Station Hotel, situated south-east of the station, was a type of building popular from early times for hotels and taverns in this section of the province. It was a roughcast building in the shape of a wedge, with the bar entrance on the east point of the wedge. When they went to the city, farmers could leave their teams in the long sheds adjoining the building on the west. Williams soon sold this establishment and there followed a long line of proprietors, most of whom ran it in conjunction with other hotels in the town, until about 1923. After being closed for some years, the building was used as a storage house by a wine factory. When it was demolished in 1935, the heavy timbers fastened with wooden pegs were used in the construction of another house.

Following the trend toward large brick buildings, Williams erected the Canadian Hotel upon the site of Captain Boylan's dwelling at the south-east corner of Navy and Robinson Streets. This hotel, which had twenty-one bedrooms, many of them only about six feet square, and four parlours, opened "to receive travellers" on December 15, 1857.

Williams had provided for the care of his patrons' valuables by building next to the cellar stairway a row of cupboards which were hidden by hollow panels and almost impossible to detect. He ran the Canadian Hotel until 1867, when he sold it to James Teetor for \$2,005.00. Taking over the Oakville House once more, Williams remained there until he retired about 1875."

John Williams and his wife Margaret purchased the property at 76 Thomas Street in 1862 from George King Chisholm, oldest son of Oakville's founder, Colonel William Chisholm, and the first Mayor of Oakville. For most of their years in Oakville, John and Margaret Williams most likely lived in the hotels they were proprietors of.

The profits from the sale of the Canadian Hotel (Murray House), however, enabled the Williams to erect their fine brick house on the corner of Thomas and Robinson Streets. In 1874, the house was sold to the daughter of John and Margaret Williams, Mary Elizabeth. Soon after, Mary married Frederick W. Doty, a member of the Doty family, which owned and operated the Oakville Storm Engine and Machine Works. Mary and Frederick Doty lived at 76 Thomas Street for six years, but in 1880, the house was sold back to John and Margaret Williams.

John spent the last four years of his life at 76 Thomas Street before passing away in 1884. The widowed Margaret Williams soon sold the property at 76 Thomas Street in November of 1884 to George Halen and his wife. The property was sold again in 1891 to William Herbert Carson. William H. Carson was a builder and contractor, who in 1879 converted the Oakville Steam Cabinet factory on Trafalgar Road into a planing mill, which he conducted for some thirty years. The business was known as Carson and Sons Planing Mill.

The house was sold again in 1894 to Mary Anne Smith, a widow. Mrs. Smith died in 1899, and in 1900 the house was sold to James and Sarah Hunter. The Hunters owned the property for over fifty years. During this time, a long-time occupant of the house was Nellie Hunter. As a result, the house is known today by many old Oakville residents as "The Nellie Hunter House".

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The house at 76 Thomas Street is a large brick and frame residence. The building is a good example of the late Victorian, highly decorative style. The asymmetrical plan, tall proportions, elaborate moldings and imbrication, all combine to achieve a highly picturesque effect.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The house at 76 Thomas Street is a building with a great deal of contextual significance. According to the Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District Plan (which was amended to exclude those houses set back less than one lot from Robinson Street), the house at 76 Thomas Street is "a key building which forms an important corner feature", and the large house and trees form a gateway into the residential district.

s:\amidata\by-laws\1994-176.sam

SCHEDULE "B" TO BY-LAW 1994-176

All and singular, that certain parcel or tract of land and premises situate, lying and being in the Town of Oakville, in the Regional Municipality of Halton, more specifically described as Part of Lot C, in Block No. 13, Town of Oakville, according to Registered Plan No. 1, more particularly described as Part 1 on Reference Plan Number 20R-5893, Registry Office for the Registry Division of Halton (No. 20).