

Heritage Property Research Report



Source: <https://www.mississauga.ca/apps/#/property/view/heritage>

822 Clarkson Rd. South

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For: Heritage Planning and Indigenous Relations

Culture Division

July 2023

Executive Summary

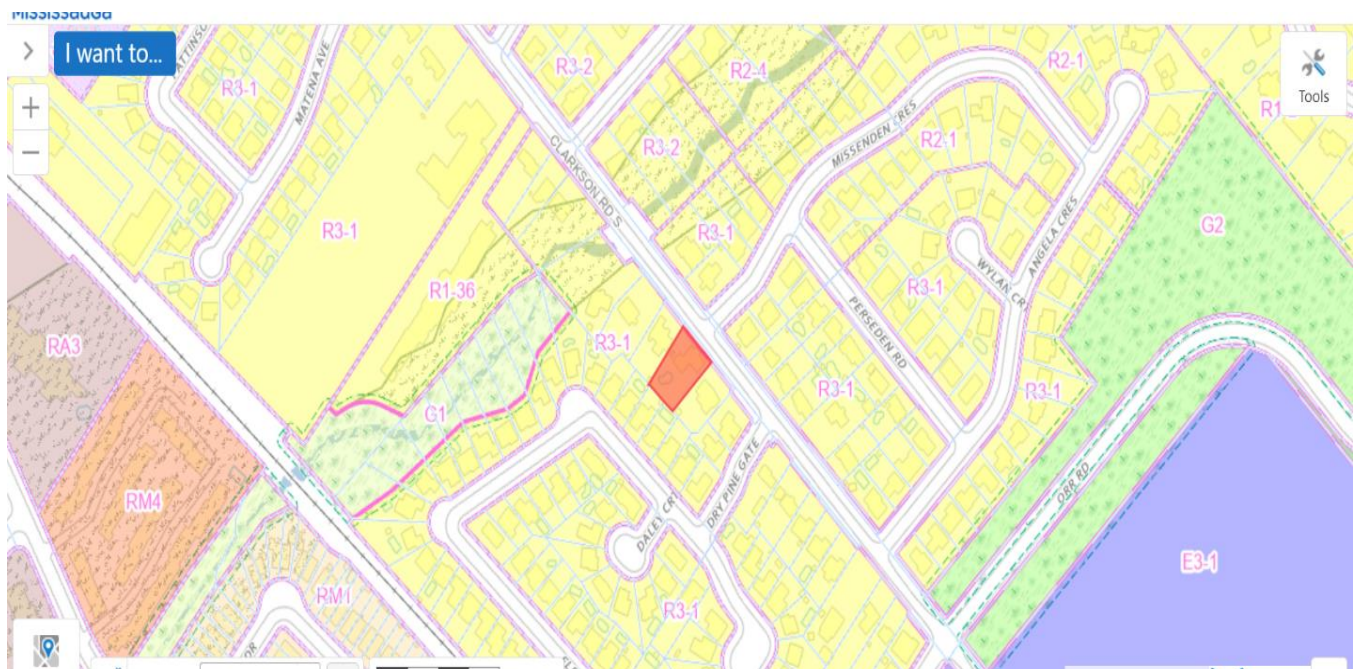
- The house was built for Russell Bush in 1835 to serve as an inn for travelers journeying between Toronto and Hamilton.
- Bush's Inn reflects the English Tudor Manor style.
- The property is significant for its connections to early Clarkson settlers such as the Merigold, Sutherland, and Harris families; it was also the site of Clarkson's first strawberry farm.
- It merits designation under the Ontario Heritage Act because of its architectural and contextual value.

Introduction

This report examines the history, architecture, and genealogical connections of the property at 822 Clarkson Road South and considers its designation as a heritage site under the criteria prescribed by the Province of Ontario in Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. The property was listed on the heritage inventory in 1982.

Property Description

The house is a single-family, detached, two storey structure with a single-storey addition to the north rear. It is situated on a clear lot above a slight valley on Clarkson Road. It is located south of Lakeshore Road West and north of Orr Road.



Source: <http://www6.mississauga.ca/missmaps/#map=18/-8863127.9/5390370.48/0>

Relevant Historical Timeline

Date	Event
1808	Thomas Merigold receives a land grant of 400 acres which includes Lot 29, Concession 3
1835	Russell Bush purchases 20 acres of land from Amos Merigold for £100 and builds one of the first inns in Clarkson
1855	The Great Western Railway was built between Toronto and Hamilton
1855	Bush sells 20 acres to Edward Sutherland for £650 who establishes a strawberry farm on the property
1861	Sutherland sells the property to Charles Magrath
1868	Charles Magrath sells the inn to Robert Orr
1870	Robert Orr sells the property to Joseph Orr for \$1480
1889	Joseph Orr gives the property to his son, Andrew Orr
1910	Andrew Orr sells 20 acres to Andrew Westervelt and Percy Hodgetts in 1910. The two men tossed a coin to see which part of the property they would get; Westervelt won the side with the inn
1944	Avice Westervelt sells to George Ethel Bonter
1946	Carolyn Dayley buys the property; the Dayleys subdivide the property
1955	Muriel Williams buys the inn which now sits on one acre of land
1956	Murray and Joan Thom move into the house with their five children; they do some restoration work throughout the home
1975	Hubert and Katherine Thom take over the house
1979	William and Janet Woods purchase the home from the Thoms

Thomas Merigold

Concession 3, Lot 29 was originally a Crown grant given to Thomas Merigold, a United Empire Loyalist with The Loyalist Regiment of New Jersey Volunteers. In 1783, he was transported along with his regiment to New Brunswick where he was granted land on the Saint John River in an area known as Kingsclear.

In 1808, Thomas Merigold moved to Upper Canada in hopes of providing better opportunities to his ten children. On April 13, 1808, he and his wife Elizabeth Ansley sold his land in New Brunswick for £200 to George Ludlow Jr.

Upon arriving in Toronto Township, Merigold was granted 400 acres of land. 324 acres were located at Lot 29 and Broken Front and Broken Lot 24 in Concession 3, south of Dundas Street. In order to make up the remaining 76 acres, he was offered small broken lots that were difficult to access because of a lack of developed roadways. Merigold ultimately relinquished his claim to

Broken Lot 24 and in exchange requested Lot 30 which was west of his original grant. In 1818, he was granted the north end of Lot 29, Concession 3 which made up the remainder of his grant (76 acres).

Thomas Merigold died on May 25th, 1827 and was buried at Springcreek Cemetery. His son, Amos*, acted as his executor and sold off parts of his father's original land grant. Among the land he sold was 20 acres of Lot 29, Concession 3 to Russell Bush and his wife. The land was sold for £100 on November 7, 1835.

* Amos and his wife, Nancy Merigold, are connected to William F. Cody, a.k.a. Buffalo Bill (famous for founding and performing in "Buffalo Bill's Wild West" show). Nancy Merigold's (nee Cody) father, Philip Cody, was William's grandfather.

Russell Bush

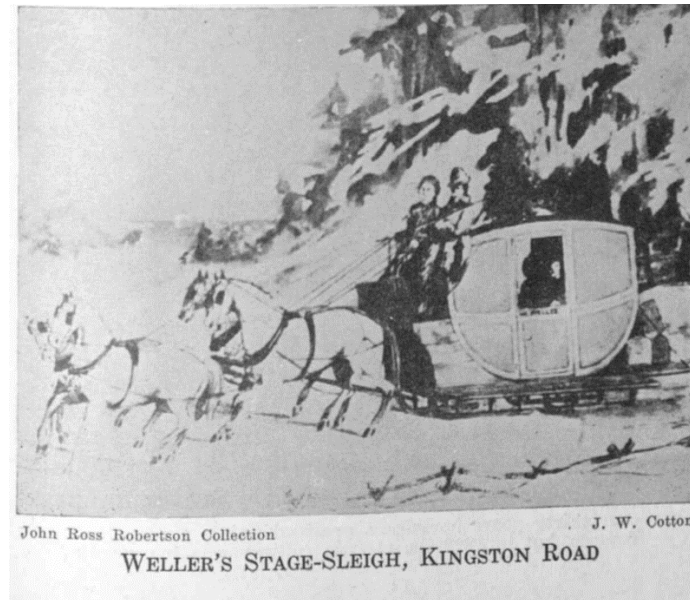
Russell Bush was born in Greenfield, Massachusetts on April 2, 1803. In 1827, he immigrated to Canada and settled in Beamsville, Ontario. Here, he married Mary Stilwell in 1831. In 1835, Russell purchased 20 acres of land from Amos Merigold for £100 and built one of the first inns in the Clarkson area. The land on which the inn was built (Concession 3, Lot 29) was part of a wagon trail that was referred to as Merigold Road (now Clarkson Rd. S.).

His inn, named Bush's Inn, served as a stop for stagecoach travelers going between Toronto and Hamilton via Lakeshore Road. In order to avoid deep ravines in the area, stagecoach drivers used the above-mentioned wagon trail on the west side of the Credit River past Bush's Inn to access Lakeshore Road. As such, the inn was situated in an ideal spot for traveling coaches. Indeed, William Weller's Stage Coach Line made frequent stops at Bush's Inn to change horses and provide passengers with refreshments. One account of the journey between Toronto and Hamilton comes from Mrs. Anna Jameson who described the stagecoach and its occupants during the winter of 1837:

"It was a heavy wooden edifice about the size and form of an old-fashioned lord mayor's coach, placed on runners and raised about a foot from the ground; the whole was painted a bright red, and long icicles hung from the roof. This monstrous machine disgorged from its portal eight men-creatures, all enveloped in bearskins and shaggy dreadnoughts, and pea-jackets, and fur caps down upon their noses, looking like a procession

of bears on their hind legs, tumbling out of a showman's caravan. They proved, however, when undisguised, to be gentlemen, most of them going up to Toronto to attend their duties in the House of Assembly."

The inn's role as a rest stop became particularly important during colder months when snow and mud made travel heavy and slow; horses became tired more quickly and had to be rested or changed before the journey could continue. In an effort to accommodate these needs, Bush added a barn, seven stables, as well as various outbuildings on the property.



Source: Edwin Guillet, *Early Life in Upper Canada* (Toronto: The Ontario Publishing Co., Ltd., 1939), 147.

The inn was also an important stopping point for coaches carrying mail. A regular overland mail service was established between Toronto and Hamilton around 1829. *John Barnett's Scrapbook* offers a glimpse into this mail route:

The only possible roadway for mail stage coaches was on Dundas Street (No. 5 Hy.) which was the oldest surveyed road. Post offices were established along it. The first a short distance west of the Humber called "Etobicoke Twp.", the next called "Toronto Twp." a short distance east of Cooksville. The next called "Credit" (now Erindale) which was intended to serve the largest block of settlement in the S.W. corner (Clarkson area). The one next west was called "Trafalgar Twp." and was at or near Palermo. The postage rate in 1837 was 4.5 pence a letter from Toronto.

With the arrival of the Great Western Railway in 1855, the inn's role as a rest stop for weary travelers as well as the mail service declined considerably. Therefore, Russel Bush sold 20 acres of land on the north end of Lot 29, Concession 3 to Edward Sutherland for £650 on October 15, 1855.

Bush and his wife eventually settled on a farm in Michigan where they retired. Mary died in 1883, leaving behind a grieving husband and three children.

According to research conducted by Elaine Eigl for Heritage Mississauga, one of Russell Bush's sons, William Bush, was identified as "coloured" in the 1851 census. There are no subsequent entries that identify any immediate members of the Bush family as "coloured". The following are images of the 1851 census with William Bush's name highlighted.

TAKEN UNDER ACT 14th & 15th Vict. Chap. 40. *Page 10* **ENUMERATOR.**

Information as to Mills, Factories, &c., &c., their cost, power, produce, &c.

Number of persons usually employed therein.

General Remarks of the Enumerator.

PERSONAL CENSUS—ENUMERATION DISTRICT, No. 1 *Ward 1* **OF** *Trinity*

Names of Inmates.	Profession, Trade or Occupation.	Place of Birth.	Religion.	Residence or out of house.	Age next birth day.	Sex.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Edward Butler	Labourer	England	C of England		15	M
Ann do	"	"	do		35	F
Ann Highland	"	Ireland	do		12	F
James Murray	"	Canada	do		5	M
Margaret do	"	do	do		3	F
John do	"	do	do		48	M
C. McPherson	Farmer	Scotland	do	X	35	M
Caroline do	Wife	Canada	do		15	F
Eliza do	"	do	do		11	F
Charles do	"	do	do		5	M
Henry do	"	do	do		2	M
John do	"	do	do		11	M
John Wigg	Farmer	England	do		21	M
Thomas Wigg	Labourer	Canada	Methodist	X	37	M
Barth do	Wife	do	do		1	F
Barth do	"	do	do		57	M
Grace do	Wife	do	do	X	65	F
William Caldwell	Farmer	do	C of England	X	21	M
William do	Wife	do	do	X	19	F
John Division	Farmer	do	do	X	43	M
John do	Wife	do	do	X	43	F
David do	"	do	do		22	M
Elizabeth do	"	do	do		19	F
William do	"	do	do		17	M
John do	"	do	do		15	M
William do	"	do	do		18	M
James do	"	do	do		8	M
Robert do	"	do	do		1	M
William Butler	Labourer	do	do		20	M
William Butler	Farmer	Ireland	R. Catholic		25	M
Margaret do	Wife	do	do	X	52	F
George do	Labourer	do	do		27	M
John do	do	do	do		22	M
John do	"	do	do		25	M
John do	"	do	do		21	M
John do	Labourer	do	do		22	M
John do	Farmer	England	C of England	X	39	M
Thomas do	Wife	do	do	X	31	F
Thomas do	"	Canada	do		6	M
John Thomas	Labourer	do	Methodist	X	24	M
John do	Wife	do	do	X	24	F
John do	"	Canada	do		5	M
John do	"	do	do		3	M
William do	Farmer	do	do	X	39	M
Margaret do	Wife	do	do	X	18	F
William do	Labourer	do	do		22	M
William do	do	do	do		17	M

25 27

Source: 1851 Census of Canada East, Canada West, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia. Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2006.

[illegible]

Source: *1851 Census of Canada East, Canada West, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia*. Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2006.

Sutherland Family

Edward Sutherland was born in Armagh, Ireland on August 11, 1796. He went to Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst and served with the 102nd Regiment of Foot. He spent four years in Bermuda and North America while serving with the regiment and, during this time, took a walking and sketching trip across Europe. Many of his paintings are a result of this trip.

Sutherland married Christiana Coffin in 1826. They had seven children (one died in infancy). Christiana died in 1852 and Sutherland moved his family to the Clarkson area where he purchased Bush's Inn from Russell Bush for £650 in 1855.

Sutherland renamed the property "Woodburn" and turned the land into a strawberry and raspberry farm which he ran for 15 to 20 years. This was the first strawberry farm in the area and launched Clarkson's reputation as "The Chief Strawberry Shipping Station of Ontario". Sutherland relied on the railway to ship his fruit across Ontario. In 1861, he sold the property to Charles Magrath, son of Reverend James Magrath (grandfather of Mary Harris of Benares). Edward died in 1885 at his daughter, Isobel's, home in California.

The Sutherland family had several notable members who were known for their artistic talents. Edward's daughter, **Fanny Sutherland** won an amateur prize for pencil portraiture in the Upper Canada Provincial Exhibition in 1858. One example of her work is a portrait of Lucy Harris that was painted in 1881 and hangs in the drawing room at Benares. **Isobel Sutherland, John Sutherland, and Maude Sutherland** were also among Edward's children who were considered amateur artists.

Lady Lucile Duff Gordon (nee Sutherland) was the granddaughter of Edward Sutherland. She had a thriving career in fashion and was credited for introducing the cat walk to model her designs. She also survived the sinking of the Titanic along with her (second) husband, Lord Cosmo Duff Gordon. Lucile's father was Mary Magrath's paternal uncle.

Elinor Glyn (nee Sutherland) was Lucile's sister and granddaughter of Edward Sutherland. She was described by Mark Twain as incontestably beautiful. She was a well-known author whose books were turned into Hollywood films (*Three Weeks*).

Charles Magrath

Charles Magrath bought the property from Edward Sutherland in 1861. Charles was born on March 9, 1809 in Aberystwyth. He was the third son of Reverend James Magrath of Erindale. Charles moved to Canada in 1827 at age 18 and helped build the first family cabin in Erindale. He opened a store in Streetsville in 1835 but closed it in 1838 because of the Upper Canada Rebellion. In 1847, Charles studied to become a lawyer and practiced in Toronto. Late in his life, he married a widow named Louisa Stanton. He died on May 25, 1884, aged 76.

Charles' niece, Mary Magrath, married Arthur Harris of Benares.

Orr Family

In 1868, Charles Magrath sold the inn to **Robert Orr**. Robert Orr then sold to **Joseph Orr** in

1870. Joseph and his wife, Elizabeth, were originally from Northern Ireland and owned a farm on Dundas Street in a small hamlet called Frogmore (near Winston Churchill Boulevard). Joseph sold this land in 1870 before moving to Clarkson and purchasing several plots of land in the area, including Bush's Inn. He retired and moved to Mimico in 1889, dividing all of his property between his two sons, Edward and Andrew. He died in 1904 at age 70.

Andrew Orr inherited Bush's Inn from his father, but proceeded to purchase 33 more acres of land in 1891. His brother, **Edward Orr**, owned a large dairy farm as well as 10 acres of land for strawberry farming. In 1925, Edward became the president of the Toronto Milk and Cream Association. He was also deeply involved in local politics and was a councillor on the Toronto Township Council (1914-1915). Edward was very active in the Carman Methodist Church and played a key role in the development of the Sunday School and Community Hall in 1924. Edward died in 1935 and two of his seven sons, Fred and Hugh, took over his interests.

Orr Road is named in honour of this prominent farming family in Clarkson.

Alexander Westervelt

In 1910, Alexander Westervelt and his friend Percy Hodgetts purchased 20 acres of land from Andrew Orr. The two tossed a coin to see which part of the property they would get. Westervelt won the part of the property that had Bush's Inn and continued to farm strawberries on the land. It was Alexander who made significant changes to the property after he purchased it. He tore down the stables and barns Russell Bush had built and planted orchards (which is what many of the nearby owners were also doing).

Westervelt became the general manager of the Royal Winter Fair (1922-1936). While preparing for the Fair in 1936, he collapsed and died. He was 64.

George and Ethel Bonter

The Bonter family purchased the home from Avice Westervelt in 1944.

Carolyn Dayley

Carolyn Dayley purchased the house in 1946. The strawberries were replaced with an apple orchard as well as a few pear and peach trees. The Dayleys subdivided the property.

Muriel Williams

Muriel Williams bought the house in 1955. By this point, the inn sat on one acre of land after the previous owners, the Dayleys, subdivided the property.

Thom Family

Murray and Joan Thom, along with their five children, move into the house in March 1956. They did some restoration in the home during which time they discovered the inn's old kitchen fireplace and bake oven. A few other artifacts were also found such as a crane and hook and an assortment of ironwork. Hubert and Katherine Thom took over the house in 1975.

William and Janet Woods

The Woods family purchased the home in 1975.

Architect

There is little evidence to confirm the architect of this property. As a very early build in the Clarkson area, it was likely designed and constructed by local tradesmen.

Architectural Description

Bush's Inn was inspired by typical English inns known for low ceilings and wandering corridors. The house is a two-storey structure with a single storey addition in the north rear. The foundation of the house is rubble with walls of frame construction covered in stucco. The rear addition has been re-stuccoed and reflects a salt-box style. There are two pane windows on either side of the front door of the house on the main floor with smaller windows on the top floor. The front porch is covered by curved balusters and Tuscan columns that likely date back to the early twentieth century; they reflect an indirect influence of the Beaux Arts Style that can be seen in Toronto's Union Station. The original façade of the property has been concealed with the building of a new extension in the front. The basement is accessible from outside.

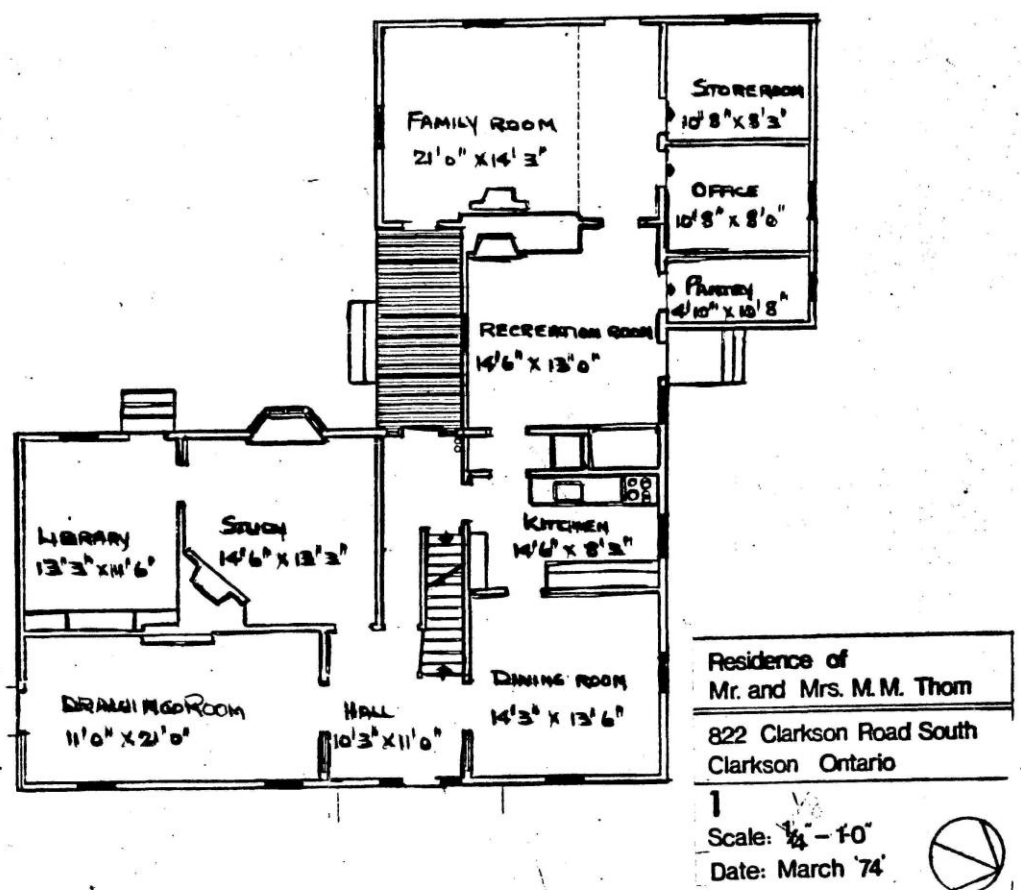
When it was built by Russell Bush, the project was aided by the close proximity of Hyett's saw mill which cut the lumber for the inn. The interior layout has not changed much over the decades. Many original wood details remain preserved inside. Moreover, on the left side of the entrance, there is a Tap Room with its own outside entrance that was used by local farmers to enter and exit; this was eventually turned into a living room. To the right of the entrance hall, there is a large dining room next to the kitchen; the original kitchen was converted into a family room while a smaller kitchen was built at one end of the dining room. Downstairs, there is a sitting room for guests next to an office that could be entered from outside. Old fireplaces and a large bake oven that had been concealed behind a thin plaster wall were later discovered. Old artifacts were also found in this area, including a crane and hook, square-headed nails, and an assortment of iron work. Upstairs, the linen cupboards that had once served the inn's guests remain as they were originally. The house has five bedrooms that have been enlarged; the number of rooms seems inadequate for an inn, but during the nineteenth century, it was customary for visitors to share rooms and even beds.

Around the turn of the 20th century (and even as late as the 1930s), many changes were made to the exterior of the building which reflect the revival of the Tudor style. The stucco likely dates back to this time. Other modifications include the addition of exposed beams on the top floor of the building and a roof-styled porch over the front door that is noticeable today. New windows, including the central bay window, were also added around this time.

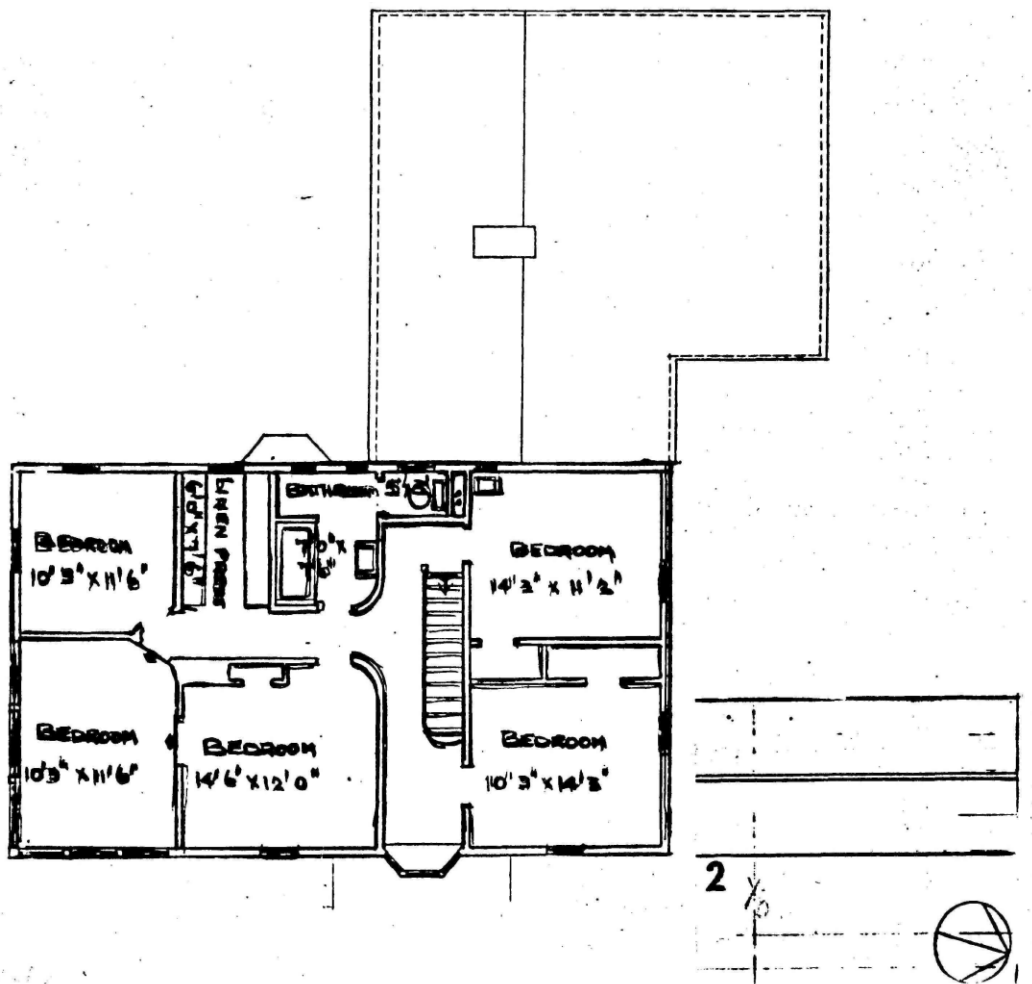
David Thom, one of the later occupants of Bush's Inn, had this to say about the house's transformation over the years:

Although the Inn remains unchanged, the travellers of over a century ago would not recognize the district now, for the “main crop” hewn out of the farms and orchards, is sub-divisions!

Below are images of the house's floorplan from March 1974 when it was occupied by the Thom family:



Source: Residence of Mr. and Mrs. M.M. Thom, 822 Clarkson Road South - 2 floor plans, March 1974.



Source: Residence of Mr. and Mrs. M.M. Thom, 822 Clarkson Road South - 2 floor plans, March 1974.

Other Buildings of the Same Style

Percy Hodgetts' home is also in the same area and reflects similar Tudor touches such as half timbering.

Context

822 Clarkson Rd. S. is located north of Orr Road in the Clarkson neighbourhood. It is situated on a narrow lot and is surrounded by other single-family detached dwellings. The house features a large front yard with a driveway to the side and is surrounded by a split rail wood fence.

The property is part of the original Merigold grant and was mostly used for farming by some of Clarkson's prominent early settler families (Bush, Sutherland, and Orr).

Property Changes

The stucco was added around the turn of the twentieth century. Also during this time, simulated exposed beams on the top floor of the building and a shed-roofed style porch above the front

door were added. New windows were also added during the house's Tudor Revival in the early twentieth century.

The property was subdivided by the Dayley family after they purchased the home in 1946. By the time Muriel Williams bought the house in 1955, it sat on one acre of land.

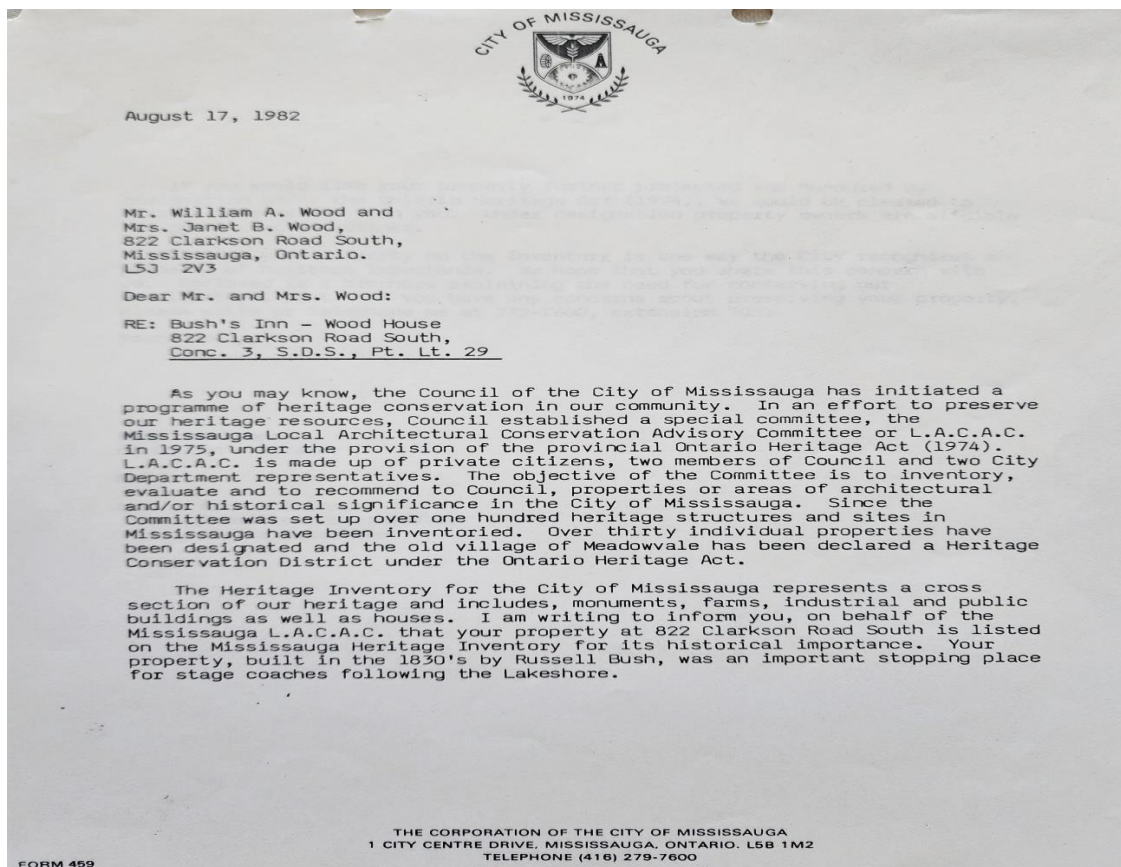
According to property details through the City of Mississauga, a permit was granted for the building of a swimming pool in 1976. A permit was also issued for a fireplace in 1992.

Community Engagement

In 1976, the Thom family hosted the Mississauga Historical Society in their home and gave members a guided tour of the house, explaining how the different rooms were once used.

A letter dated August 17, 1982 from the City of Mississauga to William and Janet Wood explained that the property had been listed on the Mississauga Heritage Inventory due to its historical significance (i.e. that it was an important stopping point for stagecoaches following Lakeshore in the mid nineteenth century).

The letter also offers to discuss further protecting the property under the Ontario Heritage Act (1974) if the Wood family chose to do so. Below are images of this letter.



- 2 -

If you would like your property further protected and honoured by designation under the Ontario Heritage Act (1974), we would be pleased to discuss this matter with you. Under designation property owners are eligible for grants and assistance.

Placing your property on the Inventory is one way the City recognizes a property of heritage importance. We hope that you share this concern with us. Enclosed is a brochure explaining the need for conserving our architectural past. If you have any concerns about preserving your property, please write or telephone me at 279-7600, extension 505.

Yours truly,

Mary Lou Evans,
Historian - Curator

MLE/k

c.c. - Arthur Grannum
Committee Co-ordinator
Clerks Department

Evaluation - Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed by the Province of Ontario for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Design or Physical Value	
i. is a rare, unique representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method	X
ii. displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	N/A
iii. demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement	N/A

i. The house has design value because it is an example of a Tudor revival style home in Mississauga. It has many original features such as wood details inside as well as the linen cupboards on the top floor. The latter were used to store linens used by the inn's guests. Old fireplaces and a large bake oven that were original to the inn were also discovered behind a thin plaster wall. Old artifacts were found in this area, including a crane and hook, square-headed nails, and an assortment of iron work.

The front porch is covered by curved balusters and Tuscan columns that likely date back to the early twentieth century; they reflect an indirect influence of the Beaux Arts Style that can be seen in Toronto's Union Station.

Historical or Associative Value	
i. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community	X
ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	X
iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	N/A

i. The house has important connections to some of Clarkson's earliest settlers. The original land grant belonged to Thomas Merigold and later changed hands to include families such as the Sutherlands, Magraths, and Orrs.

The house was the site of the first commercial strawberry farm in the area which launched Clarkson's reputation as the "Strawberry Capital of Ontario".

ii. In 1976, the Thom family hosted the Mississauga Historical Society in the home which speaks to its value as a space for community and social engagement. Moreover, changes to the house contribute to a deeper understanding of how Clarkson transformed from a largely farming area to a suburban neighbourhood.

Contextual Value	
i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area	X
ii. is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings	N/A
iii. is a landmark	X

i. As a stop for the Clarkson area's earliest stagecoach route between Toronto and Hamilton, this property was a connecting point for people as well as the larger community. Travelers stopped at Bush's Inn to trade stories and reflect on their journeys while they warmed up in the Tap Room surrounded by locals. The property then became the site of the first strawberry farm in Clarkson under Edward Sutherland, marking the area's reputation as a strawberry capital. For decades and generations after, the home continued to reinforce the importance of farming and farming families to rural Ontario.

iii. Heritage Mississauga refers to Bush's Inn as a landmark, likely because of its strong ties to Clarkson's farming history. As an example of a Tudor-revival home, it is also one of few such existing examples of architecture in the Mississauga area.

Heritage Attributes

- Rare example of a surviving Tudor Manor style home in Mississauga.
- Owned by prominent early Clarkson families who made significant contributions to the success of strawberry farming in the area.
- Old fireplace and bake oven from the Bush era discovered along with other artifacts.
- Many wooden details inside are original.

Conclusion

822 Clarkson Rd. S. is a unique property that holds considerable historic and architectural value. Boasting a Tudor revival style from the turn of the 20th century, it is among a few remaining historic homes in Mississauga.

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