

Research and Evaluation Report



(Town of Halton Hills 2023)

Harrison-Brown House

4 Stewarttown Road, Stewarttown, Town of Halton Hills

June 2023

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1.0 Property Description

4 Stewarttown Road	
Municipality	Town of Halton Hills
County or Region	Region of Halton
Legal Description	PT LT 17, CON 7 ESQ, AS IN 581967; S/T 107884 HALTON HILLS/ESQUESING
Construction Date	c. 1850s
Original Use	Residential
Current Use	Residential
Architect/Building/Designer	Unknown
Architectural Style	Neo-Classical
Additions/Alterations	Rear addition; interior alterations
Heritage Status	Listed on the Town's Heritage Register
Recorder(s)	Laura Loney with Ray Denny and Mark Rowe
Report Date	June 2023

2.0 Background

This research and evaluation report describes the history, context, and physical characteristics of the property at 4 Stewarttown Road in Halton Hills, Ontario (Figure 1 and Figure 2). The report includes an evaluation of the property's cultural heritage value as prescribed by the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

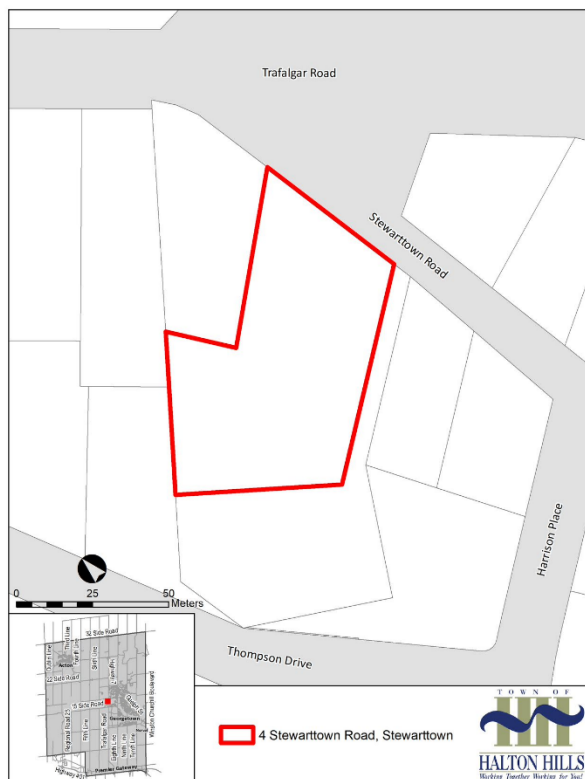


Figure 1: Location Map - 4 Stewarttown Road



Figure 2: Aerial Photograph - 4 Stewarttown Road (2021)

2.1 Historical Background

Members of the Harrison family settled on Lot 17, Concession 7 in 1819, and received the Crown patent in 1846. The Harrison family were some of the earliest settlers in the area who were predominantly Protestant Irish immigrants. The 1822 Patent Plan (Figure 9) and 1858 *Tremaine's Map of Halton County* (Figure 10) identify John Harrison as the owner of the subject lot.

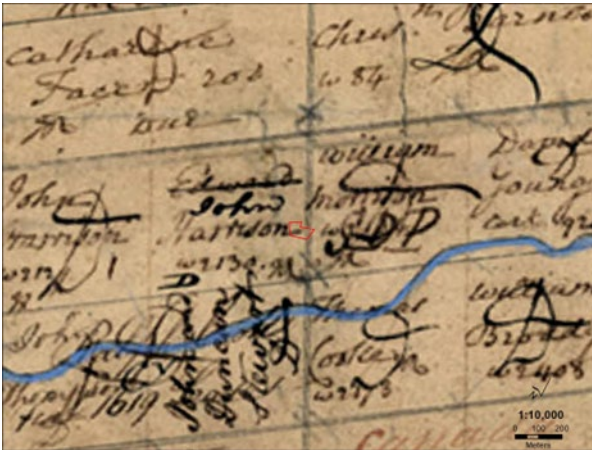


Figure 3: 1822 Patent Plan



Figure 4: 1858 *Tremaine's Map of Halton County*

The existing house at 4 Stewarttown Road was likely constructed circa 1858 when a mortgage was taken out on the property by John Harrison. John Harrison was born in Ireland in 1794, married to Catherine Harrison (nee Lamb) and with children Margaret, Sarah, James, Maria, John, Fanny, and William. According to the 1861 Census, Harrison was then a yeoman, or farmer, living in a brick, one-and-a-half storey residence. Harrison was also involved in the community and was a Trustee of the Mount Pleasant Methodist Church. Harrison died in 1874 at 80 years old and is buried in Greenwood Cemetery with wife Catherine (Figure 3). The house is believed to have been constructed of hand-pressed bricks, made locally in Stewarttown.



Figure 5: Gravestone for John and Catherine Harrison
(Courtesy of findagrave.com, SD Cowan 2018)

The 1877 *Halton County Atlas* (Figure 11) shows the property owner as the Estate of John Harrison. The 1909 National Topographic Map (Figure 12) identifies a brick or stone building in this location within a primarily rural context along Trafalgar Road.



Figure 6: 1877 Halton County Atlas

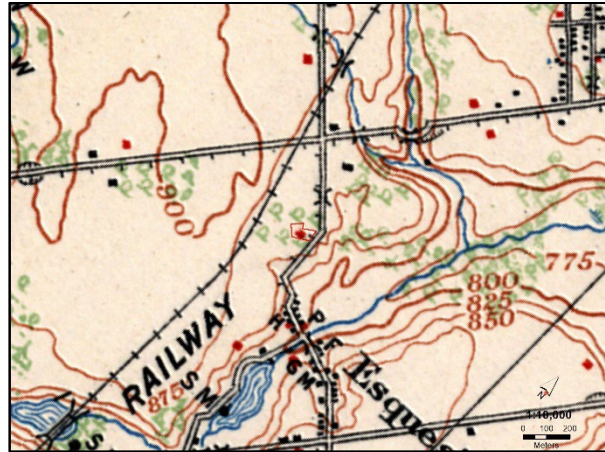


Figure 7: 1909 National Topographic Map

In 1916, the property was sold by the Harrison family to Charles Greensides, who then sold the property two years later to Gordon Oliver Brown in 1918.

Brown was born September 8, 1888. Brown's Officers' Declaration Paper for the Canada Over-seas Expeditionary Force, dated April 10, 1916, identifies Brown as a Captain of the 20th Regiment, with former military service for nine-and-a-half months with the 4th Battalion (Figure 4 and Figure 5). Brown married his wife Mary in 1916.

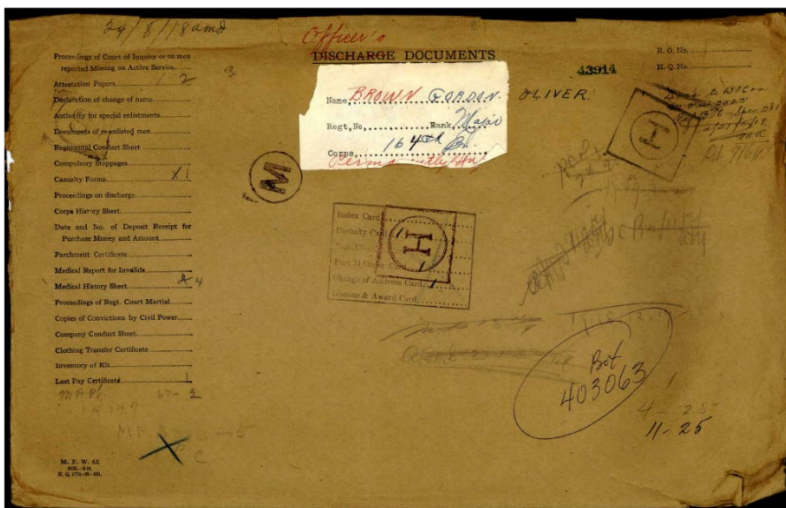


Figure 8: Officer's Documents for Major Gordon Oliver Brown (WWI CEF Personnel Files, 1914-1918)

Unit 104th Bn Rank Capt Name Gordon Oliver Brown **ORIGINAL**

OFFICERS' DECLARATION PAPER
CANADIAN OVER-SEAS EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED BY OFFICER (ANSWERED)

- (a) What is your Surname? Brown
- (b) What are your Christian Names? Gordon Oliver
- (c) Where were you born? (State place and country) Knoxville Ont
- (d) What is your present address? Georgetown Ont
- (e) What is the date of your birth? Sept 8th 1888
- (f) What is (a) the name of your next-of-kin? Mrs J. J. Brown
(b) the address of your next-of-kin? Ashvale Ont
(c) the relationship of your next-of-kin? Mother
- (g) What is your profession or occupation? Farmer
- (h) What is your religion? Church of England
- (i) Are you willing to be vaccinated or re-vaccinated and inoculated? Yes
- (j) To what Unit of the Active Militia do you belong? 20th Regt
- (k) State particulars of any former Military Service. 9 1/2 months 4th Bn CEF
- (l) Are you willing to serve in the CANADIAN OVER-SEAS EXPEDITIONARY FORCE? Yes

The undersigned hereby declares that the above answers made by him to the above questions are true.

G. O. Brown Capt (Signature of Officer)

CERTIFICATE OF MEDICAL EXAMINATION

I have examined the above-named Officer in accordance with the Regulations for Army Medical Services.

I consider him Fit for the CANADIAN OVER-SEAS EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

Date Apr 10 1916.

Place Georgetown

J. H. Brown Medical Officer

M. F. W. H. (Signature)

Figure 9: Gordon Oliver Brown Officer's Declaration Paper (Library and Archives Canada)

A Peace Celebration in July 1919 included Major Brown leading the 20th Battalion Band and over a hundred local veterans. Brown was actively involved in the local community, including a position as

manager of the Georgetown Baseball Team in the Halton-Peel Baseball League in 1920 (Figure 7). In 1924, Brown was appointed as agent for Georgetown, Acton, Erin, and vicinity for the Willoughby Farm Agency (Figure 8). Brown was also a member of Halton County Council, and in 1925 was the Deputy Reeve of Esquesing (Figure 6). Between 1927 and 1935, Brown also served as Sheriff for Halton. Voter's lists between 1935 and 1958 identify him as a farmer. Brown also was on active duty during the Second World War, identified as Major G.O. Brown with the Veteran Guards of Canada. In 1962, Brown, then 74, is identified as a gentleman.



Figure 10: Halton County Council c. 1925, Colonel Brown identified in red (EHS 20858)



Figure 11: Georgetown Baseball team, 1920 - Champions of Peel-Halton Baseball league; Major G.O. Brown in the second row from the top, right side (EHS p84f)

The Willoughby Farm Agency Appoints a New Agent at Georgetown

The Willoughby Farm Agency announces the appointment of Colonel G. O. Brown as their new representative for Georgetown, Acton, Erin and vicinity.

Colonel Brown needs no introduction to the farmers of Halton or Wellington counties, having lived in Halton county practically all his life, and is engaged at the present time in farming near Georgetown.

Colonel Brown will have full charge of the Georgetown office.

Willoughby Farm Agency, Office Mill Street, Georgetown. Phone 66.

Representative: Gordon O. Brown, Residence Phone 84 ring 6.

Figure 12: Willoughby Farm Agency appoints a new agent at Georgetown (Georgetown Herald October 22, 1924, p. 3)

A review of National Topographic Mapping and aerial photographs between 1929 and 1974 (Figure 13 through Figure 19) show a largely unchanged context surrounding the subject property.

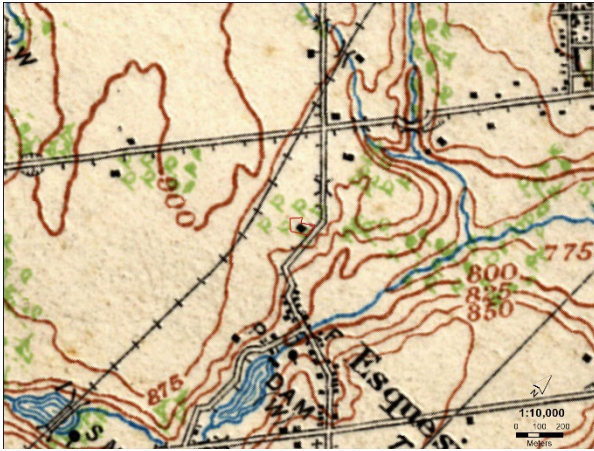


Figure 13: 1929 National Topographic Map

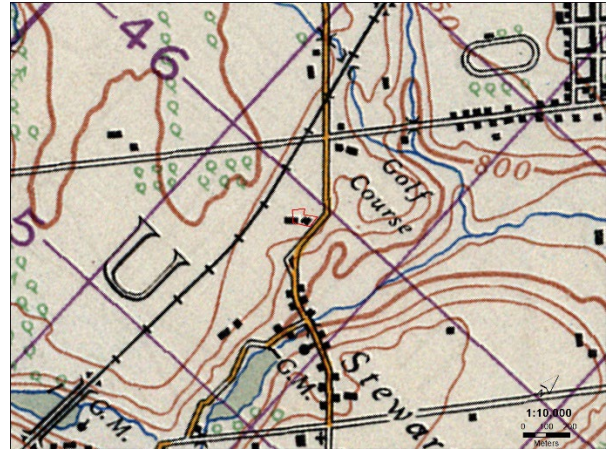


Figure 14: 1942 National Topographic Map



Figure 15: 1946 Aerial Photograph



Figure 16: 1952 Aerial Photograph



Figure 17: 1960 Aerial Photograph

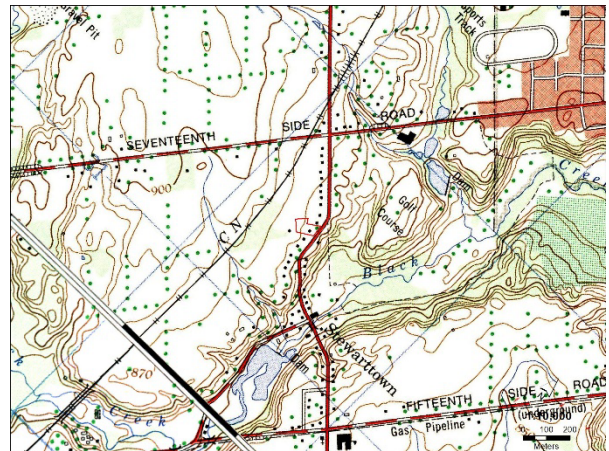


Figure 18: 1974 National Topographic Map

Aerial photography from 1990 to 2015 (Figure 20 through Figure 21) shows the development new residential buildings to the west of the subject property and a changing context along the east side of Trafalgar Road north of 15 Side Road.



Figure 19: 1990 Aerial Photograph



Figure 20: 2015 Aerial Photograph

Brown sold the subject property to Oscar and Lottie Robb in 1961, who in 1972 sold the property to David and Beryl Godden. The property changed hands again from the late 1970s and is currently owned by Joseph Krebs.

2.3 Property & Architectural Description

The subject property is located along the northwest side of Stewarttown Road in Stewarttown to the west of Trafalgar Road. The property is an irregularly shaped parcel, and the existing house is situated on a rise above Stewarttown Road, surrounded by mature trees and soft landscaping. The property is accessed via a driveway from Stewarttown Road. The property features a large grassed lawn, mature trees, and a fenced swimming pool area (Figure 22 through Figure 24).



Figure 21: Looking towards the rear of the property, 4 Stewarttown Road (Town of Halton Hills 2023)



Figure 22: Looking towards the rear elevation of the garage addition, 4 Stewarttown Road (Town of Halton Hills 2023)



Figure 23: Swimming pool within the northwest portion of the property (Town of Halton Hills 2023)

The primary structure within the subject property is the existing residential building, which includes the original mid-nineteenth century structure and later additions to the rear of the property. The front (southwest) elevation of the building includes the one-and-a-half storey building with one-storey side wing, with a single entrance within the one-and-a-half storey portion as well as an additional entrance within a recess on the one-storey wing (Figure 21).



Figure 24: Front (southwest) elevation of existing residential buildings at 4 Stewarttown Road (Town of Halton Hills 2023)

The one-storey wing (Figure 25), likely an early summer kitchen addition to the original one-and-a-half storey structure, features the same red and buff dichromatic brick pattern, with some variation in colours throughout that would suggest the bricks used were produced at different times. A stone lintel (parged) suggests there was once a window opening on the projecting portion, while the flat-headed window opening and entrance within the recessed portion appear unaltered. Within the one-and-a-half storey portion (Figure 26), now-parged stone lintels are extant above the flat-headed door and window

openings, with stone sills on the lower windows at the first storey. Windows within the openings are not original. A decorative wooden element is located at the gable peak. Evidence of repair or alterations to the dichromatic brick are extant to the side of the entrance, suggesting brick may have been borrowed from other elevations as part of repair or alterations to the building.



Figure 25: Partial front (northeast) elevation, 4 Stewarttown Road (Town of Halton Hills 2023)



Figure 26: Partial front (northeast) elevation, 4 Stewarttown Road (Town of Halton Hills 2023)

The side elevation of the one-storey wing (Figure 27) features a large rectangular window opening, with clear indications within the brickwork above that the window opening has been altered over time. The rear elevation of the one-storey wing (Figure 28) features a flat-headed window opening and a stone chimney understood to be a more contemporary intervention.



Figure 27: Partial side (southeast) elevation, 4 Stewarttown Road (Town of Halton Hills 2023)



Figure 28: Looking north towards the original house and side wing, 4 Stewarttown Road (Town of Halton Hills 2023)

A large gable-roofed addition with rear one-storey garage is located towards the rear of the building and was added to the property in the late twentieth century (Figure 29 and Figure 30) .



Figure 29: Looking towards the southeast elevation, 4 Stewarttown Road (Town of Halton Hills 2023)



Figure 30: Looking towards the northwest corner of the building, 4 Stewarttown Road (Town of Halton Hills 2023)

The side (northwest) elevation of the original structure (Figure 31 and Figure 32) features the same dichromatic brick as the rest of the structure, with symmetrically-placed flat-headed window openings with stone sills and lintels that have been parged. A small gable-roofed dormer is located on the roof above and the central chimney (re-constructed above the roofline) is visible at the peak of the roof.



Figure 31: Looking towards the northwest elevation, 4 Stewarttown Road (Town of Halton Hills 2023)



Figure 32: Partial northwest elevation, 4 Stewarttown Road (Town of Halton Hills 2023)

The dichromatic brick in a Flemish bond pattern throughout the original building features some variations in colour and texture, in line with it being hand-pressed and with alterations to the building understood to have taken place over time (Figure 33 through Figure 35).



Figure 33: Detail of brick on northeast elevation, 4 Stewarttown Road (Town of Halton Hills 2023)



Figure 34: Detail of brickwork on front (southeast) elevation of original structure, 4 Stewarttown Road (Town of Halton Hills 2023)



Figure 35: Detail of front (southeast) elevation, 4 Stewarttown Road (Town of Halton Hills 2023)

The interiors of the existing building were not investigated as part of this report.

3.0 Description of Heritage Attributes and Evaluation Checklist

The following evaluation checklist applies to Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the *Ontario Heritage Act*: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. The criteria are prescribed for municipal designation of Heritage Properties under Part IV, Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The evaluation tables utilize an 'X' to signify applicable criteria and 'N/A' to signify criteria that are not applicable for this property.

Design or Physical Value	
Is rare, unique, representative, or early example of a style, type, expression, material, or construction method	X
Displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	X
Demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement	N/A

The property at 4 Stewarttown Road has physical and design value as a representative example of a mid-nineteenth century vernacular building with Georgian influences within the community of Stewarttown in Halton Hills. Its unique dichromatic, locally hand-pressed brick laid in the Flemish-bond pattern displays a high degree of artistic merit, as evidenced by later alterations which have maintained the Flemish bond pattern and dichromatic brick throughout. While some alterations to select window openings, chimneys, and a rear addition have modified the original structure to a certain extent, the original, simple form of the building remains legible, and with the dichromatic brickwork and symmetrically-placed original door and window openings extant throughout the building, the Harrison-Brown House has maintained its integrity since its construction almost 165 years ago.

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

The property at 4 Stewarttown Road has historical and associative value due to its associations with the early development of the community of Stewarttown, its associations with the original owner, farmer John Harrison and his family, who owned a significant portion of the land in this area in the mid-nineteenth century. Additionally, the property is associated with long-time owner, Gordon Oliver Brown, who was a soldier, active community member, agent for the Willoughby Farm Agency, member of Halton County Council, Deputy Reeve of Esquesing, and Sheriff for Halton.

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

The property at 4 Stewarttown Road has contextual value as part of the historic community of Stewarttown and helps to define, maintain, and support the heritage character and cultural heritage value of the area as a visible presence along Stewarttown Road. The Harrison-Brown House, in its original location on a rise above Stewarttown Road, is physically, functionally, visually, and historically linked to its surroundings within the residential community within Stewarttown. While not a landmark in terms of size or location, the building's unusual dichromatic brick pattern stands out along the streetscape.

4.0 Summary

Following research and evaluation according to Ontario Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the Harrison-Brown House at 4 Stewarttown Road has physical and design, historical and associative, and contextual value and therefore meets Ontario Regulation 9/06 criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest.

The heritage attributes identified for the Harrison-Brown House at 4 Stewarttown Road include the following:

- The setback, placement, and orientation of the c.1850s brick residential building on a rise above Stewarttown Road;
- The scale, form, and massing of the original one-and-a-half storey brick structure with one-storey brick wing on a stone foundation (excluding the rear contemporary addition);
- The materials, including dichromatic (buff and red brick throughout), stone foundation, stone sills, and lintels where extant;
- On the front elevation facing Stewarttown Road,
 - The symmetrically placed door with transom and window openings at the first and second storeys on the one-and-a-half storey portion of the building;
 - The stone lintel, flat-headed window opening with stone sill and lintel and flat-headed entrance within the one-storey wing;
 - Dichromatic brickwork throughout laid in Flemish bond;
- On the side (northwest) elevation, the dichromatic brickwork laid in Flemish bond featured throughout the elevation above the stone foundation;
- On the side (southeast) elevation:
 - The symmetrically placed flat-headed window openings at the first storey; and,
 - Dichromatic brickwork laid in Flemish bond.

The rear addition and any other outbuildings on the property have not been identified as heritage attributes.

5.0 Sources

Primary Sources

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Independent & Free Press

"Georgetown – on Active Service During World War II." *Independent & Free Press* (Georgetown, ON), 10 Nov 2006, p. 10 - <https://news.haltonhills.halinet.on.ca/details.asp?ID=315394>

Secondary Sources

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