

Research and Evaluation Report



(Town of Halton Hills 2023)

Barclay's Block
87 Main Street South, Town of Halton Hills

January 2024

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1.0 Property Description

87 Main Street South	
Municipality	Town of Halton Hills
County or Region	Region of Halton
Legal Description	PT LTS 4 & 5, PL 37, E OF MAIN ST OR S OF MILL ST, AS IN 845605; T/W 352338; HALTON HILLS
Construction Date	c.1852
Original Use	Commercial
Current Use	Commercial
Architect/Building/Designer	Built for Francis Barclay
Architectural Style	Commercial Vernacular
Additions/Alterations	Remaining portion of Barclay’s Block; Stuccoed exterior
Heritage Status	Listed on the Town’s Heritage Register
Recorder(s)	Laura Loney
Report Date	January 2024

2.0 Background

This research and evaluation report describes the history, context, and physical characteristics of the property at 87 Main Street South in the community of Georgetown in the Town of 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*.

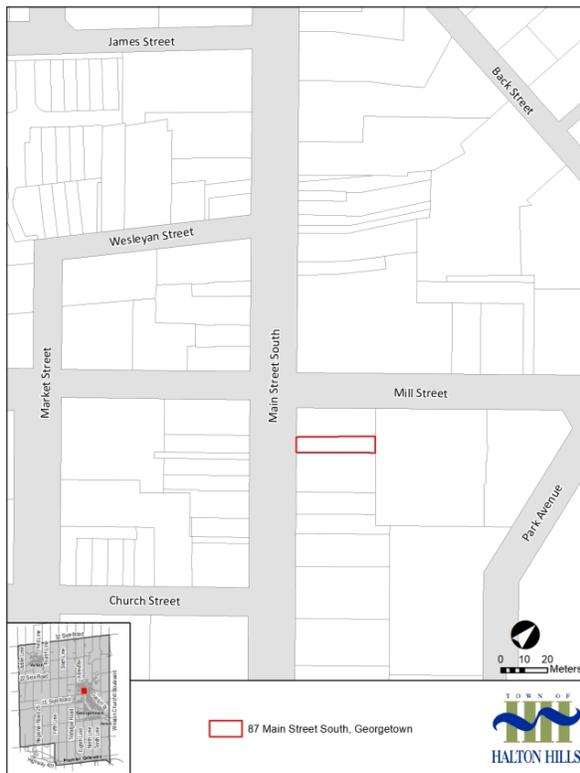


Figure 1: Location Map – 87 Main Street South



Figure 2: Aerial Photograph – 87 Main Street South

2.1 Historical Background

Indigenous History Background

The enduring history of First Nation Peoples in Halton Hills can be traced back through time immemorial before contact with Europeans in the 1600s. Prior to the arrival of European settlers, the Credit River was central to Indigenous ways of life, supporting settlements, fisheries, horticulture, transportation, and trade. Iroquoian-speaking peoples, ancestors of the Wendat, occupied the Credit River Valley for hundreds of years until approximately the mid-1600s, establishing semi-permanent villages. There are numerous archaeological sites in Halton Hills dating from this period, ranging from village sites to burial grounds, which reveal a rich cultural heritage.

The Wendat were displaced by the Haudenosaunee around 1649-50 amid the conflicts that arose between European colonial powers and their First Nation allies. The Mississaugas (part of the Anishinaabe Nation) arrived in southern Ontario in the 1690s, settling in two groups along the north shore of Lake Ontario and Lake Erie. The western group, occupying the area between Toronto and Lake Erie, became known as the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Until the early 19th century, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation followed a seasonal cycle of movement and resource harvesting along the Credit River (Missinnihe, meaning “trusting creek”), and other rivers. In the winter months, extended family groups hunted in the Halton Hills area, travelling south towards the mouth of the river in the spring for the salmon run. The Mississaugas’ fisheries and traditional economies were diminished as a result of increased Euro-colonial settlement, leading to a state of impoverishment and dramatic population decline.

In 1818, the British Crown negotiated the purchase of 648,000 acres of land from the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, including present-day Halton Hills, under the Ajetance Treaty (No. 19), named after Chief Ajetance. This left the Mississaugas with three small reserves on the Lake Ontario shoreline. The legitimacy of early land “surrenders” to the Crown is questionable when considering the Mississaugas’ traditional understanding of property ownership. Unlike the British, the Mississaugas understood land in spiritual terms, and did not share the idea that access to land and resources could be given up permanently¹.

Francis Barclay

The subject property was purchased by John Dolson in 1844 from George Kennedy, who in 1854 sold it to Francis Barclay. Francis Barclay was born to Mary (nee Fleming) and Matthew Barclay in 1822. In 1832, the family emigrated from Scotland to Canada and settled later in Trafalgar Township in 1837. In 1848, Francis Barclay partnered with Peter A. MacDougald to establish a dry goods business. Barclay constructed the existing building as part of what became known as “Barclay’s Block” in 1852. Wooden canopies (no longer extant) along the storefront were built to provide a more comfortable shopping experience. Barclay also purchased Lot 101 and 102 in the Young and Barber Survey in November 1858,

¹ This brief overview of Pre-Treaty Indigenous Territory within the land now known as Halton Hills is taken from the Town of Halton Hills’ 2023 *Cultural Heritage Strategy*. This document includes additional recommendations relating to Truth and Reconciliation in Heritage Planning as part of the Town’s commitment to advancing Truth and Reconciliation.

upon which he employed William Watson to construct his home (now 51 Edith Street). Watson used triple-wythe brick in a Flemish bond, the same pattern which was used for Barclay's Block.



Figure 3: Subject property identified on an 1858 Map of Georgetown



Figure 4: Subject property identified on the 1877 *Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of Halton*

In 1863, Barclay partnered with both William McLeod and James McLean. When McLean died in 1865, their business known as “Mammoth House” continued under the ownership of Barclay & McLeod. Barclay was appointed postmaster of Georgetown in 1865 and was the Reeve in 1866. Barclay had married Isabella McKirlie in 1848 and had four children with her before her death in 1863. In 1864, Barclay married Helen McKirlie, a relative of his late wife, and they had three children together. Barclay retired in 1871 and the business continued under “McLeod, Anderson & Co” in a large brick two-storey building, employing between 25 to 30 people. Barclay then moved to Toronto and established a wholesale boot and shoe business on Front Street, however returned to the Milton area following a disastrous fire. In 1874, Barclay was elected to Esquesing Township Council as the Reform candidate. In 1881, Barclay became the registrar of Halton County, a position he held until his death in 1889.

MAMMOTH HOUSE.
M'LEAN, M'LEOD AND CO.,
 OF GEORGETOWN.
 Property is returned to the Commission as the
FAIR DAY, FRIDAY, OCT. 6th, '65
 Will be kept in full of the purchase of the business FRUITED by the receipt of the Cash, for the same, and other and some things not so.
Mammoth house, Corner of Main and MILLS,
 And has a large variety of goods that they have never had before in this part of the County.
MESSRS McLEAN McLEOD & Co.
 An happy & famous Old Store throughout the County that trade
Stock is now Complete for the Fall Trade
 And for the remainder that
 No House in the Trade West of Montreal can show a Stock equal to theirs
SEE MESSRS AND TRUSS.
BUY THEIR DRY GOODS
 Being noting that we will not be any more in any way. An old and famous in the way of business in a number of
Stock comprises everything that the market can furnish
DRY GOODS, MILLINERY & CLOTHING
 Georgetown, October 4th, 1865.

Figure 4: Advertisement for Mammoth House, c. 1865 (*Canadian Champion*, October 4, 1865)

MONEY. MONEY WANTED, MONEY SAVED!
BARCLAY & McLEOD.
 In order to meet the present hard times half way, have determined to Sell Goods Cheaper than they have been sold in Canada for the last ten years. In addition to our Large Importations this Spring we have been tempted in consequence of their extreme Cheapness to purchase several large lots of WHOLESALE BANKRUPT STOCK in Montreal. We have too many Goods, so we call on Farmers, Mechanic, Professional Men, Ladies, Gentlemen, and in fact everybody, Money we want. Goods you shall have the cheapest in Canada. We call attention to the following Departments.
TAILORING.
 This Department is unsurpassed by anything in the Dominion for Largeness of Stock, Variety of Pattern, Excellence of Workmanship, Neatness and Exactness of Fit and Cheapness. Ready-Made Clothing to suit Everybody. Boys' Clothing in profusion. We call special attention to our Magnificent Variety of Hats and Caps.
MILLINERY.
 The Latest Novelties from the Leading Centres of Fashion in the World. We keep a Large Stock of Mantles, Ribbons, Feathers, Flowers, Bonnets, Hats, Parasols, Shawls, &c., &c.
CARPET.
 A Large Stock Imported direct, money saved on them, Great Bargains, Immense Variety. Boots and Shoes in all the different grades and sizes.
SPECIAL LINES.
 We bought all our Clothings before the 29th of January, so we can now sell them as cheap as the manufacturers. A large lot of beautiful Dress Goods from 8 cents upwards. A magnificent variety of the New Chinese Silk Dress Goods, One Dollar per yard; and further we would say, we have the Largest Store, the Biggest Stock, Sell the Most Goods, and afford to Sell the Cheapest of any house in this or the surrounding Counties. In fact we were never in a better position to give the public Unparalleled Bargains, and so previously stated, to make hard times easy.
BARCLAY & McLEOD, Mammoth House, Georgetown, April 1869.

Figure 5: Advertisement for Mammoth House, c. 1869 (*Canadian Champion*, July 8, 1869, p.4)

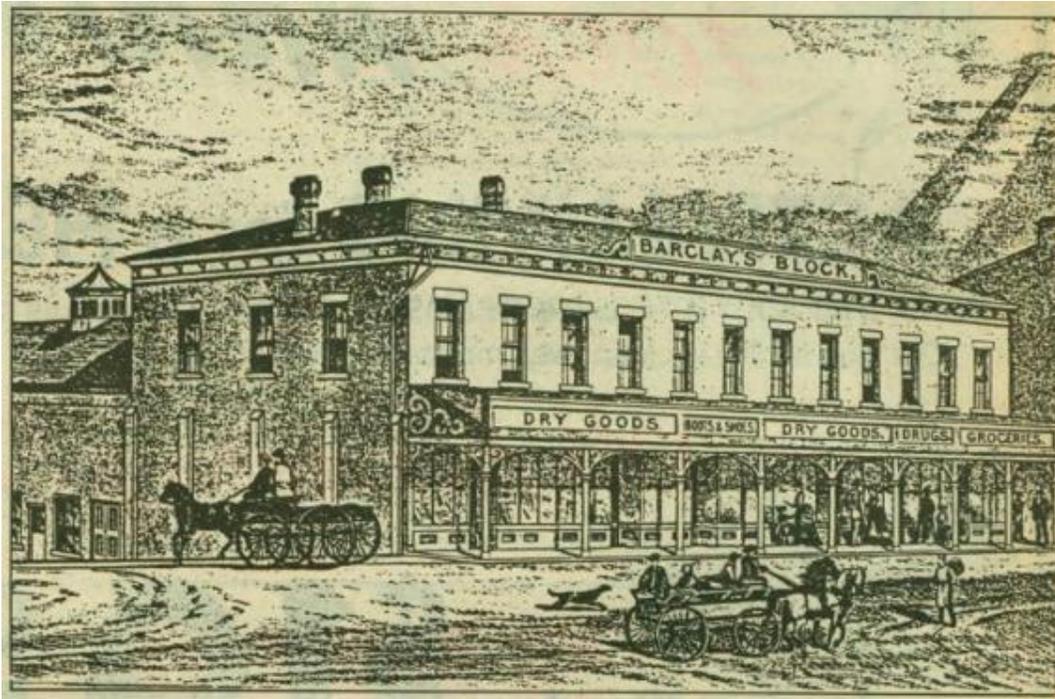


Figure 5: Barclay's Block depicted in the 1877 *Illustrated Atlas of the County of Halton*

In 1893, a fire broke out in the store of P.H. Laird, furniture dealer, in Barclay's Block. *The Georgetown Herald* reported that the balance of the block was saved and that Laird lost \$1,500 worth of stock, Mrs. Barclay lost \$1,200, and Mr. Thompson's stock was damaged by smoke.



Figure 6: Downtown Georgetown, n.d. (Georgetown Vault via George Marko)



Figure 7: Downtown Georgetown, n.d. (Georgetown Vault via Wayne Gougeon)



Figure 8: Main Street, Georgetown, c.1910; the existing portion of Barclay's Block is identified with an arrow. (TPL - Baldwin Collection of Canadiana, PCR-567) (EHS 00009)

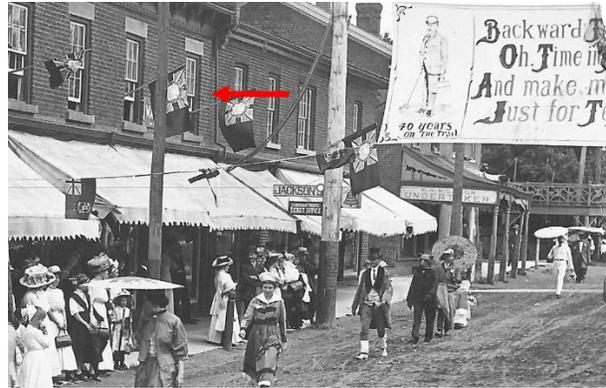


Figure 9: Crowds watch a Drummer's Snack parade in July 1912. The existing portion of Barclay's Block is identified with an arrow (EHS 21580)

Commercial Use and Services

The *Georgetown Herald* reported in October 1918 that the Barclay Block had been freshly painted, and that Brill & Co (later Brill's Department Store) would be moving into the building which had been most recently occupied by Adams & Co. In 1919, the Barclay Block was advertised for sale in *The Georgetown Herald* by William Barclay.



Figure 10: Main Street South, looking north; the existing portion of Barclay's Block is identified with an arrow (EHS 21524)

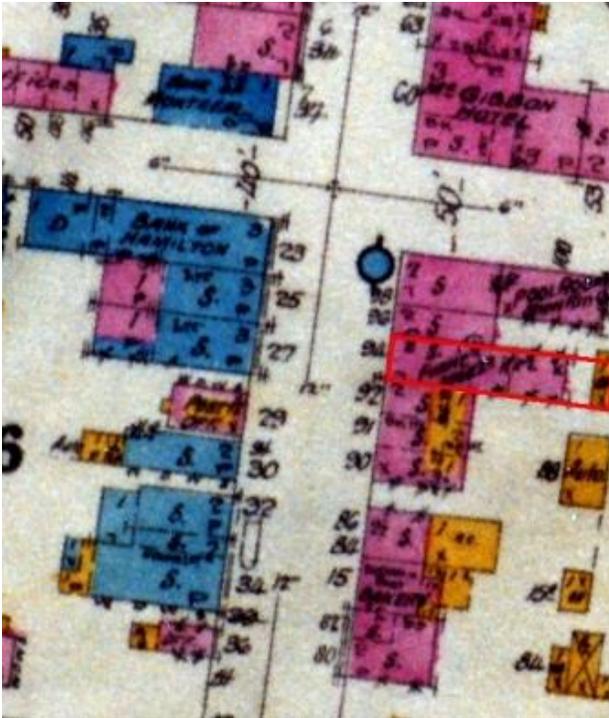


Figure 11: Subject property identified on the 1922 Fire Insurance Plan of Georgetown



Figure 12: Subject property identified on the 1934 Fire Insurance Plan of Georgetown

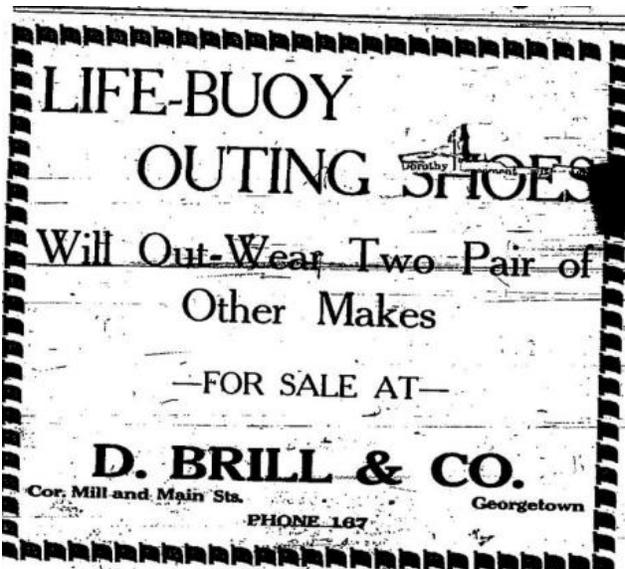


Figure 13: Georgetown Herald (Georgetown, ON), July 6, 1921, p. 3



D. BRILL & CO. COR. MILL & MAIN STREETS GEORGETOWN

Figure 14: Georgetown Herald (Georgetown, ON), December 9, 1925, p. 2



Figure 15: Advertisement for Hughey & McDonald (*The Georgetown Herald*, December 29, 1926, p.1)



Figure 16: Advertisement for Brill's Department Store (*The Georgetown Herald*, December 5, 1945, p.1)

Brill's occupied the majority of Barclay's Block for many years. In 1946, David Brill sold his department store to entrepreneur Jack Cotton, who operated a clothing store there until the 1970s. In 1948, Harold Hutchinson took ownership of Roy Magloughlen's barber shop, smoke business, and billiard parlor at the south end of the building (the extant portion), and continued to partner with Bob Murray following Magloughlen's retirement, renaming the business after himself.



Figure 17: Ready's 5c to \$1.00 Store on the left. Main Street South in 1949 (detail); the existing portion of Barclay's Block is identified with an arrow (EHS 00026)



Figure 18: Main Street looking north from Church St, c.1959 (detail); the existing portion of Barclay's Block is identified with an arrow. (EHS 04488)



Figure 19: Orange Parade in Georgetown, July 12, 1961. Subject property partially shown on the right, pre-removal of most of the building for the Royal Bank building. "Cotton Brothers" and "Hutch's Smoke Shop" signs are visible; the existing portion of Barclay's Block is identified with an arrow (EHS 00238)

In 1961 "Hutch's Smoke Shop" was remodelled and renamed "The Snackette" and operated until 1972. Also in 1972, Cotton Brothers closed their doors (at which time the building was still owned by the Brill Estate). The majority of Barclay's Block was soon demolished, leaving the existing portion, to facilitate the construction of the Royal Bank building (still extant) at the corner in 1973. The existing building was later the location of a Sears Catalogue store.

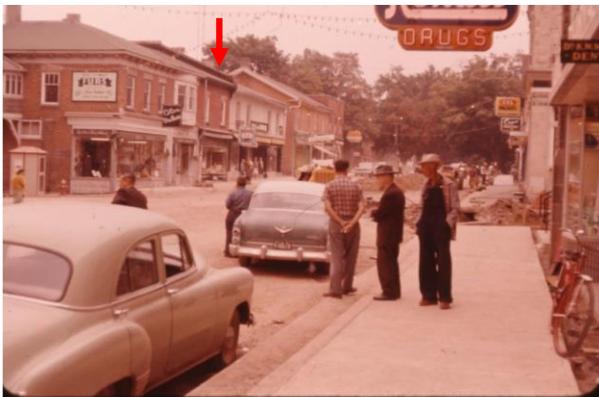


Figure 20: Georgetown Vault c.1961; the existing portion of Barclay's Block is identified with an arrow.



Figure 21: Barclay's Block shown to the left c.1961; the existing portion of Barclay's Block is identified with an arrow (The Georgetown Vault)



Figure 22: Barclay's Block shown to the left c.1961; the existing portion of Barclay's Block is identified with an arrow (EHS 18401) (detail);



Figure 23: Photograph showing the corner of Barclay's Block prior to its demolition in the 1970s (Georgetown Vault, n.d.)



Figure 24: Advertisement in *The Georgetown Herald* (August 2, 1962, p. 8)



Figure 25: Subject property shown to the right of the Royal Bank building, c.1987; the existing portion of Barclay's Block is identified with an arrow (EHS 10472)

PRESTIGE retail location Downtown Georgetown, approx., 2200 square feet, clear 22 ft. glass front, newly refurbished building at 89 Main St.S., formerly Sears Catalogue Store, beside Royal Bank, available immediately, call owners at 416-932-1900.

Figure 26: Advertisement for the subject property (November 21, 1993)
(https://images.ourontario.ca/Partners/HHPL/HHPL002886049pf_0025.pdf)

In 1983 Marcia Dye opened a health food store by the name of “Foodstuffs” at 92 Main Street South in Georgetown. The current owner purchased the subject property 13 years later and continues to operate the health food store at this location.

VI'S TOMATO SOUP CAKE

- 2 tbsp butter or margarine
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 egg
- Beat thoroughly

Dissolve 1 tsp. soda in 1 can tomato soup, add alternately to above mixture with:

- 1½ cups flour
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 tsp. cloves

Bake 35 to 40 mins. at 350°

SPECIAL

- PEANUTS**
(Blanched & Roasted)
95¢/lb.
- JUMBO PURE CHOCOLATE CHIPS**
***1.98/lb.**
- HOT CHOCOLATE POWDER**
Plain or with Marshmallows
(Just add water!)
***1.49/lb.**

Foodstuffs 92 Main St. S. Georgetown 877-6569

Figure 27: Georgetown Herald (Georgetown, ON), January 30, 1988, p. 7

Hello Friends

WHEN YOU SHOP AT FOODSTUFFS, you're part of the grassroots culture of small business. You're not helping to pay big salaries and bonuses to upper management and dividends to stockholders ... you're making a difference for about a dozen of your neighbours and their families.

And we thank you!

FOODSTUFFS
Specialty • Health • Bulk

89 Main Street South | Downtown Georgetown
FOODSTUFFS.CA 905.877.6569

Figure 28: Independent & Free Press (Georgetown, ON), 3 November 2023, p. 20

2.2 Property & Architectural Description

The property at 87 Main Street South is located along the east side of Main Street South within a commercial row. The existing two-storey building with rear additions has been modified at grade, as with many of the nineteenth-century commercial properties extant within Georgetown's commercial core.



Figure 29: Looking along Main Street South towards the subject property (Town of Halton Hills 2023)



Figure 30: Looking along Main Street South towards the subject property (Town of Halton Hills 2023)

The first storey of the front (west) elevation features an angled, recessed storefront with single entry door and a large glazed storefront window. An entrance is located adjacent to the storefront providing access to the upper storeys. The brick façade of the existing building has been covered with stucco at the second storey. Two flat-headed window openings are evenly spaced on the second storey with shutters (not original) and painted stone sills.



Figure 31: Looking towards the front (west) elevation of the existing building (Town of Halton Hills 2023)



Figure 32: Looking towards the front (west) elevation of the existing building (Town of Halton Hills 2023)



Figure 33: Detail of the front (west) elevation of the existing building (Town of Halton Hills 2023)

The rear elevation of the building shows a two-storey addition, also stuccoed, accessed via fire escape.

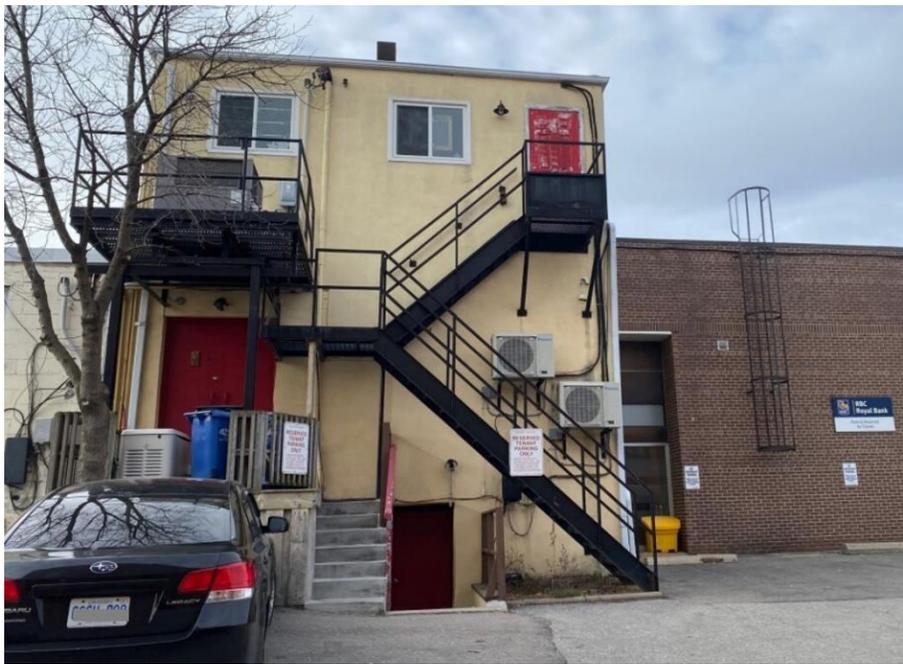


Figure 34: Rear elevation of the existing building from within the municipal parking lot (Town of Halton Hills 2023)

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 is 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	N/A
Demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement	N/A

The property at 87 Main Street South has physical and design value as the last remaining portion of the mid-nineteenth century commercial building known as Barclay's Block within the community of Georgetown. Built for prominent entrepreneur Francis Barclay, the building featured architectural details and a form typical of nineteenth-century downtown commercial buildings in Ontario at the time. While the remaining section of Barclay's Block has been altered from the fine commercial building identified in the 1877 *Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of Halton*, the scale, form and massing, the traditional storefront, and symmetrically placed upper storey windows reflect some of its original form. Restoring the original, Flemish-bond brick beneath the existing stucco on the front elevation would further contribute to its physical value within the community of Georgetown.

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 87 Main Street South has historical and associative value due to its associations with prominent entrepreneur, Francis Barclay. Barclay's Block has been the site of several department and clothing stores since its construction, with connections to Brill & Co., the Cotton Brothers, and several smaller business and services including a pool and billiards hall, barber shop, smoke and tobacco shop, and restaurant. Serving as a health food store since the 1990s, the subject property continues to serve as an important part of historic Georgetown's commercial core.

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 87 Main Street South has contextual value as it is important in defining the built heritage character of the downtown. The existing remaining portion of the two-storey building known as

Barclay's Block remains in its original location, physically and functionally linked to its surroundings as a commercial property on the Georgetown main street. The scale, form and massing of the building helps to define the historic streetwall along Main Street South in the downtown.

4.0 Summary

Following research and evaluation, the property at 87 Main Street South 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 of the property at 87 Main Street South are identified as follows:

- The setback, location, and orientation of the remaining portion of the "Barclay's Block" along Main Street South in Georgetown;
- The scale, form, and massing of the remaining portion of the mid-19th century building with modified hipped roof;
- The traditional storefront layout at the first storey, including the solid base panels at grade beneath large display window openings, recessed entry, and sign band below the second storey;
- Window openings at the second storey; and,
- Red brick in Flemish bond pattern, covered with stucco.

The interior and rear elevation have not been identified as heritage attributes as part of this report.

5.0 Sources

Primary Sources

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“Port Credit Man Buys Local Business”. (August 18, 1948). *The Georgetown Herald*, p.1.

“Local News Items”. (November 6, 1918). *The Georgetown Herald*, p.3.

“Lease Expiring, Cotton Store Will Close Down”. (December 2, 1971). *The Georgetown Herald*, p.1.

Independent & Free Press

“The Freckled Lion roars”. (October 16, 1996). *Independent & Free Press*, p.21.

<https://news.haltonhills.halinet.on.ca/238363/data>

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