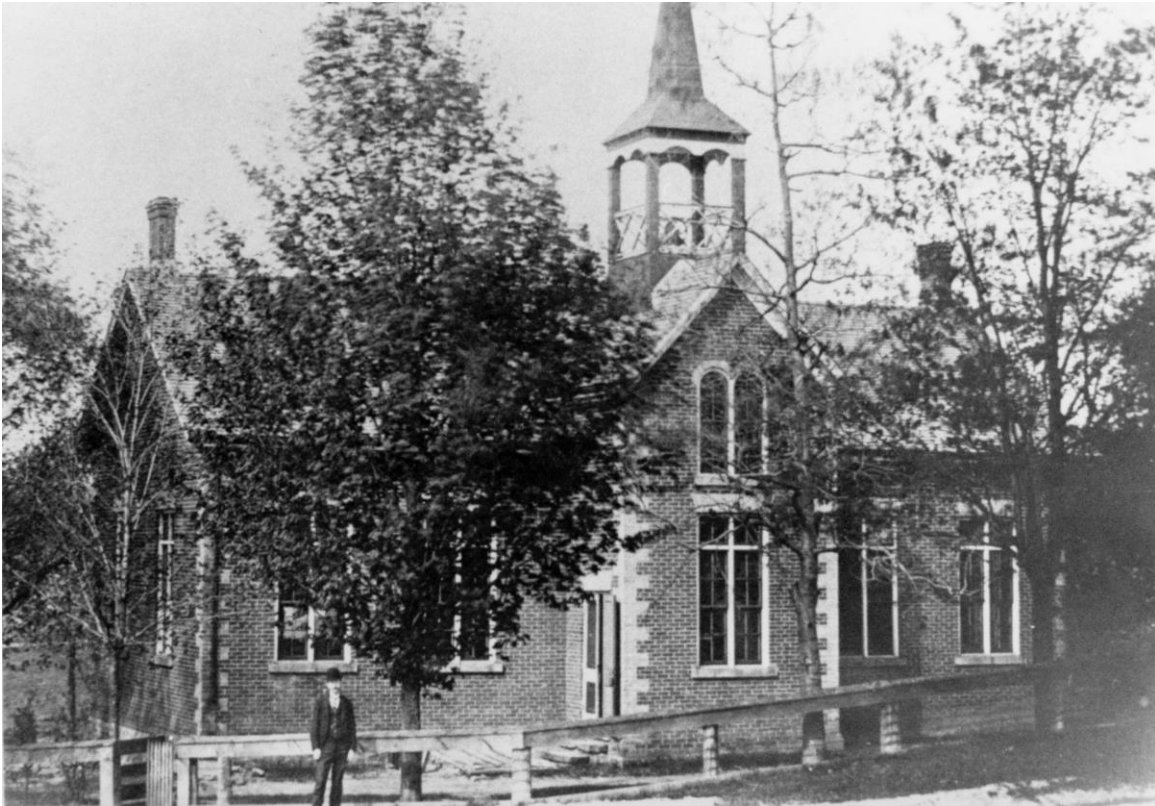


Glen Williams Schoolhouse



ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION
ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Heritage Halton Hills Designation Report 2018

By John Mark Rowe
& Anne Fisher

Location

The Glen Williams Schoolhouse is located at 15 Prince Street, Glen Williams, Halton Hills, village lot #69, being part of Lot 21, Concession 10, Esquesing township. It is found at GIS co-ordinates 43.671161 North and -79.923093 East. It is registered as Halton Hills Assessment Roll #2415070.003.62500.0000.

Historical Background

The son of a Loyalist family, John Butler Muirhead (1800-1824) received a location ticket for Lot 21, Concession 10 Esquesing in 1818. John Butler Muirhead completed his settlement duties on his 200 acres on 13 June 1823. On 25 September 1824, the Crown patent was issued to Muirhead. John Butler Muirhead died suddenly on 29 November 1824 and was buried at St. Mark's Church, Niagara.

Niagara woollen miller Benajah Williams sold his property to move to this lot. Whether Benajah had a deal with the young Muirhead or it was happenstance, he purchased Lot 21, Concession 10, Esquesing Township from the heirs of John Butler Muirhead on 9 November 1825. Sixty-year old Benajah reportedly had the saw mill up and running that same year, which suggests an understanding with the Muirhead heirs.



The 1837 schoolhouse at 6 Prince Street.

The village of Glen Williams is believed to have established a school in 1830. The early schools were usually in the home of one of the families involved. As the number of scholars rose (a fee was payable) the need for a separate building arose. A small frame and plaster building, which still stands east of 6 Prince Street, is believed to have been built as the school house in 1837. In 1840 John Colling was the school teacher.

In 1842, Esquesing Township divided the Township into 15 school sections (SS#16 and #17 were added later). Glen Williams became the centre for Section 11. James Stirrat was engaged in 1848 to keep a regular school for 11 months, as was now required by law.



Engraving of 1852 frame schoolhouse.

A new frame school was built in 1852 at the bottom of Prince Street. Lachlan McDonald was the teacher that year.

A growing population prompted Trustees to call a special meeting on 18 January 1873, where they were empowered to borrow up to \$3200 to build a new brick school.

On 26 February 1873, Charles Williams sold the Trustees of School Section #11 land half-way up Prince Street, on which they erected a two-room, brick school house. William Ewart was the school teacher. Theophilus Norton served as the senior teacher from 1876 until 1900. He was consistently paid \$500 per annum. Mr. Norton built his home across from the school at 9 Prince Street.



Students return chairs to the schoolhouse after an event. -EHS00964

The school grounds were often used for garden parties to raise funds for the war efforts, while the stage at the Town Hall provided a venue for Christmas performances.

The school may not have had a bell originally, since a fine

bell was ordered by school Trustees in 1909 from Meneely & Co. bell foundry in West Troy, New York.

It was cast with the raised letter inscription "Installed June 1909 on behalf of the pupils and teachers. Trustees: H. Holdroyd, G. Beaumont, D. Reid. Geo. Fittall, Principal." The bell is currently mounted on a cairn in front of the present school at 512 Main Street. It was dedicated in June 1967 as a Centennial project by the people of the village.

The school registers reveal some interesting tidbits of history. The 1909 register lists 80 students enrolled in the two-room school. The teacher was sick for two weeks from November 29th. By that time scarlet fever had been confirmed in the village. For the remaining two weeks before Christmas only 12 students showed up.



Glen School bell, cast in 1909 and engraving of 1852 schoolhouse mounted on a cairn at 512 Main Street, dedicated in 1967.

The following year the school closed on the day of King Edward VIII's funeral and again for Coronation Day in 1911. Teacher Mabel Erma Norton was paid \$450 for 1913 for teaching 90 students, while Margaret Currie had 60 senior students! In 1926, two Mildred Norton's enrolled.

Rising salaries after the Great War worried Trustees, resulting in their refusal of an increase for Miss Currie to \$1300 in 1923, who resigned. She was replaced by Miss Edna Neil of Renfrew. By 1932 Miss Neil made \$1150, but the Depression resulted in a reduction of pay. Miss Neil became Mrs. William Beaumont in 1941 and she continued to teach at the Glen School until June 1958, retiring after 36 years.



Glen Williams Public School, S.S. #11, Junior Department with teacher Margaret Leslie. 11 June 1924 -EHS13138

The Glen Williams School Board joined the Esquesing School Board about 1949, ending the use of section numbers. The growing number of children in the village prompted Trustees to authorize the construction of a third classroom addition. Construction began in the spring of 1949. On Monday 11 July, while two workmen were on the site of the excavation, the senior room wall collapsed into a pile of rubble. A hastily convened Board meeting was called, and it was decided to build a new school building.

Consequently, a new school was built in 1950 at 512 Main Street, where the school operates today. The original school property at Lot 69 was sold on 23 October 1951 to Herbert and Catherine Hancock

for \$1600. The original school structure was modified into a private residence.



Glen Public School (SS#11) class picture taken outside the school house on Prince Street about 1908. George Fittall is the teacher in the bowler

Site Analysis

SS#11, Glen Williams is the third school building to have been built in the village and was the first to be constructed in brick. It was originally a large single storey 5-bay brick schoolhouse with chimneys at either end and a projecting central gabled entrance porch. A prominent cupola that contained the school bell existed on the front of the roof situated just behind the projecting front gable.



The schoolhouse displayed characteristics of the Gothic Revival style of architecture.

The red brick was laid in a stretcher bond pattern on the front, rear and side gable end walls on both sides of the house and laid in common bond on the single-storey rear projecting wing.

Buff coloured bricks providing



decorative “quoin” features are found at the corners of the original school building.



A water table comprising two projecting brick courses above the foundations is found on the original school building, except for the truncated eastern end and the rear single storey projecting wing. The foundation is comprised of fieldstone on the exterior.

Buff coloured brick voussoirs sit above the windows and entrance door on the front and western gable end wall of the original school building, while red brick voussoirs support



the window and door openings on the rear wall.

The original stone window sills were reused and the



original buff coloured brick voussoirs were reused to create voussoirs for the new house.

The renovations included adding a new internal floor to make the building two storeys in height with a loft above. The long windows were removed to allow for the insertion of new upper floor and lower floor windows. However, the line of the original window and door openings are easily discernible in the brickwork.



The front chimney and existing doors and windows are not of heritage significance.



Scratched letters and marks from schoolchildren can be found in many original exterior bricks.



The one remaining original chimney.



SCHEDULE OF DETERMINING CRITERIA

Description of Property

The old brick Glen Williams SS#11 is located at 15 Prince Street, Glen Williams. It was the first brick schoolhouse to be built in the village of Glen Williams and was used for school purposes from 1873 until 1949 before being converted to use as a house. It is a cultural heritage landscape comprising of an old schoolhouse encircled with numerous trees and situated on the south east side of Prince Street to the east of the village centre.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The Glen Williams Schoolhouse meets the requirements of Ontario Regulation 9/06 by meeting several criteria that determine its cultural heritage value or interest.

The old brick Glen Williams SS#11 building is of design and physical value as a rare and early example the conversion of a large brick schoolhouse into a two-storey house.

The old brick Glen Williams SS#11 has historical or associative value as one of two nineteenth century old school houses that remain in the village.

This property is physically, functionally, visually and historically linked to the development of the village of Glen Williams and the school house is associated with the theme of the school system created by the early residents to this part of Halton Hills. This heritage landscape helps to define, maintain and support the character of the Glen Williams.

Description of Heritage Attributes

- a) Rectangular form with projecting two-storey front gable wing containing the front entrance and a single storey rear wing.
- b) Pitched roof;
- c) Three-bay front façade;
- d) Red brick laid in stretcher bond on the front, rear and side gable end walls on both sides of the house and laid in common bond on single-storey rear projecting wing.

- e) A water table comprising two projecting brick courses above the foundations of the original school building (not on the truncated eastern end or the rear single storey projecting wing);
- f) Buff coloured bricks providing decorative “quoin” features at the corners of the original school building (not the truncated eastern end);
- g) Buff coloured brick voussoirs above the windows and entrance door on the front and western gable end wall of the original school building;
- h) Red brick voussoirs above the windows and doors on the rear wall;
- i) Scratched letters and marks from schoolchildren in many original exterior bricks;
- j) Line of original window and door openings present in brickwork;
- k) Fieldstone foundation on exterior;
- l) Lug stone window sills with tooled edges on original school building. [Lug sills are not present on the truncated eastern end or the rear projecting single storey wing (including the small square window above the projecting rear wing)];
- m) Brick chimney with corbelled brick detailing and a buff brick base on western end of roof.

Documentation

Annual Report of the Local Superintendent of Common Schools for Esquesing, Department of Education, Ontario Archives.

Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of Halton, J.H. Pope, Toronto:1877.

The Georgetown Herald

The Acton Free Press

Halton Land records for Lot 21, Concession 10, Esquesing Township

Halton Land Records for Glen Williams Village Lot 69

Esquesing Historical Society Archives

Glen Williams Cemetery Transcription, Ann Sampson, Dale Ward et. al., Ontario Genealogical Society, Halton-Peel Branch, 1990.

Photographs of 15 Prince Street by J. M. Rowe, 8 January 2011; 5 January 2016; 20 May 2017; 17 August 2017.

School Registers of Glen Williams Public School 1902-1933, John Mark Rowe, ed., Esquesing Historical Society, Georgetown: 1996

Trustee Meeting Minutes of Glen Williams Public School 1873-1893, John Mark Rowe, ed., Esquesing Historical Society, Georgetown: 1994

CURRENT OWNERS

Dan and Allison Roffel

RECOMMENDATION

It is the recommendation of Heritage Halton Hills to designate The Glen Williams Schoolhouse under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.