



McSWEEN INN

c.1820

62 Water St. E.
3 Park St.



(The new updated building after Gord Cameron's 2021-2024 complete renovations.)

McSWEEN INN, 62 Water St. - ca.1820

This report is a result of much new information supplied by current owner and renovator, Gord Cameron.

With the current renovation by Gord Cameron, new details have emerged about its early beginnings, from the unveiling of nails used and window/door imprints revealed with the removal of inside walls. The nails used, fireplaces and the 'post and beam construction' all indicate it was pre-1830.

It was built **ca.1820** and in the early days was a standalone building, with windows on the east side. When built, the front faced Park St. There was a door way in the middle, with two large windows on each side. Because of this setup, it is believed that it was originally a store. The early building had pine clapboard siding, revealed in good shape when the century+ stucco was removed.

Roderick McSween acquired this building and built his stone house next door to the east, which was attached to this building. The back door to the east was filled in, as well as the windows. A new doorway, from the stone house to the Inn was put in near the front. This door led to a public room with expensive wainscoting panelling. This is believed to be a bar.

The pilaster columns are not original to the house, but believed to have been added at this time. The doorway to the Inn was probably installed on the Water St. side, also at this time. The original windows were larger than normal for the day, 15 panes over 15 panes. Dormer windows were installed in the roof to replace windows lost on the east side.

McSween is shown still living in the stone house, in the early 1870s. In 1867, he is shown as an inspector of licenses, indicating the Inn was closed by that point. **James Taylor**, who, in the early 1860s, was proprietor of the Steamboat Hotel & tavern on Main St. (later King), later a boarding house, moved this business to Water St. by 1871. It is believed (speculation) to be in this building as, after his death, Mrs. James Taylor was living here in the 1880s.

In the later 1800s, the building returned to its original form, as a grocery store. **Mrs. Hannah M. Clutterbuck** (1856-1927), widow of Frederick, had her grocery there from before the mid 1880s until ca.1893. Clutterbuck shared the building with **Jonathan M. Todd**, who ran a painting business there. Both Clutterbuck and Todd lived in the building. The building had a doorway out on Water St., in the basement, on the east side, since covered up. It is believed that their was a separate business there and most likely was put in and used by Todd. In later years, Mrs. Clutterbuck became a tailor, working for Mowet & Jackson.

After Clutterbuck's store closed, the store was vacant in mid-decade before being replaced by **James Higgins** grocery store, taking him to the end of the century. Around 1900, after the Higgins grocery store had closed, the building was radically changed, turning it into a duplex. The two units were divided centrally, with both units occupying 3 floors. The Park St. door was moved from the centre to the north corner, with two smaller windows to its right. This door served the west unit, later becoming #3 Park St. There was a door in the middle of the Water St. side, which served the east unit, later becoming #62 Water St. Between ca.1900 and ca.1955, the duplex was a rental unit.

The Water St. side saw many short term renters, ca.1900-ca.1955: **Edward O'Brien**, labourer; **Benjamin Dow**, plumber; **A. Victor Cromwell**, fireman at the Water Works; **Timothy Perrin**, engineer at Laing Produce Co.; **George T. Perrin**, engineer at Laing Produce Co.; **Edward J. Barber**, worked at Canada Foundry & Forgings; **Dalbert Kirby**, (Irene), fireman/Laing P & S Co.; **Gordon Kirkby**, worked at Laing P & S Co; **Mrs Margaret Lavery**; **John W. Hollingsworth (Alice)**, labourer; **James W. Beckstead (Loretta M.)**, mechanic/G.P. Wills;

The Park St. side saw many short term renters, ca.1900-ca.1955: **John Flanigan**; **William Emms**, labourer; **Shell Whiting**; **Mrs. M. Gehan**; **Stanley Carpenter**, driver-J.R. Bresnan & Son; **Daniel Darragh (Eva)**, fireman; **Charles E. Fodey (Anna)**, attendant at Ontario Hospital; **Edward H. Anderson**, worked/Canada Foundries & Forgings Ltd; **William Shepherd (Marjarie)**, assistant manager, Loblaws; **William H. Tosh (Elizabeth)**;

Around 1955, the two sides were sold off. The Park St. side was acquired by **Thomas Melvin (Susan)**, Melvin was a wire worker at Phillips Electric. The Melvin's were there until ca. 1965. After sitting vacant, it was owned/occupied by **William Besselink (Judy)**, a desk clerk at the Queens Grant Motel. The Besselink tenure lasted until 1994, when it was purchased by **Gord Cameron**. Cameron rented it out to **W Ashby** and **D. McAllister** among others.

On the Water St. side, we come to the longest occupant, at least in modern times. **Donald F. Yeldon** (1925 - 2015) and his wife, the former **Dorothy (Dollie) Mary Sylvain** (1923 - 2021) purchased the home about 1955, after many decades of it being a rental. The couple had 4 children, Cheryl, Donna, John and Wendy. There were also ten grandchildren, sixteen great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren. Donald worked many years at Phillips Cables. The family were here until around the time of Donalds death in 2015.

(Most information acquired from the various directories, Kimball's, Foster's, Vernon's, Gord Cameron.)

The 20th century and beyond saw the building covered over with stucco. This probably happened around 1900 after it was transformed from commercial to duplex residential units, in order to cover over the many changes to doors/windows. (Photo from Google Maps)



The original pine clapboard siding was still in good shape, when the stucco was removed, enabling Cameron to bring the structure back to it's original form. (Photo by Doug Grant)

Federal or Neo-Classical architecture had an influence on the original cornice and roof design of the building. This was typical before 1830.



The building has one central chimney that had 8 Rumford fireplaces feeding into it, two on each floor. Rumford fireplaces gained popularity between 1770 and 1830 because of their better efficacy and reduced smoking rates. The fireplaces were replaced by stoves and stove-pipes with the conversion of the building to the Inn, ca. 1840. This one was in the basement.

The windows were all reconstructed as the original ones were from some that were still there. They were 15 panes over 15 panes (3x5) and were rare because of their wider width then was normal for the time. Windows not facing the street were smaller.

