



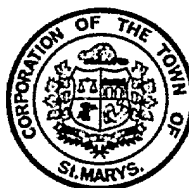
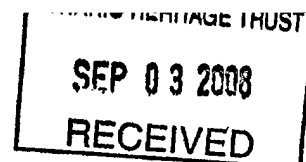
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Corporation of the Town of St. Marys
Box 998
St. Marys ON N4X 1B6

August 27, 2008

Ontario Heritage Trust
10 Adelaide Street East
Toronto, Ontario M5C 1J3

To whom it may concern:

Re: New designation of property of architectural and heritage significance

Please be advised that Town Council of the Corporation of the Town of St. Marys has designated a property at 481 Water Street South, St. Marys, under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Please find attached a copy of the designating bylaw. I believe you have been sent a copy of the statements of designation along with the notice of intent to designate.

Best wishes,

Mary A. Smith, for the Heritage St. Marys Committee



Bylaw 63 of 2008
Corporation of the Town of St. Marys

*Being a bylaw to designate the property known municipally as
481 Water Street South as being of architectural value or interest.*

WHEREAS Section 29 [4] of the Ontario Heritage Act authorizes the Council of a municipality to enact bylaws to designate real property, including all buildings and structures thereon, to be of architectural value or interest; and

WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Town of St. Marys has caused to be served upon the owners of the aforesaid real property and on the Ontario Heritage Trust notice of intention to so designate this property and has caused such notice of intention to be published in local newspapers having general circulation in the municipality; and

WHEREAS no notice of objection to the proposed designation has been served on the Chief Administrative Officer of the municipality;

THEREFORE the Council of the Corporation of the Town of St. Marys ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

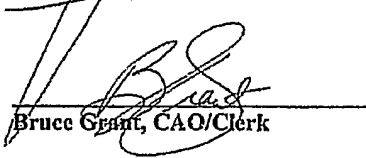
1. There is designated as being of architectural value or interest the real property known as 481 Water Street South, more particularly described in Schedule A attached hereto.
2. The municipal solicitor is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this bylaw to be registered against the property described in Schedule A attached hereto in the proper land registry office.
3. The Chief Administrative Officer is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this bylaw to be served on the Ontario Heritage Trust and to cause notice of the passing of this bylaw to be published in local newspapers having general circulation in the municipality.

Read a first and second time this 19th day of August 2008.

Read a third and final time and passed this 19th day of August 2008.



Jamie Hahn, Mayor



Bruce Grant, CAO/Clerk

Alexander McDonald house

481 Water Street South
Part Lot 35, Thames Concession
St. Marys, Ontario



photograph, courtesy Burton Ready

Statements for Designation

Prepared by Heritage St. Marys
2008

Alexander McDonald house
481 Water Street South, Part Lot 35, Thames Concession, St. Marys

Statement of architectural significance

This stone house was constructed in the early 1850s by the St. Marys stonemason, Alexander McDonald, builder of the Junction Station, the London railway viaduct, the 2½ storey stone building at 48 Water Street South (currently the R. J. White law office) and the Victoria Bridge. The house has many features that are recurring marks of McDonald's trade and of his style.

McDonald apparently built the house to rent, not to live in himself. An early description survives from an advertisement that first appeared in the St. Marys Argus, November 11, 1858 and ran for several subsequent weeks:

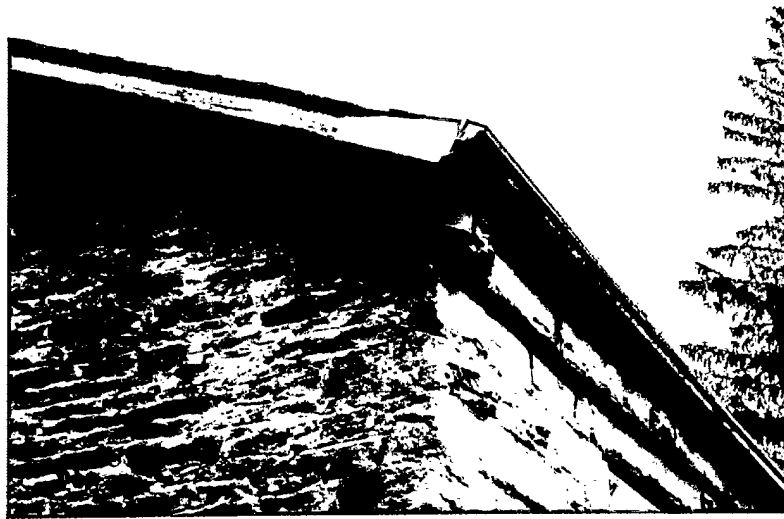
For Rent: Commodious stone house, situated Water St. South, eight well-finished rooms. Lot ¼ acre of land, well-fenced & in good condition for gardening; good stable, well & cistern in premises with a neat stone fence in front of house. Rent \$100. Apply owner Lot 47, Thames Concession, Blanshard. A. McDonald.



The façade of the house has a projecting architrave that is echoed by a projecting base course. The front door has four fielded panels, a large transom (with six lights) and sidelights. The base and stairs of the porch are limestone. The regular, ten-inched coursing of the façade consists of smooth-faced stones with the exception of intermittent rock-faced stones, a characteristic of McDonald's work that can be seen in the Junction Station. As in the Junction Station, there are both mason's marks and the marks of the feather drill originally used to in the process to extract the stone from the quarry. Again like the station, the foundation has regular ventilation holes. The sides of the house have large irregularly-shaped stones – blocks placed on their sides that mark the lines of the chimney flues. Here and at the back, the lintels are large, rough-hewn stones. The addition, built into the hill – and probably slightly later in date – has compound lintels and regular-coursed stonework. These features are particularly evident and beautiful on its south side.

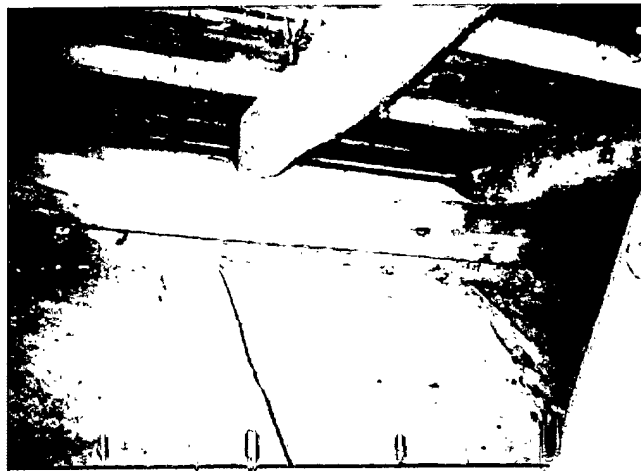
The house has two features that are unusual in St. Marys but found in McDonald's native Scotland. The architrave or beam course (the projecting stones at the eaves) is a wider, stronger course meant to support the roof, act as a soffit, and tie the outer and inner stones in the walls. On the main or west façade of the house this beam course is a substantial course of stone; its corbels are feathered. On the

east (back part of the main house) the beam course consists of a very shallow course of stone projecting from the eaves but not so ponderously as at front.



Detail of beam course at eaves, front of house

The second extraordinary feature can be seen in the attic. Here the second storey ceiling joists are set into the stone wall (down about a foot) instead of sitting on the stone wall as might be expected. Ordinarily the ceiling joists join the rafters to the roof but here the rafters are dovetailed into a squared plate on top of the wall and go down on an angle to the joists.



In the attic; note rafters dovetailed into plate

NOTE: Alexander McDonald hailed from Caithness at the northeastern tip of Scotland. Sandy McLean, a contemporary stonemason who does a great deal of work in the St. Marys area, reports seeing both of these construction features in a house he was repairing during a visit to his native Elgin in Morayshire, Scotland, in 2007.



Front door and entrance hall

The McDonald house is filled with light. Its main section has large, double sash windows, each with six over six lights. The front hall is wide and high and well lit by its transom and sidelights. Originally there were two rooms on either side of the front hall and two fireplaces heated the front part of the house. Two great hearthstones are still extant and the simple wooden overmantel of the fireplace in the south room is reminiscent of a mantel of the same period in the St. Marys Museum. A steep stair leads to the loft with two bedrooms, each with a dormer to the east and wide pine floorboards.

The refinements of the exterior stonework, the scale and proportion of the house and the interior details that have survived for a century and a half all set this building apart. It is not only one of the earliest but also one of the most remarkable residential stone buildings in St. Marys.

NOTE: The photographs that illustrate architectural details were provided by Burton Ready and Bill Mustard.