

**Mississauga's Lost Heritage - Dr. Dixie's House**  
**By Dorothy Kew**



Dr. Dixie's House, Erindale. Mississauga Library System

This unassuming house, reminiscent of Ontario Regency cottage style, formerly located at 1437 Dundas Crescent, was the home of well-known and well liked Dr. Dixie who practised medicine in the area from 1846 till his death in 1898. Beaumont Wilson Bowen Dixie was born in Carmarthenshire, Wales in 1818, the second son of Richard Thomas Dixie and his wife, Harriet Wilson. Beaumont, his brother, Wolstan Alexander, and his parents immigrated to Canada in 1831 and settled at Stamford, Niagara. Both Beaumont and Wolstan attended Upper Canada College, among the first pupils to do so, where Beaumont studied medicine. He received his license in 1842, practising first in Oakville, but soon after made Erindale his home and practised there till his death.



Dr. Beaumont Dixie. Mississauga Library System

Beaumont Dixie married Joanna (aka Anna) Skynner, the daughter of Captain John Skynner, a retired Royal Navy veteran of the Napoleonic Wars who purchased The Anchorage in Clarkson, another Regency style cottage, and settled there with his family.



The Anchorage, Clarkson. Mississauga Library System

Dr. Dixie and his wife, Anna, had six children, four girls and two boys. Four of the children including the two sons died in infancy in the diphtheria epidemic of 1853-4. Anna Dixie died in 1867 and Beaumont married again in 1868 to Elizabeth Blakely, the daughter of the late Dr. William Blakely and his wife, Sarah Hunter. Sarah had also remarried, to Robert Cotton. The Skynner family was also connected by marriage to the Jarvis family, and these families all lived in the Clarkson area.

Beaumont and Elizabeth Dixie had one daughter, Sarah Bertha Harriet, who never married and lived in the Dixie home until her death in 1951. Dr. Dixie was a popular physician who practised not only in Erindale but in the surrounding area. The village of Sydenham (also known by various names such as Fountain Hill and Fonhill) was renamed Dixie in his

honour, and Dixie Road was also named after him.

The Dixie house was described as a single storey frame structure with a stone foundation, sheathed in clapboard, to which several additions had been made, including a dispensary that Dr. Dixie probably built for his work. Descendants of Dr. Dixie lived in the house until it passed into other hands, most likely on the death of Bertha in 1951, her two half-sisters, Mary Amelia and Christianna having married and left home.



Dr. Dixie's House, ca 1976. Mississauga Library System

The house was eventually bought by the developer, Peter Demeter. His wife, Christine, was brutally murdered there in the garage in 1973 and Demeter was charged and convicted of planning her murder. In 1984 the house was gutted by three fires. Although he was in prison Peter Demeter was charged with three counts of arson concerning these fires. While it was in bad condition attempts were made to have the house, which had been listed on the City's Heritage Register, designated under the terms of the Ontario Heritage Act, but the plans fell through and the house was demolished the same year - a great loss to Mississauga's early heritage.