

Mississauga's Lost Heritage - Thorne Lodge By Dorothy Kew

Thanks to the work of Heritage Planning, a department of Community Services, many of the historic buildings in the City of Mississauga have been preserved. However, many have not been as fortunate but thanks to existing photographs we still have the opportunity to enjoy their history and architecture. One such building is Thorne Lodge.



Thorne Lodge, 1965, Mississauga Library System

Thorne Lodge, originally called Toronto House, was built for Lieut.-Colonel Peter Adamson in 1821 on 200 acres of land near the Credit River, between Dundas Street and the Middle Road (now the Queen Elizabeth Highway) near to the village of Erindale. The area is now known as Sheridan Homelands. The name Thorne Lodge was given to the house because of the many imported hawthorn trees on the property. Jean Adamson, in her book, **Erindale at the Crook of the Credit** (Rev. ed. Boston Mills Press, 1978), describes the house as a four-sided structure built of fieldstone with an inner courtyard. Colonel Adamson lived in one part of the house and another part was called the Assembly Hall and used for meetings and dances. This was where church services were held until St. Peter's Anglican Church was built in 1827.



Lieut.-Colonel **Peter Adamson** came to Canada from Scotland in 1817, purchased the land to build his house, and then returned to finish his army service. He had served with distinction in the Peninsular War (1808-1814). He settled in Erindale and was responsible for bringing the Reverend James Magrath from Ireland as the first rector of the new church, St. Peter's Erindale. Peter Adamson had a brother, Joseph Adamson, one of the first doctors in the area.

Lieut.-Colonel Peter Adamson, Mississauga Library System



According to Betty Clarkson, in the book, **Medicine for Heroes: a neglected part of pioneer life** (Mississauga South Historical Society, 1981), **Dr. Joseph Adamson**, who was born in 1786 in Dundee, Scotland, became in 1822 the first physician and surgeon in Peel County to receive a license from the government of Upper Canada to practise medicine. Dr. Adamson not only treated the residents of the area but also did much work among the Mississaugas at the Credit Village and was a friend of their chief, Peter Jones. William Perkins Bull, in his book, **From Medicine Man to Medical Man** (Perkins Bull Foundation, 1934) describes the physical hardships Dr. Adamson had to face, as he carried a hatchet in his saddle bags in order to hack his way through the forest to get to his patients.

Dr. Joseph Adamson, Mississauga Library System

Thorne Lodge passed to the daughter of Lieut.-Colonel Peter Adamson, and after that into other hands. By 1932 it had been bought by Stanley Harmer whose family farmed it continually until 1964 when the property was sold for a subdivision. Plans were made in 1965 to save the house, which had not much changed over the years, but sadly it caught fire in May of that year and burned to the ground. No trace of Thorne Lodge remains. In an update to her original 1967 book Jean Adamson reported that two plazas were built in the area and that the Sheridan Park Research Centre, now Sheridan Science and Technology Park, occupies part of the site.