



The Cedars, a fine summer home located on King Street West, remains true to its original form. Inset, the house around 1910.

The Cedars retains

By Peggy Wright

Down a lane which emerges at a coach house stands *The Cedars*, a former home in west-end built in the early 1880s.

The residence is centrally situated on a graceful lawn, bordered on the east by the lake and on the west sides by dense shrubs and trees.



The coach house, around 1910, as seen by Kathleen Osler about 1910.

Giving up the underground for new ground

Scott Berry, former Toronto advertising account executive, has taken up new ground with Limelight Advertising and Creative Services.



The Oslers would move one every summer to their se on the lake. Mess said grandmother and the ser- s would precede the rest of



The Cedars: A summer house retains atmosphere of the 1890s

By Peggy Wright

Down a lane which winds through deep green woods and emerges at a coach house stands *The Cedars*, a fine summer home in west-end Cobourg, built in the early 1880s.

The residence is centrally situated on a graceful stretch of lawn, bordered on the south by the lake and on the east and west sides by dense shrubs and trees.

Building history

The 11-acre property is located on the south side of King Street West, just beyond Maher Street.

The house is large and strong-looking, basically constructed with a Georgian plan and simple Victorian details in the doors and windows.

Historian Rob Mikel says it reflects the conservative taste in Cobourg architecture of the period and contains all the wonderful aspects of a summer home.

Used primarily as a summer residence for many years, the house and grounds embody the essence of the warmer months — the wide verandah with wicker and ladder-back chairs, the summer kitchen and pantry, the expanse of lawn overlooking the lake where you can almost hear the crack of a croquet mallet, and the sheer curtains blowing in doors which lead from both front rooms.

The current owner, Susanna Mess, remembers a children's game from her youth which she says must have "driven my grandfather wild." The children would open the wide screen door inside the front entrance as far as it would go, then run at top speed towards the lake to see how far they could get before the door closed with a resounding bang.

Dr. Thomas White bought the property in 1881 and presumably built the house soon after.

In the early 1890s, the home was purchased by another doctor, John Clark, who lived only a few years at the residence before it was sold to Charles Guillett.

Guillett and his son are credited with some extremely unusual papier mache decoration in the front hall and dining room. The ornamentation must have taken many months of work.

Newspapers from the years 1892-95 completely cover the downstairs walls in a relief pattern.

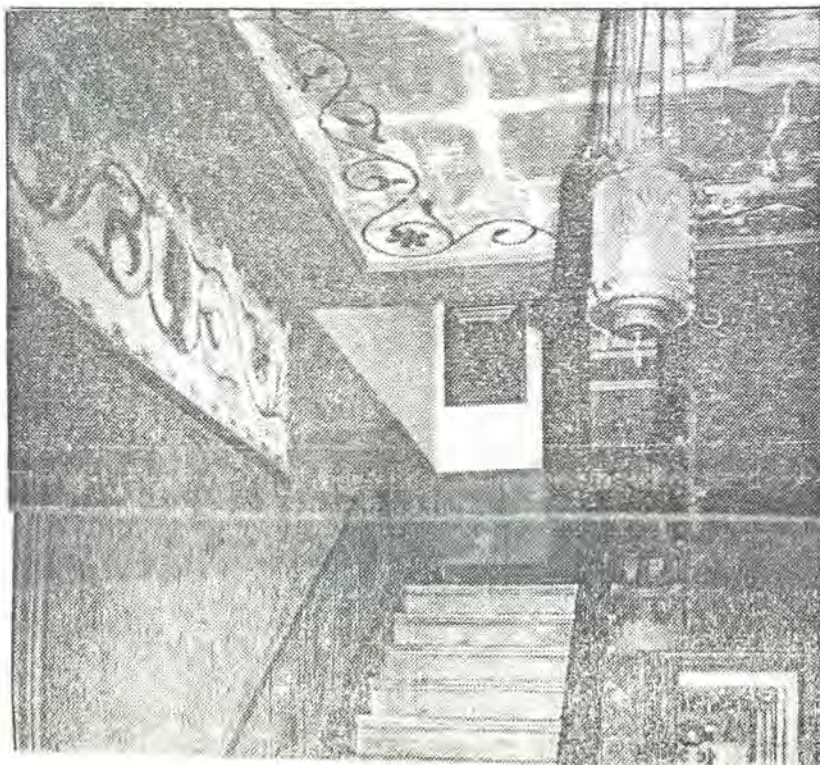
In the dining room, the Guilletts created a border frieze of children dancing along the top of the walls. On the ceiling is a painting of four cherubs, one of which gazes at the dinner table with a particularly intense look.

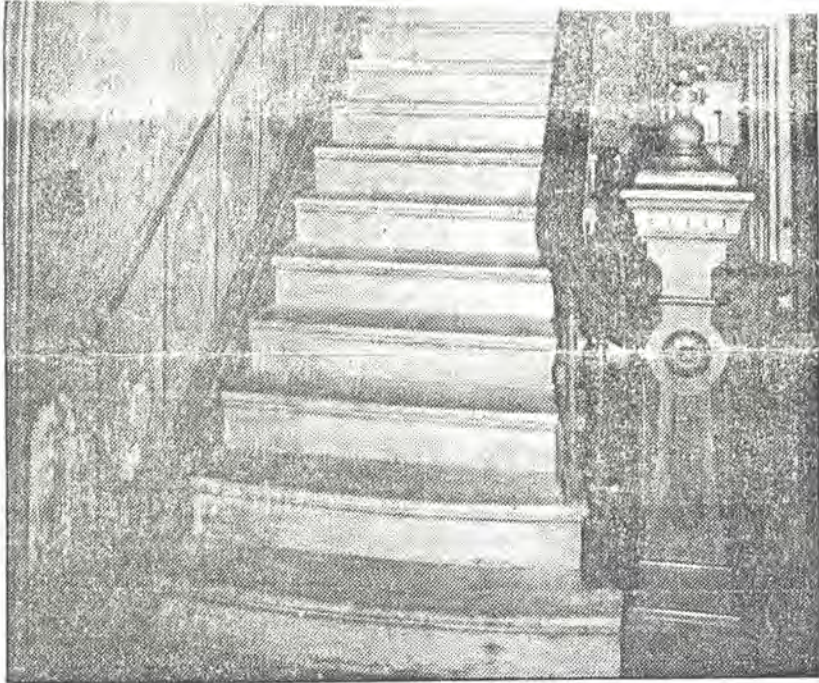
Mess's grandfather, Edward H. Osler, bought the house in 1898.

Osler arrived in Cobourg around 1876 and was manager of the Dominion Bank for 45 years (the Dominion subsequently merged with the Toron-

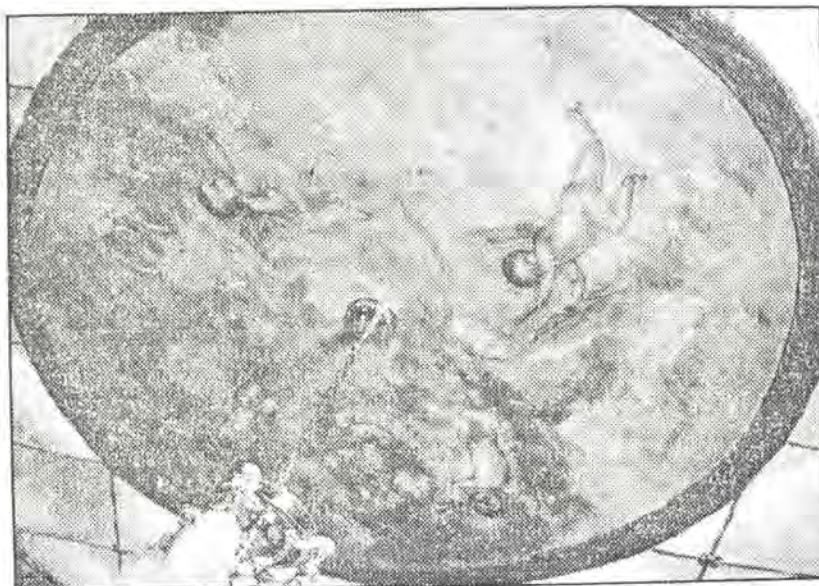


The coach house, around 1910, with the present owner's mother, Kathleen Osler about to take her mare 'Lady' for a drive.





Detail of the front hall, with the papier mache decoration dating from 1892 which is presently being restored.



The dining room ceiling, resplendent with cherubs who cast their gaze upon those who sit at the table.

OH NO!



NOT 4 OH
Happy Birthday
Sis

Happy 13th Chris



Love, Mom & Cortney

around 1876 and was manager of the Dominion Bank for 45 years (the Dominion subsequently merged with the Toronto Bank) at the north-west corner of King and Division streets.

He was known as the "widows friend" because of his compassion as a bank manager, and was very highly thought of in the community.

Osler met his future wife, Kate Fairbanks, while she was in Cobourg to visit her sister, Florence, who attended the Brookhurst Ladies Academy on Havelock Street.

The Osler family first lived at 130 King St. E. in a home which at the time greatly resembled *The Cedars*.

The Oslers would move one mile every summer to their house on the lake. Mess said her grandmother and the servants would precede the rest of the entourage, opening the shutters and laying the linen.

The house on King Street was sold in the late 1920s when the family made *The Cedars* their permanent residence.

Grandmother Kate Osler was known to be very talented musically and was a great friend of Madame Albertini, a well-known opera singer who lived in Cobourg.

The house passed to Mess's mother, Kathleen Frances Osler, around 1930.

Mess said her mother, an avid equestrian, was one of the first women to ride astride in the area. It was only her high standing in the church which dispelled talk about the unsuitability of young women riding in any manner other than side-saddle.

In the course of restoration, Mess discovered a small room underneath the coach house. The space is believed to have served as a groom's quarters.

The interior of the house contains many of the original pieces of furniture brought by the Oslers.

The second floor is illuminated from the north by a lovely gothic window, and all the bedrooms have transom windows with the original glass.

Mess is in the midst of restoring the house, including the papier mache designs, which she said "are so awful, they're beautiful."

The charm of the property is due mainly to the fact the residence and the coach house, which stands to the north, remain as they were.

The proof is in old photographs of the property. Taken in 1910, it is difficult to see any change in *The Cedars*.

Mess says the estate will remain the way it is as long as she has her way.