

this ss it's been covered by a later building material—this conjecture seems likely. One example of this type of building is the white clapboard house, known locally as the Belshaw house or the Campbell farm house (circa 1840s), at 77 Front Street West. This home was built with timbers in frames called bents and used basically the same frame structure as an old-fashioned barn. These bents would then be lined with some sort of deterrent to winter's icy blasts; brick was often used for this. It provided just one more line of defence against the bitter winter weather in homes which were often made habitable only by fireplaces or simple stoves. Central heating was still a few decades away.



*The Nicholas Lake house.*

Stone was also a relatively easy to obtain building material in Stirling's environs. Most of the neighbouring rich farm lands lie over solid limestone bedrock and a favoured spot for an easily "mined" stone was the Glen Ross area. Several fine examples of



*The Horton-Cummings house.*

stonework are to be found in the village: there's the Nicholas Lake house (circa 1840) at the northwest corner of Front and Station Streets; the fine old building which houses the Masonic Lodge on North Street and the stone building known as the Baker flour mill on Mill Street (circa 1850s). The Horton house on the east side of the mill pond beside what is now the



*The Gallagher house at 22 Henry Street.*

police service building, is another fine example of the stone mason's art; it dates to at least the 1840s. Stone also served as a less-expensive building material for side and rear walls of buildings which would then feature a brick facade; many Stirling building foundations are made of local limestone.

A third building material used in many of the early buildings was locally fired brick; by the 1880s brick was becoming the building material of choice and Stirling has many beautiful old brick homes and churches. At one time several brickyards flourished; one was located at the corner of Holly and Elizabeth Streets while another was located just north of town on the Concession 2 farm of James Kyle; according to Belden's 1878 Atlas of Hastings and Prince Edward Counties, the brick yards would have been east of what would become Highway 14. The Gallagher house at 22 Henry Street is reputed to have been the first brick house built in Stirling. It also has the distinction of being the first home in Stirling to have been outfitted with electricity. The dates of each aren't known exactly.

By 1900 Stirling had grown to roughly 1,000 people. Businesses were booming and the village benefited from the railway which had been a town asset since the mid-1870s (see the station history). Hotels did a brisk business running salesmen from the station to the hotels on Front and Mill Streets. Here they would have display rooms set up so local merchants could check out the latest trends in agriculture, clothing, books, kitchen appliances, corsets, toys, hardware and a host of other trade goods. Salesmen's samples were quite often smaller versions of the actual goods; 100-year-old sample stoves, blanket boxes, sewing notions, toys and vintage clothing sell at a premium to collectors.

Although the downtown core has not changed much from the way it looked at the turn of the 20th century, businesses have come and gone as dictated by the desires of the buying public. We no longer have tin smiths, coopers, tanneries or harness shops. Other services provided in Stirling at that time have moved to larger centres like Belleville and Trenton. Stirling