

Heritage Property – Eby House



78 Erb St. E.

Built c. 1887

Designated Sept. 2007: bylaw: 07-111, “The Eby-Snider House”

Ever since 1850, David B. Eby, son of David Eby and Elizabeth Bechtel of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, farmed a part of his father’s lot 32 at today’s Erb Street West and Fischer-Hallman Road. In 1851, he provided the southeast corner of that intersection for a Mennonite meeting house and only the cemetery (containing his grave and that of his first wife, Lydia Bauman) remains today.

In 1885, Eby bought from Benjamin and Nancy L. Devitt lots one and two, plan 512, at the corner of today’s Erb and Tweed streets and two years later retired from farming, moving with his second wife, Mary Kercher, into his new house on those lots. In 1905, the house was sold by Eby’s widow to Martin B. Snider, whom Eby had sold his farm some 20 years earlier. In 1920 his widow, Mary B. Shantz, sold the house at 78 Erb St. E. (Interestingly, Martin B. Schneider and Mary B. Shantz are documented as living for a while on “a large farm, known as Daniel Rudy’s.”

This two-storey yellow-brick building on a stone foundation with a lower two-storey summer kitchen to the rear is a clean example of Italianate design found in houses built for relatively affluent Waterloo citizens toward the end of the 19th century. Those design elements include a hip roof, wide eaves overhang, paired eaves brackets, symmetrical elevations and two-over-two double-hung windows in pairs, tall and narrow, with



relatively large panes of glass. Three blind windows reinforce the symmetrical appearance of an elevation. Both windows and doors throughout have segmentally arched lintels of bricks in a soldier course. Two single-storey bays project from the house, on the south, square in plan, on the east, half-hexagonal. Two chimneys have split double flues.

Among decorative elements are a semi-circular oculus in the south gable end, return eaves on the gable ends and eaves brackets which are heavy and ornate.

78 Erb St. E. is a pleasingly harmonious structure. The few alterations (stone-faced front porch, board-and-batten rear-entrance porch) do not detract from its authentic appearance. On two successive occasions, the house illustrates the phenomenon of the region's farmers choosing the town for their retirement years.