

Heritage Property – Snyder-Hahn Building



4-6 King St. S.

Built by Jacob Bricker, 1857; pharmacy opened, 1863

Designated March 17, 1986: bylaw 86-41, “The Snyder-Hahn Building”

The Snyder-Hahn Building represents the first and oldest pharmacy in the City of Waterloo, operating continuously for long over a century. The ground floor of this building was first used for a pharmacy in 1863 when J.S. Hoffman was the proprietor. In 1868 the business was sold to two prominent citizens, Moses Springer, the first reeve (1857) and mayor of Waterloo (1876) and Simon Snyder, who served as mayor in 1895. Snyder purchased Springer's share in 1873, and in 1949 Melvin J. Hahn acquired the business for which he had worked since 1907.

The Snyder-Hahn Building also holds a special place in local history as it was there in 1888 that the feasibility of a new insurance company was discussed. From the 1860s, the local town fathers used to gather around the stove in the pharmacy to talk over the affairs of the town. It was at one of these gatherings that Thomas Hilliard and “the hot-stove committee,” as they were called, conceived a project that would be called the Dominion



Life Assurance Co. Hahn's Pharmacy itself remained a vital Waterloo landmark up until 1987.

The Snyder-Hahn Building forms a part of one of the most significant business blocks remaining in uptown Waterloo — the three-storey commercial block. Though the façade, in a simple yellow-brick Victorian style and surmounted by a raised parapet, has been altered somewhat over time, it continues to reflect the era of its construction. The panelling under the display windows of the old pharmacy is original, as are the upper window openings and the corbelled brickwork beneath the cornice.