

Subject: Designation of 410-412 Besserer Street under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*

File Number: ACS2025-PDB-RHU-0033

**Report to Built Heritage Committee on July 8, 2025
and Council July 23, 2025**

Submitted on June 26, 2025 by Court Curry, Manager, Right of Way, Heritage, and Urban Design Services, Planning, Development and Building Services

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Ward: Rideau-Vanier (12)

Objet : Désignation des 410-412, rue Besserer en vertu de la partie IV de la *Loi sur le patrimoine de l'Ontario*

Dossier : ACS2025-PDB-RHU-0033

Rapport au Comité du patrimoine bâti

le 8 juillet 2025

et au Conseil le 23 juillet 2025

Soumis le 26 juin 2025 par Court Curry, Gestionnaire, Services des emprises, du patrimoine, et du design urbain, Direction générale des services de la planification, de l'aménagement et du bâtiment

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Quartier : Rideau-Vanier (12)

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Built Heritage Committee recommend that Council:

1. **Issue a Notice of Intention to Designate 410-412 Besserer Street under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* according to the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value attached as Document 4; and**
2. **Direct staff to issue a heritage permit for the alterations to the building in accordance with the approvals contained within the building permit issued on June 11, 2024.**

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que le Comité du patrimoine bâti recommande au Conseil municipal :

1. **De publier un avis d'intention de désigner l'édifice situé aux 410-412, rue Besserer, en vertu de la partie IV de la *Loi sur le patrimoine de l'Ontario*, conformément à la Déclaration de la valeur sur le plan du patrimoine culturel faisant l'objet du document 4 ci-joint;**
2. **De demander au personnel de délivrer un permis patrimonial pour les modifications prévues au bâtiment conformément au permis de construire délivré le 11 juin 2024.**

BACKGROUND

This report has been prepared because designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (OHA) must be approved by City Council. The property is located in the Sandy Hill Cultural Heritage Character Area and the Heritage Planning Branch received a request to designate this property in September 2022.

The Fleming Convalescent Home at 410-412 Besserer Street is a two-and-a-half storey stone residential building located in Sandy Hill, Ottawa. It was constructed in 1904 and is representative of the Queen Anne Revival style. The building was used as a military hospital and convalescent home during the First World War called the Fleming Convalescent Home and was jointly operated and physically connected to the Sir Sandford Fleming Convalescent Home at 311 Daly Avenue. They operated from 1917-1921 and 1916-1920 respectively. The Fleming and Sir Sandford Fleming Convalescent Home was one of six in Eastern Ontario and the only one in Ottawa. Therefore, the building yield more information about returned First World War soldiers, their care by the Military Hospitals Commission, and public opinion on military convalescent homes. The building at 410-412 Besserer Street supports the built

character of Sandy Hill as a residential neighbourhood with a mix of architectural styles of their time. The building has contextual value as part of Sir Sandford Fleming’s large Sandy Hill estate, built by Sandford for his son, Hugh Percy Fleming. It has cultural value for its design, associative, and contextual values and meets six of the nine criteria for designation under Part IV of the OHA.

DISCUSSION

1. Issue a Notice of Intention to Designate 410-412 Besserer Street under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*

The Official Plan, Provincial Planning Statement (PPS), and the OHA all provide policy direction related to the designation of individual properties under Part IV of the OHA.

Official Plan

The Official Plan has policies related to cultural heritage in Section 4.5, Cultural Heritage and Archaeology. Section 4.5.1(3) states: “Individual buildings, structures, and sites shall be designated as properties of cultural heritage value under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.”

Provincial Planning Statement (2024)

The Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) replaces the former Provincial Policy Statement and came into effect on October 20, 2024. Section 4.6 of the PPS includes the following policy regarding the conservation of heritage resources:

4.6.4 Planning authorities are encouraged to develop and implement:

b) proactive strategies for conserving built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes

Policies within the City’s Official Plan, as described above, direct the designation of significant properties and comply with this policy.

Should City Council designate the property outlined in this report, it would be considered “protected heritage property” for the purposes of the PPS 2024. The PPS includes the following policy related to protected heritage property:

- 1. Protected heritage property, which may contain built heritage resources or cultural heritage landscapes, shall be conserved.*

Ontario Heritage Act

Part IV of the OHA provides municipalities with the authority to designate properties of

cultural heritage value. Section 29 of the OHA sets out the process for the designation of individual buildings. It requires:

- that Council consult with its municipal heritage committee, and
- that the official Notice of Intention to Designate served on the owner and the Ontario Heritage Trust contain a description of the property and its heritage attributes, as well as a statement explaining the cultural heritage value or interest of the property and a statement that a notice of objection may be served on the clerk within 30 days after the date of publication of the notice of intention in a newspaper.

Per by-law 2002-522, as amended, the Notice of Intention to Designate will be published online on the City's website in both official languages. Document 4 contains the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value for this property.

Ontario Regulation 9/06

Regulation 9/06 (see Document 3) establishes criteria to determine if a property is of cultural heritage value or interest. A property may be designated under Section 29 of the OHA if it meets two or more of the nine criteria set out in the regulation. Through research and evaluation, staff have determined that the building at 410-412 Besserer Street meets six of the nine criteria. Detailed research and analysis are outlined in the Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report (see Document 5), and a brief analysis of each of the applicable criteria is provided below:

The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method:

The Fleming Convalescent Home at 410-412 Besserer Street has design value as a representative example of a Queen Anne Revival residence in Ottawa. This is demonstrated by its asymmetrical façade, irregular massing with multiple rooflines, verandah and entrance porch, two-and-a-half storey massing, variety of colour and texture through the mix of construction materials, decorative woodworking, and a central bay window. The Queen Anne Revival style was frequently used in Canada and Ottawa in residential architecture for middle- and upper-class families, reflecting the family that built the Fleming Convalescent Home.

The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit:

The property at 410-412 Besserer Street has design value because it displays a high

degree of craftsmanship. This is demonstrated by its complex roofline, stone cladding, use of multiple materials, and ornate wood detailing focused on the uppermost storey. Together, these elements illustrate a higher than typical standard of craftsmanship and identifies the building as a stately, upper-class home in Sandy Hill.

The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community:

The Fleming Convalescent Home has historical value because it has direct associations with convalescent homes during the First World War. Sir Sandford Fleming's family residence at 311 Daly Avenue was offered by his executors as a convalescent home and opened in January 1916. The following January, Hugh and Ethel Fleming offered their home, 410 Besserer Street as a convalescent home which was connected to 311 Daly Avenue by a stone wall. The two buildings were operated by the Women's Voluntary Aid Detachment and Military Hospitals Commission's documents refer to their operations jointly. Local sources refer to 311 Daly Avenue as the Sir Sandford Fleming Convalescent Home and 410 Besserer Street originally as the Sir Sandford Fleming Convalescent Home annex, then as the Fleming Convalescent Home. First World War convalescent homes were under the guidance of the Military Hospitals Commission (MHC) but were entirely run by volunteer organizations. The Sir Sandford Fleming Convalescent Home and the Fleming Convalescent Home was only one of six in Eastern Ontario and the only one in Ottawa and operated until 1920 and 1921 respectively. The Fleming Convalescent Home represents the early convalescent homes that aimed to use large, private homes for the medical care of wounded soldiers before the shift to the use of larger public buildings and purpose-built facilities. Convalescent homes in "borrowed buildings" during the First World War contributed to the evolution of hospitals and at home medical care in the second half of the twentieth century.

The property has historical value or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture:

The building's use as a military convalescent home yields more information about the First World War veteran community and the federal government's involvement in the physical and mental health treatment of its servicemen in the early twentieth century. It contributes to understanding the role of the MHC and care provided in convalescent homes to First World War "invalid soldiers." Fleming Convalescent Home demonstrates the MHC's adaptation of convalescent homes to also serve as hospitals and a space for

vocational training. Studying the MHC can illustrate the complex patient and public opinions of returned soldiers and their treatment received at convalescent homes.

The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area:

The building at 410-412 Besserer Street is important in supporting the character of Sandy Hill as part of the former Besserer Estate neighbourhood, which is characterized by a diverse collection of architectural styles spanning the decades of development. Most construction occurred between the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century, and the buildings represent the popular architectural styles of this period, including Queen Anne Revival, Tudor Revival, Edwardian Classicism and Italianate. The residential neighbourhood often feature the use of natural building materials, second storey porches, regular setbacks, and mature trees. The building at 410-412 Besserer Street fits within this established built character of Sandy Hill.

The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings:

The Fleming Convalescent Home has physical contextual value for being part of Sir Sandford Fleming's Besserer and Daly Street estate. He owned the western block between Besserer Street, Chapel Street, and Daly Avenue. Sir Sandford Fleming purchased the four corner lots in 1870 including the home at 311 Daly Avenue called Winterholme which was their residence until his death. When Sir Sandford Fleming began settling his estate, in 1906/1907 sold 410 Besserer Street to his son Hugh Percy Fleming, and the remaining lots were sold jointly to his three sons. These properties were granted in 1922 or 1927, and in the 1930s were developed. Additionally, the building's primary residential use was only temporarily interrupted while used as a convalescent home during the First World War and as the Embassy of the Republic of China. Otherwise, 410-412 Besserer Street has maintained its use as a residential building from one family to a multi-unit residence in the 1920s onwards, representing Sandy Hill's primarily residential neighbourhood context.

2. Direct staff to issue a heritage permit for the alterations to the building in accordance with the approvals contained within the building permit issued on June 11, 2024.

The owner has a building permit that was issued on June 11, 2024, for construction of a new garage, reconfiguration of the enclosed exterior stairs on the east façade, and a re-cladding of the second storey enclosed porch and first storey enclosed verandah.

Section 30 (1) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* states:

If a notice of intention to designate a property as property of cultural heritage value or interest is given under section 29, any permit that allowed for the alteration or demolition of the property and that was issued by the municipality under any Act, including a building permit, before the day the notice was served on the owner of the property and on the Trust and published in a newspaper is void as of the day the notice of intention is given in accordance with subsection 29 (3). 2005, c. 6, s. 18.

Section 30(2) of the OHA provides interim control and notes that once a NOID is issued, a heritage permit is required as if the property is already designated.

In general, Heritage Planning Staff have no concerns with the proposed alterations. However, the enclosed porch is identified as a heritage attribute and staff will work with the owner to finalize the material and design for the porch. The property owner has already expended significant time and resources in obtaining his building permit and this recommendation is included so that the owners' previously issued building permit will remain valid.

Conclusion

The property at 410-412 Besserer Street meets six of the nine criteria for designation outlined in Ontario Regulation 9/06 for designation under Part IV of the OHA. Staff recommend that Council issue a Notice of Intention to Designate the property under Part IV of the OHA.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications associated with implementing the report recommendations.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)

The Ward Councillor is aware of the recommendations in the report.

CONSULTATION

The property owner was notified of the proposed designation by letter on January 20, 2025 and May 27, 2025. The letter included information about the designation process, instructions on how to participate and an offer to meet with staff to discuss and answer any questions.

The Community Association and Heritage Ottawa have also both been notified of this proposed designation.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

The designation of these properties under the *Ontario Heritage Act* does not impact the physical fabric of the buildings. While alterations to designated properties, including renovations to remove barriers for people with disabilities, require a heritage permit, the fees for these permits are waived and staff work with property owners to allow for accessibility retrofits.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no asset management implications.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no rural implications.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 Location Map

Document 2 Photos

Document 3 Ontario Regulation 9/06

Document 4 Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report

Document 5 Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

DISPOSITION

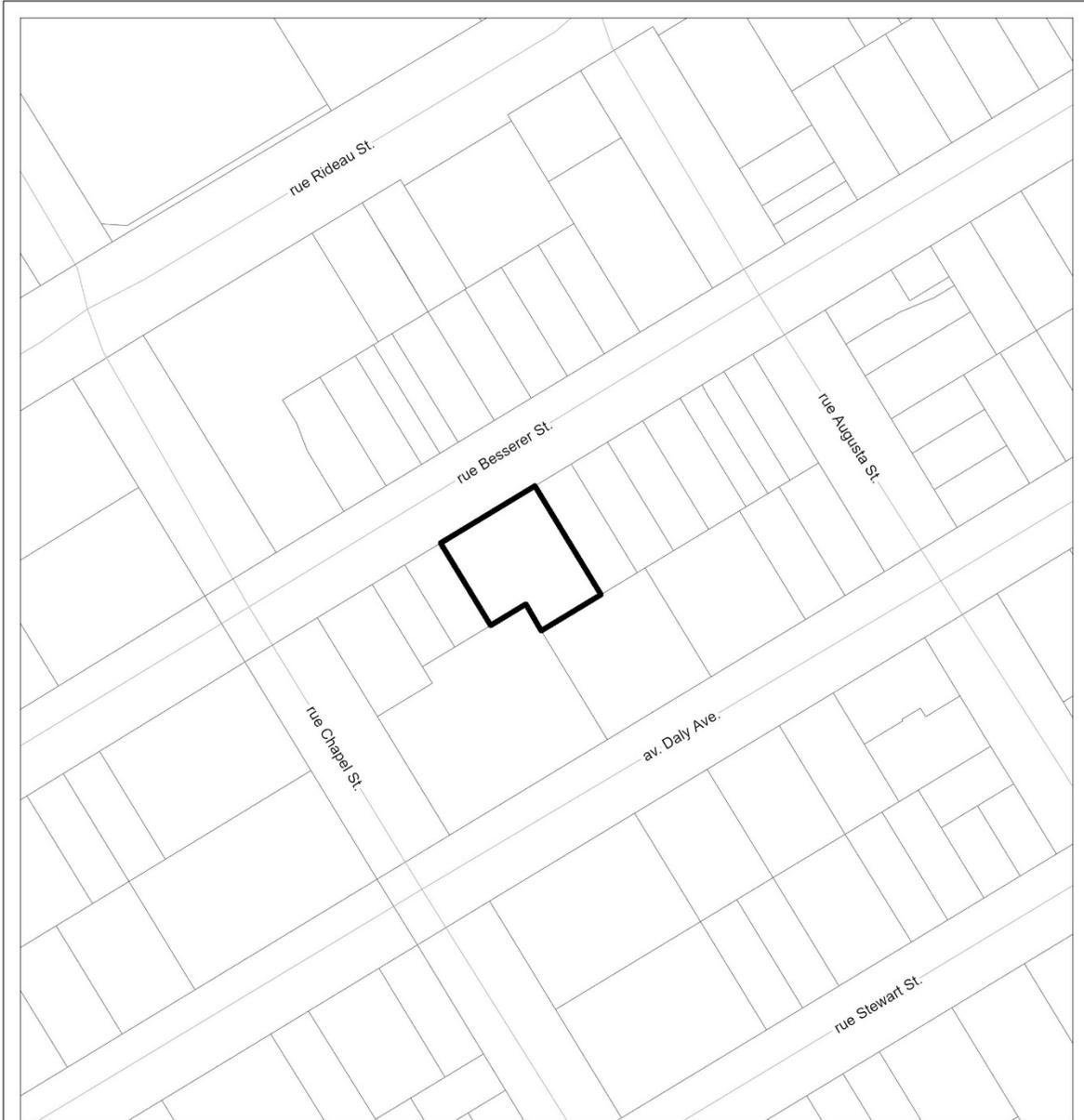
If Council does not carry the recommendation, no further steps are required. If Council proceeds with the issuance of a Notice of Intention to Designate for the property located at 410-412 Besserer Street, several actions must be taken:

- 1) Heritage Planning Branch, Planning Development and Building Services Department, to prepare the Notice of Intention to Designate. Office of the City Clerk, Council and Committee Services to notify the property owner and the Ontario Heritage Trust (10 Adelaide Street East, 3rd Floor, Toronto, Ontario,

M5C 1J3) of Council's decision to issue a Notice of Intention to Designate the property at 410-412 Besserer Street under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

- 2) Heritage Planning Branch, Planning Development and Building Services Department to ensure publication of the Notice of Intention to Designate according to the requirements of Section 29 the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
- 3) If the City Clerk receives a Notice of Objection under Section 29(5) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* within thirty days of the publication of the Notice of Intention to Designate, the Heritage Planning Branch, Planning Development and Building Services Department is to prepare a report regarding the objection for consideration by Council within 90 days after conclusion of the objection period, according to Section 29 (6) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
- 4) If the City Clerk does not receive any Notice of Objection under Section 29 (5) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* within thirty days of the publication of the Notice of Intention to Designate, or if City Council decides not to withdraw the notice of intention to designate the property after an objection has been served, the Heritage Planning Branch, Planning Development and Building Services Department, is to prepare the designation by-law, under the authority of the approval of this report and Legal Services to submit to City Council for enactment within 120 days of the publication of the Notice of Intention to Designate as prescribed in Section 29(8) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
- 5) Office of the City Clerk, Council and Committee Services to cause a copy of the by-law together with a statement explaining the cultural heritage value or interest of the property and a description of the heritage attributes of the property, to be served on the owner of the property and on the Trust according to the requirements of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. Heritage Planning Branch, Planning Development and Building Services Department to ensure publication of the notice of the by-law in the newspaper according to the requirements Section 29(8)(4) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Document 1 – Location Map



	
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REVISION / RÉVISION - 2025 / 01 / 16	

LOCATION MAP / PLAN DE LOCALISATION
HERITAGE / PATRIMOINE



410, 412 rue Besserer St.



NOT TO SCALE

Document 2 - Photos



Front façade



West façade



North and east façades



North and west façades



East façade



South façade and gable end of former connecting wall, view from Daly Avenue

Document 3 – Ontario Regulation 9/06**CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST**

Consolidation Period: From January 1, 2023 to the e-Laws currency date.

Last amendment: [569/22](#).

This is the English version of a bilingual regulation.

Criteria, s. 27 (3) (b) of the Act

1. (1) The criteria set out in subsection (2) are prescribed for the purposes of clause 27 (3) (b) of the Act. O. Reg. 569/22, s. 1.

(2) Property that has not been designated under Part IV of the Act may be included in the register referred to in subsection 27 (1) of the Act on and after the day subsection 3 (2) of Schedule 6 to the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 comes into force if the property meets one or more of the following criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest:

1. The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.
2. The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.
3. The property has design value or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
4. The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.
5. The property has historical value or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.
6. The property has historical value or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.
7. The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.
8. The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.
9. The property has contextual value because it is a landmark. O. Reg. 569/22, s. 1.

(3) For clarity, subsection (2) does not apply in respect of a property that has not been designated under Part IV but was included in the register as of the day subsection 3 (2) of Schedule 6 to the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 comes into force. O. Reg. 569/22, s. 1.

Criteria, s. 29 (1) (a) of the Act

2. (1) The criteria set out in subsections (2) and (3) are prescribed for the purposes of clause 29 (1) (a) of the Act. O. Reg. 569/22, s. 1.

(2) Section 1, as it read immediately before the day subsection 3 (2) of Schedule 6 to the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 comes into force, continues to apply in respect of a property for which a notice of intention to designate it was given under subsection 29 (1.1) of the Act after January 24, 2006 and before the day subsection 3 (2) of Schedule 6 to the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 comes into force. O. Reg. 569/22, s. 1.

(3) In respect of a property for which a notice of intention to designate it is given under subsection 29 (1.1) of the Act on or after the day subsection 3 (2) of Schedule 6 to the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 comes into force, the property may be designated under section 29 of the Act if it meets two or more of the criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest set out in paragraphs 1 to 9 of subsection 1 (2). O. Reg. 569/22, s. 1.

Criteria, s. 41 (1) (b) of the Act

3. (1) The criteria set out in subsection (2) are prescribed for the purposes of clause 41 (1) (b) of the Act. O. Reg. 569/22, s. 1.

(2) Subject to subsection (3), in the case of a by-law passed under subsection 41 (1) of the Act on or after the day subsection 5 (1) of Schedule 6 to the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 comes into force, a municipality or any defined area or areas of it may be designated by such a by-law as a heritage conservation district under subsection 41 (1) of the Act if the municipality or the defined area or areas of it meets the following criteria:

1. At least 25 per cent of the properties within the municipality or defined area or areas satisfy two or more of the following:
 - i. The properties have design value or physical value because they are rare, unique, representative or early examples of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.
 - ii. The properties have design value or physical value because they display a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.
 - iii. The properties have design value or physical value because they demonstrate a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
 - iv. The properties have historical value or associative value because they

have a direct association with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.

- v. The properties have historical value or associative value because they yield, or have the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.
- vi. The properties have historical value or associative value because they demonstrate or reflect the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.
- vii. The properties have contextual value because they define, maintain or support the character of the district.
- viii. The properties have contextual value because they are physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to each other.
- ix. The properties have contextual value because they are defined by, planned around or are themselves a landmark. O. Reg. 569/22, s. 1.

(3) Subsection (2) does not apply in respect of a by-law passed under subsection 41 (1) of the Act on or after the day subsection 5 (1) of Schedule 6 to the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 comes into force if a notice of a public meeting required to be held for the purposes of the by-law under subsection 41.1 (7) of the Act was given before the day subsection 5 (1) of Schedule 6 to the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 comes into force. O. Reg. 569/22, s. 1.

(4) For clarity, the requirement set out in subsection 41.1 (5.1) of the Act,

(a) does not apply in respect of a by-law under subsection 41 (1) of the Act that is passed before the day subsection 5 (1) of Schedule 6 to the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 comes into force; and

(b) does not apply in respect of a by-law under subsection 41.1 (2) of the Act. O. Reg. 569/22, s. 1.

Document 4 – Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

Description of Property – Fleming Convalescent Home, 410-412 Besserer Street

The building at 410-412 Besserer Street is a two-and-a-half storey stone building constructed in 1904. The building is located on the south side of Besserer Street between Chapel Street and Augusta Street on the edge of Sandy Hill, Ottawa.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The Fleming Convalescent Home at 410-412 Besserer Street has design value as a representative example of a Queen Anne Revival residence in Ottawa demonstrated by its asymmetrical façade and rooflines, two-and-a-half storey massing, verandah and entrance porch, variety of colour and texture through the mix of cladding materials such as slate shingles and a metal cornice, decorative woodwork, and a central bay window. These architectural features illustrate the building's high degree of craftsmanship, including its complex roofline, stone cladding, and upper storey woodworking. The Queen Anne Revival style was frequently used in Canada and Ottawa in residential architecture for middle- and upper-class families and reflects the Fleming family's wealth who built and lived at 410-412 Besserer Street.

The building's architectural style, along with its landscaping, and setback support the built character of the former Besserer Estate in Sandy Hill north of Laurier Avenue, characterized by the architectural styles spanning the decades of development. Constructed between the late 19th to the early 20th century, the buildings represent the popular architectural styles of this period, including Queen Anne Revival, Tudor Revival, Edwardian Classicism and Italianate. The neighbourhood features the use of natural building materials, second storey porches, regular setbacks, and mature trees, all of which is demonstrated by 410-412 Besserer Street. The building's primary residential use was temporarily interrupted as a convalescent home during the First World War and for three years as an embassy. Otherwise, 410-412 Besserer Street has maintained its residential use from a single family to a multi-unit residence in the 1920s onwards, representing Sandy Hill's residential neighbourhood context.

The building at 410-412 Besserer Street is historically significant due to its use as a convalescent home during the First World War. These institutions provided care to physically and mentally unfit returned soldiers. Sir Sandford Fleming's executors offered their family residence at 213 Chapel Street (311 Daly Avenue) as a convalescent home and opened in January 1916. Hugh and Ethel Fleming offered their home, 410 Besserer Street in January 1917, which was conveniently connected to 213 Chapel Street by a stone wall and was referred to as the Sir Sandford Fleming Convalescent Home annex or the Fleming Convalescent Home. First World War convalescent homes operated

under the guidance of the Military Hospitals Commission (MHC) but were run by volunteer organizations. The Sir Sandford Fleming Convalescent Home and the Fleming Convalescent Home was one of six in Eastern Ontario and the only one in Ottawa and operated until 1920 and 1921 respectively. The Fleming Convalescent Home represents an early convalescent home in a large, private home before the shift to acquiring larger public buildings and purpose-built facilities. Convalescent homes in “borrowed buildings” during the First World War contributed to the evolution of hospitals and at home medical care in the second half of the 20th century.

The building’s use as a military convalescent home yields more information about the First World War veteran community and the federal government’s involvement in the physical and mental health treatment of its servicemen in the early 20th century. It contributes to understanding the role of the MHC and care provided in convalescent homes to First World War “invalid soldiers.” Fleming Convalescent Home demonstrates the MHC’s adaptation of convalescent homes to also serve as hospitals and a space for vocational training. Studying the MHC can illustrate the complex patient and public opinions of returned soldiers and their treatment received at convalescent homes.

Finally, the home was associated with Sir Sandford Fleming’s large Besserer Street and Daly Avenue estate. Fleming was a civil engineer who was Canada’s foremost 19th century railway engineer and was instrumental in the adoption of international standard time. He owned the western half of the block between Besserer Street, Chapel Street, and Daly Avenue. Sandford purchased the lots in 1870 including the stone building known as Winterholme, which used as his family’s residence. Around 1906/7, Sir Sandford Fleming began settling his Sandy Hill estate, selling 410 Besserer Street to his son Hugh Percy Fleming, and the remaining lots to his sons jointly and were developed in the 1930s.

Description of Heritage Attributes

Key exterior attributes that contribute to the heritage value of 410-412 Besserer Street as a representative example of a Queen Anne Revival style residential building include:

- Two-and-a-half storey massing
- Irregular roofline with three off-centred gambrel gables
- Gable ends with slate shingles and window
- Stone cladding
- Shed dormer windows with slate shingles
- Metal cornice
- Decorative woodwork on the second storey including: pediments; friezes; and bargeboard

- Second storey enclosed porch on northeast corner with half timbering
- First storey pedimented front porch with Classically inspired columns
- First storey bay window with stone cladding
- Second storey bay window with wood cladding
- Irregular arrangement and size of windows on each storey
- Window openings on the top storey with plain pediment trim on north façade and an entablature trim on the east façade
- Original stained glass window
- Presence of verandah on the west façade

The interior of the building and any additions or outbuildings are excluded in this designation.

Document 5 – Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report

Ontario Regulation 9/06 Assessment

Address: 410-412 Besserer Street

Date: December 2024

Prepared by: Heritage Staff



410-412 Besserer Street, Source: City of Ottawa, 2024

Executive Summary The Fleming Convalescent Home at 410-412 Besserer Street is a two-and-a-half storey stone residential building located in Sandy Hill, Ottawa. It was constructed in 1904 and is representative of the Queen Anne Revival style with its massing, asymmetrical façade and rooflines, porch and verandah, bay window, and use of multiple construction materials. The architectural features reflect the residential architecture of the middle and upper class in Sandy Hill. The building was a military hospital and convalescent home during the First World War as the Fleming Convalescent Home and was operated and physically connected to the Sir Sandford Fleming Convalescent Home at 311 Daly Avenue. They operated from 1917-1921 and 1916-1920 respectively. The Fleming and Sir Sandford Fleming Convalescent Home was one of six in Eastern Ontario and the only one in Ottawa. Therefore, the building yields more information about returned First World War soldiers, their care by the Military Hospitals Commission, and public opinion on military convalescent homes. The building at 410-412 Besserer Street supports the built character of Sandy Hill as a residential neighbourhood with a mix of architectural styles of their time. The building has contextual value as part of Sir Sandford Fleming's large Sandy Hill estate, built by Sandford for his son, Hugh Percy Fleming.

The property has cultural heritage value for its design, associative and contextual values. It meets six of the nine criteria for designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Introduction

The building at 410-412 Besserer Street is a two-and-a-half storey mixed material building constructed in 1904. The building is located on the south side of Besserer Street between Chapel Street and Augusta Street on the edge of Sandy Hill, Ottawa.

Criterion 1	
The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.	Yes
Response to Criterion	
The building at 410-412 Besserer Street has design value as a representative example of a Queen Anne Revival residence in Ottawa. This is demonstrated by its asymmetrical façade, irregular massing with multiple rooflines, verandah and entrance porch, two-and-a-half storey massing, variety of colour and texture through the mix of construction materials, decorative woodworking, and a central bay window. The Queen Anne Revival style was frequently used in Canada and Ottawa in residential architecture for middle- and upper-class families, reflecting the family that built the Fleming Convalescent Home.	

Supporting Details – Criterion 1

Architectural Analysis and Overview

The Fleming Convalescent Home was constructed in 1904 as a residence and has design value as a representative example of a Queen Anne Revival building in Ottawa. The Queen Anne Revival style can take many appearances because it is characterized by complex and irregular forms, use of multiple materials, and detail and ornamentation. The building at 410-412 Besserer Street fits within the style due to its irregular plan and roofline, two or more storey massing, use of a variety of materials, wood detailing, porch and enclosed verandah, and bay window.

Architectural Style Description & Canadian Context

Queen Anne Revival

The Queen Anne Revival style originated in England in the 1860s as a response to the other Revival styles. The style was designed by British architect Richard Shaw who created a combination of Medieval asymmetry, irregular Elizabethan country house, with early 18th century Classical features to create a “extroverted but quintessentially British” style.¹ Queen Anne Revival style was designed by architects for the upper

¹ John Blumenson, *Ontario Architecture: A Guide to Styles and Building Terms 1784 to the present*, (Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1990), 102.

middle classes such as merchants and industrialists who wanted to express their success in business, which was reflected by a building's complexity and grandeur.²

Of the nineteenth century architectural styles, Queen Anne Revival was the most eclectic and known for being playful and although asymmetrical, still focused on compositional balance.³ It combined Medieval features including Tudor windows, corner towers, and bay windows, with Classical elements such as columns, sash windows, pediments, and stringcourses, with irregular massing and rooflines incorporating dormers, multiple gables, and chimneys.⁴ The Queen Anne Revival styles incorporates a variety of materials including brick, wood, terra cotta, stone, and the combination of multiple shapes, finishes, and ornamentation characterized the style.⁵

Queen Anne Revival in Canada

In Canada, the Queen Anne Revival was predominantly a residential style for middle- and upper-class families in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and occasionally for public and commercial use.⁶ Ontario has the highest concentration of Queen Anne Revival residences, reflecting the financial success of those in the province in the late nineteenth century.⁷

Like the application of other European architectural styles in North America, the Queen Anne Revival style experienced varied interpretations to adapt to local climates and materials available. Most of Ontario's Queen Anne Revival style residences were constructed of red brick compared to the heavy use of wood in Atlantic Canada.⁸ The use of timber and the addition of verandahs were highly common in Ontario, however, were not used in England's application of the style.⁹

The Queen Anne Revival style was popular across North America in the late 19th century, however its popularity declined following the First World War.¹⁰

Architectural Style Locally

In Ottawa, the Queen Anne Revival style is prominent in residential architecture. It is featured most heavily in the downtown core in Wards 14, 17, and 12 respectively, reflecting where those historically of status and wealth lived and worked. In the Sandy Hill neighbourhood, the Queen Anne Revival style is the architectural style most

² Shannon Kyles, "Queen Anne Revival Style (1870 - 1910)," Ontario Architecture, accessed December 3, 2024, <http://www.ontarioarchitecture.com/QueenAnne.htm>;

³ Shannon, Ricketts, Leslie Maitland, and Jacqueline Hucker, *A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles – Second Edition*, (Broadview Press, 2004), 105, 107.

⁴ Ricketts, Maitland, and Hucker, *A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles – Second Edition*, 107.

⁵ Ricketts, Maitland, and Hucker, *A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles – Second Edition*, 107.

⁶ Ricketts, Maitland, and Hucker, *A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles – Second Edition*, 109; "The Queen Anne Revival Style," *Canada's Historic Places*, accessed December 3, 2024, https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/pages/32_queen_anne.aspx.

⁷ Ricketts, Maitland, and Hucker, *A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles – Second Edition*, 106.

⁸ Ricketts, Maitland, and Hucker, *A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles – Second Edition*, 106.

⁹ "Queen Anne Revival Style (1870 - 1910)."

¹⁰ Ricketts, Maitland, and Hucker, *A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles – Second Edition*, 110.

represented by properties on the heritage register after vernacular.¹¹ There are several heritage buildings in Sandy Hill designated as examples of the Queen Anne Revival style including 190 Laurier Ave E, 62 Sweetland Ave, 273 and 500 Wilbrod St.



190 Laurier Ave E, Source: Google Streetview, 2019.



62 Sweetland Ave, Source: Google Streetview, 2021.



500 Wilbrod St, Source: Google Streetview, 2023.

By comparing these four examples, the diverse application of the Queen Anne Revival style can be analyzed. The buildings were all constructed for residential purposes and are at least two storeys, use a variety of construction materials including brick, wood, and stone, Classical elements such as pedimented porches, verandahs, bay windows, multiple and irregular rooflines, and decorative chimneys, rooflines, and verandahs.

Relation of the Building to the Style



410 Besserer Street, Source: *The Ottawa Citizen*, 14 April 1984, p 83

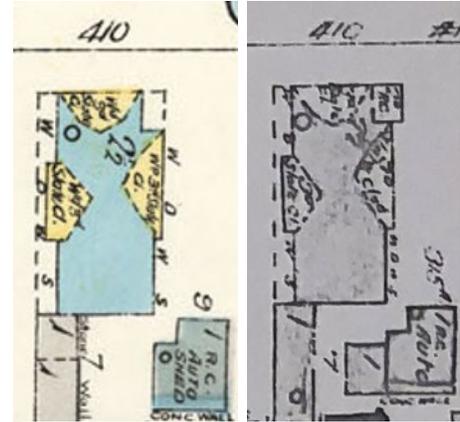


410-412 Besserer Street, Source: Google Streetview, 2019

410-412 Besserer Street is representative of the Queen Anne Revival style in its eclectic design. It has an irregular plan and roofline, as three gambrel gabled ends on the east and west are not aligned and has two shed dormer windows. Typical massing is two storeys and over and the house is two-and-a-half storeys high. The house has a verandah on the west façade that was historically and currently is enclosed, and the second storey northeast porch was enclosed between 1912 and 1922 and constructed

¹¹ Style of Sandy Hill properties on heritage register: Vernacular: 43.2%; Queen Anne Revival: 26.5%; Edwardian Classicism: 15.2%; Arts and Crafts: 5.5%; Second Empire: 5.2%; Italianate: 4.5%. Source: Heritage Register.

using rough cast, indicating the Tudor Revival half timbering has been present for over a century. The pedimented and double columned porch pulls in the Classical Revival elements of the style. The house and garage originally had slate roofs at minimum until 1956, a typical Queen Anne Revival element.¹² Original finishes include a metal cornice, gable ends with slate shingles, and decorative woodwork including bargeboard, pediments, and friezes above the top storey windows. The first storey bay window was constructed of stone and the second storey bay window of wood. The top storey window with its plain pediment trim suggest the continuation of the bay window over the top two floors. The windows on the west and east gable ends also feature an entablature trim, and the house has two stone chimneys. Since 2019, the second storey bay window has been renovated.



1912 (left) and 1922 (right), 410 Besserer St, Source: Ottawa Fire Insurance Plans, vol 1, p 25.



410-412 Besserer Street, Source: City of Ottawa, 2024

The massing, construction materials, variety of materials, and architectural elements illustrate the building's Queen Anne Revival style, which aimed to demonstrate one's wealth, which this building certainly accomplishes. The use of stone construction on Queen Anne Revival buildings in Ontario was less common,¹³ and its large size demonstrated the family's wealth. Typical of turn of the century residences, it was used by a large immediate family, guests, and staff. Newspaper advertisements show the Fleming's employing numerous staff including a cook, housemaid, laundress, governess, and gardener, illustrating the estate size.¹⁴ The large interior with multiple rooms likely lent itself to the adapted use as a convalescent home during the First World War.

¹² University of Waterloo Heritage Resources Centre, "Ontario Architectural Style Guide," last modified January 2009, <https://www.therealtydeal.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Heritage-Resource-Centre-Achitectural-Styles-Guide.pdf>.

¹³ University of Waterloo Heritage Resources Centre, "Ontario Architectural Style Guide."

¹⁴ "Queen Anne Revival Style (1870 - 1910)."

Criterion 2

The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.

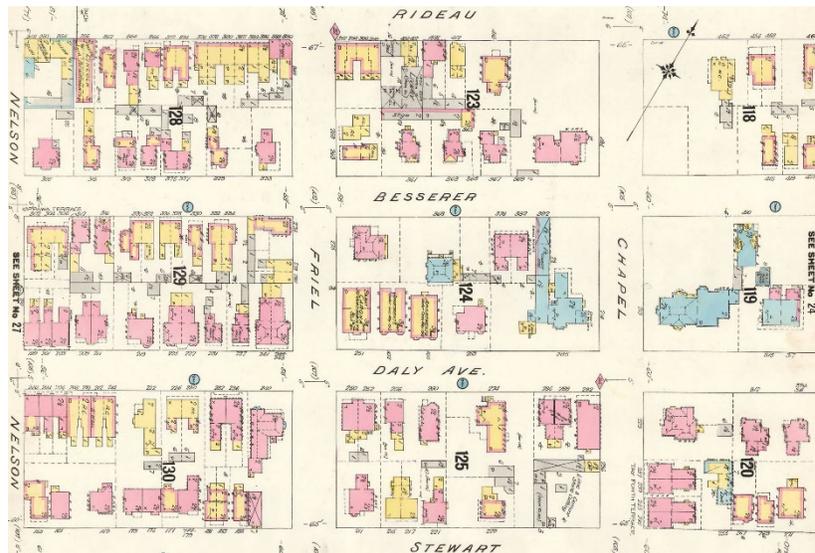
Yes

Response to Criterion

The building at 410-412 Besserer Street has design value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship. This is demonstrated by its complex roofline, stone cladding, use of multiple materials, and ornate wood detailing focused on the uppermost storey. Together, these elements illustrate a higher than typical standard of craftsmanship and identifies the building as a stately, upper-class home in Sandy Hill.

Supporting Details – Criterion 2

410-412 Besserer Street's typical and atypical Queen Anne Revival style demonstrate the building's high degree of craftsmanship. The building is constructed of stone on the first and second storeys, which was used less frequently in Ontario compared to the use of wood or brick, demonstrated by Sandy Hill's designated Queen Anne Revival buildings that use these materials as their primary cladding. Additionally, 410-412 Besserer Street was one of the few late 19th and early 20th century stone homes within the vicinity. The use of multiple construction materials from its stone construction, a stone chimney, original slate roof, wood box bay window and upper storey detailing, and slate shingles in the gable end, illustrate complex construction methods and installation. The irregular roofline with three unaligned gambrel gable ends in addition to two rear dormers indicate a level of construction expertise. Finally, the simple but decorative woodwork of the frieze, bargeboard, and pediments, and friezes on the upper storey windows illustrates a high degree of craftsmanship.



Stone buildings (blue), brick buildings (pink), wood buildings (yellow), Source: *Ottawa Fire Insurance Plan, 1912, vol 1, 25*

Criterion 3

The property has design value or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.

No

Response to Criterion

Heritage staff have reviewed primary sources for the subject building, compared the building to others of similar age or typology, and consulted relevant secondary sources including architectural history books. Staff's review concluded that the construction method for The Fleming Convalescent Home is typical of the building's construction era

and type. As such, the building does not display a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.

Criterion 4	
The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.	Yes
Response to Criterion	
<p>The Fleming Convalescent Home has historical value because it has direct associations with convalescent homes during the First World War. Sir Sandford Fleming's family residence at 311 Daly Avenue was offered by his executors as a convalescent home and opened in January 1916. The following January, Hugh and Ethel Fleming offered their home, 410 Besserer Street as a convalescent home which was connected to 311 Daly Avenue by a stone wall. First World War convalescent homes were under the guidance of the Military Hospitals Commission (MHC) but were entirely run by volunteer organizations. The two buildings were operated by the Voluntary Aid Detachment and Military Hospitals Commission's documents refer to their operations jointly. Local sources refer to 311 Daly Avenue as the Sir Sandford Fleming Convalescent Home and 410 Besserer Street originally as the Sir Sandford Fleming Convalescent Home annex then as the Fleming Convalescent Home. The Sir Sandford Fleming and Fleming Convalescent Home was only one of six in Eastern Ontario and the only one in Ottawa and operated until 1920 and 1921 respectively. The Fleming Convalescent Home represents the early convalescent homes that aimed to use large, private homes for the medical care of wounded soldiers before the shift to the use of larger public buildings and purpose-built facilities. Convalescent homes in "borrowed buildings" during the First World War contributed to the evolution of hospitals and at home medical care in the second half of the 20th century.</p>	

Supporting Details – Criterion 4

During the First World War between July 1914 and November 1918, the Canadian and Newfoundland forces were 650,000 strong and suffered 66,000 deaths and 172,000 were wounded.¹⁵ The war was expected to be short-lived, and it was believed the existing medical system could handle the wounded. However, the strain was quickly evident with an unprecedented number of people needing hospitalization. Compared to previous wars' veterans who were supported by charity, most First World War soldiers were volunteer civilians and therefore "all citizens were expected to share this burden."¹⁶ There was a need to support those deemed unfit for military service or those

¹⁵ "First World War: 1914-1918," Veteran Affairs Canada, last modified March 6, 2024, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/en/remembrance/wars-and-conflicts/first-world-war>.

¹⁶ Tim Cook and J. L. Granatstein, editors, *Canada 1919: A Nation Shaped by War*, (UBC Press, 2020), 118, https://books.google.ca/books?id=IGfqDwAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ViewAPI&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=true.

requiring six or more months of medical care to rehabilitate and return to work.¹⁷ This resulted in the establishment of the Military Hospitals Commission (MHC) in June 1915 “to care for the returning men” in: “the provision of Convalescent Hospitals and Homes;” “the provision of vocational training for those through their disability incurred on active service, would be unable to follow their previous occupations;” and “the establishment of the necessary machinery for the provision of employment for those require vocational training and for those who will return during and at the conclusion of the war.”¹⁸

Most convalescent homes were repurposed private residences and public institutions that were offered to the Commission for free use, and of those, the Commission selected buildings based on their location, ability to administer their programs, and accommodation capacity.¹⁹ Corresponding to the number of men returning wounded or “invalid,” the Commission in the summer of 1915 aimed to obtain numerous small convalescent homes.²⁰ However the following summer, it was acknowledged “these isolated and scattered homes would not make for the most efficient and economic administration” and many offers were declined, and there was a shift to acquiring larger facilities.²¹ Convalescent homes were operated by the MHC but were financially supported by private philanthropy and public funding, and often run by volunteer organizations.²² In July 1915, three buildings in Ottawa were submitted to the MHC and none were deemed suitable as a convalescent home.²³

¹⁷ Cook and Granatstein, editors, *Canada 1919: A Nation Shaped by War*, 119.

¹⁸ “Military Hospitals Commission Bulletin,” The Military Hospitals Commission, No. 2, June 1916, Library and Archives Canada, https://www.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.8_06871_2, 1.

¹⁹ “Military Hospitals Commission Bulletin,” No. 2, June 1916, 1.

²⁰ “Military Hospitals Commission Bulletin,” No. 2, June 1916, 1.

²¹ “Military Hospitals Commission Bulletin,” No. 2, June 1916, 1.

²² “Military Hospitals Commission Bulletin,” No. 2, June 1916, 1.

²³ From A/Director-General of Medical Services, Ottawa to The Secretary, “Hospital Commission,” memorandum re Hospitals and Convalescent Homes for returned invalid soldiers, 8 July 1915, Military Hospitals Commission Minutes, 1915-1917, RG 38 Vol 287, Library and Archives Canada, <http://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.redirect?app=fonandcol&id=196741&lang=eng>.

Fleming's home at 410 Besserer Street opened as a convalescent home.²⁹ MHC records referred to 213 Chapel Street and 410 Besserer Street jointed as "Fleming Military Hospital and Convalescent Home," "Sir Sandford Fleming MCH [Military Convalescent Home]," "Sir Sandford Fleming," "Fleming MCH," "Fleming Home," "Fleming Convalescent," and "Fleming Hospital." Local contemporary newspapers referred to 410 Besserer Street at first as the annex of the Sir Sandford Fleming Convalescent Home, then called 213 Chapel Street Sir Sandford Fleming Convalescent and 410 Besserer Street Fleming Convalescent Home, which is consistent with the *Ottawa City Directory*.³⁰ 410 Besserer Street was connected by a stone wall to 213 Chapel Street to increase the convalescent home's capacity, and the rear peaked wall is still present today. The Fleming Convalescent Home at 410 Besserer Street operated for an additional year until 1921 after the Sir Sandford Fleming Convalescent Home closed in 1920.³¹ Hugh's occupation as a physician may have influenced his decision to offer their home, and he served as Captain in the Canadian Army Medical Corps in England and France from November 1916 to July 1919.³²

Admission and discharge ledgers of the Fleming Military Hospital and Convalescent Home from October 1917 to October 1918 documented patients³³ of the following ranks: Lieutenant; Gunner; Sergeant; Corporal; Sapper; Army Medical Staff; Driver; and Company Sergeant Major, majority of whom were from overseas. The most common injury was gunshot wounds, followed by debility, nephritis, myalgia, bronchitis, hernia, fractured or broken bones, heart or breathing troubles, and trench foot, ulcers, amputation, tuberculosis, among others. Patient's stays ranged from one to seven months, with two to three months being typical. Most returned soldiers were discharged from service following their stay, with the minority transferred to other MHC hospitals in Eastern and Southern Ontario, and the majority in 1918 onwards were transferred to the Casualty Company [while on convalescence duty and typically was followed by discharge].

²⁹ "Announcements," *The Ottawa Journal*, January 6, 1917, accessed December 13, 2024, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/43441349/>.

³⁰ *The Ottawa City Directory*, 1918, 32; "213 Chapel Street, Sir Sandford Fleming Military Convalescent Home," "410 Besserer Street, Fleming Convalescent Home."

³¹ *The Ottawa City Directory*, 1921, 12.

³² Ancestry.ca, "Hugh Percy Fleming," Canada, World War I CEF Personnel Files, 1914-1918, Library and Archives Canada, accessed December 12, 2024, <https://www.ancestry.ca/imageviewer/collections/61084/images/b3137-s046-0001?pid=1029362>, 2.

³³ Fleming Military Hospital and Convalescent Home Admission and Discharge books, October 1917 to August 1919, RG 9 II-L-1, volume 8, LAC.



410 Besserer St, circa 1920s, see stone wall connecting 410 Besserer St and 311 Daly St, and enclosed verandah on west façade; Source: Library and Archives Canada, PA-057469



311 Daly Ave garage, rear of 410 Besserer St, and rear of former stone wall, Source: City of Ottawa, 2024

The home was operated by the Voluntary Aid Detachment of the St. John Ambulance Association with assistance from several Ladies' organizations including the Womens' Canadian Club and the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire until 1920.³⁴ The Fleming family donated several pieces of furniture for the home's use and the Ottawa Women's Voluntary Aid Detachment supplied items for operations.³⁵

Besides the immense size of 213 Chapel Street, its location likely also contributed to the building being selected. At this time, around Rideau Street and Wurtemberg Avenue was the primary hospital district in Ottawa, home to the Carleton County Protestant Hospital (1873-1924), The Lady Stanley Institute for Trained Nurses (1891-1924), and Maternity Hospital (1894), and Salvation Army's Grace Hospital (1904) was at 121-123 Daly Avenue.³⁶ The 410-412 Besserer Street property is conveniently equidistant from the former Protestant Hospital and Salvation Army's Grace Hospital making it a suitable location for the convalescent home.

These "borrowed buildings" during the First World War delineated passive (for convalescence and vocational training) verses actives (purpose built with medical equipment) spaces and their ad hoc additions to modify the buildings to become hospitals impacted the evolution of hospitals in the mid 20th century.³⁷ For example the addition of verandahs or solaria was central to tuberculosis treatment.³⁸ The Fleming Convalescent Home originally featured an open verandah its entire west façade that was enclosed by the 1920s. A key feature of MHC hospitals and convalescent homes was their "domestic therapy" with a "homey, cosy, familiar environment [which] was ideal for healing."³⁹ This received backlash from the early 20th century medical field shifting to standardize, and some discontent from the public who believed these soldiers

³⁴ "Military Hospitals Commission Bulletin," No. 2, June 1916, 2; *The Ottawa City Directory*, 1920, 40.

³⁵ "Convalescent Home Will Open Shortly."

³⁶ "Health Facilities," Sandy Hill History, accessed December 13, 2024, <https://www.ash-acsc.ca/history/health-facilities/>.

³⁷ Anmarie Adams, "Borrowed Buildings: Canada's Temporary Hospitals during World War I," in *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History*, vol 16, no. 1, 1999, 30-31, 34, <https://www.mcgill.ca/architecture/files/architecture/1999borrowedbuildings2.pdf>.

³⁸ Adams, "Borrowed Buildings: Canada's Temporary Hospitals during World War I," 34.

³⁹ Adams, "Borrowed Buildings: Canada's Temporary Hospitals during World War I," 42.

were lounging in luxurious settings.⁴⁰ However, these borrowed spaces provided greater accessibility of medical care as marginalized or ethnic groups who were previously excluded from working in or receiving services were able to be in these spheres.⁴¹ Convalescent homes were available to all servicemen, not only those who could afford institutional care. Finally, soldiers were segregated by their medical condition and type of care required, which continues in facilities today with specialized medicate care occurring at hospitals and long-term rehabilitation in home-care type settings.⁴²

Criterion 5	
The property has historical or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.	Yes
Response to Criterion	
<p>The building at 410-412 Besserer Street yields more information about the First World War veteran community, specifically returned injured serviceman requiring treatment at a convalescent home. Convalescent homes served as hospitals, spaces for the physically wounded and mentally affected as a space for recuperation, and a vocational training facility - the Fleming Military Hospital and Convalescent Home served these three functions and illustrates its adaptations to the soldier's needs over time. Studying one of Canada's First World War convalescent homes can contribute to the understanding of the federal government's role in the care of physical and mental health of its citizens in the early twentieth century. Additionally, studying the subject can provide a wider understanding of patient's vs the public's perspectives of convalescent homes during the First World War.</p>	

Supporting Details – Criterion 5

The Military Hospitals Commission (MHC) was established in June 1915 to manage the high levels of injured soldiers from the front. Especially after the Battle of the Somme, Canadian hospitals and convalescent homes saw an increase in patients from approximately 7000 around July 1916, to approximately 20,000 in December 1916.⁴³ Most military hospitals and convalescent homes provided generalized physical and mental health treatment, as well as specialized facilities such as tuberculosis sanitoriums and orthopedic and prosthetic factories.⁴⁴ The MHC opened the first hospital for “nervous cases” in Coburg in July 2016, and in the first year the facility

⁴⁰ Adams, “Borrowed Buildings: Canada’s Temporary Hospitals during World War I,” 42; Allison Margot Smith, “Winterholme and the Fleming Convalescent Home: Part of Ottawa’s WWI History,” Heritage Ottawa Newsletter, November 2021, vol 28, no. 4, 3,
https://heritageottawa.org/sites/default/files/newsletter_pdfs/herottnews_2021_04.pdf.

⁴¹ Adams, “Borrowed Buildings: Canada’s Temporary Hospitals during World War I,” 42-43.

⁴² Adams, “Borrowed Buildings: Canada’s Temporary Hospitals during World War I,” 44-45.

⁴³ Military Hospitals Commission, December 15, 1916, Circ. Letter No. 152, Military Hospitals Commission Minutes, 1916-1920, RG38 Vol 287, LAC.

⁴⁴ 15 November 1917, Report from Medical Superintendent of the Military Hospitals Commission to the members of the Commission, Military Hospitals Commission Minutes, 1915-1917, RG38 Vol 287, LAC.

treated 236 patients.⁴⁵ In November 1917, an MHC report recorded the percentages of invalid soldiers in Canada in the Nervous and Mental Branch was functional nervous cases 6 per cent, mental cases (“insanity,” “mental defect,” epilepsy, paresis etc) 2.5 per cent, and head injury 1.5 per cent, while “Insane patients” were sent to provincial hospitals for care.⁴⁶ Although the mental health care provided by the MHC likely could have been widely expanded due to the need during and after the First World War, it’s worth noting that the Canadian Mental Health Association was founded in 1918, three years after the MHC. Therefore, researching the MHC’s military hospitals and treatment centres can reveal the Canadian government’s expansion of health care and specialized facilities, including early mental health care, in the early twentieth century.

Studying the MHC can also illustrate the varied opinions of their First World War convalescent homes. The general foundation of a convalescent home’s treatment included fresh air, a good diet, massage baths, and exercise.⁴⁷ The MHC originally believed their convalescent homes were places for relaxation and rehabilitation, and the concept of “domestic therapy” of having a familiar, comfortable environment encouraged treatment, compared to the emerging sterilized modern hospital settings.⁴⁸ This setting was especially seen in military hospital and convalescent homes in borrowed buildings of the middle and upper classes, such as the Fleming Convalescent Home in Sir Sandford and Hugh Fleming’s family residences. These levels of luxury were criticized by the public and the idea of these men’s idleness and lack of motivation.⁴⁹

An MHC special bulletin published in April 1916 made this assessment of their military convalescent homes:

The supply of comforts which in many cases were luxurious, the relaxation of discipline, the treating of men as one treats a civilian patient in the interval between illness and the resuming of ordinary occupation, which might do no harm if the experience was to be counted in days, are most seriously detrimental to the best interests of the men when extended over the prolonged periods which have been found unavoidable. The first conception of the homes was that they were places of relaxation; the right one which experience has taught us to realize, is that they are places of rehabilitation. In other words, we are changing as rapidly as may be, our convalescent homes into hospitals where, in the interests of the men, their time will be fully occupied, their physical restoration made as perfect as possible, and, from the beginning, the bad effects of idleness obviated by employment.

⁴⁵ 15 November 1917, Report from Medical Superintendent of the Military Hospitals Commission to the members of the Commission.

⁴⁶ 15 November 1917, Report from Medical Superintendent of the Military Hospitals Commission to the members of the Commission.

⁴⁷ Adam Black, “Salvaging War’s Waste: The System Successfully Employed by the Military Hospitals Commission of Canada for Restoring Wounded and Disabled Soldiers to Health so that They Can Become Self Supporting,” reprint *The Red Cross Magazine*, October 1917, RG 38 Vol 287, LAC.

⁴⁸ Adams, “Borrowed Buildings: Canada’s Temporary Hospitals during World War I,” 42.

⁴⁹ Adams, “Borrowed Buildings: Canada’s Temporary Hospitals during World War I,” 44.

Consequently, the MHC updated their treatment of invalid soldiers in Canada as, “the necessity for discipline in our homes, for occupation of the men in such measure that it will assist in cure, prevent the formation of bad habits, and train them for a successful life.”⁵⁰ Going forward, the MHC aimed to “defeminize” health care by offering vocational programs at almost all of their institutions.⁵¹ The Vocational Branch offered⁵²:

- Occupational therapy
 - Ward occupations to support active treatment
 - Weaving, basketry, modelling, simple woodworking
 - Curative workshops
 - Carpentry, machine shop practice, motor mechanics, shoe repairing etc. with attention related to subjects, draughting, mathematics, general education
- Industrial re-education
 - Re-educating disabled men unable to return to old jobs
 - Agriculture, office work, manufacturing

As early as June 1916, Fleming MCH had maintenance and equipment expenses for vocational programming.⁵³ In May 1917, the MHC acquired the land north of 213 Chapel Street to be used for vocational training, and, “The soldier’s garden should yield a good crop not only of vegetables but of horticultural skill in the men who raise them.”⁵⁴ In November 1917, two retired soldiers were enrolled in Elementary classes, one retired soldier in a cabinet and drafting course, and a civilian in an auto mechanic program,⁵⁵ and in April 1918, Fleming MCH offered commercial courses.⁵⁶ In the winter of 1918, 30 pupils were enrolled in the Fleming vocational programs. “They are being educated from the ground up, if necessary. Most of the pupils are soldiers in the convalescent stage, and some are discharged men who are now living at home, but come to the school to get training.”⁵⁷ The MHC reported in 1918 to offer 196 courses in Canada to 3861 returned soldiers.⁵⁸ Typically, three months training was adequate for men to return to their previous field of work or in a job with some experience, or six and a half months for industrial education in a related but new trade or disabled men who

⁵⁰ J. S. McLennan, “Introduction,” *Military Hospitals Commission Canada Special Bulletin*, April 1916, accessed January 8, 2025, <https://archive.org/details/31761119734887/page/n3/mode/2up>, 6.

⁵¹ 15 November 1917, Report from Medical Superintendent of the Military Hospitals Commission to the members of the Commission.

⁵² Circular of Information, Number 4, June 1, 1918, Department of Soldiers’ Civil Re-Establishment, Issued by the Vocational Branch, Ottawa, Canada, R1186-3-4-E, RG38-B-3, Volume 371, LAC.

⁵³ Minutes of the Meeting of the Military Hospitals Commission Held at 22 Vittoria Street, Ottawa, on Tuesday Jun 13th 1916, *Military Hospitals Commission Minutes, 1915-1917*, RG 38, Vol 287, LAC.

⁵⁴ “Returned Men Work Sandy Hill Garden,” *The Ottawa Journal*, May 2, 1917, accessed January 14, 2025, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/43081584/>.

⁵⁵ 15 November 1917, Report from Medical Superintendent of the Military Hospitals Commission to the members of the Commission.

⁵⁶ Circular of Information, Number 2, April 1, 1918, Department of Soldiers’ Civil Re-Establishment, Issued by the Vocational Branch, Ottawa, Canada, 15, R1186-3-4-E, RG38-B-3, Volume 371, LAC.

⁵⁷ “How The Discharged Soldier Will Make His Living After The Great War Has Passed Into History,” *The Ottawa Journal*, March 23, 1918, accessed January 14, 2025, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/43919505/>.

⁵⁸ Circular of Information, Number 4, June 1, 1918.

were unable to return to their previous job,⁵⁹ and class hours were from 9 am to 12 pm then 2 to 5 pm.⁶⁰

The MHC's goal of returned soldiers resuming "normal" life was tied to war time propaganda and contemporary ideas of masculinity and the opinion that men should be independent, hard-working, and support themselves rather than rely on government aid. It's worth investigating opinions of returned soldiers towards the end of the war. An MHC circular of information from 1918 includes a letter addressed to the foremen of a large Canadian industrial company acknowledging the 'broken constitutions' of returned soldiers and therefore require additional assistance and grace, and depend on the support of their coworkers, for their and the company's benefit. The letter indicates these returned soldiers should be respected and while also guilting the employees indicating this is their patriotic duty. "The greatest tact, care and attention that you can give these men in helping them to be useful employees in what the Company expects, and moreover, - YOU OWE IT TO THEM."⁶¹

Despite the complex public opinion of the MHC's programs, they did help thousands of injured soldiers recover and obtain training directly resulting in successful employment. Voluntary testimonials of returned soldiers who used MHC programs described their employment success directly because of the MHC. From a correspondence June 15, 1917 of a returned French Canadian soldier to his convalescent home,

When I came back from the front in October 1916, I was not able to read or write, and so I went into the school class at the Grey Nuns' Convalescent Home. As you will now see from this letter, I can now make a pretty fair show of myself.

When the M.H.C. opened the Machine Shop at McGill I decided to take up the course, as I wanted to get a trade for myself. I had never worked on machines before, so I had a lot to learn, but I stuck with it, and when I got my discharge, three months later, I was able to secure my job with the Dominion Bridge Company. I received \$21.10 per week since I started. The foreman told me this week that he was going to put me on a new machine and this would mean more money for me. I expect to get about \$30 per week.

If it had not been for the school I never would have been in the place I am to-day. Before the war, I was driving a team at \$15 per week. I also worked on a pile driver at \$18 per week, so you see I am now able to earn almost twice as much as I could before. I hope all the returned boys will see the chances they have in the school and make the most of them.⁶²

⁵⁹ Circular of Information, Number 1, March 1, 1918, Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-Establishment, Issued by the Vocational Branch, Ottawa, Canada, 2, R1186-3-4-E, RG38-B-3, Volume 371, LAC.

⁶⁰ Circular of Information, Number 2, April 1, 1918.

⁶¹ Circular of Information, Number 6, August 1, 1918, Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-Establishment, Issued by the Vocational Branch, Ottawa, Canada, 128, R1186-3-4-E, RG38-B-3, Volume 371, LAC.

⁶² Black, "Salvaging War's Waste: The System Successfully Employed by the Military Hospitals Commission of Canada for Restoring Wounded and Disabled Soldiers to Health so that They Can Become Self Supporting."

Therefore, it's clear The Fleming Convalescent Home yields a significant amount of information about the MHC's work, and how they were perceived by the public and those who used the programs.

Criterion 6	
The property has historical value or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.	No
Response to Criterion	
Based on primary and secondary source research conducted by Heritage Staff, no confirmed architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist has been associated with 410-412 Besserer Street.	

Criterion 7	
The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.	Yes
Response to Criterion	
The building at 410-412 Besserer Street is important in supporting the character of the Sandy Hill former Besserer Estate neighbourhood, which is characterized by a diverse collection of architectural styles spanning the decades of development. Most construction occurred between the late 19 th to the early 20 th century, and the buildings represent the popular architectural styles of this period, including Queen Anne Revival, Tudor Revival, Edwardian Classicism and Italianate. The residential neighbourhood often feature the use of natural building materials, second storey porches, regular setbacks, and mature trees. The building at 410-412 Besserer Street fits within this established built character of Sandy Hill.	

Supporting Details – Criterion 7

Sandy Hill is centrally located bounded by the Rideau River on the east, Rideau Canal on the west, Highway 417 on the south, and Rideau Street on the north. The building at 410-412 Besserer Street is specifically located in the Sandy Hill Cultural Heritage Character Area bounded by the King Edward Avenue on the west, the north side of Besserer Street on the north, the Rideau River on the east, and Marie Curie Private and Osgoode Street on the south.

This area has been identified for its significant historic urban landscape that illustrates Ottawa's growth and development into the Nation's capital. Sandy Hill's grid street plan was mapped in 1838 however it wasn't until the opening of Parliament Hill in 1866 that stimulated the development of Sandy Hill as a residential neighbourhood.⁶³ It became

⁶³ City of Ottawa, *Ottawa: A Guide to Heritage Structures*, (Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee: 2000), 119, 120.

the most prestigious and affluent neighbourhoods in Ottawa and was home for new civil servants, professionals, businessmen, and Prime Ministers alike.⁶⁴ This particularly characterized the north and eastern parts of Sandy Hill, compared to the western portion that featured modest sized homes, rentals, and boarding homes, and the area south of Laurier Avenue that was predominantly constructed post the Second World War.⁶⁵

Most of Sandy Hill's development in the former Besserer Estate located north of Laurier Avenue occurred between the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and it features architectural styles in Canada that were popular during all stages of neighbourhood development.⁶⁶ The architectural styles include Queen Anne Revival, Tudor Revival, Edwardian Classicism and Italianate. This range of architectural styles can be demonstrated by the block surrounding 410-412 Besserer Street as 311 Daly Avenue represents the Italianate style, 315 Daly Avenue as Second Empire, 410-412 Besserer Street as Queen Anne Revival, 422 and 433 Besserer Street as Edwardian Classicism, and 394 Besserer Street as Arts and Crafts.



311 Daly Ave, built 1865, Source: Google Streetview, 2019; GeoOttawa



315 Daly Ave, built before 1861, Source: Google Streetview, 2019; GeoOttawa

⁶⁴ "Sandy Hill," Ottawa Neighbourhood Study, accessed December 10, 2024, <https://www.neighbourhoodstudy.ca/949sandy-hill/>.

⁶⁵ "Sandy Hill," Ottawa Neighbourhood Study.

⁶⁶ City of Ottawa, *Sandy Hill Cultural Heritage Character Area*, last modified July 2018, https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/sandy_hill_character_guidelines_en.pdf, 5.



433 Besserer St, built circa 1900, Source: Google Streetview, 2019; GeoOttawa



422 Besserer St, built circa 1931, Source: Google Streetview, 2019; GeoOttawa



394 Besserer St, built circa 1932, Source: City of Ottawa, 2024

Therefore, the Fleming Convalescent Home fits within the Sandy Hill Besserer Estate built heritage character. The decorative and playful Queen Anne Revival style buildings in the Sandy Hill Besserer Estate neighbourhood were often large mansions that showcased the wealth of the upper class, which is exemplified by 410-412 Besserer Street.⁶⁷ The building's Queen Anne Revival architectural style, massing, use as a residence, and the home's first owners, Hugh Percy Fleming. It's also worth noting that 410-412 Besserer Street abuts the Daly Avenue Sandy Hill Heritage Conservation District which represents one of the two largest HCDs and contains the majority of distinguished residences along with modest historic homes, and fits within this built character of stately homes.⁶⁸



Aerial view, Besserer Street between Chapel Street and Augusta Street, in red 410-412 Besserer Street, Source: GeoOttawa, 2022



Besserer Street at Chapel Street looking east, Source: Google Streetview, Sep 2024

Sandy Hill north of Laurier Avenue was part of Besserer's original grant and the lots were larger and the first to be developed and therefore had established landscaping

⁶⁷ *Ottawa: A Guide to Heritage Structures*, 120.

⁶⁸ *Ottawa: A Guide to Heritage Structures*, 121.

with shade trees, gardens, and ornate fences by the twentieth century compared to Colonel John By's original property south of Laurier Ave which can be characterized by smaller lots with modest landscaping.⁶⁹ Aerial views show the alignment of the properties on Besserer Street between Chapel Street and Augusta Street and the dense tree coverage, and an archival photo of The Fleming Convalescent Home circa 1920 shows trees lining the south side of Besserer Street. Early twentieth century newspapers ads show the Fleming's hired several gardeners to maintain their properties, suggesting historic gardens on the property.⁷⁰ Archival photographs also show a fence surrounding Hugh and Sandford Fleming's properties.⁷¹ All of these characteristics illustrate how 410-412 Besserer Street contributes to the Sandy Hill Besserer Estate built character.



410 Besserer St, circa 1920s, Source: Library and Archives Canada, PA-057470

Criterion 8	
The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.	Yes
Response to Criterion	
The Fleming Convalescent Home has physical contextual value for being part of Sir Sandford Fleming's Besserer and Daly Street estate. He owned the western block between Besserer Street, Chapel Street, and Daly Avenue. Sir Sandford Fleming purchased the four corner lots in 1870 including the home at 311 Daly Avenue called Winterholme which was their residence until his death. When Sir Sandford Fleming began settling his estate in 1906/7, he sold 410 Besserer Street to his son Hugh Percy	

⁶⁹ *Ottawa: A Guide to Heritage Structures*, 120.

⁷⁰ "Male Help Wanted," *The Ottawa Citizen*, May 30, 1913, accessed December 10, 2024, <https://www.proquest.com/hnpottawacitizen/docview/2332332708/49E7024A5614442APQ/5?accountid=46526&sourcetype=Newspapers>.

⁷¹ "Residence of Sir Sandford Fleming, corner of Daly Avenue and Chapel Street, Ottawa, Ont.," Library and Archives Canada, PA-057470, accessed December 3, 2024, <http://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.redirect?app=fonandcol&id=3325872&lang=eng>.

Fleming, and the remaining lots were sold jointly to his three sons. These properties were granted in 1922 or 1927, and in the 1930s were developed. Additionally, the building's primary residential use was only temporarily interrupted while used as a convalescent home during the First World War and as the Embassy of the Republic of China. Otherwise, 410-412 Besserer Street has maintained its use as a residential building from one family to a multi-unit residence in the 1920s onwards, representing Sandy Hill's primarily residential neighbourhood context.

Supporting Details – Criterion 8

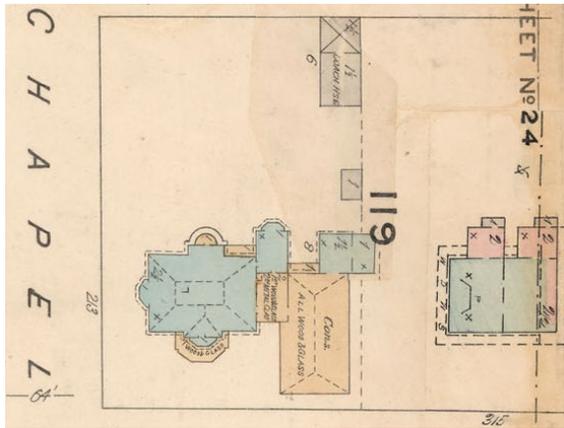
Sir Sandford Fleming lived in Peterborough, Toronto, and Halifax, and in 1869 he moved his family to Ottawa after being appointed the engineer in chief of the Intercolonial Railway and his upcoming position as engineer in chief of the Canadian Pacific Railway.⁷² In 1870, he purchased the two western lots on Daly Avenue and Besserer Street, which included the grand stone home of George Édouard Desbarats at Chapel Street and Daly Street.⁷³ Fleming aptly called the house Winterholme as he wintered in Ottawa and summered in Halifax.⁷⁴ His large family and parents' primary residence was Winterholme,⁷⁵ which had several alterations and expansions over time.

⁷² Mario Creet, "Fleming, Sir Sandford," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 14, (University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003), accessed December 11, 2024, https://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/fleming_sandford_14E.html.

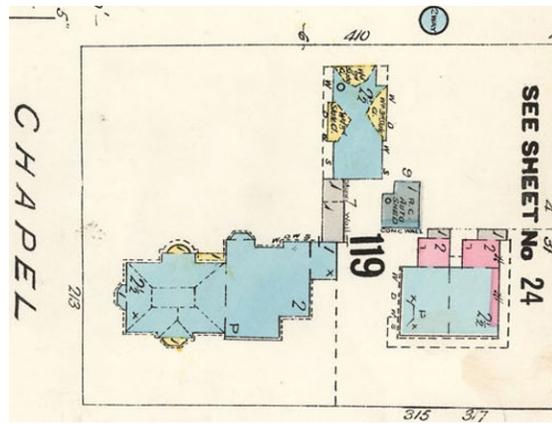
⁷³ "OTTAWA-CARLETON (04), OTTAWA-CARLETON, Book 11, PLAN 6; NORTH DALY," Ontario Land Registry Access, accessed December 10, 2024, <https://www.onland.ca/ui/4/books/80845/viewer/44139011?page=3>; "OTTAWA-CARLETON (04), OTTAWA-CARLETON, Book 10, PLAN 6; SOUTH BESSERER," Ontario Land Registry Access, accessed December 10, 2024, <https://www.onland.ca/ui/4/books/80579/viewer/44277761?page=3>.

⁷⁴ "Appendix A: SPDA Fleming Cottage Scope of Work (2016)," in *Restoration and Preservation of Fleming Cottage*, City of Halifax, June 20, 2023, <https://cdn.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/230620rci03.pdf>, 3.

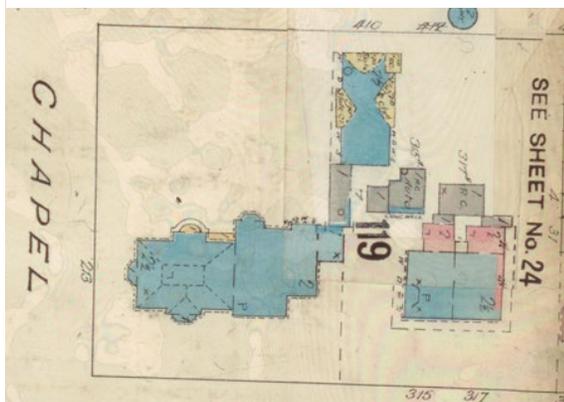
⁷⁵ "The Fleming Family" in *Sir Sandford Fleming: The Knight of Time*, Virtual Museum of Canada, accessed December 11, 2024, <https://www.sandfordfleming.ca/en/f2041.html>.



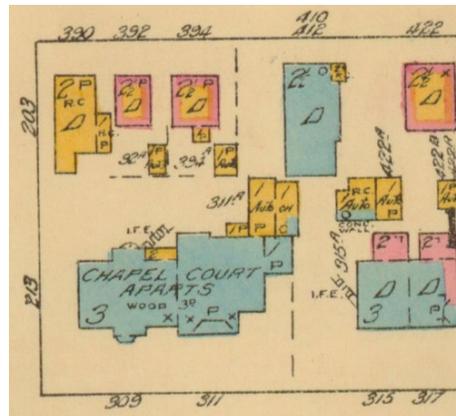
213 Chapel, Source: *Ottawa Fire Insurance Plans*, 1888, revised 1901, Vol 1, 25



213 Chapel, Source: *Ottawa Fire Insurance Plans*, 1912, Vol 1, 25



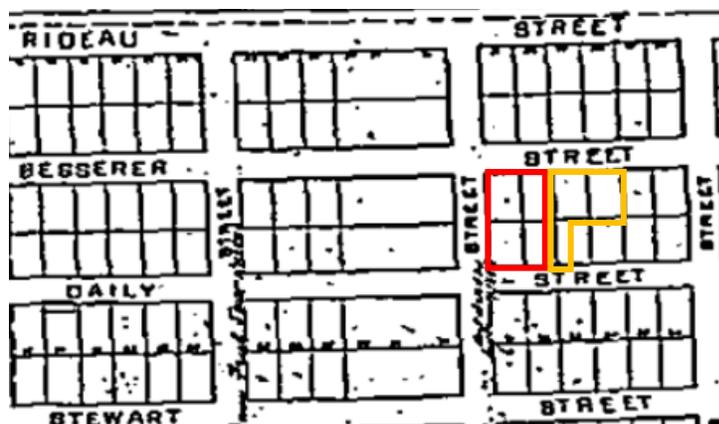
213 Chapel, Source: *Ottawa Fire Insurance Plans*, 1912, revised 1922, Vol 1, 25



213 Chapel/309-311 Daly, Source: *Ottawa Fire Insurance Plans*, 1948, Vol 2, 215

In 1891, Sandford Fleming purchased the two east adjoining lots (33 and 34) on Besserer south and part of east lot (33) on Daly.⁷⁶ The only other house built on Sandford's Sandy Hill estate was 410 Besserer Street for his son, Hugh Percy Fleming in 1904. The northern stables, woodsheds, and coach house were demolished to make way for Hugh's stone house. Between 1904 and 1912, a stone wall with an iron roof and by 1922 a slate roof that connected the houses.

⁷⁶ "OTTAWA-CARLETON (04), OTTAWA-CARLETON, Book 11, PLAN 6; NORTH DALY,"; "OTTAWA-CARLETON (04), OTTAWA-CARLETON, Book 10, PLAN 6; SOUTH BESSERER."



Sandford Fleming estate, acquired red lots in 1870, orange lots in 1891; Source: OnLand, "OTTAWA-CARLETON (04), OTTAWA-CARLETON, Book 11, PLAN



Sandford Fleming residence, corner Chapel and Daly Streets, Source: Library and Archives Canada, PA-

In 1906 and 1907, Sir Sandford Fleming sold the lots where 410 Besserer Street was located to Hugh Percy, the lot west of 410 Besserer Street to his son Walter Arthur, and the remaining lots were sold jointly to his sons Hugh, Walter, and Frank Andrew as trustees.⁷⁷ Sandford deeded most of his Halifax property to the city, reserving seven lots for his family in 1908, indicating he was settling his estates around this time.⁷⁸

Hugh Percy Fleming spent his adolescence and early adulthood living at 213 Chapel Street until he moved into 410 Besserer Street.⁷⁹ It's suggested that 410 Besserer Street was constructed by Sir Sandford Fleming for his son, Hugh and his new daughter-in-law Ethel Wynyard Gormully as a wedding gift.⁸⁰ The couple were married in 1902⁸¹ and continued to live at 213 Chapel Street until they moved around the block into their own home.⁸² Hugh P Percy is documented living at 410 Besserer St in 1905 then owning the house in 1906 onwards, suggesting the building was paid for by his father.⁸³ Mr. and Mrs. Dr Hugh P Fleming continued to live at the house until 1922.⁸⁴

⁷⁷ "OTTAWA-CARLETON (04), OTTAWA-CARLETON, Book 11, PLAN 6; NORTH DALY"; "OTTAWA-CARLETON (04), OTTAWA-CARLETON, Book 10, PLAN 6; SOUTH BESSERER."

⁷⁸ "Fleming Cottage Assessment and Feasibility Report June 2022," in *Restoration and Preservation of Fleming Cottage*, City of Halifax, June 20, 2023, <https://cdn.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/230620rci03.pdf>, 4.

⁷⁹ *The Ottawa City Directory*, 1900, 239; *The Ottawa City Directory*, 1901, 247; *The Ottawa City Directory*, 1903, 263; *The Ottawa City Directory*, 1904, 270; *The Ottawa City Directory*, 1905, 282.

⁸⁰ "A father's gift," *The Ottawa Citizen*, June 15, 2013, accessed December 3, 2024, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/468486649/>.

⁸¹ "Marriage record for Hugh Percy Fleming and Ethel Eynyard Gormully," Ancestry.ca, April 16, 1902, accessed December 4, 2024, <https://www.ancestry.ca/search/collections/7921/records/2835492?tid=&pid=&queryId=faf8c4a4-1f98-4e37-8610-8b637ca4d0ad&phsrc=gnB1118&phstart=successSource>.

⁸² *The Ottawa City Directory*, 1903, 263; *The Ottawa City Directory*, 1904, 270; *The Ottawa City Directory*, 1905, 282.

⁸³ *The Ottawa City Directory*, 1905, 282; *The Ottawa City Directory*, 1906, 267.

⁸⁴ *The Ottawa City Directory*, 1922, 416.

Therefore, 410-412 Besserer Street has value because of its association with Sir Sandford Fleming and his large Sandy Hill estate.

Criterion 9	
The property has contextual value because it is a landmark	No
Response to Criterion	
<p>410-412 Besserer Street does not have contextual value as a landmark. Overall, the building appears to be well preserved and retains many its Queen Anne Revival features with only a few recent alterations. It is one of the few stone buildings constructed before 1912 in Sandy Hill located near the northern boundary clustered around Besserer Street and Chapel Street. This is notable compared to the predominant use of brick veneer or brick clad buildings on the adjacent streets south of Rideau Street. However, given the building's interior location on the street and having a similar setback and massing with the rest of Besserer Street between Chapel Street and Augusta Street, the building is not considered a landmark. Additionally, 410-412 Besserer Street's associated building, Winterholme at 311 Daly Avenue is situated diagonally and at Daly Avenue and Chapel Street is a more recognizable landmark in Sandy Hill as an imposing stone structure on a street corner.</p>	

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