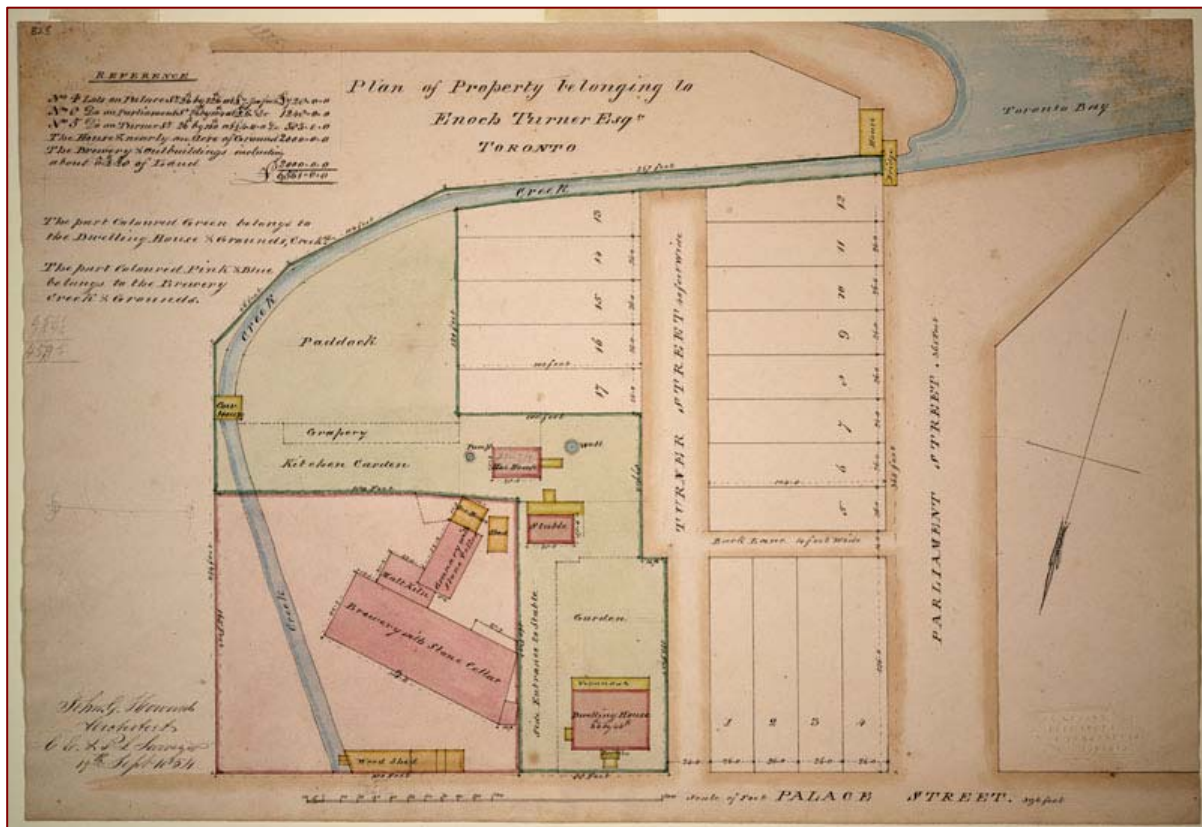


Neighbours: Enoch Turner, Brewer



Enoch Turner's Home & Brewery in 1854 by John George Howard TPL

This is the first article in an occasional series devoted to distillery district neighbours - the people, businesses, and institutions located near Gooderham & Worts from the 1830s onward.

On the last day of January 1832, fire broke out in Enoch Turner's new brewery on Palace (now Front) Street near Parliament. A church bell rang out the alarm at 2 a.m., but efforts to save the building failed. The uninsured immigrant was wiped out and faced a cold winter ahead.

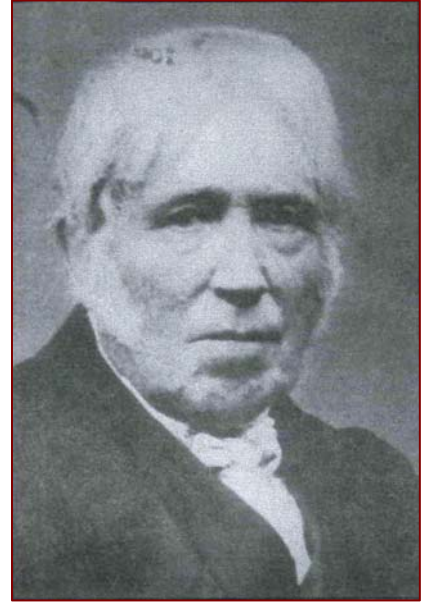
Enoch Turner (1790-1866) had been born and raised in Staffordshire, England where he may have been a potter as well as a wheelwright. In 1830 or '31 he joined the stream of emigrants leaving recessionary England to seek their fortunes in the New World. He arrived in York, Upper Canada armed with a collection of Staffordshire pottery and some money to get started. Whether he tried and failed to sell the pottery remains unknown. But he soon got into another, ultimately far more lucrative, business: brewing.

Turner established his brewery on the south side of Palace Street just east of Parliament Street and west of the meandering Taddle Creek. According to the February 8, 1832 issue of the *Upper Canada Herald*, nearly all the building, as well as a large quantity of malt and brewing utensils, were consumed by the January

31st fire. Since Turner had invested all his capital, but was not insured, he was reportedly "...reduced to poverty by this sad accident."

Fortunately, help arrived. James Worts - another recent immigrant from England, who was building a windmill nearby - and several other neighbours arranged a temporary loan of £300 to tide the brewer over. The York Circus also donated proceeds from an evening's benefit performance. Enoch Turner re-established his business; parried other threats (such as the City's 1835 proposal to drain Taddle Creek, which would have cut-off his water supply); expanded his interests into real estate and railways; and joined his friends and neighbours, the Gooderhams and Worts families, in philanthropic ventures.

Of particular note for the neighbourhood were Little Trinity Church on King Street and the adjacent Enoch Turner Schoolhouse. Designed by Henry Bowyer Lane, the 1843 church is simple but elegant. (The ogive arches perhaps inspired distillery architect, [David Roberts Jr.](#), when he designed the Gooderham Building 50 years later.) Turner, like Gooderham and Worts, donated money and time to its growth. As for the 1848 schoolhouse bearing his name, it was also supported by his neighbours, but would not have been built without his critical financial impetus.



Enoch Turner (1790-1866)

Turner operated his brewery at Palace and Parliament until 1855 when he sold the property to Consumers Gas for £6,500 (£4000 in cash and the rest in stock). He then moved to a splendid new Georgian home, "Allendale," at 241 Sherbourne street, where it can still be seen. In the course of arranging the sale, his agent, architect John George Howard, prepared a survey of the Palace Street property. This September 1854 plan provides rare insight into the lay-out of a pioneer brewery, as well as some of Turner's other, more idiosyncratic interests. (NB The plan is oriented toward the south, with the lake on top and Palace Street on the bottom.)

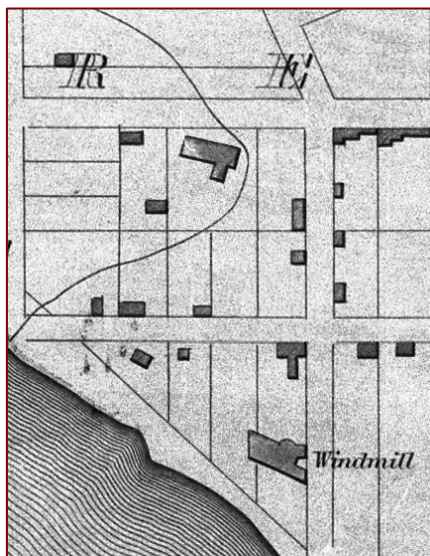
Turner's house - where he lived with his second wife and an Irish housekeeper - was entered through a portico off Palace Street, on the site of today's Toronto Public Library administration building. Like William Gooderham's house on nearby Mill Street, Turner's had a verandah stretching along the south façade from which he could observe the lake ... and his neighbour's looming windmill. (In the 1837 City Directory, Turner's brewery was listed simply as being on "Palace Street near the windmill." - an indication of the windmill's early landmark status.)

John George Howard's plan shows the main Brewery with Stone Cellar set at an oblique angle between the house and Taddle Creek, a Malt Kiln (from which he may have sold William Gooderham malt in his early distilling days), and a Granary with Stone Cellar for storing barley and other grains required to make beer. In addition to the expected kitchen garden, stable, and paddock, Turner also had a large garden immediately south of the residence, a "hot house" for protecting and nurturing plants, and a grapery, all attesting to his love of horticulture. He had even retained

the right to transfer small trees from Palace Street after he sold the property; and he carefully bequeathed his garden tools to one of his nieces.

Enoch Turner was obviously shrewd in business, devout in religion, and generous in philanthropy. He also appears to have been a great uncle, admired by his descendents for, among other things, giving his horses beer to drink after a hard day's work, a treat he extended to neighbouring horses at Gooderham & Worts' distillery.

Enoch Turner died on January 5, 1866.



1842 Cane Map showing Turner's Brewery embraced by Taddle Creek north of the Gooderham Windmill



Enoch Turner Schoolhouse & Little Trinity Church

Many thanks to Shirley Hartt, curator at Enoch Turner Schoolhouse. For more about Enoch Turner, see Jane Macauley Sutton's "Enoch Turner, the Benevolent Brewer," in *The York Pioneer*, v. 88 (1993).

Please send your comments or questions to Manager of Heritage Services, Sally Gibson, sg@thedistillerydistrict.com.

For more about the history of the Distillery District, visit www.distilleryheritage.com.