

Cory Miller Residence



Date of Construction	1912
Address	361 - 1 (Esplanade) Street SE
Original Owner	Thomas A. Cory
Architect	William T. Williams
Contractor	Lussier Construction Co.
Neighbourhood	Downtown
Legal	1491;3;8,9

Description of Historic Place

The Cory Miller Residence is a grand two and one-half storey, plus full-basement, wooden-frame residence with complex asymmetrical massing visible by its multi-pitched rooflines and irregular projecting gables. It is situated just west of the downtown core in Medicine Hat and is part of a historic grouping of houses on 1st Street SE. Distinguishing features of this residence include a tall, corbelled red-brick chimney, a two-storey stacked front verandah with pediment, and a full-width verandah supported by twinned square columns. The residence presently houses the offices of The Monarch Corporation.

Heritage Value of Historic Place

The Cory Miller Residence, constructed in 1912, is valued as an emblem of the peak of the Edwardian era boom in Medicine Hat in the 1910s, and is representative of the importance of the first owners of the house: the Cory family. Medicine Hat first developed in the 1880s due to its positioning along the CPR rail line, but

did not experience substantial growth until the 1910s with a local industry boom due to the capitalization of inexpensive local gas and the presence of high quality clay deposits. This handsome residence was built by English-born Thomas A. Cory (1862-1941) for \$6,500. Cory was a long-time railway conductor for the CPR, beginning his career in Rat Portage (now Kenora) as a trainman in 1887. He was promoted to a conductor in 1890, transferring first to Calgary in 1897, Cranbrook in 1900, and eventually to Medicine Hat in 1904. Cory and his wife, Dakota-born Maud (nee Dunphy), occupied the house along with their four children until 1929. Following his retirement from the CPR in July of 1929, and Maud's passing in September of 1929, Cory relocated to Vancouver where he lived until his death.

The Cory Miller Residence has additional heritage value through its association with its second owner, Medicine Hat doctor and federal politician, Frederick William Gershaw (1883-1968). Gershaw first began renting the house in 1932 before eventually purchasing the property in 1937. Born in Emerson, Manitoba, Gershaw

came to Medicine Hat as a medical officer for the CPR. He was a member of both the Royal College of Physicians of Canada and a fellow of the American College of Surgeons. In 1912, he wed Harriet (nee Robinson), a registered nurse. The couple had four daughters. Gershaw was an influential member of the Medicine Hat community, serving on the School Board, and the Medicine Hat Hospital Board. He was also instrumental in the foundation of the Medical Arts Clinic in 1927. A member of the Alberta Liberal Party, Gershaw ran for MLA for the Medicine Hat constituency in 1921, but lost. He ran again four years later, and won. He held his seat until 1935. In 1945, Gershaw was appointed to the Alberta Senate, a position that he held until 1968 when, at age 84, he resigned due to his poor health. In addition to his political career, Gershaw was the author of several important historical articles on Medicine Hat. The Gershaw family owned the residence until 1953; Gershaw Drive in Medicine Hat is named after him, commemorating his importance to the community of Medicine Hat.

The Cory Miller Residence is further significant as an outstanding example of Medicine Hat's unique architectural. The grand house expresses an elegantly detailed plan and is an eclectic response to popular architectural styles of the Edwardian era, featuring elements of both the Queen Anne Revival and Classical Revival-styles. Design features of the Queen Anne Revival-style, popular in Medicine Hat due to the large population of British residents, are evident in the residence's asymmetrical massing with steeply pitched hipped-roof, irregular projecting gables, and articulation of surface treatments with patterned shingles in the gable peak, which are contrasted by horizontal wooden siding on the main body of the house. Classical Revival-style features are referenced in the design by the presence of the triangular pediment, decorative wooden brackets, and large square verandah columns. The residence is a design by William T. Williams. British-born Williams was a noteworthy Medicine Hat architect who designed numerous public, commercial, financial, civic, industrial, and educational buildings during his ten-year residency in the city.

Rear of the Cory Miller Residence showing the 1980s addition constructed following the conversion of the house to office space

Donald Luxton & Associates
August 2013



With the Cory Miller Residence's prominent location on the tree-lined historic 1st Street SE, and distinctive architectural and landscape features, the residence is valued as a highly visible landmark in Medicine Hat.

Character-Defining Elements - Cory Miller Residence (361 - 1 Street SE)



- Prominent location on the south side of 1st Street SE (formally Esplanade) in Medicine Hat



- Original placement and siting at the eastern extent of a tree-lined historic residential neighbourhood on 1st Street SE



- Original landscape features such as: expansive grassed lot with mature trees; circular walkway at front of house



- Form, scale, and massing as expressed by its: two and one-half storey height, plus basement height; rectangular plan; bellcast hipped-roof with wide overhang; asymmetrical projecting gables; closed soffits; large two and one-half storey addition at the rear



- Wooden-frame construction with quality materials including: lapped wooden siding under later vinyl siding; patterned wood shingles, recessed wooden panels, and concrete foundation



- Queen Anne Revival-style details such as: highly-articulated details; contrasting patterns of surfaces; stacked front verandah with pediment; full-width verandah with open balustrade and twinned and single verandah columns on wooden piers; red brick chimneys with corbelled chimney caps



- Classical Revival-style details such as triangular pediment with closed cornice; decorative wooden modillions



- Original windows such as: single assembly 1-over-1 single-hung wooden-sash windows; three-sided bay windows on the north elevations with leaded glass in upper sash; ribbon windows with curved upper sash in enclosed upper verandah; 1-over-1 single-hung wooden-sash windows with leaded glass in upper and lower sash; wooden-sash fixed windows at basement level; wooden door with original hardware and single light

- Interior features such as wooden floors and trim



Statement of Integrity - Cory Miller Residence (361 - 1 Street SE)

Applicable Significance Criteria

This site is significant because...

Theme / Activity / Cultural Practice / Event ☒ Yes ☐ No

-The Cory Miller Residence, constructed in 1912, is valued as an emblem of the peak of the Edwardian era boom in Medicine Hat in the 1910s and is representative of the importance of the first owners of the house: the Cory family (**Theme Value – Oasis in the Prairies: Settling Medicine Hat**).

Institution / Person ☒ Yes ☐ No

-The Cory Miller Residence has additional heritage value through its association with the second owner, Medicine Hat doctor and federal politician, Frederick William Gershaw (1883-1968) (**Theme Value – Oasis in the Prairies: Settling Medicine Hat**).

Design / Style / Construction ☒ Yes ☐ No

-The Cory Miller Residence is further significant as an outstanding example of Medicine Hat's architectural design. The grand house expresses an elegantly detailed design and is an eclectic response to popular architectural styles of the Edwardian era with elements of both the Queen Anne Revival-style and the Classical Revival-style (**Theme Value – Made in Medicine Hat**).

Information Potential ☐ Yes ☒ No

Landmark / Symbolic Value ☒ Yes ☐ No

-With the Cory Miller Residence's prominent location on the tree-lined historic 1st Street SE, and distinctive architectural and landscape features, the residence is valued as a highly visible landmark in Medicine Hat (**Landmark Value**).

Period of Significance

1906 to 1913 Pre-First World War, Age of Optimism

Chronology of Alterations

Post 1970s - Addition added to rear of house
Post 1920s - Upper balcony filled in
1990s - Vinyl siding added over wooden lapped siding

Aspects of Integrity

LOCATION ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

The location of the residence has not been changed.

DESIGN ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

The design of the building has been retained, apart from the vinyl siding added over the original siding, and the changes to the upper balcony, which has been filled in.

ENVIRONMENT ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

The building continues to be situated in a residential neighbourhood on 1st Street SE.

MATERIALS ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

The authenticity of the materials is evident on the residence.

WORKMANSHIP ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

The high quality of the workmanship of the building is identifiable through its use of quality materials and current condition.

FEELING ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

The feeling of the building has not been altered. It conveys a grand historical aesthetic.

ASSOCIATION ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

The association of the building is unchanged.

Statement of Integrity continued on next page...

Statement of Integrity - Cory Miller Residence (361 - 1 Street SE)

Statement of Integrity

Cory Miller Residence maintains all the aspects of integrity necessary for it to convey its significance / heritage value.

The Cory Miller Residence is in excellent condition with very few changes. The recessed verandah at the second storey was enclosed with ribbon windows with arched upper windows at some point during the house's history. A two and one-half storey addition was added to the rear of the house at an unknown date. The residence currently functions as an office and has been updated substantially from its original design.


Additional Images - Cory Miller Residence

Historic photo of Cory Miller Residence

Esplanade Archives, Medicine Hat, Alberta.
0019.0022.



Heritage Evaluation Form - Cory Miller Residence (361 - 1 Street SE)

 Medicine Hat The Gas City Heritage Evaluation Form	Site Number	Category A
	Community District Downtown	
	Designation	

Site Name(s): Cory Miller Residence			
Municipal Address: 361 - 1 Street SE		Date of Construction:	Y 1912
Consultant(s): Donald Luxton & Associates Inc.		Evaluation Date:	Y 13 M 05 D 17
Heritage Committee: Heritage Resource Committee			
Heritage Planner: Chris Reddy			
		Total	
		85	

History (H)	E	VG	G	F	P		(H) SCORE
H.1 Associations/Patterns		X				20	30
H.2 Age		X				10	
Comments: H.1 The Cory Miller Residence is emblematic of the peak of the Edwardian era boom in Medicine Hat in the 1910s and is representative of the importance of the first owners of the house: the Cory family. H.2 Constructed in 1912.							

Architecture (A)	E	VG	G	F	P		(A) SCORE
A.1 Style/Type/Design	X					40	35
A.2 Designer/Builder		X				10	
A.3 Construction Technology			X			5	
A.4 Interior Details				X		2	
A.5 Alterations		X				-5	
Comments: A.1 The Cory Miller Residence is an outstanding example of Medicine Hat's architectural design, expressing an elegantly detailed plan and is an eclectic response to popular architectural styles of the Edwardian era with elements of both the Queen Anne Revival and Classical Revival-styles. A.2 Architect – William T. Williams, Contractor – Unknown A.3 Wooden-frame construction A.4 Interior elements including wooden floors and trim. A.5 Enclosed the verandah on the second storey and boarding below the front verandah replaced with an alternate design.							

Urban Context (C)	E	VG	G	F	P		(C) SCORE
C.1 Landmark/Character		X				10	20
C.2 Streetscape/Landscape		X				10	
Comments: C.1 The residence's siting, exception detailing and overall refined form make it a highly recognizable building. C.2 The Cory Miller Residence's is representative of a grouping of early residences along 1st Street.							