

ON THE MARKET

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WOODSTOCK

Four storeys, 20 rooms, 9 fireplaces

*210 Vansittart Ave. (Dundas Street and Vansittart Avenue)
Asking price: \$895,000, Taxes: \$7,196 (2002)*

In 1894, Thomas L. Willson bought this Woodstock property as the site where he would build his dream home. Willson, better known as Carbide Willson, spared no expense. A New York architect was hired to design the Queen Anne Revival-style home, made of brick and stone with a circular verandah.

Willson discovered the processes for making calcium carbide and acetylene in commercial quantities, and many years later sold his Canadian patents to the founders of the Union Carbide Company of Canada Limited in 1914, writes Ron Brown in *Castles and Kings, Ontario Mansions and the People Who Live in Them*, published by Polar Bear Press.

The four-storey house, with a solarium across the back, boasts 20 rooms, including nine bedrooms and seven bathrooms. There are nine fireplaces, and each room showcases a different kind of wood. One bedroom has birds' eye maple panelling, another cherry wood, another oak.

"The current owners matched Carbide Willson's extravagance with their investment for the restoration and upgrade process, down to the most minute detail," listing agent Richard Ling says. "All of the original locks have been taken out and were sent to Amsterdam to re-key, at a cost of \$20 each. Now each room has a door that can be locked."

Ling says his favourite room is the third-floor Admiral Room, previously the billiard room. It features soaring ceilings, an antique ceramic fireplace mantel with an ornate metalwork border and a wrap-around balcony.

Of note is the library, which has original mahogany columns and a ceiling crown centred by a dancing cherub fresco. The octagonal room has a fireplace, built-in shelves, carved mahogany wainscoting and a glass-panel door to the verandah.

*(Listing Broker: Harvey Kalles Real Estate Ltd.
(Richard Ling)*

— Connie Adair