

Please find a rewrite of my letter below referencing the City of London staff report issued by Heritage Planner Kyle Gonyou from July 16, 2018.

Thank You

AnnaMaria Valastro

Dear Council Member,

The property at 172 Central Ave. was designated a heritage property in 2018. It is currently for sale.

The property owners tried to sell the house after it was designated but the price was too steep. They have since left the house to rot. A recent property standards complaint has triggered renewed attempts to sell it again.

Please find attached current photos of the property and a short history. This house could be repurposed to affordable housing for the many First Peoples living homeless on London's city streets.

Sincerely,

AnnaMaria Valastro

1. The first known occupant of this house was Dr. Oronhyatekha, a Mohawk from the Six Nations who practiced medicine in London. "Dr. O.", who lived in London from 1874 to 1889, was respected as a skilled and learned physician in Canada who applied both emerging western medicine and traditional Mohawk medicine.
2. He was an extraordinary man who believed in the equality of men and woman and advocated for the admission of woman as full members in the International Order of Foresters - a fraternal and financial institution that he founded in 1878 while living in London.
3. Dr. Oronhyatekha ("Burning Sky" or "Burning Cloud" in Mohawk), or Peter Martin, was a significant figure in Canadian Indigenous history. He rose to prominence in medicine, sport, politics, business, fraternalism, and social reform. He was one of the first Indigenous medical doctors to achieve accreditation and to practice in Canada, and the first Indigenous person to attend Oxford University.
4. Born in 1841 on the Six Nations Reserve near Brantford, Ontario, Oronhyatekha was sent to the Mohawk Institute where he trained as a shoemaker. He attended the Wesleyan Academy in Massachusetts and Kenyon College in Ohio before returning to teach at Tyendinaga on the Bay of Quinte (his mother's home community).
5. He was selected by the Six Nations of the Grand River Council to give the welcoming address to the Prince of Wales during his visit in 1860. Through this opportunity, Oronhyatekha gained an introduction to Dr. Henry Acland, personal physician to the Prince of Wales on his tour of Canada and the United States, who recommended he study medicine at Oxford University. Oronhyatekha pursued his education at Oxford University but he did not stay in England long and completed his studies at the

University of Toronto, where he earned his medical degree in 1866 – the second Indigenous Canadian to become a practicing doctor.

As a qualified doctor, Dr. Oronhyatekha opened practices at Fra

6. Dr. Oronhyatekha was appointed as the doctor to the people of the Oneida Nation of the Thames in either 1875 or 1876 (Jamieson and Hamilton 2016, 128). He also opened a medical practice in London (first at 390 Richmond Street, later moving to the Masonic Hall at 371 Richmond Street), advertising himself as a specialist in cancer treatment, and diseases of the nerves, throat, and lungs (Jamieson and Hamilton 2016, 128). Dr. Oronhyatekha lived at 264 Oxford Street East in 1876-1877 (City Directory), and 573 Dundas Street in 1880-1881 (City Directory), before moving into the newly constructed house at 172 Central Avenue as recorded in the 1881-1882 City Directory.
7. The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada designated Dr. Oronhyaetkha as a Person of National Historic Significance in 2001.

The full staff report submitted by Heritage Planner Kyle Gonyou can be read here:

<https://pub-london.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=48003>





