

About Durham Furniture

Durham Furniture has been making solid wood furniture of the highest quality and enduring value since 1899. Our proud legacy of quality, integrity and dependability places us among North America's premier manufacturers of fine furniture.

All of our furniture is made from [sustainably harvested solid](#) wood at our plant in the Town of Durham, Ontario, Canada. Durham (population 2,500) is nestled amid rolling hills, forests and farms, along the Saugeen River about 150 kilometres (93 miles) north of Toronto.

Durham Furniture employs about 200 craftspeople who work in our century-old red-brick factory. We are a tightly knit family – spanning multiple generations – dedicated to making fine furniture in an [environmentally sustainable and ethical](#) way.

Our products include traditional, transitional, contemporary and cottage styles, and are sold by [fine furniture dealers](#) across North America.

Durham Furniture is featured in exclusive luxury hotels and in countless beautiful homes across Canada and the United States where it is passed down from one generation to the next.



Our History:

Durham Furniture got its start in the late 1890s, as a community initiative to provide employment for the Town of Durham's young people. A group of businesspeople raised more than \$10,000 in capital from local citizens and secured an interest-free loan and other concessions from the town council. The Town purchased a six-acre site on Lambton Street for \$500, which remains the present site of Durham Furniture today.

The new company's first shipment took place on Feb. 5, 1900 – a consignment of unfinished furniture sent to a Mr. Brentall of Manchester England. The first 32 employees earned wages of seven cents an hour for a 10-hour day.

T. Eaton Company provided a steady source of demand for the products, which were sold across the country through the popular Eaton's catalogue.

Durham Furniture's reputation for fine quality furniture grew over the years. In 1948, Eaton's commissioned the company to produce a gift for the newly married Princess Elizabeth and Duke of Edinburgh. The result was the solid maple paneling and specially designed furniture in the "Canadian Room" in Clarence House, the young couple's home in London, England.

After Elizabeth was crowned Queen of England, the furniture was dispersed to Buckingham Palace and other royal residences and much of the paneling was re-installed aboard the royal yacht Britannia. (Prince Phillip continues to use his solid Canadian maple desk at Buckingham Palace to this day.

In the 1950s, Durham Furniture was purchased by U.S.-based Kroehler Manufacturing, the largest furniture manufacturing company in the world at that time. In 1979, Strathearn House Group of Toronto purchased Kroehler's Canadian division. When Strathearn entered receivership in 1992, a committed group of towns people stepped forward to once again secure the Town of Durham's economic future. Led by Durham-born Orville Mead they raised funds locally to purchase the company from the Receiver.

Durham Furniture Inc. was launched on June 22, 1992 and has today regained its position as one of North America's leading manufacturers of solid wood fine furniture.

--with information from "Durham Furniture 100th Anniversary Special Edition" by Cathy Byberg, produced by the Durham Chronicle