

The Dickson Palace is owned and managed by Higab, the City of Gothenburg's property management company. Its wide range of properties includes covered markets, museums, theatres, arenas, one ship and 27 listed buildings. The property management company's mission includes caring for and developing the historical buildings of the City of Gothenburg in the long term.

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The Dickson Palace - a merchant's home



Completed in 1862, the Dickson Palace was designed as a private home for the merchant Oscar Dickson, his wife Marika von Rosen and their children. British architect William Allen Boulnois designed the elegant residence, and later also Villa Överås in Örgryte for Oscar's brother James J Dickson.

The palace was one of the first stone buildings erected outside the moat, and it was very modern for its era with a water toilet, gas lighting and heating pipes in some rooms. It was built in three storeys with over 30 rooms and totalled about 930 m² in floor space. There was a greenhouse, and in addition to the main building there was also a stable with a coachman's house and a carriage house. The main residence and its outbuildings were all made of stone and featured Renaissance Revival façades with English influences.



The interiors and grounds were also English-inspired. Many elements of the décor were imported from England, such as the main staircase in the hallway, the ceramic floor tiles, doors, columns and textiles. The interior was lavish, with stucco reliefs by the Italian artist Bellini and floors of Lebanese cedar laid out in a star pattern. The giant mirrors on the walls, the crystal chandeliers and gold cornices added to the exclusive look of the home.

School for household management

Oscar's son Osborn inherited the house from his parents. He died in 1921 and the family left the house the following year. In 1923, the Dickson Palace was taken over by the Margareta School, which taught household management and also ran a restaurant and banquet hall. The main residence was remodelled at this time, making the third storey into small hotel rooms. The stables became a shop. In the mid-1940s, wartime rationing led to the school's closing, but the restaurant business continued.

In 1968, the City of Gothenburg took possession of the property, and in 1973 the palace became a listed building. Today the property is owned and administered by Higab. The city's executive office rents it for its internal and external entertaining.

The Dickson family

The Dickson family, with roots in Kelso in Scotland, has left its mark on the history of Gothenburg. Brothers Robert and James Dickson moved to Gothenburg in the first decade of the 19th century to pursue commerce. In 1816 they founded the James Dickson & Co. house of commerce, which exported iron and wood and imported mostly colonial goods. Business boomed, and soon they were the next-biggest house of commerce in Gothenburg after Carnegie & Co.

Several members of the family have become famous as major donors. Oscar Dickson (1823–1897) was James's son and eventually took over the family business, selling it in the latter half of the 19th century. When Oscar Dickson died, he left an inheritance of SEK 10 million – indescribable wealth in those days. He donated large amounts of money to charity and science, for example funding Nordenskiöld's journey through the Northeast Passage. Oscar Dickson was also knighted.



Oscar Dickson. Portrait by Hilda Lindgren in the Dickson Palace



The former stable and coachman's house