

Halifax, Nova Scotia

Halifax Citadel

Northeast Salient (including Casemates Nos. 15 to 33)

Halifax Defence Complex

The Northeast Salient in the Citadel at Halifax was constructed between 1830 and 1846 for the colonial garrison of the Imperial War department based at Halifax, under the commander-in-chief Lieutenant General Perigrine Maitland. The Salient, a "V" shaped projection in the northeast corner of the main work, was built to command the harbour, observe and defend the glacis on the north-east front, throw flanking fire into the dry ditch, provide entry to the ditch (through sallyports 5 and 6), give access to an old well, offer barrack accommodation and other uses. The Salient was the work of three members of the Corps of Royal Engineers: Lieutenant-Colonel Gustavas Nicolls (1825-1831), who was credited with the original design; Lieutenant Colonel Rice Jones (1833-1842), who added two more casemates of defence on the east front and five additional casemates on the north front; and Lieutenant Colonel Patrick D. Calder (1842-1848), who added the remaining casemates and supervised the completion of the work. Modifications over the years are summarized at Appendix A to this document. The Northeast Salient is currently the property of Canadian Heritage. See FHBRO Building Report 95-01, Volume 1.

Reasons for Designation

The Northeast Salient was designated Recognized because of its important historical associations, the qualities of its architectural design and the important role it plays in the environment.

The structure is associated with the active defence of the Imperial naval station in the period of mutual suspicion and hostility between Great Britain and the United States following the War of 1812, and in the period of heightened tension following the Trent affair of 1861. Displaying the prototypical characteristics of a bastioned masonry fort component designed for the mounting of smoothbore ordnance and later adapted for RML ordnance, the Salient is a valuable survivor from both eras.

The completion of the Salient in 1846 was part of a major upgrade of the Halifax defences advocated by the Smythe Report of 1825 and largely accomplished between 1838 and 1862. The civilian employment generated by this project and the increased personnel needed to man the defences gave a boost to the economy of Halifax.

Viewed from the dry ditch, the Salient is impressive for the tall, slightly battered, coursed ironstone escarp walls, topped by a projecting freestone coping and shaped sod parapet. Seen from within the gorge the Salient is conspicuous for its equally high

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granite ashlar masonry retaining walls, pierced at regular intervals by the pattern of openings given the casemates in the 1870s. The interior spaces, in particular the brick-lined "Calder" casemates, set off by the extensive use of granite for skewbacks, skirting, and the trimming of openings, display (when stripped of their plaster finish) a simple elegance and warmth.

Over its lifetime the Northeast Salient has displayed a remarkable adaptability to change; e.g., a full rearmament of the rampart and successive changes in use for the casemates until the present day.

The restoration of the ramparts (emplacements, ammunition and shell recesses, sod parapets and traverses) and parade ground in recent years has largely recovered the appearance of the Northeast Salient in the late 1870s period, leaving only minor changes in the historic relationship between the building and its associated landscape. As an integral component of the main body of the work, the Salient has a strong influence on the military character of the Citadel site.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of the Salient resides in features expressing its specialized military function, a projection of a bastioned fort, for the mounting of artillery on the rampart, firing through embrasures or en barbette for harbour defence, the mounting of artillery in casemates for defence of the dry ditch, the passage of defenders to the ditch if under attack, and the accommodation of military personnel. Externally, the features which define the heritage character of this salient are the shape (two escarp wall faces forming a salient angle) and the construction of the rampart (an escarp of irregular coursed ironstone rubble, a terreplein of segmental profile brick vaulted casemates with a thick earth cover, and a retaining wall of coursed granite ashlar). Also defining the character of this salient are the openings found in the escarp walls: in the typical casemate a single vertical musketry loophole; in the casemates of defence a gun-port flanked by vertical musketry loopholes (both of oblique design).

The heritage character of the exterior would be best protected by conservation treatment of the miscellaneous iron elements attached at the exterior (the iron balustrades of the stairs, the gate, davit and brackets of the munition hoist and the drainpipes bracketed off the retaining wall), cleaning of the iron oxide and efflorescence staining on the masonry, regular repointing of the ironstone and granite walling,

inspection of potential weak points in the rampart waterproofing (the junction of the

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escarp and dwarf retaining walls with the roofs of the casemates), and keeping catchbasins and drains clear.

Internally the features which define the heritage character of this salient are the vaulted bomb-proof construction of the casemate roofs (segmental profile brick vaults of multiple rings, a thick layer of concrete of gable profile, an asphalt layer, and a thick earth cover), the ventilation shafts rising from the ceilings of the casemates of defence, and the open fireplaces (some being bricked up) connected by inclined flues to chimney stacks projecting from the parapet.

The heritage character of the interior would be best protected by monitoring the performance of the waterproofing over the casemates, and keeping up the pointing on the wall and ceiling surfaces. Unblocking the bricked-up fireplace openings and restoring the historic timber floors would contribute to the heritage character of the interior.

The historic relationship between the Northeast Salient and the interior of the main body of the work has been enhanced and strengthened in recent years by the restoration of the retaining walls of the West Curtain, Redan, Southeast Salient and demi-bastions, the boundary wall of the South Magazine, the ramp and the paving of the parade. The continued maintenance of these features and the various elements on the ramparts will preserve the military character of the fortification.

APPENDIX A

External modifications include: the construction of an expense magazine/cartridge store on the ramparts of the north face over sallyport 5 (1863-1865), the dismounting of the five smooth-bore pieces on the ramparts and the construction of 4 new emplacements formed in granite and flanked by brick-lined ammunition and shell recesses for two 64-pounder RMLs on traversing platforms on the right face, one 7-inch RML on traversing platform in the salient and one 64-pounder RML on traversing platform on the left face (1864-1879), the breaking of a new window in the retaining wall between the original window and door of each casemate (1870-1879), the breaking down of 30-foot sections of dwarf retaining wall and the construction of an iron and timber extension to the terreplein in the rear of 2 of the new 64-pounder RML emplacements on the right face (1874-1879), the breaking of a 3-foot gap in the dwarf retaining wall at the right face

and the fitting of an iron gate and munition hoist to lift heavy projectiles and ammunition to the loading stage (1874-1879), the construction of sod traverses between

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emplacements, the reshaping of the parapet and the replacement of all ventilation shafts and chimneys (1878-1879), the blocking up of the door and window openings in the retaining wall of casemate 30 (1878-1879), the enlargement of the loophole opening of each casemate in the escarp wall except casemates 26-29 to form a pair of windows (c. 1900), the blocking up of the gun-ports and flanking musketry loopholes of the casemates of defence, 22, 31 and 32 (n.d.), the replacement of the punched door and window openings of casemate 31 by a single segmental arched opening incorporating a glazed screen (1924-1928). Internal modifications include: the addition of fireplaces in a number of casemates and the plastering of all wall and vault surfaces (post 1874), the breaking of communicating doors between casemates 32 and 33 and between casemate 30 and sallyport 6 (1878-1879), the installation of partitioning in casemates 30, 32 and 33 as part of their conversion to shell stores, artillery stores and expense magazine respectively (1878-1879), the replacement of the pine floors of the casemates by concrete floors (c. 1900), the bricking up of a number of fireplace openings (n.d.).

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For further guidance, please refer to the *FHBRO Code of Practice*.
