

**FHBRO HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT
AMMUNITION STORAGE (#30b), FORT FREDERICK, RMC, KINGSTON**

FHBRO number: **93-099**
DFRP number: **09405**
Resource name: **Ammunition Storage (Building 30b); Fort Frederick Magazine**
Address: **Fort Frederick, Royal Military College, Kingston, Ontario**
FHBRO status: **"Recognized" Federal Heritage Building**
Construction: **1846**
Designer: **No designer identified**
Original function: **Explosives and ammunition storage**
Current function: **Storage**
Modifications: **Minor adjustments to surrounding landscapes**
Custodian: **Department of National Defence**

Reasons for Designation

The ammunition storage building is a "Recognized" Federal Heritage Building because of its historical associations, and its architectural and environmental values:

Historical value:

The ammunition storage building, or Fort Frederick Magazine, is associated with the enlargement of the defences of Fort Frederick beginning in 1846, and comprises one of several components of what has become, since 1989, the Fort Frederick National Historic Site.

The original Fort Frederick was constructed in 1813 to defend Kingston harbour against the United States. The defensive works were completely rebuilt by British military authorities during 1846 and 1847, following increased tensions in 1845 between Britain and the United States over the Oregon border dispute. The most conspicuously augmented harbour defence works at Kingston, the Martello towers, date from this period. At three storeys, the Martello tower at the centre of Fort Frederick was the largest and most heavily fortified.

Advancements in the power and range of rifled artillery rendered these fortifications obsolete within a few years. After Confederation, the threat from the United States abated and the British left in 1870. Subsequently, the magazine has remained in use for ammunition and explosives storage. The magazine is integral to the historical significance of the fortifications as an ensemble.

Architectural value:

An illustration of a relatively unchanged and integral part of mid-nineteenth century fortifications, the magazine's external appearance is primarily an earthwork, whose sole architectural aspect is its entrance, a narrow slit between two rough-coursed stone retaining walls. These side walls are capped with dressed stone parapets whose slope conforms to the earthen slopes they hold back, with a short horizontal parapet to meet the narrow end wall. The entrance itself is a low doorway in this end wall, with brick masonry surrounds

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beneath an especially heavy stone lintel surmounted by rough-coursed stone keyed to the side retaining walls, and topped by a stone gable. The fill to the wall is a combination of rough stone blocks and grass-covered earth, eroded in parts.

The entrance looks back toward the Martello Tower, so that the maximum protection would be available against fire from offshore. Its masonry-lined interior is a single storey on grade, with a gross area of roughly 40 square metres and a height of 2.7 metres. The magazine shares its architectural character — its particular combination of rough stone masonry and dressed accents — with the rest of the constructions of the 1840s, and later.

Environmental value:

The relatively unchanged relationship between the magazine and the fortifications of which it is a part and the magazine that is part of the perimeter of Fort Frederick, was constructed as an articulated ring combining stone walls and earthworks that commanded the entrance to the harbour at Kingston, and the entrance to the Rideau waterway. The magazine lies within this fortified perimeter, between the Martello Tower and the earthworks overlooking the water, opposite the lunette and guardhouse (#30a) where it remains an integral part of the landscape of the fortifications as they were originally constructed, with very little change.

With its entrance facing back to the Tower, the magazine appears from the presumed direction of enemy naval fire as no more than a part of the defensive earthworks, almost invisible from most directions. It remains capable for its original intended use.

Character-Defining Elements

The following character-defining elements of the ammunition storage magazine should be respected:

Its role as an illustration of the pre-Confederation defences of Canada is reflected in:

- the unaltered combination of unobtrusive earthwork and minimal architectural visibility in accordance with its original purpose to store dangerous explosives under potential attack.

Its functional combination of landform and constructed space in concert with the craft and quality of its period and architectural context as manifested in:

- the spare, precise stone walls, symmetrically arranged to protect its single entrance, that nonetheless incorporates a small gable as an accent corresponding to the more visible architectural gestures of neighbouring structures;
- the ordered combinations of coursed stone, dressed and rusticated, that correspond to the treatment of all the Fort Frederick structures from 1846; and
- the narrow, exterior space, almost subterranean, faced by a gabled “frontage”.

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The manner in which it reinforces the traditionally defensive military character of the setting as evidenced in:

- the open landscapes outside its entrance, and comprising most of its exterior walls and roof; and
- the building's location in context, helping to define an essential historical and functional setting in the green space within the fortified precinct of the Fort.

For guidance on interventions, please refer to the *FHBRO Code of Practice*. For further information contact FHBRO.

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