

FHBRO Number 96-96

Colwood, British Columbia

Lower Battery - Guardhouse

603 Fort Rodd Hill Road

The Guardhouse was constructed in 1895-1898 and incorporated as part of the defensible wall of the Lower Battery. It was designed by the British Royal Engineers. External modifications include: renovations to windows, the wooden shed-style latrine roof (nd). Internal modifications include: hardware replacements (nd), wood flooring repairs (nd). The building is currently interpreted as part of Fort Rodd Hill National Historic Site. Parks Canada is the custodian. See FHBRO Building Report 96-96.

Reasons For Designation

The Guardhouse has been designated Recognized because of its architectural importance and its environmental significance as well as its historical associations.

A functional military structure to accommodate a small guard contingent, the Guardhouse has a simple, unassuming appearance derived from the horizontal lines of the design. The good craftsmanship of the wood porch and concrete structure, which is plastered, as well as the distinct patterned paintings around windows and doors add to the aesthetic appeal.

Its site is unchanged from its early appearance and reinforces the stark military character of the battery. The structure's placement to the north, in concert with the defensible wall, defines one edge of the Lower Battery's entry courtyard.

The Guardhouse at the Lower Battery is associated with the original planning and construction of Fort Rodd Hill and is illustrative of a pivotal phase of development. The Guardhouse is a typical component of the military planning for forts and bases.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of the Guardhouse resides in the overall massing, profile, construction materials, interior planning and site relationships.

The flat-roofed structure has a low, rectangular massing and a prominent chimney. The structure is integrated with a gate and perimeter wall of similar height as well as a sloped porch and latrine as part of the footprint which should be maintained. The massing, profile, and footprint and the relationship with the gate reflect the functions of the structure and should be respected.

The concrete formwork with plaster finish features rounded edges at openings and

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projecting sills. The paint finish is a distinctive feature reflecting military influences. The woodwork of the porch shelter, with exposed rafters, roof sheathing and wood posts with chamfered edges, is simply detailed. The exterior materials merit a regular maintenance program. The wood six-over-six sash windows appear to be original.

The interior planning - a three room layout with one door at the front and rear - has been maintained, reflecting the adaptability of the design. The interiors maintain the wood casings, trims and the heavy wooden doors of the bedroom loopholes which contribute to the military character of the interiors. Other finishes include the painted plaster walls and wood flooring which exhibit a deliberately utilitarian, functional character.

The ground plane, whether turfgrass or crushed stone, should be maintained. Interpretive signage obscures the clean lines of the the structure and its exterior features and should be replaced with alternative communications media.

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