

Halifax, Nova Scotia

Halifax Citadel

Cavalier Building

Halifax Defence Complex

The Cavalier Building in the Citadel at Halifax was begun in 1830 - 1832 and completed in 1840 - 1855 for the colonial garrison of the Imperial War department based at Halifax, under the General Officer Commanding, Major General Sir John Gaspard Le Marchant. The Cavalier was the work of three members of the Corps of Royal Engineers: Lieutenant-Colonel Gustavas Nicolls (1825-1831), credited with the original design and who supervised much of the construction; Lieutenant Colonel Rice Jones (1833-1842) who introduced the cross-axial casemates on the short ends; and Lieutenant Colonel Patrick D. Calder (1842-1848) who fitted up the rooms over these latter casemates. Modifications over the years are summarized at Appendix A to this document. The Cavalier Building is currently the property of Canadian Heritage. See FHBRO Building Report 95-01, Volume 1.

Reasons for Designation

The Cavalier was designated Classified 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. Displaying the prototypical characteristics of a bastioned masonry fortress component designed for the mounting of smoothbore ordnance and the bomb-proof accommodation of the garrison, the Cavalier is a valuable survivor from the smoothbore era.

The completion of the Cavalier in 1855 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 parade, the Cavalier is impressive for the long symmetrical east elevation, the two storey colonnaded verandah terminated at each end by a three-storey clapboarded stair tower, and the hip roofed central element rising above the parapet. Breaking the roof line are a forest of brick chimney stacks with a variety of cap treatments. Seen from south the Cavalier is notable for the slightly battered squared ironstone walling with finely executed cut-granite quoins and framed windows.

The restoration of the 1875-1877 period roof, 3rd floor, chimneys and verandah in

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recent years has largely recovered the appearance of the Cavalier in the rifled muzzle loading era, leaving only minor changes in the historic relationship between the building and its associated landscape. As the dominant feature within the main body of the work, the Cavalier has a strong influence on the military character of the Citadel site. Because of its striking appearance, period furnishings and museum displays, the building has a strong identity within the Halifax region.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of the Cavalier resides in features expressing its status as specialized military structure, a detached fortified work within a bastioned fort, for the mounting of artillery on the roof to fire en barbette for land defence and the accommodation of garrison troops in bomb-proof casemates. Externally, the features which define the heritage character of this cavalier are: the walls of the original (1830-1832) cavalier structure; the barbette battery on the original roof (masonry parapets on the north, west and south fronts and a dwarf wall across the east front enclosing a terreplein with curbs, pivots and full circle racers in the northwest and southwest corners and half-circle racers along the west face for the mounting of seven 32-pounder guns on iron common traversing platforms); the original pattern of openings (for each casemate a pair of windows, set in deep embrasures on the west front, and two windows or a door and window on the east front); the walls of the 1840-1841 cook house additions (6-foot thick battered abutment walls on the west and east to resist the thrust of the casemate vaults and 3 foot thick vertical walls on the north and south to enclose the rooms); the original pattern of openings in the cook houses (a triangular grouping of windows serving each of the 4 casemates); and the reconstructed two-storey colonnaded verandah with clapboarded stair towers for vertical circulation located at the east face.

The heritage character of the exterior would be best protected by the regular inspection and repair/replacement of deficient materials belonging to the complex system of roofs (including the parapet wall, chimney flashings, and guttering), the repointing of brick chimney stacks and caps, and the regular repointing of the squared ironstone walling and cut-granite trim.

Internally the features which define the heritage character of the Cavalier are the vaulted bomb-proof construction of the casemate roofs (segmental profile brick vaults of

multiple rings, 2 foot 8 inches thick, a covering of glazed tiles, flagging and counter flagging, an asphalt layer and a filling of earth and broken stones), the truncated

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triangle or semi-circular arched openings in the pier walls forming the "enfilade access" between casemates, the single open fireplace centred on the west wall of each casemate connected by flues to chimney stacks projecting from the parapet and the construction of the cookhouse casemate roofs (semi-circular profile brick vaults of multiple rings, 2 foot 3 inches thick, and a filling in or loading).

The heritage character of the interior would be best protected by monitoring the timber framed and planked flooring spanning over a crawl space on the ground floor, the joist ends embedded in the pier and abutment walls, and the jointing in the ironstone flagging of the of the south cook house. The whitewashed masonry walls and ceilings of the various casemates will also require periodic attention.

The historic relationship between the Cavalier 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, salients, and demi-bastions, the boundary wall of the South Magazine, and the surface of the parade. The continued maintenance of these elements and the display of the parade in its unencumbered state will preserve the military character of the fort.

APPENDIX A

External modifications include: the mounting of seven 32-pounder guns on the roof, all firing en barbette and all on iron common traversing platforms (1853-1854), the construction of a permanent hipped timber roof to cover the cavalier terreplein and parapet and the raising of the chimneys (1855), the breaking of a grade level entrance on the west elevation and the annexing of an ablution room, the introduction of stoves for heating (1860-1870), the dismounting of two 32-pounders (pre 1873), the raising of the roof and the introduction of a band of windows at the east and west elevations of the 3rd floor, the breaking of an additional window opening in the south cooking casemate, the breaking of two paired windows at the room over the north cooking casemate and the further raising of the chimneys (1875-1877), the dismounting of the remaining five 32-pounder guns (pre 1886), the installation of a low pitched gable roof supported on the parapet and the elimination of the windows at the east and west elevations (n.d.), the partial blocking up of the door opening on the west elevation to form a window (1908-1922), the destruction of the roof in a storm (1924), the

construction of a medium pitched gable roof with 8 shed roofed dormers (1925), the dismantling of the roof (1939), the demolition of the verandah (1945), and the restoration of the roof and verandah (c. 1970). Internal modifications include: the re-

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positioning of the casemate stoves (1854), the demolition of the cells over the north cooking casemates (1870), the breaking of stair passages between the rooms over the cross-axial casemates and the 3rd floor of the Cavalier and the breaking of passages between the cooking casemates and the ground floor of the Cavalier (1875-1877), the renovation of the 3rd floor (c. 1939), the replacement of the floors in the ground floor casemates and the whitewashing of walls and ceilings (c 1985).

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