

Rideau Canal, Ontario
Defensible Lockmaster's House
Lower Brewers Lockstation

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

The Lockmaster's House at Lower Brewers Lockstation was built in 1842 by the British Ordnance Department as a defensible residence for the lockmaster. In 1898-99, a second storey was added and, post-1930, a small wooden structure with porch was added to the rear. Environment Canada Parks Service is the custodial department. See FHBRO Building Report 89-155.

Reason for Designation

The building was designated Recognized because of its historical associations, its design, materials and craftsmanship, and its site.

This defensible lockmaster's house was built during the period in which the Rideau Canal fulfilled a major role in the military defence strategy of the United Canadas. The establishment of a station at Lower Brewers stimulated the development of a milling community centred on a grist mill, woolen mill, and store.

The house retains a number of the defensible design components of its original type, while its second storey addition represents the shift to a more strictly residential design associated with the use of the canal for transportation. Its materials and craftsmanship exemplify the high design standards of the Royal Engineers.

The historic relationship of the house to its site remains generally undisturbed from the early twentieth century. The building is a dominant component of the lockstation environment.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of this property is defined by its combination of military and residential design features, its materials and craftsmanship, and its relationship to its site.

The Lower Brewers Lockmaster's House is a two storey, pyramidal-roof dwelling, with a small wooden addition at the rear. Originally, it was a single storey structure of limestone, with a simple cubical form and a symmetrical façade. The second storey addition in horizontal clapboard maintains the simple massing. On the main façade, the windows of the upper storey balance those of the lower, retaining the original symmetry.

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The lower storey is carefully constructed in the evenly coursed limestone associated with the Royal Engineers. The house retains its single storey limestone porch, an original defensible design component which has been lost on a number of similar lockmasters' houses. It also retains infilled loopholes recalling its original military function.

The historical points of entry to the building have been maintained, preserving the orientation of the building to the canal. The building's proximity to the canal, its open site and its limestone construction make the house a highly visible feature of the lockstation environment. The form, materials and setting of this property should be maintained.

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