

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

Building No. 20, the Officers' Ward within the original Royal Naval Hospital complex, was constructed in 1891 to the designs of Victoria architect John Teague. It subsequently served as part of the Esquimalt Military Convalescent Hospital, operated on the same site by the Military Hospitals Commission from 1915 to 1922. In 1922, HMCS Naden was established as a west coast naval training complex by the Royal Canadian Navy, and this training complex continues as an important component of modern-day CFB Esquimalt. Building No. 20 served in succession as the Naden Commander's residence, offices, and schools. It is presently the base museum. The custodial department is National Defence. See FHBRO Building Report 88-1 54.

Reason for Designation

Building No. 20 at CFB Esquimalt has been designated a Recognized heritage property because of its historical associations, its design, and its role as part of a significant institutional complex.

Historically, it was an integral part of the 1887-1894 Royal Naval Hospital complex, an essential service in maintaining Esquimalt as the headquarters of the Pacific station of the Royal Navy from 1865 to 1905. This was one of thirteen hospitals maintained by the Admiralty in Britain and abroad. From 1915 to 1922, when the complex was on loan to the Military Hospitals Commission, it became an element of this important national medical program set up to care for World War I casualties and service personnel suffering from tuberculosis. From 1922 through the mid-1930s, the former hospital buildings housed the first west coast Royal Canadian Navy training establishment, illustrating the evolution of Canadian control over all aspects of national defence. This function, as part of HMCS Naden, continues to the present day.

Architecturally, the building represents a significant phase in the evolution of hospital planning and design. The complex it is part of is a rare surviving Canadian example of a "pavilion hospital," a building type popular in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to counter overcrowding and the spread of disease through improved ventilation and greater separation of functions. Building No. 20 survives relatively intact, a well-crafted building in the Picturesque style with some of its associated landscape features intact.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of Building No. 20 is defined by its exterior and by its

.../2

landscaped setting. The interior layout, which has survived virtually intact, is also of interest.

The building is a one-storey brick structure. The exterior, in the Picturesque style, is marked by a hipped roof, projecting bays on the main elevation, and a verandah with decorative woodwork. The raised foundation, the bracketed cornice, and the segmentally-arched windows with stone surrounds, as well as the hipped roof and verandah, give it an architectural vocabulary consistent with the other original buildings of the hospital complex. The railing detail is somewhat more elaborate, and may be the only original example to have survived. There have been some modifications over time, including the removal of the four massive brick chimneys, the change from cedar roof shingles to asphalt shingles, the bricking in of a few window openings, and the addition of a small washroom on the west façade.

These changes have not compromised the integrity of the original architectural design, and the building should be carefully maintained to preserve its original materials, proportions and detailing. When replacement of items such as roof finish is required, consideration should be given to reinstating original materials where these have been replaced, using historic documentation to ensure accuracy.

The landscaped setting is particularly important to buildings in the Picturesque style. Surviving elements of the original landscape design should be maintained, and every opportunity taken to restore period landscape features based on historic evidence.

The interior retains the original central corridor with adjacent rooms divided by masonry walls and fireplaces. This layout should be maintained if possible as part of the structural and architectural character of the building.

92.01.16