

## **HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT**

The Defensible Lockmaster's House at the Smiths Falls Combined Lockstation was built in 1841 by the British Ordnance Department as part of the defence system for the Rideau Canal. In the first decades of the twentieth century, a single-storey frame summer kitchen was added to the rear, and a second storey and new front porch were added to the main structure. It is currently occupied by the Friends of the Rideau. The Canadian Parks Service is the custodial department. See FHBRO Building Report 91-74.

### **Reasons for Designation**

The building was designated Recognized as a result of its historical association its functional design and quality craftsmanship, and the character of its setting.

The defensible lockmaster's house reflects the original military role of the Rideau Canal in the defence of the united Canadas during the nineteenth century, and it is an important representative of the formative period in the development of the Smiths Falls community. The twentieth-century second-storey addition, summer kitchen, and interior layout reflect the emphasis on residential design which resulted from a change in the function of the canal from defence to commerce and recreation.

The park-like setting has remained essentially unchanged since the 1920s.

### **Character Defining Elements**

The heritage character of this structure is defined by its combination of military and residential design features, and its materials and craftsmanship.

The Smiths Falls Defensible Lockmaster's House is a two-storey, hipped-roof structure, with summer kitchen at the rear. As originally constructed, it was a single-storey hipped-roof structure, square in plan. The clapboarded second storey, with a cedar-shingle roof, maintains the simple massing of the original, while the symmetry of the main facade has been retained by balancing the original central door and flanking windows with three windows on the upper floor.

The thick limestone walls of the lower floor, which retain loopholes on either side of the main entrance, reflect the military function of the original structure and the careful construction associated with the Royal Engineers. Some of the first floor partition walls and floor joists, and the base of the hearth in the cellar also date from this period. The balustraded central

staircase, wood floors, and door and window trim date from the addition of the second storey in the 1920s, and are consistent with residential accommodation of the period. The change in emphasis from defence to domestic comfort reflects the change in the role of the canal itself.

The building, set back from the lock and surrounded by spacious lawns, retains the residential character of the 1920s. The house is a local landmark. The overall form, historic materials, residential character and setting of this property should be maintained.

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