

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

FHBRO Number 96-24

DFRP Number 32086

Recognized Federal Heritage Building

HALIFAX, Nova Scotia

Oil Stores/Artificers' Shop

Fort McNab, Halifax Defence Complex

The Oil Stores/Artificers' Shop was constructed in 1906 to contain a skidding store, machine gun shed, artificers' workshops and latrines for Fort McNab. It was designed by the British Royal Engineers. The building originally comprised five interior sections, each accessed by its own entrance. One of the interior walls has been removed and the door converted to a window. The building has remained unused since Fort McNab was closed in 1960. The Oil Stores/Artificers Shop now forms part of Fort McNab National Historic Site. The custodian is Parks Canada.

Reasons for Designation

The Oil Stores/Artificers' Shop has been designated "Recognized" because of its historical, architectural and environmental significance.

Historical Significance

As a support facility within Fort McNab, the Oil Stores/Artificers' Shop is indirectly associated with the defence of Canada between 1888 and 1960 by the Imperial Navy and by Canada's Department of National Defence. Fort McNab was established in 1888 to defend Halifax Harbour and the Imperial naval station. It remained in active military use until after the Second World War. The Oil Stores/Artificers' Shop housed a series of garrison and ordnance support functions for the fort during its active history.

Architectural Significance

The scale, proportions, brick construction and simple detailing of the Oil Stores/Artificers' Shop are typical of support structures designed by the Royal Engineers for other fortifications within the Halifax Defence Complex. Originally one of many secondary structures constructed in brick, the Shop is now the only extant brick building at Fort McNab. The interior is divided into sections according to original function, with separate access to each section. Window and door openings on the front elevation are arranged according to the original use and layout of the rooms. All openings feature flat concrete lintels and plain sills. Some original fixtures, including wall brackets, latrine fixtures and glazed wall finishes, and the interior remains of two brick chimneys, are extant.

Environmental Significance

As the only extant brick building at Fort McNab, the Oil Stores/Artificers' Shop complements the concrete structures at the fort. It provides a visual link with other British-built fortifications of the Halifax Defence Complex in its proportions, massing and use of materials.

Character-defining Elements

The heritage character of the Oil Stores/Artificers' Shop resides in the following character-defining elements:

- Its scale, proportions, brick construction and simple detailing, including flat concrete lintels and plain sills on all openings, which tie it to other Royal Engineer-designed support structures within the Halifax Defence Complex.
- Its division into functional sections, the placement and size of window and door openings according to function, and the extant original interior fixtures (wall brackets, latrine fixtures, glazed wall finishes in the latrines, and the interior remains of two brick chimneys).

All maintenance and repair work, as well as future interventions, should respect these character-defining elements.

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