

Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario  
**Powder Magazine**  
Fort George

## **HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT**

The Powder Magazine was built in 1796-97, by the Corps of Royal Engineers, as part of the original Fort George. Windows were added in the 1860s, repairs to the walls including some reworking of the buttressing were undertaken in 1890s, and the building was restored in 1937. The Magazine is currently used for interpretive purposes. The Environment Canada Parks Service is the custodial department. See FHBRO Building Report 89-15.

### **Reasons For Designation**

The Powder Magazine was designated Classified because of its association with the themes of the defence of Upper Canada by the British military and the 1930s philosophy of restoration, as well as its architectural qualities, and landmark status.

Fort George was built by the British in 1796 for the defence of Upper Canada, after the British garrison was transferred to Newark and Fort Niagara was turned over to the Americans. The fort was attacked and burned by Americans during the War of 1812-14; only the Powder Magazine survives from this period. This historic structure is an important component of the reconstructed fortification complex, developed as a tourist destination in the 1930s under a Depression relief works program. Hence, the Powder Magazine is associated with both the initial growth and defence of Niagara-on-the-Lake and its economic development during the 1930s.

The Magazine is a rare surviving example of a British 18th-century powder magazine, and is a well-known landmark.

### **Character Defining Elements**

The heritage character of this structure is defined by its distinctive functional architecture, its massing and materials, and its contribution to the military ambience of the setting.

The Fort George Powder Magazine was designed by Gother Mann and its sturdy thick-walled masonry construction is typical of the work of the Corps of Royal Engineers. It is a single-storey symmetrical structure, composed in plan of a main rectangular storage area and a smaller rectangular entry, both with copper-clad gable roofs. The exterior massing, with reinforcing buttresses, and the interior brick "bomb-proof" arch, attest to the functional requirements for powder storage. Although windows were added during the 19th century, the Powder Magazine is a very good

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Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario  
**Powder Magazine** (Continued)

example of this type of structure. A program of regular maintenance of the historic

building fabric should be established.

The Powder Magazine, in its original protected location in a depression, reinforces the military character of the site. As the only original building at Fort George, it is a landmark well-known to both visitors and military scholars.

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