

FHBRO Number 90-31

Grosse Île, Quebec

The Third-Class Hotel (No. 19)

The Third-Class Hotel dates from 1914. Its plans were undoubtedly prepared by an architect from the Department of Public Works. During the Second World War, this building housed the officers' quarters. It was later converted to a hay storage building. It is currently unoccupied. The Third-Class Hotel is the property of Parks Canada. See FHBRO Building Report 90-31 (Part IV: 1901-1 920).

Reasons for Designation

The Grosse Île Third-Class Hotel was designated Recognized because it is a very good example for illustrating the themes of immigration and quarantine in Canada. This long concrete building with clean and simple lines exhibits good workmanship. Its presence reinforces the current character of the western sector of Grosse Île.

The economic boom at the turn of the century resulted in a flood of immigrants unprecedented in Canadian history. The construction of the Third-Class Hotel is evidence of the major redevelopment of the station at that time and is the result of the pressure brought to bear by the large shipping companies keen to offer healthy passengers accommodations in keeping with their travel class.

The facade of the Third-Class Hotel is characterized by its austere Classicism. Only the buttresses and projecting elements convey a certain aesthetic concern. The use of an avant-garde material such as concrete in this building, as well as the quality of its workmanship, are also noteworthy.

The immediate environment of the Third-Class Hotel has retained its historical character despite the demolition of several nearby service buildings. This building is an integral part of a series of structures reserved for receiving healthy immigrants and reinforces the character of the built environment of this sector of the island.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage value of the Third-Class Hotel resides in its general form, the symmetrical arrangement of its compositional elements and its type of construction, which exploits a modern material, concrete.

If it were not for the three gabled building projections which interrupt the monotony of

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the long facade, as well as the buttresses, the front of this all-concrete hotel would be very monotonous. The symmetrical and repetitive alignment of the hung sash windows, on both storeys, further accentuates this austere effect. However, these compositional elements should be preserved since they reflect the building's function: accommodating immigrants who travelled in third class during the crossing. The location of the entrances at the extremities of the building should also be respected.

In this concrete building, the hung sash windows dominate the entire composition. It would be desirable to set up a good maintenance program in order to ensure their longevity. It is recommended that defective windows be repaired rather than changed; however, if one or more must be replaced, all aspects of the existing style should be faithfully reproduced. The same applies to the wooden awnings that protect the entrances. Finally, steps should be taken to protect the integrity of the parking and specialists should be retained to repair the old concrete.

Fire safety was ensured by outside metal staircases. Any work aimed at bringing the hotel up to standard should preserve these staircases, at least as interpretation elements, while meeting current safety standards. The integration of modern mechanical elements should also be done in way that is respectful and discreet.

The partitioning of this building is quite unusual in that it results in the following layout: a kitchen and dining room occupy the extremities of each floor, while the bathrooms are located in the centre, in the middle of the guest rooms. The Third-Class Hotel exemplifies modern and innovative guest accommodations, whereas the First-Class hotel, from 1912, followed the same general layout as the former hotel built in 1893.

The changes in use of the building have resulted in the disappearance of several of the original partitions and the modification of the existing partitions on the second floor. It would be appropriate to find a use for the building that would make it possible to maintain the original divisions, entrances and traffic patterns. The various historical phases of the building could be highlighted at the same time.

All of the old finishing elements such as the wooden floors, panelled walls, plaster surfaces, wood trim, hardware and staircases merit preservation. The period light fixtures add to the heritage character and should be left intact.

With the other detention hotels and the Old Wash House, the Third-Class Hotel forms a

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very significant ensemble. The immediate site has retained its historical character and any work required to enhance this national historic park should maintain the authentic character of the site.

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

Translation
