

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

The Defensible Lockmaster's House was built at Kilmarnock Lockstation in 1841 by the Royal Engineers as part of the defence system for the Rideau Canal. A limestone second storey was added to the main structure in the 1890s, followed soon by a single-storey frame summer kitchen. The Canadian Parks Service is the custodian. See FHBRO Building Report 91-77.

Reasons For Designation

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

The design of the defensible lockmaster's house type was a result of the military role of the Rideau Canal in the defence of the united Canadas during the nineteenth century. This building is the only structure on the site surviving from the military era, and hence is an important representative of the formative period in the development of Kilmarnock.

The second-storey addition and summer kitchen reflect the emphasis on residential design which resulted from a change in the function of the canal by the twentieth century from defence to recreation and commerce.

The house, in a prominent location overlooking the lock, enhances the historic character of the lockstation.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of this structure is defined by the aesthetic integration of military and residential design features, the high level of craftsmanship and materials and its contribution to the setting.

The Kilmarnock Defensible Lockmaster's House is a two-storey, hipped-roof stone masonry structure, retaining a turn-of-the-century frame kitchen at the rear. It was originally a single-storey hipped-roof structure, square in plan. The well-integrated addition of a second storey in stone is unique among the Rideau Canal defensible lockmaster's houses. The result is aesthetically successful and maintains the simple massing of the original. The original symmetrical placement of window and door openings is maintained in the placement of the second-storey windows.

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The thick stone walls of the lower floor, with an infilled loophole on the south facade, reflect the military role of the building during the nineteenth century, and display the careful construction associated with the Royal Engineers.

Some interior first-floor partition walls appear also to date from this period. The later second-storey addition and the rear kitchen reflect the change in function from defence to simple domestic accommodation associated with the change in the role of the canal itself, and the careful integration of the second-storey addition attests to the craftsmanship of the turn-of-the-century masons.

The site and setting retain the residential character of the early twentieth century. Its high visibility makes the house a local landmark. The overall form, historic materials, residential character, and setting of this property should be maintained.

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