

## **HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT**

The lockmaster's house at the Upper Brewers Lockstation was constructed in 1842 by the British Ordnance Department, as part of the ongoing defence strategy for the Ottawa-Rideau corridor. It served a combined military-residential function until 1856, when the canal was turned over to the United Provinces of Canada by the Ordnance, and thereafter continued to provide accommodation for the lockmaster. Today it is leased on a seasonal basis for use as a summer residence. The custodial department is Environment Canada. See FHBRO Building Report No. 88-81.

### **Reasons for Designation**

The Upper Brewers defensible lockmaster's house has been designated Recognized because of its historical significance, its interest as an example of a rare building type, and its contribution to its setting.

The building has strong associations with the Rideau Canal defensive system. The defensible Lockmaster's houses were constructed in the wake of the 1838 Rebellion to provide additional protection for the navigation corridor.

Of the 16 defensible Lockmaster's houses built in the 1838-49 period, the building at Upper Brewers is an exceptionally well preserved example. It retains many of the characteristics of its original design and functions, both military and residential. The modifications and additions over time, evident in both its design and materials of construction, clearly indicate its evolution from the military role to the residential.

The building significantly contributes to the historical character of the cultural landscape.

### **Character Defining Elements**

The Upper Brewers lockmaster's house is a single storey, hipped roof stone dwelling with a frame addition. The exterior of the building is marked by diversity of form and material -- expression of its function and evolution.

The heritage value of the Upper Brewers defensible lockmaster's house resides in those features which characterize it as a dual-purpose structure, military and residential and which illustrate its evolution over time to its site.

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The exterior retains its original one-storey, hip-roofed shape, featuring heavy stone walls of regularly coursed local stone. The building retains original window openings and evidence of the loop holes flanking many of the windows, now filled with stone. Changes have included the replacement of original casement windows with double-hung sash in the 1870s; replacement of the original tin roof with asphalt shingles; and removal of the front defensible porch and provision of an open wood porch. A wood frame, cove-sided summer kitchen addition was added to the rear elevation in 1899, and a screened porch at a later date.

Inside, the basic four-room floor plan of the stone portion has survived. The original central fireplace was replaced by a stove for heating and cooking in the second half of the 19th century. Plumbing and electricity were added in the mid-twentieth century. Otherwise, the changes have been largely cosmetic.

Enough of the original form, material and detail of the building survive to make it a valuable example of a unique architectural type. Most of the changes illustrate its residential function. These changes reflect the evolution of the site, and are now an integral part of the building's character.

The building was well-built originally, to the relatively high standards characteristic of the royal Engineers. Every effort should be made to continue the pattern of regular maintenance through appropriate programs of inspection, cleaning, repointing and repair. Special attention should be given to the retention of original fabric, on both the exterior and interior, and the protection of the evidence of later changes, in particular the frame additions. Any intervention in terms of future upgrading should be kept modest and non-destructive.

The landscape character of the site has changed significantly in the last fifty years; however, it too reflects the evolutionary character of the building. Future changes should be based on a review of the landscape history, and attention to the importance of the cultural landscape of lockstation sites.

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