Halifax, Nova Scotia
Halifax Citadel
Redan (including Casemates Nos. 34 to 50 and 36b to 48b)
Halifax Defence Complex

The Redan in the Citadel at Halifax was constructed between 1840 and 1853 for the colonial garrison of the Imperial War department based at Halifax. The Redan was the work of three members of the Corps of Royal Engineers: Lieutenant-Colonel Gustavas Nicolls (1825-1831), credited with the original design; Lieutenant Colonel Rice Jones (1833-1842), who modified the design to include two storey casemates within the ramparts; and Lieutenant Colonel Patrick D. Calder (1842-1 848), who modified the design still further by placing cellar casemates under the parade. Modifications are summarized at Appendix A to this document. The Redan is currently the property of Canadian Heritage. See FHBRO Building Report 95-01, Volume 1.

Reasons for Designation

The Redan was designated Classified because of its important historical associations, the qualities of its architectural design and the important role it plays in the environment.

The structure is associated with the active defence of the Imperial naval station in the period of mutual suspicion and hostility between Britain and the United States following the War of 1812, and in the period of heightened tension following the Trent affair of 1861. Displaying the prototypical characteristics of a bastioned masonry fort component designed for the mounting of smoothbore ordnance, and later adapted for RML ordnance, the Redan is a valuable survivor from both eras.

The completion of the Redan in 1853 was part of a major upgrade of the Halifax defences advocated by the Smythe Report of 1825 and largely accomplished between 1838 and 1862. The civilian employment generated by this project and the increased personnel needed to man the defences gave a boost to the economy of Halifax.

Viewed from the base of the dry ditch, the Redan is impressive for the tall, slightly battered, regularly coursed escarp walls and their regularly spaced flat arched openings. Projecting from the south face is an attractive entrance feature of Classical triumphal arch design. Internally, the casemates in particular demonstrate a competent handling of masonry materials, notable for simple geometry, precision and soundness.

Over its lifetime the Redan has displayed very good functional qualities despite the

mounting of new rifled guns on the ramparts, alterations to the interior partition arrangement and the breaking of new communication doors between blocks.

The restoration of the parapet profile and remounting of the guns in recent years have largely recovered the appearance of the Redan post 1874-78, leaving only minor changes in the historic relationship between the structure and its associated landscape. As an integral component of the main body of the work, with the highest section of escarp wall in the fortification, the Redan has a strong influence on the military character of the Citadel site.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of the Redan resides in features expressing its status as a specialized military structure. Externally, the features which define the heritage character of this redan are the two escarp wall faces forming a salient angle, the regularly coursed granite ashlar walls with a rubble filling, the gun-ports and flanking musketry loopholes serving the casemates of defence, the regularly spaced musketry loopholes and windows serving the barrack casemates, and the segmental arched main gate framed with pilasters, supporting an entablature and attic with inset plaque. The straight retaining wall face facing the parade is characterized by regularly coursed rusticated granite with rebated joints and a rubble filling, the irregularly spaced window and door openings with flat arches, the dry area/lightwell serving the basement floor and the segmental arched main gate with voussoirs.

The heritage character of the exterior would be best protected by conservation treatment of the miscellaneous iron elements (pickets, handrailing, bars, davits and iron brackets), cleaning of the iron oxide and efflorescence staining of the masonry, regular repointing of the granite walling, inspection of potential weak points in the rampart waterproofing (escarp coping and dwarf retaining wall junctions with the casemate roof), and keeping catchbasins and drains clear.

Internally the features which define the heritage character of this redan are the vaulted bomb-proof construction of the casemate roofs (segmental profile brick vaults of multiple rings, a cementitious coating, an asphalt layer, and a thick earth cover), and the open fireplaces with inclined flues united in a chimney stack projecting from the parapet.

The heritage character of the interior would be best protected by monitoring the performance of the waterproofing over the casemates, checking the condition of the

floor beams pocketed into the masonry walls, and keeping up the pointing on the wall and ceiling surfaces.

The historic relationship between the Redan and the interior of the main body of the work has been enhanced and strengthened in recent years by the restoration of the retaining walls of the West Curtain, salients and demi-bastions, the Cavalier, the boundary wall of the South Magazine, the ramp and the surface of the parade. The continued maintenance of these features as well as the various elements on the ramparts will preserve the military character of this fortification.

APPENDIX A

External modifications include: the conversion of the doors in casemates 49 and 50 to windows and the installation of bars in the gun-port of casemate 50 (1855-1856); the dismounting of the 8-inch and one 32-pounder smooth bore on the ramparts and the construction of two new emplacements formed in ironstone for one 7-inch rifled breech loader (RBL) on dwarf traversing platform on the right face and one 7-inch RBL on dwarf traversing platform in the salient (1864-1868); the breaking of numerous new window openings in the retaining wall, converting the single punched openings to paired units (1870-1879); the dismounting of all ordnance on the ramparts and the construction of 4 new emplacements formed in granite and flanked by brick-lined ammunition and shell recesses for two 7-inch RML guns on the right face, one 7-inch RML gun at the salient and one 7-inch RML gun on the left face (all mounted on dwarf traversing platforms with A pivots), the construction of sod traverses between emplacements and the re-shaping of the parapet (1874-1879); the breaking down of 30-foot sections of dwarf retaining wall and the construction of an iron and timber extension to the terreplein in the rear of three of the new 7-inch RML emplacements (1874-1879); the breaking of two 3-foot gaps in the dwarf retaining wall at opposite ends of the Redan and the fitting of iron gates and munition hoists to lift heavy projectiles and ammunition to the loading stage (1874-1879); the enclosure and roofing of the ramparts by a wood frame structure (1881); the demolition of the framed structure on the ramparts (1938); the removal of blocking beneath the window in casemate 49 to restore the door (c. 1956); and the replacement of the original drawbridge by a fixed timber bridge (1961). Internal modifications include: the breaking of a number of doorways in the bearing walls between casemates and the alteration of

the original partition configuration (n.d.); the conversion of casemate 42 to a two-level configuration (n.d.); the construction of the present cell arrangement in casemate 50 and the laying of parquet floors in casemate 49 and the lock-up of casemate 50 (c.

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1900); and the removal of the timber floor dividing casemate 45 into two storeys (c. 1990).

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