

FHBRO Number 90-312

Québec, Quebec

Former Military Prison (Building No. 10)

Museum Annex

The Citadel, Québec

The Former Military Prison was constructed in 1842 under the supervision of Lieutenant-Colonel John Oldfield, as indicated by the plaque mounted on the building. It was converted to its new use as a museum annex in 1970 and currently houses items related to the history of the Royal 22^e Régiment. The former prison is located inside the ramparts across the gorge of the King's Bastion. The building is part of the Citadel of Québec, a National Historic Site. It is managed by Public Works and Government Services Canada. See FHBRO Report 88-161.

Reasons for Designation

The Former Military Prison has been designated "Classified" because of its historical significance, the quality of its functional design and construction, and its environmental significance.

The building is directly associated with the defence of British North America in the period during which the Citadel was completed (1839-1857); more specifically, it is associated with the first phase of that period (1839-1842), which was marked by the Rebellions of 1837. The former prison was a key support within the defence system of the fortress, as one of its functions was to serve as a curtain wall in the event of an enemy attack. Its location across the gorge of the King's Bastion meant that it blocked access to the bastion, thereby creating a reduit where soldiers could retrench.

The formal design of the former prison clearly reflects its original dual function. Its use as a prison is still evident in the layout of the interior that includes a long corridor providing access to the cells, which has been preserved. The west wall pierced with loopholes on both floors, the thick walls and the vaulted ceilings are indicative of the building's role in defence. Building No. 10 is in excellent condition, a sign that it was built with good materials and using appropriate construction techniques. It has also been carefully restored.

Building No. 10, along with the Cap-aux-Diamants Redoubt, the Former Pump House and the former Latrines, together comprise a military grouping that supports the historical significance of the King's Bastion. Because of its design and materials, it blends in well with the surrounding buildings. Owing to its historical significance and its current use, Building No. 10 is well known to visitors and residents alike.

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Character Defining Elements

The heritage significance of the former prison resides in its formal design and all the elements that reflect its original dual function. It also resides in the location, which is closely associated with the building's role as a curtain wall, and its relationship with the other buildings in the King's Bastion.

The Former Military Prison is a long, rectangular, two-storey building with a hip roof covered in painted clip-joined metal. The masonry walls are solid, and the limestone is laid in regular courses; the chimneys extending through the roof are brick.

All the elevations are different. The west wall, which faces the inside of the Citadel, is rather austere with its two rows of loopholes echoing its defensive function. The west wall was built thicker (four feet) than the opposite wall (two feet) to make it better able to withstand enemy fire. Pilasters, rare decorative elements on a military building of this type, express the internal structure (they are an extension of the vaults). The opposite elevation, which faces the bastion, is pierced with several small horizontal windows that let light into the cells and a few bigger windows fitted with bars. Each of the side elevations has a door topped by a lighted transom. One of the few changes to the original design is a wheelchair ramp in front of the southwest entrance.

The historical texture of the former prison should be respected. It is also recommended that no new openings be made and that the existing materials not be damaged by irreversible interventions. In order to preserve the masonry, the metal elements should be rust treated. Ongoing maintenance of the joints is recommended, and damaged stones should be replaced with stones identical to the old ones (type, size, colour and bond). The style of the roof, windows and doors (the current ones imitate old studded doors) should be true to the original design so as to preserve the architectural character of the building. The protective grilles should be the same throughout and should be of a plain style, in keeping with the austere nature of the site. The installation of modern mechanical systems should be done without damaging the historic materials (using existing openings where possible).

The layout of the Former Military Prison, which includes a corridor along the side to allow soldiers to fire through the loopholes, was not affected by the change in the function of the building. The interior features compartmentalized spaces, vaulted ceilings, massive masonry, fireplaces and ironwork related to the building's use as a prison. Renovations related to the museum use of the site should respect these architectural features. It would be desirable to preserve the old divisions and the horizontal and vertical circulation patterns which give meaning to the building. It would

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be better to use the building's accommodation capacity than to make irreversible alterations (for example, piercing holes or making niches to install exhibits or mechanical devices). Finally, the ironwork should be rust treated and left in place; it contributes to the heritage character of the Former Military Prison.

The environmental integrity of Building No. 10 should be respected by avoiding new construction in the immediate vicinity. Landscaping or outdoor furnishings that would obscure visitors' appreciation of the defensive function of the former prison (trees in front of the loopholes, for example) should also be avoided.

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

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Translation