

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

FHBRO Number 98-12 1

DFRP Number 03918

Recognized Federal Heritage Building

SAINT JOHN, New Brunswick

Carleton Martello Tower

Carleton Heights

The Carleton Martello Tower was built between 1813-5 on the west side of Saint John Harbour. It was designed by the British Royal Engineers. The tower was upgraded during the 1830s and 1860s. In 1941 a two-storey, concrete command post was added to the top of the tower. The command post was designed by the Engineering Services Division of Canada's Department of National Defence. During the Second World War, washrooms and a furnace were added to the tower, but these were later removed. The roof of the command post has been rebuilt. Collectors have been added to the roof flashing of the command post and drainage pipes have been added to the exterior of the tower walls to address drainage problems. Carleton Martello Tower is a National Historic Site. Parks Canada is the custodian.

Reasons for Designation

The Carleton Martello Tower has been designated "Recognized" because of its historical, architectural and environmental significance.

Historical Significance

The Carleton Martello Tower is associated with the defence of British North America and Canada between 1812 and the end of World War I and with the defence of eastern Canada during the Second World War. The tower was built to defend Saint John against American attack during the War of 1812, but was not completed until after the war's end and was never armed. Upgrading was begun in the late 1830s in response to increasing English-American trade tensions, but never completed. In the late 1860s, the tower was refitted to meet the Fenian threat and was armed for the first time. The tower fell into disuse until World War I, when it served briefly as a detention centre for deserters. During the Second World War, the tower served as an observation, artillery and command post for Saint John Harbour.

Architectural Significance

The original portion of the tower typifies the second phase of Martello tower building in Canada. In its simple, circular design, exterior dimensions, concentric walls and rough, masonry construction incorporating local materials, it is representative of the British model of tower design. Its highly functional interior includes ground-floor loopholes, bombproof ceilings, lower-floor magazine and upper-floor barracks, and restricted access to the interior of the tower. The design of the original tower has been compromised by the addition of the two-storey concrete command post. The style, proportions and materials of the command post are typical of its time and function, but contrast sharply with those of the original tower. The fact that the tower is still standing after 200 years and with the added weight of the 1941 addition is testament to its solid construction. The 1941 addition is suffering from water damage.

Environmental Significance

Due to its location on a high, rocky promontory, the tower is clearly visible throughout the Saint John area. It is a major physical point of reference for the Saint John Harbour. It is well-known

throughout New Brunswick and has been a popular tourist attraction since the late 19th century.

Character-defining Elements

The heritage character of the Carleton Martello Tower resides in the following character-defining elements:

- The simple, circular design of the original two-storey tower, 50 feet in exterior diameter and 30 feet high, with concentric interior and exterior tapered walls. The tower is topped by a masonry platform surrounded by a parapet.
- The use of rough-textured quarry stones on the exterior walls of the tower.
- The division of interior spaces and other extant features that illustrate the tower's defensive role. The upper floor contains a barracks and kitchen. The lower floor features a bombproof, arched, brick-lined magazine. Musketry loopholes are cut into the exterior wall and serviced by a peripheral wooden banquette step. A hollow, masonry pillar rises from the lower to the upper floors to provide a passage for ammunition. The pillar widens at the top to form a thick, arched, brick-lined, bombproof ceiling. The space between the arched ceiling and the platform above is filled with rubble. A narrow, winding, interior staircase leads from the upper to the lower floors.
- The external access to the tower, provided by a staircase cut into the exterior wall and leading to the upper floor.
- The two-storey command post constructed during World War Two on the masonry platform of the original tower, characterized by a flat roof, horizontal bands of observation windows, and smooth, monochromatic concrete. The command post's unusual plan, consisting of a pie-shaped one-storey section with multi-faceted facade and a smaller and more angular two-storey section, has been adapted to fit within the curved dimensions of the original tower.
- The location of the tower on a high, rocky promontory, making it a highly visible and well-known landmark in New Brunswick.

All maintenance and repair work, as well as future interventions, should respect these character-defining elements.

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