

**FHBRO HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT
DEFENSIBLE LOCKMASTER'S HOUSE, HARTWELLS LOCKSTATION, RIDEAU CANAL**

FHBRO number: **91 -1 33**
DFRP number: **09412**
Resource name: **Defensible Lockmaster's House**
Address: **Hartwells Lockstation, Rideau Canal, Ottawa, Ontario**
FHBRO status: **"Recognized" Federal Heritage Building**
Construction: **1841**
Designer: **Royal Engineers; no individual designer identified**
Original function: **Lockmaster's residence and office**
Current function: **Lock station office**
Modifications: **Second storey and cladding, 1905; minor alterations to exterior and landscape**
Custodian: **Parks Canada**

Reasons for Designation

The defensible lockmaster's house at Hartwells Lockstation is a "Recognized" Federal Heritage Building because of its historical associations, and its architectural and environmental values:

Historical value:

The defensible lockmaster's house is associated with the construction and operation of the Rideau Canal, a National Historic Site, which illustrates firstly the theme of military defence strategy for the Canadas in the second quarter of the 19th century, and secondly the subsequent evolution and transformation of the waterway as a federal public work.

The two-chamber Hartwells lock began operation in 1833, and the defensible lockmaster's house was built by 1841, in lieu of a more substantial blockhouse. The Hartwells lockstation and the house are distinguished historically for the long periods of service of its lockmasters: only six from 1833 into the 1950s. The house and lockstation are also notable features in the local development and landscape of Gloucester Township, now absorbed into the City of Ottawa. This building, as part of the collection of other surviving defensible houses and blockhouses of the Rideau system, has been declared of national historical significance by the HSMBC.

Architectural value:

The house is a good illustration of the defensible lockmaster's houses built along the Rideau Canal in the mid-nineteenth century and designed by the Royal Engineers. The house is a two-storey, clapboard-clad building of rectangular plan with a shallow hipped roof of cedar shingles, concealing a hybrid structure of stone-walled first storey and timber framing above. The front elevation is symmetrical, with a central single doorway flanked by double-hung windows on both storeys. An open, gable-fronted porch has replaced the originally enclosed defensible porch evident in 19th-century visual documents. Another open, gable-fronted porch protects a

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doorway at the rear, and a ground-storey gabled extension to the south covers the cellar stairway. In recent years, the exterior walls have been painted white, with dark corner boards and window trim; historic photographs show that in some earlier periods this scheme was reversed. The interior structure remains, though posts have been added to reinforce aging floor beams.

In the mid-19th century, the defensible lockmaster's house was one of a series of sixteen similar single-storey, hipped-roof, coursed masonry constructions at lockstations throughout the Rideau waterway system, established as second-tier defences supporting four more substantial blockhouses. With the passage of time and the decline of the defensive duty, these lockmaster's houses were altered and expanded in different ways. At the beginning of the 20th century the Hartwells house and six other formerly defensible lockmaster's houses became a modified house clad in clapboard with an added second storey. Other early 20th-century enlargements in plan have since been removed.

Environmental value:

The landscaping of the lockstation itself has been groomed and embellished from its earlier rural state, with added interpretive markers and visitor amenities. As the City of Ottawa has expanded, the station's larger context has changed from its original agricultural environment, with the institutional campus of Carleton University on the east bank of the waterway. The open landscape of the Central Experimental Farm to the west has muted the visual impact of urban expansion and permitted some continuing sense of the historic rural setting. The defensible lockmaster's house is the anchor for the small group of lockstation buildings to its west and south. The house sits on a level open lawn amidst mature trees on the west side of the canal, immediately facing the upper chamber of the lockstation.

Character-Defining Elements

The following character-defining elements of the Defensible Lockmaster's House at Hartwells Lockstation should be respected:

Its role as an illustration of the transformation of the Rideau Canal from a defensive work into a public waterway system is reflected in:

- its association with colonial defences and the construction of the Rideau Canal;
- its continuing administrative and functional role in lockstation operation;
- its stability as a functioning workplace since its earliest operation; and
- its material evocation of the local rural past of the region.

Its incorporation of workplace and public functions over a very long period in a traditional residential form and style as manifested in:

- its clapboard-clad, hipped-roof domestic exterior form typical both of structures throughout the Rideau

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system and of rural housing in the wider region;

- the symmetries and materials of its principal elevations;
- the preservation of original building structure and material within; and
- its relation to an architectural type found at other locations along the Rideau Canal.

The manner in which it reinforces the waterside and the partly rural character of the setting as evidenced in:

- its location and visual contribution to a coherent appearance of building and landscape setting;
- its attractive, publicly accessible, and working landscape at the water's edge; and
- its role as a long-standing visual landmark, in its present form from the beginning of the 20th century.

For guidance on interventions, please refer to the FHBRO Code of Practice. For further information contact FHBRO.

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