

Rideau Canal, Ontario
Blacksmith's Shop
Jones Falls Lockstation

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

The Blacksmith's Shop at Jones Falls was constructed in 1843 by the British Ordnance Department as a metal repair facility for gate hardware and other lock chamber equipment. During the military period, it was used intermittently each year. It was last used for repair work in 1930, and is currently a Canadian Parks Service interpretive site. Environment Canada Parks Service is the custodial department. See FHBRO Building Report 89-156.

Reasons for Designation

The Jones Falls Blacksmith's Shop was designated Classified because of its historical associations, its merit as a superior example of a British military design and its site.

As the Rideau Canal played an important defence role in the transportation of military traffic, it was necessary that repairs to lock gates and chambers be carried out quickly. The blacksmithing facilities were intended to keep the canal in a state of military preparedness. Jones Falls became a regional repair depot for the canal.

In contrast to many blacksmiths' shops of the period, the Jones Falls building was designed as a substantial, permanent and highly functional structure. The building is an unusual and well-preserved example of its type.

The historic setting remains unchanged, while the building is a local landmark.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage value of the Jones Falls Blacksmith's Shop resides in its compact functional design and the materials used in its construction.

It is a one storey, hipped roof structure, with simple cubical massing similar to that of the defensible lockmasters' houses. The stone masonry walls and tin cladding of the roof provide superior protection against fire, while the floor is constructed of logs adzed flat and laid on a sand base. The limited number of windows reduced light levels, thus enabling the blacksmith to see the colour of the hot metal. The open plan, with the forge located near the centre of the room and workbenches along the walls, provides maximum working space.

The masonry walls, roof framing, wood windows, the brick forge and one workbench, are original. The tin cladding of the roof was replaced, and the chimney was partially rebuilt. The careful craftsmanship, as evidenced in the handling of the stonework, is associated with the Royal Engineers.

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Blacksmith's Shop (Continued)

The building is well maintained and in good overall condition. Both the design and the original materials should be maintained and protected.

The site appears largely unchanged, although the lawns may be more groomed than historically. The somewhat isolated location of the shop near the turning basin and detached lock reinforces the historic character of the setting. This relationship to the overall environment should be protected. The interpretation of the building as a functioning blacksmith's shop is an appropriate use and contributes to its significance as a local landmark.