

Fort St. James, B. C.  
**General Warehouse**  
Fort St. James National Historic Park

## **HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT**

The General Warehouse at Fort St. James was built in 1888-89 and is one of a number of buildings of the former Hudson's Bay Company Post located on Stuart Lake. It is administered by Parks Canada. See FHBRO Building Report 89-113.

### **Reasons for Designation**

The General Warehouse at Fort St. James was designated Classified for its historical associations, its structural and functional type and its role in defining the character of the site.

The General Warehouse and its companion structures at Fort St. James are an excellent example of a Fur Trading establishment. The General Warehouse is a fine and large-scale example of Red River Frame construction, and its design is representative of the Hudson's Bay style, which drew its form and massing from the British Classical tradition.

The General Warehouse is a striking original structure within the National Historic Park. The site has been restored to represent the interdependent historic arrangement of boardwalks, fences, gardens, open fields and buildings, and retains its physical relationship to Stuart Lake.

### **Character Defining Elements**

The heritage value of the General Warehouse resides in its striking form and presence, in its original materials and construction system, and in its functional role as a large scale Hudson's Bay facility used for storage of furs and goods for transshipment. The value of the building is also reinforced by its relationship to its setting.

The warehouse is a large, rectangular, two-storey, hip-roofed framed log structure. Features relating to its Red River frame construction, including the typical exposed log detailing and the technique of squared upright logs and filler logs, should be respected and repaired in kind when necessary. The effect created by bays and symmetrically placed windows should be maintained without additions or modifications.

Internally, the two floors were designed as open spaces to accommodate display and storage of goods and furs. Alterations which would compromise the impact of the original volumes should be discouraged. The interior finishes are original, and should

**General Warehouse** (cont'd)  
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be retained together with hardware and other features which reflect the building's original function.

The General Warehouse is connected to other buildings by a series of fences, boardwalks, gardens and spaces which contribute to the function and character of the park and which should be maintained for continued public use and interpretation. The site's generally flat topography should be respected, and its relationship to the water and tree enclosure maintained to ensure a historical identity distinct from the adjacent modern community.

Because of its size and placement, the General Warehouse is the dominant structure in the park, and should be maintained in its present position without changes, alterations or additions.

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