

Brockville, Ontario  
**Armoury**  
1-9 East Avenue

## **HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT**

The Brockville Armoury was constructed by the Department of Public Works under the supervision of T.W. Fuller between 1900 to 1901, according to criteria established by the Department of Militia and Defence. The Department of National Defence is the custodial department. See FHBRO Building Report 89-78.

### **Reason for Designation**

The Brockville Armoury was designated Recognized for its association with an important theme in Canadian history, the quality of its design, materials, and craftsmanship; and essentially unchanged and prominent location in its residential context.

The Brockville Armoury was built as a result of federal military reform policies, including the construction of better armouries in small communities across the country, implemented by Frederick Borden, the Minister of Militia and Defence. It housed the Brockville Rifles, an old Ontario Regiment founded in the 1860s as a result of the Fenian threat in Ontario, Quebec, and Manitoba. The Brockville Rifles also served in the First and Second World Wars.

Aesthetic and functional qualities of the design, planning, and materials are of significance. The Brockville Armoury is a good example of the first of two groups of battalion drill halls built between 1896 and 1918. Additionally, it is a rare example of a smaller drill hall constructed in stone rather than brick.

This designation applies to the exterior elevations and to the interior spaces characteristic of the armoury as a building type, especially the open span of the drill hall with the overlooking gallery and two spiral iron staircases.

### **Character Defining Elements**

The heritage character of the Brockville Armoury resides in its symmetrical planning, massive visual character, well-crafted stone masonry, modern structural frame and its site relationships, particularly the front lawn.

The Armoury is composed of two distinct elements: a large gable-roofed drill hall to the rear and a towered, double-storied front entry block. The entry block is situated longitudinally to the drill hall. Inspired by the Richardsonian Romanesque, the design is characterized by rough faced stone, round arches, and a low ratio of window to wall

.../2

Brockville, Ontario  
**Armoury** (Continued)

surface. The detailing is derived from medieval military architecture. Exterior design features include the round end "towers"; central projecting frontispiece with round-arched front door; regular and grouped spacing of single, paired, and round-arched windows; and the stone stringcourses, copings, and crenellations.

The stone masonry is well-crafted and should be carefully maintained. Any repairs, repointing or cleaning required should only be undertaken under the advice of architectural consultants experienced in historic masonry conservation.

The original, double-hung wood windows should be maintained, repaired, or replaced in kind if necessary.

The plan reflects turn-of-the-century militia reform policies with regards to the provision of space adequate for training and for the storage of arms. The smaller functional spaces - offices, armouries, mess hall, band room, lecture room, and officers' mess - are contained on two levels in the front entry block, the second level rooms accessed by a gallery overlooking the drill hall. Of note are the two free-standing spiral iron staircases inside the drill hall which provide access to the gallery. The spatial relationship of these smaller spaces to the openness of the drill hall should be maintained.

Original interior finishes including window/door millwork, baseboards, flooring and wood panelling, contribute to the character of the interior and should be left intact or, if repairs are necessary, repaired to match.

The relationship of the building to its site and of the site to its residential context remains largely intact, and should be maintained. The open lawn and setback of the building are important features of this property, providing a strong civic presence for the long King Street East elevation. The existing fencing in front of the building is not compatible and should be removed if possible. Similarly, relocation of the vehicle lock-up area would enhance the building. The paved parking surface is acceptable providing no vertical obstructions such as fences are added.

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