

FHBRO Number 88-161

Québec, Quebec

**Former Caponiere**

Building No. 25

The Citadel, Quebec

The Former Caponiere was constructed in 1852 from plans attributed to the Royal Engineers. It is located within the counterscarp at the west corner of the Citadel. The partially buried building has undergone some modifications over the years, including the replacement of the old, dry masonry covering with a concrete shell, and the alteration of access to the west end of the passageway. The Former Caponiere is currently vacant. It is part of the Citadel of Québec, a National Historic Site. The building is under the jurisdiction of Parks Canada. See FHBRO Report 88-161.

### **Reasons for Designation**

The Former Caponiere has been designated “Classified” because of its historical significance, its fine design, the quality of construction and its environmental significance.

Building No. 25 is associated with the defence of British North America during the period in which the Citadel was completed (1839-1857). Built in the west counterscarp of the Citadel outside the walls, the former Caponiere was intended to command the lower ditch. From the standpoint of local history, the Former Caponiere accentuates the military character of the Citadel, which had a major impact on the civilian administration of Québec during the last century and also on local development.

The Former Caponiere has retained its unique shape, which reflects its location. The facade, pierced with loopholes, is the only part of the building not hidden underground. It is relatively well preserved, which indicates careful construction and a choice of materials generally appropriate to the characteristics of the site.

The relationship between Building No. 25 and the other defensive works in this part of the Citadel has been preserved. The presence of the Former Caponiere strengthens the military character of this strategic site. It blends well with the other defensive works in the fortress in terms of materials and design.

### **Character Defining Elements**

The heritage character of the Former Caponiere resides in its architectural design, the building materials and construction techniques used, and the strategic location outside the fortress.

Building No. 25 displays the typical features of British military buildings, including functional, solid masonry construction, with no real decoration. In this particular case, the structure is concealed within the counterscarp. All that is exposed is the facade,

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which has two faces set at a slight angle to each other and pierced with loopholes. The wall is of regular bond, except for the lower part (which is actually part of the wall of the old ditch). The roof of the building is concealed by the glacis, which slopes down toward the Plains of Abraham, making the Former Caponiere practically invisible. The entrance is located in the counterscarp of the main ditch at a level higher than the rest of the building.

Nothing should be done to undermine the integrity of this arrangement, and new openings should not be created. It is recommended that ongoing maintenance of the joints be carried out and that damaged stones be replaced with stones identical to the original ones in type, size, colour and bond. In the interest of historical consistency, the style of the door should be the same as the old one if it is not already.

The interior of the Former Caponiere is vaulted throughout. It includes a long, narrow shooting gallery and stairs to the entry door. There is a vestibule at the entrance. At present, the cut stone walls and vaults are exposed. Restoration of this building should respect the rudimentary look that currently exists. The recommendations made for the exterior masonry also apply to the interior. Finally, the access point at the west end of the passageway may eventually be restored to its original condition.

The heritage character of the Former Caponiere also resides in its relationship with the other elements of the defence system located in this part of the Citadel. It is therefore important to preserve the military character of the environment and not introduce landscaping that might make that character harder to read.

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

2000.02.18

Translation