

Archaeological Site Report	SiteNo	9/2/003/0019
	Site Name	Old Military Hospital, Rhodes University,
	Date	Grahamstown
	Project	
	CaseNID	
	Coords	-33.313231, 26.522019

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SiteAutoID: 33

Site Category: Building

SiteComments:

Archive Import History: Inside the University grounds, i.e. the former Drostdy grounds, there is another old building which recalls the tempestuous years of 1835 to 1842 when the Governor of the Cape Colony decided to use the Drostdy and the surrounding area in the defence of the town against the Xhosa. It is the old military hospital which was built of stone about that time. At present it houses the Department of Botany of the Rhodes University. Apart from its connection with the old Drostdy and the early defence of Grahamstown, this building acquired special historical significance when the Cape Parliament had its session at Grahamstown in 1864. Shortly before the session the garrison vacated the buildings on the grounds and it was decided to prepare the military hospital as a meeting-room for the Legislative Assembly and the three wooden huts next to the hospital as chambers for the Legislative Council. The services of a carpenter were called in to change the interior of the buildings in such a way as to resemble that of the two council-chambers of Parliament in Cape Town. He carried out his instructions so successfully that, according to an eye-witness who knew both houses, the interior of the old military hospital and that of the Council chamber in Cape Town were as like as two peas. On 28th April, 1864, the opening took place in Shaw Hall in High Street and after that the members of the two houses moved into the military hospital and the huts. Parliament sat here for three months and discussed the thorny problem of dividing the Cape Colony into the Western and Eastern Provinces." Visual Description: Colours: Site Features: Condition: Construction Date: Materials: Catalogue: , No: , Significance Category:

Damage Types: