

FHBRO Number 92-017

Longview, Alberta

Storage Building (Building 8) *FINAL*

Bar U Ranch

Storage Building 8 is part of the first phase of construction at the Bar U Ranch (ca. mid-1880s to the early 1900s), and was probably built before 1892. One building in a row of three storage buildings, it originally stored ice related to food preparation in the nearby Bunkhouse/Cookhouse. Storage Building 8 is a component of the Bar U Ranch National Historic Site. Parks Canada is the custodian. See FHBRO Building Report 92-17.

Reasons for Designation

Storage Building 8 was designated “Classified” because of the historical associations of the building as a component of the Bar U Ranch, because of its functional design and contribution to the overall aesthetic qualities of the complex, and because of the exceptional qualities of the site and setting.

As a component of the Bar U Ranch, Storage Building 8 is strongly associated with the development of ranching in Alberta. Constructed before 1892, it is also associated with George Lane, a prominent Alberta cattleman, who was hired at the Bar U in 1884 to serve as the ranch foreman and who ran the ranch between 1902 and 1925. Storage Building 8 is also associated with Patrick Burns, who purchased the Bar U Ranch in 1927 to add to his vast cattle empire. Burns, who is recognized as the kingpin of the meat processing industry in western Canada during the mid-1920s, has been designated a person of national significance.

An integral component of the historic grouping associated with the community centre focused on Pekisko Creek, Storage Building 8 had an important functional role in daily life as the Ranch was being established. Its configuration is characteristic of basic structures built as preliminary shelters or as outbuildings during the early stages of settlement in western Canada. Individually, Storage Building 8 is the product of a simple, function-oriented approach to construction. The grouping of which it is a part has a strong aesthetic impact due to the squat massing of the buildings, their tight, cohesive arrangement and the interplay of varying roof slopes.

As part of a larger cohesive complex of buildings arranged to great functional effect in a simple and beautiful natural setting, Storage Building 8 contributes significantly to the character of the Bar U Ranch. The structure serves to reinforce the ranch’s present character, which is that of a historic ranch headquarters. It is also a component of the collection of pre-1927 buildings which contribute to the landmark value of the complex as one of the region’s most important early ranch sites. This landmark value is reinforced by the designation of the complex as a National Historic Site.

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Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of Storage Building 8 resides in its massing, construction techniques and materials, exterior finish, interior features and tight physical relationship with the adjacent storage buildings and with Pekisko Creek.

Storage Building 8 is the easternmost of the row of three storage buildings. It is a simple, one-storey structure with a medium-pitch gabled roof and a small shed-roofed entrance porch. The building has a single door, and a single window high in the rear gable end. The walls are of round log construction, with squared dovetail-notched corners. The roof of Building 8 is supported by pole rafters braced with collar ties and tied with ceiling joists lapped and nailed near mid-span. The roof is covered with cedar shingles and has two wood ventilation stack vents and a larger cupola on the ridge near the front of the building. These are related to the early functions of the building and should be retained. The building is characterized by its simple, functional construction and natural, weathered materials.

Interior features related to the early use of the building as an ice house merit protection. These features include the interior stud walls sheathed with boards in order to line the walls with insulating sawdust; interior stud wall partitions lined with boards to divide the building into functional areas; and a mysterious 10" diameter opening through the log wall of the southwest room to the outside, complete with scorch marks. Evidence of original functions and the patina of wear should be protected.

Storage Building 8 is situated on the edge of Pekisko Creek and in close proximity to the other two storage buildings, with roof eaves overlapping in some places. The relationship of the three buildings to grade is distinctive, with the middle building sitting very low and the westernmost building sitting higher than the other two buildings. This characteristic siting and elevation should be protected. Any development should seek to retain the functional quality of the site, and respect existing patterns of access and circulation. Any changes to circulation or access should consider historic patterns.

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

2000.03.27