

William and Lucina Bowe Ranch,
Granary
165 feet West-Southwest of House
Melrose Vicinity
Silver Bow County
Montana

HABS No. MT-104-I

HABS
MONT
47-MEL.V,
II-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Rocky Mountain System Support Office
National Park Service
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225-0287

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

WILLIAM AND LUCINA BOWE RANCH,
GRANARY

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I. INTRODUCTION

Location: The William and Lucina Bowe Ranch is on the east side of the lower Big Hole River Valley in southwest Montana. It lies in Silver Bow County about 0.1 mile south of the community of Melrose and 35 miles north of Dillon. County Road 40 passes through the property and crosses the river approximately 0.1 mile to the southwest.

The granary is on the north side of the ranch, approximately 165 feet west-southwest of the house.

Quad: Melrose

UTM: Zone: 12; Easting 368565; Northing 5053820

Date of Construction: ca. 1880s

Present Owners: Dale and Rosanna Carpenter
P.O. Box 26
Melrose, MT 59740

Present Use: Storage

Significance: The granary contributes to the significance of the William and Lucina Bowe Ranch. It is linked to the site's important association with the agricultural development of the lower Big Hole Valley in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The granary shop also serves as an example of a vernacular building form common to the period in which it was built.

Historian: Mary McCormick
Renewable Technologies, Inc.
Butte, Montana
March 1998

II. HISTORY

The granary probably dates to the 1880s, and was listed as one of the improvements at the ranch in the 1904.¹ The 1880s construction date is, in large part, supported by the near-exclusive use of cut nails in the interior wall siding and flooring. The exterior walls apparently were not sided until the 1890s, as mostly wire nails are found in the drop siding. This is a reflection of a common practice whereby the exterior walls of a wood-frame granary--such as this building--were left uncovered as the interior walls necessary had to be finished so that grain would not be lost in crevices.

III. DESCRIPTION

The granary is wood-frame building (16'6" x 24') about 25 feet west of the log bunkhouse (MT-104-H). It is constructed of 2' x 8' studs on 1'6" on centers. Drop siding covers the exterior walls. The building is elevated about 2' above the ground on a foundation of log stumps. Each stump stands on a rock slab and is capped by an enameled metal basin that likely served to keep rodents from crawling up the stump into the granary. The side gable roof has 2 x 8 rafters supporting board decking. Wood shingles are nailed to the decking, and ridgeline has a metal cap with ball finials at both ends. The roof eaves extend about 1-½ feet beyond the walls and the rafter tips are exposed under the overhang. East of center on the front (south) wall there is a door constructed of horizontal boards over vertical boards. It is reached by a very delapidated set of wood stairs. To the east of the front door there is a window opening blocked by metal sheeting. A small window vent also pierces the front wall; it is positioned west of center under the roof eave. Attached to the granary's west wall is the blacksmith shop (MT-104-J).

The interior of the granary is finished by 3" board flooring and 4" horizontal-board wall siding. It originally consisted of a single open room, but has been divided into several animal stalls by the addition of half walls made of boards. An historic closet stands in the southeast corner. It is constructed of boards and has a pair of paneled doors. The granary is currently used for storage.

IV. ENDNOTES

1. Silver Bow County Clerk of the Court, Probate Record No. 1624.