

William and Lucina Bowe Ranch,  
Blacksmith Shop  
180 feet West-Southwest of House  
Melrose Vicinity  
Silver Bow County  
Montana

HABS No. MT-104-J

HABS  
MONT  
47-MEL.V,  
15-

**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,  
BLACKSMITH SHOP

HABS  
MONT  
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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 blacksmith shop on the north side of the site, approximately 180 feet west-southwest of the house.

**Quad:** Melrose

**UTM:** Zone: 12; Easting 368560; Northing 5053820

**Date of Construction:** ca. late 1890s/early 1900s

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

**Present Use:** Abandoned

**Significance:** The blacksmith shop 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 blacksmith 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 blacksmith shop may represent the workshop that was listed as one of the improvements at the ranch in the 1904.<sup>1</sup> The relatively poor condition of the building and the exclusive use of wire nails are suggestive of a construction date around the turn-of-the-century.

## III. DESCRIPTION

The blacksmith shop is a small wood-frame building (16'6" x 16'6") attached to the west wall of the granary (MT-104-I). It rests on timber sills and is topped by a side gable roof. Vertical board siding is on the south, east and west walls, while the north wall has vertical board-and-battens. The side gable roof is comprised of 2x6 rafters and board decking covered by a layer of asphalt shingles which, in turn, is covered by two layers of boards. A metal pipe protrudes from the roof at the southeast corner of building; corrugated metal sheeting covers the area of the roof around the pipe. Entries included a 5'6"-wide door centered on the south wall, and a narrower door at the east end of the north wall. Both doors are made of vertical boards.

The interior of the blacksmith shop contains an unfinished room with a dirt floor. Remains of an anvil and hearth are evident in the southeast corner below the metal pipe that vents through the roof. A vise stands in the southwest corner and a wood workbench is along the north wall. Lots of artifacts are scattered about including numerous wagon wheels, harness, horse shoes, metal link chains, and a variety of metals pieces of unknown function.

## IV. ENDNOTES

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