

William and Lucina Bowe Ranch,  
Log Calving Barn  
230 feet South-Southwest of House  
Melrose Vicinity  
Silver Bow County  
Montana

HABS No. MT-104-T

HABS  
MONT  
47-MEL.V,  
IT-

**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,  
LOG CALVING BARN

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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 log calving barn is on the south side of the ranch, approximately 230 feet south-southwest of the house.

**Quad:** Melrose

**UTM:** Zone: 12; Easting 368650; Northing 5053735

**Date of Construction:** ca. 1870s/early 1880s

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

**Present Use:** Storage

**Significance:** The log calving barn 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 during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The barn also embodies log carpentry technologies and design concepts representative of the period in which it was built.

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

## II. HISTORY

The log calving barn probably dates to the late 1870s or early 1880s, and was listed as one of the improvements at the ranch in the 1904.<sup>1</sup> A pre-1890s construction date is supported the use of cut nails in the door jambs.

## III. DESCRIPTION

The calving barn is a large log outbuilding (32' x 43'6") near the county road at the northeast end of the corral complex. It has finely-crafted, hand-hewn wall logs joined by half-dove tail notching at the corners and daubed by mortar on the exterior. Both of the long sides (east and west) of the barn have a butt-end joint at the center of the wall; each joint is braced on the exterior by a timber post. The roof is front gable structure comprised of fairly large log rafter and purlins. It has been recovered in recent years with boarding decking and corrugated metal sheeting. Fascia boards cover the purlin tips projecting at the gable ends. A brick chimney protrudes from the roof at the northwest corner of the barn. Paired entries are centered on the front (north) and rear (south) walls. Both doors at the front entry are made of horizontal boards but the door to the west has been nailed shut and the hinges removed. The rear entry holds a vertical board to the west, and a replacement door of plywood to the east. The barn's only window is a narrow, double-hung unit on the front wall to the west. It has window screening on the upper sash, while the lower sash has been covered by boards.

The interior of barn has animal stalls on either side of central passageway that runs north-to-south between the doors. Log post-and-beam lines divide the passageway from the stalls, and help support the roof trusses. Each stall has a gate and half walls made of poles. At the northwest corner of the barn there is a wood-framed "cowboy room" enclosed by vertical board siding. The cowboy room contains a cast-iron wood stove vented by the brick chimney. Floors throughout the barn are dirt.

## IV. ENDNOTES

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