

FHBRO Number 92-017

Longview, Alberta

**Foreman's House (Building 4) FINAL**

Bar U Ranch

The Foreman's House at the Bar U Ranch is believed to have been built between 1884 and 1887, as part of the first phase of building at the ranch. The building was likely moved to its present location from the edge of the residential area and the community centre area, due west of the Workhorse Barn and Implement Shed. The designer is unknown. The Foreman's House 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**

The Foreman's House, as a component of the Bar U Ranch complex, was designated "Classified" because of the historical associations of this building and the ranch as a whole, because of the exceptional qualities of the site and setting, and because of its contribution to the overall aesthetic and functional qualities of the complex.

The Bar U Ranch is strongly associated with the development of ranching in Alberta. The Foreman's House was constructed to accommodate George Lane, who was hired at Bar U in 1884 to serve as the ranch foreman and who ran the ranch between 1902 and 1925. Lane was a prominent member of the second generation of Alberta cattlemen. The Foreman's House 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.

The proportions and construction of the Foreman's House are typical of many pioneer dwellings built during the early stages of settlement in western Canada. It stands out because of its squared log construction, its domestic character and its superior log work and finishing. The introduction of structures like this one heralded a larger degree of permanence and stability at the ranch.

As part of a cohesive complex of buildings arranged to great functional effect in a simple and beautiful natural setting, the Foreman's House contributes significantly to the character of the Bar U Ranch. Located within the community centre, the building is situated directly opposite the contemporary Post Office. The building 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.

**Character Defining Elements**

The heritage character of the Foreman's House resides in its proportions, construction

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techniques and materials, exterior finish, interior features and floor plan, and site relationships.

The Foreman's House is a rectangular, one-and-a-half-storey log structure. The construction materials chosen for the house and the craftsmanship employed are of high quality. The wall construction consists of squared logs with dovetail corner notching. It is believed that skilled log builders were hired and that high grade spruce logs from the foothills were used for the structure. Any repairs should match the level of craftsmanship found in the original work. The house has four-over-four double-hung windows. Its gable roof and gable ends are of milled frame construction and are covered with cedar shingles. A chimney composed of segments of concrete, brick and concrete block is located on the roof's ridge, near the centre of the building and was probably used for both heating and cooking. A small concrete cellar exists in the southwest corner, which was used principally for storage. The condition of the building's log walls, foundation, roof, doors and windows is poor. Any repairs should respect character defining features and maximize the retention of original fabric.

The Foreman's House retains its interior beaverboard finish and floor plan. The main floor is separated into three rooms, used as the principal living quarters: a kitchen, a living room and a bedroom. The stairs lead to an unfinished attic space.

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. The setting of the Foreman's House, back from the lane in a flat, grassed area, is important to its heritage character.

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

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