

MONTANA HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL INVENTORY

BRIDGER SURVEY



Legal Description: Section 21, Tract P, Lot 5
Address: 406 East Carbon Avenue
Ownership: Name: Bertha Hunter
 %Audrey Bohley
 Address: 2027 Jerome Place
 Helena, MT 59601

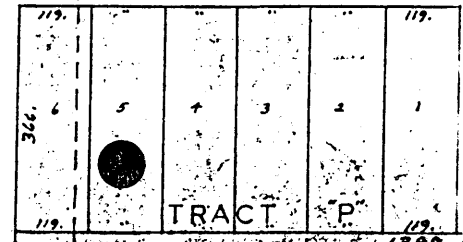


10 24
Roll# 10/Frame# 27

Historic Name: Forsman Home
Common Name: Hunter Home
Date of Construction: 1907
Architect: Unknown
Builder: Eric Forsman/Maurice Levander
Original Owner: Eric Forsman
Original Use: Residence
Present Use: Residence

Research Sources:

Abstract of Title: Carbon County Courthouse:
1900, A.H. Wethey; 1902, Bridger Improvement
Company; 1906, Bridger Coal & Improvement
Company; 1907, Eric Forsman; 1931, Marit
Forsman; 1935, Berthine Levander; 1938,
Berthine Levander; 1944, Bertha & John
Hunter; 1982, Bertha Hunter
Plat Records: Carbon County Courthouse
Tax Records: Carbon County Courthouse
Building Permits: N/A
Sewer/Water Permits: N/A
City Directories: 1909-1919
Sanborn Maps: No Exposure
Newspapers: Bridger Times; 4-16-09; 8-13-09;
 3-3-11; 7-14-11; 1-12-12; 8-2-12;
 2-13-13; 4-26-13; 5-23-13; 10-17-13;
 9-5-14; 4-28-16; 9-21-17; 9-6-18;
 10-11-18; 1-9-19; 7-12-23; 8-2-28
Other: Census, 1900



Location Map

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

Single dwelling - 1270 sq. ft. - 414 sq. ft. enclosed porch.
Formed concrete and stone foundation, stone wall construction,
stone exterior. Gambrel roof, composition shingle roofing.
Softwood floors, lath and plaster interior, pine or fir trim.

The 1 1/2 story gambrel roofed house features walls of coursed
sandstone block on the first floor with wood frame construction

on the second, decorated with diamond-cut shingles in the gambrel ends of the large dormers. The native sandstone walls, porch apron, and supports are of rock-faced blocks set with rounded, raised, tooled mortar joints. The porch, which spans the front (north) facade, apparently also supported a balcony above, as evidenced by the second story door on this facade. A rear porch was enclosed with vertical siding and small casement windows, circa 1948.

A two story hipped roofed, square bay protrudes from the west facade. A band of three one-over-one double hung windows with narrow one-over-one sidelights were used in this bay on both floors. All other windows in the house are singly placed, one-over-one, double-hung sash, with the exception of the two cottage windows that flank the front doorway. Two interior, corbelled brick chimneys protrude from the center of the roof.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION:

Eric Forsman purchased this lot from the Bridger Coal and Improvement Company in June of 1907, and likely constructed this house at that time. He was living on Carbon Avenue when the census enumerator visited him in 1910, and this is the only Carbon Avenue property he owned. According to Census records, Eric was a stone mason born in Sweden. His wife Mary, and daughters Bertina and Olga were from Norway. Forsman had a boarder, Morris (Maurice or Maurity) Levander, also of Sweden, who was a house carpenter, and he possibly helped build this house as a part of his keep.

Eric Forsman laid the stone for the Bridger Coal and Improvement Company machine shop in 1911. The 35' x 100' building replaced one razed by fire, and was constructed to house the blacksmith shop, the machine shop and the electrician's shop. In 1913 he laid the stone walls for the foundation of the new Methodist parsonage, and replaced the 1910 sidewalks around the Glidden Mercantile.

Eric Forsman moved to Billings in the late teens, and was employed at the Billings Poly Technic Institute. During his absence, the house was rented out. In September of 1918 Dr. Gates family moved out of Eric's home, and the Breen family moved in. Forsman was back in Bridger in July of 1923, and at the age of 73, was working on an addition to the Bridger Library Building.

Forsman's daughters ran the Forsman Sisters Millinery shop from about 1909 to 1918, and in 1923 they had a clothing shop. In 1911 Bertini married Maurity G. Levander (Morris the boarder) and in 1918 Olga married Ole P. Overby, the photographer who shared space with the sisters in the Frates & Levander building (Block 11, O.P.). While Forsman was in Billings, the latter couple lived in the upstairs of this house.

John Forsman, Eric's younger brother, was in Bridger in 1900 when

the census was taken, and was listed as a general merchandise store owner. In 1902 John had a large stone warehouse constructed, and in 1903 he had a stone business block erected by J.A. Johnson, also a stone mason. (Both buildings had been destroyed prior to survey). Likely Eric did not move to Bridger until after these buildings were constructed.

INTEGRITY

The only significant alteration to the Forsman House has been the enclosure of the small porch at the rear (west) elevation, which likely occurred ca. 1948. Other than this minor change, the house retains complete integrity of design, materials, and craftsmanship.

HISTORICAL and/or ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Forsman House meets criterion C for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as a distinctive example of sandstone architecture. Built by Swedish stone cutter Eric Forsman in 1907, this house is the only example of the use of locally quarried sandstone for residential construction. The house is a good example of popular architecture, resembling designs promoted by early 20th century builder's manuals and published house plans. The ashlar first story of the Forsman House, together with the irregular roof line that combines gambrel dormers and a two-story hipped bay under a large gambrel roof, the cottage windows with stained glass transoms, and the decorative shingle work on the second story add considerable interest in terms of form, texture, and decorative detail. The Forsman House is architecturally significant in a local context as one of the finest, early 20th century houses in Bridger, Montana.

FORM PREPARED BY:

Name: Carbon County Historic Preservation Office

Address: Box 1651

Red Lodge, MT 59068

Date: October, 1986

GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

Acreage: less than one acre

USGS Quad: Bridger, Mont. 1956 7.5

UTM's: Zone 12, 664028 E., 5017428 N.

