

CLASSIFIED STRUCTURE FIELD INVENTORY REPORT
(Attach 4" x 5" Black and White Photograph)

24-11741

REGION RMRO PARK/AREA NAME GLACIER NATIONAL PARK PARK NUMBER 1430

STRUCTURE NAME CHARLES SCHOENBERGER HOMESTEAD STRUCTURE NUMBER I-124

LOCATION OF STRUCTURE NORTH FORK STUDY AREA PARK LOCATION CODE GLAC

NATIONAL REGISTER _____ DATE: _____ MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: (A) (B) (C) (D)

NPS LEGAL INTEREST None. MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT: _____

Check all of the following categories for which NPS has treatment responsibility:

Stabilization() Cyclic Maintenance() Routine Maintenance() Approved Ultimate Treatment()

(ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION USE ONLY)

APPROVED ULTIMATE TREATMENT OR RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN, CULTURAL COMPONENT DESIGNATION

Preservation	(PP)	Restoration	(RR)	Reconstruction	(CC)
Adaptive Preservation	(AP)	Adaptive Restoration	(AR)	Adaptive Reconstruction	(AC)
Neglect	(NG)	Remove	(RM)	No Approved Treatment	(NO)

Approval Document _____ () Document Date: / /

Estimated Treatment Costs _____

Stabilization: \$ _____ Date: / /

Approved Treatment: \$ _____ Date: / /

Level of Estimate: (A) (B) (C)
Estimator: (Region) (DSC) (A&E)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Date of Construction: 1916 Date of Alterations: ca.1952
Architect/Designer: Charles Schoenberger Historical Theme(s): Homesteading
History of Structure: _____

---SEE ATTACHED SITE FORM---

Evaluation of Structure: Historic Theme Contributing X Non-Contributing _____
National Register Criteria: Ax Bx Cx D (Include integrity statement)

---SEE ATTACHED SITE FORM---

Bibliography: ---SEE ATTACHED SITE FORM---

Representation in Other Surveys: Historical Research Associates, 1980

If structure has been removed, how? n/a Date: _____

Report prepared by: Patricia L. Bick, Historian Date: 10/01/86

- Condition:
- Documentation:
- Significance:
- Internal Impacts:
- External Impacts:

LOCATION: Section 8 State MONTANA USE: CURRENT INTERIOR USE (NPS 28 CODE)

Township 35N County FLATHEAD Original Use HOMESTEAD

Range 21W Intermediate Uses HOMESTEAD

PERIOD OF CONSTRUCTION (NPS 28 CODE) _____

OWNERSHIP: Present Owner: William Cusick, Route 6, Box 365, A-2, Portland, Oregon

Original Owner: Charles Schoenberger

Intermediate Owner(s): see attached

DRAWING NO. n/a

NEGATIVE NO. Roll NF#1, frames 1-15

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

TYPE OF STRUCTURE (NPS 28 CODE): _____

CHIMNEYS: _____

ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER (STYLE): _____

SITE (INCLUDE ORIENTATION OF STRUCTURE): _____

PORCHES: _____

---SEE ATTACHED SITE FORM---

OVERALL BUILDING PLAN (FOOTPRINT): _____

WINDOWS: _____

OVERALL DIMENSIONS: _____

COMPOSITION (NPS 28 CODE): _____

STORIES: _____

DOORS: _____

FOUNDATION: _____

ADDITIONS: _____

WALLS: _____

---SEE ATTACHED SITE FORM---

INTERIOR PLAN: _____

ROOF: _____

INTERIOR FINISHES: _____

SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES (INCLUDING INTERIOR AND SETTING) FOR PARK PLANNING PURPOSES:

---SEE ATTACHED SITE FORM---

Historic Name: CHARLIE SCHOENBERGER HOMESTEAD

I-124

Location: T35N; R21W; SW 1/4, NE 1/4, NE 1/4, SE 1/4, Sec. 8.

Acreage: approximately 4 acres.

UTM Reference: 11/5409420/696540

Ownership: William Cusick, Route 6, Box 365-A-2, Port Orchard, Washington.

Access: Private ownership. Located approximately 2 1/2 miles north of Polebridge Ranger Station on Glacier Route 7. Site visible on west side of road in Big Prairie.

Evaluation of Significance and Architectural Integrity: The Charlie Schoenberger Homestead is significant for its strong historical associations with the homestead settlement of the North Fork, the development of social and community life, and for its association with an important early family. The property meets Criteria A, B, and C for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The first Schoenberger residence, a one-story log cabin (no longer extant) which served as the Kintla Post Office from 1914-1918, was where eastside and westside homesteaders met often to exchange news and visit. Socializing continued at the Schoenberger place when the new two-story log residence was completed in 1917 and became a popular spot for all night community dances during the winters.

The existing homestead residence, built to replace the earlier one-story cabin, is architecturally significant as a two-story log building that exemplifies the skilled use of locally prepared materials on the North Fork. Later modifications to the building include the construction of a porch across the east facade and of an overhead stoop over the southern entrance. These alterations, completed in the early 1950s, are of log construction, compatible in design, and do not seriously compromise the architectural integrity of the residence.

Historical Information: Charlie Schoenberger came west from Illinois in search of opportunity shortly after the turn of the century, hauling agricultural equipment with the intent to work as an itinerant thresher. When this enterprise did not prove as profitable as expected, he found work with John Lewis at the Glacier Hotel on Lake McDonald, as a laborer for the Great Northern Railroad, and as a packer for the various oil and coal exploration ventures that were gaining enthusiasm about the North Fork's prospects.¹ Both the Great Northern and the Milwaukee

¹Interview with Mary Kickbusch by Cindy Mish, 1981.

St. Paul and Pacific Railroads were busily surveying routes for North Fork branch lines in 1908², and Charlie Schoenberger decided he would "get in on the ground floor" of the North Fork bonanza by establishing a homestead claim.³

Charlie, Mary, and their daughter Carolyn established residency on their Big Prairie homestead in July 1909 and had their first log house completed by August of that year.⁴ During that first winter of 1909-10, Mary was the only woman to live on the upper North Fork; her closest female neighbor was Mrs. Sullivan about 12 miles to the south on Camas Creek.⁵ The following summer saw an influx of new families to Big Prairie, and although much of the time was spent battling the encroaching 1910 fire, a permanent homesteading community was established.

Charlie Schoenberger was the first of the Schoenberger clan to take up a homestead on the North Fork. His father Anton and brother Paul followed, claiming two homesteads on Indian Ridge at the southern end of Big Prairie. The family of Charlie's wife, Mary DeFord Schoenberger, also came up to the North Fork. Her father and brother took up claims on the west side of the river and her sister Eva married Chance Beebe, who homesteaded near Polebridge, was a prominent North Fork ranger, and headed the Park and Forest Service predator control program during the teens.⁶ Mary's other sister Jesse married border agent William Roberts, and lived at the northern edge of the westside homesteading community.

In 1914, when the Schoenbergers provided final proof on their homestead, they declared having built a log one-story house (16 by 48 feet), a log barn (24 by 32 feet), and a root cellar (10 by 12 feet). All of their 89.13-acre claim was enclosed with log snake fencing and they had three cows with three calves, 30 chickens, and one horse.⁷

The Schoenberger place served as the unofficial post office for the North Fork since 1914, with approximately 80 families receiving their mail there.⁸ Bill Raftery, who ran a stage line

²Columbian, June 1908.

³Interview with Mary Kickbusch.

⁴National Archives, Case file #514401, Testimony of Claimant.

⁵Interview with Mary Kickbusch.

⁶Interview with Eva Beebe by Cindy Mish, April 20, 1974, and April 3, 1975.

⁷Case file #514401.

⁸Interview with Mary Kickbusch.

from Belton north during the early years, would bring up the mail on his irregular runs.⁹ When the Kintla Post Office was officially designated on January 12, 1916, Mary Schoenberger was named the postmistress, and Theodore Christensen was awarded the first 8-year mail contract.¹⁰ Charles built an addition on the front of their log residence to serve as the post office.

During the summer of 1916, Charles began construction of the present two-story log residence, which he built entirely by himself¹¹, which was not the custom on the North Fork. It took him almost 2 years to finish the job. The Kintla Post Office continued at its original location in the first residence until 1918 when Mary went to Seattle, where she gave birth to her second daughter, Bernice. Before leaving, Mary arranged for the Kintla Post Office to be transferred to her neighbor Harriet Walsh.

With the large new house completed, the Schoenberger place became a focal point in the social life of the North Fork community. During the winter months large dances were held there, with as many as 50 North Forkers attending.¹² Jesse Bemis and the Covey brothers supplied the music, Ernest Henthorn the homemade rhubarb wine. Supper would be served at 1:00 a.m. and the dancing would continue through the night. After breakfast was served at daybreak, the party would disperse.¹³ These all-night dances became a regular entertainment and were a practical solution to the difficulty of traveling at night during the winter months.

Like all North Fork homesteaders, Charlie Schoenberger did not make his living solely off the land. In May 1910 he listed his occupation as "trapper and hunter" on the 13th U.S. Census. The Act establishing Glacier National Park was passed that same month, and trapping and hunting on park lands was soon prohibited. Charlie picked up temporary summer jobs with both the U.S. Forest Service and the Glacier National Park as a trail foreman and on road construction crews. He worked for a time for I.N. Dally at the Cabin Creek coalfield across the border in Canada, built cabins for neighboring homesteaders¹⁴, and took on various logging contracts to make ends meet. In 1928, the family left to work for the Glacier Hotel on Lake McDonald and stayed through the change in hotel ownership. Charles then got work

⁹Interview with Ben Hensen, Jr. by Cindy Mish, July 22, 1976.

¹⁰Microfilmed Postal Records, Montana Historical Society.

¹¹Interview with Eva Beebe.

¹²Columbian, February 16, 1922.

¹³Interview with Eva Beebe.

¹⁴Columbian, April 13, 1922.

with the Montana Department of Highways and Mary cooked for the construction crews during the 1930s. They would return to the North Fork occasionally to visit their daughter Carolyn and son-in-law who were living on the homestead, running a cattle ranch.¹⁵

During the 1940s, Charlie returned to live on the homestead property.¹⁶ Mary Schoenberger took off with the late North Fork arrival, John Kickbusch, and lived in Washington State for the remainder of her life.

Chain of Title:

Charles Schoenberger: final certificate 1914
Claude and Carolyn Jordan: 1962
Jean Gould: 1966
William and William F. Cusick: 1966

Physical Description: The Schoenberger Homestead is located at the southern end of Big Prairie in an open setting and consists of two contributing and two non-contributing structures and a number of ground depressions indicating the historical presence of additional buildings. The first residence at the site, which served from 1916-18 as the official Kintla Post Office, has been demolished (date unknown). Integrity of setting is very good, disturbed only by a modern (1970s) dwelling located approximately 1/4 mile to the north. The boundaries for the Schoenberger Homestead site property have been drawn along the existing fenceline surrounding the extant buildings. This area, which is bounded on the east by Glacier Route 7, encompasses the primary area of domestic use. From a point of beginning at the NE corner of the SE 1/4, NE 1/4, SE 1/4 of section 8; T35N; R21W, thence approximately 225 feet south, thence 400 feet west, thence 450 feet north, thence 400 feet east, thence 225 feet south to the point of beginning.

1. LOG RESIDENCE (constructed 1916). Contributing.

This two-story, gable-roofed log building is one of the largest and best preserved structures on the east side of the North Fork. The building features peeled log construction, cement chinking, square notch corner timbering, exposed log joists for the second story set on 30-inch centers, and an overhanging gable roof with log purlins. Windows are set in a symmetrical pattern, with 8-over-1, double-hung sash on the first floor and smaller 6-over-1, double-hung sash on the second. The building measures 19 by 27 feet. The central entrance on the south facade is marked by a gabled overdoor with log supports and a concrete stoop. The east entrance is enclosed within a full width screened porch with

¹⁵Interview with Mary Kickbusch.

¹⁶Mary McFarland, personal communication, September 28, 1986.

a split log apron, constructed ca. 1950. A stovepipe pierces the roof at the center of the building. The foundation is of concrete dating from the early 1950s renovation. The roof is covered with sheet metal. The building is occupied during the summer months and well maintained.

2. LOG HORSE BARN (constructed ca. 1910). Contributing.

This long log outbuilding is now used for storage. It has a 40-foot slope shed roof with log purlins, covered with rolled asphalt roofing. A fixed 1-light window is set in the east facade. The building is oriented toward the south and the entrance is on that facade. Another more recent doorway had been cut into the west facade. In 1984, the deteriorated southern half of the horse barn was removed by the owner. The barn is now set on concrete corner blocks.

3. FRAME PRIVY (date unknown). Non-contributing.

The gable roofed, ship-lap-sided privy with a concrete floor, appears to have been moved to the site. The gable roof is of plank construction and is uncovered. The privy is situated a few feet to the south of the log horse barn.

4. FRAME PRIVY (date unknown). Non-contributing.

Built of 1-inch-thick, vertical rough-sawn lumber, this one-hole privy has a gable roof covered with rolled asphalt.

5. GROUND DEPRESSION. Non-contributing.

Located approximately 30 feet to the west of the residence. Stones and deteriorated lumber fill hole. Function unknown.

6. PUMP HOUSING. Non-contributing.

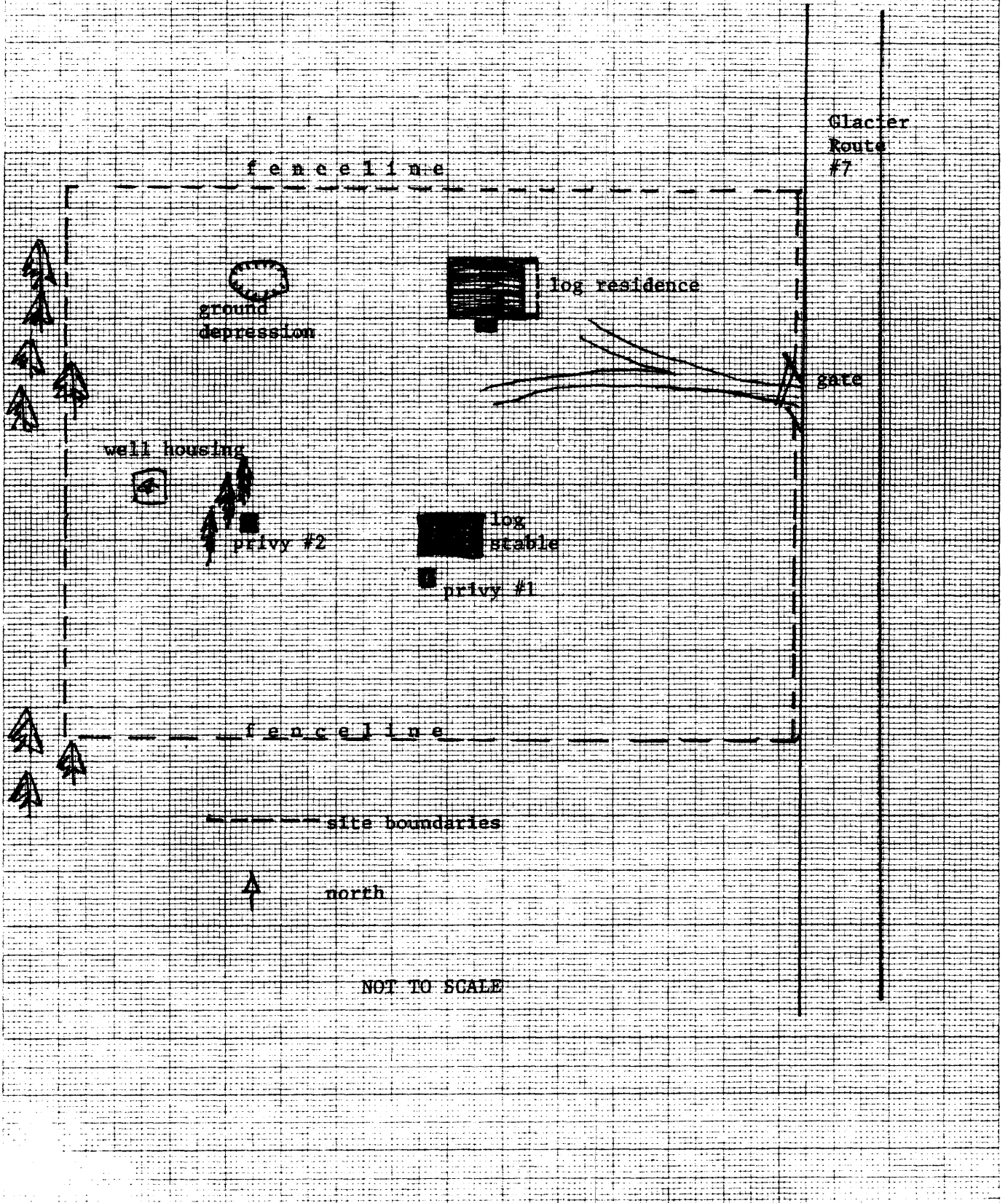
Located approximately 100 feet to the southwest of residence, consists of concrete slab with modern pump.

(The original Charlie Schoenberger Homestead residence was located approximately 150 feet to the northeast of the present house. No foundation remains exist.)

Form Prepared by: Patricia L. Bick, Historian, October 1986.

CHARLES SCHOENBERGER HOMESTEAD

ca. 4 acres
Polebridge Quad



LOWER BIG PRAIRIE AREA

