

Farm Outbuildings

Because the Ukrainian formed the majority of eastern European immigrants to the planning district, their farm structures are the most common. There are few German or Polish structures and they are generally similar to Ukrainian buildings. A discussion of eastern European farm buildings is thus a discussion of Ukrainian farm buildings. Like their log houses the construction and design of Ukrainian farm buildings were based on folk traditions. A typical early Ukrainian farmyard would have included the house, a barn or "stodola" for a few cows and horses, a "khliv" for some pigs, a "kurnyk" for poultry, one or two "spitlair" or granaries for feed and seed storage, a "kuchny" for summer food preparation, and usually a "komora" for general dry storage. Other standard items in an early farmyard included an outdoor clay and stone bake-oven, a crib-well with a tall sweep or balance beam for drawing water, a small outhouse, and in some cases an open structure used as a sheltered work area.

The styles of the buildings varied, as did the names by which they were known, according to local traditions. The Bukovynians favoured large hipped or hipped gable roofs, while the Galatians preferred the gable roof although their buildings often exhibited prominent front gable end projections. The farmyard complex was often enclosed or at least fronted with a wattle fence constructed of thin willows. The placement of the buildings within the yard varied according to personal preference and site topography, although a rectangular arrangement was most common.

The Ukrainian farm buildings in the Eastern Interlake went through a sequence of changes similar to that of the houses. The crude folk forms of the early 1900s gave way to more sophisticated traditional forms during the 1920s, followed by a period of transition in the 1930s. The post-war years however saw the complete abandonment of the folk traditions for contemporary Canadian designs. These phases, though clearly defined, overlapped each other and occurred at slightly different times in different areas, depending on the time of initial settlement and the economic progress of the settler. At any one time the average farmyard could contain buildings from several different periods.

Barns

As with most other immigrant groups, the initial barns and other farmyard buildings constructed by the Ukrainians were considered only temporary facilities and were rather hastily built. They were generally built of green unpeeled logs using a simple saddle or crude dovetail notch at the corners. The roofs were roughly thatched or simply stacked with grass (Figure 23).

Very few of these early barns still exist in the planning district, and those remaining are in poor condition. One in the Berlo area is a fairly good example (Figure 24).



Figure 23
Early log barn in the Foley area. Feed hay was stored under the thatch-roofed structure in the foreground. (Provincial Archives Manitoba)



Figure 24
Moga barn, NE 16-21-3E, ca. 1915.

The walls are constructed of 200 mm (7") diameter logs, peeled but left in the round, joined at the corners by saddle-notches and laid on a foundation of loose boulders. The grooved saddle-notch made on the bottom of the logs directs rain water away from the joints and helps prevent rot. Like many of the early structures in which animals were kept, this barn has remnants of a mud plaster coating which sealed and insulated the building, on the exterior walls. The use of diagonal willow purchase laths suggests that this plaster coating was quite thick. The loft floor, constructed of unpeeled rails, was also covered with a layer of mud. Despite its simple construction the building exhibits good craftsmanship (Figure 25). Several interesting connections were used including a tongue and groove sidewall joint and a mortise and tenon peg joint on the interior supporting posts. Although very little remains of its roof, the walls of this structure are still quite sound.

As the settlers became more established and larger amounts of stock were raised, better facilities were soon required. Replacement of the original barn and other farmyard structures usually began within the first ten years of settlement. Although built of logs, the new barns were considered to be permanent facilities and thus were larger and more carefully constructed than the originals. The logs used in their construction were usually faced or hewn square and the more difficult, but tight-fitting, dovetail notch was used at the corners.

While the dovetail corner notch was most common in the Eastern Interlake during this period, several other notches were also used. Buildings were found displaying the lock notch, the lap notch, and the post and fill or Red River frame method (Figure 26).

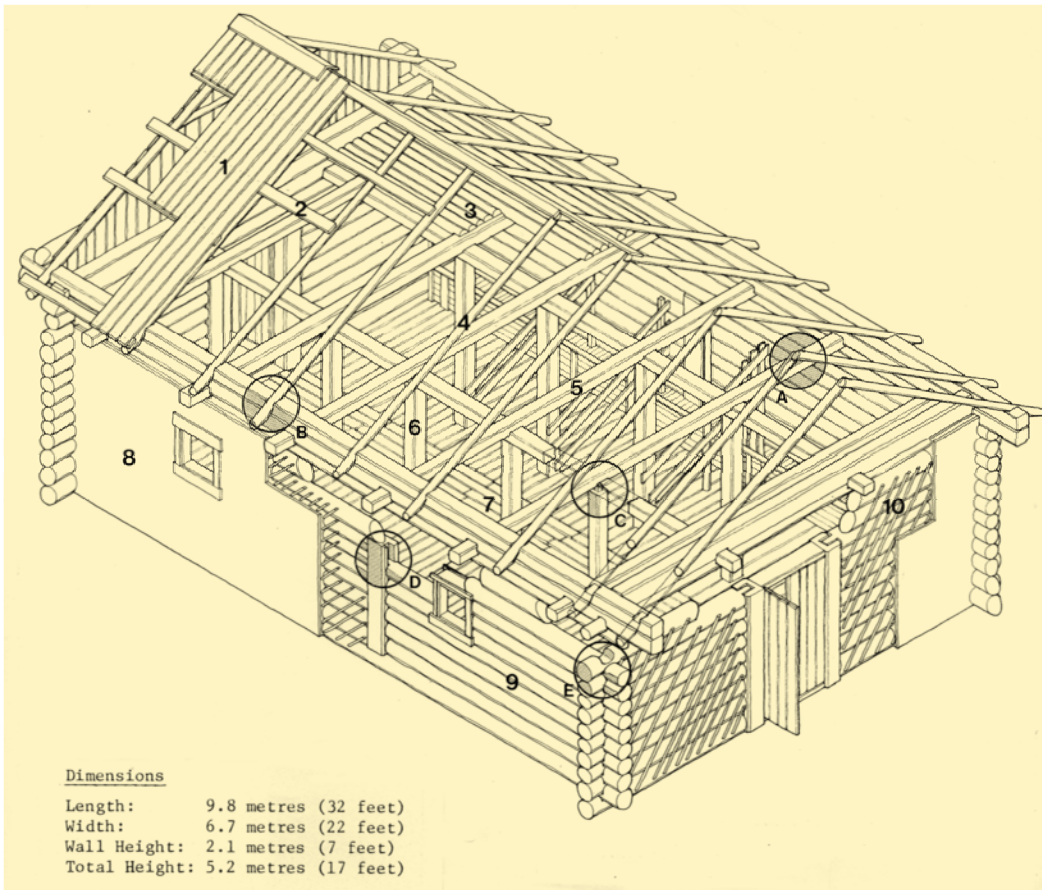


Figure 25
 Moga barn: construction details.

Building Materials

- 1) Roofing: board and batten; 25 mm (1") unplaned lumber; 100-200 (4-8") widths
- 2) Purlins: 50x150 mm (2x6") unplaned planks
- 3) Loft floor: 75-100 mm (3-4") diameter peeled rails
- 4) Rafters: 125-150 mm (5-6") diameter peeled rails
- 5) Joists and girders: 200-225 mm (8-9") hewn timbers
- 6) Posts: 200-225 mm (8-9") hewn timbers
- 7) Stable floor: 100 mm (4") square hewn timbers; laid over earth
- 8) Mud plaster: 50-150 mm (2-3") thick
- 9) Walls: 150-200 mm (6-8") diameter peeled logs
- 10) Purchase: 25 mm (1") willow lath

Connections

- A) Rafter lap-joint at apex; nailed
- B) Rafter seat notched into top plate; nailed
- C) Posts form mortise and tenon peg-joints at girders
- D) Guide posts (and framing at openings) use tongue and groove joint
- E) Corner joint: saddle-notch



Figure 26

Lap notches, on the left and lock notches, on the right, were occasionally used in the construction of log buildings in the Eastern Interlake.

Only two examples of the latter were found in the areas of Ukrainian settlement. The Rostkowski barn in the Framnes area is an interesting example (Figure 27).

In addition to the post and fill construction, it has an unusual hipped gambrel roof with split shingles on the crown and vertical board and batten roofing on the lower portions. The building was carefully constructed and displays several obviously well planned design elements (Figure 28).

The gable end hips and lower roof eaves project out over half a metre, protecting the plaster coated walls from rainwash. The eave soffits were left open to improve loft ventilation and prevent spoilage of the stored hay. Large lock notches were used at the corners of the sill and plate logs to help keep the walls square as the building settled, a problem inherent with this type of construction. Diagonal sway braces attached to the top of each corner provided added protection. The vertical channels, into which the log ends were fitted, were formed by nailing two wooden strips to the sides of the supporting posts rather than cutting a groove along the length of the post. This was an easier way of creating a channel and was quite common in Ukrainian built post and fill structures.



Figure 27
Rostkowski barn, SW 4-22-1E, ca.
1925.

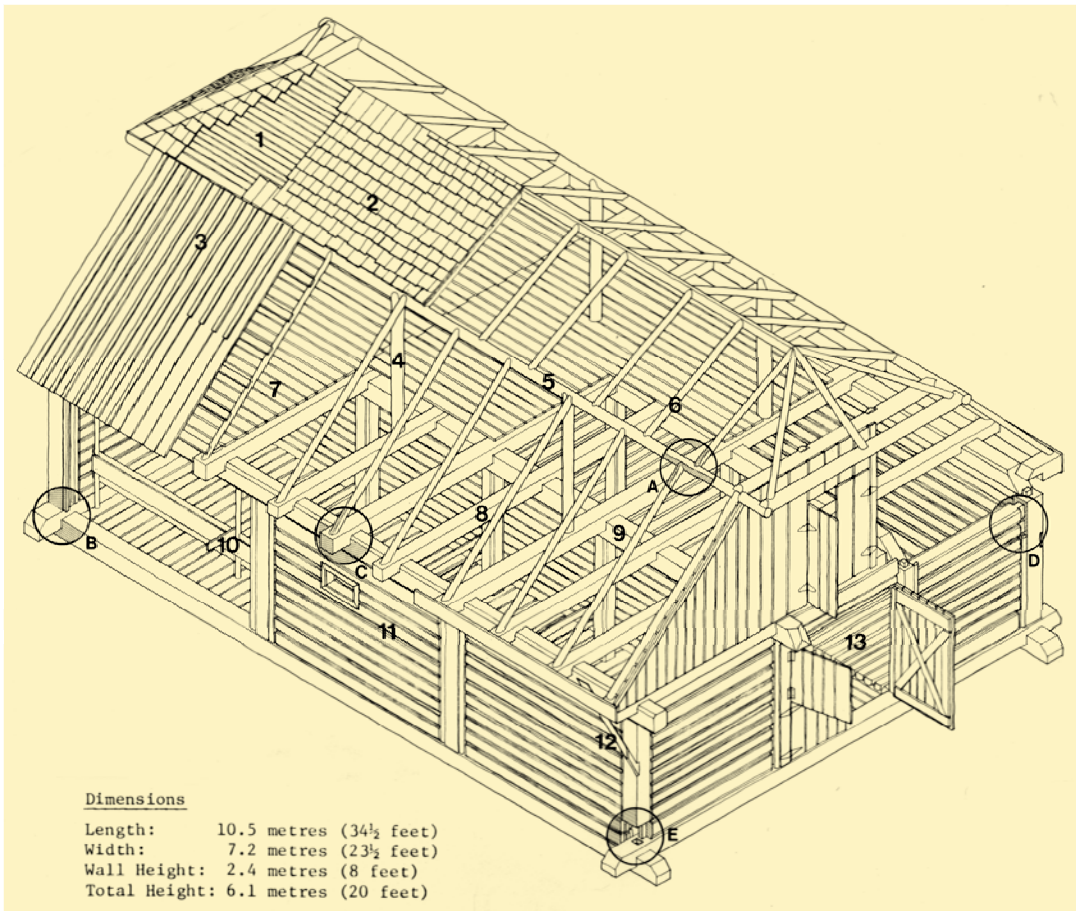


Figure 28
 Rostkowski barn: construction details.

Building Materials

- 1) Roof sheathing: 25 mm (1") unplaned lumber; 100-200 mm (4-8") widths
- 2) Roofing "a": split wooden shingles
- 3) Roofing "b": board and batten; 25 mm (1") unplaned lumber
- 4) Posts: 100-125 mm (4-5") diameter peeled timbers
- 5) Purlins: 100-125 mm (4-5") diameter peeled timbers
- 6) Rafters: 75-100 mm (3-4") diameter unpeeled rails
- 7) Loft floor: 25 mm (1") unplaned lumber; 100-200 mm (4-8") widths
- 8) Joists: 150-175 mm (6-7") square hewn timbers
- 9) Girders: 200-225 mm (8-9") square hewn timbers
- 10) Stall partitioning: unplaned lumber
- 11) Walls: 150-175 mm (6-7") square hewn timbers
- 12) Diagonal bracing: 50 mm (2") widths; set into corner posts
- 13) Stable floor: 125 mm (5") square timbers; laid over earth

Connections

- A) Rafters saddle-notched to purlins; nailed
- B) Sill beam corners: lock-notch
- C) Joists lock-notched at girders and top plates
- D) Wall timbers fit into vertical channels formed by 50 mm (2") squared poles nailed to posts (tongue and groove joint)
- E) Posts form mortise and tenon peg-joints with sill and plate

Prior to the 1920s thatched roofs were still common and were much more carefully constructed than those on the initial buildings. The hipped roof, which was better suited for the thatching process than the gable roof, was quite common during this time and even appeared on Galician structures. Milled lumber was used sparingly during the early 1920s and was usually reserved for the doors and gable ends. The thatched roofed barns rarely had lofts: hay was stored in stacks outside the structure. By the late 1910s new styles and construction methods were being adopted and traditional elements began to disappear. Thatched roofs were replaced with wooden or tin covered ones. With a change in roofing material, the roof shape changed as well. A lower pitched gable shape became common (Figure 29), and the gambrel roof was appearing on many of the new barns being constructed.

This was an improvement over the gable shape as it had a greater storage capacity (Figure 30). The use of concrete foundations and wood siding on the exterior of walls to eliminate the constant maintenance that mud plaster walls required, also appeared during this period.

Despite the depression of the 1930s, frame lumber barns began appearing, although log construction was still occasionally used as late as the 1940s. In many cases these later log barns were constructed with timbers which were sawn square and joined at the corners with a simpler spiked lap (Figure 31).

During the 1930s and 1940s, a variety of building materials, as well as designs, were experimented with. Barn walls were being constructed from poured concrete, fieldstone and an unusual cordwood or stackwall method popular in the camp Morton area.



Figure 29
Kwizina barn, SE 9-24-2E, ca. 1925.



Figure 30
Chomokovski barn, NE 14-24-2E, 1934.



Figure 31
Gislason barn, SW 33-22-3E, ca. 1940.
This corner detail shows the simple
spiked lap joint.

During the post war period, few of the farm buildings constructed by Ukrainians in the Eastern Interlake displayed any traditional elements. They were all frame lumber structures of contemporary design similar to those being built in any other area of the province (Figure 32).



Figure 32
Farm barn, SE 33-21-3E.