

**J. Pearson Shaw Log Cabin**

**751 Highway 97B NE**

**Salmon Arm, B.C.**

**Circa 1889**

Previous location: Harbell Road (now 30 Street SW) at Minion Field (1889-1986)

**Description**

The J. Pearson Shaw Log Cabin is a one-and-a-half storey, hand-hewn log home. Commonly called the Salmon Valley Homestead, it is located at R.J. Haney Heritage Village & Museum in Salmon Arm. The home dates back to 1889 when J. Pearson Shaw settled in the area to file his letters patent on 80 acres of the SE quarter of Section 9, Township 20, Range 10 West of the 6<sup>th</sup> Meridian.<sup>1</sup>

The log cabin was moved from Minion Field on Harbell Road (10th Ave SW) to R.J. Haney Heritage Village & Museum in 1986, and reassembled in the parking lot southeast of Haney House. According to Rick Tanaka, several lower logs were replaced and a hand split shake roof installed. The log home was moved a second time to the pasture at the Village in 2014, placed on two concrete wall foundations and two rows of Sonatube footings in the middle of the structure and roofed with taper sawn cedar shingles.

**Values**

The log cabin has aesthetic and heritage significance.

The aesthetic significance of the J. Pearson Shaw Log Cabin lies in its vernacular architecture. The one-and-a-half storey dwelling was constructed from locally available materials to meet the requirements of a Western Land Grant. Its simple rectangular massing consists of hand-hewn logs with dovetail joints and a cedar roof. Its method of construction indicates a level of craftsmanship that is a testament to historic architectural techniques.

The historic significance of the cabin lies in the community leaders who have taken up residence in the home.

On November 6, 1890 Reverend Jas. Turner married James Pearson Shaw (23) and Ellen Elizabeth Willson (24) by special licence at the home of Thomas Shaw, the groom's father. The marriage is thought to be the first in the district. Two daughters were born to the couple while residing in Salmon Arm, Effie in 1892 and Nellie in 1893. Effie was the third known child of European descent to be born in the area, only preceded by the Harris twins born in 1891. Mrs. Shaw was tended to by her mother-in-law Mrs. Thomas (Maria Jane) Shaw (1892) and Mrs. Robert (Annie) Armstrong (1893) as no doctors were available.

In February 1894, Shaw moved his family to Shuswap, near Chase. Shaw went on to serve as Justice of the Peace, Secretary-Treasurer for the Shuswap school board, and was President of the Kamloops Agricultural Association (1903-1904). He represented the Kamloops Riding in the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia from 1909-1916 as a conservative.

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<sup>1</sup> Letters patent were applied for on March 31, 1890 and awarded April 7, 1894.

In 1894 a fire raged through the valley destroying homes, barns, crops and livestock. The J. Pearson Shaw cabin survived where neighbours' homes did not. The Shaw cabin became the manse for the first resident Methodist Minister. Rev. James Calvert, and his wife Mary Jane (Polly), took up residence for two years.<sup>2</sup> Polly had never lived in such a modest dwelling and set to work making it homey. They were joined by James' sister Susanna (Susie) for their first winter, who suffered from asthma and needed care.

Calvert was ordained at the first Methodist Conference held in B.C. (1887). He had served Bella Bella, Ladner, Nicola, Maple Bay, and Salt Spring Island, before being called to serve in Salmon Arm in 1894.

Having overseen the construction of the first Methodist Church in Salmon Arm, James Calvert was called to Grand Forks in 1897. He returned to name and officiate at the opening of the Mt. Ida Methodist Church in 1911. He also served as the Methodist conference leader (1909) and retained his connection to Salmon Arm through his parents and sibling who owned property at the base of Mt. Ida.

### **Character Defining Elements**

#### Current Site:

- Location in proximity to the Mt. Ida Methodist Church, the Peterson Barn, and the Turner Heritage Orchard
- Agricultural land, cleared pasture flanked by mature forest to the north

#### Former Site:

- Association with the Shaw and Palmer families
- Surviving the fire of 1894 where neighbouring homes, barns, crops and possessions did not
- Association with Harbell Road, the third road laid out in Salmon Arm
- Repurposed as Salmon Arm's first Methodist parsonage for Reverend James and Polly Calvert
- Association with Mt. Ida Methodist Church, which was officially opened by James Calvert in 1911. The church is a virtual twin to the Methodist Church at Hedgman's Corner, built under the leadership of Reverend Calvert during his time in residence. The Mt. Ida Methodist Church was also relocated to R.J. Haney Heritage Village & Museum
- Proximity to Minion Field, Salmon Arm's first air strip
- Proximity to the District of Salmon Arm operated dog pound

#### Building:

- Vernacular architecture typical of pre-20<sup>th</sup> century settler homes of the area
- Constructed from locally available timbers
- Utilitarian scale and massing
- Strong horizontal lines
- Simple gable roof
- Hand-hewn logs
- Well executed rustic detailing such as square dovetailed corner joints
- Unadorned wall surfaces

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<sup>2</sup> The Encyclopedia of Methodism at the Bob Stewart Archives, Vancouver School of Theology lists Calvert in Salmon Arm from 1894-1896. Page 122.

- Locally available cedar taper sawn shingles replacing original shake roof