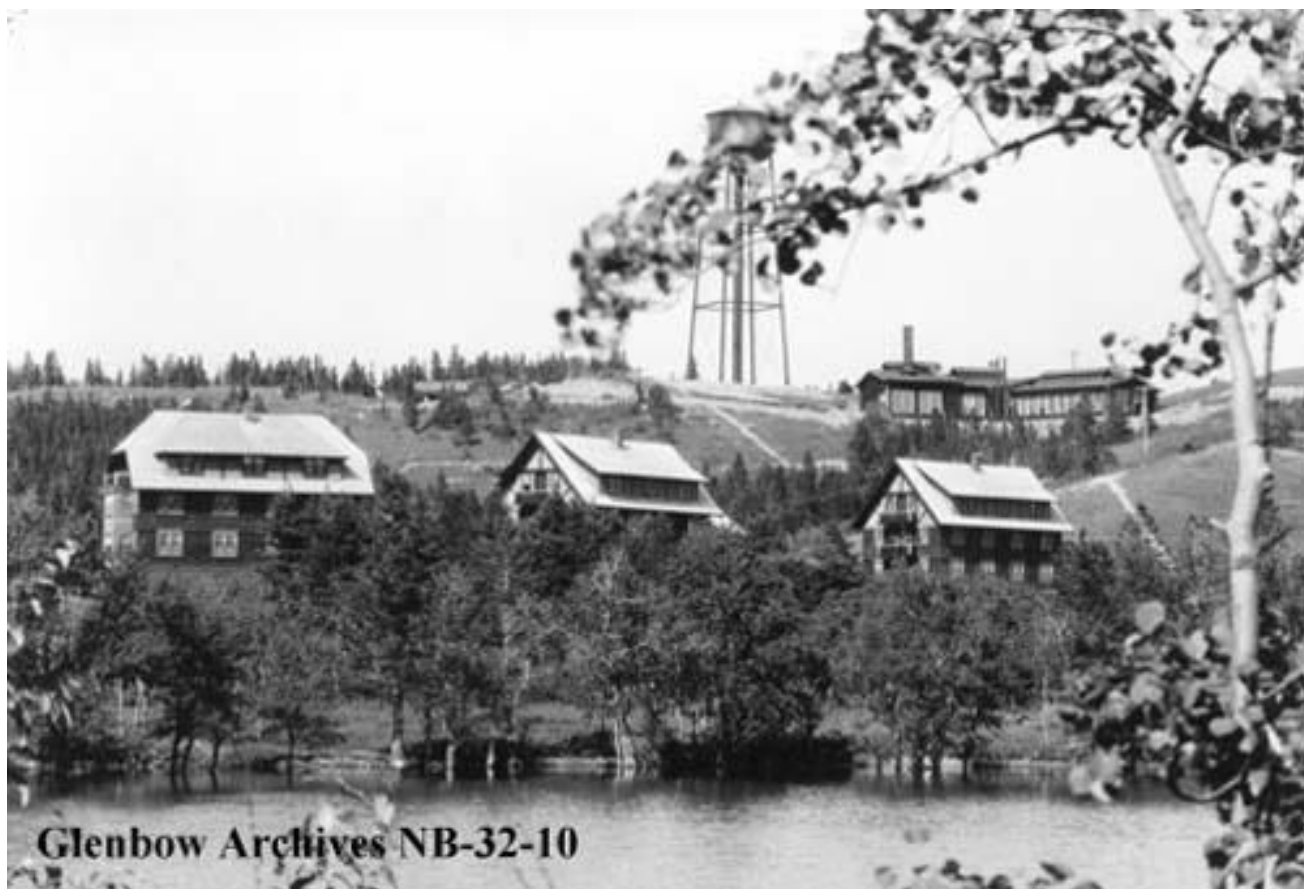


WATERTON HISTORICAL BUILDINGS

“Prince of Wales Staff Accommodation”
Between Emerald Bay Picnic Ground
and Turn off to Prince of Wales Hotel

#20 on the History Walking Tour



When the Great North Railway set about to build ‘helps buildings’ for their Prince of Wales Hotel, the Parks office was very firm they adhere to the Swiss Chalet architectural theme. As a result, the three attractive buildings serve as a link of the chalet-style to the Tudor-Rustic architectural theme being developed in the town site at the time.

BUILT: 1927-1928

BUILDER: Oland and Scott Construction

OF NOTE: Each of the buildings are named after a prominent Waterton mountain.

PARKS CANADA HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT:

Staff dormitories, or "helps' buildings," as they were frequently called, were standard components at summer resorts such as the Prince of Wales Hotel. They provided accommodation for the large numbers of seasonal staff needed to run the hotel during the summer months. Construction of the three dormitories, and recreation cottage on the Prince of Wales site likely began before the hotel was completed, and ended in the following year.

The designs of the three dormitories illustrate the influential role played by the National Parks' Architectural Division. Although the Division approved the Great Northern's Swiss chalet design for the hotel without modifications, it was more stringent in the case of the dormitories. For them the railway was requested to adhere more closely to the architectural theme that the Branch was attempting to develop within the townsite. This was reflected in the application of mock half-timbering to the upper floors of each of the dormitories. Branch architects also insisted that the stock plan submitted for all three dormitories be varied somewhat to create more visual interest within the complex. To accomplish this, the Architectural Division prepared modified elevations for the third dormitory building, in which hipped gables were substituted for the conventional gable treatment on the other two buildings. As a result of this collaborative effort, the designs of the dormitories meshed well with both the Swiss image of the hotel and the Tudor-Rustic theme being developed in the townsite. The smaller cottage, designed as a recreation facility for the hotel staff, complements the dormitory grouping and is an attractive example of cottage design in its own right.

The three dormitory buildings, along with the smaller contemporary cottage, are important visual features on the Prince of Wales Hotel site, forming an architectural link between the hotel and the townsite.

Character Defining Elements

The four buildings in this grouping display a cohesiveness in terms of design and finish that contributes to their collective visual impact. Important features include the rusticated shingle treatment on wall surfaces, half-timber trim on gables and dormers, and decorative eaves bracketing. The wood shingled roofs on the three dormitories also contribute to the overall effect; conversely, the recent installation of a metal roof on the one storey cottage is an intrusive precedent which should not be followed for other buildings on the POW site.

