

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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SITE NO. 4

NAME Jens and Kari Ringness farm

LOCATION FM 219, 8 miles southwest of Clifton, Bosque County, Texas, on the J. Ringness survey

OWNER Don Brandenburger
Route 2
Clifton, Texas 76634

PRESENT USE Agriculture

CATEGORY Buildings, site

STATUS Unoccupied

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS Family Land Heritage Program
1975
General Land Office
Austin, Texas

QUADRANGLE NAME Hurst Springs, Texas

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCE 14/623670/3510300

ACREAGE less than 1 acre

PHOTO REFERENCE NO. 11, 12, 13

DESCRIPTION

Located on a gently rising bluff overlooking the Neils Creek valley, the Jens and Kari Ringness farm stands near the east bank of a small creekbed. This rural complex is visible by car from its location south of FM 219, about two miles southwest of FM 182. The house, despite its poor condition, retains much of its integrity. It is a large, one-and-a-half-story building of limestone construction that was once covered

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with plaster. The front faces south and exhibits a five-bay facade that is symmetrically composed. Flat arches with stone voussoirs span each of the openings. A small gable, which originally was part of a porch, extends above the broad central bay. The end elevations are virtually identical to one another, and feature stone chimneys in the center of the gables, with flanking attic windows supported by wooden plates. The rear elevation is similar in its composition to that of the front, but it did not have the central gable. A low-pitched gable roof, in poor condition, caps the structure. Because of its present use as a barn, the interior is virtually gutted. Its plan has a central hallway that is flanked on each side by a pair of rooms.

The old blacksmith shop, which stands about 100 feet north of the house, remains in good condition with few alterations. With a square-shaped plan, this one-and-a-half-story building features limestone walls that are canted inward toward the top. It is now used for storage.

The old well and cistern located on the property contribute to the historic character of the farm. The modern buildings, which stand east of the old farm, are not included within the property to be nominated.

SIGNIFICANCE

Jens and Kari Ringness arrived in Bosque County, with the first wave of Norwegian settlers, in 1854. Their house, which is said to have been constructed five years later, represents an excellent example of the Norwegian Dobbelthus, and the blacksmith shop near it ranks among the finest masonry structures in the area. In 1867, the first Norwegian Lutheran service to be held in the county was celebrated in the Ringness house by the Reverend Styrk S. Reque.

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AREA TO BE NOMINATED

