

FEB 26 1987

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SITE HN-8

NAME L.W. Shevling Ranch

LOCATION Harding, Harding County (063),
South Dakota (046)

OWNER Ramona Hight
Box 24
Buffalo, South Dakota 57720

CLASSIFICATION Buildings, private, NA acquisition,
unoccupied, restricted access,
agriculture

DESCRIPTION Very good, unaltered, original site

The Louie W. Shevling Ranch is located east of Harding (population 2, 1985) on the rolling prairie of the West Short Pine Hills area of Harding County. The ranch consists of an interesting assortment of fourteen contributing structures.

With the exception of one barn the buildings are arranged in an inverted L pattern over the rolling terrain. Several log structures are located at the site. The original log structure is a small rectangular pen with a gable roof. The low pitched gable roof is supported by a ridgepole and two purlins. The structure which is almost square is believed to have a construction date around 1883. It is constructed of unhewn round logs in Lincoln log fashion. One window is in the west facade. A door is in the south (front) facade. A frame addition is built on the east facade. It has a low pitched gable roof.

Southwest of the log structure is the house. It is a low one-story structure with a gable roof that over hangs on the front elevation to create a wide front porch. The structure is built into the hillslope with a gable-roofed portion attached to the east facade. A shed-roofed entry is attached to the south facade. A root-cellar extends off the northern facade into the hillslope. Fenestration includes large rectangular two-over-two light windows. The front door has its original screen door with delicately turned spidles across the top of the screen door and through the center. The roofs of all sections are clad with

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wooden shingles and the central portion is covered with corrugated metal. The exterior of the house is stuccoed, with the exception of the east end section that is clapboard. Two red brick chimneys rise from the ridgelines.

South east of the house is a frame outbuilding (contributing) that is covered with brick patterned pressed tin. The gable roof is covered with metal.

Farther to the southeast is the outhouse (contributing). It is frame construction, sided in clapboard, with a gable roof clad in wood shingles. The door is in the south facade.

North of the house and original log structure are five outbuildings (contributing). A shed-roofed outbuilding covered with pressed tin is directly to the north of the original log structure.

West of the outbuilding is a log barn (contributing) that has fallen in. It is constructed of hand hewn logs with dovetail notched corners.

A frame chicken coop (contributing) is located west of the log barn. It has a shed roof and the clapboard is covered with tar paper. A row of windows and the door are in the front (south) facade and a window is in the center of both the east and west facades.

A larger chicken coop (contributing) is located west of the other coop. It is frame construction which is covered with pressed tin. The shed roof is covered with metal.

A flat-roofed frame garage (contributing) is located west of the larger chicken coop. It is sided with verticle milled lumber. The garage is the only structure on the site that is not on a direct north-south axis. It is approximately 45 degrees west of north.

The barns, the primary agricultural buildings at the site, are located northwest of the house complex across a pasture area and in a swale. The gable-roofed barn (contributing) is a one-and-one-half story structure with a corrugated metal roof. It is a central asile interior plan with three stalls on either

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side of the asile. The exterior of the barn is covered with verticle milled lumber. Connected to the west facade is another one-story log barn (contributing). A two part Dutch door is in the south (front) facade. It is notched in a rough diamond corner notch. Another one-story log barn (contributing) is attached to the east facade of the gable-roofed barn. It has two two part Dutch doors in the front (south) facade. The low pitched gable roof is covered with vertilce planks. The hand hewn logs are corner notched in a dovetail notch. A milled lumber one story gabled-roofed barn (contributing) is attached to the east facade of the log barn. The collapsing roof is clad in bent-seam metal.

Located southwest of the connected barns is another large frame barn (contributing). Part of the gable roof has fallen in, the remainder is covered with corrugated metal. The log frame is covered with milled lumber.

The barn complex is enclosed by a wooden fence. The house complex is enclosed in a barbed wire fence.

SIGNIFICANCE 1800-1899, 1900-present, architecture, settlement

DATES: ca. 1883, 1906

BUILDER: L.W. Shevling

The Louie W. Shevling Ranch is important to rural Harding County as a good example of early log construction, as a turn-of-the-century ranch plan, and as an original ranger station of the Sioux National Forest. The original log structure is one of the few remaining intact in the West Short Pines vicinity. Many artifacts remain in the structures. Hanging from the rafters in the original log structure is a large buffalo hide coat, the type worn by buffalo hunters in the late nineteenth century. Early settlers in the region usually built their structures of log because timber was plentiful in the area.

The log barns at the site are unusual. Only one other log barn was recorded during the survey. This rather surprising fact is probably the result of both the limitations of the material and human destruction. The barns exhibit a variety of notching

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techniques and considering their age and location are in relatively good repair.

Louie W. Shevling was the District Forest Ranger for the west Short Pine Hills district of the Sioux National Forest. He assumed the position in 1906. An early atlas from that year shows his ranch where, the Ranger Station was also located. Shevling was responsible for issuing grazing permits to local ranchers, supervising the harvesting of timber in the area, and the maintenance and creation of roads throughout the Forest. The Sioux National Forest was renamed the Custer National Forest in the late 1920s.

The house is the only one encountered in the survey with a log portion. Most log homestead houses were dismantled when milled lumber became available. In this instance the log house was incorporated into the house by the addition of two milled lumber sections on either end (the east and west facades).

The L.W. Shevling ranch is architecturally important because of the diversity of architectural styles exhibited in the structures. Further historical significance is gained from Shevling, who was an important and influential person in the development of the West Short Pine Hill region of western Harding County.

The site was originally located by Harley Shevling, Louie's older brother. Harley had his mother and Louie (L.W.) come to the West Short Pine Hills to settle. Louie built a ranch on the site and lived there for the rest of his life. According to local folklore, Harley has the dubious distinction of having killed the last buffalo in the county.

Although it has been abandoned for years, the L.W. Shevling Ranch is in a good state of repair.

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QUADRANGLE NAME Harding, SD

UTM 13/591900/5027740

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

ACREAGE Three and one half

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries of the nominated property consist of four imaginary intersecting lines. The north is fifteen feet from the north exterior wall of the barn. The east fifteen feet from the east exterior wall of the shed-roofed outbuilding. The south fifteen feet from the south exterior wall of the outhouse. The west fifteen feet from the west exterior wall of the barn. The site is located in the NW quarter of the NW quarter of Section 36, Township 17 North, Range 2 East in Harding County, South Dakota.

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