

~~FORM 19-900 (11-78)~~

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**



**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Ritger Wagonmaking & Blacksmith Shop

and/or common Ziegelbauer Shop and Residence

2. Location

street & number 4928 ^{WI} Highway 175 not for publication

city, town Hartford vicinity of congressional district

state Wisconsin code 55 county Washington code 131

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<u> </u> district	<u> </u> public	<u> </u> occupied	<u> </u> agriculture
<u>X</u> building(s)	<u>X</u> private	<u> </u> unoccupied	<u> </u> commercial
<u> </u> structure	<u> </u> both	<u>X</u> work in progress	<u> </u> educational
<u> </u> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<u> </u> entertainment
<u> </u> object	<u> </u> in process	<u> </u> yes: restricted	<u> </u> government
	<u>X</u> being considered	<u>X</u> yes: unrestricted	<u> </u> industrial
	<u>X</u> N/A	<u> </u> no	<u> </u> military
			<u> </u> museum
			<u> </u> park
			<u>X</u> private residence
			<u> </u> religious
			<u> </u> scientific
			<u> </u> transportation
			<u> </u> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Floyd E. and Judith A. Lewnau

street & number 439 Branch Street

city, town Hartford vicinity of state Wisconsin 53027

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Washington County Courthouse

street & number 320 South Fifth Avenue

city, town West Bend state Wisconsin 53095

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes X no

date 1977 federal X state county local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located in the unincorporated crossroads village of St. Lawrence, surrounded by the agricultural lands of rural Washington County, the Ritger Wagonmaking and Blacksmith Shop is a gable roof, fieldstone industrial structure composed of a two story wagon shop and an attached one story blacksmith shop. Although simple in plan and profile (reflecting the utilitarian program of the interior) the structure is enlivened by colorful and skillfully crafted walls of split fieldstones and heavy mortar joints.

Measuring 35" in thickness, the walls are constructed of split boulders, fairly uniform in size, interspersed with smaller stones and set with heavily mortared joints. Unusually large boulders have been used for quoins on the corners of the wagon shop, and the east and west facades have been punctuated with symmetrically disposed, segmentally arched openings, capped with yellow brick arches. The first floor windows, set in wooden frames, feature six-over-six sash while the upper story eyebrow windows are divided horizontally into three panes. On the south facade, a double door opening on the second story (originally for the exit of completed wagons) has been partially closed, but the heavy wooden lintel supporting the original opening is clearly visible. Above that, a datestone, engraved "1867," denotes the year of construction. Beneath the gable roof, a broad frieze outlines the cornice. Several original openings on the south and east facades have been closed with stone.

The attached one-story blacksmith shop is flush with the wagon shop and built of similar construction. Less ornamented, (lacking quoins or brick arches), the shop features four regularly spaced openings including six-over-six sash windows, a door, and an entry for horses.

The total measurements of the combined shops are 87.5' x 24.5'. Both shops have had the original roofing material replaced and the chimneys reconstructed. A frame addition in the rear, added sometime in the late 19th century, was torn down by the new owners in an attempt to restore the exterior to its original appearance.

Inside, the shops are divided by a 27" thick fieldstone wall which houses a chimney. The floors of the wagon shop are supported by heavy hand-hewn timber beams, and the fieldstone walls are visible through the plaster. The wagon shop has a simple one-room plan on both floors and a wooden stairway connects the two levels. On the upper story, an incline leads to the double door entry (through which completed wagons originally rolled). Splashes of paint used in the shop, and an ornately scrolled "R", remain on the shop walls. Window sills in both shops measure 22" in thickness. A fieldstone cellar lies beneath the wagon shop and an attic, used for storage, is above the blacksmith shop. The current owners, who purchased the property in 1980, have repaired the roof, and are currently in the process of restoring the structure for use as a residence and craft shop. A barn in the rear of the property is not included in the nomination.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> invention				

Specific dates 1867¹ -- 1915 **Builder/Architect** not known

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Built in 1867,¹ and in continuous operation throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Ritger Wagonmaking and Blacksmith Shop is a historically significant structure associated with the industrial development of the village of St. Lawrence and its agricultural hinterland and an outstanding example of fieldstone construction in Washington County. Providing Washington County farmers with the critical facilities of both wagonmaker and blacksmith for over half a century (until it was converted to a carpenter's shop and residence in 1915), the shop ranked among the first, largest, and longest operating enterprises in the area and helped shape St. Lawrence as a vital crossroads community. Today, it is the best preserved remnant of the village's industrial heritage and a rare example of a fieldstone industrial building.

Industry

When Jacob Ritger, the son of a Bavarian farmer living in Washington County, built a wagon shop in the community of St. Lawrence, the village was a small collection of structures with no businesses of consequence (according to the 1860 census).² But the land upon which Jacob built his shop (purchased from his father-in-law in 1865)³ was perfectly situated for a wagonmaker. Surrounded by farmers in the towns of Addison and Hartford, and located equidistant from the villages of Hartford, Slinger, and Addison, the hilltop community soon grew to service that agricultural region. By the 1870 census, several businesses had opened in the village, and Jacob Ritger's wagon shop was among the largest.⁴ 1870 census figures indicate that Ritger was the only wagonmaker in the village, with substantial investments in the shop and enough business to hire an extra man (who lived in the Ritger household).⁵ Throughout the 1870s, Ritger remained in business, making and repairing an assortment of wagons, sleighs, and buggies.

During its first years in business, the Ritger shop was advertised in state-wide business directories as the only such operation in St. Lawrence.⁶ Together with the attached blacksmith facility (possibly operated by Jacob's brother John)⁷ the shop became a significant element in the commercial development of the village. In 1875, Ritger was joined in business by blacksmith Louis Hermann⁸ and both operations proved successful. 1880 census figures indicate that Ritger's wagonmaking facility was the largest in the town of Addison, outstripping all competition in value of product, while the blacksmithing business of Herman was unrivaled by other town smiths.⁹

Today, traces of the shop's first artisans are visible in the upstairs wagon assembly room. An incline in the floor leads to the double doors (now partially closed) where completed wagons rolled out of the shop. Paint strokes on the fieldstone walls (recently uncovered when plaster was removed) show evidence of testing and mixing the paints which would brightly identify a Ritger wagon. Finally, an ornately scrolled "R", painted on a stone wall of the shop, provides an example of the lettering used

9. Major Bibliographical References

Federal Manuscript Census, Population and Manufacturing Schedules, Washington County, Town of Addison, 1860, 1870, 1880.

Property Abstract, in possession of Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Lewnau.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1.

Quadrangle name Hartford, East, Wis.

Quadrangle scale 1: 24,000

UMT References

A	<u>1 6</u>	<u>3 9 1 9 2 0</u>	<u>4 8 0 2 6 6 0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

D			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

E			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

F			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

G			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

H			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Leonard T. Garfield/Historian

organization State Historical Society of Wisconsin date 1/25/81

street & number 816 State Street telephone 608/262-2970

city or town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Richard Henry*

title Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin date 4/12/82

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<u><i>Melona Byer</i></u>	Entered in the National Register date <u>6/1/82</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

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Inventory—Nomination Form**



Ritger Wagonmaking & Blacksmith Shop, vicinity of Hartford
Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 1

on Ritger's products. In the attached blacksmith shop, iron hitching rings are still embedded in the exterior and interior walls of the shop. Such remnants are important evidence of the earliest industrial traditions of rural Wisconsin.

Even though Ritger remained in the shop through the early 1880s, ownership of the structure passed to Herman in 1875,¹⁰ and by the late 1880s he was in the shop alone. Advertised throughout the next decade in statewide business directories as the sole blacksmith in St. Lawrence¹¹ (although census data indicates he had smaller competitors) he remained in business at the location until 1900. Between that date and 1915, the shop changed ownership several times but remained a wagonmaking and blacksmith facility until purchased by Herman Ziegelbauer, a carpenter and cabinet maker who eventually converted the wagon shop to a residence. In 1962, Ziegelbauer died and the shop has remained vacant since that time. Recently purchased (1980) by Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Lewnau, the new owners have repaired the badly deteriorated roof, removed a frame addition to the rear of the wagon shop, and have partially restored the interior to its original shop-like appearance. Still in excellent exterior condition, with full integrity intact, the Ritger shop is a unique and valuable example of the early industrial history of rural Washington County.

Architecture

Architecturally significant as a representative of 19th century fieldstone construction in Washington County, the Ritger Wagonmaking and Blacksmith Shop is an excellent example of that type of construction applied to an industrial building. Built in the Bavarian community of St. Lawrence, with stones gathered from the boulder-strewn Kettle Moraine area, the shop is distinguished by its skillfully crafted walls of split boulders and thick mortar joints. Large fieldstones have been fashioned as quoins and yellow brick arches surmount the openings, adding a trace of formality to an otherwise utilitarian design. Richard W. E. Perrin, in Historic Wisconsin Buildings, praises the structure as "one of the most colorful of the split fieldstone houses in southeastern Wisconsin."¹²

Although many Washington County buildings reflect the tradition of fieldstone construction, the Ritger Shop is a rare industrial example. A reconnaissance survey of Washington County structures, conducted by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin in 1977, identified only one other industrial fieldstone building, (a cheese factory with partial fieldstone construction). Even when compared to fieldstone houses and churches, according to Perrin, in the Architecture of Wisconsin, it is an "outstanding" example of its type of construction.¹³

¹ Datestone in gable, verified by Washington County tax rolls and property abstract, in possession of Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Lewnau.

(footnotes continued)

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Ritger Wagonmaking & Blacksmith Shop, vicinity of Hartford, WI

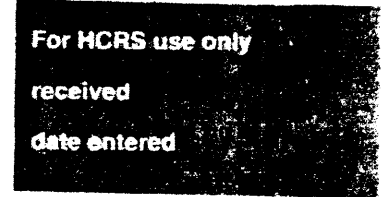
Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 2

- 2 1860 Federal Manuscript Census, Population Schedule and Manufacturing Schedule, Washington County, Town of Addison.
- 3 Property abstract.
- 4 1870 Federal Manuscript, Population Schedule, Washington County, Town of Addison, p. 13.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 See, for example, Wisconsin State Business Directory, 1872-73 (Chicago: Evening Journal Book Est., 1871), p. 298; Wisconsin Business Directory, 1873 (Milwaukee: Evening Wisconsin Book and Job Printing Co., 1873), p. 219.
- 7 John Ritger appeared in the 1870 Federal Manuscript Census as a blacksmith with a shop in St. Lawrence which may have been the one-story shop on Jacob's property.
- 8 Property abstract.
- 9 1880 Federal Manuscript Census, Manufacturing Schedule, Washington County, Town of Addison.
- 10 Property abstract.
- 11 See, for example, Wisconsin State Gazateer and Business Directory for 1876-1877 (Milwaukee: The Sentinel Company, 1876), p. 390; Wisconsin State Gazateer and Business Directory for 1888-89 (Chicago: R. L. Polk and Co., 1888), p. 1002; or Wisconsin State Gazateer and Business Directory for 1891-92 (Chicago: R. L. Polk, 1891), p. 919.
- 12 Richard W. E. Perrin, Historic Wisconsin Buildings: A Survey in Pioneer Architecture, 1835-1870 2nd ed. rev. (Milwaukee: Milwaukee Public Library, 1981), p. 92.
- 13 Richard W. E. Perrin, The Architecture of Wisconsin (Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1967), p. 48.

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 Inventory—Nomination Form**

Ritger Wagonmaking & Blacksmith Shop, vicinity of Hartford, WI

Continuation sheet

Item number 10

Page 1

Verbal boundary description and justification:

The nominated property is a rectangle located within the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 34, Town 11 North, Range 18 East, and is described as follows: Beginning at a point ten feet southwest of the southwestern corner of the building, proceed northwesterly along a line parallel to Highway 175 for 100 feet, then turn right 90° and proceed northwesterly 35 feet, then turn right 90° and proceed southeasterly 100 feet, then turn right 90° and proceed southwesterly 35 feet to the point of beginning.