

Walter Ring House
Wayne National Forest
North Side of Township Road No. 575 at Little Muskingum River
Rinard Mills Vicinity
Monroe County
Ohio

HABS No. OH-2421

HABS
OHIO
56-RINMI.V,
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Great Lakes Support Office
1709 Jackson Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68102

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

WALTER RING HOUSE

HABS No. OH-2421

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1-

Location:

North Side of Township Road 575 at Little Muskingum River
Rinard's Mill Vicinity
Monroe County, Ohio
USGS Stafford Quadrangle
17 489560 438400

Significance:

The Walter Ring House and mill site is an example of early industry in Monroe, County, Ohio, dating back to 1810. The mill site, located within close proximity of the residence, is a significant archaeological site and may provide information regarding the industrial life of early settlers within the county. The residence is significant for its architecture. The house, built of stone, is unique to an area dominated by wood and a few brick structures.

Description:

The Walter Ring House is located on the north side of Township Road 575 along the banks of the Little Muskingum River in the vicinity of Rinard's Mill in Monroe County, Ohio. The residence is located on a sloping site in a heavily wooded portion of the Wayne National Forest. The property consists of deciduous and coniferous trees surrounded by rolling hills. The house is the only remaining structure on the property; the property once housed a grist mill, sawmill, barn, and poultry house. A schoolhouse was located between the house and the mills and a 7' high dam was built to power the mills.

The Ring House is a 1-1/2-story L-shaped stone house with a raised foundation and a gable roof. The house is constructed of 2' thick hand-hewn sandstone quarried from the surrounding hills. The exterior of the house was originally painted to resemble brick. The symmetrically arranged 5-bay facade has a center door with a three-light transom flanked by two windows on either side. The 2 over 2 windows have stone sills with thin stone lintels. A decorative wooden porch with plain posts and decorative capitals and balustrade was originally located along the front elevation of the house, however, it has since been dismantled. An inscribed stone lintel over the front door reads "Walter Ring and Margaret Ring, 1846."

The metal seam roof has an 8" overhang with exposed rafters. A stone chimney is located at the center ridge along the exterior wall. Two small windows are located on the second floor under the gable ends. A one-story ell is located at the rear of the house. This portion of the structure is in deteriorated condition and has collapsed.

The interior of the house is divided into two rooms separated by a center hallway. The wooden floors throughout the house are sloping. A stone hearth is located along an exterior side wall. The staircase to the second floor is located in the rear corner of the house.

History:

The property is located within the Marietta Unit of the Wayne National Forest in Monroe County, Benton Township, Ohio. Monroe County was one of several Ohio counties divided from Washington County, the first organized county north of the Ohio River, which comprised approximately half the territory now included in the State of Ohio. Established on July 26, 1788, Washington County area lawmakers did not divide the area into townships until 1790. The first organized townships of Marietta, Belpre, and Waterford sat along the river with continued organization of the hinterland through 1861.

Benton township was originally known as Perry Township. John Cline (1799-1868) constructed the first grist mill in the township in 1810, about one-half mile northeast of the present Ring house site. Cline replaced this grist mill with a sawmill built on the site in 1817. In 1832, the 80-acre property was purchased from George and Mary Barkes by George and Celia Ring of Belmont County, Ohio. George Ring's nephew, Walter Ring (1793-1864), a native of New York who had previously lived in Belmont County, settled on the site in 1835 and built a small log cabin. The site was officially sold to Walter Ring by George Ring in 1847.

Walter began construction on the existing stone house in the early 1840s, using large limestone blocks floated down the Little Muskingum River. The house was completed by 1846, at which time Ring began construction on a new grist mill for the site, building its foundation from the same limestone used for the house. Completed in 1848, the new mill was 5 stories tall, and was a square structure measuring 28 feet on each side. Its millstones, which weighed about 1,600 pounds each, were obtained in Pennsylvania. With a heavy demand for lumber developing in the area, a sawmill was built next to the grist mill in 1850. The sawmill's dimensions were approximately 25' by 50'. A 7' high dam built of logs and boulders was used to power the two mills.

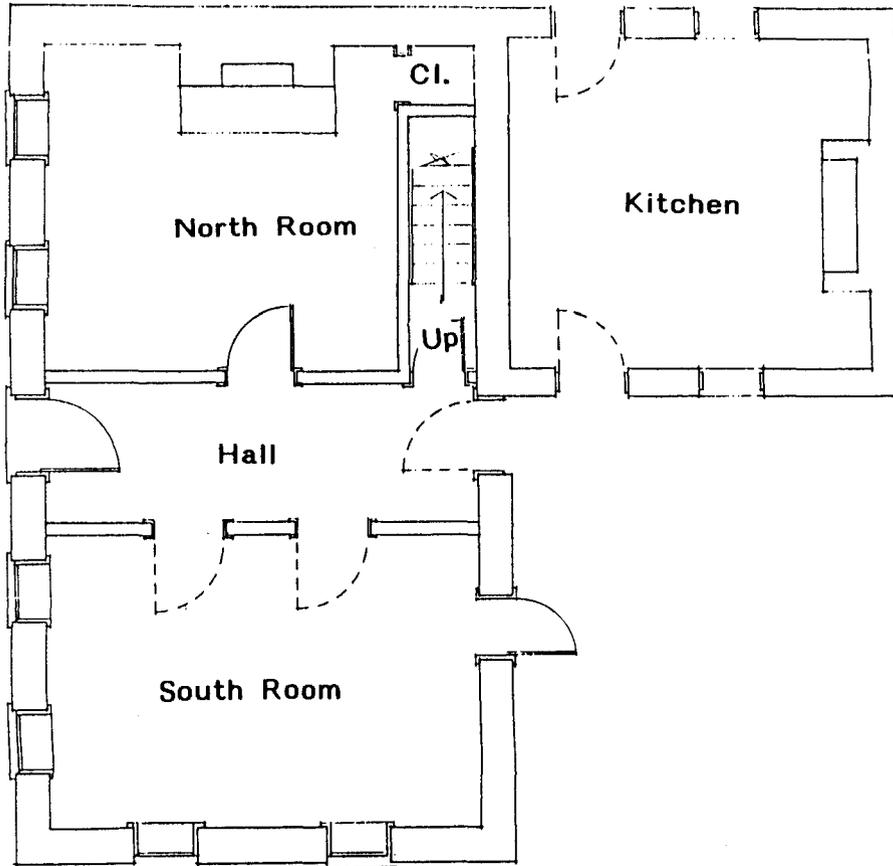
After the death of Walter Ring, his son George (1823-1899) continued to run the mill and also served as trustee of the township (renamed Benton Township) for two terms. The mill continued to be operated by George's son Lafayette Ring (1866-1907) and by Lafayette's son Alexander Ring. In 1882 a wooden covered bridge was built on the site, but was replaced by a steel truss bridge in 1955. Some accounts report that a schoolhouse was also built on the site. By 1900, a chicken coop and barn existed on the property, along with the stone house, mills, and covered bridge. The dam providing power for the mills was washed out in 1921 and the mill structures were demolished a few years later, while a new mill complex was built nearby at Rinard's Mill. The Ring family continued to occupy the house until about 1972. The house and its surrounding 6 acre site were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979.

Sources:

Hardlines: Design and Delineation. "Architectural Evaluation of the Walter Ring House." 1993.
Marzulli, Lawrence J. *The Development of Ohio's Counties and their Historic Courthouses*. County Commissioners Association of Ohio, Columbus, Ohio.
Ring, Dennis, and Margaret Ring. *Ring Family Tree*.
Taylor, David. "National Register Nomination, Walter Ring House and Mill Site." 1979.

Historian:

Hardlines: Design and Delineation
Columbus, Ohio
May, 1997



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

$1/8" = 1' - 0"$