

Edward Henkel House  
In NW. portion of "Henkel Square"  
Round Top  
Fayette County  
Texas

HABS No. TEX 3196

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. TEX 3196

EDWARD HENKEL HOUSE

Location: In the northwest portion of the twenty-five acre restoration area, "Henkel Square", Round Top. Fayette County, Texas.  
Latitude: 30 03' 53" N Longitude: 98 41' 38" W

Present Owner: The Real Estate Mortgage Corporation, Houston, Texas.

Present Occupant and Use: An historical house museum, a part of "Henkel Square" development of the Texas Pioneer Arts Foundation.

Statement of Significance: Constructed about 1851 the house is one of the earliest of Round Top that was built by German craftsmen. Its form and character reflect the traditions of the homeland of these settlers.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION:

A. Physical History:

1. General History: As a part of the Stephen F. Austin colony, James Winn acquired 4,428 acres in 1831; the present town-site was included in this tract. Named after early settlers, the town was known as Townsend; later it was renamed Round Top since the postmaster lived in a house with a round tower. Portions of nearby Nassau farm were purchased by the German organization, Adelsverein, and settlement by German immigrants began 1845 to 1847; these settlers began buying up the local farms and the town lots.
2. Ownership of the Property: This is a part of the James Winn league acquired in 1831. A portion of the Winn holdings were sold in 1835 to John York, and in 1841 two hundred and forty-one acres of this were sold to John Shults. About 1851 the present house was erected on a tract of fifty-four acres. On November 2, 1852 twenty-five acres, including the house, was sold to Edward Henkel for \$700.00. Edward Henkel lived in the house until his death in 1895. His heirs sold the house and remaining property to Fred Fricke in 1899; after other transfers of ownership, the properties were sold to Mrs. Charles L. Bybee and it became a part of the historical development of the Texas Pioneer Arts Foundation.

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3. Date of Erection: About 1851.
4. Builder: No definite information is available, but the character, form and craftsmanship indicates that the builder was an immigrant carpenter trained in the traditional construction methods of the German homeland.
5. Alterations and Additions: The house apparently stands as erected with few modifications. Some restoration work is being done by the Foundation, but care is being taken to preserve the original materials and character.

B. Sources of Information:

1. Manuscript:

"A Summary of the Abstract on Henkel Square, Round Top, Texas" by W. Lewis Barlow, IV, 1972. Texas Pioneer Arts Foundation.

2. Bibliography:

Biesele, Dr. R. L., History of the Early German Settlements in Texas, 1830-1860. Austin, Texas: Von Boeckmann-Jones Co., 1930.

Lotto, F., Fayette County: Her History and Her People. Schulenburg, Texas, Sticker Steam Press, 1902.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER:

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: One of the earliest houses built by German craftsmen in the area. Its steep roof pitch, exterior stairway, and absence of windows on the north side give it a character which is quite unlike that of the typical house built in other areas of the state. Its heavy timber framing recalls the traditional construction methods of the German homeland.
2. Condition of the Fabric: Good; there has been some restoration and repair work on the house, and it has generally preserved the original character.

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B. Technical Description of the Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: A rectangular enclosed space 20' x 28" with a 9' x 24' porch; two stories with the upper floor ceiling the unfinished roof rafters.
2. Foundations: Mortared stone piers support the heavy timber sills; underspace open.
3. Wall construction: Heavy corner posts (5" x 5") and heavy upper plates are mortised. Intermediate studs are 3" x 4". Exterior siding was flush shiplap which is still in place on the front wall on the porch. Other exterior walls now have lapped siding, 7" to the weather; this appears to have been added later.
4. Structural framing: The framing is of cedar. First floor sills and joists, and the roof rafters and tie beams are sawed, roughly-squared timbers. First floor ceiling joists are exposed, 3" x 8", 24" on center.
5. Porch: Across the front there is a 9' x 24' open porch. Posts are 6" x 6", beveled on corners.
6. Chimney: A 10" diameter metal flue extends from the first floor ceiling through the roof.
7. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and Doors: Entrance, a pair of three-panel doors; rear door, four-panel; upstairs entrance, a plank type door.
  - b. Windows: Double-hung, nine-over-six lights on the first floor. Second floor windows west side are double-hung, six-over-six lights; windows on south are six lights. There are no windows on the north and east walls.
8. Roof:
  - a. Shape: Main roof ridged, 10 in 12 pitch; a shed roof over the porch, 6 in 12 pitch.
  - b. Covering: Split cedar shingles.

C. Description of the Interiors:

1. First Floor Plan: A large front room with a smaller dining room to the rear. Kitchen is a separate log building behind the main house.

Second Floor: A long entry space and two square bedrooms; one-inch partitions extend to the tie-beam, open to rafters above.

2. Stairway: An unusual feature: an exterior wood stair, single run with top landing; it is sheltered by the overhanging roof.
3. Flooring: Floors are of yellow pine, 6" to 8" in width.
4. Wall and Ceiling Finish: First floor walls of horizontal, wide cedar boarding. The large front room has a wainscot, painted; it was papered above. The dining room walls were painted with traces of stenciled borders. Ceilings have exposed joists, painted; ceiling height, 10'-7". Upstairs outside walls of horizontal boarding, unpainted. Partitions are of single-thickness vertical boarding, cedar.
5. Openings: Only one first-floor interior door, a four-panel type. Door and window trim is moulded, four-inch width. Doors upstairs are plank type.
6. Lighting: Lighted by Kerosene lamps. The house is not wired for electricity.
7. Heating: Heated by wood-fired stoves. From the ceiling of the large front room there is a sheetmetal flue through the roof.

D. Site:

1. General setting and Orientation: Although the Brenham-La Grange road and other parts of the town have a NE-SW orientation, this house faces directly south.
2. Outbuildings: Northward from the house is the 20' x 26'

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one-story kitchen of log construction. Northeastward is the 18' x 20' smoke house that is built of heavy, mortised frame covered with vertical board-and-batten, all of cedar.

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August 1972