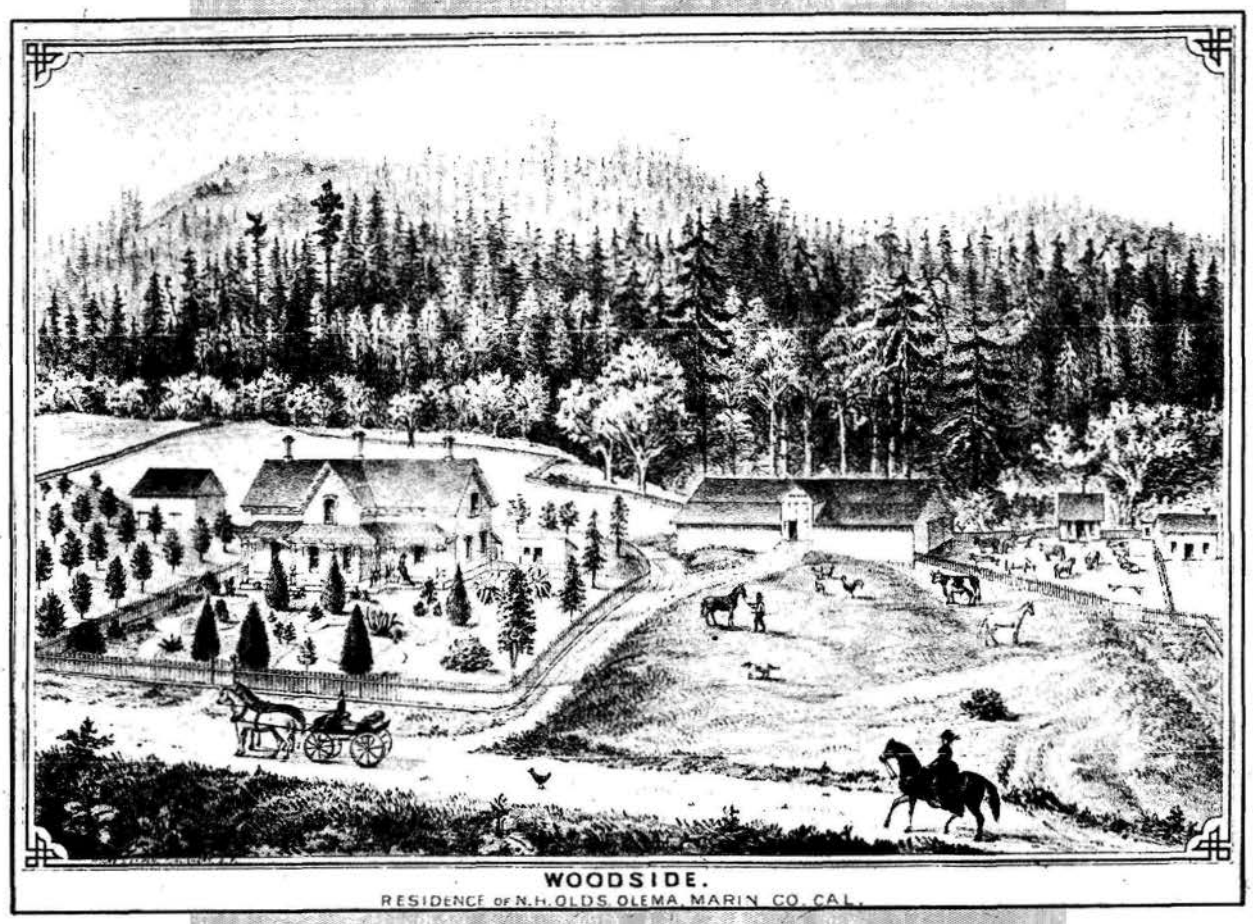
D-57
File:
Point
Reyes NS

A Good Life:
DAIRY FARMING
IN THE OLEMA VALLEY



WOODSIDE.
RESIDENCE OF N.H. OLDS. OLEMA. MARIN CO. CAL.

A History of the Dairy and Beef Ranches of the Olema Valley and Lagunitas Canyon

Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore, Marin County, California

by D. S. (Dewey) Livingston

ON MICROFILM

HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PLEASE RETURN TO:
TECHNICAL INFORMATION CENTER
DENVER SERVICE CENTER
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Color Scans 10/9/2002

A Good Life:
DAIRY FARMING
IN THE OLEMA VALLEY

A History of the Dairy and Beef Ranches of the Olema Valley and Lagunitas Canyon

Golden Gate National Recreation Area
and Point Reyes National Seashore,
Marin County, California

by D. S. (Dewey) Livingston

Historian
Golden Gate National Recreation Area
Point Reyes National Seashore

HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY

San Francisco:
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
1995

Cover: Nelson Olds Ranch ("Woodside"), 1869
courtesy of the Boyd Stewart family

Fronticepiece: Ole fence on the Don McIsaac Ranch, 1991
photograph by Dewey Livingston

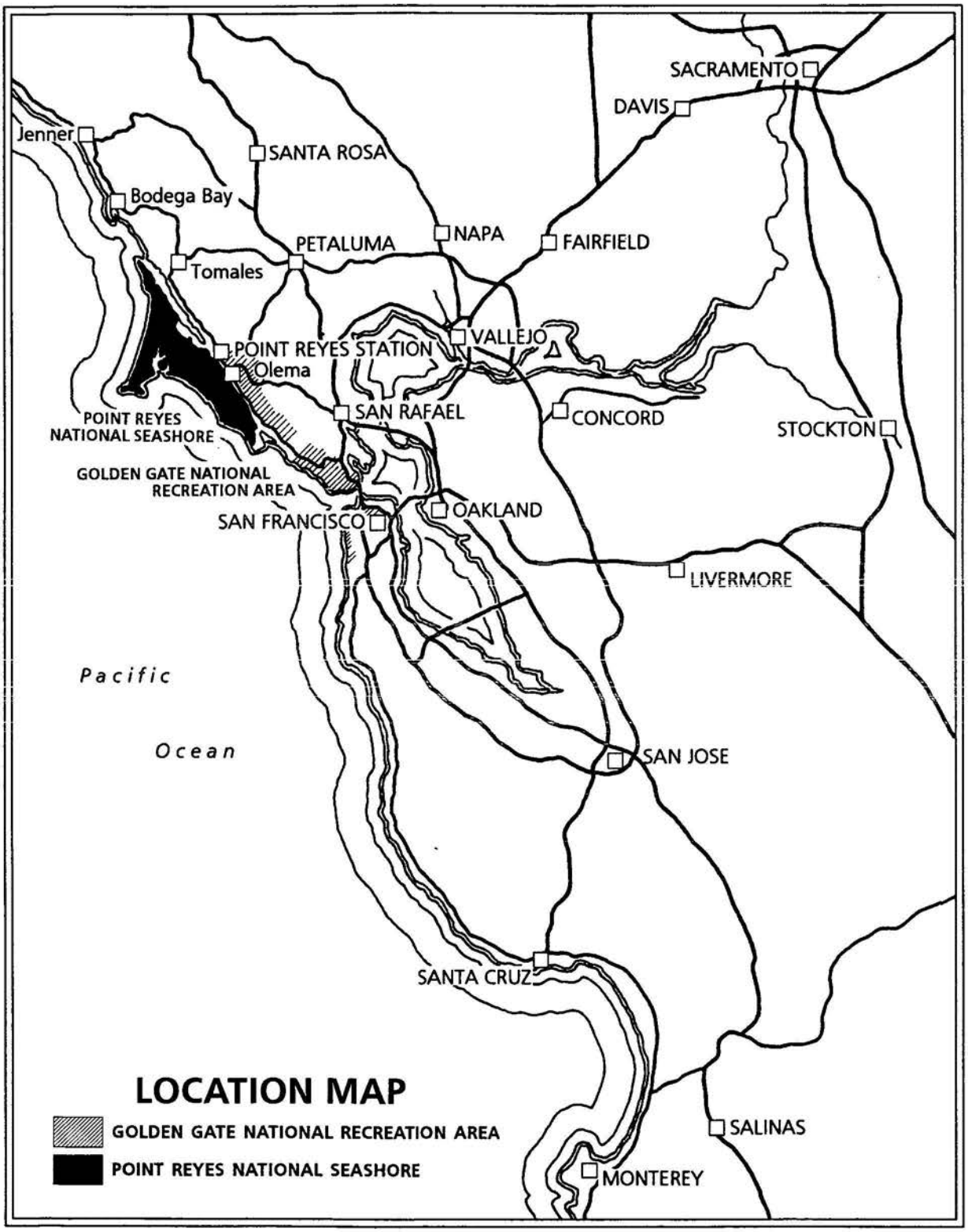
Produced as a cooperative effort between
Point Reyes National Seashore, Golden Gate National Recreation Area
and the Western Regional Office, National Park Service

Design, maps, contemporary photographs and production by Dewey Livingston

Copy prints by The Photo Lab, San Francisco

Table of Contents

I.	ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION		iii
II.	EARLY HISTORY OF THE OLEMA VALLEY AREA		1
III.	THE RANCHES		69
	A.	WILKINS RANCH	71
	B.	McCURDY RANCH	103
	C.	TEIXEIRA RANCH	111
	D.	HAGMAIER RANCH	129
	E.	RANDALL RANCH	143
	F.	GIACOMINI RANCH	167
	G.	FIVE BROOKS	183
	H.	LUPTON RANCH	193
	I.	STEWART RANCH	209
	J.	TRUTTMAN RANCH	239
	K.	DeSOUZA RANCH	277
	L.	ROGERS RANCH	285
	M.	BEAR VALLEY RANCH	293
	N.	McFADDEN RANCH	315
	O.	EDWIN GALLAGHER RANCH	323
	P.	GENAZZI RANCH	329
	Q.	ZANARDI RANCH	335
	R.	McISAAC RANCH	347
	S.	NEIL McISAAC RANCH	369
	T.	JEWELL RANCH	377
	U.	CHEDA RANCH	385
	V.	GALLAGHER & SHAFTER RANCHES	395
IV.	SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS		401
V.	BIBLIOGRAPHY		411


SACRAMENTO
DAVIS
Jenner
SANTA ROSA
Bodega Bay
NAPA
FAIRFIELD
PETALUMA
Tomales
VALLEJO
POINT REYES STATION
Olema
SAN RAFAEL
CONCORD
STOCKTON
POINT REYES
NATIONAL SEASHORE
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL
RECREATION AREA
OAKLAND
SAN FRANCISCO
LIVERMORE
Pacific
Ocean
SAN JOSE
SANTA CRUZ
LOCATION MAP
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE
SALINAS
MONTEREY

ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION

Golden Gate National Recreation Area, established by Public Law 92-589 on October 27, 1972, covers approximately 73,000 acres in San Francisco, San Mateo and Marin Counties. Point Reyes National Seashore, authorized on September 13, 1962 and established on October 20, 1972, covers approximately 70,000 acres of the Point Reyes Peninsula in Marin County. The entire portion of Golden Gate National Recreation Area north of Bolinas Lagoon, of about 10,000 acres, is managed by the Superintendent, Point Reyes National Seashore. The ranches in this portion, comprising the Olema Valley, the Tocaloma area or "Lagunitas Loop," and a portion of Pine Gulch near Bolinas are the subject of this study.

The ranches included in this Historic Resource Study are within the boundaries of Golden Gate National Recreation Area except for the Bear Valley, Teixeira and Hagmaier Ranches, which are within Point Reyes National Seashore; those three ranches, which have been written about in a recent study mentioned below, are included for geographic and historical continuity. This study focuses primarily on operating ranches in federal ownership, most of which continue to exist under agreements known as reservations of use and occupancy. Sites of former ranches (McCurdy, Jewell, etc.), are described but in less detail than the occupied sites.

A previous historic resource study, *A Civil History of Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore, California,* prepared in 1980 by NPS historian Anne Coxe Toogood, dealt with the ranching history in the area, but did not provide enough detail to adequately assist day-to-day management, planning and interpretation of the existing cultural resources. The purpose of this report is to fill those gaps with a detailed, ranch-by-ranch history and evaluation. Research methods included site inventories using criteria established by the NPS List of Classified Structures and the National Register of Historic Places, interviews with current and former ranch occupants, and extensive archival research. Ms. Toogood's study was invaluable in preparing the introductory chapters.

This study acts as a companion volume to the Historic Resource Study, *Ranching on the Point Reyes Peninsula: A History of the Dairy and Beef Ranches Within Point Reyes National Seashore, 1843-1992*, published in 1993 by

the National Park Service. Together, the two reports cover adjacent areas with compatible histories and resources and are practically identical in format. Three chapters in this volume are taken almost verbatim from the earlier document to provide historical continuity, and other chapters on general subjects have been adapted from the Point Reyes volume. The adjacent areas of Point Reyes Peninsula and the Olema Valley are historically compatible yet have their own distinctive patterns and resources.

Research has revealed that the entire area comprising the Olema Valley and Lagunitas Loop has had significant historic ranching activity, and therefore may be eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places as a locally or regionally significant rural historic district. Further study and evaluation of the Olema Valley's cultural landscape is recommended; the area is most appropriate for a multidisciplinary Cultural Landscape Study.

This Historic Resource Study will fulfill the requirements of the National Park Service Management Policies and NPS-28, Cultural Resources Management Guidelines, concerning proposals which affect cultural resources. The study will also assist the National Park Service in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and in the associated consultation process with the State Historic Preservation Office, accomplishing the inventory, identification and evaluation of historical resources within the parks' ranching zones to comply with Executive Order 11593, "Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment." It is intended as a complete narrative history of ranching in the Olema Valley and Lagunitas Loop, providing basic reference material for planners, resource managers, and interpreters to facilitate the proper care, interpretation and management of these cultural properties within Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Olema Valley is a gem. Its possesses a gentle beauty that speaks of a good life. It is a quiet valley of rolling pastures lined with oak trees, dramatic forests, and a handful of small farms with their barns, sheds and houses sometimes hidden in glens and only noticed by sharp eyes. While most of the valley and the surrounding area appears to be left over from the 19th century, it is in fact part of our 20th century national park system.

Despite its status as a National Recreation Area, virtually all of the Olema Valley retains its historic rural ranching character. The former dairy ranches, many with pioneer structures intact, continue to thrive under the stewardship of families who have been here for generations. Since creation of the park in 1972, most of the resident families remain, and to them I give my heartfelt thanks. Rarely does one find such old-fashioned hospitality and sincere interest in a subject; all were happy to open their homes and dust off their memories for me, which is most appreciated as this book couldn't have been written without them. My family was fortunate to live on on an active Olema Valley ranch for many years and to get a taste of the true life of the valley. For the positive influences on my children and the warm acceptance which we were given by his family, I dedicate this book to the memory of Armin Truttman, a well-loved and highly admired member of the Olema and California dairy ranching community.

People with Olema Valley roots have been found all over California; they generously and enthusiastically shared their knowledge with this stranger, usually with only a phone call as an introduction. Also, I thank the people loaned photographs to the project, especially Roy Farrington Jones who generously loaned the excellent pictures of the ranches taken by his father.

Libraries and archives, local and regional, played a large part in research for this report. The archivists and librarians in the many institutions that I visited in quest of Olema Valley facts are too many to mention, but I thank them all. Alice Lake of the Marin County Recorders Office, now retired, was always helpful at finding obscure information in that office. The archive that acted as the foundation of this research was the Jack Mason Museum Collection, from which many photographs and much information has been culled over the years. Local historians added to the project as well, including

Bill Allen, Rae Codoni of Modesto, Phil Frank, Fred Sandrock, Suzanne Baty, Jocelyn Moss and especially, the late Point Reyes historian Jack Mason, who got me going on all this years before joining the National Park Service.

At Point Reyes National Seashore, former Chief of Interpretation and now Superintendent Don Neubacher deserves credit for creating this project; at Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Park Historical Architect Ric Borjes gave his full support and helped see it through to its completion. GGNRA Park Historian Steve Haller read the final draft and offered much-needed comments on short notice, as did Park Curator Diane Nicholson and archivist Dennis Copeland. John Dell'Osso, Acting Chief of Interpretation at Point Reyes helped immensely in the last weeks of the project, as did former secretary Terry Edinger and her successor Leslie Price. I also thank the administrative staff and seasonal interpreters at both parks for their support and interest.

At the National Park Service's Western Regional Office, Regional Historian Gordon Chappell and Historian Jamie Donahoe were especially helpful, scouring two drafts and offering help as the project went along. Also, special thanks to Thomas D. Mulhern, Chief, Park Historic Preservation, whose efforts to have these documents published is greatly appreciated; and Regional Historical Architects Craig Kenkel, Hank Florence and Robbyn Jackson, all of whom have inspired the author. In Washington, D.C., Chief Historian Edwin C. Bearss offered comments and support, as did his staff.

This book, documenting the history of the Olema Valley ranches and the families who have come and gone over the last century and a half, took more than four years to complete; during that time many other major projects were accomplished, resulting in a sporadic work schedule and frustrating delays. All involved have shown a great deal of patience and understanding, and I can only hope that all will enjoy and be enlightened by the following work.

HISTORIC CONTEXT: Olema Valley Dairy and Beef Ranches 1834-1945

Establishment of the Spanish hospital mission at San Rafael in 1817 brought domestic grazing animals to west Marin County. Two decades later Mexican land grantees brought additional cattle and livestock to the Point Reyes area. A regionally significant dairy industry developed starting in 1857 and thrived for over 100 years; a number of the original dairy ranches continue to operate within the boundaries of Point Reyes National Seashore and, as beef cattle ranches, in Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

As a region, Point Reyes and the Olema Valley played an instrumental part in the development of the dairy industry in California. Point Reyes dairies were among the first large-scale and high-quality dairies in the state, and at one time the Shafters' butter district was considered to be the largest in the world. Before 1857, dairy products for consumption in San Francisco were shipped from the East Coast or produced locally by very small dairy operations of questionable quality.

Vital dairy production equipment and methods developed at Point Reyes-area dairies were adopted nationwide. Local dairymen stayed at the forefront of industry modernization, and still do.

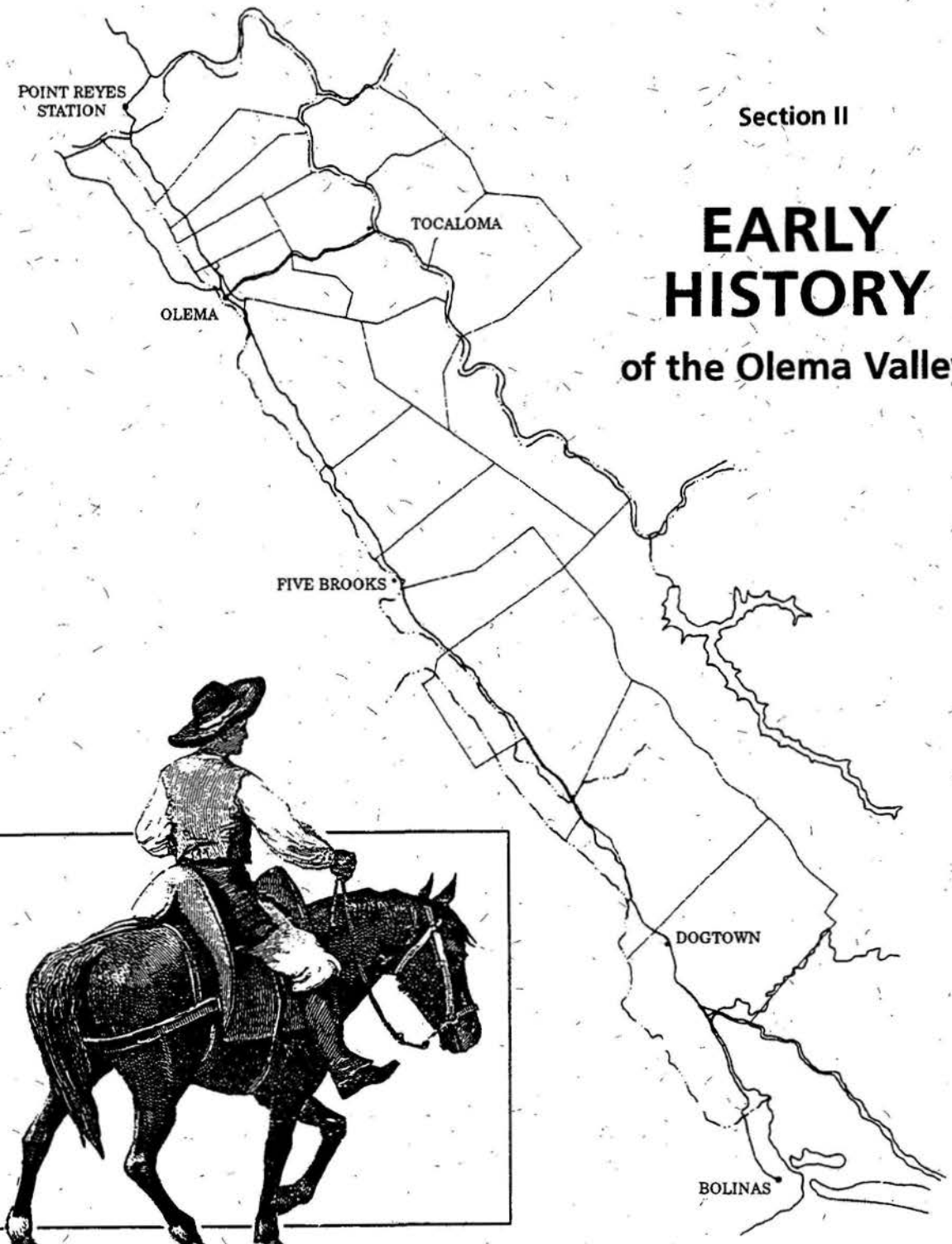
Marin County led the state's counties in dairy production (volume) into the 1890s. Point Reyes area dairies produced what was widely considered to be the highest quality butter in the state for the last half of the 19th century.

Point Reyes and Olema Valley dairies attracted immigrants from Ireland, Switzerland, the Azores, Scandinavia, and many other counties, bringing a rich ethnic mix to the area that remains to this day. Marin County was a primary destination for immigrants from Switzerland and the Azores in the 1860s through the early 1900s. Many immigrant families eventually purchased their own property and are the foundation of the population in Marin County today.

This study documents the significance of the system of dairy ranches at Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore for its contribution to the state's dairy industry and the commerce of San Francisco. With many of the ranch complexes remaining in use, all dating from 1857-1880, and with most of these retaining their individual historic integrity, the ranches as a whole or in part appear to be eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places with regional historic significance.

The first map of Marin County ranchos as a whole, by A. Van Dorn, 1860.

DAIRY FARMING IN THE OLEMA VALLEY

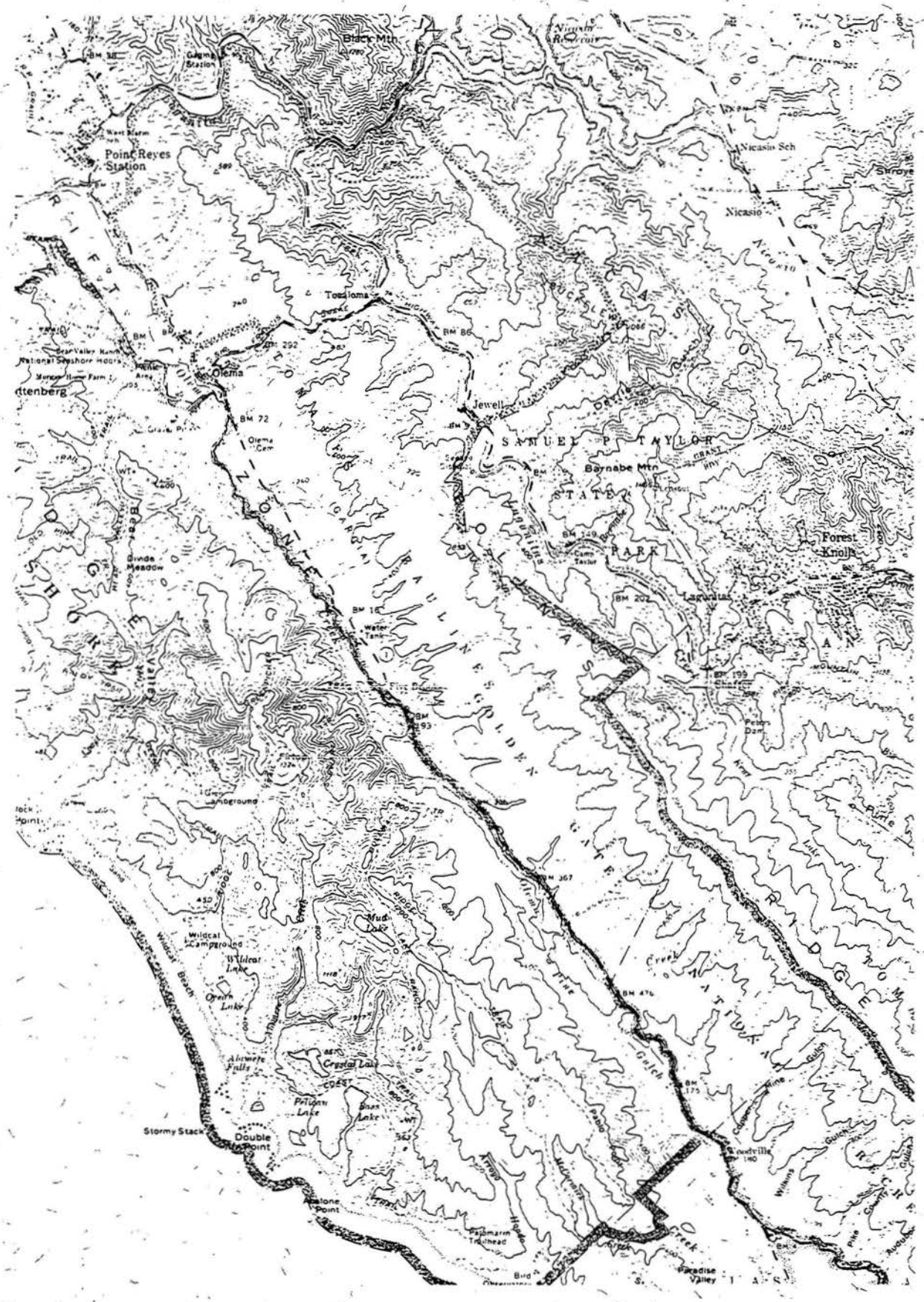


Section II

EARLY HISTORY

of the Olema Valley

HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE



Topographic map of the Olema Valley from Point Reyes Station to Bolinas Lagoon.

II. EARLY HISTORY OF THE OLEMA VALLEY AREA

A. Introduction

Marin County's Olema Valley is the ramrod-straight cleft that separates Bolinas Lagoon from Tomales Bay, and "mainland" Marin County from the Point Reyes Peninsula; it is one of the most visible geographic influences of the famous San Andreas fault in California. Usually considered as one valley, It is actually composed of two valley/watersheds: the eight-mile-long Olema Creek watershed draining northwesterly from the Randall and northern McCurdy Ranches towards Tomales Bay, and the six-mile-long Pine Gulch Creek watershed draining southeasterly from south of Five Brooks towards Bolinas Lagoon.

The Olema Valley is unique in that, due to the activities of the underlying San Andreas Fault over the past thousands of years, the valley is virtually a straight line for ten miles, continued by the similar line of the narrow 14-mile-long Tomales Bay to the north. In fact, Tomales Bay is merely a submerged section of the Olema Valley, as is Bolinas Lagoon to the south. For two miles near the center of the valley, roughly between Five Brooks and Thirteen Turns, Olema and Pine Gulch Creeks run side-by-side in opposite directions for two miles, a situation that has undergone much scrutiny by geologists during the last century.

The valley is a fertile one in many ways, with relatively small portions of rich bottom lands, good pasture land on the east slope and dense fir forests to the west. All of these resources, including the plentiful water resources of the west side, have been exploited over the last century and a half by dairymen, farmers and loggers. The cultural characteristic of the valley appears timeless, with century-old ranches still in operation and little more than the pavement on the narrow, winding state highway to remind visitors that they are in the twentieth century.

The natural division made by Olema Creek in the northern two-thirds and Pine Gulch in the southernmost part of the valley set the tone for historic development in the Olema Valley. The creeks acted as boundaries dividing the lands of Rancho Punta de los Reyes, owned by a family of powerful lawyers named Shafter, and Rancho Tomales y Baulines, owned by the aging veteran Mexican soldier Rafael Garcia; at the far south adjacent to Dogtown is the

perpendicular line of the Gregorio Briones' Rancho las Baulines boundary.

The Shafter family constructed a vast system of tenant dairies that stayed under family control until 1939; Garcia and Briones sold off their property to hardworking and ambitious families from the east coast who developed farms and ranches to their own tastes and style, unhindered by landlords and the demands of standardization. Out of this grew the unique Olema Valley Dairy District, with a somewhat insulated and comfortable lifestyle, yet successful and respected by the rest of the county. Of the six Olema Valley ranches discussed in this report, two have been under the continuing ownership of their founding families, and the others have seen few changes in ownership after a brief interval of title turbulence in the early years.

The Lagunitas Loop ranches, so-called because they line Lagunitas Creek and the northern Olema Valley and can be visited by taking a "loop" road in the area, have their own unique histories. Three of these were part of Rancho Nicasio, the largest of the Marin County land grants; they were prominent Swiss-owned dairies, called in some reports the "Italian farms." It is hoped this report will shed light on these lesser-known ranches of the region, and bring into focus the rich history of the Olema and Bolinas area and the challenges of local historic preservation.

B. Coast Miwok Settlements in the Olema Valley Area

The Coast Miwok Indians are among at least four groups known as Miwok in California; the word means "people" in Sierra Miwok dialect. The tribe was reportedly composed of up to 15 independent tribes of up to 200 people; according to Miwok historian Beverly R. Ortiz, the name was "given by linguists to several groups speaking related languages." The Coast Miwok occupied an area comprising all of today's Marin County and much of southern Sonoma County, in which more than 600 village sites have been identified by archaeologists and ethnographers, most of which are located in drainages near a salt water bay, where most of the food was found. Many local names, including Olema and Bolinas, are believed to derive from Miwok dialect. *Olema-loke* is

the only verified Miwok name found on the Point Reyes Peninsula, possibly meaning "Coyote Pass."[1]

The Coast Miwok were hunters and gatherers, living in an environment teeming with game, birds, fish, shellfish, nuts, fruits and vegetables. The temperate weather allowed the inhabitants to occupy permanent villages such as *Olema-loke*.[2]

At least two European explorers had contact with the Coast Miwok in the 16th century: the Englishman Francis Drake spent five weeks on the Marin Coast, apparently at Drakes Bay, and had extensive contact with the Coast Miwok in 1579; Sebastian Rodriguez Cermeno, a Portuguese sailing for Spain, lost his ship in Drakes Bay in 1595 and, like Drake, recorded impressions of the native peoples he met. Both men claimed the land for their monarchs but never returned. The Coast Miwok presented themselves in a simple, direct way to these explorers and the Spanish pioneers who were the first whites to move onto and settle the Indian lands in California. The Indians' open and friendly acceptance of the early white men left them vulnerable to the ambitions of the Catholic missionaries and Spanish military frontiersmen who first occupied the lands around the Golden Gate beginning in 1776.[3]

Spanish Lieutenant Don Felipe de Goycoechea passed through the Olema Valley in 1793 and left the following narrative:

> This place is very well fitted for any kind of establishment. There are good lands for crops, a sufficient supply of water and a great abundance of wood--red pine, oak, madrone, laurel, willow and a grove of hazelnut trees . . . . Here there is a settlement which the natives abandoned for the adjoining forests when we passed by it. I pacified them by means of the interpreter and ordered them to assemble in their settlement. Although they did not all do so I divided among them two strings of

---

[1]Sylvia Barker Thalman, The Coast Miwok Indians of the Point Reyes Area (Point Reyes: Point Reyes National Seashore Association, 1993), pp. 6-7; Beverly R. Ortiz, "A Coast Miwok History," We Are Still Here: A Coast Miwok Exhibit (Bolinas: Bolinas Museum, 1993), p. 5.

[2]Thalman, The Coast Miwok, pp. 6-7.

[3]Marilyn Ziebarth, editor, "Special Issue The Francis Drake Controversy: His California Anchorage, June 17 July 23 1579." California Historical [Society] Quarterly 53, No. 3 (Fall 1974): 274-286, 287-288.

> beads and some of our food. By doing this we were able to count in the surroundings, in little groups, about one hundred and fifty souls, more or less.[4]

De Goycoechea recommended a site near the Indian village in Olema Valley "as the most appropriate [place] for founding a mission or establishment, as all around there is a sufficient number of natives." He also commented on the Tomales Bay area, noting that there was "a wonderment of various settlements along the Bay Shore." De Goycoechea's 1793 encounter occurred as Miwok men, women and children were being taken to the mission at San Francisco for conversion to Catholicism, a fact that likely accounts for the distrust he faced at Olema. At the time groups were hunting new mission sites, "recruiting heavily by means of private parties and expeditions from the Costanoans and Coastal Miwok." The establishment of Mission San Rafael Archangel in 1817 contributed to the disappearance of Miwok culture in the Olema Valley and elsewhere, at least temporarily. After the missions were secularized in 1833 and mission lands dispersed to grantees, many Coast Miwok returned to find a changed land, where oak trees had been cut for fire wood, elk and game had been killed in great numbers and cattle grazed in the hills.[5]

[4]As translated by Henry R. Wagner in his article, "The Last Spanish Exploration of the Northwest Coast and the Attempt to Colonize Bodega Bay," California Historical Society Quarterly 10, No. 4, (December 1931): 342.

[5]Wagner, "Last Spanish Expedition," p. 345; Lawrence Kinnaird, "History of the Golden Gate and Its Headlands" (typescript written for the National Park Service), 1962, 1967, pp. 35 and 128; Sherburne F. Cook, "The Conflict Between the California Indian and White Civilization" I-IV, Ibero-Americana 21-24 (Berkeley: 1943), republished as a book in 1976 by U. C. Press, I:75.

C. Lands Grants and Early Settlement in the Olema Valley[6]

Prior to the 1833 secularization act passed by the Mexican Congress, most of the land in the San Francisco Bay area belonged to the missions, the Presidio of San Francisco, the Spanish crown and, after 1822, the Mexican government. Mission San Rafael claimed all of today's Marin County, and the Missions San Francisco de Asis (Dolores), San Jose, and Santa Clara held rights to huge tracts along the south and western shores of the bay. During the 1820s only seven veterans of the Spanish and Mexican frontier troops of the San Francisco district received grants of land, all of which were in the east and south bay areas. Many other soldiers also expressed a desire to settle on some land of their own, and many filed for land grants after the decree to secularize the missions went into effect in 1834.[7]

The Mexican government in 1824 and 1828 tried to encourage settlement on the California frontier by passing a colonization law and then formulating regulations for obtaining title to the lands requested. The 1828 regulations gave the Governor of California exclusive right to make land grants of up to eleven leagues, or nearly 50,000 acres. Most of the ranchos granted, however, contained five leagues or less.

The process of acquiring a land grant proved to be the critical factor in determining the legitimacy of Mexican ranchos after the American government took possession of California. A person requesting a land grant had to follow certain procedures laid down in the regulations of 1828. First, he submitted a

---

[6]Sections C through F are adapted and expanded from original text by Anne Coxe Toogood in the Historic Resource Study, A Civil History of Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore, California (Denver: Historic Preservation Branch, Pacific Northwest/Western Team, Denver Service Center, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, 1980), with alterations reflected in a draft National Register nomination compiled by James P. Delgado (Historian, WR/GOGA), Roger Kelly (Regional Archeologist, WR), Anna C. Toogood (Historian, DSC), Gordon Chappell (Regional Historian, WR), Robert Cox (Regional Historical Architect, WR) and Thomas D. Mulhern (Chief, Cultural Resources Management, WR), May 1, 1979. Many portions have been added and some corrections to the original text made by the author.

[7]W. W. Robinson, Land in California . . . (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1948), pp. 45-57; Hubert Howe Bancroft, History of California, 7 Volumes (San Francisco: The History Company, 1884-1890), Vol. 2, pp. 592-593; Beechey, on his visit to the San Francisco Presidio in 1826, learned that the soldiers felt aggrieved that they did not receive a portion of land after ten years service on the frontier. John W. Dwinelle, The Colonial History of San Francisco (San Francisco: Towne and Bacon, Book and Job Printers, 1863), p. 43.

petition to the Governor, providing him with information on his family and on the land in question, as well as a map, or *diseño*, of the land. The Governor then sent the petition to a local officer to confirm the accuracy of the information. If the officer reported favorably, the Governor granted the land, but the title was not considered valid until sanctioned by the Territorial *Deputation*, or local assembly.

Four conditions governed the continued ownership of a rancho: (1) that within one year the grantee settle the land and erect and occupy a permanent dwelling; (2) that the grantee might fence or otherwise enclose his land but not obstruct public roads, crossings, or easements; (3) that the rights of the Indians be reserved and protected; (4) that the grantee obtain from the local magistrate the act of juridical possession to define the measure of the boundaries of the rancho.

The fourth condition, when carried out, assured the grantee physical identification of his rancho boundaries. The event turned into something of a community affair, as neighbors of the new landowner were summoned to witness and concur with the marking of the property lines. The local magistrate appointed two *cordeleros* who carried the pole ends of a cord which usually measured fifty *varas* (approximately 137 feet, 6 inches). With everyone following on horseback, one *cordelero*, under the direction of the magistrate, rode forward from a pile of rocks which marked the beginning of the property line, until he reached the end of the cord. He then put his pole down on the ground and the second cordelero rode ahead, and thus they continued around the rancho boundaries, which another official kept count of the number of *cordeles* made in the process. Any objections raised by the neighbors were settled by the magistrar right on the spot, so that upon completion, the juridical possession finalized the demarcation of the rancho lands.[8]

Despite the colonization laws to encourage settlement in California, only fifty ranchos had been granted to private individuals by 1830; and most of them were to the south of San Francisco Bay. Pressure, however, was mounting to

---

[8]Robert H. Becker, Designs on the Land, Diseños of California Ranchos and Their Makers. (San Francisco: The Book Club of California, 1969), Introduction, n.p.; U. S. Congress, Senate, Report of the Secretary of the Interior Communicating a Copy of the Report of William Carey Jones, special agent to examine the subject of land titles in California (S. Doc. 18, 31st Congress 1st Session, 1851, Serial 859). The Jones Report is also extensively quoted in Munro-Fraser, History of Marin County, pp. 151-194. Robert G. Cowan, Ranchos of California, A List of Spanish Concessions 1775-1822 and Mexican Grants 1822-1846 (Fresno: Academy Library Guild, 1956) p. 5.

secularize the missions, and on November 20, 1833, the Mexican Congress issued a Decree of Secularization. On April 16, 1834, the Congress passed an act putting secularization into effect. Between 1834 and 1846 the mission possessions rapidly slipped into private ownership, as the Mexican Governors granted more than 500 ranchos, most of which were carved out of mission lands and stocked with mission horses, cattle and sheep.[9]

Foreign visitors to California in the late 1830s and 1840s frequently characterized the California *rancheros* as indolent, pleasure-loving people. To the American, British, and French, these cattlemen neither farmed nor manufactured products for their own use because they simply preferred to let their cattle bring them an income. In 1844, Sir George Simpson remarked on the great decrease in sheep in California and suspected that the loss was due to the *rancheros'* laziness and to their slaughter of sheep to increase their stock of horned cattle.

The rancho herds served a dual purpose by providing the *rancheros* with hides and tallow to trade with foreign merchant ships and beef, the main staple of their diet. Some *rancheros* raised small patches of corn, beans, and grain for bread or tortillas, and some home industries on the ranchos provided them with harness, leather, soap, oil, wool, and other items of daily use. For the most part, however, the *rancheros* depended on trade with foreign ships to supply their manufactured products and to satisfy their taste for elegant accessories.

Foreign criticism of the Californio *rancheros* usually went hand-in-hand with an admiration for the Californios' open and abundant hospitality, their joyful celebrations of dancing, singing, and feasting, and their exceptional equestrian skills.

The ranchos made up small pockets of population in a countryside that had been sparsely settled to allow for the vast grazing ranges needed to feed the large cattle herds. Even though they were physically isolated, the *rancheros* gathered frequently to observe religious and political holidays, to enjoy bull and bear fights, rodeos, births, and weddings. The *rancheros'*

---

[9]Senate, Jones Report, 31st Cong., 1st Sess., 1951, p. 3; California, Surveyor General, Special Report of the Surveyor General of the State of California ([Sacramento]: Eugene Casserly, State Printer, 1852), pp. 28-29; Paul W. Gates, ed., California Ranchos and Farms 1846-1862 (Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1967), p. 3; Bancroft, History 2: 663. Bancroft also notes here that only one or two of the fifty ranchos granted followed the 1828 regulations. John Walton Caughey, History of the Pacific Coast (Los Angeles: Privately published by the author, 1933), pp. 165-66; Dwinelle, Colonial History, p. 63; Robinson, Land in California, pp. 30-31, 61.

parochialism, their love of leisure, and their dependence on foreign imports, however, contributed to the eventual American takeover which, in turn, marked the rapid decline of the Mexican rancho lifestyle in California.[10]

D. Marin County Ranchos

In 1834 the first Mexican rancho granted in today's Marin County went to John Reed, an Irishman by birth and a naturalized Mexican citizen. Twenty other applicants received the remaining land in Marin County before the American takeover in June, 1846, seven of whose ranchos lay within the existing boundaries of Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore, four of which are pertinent to this report.[11]

1. Rancho las Baulines[12]

Possibly in response to the Decree of 1833, which set the secularization of the missions into motion, Rafael Garcia moved his family to Bolinas Bay, and constructed the first known non-aboriginal residence on the western shore since Mission San Rafael had laid claim to the lands. Garcia had completed his required ten years service as a frontier soldier in the Mexican army during which time he apparently commanded a small force of soldiers, commonly called

---

[10]Sir George Simpson, Narrative of a Journey Round the World, During the Years 1841 and 1842, 2 Volumes (London: Henry Colburn, 1847), Vol. 1: 294; Charles L. Camp, ed., "James Clyman, His Diaries and Reminiscences," California Historical Society Quarterly 5, No. 3 (September 1926), pp. 257-258; J. P. Munro-Fraser, History of Marin County, California (San Francisco: Alley, Bowen & Co., 1880), pp. 47-49; Dwinelle, Colonial History, p. 86; Caughey, Pacific Coast, pp. 155-156; Robinson, Land in California, p. 139; Lieutenant Wise, U.S.N., Los Gringos: or An Inside View of Mexico and California, with Wanderings in Peru, Chile, and Polynesia (New York: Baker and Scribner, 1849), p. 71; Cowan, Ranchos, pp. 5-9.

[11]Reed's Rancho Corte de Madera del Presidio covered one square league of land on the Tiburon Peninsula. Jack Mason, in collaboration with Helen Van Cleave Park, Early Marin, 2nd rev. ed. (Inverness: North Shore Books, 1976), p. 11; Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 189.

[12]The name Bolinas apparently originates from a Spanish (H. H. Bancroft was convinced it was Spanish for whale) or Indian word and has seen many spellings: Baulines, Baulinas, Baulenes, Ballenas. This report uses the spelling contained on the original land grant patent, Rancho las Baulines.

an *escolta,* who were assigned to protect Mission San Rafael. Garcia, a corporal, and his men reportedly proved themselves to be valuable members of the community by fighting off Indian attacks on the mission and by helping with the construction of mission buildings.[13]

In July of 1835, Garcia petitioned for a grant of two leagues in the "Cañada de Baulenes", and in March 1836, he received his grant. His *diseño* failed to depict the rancho with any accuracy and later contributed to a boundary conflict with neighboring *rancheros* Richard Berry and Antonio Osio. Garcia called his rancho Tomales y Baulenes, a name which probably described Olema Valley between Tomales Bay and Bolinas Bay.

In an effort evidently to accommodate his brother-in-law, Gregorio Briones, Garcia moved his rancho headquarters or *hacienda* to a site near today's town of Olema, while Briones' family took up residency near Bolinas Bay, presumably in Garcia's vacated *hacienda.* Gregorio Briones sent his eldest son, Pablo, aged fourteen, to Bolinas Bay in the fall of 1837, to take charge of the rancho and to erect any necessary buildings. The following year Ramona Briones and her other children joined Pablo, while Gregorio stayed behind to complete his service as *alcalde* (mayor) of San Mateo.

In 1843, Gregorio Briones filed a correction deed with the local government declaring that Garcia had transferred the land to him some seven years earlier (1836) and that he had been living there about that length of time. Not until February 11, 1846, however, did Briones officially receive title to two leagues of land (8,911 acres), which he called the *Rancho Las Baulines.*[14]

Gregorio Briones, like his brother-in-law Rafael Garcia, had completed a ten-year enlistment as a frontier soldier. Gregorio and his wife, Ramona Garcia de Briones, were born in California; Gregorio in Monterey, and Ramona in San Diego. They were married sometime around 1822. After retiring as a soldier in 1827, Gregorio continued his public service as *alcalde* of the *Contra Costa* in 1835, *regidor* of San Francisco in 1836, *alcalde* of San Mateo in 1838, and sheriff

---

[13]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 276; "A Chronological History of Marin County," 3 Volumes typescript, 1: n.p.

[14]Robert H. Becker, "Historical Survey of Point Reyes," Land Use Survey, Proposed Point Reyes National Seashore (San Francisco: Region Four Office, National Park Service, February, 1961), p. 42; Munro-Fraser, Marin County, pp. 112, 194, 418; Bancroft, History 3, pp. 712-713; Cowan, Ranchos, pp. 18 and 104; Bliss Brown, "Rancho Los Baulines," February 10, 1937, p. 1, in "Marin County, Mexican Land Grant," Works Progress Administration Project, Typescript, no date, Marin County Library, San Rafael.

of San Rafael in 1846, the year he received his land grant. Even though Gregorio and his family moved to Rancho Baulines in the late 1830's, he maintained an interest in the community growing at Yerba Buena, and by 1845 he had applied for and received six lots of property in the village.[15]

Within two years after he moved to Bolinas Bay, Briones took steps to legalize his claim to two square leagues. In 1841, neighboring grantee to the south Capt. William A. Richardson, accompanied by fellow grantees Timoteo Murphy, Domingo Sais and Rafael Garcia, made a rough measurement and demarcation of the ranch boundaries for Briones on the local magistrate's authority. The resulting map or *diseño* accompanied Briones' application for the land which his son, Pablo, personally carried to the Governor in Monterey and Los Angeles.

According to Richardson's later testimony, he ran the boundary lines:

> on the South East by Sausalito farm, on which I live on the North West by the place called "Cañada Serro" the land of Rafael Garcia, on the North East by the ridge on Mountain of Tamalpais, which runs South East and North West, and on the South West by the Pacific Ocean.[16]

Briones' rancho bordered Bolinas Lagoon and included the *mesa* lands of the Bolinas peninsula and the timber-rich gulches and steep grassy pastures of Bolinas Ridge. The cattle he raised thrived and multiplied into the thousands. The house which he, his wife, and five children lived in was partially adobe, containing four rooms, two bedrooms, a sitting room and kitchen. Briones received guests with liberal hospitality. He won the respect of his peers as "an honest, upright and truthful man" who with few exceptions, "did not have an enemy in the world."[17]

Although Briones managed well during the transition years of the

---

[15]Bancroft, History 2: 730, 3: 704-706, 4: 669, 5: 669-670, 682-683; Dwinelle, Colonial History, p. 62 and Addenda No. 22, p. 36; Brown, "Rancho Los Baulines," p. 4.

[16]Testimony of William A. Richardson in Land Case 189 ND, Baulenes, Bd. 21. July 24, 1854. Transcript in 174SD, Los Baulenas, Bd. 8, No. 51, in Jacob N. Bowman, "Testimony of William Antonio Richardson in Private Land Grant Cases 1850-1855," pp. 136-138, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

[17]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 264.

American takeover, he and his family gradually faded from the West Marin scene, as did the lifestyle they shared on Rancho las Baulines.

2. Rancho Tomales y Baulines

The first buildings in the vicinity of what is now the town of Olema, California, were the adobe structures that comprised the *hacienda* or headquarters of Don Rafael Garcia's 9,467.77 acre Rancho Tomales y Baulines.

Garcia had first settled the area around 1837, when he had moved north from his home in present Bolinas to accommodate his brother-in-law, Gregorio Briones. Garcia moved onto the lands claimed by James Richard Berry, the grantee of Rancho Punta de los Reyes, but Berry reportedly acquiesced the lands in Garcia's favor.

Sometime in 1837, Garcia moved his family, servants and livestock into the Olema Valley and built a "palizada", a home built of wood and thatch. In later testimony, Garcia was said to be living in a new "timber" house. This would seem to indicate that the home was built in late 1837.

The actual date of construction of Garcia's later adobe structures is uncertain; it would seem that they were erected in the late 1830's or early 1840's. In 1841, Garcia entertained Captain John Paty at his rancho "on the west side of Baulines Bay near a creek," but this description actually fits the original Garcia home at Bolinas, unless the correspondent misreported Tomales Bay.

Rancho Tomales y Baulenes had been granted to Don Rafael on March 18, 1836. The boundaries as finally surveyed took in what had originally been part of Berry's Rancho Punta de los Reyes, with Garcia owning most of the Olema Valley, bordered by Olema Creek, Bolinas Ridge, and Tomales Bay. It was on this vast acreage that Don Rafael ran his large herd of livestock and established his home.

Garcia's hacienda near Olema grew into a comfortable home and headquarters for his rancho with its thousands of livestock and what may have been a steady stream of visitors. A writer in 1880 described the old Garcia ranch:

> He built a very large adobe house for the use of his family, which stood on the present site of Thomas

> Crandall's house [W Ranch]. The work was done by Indians, and an Indian was foreman and had full charge of the work. He afterwards built two more adobe houses for the use of his servants and *employees;* also several frame buildings. In the olden and balmy days of the Spanish-Mexican regime, the *Summa Summarum* of the *dolce far niente* style of life of that age could be found at this ranch.[18]

The *hacienda* at the Rancho Tomales y Baulenes consisted of Don Rafael's home, two or more adobe buildings for his servants, and several frame buildings. Garcia reportedly had 3,000 head of cattle, "one of which was slaughtered daily to supply the demands of the *establecimiento*"; 400 horses that "bore the ranch brand"; and "extensive flocks of sheep and herds of swine [that] formed a part of the princely possessions of the Garcia estate." Garcia built at least two corrals for his livestock; one apparently for horses near the hacienda, and another built in the Olema Valley on the present Boyd Stewart Ranch and used to hold Garcia's few tame cattle. Wild game roaming on Garcia's (and probably Osio's and Berry's) land attracted guests who came to hunt and visit with the Don.[19]

The rancho apparently was self-sufficient, no doubt because Garcia's Indians, former neophytes trained at Mission San Rafael, could wash, cord, spin, and finally weave the wool into cloth; tan the hides and make boots and shoes from the leather; and farm, ranch, and prepare the food for the ranchero and his family. The use of Indian servants was not an uncommon practice, as many other rancheros also had staffs of trained Indian servants.[20]

Joseph Warren Revere, an American lieutenant stationed at Sonoma, visited Garcia's ranch during its heyday. Revere described a fiesta he attended as a guest of Garcia at his Bear Valley headquarters in August 1846. Revere's party had been salvaging a rich array of articles from a shipwreck nearby and returned in a festive mood. When Revere and his associates arrived, a feast was prepared. "Fat muttons and beeves were slaughtered by Don Rafael; and the *cocina* was alive with women preparing the various dishes affected by

---

[18]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 277.

[19]Ibid., pp. 277-278.

[20]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, pp. 277-278; Bancroft, History 2: 598; Garcia's house and corral are located on the Plat of the Rancho Tomales y Baulines of October 6, 1865.

native Californians . . . ." According to Revere, the staple at Garcia's was tortillas and "beefsteaks broiled on the coals,--called *carne asado.*"

Garcia's house was well-appointed with European finery, perhaps with treasures of the wrecked ship and others:

> The long, low, one-storied house, with its spreading eaves, was profusely illuminated with the best wax-candles in bronze or plated candelabra of artistic patterns, adorned with artificial flowers of every hue; while the rugged walls were concealed with framed engravings: and beneath them was arranged elegant furniture in buhl and *marquetrie,* on which stood crowds of bottles, from which the company regaled themselves with unlimited champagne, and the delicate wines of the Rhine and Burgundy . . . .[21]

Garcia treated Revere to a party not to be forgotten, complete with "exhibitions of skill with the lasso" and a duel between a bear and a bull. Early on, "the rancheros, who had brought their guitars and fiddles strapped on their backs, soon struck up merry tunes; and the light-hearted Spanish girls and their cavaliers danced the *jarabe,* the waltz, and other national dances, all night long; while the elders sat about amusing themselves with monte and euchre."[22]

Under the Mexican government of California, Garcia prospered. His herds were large and continued to grow; his family lived around him on his large domain where he ruled as a grand patriarch; he was also on good terms with most of his neighbors.

When at home on the rancho, Garcia treated his visitors with generous hospitality, including Lieutenant Revere, who stopped at Garcia's again in 1847. Revere and a party of sixteen soldiers had been riding hard in pursuit of a band of Mexican outlaws who also had found their way to Garcia's but had fled hurriedly at the soldiers' arrival, leaving behind their hats, a freshly slaughtered bullock, and twenty-four good horses which had been stolen from neighboring ranchos. Evidently the open house provided by Garcia precluded turning away travelers, no matter what kind of character their appearance suggested.

---

[21]Revere, Joseph W., Keel and Saddle, A Retrospect of Forty Years of Military and Naval Service. Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1872. pp. 184-185.

[22]Ibid., pp. 184-185.

Garcia extended his hospitality to Revere and his men, and invited Revere to join him and several neighboring rancheros on an elk hunt. The offer was accepted and Garcia provided Revere and two of his men with fresh horses for the day.[23]

Garcia and his neighboring rancheros appreciated the Point Reyes Peninsula for the vast herds of elk which grazed on its exceptional natural pasturage. Sir George Simpson in 1841, had marveled at the cattle and horses feeding on the grassy slopes of the peninsula and observed they "were growing and fattening, whether their owners waked or slept, in the very middle of winter, and in the coldest nook of the province." The elk, while still relatively isolated and undisturbed on Point Reyes, gained even higher esteem among the Californios who prized their fat for cooking.[24]

Point Reyes' heavy dews and proximity to the sea fostered a great luxuriance of wild oats and other grains and grasses which supported the huge elk herds. August was the best time of the year to hunt because the elk then had grown to their fattest, making them easy prey for the specially-trained horses and their riders, whereas, only a few months later, "the fleetest horse could hardly overtake them." On the elk hunt with Lieutenant Revere, the Californio hunters carried no firearms, but instead, a rope or riata, "the unfailing companion of all rancheros." Through the lifting fog they caught sight of "not less than four hundred head of superb fat animals," six of which the rancheros, with some help from Revere, brought down and killed with a *luna,* (a crescent-shaped stone used for hamstringing the elk), a knife, and Revere's shotgun.

Elk furnished a popular staple, tallow, for which the Californio rancheros felt considerable gratitude. Revere overheard a Californio, who had an elk entangled in his riata, address the struggling beast as "cundo", or brother-in-law, and assuring him that he only wanted a little of his lard to cook tortillas. Once processed, the elk fat possessed a "superior hardness, whiteness and delicacy", which evidently was consumed in enormous quantities. From the six elk killed on the first day of the hunt with Lieutenant Revere, the Californios obtained at least 800 pounds of tallow which they stored in two large hides, doubled in the middle and laced with thongs on the sides. The next morning, the rancheros

---

[23]Joseph Warren Revere, Naval Duty in California (Reprint, Oakland: Biobooks, 1947), p. 64.

[24]Simpson, Narrative 1: 274.

rode off again to continue the hunt, leaving Revere to observe the great quantity of elk killed on Point Reyes. "We passed many places, on our way back, where mouldering horns and bones attested to the wholesale slaughter which had been made in previous years by the rancheros of the neighborhood." The beleaguered elk already were dwindling in numbers, and according to an account related by Rafael Garcia, the surviving herds swam across Tomales Bay to the wilderness of Sonoma County sometime in the late 1850's or early 1860's.

Revere also offered comments on the state of the Point Reyes rancho in 1846. The hunting party camped for the night at "what was called the rancho, but in arriving we found nothing but a broken down corral [this is apparently Osio's headquarters at the later site of C. W. Howard's F Ranch on Drakes Estero]." En route to the rancho they passed "a herd of cattle so little civilized that the very antelopes were grazing amongst them." Point Reyes, then at the dawn of American control, had reverted to its wild and natural state, awaiting the arrival of the dairymen who would make the peninsula famous.[25]

3. Rancho Nicasio

Rancho Nicasio, at 56,807 acres the largest of the Marin land grants, was given to Pablo de la Guerra and Juan Cooper in 1844, ending a sad chapter in California history when the remaining Coast Miwok were brazenly swindled out of 80,000 acres that had been promised them by Mariano Vallejo, military commander of the northern frontier. De la Guerra and Cooper hired surveyor Jasper O'Farrell to divide the grant into five sections which, by 1851, had been sold. Cooper sold Section 4, of 8,695.27 acres on which stand three of the ranches subject of this report, to Benjamin Buckelew on October 25, 1850, for $10,000.[26]

---

[25]Bancroft, History 4: 664; Robinson, Land in California, pp. 63, 204; Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 151; Senate, Jones Report, 31st Cong., 1st sess., 1851; Becker, "Point Reyes," p. 43.

[26]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 283; Mason, Early Marin, pp. 59-67. See Mason for the entire story of the Nicasio land case.

4. Rancho Punta de los Reyes

On March 17, 1836, James Richard Berry applied for and was granted 35,000 acres. Berry, a Mexican national of Irish descent who had served Mexico as a colonel during the Spanish War, named his domain Rancho Punta de los Reyes. Berry visited Point Reyes with Captain of the Port of San Francisco, William L. Richardson, who related many years later:

> He came to me in the early part of 1836 with recommendations from the then commandant of California, Don Nicolas Gutierrez, to pass him over to the north side of the Bay of San Francisco . . . in order to select some land granted to him for his services as a Colonel in the Mexican Army and I did so. He returned to my house at Yerba Buena [San Francisco] about three weeks afterwards on his road to Monterey. He came back again about a month after with his grant to take possession of his land at Punta de Reyes, which is in what [is] now Marin County.[27]

Berry chose property comprising practically the entire Olema Valley from what he evidently considered to be Garcia's grant north, including what would eventually become the town of Olema. The northern section of two leagues extended up the shores of Tomales Bay, including the area that would become the town of Inverness fifty years later. Berry brought cattle and heifers to the ranch and built a one-story house in the northern Olema Valley, at a location on Olema Creek reportedly adjacent to the future town of Olema, on the main road, on the west bank of a stream which fed into Tomales Bay. Berry filed a juridical possession and survey with the military commander at Sonoma which was later found to be invalid.[28]

Berry sold the two leagues on Tomales Bay in 1838 to Joseph E. Snook, a naturalized Mexican citizen and veteran sea captain and merchant of the Pacific

---

[27]Testimony of William A. Richardson in Land Case 418 ND, copies at National Park Service, Western Regional Office, San Francisco.

[28]Testimony of William Richardson, October 27, 1853, in Land Case 418 ND Punta de Reyes, Bd 7, October 27, 1853, No. 43, Bowman, "Testimony" p. 115, Bancroft Library, U. C. Berkeley; Jack Mason, Point Reyes, The Solemn Land (Inverness: North Shore Books, Third Edition, 1970), p.21; Becker, Point Reyes, p. 42-43.

Coast trade routes. However, sale of granted property was not allowed under the terms of Berry's grant. On September 18, 1838, Snook wrote to Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, at that time Military Commander of the Northern Frontier, for advice:

> You know that on the voyage past I bought from Don James Berry 2 leagues of his rancho, situated on Point Reyes . . . and the other day I put there 56 head of cattle by Mr. Rafael Garcia, whom I am paying $12 per month . . ., but I do not have papers for the rancho. I hope that you will be my counsel as to the manner in which I can secure the necessary papers . . . .[29]

Snook chose or was advised to denounce the portion of the grant he had purchased from Berry. In this process a citizen could challenge the ownership of property if the terms of the grant were unfulfilled; in Snook's case the denouncement was based on the fact that Berry's grant was unoccupied, and the denouncement was no doubt applied for with Berry's approval. In fact, Berry probably would have lost the land entirely had the governor known that he had illegally sold a portion of it. Snook won title to the 8,878 acres under a ruling by the Mexican governor in June of 1839. As one historian interpreted the transactions:

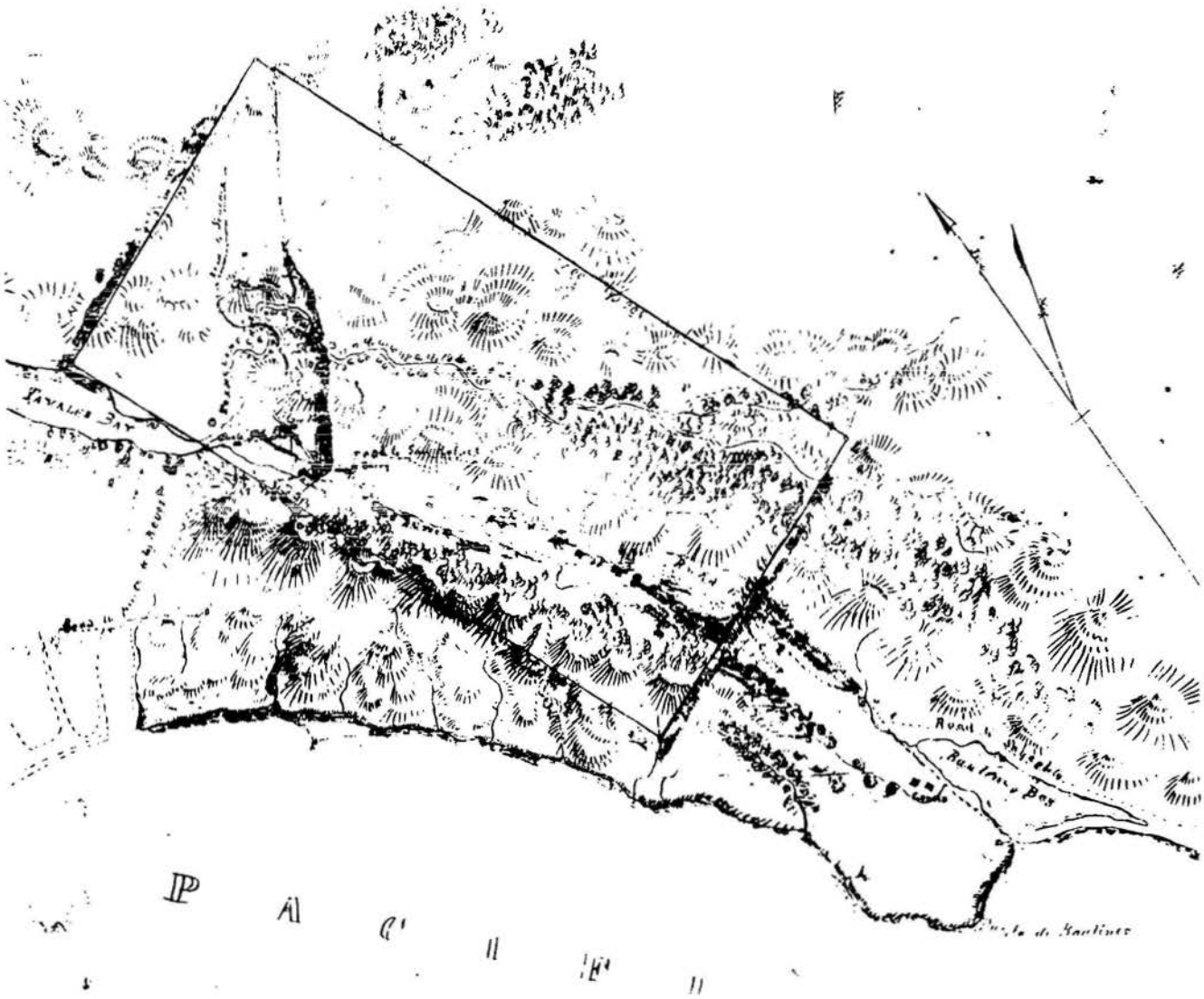
> Snook officially denounced the land he had unofficially bought from Berry. Berry officially acceded to the denouncement of the land he had unofficially sold to Snook. In June of 1839, the land was officially regranted to Snook, and Berry officially retained the remainder of his land, with Snook's money unofficially in his pocket.[30]

About 1837 Snook had built a small house at the northwestern corner of the rectangular parcel (on today's Rogers Ranch) for his ranch foreman. Situated on the north side of a small creek draining into Schooner Bay, the house was

---

[29]Joseph E. Snook, letter dated September 18, 1838, in Vallejo, Mariano Guadalupe, Documentos para la Historia de California, V, doc. no. 172, mss. at Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

[30]Becker, Point Reyes, p. 42.



Detail of a map of the Berry grant made for Bethuel Phelps in 1854. Berry's house is marked in the left center and Garcia's in the lower right. *Reproduction in the Point Reyes National Seashore Collection.*

built of logs as thick as a man's thigh, plastered with clay, with a thatched tule roof, measuring about 15 by 12 feet and seven feet high.[31]

Within months after winning title, Snook mortgaged his Rancho Punta de los Reyes and traded it to Antonio Maria Osio on September 28, 1839. Osio, the administrator of the custom house in Monterey and grantee of Rancho Isla de los Angeles (Angel Island) on San Francisco Bay, soon petitioned the governor for the remaining eleven leagues, or *sobrante,* on Point Reyes. After three years of administrative delays Governor Manuel Micheltorena awarded the 48,829-acre grant on November 20, 1843, to Osio, who moved his family to Point Reyes that year.[32]

Osio soon found himself in a dispute over proper boundaries of the rancho, setting the stage for later events. Berry, who had retained six leagues of his grant in the Olema Valley, began to run his cattle on Osio's *sobrante.* Berry had been pushed out of his own land by Rafael Garcia, grantee of Rancho Tomales y Baulines to the south; Garcia had given his Bolinas land to his brother-in-law Gregorio Briones and moved north onto Berry's ranch, where he had settled in comfortably, calling his new property Rancho Al Punta El Estero. Until Osio received his vast *sobrante,* the apparent feeling in the area was that there was plenty of land to spare, hence the informal mode of use and settlement.[33]

Osio sued Berry in 1844, an action that brought to light Garcia's move north. Jose Maria Castanares, the government attorney in Monterey, ruled in Osio's favor and recommended that Garcia return the land to Berry by moving back to Bolinas. But Berry pulled out of the fray abruptly, transferring his property to his friend Stephen Smith of Bodega, "being debtor to Don Estevan [Smith] for various sums with which he has aided me." Berry, who had reportedly acquiesced to Garcia, died soon after. In the end, Garcia stayed on Berry's property and Osio was satisfied that his rancho was not being encroached upon.[34]

---

[31]Mason, Point Reyes, p. 22-23; G. W. Hendry and Jacob N. Bowman, "The Spanish and Mexican Adobes and Other Buildings in the Nine Bay Area Counties, 1776 to about 1850," unpublished manuscript, 1940, pp. 96-97.

[32]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, pp. 190, 194.

[33]Becker, Point Reyes, p. 42; Mason, Point Reyes, pp. 42-43.

[34]Mason, Point Reyes, p. 25.

While Osio lived at Point Reyes beginning in 1843, he continued to work in Monterey, as justice of the superior court from 1840 to 1845, as a substitute congressman in 1843, as captain of the defenses in 1844, and as judge at San Rafael in 1845. He had hired a "Spaniard" named Pakito as his *major domo,* according to an 1880 account. After the American takeover in 1846, Osio moved his family to Hawaii, then settled in Baja California. Osio mortgaged the property to a man named G. W. Bird, then sold it to Andrew Randall in 1852. Meanwhile, Smith sold his Berry ranch to cattleman Bethuel Phelps on September 25, 1848, for $15,000.[35]

When California gained statehood and the first legislature created Marin County in 1850, the new county government found nothing but confusion at Point Reyes. Few of the landowners lived there and the true acreage of their properties was unknown. Tax assessments of 1851 indicated that Osio owned only two leagues, while his eleven leagues of the *sobrante* received no notice. Berry's tract, transferred to Smith then sold to Phelps, was described as, "The tract of land formerly owned by Berry containing six leagues owners unknown lying between Punta Reyes and Garcia also running on said tract of land is 200 head of cattle belonging to said farm." The fact that Bethuel Phelps recorded his purchase in Sonoma County may explain some of the confusion.[36]

E. Land Claims Under Scrutiny

In 1851, the United States Congress passed an "Act to Ascertain and Settle the Private Land Claims in the State of California" which created a three-man Board of Land Commissioners, who were appointed by the President to examine and determine the validity of the Spanish and Mexican land grants in California. The Land Commission, which began hearings on January 2, 1852, represented only a first legal step, as both sides--the land claimant and the United States--had the right of appeal in the California District courts, and when necessary, in the State's Supreme Court. As common practice, the United States attorneys entered an appeal to the courts, extending the litigation and making the average length of time between the initial petition to the Land Commission and the final patent on the land seventeen years.

---

[35]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 302.

[36]Toogood, Civil History, pp. 69-70.

In the midst of this lengthy legal process, most claimants went bankrupt. Some who had received confirmation of their grants from the Board of Land Commissioners had their titles invalidated in district courts. Presented with financial difficulties and the pressing demand for land from growing numbers of Americans in California, some sold off sections of their land before receiving a final American land title and patent. Consequently, clouds remained over many coastal land titles for years after California became a state in 1850.

With some 1,400 land claims before the Board of Land Commissioners, California had a constant demand for lawyers. San Francisco's law bar included some of the most skilled and knowledgeable attorneys in the state. Many of these lawyers directed their energies towards acquiring property themselves, often accepting rancho lands as payment for their services. By the close of 1866, vast tracts in Marin County had fallen into the hands of San Francisco attorneys, while not one of the original rancho grantees remained to witness the nearly completed American takeover of the land.[37]

[37]Becker, Designs on the Land, Introduction, n.p.; Marshall McDonald and Associates, Report and Recommendations on Angel Island 1769-1966 Prepared for the Division of Beaches and Parks, State of California, 1966, p. 60; Robinson, Land in California, p. 106; Mason, Early Marin, pp. xii and 82; Becker, "Point Reyes," p. 43.

The Mexican ranchos in the Olema Valley area.

F. Ranchos in Transition

1. Rancho las Baulines

According to available tax schedules and records, Gregorio Briones fared well for nearly a decade after the American takeover. The agricultural schedule for Marin County in the 1850 United States census shows that Briones claimed possession of 13,230 unimproved acres (4,409 more than granted as Rancho Baulenes in 1846), 50 horses, 300 other cattle and 15 swine, with a value of $10,000 on his farm and $4,500 on his livestock. The 1854 county tax records indicated that Briones had built a new house and had added 100 sheep and goats to his property, helping to raise his total valuation to $833,414, more than three times that of 1850.

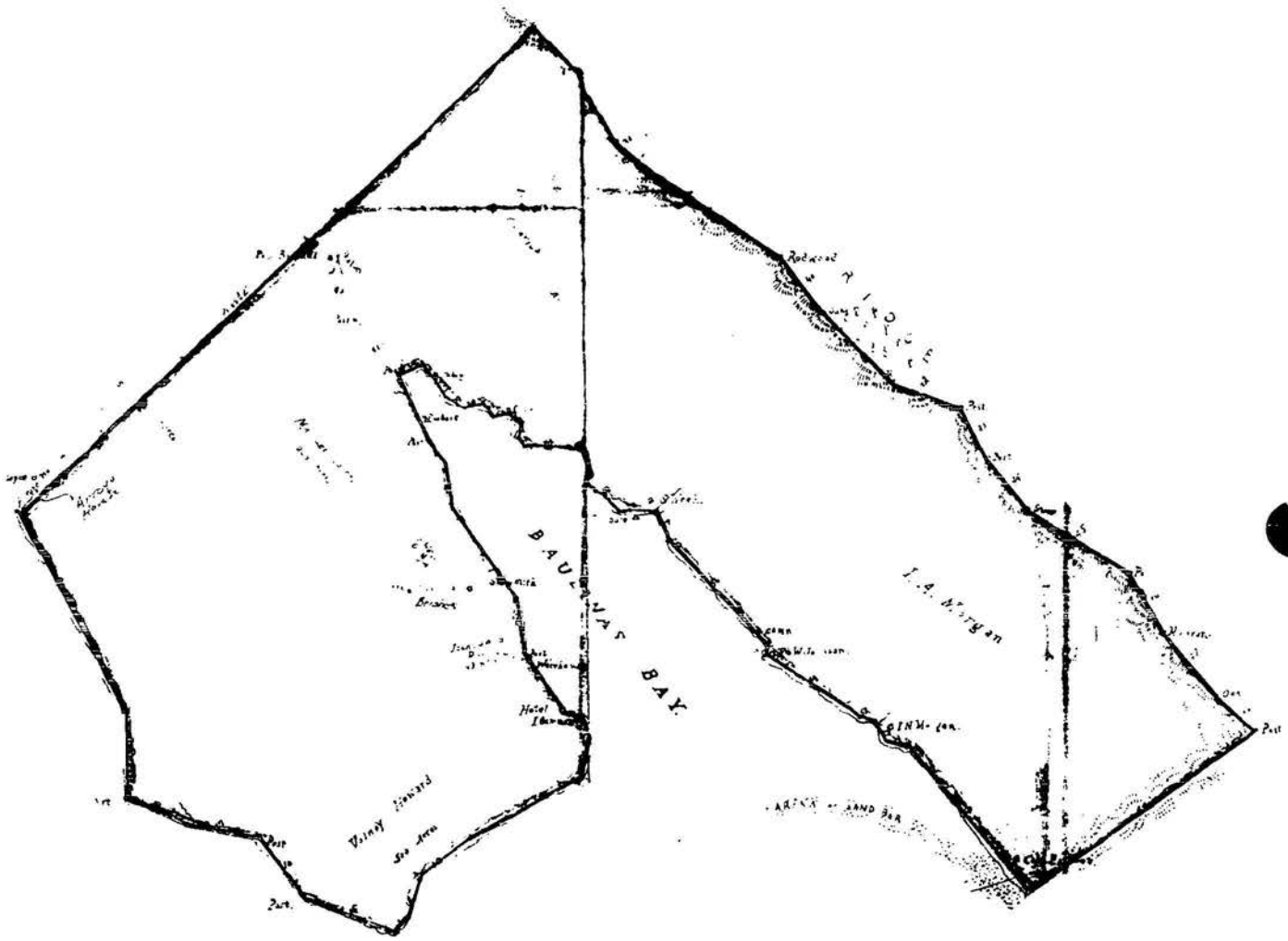
The 1860 United States Census, however, revealed the Briones family's material losses during the latter part of the 1850s. According to agricultural schedule, four family members together owned less property than many of the new settlers. Gregorio apparently had given charge of his lands to his children, for he was not included in the 1860 schedule. He died on May 16, 1863.[38]

Gregorio Briones had filed his claim to two square leagues of Rancho Las Baulines on January 31, 1853. More than one year later, on May 15, 1854, the Land Commissioners confirmed his title, but the District Court process held up the final validation of his claim until April 2, 1857, when Briones officially became owner of the 8,911.34-acre rancho, as surveyed by the United States Deputy Surveyor, Robert C. Matthewson, in October of 1858.[39]

---

[38]California, U. S. Census 1850, Partial Schedules, Schedule 4, Productions of Agriculture, Marin County, p. 15; Marin County Assessments, 2 Volumes, 2: 1954-1955, p. 256, on microfilm at Bancroft Library; 8th U. S. Census, 1860, Products of Agriculture, Bolinas Township, pp. 23-26; "Chronological History of Marin County," 1: n.p.

[39]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 194, quotes from Judge Ogden Hoffman's Report of Land Cases Determined in the United States District Court for the Northern District of California which he published in 1862, having been the principal judge presiding in the district court in San Francisco. Robinson, Land in California, p. 263; "Plat of the Rancho Los Baulines finally confirmed to Gregorio Briones . . . by Robert C. Matthewson, Deputy Surveyor, October 1858, Containing 8911 34/100 acres." A copy of the plat is in Patent Book A., p. 157, MCRO. Jack Mason in Last Stage for Bolinas (Inverness: North Shore Books, 1973), p. 15, wrote that R. C. Matthewson surveyed the Bolinas rancho in October 1858 and found it contained four square leagues, not two, but the 8911 34/100 acres indicated on the above plat equals two leagues. The 1858 plat showed five American residences on the east side of Bolinas Lagoon and a steam saw mill located near the road on the northeastern portion (Dogtown area) of the rancho.



Detail of the plat of Rancho las Baulines ("Baulinas Rancho") by U. S. Deputy Surveyor R. C. Matthewson, 1858.
Marin County Recorders Office.

As early as July 1852, Gregorio Briones began to sell his lands to the Americans, contingent on the confirmation of his title to Rancho Baulines. On July 4, 1852, he sold to Isaac Morgan a tract of land on the east side of Bolinas Bay, contained by Richardson's Rancho Sausalito boundary, the ridge line, and the San Rafael trail which dropped west from the ridge to the bay shore. Either Briones was extremely generous or very naive with financial arrangements, for Morgan was able to live rent free on the land he planned to buy until Briones received a valid title, and then he paid only five dollars per acre. Thus, until 1857, Morgan held claim by agreement to the eastern shore of Bolinas Bay without compensating Briones, and beginning that year the Briones family's lands were reduced by about 2,600 acres.

Briones' rancho possessed two physical advantages: the protected harbor of Bolinas Bay and the redwood trees in the gulches of Bolinas Ridge. With San Francisco growing by great leaps and bounds, several Americans beginning in 1849, had made arrangements with Briones to cut timber and run sawmills on 2,200 acres on the northeast quarter of the rancho. Briones sold the acreage to Charles Correns, and that land passed through many hands before becoming the Wilkins and Bourne Ranches of the 1870s.

The Briones family livestock and residences remained on the western half of the bay until, parcel by parcel, Briones' heirs began to sell off the 3,000 acres left to them by Gregorio's will. Today, after the passing of Rose Briones of Dogtown, no known member of the Briones family or their descendants lives upon the Rancho las Baulines.[40]

2. Rancho Tomales y Baulines

Rafael Garcia's transition years under American authority followed the same general pattern as Briones', with the exception that his decline in material possessions was much more rapid. According to the 1851 county tax

[40]Deeds Book B, pp. 3, 156-158, 296-297, Book C, pp. 102, 187-188, Book D, p. 67, Marin County Recorders Office (hereinafter cited as MCRO); Mason, Last Stage, pp. 15-16; on pp. 15-16 and 94-95, in the same source, Jack Mason identified Captain Morgan as an 1849 American pioneer in Bolinas Bay and as one of Gregorio Briones' only American friends. Morgan worked on timber crews which sent lumber for wharves to San Francisco. Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 267.

Detail of the plat of Rancho Tomales y Baulines as finally confirmed to Rafael Garcia, 1865.
Marin County Recorders Office.

assessments, Garcia had the most valued improvements of all *rancheros* along the coast to his south and west, from Point Reyes to the Golden Gate. The value of his personal estate, however, was comparatively low, being $11,700, indicating that Garcia's wealth lay in his land, its structures and his livestock. The total valuation came to $44,700, a considerable sum for the times. By 1854, Garcia's total property valuation had dropped to $38,315, more than half of it directly based on the assessment of 8,800 acres. The rancho still remained intact, however, and supported a variety of livestock, including 200 wild cattle, 150 tame California cattle, 20 tame California horses and mares, 12 wild horses, three mules and various pigs, sheep and goats. These numbers reflected only a fraction of Garcia's vast property during his years under Mexican rule.[41]

Garcia's land, then, contained the key to his future, and on March 23, 1852, only months after the Land Commissioners began their sessions, he filed his claim for Rancho Tomales y Baulines. Between litigation before the Land Commission and the District Court, the claim was not confirmed until October 19, 1858. The following year Garcia entered a law suit against Oscar Shafter, et al., San Francisco attorneys who, by 1858, had acquired all of the Point Reyes peninsula and who had their eyes on Garcia's land. The legal battle dragged on for six years, draining Garcia of what capital he had at his disposal. Garcia had evidently gained experience in the American legal system earlier in the 1850s, for his name appears frequently on a list of plaintiffs who sued in District Court. Garcia, in fact, filed a suit each year from 1852 to 1856.

Garcia's biggest day in court occurred on March 9, 1864, as he defended his ownership of Tomales y Baulines. U. S. Deputy Surveyor R. C. Matthewson had redrawn the boundaries of the west Marin ranchos, cutting more than 13,000 acres off of the original Berry grant which he considered to be improperly defined at the time it had been claimed. The Shafters, who owned the Berry grant, wanted Garcia's land as their due, citing the loss of the 13,000 acres, and claimed that Berry's acquiescence was a forgery. By this time, Garcia had already sold much of his land, and his lawyer A. T. Willson pleaded for the threatened Garcia and his landholders. Judge Ogden Hoffman, after hearing from the parties involved, ruled in Garcia's favor. The next year Garcia received a survey plat to his rancho which contained 9,467.77 acres, 605 acres more than that confirmed to him by the 1858 validation of his title. Never ones

---

[41]Marin County Assessments, Vol.1, 1851, and Vol. 2, 1854, Bancroft Library; Munro-Fraser, Marin County, pp. 177-178.

to leave a courtroom emptyhanded, the Shafters were rewarded with the huge 13,644.66-acre Phelps patent, called a portion of Tomales y Baulines, which covered all of the land between Garcia's Olema Valley and the summit of Mt. Tamalpais to the southeast, including the rich timber lands of the upper Lagunitas Canyon, as well as some 1,800 acres of Briones' land, that would become the McCurdy Ranch.[42]

The difference of 605 acres in Garcia's grant probably reflected the disparity between the written grant (2 leagues or roughly 8,880 acres) and the actual survey of the rancho boundaries performed at the juridical possession of the land. Garcia's 1865 plat, however, indicated the extent to which his lands had been sold to Americans, probably to pay his endless legal expenses from over a decade in court.

Since 1849 Garcia had leased land to various parties for logging, lime production, and grazing and farming. On Christmas Day, 1855, Garcia began selling off most of Rancho Tomales y Baulines, in a transaction with Victor Post, a partner in Samuel P. Taylor's paper mill which was being constructed on Garcia's property. Less than a year later, on September 25, 1856, Garcia sold a parcel which consisted of 4,366 acres in the Olema Valley to Daniel and Nelson Olds. The parcel represented nearly half of Garcia's land, which he sold at less than two dollars per acre.[43]

The following year, in 1857, Garcia sold to John Nelson and William E. Randall another 1,400 acres just south of the Olds tract in Olema Valley, for $2,000, again accepting less than $2 per acre. He began to sell lots in Olema and there a town was established. Thus, before his title had been finally confirmed Garcia had relinquished nearly sixty percent of his holdings. In fact, the site of Garcia's hacienda on the west side of Olema Creek ended up in the final surveys as part of Rancho Punta de los Reyes. Rafael Garcia had little time to deal with this, as he died on February 25, 1866, only four months after he received his official survey and patent to the rancho. Garcia left his remaining 3,089 acres north and east of Olema, as well as six town lots in Olema, to his wife and seven other heirs. Garcia's adobe reportedly fell in the

---

[42]Mason, Early Marin, pp. 142-143; "Plat of the Rancho Tomales y Baulines Finally Confirmed to Rafael Garcia," 1865.

[43]Deeds Book C, pp. 46, 66 and 144, MCRO; "Abstract of Title and Certificate of Search, Part of the Rancho Tomales y Baulinas," compiled for James McMillan Shafter, collection of PRNS.

earthquake of 1868, and on the site Charles Webb Howard built his Bear Valley Ranch.[44]

The will of Rafael Garcia asked that he be buried "in a sacred graveyard, either in my ranch or any other," that one acre be sold with the proceeds to be "applied in masses for the good of my soul," that "the land which constitutes the cemetery be left for the benefit of my heirs" (no such cemetery exists today; the Olema Cemetery was established almost 20 years later), that his widow receive the Garcia house and "the property on which it was situated, and a third part of my lands," and that the remaining lands be divided "in equal parts among my heirs." Hard times followed for the Garcia heirs. They divided the 3,089 acres he had left to them into seven parcels, and soon most of it was gone.[45]

Many of the settlers were covetous of the Garcia lands. In a story so like that of so many other Californios, the Garcia lands dwindled into nothing. By 1880, most of the 3,089 acres left by Don Rafael to his heirs were in the hands of the American settlers, principally James McMillan Shafter.

The lands of Maria Loreta Garcia were very nearly lost to her in 1872, when the sheriff threatened "to take everything she owned" when she became indebted to the local grocery store for $396. She apparently settled the bill, for in 1873, she was residing in her home nearby.

Calamity then struck the Garcia family. On April 17, 1873, the "Senora" was visited by a young blacksmith who wished to marry her. After some heated discussion, in which she apparently refused, the blacksmith pulled a Navy pistol and shot Senora Garcia in the breast. She fell to the floor and was attempting to rise when he fired again, this time at her head, killing her. After trying to burn the adobe, he fled to a nearby home, where in front of horrified onlookers, he confessed his crime and shot himself in the temple.[46]

---

[44]Hoffman Report as cited in Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 192; Appendix A, Marin County, District Court, Miscellaneous Series, Nos. 1-292, Suit Nos. 83, 22, 135, 122, 215, 197; Appendix B, Marin County, District Court, Old Series, Nos. 1-238, Suit No. 72, California State Archives, Sacramento, California; "Plat of the Rancho Tomales y Baulines finally confirmed to Rafael Garcia as located by the U. S. Surveyor General . . . October 6th 1865 Containing 9467 77/100 acres," Patent Book B, P. 65; Deed Book C, pp. 66, 94, MCRO; Hendry and Bowman, "Adobes," p. 125; Mason, Point Reyes, p. 45.

[45]Probate Register B, p. 65 No. 61, Deeds Book H, p. 77, MCRO. Garcia's estate was valued at $25,000 to $30,000. Garcia's surviving children were Maria Dolores (Hurtado), Maria Hilaria (Noriel), Jose, Juan, Felipe, Feliz and Ava Thomas, a minor.

[46]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, pp. 245.

Between the death and endless pressure by the settlers, the Garcias lost their lands, "much of it at the sheriff's auctions". By 1880, Juan Garcia, who lived in his two story frame home near the site of his father's adobes, brother Jose, and Felix, who lived in Olema were apparently the only members of the family remaining in the area. Felix lost his property to Shafter, then operated a saloon in town from July 1876, to April 1879, when he lost all to his creditors. In time Felix Garcia left town and died a pauper in San Rafael in 1900.[47]

Brother Felipe Garcia operated a stage line from Sausalito to Olema in 1870. A news correspondent wrote of "the splendid line of stages . . . a large amount of the pleasure and comfort enjoyed being due to the provisions made by Mr. Garcia, who may be considered the prince of stagists . . . ."[48]

In 1888 Jose Garcia, as executor of his father's will, made an attempt to recover all of Garcia's land plus $10,000 in a lawsuit against landowners on the rancho, including Shafter, C. W. Howard, Joseph Bloom and John Nelson. The suit was dismissed after the defendants claimed that the suit amounted to fraud "for the purpose of wrongfully depriving the petitioners of the possession of their said lands."[49]

Juan Garcia did his best to hold the family name in esteem. Born on the Rancho Corte Madera del Presidio in 1838, and named after Father Juan of the San Rafael mission, he spent most of his life with his wife Guadaloupe and children in his father's Olema Valley. He farmed in the area, and ran a livery business, as described by Bertha Stedman Rothwell:

> When Don Rafael Garcia died in 1866, he left to his son Juan the remnant of his once famous stable . . . . This Garcia stable consisted of a large number of well-bred horses and a large assortment of vehicles and saddles. The saddles and harnesses were embellished with the usual silver mountings which were a familiar sight in the early Spanish regime. This stable Juan Garcia prized dearly, and it became his life's ambition not only to keep intact what remained but also to

---

[47]Mason, Earthquake Bay, pp. 92; "Abstract of Title and That of Encumbrances on the Nelson Hotel Lot, Olema" Vols. 1 and 2, Jack Mason Museum.

[48]Marin Journal, November 26, 1870.

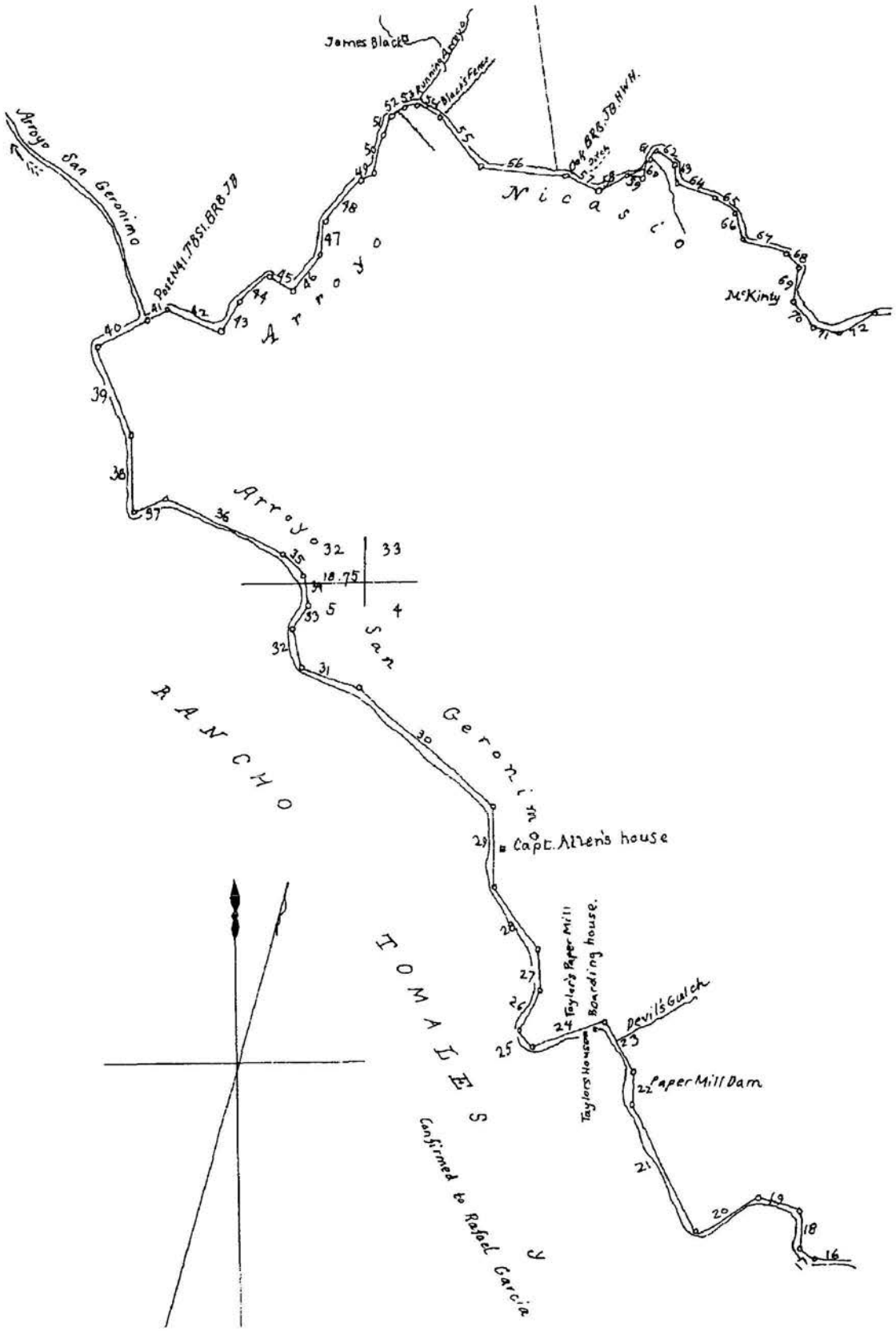
[49]Marin County Superior Court, Register 2 No. 852, Jose Garcia vs. Nelson et al., in "Abstract . . . Nelson Hotel" Vol. 1.

> perpetuate the memories of his father's reign in Marin County as a Spanish Don.
>
> "Jim" [Taylor, owner of the Camp Taylor resort about four miles from Olema] contacted Mr. Juan Garcia and contracted with him to take over the management of the livery stable service for the hotel guests.
>
> Juan was delighted with this opportunity to not only add financially to his livelihood but to also place before the public his prized possessions and thoroughbred horses. His stable and equipment were brought to Camp Taylor and I can still, in memory, see the astonished guests as Juan Garcia, himself a typical Spanish Don, drove around to the front of the hotel each morning to take a large number of hotel guests for a day's drive through beautiful Bear Valley. Mr. Juan Garcia had a large "Carry-all." This was a six-seated conveyance which could comfortably seat twenty-four persons. This coach with his four beautiful horses, bedecked in their silver-mounted harnesses, champing at their bits, attracted each day an interested crowd of spectators. Mr. Juan Garcia appeared each morning at precisely ten o'clock, seated proudly in the driver's seat of this immaculate equestrian outfit . . . .[50]

Juan Garcia lost all too, apparently through gambling. According to the *San Rafael Independent,* Garcia "permitted the yellow gold to slip through his fingers . . . the gambling table was one of his weaknesses, and he often bet a thousand dollars at the turn of a card." Juan died penniless at age 80 in 1913. Today, there are no Garcia descendants living in the Olema Valley.

---

[50]Bertha Stedman Rothwell, Pioneering in Marin County (typescript, 1959), pp. 185-187; Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 456.



Tracing of a detail of the plat of the western part of Rancho Nicasio as confirmed to Benjamin Buckelew, 1858. Note Capt. Allen's house at the site of the future entrance to the Cheda Ranch, and the location of Taylor's paper mill, now marked by a plaque in Samuel P. Taylor State Park. *Original in Marin County Recorders Office.*

3. Rancho Nicasio

Benjamin Buckelew, who also owned Rancho Punta de Quentin on the east shore of Marin County, sold much of his Nicasio land to William J. Miller. The son of Marin pioneer James Miller who settled in San Rafael in 1845, William was educated at Jesuit College in Santa Clara and went into business dealing cattle and land. His Nicasio land was only a part of his 8,000 acres around the county; he may have been the county's largest taxpayer until the Shafter family took hold of their Point Reyes ranchos. Miller built a large hotel in Nicasio in 1867.[51]

As in all of the county, dairying became the major industry in Nicasio. As J. P. Munro Fraser wrote in 1880, "Butter is here, as elsewhere, the product, although the business of dairying is not conducted on quite so large a scale, by individuals, as in some other sections." Nicasio Township became noted for its numerous cheese factories, and still supports a number of dairy ranches.[52]

In 1866 Miller sold two parcels totalling more than 2,000 acres on the extreme west edge of Buckelew's grant, 932 acres to Gaudenzio Cheda for $4,500 and 1,202 acres to Joseph and John DeMartin for $6,000. These ranches developed into dairies and are now part of Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

4. Rancho Punta de los Reyes

Antonio Osio sold his holdings at Point Reyes, including Snook's two leagues on Tomales Bay and the vast *sobrante,* to Dr. Andrew Randall of San Francisco on January 8, 1852. Randall, a geologist with medical training, came to California late in 1849 and soon became customs inspector and postmaster at Monterey. He won a seat on the first California legislature and founded the California Academy of Sciences. Upon purchasing the Point Reyes ranch he

---

[51]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 287; Mason, Early Marin, pp. 44-45; Jack Mason, in collaboration with Helen Van Cleave Park, The Making of Marin (1850-1975) (Inverness: North Shore Books, 1975), p. 140.

[52]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, pp. 282-283.

hired a foreman, Josiah Swain, and built a house for his wife and four children at what became the site of F Ranch.[53]

Within a year Randall apparently had a flourishing cattle ranch, although it is doubtful that he spent much time there. His property assessment for the year 1854 listed land and improvements valued at $178,365.[54]

Earlier in 1854 Randall had purchased the remainder of Berry's ranch from Phelps with $150,000 he had borrowed. Having already purchased Osio's Point Reyes property and other parcels of land across the state, Randall soon found himself deeply in debt. His problems were exacerbated by a financial depression all over the country and he soon found himself pursued by creditors. The Point Reyes ranch was foreclosed, setting the stage for a confusing and costly battle over the property.[55]

One creditor, Joseph Hetherington, sued Randall; the Doctor refused to answer questions from the judge during a debt hearing and fled to Sacramento where he was arrested for contempt of court. Finally, on July 24, 1856, Hetherington approached Randall in a San Francisco hotel and shot him to death. After Hetherington's arrest, the city's vigilance committee seized him and hanged him two days later in front of a large cheering crowd.[56]

Elizabeth Randall found herself not only a widow pregnant with her fifth child but saddled with Andrew's debt of $237,000. Randall's credit troubles not only led to his murder, but as Jack Mason wrote, "out of the turmoil was to come a series of events that helped to write California legal history."[57]

Osio's mortgage to Bird had by 1853 grown from $3,000 to $8,400, with the Point Reyes land put up as collateral. At a foreclosure sale, Thomas G. Cary purchased it, obtained a deed from the sheriff, then sold it to John G. Hyatt, who in turn sold it to Thomas G. Richards and Samuel F. Reynolds. All received deeds from the sheriff. At the same time, on January 5, 1855, Dr. Robert McMillan obtained a judgment against Randall and recorded the

---

[53]Mason, Point Reyes, p. 24; Jack Mason, Point Reyes Historian (Inverness: North Shore Books, Vol. I-VIII, 1976-1984), pp. 726-735.

[54]Marin County Tax Assessments Vol. 2, 1854, p. 314, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

[55]Mason, Historian, pp. 731-733.

[56]Ibid., pp. 731-733.

[57]Mason, Point Reyes, p. 29.

judgment a week later which created a lien against the estate. Jesse Smith had also obtained a judgment against Randall, even before McMillan had, but failed to record it until February 20, 1855. McMillan and Smith were also issued deeds by the sheriff. And Randall, still alive at this point, mortgaged the premises to William I. Shaw.[58]

It was Marin County Sheriff G. N. Vischer who had foreclosed the property to each of the claimants, apparently pocketing the $2,000 he had collected from them. The claimants, McMillan, Smith, Hyatt, Reynolds and Richards, soon found that they had been conned by the sheriff. With the exception of McMillan, the group hired a lawyer; the wealthy McMillan, however, hired Shafter, Shafter, Park and Heydenfeldt, one of the most respected law firms in San Francisco. The firm's senior partner, Oscar L. Shafter, was a powerful figure in California title litigation. Historian Mason wrote:

> McMillan was the only one with enough money to clear Randall's property of the liens against it. His attorney Shafter went to Sheriff Vischer's office twice --first to ascertain what the liens were; again on December 13, 1856, with the cash in hand. He counted it out on the desk--$24,146.08--and told the sheriff to deposit it in McMillan's bank "to save the interest during litigation." The sheriff instead put it in two banks of his own choosing. Indignantly Shafter got out an injunction and impounded the funds. Richards, Hyatt and the others took their case into district court where they argued that McMillan and Shafter by impounding the money were admitting they had no intention of parting with it--that in reality it had not been paid at all. The judge agreed and found for Richards et al. Shafter prepared an appeal to the state supreme court.[59]

As Richards, Hyatt, Reynolds and others lived on Point Reyes, McMillan sued in

---

[58]Ibid., p. 27; Delos Lake, U.S. Attorney, District of California, to United States Lighthouse Board, "The Title of O. L. Shafter, James McM. Shafter, and Charles Webb Howard to La Rancho Punta de los Reyes Sobrante . . .", circa 1869, copy at Point Reyes National Seashore (hereinafter cited as PRNS); Deeds Book B, pp. 69, 147, 179, 286, 300, Book C, p. 183, Book D, pp. 13, 15, 16, 18, 20, 28, 30, MCRO.

[59]Mason. Point Reyes, p. 30-31.

ejectment, in addition to appealing the district court's decision. The supreme court decided in McMillan's favor on May 31, 1858. Meanwhile, John and Samuel Reynolds had conveyed the land to Stephen Marshall, creating further problems for the litigants, and McMillan sold away part of the property.[60]

On January 14, 1857, before receiving the final judgment, McMillan conveyed a two-thirds interest in his Point Reyes holdings to the law firm that represented him, Shafter, Shafter, Park and Heydenfeldt; the firm paid McMillan $50,000. Then, on April 7 of the same year, they bought the Snook parcel of the original Rancho Punta de los Reyes from Randall's widow at auction for $14,700, or one-tenth of what Randall had paid for it in 1854. The partners then bought out McMillan's third interest for $20,000, and as a result owned almost the entire Point Reyes Peninsula. As Mason wrote: "The total price paid for Point Reyes was $84,700. How much cash the lawyers were out of pocket has fed the fires of speculation on Point Reyes for a century. A good part of the purchase price was undoubtedly written off as legal fees owed by McMillan. How much, who knows?"[61]

The Shafter firm then successfully beat down challenges by Shaw, holder of Randall's mortgage, and the Reynolds' buyer, Marshall. Oscar Shafter wrote:

> After a series of tremendous fights we have beaten our adversaries at all points and what is more have humbled the strongest and the proudest of them.[62]

The Shafters also personally evicted six or seven people still occupying the point, including Richards and probably Hyatt and Reynolds as well. This action cleared the way for the Shafters' development of what would become the largest dairy operation in California, in which the partners divided the peninsula into more than 30 ranches occupied by tenants.[63]

---

[60]Lake, "La Punta de Los Reyes"; Deeds Book C, pp. 122, 125-126, MCRO.

[61]Mason, Point Reyes, pp. 33-34; Lake, "La Punta de Los Reyes"; Deeds Book C, pp. 125-129, 349, MCRO.

[62]Oscar L. Shafter, Life, Diaries and Letters of Oscar Lovell Shafter, Flora H. Loughead, ed. (San Francisco: The Blair-Murdock Company, 1915), p. 203.

[63]Mason, Point Reyes, pp. 36-37; Lake, "La Punta de Los Reyes".

G. Pioneer Dairies in the Olema Valley

1. California Dairy Development to 1857

Dairy farming is one of the most important industries in the civilized countries of the world, and health, wealth, and prosperity of a country is largely denoted by the extent and condition of its activity.[64]

The effect of the 1849-50 Gold Rush on the once-sleepy territory/state of California has been well documented, as thousands of people converged on the San Francisco Bay area seeking their fortunes. Along with the immigrants came a need for food, particularly dairy products. According to the 1850 census, only 705 pounds of butter and 150 pounds of cheese were produced in the state that year. Miners in the Sierra foothills relied on small dairies based in the San Joaquin Valley, who in the spring would drive their cows to the mountains, bringing along the necessary dairy utensils to make butter and cheese. These nomadic dairies stayed until the October frosts, when the herds and wagons returned to the valley. The dairies reportedly made products of good quality, as the demand (and prices) were high.[65]

San Franciscans, on the other hand, initially made do with butter imported from the east coast or Chile, salted and packed in firkins and, in the case of the Chilean product (according to a contemporary correspondent), "partaking strongly of the character of hog's lard, which we always believed to be one of its principal ingredients." The East Coast butter was not much better, as it often emitted a "most ancient and fish-like smell."[66]

By 1854 dairies in Sonoma and Santa Clara Counties provided fresh butter and cheese to San Francisco. Milk, highly perishable, could only be produced in or near the city itself, whereas butter could withstand a day's journey and cheese even more under reasonable conditions. Sonoma County proved to be the city's major supplier of butter and cheese until 1862, when

---

[64]R. G. Sneath, "Dairying in California" (Overland Monthly, January-June, 1888), p. 387.

[65]Compendium of the Ninth Census, compiled by Francis A. Walker, Sup't of Census. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872, p. 711; Sneath, "Dairying in California," p. 387.

[66]Toogood, Civil History, p. 94; San Francisco Daily Alta California, May 25, 1854, p. 2.

Marin County surpassed its northern neighbor in production of both commodoties.[67]

By 1857 a number of dairies had been established on the Point Reyes Peninsula and in the Bolinas area. That year Randall and Nelson started a dairy in the Olema Valley, followed closely by Karner and Baldwin, the Olds family and D. D. Wilder. Each built a dairy operation making the best use of their land, taking into account their transportation, feed and water needs.

2. Sites and Construction

Adequate supplies of feed and water determined the location of a dairy ranch. Pioneers found both in the Olema Valley. Forests of Douglas fir, oak and other trees covered most of the west slope of the valley, providing firewood and lumber. The east side of the valley was mostly grassy, with the timbered gulches getting thicker farther south. A great deal of logging and some clearing occurred in these areas, as well as around Bear Valley.[68]

The dairymen chose a reasonably flat site, central to the grazing area and with a spring nearby, which provided both for the ranch house and for the cows in the corral. The spring would be boxed and the water conveyed in pipes to the various outlets as needed. A house or two, a barn for hay and horses, fences and corrals, and the creamery (or dairy house) were the first structures to be built. Later came larger barns and bigger houses for the occupants. Andrew Howe, an Olema carpenter, built many barns in the area during the 1880s, all of a typical design. The barns were usually large, constructed with mortise-and-tenon joints in the superstructure and nailed boards and planks in the framing and sheathing. They contained milking galleries with wooden stanchions and central areas and lofts for hay storage, all well-drained. Large entrance doors typically stood centrally on the long side of the barns, often under gable-roofed additions off the main roofline.

---

[67]Toogood, Civil History, pp. 94-96; John S. Hittell, Commerce and Industries of the Pacific Coast of North America (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft and Co., 1882), p. 261; California, Surveyor General, Annual Report of the Surveyor-General of the State of California for the Year 1862, (Sacramento: P. Avery, State Printer, 1863), pp. 62-63. That year, Marin County produced 200,000 pounds of butter to Sonoma's 191,400; Marin's cheese output was 300,000 pounds to Santa Clara's 250,000, San Mateo's 75,000 and Sonoma's 66,700 pounds.

[68]Ibid., December 16, 1875 and November 16, 1883.

3. Typical Dairy Layout

The typical dairy ranch consisted of a dwelling, milking corral, dairy house, horse barn, calf shed and pig pens, in addition to any necessary outbuildings. The horse barn was used to store hay as well. From early on the Olema Valley dairymen built the larger milking barns (which later became used as and referred to as hay barns), unlike their Point Reyes counterparts who made do without large barns until the 1880s and as late as 1920.[69]

Within decades almost all of the ranchers planted trees as windbreaks in the ranch complexes. Typically in a straight line or an L shape, the trees effectively created protected yards in this windy climate. Blue gum eucalyptus trees (*eucalyptus globulus*) were a common choice in the 19th century. First documented in California in 1856, the fast-growing Australian native enjoyed a surge of popularity in California in the 1870s for use as lumber, firewood, landscaping, and windbreaks. The imported species of tree proved worthless as lumber and messy as an ornamental, and fell from favor by the turn of the century. Many of the Olema Valley dairies had stands of eucalyptus, or the coniferous Monterey cypress (*cupressus macrocarpa*), a closed-cone California native with a rapid growing rate. Many of the current stands of cypress were planted after the turn of the century. Today, groves of eucalyptus and/or Monterey cypress stand at the Wilkins, Teixeira, Hagmaier, Randall, Bear Valley, Zanardi and McIsaac Ranches. Lone specimens or stands of eucalyptus or cypress are found on most of the other ranches in the area. Many of the former ranch sites such as the Biesler, Lupton, Jewell and Neil McIsaac Ranches are marked by trees.[70]

4. Immigration

The first dairies hired family members, transients and Gold Rush veterans as workers. By the 1860s a wave of immigration swept Marin County, and many of these immigrants found work on Olema Valley dairies.

---

[69]Marin Journal, July 10, 1890, p. 3; interview with Joseph H. Mendoza.

[70]Kenneth M. Johnson, "Eucalyptus," Out West, Vol. VI, October 1971, pp. 41-49; Philip A. Munz, A California Flora (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959), p. 61.

Dominating these were Swiss and Portuguese. Italian-speaking Swiss arrived in great numbers from the Valleys Maggia and Verzasca in the southern Alps. Thousands of men left their overpopulated, poverty-stricken villages in Switzerland to come to Marin County and California, and most stayed. These men were sponsored either by their villages or by a man who had already found success in the United States, and repaid their passage in labor; wives and family members soon followed. A similar situation occurred with Portuguese from the Azores, or Western Islands, about 800 miles west of mainland Portugal. Azorean laborers arrived beginning in the 1860s, having traveled by ship around Cape Horn to Hawaii, then to San Francisco, a trip of about three and a half months. Azorean immigrants brought religious and social customs to Point Reyes, including the religious festival, *Festa do Divino Espirito Santo* or Festival of the Holy Ghost.[71]

Many of these immigrants, especially the Portuguese, received criticism from "Americans" about coming to the country, working for cheap wages, then buying up the productive land. R. G. Sneath wrote:

> Most of these arrivals are young men about of age, and physically able to do any labor. Their experience in the home country, except that of milking a cow, is of little value to them here, and not being able to speak English, they are perforce compelled frequently to work for their board and a very few dollars per month.
>
> This is true not only of the Swiss but of all foreigners, and is the principal reason why foreigners that employ many laborers, especially in the dairy and vegetable line, have become wealthy in a few years. They have thus been able to crowd our own people to the wall in many industries where labor is the chief factor, and their presence in the country is looked upon by many unfavorably.[72]

Most of these complaints, however, were countered by general support of the

---

[71]Rae Codoni, The Corippians, A Retrospective View (Riverbank, CA: Baker Graphics, 1990), pp. 17-21; Hallock F. Raup, "The Italian-Swiss in California," California Historical Quarterly, December 1951, pp. 308-309; August Mark Vaz, The Portuguese in California (Oakland: I.D.E.S. Supreme Council, 1965), pp. 53-57; various documents in Leases, MCRO.

[72]R. G. Sneath, "Dairying in California," Overland Monthly, January-June, 1888, p. 389.

local populace and the patriotic deeds of the immigrants. One correspondent wrote of the typical dairy tenant in 1886:

> His children are educated at the district school. He adorns his premises with trees and flowers and the sound of the piano and parlor organ is heard in the land. He pays his rent--be it $22.50 or $25 per cow--semi-annually, does his duty by his neighbor, and lives like what he is--an honest, intelligent country gentleman.[73]

5. Early Transportation in the Olema Valley Area

Early dairymen and their families faced substantial odds in transporting their goods to market in San Francisco. Ocean travel dominated Point Reyes commerce for the entire 19th century, although the construction of a narrow gauge railroad in 1875 improved the reliability and lessened the risks of transport to the dairymen in reasonable proximity to the depots. Overland travel, common for trips to the local towns, was not a favored method until highway improvements commenced in the 1920s, although the Olds family of Olema preferred to travel overland to Petaluma, then by schooner to the city, thus avoiding an ocean voyage.[74]

Geography, natural resources and existing transportation routes determined the location of new towns in the area. One of the oldest towns in Marin County, Bolinas, was founded in 1849 as a shipping point for lumber taken out of the Bolinas Lagoon area. A nearby settlement and location of the lumber mills, Dogtown (renamed Woodville in 1870), failed to grow and remained an obscure outpost. These areas were reached by a trail from San Rafael that crossed Bolinas Ridge above the Weeks Ranch. Olema, founded in 1857 by hotel keeper/rancher Benjamin Winslow, became the hub of Point Reyes commerce, with hotels, saloons, services, and a scheduled stagecoach service. Travelers approached the village on a trail over the ridge, passing the paper mill. Olema lost its prominence with the coming in 1875 of the North

---

[73]Maria Waterman, in San Francisco Chronicle, October 30, 1886.

[74]Jeremiah Stanley Olds, "Recollections of Woodside," February 18, 1939, handwritten manuscript in Boyd Stewart Collection.

Pacific Coast Railroad, which bypassed Olema and provided Galen Burdell the opportunity to build a new town called Point Reyes Station two miles to the north.[75]

a. Overland Travel

The aboriginal transportation route through the Olema Valley is undocumented, but probably followed the banks of Pine Gulch and Olema Creeks for much of the way. What would have been a foot trail was no doubt altered with the arrival of wagons and ox teams by the 1840s. The appointment of road overseers contributed to the improvement and maintenance of local roads, but no complete map of the precise routes previous to 1867 has been found.

One well-documented route is the portion of the San Rafael Road or Old Olema Trail that connected Olema to Lagunitas Creek in the vicinity of the Jewell Ranch. It is unknown whether this was the Indian trail, or was adopted by grantees and settlers; there is not much doubt that this is the route used by Rafael Garcia and other settlers of the 1840s. The trail left the site of Olema near the present Druid's Hall and headed almost due east up the back of the ridge to the summit, then down a spur to Lagunitas Creek at a point north of the Jewell ranch house; Garcia's 1856 land sale to Daniel and Nelson Olds used the trail as the north boundary of the property, and fence lines remain, separating the McIsaac/Merz/Stewart grazing permits. The route remains in use as a right-of-way for PG&E utility poles.[76]

Responding to demands of rural residents for better public roadways, county engineers surveyed and constructed a new county road from Bolinas to Olema, then east to near Lagunitas, in 1867. According to the survey by county surveyor Hiram Austin, the official road followed the previously used route with a few exceptions: 1) Austin devised a new route up "Strain's Hill" north of

---

[75]Mason, Historian, p. 178; Munro-Fraser, Marin County, pp. 264-269; Jack Mason, Earthquake Bay, A History of Tomales Bay, California (Inverness: North Shore Books, 1976), pp. 78, 95. 105; Louise Teather, Place Names of Marin (San Francisco: Scottwall Associates, 1986), pp. 11, 21, 31-32.

[76]Deeds Book H, p. 77, MCRO; Payne J. Shafter, "Early Roads in Marin," San Rafael Independent, November 23, 1929.

Dogtown, bypassing the steep track that followed the grant line on the small ridge north of Henry Strain's ranch; 2) Austin bypassed the old Olema Trail with a totally new grade over the Bolinas Ridge from the town of Olema to the Jewell Ranch on Lagunitas Creek; and 3) switching banks along Lagunitas Creek in today's Samuel P. Taylor State Park, parts of which were superseded by the North Pacific Coast Railroad in 1873-74.[77]

The State of California adopted the county road from Sausalito to Tomales and beyond as State Route 52 in 1927, part of the soon-to-be-famous coast route from San Diego to Humboldt County. State engineers widened and paved the roadways and built concrete bridges and culverts, almost always following the original alignment of the 1867 Austin roads.[78]

Based on documentary information from a number of early maps and plats, it is apparent that the current state highway follows precisely the route of the first county road constructed in 1867, although with two major exceptions: 1) from the intersection adjacent to Bolinas Cemetery to a point south of Dogtown, now known as Horseshoe Hill Road, which was the original county road until bypassed by the current Olema-Bolinas Road; and 2) from the Randall House to a point south of the Olema Lime Kilns where the road followed the creek rather than the higher elevation in use now. The only other exceptions are minor realignments of curves for safety reasons, such as two small segments opposite the Truttman Ranch complex and replacement of minor wooden bridges with culverts.[79]

On Sir Francis Drake Highway the same is true. The only major realignment of the 1867 route is the short bypass of the Tocaloma Bridge and easing of the curve opposite the Baty property on the west side of Olema Hill.

The alignments of Platform Bridge Road, Bear Valley Road and the stretch of Highway 1 between Olema and Point Reyes Station are only improved (widened) versions of the original stage roads. Platform Bridge Road, reportedly named after the old wood and iron "platform" bridge at Tocaloma, was built after local landowners, including Joseph Codoni, petitioned the county

---

[77]"Plat of the Survey for the Relocation of the Road from Bolinas to Olema," and "Plat of the Survey, for the Relocation of the San Rafael and Olema Road," by Hiram Austin, 1867, CHS.

[78]Interviews with Boyd Stewart and Gordon Strain. Highway 52 was changed to 1 by 1940.

[79]"Plat . . . Bolinas to Olema," 1867; U.S.G.S. quadrangle maps dated 1898, 1916 and 1952.

for a road to Nicasio and beyond in 1870. The road does not appear on Austin's 1867 plat of the Olema-San Rafael Road.[80]

The construction history of Bear Valley Road is elusive. It is known that pioneers traveled past Rafael Garcia's house (present site of park headquarters) to the foot of Haggerty Gulch at White House Pool, but it is unlikely that these early travelers crossed the marsh as the road has done since at least 1916. The route probably stayed west of the marsh, following the contour in the area of the Limantour Road, then to Haggerty Gulch. When the short levee was built on the marsh is unknown; Charles Webb Howard built the longer levee nearby on today's Sir Francis Drake Highway by 1875, no doubt to connect the new railroad town of Point Reyes Station with his ranches on the point, avoiding a long detour via Olema. Bear Valley Road was abandoned by the county in 1921, and reacquired in the late 1940s.

The portion of Highway 1 between Olema and Point Reyes Station is mentioned numerous times in Garcia family deeds written as part of the 1868 subdivision to Garcia's heirs. It appears to have been a private road, although the public used it and employed saloonkeeper Charley Hall to ferry them across Papermill Creek at Taylor's warehouse, site of today's highway bridge. When it became a county road is unclear. The highway, all the way from Point Reyes Station to Fairfax, was regraded in 1927, paved with concrete in 1929, and christened as part of Sir Francis Drake Highway the next year; it remains the same except for a layer of asphalt applied in 1985.[81]

At the southern boundary of the scope of this study, the county built the San Rafael-Bolinas Road in 1878 to replace the steep, prehistoric San Rafael Trail which crossed Bolinas Ridge from the Weeks Ranch to the confluence of Cataract and Lagunitas Creeks, site of today's Alpine Dam. The road started at the head of Bolinas Lagoon on the Wilkins Ranch and followed an easy grade near Wilkins' southern boundary to the summit of the ridge, then down to the aforementioned creeks and on to San Rafael via Ross. In 1884 the county changed the route to pass through Fairfax for a saving of mileage. This road, now called the Fairfax-Bolinas Road, has changed little on the west side of Bolinas Ridge, except for widening to about 12 feet and paving.[82]

---

[80]Mason, Historian, pp. 485-488.

[81]Marin Journal, May 5, 1927 and November 12, 1929; "Abstract . . . Nelson Hotel."

[82]Mason, Last Stage, p. 34.

Dozens of dirt ranch roads traverse the gulches and ridges of the area. Most ridges from the valley floor to ridge tops have or had ranch roads running up their spines; some of these, such as on the Randall and McCurdy ranches, are used by hikers today. Many of the gulches have graded roads leading into the upper portions of the canyons, primarily used for wood gathering, but most of these are abandoned.

b. Schooners

The most efficient transport to be had in the 19th century was by sea in small, shallow draft schooners. While the coast of California had seen a great deal of maritime commerce before the Gold Rush, wherein goods from China and other areas were traded for hides and tallow. Fur hunters, seeking the coveted sea otter pelts, were also active on the nearby coast, as well as the everpresent smugglers. The Gold Rush brought the world's attention to San Francsico as the major port of the west coast, and the goods that could be obtained from the regions north and south were soon providing food, lumber and other building materials.[83]

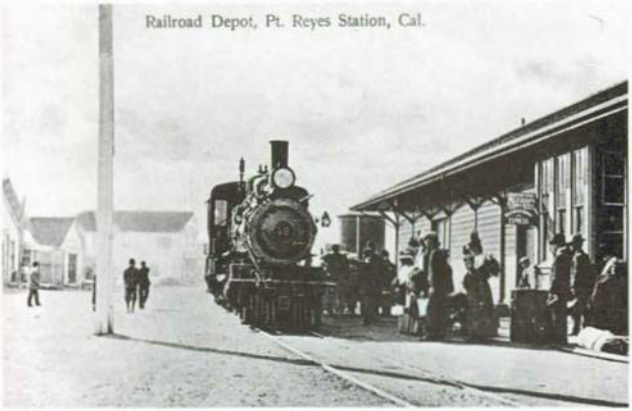
Beginning in 1849 schooners regularly called on Bolinas, where lumber would be transported on small barges (lighters) to waiting schooners near the mouth of the lagoon. All of the ranches from the Five Brooks area south used Bolinas as their primariy shipping port; schooners calling at Bolinas included *Esperanza, Fourth of July* and *H. C. Almy.* Another landing site was at Samuel P. Taylor's warehouse on Lagunitas (Paper Mill) Creek near the site of today's Point Reyes Station. Here again, lighters carried products to and from a schooner waiting in deeper water.[84]

---

[83]James P. Delgado and Stephen A. Haller, Submerged Cultural Resource Assessment, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary and Point Reyes National Seashore (San Francisco: United States Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, and United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, 1989), pp. 7-9.

[84]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 269; Mason, Earthquake Bay, p. 27; "Abstract . . . Nelson Hotel."

Olema as it appeared about 1900. John Nelson's Olema Hotel dominates the town. *Jack Mason Museum Collection.*



The North Pacific Coast Railroad, seen at Point Reyes Station, bypassed Olema when it was built in 1874. *Jack Mason Museum Collection.*

c. North Pacific Coast/Northwestern Pacific Railroad

A syndicate formed the North Pacific Coast Railroad (NPCRR) in 1871 for the purpose of constructing a railroad and ferry line from San Francisco to the timber-rich Russian River area. Syndicate president James McMillan Shafter influenced the engineers to route the railroad through the Tomales Bay area to benefit the dairy ranchers, many of which were tenants of Shafter's. After procuring rights-of-way from local landowners, the narrow-gauge railroad was constructed during 1873-74 and opened for traffic on January 7, 1875. With termini in Sausalito and San Rafael, where company-owned ferries completed the connection to San Francisco, the line passed through the Ross Valley, over White's Hill and through the San Geronimo Valley, then into the narrow Lagunitas Canyon and across a trestle to the future site of Point Reyes Station. Here the NPCRR built a depot, and within a decade the new town had surpassed Olema in importance and commerce. The railroad continued north along the east shoreline of Tomales Bay and then inland to Tomales and onward to the Russian River area.[85]

Local dairymen and residents, as well as travelers from the city, used stops along the line including Camp Taylor, Taylorville (Pioneer Paper Mill), Jewell's, Tocaloma and Garcia. Jewell's and Garcia were dairy ranch flagstops, while Camp Taylor and Tocaloma attracted tourists to the hotels and camping facilities. A stage could be caught at Tocaloma for Olema and Bolinas.

After a decade of failures and physical deterioration, the line was purchased and renamed North Shore Railroad. The new owners made improvements and, in 1907, sold out to a consortium of North Bay railroads, the Northwestern Pacific Railroad (NWP). The NWP rebuilt the tracks to standard gauge in 1920, but loss of lumber freight business and the advent of automobiles, trucks and improved roads led to the abandonment of the line northwest of Fairfax in 1933. The right-of-way reverted to the ranch owners.[86]

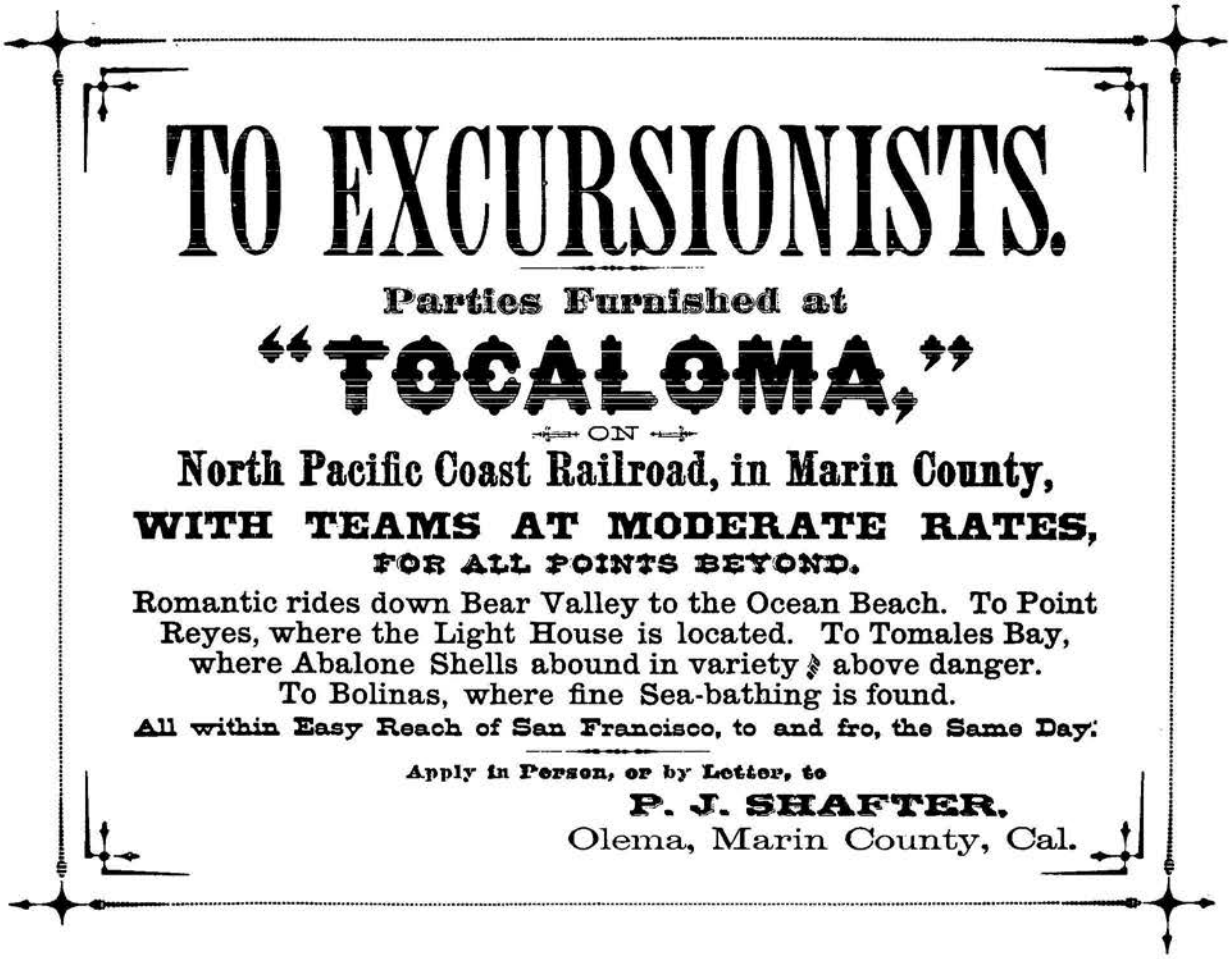
About 9 miles of the railbed of the Northwestern Pacific Railroad remains intact from Lagunitas to Point Reyes Station. It is paved as a multi-

---

[85]A. Bray Dickinson, Narrow Gauge to the Redwoods (Berkeley: Trans-Anglo Books, 1967), pp. 41-42; Mason, Earthquake Bay, pp. 28-29.

[86]Dickinson, Narrow Gauge, p. 128.

use trail from Samuel P. Taylor State Park to the Tocaloma Bridge, and used as a ranch road as far as the Genazzi Ranch, where the grade deadends at the site of a large trestle that spanned Papermill Creek about 1/2 mile from Point Reyes Station. All of this grade is within current park boundaries with the exceptions of the short portion which passes through private property at Tocaloma and the approximately two miles that pass through the private Gallagher Ranch; both properties are within GGNRA's legislated boundaries but have not yet been purchased by the federal government.



Small schooners carried passengers and cargo to and from San Francisco. This boat is docked at Bolinas around the turn of the century. *Collection of Margaret Dowd.*

Bolinas was the major town to the southern Olema Valley families, where stores, churches and transportation to San Francisco could be found. This view is dated 1911. *Courtesy of Jack Mason Museum.*

6. Historic Operation of the Dairy Ranches

a. Grazing and Livestock

Since the arrival of Francis Drake in 1579, visitors have noted the rich grasses of Point Reyes and their potential for exploitation. Spanish explorer Felipe DeGoycoechea described the "very good pasture and springs" during his visit in 1793. Joseph Warren Revere wrote, after his visit in 1846, of "the superior quality of the pasture--the land lying so near the sea, that the dews are heavy and constant, adding great luxuriance to the wild oats and other grains and grasses." The cover of green grass led Isaac Steele to proclaim Point Reyes "Cow Heaven," and can be considered to be the prime factor in the success of the dairy industry here.[87]

A correspondent writing in 1875 noted "the fine natural pasture clear from evil growths, and, where the tenants have been true to their contracts, it is covered with a perfect carpet of rich grasses." On the eastern side of the peninsula at the Olema Valley, clearing of brush and forests was painstakingly producing additional grazing land. Ranch managers also introduced non-native grasses: "In places where improper cultivation has admitted a growth of sorrel," the correspondent wrote, "the land is being put in with Australian rye grass, seeding being thirty pounds to the acre." Eventually, aided by overgrazing, these non-native annual grasses literally took over the peninsula, shortening the feeding season and encouraging growth of brush and invasive plants like thistle and broom.[88]

The natural perennial bunch grasses extended the grazing season by months, but dairy cows still went dry during the winter. Dairymen experimented with feed, at times providing combinations of hay and cultivated ground feeds like corn, barley, wheat, oats and grasses. Experiments with sugar beets, mangel-wurzels, carrots, potatoes, and squash failed. Most dairy ranches in the area until the 1940s kept hayfields which provided the needed supplementary feed. Around the turn of the century scientists found that cows fed alfalfa produced more than double the butterfat than those fed entirely

---

[87]Revere, Naval Duty, p. 68.

[88]Jules G. Evens, The Natural History of the Point Reyes Peninsula (Point Reyes: Point Reyes National Seashore Association, 1988), pp. 55-59; Marin County Journal, December 16, 1875, p. 3.

grass from the range. The advent of cheap feed brought on trucks from the Central Valley led practically all of the dairymen to abandon their fields.[89]

The Shafters stocked their ranches with Durham and Devon cows, but experience proved that cross-breeding increased a cow's value as a milker. Popular early thoroughbreds included the American shorthorn (introduced in 1858), Ayrshire, Devon, Alderney, and Jersey (a favorite family cow giving milk high in butterfat, introduced in 1874); by the 1880s Holstein-Friesian cows, with origins in Europe, were imported in increasing numbers and became, and remain, most popular. Holsteins were reasonably rich milkers, more gentle, and hardy; they were also more expensive. In 1870 a "good" milk cow could be bought for $40 a head. Today, Holsteins are bred to produce large quantities of milk with a lower butterfat content, reflecting the diets of modern Americans.[90]

By 1870 about 500 heifer cows were raised every year on Point Reyes, with most sent to other stock-raisers or to market in San Francisco. Up to 300 cows and beef-steers were sold during the late 1860s, as well as more than 100 horses. Hogs, a staple of the dairyman's enterprise, were fattened in the ranch pigpens on grains and skim milk left from the separating process, then shipped live or dressed to market on the schooner or train. Livestock from the Point Reyes area was typically high quality, boosting the prominence of California as a stock raising region. The Secretary of State reported in 1887, "few countries produce cattle that are superior in any respect to those now being raised in California, notwithstanding her youthful existence." Popular beef cattle included Hereford, Poll-Angus, and Galloway. The native Spanish cattle, raised primarily for hides and tallow, were never considered very good for beef.[91]

The milking season lasted from December through August. The best milk was obtained in the spring and early summer, after which the cows gradually dried up. In the 1860s a buttermaker averaged 175 pounds of butter per cow per season.[92]

---

89 Sneath, "Dairying in California," p. 391; DeGroot, "Dairies and Dairying," p. 357; Arthur R. Briggs, "Dairy Industry of California," California: Its Products, Resources, Industries, and Attractions, T. G. Daniels, Ed. (Sacramento: Superintendent of State Printing, 1904), p. 134.

[90]Peter J. Shields, "Cattle Raising in California," in Daniels, Ed., California: Its Products, pp 128, 130; DeGroot, "Dairies and Dairying," p. 360; Sue Abbott, North Bay Dairylands, (Berkeley: Penstemon Press, 1989), p. 34.

[91]DeGroot, "Dairies and Dairying," p. 358; Sneath, "Dairying in California," pp. 387-388.

[92]DeGroot, "Dairies and Dairying," p. 359.

b. Milking and Separating

Laborers on the dairies milked the cows by hand until the 1920s and 1930s, when milking machines became popular here. A milker found work on a dairy and was provided housing, food, and from $25 to $30 per month wages. One writer noted that the milkers were mostly "whites," with Chinese considered to not be satisfactory milkers. Off season, the milkers either found other work on the ranches or went to the cities for the duration.[93]

Unless it was raining, milking was done outdoors, in a well-drained central corral reserved for the purpose. Each milker took charge of a "string" of cows, usually 20-25, and could milk them in about two hours. The number of cows on a dairy ranch determined the number of milkers required to get the job done. According to an account of methods employed at the Pierce Ranch on Point Reyes published in 1880:

> The milkers use an ordinary flared tin pail, holding about sixteen quarts, and have their milking stools adjusted to them with straps. When the pail is full the milker steps into the strainer room and passes the milk into a sort of double hopper with a strainer in each section. From this the milk passes through a tin pipe to a vat which holds one hundred and thirty gallons.[94]

The milker returned to his "string" after depositing the contents of his bucket.

During bad weather the milking was done in the barn. Here, cows entered the barn from one side, were secured into a stanchion, and milked by hand. The floors were wood, increasing the cleanliness, and the barn was washed out after every milking. Near the turn of the century, some milking barns were improved with concrete floors. Milking machines, invented in the 1870s but not in popular use until the 1920s, decreased the number of milkers required and improved sanitation in the milking process.[95]

After being drawn from the cow, the milk was strained and separated,

---

[93]Ibid., pp. 357-358; Francis E. Sheldon, "Dairying in California," Overland Monthly 11, January-June 1888, p. 343;

[94]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 298.

[95]Sneath, "Dairying in California," p. 391; interview with Joe Mendoza.

the latter a time-consuming procedure requiring skill and timing. The 1880 narrative continues:

> From [the 130-gallon vat] it is drawn off into strainer pails which hold five gallons each, and which have a large scoop shaped nozzle, from which it is poured into the pans. It will thus be seen that the milk passes through three strainers before it is panned. The pans are made of pressed tin and hold twelve quarts each, and are placed in racks, one above the other, before the milk is poured into them . . . . In the center of each room, there is a skimming apparatus which consists of a table about five feet long and two feet wide, placed upon a square pedestal, in either end of which there is a semi-circular notch, under each of which there is placed a can and holding ten gallons for the reception of the cream. In the center of the table is a hopper for the reception of the sour milk, from which it is carried off through pipes. Skimming is performed twice a day, morning and evening, and milk is ordinarily allowed to stand thirty-six hours before it is skimmed, but in very warm weather it is only kept twenty-four hours. This work is begun at three o'clock in the morning, and usually requires an hour and a half to complete it. Two men work at a table, one at each end. The skimmer consists of a wooden knife with a thin blade shaped much like a butters or farrier's knife. This is dexterously and rapidly passed around the rim of the pan, leaving the cream floating free upon the surface of the milk. The pan is then tilted slightly and the cream glides quickly over the rim into the can below. The milk is then emptied into the hopper and conducted to the hog-pen. This arrangement is so compete and compact that the pan is scarcely moved from the time it is placed upon the skimming table till the milk is emptied from it and no time is lost except in passing the pans from the rack to the table. An expert skimmer can handle two hundred pans an hour. In some dairies where the rooms are larger the skimming table is placed upon castors and can be trundled from place to place as convenience requires, and a hose is attached to the hopper leading to the waste pipes.

The pan method described above required vigilance in watching the milk to avoid spoilage and carefully controlled environmental conditions. The scarcity of hot weather aided the Olema Valley dairyman in some ways, but new methods were sought to reduce the time needed for old-fashioned separating. Some complained that the "volatile and delicate flavoring oils" essential to the best butter production were lost in the pan method. Experimentation on the East Coast led to the invention by Dr. Karl Gustaf Patrik De Laval of the continuous discharge centrifugal cream separator, described in a contemporary journal:

> The machine is practically a large bowl which revolves at a rate of from six to eight thousand revolutions a minute. A simple contrivance forces the milk to follow the rotation of the vessel. The milk and cream being of different specific gravities, separate almost immediately upon being put into the machine. The milk being the heavier, passes to the circumference, and is forced up and out through a small delivery tube. The cream collects at the center, and rising up, overflows through the outlet at the top.[96]

These separators, powered by steam or gasoline engines, came into use on Point Reyes in the 1880s, and were in universal use by the turn of the century. The time saved and assurance of quality only furthered the production of fine butter in the area.

c. Buttermaking

Many ranches employed a buttermaker, who was often started as a milker and learned the skills on the job. The buttermaker reigned over the dairy house, and his responsibility to the owners was heavy. Again, the 1880 account:

> The cream is then placed in the churn, which consists of a rectangular box in the shape of a parallelo-pipedon, the sides of which are two and five feet

---

[96]Sheldon, "Dairying" pp. 343-344; The De Laval Handbook of Milking (Poughkeepsie: De Laval Separator Company, ca. 1961), p. 15.

> respectively on the inside. It works on a pivot at the center of the ends, and is driven by a one-horse tread power. The desired result it attained by the breaking of the cream over the sharp angles of the churn, and the operation requires from twenty to forty minutes. The usual yield of a churning is two hundred pounds, although as much as three hundred and forty-seven pounds have been churned at once. The buttermilk is then drawn off and the butter is washed with two waters, when it is ready to have the salt worked into it. It is now weighted and one ounce of salt is allowed for each pound of butter. The worker is a very simple device and is known as the Allen patent, it having been invented by Captain Oliver Allen, of Sonoma county, and consists of two circular tables, one above the other and about four inches apart. The bottom one is stationary and dressed out so that all milk or water falling on it is carried off into a bucket. The upper disc is on a pivot, so that in the process of working all portions of the butter may be easily brought under the flattened lever used for working it. After the salt has been thoroughly incorporated the butter is separated into square blocks about the requisite size for two-pound rolls. The mould is also a patent device originated by Captain Allen, and consists of a matrix, composed of two wooden pieces shaped so as to press the butter into a roll, which are fastened to an extended shear handle, with the joint about midway from the matrix to the end of the handle. The operator opens the matrix, and passes it on either side of one of the squares of butter and then closes it firmly. The ends of the roll are then cut off even with the mould, and the roll is complete. Thin white cotton cloth is placed around each roll, and the stamp of the dairy is applied to one end of it, when it is ready for the market. The rolls are accounted to weigh two pounds each, but they fall short of that weight about two per cent or two pounds to fifty rolls.

The fresh, packaged butter was then stored in a cool cellar, awaiting shipment on the schooner or train to San Francisco. Some butter was saved for the "dry" season in winter, when fresh butter was in demand. This surplus butter was packed in firkins, or made into two pound rolls, covered with light muslin wraps, then packed in salt brine in tight barrels. Timing was everything in the

sale of this off-season "pickled butter," as the prices fluctuated day by day in the fall and winter.[97]

The majority of the local butter, however, was shipped within days to market. The 1880 writer waxed about the quality of the local butter, enchanted by what he had witnessed at a Point Reyes dairy:

> It is thus that this elegant golden delicacy is prepared for our table, and among all the choice products of the glorious State of California none stands out in bolder relief, nor strikes the visitor to our coast more forcibly, none affords more real pleasure to the consumer than the wonderfully excellent butter which finds its way to the city markets from Marin county. In quality, color and sweetness it is not excelled by the famous butter producing sections of Goshen in New York, or the Western Reserve of Ohio. Nor is it equaled in any other part of the United States. What a field for contemplative thought: The verdant fields of grass, toyed with by the winds, bathed in a flood of sunshine and shrouded in folds of lacelike and fleecy mists fresh from the ocean with herds of kine feeding upon them; driven at eventime into the corral and, while thoughtfully ruminating, yielding the gallons and gallons of rich, pure, sweet milk; again we see it in great cans of yellow cream, fit for the use of a king; and then the golden butter, and such a delicious butter; Ready for the market and for the table of the epicure. The grass growing in the fields on Monday is the butter on the city tables the following Sunday![98]

e. Marketing

California dairies made 6 million pounds of butter in 1869, and the figures continued to grow during the next decades. Marin County was the highest producer at 1.5 million pounds, with the Shafters' Point Reyes dairies contributing the lion's share; the Olema Valley contributed to a lesser extent,

---

[97]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 299; Sneath, "Dairying in California," p. 390; San Francisco Chronicle, October 30, 1886.

[98]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 300.

while keeping the quality levels high. All of the local butter was shipped via sea or rail to San Francisco commission houses, where the dairyman received a pre-arranged price and the commission merchant distributed the product.[99]

In 1870 the wholesale price of butter in San Francisco averaged 70 cents per pound (this was the price given to the farmer) in late November, reduced to 40 cents by the end of February. From March through May the price dropped to a low of 30-35 cents, then advanced in June back to the 70-75 cents level where it generally stayed until November. When the price hit 40 cents the dairyman typically started packing it and waiting for a better market. A great deal of butter was exported: also in 1870, some 25,389 firkins were shipped by steamer to the East Coast, Japan, China and Pacific Islands, and 5,098 firkins and 3,154 kegs by railroad to the eastern states.[100]

Point Reyes butter, known for its high quality, commanded higher prices than that from other areas in the county and state. Some dairy farmers from these areas questioned the fairness of the reputation bestowed upon Point Reyes butter. One publication, *The San Francisco Merchant,* editorialized in 1879:

> It seems so strange that Olema and other points with almost the same climate and soil cannot reach the prices obtained by the Point Reyes dairymen by a cent or more, but such is the case. Which is the more probable, that the dairymen are particular in preparing their butter or that the soil and climatic conditions are somewhat different, or that the produce agents and commercial reporters are in league to bull Point Reyes products at the expense of other points of the same county? We think the complainants will find the cause or causes of the discrimination against them at home if they look carefully for it.[101]

The question arises, was Point Reyes butter overrated, with the help of the

---

[99]Titus Fey Cronise, The Natural Wealth of California (San Francisco: H. H. Bancroft & Co., 1868), pp. 162-163; "Partial Schedules for California, Vol. 2," Agricultural Recapitulations for California, Marin County, U. S. Census Bureau, 9th Census, 1870.

[100]DeGroot, "Dairies and Dairying," pp. 359-60.

[101]Quoted in the Marin County Journal, March 20, 1879, p. 3.

Shafters' business and political connections and social stature in San Francisco? Or was the butter quality indeed high enough to deserve its praise and prices? The *Merchant's* point about soils and climate brings up the fact that Point Reyes climate and soils were indeed different, both with increased moisture and entirely different soil conditions on the west side of the San Andreas Fault that increased production and quality. In addition, Point Reyes did not always command the highest prices, as stated in the *Marin Journal's* rebuttal to the *San Francisco Merchant's* editorial:

> We think it is an open question whether Point Reyes dairymen do obtain higher prices than others in this county. We know butter men in Olema, Nicasio, Marshall and Tomales, who claim that their product, placed side by side with Point Reyes, sells first, and at the same price; and they are reliable men. Point Reyes has become a synonym for gilt-edge butter, and deservedly so, but we are not clear that it outranks other places in this county . . . .[102]

By the 1920s, Point Reyes dairymen marketed cream rather than butter, as members of the Point Reyes Cooperative Creamery. Grade A market milk was sold through contracts with large creameries.

7. Government Dairy Regulation

During the first four decades of dairying in Marin County few if any laws regulating sanitation or product quality existed. While by 1888, English dairies operated under strict medical and scientific supervision, and the State of New York spent some $75,000 per year on dairy supervision, California adopted no regulations or means of sanitary or quality control supervision.[103]

Before the turn of the century, California began to follow national trends of using science to improve production and quality. California Governor James H. Budd appointed a temporary three-person State Dairy Bureau in 1895 and made the organization permanent in 1897. In 1906, the San Francisco Medical

---

[102]Ibid.

[103]Sneath, "Dairying in California," pp. 394-95.

Society appointed a Milk Commission to set standards for fresh milk. The Pure Milk Law of 1915, which regulated conditions in which butter could be made, requiring pasteurization of cream, resulted in the formation of the Point Reyes Dairymen's Association and its Point Reyes Cooperative Creamery, built that year in Point Reyes Station. This act ended the manufacture of commercial butter on the ranches. Most dairymen from the Olema Valley trucked their cream to the creamery where it was processed into butter, cheese, condensed milk, dry milk powder, and casein.[104]

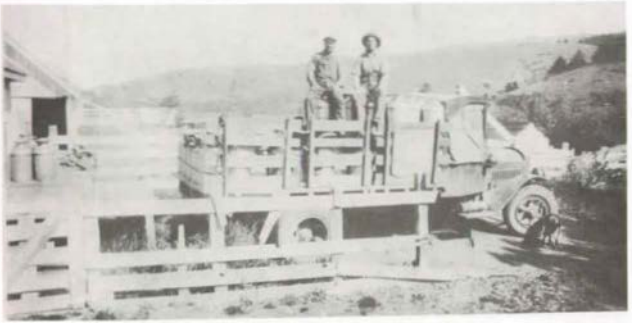
The Department of Agriculture succeeded the State Dairy Bureau in 1919, creating a Division of Animal Industry that regulated dairying, livestock identification, disease control, meat inspection, and tuberculosis control. In 1924 the Dairy Service of the Division of Animal Control became a separate branch within the Department of Agriculture, called the Bureau of Dairy Control, which operated until it was dissolved in 1933. In 1920, the Marin County Farm Bureau established an office in San Rafael and M. B. Boissevain was appointed as the county Farm Advisor. Under the auspices of University of California at Berkeley, established as an agricultural land-grant college, the farm advisor traveled to all of the farms in Marin County and shared the newest information from the scientific and agricultural community. Boissevain worked with the ranchers to improve the herd's health and production, feed quality and crop methods, erosion and range management, and sanitation problems. The farm advisor also participated in 4-H organizations throughout the county, and helped establish a local chapter of Future Farmers of America.[105]

These various regulatory agencies established sanitary standards for ranches and creameries, including construction specifications for milking barns, and performed tests on the purity of the milk as it came out of the cow. The dairy tester was a common visitor to any California dairy. He would check the milk for impurities and disease and measure butterfat content. The state began to certify dairies in the early 1920s, a process that eventually resulted in the A and B grading system.

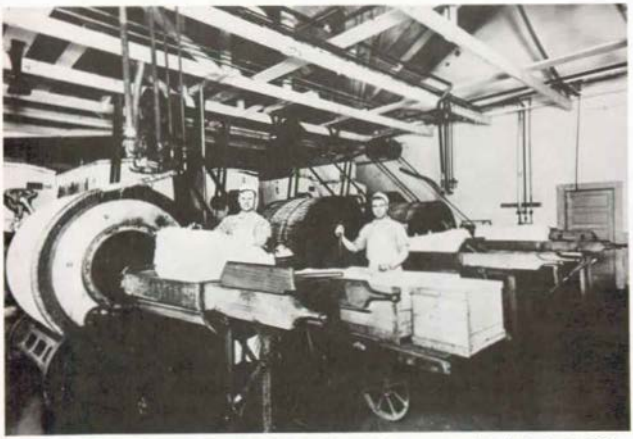
---

[104]Marin Journal, February 22, 1906; Mason, Historian, pp. 736-737; interviews with Joe Mendoza, Boyd Stewart.

[105]Elsey Hurt, California State Government, An Outline of its Administrative Organization from 1850 to 1936 (Sacramento: Superintendent of Documents, 1936), pp. 12, 17; Abbott, North Bay Dairylands, pp. 15-16; Marin Journal, September 30, 1920.



Picking up cream at the Healion (Hagmaier) Ranch for the Point Reyes Cooperative Creamery in the 1930s. *Collection of the Lucchesi Family.*



Member workers (Point Reyes dairymen Bill Hall and Joe Adams) in the creamery making butter in the 1920s. *Jack Mason Museum Collection.*

The revolution in the dairy industry involved this grading system, in which a dairy could become certified to ship fresh liquid milk, or "market milk," for home consumption after processing at a pasteurization and packaging facility. Grade A dairies required a milking barn with a concrete floor and walls with adequate drainage and ventilation. In the Olema Valley these improvements began to appear in the mid-1930s, and by 1950 practically every dairy was Grade A. Grade B dairies operated under less strict sanitary standards and produced only cream for processing into butter. During World War II, Grade B dairymen who could pass a sanitary inspection could sell liquid milk, called emergency milk, as a contribution to the war effort.[106]

The establishment of Grade A dairies changed the face of the Olema Valley dairies. The large wooden milking barns came into a new use as feed storage, and the old dairy houses or creameries were often remodeled into residences or torn down. The Grade A, or sanitary, barn became the center of activity at the ranch, and the cleaning of the barn and disposal of dairy wastes became more carefully practiced. Local dairies ceased to truck their own milk out, as larger creameries provided pickup service to the farthest dairies at Point Reyes. The days of ten-gallon cans of milk or cream gave way to the stainless steel storage tank and tanker truck. The early 1970s brought strict environmental laws to west Marin dairies, requiring large capital outlays for manure handling. Many of the small Olema Valley dairies did not even have room for these improvements, and most had been purchased by the federal government as parkland. As a result of these factors, by 1975, all of the Olema Valley dairies had gone out of business.[107]

H. Olema Valley Becomes Public Land

1. County and State Acquisition, 1935-62

A growing conservation movement in the San Francisco Bay area provided a boost for recreational lands in proximity to the urban areas. In Marin County, Muir Woods National Monument was created in 1908 as the first

[106]Interviews with Ron McClure, Joe Mendoza.

[107]Abbott, North Bay Dairylands, pp. 82-83.

Aerial view of the Olema Valley, looking north, taken in 1959. The Ralph Giacomini Ranch is in the center, Olema and Point Reyes Station in the distance. *California Division of Highways.*

National Park in the San Francisco area. A number of county and state parks were created in the 1930s and 1940s largely through the efforts of local conservationists. The political climate of the late 1950s included a push for increasing park lands near major cities; Point Reyes National Seashore, authorized in 1962, laid the groundwork for the establishment of Golden Gate National Recreation Area ten years later. GGNRA enveloped a mix of urban, military, recreational and agricultural lands, including much of the western San Francisco waterfront and open space of southern Marin County.

2. National Park Service Acquisition, 1963-88

President John F. Kennedy signed Public Law 87-657 (S.476) on September 13, 1962, authorizing Point Reyes National Seashore. After a number of initial land purchases, including the massive Bear Valley Ranch, the authorizing acquisition funds had been spent. With park-designated lands slated for development and increasing public activism to "Save Our Seashore," as well as landowner complaints about paying higher taxes, the authorizing act was amended in 1969 to raise the acquisition ceiling to $57.7 million. Most of the park land purchases occurred during the early 1970s. The U. S. Department of the Interior officially established Point Reyes National Seashore on September 16, 1972, after sufficient land had been purchased to make the area efficiently administrable to carry out the purposes of the Authorizing Act of 1962 and its revision of 1969.[108]

Public sentiment fueled by the "Save Our Seashore" movement brought a push for additional park lands close to San Francisco. As the idea progressed of an urban park that also stretched north into rural lands of the Olema Valley, some landowners became alarmed. Rancher Boyd Stewart, a supporter of the park idea, recalled:

> Developers got very interested in the land when they started talking about the park . . . . There was a lot of interest shown in all of the ranches in the Olema

[108]Statement for Management, Point Reyes National Seashore (revised May, 1990; National Park Service: 1990), p. 45.

Valley on the part of outside developers and speculators.[109]

The interests described had little time to act. Public Law 92-589, authorizing Golden Gate National Recreation Area, was signed by President Richard Nixon on October 27, 1972. Included in the approximately 35,000 acres in the designated park boundaries were more than 8,000 acres of ranching land in the Olema Valley. The Acquisition Policy of the Act contained an important provision that helped significantly to ease the initial impact of the park on the ranching community. It specified that owners of improved properties could retain a right of use and occupancy for life or a term of 25 years. In the Olema Valley, four landowners elected to retain such rights, thus helping to maintain the stability of the local economy and the continuity of cultural values. On November 10, 1978, Public Law #95-625 increased the park's boundaries to the north and east of Olema, to include much of the Lagunitas Creek area in the vicinity of Tocaloma and Devils Gulch. This Act specifically mentioned agriculture as an appropriate continuing use of the area within park boundaries, and all of the owners in the area retained 25-year rights. More land, 1,214 acres including Samuel P. Taylor State Park and more of the Lagunitas Loop, was added with Public Law 96-199 on March 5, 1980, and Public law 96-344 of September 8, 1980 added 1,096 acres of the McFadden and Genazzi Ranches. These boundary changes increased the lands in the Olema Valley/Tocaloma area to more than 10,000 acres.

Three subsequent acts of Congress added acreage to Point Reyes National Seashore: 448 acres in the Inverness Ridge and Bear Valley areas in 1974 (Public Law 93-550), about 2,000 acres in the Bolinas area in 1978 (Public Law 95-625), and an undetermined number of acres in the Inverness Park area in 1980 (Public Law 96-199). Under a management agreement with General Superintendent of GGNRA, the Superintendent of Point Reyes National Seashore manages 10,125 acres of the adjacent Golden Gate National Recreation Area, which is almost entirely in agricultural operation as beef and horse ranches.[110]

---

[109]Golden Gate National Recreation Area Oral History Interview with Boyd Stewart, by Sara Conklin, June 15, 1993.

[110]Ibid., pp. 46-47; "Briefing Statement," Point Reyes National Seashore, January, 1987, pp. 1, 3; "Statement for Management," Golden Gate National Recreation Area, April 1992.

Pioneers of the Olema and Bolinas area: Henry Strain (see page 71 *et seq.*) and Omar Jewell (page 377 *et seq.*). From Munro-Fraser's 1880 *History of Marin County.*

Felix Garcia

To

James McM. Shafter

Deed

David Sept 24. 1871

Cmo $8250

Stamps $8.50 Canc.

This grant, bargain and sell convey and confirm unto the said party of the 2d part his heirs and assigns all that lot of land situate in the County of Marin State of California described as follows, to wit:-

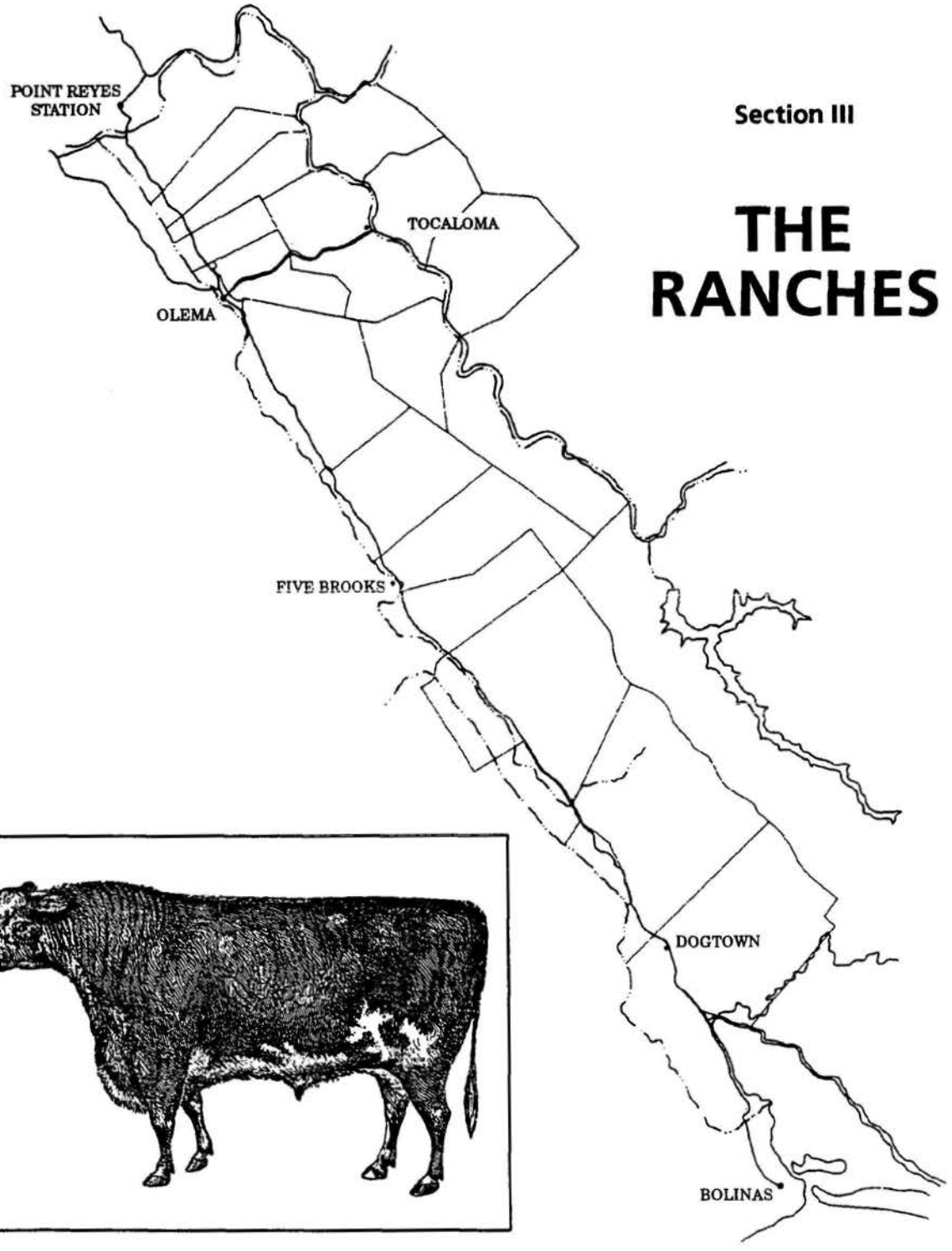
All that certain tract of land being part of the Rancho Tomales y Baulines which was granted to Rafael Garcia now deceased by the Mexican Government. The portion of said Rancho hereby conveyed is described as follows.

(Same as in Liber J of Deeds page 5 M. Loretta Garcia & others to Felix Garcia)

Containing an area of Four hundred and fifty-four and

A copy of the deed between Felix Garcia and James McMillan Shafter, one of the transactions signalling the end of the Garcia era at Olema.

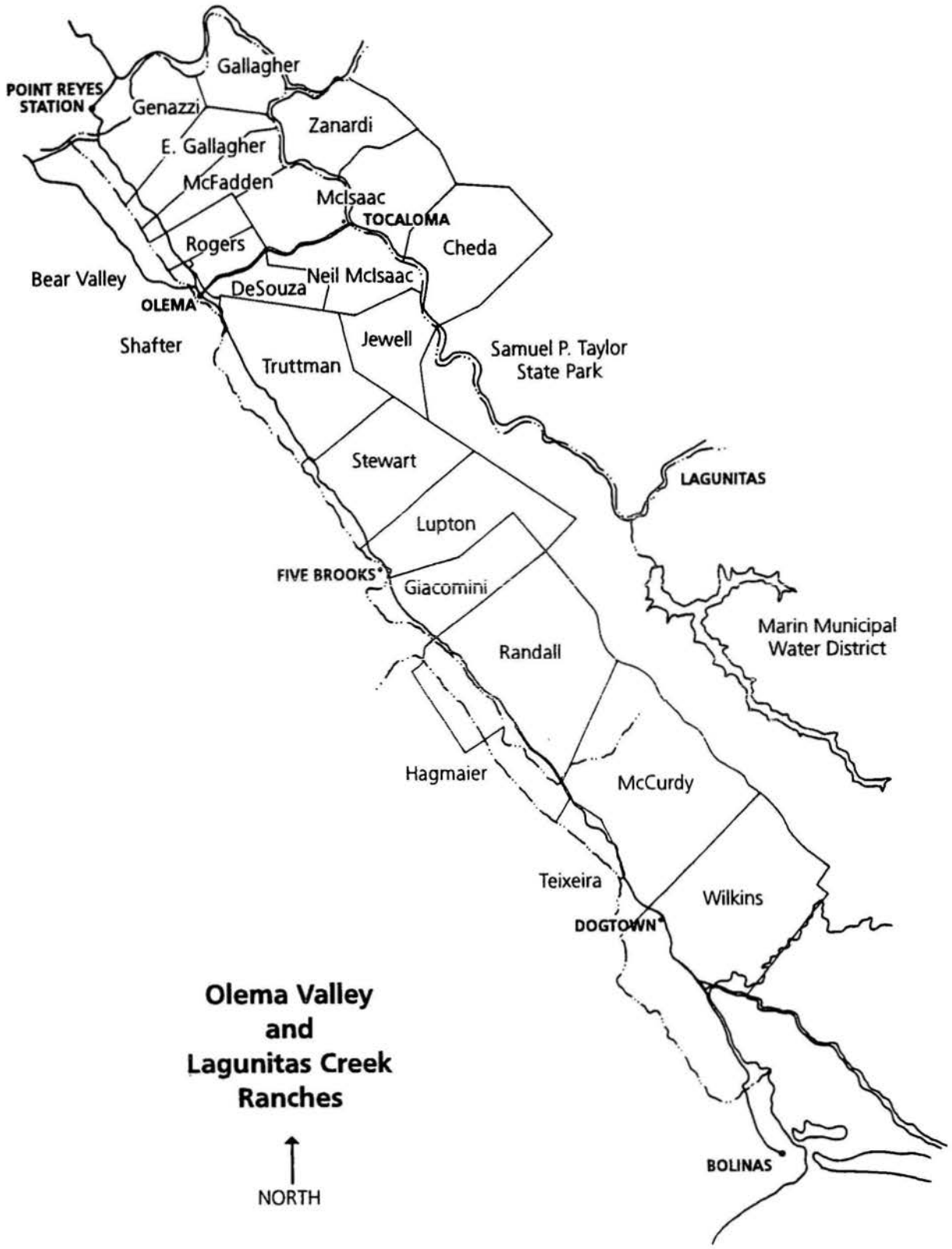
DAIRY FARMING IN THE OLEMA VALLEY



Section III

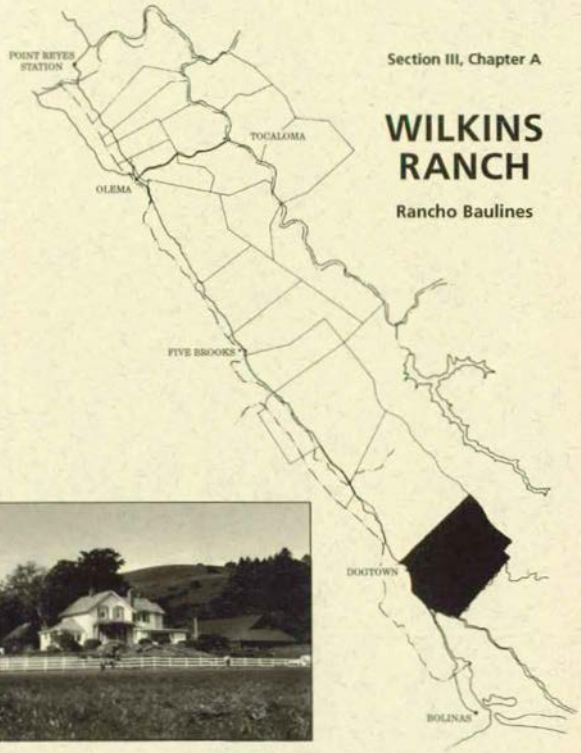
THE RANCHES

HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE



Olema Valley and Lagunitas Creek Ranches

DAIRY FARMING IN THE OLEMA VALLEY

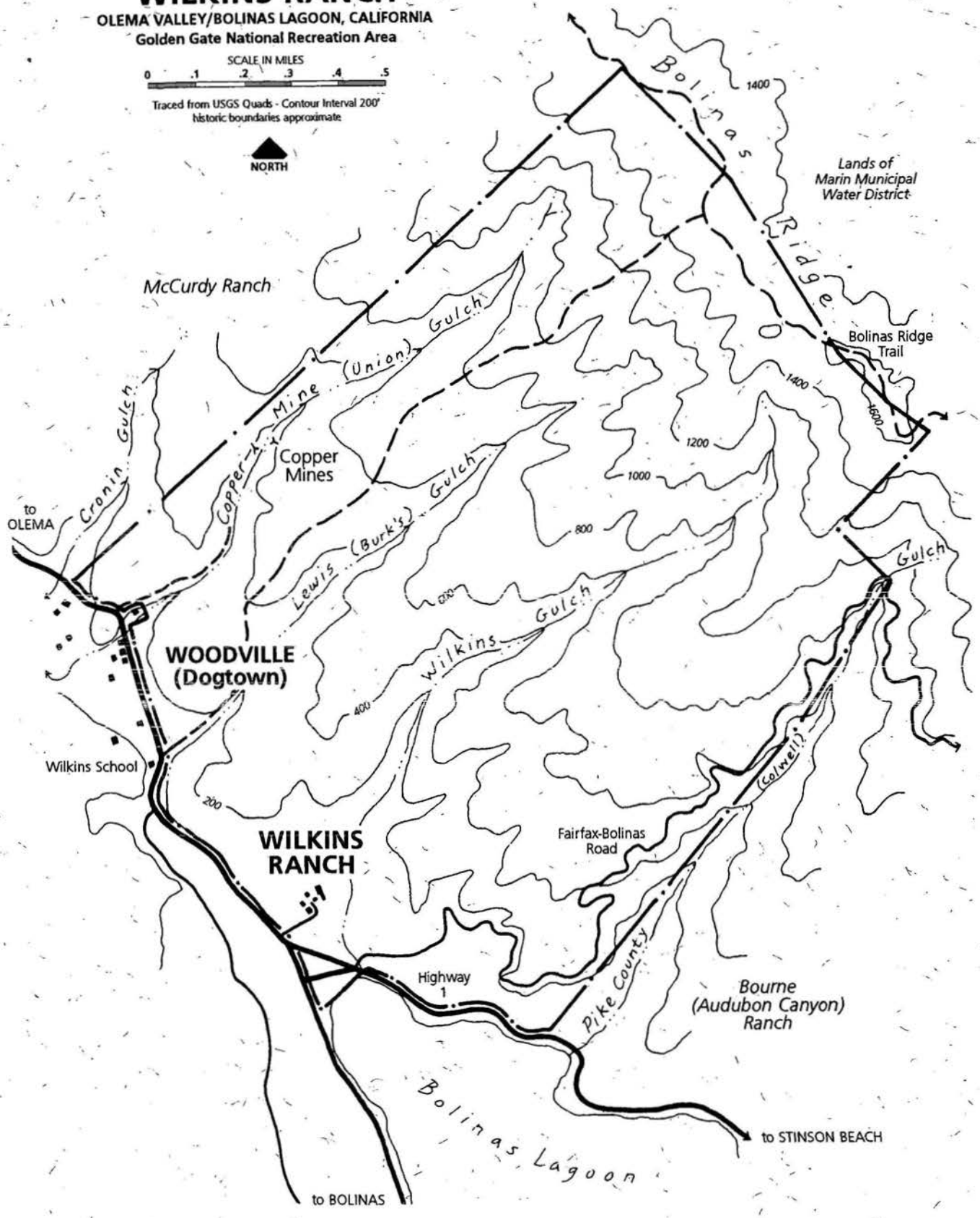


Section III, Chapter A

WILKINS RANCH

Rancho Baulines

HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE


WILKINS RANCH
OLEMA VALLEY/BOLINAS LAGOON, CALIFORNIA
Golden Gate National Recreation Area
SCALE IN MILES
0 .1 .2 .3 .4 .5
Traced from USGS Quads - Contour Interval 200'
historic boundaries approximate
NORTH
Bolinas Ridge
Lands of Marin Municipal Water District
McCurdy Ranch
Union Gulch
Copper Mine
Copper Mines
Cronin Gulch
Lewis (Burk's) Gulch
Wilkins Gulch
Bolinas Ridge Trail
1400
1600
1200
1000
800
600
400
200
to OLEMA
WOODVILLE (Dogtown)
Wilkins School
WILKINS RANCH
Fairfax-Bolinas Road
Colwell?
Highway 1
Pike County
Bourne (Audubon Canyon) Ranch
Bolinas Lagoon
to STINSON BEACH
to BOLINAS

A. WILKINS RANCH
Rancho Baulines
(Golden Gate National Recreation Area)

1. Description

The Wilkins Ranch, called Rancho Baulines by its occupants for the last two decades, is a gem of vernacular architecture and in a rural setting: the white farmhouse and outbuildings sit on a knoll surrounded by green fields at the head of Bolinas Lagoon, acting as a picturesque welcoming scene to the northern section of Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore. The Wilkins family owned the ranch for more than a century and little has changed on the exterior from its original state. The 1,397-acre ranch is composed of grassland, brush and forest, stretching from Bolinas Lagoon and Wilkins Gulch to the top of Bolinas Ridge. The ranch is bounded on the north by the former McCurdy/Righetti Ranch in GGNRA, on the east by lands of the Marin Municipal Water District, on the south by the Fairfax-Bolinas Road and the former Bourne Ranch (now Audubon Canyon Ranch), and on the west by State Route One and Bolinas Lagoon.

2. History of the Wilkins Ranch

The story of the Wilkins Ranch begins with the timbering and sawmill operations at Dogtown, a tiny village on the northwestern corner of the ranch. A party of "Forty-niners" led by James Hough arrived at Bolinas Lagoon late in 849 with the intent to log the rich valleys of the area and export wharf timbers to the fast-growing new city, San Francisco. Gregorio Briones and Rafael Garcia sold exclusive timber rights to Hough, P. G. Hatch and Joaquin Armas "to fell, saw and otherwise make use of all the timber now standing on the rancho or farm" [Rancho las Baulines], for a period of 10 years. The deed also granted the right to "make roads, wharfs, mill houses, barns or other improvements . . . without paying for the timber." The agreement included the right to graze cattle and horses. Hough and his partners agreed to pay Briones and Garcia either one tenth of the profits from sale of the lumber or "one third part of all boards, shingles, joists or other lumber that they . . . shall cut, split or saw."

At the end of ten years the Hough party will leave "at least one good saw mill and one good dwelling house." The contract could be sold to a third party, and if the partners did not commence building the saw mills within eight months the contract would be void. The men made a verbal agreement in July of 1849 and drew a contract on October 12. They soon constructed a sawmill, on the flat above what would soon become Dogtown, with a capacity of producing about 8,000 board feet per day.[1]

Among the party were Joseph Almy, Charles Lauff, Bart Henderson, Benjamin T. Winslow, Hiram Nott and others, most of whom stayed in the area for the rest of their lives. The company built a large building, reportedly about 100 yards north of the present Wilkins Ranch house, and began shipping wharf timbers to San Francisco. The timbers, for which the contractor received two dollars per running foot, were rafted from a wharf at the head of Bolinas Lagoon to a schooner waiting outside the entrance to the lagoon, near the location where the town of Bolinas developed in the following years.[2]

It appears that the Hough contract ended by 1852. That year Briones leased most of what became the Wilkins Ranch to George R. Morris, to farm and cut timber for $150.00 per month. At some point the lumber operation was given the name Pacific Lumber Company. Within five months Morris transferred the lease to Captain John Hammond and J. E. De La Montague. Hammond and his partner, for $27,500, received mill machinery, houses, implements, furniture and provisions, seven yoke of working cattle, two horses (a bay and a sorrel), and all the wagons, trucks, carts, carriages, iron, coal and a scow (probably the *Julia,* whose master was original partner Joseph Almy), in essence, the entire works of the Pacific Lumber Company. Hammond soon sold out to De La Montague, who went into debt in the ensuing year and founded the Baulines Mill Company in May, 1853. The mill works were reconstructed by Oliver Allen, an inventor and steam-power expert. Allen lived at the site for about two years. Allen's steam-powered circular saw reportedly cut six million feet of lumber during the following six years of operation. Other mills, including an additional Baulines Mill Company operation, soon followed. Various outfits placed sawmills in the surrounding area, on Peck's Ridge and

---

[1]Deeds Book A, p 279, MCRO.

[2]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 267.

the Randall Ranch to the north and in the gulches draining into Bolinas Lagoon to the south.[3]

The products of the early sawmills were transported across the future Wilkins Ranch with great difficulty. About twenty years after the heyday of the operations at Dogtown, a writer described the process:

> The logs were drawn to the mills with heavy ox teams on carts, the wheels of which were made from sections sawed off from a log. The lumber was drawn to the head of the bay, and thence lightered out over the bar, where it was loaded on vessels for San Francisco. The transportation of this lumber required from six to eight vessels ranging in carrying capacity from eight thousand to one hundred and twenty thousand feet each. The remnants of the old lighter wharves are all that is now left to mark the site of these busy operations . . . .[4]

De La Montague's debts caught up with the company in May of 1854, when a creditor sued the company for $30,000 with interest. Hiram Grimes bought the company and lease in June of 1854 at a Sheriff's sale for $21,000; by now the assets included two saw mills, six lighters (scows) and a load of lumber at the embarcadero. The records of that year read like a messy stew of sales, mortgages and foreclosures, as Grimes sold his contract and Briones mortgaged the entire property, finally losing it to one Charles Correns who apparently resided in Germany. This January 29, 1856 transaction with Correns set the boundaries of the 2,200 acre tract that would become the Wilkins Ranch and its neighbors, the Bourne and Weeks Ranches on Bolinas Lagoon.[5]

Around all this activity grew the small village of Dogtown. A store, blacksmith shop and school eventually made the town prosperous enough to cause, in 1870, the city fathers to change the name to a more respectable "Woodville." The woodcutting eventually diminished but the townsite west of

---

[3]Ibid.; Deeds Book A, pp. 216-219,220-222, 248-249, 298, Book B, pp. 18-21, Mortgages Book A, pp. 93-95, 96-100, 102-105, MCRO; Delgado and Haller, Submerged Cultural Resource Assessment, p. 120; Oliver Allen Papers, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

[4]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 269.

[5]Deeds Book A, pp. 463-464, 465-466, Book B, pp. 66-67 and 161-163, Book C, pp. 8-9, Mortgages Book A, pp. 224-225, 227-228, 234-235 and 279-280, MCRO.

THE BOLINAS COPPER MINES

The copper mine works on the Wilkins Ranch, about 1903. Part of the structure is a residence. *National Park Service Collection.*

As the sawmills at Dogtown finished stripping the surrounding gulches of their redwood timber, another consumptive industry was beginning in the same area. During the Civil War in 1863 owners of the Union Copper Mining Company, including Pablo Briones, opened a mine in what they called Union Gulch (the name probably derived from the political orientation of its owners or managers in support of the Union against the Confederacy); another group, the Pike County Mining Company, opened a mine in Pike County Gulch about a mile south. A newspaper noted in 1864 that the companies were "pushing forward their tunnels with vigor, and are sanguine with success." The mine at Pike County Gulch, however, failed. Work continued at the Union into 1867, when Cantrill & McCormack sought a rich ledge through hard rock. But the next year the mines were at a standstill, the newspaper reporting that they were "rich in copper, but no silver to extract it." Over the years the Union mine did ship several tons of ore out for reduction to England. The mining boom occurred in many areas of the county, but most operations "fizzled". The low price of copper and the high cost of transportation worked against gaining any financial success.

In the late 1860s William W. Wilkins purchased the property on which the mine stood, and made agreements in 1875 with James K. Maddock and in 1877 with Joseph Lauricella to "work continuously in prospecting and developing the mining interests in [Union] Gulch." The next reported activity was in 1895 when a prospect shaft was being sunk, revealing a 12-foot vein of "sulphurets of copper and iron." Fifty tons of copper at $45 per ton was taken at that time. At some point around the turn of the century the canyon was renamed Copper Mine Gulch.

Wilkins leased the mines again in 1900 to Captain Thomas Whitelaw, who "imported a lot of ancient mine machinery" and eventually turned the operation over to "Wildcat" Pearson. After showing poor results and failing to pay laborers and creditors, Whitelaw and Pearson were evicted by a court order brought by Wilkins, who had also suffered the loss of cattle into the mine shafts. In 1917 and 1918 the Chetco Mining Company worked the mines for the last time, removing 22,500 pounds of copper ore which was transported by a small local schooner, the "Owl", to Pittburg, California for processing. Chetco's operation, employing 25 workers and using up-to-date equipment, developed the mine to its greatest extent and no doubt made the most profit of all the attempts during the last half century.

At least two tunnels, securely closed against intruders, remain at Copper Mine Gulch, as well as remnants of the operation including foundations, rusty boiler and a cabin site; the road from Dogtown to the mines can still be traced for much of the way to the site. At least two tunnels, securely closed against intruders, remain at Copper Mine Gulch, as well as remnants of the operation including foundations, rusty boiler and a cabin site; the road from Dogtown to the mines can still be traced for much of the way to the site.

Sources: Toogood, Civil History, pp. 201-205; Mason, Last Stage, pp. 61-62; Marin County Journal, April 8, May 2 and 9, November 11, 1863, June 11, 1864, March 16 and 30, April 13, 1867, and April 4, 1868; Leases Book B, p. 291, Deeds Book P, p. 460, MCRO.

the county road continued to the present as a small residential community. The eastern part of the town was sold in 1866 and 1868 to W. W. Wilkins, who developed the ranch that is the subject of this chapter.[6]

In August of 1857 Correns made an agreement with Nathaniel Page, Jr. to take and mill lumber, and in early 1858 sold the 2,200 acre property to Page; the deed for this transaction established the property as the Page Tract, a name that would figure in deeds for decades to come. Page and his partners Solomon Sharp and Francis Belden apparently kept the sawmills going and paid taxes on the land until making an agreement in 1864 with a group of men calling themselves the Morgan Land Company. Page then sold the tract to the group, Isaac Morgan, William W. Wilkins, John M. Burke, L. C. Pyle, Samuel Clarke and S. P. Weeks, on August 1, 1866, for $7,000.[7]

The apparent leader of the partnership, Captain Isaac Morgan, had arrived at Bolinas in 1851 and was the first to purchase land from Gregorio Briones. Morgan purchased a tract covering much of the east side of Bolinas Lagoon and established the Belvidere Ranch, where he grew apples, had a small dairy and farm, built boats and cut wood. Morgan and his partners in the Page Tract purchase were all neighbors who had pioneered in the area during the previous decade.

During the following two years, 1866 through 1868, partners Burke, Weeks and Pyle sold out their interests to Wilkins, and in late 1868 Clarke sold his 2/7th to Peter Bourne. In November of 1869 Bourne and Wilkins split up the tract, with Bourne taking the southern 794 acres where he developed a dairy ranch and Wilkins the larger northern tract of 1397.14 acres; he also bought adjacent tidelands at the head of Bolinas Lagoon from L. C. Pyle. Thus the Wilkins Ranch was created, and soon it prospered.[8]

---

[6]Marin County Journal, November 26, 1870.

[7]Deeds Book B, pp. 368-371, 377, 378, Book C, pp. 187-188, Book E, p. 614, MCRO; Assessments 1859-1865, in Abstract, Wilkins.

[8]Deeds Book E, p. 620, Book F, pp. 403 and 416, Book G, p. 597, Book H, pp. 66, 199, 276 and 403, MCRO. Peter Bourne's family owned the ranch south of Wilkins well into the 20th century. Today it and its neighbor to the south, the Weeks Ranch, comprise the Audubon Canyon Ranch.

Left, William Wallace Wilkins in a photo taken about 1880. Below, Mary Butler Morse Wilkins. *Courtesy of Ruth Rathbun.*

William Wallace Wilkins arrived in San Francisco at the height of the Gold Rush, on September 17, 1849. Born in Middleton, Massachusetts in 1824, Wilkins had joined the Gold Rush with one of the earliest joint stock companies of 65 members which brought as part of its cargo on the *La Grange* a disassembled steamer for use in Sacramento River trade. Upon its completion the steamer, christened *Commodore Jones* by its makers, made the first voyage of any steamer from Benicia to Sacramento; it subsequently became that city's first jail. Wilkins worked in various mines until late 1852, when he came to the Bolinas area where he met with Capt. Morgan. Wilkins leased Morgan's ranch with the intent of starting a dairy, but instead was employed by Morgan as the ranch manager. He then bought out Morgan's partner in the ranch and made a living for almost ten years cutting cordwood and railroad ties for a commission house in San Francisco. His interactions with Morgan and other neighbors led to his final purchase and settlement on the Wilkins Ranch.[9]

According to family accounts, Wilkins built his large barn soon after purchasing an interest in the property in 1866; the barn appears on the first survey for a road around Bolinas Lagoon in February of 1868. He also built a creamery, horse barn and a number of outbuildings. Also, a number of residences around Dogtown, dating from the sawmill era, remained on the ranch under lease from the owner. Wilkins made agreements with miners to reopen the copper mines on the property that had been first explored in 1863 (see sidebar).

Wilkins did not continue to operate the dairy; in 1870 he leased the ranch to Angelo Pedrotti, a Swiss immigrant, for five years at $1800 per year. Included in the lease were 150 cattle, 8 head of horses and colts, plus all of the "teams, carts, machinery, tools and implements now on the tract." Later, in 1883, Angelo's brother James Pedrotti took a five year lease on the dairy.[10]

Reportedly the fine Wilkins house was built around 1875 as he prepared to get married and start a family. In 1876 he married Mary B. Morse, sister of a neighbor down Bolinas Lagoon, Benjamin Morse. The couple had five children, twins Mary (May) and Bessie (born 1876), James G. (Jim) (1878), Helen (1882) and Edith (1884). Jim and his twin sisters worked on the ranch,

---

[9]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, pp. 428-430; Prof. J. M. Guinn, History of the State of California and Biographical Record of the Coast Counties (Chicago: Chapman Publishing Co., 1904), pp. 393-394.

[10]Deeds Book I, p. 310, Leases Book A, p. 523, Book B, p. 121, Book C, p. 130, MCRO.

and Jim eventually took over the operation of the dairy with his wife, the former Helen DeFraga of the McCurdy Ranch. Helen and Edith were sent to schools outside of the area and both eventually graduated from Stanford.[11]

A biography published in 1894 noted that "for many years [Wilkins] has conducted a dairy on his place, milking about eighty cows, and has a model establishment fitted up with every convenience, among which may be mentioned a fine modern refrigerator. The power is all supplied by water." Wilkins had a water-powered generator which ran the separators and a sawmill, with which he milled lumber from his property on Bolinas Ridge. Later the system reportedly powered electric milking machines and lights in the house and barns. The area did not get commercial power until Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company of America built an important trans-Pacific transmitting station nearby in 1914.[12]

W. W. Wilkins was known for his handiness with machines and tools. In 1881 he was awarded $1,029 after construction of the San Rafael-Bolinas Road took an unplanned route through the property in 1878, and as part of the settlement he was allowed to keep a gate at the foot of the grade for a period of three years. He built a self-operating gate at the foot of the road that rated mention in the San Rafael newspaper. A few years later he lost two fingers while building a bridge near his ranch. He worked on the roads in his neighborhood, at one point employing sixteen men on the San Rafael-Bolinas Road, making it "one of the best roads in the county."[13]

At the turn of the century the Wilkins Ranch was producing 2,250 pounds of butter per month from 64 cows at the height of the season. Eventually the number of cows rose to about 125.[14]

Fire caused a great deal of damage on the Wilkins Ranch a number of times. In late 1890, a fire burned an estimated nine-tenths of the Wilkins land; the San Rafael newspaper wrote of "hungry flames which have licked the hills and gulches clean of feed for many miles." A similar fire did much damage in

---

[11]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 430; interview with Helen Wilkins and Kenneth Wilkins.

[12]Guinn, Coast Counties, p. 394; interview with Helen Wilkins and Kenneth Wilkins; Pacific Service Magazine, Vol. VI, No. 5, October 1914, p. 148, courtesy of Ted Wurm.

[13]Deeds Book R, p. 620, Book V, p. 484, MCRO; Marin County Journal, March 4 and July 28, 1881; Marin Journal, November 5, 1885, May 6, 1886.

[14]Marin Journal, June 20, 1901; interview with Kenneth Wilkins.

1904, including destroying bridges and culverts on the Fairfax-Bolinas Road, and a huge fire in 1945 burned from Stinson Beach almost to Novato, taking much of the Wilkins Ranch pasture and timber. Kenneth Wilkins recalled that the remaining structures at the copper mines were destroyed in the fire.[15]

W. W. Wilkins died on March 21, 1911 at age 85. A newspaper eulogized him as "a man of sterling worth, and one who had everybody as his friend." His son Jim, who had been studying to be a doctor, took over the ranch and continued the dairy operation much as it had been. Jim Wilkins married his neighbor from the McCurdy Ranch, Helen DeFraga in 1922. The family divided the two-story house into two units to accommodate the couple. Jim and Helen Wilkins and their two children, Kenneth and Shirley, occupied the east half which had previously been storerooms. Jim's mother and sisters Edith and Bessie lived in the western side of the house. Daughter May married neighbor Alex McCurdy and moved to Mill Valley, and Helen married a Mr. Myers.[16]

Either W. W. or Jim Wilkins made a number of alterations to ranch structures early in the century. The family added a hipped roof lean-to dining room to the west side of the house and enclosed the front porch. An unusual cross gable and shed were added to the south side of the barn some time between 1907 and 1933, creating more storage space and a room with windows for a hired hand.[17]

By 1920 butter was no longer produced at the ranch. Jim Wilkins shipped cream from his Jersey herd until building a Grade A Dairy around 1933. The family made it through the depression in fairly good shape, although they had trouble getting good hired hands. Three of their best hired hands

---

[15]Marin Journal, October 30, 1890 and September 15, 1904.

[16]Marin Journal, March 24, 1911. Jim Wilkins gained some local notoriety for running in a early Dipsea Race, now the second oldest footrace in the country. The following descriptions of Wilkins Ranch history is derived from personal interviews with Mrs. James (Helen) Wilkins, Kenneth Wilkins, Shirley (Wilkins) Park and Ruth (Myers) and Rex Rathbun, and from an oral history tape, Helen and Kenneth Wilkins, The Story of the Wilkins Ranch, recorded July 18, 1979 by Carla Ehat and Anne T. Kent for the Oral History Program, Moya Library Guild, for the Marin County Library, Civic Center, San Rafael. Helen Wilkins and her son Kenneth are now deceased.

[17]This information is derived from a comparison of dated photographs taken by the Marin County Association of Tramps and Wanderers, Ltd., a spirited hiking group, in 1898-1901 in the collection of the Sausalito Historical Society; a photograph taken 1906 or 1907 by G. K. Gilbert for the U. S. Geological Survey, in the U.S.G.S. Library, Menlo Park; and others taken between 1933 and 1955 by Farrington Jones, a San Anselmo real estate appraiser, courtesy of Roy Farrington Jones.

during this time were former wheat farmers from North Dakota who had come west with the dust bowl migration of the mid 1930s. The hired hands lived in the old creamery which had been remodeled into a bunkhouse. The family sold vegetables and chickens to supplement the meager income made at the dairy. Two orchards of apples and pears had been established earlier, one between the house and the barn and the other in the field west of the calf barn; a few trees remain.

World War II proved to be a hardship for the family with son Kenneth, a key laborer at the dairy, being drafted. For reasons unknown, the Army occupied the northern part of the ranch during part of the war; Kenneth Wilkins described how he and his father had to be escorted by soldiers in order to take care of the cattle in the pastures around Copper Mine Gulch.

Between 1951 and 1954 Jim Wilkins remodeled his family's eastern portion of the old house. The ornate enclosed porch was removed and replaced with a huge picture window with views to the lagoon. An addition on the east side extended the house by about 10 feet. The interior was remodeled with lower ceilings, a different stairway, and a new flagstone fireplace and chimney.[18]

Kenneth was also drafted to serve in Korea. Shortly after his return Jim Wilkins died. Kenneth and his mother unsuccessfully ran the dairy and soon leased it out to a succession of tenants including Tony Silva, who lived in the east portion of the house after the sisters passed away. Kenneth Wilkins went into the firewood business, cutting oak, bay and fir cordwood in the hills of the ranch.

Dairying at the ranch ended in the mid-1960s when Carnation, the San Francisco creamery to which the Wilkins milk was sold, was bought by a Texas company and the milk contracts in the area cancelled. Nearby dairyman Steve Balzan attempted to get the Wilkins family involved in his local Jersey dairy business but failed.

Faced with skyrocketing taxes (reportedly from $1,200 per year in the early 1960s to $22,000 in 1969) and low production at the ranch, the Wilkins family decided to sell the ranch. They had already been approached by a land developer who proposed clustered homes on the property; that plan did not succeed. Then in 1970 a young, newly wealthy publisher from the East Coast found what he saw as his new country home.

---

[18]Documented by Farrington Jones in 1951 and 1954, courtesy of Roy Farrington Jones.

The Wilkins Ranch, after more than 100 years under the control of only two generations of the family, was sold on December 29, 1970, to Nicholas Charney, founder of *Psychology Today* and at the time publisher of *The Saturday Review.* Members of the Wilkins family retained a 30-acre parcel south of the ranch complex but were unable to legally build on the land.[19]

Charney and his friends transformed the Wilkins Ranch into a communal experiment in creative agriculture and living; the occupants christened it Rancho Baulines after the name of the original land grant. A news reporter described the endeavor as one given energy by the young "New Pioneers" who arrived, "drawn to its beauty and excited by its potential as an agricultural community." In 1972 fourteen people lived at the ranch, working on an organic garden, planting crops, remodeling the 100-year-old barns into living spaces, and running a horse-boarding operation. The old water system, carrying water from Lewis Gulch to the ranch complex, was rehabilitated. Ruth Rathbun, a granddaughter of W. W. Wilkins, and her husband Rex Rathbun managed the ranch, and Mary Tiscornia, who had settled on the ranch before the sale to Charney, operated the horse facilities. Meanwhile, the National Park Service created Golden Gate National Recreation Area and included the Wilkins Ranch within its boundaries.[20]

After a number of business reverses, Charney was unable to keep up his payments to the family and sold a two-month option on the property to the Trust for Public Lands in 1973; the land was transferred to the National Park Service in July of that year. Mary Tiscornia, the last of the 1970s occupants to remain on the ranch, has been raising a small number of beef cattle and keeping her many horses on the property, as well as rehabilitating many of the buildings. Tiscornia operates under a lease administered by Point Reyes National Seashore.[21]

---

[19]Official Records, Book 2426, pp. 171 and 183, MCRO.

[20]Point Reyes Light, August 3, 1972.

[21]Official Records Book 2709, p. 663, MCRO.

3. Buildings and Historic Resources

Eight historic buildings remain on the Wilkins Ranch. Two sheds evident in early photographs were removed many years ago. Three of the structures were remodeled into residences in the early 1970s. Only two non-historic structures are in evidence on the ranch.

a. Main Residence (OV-01.01)[22]

By some reports the house was built by W. W. Wilkins about 1876, but it may have been constructed earlier. It has been in continuous use as a residence since it was built. It is a 38' by 66' two-story wood frame building with horizontal drop siding and overlapping bands of "fish scale" shingles and square shingles under the gables. One section of the east wall is composed of asbestos shingles. The main roof is a gable, and additions to the building have varying roof types from gables to sheds; there is an old hipped roof addition on the west side of the house which dates from before 1933. Many of the windows are shuttered and there is much fancy woodwork trim. There are three brick chimneys, one of which was added about 1953.

The house was divided between two family members in 1922. The west half of the house was basically unaltered on the interior, but the east half was thoroughly, but not irreversibly, remodeled about 1953. The west half features high ceilings and plaster walls with picture molding, and a stairway with mahogany posts and bannister. The east half of the house has been remodeled with lowered ceilings, linoleum floors, a new flagstone fireplace and modern hardware.

The old house has been preserved at great expense by the current lessee and is in good condition. A future goal of restoration of the original east front porch is desirable; elimination of the 1950s picture window would restore much of the integrity of the house. At present, the historic integrity of the house is fair.

---

[22]The numbers in parentheses are the park building numbers; OV numbers include buildings in the Olema Valley within Golden Gate National Recreation Area, while PR numbers are in Point Reyes National Seashore.

b. Barn (OV-01.05)

This 57' by 93' barn, perhaps one of the earliest surviving structures on the ranch, sits on a slope of the hill. The barn features hand-hewed redwood beams and a basement area with log walls. It is three stories high, L-shaped, with a hay storage area on the top floor. The gable roof has a peculiar cross gable and hipped shed on the south and west sides which, according to historic photographs, was added between 1906 and 1933. A small bedroom, probably for a ranch hand, is in a corner of the barn. There are various windows and openings. The shingle roof has been covered with corrugated metal roofing. Attached to the south wall is a 30' by 57' concrete and metal Grade A dairy barn which had a milking capacity of about 30 cows. It is no longer used for its intended purpose but is used for temporary horse stalls. Remains of the manure transport system can be found in the barns; the tracks mounted on the ceiling carried buckets of manure to a pit behind the chicken sheds. The extensive tramway between the barn and the pit has been dismantled. In the early 1970s a small amount of land was graded on the west side of the barn to create a driveway to the north side. The historic integrity of both of the barns is good.

c. Creamery (OV-01.04)

This building, originally the 16' by 20' separating house and butter manufactory and later the ranch bunkhouse, has been enlarged and remodeled into a comfortable 27' by 40' residence although it retains a number of key historic features. The original small gable-roofed building has a lower story of stone forming a cool cellar with an old wooden door and window. The upper story is wood, with two additions, a shed on the north and a recent addition extending the gable on the east wall. This addition doubled the size of the structure. Distinctive diagonal sash windows have been added to the south side, and has a narrow deck. It is now used as a caretaker's residence. Because of extensive alterations, the historic integrity of the creamery is poor.

d. Horse Barn/Calf Shed (OV-01.07)

The old 18' by 30' horse barn is a typical, small rural barn with gable roof

and shed sides, with random-width vertical board siding and a corrugated metal roof, except for the west shed which retains its old wood shingles which are deteriorating. It was used originally for sheltering calves and an occasional horse with hay storage in the loft. It has been abandoned for many years and some of the siding is missing; the barn is in poor condition. Its historic integrity, however, is excellent.

e. Garage/Shop (OV-01.06)

This wood-frame, three room building was a carriage house, shop and garage until the 1970s. Tractors were parked under the building. Jim Wilkins remodeled the front to include a modern garage door in the early 1950s and the residents during the Charney ownership further remodeled interior and the front, eliminating the large doors and enclosing the wall with windows. The interior has been altered.

The 21' by 30' building is two stories with an open shed as the lower floor where the log posts and concrete retaining wall that supports the upper story are visible. It has a gable roof with composition shingles, random-width vertical board siding, four of the original six-over-six double-hung wood sash windows, and two wood doors. Some structural work has been done on the underpinnings but the many of the log posts are not plumb. The building is in fair condition and is now used as a recreation room. Its historic integrity is fair.

f. Shed

A small wood frame shed sits on a slope behind the residence. Although it appears to be old, it was built by the current occupant with used lumber, and is used as a storage area. It is 8' by 12', with a shed roof covered by asphalt shingles, board and batten siding, double access doors, and a concrete foundation. It is in fair condition but is not historic, although i is compatible with the historic scene.

g. Pump House (OV-01.02)

This old building was the granary used by the family in the early days of the ranch, but it received its name from the antique gasoline pump (original to

the site) which sits in the front. It is an 8' by 18' gable-roofed building with a small shed addition on the east. It has random-width board and batten siding, various windows (some new), and a small entrance porch. The roof is corrugated metal. Because of some alterations, its historic integrity is fair.

h. Bull House (OV-01.09)

This small old barn housed livestock and is now used for storage. It is 12' by 18' with a gable roof, board and batten siding, a sliding door and a window, and a stock chute on the west side. It is in fair condition but is deteriorating, and has good historic integrity.

i. Well House (OV-01.11)

This structure is more than 50 years old. A pump in this small structure brings water from a nearby gulch for ranch uses. It is 6.5' square with a corrugated metal shed roof, board and batten siding, and a door. It is in fair condition but is deteriorating; its historic integrity is fair.

j. Gates, Fences, Corrals

The fences seem to follow the original lines, but have been replaced over time with newer materials. Mary Tiscornia has been restoring historic split picket fences in the vicinity of the calf barn. The fences are a critical component of the cultural landscape values at the Wilkins Ranch.

k. Orchard and Trees

Remains of a historic orchard survive in the area east of the main residence, west of the barn, and south of the old creamery. Some of the trees appear to have been planted around 1900 or earlier.

By examining early photographs of the ranch one sees at least two large eucalyptus trees in the vicinity of the creamery. These were cut down in the 1940s and the stumps remain. An old windbreak of Monterey cypress extends from the granary to the fenceline north of the barn. Large oaks once surrounded the house; one on the east side of the house was cut in the 1950s,

one picturesque tree at the southwest corner of the house died and was removed around 1992, and the last one remains at the northwest corner of the house and is dying. Mary Tiscornia believes that siltation as a result of the flooding in early 1982 killed the trees.

l. Copper Mines (OV-016 & OV-017)

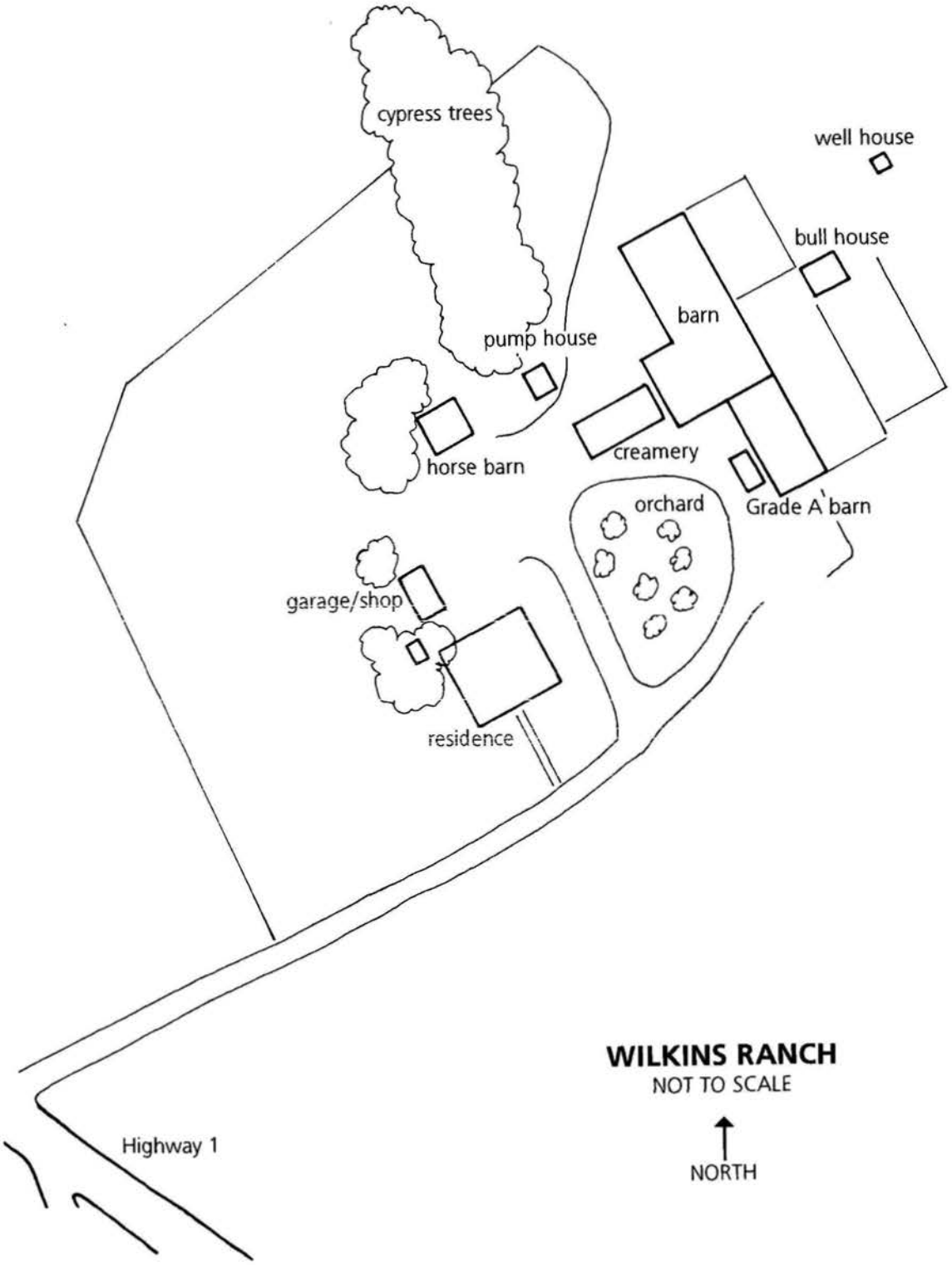
Located more than a mile up Copper Mine Gulch on the north part of the ranch property, these copper mines were developed around 1863 and worked until 1917. The remains include two open shafts (now barricaded with metal bars), scattered remains of buildings, concrete foundations for equipment in the creek bed, various rusting machinery and boiler parts, and the road from Highway 1 to the site.

4. Historic Significance of the Wilkins Ranch

The Wilkins Ranch is significant as an early Bolinas Lagoon-area dairy ranch, perhaps the best physical example of those remaining on park land. The house and main barn are architecturally significant as examples of rural vernacular design using fine craftsmanship. Despite alterations on four of the buildings, the historic integrity of the ranch is good, particularly from a cultural landscape perspective. Rancho Baulines is one of the best-maintained examples of a historic dairy ranch in Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

Historic Features

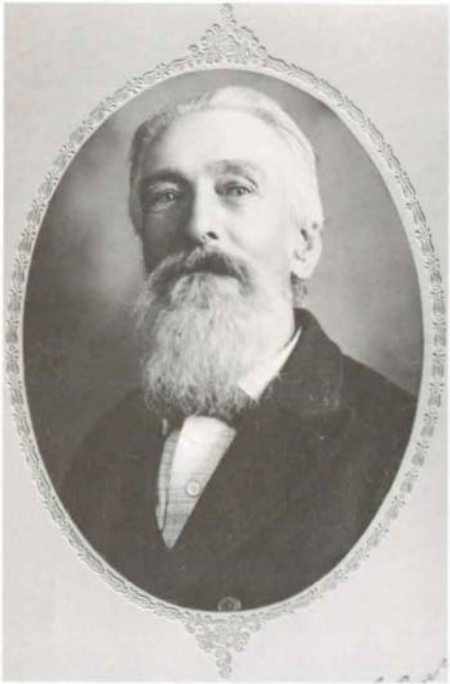
1. Main Residence, ca. 1876
2. Barn, ca. 1868
3. Creamery, ca. 1870
4. Horse Barn/Calf Shed, ca. 1870
5. Garage/Shop, ca. 1880
6. Pump House, ca. 1900
7. Bull House, ca. 1900
8. Well House, ca. 1930
9. Gates, Fences, Corrals
10. Orchard and trees
11. Copper Mines


cypress trees
well house
bull house
barn
pump house
horse barn
creamery
orchard
Grade A barn
garage/shop
residence
Highway 1
WILKINS RANCH
NOT TO SCALE
NORTH

W. W. and Mary Wilkins had twin girls, Mary (called May) and Bess, pictured here circa 1880. *Courtesy of Ruth Rathbun.*

The Wilkins Ranch as it appeared between 1897-1901. *Kate Harlan Collection, Sausalito Historical Society.*

Wilkins family and friends from the "Marin County Association of Tramps and Wanderers, Ltd."; W. W. Wilkins appears in the right background. *Kate Harlan Collection, Sausalito Historical Society.*



W. W. Wilkins as he appeared in 1894. *Courtesy of Ruth Rathbun.*

The Wilkins Ranch appears this 1906 photograph by G. K. Gilbert. Note that the barn has yet to have an addition. Pilings from the lighter wharf can be seen on the left. U. S. Geological Survey Library, Menlo Park.

The Wilkins children around 1896: Edith, Jim, Helen, Bess and May. *Courtesy of Ruth Rathbun.*

Haying time at the Wilkins Ranch, circa 1920s. *Courtesy of Ruth Rathbun.*

A view to the northwest of the Wilkins Ranch taken around 1945. The implement shed in the center is gone, as is another small barn on the right in front of the milking barn. This photo and the six following were taken by appraiser Farrington Jones of San Anselmo. *Courtesy of Roy Farrington Jones.*

Bess Wilkins is on the horse, with the granary (pump house) in the background. *Courtesy of Ruth Rathbun.*

The barn as it appeared in 1933, with the new Grade A barn on the left. *Courtesy of Roy Farrington Jones.*

The creamery at Wilkins Ranch in 1951, used as a milker's residence. *Courtesy of Roy Farrington Jones.*

The Wilkins garage in 1943, later remodeled into a small residence. *Courtesy of Roy Farrington Jones.*

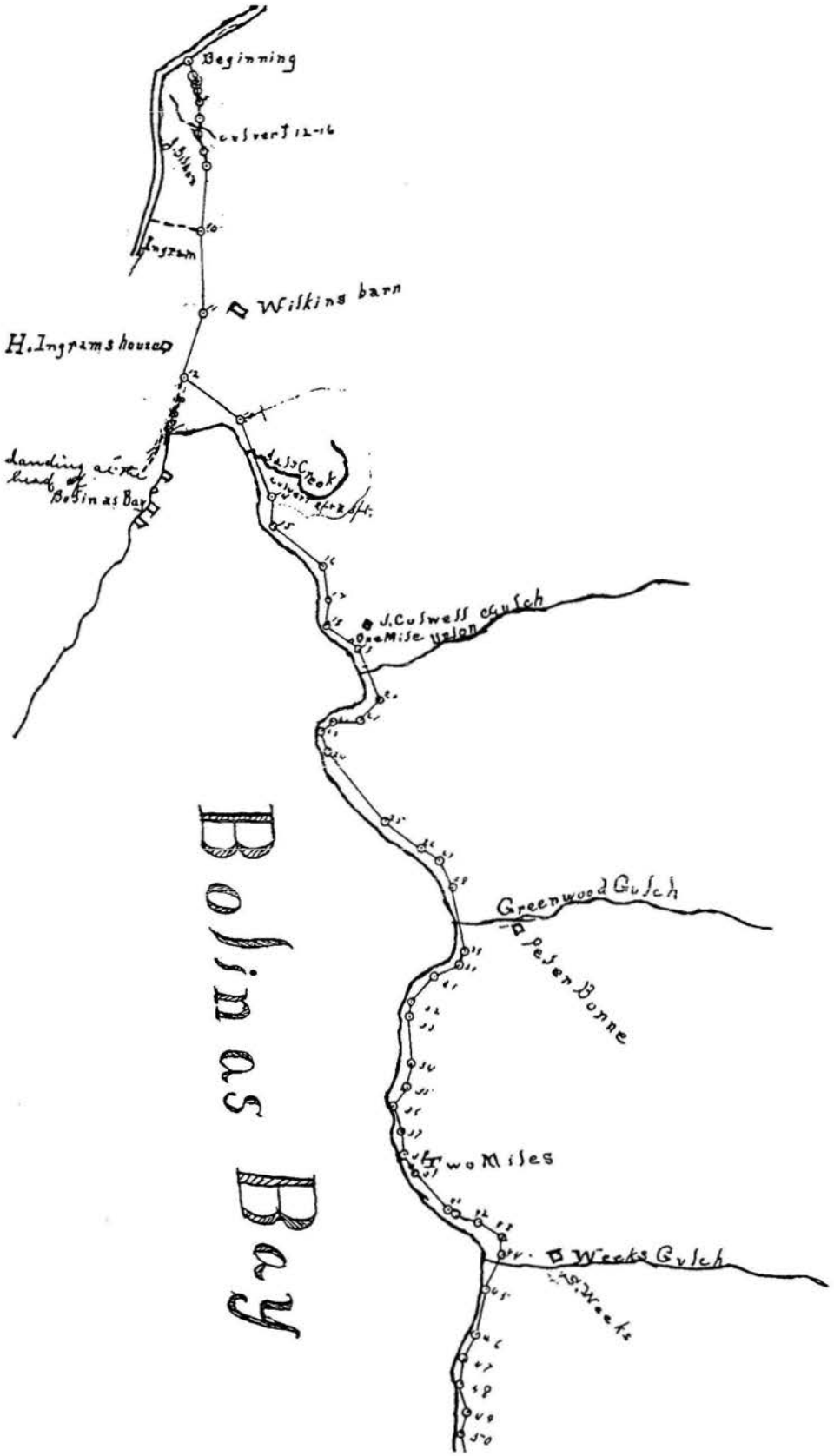
Above, the Wilkins house before remodeling, 1951. Note the shutters and the old enclosed porch. Below, the house after remodeling, 1954. The porch has been incorporated into the living room with a picture window, rooms added on the right and a new fireplace has been added. *Courtesy of Roy Farrington Jones.*

A view of the Wilkins Ranch barn and Grade A dairy in 1943; a tramway for hauling manure to a basin is visible on the left. *Courtesy of Roy Farrington Jones.*

A view of Dogtown taken in 1952, looking south. *Marin County Historical Society Collection.*

The milk room of the Grade A dairy barn at Wilkins Ranch as it appeared in 1943. The stairs led to the hopper where the fresh milk was poured for cooling before shipment; the cooling tower is visible in the right rear. *Courtesy of Roy Farrington Jones.*

Detail of the U. S. Coast Survey map of Bolinas Lagoon made in 1854 showing the future site of the Wilkins Ranch at the head of the lagoon, the lighter wharf (circled) and the saw mills at Dogtown. *Register No. 452, California State Lands Commission, copy at Point Reyes National Seashore.*

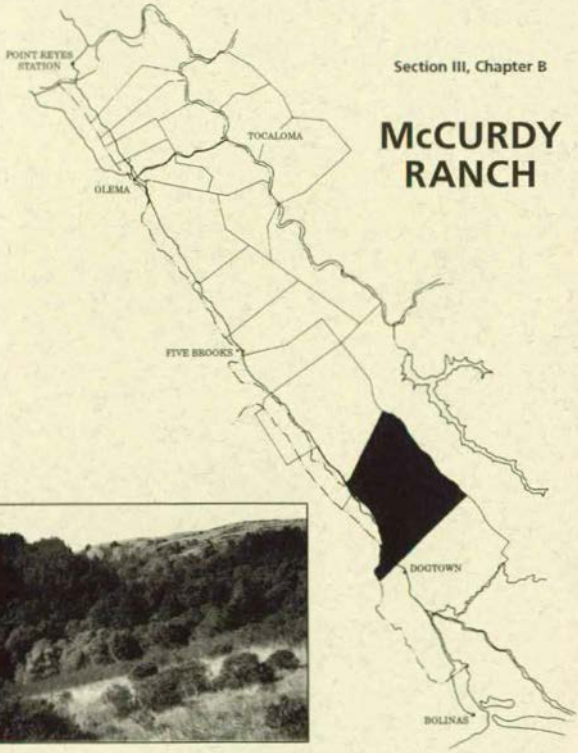


Portion of Alfred Easkoot's survey of the Bolinas Lagoon road, 1868. Note W. W. Wilkins' barn at the head of Bolinas Lagoon. *Marin County Department of Public Works.*

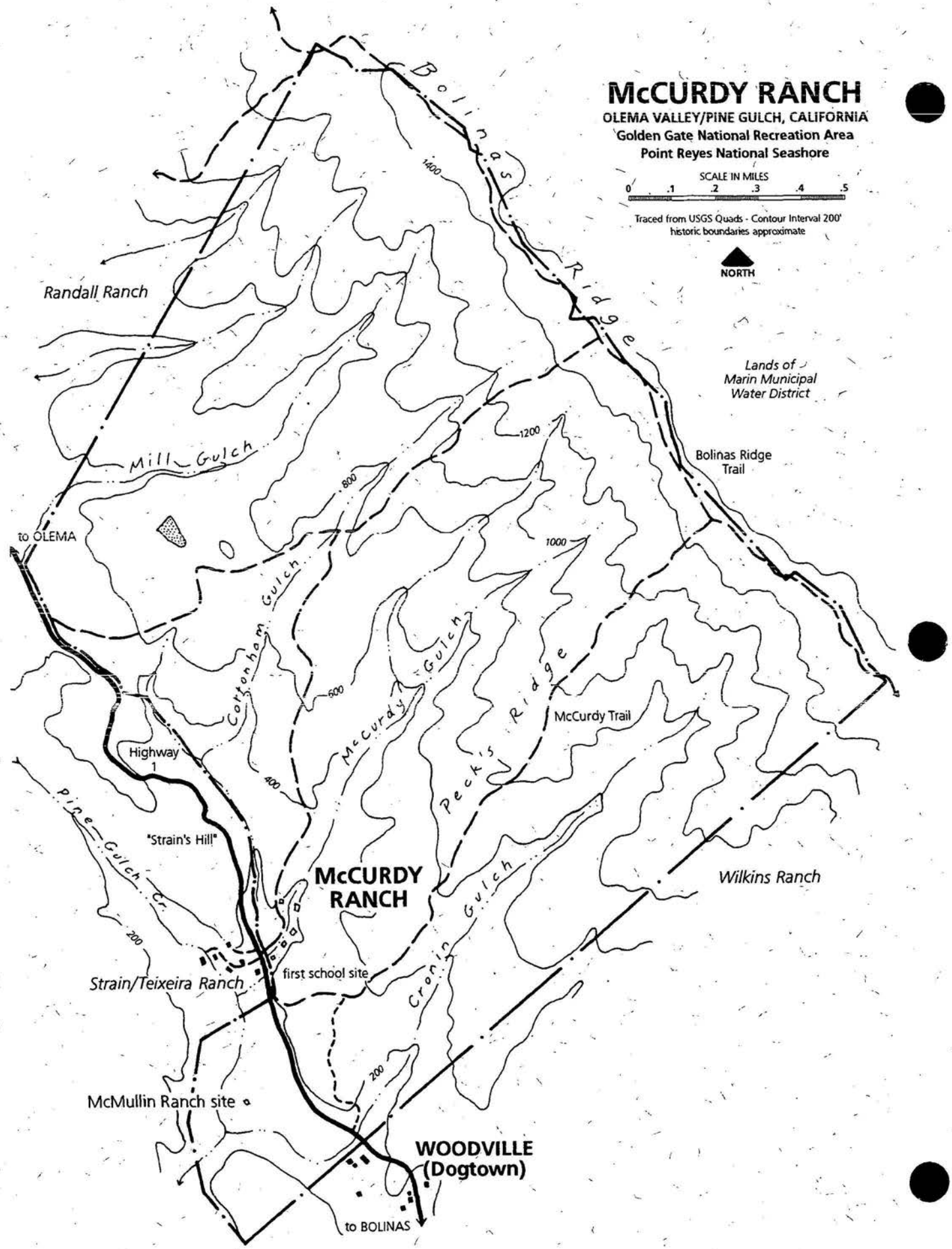
DAIRY FARMING IN THE OLEMA VALLEY

Section III, Chapter B

McCURDY RANCH



HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE


McCURDY RANCH
OLEMA VALLEY/PINE GULCH, CALIFORNIA
Golden Gate National Recreation Area
Point Reyes National Seashore
SCALE IN MILES
0 .1 .2 .3 .4 .5
Traced from USGS Quads - Contour Interval 200'
historic boundaries approximate
NORTH
Bolinas Ridge
Randall Ranch
Lands of Marin Municipal Water District
Mill Gulch
1400
1200
800
1000
600
400
200
Bolinas Ridge Trail
to OLEMA
Cottonham Gulch
McCurdy Gulch
Peck's Ridge
McCurdy Trail
Highway 1
Pine Gulch Cr.
"Strain's Hill"
McCURDY RANCH
Wilkins Ranch
Cronin Gulch
Strain/Teixeira Ranch
first school site
McMullin Ranch site
WOODVILLE (Dogtown)
to BOLINAS

B. McCURDY RANCH (Golden Gate National Recreation Area)

1. Description

The McCurdy Ranch is a large, mostly wooded property north of Dogtown in the Pine Gulch drainage. A small dairy was operated here until the 1920s. The 1,590-acre parcel (originally 1,835 acres) is bounded on the north by the former Randall Ranch, on the east by lands of the Marin Municipal Water District, on the south by the Wilkins Ranch, and on the west by the Teixeira Ranch and Point Reyes National Seashore. An 80-acre parcel across Highway 1, the location of David McMullin's farm, is mostly flat and is within the boundaries of the National Seashore. The land is hilly with grasslands in the north and south corners, and second and third growth redwood forests on much of the property; a rapidly expanding line of eucalyptus marks the southern boundary. There are no buildings on the ranch; it has been vacant for about 40 years.

2. History of the McCurdy Ranch

Irish immigrants Samuel McCurdy and David McMullin arrived in California around 1852 and settled on this property some time before 1860. McMullin was listed in the 1860 census as owning only two head of oxen and no land. Soon the duo obtained 1,835 acres of land on the Phelps patent of Rancho Tomales y Baulines that had likely been logged during the heyday of the sawmills during the 1850s. The Shafter law firm sold the pair additional lands in 1865 and 1867.[23]

The two were farmers and woodcutters, both raising families on the ranch. Others, such as George Morris and probably Timothy Cronin, lived on the property before McCurdy and McMullin owned the property and apparently continued in residence. Cronin was hanged in 1868 after being convicted of killing his wife; after neighbors became suspicious about Mrs. Cronin's absence, the local constable found her body buried under a newly constructed duck pond

[23]8th U. S. Census, 1860; Deeds Book E, p. 423 and Book F, p. 436, MCRO.

on the property. Cronin ran but was lassooed by Pablo Briones and taken to trial. The southernmost gulch on the McCurdy Ranch is called Cronin Gulch.[24]

The woodcutting operation took up much of the partners' time, although they were listed as farmers in the 1870 census. McMullin was 40 at the time and had a wife, Mary, and seven children; an eighth would come the next year. They lived in a house on a knoll on the western, 80-acre parcel, with an orchard. McCurdy, 32, was unmarried at the time, and lived with his brother John. McCurdy and McMullin owned 16 milk cows and 24 oxen, no doubt used in the logging operation; they had no crops but hay, and made 800 pounds of butter the previous year. In 1870 Sarah Randall, McMullin and McCurdy's neighbor to the north, leased a right-of-way to the duo for hauling wood off the ridge. They rented the dairy on the property to other parties, including James Pedrotti in 1875; Pedrotti took possession of the "Hill" ranch with 80 cows and heifers at $18 per head rent. McMullin and McCurdy retained the right to take wood from the property. In September of 1885 McMullin rented his farm to Frank Foster and moved to Oakland. He sold his share of the land to McCurdy in 1890.[25]

By 1900 McCurdy had married and had seven children. He had built a substantial two-story house on a knoll near the county road, and with his sons operated the dairy, making 2,100 pounds of butter per month from 60 cows in 1901. The McCurdy orchard produced apples, cherries and pears. Lumbering continued on the ranch; in 1904 Achille Bonaiti, a storekeeper in Bolinas, ran a sawmill on the McCurdy ranch. His mill reportedly produced 18,000 to 20,000 feet of redwood lumber per year. At an unknown date a dam was installed in Cronin Gulch to collect and distribute water to Bolinas.[26]

The Marin Journal described the McCurdy Ranch in early 1906:

> The McCurdy Ranch is one of the best equipped dairy ranches in the county. They have good buildings and the dairy machinery is run by electric power which is

---

[24]Marin County Journal, May 9, 1868; Mrs. Cronin's murder is detailed in Munro-Fraser, Marin County, pp. 242-243.

[25]Population and Agriculture Schedules, 9th U. S. Census, 1870; Leases Book A, p. 72 and Book B, p. 387, MCRO; Marin Journal, September 10, 1885 and July 31, 1890.

[26]Population Schedules, 12th U. S. Census, 1900; Marin Journal, June 20, 1901; Guinn, Coast Counties, p. 1450.

> developed by the water power on the place. The house and other buildings are also lighted by electricity, and the cost is trifling.[27]

McCurdy rented the ranch to Manuel DeFraga in late 1905. DeFraga had leased the Shafter Home Ranch on Point Reyes for many years and was an experienced dairyman. He brought his wife Nellie and seven children to the McCurdy Ranch; two more, Harold and Edward, were born there. The children attended school at the Wilkins School in Woodville. While the DeFragas were in residence the McCurdys sold the ranch to Charles McMaster. The DeFragas left the ranch for Palo Alto in 1921, but their daughter Helen stayed and married neighboring dairyman Jim Wilkins.[28]

The McMaster family sold the ranch to Dr. Ethel Righetti in 1935. Some time later the house burned down and the ranch was used only for grazing and occasional timber cutting. By the 1960s no structures remained at the McCurdy Ranch; Boyd Stewart and Dennis Wisby leased the grazing land, a small fire wood company cut wood on the land, and Western Evergreen, a San Francisco nursery firm, paid for rights to collect greens for floral displays. A hunting camp was located in a redwood grove on the McCurdy Trail. In 1969 a logging operation commenced on the upper reaches of the property but was shut down by the county for substandard logging practices. The old McMullin homestead parcel was sold in 1972 for Point Reyes National Seashore, and the bulk of the ranch purchased from the late Dr. Righetti's six children for $2,500,000 in June of 1974 for Golden Gate National Recreation Area.[29]

3. Historic Resources

No buildings remain on the McCurdy Ranch, and because of disturbances from recent logging activities, none of the ranch roads appear to have historic integrity. The ranch boundary fences are mostly intact but with newer fabric.

---

[27]Marin Journal, February 8, 1906.

[28]Deeds Book 129, p. 139 and Book 167, p. 284, MCRO; interview with Marie (DeFraga) Davidson, Edward DeFraga and Helen (DeFraga) Wilkins.

[29]Official Records Book 300, p. 170, MCRO; Appraisal Report: Righetti Ranch (Sebastopol: Harding Appraisal Co., 1973); tract files (L-1425), Tract 04-101, Righetti, Ethel estate, PRNS.

A line of eucalyptus trees marks the southern boundary of the ranch property, and these have spread over the last 50 years to create a forest, reducing the integrity of this landscape feature.

4. Historic Significance of the McCurdy Ranch

While the McCurdy Ranch has significance in the area's history, the ranch possesses no integrity because of the lack of historic resources. However, the McCurdy Ranch has potential cultural landscape values that should be evaluated as soon as possible, as the historic grasslands are rapidly being covered by broom, brush and trees. The ranch area has potential for historical archeology.

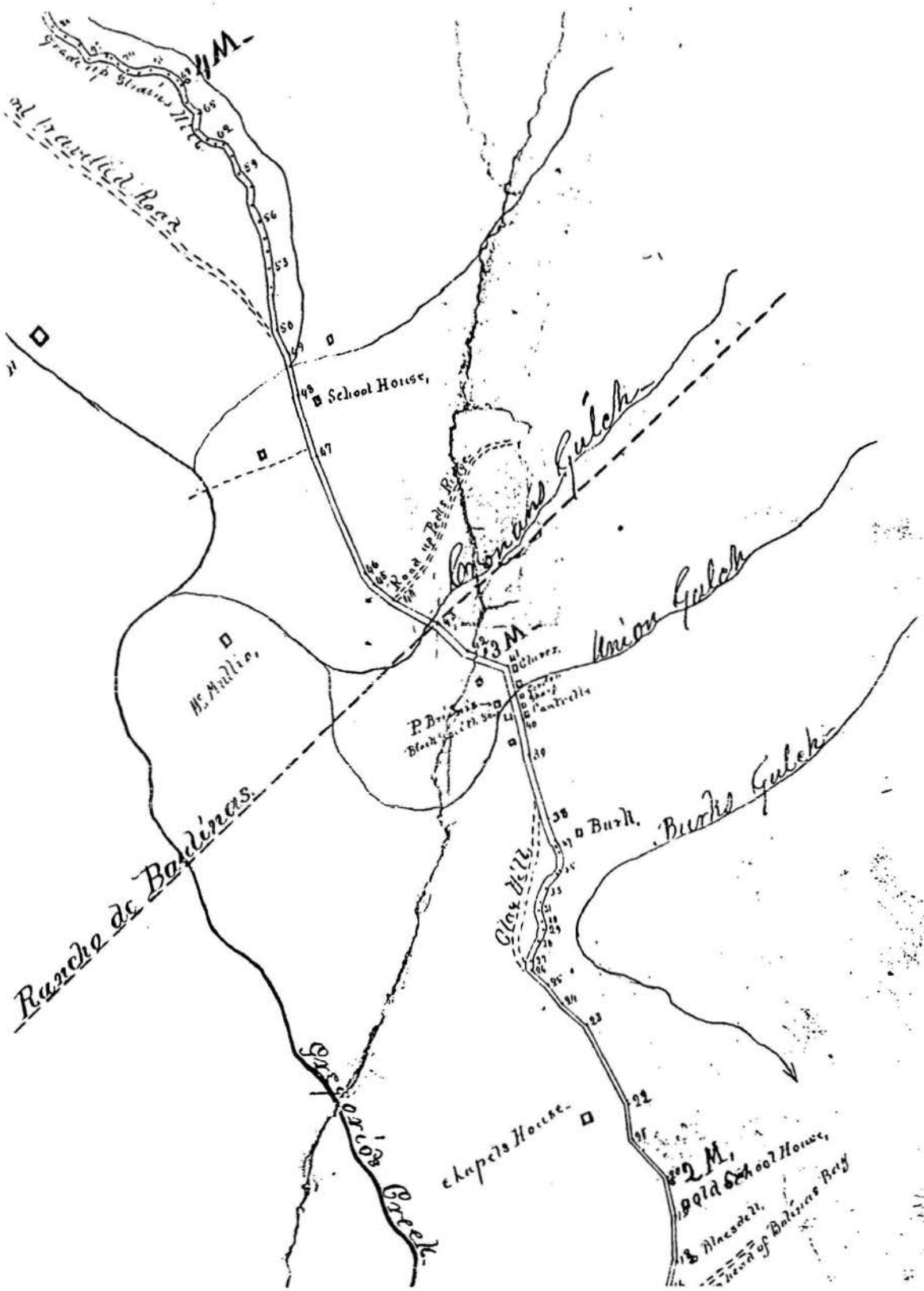
Historic Features

1. McCurdy Trail
2. Road up Peck's Ridge
3. Orchard remains

Members of the McCurdy family on horseback at the barn, around the turn of the century. *Courtesy of the Tom Barfield family.*

Members of the McCurdy family on a wagon loaded with what appears to be corn, circa 1900. The photographer is looking west towards the county road. *Courtesy of the Tom Barfield family.*

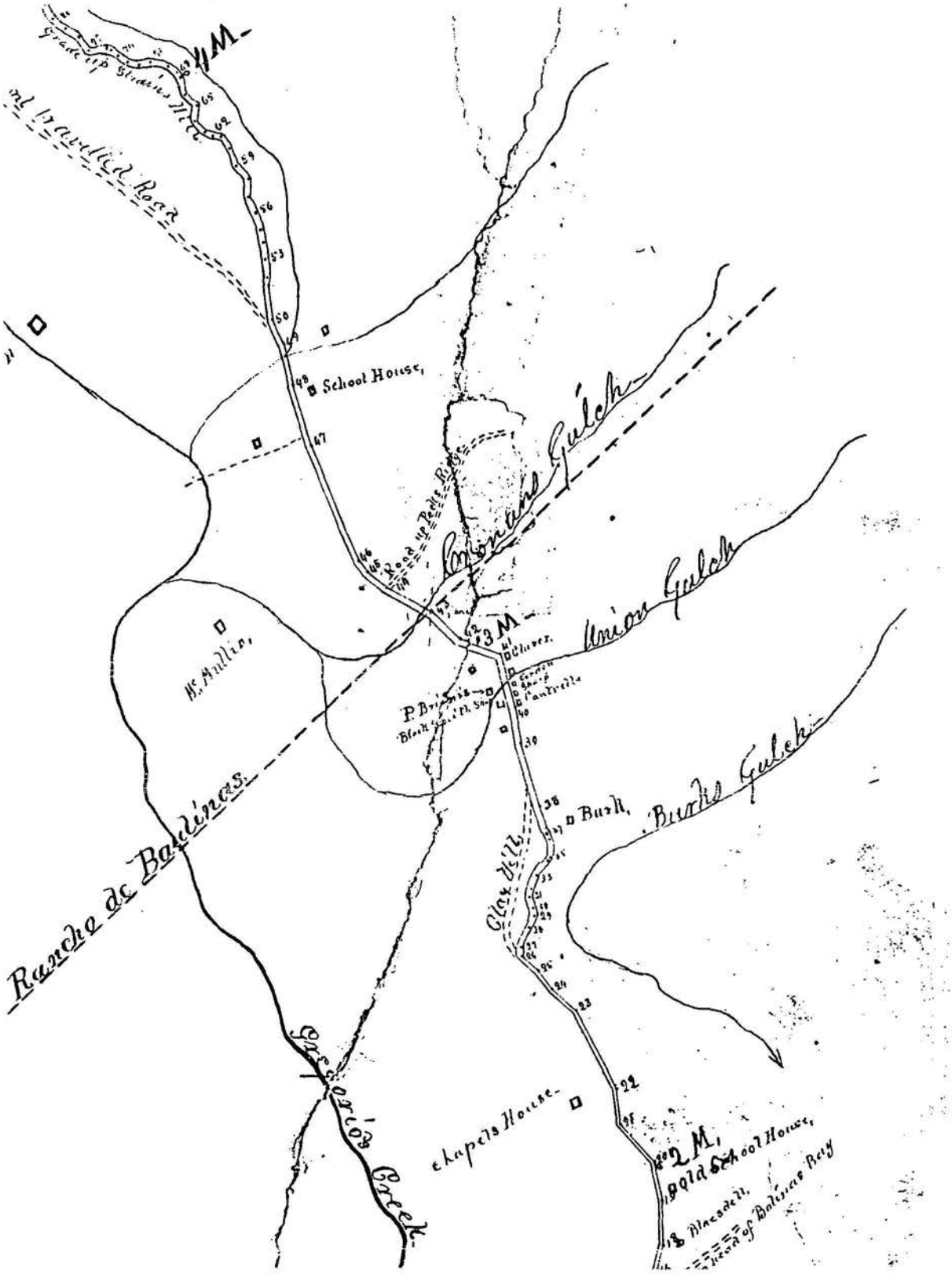
The McCurdy Ranch, looking west/northwest, around 1915. Note the house at far left. *Courtesy of the DeFraga family.*



Detail of the 1867 "Plat of the Survey for the relocation of the Road from Bolinas to Olema" by Hiram Austin, showing the area around Dogtown. Note the new grade "up Strain's Hill," the school at the McCurdy Ranch, [David] McMullin's house and the house labeled Burk in what is more commonly called Lewis Gulch on the Wilkins Ranch. *California Historical Society Collection.*

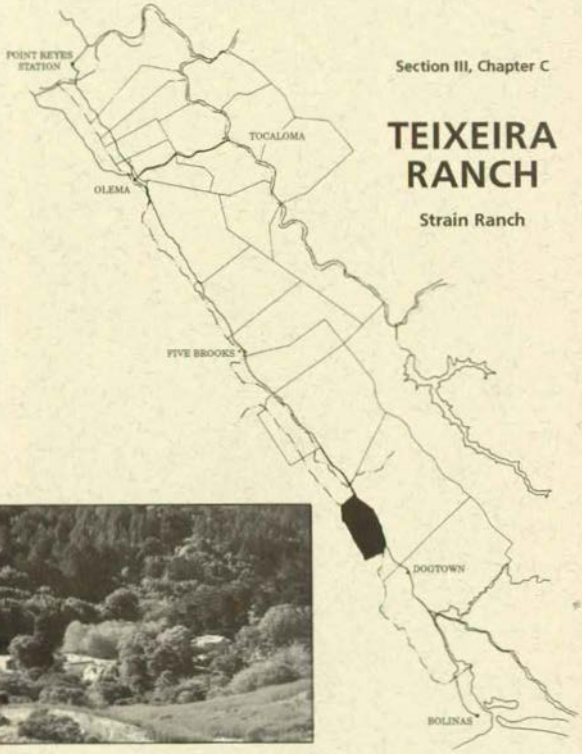
Members of the McCurdy family on a wagon loaded with what appears to be corn, circa 1900. The photographer is looking west towards the county road. *Courtesy of the Tom Barfield family.*

The McCurdy Ranch, looking west/northwest, around 1915. Note the house at far left. *Courtesy of the DeFraga family.*



Detail of the 1867 "Plat of the Survey for the relocation of the Road from Bolinas to Olema" by Hiram Austin, showing the area around Dogtown. Note the new grade "up Strain's Hill," the school at the McCurdy Ranch, [David] McMullin's house and the house labeled Burk in what is more commonly called Lewis Gulch on the Wilkins Ranch. *California Historical Society Collection.*

DAIRY FARMING IN THE OLEMA VALLEY



Section III, Chapter C

TEIXEIRA RANCH

Strain Ranch

HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE

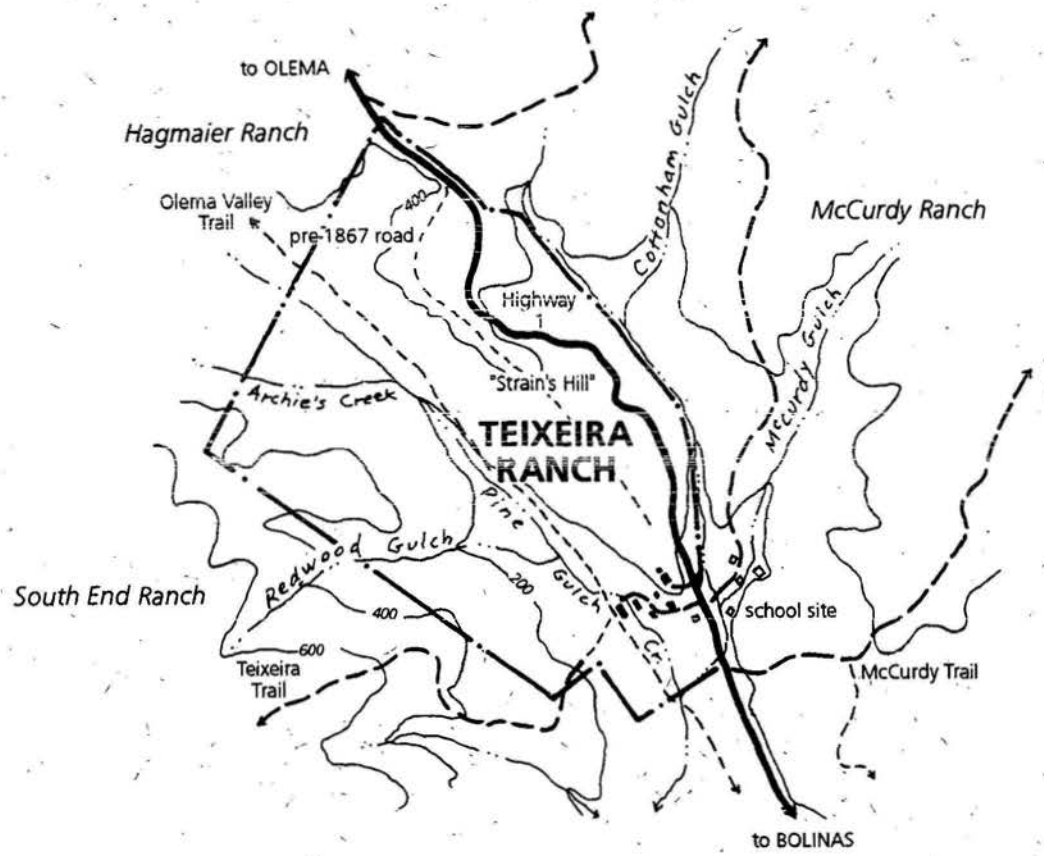
STRAIN/TEIXEIRA RANCH

OLEMA VALLEY/PINE GULCH, CALIFORNIA
Golden Gate National Recreation Area

SCALE IN MILES
0 .1 .2 .3 .4 .5

Traced from USGS Quads - Contour Interval 200'
historic boundaries approximate

NORTH



C. TEIXEIRA RANCH
Former Strain Ranch
(Point Reyes National Seashore)

1. Description

For most of its existence, the Teixeira (formerly Strain) Ranch was a 248-acre dairy ranch, but today the ranch complex is within a 3.6 acre area leased by the previous owners while the balance is unrestricted park land. The ranch is located in what has been called Pine Gulch, occupying both sides of Pine Gulch Creek north of Woodville (Dogtown). The land is now mostly brushy and wooded, as it has not been grazed since it was purchased by the federal government in 1971. It is bounded on the north by the Hagmaier Ranch, on the east and south by the former McCurdy/Righetti Ranch, and west by lands once part of the O. L. Shafter Estate. The ranch is located on State Route 1 about four miles north of Bolinas.

2. History of Strain/Teixeira Ranch

The Strain/Teixeira Ranch has existed under the administration of only two owner-families, the Strains (1856-1920) and the Teixeiras (1920-present). Marin County pioneer Henry Strain founded the ranch and developed most of the historic ranch structures and features that remain on the ranch, while Joseph Teixeira added and improved on these over the remaining years.

Henry Strain was born in the county Monaghan, Ireland in 1826. He left Ireland at age 16 for New York City. A contemporary biography detailed his early life in America:

> He worked at the hatter's trade for three years; he then went to Connecticut and found employment in the Smithfield Cotton Manufacturing Company until he embarked for California. On March 5, 1852, he sailed in the steamer "Prometheus" for Nicaragua; thence per sailing vessel to the Isthmus. In Panama he was detained three months from an attack of fever, which, having departed, he sailed for San Francisco, where he arrived in the month of July. Mr. Strain at

> once proceeded to Hangtown, now Placerville, but on account of ill-health only worked in the mines for one month; seceding from this occupation he commenced that of prospecting, which he continued until he left the district.[30]

Strain came to Bolinas in March of 1853 and ran a team for the mill company at Dogtown and operated the steamboat "Union." He worked at various jobs around Bolinas until buying the 78 acres of land that he had been living on in Pine Gulch north of Dogtown from Gregorio Briones on January 22, 1857. He then bought another 20 acres from Briones on September 30, 1858. Strain cut the alder trees on his land and sold them as firewood, then cleared the stumps for farmland. By 1859 Strain had an operating farm where he grew 300 bushels of Irish potatoes and ten tons of hay during the year. He kept only five milk cows at that time, as well as one horse and twenty other cattle.[31]

Strain found himself caught up in the title litigation between Mexican grantees Rafael Garcia and Gregorio Briones and the law firm of Shafter, Shafter, Park and Heydenfeldt. The lawyers claimed that the land in question actually fell in the Shafters' Rancho Punta de los Reyes. After the Shafter partners had won title to this part of Briones' land, Strain had to repurchase it. He purchased 203.2 acres from the Shafters in 1861 and another 45.44 acres (for $908.80) in 1870, bringing the size of his ranch to 258 acres. He planted a eucalyptus tree marking the northeast corner of the property; the tree stands today alongside Highway One.[32]

Strain built barns and a dairy and developed a limited dairy business. As his biography noted, "from these small beginnings Mr. Strain gradually worked himself into the dairying business, until he is now [1880] the possessor of a fine farm of two hundred and fifty-eight acres and forty milch cows."[33]

The 1870 census listed Strain as owning land valued at $2,500 with a

---

[30]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 427. Two other men, Robert Strain and John Strain, settled in Bolinas at the same time as Henry Strain; it can be assumed that they were related but this has yet to be documented.

[31]Ibid., p. 427; Population and Agriculture Schedules, 8th U. S. Census, 1860.

[32]Deeds Book B, p. 312, Book C, pp. 220 and 380, Book E, p. 629, and Book I, p. 115, MCRO; interview with Gordon Strain.

[33]Marin County Journal, May 14, 1870; Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 427.

personal estate of $1,500. He and his Irish-born wife, Marcella, had five children at the time, Henry, William, Winfield Scott, Henrietta (Etta), and Ella. The couple would have three more children, Everett, Lillian (Lillie), and Anna. Strain produced $1,967 worth of butter, potatoes and hay on the ranch in 1869, having expanded his dairy herd to 23. Ten years later, according to the 1880 census, Strain had increased his dairy herd to 38, producing over 18,000 gallons of milk to be made into butter (apparently elsewhere). Strain may have shipped cream on a schooner from Bolinas during those years. The ranch contained 125 acres of grazing land, with a 25-acre hayfield and about 100 acres of unusable land.[34]

The original road through Strain's property led past the ranch in the valley, then up the grant line on the small ridge north of the ranch buildings. The county built a new Olema-Bolinas road up "Strain's Hill" in 1867, one that took a curvy course with an easier grade up the side of the small ridge. Strain reportedly planted the eucalyptus trees that line the road today on State Route One on the northeast section of the ranch.[35]

In the early 1880s Strain built a new house for his family, a stately two-story Victorian residence on a knoll overlooking the dairy. The date of construction was either 1880 according to family tradition, or 1885 when a county newspaper noted in July that "Mr. Strain's house is progressing very fast. It will be the finest house in Bolinas when completed." Strain planted a windbreak of Monterey cypress north of the new house and an orchard on the hillside below.

When the house was nearing completion Strain leased the dairy, according to the newspaper, "to be in style with his neighbors." Apparently the ranch was leased out for much of the time the Strain family owned it, although the Strains continued to live in the new residence. At the turn of the century the Strains' Portuguese tenant J. A. DeBorba milked 44 cows, from which he made 1,500 pounds of butter per month.[36]

---

[34]Population and Agriculture Schedules, 9th and 10th U. S. Censuses, 1870 and 1880.

[35]"Plat of the Survey, for the Relocation of the Bolinas and Olema Road," by County Surveyor Hiram Austin, 1867, California Historical Society; Marin County Journal, March 15, 1883; interview with Gordon Strain.

[36]Marin Journal, July 23 and October 15, 1885, and June 20, 1901. The news accounts may have been speaking of another Strain family; according to Gordon Strain, the house was built when his father Everett was ten years old, or about 1880 or 1881. Young Everett recalled hauling

After Henry Strain's death his widow deeded the residence portion of the ranch in 1901 to her surviving children as a gift. All of the heirs except Ella had moved off the ranch by that time: with their father's help Will and Winfield had leased the Kellogg dairy ranch near Crescent City, to be joined around 1890 by Everett; in 1883 Etta had married Matthias Pedrotti, a San Rafael dairyman who became a prominent banker in that city; Lillian married and lived in Bolinas; and Annie obtained an education and worked at a bank in San Rafael.[37]

Everett Strain returned to the Bolinas ranch around 1901 and married Mary McCurdy, a daughter of Samuel McCurdy from the ranch across the road. The couple raised three boys in the house, Harold, Everett Jr. and Gordon. Strain's mother and sister lived upstairs in the house. Everett took over the dairy business, milking about 40 Jersey cows with the help of a hired hand. The Strain dairy produced butter during these years, milking by hand and making cream and butter with a separator and churn powered by water pressure.

After milking, the cans of fresh milk would be hand carried across the foot bridge and poured into a hopper in the side of the creamery. The three-room creamery was located at the site of the later Grade A milking barn, and was apparently the original Strain home. A smaller adjacent building, also of three rooms, housed the hired hand and had a storage room for grain. The family sold much of the butter in San Rafael; Mary Strain took the butter boxes to the head of Bolinas Lagoon where she met the Bolinas-to-San Rafael stage, by 1911 a modified Stanley Steamer. The Strains raised hogs as well, feeding them grains mixed with skim milk, and selling them at the Bolinas wharf.

Everett Strain also cleared land and planted extensive crops on the ranch, including peas on the western side hill, and corn, potatoes, vegetables, and hay in the bottom land. He planted an orchard south of the horse barn to supplement his father's original orchard on the hillside west of the house. Strain developed a water source upstream on Pine Gulch Creek (or a tributary)

---

bricks for the foundation of the new house.

[37]A great deal of information about the Strain family originates from an interview in November 1994 with Gordon Strain, as well as notes taken from a family videotape interview with Mr. Strain made in 1986 and notes provided by Mr. Strain to PRNS in 1976; a biography of Matthias Pedrotti is found in Ira B. Cross, Financing an Empire: History of Banking in California (Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1927), pp. 486-487.

and built a flume and ditch to deliver the water to the cropland in the area between the milking barn and the McCurdy boundary fence to the south. Strain and his hired man also cut cordwood for market during the time when the cows were dry. His saw was also powered by water pressure. Strain sold the produce and cordwood in Bolinas, most of it going to San Francisco by schooner. Surplus corn was chopped up by the children and used as feed.

Everett's father Henry Strain had built a horse barn during the early years of his occupation of the ranch. He built it on a side hill with the stables facing the drive from the county road to the dairy. By placing the barn in a cut on the hillside he gained access to the upper story from behind. Everett Strain continued to use the old horse barn for stabling his work horses. He cut a better road on the hillside for easier access to the top floor. The family used a carriage shed near the horse barn for storing their wagon and buggy.

The children of Everett and Mary Strain attended the Wilkins School in nearby Dogtown. The family had a private phone system that connected with neighboring ranchers and an exchange in the store in Bolinas. For many years the house had no running water, so Everett's mother Marcella did the washing in the creek upstream from the milking barn. Mary McCurdy Strain was known as a good cook, preparing food for the family and hired hand from the garden; a butcher in Olema, Martinelli, delivered meat to the ranch regularly. The family kept chickens in a large chicken shed northwest of the barn. The Strains bought their first car, a Studebaker, in 1914. Everett Strain helped maintain the county road, hauling rock from the Randall Ranch in his Studebaker to fill potholes.

Although located within yards of the San Andreas fault, the Strain Ranch survived the 1906 earthquake with very little damage. Family tradition tells that the cows stampeded and were stray for two days. Photographs taken shortly after the temblor show chimneys and barns intact, but a fence offset about ten feet on the fault line west of the barn. The photographs, taken by geologist G. K. Gilbert, also show with great clarity the split picket and barbed wire fences in the corrals southwest of the barn, the original creamery, the orchard and the large Strain house on the hill (even the family laundry is visible on the clotheslines next to the house). The forests of Bolinas Ridge to the east are obviously scarred by the major fire of 1904.[38]

---

[38]Photographs by G. K. Gilbert are found in the U. S. Geological Survey Library, Menlo Park, California.

In 1920 Everett Strain moved his family to Palo Alto where he established the Mayfield Dairy; his mother and sister remained living upstairs in the ranch house. The Strain family rented the dairy, first to a tenant that proved unsatisfactory and then to Joseph and Mary Teixeira.

Teixeira, born in St. George, Azores, had immigrated to the United States at age 17 and worked on dairies in Fresno, Point Reyes (for James McClure at G Ranch), and Tiburon. The Teixeira family bought the previous tenant's dairy business and moved to the Strain Ranch in November of 1920. The family, including Christina and Anthony, born in Tiburon, and Molly, Joseph, Irene, and William, born on the Strain Ranch, shared the big house with Henry Strain's widow Marcella and her spinster daughter, Ella. During this time and after Marcella's death Ella Strain occupied the upper floor of the house and reserved the parlor downstairs. The Teixeiras lived in the remainder of the house until Ella's death in 1935. Eventually the entire ranch was inherited by the youngest daughter, Anna Strain.[39]

Joseph Teixeira milked about 65 cows on the ranch at first, separating the cream and shipping it to the cooperative creamery in Point Reyes Station for processing. Teixeira equipped the ranch with gasoline engines which drove the milking machines and separator. The Teixeiras used the old creamery for cooling the milk (in cans in a cool trough) and separating the cream until local builder Eddie Alberti constructed a Grade A barn in the early 1940s. The old dairy and a shed were torn down at that time. Teixeira grew crops on various parts of the ranch, including potatoes, ryegrass and oats. Commercial electric power reached the ranch in 1941.

The Teixeiras bought the property from Anna Strain on December 26, 1941 after twenty years of tenancy on the ranch. After Joseph Teixeira's death in 1951 the property was divided among the surviving members of the family.[40]

After building the Grade A barn Joseph Teixeira retired and his oldest son Anthony (Tony) took over the business in 1945. Tony Teixeira shipped fresh milk from the ranch, eventually milking more than one hundred cows. The dairy ceased operation in 1972 after the National Park Service purchased most of the property for Point Reyes National Seashore on December 8, 1971.

---

[39]Copies of map dated September 1, 1900 and deed dated January 2, 1901, and notes from interview with Gordon Strain in 1975 by Ron Treabess, PRNS. Teixeira family information from interviews with Christina Teixeira Silveira, Irene Teixeira and Molly Teixeira Waters.

[40]Official Records Book 422, p. 321, Book 838, p. 171, and Book 1227, p. 370, MCRO.

A remaining parcel of 23 acres across Highway One was purchased in 1974 for Golden Gate National Recreation Area.[41]

At the time of the first park purchase, four members of the Teixeira family lived at the ranch. Christina and her husband Joseph Silveira built a one-story house on a .6 acre lot in the Everett Strain orchard south of the main house in 1948, and youngest daughter Molly and her husband Tim Waters remodeled the upper floor of the old horse barn into a living quarters in 1971. Irene Teixeira and her brother Tony and his wife shared the main house. In 1991 the Silveiras moved to San Rafael and their home became a housing unit for Point Reyes National Seashore personnel; the Waters' moved from the horse barn in April 1995 and the barn is vacant.

3. Buildings and Historic Resources

Nine historic buildings and three structures, including two historic bridges, remain at the Strain/Teixeira Ranch. The original pioneer Strain house, creamery, various sheds and a privy (PR-230) have been demolished over the years. A number of buildings have been built since the Teixeiras bought the property in 1941.

a. Main Residence (PR-226)

The main residence on the Teixeira Ranch is the Henry Strain house built in 1880 or 1885. The home, on a promontory with a commanding view of the ranch and valley, has been in use as a residence since that time. It is a two-story, 27' by 48' wood frame building on a brick foundation. The exterior is clapboard with scalloped shingles on the second story, but the shingles have been covered with what appears to be large square asbestos shingles. The roof is an offset gable with metal roofing made to imitate wood shingles. The house has boxed cornices with decorated frieze and brackets. There are two porches, but the rear one has been enclosed. The house has had only minor alterations both exterior and interior, and is in good condition. Although the house has

[41] Official Records, Book 2524, p. 485, Book 2484, p. 137, and Book 2850, p. 251, MCRO.

had surface alterations such as the siding and roof, they are reversible; the house possesses good historic integrity.

b. Barn (PR-228)

The Strain/Teixeira Ranch barn, located across Pine Gulch Creek from the ranch complex, was reportedly built by Henry Strain before 1870. It is a two-story, 45' by 84' wood frame structure with random-width vertical board siding. There are doors on the east and north sides. The gable roof, originally shingled, has been covered with corrugated metal. The interior is a large open space with a partial hayloft on the north and west walls. The west wall slopes out to become a stall area, in which up to thirty cows would be placed for milking in wood stanchions, which are extant. The floor is wood planking. A lean-to feeding structure is attached to the west side. The barn is currently used for storage. Storm damage on the southwest corner was repaired in 1993. There is termite damage and the barn is in fair condition. It has excellent historic integrity.

c. Horse Barn (PR-229)

The three-story 27' by 28' board and batten horse barn was reportedly built about 1876 by Henry Strain. It faces south and is located on the ranch access road. It has a gable roof with composition shingles with a wall dormer facing south. The upper floors were converted to a residence in 1971. The lower story is in use as a shop and is not significantly altered. The front (south) side had vinyl siding applied in 1990; new windows are aluminum sash. Because of the alterations the horse barn possesses little historic integrity, but it could be restored in the future if funds allowed.

d. Bridges (PR-231 & PR-232)

A 15-foot long footbridge (PR-231), built of log stringers, with a six-foot wide wood plank deck and wooden handrails, crosses Pine Gulch Creek from the Grade A barn to the old barn. It was built before 1900, is abandoned, and is in poor condition. A second bridge (PR-232) was built for automobiles north of the footbridge. It is 29' long, 15' wide, with concrete abutments, heavy timber

stringers, 3"x12" plank deck and braced wooden railings, and is still in use. Its historic integrity is good.

e. Grade A Barn (PR-227)

The 33' by 72' sanitary barn was built by the Teixeiras during World War II on the site of the old dairy house. Built in the typical fashion of concrete foundation and lower walls, wood frame with horizontal drop siding, and corrugated metal roof, the barn consists of a milking parlor and a milk room with a breezeway between, connected by a continuous gable roof with a long ridge vent. An open bay on the north end has a set of large rolling doors. The barn has not been significantly altered. It is no longer in use and has good historic integrity.

f. Garage/Shed (PR-233)

This open-front, 3-bay shed is located between the horse barn/residence and the Grade A barn. Gordon Strain remembers it as the same shed that existed here before 1920. It measures 20' by 43', with a corrugated metal shed roof and vertical random-width board siding. The remains of original opening shapes are extant in some bays; there have been some structural modifications, and a fuel shed has been added on the north side. It is in fair condition and possesses fair historic integrity.

g. Fuel Storage Shed (PR-234)

This small, 18' square open-front shed has an almost flat corrugated metal roof, corrugated metal walls, and board walls separating the two bays. A newer matching bay was added to the west. The shed contains fuel tanks and is in fair condition; its historic integrity is fair.

h. Stock Shed (PR-239)

The stock shed, located in the field behind the old barn, is actually two structures of similar dimensions joined together. The 18' by 30' structure has a low gable roof with corrugated metal sheathing on the roof and walls, although

some vertical board siding remains visible. The south section is open on two sides for stock access. The deteriorating structure is in fair condition and possesses little historic integrity.

i. Small Shed (PR-413)

A 7' by 10' stock shed sits in the pasture behind the old barn. It has a corrugated metal shed roof, vertical board siding, and no foundation. It is in fair condition and has fair historic integrity.

j. Wood Shed (PR-414)

A 6' by 8' shed with corrugated metal walls and roof, open on the north side. Wood sills are deteriorating and structure is leaning but still used for cordwood storage. It has fair historic integrity.

k. Roads

Three roads and a trace road remain on the Teixeira Ranch. The driveway from the highway to the main house dates from the 1880s and retains its character-defining features, foremost of which is the loop turn-around at the house front porch; a large magnolia tree stands in the center of the circle. Another road is the access to the ranch complex, leaving the highway just south of the residence road and leading past the horse barn/residence and Grade A barn to the bridge and old barn. This road appears to be the oldest in continuous use. Another road leads upstream on Pine Gulch Creek, part of which is now in use as the southern portion of the Olema Valley Trail. All are dirt roads. A trace of the original Spanish/Mexican-era Olema-Bolinas Trail, in use until 1867, can be found ascending the ridgeline north of the main house past the water tank, but the area is fast becoming covered with brush. This was one of the only places that the surveyor bypassed the old Mexican trail to any significant degree as he laid out the new county road in 1867; that survey is followed today by Highway One. These old roads have fair to good integrity.

l. Gates, Fences, Corrals

The fence lines have apparently not changed significantly since the Strain family ran the ranch, but over the years the materials have been replaced near the ranch complex and fencing has been removed on the rangeland; their integrity is fair.

m. Windbreak Trees and Orchard

A line of Monterey Cypress trees define part of the north boundary of the ranch complex, just north of the main house. These trees are more than 100 years old. The orchard south of the horse barn/residence dates from the later Strain era, 1901-1920, although many of the older trees are gone. Only one tree remains from the original Henry Strain orchard located west of the house.

The portion of Highway One known as Strain's Hill or Thirteen Curves is lined with century-old eucalyptus trees, reportedly planted by Henry Strain after the road was built in 1867. The historic trees are probably on the CalTrans right-of-way. One tree marks the northeast corner of the Strain lands and was planted by Henry Strain in the mid-1860s.

n. Other structures

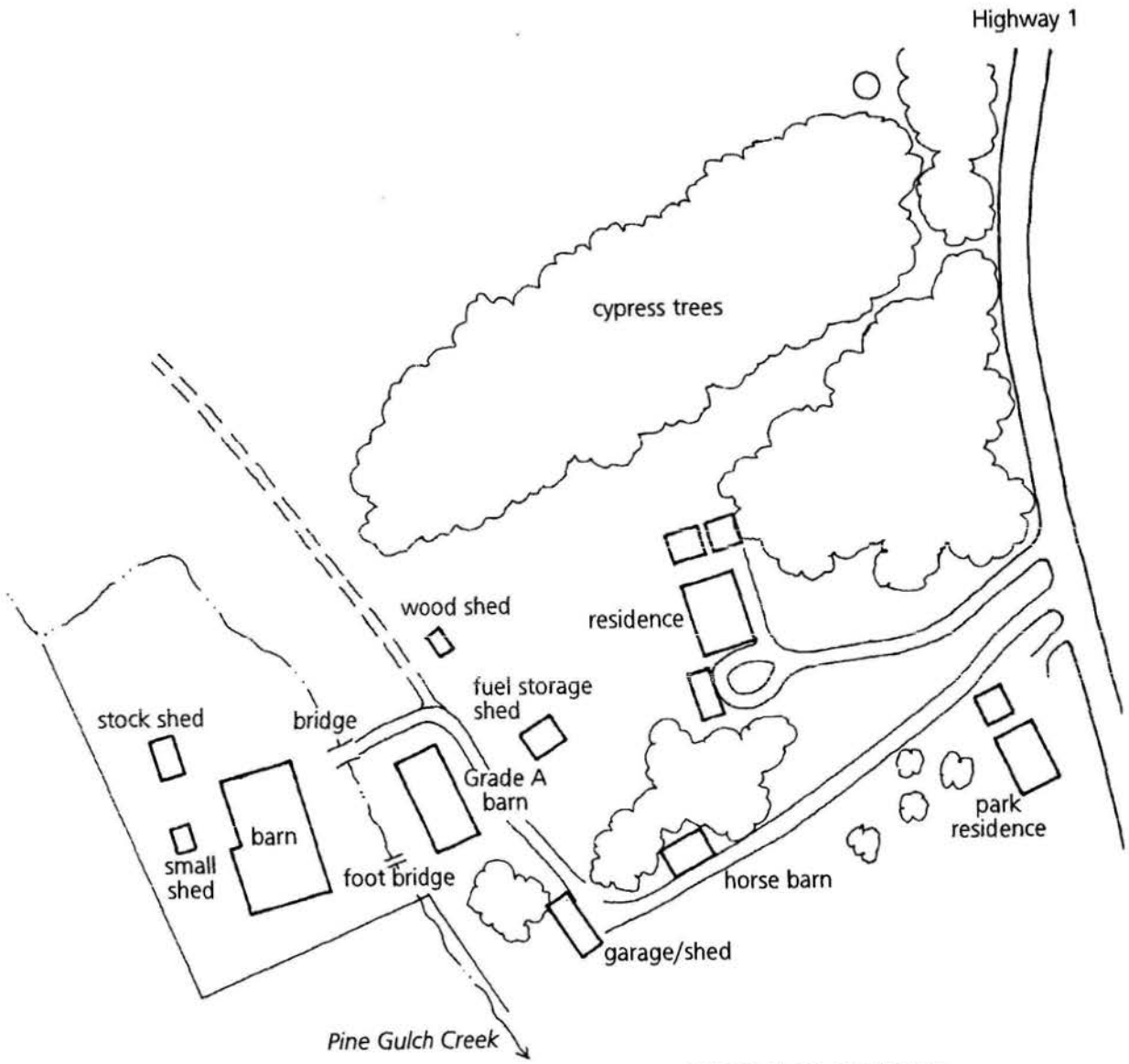
There are three other small outbuildings on the property, all built less than 50 years ago by the Teixeira family. The Silveira house and its outbuildings were built in 1948 in the orchard south of the original ranch complex. The historic ranch outhouse (PR-230) was removed around 1990.

4. Historic Significance of the Teixeira Ranch

The Teixeira Ranch is significant as a pioneer farm of the Bolinas area. The hay barn and horse barn are very early surviving examples of 1860s farm architecture, and the 1880/85 Strain house is a rare example of vernacular/ Victorian residential architecture in the region. The structural integrity of the buildings varies: the barn, built without nails, is in fair condition but needs treatment for structural deterioration; the horse barn has been altered a great deal on the exterior and upper interior; the main house is in very good condition, having been well-maintained during the last century, although its historic integrity has been reversibly compromised by alterations such as the asbestos siding. Overall the ranch possesses good historic integrity and is an important part of the cultural landscape of the Olema Valley.

Historic Features

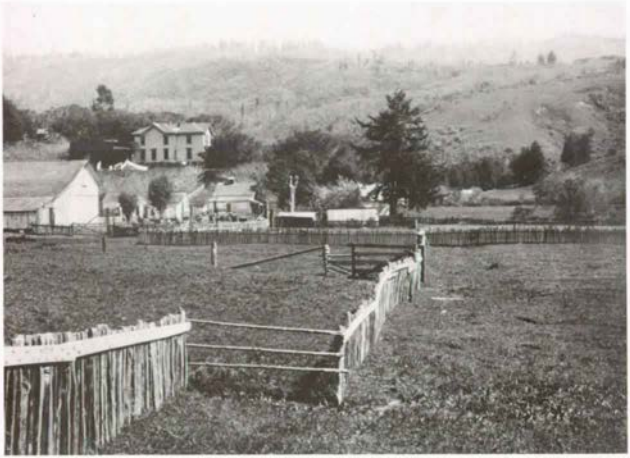
1. main residence, 1885
2. Grade A dairy barn, c. 1945
3. barn, ca. 1870
4. horse barn-residence, ca. 1876
5. foot bridge, pre-1900
6. bridge, c. 1940-45
7. garage/shed
8. fuel storage shed
9. stock shed
10. small shed
11. wood shed
12. gates, fences, corrals
13. cypress trees, ca. 1880
14. orchards, ca. 1880 & 1900
15. ranch driveways, ca. 1867 & 1880
16. trace of original Olema-Bolinas Road, ca. 1840s



TEIXEIRA RANCH

NOT TO SCALE

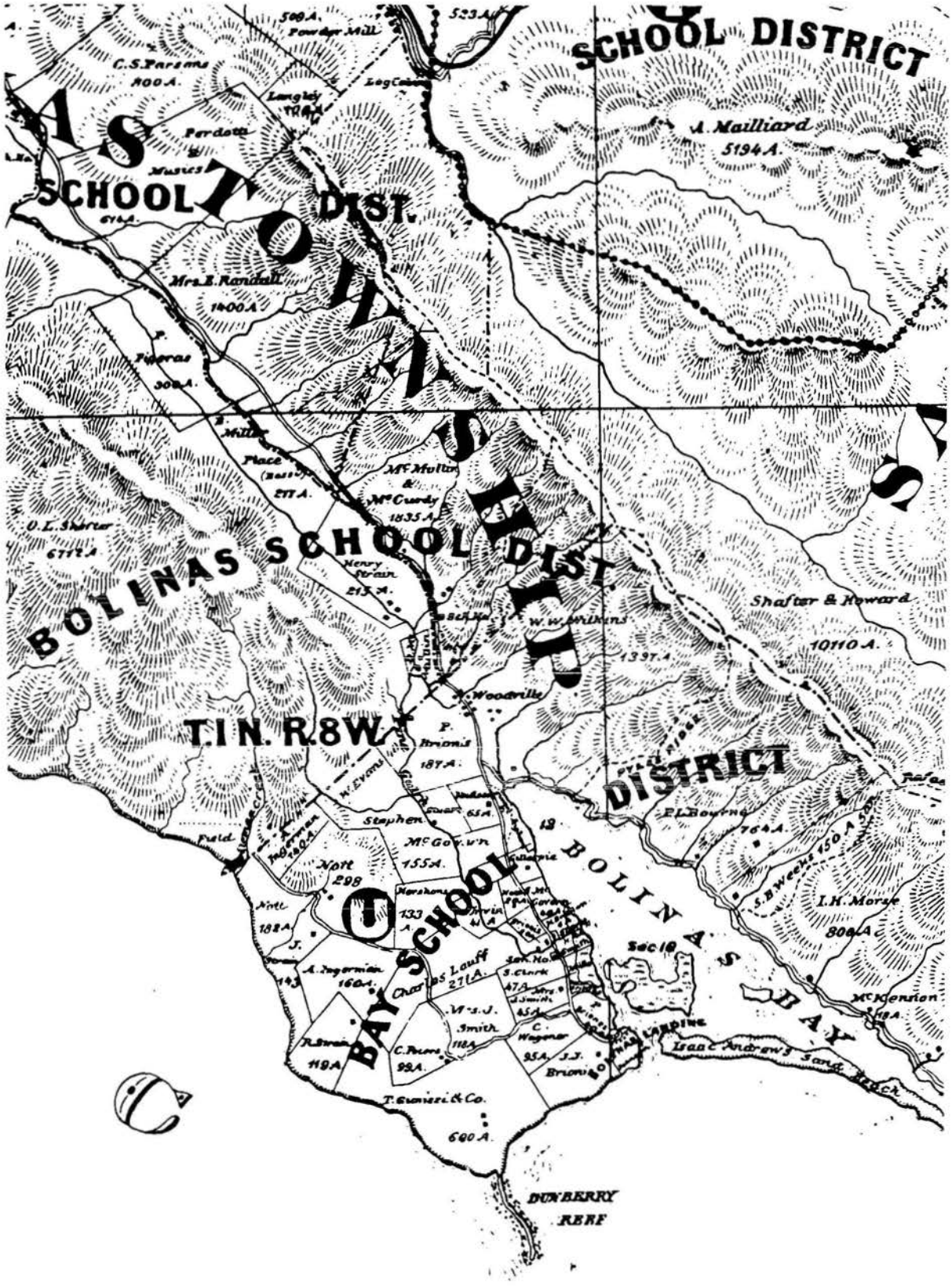
NORTH



Effects of the 1906 earthquake are dramatic in this scene on the Strain Ranch; the fence was offset about six feet as it straddled the San Andreas Fault. Note the old dairy buildings to the right of the barn and the results of a huge fire on the ridge two years earlier. *G. K. Gilbert photo, U.S.G.S. Library, Menlo Park.*

1906 view north towards the Strain Ranch, center, with David McMullin's orchard visible in the foreground. The eucalyptus lining Strain's Hill can be seen in the center distance. *U. S. Geological Survey Library.*

The Teixeira house (above) and barn (below) as they appeared in 1994. *NPS photos by Dewey Livingston.*

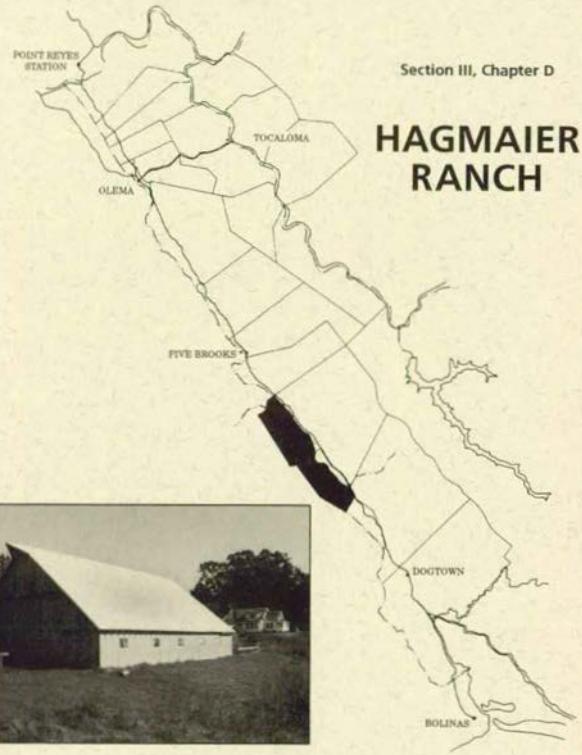


Detail of the 1873 "Official Map of Marin County" by Hiram Austin, showing Bolinas and Woodville. Note the ranches of Wilkins, McMullin & McCurdy, Henry Strain, B[enjamin]. Miller, P. Figeras [sic] and Mrs. Randall. *Jack Mason Museum Collection.*

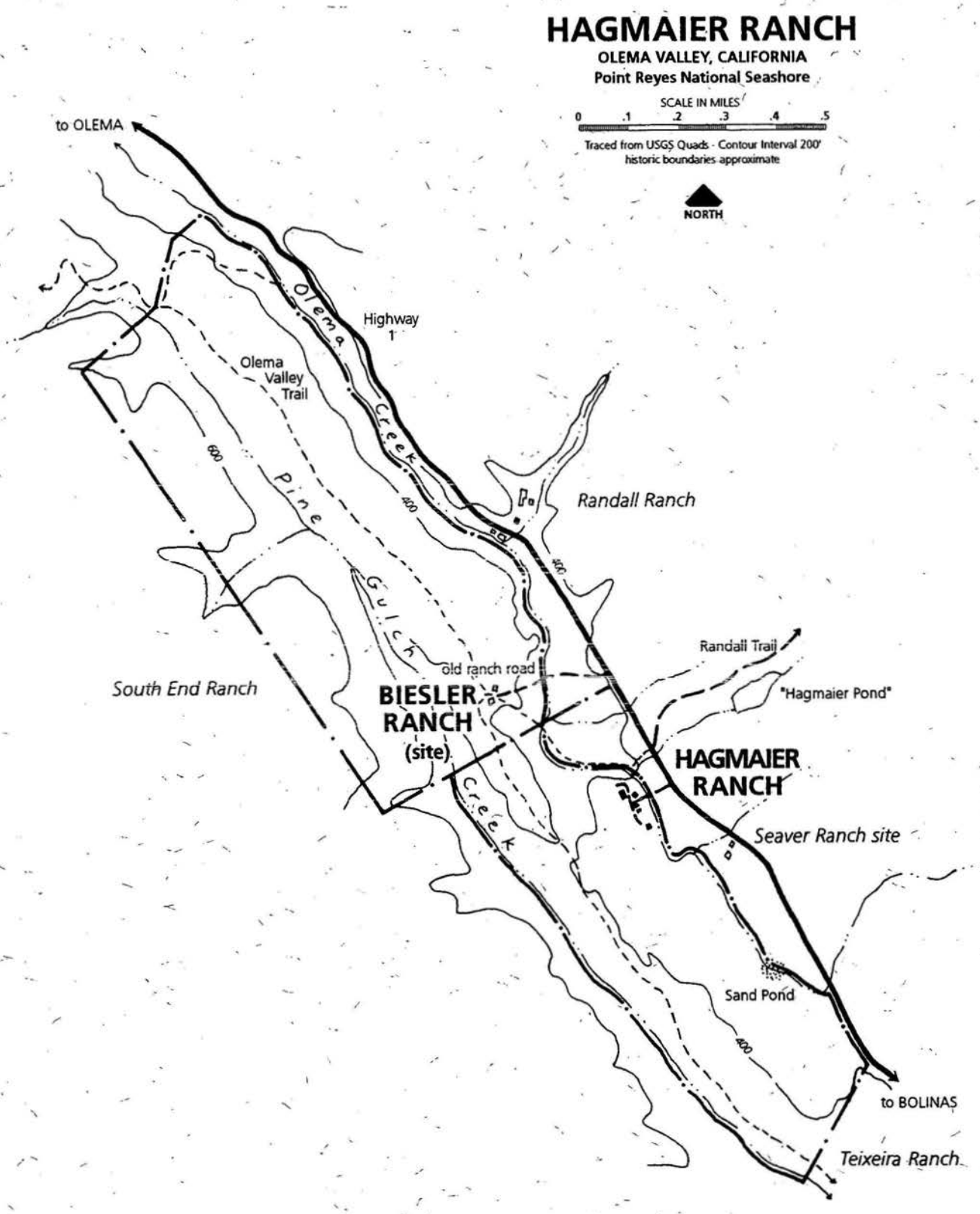
DAIRY FARMING IN THE OLEMA VALLEY

Section III, Chapter D

HAGMAIER RANCH



HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE


HAGMAIER RANCH
OLEMA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA
Point Reyes National Seashore
SCALE IN MILES
0 .1 .2 .3 .4 .5
Traced from USGS Quads - Contour Interval 200'
historic boundaries approximate
NORTH
to OLEMA
Olema Creek
Highway 1
Olema Valley Trail
600
Pine Gulch Creek
400
Randall Ranch
Randall Trail
old ranch road
"Hagmaier Pond"
South End Ranch
BIESLER RANCH (site)
HAGMAIER RANCH
Seaver Ranch site
Sand Pond
to BOLINAS
Teixeira Ranch

D. HAGMAIER RANCH
including Biesler Ranch
(Point Reyes National Seashore)

1. Description

During the last 50 years the Hagmaier Ranch has consisted of two smaller ranch complexes, one of which was removed in the early 1970s. Historically known as the Miller and Figueras Ranches, the two were merged in the late 1930s when purchased by the Hagmaier family, and today the remaining ranch complex serves as park housing and storage.

Hagmaier Ranch lies in the upper, or southern, end of the Olema Valley, where Olema Creek enters the flat valley for its journey to Tomales Bay. It is in an interesting geographic area on the San Andreas fault where Olema Creek flows north on the east side of the ranch and Pine Gulch Creek flows south on the west side. Flanked on the west by forested hills beyond Pine Gulch Creek and on the east by grassy hills with encroaching brush and forests, the ranch is on a relatively level site of about 500 acres. Olema Creek and State Highway 1, a paved, two-lane road, serve as the ranch's eastern boundary. A gravel driveway provides access to the ranch buildings. The Olema Valley Trail passes through the west edge of the ranch, and the Randall Trail connects hikers coming from Highway One to the Olema Valley Trail, just north of the existing ranch complex.

2. History of Hagmaier Ranch

Benjamin Miller settled in the upper Olema Valley as early as 1856, apparently claiming unoccupied land that would figure in subsequent title litigation. He eventually purchased his land from the Shafter law firm on March 6, 1861, for $3,264.05, or about $15 per acre. Miller, born in Ohio around 1812, gained local renown for the murder of his neighbor, William Randall, in 1861, as described in the following chapter.[42]

Miller had developed the ranch extensively by 1860, when he was

---

[42]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, pp. 239-240, 278; Population Schedules, 8th U. S. Census, 1860.

recorded as producing 3,000 pounds of butter from 100 cows during the previous year, as well as raising peas, beans, wheat, oats, and 2,000 bushels of Irish potatoes. Miller had horses, sheep, oxen, and pigs, valued at more than $6,000. He evidently remained on the ranch throughout his prosecution for murder. A correspondent from *The California Farmer* visited the Miller Ranch in early 1862 and published the following report:

> Mr. B. Millar [sic] has 217 acres of good land, and rents a league more from the great "Shafter claim." He has 300 head of stock, 75 milkers; makes no butter yet; had no hay or root-crops; will plant root-crops this year for stock. Made in 1861, from 30 cows, 75 to 100 pounds of butter a week. Mr. Millar [sic] has large and well-planned barns, and good buildings generally; desires good schools, roads, bridges, etc., and ready to aid them. Has suffered much by unsettled titles.[43]

Miller put his property on the market in 1869, advertising a "1 1/2 story dwelling house containing 8 rooms, also a fine orchard, straw & hay shed 130x30 ft, wood shed & all necessary out buildings, divided into 6 lots." Swiss immigrant Giuseppe Bassi purchased the property for $5,000 in July 1869, and the next month Miller auctioned his 25 milk cows, 25 two-year-old heifers, 39 spring calves, ten head of horses, 20 head of hogs, "a lot of poultry," farming utensils, household furniture, and other items; he then moved to Watsonville where he died in 1879.

Giuseppe Bassi and his wife Mary occupied the ranch, making butter and raising hogs, until selling the ranch to Henry Betten in 1872. Betten milked cows at the ranch but did not make butter there, selling his milk to a creamery. In 1880, Betten was listed as having produced $1,750 worth of milk and crops; Betten also kept 70 chickens on the ranch. In 1883 Betten held a community dance in his dairy barn. His house burned down on July 12, 1888, and a few months later Betten sold his Jersey herd and tools and apparently moved to Bolinas.[44]

Betten rented the dairy ranch to Toroni and Bareuchi in 1890. Daniel Bondietti rented the Betten Ranch from 1895 to about 1913. Bondietti, a Swiss

---

[43]Agricultural Schedules, 8th U. S. Census, 1860; The California Farmer, April 4, 1862, p. 1.

[44]Marin County Journal, September 26, 1883, July 12 and November 5, 1888.

immigrant who arrived in 1884, had a wife and seven children and also rented the Lake Ranch at Point Reyes from the O. L. Shafter estate. In 1901 Bondietti was recorded as milking 40 cows, from which he made 1,260 pounds of butter per month. According to the 1910 census record, Bondietti employed his children as milkers. Bondietti bought a ranch on Tomales Bay and moved there in 1913. The ranch had passed through a few hands while leased by Bondietti until it was purchased by Thomas Healion, an Irish immigrant who had arrived in Marin County as a young man in the 1860s. Healion died in 1909 and passed on the ranch to his son Arthur and his wife Caroline, who after Bondietti left, operated the dairy, built a new house, and raised a family there.[45]

The 290-acre property directly north of the Healion Ranch has been known most popularly as the Biesler Ranch. Pablo (or an Americanized "Paul") Figueras, born in Spain about 1819, settled on this ranch in the late 1850s, probably purchasing or renting it from Rafael Garcia or Gregorio Briones. He served as Justice of the Peace for Bolinas Township in 1858-59, and 1860-61. Figueras officially bought the property from Shafter, Shafter, Park and Heydenfeldt, after the law firm won title to the property in court, in 1862 for $1,700. He later sold 11 acres, including the roadway to his ranch to which he retained a right-of-way, to neighbor Sarah Randall for $100. Apparently Figueras and his brother Louis farmed potatoes at the ranch and had no dairy. In 1870 Figueras and his brother employed five laborers at the ranch, raising oats and hay and caring for 11 oxen and eight horses.[46]

German-born John Biesler bought the Figueras Ranch shortly before 1880, after a life in the gold mines of California. The ranch had fallen into neglect, so Biesler spent much time and money improving it. By 1880, Biesler was selling 8,000 gallons of milk per year from 17 cows. Biesler died in 1893 and passed the ranch to his sons John H. and Fred W. Biesler, who lived there with their mother. A biography described the ranch shortly after the turn of the century:

---

[45]Financing an Empire, p. 528; Guinn, Coast Counties, pp. 694-699; Marin County Journal, May 22, July 17, and August 28, 1869, p. 3; Deeds Book G, p. 474, and Book L, p. 153, Leases Book D, p. 91, MCRO; Population Schedules, 13th U. S. Census, 1910.

[46]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, pp. 232-233; Population Schedules, 8th U. S. Census, 1860; Agricultural Schedules, 9th U. S. Census, 1870, and 10th U. S. Census, 1880; Deeds Book C, p. 406 and Book E, p. 534, MCRO.

> [The Biesler brothers] have since conducted it as a dairy, taking pride in making it a model in all respects, having an up-to-date separator run by water power, and many other modern dairy conveniences. Most of the dairy product is marketed in San Francisco, where it commands a good price. The Biesler boys, as they are familiarly known, are both hard-working, industrious men, upright and honorable in their business dealings, and in all respects worthy sons of a good father.[47]

The 1920 census lists Fred Biesler at the ranch, with partners George Hagmaier (Biesler's second cousin) and John Krochler, an Austrian immigrant. John H. Biesler died around 1922, leaving the property in Fred's hands. The Dougan family rented the dairy ranch from Fred Biesler for about two decades until 1948, when longtime Olema dairymen Elfie and Florentino Franzi rented the ranch for a dairy. Florentino died in 1951, and Elfie died in 1967 after the house burned.[48]

San Francisco contractor George Hagmaier, who had lived on the Biesler Ranch to the north in 1920, purchased that 289.76-acre ranch from Fred Biesler on October 28, 1937. Soon after, he bought the 179.15-acre Healion Ranch from Arthur Healion's widow, Caroline, on May 2, 1938. Hagmaier went to work improving the property, while residing for the most part in Alameda and continuing in the contracting business.[49]

At the time George Hagmaier bought the ranch it consisted of about five major buildings, including the Healion's large house, a smaller house for workers, a two-story barn that had apparently been converted to a dwelling with a garage on the bottom floor, a medium-sized milking barn, and a two-room calf barn. All but the Healion house appeared to be from the Miller or Bassi era. Hagmaier made many improvements at the Healion ranch during his first years of ownership. The first year he tore down some of the old buildings and built a bunk house and two tool sheds, and rebuilt the old wooden milking barn after it burned in a dramatic fire in 1940. George Gomez managed the

---

[47]Guinn, Coast Counties, pp. 694-699; Agricultural and Population Schedules, 10th U. S. Census, 1880.

[48]Population Schedules, 14th U. S. Census, 1920; Baywood Press, June 10, 1951.

[49]Hagmaier era information from an interview with Daniel Hagmaier.

dairy until 1942; milk was trucked to the creamery in Point Reyes Station. With the United States entry into World War II and subsequent demand for dairy products, Gomez proposed to lease the dairy for his own business, but Hagmaier chose to close the dairy and auctioned the dairy stock in early 1942. After the end of the war, Hagmaier stocked the ranch with beef cattle. Hagmaier's son Daniel spent a great deal of time at the ranch and, after his father's death, made additional improvements during the 1950s, including some interior remodeling of the main house. The ranch was rented to Dan Quinn, who ran cattle on the ranch, when it was purchased in 1972 by the National Park Service.

At the Biesler Ranch the old buildings, probably dating from the Pablo Figueras and John Biesler era, remained intact although somewhat ramshackle. They consisted of a two-story, "T"-shaped house, a milking barn, a dairy, a wagon shed, and a horse barn. All were of a distinctive early California vernacular style. In 1966 the old Biesler house and dairy barn burned, leaving Elfie Franzi without his longtime home. The Park Service obliterated the remains of the Biesler Ranch in the early 1970s; only a row of cypress trees and a couple of orchard trees remain.[50]

3. Buildings and Historic Resources

The Hagmaier Ranch consists of five buildings and a water system, all more than 50 years old.

a. Main House (PR-415; PORE residence #172)

The main house, built by the Healion family around 1915 to replace their pioneer dwelling, is a 34' by 53' two-story home on a knoll overlooking Olema Valley. It has a gable roof with wide dormer windows facing north and south. A spacious porch wraps around the north and east sides of the house, with a tall, brick chimney on the north porch. The siding is a combination of shiplap on the first floor and shingles on the second floor, all painted white, with unpainted wood shingles on the roof. The house has not been seriously altered

[50]Interview with Daniel Hagmaier; Baywood Press, July 7, 1966, p. 1. Descriptions of the ranches are obtained from photographs, ca. 1938-1941, loaned by Daniel Hagmaier.

on the exterior since the Hagmaiers bought the ranch in 1938, except for the installation of aluminum windows in some areas and some interior remodeling; the original windows are mostly 8-over-1 and 6-over-1 double hung wood sash. The house is in good condition and has good historic integrity.

b. Bunk House (PR-416; PORE residence #173)

The bunk house, built in 1938 for ranch hands, has the simple appearance of a century-old farm house, with a gable roof and shed extension on the west side. The 33' by 37' house has horizontal drop siding and is painted white. Windows are 1-over-1 wood sash. The interior is rustic, with dark-stained wood paneling and white trim. The house is in good condition and possesses good historic integrity.

c. Hay Barn (PR-417)

The hay barn, built to replace an old milking barn that burned around 1941, is a wood frame structure with a corrugated sheet-metal roof and walls. It has eleven 6-light windows, five of which are currently boarded up, and large and small rolling doors. It is used for storage, and is in good condition. The barn possesses fair historic integrity.

d. Sheds (PR-418 & PR-419)

Two large sheds stand between the bunk house and the main house, both built by George Hagmaier in 1938. The larger, north shed (PR-418) is 25' by 40' with a corrugated metal gable roof, wide vertical board siding and large rolling doors on both the north and south sides. The south shed (PR-419) is 20' by 36' and is similar in appearance to the north shed. Both are painted red; they are used as garages and for storage today, and are in good condition with good historic integrity.

e. Road to Ranch

The gravel driveway to the ranch from Highway One appears to follow the same route as in 1898 when it first appeared on a U. S. Geological Survey

map. The bridge was reportedly replaced by George Hagmaier in the early 1940s. The old road to the Biesler Ranch has been obliterated.

f. Trees

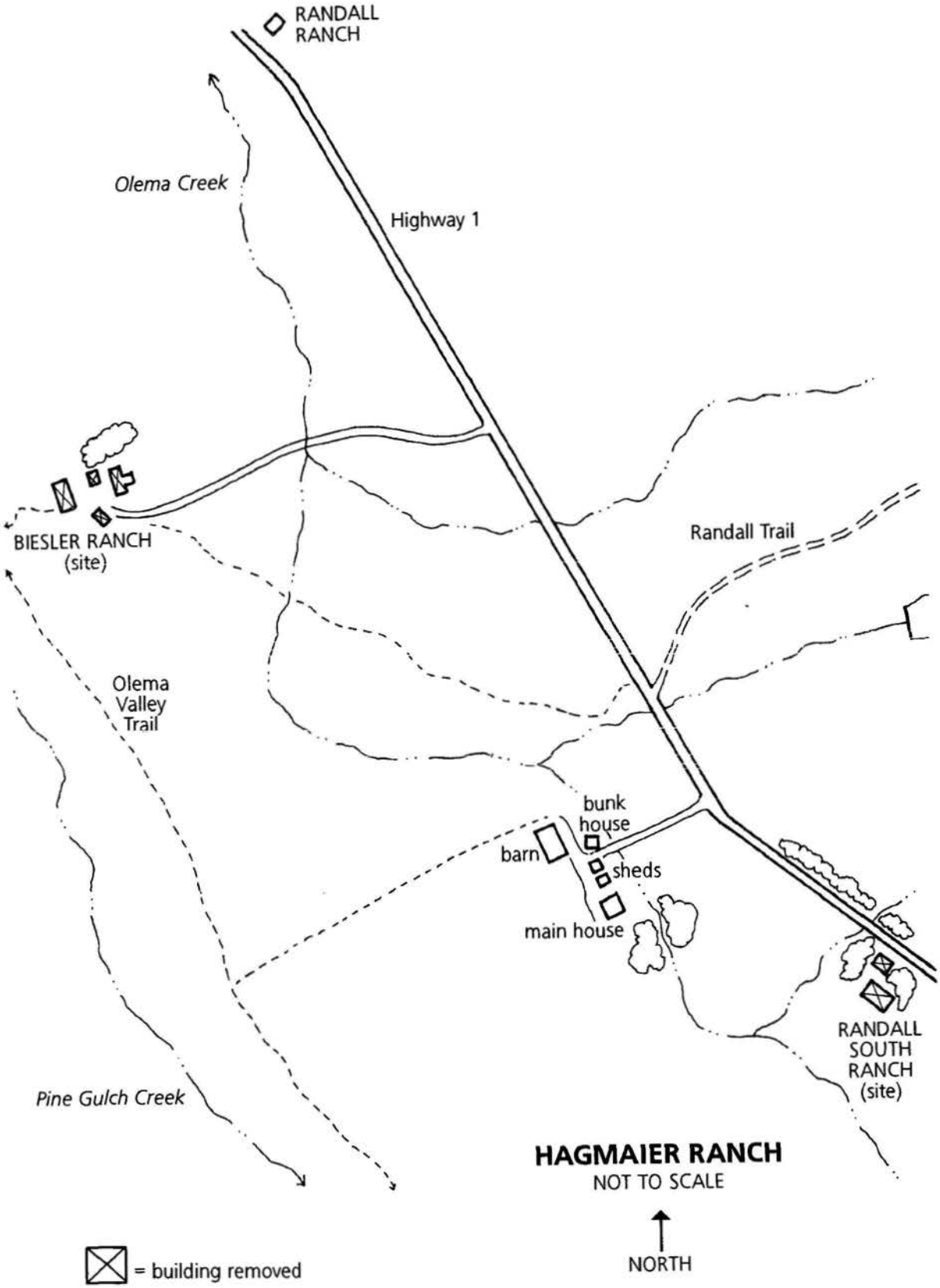
No historic trees are found at the Hagmaier Ranch. A grove of Monterey cypress and the remains of an orchard are found at the Biesler Ranch site.

4. Historic Significance of the Hagmaier Ranch

The Hagmaier Ranch is a significant part of the Olema Valley ranching district, 1856-1945. Settled by a Marin County pioneers Benjamin Miller and Pablo Figueras in 1856, the site is one of the oldest non-prehistoric habitations in the Point Reyes area. Most of the buildings on the site are vernacular farm buildings from a more recent era, about 55 years old, but the main ranch house may be architecturally significant as a rare local example of the sprawling midwestern farmhouse, with its wide verandas and dormer windows; it is unique among the remaining West Marin farmhouses in the area. The integrity of the ranch, although reflecting the circa 1940 improvements, is excellent.

Historic Features

1. main house, ca. 1915
2. bunk house, 1938
3. barn, 1941
4. north shed, 1938
5. south shed, 1938
6. road to ranch, ca. 1870s
7. cypress and fruit trees, Biesler Ranch


RANDALL RANCH
Olema Creek
Highway 1
BIESLER RANCH (site)
Randall Trail
Olema Valley Trail
bunk house
barn
sheds
main house
RANDALL SOUTH RANCH (site)
Pine Gulch Creek
HAGMAIER RANCH
NOT TO SCALE
NORTH
= building removed

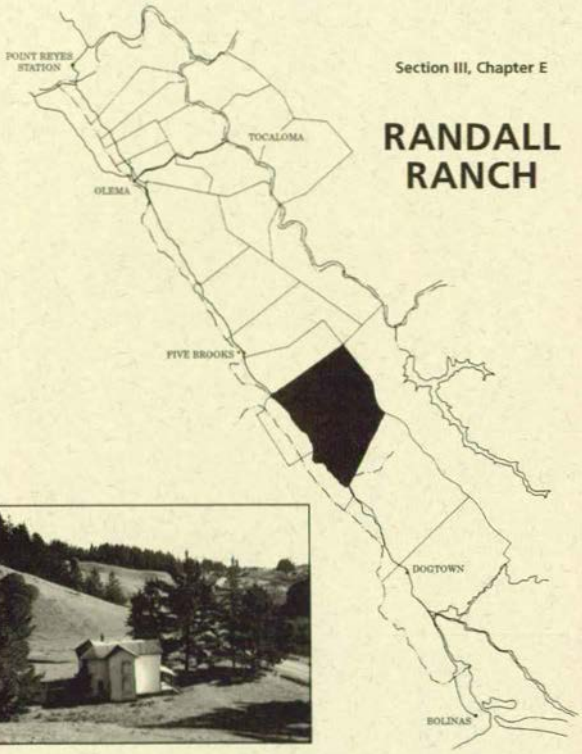
Two views of the Hagmaier Ranch, taken between 1939 and 1941. Above, looking northeast, below, looking west. *Courtesy of Daniel Hagmaier.*

The Biesler Ranch is seen in the backgound in this view from the Hagmaier Ranch taken in 1941. One can clearly see the barn, outbuildings and distinctive house. *Courtesy of Daniel Hagmaier.*

A view of the Biesler Ranch showing the outbuildings with the old house in rear. Photograph taken in 1941. *Courtesy of Daniel Hagmaier.*

Two views of the Biesler Ranch. Above, the old Pablo Figueras house, which burned in 1966; below, the creamery. Photographs taken in 1941. *Courtesy of Daniel Hagmaier.*

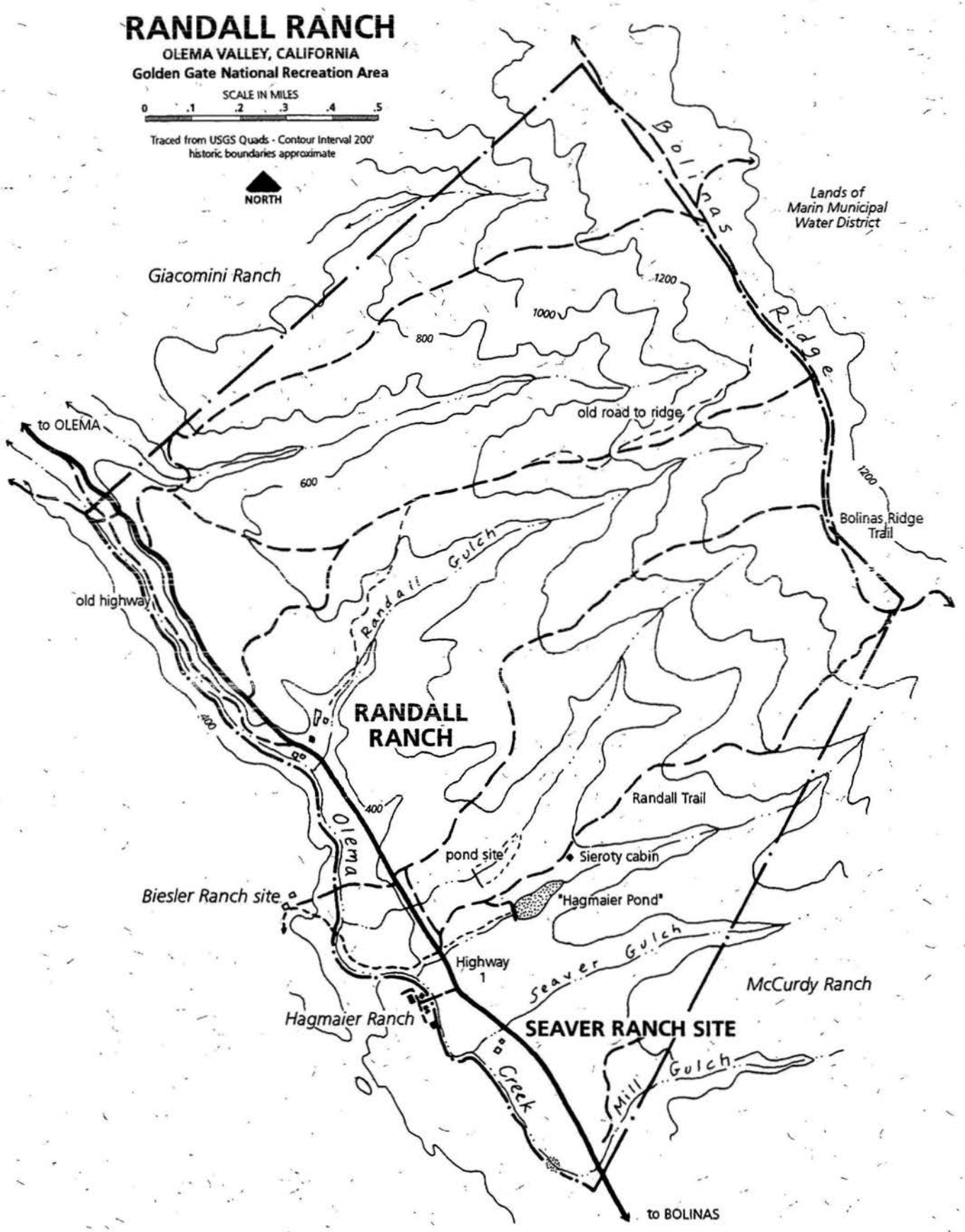
DAIRY FARMING IN THE OLEMA VALLEY



Section III, Chapter E

RANDALL RANCH

HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE


RANDALL RANCH
OLEMA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA
Golden Gate National Recreation Area
SCALE IN MILES
0 .1 .2 .3 .4 .5
Traced from USGS Quads - Contour Interval 200'
historic boundaries approximate
NORTH
Bolinas Ridge
Lands of Marin Municipal Water District
Giacomini Ranch
1200
1000
800
600
400
to OLEMA
old road to ridge
Bolinas Ridge Trail
Randall Gulch
old highway
RANDALL RANCH
Randall Trail
pond site
Sieroty cabin
"Hagmaier Pond"
Olema
Biesler Ranch site
Highway 1
Seaver Gulch
McCurdy Ranch
Hagmaier Ranch
SEAVER RANCH SITE
Mill Gulch
Creek
to BOLINAS

E. RANDALL RANCH
(Golden Gate National Recreation Area)

1. Description

The Randall Ranch is a 1400-acre property located almost exactly between Bolinas and Olema, leading one rancher in the 1950s to name it the Midway Ranch . Noted for its longtime operation under the pioneer family of William and Sarah Randall, the ranch has had many owners during the 20th century and is now only a shell of its former self. Only the prominent 2-story Randall house remains, and it has stood abandoned for two decades. The parcel is almost square in shape with a diagonal boundary at the south end. The ranch is on the west slope of Bolinas Ridge, with the east boundary being the summit of the ridge and the west boundary Olema Creek and the state highway. The ranch is bounded on the north by the Ralph Giacomini Ranch, on the east by lands of the Marin Municipal Water District, on the south by the former McCurdy Ranch and on the west by the former Hagmaier and Lake Ranches on the Point Reyes Peninsula. The ranch is crossed by four dirt ranch roads leading to the ridge top; one, the Randall trail, is a designated trail in the GGNRA system. At least three older abandoned roads are extant on the property as well, one of which is the original Olema to Bolinas Road in use from 1867 to 1927. A stock pond near the southern boundary is a popular swimming hole for Bay Area residents.

2. History of the Randall Ranch

William Edgar Randall, born on May 13, 1824, learned the trade of carpentry in his native Greensboro, Vermont. In 1849 he married fellow Vermonter Sarah Seaver, who was born on October 6, 1826. In the spirit of the era, the young couple joined the Gold Rush to California. Arriving in San Francisco on May 2, 1850 aboard the ship *Hannibal,* the Randalls made a few attempts at businesses in that city and San Jose but soon headed for the gold fields. The Randalls returned to San Jose in the fall of 1853 and it was here that they probably met John Nelson. Nelson, born in Sweden in 1819, also came to California with the Gold Rush. He settled in San Jose area at the

same time as Randall, where he operated a pig farm in the Santa Clara Valley. Randall and Nelson joined forces and went to Oregon in the spring of 1855 to try their luck in the mines there. After some time, including a stint fighting Indians in 1856, they purchased a herd of cattle in the Willamette Valley of Oregon and drove it to Olema, arriving in January, 1857.[51]

Randall and Nelson looked for land in the area and purchased 1400 acres in the southern Olema Valley drainage from Rafael Garcia and his wife on May 2, 1857. They paid the Garcias $2000 and commenced dairy ranching. According to a neighbor, the men created "a large dairy establishment" and made "extensive and valuable improvements thereon in buildings and fences". They built ranch buildings along Olema Creek at the center of the western edge of the property, with a simple farmhouse nearby. Randall's granddaughter wrote of "the huge barn built by [Randall] without the use of a nail . . . ." Another dairy complex was built about a mile south of the main ranch on the county road.[52]

Nelson sold his share in January of 1860 for $3000 and went to work for his longtime friends, the Olds, on the next property north; he eventually became involved in the growth of the village of Olema, where he opened the Point Reyes House, a bar and billiard parlor, ran the stage line to San Rafael and for many years owned the Olema Hotel, a centerpiece of the town for more than 50 years.[53]

The 1860 census recorded W. E. Randall, age 38, as having land valued at $3625 and an estate of $2150; Sarah's two sisters and a brother lived at the ranch as well. Randall had improved 300 acres of his land, owned 32 milk cows, two head of oxen, four horses, 40 other cattle and nine pigs; the previous year

---

[51]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p.425; [GGNRA Park Historian] James P. Delgado, untitled manuscript dated September 18, 1980. Delgado's article appeared in a edited form in Mason, Historian, pp. 584-586. According to family tradition, son Raymond was born in an Oregon fort during an Indian massacre.

[52]Land Case 68 ND, U.S. vs R. Garcia, Bancroft Library, pp. 83, 85; interview with Boyd Stewart; "Personal History of William Edgar Randall and His Wife, Sarah Seaver Randall," manuscript by an unidentified granddaughter of the Randalls, circa 1955, in park files. The author appears to be Rue Randall Clifford, who wrote a brief history of her family in 1955 at the time of her donation of Randall's Gold Rush diaries to the Bancroft Library. The manuscript notes that the old barn fell into the creek in the early 1950s.

[53]Deeds Book E, p. 530, MCRO; Marin County Journal, March 20, 1869; 9th U. S. Census, 1870. John Nelson died in 1898.

the ranch had produced 5000 pounds of butter, 500 bushels of Irish potatoes and 400 pounds of honey. Daniel Seaver, Sarah's brother, produced 4300 pounds of butter on a dairy on the south part of the ranch. A man named William Peach lived on Randall land; he owned 35 milk cows and 40 other cattle. His relation to the Randall family is unknown, and one John Peach appears on the census as residing with Sarah Randall ten years later.[54]

William Randall, known to his family and friends as Edgar, did not have long to enjoy the fruits of his labor. On June 7, 1860, Randall's neighbor Benjamin Miller killed him in a long-simmering boundary dispute. A history of Marin County written in 1880 detailed the murder. Reportedly angry that Randall and Nelson had purchased land that he coveted, Miller "commenced a fierce war against them, and on two occasions shot at and missed" Nelson. Miller allegedly shot at Randall seven times in the days before the final act, here described:

> The day before while Randall was riding along the road, a ball whistled close by his head. It would seem that Miller was in the habit of tearing down Randall's fence, and permitting his stock to run at large upon the ranch. On the morning of the shooting, Randall and his brother-in-law were driving out the stock when they came to a gate where they found Miller and his son, each armed, Miller with a rifle and the latter with a double-barrelled shotgun. Some words passed between them, when, on the arrival of another brother-in-law, the gun was taken from the younger Miller by the new-comer. Upon this, Miller, the elder, presented the rifle which he carried at the last arrival, when Randall rode up towards Miller with a small pistol in his hand, on this move Miller whirled around and fired at Randall striking him in the abdomen. This was at 10 a.m.; at 7 p.m. he died.

A good samaritan rode on horseback some 25 miles to San Rafael for a doctor; by the time the doctor arrived the victim was dying. Randall was buried in a small graveyard established on a knoll north of the ranch. Miller, although sentenced to 11 years in prison, went free and eventually took the case to the

---

[54]Population and Agriculture Schedules, 8th U. S. Census, 1860. Peach may have been the husband of Sarah's sister Jane.

Supreme Court. He later settled in Watsonville "where he dropped dead in the street" in 1879.[55]

At the time of her husband's death Sarah Randall had five young children, her husband's debt, and limited knowledge of the dairy business. No doubt with the help of her brother and neighbors, Mrs. Randall recovered from her tragedy and kept the dairy ranch going. Soon, however, problems arose over ownership of the Randall land.[56]

Rafael Garcia had been granted two leagues but the map delineating his properties had been carelessly drawn. A new survey cut out about 2,000 acres, including Mrs. Randall's ranch. According to the new map Garcia would have had no right to sell the property to Randall and Nelson. The government could claim this land, but the Shafter law firm claimed that the land belonged to them as part of the old Berry claim which they had rightfully purchased. The matter went to court on October 22, 1862. Mrs. Randall appeared, arriving late and explaining that she was delayed "by remote residence, the inclemency of the weather, the difficulties in traveling, and by . . . many other pressing duties and obligations." Also present in the courtroom were Salvador Vallejo, Ignacio Pacheco and James McMillan Shafter. Mrs. Randall's case may have been saved by the testimony of her neighbor to the north, Daniel Olds, Jr., who stated that he was present at the time of the survey and felt her claim was true, and noted that she was "very industrious and devotes herself incessantly to the care of her family and the conduct of her dairy operation. She knows as little about legal matters as the majority of American matrons." The Shafters did not get the Randall Ranch and other Garcia lands as threatened, but instead received the immense Phelps patent to the east.[57]

In March of 1862 a correspondent for *The California Farmer* visited and wrote that the family "has 1200 acres, 200 head of stock, 100 milkers; had 60 milkers last season and made 400 pounds of butter a month; no hay or root crops now, and making no butter; lost some stock." Mrs. Randall leased a

---

[55]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, pp. 239-240; "Personal History," p. 1.

[56]At the time of their father's death the ages of the Randall children were: Elizabeth Deborah, 9 (born October 25, 1850); William James, 8 (April 1, 1852); Fannie Jane, 6 (May 2, 1854); Raymond (or Ramon) Leon, 4 (May 31 1856); and Mary Lorraine, 1 (April 4, 1859); Mary was the only Randall child born at the Olema Valley ranch.

[57]Land Case 68 ND, U. S. vs R. Garcia, Bancroft Library, p. 87; Mason, Point Reyes, pp. 45-47; notes by Jack Mason in Jack Mason Museum Collection, Inverness.

portion of the ranch to her sister Jane's husband. She wrote to her brother in 1864 and provided news of the ranch:

> We are having one of the pleasantest winters I ever experienced in California, grass has grown finely and at the present time feed is very good. I have 18 fresh cows which we are milking with a prospect of about 60 this season. I sold only butter for 42 1/2 cents pr. lbs. last year but fresh butter is now selling for .55 and 60 cts. and I am making about 75 lbs. pr. week---
>
> Times are very good here and money is plenty. Geo. Urie is at work for me still but I shall require another man soon.
>
> Willie [son William James] is old enough to do considerably[;] he brings in the cows night & morning besides looking after my cattle which takes considerable riding . . . .[58]

The Randall lands grew slightly when in 1866 Pablo Figueras sold a small part of his ranch across the county road to Mrs. Randall for $100. The parcel included the driveway to Figueras' ranch, on which Figueras retained a right-of-way. The next year county surveyor Hiram Austin laid out a new county road through the Randall Ranch, today's Highway 1. Someone, perhaps Seaver or a Randall son, planted eucalyptus and cypress trees along the roadway in the vicinity of the south ranch. In 1870 Mrs. Randall leased a right-of-way to Samuel McCurdy and David McMullin for hauling wood from their tract of timber to the south to the county road.[59]

The 1870 census listed Sarah Randall as head of the household. Her oldest child, Elizabeth, did not reside at the ranch at the time the census was taken, and William was 18. Also in residence was Sarah's sister Margaret Seaver, one John Peach, age 40, and a Swiss dairy laborer. Sarah's brother Daniel Seaver lived down the road, at the site now marked by eucalyptus trees

---

[58]The California Farmer, April 8, 1862, p. 1.; letter to "Brother William [Seaver]" dated January 25, 1864, collection of Bancroft Library. George Urie (or Eurie) lived in the northwestern corner of the ranch as of 1867, when his house appears on a map of the new county road.

[59]Deeds Book E, p. 534, Leases Book A, p. 72, MCRO; "Plat . . . Bolinas and Olema Road," 1867.

near the Hagmaier Ranch. Seaver, 35, was a dairyman with $1000 worth of assets, and lived on the southern portion of his sister's land with his wife Annie and infant daughter Charlotte. By this time the Randalls had improved 740 acres of land, with the entire ranch valued at $18,000. The Randall dairy produced 5000 pounds of butter that year, and Seaver made 3000 pounds. Between the two dairy ranches on the property, there were 72 milk cows, 50 other cattle, 52 pigs and 11 horses. Mrs. Randall's farm produced 65 bushels of winter wheat, 600 bushels of oats and 75 tons of hay; Seaver grew 100 pounds of potatoes. The figures show that Mrs. Randall, with the help of her family, had indeed developed a prosperous dairy farm.[60]

The five Randall children grew up in a sort of idyll at the ranch, the death of their father notwithstanding, riding to the nearby Olema School at Five Brooks on horseback, gathering huckleberries in the surrounding woods and then drying and preserving them by the bushel. The children were no doubt a large factor in their mother's prosperity in the dairy business. Oldest son William, known as Willie and later W. J., was born at Murphy's Camp, California on April 1, 1852. He attended boarding school in Petaluma and was eight years old when his father was killed; he then attended local schools and graduated from Heald's Business College in San Francisco in 1873. He apparently ran his uncle Daniel Seaver's ranch up the road for many years, and married Abbie Perham in 1879. William left the ranch around 1881 to run his own dairy businesses on Point Reyes, including the famous Pierce Ranch and O. L. Shafter's L Ranch. Raymond Randall, born at Angel's Camp in the Oregon gold country while his father was mining there, took over the Randall business in the 1870s after his marriage to Harriet "Hattie" Weeks, a neighbor to the south. The couple had six daughters while living on the ranch, Lottie, Myra, Elizabeth, Helen, Sadie, Fanny and Aileen. The family referred to the place as the Bell Ranch, because the cows wore bells. Raymond's sister Mary became a schoolteacher, beginning at the Garcia School in Olema in 1879 and then teaching at the nearby Olema School at Five Brooks in 1883. Mary was married to M. H. Clifford of San Francisco in her mother's house in 1885. Oldest sister Elizabeth married P. Tripp of San Francisco in 1886.[61]

---

[60]Population and Agricultural Schedules, 9th U. S. Census, 1870.

[61]Letter to "Dear Cousin Mary" from Fannie Randall, October 1863, in the Randall Papers at Bancroft Library; Marin County Journal, July 17, 1879, September 20 and November 1, 1883 and April 10, 1884; Marin Journal, November 26, 1885 and November 26, 1886; letter to Jack Mason

A granddaughter of the Randalls wrote many years ago about her grandmother:

> [Sarah Randall] carried on an active business in butter and other dairy products with commission merchants in San Francisco. The products were shipped by small boats from Bolinas . . . . My grandmother was active in the pioneer Methodist church. Seminary students came by horseback on Saturdays. She housed them until Monday morning when they returned to San Rafael, after preaching on Sundays. She also helped to establish the Sunday School in Bolinas.

Mrs. Randall was among the founders, along with neighbors Nelson Olds and L. K. Baldwin, of a "Tent of the Order of Rechabites" in Olema in 1870.[62]

By 1880 it appears that Sarah Randall did not live on the ranch at all and that all Seavers were gone. The census that year lists William J. Randall at the old Seaver dairy (near today's Hagmaier Ranch), where he, his wife Abbie and a farm laborer owned 40 milk cows as well as horses and calves. Randall did not make butter, but sold 17,875 gallons of milk to a creamery. His ranch was valued at $8200. Raymond Randall rented the main ranch from his mother for shares of the produce. Living with him was his wife Hattie, infant daughter Lottie, sister Mary the schoolteacher, and two hired hands. The dairy sold 35,007 gallons of milk to a creamery, from 67 cows. The ranch also housed eight horses, 72 calves and other cattle, 60 pigs and 24 chickens. The value of all products was listed at $3475, with a total value of the farm at almost $13,000.[63]

Perhaps to accommodate Raymond's growing family, Mrs. Randall had a larger house built east of the county road, across the road from the dairy buildings. The exact date of construction is unclear; the 1880 census does not reflect an outstanding improvement in the value of the buildings there. One report states that Mrs. Randall began construction in 1880 and completed the house in 1881. The two-story Victorian, with elegant trim and ample space,

---

from Lottie Randall Taylor (daughter of Raymond Randall), age 88, May 1968, Jack Mason Museum Collection.

[62]"Personal History," p. 2; Marin County Journal, June 11, 1870.

[63]Population and Agricultural Schedules, 10th U. S. Census, 1880.

became a showplace in the Olema Valley and still stands today. According to the county newspaper, Sarah Randall planned to have a new barn built in 1884. A fire in 1890 destroyed most of the pasture and fences on the ranch; the newspaper called 10-year-old Lottie Randall "the little heroine" of the disaster.[64]

Mrs. Randall apparently returned to the ranch and lived alone there in later years but was eventually persuaded by her children to leave and live with them in town. Sarah Seaver Randall died on January 24, 1907, and left the ranch to her grown children Elizabeth Tripp, William, Fanny Tullar, Raymond and Mary Clifford. Upon his death William left his 1/5 share to his three children in 1909, and Fanny left her portion to her two daughters Diadama and Mary after her death in 1911. The family had spread far and wide and decided after Fannie's death to sell the home ranch.[65]

At the end of 1911 the Randall heirs sold the ranch to Millerton (Tomales Bay) dairyman George Woodley. The ranch was rented to tenants during this period, including the Silveira family and Frank Fostine, both of whom ran the dairy. For a short time in the early 1930s, tenants ran sheep on the ranch. Woodley's daughter Nellie Deevy had inherited the ranch in 1924, and she and her husband Dan had a Grade A barn built behind the house around 1934, one of the first in the Olema Valley. The family moved to the ranch at that time and operated under contract to Marin Dell Milk Company. The Deevys also built a large hay barn with horse and calf sheds along the side, behind the Grade A barn. Deevy's heirs sold the ranch in 1942 to Umbert "Al" Borello and his partners, Angelo Devencenzi and Donald L. Cooper, who continued a Grade A operation; Borello bought out his partners a year later. It was some time after this that the Randall-era barns across the road were destroyed.[66]

Ernest Kettenhofen, a former ship's captain (and later a Marin County supervisor), bought the Randall Ranch from Borello in 1951. Kettenhofen ran cattle and sheep on the ranch and built two stock ponds in southern drainages.

---

[64]Delgado, p. 4; Marin Journal, April 10, 1884, November 20 and December 11, 1890.

[65]Deeds Book 114, p. 338, Book 120, p. 320, Book 133, p. 417, MCRO.

[66]Deeds Book 139, pp. 418 and 420, Book 140 pp. 149 and 150, Official Records Book 50, p. 86, Book 343, p. 175, Book 450, p. 410, Book 723, p. 227, MCRO; Population Schedules, 14th U. S. Census, 1920; interviews with Dan Deevy and Joseph Silveira.

Around this time the Truttman brothers, who rented pasture for their dairy cows from Kettenhofen, named the place "Midway Ranch."[67]

The last owner of the ranch, a corporation run by State Senator Alan Sieroty and called Gottshalk-Sieroty Co., built a small cabin in the woods south of the ranch complex. They rented the ranch house to a tenant and the pasture to neighboring dairyman Ralph Giacomini. The remaining land was zoned A-2, allowing development of a density of one unit per two acres, although in reality the property was not appropriate for such density because of steep slopes. A 1973 appraisal considered development of second homes and recreational type units as well as timbering as the best use of the land. The tenant at the time had a horse ranch called "Sunrise Ranch." The federal government purchased the Randall Ranch on May 6, 1974 for $1,118,300. Ralph Giacomini continues to graze cattle on the pastures under a special use permit. The federal government purchased by condemnation 90 acres of the western part of the ranch for Point Reyes National Seashore in 1975, property no longer in use for grazing.[68]

The superintendent of Point Reyes National Seashore had the remaining barns and outbuildings removed soon after the purchase and intended to demolish the unoccupied Randall House. The keeper of the National Register of Historic Places declared the house eligible for the National Register in 1979, spurring the park to attempt historic leasing on the old house. This effort failed through the lack of acceptable proposals, and again the house faced demolition. Discovery in the 1980s of a rare big-eared bat colony in the attic has given the place at least a temporary reprieve.[69]

---

[67]Official Records Book 723, p. 227, MCRO; interviews with Ernest Kettenhofen and Armin and Frank Truttman.

[68]Official Records Book 1157, p. 617, Book 1210, pp. 113 and 292, Book 2539, p. 609 and Book 2790, p. 457, MCRO; "Appraisal Report: Sieroty Ranch." (Sebastopol: Harding Appraisal Co., Inc., 1973), pp. 1, 9, 11-13; Tract file (L-1425): Tract 04-103 Sieroty Co. Inc. et al, PRNS.

[69]Tract files, PRNS; National Register files, GGNRA; interview with Dr. Gary Fellers, National Biological Survey.

3. Historic Resources

The circa 1881 Randall house is the only remaining building on the property. Declared eligible for the National Register of Historic Places in 1979, the house is on the List of Classified Structures. The site of the Daniel Seaver dairy has been vacant for most of this century.

a. Sarah Seaver Randall House (OV-05.01)

The Randall house is a wood frame Victorian structure with Italianate detailing, with stick type brackets at the eaves and trim at the outside corners and with handsome pediments over most of the front and side windows. A combination hip and gable roof has a middle flat portion which contains the roof access hatch. Some fascia trim is missing and there has been an addition of a small single story room off the kitchen side. A front porch had been added which interrupted the pediments over the downstairs front windows; this deteriorated porch has been replaced by the park with a flat shed porch, the sole purpose of which is to protect the front of the building. The front porch covers about 110 square feet, and the side porch 56 square feet. The house rests on a brick foundation.

The building is sheathed in horizontal siding, all painted white. A major portion of the of the south side has been treated with an added finish of banded shingles--alternate bands of horizontal shingles and shingles of fish-scale pattern--each band being about three and a half or four feet wide. This was added over the original horizontal siding at some time in the late 1800s when the chimney was removed from that side of the house. The original windows were wood two over two double hung sash. A side porch with a concrete floor has been put on adjacent to the small addition by the kitchen. The rear elevation is essentially unadorned with no special window trim and no brackets. Exposed plumbing and vent lines are evident and were no doubt added to accommodate a bath which was put in on the second floor.

The interior shows four large rooms on the lower floor with a generous entry/stair hall and with the add-on room and bath off the kitchen. The first floor contains 1,084 square feet. There is a fine open stair which leads to the second floor, but the bannister has been stolen by vandals. Upstairs are four generous bedrooms, a nice upper hall space, and a large bath and storage room

which must originally have been another bedroom. The upper floor contains 948 square feet. Access to the attic and ultimately the roof is by a ceiling hatch located in a closet off a rear bedroom.

Originally the house had decorative finials on the roof ridges, as well as two porches which were embellished in the Victorian fashion of the day. The original front porch was replaced before 1940 with a larger one that covered the entire lower front of the house. It was removed by the Park Service.

Heat was originally supplied by stoves which were vented through one flue. The house has no fireplaces. Redwood and pine trees have been planted in the yard within the last 30 years and obscure views of the house from the west and south.

The building is structurally sound, showing no evidence of foundation settling or severe deterioration. It has been unoccupied for 20 years, and vandals have taken some exterior trim and have almost stripped the interior. Plaster is falling inside and there is almost no ventilation.

Because of alterations and vandalism, the Randall House possesses only fair historic integrity. With proper funding it could be restored and used to interpret the ranching history of the area.

b. Roads

Three useable ranch roads cross the Randall Ranch from west to east, leading from the state highway up grassy ridges to the top of Bolinas Ridge, where a ridge-top track connects them all. One such road leaves the highway at a point north of the house, the next from a gate near the north former stock pond, and the southernmost from near the south "Hagmaier" pond. The latter one is called the Randall Trail and passes the Sieroty cabin. A fourth, the northernmost, is now inaccessible from the ranch property because of a washout in a major creek crossing; it is now accessed from the Giacomini Ranch to the north. At least two older abandoned roads, believed to date from the 19th century, provide access to the ridge with easier grades. One leads from the house and dairy complex to the current ranch road, which it leaves 1/3 of the way from the top in an easier grade to the summit near the northeast boundary corner, and the other ascends from the gulch that had formed the north stock pond. Both are overgrown but the grades are mostly intact.

The original Olema-Bolinas Road, built in 1867 and in use until 1927, was

rebuilt in situ along most of the valley, but one lengthy original section was bypassed and remains, mostly on the Randall Ranch. The grade follows Olema Creek north to near the lime kilns, where it joins the current highway. This section is mostly overgrown and has been damaged by a slide near the old Bolema Club Road crossing.

c. Fences, gates, corrals

With only a few exceptions, the original boundaries of the ranch have not changed since 1857 on the west side. Some older fencing is found but the interior patterns have been changed over the years; overall the integrity of the fencing system is poor.

d. Trees

Two old eucalyptus trees, located on the highway opposite the northwest corner of the house, mark the Randall Ranch site. The Seaver dairy site south of Hagmaier Ranch is marked by a grove of eucalyptus and cypress trees, which also line the highway at this point and surround the ranch site. These trees appear to be well over 100 years old; buildings have been gone from the site for more than 50 years.

A large eucalyptus and a large Douglas fir mark the site of the old graveyard north of the ranch site. The graves and markers were moved by 1907 to other cemeteries, but the trees are significant as part of the landscape marking the site.

Overall, tree growth on the ranch is expanding rapidly from its circa 1900 condition, reportedly due to overgrazing by sheep in the 1930s and lack of adequate grazing which keeps the remaining native grassland clear. Young fir trees and brush are filling in the pasture on the slopes of the ranch, creating what will eventually become a forest rather than a historic ranching landscape. Early photographs show practically no trees on the slopes except in the gulches. Evidence from aerial photographs show that much of the encroaching growth has occurred in the last 40 years. As a natural process, however, it is debatable whether any action should be taken to protect the historic grasslands.

At the time of park purchase, a gable-roofed garage (OV-05.02) stood in

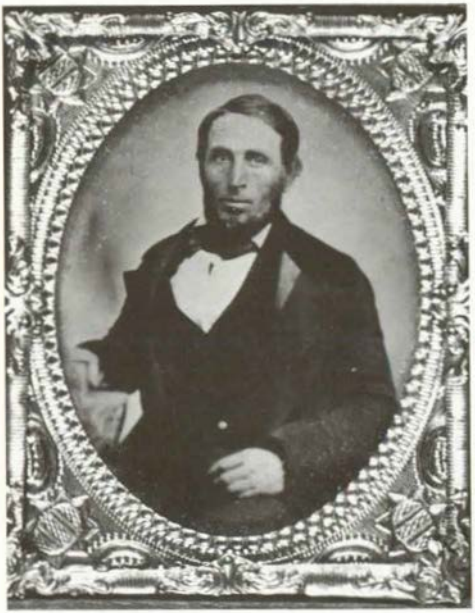
the yard near the house, and the Deevy's Grade A barn and open barn stood behind the house towards the gulch. Both structures were removed after 1975.

4. Historic Significance of the Randall Ranch

The Randall House is the lone survivor of the legacy of William and Sarah Randall. The couple are among the earliest American settlers in the Olema Valley; the story of Mrs. Randall's operation of the ranch and raising a large family after becoming widowed contributes significance in the area of women and the development of the west. The ranch may be regionally significant for its contribution to the 19th century dairy industry in the Olema Valley, an industry that provided food products to a growing San Francisco during the later years of the Gold Rush. Unfortunately, the surrounding ranch buildings are gone and the house has been altered and vandalized, a fact which severely impacts the integrity of the ranch site.

Historic Features

1. Randall House, circa 1880
2. Ranch roads, dates unknown
3. Trees at Seaver ranch site, cemetery site, circa 1860s
4. Original county road along creek, 1867



William Edgar Randall, in a daguerrotype taken before he left for California, 1849. *Bancroft Library.*

William Edgar and Sarah Seaver Randall, in a daguerrotype taken before the young couple left for California in 1849. *Bancroft Library.*

Sarah Randall and her five children shortly after the murder of William E. Randall, circa 1862. *Bancroft Library.*

The second Randall dairy ranch located a mile south of the home ranch. Here, Randall kin operated a dairy until before the turn of the century. The location is marked by trees on the highway today. *Bancroft Library.*

The first known photograph of the Sarah Seaver Randall house, circa 1885. Note the chimney on the south side, the roof decorations and the front porch. *Bancroft Library.*

The Randall house, windmill and outbuilding, circa 1885. *Bancroft Library.*

The Randall house, circa 1890-1900. Note that the chimney has been removed and fish scale shingles have covered the south wall. *Bancroft Library.*

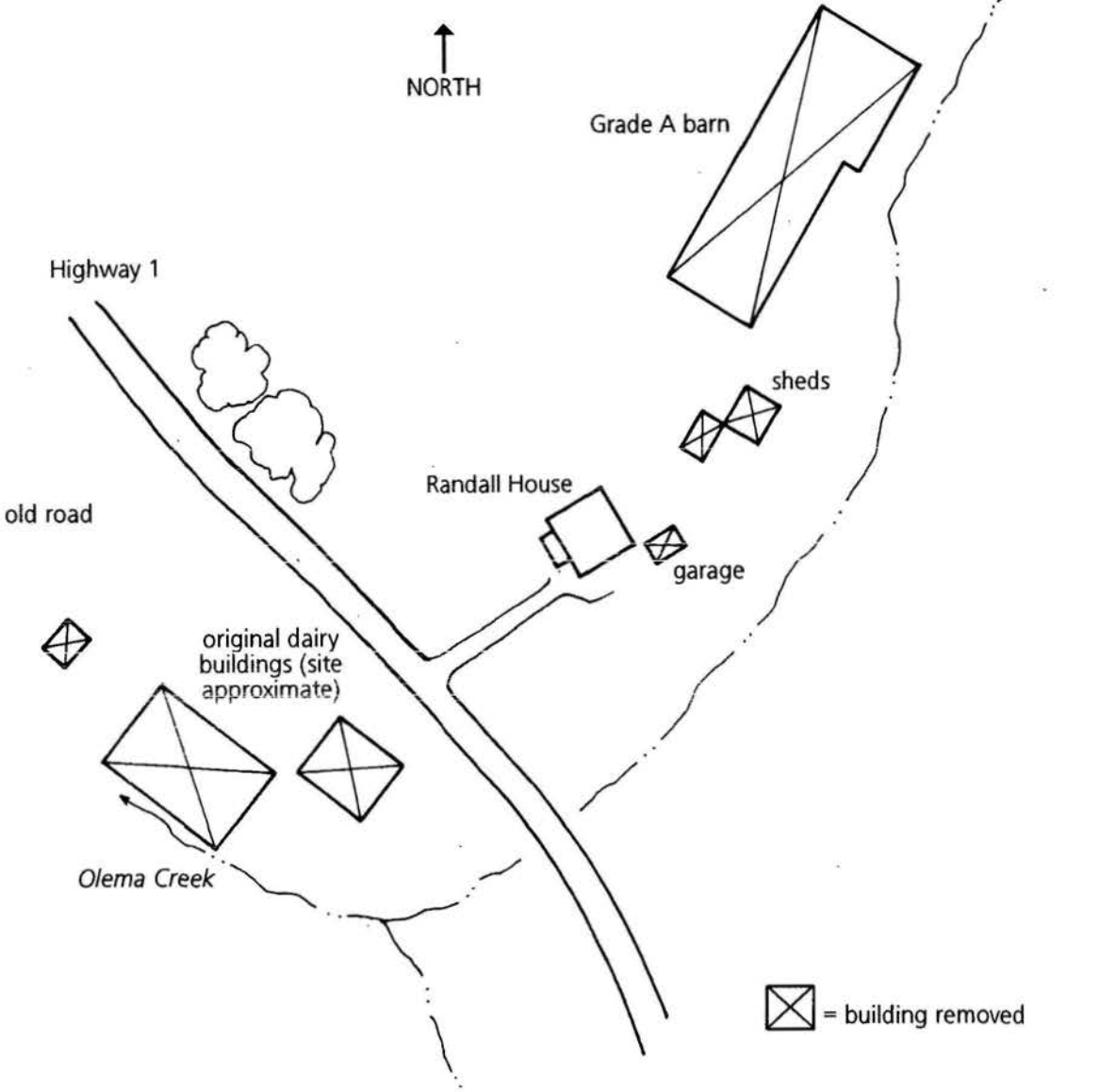
Sarah Seaver Randall later in life, circa 1900. *Bancroft Library.*

A remarkable 1906 view looking north in the upper Olema Valley shows the almost treeless hills (now largely forested) and the second Randall dairy in the center. The Olema-Bolinas Road can be seen on the right. Today the hills are largely covered with brush and trees. *U.S.G.S. Library, Menlo Park.*

The Randall House as it appeared in 1994. Note the new porch and trees in the yard. *NPS photo by Dewey Livingston.*

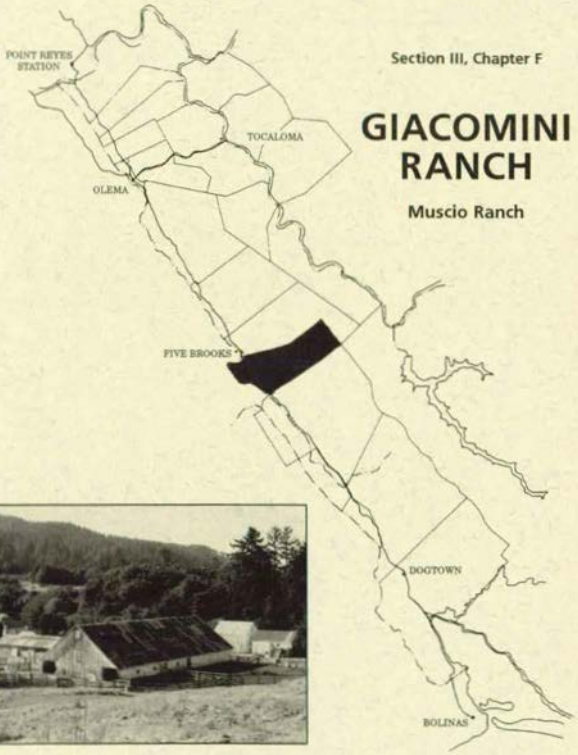
Historic Base Map
RANDALL RANCH

NOT TO SCALE



Detail of the 1898 United States Geological Survey's first published map of the Tamalpais quadrangle.

DAIRY FARMING IN THE OLEMA VALLEY



Section III, Chapter F

GIACOMINI RANCH

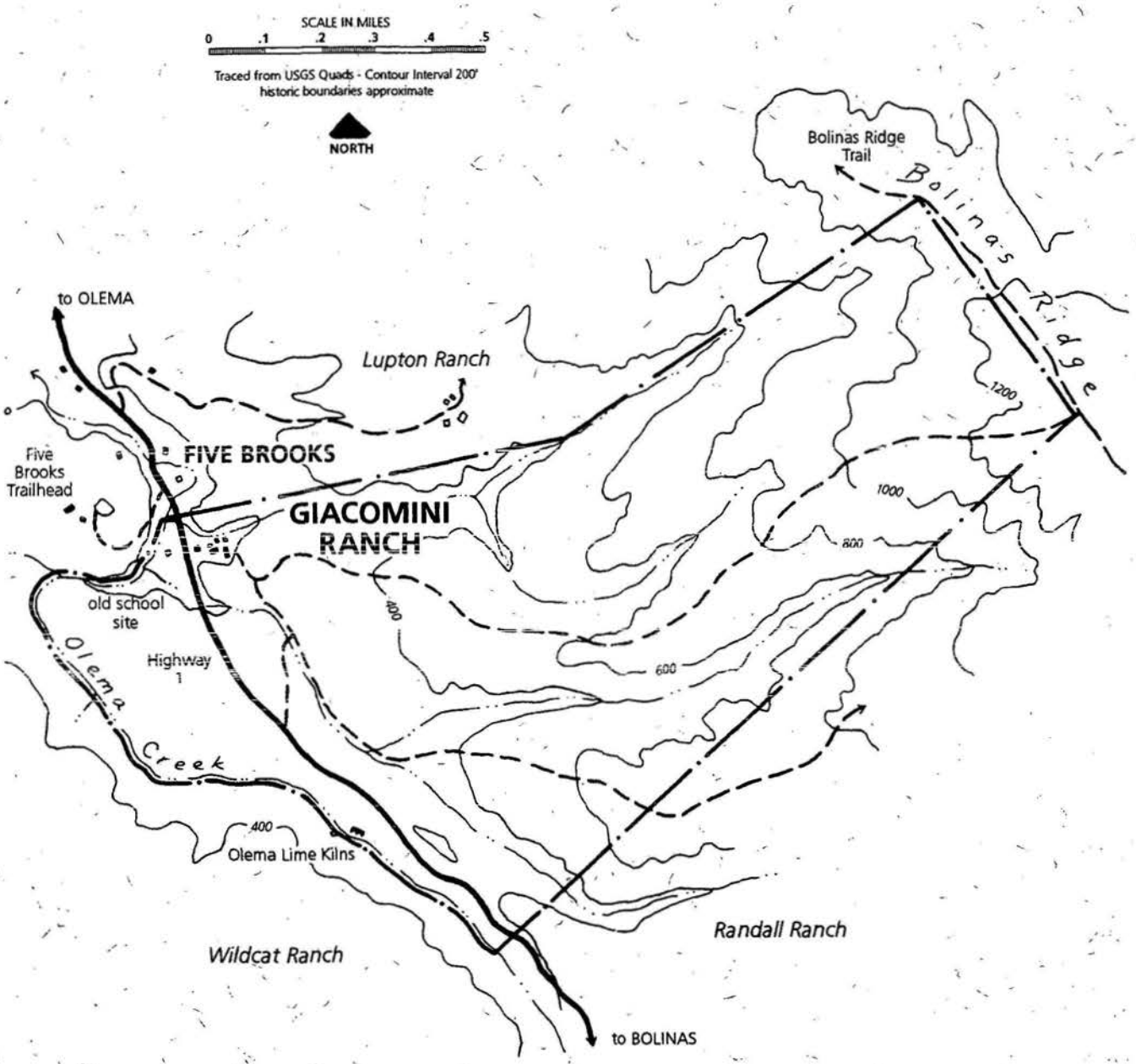
Muscio Ranch

HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE

GIACOMINI RANCH

OLEMA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

Golden Gate National Recreation Area



F. RALPH GIACOMINI RANCH
Former Muscio Ranch
(Golden Gate National Recreation Area)

1. Description

The Ralph Giacomini Ranch, historically called the Muscio Ranch and Blake Ranch, is squeezed into a narrow valley at a major bend in Olema Creek on the south end of Five Brooks. The ranch lands are composed of 614 acres of rolling grassland with a great deal of forest in and near the many gulches that drain the ranch. The land is a transition zone from the mostly grassy northwest-facing hills of the north part of the valley to the recently-wooded hills south of the ranch. Mixed hardwoods, evergreens and redwood grow on the ranch. The ranch is bounded on the north by the Lupton Ranch, on the east by the Lupton and Randall Ranches, on the south by the Randall Ranch and on the west by Olema Creek and Five Brooks. The ranch complex is located at the northwestern corner of the ranch adjacent to Highway 1.

2. History of Giacomini Ranch

Rafael Garcia sold 4,366 acres of the Olema Valley and Lagunitas Canyon, roughly half of his holdings, to Daniel and Nelson Horatio Olds on September 25, 1856. The Ohio-born Olds brothers came west with the Gold Rush, arriving in San Francisco in July of 1850. One of their shipmates, John Nelson, would purchase a large tract just south of theirs seven years later. According to family tradition, the Olds brothers financed their purchase in Olema Valley after striking a rich vein of gold while prospecting in the Sierra Nevada and selling out to an eastern company. After spending a few years operating a merchandise store in San Leandro, Alameda County, the family came to Marin County. The Olds brothers paid $8,000 to Garcia, or less than two dollars per acre.[70]

Many members of the Olds family soon arrived in the Olema Valley:

---

[70]Deeds, Book C, pp. 66 and 68, MCRO; interview with Boyd Stewart; Nelson Olds, Jr. to Boyd Stewart, January 28, 1936, Stewart Collection; undated obituary of Nelson Olds, Jr., PRNS; Toogood, Civil History, p. 180.

THE OLEMA LIME KILNS

by Gordon Chappell, Regional Historian

On July 13, 1850, Rafael Garcia leased to James A. Shorb and William F. Mercer "all that tract or parcel of land known as the ranch of the first party of the first part and called or named 'Punta el Estero de Malo,' for all limeing & timber & wooded purposes." The lessees, respectively a county judge and a clerk in the judge's court, were to have the "privilege of building lime kilns, quaring [quarrying] & using lime stone, wood for burning the kils and the entire timber privilege of the Rancho." In exchange, Shorb and Mercer were to give a third of all the lime burned to Garcia. Furthermore, they were to pay four dollars each for trees cut for timber or fuel, and they were prohibited from cutting any trees over three feet in diameter at the base--that is, the trees most useful for lumber. Garcia, in turn, was to furnish oxen, carts and Indian labor, to haul all the lime to the *embarcadero* at Bolinas Lagoon, and to provide assistance in loading lime onto the ships there.

Undoubtedly the developers of this short-lived lime producing industry hoped to find a large and ready market in a San Francisco made a boom-town by the Gold Rush which had commenced only a year before and which was destined to continue for several years. Employing no doubt Indian labor, Shorb and Mercer built three lime kilns aling Olema Creek. The first of these barrel-shaped kilns was built of locally quarried stone laid up in clay mortar. Very likely, lime burned in this kiln was used in constructing the other two immediately adjacent to the north, and a platform on the north end for storage of lime. The fine grained dark-gray limestone was quarried from a Franciscan formation on the hillside above the kilns, using a stripping technique which took advantage of natural fractures, rather than explosives.

Archeological investigation suggests that no single kiln was fired more than four times, and that there were no more than a total of twelve firings for all of the kilns. The quantity of limestone excavated from the quarry site supports this conclusion of very limited use. A contract dated March 15, 1852 indicates that the kilns were in use, being tended by a "Spaniard" (meaning, no doubt, a Californian of Mexican background). A deed dated September 25, 1856, suggests that kilns were idle by that date if not abandoned. Maps dated 1852 show a house located about fifty yards downstream and on the opposite (west) side of the creek; it may have been associated with the operation of the kilns, but today only traces of the structure remain, as it reportedly burned at an undetermined date long ago.

Presumably there were better and cheaper sources of lime for use in San Francisco with which the Olema industry could not compete, resulting in its failure between 1853 and 1856, no doubt with financial loss to its builders.

Written as part of the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places; the Olema Lime Kilns were listed on the National Register on October 8, 1976.

The Olema Lime Kilns have been a curiosity in Marin County for more than a century. Photo taken circa 1935. *Point Reyes National Seashore Collection.*

Daniel and Nelson's wives and children, sisters Martha Olds Powell and Emeline Olds Winans, and parents Daniel, Sr. and Lois settled there for at least a short time.[71]

By 1858 the Olds family had settled into dwellings in three locations in the Olema Valley. Nelson Olds and his young family occupied a house they may have built at the present location of the Giacomini Ranch. The census of 1860 listed Nelson Olds at this location with his wife Lavina and three young children, Kate, Nelson and Irene (Jennie). Three hired hands included Olds' longtime friend John Nelson, former partner of William Randall to the south and future hotelkeeper and stage driver in the town of Olema. Olds controlled over 1900 acres, 50 of which were improved and growing winter wheat, peas, beans, oats, hay, barley and Irish potatoes. The census taker counted almost 100 head of livestock, including 21 horses, 61 milk cows and cattle, 2 oxen and 13 pigs, all valued at $2,460. The entire ranch was valued at $6,250 with an additional $300 worth of farm implements and machinery. Olds' personal property was valued at $2,497.[72]

The correspondent from *The California Farmer* visited Nelson Olds' ranch early in 1862 and found it under the charge of John Nelson, who had recently left his partnership with William Randall on the ranch to the south. The *Farmer* reported a great increase in livestock since the census a year and a half earlier: Olds had 650 head of stock, including 100 milk cows and 50 horses, although no butter was being made at the time. The next year Daniel Olds, Jr. took over the land as his half in the brothers' land division. Nelson and his family moved a short distance north not long after.[73]

In late 1864 Daniel Olds, Jr. sold 614.86 acres to his sister, Matilda C. Wood, who subsequently married Albert Moore of San Rafael. From the mid-1860s to 1871 Mrs. Moore leased the ranch to two dairymen from New York, Norman Meriness and Garrett Lansing. In 1870 the two men made 2,000 pounds of butter from 65 cows, as well as raising oats, wheat and hay. Meriness and Lansing left the ranch when it was sold by Mr. and Mrs. Moore to

---

[71]Olds family notes, Stewart Collection; Population Schedules, 8th and 9th U. S. Censuses, 1860 and 1870.

[72]Plat of Rancho Tomales y Baulines, 1858, PRNS; Population and Agriculture Schedules of the 8th U. S. Census, 1860.

[73]The California Farmer, April 4, 1862, p. 1; Population Schedules of the 8th U. S. Census, 1860.

Giuseppe Muscio and Angelo Pedrotti on August 1, 1871. It appears that during the Muscio era that most of the extant buildings on the ranch were built.[74]

Giuseppe Muscio was born in Someo, Canton Ticino, Switzerland on October 22, 1846. Muscio emigrated to the United States at the age of eighteen. For five years he worked on the famous Pescadero dairy owned by ex-Point Reyes dairyman Isaac Steele, where he learned the fine art of buttermaking, and also worked in Henry Cowell's lime kilns for a number of years. After buying the ranch in the Olema Valley Muscio married Marianna Albertoli. The couple had eight children, Dante, Eda, Oliver, Lelia, Romano, Henry, Lena and Camillo. Mrs. Muscio died in childbirth in 1888, at age 35, while giving birth to her ninth child, who did not survive. Muscio remarried in 1895, to Josephine Giannini.[75]

Little is known about Muscio's partner Angelo Pedrotti, also a Swiss immigrant. Pedrotti apparently sold his share in the ranch to Muscio after only a few years of partnership. Pedrotti had been leasing the Wilkins Ranch and later leased the Lake Ranch from the O. L. Shafter Estate; he bought a Garcia ranch at the town of Olema before 1892. Pedrotti died at his Olema ranch in 1895 at the age of 48.[76]

Muscio owned 66 milk cows in 1880, as well as 30 cattle and pigs and chickens. With the help of hired man John Blasdell, he harvested 60 tons of hay the previous year on 23 acres of his property. His children grew up to work on the ranch, and some of them eventually operated dairies of their own.[77]

Muscio and his family moved to Evergreen, near San Jose, for eight years, from October, 1881 to October, 1889. During Muscio's absence his Olema Valley dairy ranch was leased to Peter Tognazzi, noted by the local paper as having been "long and favorably known as a successful dairyman." After the death of his wife at Evergreen, Muscio returned to the Olema Valley. Tognazzi

---

[74]Deeds Book E, p. 266, Book G, p. 30, and Book J, p. 240, MCRO; Plat of Road from Bolinas to San Rafael, 1867, CHS; Population and Agriculture Schedules, 9th U. S. Census, 1870.

[75]Guinn, Coast Counties, p. 480; Financing an Empire, p. 513; Population Schedules of the 10th and 12th U. S. Censuses, 1880 and 1900; Marin Journal, November 29, 1888; Muscio family notes courtesy of Fern Muscio Gilliam. Giuseppe Muscio eventually Americanized to Joseph.

[76]Population Schedules, 10th U. S. Census, 1880; interview with Juanita Sweeney, granddaughter of Angelo Pedrotti.

[77]Guinn, Coast Counties, p. 480; Population and Agricultural Schedules of the 10th U. S. Census, 1880; interview with Fern Muscio Gilliam.

then leased the Pacheco Ranch in Novato for a year, but returned to the Olema area where he died in 1893. A contemporary biography praised the Muscio Ranch:

> In recording the merits of the many dairy farms which abound in Marin County, that owned by Joseph Muscio must not be omitted. Situated between Olema and Bolinas, in Bolinas Township, it is rich in pasture and grazing land, and in every way well suited to the purpose to which it has been devoted . . . . At this time [1894] he has a herd of milch cows numbering sixty, and has his place well fitted up with almost every known convenience for the better handling of his business, the power for his separator, etc., being principally furnished by steam.[78]

Joseph Muscio continued to operate the dairy under his high standards, a biography noting that "it has been his life's principle to aim at quality rather than quantity, and there is no better article produced in Bolinas township than that turned out of this dairy." A Marin County newspaper recorded Muscio's dairy as making an average of 2,220 pounds of butter per year from 57 cows at the turn of the century.[79]

Muscio retired from the dairy business in 1914 and moved to Oakland. He spent his last years in Point Reyes Station with his son, Dante, and died at age 75 on October 19, 1921. Muscio's sons were well-known around the Point Reyes area, working on the Shafter Ranch and leasing a number of ranches on the Point Reyes Peninsula. Many in the family eventually settled in the Central Valley.[80]

The ranch had been leased to Irishman Walter Wilson and his family by 1919. Muscio's heirs sold the family ranch on September 8, 1922, to Charles and Margaret Blake; Wilson continued the dairy operation under a lease with the Blakes until 1936. Alexander McCall and his wife Agnes moved to the

---

[78]Marin County Journal, October 20, 1881; Marin Journal, October 10, 1889 and November 12, 1890.

[79]Guinn, Coast Counties, p. 480; Marin Journal, June 20, 1901.

[80]Guinn, Coast Counties, p. 480; Cross, Coast Counties, p. 513; Marin Journal, August 14 and September 1, 1919; Point Reyes Light, December 14, 1967; interviews with Owen and Oliver Muscio and Fern Muscio Gilliam.

ranch from the O. L. Shafter Estate's M Ranch on Point Reyes in 1936 and marketed Grade B cream from their 63 cows until the ranch was sold to Samuel and Alberta Smoot of Petaluma in 1940.[81]

The Smoots attempted to operate the ranch but in 1941 decided to leave and leased it to Horace Edrington, who upgraded the dairy to a Grade A operation. Ralph and Margaret Giacomini of Petaluma bought Edrington's dairy business in 1958, and operated the dairy under lease from the Smoots until 1972. Since that time the Giacomini family has run beef cattle on the old Muscio Ranch and the adjacent Randall Ranch.

In 1971 the Smoots sold 84 acres on the western edge of the ranch to the National Park Service for inclusion in Point Reyes National Seashore. Three years later a banker, John Connelly of Mill Enterprises, Inc., bought the remainder of the ranch and almost immediately sold it to the National Park Service as part of the newly established Golden Gate National Recreation Area. The Giacominis continued to occupy the ranch after it was sold to the National Park Service and operate it today under a special use permit.[82]

3. Buildings and Historic Resources

Eight historic buildings remain on the Giacomini Ranch. Three rare historic chicken coops and a shed (OV-06.04, 06.05, 06.09, 06.10) were demolished around 1990.

a. Main Residence (OV-06.01)

The old Muscio Ranch house began as a small, simple farmhouse until some years later a more substantial portion was added to it. The original (east) part of the house, appears to have been the Nelson Olds house occupied by that family circa 1858-1864. It is a simple, gable-roofed wood frame house with a

---

[81]Official Records Book 15, p. 15, Book 322, p. 139 and Book 450, p. 315, MCRO; interviews with Andrew and Annie Porter and Agnes McCall. The lease to the McCalls provides an inventory of stock and equipment on the ranch: 63 cows, 65 other cattle, two horses, 150 tons of hay, a cat tractor, Model A truck, 94 chickens, two DeLaval magnetic milking machines, and a #15 Primrose separator.

[82]Interview with Ralph and Margaret Giacomini; Official Records Book 2468, p. 610, MCRO.

boxed cornice and frieze, similar to the Pinkerton house nearby (which was reportedly the original James Winans home on the lot next door). It has mostly horizontal drop siding with a shiplap wall and open porch on the north.

The later addition, dating from circa 1880-1900, is now the front (west) side of the house, facing the highway. It has a hip roof with gablets at the hip; the exterior is horizontal drop siding with alternating bands of square and "fishscale" shingles above. The roof of the front portion is a gablet. Overall the house measures 30' x 65', with a front porch with chamfered posts, and an antique picket fence surrounding the yard.

The house is basically unaltered except for the addition of utilities, a remodeled den, and an added skylight in the kitchen. Most of the windows are one-over-one double hung wood sash. The house appears to be in fair condition, with surface maintenance good but the need for foundation work evident. Minor alterations have not greatly affected the historic integrity of this building.

b. Barn (OV-06.07)

The barn is a Grade B milking barn no longer used for milking. It is a 45' x 105' wood frame building with random-width vertical wood siding with glassless window openings. Some of the original milking stalls with wooden stanchions have been enlarged for feeding beef cattle. The floor is earth in the center and concrete in the milking galleries. The roof is wood shingles covered with corrugated metal roofing. Minor alterations have not impaired the historic integrity of this building.

c. Grade A Dairy Barn (OV-06.03)

This Grade A milking barn was built in two sections, the first and smaller section about 1940 and the larger section about 1945. The 28' x 68' barn is constructed from concrete, wood and corrugated metal. It has a gable roof with a long ridge vent, and there is a breezeway separating the milk room from the larger milking parlor. A number of the original six-light windows are covered with corrugated metal. An open shed was added to the north side. The barn is no longer used for milking. Minor alterations have not affected the historic integrity of this building.

d. Horse Barn (OV-06.06)

This barn is probably more than a century old. It is a common 28' x 36' wood frame barn with gable roof and shed side gallery, random-width vertical wood siding, and a corrugated metal roof which covers the older wood shingles. Inside it has four stalls for horses and a small hayloft. The barn, with mudsill foundation, is situated on the bank of a small creek which is subject to erosion; at this writing the northeast corner post is dangling over the creekbed although the roofline shows no sign of serious failure. Because of this situation, the barn is considered to be in poor condition and will require foundation work and streambank restoration. This building has excellent historic integrity.

e. Carriage Shed (OV-06.02)

This century-old structure is unique to the Olema Valley ranches. Basically a 20' x 32' shed-roofed structure on mud sills with three open stalls, the upper portion has a two-room living quarters once used by a hired hand. It has random-width vertical board siding and a wooden stairway on the west side leading to the upper rooms. The older shingle roof is covered with corrugated metal roofing. The east wall is failing. The building is in fair condition. Minor alterations have not affected the historic integrity of this building.

f. Dairy House (OV-06.08)

The original dairy house, where butter was made and, later, cream was separated, may have been built as early as 1870. It is wood frame double-wall construction, with a gable roof covered by corrugated metal. An opening on the south side is plastered over. It has shiplap and horizontal drop siding on the exterior (parts of the north side are covered with plywood, some shiplap is missing) and lath-and-plaster on the interior. The building has a concrete floor, probably added after the turn of the century. It has a corrugated metal roof. It is in fair condition with a number of repairs needed. Minor alterations have not impaired the historic integrity of this building.

g. Wood Shed (OV-06.11)

A small vertical woodshed which appears to be at least 100 years old stands east of the house. It is 13' x 21' with a gable roof, random-width vertical wood siding, an arched door on the west and a small access door on the east. It appears to be unaltered except for a corrugated metal roof. It is in fair condition although a large vine on the west wall is impacting the structural integrity. Minor alterations have not impaired the historic integrity of this building.

h. Fences (OV-06.13)

The fences appear to follow traditional pasture layout although some cross-fencing has been removed. Fence fabric has been replaced over the years, with the original split redwood picket fences being replaced with barbed wire and horizontal board fencing. The old picket fence around the residence is an important part of the landscape and adds to the overall integrity of the ranch. Some metal circulation fences installed in the 1940s remain at the Grade A barn. The boundaries of the ranch have not changed since 1864.

i. Olema Lime Kilns

The 1850 kilns, located on the west side of the highway south of the ranch complex, were stabilized in 1976 and are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

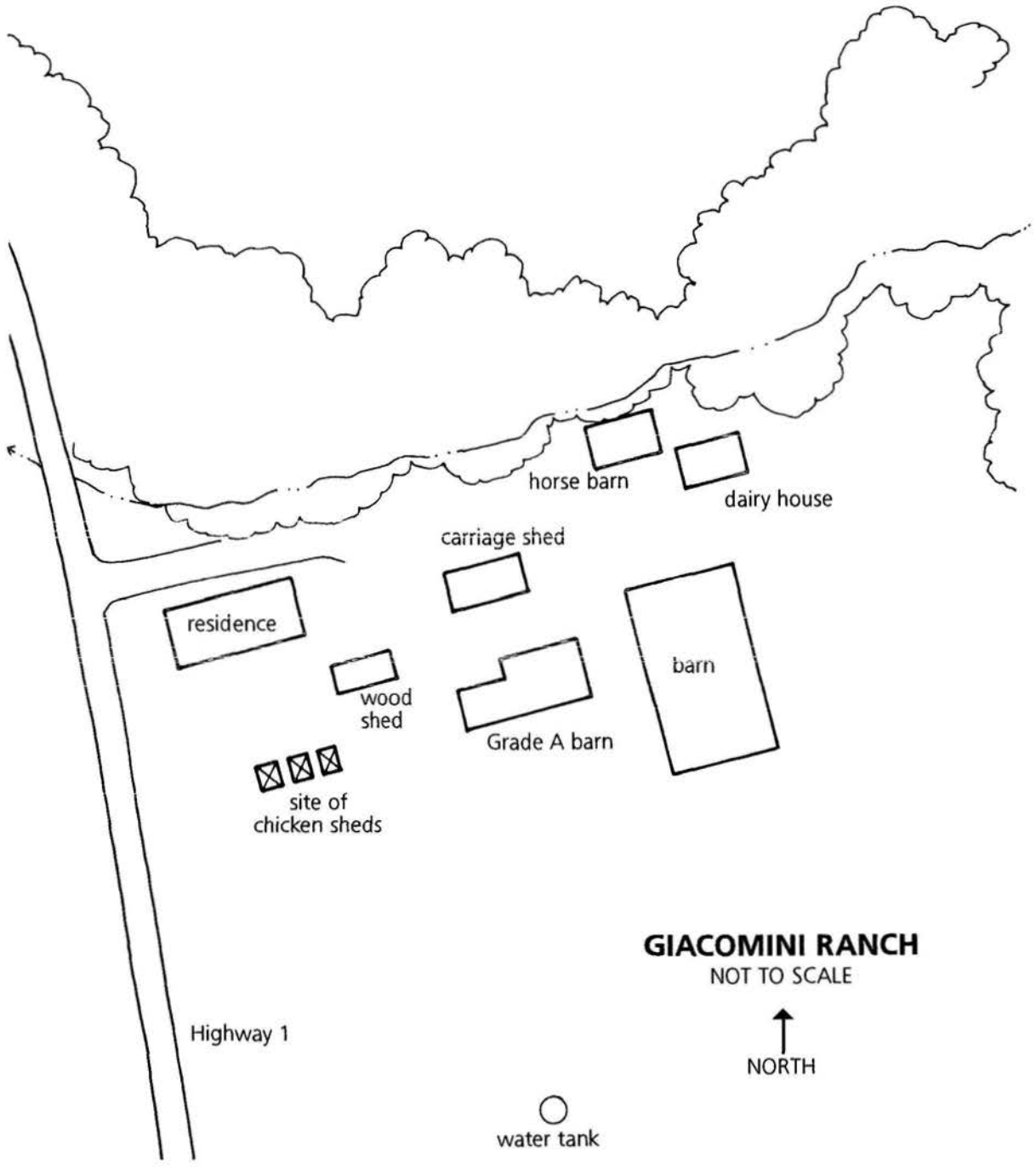
4. Historic Significance of the Giacomini Ranch

The Giacomini Ranch has local historic significance as one of the pioneer Olema Valley dairies. The house, actually two joined together, is architecturally significant as a unique vernacular farm house, with its unique roof line and scalloped shingles. The fact that the two houses were joined illustrates the needs of the family as it expanded over the years. The ranch buildings are fine examples of the structures needed to operate a small dairy, and continue to be used by the lessee.

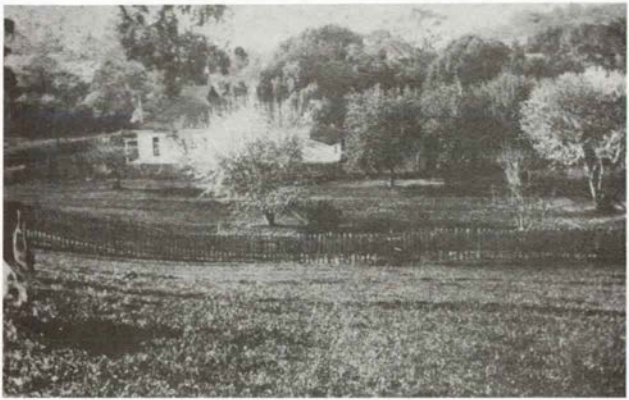
Historic Features

1. Residence, ca. 1858, 1880s
2. Barn, ca. 1880s
3. Grade A Dairy Barn, 1940
4. Horse Barn, ca. 1870
5. Carriage Shed/Bunkhouse, ca. 1870
6. Dairy House. ca. 1870
7. Woodshed, ca. 1880s
8. Gates, Fences, Corrals

Giuseppe and Marianna (Albertoli) Muscio.
Courtesy of Fern Gilliam.


horse barn
dairy house
carriage shed
residence
wood shed
Grade A barn
barn
site of chicken sheds
Highway 1
water tank
GIACOMINI RANCH
NOT TO SCALE
NORTH

Giuseppe Muscio and his second wife, Josephine, circa 1900. *Courtesy of Fern (Muscio) Gilliam.*



The Muscio Ranch as it appeared early in the century. From *Pictorial History of Marin County Schools.*

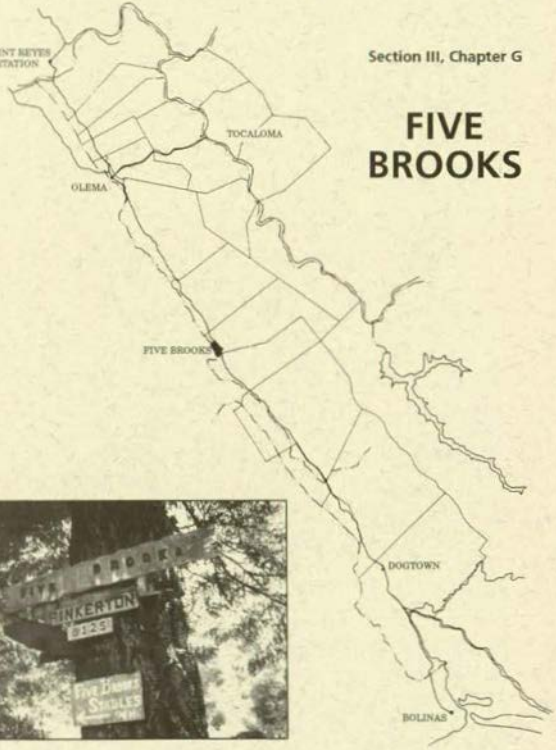
A load of equipment for the Marconi Wireless station at Bolinas is hauled from the train depot at Point Reyes Station up Muscio Hill in 1914. *Courtesy of Helen Harris.*

Detail of the 1865 plat of Rancho Tomales y Baulines showing the central Olema Valley. "Kearney's [sic: Karner's] house is the future Truttman Ranch, Andrew Powell is at the Stewart Ranch, Daniel Olds is at the location of Pinkerton's house at Five Brooks, and Nelson Olds is located at the Giacomini Ranch. Note the lime kiln marked in the bottom right. *Marin County Recorders Office.*

DAIRY FARMING IN THE OLEMA VALLEY

Section III, Chapter G

FIVE BROOKS



HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE

FIVE BROOKS AREA

OLEMA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

Golden Gate National Recreation Area

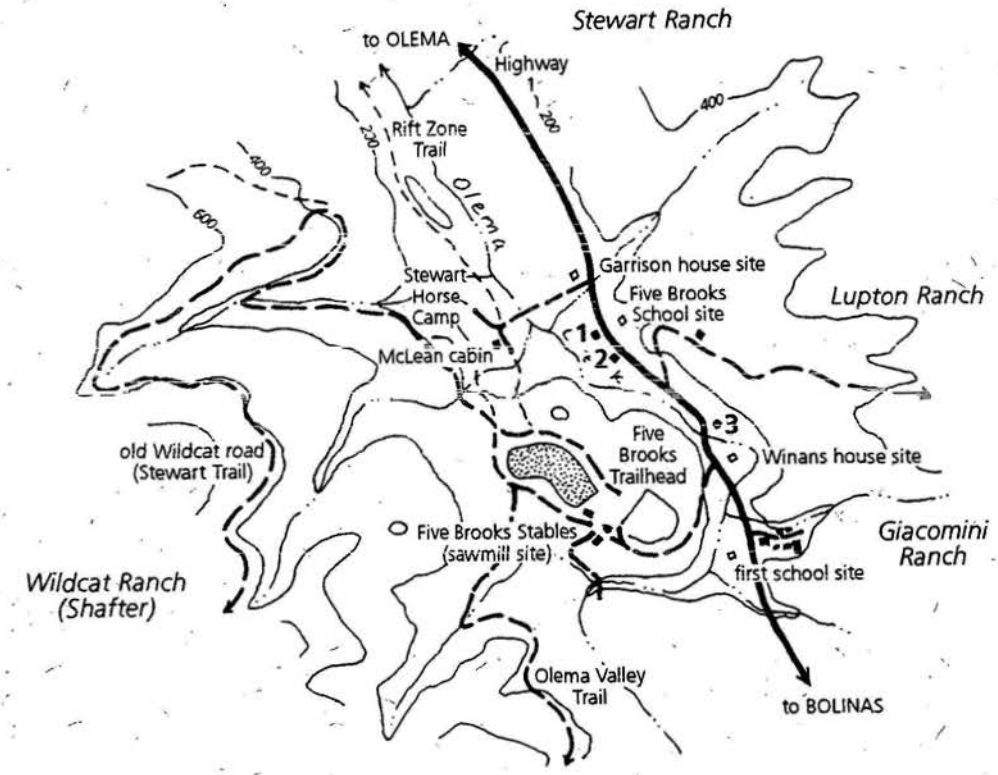
SCALE IN MILES

0 .1 .2 .3 .4 .5

Traced from USGS Quads - Contour Interval 200'
historic boundaries approximate

NORTH

1. Benevenga home (old school house)
2. Pinkerton home
3. Holcomb home (modern)



G. FIVE BROOKS (Pinkerton and Benevenga residences) (Golden Gate National Recreation Area)

1. Description

Two houses sit between the State Highway and Olema Creek at Five Brooks, the Pinkerton and Benevenga residences. Both were associated with the historic Parsons (Lupton) Ranch, one as the original Parsons (and possibly Olds) residence combined with the old Winans house; the other was the schoolhouse at Five Brooks. The properties were divided from the ranch in the 1930s and 1964, and were under separate private ownership at the time of federal purchase.

The Pinkerton residence consists of two historic houses joined together: the original, gabled Parsons house, built in 1865 or earlier, and what was probably the original home of James Winans, moved here some time after 1870. The house has improvements dating from the late 1960s; four old sheds stand to the rear of the house. The house has been well kept by its owner-occupant, William Pinkerton, retaining its historic flavor and integrity. The house is painted red and is in good condition.

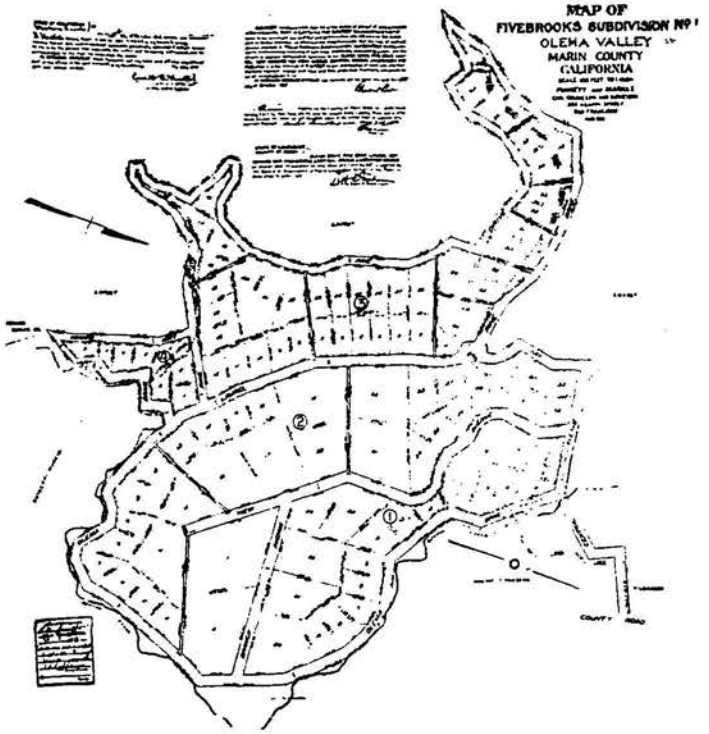
The Benevenga house, once the Olema and Five Brooks School, was moved from its original location across the highway about 1937 and remodeled into a residence. The original structure is partly intact, but significant alterations have impacted the building's historic integrity. The home is painted a soft yellow and is in good condition.

An old orchard, no doubt the Parsons family orchard, exists between and around the two houses. Some trees appear to be well over 100 years old.

2. History

Daniel Olds, Jr. occupied what may be the north section of the Pinkerton residence in 1858. Olds sold the property in 1865 to Charles Parsons, who either moved into Olds' house or built a new one soon after the purchase. Parsons' daughter Ella was born in the house in 1867, and she resided there until her death in 1938. At the time the house was called "Minerva Lodge," after Ella's mother, Minerva Wittenberg Parsons. Some time after a neighbor

FIVE BROOKS SUBDIVISION



Five Brooks, today the name of a trailhead in the National Seashore, has a long and varied history. It actually encompasses the area not only around the trailhead but the lower places along Olema Creek from the highway bridges to Stewart Horse Camp.

The origins of the pleasant name Five Brooks is unknown. It is true that up to five seasonal creeks join Olema Creek in less than a mile of its length in this section. People settled here as early as they did Olema, and the first school in the district was established here in 1862. Pioneers Nelson and Daniel Olds, James Winan, John Garrison and others built houses along the creek. Picnickers gathered at "Laurel Grove", apparently the site of today's Stewart Horse Camp. James McMillan Shafter, who owned the land west of Olema Creek, stationed his portable sawmill at Laurel Grove between 1883 and 1890 ("cutting fine lumber," commented the local press), and his manager, Charles Noyes, had a home here.

The 20th century came to the area with a bang when, in 1912, landowner Charles N. Post filed a plat for a residential subdivision of 110 lots called Fivebrooks. Post dedicated the roads, such as Olema Avenue, Central Avenue and Howard Way, to the public. While dozens of lots sold, with many buyers taking more than one of the tiny lots to provide a reasonable lot size, only a handful of houses were built. The subdivision was abandoned in 1933 and by the 1940s much of the property came up for auction; Boyd Stewart bought up about 60 lots adjacent to his ranch at a tax sale.

Stewart recalled some of the people who did live there, such as Johnny (the Frenchman) Morere, a retired San Francisco chef who lived for a quarter century in his cabin until his death in 1958; a San Francisco fire chief who had a two-story house (and a barn) which burned in the 1950s; and a member of the well-known Paladini family who made a fortune in the local fishing industry.

The Sweet Lumber Company of Coos Bay Oregon leased land at Five Brooks in 1956 and constructed a sawmill, complete with a three acre mill pond and "pepper shaker" slash burner. The loggers were hard at it when the National Seashore was proposed and called off operations in good faith after finding themselves perceived as one of the biggest threats in the public eye to the conservation of the area. The last trees went through the mill around 1963.

The Stewarts sold 301 acres comprising Five Brooks to the National Park Service in 1971, keeping a reservation on three acres for use as a horse camp. Harold Hart had been operating a horse rental business for Stewart and continued until 1980. Today, Five Brooks Stables operates as a park concession owned by Fred Vaughn.

Sources: Marin Journal, October 18, 1883, July 4, 1889, May 15 and July 31, 1890; plat map in Subdivisions Book 4, p. 32, MCRO; Joan Reutinger, "Five Brooks--West Marin's Forgotten Village..." Coastal Post, November 15, 1982; interview with Boyd Stewart; tract files, PRNS.

to the south, James Winans, moved away from the area around 1870, Parsons moved Winans' house to his property and joined it to the south wall of the original house. Parsons and his family resided here for many years. Mrs. Denman's grandson Earl Lupton sold the house and lot to William Pinkerton in 1964, who renovated the house, enclosing an open porch on the front and somewhat modernizing the interior and adding a larger window on the front.[83]

The Benevenga house originated as the Olema School, serving families in the Olema Valley and Bolinas Ridge area since about 1860. To avoid confusion with the Garcia School in the town of Olema, the name was changed to the Five Brooks School in 1915; Garcia School then took the name Olema School. The first Olema School was built about 1860 on the road south of the highway bridges opposite today's Giacomini Ranch. Some time between 1873 and 1895 a second schoolhouse was built on the Parsons Ranch across the county road from the Parsons residence. The new school served the mid-valley families until closing in 1927, and then stood empty for almost a decade. John and Ella Denman moved the property including the schoolhouse to a lot across the state highway and did some minor remodeling, then rented it as a vacation cottage for a short time. The Denmans sold the schoolhouse to Ralph and Emma Benevenga in 1938; the Benevengas remodeled it into a home and moved there permanently in 1941. Emma Benevenga, a prominent West Marin citizen and sister of neighbor William Pinkerton, no longer occupies the house at this writing; it is rented to a tenant.[84]

3. Buildings and Historic Resources

Four historic buildings and a historic orchard make up the Pinkerton/Benevenga complex.

The Pinkerton house is composed of two houses joined together, one north and one south, as well as a shed garage attached to the west. The

---

[83]Plat of Rancho Tomales y Baulines, 1858, PRNS; files of Marin County Recorders Office; interviews with Earl L. Lupton, William Pinkerton and Emma Benevenga.

[84]School Registers, Marin County Office of Education; Gerald J. Foley and Perry McDonald, Pictorial History of Marin County Schools (no publisher noted, 1976), pp. 17, 35; "Plat . . . Bolinas to Olema," 1867, California Historical Society; "Official Map of Marin County," 1873, PRNS; Point Reyes Quadrangle map, U. S. G. S., 1916; interview with Emma Benevenga.

original house on the location is the north half, a one story wood frame dwelling with board and batten siding and a hip roof. Porches both front and back have been enclosed, and some interior remodeling has occurred, but the home retains its historic character. The south section is reportedly the older, moved to the site and joined to the Parsons house some time between 1870 and 1900. It is a one-and-a-half story wood frame, gable-roofed building with boxed cornice and frieze. It has horizontal wood siding, which is apparently original. Alterations have somewhat impaired the historic integrity of this building.

Two long, wood frame sheds, with shed roofs, are in back of the residence; the longer one with a shed roof, 21' x 77', is connected to the southwest side of the house. It may have been a carriage house, with ports enclosed at some other date. The other, 15' x 32' with a gable roof, was reportedly constructed by John Denman from materials obtained by dismantling a small barn on the property. Both are in fair condition and are used for shop space and storage. A 12' x 16' tractor shed, 7' x 10' pumphouse and a 4' x 5' outhouse also remain near the creek. Their historic integrity is good.

The old Five Brooks schoolhouse, moved a short distance to this location, has been altered significantly in the 1940s, and a shed dining room addition was added in 1971. It is in good condition but major alterations render its historic integrity poor.

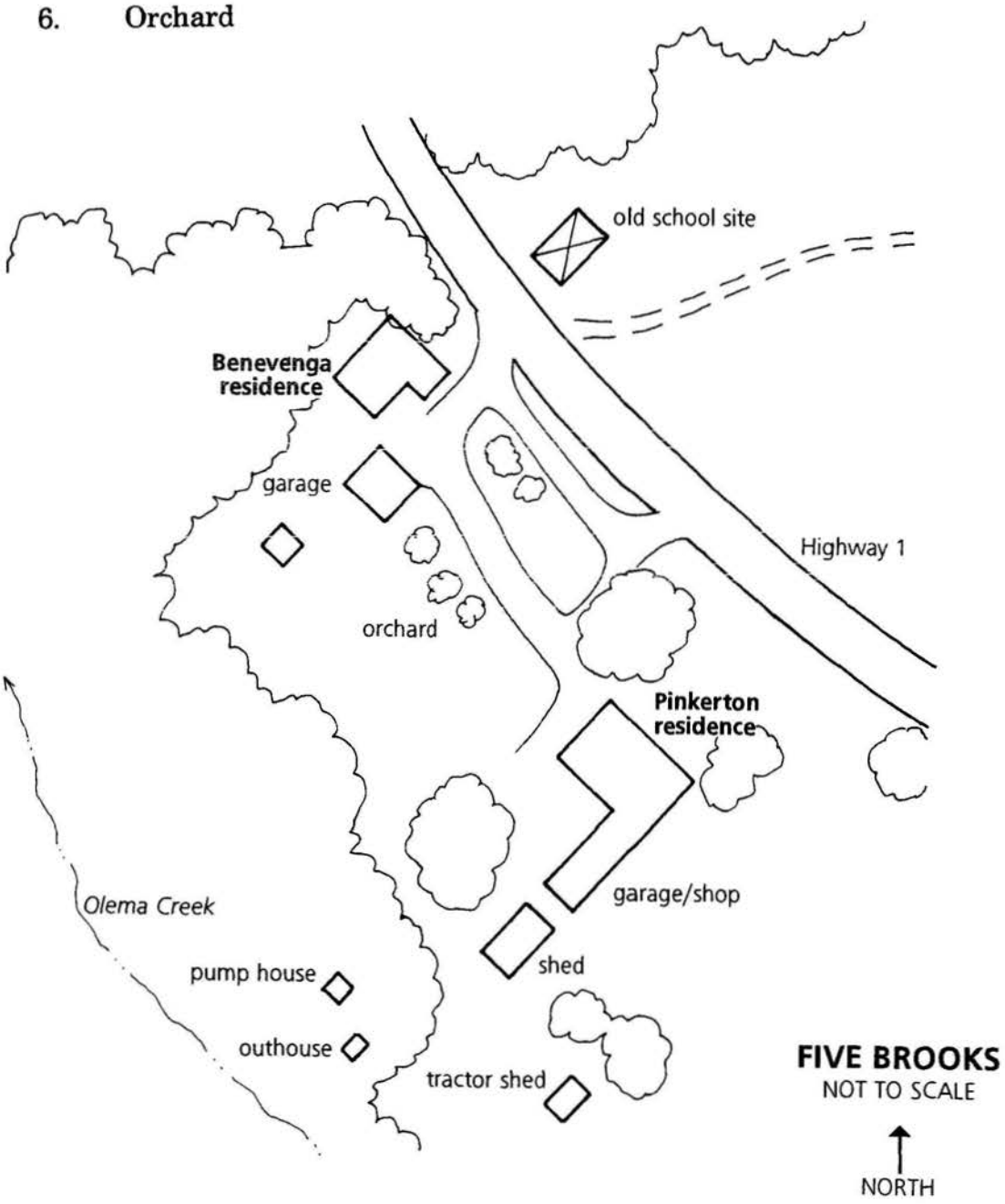
4. Significance of the Pinkerton/Benevenga Residences

The Pinkerton residence, actually two historic houses joined together more than 75 years ago, has local historic significance as two early, possibly pioneer dwellings in the Olema Valley. The house may have been built by Daniel Olds, Jr. circa 1856-58, or was built by Charles Parsons in 1865; the additional house was evidently built by James Winans around 1860. The house was occupied by the Parsons family and others, serving as the ranch owner's home separated by a mile from the dairy, often operated by tenants. Its connection to the historic Lupton Ranch is important. The house is in good condition although it has been altered on at least two occasions.

The Benevenga residence is a rare local example of a surviving rural one-room schoolhouse, but its historic integrity is greatly compromised by the fact that it was moved from its original location and has been extensively alterated.

Historic Features

1. Pinkerton Residence and attached shed, ca. 1858-1865
2. Pinkerton Shed (detached), ca. 1900
3. Pinkerton tractor shed, ca. 1900
4. Pumphouse, ca. 1900
5. Outhouse, ca. 1900
6. Orchard



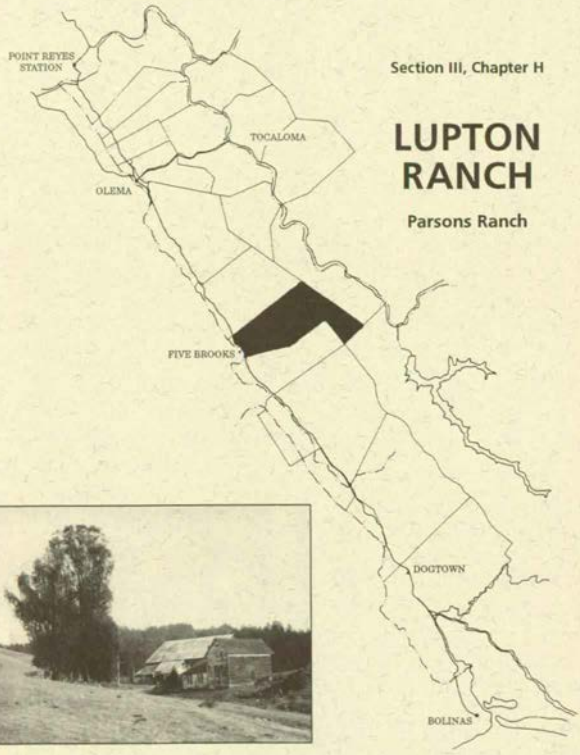
The Olema School on the Parsons Ranch as it appeared about 1890. The ramshackle appearance was soon remedied with drop siding and a paint job; it would later be called Five Brooks School. *Point Reyes National Seashore Collection.*

The old school house after being moved across the highway, late 1930s; at the time it had been used for rentals and would soon be remodeled into a permanent home. *Courtesy of Emma Benevenga.*

The Sweet Lumber Co. logging operation at Five Brooks, 1959. *Point Reyes National Seashore Collection.*

The Pinkerton house at Five Brooks in 1994. *NPS photo by Dewey Livingston.*

Detail of the 1860 map, the first complete map of Marin County ranchos, by Aaron Van Dorn showing the Olema Valley and the head of Tomales Bay. *Courtesy of Fred Sandrock.*

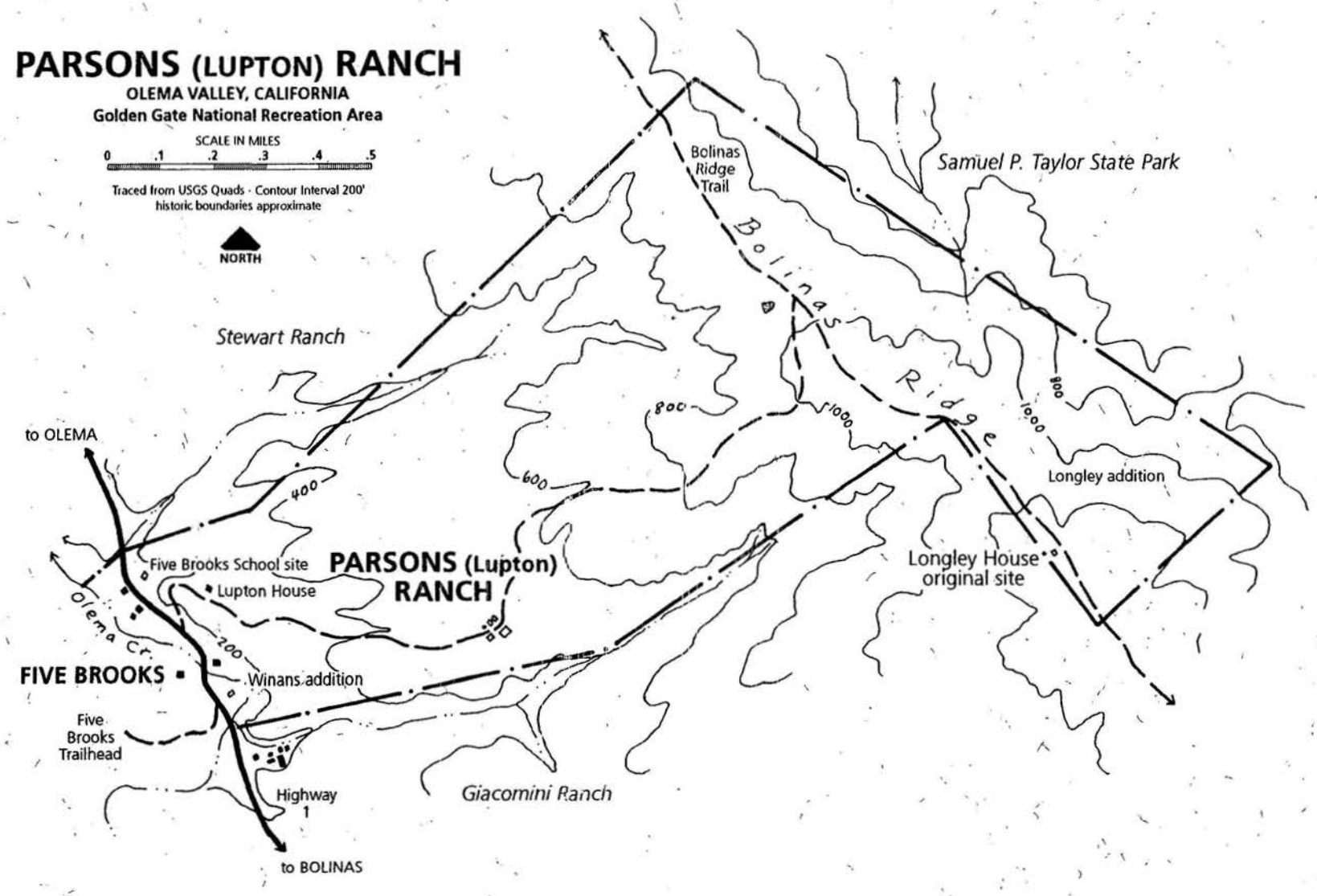


Section III, Chapter H

LUPTON RANCH

Parsons Ranch

HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE


PARSONS (LUPTON) RANCH
OLEMA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA
Golden Gate National Recreation Area
SCALE IN MILES
0 .1 .2 .3 .4 .5
Traced from USGS Quads · Contour Interval 200'
historic boundaries approximate
NORTH
Bolinas Ridge Trail
Samuel P. Taylor State Park
Stewart Ranch
Bolinas Ridge
800
1000
to OLEMA
400
600
Longley addition
Five Brooks School site
PARSONS (Lupton) RANCH
Lupton House
Longley House original site
Olema Cr.
200
FIVE BROOKS
Winans addition
Five Brooks Trailhead
Highway 1
Giacomini Ranch
to BOLINAS

H. LUPTON RANCH
Former Parsons Ranch
(Golden Gate National Recreation Area)

1. Description

The Lupton Ranch, historically known as the Parsons Ranch, has been in the same family for its entire existence. The old ranch complex is not visible to the public from Highway One; hikers glimpse it from the Bolinas Ridge Trail or through the trees on the Stewart Trail, but otherwise the ranch is practically unknown to the public. The owner has built a new house by the highway, and sold two historic buildings across the highway to other parties. The 836-acre ranch is, like its northern neighbors, mostly rolling grassland with wooded gulches. The historic ranch complex, consisting now of a house, barn and water tower, was located on the grassy ridge about half a mile east of Five Brooks. It is reached by a narrow dirt ranch road.

2. History of the Lupton Ranch

Not long after the pioneering Olds family divided their property in 1863, Daniel Olds, Jr. sold two parcels that would become the Lupton Ranch. A tiny part of James McMillan Shafter's Rancho Punta de los Reyes was added to the ranch as well. The three transactions that led to the current (since 1888) boundaries of the Lupton Ranch occurred as detailed below:

First and foremost, on October 28, 1865, Daniel Olds, Jr. sold 800 acres to Charles S. Parsons, a thirty-year-old native of Massachusetts who had been working for his brother-in-law, Levi K. Baldwin, on the successful Baldwin and Karner dairy (now Truttman Ranch) only a few miles north of his new property. It is possible that Baldwin, known for his generosity in helping young men get a start in business, loaned his wife's younger brother the money to make the purchase; Parsons had been managing a Shafter Ranch leased to Baldwin before the purchase.[85]

---

[85]Deeds Book E, p. 415 and 440, MCRO; Population Schedules of the 8th and 9th U. S. Censuses, 1860 and 1870; E. S. Harrison, History of Santa Cruz County, California (San Francisco: Pacific Press Publishing Co., 1892), p. 333.

Parsons had married Minerva T. Wittenberg, daughter of Peter Wittenberg for whom the tallest mountain on the Point Reyes Peninsula is named. Minerva, nineteen years old at the time of the purchase, was born in Georgia and raised in Texas and on her father's mountain-top ranch above Olema. By 1870 the Charles and Minerva had produced two children, Charles, born in 1865 (died at age 18 in 1883), and Ella, born in 1867. According to the 1870 census, Parsons employed his brother, John, and his wife's brother, also named John, and a carpenter. John Parsons lived on the ranch with his wife and two children. The family lived in a house on the Olema-Bolinas Road while developing a dairy on the hill above. This family home likely was Daniel Olds' original home, or may have been built by Parsons in 1865 or shortly thereafter. The house has survived and is now occupied by William Pinkerton at Five Brooks (see page 187).[86]

Parsons built a house, creamery, barn and various outbuildings on the ranch, at a site overlooking the Olema Valley less than a mile up Bolinas Ridge from Five Brooks. By 1870 Parsons, in partnership with Swiss dairyman Joseph Righetti, operated a dairy of 74 milk cows, 40 cattle and 35 pigs. Parsons and Righetti produced 10,000 pounds of butter that year, as well as wheat, oats, barley and hay, all valued at almost $8,000. The partners paid out $1,200 in wages and board that year to Righetti's three Swiss-born milkers. Righetti and his hired hands probably lived at the dairy ranch on the hill.[87]

Charles Parsons had a keen interest in Marin County roads and transportation; he served as the roadmaster of the Olema Valley district in 1867, maintaining the county road with the help of paid laborers. As early as 1865 he owned half interest with W. L. Barnard in a livery business in San Rafael, the county seat and largest town in Marin County. Barnard sold his share to Alva Jewell, a west Marin neighbor of Parsons, in 1879 and the business became known as Parsons and Jewell. Later that year Parsons sold his share to Jewell's brother, William, and the business name changed to Jewell Brothers; that business was dissolved in 1886.[88]

---

[86]Population Schedules of the 8th and 9th Censuses, 1860 and 1870; Plat of Rancho Tomales y Baulines, 1858, PRNS; "Plat . . . Bolinas to Olema," 1867, California Historical Society; Marin County Journal, September 20, 1883; interview with Earl Lupton.

[87]Schedules of Agriculture and Industry, 9th U. S. Census, 1870.

[88]Marin County Journal, March 16, 1867, August 14 and September 25, 1879; Marin Journal, March 18, 1886; Deeds Book E, p. 313, and Book I, p. 284, MCRO.

The Parsons Ranch made the local news in 1867 with this exciting story:

> EXPLOITS OF A WILD-CAT.
> On Thursday of last week a monster of a wild-cat . . . made its way to the place of Mrs. C. S. Parsons, where a great commotion was manifest among the poultry, and the bones of a dozen or more were strewn upon the ground in a short time . . .[89]

The second parcel of land to come into the Parsons Ranch was a small lot located on a curve in Olema Creek known as "Winan's Place" opposite the original Olema School across the Olema-Bolinas Road. Daniel and Nelson Olds' brother-in-law James Winans occupied the land, part of Rancho Punta de los Reyes Sobrante owned by James McMillan Shafter, from about 1858 to some time in the 1860s. Winans, born in Ohio in 1810, farmed the land and raised a family with his wife, the former Emaline Olds. In 1860 Winans milked fifteen cows, made 200 pounds of butter, and raised almost 1500 bushels of winter wheat, oats, barley and Irish potatoes, and five tons of hay. It is likely that he leased additional land from Shafter, as his small plot could not have supported such an operation. Winans had left the area for San Rafael by 1870, and on October 11, 1875, Shafter sold the small parcel to Charles Parsons. Parsons moved the Winans house across the creek and added it to his existing home, doubling the size.[90]

The third and final parcel to join the Parsons Ranch was 47 acres at the top of Bolinas Ridge above Five Brooks that Thomas Longley had bought from Daniel Olds in 1870. According to the 1959 reminiscence of Bertha Stedman Rothwell, whose family knew the Oldses and the Longleys, Nelson Olds built a two-story house on the ridgetop which was known as "The Home Ranch of Nelson H. Olds" until the Oldses permanent home was built in 1864 at Woodside, today's Stewart Ranch. Rothwell reported that Omar Jewell, who later built a dairy ranch on Lagunitas Creek, occupied the ridge ranch for a few years with his family until purchasing his ranch to the northeast from Nelson

---

[89]Marin County Journal, June 29, 1867.

[90]Deeds Book Q, p. 38. MCRO; Population and Agriculture Schedules, 8th and 10th U. S. Censuses, 1860 and 1880; Olds family notes courtesy of Boyd Stewart; interviews with Emma Benevenga and William Pinkerton.

Olds. Longley moved into the house after the Jewell family had moved to their dairy. Rothwell recalled the Olds/Longley farm:

> I can distinctly remember this country farm-house. It was a large two story wooden building similar in appearance to other houses built in the early pioneer days of Marin County. This home was kept neat in appearance by a fresh coat of white-wash each Spring. The surroundings of this home were composed of a very large barn, a wagon and farm implement shed and the dairy where the butter was made. This completed the group of buildings on the ridge. Of course the usual pig sty was set apart from the other buildings.
>
> I can remember as a very young child [1880s] often climbing with my mother and her other children, one mile up the steep hillside trail through the Shafter-Howard forest, to visit with Mrs. George [sic] Longley and her family . . . .
>
> As a child there was one distinctive feature about this place which interested me. It was the first time in my life I had ever seen a well with a hand-pump attached. It fascinated me to see the water siphoned out of the well into a bucket placed under the outlet of the pump. Prior to this time I had always seen water flow freely from a creek or hill-side spring. This home being situated as it was on a crest of a range of hills the water supply could only be obtained by digging a well and depending on the laborious task of operating a hand-pump when a supply of water was needed. There was no windmill or water tank connected with this well.[91]

British-born Thomas Longley came to California in 1857 and worked as a miller in San Francisco before settling in the Olema area. He operated a dairy in 1860, at an unknown but nearby location, making 1333 pounds of butter that year and employing two hired hands. Longley didn't own any livestock that year except for a horse; he may have made butter for Daniel Olds, who owned twenty milk cows but made no butter himself. Around 1865 Longley moved to

---

[91]Rothwell, Pioneering, pp. 231-232.

the hilltop ranch formerly occupied by Jewell. By 1870 Longley raised wheat, oats, barley, hay and potatoes on sixty acres of land, no doubt including the 47-acre parcel and other land rented from Daniel Olds.[92]

Longley lived in the two-story house in a protected cove on the ridge sheltered by five eucalyptus trees in a line to the east of the house. The ridgetop road from Samuel P. Taylor's paper mill to Bolinas passed by the house. Travelers of this route reportedly used Longley's house as a watering point. Longley was listed in the 1870 census as a farmer, with real estate valued at $800 and personal property of $400. Longley's son Charles, born in 1852 in Michigan, worked on the farm. Upon Thomas Longley's death in July of 1870, Charles took over the small ranch until selling it to Minerva Parsons on October 6, 1888. Charles Longley then operated a dairy a number of miles up Bolinas Ridge for a few years before settling in Inverness where he was a founding member of the school board there. Charles Longley died in 1944.

According to a number of sources, the Longley house on the ridgetop was moved down to the Parsons Ranch soon after the 1888 sale, where it has stood since. An existing one-story board and batten house was connected to the two-story house, producing a home of comfortable size. On the ridgetop, only the trees planted by Olds or Longley, known to locals as the Five Sisters, remain.[93]

Charles Parsons bought 86 acres of land in Santa Cruz near his brother-in-law's dairy in 1879, but then decided not to move there. In 1881 he and his wife moved to Petaluma and continued leasing out their dairy ranch. John Fuller and Christopher Blasdell rented the dairy in 1880, while William Dunn rented the Parsons home on the county road. Parsons' widow tried unsuccessfully to sell the ranch in 1895. Near the end of 1890, Olema Valley pioneer Daniel Olds, Jr. and his daughter Annie Baily rented the Parsons home, where Olds had lived when he first came to the valley in 1856. The newspaper noted the next year that "Olema ranch life agrees with him." Olds died in 1896. Angelo Pedranti, a Swiss dairyman who had previously worked on a Bolinas dairy and then the Bloom Ranch north of Parsons, rented the Parsons dairy

---

[92]Deeds Book I, p. 195, MCRO; Guinn, Coast Counties, p. 984; Population and Agriculture Schedules, 8th and 9th U. S. Censuses, 1860 and 1870.

[93]Population and Agriculture Schedules, 9th U. S. Census, 1870; Marin County Journal, July 23, 1870; Marin Journal, October 11, 1888; interviews with Earl Lupton, Boyd Stewart and Dorothy Meloney, granddaughter of Charles Longley.

until 1890 when he moved to C. W. Howard's Z Ranch, once occupied by Mrs. Parsons' father, Peter Wittenberg.[94]

In 1901 Mrs. Parsons rented the ranch to the son of her neighbor, Oliver Muscio. The lease did not include two fields by the county road, and required Muscio to "deliver two tons of hay to her barn on the west side of the county road."[95]

Erminio (Herman) Franzi rented the dairy after Muscio left. His family stayed at the Parsons Ranch until about 1945. Franzi, who died in 1911, and his wife Angelina had a daughter and three sons, Florentino, Atillio and Elfie, who became dairymen in their own right and operated the dairy together. Jim Colli recalled his employment as a milker at the Parsons Ranch in 1922 for Florentino Franzi; brother Elfie also worked as a milker and became the last surviving brother to run a dairy in the area. Electricity was installed on the ranch in 1925.[96]

Children from the Parsons Ranch and surrounding homes attended the Olema School, established in 1860 on Shafter lands across the road from James Winan's house. A schoolhouse in the town of Olema was called Garcia School, a matter that caused some confusion over the years. In 1915 the school was renamed Five Brooks School, and Garcia School was renamed Olema School. At some time between 1873 and 1895 a new schoolhouse was built on the Parsons property at the foot of the ranch road on the east side of the county road. The Marin County Department of Education closed Five Brooks School in 1927, and students were reassigned to Olema School. Ralph and Emma Benevenga remodeled the abandoned schoolhouse, moved across the road some years earlier by John Denman, in the mid-1940s.[97]

After the death of Minerva Parsons the title went by decree in 1921 to her daughter, Ella Denman. Ella had married John R. Denman in 1888 and moved to Petaluma, but returned to the family property about 1934 after

---

[94]Marin County Journal, November 6, 1879 and April 21, 1881; Marin Journal, October 2 and 9, 1890; Population Schedules, 10th U. S. Census, 1880.

[95]Leases Book F, pp. 272-273, MCRO; Marin Journal, September 7, 1901.

[96]Population Schedules, 12th U. S. Census, 1900; interviews with Jim Colli, Earl Lupton, Emma Benevenga and Tom Pinkerton, who helped his father wire the ranch with electricity around 1925.

[97]"Plat . . . Bolinas to Olema," 1867, California Historical Society; School Registers, Marin County Department of Education, San Rafael; interview with Emma Benevenga.

suffering from the stock market crash. John Denman closed down the dairy operation about 1945, after asking Elfie Franzi to leave, and put a herd of sheep on the ranch. The Denmans lived in the old family home called "Minerva Lodge" on the county road which, during their lifetime, became a state highway. Mrs. Denman died of a stroke in 1938 at age 71, leaving the ranch in life estate to her husband John and to her daughter, Mrs. Lupton. John and his son Charles continued the sheep ranch through World War II. Two parcels on the west side of State Route One were sold, the first in 1938 to Ralph and Emma Benevenga, the other in 1953 to John C. Williamson.[98]

When both John Denman and Mrs. Lupton died in 1954, the ranch passed to Mrs. Lupton's son, Lt. Col. Earl Lane Lupton. Lupton leased the ranch to Lynn Elphick, who continued to run sheep on the hills until about 1960. In 1964 Lupton sold the old Parsons home on the highway to William Pinkerton, who remodeled the historic house. A parcel adjacent to the northern Five Brooks bridge was sold to Thomas Holcomb in 1967.[99]

Lupton retired from a career in the U. S. Air Force in 1970 and moved to the ranch, building a large house overlooking the highway in 1971 and establishing a herd of beef cattle. During this construction the lower part of the old ranch road was rerouted to serve the new house. Between 1967 and 1993 Lupton rented the house on the old Parsons dairy ranch to longtime family friends Tom and Ollie Pinkerton. The house has been vacant since Tom Pinkerton's death in 1993.[100]

The 836-acre Lupton Ranch was sold to the National Park Service on March 25, 1974, after 109 years in the Parsons family. Earl Lupton negotiated a 25-year reservation of use and occupancy for his 1971 home and grazes a small herd of beef cattle under a special use permit.[101]

In December of 1994 the two-story section of the old ranch house was knocked down without Section 106 compliance under orders from John Sansing, the superintendent of Point Reyes National Seashore, an act in direct defiance

---

[98]Deeds Book 232, p. 25, and Official Records Book 458, p. 292 and Book 790, p. 139, MCRO; Marin Journal, December 15, 1938; Point Reyes Light, November 11, 1976; interview with Earl L. Lupton.

[99]Official Records Book 1820, p. 362, MCRO; interview with Earl Lupton.

[100]Point Reyes Light, December 14, 1967; interview with Earl Lupton.

[101]Administrative files, PRNS.

of National Park Service cultural resource management policies. Subsequently the water tower and barn were stripped by wood salvagers and effectively destroyed. At the time of this writing, the site is mostly rubble and is slated for site restoration.

3. Buildings and Historic Resources

Until recently, two buildings and two structures remained of the historic Lupton Ranch. The small dairy house (OV-09.03) and shearing shed (OV-09.05) had been demolished around 1990 because of deterioration. The recently destroyed structures will be described here for the record.

a. Ranch House (OV-09.01)

The ranch house consisted of what is believed to be the original Nelson Olds and/or Thomas Longley home that had been built on the ridgetop above its current site around 1859. The 19' x 24' two-story house was moved after the Longley family sold their property to Charles Parsons in 1888. Parsons attached an existing 22' x 36' one-story building to the east side of the older house some time before 1900. Both sections had gable roofs and horizontal drop siding, although portions of the exterior walls had been covered with asphalt roll roofing for protection. The one-story section had board and batten siding under the drop siding. The two-story section had original 6-over-6 double-hung wood sash windows, while the one-story portion featured various windows.

The house had not been altered for the last 75 years. The house was dilapidated, but due to lack of alterations had excellent historic integrity.

b. Old Milking Barn (OV-09.02)

At 50' x 61' this Grade B milking barn was smaller than most barns in the Olema Valley. It was a one-and-a-half story, gable-roofed, wood frame barn with random width vertical wood siding. The original shingle roof was covered with corrugated metal roofing. There were 80 milking stalls and a hay loft. The barn was in fair condition, but its historic integrity was good; it was a

unique structure in the valley. This ranch never upgraded to a Grade A dairy because the owners switched to a sheep operation in the 1930s. One corner shed room of the barn, once used as a stable, was removed around 1990 because of advanced deterioration.

c. Water Tower (OV-09.04)

A 700-gallon wood water tank, sitting on a wooden tower about twenty feet above the ground, was built prior to 1900. The base, of concrete piers, measured 12' square. The tower was surrounded by three old eucalyptus trees which appeared to hold it up; it had long been out of use and had severe structural deterioration.

d. Ranch Road (OV-09.06)

The one-mile road to the Lupton Ranch dates from 1865 or earlier. It may have been developed by Thomas Longley as an access between his ridgetop home and the Olds residences in the valley in the late 1850s. The lower .25 mile of the road has been realigned and altered, although the original remains mostly intact but unused (the Olema/Five Brooks school house stood at the foot of this alignment until the 1930s). The upper part that leads to the ranch past the newer Lupton home is original, leading through a bay laurel forest to the pastures of the Lupton Ranch and the old ranch complex. Recent grading by an apparently unskilled bulldozer operator has widened portions of the road by about five feet.

e. Trees

Three large eucalyptus trees surround the site of the old water tower at the ranch complex. Five very large eucalyptus trees, planted in a row, mark the site of the ridgetop home and dairy of Thomas Longley. They were reportedly planted about 1860. All of these trees were bitten by cold weather in late 1990, but have survived.

f. Fences

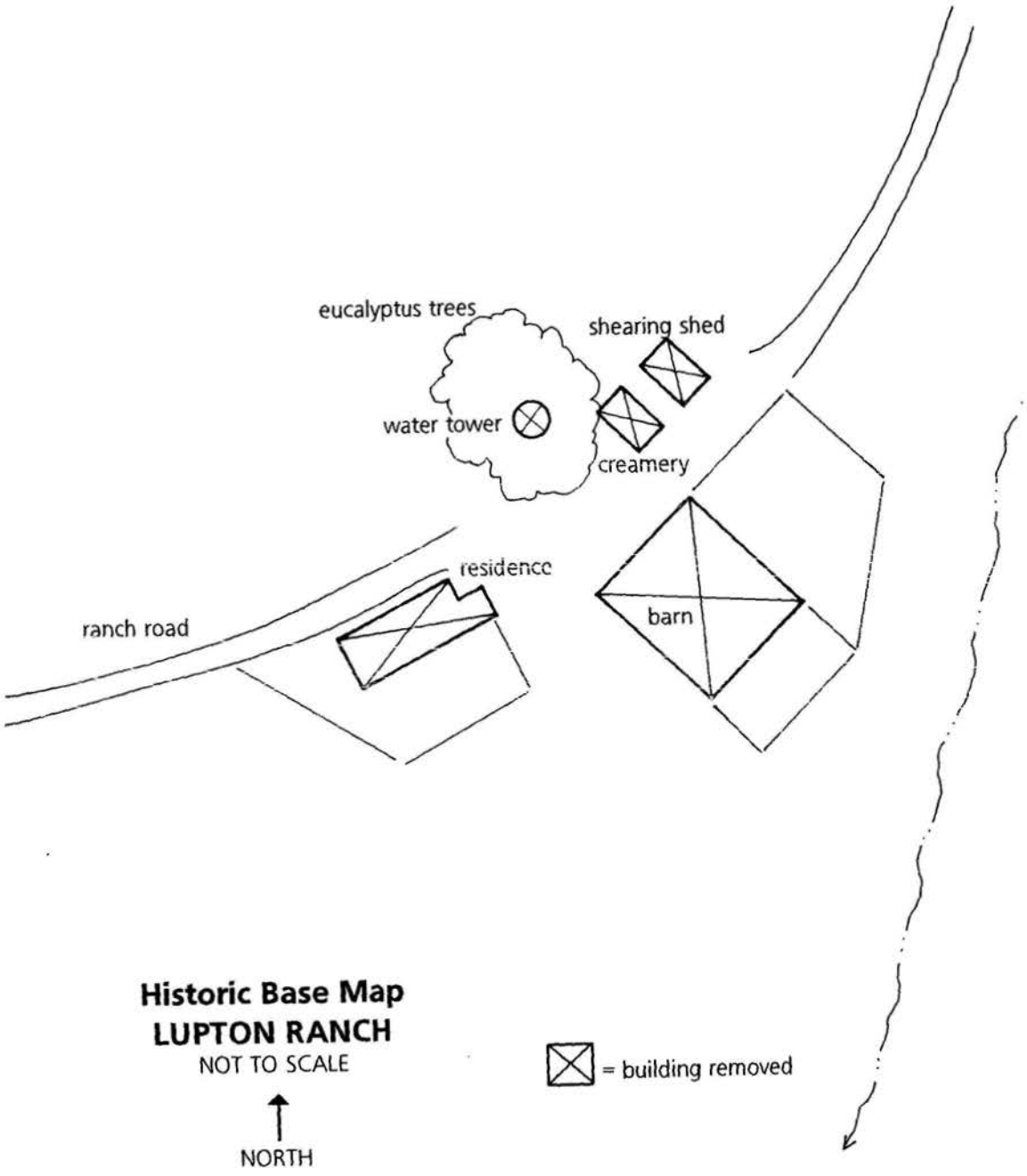
The boundary fencelines appear unchanged since the days of the Parsonses and Longleys, but the building material has been replaced over the years. The pasture divisions above the ranch complex may reflect the needs of the sheep operation that was here from around 1935 to 1960.

4. Historic Significance of the Lupton Ranch

The Lupton Ranch has local historic significance as a pioneer dairy ranch of the Olema Valley dairy district. Developed beginning in 1865, the ranch was a smaller operation than its northern neighbors due to the size and quality of its grazing area. Only two of the original buildings survived until recently, but both are of historic interest. The house was one of the older surviving houses in the area, and the main section had been moved from its original location on the ridgetop more than ninety years ago. The house had not been altered for at least seventy years; even the interior wall coverings, a plain yellowed paper, were old. The hay barn was a smaller version of the typical Olema Valley dairy barn. Both buildings were destroyed in 1994. A dairy and sheep shed were demolished by the reservors during the last five years. The destruction of the buildings has severely affected the integrity of the ranch. The road to the ranch has significance as an 1860s transportation route in the valley. The five eucalyptus trees, the "five sisters" on the ridgetop, are significant remains marking the site of the Longley dairy that operated there from about 1859 to 1888.

Historic Features

1. Ranch Road, ca. 1858
2. Eucalyptus Trees, ca 1880s
3. Eucalyptus Trees on ridge top, ca. 1858
4. Site of demolished buildings

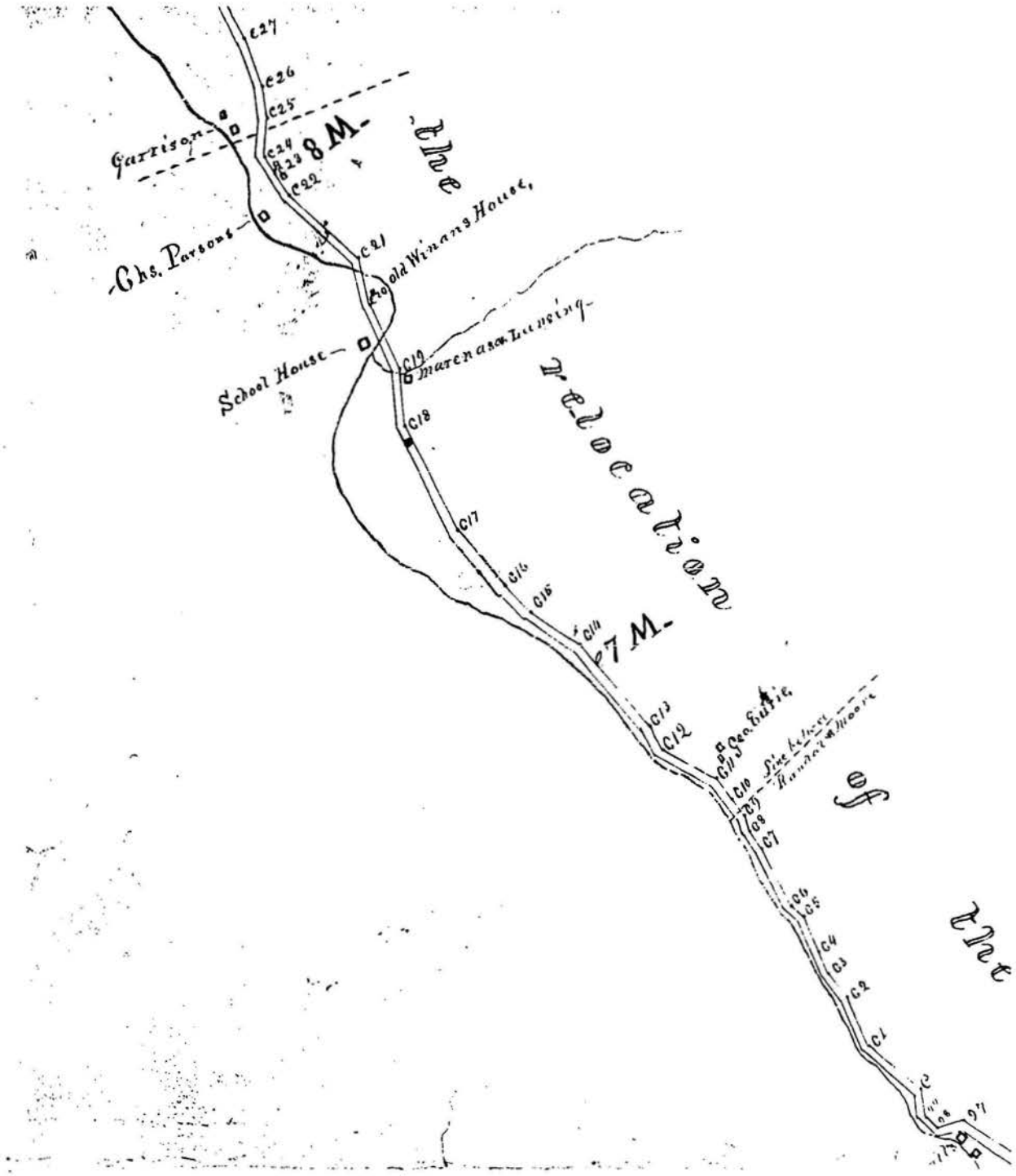


Historic Base Map
LUPTON RANCH
NOT TO SCALE

The Parsons ranch is visible in the far right of this 1906 photograph of the Olema Valley from above the lime kilns. Fencing is seen on the hillsides, and the county road in the center right. *U.S.G.S. Library, Menlo Park.*

The "Five Sisters" planted at the original site of the old Lupton house. *Photograph by Phil Frank.*

The Lupton Ranch house and barn before they were demolished: the two-story section of the house was built circa 1858 and moved to this site around 1890; the other section was probably the original Parsons farmhouse, circa 1865. Note the water tower barely visible in the trees. *NPS photo by Dewey Livingston.*

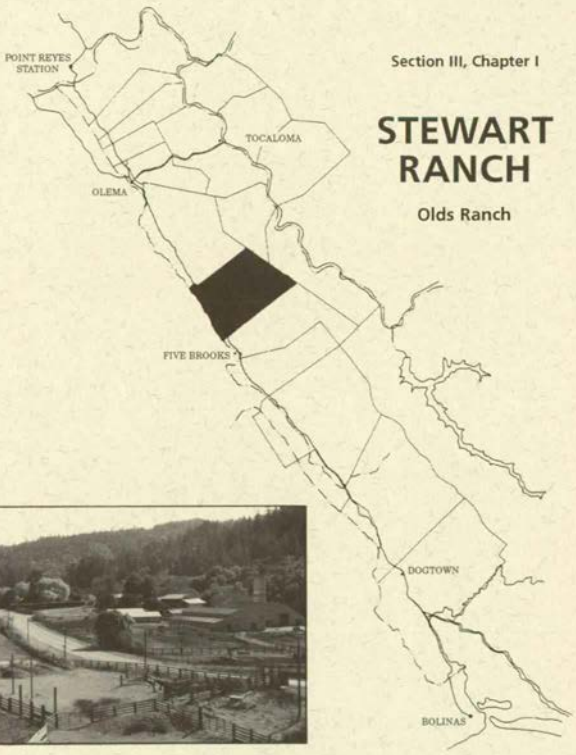


Detail of the 1867 "Plat of the Survey for the relocation of the Road from Bolinas to Olema" by Hiram Austin, showing the Five Brooks area. Note Charles Parsons' house (now Pinkerton's) and Marenas [sic] and Lansing (now Ralph Giacomini's) with the school house opposite. George Eurie worked for Mrs. Randall.
California Historical Society Collection.

Section III, Chapter I

STEWART RANCH

Olds Ranch



HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE

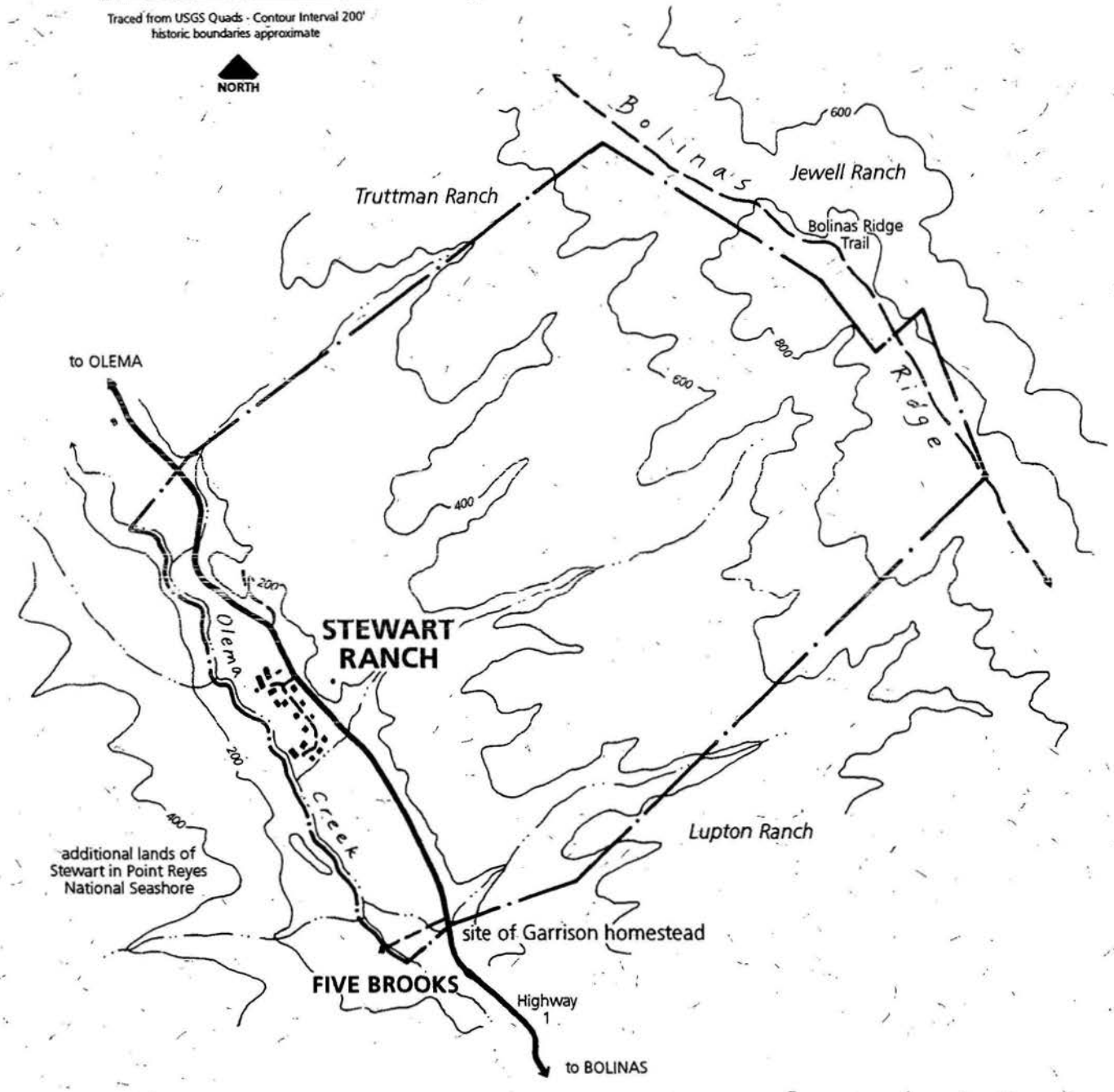
STEWART RANCH

OLEMA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA
Golden Gate National Recreation Area

SCALE IN MILES
0 .1 .2 .3 .4 .5

Traced from USGS Quads - Contour Interval 200'
historic boundaries approximate

NORTH



I. STEWART RANCH
Former Olds Ranch
(Golden Gate National Recreation Area)

1. Description

The Stewart Ranch, historically known as the Olds Ranch, is an 890-acre parcel in the geographic center of the Olema Valley. It consists of rolling, grassy hills with wooded gulches, facing the virgin forests of Inverness Ridge across Olema Creek to the west. It is bounded on the north by the Truttman Ranch, on the east at the crest of Bolinas Ridge at the Samuel P. Taylor State Park boundary, on the south by the Lupton Ranch and Five Brooks, and on the west by Olema Creek. The ranch complex, headquarters for the Stewart's beef cattle ranch and horse boarding and breeding facility, is the largest in the Olema Valley and consists of structures old and new. The Stewart family has owned the ranch since 1924.

2. History of Stewart Ranch

Rafael Garcia reportedly used the Stewart Ranch site as a remote stock corral serving the southern part of his rancho; according to the memories of Nelson Olds, Jr. and Boyd Stewart, Garcia called the small knoll that would become the Olds and Stewart Ranch "Cabristo Hill," and kept two tame steers here for meat. Garcia sold 4,366 acres of his rancho to Daniel and Nelson Olds on September 25, 1856. Victor Post, who had purchased much of Garcia's land early in 1856, quitclaimed 92 acres of it to the Olds family on the same day as the Garcia sale.[102]

According to recollections of Nelson Olds, Jr. and a letter by Jeremiah Olds, their father moved the family into an unfinished squatters cabin near the site of the current ranch house on Christmas Eve of 1856. Nelson Olds paid the squatter, possibly Peter Boucher, $100 for the cabin after convincing the man that he owned title. A storm lashed the cabin while the family pinned

[102]Deeds, Book C, pp. 66 and 68, MCRO; interview with Boyd Stewart.

blankets over the empty window and door frames. Jeremiah Olds wrote of the work involved in setting up a ranch:

> There was only the squatters house on the tract not a fence anywhere, but there was redwood timber on one corner of the property, then the real work began cutting timber for fences and lumber for buildings. When they built the first barn they underestimated the force of the wind in that section; sometime later during a severe storm this barn was blown down killing several cows and horses, one fine black mare was blinded by the crash although apparently unhurt otherwise.[103]

The first documented resident of the site of today's Stewart Ranch was Andrew Powell; his name appears on a grant survey map dated 1858. Powell married a sister of Nelson and Daniel Olds, but apparently left the area or died by 1860. According to census figures that year, his wife Martha Olds Powell continued to live at the site.[104]

Next at the site was the elder Daniel Olds. Olds and his wife Lois, both 75 years old, lived in a house with his daughter, the abovementioned Martha Powell, as well as a laborer and housekeeper named Sylvester and Mary Davis and another laborer named Burton Shippy. Apparently Shippy and Davis operated Olds' dairy, as the 1860 census noted that Olds owned 37 milk cows but made no butter, and Shippy owned no cows but made 1600 pounds of butter and supported two farm laborers. Martha Powell owned 23 milk cows. In all, the ranch supported 60 milk cows, 50 other cattle, six horses and 25 pigs, most owned by Olds. Also, Daniel Olds, Sr. did not own the property he was living on; his sons Daniel Jr. and Nelson did. Lois Olds died at the ranch in June,

---

[103]Jeremiah Stanley Olds, "Recollections of Woodside," handwritten manuscript, February 18, 1939, p. 6, Boyd Stewart Collection, photocopy at PORE. The black mare, probably one of the Morgans that the family had brought from the east, was given to neighbor James McMillan Shafter for breeding purposes.

[104]Plat of Rancho Tomales y Baulines, 1858, PRNS; Olds family notes; Population Schedules of the 8th U. S. Census, 1860. Andrew Powell may have been temporarily out of the area at the time the census taker visited.

1861, and Daniel Olds, Sr. moved to San Rafael, where he died at age 89 in 1874.[105]

The California Farmer correspondent visited the Daniel Olds, Sr., ranch in 1862, and spoke critically of the operation:

> Here was a farm of 2000 acres, with 250 head of stock, 100 cows. Kept 50 cows in 1861, and made 150 pounds of butter a week. *Was not making butter now;* cows were poor, by means of short feed in winter and no root-crops raised. When root-crops are so easily raised, we are surprised that Ranchers and Dairymen have suffered fifty head of cattle to perish this winter on this Ranch.

The writer compared the dismal situation at Olds' ranch with that of Baldwin and Karner's successful dairy to the north, and asked, "Is it right, aside from the pecuniary interest, for stock-owners to keep stock and allow them to perish in our winters from starvation?"[106]

Fifty acres in the center of the Olds ranch had been purchased earlier in 1856 by Victor Post and then sold to John Garrison of Alameda. Garrison, apparently a friend of his neighbor to the north, Homer Strong, became the superintendent of Samuel P. Taylor's Pioneer Paper Mill on Lagunitas Creek over Bolinas Ridge from the Olds Ranch. Garrison lived in a two-story house at the south end of today's Stewart Ranch with his wife Mariah, his four children and the local schoolteacher, James Bailey. According to the 1860 census, Garrison operated a dairy of fourteen cows, making 5,000 pounds of butter the previous year, probably from cows owned by Daniel Olds. He also grew wheat, oats, barley, Irish potatoes and hay, presumably leasing extra land from a neighbor. Garrison moved to Mendocino County and sold his property to Nelson Olds on September 29, 1870.[107]

---

[105]Population and Agriculture Schedules, 8th U. S. Census, 1860.

[106]The California Farmer, April 4, 1862, p. 1. The journal apparently confused Daniel Olds Sr. and Jr.; Daniel Olds, Jr. was a county supervisor (see Supervisors Minutes, 1861-1862, Marin County Civic Center) at the time and often called Judge Olds, while the former was evidently mistakenly called Daniel Olds, Jr.

[107]Deeds Book C, p. 50 and I, p. 300; Mason, Historian, p. 602-603; Population and Agriculture Schedules of the 8th U. S. Census, 1860. By 1919, the Garrison house was occupied by Capt. E. W. Newth, who sold feed and grains and traded goods to and from Alaska. See the Marin Journal, July 3, 1919. Newth lived on the ranch until around 1925; the house stood abandoned for many

The Olds brothers split their Olema Valley landholdings exactly in half on February 11, 1863, Nelson taking 1,955 acres of the northern half and Daniel the same amount to the south. Nelson Olds sold off much of his northern half, including 680 acres of the eastern portion to Omar Jewell and 100 acres on Papermill Creek to the Pacific Powder Mill Company in 1864, and acreage on the northern portion to Levi K. Baldwin and to William L. Johnson. Omar Jewell may have lived on the Stewart Ranch site before settling a short distance to the east; Jewell's biography noted his early residence at "the Home Ranch of Nelson H. Olds," with his family from September 1862 to 1864. Olds kept 850 acres of perhaps the choicest land for himself.[108]

Shortly after the Olds family land split of 1863, Nelson H. Olds built a house on the site of the old corral and developed a respectable dairy ranch on his 850 acres, which he called "Woodside." According to his son Nelson, Jr., Olds hired McMarion "Mac" Miller of Olema to haul lumber up from Bolinas, building the house about the time of Rafael Garcia's death, or 1864-1866. Dairy buildings may have remained from Daniel Sr.'s business. A lithograph of the ranch dated 1869 (see cover) and interpreted by Nelson Olds, Jr., showed the main house, a dairy house built about 1863 ("designed to suit the old tin pan system, long before the separator came into use"), a barn he dated 1869, and the original squatter's cabin in which the family had spent that stormy Christmas Eve. A previous barn on the site had fallen in an earthquake in 1868.[109]

Nelson Olds and his wife Lavina had five children, Kate, Nelson, Jennie, Edgar and Stanley, the youngest being born at Woodside. The 1870 census showed the Olds Ranch supporting three laborers, who milked 70 cows and produced 9,000 pounds of butter in 1869. The ranch also produced wheat, oats, hay and barley, and supported a herd of 25 pigs. Woodside was valued at $19,000, producing almost $5,000 worth of products the previous year. Living a short distance to the north was an Englishman, Edward Pittam, and his wife.

---

years until it "fell down" (Stewart).

[108]Deeds Book E, pp. 238, 354, 439, 532, MCRO; Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 465, Rothwell, Pioneering, pp. 231-232. Rothwell, who was a young woman in the 1870s, referred to the Olds home ranch as the ridge top home, later Longley's residence, that is detailed in the Lupton Ranch chapter.

[109]Nelson Olds, Jr. to Boyd Stewart, December 18, 1935 and January 28, 1936; lithograph in Boyd Stewart Collection.

A horse barn once stood here before being moved to the main ranch at an unknown date. To this day the Stewart family refers to this area as Pittam field.[110]

Olds, made a deputy United States marshal in 1862, served as Marin County Sheriff and Tax Collector from 1873 through 1875, probably letting his ranch hands run the dairy. Late in 1875 Olds opened a mine across the road from his house, digging a tunnel about 325 feet long that yielded "considerable" bituminous shale. The Marin County newspaper stated that Olds "has hopes for developing a coal vein that will prove of commercial importance." Presumably the mining venture failed, as the newspaper never mentioned it again. Olds had invested in the nearby Pacific Powder Mill (constructed on land his family had sold) and two mining outfits near Bolinas, the Bolinas Union Mine Company and the Pike County Mining Company, in 1864.[111]

In mid-1879 Olds leased the ranch to a young Swiss dairyman, Pacifico Donati, but continued to live in the main house. Donati and his partner Enrico Dellamaria milked 100 cows that year, producing 56,250 gallons of milk which they made into butter on the ranch. Their four laborers included two younger brothers of Donati, Salvatore and Stefano. Donati received notice in the San Rafael newspaper for being "ahead of his neighbors" in haying, producing a crop that was "very heavy, and of good quality."[112]

Meanwhile, Nelson Olds decided to move to family property at Escondido, near San Diego. He had set up a honey farm there and reportedly preferred the weather of southern California. He set sail on his new yacht, Letti, on the last day of October, 1879. His family traveled by steamer. The newspaper commented, "Mr. Olds does not expect to leave Marin County permanently, and, in common with his numerous friends, we hope he will not." Unfortunately, Olds did not live to make his return; he died in San Diego on September 28, 1882.[113]

---

[110]Population and Agriculture Schedules, 9th U. S. Census, 1870; interview with Boyd Stewart.

[111]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 234; Marin County Journal, April 2 and August 6, 1864, November 18, 1875.

[112]Marin County Journal, May 1 and August 17, 1879; Population and Agriculture Schedules, 9th U. S. Census, 1870.

[113]Marin County Journal, September 11, October 23 and 30, 1879; interview with Boyd Stewart.

Upon his departure Olds rented his house to a Mr. Risdon. Ridson's wife Carrie and three children lived in the house in June of 1880. Eldest daughter Lizzie was the schoolteacher at nearby Olema School at Five Brooks.[114]

The Olds ranch continued to produce butter under Pacifico Donati, although Enrico Dellamaria left the partnership in 1883. At the end of 1884 County Sheriff George Mason, married to Nelson Olds' daughter Kate, leased the ranch and anticipated a general remodeling of the "old homestead," building a new butter house "with all the late improvements, probably with Concord floor and walls." Mason retired from public service and moved to the ranch in November, and by the next spring the newspaper noted that "it would take a whale of an office to lure him from his ranch home."[115]

George Mason, born in Maine in 1841, spent seven years as a seaman before settling in Marin County in the 1860s. He operated a dairy in Novato for many years until becoming a conductor on the North Pacific Coast Railroad upon its opening in 1875. While running for Sheriff in 1879 the San Rafael newspaper described him in this way: "He has the muscle and courage which are requisite in the Sheriff's office, has good abilities, and his friends are legion." He was elected to the office in early September, 1879.[116]

Mason married Nelson Olds' daughter Kate in 1877 and the couple resided in San Rafael until their move to the Olema Valley. The Masons purchased the ranch from Lavina Olds on February 24, 1890, and proceeded to develop the ranch into a premium dairy.[117]

The Masons moved to Petaluma and sold the ranch on October 17, 1900, to John Calvin Dickson, one of the pioneering Dickson brothers who had settled San Geronimo Valley in central Marin County in the 1850s. Dickson retired soon after the purchase and his son Robert Edwin "Ed" Dickson took over the ranch, having gained experience after a number of years operating Charles Webb Howard's A Ranch near the Point Reyes Lighthouse.

---

[114]Ibid., September 11, 1879; Population Schedules of the 10th U. S. Census, 1880.

[115]Marin County Journal, August 23, 1883 and April 10, 1884; Marin Journal, November 20, 1884 and April 4, 1885.

[116]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 471; Marin County Journal, June 26 and September 4, 1879.

[117]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 471; Marin County Journal, April 10, 1884; Deeds Book 11, p. 299 and Book 16, p. 615, MCRO.

Dickson established what he called the Laurelwood Creamery, where he processed his and his neighbors' milk in preparation for marketing. San Rafael's newspaper *The Tocsin* published a glowing account of Dickson's endeavor, giving deserved credit to the former owner:

> Laurelwood Creamery.
> Olema, Jan. 18, 1901
>
> Ed. Tocsin - At the magnificent home of R. E. Dickson we find one of the best regulated creameries in the county, known as the Laurelwood Creamery, operating near Olema; formerly Mason's ranch.
>
> Eighty-four cows are being milked at present with a yield of one hundred and twenty pounds per day of a very high grade of butter. The bunch grass that grows plentiful in this section, with the high grade Jersey blood, are the great stimulators that cause the fine yield, which has been brought to this high state of perfection under ex-supervisor Geo. Mason's management. It was last September that this gentleman concluded to part with the grand old home that in the past fifteen years has placed him in the position to take life easy and open up an opportunity for Mr. Dickson to do the same; and as the time and opportunities are becoming better each day, we may look to Laurelwood Creamery hold its position with the best in the State. The gentleman that has lately taken the position as buttermaker, John Shoemaker, just from British Columbia, is a competent man. Mr. Mason is still dairying a dozen choice cows near his old home and sends the milk to Mr. Dickson's creamery. Another rancher sends about a ton of milk; thirty more cows yet to come in and then business will be running at full blast. Twenty-five calves from the best cows are being raised, and as many more heifer calves also will be raised. This being considered an off year for heifers, one of the features of a fine dairy is the system for feeding the calves. Heavy metal dishes are used instead of wood which can be kept clean thereby avoiding one of our greatest troubles -- tubercle [sic]. The choice stock of hogs show that the skim-milk is not to be wasted by feeding into railsplitters.

> A very large quantity of choice fruit is raised here. A prettier location of buildings could not be found -- the only one to compare with it, in my observation, is the E. G. Maggetti ranch at Marshall, this county.
>
> Mrs. Robinson, a lady from San Francisco, is assisting Mrs. Dickson in the dressmaking line.
>
> Mr. Dickson's last improvement to his fine dairy was to have Dr. B. A. Frost dehorn his cows, and was greatly surprised as well as pleased to see how quite [sic] and humane the operation was conducted.[118]

According to a newspaper report six months later, the creamery was up to speed: Dickson milked 107 cows and made 4,200 pounds of butter per month. Less than a year later the *Dairy and Produce Review* wrote about the ranch:

> At Olema is the fine dairy of Ed Dickson, where 115 high grade Jerseys are being milked, producing about 1 1/4 pounds of butter each per day. Over $1,000 worth of mill feed was used during the last winter, but the Jerseys more than paid for it. This fine dairy ranch has been developed to its present conditions by Mr. George Mason, an enterprising dairyman, who sold out to Mr. Dickson.[119]

The 1906 San Francisco earthquake struck while Dickson resided at the ranch. The large milking barn, built after the 1868 quake, was destroyed. The shock also toppled the fireplace, destroying the marble mantle and side equipment. Dickson rebuilt the barn in a slightly different configuration.[120]

Robert E. Dickson received title for the ranch from his widowed mother in 1916, two years after the death of his father, John C. Dickson. Around this time he sold a small amount of acreage on the northwestern corner of the ranch to one Roger Johnson. Eventually he leased the ranch to others and moved his family to San Rafael. Eight years later, on October 3, 1924, he sold

---

[118]San Rafael Tocsin, January 26, 1901.

[119]Marin Journal, June 20, 1901, March 20, 1902 (quoting the Dairy and Produce Review) and October 8, 1914; Deeds Book 64, p. 213, MCRO; Population Schedules of the 12th U. S. Census, 1900.

[120]Nelson Olds, Jr. to Mrs. Boyd Stewart, August 24, 1938.

the ranch for $54,000 to his friend Samuel J. Stewart of Nicasio. Stewart had been running dry cows on the Dickson ranch for a number of years.[121]

The Stewart family did not occupy the ranch until 1932; Dickson's lease to Willie J. Wilson ran until 1925. Between 1926 and 1929 the Stewarts did not milk cows on the ranch but ran cattle and grew hay. For a short time in 1929-30 they rented the ranch to Point Reyes dairymen John and David McClure, who had lost their ranch by condemnation to RCA. Meanwhile, Samuel Stewart leased the V. J. Bloom ranch to the north to supplement his family's dairy operation, but was killed when kicked by a horse he owned; his daughter and son-in-law Henrietta and Tom Greer continued operation of that ranch. Stewart's son Boyd moved to the former Dickson ranch in 1932 and began extensive development and improvements.[122]

Boyd Stewart, born in Nicasio in 1903, had a Stanford University education when he came to run the family ranch. He was married to Joseffa Conrad, an educated woman who helped the family finances during the depression teaching music and holding a job. Stewart employed the latest knowledge in ranch improvements and was in many ways ahead of his time. The Stewart Ranch upgraded its dairy to Grade A in 1935, when contractors R. E. Murphy and Son built a sanitary barn. The following year they built a concrete silo for corn storage, growing corn on flats until 1952. The Murphys also built a sizeable stable for the Stewart family's many horses, a large shop building near the site of the fallen barn of 1868, and various residences for farm hands and sheds. The house had been damaged in a fire around 1931. An addition was made to the Olds residence and parts were remodeled; Mrs. Stewart actively remodeled the house and landscaping. Stewart also bought wooded property on the west side of the ranch to obtain a sufficient water supply.

Stewart and his wife Joseffa raised a daughter, Jo Ann, at the ranch. Jo Ann took over the dairy business after graduating for University of California at Davis in 1950. The Jersey dairy expanded from 175 cows in 1950 to up to 280 at the time the dairy business ceased in 1972. Jo Ann Stewart kept the ranch in excellent condition, winning numerous incentive awards from her milk

---

[121]Deeds Book 176, p. 153 and Official Records Book 54, p. 458, MCRO.

[122]Information on the Stewart years at the ranch is from interviews with Boyd Stewart, Jo Ann Stewart and Henrietta (Stewart) Greer.

contractor, Borden's. The Stewarts retained the Olds Ranch name, Woodside, for its dairy, beef cattle and horse operations.

After selling the dairy contract in 1972 the Stewarts and Ray Sanders operated a horse boarding business on the ranch, as well as raising beef cattle. The Stewarts had been breeding registered Morgan horses since the 1950s, and eventually turned to raising Black Angus cattle exclusively.

The National Park Service purchased the woodland property that Boyd Stewart had bought in 1945 west of Olema Creek in 1968, for inclusion in Point Reyes National Seashore. The original Olds/Stewart Ranch was purchased by the government for Golden Gate National Recreation Area in 1974. The Stewart family negotiated a reservation of use and occupancy and continue their beef and horse operations. Boyd Stewart has been a prominent figure in not only dairy ranching but also in an advisory capacity to the National Park Service; he served for many years on the Coastal Parks Association, now the Point Reyes National Seashore Association.

3. Buildings and Historic Resources

There are twelve potentially historic buildings on the Stewart Ranch, as well as various historic structures; most have been adapted to 20th century uses and reflect the continuum of use in a farm setting.

a. Main Residence (OV-12.01)

The main house at Stewart Ranch is the one built by Nelson H. Olds for his family after the Olds brothers split their landholdings in the Olema Valley. The house was reportedly built in 1864 by carpenters from Nova Scotia from locally cut redwood. Originally built upon redwood sills, the house was later raised and a concrete foundation added. It is a wood frame building with a steep-pitch gable roof and horizontal drop siding. Much of the fancy woodwork at the eaves was removed in the 1930s because of rotting. The house is L-shaped, and measures 65' by 42'.

The kitchen addition, apparently built at the time of or soon after the house was built, has been remodeled and modernized. Four brick chimneys, including a large one replaced after the 1906 earthquake, exist on the house. A

shed-roofed room was added to the back of the house about 1942, and a flat dormer added on the second story above the kitchen. Because of the numerous alterations over the years, the house has only fair historic integrity.

b. Laundry Shed (OV-12.07)

A small 10' by 12' wash house, supposedly built not long after the Olds residence, stands near the house. It has a corrugated metal gable roof, enclosed eaves, horizontal drop siding, mudsill foundation, and no windows. It has had only minor alterations, and has good historic integrity.

c. "Squatter's Cabin" - House #3 (OV-12.05)

Located some three hundred yards south of the main residence is what is called the squatter's cabin, it being the unfinished cabin in which the Olds family spent its first night in 1856. Probably built that year, the three-room redwood building was moved from its location near Olema Creek to its present location about 1936. At that time it was extensively remodeled with a concrete foundation, enclosed porches, and new roof, floors, interior walls, windows and hardware. The 28' by 30' house has a corrugated metal gable roof with shed porches, lap siding, aluminum sash windows and a metal chimney. While it is the oldest wooden structure known to survive in the Point Reyes area, the move and alterations were severe enough to render it with no historical integrity.

d. 1906 Barn (OV-12.12)

This was the third cow barn to be built on the ranch, after the original two fell in the earthquakes of 1868 and 1906. The two-story 69' by 147' barn was reportedly constructed from douglas fir. The concrete-floored barn was a milking barn accommodating about 80 cows. The barn has had a new corrugated metal roof added and some internal bracing. It has vertical board siding, rolling doors, and the wooden milking stanchions are extant. The east side of the barn has been opened for stock access. The minor alterations have not greatly impaired the historic integrity of this structure.

e. Carriage House (OV-12.04)

This pre-1869 building was used to store carriages and wagons, and is used today as a garage. It is seen in the 1869 lithograph of the ranch. The 15' by 21' one-story gable-roofed building has had few alterations: replacement of the north door, closing of the south door and a roof of corrugated metal are the only changes. Its historic integrity is good.

f. Bunkhouse/Shed (OV-12.02)

This former bunkhouse appears in early photographs of the ranch. It has a corrugated metal gable roof, horizontal drop siding, miscellaneous windows, and a large opening on the east side with no door. It measures 17' by 36' and has fair historic integrity.

g. Stable (OV-12.14)

Boyd Stewart built this 60' by 144' barn before World War II on the site of the Olds Ranch dairy house. The board-and-batten structure now has a gable corrugated metal roof with drop shed sides, rolling doors as well as numerous paddock doors, and is still used as a horse barn. It has had few alterations and its historic integrity is good.

h. Equipment Shed-Shop Complex (OV-12.11)

This structure was built in the late 1930s on the site of the old horse barn; it served as a shop and had a concrete floor and concrete foundations. Three wood and corrugated metal open-front additions were built after 1950. The many alterations over the years leave the structure with poor historic integrity.

i. Dairy Barn (OV-12.17)

Boyd Stewart had this Grade A dairy built in 1935. It is constructed of concrete, stucco and wood, with a corrugated metal roof. The main part of the building measures 20' by 60' with a 28' by 14' shed and a 6' by 10' milk room.

The original gabled entry has been removed. A small addition is used for storage. The dairy is no longer in use, and has fair historic integrity.

j. Bunkhouse - House #1 (OV-12.10)

Formerly a bunkhouse, this structure was apparently constructed in the late 1860s or early 1870s by the Olds family. It was almost entirely rebuilt about 1940 and converted to a residence. It measures 26' by 28', has a corrugated metal gable roof, wood and aluminum sash, and a shed porch on the front. A small open garage, built around 1940, sits across the driveway from this house. The historic integrity of the house is poor.

k. Silo (OV-12.13)

This concrete and corrugated metal silo was built by Boyd Stewart and contractors R. E. Murphy and Son in 1936 to store corn grown on the ranch for his cattle. It is about 18' diameter at the base and is approximately 60' tall. Stewart removed the wood and metal superstructure around 1990. The silo has fair historic integrity.

l. Calving Sheds/Stables (OV-12.03)

Two small sheds stand north of the ranch house in the horse pasture. They were built by the Stewarts in the late 1930s. They have fair historic integrity.

m. Trees

A huge eucalyptus tree across the highway from the ranch house was reportedly planted by Nelson Olds in 1861. It has been healthy, although was bitten by extreme cold in December of 1990. A pear tree behind the wash house reportedly dates from about 1870. Remnants of the Olds orchard survive at various locations on the ranch.

n. Fences (OV-12.08)

The original fences erected by the Olds family have been replaced through the years with new fencing, mostly barbed wire. However, there are wooden fences within the ranch complex that appear to have structural elements derived from the older fences, and portions of the old split picket fences survive on the north boundary with the Truttman Ranch. There has been no apparent change in the lines of the fences since the residency of the Olds family. The older cut picket fence around the house yard has been replaced by hedges.

o. Ranch Roads

A number of primitive ranch roads connect the state highway with the ridges to the east of the ranch complex. All are dirt and/or grass covered. The circulatory roads within the ranch complex have not changed in the last 60 years. An old road connects the highway with Stewart Horse Camp.

p. Non-historic Structures

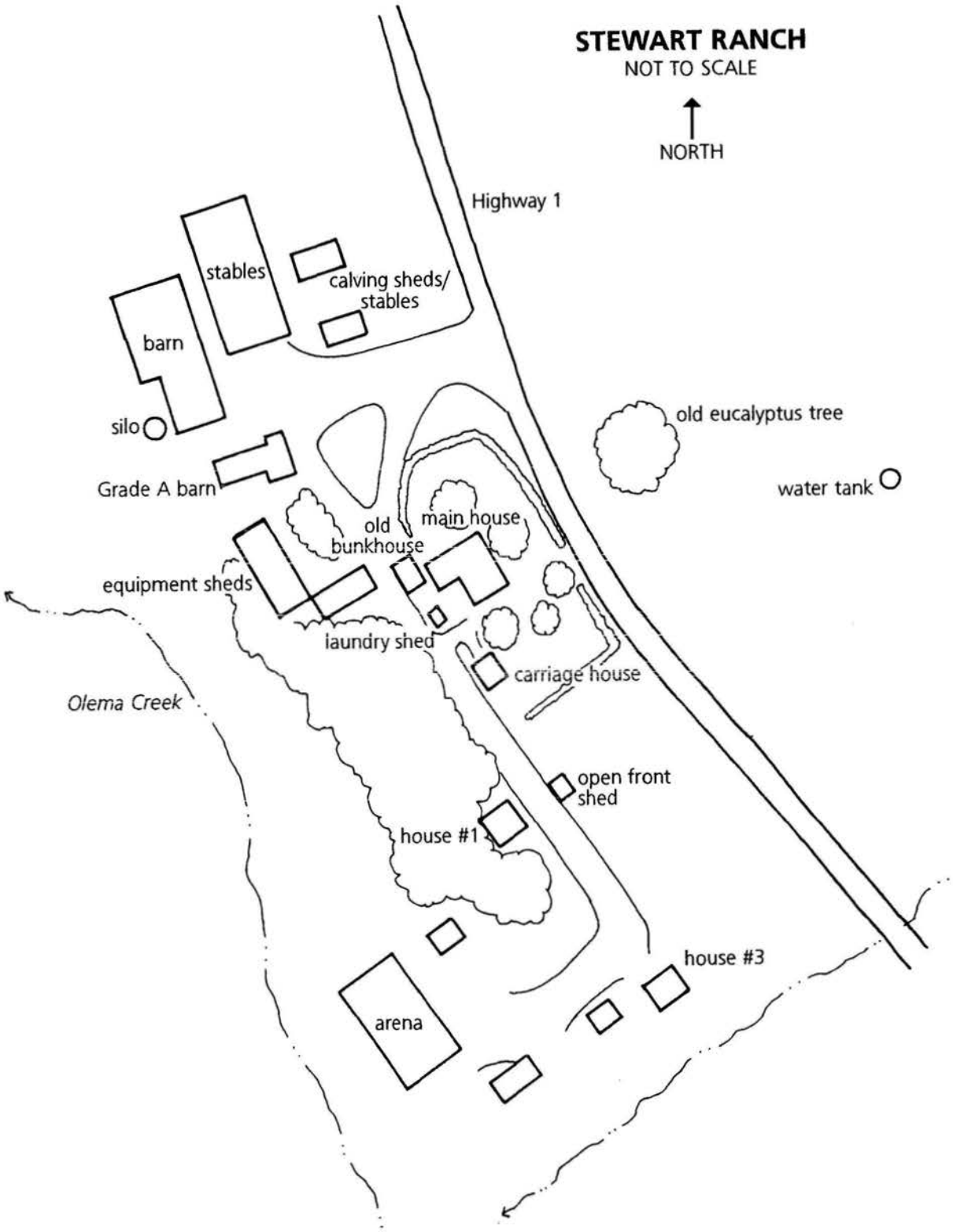
The Stewart Ranch has number of non-historic structures, including residences #2, 4 and 5, a dog house, a horse exercise area and various structures related to the horse boarding operation.

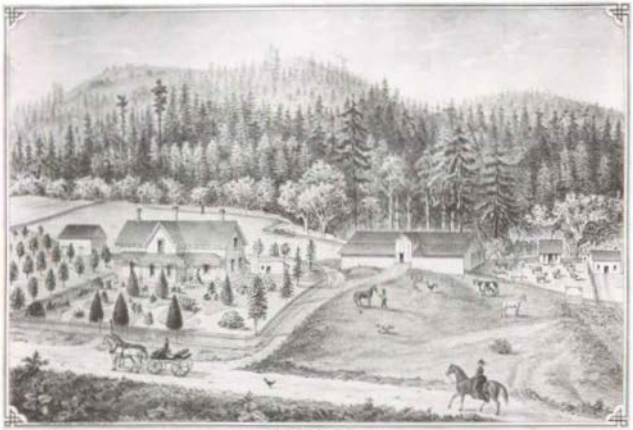
4. Historic Significance of Stewart Ranch

The Stewart Ranch has local significance as an important dairy ranch and home place of the pioneering Olds family, who purchased this land from the original grantee, Rafael Garcia, in 1856 and developed the ranch beginning in 1863. A number of the buildings, including those built in the 1860s, have fair to good structural integrity and are unique to the area. The most notable structure is the house, built circa 1864, which, despite remodeling in the kitchen and other areas, retains a fair amount of its historic integrity and could be considered a "showplace" historic home in the Olema Valley. There are many newer and remodeled structures on the ranch which affect the integrity but illustrate the changing needs of the ranch operation over the years (as part of a cultural landscape).

Historic Features

1. Main Residence, 1864
2. Laundry Shed, ca. 1865
3. Squatter's Cabin (house #3), ca. 1856, remodeled 1936
4. Barn, 1906
5. Carriage House, ca. 1868
6. Bunk house/Shed, date unknown
7. Stables, ca. 1938
8. Equipment shed/shop complex, 1938-1955
9. Grade A dairy barn, 1935
10. Bunkhouse (house #1), ca. 1870, remodeled 1940
11. Silo, 1936
12. Calving Sheds/stables, ca. 1938
13. Concrete Water Tank
14. Trees
15. Fences, Gates, Corrals
16. Ranch roads


STEWART RANCH
NOT TO SCALE
NORTH
Highway 1
stables
calving sheds/
stables
barn
silo
Grade A barn
old eucalyptus tree
water tank
old
bunkhouse
main house
equipment sheds
laundry shed
carriage house
Olema Creek
open front
shed
house #1
house #3
arena



A lithograph of the Nelson H. Olds Ranch, "Woodside," made in 1869. Although some artistic license was taken, the image is remarkably accurate as far as ranch buildings and layout. The house is seen in its original state, without a kitchen addition; the carriage house is seen to the left. The large barn was new, rebuilt after an earthquake destroyed the previous one the year before. On the right is the squatter's house and the creamery. Notice the landscaping, and compare with the bottom photograph, evidently taken soon after the lithograph was made. Joseffa Stewart found this lithograph in the bar at Nelson's Hotel in Olema and took it home for restoration many years ago. *Courtesy of the Boyd Stewart family.*

The Olds Ranch in a circa 1870s photograph. *California State Library.*

Nelson Horatio Olds. *Courtesy of the Boyd Stewart family.*

Lavina Olds. *Courtesy of the Boyd Stewart family.*

The Mason Ranch house and barn as they appeared circa 1895. The landscaping has been kept up, although four eucalyptus trees have been added to the scene. *Courtesy of Barbara Race and Jack Mason Museum.*

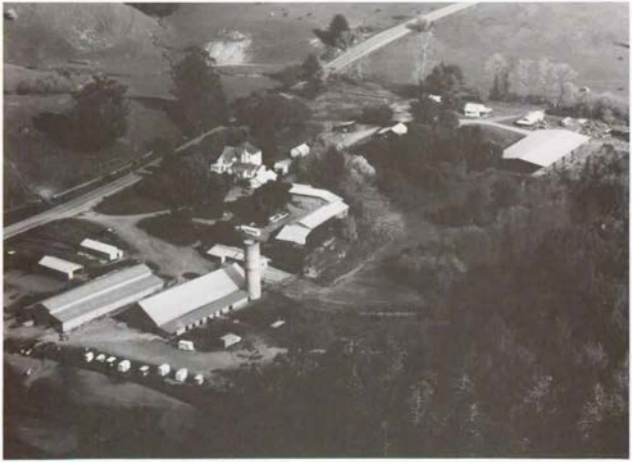
The same scene as above, taken in 1937. Joseffa Stewart removed the eucalyptus trees; note that the old picket fence is gone. *Courtesy of Henrietta (Stewart) Greer.*

This view of the house, taken before 1937, shows that the eaves decoration has been altered and the south side of the porch has been enclosed. The picket fence would soon be removed. *Courtesy of Henrietta Greer.*

Two views of the Stewart Ranch house taken in the early 1930s. *Courtesy of Henrietta Greer.*

Two views of the Stewart Ranch house taken in 1939. *Courtesy of Henrietta Greer.*

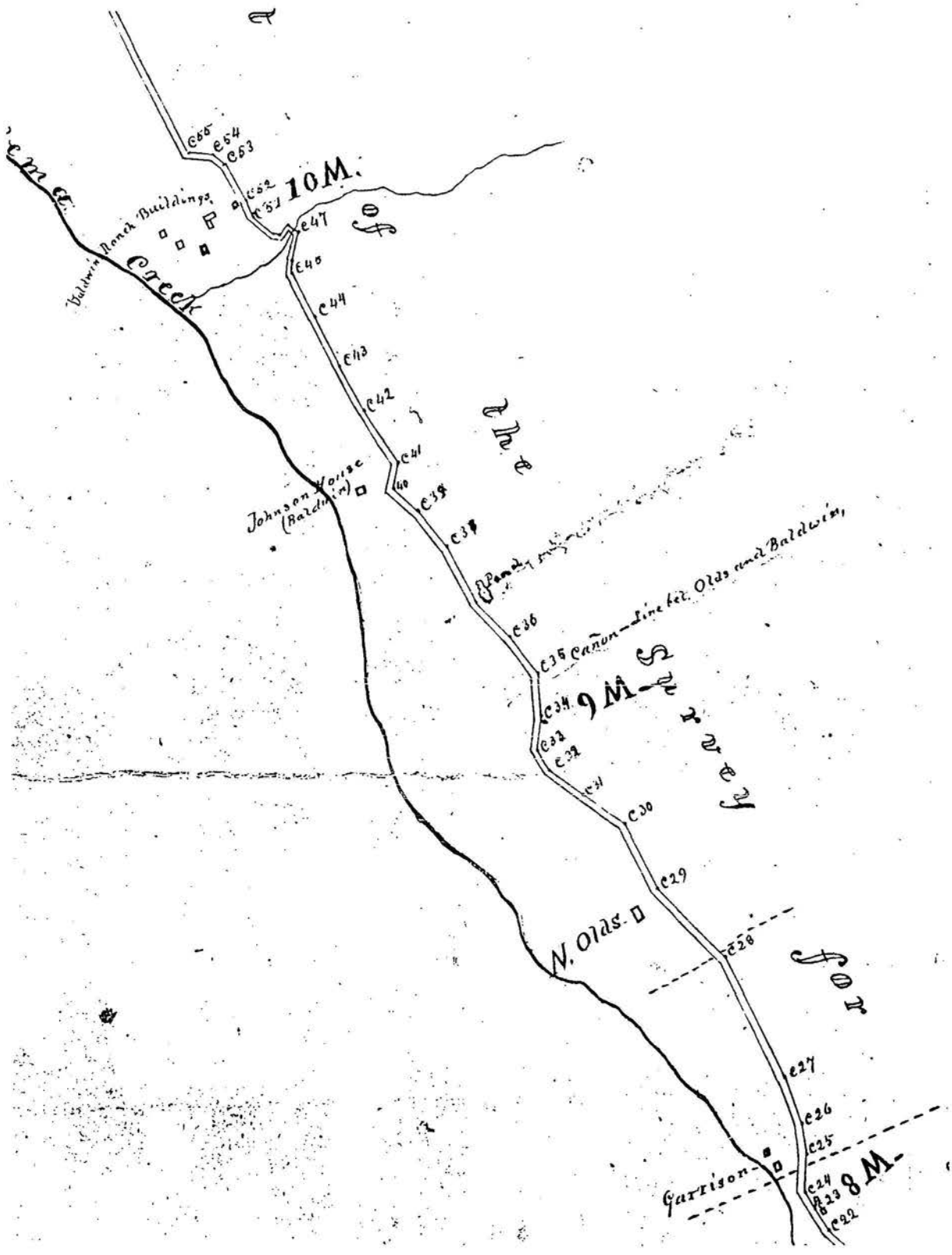
John Bettencourt's hay truck arriving at the Stewart Ranch in 1942. *Courtesy of Henrietta Greer.*



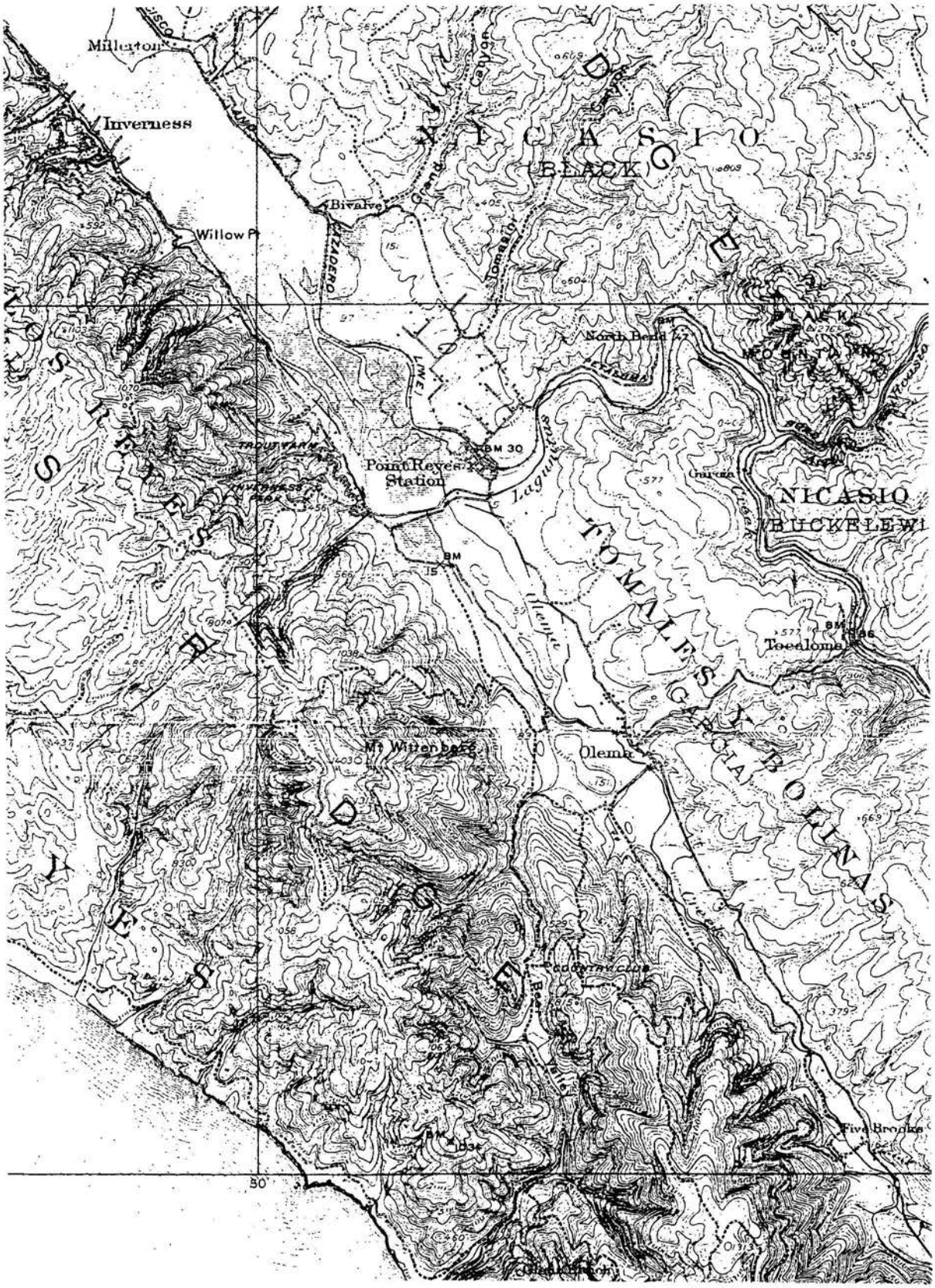
Aerial view of the Stewart Ranch taken in 1992.

The Stewart Ranch house as it appeared around 1948. Brick stairs have replaced the original wooden ones. *Seth Wood photograph courtesy of the Jack Mason Museum.*

The living room of the Stewart Ranch house as it appeared around 1948. Dr. Agnes Conrad sits by the window. The fireplace has been rebuilt, but otherwise the room looks the same. *Seth Wood photograph courtesy of the Jack Mason Museum.*

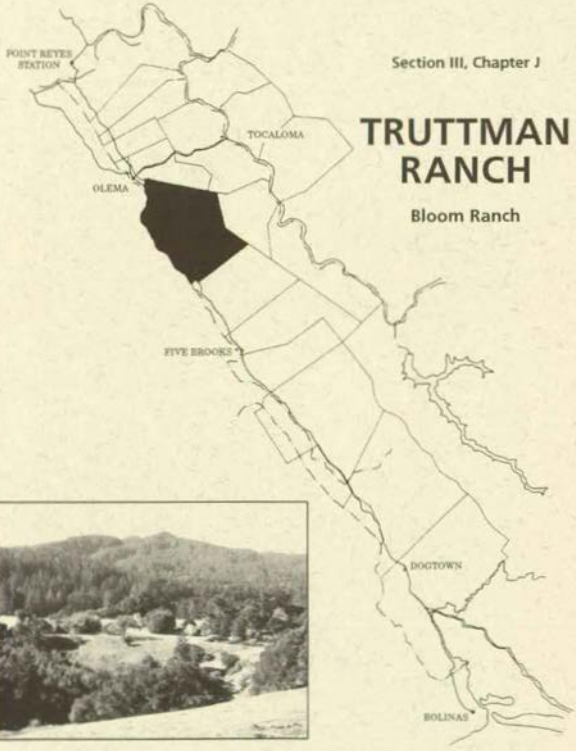


Detail of the 1867 "Plat of the Survey for the relocation of the Road from Bolinas to Olema" by Hiram Austin, showing the area between Five Brooks and Olema. The "Baldwin Ranch buildings" are the future Truttman Ranch; N. Olds is at the future Stewart Ranch. Note the location where William Johnson had a potato farm. *California Historical Society Collection.*



Detail of the first U. S. Geological Survey map published of the Point Reyes quadrangle, 1916. Note the railroad tracks along Lagunitas Creek.

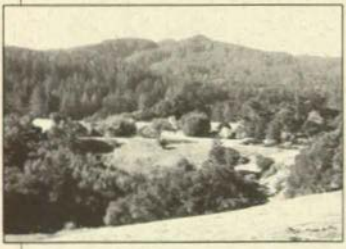
DAIRY FARMING IN THE OLEMA VALLEY



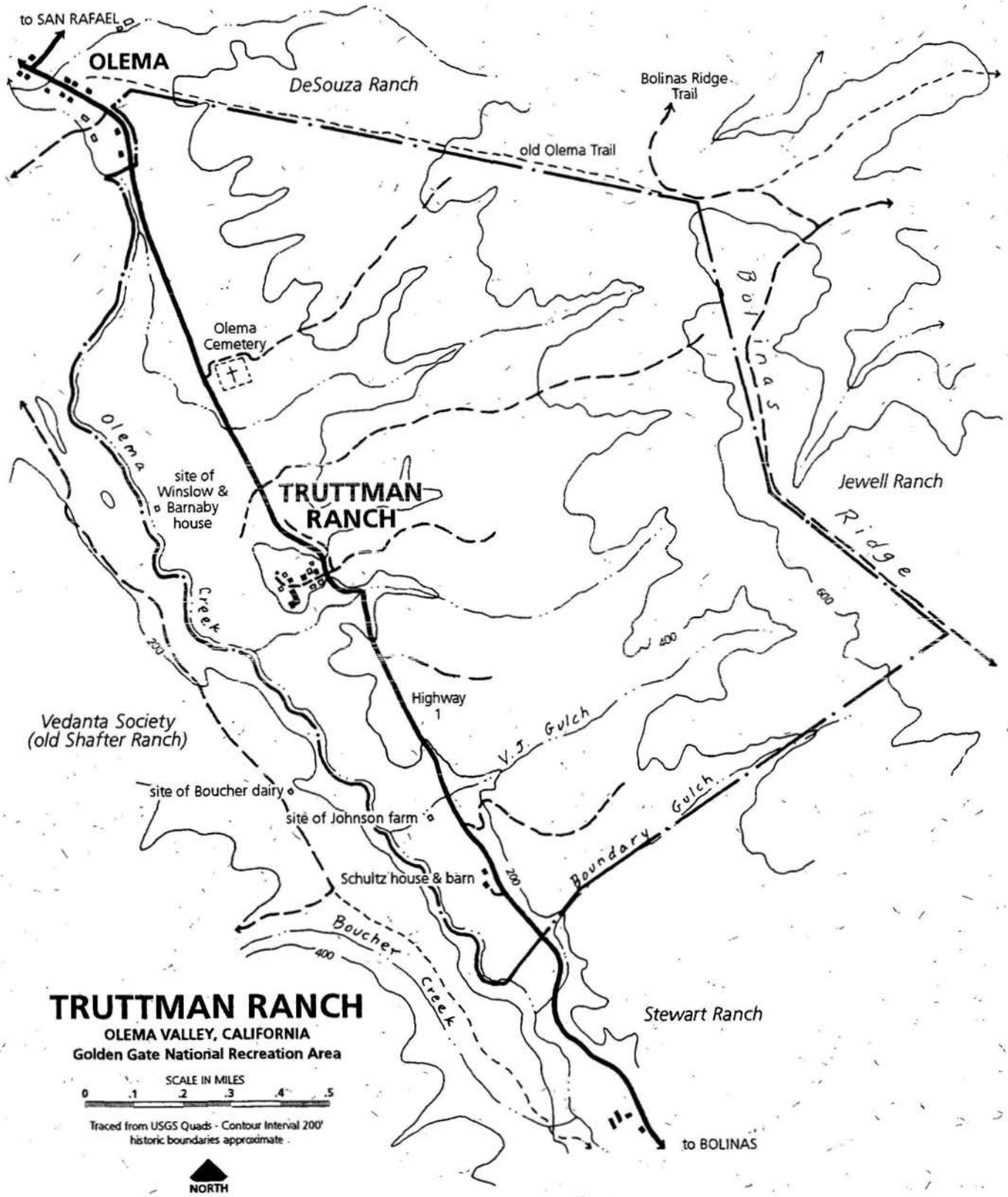
Section III, Chapter J

TRUTTMAN RANCH

Bloom Ranch



HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE


to SAN RAFAEL
OLEMA
DeSouza Ranch
Bolinas Ridge Trail
old Olema Trail
Olema Cemetery
Bolinas Ridge
Olema Creek
site of Winslow & Barnaby house
TRUTTMAN RANCH
Jewell Ranch
Highway 1
V.J. Gulch
Vedanta Society (old Shafter Ranch)
site of Boucher dairy
site of Johnson farm
Schultz house & barn
Boundary Gulch
Boucher Creek
Stewart Ranch
to BOLINAS
200
400
600
TRUTTMAN RANCH
OLEMA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA
Golden Gate National Recreation Area
SCALE IN MILES
0 .1 .2 .3 .4 .5
Traced from USGS Quads - Contour Interval 200'
historic boundaries approximate
NORTH

J. TRUTTMAN RANCH
Former Bloom Ranch
(Golden Gate National Recreation Area)

1. Description

The 1170-acre Truttman Ranch, historically known as the Baldwin Ranch and Bloom Ranch, lies to the east of Olema Creek and south of the small town of Olema. Successful dairy businesses operated here from at least 1858 to 1974; beef cattle now graze the pastures. The ranch land is mostly grassy, with wooded gulches on the Bolinas Ridge slope and fir/oak forests covering the southwestern corner.

The ranch's dairy complex consists of about five acres on a wide knoll on the west side of Highway One near the western center of the ranch. Until recently it consisted of a typical dairy layout with two dwellings and a bunkhouse, a hay barn, a Grade A dairy, a horse barn, various sheds, remains of an old orchard, and numerous corrals and fences; many of these historic structures were removed in February 1994 under the orders of Point Reyes National Seashore Superintendent John Sansing.

2. History of the Truttman Ranch

The Truttman Ranch grew out of at least three different landholdings that made up the north, central and south parts of the ranch. All three sections had working farms on them, of which only the central one remains. First, Rafael Garcia sold 357 acres south of his hacienda (near Olema) to Victor B. Post on Christmas day, 1855. Post, a partner of Samuel P. Taylor in the development of the Pioneer Paper Mill on nearby Lagunitas Creek, soon resold a number of parcels in the Olema Valley; those that made up the central and south portions of the Truttman Ranch were included in these transactions. Garcia then sold what would become the northern portion to Daniel and Nelson Olds in 1856; then, on September 23, 1857, the Olds brothers sold the 574 acres to Benjamin T. Winslow and Stephen Barnaby.[123]

[123]Deeds Book C, p. 46, 66 and 144, MCRO. According to Jeremiah Olds, Garcia would not sell Winslow the small tract adjacent to Olema that he desired, so Nelson Olds bought his large tract

Winslow had built a house prior to his purchase, as early as 1856; he planted crops and eventually developed a dairy after buying the property in partnership with Barnaby. The land was mostly rolling, grassy hills, with a rich section of bottomland next to Olema Creek. The partners located their homestead near the creek, at the approximate location of the more recent Truttman deer camp.[124]

Benjamin T. Winslow has been credited with founding and naming the town of Olema at the northern end of his new property. Before September of 1857 Winslow built a combination hotel, store and saloon, called the Olema House, and became the first postmaster when a post office was established on February 28, 1859. Within a short time the town had a number of hotels, saloons, service businesses and dwellings and became the dominant town in the Point Reyes area for at least the next two decades.[125]

Both Winslow and Barnaby hailed from Massachusetts and came to California with the Gold Rush. Winslow arrived in Bolinas in late 1849 as part of a company contracted to supply wharf timbers to San Francisco, then found his way to Garcia's rancho. After purchasing their Olema Valley property Winslow and Barnaby may have divided their responsibilities, i.e., Winslow developed the hotel and post office and Barnaby the farm. However, both were listed as farmers in the 1860 census. The dairy farm produced 1500 pounds of butter the previous year, and the rich bottom lands produced sixty bushels of winter wheat, 1,000 bushels of oats, 600 bushels of barley, 2,000 bushels of Irish potatoes and 40 tons of hay. Winslow, married with one child, owned 15 horses, while Barnaby, a single man, owned only three. Seven men, including Point Reyes pioneer Frank Miller, were employed at or around the farm in mid-1860.[126]

The partners split their holdings in October of 1860, Winslow keeping 170 acres of the northern part and Barnaby selling his 400 acres to Samuel Nay,

---

and sold the smaller property to Winslow after the Olds purchase.

[124]Op. Cit.; Agriculture Schedules, 8th U. S. Census, 1860; Plat of Rancho Tomales y Baulines, 1858, PRNS.

[125]Deeds, Book C, p. 144, MCRO; Jack Mason, Earthquake Bay: A History of Tomales Bay, California (Inverness: North Shore Books, 1976, p. 78.

[126]Population and Agriculture Schedules, 8th U. S. Census, 1860; Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 267. Frank Miller lived to an old age in Olema operating a blacksmith shop.

a San Antonio township dairyman a few days later. Barnaby left the area, but Winslow stayed on, operating his small dairy farm. In 1870 Winslow had sixteen milk cows and continued to produce farm crops. Benjamin Winslow died at Olema in 1875 and, many years later in 1882, his widow Margaret sold his farmland to Joseph and James Bloom.[127]

The central section of the ranch consisted of two old parcels, the first being the 400 acres Stephen Barnaby sold to Samuel Nay in 1860 and the second being 157 acres that Victor Post sold to Zadock Karner on February 1, 1856. Karner came to California in 1851 on the first voyage of the steamer *Golden Gate* from the Isthmus of Panama to San Francisco. Karner had worked in his native Massachusetts as a farmer, grocer and jeweler, and while at the California mines operated a hotel at Mountain Springs for six years and also worked as a watchmaker. Two years after purchasing his Olema Valley ranch he came to settle there and start a dairy, bringing with him his nephew, L. K. Baldwin.[128]

Levi K. Baldwin's hometown in Massachusetts was the same as his uncle Zadock Karner's: Egremont in Berkshire County. Baldwin married Emeline Parsons and operated a successful farm on the East Coast for many years. Due to an investment gone bad, Baldwin lost his fortune and came to Olema in 1858 to work on his uncle's dairy. Baldwin and his wife and young daughter occupied a house on the site of the Truttman Ranch today, possibly the "bunk house" that still stands, and helped his uncle to develop a fine dairy ranch.[129]

By 1860 the thriving Karner and Baldwin dairy, known as L. K. Baldwin & Co., supported 70 milk cows which produced 5,000 pounds of butter. Four hired hands did the milking and farm work, raising 1,620 bushels of wheat, oats, barley and potatoes and sixteen tons of hay. One of the farm hands was Emeline Baldwin's brother Charles Parsons, who five years later would develop another early dairy ranch (now Lupton) to the south.

In early 1862 a correspondent from *The California Farmer* visited the Olema Valley ranches and, in glowing terms, singled out Baldwin's dairy as the best and most successful in the area. In the opinion of the writer, "[Karner

---

[127]Deeds Book C, p. 344, Book D, pp. 243 and 245, Book X, p. 475, MCRO; Population and Agriculture Schedules of the 9th U. S. Census, 1870; Mason, Historian, p. 767.

[128]Deeds Book C, pp. 49 and 234, MCRO; Santa Cruz County, pp. 309-310.

[129]Santa Cruz County, pp. 332-333; Plat of Rancho Tomales y Baulines, 1858, PRNS.

and Baldwin's] may be called a *Real Dairy Ranch*. It embraces 550 acres, and upon it are 250 head of stock, all told, usually 100 milkers; they now milk 60 cows; and the success of this Dairy should stimulate every one in the Dairy business."[130]

The layout of the ranch and the quality of its buildings especially impressed the writer:

> The whole arrangement of barn-yards, corrals, pens for swine, domestic fowls, and all that appertains to a well arranged farm and dairy, gives evidence that what is worth doing at all *is worth doing well.* The large barn and hay-sheds were well filled with hay this past winter, with tubs of potatoes and roots for stock. . . . The Dairy-rooms are perfectly neat and sweet, average temperature 60 degrees. Here is an excellent churn, home-made, which churns 70 to 87 pounds at a churning, requiring 30 minutes and does up the work well. Messrs. K. & B. market their own butter. We noticed with pleasure, as a credit to the ranch, good dry stalls where 50 to 75 cows can be placed within warm stalls during stormy weather, or sheltered in hot weather. The milking corral is on a dry round knoll, with four large oaks for shelter, selected with reference to comfort and dryness, as the water rolls off as it falls. Pasture for the cows is divided off so as to give fresh feed at all times. Noble large oaks shelter the dwelling and the dairy-house from the heat of summer. . . . A young orchard of 200 trees upon a good spot, with small fruits, will give luxuries to the table. A fine breed of swine take the waste milk, which is conveyed from the dairy-house in a wooden trunk under ground to a trough in the yard for the swine, thus saving great labor.

Baldwin and Karner were no doubt doing well financially, as the correspondent provided a detailed look at the books of the ranch during the preceding three years:

> . . . And what was the result for the winter. We take the dairy record: The months of January and

---

[130]Population and Agriculture Schedules, 8th U. S. Census, 1860; The California Farmer, March 28, 1862, p. 1.

> February, 1500 pounds of butter were made, which realized 62 1/2 cents per pound for the former month, and 54 cents for the latter. In 1861, 10,000 pounds of butter were made, which averaged 40 cents per pound for the season. In 1860, amount made 8000 pounds, average price for the season 46 1/2 cents per pound. In 1859, made 6000 pounds, average price 52 cents per pound. The largest months last year were: May 1988 pounds, June 1761 pounds, July 1028 pounds; besides these amounts, considerable is sold at the Ranch. . . . It is such oversight, such care of stock, that has given 1500 pounds of extra butter, selling for $800 in cash, to this dairy, without the loss of any stock, at a time when many others have lost largely by starvation, and have not yet begun to milk.

In closing, the writer gave praise to the management of Levi Baldwin and Zadock Karner, as if setting the stage for the dairymen's future successes:

> We do love to praise well doing. We admire to see animals well cared for, neatness and cleanliness in a dairy, and yet upon a little reflection, all men of good common sense, men that *love their business*, KNOW their own interest is best promoted by such means; therefore, having enjoyed the courtesy and hospitality of the proprietors of this ranch, we will say, that they have manifested a large share of wisdom and sound common sense, added to judgement and knowledge, in the management of their Dairy business, which is in most prosperous condition.[131]

L. K. Baldwin bought 400 acres adjacent to Karner's original 157 acres in 1861 from Samuel Nay, and 243 acres from Nelson Olds in 1864. Karner sold his Olema Valley property and his half of the business to Baldwin in 1867 and moved to Castroville, where he lived past age 80.[132]

The southern portion of Truttman Ranch was originally two parcels: the first was a 58-acre parcel sold by Victor Post to Homer Strong of Alameda in February of 1856. Strong apparently built a house and lived there for a while

---

[131]The California Farmer, March 28, 1862.

[132]Deeds Book B, p. 483, Book E, p. 439 and Book G, p. 16, MCRO.

and then sold the property to ex-New Yorker William L. Johnson one year later. Johnson developed a small dairy of six cows and a potato farm. According to the 1860 census, Johnson lived with what was probably two young sisters and a hired hand, N. W. Garrison. His land was valued at $1,530 and he owned three horses, six milk cows and one other head of cattle, and twelve pigs, all valued at $300. Johnson lived in a house on a small lake near Olema Creek. The correspondent from *The California Farmer* visited Johnson and gave a detailed description of his improved farm:

> Continuing our ride onwards after leaving the pleasant home of Messrs. Karman [sic] & Baldwin, we called on Mr. W. L. Johnson, who cultivates sixty acres of farming land, and has a very neat and pretty cottage in a truly rural spot, well sheltered from the winds. The Home-garden is good land, rich, deep, and well-cultivated, with a fine small orchard and neat surroundings. A pretty lake for a fish-pond is nicely situated in front of the cottage, and can be made beautiful. The 60 acres is all planted in potatoes. We found Mr. Johnson planting his potatoes on the high rolling hill-tops, the soil dark rich deep loam. He has leased another 70-acre lot, all for potatoes. The flood involved him in a loss of 800 sacks of potatoes, which were at the landing and swept away. Mr. J. has a fine home and family to make his lot a pleasant one.[133]

Nelson Olds sold Johnson 146.36 acres in early 1866, but later that year Johnson sold his property, now totaling 204.36 acres, to L. K. Baldwin and moved away from the Olema Valley. His home was moved to Olema in 1883 and remodeled into a tinsmith's shop.[134]

By 1867 Levi K. Baldwin owned the former properties of Stephen Barnaby, Zadock Karner and William Johnson, totalling 1,004 acres. Baldwin was seen as a successful and generous member of the Marin County community. Because his "sound judgement and business abilities were recognized by his neighbors," Baldwin served for three terms on the Marin County Board of Supervisors. Active in community affairs, Baldwin hosted

---

[133]The California Farmer, April 4, 1862, p. 1; Deeds Book C, pp. 48 and 87, MCRO; Population and Agriculture Schedules, 8th U. S. Census, 1860.

[134]Deeds Book E, p. 532, and Book F, p. 171, MCRO; Marin County Journal, May 17, 1883.

events and picnics at "a beautiful grove" near his ranch house. This description of one such event in 1867 appeared in the San Rafael newspaper:

> PICNIC AT OLEMA. A May-day picnic and festival given for the pupils attending the Public and Sunday Schools came off at Olema in a beautiful grove near the residence of L. K. Baldwin on the 1st instant. It was largely attended and proved a complete success. The day was magnificent; the breeze, soft and balmy, laden with the perfume of a thousand wild flowers went sighing through the grand old oaks, stirring the foliage of the evergreens whence issued the melodious warble of the linnet and the joyous carol of the robin. Along the outskirts of the grove a stream of crystal water ran babbling and murmuring; troops of bright-eyed, gaily dressed, well behaved children frolicked about upon the green sward or swung in the swings suspended from the branches of the oaks. All was joy and gladness. In the afternoon a table bountifully supplied with everything in the way of edibles that could charm the eye or tempt the palate was set in the shade and everybody partook until satisfied. The repast being finished there was some excellent singing under the admirable leadership of Mr. Stickles, of the Powder Mill, after which Rev. Mr. Barlingame was called upon who responded in a neat little address replete with imagery and abounding in metaphor, exactly suited to the day and the occasion. The behavior of the children was unexceptionable, and reflects the highest credit on their teachers, their parents and themselves. Altogether it was a most pleasant affair, and we trust it will be repeated next May-day."[135]

While Baldwin's business and social life was one of acclaim and success, his family life had its share of tragedy. His oldest daughter Clara was listed in censuses as "dumb" and "idiotic," and a daughter Satella, born on the ranch in 1863, died at age seven. The couple had one other daughter, Mary, born on the ranch in 1867. Also in residence at the ranch was Baldwin's wife's mother and

[135]Santa Cruz County, p. 332; Marin County Journal, January 9, 1864, May 4, June 22, and July 6, 1867.

sister, members of the Parsons family who by that time had purchased a ranch only a few miles south in the valley.[136]

Baldwin took on a business partner in 1869: Swiss immigrant Giuseppe Fiori. He agreed to sell the ranch for $20,000 in early 1870 to Fiori, but continued to reside on the ranch until moving to Santa Cruz in 1872. In partnership with fellow Olema rancher Delos D. Wilder, Baldwin started a large dairy north of Santa Cruz, where he spent the remainder of his life.[137]

Giuseppe, or Joseph, Fiori hired a number of fellow Swiss to work on his dairy. In 1870 they milked 99 cows and made 14,000 pounds of butter, being the largest dairy at the time in the Olema Valley. In October of that year Fiori sold his option on the ranch and the livestock and appurtenances to a fellow Swiss immigrant (and probably relation) James Bloom. Included in the transaction were 101 milk cows and 57 other cattle, four horses with saddles and harness, 42 hogs, 50 fowl, three wagons, and dairy equipment. Bloom may have been a son or other relative of Fiori; James Bloom and his brother Joseph had changed their names from Fiori (Italian for flower) to an English equivalent, Bloom, upon their arrival in the United States some years earlier. James Bloom owned and occupied another dairy in Chileno Valley in northern Marin County, and soon sold his brother Joseph a half-interest in the Olema dairy ranch with the apparent intent that Joseph would operate it.[138]

Joseph Bloom left his birthplace of Canton Ticino, Switzerland in 1862 at age 14 and immigrated to America. He leased a ranch from Felix Garcia at Tocaloma (now the western part of Don McIsaac's) in 1868 for $450 per year before moving to his new ranch near Olema. In taking over the Baldwin ranch, Bloom found himself in control of one of the largest and most respected dairies

---

[136]Population Schedules, 8th and 9th U. S. Censuses, 1860 and 1870; Marin County Journal, March 2, 1867, October 29, 1870, and March 3, 1881.

[137]Deeds, Book H, p. 466, MCRO; Santa Cruz County, p. 333. The Wilder Ranch, located a short distance north of Santa Cruz, is now a unit in the California State Parks system and is open to the public. Baldwin and Wilder had divided their Santa Cruz lands some time after the move.

[138]Population and Agriculture Schedules, 9th U. S. Census, 1870; Deeds Book H, pp. 542 and 544, MCRO; interview with Louis Bloom and Fred Rodoni. Bloom family tradition has it that Joseph Fiori and Joseph Bloom were the same person, but census records prove this incorrect, as Fiori was 23 years older than Bloom in 1870; it is likely that they were father and son.

in the county. One newspaper correspondent wrote in 1875 of visiting Bloom, "owner of the famous Baldwin dairy."[139]

Bloom had been married and had a son, Jeremiah, while at Tocaloma; apparently his first wife Mary died. After about four years on the dairy Bloom took a new wife, Teresa, and the couple had six children: Begnimina, Clorindo (originally named Galileo), Valenti Joseph, Celia, Romilda and Lino, who died as a child. The Bloom family became respected and influential in the Olema area, where many descendants still reside.[140]

In 1876 Bloom built a large, two-story house facing the county road to replace the small old ranch dwelling. The house resembled others built during the same decade in the area, especially the house of Joseph Codoni at Tocaloma. Bloom also built a large, 100-cow milking barn, probably replacing a smaller one nearby. Later, perhaps around the turn of the century, about forty feet were added to the barn's west end to increase the milking capacity. The Blooms bought the Winslow property to the north in 1882, bringing the total size of the ranch to 1170 acres.[141]

Joseph Bloom involved himself in community service, deeding a lot on his ranch for use as a cemetery in 1882, and donating an acre for the new Druid's Hall in Olema, of which Bloom was a charter member. The Druids order built a landmark building in 1885, a newsman commenting that "it is a handsome site, and a handsome act in Mr. Bloom." James Bloom and his wife Lucy sold their half interest in the ranch to Joseph on July 11, 1893.[142]

As Joseph Bloom's sons grew to adulthood, they each learned the dairy business by working on the ranch. In 1900 Clorindo and Valenti worked side-by-side with five other farm hands, all Swiss or Italian. In mid-1901 the Bloom Ranch was producing 5,850 pounds of butter per month from 152 cows. Clorindo Bloom eventually purchased the Pedrotti ranch on the northern

---

[139]Population Schedules, 9th U. S. Census, 1870; Leases Book A, p. 351, MCRO; Marin County Journal, December 16, 1875.

[140]Population Schedules of the 9th, 10th and 12th U. S. Censuses, 1870, 1880, 1900; Marin Journal, February 20, 1890.

[141]Deeds Book X, p. 475, MCRO; interviews with Louis Bloom, Henrietta Greer and Boyd Stewart.

[142]Deeds Book X, p. 58, Book 2, p. 270, Book 26, p. 355, MCRO; Marin Journal, June 19, 1884.

outskirts of Olema, where he raised a large family.[143]

The ranch water supply originated about two miles away on the forest lands of Payne Shafter to the west. Joseph Bloom traded two lots in Olema for the water rights in 1894. The water traveled through a 2" pipe from its intake near the source of Boucher (or Davis) Creek, across Olema Creek and uphill to the ranch. The Blooms extended the line to the other side of the highway, up the ridge, and then ran lines north and south to all of the important pastures, crops and hayfields; the water system reportedly included about ten miles of pipeline.[144]

Valenti J. Bloom continued to work on his father's dairy, and took over the operation when Joseph Bloom retired about 1915. Bloom died in 1927 at age 79 and was buried in Olema Cemetery on his ranch. Before the father's death, the Bloom family sold the ranch to Valenti on July 1, 1919. Bloom and his wife Mary ran the ranch for only a few years after gaining title. The couple moved to San Rafael in 1924. V. J. Bloom kept a hunting camp on the ranch near the creek on Johnson's old farm, and often entertained friends at the rustic camp.[145]

The Bloom family leased the ranch to other parties for the remainder of their ownership. Joseph Vogensen bought the dairy business from V. J. Bloom and rented the ranch from 1924 to 1927. Nicasio dairyman Samuel Stewart, recent purchaser of the neighboring Olds Ranch, then rented the Bloom Ranch. Stewart improved the ranch, building a wooden floor in the barn and repairing many of the aging structures. Stewart died after being injured by a horse near the ranch residence in March 1927. Stewart's widow, daughter Henrietta, and son Boyd operated the dairy until Henrietta married Thomas Greer in 1932. The Greers took over the dairy, milking between 100 to 125 cows with gasoline-powered milking machines and shipping the fresh milk to the Point Reyes Cooperative Creamery. The ranch was equipped with two electric plants, a

---

[143]Population Schedules, 12th U. S. Census, 1900; Marin Journal, June 20, 1901; interview with Louis Bloom.

[144]Deeds Book 28, p. 388, and Book 51, p. 375, MCRO; interview with Henrietta Greer. Boucher Creek was named for Peter Boucher, a French-born harnessmaker who rented a small dairy across Olema Creek from the Blooms (and adjacent to the aforementioned creek which was Bloom's water supply) from the Shafter family. Davis was probably Sylvester Davis who lives at the Olds Ranch in 1860.

[145]Deeds Book 209, p. 102, and Chattel Mortgages Book O, p. 99, MCRO; San Rafael Independent Journal, October 8, 1969; interview with Henrietta Greer.

Delco for the dairy and a Kohler plant for the house. The former ranch butter house was used to cool and store the milk.[146]

The Greers occupied the ranch until December of 1934, when Charles Dolcini and Fred LaFranchi took the lease; LaFranchi eventually left the partnership. Dolcini upgraded the ranch to produce and ship Grade A milk, building a large sanitary barn in 1935 next to the old milking barn. The old dairy house, in its heyday a four-room dairy equipped with a steam turbine separator, was torn down, as were the hog pens. The Dolcini family left the ranch in late 1941; V. J. Bloom then entered a lease with Sayles Turney, one of the owners of Roberts Dairy in San Rafael. On the first night of the hired ranch manager's occupation, and only days before the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the large old Bloom house burned to the ground, reportedly taking with it many treasures of Olema Valley history that had been left in the house. Although the fire was supposedly due to a faulty flue in the house, Bloom reportedly evicted the tenant and canceled the contract with Turney; the tenant, named Shotwell, then sued Bloom over loss of his possessions and won a settlement.[147]

Bloom found reliable tenants in Armin and Frank Truttman, brothers who moved to the ranch in 1943 in partnership with their father, Joseph Truttman, and San Joaquin Valley dairyman Manuel Silva. At the time Silva operated about nine dairies in the vicinity of Dos Palos, and chose one of his foremen, Armin Truttman, to manage a Bay Area dairy to satisfy the wartime demand. Silva and the Truttmans bought the business at the Bloom Ranch, although Silva and the elder Truttman sold their interests in the early 1950s to the Truttman sons. V. J. Bloom limited the number of cows on the pasture to 120, but within a few years gained approval of the Truttman's management and allowed an increase to about 160 cows.[148]

Frank Truttman soon married one of V. J. Bloom's nieces and moved off the ranch. Armin Truttman and his wife Helen raised a family at the ranch, occupying either of two houses built at the ranch to replace the old Bloom house. The larger of the houses was incomplete when the Truttmans came in

---

[146]Interviews with Boyd Stewart and Henrietta Greer.

[147]West Marin Star, December 8, 1934; interviews with Armin and Frank Truttman, Boyd Stewart and Don McIsaac; dated photographic evidence on the construction of the Grade A barn was taken by Farrington Jones in the 1930s, courtesy of Roy Farrington Jones.

[148]Information on the Truttman era, 1943-1990, from interviews with Armin and Frank Truttman, Louis Bloom and Don McIsaac.

1943, and they finished it. A second, smaller, house was built next door in 1944, and was occupied variously by the Truttmans, dairy foremen, and the Stanley Truttman family until 1988. The bunk house, probably the original Baldwin dwelling built about 1858, was occupied by milkers. The Truttmans moved two buildings on the ranch, the calf barn and a shed (both since removed). They put a large sliding door on the east side of the hay barn to improve access, and removed a wooden floor installed by the Stewarts in 1927.

The Truttman family built a new "deer camp" of their own on Olema Creek, near the original 1850s residence of Stephen Barnaby. Barbecues and campouts for families and local organizations echoed the festive gatherings that had occurred in "Baldwin's grove" a hundred years earlier. The Truttmans improved the deer camp to include a fully equipped kitchen and bar, as well as a fireplace and volleyball court. The remains of the deer camp were destroyed by the Park Service in early 1991.

Armin Truttman was active in local, statewide and national dairy and livestock organizations, often traveling to Sacramento and Washington, D. C. to lobby for the dairyman's interests. He was a founder of the California Dairymen's Association and the American Dairy Association, as well as being actively involved in local organizations and charities. His activities kept him and his dairy operation in the limelight for much of the 1950s and 1960s.

Armin and Frank Truttman invested about $70,000 on improvements on the Grade A dairy in the mid-1960s, replacing the original wooden stanchions with metal and improving the flow of stock through the barn during milking. The Truttmans installed milk transport lines and an automated grain delivery system for feeding while milking. The tall grain silo next to the hay barn was removed, and a grain shed built and pavement poured in the dairy yard. This could be called the heyday of the 20th century dairy operations at the ranch. The Truttman dairy ceased operation in 1974, shortly after the ranch was purchased by the National Park Service; until 1990 the Truttmans raised Hereford beef cattle.

Valenti J. Bloom sold part of the ranch to Greenbrae developer Neils Schultz in 1959, and the remainder to Schultz in 1966. Bloom died in 1969. Under the corporate names Schultz Investment Company and Nicasio Ranch Company, Schultz planned a large housing development of one house to the acre. The dairy and grazing continued to be leased by the Truttmans during this time. A house and a horse barn was built by the Schultz family a mile

south of the ranch complex, but the development plans were scrapped when the ranch was purchased by the National Park Service in 1974.[149]

Armin and Frank Truttman leased the ranch from the National Park Service under a special use permit until December 31, 1990, when they ceased operations and retired; Armin Truttman died in October 1993. Most of the ranch buildings, except for the bunkhouse, hay barn, Grade A barn, and main house, were removed by Point Reyes National Seashore without 106 compliance in February of 1994. With the exception of the house, the remaining buildings are vacant.

The ranch grazing land has been leased to Jo Ann Stewart of the neighboring Stewart Ranch. Stewart, in cooperation with National Park Service range management staff, has been rearranging grazing patterns on the land in order to improve range conditions, and has improved the water system.

3. Buildings and Historic Resources

a. Bunkhouse (OV-15.16)

The bunkhouse is a simple wood frame dwelling with a hipped roof and vertical redwood board and batten siding. It is probably the original dwelling house on the ranch, which would place its construction date at about 1858-60 and would therefore make it the oldest unaltered house in the area. It has been referred to as the bunkhouse since the 1920s; it is likely that the two-story house built by Bloom in the 1870s (which burned in 1941) replaced this smaller dwelling as the prosperity of the owners grew. A shed addition, for use as a kitchen, was added in the early 1960s; it is the only alteration, and is reversible.

The bunkhouse was used for general ranch storage from 1974 to 1991; since then it has been vacant.

The bunkhouse, measuring 24 by 36 feet, is in fair condition; it needs foundation repairs, flooring and other interior repairs. Taking into account the removable addition, its historic integrity is excellent.

---

[149]Official Records Book 1333, p. 476. Book 2100, p. 378, Book 2781, p. 610, and Book 2784, p. 165; tract files, PRNS.

b. Hay Barn (OV-15.20)

The hay barn was reportedly built by Joseph Bloom in the 1880s. After this time the cows were milked in this barn, which once had stanchions for approximately 75 cows; some of the old wood stanchions remain. The barn was enlarged some time before the 1920s with an addition on the west end. About 1926 a wooden floor was installed in the center aisle of the barn, but this was removed by the Truttmans in the late 1940s. At that time the Truttmans installed the large sliding door on the east end and removed half of the original stanchions. Cables and rods were installed, and some framing removed, to stabilize the barn in the 1950s.

The hay barn, measuring 56 by 146 feet, is in poor condition, with vertical supports leaning outward, a collapsing wall, leaking roof and extensive damage by powder post beetles. It is no longer in use, and has good historic integrity.

c. Dairy Barn (OV-15.05)

This Grade A sanitary barn was built in 1935 by Novato contractors, the Renati Brothers. In its original state 100 cows could be milked at one time; it was remodeled in the mid-1960s by the Truttmans, a move which decreased the numbers of cows being milked at one time but improved efficiency. During the remodeling the original wood stanchions were removed and the layout changed to include three holding pens and a smaller row of metal stanchions with automatic feeders and a stainless steel carrying pipe, which eliminated the need to hand-haul cans of milk to the tank in an adjacent room. Vertical ceiling supports were removed and replaced with laminated horizontal beams.

The north end of the dairy building is a four-room complex which contains the tank room, cooler room, wash room and utility room. A breezeway with concrete stairs separates the complex from the dairy; this was where the milk was hauled by hand before the remodeling. The heavy door to the cooler room has been removed.

The dairy, measuring 63 by 94 feet and constructed of reinforced concrete, wood and metal, is in fair condition, and has good historic integrity.

d. Grain Shed (OV-15.12) and Dairy Yard

The dairy yard, built in the mid-1960s, is a large concrete pad with fence rail directly west of the dairy. Cows were washed here before entering the barn for milking. On the pad is the grain shed, built about 1946 next to where a tall wooden grain silo stood. Feed for the cows while they were being milked was stored here. The building became obsolete with the addition of the metal 14-ton grain bin nearby in the dairy yard. A large concrete water tank stands abandoned next to the grain shed.

The grain shed and dairy yard are in good condition, but are not historic.

e. Main House

The main house was built in 1942-43 on the site of the burned Bloom residence. It was occupied by Armin Truttman and his family for most of its existence. Of simple architecture, the house has a kitchen, living room, bathroom, utility room and three bedrooms. A porch on the south side was enclosed at an unknown date. Concrete walks and plantings from the original 1880s house, which sat in this location, remain in the garden. A portion of the old milled picked fence remained north of the house until it was removed in early 1994.

The main house, currently occupied by park personnel, is in good condition and has good historic integrity.

f. Orchard

The orchard, originally of 200 trees planted circa 1860, has about half a dozen of what may be original trees. Another six or so trees were planted later. Most of the trees on the original orchard plot are gone. A septic system leach field from the remaining residence is located in the orchard. The remaining trees are various strains of apple, cherry and peach.

The orchard covers about an acre, and most of the remaining trees are in fair condition but in need of pruning. The integrity of the orchard is fair.

g. Corrals, Chutes, Feeders, Walkways

Throughout the ranch complex are structures related to livestock control, although the major structures (within the ranch complex) were removed in early 1994. The removed structures included a horse corral, rebuilt in the 1940s, which adjoined the horse barn, enclosures and ramps for cows at milking time, peripheral fences and a loading chute built by the Truttmans about 1960 near the dairy barn. Another, similar, loading chute remains in the hills on the eastern parcel of the ranch and is in fair condition, being still in use. The pastures throughout the ranch acreage are divided by various styles of fence into large and small pastures. A number of new barbed wire pasture fences have been added and a few old fencelines removed in the past three years. Most of the gates are "Portugee gates," simple barbed wire and post gates.

Concrete feeding areas were found west of the ranch complex and on the east side of the highway about 1/4 mile up the hill road. These are long stretches of unreinforced concrete about six feet wide. Wooden feed troughs and stanchions line the concrete areas and a concrete water trough is located on each one. In early 1994, the west feeders were removed. Other metal and concrete troughs are scattered around the ranch.

Concrete walkways, installed for sanitation purposes, led to the dairy from behind the horse barn and from the west pasture, but these were also removed. They had been built during the 1940s through 1960s. A concrete pad was laid on the south side of the hay barn at an unknown date and remains.

h. Water System

The Truttman ranch water system dates to at least 1894 when Joseph Bloom traded water rights with neighbor Payne J. Shafter for a town lot . The water originates in Davis, or Boucher, Creek, now on lands of Vedanta Society, about two miles southwest from the Truttman Ranch. It is caught at an intake on a pristine section of the upper creek and conveyed through various kinds of pipe (having been repaired over the years) overland through Vedanta Society property, across Olema Creek, then uphill to a concrete storage tank near the west corral. It is then pumped to the residence and uphill to pasture troughs in the hills to the east. The newer sections of the pipeline are PVC. The water

system is in good condition, with access to the troublesome line being improved in 1992.

i. Ranch Roads

The Truttman Ranch is serviced by a main driveway which leaves Highway One on a dangerous curve (many accidents, some fatal, have occurred near the ranch entrance; news accounts often refer to it as "Truttman's Curve"). The driveway opens up into a wide dirt yard capable of handling heavy truck traffic. Short roads lead off this yard to the hay barn, water tank and orchard. An abandoned road leaves the ranch complex northwesterly to the flats and deer camp site; it has been overgrown with grass. Three roads split from this one to various areas on the west side of the ranch. All of these roads are abandoned.

A dirt road leads to the chutes and feeders on the east side of the highway and ends about halfway up the ridge. There are approximately six other undeveloped gate entrances to the pasturage on the approximately two miles of Highway One that pass through the Truttman Ranch.

j. Trees

An immense Douglas fir planted by the Truttmans about 1944 grows in the yard between the main house and the site of the small house; it was damaged by the controlled burning of the smaller house in 1993. A number of recent non-native acacia trees are growing on the east side of the dairy. The ranch is studded with large native oaks.

4. Park-Removed Historic Structures

In early 1994 most of the historic resources at Truttman Ranch were destroyed without Section 106 compliance in an effort by the Park superintendent to clean up the ranch site. For reasons of context the structures, none of which were properly documented before removal, are described herein:

a. Horse Barn (OV-15.19)

The horse barn, located at the entrance to the ranch, appeared to be one of the oldest structures on the ranch and among the oldest in the Olema Valley. It is estimated to have been built in the 1860s. Its framing was constructed of used material, including huge hand-hewn redwood beams showing notches and pegs from an earlier use. Roof rafters were peeled poles. Siding consisted of random-width vertical redwood planks, circular-sawn. The building was a classic 19th century horse barn, the last one of its size remaining in the Olema Valley and the only horse barn visible to the public on the State Highway. The roof had been strengthened with diagonal supports, and a small part of the front of the barn had been replanked due to vehicular damage. Armin Truttman built a small tack room in one corner of the barn. A shed on the west side, used for tractor storage until recently, was empty, with the roof mostly destroyed.

The horse barn, measuring 50 by 50 feet, needed roof and siding repair and structural strengthening, was infested with powder post beetles and was in poor condition.

b. Equipment Shed/Garage (OV-15.18)

The Equipment Shed/Garage appeared to be more than 100 years old. It was comparable with a similar shed at Upper Pierce Ranch. It was wood frame with a corrugated metal shed roof, open on one side with two wide bays for automobiles or equipment. It had not been altered during the last 50 years.

The garage, measuring 22 by 32 feet, was in fair condition.

c. Dairy Shop/Tool Shop (OV-15.10)

This tool shop was one of the older buildings on the ranch. It was used at least since the turn of the century as a tool shop relating to operation of the dairy. At the east end was an open, raised and roofed platform once used for storage of 55 gallon fuel cans. A gas pump and underground tank was installed nearby about thirty years ago but the operable pump had been removed to the Stewart Ranch in 1990 and the underground tank has been removed. The building had not been altered in the last 50 years.

The dairy shop, measuring 23 by 12 feet, was in poor condition; planks were rotting and young trees were impacting two sides of the structure.

d. Shop Garage (old storage shed) (OV-15.04)

The shop garage, connected to the dairy shop by a wooden wall or fence, was also one of the older buildings on the ranch. It was used in the early days for vegetable and fruit storage, probably because it was shaded by an ancient oak tree. It was used as a garage in the late 1920s. This shed had been used for general storage for the last 50 years.

The shop garage, measuring 12 by 20 feet, was in fair condition.

e. Pumphouse (OV-15.14)

The pumphouse was an older structure of unknown origins. It was moved to its last location in 1944. It contained the electric water pump system which supplied water to the dwellings.

The 9 by 12 foot building was covered with ivy and was in fair condition.

f. The Ivy House (OV-15.09)

This was a small shed with shelves inside, entirely engulfed in ivy plants during its last years. Its use is unknown; it may have been an outhouse at one time.

The ivy house, measuring 6 by 9 feet, was in poor condition.

g. Play House (OV-15.08)

The play house was installed circa 1934-41 between two existing structures. It had been used by children since then, although at the time of removal was overgrown and dirty, hence unusable.

The play house, measuring 3 by 9 feet, was in poor condition.

h. Freezer (OV-15.07)

The freezer shed had been located further south according to a 1920s photograph. It appeared to have been constructed out of materials from other old buildings. It was used as a meat cooler until about 1950 when it was replaced with the meat house.

The freezer, measuring 14 by 15 feet, was in fair condition.

i. Meat House (OV-15.15)

The meat house was built by Armin Truttman about 1950. It had been used for meat storage until the Truttmans' departure in 1990.

The meat house, measuring 13 by 16 feet, was in good condition. It was not a historic building but had a functional use for the residents.

j. Small House (removed 1993)

The small house was built by the Truttmans in 1944, and housed three generations of Truttmans, a ranch manager's family and park personnel until it was removed in 1993. It was of simple construction; a porch originally ran the length of the front (south) side, but was enclosed in two separate operations. More recently the kitchen was enlarged and a shed utility room was added to the west side. It was vacated and burned by the National Park Service in 1993.

5. Historic Significance of Truttman Ranch

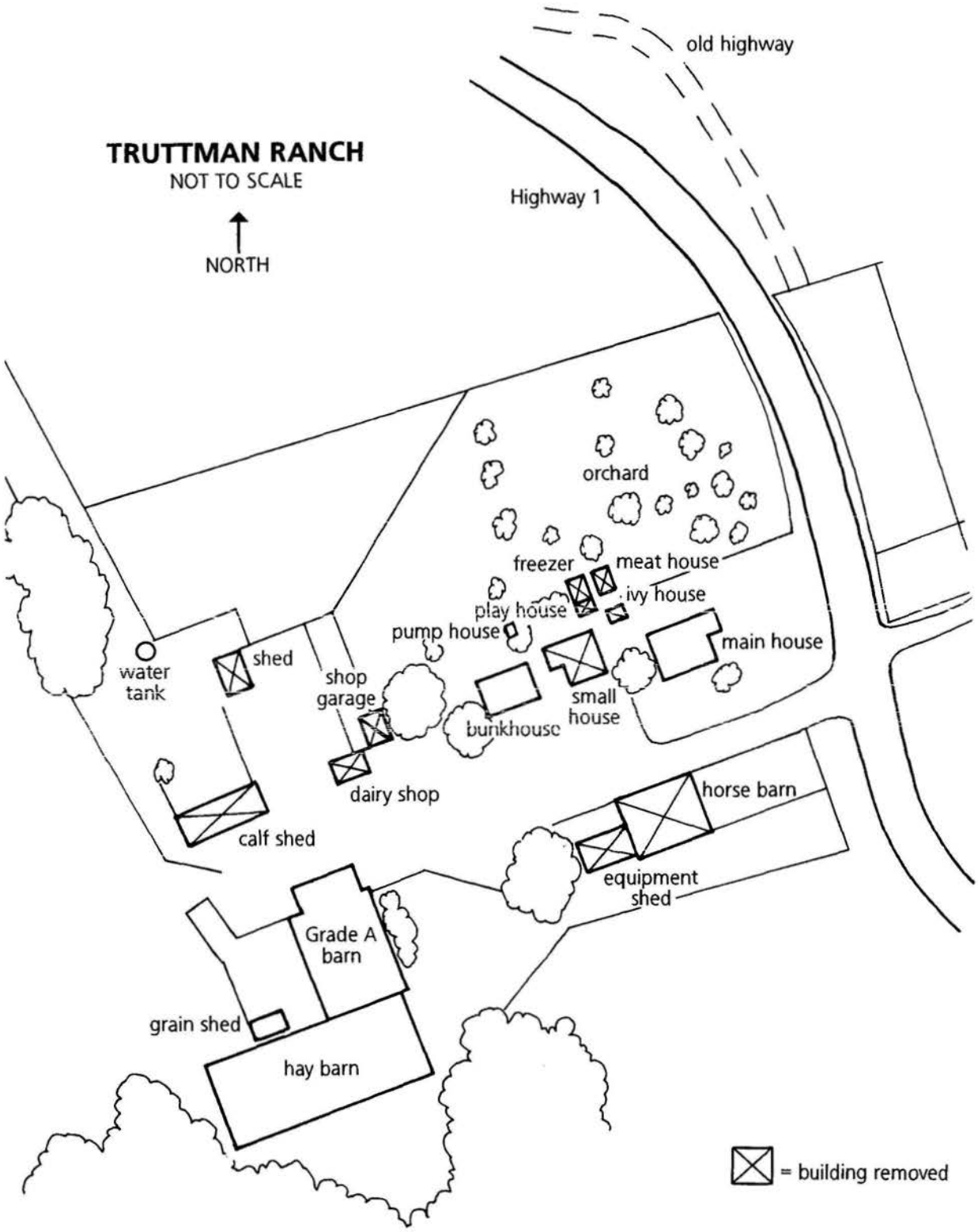
Although many important historic structures were recently removed by the National Park Service, the Truttman Ranch contains a number of unique buildings that are among the earliest examples of surviving Olema Valley historic ranch structures. The bunkhouse and Grade A dairy are significant as unique early examples of pioneer and progressive dairy operations in the Olema Valley, once one of the premium dairy regions of California. Specifically, the bunkhouse appears to be the oldest intact building of its kind in the valley. The Grade A dairy, built in 1935, is the first and largest of the genre and the only one of its size surviving in the valley. In addition, the hay barn is one of the largest surviving 19th century barn in the valley.

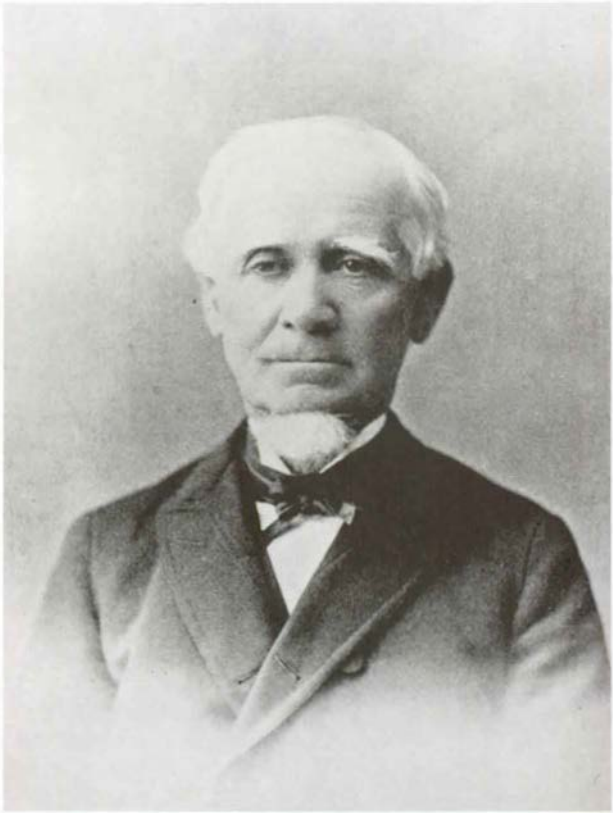
The removal of buildings and corrals has impacted the historic integrity of the ranch, although the remaining buildings have a high level of integrity on an individual basis.

The Truttman Ranch is locally significant as the major dairy of the area throughout its history, in both production and quality of pasture; it may be regionally significant as the first significant dairy in the Olema Valley and the first dairy ranch of Levi K. Baldwin, who started here on his rise to being one of the prominent dairymen of the state. It is also significant for its contribution to immigration in the state of California, as a dairy ranch owned and operated by Swiss immigrants during the 19th century. In addition, this dairy ranch predates the development period of the regionally significant Shafter dairy empire at Point Reyes to the west.

Historic Features

1. Bunkhouse, ca. 1858
2. Hay Barn, ca. 1870-1880
3. Grade A Dairy Barn, 1935
4. Main House, 1942
5. Orchard, ca. 1858-1950
6. Fences, chutes, corrals
7. Water System
8. Road systems

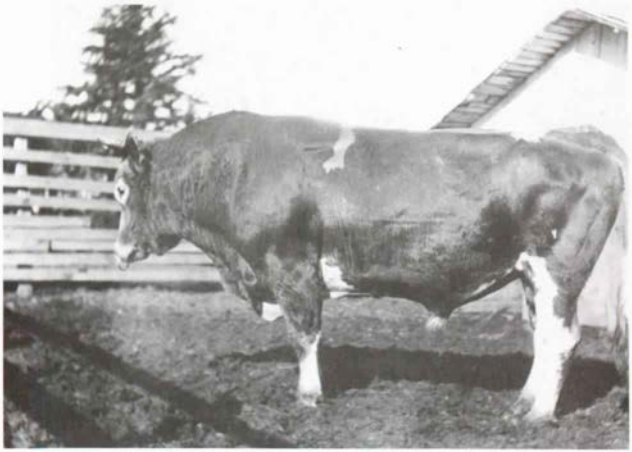

TRUTTMAN RANCH
NOT TO SCALE
NORTH
old highway
Highway 1
orchard
freezer
meat house
ivy house
play house
pump house
main house
water tank
shed
shop garage
small house
bunkhouse
dairy shop
horse barn
calf shed
equipment shed
Grade A barn
grain shed
hay barn
= building removed



Levi K. Baldwin, co-founder of the dairy ranch that became the Bloom/Truttman Ranch. From *The History of Santa Cruz County, California.*

Two 1906 views by G. K. Gilbert of the countryside and county road on the Bloom Ranch: above, looking north from near the southern end of the ranch, with a San Andreas fault sag pond in the foreground; below, looking south near the center of the ranch. Note the varying fence styles. *U.S.G.S. Library, Menlo Park.*

Pasture above the ranch complex in 1924, while Joe Vogensen rented the ranch. *M. B. Boissevain photo courtesy of Jack Mason Museum.*



A Guernsey bull owned by V. J. Bloom on the ranch, February 1923. *M. B. Boissevain photo courtesy of Jack Mason Museum.*

The Bloom Ranch around 1928, when the Stewart family rented it. The large house later burned. *Courtesy of Henrietta (Stewart) Greer.*

Similar view to the previous page, showing the orchard, center. *Courtesy of Henrietta Greer.*

The old truck used by the Stewart family in the dairy operation, around 1928. The old Baldwin house, by this time a bunk house, is on the left. *Courtesy of Henrietta Greer.*

Two views of ranch buildings taken in 1935, when Dolcini and LaFranchi ran the dairy at the Bloom Ranch. Top, the old Bloom house; bottom, the horse barn. *Courtesy of Roy Farrington Jones.*

Two views of the former milking barn taken in 1935, when Dolcini and LaFranchi ran the dairy at the Bloom Ranch. Top, the east side of the barn; bottom, the south elevation. *Courtesy of Roy Farrington Jones.*

Two views of the newly built Grade A barn taken in 1935. Top, the barn's north side; bottom, the west side of the Grade A barn, the silo and the north side of the former Grade B milking barn. *Courtesy of Roy Farrington Jones.*

Frank (left) and Armin Truttman, operators of the dairy and later beef ranch from 1943 to 1990. The Grade A barn and feed bin is in the background. *San Rafael Independent-Journal photograph courtesy of Marin County Historical Society.*

The Truttman Ranch as it appeared around 1948. Note the silo, calf barn and open porches on the two newer houses. *Seth Wood photograph courtesy of Jack Mason Museum.*

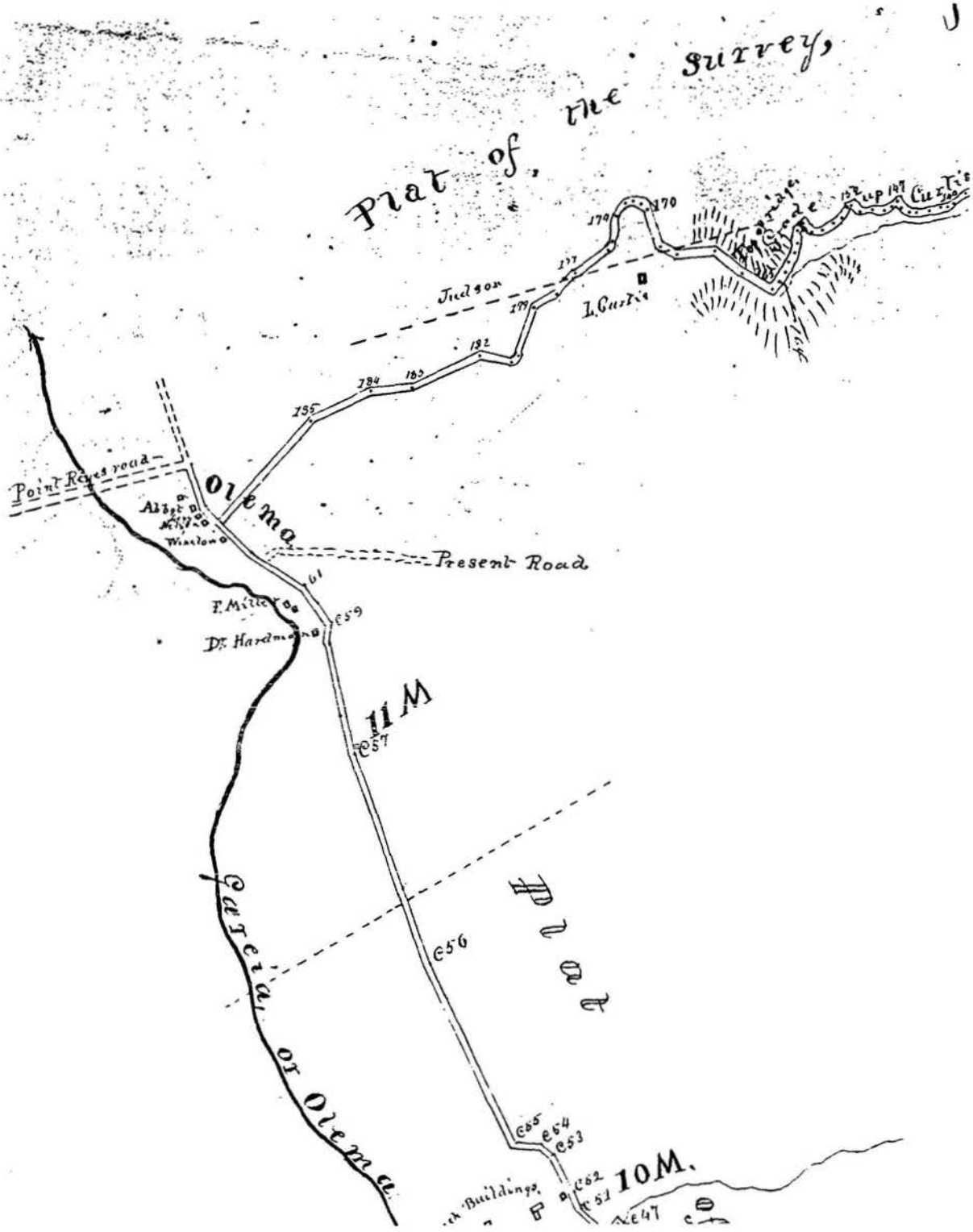
Similar view taken in 1985. Trees have practically hidden the houses. *Photograph by Dewey Livingston.*

The Truttman Ranch horse barn as it appeared in 1990; the carriage shed is at the right. These and many of the surrounding structures were torn down in 1994. *NPS photograph by Dewey Livingston.*

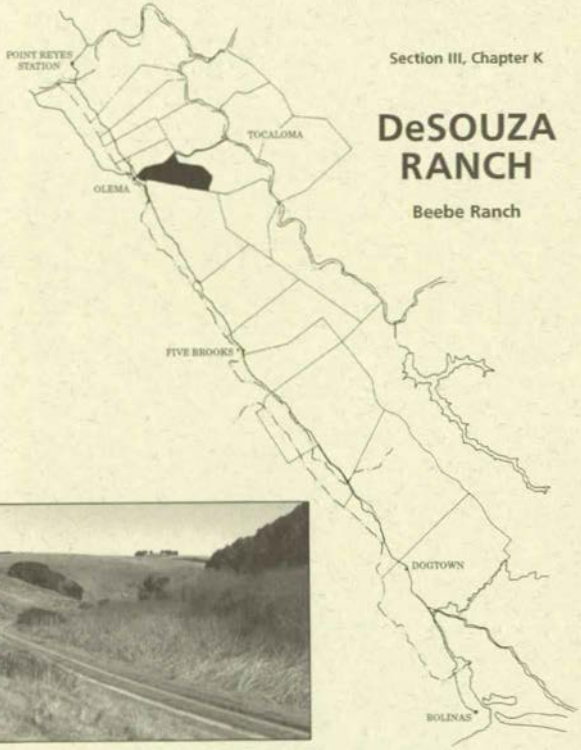
Interior of the Truttman Ranch horse barn in 1990. *NPS photograph by Dewey Livingston.*

The horse barn shortly before it was demolished, February 1994. *NPS photograph by Dewey Livingston.*

The small 1944 house as it appeared in 1990. The house was later burned for fire training. *Photo by Dewey Livingston.*



Detail of the 1867 "Plat of the Survey for the relocation of the Road from Bolinas to Olema" by Hiram Austin, showing the Olema area. Note the Loomis Curtis ranch at the top of Olema Hill, and the location of the old Olema road. Austin, the county surveyor calls Olema Creek "Garcia or Olema Creek."
California Historical Society Collection.



Section III, Chapter K

DeSOUZA RANCH

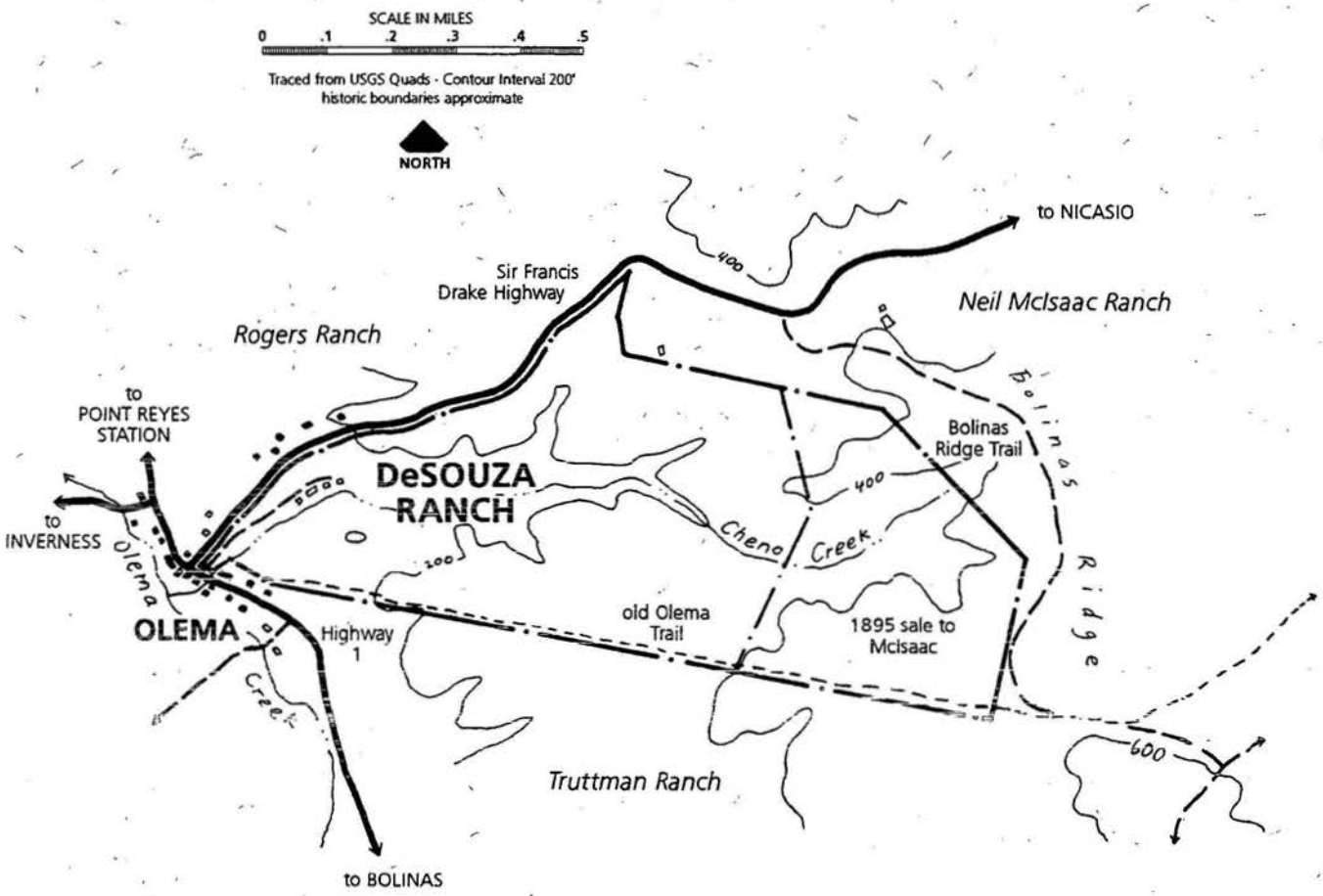
Beebe Ranch

HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE

DeSOUZA RANCH

OLEMA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

Golden Gate National Recreation Area



K. DeSOUZA RANCH
Beebe Ranch
(Golden Gate National Recreation Area)

1. Description

This ranch, locally known as the Beebe Ranch for the last tenants who were there between 1950 and 1976, is an almost-pie-shaped parcel surrounding a gulch that carries Cheno Creek directly through the town of Olema. Reached by an access road at the foot of Sir Francis Drake Highway and Highway One, the ranch is composed of steep hills and very little flat land. It is mostly grassy, with some hardwoods growing on the south side of the gulch. It is bounded on the north by Drake Highway, on the east by the Ferro/McIsaac Ranch, on the south by the Truttman Ranch and on the west by Highway One at Olema. There are no remaining ranch structures, and the land is not open for grazing.

2. History of the DeSouza Ranch

The original route from Point Reyes to San Rafael, the Old Olema Trail, ascended a flat ridge easterly from Olema to the summit of Bolinas Ridge, where it then led down to the Lagunitas Creek valley and on through the San Geronimo Valley to San Rafael. This route from the village to the ridge served as a boundary line when Rafael Garcia sold part of his property in the Olema Valley to Nelson and Daniel Olds in 1856. After Garcia's death and the family's subdivision of his lands this line became the south boundary of the 300.66 acre ranch of Garcia's daughter Maria Dolores Garcia Hurtado. With the northwest boundary being the newly built county road from Olema to San Rafael, the shape of the ranch was formed by transportation patterns in the area.

No record has been found of Mrs. Hurtado's use of the land. Hurtado mortgaged the property to James McMillan Shafter and defaulted; the mortgage was foreclosed on August 9, 1871 and ordered for sale by the county sheriff. Shafter purchased the ranch for $7576.13 at the sheriff's sale on September 11. Nevertheless, Hurtado and her husband sold the property in March of the following year to John Wright and George Sanders for $8500, and soon after the Hurtados borrowed $13,000 from Wright and Saunders and leased the land from

them for $5.00 per month. Whatever Hurtado was trying to achieve in these transactions didn't work, as the previous sheriff's sale to Shafter was confirmed on March 12, 1872 and a deed was finalized in Shafter's favor.[150]

Shafter deeded the land to his son Payne, owner and resident of "The Oaks" across the county road to the west. Payne Shafter sold the eastern end of the ranch to Neil McIsaac in 1893, reducing the size of the property to 187.16 acres. Shafter also sold small parcels in Olema to tinsmith Samuel Olstead and storekeeper Santino Martinelli.[151]

The Shafters called it the Cheno Ranch or Cheno Field. A two-bedroom house, a 32-foot by 50-foot barn and outbuildings were constructed at an unknown time and the place operated as a small dairy for many years, no doubt under a lease with some local dairyman. In 1910 the ranch was leased to A. F. Morris.[152]

Payne Shafter sold the ranch on February 1, 1934, to Manuel J. and Maria F. DeSouza. The DeSouzas ran a dairy business and raised a family, but after World War II rented the ranch to Jack Dougan. Dougan built a 1140-square foot Grade A barn and shipped market milk. By 1950 the DeSouzas leased the ranch to Wilson Beebe, who continued to operate a dairy until the federal government bought the property in December of 1975 for inclusion in Golden Gate National Recreation Area. In 1964 Beebe had purchased a small plot of land on Drake Highway from the DeSouzas; this was also bought for the park. The Beebe family was relocated in May of 1976 and the buildings were torn down by the park service.[153]

---

[150]Records in "Abstract . . . Nelson Hotel", pp. 145-148; Deeds Book V, p. 508, Book L, p. 22, MCRO.

[151]Deeds Book 57, p. 214, Official Records Book 8, p. 107, MCRO.

[152]Shafter ledger, Jack Mason Museum; Appraisal Report: The DeSouza Ranch (Sebastopol: Harding Appraisal Co., 1973).

[153]Official Records Book 215, pp. 89 and 93; Appraisal: DeSouza; interview with Don McIsaac, Boyd and Jo Ann Stewart.

3. Historic Resources

No building remain at the DeSouza Ranch. The ranch road remains in use by park personnel for access to a wood chopping area at the former house site.

The only resource of any significance is the old Olema Trail ran along the southern fence line; traces of this portion can be found and it is in occasional use by utility crews maintaining the lines on the right-of-way which follows the old trail.

4. Historic Significance of the DeSouza Ranch

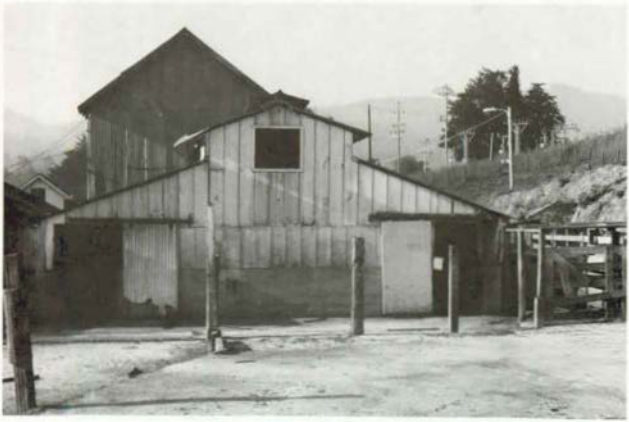
While the DeSouza Ranch is significant for its contribution to the Olema Valley dairy district, the absence of ranch resources leaves it with no integrity. Howver, the old Olema Trail which delineates the southern boundary of the ranch is significant as an important pioneer road corridor in the Olema and Point Reyes area.

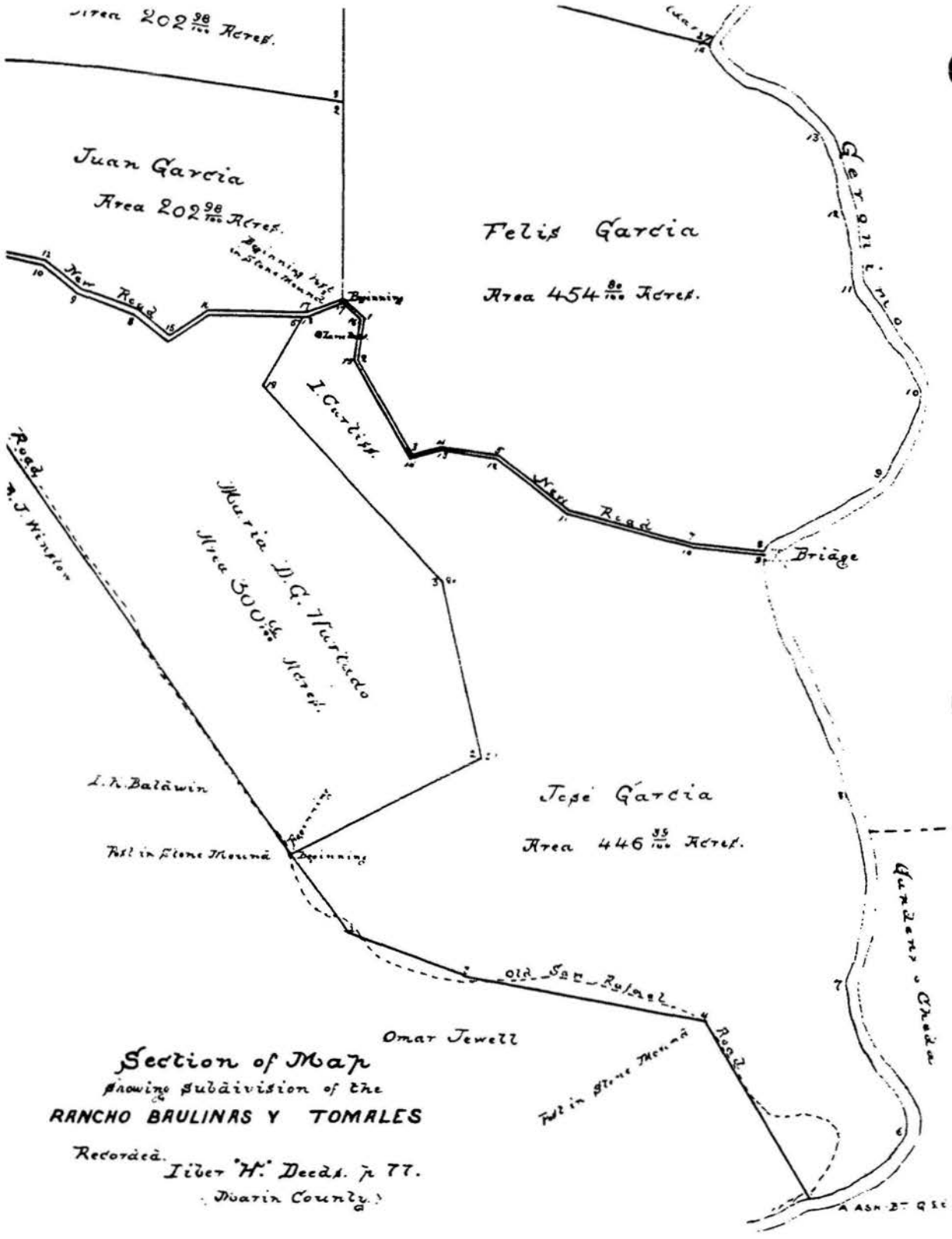
Historic Features

1. Old Olema Trail
2. Ranch driveway

Aerial view of Olema, looking north, in 1959. The Beebe Ranch is at right, Rogers Ranch in the center. *California Department of Highways.*

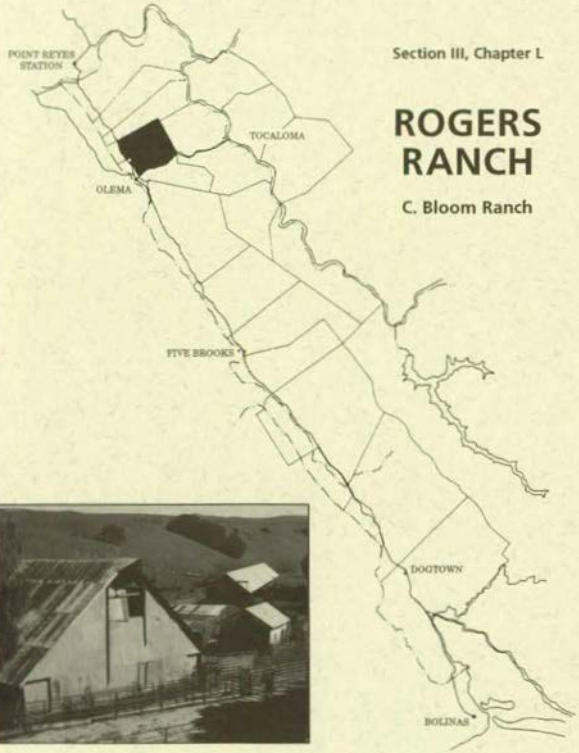
Two views of the former DeSouza Ranch in 1976 before it was torn down. Top, house at left; bottom, the Grade A and hay barns. *NPS photographs, 1975.*





Detail of a subdivision map of Rafael Garcia's lands, showing the old Olema road, called the "Old San Rafael Road" on this map. From "Abstract of Title . . . Part of the Rancho Tomales y Baulines," donated by Don McIsaac. *Point Reyes National Seashore Collection.*

DAIRY FARMING IN THE OLEMA VALLEY



Section III, Chapter L

ROGERS RANCH

C. Bloom Ranch

HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE

ROGERS RANCH

OLEMA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

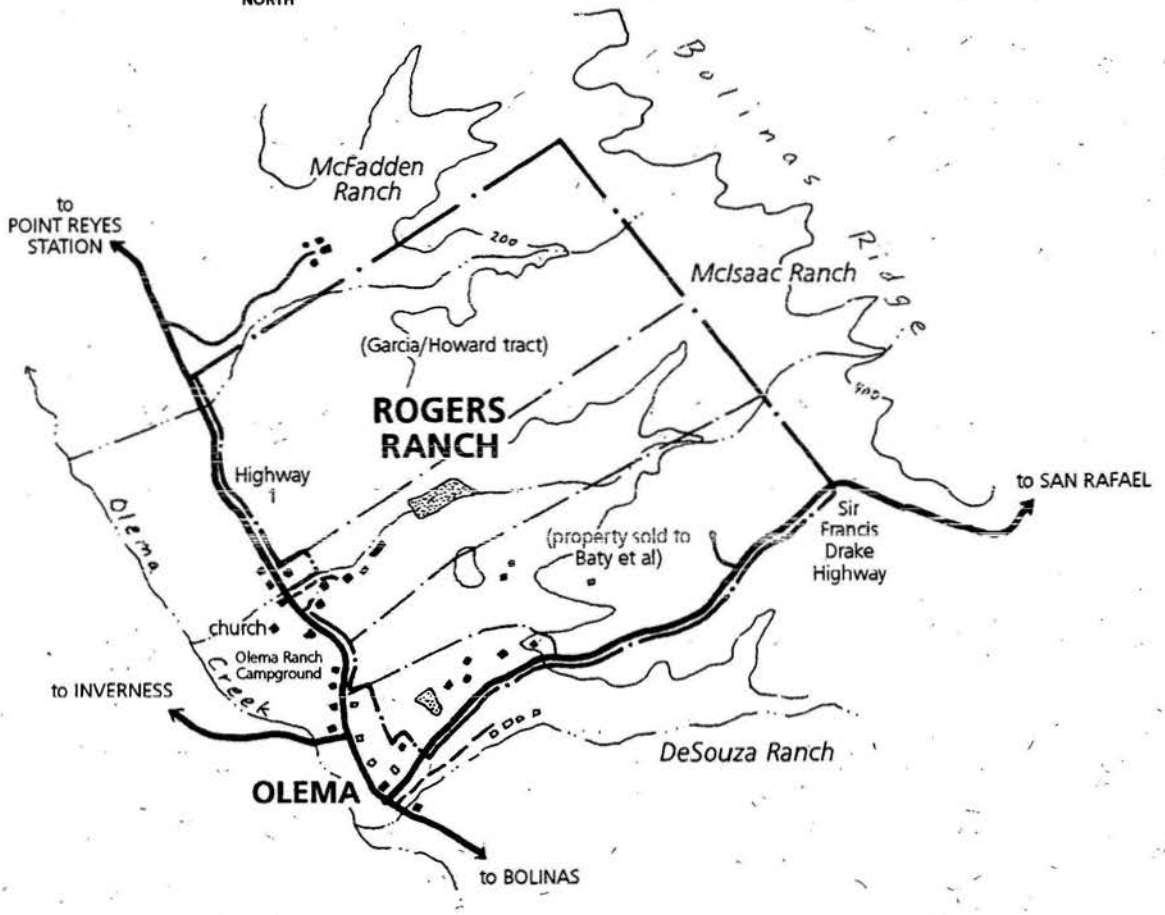
Golden Gate National Recreation Area

SCALE IN MILES

0 .1 .2 .3 .4 .5

Traced from USGS Quads - Contour Interval 200'
historic boundaries approximate

NORTH



L. CLARENCE ROGERS RANCH
Former Clorindo Bloom Ranch
(Golden Gate National Recreation Area)

1. Description

The Rogers Ranch is located at the north end of the town of Olema, directly across Highway 1 from the Sacred Heart Catholic Church. As the former Clorindo Bloom Ranch for many decades, the current property is the result of two of the Garcia family properties having been combined. The park purchase of 219 acres excluded the residence and one outbuilding, located close to the road. The acreage within park boundaries includes the ranch buildings behind the house and about 200 acres of grazing land. It is bounded on the north by the McFadden Ranch, on the east by the McIsaac Ranch, on the south by private property in the village of Olema and on the west by Highway 1. It is mostly grassy pasture, with a small amount of wooded gulches.

2. History of the Rogers Ranch

The Rogers ranch was first a part of the Garcia family subdivision of 1868. Two rectangular parcels of 202.98 acres were given to Juan and Thomas Garcia. Juan, also inherited other parcels in Olema, and sold various portions of his larger tract, in essence contributing greatly to the growth of Olema as a village. He sold 180 acres of his ranch tract for $7200 to William Clear of Alameda in 1874. V. Donati then owned the parcel for a while and in 1886 sold it to longtime Olema Valley dairyman Angelo Pedrotti, who operated a dairy there until his death in 1895.[154]

Thomas Garcia, who was underage at the time of the inheritance, died five years after receiving the property. His brothers almost lost the land to James McMillan Shafter, before selling to William Evans in 1875. Evans, in turn, sold the tract to Charles Webb Howard in 1887.[155]

---

[154]Deeds Book H, p. 77, Book M, p. 182, MCRO.

[155]Deeds Book K, p. 707, Book L, p. 518, Book M, pp. 131 and 468, MCRO; interview with Juanita Sweeney.

Clorindo Bloom, son of Olema Valley pioneer Joseph Bloom, bought both Pedrotti and Howard properties at different times after 1896 and continued dairy ranching there. Bloom married Alma Mazza from a nearby ranch in Tocaloma and raised a family on the Olema ranch: Louis, Margaret, Regina, Richard, Rita and James, all of whom helped with the ranch duties. The Bloom's original house was reportedly replaced with the home that stands today. The family milked between 35 and 80 cows, separating the cream in the dairy house and taking it to the cooperative creamery in Point Reyes Station for processing. Hay was grown in the hills and on three parcels owned by Bloom across the highway in Olema. Like his neighbors, Bloom owned a team of horses and mules for ranch work until he bought a tractor.[156]

Clorindo Bloom died in 1938, after which his widow and sons Louis and Richard ran the dairy. Louis stayed on after his mother and siblings left and ran the ranch as a beef operation for about 20 years; Louis also worked as the county brand inspector, as well as being county fire chief for nine years. His mother, Alma Bloom, died in 1955 and the Bloom family sold the ranch in 1958 for $75,000. Louis Bloom and his sister Rita Truttman bought parcels of the ranch above Olema, as did a number of outside parties.

Neighboring dairyman Fred Genazzi bought the ranch from the Blooms around 1958 and built a Grade A barn with the intention of having a second family dairy, but a problem in getting a milk contract caused Genazzi to sell the ranch. He sold a portion of the southern half to an Olema resident, Marin County Judge David Baty, and sold the Bloom dairy to Clarence Rogers of a longtime Nicasio dairying family. Rogers operated the Grade A dairy until the mid-1970s when he bought a herd of beef cattle.[157]

The federal government acquired 219.3 acres of Rogers' property for GGNRA on February 5, 1981; Rogers retained his home and outbuilding. Rogers holds a 25-year reservation for livestock ranching on the parcel.[158]

---

[156]Bloom family information from interviews with Louis and Richard Bloom, Regina (Bloom) Rodoni, and Frank Truttman.

[157]Official Records Book 1372, p. 274, MCRO; interview with Clarence Rogers.

[158]Tract File (L-4125): Tract 05-114, Rogers, Clarence R., PRNS.

3. Historic Resources

At the time of park purchase, the Rogers Ranch consisted of the main house and garage, excluded from the sale, and two large hay barns, an old carriage shed, dairy house, one-car garage, workshop/garage, and a concrete Grade A milking barn.

a. Hay Barn

This mid-sized 42' by 54' barn was once the Grade B milking barn. It was apparently built by Clorindo Bloom around the turn of the century; the family stopped milking cows in the late 1930s and the barn has been used for feed storage since then. The barn is sheathed in corrugated metal but most of its structural fabric appears to be original. The wood central floor was removed and the large doorways were reoriented in the 1960s by Armin Truttman. Because of these alterations, the barn has only fair integrity, although its condition reflects the changing uses of farm buildings in the area.

b. Carriage Shed

This is a typical 19th century three-bay wagon shed that is now used for storage. The front was extended seven feet about 50 years ago but the original ports are evident. The 45' by 22' building has random-width vertical board siding and a corrugated metal roof. It is in fair condition and its integrity is good.

c. Dairy House

The old 15' by 18' dairy house, long out of use for its intended purpose, is a simple, gable roofed building with wood siding and a corrugated metal roof. It is in poor condition but its integrity is good.

d. One-car Garage

The 16' by 10' one-car garage, located near the Rogers home, was built around 1945 to house the fire truck owned by the Olema Volunteer Fire

Department. It is a simple, gable-roofed building with horizontal siding and a corrugated metal roof. It is in fair condition and its integrity is good.

e. Workshop/Garage

Louis Bloom reportedly built the garage out of lumber salvaged from the original house on the property. It is a long, 16' by 36' building with plywood rolling doors facing south, with a gable corrugated metal roof and horizontal v-groove siding. It is in good condition and its integrity is fair.

The Grade A dairy barn and the cube barn are recent additions and not considered to be potentially historic.

4. Historic Significance of the Rogers Ranch

The Rogers Ranch has historic significance as a dairy ranch that contributed to the important Olema Valley dairy industry. The Bloom family were pioneers of the area and a number pf family members live in the area today. The former Bloom Ranch has been cut up into numerous parcels but the ranch complex is relatively intact. Alterations to some buildings have affected the integrity of the ranch, but overall the integrity of the Rogers Ranch is good.

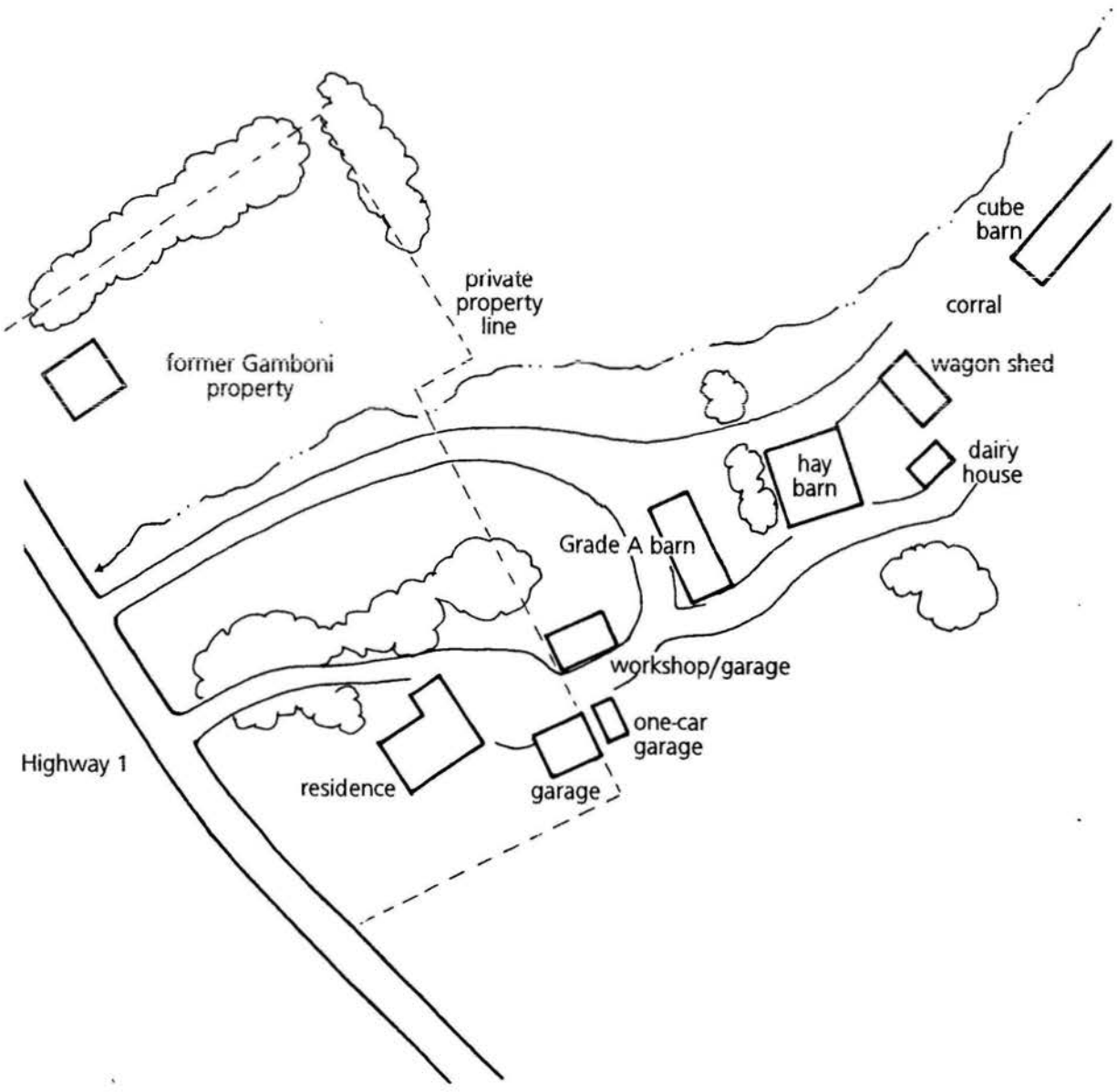
Historic Features

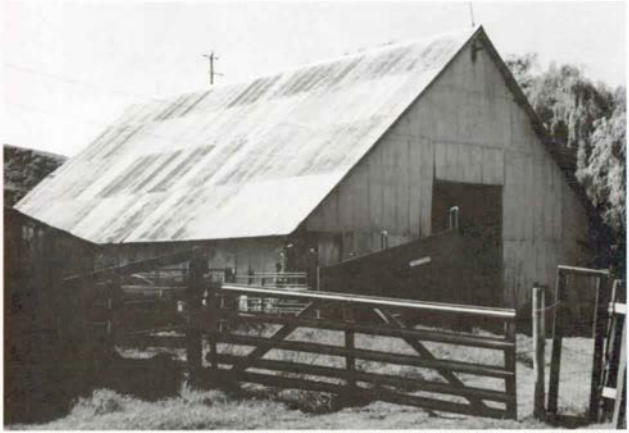
1. Hay Barn, ca. 1900
2. Wagon Shed, ca. 1880
3. Dairy House, ca. 1880
4. One-car Garage, ca. 1945
5. Workshop/Garage, ca. 1940

ROGERS RANCH

NOT TO SCALE

NORTH



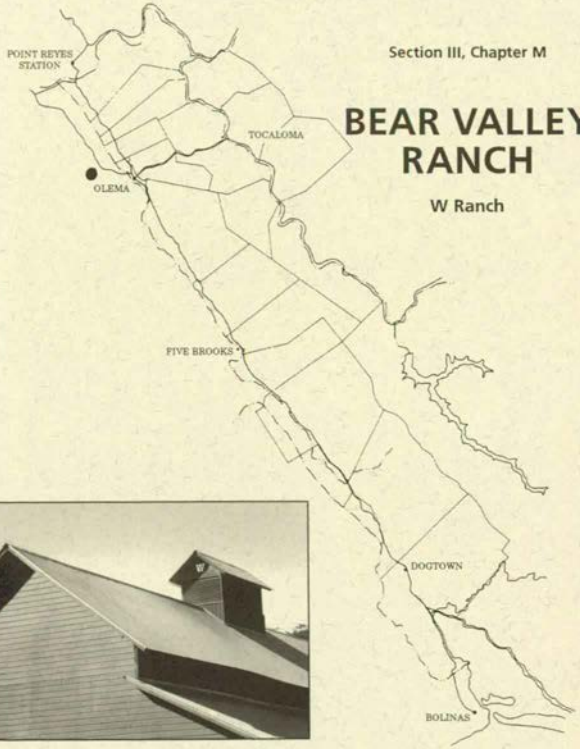


Two 1995 views of the Rogers Ranch. The hay barn (top) and the old dairy. *NPS photos by Dewey Livingston.*

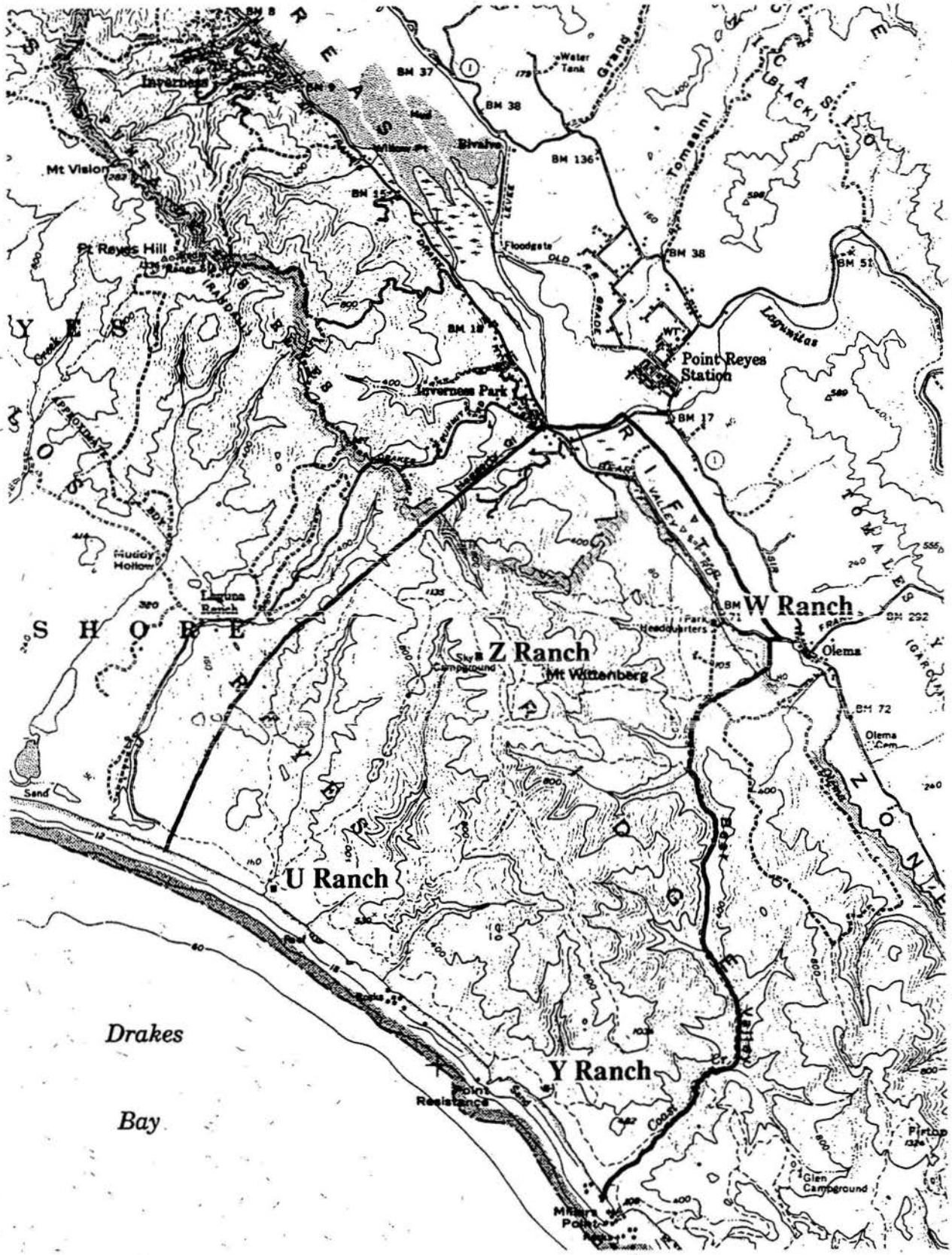
Section III, Chapter M

BEAR VALLEY RANCH

W Ranch



HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE


Inverness
Mt Vision
Pt Reyes Hill
Inverness Park
Point Reyes Station
Floodgate
Water Tank
Bivalve
Tomasini
Lagunitas
Muddy Hollow
Laguna Ranch
Olema
Mt Wittenberg
Sky Campground
Park Headquarters
Olema Cem.
Glen Campground
Point Resistance
Mikers Point
Sand
Rocks
Creek
Drakes
Bay
W Ranch
Z Ranch
U Ranch
Y Ranch
BM 37
BM 38
BM 136
BM 51
BM 17
BM 72
BM 292
BM 71
WT
Coast

M. BEAR VALLEY (W) RANCH
Point Reyes National Seashore Headquarters
(Point Reyes National Seashore)

1. Description

One of the largest and most famed Point Reyes and Olema Valley ranches is the Bear Valley Ranch, which now acts as the administration headquarters, visitor center, and major trailhead for visitors to the Point Reyes National Seashore. Given the letter W in the Shafter dairy organization of the 1860s, the proximity of the ranch to Olema (less than a mile) held it in the public eye for all of its history. The scenery at Bear Valley is among the finest in California, and its resources have long been exploited and enjoyed by man. Long a favorite destination for tourists coming by train, stagecoach and automobile, Bear Valley remains a prominent and popular area in Marin County.

For the most of this century the Bear Valley Ranch consisted of four dairy ranches, U, W, Y, and Z. The W designation dropped from use around the turn of the century and eventually Bear Valley Ranch stood to mean the whole area of the aforementioned ranches. These ranches are separated for individual history study in this report. The 7739-acre ranch, including the smaller dairies, stretched from Olema and Tomales Bay on the east to the Pacific Ocean and Drakes Bay on the west. Bounded on the north and south by the lands of James McMillan Shafter, delineated by a series of ridges adjacent to the Laguna Ranch to the north and Bear Valley Creek and Coast Creek to the south. The land is practically mountainous, with the highest peak on the Point Reyes Peninsula, Mt. Wittenberg, as the central geographic feature of the ranch. Forested hills spotted with meadows characterize the eastern portion of the ranch, while brush- and grass-covered ridges and gulches pour down to a spectacular Pacific shoreline on the west.

The ranch complex is located near the foot of Mt. Wittenberg a half-mile from Olema on Bear Valley Road. It consists of a large red hay barn, three residences for ranch workers (two of which have been converted to offices), a horse barn, and maintenance facilities. On a hill nearby, past the current visitor center, is a later complex of buildings constructed for the pleasure of the wealthy owners of this century: a house, garage/apartment, and horse barn.

This area is now the site of the Morgan Horse Ranch. Access to these complexes is by a federal entrance road off county-owned Bear Valley Road, marked with a prominent carved wooden park entrance sign.

2. History of the Bear Valley (W) Ranch

W Ranch may sit on the site of Rafael Garcia's adobe *rancho,* described in Section I of this report. Archeological investigations have not been attempted in this area, and some previous research led historians to believe that the Garcia site was in the flat area across Bear Valley Road from park headquarters. Given the historical data gathered about that area for this report, it seems unlikely that a substantial ranch complex would have been built on what was essentially an unstable marsh or slough. This writer believes that Garcia's ranch was located at the present site of the Bear Valley Ranch. The site offered flat ground of stable character, and fits descriptions and early surveys of Garcia's ranch. For instance, a correspondent for San Francisco's *Alta California,* writing about a visit to Point Reyes, described leaving Olema and "passing the Garcia ranch house, which stands on a knoll, a short distance from Olima [sic] . . . ." Only archeological investigation will prove the exact location, and the amount of earthmoving done at the Bear Valley Ranch site since the 1920s could have obliterated any evidence remaining from Garcia's time.[159]

After receiving the patent for the Ranchos Punta de los Reyes and Punta de los Reyes Sobrante, the Shafter brothers went after Rafael Garcia in court, claiming that their rights to the Berry Ranch should include additional acreage, namely Garcia's. The case was resolved in 1865, just before Garcia's death, with the Shafters receiving some land in the Olema Valley and Pine Gulch, and a large tract of unclaimed land on the northern slopes of Mt. Tamalpais, including much of Lagunitas Canyon. This settlement also confirmed Olema Creek as the boundary between Shafter and Garcia land, leaving Garcia's historic old adobe *rancho* in Shafter hands. Apparently, Garcia's adobe buildings were demolished (reportedly by the 1868 earthquake) and the W

---

[159]Plat of Rancho Tomales y Baulines, 1860; San Francisco Alta California, December 9, 1865; James Delgado, "Found--The Garcia Adobe Site!", in Mason, Historian, pp. 400-401.

Ranch constructed at the site in the late 1860s.[160]

Along the lines of the Shafters' plans, W Ranch was designed as a premium dairy ranch. A dairy house, barns, and a substantial two-story house occupied an area between a westward bend in Olema Creek and a section of Bear Valley Creek. Probably later, in the 1870s or '80s, the proprietors built a huge milking barn. After the partition of 1869-1870, Charles Webb Howard owned W Ranch; he may have been the moving force in the establishment and construction of the ranch. Like the Shafter Home Ranch, W Ranch was no doubt designed to be one of the showplaces of the Shafter/Howard dairy empire, perhaps built by Howard with competitive spirit directed toward his in-laws. The earliest reference to the name Bear Valley Dairy appeared in an 1883 account book of the Shafter family.[161]

Howard himself didn't operate or live at W Ranch, but for much of the time his superintendents did, making W the headquarters of Howard's dairy operations on Point Reyes. The first known tenant at W Ranch, as of 1871, was named Crandell, perhaps a relative of Thomas Crandell of F Ranch or the same man. Starting around 1877 Howard's ranch superintendent, William H. Abbott, oversaw Point Reyes operations from the Howard "home ranch" at Bear Valley. Around that time a great deal of land clearing was in progress. A newspaper reporter recounted wind damage after the clearing operation:

> During the high winds of last month, about one hundred and fifty oak and bay trees blew over on the lately cleared lands of C. W. Howard, at Olema. A few years ago these lands were covered with dense forests .... The stumps were cleared by grubbing, blasting, burning, etc.[162]

Howard liked his superintendent Abbott a great deal (Abbott "belongs to the family," wrote Howard) and gave him full responsibility for operation of the ranches. Howard was busy with his San Francisco enterprises, including the Spring Valley Water Company and the muckraking magazine *The Wasp,* and

---

[160]Mason, Point Reyes, pp. 40-48; "Plat of the Rancho Tomales y Baulines," 1865, PRNS.

[161]Shafter Ranch Ledger, entry of November 16, 1883, Jack Mason Museum.

[162]Plat of the Subdivision of Punta de los Reyes, 1871; C. W. Howard to Theron Howard, July 18, 1882, Howard Family Collection; Marin County Journal, February 7, 1878, p. 3.

spent his time in the city. Abbott kept up-to-date with dairy innovations, being perhaps the first in the area to try and purchase a cream separator. Howard wrote in 1884, "Abbott has just got in operation at his place The Machine which separates the cream from the milk by centrifugal force & thinks it will benefit him nearly 20% in his business of Butter Making & Selling." The San Rafael newspaper reported the next month:

> The Fay cream separator has had a trial at Mr. Abbott's dairy. The milk was divided in equal parts, one-half going into the machine, and half set in the old way, say 1,000 pounds in each. The separator produced the greater weight of cream, but at the churning it made a half-pound less of butter, showing a greater amount of buttermilk. The test was made under some disadvantages to the new method, and it is probable another trial will be made, with steam power brought from the city. The innovation is so much esteemed that Mr. Claussen [E ranch] will probably take two, and so will Randall and Johnson [Pierce ranch]. A machine will separate seventy gallons an hour.[163]

Abbott also farmed hay on W Ranch, with 25 acres producing 4 tons in 1890. He retired in May 1899, after 22 years of faithful work for Howard.[164]

Howard's son, Frederick Paxon Howard, moved to the ranch after Abbott left and spent his days there as a "gentleman farmer." His siblings, Maud, Harold, and Oscar, lived in the east and Europe, showing no apparent interest in the ranch. Charles Webb Howard died in 1908, leaving the ranch to his estranged wife, Emma Shafter Howard. Mrs. Howard lived the life of a socialite in San Francisco while her son ran W Ranch in high style. After Mrs. Howard's death, however, the family began to squabble over the Point Reyes property. Historian Jack Mason wrote of the events to come:

> Fred Paxon Howard had been a gentleman farmer, like his second cousin Payne, on his mother's W Ranch . . . which was flourishing through these years.

---

[163]Marin County Journal, April 10, 1884.

[164]C. W. Howard to Theron Howard, March 18, 1884, Howard Family Collection; Marin Journal, July 17, 1890 and May 25, 1899.

> It vexed his sister Maud that he presumed to "live on, use and have income from that particularly choice ranch," especially when--as she claimed--he refused to account for the income it produced. Maud, who had been living in Europe on a family allowance, "wanted out" of the family combine, and offered her share of Point Reyes to her brothers for $100,000. Two of them lived in the east: Harold was in a mental institution, and Oscar Shafter Howard, a composer of sorts, lived at the Lamb's Club in New York City. Neither objected but Fred, who was president of the family corporation, did. Maud hired a young San Francisco lawyer, Jerome B. White, and sued her brothers to force a partition of the Point Reyes holdings.[165]

Maud Howard won the lawsuit, and the family members sold their interest in the land individually to millionaire San Francisco brewer John G. Rapp for a total of about $400,000. Rapp quickly sold off the ranches on the Point, but kept W Ranch and, after Fred Howard left, set to work making the Bear Valley Ranch into a 20th century dairy farm.[166]

John Rapp, son and namesake of one of San Francisco's most prominent beer producers, had the resources to improve the Bear Valley Ranch both for business and comfort. Prohibition had closed down the family business the same year that Rapp made the ranch purchases. For his family's enjoyment, Rapp built a "magnificent country home" in 1923 on a hill near Oscar Shafter's centennial sequoia, about half a mile up Bear Valley from the ranch complex. The house, reportedly costing about $12,000 to build, was of a rustic character, along the lines of a hunting retreat with an eye for entertaining. A wide porch looked out over the Olema Valley. On the creek below, Rapp had a dam constructed, which formed a pond large enough for boating and swimming; changing rooms were available at pondside for guests. The family, including three daughters and a son, enjoyed horseback trips to the ridges, swimming, hunting, and hiking all over the property. Guests were frequent, some of whom were allowed to set up tent camps on the property during the summer. One family, that of Robert Menzies of San Rafael, kept a tent camp on the hill near

---

[165]Mason, Point Reyes, p. 94.

[166]Ibid., pp. 94-95.

Rapp's house site where the children and friends had the run of the ranch. A longtime tradition of free public access to Bear Valley, started by Charles Webb Howard, changed as Rapp began to charge a fee for entry. Rapp also sold some prime property: he sold 466 acres in the northeast corner of the ranch to his realtor, August Lang, in November 1923, for $18,000. This property eventually became Noren Estates and the Silverhills subdivisions adjacent to Inverness Park.[167]

At the old W Ranch dairy, Rapp hired John Watson as manager, and embarked on a program that would make the Bear Valley Dairy one of the first certified dairies in Marin County. Certification was the precursor to Grade A labeling which was established in the 1930s, where sanitary standards were upheld in order to produce milk for popular consumption. To do this, Rapp improved the dairy herd and built a sanitary barn and two trademark silos in 1922. Rapp's milk, taken from the cows by white-uniformed milkers, was sold on contract to hospitals and restaurants in San Francisco. A newspaper report mentioned the status of the dairy:

> Rapp is said to have one of the best certified milk dairies in Northern California. All of his product, which is shipped in bulk, is transported to leading hospitals in San Francisco. Those who have visited the ranch state it has been transformed into a veritable marvel of perfection in every detail. The herd, comprising purebred cattle, now numbers about 200 head, and Rapp employs about 20 men to handle their product.[168]

The other dairies on the ranch, U, Y, and Z, continued producing cream under leases from Rapp that duplicated the old Shafter leases. Rapp and Watson also hired Greek laborers to clear about 10 acres of dense willows in the flats opposite the dairy ranch, and to channelize Olema Creek, rerouting it to a tangent from the village of Olema to near the head of Tomales Bay. Rapp planted feed crops on the flats, in cooperation with the county farm advisor, M. B. Boissevain. Irrigation was introduced to the ranch, with water from the dam

---

[167]Rapp family information from an interview with his daughter, Joan Rapp Mayhew; interview with Mary Menzies Page; Marin Journal, March 22, 1923, p. 1; Petaluma Argus, undated clipping circa 1922; Mason, Point Reyes, p. 95.

[168]Marin Journal, March 22, 1923, p. 1.

upstream from the dairy. Rapp also had cottages built for his milkers.[169]

On September 1, 1925, Rapp traded the ranch for valuable shares in Dunham, Carrigan, and Hayden Company, a wholesale hardware business in San Francisco, to Colonel Jesse Langdon, manager of the business whose wife was a member of the Dunham family. Langdon continued Rapp's work in the certified dairy, and further improved the Holstein herd. Langdon's milkers were paid $90 per month, about three times the rate on other dairies. John Watson was laid off by Langdon and replaced by Dong Sing Tong, who "presided over [the dairy] with a firm hand," according to a local newspaper. Watson eventually became president of the State Board of Agriculture and a University of California regent.[170]

Jack Mason wrote about Langdon, long considered to be a part of the local color at Point Reyes:

> Like Rapp, the Colonel was a perfectionist . . . . A contemporary remembers him as a tall, ramrod straight man with a thin, craggy, humorless face, a spit-and-polish disciplinarian who wore khaki and a stiff-rimmed World War I-style Army hat even into the milking barn. Bill Christensen recalls "going over to ask for work and the colonel looking me up and down like a recruit standing inspection."[171]

Langdon closed the small dairies at U, Y, and Z Ranches and stocked the ocean range with beef cattle. By 1927, the Holstein herd had increased to 500 and had been accredited as tuberculosis-free, making it one of the state's largest disease-free herds. In 1928, Langdon's Bear Valley Dairy shipped 700 gallons of milk daily to San Francisco on the ranch truck.[172]

When the depression struck in 1929, Langdon reportedly lost most if not all of his capital, and soon lost his dairy certification and hospital contracts as

---

[169]Mason, Historian, p. 95; Claribel Rapp Berckmeyer to Jack Mason, August 29, 1971, Jack Mason Museum Collection; interviews with Joan Rapp Mayhew and Lauren Cheda. Boissevain left photographs of Rapp's improvements at Bear Valley Ranch, now in the Jack Mason Museum Collection.

[170]Mason, Historian, pp. 8-9.

[171]Ibid., p. 792.

[172]Marin Journal, November 10, 1927, p. 5; Marin Herald, "Marvelous Marin Edition," August, 1928, p. 3; interview with Jim Colli.

well. The dairy remained in operation for a while, probably producing Grade B cream. A mortgage on the ranch became delinquent, and Langdon invoked the Frazier-Lempke Act to protect himself from foreclosure by the Bank of San Rafael. The U. S. District Court took over financial control of the ranch, but Langdon's problems were far from over. The Langdon's marriage was breaking up, according to Jack Mason, and Mrs. Langdon and her daughters labored at manufacturing muslin shirts in her living room. Langdon reportedly offered to sell the ranch to neighbor Lee Murphy for $90,000, but was turned down. Langdon published an illustrated brochure, touting the ranch as "one of the most magnificent country estates in all America." But finally, the bank foreclosed on its $212,000 mortgage, then bought the ranch and livestock at an auction on the steps of the county courthouse for $125,000, and put Bear Valley Ranch up for sale. The Langdons remained at the ranch, hanging on through red tape and perseverance, until they were evicted by the Marin County sheriff on April 23, 1943; the ranch had just been sold to Eugene Compton of Nevada, who had plans for the place.[173]

Well-known and wealthy cafeteria magnate Gene Compton bought Bear Valley Ranch from the Bank of San Rafael on April 21, 1943 and took possession soon after. Compton, like Rapp had done 20 years earlier, undertook an improvement and expansion program that included tearing down the large old W Ranch house that had been used as a horse barn and replacing it with a dairy foreman's residence and a bunkhouse. Compton hired Woodacre contractors Philpott & Bell to build a residence for the ranch manager, Charlie Schramm, across Bear Valley Creek from the ranch complex, as well as a horse barn, garage, equipment shop, and meat house. Up at the Rapp house, a horse barn and garage apartment were constructed. The huge old milking barn, in use as a hay barn since Rapp improved the dairy in the 1920s, was stripped to the frame, given a substantial concrete foundation, and re-sided with horizontal v-groove siding. Compton built a new hay barn between the old one and the milking barn. No doubt Compton knew people in the right places, as such large private construction projects so soon after the war were rare because of lack of

[173]Mason, Historian, pp. 792-795; San Rafael Independent, October 18, 1938; Marin Journal, October 20, 1938; booklet, "Bear Valley Rancho," ca. 1938, PRNS.

materials. Compton also purchased the adjacent Glen Ranch on the Shafter ranch.[174]

As Jack Mason wrote, "Compton's Bear Valley Ranch was as different from Colonel Langdon's as day from night. The austerity and tension of the Langdon years gave way to creature comforts and good will. The public had never felt wanted at the ranch; now it did." Compton staged three rodeos (1946, 1947, 1948) at the ranch, in the area south of today's picnic area and parking lot, that drew competitors from all over the state. The last rodeo was endorsed by the International Rodeo Association and Rodeo Cowboys of America, which put the event in the league of world champions. Compton built an arena, complete with bleachers, refreshment stands, and restrooms, with the proceeds of the event to benefit the Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Point Reyes Station and the Widows and Orphans Fund of the Olema Volunteer Fire Department.[175]

Unexpectedly, Compton sold the ranch on February 11, 1949 to Grace H. Kelham, heiress to the Spreckels sugar fortune, and her husband Bruce, a San Francisco investment broker, and left town. The Kelhams were not interested in rodeos or dairy farming, and within a year sold the dairy herd and demolished the dairy and hospital (hay) barn. Equipment was auctioned and, after more than 80 years as a premium dairy, Bear Valley Ranch became a large beef cattle operation. The Kelhams hired Ralph Beatty as ranch foreman; Compton's manager Schramm stayed on for a short time to help Beatty get familiar with ranch operations.[176]

The Kelhams kept up the ranch buildings, and apparently did not build any others. Their ranch hands, including Beatty and George DeMartini (who was employed at the ranch by the Kelhams from 1949 and then by the park until his retirement in 1984), built corrals, cleared brush off of acres of hillsides on the ocean side of the ranch, and raised hay on the Olema Creek flats and at Y and U Ranches. DeMartini recalled tearing down the old Country Club buildings for the Kelhams around 1950 and then the coastal barns for the National Park Service fifteen years later. DeMartini, the assistant foreman,

---

[174]Mason, Point Reyes, p. 95, Historian, p. 823; comments of Louis Bloom, Boyd and JoAnn Stewart.

[175]Mason, Historian, pp. 823-824.

[176]Mason, Point Reyes, p. 95; interview with George DeMartini.

lived in the bunk house (today's administration building) until his eviction and subsequent hiring by the federal government.[177]

In the late 1950s, the ranch became a focal point in the establishment of Point Reyes National Seashore, being part of the smaller, original park plan. The National Park Service rented a building from the Kelhams to operate their land office, and a tiny parcel on the coastal part of the ranch became the first property to be deeded to the new park, as the gravesite of park legislation sponsor Clem Miller. The National Park Service purchased Bear Valley ranch on October 1, 1963, for $5,725,000. National Seashore staff immediately moved into the ranch buildings, with the bunkhouse and dairy foreman's house used as administration buildings. A wing was added to the bunkhouse in the late 1960s. The horse barn is used by the rangers as an office and fire cache. The garage and equipment shop are used by the park maintenance division. The foreman's house, the upper apartment and garage, and Rapp's 1923 house were put to use as park housing. The upper horse barn now houses a part of the National Seashore's well-known Morgan Horse Ranch. The park service built a picnic area and parking lot in a meadow at the foot of the road to the Rapp house.[178]

A number of water systems had been in use on the ranch for many years. A major system on a tributary of Bear Valley Creek supplied Olema with water, apparently since before the turn of the century. Another system, also feeding the Olema network, was located above the tributary of the creek that passes behind Kule Loklo, the park's Coast Miwok interpretive area. It was apparently built by Compton during the 1940s. The Olema system was superseded in the 1960s by the North Marin Water District which provided water originating in Lagunitas Creek aquifers near Point Reyes Station through a pipeline from that town; the Bear Valley Creek water works were removed although the other system remains in an operative state near Kule Loklo, supplying water for the Park's landscaping and Morgan Horse Ranch.

In 1983 the new Bear Valley Visitor Center was completed in a meadow opposite the picnic ground. Two years later, new access road was built, causing the abandonment of a portion of the century-old access road to Bear Valley. Today, the Bear Valley Ranch site is the primary destination of some two million visitors annually to Point Reyes National Seashore.

---

[177]Interview with George DeMartini.

[178]Baywood Press, December 19, 1963, p. 1.

3. Historic Buildings and Resources

The hay barn, known for many years as "the red barn," was built circa 1870 and remodeled in 1944. It retains its size (52' by 198') and shape, and much of what appears to be the original interior framing. The siding and roof was replaced and a concrete foundation built under the barn. The barn was apparently unpainted at the turn of the century, and from about 1920 to the 1950s it was painted white. By the time the park purchased Bear Valley Ranch in 1964 the barn had been painted red.

The Rapp house, built in 1923, was used as a summer residence by the Rapp family, then as a permanent residence by members of the Langdon family. The house was remodeled by Gene Compton in the 1940s, and has apparently not been significantly altered since then. Most of the structures at Bear Valley Ranch were built between 1944 and 1948 by Gene Compton.

The bunkhouse, foreman's houses, horse barns, garage, equipment building, and meat house were built in 1947-48. All are in good condition and are maintained by the park maintenance staff. The west and north parts of the bunk house were altered in the late 1960s with an addition for administrative space, and an addition was constucted on the southeast corner in 1993. The additions matched the existing style but increased the size of the building by more than one third. During the 1993 construction, it was revealed that the current Superintendent's office was originally a separate small cabin, apparently predating the Compton improvements of the 1940s. The meat house was recently moved to make way for a realigned access road to the roads and trails shops and a new park housing area.

A number of historic roads exist at the ranch. The Bear Valley Trail was the major access to the coast from Olema, and dates from before 1873. Two old ranch roads branch off of Bear Valley Trail, the Old Pine Trail (which appears on a 1859 map) and the Sky Trail. Both provided access to the dairies at Mt. Wittenberg and the coast.

The site of the Bear Valley Country Club, 1890-ca. 1940, lies at Divide Meadow on the Bear Valley Trail to the coast. The Country Club was established by a group of wealthy and prominent members of the Pacific Union Club in San Francisco as a place for hunting and social meeting place in the country. The club thrived through the 1890s and early part of the century, having fine facilities including an elegant club house, cottages, kennels, horse

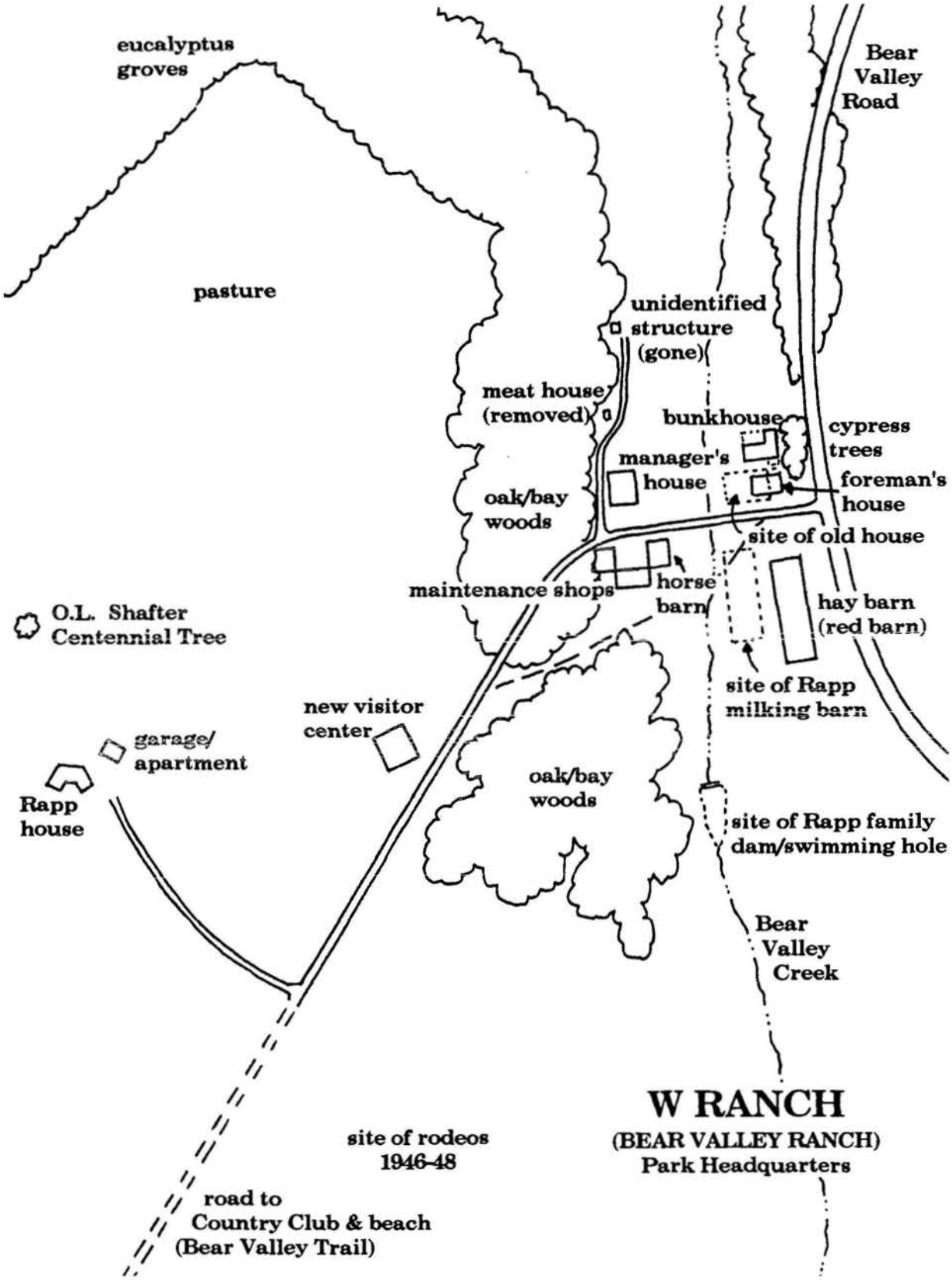
barns and stocked fishing lakes. The club disbanded in the late 1930s and the last of the buildings were razed in the early 1950s. A deteriorating two-room outhouse, two fruit trees, and some evidence of grading are all that remain at the site. A number of exotic trees, including a flowering dogwood and a dawn redwood, survive at the site of the Robert Menzies cabin on Bear Valley Creek, a family retreat from about 1925 to 1970.

4. Historic Significance of Bear Valley (W) Ranch

W Ranch is a significant contributor to the history of Point Reyes, arising from its role in the Mexican period (as Rafael Garcia's headquarters), the Shafter and Howard dairy industry (as the headquarters of Charles Webb Howard's dairy enterprise), the use of the area by prominent Californians (the Howards, Rapps, Comptons, and Spreckels/Kelhams) for commerce, leisure and public recreation, and for its role in the administrative history of Point Reyes National Seashore. The ranch retains a number of buildings from these eras (excepting Garcia), including the "Red Barn" of W Ranch, the 1923 Rapp house and 1948 Compton improvements, and National Park Service structures, notably the acclaimed Bear Valley Visitor Center. In addition, a number of historic roads which retain integrity cross the acreage of the original ranch, and are significant to the transportation history of Point Reyes.

Historic Features

1. hay barn, ca. 1870s, restored 1940s
2. Rapp house (ranger residence), 1923
3. Manager's residence (ranger office) 1948
4. Bunkhouse (administration) 1948
5. Horse barn (fire cache) 1948
6. Garage and shops (B&U shops) 1948
7. Manager's duplex (ranger residences) 1948
8. Meat shed ca. 1948 (moved and altered in 1992)
9. Garage/apartment (horse ranch) ca. 1944-48
10. Horse barn (horse ranch) ca. 1944-88
11. Bear Valley road (Trail), ca. 1860s
12. Z Ranch road (Sky Trail), ca. 1880s
13. Old Pine Trail, 1850s
14. dogwood and dawn redwood trees, 1920s
15. fruit trees at Divide Meadow, ca. 1890s
16. Country Club outhouse, ca. 1893


eucalyptus groves
Bear Valley Road
pasture
unidentified structure (gone)
meat house (removed)
bunkhouse
cypress trees
manager's house
foreman's house
oak/bay woods
site of old house
maintenance shops
horse barn
hay barn (red barn)
O.L. Shafter Centennial Tree
site of Rapp milking barn
new visitor center
garage/ apartment
Rapp house
oak/bay woods
site of Rapp family dam/swimming hole
Bear Valley Creek
W RANCH
(BEAR VALLEY RANCH)
Park Headquarters
site of rodeos 1946-48
road to Country Club & beach (Bear Valley Trail)

Scenes of the Bear Valley Ranch in the 1920s. Top, John Rapp, Jr. in the barnyard; notice the barn and silo in the background. *Courtesy of Joan (Rapp) Mayhew.* Bottom, the ranch truck delivered fresh milk to hospitals in San Francisco. *Point Reyes National Seashore Collection.*

Two views of the Bear Valley Ranch in the 1920s. Top, looking north. *Point Reyes National Seashore Collection.* Bottom, looking west. *Courtesy of Joan (Rapp) Mayhew.*

John Rapp made many improvements on the Bear Valley Ranch during the time he owned it. Top, the house built in 1923 as a summer residence. Bottom, the dam and pond on the creek above the dairy complex. *Courtesy of Joan (Rapp) Mayhew.*

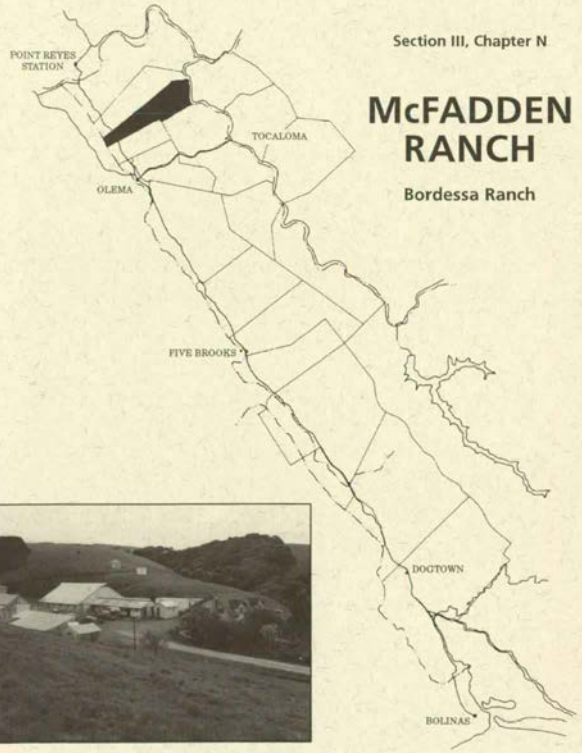
Rapp built two silos next to his new sanitary barn (top). He had one of the first certified dairies in Marin County. *M. B. Boissevain photograph courtesy of Jack Mason Museum.* Bottom, the interior of the milking barn. *Courtesy of Joan (Rapp) Mayhew.*

The old C. W. Howard W Ranch house at Bear Valley Ranch in the 1920s. *Courtesy of Joan (Rapp) Mayhew.*

The entrance to Gene Compton's Bear Valley Ranch in 1947. This is now the entrance to Point Reyes National Seashore headquarters. *Seth Wood photograph courtesy of Jack Mason Museum.*

The Robert Menzies family camped at the Bear Valley Ranch in the 'teens. *Courtesy of Mary (Menzies) Page.*

The Menzies cabin at Bear Valley. Menzies planted the popular dogwood and dawn redwood trees by Bear Valley Creek. The cabin was razed in the 1970s. *Marin County Library Collection.*



Section III, Chapter N

McFADDEN RANCH

Bordessa Ranch

HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE

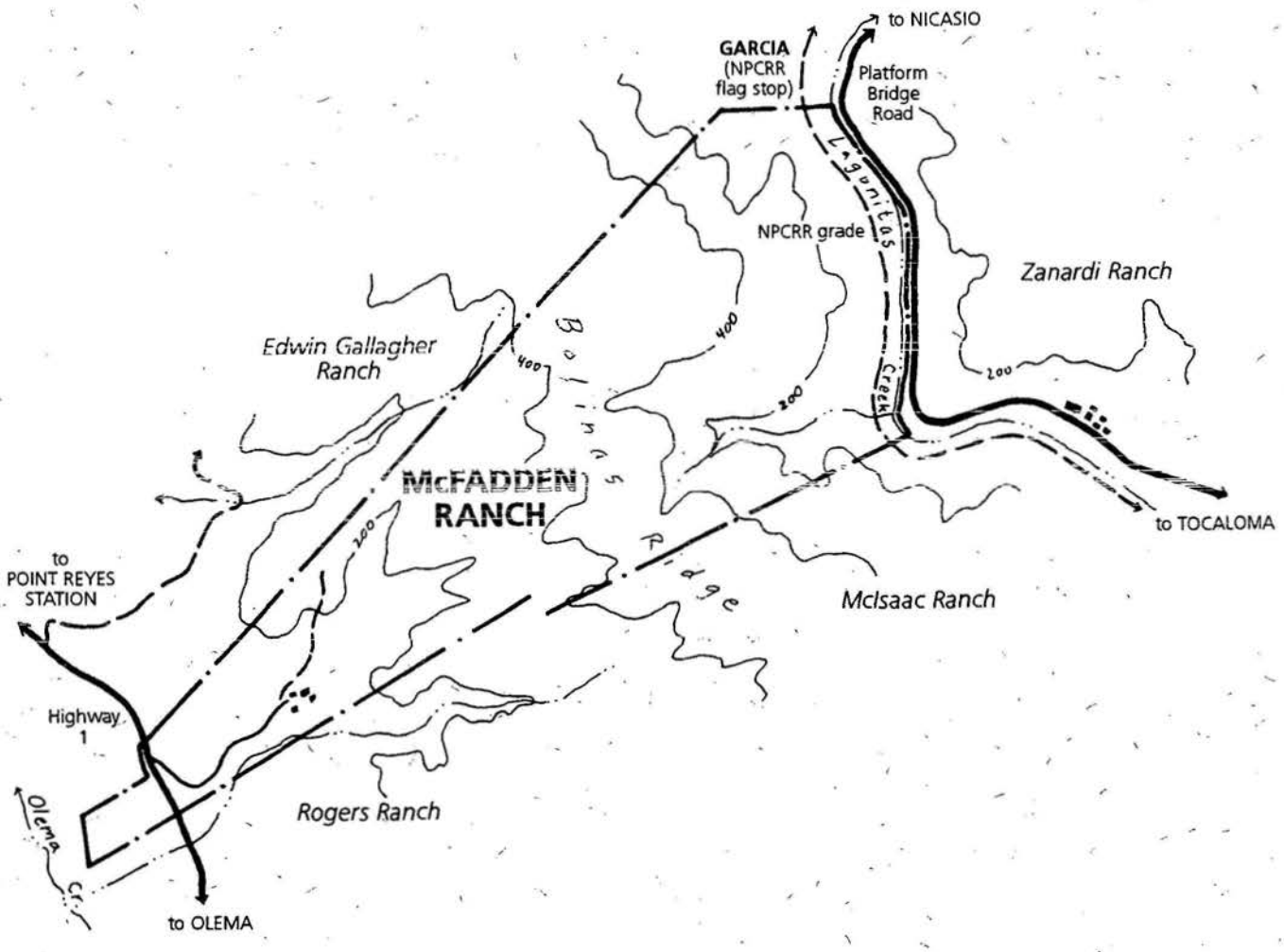
McFADDEN RANCH

OLEMA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA
Golden Gate National Recreation Area

SCALE IN MILES
0 .1 .2 .3 .4 .5

Traced from USGS Quads - Contour Interval 200'
historic boundaries approximate

NORTH



N. McFADDEN RANCH
Former Bordessa Ranch
(Golden Gate National Recreation Area)

1. Description

The McFadden Ranch is one of the most recent additions to Golden Gate National Recreation Area at the time of this writing. The 340-acre beef cattle ranch is a narrow parcel that stretches from the Olema Valley over Bolinas Ridge to Lagunitas Creek, with the paved main access driveway off Highway One at a point halfway between Olema and Point Reyes Station. The ranch consists of grassland with pockets of brush and trees in the gulches and on the eastern slope. It is bounded on the north by the former Edwin Gallagher Ranch, on the east by Lagunitas Creek, on the south by the McIsaac and Rogers Ranches, and on the west by Olema Creek. The ranch complex is located about half of a mile up the driveway from the highway.

2. History of McFadden Ranch

The McFadden Ranch was originally part of Rafael Garcia's holdings as confirmed in his 1866 patent to Rancho Tomales y Baulines. In 1868, as part of the subdivision of Garcia's property after his death, a 340.93 acre parcel was given to one of his daughters, Maria Hilaria Garcia, in a deed dated May 29, 1868.[179]

At an unknown date, apparently between 1868 and 1871, Maria H. Garcia married a fellow Mexican, Jose de la Cruz Noriel. Apparently the couple lived on their Olema lot. Mrs. Noriel died in 1872 shortly after giving birth to a child, who then died a few days later. In 1874 Jose Noriel sold the ranch to local dairyman Burton Shippy; no doubt Shippy operated a dairy and may have built the original buildings on the property. In 1883 Shippy sold the ranch to John Carter, an Irish-born dairyman who at the time was leasing a Shafter ranch at Point Reyes. Some time before 1888, the ranch was leased to

---

[179] Abstract of Title and Certificate of Search, Part of the Rancho Tomales y Baulines (Felix Garcia/Shafter Tract), original document in PRNS Collection; Deeds Book G, p. 98, MCRO.

dairyman George Runckles, who occupied the ranch and owned 72 head of cattle.[180]

Apparently the transactions made by Jose de la Cruz Noriel were invalid, for Mrs. Noriel's estate sold the ranch on August 20, 1888, to John Carter, probably making Shippy's sale valid. Carter soon sold the ranch to David Myers for $20,000; curiously, Myers had been found by the Marin County Superior Court to be the grantee of Noriel's estate only a week after the decree of distribution to Carter. Myers, born in Ireland, came to Marin County in 1865 and had a dairy in Novato for many years; he apparently operated the Noriel ranch, eventually with co-owner (and brother-in-law) Gilbert Crandell, until Myers' widow Mamie and Crandell and his wife Nellie sold the ranch to David Bordessa of Tomales in 1918.[181]

Bordessa was a cattle dealer who owned a public house in Tomales, and apparently had no personal interest in dairying on the new ranch. The ranch was leased to Joseph Memeo in 1918 and then to Abramo Boccaleoni from 1921 until September 11, 1923, when Bordessa's son Rico and his cousin and partner Salvatore Bordessa moved to the ranch and took over the dairy business. Salvatore did not stay long, but Rico Bordessa took on the business alone, milking forty to fifty cows by hand with the help of one hired man. Bordessa separated the milk, selling the sweet cream to the Point Reyes Cooperative Creamery.[182]

Bordessa made many improvements at the dairy in the mid-1930s. He built a large Grade B milking barn on the site of the combination dairy and bunkhouse, which he had moved across the yard in preparation for the new construction. Only two years later Bordessa built a Grade A barn, leaving the Grade B barn for hay storage and calves. He installed milking machines, driving the vacuum pump with a gasoline engine in a separate machine shed. Milk was cooled and put in cans until a tank was installed in the 1950s.

---

[180]Deeds Book 8, p. 300, Book O, p. 9, MCRO; "Official Map of Marin County," 1873, PRNS; Guinn, Coast Counties, p. 1263.

[181]Deeds Book 9, p. 55, and Book 196, p. 274, MCRO and collection of McFadden family; court order of August 27, 1888 in "Abstract . . . Nelson Hotel"; Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 442; interview with William J. Scilacci.

[182]Leases Book J, pp. 323, 333 and 492, MCRO. Information on the Bordessa and McFadden years at the ranch from interviews with Rico Bordessa and Jim and Virginia (Bordessa) McFadden, and the ranch ledger in the McFadden's possession.

Bordessa raised a family in the old ranch house. Bordessa's widowed mother deeded the ranch to Rico in 1955, who then quit milking cows in 1960 and leased the dairy to Pete Poiani. Poiani milked there until 1971, when Bordessa's daughter and son-in-law Virginia and Jim McFadden bought the ranch. The McFaddens put beef cattle on the ranch and continue in the cattle business today. McFadden remodeled the old house in the 1970s, stripping it to the frame and at least doubling the size. The McFaddens have raised a family there, and took a 25-year reservation of use and occupancy when the National Park Service bought the ranch on January 9, 1989. Rico Bordessa died at age 87 in early 1992.[183]

3. Buildings and Historic Resources

The McFadden Ranch contains five historic buildings exhibiting varying degrees of historic integrity. The main house and machine room have been remodeled and have no remaining historic integrity.

a. Barn

The Grade B barn was built in 1934 by Rico Bordessa. It was used for only two years for milking and has been used for hay and other storage since 1936. It is a 48' by 62' wood frame building with concrete floor and foundation. The framing style is more modern than typically found, with an engineered roof similar to a typical large Grade A barn. The barn has corrugated metal siding and roof. It is in good condition and possesses good historic integrity.

b. Grade A Barn

Attached to the large barn is the 54' by 24' sanitary barn built by Bordessa in 1936. This 1,200 square foot concrete and wood building is of the typical Grade A design, although smaller than most. Although out of use for 20 years, it is in good condition and possesses good historic integrity.

---

[183]Official Records Book 982, p. 613, MCRO; Marin Independent Journal, January 22, 1992, p. B2; park administrative files, PRNS.

c. Old Dairy

This building resembles a typical older horse barn was the original 18' by 25' dairy house used for separating cream and making butter prior to 1936. The wood frame building has evidence of a residential loft, with ghosts of a floorline and steep stairway; old-fashioned wallpaper remains on much of the upper walls. The roof structure, including rafters, has been replaced. Sheds with random-width vertical board siding were added to the sides of the building in the 1930s, enlarging the structure to 25' by 46', but some of the original shiplap siding remains. The old dairy is in fair condition. As the additions occurred more than 50 years ago, the dairy possesses good historic integrity.

d. Garage

This is an old, 18' by 50' three-bay open carriage shed now used for equipment storage and as a garage. One small section in the center has been enclosed. Built of wood, with random-width vertical board siding on the back and sides, it appears to be at least 100 years old and is in fair condition. Its integrity is good.

c. Shed

This small, 12' by 15' shed appears to be more than 50 years old. It is wood frame, with random-width vertical board siding, a corrugated metal gable roof and a plywood door. It is in fair condition but has good historic integrity.

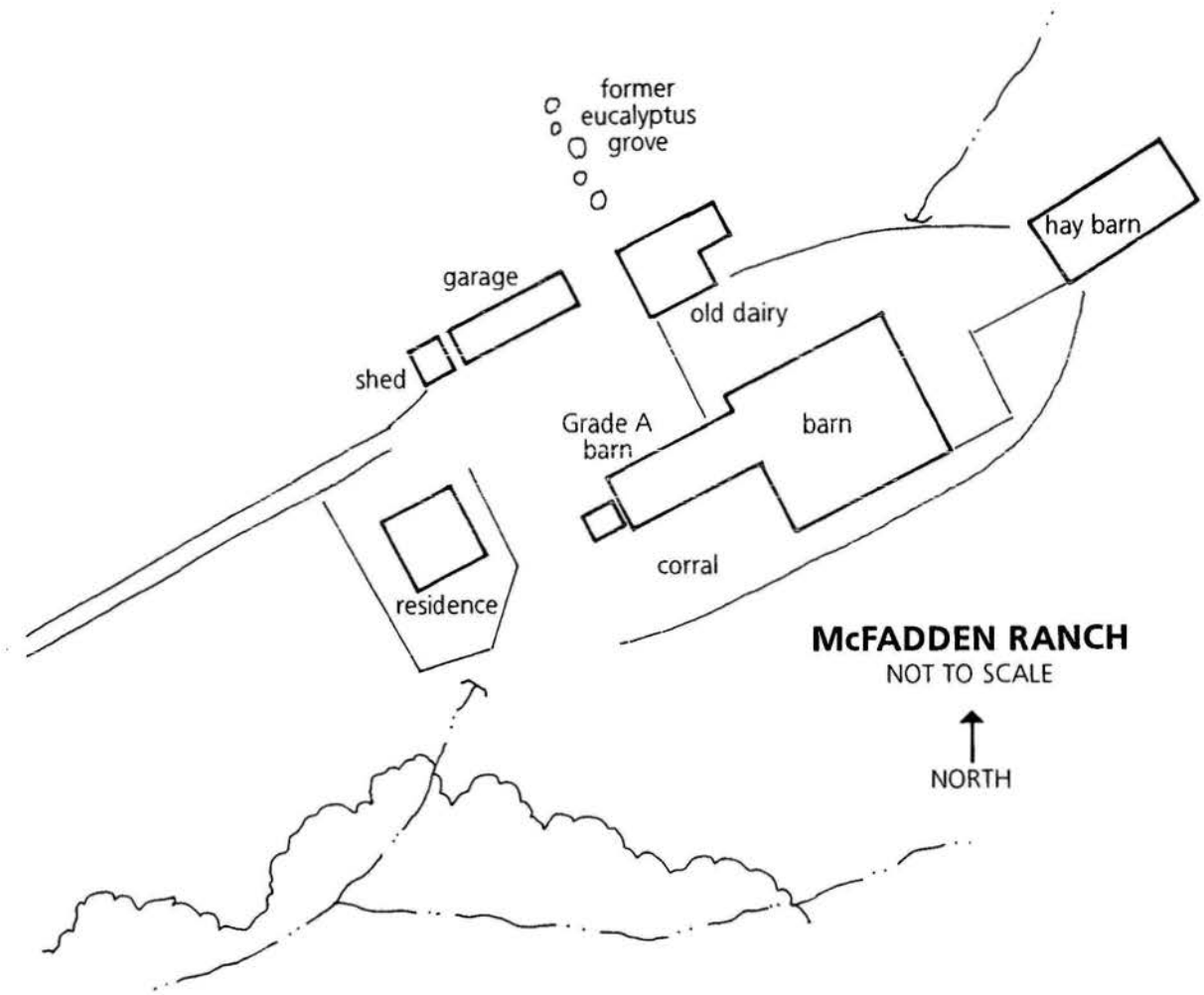
The McFadden Ranch also contains the remodeled house, remodeled 12' by 15' machine shed now used as a bedroom, a large open pole barn for storing hay, a water tank, pump house and trailer residence. The road to the ranch follows the original route except for the first 1/8 of a mile, and is paved.

4. Significance of the McFadden Ranch

The McFadden Ranch has historic significance as one of the contributing dairy ranches in the district. Although the house has been remodeled, the ranch retains its overall historic integrity.

Historic Features

1. Barn, 1934
2. Grade A Barn, 1936
3. Old Dairy, ca. 1880
4. Garage, ca 1880
5. Shed, ca. 1930s
6. Road, ca. 1870s
7. Fences, gates, corrals



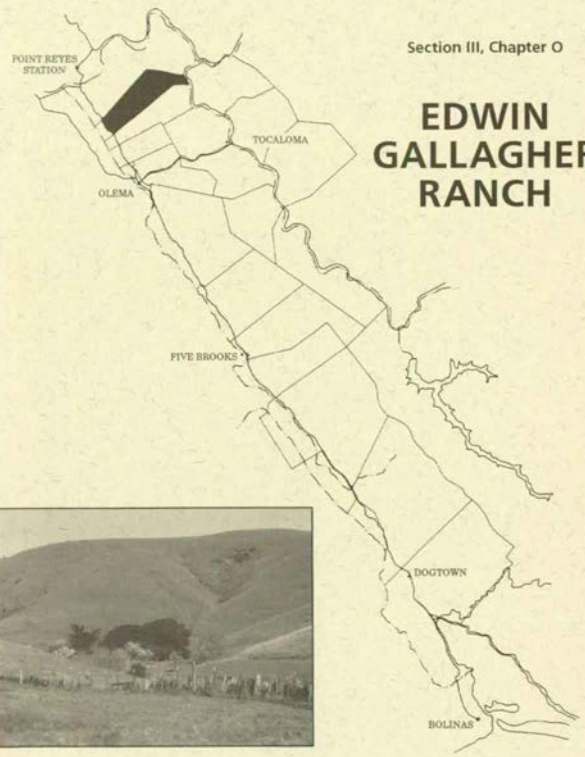
Rico Bordessa at work on his dairy ranch in the 1940s. *Courtesy of Virginia (Bordessa) McFadden.*

View of the Bordessa Ranch house before it was remodeled. *Courtesy of Virginia (Bordessa) McFadden.*

DAIRY FARMING IN THE OLEMA VALLEY

Section III, Chapter O

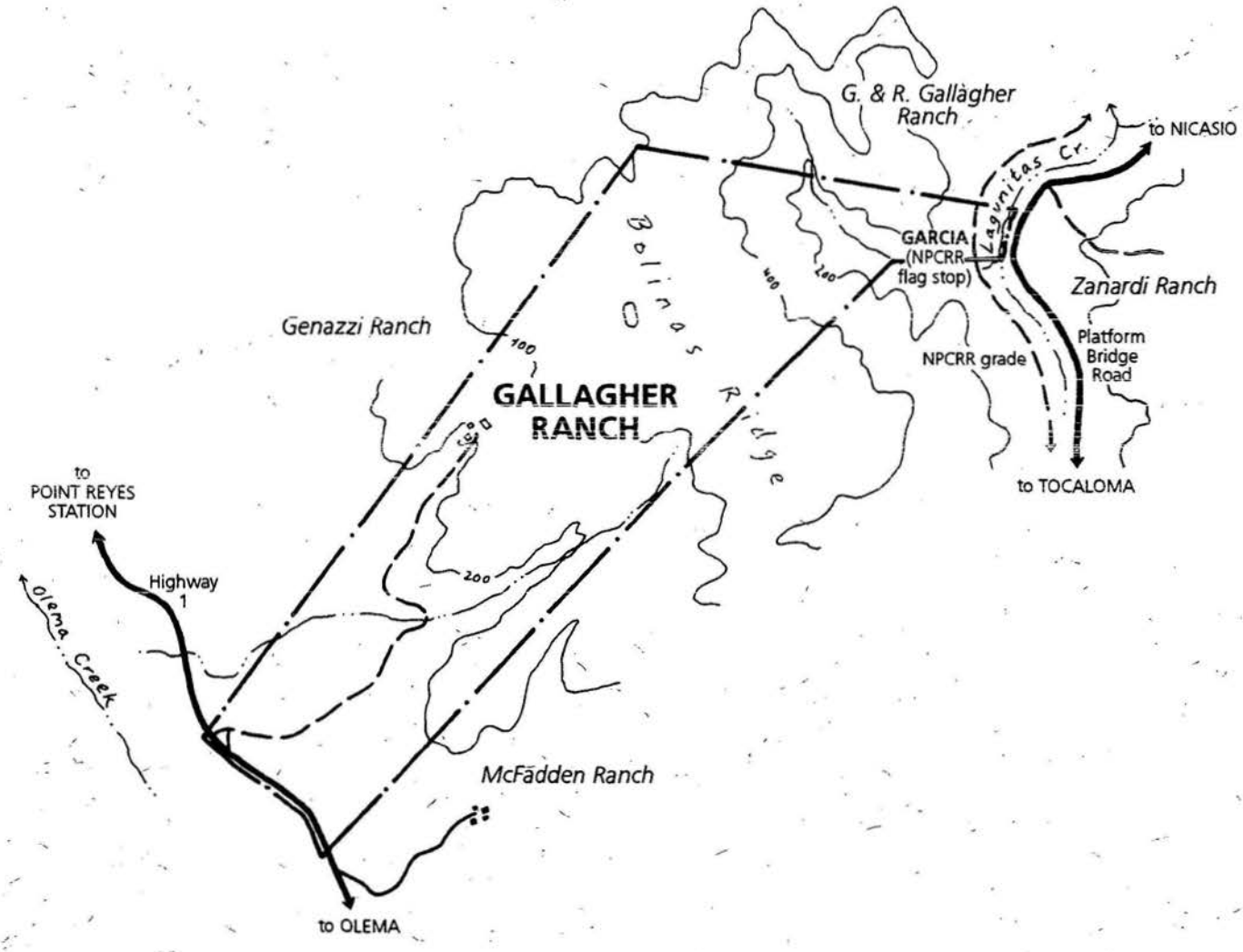
EDWIN GALLAGHER RANCH



HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE

EDWIN GALLAGHER RANCH

OLEMA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA
Golden Gate National Recreation Area



O. EDWIN GALLAGHER RANCH (site) (Golden Gate National Recreation Area)

1. Description

The 321-acre former Edwin Gallagher Ranch is a narrow strip of land that reaches from Highway One on the west to Lagunitas Creek on the east. The ranch has not operated for about 30 years and the old buildings were removed about 10 years ago. The land is mostly grassy with hardwood trees in the gulches and brush and trees covering much of the east slope. The ranch is bounded on the north by the Genazzi Ranch, on the east by Lagunitas Creek and Platform Bridge Road, on the south by the McFadden Ranch and on the west by Highway One. It is currently used for grazing and feed crops.

2. History of the Edwin Gallagher Ranch

Felipe Garcia received this ranch as his part of the family land division of 1868. Felipe and his wife Virginia lived in San Francisco and did not appear to have any interest in working the land; Felipe, in consideration of "love and affection," deeded the ranch to his wife in October of 1872.[184]

Edward Gallagher, a native of Ireland, bought the ranch from the Garcias for $9636 on November 12, 1875. Gallagher operated a dairy ranch on the property, and left it to his sons Daniel and Edward around 1890. Daniel Gallagher married Ellen Ryan and the couple had two children; Mrs. Gallagher died and, coincidentally, Daniel married another Ellen Ryan and had two more children. A son from the first wife, Edwin Gallagher, continued to operate the Grade B dairy after his father's death in 1934. The ranch was never connected to commercial electricity, reportedly because Ellen Gallagher didn't want the modern conveniences. Her son Edwin milked cows and kept up the old buildings without electricity until his mother's estate sold the ranch in 1962 to San Francisco pharmacist Abe Jean Melmon. Three years later the Melmons sold the ranch for $240,000 to their friend Dr. Millard Ottinger. Ottinger,

[184]Deeds Book H, p. 83 and Book J, p. 595, MCRO.

owner of a large Point Reyes ranch since the 1930s, did not live on the ranch, and died in 1972.[185]

During the late 1960s and through the 1970s the ranch was inhabited by hippies led by theater artist Peter Coyote, later to become a successful film actor. Living the counterculture life that blossomed in the area during the late 1960s and through the 1970s, the occupants remodeled the interior of the house with old barn wood and outfitted even the smallest outbuildings as homes; still, the ranch had no electricity. The place became known as Coyote Ranch. The last residents left in 1985.[186]

After the death of Ottinger's widow Kyoko in 1985, the conservator of the estate began negotiations towards park purchase. Kyoko Ottinger also owned the Hanna Boys Center and Florence Crittenden Home for Unwed Mothers in San Francisco; these institutions as well as one Masayo Kitada became the heirs to the estate. After pleas of hardship due to Kitada's illness and the needs of the charitable institutions, the federal government bought the property on October 29, 1987 for $600,000. Previous to the sale the grazing leaseholder demolished the remaining buildings. Today the land is used for grazing and feed crops under a special use permit to Robert Giacomini of Point Reyes Station.[187]

3. Historic Resources

No buildings remain on the Gallagher Ranch. The fence lines remain the same but of updated materials, although a number of sections of older split picket fences survive. The road to the ranch, about one mile of narrow dirt road, dates from the earliest days and is a contributing feature to the cultural landscape.

---

[185]Deeds Book P, p. 66, Official Records Book 1580, p. 36 & 38, Book 1976, p. 260, MCRO; Dewey Livingston, Ranching on the Point Reyes Peninsula (Point Reyes: National Park Service, 1993), pp. 427-428; interviews with Marian (Gallagher) Morris and Virginia McFadden. Daniel Gallagher's first wife, the former Ellen Ryan, died, leaving two children; Gallagher married another Ellen Ryan and had two more children.

[186]Personal observations of the author.

[187]Tract File (L-4125), Tract 05-137, PRNS.

4. Historic Significance of the Edwin Gallagher Ranch

The former Gallagher Ranch is a significant contributor to the Olema Valley dairy district, but the absence of historic resources leaves it with no integrity. The cultural landscape features remaining, such as the road and the fences, are significant.

Historic Features

1. Ranch road
2. Fences

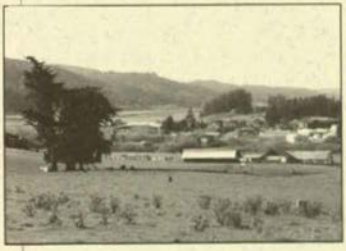
The Edwin Gallagher Ranch house shortly before demolition, looking northeast, 1985. *Photograph by Dewey Livingston.*

The Gallagher Ranch shortly before demolition, 1985. *Photographs by Dewey Livingston.*

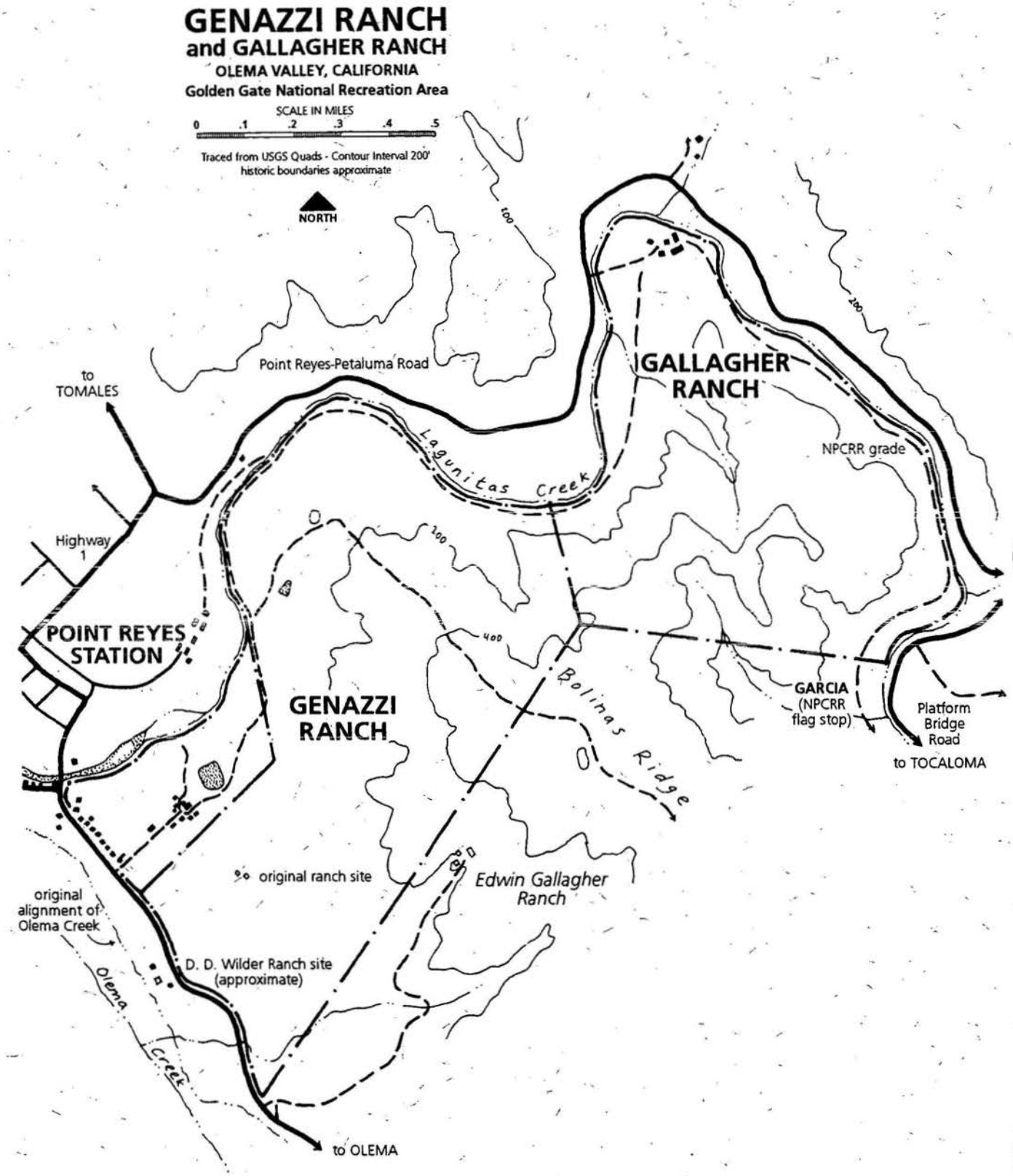
DAIRY FARMING IN THE OLEMA VALLEY

Section III, Chapter P

GENAZZI RANCH



HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE


GENAZZI RANCH
and GALLAGHER RANCH
OLEMA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA
Golden Gate National Recreation Area
SCALE IN MILES
0 .1 .2 .3 .4 .5
Traced from USGS Quads - Contour Interval 200'
historic boundaries approximate
NORTH
to TOMALES
Point Reyes-Petaluma Road
GALLAGHER RANCH
Lagunitas Creek
NPCRR grade
Highway 1
POINT REYES STATION
GENAZZI RANCH
Bolinas Ridge
GARCIA (NPCRR flag stop)
Platform Bridge Road
to TOCALOMA
original ranch site
Edwin Gallagher Ranch
original alignment of Olema Creek
D. D. Wilder Ranch site (approximate)
Olema Creek
to OLEMA

P. GENAZZI RANCH
(portion in Golden Gate National Recreation Area)

1. Description

While within the legislated boundaries of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, only part of the Genazzi Ranch was purchased by the National Park Service. The ranch, located south across Lagunitas Creek from the town of Point Reyes Station, was split at the time of federal purchase, with 435 acres of grazing land included in the park and about 60 acres retained by the Genazzi family. The ranch is bounded on the north by Lagunitas (Papermill) Creek, on the east by the Gallagher Ranch, on the south by the former Edwin Gallgher Ranch and on the east by Highway One and some small residential parcels.

The pioneer dairy ranch of D. D. Wilder no longer remains, in fact its exact location is not known for certain. It is believed that Wilder's historic dairy was located on land adjacent to the Genazzi Ranch, on a parcel now occupied by CalTrans as a maintenance station. Wilder, who became a prominent California dairyman after leaving Olema, leased land from Rafael Garcia and his family in the vicinity of the Genazzi Ranch, with a house near the creek. His place in early dairying history of the area deserves mention in this report.

2. History of the Genazzi Ranch

The history of the Genazzi Ranch must begin with the occupation of Delos D. Wilder, an Olema pioneer who eventually left Marin County and became a prominent dairyman near Santa Cruz. Wilder was born in Connecticut on February 23, 1826. He followed the Gold Rush to California in 1853 and arrived in Marin County in June of 1859. With $200 Wilder started a chicken ranch and small dairy where he met with some success. Wilder rented land near Samuel P. Taylor's paper mill warehouse on Lagunitas Creek from Rafael Garcia and became friends and apparently partners with nearby rancher L. K. Baldwin (see chapter on Truttman Ranch). He married neighbor John Nelson's sister Delia and started a family at the ranch. By 1870 he employed six laborers, five of whom were Swiss immigrants; previous employees had been

Joseph Codoni and Canadian Neil McIsaac, both of whom would become leading dairymen in the area.[188]

About 1870 Wilder, in partnership with Baldwin, moved to Santa Cruz County and bought a dairy ranch which prospered. Eventually the partners split their holdings, both living to an old age as prominent citizens of the coast. Wilder's ranch north of Santa Cruz has become a part of the state park system, with most of the ranch being preserved and interpreted for the public.

Upon Rafael Garcia's death in 1866 the remaining lands of Rancho Tomales y Baulines were divided among the heirs. Garcia's widow Maria Loreta received 819 acres at the northern part of the rancho, forming the southern boundary of what became the Genazzi and Gallagher ranches. Mrs. Garcia reportedly lived on a flat area of the ranch above today's Genazzi buildings. In 1873 she was murdered by a jilted lover who then ran to a nearby house and killed himself (see page 31). The land was left to her children, who soon divided the lands into the parcels known today. First, a 100-foot right-of-way along the creek was sold to the North Pacific Coast Railroad Company. Then, two parcels were sold to Emma Shafter Howard, owner of many Point Reyes ranches. Mrs. Howard sold a 124-acre parcel in the northwestern corner of the ranch to her brother-in-law James McMillan Shafter who built a house and dairy, naming it Riverside Farm; Shafter also bought the eastern 330 acres of Mrs. Garcia's holdings. One of Emma Howard's Point Reyes tenants, dairyman William E. Evans, bought 372 acres directly south of the Riverside Farm.[189]

Shafter rented the Riverside Farm to various parties; it was there that his brother William Newton Shafter, who had supervised the vast Shafter dairy empire for many years, lived his last years. By 1892 the Evans parcel had been bought by Candido Righetti, a Swiss dairyman; in 1893 Righetti bought the Riverside Farm for $8,000, forming an almost 500-acre ranch and moving buildings from the Evans site down to the Riverside Farm site where they remain today. Righetti operated a dairy there until renting the ranch to Point Reyes tenant ranchers Peter and Isa Campigli. After the Campiglis retired to

---

[188]Harrison Santa Cruz County, p. 325; "Abstract . . . Nelson Hotel"; Marin Journal, April 4 and September 5, 1868, November 13, 1869, July 9, 1870 and November 7, 1889; Population Schedules, 9th U.S. Census, 1870.

[189]Deeds Book G p. 98, Book H 77, Book K p. 647, Book M pp. 169, 357 & 462, Book Q pp. 571 & 621, Book P p. 396, MCRO; Munro-Fraser, Marin County, pp. 245.

Olema, Righetti sold the ranch to their son-in-law, Federico (Fred) Genazzi.[190]

Fred Genazzi was born in Maggia, Switzerland, and came to California in 1896 at age 14. He worked on ranches in the Tomales area and eventually rented a dairy ranch in Penngrove, Sonoma County; for a short time he operated a grocery store and saloon in Petaluma. Genazzi married Erminia Campigli, who had been raised at the U Ranch on Point Reyes and was now a widow with two children. Shortly after their marriage Genazzi bought the dairy business at the Righetti Ranch from his father-in-law, and in 1919 bought the ranch property. The couple raised four children at the ranch, including the two from Mrs. Genazzi's previous marriage. Genazzi milked about 100 cows and separated cream as a member of the Point Reyes Cooperative Creamery until he built a Grade A barn in 1934. Genazzi's son Harold entered the business and, with brother-in-law George Gilardi, bought the business entirely in 1951. Fred Genazzi retired to a house he built on the edge of the ranch; the family sold some residential parcels along the state highway during this time. Erminia Genazzi died in 1960 and her husband passed away in 1963. Harold Genazzi and his family operated the Grade A dairy until he accepted a federal dairy buyout in 1987. The next year the National Park Service bought almost all of the grazing land on the ranch, leaving 60 acres under the ownership of Harold Genazzi and his sister, Evelyn Gilardi. The family holds a 25-year reservation on the grazing property, and raise beef cattle and replacement heifers.[191]

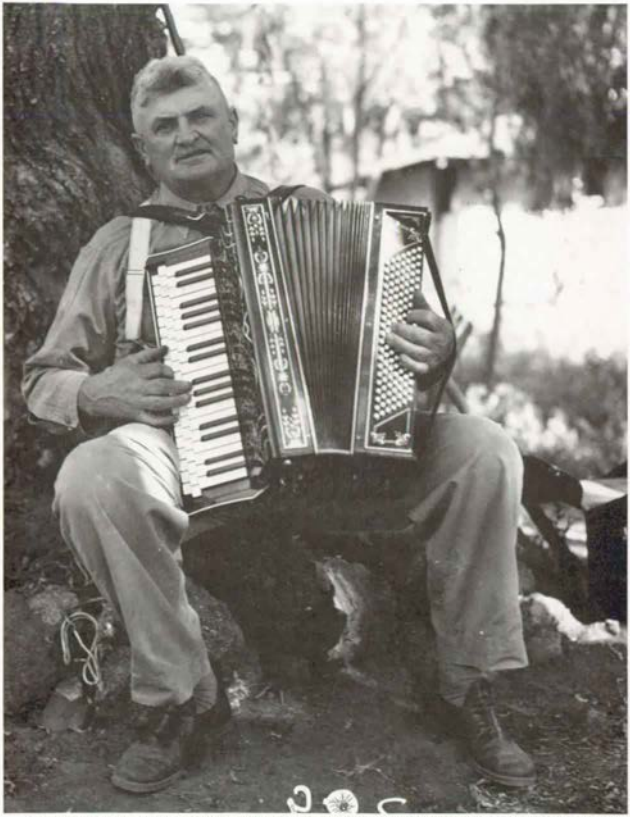
3. Historic Resources

All of the potentially historic ranch structures are in the Genazzi's private parcel. On government land are the site of the old ranch, marked by a stand of old cypress trees, the former NPCRR railroad grade, and the fence lines which have not changed in location since 1868.

---

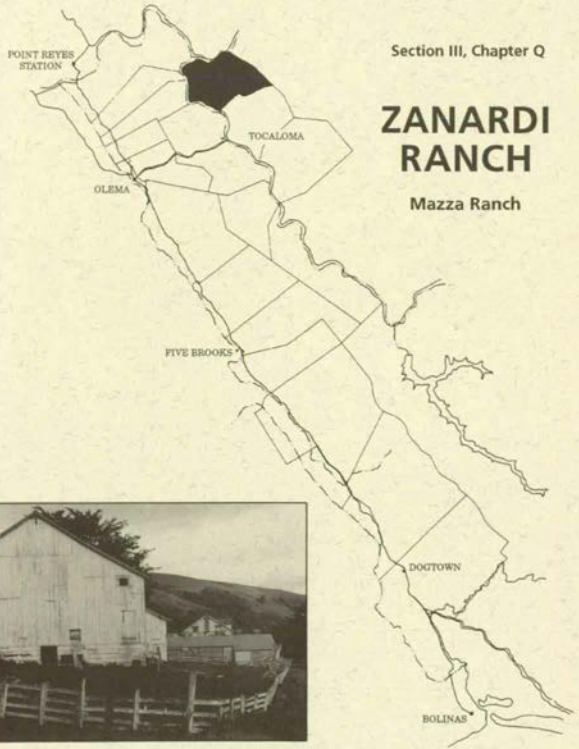
[190]Official Map of Marin County by George M. Dodge, County Surveyor, 1892; Livingston, Ranching, p. 327; Mason, Point Reyes, p. 81.

[191]Genazzi ranch information from interviews with Evelyn and George Gilardi and Harold Genazzi.



Federico (Fred) Genazzi, Olema Valley dairyman. *Seth Wood photograph courtesy of Jack Mason Museum.*

DAIRY FARMING IN THE OLEMA VALLEY

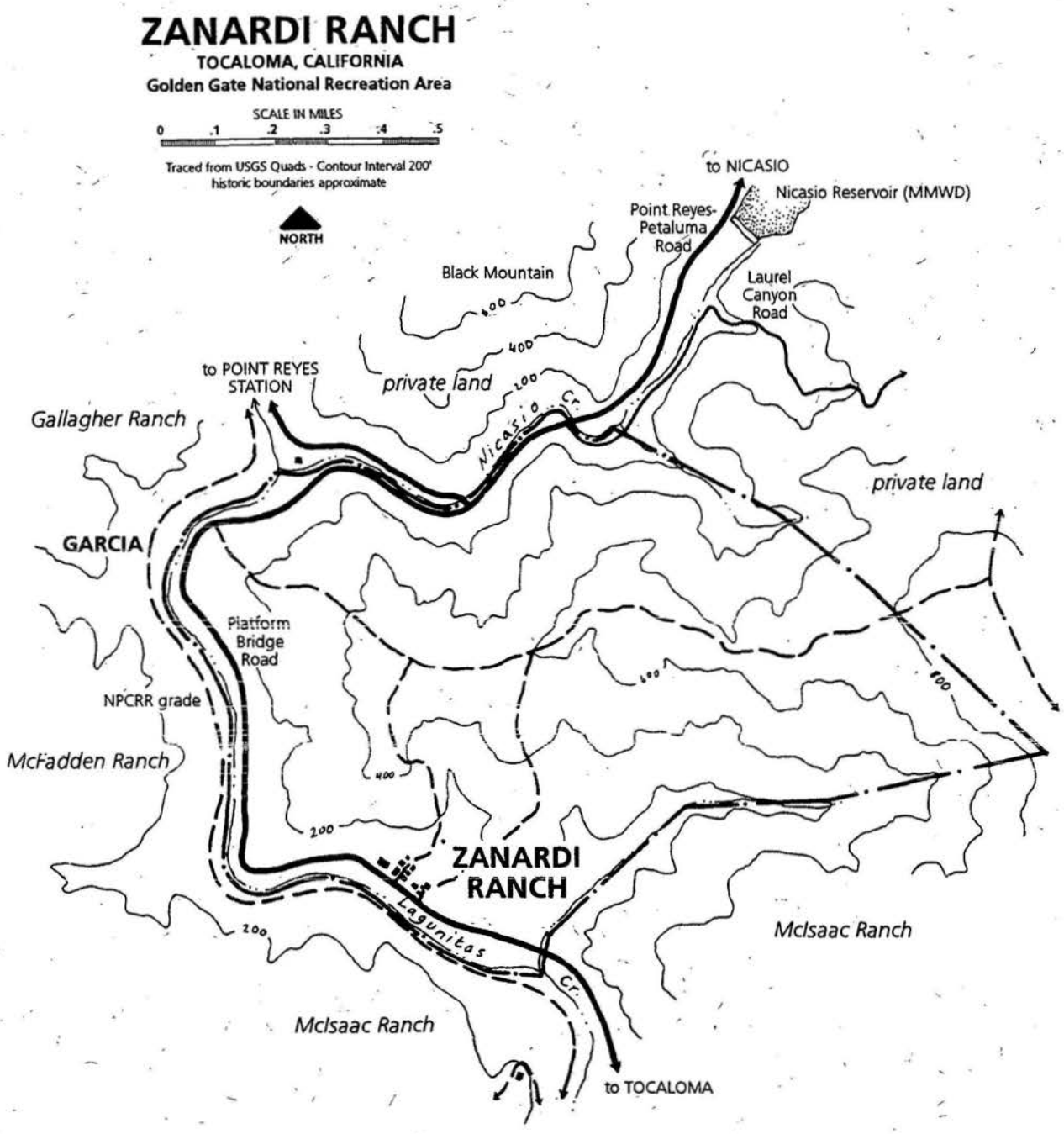


Section III, Chapter Q

ZANARDI RANCH

Mazza Ranch

HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE


ZANARDI RANCH
TOCALOMA, CALIFORNIA
Golden Gate National Recreation Area
SCALE IN MILES
0 .1 .2 .3 .4 .5
Traced from USGS Quads - Contour Interval 200'
historic boundaries approximate
NORTH
to NICASIO
Nicasio Reservoir (MMWD)
Point Reyes-Petaluma Road
Black Mountain
Laurel Canyon Road
to POINT REYES STATION
private land
Gallagher Ranch
Nicasio Cr.
private land
GARCIA
Platform Bridge Road
NPCRR grade
McFadden Ranch
ZANARDI RANCH
Lagunitas Cr.
McIsaac Ranch
McIsaac Ranch
to TOCALOMA

Q. ZANARDI RANCH
Former Mazza Ranch
(Golden Gate National Recreation Area)

1. Description

The Zanardi Ranch, now occupied by Anna Zanardi's son Pat Martin, is a well-preserved former dairy ranch on Platform Bridge Road, a back road that follows Lagunitas Creek north from Tocaloma. The 573-acre ranch rises from its extensive creek frontage to the top of the ridge that overlooks Nicasio Valley to the east and Lagunitas Creek and Point Reyes to the west. It is bounded on the west by the McFadden, Ottinger and Gallagher Ranches, on the north by Platform Bridge and Point Reyes-Petaluma Roads, on the northeast by private lands, and on the south by the McIsaac Ranch. The property is mostly grassland with wooded gulches and very small amount of level land. The ranch complex sits on a rise next to the county road in the southern corner of the property.

2. History of the Zanardi Ranch

William J. Miller, a major landowner of the vast Rancho Nicasio, divided much of his property in the 1860s. In 1866 he sold a 1,201.64-acre portion on the extreme western section of his holdings to brothers Joseph and John DeMartin for $6,000. The Swiss brothers apparently developed a dairy on the property. Three years later, on August 25, 1869, the DeMartins sold slightly less than half of the ranch, 582.5 acres, to two other brothers from Switzerland, Luigi (Louis) and Joseph Mazza for $10,400. The Mazzas set to work developing their own dairy ranch, although Joseph died soon after, in 1873.[192]

Luigi Mazza came to California in 1868 the long way, by ship around Cape Horn. Mazza was already well-traveled: he had participated at the young age of 13 in the Swiss gold rush to Australia in the mid-1850s. Mazza worked on a dairy at Petaluma for a year before buying his Marin County property. Five years after settling at Tocaloma he married Lucia Giacomini, possibly a

[192]Deeds Book F, p. 89, Book I, p. 548, and death records, MCRO.

neighbor (Giovanni Giacomini owned the adjacent ranch during the late 1860s). The couple eventually had eight children: Romilda, Onellia (Nellie), Claudina, Olympia, Willie, Alma, Samuel and Katherine. The Mazzas first lived in a small house, then built a two-story building with a creamery below and living quarters above. After gaining some profit from the dairy, Mazza built a substantial house in 1886 overlooking Lagunitas Creek. The older houses remained, the original one being attached to the new house. Mazza had also built a large milking barn a few years earlier. He inscribed his name and the year on beams in the barn and house.[193]

Mazza's son Samuel worked on the ranch until he purchased the business for himself around 1906. He leased the ranch from his mother and siblings, as recorded in a lease dated 1920. Samuel Mazza's dairy was described in a contemporary biography in 1924:

> He gives special attention to dairy farming, keeping between eighty and ninety head of high-grade Jersey cows. He keeps pure-bred sires and is gradually improving the quality of the herd. He raises general crops and this year has the finest field of corn in Marin County, due to the fact that, though it is a dry year, he has irrigated his field. He also has a splendid crop of stock beets for the cattle. He employs modern methods in the operation of the farm, maintains it at the highest state of improvement, and is regarded as one of the most progressive farmers of the district.[194]

Mazza kept up the old family buildings, and in 1923 built a house near the old horse barn. Members of the Mazza family lived here during the subsequent years.

In 1932 Mazza rented the ranch to Pete Poiani, his wife and stepson Louis Zanardi. After Poiani's death Zanardi and his mother bought the ranch from Mazza in the late 1930s; Mazza died in 1948. Mrs. Poiani and Louis Zanardi ran the dairy, building a Grade A sanitary barn in 1947 and shipping whole milk beginning in April of that year. At that time about 110 cows were milked, a number gradually increased to 160. Zanardi took over the business

---

[193]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p.436; Cross, Financing an Empire, p. 527; interviews with Pat Martin and Louis Bloom.

[194]Leases Book J, p. 424, MCRO; Cross, Financing an Empire, pp. 527-528.

about 1950 and stayed in business with stepson Pat Martin until 1972. The Zanardis leased the pasture but continued to reside at the ranch. In 1984 Pat Martin took over the ranch. Later that year the Zanardi Ranch was purchased by the National Park Service from Louis and Anna Zanardi. The grazing land is now leased to Barbara Hall.[195]

3. Buildings and Historic Resources

The Zanardi Ranch contains most of its original structures dating from the 1870s and 1880s. There are 14 historic buildings on the property.

a. Main Residence

The home Luigi Mazza built in 1886 is a two story wood frame dwelling with gable roof and two gable dormers. It is attached to the pioneer dwelling of the ranch, possibly built before 1869. Overall the house measures 48' by 28', has a hip roof porch with chamfered posts, horizontal drop siding, and aluminum sash windows which have replaced the original wood sash. The house has a stone foundation and a wine cellar. The older portion has been remodeled extensively into a modern kitchen. The main house has seen some remodeling, although the exterior and upstairs interior have had few alterations. The house is in good condition. Although there have been some alterations, the historic integrity of the Zanardi house is good.

b. Creamery/Dwelling

This building may have been built around 1870. The Mazzas lived here before moving into the 1886 home. This small, two-story wood frame building, 24' by 16', has dwelling rooms upstairs, and the old dairy house on the ground floor has been converted to a garage with a shed addition. It has horizontal drop siding, is painted gray, and is in fair condition. The creamery has seen alterations, and it possesses fair historic integrity.

---

[195]Zanardi family information from interview with Pat Martin.

d. Barn

This large rectangular wood frame milking/hay barn was reportedly built in 1884. Cows were milked here until 1947, and it has been used for hay storage since then. The 40' by 64' barn has a stone and mortar foundation, random-width vertical board siding with some board and batten, corrugated metal roofing, and an old shed addition on the west side. It is accessed through small wood doors and rolling doors, and has raised wooden floors in the milking galleries, where many of the old wooden stanchions are extant. The name inscribed on the beam could not be located at the time of this writing. The barn is in fair condition and possesses excellent historic integrity.

c. Grade A Barn

This sanitary barn was built in 1947 and is no longer in use. It is a typical modern milking barn built of concrete, wood and corrugated metal. It is in good condition and, although at this writing it is less than 50 years old, has good integrity.

e. Seven Sheds

The largest Zanardi Ranch shed measures 21' by 12' and stands east of the old dairy/dwelling. It appears to be over 100 years old. A small shed with a pyramidal roof, possibly used as a wash house, sits next to the 1886 house and appears to be contemporary with the house. It has horizontal drop siding, two doors, a 6-light wood sash window and a stone and mortar foundation; it is in good condition. Next to that stands a 14' by 24' open front shed and a small 7' by 10' gable roofed shed. Another unpainted 7' by 10' shed of uncertain origin stands behind the 1886 house. A 10' by 10' shingled shed with a pyramidal roof stands in the back yard of the 1923 house. A larger old shed/garage, 10' by 18', stands by the road at the entrance drive to the horse barn. The historic integrity of the sheds varies; most have good integrity with the exception of the 1923 shed and the open front shed.

f. Horse Barn

This is a typical circa 1870s horse barn and carriage shed; five horse stalls remain in the structure. The 25' by 42' barn has random-width vertical board siding and a wood shingle roof except for the rear shed section which has corrugated metal roofing. It has a large doorway on the front and various openings, including a diamond-shaped window, with no glass, at the peak of the front wall. It is in fair to poor condition; the roof is sagging and there is much structural deterioration. The horse barn possesses excellent historic integrity.

g. 1923 House

The house was built by Samuel Mazza in 1923 for family members. It is a simple, L-shaped wood frame building, 30' by 40', with a hip roof, lap siding, and front porch alcove. It is in fair condition. A room was added to the north side in 1961, leaving the house with only fair historic integrity.

h. Water Tank

A 10' by 10' concrete water tank with an old wood frame tank house on top sits on the hillside east of the ranch complex. It has a hip roof, board and batten siding. Its construction date is unknown, but appears to be up to 100 years old, and has excellent historic integrity.

i. Gates, Fences, Corrals

The fence lines on the Zanardi Ranch appear to follow the original lines. Much has been replaced over the years, although some major sections of old-style split-picket fencing remain near the ranch complex.

j. Trees

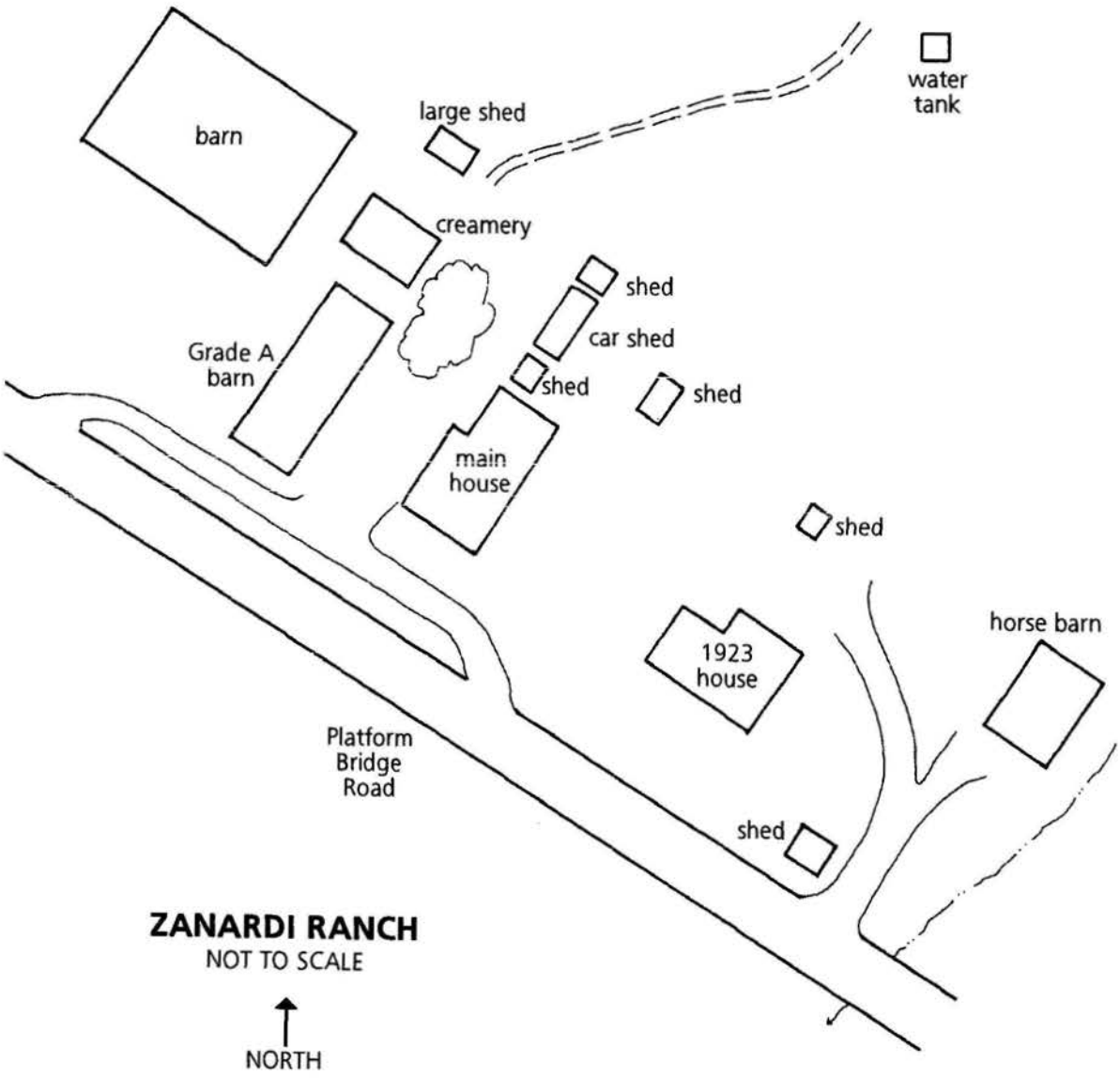
Two groves of monterey cypress stand in the ranch complex. They appear to have been planted well over 50 years ago.

4. Historic Significance of the Zanardi Ranch

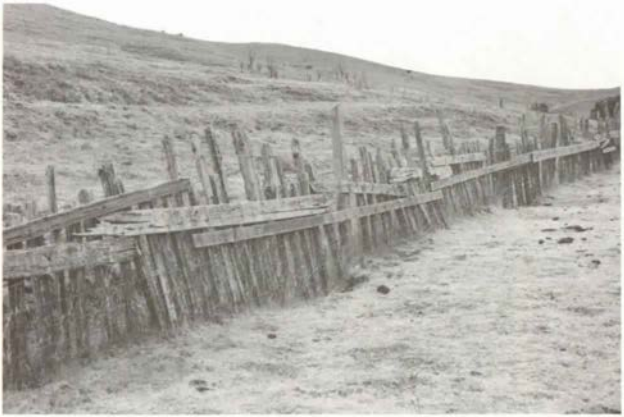
The Zanardi Ranch is significant as an intact and well-preserved example of an early Marin County dairy ranch. Practically all of the original complex remains, with few alterations and additions, and in reasonably good condition. The owners, from only two families, contributed to the important Marin County dairy industry for more than a century.

Historic Features

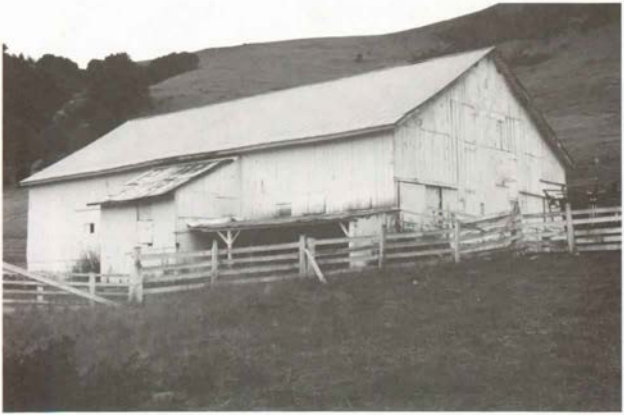
1. Main Residence
2. Creamery/Dwelling
3. Barn
4. Grade A barn
5. 7 Sheds
6. Horse Barn
7. 1923 House
8. Water Tank
9. Gates, Fences, Corrals
10. Cypress Trees


barn
large shed
water tank
creamery
shed
car shed
Grade A barn
shed
shed
main house
shed
horse barn
1923 house
Platform Bridge Road
shed
ZANARDI RANCH
NOT TO SCALE
NORTH

Top, the Zanardi house as it appeared in 1994. Below, the dairy house. *NPS photographs by Dewey Livingston.*



Old split picket fences remain on the Zanardi Ranch, top. Below, the barn. *NPS photos by Dewey Livingston.*



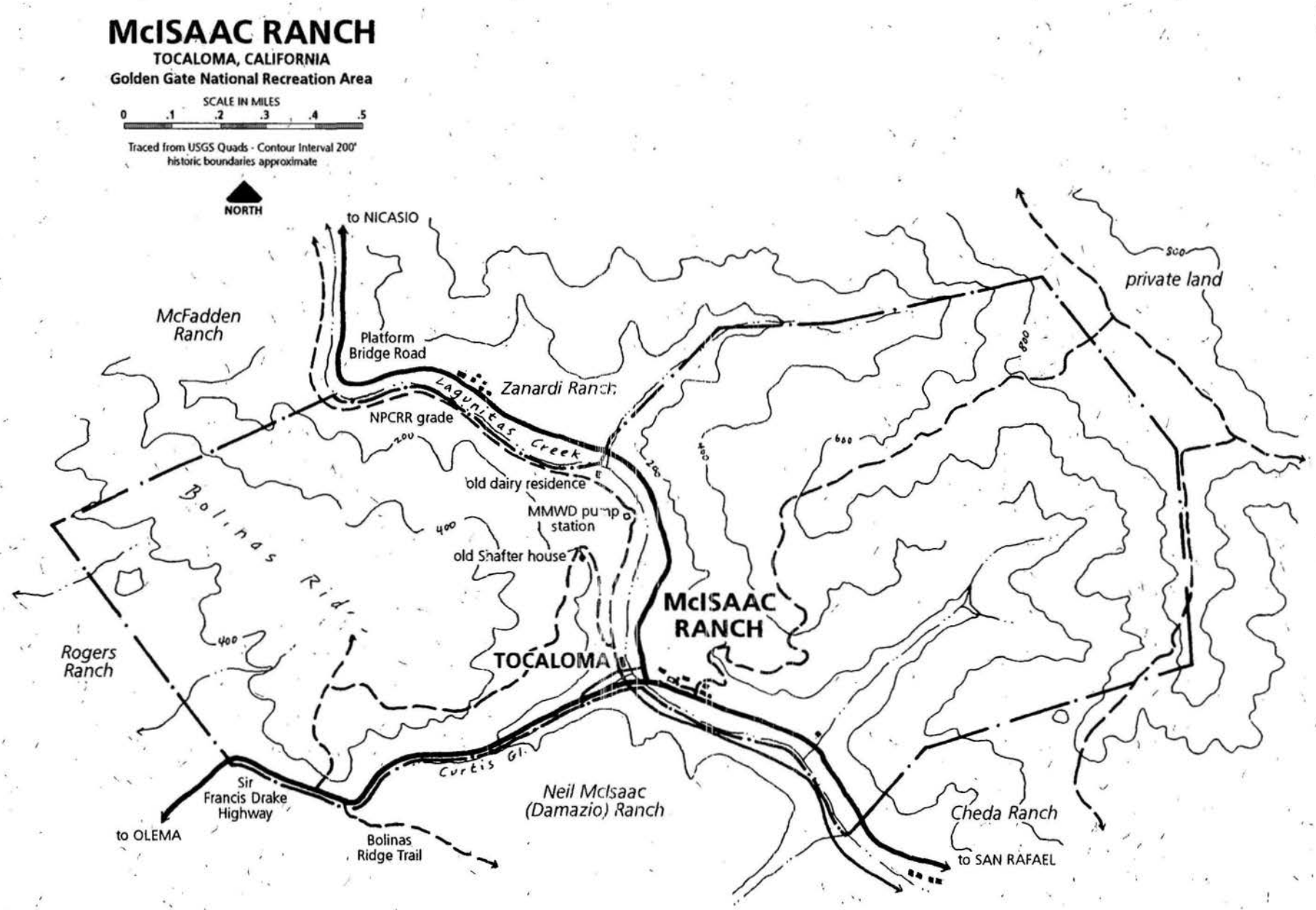
Detail of the 1873 "Official Map of Marin County" by Hiram Austin, showing the northern Olema Valley and the Tocaloma area. *Jack Mason Museum Collection.*

Section III, Chapter R

McISAAC RANCH

Codoni Ranch

HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE


McISAAC RANCH
TOCALOMA, CALIFORNIA
Golden Gate National Recreation Area
SCALE IN MILES
0 .1 .2 .3 .4 .5
Traced from USGS Quads - Contour Interval 200'
historic boundaries approximate
NORTH
to NICASIO
McFadden Ranch
Platform Bridge Road
Zanardi Ranch
NPCRR grade
Lagunitas Creek
old dairy residence
MMWD pump station
old Shafter house
Bolinas Ridge
Rogers Ranch
TOCALOMA
McISAAC RANCH
private land
Curtis Gl.
Neil McIsaac (Damazio) Ranch
Cheda Ranch
Sir Francis Drake Highway
to OLEMA
Bolinas Ridge Trail
to SAN RAFAEL

R. McISAAC RANCH
Former Codoni Ranch
(Golden Gate National Recreation Area)

1. Description

The Donald McIsaac Ranch is located at a former railroad stop called Tocaloma, on Lagunitas (or Papermill) Creek a short distance east of Olema. The main ranch complex sits on a small plot northeast of the creek, the buildings clustered tightly together due to the shortage of level land. In addition, a historic ranch dwelling sits on a hillside west of the main ranch, and a converted dairy house, now a home, is located on the old railroad grade by Lagunitas Creek north of Tocaloma. The ranch itself is composed of two parcels totalling 1,073 acres; the smaller west parcel is a mixture of grassland and woodland running west over the ridgeline, and the east section is mostly grassland on steep rolling hills culminating at the top of a high ridge overlooking the Nicasio Valley. The ranch is bounded on the north by the McFadden and Zanardi Ranches, on the east by private property and the Cheda Ranch, on the south by the Cheda Ranch, the former Jewell Ranch, and the former McIsaac/Ferro (Damazio) Ranch and on the west by the former Clorindo Bloom Ranch. Sir Francis Drake Highway marks most of the southern border of the ranch, and Lagunitas Creek and Platform Bridge Road divide the two ranch parcels.

2. History of McIsaac Ranch

William J. Miller, a major landowner of the vast Rancho Nicasio, divided much of his property in the 1860s. In 1866 he sold a 1,201.64-acre portion on the extreme western section of his holdings to brothers Joseph and John DeMartin for $6,000. The Swiss brothers apparently developed a dairy or two on the property. Three years later, on August 25, 1869, the DeMartins divided the ranch, selling 582.5 acres on the northern portion to the Mazza brothers and the southern 619.5 acres to John or Giovanni deAndrea Giacomini for $5,000. Giacomini left the country, apparently leaving one of the DeMartin brothers running a dairy on the site. Less than a year after purchasing the

Tocaloma ranch, Giacomini sold the property to fellow Swiss immigrants Codoni and Cotta.[196]

Giuseppe (Joseph) Codoni, born of an old family in Corippo, Valle Verzasca in 1847, emigrated to the United States from Switzerland with a group of young townsmen in 1867, arriving in San Francisco on January 2, 1868. The group came to Marin County to work on dairies as others in their area had earlier; Codoni found work on the dairy of Delos D. Wilder north of Olema. In little more than two-and-one-half years Codoni was able to purchase his own dairy ranch, in partnership with a fellow traveler and Corippian named Giacomo Cotta. Codoni and Cotta bought the 619-acre ranch at Tocaloma from Giovanni Giacomini on August 15, 1870, for $10,000. Giacomini, living in Switzerland at the time, enlisted his attorney John D. Giacomini, no doubt a relative and perhaps a son, to handle the sale. Codoni and Cotta took over the dairy and improved it through the years made it a well-respected dairy farm. Cotta sold his undivided half of the ranch in 1874 and bought a ranch of his own nearby. Codoni added the 454.8-acre Felix Garcia ranch about 1895. This ranch, located west of the original Codoni ranch, had been leased as a dairy to a number of men, including Joseph Bloom in 1869 who would take over the Baldwin dairy in the Olema Valley. Garcia sold the ranch to James McMillan Shafter in 1871, then Shafter sold it to his daughter Julia Shafter Hamilton in 1885. By the close of the century Codoni's 1073-acre ranch was a landmark on the road to Point Reyes.[197]

Across the creek from the Codoni Ranch grew the "town" of Tocaloma, really nothing more than a hotel, post office and stables. Tocaloma became the unofficial depot on the North Pacific Coast Railroad for Olema, just over the hill to the west. The North Pacific Coast Railroad, formed in 1871 and built 1873-74, carried freight and passengers on narrow gauge rails from terminals at San Quentin and Sausalito to the redwood country of Sonoma County along the Russian River. At Tocaloma, passengers could take a regularly scheduled stage to Olema and Bolinas, or pay for excursions offered by Payne Shafter to the scenic areas of the Point Reyes Peninsula. John Lycurgus built a two-story hotel, the Tocaloma House, next to the tracks in 1879. The hotel featured a

---

[196]Deeds Book F, p. 89, MCRO, and original deeds in the collection of Don McIsaac; 9th U. S. Census, 1870.

[197]Deeds Book I, p. 384 and K, p. 57, MCRO; Codoni, The Corippians, p. 40-42; Marin Journal, February 25, 1915.

"Swiss bowling alley" and catered to sportsmen. A San Rafael newspaper described the progress there:

> TOCALOMA STATION, the nearest on the railroad to Olema, has made a grand advance within the last year. It is situated in the very midst of the finest sporting district to be found anywhere near the city, its streams abounding with fish and its hills with game. Mr. John Lycurgus has built a fine hotel, and furnished it with every comfort for guests, and Mr. [Payne] Shafter has a stable of good horses for public convenience. Tocaloma will be the destination of many Nimrods and Waltons next week.[198]

Tocaloma-area residents built a schoolhouse on the Cheda Ranch to the east in 1884, taxing themselves for the $600 needed for construction. Twenty-six children from the dairy ranches and the Pioneer Paper Mill upstream filled the school immediately upon its opening. The school was abandoned in 1927 and subsequently torn down.[199]

The Tocaloma House burned down in 1885 and was replaced the next year by a larger one under the ownership of Joseph Bertrand, a French hotel-keeper. Bertrand's Hotel became a favorite of city-dwellers who traveled to the country for recreation and health. Bertrand was appointed Tocaloma's first postmaster on April 17, 1891. Bertrand sold the hotel and property to Caesar Ronchi in 1913. The huge edifice burned to the ground in December of 1916, but Ronchi rebuilt, in more modest form, the next year. Caesar's was a popular stop for motorists on the road to Point Reyes until the 1940s.[200]

Giuseppe Codoni returned briefly to Corippo in 1873 and married Rosa Scilacci, also of an old and respected family of the village. The couple returned to Tocaloma and had six children: Ida (1875), who died in Tocaloma at age six; Silvio (1876); James (1878); Helen (1882), known as Nellie, who would marry Neil McIsaac; Romeo (1884); and Henry (1898). Codoni helped his fellow

---

[198]Marin County Journal, April 17 and September 17, 1879, April 7, 1881, October 25, 1883.

[199]Marin Journal, June 19 and September 11, 1884; Gerald J. Foley and Perry McDonald, Pictorial History of Marin County Schools, The First 100 Years (San Rafael: Marin County Schools Office, 1976), p. 72.

[200]Marin Journal, June 11, 1885; San Rafael Independent, December 30, 1913, December 16, 1916, January 2 and March 27, 1927.

countrymen emigrate to the United States by paying for passage in exchange for a year's work on his or other dairies. Dozens of Swiss got their starts in Marin County at Codoni's ranch, including his younger brother Quinto Codoni, who later became a major landowner and head of the local bank.[201]

Codoni built a new house on the ranch in 1884, attaching it to the small original house rather than destroying the old one. The two-story house was fancier than most in the area, having decorative trim, and appeared as a mansion. The spacious home brought new comforts to the growing family; Codoni believed in giving his children education and culture, and the house was equipped with a library and piano.[202]

Codoni involved himself in local politics and community interests throughout his life. He regularly served as an election clerk at Tocaloma precinct, and became the postmaster at Tocaloma in 1899. Codoni ran for county supervisor in 1884, when a newspaper described him as "a Republican, the seeds of his sympathy with Republican principles are of Alpine origin . . . ." Codoni was also active in the local grove of the Druids and served several terms on the Tocaloma School Board.[203]

Codoni's dairy was considered by many to be a prominent one, no doubt because of Codoni's careful stewardship. The San Rafael newspaper made note of Codoni's operation in 1898:

> Mr. G. Codoni, the enterprising dairyman, is milking over 120 cows at present and is making a box of butter daily. His butter is well known and in great demand in San Francisco, where he has the name of being one of the best butter makers in the County.[204]

In mid-1901 Codoni reportedly milked 133 cows and made 4,500 pounds of butter per month. By this time he had consolidated two dairies, the Felix Garcia dairy ranch to the west and the home ranch; cows were herded across the narrow bridge on the county road at Tocaloma daily for milking at the main

---

[201]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 420; interviews with Rae Codoni and Don McIsaac.

[202]Interview with Don McIsaac.

[203]Marin County Journal, October 17, 1881; Marin Journal, November 20, 1884, May 14, 1885, April 27, 1899; San Rafael Tocsin, October 29, 1898.

[204]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 420; Marin Journal, March 31, 1898.

ranch. The dairy buildings at the Garcia ranch were then used for hay storage. Codoni apparently ceased butter production temporarily at the ranch in 1902 and began to ship cream on the North Shore Railroad. The newspaper published the following report:

> Mr. Jos. Codoni's herd of 120 cows at Tocaloma is making a pound to the cow. The cows are in good condition and are one of the finest bunch to be seen in the county. Mr. Codoni is one of the dairymen in this county who does not milk his cows in the corral, but has a substantial and comfortable barn. He is a liberal feeder, and living right by the railroad, can have the feed he buys delivered very conveniently. At present he is shipping cream to San Francisco.[205]

The most lengthy description of the Codoni Ranch appeared in early 1906 in the *Marin Journal:*

> CODONI VILLA
>
> Improvement is the watchword on this progressive ranch. A big addition to the barn has been built. The writer knows of only one barn in the state as well lighted. There are fourteen windows on the north, twelve on the south, ten on the west, four glass to the sash 14x15 in size. The baby calf barn is also well lighted. Mr. Codoni does not do his work by halves, and will continue the good work until he has one of the best cow barns in the state. A carrier mounted on a track takes the barn cleanings to the tank house built to receive it, and a cement floor will soon be put in the barn, and a tank provided for the liquids. A concrete floor will soon be put in the dairy building.
>
> G. A. Codoni, the owner, has wisely turned the ranch over to his two sons, James and Romain. Romain attends to the butter department in a manner creditable to himself, while James attends to the outside work. One hundred cows are milked now, and about sixty pounds of gilt-edged butter is the daily output. The Jersey is the favorite with the Codoni Bros. At night at the supper table, like the careful

[205]Marin Journal, June 20, 1901 and March 20, 1902; interview with Don McIsaac.

> officer, the book comes out and the day's work is recorded.
>
> Papers, magazines and other literature on the table shows a broad American spirit. No one appreciates Americanism more than the Swiss people. And no one exceeds them in genuine hospitality.
>
> Miss Nellie is giving her young brother Henry lessons on the piano, as well as teaching others. She received calls Wednesday from the Misses Mazza, also from the Misses Bloom, and Miss Knittel from San Rafael came up for a visit.
>
> One important factor on the Codoni ranch is a well equipped blacksmith shop, with its drills, thread cutter, dies, etc. and men with mechanical ideas who manage it. A few dollars invested in tools will save the rancher many dollars.[206]

Joseph Codoni, one of "Marin county's noblemen," died after a long illness on February 20, 1915 at the age of 67. An obituary noted that Codoni "was well known throughout Marin County and was universally esteemed. He was a clean, upright, and honorable man, and was so regarded by all who knew him." Four years later his widow and son James leased the ranch, selling the stock and implements to a Mr. Maggiorini and his partners. Mrs. Codoni also leased the old creamery adjacent to the Garcia house across the creek to George Russell for a period of fifteen years beginning in 1916, for $5.00 per month rent; Russell remodeled the building into a small home. James Codoni resigned as postmaster, effectively ending the life of the Tocaloma post office.[207]

Rosa Codoni lived with her son James in the old house on the Felix Garcia tract until her death in 1944. James died in January of the same year. Innocento Rizzoli had operated a dairy on the smaller ranch from about 1910 to at least 1914, while various tenants, including a man named Sichetti and partners Jim Fraiser and David Rogers, leased the main Codoni ranch until 1934. The Armanino brothers, Al and Syl, rented the Codoni Ranch from 1934

---

[206]Marin Journal, February 15, 1906.

[207]Leases, Book J, p. 342, MCRO; Cross, Financing an Empire, p. 540; Marin Journal, February 25, 1915, August 21 and 28, 1919.

to 1944. The brothers shipped Grade B cream to Point Reyes Station and Petaluma. When the Armaninos left in 1944, Joseph Codoni's grandson Don McIsaac of Nicasio took over the family ranch for grazing young dairy cows.[208]

Don McIsaac's paternal grandfather was another Marin County pioneer, Neil McIsaac, who arrived in the area from his native Nova Scotia in 1865. By coincidence, Neil McIsaac worked at the D. D. Wilder dairy ranch near Olema at the same time Giuseppe Codoni was there. McIsaac leased a ranch near Nicasio from the Black/Burdell and Cutter families and raised a family there. One of his sons, Donald Dinnie McIsaac, married Nellie Codoni in 1912; their two sons, Don and Neil, eventually took over the Nicasio dairy and were operating it at the time of Rosa Codoni's death in 1944.[209]

Don McIsaac and his wife Lorraine and family moved into Joseph Codoni's old home in 1944, while operating a Grade A dairy in partnership with his brother Neil on the family's Nicasio Valley Ranch. By this time the ranch was owned by Nellie McIsaac and her brother Romeo. Don McIsaac had a Grade A dairy barn built by the Renati Brothers of Novato in 1951 and started milking again on the Codoni ranch. The old dairy house was moved a short distance to the west and remodeled as a bunkhouse for the milkers. More recently the dairy house was moved to the west side of Lagunitas Creek, below and downstream from the old Garcia ranch, and further remodeled as a family dwelling. In 1962 the county built a new highway bridge over Lagunitas Creek, trading land with McIsaac and building a cattle underpass on Platform Bridge Road as part of the deal. McIsaac took possession of the 1927 highway bridge and has used it for access to the west side of the ranch.

McIsaac milked about 100 cows in the early 1950s, and when he stopped milking in August of 1973 had a milking herd of about 200. Since then the McIsaac family has raised beef and dairy cattle on the ranch. Nellie McIsaac deeded the ranch as a gift to the McIsaac brothers and their wives in 1975. The federal government purchased the McIsaac Ranch in May of 1983 for inclusion in Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

---

[208]Information on the later Codoni years and McIsaac Ranch from interviews with Don and Lorraine McIsaac. Codoni's tenant on the Garcia tract, Innocento Rizzoli, an immigrant from Canton Ticino, Switzerland, disappeared from his next place of employment, the Cheda Ranch, in November 1915; his body was found almost 21 years later in nearby Devil's Gulch, and the death was ruled a suicide.

[209]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 436; Cross, Financing an Empire, pp. 539-540.

3. Buildings and Historic Resources

The McIsaac Ranch contains eight historic buildings, a historic highway bridge, and six newer structures.

a. Main Residence

The McIsaac residence consists of two buildings joined together: the original home built as early as 1866, and the Codoni home built in 1884. The older house is a one-story simple farmhouse with a gable roof and open porches on both sides of the structure. It has an altered and modernized interior, in use for decades as the ranch kitchen. The 1884 addition is two stories, with a hipped roof with decorative cornice and brackets, horizontal drop siding and a stone and mortar foundation. Overall the house measures 28' by 54'. The house has had a number of exterior alterations, including replacement of windows with aluminum sash, loss of original chimneys and front porch, replacement of the original front door facing the highway with a sliding double glass door; the interior alterations are mainly in the bathrooms. Originally the house had a number of chimneys, but after the 1906 earthquake they were consolidated into one. This main chimney was replaced some years ago by Don McIsaac. The house is in good condition. A modern carport is attached to the northwest corner of the house. Because of the extent and number of alterations, the house possesses only fair historic integrity.

b. Hay Barn

This barn is the only one of its kind in the area. It is a large, 50' x 55', steep pitch gable-roof barn with old shed additions around three sides. The siding is wood board and batten. The barn is built into the hillside, with the hayloft extending over the hillside a short distance. The major portion of the hayloft in the main barn has been removed and many of the rafters used to strengthen the barn. The barn has a concrete floor, installed about 1906, and the remains of a manure conveyor system. Milking stanchions have been removed. The roof is corrugated metal although one section at this writing is original wood shingle and badly deteriorated. The barn is in fair condition, but possesses good historic integrity.

c. Shelter Shed

This 16' x 46' open shed fit tightly between the Grade A barn and the calf barn, was originally used for feed storage and is now used as an equipment shed. It appears to be 19th century construction. It has a steep-pitched corrugated metal gable roof, mostly open sides, vertical board siding on the ends and an old shed addition facing the highway. It is in fair condition but has poor historic integrity.

d. Calf Barn

Once used to house calves, this 19th century barn is now used for pigs and storage. The gable-roofed barn with shed addition measures 24' x 28', has board and batten siding and a deteriorated shingle roof, and is in poor condition. It possesses good historic integrity.

e. Dairy/Dwelling

The old dairy/dwelling, now occupied by Don McIsaac, was originally the 19th century dairy house on the main ranch in which butter was made and cream separated. In making way for the new Grade A barn it was moved in 1951 to a location near the main residence and used as a bunkhouse. About 1965 the house was moved about half a mile to the present location and extensively remodeled. The two-story house has a gable roof with a new flat dormer facing south; much of the original horizontal siding remains. The building has many alterations, and is in good condition. Because of its change of location and remodeling, however, its historic integrity is poor.

f. Shafter House

The old Shafter house is more than 100 years old, possibly built as early as 1865. It was once the dwelling house for a separate dairy ranch, with barn and creamery nearby. It is a one-and-a-half story, wood frame dwelling, with a gable roof and a shed roofed garage/entry with a distinctive arched opening, apparently for a buggy. It measures 28' x 34' overall. The horizontal drop siding is apparently original. An old front door and evidence of a covered porch

remain on the south face; a deck was recently added to this side, affording a sweeping view over the ranch and valley. The interior has seen basic alterations, although it retains its original layout of three bedrooms (two upstairs), living room, kitchen and dining room. The house is very old and in poor condition. Because of alterations it possesses only fair historic integrity.

g. Water Tank

This water tank, twelve feet square and eight feet deep, sits on the slope above the corrals. The underground portion is concrete and covered with an old board and batten tank house that may be up to 100 years old. The roof is pyramidal with a vent cupola and decorative spike at the top. It is in fair condition, and possesses good historic integrity.

h. Tocaloma Bridge

The Tocaloma Bridge, long a landmark on Sir Francis Drake Highway, was designed by Marin County surveyor John C. Oglesby and constructed in 1927. The bridge crosses Lagunitas Creek at Tocaloma before the long grade towards Olema. The new highway was touted as both an important farm route and a pathway to scenic west Marin County for an increasing number of motorists. Financed by a 1925 bond issue in the county, the Tocaloma Bridge was the most spectacular of six large bridges built during the project, 1926-1930. The reinforced concrete arch bridge is unique to the west county, and only one similar bridge exists in the county. The bridge was bypassed in 1962 and abandoned, the property reverting to the McIsaac family. The bridge has cracks and damage to the concrete guard rails, and will require structural study by qualified engineers to determine its condition. Further study of the history of this bridge is recommended. It possesses good historic integrity.

i. Railroad Grade

The original railbed of the North Pacific Coast Railroad and its successors, the North Shore Railroad and the Northwestern Pacific Railroad, passes through the property along the west bank of Lagunitas Creek. Built by Chinese labor in 1874 and widened for standard gauge tracks in 1920, and

dismantled after 1933, this section of the railbed has been graded and maintained as a gravel ranch road and a right-of-way for a major pipeline serving the Marin Municipal Water District. The district owns a 1/2 acre parcel along the grade near the dairy/dwelling, on which is located a non-historic pumping station. Overall, the integrity of the railroad grade is good.

j. Fences

The fencelines on the McIsaac Ranch follow the historic lines, but most have been replaced over the years. Some of the original split picket fences remain near the ranch complex and are important features of the historic landscape of the ranch.

k. Ranch Roads

Two old ranch roads contribute to the historic landscape at the McIsaac Ranch. One originates in the main ranch complex at the barn and leads northeasterly to the top of the ridge overlooking Nicasio Valley. It is evident in a circa 1890 photograph of the ranch. The other begins on the railroad grade near Caesar's Tavern and leads to the Shafter house and then beyond to Bolinas Ridge, where it ends with a gate at Drake Highway. The route to the old house was changed before 1940; the original (and steeper) route remains but has been long abandoned.

l. Equipment Barn

This barn was a large board and batten hay barn, prominent from the highway, and more recently used for storage. The gable roofed barn collapsed in 1991 and has since been removed.

There are five non-historic buildings on the ranch: a Grade A barn built in 1951, a large open shed, a butcher shed, a pole hay barn and a World War II prefab residence located in a gulch on Sir Francis Drake Highway east of the ranch complex. Next to the Tocaloma Bridge is a small privately-owned lot containing the old Caesar's Tavern, on the site of Bertrand's Tocaloma Hotel.

The lot is on the park acquisition list. The old railroad grade is an easement to the McIsaac Ranch west parcel and the two dwellings there.

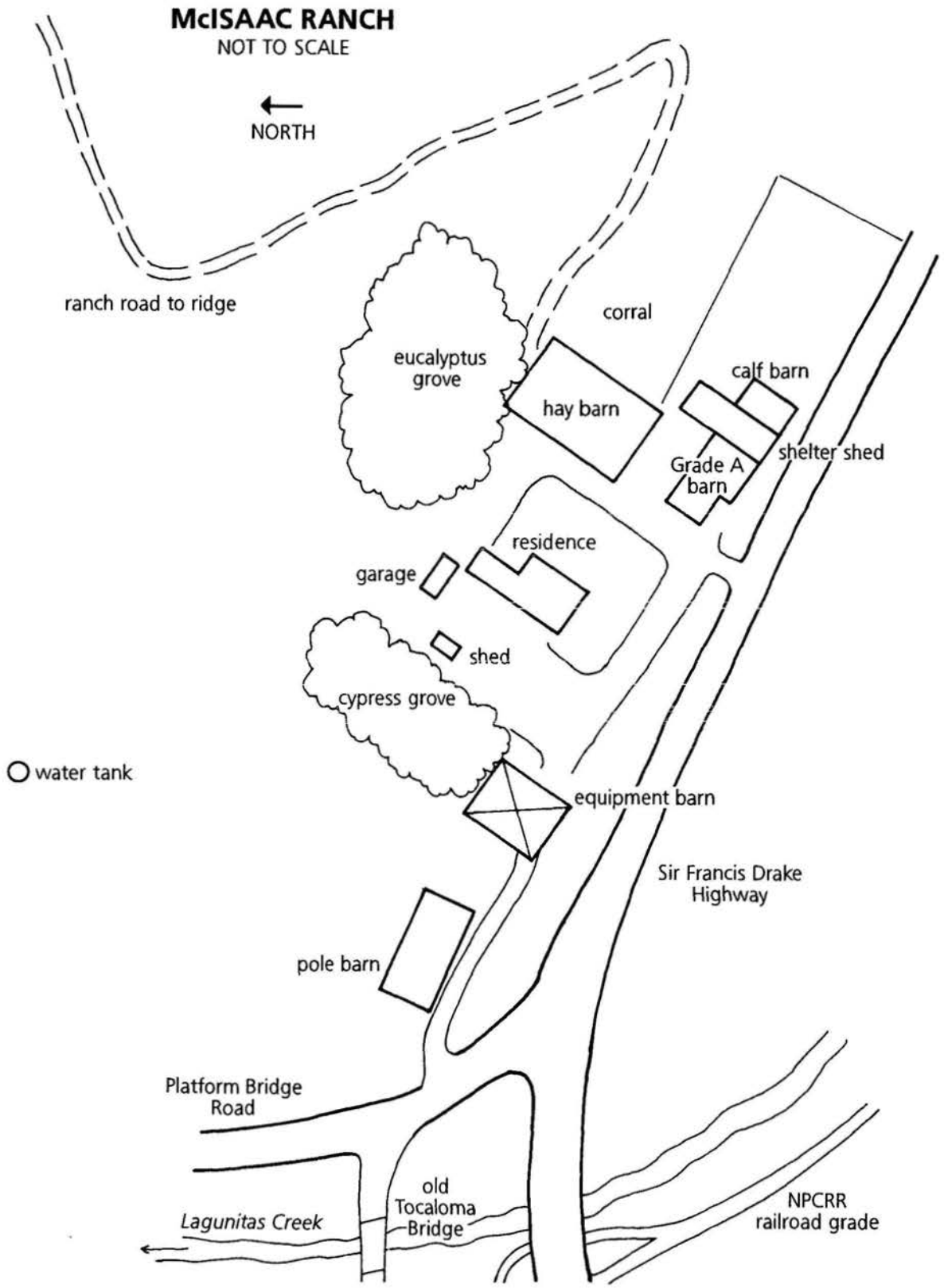
4. Historic Significance of McIsaac Ranch

The McIsaac Ranch is significant as an example of an early Swiss-owned dairy ranch in the Lagunitas Creek area. The farm house is unique to the area and includes a pioneer portion attached. The hay barn is unlike any other remaining in the area, and of fair structural integrity. The old house on the hill above Tocaloma is a pioneer structure in use for more than 120 years. The McIsaac Ranch and neighboring Zanardi Ranch are the last of some six dairy ranches that once occupied this section of Lagunitas Creek which retain their historic integrity.

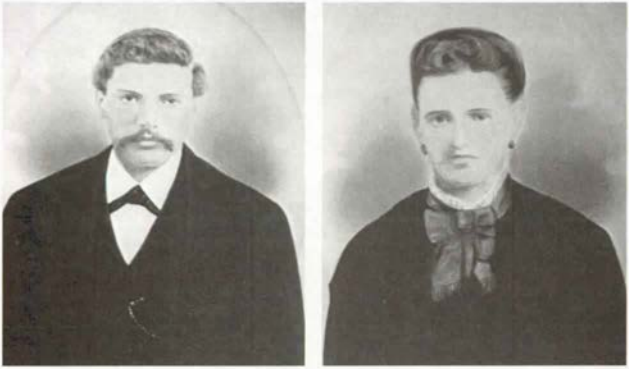
The Tocaloma Bridge has regional significance in transportation and architecture, as the best example of a J. C. Oglesby bridge on the important "town-to-country" road, Sir Francis Drake Highway. The bridge has long been a landmark to Bay Area residents and was an important link in the county-wide transportation system.

Historic Features

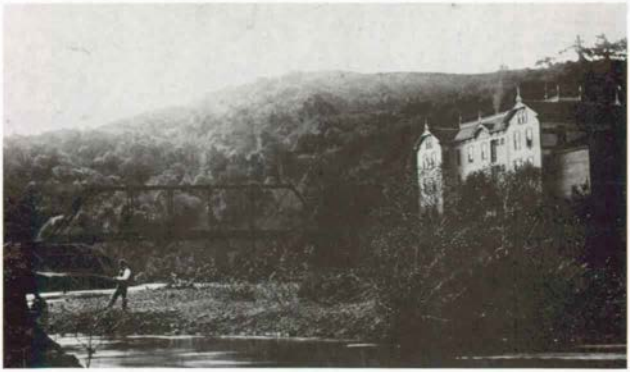
1. Main Residence, ca. 1866-1884
2. Hay Barn, ca. 1880
3. Shelter Shed, ca. 1900
4. Calf Barn, ca. 1900
5. Shafter House, ca. 1865
6. Water Tank, ca. 1890
7. Tocaloma Bridge, 1927
8. NPCRR/NWP Railroad Grade, 1874
9. Fences, Gates, Corrals
10. Ranch Roads


McISAAC RANCH
NOT TO SCALE
NORTH
ranch road to ridge
corral
eucalyptus grove
calf barn
hay barn
shelter shed
Grade A barn
residence
garage
shed
cypress grove
water tank
equipment barn
Sir Francis Drake Highway
pole barn
Platform Bridge Road
old Tocaloma Bridge
Lagunitas Creek
NPCRR railroad grade

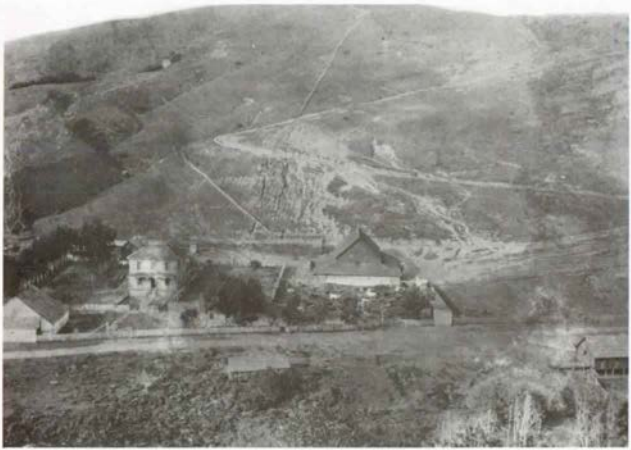
An early portrait of Giuseppe and Rosa (Scilacci) Codoni. *Courtesy of Rae Codoni.*



Giuseppe and Rosa (Scilacci) Codoni. *Courtesy of Rae Codoni.*

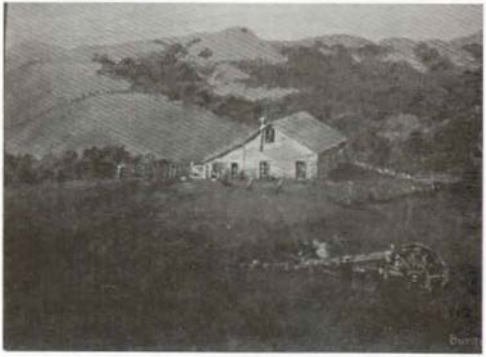


Bertrand's Hotel and the old platform bridge, circa 1890. *Courtesy of Rae Codoni.*

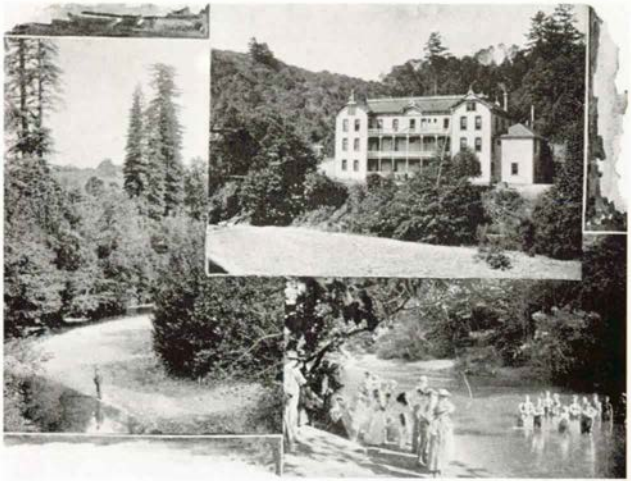


Two views of the Codoni Ranch around the turn of the century. Above, the porch is visible on the house, the barn has lower shed sides, and the dairy house is obscured by trees, center. The barn at left was later replaced. Hog pens are near the creek at the bottom of the picture. In the photo below, Payne Shafter's livery stable is in the foreground, and the roof of the Tocaloma depot is barely seen. *Courtesy of Don McIsaac.*

The Codoni Ranch around the turn of the century. *Courtesy of Don McIsaac.*



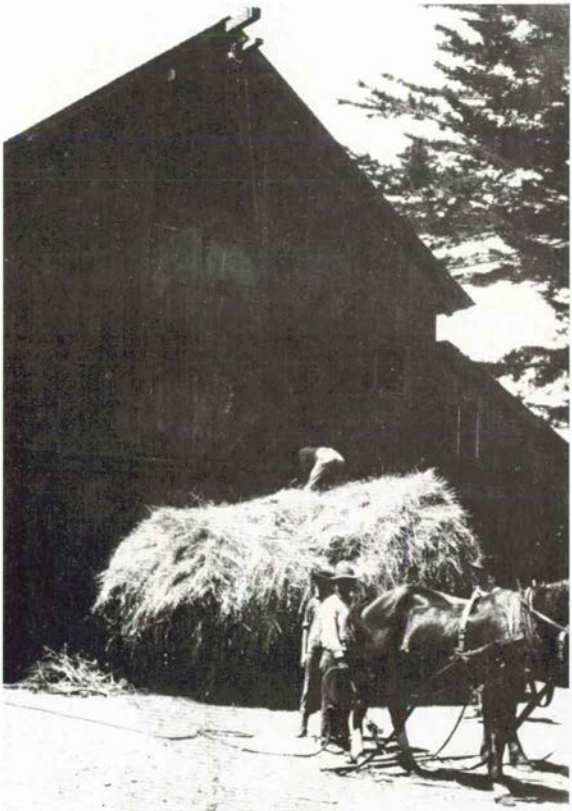
A painting of Rosa Codoni's house, on the former Felix Garcia Ranch. *Courtesy of Rae Codoni.*



Views of Tocaloma from a circa 1894 North Pacific Railroad brochure. *Courtesy of Gordon Chappell.*

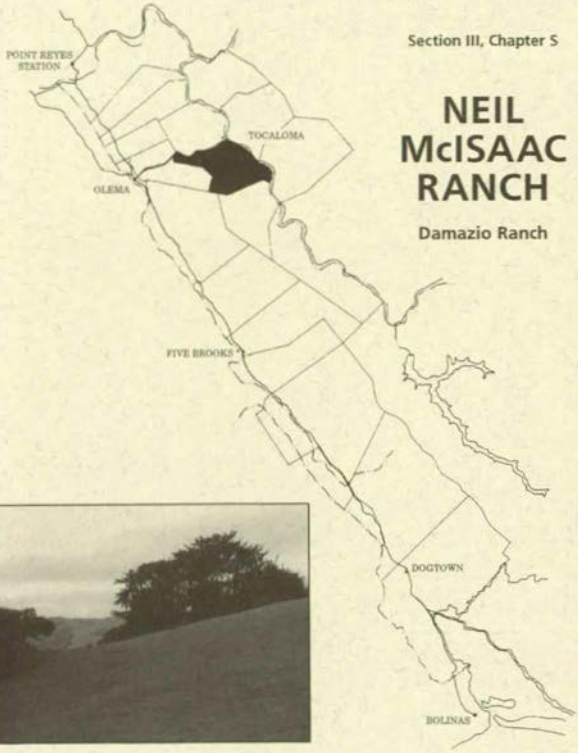
North Pacific Coast Railroad tracks near Tocaloma. *Courtesy of Rae Codoni.*

The abandoned Tocaloma Bridge, 1994. *NPS photo by Dewey Livingston.*



Loading hay into the west barn; this barn collapsed in 1992. *Courtesy of Don McIsaac.*

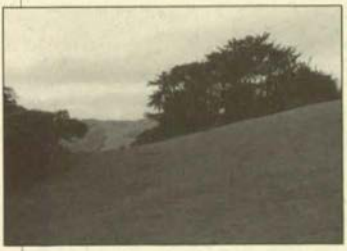
DAIRY FARMING IN THE OLEMA VALLEY



Section III, Chapter S

NEIL McISAAC RANCH

Damazio Ranch

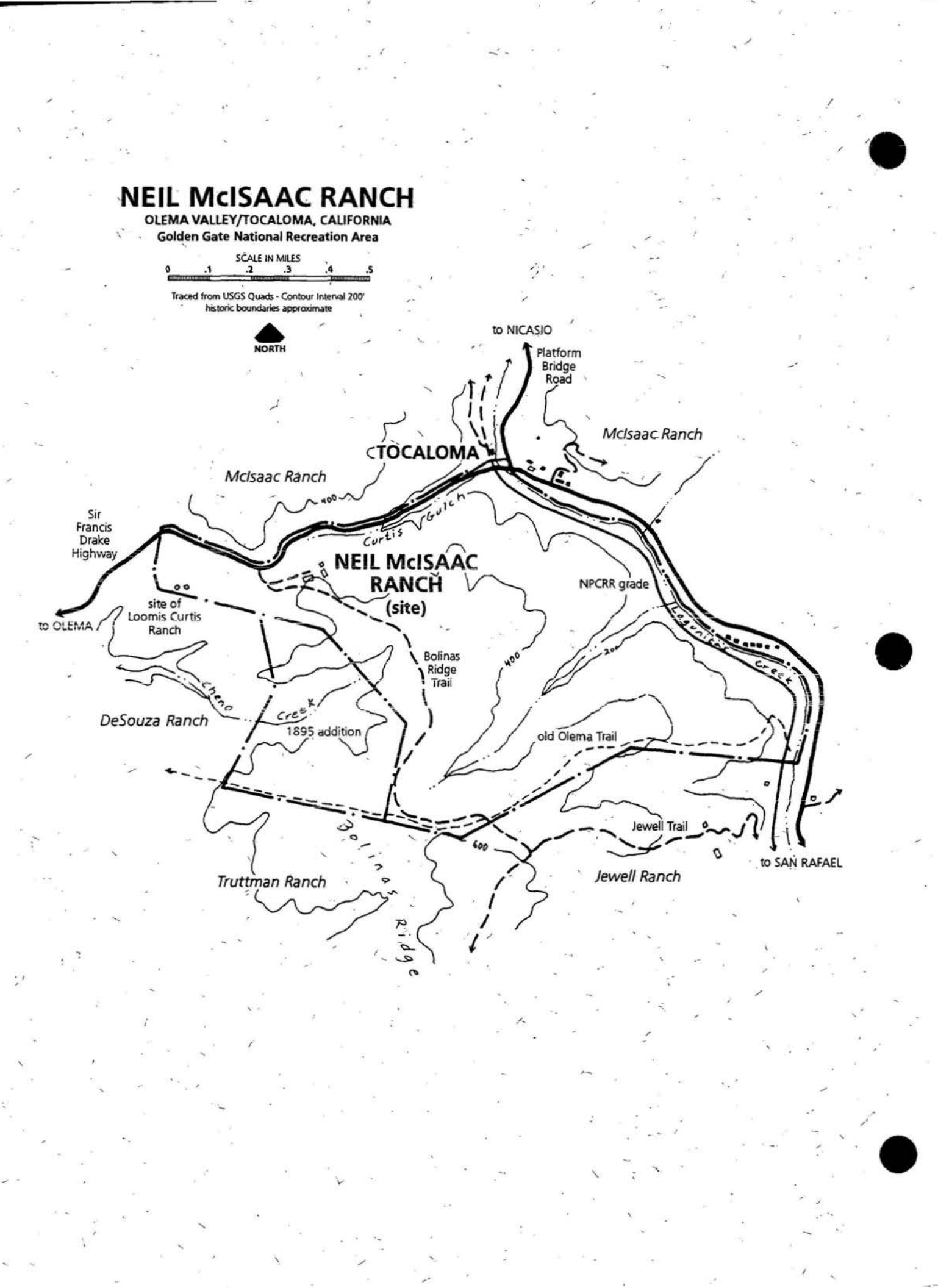


HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE

NEIL McISAAC RANCH

OLEMA VALLEY/TOCALOMA, CALIFORNIA

Golden Gate National Recreation Area



S. NEIL McISAAC RANCH (site)
Former Damazio Ranch
(Golden Gate National Recreation Area)

1. Description

This ranch property once supported a small dairy operation but has been used for only grazing for the past 30 years or so. The 570.3-acre parcel is formed from two older divisions: a 457.15-acre ranch once owned by a son of Rafael Garcia, and 113.15 acres that had been split from another Garcia ranch in 1893. The property is of an awkward shape, stretching from the upper western slopes of Bolinas Ridge above the town of Olema to Lagunitas Creek which delineates the northeast boundary. Sir Francis Drake Highway forms the northwestern border; the ranch is bounded on the west by the former DeSouza Ranch, on the south by the Truttman and Jewell Ranches, on the east and northeast by the Cheda and McIsaac Ranches, and on the northwest by the McIsaac (former Hamilton) tract. The land is wooded on most of the east slopes of Bolinas Ridge and grassy on the top of the ridge and on the western slopes.

2. History of the Neil McIsaac Ranch

The pioneer Olema to San Rafael Road, sometimes called the Old Olema Trail, crossed this property in the mid-19th century. The Mexican owners of the Point Reyes Peninsula and other early pioneers used the trail to travel to San Rafael and San Francisco, and the first stage coaches from Olema to San Rafael followed its crude path. This old horse trail and wagon road left the Olema/Bolinas road near the homes of the Garcia family at the future site of the town of Olema, followed a ridgeline easterly to the summit, then descended to Daniels or Lagunitas Creek. The trail is the earliest known structure on what would become the Jose Garcia and later the Neil McIsaac Ranch. County surveyor Hiram Austin laid out a new road about one-half mile to the north to replace the old trail in 1867. At the time, Loomis Curtis operated a dairy near the summit of the ridge. Curtis' house is marked on Austin's survey, and when the land was officially divided in 1868, the deed noted that the property

line "crosses through the Curtiss [sic] coral [sic] to the west of the dairy house." Austin's survey names the drainage towards Tocaloma "Curtiss Gulch." Little is known of Curtis; he married Elizabeth McGovern of Olema in 1864, and the couple moved some time after 1868 to the Shafters & Howard property in the upper Lagunitas Canyon near Bon Tempe where he operated a dairy which later became the well-known Liberty Ranch; Curtis died in 1875.[210]

After the death of Rafael Garcia his widow divided the remaining land amongst the family. Jose Garcia received the southernmost ranch of 446.39 acres as surveyed in 1868. The newly built road from Olema to San Rafael acted as the northern boundary of the parcel. Jose Garcia mortgaged the property to the Masonic Savings Bank in June of 1872, and within about five years defaulted. The bank sold Garcia's ranch to Nicasio dairyman Neil McIsaac for $10,000 in gold coin. McIsaac had a house on the property, evidenced by a news report of the house burning down in 1883. Subsequently, Payne Shafter of Olema sold 113 acres of the former Hurtado ranch to Neil McIsaac on October 26, 1893 for $100, bringing the total acreage of McIsaac's ranch to about roughly 573 acres.[211]

Nova Scotia-born Neil McIsaac came to California as a young man after serving in the Army during the Civil War. He worked on D. D. Wilder's dairy near Olema in 1868 and had apparently rented the Jose Garcia ranch before purchasing it from the bank. McIsaac also rented a larger dairy property near Nicasio where he raised a family. He died in 1909, leaving the Garcia ranch to his wife Katherine. His son, Donald Dinnie McIsaac, married Nellie Codoni from the neighboring ranch; both ranches were eventually inherited by Neil McIsaac's grandsons Donald J. and Neil.[212]

At the turn of the century Charles Skinner rented the dairy ranch. His children were born there and Skinner enlarged the house. Skinner's brother William managed the Shafter and Howard ranches on Point Reyes for many

---

[210]"Plat of the Survey, for the Relocation of the San Rafael and Olema Road," by Hiram Austin, 1867, CHS; "Section of Map Showing Subdivision of the Rancho Baulinas Y Tomales," 1868, in "Abstract of Title ... " [McIsaac], p. 4, PRNS Collection; Marin County Journal, December 24, 1864; Lincoln Fairley, Mt. Tamalpais, A History (San Francisco: Scottwall Associates, 1987), p. 25; notes on Loomis Curtis provided by Bob Lethbridge (now retired), Marin Municipal Water District, Corte Madera.

[211]Deeds Book H, p. 77, Book T, p. 529, Book 27, p. 380, Mortgages Book F, p. 646, MCRO; Marin County Journal, June 7, 1883.

[212]Cross, Financing An Empire, p. 539; interview with Rae Codoni.

years. For at least three decades the McIsaac family rented the ranch to John Damazio, who lived in the house with his wife Ophelia and their many children. John Damazio and his son Joe operated a dairy from the early 1920s until some time in the early 1940s, when family members continued residing there but did not milk cows. The grazing land was rented to Armin and Frank Truttman of a nearby dairy ranch, and then to the Xavier brothers who rented the Cheda Ranch for their dairy business. The McIsaac family, brothers Don and Neil, have used the land for grazing since about 1960. In the 1960s the Marin County Fire Department burned the abandoned ranch structures, leaving only sections of concrete floor and the cypress trees that sheltered the house from the strong coastal winds.[213]

In the 1960s the McIsaacs made two transactions which affected the property. In 1961 the Marin Municipal Water District acquired a 20-foot right-of-way along the old Northwestern Pacific Railroad grade on the eastern side of the property for a major water pipeline. Two years later the County of Marin traded property in order to replace the old Tocaloma Bridge on Sir Francis Drake Highway with a modern highway bridge. In the transaction the McIsaacs secured ownership of the old bridge and the land surrounding it.[214]

In January of 1972, Don and Neil McIsaac sold the ranch to San Francisco investor and wholesale florist Angelo Ferro and his wife Irma for $285,000. The Ferros intended to develop the ranch and had the land surveyed and divided into 60 acre tracts. While the land had been zoned A-2, wherein one home per two acres was permissible, the planning department indicated that only larger tracts would be acceptable on this particular piece of land. Later in 1972, the Ferros were reportedly offered $425,000 for the ranch by a developer, but the offer was withdrawn because the proposed Golden Gate National Recreation Area would include the ranch within its boundaries. In fact, the property was acquired by the United States for inclusion in the park on December 4, 1973, paying the Ferros $420,000, almost exactly what the

---

[213]Marin Journal, August 24 and October 19, 1899; interview with Earl Skinner; 20th century ranch information from an interview with Don McIsaac.

[214]Official Records Book 1457, p. 370, Book 1461, p. 121, Book 1733, p. 298, MCRO.

developer had offered earlier. Don McIsaac grazes cattle on the property now under a special use permit with the National Park Service.[215]

3. Historic Resources

No buildings remain on the former Ferro property. The house site is marked by the cypress grove which acted as a windbreak to shelter the house. Remains of a barn are visible south of the house site. The McIsaac family has built corrals on the site of the Grade B milking barn. Fence lines follow the original 1868 subdivision, but their fabric has been changed over the years; now most are wood post and barbed wire.

The only significant structure remaining on the property is the eastern portion of the old Olema Trail, in use from the Mexican era until 1867. Leading uphill from Olema along the DeSouza Ranch fence line, the pioneer route then follows the fence line on the Ferro property as it crosses the ridge and descends to Lagunitas Creek. The section with the highest integrity is the lower half on the east slope, where the long-abandoned roadbed is visible as it descends the steep hillside, bends around a knoll and through some oak trees, then makes a sharp turn to the southeast for its final descent to the railroad grade and the creek.

4. Historic Significance of the Neil McIsaac Ranch

The former Neil McIsaac Ranch has significance as a contributor to the Olema Valley dairy district, but the absence of historic resources leaves it with little historic integrity. Those resources with integrity are the Olema Trail and the railroad grade, as well as landscape features such as the building remains, fence lines and windbreak trees.

---

[215] Appraisal Report: The Ferro Ranch, (Sebastopol, CA: The Harding Appraisal Co., 1973), pp. 1-7; Official Records Book 2538, p. 153 and Book 2747, p. 450, MCRO; Tract File (L-1425) "Tract 05-105, Ferro," PRNS.

Historic Features

1. Old Olema Trail
2. NWP Railroad Grade
3. Fences, gates, corrals
4. Cypress windbreak at ranch site
5. Building ruins

Giuseppe Codoni, left and Neil McIsaac, in 1905. McIsaac was a neighbor and married Codoni's daughter Nellie. *Courtesy of Rae Codoni.*

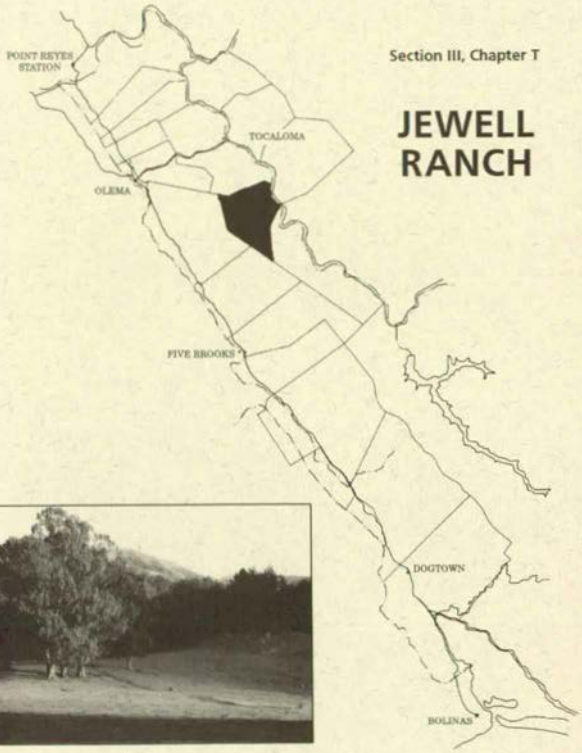
Professor A. W. Sampson stands in a pasture rented by the Damazio family and owned by Donald D. McIsaac, son of Neil McIsaac. In the left background of this 1923 photograph are the Bear Valley Ranch and Mt. Wittenberg. *M. B. Boissevain photograph courtesy of Jack Mason Museum.*

The site of the 1860s Loomis Curtis dairy ranch on the top of Olema Hill as it looked in 1995. *NPS photo by Dewey Livingston.*

DAIRY FARMING IN THE OLEMA VALLEY

Section III, Chapter T

JEWELL RANCH



HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE

JEWELL RANCH

TOCALOMA, CALIFORNIA

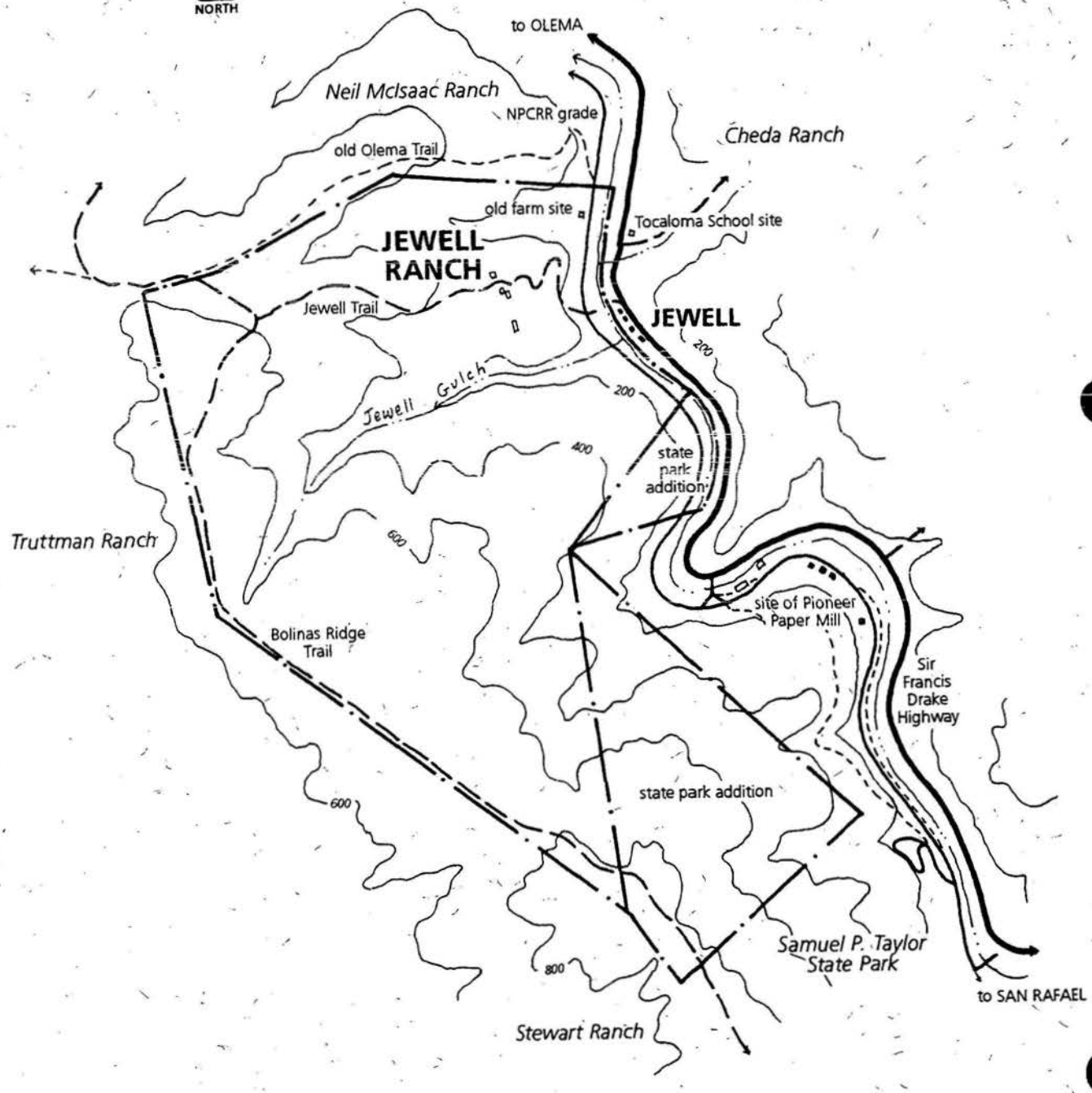
Golden Gate National Recreation Area

SCALE IN MILES

0 .1 .2 .3 .4 .5

Traced from USGS Quads - Contour Interval 200'
historic boundaries approximate

NORTH



T. JEWELL RANCH (site)
(Golden Gate National Recreation Area)

1. Description

The Jewell Ranch is located across Lagunitas Creek from the small residential settlement of Jewell on Sir Francis Drake Highway between Samuel P. Taylor State Park and Tocaloma. The 536.77-acre ranch within park boundaries is what remains of the original 681-acre Omar Jewell Ranch. The ranch is bounded on the north by the former Ferro/McIsaac Ranch, on the east by Lagunitas Creek and Samuel P. Taylor State Park, on the south by the Stewart Ranch and on the west by the former Truttman Ranch. The land is mostly grassy with wooded gulches on the south part of the property. Two ranch sites can be found on the property, but no buildings remain. The Jewell Trail, part of Golden Gate National Recreation Area's trail system, crosses the ranch as a connector between the Bolinas Ridge Trail and the Cross Marin Trail. The latter trail passes along the entire east edge of the property as part of its route between Tocaloma and the state park.

2. History of the Jewell Ranch

Omar Jewell, born in New York in 1821, farmed in Wheaton, Illinois for many years before coming to California in 1861. Leaving his large family behind on the farm, Jewell established a farming implement business in Petaluma, being the exclusive agent for D. M. Osborne Reaper and Mower Company. In April of 1862 he sent for his family, who sold the farm and traveled overland by wagon train to Petaluma, arriving in September of that year.

According to Bertha Stedman Rothwell, who had known the Jewell family, Jewell became interested in dairy farming after seeing his implement customers doing so well in their endeavors. Soon after arriving in Petaluma, Jewell leased a dairy on the crest of Bolinas Ridge from the Olds family and commenced dairying. His children attended school in the valley below. After the Olds brothers divided their large Olema Valley holdings, Jewell purchased a 680.99-acre ranch property on the east side of the ridge, north of Samuel P.

Taylor's papermill property. Jewell paid Olds $3,405 on December 2, 1864. Here he built a home and dairy ranch near the northern corner of the property.[216]

Mrs. Rothwell describes Jewell's house and dairy as located "on the west bank of the Paper Mill Creek at a spot designated now as Jewell's." She recalled the dairy ranch of Omar Jewell:

> On this new site he built himself a large two story family home. Surrounding it he built a very large barn for his stock and supply of hay for the Fall and Winter months. Also various sheds, a dairy house and pig sty where the swine could be raised for market. All early pioneer dairy ranches featured this means of disposal for the milk remaining after a top layer of thick cream had been removed with a wet, wooden paddle.

Jewell and his wife Viana had seven children, only four of which, Alva, Viana, William and Annie, lived at the Jewell Ranch in 1870. A daughter Harriet died at the ranch in 1866 and her sister Olive followed in 1869. Omar Jewell's father-in-law Alva Marshall lived with the family for a time, helping on the dairy.[217]

By 1870 Jewell had developed his dairy ranch into one that provided him a comfortable livelihood. Jewell milked 40 cows and produced 8500 pounds of butter and 15 tons of hay that year, all valued at $4,500. In addition to the milk cows the ranch also supported 13 horses, 35 other cattle and 40 pigs, valued at $4,400.[218]

In 1872 Omar Jewell and 38 of his neighbors, including Cheda, Codoni, Bloom, Olds and Parsons, petitioned the Marin County Board of Supervisors for the construction of a bridge across Lagunitas Creek near Jewell's house, apparently to allow the residents continued use of the old Olema road that had been abandoned five years earlier but was for some a more convenient route.

---

[216]Rothwell, Pioneering, pp. 228-231; Munro-Fraser, Marin County, p. 465; Deeds Book E, p. 238, MCRO.

[217]Rothwell, Pioneering, pp. 211, 228-234; Population Schedules, 9th U. S. Census, 1870. Viana Jewell's name is spelled Vienna in some accounts.

[218]Agricultural Schedules, 9th U. S. Census, 1870.

The petition was denied. The next year Jewell sold a 75-foot right-of-way to the North Pacific Railroad Company, which constructed narrow gauge tracks along the east side of the property below Jewell's home. A flagstop was established soon after and named Jewell's.[219]

Omar Jewell died in 1875 after a long illness; his daughter Emma passed away shortly after. Both were buried at Olema Cemetery. Jewell's oldest son Alva returned from his Mendocino County sheep ranch to operate the dairy with his brother William. To supplement their business activities the brothers purchased a livery stable in San Rafael; William ran the livery business while Alva and his wife stayed and operated the dairy ranch. Alva Jewell died in June of 1888, and his mother Viana passed away in 1890.[220]

The Jewell family leased the ranch to Battista Ottolini for many years beginning in 1883. The leases were renewed every three years until at least 1892; Ottolini paid between $1,200 and $1,350 per year rent for the dairy ranch. Ottolini and his wife Maria started a family while at the ranch; they relocated to Duncan's Mills before 1895. Ottolini family eventually settled in Nicasio and San Geronimo. By 1925 Samuel M. Augustine, who had been the notary public on the leases to Ottolini, owned the Jewell Ranch, but little has been found of his tenure there. The railroad, at the time part of the Northwestern Pacific, ceased operations on the Point Reyes line and abandoned its right-of-way in 1933. Augustine sold the ranch on August 19, 1933 to the operators of Roberts Dairy, a processing plant in San Rafael owned by Ruth Roberts Lundgren, her son James Lundgren and Sayles Turney. Roberts Dairy eventually owned a number of West Marin ranches, including the New Albion and K Ranches on Point Reyes. The partners built a Grade A dairy at the hill location and also constructed a bridge across Lagunitas Creek, which washed out shortly after its construction and had to be rebuilt.[221]

Two sites of settlement can be found on the Jewell Ranch: the known dairy site on the hill, and what appears to be an older site next to the railroad right-of-way at the northeastern corner of the property. It is possible that the

---

[219]Marin County Journal, February 6, 1872.

[220]Rothwell, Pioneering, pp. 235-238; Marin Journal, June 14, 1888 and October 16, 1890.

[221]Rothwell, Pioneering, p. 238; Leases Book C, pp. 112 and 487, Official Records Book 266, p. 165, MCRO; interview with Anita Ottolini Flanders; "Map of Marin County," 1925; interview with Don McIsaac.

Jewell family dairy had been located at the upper site from the beginning, with the home and orchard situated by the railroad tracks; the lower site does not appear to be large enough for a dairy operation of any size, and the construction of the railroad would have eliminated most of the level land. Omar Jewell may have moved uphill after selling the right-of-way. The trees at the uphill site do not appear to be as old as those at the lower site, but the grading on the hillside where a barn may have stood appears to be hand-graded and therefore is likely pre-1920s. By the time Roberts Dairy developed the Grade A dairy operation, the entire ranch was located at the upper site, with no structures known to remain below. At some point a one-story house was built at the upper site, near the Grade A barn and an adjacent shed. It replaced the older two-story house that had apparently burned down.[222]

According to a long-time neighbor, Sayles Turney ran the dairy ranch in the early 1940s, then the Shanks brothers took over for about four years. Frank and Rita Morris were reportedly the last family to milk cows there, during the 1950s. For many years neighboring ranchers Armin and Frank Truttman rented the land for grazing their dairy cows and had a group called the Jewell Hunting Club. In 1958 the owners sold about 144 acres of wooded land on the southern end of the ranch to the California State Park System as an addition to Samuel P. Taylor State Park, reducing the size of the ranch to 536.77 acres. In 1961 the Marin Municipal Water District purchased right-of-way along the abandoned railroad grade and laid a major pipeline along the route.[223]

By the time the National Park Service bought the ranch in 1974 the buildings had been abandoned, the water system had ceased to function, and the land used only for grazing. The property was zoned A-2 (one unit allowed per 2 acres), but was considered appropriate for a residential development on 15- to 25-acre sites. Lundgren sold the ranch to the federal government in 1974 for $362,250 and ran his cattle on it until his death. The remaining buildings, a one-story house and the Grade A barn and shed, were torn down and the land is now used for grazing under a special use permit to Frank and Robert Merz.[224]

---

[222]Field survey by the author; interview with Boyd Stewart.

[223]Interview with Don McIsaac; Appraisal Report: The Lundgren Ranch, (Sebastopol: Harding Appraisal Co., 1973), p. 29; Rothwell, Pioneering, p. 238.

[224]Appraisal: Lundgren, pp. 1, 7, 9a, 10; tract file (L-1425), tract 05-104, Lundgren, PRNS.

3. Historic Resources

No buildings remain at the Jewell Ranch. The sites of two homesteads are visible. Near the eastern corner of the ranch is what is believed to be the original Jewell home site with its remains of an old terraced orchard and typical windbreaks of cypress and eucalyptus trees. An especially large eucalyptus tree marks the exact eastern corner next to the creek; this tree appears to be about 130 years old. A mature stand of eucalyptus trees mark the property boundary for about 100 yards from this corner. On the hill directly south of this older site is the more recent ranch site, reached by a dirt road from the railroad grade to the ridgetop, now known as the Jewell Trail. There is a connector road leading from the old site to the upper site. The ranch site has four stands of eucalyptus in short rows, remains of an orchard, a bench cut into the hillside, apparently for a barn, and what appears to be old sheep fencing on a small wooded knoll above the barn site. A trace of a road leaves this site to what appears to be the remains of a hunting camp in the nearby woods. Boundary fences are intact, with short sections of the older split picket fences remaining.

4. Historic Significance of the Jewell Ranch

The former Jewell Ranch has significance as a contributor to the Olema Valley dairy district, but the absence of historic resources leaves it with little historic integrity. Those resources with integrity are the Jewell Trail and the railroad grade, as well as landscape features such as the building sites, fence lines and windbreak trees.

Historic Features

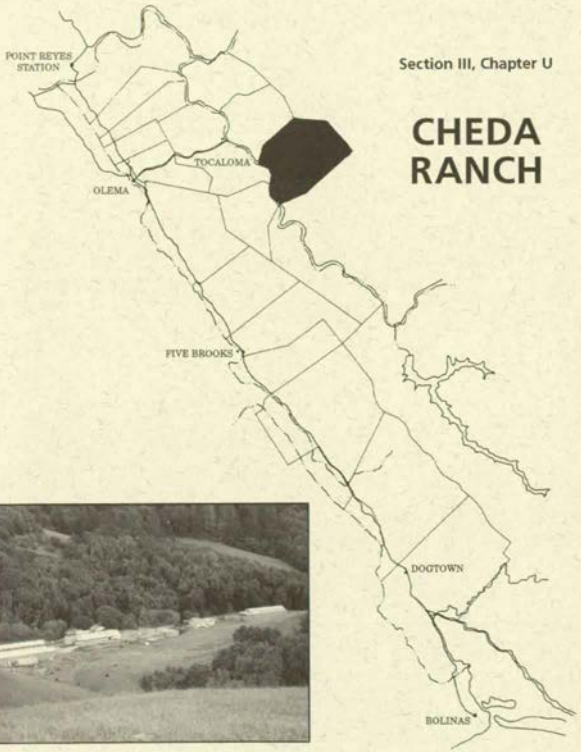
1. Ranch roads (Jewell Trail)
2. NWP Railroad Grade
3. Old orchard
4. Windbreak trees (both sites)
5. Boundary fences

Buildings on the Jewell Ranch as they appeared in 1973, from the Harding appraisal of the property.

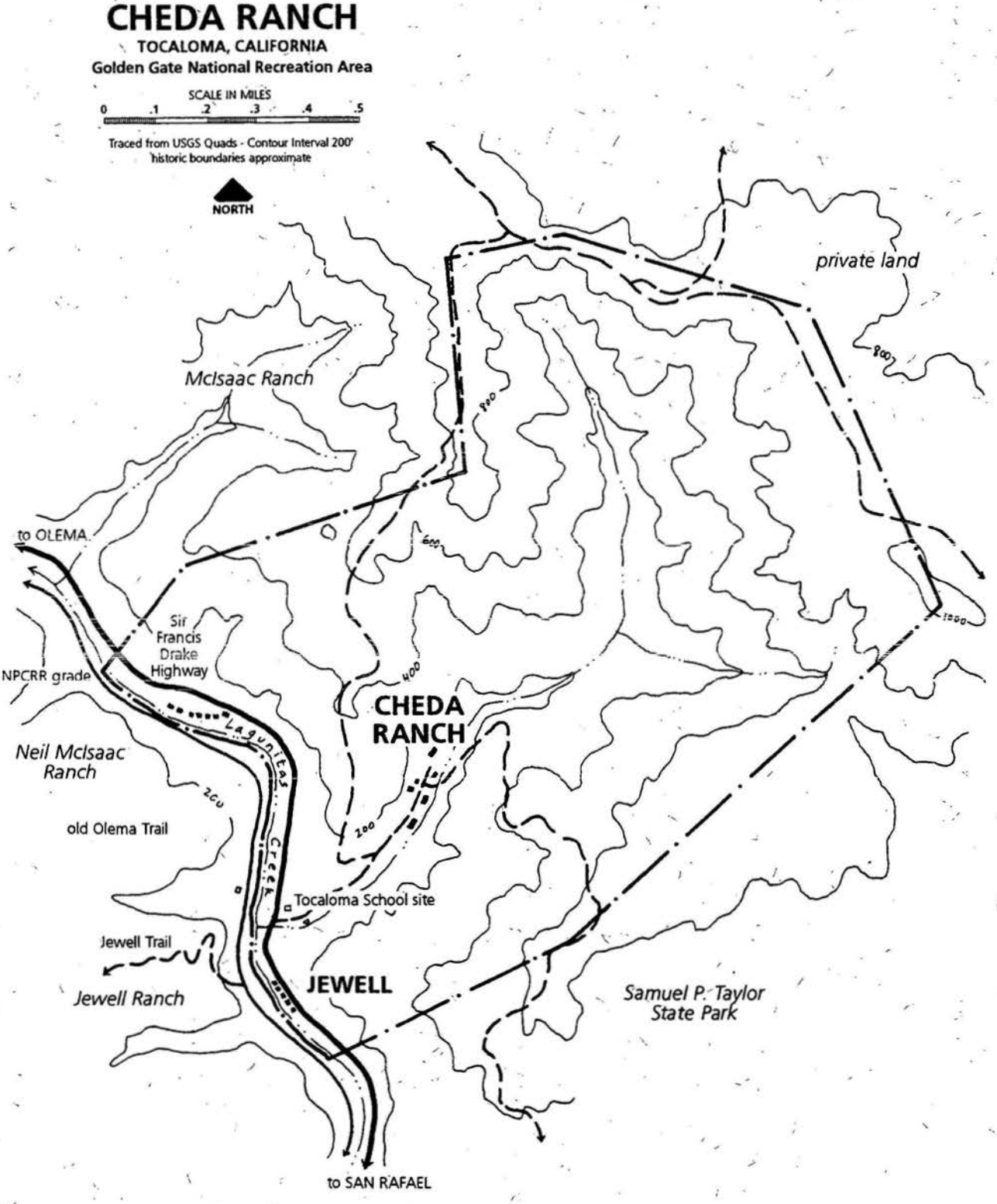
DAIRY FARMING IN THE OLEMA VALLEY

Section III, Chapter U

CHEDA RANCH



HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE


CHEDA RANCH
TOCALOMA, CALIFORNIA
Golden Gate National Recreation Area
SCALE IN MILES
0 .1 .2 .3 .4 .5
Traced from USGS Quads - Contour Interval 200'
historic boundaries approximate
NORTH
private land
McIsaac Ranch
to OLEMA
Sir Francis Drake Highway
NPCRR grade
CHEDA RANCH
Neil McIsaac Ranch
old Olema Trail
Lagunitas Creek
Tocaloma School site
Jewell Trail
Jewell Ranch
JEWELL
Samuel P. Taylor State Park
to SAN RAFAEL

U. CHEDA RANCH
(Golden Gate National Recreation Area)

1. Description

Cheda Ranch is a large parcel of land adjacent to Samuel P. Taylor Park on Lagunitas Creek, east of Tocaloma. The ranch complex is about 1/2 mile up a dirt road from Sir Francis Drake Highway, sitting in a valley that drains to Lagunitas Creek. The ranch is mostly grassland with forested areas in the gulches. The former owners negotiated a reservation of use and occupancy, and rent the buildings and pastures to various tenants.

2. History of Cheda Ranch

The first known non-Indian resident of the area that would become the Cheda Ranch was Marin pioneer Capt. Oliver Allen, a well-known engineer and inventor who had arrived in California with the Gold Rush. Allen came to Marin County in 1852 and rebuilt two sawmills at Dogtown near Bolinas. He then settled with his family in a house on the creek draining the Cheda Ranch, probably renting the property from Rancho Nicasio owner William J. Miller. While here he was employed by Samuel P. Taylor to aid with the engineering and machinery of Taylor's Pioneer Paper Mill, the first paper mill on the west coast. Allen also reportedly began his first experiments with dairy farming on this site; eventually his inventions for butter churns and other dairy equipment became used on dairies throughout California. Allen and his family moved to a Shafter dairy on Point Reyes in 1859.[225]

In one of the first transactions upon breaking up his holdings in Rancho Nicasio, William J. Miller sold Gaudenzio Cheda and Carlo Solari 932 acres of prime land draining into Lagunitas Creek on January 9, 1866, for a sum of $4,500. Cheda first located in Trinity County, where in 1859 he was naturalized as an American citizen in Weaverville. Cheda and Solari were among the first Swiss immigrants to arrive in Marin County, marking the

---

[225]Munro-Fraser, Marin County, pp. 431-433; Oliver Allen Papers, Bancroft Library, Berkeley; John S. Hittell, The Commerce and Industries of the Pacific Coast of North America (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1882), p. 264.

beginning of an influx that changed the face of the County for good. Solari apparently sold out his share to Cheda within a few years.[226]

By 1870 Cheda, at age 34, had a thriving dairy ranch where he milked 85 cows and made 8,500 pounds of butter the previous year. He employed six laborers, including his brother Pete, paying $2,000 in wages during the year. With wife Antonia (or Antoinette) and three children, Philamenia, Emaragilda and Silvio, Cheda had made a good life for himself in just a short time. By the end of the year all his neighbors but one were fellow Swiss. Cheda returned to Switzerland with his family, and son Virgilio was born there in 1875. The family returned to Marin County by 1878 but settled in San Rafael where Cheda bought a hay, grain, wool and coal business. The ranch was leased out and the Cheda family never returned.[227]

Cheda leased the ranch in 1883 to one F. Magee. Residents of the area voted for a school tax in 1884 which established the Tocaloma School District. By September a schoolhouse had been erected at the entrance to the Cheda Ranch and 26 children, most from the paper mill upstream, appeared for school. Across the small creek from the school house stood an open-air dance pavilion, used by the local residents until the 1920s.[228]

Gaudenzio Cheda died at age 54 in 1889 and left the ranch to his heirs, the ranch staying in the family under the name Cheda Estate Company for much of this century. Early in the century the large original Cheda home burned and was replaced with a more modest bungalow. The family leased the ranch to various dairymen, including (during this century), a Mr. Bettencourt, the Xavier Brothers, who developed the Grade A dairy, Peters Oakland Central Creamery for a short time and finally, Ray Valconesi. Neighboring dairymen Armin Truttman and Don McIsaac bought the milk contract from Valconesi in 1965 and moved the operation off the ranch.[229]

In 1972 the property was sold to Laurence and Elizabeth Bono; the Bonos then sold to a group of land developers calling themselves Cheda Ranch

---

[226]Deeds Book F, p. 87, MCRO; Marin People, Volume II (San Rafael: Marin County Historical Society, 1972), pp. 171-172; Mason, Earthquake Bay, p. 41.

[227]Population and Agriculture Schedules, 9th U. S. Census, 1870.

[228]Marin County Journal, October 18, 1883; Marin Journal, June 19 and September 11, 1884; interview with Don McIsaac and Rae Codoni.

[229]Death Records, MCRO; Marin Journal, October 31, 1889; interview with Don McIsaac.

Associates. The partners planned an equestrian-oriented development in the valley, but the ranch was purchased in 1982 by the National Park Service as a part of Golden Gate National Recreation Area. The ranch is currently occupied by tenants of Cheda Ranch Associates and the grazing land is leased by Barbara Hall.[230]

3. Buildings and Historic Resources

The Cheda Ranch contains eleven buildings: two houses, two hay barns, a Grade A barn, a weaning barn, and five sheds. Many possess poor historic integrity because of alterations.

a. Main Residence

This one-story wood frame house appears to be built around 1920 as the later principal ranch residence. It has a partial hip roof with various gables and shed additions. Distinctive shutter decorations are on many windows, and a modern fireplace and chimney has been added to the southwest corner of the house. It is in fair condition, and its integrity is fair.

b. Small House

The smaller house on the ranch was originally a bunk house. It measures about 30' by 30' and has a gable roof and an open porch. The tenants have removed some interior walls to make it a family home. The small one story house is in fair condition.

c. Grade A Dairy

The 35' by 100' sanitary milking barn appears to have been built about 1937-38; it is practically identical to the Truttman Ranch Grade A barn. Built out of concrete, wood and corrugated metal, it retains some of its original wood

---

[230]Deeds Book 70, p. 81, Official Records Book 2628, p. 266, MCRO; Independent Journal, October 20, 1973; interview with Don McIsaac.

stanchions and a feeder cart on tracks. It is in fair condition and is used for storage.

d. Hay Barn

The hay barn is actually two buildings: the original 48' by 108' Grade B barn, apparently built in the 1920s, with vertical wood siding and a corrugated metal raised gable roof, and a newer 28' by 108' section of wood frame with corrugated metal siding and roof. The old barn is in poor condition, and is used for hay storage. Its integrity is fair.

e. Weaning Barn

This small, 30' by 35' barn appears to be about 100 years old, but has been altered with the addition of windows and interior modification. It is now used as a music studio, is in fair condition and has poor integrity.

f. New Hay Barn

Used for storage, this barn was built about twenty years ago. It is a partially-open barn with corrugated metal siding and roof; it appears to be in good condition.

g. Garage

The 15' by 30' garage is apparently over 50 years old. It is a wood frame structure with corrugated metal siding and roof, rolling doors and a concrete foundation. It is in fair condition.

h. Chicken Shed

The chicken shed is a small 10' x 12' building over 50 years old. It has vertical board siding, double doors, and a sagging roof with wood shingles and sections of asphalt shingles. A lean-to has been added to the east side. It is in poor condition and its integrity is poor.

i. Tack Room/Office

This small building is about 30 years old had been used as a tack room until it was made into an office. It is wood frame with corrugated metal roofing, has been altered, and is in fair condition.

j. Shed

This appears to have been the ranch blacksmith shop. It has vertical board siding with board and batten on the east side and a corrugated metal gable roof. A brick chimney, with the fireplace portion damaged, sits on the north wall. Plants are affecting the stability of the structure. The wood frame building has been altered and is in poor condition.

k. Ranch Road

The narrow dirt road to Cheda Ranch appears to be the original road dating from the 1860s. Its integrity is good and it is in fair condition.

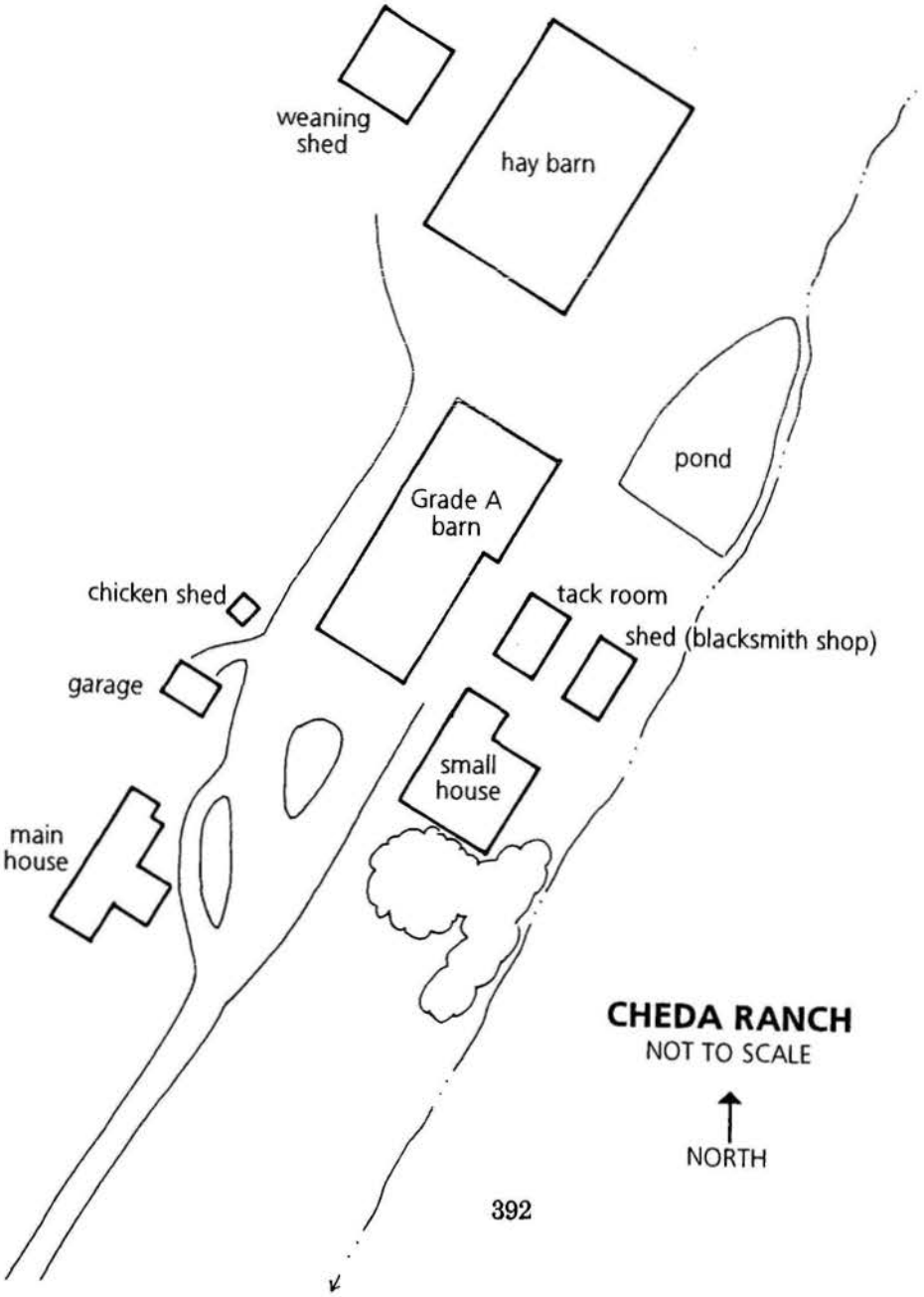
Also on the ranch are an abandoned deer camp, a large artificial pond, and the ruins of a cabin on the creek near the highway.

4. Historic Significance of the Cheda Ranch

While the Cheda Ranch has local significance as one of the first Swiss-owned dairies in Marin County, the remaining buildings lack both physical and historic integrity and it does not appear to be eligible for the National Register.

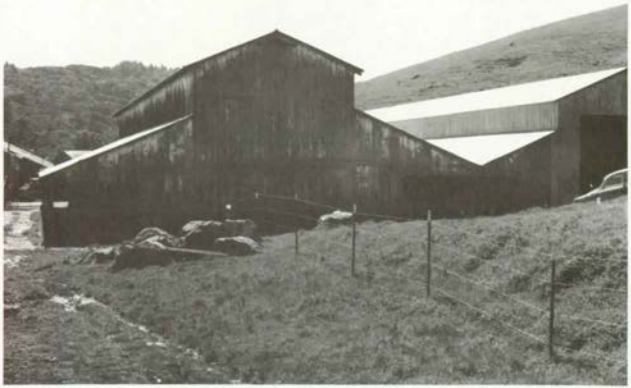
Features

1. Main Residence, ca. 1920
2. Small House, ca. 1900
3. Grade A Dairy, ca. 1937
4. Hay Barn, ca. 1920, 1970
5. Weaning Barn, ca. 1900
6. Garage, ca. 1920
7. Chicken Shed, ca. 1920
8. Shed (Blacksmith Shop), ca. 1880
9. Ranch Road, ca. 1860s

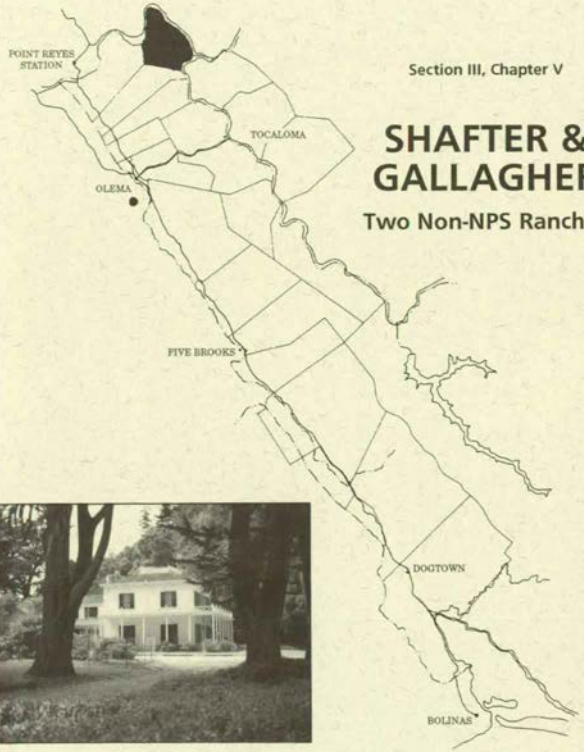


Tocaloma School on the Cheda Ranch around the turn of the century. *Courtesy of Don McIsaac.*

The main house at the Cheda Ranch (top) and the hay barn (bottom), as they appeared in 1995. *NPS photos by Dewey Livingston.*



DAIRY FARMING IN THE OLEMA VALLEY

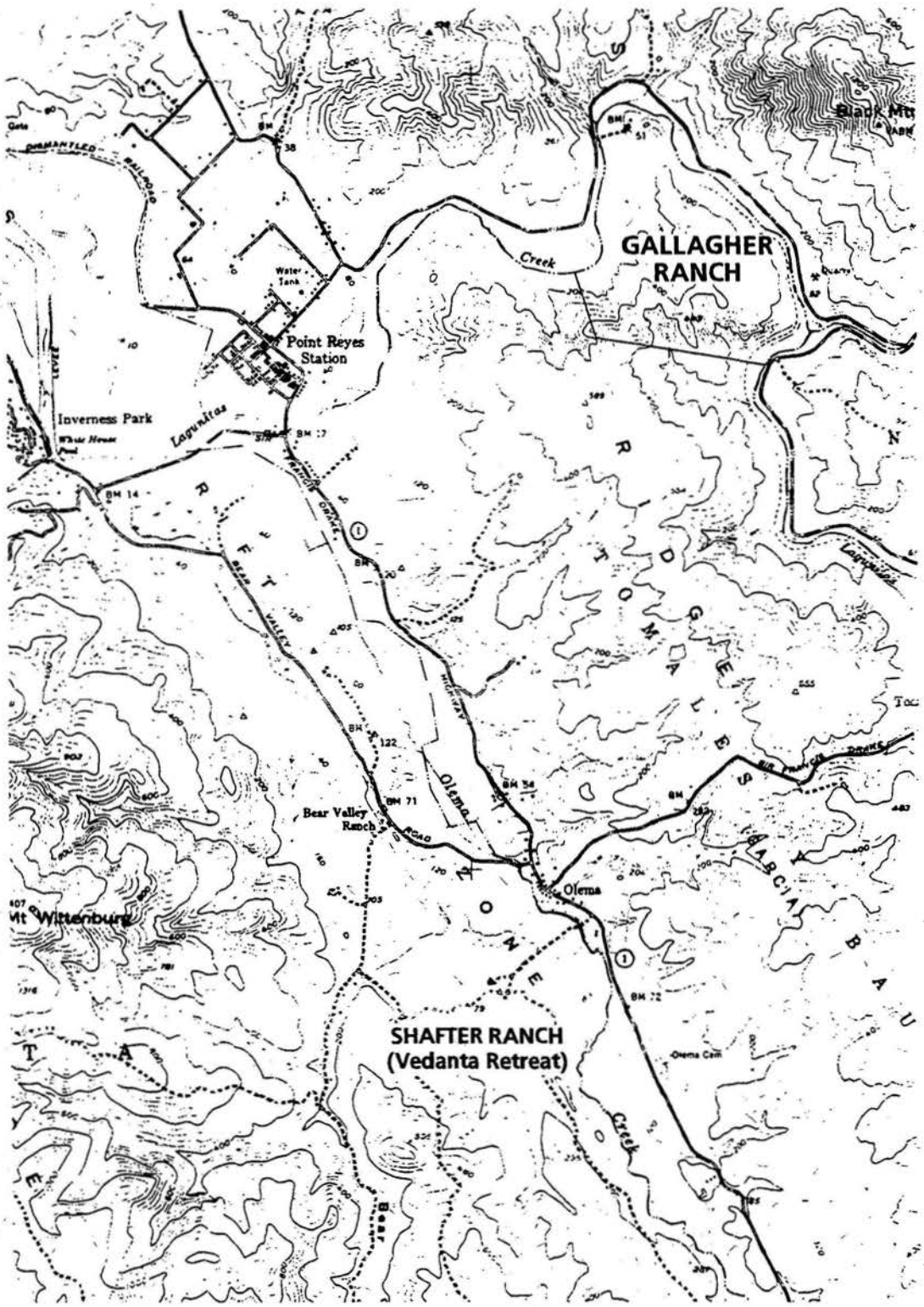


Section III, Chapter V

SHAFTER & GALLAGHER

Two Non-NPS Ranches

HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE


GALLAGHER
RANCH
SHAFTER RANCH
(Vedanta Retreat)
Point Reyes
Station
Inverness Park
Bear Valley
Ranch
Olema
Mt Wittenburg
Black Mtn
Lagunitas
Creek
Olema-
Bear
Valley
Road
Highway
Tomales
Bay
Ridge
Trail
Fault
Zone

V. SHAFTER and GALLAGHER RANCHES (not owned by the National Park Service)

Two ranch properties are within the designated boundaries of Point Reyes National Seashore and Golden Gate National Recreation Area but have not been purchased for inclusion in those parks. The Vedanta Society property of over 2,000 acres adjacent to Olema was excluded from purchase in the Seashore legislation because the religious organization which owns it provides uses compatible to the park. The ranch owned by the Robert and George Gallagher families, located east of Point Reyes Station, is slated for purchase when funds become available. Both have historic significance, especially the Vedanta property which was the country home of James McMillan Shafter, a prominent Californian and one of the original owners and developers of the Point Reyes dairy ranches. A brief history of these properties follows.

A. THE SHAFTER RANCH (The Oaks) Vedanta Society Retreat

The Vedanta Society Retreat is a large, mostly wooded parcel of over 2,000 acres located directly to the south and west of Olema, stretching from the town to the Stewart Ranch on the south. James McMillan Shafter chose this parcel as his country estate where, in 1869, he built a fine New England-style manor, which he called The Oaks, and dairy ranch. Shafter's law firm had purchased the entire Point Reyes Peninsula in 1858 and within ten years developed the largest dairy ranch in the state; no doubt Shafter wanted a fine estate from which to watch over his enterprises. During the early years at The Oaks, Shafter bought at least four small ranches from the Garcia family, although most of these transactions were taking advantage of defaulted loans. Shafter was a major stockholder in the North Pacific Coast Railroad, which commenced service to Tomales Bay in early 1875; his investment in this narrow gauge line eventually led to his financial downfall.[231]

Shafter gave The Oaks to his son Payne as a 30th birthday present in

---

[231]Mason, Point Reyes, pp. 69-74. The late historian Jack Mason wrote a great deal about the Shafters in Olema. Also see Mason's quarterly Point Reyes Historian for numerous articles and anecdotes.

1875. Payne Shafter took on the role of country squire, taking part in local events and charities, hunting with members of San Francisco society, writing poetry, and keeping a fine stable of race horses which exercised on the race track on the ranch. Shafter loved the ranch and operated a stage service from Tocaloma station offering scenic drives to Bear Valley, Bolinas and the ocean. The dairy was leased to local ranchers; the famous tale of the cow falling into the crack during the 1906 earthquake purportedly happened here. In 1925 Shafter sold 2,000 acres, excepting the mansion, to a Los Angeles syndicate bent on developing a golf resort. The plans never materialized and the property was sold in 1946 to the Vedanta Society, a Hindu-based sect brought to America 100 years ago by Swami Vivekenanda. Payne Shafter died in 1934, leaving the mansion and small amount of property to his daughters Helen and Mary. They held on to the fine old estate until 1965 when it was sold to Bill and Louise Watt. The Watts eventually sold the mansion to the Vedanta Society, who use the building as a meditation retreat center. The mansion parcel is not within the legislated boundaries of Point Reyes National Seashore, but the Rift Zone Trail is maintained for the public nearby.[232]

B. ROBERT and GEORGE GALLAGHER RANCH
North Bend Ranch

The 330-acre Gallagher Ranch is located on Lagunitas Creek east of Point Reyes Station. It is bounded on the north by the creek which surrounds the ranch on three sides, and on the south by the Genazzi and former Edwin Gallagher Ranches. The land originally belonged to Rafael Garcia, whose wife Loretta inherited it in the 1868 family land division. By 1873 James McMillan Shafter owned the ranch and developed a dairy there. He built a large house, reportedly as a country estate for his daughter Julia, but for the most part the ranch was leased to dairymen. The North Pacific Coast Railroad built tracks through the ranch in 1874 and named the flagstop there North Bend.[233]

After James McMillan Shafter's death in 1892 his heirs rapidly sold their

---

[232]Ibid., pp. 83, 100-103.

[233]Deeds Book H, p. 77, Book M, p. 462, Book Q, pp. 324 and 621, MCRO; 1873 Map of Marin County.

ranches in the vicinity to pay off their father's debts. Edward Gallagher, an Irishman who had arrived in the area before 1873, bought the ranch from the Shafters about 1893. Gallagher had operated leased dairies across the creek from the ranch, owned the ranch directly to the south as well as another in Nicasio. He raised a family and eventually his son William took over the dairy operation at North Bend. William L. Gallagher had spent a few years in San Francisco operating a cigar store but returned to the family ranch where he and his wife raised seven children. Sons Robert and George worked on the ranch and took over in 1944 after their father's death.[234]

The family made a living making cream until 1947, when Robert and George Gallagher built a Grade A dairy and began to produce market milk. George eventually moved to Point Reyes Station where he was postmaster for many years. The family sold the dairy business in 1985 and now raise replacement heifers. The family has been negotiating with the National Park Service towards eventual purchase of the ranch.

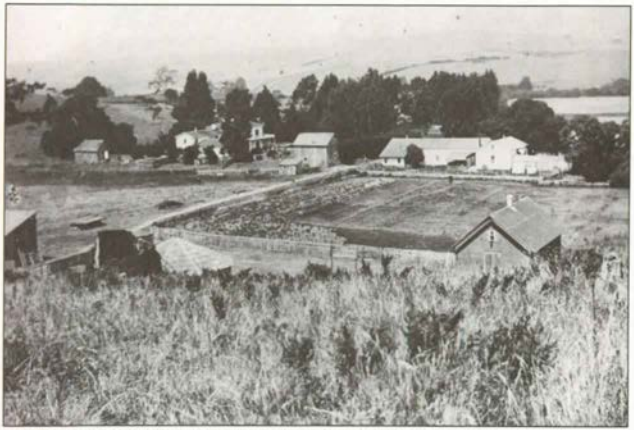
The ranch contains a circa 1880 two story house, built by Shafter along plans similar to his ranch houses on Point Reyes. There is also a Shafter-era hay barn, as well as a horse barn and outbuildings, a modern house and 200-stall loafing barn.

C. Historic Significance

The Vedanta property has a great deal of historic significance as the home of James McMillan Shafter; it has architectural significance as well. The Shafter mansion provides a vivid illustration of the dominance of the Shafter family during the 19th century of the Point Reyes Peninsula. The Gallagher Ranch has historic significance as a contributing dairy ranch to the Olema Valley dairy district, and has good historic integrity. Further study of these properties is recommended.

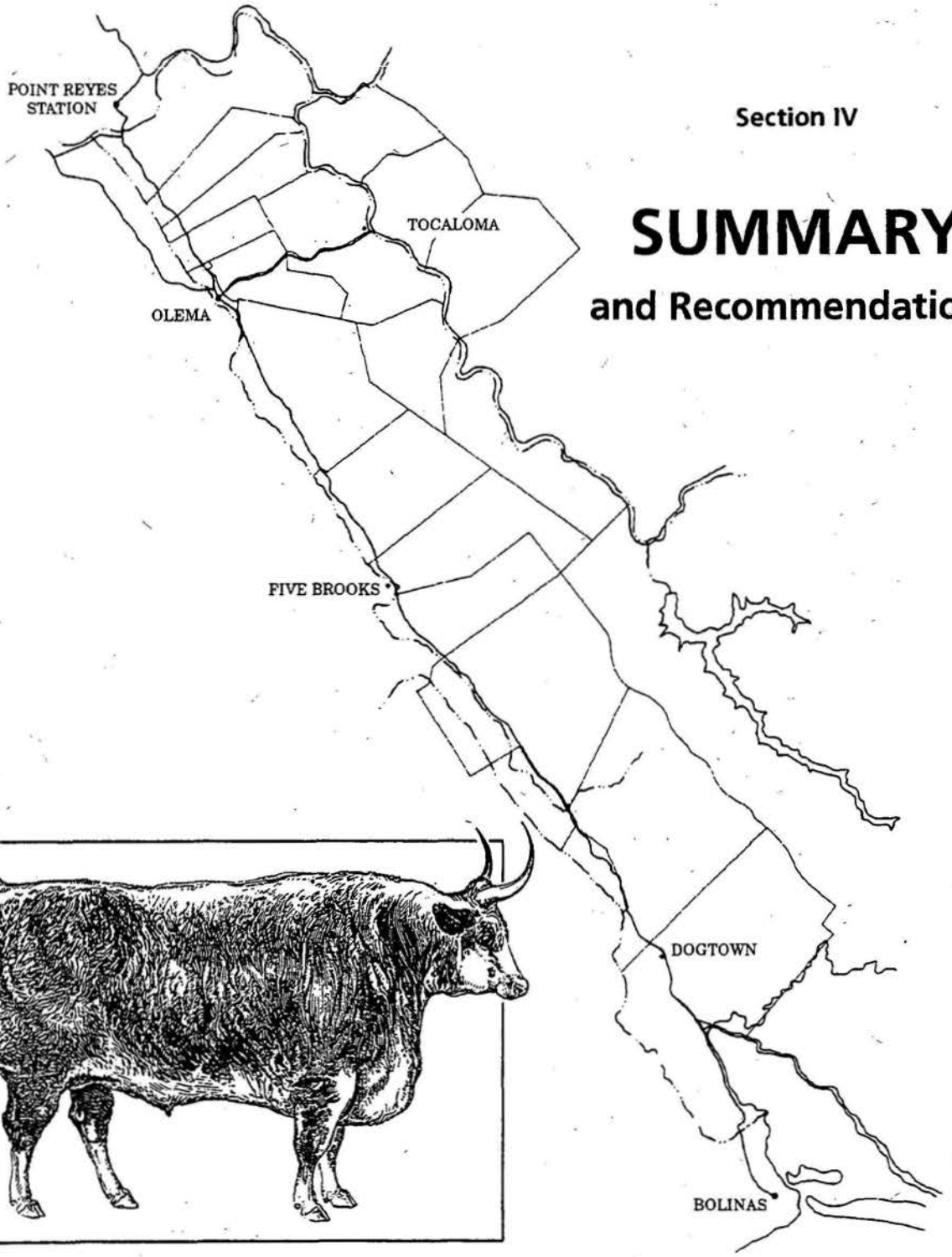
---

[234]Mason, Point Reyes, p. 81; Gallagher Ranch information from an interview with Robert Gallagher.



The Shafter Ranch, called The Oaks. *Courtesy of Jack Mason Museum.*

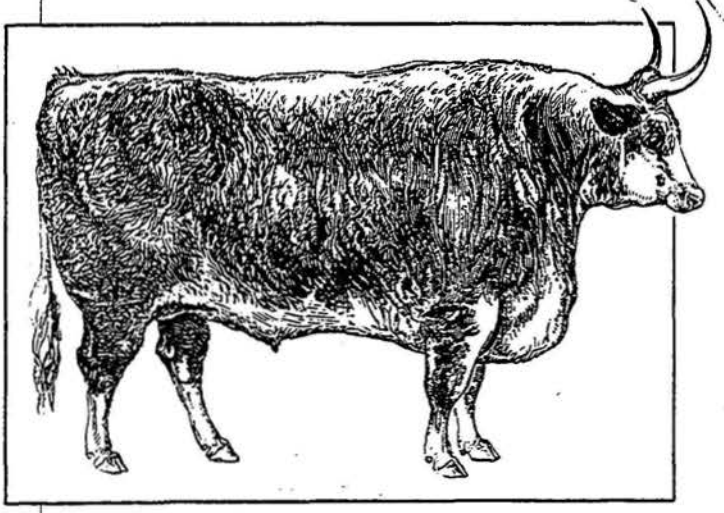
DAIRY FARMING IN THE OLEMA VALLEY



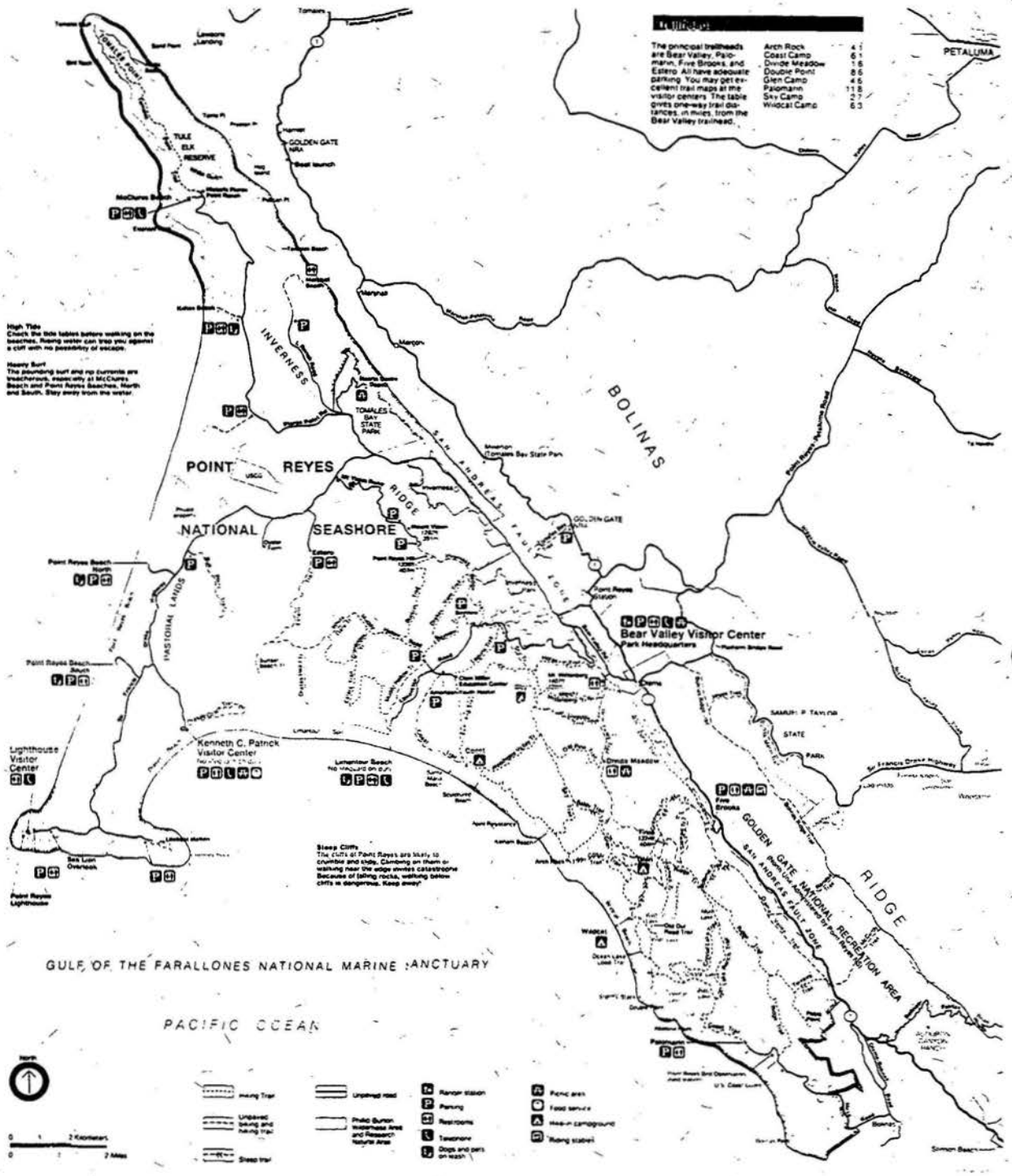
Section IV

SUMMARY

and Recommendations



HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE



1994 map of Point Reyes National Seashore, part of the park brochure.

IV. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Management Context

The overall objectives for Cultural Resource Management in the *Statement for Management* (1992) for Golden Gate National Recreation Area are: "To identify and protect the significant historic and cultural resources of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area through proper planning, research and preservation treatments;" and:

> To identify, research, and nominate all cultural resources that appear to have historical significance to the National Register of Historic Places.
>
> To stabilize and apply preservation treatments to all cultural resources determined to have historic significance, and to secure and protect all other historic structures pending historical research and evaluation.
>
> To require park partners to contribute to the preservation of historic features and structures with direction from historic structure reports, park staff involvement and the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings.*
>
> To develop historic structure reports and preservation guides to direct rehabilitation and routine and cyclic preservation maintenance activities.
>
> To initiate historic resource studies for proper management of significant historical features and structures.
>
> To identify, preserve and enhance cultural landscape values, considering the dynamics of natural systems and the need to maintain species diversity. . . . .

The subject of grazing is also addressed in the 1992 *Statement for Management:*

> Livestock grazing has continuously occurred within

> what is now parkland since the Spaniards arrived in 1776. As a result of heavy grazing, trampling, and the introduction of Mediterranean grass species, the species composition of the original grasslands has changed significantly. Now, when grazing is discontinued the disruption of the system allows invasion by exotics and the encroachment of coastal scrub communities, into what has historically been grasslands. In addition to the aesthetic impacts, this change reduces the amount of "edge" available as important wildlife habitat, it diminishes the ability to restore native coastal prairie species, and it could lead to a sizeable decrease in biological diversity.

The park's *General Management Plan (GMP),* approved in 1980, denotes a Pastoral Landscape Management Zone which includes portions of the Olema Valley north of Five Brooks but which does not follow historic ranch boundaries. The zone includes lands "with which it has been determined that dairying and cattle ranching are desirable aspects of the scene from both an educational and aesthetic point of view. At a minimum, agricultural buildings and open grasslands will be retained in these areas, and where feasible, livestock grazing will continue within the limits of carefully monitored range capacities." It should be noted that grazing has more than a 200 year history in the area. Prehistoric mammals are known to have grazed extensively and, more recently, large herds of elk roamed the region.

The park's List of Classified Structures (LCS), which includes most structures in the Olema Valley, is also listed in the *GMP.* The LCS is being updated at the time of this writing to include the structures in the Tocaloma area as discussed in this report.

The Olema Valley contains five ranches (Wilkins, Giacomini, Stewart, Rogers and McFadden) that are in use as working ranches and occupied by the original owners, and five ranch sites (Randall, Lupton, Truttman, Edwin Gallagher and Genazzi) where grazing is allowed under permit; there are three ranch complexes (Truttman, Hagmaier and Teixeira) that are used as park or private housing, and two old houses at Five Brooks under reservations; all of these potentially contribute to a proposed historic district on the National Register of Historic Places. The copper mining site in the valley appears to contribute, although it is not directly related to the ranching activity. In the Tocaloma area are three operating ranches (Zanardi, McIsaac and Cheda) and

two ranch sites (Jewell and Neil McIsaac), as well as the North Pacific Coast Railroad grade and Tocaloma Bridge, all of which potentially contribute to the district. Also, three significant parcels, the Gallagher (North Bend) Ranch, the Genazzi Ranch remainder and the Vedanta Society property, are not owned by the National Park Service but are within the designated boundaries and would be important parts of the proposed historic district. More than eighty potentially contributing buildings, structures and features are found in both areas.

Most of these ranches and sites appear to have regional historical significance in agriculture, industry and architecture. Future management of the area as a historic district/cultural landscape will be the key challenge to park planners over the coming years. Striking a proper balance between historic resource management and natural resource management is an especially important challenge.

Overall, the cultural landscape of the Olema Valley ranches may carry the greatest significance and integrity. While a number of ranch complexes have disappeared over the years, the texture of the ranching character of the valley and most of the landscape values remains intact. On an individual basis, the best of these complexes in terms of significance and integrity are the Wilkins, Teixeira, Giacomini, McIsaac and Zanardi Ranches.

The ranches not named above contain only portions of the original dairy complex, for instance, only the house and larger barns remain at the Truttman Ranch, and the house at the McFadden Ranch has been significantly remodeled; these ranches retain their historic significance more through the values of a cultural landscape, where the continuum of use and changing policies are evident, than through the character of the buildings and structures. Of course, many ranches no longer exist at all; some of these sites, however, still contain significant landscape remains such as trees or foundations, and have potential for historic archeology.

B. Research and Recordation

1. National Register Nominations

Following the criteria of National Register Bulletin 30, *Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes,* it is proposed that the Olema Valley and Lagunitas Creek ranches be listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a rural historic district. The boundaries of the district, to be named the Olema Valley Ranches Historic District, would be all that land in the Olema Valley lying between Bolinas Lagoon and Tomales Bay, delineated as follows: on the south, the southern boundary of the Wilkins Ranch; on the west, Highway 1 to the Point Reyes National Seashore boundary at Dogtown, then Pine Gulch Creek north to the northern line of the former Biesler Ranch and then Olema Creek to the head of Tomales Bay, and including a portion of Bear Valley Ranch to the west of Olema Creek; on the north, the northern boundaries of the Genazzi and Gallagher ranches; on the east, the eastern boundaries of the Gallagher, Zanardi, McIsaac and Cheda ranches, then the western boundary of Samuel P. Taylor State Park and the western boundary of the lands of the Marin Municipal Water District from the State Park to the southeast corner of the Wilkins Ranch. This district encompasses most of the lands in Golden Gate National Recreation Area now managed by the Superintendent, Point Reyes National Seashore (excepting those lands north of Lagunitas Creek and Point Reyes Station), and three former ranch parcels, the Teixeira and Hagmaier ranches and the eastern part of the Bear Valley Ranch, which are within the boundaries of Point Reyes National Seashore.

Based upon the guidelines of the U. S. Department of the Interior, National Register of Historic Places, the proposed Olema Valley Ranches Historic District is considered to possess regional significance in the following categories:

Function and Use:

DOMESTIC	single dwellings: residences, homesteads secondary dwellings: bunk houses secondary structures: dairies, storage sheds, garages camps: hunting campsites
EDUCATION	school: schoolhouse

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE
- processing: dairies
- storage: granary, silo, butter storage
- agricultural field: pasture, crop fields
- animal facility: stockyard, barn, chicken coop
- agricultural outbuilding: wagon shed, toolhouse, barn

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION
- manufacturing facility: butter and cheese factory
- waterworks: reservoirs, dams
- mining: copper mines, lime kilns

LANDSCAPE
- forest: windbreaks, boundary lines

TRANSPORTATION
- road-related: ranch roads, highway
- pedestrian-related: trails
- rail-related: narrow gauge railroad grade

Areas of Significance:

AGRICULTURE
ARCHITECTURE
COMMERCE
EDUCATION
ETHNIC HERITAGE
EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT
INDUSTRY
MARITIME HISTORY
SOCIAL HISTORY
TRANSPORTATION
MINING

The land and properties within the boundaries of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, containing the historically significant dairy ranches discussed in this report, shall be nominated as a rural historic district to the National Register of Historic Places as significant in the above categories. A potential amendment as a cultural landscape may occur when funding permits further study of the landscape of the area. Cultural landscape elements which need immediate protection pending acceptance to the National Register include historic roads and routes, fences and fencelines, water systems and ranch tree

groves. Individual or windbreak groves of trees, both at surviving ranches as well as vanished ones, even though considered exotics (such as eucalyptus), should be considered as historic resources and be preserved.

2. Further Study: Cultural Landscape Report

The Olema Valley section of Golden Gate National Recreation Area possesses one of the outstanding cultural landscapes within the National Park System. The Department of the Interior defines a rural historic landscape as:

> a geographic area that historically has been used by people, or shaped or modified by human activity, occupancy, or intervention, and that possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of areas of land use, vegetation, buildings and structures, roads and waterways, and natural features.

These former dairy ranches exhibit integrity in all eleven landscape characteristics outlined by the National Register of Historic Places as essential features to a rural historic landscape: land use and activities; patterns of spatial organization; response to natural environment; cultural traditions; circulation networks; boundary demarcations; vegetation related to land use; buildings, structures, and objects; clusters; archeological sites; and small-scale elements.[235]

The park's *Statement for Management* (1992) recommends cultural landscape studies for many areas of the park, including the Olema Valley:

> Although relatively extensive attention has been paid to the historic structures of the park, its historic landscape values remain largely unsurveyed and unevaluated. This is primarily due to the fact that a full appreciation and understanding of cultural landscape values has only recently found its way into National Park Service management practices.
>
> . . . The entire park bears the evidence of more than

---

[235]See National Register Bulletin Number 30, "Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes," published by the U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Interagency Resources Division.

200 years of intensive use and much of that evidence potentially represents important cultural values. The dynamic nature of many of these potential resources presents a compelling reason not to delay their study. Changes in agricultural practices in the Olema Valley can rapidly begin to turn grasslands into shrublands.

It is recommended that a Cultural Landscape Study (CLS) be undertaken for the Olema Valley, using the information contained in this study as a foundation which already provides evaluations of the historical significance and historic integrity of the ranches. This is especially important as the significant landscape features in the area disappear or are altered, such as fence lines, abandoned historic roads, and structures undergoing change of use. Included in the task directive for a CLS should be the preparation or modification of National Register nominations to incorporate cultural landscape characteristics.

It is also recommended that a series of Historic Structures Reports (HSR) be undertaken for the ranches, and subsequent Historic Structure Preservation Guides (HSPG) be prepared. These studies could be done efficiently by grouping structure types, because of the similarity between ranches and their structures; one HSPG for all the Point Reyes and Olema Valley ranches could cover recommended treatments of a typical dairy house, hay barn, etc., after a structure-by-structure evaluation of the individual ranches. This is especially important as a means of education for the ranch lessee towards understanding NPS preservation policy and guidelines.

3. Interpretation

Lying as it does along State Highway One and Sir Francis Drake Highway, the Olema Valley area is lacking in interpretation programs directed at the approximately two million visitors per year to the area. Currently there are no wayside exhibits outside of the Bear Valley Visitor Center area, and a small brochure available at Point Reyes National Seashore is inadequate. The Park broadcasts a 1610 AM radio announcement giving general park information with reference to the Olema Valley.

The *Interpretive Prospectus* (1989) for Golden Gate National Recreation Area's north district details a number of plans for interpretation in the Olema Valley and Tocaloma area, including media at all trailheads (some of which have

yet to be developed), improved entrance signage, and a picnic area at the McCurdy Trailhead. The *IP* also discusses the need for various publications and brochures about the area. These are needed to specifically interpret the ranching and mining history of the area. Some sites, such as the Randall House or the Olema lime kilns, could act as "discovery" sites where visitors could wander around a site and learn about the history of the area. Publications could detail the significance of the area and encourage appreciation and preservation of the historic landscape.

4. Archeology

Surveys of both prehistoric and historic archeological resources should be completed and included in the recommended CLS. As few surveys have been undertaken in the Olema Valley and Lagunitas Creek areas, little is known about the prehistoric settlement of the area. Unrecorded archeological sites are especially susceptible to vandalism and looting.

C. Preservation Recommendations

The historic ranches of the Olema Valley and Tocaloma area are currently in need of preservation activity, as the reservors and permitees are not familiar with NPS preservation standards. At least two ranches, Wilkins and Stewart, stand out as having outstanding upkeep, but the *Secretary's Standards for Rehabilitation* are not being followed in many specific cases. It is recommended that the ranches in current use for agriculture be preserved and the ranching activity continued, and that a program of cooperative education and financing for the stabilization of buildings and landscape be implemented. Also, the 1980 *GMP* may warrant revisions to management zones based on potential findings of a proposed Cultural Landscape Report.

Park managers should refer to the updated (1995) List of Classified Structures which details construction, condition, impacts, management categories, proposed treatments with cost estimates and maintenance responsibilities. The LCS is a valuable tool for investigating and tracking individual historic structures in the park and its use is essential for efficient management of cultural resources in the parks.

V. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Newspapers and Periodicals

Baywood Press (Point Reyes Station)
The California Farmer
Commercial Herald and Market Review (San Francisco)
Independent Journal (San Rafael)
Marin County Journal/Marin Journal (San Rafael)
Point Reyes Light (Point Reyes Station)
San Rafael Independent
San Rafael Tocsin
West Marin Star

Articles

Camp, Charles L. ed., "James Clyman, His Diaries and Reminiscences." California Historical Society Quarterly 5 (September 1926): 256-67.

Cook, Sherburne F. "The Conflict Between the California Indian and White Civilization" I-IV. Ibero-Americana 21-24.

DeGroot, Henry. "Dairies and Dairying in California." Overland Monthly 4 (April 1870): 355-60.

Johnson, Kenneth M. "Eucalyptus." Out West Vol. VI (October 1971): 41-49.

Ortiz, Beverly. "A Coast Miwok History." We Are Still Here: A Coast Miwok Exhibit. Bolinas, California: Bolinas Museum, 1993.

"Profit in Dairying -- the Interest in Marin County." San Francisco, Cal., February 24, 1884: 6.

Raup, Hallock F. "The Italian-Swiss in California." California Historical Quarterly 30 (December 1951): 305-14.

Sheldon, Francis E. "Dairying in California, I." Overland Monthly 6, second series (April 1891): 337-50.

Sneath, R. G. "Dairying in California." Overland Monthly 11, January-June 1888: 387-395.

Steele, Catherine Baumgarten. "The Steele Brothers, Pioneers in California's Great Dairy Industry." California Historical Quarterly 20 (September 1941): 250-273.

Wagner, Henry R. "The Last Spanish Exploration of the Northwest Coast And the Attempt to Colonize Bodega Bay." California Historical Society Quarterly 10 (December 1931): 313-45.

Ziebarth, Marilyn ed. "The Francis Drake Controversy: His California Anchorage, June 17 - July 23, 1579," California Historical Society Quarterly 53 (Fall 1974), special issue.

Manuscripts

Berkeley, Cal. University of California. The Bancroft Library.

Oliver and Charles D. Allen Papers.

Jacob N. Bowman. "Testimony of William Richardson and Jeremiah E. Whidzher in Private Land Grant Cases of California." Typescript No. C-R16, Vol. 5, 1939.

"Testimony of William Antonio Richardson in Provate Land Grant Cases 1850-1855." Typescript. 2 vols.

William Edgar Randall. Diaries and Letters.

Shafter Family Papers, 5 vols.

Hendry, G. W. and Jacob N. Bowman. "The Spanish and Mexican Adobes and Other Buildings in the Nine Bay Area Counties, 1776 to About 1850." 1940. Anne T. Kent California Room, Marin County Library.

Lake, Delos. "The Title of O. L. Shafter, James McM. Shafter, and Charles Webb Howard to La Rancho Punta de los Reyes Sobrante . . . ." Circa 1869. Point Reyes National Seashore Collection.

Sacramento, Cal. California State Archives. U.S. Census. California. Agricultural Schedules, 1860 - 1880.

San Francisco, California. National Park Service. Western Regional Office.

Lawrence Kinnaird, "History of the Golden Gate and Its Headlands." Typescript written for the National Park Service, 1962, 1967.

Nelson Olds family papers. Machine copy, from Virginia Olds French.

Olds family letters to Boyd Stewarts, Olema, Ca. Xerox copies by permission from the Stewarts.

San Rafael, Cal. Marin County Civic Center Administration Building.

Recorder of Deeds Office.

Deed Books and maps.

Marin County Library, Anne T. Kent California Room.

"Chronological History of Marin County." 3 vols. typescript.

"Marin County, Mexican Land Grants." Typescript, Works Progress Administration. 1936 to 1937.

Various short manuscripts in Point Reyes National Seashore and Jack Mason Museum Collections.

Books

Abbott, Sue. North Bay Dairylands. Berkeley: Penstemon Press, 1989.

Alvord, Henry G. "Dairy Development in the United States," in Yearbook of the US Dept of Agriculture 1899. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1900.

---. "The Modern Dairy." Current Literature 29 (July-December 1900): 597-8.

Bancroft, Hubert Howe. History of California. 7 vols. San Francisco: The History Company, 1884-1890.

Becker, Robert H. Design of the Land. Diseños of California Ranchos And Their Makers. San Francisco: The Book Club of California, 1969.

Bingham, Helen. In Tamal Land. San Francisco: The Calkins Publishing House, 1906.

California Immigrant Union. California as a Home for the Emigrant. San Francisco: [California Immigrant Union,] 1878.

California Surveyor General. Annual Reports, 1856-73. Sacramento: State Printer, 1856-73.

---. Special Report of the Surveyor General of the State of California. [Sacramento]: Eugene Casserly, State Printer, [1852].

Caughey, John Walton. History of the Pacific Coast. Los Angeles: Privately published by the author, 1933.

Checklist of United States Public Documents 1789-1909. 1911. 3rd revised ed. Ann Arbor: J. W. Edwards, Publishers, 1953.

Codoni, Rae. The Corippians, A Retrospective View. Riverbank, CA: Baker Graphics, 1990.

Cowan, Robert G. Ranchos of California, a list of Spanish Concessions 1775-1822 and Mexican Grants 1822-1846. Fresno: Academy Library Guild, 1956.

Cross, Ira B. Financing an Empire: History of Banking in California. Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1927.

Daniels, T. G., Ed. California: Its Products, Resources, Industries and Attractions. Sacramento: Superintendent of State Printing, 1904.

De Laval Handbook of Milking, The. Poughkeepsie: De Laval Separator Company, n.d. [circa 1965].

Dickinson, A. Bray. Narrow Gauge to the Redwoods. Al Graves and Ted Wurm, Editors. Berkeley: Trans-Anglo Books, 1967.

Dwinelle, John W. The Colonial History of San Francisco. San Francisco: Towne and Bacon, Book and Job Printers, 1863.

Fairley, Lincoln. Mt. Tamalpais: A History. San Francisco: Scottwall Associates, 1986.

Foley, Gerald J. and Perry McDonald. Pictorial History of Marin County Schools. No publisher noted, 1976.

Guinn, Prof. J. M. History of the State of California and Biographical Record of the Coast Counties. Chicago: Chapman Publishing Company, 1904.

Harrison, E. S. History of Santa Cruz County, California. San Francisco: Pacific Press Publishing Company, 1892.

Hittell, John S. The Commerce and Industries of the Pacific Coast of North America. San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1882.

Hurt, Elsey. California State Government, An Outline of Its Administrative Organization from 1850 to 1936. Sacramento: Superintendent of Documents, 1936.

Jones, Robert E. Dairying in California. San Francisco: Californians, 1923.

Kingsbury's 1905-06 Directory of San Rafael City and Marin County. [San Francisco:] A. Kingsbury & Co., 1905.

Livingston, D. S. (Dewey). Ranching on the Point Reyes Peninsula: A History of the Dairy and Beef Ranches Within Point Reyes National Seashore. Point Reyes: National Park Service, 1993.

Marin County Planning Commission. Master Recreation Plan. San Rafael: Marin County Planning Commission, 1943.

Marin People Volume II. San Rafael: Marin County Historical Society, 1972.

Mason, Jack, in collaboration with Helen VanCleave Park. Early Marin, 2nd revised ed. Inverness: North Shore Books, 1976.

---. Earthquake Bay, A History of Tomales Bay, California. Inverness: North Shore Books, 1976.

---, in collaboration with Thomas J. Barfield. Last Stage for Bolinas. Inverness: North Shore Books, 1973.

---. Point Reyes Historian. Volumes I-VIII. Inverness: North Shore Books, 1976-1984.

---. Point Reyes, The Solemn Land. Inverness: North Shore Books, 1970.

McDonald, Marshall, and Associates. Report and Recommendations on Angel Island 1769-1966. Prepared for the Division of Beaches and Parks, State of California, 1966.

Munro-Fraser, J. P. History of Marin County, California. San Francisco: Alley, Bowen & Co., 1880.

Munz, Philip A. A California Flora. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959.

Pepper, Marin W. Bolinas, a Narrative of the Days of the Dons. Vantage Press, 1965.

Point Reyes National Seashore. Statement for Management. Point Reyes: National Park Service, 1990.

Report of the Commissioner of Agriculture for the Year 1870. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1871.

Revere, Joseph Warren. Keel and Saddle, A Retrospect of Forty Years of Military and Naval Service. Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1872.

---. Naval Duty in California. 1849. Reprint, Oakland: Biobooks, 1947.

Robinson, Alfred. Life in California, A Historical Account of the Origins, Customs, and Traditions of the Indians of Alta-California. 1846. Reprint ed., Oakland: Biobooks, 1947.

Rothwell, Bertha Stedman. Pioneering in Marin County. Typescript, 1959.

Shafter, Oscar L. Life, Diary and Letters of Oscar Lovell Shafter. Edited by Flora Haines Loughead. San Francisco: The Blair-Murdock Co., 1915.

Simpson, Sir George. Narrative of a Journey Round the World, During the Years 1841 and 1842. 2 vols. London: Henry Colburn, 1847.

Souvenir of Marin County, California. San Rafael: Marin County Journal, 1893.

---. Issued by Sausalito News, William J. Boyd, 1907.

State of California. State Dairy Bureau. First Report of the State Dairy Bureau to the Governor of the State of California. Sacramento: A. J. Johnston, Superintendent of State Printing, 1896.

---. Surveyor General. Annual Report of the Surveyor General of the State of California for the Year 1862. Sacramento: State Printer, 1863.

---. General Report of the Surveyor-General, 1871-1873. Sacramento: Eugene Casserly, State Printer, 1873.

Stindt, Fred A. The Northwestern Pacific Railroad; Redwood Empire Route. Redwood City: Fred A. Stindt, 1978.

Teather, Louise. Place Names of Marin. San Francisco: Scottwall Associates, 1986.

Thalman, Sylvia Barker. The Coast Miwok Indians of the Point Reyes Area. Point Reyes: Point Reyes National Seashore Association, 1993.

Toogood, Anna Coxe. Historic Resource Study: A Civil History of Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore, California, 2 Volumes. Denver: Historic Preservation Branch, Pacific Northwest/Western Team, Denver Service Center, National Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, 1980.

Transactions of the California State Agricultural Society During the Year 1859. Sacramento: C. T. Botts, State Printer, 1860.

United States Census Bureau. A Compendium of the Ninth Census (June 1, 1870). Compiled by Francis A. Walker, Superintendent of Census. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872.

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Land Use Survey, Proposed Point Reyes National Seashore. San Francisco: National Park Service, Region IV Office, 1961.

Vaz, August Mark. The Portuguese in California. Oakland: I.D.E.S. Supreme Council, 1965.

Warren, John Quincy Adams. California Ranchos and Farms, 1846-1862. Paul W. Gates, ed. Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1967.

Watson, Samuel E. "California Dairying" in California State Board of Trade. California. San Francisco: California State Board, 1897-98.

Wickson, E. J. "Dairying in California." United States Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Animal Industry. Bulletin No. 14. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1896.

Wise, Lieutenant, U.S.N. Los Gringos: or An Inside View of Mexico and California, with Wanderings in Peru, Chile, and Polynesia. New York: Baker and Scribner, 1849.

Archives and Libraries

Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley
California Historical Society, San Francisco
California State Archives, Sacramento
California State Lands Commission, Sacramento
California State Library, Sacramento
Fairfax Historical Society
Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Historian's Files
Inverness Library
Jack Mason Museum Collection, Point Reyes
Marin County Board of Supervisors, San Rafael
Marin County Historical Society, San Rafael
Marin County Library, Anne T. Kent California Room, San Rafael
Marin County Office of Education
Marin County Recorders Office, San Rafael
Mill Valley Public Library
Mt. Tamalpais History Project, Larkspur
National Archives, Washington, D. C. and Suitland, MD
National Archives, Pacific Sierra Region, San Bruno
National Park Service, Western Regional Office, San Francisco
Point Reyes Light Collection
Point Reyes National Seashore, Administrative Files, Archive, Library
San Francisco Archives, San Francisco Public Library
San Rafael Public Library
Sonoma County Library, Petaluma
Stanford University Library
Stinson Beach Library
United States Coast Guard, Real Property Division, Alameda
United State Geological Survey Library, Menlo Park

Personal Interviews

Emma Benevenga
Rico Bordessa
Louis Bloom
Richard Bloom
Lauren Cheda
Rae Codoni
Jim and Mary Colli
Marie (DeFraga) Davidson
Daniel Deevy*
Edward DeFraga
George DeMartini*
Margaret (Wosser) Dowd

Anita (Ottolini) Flanders*
Bob Gallagher
Harold Genazzi
Ralph and Margaret Giacomini
George and Evelyn (Genazzi) Gilardi
Fern Gilliam
Joan (Gallagher) Gimpel*
Henrietta (Stewart) Greer
Daniel Hagmaier*
Lt. Col. Earl L. Lupton
Pat Martin
Agnes McCall*
Dorothy McClure
Ron McClure
Jim and Virginia (Bordessa) McFadden
Don & Lorraine McIsaac
Joan (Rapp) Mayhew
Dorothy Meloney
Joseph H. Mendoza
Marian (Gallagher) Morris
Owen and Oliver Muscio
Shirley (Wilkins) Park
Tom & Ollie Pinkerton
William Pinkerton
Andrew and Annie Porter
Barbara Race
Rex and Ruth Rathbun
Nancy (Campigli) Robinette
Fred and Regina (Bloom) Rodoni
Clarence Rogers
Wilfred J. Scilacci
Joseph and Christina Silveira
Boyd Stewart
Jo Ann Stewart
Juanita Sweeney*
Irene Teixeira
Armin Truttman
Frank Truttman
Molly (Teixeira) Waters
Helen Wilkins
Kenneth Wilkins

*Interviewed by phone or correspondence

As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

NPS D-57 May 1995