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HISTORICAL RESOURCE REPORT

Alta Napa Valley Vineyards P19-00372-UP & P19-00373-VAR
Planning Commission Hearing July 1, 2020

HISTORIC RESOURCE EVALUATION



2125 Silverado Trail, Napa , CA

February 7, 2020

PREPARED FOR:

Fred Oliai
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1988 Thousand Oaks Blvd.
Berkeley, CA 94707

PREPARED BY:

LILLY BIANCO
PRESERVATION & PLANNING

Received
Mar 30 2020

PURPOSE

This Historic Resource Evaluation (HRE) has been prepared for the vernacular side gable, stick-frame farmhouse located at 2125 Silverado Trail in Napa, CA (APN. 039-270-005). The following Evaluation has been prepared to comply with guidelines and evaluation criteria of the California Register of Historic Resource (14 CCR §15064.5 and PRC§ 21084.1). California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Section 15064.5 provides direction for evaluation of properties and the preparation of environmental documents. Pursuant to California State law, the County of Napa is the agency responsible for determining the environmental impact of any land use proposal it approves. Historic resources are aspects of the environment that require identification and assessment for potential significance under CEQA (14 CCR 15064.5 and PRC 21084.1).

The proposed “Alta Vineyards Winery” project proposes to redevelop the subject property with a winery and in doing so, proposes to demolish an existing contemporary residence, carport, and shed (built during the 1980s) and to demolish a c. 1883 farmhouse. An existing barn and shed on the property would be retained. Given that farmhouse is proposed for demolition and meets the minimum age-eligibility to be considered a historic resource for the purposes of CEQA, the property owner has requested an evaluation to determine whether or not it constitutes a historic resource.

METHODOLOGY

To inform the evaluation, the author conducted review of archival information and records available at the Napa Historical Society, Napa County Recorder’s Office, and consulted online resources including the California Digital Newspaper Collection and Newspapers.com archives. A field survey was undertaken on December 16, 2019 to conduct site documentation and evaluate the level of integrity. The Evaluation was further informed by review of project plans prepared for the “Alta Vineyards Winery” project and provided November 19, 2020 via email correspondence.

The evaluation focuses on the identification of essential character defining features important for conveying the building’s significance, the role the building/property played in the larger historic context, and an assessment of the extent to which the essential features have or have not been retained.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

The Napa Valley's Agricultural Development

The Spanish Period

Spanish colonization of California began in the 1770's and continued through the 1830's. However, the Spanish influence over the Napa Valley was brief. The first recorded exploration of Napa County was in 1823 by Francis Castro and Padre José Altimira; only a decade later in the 1830s, the Spanish lost control of the area when Mexico obtained independence. During the 1820's when the land briefly came under the jurisdiction of the Mission San Francisco Solano, grazing came to typify the Napa Valley landscape, especially the upper portions. The practices of the Native American population favored a landscape already conducive to grazing and this continued throughout this period.

The Mexican Period:

In 1821, Mexico gained independence from Spain, and by 1834 the Spanish Missions, developed by the Franciscans, were secularized. Land that had previously been owned by the church was divided up by the new Mexican government using maps called *diseños* that roughly demarcated the grant's boundaries. A large number of these grants were secured by the most well-connected of families and distributed among the elite of Mexican Californio society (University of California 2011). The process of land granting that began in the 1830's divided the present-day Napa Valley into thirteen ranchos — approximately 6,654-acres just north of Napa and east of the Napa River, would form the Rancho Yajome, within which the subject property is located.

An expansive, permeable landscape characterized the Napa Valley during this period, as Mexicans were primarily stock raisers, not farmers (Menefee 1879, 46). A thriving tanning industry in the City of Napa further encouraged cattle production for their hides and tallow. The raising of cattle remained the most lucrative agricultural pursuit and encouraged Mexicans to maintain the valley floor in wide unfenced grasslands, allowing the cattle to roam and graze freely. While less ubiquitous than cattle, there was also a marked presence of crops, the most prominent being wheat followed by barley, oats, corn and onions (Ketteringham 1967, 82). Wheat and barley in particular, endured as important crops until the turn of the twentieth century when orchards and vineyards supplanted grain crops.

The American Period

In Menefee Campbell's *Descriptive Sketchbook*, he describes how in 1847, "there was not a house in the County except a few adobe buildings occupied by Mexicans... there was neither roads, bridges nor fences excepting a few small enclosures" (Menefee 1879, 45). The mid-1840s saw the beginnings of permanent settlement as more and more Americans drove their wagon trains west. In 1846, the Bear Flag Revolt, a revolt incited over land-use control, successfully freed the area of Alta California from Mexican control. The newfound freedom further encouraged settlement and opened up the landscape to new ventures, it didn't take long for the population density and settlement of the Napa Valley to change.

The encroachment by American settlers onto pre-existing Mexican land grants set into motion the transition from a pastoral landscape to one increasingly defined by agriculture (Ketteringham 1967, 95). The informal system of documentation used by the Mexican Government to demarcate grant boundaries would open the door to legal challenges by Americans after the US-Mexican War (University of California 2011). Accounts dating from this period observed how, "Most of the valley lands were taken up by American immigrants, fenced and put under cultivation (yet, some large tracts remained untouched)" (Menefee 1879, 53). The paucity of rainfall in the years 1836 - 1865 further catalyzed the disintegration of the Mexican rancho system. Furthermore, because the ranchos relied so heavily on the production of grain, the absence of both water and grain required the Mexicans to sell off their cattle and ultimately to dispose of their holdings, lands and all. In the end, the intensive agriculture replaced pastoral endeavors and wheat replaced hides as the predominant crop in the region.

This transition coincided with a rise in experimental agriculture, during which farmers planted orchards, tobacco, wine grapes, mulberry, tea, cotton, and hops. In 1857 Napa's first agricultural society was founded. In 1862, George Yount established the Napa Valley's first commercial dairy. The Suscol and Oak Knoll orchards were also planted during this time, as was Napa's First Vineyard—Patchett's Vineyard. Dr. Crane and Charles Krug built Napa's first wineries in 1862 (Gregory 1912, 147). The landscape of the Valley was rapidly transitioning from one dominated by large scale grazing land to midsize and small farms devoted to a variety of agricultural pursuits.

In the 1880s, the open and sprawling landscape, devoted mostly to wheat and grain, began to be displaced by more profitable ventures of prune orchards, English walnut orchards and vineyards (Olmstead 2003) Between the years 1880 and 1930 wheat cultivation decreased from 33,000 to 3,000 acres (Carpenter 1938, 8) The cultivation of French prunes (introduced into the Valley in 1883) more than compensated for the

decrease in wheat production. In the 1880s roughly 6000 prune orchards dotted the landscape of the Napa Valley and by 1930 there were more than 1 million in the valley (Carpenter 1938, 8). For nearly half of the twentieth century, prunes served as one of Napa County's largest fruit crops, second only to grapes. However, not the entire valley floor proved conducive to such crops. Deep-rooted plants typical of orchards and vineyards are not partial to wet meadows and because of this the portions of land characterized by the wet meadow remained pastureland or in grain production much longer than the surrounding landscape (Grossinger 2012, 72).

Between 1919 and 1932 the burgeoning viticulture industry faced major challenges. The passage of the Volstead Act in 1920 and the ensuing prohibition resulted in the closing of wineries and abandonment of vineyards. While some remained in business producing wine for sacramental purposes, the vast majority of wineries and vineyards shut down production. However, because former vintners still needed to produce an income, they often removed vineyards and replaced them with other crops, including prunes, apples, apricots, cherries, and walnuts.

The repeal of prohibition in 1933 encouraged the re-instatement of vineyards and allowed the industry to reestablish itself, but only to an extent. The removal of vineyards that took place in the intermediate years and the fact that many former vintners were forced to find a new livelihood resulted in a much less robust wine industry immediately following repeal. Intensive, mixed agriculture consisting of prune orchards, vineyards with a small presence of pear orchards, walnut orchards, and the occasional dairy came to typify the valley. In an effort to revive the decimated viticulture industry, in 1934 Napa Valley Co-op was formed.

By 1966, roughly 20 wineries dotted the entire landscape of Napa Valley; today there are upwards of 475. During the latter part of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, wine grapes became solidly established as Napa Valley's premier agricultural product. In 1976, The Judgement of Paris solidified the Napa Valley as a premier wine growing region. Land devoted to diverse agriculture and orchards so prevalent in the earlier part of the twentieth century is today, mostly developed with vineyard. According to the 2018 Napa County Crop report, in 2018 the total GDP of the fruit and nut crop exceed one billion dollars— the category "other fruits and nuts", which excluded wine grapes and olives, accounted for a mere \$90,000. Viticulture continues to be at the center of the Napa Valley's identity and history.

2125 Silverado Trail

Chain of Title

Date	Name	Reference
1853	Salvador Vallejo	
1853-1855	Justus Struver	MS00221
1855-1856	Francis Schulte	MS0221
1856-1857	Charles Plass	MS021
1857-1858	George Grigsby	MS0221
1858-1875	George Crowey	Assessor's Document Number: 1002-0005253
1875-1883	Felix Borreo	Assessor's Document Number: 1002-0021165
1883- 1929	George and Michael Bernhard	Assessor's Document Number: 1002-0035026
1929- 1949	Frank and Paul Rossi	Assessor's Document Number: 1929-0000966
1949- 2017	John E Hoffman & Ruth Margaret Hoffman	Assessor's Document Number: 1949-0004389 ; 2017-0002912

Property History

The subject property at 2125 Silverado Trail was historically part of the 6,652.58-acre Rancho Yajome. General Mariano Vallejo took ownership of the Rancho Yajome land in 1841, giving it to his brother Salvador Vallejo shortly after. Salvador was the beneficiary of the land grant from the Mexican government before the Mexican American war, and he began selling portions of it off shortly after his acquisition of the property.

In 1853, Justus Struver by way of Juan Antonio Vallejo acquires three parcels of the Yajome Rancho totaling 1150 acres, which includes the subject property. In 1855 Struver sells 419 acres to a Francis Schulte, who, in 1856 subsequently sells a 109-acre portion of land to a Charles Plass (Hoffman 1991, 26). In 1857, Plass sells to George Grigsby who sells the property again in 1858 to George Crowey.

George Washington (Wash) Crowey, arrived in Yountville Township in about 1850 by way of the Grigsby-Ide wagon train to California. Crowey, a local businessman, acquired large land holdings throughout the Napa Valley. One of his larger land holdings was just north of Soda Canyon – eventually totaling 2000 acres, what came to be known as the Crowey Ranch and which covered the present- day Stags Leap

district. George Crowey also attributed with having commissioned the construction of the Napa Opera House in 1879.

In 1875, George Crowey sold the 109-acre parcel to Felix Borreo. Originally from Italy, Napa pioneer, Felix Borreo, arrived in Napa County in 1866 where he became a successful grocer and farmer. He established a grocery business on the corner of Soscol and Third Streets, where he sold hay, feed, wool, coal, and liquor. He also owned the Bay View Vineyard, and farmed the Crowey Ranch, in addition to owning a number of his own farms (Wallace 1901, 268).

In 1883, Borreo sold a 59-acre portion of his property (including the subject property) to Michael and George Bernhard who hold the property until 1929 (Hoffman 1991, 32). According to mortgage receipts, it is during the Bernhard's tenure that the land is improved and transformed into a working farm. Until this time, the subject property consists of unimproved grazing land, likely planted with wild oats (Hoffman 1991, 25).

Around 1883, the original residence, barns, and the no longer extant water tower were likely erected. Tax records for 1887 list improvements at \$300.00 and list furniture, a sewing machine, farming utensils and machinery, two wagons, buggies or other vehicles, harnesses, two horses, two colts, two head of cattle, and one dozen poultry. During this time, the Bernhards kept 8 acres in oats, and likely planted prunes and a variety of other fruit bearing trees. By 1891, tax records indicate the land is worth \$1400.00 with improvements of \$300.00 — there were three horses, three dozen poultry, and a dog.

According to Michael Bernhard's obituary, the Bernhards were well known residents of Napa for upwards of 60 years — they arrived in Napa from Germany in the 1870s where they engaged in farming (Napa Daily Register 1923). A 1910 census lists the agricultural products being produced as fruits and vieres. The article notes that Michael Bernhard owned extensive and valuable farmland in the vicinity of Yountville and Napa Soda Springs.

In 1929, after selling off portions of their land, the Bernhards sell the remaining 20.45 acres to Paul and Frank Rossi. A 1942 draft card for Paul Rossi, lists him as "farmer" from Castiglione Italy. Frank and Paul Rossi held the property until 1949, when it was acquired by John and Margaret Hoffman.

In 1949, the Hoffmans purchased the property for \$18,500. When they arrived, John Hoffman recalls that the property was a working, productive "prune ranch" — it contained about an acre of sweet cherries, an acre of Bartlett pears, several acres of

wheat, as well as 16 acres of prunes — mostly French, but some of the sugar and imperial varieties, as well (Hoffman 1991, 45). Non-commercial crops included, a large Gravenstein apple tree by the house, a pear tree, six Franquette and one Cord walnut tree near the house. There as also a large Brown Fig tree and Black Mission Fig tree and apple trees in the middle of the prune orchard with a large Freestone Peach tree near the barn. There was also a chicken yard behind the barn stocked with a mixed breed of chicken.

Existing Improvements on the property included the barn, which was equipped with a hay fork suspended from a track inside the peak of the roof to unload hay from a hay wagon stored in the middle of the barn; the south side featured a row of horse stalls. Other buildings on the property in 1949 included the prune shed — used to store dried prunes and orchard lugs, a woodshed and shop with forge and vise for metal working and horse shoeing, as well as a makeshift chicken house and water tower (Hoffman 1991, 47).

In 1954, John Hoffman planted the first black walnuts on the property and by 1991, the entirety of the existing prune orchards was interplanted with walnuts (Hoffman 1991, 75). In 1962, the Hoffman's began renting out the property and in the 1980s, when the Hoffmans retired and decided to relocate back to the property, they repaired the existing farmhouse by filling in the cellar, installing a concrete perimeter foundation, replacing the porch, and undertaking other interior repairs. They also had a new house, shed, and carport constructed. The Hoffman family continued to farm the property through the early 2000s. Today the prune orchards have been replaced with vineyards.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The subject property at 2125 Silverado Trail consists of an approximately 22.65-acre parcel located on the west side of Silverado Trail, north of the intersection of Silverado Trail and Trancas Street. The surrounding area is largely devoted to agriculture with some commercial and recreational land uses nearby. The property is accessed via a long driveway and is improved with two residences, a barn, two sheds, a carport and a well with the remaining acreage planted in vineyard. The site layout is such that the farmhouse fronts Silverado Trail and exhibits a 115 ft. setback from the road. South of the farmhouse is the small shed and the barn is located west of and to the rear of the

house. The modern residence, carport and shed are located north of the original farmhouse.

For the purposes of this report, The following discussion is limited to those buildings proposed for demolition and omits those buildings that do not meet the minimum (45 year) age-eligibility for listing on the CRHR and/or which will not be directly affected by the proposed project.

Vernacular Farmhouse

Built around 1883, the original side gable, stick-frame vernacular farmhouse is a one-story single-family residence. The building is rectangular in plan, clad in horizontal drop siding and capped with a side gabled roof covered with composite shingles. The primary façade faces east with frontage on Silverado Trail and features an (unoriginal) small covered porch accessed by stone and wood stairs. The primary entrance is located on the center of the façade and features a partially glazed, paneled wood door with flat board trim. It appears that there was once a small porch out the backdoor, but this has been enclosed and there is now a pergola over the back door. Typical fenestration consists of a combination of two over two double-hung windows and one over one double hung windows There is a wood-framed side-slider on the west elevation. Architectural features are very limited but include: (salvaged) decorative brackets at front porch and corner boards. Contemporary modifications to the residence include removal and replacement of a full width porch, the addition of a gable roofed addition on the north side of the building and multiple additions on the west side of the building which form a long “wing”.



Figure 1 Undated photo of farmhouse. Assessor Building Record, Courtesy of Napa County Assessor



Figure 2 East Elevation



Figure 3 East Elevation



Figure 4 South Elevation



Figure 5 West (Rear Elevation)



Figure 8 North Elevation and Addition



Figure 7 West -Elevation addition



Figure 6 North Elevation/ wing addition

SIGNIFICANCE

This section examines the building's eligibility for listing on the California Register of Historic Resources (California Register). Eligibility for listing on the California Register is determined based on how well a given building/property meets one or more of the following criteria at the local, state, or national level. It is not required that all four criteria are met for a resource to be considered significant.

1. It is associated with events or patterns of events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.
2. It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.
3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values.
4. It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, state or the nation.

Criterion 1. Associated with significant events.

To be eligible under this criterion, the resource must have an important association with a significant event or historic trends. This criterion recognizes single historic events or patterns of events, when both the event itself and the resource's association with it can be proven to be significant.

The subject residence is a vernacular farmhouse that historically was associated with the orchard industry and the development of diverse agriculture in the Napa Valley during the late 19th and through the 21st centuries. From 1883 until the modern day, the subject property functioned as a working farm devoted to the cultivation of fruit and nut trees. It is most definitely one of the longest operating small farms in private ownership. The growth of the agriculture industry in Napa Valley is a significant theme and central to the history and identify of Napa Valley. As a small farm, the

property does exhibit an association with this important theme; however, there is no records that support that the property or residence in question made a significant contribution to the context of agriculture in Napa County. For that reason, the property and farmhouse thereon does not appear eligible under Criterion 1.

Criterion 2. Associated with important persons

As detailed herein, the subject property is most strongly associated with Michael and George Bernhard (who improved the property to function as a small farm and are purported to have constructed the farmhouse and agricultural buildings), the Rossis, by virtue of the length of their tenancy, and the Hoffmans for the same reason. While all of the owners noted were valued members of the community, their contributions do not rise to a level such that their activities were demonstrably important in the context of local, state, or national history. As such, the property does not appear to be significant solely based on its association with them. The property also doesn't derive significance from some of its more prominent owners, namely, George "Wash" Crowley and Felix Borreo, simply because it is not illustrative of their achievements and there are other resources that are better able to convey that significance. Accordingly, the farmhouse does not appear eligible under Criterion 2.

Criterion 3. Architectural Significance

The side gable stick-frame vernacular residence is one of the most enduring property types on California agricultural properties during the period from about the 1850s until the 1930s (Caltrans 2007: 150). The distinctive characteristics of a vernacular farmhouse include basic symmetry, simplicity in form and detailing, gable roofs, horizontal wood siding, surrounding porches, and double hung windows. While the farmhouse does exhibit some of those characteristics associated with this building type, it is only a modest example. Furthermore, the removal of the original full width porch, as evidenced by Tax Assessor's building records, and replacement with a small covered stoop, along with the series of additions, have altered the form, proportions, and detailing such that the building does not serve as a good example of this building type. For that reason, the farmhouse does not appear eligible under Criterion 3.

Criterion 4 (Potential to yield information)

Under this criterion a property is eligible if it has been used as a source of data and contains more yet retrieved data. A property is also eligible if it has not yet yielded information but, through testing or research, is determined a likely source of data.

The subject property, and more specifically, the vernacular farmhouse, is not known to constitute the principal source of information, for which to deem it eligible under this criterion. Records are not indicative of the property or any components therein being significant because they have yielded or are expected to yield information important to the prehistory or history of California or the nation.

INTEGRITY

Historic Resources deemed to be significant must also be able to convey their historic significance, which is understood in terms of integrity. Whether or not a property retains integrity is judged by how well the resource meets the seven aspects of integrity: *Location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association*. It is not required that a property retains *all* its historic physical features or characteristics, rather a property must retain at the very least, those essential features which allow it to convey its significance. The essential features are those that define (1) why a property is significant and (2) when it was significant.

Per the analysis, above, the subject building does not appear to be significant and therefore a discussion of its integrity is not warranted.

CONCLUSION

The analysis above indicates that while the subject property and specifically, the vernacular farmhouse, was associated with the agricultural development of the Napa Valley, it did not play such an important role as to be considered significant. The persons most closely associated with the property (the Bernhards, Rossis, and Hoffmans) do not appear to be demonstrably significant in the context of local, state or national history. In terms of design, the farmhouse is only a modest example of the side-gable stick frame vernacular residence type typical of California Agricultural properties and it has undergone a series of modifications that have altered its design, proportions, and form such that it doesn't appear to exhibit architectural significance. Finally, there is no indication that the property or subject building has archeological significance. For those reasons, the vernacular farmhouse in question does not appear to be a historic resource and its modification or removal would not constitute a significant impact for the purposes of CEQA.

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QUALIFICATIONS

Lilly Bianco holds a Masters in Historic Preservation and has practiced in the field for ten years. She is a qualified Architectural Historian pursuant to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and as defined in the Code of Federal Regulations, 36 CFR Part 61. Ms. Bianco is also listed as an Architectural Historian on the California Historic Resources Information Systems list of qualified consultants.

ATTACHMENTS

1. DPR 523 Primary Record and Building, Site, and Object Record

State of California & The Resources Agency
 DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
 HRI #
 Trinomial
NRHP Status Code
 Other Review Code
 Reviewer
 Date
 Listings

Page 1 of 9 *Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 2125 Silverado Trail - Farmhouse

P1. Other Identifier: _____

*P2. Location: Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County Napa and (P2c, P2e, and P2b or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad Napa Date 1980 T ; R ; of of Sec ; B.M.

c. Address 2125 Silverado Trail City Napa Zip 94558

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone 10, 562972 mE/ 4242666 mN

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, decimal degrees, etc., as appropriate)

*P3a. Description:

Built c. 1883, the original side gable, stick-frame vernacular farmhouse is a one-story single family residence. The building is rectangular in plan, clad in horizontal drop siding and capped with a side gabled roof covered with composite shingles. The primary façade faces east with frontage on Silverado Trail and features an (unoriginal) small covered porch accessed by stone and wood stairs. The primary entrance is located the center of the façade and is a partially glazed, paneled wood door with flat board trim. It appears that there was once a small porch out the backdoor, but this has been enclosed and there is now a pergola over the back door. Typical fenestration consists of a combination of two over two double-hung windows and one over one double hung windows...Continued on Page 3.



*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP33

*P4. Resources Present: Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5b. Description of Photo: (view, date, accession #) Facade

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source: Historic Prehistoric Both
C.1883

*P7. Owner and Address:
 Alta Napa Valley Vineyards, LLC
 1988 Thousand Oaks Blvd.
 Berkeley, CA 94707

*P8. Recorded by: (Name, affiliation, and address) Lilly Bianco
Preservation & Planning

*P9. Date Recorded: February
6, 2020

*P10. Survey Type: (Describe)
Intensive

*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.")

Historic Resource Evaluation, 2125 Silverado Trail Farmhouse, Prepared by Lilly Bianco
Preservation and Planning, Feb 7, 2020.

*Attachments: NONE Location Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record
 Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record
 Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List): _____

Received
 Mar 30 2020

State of California & The Resources Agency Primary #
 DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION HRI#
BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) 2125 Silverado Trail Farmhouse *NRHP Status Code _____

Page 2 of 9

B1. Historic Name: 2125 Silverado Trail Farmhouse

B2. Common Name: 2125 Silverado Trail Farmhouse

B3. Original Use: Single-family residence B4. Present Use: Single-family residence

*B5. Architectural Style: Side gable stick-frame vernacular farmhouse

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

Constructed c.1883; Kitchen and bedrooms additions added in early twentieth century; new foundation, new porch, new windows in 1980s.

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: _____ Original Location: _____

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: Unknown b. Builder: Unknown

*B10. Significance: Theme Agriculture Area _____

Period of Significance N/A Property Type Agriculture Applicable Criteria N/A

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

HISTORIC CONTEXT

The Napa Valley's Agricultural Development

The Spanish Period

Spanish colonization of California began in the 1770's and continued through the 1830's. However, the Spanish influence over the Napa Valley was brief. The first recorded exploration of Napa County was in 1823 by Francis Castro and Padre José Altimira; only a decade later in the 1830s, the Spanish lost control of the area when Mexico obtained independence. During the 1820's when the land briefly came under the jurisdiction of the Mission San Francisco Solano, grazing came to typify the Napa Valley landscape, especially the upper portions. The practices of the Native American population favored a landscape conducive to grazing and this continued throughout this period. Continued on Page 3.

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) _____

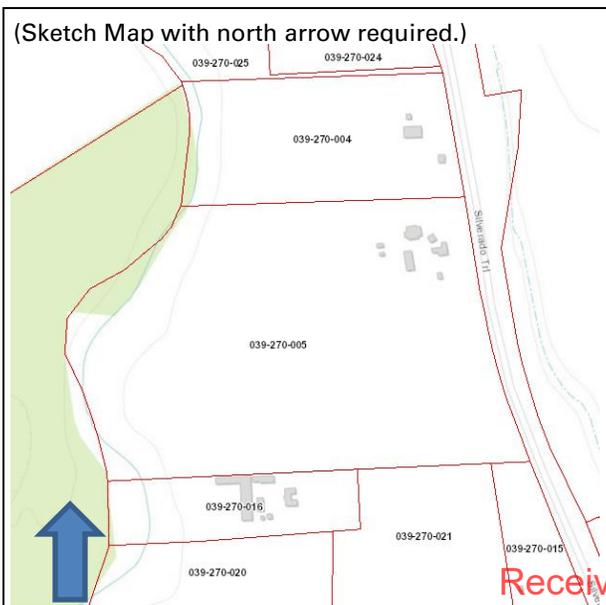
*B12. References:

HRE 2125 Silverado Trail, Napa, CA prepared by Lilly Bianco Preservation & Planning, February 7,2020.

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Lilly Bianco Preservation & Planning

*Date of Evaluation: Feb 7,2020



(This space reserved for official comments.)

Received
 Mar 30 2020

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P3A. Architectural Description Continued:

There is a wood-framed side-slider on the west elevation. Architectural features are very limited but include: decorative brackets at front porch and corner boards. Contemporary modifications to the residence include a new foundation, removal and replacement of a full width porch, the addition of a gable roofed addition on the north side of the building and multiple additions on the west side of the building which form a long "wing".

B10. Significance Continued:

The Mexican Period:

In 1821, Mexico gained independence from Spain, and by 1834 the Spanish Missions, developed by the Franciscans, were secularized. Land that had previously been owned by the church was divided up by the new Mexican government using maps called diseños that roughly demarcated the grant's boundaries. A large number of these grants were secured by the most well-connected of families and distributed among the elite of Mexican Californio society (University of California 2011). The process of land granting that began in the 1830's divided the present-day Napa Valley into thirteen ranchos — approximately 6,654-acres just north of Napa and east of the Napa River, would form the Rancho Yajome, within which the subject property is located.

An expansive, permeable landscape characterized the Napa Valley during this period, as Mexicans were primarily stock raisers, not farmers (Menefee 1879, 46). A thriving tanning industry in the city of Napa further encouraged cattle production for their hides and tallow. The raising of cattle remained the most lucrative agricultural pursuit and encouraged Mexicans to maintain the valley floor in wide unfenced grasslands, allowing the cattle to roam and graze freely. While less ubiquitous than cattle, there was also a marked presence of crops, the most prominent being wheat followed by barley, oats, corn and onions (Ketteringham 1967, 82). Wheat and barley in particular, endured as important crops until the turn of the twentieth century when orchards and vineyards supplanted grain crops.

The American Period

In Menefee Campbell's Descriptive Sketchbook, he describes how in 1847, "there was not a house in the County except a few adobe buildings occupied by Mexicans... there was neither roads, bridges nor fences excepting a few small enclosures" (Menefee 1879, 45). The mid-1840s saw the beginnings of permanent settlement as more and more Americans drove their wagon trains west. In 1846 the Bear Flag Revolt, a revolt incited over land-use control, successfully freed the area of Alta California from Mexican control. The newfound freedom further encouraged settlement and opened up the landscape to new ventures. While no longer under Mexican influence, the landscape in 1847 had yet

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to depart substantially from its appearance during the Spanish and Mexican periods. However, not long after the account, the population density of the valley changed rapidly.

The encroachment by American settlers onto pre-existing Mexican land grants set into motion the transition from a pastoral landscape to one increasingly defined by agriculture (Ketteringham 1967, 95). The informal system of documentation used by the Mexican Government to demarcate grant boundaries would open the door to legal challenges by Americans after the US-Mexican War (University of California 2011). Accounts dating from this period observed how, "Most of the valley lands were taken up by American immigrants, fenced and put under cultivation, yet large tracts remained untouched" (Menefee 1879, 53). The paucity of rainfall in the years 1836 - 1865 further catalyzed the disintegration of the Mexican rancho system. Furthermore, because the ranchos relied so heavily on the production of grain, the absence of both water and grain required the Mexicans to sell off their cattle and ultimately to dispose of their holdings, lands and all. In the end, the intensive agriculture replaced pastoral endeavors and wheat replaced hides as the predominant crop in the region.

This transition coincided with a rise in experimental agriculture, during which farmers planted orchards, tobacco, wine grapes, mulberry, tea, cotton, and hops. In 1857 Napa's first agricultural society was founded. In 1862, George Yount established the Napa Valley's first commercial dairy. The Suscol and Oak Knoll orchards were also planted during this time, as was Napa's First Vineyard —Patchett's Vineyard. Dr. Crane and Charles Krug built Napa's first wineries in 1862 (Gregory, 147). The landscape of the Valley was rapidly transitioning from one dominated by large scale grazing land to midsize and small farms devoted to a variety of agricultural pursuits.

In the 1880s, the open and sprawling landscape, devoted mostly to wheat and grain, began to be displaced by more profitable ventures of prune orchards, English walnut orchards and vineyards (Olmstead, A.L.) Between the years 1880 and 1930 wheat cultivation decreased from 33,000 to 3,000 acres (Carpenter 1938, 8) The cultivation of French prunes (introduced into the Valley in 1883) more than compensated for the decrease in wheat production. In the 1880s roughly 6000 prune orchards dotted the landscape of the Napa Valley and by 1930 there were more than 1 million in the valley (Carpenter 1938, 8). For nearly half of the twentieth century, prunes served as one of Napa County's largest fruit crops, second only to grapes. However, not the entire valley floor proved conducive to such crops. Deep-rooted plants typical of orchards and vineyards are not partial to wet meadows and because of this the portions of land characterized by the wet meadow remained pastureland or in grain production much longer than the surrounding landscape (Grossinger 2012, 72).

Between 1919 and 1932 the burgeoning viticulture industry faced major challenges. The passage of the Volstead Act in 1920 and the ensuing prohibition resulted in the closing of wineries and abandonment of vineyards. While some remained in business producing wine for sacramental purposes, the vast majority of wineries and vineyards shut down production. However, because

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former vintners still needed to produce an income, they often removed vineyards and replaced them with other crops, including prunes, apples, apricots, cherries, and walnuts.

The repeal of prohibition in 1933 encouraged the re-instatement of vineyards and allowed the industry to reestablish itself, but only to an extent. The removal of vineyards that took place in the intermediate years and the fact that many former vintners were forced to find a new livelihood resulted in a much less robust wine industry immediately following repeal. Intensive, mixed agriculture consisting of prune orchards, vineyards with a small presence of pear orchards, walnut orchards, and the occasional dairy came to typify the valley. In an effort to revive the decimated viticulture industry, in 1934 Napa Valley Co-op was formed.

By 1966, roughly 20 wineries dotted the entire landscape of Napa Valley; today there are upwards of 475. During the latter part of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, wine grapes became solidly established as Napa Valley’s premier agricultural product. In 1976, The Judgement of Paris solidified the Napa Valley as a premier wine growing region. Land devoted to diverse agriculture and orchards so prevalent in the earlier part of the twentieth century is today, mostly developed with vineyard. According to the 2018 Napa County Crop report, in 2018 the total GDP of the fruit and nut crop exceed one billion dollars— the category “other fruits and nuts”, which excluded wine grapes and olives, accounted for a mere \$90,000. Viticulture continues to be at the center of the Napa Valley’s identity and history.

2125 Silverado Trail

Chain of Title

Date	Name	Reference
1853	Salvador Vallejo	
1853-1855	Justus Struver	MS00221
1855-1856	Francis Schulte	MS00221
1856-1857	Charles Plass	MS0221
1857-1858	George Grigsby	MS0221
1858-1875	George Crowey	Assessor’s Document Number: 1002-0005253
1875-1883	Felix Borreo	Assessor’s Document Number: 1002-0021165
1883- 1929	George and Michael Bernhard	Assessor’s Document Number: 1002-0035026
1929- 1949	Frank and Paul Rossi	Assessor’s Document Number: 1929-0000966

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1949- 20??	John E Hoffman & Ruth Margaret Hoffman	Assessor's Document Number: 1949- 0004389
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Property History

The subject property at 2125 Silverado Trail was historically part of the 6,652.58-acre Rancho Yajome. General Mariano Vallejo took ownership of the Rancho Yajome land in 1841, giving it to his brother Salvador Vallejo shortly after. Salvador was the beneficiary of the land grant from the Mexican government before the Mexican American war, and he began selling portions of it off shortly after his acquisition of the property.

In 1853, Justus Struver by way of Juan Antonio Vallejo acquires three parcels of the Yajome Rancho totaling 1150 acres, which includes the subject property. In 1855 Struver sells 419 acres to a Francis Schulte, who, in 1856 subsequently sells a 109-acre portion of land to a Charles Plass (Hoffman 1991, 26). In 1857, Plass sells to George Grigsby who sells the property again in 1858 to George Crowey.

George Washington (Wash) Crowey, arrived in Yountville Township in about 1850 by way of the Grigsby-Ide wagon train to California. Crowey, a local businessman, acquired large land holdings throughout the Napa Valley. One of his larger land holdings was just north of Soda Canyon – eventually totaling 2000 acres, what came to be known as the Crowey Ranch and which covered the present- day stags leap district. George Crowey also attributed with having commissioned the construction of the Napa Opera House in 1879.

In 1875, George Crowey sold the 109-acre parcel to Felix Borreo. Originally from Italy, Napa pioneer, Felix Borreo, arrived in Napa County in 1866 where he became a successful grocer and farmer. He established a grocery business on the corner of Soscol and Third Streets, where he sold hay, feed, wool, coal, and liquor. He also owned the Bay View Vineyard, and farmed the Crowey Ranch, in addition to owning a number of his own farms (Wallace 1901, 268).

In 1883, Borreo sold a 59-acre portion of his property (including the subject property) to Michael and George Bernhard who hold the property until 1929 (Hoffman 1991, 32). According to mortgage receipts, it is during the Bernhard's tenure that the land is improved and transformed into a working farm. Until this time, the subject property consists of unimproved grazing land, likely planted with wild oats(Hoffman 1991, 25).

Around 1883, the original residence, barns, and the no longer extant water tower were likely erected. Tax records for 1887 list improvements at \$300.00 and list furniture, a sewing machine, farming utensils and machinery, two wagons, buggies or other vehicles, harnesses, two horses, two colts, two head of cattle, and one dozen poultry. During this time, the Bernhards kept 8 acres in oats, and

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likely planted prunes and a variety of other fruit bearing trees. By 1891, tax records indicate the land is worth \$1400.00 with improvements of \$300.00 — By this time, the Bernhard's had three horses, three dozen poultry, and a dog.

According to Michael Bernhard's obituary, the Bernhards were well known residents of Napa for upwards of 60 years — they arrived in Napa from Germany in the 1870s where they engaged in farming (Napa Daily Register 1923). A 1910 census lists the agricultural products being produced as fruits and vieres. The article notes that Michael Bernhard owned extensive and valuable farmland in the vicinity of Yountville and Napa Soda Springs.

In 1929, after selling off portions of their land, the Bernhards sell the remaining 20.45 acres to Paul and Frank Rossi. A 1942 draft card for Paul Rossi, lists him as "farmer" from Castiglione Italy. Frank and Paul Rossi held the property until 1949, when it was acquired by John and Margaret Hoffman.

In 1949, the Hoffmans purchased the property for \$18,500. When they arrived, John Hoffman recalls that the property was a working, productive "prune ranch" — it contained about an acre of sweet cherries, an acre of Bartlett pears, several acres of wheat, as well as 16 acres of prunes — mostly French, but some of the sugar and imperial varieties, as well (Hoffman 1991, 45). Non-commercial crops included, a large Gravenstein apple tree by the house, a pear tree, six Franquette and one Cord walnut tree near the house. There as also a large Brown Fig tree and Black Mission Fig tree and apple trees in the middle of the prune orchard with a large Freestone Peach tree near the barn. There was also a chicken yard behind the barn stocked with a mixed breed of chicken.

Existing Improvements on the property included the barn, which was equipped with a hay fork suspended from a track inside the peak of the roof to unload hay from a hay wagon stored in the middle of the barn; the south side featured a row of horse stalls. Other buildings on the property in 1949 included the prune shed — used to store dried prunes and orchard lugs, a woodshed and shop with forge and vise for metal working and horse shoeing, as well as a makeshift chicken house and water tower (Hoffman 1991, 47).

In 1954, John Hoffman planted the first black walnuts on the property and by 1991, the entirety of the existing prune orchards was interplanted with walnuts (Hoffman 1991, 75). In 1962, the Hoffman's began renting out the property and in the 1980s, when the Hoffmans retired and decided to relocate back to the property, they had a new house, shed, and carport constructed. The Hoffman family continued to the farm the property through the early 2000s. Today the prune orchards have been replaced vineyards.

SIGNIFICANCE

This section examines the building's eligibility for listing on the California Register of Historic Resources (California Register). Eligibility for listing on the California Register is determined based

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on how well a given building/property meets one or more of the following criteria at the local, state, or national level. It is not required that all four criteria are met for a resource to be considered significant.

1. It is associated with events or patterns of events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.
2. It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.
3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values.
4. It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, state or the nation.

A discussion of how the project does or does not meet the applicable criteria is included, below. Note that resources on the property which do not meet the minimum age requirements for listing are omitted from this analysis. For the purposes of this evaluation, the discussion below is limited to the c.1883 residence.

Criterion 1. Associated with significant events.

To be eligible under this criterion, the resource must have an important association with a significant event or historic trends. This criterion recognizes single historic events or patterns of events, when both the event itself and the resource's association with it can be proven to be significant.

The subject residence is a vernacular farmhouse that historically was associated with the orchard industry and the development of diverse agriculture in the Napa Valley during the late 19th and through the 21st centuries. From 1883 until the modern day, the subject property functioned as a working farm devoted to the cultivation of fruit and nut trees. It is most definitely one of the longest operating small farms in private ownership. The growth of the agriculture industry in Napa Valley is a significant theme and central to the history and identify of Napa Valley. As a small farm, the property does exhibit an association with this important theme; however, there is no records that support that the property or residence in question made a significant contribution to the context of

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agriculture in Napa County. For that reason, the property and farmhouse thereon does not appear eligible under Criterion 1.

Criterion 2. Associated with important persons

As detailed herein, the subject property is most strongly associated with Michael and George Bernhard (who improved the property to function as a small farm and are purported to have constructed the C.1883 residence and agricultural buildings), the Rossis, by virtue of the length of their tenancy, and the Hoffmans for the same reason. While all of the owners noted were valued members of the community, their contributions do not rise to a level such that their activities were demonstrably important in the context of local, state, or national history. As such, the property does not appear to be significant solely based on its association with them. The property also doesn't derive significance from some of its more prominent owners, namely, George "Wash Crowley" and "Felix Borreo," simply because it is not illustrative of their achievements and there are other resources that are better able to convey that significance. Accordingly, the property does not appear eligible under Criterion 2.

Criterion 3. Architectural Significance

The side-gable stick frame vernacular residence is one of the most enduring property types on California agricultural properties during the period from about the 1850s until the 1930s (Caltrans 2007: 150). The distinctive characteristics of a vernacular farmhouse include basic symmetry, simplicity in form and detailing, gable roofs, horizontal wood siding, surrounding porches, and double hung windows. While the farmhouse does exhibit some of those characteristics associated with this building type, it is only a modest example. Furthermore, the removal of the original full width porch, as evidenced by Tax Assessor's building records, and replacement with a small covered stoop, along with the series of additions have altered the form, proportions, and detailing such that the building does not serve as a good example of this building type. For that reason, the property does not appear eligible under Criterion 3.

Criterion 4 (Potential to yield information)

Under this criterion a property is eligible if it has been used as a source of data and contains more yet retrieved data. A property is also eligible if it has not yet yielded information but, through testing or research, is determined a likely source of data. The subject property, and more specifically, the vernacular farmhouse, is not known to constitute the principal source of information, for which to deem it eligible under this criterion. Records are not indicative of the property or any components therein being significant because they have yielded or are expected to yield information important to the prehistory or history of California or the nation.