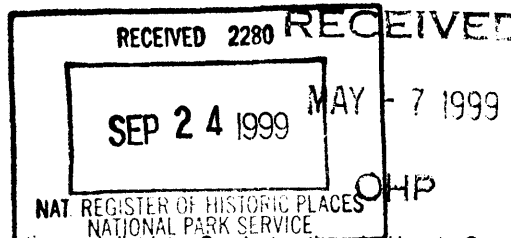


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

264



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Bird & Dinkelspiel store

other names/site number Benjamin store

2. Location

street & number 2145 Collinsville Road not for publication

city or town Bird's Landing vicinity

state California code CA county Solano code 095 zip code 94512

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Samuel Abeyta Sept 20, 1999
Signature of certifying official Title Date

California Office of Historic Preservation
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

Edson H. Beall 10/21/99
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Bird & Dinkelspiel store
Name of Property

Solano County, CA
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce & Trade/ department store

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce & Trade/department store

"Work in Progress"

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival/vernacular

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Wood/plywood

roof Asphalt shingles

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See Continuation Sheet (Section 7, p.1)

Bird & Dinkelspiel store
Name of Property

Solano County, CA
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Exploration/Settlement

Architecture

Commerce

Period of Significance

1875-1900

Significant Dates

1875-store built

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Bird, John

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Frank, Jacob

Dinkelspiel, Moses

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Solano County Archives

Bird & Dinkelspiel store
Name of Property

Solano County, CA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .15 of an acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	0	5	9	90	4	0	4	2	20	93	9
Zone		Easting					Northing				

3

Zone		Easting					Northing				

2

Zone		Easting					Northing				

4

Zone		Easting					Northing				

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Noelle Storey

organization Sonoma State University date 4/1/99

street & number 1801 East Cotati Ave. telephone (707)571-1491

city or town Rohnert Park state CA zip code 94928

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Section 7

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

The Bird & Dinkelspiel store is a two-story, balloon framed building with a full basement and a small attic. The building is set upon wooden posts embedded into a concrete perimeter with horizontal drop siding of milled lumber held together by wire nails. Architecturally, the building is best understood as a vernacular adaptation to the Greek Revival style popular in the United States from 1830 to 1850 although it continues as a dominant folk form well into the 20th century. The front gable shape echoes the pedimented facade of typical Greek temples. The Bird & Dinkelspiel store is situated at a crossroads, the place where the development of the town of Bird's Landing began. Although currently undergoing rehabilitation, the building retains a very high degree of integrity, interior as well as exterior, to its appearance during its period of significance.

SETTING, LOCATION

The Bird & Dinkelspiel store is located on a .15 acre plot at the southwest corner of the intersection of Collinsville Road, Birds Landing Road, County Road # 68, and County Road #249. To the west the store is bordered by a building currently rented by Shirley Paolini. To the north, the property is bordered by Bird's Landing Road and various privately owned lots. Close to the southern border of the property is the Bird's Landing Post Office. There are only two other buildings sitting at the crossroads. One of these is the Benjamin home, which is located east of the crossroads. The other building is Mel's Bar, which is located northeast of the crossroads. This crossroads is the heart of the historic town of Bird's Landing (see photograph 1). According to James Mayo in *The American Grocery Store*, "Country stores were located when possible at crossroads for practical reasons. A storekeeper could maximize any contact with potential passersby and be located at the one point where the greatest number of local settlers could take the fastest route to their supply source" (52).

As the use of county road numbers for street names implies, the town of Bird's Landing has, unlike many of its contemporaries, managed to resist the impacts of modernization and retain the character of the crossroads town it has always been. The store maintains its original design and is located at the same rural crossroads setting as during its period of significance.

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EXTERIOR ELEMENTS

The Bird & Dinkelspiel store is a wooden, two-story, balloon framed, linear planned building measuring 60' x 24'. It was constructed at this site in 1875. Architecturally, the Bird & Dinkelspiel store is best understood as a type of commercial building determined a "National" style: a vernacular adaptation of the Greek Revival style popular in the United States from 1830 to 1850¹. The foundation of wooden posts embedded into a concrete perimeter, measures approximately 42" from grade. The steep-pitch, front-gabled roof is covered with composition shingles, and has a wide eave overhang. Both of the gable ends and the eaves are decorated with a thin band of fascia. Inside the gables and just below the eaves is a wide band of trim. There are twenty eave vents, ten each on the underside of the eaves. Exterior cladding is horizontal drop-siding comprised of milled boards of variable lengths; attached with wire nails.

Decorating the facade, or eastern elevation, directly underneath the front gable, are a series of nine ornamental brackets (see photograph 2). Directly below the center bracket is a cast iron attic register. Located on the second story are two 6' x 3' window openings. The openings have been boarded up from the inside until the sash can be replaced. Cornice-like window hoods cap the openings. On the first story, centered on the facade, are the original paired entrance doors each measuring 28" x 10'. The doors have a glazing patterned sash with six muntions stacked two over two. On either side of the doors are two original six over six, double-hung, wooden sash windows measuring 8' x 3'. A loading dock/front porch measuring 9' x 24' is attached to the facade with access steps to the main entry gained by six front-facing steps. Above the dock rests a freestanding awning that is attached to a top plate below the second story windows and is supported by four steel cantilevers mounted to the face of the building. The awning has been repaired but not remounted.

The northern elevation features one six over six, double-hung, wooden sash measuring 6' x 3' on the second story (see photograph 3). At the second story are three fresh air registers. In the 1930s two 4' x 4' ribboned windows were installed. Both of these windows were removed in July of 1997.

¹ This single, vernacular building fits into none of the formal styles. The term "national" is based on McAlester & McAlester's *Field Guide to American Houses*, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 89.

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The rear of the building, or western elevation, includes a covered staircase and an office that was added to the building in 1885. Exterior siding on the office is horizontal drop siding comprised of milled boards of variable lengths; attached with wire nails (see photograph 4). A doorway was installed on the north wall of the office in 1999 to provide another access way out of the building. At the second story, in the northern corner, is a window opening measuring 6' x 3'. A covered staircase, measuring 4' x 35', runs from the north rear entrance to the second story. The roof of the staircase is covered in asphalt shingles. Exterior cladding of the staircase was originally tongue and groove beadboard that has been replaced by horizontal flush siding of clear redwood produced around 1870. At the top of the staircase and flush with the window at the northern corner, is another window opening measuring 6' x 3'. The window openings have been boarded up from the inside until glass can be replaced.

The southern elevation of the building features a window opening measuring 6' x 3' on the first floor. A 5' wide concrete ramp, positioned at ground level, runs to the basement. At the second story there is a window opening measuring 6' x 3', and four fresh air registers (see photograph 5).

INTERIOR ELEMENTS

The first story is one large commercial space and the second story is one room meant to house a lodge, formal meetings, or other types of public gatherings. The first story contains the original wood floor, ceiling, and shelves. The original shelves, tracks for rolling ladders, and one of the original ladders still exist and will be in use once the store is re-opened. The ceiling boards are covered in a decorative paper that was added over fifty years ago. The walls are covered with 1" x 6" tongue and groove redwood. The store also retains the original post office boxes, safe, candy holders, and large glass containers to display items for sale to the customers.

The second story walls and ceiling are covered with redwood boards measuring 3 1/4" x 7/8", with bead and tongue and groove joints. The second story was originally used as a meeting hall and the current owners intend to use it for similar purposes once it has been rehabilitated (see discussion of integrity).

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DISCUSSION OF INTEGRITY

In its totality the Bird & Dinkelspiel store retains a good degree of integrity to the period it achieved its significance. While currently under rehabilitation, the character defining elements of the Bird & Dinkelspiel store have been left intact while simultaneously bringing the building up to code to re-open it as a general store. Compared to an early photograph of the store (see photograph 6) taken in the 1890s, the original storefront has remained the same for more than 100 years.

Other than the aforementioned removal of the ribboned windows, the exterior of the building retains a high degree of integrity. Two of the original windows are retained by the owners and will be replaced into their proper openings on the first floor of the facade. The mud sill foundation has been replaced with wood posts embedded into a concrete perimeter. The original, partial basement has been extended into a full basement. The most intrusive modifications are the addition of the office door on the western elevation, adjacent to the staircase, and the addition of four support posts for the awning on the facade.

In its interior, the major modifications include those required for compliance with Solano County codes for re-opening as a general store. On the first story, wooden beams have been positioned in a vertical line down the center of the floor, as specified by Solano County, to support the second story. To bring the building up to code, there has been a space, measuring 6' x 24', created toward the rear of the building to accommodate a restroom with wheelchair access. The second story is currently being modified to include water and sewage and update the electrical. The 18" x 24" dumb waiter on the southern corner of the west wall has been lined with two layers of 1/2" wallboard and fire taped inside and out. A 14" x 21" raceway on the northern corner of the west wall has been wired for electrical and central vacuum suction tubing. It was constructed using 4" shaft studs lined with 1' of wall-board and covered with two layers of 1/2" wallboard and fire taped. A triple wall stainless flue has been enclosed in a shaft constructed using 2" shaft studs lined and covered with two layers of 1/2" wallboard and fire taped. The floorboards were dismantled for cleaning and sweetening before being reassembled. The exterior walls have been insulated and covered. The interior walls and ceiling boards have been cleaned, sweetened, and reassembled. The guidelines for completing all of the modifications, including updating the electrical wiring, sewage, and water, have been the state historical building codes.

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Section 8

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Bird & Dinkelspiel store is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criteria A, B, and C in the areas of architecture, for its association with an important person in the history of the United States, and for its association with an important event in the history of the United States. The period of significance extends from 1875-1900; the earlier year is the date the store was built and the latter year is the date Bird & Dinkelspiel end their direct involvement in the store by renting it to Peter Siebe. In 1905, John Bird's sons, John Bird Jr. and Elmer, reclaimed ownership. Under Criterion A, the store is significant as a commercial institution. The general store represented an essential commercial outpost whose presence in an isolated landscape offered a sense of civility and stability to those considering relocating to more remote areas. Under Criterion B, the Bird & Dinkelspiel store is associated with John Bird, the town's namesake, whose exploration and eventual entrepreneurial activities along the Montezuma slough led to the settlement of the town of Bird's Landing. Under Criterion C, the Bird & Dinkelspiel store is significant as an excellent example of a vernacular type of commercial building determined a "National" style². The building retains a very high degree of integrity to its appearance in 1875, when it achieved its period of significance.

The Bird & Dinkelspiel store is one of the earliest remains of settlement in the Sacramento Delta. Within the last 123 years, it has served continuously as a store and the center of local and economic activity in Bird's Landing. At times in its history it served the community as a post office, telegraph office, and Odd Fellows Hall. Although currently under rehabilitation, the owners will re-open the building as a general store catering to the local community. In its totality, the Bird & Dinkelspiel store retains a sufficiently high degree of integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to warrant listing in the National Register. The Bird Dinkelspiel store has been recognized as a California Point of Historical Interest #SOL-008.

² Influence of Greek Revival movement as described in *Field Guide to American Houses*, 90.

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Sacramento Delta is an area of rich farmland that has been continuously cultivated since the early days of the California Gold Rush. The maritime use of the Sacramento River and its sloughs during the Gold Rush set a pattern in the local landscape that continues to shape one of the fundamental ecological, economic, and political features of the contemporary California landscape: the California Delta. As a region, the Delta can only be understood as a combination of land and water and the complex flow of goods, people, and ideas between them. The earliest phases of American settlement in this part of the corridor date to the early 1840s. By 1846, newcomers L.W. Hastings and John Bidwell were attempting to develop speculation town sites at what would become Rio Vista and Montezuma. Neither of these efforts was particularly successful but these initial efforts left traceable remains including legal precedents and established property claims that were revived about a decade later to launch more successful efforts.³

Success was achieved when the river and sloughs were developed for navigation as a means of transportation for agricultural goods grown on the arable land within reach of the waterways. With the discovery of gold in 1849, navigation increased dramatically. Bird's Landing, like other towns in the area, came into being as a river or slough-side town, attracting settlers because of its access to waterway transport. Bird's Landing is located at the intersection of the old road to Collinsville and the road out to Mein's Landing, another privately owned landing along the Montezuma slough.⁴

Bird's Landing was created as a small townsite whose investors and settlers hoped to capitalize on the business generated by busy landing sites and warehouses. John Bird was born in Marcellus, Onondaga County, New York in 1837. He was the son of Henry Bird, a native of England⁵. On October 5, 1859 John Bird left his home and ventured to California via the Isthmus of Panama. After arriving in San Francisco, he traveled to Marin County where he was employed for three years as a foreman on a farm. In 1862 he moved to Sacramento where he ran a dairy and stock farm.⁶ According to the *History of Solano and Napa Counties* by Tom Gregory, John Bird:

³ Margaret Purser *Defining the Inland Maritime Landscape of the Sacramento Delta*; Internet

⁴ Margaret Purser *Defining the Inland Maritime Landscape of the Sacramento Delta*; Internet.

⁵ Steven M. Shine *The History of Bird's Landing*, Victoria Books. There were apparently three Henry Bird's. John Bird's father, his brother and his first son all had the same name. For the purpose of this narrative, Henry Bird, Sr. will refer to John's brother and Henry Bird, Jr. will refer to John's son.

⁶ Wood, Alley & Co. *History of Solano County*, James Stevenson Publisher, 486.

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... went into the dairying business at the place then called the Norris grant, and remained there until November, 1865. In that year he came to Bird's Landing and bought nine hundred and sixty acres of land, on which he commenced a farming and dairying business. Four years later, in 1869, he built the first wharf and warehouse in the place that now bears his name. The progress of the town was then assured, for in 1875 a store was started, and later a post office, and the official name of Bird's Landing was given to the place. In 1871 Mr. Bird built a blacksmith shop, the first one built this side of Suisun, and in 1880 he purchased the store that had been started before this time, and now owns all the buildings at Bird's Landing.⁷

John Bird, like other founding fathers, sought to create his fortune through a variety of commercial ventures. The opportunities that existed in the area bordering the Sacramento River were based on diversified agricultural pursuits. One such opportunity included the use of the soil for pasturing and dairying. Another opportunity was derived from the surrounding hills, which offered soil that was suitable for hay and grain production.⁸ Bird, who had gained experience in dairying while in Sacramento, saw the opportunity to capitalize on this experience while simultaneously pursuing another venture, farming. In 1865 John Bird purchased 960 acres of land in the area, devoting 475 acres to grain production and the rest to his dairying business. John Bird has received the distinct honor of establishing the first dairy in Solano County as he had "demonstrated many years ago that this industry would pay well, if conducted rightly".⁹

Like other pioneers in the Delta, Bird understood the need for a shipping point to both send and receive goods. In 1869 he built the first wharf and warehouse at the original Bird's Landing on the Montezuma Slough. At this landing, John Bird shipped butter to San Francisco for \$1.00 a pound. He eventually sold his land to Frank & Dinkelspiel of Suisun although he ran the landing and warehouse for approximately forty years.¹⁰ In his memoirs, Henry Bird, Jr. writes,

Father was interested in shipping, owned interests in Scow Schooners, first vessel Arab, new vessel to take Arabs place named Lizzie Theresa. Capt. Albert Sims (Alberts namesake) owned half interest, John Bird one fourth, J.L. Vermeil and George Wellington one eighth each. Tonnage of vessel was 150 tons. She plied rivers and bays and carried thousands of tons of grain to San Francisco and different bay points.⁷

⁷ Pg. 427

⁸ Tom Gregory *History of Solano and Napa Counties*, Historic Record Company, 71.

⁹ Tom Gregory *History of Solano and Napa Counties*, Historic Record Company, 427.

¹⁰ Personal memoirs of Henry Bird, Jr. In the private collection of Mrs. Shirley Paolini.

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It was also in 1869 that John Bird married Ms. Emily J. Hargrave, who bore him five sons: Henry in 1870, Walter in 1871, Albert in 1873, John, Jr. in 1878, and Elmer G. in 1881. John Bird continued to invest in the development of the area by building the first blacksmith's shop on this side of Suisun in 1871 and hiring a man named Mr. Ent as the first blacksmith.¹¹

According to the personal memoirs of Henry Bird, Jr. and the *History of Solano and Napa Counties* by Tom Gregory, the partnership of Jacob Frank & Moses Dinkelspiel built the first store in the town in 1875. However, according to *The History of Bird's Landing* by Steven M. Shine, the land that John Bird sold to Frank & Dinkelspiel on which the store was to be built did not occur until March 28, 1876. It is probable that Frank & Dinkelspiel built the store in 1875 and subsequently purchased the land from John Bird in 1876.¹² Based on the evidence at hand, it would appear the store was built in 1875. The Dinkelspiel family was another pioneering group in the area with Moses Dinkelspiel, a native of Germany, arriving in Solano County in 1865 where he pursued a number of real estate ventures.

According to Henry Bird, Jr. the creation of the store assured the progress of the town.¹³ Designated areas within the store were created to offer specialized services, the best known of which was the post office.¹⁴ In 1876, the first post office was established inside the store and the town was given its official name of Bird's Landing. The honor of becoming the first postmaster was bestowed on Adolph Dinkelspiel. According to Henry Bird, Jr. the mail was received by stage coming from Suisun and by way of two mail boat steamers, the Apache and the Modoc, through Collinsville. With the success of these ventures, other entrepreneurs attempted to make their fortune by investing in the build-up of the town. In his personal memoirs Henry Bird, Jr. writes,

W. Cerkel of Suisun built a large two story building in 1875 and the same caught on fire on Sunday night before it was occupied...They had to work hard saving the present store that still stands. J.B. Blythe built another store and hall across from the Bird & Dinkelspiel Store. Never stocked, Father (John Bird) got that when he bought the 160 acre ranch where the last home of the Birds was that was burned down. D. Weingartner built the hotel that was known as the Union Hotel. E. Krause built the hotel known as Montezuma Hotel, also the first Meat Market. The first Saloon was run by H.E. Winters. After that there were two more, one in each hotel. Another Blacksmith Shop was added to the town being run by OT. Owens. A Paint Shop run by Mr. Warren, a China Wash House being conducted by a chinaman named Bow Yuen, and other dwellings, so the town was ready for business. (+)

¹¹ Personal memoirs of Henry Bird, Jr. In the private collection of Mrs. Shirley Paolini

¹² Solano County. Office of the Recorder, John Bird to Jacob Frank, 1876, 61 Deeds 92.

¹³ Personal memoirs of Henry Bird, Jr. In the private collection of Mrs. Shirley Paolini.

¹⁴ James M. Mayo *The American Grocery Store* p.54.

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It was in the same year, of 1876, that John Bird held the office of Justice of the Peace for the Montezuma Township, and Jacob Frank sold his interest in the store to Moses Dinkelspiel. Moses and Adolph Dinkelspiel ran the store and post office together until 1878. During the 1870's, the store would also serve as the meeting place for the International Order of Odd Fellows, Lodge # 284, of which all of John Bird's sons were members.¹⁵ Sometime after 1878, Moses Dinkelspiel sold $\frac{1}{4}$ of his interest to his uncle Henry Bird, Sr., and in 1880, sold another $\frac{1}{4}$ of his interest in the store to John Bird. On the same day in 1880, Adolph Dinkelspiel sold his interest to Moritz Dinkelspiel. From this point, the store would exist under the new partnership of Bird & Dinkelspiel. In 1886 the telegraph was installed inside the store by the Montezuma Telegraph Company.¹⁶ Bird and Dinkelspiel ran the store for twenty years, until 1900 when Moritz Dinkelspiel suddenly collapsed and died in the Bird home at the rear of the store. After Moritz Dinkelspiel's death, the store was rented to Peter Siebe of Suisun until around 1905 when John Bird, Jr. and a partner named "Smith" took over. By 1908, Smith was no longer with the store and the Bird brothers, John Jr. and Elmer, had partnered to run the business. It was sold to Chris Benjamin in 1921. The Benjamin family still owns the store today.

The Bird & Dinkelspiel partnership officially ended when the last of their joint property was sold to Emil Emmington between 1900-1901. Henry Bird, Jr.'s memoirs do not make clear which property this was but he does write of Bird & Dinkelspiel purchasing the town of Collinsville at the death of a man named E. I. Upham. Collinsville consisted of warehouses, wharves, a hotel, general store, and a number of buildings, about 15 acres total. Bird & Dinkelspiel may have been involved in the fishing industry that existed in Collinsville. In his personal memoirs, Henry Bird, Jr. remembers the steamers paying wharfage when they landed at the wharves. In Collinsville in the seventies, eighties, and part of the nineties there existed two salmon canneries employing approximately 250 to 300 Chinese workers as well as Greek and Italian fisherman¹⁷.

¹⁵ Personal memoirs of Henry Bird, Jr. In the private collection of Mrs. Shirley Paolini.

¹⁶ Receipts in the private collection of John and Leona Benjamin.

¹⁷ Personal memoirs of Henry Bird Jr. In the private collection of Mrs. Shirley Paolini.

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While under the proprietorship of Bird & Dinkelspiel, the Bird's Landing store gained a reputation as a trade center for local farmers and ranchers. The store bought a variety of goods that were shipped from San Francisco including Havana cigars, spices, oil, hats, furniture, coal, soap, insurance, jewelry, tobacco, books, and credit. Bird & Dinkelspiel purchased clothing from Levi Strauss & Co., newspapers from the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and coal from E. Peabody & Co.¹⁸ Items were also bought from companies in "San Quentin Prison (grain sacks), Sacramento, Suisun City, Fairfield, and Rio Vista, California."¹⁹ The Bird & Dinkelspiel store supplied the town with a variety of services including a "meeting place where the locals and strangers alike could purchase plain and fancy goods, medicine for man and beast, pick up mail and packages, share information via the telegraph and talk about politics, the crops, and other news of the day."²⁰

SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE ASSOCIATION WITH THE LIFE OF AN IMPORTANT PERSON AND AN IMPORTANT EVENT

The process of town building on the unsettled western frontier is a phenomenon that existed during and after the Gold Rush. This historical/cultural process produced structures in settlements that today are representative of the earliest efforts of colonization. According to James M. Mayo in *The American Grocery Store*,

...this rural form of enterprise had its own unique history that was shaped by political, economic, and spatial forces. Country stores were established by storekeepers to supply not only the settled hinterlands but also the western frontier. Such establishments were outposts, and when both travel time and unsettled space were reduced, the country store had served a major role in advancing commercialism throughout the nation.²¹

The Bird & Dinkelspiel store is significant under Criterion A as a representative of community stability and productivity that affirmed the town's potential for growth. The store is significant under Criterion B as a symbol of exploration and settlement efforts by John Bird in Bird's Landing. It is a signature piece on the landscape that played an essential role in the development of the town. The general store represented an essential commercial outpost whose spatial isolation and architectural presence often meant it was the only form of civilized life in a landscape that was dominated by nature.²² Commerce and community grew together once the security of the Bird's Landing store affirmed the potential for town growth.

¹⁸ Steven M. Shine *The History of Bird's Landing, California*, 13.

¹⁹ Steven M. Shine *The History of Bird's Landing, California*, 3.

²⁰ Application for CA Point of Historical Interest completed by John and Leona Benjamin.

²¹ Pg. 51

²² *The American Grocery Store*, 60.

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Community elements converged at the store, and the “storekeeper’s name was eventually given to the crossroads intersection or corners that the store abutted. Eventually, these place names were landmarks, directing travelers and defining surrounding neighborhoods. The country store and storekeeper were the essential ingredients that helped to bind together the local community and its place identity”.²³ The general store centralized community life while becoming a symbol of capitalism expanding into territorial margins so that the nation’s economy could maximize markets through settlement trade.²⁴ After the initial development was undertaken by John Bird, a number of investors and entrepreneurs utilized very similar strategies to build additional enterprises in Bird’s Landing.

The development of the American landscape, including towns like Bird’s Landing, occurred in a pattern urban historian Eric Monkkonen in *American Becomes Urban* has described as “functionally distinct kinds of cities and villages, all spatially, socially, and economically interrelated.”²⁵ Within Monkkonen’s model, there are four distinct levels including: the metropolis, the city, the town, and the village. The center of activity is the metropolis, which offers advantages in communications and specializations in a variety of activities and professions. The city, the second largest development in the model, has a number of specialized functions, maybe even more than the metropolis, but none that can exist independently. The third level, towns, surround the cities and offer a number of limited services, or may exist to support a single economy. Early western towns usually developed in locations the initial inhabitants hoped were places with economic futures where individuals could survive and eventually prosper. The early settlements that did survive had the possibility of becoming trading centers, small country towns, or stops along the railroad. The last level in the model, the village, provides the most basic types of goods and services to a limited area. Bird’s Landing, as an example of Monkkonen’s model, began as a village but quickly aspired to the role of town within a few years. The town eventually fell under the county-township system, a territorial form of government control based on geography instead of population. This method of designation was most successful in pioneer settlements where most of the inhabitants existed on farms scattered throughout the landscape.²⁶ Bird’s Landing and Collinsville fell under the Montezuma township.

²³ *The American Grocery Store*, 60.

²⁴ *The American Grocery Store*, 60.

²⁵ *America Becomes Urban*, 46.

²⁶ Based on the ideas presented by Richard Lingeman *Small Town America*, 123.

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The expansion of Bird's Landing, and other similar villages, from a village to a town, was made possible by water transport, which created a direct link to the metropolis. Maritime links to San Francisco and Sacramento that existed throughout the history of town development greatly expanded the scope of life for those living in the area. One example of this development is represented in the types of goods offered by the Bird & Dinkelspiel store. Insurance policies and credit for loans depended on metropolitan bankers. Bird & Dinkelspiel sold both items to their customers, which they secured from San Francisco's Fireman's Fund Insurance in 1883 and The Bradstreet Company in 1890.²⁷

Individual entrepreneurs, like John Bird, are a type of western phenomenon as amazing as the towns they develop. These types of men literally created towns to house their commercial ventures. The goal would be to attract new residents who purchased land and built up their own enterprises. These new enterprises would entice more newcomers; and as the town expanded, so did the bank account of the men who invested in its development. Eventually the shops, stores, empty lots, wharves, landings, and houses formed the context of daily living for the residents. The founding father of a town furthered his social and economic interests by becoming a community leader and town booster. By involving himself in "...financed boosterism..." he "...reinforced his or her identity as a leading member of the community, and that of the community itself as a unified and visibly prosperous whole."²⁸ This interaction of "privately owned public space"²⁹, like the inclusion of the Odd Fellows Hall in the store, allowed the town merchant and booster to gain both personal success and town prosperity by allowing privately owned buildings to be used publicly. As a result citizens identified these structures with the success of the town.

John Bird involved himself extensively in community matters. According to the *History of Solano and Napa Counties*,

He is a man that is active in school matters, believing in giving to the young of the land the best possible educational advantages. For thirty-five years he has been a member of the board of school trustees, and has also been clerk of the board during this period. For one term he served as justice of the peace, and under McKinley's administration he served as postmaster of Bird's Landing until he resigned... Politically Mr. Bird is a Republican and is ever ready to assist in everything that has for its object the improvement of the county or community.³⁰

The Bird & Dinkelspiel store is a significant representative of a type of rural commercial structure created in the earliest phase of settlement of a crossroads town. John Bird is representative of a type of entrepreneur that developed a town through his individual actions, numerous business ventures and boosterism.

²⁷ Steven M. Shine *The History of Bird's Landing, California*, 13.

²⁸ Margaret Purser, PhD dissertation, *Community and Material Culture in Nineteenth Century Paradise Valley, Nevada*, 61.

²⁹ Margaret Purser, PhD dissertation, *Community and Material Culture in Nineteenth Century Paradise Valley, Nevada*, 61.

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The building is significant, under Criterion B, as a representative of the enterprises John Bird invested in and around Bird's Landing. It is also significant under Criterion A as a representative of a stable community to those seeking new a new residence and new opportunities. This commercial building, like its counterparts in other new western towns, became a symbol of community prosperity and development within Solano County.

SIGNIFICANCE IN ARCHITECTURE

Architecturally, the Bird & Dinkelspiel store retains a high degree of integrity to its period of significance (see photograph 6). It appears to qualify under Criteria C for its strong association with the vernacular adaptation of the Greek Revival style or "National" style. The building retains the characteristics, such as balloon framing and a front-facing gable, that define this type of building. The long rectangular shape and linear plan are also indicative of this style of building. Although currently undergoing rehabilitation, the rehabilitative efforts have been undertaken with the intention of maintaining the historic character of the building and re-opening it as a general store once again. Every effort has been made to preserve the character-defining elements that make this building a representative of the earliest pioneering efforts in Bird's Landing.

The store exists in its original location, maintains its original design, and inhabits a rural crossroads setting as it did during its period of significance. According to James M. Mayo, in his publication entitled *The American Grocery Store*, "In the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth century, a general store was a wood, rectilinear building...One-story structures were initially used, but two- and even three-story structures were commonly built in the early nineteenth century in settled areas. The upper floor space was either used by storekeepers as a home or leased as housing quarters or offices for professional men" (52). Mayo also argues that as storekeepers were becoming aware of the need to make goods more presentable to potential customers, they began to incorporate more decorative elements into the facade including front windows for displays and awnings to protect customers from the summer heat. By definition, the Bird & Dinkelspiel store represents the country store that James Mayo argues has "all but disappeared" from the landscape.³¹ The store retains most of the original materials, including the exterior siding, ornamental brackets, attic registers, awning, and the original front doors. The owners will replace two of the original windows on the first story of the facade. The exterior siding has been rehabilitated and replaced. The original mud sill foundation has been replaced with wood posts embedded into a concrete perimeter. The only exterior modifications have been the addition of four support posts for the awning on the facade, the replacement of the tongue and groove beadboard with flush siding on the staircase, and the removal of the two 4" x 4" ribboned windows installed in the 1930s.

³¹ James Mayo *The American Grocery Store* Greenwood Press, p.51.

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Verbal Boundary Description

See enclosed scale map

Boundary Justification

Boundaries encompass the historic building and the immediate environment.



Property Boundary

Property Boundary

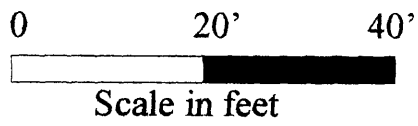
Bird &
Dinkelspiel
Store

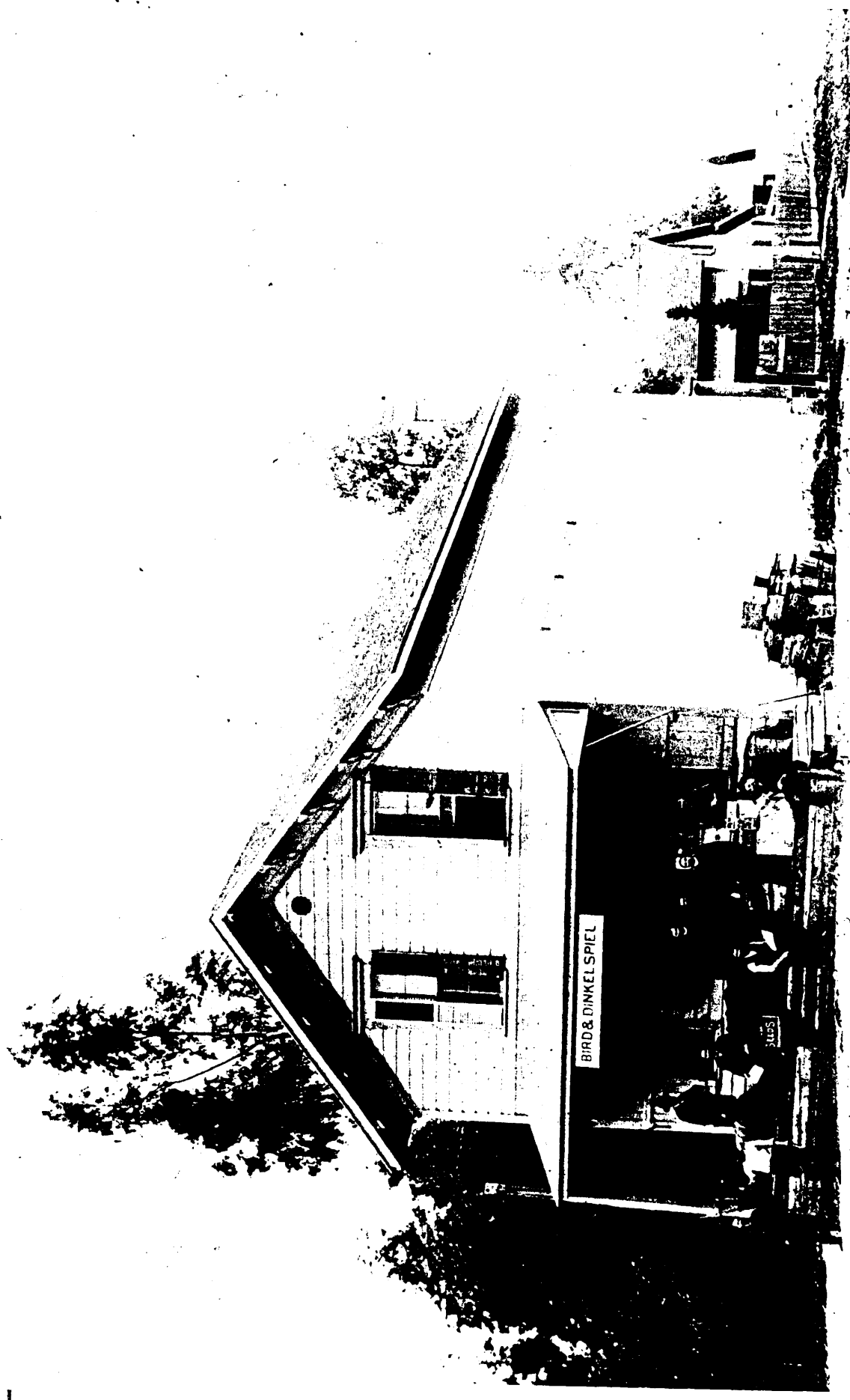
Bird's Landing Road

Collinsville Road

Road number 68

Road number 249





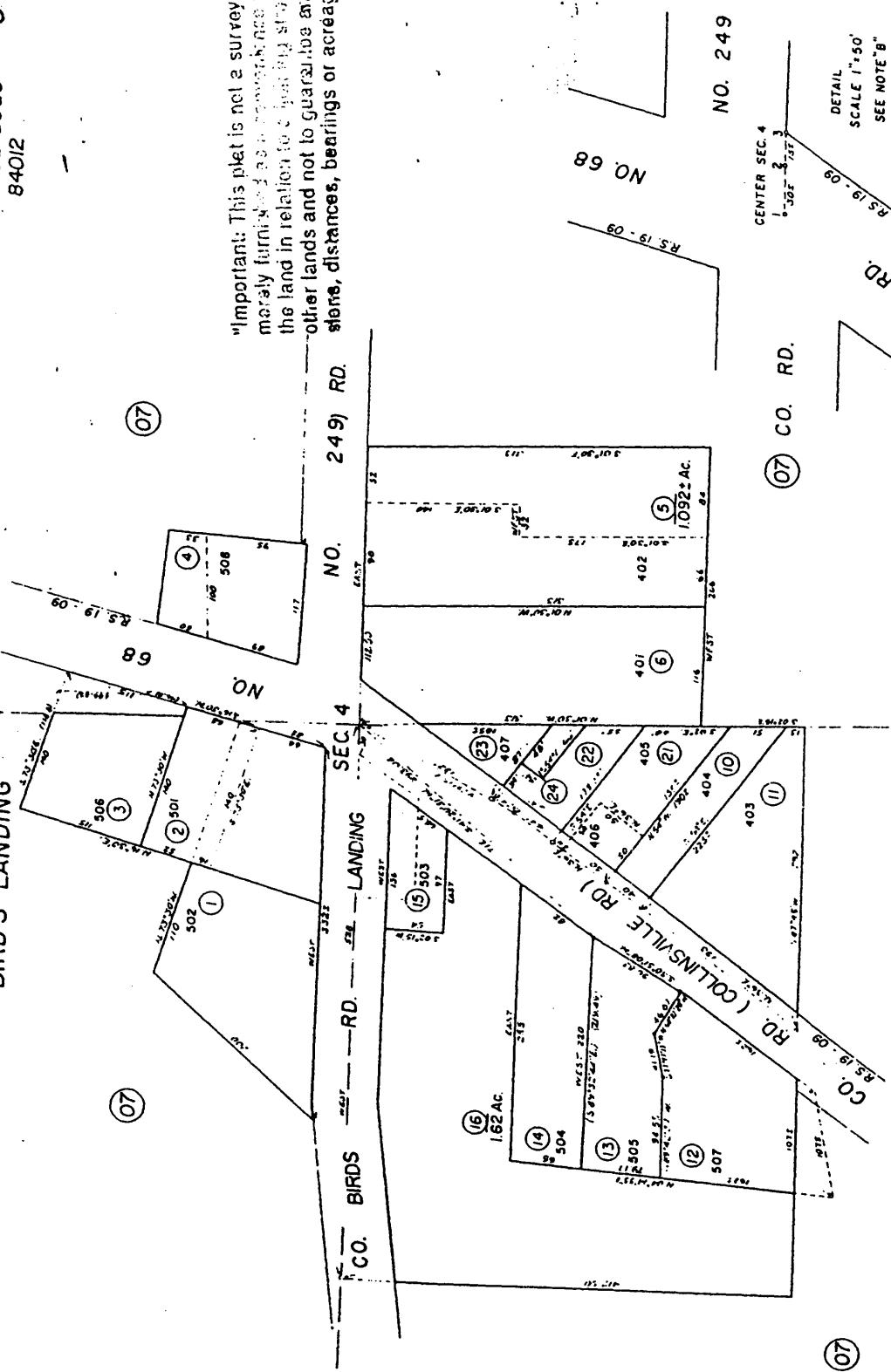
346

Photograph 6: The Bird & Dinkelspiel Store in the late 1890s

POR. SEC. 4, T.3N., R.1E., M.D.B. & M.
BIRD'S LANDING

Tax Area Code 90-08
84012

"Important: This plot is not a survey. It is merely furnished as a convenience to locate the land in relation to adjoining streets and other lands and not to guarantee any dimensions, distances, bearings or acreage."



NOTE "A"
PCLs 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15 ARE SHOWN AS ON THE GROUND. DASHED LINES SHOW LOCATION BY LEGAL DESCRIPTION.

NOTE "B" CENTER SEC. 4
1- CENTER OF SEC. 4
2-CENTER SEC 4 ACCORDING TO SURVEY MADE BY K.B. GRIMM, SURVEYOR.
3-CENTER OF SEC. 4 ACCORDING TO "PLAN OF BIRD'S LANDING," JUNE, 1924, AS SHOWING MEASUREMENTS ON THE GROUND.

REVISION	DATE	BY
1	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
2	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
3	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
4	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
5	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
6	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
7	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
8	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
9	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
10	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
11	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
12	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
13	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
14	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
15	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
16	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
17	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
18	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
19	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
20	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
21	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
22	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
23	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM
24	7/1/24	K.B. GRIMM

NOTE - ASSESSOR'S BLOCK & LOT NUMBERS SHOWN IN CIRCLES

Assessor's Map Bk. 90 -Pg. 08
County of Solano, Calif.

90-97

Bird & Dinkelspiel Store
Solano Co., CA