

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

MAR 26 1992

DHP

06

NATIONAL
REGISTER

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Wulff, Captain N. H., House

other name/site number: N/A

2. Location

street & number: 549 Brown Street

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Napa

vicinity: N/A

state: CA county: Napa

code: 055

zip code: 94559

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private

Category of Property: building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. See continuation sheet.

Luigi P. Cury Signature of certifying official June 24, 1992 Date

California Office of Historic Preservation State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

 Signature of commenting or other official Date

 State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this 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):

Delores Byers 8/18/92 ^{entered in the} National Register

 Signature of Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic: Domestic Sub: single dwelling

Current : Domestic Sub: multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Late Victorian: Italianate

Other Description: N/A

Materials: foundation brick roof asphalt
walls weatherboard other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: at the local level.

Applicable National Register Criteria: B

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : N/A

Areas of Significance: Maritime History
Commerce
Transportation

Period(s) of Significance: 1885-1911

Significant Dates : 1885

Significant Person(s): Wulff, Niels Hanson

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Corlett, William H. (architect)
Derry, Thomas (builder)

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. X See continuation sheet.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: City of Napa Cultural Heritage Commission

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property: less than one acre

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>10</u>	<u>562760</u>	<u>4238540</u>	B	_____	_____	_____
C	_____	_____	_____	D	_____	_____	_____

____ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: ____ See continuation sheet.
 Napa County Assessor's parcel 003-281-07

Boundary Justification: ____ See continuation sheet.
 The boundary includes the entire assessor's parcel that has been associated with the resource since 1890.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Donald S. Napoli

Organization: _____ Date: March 25, 1992

Street & Number: 1614 26th Street Telephone: (916) 455-4541

City or Town: Sacramento State: CA ZIP: 95816

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7

Wulff, Captain N. H., House Page #1

Description

The Captain N. H. Wulff House is a narrow, two-story wood frame residence with horizontal board siding and low-pitched hipped roof. The organization of the front elevation is asymmetrical, with a two-story bay window on the south and one-story entrance portico on the north. The building, designed in the Italianate style, has overhanging eaves supported by elaborate brackets and tall, narrow windows with decorative bas-relief pediments. The exterior is virtually unaltered. The interior, however, lost much of its detailing when it was converted into three rental units. The small front lawn is enclosed with a newly erected four-foot cyclone fence. The building is located approximately 100 yards west of the Napa River at the edge of a residential neighborhood of mostly small houses.

The building rests on its original brick foundation and is set beneath a low-pitched hipped roof finished with asphalt shingles. Two chimneys protrude through the roof; the one the west has a decorative chimney top. The cornice, which has three string-courses, wraps around the roof and is supported by elaborate brackets that extend beneath the architrave. Between the brackets is zig-zag crown molding atop a paneled frieze. The entablature is finished with a simple banded architrave.

All of the building's thirty windows are narrow, double-hung and surrounded by elaborate ornamentation. Each is topped by a panel with bas-relief pediment, sided by casing with vertical molding, and placed upon a banded sill with plain panels below. First floor windows also are capped by banded hoods supported by scroll brackets.

Window treatment takes up much of the front (east) elevation, which is divided into two bays. The one on the south is marked by a two-story slanted bay window. The other bay has a window on the second story and an entrance portico below. Two pillars and two pilasters, detailed to match the windows and topped with Corinthian capitals, support the flat portico roof. On each side, between column and pilaster, is a wood railing with turned balusters. A single step leads to a pair of wood and glass panelled double doors with a transom above. A flight of four wooden stairs with a wrought iron railing leads to the porch. At the corners of the building are corner boards decorated with vertical molding.

The back (west) elevation is a mirror image of the front, except that the back has a less elaborate porch and two additional windows, one on each level. The south elevation is dominated by a two-story bay window that is flanked by one window on each side at each level. The north elevation has four windows, two at each level, placed together in the center.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7

Wulff, Captain N. H., House Page #2

The house, which extends almost to the parcel line on both sides, is somewhat constricted on its 31-by-150 foot lot. It now has no landscaping, except a small front lawn that is enclosed with a four-foot cyclone fence. The nature of the original landscaping is unknown. The original parcel extended about 30 feet to the south and included another dwelling in that section. The present configuration dates from ca. 1890.

Most of the interior features disappeared in the conversion of the building to apartments ca. 1980. The chief exception is the main staircase, which is located a few feet away from the front doors and gently curves towards the second floor. The hand railing, balusters, and newel post all echo the detailing of the porch. Some remnants of the 1885 interior plan, which consisted of a parlor, dining room, and kitchen with two pantries on the first floor and four bedrooms, a large dressing room, and a bathroom on the second, also still remain.

The building is in good condition. Its setting has changed somewhat over the years, with more recent structures (an addition to the house on the south and an auto repair shop on the north) now hemming it in. Because the building has received only one noteworthy exterior alteration--the replacement of the front handrail--since its construction in 1885, other aspects of architectural integrity remain high.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8

Wulff, Captain N. H., House Page #3

Significance

The Captain N. H. Wulff House is significant in the maritime history of Napa for its association with Captain N. H. Wulff, one of the city's most important steamboat owners and masters during the last half of the nineteenth century. Because Wulff was engaged in carrying goods and passengers vital to the growth of the town, the building is also significant in the areas of commerce and transportation. Despite the importance of river traffic in Napa's development, the Wulff House is one of only a few remaining buildings with direct associations to the city's maritime history. Wulff had the house erected at the height of his career in 1885 and lived in it until his death in 1911. The building, virtually unaltered since its construction, retains a high degree of architectural integrity.

The Napa River served as an important link to distant markets from the settlement of the town in 1848 until the 1920s. The river flows along the west side of town and another 20 miles into San Francisco Bay. For the city's first two decades riverboats were the virtually the only means for transporting produce to San Francisco, goods of all kinds to Napa, and passengers in both directions. Even after the coming of the railroad in the late 1860s, riverboats continued a brisk trade. As their numbers grew, wharfs and warehouses were constructed along the riverfront. The boats fell into two general types, schooners and steamers, of which a few of the latter sailed on schedules between Napa and San Francisco. Steamers carried both goods and passengers; they continued in regular service well into the twentieth century. Only in the 1920s did river traffic decline dramatically, giving way to rail and highway competition.

Captain N. H. Wulff had a long career on the Napa River. He was born in Denmark in 1830, took to the sea as a youth, and arrived in California in 1850. After mining for a few years, Wulff bought a schooner and began transporting goods on the Sacramento River. He moved to Napa in 1859, where he went into business sailing local wheat and flour to Sacramento and other points. In the mid-1870s he shifted from schooners to steamboats. He owned several boats in later years, the most notable of which sailed on regular schedule to San Francisco. He acted in various capacities--master, agent, and owner--but did less sailing himself as his business prospered. In 1889 he commissioned the building of the Zinfandel, a sternwheeler which was probably the largest boat ever to regularly cruise the Napa river. With comfortable passenger accommodations, it sailed from Napa to San Francisco and back three times a week. Wulff kept the Zinfandel on this schedule for 17 years, during which time it was the most prominent boat that sailed from Napa. Wulff stayed in business until 1906, when he sold the Zinfandel and retired. He died in 1911.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8

Wulff, Captain N. H., House Page #4

The Wulff House has close associations with Wulff and thus with the maritime, commercial, and transportation development of Napa. He had the structure built in 1885, at a time when his career was well established but before it peaked with the construction of the Zinfandel. Wulff picked a convenient location, just 120 feet from the landing dock that he used. He lived in the house for the rest of his life. The building's importance is heightened because no structures directly related to Napa's maritime commerce--wharfs or warehouses, for example--remain from the nineteenth century. One other residence belonging to an important riverboat captain does exist nearby, however. The Wulff House, which is essentially unaltered, appears much as it did during the time Wulff lived there and retains its important historical associations.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9

Wulff, Captain N. H., House Page #5

Major Bibliographical References

Grieg, Jack R. The Vessels of the Napa River, 1844-1890. Gleanings, vol. 3, no. 2. Napa, California: Napa County Historical Society, 1984.

Memorial and Biographical History of Northern California. San Francisco: Reades, 1891.

Napa, California. Fire Insurance Maps. New York: Sanborn Map and Publishing Co., 1886, 1891, 1901, 1910, 1924, 1941.

Napa County Reporter, 8 May 1885, 1887-1890, passim.

Napa Daily Journal, 1892-1906, passim.

Sacramento, California. State Department of Parks and Recreation. Napa Historic Resources Inventory, 1978.

MAY 15 1992

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OHP

OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Additional Documentation

Wulff, Captain N. H., House Page #6

Photographs

Photographs 1-3 have the following information in common:

3. Thomas Schardt, Photographer
4. July, 1991
5. Napa City Planning Department
1600 First Street
Napa, CA 94559

Photo No. 1

6. View from the South

Photo No. 2

6. View from the East

Photo No. 3

6. View from the Southeast

Photographs 4 and 5 have the following information in common:

3. Thomas Schardt, Photographer
4. April, 1992
5. Napa City Planning Department
1600 First Street
Napa, CA 94559

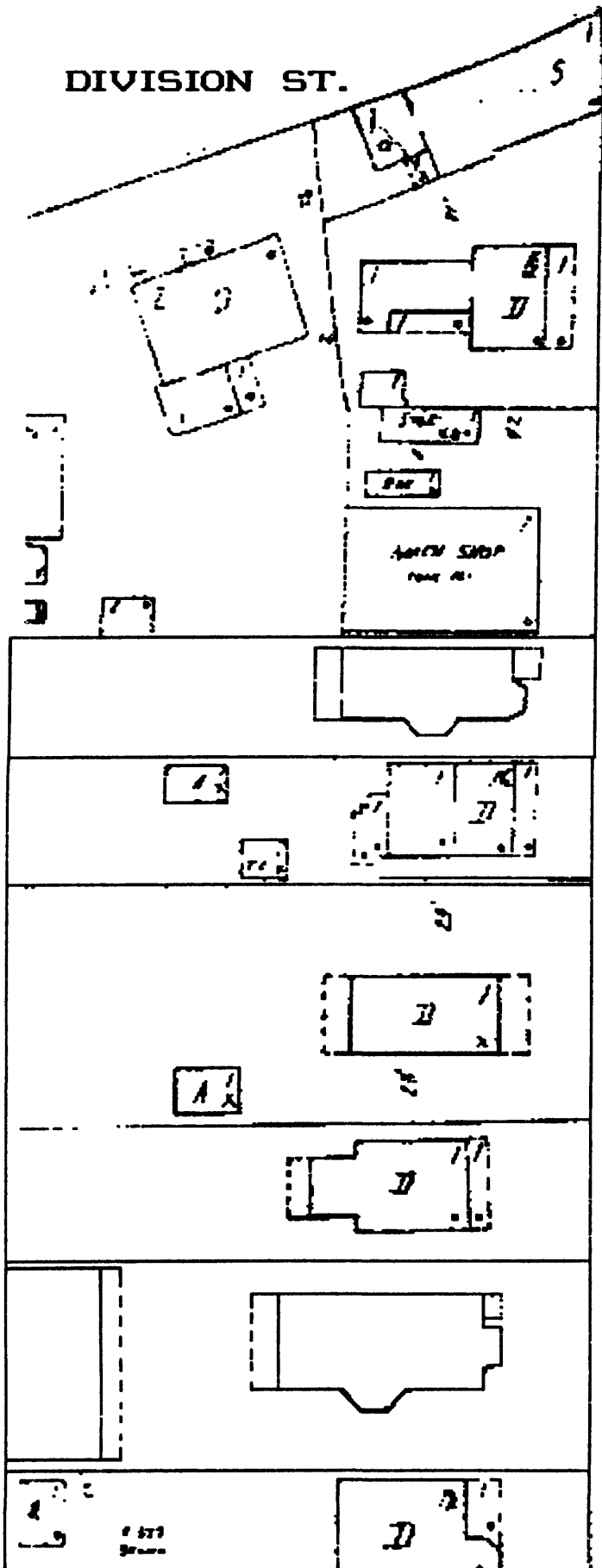
Photo No. 4

6. View from the North

Photo No. 5

6. View from the Northwest

DIVISION ST.



Wulff, Captain N. H., House
549 Brown Street
Napa, California

Napa County

50'



← WULFF HOUSE

BROWN ST.

