

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received APR 24 1984

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic HELENA TOWNSITE

and/or common  HELENA HISTORIC DISTRICT

2. Location

street & number ~~Located on the North Fork of the Trinity River 1/4 mile north of Highway 299 W.~~ N/A not for publication

city, town Helena N/A vicinity of

state California code 06 county Trinity code 105

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: post office

4. Owner of Property

name W. L. Battaglia, Successor Trustee

street & number P. O. Box 6180

city, town San Jose N/A vicinity of state CA 95150

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Trinity County Courthouse

street & number Court Street

city, town Weaverville state CA 96093

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Trinity County Historic Sites has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1981  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Trinity County Historical Society

city, town P.O. Box 333, Weaverville state CA 96093

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Helena occupies a flat along the banks of the North Fork of the Trinity River about a quarter of a mile above the mouth of the stream and Highway 299W, which crosses the North Fork near its confluence with the main Trinity River. Helena, in earliest days known as North Fork, was located near the intersection of important pioneer trail routes, which previously has been used by the Indians. The district encompasses the remains of the old mining and supply center, its orchards, cemetery, and immediate setting.

Though originally on land taken up in 1852 by one owner, Craven Lee, from the late 1850s until the beginning of this century, the Helena townsite consisted of two family properties, separated by a main thoroughfare, and a group of business establishments along the bluffs and banks of the North Fork on its west side. Both properties were intimately connected with the business activities of their owners and were, therefore, an integral part of the Helena community.

The land to the right and the north belonged to the Meckel family. During most of the last century, it contained a hotel at the upper end and at the lower end a brick store building, a warehouse, a saddle house, and barns and mule corrals required for the Meckel merchandise and packing business. On this property were raised the hay, the cattle, the vegetables, and fruits related to the hotel and mercantile businesses. The hotel and store were the centers of social, political, and community and business life of the town for over 70 years.

The field on the west side of the main thoroughfare belonged to the Schlomer family. In addition to the family residence, this property included the Schlomer blacksmith shop, where mining tools were forged or repaired and where mules and horses were shod; and the Schlomer livery and feed stable, where horses were rested and boarded and wagons or carriages stored. This property also produced fruits, grapes, wine, cider, and vinegar in commercial quantities. Surrounded and protected by rugged forested mountains, Helena is only 1,440 feet above sea level, and the area has thus enjoyed a relatively benign climate. The locality thus escaped late frosts characteristic of most of the rest of Trinity County and was especially noted for its fine cherries, apples, and figs.

The land along the bluffs and banks of the North Fork contained, in earliest days, the Adams Hotel, saloons, a butcher shop, drug store, an express office, the Meckel Brothers Brewery, the Schlomer Brick Building, and a toll bridge for miners, mules, and horses. Later, a wagon bridge was constructed on the bluff at the northeast end. With the exception of the Schlomer Brick Building and foundations and retaining walls, none of these very early structures survive today.

Today, the townsite of Helena has one single owner and gives the general impression of being a fine mountain ranch property. It is the feeling of the Trinity County Historical Society that the fields just described have been so much an integral part of the historical community that it would be falsifying pioneer history to set the boundaries of a historical district in a way that would exclude them. This is also the attitude of the present owners. The plot map included in these papers indicates the layout of the property involved.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1850s - 1890s      **Builder/Architect** N/A

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Helena Historic District is one of the oldest surviving pioneer mining settlements in the State of California. The area, as indicated, has both historic and archeological significance. When miners first came to the area, they found Indian campgrounds on the flat land on both sides of the North Fork. The archeological excavations, recently done on the east side of the North Fork in connection with plans for the construction of a new state highway bridge, indicate human habitation in the area 4,000 years ago or longer. A description of these excavations is contained in the report of Dr. Peter M. Jensen entitled Archaeological Test Excavations at Site CA-Tri-205, Trinity County, California. During the 1850s, Helena became the center of extensive gold mining activities and for over 80 years was the major supply center for mines on the North Fork, the East Fork of the North Fork, the New River, and the main Trinity River. Until the construction of Highway 299W to Arcata and Eureka in the 1930s, Helena was the end of the wagon road from Weaverville (the county seat) and was a major stopping place for miners and travelers.

Earliest historical references to the area date from February 1851. At this time, there was a trading post housed in a large tent, located probably at the pioneer trail intersection on the banks of the North Fork near the property known as the Cove, named because of its sheltered location. Records in the Trinity County Court House show that in January of 1852 Craven Lee, previously mentioned, filed a land settlement claim in Weaverville which included all the flat land on both sides of the North Fork near the mouth of that stream. Later that year, rich gold deposits were discovered along the Trinity River and its gulches, which drew hundreds of miners to the area. Lee and a man named David Weed erected a hotel, store, and butcher shop, which became the nucleus of a miner's settlement that developed on Lee's flat land on the east side of the North Fork, the area first reached by men traveling down the Trinity River. This settlement acquired the name "Bagdad", and the existence of the settlement is commemorated by a plaque erected by Mt. Bally Parlor of the Native Sons of the Golden West.

The development of a community on the opposite side of the North Fork, where the present townsite is located, occurred somewhat later. This development was facilitated by the bridging of the North Fork, making the west side flat easily accessible at all times of the year; by a population increase, occasioned by new gold discoveries, which resulted in a need for buildings for commercial and domestic reasons; by the availability of land from Craven Lee's holdings; and by the erection of a local sawmill which provided lumber.

Lee and Weed's business failed and, to cover financial obligations, Lee began to sell parcels of land on the west side of the North Fork. The building of a toll bridge across the North Fork by Harmon Schlomer made this portion of Lee's land accessible even when the North Fork was at flood stage. Additional settlers and increased economic activities

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

- Bartlett, James W. Judge. Annotations to Cox's Annals of Trinity County. Eugene, Oregon, 1940.
- Buck, Frank. A Yankee Trader in the Gold Rush. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston and New York, 1930.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approximately 43

Quadrangle name Helena

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

### UTM References

A	<u>1</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>8</u> <u>9</u> <u>1</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>1</u> <u>1</u> <u>3</u> <u>9</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>	B	<u>1</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>8</u> <u>9</u> <u>7</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>1</u> <u>1</u> <u>3</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>1</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>8</u> <u>9</u> <u>0</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>1</u> <u>1</u> <u>3</u> <u>1</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u>	D	<u>1</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>8</u> <u>8</u> <u>7</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>1</u> <u>1</u> <u>3</u> <u>9</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u>
E	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	F	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
G	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	H	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet Item Number 10, page 2.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Henry C. Meckel, Chairman, National Register Committee (OHP staff revision 7/83)

organization Trinity County Historical Society date November 1981

street & number P.O. Box 1435 telephone (916) 623-3755

city or town Weaverville state California 96093

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature K. M. Gellon

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 5/16/82

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the  
National Register

date

5/24/84

for Shelores Byers  
Keeper of the National Register

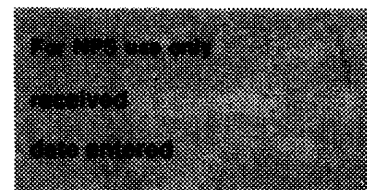
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
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The Helena Historic District as herein nominated for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places thus includes the Helena townsite, just described as it developed during the second half of the nineteenth century; the Cove area, located at an important Indian and pioneer trail intersection; and the Helena Cemetery, still in use today and located on the east side of the North Fork, where many of the early pioneers are buried.

To assist in identifying the location of structures, all existing buildings within the proposed Helena Historic Townsite are indicated and numbered in the attached Helena Townsite plot map. The oldest structures in the proposed historic district include:

The Meckel Store Building (Map No. 7), now the post office, constructed in 1858 out of local brick made on the premises and the central building of the Meckel merchandise and packing business. This building was restored in 1976 through funds granted through the California Department of Parks and Recreation. This building has been leased to the government as a post office for a period of 25 years, the lease expiring June 20, 2001.

The Schlomer Brick Building (Map No. 14), commonly called the "Brewery Building", also constructed out of local brick and erected by Harmon Schlomer in 1859. A three-story structure, the building was planned for income purposes. Schlomer, a skillful blacksmith, took an active part in the construction of the building. He forged metal braces in his blacksmith shop which provide support as well as decoration to the masonry. There are large forged metal S's on each end of the building, and the date of construction is in large numbers on the river side. The building over the years has served many purposes. The top floor was the residence of Harmon and Louisa Schlomer in the first years of their marriage. The basement at various times served as a saloon, a beer hall, and a kitchen. Catholic Mass was sometimes celebrated in the building, and children were baptized there. In the 1930's, the building served as an office and home for the manager of the North Fork Placers, whose wife furnished it with tasteful antiques. The Schlomer Brick Building is in a state of serious disrepair. If it is to be saved as a historical landmark, disintegrating forces will soon have to be controlled.

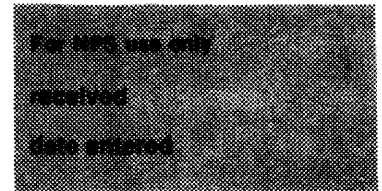
North of the Schlomer brick building in the early days of its existence was the Meckel Brothers' brewery which supplied beer to the town, the back-country miners, and the lower Trinity area. Today, only the foundations and retaining walls of that building remain (map number 13).

South of the Schlomer brick building are the foundations of a building constructed before 1861 (map No. 15). This was the site of the community's first blacksmith shop.

The Currie Cottage (Map No. 4) is the oldest surviving pioneer cottage in Helena. The house, protected by a post and wire fence, sits to the northeast of Schlomer's Feed Stable and is shaded by a giant walnut tree. The house was constructed by Algernon S. Currie and his wife, Rebecca, in 1859 or 1860.

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The Schlomer Feed Stable (Map No. 5), symbolic of the days of horse, buggy, and stage travel when Helena was a busy and flourishing pioneer community. The original advertising sign still hangs above the doors of this livery stable, where horses were boarded or rested. An oblong wooden watering trough formerly stood on the street just to the left of the building. This old relic of horse and buggy travel is gone, but the water hydrant that supplied water is still in place, dripping water into a steel oil drum, symbolic of the arrival of the age of the automobile. (The Schlomer residence, located immediately to the east of this building and shown in Photo #5, was destroyed by lightning several years ago.)

The Meckel Barn (Map No. 6), located in the southern half of the old Christian Meckel property, close to the banks of the North Fork. This barn sheltered the cows that supplied the milk for the Meckel Hotel and was part of a series of out-buildings and corrals for the 50-60 pack mules and horses of the Meckel Brothers merchandise and packing business.

The Helena Cemetery (Map No. 16) is administered by the county and still used for burials, and is located on a parcel of flat land just below the hillside on the side of the North Fork across from the Helena townsite. Many older residents of Helena are buried here, among them the entire family of Harmon Schlomer, with the exception of the older daughter, the only member of the family who married.

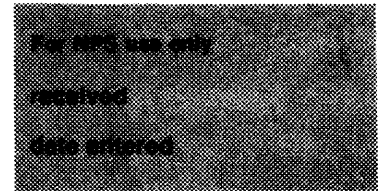
Later features within the district include:

The Hotel Foundation (Map No. 2) These foundations are partially those of a hotel constructed in the 1930 's by Harvey Stofer and are also partially the remains of the remodeling done by Frank DiNapoli after he acquired the property from the heirs of the Schlomer family. The location of these foundations is to the rear of the historic hotel owned and operated by Christian and Helena Meckel, which dated back to the early 1860's. Stofer's project was not completed because of the failure of the Trinity County Bank. Mr. DiNapoli did extensive remodeling to the building. In 1969, he built the large fireplace, the remains of which are still standing; remodeled the kitchen; and erected a small and complete private apartment in the northeast corner. The building was destroyed by fire on New Year's Day of 1971 during the absence of the caretaker.

The mobile home (Map No. 1), used as a residence for the caretaker, is located very close to the site of the old Meckel Hotel and near the foundation of the Harvey Stofer Hotel. The remaining structures (Map No. 8-12) were built during the 1930's for rental purposes. None of the buildings is occupied at the present time.

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Contributing features:

The old townsite contains remnants of the early orchards, the town's cemetery, historic archaeological values associated with early settlement, and a number of structures which contribute to the sense of time and place, including:

- Map No. 4 - Currie Cottage (built 1859 or 1860)
- 5 - Schlomer Feed Stable (1860's)
- 6 - Meckel Barn (c. 1860's)
- 7 - Meckel Store (1858)
- 13 - Retaining wall and foundation of Meckel Brewery (before 1861)
- 14 - Schlomer Brick Building (1859)
- 15 - Foundations (before 1861)
- 16 - Helena Cemetery (1860's)

Non-contributing features:

- Map. No. 1 - Caretaker's trailer (modern)
- 2 - Hotel foundations (c. 1931)
- 3 - 3 sheds (probably 1930's)
- 8-11 - Wooden rental buildings (1930's)
- 12 - Rental house (1931)

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provided the motives for a small building boom, and the result, within a few years, was the development of a new settlement. The town first developed along the bluffs on the west bank of the North Fork. In 1853, John Meckel and his brother, Christian, started a mercantile and packing business, buying land from Craven Lee, and throughout the remainder of the century, the history of North Fork was closely influenced by the business activities of the Meckel and Harmon Schlomer families, as previously indicated.

At the beginning of the 1860s, the Trinity Journal described North Fork as a community second only to Weaverville in economic and social importance. The name of the settlement was changed to Helena in 1890 to avoid postal confusion with another North Fork in the State of California. The name honored Christian Meckel's wife, Helena.

From the 1880s on into this century, the development of quartz mines on the North Fork and the East Fork and the New River continued to make Helena a lively place. Considerable hydraulic mining also developed, though not to the extent characteristic of other areas of the county.

In 1931, the State of California completed the highway bridge across the North Fork. No longer did a main road go directly into the town. Reached only by a spur road from the highway and no longer an important stopping place for most travelers, the heyday of Helena came to an end. By the 1930s, significant gold mining in the area was almost at an end. In the late 1920s, the Schlomers had bonded their mining property to the North Fork Placers, a company with capital supplied by easterners. Herbert Hoover had been retained as a consultant. Considerable money was expended constructing ditches and flumes to the North Fork, but the mining venture was not successful.

In 1932, the old Meckel property, owned at that time by Harvey Stofer, went into receivership when the Trinity County Bank failed. In the bankruptcy settlement, the property was acquired in 1939 by H. G. Schlomer, who with his sister, Lou, now owned the entire Helena townsite. An increase in the population of the area encouraged the Schlomers to erect several buildings for rental purposes, and the establishment of the North Fork Grange resulted in the revival of considerable community spirit and social cohesiveness.

The entire Schlomer property was acquired from the Schlomer heirs in 1966 by Frank DiNapoli of San Jose, who, during his life, regarded the property primarily as a mountain ranch. Following Mr. DiNapoli's death in 1974, the townsite and its related mining properties have been owned by W. L. Battaglia, as trustee for the DiNapoli family. The property has been looked after by a resident caretaker.

Local interest in the historic preservation of the Helena townsite was demonstrated in the mid-1970s by the enthusiastic response secured by Mrs. Eulah Beel, a resident, in circulating a petition for the restoration of the old Meckel brick store building for a



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post office. Recognition of the historical significance of Helena was further indicated when a grant was given in 1976 through the State Department of Parks and Recreation to restore this building.

Plaques commemorating the pioneer significance of the Helena townsite have been placed by E. Clampus Vitus and by the Native Sons of the Golden West.

There has been a strong revival of interest in Trinity County for the nomination of Helena for the National Register as a result of a grant from the California State Office of Historic Preservation for a survey of county historical resources in 1978 under the direction of the Trinity County Historical Society. The publication by the society this year of Trinity County Historic Sites, partly encouraged by a grant from the James Irvine Foundation, has resulted in wide county recognition that Helena ranks second to Weaverville in the significance of its role in Trinity County's pioneer history. The unanimous endorsement of the Trinity County Board of Supervisors, hereto attached, reflects the attitude of the county. Interest has been especially strong in the preservation of the two early-day brick buildings.

D-1723H

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Carr, John. Pioneer Days in California. pg. 141-142. Times Publishing Company.  
Eureka, California. 1891.

Cox, Isaac. The Annals of Trinity County. John Henry Nash printing. Eugene, Oregon.  
1940

Jensen, PeterM. Archaeological Test Excavations at Site CA-Tri-205, Trinity County,  
California. Prepared under CALTRANS Contract Number 2934-x. California State Department  
of Transportation, Redding District Office, Redding, California, 1980.

Map of Township No. 34 North, Range No.11 West Mount Diablo Meridian. Surveyor Generals  
Office, San Francisco, March 12, 1883. This map show a trail up the east side of the  
North Fork between Ritterbush Gulch and the East Fork; also a trail down the Trinity,  
based on surveys of 1881, 1882, and 1883. The map is significant in suggesting the  
location of the first trading post on the North Fork.

Plat of the Schlomer and Meckel Placer Mine, Book 1 Maps and Surveys, p.52.  
Official Records, Trinity County Court House.

Files of the Trinity Journal, Weaverville, California. 1856 - the present. The  
issue of October 16, 1897 has interviews with Christian Meckel and Harmon Schlomer  
which contain information concerning the construction of the two brick buildings in  
Helena.

Trinity County Historic Sites. Trinity County Historical Society, Weaverville, Ca. 1981

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That real property situate in the County of Trinity, State of California, described as follows:

PARCEL NO. 1: That portion of the Schlomer and Meckel Placer Mining Claim the patent to which is recorded in Book 2 of Patents at page 759, Trinity County Records embraced in the following described tract:

Beginning at a spruce tree 7 inches in diameter, scribed M, whence the quarter section corner between sections 28 and 29 in Township 34 North, Range 11 West, M.D.M. bears North  $19\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  East, 12.30 chains distance, thence the magnetic variation being  $19^{\circ}$  East, 1st South  $31^{\circ}$  East along in the street in the town of North Fork 14.10 chains to an iron bolt 2 feet long driven in the ground in the street in front of Christian Meckel Sr. store thence  
2nd South  $40^{\circ}$  East, 147 chains to an iron bolt 18 inches long driven in the ground in the street thence  
3rd North  $41^{\circ}$  East, 3.97 chains to an iron bolt 18 inches long driven in the ground,  
4th South  $49^{\circ}$  East, 3.65 chains to a point in the water of the North Fork of Trinity River and on the East boundary of the claim, thence  
5th North  $1\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$  East 14.30 chains to a mound of stone, thence  
6th West 13.00 chains along the North boundary of the Schlomer and Meckel Placer Mine to a mound of stone at corner of Christian Meckel's fence, thence  
7th South  $25\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  West 1.85 chains to the point of beginning.

PARCEL NO. 2: The Cove Lot embracing the Northwest quarter of the Northeast quarter of the Southeast quarter of Section 29, in Township 34 North, Range 11 West, M.D.B. & M.

PARCEL NO. 3: The Northeast quarter of the Northeast quarter of the Southeast quarter of Section 29, in Township 34 North, Range 11 West, M.D.B. and M.

PARCEL NO. 4: That portion of the Schlomer and Meckel Placer Mining Claim the patent to which is recorded in Book 2 of Patents at page 759, Trinity County Records embraced in the following described tract:

Beginning at a Spruce Tree 7 inches in diameter scribed "M", whence the quarter section corner between sections 28 & 29, in Township 34 North, Range 11 West, M.D.M. bears North  $19\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  East, 12.30 chains distant, and running thence, magnetic variation being  $19^{\circ}$  East,  
1st South  $31^{\circ}$  East along in the street in the town of North Fork 14.10 chains to an iron bolt 2 feet long driven in the ground in front of Christian Meckel's store, thence,  
2nd North  $40^{\circ}$  East 1.47 chains to an iron bolt 18 inches long driven in the ground in the street, thence  
3rd North  $41^{\circ}$  East 3.97 chains to an iron bolt 18 inches long, driven in the ground, thence  
4th South  $49^{\circ}$  East, 3.65 chains to a point in the water of the North Fork of Trinity River, on the East boundary of the claim, thence

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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- 5th South  $1\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  West, 3.07 chains to a mound of stone on the East boundary of the claim, thence  
6th North  $70^{\circ}$  West, 4.90 chains to gun barrel 30 inches long driven in the ground on north side of road, at East end of Street and at Northwest corner of the Brewery Lot, thence  
7th South  $15\frac{3}{4}^{\circ}$  West 2.86 chains to an iron bolt 16 inches long driven in the ground at the Southwest corner of the Brewery Lot, thence  
8th South  $70\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$  East, 1.22 chains to a mound of stone, thence  
9th South  $31^{\circ}$  West, 1.86 chains to a mound of stone, thence  
10th North  $74\frac{3}{4}^{\circ}$  West, 4.21 chains to a pine tree 5 inches in diameter scribed "S", thence  
11th North  $31\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  West, 6.17 chains to a pine tree 18 inches in diameter scribed "S"  
12th North  $12^{\circ}$  West 5.12 chains to a post scribed "S" in stone mound.  
13th North 7.38 chains to the place of beginning.

PARCEL NO. 5: That portion of the Schlomer and Meckel Placer Mining Claim patent to which is recorded in Book 2 of Patents at page 759, Trinity County Records embraced in the following described tract:

That certain lot commonly known as the Brewery lot on East side of County Road in the West half of the Southwest quarter of the Southwest quarter of Section 28, Township 34 North, Range 11 West, M.D.B. & M. described

Starting at the corner common to Sections 28, 29, 32 and 33 in Township North, Range 11 West, M.D.B. & M. and running thence East 660 feet; thence North  $1^{\circ} 15'$  East 651 feet to the true point of beginning, thence

- 1st North  $70^{\circ} 15'$  West 372.90 feet; thence  
2nd North  $15^{\circ} 45'$  East 188.76 feet; thence  
3rd South  $70^{\circ}$  East 323.4 feet; thence  
4th South  $1^{\circ} 30'$  West 196.88 feet to the true point of beginning.

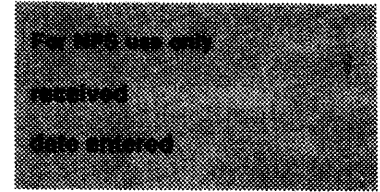
PARCEL NO. 6: The Helena County Cemetery as shown in the Record of Survey in Sec. 28, T 34 N, R 11 W, M. D. M., filed for record in the office of The County Recorder, Trinity County, California on April 5, 1965 in Book 3, Maps and Surveys at page 228.

Note: A letter to W.L. Battaglia, Trustee, from the Bureau of Land Management, Redding California dated May 1, 1980 and signed by Dwain L. Davis, Four Rivers Area Manager, states that because of a 1976 Dependent Resurvey, the legal description of the above territory has been significantly changed. It is the understanding of the Trinity County Historical Society that patent correction action has been initiated.

Boundaries are drawn to encompass the old townsite, its cemetery and its immediate setting, and are shown on attached site plan.

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HELENA HISTORIC DISTRICT

KEY TO PHOTOGRAPHS

NOTE: The photographic coverage includes some older photos. An on-site visit by state staff verified that the views remain unchanged today unless noted in the following descriptions.

- Photo No. 1 Currie Cottage (Map, #4) View of house from Main Street, camera looking southwest.
- Photo No. 2 Currie Cottage (Map, #4) Construction detail. Note the hand split laths on the right side of the building where the siding is missing.
- Photo No. 3 Small outbuildings (Map, #3) west of old barn. View looking west from barn (Map, #6).
- Photo No. 4 Rental house (Map, #12) across from post office. View looking south.

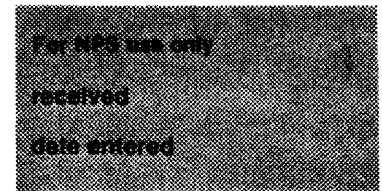
Although this house was built in 1931, it looks much older. Harvy Stafer, then owner of the Helena Hotel, decided to replace the old hotel with a new building. He used the material from the old hotel to construct this building which was to become a rental. The main building of the old hotel may have been built originally as a Masonic Hall.

This reconstructed building measures 24' x 36'. The low gabled roof is covered with fairly new corrugated iron. A back shed was added onto the east side over-hanging the creek bank. A front porch has fallen. The long front or west side of this building has 1-6 over 6 window, a French door, another 6 over 6 window and a group of three 6 over 6 windows. The south side has a group of five 6 over 6 windows. The north gable end has two 6 over 6 windows. The building siding is of double grooved shiplap.

The building is surrounded by many fairly young locust trees.

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Helena Historic District, continued

Photo No. 5

Rental house (Map #12), view looking east from Main Street.

Photo No. 6

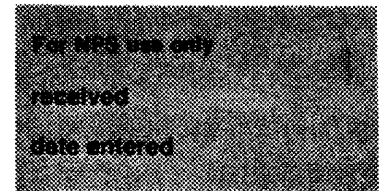
Historic view of townsite, view looking west across North Fork of the Trinity River. This photograph, taken in 1860 or 1861 before the great flood of that year, shows Schlomer's brick building, soon after construction, the Meckel Brothers' Brewery to the right of it, the Schlomer toll bridge, Schlomer's first blacksmith shop (to the left of the bridge) and a fence, in the extreme lower section of the photograph which documents the existence of improved property on the east side of the North Fork, traditionally known as the "Bagdad" side of the North Fork. This property was sold by Craven Lee to A. F. Billay in 1859, according to Trinity County Court House records.

Photo No. 7

Entrance to Helena townsite, view looking north. Entering Helena on the present spur-road from Highway 299W, one passes in front of the sites of the early commercial buildings constructed along the west-side embankment of the North Fork. The stream is visible in the lower right-hand portion of this photograph. This view shows Schlomer's brick building (Map No. 14) constructed in 1859, and a rental building (Map Number 12) built in the early 1930's out of lumber salvaged from the old Meckel Hotel. The rental building occupies the approximate site of the old Adams-Yohe Hotel, erected in the 1850's. Foundations and retaining walls exist on both sides of Schlomer's brick building, among them, on the up-river side, the remains of the Meckel Brothers' Brewery.

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Helena Historic District, continued

Photo No. 8

Currie Cottage (Map #4), view looking south.

The Currie Cottage is a medium gable 1½ story structure. Clapboard siding covers the main cottage. A low shed covered with vertical board and batten has been added to the rear of the L. The gable end of the 1½ story structure is enhanced with cornice returns. Windows are of 3 lite sash divided vertically. Three windows line the east side of the downstairs. One casement window is evenly placed in the upstairs gable end. Another window and front door open to the street. Another casement window is in the front of the L. The north side has two 6 lite square windows. (One in the original L and one in the added shed). Built 1859 or 1860 by Algernon S. Currie and his wife Rebecca.

The first sawmill to operate on the North Fork provided lumber for the Curry cottage. The mill was destroyed in the flood of 1861. The Currie cottage may be the oldest building within the town of Helena.

Photo No. 9

View looking northwest on main street showing a portion of the west side of the street. From left to right: Old Schlomer House (now destroyed), the Feed and Livery Stable (Map #5) and a portion of the Currie Cottage (Map No. 4) .

Photo No. 10

Schlomer Feed and Livery Stable (Map #5), view looking west from Main Street.

Photo No. 11

Meckel Barn (Map #6), view looking east. The Meckel Barn, the only surviving structure for animals. Nearby, in pioneer days, was an additional barn, sheds, corrals, and a saddle house for horses and for the 50-60 mules utilized in the merchandise and packing business of the Meckel Brothers.

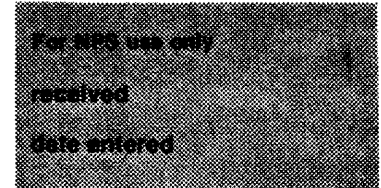
Photo No. 12

View looking northwest from end of Main Street, showing the Meckel store building (Map No. 7). The photograph was taken before the restoration of the building.

The caretaker's mobile home is partially visible behind the store building in the background. The truck parked on the street is very near the location of the old Meckel Hotel. Visible on the left are a portion of the Schlomer Feed and Livery Stable (Map No. 5) and the Currie Cottage (Map No. 4).

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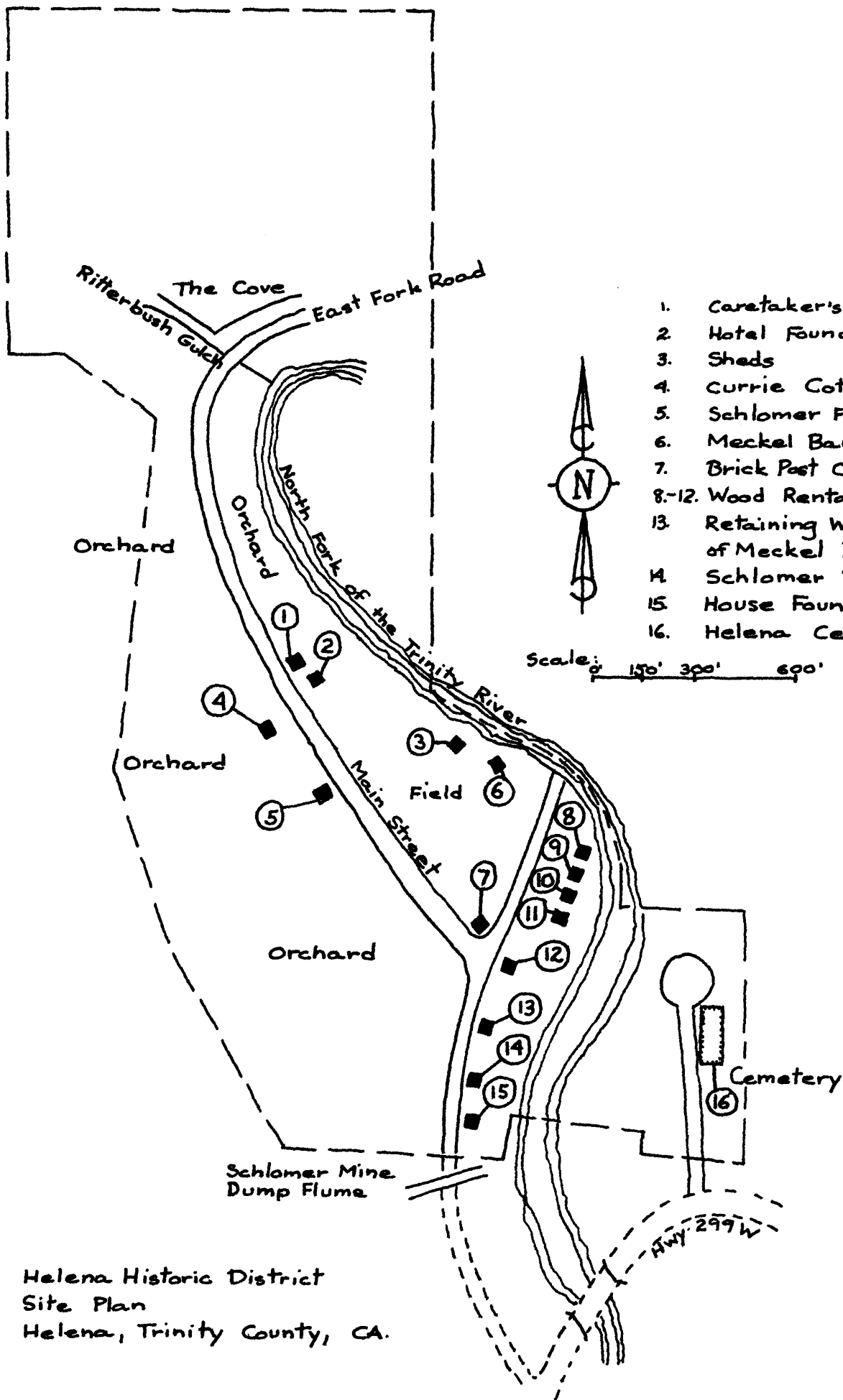
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Helena Historic District, continued

- Photo No. 13                      View looking north from Main Street showing the Meckel Store Building (Map No. 7) constructed in 1858, and now the Helena post office.
- Photo No. 14                      An Example of Buildings 8-11, view looking northeast. One of four rental buildings constructed along the route to the old horse and wagon bridge.
- Photo No. 15                      Schlomer's Brick Building (Map #14) today, showing one of the "S's" forged by Harmon Schlomer in his blacksmith shop. The increasing deterioration of this building is evident in this photograph. View looking northeast.
- Photo No. 16                      The Helena Cemetery (Map #16), view looking northwest. The photograph shows the old section of the cemetery with attention focused on the plot of the Schlomer family, much photographed by tourists because of the ornamental fence designed and forged locally by Harmon Schlomer in his blacksmith shop. A portion of this fence was recently stolen by vandals.





- 1. Caretaker's Trailer
- 2. Hotel Foundation
- 3. Sheds
- 4. Currie Cottage
- 5. Schlomer Feed & Livery Stable
- 6. Meckel Barn
- 7. Brick Post Office
- 8-12. Wood Rental Buildings
- 13. Retaining Wall & Foundation of Meckel Brewery
- 14. Schlomer Brick Building
- 15. House Foundation
- 16. Helena Cemetery

Scale: 150' 300' 600'

Helena Historic District  
 Site Plan  
 Helena, Trinity County, CA.