OMB No. 1024-0018

NPS Form 10-900a (8-86)

United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section	Page						
		SUPPL	EMENTARY	LISTING	RECO	RD	
NRIS Ref	ference l	Number:	06000280		Date	Listed:	4/7/2006
Pleasant Property	ts Ranch y Name				<u>Solar</u> Count		<u>CA</u> State
<u>N/A</u> Multiple	e Name						
Places : subject notwiths	in accord to the s standing	dance wi following the Nat	g excepti	tached rons, exc	nomina clusio	ation do	Historic cumentation amendments, ion included
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======	re of the		=======	Date	OI AC	======================================	
Amended	Items in	n Nomina	tion:				
Don	nestic/Single D	welling; Dom	are revised to inc estic/Secondary ding; Agricultur	Structure; Ag	griculture	e/Animal facili	categories as follows:
[The exta	Period of Sign ough minor ele nt resources re	ments of the d flect the late-r	ineteenth and ea	before 1890 arly twentieth	-century	period of rancl	ne majority of the n development in the owth and prosperity.
The	ese clari:	Eications	were con:	firmed wi	ith th	e CA SHPO	office.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment) NPS Form 10-900 (Oct.1990)

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the approximate box or by entering the information requested. If any 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 parrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

OMB No. 1024-0018

RECEIVED

2280

Name of Property	
istoric name Pleasants Ranch	
ther names/site number Hoskins/Pleasants Ranch	
Location	
treet & number 8212 Pleasants Valley Road	NA not for publication
ty or town Vacaville	vicinity
tate California code CA county Solano	code 095 zip code 95688
State/Federal Agency Certification	
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as request for defermination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for reg Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this produced by the statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.) Signature of certifying official/Title California Office of Historic Preservation	istering properties in the National Register of 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property operty be considered significant ☐ nationally
State or Federal agency and bureau	
In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria comments.)	(니 See continuation sheet for additional
Signature of commenting or other official Date	
State or Federal agency and bureau	
National Park Service Certification	
nereby certify that this property is: entered in the National Register See continuation sheet. determined eligible for the National Register determined not eligible for the National Register	Date of Action 4/7/06

Pleasants Ranch Name of Property	_	Solano Co. 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	Contributing None	sted resources in the count.) contributing buildings sites structures objects 1 Total *		
Name of related multiple property is not part of a	erty listing ultiple property listing.)	*District also includes Number of contributi the National Register	ing resources previously listed in		
N/A		N/A	_		
6. Function or Use					
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)		Current Functions (Enter categories from instruction	ions)		
Main House Single Dwelling		Domestic single dwelling			
Gazebo Gazebo		Gazebo			
Tool House and Laundry Storage		Storage			
Smoke House Processing		None			
Cook's Bunk House Single Dwell	ing	None			
Garage #1 Road Related		Road Related			
Garage #2 Road Related		Road Related			
Garage #3 Road Related		Road Related			
Chicken Coop Animal Facility		None			
Stock Barn Animal Facility		None			
	D 111	Storage			
Foreman's House Single/Multiple	e Dwelling	Storage			
Barn # 1 Tractor Shed Storage Barn #2 Buggy Barn Storage		None None			
7. Description					
Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)		Materials (Enter categories from instruct	ions)		
Late Victorian		foundation Stone	Granite		
Queen Anne Main House		roof Composition	Shingle		
Folk Victorian Outbuildin	gs	walls Wood Batten	Clapboard / Board and		
Utilitarian Outbuildings		other			

Narrative Description

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

	sants Ranch FProperty	Solano Co. CA County and State
8. Sta	tement of Significance	
Applic (Mark "x	cable National Register Criteria "in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property	Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)
for National Register listing)		A. Agriculture
	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of	Local
our history.		C. Architecture
	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.	Property Type ranch
,	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.	Period of Significance
		1856-1919 .
	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.	<u> </u>
• • • • • • •	ia Considerations " in all the boxes that apply.)	Significant Dates
Prope	rty is:	A. N/A
	owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.	
□в	removed from its original location.	Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
C a birthplace or a grave.		
□ D	a cemetery.	Cultural Affiliation N/A
□ E	a reconstructed building, object, or structure.	
F a commemorative property.		
	less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.	Architect/Builder Cook, A.A. Architect, Sacramento main house
Narra (Explain	tive Statement of Significance the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)
SEE	CONTINUATION SHEET SECTION 8 PAGE	ES 1-8
9. Ma	jor Bibliographical References	
	CONTINUATION SHEET SECTION 9, PAGE e books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on or	
	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	Primary Location of Additional Data N/A State Historic Preservation Office Other State agency Federal agency Local government University Other

Pleasants Ranch	Solano Co. CA
Name of Property	County and State
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey	Name of repository:
#	
Record #	

Pleasants Ranch Name of Property						Solano Co. CA County and State			
10. Geographical Data						County and Glate			
10. C	eogra	опісаі Data	<u> </u>						
Acrea	age of F	Property:							
Appro	ximate	ly 4.5 Acres	·.						
	Refere additiona		ces on a continuation	sheet)					
1		Easting 583080	Northing 4257640 3	Zone	Easting	Northing			
2			4						
				∐ See d	continuation sh	eet.			
		dary Descioundaries of the	ription e property on a contir	nuation sheet.)					
SEE	CONT	INUATIO	N SHEET SEC	CTION 10,	PAGE 1				
		ustification boundaries w	ere selected on a cor	ntinuation shee	t.)				
SEE	CONT	INUATIO:	N SHEET SEC	CTION 10,	Page 1				
11 F	orm Pr	enared By							
name	/title C	arol Rolan	d						
organ	ization	Roland-N	awi Associates:	Preservati	on Consult	ants date May 9, 2005			
street	& num	ber 4829 C	Crestwood Way_			telephone 916 441-6063_			
city or	town	Sacrame	ento			state <u>CA</u> zip code 95822	2		
Addit	ional D	ocumenta	tion						
Submit	the follow	wing items with	the completed form:						
		n Sheets 7,8,9,10							
Maps	;								
ATT.	ACHE USC		Vaca Quadrang	gle 1:24000	scale				

Aerial Photographic maps Building Locations Landscape Feature Locations District Boundary Map

Photographs

Black and white photographs (2 copies each)

Additional items

Copies of historical photographs (Section 8 illustrations; attached copies of 1901 house photographs). color prints for scanning

Pleasants Ranch	Solano Co. CA County and State			
Name of Property				
Property Owner				
(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)				
name Ethel Hoskins				
street & number 8212 Pleasants Valley Road	telephone _707 448-2288			
city or town Vacaville	state _CA zip code _95688			

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 the 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.0. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7

Page 1

Pleasants Ranch Solano County, California

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION:

The Pleasants Ranch is located in Pleasants Valley approximately seven miles southwest of Winters and ten miles northeast of Vacaville, California. Pleasants Valley is a north-south oriented valley nestled on the eastern perimeter of the coastal range between the Bay Area and the upper Central Valley. It is approximately five miles long and one and one-half miles wide. The valley is traversed by Pleasants Creek, a tributary of Putah Creek and is within the Putah Creek watershed. The ranch complex consists of twelve contributing buildings, one contributing structure, one non-contributing structure and several landscape features that date between the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These buildings are associated with the fruit growing and shipping industry that characterized the economies of northern Solano, as well as Yolo, Sonoma, Napa and Sacramento counties. All of the buildings were constructed by William J. Pleasants who established his ranch in 1856 and continued to farm it until his death in 1919. It has continued to function as an agricultural operation in the ownership of his descendents until the present. Under Criterion A the Pleasants Ranch reflects the operation of a large prosperous fruit and stock raising ranch from the 19th and early 20th centuries, a crucial period in the development of California agriculture. Under Criterion C the built environment of the ranch dates entirely from the life time of pioneer fruit rancher, William Pleasants, and is the only surviving example of its type in the Vacaville/Winters area.

Despite some losses, the buildings and structures that remain on the Pleasants Ranch constitute a fairly complete district of 19th and early 20th century ranch buildings that exemplify the life and economy of this agricultural fruit growing region at the time of its greatest development and prosperity. Together the buildings, structures, and landscape features within the central ranch complex constitute a historic district. The ranch district complex is bounded on the east by the west bank of Pleasants Creek, on the west side by the east side of the county road to north of the tributary creek bridge where the boundary crosses the county road, a non-historic feature, to encompass the stock barn which is sited on the west side of the road. The majority of cultural resources are located south of the tributary creek and east of the road.

One major building, the packing shed, and one major structure, the tank house, were a part of the original ranch house complex, but are no longer extent. The packing shed, located on the east side of Pleasants Creek, is a ruin with only one wall standing, and the tank house, located at the end of the driveway to the rear of the main house, collapsed in the 1970s. Among more minor structures and elements the upper arch over the driveway gate has been removed, leaving only the lower posts and the metal and wire gate. The property also includes several bunk houses located on the east side of Pleasants Creek. These bunk houses, including a building known as

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7

Page _2

Pleasants Ranch Solano County, California

the Chinese Bunk House, built and occupied by Chinese ranch hands, are in varying states of disrepair or collapse. The Chinese bunk house is described in Section 8. It collapsed in an attempt to pull it back from the eroding bank of Pleasants Creek. Part of the building is currently on exhibit at the Vacaville Historical Museum and will be returned to the ranch in August, 2005. Although the packing shed ruin and bunk house buildings are a reminder of the labor intensive nature of the 19th and early 20th century horticultural ranch, changes in agricultural practices have left the buildings on the east side of the creek in such disrepair that they do not retain sufficient integrity to contribute to a district. The boundaries of the district have been drawn to include only those buildings which can continue to convey their significance as integral parts of a ranching operation.

The integrity of the buildings within the historic district ranges from fair to excellent, with some of the agricultural outbuildings suffering from disuse. The owner is working to stabilize some of these buildings and hopes eventually to rehabilitate the full complex. Despite some losses, the ranch conveys a picture of farm life in a past era that has largely been replaced by modern residences and farm structures associated with a more mechanized agriculture and creeping recreational and suburban development.

District Buildings and Structures:

RD 1. Main House 1891

RD 2. Gazebo Circa 1892

RD 3. Tool House and Laundry Room...1896/1902.

RD 4. Smoke House 1877

RD 5. Cook's Bunkhouse 1904

RD 6.Garage (#1) Circa 1918

RD 7.Garage (#2) Circa 1918

RD 8. Garage (#3) Circa 1918

RD 9. Stock Barn Circa1900

RD 10.Garden Shed Circa 1915

RD 11. Foreman's House 1899

RD 12. Barn #1 Tractor Shed 1900

RD 13. Barn #2 Buggy Barn 1902

RD 14 Chicken Coop 1896 (non-contributing)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7

Page _3

Pleasants Ranch Solano County, California

District Landscape Features:

- LF 1. Entry Road and Walnut Tree Allee 1856/Circa 1895
- LF 2. Circular Drive 1892
- LF 3. Circular Planting of Olive Trees 1892
- LF 4. Stone Wall and Iron Fence (Main House) 1902
- LF 5. Hitching Post (Main House) 1896
- LF 6. Main House Driveway and Walnut Tree Allee 1892/1902
- LF 7. Orchards west, southwest and northwest of Main House to Pleasants Valley Road.

Main Ranch House (RD 1) Contributing Building

This is the largest and most impressive building in the ranch complex. Completed in 1891, it was built by William James Pleasants. It replaced an earlier ranch house he built by shortly after he purchased the land for the ranch in 1856. The "new" main house was designed by Allen A. Cook, a Sacramento architect and was built by T.D. Ball, a contractor from nearby Winters. The 1891 house, built in the latest fashion, clearly marked the prominence and prosperity that the pioneer Pleasants family had achieved in the forty years since they had settled the valley that bears their name. It was by any standard of the day a substantial house with elaborate and careful exterior detailing, expensive interior finishes, and furniture and carpet shipped from the best stores in Sacramento and San Francisco.

The house is an imposing, wood frame two-story Queen Anne residence with an irregular floor plan. It rests on a quarried stone foundation. Relatively restrained in massing and form, the house is richly embellished with decorative details. The front of the house consists of cross gable wings, while the rear portion of the building is rectangular in form. Two-story porches are found on the rear side elevations and a single story service porch is located at the rear. The use of porches on all elevations may have been a response to the hot climate which prevails on the east side of the coastal range and marks the transition from the Bay Area to the Central Valley.

The building has a multiple gable roof of steep slope. A narrow front gable wing is intersected by a long gabled wing running on an east west axis. Originally the roof ridges were trimmed with cresting which has since been removed. The closed gable ends are elaborately decorated. There is a plain facia and a verge board with a raised pattern of plain rosettes. The gable end is clad with fish scale shingle, diagonally laid board, and square shingle. A semi-circular attic vent with scalloped louvers occupies the center of the gable end. A wide board and batten cornice

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7

Page 4

Pleasants Ranch Solano County, California

runs beneath the eaves and gable ends. The former are supported on incised brackets with rosette patterns. Modillions are found under the eaves between the brackets. All of the gable ends and side eaves follow this pattern, although the rear gable treatment is somewhat simplified. On either side of the rear gable the roof has extended slopes which cover the upper story side porches. There are three corbelled brick chimneys, one on the west gable ridge, one on the front gable ridge, and one on the rear wing.

On the east side of the front elevation the house is dominated by the gable and a canted bay. On the west side there is a long raised and covered porch. The entry provides a transition between these two elements. The front gable wing extends forward creating an L with the intersecting side gable wing. The gable end is finished in the manner described above. There are paired double hung windows at the upper story level with a canted bay below. The bay has a flat hexagonal roof. A board and batten cornice and brackets on the bay repeats the pattern found at the eaves and gables. There are inset panels below each of the bay windows with a raised saw tooth pattern along their top edge. Above the hexagonal roof there is a canted rail with a saw tooth edging and a geometrically patterned balustrade running between newel posts.

A long raised wooden porch occupies the west side of the front façade. It is covered by a flat roof with a patterned rail above and a spindle work frieze at the eaves. Turned posts with applied rosettes support the porch roof. There is a low porch rail with turned balustrades.

The entry is located in the L created by the intersection of the cross wings. A gabled pediment frames the entry and is connected to the porch roof on the west. The pediment is supported on turned posts with intricately patterned brackets, rosettes and drop newels. Stone steps with a low rail provide access to the porch and the double entry doors. The stone for the steps and the front walk were quarried at the Monticello quarry. The doors are paneled and retain their original hardware including the door bell. A multi-light colored glass transom surmounts the doors.

Fenestration is generally one-over-one double hung and is vertically emphasized. On the lower front façade the windows are surrounded by elaborate casements which feature small gabled pediments with inset half rosette patterns and raised saw tooth edging at the bottom of the sills. Upper story and bay windows have plain casements, as do the other windows, with the exception of the elaborate stair window on the west elevation.

On the west elevation the gable repeats the pattern of the front gable. Below the gable there are canted corner windows at both levels. Elaborate brackets with drop newels, turned friezes, and upper rails tie the upper and lower windows together. Behind the cross gable wing a long two-

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7

Page 5

Pleasants Ranch Solano County, California

story porch runs from the gable wall intersection to the south end of the building. The roof, post, and rail treatment of this porch is similar to that of the front porch and is repeated at both levels. The porch remains intact, but the lower porch has been partially enclosed with screen circa 1940. This has been accomplished without removing the frieze or rail.

The east side of the house originally had a gable end wall with a two-story porch at the rear, much like the west façade. However, in 1914 a one-story addition was made to the east side of the house to extend a downstairs bedroom and add the first indoor bathroom. At the rear of the east elevation there is a two-story porch with the same detailing as that of the front and west porches. The upper story of this porch was extended over the 1914 addition with a low rail, but no covering. At the upper story the south end of the porch has been enclosed to accommodate a bathroom. This was done circa 1914. The east gable end repeats the decorative finish of the other gables.

At the rear of the house the gable end is decorated in a fashion similar to the other gables, but with a less elaborate vent. The rear gable slope is extended beyond the envelope of the house to cover the east and west upper porches, giving the rear façade an elongated roof profile. The upper story paired rear windows are elaborated with a prominent flat pediment supported on posts with caps and brackets. The posts rest on the roof of the one-story porch below. The entire back wall of the house is occupied by a rectangular shed roof service porch which is decoratively treated like the other porches. This porch is partially enclosed with lattice work that has been applied between the posts. The lattice may not have been a part of the original construction, but it was added shortly after and has been present since Ruth, W.J, Pleasants youngest daughter was a child.

In 1912 the kitchen was extended west and the rear stair to the 2nd story was removed. Gas was installed in the house in 1903 and an updated system was installed in 1914. The gas fixtures were later wired for electricity and but remain in the house.

The integrity of the house is excellent. The one addition on the east side was made during the period of significance by the original owner. The original ridge rail of the roof was removed at an unknown date. Due to dry rot, the balustrade above the porch and canted bay on the front façade was replaced with a rail that is similar in height and proportion but varies slightly in design, although it maintains a geometric pattern. Other alterations include the enclosure of the lower west side with wire screening circa 1930 The screening provides a superficial enclosure of the space, but does not affect the porch design, materials or workmanship. No rails, posts or openings were altered to accommodate the screening materials. Metal frame screen doors have

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7

Page 6

Pleasants Ranch Solano County, California

been added to the front entry, again without altering the entry door, transom, or original hardware. Overall, the house retains integrity of design.

Gazebo and Covered Walkway(RD 2) Contributing Structure

The gazebo, circa 1892, is a square wood frame structure located immediately to the rear of the house. It has a hip roof with a plain facia and cornice. The roof is surmounted by a tall square bell tower with a hip roof with wide eave overhangs and a finial on top. The roof of the bell tower is supported on bracketed posts of the same design as those of the lower structure. The bell was used to call farm hands to meals.

The structure consists of open bays, two on each elevation. The roof is supported on the posts that comprise the framework of the structure. The posts are turned and bracketed. The openings between the bays are screened with latticework attached to the posts. Like the lattice work on the back porch, it was added in the early 1900s during William Pleasants' ownership.

A long open frame covered walkway extends south from the gazebo to the tool house. This walkway provided protected passage from the rear porch of the house all the way to the tool house and laundry room. This walkway was constructed circa 1902 at the time that the laundry was added to the tool house.

Tool House and Laundry (RD 3) Contributing Building

The tool house was constructed in 1877 by a Mr. Ritchie and a Mr. Smith and may be the oldest surviving building on the ranch. It was constructed to store fire wood for the house and peach pits. In 1902 a laundry room and furnace were added to the east end of the building by a Mr. Cooper extending the building to the east. The laundry room furnace is housed in a gable roof addition which is stepped back from the façade of the main tool house and laundry and it has a roof of lower height.

The tool house is a large one and one-half story wood frame barn building with a prominently gabled roof that is sloped lower at the rear than in the front. The roof is covered with corrugated metal. According to Ethel Hoskins, W.J. Pleasants' granddaughter and current owner of the ranch, the corrugated metal roofs on this and other farm buildings were installed by her father replacing the original shingle roofs circa 1949. There is a centrally located double-wide opening with a hexagonal arch on the front elevation and a square double opening on the rear wall. The rear opening replaces an original window to allow for storage of modern equipment.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7

Page 7

Pleasants Ranch Solano County, California

The building is partitioned into three separate spaces on the interior. The central section is the tool house proper. It continues to serve its original function and to store farm equipment. On the west side of the building is a work room which may have been used as housing at one time. On the east side is the 1902 laundry room. A small, gable roof attached shed houses the furnace. Both west work room and the east laundry room have separate entry doors on the front elevation. Long double hung windows are found on the laundry room elevations and on the east wall. A square window is found on the rear elevation and illuminates the workroom.

In 1904 the cement walk between the tool house and the main house backyard was laid by an employee of the farm.

The tool house and laundry retain substantial integrity. The building has not been altered since it was completed with the addition of 1902. Even the original furnace that heated water for the laundry is still in place, although no longer in use. Floors, cladding, framing, fenestration, and most of the cladding is original. The building retains integrity of design, materials, workmanship, location, setting and association. It continues to be used for the storage of supplies and equipment.

Smoke House (RD 4) Contributing Building

The smokehouse is located to the west of the gazebo and was used to smoke pork until the 1940s. It was constructed circa 1877 and "refaced" in 1885.

It is a square one-story building with a moderately pitched front gable roof that extends to cover a front porch/entry area on the east side of the building. The roof extension is supported on turned posts. The north and south sides of the entry are enclosed with a low porch wall. The open space between the low wall and the roof overhang was covered with garden lattice in the early 20th century. The roof is covered with corrugated metal. The upper wall of the front façade is clad with clapboard while the lower wall is covered by tongue and grove. The two are separated by a wide plain belt course. The remaining walls are clad with clapboard. Fenestration consists of a single rear window that is one-over-one double hung. The window is vertically emphasized.

Although it is a utilitarian building, the smoke house is carefully detailed. The gables have wide overhangs. Both the gable corners and the eaves are bracketed. The gables are closed and finished with board and batten and a saw tooth woodwork pattern along the bottom edge. On the

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7

Page 8

Pleasants Ranch Solano County, California

front gable there is "Y" shaped stick work. A cornice on the sides of the building also is board and batten. The rear window casing is embellished with decorative floral motif brackets at the sill.

The integrity of the smokehouse is largely intact. Its original detailing has been carefully preserved. .

Cook's Bunkhouse (RD 5): Contributing Building

The Cook's Bunkhouse is a rectangular, wood frame, gable roof building constructed in 1904. It is located to the southwest of the smokehouse near the tool house. It is set on a sill foundation and is covered with board and batten siding. The gable roof is moderately pitched and covered with corrugated metal. It has gable and eave overhangs. The gable is finished with a plain facia. Fenestration consists of small horizontally emphasized windows which open at the bottom and have plain wooden casings. The entry door is located on the north gable wall elevation and is five panel. The interior consists of a single room. The building was used as the sleeping quarters for the cook who prepared meals for the family and the ranch hands.

The only changes over time are the replacement of the original roofing material with corrugated metal in the 1940s and the loss of the rear window casing, the shadow of which is clearly discernable around the edge of the window opening.

Garage (RD 6) Contributing Building

The garage is one of three such buildings located to the rear of the main house and southeast of the tool house. It is a plain rectangular building with a gable roof. The roof is moderately sloped with overhanging gables and eaves. The gable is closed and finished with a plain facia and verge board and there is a narrow plain cornice. It has a double-wide opening on the north façade with exterior hinged doors. The doors are vertical board. Fenestration consists of six-over-six double hung vertically emphasized windows on the side facades of the building.

Pictures of the garage with an early touring car parked next to it indicate that this, and the other garages, were added to the building complex between 1915 and 1918. There are several photographs of William Pleasants with the family's first touring car, so that is likely the garages were constructed during his lifetime.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7

Page 9

Pleasants Ranch Solano County, California

The garage has been relatively unaltered except for minor repairs. It remains in use. The building is set on its original sill foundation and retains its siding and gable treatment. Its most notable feature is the wide plank side hinged double doors which, with the exception of some minor dry rot at the base, remain intact.

Garages (RD 7 and 8) Two Contributing Buildings

These garages are sited to the southeast of garage RD 6 and are placed very close together. They are smaller than the RD 6 building and do not have fenestration. They are rectangular in form with low metal gable roofs. Both are clad with board and batten. Garage RD7 has double wide doors of vertical wood that are externally hinged. Garage RD 8 has a vertical board double-wide door mounted on an industrial track.

The garages have been relatively unaltered except for minor repairs. They remain in use. The buildings are set on their original sill foundations and retain their siding and gable treatment. Their most notable features are the wide plank original doors which, with the exception of some minor dry rot at the base, remain intact

All of the garages are sited at the rear edge of the residential complex among large shade trees. Thee trees provide a visual transition into the orchard just south of these buildings.

Stock Barn (RD 9) Contributing Building

The stock barn is a large two-story building and is the only building in the district which is located on the west side of Pleasants Valley Road. The barn was used for housing and feeding livestock and retains the large feed racks installed for that purpose on the interior. It was constructed in 1900 and replaced an earlier barn at the same location which was destroyed in a tornado.

It is rectangular in form with a moderately pitched gable roof with wide overhangs and a hay loft. The roof is clad with corrugated metal and has a hay hook at the ridge of the gable end with an open loft immediately below. Wide side sheds are found on both the south and north sides. The gable ends and walls are clad with wide vertical planks approximately an inch in thickness. The building has an open frame with 6X6 structural members. The barn is set on a stone foundation and has carefully crafted stone culverts running along the foundation of the north and south sides. These culverts were apparently constructed to drain water away from the building. A raised stone terrace is set at the front barn entry The side sheds have wide openings with an

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7

Page 10

Pleasants Ranch Solano County, California

angled arch at the top. They do not have doors, but are now fenced with removable metal gates to prevent cattle from entering at will. Two smaller openings with plank doors are symmetrically arranged on the front central portion of the barn.

In design this is a typical California barn with a balloon frame and a central aisle supported by heavy posts. The siding is notable for its straight grain and wide cut. Also notable is the stone work around the barn in the form of culverts and terracing. The barn retains its original structure, siding, corrugated roof dating from the 1940s, and its internal features, including the hay loft and feed racks. Siding at the rear of the barn is missing, stolen by scavengers apparently attracted by the 19th century lumber's weight and cut. Despite this loss, the barn retains its integrity and is a picturesque reminder of an earlier agricultural era. Exposed to the road, it is frequently photographed. A photograph of it hangs in the Secretary of States Offices in Sacramento.

Garden Shed (RD 10) Contributing Building

This is a small rectangular building with a gable roof. It is located just east of the driveway close to the main house. It is wood frame with vertical board siding. The front entry door is constructed of vertical boards and is hung from an industrial sliding track. The building appears in family photos circa 1917, but may have been built before that date. The existing building appears to have undergone no discernable change. It conforms in all regards to the building shown in the 1917 photograph.

Foreman's House (RD 11) Contributing Building

This residence building is one-story and rectangular in plan. It is gable roofed with both gable and eave overhangs. The roof is covered with corrugated metal and is pierced in the middle of the ridge line by a brick chimney. A partially enclosed front porch with a gable and shed roof is located on the north side of the front façade. The porch roof is supported on square posts. The lower part of the porch is enclosed with high horizontal wood walls and it is screened at the top. There is a gable roof utility porch at the rear which also is partially walled and has upper screening. A toilet facility is located here and was probably a later addition. Both porches have a screen door opening. The principal structure has double hung windows, most of which are one-over-one, except on the rear façade where there is a six-over-six window to the south of the porch. The building is clad with horizontally laid board. William J. Pleasants' journal refers to the construction of a house in 1899 for hired men. This is the only building on the property that fits this description. It later was used to house the ranch foreman.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7

Page 11

Pleasants Ranch Solano County, California

The foreman's house has been little altered, but it is in poor condition. At the present time it has integrity of design, materials and workmanship, but these qualities, particularly integrity of materials, are endangered by deterioration. The front porch suffers from extensive dry rot, but could be repaired in kind. The building retains integrity of location, setting and association.

Buggy Horse Barn (RD 13) Contributing Building

This barn was constructed in 1900. Work horses were fed in this barn and visitor's horses were housed here. It is now used for storage.

This is a very large two-story building with a hay loft. It is rectangular in form with a moderately pitched gable roof with wide overhangs. The roof is clad with corrugated metal and has a hay hook at the ridge of the gable end with an open loft immediately below. The gable ends are clad with wide vertical board. The barn is set on a stone foundation. The building has an open frame with 6X6 structural members. On the front façade there are two symmetrically arranged double-wide openings with doors constructed of diagonally laid board. The doors slide open on an industrial track. At the rear of the barn there are also two entries, although these are smaller and are hinged on the exterior. The walls of the barn are vertical board.

This barn has been maintained in good condition and appears to be structurally sound. With the exception of the replacement of some siding, it retains its original design, materials, particularly its exposed framing, plank floor and stone foundation, workmanship, location, setting and association. A large number of wooden fruit packing crates are stored on the interior.

Barn Tractor Shed (RD 14) Contributing Building

This barn is located near the bank of the small tributary that runs into Pleasants Creek just north of the Buggy Barn. It is a rectangular plan building, one and one-half story and was constructed in 1902. It has a gable roof with wide overhangs and is clad with corrugated metal. The building has double-wide openings on the gable walls. These have octagonal arches at the top much like the opening to the tool house. There is no evidence at either opening of any door or door hardware. There is also a smaller rectangular opening on the east wall. The building is single wall construction with cladding of vertical board on three sides. There was originally shingle attached over the vertical board siding, but the shingles have long been removed and the barn has been maintained in its current appearance for the past 50 years. The north wall of the barn is open with widely spaced horizontal boards or rails attached to the frame at intervals sufficient to

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7

Page 12

Pleasants Ranch Solano County, California

prevent access into the building on that side. According to Ethel Hoskins, the ranch owner, the barn has been open on this side at least since her childhood in the 1940s. .

This barn is in fair condition. The foundation has subsided on the north side of the building causing the building to lean in that direction. Siding on the east wall around the smaller entry door is missing as well. However, the building remains structurally sound and retains its original framing and structural system, its siding, openings, and corrugated metal roof from the 1940s. The building currently retains its integrity, although it is endangered.

Chicken Coop/Shed (RD 15) Non-Contributing Structure

The Chicken Coop is located east of the garages with the entrance oriented toward the creek. It was completed in 1897. It was built by W.J. Pleasants and his son, Tommy, who began framing the structure in December, 1896. According to W.J.'s journal, they sent three teams to Vacaville to purchase and haul the lumber for the building.

It is a rectangular plan structure set on a sill foundation with a shed roof. It has overhanging eaves with exposed rafters and is covered with corrugated metal roofing material. It is single wall construction with open framing. The remaining walls consist of wide horizontal boards. These are still in place on the rear elevation, but are missing on the side elevations. At the front of the coop the structure was enclosed with chicken wire attached to the frame, only a portion of which is still intact. Wood plank doors hang on an industrial track providing entry. Although the chicken coop was built by William Pleasants and dates from the earlier period of the ranch, it is in such disrepair that it lacks integrity and does not contribute to the ranch district.

Landscape Features and Setting:

There are a number of formal landscape features and some agricultural features that are closely related to the farm building complex. The formally installed landscape features were added to the site after the construction of the main house and were intended to create a formal approach to the house, a hierarchy of entry features, and a formal garden setting, as well as shade and privacy. The agricultural features, primarily fruit tree orchards to the west and southwest of the house and north between the entry drive and the barns, create a more extended setting for the buildings and structures and place them within the context of a working ranch. They also function to screen the house and other buildings from the main road.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7_

Page _13

Pleasants Ranch Solano County, California

Entry Road and Walnut Tree Allee (LF 1) Contributing

The main house and other farm buildings are set well back from the Pleasants Valley Road and sited in close proximity to the creek. Pleasants Valley Road was historically the main route between Winters and Vacaville. A long, graveled drive leading to the house turns east off of the main road. The gravel drive is framed on both sides with a planting of evenly spaced walnut trees that date from the turn of the 20th century. An 1877 lithograph of the William J. Pleasants ranch in Thompson and West's, *History of Solano County*, shows a long driveway from the road to the farm house, but no landscaping is evident. The trees appear to have been added after the construction of the Victorian main house and provide a more elegant, but still informally demarcated entry to the property.

There are twelve trees. Due to age and poor condition three of the original trees have been removed. There previous location is marked by the uneven spacing left by their removal. However, the design intent, alignment of plantings, and the allee effect of the entry plantings remains intact and clearly discernable. The drive was paved in 1952, but retains a rustic appearance with no curbing or gutters and gravel shoulders.

Circular Drive (LF 2) Contributing

As the entry drive approaches the main house it curves to the south and then makes a wide circle to the left that extends as far north as the foreman's house. It then connects back into the entry drive forming a circle. This circular drive allows the passage of vehicles up to the house and then back out to the main road. While providing access to the house it also allowed the transport of farm materials to the barns.

The circular drive appears to date from the construction of the Victorian main house. As noted above, the entry road appears in the Thompson and West 1880 lithograph of the property, but does not show any evidence of the wide circle with plantings. A 1903 photograph of the main house shows the iron fence and stone wall that enclose the house yard and the hitching post which is located on the edge of the curved road. In this photograph a circular grade is evident. The olive tree planting (see below) around which the road is designed was laid out circa 1892. The circle portion of the drive is paved (circa 1952), but like the entry road it retains a rustic appearance with no curbs or gutters.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7

7_ Page _14

Pleasants Ranch Solano County, California

The road maintains its original alignment and relationship to the main house, hitching post and picket fence. It was partially paved at an unknown date, but remains very rustic in appearance with no curbing or gutters. In several places the paving is quite worn.

Olive Tree Plantings (LF 3) Contributing

There are two distinctive landscape plantings of olive trees, one in the circular area in the middle of the turn-around and the other in front of the entry gate to the main house yard. In the circle there are approximately 18 olive trees planted in a circular pattern. There are no under plantings and the ground is covered with duff. Originally this grove was enclosed with a picket fence like that found near the entry road and along the east side of the house driveway. The fence had gates at the north and south. A family story suggests that this enclosure was either used for a formal garden or to house visitor's horses. The fence was entirely removed circa 1950.

There are three massive olive trees planted on either side of the entry gate to the Main House yard. These visually frame the gate and the entry stair to the house. They provide a vegetative transition to the landscaped yard and the hedge row just inside the iron fence.

The olive trees were all planted by William James Pleasants circa 1892 as a landscape feature of the house which was completed in 1891. The planting was laid out informally, but with a clear intent to create a focal landscape at the end of the entry drive. The trees are framed by the drive. Together they establish a formal traffic pattern in front of the house, and visually separates the house from the foreman's house and barns to the north and northeast.

It should be noted that olive trees were a very popular landscape tree in this period and were used heavily in Solano and Yolo Counties to demarcate road alignments. Examples of this are found along Putah Creek Road between the ranch and Winters.

Stone Wall and Iron Fence (LF 4) Contributing

The Main House has a landscaped front and rear yard which is planted in shrubs, grass and flowers. This yard is set off from the entry turnaround by an iron fence set on a stone wall base. The stone base is approximately 16-18" tall and is quarry faced. The fence is decoratively patterned with vertical posts of alternating height. The entry gate is of the same design, but has an elaborate central metal work ornament. The gate is hung from carefully detailed metal newels. This fence extends across the front of the house enclosing the landscaped yard.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7

Page _15

Pleasants Ranch Solano County, California

The wall and gate were installed in 1902. The stone was quarried in Putah Canyon. The gate opens onto a stone walk that was quarried in 1901. The rock was hauled by W. J. Pleasants, and finished by a Mr. Buothlett.

The stone wall and iron fence served to demarcate the more intimate domestic space of the family residence. Inside the fenced area the landscape is characterized by more formal plantings including a hedge, lawn and garden plantings. Although plantings inside the immediate yard area have changed over time, a more formal landscape has been maintained with these perimeters ever since its inception. The iron fence and yard landscaping are evident in the 1903 photograph of the house. The sense of stepping into a separate domestic space immediately associated with the house has been retained.

The stone wall and iron fence and gate retain their integrity of design, materials, workmanship, location, setting and association. This portion of the fence was always distinguished from the less formal enclosure used along the driveway. The side of the yard along the driveway was originally fenced with a painted wooden fence installed in 1892. This fence appears in historic photographs of the house and had a wooden sill with wooden posts and rail. Chicken wire was stretched between the posts. This fence was replaced circa 1940 with the wire fence that is there today.

In addition to the house yard fences, a wooden picket fence extends from the east side of the driveway arch along the east side of the curved drive. A portion of this fence is still standing, but it lacks integrity due to a missing portion.

Hitching Post (LF 5) Contributing

The hitching post consists of a circular metal bar that runs between metal newel posts. It is located just in front of the olive trees that frame the front gate (see above) near the edge of the circular drive. It was purchased in 1896 in Winters by William J. Pleasants. It was used to tie visitor's horses. It remains unaltered from its installation in the 1890s.

Main House Driveway and Walnut Tree Allee (LF 6) Contributing

The driveway is located just east of the house. It runs off the circular drive to the right and continues south to the 1920 garage (RD6). The drive was cut by 1892 at which time it terminated at a well house to the rear of the yard. It is bordered by a wire fence on the west and

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7

•

Page 16

Pleasants Ranch Solano County, California

a planting of walnut trees on the east. In a 1902 photograph, these trees are visible as saplings. A large post and an ornamental metal gate of the same design as the front gate mark the entrance to the driveway. The post and the single gate are all that is left of a tall arched and decoratively elaborated entry with two metal gates that originally separated the house yard and the circular entry to the property. The drive was paved in 1952, but retains a rustic appearance.

Orchards Between the Ranch Complex and Pleasants Valley Road (LF 7)

Although the orchards are not formal landscape elements, they play an important role in establishing the setting of the ranch buildings. Set out in rows, the trees extend from the edge of the main house yard to Pleasants Valley Road on the south side of the entry drive. On the north side of the drive they extend from the road east to Pleasants Valley Creek and the area in front of the barns. The orchard trees provide a heavy vegetative screen that separates the ranch complex from the moderately traveled road. They establish a strong agricultural context for the buildings in which there is a progression from the main road, down an informal allee with the orchard on both sides, to the more formal circular planting of olive trees and the house and complex of other buildings.

This orchard was originally composed of peach trees, one of the major commercial fruit crops produced on the ranch. In the 1970s a peach tree blight killed most of the trees and the surviving fruit trees were removed. The orchard was replanted with walnuts, a more commercially viable crop in the contemporary agricultural economy. Although the plantings are not of the same species as the historic plantings, the orchard is laid out in a similar manner and extends over the same area between the main house and the county road that was dedicated to orchard planting from at least the 1880s, and probably before. This location and pattern of orchard plantings is evident in the 1880 Thompson and West lithograph. These areas are one of the last areas on the farm to remain in orchard production.

While the orchard plantings to the southwest of the house have been in place since the 1970s, those to the northwest have been recently planted. They do reflect the traditional land use of this area and when mature will retain the orchard screen that has historically existed between the farm and the public road.

8

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number

Page 1

Pleasants Ranch Solano County

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: CRITERION A: EVENTS

The ranch is important for its association with the development of horticulture in the Vacaville region of northern Solano County in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The transition from a grain and stock based agricultural economy to one based on fruit and vegetable crops was a major development and significant theme in California agriculture. Under Criterion A the Pleasants Ranch reflects the establishment and operation of a large prosperous fruit raising ranch during this crucial period in California agriculture. The ranch complex consists of thirteen contributing buildings and one non-contributing structure and several landscape features that date between the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It is an excellent example of a ranch property type from this period under Criterion C. The ranch is significant under Criterion A and Criterion C at the local level because of its involvement in the fruit growing and shipping that characterized the economy of Solano County. The property retains integrity to the period of significance. All of the buildings were constructed by William J. Pleasants who established his ranch in 1856 and continued to farm it until his death in 1919. No buildings have been added to the complex and no major alterations have been made to the buildings since his death. All of the buildings, with the exception of the non-contributing chicken coop, remain in good condition and continue to function as part of an ongoing agricultural operation in the ownership of William Pleasants' descendents. Under Criterion C the built environment of the ranch is the only surviving example of its type in the Vacaville/Winters area.

The Pleasants family, James M. Pleasants and his son, William J. Pleasants, pioneered the valley, seven miles southwest of Winters and ten miles north of Vacaville, that bears their name. In 1856, six years after settling in the valley, William J. Pleasants purchased his first one-hundred and sixty acres and established what is now Pleasants Ranch. Over several decades Pleasants increased his holdings until the ranch encompassed between 3500 and 4000 acres of valley and hill land that stretched from ridge top to ridge top across the valley. William Pleasants was one of the earliest farmers in this area to concentrate on orchard crops and became one of the largest and most important growers in the region. His experiments with various orchard species played a role in establishing and refining the fruit production of the area. By the 1880s Pleasants had well established orchards. His leadership in horticulture of the area was attested to by his inclusion in Thompson and West and by the extensive attention his farm received in Wickson's book on fruit cultivation in Solano County. At about this same time he embarked on an ambitious program of building beginning with the tool house and culminating in the 1890s with the building of a major new residence and a number of new barns just after the turn of the century.

NPS Form 10-900-a OMB Approval No. 1024-0018 (8-86)

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8_

Page 2

Pleasants Ranch Solano County

The Pleasants Ranch is a local example of a much larger and more significant reorientation in California agriculture that took place between 1870 and the Great Depression of 1930. The shift in California from stock and grain production to the development of nut, fruit and vegetable crops between 1870 and 1930 was an agricultural shift of major economic proportions. It accounted in large part for the national and international importance of California's agricultural production after 1880 and was largely responsible for the extraordinary wealth that agriculture has produced in the state.

In the Spanish and Mexican period stock raising and grazing was the predominant form of agriculture, with hides and tallow providing the major export prior to the Gold Rush. With the Gold Rush the demand for meat increased and cattle and sheep began to be raised for these purposes. Along with stock raising, wheat cultivation predominated, with California rapidly achieving a dominance in the national market. In 1889 the state ranked second in the country in wheat production with more than 40,000,000 bushels. However, as wheat production increased, a number of farmers began to diversify into fruit, nut and vegetable growing. Although small at first, horticultural crops gained prominence as the wheat market fell in the 1890s and they are often credited with saving California from a major agricultural depression in that period.

By the end of the 19th century California made a significant and permanent shift from extensive dryland farming (grains) to intensive irrigated agriculture. As agricultural analysts, Johnston and McCalla note, the magnitude and speed of this transformation was phenomenal.² Between 1890 and 1910 there was a spectacular growth in the number of fruit trees.³ The transcontinental railroad made the shipment of fruit products to eastern markets relatively rapid, and, after the turn of the century, the development of cooling technologies made it more practicable to ship perishable produce long distances. Marketing cooperatives organized at the local level helped to facilitate individual farmer's access to distant markets.⁴ In addition, rapid population growth in California, relatively high wage levels, consumer demand, and the establishment of a world-class agricultural research and extension system through the University of California, all contributed to the rapid transformation of California agriculture from grain growing to the much more economically remunerative horticulture.

¹ Johnston, Warren and Alex McCalla. Whither California Agriculture: Up. Down or out? Some Thoughts About the Future. Oakland: University of CA, Div of Agriculture and National Resources, 2004. http//giannini.ucop.edu/publications.htm.

² Johnston and McCalla:

³ Jelinek, Lawrence. Harvest Empire: A History of California Agriculture. San Francisco: Boyd and Fraser, 1982... 49-51.

⁴ Ibid.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number

8_

Page _3_

Pleasants Ranch Solano County

Like many California farms of the late 19th and 20th century, Pleasants ranch depended on a large agricultural labor force, both permanent and seasonal. Orchard and vegetable crops were a labor intensive form of agriculture which required a large work force especially seasonally at harvest and drying time. Both Anglo and Asian laborers were a part of the agricultural labor force. In the 1880s and 1890s in Solano County area Chinese labor was particularly common. Wickson observed that Chinese laborers with wide brimmed hats were a frequent site in the fields and vineyards, but he complained that they were becoming scarce and higher priced since immigration restrictions and that there was room for many more laborers. A recent exhibition and catalogue, "The Long Journey," at the Vacaville Historical Museum chronicles the history of Chinese laborers in Solano County and their contribution to local farming and culture.

Horticultural, as opposed to grain, production first found a foothold in the coastal range and upper central valley regions of Solano, Napa, Yolo, Alameda, and Sacramento counties. These counties played a major role in the development of crop types, marketing mechanisms, and transportation networks.

The Hoskins/Pleasants ranch is an extraordinarily complete example of a horticultural operation which flourished in this crucial transitional period in California agricultural history. Establishing his ranch in 1856, William J. Pleasants, along with his father, was one of the first ranchers in the Vacaville/Winters area to begin experimenting with orchard crops. Beginning with cuttings obtained from George Yount, the founder of Yountville, Pleasants planted his first trees in the late 1850s. Wickson notes that some of these early plantings were still doing well when he visited the farm in 1878. The lithographs in his book (see appendix) give a fair impression of the scope of fruit production that had been achieved by the late 19th century. William's operation of the ranch not only exemplifies a major shift in agricultural production in California, but he was an important figure in leading this trend in a region that became noted for its commercial orchard crops. The ranch is a local example of a larger and broader pattern of events in California and in the region. The ranch complex exemplifies a 19th and early 20th century horticultural ranch operation, the labor intensive nature of orchard cultivation, and indicates the substantial economic growth and prosperity brought to local farmers by California's dominance in horticulture.

Crossing the plains from Missouri, J.M. Pleasants and his two sons, William J. and Joseph E., initially came to California at the height of the gold rush in 1849. Quickly tiring of the "diggings" they left Sacramento heading west. Briefly stopping at the ranch of Jerome Davis, the founder of Davisville (now the City of Davis) and then at the ranch of John R. Wolfskill (now the UC Davis agricultural experiment station), they arrived at the eastern edge of the coastal range along Pleasants Creek in December, 1850. In 1906, William recorded his

NPS Form 10-900-a OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8

Page _4_

Pleasants Ranch Solano County

memories of the cross-country emigration and recounted his first experiences in Pleasants Valley in an account entitled, *Twice Across the Plains 1849...1856*.

Those who never had any experience in such matters can be overcome in forging a new home in a wilderness. But we managed it somehow, and within a few years were well established. 5

In 1856 William, then twenty-two, sailed around the horn, returning to Missouri to bring the rest of the Pleasants family to California. Making a second overland journey, he returned to Pleasant Valley, establishing his own ranch close to that of this father, James. In 1857 he married Nancy Hopper of Cloverdale, a fellow Missourian. He constructed a one-story vernacular ranch house northwest of the current main house (Figure 3).

According to a 1912 Solano County history, the Vaca Valleys (Vaca and Pleasants Valleys) were one of the most famous fruit-growing locations in California. Allowing for the exaggeration often found in these self promoting volumes, U.S. Census data bears out the rapid growth of horticultural production in Solano County. In 1860 Solano County produced \$26,800 in nuts and fruits. By 1870 this had increased to \$125,000 and by 1910 fruit crops accounted for \$1,500,000 in cash value or 12 % of Northern California fruit production. Both Vacaville and Winters had early cooperatives that managed crop shipment.

William J. Pleasants and his father, James, were among the first to make a transition to raising nut and fruit crops as a major component of their ranch production. Pleasants had stock and continued to pasture cattle and sheep throughout his ownership of the ranch. But very early father and son began to experiment with fruit culture, planting orchards on part of their holdings. Eventually, William Pleasants had approximately 1050 acres in fruit that included peaches, apricots, prunes, pears, and a small orange grove. The majority of this production was centered on the ranch lands east of the county road around the ranch house complex and east of Pleasants Creek up into the foothills of the coastal mountains that form the eastern boundary of the valley. Some apricot production was carried out west of the road, but most of Pleasants' land on that side of the valley was devoted to feed crops.

⁵ Pleasants, William J. Twice Across the Plains 1849...1856. San Francisco: Walter N Bount Co, 1906, p. 107.

⁶ Gregory, Tom. *History of Solano and Napa Co.*, *California*. Los Angeles: Historic Record Company. 1912, p. 279.
⁷ Gregory, 124.

⁸ Northern California counties accounted for 23% of all fruit production in California in 1910.

8

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number

Page 5

Pleasants Ranch Solano County

Ranches in the Vacaville area, particularly in Pleasants Valley, enjoyed the advantage of a micro-climate which resulted in early crop yields. County historian, Tom Gregory, points out in his 1912 description of the valley that: "It is to [its] peculiar location that the valley owes its extreme earliness." It was this climatological advantage that led Edward Wickson to entitle his 1888 exposition on Solano County agriculture, *The Vacaville Early Fruit District* (emphasis added). Wickson particularly notes the great advantage that William Peasants enjoyed in marketing his orange crop in San Francisco where he sold a 30 pound box for \$2.50 with an overall profit of \$250 to \$350 a year from 50 trees. These orange groves were located on a bench approximately 75 feet above the valley floor which hastened ripening.

Although William Pleasants marketed fresh fruit, he specialized in the sulphering and drying of orchard crops. The same climatological conditions that led to early ripening also created conditions ideally suited to fruit drying. According to Wickson:

The topography affords shelter which gives a high winter and spring temperature and hurries the fruit to early maturity; it insures cloudless days and fogless nights in summer and early fall and gives a long season in which the fruit dries in the open air and is bright and beautiful, unstained by moisture deposits.¹¹

Wickson states that fruit drying was first used to save excess crops, but by 1887 a combination of a bumper peach crop and orchard failures on the east coast led to the Vacaville district becoming one of the chief sources of dried fruit supply in the country. After 1887 drying assumed a notable prominence in the area. The quality of Vacaville dried fruit was so excellent that buyers contracted for crops several years in advance.¹²

W.J. Pleasants specialized in Muir, Lovell, and late Crawford peaches. In 1888 Wickson estimated that 175 tons of green fruit was processed on the ranch:

On a single day, August 18, 35 hands, many of them boys, peeled, cut, spread and placed on the drying ground 20,240 pounds of green peaches. 13

Figures 6 and 7 show the extent of the fruit drying operations at the Pleasants ranch. The packing plant and sulphering houses were located on the eastern side of Pleasants Creek. The

⁹ Gregory: 75

¹⁰ Wickson, 61.

¹¹ Wickson: 100

¹² Wickson, 122-23.

¹³ Wickson, 61.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number

8

Page 6

Pleasants Ranch Solano County

packing shed is now a ruin, with all but one wall collapsed. The sulphering sheds are no longer present.

In order to accomplish the labor intensive work that orchard cultivation and harvest required, as well as the labor demands of drying the fruit and transporting it to market out of Winters and Vacaville, William Pleasants employed twelve hands year round and many more during the fruit season. Photographs of the farm hands circa 1895 (Figure 5) reveal only Anglo workers, although from other information it is clear that Pleasants employed a number of Chinese farm hands. William's daily journals of farm life contain numerous references to Chinese and other workers and demonstrate the reliance on a stable labor supply for all facets of farm operation including building repair and alteration.

By the late 1880s W.J. Pleasants had established himself as one of the leading producers of fruit crops in the region ranchers of the area as well as an important community leader. His status was marked by his inclusion in numerous contemporary county histories and works on agriculture of the area. Both Thompson and West (1880) and Wickson (1888) drew attention to Pleasants' economic success and his role as one of leading men of the region. Pleasants was active in the local community. He was a long time trustee of the Methodist Church of Winters. He was instrumental in establishing a school in Pleasants Valley on land donated by J.M. Pleasants. He was a school trustee for many years, kept the schools accounts, and contributed to its building improvement and library. Pleasants 1906 memoir of his transcontinental emigration, *Twice Across the Plains*, is a classic of the emigrant literature genre and conveys a vivid picture of what it meant to pull up stakes and move west in the mid-19th century. Finally the main house served as a center of community life as a place to entertain guests and to temporarily house individuals with business in the district. Pleasants journal makes mention of ministers, teachers, visiting dignitaries, and others who spent various time lodging at the house.

By the time William Pleasants died in 1919 the area between Vacaville and Winters had become well established as one of the leading fruit growing and dried fruit processing areas in northern California. Pleasants early experimentation with fruit crop types and his increased concentration in this form of agriculture played an important role in the regional transition from stock farming to the much more specialized and profitable concentration in specialty crops that made California one of the most important and richest agricultural areas in the county. Although the transition to horticultural production continued through the 1920s and 1930s, Pleasants ranch exemplifies the crucial period in this significant agricultural revolution in which new crop types were established, horticultural production area was increased. and the foundations were laid for

NPS Form 10-900-a OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8

B_ Page _7_

Pleasants Ranch Solano County

processing, transport, and shipment. It is worth noting that William's youngest daughter, Ruth, and her husband continued operation of the ranch throughout the period up to WWII and after on the foundation laid by Pleasants making few changes in either operations or in the physical ranch complex.

Because William Pleasants began the experimentation with fruit crops, expanded the ranches' orchard plantings, and developed the building complex and infrastructure on which all the later operations were based, the period of significance of the ranch extends from 1856 when he established it to 1919, the year he died and the date by which the existing ranch building complex was completed with the addition of the garages Pleasants active life as a rancher and community leader also falls within the period that agricultural historians consider the crucial period of transition in which fruit and vegetable crops gained proportionally in acreage, output, and value to establish California as the national leader in this type of production.

CRITERION C ARCHITECTURE

The ranch complex that remains today was built to facilitate the transition to horticultural production and embodies the prosperity brought by these changes in agricultural production. The growing prosperity that the concentration in horticultural crops created was manifested in William's rebuilding and expansion of the ranch complex, most notably the construction of a stylish architect designed house in the 1890s. His father, who also participated in turning this area of Solano County to fruit growing, built a palatial house about the same time. The ranch is an excellent example of a late 19th and early 20th century fruit ranch, and is the only remaining example of its type left in the Vaca Valley area.

The farm complex is characterized by wood frame buildings, a circulation pattern organized around a circular drive and a driveway to the rear of the main house, a well-defined formal landscape, and a larger agricultural setting of orchards and fields. These buildings and features are confined within a boundary that takes in the barn on the west side of the county road, the area on the east side of the road between Pleasants Creek on the north and east and the orchard on the south

The buildings and structures that remain on the Hoskins/Pleasant Ranch convey as sense of historic and architectural cohesiveness. The range of buildings represents most of activities carried out on a 19th and early 20th century ranch. The design of ranch buildings ranges from utilitarian to high Victorian and is to some extent reflective proximity to the main house as well as function.

NPS Form 10-900-a OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8_ Page _8_

Pleasants Ranch Solano County

At the utilitarian end of the spectrum are the barns and tool sheds of various sizes. There are four extant barns in the district that were built between 1900-1902. The barns were used for wagon and farm equipment storage, for repair of equipment, stock raising, and, in the case of the tool house, for storage of firewood and peach pits and for laundry. All are wood sided with wide gable roofs, and two have arched entries. The garden shed, although much smaller than these other buildings, is similar in style and materials. These buildings reflect the orchard cultivation that took place at the ranch. They were a necessary part of day to day operations providing general and specialized work space and storage. The chicken coop (non-contributing), at the periphery of the district, is the most utilitarian appearing structure in the complex composed as it is of a combination of horizontal board walls, shed roof and chicken wire. The chicken coop is a reminder of the many ways in which farms of this period provided products for their own use as well as for the market.

Other buildings in the complex show more concern with style and design than the barns and sheds. Although some are largely utilitarian in function, they reflect considerable attention to Victorian detailing and appear to have been constructed with some thought to blending with the main house. These include the gazebo (1892), smoke house 1877/1885), cook's bunk house (1904), garages (circa 1918), and the foreman's house (1899). Of the outbuildings the gazebo and smoke house are located closest to the house and are the most decorative of the several smaller buildings and structures in the complex. Both exhibit elaborated brackets, turned posts, and saw tooth woodwork similar to elements found on the house. Although the smoke house was built well before the main house, Pleasants' journals indicated that changes were made in 1885, and details of the building suggest updating after the house was complete. Several of these structures are visually tied together by the use of board and batten siding and cornices. The gazebo, used to call workers to meals, the cook's bunk house, used to house the cook who prepared meals for the farm, and the foreman's house, used to house farm laborers, all convey a sense of the relationship between the main house and the labor force that operated the farm. The smoke house is perhaps the most picturesque and, at the same time, utilitarian of these designed buildings. From the exterior it gives no indication of its function and resembles a small cottage.

The foreman's house, within the district, and several bunk houses, in various states of deterioration, that lie outside the district boundaries on the east side of Pleasants Creek, serve as reminders of the labor intensive nature of the horticultural production practiced in the valley and larger county. The size and arrangements of these buildings, when compared with that of the main house and family complex, also provide examples of the social and economic differences that separated prosperous farm owners and the large agricultural labor force that worked these properties. In its interior space the foreman's house provides information about the living standards and conditions common on a 19th-early 20th century ranch.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8

8_ Page _9_

Pleasants Ranch Solano County

The center of the complex is the main house, a large Queen Anne Victorian that embodies the prosperity and community position achieved by the ranch/ founder William J. Pleasants. At the time of his first marriage in 1857, William constructed a vernacular style California Ranch house. This was a one-story, gable roof house with a long covered front and side porches (Figure 3). This house appears in the 1880 Thompson and West lithograph of the farm. In 1885, with most of his eight children grown, Pleasants commenced the design of an elegant Victorian ranch house, comparable to any fashionable urban dwelling. A few years earlier, in 1884, his father, James Pleasants, had constructed a "commodious" house at his ranch. This later burned down in the 1960s. The main house was completed in 1891.

William employed Sacramento architect, A.A. Cook, a well-established building designer with a wide range of credits to his name. In Sacramento Cook has designed the Western Hotel, the Hale's Commercial Block, the State Prison building at Folsom. He also designed a courthouse in Redding, and County Hospitals in Mendocino, Tehama and Colusa counties. He designed numerous personnel residences in Sacramento and in the Delta Region. Cook practiced in the area from 1869-1900.

Shortly after moving into the new house, Pleasants first wife died. He remarried in 1901 to Helen Rhea of Cloverdale with whom he had another child, Ruth, in 1905 (Helen is the woman who appears in Figure 8 in front of the new house, with Ruth in her arms).

The formal landscape elements of the complex are closely related to the main house and date from after its completion. They are an integral part of the ranch complex distinguishing the main living and business area of the ranch from the working farm. The entry road/drive, although in existence prior to 1891, was formalized with walnut tree plantings on either side in 1895. The circular drive and circle of olive trees was installed a year after the house was completed and provide an elegant, if informal, approach to the house. The stone wall, iron fence, driveway, and hitching post all belong to the period of the 1890s and 1900s. This formal landscape was clearly intended to enhance the appearance and setting of the house and to provide it with a dignity in keeping with its style and grandeur.

The orchard, first planted in the 1850s and present in the 1880 Thompson and West lithograph, provides the horticultural context within which the ranch complex exits. Its inclusion in the district ties together the buildings, formal landscape elements and the economic underpinnings of the ranch. It provides a strong visual association with the horticultural and economic basis on which the ranch complex rests. The orchard was composed of peach tree plantings until the 1970s when fungus wiped out the trees. The replanting is an orchard of walnut trees which

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number

8_

Page 10_

Pleasants Ranch Solano County

continues the agricultural business of the ranch. Although a different species of trees, the form and composition of the orchard remains intact and the visual impression much the same as it was in earlier eras.

The building complex and formal landscape dating from 1877-1918, provides a feeling of time and place consistent with the period of significance. The ranch has no modern intrusions. However, some buildings associated with the late 19th and early 20th century development of the ranch are no longer in existence. The most notable of these, as discussed in the property description, are the packing shed and the tank house.

The Pleasant ranch is the only surviving example of a 19th and early 20th century ranch in the Vaca valleys (Vaca and Pleasants valleys). Of the seven or eight major ranches in the valley that were also established in the 19th century and participated in the agricultural transition of the late 19th and early 20th century, only the Buck house, dating from the 1870s and also illustrated in Thompson and West (1880), is still standing. The Buck house is in much closer proximity to the town of Vacaville and the farm environment has been substantially altered with little evidence of it earlier horticultural economic base. By contrast, Pleasants ranch retains not only its elegant residence, but a large number of working farm buildings that provide a picture of an earlier agricultural era. It clearly exemplifies its ranching property type and continues to convey an association with ranch operations as they existed during William Pleasants' lifetime.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Hoskins/Pleasants Ranch Solano County

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MANUSCRIPT SOURCES:

The William Pleasants family has retained a substantial amount of manuscript information regarding the ranch. These include maps, surveys, receipts, land records, photographs, and most important, the very detailed journals of William J. Pleasants that document the daily operation of the ranch during the period of significance. Pleasants' granddaughter, Ethel Hoskins, the current owner of the ranch, has prepared detailed subject summaries of the journals, particularly in relation to building construction and alteration. These provided invaluable information for this

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9

Page _2_

Hoskins/Pleasants Ranch Solano County

study. The family has in its possession the original manuscript of William Pleasants published account of this overland journey to California.

ORAL HISTORY:

Ethel Hoskins, who owns the ranch, grew up there and attended the Pleasant Valley elementary school where her mother had been educated. A retired school teacher in the Vacaville District, Ms. Hoskins has lived her entire life on the ranch and was a valuable source of family history and stories associated with the buildings and structures on the property.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number	10	Page _ı_	Pleasants Ranch
		•	Solano County

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA: BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The Pleasants Ranch presently consists of 406 acres which includes the original ranch headquarters complex sited between the county road and Pleasants Creek. Of these, 365 acres have been placed in a land conservation easement with the Solano County Land Trust. The proposed National Register District lies within the larger ranch and the larger agricultural conservation district and encompasses approximately four acres.

The historic district boundary commences on the north bank of Pleasants Creek from a point marked on the boundary map by the number 19 and proceeds west across the county road running to the rear of the stock barn where it turns south and then east forming a rectangular boundary around the barn building. It proceeds east along the south side of the barn again crossing the county road above the bridge on the tributary creek and then follows the meander of the west bank of Pleasants Creek to the south end of the ranch building complex. The county road (Pleasants Valley Road is not an historical feature of the district. Behind the garages the boundary leaves the creek bank and turns west to the eastern edge of the walnut orchard. At the orchard it proceeds south to the end of the orchard, turns west and follows the southern edge of the orchard back to the county road. It then proceeds north along the edge of the county road on the Hoskin's property north of the bridge.

NPS Form 10-900-a OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10

Page _2_

Pleasants Ranch Solano County

GEOGRAPHIC DATA: BOUNDARY JUSTICIFATION:

The boundaries are drawn to encompass the principal built environment of the ranch headquarters, including the stock barn located on the west side of Pleasants Valley Road. The ranch is much larger than the historic district area. The only other orchard is well removed from the ranch headquarters on the east side of the creek and is not visually or physically related to the complex. The remainder of the land in the Hoskins ownership is in pasture and feed crop and does not contribute to the historical setting. Non-contributing ruins of the packing shed and several bunk houses located on the east side of the creek do not retain sufficient integrity to contribute to the district and are not included within its boundaries. Although the boundary is defined by the existing cultural resources, it largely follows the manmade and natural features which encompass the built environment and in part shaped its siting. These features include the county road, the tributary creek to the north, Pleasants Creek to the east, and the existing orchard area to the south.

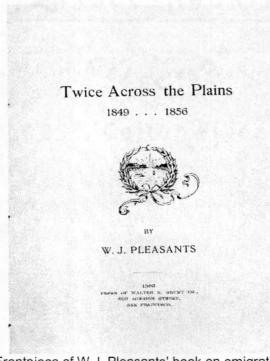
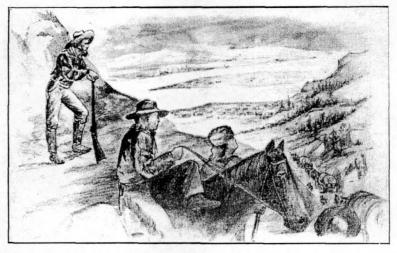


Figure 1. Frontpiece of W.J. Pleasants' book on emigration to California



ARRIVAL AT BIDWELL'S BAR.

Figure 2. Illustration of the Pleasants family's arrival in California



Figure 3. Original ranch house constructed 1857.

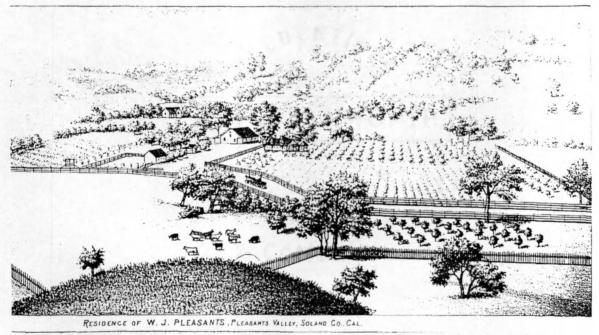


Figure 4. Thompson and West, 1880 Original ranch house pictured in background. Note orchards to the north and south of the house along the main road.



Figure 5. Farmhands on W.J. Pleasants ranch circa 1895.

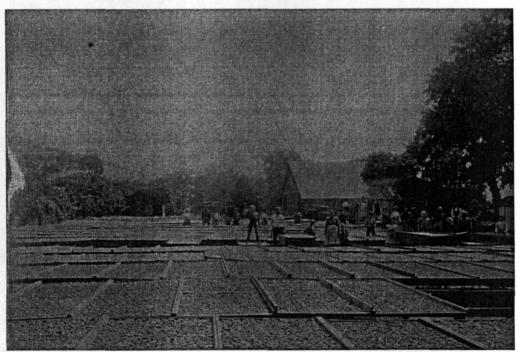
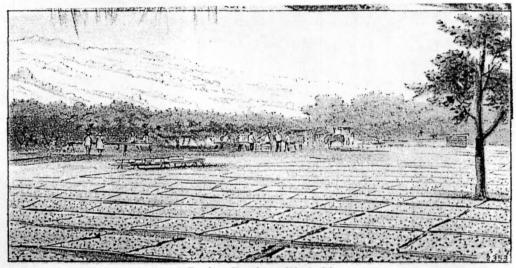


Figure 6. Fruit drying at W.J. Pleasants ranch circa 1895.



2353. Drying Peaches--W. J. Pleasants. 2572. Pampas Grass.

Figure 7. Fruit drying at W.J. Pleasants ranch 1880s. Illustration in Wickson, 1888.



Figure 8. The main ranch house designed by A.A. Cook photo circa 1903.



Figure 9. Main house circa 1915 with east side addition.

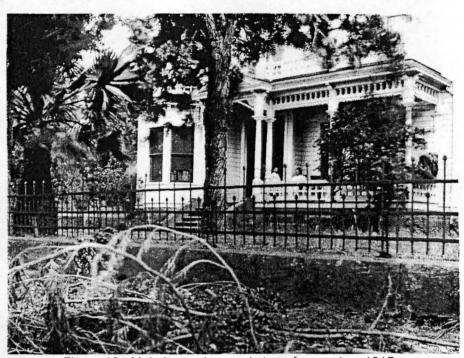


Figure 10. Main house iron and stone fence circa 1915.



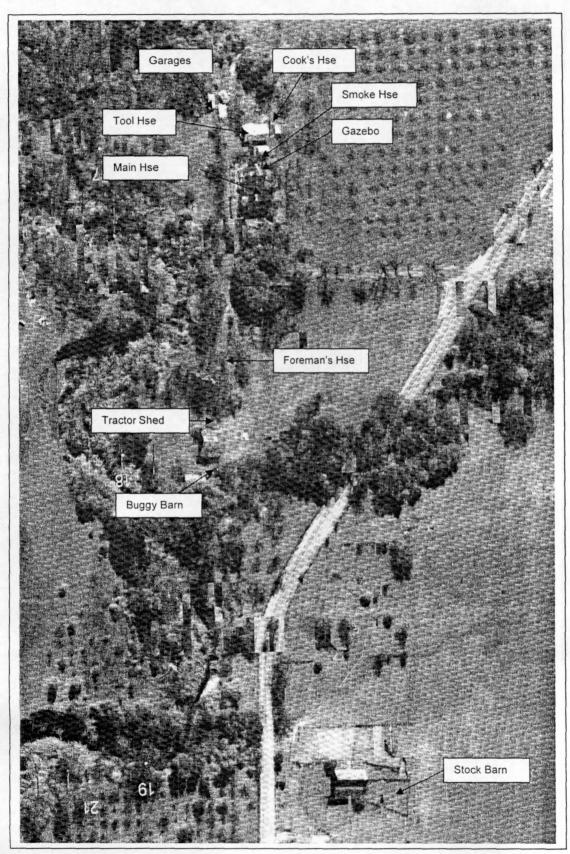
Figure 11. William J. Pleasants Formal Portrait, unknown date.



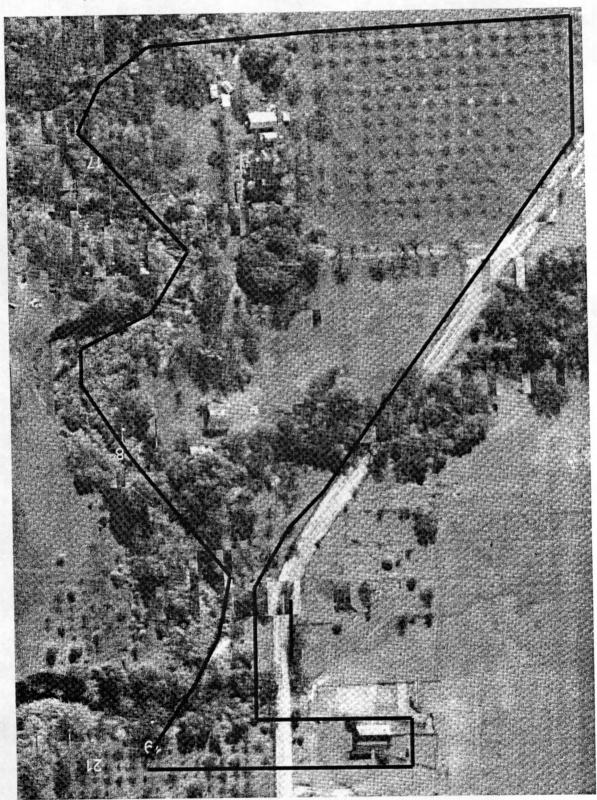
Figure 12. J.M. Pleasants with team and wagon, unknown date.

Figure 13 and 14 (over) Two views of Pleasants Valley and aspects of W.J. Pleasants ranch from Wickson, 1888.

Landscape Features Pleasants Ranch Solano, County, California Driveway and Walnut Allee Olive Trees and Circular Drive Iron Fence and hitching post Entry Drive Drive and Walnut Allee Orchard Pleasants Valley Rd



Boundary Map Pleasants Ranch Solano County, California



National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _

Page _1__

Pleasants Ranch Solano County

Photographs

DISTRICT:

Pleasants Ranch Historic District

BUILDING:

Main house Front Facade

LOCATION:

Vacaville, California

PHOTOGRAPHER:

Carol Roland

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH:

May 3, 2005

LOCATION ORIGINAL NEG:

Ethel Hoskins, Property Owner

VIEW: South

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER:

1/RD1

DISTRICT:

Pleasants Ranch Historic District

BUILDING:

Main house East Facade

LOCATION:

Vacaville, California Carol Roland

PHOTOGRAPHER:

May 3, 2005

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: LOCATION ORIGINAL NEG:

Ethel Hoskins, Property Owner

VIEW: Northwest

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER:

2/RD1

DISTRICT:

Pleasants Ranch Historic District

BUILDING:

Tractor Barn Front facade

LOCATION:

Vacaville, California

PHOTOGRAPHER:

Carol Roland

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH:

May 3, 2005

LOCATION ORIGINAL NEG:

Ethel Hoskins, Property Owner

VIEW: Northeast

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER:

3/RD 12

DISTRICT:

Pleasants Ranch Historic District

Carol Roland

BUILDING:

Main house West Facade

LOCATION:

Vacaville, California

PHOTOGRAPHER:

May 3, 2005

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: LOCATION ORIGINAL NEG:

Ethel Hoskins, Property Owner

VIEW: East

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER:

4/RD1

DISTRICT:

Pleasants Ranch Historic District

BUILDING:

Gazebo and Walkway

LOCATION:

Vacaville, California

PHOTOGRAPHER:

Carol Roland

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number

Page 2

Pleasants Ranch Solano County

Photographs

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH:

May 3, 2005

LOCATION ORIGINAL NEG:

Ethel Hoskins, Property Owner

VIEW: Northeast

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER:

5/RD2

DISTRICT:

Pleasants Ranch Historic District

BUILDING:

Tool House and Laundry

LOCATION:

Vacaville, California Carol Roland

PHOTOGRAPHER:

May 3, 2005

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH:

Ethel Hoskins, Property Owner

LOCATION ORIGINAL NEG:

VIEW: Southeast PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER:

6/RD3

DISTRICT:

Pleasants Ranch Historic District

BUILDING:

Smoke House Vacaville, California

LOCATION:

Carol Roland

PHOTOGRAPHER:

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH:

May 3, 2005

LOCATION ORIGINAL NEG:

Ethel Hoskins, Property Owner

VIEW: Northwest

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER:

7/RD4

DISTRICT:

Pleasants Ranch Historic District

BUILDING:

Cook's Bunk House

LOCATION:

Vacaville, California Carol Roland

PHOTOGRAPHER:

May 3, 2005

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH:

Ethel Hoskins, Property Owner

LOCATION ORIGINAL NEG:

VIEW: Southwest

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER:

8/RD5

DISTRICT:

Pleasants Ranch Historic District

Carol Roland

BUILDING:

Garage #1

Vacaville, California LOCATION:

PHOTOGRAPHER:

May 3, 2005

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH:

Ethel Hoskins, Property Owner

LOCATION ORIGINAL NEG: VIEW: South

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER:

9/RD6

DISTRICT:

BUILDING:

Pleasants Ranch Historic District

LOCATION:

Garages #2 and #3 Vacaville, California

PHOTOGRAPHER:

Carol Roland

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number____

Page _3__

Pleasants Ranch Solano County

Photographs

May 3, 2005

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: LOCATION ORIGINAL NEG:

Ethel Hoskins, Property Owner

VIEW: Southeast

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER:

10/RD7-8

DISTRICT:

Pleasants Ranch Historic District

BUILDING:

Chicken Coop Vacaville, California

LOCATION:

acaville, California
Carol Roland

PHOTOGRAPHER:

May 3, 2005

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: LOCATION ORIGINAL NEG:

Ethel Hoskins, Property Owner

VIEW: Southwest

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER:

11/RD14

DISTRICT:

Pleasants Ranch Historic District

BUILDING:

Garden Shed

LOCATION:

Vacaville, California ER: Carol Roland

PHOTOGRAPHER:

May 3, 2005

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH:

Ethel Hoskins, Property Owner

LOCATION ORIGINAL NEG: VIEW: East

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER:

12/RD10

DISTRICT:

Pleasants Ranch Historic District

BUILDING:

Buggy Barn #2

LOCATION:

Vacaville, California

PHOTOGRAPHER:

Carol Roland

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH:

May 3, 2005

LOCATION ORIGINAL NEG:

Ethel Hoskins, Property Owner

VIEW: West

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER:

13/RD13

DISTRICT:

Pleasants Ranch Historic District

BUILDING:

Entry Road and Walnut Tree Allee Vacaville, California

LOCATION:

R: Carol Roland

PHOTOGRAPHER:

May 3, 2005

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH:

Ethel Hoskins, Property Owner

LOCATION ORIGINAL NEG: VIEW: East

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER:

15/LF 1

DISTRICT:

Pleasants Ranch Historic District

BUILDING:

Circular Drive and Circle of Olive Trees

LOCATION:

Vacaville, California

PHOTOGRAPHER:

Carol Roland

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photographs

Page _4__

Pleasants Ranch Solano County

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH:

LOCATION ORIGINAL NEG:

Ethel Hoskins, Property Owner

VIEW: East

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER:

16/LF 2 and 3

May 3, 2005

DISTRICT:

Pleasants Ranch Historic District

BUILDING:

Hitching Post and Iron and Stone Fence

LOCATION:

Vacaville, California Carol Roland

PHOTOGRAPHER:

May 3, 2005

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH:

Ethel Hoskins, Property Owner

LOCATION ORIGINAL NEG: VIEW: Southeast

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER:

17/LF 4 and 5

DISTRICT:

Pleasants Ranch Historic District

BUILDING:

Main House Driveway and Walnut Tree Allee

Vacaville, California LOCATION: PHOTOGRAPHER:

Carol Roland

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH:

May 3, 2005

LOCATION ORIGINAL NEG:

Ethel Hoskins, Property Owner

VIEW: South

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER:

18/LF 6

DISTRICT:

Pleasants Ranch Historic District

BUILDING:

Orchard

LOCATION: PHOTOGRAPHER:

Vacaville, California Carol Roland

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH:

May 3, 2005

LOCATION ORIGINAL NEG:

Ethel Hoskins, Property Owner

VIEW: West from Main House

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER:

19/LF 7

DISTRICT:

Pleasants Ranch Historic District

BUILDING:

Orchard

Vacaville, California LOCATION: Carol Roland PHOTOGRAPHER:

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH:

May 3, 2005

LOCATION ORIGINAL NEG:

Ethel Hoskins, Property Owner

VIEW: Northeast from Pleasant Valley Road

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER:

20/LF 8

DISTRICT:

Pleasants Ranch Historic District

BUILDING:

Stock Barn

LOCATION: PHOTOGRAPHER:

Vacaville, California Carol Roland

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number____ Photographs

Page _5__

Pleasants Ranch Solano County

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH:

October 7, 2005

LOCATION ORIGINAL NEG:

Ethel Hoskins, Property Owner

VIEW: West from Pleasant Valley Road PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER:

21/RD 9

DISTRICT:

Pleasants Ranch Historic District

BUILDING: Foreman's House LOCATION: Vacaville, California

Carol Roland PHOTOGRAPHER: DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH:

October 7, 2005

LOCATION ORIGINAL NEG:

Ethel Hoskins, Property Owner

VIEW: Northeast

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER:

22/RD 11

DISTRICT:

Pleasants Ranch Historic District

BUILDING: LOCATION: Vacaville, California

Interior Structure Buggy Barn

PHOTOGRAPHER:

Carol Roland

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH:

October 7, 2005

LOCATION ORIGINAL NEG:

Ethel Hoskins, Property Owner

VIEW: East

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER:

23/RD 13