

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0665690

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAR 28 1978
DATE ENTERED	MAY 19 1978

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Simi Adobe/Strathearn House

AND/OR COMMON

Simi Adobe/Strathearn House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

137 Strathearn Place

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Simi Valley

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

20

STATE

California

VICINITY OF

CODE

06

COUNTY

Ventura

CODE

111

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Simi Valley Recreation and Park District

STREET & NUMBER

1692 Sycamore Drive

CITY, TOWN

Simi Valley

VICINITY OF

STATE

California

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of County Recorder, Ventura County

STREET & NUMBER

2387 East Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Ventura

STATE

California 93001

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

The California History Plan - Inventory of Historic Features

DATE

1973

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

State Resources Agency - Department of Parks and Recreation

CITY, TOWN

Sacramento

STATE

California 95811

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Simi Adobe residence was constructed sometime before the beginning of the Nineteenth Century. The grand house was built with three foot one inch thick walls, with interior window openings of four feet by six feet, and exterior window openings of three feet by six feet. The door openings were seven feet eight inches high, with the inner portion four feet one inch wide and the outer portion three feet wide. The adobe bricks for the exterior walls were made from tamped bundles of straw, charcoal and adobe. The foundation was constructed from "rubble" of rocks. The flooring was laid with "regular burned mission tile," and the roof being possibly a "wattle and daub roof," extending out beyond the walls forming an open veranda. The house was partially burned in the early 1820's.

Recent archaeological excavations have uncovered a rubble foundation confirming a larger dwelling than exists. The two story Victorian style structure, located at the southern end of the adobe, was added by Mr. Strathearn in 1893 while restoring the adobe to be included in the residence.

The main entrance to the residence is a highly decorated style of architecture indicative of the period. The high gable roof has a decorative box cornice with frieze, stickwork pendant at the roof peak and pattern shingles for the exterior wall covering. Across a major portion of the entrance is an open veranda with decorative trimming between the turned support posts. To the side of the veranda is a bay window with hipped roof, having a box cornice and decorative brackets.

The residence has been kept in the condition as restored and constructed by Mr. Strathearn, except by adding modern facilities as they became available during the years. In 1918 the first power line was constructed through the valley. The Strathearn residence was one of a few dwellings to receive electrical power in return for a right-of-way over their land. The gaslight fixtures installed about 1908 were then converted to electrical lights, which still light the rooms today. In the early 1900, after the completion of the house, Mrs. Strathearn planted her garden at the entrance to the residence. Many of the large plant material varieties presently growing were planted by her. At the same time, the existing olive trees along the east side were planted. The picket fence, still standing around the front yard garden, was constructed during that period.

Around 1930 plumbing was installed in the house which was fed by a gravity flowing system. The water source was located to the south and was fed to a tank supported on a wooden stand northeast of the residence. This tank supplied water directly to the house. In 1970 the house was connected to the present municipal service and the gravity flowing system was then abandoned. The wooden stand supporting the tank is still standing, however, the tank itself has been removed due to the hazard caused by its deterioration.

At the time Mr. Strathearn was initially restoring the adobe portion of the residence, the two original rooms were converted into a kitchen and dining room. The kitchen has been upgraded throughout the years to install new modern appliances and conveniences. The last time being in the late 1950's. In the early 1900 a concrete porch was laid

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under the west veranda along the adobe section and the east veranda closed in for storage. During the 1930's the exterior of the adobe along with the buttresses supporting the north wall had deteriorated so badly that a stucco material was applied for protection. The buttresses were also reconstructed and stuccoed. It was also at this time that the boy's room, upstairs in the southeastern corner of the Strathearn addition, was converted to a bathroom and storage closets.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Prehistoric Period - Chumash Indians

Recent archeological surveys indicate that the Chumash village, Shimiya (Ven-346), occupies the same site as the Strathearn House, though the midden has not yet been located.

An archeological excavation held in the summer of 1976 by Moorpark College revealed much flaking material, points and other prehistoric artifacts (the report is not yet completed by instructor Robert Lopez of Moorpark College, but enough was done to justify a further exploration). One projectile point made of aged bottle glass illustrates an interesting conjunction of the prehistoric native at the point of contact with the European influence.

Hispanic Period

El Rancho Simi was one of the few Spanish Land Grants, dating from 1795. Some of the traditional early sources seem to doubt the date by a year or two, but more recent discoveries confirm that Santiago Pico and Luis Pena were the first grantees under Governor Diego De Borica, with other members of the Pico family (sons Javier, Miguel, Patricio Pico) occupying the Simi House until 1842.

Various mission and pueblo records detail the inhabitants at the ranch house during the period from 1795 to 1842. There is an account in "Life in California", which occurred in about 1830, telling of a visit to the house on a trip between Ventura and Los Angeles.

In 1842, ownership of the adobe and approximately 92,340 acres of El Rancho Simi passed to Don Jose de la Guerra y Noriega, of Santa Barbara prominence, by a grant from Governor Alvarado. Here at El Rancho Simi, Jose de la Guerra raised thousands of head of cattle, and upon his visits to the rancho from Santa Barbara, the herds were driven before him for his review. Upon his death in 1858, the adobe and rancho became the property of his children. When the first white settlers straggled into the Valley during the 1860's, the adobe and rancho, with large herds of sheep and cattle, was the center of activity for miles around. Hospitality was not lacking at the great adobe with its fine orchards and vineyards. Through a series of financial difficulties, the ownership of the adobe and rancho eventually transferred to eastern interests who speculated for oil and later for subdivision under the Simi Land and Water Company (at which time Thomas R. Bard was agent).

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Cameron, Janet Scott; Simi Grows Up, 1963

Applegate, Dr. Richard; Papers on the Chumash, "An Index of Chumash Placenames", 1975

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .46

QUADRANGLE NAME _____

QUADRANGLE SCALE _____

UTM REFERENCES

A 11 339260 3793920
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B _____
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C _____
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D _____
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

E _____
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

F _____
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

G _____
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

H _____
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Starting at the northeast corner of the existing water storage tank stand and extending south a distance of 173 feet along a line 25 feet away from and parallel to the structure; thence in a westerly direction a distance of 115 feet; thence in a northerly

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Grant T. Burrows, Development Coordinator

ORGANIZATION

Simi Valley Recreation and Park District

DATE

March 1, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

1692 Sycamore Drive

TELEPHONE

(805) 526-3260

CITY OR TOWN

Simi Valley

STATE

California 93065

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL _____

STATE _____

LOCAL X

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Knay Mellon

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 3/9/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

5/19/78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

5-3-78

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American Period

During the 1880's the adobe was occupied for several years by a family of French Basques, the Jaureques, who raised sheep. The first educational instruction in the Valley was conducted in the kitchen of the adobe during this period.

In the early 1890's, Robert P. Strathearn purchased the surrounding 14,000 acres for a cattle ranch and the remaining adobe structure was incorporated into their family home. A Victorian style, eight room, two story structure was added to the southern end of the old adobe and readied for occupation in October of 1892.

R. P. Strathearn was a principal land owner and leader within the community. He brought the first herd of black poled Angus cattle to Ventura County and brought in large numbers of cattle from Mexico. He was also instrumental in bringing electrical power to Simi Valley, and during the late 1890's, his petitioning of the County was successful in having the Santa Susana Pass Road improved to match that improved by Los Angeles County.

When the railroad came to Simi Valley, much of its right-of-way passed over R. P. Strathearn's land. "R.P." donated the right-of-way to the Southern Pacific Railroad on two conditions: 1. that the railroad build corrals and loading chutes to accommodate the shipment of the many cattle he raised; and, 2. that they stop their passenger trains at the little station. The Southern Pacific Railroad never maintained a telegraph at the Strathearn station, but for many years a box car served as a depot at the stop.

R. P. Strathearn's sons picked up the civic leadership which their father maintained. The late Dave L. Strathearn was one of Ventura County's most influential men and he also exerted a good deal of state-wide influence. In 1941, the Simi Valley Soil Conservation District was formed and Dave was appointed as a Director of the District. He soon became Chairman of the Simi Valley District (now the South Ventura County Resource Conservation District) and, in 1945, he was appointed by Governor Warren to the State Soil Conservation Commission. He served on the State Commission until his untimely death in 1968.

Burt Strathearn became a renown painter during his lifetime. His subjects were primarily western scenes which can be viewed at the Strathearn Historical Park.

The Simi/Strathearn House remained the family's principal residence through two generations until 1969 when the dwelling and surrounding 5.85 acres were donated to the Simi Valley Recreation and Park District for use as an historical park.

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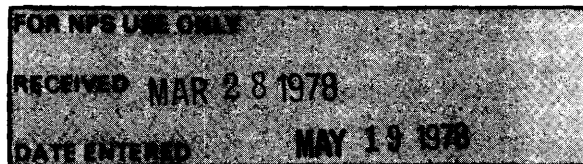
PAGE 3

An agreement was also established that year with the Simi Valley Historical Society for joint operation of the park. The park was dedicated by these two agencies on October 24, 1971, with many Strathearn descendants and dignitaries present.

The building's significance rests in its architectural and historical contributions to the region. It exemplifies the successful blending of an 18th century California adobe with a late 19th century Victorian addition, and was the home of both significant Spanish and American pioneers.

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Outland, Charles F.; Newspaper Chronology: Simi and Las Posas Ranchos, 1870 - 1900, 1975.

Thompson & West; History of Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties, 1883 (Republished by Howell-North, Berkeley, 1961).

Cleland, Robert Glass; The Cattle on a Thousand Hills, 1941, 1951, 1964 (Huntington Library 1964).

"California Place Names, the Origin and Etymology of Current Geographical Names"; 3rd Ed., V.C. Press, 1969

Robinson, Alfred; Life in California, 1846
Da Capo Press reprint Edition, 1969.

Hebberd, Wallace; History of California in Seven Volumes, 1963 - 1970 (taken from the original 39 volume history of the west, first published in 1883, called Bancroft's Works, by H.H. Bancroft.

Lopez, Robert; Professor of Archeology, Moorpark College, Moorpark, California

Kuhn, Dr. Michael; Environmental Planner, Department of Environmental Affairs, City of Simi Valley, California

Simi Valley Historical Society Archives; Strathearn Historical Park, Simi Valley, California.

Museum of Natural History Archives; Los Angeles. Pages from files of Dr. Charles Rozaire, Curator of Archeology; source of information assumed from research by Richard Van Volkenberg, early 1930's.

Ritter, E. K., History of Ventura County - State of California, 1940

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Rust, Robert M.; Dave Strathearn, the Conservationist, South Ventura County
Conservation District

Simi Valley Recreation and Park District; Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow at Robert P.
Strathearn Historical Park; 1972

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direction a distance of 173 feet along a line 50 feet away from and parallel to the structure; thence in an easterly direction to point of beginning. (See attached plan)

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Ventura County Cultural Heritage Board - Landmark No. 6

Property Administration Agency
3900 Pelican
Oxnard, California 93030

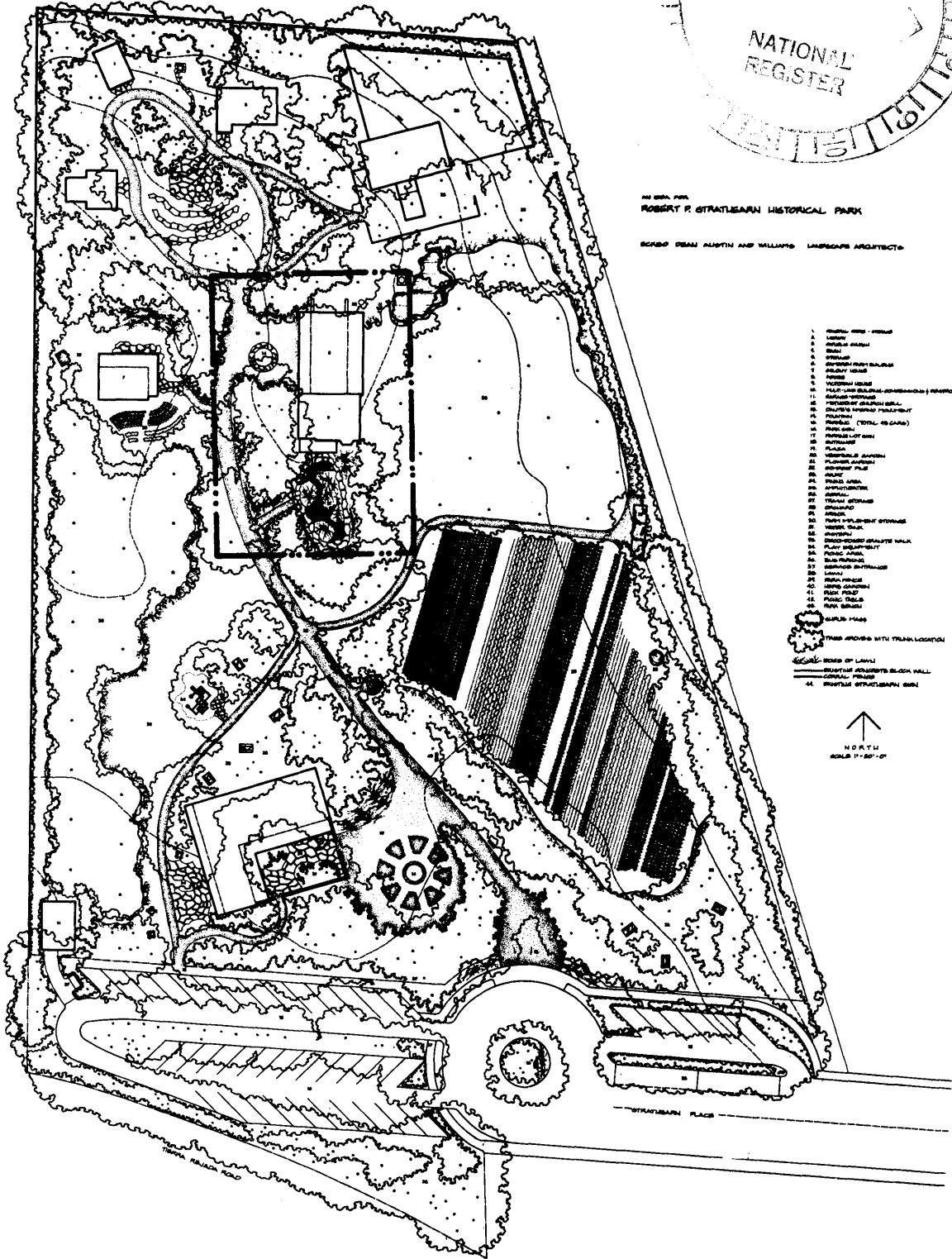
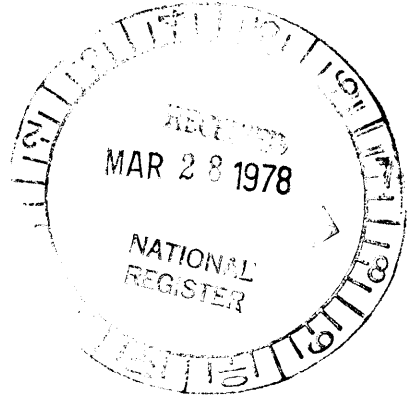
Local Level Historical Lists:

Historical Lists - Simi Valley Recreation and Park District
1692 Sycamore Drive
Simi Valley, California 93065

City of Simi Valley
3200 Cochran Street
Simi Valley, California 93065

Simi Valley Historical Society
P.O. Box 351
Simi Valley, California 93065

BOUNDARY LIMITS



NO. 1000, P. 100
ROBERT F. STRATTEGLASS HISTORICAL PARK
SCAPE: DEAN AUSTIN AND WILLIAMS, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

- 1. Building with a porch
 - 2. Garden
 - 3. Wall
 - 4. Fence
 - 5. Garden path
 - 6. Garden path
 - 7. Garden path
 - 8. Garden path
 - 9. Garden path
 - 10. Garden path
 - 11. Garden path
 - 12. Garden path
 - 13. Garden path
 - 14. Garden path
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 - 37. Garden path
 - 38. Garden path
 - 39. Garden path
 - 40. Garden path
 - 41. Garden path
 - 42. Garden path
 - 43. Garden path
 - 44. Garden path
- GARDEN PATH
○ TREE GROVE WITH TRAIL LOCATION
--- ROAD OF LAND
--- GARDEN PATH WITH BUSH WALL
--- GARDEN PATH
--- GARDEN PATH



VICTORIAN SECTION

ADOBE SECTION

SIMI ADOBE / STRATHEARN HOUSE

