

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received JAN 2 1987

date entered

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

3 29 87

1. Name

historic Knipp and Stengel Ranch Barn

and/or common Sea Ranch Stables

2. Location

street & number State Route One N/A not for publication

city, town Sea Ranch N/A vicinity of

state California code 06 county Sonoma code 097

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Sea Ranch Association

street & number P. O. Box 16

city, town Sea Ranch N/A vicinity of state California 95497

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Sonoma County Recorder's Office

street & number 575 Fiscal Drive

city, town Santa Rosa state California 95401

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Western Sonoma County Historic Resources Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date March 1981 federal state county local

depository for survey records California State Office of Historic Preservation

city, town Sacramento state CA 95811

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date n/a

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearanceSummary

The Knipp and Stengel Ranch Barn (Sea Ranch Stable) is a large wood frame structure utilizing mortise and tenon construction. Built in the mid-1880s, the barn is the major structure remaining on the 4.38-acre remnant of the once-larger ranch. Also within the boundaries are an early (pre-1906) hay barn, a 1920s scale house, and a 1920s equipment building; these wood frame utilitarian structures contribute to the overall character of the property. An early barn (known also as the machine shop), built prior to the 1880s, recently collapsed; it has been removed and no longer contributes to the complex. The main barn has undergone some interior alterations and minor window changes, but remains largely intact.

Resource Count: The nominated property consists of four contributing buildings and one non-contributing site.

Contributors: #1 - Knipp and Stengel Ranch Barn (Sea Ranch Stable)

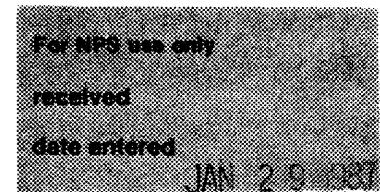
- #4 - Hay Barn
- #5 - Scale House
- #6 - Equipment Building

Non-contributor: #2 - Machine Shop (site)
(Note: #3 is a cypress tree and is not included in the resource count.)

(Continued on continuation sheets)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 1

On a 4.38-acre knoll adjacent to Highway 1 are three modest, separate utility buildings, fenced paddocks, two cypress hedgerows, and a fortuitously sited, predominant all-redwood barn known as the Sea Ranch Stable. Topping the knoll is one huge, picturesque cypress tree (#3) around which loops an unimproved road connecting this complex to the highway. This parcel was also identified in the Western Sonoma County Historic Resources Survey of 1981 which recommended National Register eligibility. The major building (#1) is placed below the crown of the knoll on the northwest and is one of the largest barns in Sonoma County. It is similar in form and proportions to northern European barns, approximately 8,400 square feet, three-aisled, and has a low gable roof. Approximately 20% of the basic structure is of hand-hewn timbers using mortise/tenon joinery secured by wooden pegs, all assembled upon a heavy plank floor. There have been no additions and only minor alterations; the perimeter remains unchanged, and the structure is in good condition. The alterations reflect changing uses over the past 100 years--cattle, dairy, sheep, equestrian use--as this particular area has been the historic center of what is still labeled German Rancho on current maps.* Casual placement of the remaining utility buildings--the Hay Barn (#4), the Scale House (#5), and the Equipment Building (#6)--attest to this knoll as the functional center as well. As roads, utilities, houses, and facilities in the 5,000-acre development known as the Sea Ranch were built, associated historic structures have vanished. To date, there have been no physical intrusions upon the knoll itself, but the flat, fenced pastures stretching 1,000' to the ocean bluff on the west and to the north are being developed for 23 houses. Directly north are easements for development (roads, power, etc.), and the public facilities (parking, toilets, etc.) for coastal access to the public trail that goes to the bluff. The Sea Ranch Stable and its setting of cypress, paddocks, outbuildings, and road form a substantial, usable link to the land, the past, and the future. It is clearly visible from the highway and an integral part of the landscape for everyone using the only coastal road.

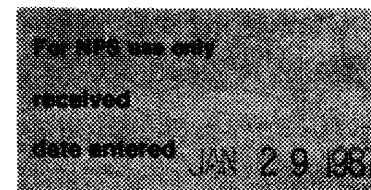
#1 - The Stable--Current Description (Building constructed 1880s)

The Stable actually straddles a saddle between two bedrock "knobs" of relatively hard, competent sandstone. Concrete piers supporting 10" x 10" posts and 10" x 10" girders allow an air space between ground and floor to prevent mildew, condensation, and odors from decomposing matter. Following the 1906 earthquake, tie-bracing under the floor rectified a slight misalignment. The ramped entrance on the south is through a large sliding door. At both sides of the south gabled end are smaller doors which currently

*This was the northernmost coastal Mexican land grant of 17,580 acres in 1846. The Garcia and Richardson grants were farther north, but they were denied confirmation by the U.S. Government.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number

7

Page

2

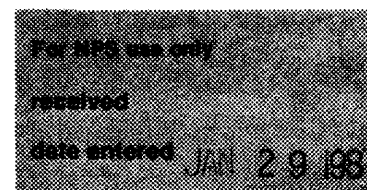
give access to the tack rooms (through which cows could enter and leave, although no stanchions exist today). The north end, several feet above ground level, reveals a wide central opening with a small square opening above it, both now neatly boarded in. Presently, there is a small door and stair down on the northeast, and double window in the center, and a small window on the northwest of the north end. The floor planks vary in width and thickness (approximately 3" x 10"), are suitable for horses, cattle, wagons, and threshing, and are worn overall, indicating no single use. This decking runs under the major mortise/tenon posts indicating the platform was built first and the preassembled bents tilted up into place later. The central aisle is 30' wide, the side aisles are 12' wide, divided into 13 bays, 12' on center, with open storage above. There are two substantial ventilators approximately 15' long upon the ridge of the shingled, wide-gabled roof. A double row of evenly spaced openings, one foot square, for light, air, and refuse disposal provide a simple rhythm along each side. The vertical siding on the north, west, and east sides is secured by square nails. The south end is horizontal tongue and groove. The Stable is white, both paint and whitewash being used, neither recently.

The Stable--Details

- A. Approximately 20% of the framing of the Stable is reused timbers showing former mortise/tenon cuts, rough hewn surfaces, surfaces, peg holes, and obvious differences with milled lumber adjacent.
- Corner posts - 8" x 8"
 - Gable ends, anchor beams - 8" x 8" S wall; 12" x 8" north wall
 - Major studs - 8" x 8"
 - Wall plates - pieced; scarf joints; pegged - 8" x 8"
 - Longitudinal struts - exterior walls - 6" x 6"
 - Lower transverse struts - 8" x 8"
 - Approximately every third rafter - 4" x 4"
- B. Timbers original to this barn:
- Vertical siding of 1" x 12" and 1" x 10" on east, north, and west walls
 - Basic structure (excluding exceptions above) of a post and beam; post typically 8" x 8", 12' on center; beams vary, most 8" x 8";
 - Roof is wide-gable, covered with wood shingles on 1 x spaced sheathing on 2" x 6", 24" on center;
 - Decking is on heavy planks, 2" x 10" and 2" x 12";
 - Only lower bank of openings in side wall
 - Sliding door on inside south gable end

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 3

C. Alterations: (no drawings or written records)

Following the 1906 earthquake, 6 steel tie rods were extended between columns on east and west sides of main aisle; additional tie-bracing below floor; barn was whitewashed; south end is 1" x 8" tongue and groove painted white; sliding barn door 10' x 12' now on outside;

North end: 10' x 12' opening with 6' x 6' opening above (early door and hay hole) neatly boarded in with 1" x 10" and 1" x 12" like the rest of the north walls. This was done prior to 1966.

In 1966, Matt Sylvia, contractor for Oceanic, developer of Sea Ranch, made the following changes:

In the north wall, the small window in the center was enlarged to 12' x 4' (two single panes); a small door and stair at east corner was made anew; small door west corner made into window 6' x 4'.

In the interior of the Stable:

into the 13 bays on the east wall were built two bathrooms (1-1/2 bays), and a simple kitchen (1/2 bay) on north corner; a tack room (1 bay) on southeast corner; and 10 horse stalls 12' x 12' of 1" x 6" vertical boards 8' high with dutch doors; stalls were painted;

into the 13 bays on the west wall were built one office (1 bay) on north corner; a tack room (1 bay) on southwest corner; 11 horse stalls;

into center space north wall, a trophy room was enclosed (12' x 30') with doors to office and bathrooms. Sheetrock, flooring, and plumbing and lighting were added as was a wood-burning stove; above the stalls on east and west walls, a continuous platform was formed of 6" x 6" beams, 2" x 6" joists, and 1" x 6" decking for hay storage.

Just inside the south entrance, an area roughly 6' x 10' has received replacements for worn decking of slightly smaller boards, 2" x 6".

D. Present use of the Stable (#1) and the Hay Barn (#4) is as an equestrian center although horses have been denied boarding in the Stable building for five years. Horses are shod, groomed, doctored just inside the entrance, and tackrooms, bathrooms, office, trophy room, and telephone are used. Most of the stalls are used now for miscellaneous storage, firewood, building materials, etc. Paddocks on the flanks of the knoll and the flat fields beyond will be unavailable when future equestrian center is completed and/or development begins in Unit 36, the area around the foot of this knoll.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered JAN 29 1987

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 4

Outbuildings and related features

There have always been outbuildings of various sizes, utility, and importance built and removed without record (compare photos 1 and 4). The three remaining to the east, south, and west of the Stable are low, simple, all wood, with vertical siding and no improvements (heat, light, plumbing). Three have gable roofs, one is shed roof, and they appear to span the period of ranching from the 1880s to the late 1920s.

#2 - Machine Shop Site. A barn at the lower western edge of the knoll was the oldest and mainly built from reused, hand-hewn timbers with mortise and tenon joinery. It was approximately 45' x 40', resting primarily on cut log sections, had some log posts on a porch extension on the east and a roughly 10' x 10' extension on the west. It was used as a machine shop within living memory, clearly held animals from time to time, and was heavily altered over time. It was in a state of partial collapse prior to its complete removal in September 1986. It is shown on the map as a site, and is no longer a contributing feature. It was built sometime before the 1880s.

#3 - Large Cypress Tree.

#4 - The Hay Barn is 40' x 20', rests on cement piers, and is of board/batten construction with a corrugated metal roof. The door and two 3-over-3 glazed windows are on the east side; there are two windows and two boarded over doors on the north; and one window on the west. This building is near the crown of the knoll looking over the paddocks and fenced pastures to the west and, because of its windows, location, and the view, has a genial character. It is used for hay storage and was once whitewashed. Built prior to 1906.

#5 - The Scale House is 37' x 16' and has been extended at both ends. A large, single-pane window was inserted in the south end extension and, on the north end, a large sliding door. Although once whitewashed, it has a closed-down air about it and is presently used for storing an auxiliary piece of fire equipment. Built between 1922-29.

#6 - The Equipment Building is 52' x 18' with a corrugated metal shed roof sloping down to the west. The east side is all doors with angled tops to the door frames. Each of the five openings is 9', and each is closed by double wood doors, one for each of the five partitioned areas inside, which held smaller farm equipment or early motor cars. Long ago, doors and door frames were painted green. It was built sometime after 1922, but before 1929. This building is on the more level east edge of the knoll and is the most recent.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered 29 1987

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 5

Buildings #4, #5, and #6 are locked and used for miscellaneous storage. Approximately 1,000' east across the highway and 200' higher is another knoll near which have been built at least three different ranch houses (none exist today). These ranch houses and their auxilliary buildings would have had a clear view of the barns, pastures, paddocks, outbuildings, ranch roads, and the coastline north and south. A map of 1861 shows buildings on both knolls, with a related pattern of fences and fields similar to what exists today. The only buildings on either knoll are those four within this cluster.

In July 1983, by action of the County Board of Supervisors, the Sea Ranch Stables and surrounding outbuildings were rezoned as a Historic District.

NOTE:

There are three barns still remaining on Sea Ranch:

- The Stable - the largest, in good condition, and in continuous use for approximately 100 years.
- The Hay Barn - located near the present stable building; currently used for hay storage.
- The Black Point Barn - also listed on the Western Sonoma County Historic Resources Survey, just west of Sea Ranch Lodge, about four miles south. It has been stabilized, has a dirt floor, and is unused.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below					
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input 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 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 type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation		
<input checked="" 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 1880s to 1920s **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The present stable at Sea Ranch is the major surviving structure directly associated with the Knipp and Stengel Ranch, a 4,819-acre cattle ranch on the northern Sonoma County coast. The barn, built in the 1880s from timbers recycled from an earlier building, is a notable example of mortise and tenon construction, and is impressive for its scale and three-aisled plan. With its cluster of associated outbuildings, the complex represents the last vestige of the headquarters area of this major northern coastal cattle empire. It represents the ranching activities of the period from the 1880s to the 1920s, during which all of the remaining buildings were constructed. The complex is a rare link with the area's agricultural past and represents the simple utilitarian buildings which were the design inspiration for Sea Ranch, the noted second-home community which now occupies the former ranch property.

The Sea Ranch Stable and surrounding outbuildings are the major remaining evidence of ranching activities associated with the nearly 5,000-acre Knipp and Stengel Ranch. Today's Stable, built during the 1880s, using timbers salvaged from an earlier barn, became the central ranch building. Within a few years of the barn's construction, Adam Knipp and Christian Stengel, owners of the ranch that would eventually cover 4,819 acres, decreased their head of beef cattle, which had been the primary source of ranch revenue for over 30 years, and increased their dairying operations. By the late 1880s, the barn's function had evolved into a dairy barn. Both the barn's size (60' x 160') and its open interior made it adaptable for a variety of uses relating to livestock and dairying operations. When the dairy cows were replaced with sheep in the 1920s, then owner, Walter P. Frick, who is often associated with Contra Costa County's Diablo Ranch, retained the barn as the central building. Frick introduced merino sheep brought from Davis to Sonoma's northern coast. During Frick's ownership, the barn served as a shelter and nursery for the lambs too young and weak to venture outside. Both ewes and lambs were housed within. When the Ohlson brothers, Edward, Chester, Elmer, and Ernest, bought the ranch from Frick's estate in 1941, the barn continued to be used for sheep. By 1964, when Hawaii-based Castle & Cooke purchased the Ohlsons' ranch to establish a second home community, the barn's function changed again--this time into an equestrian center. The Knipp and Stengel Ranch barn, which originated as a cattle barn and evolved into first a dairy barn, then a sheep barn, has now evolved into the Sea Ranch Stables. The building itself and the flat, fenced fields that encompass it have been in constant use as the center of ranch activities until the 1960s. The building is symbolic of indigenous structures of northern California upon which the renowned Sea Ranch design and philosophy are based.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheets

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property 4.38 acres

Quadrangle name Stewarts Point

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A 1,0 4,6,0 4,7,0 4,2,8,5 1,4,0
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

Property is the 4.38 acre remnant of the once-larger Knipp and Stengel Ranch. Boundaries are shown on the attached site plan. Sonoma County Assessor's Parcel No. 156-550-03. (See continuation sheet.)

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

state	n/a	code	county	n/a	code
state		code	county		code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan Clark Berlogar with Jan Strand

organization n/a date September 25, 1985 (OHP staff revision: 10/86)

street & number 557 Posada Way telephone (415) 797-9201

city or town Fremont, state California 94536

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Kathryn Swettini

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 12/29/86

For NPS use only

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

J. Melores Byer
Director of the National Register

Entered in the National Register

1-29-87

Attest:

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered JAN 29 1987

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 1

The Knipp and Stengel Ranch Barn is a notable example of mortise and tenon construction. This 1880s building was constructed of heavy timbers salvaged from an earlier barn. The three-aisled plan suggests a link with northern European barn traditions, and the very size of the building sets it apart as one of the largest and most impressive buildings of its type on the northern Sonoma County coast. The noted expert on historic barns in Europe and England, U.C. Berkeley Professor Emeritus Walter Horn, has viewed photographs of the subject building and found the proportions "amazing".¹ While possible links between the barn's German immigrant builders and European barn building traditions invite further study, the building is, in its own right, a significant example of its type, period, and method of construction.

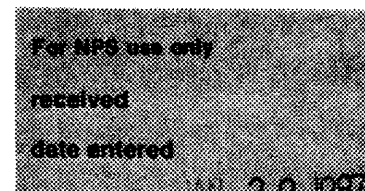
The Knipp and Stengel Barn (Sea Ranch Stable) and associated outbuildings are located on a portion of the original German Rancho, a Mexican land grant acquired in 1845 by German immigrants, William Benitz and Ernest Rufus. In 1855, the portion of the ranch south of the Gualala River (including the nominated property) was acquired by Charles Wagner and William Bihler. Two years later, Bihler bought Wagner's half interest and became sole owner. Bihler ran large herds of cattle on the ranch. In the late 1850s, he hired his nephew, Christian Stengel, and Adam Knipp to work on the ranch. Bihler moved from the property in the mid-1860s, although he still retained ownership. Chris Stengel assumed management of his uncle's coastal rancho and, in 1865, in partnership with Adam Knipp, made his first purchase of some of Bihler's acreage. The two men continued Bihler's livestock activities along with those of their own. By the time the 1878-79 U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey map of the area was produced, a big, new Victorian house replaced the small house that had been built earlier. The eucalyptus trees were already planted, and the hillside orchard between the house and the ocean-bluff barn/warehouse was flourishing. Several outbuildings had been constructed on the hill around the new house. Finley tells that Stengel had a contract to provide the Gualala Mill with a ton of beef every week. He delivered the weekly order continuously for 44 years.

Beef cattle had been the primary source of ranch income since the 1850s. The animals were driven overland to one of Bihler's slaughterhouses. Large-scale dairying operations were impractical because dairy products would spoil before they could be transported overland to markets. In 1875, according to Munro-Fraser, Bihler and D. L. B. Ross built a chute at Black Point; it was about three miles south of Knipp and Stengel's headquarters. Things began to change. The tax assessment roles give an indication of this change.

¹Letter from Janann Strand, Sea Ranch, to Marion Mitchell-Wilson, April 19, 1985.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 2

KNIPP AND STENGEL RANCH--tax assessments

	<u>1877</u>	<u>1880</u>	<u>1884</u>
thoroughbred horses	1-\$500	\$200	30-\$300
halfbred horses	15-\$450	18-\$570	---
colts	8-\$160	\$300	23-\$750
American cows	30-\$540	\$80	70-\$2100
calves	30-\$150	\$25	70-\$700
stock cattle	18-\$180	\$940	41-\$820
beef cattle	60-\$1000	\$1200	24-\$620
hogs	40-\$100	\$25	60-\$250
poultry	---	\$8	\$10
bull	---	\$40	1-\$1000

Gregory's 1911 History of Sonoma County reported that the "partners engaged in the cattle and dairy business, maintaining one of the largest stock and dairy ranches in this part of the country...Their dairy consisted of one hundred of the finest breed, and they always had as high as five hundred cattle at pasture."² Although the exact number of each animal is not available for 1880, it is easy to see a shift from an emphasis on beef production to one that relied on dairying. Since the exact nature of improvements on the property is not given, it is impossible to say precisely when the barn/warehouse down by the ocean was dismantled and the large Knipp and Stengel Ranch Barn (#1), that now serves as the Sea Ranch Stables, was constructed up near the county road. 1878-79 map shows the 1840s building still near the ocean. Yet, accounts by oldtimers and an analysis of the tax rolls would suggest it was within a very few years of the 1878-79 survey that it was reconstructed to provide easier access to Bihler's Landing three miles to the south. Dairy products had to be loaded and shipped almost immediately. An examination of the hand-hewn timbers in the Knipp and Stengel Ranch Barn (#1) and the Machine Shop (#2) between it and the ocean reveals that both structures, and possibly the barn at Black Point, were possibly constructed of timbers originally used in one large earlier barn.

Gradually, Bihler was divesting himself of his coastal property. His last section of 500 acres was conveyed to Knipp and Stengel in 1889. He also reduced his large tract of land between Lakeville and Sonoma to 340 acres. On June 16, 1891, Killip & Co. Live Stock Auctioneers of San Francisco, auctioned 47 thoroughbred horses belonging to Bihler and 25 "road and draft

2. Gregory, Thomas J., History of Sonoma County, California, p. 522.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered JUN 29 1987

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 3

horses". The pamphlet, "Catalogue of harness and draft horses, property of Mr. Wm Bihler, Lakeville, Sonoma Co." is available at Bancroft Library at the University of California.

By 1900, the Knipp and Stengel Ranch covered several thousands of acres. Both men were in their sixties. They were well off financially as a result of prudent business decisions and a somewhat Spartan lifestyle. In 1903, when they began selling their coastal property, Stengel moved into Santa Rosa. He continued to make his home there on B Street until his death in 1923.

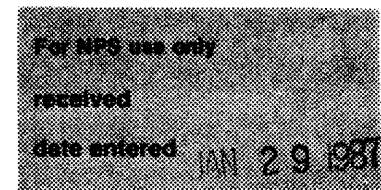
As important as ranching and dairying were to Knipp and Stengel, their timberlands were also an important part of their income. As early as the 1880s, they sold stumpage rights to the Gualala Lumber Company. By the 1890s, W. A. Bender and George L. Bender of the San Francisco based Bender Mill and Lumber Company had logging operations on the Knipp and Stengel Ranch. They built a short line railroad that began about three miles north of the dairy barn (#1) and followed a course across the meadows to the creek that flows just north of the barn. The map by Surveyor C. L. Huggins shows that loggers' cabins once lined the north side of the creek, and a bull barn stood up the hill at the edge of the timberline. Logs were brought down the hillside by ox teams and then transported by rail to Del Mar Landing at the north end of the line. From there, they were loaded on steamers and shipped away.

Bender brothers bought the 4,819-acre Knipp and Stengel Ranch in three separate transactions between November 1903 and February 1904. The largest of the three parcels, 3,220 acres, contained the dairy barn (#1), the Machine Shop (#2), the Hay Barn (#4), and a few other buildings shown in the 1906 photo. The Bender brothers continued the dairying operations along with their primary interest--logging. David Sagehorn, whose father, Fred Sagehorn, was ranch foreman during the 1920s, says there were stanchions in the barn for milking during its years as a dairy barn.

By July 1904, Bender brothers were in obvious financial trouble. Their operations on the Del Mar Ranch (the Knipp and Stengel Ranch was renamed the Del Mar Ranch because of its connection with the landing at its north end), along with others they had in both Sonoma and Mendocino Counties, overextended their resources. The court appointed Henry Brunner, William Berry, et al., to act on behalf of Benders' creditors. These men allowed dairying and agriculture to continue by hiring first Howard Bishop from Mendocino County to manage the ranch, then Douglas Hamilton. According to oldtimer Jerry Gillmore of Manchester, Bishop and Hamilton both lived in the house Stengel had built in the 1870s on the hillside above the dairy barn. Gillmore says he watched Hamilton turn a team of six horses, without unhitching them, inside the dairy barn. Ed Ohlson, owner of the ranch from 1941 to 1964, says the

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 4

1906 earthquake twisted the dairy barn but did not flatten it. It was given a new foundation and cables were attached near the ceiling to pull the building back into square. The cables are still visible today (1986).

A map of the Del Mar Ranch produced by Surveyor C. L. Huggins, which Ed Ohlson claimed was drawn in 1907, shows the Dairy Barn (#1) and Machine Shop (#2) in their present locations. Across the county road, according to the Huggins map, were the orchard, ranch house, and outbuildings. Although the Hay Barn (#4) does not appear on the map, it does show up in the 1906 photograph of the complex.

In 1916, Walter P. Frick, a timberman from the Bay Area, came into possession of the Del Mar Ranch. He increased the herd of dairy cattle to 250. He planted hedge rows at various intervals along the ocean side of the county road (now Highway 1) to provide a windbreak. Frick attempted to cultivate a variety of crops on his coastal ranch. According to Ed Ohlson and Harold Christensen, both of whom worked for Frick, Frick intended to subdivide the Del Mar Ranch into 24 ranchettes.

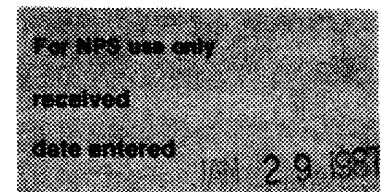
It was during Frick's ownership that the Dairy Barn (#1) came into a new use--that of a sheep barn. According to David Sagehorn, Frick was in Davis intending to buy some sheep when he met Fred Sagehorn who had also come to buy sheep. Both men had their eyes on the same flock of merino sheep, a breed known for its hardy constitution and extremely fine wool. Eventually, Frick contracted with Sagehorn; Frick would buy the sheep and Sagehorn would manage the sheep on the Del Mar Ranch. It was 1921 when the sheep arrived on the coast to replace the dairy cows. The following year, Fred Sagehorn married; Frick had a two-bedroom house built for the newly married couple a few hundred feet from the south entrance of the Dairy Barn (#1). All previous ranch foremen had lived on the hillside above the barn; all foremen after Sagehorn would live in a house to the south of it.

The 1922 coast highway survey shows the Dairy Barn (#1), the Machine Shop (#2), the Hay Barn (#4) in their present locations, but does not indicate that the Scale House (#5) or the Equipment Building (#6) had been constructed yet. David Sagehorn believes they were built during Frick's ownership (1916 - 1941). This is consistent with the 1929 U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey which includes the Scale House (#5) and Equipment Building (#6) in their present relation to the other buildings (#1, 2, and 4).

The last foreman under Frick's ownership was a Mr. Dickerson who took over when the Sagehorns left in 1928. He and his family also lived in the two-bedroom house built for the Sagehorns. Dickerson managed the ranch throughout the 1930s. In January 1937, Walter Frick died in San Francisco,

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 5

but the executor of his estate saw that the ranch was maintained as usual. The breeding stock sheep had increased. David Sagehorn and Frick's son, Walter, Jr., both explained that when ewes were having a difficult time giving birth, they were taken inside the barn. Mr. Ohlson also tells of his brother, Elmer, who was ranch foreman from 1941 to 1964, using the Barn (#1) for the same purpose. Apparently, the ewes and their lambs remained inside until both were strong enough to endure the sometimes harsh coastal winds and rain.

In April 1941, the Ohlson brothers--Edward, Elmer, Chester, and Ernest--whose family had settled a few miles away in Annapolis in the 1880s, bought the Del Mar Ranch. They were experienced sheepmen. The purchase included 2,200 ewes who were ready to drop 2,000 lambs. Like Frick before, Ohlsons' sheep grazed the meadows and were taken into the Barn (#1) when they needed extra care. The sheepmen themselves took up residence in the Barn (#1) when the sheep were too critical to be left untended.

In spring 1964, Al Boeke of Castle & Cooke visited the Ohlson Ranch in search of property that could be developed as a second home community. The land was purchased, and the name Rancho Del Mar was translated into Sea Ranch. Within a year, the sheep were removed from the fields. Since recreational activities are especially important in a second home community, a stable for private and rental horses was quite an asset. Contractor Matt Sylvia was hired to divide the side aisles of the Barn (#1) into individual stalls. He partitioned off the north end of the building into a lounge and installed a large window on the north wall of the lounge so the stable manager could survey activities in the ring and northern paddocks without leaving the building. Two bathrooms and an office were also constructed across the north end. One of the stalls along the east wall was converted into a small kitchen. The Dairy Barn, which had evolved into a sheep barn in the 1920s, was now changed into a horse stable. From the mid-1960s through the early 1970s, the Barn (#1) served as a stable for upwards of 20 horses. It was the location of horse shows and competitions.

The Dairy Barn (#1) served another function as the new community began to develop. Its simple design, like that of Black Point Barn a few miles to the south, became one of the prototypes for the unadorned Sea Ranch buildings. Sea Ranchers had no intention of turning their backs on their common heritage--a place with strong ranching and farming traditions. The sheep which had grazed on the meadows and had been tended for in the old Dairy Barn were memorialized in the Sea Ranch logo--a ram's horns circling around two seashells.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered 29 1987

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 6

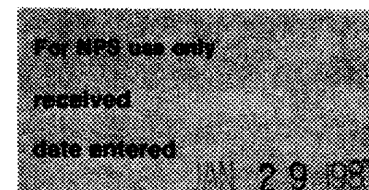
In the mid-1970s, the developer, Oceanic of California, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Castle & Cooke, decided to deemphasize equestrian activities to ease the way for the development of the area around the Sea Ranch Stables (#1). For a variety of reasons, the planned development did not occur.

Then in 1981, OCI banned horses from boarding within the Stables (#1). The structure was still the center of equestrian activities in that the Stable office was housed within it, and horses were groomed and shod inside. The kitchen continued to be used by horse owners as did the stall in which they stored their tack. However, horses were denied its shelter even during the most inclement weather. As a result, many Sea Ranchers who own horses board them elsewhere. The number of horses fluctuates between 5 and 10.

The surviving 4.38-acre property was designated a Sonoma County historical landmark by action of the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors in July 1983.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 1

Ashurst, Patricia (Ohlson). Interviews with Susan Berlogar, 8/18/82, 7/19/84, 9/1/85.

Bancroft, Hubert Howe. California Pioneer Register and Index 1542-1848. Baltimore: Regional Publishing Company, 1964.

Bihler, William. "Catalogue of Harness and Draft Horses, property of Mr. William Bihler, Lakeville, Sonoma County." Kellip and Company, Livestock Auctioneers of San Francisco. June 16, 1891. On file at Bancroft Library.

Bihler v. Platt, et al., 1874. California Supreme Court, 4514 California State Archives, Box 81, File 4514-2130.

Bowers, A. B. Map of Sonoma County, California. 1867. On file at Bancroft Library.

California Department of Public Health, California Death Index, Vol. S-U, 1905-1929.

California Department of Public Health, California Death Index, Vol. F-H, 1930-1939.

(Cassiday, Samuel, editor.) An Illustrated History of Sonoma County, California, Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1889.

Christensen, Harold. Interview with Susan Berlogar. 7 September 1981.

1924 Crocker-Langley San Francisco City Directory. San Francisco, CA: Langley Directory Co., 1924. p. 579.

Day, Clinton. Map of that Portion of the German Rancho deeded by Ernest Rufus to Frederick Hugal. September 2, 1847. (Platt v. Jones, et al., Plaintiff's exhibit #4.)

Finley, Ernest Latimer. History of Sonoma County. Santa Rosa: Press Democrat Publishing Co., 1937.

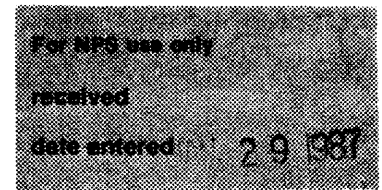
_____, Santa Rosans I Have Known. Santa Rosa: Press Democrat Publishing Co., 1942. pp 45-48.

Fitchen, John. The New World Dutch Barn. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1968. p. 93.

Ford, Jerome B. "Diary 1851-52", MS in possession of Stebbins and Baer, Mendocino Historic Research.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 2

Reynolds, W. D. and Proctor, L. A. Illustrated Atlas of Sonoma County, California. Santa Rosa: Reynolds & Proctor Publishing Co., 1897.

Robinson, William Wilcox. Land in California. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1948. pp 65-69.

Sagehorn, David. Taped interview with Susan Berlogar, June 1, 1985.

Sonoma County Public Works. Transit Book 39F. 1922. p. 68.

Sonoma County Recorder's Office. Register of Brands A, Book 5, p. 39.

Sonoma County Recorder's Office. Deeds, Book C, page 251, 1846 (Land Grant).

_____, Deeds: Book F, page 232, 1847.

_____, Deeds: Book 7, page 120, 1847.

_____, Deeds: Book 1B, page 53, 1847.

_____, Deeds: Book 1B, page 54, 1847.

_____, Deeds: Book 12, page 346, 1849.

_____, Deeds: Book D, page 25, 1849.

_____, Deeds: Book F, page 217, 1851.

_____, Deeds: Book N, page 281, 1855.

_____, Deeds: Book 6, page 329, 1857.

_____, Deeds: Book 8, page 708, 1859.

_____, Deeds: Book 11, page 747, 1861.

_____, Deeds: Book 18, page 193, 1862.

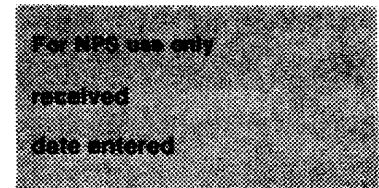
_____, Deeds: Book 44, page 75, 1872.

_____, Deeds: Book 8, page 386, 1889.

_____, Deeds: Book 184, page 270, 1897.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 3

_____, Deeds: Book 211, page 170, 1903.

_____, Deeds: Book 211, page 188, 1904.

_____, Deeds: Book 211, page 193, 1904.

_____, Deeds: Book 213, page 394, 1904.

_____, Deeds: Book 347, page 293, 1919.

_____, Deeds: Book 533, page 55, 1941.

Sonoma County Tax Assessor's Office. 1858 Tax Roll, Vallejo Township.

_____, 1877 Tax Roll, Salt Point Township.

_____, 1880 Tax Roll, Salt Point Township.

_____, 1884 Tax Roll, Salt Point Township.

Tuomey, Honoria. History of Sonoma County, California, Vol. I, II. Chicago: S. J. Clarks Publishing Co., 1926.

1860 United States Census, California, Salt Point Township, p. 28.

1900 United States Census, California, Salt Point Township, ED 170, S 5.

U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey. Map: Coast of California; Fisherman Bay to Walalla River. Register Number 1497b, Nov. 1878.

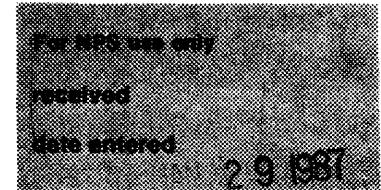
_____, Map: Coast of California: Stewarts Point to Del Marr Landing. Register Number 4507, 1929.

U.S. Surveyor General's Office. Plat Map of the German Rancho and Field Notes (J-25). 1861.

United States v Charles Mayer, et al., United States District Court, No. 15: Petition, filed June 20, 1855; Order granting an appeal, filed March 24, 1857; Final Judgment September 10, 1860. On file at Bancroft Library, University of California.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 10

Page 1

This 4.38 acre parcel contains all the remaining historic farm structures in the central section of Sea Ranch, once part of the headquarters complex. Although there were several other structures which also comprised the ranch headquarters on the Knipp and Stengel Ranch, none of these remain today.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered 29 1987

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 1

APPENDIX

Ranching activities on this specific site originated in the mid-1840s. Information concerning these early years is provided in the testimonies of Ernest Rufus, Henry Haegler, and William Benitz in the 1874 California Supreme Court Case, Bihler v. Platt, et al., (Cal. Sup. Ct. 4514).

German immigrant William Benitz who with another German, Ernest Rufus, rented Fort Ross from John Sutter, tells of accompanying Rufus in 1845 to look for a 5 league grant for which Rufus would petition the Mexican government. They chose coastal property that was bounded on the north by the Gualala River because the land was suitable for pasturage. "...(T)imber was then of no actual account. In those days, it was only in the way." Since the land was along the coast, Mexican law required that it be granted to an individual, not to more than one person. The individual had to have previously proven his loyalty to the government. The aim of this requirement was to provide some protection against a foreign invasion. Therefore, the men agreed that Rufus would travel to Los Angeles to petition Governor Pio Pico for the grant and Benitz would stay behind and draw the required "diseno". In the grant confirmation hearings (Charles Mayer, et al. v United States, Land Case 199, United States District Court, Northern California, 1854) Rufus said in order to secure the land and the livestock grazing on it, he went first to the First Alcalde of Sonoma on 21 July 1845 to obtain a provisional grant.

At this point, two other Germans come into the picture -- Frederick Hugal and Henry Haegler. According to Bancroft's California Pioneer Register and Index, 1542 - 1848, Hugal came to California in 1838. Although his early relationship with Rufus and Benitz is uncertain, Hugal had cattle and horses on the northern part of the land for which Rufus applied. In Bihler v. Platt, et al., testimony confirms there was an agreement between Rufus, Haegler, and Hugal that they would each get part of the land. By 1846, Hugal had already built a house directly above the present Stables, a grist mill on the creek to the northeast, a corral where the present paddocks are located, and a fence that ran from the coast along the creek. He had a garden with fruit trees and also a vegetable garden. Hugal had even constructed a "little barn, warehouse to ship produce from." (Bihler v. Platt, et al., 1874.) All these improvements were on a thin strip of land that stretches from the ocean to the timberline, where the eucalyptus trees now stand. The fence Benitz refers to has been repaired as needed and still stands in the same location north of the present Stables. Until 1853, when Duncan and Hendy began operations at Salt Point, there were no other developments on the entire northern Sonoma coast.

The importance of this narrow strip of the German Rancho relates to its value as grazing land. Haegler testified that Rufus had intended to keep this part

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received
date entered 2 9 1981

Continuation sheet

Item number APPENDIX

Page 2

for himself. Although he had originally promised Hugal and Haegler 1-1/4 Spanish leagues each, he changed his mind upon discovering that Hugal had not settled on the far northern end but, rather, about four miles farther south, where today's Stables and outbuildings stand. As a result, Rufus allowed Hugal only one league instead of 1-1/4. Haegler, who had taken it upon himself in 1847 to build a house 200' south of Hugal's so their livestock could share the prime pastureland, also incurred Rufus' vengeance. Benitz testified that this action by Haegler resulted in Rufus' relegating him to the most southeastern 1-1/4 leagues of the land grant. The cattle brand Haegler registered on June 1, 1846 can be seen in the Register of Brands, Book A in the Sonoma County Recorder's Office.

In 1849 when gold was discovered, Hugal decided to sell his property and livestock to William Benitz and Charles Mayer and try his luck in the gold fields. Benitz tells of how he and Mayer continued Hugal's ranching operations and began shipping produce in 1848 from a point directly below Hugal's house. This would indicate a location directly below today's Stable. The barn/warehouse shown on the 1861, 1867, and 1878 maps served as a storehouse for products ready to be shipped. This would appear to be the only shipping point north of Fort Ross until 1853. Jerome Ford kept a diary as he traveled up the coast in 1852. He visited the ranch on June 13, 1852 and wrote that Mayer and Benitz's ranch was "tambien," beautiful, with fruits and vegetables in abundance. The Hugal's ownership are shown on a map by Clinton Day which was entered as evidence in the 1871 case of Platt v. Jones (California Sup. Ct., case No. 3447).

On 4 June 1855, the portion of the German Rancho stretching south from the Gualala River for about ten miles came into the hands of Charles Wagner and German immigrant, William Bihler. Fifteen thousand dollars bought these men 8,970 acres, the houses built by Hugal and Haegler, the corral, the fenced pastureland, orchards, fields planted with assorted vegetables, the barn/warehouse near the shipping point, and large herds of cattle and horses. This sale ushered in one of the most exciting periods in the area's history. It was marked with the daring influence of William Bihler, a man who was always bigger than life. Charles Wagner, who chose the warmer Sonoma Valley to the cold, damp, foggy coast, sold his half interest to Bihler in November 1857.

According to the 1880 Munro-Fraser History of Sonoma County, Bihler was born in Eppingen, Baden (Germany) on May 16, 1828. The family emigrated to America in 1838 and settled in Baltimore. Bihler had four sisters -- Barbara (Stengel), Julia (Gengnagel), Catherine (Smith), and Elizabeth (Kimmerle). Young William was apprenticed as a butcher. After having sailed around the Horn in 1848, Bihler arrived in San Francisco. He was 20 years old, 3,000 miles from home, and very alone. Munro-Fraser says he worked as a butcher there for two years. Providing meat for the thousands of miners who

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only	
received	
Date entered	29 1987

Continuation sheet

Item number APPENDIX

Page 3

poured through San Francisco during the Gold Rush proved very profitable. Bihler made enough money to start buying land that would eventually expand to tens of thousands of acres in Sonoma, Napa, and Marin Counties. Ernest L. Finley, who was editor of the Santa Rosa Press Democrat for 40 years, wrote in Santa Rosans I Have Known:

Bihler ran a big meat market in San Francisco and also supplied much of the wholesale trade. It is said that he shipped a boatload of meat from each of his five slaughterhouses in the north bay counties every day of the year, Sundays excepted. Bihler was a great friend of Henry Miller, who afterwards formed a partnership with Lux, operating under the name of Miller & Lux. The three were associated in business at one time, but Bihler got the idea that the thing to do was to acquire land, which was cheap in those days.¹

Upon leaving San Francisco, William Bihler became partners with Charles Wagner. Together they bought land south of Sonoma, around Schellville. During the early 1850s, the two men established a cattle ranch and vineyard. As they earned more money, they continued buying parcels of nearby land. It was here at Schellville that Wagner continued to focus his attention after he sold off his German Rancho interest to Bihler. The 1858 Tax Assessment Roll for Sonoma and Mendocino Counties shows that Bihler had 11,000 acres of land in Salt Point Township and only \$500 in improvements.

During the 1850s, Bihler continued to enlarge his herds of cattle and horses on both his ranches. He found himself challenged to improve the breeds of livestock he saw in California. Bihler made the decision to import quality animals to improve the bloodlines of his herds. In 1858, he imported a fine draught stallion named "Old England's Glory". Foals sired by this stallion would bring \$500 apiece.

In connection with importing "Old England's Glory", Bihler hired two men who would manage his coastal ranch for many years. They were Adam Knipp who earned his passage to California by accompanying the stallion, and Christian Stengel, son of Bihler's sister, Barbara. Like Bihler himself, Knipp and Stengel never married; they devoted themselves 100% to dairying and stock breeding. Two of Bihler's other nephews, Jacob Stengel and Jacob Gengnagel, traveled to California to manage Bihler's ranch in Napa County. In 1862, 23-year-old Jacob Stengel was killed in an accident involving one of Bihler's fine thoroughbreds. His body was brought to the German Rancho and buried on the hillside just above the present Stables. A tombstone still marks his burial place.

1. Finley, Ernest L., Santa Rosans I Have Known, p. 45.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered
JAN 29 1987

Continuation sheet

Item number APPENDIX

Page 4

In 1859, Knipp and Stengel took up residence on the hillside where Hugal and Haegler had made their homes. The German Rancho Plat Map, accepted by the United States Surveyor General's Office in January 1861, shows a house where the eucalyptus now stand and the barn from which Mayer and Benitz shipped produce in the late 1840s.

The map also shows the fenced pasture land stretching from the ocean alongside the creek north of the barn and hillside house. 1860 census for Salt Point Township lists both Knipp and Stengel as farmers. The 1900 census adds that the parents of both men were natives of Germany. Rancho de Hermann, or German Rancho, is aptly named; Rufus, Benitz, Hugal, Haegler, Bihler, Knipp, and Stengel were all Germans.

William Bihler left the coast by the mid-1860s, although he still owned several thousands of coastal acres. He established himself at Lakeville, south of Petaluma, where he continued farming and stock raising along with vineculture pursuits. When Lakeville's Julia Gregory, a long-time neighbor of Bihler, was interviewed for the August 18, 1955 Centennial Edition of the Petaluma Argus, she said:

"I remember Wm. Bihler who owned 8,900 acres of land running from the Petaluma river almost to Sonoma. He raised stock, potatoes, and grapes. He stored his potatoes in the big brick warehouse on the Petaluma river until he was ready to sell them."²

Another article on the same page attributes to William Bihler the distinction of draining Lake Tolay so he could raise potatoes.

2. Petaluma Argus Courier, August 18, 1955, p. 8B.

G-4227H