

240332217

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

DATE OF NOMINATION: 1974

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

NAME
HISTORIC AND ORIGIN: San Gregorio House
Palmer Hotel or Bell Hotel

LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER: Old Stage Road
CITY TOWN: San Gregorio
STATE: California
VICINITY OF: South of Half Moon Bay
COUNTY: San Mateo
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 12th
STATE CODE: 06
COUNTY CODE: 081

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

OWNER OF PROPERTY
NAME: Frank Palmer Bell
STREET & NUMBER: Old Stage Road
CITY TOWN: San Gregorio
VICINITY OF: Half Moon Bay
STATE: California

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: San Mateo County Recorder's Office
STREET & NUMBER: Hall of Records, Marshall Street
CITY TOWN: Redwood City
STATE: California

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE: (1) Historic American Buildings Survey, National Park Service
(2) Junior League of Palo Alto -- Heritage Project
(3) Junior League of San Francisco

DATE: (1) 1974 (2) 1973 (3) 1964

DEPOSITORY: (1) Library of Congress
(2) Jr. League of P.A. (3) San Mateo County

CITY TOWN: (1) Washington, D. C. (2) Menlo Park, CA. (3) San Mateo, CA.

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL: 2 & 3

Included in the 1966 Historic Sites Subcommittee Report which was recommended by the County's 1990 General Plan. All basic research for the sites has been lost.

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGIN
George Washington Tully Carter 1850. When thirty years old in February of San Gregorio Creek on which to build a village stretching along the Stage Road, for the only newspaper published in the area some life of his business "hide-bound by that Sea-Side would become a bustling metropolis. Carter built a two-story gabled residence in the southern section of the present hotel. We in this century some walls were exposed, a newspaper discussing the Civil War. The house was described in the newspaper as follows:

San Gregoria (sic) House, by the Sea-County. This new house, is situated in a valley, near to the ocean, with a very easy access, offers superior attractions. San Francisco. Hunting, fishing, boating. The proprietor hopes, by strict attention to guests, a clean house, and good table. Francisco. Halfmoon Bay and Pescadero. the morning train to San Mateo.

Fortunately the last owners had notable first guests were Adjutant General W.W. Halleck, wife of the famous Union Army Orders for building the Panama Canal on the west slope of the coast mountains to work a toll road, comparable to the La Honda Road intersect the coastal stage road.

In 1869 Carter sold the San Gregorio from whom R.W. Savage leased the business the beach. Board \$2 per day." After giving (State Landmark No. 825) in Portola Valley House for six months until the property was

Evans set about "tearing down" and enlarged the hotel to its present size by adding a veranda with a balcony across the front exists, but about 1955 the eight-inch saw logs which had washed ashore along the beach the exterior siding and the roof lines. The building is well proportioned and has identify it with a style. At the turn of white trim; now it is brown with white trim accounts in part for its longevity. Many hung windows have their original glazing, and very thin mullions. Most of the four has not been extensively modified. The front each end of the long central hallway are front upstairs rooms have access to the

DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

George Washington Tully Carter came to California with his widowed mother in 1850. When thirty years old in February 1865 Carter purchased five acres near the mouth of San Gregorio Creek on which to build a small hotel. The hotel became the nucleus of a village stretching along the Stage Road. Under various *nom de plumes* Carter wrote for the newspaper published in the county. One of his columns described the lonely life of his business "hide-bound by surrounding ranches," but assured the reader that Sea-Side would become a bustling metropolis related to important stage routes.

Carter built a two-story gable roof hotel, consisting of three bays, on the southern section of the present hotel. When the hotel was being wired for electricity in this century some walls were exposed, and it was reported that they were covered with newspaper discussing the Civil War. The opening of the hotel in the spring of 1866 was described in the newspaper as follows:

San Gregoria (sic.) House, by the Sea-Side, ten mile from Halfmoon Bay, San Mateo County. This new house, is situated in one of the most beautiful of the coast valleys, near to the ocean, with a salubrious climate, no summer winds, and of easy access, offers superior attractions as a summer resort for the citizens of San Francisco. Hunting, fishing, boating and bathing in the immediate vicinity. The proprietor hopes, by strict attention to the comfort and pleasures of his guests, a clean house, and good tables, to merit a share of the patronage of San Francisco. Halfmoon Bay and Pescadero stages take passengers to the House from the morning train to San Mateo.

Fortunately the last owners have kept the hotel Registers. Among the hotel's notable first guests were Adjutant General J.F. Frey, U.S.A., his family, and Mrs. W.W. Halleck, wife of the famous Union Army General, who stayed there in July 1867.

Orders for building the Panama Canal caused the nearby lumber mills on the west slope of the coast mountains to work at full capacity. As a consequence in 1868 a toll road, comparable to the La Honda Road, headed down the valley to the hamlet to intersect the coastal stage road.

In 1869 Carter sold the San Gregorio House to John Burnap and Erastus Moore, from whom R.W. Savage leased the business. He offered his patrons "Free carriages to the beach. Board \$2 per day." After giving up the operation of Casa de Tableta (State Landmark No. 825) in Fortolá Valley William Tate Philpott leased the San Gregorio House for six months until the property was sold to John R. Evans in February 1875.

Evans set about "tearing down, and building up, to suit the times." He enlarged the hotel to its present size by expanding seven more bays on the north end and by adding a veranda with a balcony across the front. The original balustrade still exists, but about 1955 the eight-inch square posts of the veranda were replaced with logs which had washed ashore along the beach. Each section of the hotel is definable in the exterior siding and the roof lines. There is a wide, plain frieze below the eaves. The building is well proportioned and has a feeling of Greek Revival, if one must identify it with a style. At the turn of the century the exterior was painted gray with white trim; now it is brown with white trim. The hotel is constructed of redwood which accounts in part for its longevity. Many of the simply framed six-over-six double hung windows have their original glazing. The windows have simplified cornice moldings and very thin mullions. Most of the four-pannelled doors are unchanged. The interior has not been extensively modified. The parlor contains its original wainscoting. At each end of the long central hallway are two interior straight run stairways. The front upstairs rooms have access to the balcony. The hotel was heated by four fireplaces,

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"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION-SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1865 BUILDER/ARCHITECT George Washin

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

A hundred years ago each valley along the coast south of San Mateo held some aspect of a village with a saloon, often a general store, and a resort type of hotel. The San Gregorio House with its related buildings is the only remaining country hotel. It is one of the few extant buildings from early California associated primarily with stage transportation, showing signs of one the nearly complete unit with its various related functions is intact.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAR 23 1977

DATE ENTERED MAY 6 1977

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET

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CONTINUATION SHEET

served by two chimneys, but after the 1906 earthquake only one chimney was replaced. During winter business would be quiet, but with passable roads in the other seasons of the year the hotel would fill to capacity. San Gregorio House functioned as a stage station. Each day the lumbering coaches swung up to its front entrance. For those people riding the San Mateo-Pescadero stage it was a welcome interlude for rest and refreshments. For those on the Redwood City stage it was the end of the line, except when summer traffic extended the stage service to Pescadero. The hotel was a favorite rendezvous for sportsmen. It has been said that the French populace of San Francisco particularly favored the San Gregorio House.

In 1888 Evans sold the hotel and the five acres to Jesse Palmer for \$5,000 and some land in Redwood City. Thirty-three year old Frank Bell became Palmer's business partner, and in 1893 Bell married Rebecca Ellen Palmer. Her parents retired in 1911, and after Bell's death in 1914 his wife continued to operate the hotel until 1930. The hotel was her home until her death (1963), and her son now makes it his home.

The hotel functioned as a self-sufficient unit. Only two of the original outbuildings have been demolished: (1) The livery stable behind the hotel could shelter eighteen horses. (2) Characteristic of the era the cook house was a separate structure. It was demolished when a modern kitchen was added to the rear of the hotel.

The carriage shed still exists from which guests hired various styles of vehicles. Nearby it is a diminutive one-room cottage for the livery man. Numerous other early buildings exist: There is a laundry house with a huge copper boiler in a brick firebox, a granary, barns, et. Behind the hotel there is a dance hall with a lean-to addition for a stage. Each Saturday night there was "live music" for dancing. Much of the food served at the hotel was raised on the property, and the proprietors did their own butchering, smoking, and curing. Along side the smokehouse is a large caudron in which the slaughtered hogs were scalded. There also is a large rent-safe.

There was an orchard on the south side of the hotel. Hedges of Monterey pines were planted to screen the hotel from the road and to protect the hotel from the prevailing winds and they are now grown to be huge trees. There are still remnants of the early hand-hewn stake fence.

The early 20th century Ocean Shore Railroad scheme failed before the tracks reached San Gregorio, but its passengers arriving at Tunitas were transported to points south by buses. Much like the previous horse drawn daily stages the ungainly Stanley Steamers routinely took on more water at the San Gregorio House.

After automobiles appeared on the roads the summer recreational hotel business truly flourished. The first adjunct to the hotel had been a saloon on the street front north of the hotel (now at the intersection). From the earliest days the saloon was an intricate part of the hotel operation. With Prohibition the saloon was converted to a gas station and is a truly vintage structure. Gasoline had to be transported to the station in fifty-gallon drums. The station attendant filled the cars' tanks using a watering can while straining the gas through a chamois skin and charged 10c a gallon.

Suddenly San Gregorio was by-passed by the modern coast highway and cut in half by a La Honda Road extension rushing along side the hotel property to reach the

new highway near the beach. Today i
Road as it meanders over the hills d
Susa a trip helps to appropriately r

1974
1975
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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FORM 5000-107

RECEIVED MAR 23 1977

DATE ENLARGED MAY 8 1977

CONTINUATION SHEET

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new highway near the beach. Today it is pleasant to follow the winding Old Stage Road as it weanders over the hills dropping into quiet valleys back from the ocean. Such a trip helps to appropriately place the San Gregorio House in milieu.

SIGNIFICANCE

Form No. 10-200a
May 1970

UNITED STATES

NATIONAL HISTORIC INVENTORY

CONTINUATION SHEET

served by two children.

During the seasons of the year a stage station. those people riding refreshments. For when summer traffic rendezvous for 50 particularly favored.

In 1811 and some land in business partner, in 1911, and after 1930. The hotel

The hotel outbuildings have eighteen horses. It was demolished.

The early vehicles. Nearby other early building brick firebox, a lean-to addition. Much of the food did their own bar caldron in which

There are pines were planted the prevailing style of the early bar.

The early reached San Grego south by buses. Steamers routinely

After business truly first street front north the saloon was converted to tanks used for transported to the tanks using a water charged 10¢ a gallon.

Suddenly half by a La Honda

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

PERIOD	ARCHAEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	ARCHAEOLOGY-HISTORIC	COMMUNITY PLANNING	CONSERVATION	ECONOMICS	EDUCATION	EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	INDUSTRY	INVENTION	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	LAW	LITERATURE	MILITARY	MUSIC	PHILOSOPHY	POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	RELIGION	SCIENCE	SCULPTURE	SCULPTURE/JANITARIAN	THEATER	TRANSPORTATION	OTHER (SPECIFY)	
PREHISTORIC																								
1400-1499																								
1500-1599																								
1600-1699			X																					
1700-1899																								
1800-1899			X																					
1900																								

SPECIFIC DATES 1865 BUILDER/ARCHITECT George Washington Fuller Center

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

A hundred years ago each valley along the coast south of San Francisco Bay held some aspect of a village with a saloon, often a general store, and occasionally a resort type of hotel. The San Gregorio House with its related buildings now is the only remaining country hotel. It is one of the few extant hotel buildings from early California associated primarily with stage transportation. Even though showing signs of age the nearly complete unit with its various related economic functions is intact.

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