

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PHO 693 081

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	DEC 17 1978
DATE ENTERED	JAN 25 1979

**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

Branciforte or Lorenzana Adobe

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1351 North Branciforte Avenue,

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Santa Cruz

VICINITY OF

16th

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

California

06

Santa Cruz

087

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Joseph R. and Edna E. Kimbro

STREET & NUMBER

1351 North Branciforte Avenue

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Santa Cruz, CA 95062

VICINITY OF

California

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Registry of Deeds, Santa Cruz County Recorder

STREET & NUMBER

701 Ocean Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Santa Cruz, CA 95060

California

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS see continuation sheet

TITLE

California Inventory of Historic Resources

DATE

March 1976

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

State of California: The Resources Agency, Dept. of Parks and

CITY, TOWN

STATE

P.O. Box 2390, Sacramento

California Recreation

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" 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

Unlike a number of such structures the Branciforte Adobe was continuously inhabited since its construction and never unroofed, abandoned or moved. It is one of only two adobe structures left in the City of Santa Cruz and the only one remaining from the Villa de Branciforte.

The Branciforte Adobe measures about 21 x 38 feet outside with the interior space divided by an adobe partition into two rooms: one 24 x 16 feet and another 11 x 16 feet. The walls are about two feet thick and the adobes measure 11-12 inches wide by 23-24 inches long by 3-4 inches thick. Roof tile fragments found by archaeologists outside suggest the possibility that the adobe may have had a tile roof at one time.

Sometime around 1900, perhaps in 1906, the south end wall collapsed and was replaced by frame construction. At some time a two room addition, 16.5 by 38 feet, was attached at the west side of the adobe where holes in the wall for roof support indicate there was a corredor as at the front. Probably, at that time the roof line was changed to cover overall. The smaller of the two adobe rooms was divided by a frame wall into two rooms: one 11 by 11 feet, and a bath 11 by 6 feet. There is physical internal evidence that the addition itself was remodeled several times over the years, most recently in 1921 according to the tax assessor's records. At that time the adobe and wood portions were stuccoed over. A triangular pedimented porch at center front and dormer window in the roof above created a fair imitation of a California bungalow.

Recent owners removed the dormer from the roof and the porch from the front. They re-roofed with handdriven shakes and reconstructed the overhanging veranda for which there is abundant evidence: pockets for supports in the front adobe walls and post holes in the ground. In removing stucco from the exterior of the house in preparation for restoration of the mudplaster and whitewash coating, evidence was found for an outside staircase to a loft or tapanco on the north side of the adobe: three beam landing supports with sill below project above the north wall door. The Peralta adobe in Pueblo San Jose (continued)

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input 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 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 c. 1803-1848

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Archaeology - Prehistoric

Archaeological evidence in the form of chert flakes found at various levels of 17 units indicate that the site (registered in May 1975 as CA-Scr-116) may have been used by local Indians for tool making activities. Also, according to Rob Edwards of Cabrillo College, "the finding of an abalone bange and shell fragments (Pismo and Olvella) may indicate use as habitation site."¹ In addition nine pieces of a Catalina Island steatite bowl were found in units 3 and 4 at 0-10 cm. and identified by William Roop of ARS.

The excavations were supervised by Jean Stafford of the Santa Cruz Archeological Society (SCAS) and Alan Lonnberg of the Anthropology Department, University of California at Santa Cruz, with advice from Dr. Heicksen of Cabrillo College. They were considered largely a salvage project prior to disturbance of the area rear of the adobe by prior owners who graded the land. Crews of volunteers from the SCAS, West Valley College, Cabrillo College and UCSC performed the labor of excavation. Jim Toenges, formerly of College V, UCSC, has performed preliminary analysis of some of the material collected.

Archaeology - Historic

The Branciforte adobe site is extremely rich in materials spanning the entire period of its inhabitation. Many bags of as yet unprocessed artifacts from the 17 units excavated await laboratory processing. Such items as musket balls, bone buttons, ceramic marbles, oriental coins, ceramic fragments, bottles, paper and leather bits, etc., abound in the already cleaned and sorted portions. Through analysis of the materials is expected to yield some clues to the as yet uncertain period of the building's construction. More importantly, analysis of the materials will yield cultural information about the life style of common people, the settlers (continued)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 136.17' x 88.18' (.28 Ac)

UTM REFERENCES

A	10	588020	4993980	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property is bounded on the north by Goss Street, on the east by North Branciforte Avenue, on the south by the land of James, and on the west by the land of Raatz. The legal description is as follows: "SITUATED in the County of Santa Cruz, State of California and described as follows: PARCEL "A", as shown on that certain Parcel Map filed for record April 7, 1975 in Book 19 of Parcel Maps at Page 22, Santa Cruz County Records. Assessor's Parcel No. 9-012-29.

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 Edna E. Kimbro, Owner; Bruce Meacham, President Santa Cruz Historical Society; Miki Ryan Farley, S.C.A.S.

ORGANIZATION

DATE

1351 N. Branciforte Ave.

708-427-3531

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

Santa Cruz, CA 95062

CA

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

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

Kammell

11-29-78

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Charles...

DATE

1-25-79

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

Santa Cruz Historical Building Survey 1976, Local Survey - Planning Department, City of Santa Cruz, City Hall, 809 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060, State of California.

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has a similarly supported landing on the outside of an end wall, as does the Pena adobe near Vacaville. Removal of the stucco also confirmed that the north wall door, while early, (the reveal is properly slanted and door old), is not original to the structure. The opening was clearly not planned when the adobes were laid up as the heading bond is interrupted by a cut through the bricks. It is evident from the manner in which the adobes were laid up with headers and stretchers alternating vertically around the openings that the east wall was always penetrated by two windows and a door.

When the present owners removed an unsafe fireplace and chimney, the former of 1940's vintage, an earlier fireplace was uncovered behind. Upon its removal an even earlier hearth carved directly into the west adobe wall and vented at an angle out through it was discovered. So far research indicates this hearth may be unique in construction.

The adobe's only architectural ornamentation is its New England style millwork. The windows have molded frames, six lights per sash and deep splayed reveals. The interior door is six paneled and resembles Figure B, p. 94, of Hannaford and Edwards Spanish Colonial or Adobe Architecture of California. The two exterior doors have six lights in the upper portion and two panels below. Much of the glass in both the doors and windows exhibit the bubbles and imperfections of early hand-blown glass. All the doors have surface mounted locks, all of which are not original as evidenced by patched scars of earlier locks and keyholes. The millwork itself may or may not be original to the structure. The positioning of the nailers about the openings and a number of early (1800-1830) square machine cut nails projecting from the nailers and lintels suggest that the door and windows may have been otherwise framed previously. Glazed doors and windows were added to most adobes once they became available. Should the existing frames prove to be original upon further investigation, then a construction date after 1835 would be certain.

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Addendum to Physical Appearance - 7

Included herein are copies of two photographs of the Branciforte Adobe which belonged to Herbert Winchester Still whose family occupied it from 1882 until 1920. One showing the east or front facade dates from 1902 when H. W. Still was in a baby carriage. The roof was shingled then, the walls white-washed and there was a wooden sidewalk along the east side under the overhang as at present.

The other photograph confirms that as suggested by physical evidence found beneath the restored mud coat the adobe had a lower pitched roof with a door to the attic space or tapanco in the then adobe gable end of the north wall. Herbert Still reports that the south end wall was wooden during his childhood and an inside ladder had replaced the north wall exterior stairway removed to accommodate the door shown in the photo and remaining there now.

Doris Hutchison of Aptos, California, the granddaughter of John Bowman, owner of the adobe from 1870-74, repeats a family legend about the adobe. Supposedly her grandmother, a devout Episcopalian and non-believer in psychic phenomena, once heard mysterious violin music emanating from the attic.

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of Branciforte, in the virtually undocumented period before American ascendancy in Santa Cruz County.

For example, Julia Costello, archaeologist of the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation kindly examined the majolica fragments excavated at the Branciforte adobe and identified a number of them. Found were examples of Huejotzingo, San Elizario Polychrome, polychrome, blue, and white majolica. Most of the sherds appeared in unit 11 located southwest of the house in the side yard just 3.2 meters from the south wall.

Additional work proposed for the site includes a search for the footings of the outdoor stairway on the north wall and a trench to investigate the nature of the Santa Cruz mudstone (chalkrock) foundations of the south house wall as well as efforts to determine the meaning of four pieces of wood that project at angles from the northeast corners of the adobe.

Exploration/Settlement

The Branciforte adobe is the only known structure remaining of the Villa de Branciforte founded in 1797 by Spain, the last of three civil settlements established to discourage British and Russian colonial expansion on the coast of California. The adobe is located near the north end of the one mile long street now named North Branciforte Avenue on the northwest corner of Goss Street which from early days connected Branciforte on the hill with the flat lands below. North Branciforte Avenue is said to have been plotted as a one mile long race track by Lieutenant Alberto de Cordova of the Spanish Army Corps of Engineers in 1797.²

Research into the earliest period of the house's inhabitation is beset by numerous difficulties. Apparently, the house, like the Villa de Branciforte itself, was forgotten. It was not referred to in the

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Santa Cruz Sentinel between March 29, 1949 and January 1, 1967.

So far the earliest occupants traced were Jose de Jesus Lorenzana (1817-1863) and his wife and children. Jose was the oldest son of Macedonio Lorenzana who settled in Branciforte in 1824 and held a number of public offices here. Various members of the Lorenzana family owned tracts of land adjacent to the parcel occupied by the adobe which exceeded six acres at one time. In addition to the 6 plus acre parcel occupied by the adobe, Jose Lorenzana owned 37.19 acres across North Branciforte Avenue, east of the house which he sold in 1862. There was also a 35 acre plot northwest of the house directly on Branciforte Creek which he sold in 1861 to redeem a mortgage on it.

In 1856 Jose was taken to court by a neighbor, William Majors, for grabbing 15 acres of the latter's land adjoining Jose's corral on the 6 plus acre adobe parcel.

The presence of a corral suggests that Lorenzana raised livestock. The Mission had all the arable farm land and Branciforte the pasture land. It is possible Jose utilized his 35 and 37 acre parcels for grazing livestock. In 1842 Jose is known to have carted goods between Josiah Belden, Larkins Santa Cruz branch store operator, and Thomas O. Larkin in Monterey.³

In 1864 Jose Lorenzana's widow and four minor children were dispossessed by Charles Bern, an anglo, as a result of a \$257 debt incurred by Jose before his untimely death in 1863 at the age of 46. Attempting to establish homestead rights Jose's widow declared in 1863 that she and her husband had lived in the house 15 years. In 1848 she and Jose had been married 18 years and had had seven of their eleven children.

A number of post statehood documents show how Jose disposed of his lands but records of how he and other members of his family obtained

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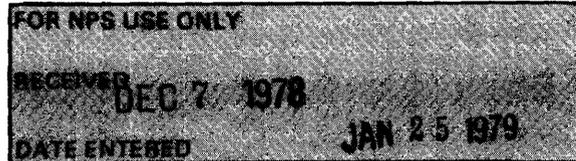
them before statehood have not yet been located. Exceptions are two grants of parcels on the banks of the San Lorenzo River, one to his father in 1841 and one to Jose in 1834, both made by Jose Bolcoff as alcalde and recorded in Book 1 of Deeds at the time of their post statehood sale.

Under the laws of the Indies grants of lands in Spanish pueblos were to be recorded in a Libro de Poblacion.⁴ No such volume has yet been located registering land grants in the Villa de Branciforte. In Monterey, a Book of Solares recorded the granting of town lots to individuals in the Mexican era. That volume is kept in the office of the County Recorder at Salinas. No such record has been found for Branciforte nor have any early maps showing the distribution of land in the pueblo. The two volumes of Patents in the Santa Cruz County Recorder's office contain no information about this land. Exact dating of the Branciforte adobe will have to await the location of such records. A closer estimate, however, may be derived from informed analysis of archaeological materials and interpretation of details of the building's construction. For example, Julia Costello of the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation considers the large size of the adobes themselves (11-12" x 22-24") to be an indication of early construction observing that later adobes are smaller.

In conversation with Harrie Downie at Carmel Mission in 1975, he indicated that he had visited the Branciforte adobe recently and inspected the exterior in contemplation of its purchase and restoration. He said that its size and humility, among other unexplained factors, led him to suspect it to date from the Spanish era. Later in 1976 he identified a number of the majolica fragments from several units about the house as being of types found at the Carmel Mission. In any case, whether finally determined to date from the Spanish or

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Mexican era the significance of this humble shelter remains unchanged. It is such a dwelling as is described by Harold Kirker in the following passage from California's Architectural Frontier: "...there survived far into the present century a number of houses, such as the Casa de Sota at Monterey (Plate 3), which--though scorned by writers of romantic fiction and of local histories--retain their authenticity as archetypal dwellings of California's colonial past."⁵

¹ Rob Edwards, August 10, 1976.

² Leon Rowland, Villa de Branciforte: The Village That Vanished (San Francisco: By the author, 1941), p. 4; Santa Cruz Archives, October 5, 1836 letter from Nicholas Gutierrez at Monterey to alcalde of Branciforte prohibits racing of mustangs without necessary permit.

³ The Larkin Papers (Bancroft Library) 1:284, Josiah Belden to Thomas Oliver Larkin, Santa Cruz, June 23, 1842, p. 243.

⁴ Francis Guest, "The Establishment of the Villa de Branciforte," California Historical Society Quarterly, XXXXII (March, 1962), p. 33.

⁵ Harold Kirker, California's Architectural Frontier (Santa Barbara and Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1973), p. 15.

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Addendum to Exploration and Settlement - 8

Harold Van Gorder, a friend of Herbert Still, cites an article on page 1 of the September 26, 1891 San Francisco Call about the Santa Cruz Mission centennial which contains the following statement about the adobe: "The only building standing which was built before 1800 is an old adobe at the end of Branciforte Avenue in East Santa Cruz."

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Simpson, Lesley Byrd. Branciforte: An Early Ghost Town of California.
San Francisco: Harry W. Porte, 1935.

NOTE: As noted elsewhere the Branciforte Adobe is not mentioned in any of the above publications as it was completely covered up and not known about by anyone, including the prominent local historian Leon Rowland after the death of Ernest Otto of the Santa Cruz Sentinel.