

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received MAY 12 1987

date entered JUN 22 1987

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

1. Name

RECEIVED

historic CHATEAU CHEVALIER

OCT 23 1986

and/or common same as above

OHP

2. Location

street & number 3101 Spring Mountain Road

N/A not for publication

city, town St. Helena

N/A vicinity of

Second Congressional District

state CA 94574

code 06

county NAPA

code 055

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input 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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name H. Gil Nickel and John T. Nickel

street & number #1 Acacia Drive, P.O. Box 327

city, town Oakville

N/A vicinity of

state CA 94562

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Napa County Courthouse/ Recorder's Office

street & number 1195 Third Street

city, town Napa

state CA 94559

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Napa County Historic Resources/ Inventory  
has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date Site inventory:10-27-78  
 federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Napa County Conservation, Development & Planning Department

city, town Napa

state CA 94559

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Chateau Chevalier, the native stone wine cellar and vineyard estate of Fortune Chevalier in 1891, is situated on the steep slopes of Spring Mountain above York Creek. The terraced hillsides of Spring Mountain, 2½ miles from St. Helena, were a primary mountain viticultural area of 19th c. Napa County and remain so today. Of the original Chevalier estate buildings, Chateau Chevalier Wine Cellar and Carriage House/Barn remain, essentially unaltered, in a vineyard setting reminiscent of the turn-of-the century. Chateau Chevalier retains its architectural and historical integrity, exemplifying the massive Chateau style in Napa County.

Chateau Chevalier Wine Cellar, 56' x 79', 2½ stories in height, is constructed of native field stone and quarried stone. It is stepped into the hillside, a design typical of gravity flow cellars. The main facade (NW elev.) of Chateau Chevalier has 2½ story gabled wings of fieldstone flanking the distinctive projecting central tower of random coursed cut stone. The Tower contains the main entrance with its molded stone semi-circular arch. Within the arched entry are hinged double wood doors with a semi-circular fanlight above. The stained glass fanlight with flower, leaf and scroll motif carries the legend "18 Chateau Chevalier 91". Pairs of semi-circular arched windows each side of the entry contain upper sash of stained glass in a lattice design. A parapet over the entry carries stone finials. Semi-circular arched windows within the Tower and half-round windows to each side are accented with alternating radiating stone of contrasting reddish (sandstone) color - a decorative feature also visible in the quoins, window and door surrounds of the Wine Cellar. The Tower's conical roof with iron cresting rises above the decorative stone frieze, pierced by a small arched window with a triangular pediment.

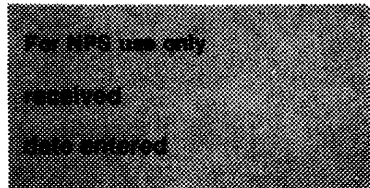
The Northeast facade(wing) is 2½ stories with two gabled dormers with board and batten gables. Segmental arched doorways are centered at ground level and the first story level; each with original wood doors. The carved stone legend "Chateau Chevalier" is above the NE entrance into the ground level wine cellar. Rectangular windows flank the entrance at ground level; half-round windows at the first story; paired semi-circular arched windows in the gabled dormers. Door and window surrounds are of alternating stone in contrasting color. Keystones carry the legends "CG" and "1891."

Encircling Chateau Chevalier along the Southwest to Southeast elevations is a fieldstone retaining wall along the terraced hillside rising steeply above the Cellar. The Southwest facade (wing), of fieldstone with board and batten gables, has small rectangular windows with plain stone surrounds flanking a central segmental arched doorway(converted to a window). There is a central wood cupola. The two wings (NE and SW elevs.)

-see continuation page-

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

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



Continuation sheet

Item number

7

Page

1

flanking the central Tower have board and batten gables, projecting eaves and a plain boxed cornice. Gables carry semi-circular arched windows with plain wood surrounds. Each wing carries a square cupola of wood centered on the gable roof peak. Paired semi-circular windows with one over one sash provide light and ventilation in the attic story. Above each pair of cupola windows is a triangular pediment in the cupola tent roof. Each tent roof ends in an iron finial. Roofing material is composition shingle.

The South elevation, 1½ stories with a hipped roof, has a segmental arched doorway. The Southeast elevation, 1½ stories of fieldstone, has a central segmental arched doorway (converted to a window) flanked by rectangular windows. Above the doorway is a board and batten dormer with tent roof containing original double wood doors.

The exterior facade of Chateau Chevalier remains essentially unaltered. Interior spaces, adapted for use as a modern wine cellar and residence, ca.1950 and 1970, retain the original structural features intact. There is minimal impact on the original integrity of style and setting. In the ground floor wine cellar, a concrete floor and concrete-block perimeter wall were added. Cellar windows retain their original panelled shutters and iron grilles. Left of the entry hall in the Tower is the original Office: it retains the original redwood framed partition wall with its large rectangular window and doorway with stained glass transom. Right of the entry hall, a staircase to the first story has been removed; an iron spiral staircase in the wine cellar replaces it. Ca. 1950, the South corner of the first story was partitioned, converting it to an apartment which was expanded in the 1970s. Stone walls, windows and door openings remain intact. The original staircase in the Tower, from the first story to the second (attic) story remains. The second (attic) story has exposed timber framing revealing the complex roof-line and cupolas. Ca.1970, framed partitions divided the open attic; structural integrity remains intact.

Northwest of Chateau Chevalier Wine Cellar is the Carriage House/Barn, 24' x 66', nearly concealed by a massive grove of palms. In fair condition, the 1½ story board and batten Barn is unaltered; it rests on fieldstone sills. Two gabled wings are joined by a central passageway with barn doors in the east and west facades. Above the passageway are gabled dormers with double doors. A wood cupola with a tent roof carries a weathervane. Tongue and groove siding sheathes interior walls. Original horse stalls, stairs and partitions remain. It is currently used for storage.

Surrounding Chateau Chevalier are extensive landscaped terraces, stone retaining walls, olive and palm groves and a formal round pool. The Chevalier residence was destroyed by fire ca.1927. Chateau Chevalier is currently maintained as a vineyard and winery estate.

*Resource Count: 2 contributing buildings*

## 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 type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1891

**Builder/Architect** Architect: unknown

**Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)** Carpenter/Builder: M.G. Bale; Stonemasons: Pithie & Birkett

Chateau Chevalier, built in 1891 for French immigrant and wine importer Fortune Chevalier, illustrates a significant era in Napa County's wine industry: the "wine boom" of the 1880s and 1890s. As phylloxera destroyed French vineyards in the 1870s, European and Eastern U.S. markets turned to California to supply the wines and liquors no longer available from France. The unprecedented demand spurred expansion and innovation in Napa County's viticulture and wine industry: the growth of extensive vineyard and winery estates established by prominent San Franciscans which emphasized quality; the expertise of French and European immigrants in viticulture and wine production; the shift in winery construction techniques; the efforts to improve ageing and the storage of wine. Architecturally, Chateau Chevalier epitomizes the high degree of craftsmanship and building technology in native stone displayed by local stonemasons. Stonemasonry construction, drawing on skilled masons from the influx of Scots, Italian, Swiss Italian and Chinese immigrants into Napa County in the late 19th century, merged with a prevailing interest in European culture in the wine regions of California to produce a strong vernacular architecture. Chateau Chevalier, one of two examples of the Chateau style in winery construction in Napa County, draws on Fortune Chevalier's French heritage and was executed by the Scots stonemason, R.H. Pithie.

Fortune Chevalier, a craftsman in glass and member of the confraternity, "Compagnons du Tour de France," left his native France for San Francisco in 1850. He arrived on the ship Franklin with a cargo of "1476 lights" (window glass) and a company of glass artisans. His company of artisans scattered, lured by the Gold Rush. Chevalier settled in Placerville, as a wine and liquor merchant, and returned to France in 1855. By 1863, Chevalier had returned to Sacramento as a wine importer, and by 1872, F. Chevalier & CO. "Importers of Wines, Brandies and Liquors" had located in San Francisco. (1)

In the late 1870s, phylloxera damage in the French vineyards and subsequent shortages of wines and brandies turned attention to California (2) wines. Fortune Chevalier, aware that the shortage would increase in the next decade, turned to Napa County, home to many French immigrants in the wine industry. (3) By 1884, Chevalier had purchased land on Spring Mountain north of St. Helena; he subsequently planted 40 acres of vines. Only a mile away, San Franciscan, Tiburcio Parrott, would build his Villa Miravelle in 1885, renowned for its grapes and olives (Spring Mountain Winery today).

see continuation page

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Heintz, W.F. Chateau Chevalier of the Napa Valley, A History, 1985.  
A Memorial & Biographical History of Northern California (Lewis Publ. Co., 1891)  
 Slocum & Bowen. History of Napa & Lake Counties (1881)  
St. Helena Star (7-24-1891, 7-1-1892), Napa Co. Historic Resources Inventory (1978)

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property one acre ±

Quadrangle name Calistoga, CA

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A 10 542740 4262840  
 Zone Easting Northing

B           
 Zone Easting Northing

C         

D         

E         

F         

G         

H         

**Verbal boundary description and justification** Nominated area: 1 acre<sup>±</sup> of 116.83 acre parcel (AP# 022-180-33, Parcel 2) Following a 1/4 mile driveway from Spring Mountain Rd. westerly along York Creek to point driveway turns South. Boundaries of area: Commencing at the NE corner, running south along a stonewall 220', then SW along stonewall 180', then NE 60', then NW 250' along a driveway, then 70' North to a ravine along York Creek, then 300' East along ravine to point of commencement. See continuation sheet 5.

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Judith A. Munns  
 organization (for) Chateau Chevalier date 10/10/86  
 street & number P.O. Box 327 telephone (707)944-8868  
 city or town Oakville state CA 94562

# 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 Ruthyn Gueltier  
 title    date 7/87

**For NPS use only**  
 I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register  
 Entered in the National Register 6/12/87  
James M. McPherson  
 Keeper of the National Register  
 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

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 2/

In 1880, Napa County had 3,500 acres of grapes in production and there were 40 wineries; by 1890, there were over 18,000 acres planted and 166 wineries. In 1891, Chevalier began construction of Chateau Chevalier and the Barn. (4.) A year later, Chateau Chevalier was near completion and there was extensive landscaping and planting of olive trees (5). A residence for Chevalier was planned (and later built; it burned in 1927). Significantly, the Wine Cellar and Barn were built first; the need to properly store and age wines became more critical as the decade passed and more bulk wine became available from the extensive acreage in production. In 1893, Chevalier's estate had 40 acres of bearing vines and 50,000 gallons cooperage (6). Chateau Chevalier wines were entered in the Midwinter International Exposition in San Francisco in 1894. F.Chevalier & Co., however, continued to purchase large lots of bulk wine, as they did in 1895, which were stored at Chateau Chevalier: "The wine has already been sold to prominent wine-dealers in New York, where California wines are commanding better prices each year." (7)

The formal and massive Chateau style of Chateau Chevalier is unusual in Napa County. Apparently, Fortune Chevalier drew on recollections of his childhood in Brittany and his years as a glass craftsman in the chateaus of the Loire Valley for the design of Chateau Chevalier. In addition to Chateau Chevalier, only "Hillcrest" (Chateau Montelena), built in 1882 for Alfred Tubbs, owner of Tubbs Cordage Co. in San Francisco, exists.

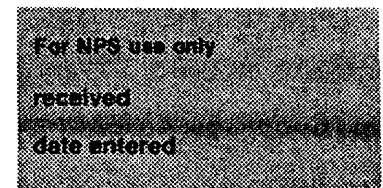
The building technology for Chateau Chevalier was well-established in Napa County. By the early 1880s, the more efficient gravity-flow cellar, stepped into a hillside, of stone rather than wood, was replacing the earlier wood, free-standing cellar in Napa County. R.H.Pithie, Scots stonemason, is known for his stone buildings on Main Street, St.Helena: Hunt Bldg.(1302-04 Main St.,1891); Richie Block (1327-37 Main St.,1892); St.Helena Star Bldg. (1328 Main St.,1900); also the Pope Street Bridge (1894) as well as many others. M.G.Bale, contractor and carpenter/builder, also contributed to St.Helena's Main Street: Bank of St.Helena (1351 Main St.,1890) and Owen Wade/Smith's Pharmacy Bldg. (1347 Main St.,1890).

In 1899, Fortune Chevalier died at 84. His son, George Chevalier, continued F. Chevalier & Co. and operation of Chateau Chevalier. The San Francisco Earthquake in 1906 destroyed the company's warehouses in San Francisco and the wine boom of the past two decades was ending. By 1915, with the prospect of Prohibition, Chateau Chevalier was sold. In 1918, Alaska pioneer Howard H.Hart acquired Chateau Chevalier. The vineyard estate, renamed "Harthaven", was used as a country home; the Wine Cellar was not used. During the period 1941-1968, under several owners, the last of the vines were removed. In 1969, the Bissonette family began preparation and replanting of the vineyards and in 1973 reactivated Chateau Chevalier Wine Cellar. The present owners, John and Gil Nickel acquired Chateau Chevalier in 1984 and maintain the vineyards and winery.

see continuation page

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 3

FOOTNOTES:

- (1) San Francisco City Directory, 1872:  
"Chevalier, F. & Co., 614 Front St."

San Francisco City Directory, 1875 (p.1155):  
" F. Chevalier & Co. Importers of Wines, Brandies and Liquors,  
614 Front Street, San Francisco."

- (2) San Francisco Post (12-10-1879):  
"Now that the destruction of the French vineyards is a fixed  
fact... The eyes of the world will be turned to our Valleys  
in temulous hope and anticipation of good wine."

San Francisco Chronicle (1-31-1879):  
"California has every right to become the leading wine-producing  
country of the world. Let our fashionable and wealthy families  
set the example of using none but native wines."

- (3) French vineyardists and winemakers in Napa County c.1880 included:  
Charles Carpy, C. Anduran, John Laurent, R.Chabot, Brun & Chaix,  
L.Corthay, Debanne & Bressard, T.A. Gaique, A.Jeanmonod, J.Medeau.

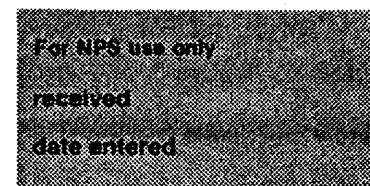
The Industries of San Francisco, 1884:

"F.Chevalier & Co.-- F. and George Chevalier, the latter being the  
business manager, importers and wholesale dealers and jobbers in  
wines and liquors, is one of the largest and most widely known  
firms in the trade... The firm is the sole agent for the Castle  
distillery, in the Sixth Internal Revenue District, Kentucky, and  
is also the agent of D.Rohrer's distilleries, Ohio. The whiskies of  
F.Chevalier & Co., are among the best in the market, included in  
which are the 'Castle' brands, that have a worldwide reputation,  
and D. Rohrer & Co.'s 'Bourbon.' The house is the sole agent for  
La Grappe d'Or, and of Chevalier's celebrated Grape Brandy and  
Cream Bitters. An extensive stock of French wines, from the house  
of J.Lacrosse, Bordeaux, France, and champagnes from F.Bernard,  
Epernay, France is also kept on hand..."

see continuation page

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 4

FOOTNOTES (cont.)

(4) St. Helena Star (7-24-1891):

" Monday, Charles York, foreman of G.F.Chevalier's Spring mountain place, showed us plans of a fine new cellar which is now in course of construction for that gentleman. It is being built of grey stone, trimmed in pink and the front is an E shape. It will be two stories high and 79 x 56 feet in size. M.G. Bale is doing the woodwork and Pithie & Birkett are the stone masons. ...The building will be completed in about six weeks when it will be filled with the very finest oak cooperage, the whole to cost in the neighborhood of \$10,000. This spring Mr.Chevalier erected a fine barn costing \$2000. It is 66 x 24 and all ceiled and oiled inside. Next year the gentleman, who spends most of his time in San Francisco, expects to erect an elegant residence..."

(5) St.Helena Star (7-1-1892):

" Chateau Chevalier....we drove to G.Chevalier's fine place on Spring mountain, 'Chateau Chevalier'; to see the improvements being made there. We found George Risley engaged in carpenter work in the cellar...Mr.Chevalier showed us through the fine cellar... He took occasion when referring to the stonework and tower of the cellar to highly compliment Messrs. Pithie & Birkett, who did the work. He showed us the fine barn recently erected, also the neat cottage built for the foreman, Mr. Charles York.The place contains forty acres of land, thirty of which has been cleared and planted in vineyard, The vines are all bearing an excellent quality of grapes. Along each avenue olive trees have been planted and on each side of the main roadways all kinds of fruit trees are growing..."

(6) Report of E.Priber, Commissioner for the Napa District, Board of State Viticultural Commissioners of California, 1893, p.34:

" M. Chevalier, St.Helena.- Total, 40 acres; all in bearing; soil loam; vineyard mountain; exposure north; crop, 120 tons; cooperage, 50,000 gallons, of which 10,000 gallons is oak and 40,000 redwood..."

(7) Napa Register (4-19-1895 from San Francisco Call):

"The largest personal wine deal ever made in this State was consummated last week when F.Chevalier & Co. of this city bought from Dowdell & Co., of St.Helena, CAL. 400,000 gallons of dry wine, which is now stored in Chateau Chevalier at St.Helena. The wine has already been sold to prominent wine-dealers in New York, where California wines are commanding better prices each year. The California Wine Association of Wine-Dealers are much stirred up over the sale..."



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

# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 5

---

These boundaries contain the two remaining buildings and representative landscaping of the historic property.

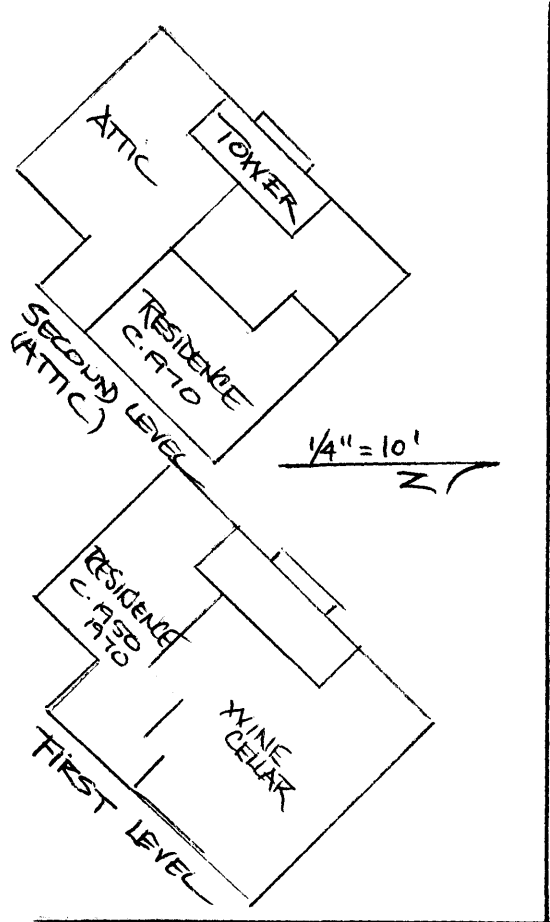
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received MAY 12 1981  
date entered

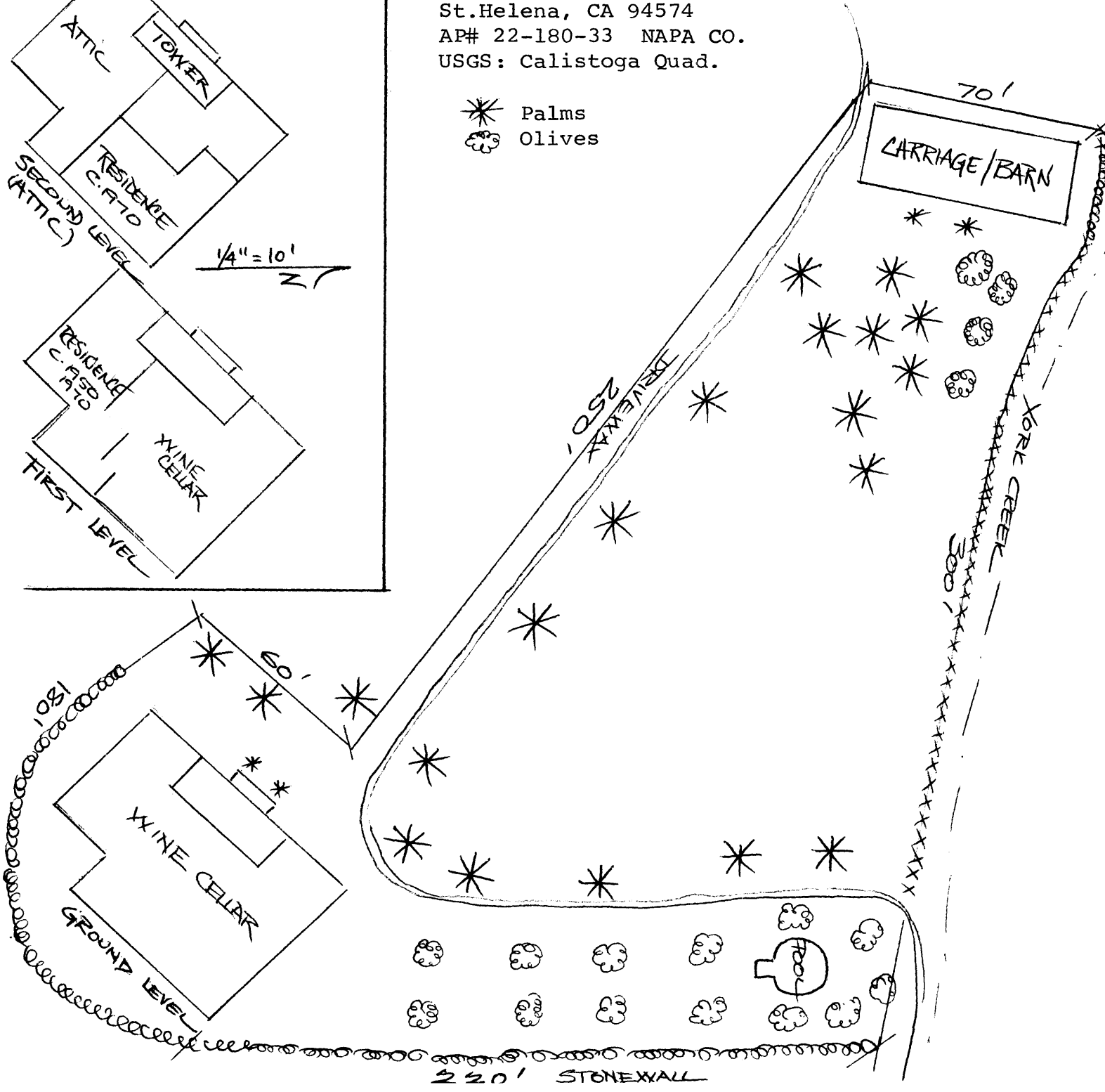
Continuation sheet

Item number Sketch Map Page

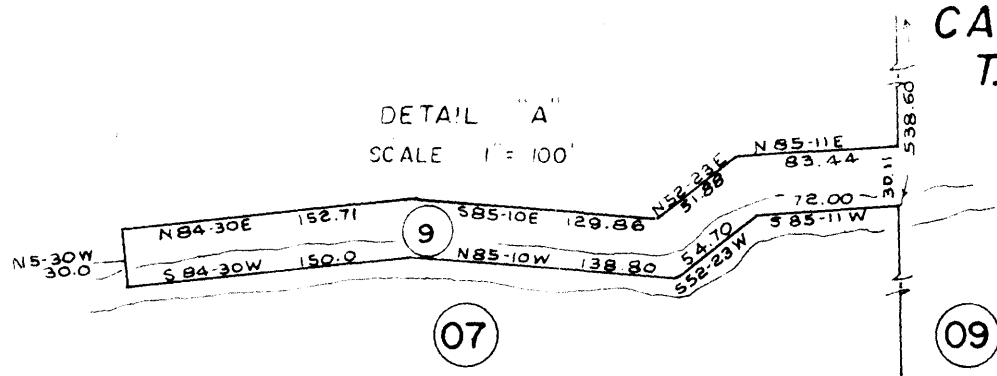


CHATEAU CHEVALIER  
3101 Spring Mountain Road  
St. Helena, CA 94574  
AP# 22-180-33 NAPA CO.  
USGS: Calistoga Quad.

- \* Palms
- ☼ Olives

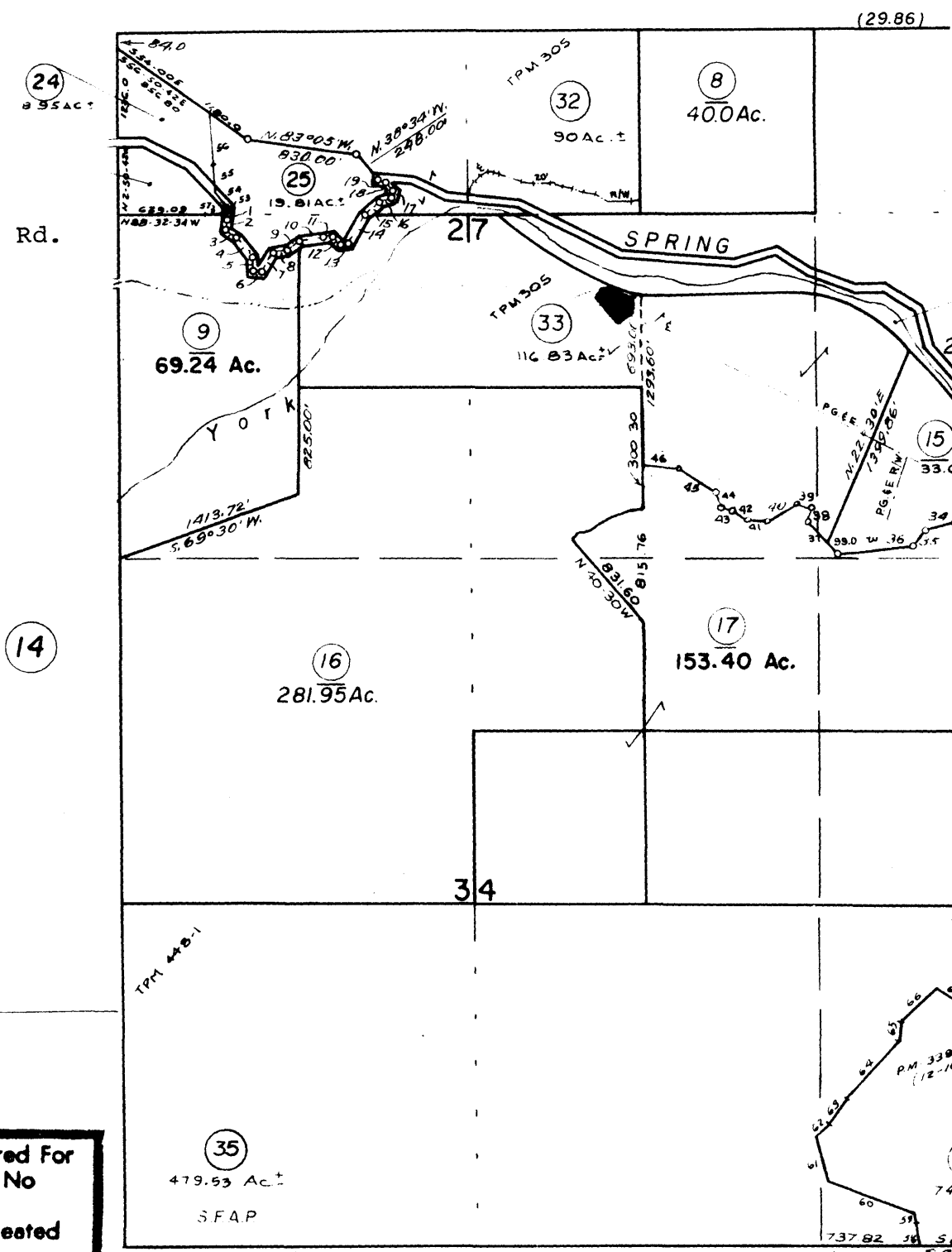


DETAIL "A"  
SCALE 1" = 100'



CHATEAU CHEVALIER  
3101 Spring Mountain Rd.  
St. Helena, CA 94574

AP# 22-180-33



**NOTE:** This Map Was Prepared For Assessment Purposes Only. No Liability Is Assumed For The Accuracy Of The Data Delineated Hereon.