

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received MAY 15 1985

date entered JUN 19 1985

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

RECEIVED  
OCT 28 1983

1. Name

OHP

historic Elliston

and/or common Elliston Vineyards

2. Location

street & number 463 Kilcare Road and 341 Kilcare Road

N/A not for publication

city, town Sunol

N/A vicinity of

state California

code 06

county Alameda

code 001

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: rental residential

4. Owner of Property

name Ramon L. and Amy E. Awtrey

street & number 463 Kilcare Road, P. O. Box 163

city, town Sunol

N/A vicinity of

state California 94586

5. Location of Legal Description

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

street & number 1225 Fallon Street

city, town Oakland

state California 94612

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None known

(Tax Certification, Part 1, 11/8/84)

has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town

state

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<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 <u>      N/A      </u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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

This proposal includes a cluster of six buildings on two parcels totalling about 9.5 acres of gentle to steep slopes. The parcel at 463 Kilkare Road includes the main house (No. 1 on attached Sketch Map ), three detached dwellings (No. 2, 3, and 5), and a carriage house (No. 4). Building No. 6, located at 341 Kilkare Road, contains a single-family dwelling. The middle parcel on the Sketch Map, presently owned and occupied by Eric Erickson, is not included in this proposal, even though it, too, was part of the original estate called "Elliston," developed by owner Henry Hiram Ellis in the late 1800's.

The main house (No. 1) is a 48'x50' stone structure in the Richardsonian Romanesque style, comprised of three stories plus a full attic. Its rusticated sandstone exterior is 32" thick on the bottom floor and gradually tapers to 22" on the uppermost floor, creating bay-like windows with window seats in all of the interior rooms. Its steep gabled roof, with a wide dormer in front (west elevation) and a smaller one in back (east elevation), provides floor space under the eaves on the third floor and attic. During the 1930's, when the house was converted into a nursing home, the east dormer window was replaced with an exterior door that leads from the third floor to a new deck.

A widow's walk leads from the attic to the south balcony, which faces the town entrance to the property. Its balustrade, carved in stone, bears a crest with the initials of the owner. They are inscribed on a shield with an anchor, its rope forming the letter "E" for "Ellis," and two "H's" on either side of the anchor for "Henry Hiram." Also inscribed in stone, centered under the front dormer gable (west elevation) is a cross-on-shield crest of unknown origin, flanked on either side with the numbers "18" and "90," the date the structure was completed. The covered front porch, with wood balustrade overhead, features stone arches and pillars on all three sides. The deck over the front porch and the wood balustrade, missing since the 1930's, were restored in 1983. Arched windows on the first and second levels, and decorative arches built into the stonework and balcony at the attic level, repeat the motif.

The interior is accentuated by central foyers on each floor and a broad oak stairway, with easy risers, that leads to stained-glass windows in the stair landings between the floors. At each level, the foyer opens to the major rooms--parlor, library, dining room, and kitchen on the first floor; drawing room, three bedrooms, bathroom, and study on the second floor; and family room, game room, two bedrooms, and bathroom on the third floor. Three centrally located chimneys, with fireplaces or openings for wood stoves, serve adjoining rooms on all three floors. The front parlor, library, and drawing room have original fireplaces trimmed with decorative porcelain tiles and ornate oak and mahogany Victorian mantels. One of the tiles depicts Lucy Ellis, the youngest of the Ellis children. Wainscoting in the dining room and doors in the library, dining room, and drawing room are the original redwood painted to look like oak. Almost all of the windows and doors are intact, including their decorative bronze hardware.

The other structures at Elliston are modest by comparison. All are representative of late 19th century rural architecture, with 7" shiplap redwood siding covering a basically rectangular wood frame with high ceilings and gabled roof. All are built against the sloping hillside. Building No. 2 is a one-story, 18'x35' building with partial concrete walls where the side garage backs against the hillside. The front door, front and back windows, and foundation were replaced in 1981, but do not detract architecturally. Buildings No. 3 and No. 5 are both two-story structures with the bottom level storage-garages dug into the hillside and constructed of native stone and concrete, with the upper ground level built of wood. Building No. 3, 36'x38', includes a wood stairway-entrance deck and a screened-in porch (west elevation). The original natural stone fireplace is intact, but the livingroom walls are covered with modern panelling.

(Continued on attached page)

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7. DESCRIPTION (Continued)

The other rooms retain their original lathe-and-plaster walls. Building No. 5 is 20'x30' in size and consists of a large room with corner kitchenette and a back addition which includes a bathroom and a closet with a water heater. The walls in the large room are lined with tongue-and-groove knotty pine panels. Building No. 4 has a 20'x40' two-story section and a 14'x40' one-story addition in the back. Used as a carriage house, there were horse stalls and carriage storage on the lower floor and a hayloft and groom's quarters on the upper floor. There is a small dormer window (west elevation), used for lifting hay into the hayloft. Built directly on the ground and against the hillside, it has sustained severe wood damage along the one-story back addition and the lower portions of the entire first floor. The back wall and the roof over the 14' one-story addition were removed for safety. (This structure will be used as a winery when restored in 1984).

Building No. 6 at 341 Kilkare Road is a two-story woodframe Victorian built before the main house was completed in 1890. It features an attractive front-porch entrance with decorative trim. The fireplace in the front room is built of native rock. At some unknown date a one-story addition, including a kitchen and dining room and an outside bathroom, was added to the original two-story structure (east elevation). In 1973, current owners abandoned the bathroom and added a new two-story wing on the south side of the original structure. It provides two bathrooms, one on each floor. The new wing complements the earlier architecture in roofline and duplicates the 7" shiplap siding of the original building. Because the house was set on natural stone for a foundation, damaged wood posts were replaced, dirt removed, and concrete perimeter foundation poured in all accessible areas in 1983.

Building No. 1 is currently used as the owners' personal residence. Beginning in 1984, the first and second floors will be used for wine-tasting and other functions related to our winery business. Building No. 2 is being used for winery storage until Building No. 4 is converted into the winery, after which it will revert to use as a residential rental. Buildings 3, 5, and 6 are all rental units and will continue to be used for that purpose after renovation.

## 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1885–1890

**Builder/Architect** Henry Hiram Ellis

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The unique architecture of the stone building and the historical period and life-style of the important pioneer family who lived there make Elliston worthy of preservation.

According to early family records supplied by members of the Ellis family, the massive yet appealingly simple stone mansion in the Richardsonian Romanesque manner was designed by Captain Ellis and his wife. The stone was quarried from the Mehrmann quarry in nearby Niles Canyon and brought by wagonloads to the site, where it was shaped and carved with handtools. Lucy Ellis Riddell, youngest daughter of Captain Ellis, recalled that her father "watched the fashioning and placing of every stone in the heavy walls."

The original water system, still standing, consisted of a huge reservoir, fed by natural springs, and a deep cistern from which water was piped to the lower houses. The system was planned and installed by the Ellis sons, Franklin Capen and Philip Austin, who had learned the trade of plumbing and gas-fitting. Some of the original plumbing for an indoor drinking fountain and bedroom washbasins, though now unused, still remain in place. The stone-lined flume, built to carry the winter run-off from the arroyos behind the houses, still runs the length of the property to Sinbad Creek.

When Henry Hiram Ellis built Elliston, after retiring from the San Francisco police force, he fulfilled a long-cherished dream to establish a family seat in California. He chose Sunol as his homesite, a tiny hamlet tucked in a protected valley where he and his family of six children had enjoyed many pleasant summers roaming the hills and swimming in the creek. He named the estate "Elliston," after the old family homestead on Cape Cod, near Sandwich, Massachusetts, established by early descendants of Lieutenant John Ellis, who left England in 1630 to settle in the Plymouth Colony.

For Captain Ellis and his family, Elliston provided a home for some forty years. The property was developed with stone-lined flower beds, three acres of vineyards, olive orchards, and native trees. The stonework, a magnificent live oak, and a huge bay tree have survived, but the vineyard is gone. (The vineyard will be replanted in 1984 as part of the winery business.) Homes were built on the estate for the Ellis children. Iza Vesta, the oldest child, lived in Building No. 3 after her marriage to Dr. Ledyard. Lucy Ellis, the youngest child, lived with her parents until her marriage to Mr. Riddell, teaching Sunday School and singing in the Little Brown Church of Sunol, accompanied by her mother, who was church organist. Church records indicate that Captain Ellis helped to establish the church and very likely donated the stained glass windows that match those at Elliston. Franklin Capen lived in Building No. 6 (a sign advertising his plumbing business was found there), and Philip Austin lived in the house just north of it (the one owned now by Mr. Erickson.) Bert Ellis, the youngest son, brought his bride to the main house where they lived with the elder Ellises. Before Captain Ellis' death, the property was deeded to Bert Ellis, who lived there until the early 1930's when the economic setbacks of the depression caused him to lose it.

For the next forty years, until 1969 when the current owners purchased it, Elliston was used as a nursing home, changing ownership three times during that period. From 1969 to the present, based on photographs and letters from the Ellis family, attempts have been made to restore the main house to its original use as a private residence. Institutional additions, such as wall-hung heaters, tile floors, room partitions, and closets, were removed, and the interior floors and walls repaired and redecorated to fit the period. The third-floor deck and stairs, which had been added above the back

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Please see Attachment.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 9.5 acres

Quadrangle name Niles Quadrangle

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	0	5	9	8	0	5	0	3	1	6	1	9	5	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

E 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

F 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

G 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

H 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

**Verbal boundary description and justification** Assessor's Parcel Numbers 96-210-7-1 and 96-210-9. The property is located about one-half mile north of downtown Sunol on the east side of Kilcare Road. It includes two parcels--463 Kilcare Road and 341 Kilcare Road--that comprise approximately 9.5 acres of the original estate called "Elliston." See Attachment.

### 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 Amy E. Awtry/Co-owner of Elliston

organization N/A

date 10-25-83

street & number 463 Kilcare Road, P.O. Box 163

telephone (415)862-2377

city or town Sunol

state California 94586

## 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 Maurice Mitchell Wilson

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

date 4/11/85

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the  
National Register

date 6-19-85

for Melores Byers  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

porch, was rebuilt, the stairs removed to make the structure conform more closely to its original design. The front porch deck and wood balustrade was reconstructed from photographs. Other than these alterations, which have not destroyed the architectural significance of the building, the main house today is essentially what it was like when completed in 1890.

The man who built Elliston was one of the Gold Rush pioneers who helped to shape American history during a turbulent period of western expansion. His story is contained in numerous news stories and his own memoirs, My Boyhood and Youth and From the Kennebec to California. Born on June 15, 1829, in Waterville, Maine, Henry Hiram Ellis was nineteen years old when gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill in 1848. After signing up as a member of the crew on board "North Bend", which his father had booked passage on, Henry persuaded his father to take him along on the dangerous journey to California. The elder Ellis, whose notes aboard the brig are preserved in the book, California Gold Rush Voyages, 1848-1849, kept a faithful record of the six-month voyage. Stalled for several days in the Straits of Magellan and disappointed with the slowness of the "North Bend", Henry switched to the bigger New York pilot boat "William G. Hackstaff" at Port Famine, a Chilean convict colony where they had stopped for provisions, and arrived in San Francisco Bay on June 25, 1849, one month before his father. The elder Ellis died in the gold fields within a year, and Henry soon abandoned his unprofitable attempts at gold-digging and bought the steamer "Gazelle" for \$6,000.00 to take provisions to the miners along the Sacramento River and bring down cargo to San Francisco. He also started a trading post at Humboldt Bay, building a pack-trail from the bay to the Trinity mines. Later, he expanded his shipping business by making several trade voyages to the Hawaiian Islands and Mexico.

In July, 1853, he returned to New England to marry Elizabeth Capen, a descendant of "Mayflower" ancestors. They returned immediately to San Francisco, where for the next thirty years they helped shape its future. Henry Hiram Ellis was a charter member of the famed Vigilance Committee, a citizens' group formed to control lawlessness and corruption in San Francisco's early days. He joined the police force in 1855, serving as captain in the detective department. During the Civil War, Captain Ellis was a strong Union supporter and served as U. S. Deputy Assistant Provost Marshall. In 1875 he was honored by being elected from the ranks as the first Chief of Police of San Francisco chosen by popular vote of the people. He introduced the billy club because it was "more humane than firearms", and received many awards, among which was a gold medal and plaque from the Chinese community for successfully warding off an attack of whites during the riots of 1876. In 1899 he was appointed to a consular position at Turks Island in the West Indies, serving a one-year term.

Ellis Street in San Francisco is a fitting tribute to Henry Hiram Ellis. But his finest memorial is "Elliston", the home he "built for the ages". In his daughter Lucy's words, "it became to him a living thing. 'His last child', as he expressed it". For almost twenty years until his death on December 15, 1909, he "delighted tinkering in his workshop, planting trees, building stone flumes and drains for the Spring freshets, gathering fruit, or driving about in a little spring-wagon". Even today, the energy and inspiration of this California pioneer live on at Elliston.

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

"Biographical Sketch of the Life of Mr. Henry Hiram Ellis", The Weekly Commercial Record, San Francisco, July 18, 1889.

Ellis, Charles H., "Journal of a Voyage from Boston, Mass. to San Francisco, California in the Brig North Bend, Capt. Higgins, by C. H. Ellis, Passenger", in Pomfret, John E., Editor, California Gold Rush Voyages, 1848-1849. San Marino, California: The Huntington Library, 1954.

Ellis, Henry Hiram. From the Kennebec to California: Reminiscences of a California Pioneer. Los Angeles: Warren F. Lewis, Publisher, 1959.

Ellis, Henry Hiram. My Boyhood and Youth. "Prologue" and "Epilogue" by Lucy Ellis Riddell. Casita de Loma Vista, Altadena, California: Private Printing, 1959.

Ellis, Mrs. Howard Coit, wife of grandson of Henry Hiram Ellis. Correspondence from April 26, 1978 to present.

Huntington, Mrs. Donald E., granddaughter of Henry Hiram Ellis. Correspondence from January 6, 1976 to present.

"Notes from a Pretty Town in Alameda County", Morning Call, Sunol Glen, January 23, 1891.

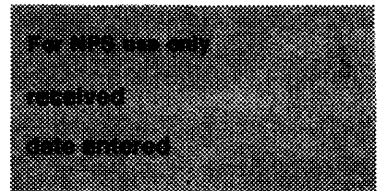
Phelps, Alonzo, A. M. Contemporary Bibliography of California's Representative Men. San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft and Company, Publishers, 1881.

"Pride in a Street, Tower: A Family That Helped Build San Francisco", San Francisco Chronicle, August 21, 1963.

Scott, Winfield, "The Vineyards in Alameda County", Report to the Board of State Viticultural Commissioners of California, 1898.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION

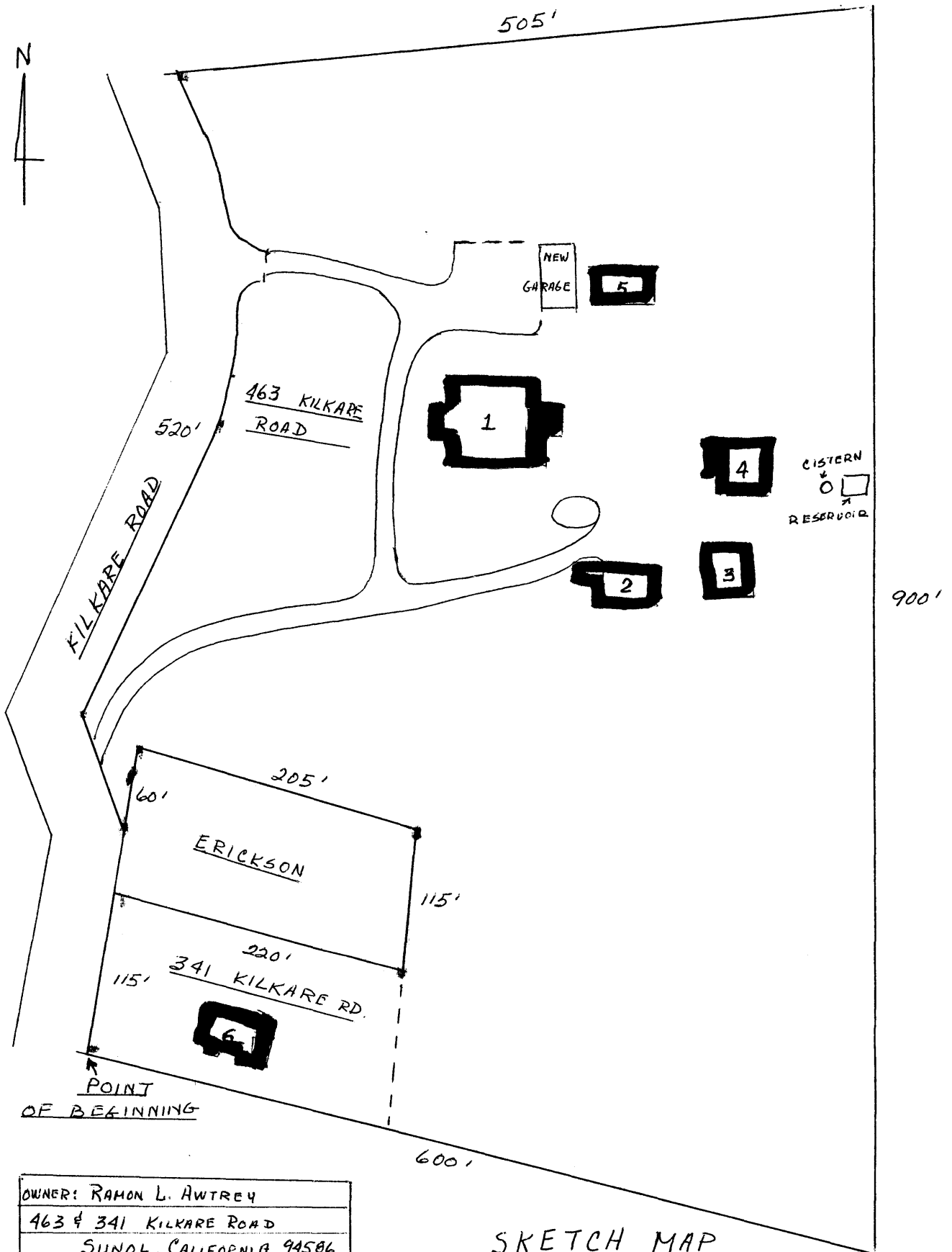
The boundary of Elliston begins at the southeast corner of 341 Kilkare Road, turning east 600', north 900', west 505', south 520' along Kilkare Road; then north 60', east 205', south 115', west 220', and south 115' to the point of beginning as shown on attached sketch map.



On the attached Sketch Map, the historical buildings are outlined in red. Note that the garage in front of Building No. 5 has not been included in this proposal since it was not a part of the original Elliston estate. The property boundaries are outlined in green.

The boundaries encompass the original estate and its grounds with the exception of a roughly 1/2-acre portion immediately north of building No. 6. This parcel was a portion of the original estate, and was the site of a house built about 1885-90 for one of the Ellis children. It was a two-story woodframe structure with shiplap siding similar to building No. 6. However, the portion of the property containing the building was sold in the 1930s. The building was stripped, stuccoed, and totally remodeled at that time. A basement was added and the roof was replaced with one of corrugated metal. The present building bears little resemblance to the original structure. Because of the elimination of this property from the estate more than 50 years ago and its severe loss of integrity, it has not been included as part of the nomination. Boundaries have been drawn to reflect existing integrity.

A-2774H





OWNER: RAMON L. AWTREY	
463 & 341 KILKARE ROAD	
SUNOL, CALIFORNIA 94506	
TAX KEY: 96-210-7-1 & 96-210-9	
PROPERTY BOUNDARY = 	HISTORIC BUILDINGS = 
SCALE: 1" = 100'	

SKETCH MAP

OF

ELLISTON

463 Kilkare Road (and 341 Kilkare Rd.  
Sunol, Alameda County  
California