

260

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

MAR 01 1993

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

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OMP

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Miller/Melone Ranch other names/site number Miller House

2. Location

street & number 12795 Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road not for publication city, town Saratoga vicinity state California code CA county Santa Clara code 085 zip code 95070

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: [x] private, [] public-local, [] public-State, [] public-Federal. Category of Property: [] building(s), [x] district, [] site, [] structure, [] object. Number of Resources within Property: Contributing (2, 1, 3, 6), Noncontributing (1, 1, 1, 1), Total (6). Name of related multiple property listing: NA. Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0.

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this [x] nomination [] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [x] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. [] See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official: [Signature] Date: 2/24/93. California Office of Historic Preservation, State or Federal agency and bureau.

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. [] See continuation sheet. Signature of commenting or other official: _____ Date: _____ State or Federal agency and bureau: _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is: [x] entered in the National Register. [] See continuation sheet. [] determined eligible for the National Register. [] See continuation sheet. [] determined not eligible for the National Register. [] removed from the National Register. [] other, (explain.) _____. Entered in the National Register. Signature: [Signature] Date: 4/1/93.

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agriculture
field/agricultural outbuildings

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Bungalow/Craftsman

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete
walls weatherboard
roof asphalt
other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Melone/Miller Ranch Complex includes a two bedroom, one bath Craftsman ranch house, a garage and tankhouse, plus a windmill, a non-contributing aviary, and a well preserved cast-iron lidded fuel oil container. The ranch house, constructed in 1910-11, has only had two alterations: an 8' addition to the rear porch, and the enclosure of its sleeping porch. Beautifully restored by its owner, the 1½ story side gabled Craftsman wears its 81 years with pride.

Although the original 40 acres have shrunk to 2.4 acres, its 200 foot driveway still accesses the main thoroughfare. There is a shallow garden pond to the east of the front entrance and low shrubs are adjacent to the front porch. At the rear, to the southwest of the house, are a tank house and one car garage, both in fair condition. West of the back porch are a windmill and a deteriorating aviary. The house is surrounded by heritage oaks and mature redwood, mountain elm, buckeye and palm trees. The original prune orchard is 60 feet from the back door.

The arrangement of the interior space of the Melone/Miller house is clearly demonstrated on original architect drawings. In general terms, the living room is in the center of the house and is accessed directly from the front door on the porch. Going counter-clockwise around it: at 3:00 o'clock, the dining room; 1:00 o'clock, kitchen opening out to screened back porch; 12:00 o'clock, open sleeping porch (now enclosed) is connected to the living room through a hall which also accesses kitchen on north and bed "chamber" on south at 1:00 o'clock. That chamber connects to a bathroom at 10:00 o'clock; the bathroom connects to another bed "chamber" at 8:00 o'clock, which returns the visitor to the central living room.

Part of the symmetry of the Melone/Miller house is executed by matching bays, two at each side. On the north elevation, one each in dining room and kitchen; on the south elevation, one each in the two bed chambers. This Craftsman house is wood frame, post and beam construction. Exterior walls are covered with 8"-wide clapboard on 1st story. It has wood shingles in a coursed pattern, on the upper ½ story and the framing of the front-facing shed dormer.

This is a textbook 1½ story Craftsman house with a low-pitched side gabled roof of synthetic mineral shingles and wide, unenclosed eave overhang. No rafter tails are exposed under the roof line on the east or west elevations. Along the rake edge on each side, three beams extend through the wall to the roof edge, each forming a triangular knee brace.

The front facade (1)** is symmetrical, it has a full width front porch, the south half screened for summer use, the north half glassed-in for winter use. The porch is contained under the main roof. The roof is supported by four solid two-tiered square columns that extend to ground level and are clad in clapboard that matches the exterior wall surfaces. On either side of the entry steps are 2'-high matching pillars.

** numbers in parenthesis, i.e.(1), are keyed to photo numbers in photo section

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1911-40

Significant Dates

Cultural Affiliation

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

Wolfe, F.D., Architect

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Melone/Miller house is the only remaining prune ranch home on its orchard with its original outbuildings left undisturbed, in the Saratoga area. This historic property that hosts a ranch house with its garage, tank house and windmill, could be described as a ranch complex. This was the home of prune orchardist Charlie Miller and his family from 1911-1986. The seventy-five year time span in that ranch complex carried them through the latter part of the golden age of agriculture in the Santa Clara Valley, through its eventual demise, and finally, through the forced metamorphosis from a rural, crop-dependent way of life, to an urbanized society. During the years they lived in their comfortable Craftsman house on the outskirts of the city of Saratoga, the lives of the Miller family closely paralleled those of most of the other fruit ranching families in Santa Clara County.

The Melone/Miller family were an integral part of a broad pattern of California history in which immigrant families purchased acreage in the last half of the nineteenth century and developed it with sacrifice and determination into productive agricultural land. They continued to harvest crops well into the first half of the twentieth century until wars, economic depression, and the pressures of increased population intervened.

Research of agricultural records shows that up until the 1870s the principal crop in the Santa Clara valley was wheat. In the mid-1870s the first vineyards and orchards were planted in Saratoga. Those early ranchers knew that the acreage in the west valley near Los Gatos and Saratoga, was in the "thermal belt." Their location, in the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains, gave them protection from early frosts.

By the mid-1890s the famous Hume Ranch on Los Gatos-Saratoga Road had 350 acres planted in prunes which brought in an annual income of \$35,000 to \$44,000. But this was the exception. Santa Clara County emerged in the early 1900s as a fruit growing region of small farmers. The soil, weather and water of the valley helped the small grower, as did the free solar power which allowed them to bypass expensive mechanized dehydration. Together, these factors helped the local prunes surpass the quality of the established French prune market. Much to the surprise of these ranchers, an international market developed for "Santa Clara Valley Dried Prunes."

Eugene Sawyer in his 1922 History of Santa Clara County (page 135) stated: "It (Santa Clara County) is the prune center of America. More prunes are grown in this valley than are produced in the whole United States outside. In 1919 the number of prune trees was 7,652,000." By 1922 the county also had the largest number of packing houses (30) and canning factories (40) plus numerous private and commercial dehydrating facilities. More prunes were grown in this valley than any other kind of fruit.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Arbuckle, Clyde &
 Rambo, Ralph, Santa Clara County Ranchos, Rosicrucian Press, Ltd., San Jose, CA - 1968
 Couchman, Robert, The Sunsweet Story, Sunsweet Growers, Inc. - - San Jose, CA - 1967
 Cunningham, Florence R. &
 Fox, Frances L., Editor, Saratoga's First Hundred Years, Valley Pub., Fresno, CA - 1967
 Garrod, R.V., - - - Saratoga Story, self-published - - - San Jose, CA - 1962
 McAlester, Virginia & Lee, A Field Guide to American Houses, A.A. Knopf, N.Y., NY - 1986
 Stern, Peter Van Doren, A Pictorial History of the Automobile, Viking Press, NY - 1953
 Stickley, Gustav, Craftsman Homes, (Re-pub. of 1909 2nd edi.) Dover Pub. Inc. NY - 1953

Newspapers:

San Jose Mercury Herald (later News)

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings
Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University DeAnza College: Stockmier Library
 - Other San Jose City Library: California R
- Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property 2.4 acres

UTM References

A

1	0
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5	8	5	8	2	0
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4	1	2	6	4	5	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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 Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The area boundary for historic designation is described as: the center portion of the Marc Kocir property, APN 503-18-091. In rectangular configuration the boundary lines run along the east property line bordering the Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road for 88', centered on the width dimension of the house. The north and south boundary lines run from the Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road east to west for 205'.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary lines include all the features of the property which directly contribute to its significance, namely, the Melone/Miller house, its outbuildings, historic objects and heritage trees.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mardi Bennett, Principal
 organization MARBEN ASSOCIATES date 7/10/92, revision 12/23/92
 street & number 38 Alpine Avenue telephone (408) 354-1973
 city or town Los Gatos state CA zip code 95032

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1Melone/Miller Ranch Complex
Santa Clara County, CA

Description (continued)

Multi-paned windows are a functional and decorative feature that tie various elements of the house together. Two windows, both standard casement multi-pane sash over sash with one large pane of glass, flanked by narrower similarly glazed windows on each side, match each other at the front of the house. The front door (2) is, in turn, flanked in a distinctive way by two windows the same dimensions as the door. They are glazed vertically with three muntins and horizontally with six muntins. The square panes, on a smaller scale, are reflected again in the shed dormer windows, and over the windows in the bays on both north and south elevations, and the interior door (formerly exterior door) leading to the enclosed sleeping porch.

The front door (3) is solid oak and has three rectangular panes of clear glass in a stair-step pattern, the lowest placed next to the door handle. Its styling is unique for a Craftsman house. The other interior and exterior doors are standard paneled doors with the exception of the interior door (originally exterior door) to the enclosed sleeping porch. This is solid at the bottom with a window divided into nine small square lights at the top.

The square brick chimney (4) is slightly to the south of center at the apex of the roof. The house was heated by an oil furnace in the basement. It has only one heating outlet, a single grate in the hall. (The heating system has been converted to a natural gas furnace.) The centered front-facing shed dormer in the roof has visible rafter tails at the dormer's roof edge. This is matched by similar shed roofs over the windows in the two bays (5) on the south elevation, and the one long shed roof over the windows in the two bays (6) on the north elevation.

The back facade (7) is asymmetrical due to the fact that soon (year unknown, but estimated as early as the 1920s) after the house was built in 1910 the back porch was enlarged by adding 8 feet along its full length. An exterior door is at the south end of the porch on the west wall. The exterior wall does not match the original clapboard except for a 2 1/2 foot border (6) along the foundation on the north and west elevations. Between the clapboard and the screening is narrow vertical siding (8) which is carried around to the south elevation of the porch. The porch is covered by a shed roof that has visible rafter tails along the eave on the west elevation. Matching clapboard was used to enclose the 11'6" exterior wall (8) of the sleeping porch.

The Melone/Miller House utilizes symmetry and the matching of small square-paned windows to achieve an attractive unadorned exterior. The next section describing significant interior features can all be considered decorative elements.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Melone/Miller Ranch Complex
Santa Clara County, CA

Description (continued)

Significant interior features:

Beautifully restored are the Craftsman trademarks such as the hand crafted tile (9) on the facing of the fireplace; the clear cypress wood (10) used extensively for the fireplace mantel and bookcases, wainscoting, paneling, moldings, boxed beam ceilings and archway in living and dining rooms; the storage window seats in the dining room (11) and front bed chamber (12); the meticulously careful finish of the built-in cabinetry throughout the house; the oak flooring with walnut-patterned inlay (13) in living and dining rooms, tongue-in-groove flooring in bedrooms; the stylized leaded art-glass cabinet doors on room dividers (10) between living room and dining room, and dining room pass-through cabinet (14); and the original hardware (15) on doors and cabinets.

Among other unique aspects of the house is the unaltered wood lift used to haul wood and coal for the stove from the basement. The half basement is reached from the screened back porch by stairs (16) which are enclosed. They are accessed through a 4' high door near the south end of the porch. A practical solution used during the early remodeling can be seen in the enclosed sleeping porch (17) whose three original walls are still finished with the exterior clapboard. Worth noting is the fact that the original plumbing fixtures (18) are still functioning. Kitchen and bathroom faucets have never been replaced. Now considered "collector's items", the clawfoot bathtub (19), the rare pill toilet tank (20), and the pedestal sink are all operational.

Outbuildings

A small 16' x 20' 1 story garage (21) constructed of board and batten redwood is located twenty feet to the southwest of the Melone/Miller House. Its pitched roof with front gable matches the pitch of the house roof. Between the house and garage is a 12' x 12' three story tank house (21) of unpainted redwood clapboard with windows on the 2nd story level, and a 2,000 gallon roofed water tank on the 3rd level. Both buildings were constructed when the house was built in 1910. Both are in fair condition and are still in use. The first floor of the tank house is used for storage; the 2,000 gallons of water in the tank are still relied on for irrigation. An aviary (22) was built sometime during the Millers' tenancy about 40 feet northwest of the garage, just to the west of the windmill. It has deteriorated over the past 35 years, but the present owner plans to restore it as authentically as possible in the same location.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Melone/Miller Ranch Complex
Santa Clara County, CA

Description, (continued)

Reflecting back to an integral part of the owners' history is one of Charlie Miller's original service station gas pumps placed next to the west wall of the garage (after photo #21 was taken). The vintage pump, with its orange paint peeling, is a Wayne Pump from Fort Wayne, Indiana. Parked next to it is a functioning 1949 Caterpillar tractor. Grouped close to the other outbuildings thirty feet to the west of the house, is a 40' tall windmill (23). The name of the manufacturer, the "Aeromotor Co., Chicago", can still be read on its blades. Another indicator of past activities is the large cast iron lidded container (24) left in its original location near the northeast corner of the watertower. It is 4' high, 4' in diameter and mounted on two cut-to-size railroad ties. It was used to store fuel oil for the basement furnace.

Alterations and Deterioration:

The architect's house plans show the dimensions of the screened back porch to be 6' wide, and that the sleeping porch was open on the west wall. Sometime, early on, another 8' was added to the width of the porch and the sleeping porch was enclosed. For an 81 year old building it is remarkable that the rest of the house has remained exactly as originally constructed. The Melone/Miller House was continuously occupied by the same family until the 1986 death of the surviving member. Its restoration was initiated soon thereafter by the new owner to whom the property was willed. Fortunately, it has never been vandalised. However, one of the original outbuildings, the barn, had been allowed to deteriorate to the point of collapse prior to the demise of the last member of the family. The new owner had to raze the barn in 1987, for safety reasons.

Neither the house nor any of its outbuildings have ever been moved.

Restoration:

Restoration efforts have been on-going from January 1987 to April 1992. Early photos of the exterior were utilized and a sincere attempt was made by the owner/restorer to return the house to its original condition. Clutter and dirt buildup were removed. Care was taken to restore wood finishes and bring back luster to metal surfaces. Original plumbing and lighting fixtures were kept if still functioning. The dining room chandelier was cleaned and rehung. The only original material replaced were 3 risers and 2 treads on the entry steps. Rain gutters were repaired. The house was repainted its original colors, off-white with a forest green trim.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7,8 Page 4

Melone/Miller Ranch Complex
Santa Clara County, CA

Description, Restoration (continued)

Waste disposal was transferred from septic tank to sewer line. Overgrowth of a long neglected garden was trimmed and removed. Outbuildings and landscape features were left in place (25), (26). As a result, this property has fully retained its historic integrity.

Statement of Significance (continued)

Historic Overview:

Following the Native American Indians' occupation and use of the land in what was later called Saratoga, California, the history of the white man's association began. The DeAnza Party passed through Saratoga on March 25, 1776. Although, during the period that followed, there was missionary activity by the Franciscan monks in nearby Santa Clara, the Saratoga area did not attract their notice. However, in another forty years, much of the land in the vicinity of Saratoga was taken as part of the land grant, Rancho Quito, that Mexican Governor Alvarado gave to Jose Noriega and Jose Zenon Fernandez in 1841. Rancho Quito covered 13,310 acres of what are now the cities of Saratoga, Campbell and Cupertino. In 1847 American settlers began lumbering operations in the foothills south of Saratoga. About that time (1848) the United States government used military force to persuade the Mexican government to cede Alta California. By 1850, when California became a state, the influx of American settlers was creating a myriad of legal problems over land ownership. Mexican land grants were challenged, squatters settled on private land, and public land surveys had not yet been made. It took many years for the court system to sort it all out, but by 1880, land could be owned, free and clear, by a private citizen.

William Thomas Melone and his wife, Lucy Conover Melone, were among the early settlers who came to California in the 1880s "for their health." By the time W.T. Melone died in 1900 they had acquired several acres of orchard land. When Lucy Melone died in 1905 she left separate parcels of land to her five children. Her daughter, Lillian, inherited 21.23 acres that bordered the Mountain View Road (now the Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road), and several shares of other parcels with her sister Nettie and brother Earl. In 1910 Lillian's friend, Charles Miller, together with his brother Frank, inherited 20 acres on the Mountain View Road just south of Herriman Avenue, when his mother, Nettie Parker, died. Also in 1910, C.R. Miller hired San Jose architect F.D. Wolfe to design a typical, but modest, Craftsman style home on Lillian's acreage. The house was similar in style to the homes that many of their neighbors built between 1905 and 1935. It turned out to be a honeymoon house, ready for newlyweds Lillie and Charlie to move into when they were married March 23, 1911.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Melone/Miller Ranch Complex
Santa Clara County, CA

Significance, Historic Overview (continued)

Their only child, Mildred, was born in 1913. The first twenty years, they, and their neighbors continued to make their living by selling their yearly prune crop to local packers such as Sunsweet Growers, Inc. And, like their neighbors, their house played a part in keeping them solvent. In lean years it was used as collateral for a bank loan to tide them over until the next harvest season. Not only did it shelter them from the elements, it provided shelter from the economic vagaries of making their living off the land.

The price of prunes dwindled during the twenties and many of the ranchers looked for other sources of income. Charles Miller knew he was handy with automobiles, after all, they had a 1913 4-cylinder Cadillac that he serviced himself. So, in 1925, he contracted with Union Oil to provide gas and oil, and he built a service station in his front yard right by the side of the busy two lane road from Saratoga to Mountain View. Lillian Miller had a good head for business and she handled all financial transactions. She was also a hard worker. Since they had decided to set up a small grocery store in the service station office, she potted garden plants, baked cookies, and made fruit jellies and jams to be sold at the store along with the bread and milk and cottage cheese. The combination service station/grocery store did a good business during and after the Depression as more friends, neighbors and strangers purchased more cars to travel down the road past their house. All those years they continued to harvest their annual crop of prunes. They also tenaciously held on to their new business venture that had been predicated on the astonishing progress in the field of transportation. After Charlie's death in 1956, Lillian tried to keep the business going. Unfortunately, in the early '60s, she was robbed and beaten one day while alone in the store. Soon thereafter she closed the store and the station. In 1964 the service station was removed. Lillian and Mildred Miller continued to live together in their aging Craftsman house, still realizing a small income from their aging prune orchard. Lillian died in 1970. Mildred, who treasured her memories and her family home, lived there alone until her death in 1986.

Significant Dates - Melone/Miller House:

- pre-1910 - no dwelling on 21.23 acre parcel of prune ranch property;
- 1911 - 2 bedroom with sleeping porch and 1 bath, 1 story Craftsman style house designed by architect F.D. Wolfe, was built and occupied by Charles and Lillian Miller on her acreage. The house was sited approximately 125' west of the Mountain View Road on the outskirts of Saratoga, California;

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

The Melone/Miller Ranch Complex
Santa Clara County, CA

Significance, Historic Overview (continued)

- 1911-1956 - house served as a base of operations for prune growing and harvesting activities; home was mortgaged several times until service station income supported the family in the mid-'30s; home kitchen and garden were utilized for production of home-made items for sale in grocery store; dinner parties and other social gatherings of friends, relatives and neighbors were held until Charlie Miller's death at age 72 in 1956.
- 1956-1962 - house used only as dwelling while service station/grocery store remained in business;
- 1962-1970 - house served as safe haven for Lillian and Mildred Miller, until Lillian's death at age 88 in 1970;
- 1970-1986 - house deteriorated as Mildred's health failed, she died at age 73 in 1986;
- 1986-1989 - house secured but unoccupied by new owner, Marc Kocir;
- 1989-1992 - house cleaned and restored. It remains in the Kocir family.

Areas of Significance: Agriculture

In establishing the significance of the Melone/Miller Ranch Complex it must be understood that the Melone family name association with the land it was built on, was a very important end-point of a three hundred year sociological pattern.

In the 17th century the eastern seaboard of the United States was mainly colonized by immigrants from Europe. Through the next three centuries, their descendents continued the pattern by moving westward across the country. Genealogical research demonstrates this clearly in the case of the Van Couwenhoven family.

Wolfert Gerritse Van Couwenhoven was born in 1610 in the province of Utrecht, the Netherlands. In 1630 he and his wife, Neeltje, immigrated to Pensellarwyck, New York. They had several children, who, in turn, had several children, and so it went for many generations down the line. Each generation moved a little farther west, and, more often than not, engaged in farming.

Five of the descendents served in the American Revolution in 1776 (about the same time the DeAnza Party was marching through Saratoga). Another descendent, Dominicus Conover (anglicized from Van Couwenhoven) (1778-1839), had a son named John (1797-1876), who married twice. With his second wife, Nancy Bennett (1809-1852), he had four children, among them Lucy Adelia (1846-1905) (born when Alta California was still governed by Mexico).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7

The Melone/Miller Ranch Complex
Santa Clara County, CA

Significance: Agriculture (continued)

In 1876 Lucy A. Conover (H-1)* married William Thomas Melone (1844-1900) (H-2). In 1887 they came west all the way from Illinois to Saratoga with their children Earl Edgar (b.1877), Nettie Elizabeth (b.1879), Lillian Fern (b.1882), William Burrel (b.1885), with little Henry Oscar (b.1887) on the way. They arrived just as Saratoga was beginning to attract a larger population. For a time the family lived behind the city jail near 4th street (H-3). Later they moved to a prune orchard just north of Herriman Avenue on the Mountain View Road.

It had been a three century journey from the Netherlands to western California for the Wolfert Gerritse Van Couwenhoven family, but these descendents were ready to put down permanent roots. By that time California land could be owned, free and clear, by any private citizen as long as he, or she, had the money to buy it. And, following the pattern, William T. Melone bought it.

In the thirteen years before his death in 1900, W.T. Melone purchased several tracts of land. In the next five years, before his widow, Lucy Melone, died, she sold the Illinois homestead and with the proceeds, bought more Saratoga acreage. Before her death she deeded 21.23 acres to Lillian (A.D. Map of Santa Clara County 1902-03). Her brother, Wm. Burrel on 11/8/71, wrote a letter stating that, "...15 acres on Pierce (Road) was given to my sister, Nettie ...and 10 acres lying between Nettie's and Lillian's was left to my brother Henry and myself undivided at mother's death...The home property (on Mountain View Road north of Herriman), was left undivided to my two sisters and my brother Earl. Earl bought the two sisters share from them..." Lillian Melone Miller chose her 21.23 acre parcel bordering the Mountain View Road north of Pierce Road as the site for her home. The major portion of all these properties were devoted to prune trees which was a mainstay for ranchers in Santa Clara County from the late 1800s up to the 1940s (H-4).

The following is a chronological history of Lillian Melone's property bordering the Mountain View Road. It reflects the prevailing pattern of family succession of land ownership in Santa Clara County around the turn of the century. Since it is not known how much of her original 21.23 acres was deeded to each new owner, the pattern may have also reflected the norm after the 1950s, when many neighboring ranchers' family lands decreased in size as parcels were sold to developers.

* Numbers in parenthesis (H-1) are keyed to Historic Photos

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

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JAN 20 1993

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Section number 8 Page 8The Melone/Miller Ranch Complex
Santa Clara County, CA

Significance, Agriculture (continued)

Date of transfer - Ownership of Lillian Melone Property (21.23 acre parcel)
 pre-1897 - Lillie T. Cloud and George W. Cloud (her husband)
 2/12/1897 - William T. Melone
 6/12/1900 - Lucy A. Melone (at W.T.Melone's death)
 6/04/1905 - Lillian Fern Melone (March 1911 she became Mrs.C.R.Miller)
 9/08/1970 - Mildred LaVergne Miller (at Lillian Melone Miller's death)
 4/27/1086 - Marc Kocir (bequeathed to this friend and neighbor at
 Mildred Miller's death)

The sales transactions of portions of Lillian Miller's acreage could not be found. However, between 1905 and 1986 all but 2.8 acres were sold to different buyers. From the late forties on, the decision to sell their acreage became standard procedure for large fruit orchardists, as the land became more valuable for residential and commercial development than it was for agricultural production.

The agricultural significance of the Melone land is that it represents a period in history when the government had stabilized sufficiently to permit private ownership of land. Under private ownership, the land produced bountiful crops for a relatively large number of "small growers", until it was needed for other uses. The remaining parcel of Melone land, on which the Miller house is located, is significant because its original orchards are intact, and it still has retained the specimen trees, some of which were on the property when the first American settlers arrived in Saratoga. Although diminished in size from its original number of acres, it is one of only three of the original fruit ranches in the vicinity of Saratoga that were considered by the Saratoga Heritage Resource Commission for inclusion on its inventory. Item #25, the Reynolds Ranch, grew grapes. Item #26, the Novakovich Ranch, grew a variety of different fruit and nut trees (apricots, almonds, etc.) (see Section III Documentation, Item 6). The Melone/Miller Ranch Complex is the only ranch eligible for local historic designation devoted exclusively to the production of the famous Santa Clara Valley prunes.

Areas of Significance: Architecture

The significance of the architecture of the ranch house is gleaned from many factors. Its primary significance is that it is an excellent example of the California-originated Craftsman style house (see section 7, Description). The architect, Frank Delos Wolf, was a pre-eminent Craftsman bungalow designer in the Santa Clara Valley. Examples of his Craftsman designs were reprinted in books such as the American Institute of Architects' 1915 publication, Bungalows, Camps and Mountain Houses.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

The Melone/Miller Ranch Complex
Santa Clara County, CA

In an interview with architect George Espinola of Sunnyvale, he stated, "I believe Frank Delos Wolfe was the most prominent and prolific architect practicing in the Santa Clara Valley at the turn of the century." In a forty year period (1890-1926), working both alone and in partnership, he designed three National Register buildings: 1901 Willard Griffin House (Los Altos), 1905 Gilroy City Hall, and the 1912 Fremont Older Home (Saratoga). The latter was documented by HABS as were the 1910 Martin Avenue Bungalow Court (Wolfe & McKenzie), and the 1913 Peter Col Residence (Wolfe & Wolfe, (F.D. Wolfe & son Carl)). Espinola's past five years of research on a Wolfe biography has identified over 300 "Wolfe" buildings throughout the county, the majority of them in San Jose.

In comparison to most other homes of its vintage, the Melone/Miller house has had relatively little alteration since its original construction.

The existence of Wolfe's plans which were drawn and followed in 1910, prove, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that the house has only had two alterations: the sleeping porch had a wall added to enclose it; the back porch had an addition.

Neither the tankhouse nor the garage have ever been altered, nor has the windmill ever been changed in any way.

The facts, as far as the Saratoga Heritage Resource Commission has been able to determine, were reported by George White, the commission staff person. White confirmed the Commission evaluation of the property by letter.

He also noted with a hand written comment at the top of the City of Saratoga Heritage Resource Inventory i.e., "I don't know of any other Craftsmen (sic.) on this list which has been restored back to original condition like the Miller house has been." He also stated that the Miller House (Melone/Miller), Item #95, is the only ranch house on their Inventory List that is a Craftsman style. Item #25, the Reynolds Ranch (House) is a Pioneer style. Item #26, the Novakovich Ranch (House), is a Queen Anne Victorian.

White went on to explain that the owner of the Melone/Miller House declined to permit the Commission to confer a local historic designation on the property. The owner felt he would prefer to have just the National Register designation if and when it satisfies their requirements.

When the Commission toured the Melone/Miller Ranch Complex in June 1992 they were impressed both with the authentic restoration and the fact that there had only been two alterations over the long span of time. Three factors had helped assure that the ranch complex would remain unchanged: the Miller's family size did not increase during their tenure and they were not forced to add more square footage; the Millers were neither wealthy nor pretentious, they were satisfied with their ranch home just the way it was built; and it remained in the same family ownership for seventy-five years.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

The Melone/Miller Ranch Complex
Santa Clara County, CA

Significance, Architecture (continued)

By a stroke of good fortune, when the last survivor of the family, died, she deeded the property to a man who was, by training and by inclination, well qualified to restore the house to its original state. Both house and grounds had suffered from neglect after the death of Charles Miller in 1956. As his wife and daughter became older they were not financially able to pay for its maintenance, nor were they physically able to maintain the property themselves. The new owner, Marc Kocir, in addition to being a personal family friend, was a carpenter by vocation and a lover of history by avocation. He also understood the value of retaining the outbuildings and ranching equipment in their original locations, and the importance of protecting the landscaping features from further damage. These factors all contributed to the significance of the Melone /Miller House by assuring the integrity of the restoration and the setting.

Finally, due to the pressures of population growth which have resulted in the conversion of most of the fruit ranch properties to housing or commercial use, the Melone/Miller House is the last remaining Craftsman style house, that was built to serve a fruit ranching family, in the Saratoga area. As such it has been approved for historic designation and placed on the city inventory by the Saratoga Heritage Preservation Commission.

Addendum: Another dimension of the Miller Family

The Melone/Miller family were well-known in the area for not only were they part of the agricultural community at the beginning of the twentieth century, they gained the respect of their peers when, in 1925, they branched out in a new direction -- the "mom and pop" operation of a rural gasoline station/grocery store. This was during the period when small privately-owned stations filled the needs of their neighbors and the business/ pleasure travelers.

Charles Raymond Miller, a native of Wisconsin, came to Saratoga in 1906. He, and his brother Frank, lived with their mother, Nettie J. Parker, on the L.L. Parker ranch on Mountain View Road. Their mother left them the twenty acres in 1910. Charles was a postal worker in San Jose, and also an accomplished musician. His first contribution to the community was the organization of the 20-piece Saratoga Cornet Band (H-5). Earl, Burrel and Henry Melone all played in the band. The band played for parties, dances and parades and practiced after working hours in Earl Melone's orchard drying yard. The Cornet Band provided entertainment for several years but, as the young men accepted their responsibility to make a living, the band eventually disbanded. (Charlie Miller's cornet was found in a closet during the restoration of the house. It will be donated to the Saratoga Museum.) Charlie Miller married Lillie Melone in 1911 and began his life's work--the management of their orchard properties--soon thereafter.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 11

The Melone/Miller Ranch Complex
Santa Clara County, CA

Addendum: (continued)

In 1906 when Charlie Miller first came to Saratoga there were only 105,900 passenger cars in the whole United States. By 1925 their numbers had swelled to 17,439,701. Up until 1915 there were only twenty-two miles of paved roads in Santa Clara County. By 1924 there were slightly more than 100 miles of paved county roads plus seventy-five miles of state highway. Besides producing the cheapest gasoline, the state of California encouraged more and better automobiles and paved more streets and highways each succeeding year.

Taking note of how rapidly the "horseless carriage" (H-6) was making changes in their lives, Charlie Miller decided to try to take advantage of the potential for a new source of revenue. In short, he decided to open the Charles Miller Service Station in his front yard.

The Miller prune ranch bordered Mountain View Road, one of the three entrance roads to the city of Saratoga. He believed the daily increase of traffic warranted a station. In 1925 he contracted with the Union Oil Company to provide him with their products (H-7). He had a two pump station (H-8) built on their land right next to the west side of the road, put up signs advertising his location (H-9, H-10), and opened for business (H-11). In doing so he joined an elite fraternity of early service station operators in the Saratoga area.

The other stations were all close to the main intersection of town. General Petroleum (later Mobile, now British Petroleum) was established in 1924. Manager Wilbur Worden pumped the gas from 1929 to World War II. During that period George Lamphear ran the Shell Station; Walt Lindstrom ran the Chevron Station. Since there were two garages in Saratoga, the service stations provided gas and oil but did not do repairs. They were all one man operations and the men worked 18 hour days. Bobbie Worden helped by carrying her husband's meals to him on a tray. When all three of the town men had to respond to the volunteer fire department, all three wives were left to "man" the gas pump and check the oil.

Charlie Miller had the only station that stocked groceries as well. His wife often served the customers in the grocery store, and she also made the home-baked treats (H-9) that lured customers to the station in the first place. Charles, as a man of principle, refused to carry Coca Cola because it contained cocaine. Nicotine was not a recognized carcinogen in those days so he did carry cigarettes. Credit was extended to his customers--which became a heavy burden during the Depression years. With the responsibility of keeping their orchards producing, both the Millers worked 18 hour days during most of the early years.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 12

The Melone/Miller Ranch Complex
Santa Clara County, CA

Addendum: (continued)

Their daughter, Mildred, attended Cupertino schools and graduated from Fremont High School there. But during her days as a student, and before and after World War II, Mildred helped out in the store and the station. She also worked as a clerk in Hale's Department Store in San Jose, and as an uncredentialed nursery school teacher at the Y.W.C.A. Mildred was married for four years in the mid-forties to William Glen Harris, then divorced. As a young woman she enjoyed participating in the activities of the Y.W.C.A.'s Tamha Thamha organization. In her later years an avid interest in civic affairs brought her to most Saratoga City Council meetings.

On the 14th of November, 1956, Charlie Miller succumbed to a heart attack while working in the station. His widow and daughter kept the station and store going until 1962. In 1964 the Charles Miller Service Station was removed from the Miller's front yard. A concrete grease pit (H-11) is the only remaining trace of the operation. For that reason the Melone/Miller House application cannot tie into its significance with the field of Transportation. However, as the forerunner to today's popular "quick-stop" markets, Miller's Station served the public well, especially during the tough times of depression and war. The memory of its 37 year contribution at that location will be fondly remembered as a vital part of the growth and development of the city of Saratoga.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 13

The Melone/Miller Ranch Complex
Santa Clara County, CA

Bibliography (continued)

Telephone Interviews

REPOSITORY: Research notes, Marben Associates, 38 Alpine Avenue, Los Gatos, CA.

Melone relatives:

Abernathy, Florence and Frances
Loist, Shirley
Melone, Earl Jr.
Schneider, Barbara

Saratoga residents:

Bee, Lenney
Bogart, Andre
Clarke, Henry
Cooper, Louise Garrod
Diemer, Shirley
Duffy, Kay
Garrod, Vince
Jorgenson, Amy June
Kocir, Jerome and Marc
Palm, Virginia
Stelling, Miriam (Cupertino)
Worden, Barbara

Friend and employee: John Breeding

Official capacity:

Adar, Tsvia, Staff - - Saratoga Heritage Commission
White, George, Staff - Saratoga Heritage Commission
Ansnes, Elizabeth, Mem. Saratoga Heritage Commission
Peck, Willys, Member - Saratoga Heritage Commission
Christian, Lisa - - - Stocklmier Library
Crowes, Judith Carson- Cupertino Historical Society
Morrisey, Phyllis - - Odd Fellows Home
O'Neill, Dr. Robert - Saratoga physician
Peters, Kathleen - - - Cupertino Christian Church

The Melone/Miller House
Santa Clara County, CA

Additional Documentation: Photos

PHOTOGRAPHER: Chalo Bennett; DATE: 5/92;

NEGATIVE REPOSITORY: Marc Kocir, Property Owner

12875 Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road, Saratoga, CA 95070

EXTERIORS:

Number Camera direction and description

- # 1 Facing west - - - East elevation, shallow pond in foreground;
- # 2 " northwest - Front porch entrance, glassed-in porch;
- # 3 " west - - - Entry door;
- # 4 " northwest - Chimney, shed dormer detail;
- # 5 " northeast - South elevation
- # 6 " south - - - North elevation, back porch addition;
- # 7 " southeast - West elevation and tank house;
- # 8 " north - - - West elevation, back porch, south wall;

INTERIORS:

- # 9 Facing south - - - Living room fireplace, handmade tile;
- #10 " northwest - Hall-living room-dining room, cypress woodwork;
Hall, floor heating grate, cabinet and pillar arch
separated living-dining room and living room-hall;
- 11 " northeast - Dining room, woodwork, window seat, chandelier;
- #12 " southeast - Front bedroom, window seat, Craftsman windows;
- #13 " southwest - Living room, oak flooring, cypress woodwork;
- #14 " west - - - Dining room, pass-thru, leaded art glass, hardware;
- #15 " southeast - Second bedroom, cabinetry, hardware;
- #16 " south - - - Screened back porch, enclosed basement stair entry;
- #17 " southeast - Enclosed sleep. porch, exterior door, clapbd. wall;
- #18 " northwest - Kitchen, original faucet, light fixture, cabinetry;
- #19 " northwest - Bathroom, clawfoot tub, original faucet;
- #20 " southwest - Bathroom, pill toilet tank, original plumbing;

The Melone/Miller House
Santa Clara County, CA

Additional Documentation, Photos, continued

PHOTOGRAPHER; Chalo Bennett; DATE: 5/92
NEGATIVE REPOSITORY: Marc Kocir, Property Owner
12875 Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road, Saratoga, CA 95070

OUTBUILDINGS, LANDSCAPE:

<u>Number</u>	<u>Camera direction and description</u>
#21	Facing southeast - Tank house and garage (oil container);
#22	" northwest - Aviary behind windmill;
#23	" southwest - Windmill, Aeromotor sign;
#24	" south - - - Oil pot;
#25	" southeast - Heritage oak near Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road fence;

PHOTOGRAPHER: Mark Kocir; DATE: 6/92
NEGATIVE REPOSITORY: Marc Kocir, Property Owner
12875 Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road, Saratoga, CA 95070

#26 Facing west - - - Driveway, mature trees, auto near aviary.

The Melone/Miller House
Santa Clara County, CA

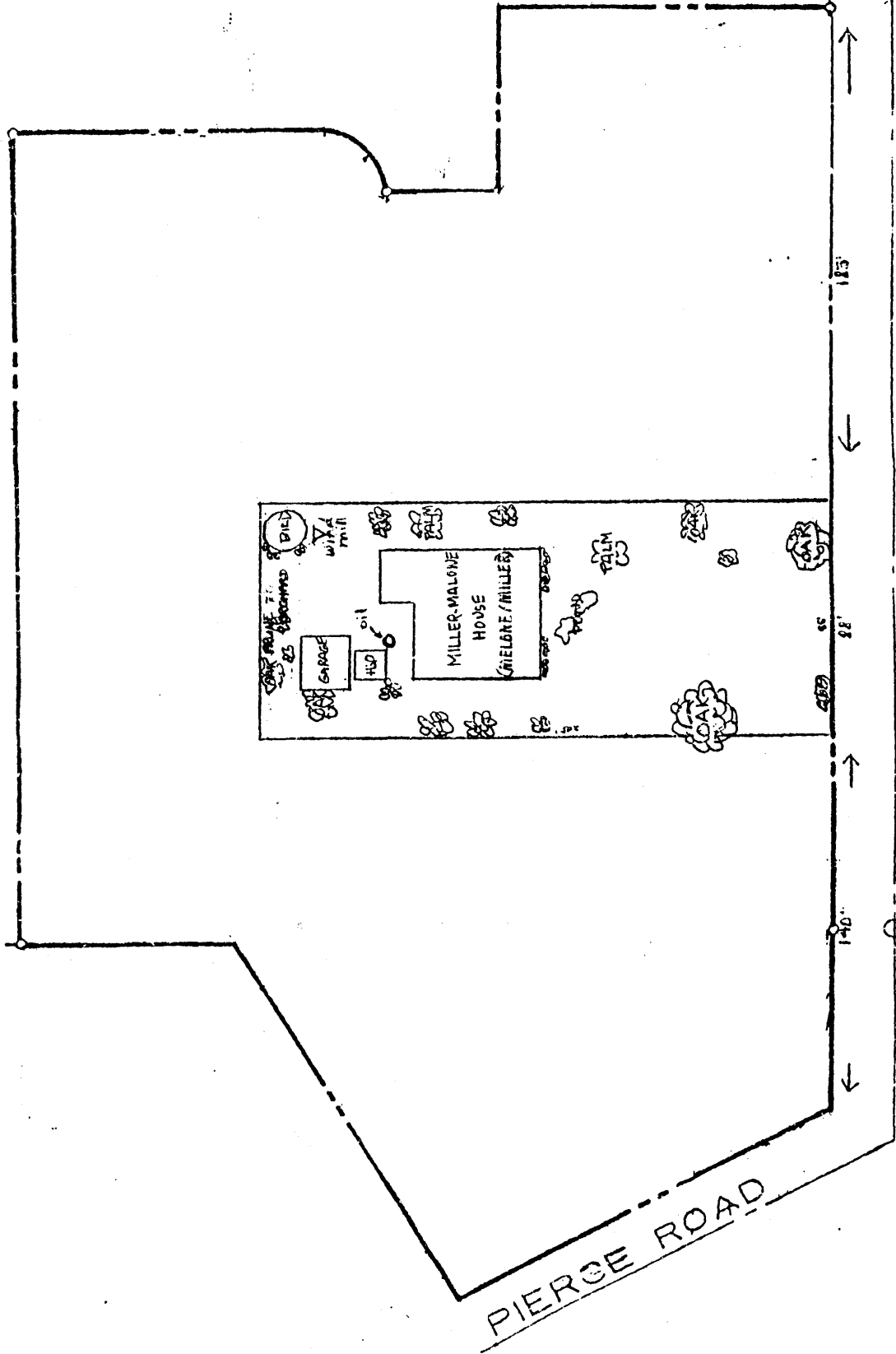
Additional Documentation: Photos, Historic

The following photographs, furnished by Marc Kocir and Jerome Kocir from Melone and Miller family albums, were copied for additional documentation by Photographer Chalo Bennett 6/92;

NEGATIVE REPOSITORY: Marc Kocir, Property Owner
12875 Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road, Saratoga, CA 95070

<u>Number</u>	<u>Description</u>
# H-1	Lucy Adelia Melone, charcoal sketch portrait, date unknown;
# H-2	William Thomas Melone, charcoal sketch portrait, date unknown;
# H-3	Home of W.T.Melone, Saratoga, CA., photograph, in front of house, left to right, W.T.Melone, Lucy Melone, their oldest children, Nettie and Earl Melone, in the late 1880s;
# H-4	Prune pickers in prune orchard, photograph, identities unknown, 1920;
# H-5	Charles Miller's Saratoga Cornet Band, photograph, Earl Melone seated at bass drum, Charles Miller, Leader, thought to be first standing man at left holding cornet, circa 1909;
# H-6	1913 Cadillac with Mildred Miller sitting on front fender, photograph, circa 1929;
# H-7	Union Oil Company gasoline delivery truck, man unidentified, photograph, circa 1925;
# H-8	Charles Miller's Service Station with Mildred Miller near pump, photograph, April 1929;
# H-9	Directional Sign, photographed 6/92, Sign professionally lettered, circa 1925;
# H-10	Advertising Sign, photographed 6/92, Sign not quite so professionally lettered, circa 1927;
# H-11	Charles Miller and unidentified friend in front of concrete grease pit at the Miller Service Station. Miller is wearing his traditional jodhpur pants and army service leggings, photograph, circa 1929.

Melone/Miller House
Saratoga, California



SARATOGA-SUNNYVALE ROAD

PIERCE ROAD

SCALE 1" = 60'

