

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

For NPS use only

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

received **JUL 25 1985**
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Morse/Skinner Ranch House

and/or common Morse/Skinner Ranch House

2. Location

street & number 13063 N. Highway 99, Frontage Road N/A not for publication

city, town Lodi N/A vicinity of

state California code 06 county San Joaquin code 077

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input 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	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

4. Owner of Property

name Raye Churchman, Danny Zendejas

street & number 13063 N. Highway 99, Frontage Road

city, town Lodi N/A vicinity of

CA state 95240

5. Location of Legal Description

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

street & number 24 South Hunter

city, town Stockton

state CA

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town

state

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Morse-Skinner Ranch house stands on the frontage road paralleling Highway 99, less than one mile south of Lodi, California, on a one-acre remnant of a once-larger ranch. The property includes two additional structures: a water tank and a more recent non-contributing garage. The residence, built in vernacular Greek Revival style in 1869, was altered in 1912 with the addition of Colonial Revival details. Subsequent alterations are minor.

Stylistically, the residence is a vernacular representative of the Greek Revival style with Colonial Revival modifications. The Greek Revival influence is most strongly seen in the proportions and forms of the two principal gabled rectangles with their eave returns and simple detailing. The original porch was replaced by the current Colonial Revival design with its Tuscan columns and ornamented pediment.

The wood frame residence is two stories in height and roughly rectangular in form. The building is comprised essentially of two gabled rectangles. The largest one is oriented east/west and is intersected by the other rectangle which extends to the south. The gabled rectangles contain eave returns on the facades, and double hung windows of both four lights over four and two lights over two. A slatted vent occurs in the center of the front facade gable. The largest rectangle appears to have been the original house. The southern wing may have been constructed at the same time or perhaps slightly later. The wood frame building is surfaced with wide channel rustic siding. The walls of the residence were originally constructed on the ground and raised into place on a brick foundation.

An angled one-story bay projects from the north elevation on the east end. A long one-story rectangle projects from the gabled wing along the south elevation. This sun porch contains steps and an entry, flanked by a row of windows on either side.

The original porch with its paired post columns and second floor balustrade was replaced by E. E. Morse, c. 1912, with the current Colonial Revival-inspired design. This one story porch is supported by Tuscan columns and contains a balustrade of turned balusters. The entrance is marked by an ornamented pediment and dramatized by a rounded projection on its southern side.

The southern sun porch was converted from an earlier screened porch, apparently added to the residence early in E. E. Morse's occupancy. A one-story roofed addition on the northwest and a gabled extension of the sun porch to the west are connected by a small addition at the rear (west).

The interior contains a stairway with turned balusters leading to the upper floor. Decorative moldings of Greek Revival derivation enframe doors and windows. The interior framing of the angled bay is embellished with decorative brackets. Upstairs doors still contain transoms. Other detailing is simple and standard to ranch house construction of the era.

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In 1936, the interior was remodeled with the addition of a bathroom, enclosure of the screened porch, and the replacement of some downstairs doors with French doors.

Tank House (Contributor)

A two story wood frame tank house, c. 1912, stands to the west and behind the residence. The structure is almost square in floor plan and topped with a hip roof.

The small wood frame building is surfaced with wood siding and contains a ground floor door on the east elevation. The small gabled addition of wood on the north end of the tank house was added after World War II to accommodate the washer and dryer.

Garage (Non-contributor)

A one story, two car garage stands between the residence and tank house, slightly north of the latter.

The small flat-roofed building is surfaced with wood siding and was apparently constructed during the 1940s. There are windows on the east and west elevations and paired doors on the south. Modifications appear to be minor.

The property occupies a one acre portion of the original ranch which formerly also contained a stable, and carriage house, demolished in the 1970s. The larger property was reduced to its present size through subdivision, primarily over the twenty five years between 1950 and 1975.

Additional features on the property include several mature deciduous and evergreen trees, a wide lawn and shrubbery. A fence separates the property from the frontage road, buffered from the parallel Highway 99 by dense planting.

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 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1869; remod. 1912 **Builder/Architect** unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Morse-Skinner Ranch house in Lodi, California, possesses historic significance due to its associations with three successive generations of a prominent pioneer Lodi family, each of which contributed substantially to the evolution of the community. This family also played a principal role in the naming of the City of Lodi. The ranch residence is additionally important as a handsome and distinctive architectural design, combining Greek Revival and Colonial Revival styles, and reflecting the major periods of its significant associations. The structure is an unusual survivor of its type and era still remaining in the Lodi area. It has retained its ranch setting, and its design integrity reflects the principal periods of significant occupation by family members.

The Morse-Skinner Ranch house was built by the prominent Lodi pioneer, Lorenzo Marion Morse in 1869. Morse, born in Maine of English immigrant parents, met and married Evelin Sarah Elliot in Illinois in the 1850s. The family, and infant son Fred, traveled by ox-drawn wagons to California in 1859 with members of the Elliot family, and settled in the Lodi area where Mrs. Morse's father was waiting.

In its earliest days, Lodi was called Mokelumne Station. Due to the mail confusion between Mokelumne Station and Mokelumne Hill, it was determined to change the name of the former settlement. Lorenzo Morse's brother Charles, a U.S. Marshal and later a prominent figure in the Bay Area, called a mass meeting of townspeople to vote upon another name for the town. The name Lodi was strongly advocated by Morse family members, and particularly Charles Morse, after a town in Illinois containing many members of the Elliot and Morse families. Lodi was chosen by town members as the new name of their settlement.

L. M. Morse purchased the ranch land that was to hold his house in 1867. The house, constructed in 1869, served as the residential focus of the Morse ranch which was purchased for \$12.50 an acre. At the time of the construction of the house, the couple's second son, Edmund (E. E.) Morse, born in 1861, was eight years old.

The land, covered with live oaks and underbrush, was cleared and the family first raised grain and watermelons. Later Morse planted fruit orchards, drying and shipping the harvested apricots and peaches. Morse and son Edmund are credited for having planted, in 1892, the first Tokay grapes in Lodi on this ranch.¹ Lodi has since become particularly well known for this highly successful crop.

¹ This acreage is no longer part of the property and is not included in the nomination.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property 1

Quadrangle name Lodi South, CA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	0	6	5	2	6	0	0	4	2	1	7	8	6	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

See Continuation Sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state N/A code county N/A code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Eleanor Young

organization Historic Environment Consultant

date 10/5/84

street & number 8579 La Riviera Drive

telephone (916) 386-2428

city or town Sacramento

state CA 95826

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

Kathryn Guethlein

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 7/10/86

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register of Historic Places.

Alfred B. Ryan
Keeper of the National Register

date 8-21-86

Attest:

Chief of Registration

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L.M. Morse's real interest, however, lay in raising pacers and trotting horses. Perhaps the best known member of his stable was the trotter Dexter Prince, out of the famous Hambletonian, purchased from Leland Stanford and eventually sold back to him. L.M. and a partner had a harness racing track near the present Micke Grove.

Unfortunately Morse's "hobby" became a financial drain upon the family, and Morse's two sons, E.E. and Fred, farmed to offset the losses. Morse's death in 1899 left debts that had to be paid by auctioning horses, colts, buggies, carts, harnesses and furniture. Upon Morse's death, his widow Eveline went to live with her married daughter, and Edmund and his family moved into the ranch house. Edmund continued to farm the original ranch, and purchased additional acreage known as the "Lower Ranch", bringing the total acreage then under cultivation ^{to} approximately 66 acres.

With his college background in business, E.E. soon added financial and business activities to his agricultural concerns. He became a founder of the First National Bank of Lodi. This bank was subsequently purchased by the Bank of America, and E.E. served as a Director of the Lodi Branch throughout his life.

Further expanding his financial activities, Morse helped found the Lodi Investment Co., formed in order to construct the Hotel Lodi and Lodi Theater. He remained a Director of this company as well until his death. Morse was also a founding member of Farmer's Mutual Fire Insurance Co. of Stockton, again remaining an active Director for many years.

As a member of the Lodi Union High School Board of Trustees, Morse helped to spearhead the bond issue for a new and accredited high school which was built in 1910, and utilized continuously until about 1975.

E.E. Morse participated actively in a number of community and social groups including the Lodi Masonic Lodge, Ben Ali Shrine in Sacramento, Stockton Lodge of Scottish Rites, Knights of Pythias, and the old Mokelumne Club (Mokelumne was the town's first name).

Morse's influence in the financial field in this region was significant and his agricultural contributions, particularly the first planting of Tokay grapes, important. His participation in the community was broad, ranging from educational concerns to a wide variety of community services. E.E. Morse was an important early twentieth century figure in Lodi and contributed significantly to the financial, agricultural, and educational growth of the community, virtually until his death in 1945.

A third family member of some prominence associated with the house

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was John Carroll Skinner, husband of one of E.E. Morse's daughters. Skinner was an early twentieth century automobile dealer in Stockton. Mechanically inclined, he invented the Skinner vaporizer designed to obtain greater fuel efficiency from motor fuel consumption. Skinner was also a noted race driver, holding all of the automobile speed records for non professional racers in California c. 1915. Much of his mountain racing was done to publicize the type of cars he sold. At the time of the Corbett-Fitzsimmons prize fight, he carried the San Francisco Examiner's fight extras from San Francisco to Carson City, beating the train in a well publicized race where county sheriffs closed the roads to other traffic and crowds cheered him on.

In 1920. Skinner gave up the automobile business and moved, with his wife Evelyn (E.E. Morse's daughter) to the Morse Ranch, where he joined his father-in-law in ranching activities. He was active in the agricultural community in the ensuing years as an originator of the Tokay Marketing Agreement which set fresh market grape standards, and as a founder of the Del Rio Winery, now Guild, where he served on the Board of Directors. Additionally, he was a Rotarian, a member of the Ben Ali Shrine and active with the San Francisco Wine and Food Society. At the time of his death in 1967, he was a Director of the Lodi Branch of the Bank of America and of the Farmer's Mutual Fire Insurance Co. of Stockton, apparently following his father-in-law's lead.

Each generational member of this important Lodi family, from early ranching and agricultural innovations to later financial and educational contributions, participated significantly in the growth and evolution of the area.

The Morse-Skinner House is a handsome vernacular ranch residence whose appearance reflects the elegance, design, and character of two important architectural eras. It is an interesting example of its type and style representations, and an unusually attractive structure for its location and use as a ranch residence. The large residence is also one of the very few ranch houses of its age remaining in the area.

Essentially Greek Revival in design origins, the Residence stylistically reflects both of its two major periods of associative significance; the Greek Revival period associated with the Lodi pioneer builder of the house, and the Colonial Revival era of the early twentieth century associated with the builder's son who remodeled a portion of the house in 1912. The basic forms and proportions of the Greek Revival style of the original building are combined with the later Colonial Revival design of its porch. Though somewhat different in design approach, the two styles derive from the same architectural origins, and retain a compatibility.

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The Greek Revival style aspects of the structure are most strongly reflected in the simple forms and elegant proportions of the two principal rectangles of the residence and in such detailing characteristic of the mode as the eave returns, window types and simple moldings. The crisp lines of the building create a visual counterpoint to the curvilinear ornament of the pediment, porch columns, and the curve of the porch, the principal Colonial Revival themes utilized in the building design.

The Greek Revival style was widely utilized in California during the 1850s and 1860s. The themes were brought to the West during and just after the Gold Rush, by immigrants from the eastern and southern areas of the country, where the style had been popular since the early decades of the nineteenth century. Vernacular representatives of the style range from farm homes and churches to commercial urban structures. The mode reflected the basic forms and ornament of Greek temple architecture, and often employed gabled or pedimented forms, eave returns that derive originally from pediments, and simple, refined proportions.

During the 1860s, the style gradually declined in popularity, giving way to Italianate or Second Empire modes. The construction of this Greek Revival house as late as 1869 reflects the fact that established styles tended to be retained longer in isolated or rural areas than in urban sites where new trends were more quickly adopted. The angled bay on the north elevation is more common to later Italianate design and may have been an early modification to the structure.

The Colonial Revival style evolved during the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, and characteristically employed such classical elements as columns, pediments, dentil courses and friezes, often embellished with formal floral ornament. The architectural return to simpler classical forms after the often excessive ornamentation of the late Victorian era reflected both a reaction to those excesses and to the grand versions of classicism represented at the Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago that heralded architectural styles for the next quarter of a century. E.E. Morse's use of the mode to "modernize" the porch of the ranch house that had become his permanent home was in keeping with the era.

The Morse-Skinner Residence is an important and rare remnant of the early settlement of the Lodi region, a good example of residential ranch construction of the area, and an unusually handsome architectural representative for its location and relatively modest use.

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Bewley, Marilyn, Granddaughter of E.E. Morse, Stockton, California,
Interview. 7/27/84.

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Hillman, Raymond, Regional Vice President, Conference of California
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Lodi News-Sentinel, 8/13/83.

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1913.

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clopedia of the Pacific, 1915.

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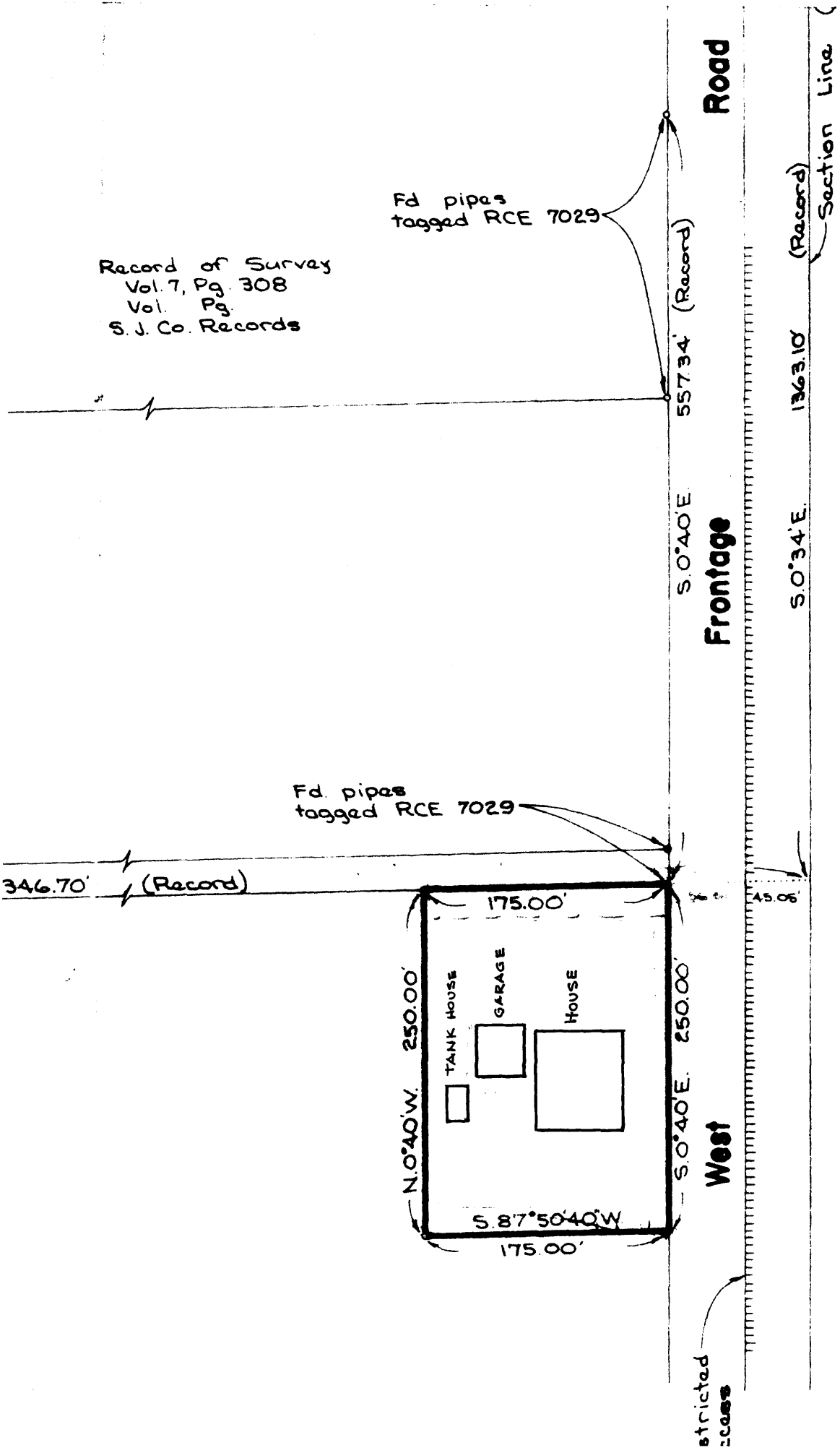
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The Morse-Skinner Ranch house property to be designated lies along the frontage road of Highway 99, less than one mile south of Lodi. The ranch property included over 200 acres of land during the height of its operation. The residence and tank house are the only ranch buildings now remaining from the original ranch. The garage is included in the property to be designated due to its location between the buildings. The property nominated is the one acre remnant of the once larger ranch, and contains these three structures and a small garden area around them.

The property is described as a portion of the North $\frac{1}{2}$ of Section 24, Township 3 North, Range 6 East, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian: Commencing at the Northeast corner of said Section 24; Thence South $0^{\circ}34'$ East along the East line of Section 24, 1363.10 feet; thence South $89^{\circ}50'40''$ West along the boundary line as described in Instrument recorded November 8, 1907 in Book "G" of Miscellaneous Records, Vol. 23, page 564, San Joaquin County Records and as shown upon that certain Survey filed for record in Book of Surveys, Vol. 7, page 308, San Joaquin County Records, 101.06 feet to a point monumented with a pipe tagged R.C.E. 7029, marking the intersection of the above described boundary line and the West line of the frontage road as described in Book of Official Records, Vol. 2386, page 452, San Joaquin County Records; said point being the true point of beginning; thence South $0^{\circ}40'$ East along the West line of the frontage road, 250.00 feet, thence South $87^{\circ}50'40''$ West, 175.00 feet; thence North $0^{\circ}40'$ West, 250.00 feet to the above described boundary line; thence North $87^{\circ}50'40''$ East, 175.00 feet to the true point of beginning.

Record of Survey
 Vol. 7, Pg. 308
 Vol. Pg.
 S. J. Co. Records



STATE HIGHWAY U.S. No. 99 & 50

Morse-Skinner Ranch complex
 13063 N. Highway 99,
 Frontage Rd., Lodi, CA
 San Joaquin County
 Sketch Map of properties