

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

For NPS use only

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

received SEP 20 1985  
date entered OCT 17 1985

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

**1. Name**

historic Stoner Residence

and/or common Stoner Mansion

**2. Location**

street & number 21143 E. Weldon Avenue N/A not for publication

city, town Sanger  vicinity of

state California code 06 county Fresno code 019

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Rex V. and Janet E. Campbell

street & number 13614 Skyway

city, town Paradise N/A vicinity of state California 95969

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Fresno County Hall of Records

street & number 2821 Tulare Street

city, town Fresno state California 93721

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Historic Resource Inventory (Fresno County Historic Registry) has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date Accepted December 13, 1983  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Fresno City Hall - 2326 Fresno Street

city, town Fresno state California 93721

# 7. Description

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

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

Built in 1910,<sup>1</sup> the Stoner House is a notable local example of California Bungalow styling,<sup>2,3</sup> with its low gable roof, broad eaves with projecting barge boards, and cobblestone porch.<sup>4</sup> Sited atop a knoll on a north-south axis facing north, there is a 360-degree view of beautiful Tivy Valley in Sanger, California. The one-and-a-half story wood frame structure, which is 36 feet in width and 59 feet in length, including 3,818 square feet of living space plus a 300-square-foot basement, is substantially unaltered in form, for the process of restoration has been meticulously done, thus preserving its character and integrity. There is one outbuilding which consists of a two-level wood frame 36 x 60 foot barn. The valley, rich with acreage of walnuts, oranges, and apples, possesses a poetic view of the snowy peaks of the Sierra Nevada.

The exterior was changed from white to a turn-of-the-century green (June/1983), a change necessitated because of taste and the practical aspect that white is so susceptible to becoming dirty because of dust flows in the valley. The extensively damaged roof necessitated its removal and the placement (August/1982) of a new Woodland series shingle was used, due to its high fire rating. The appearance of this shingle was selected since it most closely resembled the original roof, which was discovered below three layers of prior roofs. The original five-inch, half-round guttering was completely deteriorated and was replaced with same (August 1982). The original kitchen cabinetry was previously taken out with only poor quality makeshift substitutes remaining. Hence, new kitchen cabinets were designed to reflect a traditional turn-of-the-century style -- mahogany lined, ash paneled, and oak trimmed (September 1983).

The home has four gables trimmed with large barge boards scribed on each end. The upper story is faced with double sawn cedar shingles, and the lower portion of the exterior is done in a three-tier clapboard. The original double hung windows remain to grace the interior as well as the exterior of the structure. The home boasts a massive two-story native river rock fireplace, as well as an impressive covered front porch also constructed of river rock with large corner rock columns. The home was built on a foundation of river rock and mortar which in turn rests on an expanse of solid granite.

Facing the north elevation, which is the front of the home, there is seen a one-and-a-half story, 5/12 pitch. Trimming the gable are two 2" x 12" x 26' barge boards, scribed on each end. Upper portion of the top story is faced with double sawn cedar shingles. Three pairs of side hinged windows open into the room (billiards room). East pair of windows are 36" x 39", west pair of windows are 36" x 39", and the center pair is 48" x 39". Lower portion of upper story is a three-tier clapboard. There are two 4' x 5' double hung windows east of the 2" x 4' x 7' original pine and glass front door. The

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

**Specific dates** 1910 **Builder/Architect** UNKNOWN

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Stoner "Mansion", as it is referred to by residents of Tivy Valley, was originally built and occupied by Bertrand L. Stoner and Cornelia Williams Stoner (Kitty), prominent members of the community.<sup>5</sup> The home is significant in the local context in multiple respects. Architecturally, it is significant in that it was the first (and only) home of its kind to be built in the local area in the early 1900s, and it remains as the finest example of its type (a large California Bungalow) and period in the whole of Tivy Valley. Its agricultural significance stems from its association with the initial development of the Kings River Thermal Tract, which brought forth the emergence of a veritable garden basket from what was once a dust-swept wasteland.

The Stoner House has been restored in a manner which maintains its integrity and appearance, and stands today as a reminder of an era long past. Built in 1910, this house typifies early 20th century California Bungalow styling<sup>2,3</sup> with its low gable roof, trimmed ends of barge boards, and use of rustic materials.<sup>4</sup>

The house is unique in style when compared to other homes in Tivy Valley, for currently in the valley there are approximately 60 homes, 50 percent of which are typically small clapboard farmhouses, the remaining being modern residences. It is the largest of the older residential structures in the valley. The bungalow styling chosen by the Stoners reveals their desire for basic simplicity. This house type is ideally suited for the site and utilizes local materials for the foundation, porch, and fireplace, native rock taken from the nearby Kings River.

The construction of a house of the stature of the Stoner "Mansion" in a relatively undeveloped area reflects the faith and belief of individuals convinced of a rich potential and probability of development. This is not hard to see, for many of the best variables combined in the Kings River Thermal Tract to create a tremendous potential for prime agricultural growth: abundant water supply, high-quality rich clay loam soil, freedom from frost damage. And the agricultural skill level of the type of person attracted to the valley was of a high enough caliber so as to create a very high crop quality and productivity.<sup>10</sup>

A number of prominent figures were involved with either the occupation or development of the Kings River Thermal Tract. Jefferson James Graves was such a figure. He was the grandson of Jefferson Gilbert James, an early settler and cattle king whose role in California history goes back to 1863 when he bought his first 640 acres near Fresno, California from the state for \$1 per acre,<sup>6</sup> and his court battles with Henry Miller established much of the state's water rights laws.<sup>7</sup> Jefferson was known in his own right as an

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet - Reference List

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 19.74 acres

Quadrangle name PIEDRA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	1	2	8	5	2	2	0	4	0	7	1	6	0	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B 

1	1	2	8	5	2	2	0	4	0	7	1	2	0	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

C 

1	1	2	8	5	0	3	0	4	0	7	1	2	0	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

D 

1	1	2	8	5	0	4	0	4	0	7	1	6	0	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

E 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Kings River Thermal Tract Subdivision Number 1, R.S., Book 5, Page 30. Assessor's Parcel Number: 158-161-36. Boundaries are shown on attached map; justification included in Section 7.

### 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 Kenneth M. Jelladian

organization None

date August 11, 1984

street & number 1926 E. Simpson

telephone (209) 225-1224

city or town Fresno

state California

# 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 Gualtieri

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date Aug. 26, 1985

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

for Melvyn Beyer  
Keeper of the National Register

Edward S. Williams  
National Historian 10-17-85

Attest:

Chief of Registration

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10' x 35' covered front porch has two 2' x 2' x 10-1/2' river rock pillars supporting the east and west corners. The rock wall portion of the porch measures 18" thick and 5-1/2' high. Facing the east elevation, which is a side of the home, there is seen a one-and-a-half story, 5/12 pitch. Trimming the gable are two 2" x 12" x 14' barge boards, scribed on each end. Upper story faced with double sawn cedar shingles with two 35" x 48" double hung windows (bedroom). Upper story also includes eastern exposure of sleeping porch with six 24" x 24" windows, south end of house. First story is a three-tier clapboard. Two 2' x 4' 32 light windows, hinged on the bottom, one north and one south of the 28' high river rock fireplace (living room). To the south is a half circle of three 4' x 5' double hung windows (formal dining room). South of the dining room windows is one 24" x 39" double hung window (kitchen). There are three 27" x 46" windows on the southeast corner. They do not open (utility room).

The south elevation, the back of the house, is 1-1/2 stories with an upper level sleeping porch. Trimming the gable are two 2" x 12" x 14' barge boards, scribed on each end. Upper story faced with double sawn cedar shingles. There are eight 24" x 52" windows, openable (sleeping porch). First story is a three-tier clapboard. There are two 36" x 60" double hung windows, southeast corner of the house (bedroom). To the east is one 24" x 48" double hung window (bathroom). West of the back door is one 8" x 46" window; above the door is a 4" x 32" window, and east of the door are two 27" x 46" windows. These windows do not open (utility room). The back door is a nine light fir door and is new. Facing the west elevation, which is a side of the home, there is seen a one-and-a-half story 5/12 pitch. Trimming the gable are two 2" x 12" x 14' barge boards scribed on each end. Upper story is faced with double sawn cedar shingles with two 36" x 48" double hung windows (bedroom). South of the bedroom windows is one 29" x 36" double hung window (bathroom). Upper story also includes western exposure of sleeping porch which is identical to the eastern exposure (does not show in photo due to a tree in the way). First story is a three-tier clapboard. There are three 2' x 3' twenty-four light windows; the north and south ones open, and the center one does not (music room). To the south is a half hexagon of four double hung windows. The north and south windows are 36" x 60", and the two center windows are 48" x 60" (parlor). South of the parlor windows are two 29" x 36" double hung windows (bathroom). There are two 36" x 60" double hung windows on the southwest corner of the house and also behind the tree (bedroom).

The interior of the home contains fourteen rooms, a partial basement, and has approximately 4,000 square feet of living area. The main floor consists of a large living room with the original 4-foot-wide, pine and glass front entrance door, and a beautiful native rock fireplace on the east wall. The river rock

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used was taken from the nearby Kings River. The east wall of the living room also adorns a pair of twenty light windows on each side of the fireplace. The library adjoins the living room and has a matching trio of twenty-four light windows on the west wall. The large formal dining room is unusual as the entire east wall is half circle of a double hung windows with the original glass and adjoining window seats. The ceiling is beamed, the lower two-thirds of the walls are pine, and the upper one-third is plaster. The formal dining room, living room, and library are connected by two pairs of material pine pillars which make this area of the house very distinctive. The floors in the three preceding rooms are 2-1/4-inch, quarter sawn oak. The remainder of the flooring is fir. The parlor is also unique as the entire west wall is a half hexagon of double hung windows with the original glass. The remaining rooms on this floor include a bedroom, full bath, kitchen, utility porch, and half bath. A stairway in the back portion of the home leads to the second floor which consists of an expansive billiard room, two large bedrooms, a full bath with the original claw foot tub and sink basin, and hallway and foyer and a totally enclosed sleeping porch. The original 10-foot ceiling heights remain on the main floor, while the second story ceilings are coffin shaped. A major portion of the original lath and plaster remain but, due to cracking and other damage, the walls throughout have been resurfaced with a new coat of imperial plaster (April 1983).

The original brass hinges, brass door, and window hardware also remain.

There is a large one-and-a-half story barn, with loft, 36 feet in width and 60 feet in length, located southeast of the home, also built in 1910. This structure faces north and was constructed of the same materials as were used on the house. The large barge boards, scribed on each end, trim the two gables, and the three-tier clapboard was used on the body of the building. The pair of sliding front doors, track, and hardware are original. The back doors were missing and had to be reconstructed. This structure was reroofed with the same material as that which was used on the house. The east and west walls also retain the original double hung windows. The glass has been replaced due to breakage through the years. The barn was also built on a foundation of river rock and mortar.

From the original photographs of the home and barn, it is determined that the historic integrity of both structures have been totally maintained.

The buildings are located on the hillside at the rear of the property, which slopes down to the north. The house, barn, and remaining orange trees occupy a 3.9-acre area as shown on the accompanying site plan. The remainder of the property once contained orange trees; these have been removed over the years. Scattered oaks still remain on the lower portion of the property. Boundaries are drawn on historic lot lines to encompass the original 19.74 acres of the estate.

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agriculturalist and race horse breeder. He and his brother, Jim Graves of Graves Brothers of San Francisco, California, "purchased, subdivided, developed, e.g., irrigation systems, and offered to settlers acreages of rich tillable land tracts ... of the most beautiful body of land in Fresno County."<sup>8</sup> Jefferson was effective in promoting the Kings River Thermal Tract settlement and through his efforts "attracted a number of prominent professional men of Fresno, California, including attorneys Milton Dearing and H. A. Savage, who had developed high quality and highly productive fruit farms..."<sup>9</sup> Jefferson himself retained 200 acres for crops and horse breeding. Bertrand Stoner, husband of Kitty Stoner, herself a stockholder from Chicago, Illinois,<sup>1</sup> commented in letter form to Jefferson on April 3, 1918 about his satisfaction with the land tract. The Emperor grape vineyard, planted in the spring of 1914, was expected to yield an increasing return in 1918 of at least \$50 per acre more than in 1917. Stoner's oranges were described by one California expert ... "the finest in sugar, color, and texture" he had examined north of the Tehachapi Mountains. Bertrand further exclaims, "My water supply is abundant. The natural scenic beauty of the surroundings, coupled with returns indicated financially have determined me in making the Kings River Thermal Tract my permanent home."<sup>10</sup> It is due to the success of these early agricultural pioneers that the area has flourished to this day.

Tivy Valley was used "as a cattle and grain land for years"<sup>9</sup> before much of it was subdivided into 20-acre fruit farm parcels. Research indicates the existence of one to three other small homes in the valley<sup>11</sup> at the time that the Stoner Home was built (1910), making the home one of the first, and, being the showplace that it was, certainly the most notable. Research indicates that of these other homes built prior to the Stoner Mansion, most, if not all, were on other land in the valley, separate from the Graves development.<sup>11</sup>

The development of the 20-acre parcels by Jefferson and his brother, Jim Graves, was generated as a land speculation venture circa 1910.<sup>8</sup> The Stoners held at least 100 acres,<sup>11</sup> with references indicating that this land was probably all a part of the Graves tract.<sup>8</sup>

Tivy Valley is now a community of abundant agricultural development, businesses, and an assortment of some 50 plus homes ranging in kind from small clapboards to this impressive mountaintop villa. Much credit must then be given to Bertrand and Kitty Stoner for being one of the first to bring the development of agriculture to the area as well as for having the vision and initiative to create a home of such stature.

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The home is used for residential purposes and is currently owned by Rex and Jan Campbell, who purchased the property in June 1982 from Ralph and Donna Dunne, the son and daughter-in-law to whom the house was deeded by the aged father, Joseph Nelson, who, as near as can be determined, owned the property since 1945.

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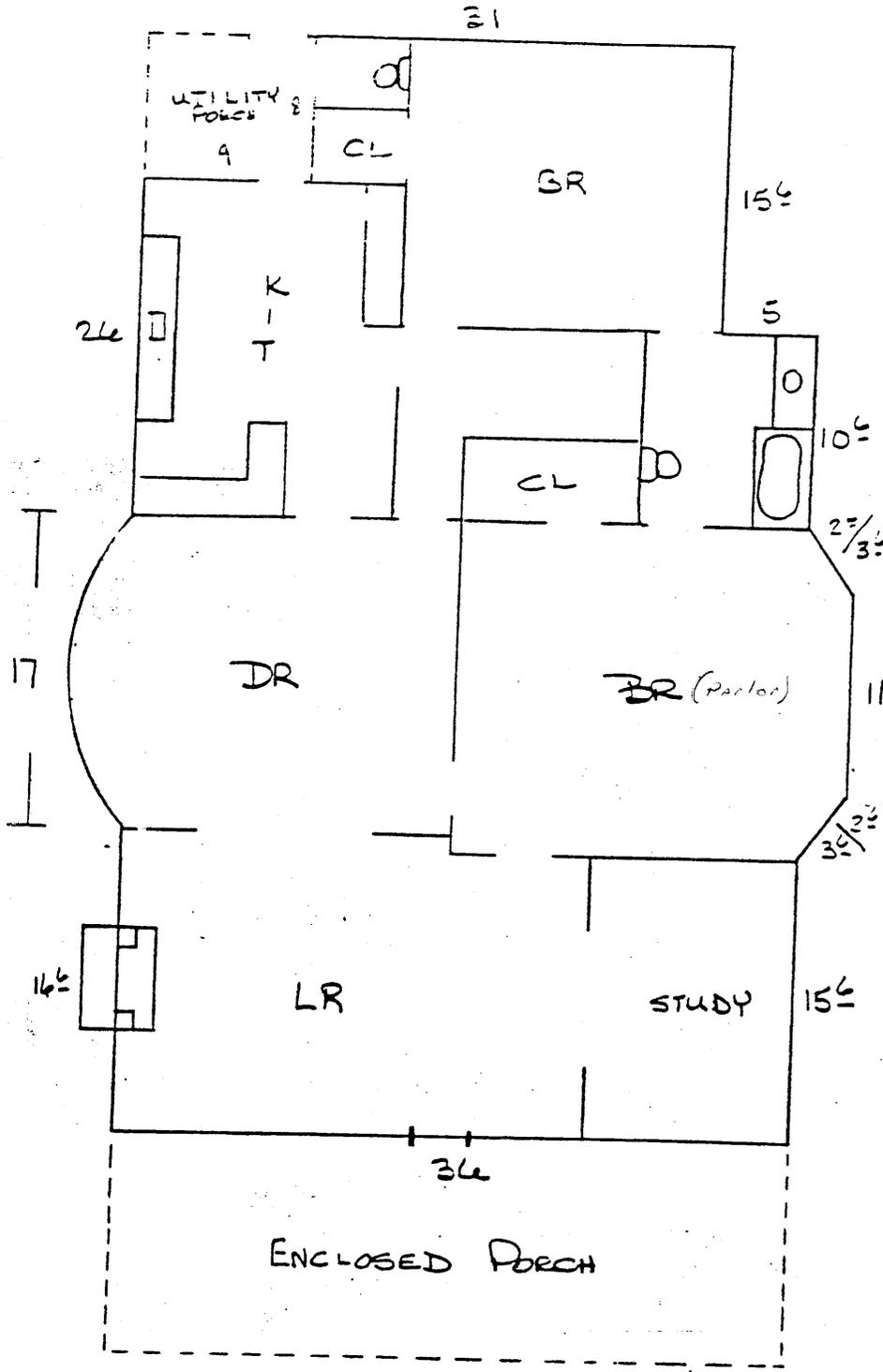
Page 2

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1. Personal Correspondence, Grace E. (Stoner) Wachold, niece of Bertrand L. Stoner, September 18, 1983.
2. Winter, Robert, The California Bungalow, Hennessy and Ingalls, Los Angeles, California, 1980.
3. Telephone Interview with John Powell, Architectural Historian, September 1983.
4. Personal Interview with William E. Patnaude, Architect, November 1983.
5. Personal Correspondence, Maurice Stoner, nephew of Bertrand L. Stoner, September 1983.
6. Anonymous, "Rancher, J. J. Graves, 90 Dies", The Fresno Bee, Tuesday, June 12, 1973, p. A10.
7. Anonymous, Obituaries, "Grandson of Cattle Baron Dies at Age 90", Independent Journal, Monday, June 11, 1973.
8. Jefferson, James Graves, ARE YOU AWAKE TO WHAT IS GOING ON? Then This Certainly Ought to Interest You (Promotional Material), Fresno, California, circa 1918.
9. Nicol, Robert H., "RACE HORSES BEING BRED ON VALLEY RANCH", The Fresno Morning Republican, Sunday, March 1923.
10. Bertrand L. Stoner, ARE YOU AWAKE TO WHAT IS GOING ON? Then This Certainly Ought to Interest You (Promotional Material), Fresno, California, circa 1918.
11. Personal Correspondence, Maurice Stoner, nephew of Bertrand L. Stoner, April 30, 1985.
12. Johnson, Helen, "50 Attend Oakhurst-Tivy Reunion", Sanger Herald, Third section--The Good Life, June 11, 1981.

G-3021H

THE STONER MANSION  
 21143 E. Weldon Sanger, CA. 93657  
 (Fresno County)



GROUND FLOOR  
 $8 \times 31 = 248$   
 $31 \times 51.5 = 1597$   
 $5 \times 44 = 220$   
 $2.5 \times 14.5 = 36$   
 $2 \times 10 = 20$   


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 2131

UPSTAIRS  
 $16 \times 56 = 896$   
 $7.5 \times 18 = 135$   
 $12.5 \times 28.5 = 356$   


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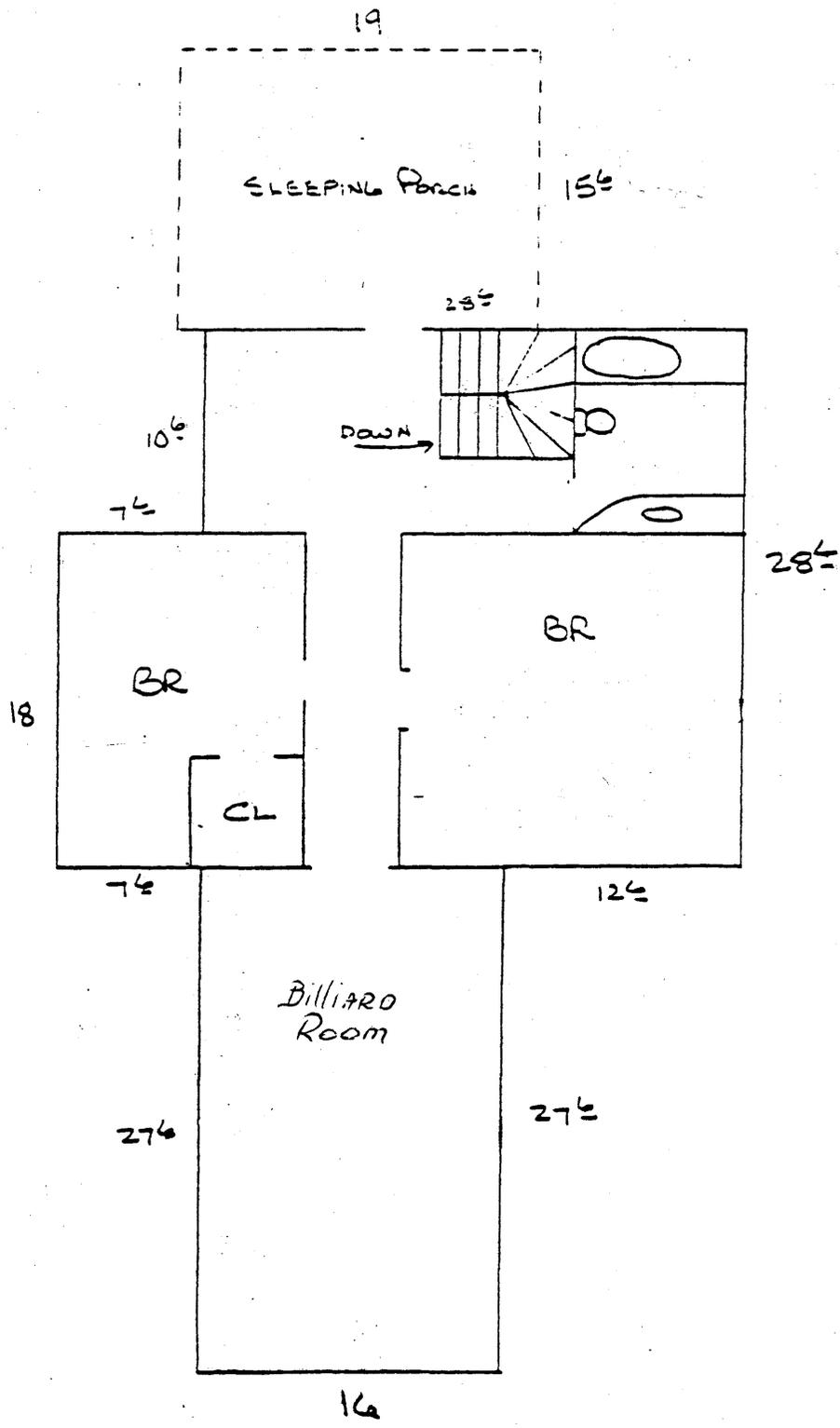
 1387

TOTAL LIVING AREA  
3518 #

ENCLOSED PORCH  
 $12 \times 36 = 432 #$   
 UTIL. PORCH  
 $8 \times 9 = 72 #$   
 SLEEPING PORCH  
 $15'6" \times 19 = 295 #$

GROUND FLOOR

THE STONER MANSION  
21143 E. Weldon Sanger, CA. 93657  
(Fresno County)



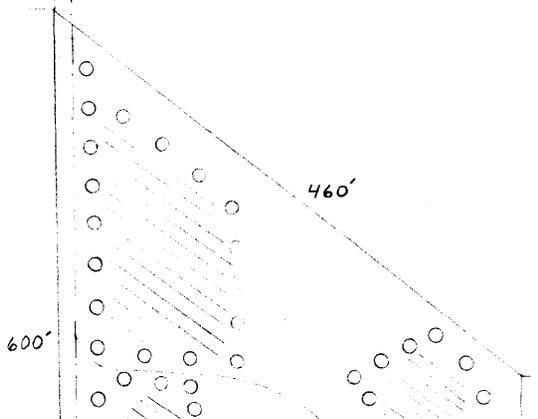
UPSTAIRS

657.6'

STONER RESIDENCE  
21143 E. Weldon Avenue  
Sanger, Fresno County, CA

19.74  
ACRES

1307.6'



# LEGEND

ROADWAY =   
 ORIGINAL =   
 ORANGE TREES = 

Dashed line indicates property and nomination boundaries; solid line encompasses historic buildings and orange trees.

# SITE LAYOUT

SCALE 1/4" = 25'

OWNERS - REX AND JAN CAMPBELL  
 ADDRESS - 21143 E. WELDON  
 SANGER, CALIF.  
 (TIVY VALLEY)

Dashed line indicates property and nomination boundaries; solid line encompasses historic buildings and orange trees.

# SITE LAYOUT

SCALE 1/4" = 25'

OWNERS - REX AND JAN CAMPBELL

ADDRESS - 21143 E. WELDON  
SANGER, CALIF.  
(TIVY VALLEY)

