

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

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 Rispin Mansion
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 2200 Wharf Road N/A not for publication
city, town Capitola N/A vicinity
state California code CA county Santa Cruz code 087 zip code 95010

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>2</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>3</u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
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 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: Kathryn Quattrin Date: 2-6-91
California State Historic Preservation Officer
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:
 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

Arlene Byers 3/14/91

for Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Mansion

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/Not in Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Mission/ Spanish Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
walls Concrete
Plaster
roof Tile
other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Rispin Mansion is a 22-room, 10,000-square foot house on a 6.5-acre estate located on the banks of Soquel Creek in the community of Capitola. The house was constructed in 1921 in a Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival style for Henry Allen Rispin, a wealthy oil baron who was responsible for much of the development of Capitola during the 1920s. Built into the side of a hill, the four level house is distinguished by concrete walls with plaster finish, hip and gabled tiled roofs, balustraded terraces, arched portico, and a massive chimney with six flues. The grounds include a concrete pool and fountain, and rock walls and steps. There is also a well house located along Wharf Road at the southwest corner of the property. The mansion was left vacant by one of its owners over 30 years ago, and since that time vandals have stripped off or otherwise destroyed interior features. The grounds have not been maintained and are overgrown with poison oak, weeds, berry bushes, and other vegetation. The building, nevertheless, retains its integrity for the purposes of the National Register. The essential features of the exterior design are intact having suffered no significant alterations or additions.

Major physical characteristics of the mansion include a large bay window which extends from the basement to the fourth level, a gracious entry portico, and ornamental Mediterranean-style windows. The Rispin grounds include a concrete pool and fountain, and rock walls and steps. There is also a well house located along Wharf Road at the southwest corner of the property. The 750 square foot well house has wood shingle siding and was built ca. 1922 in conjunction with the construction of the mansion.

Construction of the mansion was part of Rispin's dream of making Capitola the "Riviera of the New World". Comprised of four levels and two wings, the structure features one main vertical bay extending from the basement to the fourth floor. The exterior is concrete with plaster finish in typical Mediterranean style. The roof is low pitched Spanish tile with hip and gable. The structural system of the building is reinforced concrete.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

An entry portico with two patios flanking the living room and library still exists on the third (ground) level. Above the entry portico on the fourth level is a terrace in fair condition. The mansion has several Mediterranean-style windows, with ornaments typical of this vernacular.

One of the singular features of the mansion is the chimney with six flues, although there are only five fireplaces. The sixth flue led to a mysterious room - without a fireplace - in the basement, and there is speculation that it was used as a still - a theory consistent with rumors of bootlegging in the mansion.

The mansion's decorative exterior features include rock walls and steps, along with walkways leading to the once exquisitely landscaped grounds. Mediterranean-style pillars surround the portico and balcony above. The courtyard and terraces separate the stairs leading from the portico to the upper garden with its concrete pool and ornamental fountain. Ornate stonework surrounds the windows and arched entryways.

Significant interior features include arched and tiled entries, herringbone patterned oak floors, carved banisters, tiled bathrooms, and massive French windows. Rooms in the four-level floor plan include a living room, dining room, library, kitchen, screened porch, servants' quarters, bedrooms, basement; sub-basement, and secret rooms. These impressive interior features have been either removed, destroyed, or severely damaged by incessant vandalism over the years. The mansion was left vacant by one of its subsequent owners over 30 years ago, and since that time, vandals have stripped off or otherwise destroyed its interior features. The grounds have not been maintained and are overgrown with poison oak, weeds, berry bushes, and other vegetation.

In 1986, the City of Capitola purchased the mansion and began the process of clearing out the weeds and garbage left by vandals. The City has determined that, even with the severe deterioration of the property due to years of neglect, the mansion is structurally sound, and the ravages of time and abuse have had little impact on its historical integrity.

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**National Register of Historic Places
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Section number 8 Page 1

Rispin was well admired in this seasonal resort town that had grown accustomed to ownership by the wealthy. Katherine Cope Henderson, Hihn's eldest daughter and executor of his estate, felt that it would require "a mastermind, like that of her father," to make Capitola a great success.

The "Rispin Years" began with Rispin's dream of transforming Capitola into the "Riviera of the New World". Rispin promptly renamed the town Capitola-by-the-Sea and soon commenced construction on the 10,000 square foot mansion, a significant architectural landmark located on the banks of Soquel Creek - a site from which Rispin could observe his wharf and beach area.

Rispin quickly made many public improvements, then began to subdivide and sell residential lots. The development of many new cottages attracted more people, with a deeper interest in the town. Rispin was also instrumental in the creation of the Venetian Courts, recognized as the first coastal condominium in the state (constructed in 1925).

Rispin's fortune fell apart with the crash of the stock market and the Great Depression. Rispin sold the resort properties and his personal estate at an auction on Capitola Beach, August 16, 1929. Though his financial reign ended abruptly, Rispin's legacy lives on in the very visible transformation of a sleepy beach camp into the thriving year-round resort that exists today.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Poppelicus, John C.; Chambers, S., Allen Jr.; Schwartz, Nancy B. What Style Is It? A Guide to American Architecture. Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1983.

Blumensen, John J. - G. Identifying American Architecture. A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600 - 1945. Nashville, TN: American Association of State and Local History, 1981.

Lydon, Sandy; Swift, Carolyn. Soquel Landing to Capitola-by-the-Sea. San Francisco, CA: Lon Litho, Inc., 1978.

Santa Cruz Sentinel, 1862 to present.

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
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 6.5 Acres

UTM References

A 110 592900 4092820
 Zone Easting Northing

C _____

B _____
 Zone Easting Northing

D _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the mansion and surrounding gardens, as well as the portion of Soquel Creek which has historically been a part of the Rispin Mansion site.

(See Legal Description)

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert L. Rivers, Associate Planner
 organization City of Capitola date 9/15/90
 street & number 420 Capitola telephone 408-475-7300
 city or town Capitola state CA zip code 95010

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Major Bibliographical References - continued:

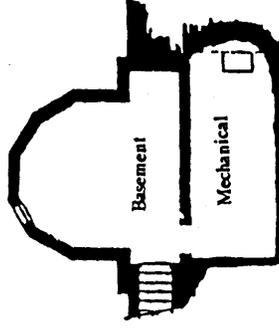
Swift, Carolyn. "Rispin: The Myth and the Mystery." The Mid-County Post.
September 25, 1990, 23-25.

Watsonville Pajaronian, 1868 to 1925.

2200 Wharf Rd.
Santa Cruz County

Rispin Mansion

Capitola, California

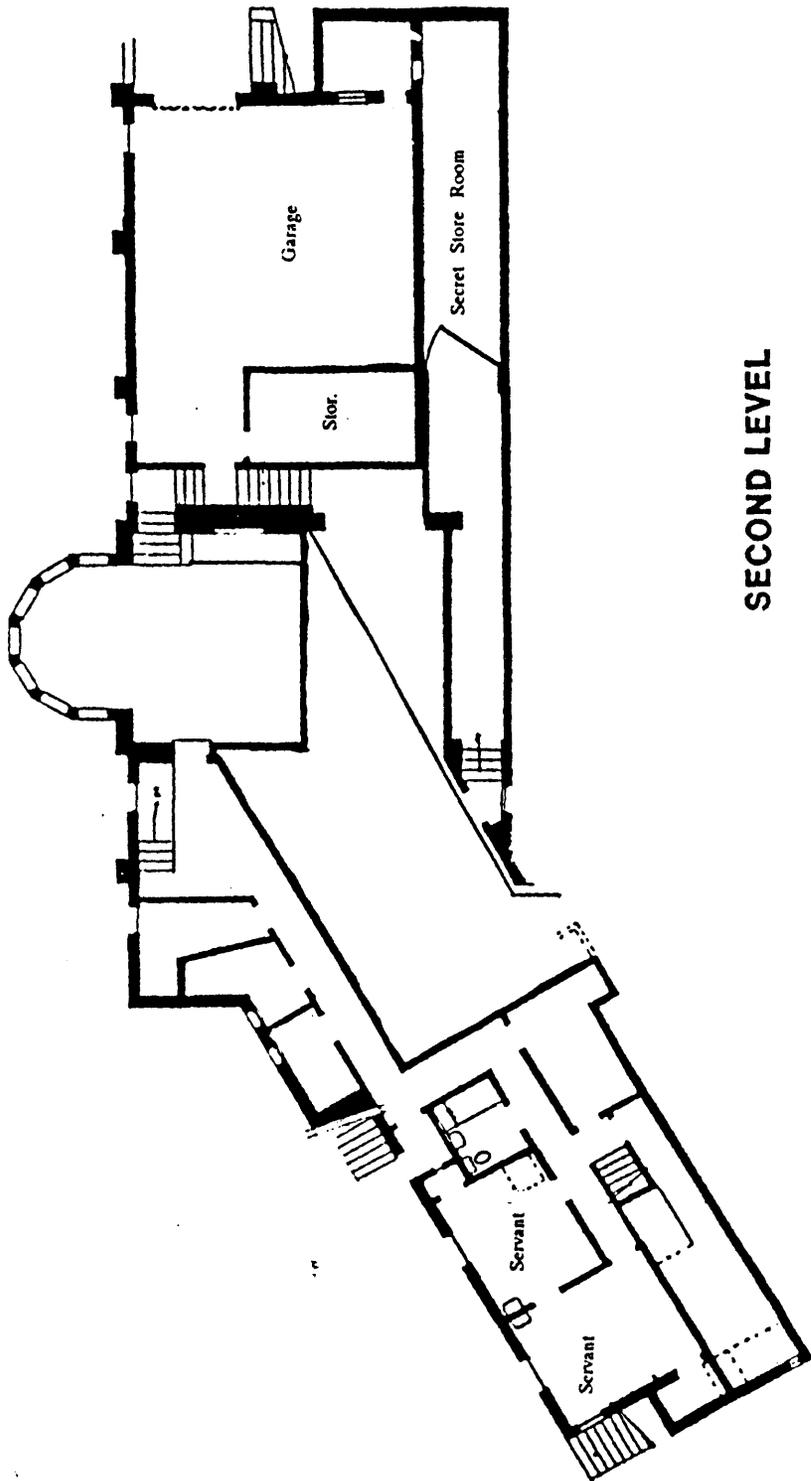


FIRST LEVEL

3200 Wherry Rd.
Santa Cruz County

Rispin Mansion

Capitola, California

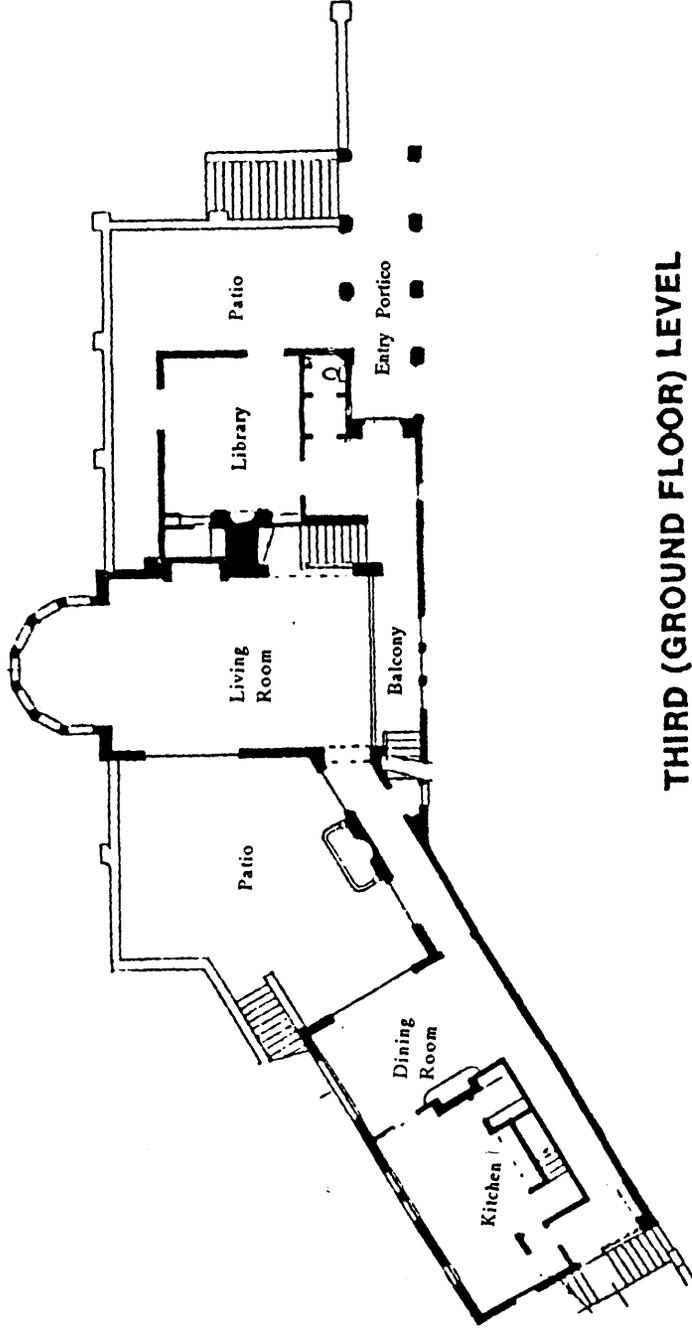


SECOND LEVEL

2200 Wilbury Rd.
Santa Cruz County

Rispin Mansion

Capitola, California

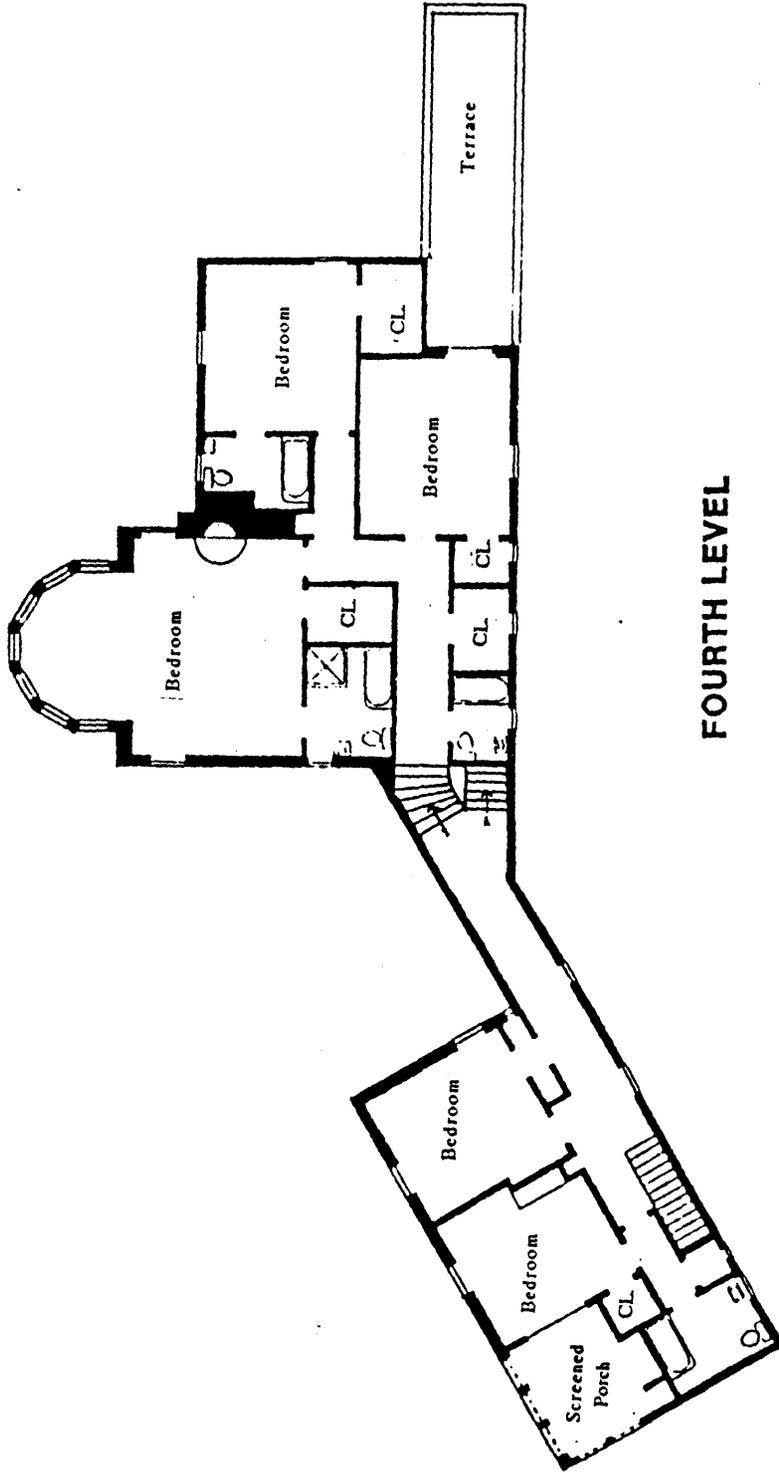


THIRD (GROUND FLOOR) LEVEL

2200 Wilbur Rd.
Santa Cruz County

Rispin Mansion

Capitola, California



FOURTH LEVEL

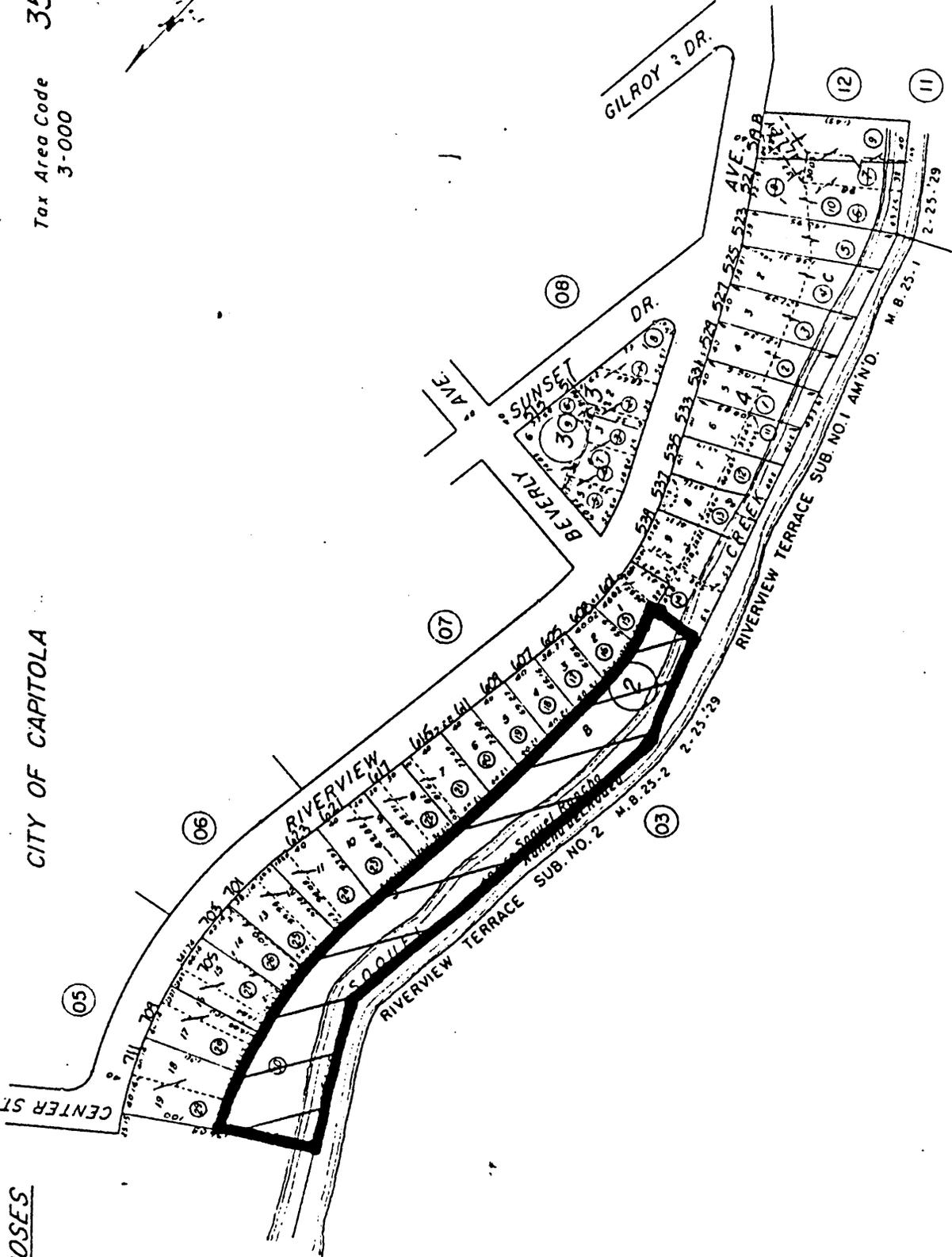
ASSessor's Map No. 35-04
City of Capitola, California

2200 Zerrary Rd.
Santa Cruz County

FOR TAX PURPOSES ONLY

CITY OF CAPITOLA

Tax Area Code 35-04
3-000



CITY OF CAPITOLA
420 CAPITOLA AVENUE
CAPITOLA, CA 95010

Note - Assessor's Parcel Block & Lot Numbers Shown in Circles.
Assessor's Map No. 35-04
City of Capitola
County of Santa Cruz, Calif.
Apr. 1950

Rispin Mansion
Capitola, California

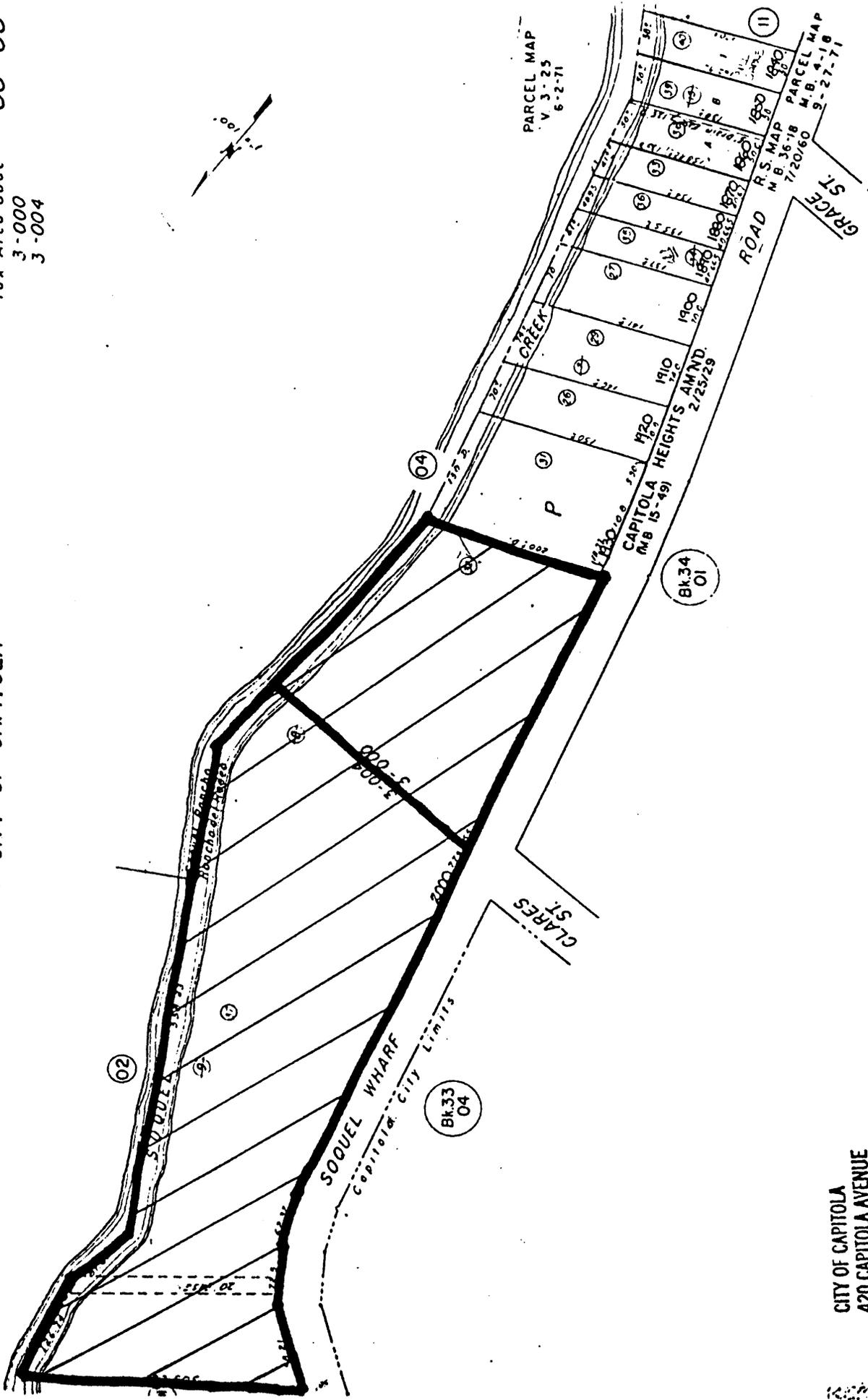
4200 Wharf Rd.
Santa Cruz County

FOR TAX PURPOSES ONLY

CITY OF CAPITOLA

35-03

Tax Area Code
3-000
3-004



CITY OF CAPITOLA
420 CAPITOLA AVENUE
CAPITOLA, CA 95010

Assessor's Map No. 35-03
City of Capitola
County of Santa Cruz, Calif.
Apr. 1950

Note - Assessor's Parcel Block &
Lot Numbers Shown in Circles

PARCEL MAP
V. 3-25
6-2-71

PARCEL MAP
M.B. 36-18
7/20/60
M.B. 4-18
9-27-71

CAPITOLA HEIGHTS AMND.
2/25/29

R.S. MAP
M.B. 36-18

ROAD

CLARES ST.

GRACE ST.

SOQUEL WHARF

CAPITOLA CITY LIMITS

Bk.33
04

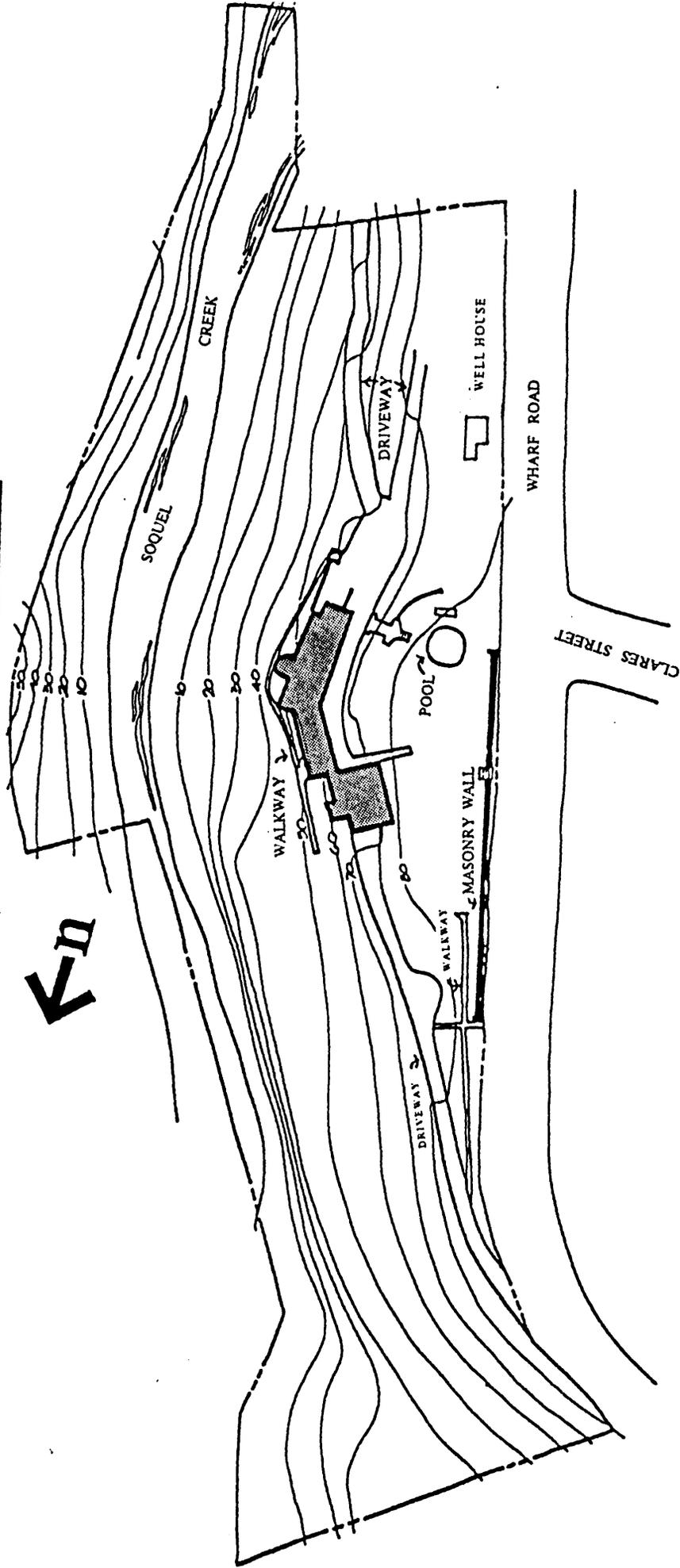
Bk.34
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3200 Eschery Rd.
Santa Cruz County

Rispin Mansion

Capitola, California

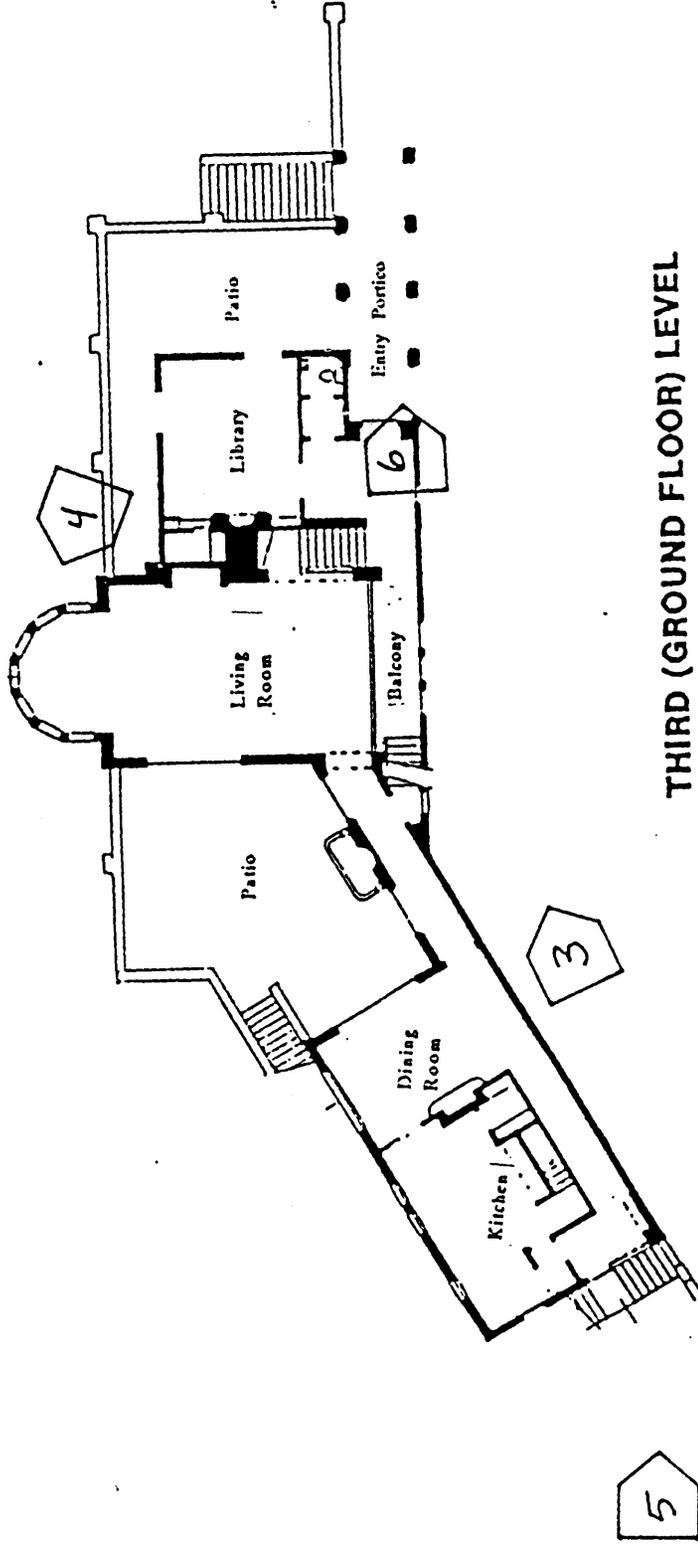
Sketch Map - No Scale



Rispin Mansion

Capitola, California

2200 Wilbur Rd.
Santa Cruz County



THIRD (GROUND FLOOR) LEVEL

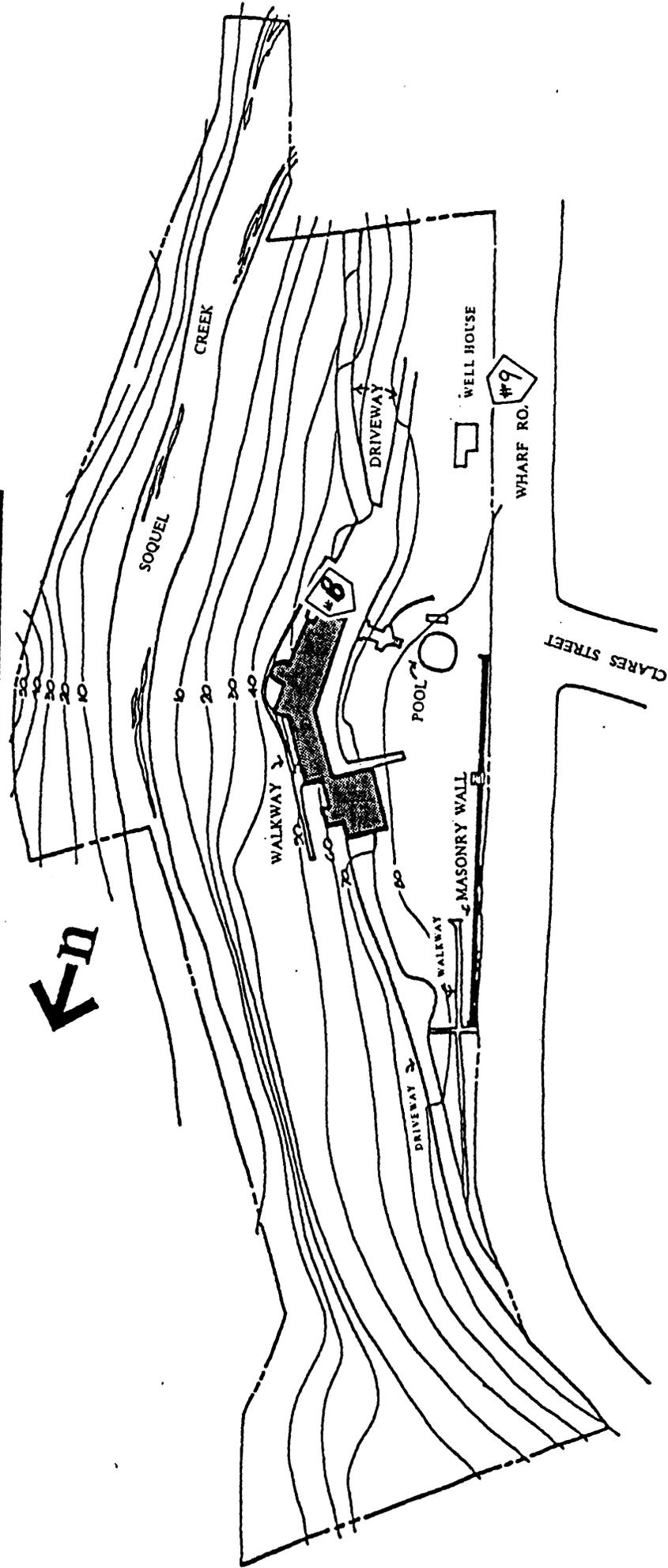
Index to Photographs

#

Photo # and Direction

2200 Wharf Rd.
Santa Cruz County

Rispin Mansion
Capitola, California
Attachment to Photo Index
Sketch Map - No Scale



Attachment to Photo Index