

PH0076503

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	California
COUNTY:	Santa Clara
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	AUG 7 1974

1. NAME

COMMON:  
**WINCHESTER MYSTERY HOUSE**

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
**WINCHESTER HOUSE** *use this*

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**525 South Winchester Blvd.**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**San Jose**

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
**10th**

STATE: **California** CODE: **95128** COUNTY: **Santa Clara** CODE: **06** **085**

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
**Winchester Mystery House, Inc.**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**525 South Winchester Boulevard**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**San Jose**

STATE:  
**California**

CODE:  
**06**

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
**Book 5895 Page 613**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Superior Court Bldg. of Santa Clara County, Register of Deeds**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**191 North First St.**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**San Jose**

STATE:  
**California**

CODE:  
**06**

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
**California Registered Historical Landmark #868**

DATE OF SURVEY: **January 1974**  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
**State Department of Parks and Recreation**

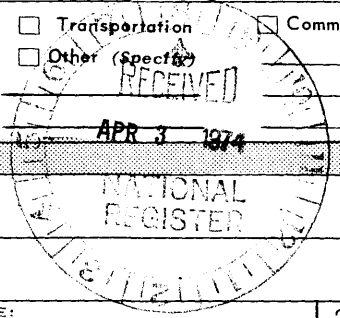
STREET AND NUMBER:  
**P. O. Box 2390**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Sacramento**

STATE:  
**California**

CODE:  
**95811** **06**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE: \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_

ENTRY NUMBER: **AUG 7 1974**

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

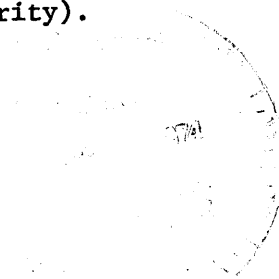
Originally, the Winchester Estate covered 161.919 acres (see 1922 Polk-Husted map of the City of San Jose), but the land was subdivided and sold in smaller lots by the heirs of Mrs. Sarah L. Winchester. Today the Winchester House is situated on the southeast third of an 18.40 acre tract of Winchester Mystery House Properties, with the front doors facing east and parallel to Winchester Blvd.

The house itself is of Victorian style, vaguely eastern in detail and cluttered with all manner of architectural ornaments as a middle period Victorian house frequently was, without any of the imitation Gothic features that the Victorian style so often incorporated at the end of the period.

Structurally, the house was built of light wood frame construction with studs as vertical members; horizontal members are wood joists of various types. Wood structural members, usual in light frame construction, form the multiplicity of roofs. Foundations are of brick and concrete as are the walls of the two basements.

Presently, the property is in the process of being completely restored to the condition it was in when Mrs. Winchester occupied the estate. This includes relandscaping, painting and/or replacing that which may have been damaged by earthquakes, the elements or vandals. As it now stands, however, the estate is in good to excellent repair without any changes, alterations or additions with the exception of having to comply with certain standards and codes placed upon us by the County of Santa Clara as well as our insurance carrier (fire prevention and security).

S E E I N S T R U C T I O N S



## SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian |  16th Century |  18th Century |  20th Century  
 15th Century |  17th Century |  19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) Circa 1884-September 5, 1922

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                      |   |  |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education   | <input type="checkbox"/> Political      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi-  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry    | losophy                                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention   | <input type="checkbox"/> Science        | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture      | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | Architecture                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature  | itarian                                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            | <input type="checkbox"/> Music       | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Winchester House is a 160-room Victorian Mansion that was built and owned by Sarah L. Winchester (Mrs. William Wirt Winchester). It is a prime example of construction at its best but construction that was unrestricted, to say the least.

The history begins at the height of the Civil War when Sarah L. Pardee met and married William Wirt Winchester, the son of the manufacturer of the famous Winchester Repeating Rifle. They were married on September 30, 1862. They had one child, Annie Pardee, who died about a month after birth. (June 15, 1866-July 24, 1866). Then, about 15 years later, on March 7, 1881, her husband died.<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Winchester was deeply upset at these deaths, and seems to have consulted a spiritualistic medium who told her that the reason for her husband's and daughter's deaths was that the victims who had been killed by the rifles her family had and was still manufacturing, were seeking their revenge by taking her husband's and daughter's lives. Further, they had placed a curse on Mrs. Winchester stating that if she wished to continue to live, she must appease them by moving out west and continuously, without ceasing, build a home for them night and day.<sup>2</sup>

She then did move out west and settled in what is now San Jose, California, purchasing an eight room farmhouse from a Dr. Caldwell. She then began her continuous construction operations in 1884.<sup>3</sup>

With a great deal of money and very few responsibilities, she satisfied her every whim and arrant notion in her uninterrupted building operations. She had no master plan for a house and according to her carpenters, built whenever, wherever and howsoever she pleased. As a result of the constant building, tearing down and remodeling, her mansion spread out over the southeast section of her 162-acre estate. She built steadily until her death on September 5, 1922.

The Winchester House is the only and, therefore, most significant of a type in its unique structure. Although it is basically Victorian, the structure has overtones of a midwestern or eastern Victorian home with its mixture of shingles, sidings, bric-a-brac, cornices and

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Polk-Husted San Jose City and Santa Clara County Directory  
1922. Sacramento:  
 Santa Clara County Recorder, Deeds. Book 5895, p. 613.  
 Santa Clara County Probate File #12772. S. L. Winchester

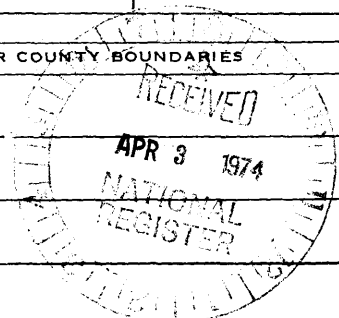
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0 ' "	0 ' "		37° 19' 05" N	121° 57' 00" W	
NE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SW	0 ' "	0 ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **6 acres**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



UTM  
 10/5930  
 4130 460  
 00

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
**Brent W. Miller, Assistant Manager-Caretaker**

ORGANIZATION: **Winchester Mystery House, Inc.** DATE: **1-29-74**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**525 South Winchester Boulevard**

CITY OR TOWN: **San Jose** STATE: **California 95128** CODE: **06**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name *William Penn Mott, Jr.*  
 State Historic Preservation Officer  
 Title \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date March 11, 1974

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

*W. Markens*  
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 8/1/74

ATTEST:  
*W. Mott*  
 Keeper of the National Register  
 Date 8/1/74

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(Continuation Sheet)

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#8. Statement of Significance

appurtenances which show traces of definite eastern influence in design not found in local craftsmen.

It is an outstanding example of Victorian construction, complete with the inevitable accidents of unrestricted and unchecked growth.

Two other areas of significance are: 1) the number of people who have visited the house. In over 50 years of business, we estimate that approximately 3,000,000 people, to date, have taken a tour and that more than 150,000 visited us last year, and 2) we have already been recognized as an Historical Landmark (#868) by the State of California.

Footnotes

- 1  
Bruce Spoon, Sarah Winchester and Her House: How A Legend Grows, (New Haven: Yale University, 1951).
- 2  
Harold F. Williamson, Winchester--The Gun That Won The West, (New York: A.S. Barnes and Co., 1952), p. 212.
- 3  
Bruce Spoon, op. cit., p. 14.

