

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

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

DRAFT

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Cunningham-Hembree Estate

Other names/site number: CA-SON-1450H

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

## 2. Location

Street & number: 9225 Foxwood Drive

City or town: Windsor State: California County: Sonoma

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

<p>_____</p> <p><b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>	<p>_____</p> <p><b>Date</b></p>
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<p>In my opinion, the property <u>meets</u> <u>does not meet</u> the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____</p> <p><b>Signature of commenting official:</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>Title :</b></p>	<p>_____</p> <p><b>Date</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>          </u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/museum

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY: Gothic Revival (Cunningham)

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> & 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS:

Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival (Hembree)

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Wood lap siding (Cunningham)  
Stucco (Hembree)

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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#### Summary Paragraph

Cunningham-Hembree Estate is located on a 2.2-acre parcel adjacent to perennial East Windsor Creek on level terrain at approximately 127 feet above sea level. East Windsor Creek is one of the last reaches of Windsor Creek remaining in natural riparian habitat. The property includes three contributing buildings: the mid-nineteenth century Gothic Revival Cunningham House, the early-mid twentieth century Spanish Colonial Revival Hembree House, and a detached two car garage adjacent to and associated with the Hembree House. One contributing site, a relic row of cypress trees historically aligned with the entrances to the houses, is associated with the property and is now on a separate assessor's parcel. Cunningham House retains integrity of location, workmanship, feeling, and association; much of its integrity of materials, design, and setting has been compromised. Hembree House retains all aspects of integrity.

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#### Narrative Description

##### Cunningham House

Landscaping includes Coast Live Oak, Pin Oak, a cypress tree in the front (west) and young redwoods at the north façade. The Windsor Senior Center and swimming pool lie adjacent to the parcel's northern boundary. The Cunningham House character defining features are symmetry, a steep roof pitch, mortise and tenon construction, and lap siding.

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The one and one-half story nearly square residence is located on an asymmetrical parcel facing west onto Foxwood Drive, between a parking lot to the northwest and the Hembree House to the south. The simple wood-framed house is finished with plain horizontal lap siding and a steep-pitched, end gable metal-clad roof. Entry is accessed via a door centered on the west façade. A perimeter post and beam foundation supports the building. Fenestration consists of rectangular wood-framed, six-over-six multi-lite sashes. All windows are framed with simple 1 x 6-in. boards with a modest drip cap and bottom sill. The west façade has a window on either side of the entry porch. The south façade has a pair of windows that match the west façade and a single second story window centered under the gable. Three window openings on the east façade are currently covered with plywood panels. A small gable-roofed front porch leading to the front entrance is supported by four turned columns. Much of the building's historic integrity has been lost over time, but the interior retains some of the earliest structural elements.

### *Interior*

The interior of the three-bedroom residence consists of an entry hall with a square-shaped bedroom to the right (south) and a narrow wooden stairway that accesses the attic to the left. A second bedroom on the southeast corner mirrors the first, and a long, narrow closet with opposing doors separates the two bedrooms. This closet was the original entry hall when the main entrance was oriented on the south façade. The original central room and the bedroom on the northwest corner are finished in 1-in. x 6-in. and 1-in. x 8-in. boards on the ceiling and walls. The two bedrooms south of the main/living room were finished in lath and plaster. The lath and plaster and some of the historic wallpapers are visible.

The oldest extant part of the house is a rectangle 18-ft. east-west by 25-ft. north-south. Some structural members remain from the original 1849 one-story cabin, which may have had a loft. The corner posts are 6 x 6-in. pinned mortise and tenon beams. Nine inch-diameter redwood log floor joists on approximately 36-inch centers with pointed and squared ends are inserted into hand-hewn 8 x 8-in. perimeter beams that are notched to receive the joists. The perimeter beams rest on posts raised approximately 12 inches from a sill plate. The floor is a combination of 1 x 14-in. redwood planks and modern 1 x 4-in. Douglas fir flooring. A decommissioned fireplace is centered on the east wall. The full-dimension attic is now used for storage. Some unjointed tenons are visible in supporting beams, indicating re-use from an earlier configuration.

The interior of the Cunningham House is well-worn, reflecting its many years of use by the Cunningham, McClelland, and Hembree families. During the Hembree family tenure, the building was used as rental housing and, after the death of Clara Hembree, for storage. Although it shows its age, it remains structurally sound.

### **Hembree House**

Mature landscaping including redwoods, oaks, and various shrubs surround the building, with denser vegetation in the formal garden between the house and the creek. A sunken garden and pond lie between the east façade of the house and East Windsor Creek. A wisteria-covered pergola is located in front (west) of a porte-cochère. Three rows of hop vines are planted in the

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southwest portion of the front yard. Character defining features of the Spanish Colonial Revival building include asymmetry, recessed arched doorways, arcaded porch, casement windows, round terra cotta attic vents and multi-level terra cotta tile roofs.

The Spanish Colonial Revival former residence is located south of the Cunningham House. The building is L-shaped, with the larger two-story section oriented east-west, and the single-story wing projecting north-south from the west end of the two-story portion. The two-story section is stepped in at the west end. The wood-framed, stucco-clad house is topped with a low-pitch terra cotta tile-clad end gabled roof. It features exposed rafter tails, straight barrel mission tile, multi-level roofs, and the house is supported on a concrete perimeter foundation. A stucco-clad chimney is centered on the south façade of the one-story wing. The interior is accessed via doors on each façade, with the current main entrance on the south façade via a round arch entry porch. All doors are recessed within covered porches except the rear entrance on the north façade.

Fenestration patterns are marked by an asymmetrical mix of styles within and among the façades. The main theme is one of wood-framed casement and picture windows—square plate glass flanked by three- or four-lite casements--interspersed with single casements and hung windows. Additionally, two second-floor multi-lite casement windows are each faced with a shallow wrought iron balcony.

The one-story north-south oriented L-wing features a picture window with four-lite casements on the east façade, and casements on either side of the chimney on the south facade. The west façade of this wing contains a coach entry from the porte-cochère into an arcaded porch along its entire length. Large four-lite casements flank a wide ten-lite door on the west façade, and a narrow ten-lite door accesses the building from the north terminus of the porch.

Fenestration on the two-story portion is described by façade. The **south** façade first floor has one four-lite casement picture window east of the recessed doorway. A small rounded arch doorway leads to a small covered porch on the east façade. The second story contains two three-lite casement picture windows visible over either side of the gable of the north-south wing, a single three-lite casement, and a four-lite double sash door with a wrought iron balcony at the east end of this façade. The **west** façade, contiguous with the single story arcaded porch, contains vertical split plane faces. The second-floor window is a ten-lite French door with shallow wrought iron balcony. A covered wooden cantilevered balcony with wooden railings shelters a three-lite casement around the corner on the west face and a French door on the north face. The more northerly plane of the west façade contains two vertical slider windows on the ground floor and single three-lite casement window on the second floor. The **north** façade (rear) first floor contains twin six-lite casement windows at the east end, twin double hung windows near midpoint, and a small one-over-one hung window to the west of the rear entry door. The second floor contains two matching picture windows with three-lite casements at the east half and two matching double-hung windows just west of midpoint. Double casement windows illuminate the northwest corner of the building. The **east** façade second floor contains a single picture-with-six-lite casement window; the first floor comprises triple six-lite casements and contains a small

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covered porch that is accessed from the south and east. The east entry leads via brick steps down to the recessed formal garden.

### *Interior*

The interior of the Hembree House (**Figures 6 and 7**) is laid out in a duplicative manner as there are kitchens and living rooms on both the ground and second floors, with rooms on the main portion of the house surrounding the central staircase. The simple, high-quality design features fine woodworking in wide wooden cove molding, built-in shelving and cabinets, and hardwood floor detailing. Interior rounded arch doorways echo the front door on the south façade. Wooden window and door trim on the first floor is right-finished and the upstairs wooden trim and built-in cabinetry are painted. The original plain solid wooden mantel tops a large painted brick fireplace in the downstairs living room. A simple wooden staircase leads to a small sub-surface basement that contains the furnace.

### **Garage**

The only other extant building associated with the Hembree House is the small, detached two-car garage at the northwest corner of the house. It is wood-framed, stucco-clad, with a course of barrel tile framing composition shingle roofing. A concrete driveway leads from the garage to a porte-cochère that opens onto the west façade arcaded porch.

### **Cypress Tree Alignment**

A long driveway to the Cunningham House was once lined with cypress trees that were planted in 1872, according to the family, to commemorate the birth of a Cunningham grandchild. The realignment of Old Redwood Highway in the 1920s cut off almost one third of the length of the lane between Windsor Road and Old Redwood Highway. When the Hembrees built their house in 1931, they located it south of the Cunningham House to align with the trees. The construction of US Highway 101 in 1962 severed the driveway further, and the surrounding residential development took out all of the south line of cypress in the early 1990s. Eight of the relic original trees can still be seen on the north side of Foxwood Drive between the Cunningham-Hembree parcel and Los Amigos Road.

### **Construction History/Alterations**

The original Cunningham homestead cabin built in 1849 measured 26 ft. 4 in. x 18 ft., and the original roof form was probably a simple side gable.<sup>1</sup> Entry was gained from the southwest corner. The house has been remodeled at least four times.

- 1) Circa 1865: likely effected when the homestead patent was issued, this remodel embellished the cabin in the Gothic Revival style and extended the south end of the house 14 feet to measure 26 x 30-ft. A new entry was added at the south end of this extension, flanked by two 39 x 65-in. windows. The front gable roof over the new entry was joined to the original, making it cross-gabled in plan. The extant floor joists in this addition are

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<sup>1</sup> The dimensions of the Cunningham House at the time of nomination are 26 ft. 4 in. x 31 ft. 4 in.

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full dimensional 2 x 6-in. milled redwood, 24 inches on center. The perimeter beams are dimensional 4 x 6-in., mortised and tenoned at the corners.

The earliest known photograph of the Cunningham House depicts the Gothic Revival style of this remodel. The one-and-a-half story house had a steep front centered gable on the south façade that was defined by decorative eave brackets. The front door was topped with an arched transom. A simple porch roof was supported by two columns and served as a balcony for the upper story. The balcony was accessed via a louvered door.<sup>2</sup> The siding in the photograph appears to be the same style lapped board as is on the house in 2017.

- 2) Between 1870 and 1880: This work extended the north end of the house, adding a second contiguous hall and parlor that provided room for a dining and/or family room and kitchen. Covered porches on the east and west façades were installed at this time. The covered porch on the west façade was later enclosed and converted into a bedroom and bathroom. This addition apparently removed the ornate detail of the first remodel as well as the second story. A family story attributes the second-floor removal to a fire.<sup>3</sup>
- 3) Circa 1931: The entry of the house was rotated from the south side that was aligned with the Cypress corridor to its location on the west façade. This change was effected after the completion of the Hembree House that blocked the view of the trees from the Cunningham House. The former location of the front door is covered with lap siding.
- 4) 1992: The fourth remodel removed the north rooms added in the second remodel, returning to the approximate dimensions of the circa 1865 house. The failing roof and roofing were also removed at this time and were replaced with new roof framing and metal roofing. The brick chimney on the east façade did not survive this renovation. Concrete pier blocks were added to level and stabilize the original supporting redwood logs. Matching cedar lap siding covers the north façade where the circa 1880 extension was removed. The earlier window configuration on the north façade is unknown because of subsequent remodeling. This façade has no extant openings.

The 1992 remodel was a compromise with the Town of Windsor. Looking to construct a senior center at the north end of the property, the Town wanted to demolish the entire Cunningham House to make room for a swimming pool. Local preservationists negotiated a less catastrophic outcome, agreeing to remove the circa 1880 north portion in order to keep the earlier building. At that time, a decision was made to stabilize what house remained, within a very limited budget. One result of the fiscal situation was the ahistorical but sturdy metal roof cladding.

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<sup>2</sup> The balustrade of the balcony and the arched transom were found stored within the upper story of the house and moved into storage at the Hembree House.

<sup>3</sup> No evidence of a fire has been found in the house configuration; however, the roof plan was reoriented 90 degrees at an unknown date. One can speculate that such a radical change may have been the outcome of major roof repair.



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When the estate was given over to management by the Windsor Historical Society in 1996, plans were made to restore the Cunningham House to the circa 1865 iteration depicted in the circa 1900 photograph (**Figure 18**). Funding for the project was limited so the Windsor Historical Society submitted a National Register Nomination in 1998, hoping that listing would better recruit monetary support. That nomination was returned for rework; it was not resubmitted and plans for restoration were abandoned at that time in the interest of preserving as much of the building as possible within budgetary constraints. Restoration plans may be revived in the future.

Hembree House has had few external changes since its construction. In the 1980s the building was used as a tasting room for the vineyard and winery. At that time two small vertical slider windows were added to the first floor of the north section of the east façade and the interior washrooms were remodeled to conform to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. The upstairs sleeping porch was converted into a kitchen so the upstairs could be used as an apartment separate from the ground floor tasting room. A wrought iron banister was installed on the interior staircase. The hinged wooden double garage doors, originally sheltered by a barrel tile-clad awning, have been replaced with two roll-up doors. One original hung window survived on the west façade; replacement vertical sliders have been installed on the south and east façades.

### **Integrity**

**Location:** Both Cunningham House and Hembree House retain integrity of location on their historical footprint adjacent to East Windsor Creek.

**Design:** Although Cunningham House has been altered over time, much of the alteration occurred long ago, and the shape of the house as nominated is very close to the 1930 layout, less the northward extension. Original structural elements remain in the foundation and the wooden interior walls. Removal of the chimney and installation of a metal roof have compromised the design somewhat. The building projects the proportions and simplicity of a once-common style of modest farmhouse. Essentially all of Hembree House's Spanish Colonial Revival architecture remains unchanged from its circa 1930 construction.

**Setting:** Suburban development has completely altered Cunningham House's original agricultural setting. Curvilinear residential streets now surround the property, and the US 101 freeway is one block away. The view of Hembree House from the street still evokes a stylish, elegant residence set within mature landscaping.

**Materials:** Cunningham House roof cladding has been replaced with expedient pinched seam metal roofing, and the excision of the circa 1930 north extension has necessitated installing modern (but visually similar) siding material. Otherwise, both the interior and the exterior retain much of their nineteenth century farmhouse construction materials. Most of the original construction materials of Hembree House are extant, save the two aluminum slider windows installed in the 1990s.

**Workmanship:** While much of Cunningham House's original exterior architectural elements have been lost or modified, the interior and foundation display traditional construction methods.

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The hand-hewn redwood log mortise and tenon construction techniques, the simple board walls, and the lath and plaster wall finish in the circa 1865 addition retain a high degree of integrity of workmanship. The well-built Hembree House with its interior and exterior stylish details retains its integrity of workmanship.

**Feeling:** The exterior of Cunningham House, in spite of its many additions and subtractions, still suggests a simple mid-nineteenth century farmhouse, and the interior absolutely evokes the feeling of early Sonoma County family life. The size, shape, proportions, construction materials, and especially the wallpaper remnants retain a strong integrity of feeling. Hembree House and grounds have retained the integrity of feeling as an example of an earlier rural period in Windsor's history.

**Association:** Due to the strong association with Robert Cunningham, a Windsor pioneer farmer, and his direct descendants who were significant local figures in their own right, Cunningham House is esteemed by the town as the oldest extant residence in Windsor. Hembree House retains its association with a pioneer family and the early history of Windsor.

While Cunningham House on its own has lost much of its integrity of materials, design, and setting, it strongly retains its integrity of location, workmanship, feeling—at least in the interior layout and furnishings, and association. Hembree House is little changed since its construction in 1931. Despite the isolation of the property from central Windsor by the construction of the freeway in 1962, and later residential development, much of the property's integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association remains. Together, Cunningham and Hembree Houses, on their much-reduced real estate, retain their early connection to Windsor as an extension of the Cunningham family presence. Cunningham House was first recorded in 1984 and subsequently designated CA-SON-1450H.<sup>4</sup> Both houses were listed on the Town of Windsor historic register in 1996.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Bieling 1984; Praetzellis and Praetzellis 1989 evaluated the Cunningham House.

<sup>5</sup> Town of Windsor 1996.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1849-1957

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1849

1957

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Cunningham, Robert

Unknown (Hembree)

\_\_\_\_\_

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Cunningham-Hembree Estate is eligible at the local level of significance under Criterion A in the area of Exploration/Settlement for its association with the early settlement of Windsor. The property was one of the foundational homesteads on which much of the developing town of Windsor was located and through which major historic transportation routes ran. The property is also eligible in the area of Community Planning and Development for its association with the Cunninghams, one of Windsor's founding families, and descendant families, each of which contributed to the physical and civic development of Windsor. Local significance is fully realized in their cumulative impact on Windsor and the longevity of the family tenure. The 1849 to 1957 period of significance represents Robert Cunningham's initial settlement on the property in 1849 to the death of his granddaughter Clara Hembree, who lived on the homestead until her death in 1957.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

*Exploration/Settlement*

**Windsor**

As with most towns in California, the initial settling of the Windsor area in northern Sonoma County was an indirect result of the 1849 Gold Rush and subsequent statehood in 1850. A handful of Americans had moved into the Russian River Valley prior to statehood, notably Cyrus Alexander and Henry Fitch, who were working the *Rancho Sotoyome* by 1840. The initial trickle of settlers soon turned to a flood, such that within ten years, farmers, merchants, and tradesmen had settled on public lands distributed between and among the rancho grants of the Spanish/Mexican period.

By the mid-1850s, homesteads occupied most of the land east of the Russian River and south of Healdsburg. The area known as Poor Man's Flat became the town of Windsor.<sup>6</sup> Farms were established largely on quarter-sections, taking advantage of public lands legislation of 1820 and 1853 that allowed the purchase of up to 160 acres.<sup>7</sup> Along with livestock, typical early crops grown there were wheat, barley, and orchard fruit.

The little settlement soon grew into a proper town and was named Windsor in 1855, with schools, churches, a cemetery, and a commercial district that attracted tradesmen who serviced the farmers. Sam Emmerson, owner of the hotel, laid out Windsor's original location in 1858, east of Windsor Creek on either side of the Healdsburg-Santa Rosa Road (later Old Redwood

<sup>6</sup> Munro-Fraser 1880:360

<sup>7</sup> Robinson 1948:167

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Highway), on his portion of the northeast quarter of Section 13.<sup>8</sup> By 1860, Windsor boasted three merchants, four blacksmiths, a wagonmaker, and a church.<sup>9</sup>

The Northwestern and Pacific Railroad was laid in 1872, bypassing Windsor and running past the southwest corner of Robert Cunningham's homestead. This shifted the local center and the town began to coalesce around the train depot. In response, many businesses moved, taking their buildings west. The original town location was then called East Windsor, or Old Town, contrasting with West Windsor, or New Town. By 1898, the commitment to West Windsor was nearly complete, as a new Methodist Episcopal church was built and the church rectory was moved from Old Town to Main Street, (later Windsor River Road) just east of the railroad.<sup>10</sup> East-West rivalries lasted until revitalization in the last quarter of the twentieth century united the two competing Windsors.

The Healdsburg-Santa Rosa Road that ran diagonally through the Cunningham homestead was originally, like most roads throughout the country, unpaved and subject to weather—sloppy in the winter rains and dusty in the summer. The highway movement that began in the mid-nineteen-teens was a result of the need for paved roads to accommodate the burgeoning population of automobiles. To this end, Healdsburg-Santa Rosa Road through Windsor was resurfaced in 1913-14, the first segment of the road to be upgraded in the county.<sup>11</sup>

This road was first called simply the County Road, then State Route 1. The segment of what became US 101 from the northern terminus of the Golden Gate Bridge in Marin County to Olympia, Washington was designated Redwood Highway in 1924, and was fully paved by 1929.<sup>12</sup> In the meantime, roads were organized nationally, and Redwood Highway was designated US 101 in 1926 (still called Highway 1 locally into the 1950s). In 1962, a four-lane US 101 freeway was built between the realigned Redwood Highway and the western remnant of the Cunningham-Hembree Estate. After the construction of the freeway, still called Redwood Highway, the older road became *Old Redwood Highway*, as it remains.

### *Community Planning and Development*

The Cunningham/ McClelland/Hembree family was integral to Windsor's history before there was a town. Through three generations, spanning the Gold Rush era to the construction of US 101 through the original Cunningham homestead, the family contributed land, buildings, and civic leadership to the development of Windsor.

Robert Cunningham was a prominent figure in early Windsor history, settling in the Russian River Township in 1849.<sup>13</sup> Prior to its naming, the Windsor area was called Cunningham's, after

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<sup>8</sup> Munro-Fraser 1880:360

<sup>9</sup> US Census 1860, Russian River Township

<sup>10</sup> Beedie 1978:

<sup>11</sup> LeBaron 1993:32.

<sup>12</sup> LeBaron 1993:36

<sup>13</sup> Windsor Historical Society 2017

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the homestead where Cunningham built the area's first corral. Local farmers brought their livestock there to be branded.<sup>14</sup> In addition to the communal use of his corrals, Robert Cunningham was an active participant in the civic life of Windsor. He was one of the founders of the first school in Windsor, and of the first church in Windsor. In 1856, Robert Cunningham with Hiram Lewis, HJ Pool, and others petitioned for separating the Windsor schools into their own district from the Russian River School District.<sup>15</sup>

Cunningham was also one of the more successful Windsor farmers. His tax bill in 1860 recorded his relatively more developed acreage and greater stock of animals than most of his immediate neighbors. Henry Bell arrived in California from New York in 1851, and in 1853 homesteaded the quarter section immediately south of Cunningham.<sup>16</sup> Although his farm produced less wealth Bell was more professionally diversified. He established an early store on his property, hired out as a carpenter,<sup>17</sup> and was for a time the town undertaker, with the parlor in his house.<sup>18</sup> As an early and important Windsor denizen, Bell is memorialized in Bell Road. The circa 1860 Bell House is the second oldest residence in Windsor.

Other examples of prominent early Windsorians were the wealthier and younger Levi Samuel Bacon Slusser, who arrived in Windsor in 1848 from Pennsylvania, and James H. Laughlin, originally from Tennessee, who arrived in the Windsor area circa 1855.<sup>19</sup> They arrived with more wealth and were able to leverage it into eventually much larger farms and ranches (impressively depicted in Thompson 1877) than the Cunninghams, such that by 1870 their accumulated real and personal wealth amounted to \$30,000 each.<sup>20</sup> However, their farms and eponymous roads were well south of the center of town, and they appear to have had less influence on the town development than Robert Cunningham and his descendants.

### **Robert and Isabella Cunningham**

Robert Cunningham, born in County Tyrone, Ireland in 1805, emigrated as a 16-year old orphan to Nova Scotia in 1822, then found his way to Illinois where he was occupied as a farmer.<sup>21</sup> There he met Isabella Russell; they married in Henry County, Illinois in 1841.<sup>22</sup> Their daughter Mary Jane was born there in 1842. In 1849, Robert Cunningham came to California via Cape Horn, settling near the future town of Windsor, and homesteaded a 160-acre quarter section of land. Robert Cunningham built the original cabin on the property and the first corral in the area.<sup>23</sup> In 1852, after improving the property with a house, livestock, and cultivation, Robert Cunningham sent for his wife and daughter.

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<sup>14</sup> Ray 2004:10

<sup>15</sup> Munro-Fraser 1880:359

<sup>16</sup> Thompson 1877:98

<sup>17</sup> US Census 1860, Russian River Township

<sup>18</sup> Beedie 1978:20

<sup>19</sup> Thompson 1877:98

<sup>20</sup> US Census 1870, Russian River Township

<sup>21</sup> Healdsburg Tribune, Enterprise and Scimitar 1936

<sup>22</sup> Dodd 1997

<sup>23</sup> Ray 2004:10

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Isabella and Mary Jane left their home in Princeville, Illinois with two ox-drawn covered wagons, joining the wagon train leaving Independence, Missouri in April 1852. Robert went to meet his wife and daughter in Utah in October of 1852, and they travelled together the remaining distance to Windsor. The team of 36 wagons remained together until the Humboldt River, Nevada, was reached. There the wagon train divided, some taking the Carson route through Placerville, and others, including Mary Jane and Isabella, taking the Truckee route. They reached Nevada City October 8, 1852, and remained six weeks, arriving at the homestead in November and taking up residence in Robert's log cabin. Although he had lived on and worked the land since 1849, and paid property taxes as early as 1852, Cunningham's land patent was not awarded until 1867. He paid \$200—\$1.25 per acre—for his 160-acre quarter section.<sup>24</sup> Prior to his patent confirmation, Robert Cunningham took American citizenship and was naturalized on June 25, 1865.<sup>25</sup> After his death in 1869, the homestead was managed by his widow, Isabella, then by his only child, daughter Mary Jane and her husband James McClelland.

### **Mary Jane Cunningham and John Cocks; James McClelland**

Mary Jane Cunningham married John W. Cocks in 1857. Their son Robert C. Cocks was born in 1859 and died within two months; John Cocks died later that same year.<sup>26</sup> In 1861, Mary Jane married James Henderson McClelland of Petaluma. They lived on the homestead with Mary Jane's parents.<sup>27</sup> The McClellands had five children, two of whom, Clara and Ella Isabella (Ella), lived into adulthood. In 1872, to commemorate the birth of Clara, James planted cypress trees along a lane that extended from the Cunningham house to Windsor Road, a distance of about one-quarter mile. Mary Jane and James continued the leadership legacy by donating land and funding for a new Methodist church in 1898, and by constructing the landmark Masonic Building on the southwestern portion of the land that had become part of downtown West Windsor.<sup>28</sup>

After the death of James McClelland in 1900, Ella and her husband Frank Welch moved their house from Old/East Windsor to McClelland's separate property at the north boundary of the Cunningham homestead. In 1915, they built a new and larger house there and farmed the 80-acre piece until Frank Welch's death in 1936. Keeping the family tradition of public service, Ella served for a while as the town Postmistress, and Frank was a Justice of the Peace.<sup>29</sup> Their house was torn down in 1959 to make way for US 101 freeway.<sup>30</sup>

### **Atlas and Clara Hembree**

Atlas Thompson Hembree, the oldest of ten children, was born on Shiloh Road, Windsor, to native Oregonians Mary E. and Andrew Jackson Hembree, who came to Windsor from Napa City around 1860.<sup>31</sup> The elder Hembrees were farmers, and Atlas' first work was helping his

<sup>24</sup> United States Department of the Interior Government Land Office 1865

<sup>25</sup> County of Sonoma 1867

<sup>26</sup> Find a Grave 2016c

<sup>27</sup> US Census 1870

<sup>28</sup> Beedie 1978:46

<sup>29</sup> Healdsburg Tribune, Enterprise and Scimitar 1936

<sup>30</sup> Healdsburg Tribune, Enterprise and Scimitar 1959

<sup>31</sup> US Census 1860a; 1860c



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parents on their farm. Atlas had plans beyond the fields, however, and his first occupation off the farm was teaching in Windsor.<sup>32</sup>

In 1895, Atlas married his former Windsor School classmate Clara McClelland, who was by then the school's teacher. Their first child, Mary Ellita, died just before her first birthday in 1898.<sup>33</sup> They lived with Clara's recently widowed mother, Mary Jane, on the Cunningham homestead where they assisted her with managing the farm. In 1900, former teacher Atlas was once again occupied as a farmer.<sup>34</sup> Soon after, Atlas took up the study of medicine and graduated in 1905 from Cooper's Medical College in San Francisco, the first medical school in the western United States.<sup>35</sup> After graduation, Dr. Hembree practiced for a year in Forest Hill, California. By 1910 the Hembrees, Mary Jane, and their adopted daughter Georgia, had moved south to Redondo Beach where Atlas established a general practice with partner Dr. J. F. Spencer and participated in the civic life of that city, serving as Trustee on the Redondo Beach City Council.<sup>36</sup> Mother Mary Jane Cunningham McClelland died in Redondo Beach in 1921.<sup>37</sup>

In 1929, in anticipation of their retirement to Windsor, the Hembrees began construction on a 2,850-square foot, five-bedroom Spanish style villa in front of the old Cunningham House and at the end of the cypress lane. Spanish Colonial Revival architecture was popular between 1915 and 1940, following the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco and the Panama-California Exposition in San Diego, both of which they likely visited. The Expositions may have influenced the Hembree's architectural choice, as well as their sojourn in southern California where Spanish Colonial Revival and its predecessor, Mission Revival, was then ubiquitous and remains so. They named their retirement residence *Matapan* from an unspecified Native American language, which is said to mean "I sit down."<sup>38</sup>

Atlas and Clara Hembree resumed life in Windsor, becoming active in many local citizen groups, which involvement continued until Atlas' death. Atlas organized the Shiloh Cemetery District to supply reliable funding for its maintenance, and constructed a commercial building adjacent to the Masonic Building.<sup>39</sup> Clara busied herself with her garden in which she took great care and pride. She is largely responsible for planting the many types of ferns that still flourish in the garden. Atlas died in December 1941 and Clara followed him in 1957. Their adopted daughter, Georgia Hembree Halderman, died a month before Atlas so the property passed to Atlas and Clara's grandchildren, Catherine May Halderman Schweickert and Robert Hembree Halderman.

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<sup>32</sup> California Great Register of Voters 1892 and 1896.

<sup>33</sup> Finda Grave 2016d

<sup>34</sup> US Census 1900. Russian River Township

<sup>35</sup> Hembree 1905. Cooper Medical College was incorporated into Stanford University in 1908 and moved to Palo Alto (Stanford Medicine 2017).

<sup>36</sup> Windsor Historical Society 2011:4.

<sup>37</sup> Find a Grave 2016a

<sup>38</sup> A neighborhood in a Boston, Massachusetts is called *Mattapan*. The Neponsett Tribe of the Massachusetts confederation of Native Americans originally settled Mattapan, glossed as "a good place to be" or "a good place to sit". Dorchester Atheneum 2013

<sup>39</sup> Beedie 1978:18, 31

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Robert, Isabella, and Mary Jane Cunningham McClelland; Atlas, Clara, and Mary Ellita Hembree; and Georgia Hembree Halderman are all buried in Shiloh Cemetery, Windsor.<sup>40</sup>

Following Clara's death, the estate was managed by her trust and her grandchildren until they decided it to William Matson Roth and his wife Joan Osborne Roth in 1962. The William Mabry family purchased the property from the Roths in 1975 and established the Landmark Winery on the property. Landmark Winery, the last private owner of the estate, remodeled Hembree House as a tasting room and caretaker residence, and removed some agricultural outbuildings. A residential development and commercial/retail development surround the remnants of the original homestead. The Cunningham-Hembree Estate became the property of the Town of Windsor in 1990.<sup>41</sup>

Cunningham House is the oldest known building in Windsor, and may be the oldest building of its type in Sonoma County. Along with Hembree House, it is associated with the Cunningham/McClelland/Hembree family. The property was the homestead and home to locally prominent citizens Robert and Isabella Cunningham, and was a focal point for many community activities. The western portion of the quarter section homestead west of Old Redwood Highway was sold over time by Mary Jane McClelland to form the nucleus of West Windsor. Six of the nine locally listed historic resources are located within the boundaries of the original homestead (**Figure 22**). The remainder of the land stayed in the family through the mid-1950s—through four generations and 108 years. The family is memorialized in Windsor's McClelland Building, and in Hembree Lane, the location of Atlas's parental home that burned down in the early 1930s. Atlas's Hembree Building burned in the 1940s.<sup>42</sup> Descendants of the family still live in the Windsor area.

The property is the location of the Windsor Historical Society and Museum, the Windsor Senior Center, and a public swimming pool, continuing its tradition as a town social and cultural hub.

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<sup>40</sup> Find a Grave 2016

<sup>41</sup> Personal communication, Steve Lehmann, Windsor Historical Society, December 2016

<sup>42</sup> Beedie 1978:31

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**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

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**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other

Name of repository: California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS),  
Northwest Information Center, Sonoma State University; Windsor  
Historical Society and Museum

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 2.2 acres

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 38.552541                      Longitude: -122.810729

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Foxwood Drive at the west; East Windsor Creek at the east; Windsor Senior Center and Pool to the north; Partridge Court parcel to the south.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Sonoma County Assessor's Parcel Numbers APN 161-230-070 and 161-230-066.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: J Longfellow, MA, RPA, RPH  
organization: J Longfellow Consulting  
street & number: 614 Forest Drive  
city or town: Sebastopol state: CA zip code: 95472  
e-mail: [jlongfellowconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:jlongfellowconsulting@gmail.com)  
telephone: (707) 758-3922  
date: March 2017; Revised December 2017

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Cunningham-Hembree Estate  
City or Vicinity: Windsor  
County: Sonoma County  
State: California  
Photographer: J Longfellow  
Date Photographed: August 15 and October 28, 2016; August 28, 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 27 Cunningham House west façade, view to east
- 2 of 27 Cunningham House south façade, view to north
- 3 of 27 Cunningham House east and north façades, view to southwest
- 4 of 27 Cunningham House north façade, view to southeast
- 5 of 27 Cunningham House entry hall, view to east
- 6 of 27 Cunningham House southeast bedroom, view to southeast
- 7 of 27 Cunningham House main/living room, view to southeast
- 8 of 27 Hembree House south façade overview, view to north northeast

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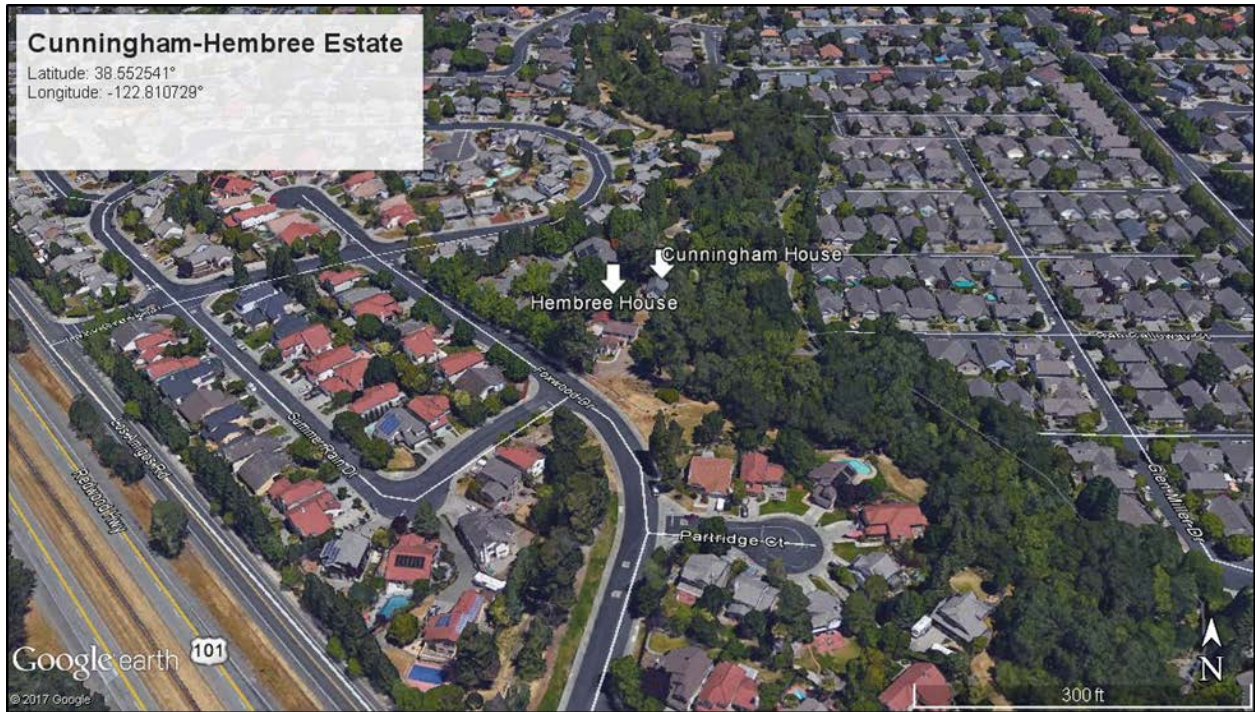
- 9 of 27 Hembree House east end of south façade, view to north
- 10 of 27 Hembree House center wing, view to northwest
- 11 of 27 Hembree House porte-cochère in front of west porch, view to southeast
- 12 of 27 Hembree House west façade (north portion), view to east
- 13 of 27 Hembree House east and north façades, view to west southwest from garden
- 14 of 27 Hembree House east porch from garden, view to west
- 15 of 27 Hembree House north façade, view to south
- 16 of 27 Hembree House garage, view to northeast
- 17 of 27 Hembree House Clara's sunken garden dry pond bed, view to east
- 18 of 27 Relic cypress trees, view to west from Hembree House
- 19 of 27 Front door from entry hall, view to southwest
- 20 of 27 Arched doorway echoing front door, view to hall and rear (north façade) entry from entry hall
- 21 of 27 Hembree House entry hall and stairway, bedroom to right (east)
- 22 of 27 Hembree House dining room, view to northeast
- 23 of 27 Hembree House living room, Windsor Historical Society exhibits room, view to southwest
- 24 of 27 Hembree House living room west wall, enclosed porch and porte-cochère visible through windows
- 25 of 27 Hembree House upstairs hall with built-in cabinets
- 26 of 27 Dr. Hembree's office (Bedroom 2), built-in bookcase
- 27 of 27 Hembree House hardwood floor detail



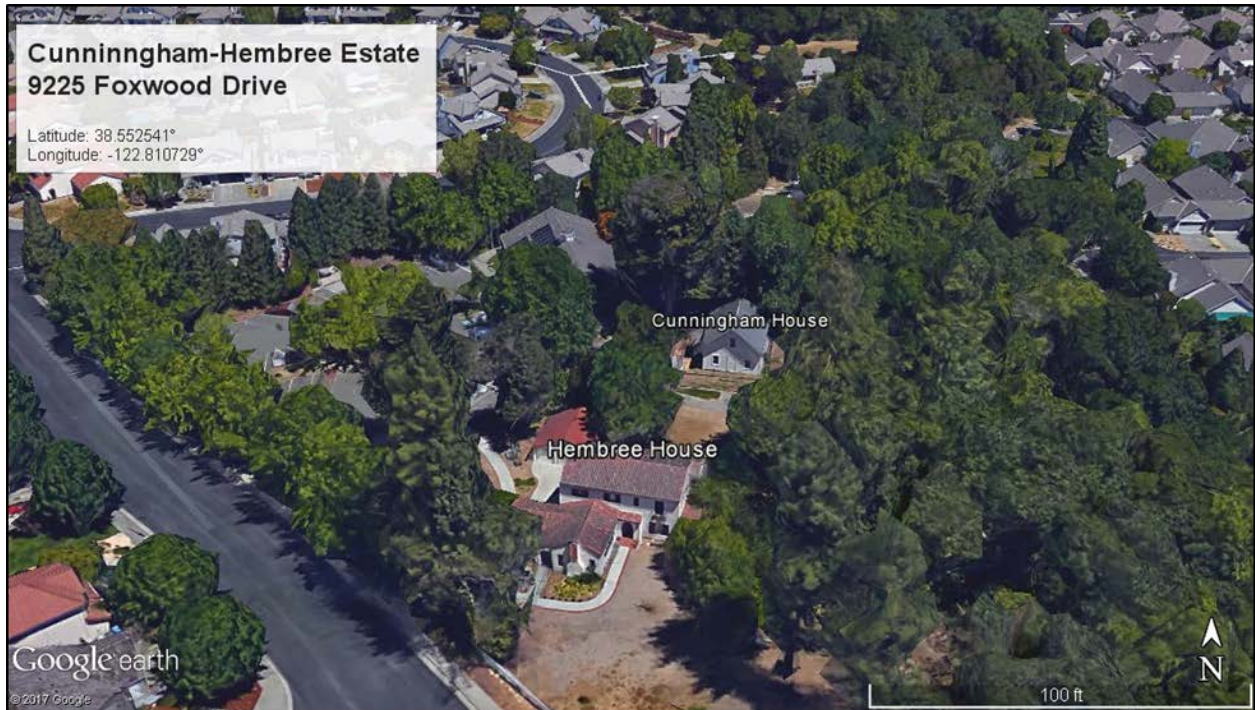
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**Figure 1a. Location Map (300 ft scale)**



**Figure 1b. Location Map (100 ft scale)**



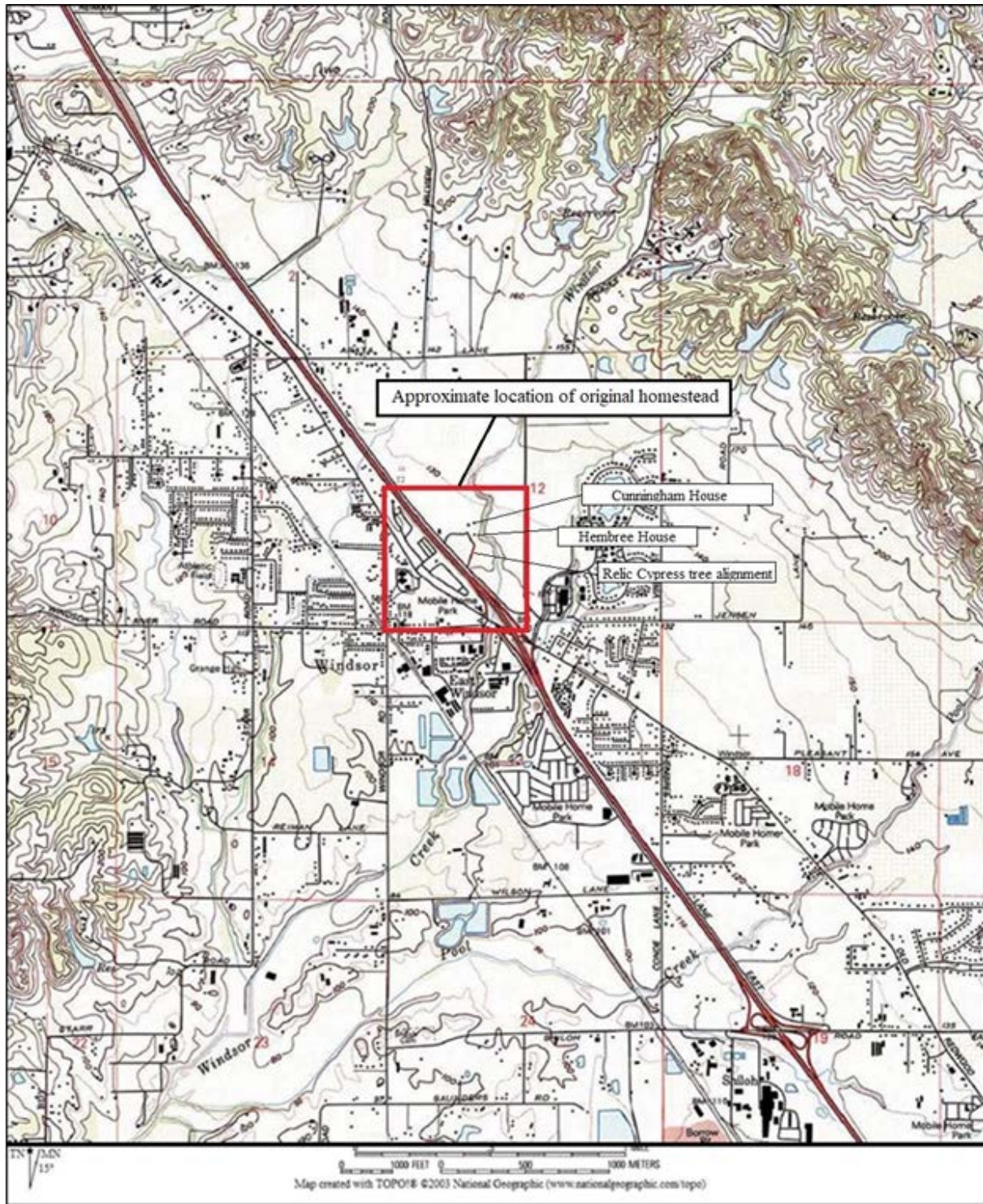


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### Figure 2. Site Map

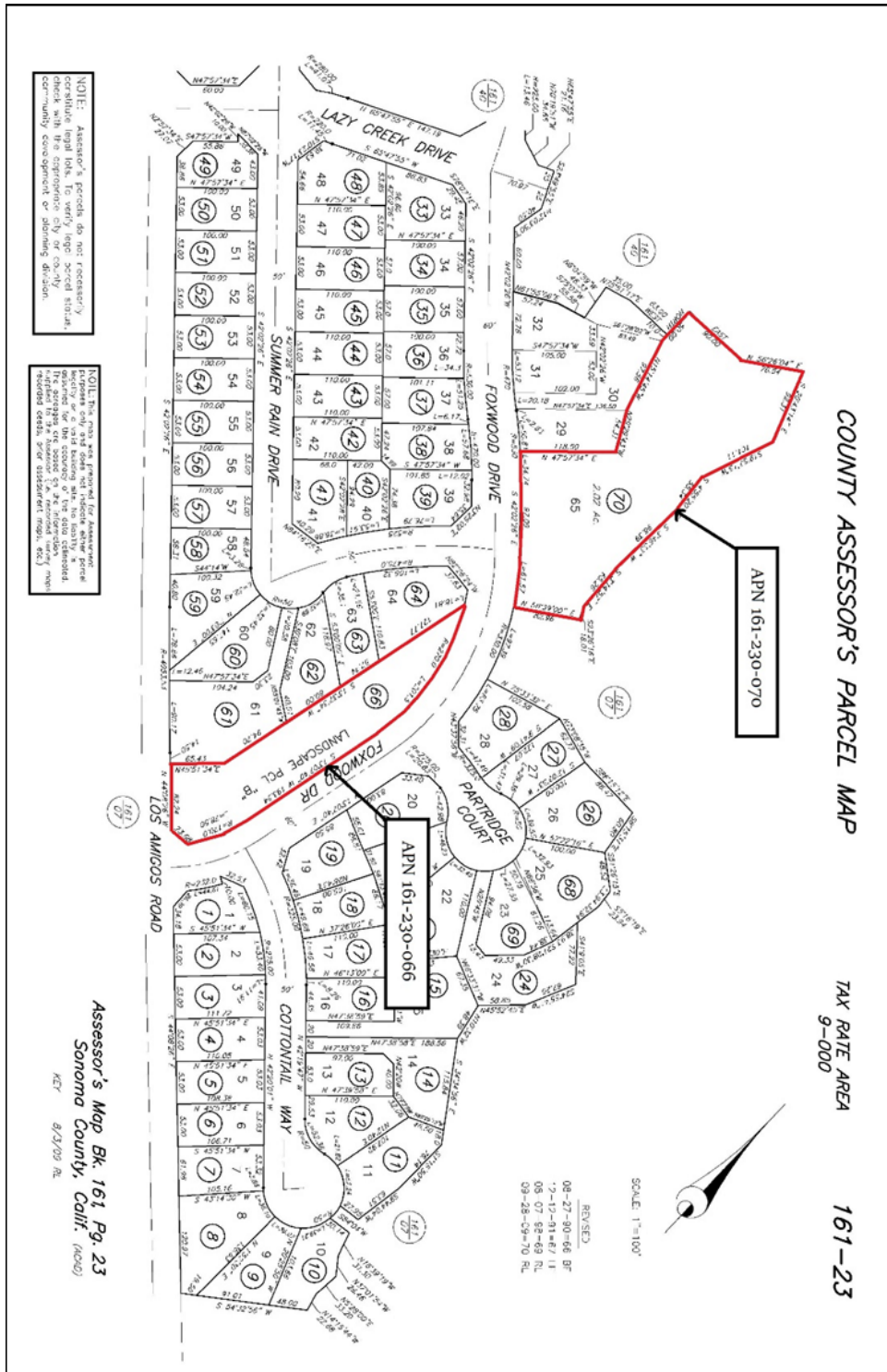
Source Map: USGS 7.5' Quadrangle: *Healdsburg, Calif.* Scale: 1:24,000



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**Figure 3. Sonoma County Assessor's Parcel Map**

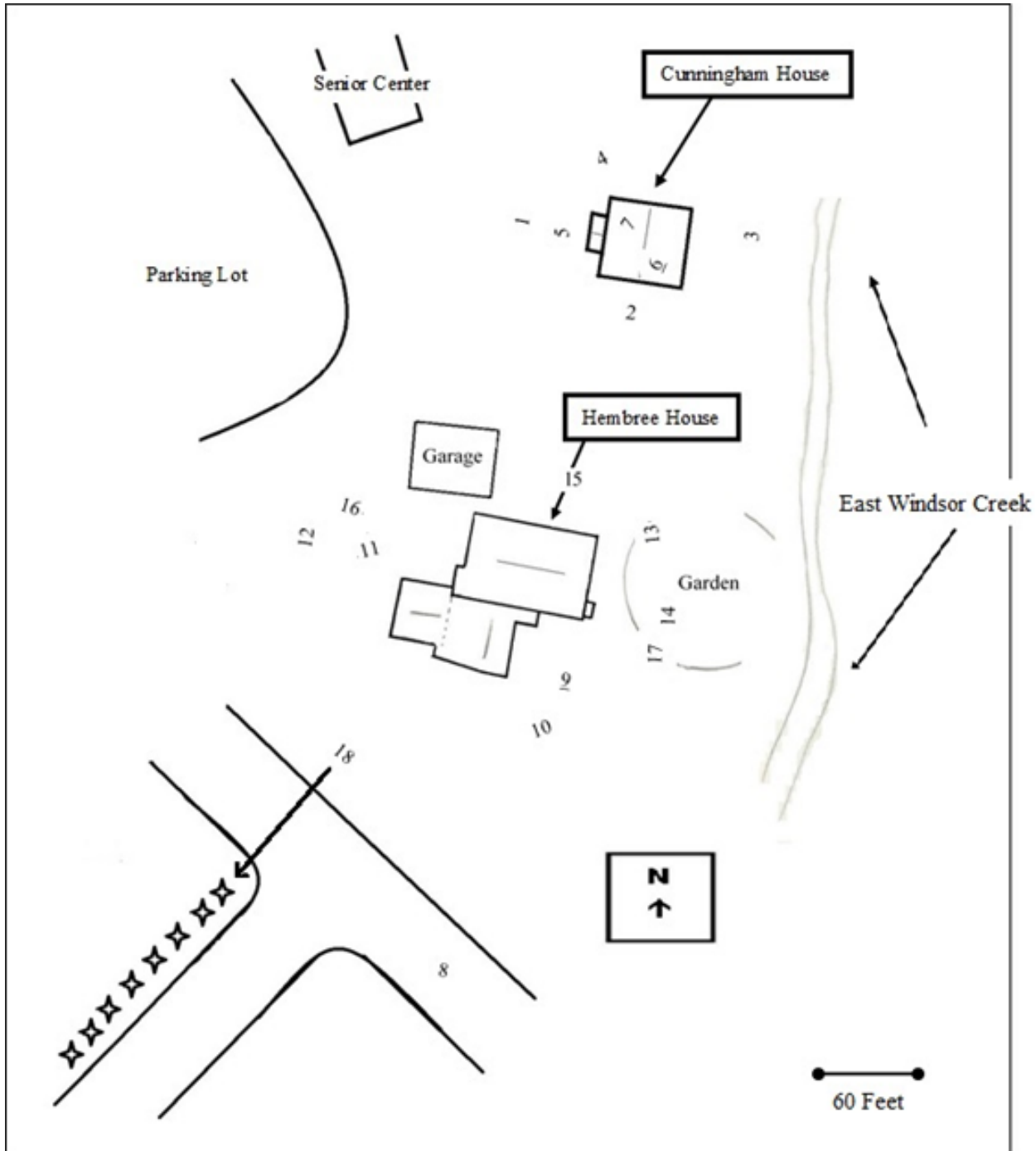




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Figure 4. Sketch Map/Exterior Photo Key

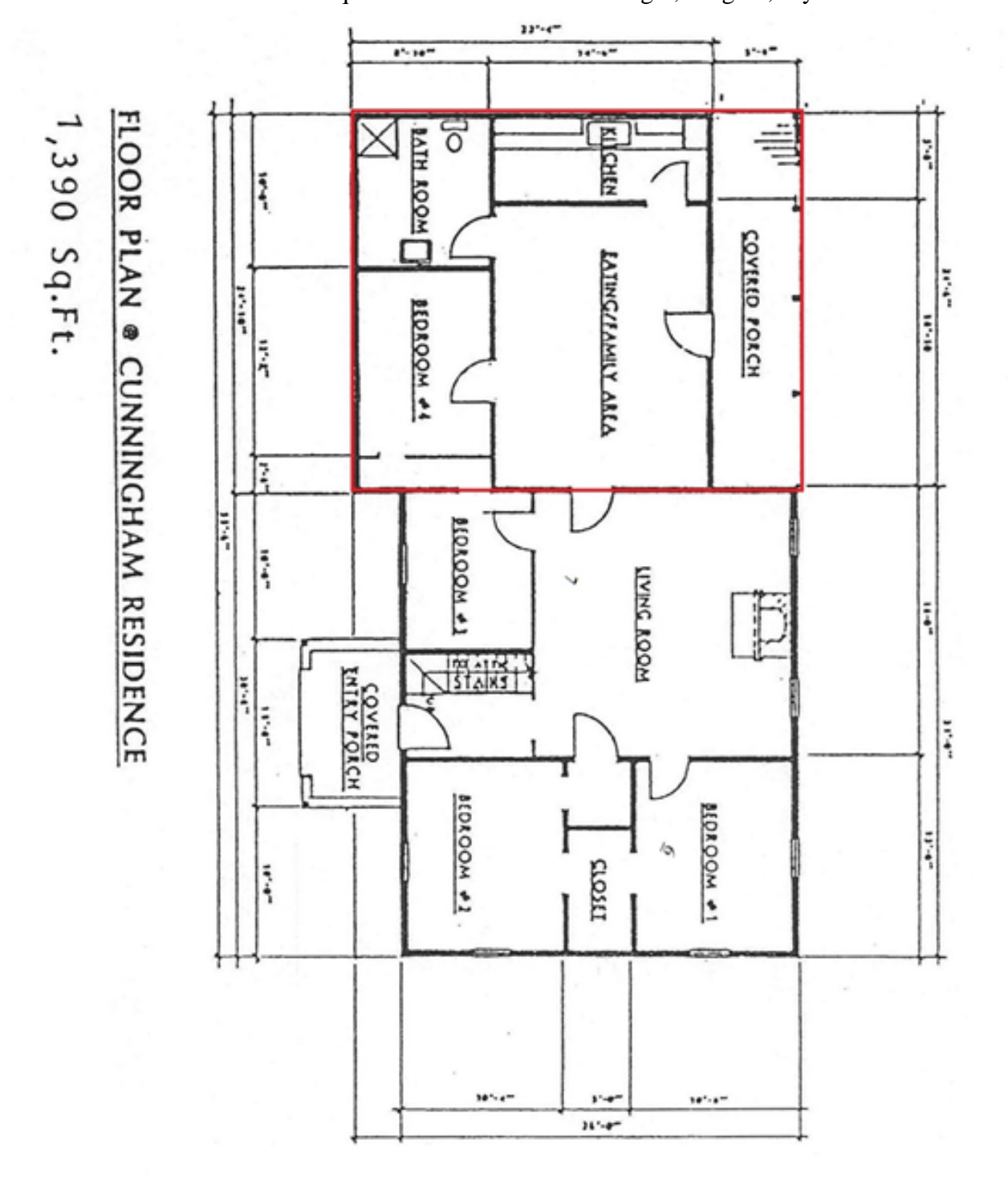


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**Figure 5. Cunningham House Floor Plan 1992/Interior Photo Key**

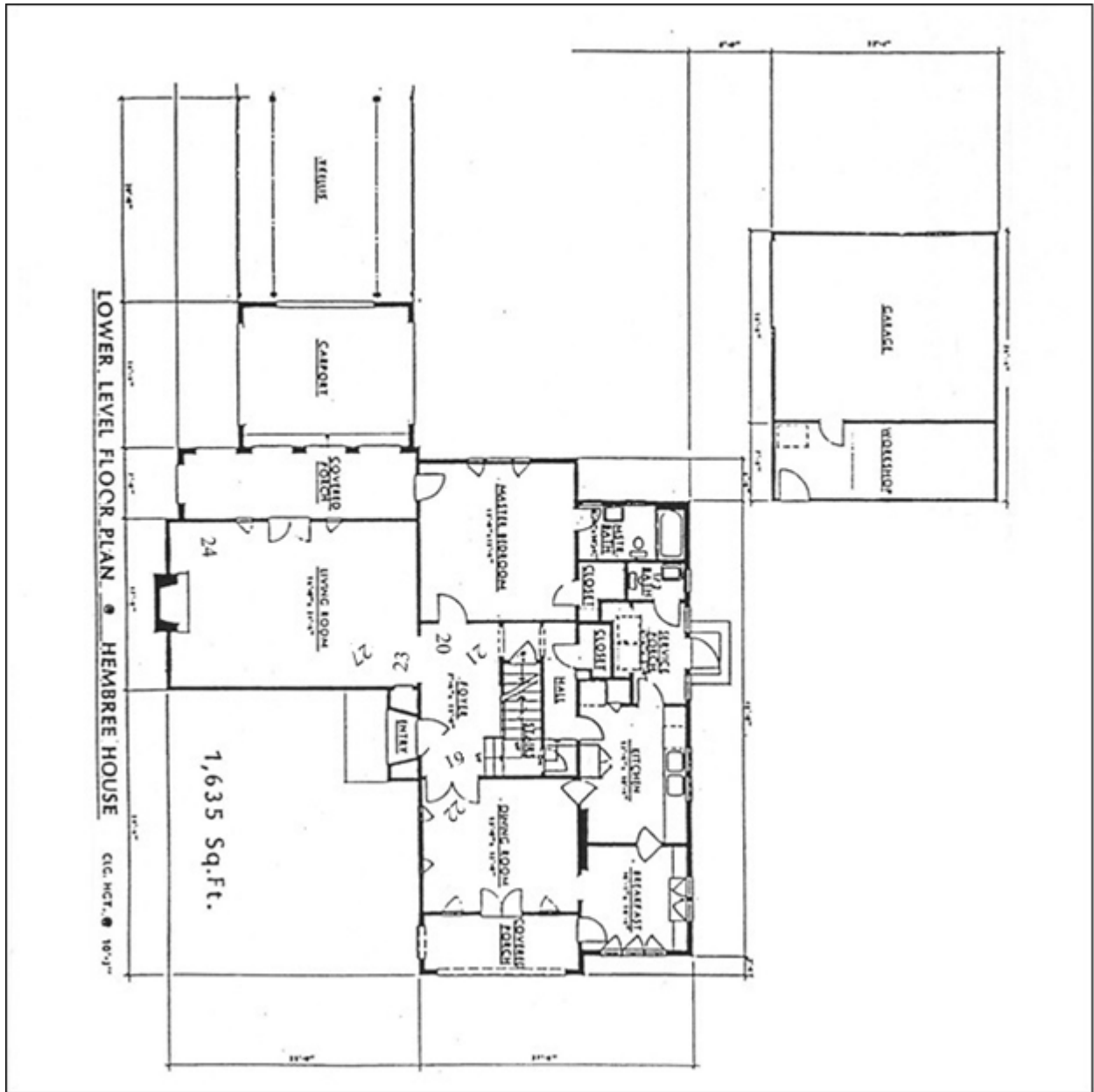
Circa 1870 addition inside red square removed 1992 Knight, Wagner, Flynn Architects 1992



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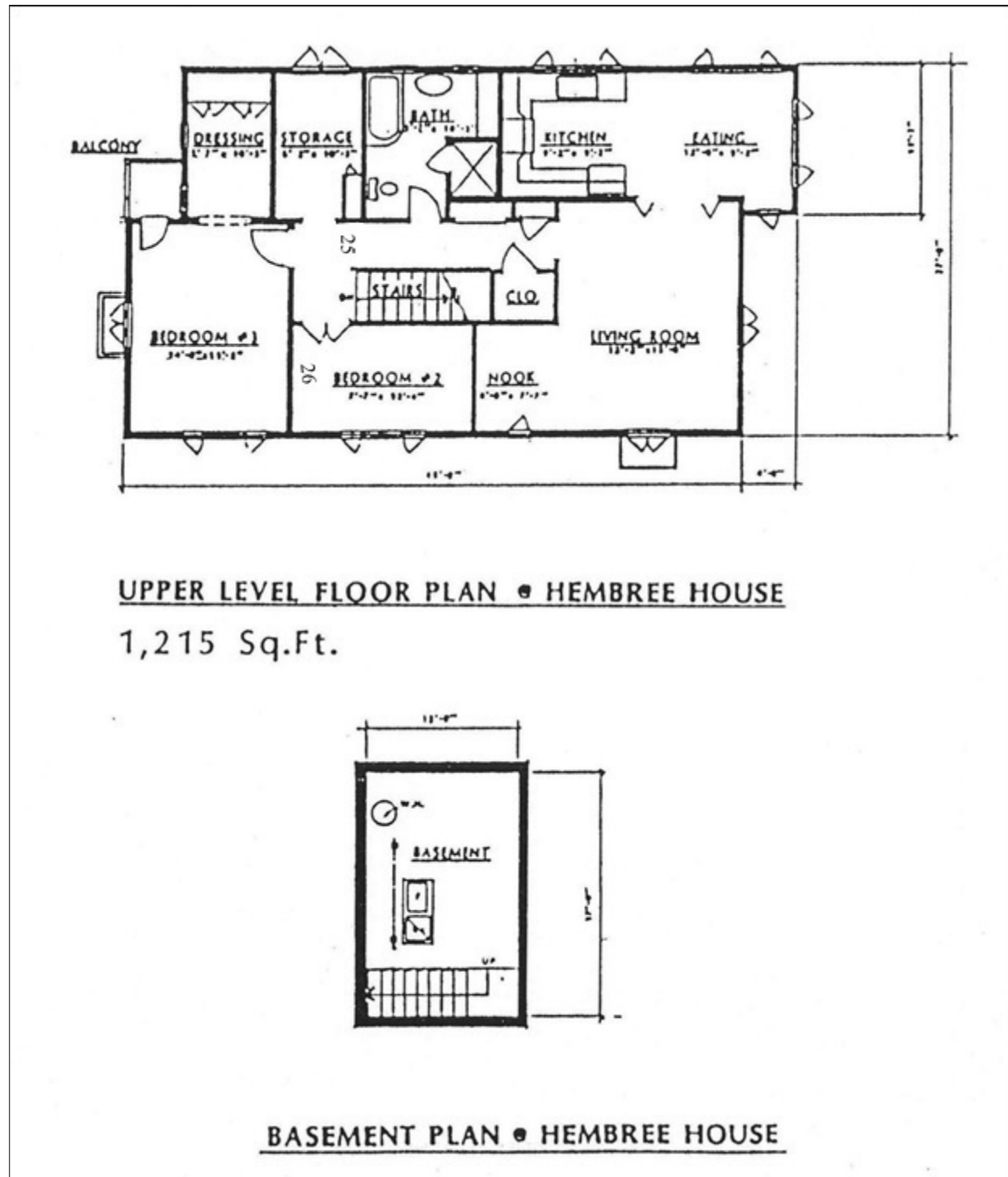
Figure 6. Hembree House Lower Level Floor Plan 1992/Interior Photo Key



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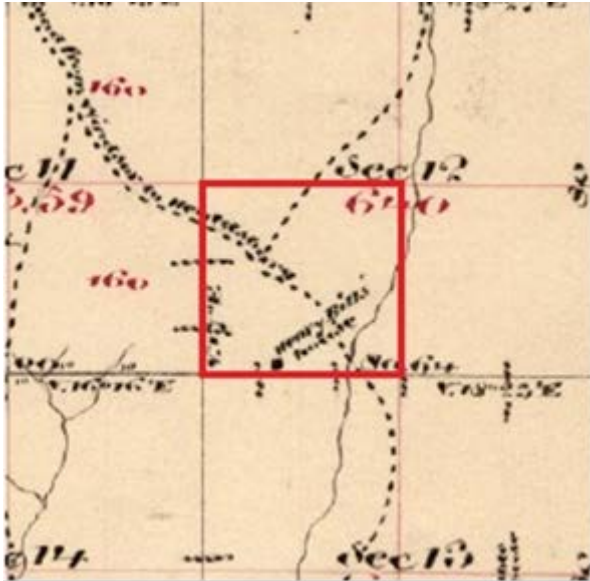
**Figure 7. Hembree House Upper Level and Basement Floor Plans 1992/Interior Photo Key**



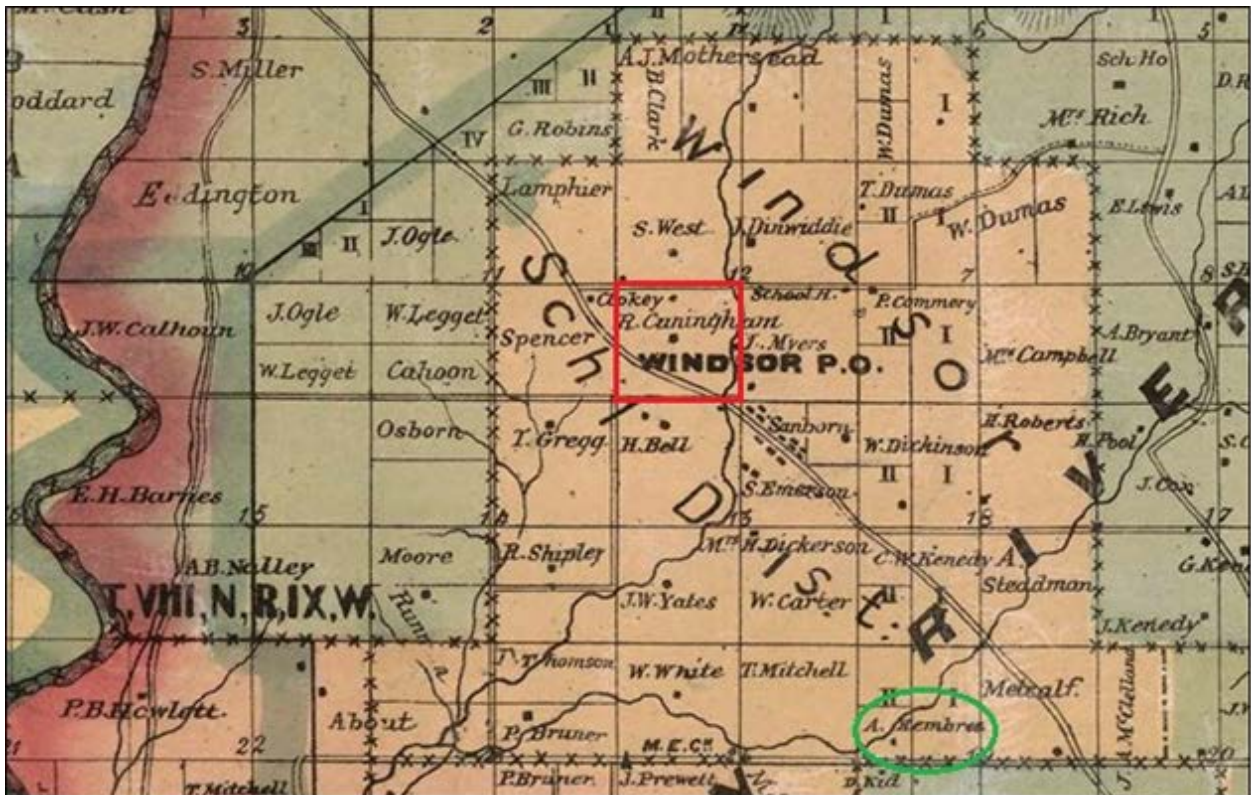
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**Figure 8. Detail, 1868 Survey Plat of Township 8 North, Range 9 West**



**Figure 9. Detail, AB Bowers 1867; Cunningham Homestead outlined in red, Andrew Hembree (Atlas' father) property circled in green**





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Figure 10. Detail, Thompson and West 1877

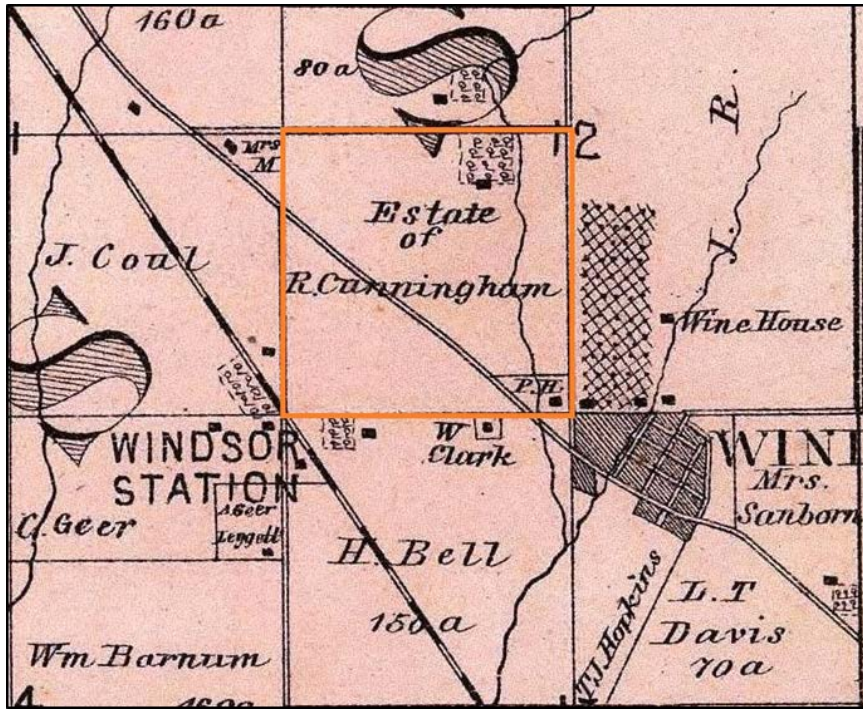


Figure 11. Detail, Reynolds and Proctor 1898



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**Figure 12. Isabella Russell Cunningham and Robert Cunningham, circa 1860 (Ray 2004)**



**Figure 13. Mary Jane Cunningham McClelland, circa 1860 (Ray 2004)**

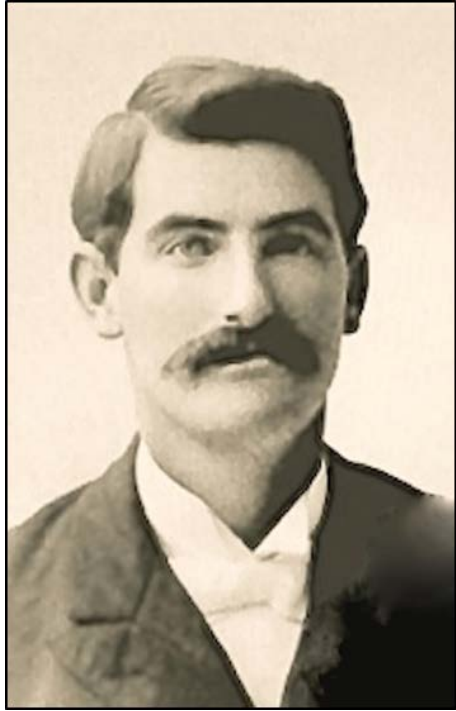




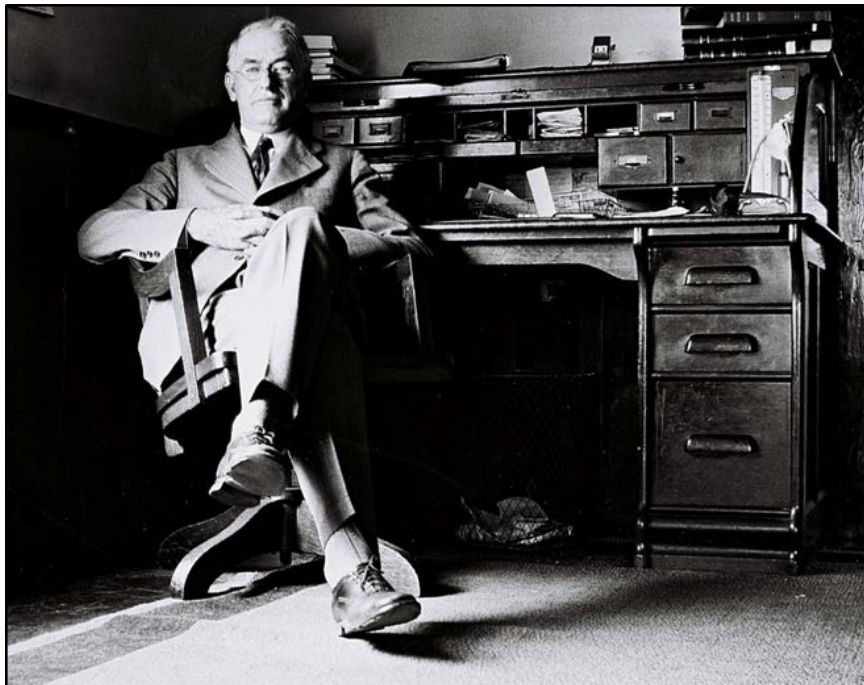
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**Figure 14. Atlas Thompson Hembree, circa 1895 (Find a Grave 2009a)**  
**Figure 15. Clara McClelland Hembree, circa 1895 (Find a Grave 2009b)**



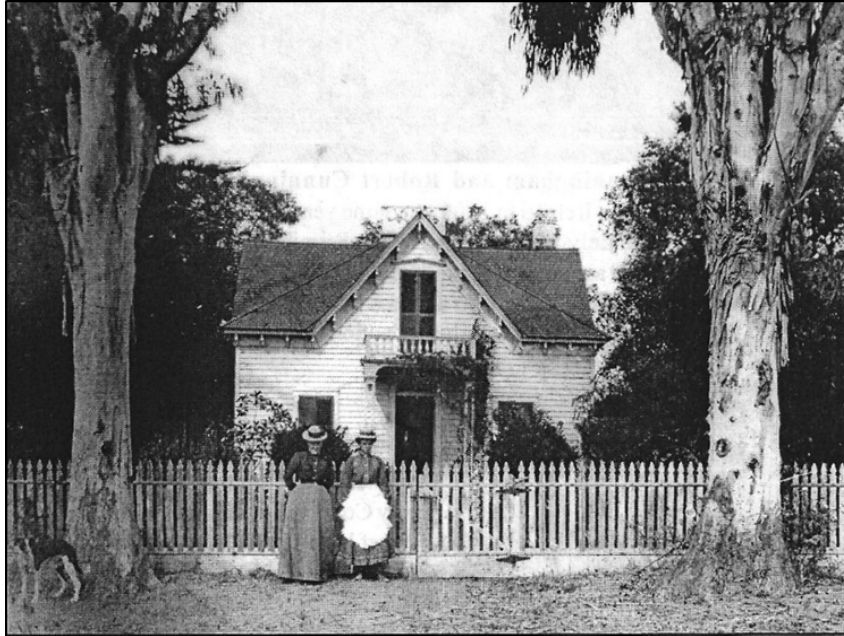
**Figure 16. Older Atlas Hembree, date unknown (Windsor Historical Society)**



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**Figure 17. Cunningham House, circa 1900, south façade, view to north (Windsor Historical Society)**



**Figure 18. Cunningham House, circa 1930, after entrance moved to west façade, view to east (Windsor Historical Society); North half [portion to left of large tree] removed in 1992**





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**Figure 19. Hembree House under construction, circa 1930, south façade, view to north  
(Windsor Historical Society)**



**Figure 20. Cypress alignment circa 1992, Hembree House at driveway end (Windsor Historical Society)**



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**Figure 21. Cunningham House original foundation showing mortise and tenon floor joists, view to southeast, 2011**



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**Figure 22. Town of Windsor Historic Register, 1996**



**EXHIBIT "A"**

**TOWN OF WINDSOR  
HISTORIC REGISTER**

1.	APN: 066-081-078	<u>371 Windsor River Road - Masonic Hall</u>
2.	APN: 066-081-084	<u>321 Windsor River Road - Gutchell House/Residence</u>
3.	APN: 161-230-065	<u>9225 Foxwood Drive - Hembree House</u>
4.	APN: 161-230-065	<u>9229 Foxwood Drive - Cunningham House</u>
5.	APN: 164-010-052	294 Windsor River Road - Bell Ranch House
6.	APN: 162-041-001	Foothill Dr/Cerrada Ct - Heritage Bay Tree
7.	APN: 164-140-003	7100 Windsor Road - Shiloh Cemetery
8.	APN: 164-010-006	<u>295 Windsor River Road - David H. Duvander House</u>
9.	APN: 066-081-079	<u>337 Windsor River Road - Odd Fellows Hall</u>

The Historic Register consists of the list above, the associated assessors parcel pages, and a text and picture of each item.

I:\60 - Planning & Building Dept\Planning Department\01-01-63\Historic Register.doc



Cunningham-Hembree Estate  
Name of Property

Sonoma County, CA  
County and State

**Photo 1**



**Photo 2**





Cunningham-Hembree Estate  
Name of Property

Sonoma County, CA  
County and State

**Photo 3**



**Photo 4**



Cunningham-Hembree Estate  
Name of Property

Sonoma County, CA  
County and State

**Photo 5**



**Photo 6**





Cunningham-Hembree Estate  
Name of Property

Sonoma County, CA  
County and State

**Photo 7**



**Photo 8**



Cunningham-Hembree Estate  
Name of Property

Sonoma County, CA  
County and State

**Photo 9**



**Photo 10**





Cunningham-Hembree Estate  
Name of Property

Sonoma County, CA  
County and State

**Photo 11**



**Photo 12**



Cunningham-Hembree Estate  
Name of Property

Sonoma County, CA  
County and State

**Photo 13**



**Photo 14**





Cunningham-Hembree Estate  
Name of Property

Sonoma County, CA  
County and State

**Photo 15**



**Photo 16**



Cunningham-Hembree Estate  
Name of Property

Sonoma County, CA  
County and State

**Photo 17**



**Photo 18**





Cunningham-Hembree Estate  
Name of Property

Sonoma County, CA  
County and State

**Photo 19**



**Photo 20**



Cunningham-Hembree Estate  
Name of Property

Sonoma County, CA  
County and State

**Photo 21**



**Photo 22**



Cunningham-Hembree Estate  
Name of Property

Sonoma County, CA  
County and State

**Photo 23**



**Photo 24**



Cunningham-Hembree Estate  
Name of Property

Sonoma County, CA  
County and State

**Photo 25**



**Photo 26**





Cunningham-Hembree Estate  
Name of Property

Sonoma County, CA  
County and State

**Photo 27**



**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.