



William Baldrige House Historical Resources Report

Vineyard House Winery, Use Permit P18-00448-UP, Use Permit
Exception to the Conservation Regulations P21-00341-UP, and
Exemptions to the Road and Street Standards
Planning Commission Hearing Date July 16, 2025



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William Baldrige House Historical Resources Technical Report

Prepared for

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December 21, 2018

RECEIVED

DEC 27 2018

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1. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

At the request of Jeremy Justin Nickel, Architectural Resources Group (ARG) has prepared this Historical Resources Technical Report for the Vineyard House Winery Project (the Project). The Project site comprises 43 acres located at 1581 Oakville Grade in Napa County, California, in an area known as Halter Valley.¹ The site contains a ca. 1870s single-family residence, the William Baldrige House (currently known as the Vineyard House). The Project includes the construction and upgrading of winemaking facilities and the adaptive reuse of the William Baldrige House into a tasting room.

This study has been prepared to fulfill the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as they relate to historical resources. CEQA states that “a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.”² An evaluation of potential impacts under CEQA includes both a determination of whether historical resources as defined by CEQA are present on and in the vicinity of the project site and, if so, the identification of potential impacts to historical resources caused by the project.

Upon thorough analysis of the William Baldrige House, ARG finds that the building is eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources for its association with Napa Valley’s early agricultural development in the mid to late nineteenth century and for its association with William Baldrige, a Napa Valley pioneer who played a significant role in the early development of Napa and California. Therefore, it is ARG’s professional opinion that the subject property is a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA. Following is an assessment of the building against California Register of Historical Resources eligibility criteria and an analysis of potential impacts to the William Baldrige House posed by the Project.

1.1 Summary of Previous Research and Evaluations

In 2011, ARG was contracted to conduct preliminary research on the property, including the Baldrige residence and other outbuildings located within the winery estate. The research completed in 2011 determined the property belonged to a larger, approximately 165-acre parcel of land owned by two significant figures in Napa Valley and California history, William Baldrige and Hamilton Walker (H.W.) Crabb, as well as Crabb’s notable To-Kalon Vineyard, in the late nineteenth century.³

In June 2016, ARG conducted additional research to expand key areas of the property’s history to determine if Baldrige, Crabb, or the subsequent To-kalon Vineyard Company produced grapes, vines, or rootstock on the property; the location and extent of Crabb’s experimental vineyard and To-Kalon Stock Farm; and the land use under subsequent owners including the Churchill, Stelling, and Nickel families. The 2016 report provided a detailed property and ownership history of the winery estate.

¹ Halter Valley appears to be a modern place name because it does not appear in any documents on the history of Napa County reviewed for this report.

² California Public Resources Code, Section 21084.1.

³ Hamilton W. Crabb’s name appears at various times in the archival record as Hiram W. and Henry W. Crabb. “To-Kalon” also appears in the archival record as “To Kalon” and “Tokalon;” for the purposes of this report, ARG refers to it as “To-Kalon” as displayed in newspaper articles and other documents during Crabb’s ownership unless otherwise referencing specific documents.

The Baldrige residence has not been previously evaluated for eligibility under the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, or as a Napa County Landmark.

1.2 Methodology

For preparation of this report, ARG performed the following tasks for research, documentation, and analysis:

- Reviewed previous research reports about the property and completed by ARG in 2011 and 2016.
- Conducted additional in-person research at the Napa City-County Library and Napa Valley Wine Library housed at the St. Helena Public Library.
- Completed research at online repositories and databases including the Napa County Planning, Building, and Environmental Services (PBES) Document Search webpage; Online Archive of California; Internet Archive; California Digital Newspaper Collection; *Napa Valley Register*, *The Weekly Calistogan*, and *San Francisco Chronicle* digitized newspaper archives; Newspapers.com; Ancestry.com; Huntington Digital Library; U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Historical Topographic Map Explorer and EarthExplorer; David Rumsey Historical Map Collection; and Google Books.
- Reviewed property deeds previously obtained from the Napa County Recorder's Office.
- Conducted a site visit of the subject property on May 2, 2017. During the site visit, the property was photographed and notes taken on the physical appearance and condition of the site, residence, and adjacent contemporary outbuildings.
- Reviewed The Vineyard House Winery Use Permit Drawings, completed by Paul Kelley Architecture and dated December 21, 2018.
- Consulted *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* (Weeks and Grimmer, 1995; revised 2017).

2. PROPOSED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Vineyard House Winery Project includes the addition and upgrading of winemaking facilities and the adaptive reuse of the historic ca. 1870s Baldrige House into a tasting room. Following is a description of the Project, as detailed in The Vineyard House Winery Use Permit Drawings, completed by Paul Kelley Architecture and dated December 21, 2018.

Proposed winemaking facilities include a large wine cave, consisting of a fermentation hall, storage tunnels, and a crush pad, located underneath the sloped, wooded area comprising the southwest portion of the property. Additionally, the contemporary barn (constructed south of the Baldrige House in 2016), which is currently used for agricultural storage, would be remodeled to house a barrel aging room, wine lab, storage, and offices. A new covered area, comprising the crush pad and sheltered by a hipped roof, would be added at the north façade. A new covered/screened process and water equipment area would be added to the south side of the pump house (built ca. 2016), which is located between the Baldrige House and barn.

The Project also includes the adaptive reuse of the William Baldrige House into a tasting room. In addition to the tasting room, the building would retain a history room, catering kitchen, offices, storage, and restrooms. A new wood porch deck and ramp enclosed by a low, simple metal railing would replace the existing (non-original) brick porch on the north and west sides of the residence. Non-original brick walkways on the east and west sides of the house would be replaced with new walkways. No other exterior alterations would occur to the building.

3. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

3.1 Site and Setting

The Baldrige House is located at the northeastern boundary of a 43-acre winery estate at 1581 Oakville Grade Road (APN 027-360-022) in Napa County. The winery is sited approximately one mile west of Highway 29 (St. Helena Highway), in an area currently known as Halter Valley, at the eastern edge of the Mayacamas Mountains. The residence is reached via an unnamed, single-lane road approximately 0.3 mile south of the intersection of Oakville Grade Road and Acacia Drive. A long, unpaved driveway stretches from the unnamed road to the east side of the residence. The house is set back from the road roughly 100 feet and is fronted by an expansive, gently sloping lawn to the north and west. South and west of the house is a wooded knoll of primarily mature oak trees. Cultivated vineyards lie south and east of the house and comprise approximately half of the estate. The residence appears to be the only remnant of the original Baldrige estate; no other buildings, structures, or site features dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century development of the property remain.



Aerial photograph of subject property, dashed line indicates approximate property boundary, 2016 (Google Earth, appended by author).



Aerial photograph of subject property, detail of buildings, 2016 (Google Earth, appended by author).

3.2 Residence

The ca. 1870s single-family residence is a 1,100 square-foot, two-story, vernacular building with one-story additions to the north and south. It is capped with a multi-gable roof with shallow eaves and covered in wood shingles, and it sits on a stone and concrete foundation. The original house volume and additions are clad in horizontal v-groove wood siding. Fenestration includes single, paired, and grouped, one-over-one double-hung windows that appear to be wood. Windows are double glazed and feature simple wood surrounds and wood screens. A multi-light wood door enclosed by a wood screen door is located at the west end of the north façade, and a multi-light metal door with a sliding metal screen is located near the center of the east façade, at the corner of the L-shaped addition.

The original two-story volume is oriented east-west and is bounded by one-story additions on the north and south sides. (Only the second story of the original house is visible on these sides.) The original volume is distinguished from the additions by its stone, rather than concrete foundation. On the west façade of the original volume is a chimney composed of irregularly shaped stone and capped with concrete. The north addition, which appears to serve as the primary façade and entrance of the building, features a front-facing gable roof and side porch covered by a shed roof supported by a wood post. A raised brick patio extends from the porch at the west façade. The south addition is an L-shaped wing containing the main entry hall and is accessed by a brick patio and fenced yard.



North façade and setting, view south (ARG, 2017).



South façade and L-shaped addition, view northwest (ARG, 2017).

The original portion of the residence contains a stair hall at the east end and a parlor at the west end featuring the historic stone fireplace on the first floor and a bedroom and bathroom on the second floor. Interior finishes, including wood floors, plastered walls, and wood doors and trim, likely date from a 1996 renovation. The north addition consists of a bedroom with an adjoining bath at the east. The south wing entry hall runs between a bedroom to the south and a kitchen and dining room to the north. Finishes in the additions appear to be contemporary with those in the original core.⁴

3.3 Outbuildings

Barn

A barn completed in 2016 is located approximately 100 feet south of the residence. The barn is two stories in height with one-story wings on either side. It is capped with a front-facing gable roof (shed roof on the side wings) and is clad with wood board-and-batten siding with stone wainscoting at its base. Large paired sliding doors are located on the north façade of the building, facing the house.

Pump House

Located slightly east of and between the Baldrige House and contemporary barn is a small, one-story pump house constructed ca. 2016. The building retains a low-pitched shed roof and is clad with wood board-and-batten siding with stone wainscoting at its base.



Barn, view south (ARG, 2017).



Pump house, view east (ARG, 2017).

4. PROPERTY HISTORY

4.1 Chronology of Development and Use

Following is a chronology of development and use of the William Baldrige House. A more detailed owner and occupant history is included under Section 5: Historical Background and Context. Source materials include property deeds on file at the Napa County Recorder's Office, online building permits obtained

⁴ ARG did not view the interior of the residence during its May 2, 2017 site visit. References to the interior appearance of the building were taken from ARG's 2011 research report on the property.

from Napa County's Planning, Building, and Environmental Services (PBES) Document Search webpage, Napa County maps, newspaper articles, and local published histories of Napa Valley.

- Early 1850s William Baldrige began residing on the property. Baldrige erected a house and other ancillary structures (none of which are extant), cultivated portions of the land, planted trees, and raised cattle.⁵
- Sept. 15, 1870 The United States government granted Baldrige 165.60 acres in central Napa Valley for his service in the Mexican-American War.⁶
- ca. 1870 The existing single-family residence was constructed.⁷
- 1885 Baldrige sold off 14.0 acres of his original estate to Adolph A. Chignon. By 1895, he had acquired 17 acres at the northwest corner from John Benson.⁸
- 1889 Baldrige sold his property (which had increased slightly to 168.5 acres), including the residence and associated ancillary buildings to Hamilton Walker (H.W.) Crabb, owner of the noted To-Kalan Vineyard Company, north of the Baldrige property.⁹
- 1889-1899 Research did not indicate how H.W. Crabb used the Baldrige estate. However, because Crabb maintained a house on his other property, it is unlikely he used the Baldrige House as his primary residence.
- 1899 H.W. Crabb died and his approximate 540-acre property, including the Baldrige House, was auctioned off and bought by Edward S. Churchill for \$5,234.¹⁰
- 1902 E.S. Churchill deeded the property to his wife, Mary W. Churchill.¹¹

⁵ "U.S. Land Commission," *Daily Alta California* 4, no. 285 (November 5, 1853); Palmer, *History of Napa and Lake Counties*, 394.

⁶ The deed was filed at the Napa County Recorder's Office in 1872; Napa County Book of Deeds and Book of Patents, on file at the Napa County Recorder's Office; General Land Office Records, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior, accessed May 20, 2017, <https://glorecords.blm.gov/details/patent/default.aspx?accession=CACAAA%20009126&docClass=SER&sid=sq041jhm.lmg#patentDetailsTabIndex=2>.

⁷ The year built date of the current house was approximated using late nineteenth century newspaper articles and local published histories from the time period. Additionally, the overall form and massing of the house conforms to the construction techniques of the mid-nineteenth century, and its modest, vernacular appearance is similar to other late 1860s and early 1870s houses depicted in the 1878 *Illustrations of Napa County, California*. Given Baldrige was not formerly granted ownership of the land until 1870, it is likely the current residence was built around that time.

⁸ George G. Lyman and S.R. Throckmorton, *Official Map of the County of Napa, California* (Napa, California: David L. Haas, 1876); M.G. King, *Map of the Central Portion of Napa Valley and the Town of St. Helena* (St. Helena, California: E.W. Woodward & Co., 1881); O.H. Buckman, *Official Map of the County of Napa, California* (San Francisco: Punnett Brothers, 1895); Napa County Book of Deeds.

⁹ Napa County Book of Deeds.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

1903-1943 Shortly after E.S. Churchill's death (1903), Mary W. Churchill transferred the property to the To-Kalon Vineyard Co. The Churchills produced wine in one capacity or another under the To-Kalon brand for the next four decades.¹²

Research did not indicate how the Baldrige House was used during this time period; however, Baldrige's original estate does not appear to have been cultivated with grapes used by the To-kalon Vineyard Co. United States BATF records from the 1930s and 1940s suggest only the northern acreage originally owned by Crabb was used by the vineyard company.¹³

1943 Mary A. Churchill, daughter-in-law of Mary W. Churchill, sold the approximate 540-acre property, including the Baldrige House, to Martin Stelling Jr., a wealthy San Francisco steel manufacturer.¹⁴

1950 Martin Stelling died, and his son, Douglas Stelling, inherited his estate.

1940s-1950s By 1951, a USGS topographic map indicates vineyards were growing on the original Baldrige estate; it is unknown if these were extant prior to Martin Stelling's purchase of the acreage or planted under his authorization.¹⁵

1981 A permit was issued to Stelling Vineyards for a dwelling remodel, including bringing the furnace up to code and installing insulation in ceilings and walls.¹⁶

1982 A permit was issued to Stelling Vineyards for electrical upgrades at the house.¹⁷

Robert L. Lieff acquired the Baldrige House and a portion of the former estate from the Stelling Vineyards partnership by way of the Title Insurance and Trust Company.¹⁸

1984 Gil Nickel acquired the Baldrige House and a portion of the original Baldrige estate from Robert L. Lieff and wife Sharon L. Lieff. Nickel transferred ownership of the property to the Nickel Land Company.¹⁹

¹² Napa County Book of Deeds; "E.S. Churchill Dead," *Napa Daily Journal*, March 29, 1903.

¹³ U.S. BATF records for To-kalon Winery Co., 1920-1941, on file at the University of California, Davis Special Collections, Collection Number D-140, Box 72.

¹⁴ Napa County Book of Deeds; "Mrs. M. Alice Churchill Sells Famed Tokalon Vineyards to Martin Stelling," *Napa Journal*, July 23, 1943: 1; Gunther R. Detert, "H.W. Crabb, 1828-1899," in *History of Napa Valley: Interviews and Reminiscences of Long-time Residents, Volume III, 1977-1981*, Napa Valley Wine Library Association (St. Helena, California: Napa Valley Wine Library Association, 1981), 10.

¹⁵ USGS, *Rutherford, California quadrangle*, 1:24,000, 7.5 Minute Series (United States Department of the Interior, United States Geological Society, 1951).

¹⁶ Permit No. 28297, Napa County PBES, accessed May 20, 2017, <http://services.countyofnapa.org/PBESDocumentSearch#>.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Order No. T0013100, 1581 Oakville Grade, Chain of Title, First American Title Company of Napa.

¹⁹ Ibid.

- 1996 Permit issued to Gil Nickel for an interior remodel of the house, including new plumbing and electrical fixtures, mechanical upgrades, new floor and ceiling finishes, and new cabinetry. The house was also re-roofed and repainted.²⁰
- 2003 After Gil Nickel's death (2003), his son, Jeremy Justin Nickel, inherited 17 acres encompassing the original Baldrige House and a portion of the estate. Ownership of the property was transferred to the Nickel Vineyard Company, LLC.²¹
- 2011 Permit approved for the construction of a new barn.²²
- Permits approved for the construction of a new sewage system.²³
- 2013 The lot line adjustment to encompass Halter Valley was approved, expanding Nickel's property to a total of 43 acres.²⁴
- 2014 An extension of the permit for the construction of the barn was granted and the application reissued.²⁵
- 2015 Permit approved for the construction of the pump house.²⁶
- 2016 Construction of the barn and pump house was completed.²⁷
- 2011-2016 An ancillary building (referred to as the "chicken coop") was demolished.

In addition to the chronology outlined above, a number of alterations were noted during the May 2, 2017 site visit. Following is a list of alterations undertaken at unknown dates:

- A one-story addition, including a new entrance porch and patio, was constructed on the north façade of the original two-story house.
- An L-shaped one-story addition was constructed on the south façade of the original two-story house. The current appearance (including its roofline, arrangement of fenestration, and window dimensions) of the southern addition suggests it may date to the 1940s or 1950s.

²⁰ Application Forms, B96.00251 and B96.00274, Napa County PBES, accessed May 20, 2017, <http://services.countyofnapa.org/PBESDocumentSearch#>.

²¹ Napa County Book of Deeds.

²² Application Form, B11.00956, Napa County PBES, accessed May 20, 2017, <http://services.countyofnapa.org/PBESDocumentSearch#>.

²³ Document Nos. E11.00458 and E11.00459, Parcel Report, APN 027-360-022, Napa County PBES, accessed June 12, 2017, <http://www.countyofnapa.org/pbes/parceldata/>.

²⁴ Document No. W13.00156, Parcel Report, APN 027-360-022, Napa County PBES, accessed June 12, 2017, <http://www.countyofnapa.org/pbes/parceldata/>.

²⁵ Extension Request/Response, B11.00956, Napa County PBES, accessed May 20, 2017, <http://services.countyofnapa.org/PBESDocumentSearch#>.

²⁶ Application Form, B15-01743, Napa County PBES, accessed July 7, 2017, <http://services.countyofnapa.org/PBESDocumentSearch#>.

²⁷ Certificates of Occupancy, B11.00956, Napa County PBES, accessed July 7, 2017, <http://services.countyofnapa.org/PBESDocumentSearch#>.

- The original cladding (which was likely wood clapboard with a narrower profile than the current cladding) was replaced with horizontal wood v-groove siding.
- The arrangement of fenestration, including the location of the original primary entrance door, has been altered.
- Original windows were replaced with new double-hung, double-glazed windows.
- New landscaping, including brick walkways, planters, trellises, and new plantings were installed.

5. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

5.1 Early Settlement of Napa Valley

Prior to European occupation, the Napa Valley region had been inhabited by members of the Wappo tribe for several thousands of years. The Wappo comprised three smaller triblets – the Mishewal of Alexander Valley and southern Lake County, the Mutisul of Knights Valley and eastern Sonoma County, and the Mayakmah of Napa and Sonoma valleys.²⁸ The Mayakmah of Napa Valley were hunter-gathers who migrated throughout the region and established several settlements along the Napa River, including near present-day cities such as Calistoga, St. Helena, and Napa.²⁹ The tribe hunted fowl, elk, deer, and antelope; fished for freshwater eel and Steelhead salmon in valley streams; and gathered acorns, wild oats, roots, and other edible plants on the valley floor.³⁰

The Wappo's peaceful existence in Napa Valley abruptly ended in the early nineteenth century with the arrival of Spanish missionaries. In June 1823, a group of Spanish missionaries led by Father Jose Altimira entered Napa Valley for the first time. Ultimately deciding Sonoma Valley offered more timber and water sources than Napa, Altimira established Mission San Francisco de Solano in Sonoma in 1824. The missionaries primarily used Napa Valley for cattle raising.³¹ By the mid- nineteenth century, the valley's native inhabitants and their settlements had been largely diminished due to religious indoctrination and their relocation to the missions as well as European diseases, such as smallpox, and war with the Mexican military.

5.2 Rancho Caymus

In 1821, Mexico achieved independence from Spain, and California came under control of the Mexican government. Napa Valley continued to be used for cattle grazing through the 1820s and early 1830s during Mexico's governance of the state. However, no permanent Mexican or Euro-American settlement occurred in the valley until the mid-1830s. In 1836, George Yount, a North Carolinian who grew up in Missouri, obtained entitlement to a large, 11,814-acre land grant known as Rancho Caymus (encompassing the subject property) in the heart of Napa Valley. Yount reached the San Francisco Bay in 1833 and spent a winter in Petaluma before arriving at Mission San Francisco de Solano. Though outsiders were not typically provided land grants under the Mexican government, Yount had befriended

²⁸ "Native History," *Suscol Intertribal Council*, accessed May 18, 2017, <http://www.suscolcouncil.org/NativeHistory2.html>.

²⁹ Lin Weber, *Old Napa Valley: The History to 1900* (St. Helena, CA: Wine Ventures Publishing, 1998), 3-6.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 11-14.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 18.

Mexican military commander Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo and provided much-needed carpentry and blacksmith skills at the mission. The land grant was partial payment for the work he had completed.³²

Shortly after obtaining his land grant, Yount moved to the Napa Valley, accompanied by a group of Sonoma Mission Indians. He selected a home site near the Napa River, approximately one mile north of present-day Yountville, where he, with the help of the Sonoma Indians, built a gristmill and a two-story "Kentucky-style" blockhouse, complete with a fireplace and chimney.³³ The following year, he built a long, narrow adobe house equipped with a series of portholes through which he could shoot hostile visitors.³⁴ In addition to farming wheat, Yount maintained a fruit orchard, berry patch, and dairy. In 1838, he planted Napa's first vineyard, though the grapes were primarily intended for eating and used as a source of sugar, not for producing wine.³⁵ In 1843, Yount was given a second land grant to Rancho de la Jota, where he established a sawmill.³⁶ After Mexico ceded control of California to the United States in 1848, Yount began selling off some of his land holdings in the southern section of Rancho Caymus in the area that would become Yountville. On October 5, 1865, George Yount died, his remains buried in an Indian burial ground later sold to the Yountville Cemetery Association.³⁷

5.3 Napa's Early Agricultural History

In the early 1840s, the Napa Valley region witnessed an influx of Europeans and Americans from Missouri as well as other states in the Midwest. Early settlers included William Pope, who arrived to the region in 1841 and settled in the valley that now bears his name; Colonel J.B. Chiles, who purchased land in what would later become Chiles Valley; and a number of other families, including the Coombs, Hudsons, Kelloggs, Nashes, Grigsbys, Yorks, Kilburns, and Baldridges.³⁸ Napa's early pioneers were attracted to the region due to its mild climate, adequate rainfall, and rich soil, a combination which allowed for a 220- to 260-day growing season. Napa's lengthy growing season allowed for a great diversity of crops to be grown and promoted experimentation with new varietals. Crop experimentation was quite common before the wine industry came to dominate Napa beginning in the 1860s and 1870s.³⁹

The California Gold Rush resulted in a sharp influx in Napa Valley's population as Gold Rush hopefuls looked to settle in the state permanently. The valley's population had tripled to 405 by 1850. Of its 405 settlers, 52 listed farming as their occupation. Horses, cattle, pigs, barley, and potatoes were tallied, and though the 1850 census did not include a category for grapevines, gallons of wine were recorded.⁴⁰ Following California's statehood in 1850, the large ranchos that existed in Napa under Mexican rule were subdivided into smaller farms, ranches, orchards, and vineyards. Cattle ranching thrived, as it did during the Rancho period. Cereal grains, including barley, oats, and wheat, were also mainstays of Napa farming.⁴¹ Napa County was formerly established on February 8, 1850 (seven months before statehood),

³² William F. Heintz, *California's Napa Valley: One Hundred Years of Wine Making* (San Francisco: Scottwall Associates, 1999), 12.

³³ "George Yount," *Napa County Historical Society*, February 19, 2015, <http://wordpress.napahistory.org/wordpress/george-yount/>; Richard H. Dillon, *Napa Valley Heyday* (San Francisco: The Book Club of San Francisco, 2004), 67.

³⁴ Mildred Brooke Hoover, et al., *Historic Spots in California*, 5th ed. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), 243.

³⁵ Heintz, *California's Napa Valley: One Hundred Years of Wine Making*, 5.

³⁶ Dillon, *Napa Valley Heyday*, 72.

³⁷ "George Yount," *Napa County Historical Society*.

³⁸ Heintz, *California's Napa Valley*, 18-19.

³⁹ Dillon, *Napa Valley Heyday*, 9.

⁴⁰ Heintz, *California's Napa Valley*, 20-21.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 40.

and by 1852, its population had increased to 2,116.⁴² In response to the valley's population influx and increased demand for a stable food supply, one of California's first nurseries was founded by Simpson Thompson in Soscol (formerly Suscol), some five miles south of the City of Napa. By 1858, Thompson had planted pears, plums, apples, cherries, currants, melons, squash, and 8,000 vines comprising 30 varieties of grapes.⁴³ Within a decade, the nursery, which had been dubbed "Thompson's Gardens," was known throughout the West.⁴⁴

Napa's advances in agriculture resulted in the formation of the Napa County Agricultural Society in 1854.⁴⁵ The 1860 census reported a population of 4,872 in the county, 640 of which listed farming as their primary occupation (only nine categorized themselves as vintners). Most farmers cultivated farms of 500 acres or less.⁴⁶ By the 1850s, wheat dominated Napa County's agricultural industry. Napa maintained over 34,000 acres and harvested over 590,000 bushels of the crop by the end of the decade.⁴⁷ In 1852, Napa County was the second largest producer of wheat in California. Though Napa's agriculture included a variety of fruit crops, grains comprised the majority of the region's crops up to the early 1870s.⁴⁸

The mid-1860s marked a boom in California's wine industry. The Civil War being fought back East prevented shipment of an array of European goods to the state, including French wines. As such, California vintners witnessed an increased demand for local wines. The completion of the Napa Valley railroad in 1868 provided a convenient form of transportation for Napa's farmers to ship their wines to San Francisco, which had become a major market for the wine industry in the mid-nineteenth century. Additionally, the transcontinental railroad, completed in 1869, opened Napa's burgeoning wine industry to the East.⁴⁹ A phylloxera epidemic in Europe in 1870 left 80 percent of European vineyards destroyed, further aiding in the rise of Napa Valley viticulture. By 1890, Napa maintained 20,763 acres of wine grapes and 142 wineries.⁵⁰ Though the region's wine industry suffered a few setbacks, including its own phylloxera epidemic as well as a nationwide depression in the 1890s, and prohibition in the 1920s, its vineyards proved resilient, and the wine industry regained its dominance over Napa's agricultural production by the Second World War.⁵¹ In 1947, Napa's vineyards produced over eight million gallons of wine, a number that continued to grow in the postwar period.⁵²

5.4 William Baldrige

William Baldrige (1811-1902) was born in Tennessee and moved to Missouri with his family where he later learned the millwright's trade. Upon hearing a description of California's mild climate and bountiful

⁴² Ibid., 22-23.

⁴³ "Exhibition of Fruits, Flowers, Vegetables, &c.," *California Farmer and Journal of Useful Sciences* 10, no. 6 (September 10, 1858): 1; Heintz, *California's Napa Valley*, 24.

⁴⁴ Weber, *Old Napa Valley: The History to 1900*, 145-146.

⁴⁵ Heintz, *California's Napa Valley*, 27.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 47.

⁴⁷ Weber, *Old Napa Valley: The History to 1900*, 165; Heintz, *California's Napa Valley*, 47.

⁴⁸ Margaret Scantlebury, "The Preservation of Napa Valley's 19th Century Agri-Industrial Landscape" (Master's Thesis, Goucher College, 2003), 17.

⁴⁹ Heintz, *California's Napa Valley*, 75.

⁵⁰ Scantlebury, "Napa Valley's 19th Century Agri-Industrial Landscape," 25.

⁵¹ For a short time during Prohibition, Napa Valley had more acreage of prunes than it did grapes; Heintz, *California's Napa Valley*, 263.

⁵² Ibid., 304.

opportunities, he decided to venture westward and fortuitously struck up a friendship with Colonel Joseph B. Chiles, who had recently returned to Missouri following a roundtrip journey to Napa Valley. In 1843, Baldrige set off on an adventurous overland journey to California with a party composed of some 50 people led by Col. Chiles and arrived in Napa Valley in 1844. That same year, Col. Chiles received the approximate 8,500-acre Rancho Catacula from the Mexican government in what is now Chiles Valley located high in the mountains between Berreyessa and Napa valleys. Chiles and Baldrige formed a partnership and together the men planted a fruit orchard and vineyard with Mission grapes and erected a log cabin, flour mill, and sawmill. The duo also established a blacksmith and wagon shop and raised cattle, mules, and hogs.⁵³ Early directories of grape growers and wine makers list Chiles as a pioneer winemaker in Napa Valley, albeit on a small scale with an annual production of around 280 gallons of wine.⁵⁴

Recognized in several late nineteenth century histories of Napa County as a “pioneer of pioneers,” William Baldrige played a role in many aspects of local and state history, including the transfer of the California territory from Mexico to the United States during the overlapping Bear Flag Revolt (1846) and Mexican-American War (1846-1848).⁵⁵ In June 1846, Baldrige and Chiles joined U.S. Army Captain John C. Frémont in the Bear Flag Revolt during which Baldrige found himself in the position of single-handedly accepting the surrender of John Sutter at Sutter’s Fort.⁵⁶ The revolt was a two-month affair when American settlers, who were largely living in the Sonoma and Napa valleys, banded together to form a militia at the encouragement of Frémont, who spread false rumors that Mexican soldiers would soon arrive to expel them from California. Shortly after the militia arrested General Mariano Vallejo in Sonoma, raised a homemade flag, and declared California a republic, United States forces arrived and planted the American flag in Monterey as the federal government had already declared war on Mexico in May 1846 over a dispute regarding the location of the Texas border. The short-lived California Republic dissolved, and many of the Bear Flag Revolt militiamen joined the American military, including Baldrige, who signed on with the California Battalion from Napa Valley. In 1848, the United States and Mexico signed the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo thus ending the war and ceding California and other borderland territories to the United States. California entered the Union in 1850, with Napa as one of the original 27 counties.⁵⁷

Upon retiring from his military career, Baldrige stayed on at Rancho Catacula before moving slightly westward to the eastern foothills of the Mayacamas Mountains in Napa Valley in the early 1850s. Early Napa County histories state Baldrige resided on his Oakville farm as early as 1852, although he would not be officially granted the 165.60-acre property by the United States government until 1870 in consideration for his service in the Mexican-American War.⁵⁸ Baldrige resided on the property for nearly

⁵³ Dillon, *Napa Valley Heyday*, 72-74, 82; Lyman Palmer, *History of Napa and Lake Counties, California* (San Francisco: Slocum, Bowen & Co., 1881), 390-391; W.F. Wallace and Tillie Kanaga, *History of Napa County* (Oakland: Enquirer Print, 1901), 29, 218-219; C.A. Menefee, *Historical and Descriptive Sketch Book of Napa, Sonoma, Lake, and Mendocino* (Napa, California: Reporter Publishing House, 1873), 160-161.

⁵⁴ Ernest Peninou and Sidney Greenleaf, *A Directory of California Wine Growers and Wine Makers in 1860* (Berkeley, California: Tamalpais Press, 1967), 33; Board of the State Viticultural Commissioners (California), *Directory of the Grape Growers and Wine Makers of California* (Sacramento: Board of the State Viticultural Commissioners, 1888), 27.

⁵⁵ Palmer, *History of Napa and Lake Counties*, 387.

⁵⁶ Weber, *Old Napa Valley: The History to 1900*, 91.

⁵⁷ Virginia Hanrahan, “Bear Flag Boys and the Bloodless Revolt that Changed State History,” *Napa Register*, February 4, 1961: 5A; James J. Rawls and Walton Bean, *California: An Interpretive History*, 8th ed. (Boston: McGraw Hill, 2003), 86-95.

⁵⁸ The deed was filed at the Napa County Recorder’s Office in 1872; Napa County Book of Deeds and Book of Patents; Palmer, 394.

four decades, farming and raising stock. Some accounts state that he grew grapes on his property, although he does not appear in any official surveys of grape growers and winemakers in the late nineteenth century (unlike his business partner Col. Chiles).⁵⁹ An 1873 history of Napa County characterized Baldrige's property as the following:

Further up the valley we come to the home of Mr. Wm. Baldrige, another one of the old Pioneers, who has established himself for the remainder of his existence in a very cozy nook in the hills that border immediately on Napa Valley. Almost every variety of grape vine and fruit tree have been grafted, planted and raised here by its even now indefatigable proprietor. An everlasting stream of water flows to his house from a mountain spring, and every comfort that nature can lavish or industry furnish in the shape of fruit, can here be found. Near the house still stands the old log cabin erected here when first taken possession of by this gentleman, in whose memory lies enthroned the history of many a stirring scene in the annals of California.⁶⁰

Therefore, it is presumed that Baldrige grew grapes on his property as one of several crops that he harvested. It is unknown if he produced wine, as many early Napa Valley farmers planted grapes to produce raisins or sugar to ship directly to San Francisco. Archival research also did not reveal a business relationship between Baldrige and H.W. Crabb prior to Crabb's purchase of the estate in 1889. Nonetheless Baldrige likely gained knowledge of winemaking through his partnership with Col. Chiles.⁶¹ He also is credited with introducing the black locust tree to the state and unsuccessfully experimenting with cotton in the early 1860s.⁶² In 1861, the *Napa Reporter* featured Baldrige's agricultural pursuit after he showed the newspaper editor a sample of the plant "cultivated by way of experiment. Some of the bolls were injured by the frost, but several were well filled and exhibited a goodly growth of short staple. In [the newspaper's] opinion, cotton can as well be raised in this latitude as in North Carolina, as the liability to injury from frost is not greater than there."⁶³ The following day the *Marysville Daily Appeal* responded by opining on the futility of raising cotton in Napa Valley and sarcastically quipping that Baldrige's experiment would inspire others to grow the crop in the North Pole.⁶⁴

Baldrige contributed to the civic development of the county by serving as a Napa County Supervisor, sitting on the first trial jury in the county, and co-founding the St. Helena Lodge No. 93 of the Free and Accepted Masons (F. and A.M.) in 1856.⁶⁵ Additionally, he diversified his investments as a trustee of the New Burlington Quicksilver Mining Company established in 1871. Cinnabar was discovered in Napa County the 1850s starting a rush to claim mines, particularly in the northern hillsides of the county and in the western foothills of the Mayacamas Mountains between Oakville and Rutherford. The reddish-brown ore was extracted from the earth, coarsely crushed, and melted for conversion into mercury, historically known as quicksilver. Through the end of the nineteenth century, Napa County was the leading producer

⁵⁹ See the compilation of directories of grape growers in Napa County from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in Ernest P. Peninou, *A History of the Napa Viticultural District, Comprising the Counties of Napa, Solano, and Contra Costa with Grape Acreage Statistics and Directories of Grape Growers* (Santa Rosa, California: Nomis Press, 2004).

⁶⁰ Menefee, 209.

⁶¹ Heintz, *California's Napa Valley: One Hundred Years of Wine Making*, 18-19.

⁶² Wallace and Kanaga, 44.

⁶³ "Cotton in Napa Valley," *Sacramento Daily Union*, December 4, 1861.

⁶⁴ Untitled article, *Marysville Daily Appeal*, December 5, 1861.

⁶⁵ Palmer, 394; Wallace and Kanaga, 39; Menefee, 161; Dillon, 83; Smith & Elliot, *Illustrations of Napa County* (Oakland, California: Smith & Elliot, 1878; reprint, Fresno, California: Valley Publishers, 1974), 2.

of mercury in California, although it remains unknown if Baldrige's speculation paid off. Two years after founding the New Burlington Quicksilver Mining Company, the trustees reported that they had only accomplished some prospecting in their mine located in the vicinity of Oakville.⁶⁶

Late nineteenth century newspaper articles and histories of Napa County indicate that by the early 1870s, Baldrige lived in a house adjacent to a log cabin in which he had originally resided.⁶⁷ Subsequent owners of Baldrige's property lived elsewhere and would have had little reason to build a new house on the property. Furthermore, a review of deeds archived in the Napa County Recorder's office indicates that the value of the property did not change significantly between the time that Baldrige sold the property to H.W. Crabb in 1889 and the auction of the parcel as part of Crabb's larger holdings to E.S. Churchill in 1899. This suggests that significant improvements to the property, including the construction of buildings, had taken place during Baldrige's ownership.

Little else is known about the estate under Baldrige's ownership. In 1885, he sold 14.10 acres at the southwest corner of the property to his neighbor Adolph A. Chignon, and at some point between 1881 and 1895, he acquired 17 acres at the northwest corner from an 83.75-acre parcel owned by John Benson. Thus the boundary of the parcel changed slightly, and the acreage increased marginally to 168.5 acres by the time Baldrige sold it to H.W. Crabb in 1889.⁶⁸ Baldrige apparently never married and left the remainder of his assets to the St. Helena Lodge No. 93 of the F. and A.M; he was residing at the Veterans Home in Yountville at the time of his death in 1902.⁶⁹ As a well-regarded Napa County pioneer, he was remembered as "brave and generous to a fault, a man of extensive reading and sound judgement" and "one of Napa's most honored and respected citizens, and a gentleman it is certainly a pleasure to meet."⁷⁰

5.5 Hamilton Walker Crabb

Hamilton Walker (H.W.) Crabb (1828-1899) is widely recognized as one of the most significant early winemakers in Napa Valley. Born in Jefferson County, Ohio, Crabb traveled to California in 1853 to mine gold in the Sierra Nevada (Placer and Nevada counties) before settling as a farmer near Hayward in Alameda County.⁷¹ He had three children, Amanda H., Adda H., and Horace A. Crabb, with his first wife Rebecca A. (née Donohoe) Crabb, who died in 1862. He then remarried Elizabeth P. (née Carmer) Crabb and had another daughter, Cora Crabb, in 1864.⁷² He moved to the Oakville area shortly after the Civil War where he purchased 240 acres at the northwest corner of Highway 29 and Walnut Lane in 1868 from

⁶⁶ Menefee, 102, 119; Wallace and Kanaga, 110-114; Rebecca Yerger, "Quicksilver Mines Brought Early Fortunes to the Valley," *Napa Valley Register*, April 19, 1998: 2C, 7C.

⁶⁷ *Napa County Reporter*, March 15, 1873; Menefee, 209.

⁶⁸ George G. Lyman and S.R. Throckmorton, *Official Map of the County of Napa, California* (Napa, California: David L. Haas, 1876); M.G. King, *Map of the Central Portion of Napa Valley and the Town of St. Helena* (St. Helena, California: E.W. Woodward & Co., 1881); O.H. Buckman, *Official Map of the County of Napa, California* (San Francisco: Punnett Brothers, 1895); Napa County Book of Deeds.

⁶⁹ William Baldrige, will dated September 10, 1902, Probate Estate Case Files, 1864-1920, California Superior Court (Napa County), accessed June 3, 2016, <http://www.ancestry.com>.

⁷⁰ Menefee, 161; Palmer, 394.

⁷¹ William F. Heintz, "The Vineyards and Wine of H.W. Crabb, Oakville, Ca. and His To-Kalon Label," The William F. Heintz Collection (St. Helena, California: Napa Valley Wine Library Association, 1980), 5.

⁷² Palmer, 435.

Eugene L. Sullivan, son-in-law of George Yount.⁷³ At the time, the property contained only a tenement house and barn.⁷⁴ Crabb originally focused on growing 70 acres of sweet, flavorful Muscat of Alexandria grapes for raisins, as did many farmers in Napa Valley at this time.⁷⁵ On his farm, which was noted as a “model for neatness and business thrift,” he also planted 40 orange trees, a number of chestnut trees, and wheat and hay fields. He advantageously constructed the original Oakville railroad station along the current Highway 29 (originally the Napa Valley railroad route), allowing him easy access to rail transit to ship his goods to market.⁷⁶

In 1872, Crabb switched from table to wine grapes and christened his new winery Hermosa Vineyards (*hermosa* means beautiful in Spanish). Fortunately, the alluvial soil on his 240-acre property contained an exceptional mixture of gravel and rock that had washed down the Mayacamas Mountains and onto the Napa Valley floor, providing the perfect condition for growing grapes, and thereby contributing to Crabb’s success as a winemaker.⁷⁷ By 1878, he had planted half his property with 120,000 vines.⁷⁸ Crabb also became an ardent collector of grape vines, with 183 varieties by the 1870s and approximately 400 varieties by the end of the 1880s; many considered it the largest collection of vines in the world. By the end of the 1870s, he had planted 220,000 vines, including Zinfandel, Malvasia, Burgundy, Chartreuse, Riesling, Chasselas, Berger, Hamburg, Tokay, and Muscat, among others. He was producing approximately 300,000 gallons of wine and 4,300 gallons of brandy in a wood cellar.⁷⁹ Accounts in the late nineteenth century report slightly different numbers regarding the total number of vines, acres planted with vines, and gallons of wine and brandy produced. What reporters and historians do agree on is that by the end of the decade, Crabb had transformed his 240-acre estate into one of the largest, most productive wineries in Napa Valley and perhaps the state.⁸⁰

In 1886, H.W. Crabb rebranded his winery as the To-Kalon Winery Company, switching from the Spanish word *hermosa* to the Greek phrase *to kalon*. He is widely quoted as stating “the name To Kalon is Greek and means the highest beauty, or the highest good, but I try to make it the boss vineyard.”⁸¹ He continued to cultivate a wide array of varieties grafted onto Mission and Zinfandel vines, with his Black Burgundy grapes among the most celebrated.⁸² Under the To-Kalon label, Crabb’s wine won numerous awards at many national and European expositions, prompting the *Chicago Herald* to dub him as the “Wine King of the Pacific Slope” and Frona Eunice Waits to describe him as “without a peer in the State.”⁸³ Crabb prolifically attended viticultural conventions, delivering technical papers, participating in panel discussions, and sharing his vast knowledge and expertise. He also authored a chapter in George

⁷³ Sullivan’s stepson John Calvert Davis Jr. would have a daughter Daisy Anna Davis, who later married Crabb’s son Horace A. Crabb. Boutwell Dunlap, “The Family of George C. Yount,” *California Historical Quarterly* 2, no. 1 (April 1923): 67-68.

⁷⁴ Smith & Elliot, 8.

⁷⁵ Heintz, *California’s Napa Valley*, 5.

⁷⁶ Menefee, 206; Smith & Elliot, 15.

⁷⁷ Liz Thach, *Call of the Vine: Exploring Ten Famous Vineyards of Napa and Sonoma* (Putnam Valley, New York: Miranda Press, 2014), 66.

⁷⁸ Charles L. Sullivan notes he had 160 acres of vines and a 300,000-gallon capacity winery by the end of the 1870s. Charles L. Sullivan, *Napa Wine, A History* (San Francisco: Wine Appreciation Guild, 1994), 87; Smith & Elliot, 8.

⁷⁹ Sullivan, *Napa Wine, A History*, 87-88; Palmer, 224-225.

⁸⁰ Heintz, *The Vineyards and Wine of H.W. Crabb*, 6.

⁸¹ Frona Eunice Wait, *Wines & Vines of California or a Treatise on the Ethics of Wine Drinking* (San Francisco: The Bancroft Company, 1889; reprint, Berkeley, California: Howell-North Books, 1973), 108.

⁸² Wait, 108-109.

⁸³ Charles L. Sullivan, *A Companion to California Wines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 88; Wait, 109.

Husmann's *American Grape Growing and Wine Making* (1879), a symbol of his prominence in the industry.⁸⁴ Lastly, Crabb was a prolific businessman and brilliant marketer. He quickly established a nationwide distribution network, allowing him to ship bulk and case goods to his wine agencies located throughout the East Coast, Midwest, and other locations. He turned To-Kalon into a national brand. In an 1889 survey of California wine, Frona Eunice Wait highlights the fact that his wine was sold "in the most aristocratic circles" as far away as Washington, D.C.⁸⁵ As the noted wine historian Charles L. Sullivan summarized, "Crabb seemed to have the perfect combination of technical know-how, a capital base that enabled him to release his wines with enough age on them, a sound sales force, and a reputation for high quality that held up for years."⁸⁶

The boundary of Crabb's winery reportedly expanded and contracted under his ownership through the end of the nineteenth century. In 1879, he increased his holdings through the purchase of the 119-acre parcel directly to the south across Walnut Lane from Eliza G. Yount, bringing the total acreage to 359. According to Matt Stamp, the Education Director for the Guild of Sommeliers who recently interviewed several contemporary winemakers conducting their own research on the To-Kalon Vineyard, Crabb planted vines for his neighbor John Calvert Davis Jr., the son of Elizabeth Ann Yount and her husband John Calvert Davis Sr., in the 1870s.⁸⁷ In the 1876 Napa County map, Davis Jr. is shown as having a 189-acre parcel located immediately southwest of Crabb's winery, and by 1881, Davis Jr.'s estate had expanded to approximately 500 acres.⁸⁸ By 1879, Crabb reportedly began purchasing Davis Jr.'s grapes in an effort to expand his wine production, and he then acquired 650 acres from Davis Jr. in 1891.⁸⁹ He must not have held onto the newly acquired land for too long, because the 1895 Napa County map indicates the former Davis Jr. parcels west of Crabb's 359 acres were owned by A.L. Williams (now two parcels totaling 222 acres and 186 acres) and the Davis Jr.'s estate (now one 160-acre parcel). Interestingly, an 1894 advertisement for the liquidation of his stock farm also indicates Crabb put "choice vineyard" up for sale; this may have been the former Davis Jr. parcels.⁹⁰

The numerous narratives documenting the life and career of H.W. Crabb focus on the cultivation of his original northern parcel (359 acres), located north of Oakville Grade Road, and barely mention the southern parcel (168 acres) that Crabb purchased from Baldrige in 1889 and that encompasses the subject property.⁹¹ It remains unknown exactly how Crabb used the southern parcel, as his residence,

⁸⁴ Heintz, *The Vineyards and Wine of H.W. Crabb*, 1-2; Heintz, *California's Napa Valley*, 187.

⁸⁵ Wait, 108-109.

⁸⁶ Sullivan, *Napa Wine, A History*, 88.

⁸⁷ Matt Stamp, "The True Story of To-Kalon Vineyard," Guild of Sommeliers, accessed June 3, 2016, https://www.guildsomm.com/stay_current/features/b/stamp/posts/the-true-story-of-to-kalon-vineyard. Daisy Anna Davis, the daughter of the younger John Calvert Davis and his wife Margarethe Davis, would later marry Crabb's son Horace A. Crabb; Dunlap, "The Family of George C. Yount," 67-68; Palmer, *History of Napa and Lake Counties*, 446.

⁸⁸ Lyman and Throckmorton, *Official Map of the County of Napa, California*, 1876; King, *Map of the Central Portion of Napa Valley*, 1881.

⁸⁹ Stamp, "The True Story of To-Kalon Vineyard."

⁹⁰ To-Kalon Stock Farm advertisement, *Napa Daily Journal*, February 18, 1894: 2.

⁹¹ For example, in a history of the To-Kalon Vineyard from Crabb's ownership to the present, Matt Stamp focuses on the northern parcel owned by Crabb and then traces how it was eventually purchased by Stelling as part of a large estate assembled from several parcels of land, but he does not include Baldrige's original holdings to the south. See Stamp, "The True Story of To-Kalon Vineyard." Likewise, noted wine historian William F. Heintz describes the extent of Crabb's vineyard as covering "an area which ran from Oakville Grade Road on the south to what is now Beaulieu Vineyard #2, on the north, and more than a mile to the west and the hills which form the western boundary of Napa Valley." There is no mention of the southern parcel he purchased from Baldrige. See Heintz, *The Vineyards and Wine of H.W. Crabb*, 21.

vineyards, and winery operations were clearly located on the northern property. His winery operation has been characterized as a “young town” employing approximately 80 to 100 workers and comprised of a practical and efficient complex of well-insulated, one- and two-story, wood-frame buildings.⁹² In 1889, the year that he acquired the southern parcel from William Baldrige, To-kalon winery was described as follows:⁹³

The cellar at To Kalon is plain and unpretentious; in fact, Mr. Crabb is one of the few men who do not believe that fine outsides to a cellar make a fine wine. Everything is scrupulously clean, and the storage capacity is immense, but the exact number of gallons could not be ascertained...from our illustration it will be seen that the machinery and appliances at To Kalon are of the most approved patterns, the white wine presses being the latest design and make. The vintages range from 200,000 to 500,000, according to the season, and there is also a distillery on the premises.

Crabb may have purchased Baldrige’s estate to expand his operation and capitalize on the 1880s Napa County wine boom during which his number of vines increased from 3,500 acres in 1879 to 18,000 acres by 1889 (the same year Crabb purchased the Baldrige estate).⁹⁴ Alternatively, Crabb raised and trained horses for racing as a hobby, and he may have used the hilly acreage to support his racing stock. Only a narrow, flat portion of Baldrige’s original property appears to have been cultivated for agricultural use, with the remaining portion consisting of wooded foothills of the Mayacamas Mountains.

Experimental Vineyard

During the late nineteenth century phylloxera crisis in Napa Valley, H.W. Crabb actively searched for disease-resistant vines, including ripping out infested vines on his property as soon as they were discovered and unsuccessfully testing 70 acres of Riparia vines and 30 acres of Lenoir vines.⁹⁵ In 1893, he also allowed the Board of State Viticultural Commissioners to establish an experimental viticultural station at his winery to test disease-resistant stocks against phylloxera and to discover new, valuable varieties of grapes.⁹⁶ The State of California established the board in 1880 with Charles Wetmore at the helm and Crabb as an original representative from Napa County. It sought to compile and distribute information to California winemakers and to address the destructive spread of phylloxera.⁹⁷ The board was dissolved by the state legislature in 1895 and its authority transferred to the University of California, Berkeley College of Agriculture.⁹⁸

In 1903, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) established a 20-acre experimental plot at the southwest corner of To-Kalon winery’s northern holding (now addressed as 1380 Oakville Grade Road),

⁹² Sullivan, *Napa Wine, A History*, 87-88.

⁹³ Wait, 108.

⁹⁴ Heintz, *The Vineyards and Wine of H.W. Crabb*, 8.

⁹⁵ Board of the State Viticultural Commissioners (California), *The Vineyards in Napa County* (Sacramento: Board of the State Viticultural Commissioners, 1893), 24.

⁹⁶ Board of the State Viticultural Commissioners (California), *Annual Report of the Board of State Viticultural Commissioners for 1887* (Sacramento: Board of the State Viticultural Commissioners, 1888); Board of the State Viticultural Commissioners (California), *The Vineyards in Napa County* (Sacramento: Board of the State Viticultural Commissioners, 1893), 24; George C. Husmann, “Viticulture of Napa County,” in *History of Solano and Napa Counties*, ed. Tom Gregory (Los Angeles: Historic Record Company, 1912), 148.

⁹⁷ Sullivan, *A Companion to California Wines*, 346-347.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

then owned by the Churchills. It replaced the previous Board of State Viticultural Commissioners' station and was one of 13 such plots nationwide.⁹⁹ In 1922, the federal government purchased the 20-acre Oakville experimental station from the Churchills during the Prohibition era. The federal government held onto the property until 1955 before transferring it to the University of California, Davis. Today the University of California, Davis Department of Viticulture and Enology operates the Oakville experimental vineyards, now known as the Old Federal Vineyards and the South Station Vineyard.¹⁰⁰ It remains unknown the exact location and extent of the 1893 experimental vineyard, as the Board of State Viticultural Commissioners' annual reports do not provide that information, and more detailed records are not known to have survived. However, it seems highly likely that the USDA's plot corresponded with the location of the state's late nineteenth century experimental station. Neither experimental station operated on the Baldrige estate.

To-Kalon Stock Farm

Racing trotting horses, a frequent Sunday activity, was a luxury to Napa Valley farmers in the late nineteenth century, because it required a sufficient level of disposable income and leisure time.¹⁰¹ A horse trots when its diagonal hooves touch the ground simultaneously and produce a smooth gait; trotting horses became popular because people could enjoy a smoother ride along unpaved country roads and men could race trotting horses in light buggies rather than on horseback. As a result of this widespread popularity and the commanding sale prices the fastest horses fetched, large stock farms, such as H.W. Crabb's To-Kalon Stock Farm, were developed across the country in the late nineteenth century to focus solely on breeding trotting horses, in comparison to older stock farms that bred a wide range of animals such as bulls, dairy cows, sheep, and horses. Trotting horses selected for breeding had to meet certain standards, primarily speed, and trotting farms were typically composed of large complexes with barns and corrals for the animals, blacksmith and wheelwright shops, facilities to mill feed, and small tracks to train horses.¹⁰²

Research did not indicate the precise date when Crabb established his stock farm or its exact location within his holdings. The first publications referencing Crabb's stock farm date to 1890, shortly after he acquired Baldrige's estate, and state that he had been purchasing horses for at least four years with the proceeds from his winery. It is plausible that Crabb purchased Baldrige's holdings so that he would have enough land to develop a large stock farm, although this has not been conclusively proven.

5.6 To-Kalon Vineyard Under the Churchill Family

In his will dated 1893, H.W. Crabb optimistically left \$10 to his widowed daughter-in-law Daisy (née Davis) Crabb; \$100 to his grandson Horace A. Crabb, the son of Daisy and Horace A. Crabb (then deceased); and the remaining portion of the estate to his three living children, son Adda H. Crabb, daughter Amanda A. Johnson, and daughter Cora C. Crabb.¹⁰³ However, like many prominent Napa winemakers of his time,

⁹⁹ "Globe Trotter Gave Vineyard To-Kalon Name," *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 21, 1934: 35.

¹⁰⁰ University of California, Davis Department of Viticulture and Enology, "Oakville Vineyard," accessed May 25, 2016, <http://wineserver.ucdavis.edu/about/facilities/vineyards/Oakville%20Vineyard.html>.

¹⁰¹ Heintz, California's Napa Valley, 40-41.

¹⁰² Philip Thurtle, "Harnessing Heredity in Gilded Age America: Middle Class Mores and Industrial Breeding in a Cultural Context," *Journal of the History of Biology* 35, no. 1 (Spring 2002): 47-70.

¹⁰³ Hamilton W. Crabb, will dated June 20, 1893, Napa County, California, Probate Records, 1851-1935, California Superior Court (Napa County), accessed June 3, 2016, <http://www.ancestry.com>.

Crabb was in financial straits later in life, and two years previously, he had taken out a \$41,000 mortgage on the property with the Goodman Bank. When Crabb died in March 1899, his debt to the Goodman Bank exceeded the appraised value of the estate. The courts awarded the bank his estate with the direction that the land would be sold at auction. E.S. Churchill purchased the property, which included the Baldrige House, for \$5,234 at the auction held on June 15, 1899.¹⁰⁴

In 1902, E.S. Churchill (1842-1903) deeded the property to his wife Mary W. Churchill (1844-1929) "in consideration of the love and affection" which she had given him and also for her "better maintenance, support, protection, and livelihood." At that time, the property consisted of approximately 541 acres: the original 240 acres purchased by Crabb in 1868, the 119 acres to the south purchased in 1879, and the 168 acres purchased from Baldrige and expanded slightly over time to 183 acres.¹⁰⁵ The following year, E.S. Churchill died of "la grippe," which he had been suffering for about a week.¹⁰⁶ He left behind his wife, son E.W. Churchill, and daughter Mary Louise, wife of Edward Twitchell.¹⁰⁷

Shortly thereafter, Mary W. Churchill transferred the property to the To-Kalon Vineyard Co., and the Churchill family operated it as Bonded Winery No. 44 for the next four decades.¹⁰⁸ The To-Kalon brand continued to be known for its quality wine in the first decades of the 20th century. In 1907, Hans Hansen reported as the winery's superintendent that the vines were in excellent condition, with "every species of grape...prospering, and everything point[ing] to one of the grape growers' most successful seasons."¹⁰⁹ During Prohibition, Mary A. Churchill (Mary W. Churchill's daughter-in-law) obtained permits from the U.S. BATF to manufacture wine for sacramental or other non-beverage purposes and to purchase wine for blending purposes. In 1926, however, BATF temporarily revoked the permit upon suspicion of the "illegal diversion of wine" by Mary A. Churchill's brother Chester Amos. Amos pled guilty to bootlegging and paid a \$500 fine, and Mary A. Churchill was able to renew the license the following year.¹¹⁰

Following the repeal of the 18th Amendment in 1933, the Churchills were permitted to produce, blend, and sell To-Kalon wine once again. It remains unknown how the winery used the southern parcel of land originally settled by Baldrige. U.S. BATF records from 1932 list the number of acres planted with vines at 180 acres, suggesting that only the northern parcel was producing wine grapes. A 1935 BATF permit application describes the winery facility as consisting of a 233.8-acre parcel of land located in Crabb's northern holdings and containing two bonded buildings: a one-story, 174-foot by 216-foot frame building with dirt floors, which was used to manufacture and store wine, and a smaller one-story, 32-foot by 60-foot frame building, which was used to carbonate and store wine. The accompanying drawing also depicts several unbonded buildings, including a dwelling, tool house, several sheds, and a bunkhouse. The southern parcel is not mentioned in these records. Likewise, the only extant photographs depict buildings

¹⁰⁴ Wallace and Kanaga, *History of Napa County*, 186-187; Heintz, *The Vineyards and Wines of H.W. Crabb*, 22; Napa County Book of Deeds.

¹⁰⁵ Napa County Book of Deeds.

¹⁰⁶ "E.S. Churchill Dead," *Napa Daily Journal*, March 29, 1903.

¹⁰⁷ See advertisements in Washington, D.C. newspapers, such as "Persons convalescing from la grippe will find the Old Stock Port and Tokay excellent remedies," in the *Sunday Herald*, April 26, 1891: 10 and "La Grippe...nothing is more pleasant or beneficial than a judicious use of pure, wholesome tonics, such as the fine old Tokay, old stock Port, and other medicinal wines of the To-Kalon Wine Co." in *Sunday Herald*, April 5, 1891: 6.

¹⁰⁸ Napa County Book of Deeds.

¹⁰⁹ "Agricultural Review, Napa," *Pacific Rural Press*, June 22, 1907: 391.

¹¹⁰ U.S. BATF records for To-Kalon Winery Co., 1920-1941, on file at the University of California, Davis Special Collections, Collection Number D-140, Box 72.

on the northern parcel, and no records from the To-Kalon Vineyard Co. are known to have survived.¹¹¹ On May 28, 1939, the To-Kalon winery burned in a spectacular fire that could be seen throughout Napa Valley. Arson was suspected as the wine had been removed and the 500,000-gallon storage tanks drained prior to the blaze, but the Churchills were not investigated.¹¹²

5.7 Subsequent Ownership

In 1943, Mary A. Churchill sold the approximate 500 acres that had comprised To-Kalon vineyards to Martin Stelling Jr., a wealthy San Francisco steel manufacturer.¹¹³ In the early 1940s, Martin Stelling Jr. began buying hundreds of acres of Oakville vineyards, including the adjacent Far Niente winery that had been established by John Benson (1828-1910), just east of Baldrige's estate, in the 1870s. Similar to Crabb, Benson first planted Muscat of Alexandria grapes to produce raisins but then began making wine on a small scale in 1876. Benson hired the architect H.W. McIntyre to design the extant stone winery building (completed in 1885 and currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places) and named his ranch Far Niente, roughly meaning "without a care" in Italian.¹¹⁴ Although Stelling began planting vines in earnest in the late 1940s, he died in 1950 before realizing his dream of renovating Far Niente and establishing the world's largest vineyard.¹¹⁵ A 1951 USGS topographic map depicts vineyards on the southern parcel owned by Baldrige; it is unknown if these were extant prior to Stelling's purchase of the acreage or planted under his authorization.¹¹⁶ Following Martin Stelling Jr.'s death, his multi-thousand-acre estate was broken up and sold in pieces, with a smaller portion (including Far Niente and the subject property containing the Baldrige House) inherited by his son Douglas Stelling.

In 1976, Harold Gilliland (Gil) Nickel (1939-2003) moved from Oklahoma to San Francisco and began producing Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon wine in the cellar of his Nob Hill residence. After studying winemaking at the University of California, Davis and becoming enamored with Napa Valley, Nickel began a three-year hunt for a parcel of land where he could establish his own winery. He eventually discovered the shuttered Far Niente estate, and in 1979, he purchased the property, rehabilitated the winery, and celebrated the first crush of grapes in 1982.¹¹⁷ He later founded the wineries Dolce and Nickel & Nickel.

In 1984, Gil Nickel acquired the Baldrige House and a portion of the original Baldrige estate from Robert L. and Sharon L. Lieff, who had bought the property from Stelling Vineyards two years prior.¹¹⁸ Following his father's death in 2003, Jeremy Justin Nickel inherited a 17-acre property encompassing the Baldrige House and part of Baldrige's original 165-acre estate, and established a winery focused on

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Lin Weber, *Roots of the Present*, 235.

¹¹³ Napa County Book of Deeds; "Mrs. M. Alice Churchill Sells Famed Tokalon Vineyards to Martin Stelling," *Napa Journal*, July 23, 1943: 1; Gunther R. Detert, "H.W. Crabb, 1828-1899," in *History of Napa Valley: Interviews and Reminiscences of Long-time Residents, Volume III, 1977-1981*, Napa Valley Wine Library Association (St. Helena, California: Napa Valley Wine Library Association, 1981), 10.

¹¹⁴ Sullivan, *A Companion to California Wines*, 109.

¹¹⁵ William F. Heintz, "The Far Niente Winery, Oakville, California and its Founder John Benson," The William F. Heintz Collection (St. Helena, California: Napa Valley Wine Library Association, 1978), 52.

¹¹⁶ USGS, *Rutherford, California quadrangle*, 1:24,000, 7.5 Minute Series (United States Department of the Interior, United States Geological Society, 1951).

¹¹⁷ William F. Heintz, "Harold Gilliland 'Gil' Nickel: an Interview," The William F. Heintz Collection (St. Helena, California: Napa Valley Wine Library Association, 1983), 6, 12-13, 17-25; Sullivan, *A Companion to California Wine*, 109.

¹¹⁸ Order No. T0013100, 1581 Oakville Grade, Chain of Title, First American Title Company of Napa.

producing Cabernet Sauvignon wine. The estate recently expanded to 43 acres within what is currently known as Halter Valley.

5.8 Victorian-Era Vernacular Farmhouse

The Baldrige House is an example of a Victorian-era Vernacular Farmhouse. Victorian-era Vernacular Farmhouses were typically two stories in height, with wood-frame construction, wood sash windows, and wood cladding, including wood shingle and horizontal siding. Though Victorian-era Vernacular houses sometimes exhibited characteristics of more elaborate architectural styles, such as Queen Anne or Stick/Eastlake, they were much simpler in form and less ornamented. Unlike their high-style counterparts, Victorian-era Vernacular Farmhouses were typically designed and constructed by an owner or builder, as opposed to a professional architect. Napa Valley's Victorian-era farmhouses were typically located outside city boundaries on large agricultural parcels with associated agricultural outbuildings.¹¹⁹

Character-defining features of Victorian-era Vernacular Farmhouses include:

- One or two stories in height (typically two stories)
- Wood-frame construction
- Hipped or gable roof
- Wood siding (either shingle or horizontal siding)
- Wood sash windows (typically double hung)
- Occasionally, ornamentation (typically modest)
- Associated ancillary structures (i.e. barns, sheds, water towers)

Other examples of late nineteenth century vernacular farmhouses in Napa County include the ca. 1890 Kreuzer Ranch House (167 Kreuzer Lane), listed in the National Register in 1982; and the ca. 1870 T.B. McClure House (2874 Las Amigas Road) and 1890s Sehabiague House (intersection of Oakville Grade Road and St. Helena Highway), both of which were listed in the Historic Resources Inventory through the 1978 Napa County Historic Resource Survey.

6. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

6.1 California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) is the authoritative guide to the state's significant historical and archeological resources. In 1992, the California legislature established the California Register "to be used by state and local agencies, private groups, and citizens to identify the state's historical resources and to indicate what properties are to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change."¹²⁰ The California Register program encourages public

¹¹⁹ Page & Turnbull, Inc., "Napa City-Wide Historic Context Statement," final draft, prepared for the City of Napa, Planning Department and Community Redevelopment Department (September 2009), 58-59; Smith & Elliot, *Illustrations of Napa County* (Oakland, California: Smith & Elliot, 1878; reprint, Fresno, California: Valley Publishers, 1974).

¹²⁰ California Public Resource (CPR) Code, Section 5024.1 (a).

recognition and protection of resources of architectural, historical, archaeological and cultural significance; identifies historical resources for state and local planning purposes; determines eligibility for historic preservation grant funding; and affords certain protections under CEQA. All resources listed on or formally determined eligible for the National Register are automatically listed in the California Register. In addition, properties designated under municipal or county ordinances, or through local historic resources surveys, are eligible for listing in the California Register.

The structure of the California Register program is similar to that of the National Register, but places its emphasis on resources that have contributed specifically to the development of California. To be eligible for the California Register, a resource must first be deemed significant at the local, state, or national level under one of the following four criteria, which are modeled after the National Register criteria listed above:

1. It is associated with events or patterns of events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States; or
2. It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history; or
3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values; or
4. It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area state or the nation.¹²¹

Like the National Register, the California Register also requires that resources retain sufficient integrity to be eligible for listing. A resource's integrity is assessed using the same seven aspects of integrity used for the National Register. However, since integrity thresholds associated with the California Register are generally less rigid than those associated with the National Register, it is possible that a resource may lack the integrity required for the National Register but still be eligible for listing in the California Register.

Following are the seven aspects of integrity as identified in the National Register:

- *Location* is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.
- *Setting* is the physical environment of a historic property.
- *Design* is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.
- *Materials* are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property.
- *Workmanship* is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory.
- *Feeling* is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.

¹²¹ California Public Resources Code SS5024.1, Title 14 CCR, Section 4852.

- *Association* is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.

There is no prescribed age limit for listing in the California Register, although California Register guidelines state that “sufficient time must have passed to obtain a scholarly perspective on the events or individuals associated with the resource.”¹²²

Resources may be nominated directly to the California Register. They are also automatically listed in the California Register if they are listed in or have been officially determined eligible for the National Register. State Historic Landmarks #770 and forward are also automatically listed in the California Register.¹²³ The California Historical Resource Status Codes are a series of ratings created by the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) to identify the historic status of resources listed in the State’s historic properties database. These codes were revised in August 2003 to better reflect the many historic status options available to evaluators. The following are the seven major status code headings:

1. Properties listed in the National Register or the California Register.
2. Properties determined eligible for listing in the National Register or the California Register.
3. Properties that appear eligible for listing in the National Register or California Register through survey evaluation.
4. Properties that appear eligible for listing in the National Register or California Register through other evaluation.
5. Properties recognized as historically significant by local government.
6. Properties that are not eligible for listing or designation.
7. Properties that are not evaluated for listing in the National Register or California Register or that need reevaluation.

Under each status code heading, properties are then given a letter code, which indicates whether the resource is eligible individually (S), eligible as part of a district (D), or both (B).

¹²² California Office of Historic Preservation, *Technical Assistance Series #6: California Register and National Register: A Comparison* (Sacramento, CA: California Department of Parks and Recreation, 2001), 3. According to the *Instructions for Recording Historical Resources* (Office of Historic Preservation, March 1995), “Any physical evidence of human activities over 45 years old may be recorded for purposes of inclusion in the OHP’s filing system. Documentation of resources less than 45 years old may also be filed if those resources have been formally evaluated, regardless of the outcome of the evaluation.” This 45-year threshold is intended to guide the recordation of potential historical resources for local planning purposes, and is not directly related to an age threshold for eligibility against California Register criteria.

¹²³ California Department of Parks and Recreation, Office of Historic Preservation, *Technical Assistance Series #5: California Register of Historical Resources, The Listing Process* (Sacramento, CA: California Department of Parks and Recreation, n.d.), 1.

7. EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

7.1 California Register of Historical Resources

The Baldrige House appears eligible under California Register Criteria 1 and 2, as follows:

Criterion 1: associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history.

The Baldrige House appears to be significant for its association with Napa Valley's early agricultural development, shortly after the subdivision of the valley's ranchos. As early as the 1850s, William Baldrige cultivated a variety of crops on the property and raised livestock. Early published histories state Baldrige grew an array of fruit trees and grape species, and even tried his hand at growing cotton, albeit unsuccessfully. Constructed ca. 1870, the subject property served as Baldrige's primary residence while he continued to farm and raise cattle for nearly two decades before selling the house and the rest of his estate to H.W. Crabb in 1889. Research indicates Crabb and subsequent owners of the Baldrige estate continued to use the property for agricultural purposes in some capacity. Although the property is no longer planted with a wide array of crops as under Baldrige's ownership (it is almost exclusively used as a vineyard), it is still used for agricultural purposes and reflects Napa's agrarian settlement patterns during the mid to late nineteenth century.

Therefore, the Baldrige House appears to be significant under California Register Criterion 1.

Criterion 2: associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

The subject property appears to be significant for its association with William Baldrige, an early Napa Valley pioneer. Prior to permanently settling in the valley, Baldrige participated in the Bear Flag Revolt, where he single-handedly accepted the surrender of John Sutter at Sutter's Fort. After the revolt, Baldrige signed on with the California Battalion from the Napa Valley and served in the Mexican-American War. Fought from April 1846 to February 1848, the Mexican-American War resulted in the acquisition of California by the United States and California's statehood shortly thereafter. Baldrige received the land patent encompassing the subject property for his military service during the war. In addition to farming and raising livestock on his Oakville property, Baldrige served as a Napa County Supervisor, sitting on the first trial jury in the valley, and co-founded the St. Helena Lodge No. 93 of the F. and A.M. in the 1850s. He was also a trustee of the New Burlington Quicksilver Mining Company during a time when mining had become a significant part of Napa's economy. At the time of his death in 1902, Baldrige was considered a well-regarded pioneer of Napa Valley.

In addition to its ownership under Baldrige, the subject property and associated farm were owned by H.W. Crabb between 1889 and 1899, and the E.S. Churchill family from 1899 to 1943. H.W. Crabb was one of the most significant early winemakers in Napa Valley. He founded the noted To-Kalon Vineyards in Oakville in 1886, where he grew numerous varieties of grapes, participated in an experimental viticultural vineyard station during the 1890s phylloxera epidemic, and raised trotting horses until his death in 1899. It is unlikely that H.W. Crabb ever used the Baldrige House as his primary residence (his primary residence was located on the original acreage he owned, north of the Baldrige estate), experimental vineyard, or stock farm. There are no extant buildings or structures directly associated with Crabb on the property.

In 1899, E.S. Churchill acquired Crabb's landholdings, including the former Baldridge residence and estate. After E.S. Churchill's death in 1903, his wife Mary W. Churchill transferred the property to the To-Kalon Vineyard Co., and the Churchill family produced wine in one capacity or another under the To-Kalon brand for the next four decades. Though research did not suggest how the Churchills used the Baldridge residence, the family did not appear to use his estate to cultivate grapes or produce wine under the To-Kalon Vineyard Co.

For these reasons, the Baldridge House appears significant under California Register Criterion 2 for its association with Napa Valley pioneer, William Baldridge. It does not appear significant for its association with Crabb or the Churchill family.

Criterion 3: embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

The Baldridge House does not appear significant under California Register Criterion 3. The subject property was constructed as a vernacular farmhouse. As a modest, vernacular residence, it cannot be said that it possesses high artistic values. Though research did not indicate who the architect of the building was, given its modest appearance, it was likely constructed by a local builder or by the original owner (Baldridge), as opposed to a master architect or designer. Furthermore, although the subject property conveys the features of a late nineteenth century farmhouse, research indicated that there are more intact examples of late nineteenth century farmhouses that exist within the region. The residence is therefore not a significant example of its type, period, or method of construction.

Thus, the residence does not appear significant under California Register Criterion 3.

Criterion 4: has yielded or may likely yield information important in prehistory or history.

As a historically agricultural property, the Baldridge House site has experienced very little development over the years and therefore, may contain intact subsurface deposits relating to its historic use. However, because a comprehensive archeological assessment was not included in the scope of this report, the property's potential to yield information important in prehistory or history is currently unknown.

7.2 Period of Significance

The period significance for the subject property is ca. 1870 to 1889, indicating the period when the property is most closely associated with Napa Valley's early agricultural development under the ownership of William Baldridge. It begins with the estimated construction date of the house and ends when the property was sold to Crabb in 1889.

7.3 Evaluation of Integrity

Integrity is the authenticity of a historical resource's physical identity evidenced by the survival of characteristics that existed during the resource's period of significance. Integrity involves several aspects including location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. These aspects closely relate to the property's significance and must be primarily intact for eligibility.

Location

The Baldrige House remains in its original location, and it therefore retains integrity of location.

Design

The building has undergone multiple alterations over the years, resulting in changes to its original design. However, since historic photographs or drawings of the building are no longer extant, it is difficult to determine to what degree these alterations have impacted its original design. Based on visual analysis of the building, the form, plan, and space have been altered, but the massing of the original two-story house volume is still evident, as are some of its original features, including its stone chimney and foundation. Therefore, the property retains integrity of design.

Setting

The Baldrige House was originally and continues to be located in a primarily agricultural setting against the wooded foothills of the Mayacamas Mountains. Though the types of crops have changed and original ancillary buildings have been removed and new ones added, the house's agrarian setting has remained unchanged. Thus, the building retains integrity of setting.

Materials

The building has undergone multiple alterations to its materials over time, including replacement of original cladding, windows, and doors, and the possible removal of original ornamentation. These alterations have compromised its integrity of materials and it therefore no longer retains integrity of materials.

Workmanship

Because most of the building's original fabric has been replaced or is no longer visible, the original workmanship of the house is difficult to discern. Therefore, the building's integrity of workmanship has been compromised.

Feeling

Though the residence has undergone multiple additions and alterations over time, the building still retains its feeling as a mid to late nineteenth century farmhouse in a rural setting. Even with its additions, the form and massing of the original two-story house volume is still apparent, and the property's surroundings have largely remained the same since its construction. As a result, the Baldrige House retains integrity of feeling.

Association

Because the house still functions as an agricultural property and retains its original rural setting, the Baldrige House maintains its association with the early agricultural development of Napa Valley. Furthermore, though the building has undergone some alterations, its original form and two-story massing is still evident, as are its original stone chimney and foundation. Thus, the property retains integrity of association.

7.4 Character-Defining Features

A character-defining feature is an aspect of a building's design, construction, or detail that is representative of the building's function, type, or architectural style. Generally, character-defining features include specific building systems, architectural ornament, construction details, massing, materials, craftsmanship, site characteristics and landscaping within the period of significance.

Character-defining features of the Baldrige House include:

- Rural agricultural setting, with crops to the south and east of the house and a wooded oak knoll to the south and west
- Approximate 100-foot setback from the road
- Original two-story house volume with a gable roof oriented east-west
- Stone chimney on the west façade
- Stone foundation indicating the footprint of the original house
- Potentially, the original fenestration pattern on the east and west façades and portions of the north and south façades

8. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The subject property was constructed ca. 1870 by William Baldrige. A native of Tennessee, Baldrige settled in Napa Valley after participating in the Bear Flag Revolt and serving in the California Battalion during the Mexican-American War. Baldrige had been cultivating the land, using it to grow a variety of crops and raise livestock, since the 1850s, and continued for nearly two decades after receiving the deed to the land in 1870 and constructing the subject property as his primary residence. The property has been owned by multiple individuals since Baldrige first sold it to H.W. Crabb in 1889. However, it has remained in use for agricultural purposes since its initial development.

Based on an evaluation of the property and archival research, ARG has determined that the subject property appears eligible for listing under Criteria 1 and 2 in the California Register of Historical Resources. The present barn and pump house are contemporary buildings and are not considered historic resources.

9. PROJECT IMPACTS

Because the Baldrige House property is a historical resource, The Vineyard House Winery Project is subject to review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Generally, under CEQA, a project that follows the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* (the *Standards*) can generally be considered a project that will not cause a significant impact (14 CCR § 15126.4(b)(1)). In most cases, if a project meets the *Standards*, it can be considered categorically exempt from CEQA (14 CCR § 15331).¹²⁴

¹²⁴ Document can be found at: <http://resources.ca.gov/ceqa/guidelines/art9.html>.

9.1 Project Analysis against *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards*

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (the *Standards*) are a set of treatment standards for historic buildings developed by the National Park Service.¹²⁵ The *Standards* are used at the federal, state, and often the local level to provide guidance regarding the suitability of various elements of a proposed project that could affect a historic resource.

Following is a discussion of the appropriateness of the proposed Project's design based on conformance with the ten *Standards for Rehabilitation*.

1. *A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, and spatial relationships.*

The Project meets Standard #1. The Baldrige House property would continue to function as it did historically, as an agricultural property. The historic Baldrige residence would be reused as a tasting room, a new use that would require no change to building's exterior distinctive materials and features. Though the building would undergo an interior remodel, the general floor plan and relationship between spaces would remain the same. Furthermore, with the exception of the original stone fireplace, a distinctive feature of the building that would be retained during the remodel, no original interior materials or features remain, and therefore, no interior distinctive materials or features would be impacted by the Project.

2. *The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.*

The Project meets Standard #2. The Project includes the construction of a wine cave, remodeling of a contemporary barn and pump house, and interior remodeling of the ca. 1870s Baldrige House. The most important characteristic of the property is the siting of the Baldrige residence, deeply set back from the road, with crops to the south and east of the house and a wooded oak knoll to the south and west. The addition of the wine cave would have a minimal impact on the relationship between the house and its historic agrarian setting since the cave would be underground and largely hidden from view. As the contemporary barn and pump house are located a substantial distance behind the residence and proposed changes to the buildings are minor, their alterations would not impact the historic character of the property. The adaptive reuse of the Baldrige House would not result in the removal of any distinctive materials or features, and the relationship between interior spaces would largely remain the same. Since much of the interior of the house received new finishes during a 1996 remodel, the reuse of the building as a tasting room would not remove any interior materials or features that characterize the property.

¹²⁵ Kay D. Weeks and Anne E. Grimmer, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1995, rev. 2017).

3. *Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.*

The Project meets Standard #3. The wine cave addition, remodeling of contemporary ancillary buildings, and minor changes to the Baldrige House would not impact the residence's ability to convey its significance as a late nineteenth century farmhouse in a rural setting. The Project would not add any conjectural features or elements from other historic properties.

4. *Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.*

Standard #4 is not applicable. No features of this description would be affected by the Project.

5. *Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.*

The Project meets Standard #5. The distinctive features and material qualities of the building are defined primarily by its two-story gabled volume, stone chimney, and stone foundation indicating the original footprint of the house. These character-defining materials and features would be preserved. Furthermore, though the existing wood v-groove siding and double-hung windows with wood surrounds are not original to the house, they are sensitive replacements and do not detract from the historic appearance of the building. The proposed Project would retain these replacement finishes and materials.

6. *Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.*

The Project meets Standard #6. Wherever possible, historic materials would be repaired, reused, and supplemented by appropriate matching materials where necessary. At this time, no historic features are known to be deteriorated beyond repair.

7. *Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.*

The Project meets Standard #7. Any cleaning of historic materials would be conducted in the gentlest means possible.

8. *Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.*

The Project meets Standard #8. The Project would require substantial excavation for the creation of the underground wine cave. If resources are uncovered during construction, an archeologist would be brought in to provide on-site monitoring.

9. *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be*

differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

The Project meets Standard #9. As described above, the underground wine cave and remodeling of contemporary ancillary buildings would not significantly affect the property's overall ability to convey its historic significance as a rural agricultural site. The design of the new wood porch deck and ramp and low metal railing at the Baldrige House would be compatible with the historic materials, features, massing, size, and scale of the house. The adaptive reuse of the residence would not destroy any historic materials or features that characterize the property.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

The Project meets Standard #10. The addition of the wine cave would largely be hidden under the wooded oak knoll to the south and west of the Baldrige House. If the cave is removed in the future, it would not impair the property's rural agricultural character. The proposed porch deck and ramp addition at the residence could be removed in the future without impacting the historic form and integrity of the building.

9.2 Conclusion

In summary, for the reasons stated heretofore, the Project would not adversely affect the property's ability to convey its historic significance as a nineteenth century agricultural site associated with Napa Valley pioneer William Baldrige. The wine cave addition would largely be hidden from view and would not significantly impact the historic setting of the property. Changes to the contemporary ancillary buildings would mostly be minor and would not impact the historic character of the property. Lastly, the Project would retain distinctive features and materials of the historic Baldrige residence. In meeting the *Standards*, the Project would not impair the significance of the historic resource for the purposes of CEQA.

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APPENDIX A: EXISTING CONDITIONS PHOTOGRAPHS



North façade and setting, view south (ARG, 2017).



Close-up of north façade addition, view south (ARG, 2017).



Primary entrance and porch at the north façade, view southeast (ARG, 2017).



South façade and L-shaped addition, view northwest (ARG, 2017).



Entrance door at corner of the L-shaped addition, view northwest (ARG, 2017).



East façade, view west (ARG, 2017).



West façade, view southeast (ARG, 2017).



Close-up of west façade and stone chimney, view east (ARG, 2017).



East façade and vineyard setting, view west (ARG, 2017).



Wooded oak knoll south of the house, view west (ARG, 2017).



Barn, view south (ARG, 2017).



Pump house, view east (ARG, 2017).