

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received **AUG 14 1985**

date entered **SEP 12 1985**

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

1. Name

historic Joseph W. Post House

RECEIVED

and/or common Post Homestead or Post Ranch House

MAY 28 1985

OHP

2. Location

street & number State Highway 1 (4 miles south of Big Sur)

N/A not for publication

city, town Big Sur vicinity of

state California code 06 county Monterey code 053

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Ventana Inn, Inc.

street & number N/A

city, town Big Sur vicinity of state California 93920

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder's Office, Monterey County

street & number 210 Church St.

city, town Salinas state California 93901

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Preliminary Survey of Historic Resources in Monterey County Survey not completed
has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date Ongoing federal state county local

depository for survey records Monterey County Historical Advisory Commission/County Parks Dept.

city, town Salinas state California 93901

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

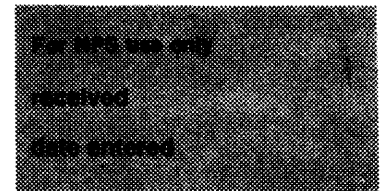
The nomination boundaries for the Post Homestead encompass that portion of the original 640 acre property that retain the integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship and the feeling and association of the homestead, and that afford or are likely to yield information important to the history and development of California's Big Sur Coast. Built on a crown of Post Grade, the one storey homestead house was originally constructed in 1867 out of native redwood, hand-split and planed on site. Over time succeeding generations of the Post family expanded the original home and continued to make improvements. A major addition was the two storey wing to the north, built in 1877. Its style reflects the family patriarch's Connecticut origins in a traditional Saltbox form. The original Post Homestead marked the terminus of a passable trail from Monterey into the Big Sur country. Subsequent development of this magnificent natural resource brought a modern paved highway through the homestead in 1922, eliminating a barn and fencing to the north. Modifications of that roadway and the entry access to the Ventana Inn complex have not significantly altered the highly cohesive historic feature with its high level of integrity and strong sense of time and place.

The Post Homestead House is constructed in Redwood with a wide variety of horizontal sidings ranging from hand-split and planed lap to milled drop siding. Vertical board-and-bat as well as milled flush siding can also be found in this product of five generations of pioneer life. The structure was maintained as means and available materials permitted. The house is irregular in plan resting on a mud sill foundation. It is capped by a series of low and steep pitched gable and shed roofs covered entirely with wood shingle. William Brainard Post (1830-1908), the family patriarch built the first structure in 1867 consisting of a rectangular one storey, single room affair abutted at the south east with a shed roofed sleeping area. The low pitched gable roof extended on either side, (south west and north east, generally) into open porch roofs supported by vertical wood posts. Entry to the appended shed roofed area was through an exterior door where the porch roof on the south west side joined the shed roof to the south east. A stepped up wooden porch is still in evidence on the rear (north east) of the building, while at the front (south west) the original wooden porch has been replaced by a poured concrete stoop (prior to 1945). Fenestration is uniformly 6/6 double hung sash with one window on both front and rear elevations and at either side of the shed appendage. Manufactured doors and screen doors appear on the front elevation (3) and at the rear (1). They probably date from the construction of a square two storey addition to the northwest end of the first structure in 1877.

In 1877 Joseph William Post (1862-1951) added this wing to the original house. To create access to the second storey he incorporated a straight run enclosed stairway into the existing north west end of the one storey structure. The stairwell was enclosed and roofed above the earlier roofline in hand-split horizontal lap siding. The roof for this feature is a partial gable with a 6 paned fixed window at the rear (north east) that affords light to the stairwell. The stairway was open at the front elevation until sometime after 1922 when a four panel inverted cruciform door (manufactured) was added. The two storey addition is in the form of a traditional New England Saltbox with the addition of two gabled dormers entirely within the roofline on the front elevation (south west). A porch roof, partially enclosed at the north west end (probably as a mud room) and originally enclosed with horizontal siding where it abutted the original house, supported by vertical posts, is the only other variation on the Saltbox form.

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Fenestration in the new wing was uniformly 6/6 double hung sash, modified after 1922 in the second floor to 2/3 fixed windows. At some later date a small single pane square fixed window was added at the south east end of the second storey above the enclosed stairwell and a small rectangular single pane awning window was added to the rear (north east) of the wing toward the south east. A modern utility box appears on the north west end of the wing, painted into the structure. With the stairwell already mentioned a single four panel wood door affords entry to the two storey wing at the front (south west) above a raised wooden porch.

Physical evidence suggests that there were two chimneys original to the building complex. One in the original house piercing the roofline to the rear (south east) near the shed appendage, and one to the rear of the two storey wing next to the ridgeline close by the enclosed stairwell. Latter roofing may have concealed other roof openings. Currently there are three additional chimney stacks, (all metal) and two metal vents incorporated into the complex. They appear from the front end (generally north west) of the new wing at the north west corner, at the joining of the new wing and original house forward of the enclosed stairwell, and centered in the front (south west) plane of the gabled roof on the original house. The vent stacks are to the rear (north east) and centered in the Saltbox roof of the new wing, and centered near the top of the shed roofed appendage at the south east. Wooden lattice baffles recently added along some portions of the front of the complex to afford privacy to the Ventana employees housed there are scheduled for removal as part of the rehabilitation process. A wooden picket fence quite similar to that shown in a circa 1922 photograph now fronts the building. The newly paved entryway to the Ventana Inn is planted to flowers and shrubs not dissimilar to those shown in the photograph mentioned and appended as a part of this nomination. A tasteful sign denoting the Inn's entrance has been placed near the north west corner of the Post Homestead abutting Highway 1.

After 1955 with the opening of Post's Campground the Post Homestead was occupied by renters. Although no significant change occurred to the exterior of the complex, over time the interior was altered by succeeding occupants. Undistinguished and plain in origin and utilitarian by necessity little remains of what might have been original to the internal features of the house.

Although development has occurred in the general area of the Post Homestead, especially since 1945, the building complex is so located along Highway 1 as to present the viewer, whether approaching from north or south the dramatic juxtaposition of this transplanted traditional New England house form and important historic resource with the magnificent natural setting that first compelled its builder in 1867 to choose the site. Surely this highly cohesive historic feature with its high level of integrity and strong sense of time and place qualifies for placement in the National Register for Historic Places.

NOTE: There are no remaining outbuildings in close proximity to the resource, but opportunity may obtain for historical archaeology where they formerly existed. The sites of all associated outbuildings are located within the boundaries of the nominated property and can be identified on the enclosed Highway Engineer's map of 1922.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/ <u>settlement</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1867, 1877

Builder/Architect W.B. & Joseph Post/none

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Post Homestead was developed over time by succeeding generations of one of the first American families to settle California's rugged Big Sur coast. The homestead house is beautifully sited on a crown of the Post Grade (named for the family) at what was the terminus of the old coast trail. It is surrounded by the peaks and valleys of the California Coast Range. The building in its setting possesses a high level of integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship and feeling and association as a historic resource. The property is significant for events related to the development of the Big Sur including construction of the Point Sur Lighthouse (1888); introduction of postal service to the region (1889); establishment of the Big Sur School (1890's) among others. In addition to possessing strong historical significance the homestead is also significant for its architecture which places a traditional New England Salt-box structure, designed in 1877 to remind the family of their Connecticut origins, close by the western edge of the American continent. This strong historic and architectural significance of the Post Homestead to the region and perhaps the state should certainly qualify it for listing in the National Register for Historic Places.

William Brainard Post (1830-1908) arrived in California in 1848. He had come by sea around the Horn from his native Connecticut and made land in Monterey. Between 1848 and 1850 Post told his children that he had worked at a shore whaling station at Pt. Lobos as well as putting 6 months at sea in this enterprise. He next found work up the Carmel Valley on the James Meadows Ranch where he met and married a Christianized Mission Indian girl, Anselma Onesimo, Meadows sister-in-law. The wedding took place in 1850. Post gained a reputation as a bear and deer hunter in the Big Sur country when he began to trade in hides and buckskin. In this capacity his travels took him north to the Elkhorn Slough area where Capt. Charles Moss was establishing a landing and wharf to handle the emerging grain trade in the Salinas Valley in the early 1860's. Post established one of the first warehouses in California at Moss Landing and acted as agent for the steamship company of Goodall, Nelson and Perkins. The success of the shipping point stimulated the growth of Monterey County's first municipality, Castroville, a service support area for Moss Landing. Post opened the first butcher shop in town and his two daughters, Mary and Ellen were born there. During this period W.B. Post determined to settle in the beautiful Big Sur country and homesteaded 640 acres south of Sycamore Canyon, where the existing trail ended. Prior to erecting the first Post Homestead house in 1867, W.B. became the foreman of the Soberanes Ranch south of Malpaso Creek, about 20 miles north of his 640 acres. Here his two sons, Joseph William and Frank were born. The Post family divided their time between the homestead and the Soberanes Ranch until 1877 when son Joe constructed the two storey New England Salt-box wing to the original homestead house. W.B. raised cattle and hogs on the place and sold tanbark to the Notley brothers, principal dealers in that commodity on the Big Sur coast. Big Sur's first continuously operating Post Office was located at the Post Homestead. For many years, until a stage road was completed from Bixby Creek south, W.B. Post rode horseback to collect the mail in Monterey without compensation.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .875

Quadrangle name Pfeiffer Point, Calif.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	0	6	1	1	1	6	0	4	0	0	9	8	5	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kent L. Seavey

organization Consultant date May 25, 1985

street & number 310 Lighthouse Ave. telephone (408) 375-8739

city or town Pacific Grove state California 93950

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

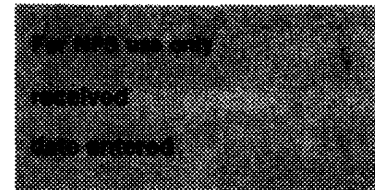
State Historic Preservation Officer signature Kathryn Gualtieri .Kathryn Gualtieri

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 8/8/85

For NPS use only
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register of Historic Places.
[Signature]
Keeper of the National Register
Attest:
Chief of Registration

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

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Continuation sheet

Item number 8

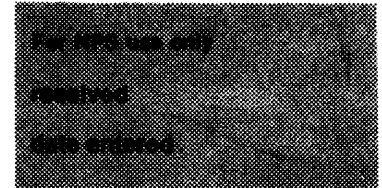
Page 2

In the interim, son Joe, who had constructed the two storey wing at the homestead had become foreman of the Molera Ranch a few miles north of the family home. In 1888 he accepted a government contract to build a wagon road from the base to the top of Pt. Sur to enable construction of the Pt. Sur navigational lighthouse. Succeeding in meeting all the requirements detailed in the contract, including driving a loaded four-horse freight wagon to the top of the grade and back again, Joe Post was awarded a further contract to haul the rock for construction of the lighthouse. Between 1889 and 1905 the homestead served as the first Big Sur School. In 1898 Joe Post built a house (later destroyed) in the canyon behind the homestead. With his son, Joseph William Post (Bill II) he led pack trips of hunters and fishermen into the back country of the Big Sur.

The family continued to live in the homestead house until the beginning of World War II when Frank & Fern Trotter moved in to live with Grandpa (Joe) Post. By 1955 the home was being used as a rental with family members residing in other structures on the large property. In 1972 the Ventana Corporation purchased the property and with a further change in corporate ownership a determination was made to protect and preserve this significant Big Sur landmark by placing it in the National Register of Historic Places. Its high level of integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, especially its strong sense of time and place surely warrent its designation.

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Continuation sheet

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Page 1

Fink, Augusta, Monterey the Presence of the Past, Chronicle Books, San Francisco, 1972.

Hale, Sharron Lee, A Tribute to Yesterday: A History of Carmel, Carmel Valley, Big Sur, Point Lobos, Carmelite Monastery, and Los Burros, Valley Publishers, CA, 1980.

Woolfenden, John, Big Sur A Battle for the Wilderness 1869-1981..., The Boxwood Press, Pacific Grove, CA, 1981.

Linda Carol, Personal interviews with Post family members Joseph William Post (Bill III), and Mary Post Fleenor for the Big Sur Historical Society, 1982.

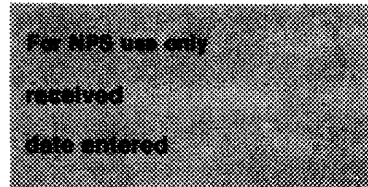
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Page 1

Certain real property situate in Section 32, T. 19 S., R. 2 E., M. D. B. & M., in the County of Monterey, State of California, being a portion of that certain 200.05 acre parcel of land described in deed from Joseph W. Post et al to Big Sur Ventana Corporation, dated January 14, 1972 and recorded January 17, 1972 in Reel 747 of Official Records of Monterey County at Page 239, said portion being particularly described as follows:

Beginning at a point on course numbered (7) of the boundary of said parcel as described in deed to Big Sur Ventana Corporation, distant along said course N. 3 43' 20" E., 107.19 feet from the southerly terminus of said course, said boundary here being the easterly line of California State Highway V-Mon-56-E (State Highway No. 1); thence, along said boundary and highway line

(1) N. 3 43' 20" E., 192.52 feet, to angle point thereof; thence

(2) N. 6 50' 20" E., 77.44 feet; thence

(3) Northerly along a tangent curve to the left with radius of 640 feet, through a central angle of 1 47' 40", an arc distance of 20.04 feet, to a point from which the center of said curve bears N. 84 57' 20" W., thence, leaving said boundary and highway line

(4) S. 83 09' 40" E., 130.00 feet; thence

(5) S. 4 42' 30" W., 289.93 feet; thence

(6) N. 83 09' 40" W., 130.00 feet, to the point of beginning, being Assessors Parcel Number 419-321-13.

(NOTE: the above boundaries are flanked generally by open space.)

The boundaries are drawn on the current lot lines which encompass the .875 acre remnant of the original property.

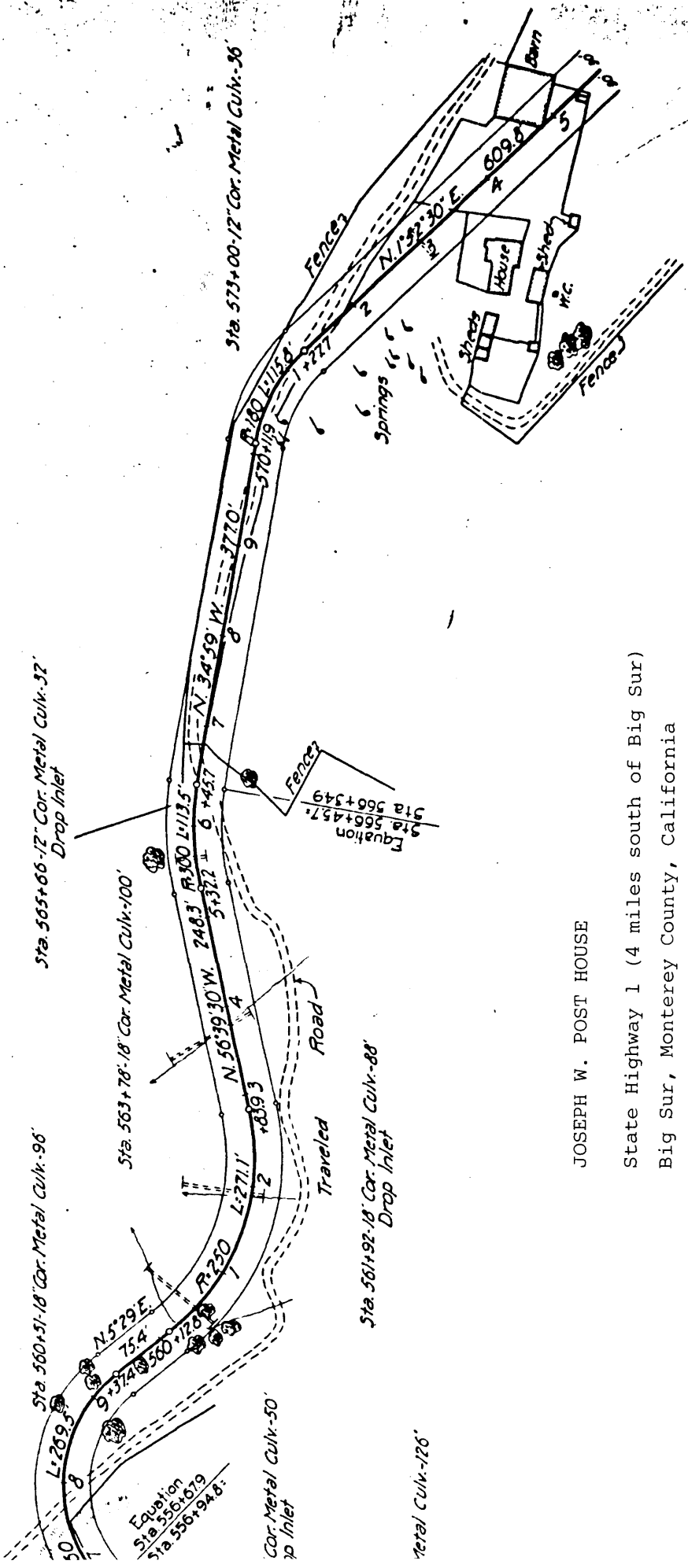
DIV	COUNTY	ROUTE	SECT	Sheet No.	of	Total
V	Mon	56	E	23		30

23

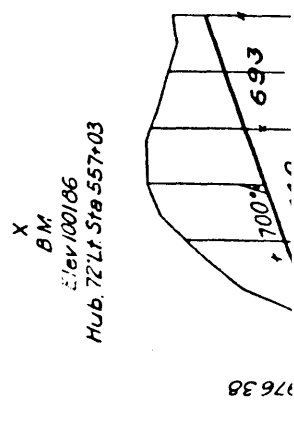
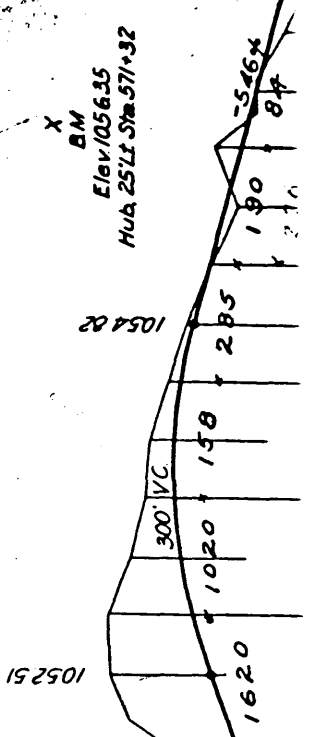
T. 20 S. R. 2 E.
Sec. 5

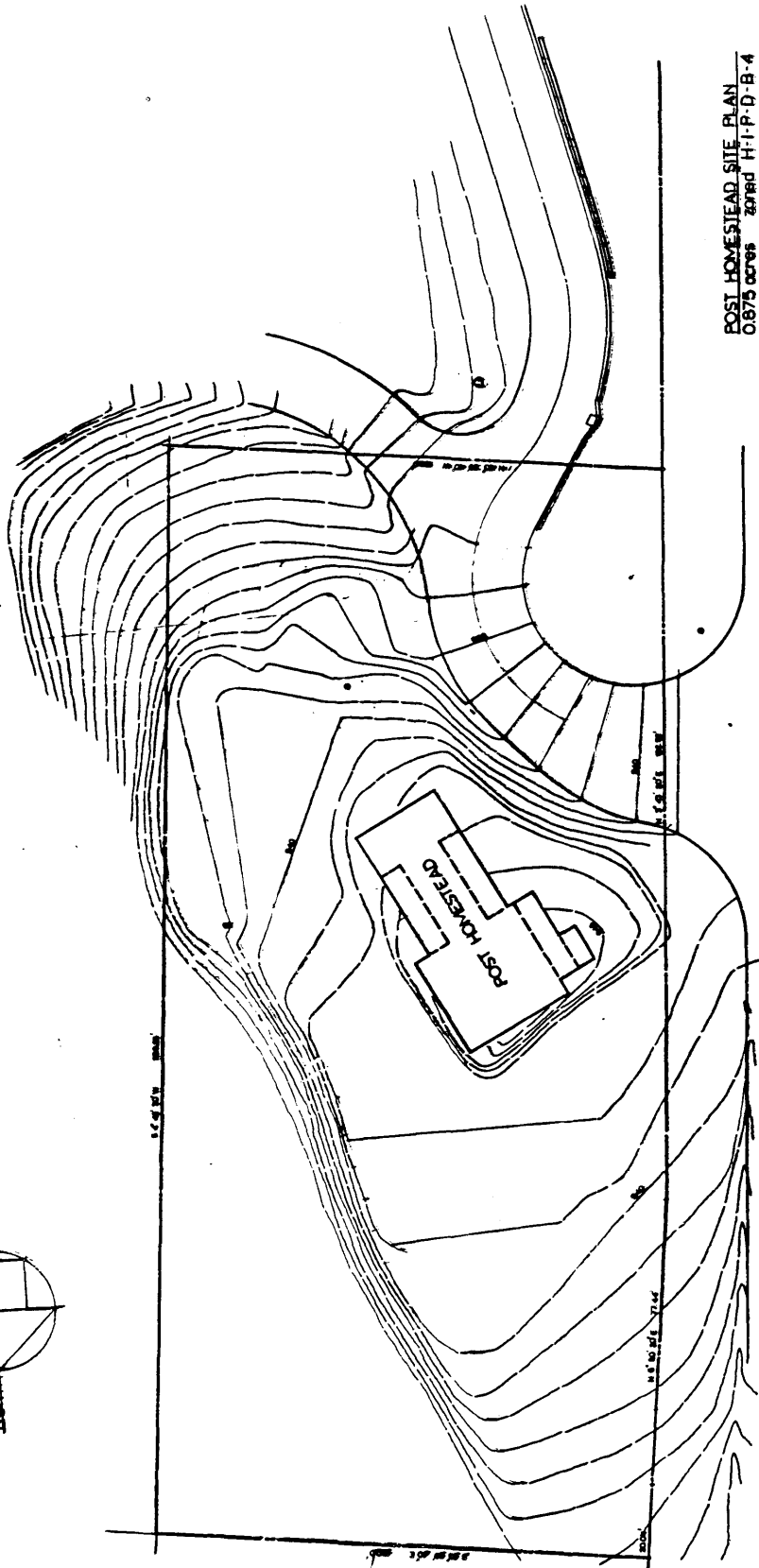
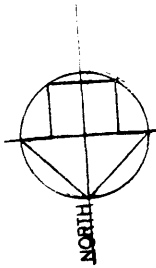
J. W. Post

Approved July 3, 1918
J. W. Post
 State Highway Engineer



JOSEPH W. POST HOUSE
 State Highway 1 (4 miles south of Big Sur)
 Big Sur, Monterey County, California
 State Highway Engineer's Map, 1922





POST HOMESTEAD SITE PLAN
0.875 acres zoned H-1-P-D-B-4
VENTANA INN, INC.
BIG SUR, CALIFORNIA
ROBERT BRAVACINI ARCHITECT
scale: 1" = 18' feet March 1982

STATE HIGHWAY NO. 1

JOSEPH W. POST HOUSE
State Highway 1 (4 miles south of Big Sur)
Big Sur, Monterey County, California

Boundary Map