Baker Station
Historic Context
Tuolumne County, California
Stanislaus National Forest

Baker Highway Maintenance Station, 1931.
California State Archives Collection

Baker Station, approximately toward the northwest, down the old Sonora-Mono Road; shows oblique view of dining hall flanked by residences, with Social Hall closest to photographer. Department of Public Works; Division of Highways, California Highway Commission Records, Inventory F3778: 1364B, Box 10 of 40 (Location VB462); California State Archives.

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for
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Tuolumne County, California

by
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September 2003

Baker Station Historic District

Baker Station is a collection of eleven buildings distributed on an approximately 5.8-acre site. The buildings are arranged in two clusters: one grouping has nine and the other has two buildings. All of the buildings contribute to the historic district. Baker Station also includes two objects: A simple, cement, commemorative marker and a support bar and hardware for a 19th century swing. The marker contributes to the historic district (cf. 24, 26-27).

Baker Station is an early 1930s California Highway Commission, Division of Highways, Maintenance Station that has undergone little change since its construction. Baker Station is a historic district because it represents a significant linkage of buildings united historically by physical development, and because it meets Criteria A and C. That is, Baker Station is associated with an important historic context—the development of California's transportation system—and architecturally, it represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components, though lacking individual distinction, strongly convey their historic context when taken as a whole. Baker Station is significant as a rare property type for its architecture and as one of few remaining, intact Division of Highways maintenance stations from this era (*National Register Bulletin 15* rev. 1991:2, 5; Hupp 5/2003).

Baker Station possesses all of the components of historic integrity: its location, design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling, and association are strongly evident. Moreover, the setting for Baker Station is integral to its historic significance. It is located in a glacial valley of the Central Sierra Nevada, nine miles west of the summit of Sonora Pass, and adjacent to both the old Sonora-Mono Wagon Road and the alignment of State Highway 108.

Contents

Historic Context

The historic significance of Baker Highway Maintenance Station is related to the 1930s, the era of the Great Depression. However, Baker Station—as a place—and its relationship to the adjacent travelway dates to the 1860s. This historic context, therefore, includes a summary of the development of the Sonora-Mono Road and its connection with the place called Baker Station.

Sonora-Mono Road Development, 1862-1900

From Trail to Toll Road

Baker Station is associated with and is an important element of California's transportation history. Although its current and projected uses are unassociated with this context, the location was first a toll and stage station for the Sonora-Mono Wagon Road run by Greenbury Columbus Baker.

While pack trains had, for years, plied the trans-Sierra trade over rough trails, promoters in San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Tuolumne, and Mono counties pressed for a proper wagon road; viewing the proposed wagon road as a trade artery and linking it with revitalization of the region's prosperity. Developed principally to serve the west-to-east trade, supplying the 1860s mineral strikes on the eastern side of the Sierra Nevada, construction of the Sonora-Mono Wagon Road began in 1863.

The wagon road was passable by the late fall of 1864. Both before and after 1862, the year the road was roughly surveyed, speculators applied for patents on these otherwise remote lands that would be touched by the new road. Although the survey for the wagon road somewhat followed the course of the old Walker-Sonora emigrant route in the lower elevations below Strawberry, in the upper elevations, the emigrant route was several miles to the south and west, crossing the Sierra Nevada crest about eight miles south of the new wagon road.

Greenbury Baker was among the second wave of speculators. An experienced hosteller, Baker operated a hotel at Confidence, about twelve miles east of Sonora, which also catered to travelers on the Sonora-Mono Wagon Road. Baker Station was established in 1879, first as a stage stop for the Bodie to Sonora route (Lang 1882:323). The General Land Office plat for Township 6 North, Range 20 East was completed by J. M. Anderson in May, 1879. The surveyor's notes place "Baker's House" near the "Bridgeport and Sonora road," between the Middle Fork Stanislaus River and "the foot of granite mountains." The surveyor also referred to the road as the "Sonora Bridgeport and Aurora Road."

While snow prevented wagon and stage travel during the winter and early spring, the place that Baker chose for his station was ideal during the summer and fall. The

elevation, at 6,200 feet, is relatively low; the elevation increases significantly a few miles eastward and westward along the Sonora-Mono Road. Baker Station was well situated for both forage and water: meadows were at hand as was the upper reach of the Stanislaus River, which roughly paralleled the road through this area. Hay to feed the enroute stock of the trans-Sierra freighting business was brought to Baker's from Haypress Meadow, a little over a mile to the south (cf. Curtain 1982). Importantly, too, the place was early recognized for its recreational values, and Baker advertised these qualities of the station in the Sonora newspapers. Sometimes called Bakers Resort, fishing, scenic beauty, hunting, and relaxation were among its selling points (DB 1886:2). It was also a day and a half horseback ride from Sonora to the west and a day's ride to Bridgeport to the east.

"…Like Many Another Enterprise Undertaken in California"

Though it was born of high hopes, the Sonora-Mono Wagon Road never became a favored route for commerce from the Central Valley over the Sierra. Construction of the road was inspired by gold strikes at Bodie and Esmeralda mining districts on the eastern flanks of the Sierra Nevada in the late 1850s and early 1860s, and the road's use—primarily as a supply conduit from the agricultural Central Valley and foothill regions—fluctuated with the boom and bust cycles of those endeavors. Responding to this cycle, the Sonora and Bodie Stage—which stopped at Baker Station beginning in 1879—quit running in 1881.

By the early 1860s, when the immense and relatively long-lasting Comstock Mines were being supplied with a stream of goods from and through California, the Carson River Trail from Placerville, eastward, was already the preferred route. While the Carson River Trail's commercial heart was Sacramento, the Sonora-Mono route's heart was Stockton… and Sacramento had contentiously surpassed Stockton as the Central Valley's primary center of commerce and pipeline to the port of San Francisco. The Sonora-Mono route, though assiduously touted as superior by its promoters, was a secondary trans-Sierra wagon road that never seriously challenged the dominance of the Carson River Trail, also referred to as the Placerville Road. The placement of the transcontinental railroad, with its western terminus in Sacramento, and the inability of any of the other trans-Sierra railroad schemes to materialize nearer the Sonora-Mono Wagon Road's realm of influence, relegated the wagon road to a more regional role in commerce. Accordingly, the Sonora-Mono Wagon Road failed to garner the attention of the state legislature for improvements and maintenance, leaving those burdens largely to the local counties.

By the standard of commerce for its day, the Sonora-Mono Road was a disappointment. Prentice Mulford--a well-spoken humorist who spent a dismal winter in 1864/1865 at Hayes Station in Eureka Valley, about two miles west of where Bakers Station would be located--recounted the Sonora-Mono Road venture in his inimitable style:

> ...This was a new road built by the counties of Stanislaus, Tuolumne and Mono to rival the Placerville route, then crowded with teams carrying merchandise to Virginia City. The Mono road cost three years of labor, and was a fine piece of work. It ran along steep mountain sides, was walled in many places fifteen or twenty feet in height for hundreds of yards, crossed creeks and rivers on a number of substantial bridges and proved, like many another enterprise undertaken in California, a failure [Mulford in Kelly 1995:10].

Baker and the Toll Road… Another in a Long Line of Believers

Greenbury Baker married Mary E. Carter in 1873, and it was probably a relative of Mary's, J. B. Carter, who ran a weekly stage from Sonora to Bakers Station. A short article in the *Sonora Banner* announced the new service:

> Mr. J. B. Carter, having put things in order at Baker's station for the reception of tourists, will on Monday, commence the running of a weekly stage to the station. The stage will leave Sonora every Monday and return on Saturday. This is a capital idea of Mr. Carter's as the many persons who wish to visit the station every year to enjoy the fine hunting and fishing, can now accomplish the trip at half what it costs, when private teams and outfits are used, besides avoiding a great deal of trouble and work [SB 1888: 5].

Greenbury Baker was one in a long line of believers in the Sonora-Mono Wagon Road, and the last in a long line of individuals who bought a franchise or lease on the road. In 1897—just two years after the Bureau of Highways was formed to "study the laws, physical features, and economic and legal status of highways in the state"—Baker leased the upper reach of the Sonora-Mono Wagon Road counties (Lang 1882: 323; OL 2). Baker took on the task of maintaining the upper Sonora-Mono Wagon Road lying in both Mono and Tuolumne counties. As recompense for keeping the road serviceable, Baker had the right to collect tolls from travelers on the road.

Maintenance on this part of the road was substantial from the start, with heavy snow and seasonal flooding causing repeated washouts, erosion, and blockages from fallen trees and boulders. Bridges were a special hex: crossing streams which were relatively tame during late summer and fall, but which were churning torrents in spring and early summer. The tolls earned by Baker from travelers using the road were far outstripped by the overwhelming costs and energy demands of maintenance, which led him to first to relinquish his franchise on the portion of the road in Mono County in July 1898, and only a month later, to relinquish the lease on the Tuolumne County portion of the road. In late summer of the same year, the Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors directly assumed responsibility for the Sonora-Mono Wagon Road through the county and declared it a "free" road. (Cf. MLM 1898a:3; SB 1898:3; MLM 1898b:3.)

Knowing it could not sustain the Sonora-Mono Road, county officials looked to the State of California to assume responsibility. The First Biennial Report in 1896 paved the way for the state to assume responsibility for such roads:

> Were it not for the fear of neglect, the maintenance of these State highways should be left to the counties, but experience would seem to dictate the folly of such a step. The question of maintenance is of immense importance and if California is to take a forward step in highway matters, every detail must be considered.

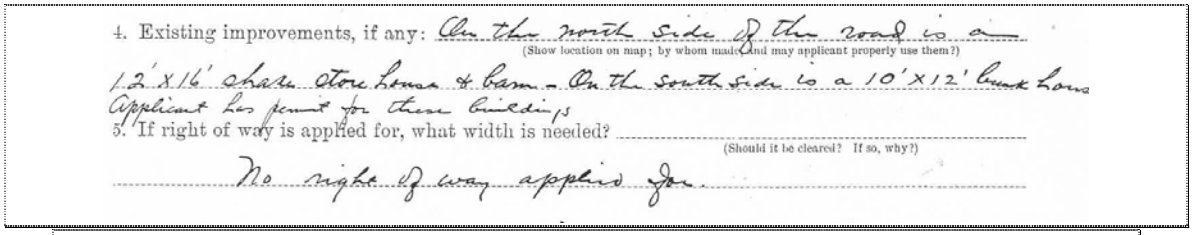
From Toll Road to State Highway… A Road Only in Name

In 1901, the county got its wish; the Sonora-Mono Road--from Long Barn in Tuolumne County to Bridgeport in Mono County--was made a state highway and designated State Route 13. However, the legislature made no appropriation at that time for maintenance or improvements. When the state acquired the road, it was described as "a rutted gully, which could be termed a road only in name." Especially in its higher elevations, "the roadbed was for great stretches a bed of boulders, the bridges were rotted out, and no culverts existed… [F]rom Baker's station to Deadman's creek a very important change is necessary in order that a bad, slippery and steep solid granite roadway may be avoided…" (SB 1909:7). During roughly this same period, the lands surrounding Bakers Station came under federal administration with establishment of the Stanislaus Forest Reserve in 1897.

In 1905, the state appropriated money for "permanent structures" on the road, such as bridges and culverts. Two years later, the legislature appropriated $6,000 a year for maintenance of the Sonora-Mono State Road. It is not known what, if any, connection there was between favorable legislative action in behalf of the Sonora-Mono State Road and plans for the construction of major water developments that required heavy use of the roadway, but in about 1908, Baker Station was again on the map as a landmark in the region. It was near Bakers where the teams left the improved Sonora-Mono State Road and headed westward, through Kennedy Meadow and over granite walls, to Summit Creek and into the valley that, with completion of the dam in November 1909, became Relief Reservoir. The Union Construction Company was contracted by the Sierra and San Francisco Power Company to build the dam, and Baker Station became a rest stop for crews working on the massive project. During this same slice of time, in 1907, the Department of Highways was absorbed into the Department of Engineering, and highway work was delegated to the Highway Department, under the Department of Engineering (OL 2).

Bakers Highway Maintenance Camp, The U.S. Forest Service, and The California Highway Commission, 1901- 1928

Even before actual construction of the Baker Highway Maintenance Station, the area that was the old Bakers Station was identified by the State of California as a "state highway camp." A July 1911 "Report on Special-Use Applications" indicated that the state had applied for a 100' x 50' corral "around the applicant's barn at Bakers Station in the NE of NE of SW ¼ Section 35, Twp 6N, R 20E, M.D.M., on the north side of Sonora and Mono Road." (Note that, today, this is not an accurate legal description: Baker Station is in the NWNW Section 35. The 1911 documentation depicts Section 35 as regular, whereas current maps show this section as irregular and shifted to the north when compared with the 1911 map. The relationship, however, between the location of Baker Station and the road to Kennedy and Relief are the same on both the 1911 sketch map and the current quadrangle map.) M. J. Curtain (Mike Curtain's father) was the local road superintendent who applied for the permit, with the aim of keeping "campers' stock away and also to head his own stock in." The Forest Service report noted that the applicant did not graze stock on the national forest and alluded to the fact that a "special use camp site" was already "issued to the applicant." The report also noted that existing improvements consisted of a 12' x 16' shake storehouse and barn on the north side of the road. On the south side of the road was a 10' x 12' bunkhouse, for which the applicant already had a permit. Therefore, the State Department of Highways had a recognized presence at Baker Station even prior to 1911. It is unknown whether the large corral was ever built. Though the forest officer recommended that the permit be granted, Curtain had informed him that "he didn't know whether he would put up the corral or not. It all depended on the way his work went on and whether or not he was bothered with campers" (Longdon 1911).



4. Existing improvements, if any: On the north side of the road is a
(Show location on map; by whom made; and may applicant properly use them?)
12' x 16' shake store house & barn - On the south side is a 10' x 12' bunk house
Applicant has permit for these buildings
5. If right of way is applied for, what width is needed? .....
(Should it be cleared? If so, why?)
No right of way applied for.

Excerpt from July 20, 1911 Report on a Special Use Application requested by Road Superintendent M.J. Curtain in behalf of the State of California. The request was to add a corral around the existing barn at Bakers Station.

In 1925, the Sonora-Mono Road became an element of the U.S. Forest Service's Forest Highway system from Pooley's Ranch, seven miles east of Sonora, to the junction with Route 37, the Bridgeport-Coleville National Forest Highway at Cabin Creek, the current junction of highways 108 and 395. The distance was 66.4 miles. Designated the Sonora Pass Forest Highway, FS 155 or Route 38, it was added to the forest highway system April 18, 1925. This was one of a number of roads highlighted as being of particular importance to states, counties and communities and that passed through a national forest

and which, by being so designated under provisions of the Federal Highway Act of 1921, was eligible for improvement funding appropriated under that act (Sweetser 1939; USDA 1933: 1, 474).

The dual designation of the Sonora-Mono Road as a state highway and as a national forest highway created confusion in funding sources for maintenance and improvements. While the state looked to the federal government to provide funding, federal officials looked to the state. A 1928 memorandum from the Forest Service's Regional Engineer noted that the Forest Service was in the process of "working out a policy so that the bulk of Forest Highway program funds would be used on meritorious roads which are not in the State Highway system. We have felt that the state roads are now adequately financed through the gas tax, and therefore, that it is best to have the Forest Highway funds allocated principally to improving county roads." Despite this general policy, the Regional Engineer noted: "...it is possible that some assistance will be given to sections of road on the State system, which are important from a Forest Highway standpoint and which may not be reached within the immediate future through the State Highway Commission" (Bonner 1928). The Sonora-Mono Road was important from a Forest Highway standpoint and received some federal forest highway funding. As noted in one of the reports of survey and proposed construction completed under the auspices of the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Public Roads, this highway was important because it would "make more accessible additional recreational areas for summer vacationists and devotees of winter sports. [It]... is also a link in the trans-Sierra Sonora Pass Road and the proposed Sierra Way," a proposal to create a highway across the Sierra Nevada between Yosemite and Lake Tahoe (Sweetser 1939:2).

By the end of 1928, the 11.5-mile stretch of highway between Long Barn and Strawberry was well maintained by the state, allowing for average automobile travel speeds of 20 miles per hour. With relatively little commercial traffic over the highway, most of the use was related to recreation on the Stanislaus National Forest. Summer season traffic averaged 200 cars per day, with 1,200 cars in 16 consecutive hours during peak use (Burnett 1928).

California Highway Commission

In 1911, the State Highways' Department of Engineering advisory board—which exercised direct control over the Highway Department--was expanded by three members. In August 1911, this new board was designated the California Highway Commission (CHC). Two months later, the CHC appointed a "Highway Engineer" to run the Highway Department. At this time, the state was divided into seven highway districts, each run by a district engineer. The CHC soon established a few maintenance stations, with a "twofold purpose"...

> to maintain the roads in their original first-class condition and to be able to deliver, at the proper temperature, oil used in surfacing or resurfacing the pavement [CA 1916: 299].

In 1921, the Highway Department/Bureau of Highways was renamed the Division of Highways. It and the CHC were placed under the new Department of Public Works. The new department's director wore two hats: he was both the State Highway Engineer and the Chief Executive of the CHC.

Probably reflecting the uncertainty of the department's authority, this structure of the Department of Public Works was short-lived. In 1923, highway activities were taken from Public Works and put under the now independent CHC. But wishing to limit the CHC's discretion, significant aspects of its powers were later reabsorbed by the Department of Public Works, narrowing the CHC's authority to such activities as routing and abandoning highways, funding projects, condemning property, and bringing roads into the State highway system.

With its newly delineated authority, the CHC again, reorganized the Division of Highways. This division remained under the Commission's authority for only four years before being placed, once more, under the Department of Public Works in 1927. The year 1923 also ushered in the first gas tax at 2 cents per gallon: one cent was to be allocated to counties for highway maintenance. Meanwhile, the demand for additional highways and for reconstruction and maintenance of existing ones spurred reconfiguration of existing highway districts and addition of new ones; the number of districts grew from seven to ten. In 1933, besides adding Mariposa and Merced counties and eliminating the southern part of Yolo and all of Sacramento County above Walnut Creek, District X's headquarters moved from Sacramento to Stockton. District XI was added in 1935 (OL 2). By the early 1920s, the Division of Highways had changed its policies regarding state-owned maintenance facilities. While it had earlier favored minimizing and renting them, it now favored owning and building a network of its own maintenance facilities, particularly for crews in remote locales. This was chronicled in the March 1924 issue of *California Highways* magazine:

> It is now the policy of the commission and the state highway engineer to establish permanent maintenance yards at central locations to provide storage for state owned equipment and materials. These stations include warehouse and garage space, and, in some localities, a dwelling for the foreman. The state now owns forty-five of these permanent maintenance stations, about one-half the number required.

In 1923, the CHC, Division X (ten) formally identified two maintenance station sites in the upper elevations of the Sonora Pass Road within the Stanislaus National Forest: One at Niagara Creek and one at Bakers Station (Pierce 1927). In fact, as early as 1920, Lot 1 in the Niagara Group of summer home sites—just a dozen miles from Baker—was reserved for the CHC as a highway maintenance site. In June 1927, the Stanislaus National Forest issued a new permit for a maintenance station site at Baker, presumably anticipating construction of the new improvements. It was issued to the California Highway Commission, at no charge. The site was to occupy Lot 5 of the Baker Station Summer Home Tract, consisting of 1.61 acres; which matches the 1921 Forest Service

survey map showing the State Highway Camp in the Baker Station Tract measuring 158 feet wide by 450 feet long (Miller 1921; StF 1927). The California Highway Commission persisted until June 30, 1978.

Baker Highway Maintenance Camp

Baker was always a relatively remote outpost. Mike Curtain reported that it took his father five days to get goods from Sonora: two days down, one day in town, and two days to make the return trip. As late as 1926, the same trip took an entire day. Haigh recalled that horse teams were used to perform the maintenance and construction on this route as late as 1925 or 1926. But beginning late in 1919 and through the 1920s, "a considerable amount of first world war surplus government equipment was made available to the States" for road maintenance and construction work. By the summer of 1919, California maintained about 1,240 miles of paved highway and 1,060 miles of graded roads (Gibson 1918:6). It was during this period, in 1919, that the portion of Route 13 from Sonora to Long Barn was added to the State Highway system.

Descriptions of Bakers Station as it appeared during the nineteenth century have not yet been found. The earliest are recollections that date from 1907, as well as from the late 1920s and early 1930s, when the Baker Highway Maintenance Station was being built under the auspices of the California Highway Commission. According to these memories, old Bakers Station was comprised of at least three buildings. One building, of which there was incomplete evidence, was described as being about…

> 50 to 60 feet long by perhaps 30 feet or so wide. It stood just south of the existing bunkhouse. This building could have been a small type hotel or a rooming house. There was not sufficient evidence in 1907 to actually know just what this building had been, but portions of it were standing at that time [Haigh 1982].

This "hotel" was probably the same building described by Mike Curtain. He recalled the outline and remains of what his father referred to as a hotel. It was located beyond the original cabin site, going toward the Kennedy Meadow turnoff, which is south of the existing bunkhouse (Curtain 1982).

The second building was a barn, located…

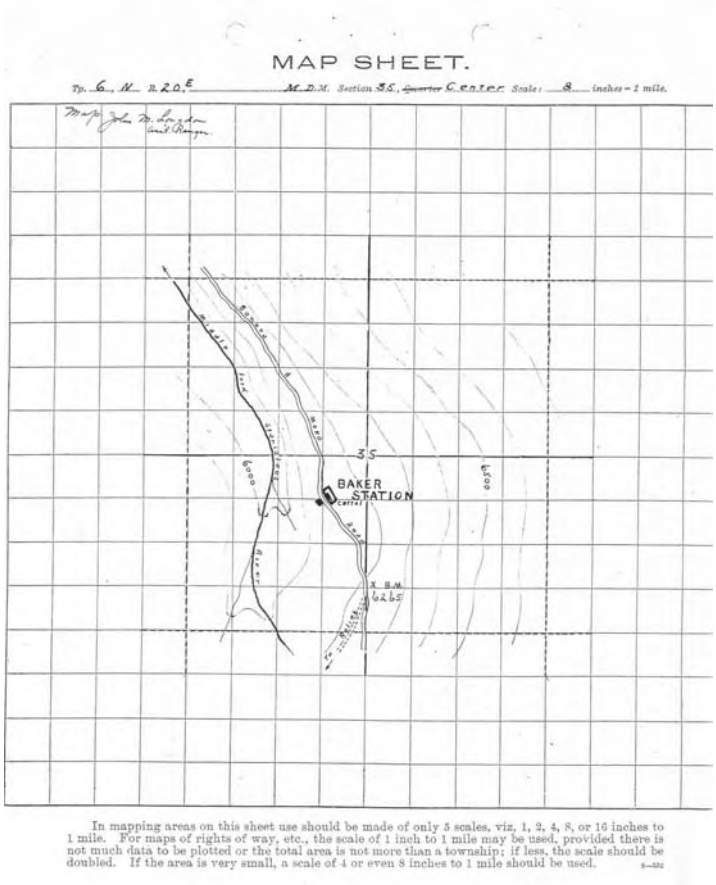
> about midway of the present number of buildings but some distance from them and quite close to the river, and in what is now the present highway…. This barn… was constructed of cut poles with shake sides and roof, and was 18' x 20', more-or-less, in size with the mangers in the back or river side which would be toward the west.

The third building was a one-room structure and was located immediately north of the where the highway maintenance station bunkhouse was constructed.

> It had no windows, no ceiling and was of the same construction as the barn. It had apparently been used as the cookhouse and probably the eating area also.
>
> Its walls showed signs of smoke stain, the floor at one location had burns which could have indicated a stove probably stood there. There were hinged wooden shutters on both sides of this building which could be opened and closed as weather dictated. Inside these shutters were frames which were covered with screen, no doubt for ventilation, light and protection from insects.
>
> This building was in useable condition in 1913, altho [*sic.*] it could have undergone repairs after original construction. It was used as a cook house and for other uses, along with a few more recently erected small buildings, until about 1927 or 1928 when the remainder of the station was pretty much a tent camp. This was not torn down following completion of the existing buildings now there, but was remodeled and used as a recreation hall [a.k.a. social hall, club house, or building 2814]. Its sides were covered with a modern siding of that period, it was sealed inside, a porch added to the front on the west end, a new roof placed, a new floor installed, a fire place of local stone built and other improvements made. It served quite well over the years as an evening gathering place for those staying at the camp [Haigh 1982].

This third building is presumably the same described by Lloyd "Mike" Curtain. Mr. Curtain's father had served as a state road superintendent beginning in 1900 and was assigned to Baker Station in 1907. He served as the local superintendent for the Sonora-Mono Road through 1913. During that period, the improvements comprising Baker Station were leased by the state. Mike Curtain (Jr.) described the building used by the highway maintenance workers at Baker as a single room cabin, about 16 feet by 20 feet, made of a framework of debarked poles, sided and roofed with sugar pine shakes. The floor was made of planks raised about two and one-half feet from ground level.

At the start of each season, rattlesnakes were flushed out from under the cabin by dogs; long-tailed rats also frequented the place. The cabin walls were generously scribed with the initials of its human visitors, with notations of places and dates. During construction of Relief Dam--located five, slow, mountainous miles southeast of Baker Station--Union Construction Company workers used this cabin. Mr. Curtain also noted that there had been two large trees in front of it and that Lloyd Haigh, during his tenure as road superintendent, had them removed when the current highway maintenance station was built at Baker (Curtain 1982). Indeed, historic photographs show two, enormous trees in front of and adjacent to the social hall, which are no longer extant (see photo, below).



Although the relationships between these two mapped buildings and their later descriptions do not entirely jibe, this map from a 1911 Report on Special-Use Applications, completed by Assistant Ranger John Longdon, shows the barn at Baker Station—encircled by the proposed corral—on the north (and east) side of the Sonora-Mono Road. The building described by Longdon as a bunkhouse is on the south (and west) side of the road. Longdon reported that the barn was a 12' x 16', shake-clad, combination storehouse and barn; and that the bunkhouse measured 10' x 12'. Haigh reported that the barn was about midway of the present buildings and was located "quite close to the river" in about the current road alignment; the current highway alignment is just south/west of the historic roadway. The 16' x 20' cabin/cookhouse noted by Haigh and Curtain is not depicted on this 1911 map. Moreover, by 1911, there was apparently not enough of the "hotel" to note it as an improvement. It is possible that Longdon only depicted those improvements then administered under the permit issued by the Forest Service to the California Highway Commission.
Courtesy of Stanislaus National Forest

This undated photograph was probably taken in about 1930, when construction of the new highway maintenance station at Baker Station was well underway, but before construction of the new bunkhouse. Note that the view of the Social Hall is nearly entirely obstructed by the large pine tree and that the tree (with the ladders against it) is deeply fire-scarred at the base.
Courtesy of Caltrans History Library

Baker Station and California's State Highway Maintenance System

Within the historical context of *Caltrans*, or what in 1921 was named the Division of Highways, Baker Highway Maintenance Station was built shortly after the California Highway Commission functionally divided its work, and the Maintenance Department was established. Although the state had rented or constructed road maintenance stations before that date—including a facility at Benicia/Martinez built in 1903 and what appears to have been the first full-fledged maintenance station, with storage, fuel, and workshop, built in 1921 at Petaluma—it was not until the mid-1920s that construction of highway maintenance stations gained momentum (cf. Fisher 2000, working files).

Although expenditures for maintenance and improvements of the highway system had shown a steady increase from $83,936 in 1914 to $3,590,752 in 1923, it was only in 1923 that the gasoline tax law was enacted to provide funds for road reconstruction in addition to maintenance of state roads. This additional revenue for road reconstruction may have been the force that triggered construction of the new facility at Baker Station. By the early 1920s, reorganization of the Bureau of Highways and redistribution of the increasing state roads workload was being discussed. At that time, as it is now, California was divided into state highway districts. Within each district, roads for which the department was responsible were numbered and given a county designation. In addition, each of these roads was subdivided into sections. From its inception in 1911, District III administered an enormous territory. It not only included Tuolumne County, but also Sacramento, Butte, Colusa, El Dorado, Glenn, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, San Joaquin, Sierra, Solano, Stanislaus, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba counties. By 1924, the district was expanded to include over twice its original territory. Too unwieldy, District III was delimited and reorganized. With a decision that was undoubtedly seasoned by state capitol politics, an east-west line was drawn through the city of Sacramento; the counties north of that line and the northern portions of Sacramento, Yolo, Sierra, Sutter, and Yuba remained in District III; the southern portions of those counties and counties south of that demarcation, formed the new District X (OL 3).

In a retrospective article for *California Highways* about changes he had witnessed during his career, J. B. Woodson, Division VI Engineer at Fresno, reported that a *bonafide* maintenance system for state highways did not begin until 1913. In this article, Woodson not only reminisced, but attempted to defuse complaints and make a case for "why the highway commission builds neat, five-room bungalows for certain employees of the maintenance forces."

Entitled "State Owned Maintenance Stations Bring Results," Woodson's 1924 article noted that the term "permanent road" was frequently used during the early years. Its connotation was that, once a road was built to engineered standards, there was little need for a robust maintenance program. Before the policy of state-owned maintenance stations was adopted in 1913, a "responsible man" from division headquarters took an occasional look at the roads assigned to him. If he deemed that repairs were necessary, he was empowered to hire a few local laborers and to borrow a county's heavy equipment to complete the job. These responsible men were highly autonomous and largely defined their own priorities. Supervision was indirect and sporadic, and they were expected to maintain the roads for which they were responsible with sparse resources. The first stage in "establishing a regular maintenance force" was defined as the "patrol system." Typically operating from a motorcycle with a sidecar, early patrolmen monitored their assigned roads and maintained them with little more than a state-owned shovel and a supply of cement, rock, and sand. Soon, ever-increasing responsibilities called for patrolmen to exchange their privately-owned motorcycles for Ford touring cars or light trucks. While "patrol" remained the moniker for its maintenance system, by the time Woodson's article was written, the position of "maintenance foreman" had been established and the term "permanent road" had fallen from favor. A foreman was typically assigned a road segment of from 25 to 50 miles long, depending on the road's

maintenance requirements and history. Gradually, more state-owned equipment was at the maintenance foreman's disposal, including five-ton trucks, graders, concrete mixers, asphalt kettles, and an expanding array of specialized tools (Woodson 1924:10; CA 1930: 95).

Woodson made an interesting observation when he explained the trend that state highway foremen tended to be men who had 'worked up from the ranks,' from contractors' laborers, mixer men, and teamsters. When a division engineer identified a promising candidate—one "who would be satisfied to be stationed at a certain location" —he would assign the new foreman a section of highway and a headquarters. Woodson further observed that:

> Many of the towns, that became headquarters of the various foremen, afforded few or no suitable houses, and frequently an available house had a higher rental value than the maintenance man could afford.
>
> The result was more or less of a 'camping out' proposition. The foreman would secure a vacant lot or get a shack with a sizeable yard; then, with his personally belongings and family, he could get started. State equipment and materials were stored haphazardly in any place not occupied [Woodson 1924:11].

Such conditions resulted in short tenures of about six months, poor communications, and equipment "at the mercy of thieves and fire…. Since inaugurating the state-owned foreman's cottage system" in 1913, resignations of maintenance foremen plummeted and the position became a "fair ambition" (Woodson 1924:11).

Woodson reported that the cottages were built for a family of five. They were "periodically inspected, kept in excellent condition, and cost approximately $2,500 each. The garage, storehouse, and heavy yard fence, which are a part of each station, cost $1,500 more. The average site costs about $750…

> The maintenance foreman is proud of his station and proud of his job. And again I say, 'the investment brings home the bacon [Woodson 1924:11].

Though not specific to Baker Station, Woodson's description is apt. Woodson's location in Fresno probably made it one of the earlier divisions/districts to garner funds for maintenance stations and their improvements. From 1900 to 1913, when M. J. Curtain was the superintendent responsible for the Sonora-Mono Road, as well as for other roadways, he may have been among those, as described by Woodson, who came from the ranks of teamsters or similar trades. Similarly, it may have been Curtain who, familiar with Baker Station, saw it as an ideal place for a road maintenance "headquarters." Also paralleling Woodson's description, Baker Station Highway Maintenance Camp—before construction of the new facilities—used old, existing buildings, supplemented by tents. It is of note that Curtain's tenure spanned from before the Sonora-Mono Wagon Road

became a state road to the year that California ramped-up its road maintenance program and authorized state-owned stations dedicated to highway maintenance.

State Highway Maintenance Stations and The Great Depression, 1929-1941

From 1920 to 1930, California's population skyrocketed from 2,377,549 to 5,672,602, an increase of nearly 100 percent, with a greater annual average increase than for any other state. And although it would seem that the Great Depression would have significantly decreased travel along such routes as the upper reaches of Route 13, the opposite was true. Forest Service officials observed that:

> The era of prosperity since the world war [World War I] enabled many to purchase automobiles and travel long distances to enjoy the recreational advantages of the national forests. And, strangely enough, the impetus thus given to travel in the forest continued in the later period of business depression due, it is believed, to the pleasant surroundings and lower cost of living in the forest and recreation camps as completed to living in the urban centers [USDA 1933: 2].

Similarly, instead of curtailing construction of state highway maintenance stations, in 1929, the pace sharply accelerated. During that year, the state built 13 highway maintenance stations. The economic crisis through the 1930s spawned government work programs for projects--such as roads, road maintenance, and facilities--at the national and state levels. This is reflected in archival records of the District Engineer which, beginning in 1932, includes a significant volume of correspondence providing guidance on using unskilled laborers, who were on government relief, for emergency federal aid construction and highway projects (cf. CA Archives Inventory F3762:11, 12).

From 1930 through 1945, from at least two to at least 13 state highway maintenance stations were built per year, resulting in construction of over 66 new maintenance stations on state-owned land during that period.

State Highway Maintenance Stations Constructed and Additions Made to Existing Stations on State-Owned Land, 1930 – 1945

YEAR	NO. STNS.		YEAR	NO. STNS.		YEAR	NO. STNS.		YEAR	NO. STNS.
1930	13		1935	10		1940	8		1945	2
1931	8		1936	4		1941	4			
1932	11		1937	2		1942	6			
1933	2		1938	10		1943	2			
1934	7		1939	6		1944	2			
Totals	41			32			22			2

Baker Station was not listed in this summary because it was not constructed on state-owned land. (Table derived from Fisher 2000: working files.)

By mid-1934, there were 15 highway maintenance stations in District X: Stockton, Rio Vista, Fairfield, Midpines, Cathay, Merced, Los Banos, Carl Inn, Sonora, Niagara Creek, Baker Station, Altaville, Cabbage Patch, Corral Flat, and Woodfords. At this juncture, L. H. Haigh was the superintendent for Rio Vista and Fairfield. Three of these 15 maintenance stations—Niagara Creek, Baker Station, and Carl Inn—were on the Stanislaus National Forest, administered under permit. L. H. Kahl was the superintendent for Carl Inn; S. E. Harris was the supervisor for Sonora/Jamestown (Tuo 13), Niagara Creek (Tuo 13F); and Baker Station (Tuo 13G) (Pierce 1934).

The Seventh Biennial Report of the Division of Highways of the Department of Public Works, published in late 1930, documented an important principle. Not only did it indicate that the patrol system remained the prevailing operational method for state highway maintenance, but also that the efficiency of highway maintenance workers under this system depended upon both their work and their shelter being close at-hand:

> Recognizing the value of centralized, adequate housing and storage facilities where men and equipment would be accessible in times of emergency, the state some years ago initiated a policy of acquiring and improving maintenance sites. To date 156 such sites have been purchased or secured under special use permit from the federal government and fifty-two leased, the total original cost of the sites and improvements amounting to $838,900. This investment, while considerable, does not exceed the rental for like accommodations capitalized at 5 per cent and in addition insures a high type of labor together with adequate protection for the equipment [CA 1930: 95].

The steep spike in usage of California's road system fueled by the immense and burgeoning popularity of the automobile prompted the California Highway Commission

to establish this network of maintenance stations and to prescribe their content and layout. Though development of the new highway maintenance station at Baker was underway by the time of the *Seventh Biennial Report* in 1930, the section on "housing and storage" closely matches developments at Baker:

> These [maintenance station] sites located adjacent and central to the section maintained are usually one to two acres in area. The improvements include a foreman's cottage, bunkhouse for the crew where warranted, truck shed, oil house and loading platform [CA 1930: 95].

While the maintenance stations were first and foremost designed to be efficient and Spartan, Department engineers attempted to choose a design motif that was nominally sensitive to the varied settings in which the stations would be built. A "Spanish" flair was used "where local restrictions necessitated," such as in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties, while desert locations were usually simply wall board over a wood frame. Where local restrictions did not hold sway, but where local climatic conditions required more than wallboard, the Department chose to use a simplified colonial style [CA 1930:97]. Fisher noted in his study of California Highway Maintenance Stations that…

> the term 'colonial' is used rather loosely and refers primarily to a building's massing and general proportions. The [Division of Highways' colonial] cottage was a side-gabled structure with one or two cross gables at one end and a wing under a lower gable at the other end which housed the dining room and a separate, enclosed back porch. A shed-roofed porch supported on square columns, complete with bases and capitals, covered the entry. The plan was for a three-bedroom house. (A two-bedroom version eliminated one of the cross gables.) An earlier style, which could be loosely described as 'craftsman,' was shown in the 1924 *California Highways*… also a side-gabled structure [with] a cross gable porch which spanned nearly the entire façade [Fisher 2000:3].

The cottages were described as one-story, five-room frame houses with 840 square feet of floor space. Bunkhouses were built to accommodate eight men and were typically equipped with "lights, lockers, shower, toilet and lavatory."

Typical truck sheds were…

> Constructed of galvanized iron over a substantial wooden frame work; … equipped with lights, lavatory, toilet, pits, wash rack, work bench and supply rooms. The standard depth is thirty feet, the length in ten-foot multiples varying from sixty to one hundred feet [CA 1930:97].

This intriguing article from the *Seventh Biennial Report,* explained that the Division of Architecture (now the Office of the State Architect) had "recently revised and improved the former plans, so that there are now separate and complete standard plans and

specifications for superintendent or foreman's cottage, bunkhouse, truck shed, warehouse and office, oil house, septic tank and loading platform." Highway maintenance station buildings were to be economical, yet well planned for operational convenience and appearance. With such a large, statewide system of highway maintenance stations underway, the Division of Architecture standard plans promoted economies in planning as well as in actual construction. The article concluded that: "It is hoped to eventually secure and improve maintenance sites at all important working centers, as the benefits realized amply justify the continuance of this policy" (CA 1930: 97). Copies of these standard plans have not yet been found, despite significant attempts to locate them.

Baker Station and Standard Plans

It is unknown if Baker Highway Maintenance Station was constructed using Division of Architecture standard plans. While it is clear that the "new" Baker Station buildings at least generally conformed to department direction in terms of their scale and simplicity, it may be that the plans and architectural style chosen for Baker Highway Maintenance Station--instead of referring the generally prescribed colonial design--referenced the appearance of an extant Baker Station building (cf. c. 1920 photo). Site planning for Baker, however, most definitely referred to standard building types and their arrangement on the land.

This photograph, reportedly taken in about 1920, shows the vertical board and batten siding, the ample, open front porch, the steeply-pitched front gabled roof, and the multi-light wooden windows that characterize the buildings constructed in the residential area for the Baker Highway Maintenance Station, completed in about 1931 or '32. Typically, the cottages for state highway maintenance stations were roofed with composition asphalt shingles; the roofs at Baker were wood shingles.
Photo from closed Baker Station Special Use File, 2720; Stanislaus N.F.

The earliest official guidance on the layout and construction of state highway maintenance stations appeared in the first edition of the State of California, Department of Public Works, Division of Highways *Maintenance, Manual of Instructions,* printed in July 1927. Occupying only a few pages of a thick manual, planners were told to furnish a site plan, provide for improvements of the grounds--including erection of a standard maintenance station sign--and to maintain the buildings and grounds in neat, safe, and orderly condition. The Baker Station site plan closely followed the format provided in the sample site plan in this 1927 guidance (CA 1927:73-75).

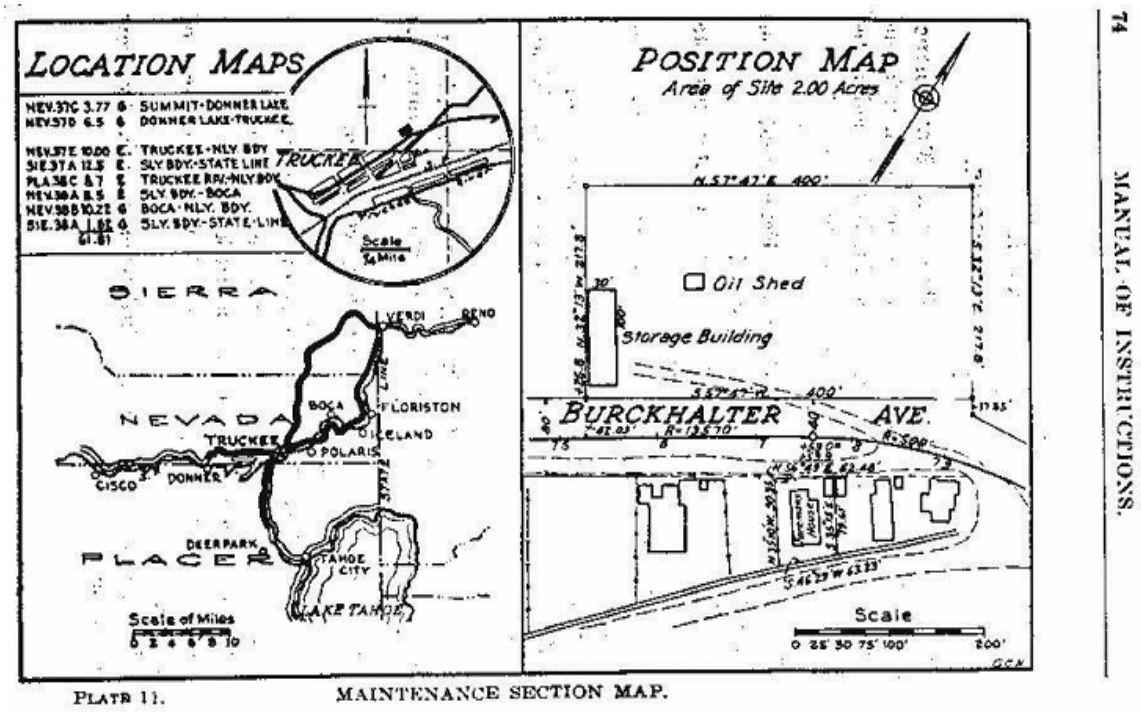
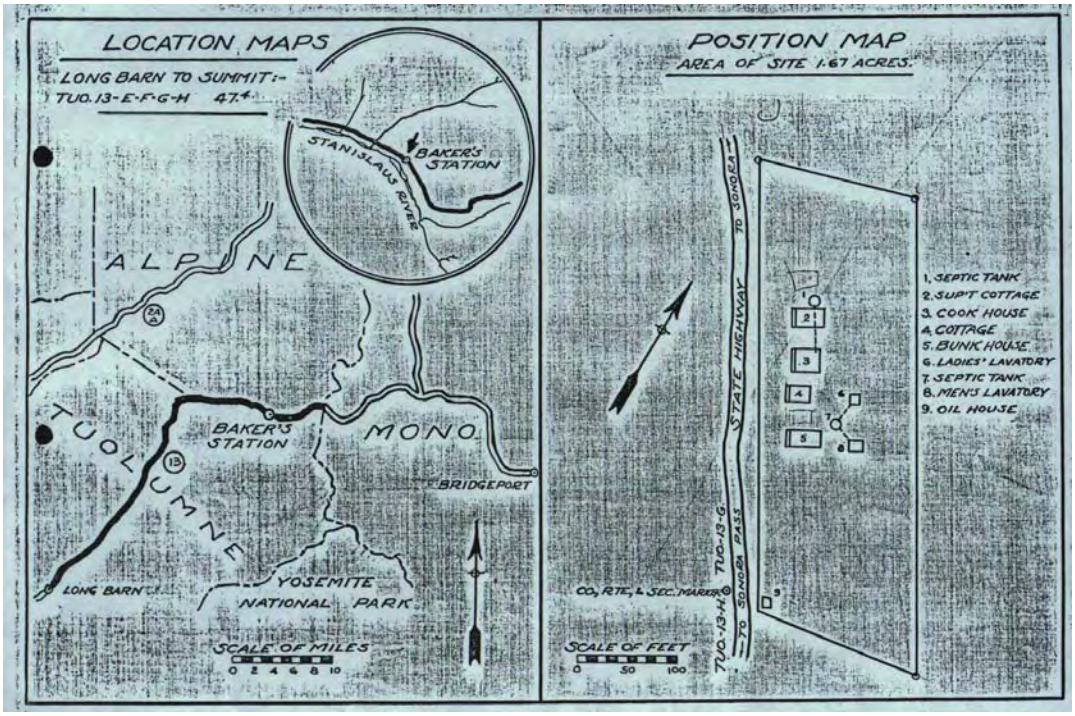


PLATE 11. MAINTENANCE SECTION MAP.

Sample of a site plan and maintenance section map from the 1927 first edition of the Maintenance Manual of Instructions for the Division of Highways, Chapter XVII.



This is an undated site plan and maintenance section map of Baker's Station that was part of the Stanislaus National Forest's closed Special Use Permit file for the station. Note how closely it parallels the content and design of the sample from the 1927 manual, above. Note, also, that the bunkhouse is not depicted; what is labeled as the bunkhouse is in the location of the social hall. Also, what is labeled as the superintendent's cottage is what actually was/became the foreman's cottage. The truck shed and related non-residential buildings are not shown on the position map; they are located northwest of the area scribed as the station limit. The oil house is shown at the southwest corner of the station site, instead of near the truck shed.
Sometime after 1930 and before 1951, the site was expanded from 1.61, first to 3.2 and then to 5.8-acres. (Cf. Pierce 1927 in which it is noted that the maintenance station sites previously "asked for… are not sufficient for our needs." See also Miller 1921, Stanislaus N.F. Brightman Recreation Area, Baker Station Tract map; it shows the same shape, size and orientation of the "State Highway Camp" as shown on this map.) Note that by 1938, the minimum size prescribed was increased to two acres (CA 1938: 314).

The second edition of this manual was printed in January 1931, containing nearly the same information as the first edition. This edition admonished that planning and operating a maintenance station required that:

> A plan with detail information as to location and dimensions, as well as territory to be served, is to be submitted with all requests for purchase of maintenance sites [as well as a] plan showing location of proposed improvements…. Fence is required. This work is generally to be done under contract. Put in lawn around portion of yard reserved for cottage and plant trees and shrubbery as may be approved by headquarters office [CA 1931:135].

Baker Highway Maintenance Station's site layout closely parallels that depicted as the "typical maintenance station layout" in the California Division of Highways Seventh

Biennial Report [CA 1930: 94]. Within that layout, the typical highway maintenance station was formed from selecting a combination of buildings and structures from the following list; the kinds and numbers of buildings depended on the character of the highway for which the station was responsible and on whether it also served as the maintenance superintendent's headquarters:

Superintendent's and/or foreman's cottage
Workman's cottage
Bunkhouse
Combined office and bunkhouse
Combined office and warehouse
Combined woodshed and garage
Truckshed
Oil and gas house
Woodshed
Blacksmith shop
Pump house
Tank house
Septic tank
Loading platform

Baker Station included the following buildings and features:

Superintendent's cottage
Foreman's cottage
Workman's cottage
Bunkhouse with front sitting room
Dining hall
Social hall
Bath houses (2)
Truckshed
Oil and gas house
Blacksmith shop
Pump house
Septic tanks
Loading platform

The ways that Baker Station conforms with the typical station layout is the separation of the work from the residential living space, separation of the foreman's cottage from the bunkhouse, the placement, materials, and size of the truck shed, close proximity to the highway right of way, and presence of the key station components: bunkhouse, foreman's cottage, gas and oil canopy, truck shed, loading ramp and platform, blacksmith shop (utilized to house a generator), pump house, walkways, and driveways. Some key departures of Baker Station from the typical layout are that there is a cottage for both the superintendent and foreman (even though the site did not also serve as headquarters for

the maintenance superintendent), a dining hall, a social hall, bathroom and shower facilities attendant to the bunkhouse that were not only in a separate building, but which were separate facilities for males and females.

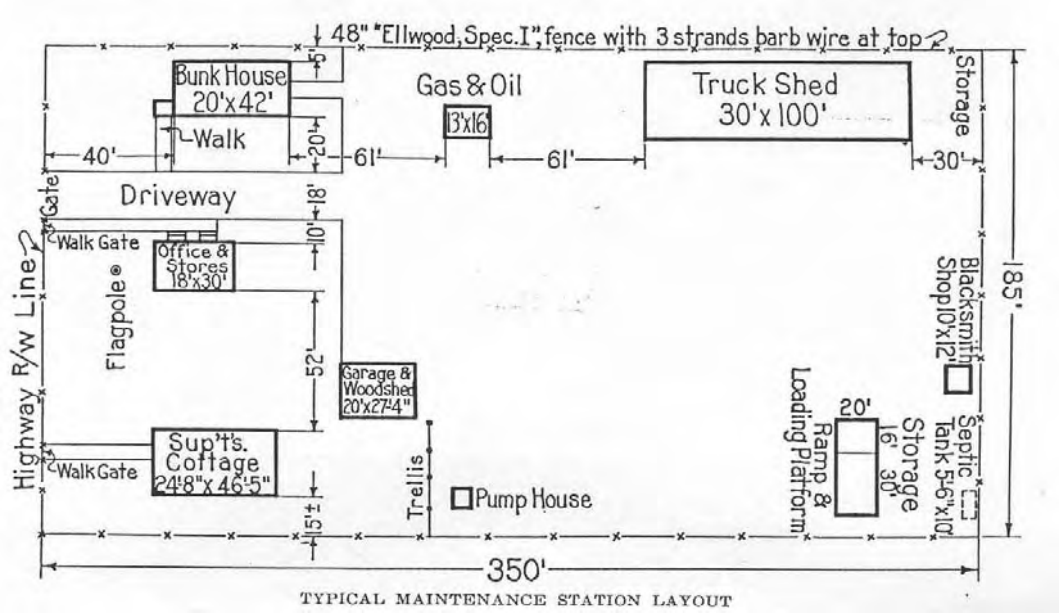
This photograph of Baker Station, probably taken in about 1930 shows, from left to right, the foreman's cottage (cabin 3, building 1113); the dining hall (cookhouse, building 1112); the worker cabin (cabin 1, building 1222); and the social hall (clubhouse, building 2814). The women's bathhouse can be seen behind cabin 1. Note the sign on the tree between cabin 1 and the social hall, as well as the large, fire-scarred tree on the right side of the frame.
Courtesy of Caltrans History Library

The buildings in the residential area at Baker Station are not colonial in design. Rather than the cross-gabled and side-gabled buildings described as the standard plans, most of those at Baker are single, front-gabled; the superintendent's cottage and the dining hall are single, side-gabled buildings. Rather than having the typical enclosed rear porches and roofed front entry porches supported by square columns, at Baker the main buildings in the residential area—the superintendent's cottage, the foreman's cottage, the dining hall, the worker's cottage, the social hall, and the bunkhouse—all have prominent, full, front porches, facing the highway. The close proximity of the buildings at Baker Station also departs from the prescribed plan. The manual instructed that buildings be at least 25 feet apart for fire protection… at Baker, the buildings from the foreman's cottage to the bunkhouse range from only about eight to 20 feet apart (CA 1938: 316). Finally, a distinctive feature of the typical maintenance station is a perimeter fence topped with three strands of barbed wire, primarily used to define the station limits and to provide security for equipment and tools: Baker Station is not fenced. Moreover, each element of Baker Station's residential area has a prominent front porch and is oriented with its front façade and entrance facing the highway.

Landscaping at Baker Station was minimal, taking advantage of the natural vegetation and topographic features. The only plantings appear to have been iris at the front entrances of the residential area buildings and at the base of some of the pines, and

landscape features appear to have been limited to defining a few pathways and plantings around trees with alignments of local, fist-sized rocks. While formal landscaping became a priority for urban maintenance stations and district headquarters, it was noted to occur at rural stations, as well; not the product of any formal requirements, but " due to the innate desire of the occupant to have a home" (Whitaker 1938:22-23). Another extant landscaping element owing to this "innate desire to have a home," apparently predates the highway maintenance station. "Molly's swing," located between the two, large cedars in front of the foreman's cabin and the dining hall, consists of a wooden bar and hand-wrought iron hardware that once supported attachments for a swing; it was reputedly for a daughter of G. C. Baker, during the 1880s, when Baker was a toll station (Gandolfo 2002).

Molly's swing, as it appeared in 2002. Braced between two, large incense cedars, the wooden bar and hand-wrought, iron hardware reportedly dates to the Baker Toll Station era, in the 1880s; Molly was reputedly Greenbury C. Baker's daughter. Molly's swing is in front of the foreman's cottage and dining hall, between the alignment of the old Sonora-Mono Road and the current alignment of Highway 108.



TYPICAL MAINTENANCE STATION LAYOUT

This 1930 template for a California State Highway Maintenance Station was repeated in manual guidance throughout that decade (cf. Seventh Biennial Report of the Division of Highways, 11/1/1930 and the State of California, Division of Highways Manual of Instructions, Maintenance, 7/1938). The only differences between the 1930 and the 1938 templates refine the social geography and enlarge the site: in the 1938 version, the truck shed was recommended to be placed behind the superintendent's cottage, rather than behind the bunk house; a paint house and additional storage were added.

Despite substantial research, documentation explaining why Baker Station, instead of Niagara, was chosen as the location for the new highway maintenance station has not been found. An anecdotal reason was related by the younger Mike Curtain. Curtain noted that Baker was already being used as the staging area for highway maintenance on the upper Sonora-Mono Road, and that the decision to retain it for the new highway maintenance station was because of superior fishing adjacent to it. He reported that Ed Harris was the road superintendent at the time this decision was made (Curtain 1982). Although there may be some truth to this, it is also true that the state had designs to improve the upper stretch of the Sonora-Mono Road to Sonora Pass, and to realign significant parts of it: particularly to eliminate some of the crossings of Deadman Creek. Including reconnaissance and survey work, this project spanned a decade, from about 1926 through 1936. For efficiency, proximity to the project would have been a key factor in choosing a site for a permanent maintenance station, and Baker was superior to Niagara in this regard, as well.

Baker Highway Maintenance Station was operational for only five or six months each year. The upper elevation of State Route 13 was closed during the winter due to snow. The winter closure point has moved eastward with time, but as early as 1948, it was at Cow Creek, which remains the winter closure point. Crews usually vacated the station in November--after the first significant snowfall--and returned in the spring, attempting to have the road open by Memorial Day. During the winter, those who were not on "TAUs," or temporary authorizations, worked out of the highway superintendent's office in Sonora (Gandolfo 2002).

Building and Living at Baker Station

The season for accomplishing construction at Baker Station is relatively short due to winter weather. Construction is also complicated by the logistics of getting materials on-site; the closest center for acquiring materials was approximately two hours distant, by road. It is evident that all of the improvements at Baker were built over more than one season, and likely that the construction was phased over three years, probably from 1929 through 1931. The order in which the improvements composing the new Baker Highway Maintenance Station were constructed is incompletely understood. However, from photographic and map evidence, it appears that the foreman's cottage, the dining hall, the worker cabin, the social hall, and the two bathhouses (the women's bathhouse included the power plant) were constructed in the first phase. Moreover, as noted above, the social hall was reportedly built over the shell of a pre-existing structure, and historic photographs of the completed social hall show that the fireplace and chimney were not part of this initial remodeling. Though conjecture, it is likely that the bunkhouse was built during the second phase of construction and, perhaps due to its proximity to the bunkhouse and to anticipated intensified use of the social hall, addition of the chimney and fireplace to the social hall may also have occurred at that time.

Because the site, as designated at least in 1927 and as late as July 1930 (StF 1927: CA 1930), does not extend northwestward to include the 2.6-acre addition, the truck shed may not have been built until the final construction phase, which may have included not only the truck shed, but also the gas and oil house, and the 10' x 12' blacksmith shop that were located on the addition to the site. The superintendent's cottage may have also been built during this phase. It is stylistically dissimilar from the other major buildings in the residential area, is set apart from them and, unlike any of the other residences, is side-gabled. The reason for the superintendent's separation may be a matter of social geography.

By the time Holmes Ives began working at Baker Highway Maintenance Station in 1934, there was no apparent evidence of old Baker Station. Mr. Ives knew by hearsay that there was once a foundation on the flat east and adjacent of the bunkhouse. However, he noted that highway department policy was to "neat-up" the stations, and that equipment was available to obliterate such remains. Indeed, the area that would have been east of and adjacent to the bunkhouse is shown on a 1930 Division of Highways Map as being occupied by a building; in an area that later became a borrow pit (CA 1930). Mr. Ives said that the new highway maintenance station at Baker was built by state workmen. He also noted that there were workers who lived in tents; some of which were platform tents. Mr. Ives recalled that there was still a maintenance station at Niagara Creek in addition to Baker Station, but that the Niagara Creek cabin was dilapidated (Ives 1982).

A cement slab, probably commemorating completion of the Baker Highway Maintenance Station, is located near the truck shed. Dated "Sept. 7, 1931 A.D.," it is identified as a

"C.H.C" project; the following names are also hand-scribed into the cement: Frank Shore, Jamestown; Phil Alonzo, Cordelia; and H. M. Parker, Stockton.

California Highway Commission marker, embedded on the ground near the truck shed, Baker Station. Although 1931 is shown on this marker, 1932 is scribed in the cement foundation of the generator house.

In 1931, the California Highway Commission applied to the U.S. Forest Service for a permit for a tank and pipe line in the NWNW Section 35, of Township 6 North, Range 20 East. In addition to supplying spring water to the station, summer home permittees on lots in the Baker Station Tract were also to get water from this source by paying a *pro rata* share of the installation cost (Cary 1931). The permit was approved by Stanislaus National Forest Supervisor, J. R. Hall. The State's guidance regarding highway maintenance stations did not highlight the importance of a reliable domestic water supply until the third edition of its *Manual of Instructions, Maintenance*. While earlier editions did not allude to a water supply, the third one not only reminded planners to assure an adequate supply, but also prescribed sampling and testing procedures (CA 1938:314).

Though all indications are that the buildings that comprise Baker Station were completed at least in 1932, the area covered by the Forest Service Special Use Permit may not have been formally enlarged to encompass the full extent of the station until later. The 1921 Stanislaus N.F. Brightman Recreation Area, Baker Station Tract map shows the same shape, size and orientation of the "State Highway Camp," occupying an oversized summer home lot as the undated Baker Station position map. The 1921 map is important but difficult to analyze, since it was first created through a 1921 survey by Stanislaus forest official George Miller. In 1929, it was, in some way, embellished by Forest officials J. R. Hall and C. K. Barker. Then in early 1930, it was initialed by Barker and "R.E.J." As late as 1972, this map was revised, yet still (erroneously) showed the old demarcation of the Baker Highway Maintenance Station. The size of the station as shown on this and the state's "position map," was a rhomboid, 450' at North 36° West by

158’ at 72° 30’ West, comprising 1.61 acres. A 1950 map of the “Maintenance Yard at Baker’s Station” shows an addition of about 2.66 acres to the north end of the yard and a gain in girth in the south end of the station from 158 feet to 260 feet at the short sides (perpendicular to the highway) and from 450 feet to 527.45 feet on the long sides (parallel with the highway) for an approximate total of 5.8 acres.

This photograph of Baker Station is labeled “1931”; it is unknown if this represents the date the photograph was taken or the date that the maintenance station was essentially completed. The landscaping, although minimal, would suggest a slightly later date.
Landscaping remained minimal at Baker. Unlike most state highway maintenance stations, Baker was not fenced. Imported landscaping was limited to a few rock-lined pathways and encirclements at the base of some of the pines, with iris within the circle of rocks and at the entrances to the residences.
Courtesy of California State Archives

Haigh recalled that, before the new maintenance station was completed in 1930 or 1931, the Sonora-Mono Road in this sector—from about Mill Creek to Sonora Pass—was earthen. To keep track of maintenance and improvements, Route Tuo(lumne) 13, which was the designation for what later became Highway 108, was divided into sections. For example, Section 10Tuo13C, indicated that the piece of road in question was in District X, Tuolumne County, State Route 13, Section C. Beginning with Section C of State Route 13, at the foot of the Twain Harte Grade, the route in District X was all in mountainous, forested territory. The portion of the route for which the Baker Station crew was responsible was 47.4 miles long. It began at Long Barn, Section E, and ended at Sonora Pass, Section H; the Sierra Nevada summit at Sonora Pass is also the line separating Tuolumne and Mono counties. From Sonora Pass, eastward, the highway was maintained by District 9 crews, headquartered in Bishop (Gandolfo 2002; CA State 1963). Baker Station was located at Mile Post (MP) 57.3, designated in State Highway

documents as in 10Tuo13H. Between 1925 and 1938, Sections A through D, 26.6 miles, were graded, including surfacing on all but Section D (Sweetser 1939:1).

SECTION	MILE POST BEGIN	MILE POST END	MILES IN SECTION
E	20.187	30.164	9.9
F	30.164	45.137	14.9
G	45.137	57.332	12.2
H	57.332	66.972	9.6

Excerpted from CA State 1963.

Although an inventory of the first maintenance equipment staged at the new Baker Station has not been found, there is a June 1931 reference to a power grader with a ten-foot blade being quartered there. The grader operator worked all summer, as a rule, making one trip from "Bakers Station and grades through, without turning, to Strawberry and turns around and goes back, the round trip consuming approximately three days" (Pierce 1931).

During the construction period for the new Baker Station, there was a great deal of discussion at the state level regarding hours of work for state employees. In 1931, the State Attorney General clarified that state highway maintenance "employees may elect to take one day's rest in seven. This is the employee's privilege and it is not necessarily a duty of the employer to see that the employee must take one day off if he does not wish to do so" (Pierce 1931). Apparently, partly for safety considerations and to encourage employment of more people during the Depression, in 1933, California's legislators passed a law providing for a five-day workweek for State employees. Previously, maintenance workers averaged five-and one-half days per week, with many working six days per week (Bovey 1934).

By at least 1938, workers at maintenance stations who were assigned a cottage were charged a monthly rental fee. The fee was based on a four percent annual depreciation of the cottage, with an additional charge for upkeep, water and utilities. Men who used the bunkhouse were not charged (CA 1938: 317).

Baker Station, Post World War II to 1981

Although Baker Station sporadically housed a few others, by 1948 only one worker and his family were in residence; they occupied the foreman's cabin. By this time, rarely were there more than one or two highway maintenance workers staying in the bunkhouse. As one expressed it, "the day of the gangs had long since past." The superintendent's cottage was intermittently used by Superintendent Lloyd Haigh and his wife, primarily for relaxing and entertaining. This cottage was strictly off-limits to other workers (Gandolfo 2002).

At least by the latter 1940s, acquiring and refrigerating food at Baker Station was not as difficult as one might expect. Bread, meat, and staples could be purchased from the store at Kennedy Meadow Resort, and produce was available once or twice a week from Elbert and Roy Miller. During the summer months, the Millers drove their food-laden truck up the highway, selling to campers, summer home owners, and the few, small businesses along the way; especially between Pinecrest and the Kennedy Resort. The Millers not only brought fresh produce to the area—reportedly good quality, good selection, fair prices—but they also sold treats such as candy bars. The produce was supplied by an Italian, Joe Neglie, who lived in Stockton. Milk was delivered at least once a week by Margaret and Alvin Silva's dairy in Sonora; the truck made stops on its way up the highway to Kennedy's Store. Though it was apparently not in use by the late 1940s, there was a 6' x 11' "icehouse" located behind the dining hall. Reportedly, until late summer, workers on the job near Sonora Pass, gathered ice and snow and brought it back to the semi-subterranean, sawdust-lined icehouse so that meat and dairy products could be refrigerated. Garbage and trash disposal was up to each person, and household waste was commonly taken to a "dump" in the ravine just west of the Clark Fork turnoff, about nine miles away (cf. 1950 Baker site plan; Gandolfo 2002).

By the 1970s, employees working out of Baker Station did not eat their meals there. Instead, provision was made for them to eat at the Kennedy Meadows Resort, two miles away. Entertainment for workers, besides hiking and fishing, was spare: the dining hall/cookhouse was used in the evenings as a card room because it had a large table; the social hall had just a few magazines "that came over on the Mayflower." Though there was a nice fireplace in the social hall, it was seldom used. Douglas Station, a little over a mile away, showed a movie on Saturday nights during the summer tourist season (Gandolfo 2002).

Not all of the buildings that once comprised Baker Station still exist: the 224 square foot gas/oil house, the "icehouse," and the 4' x 7' "meat house" are gone. Moreover, the oil house had originally been adjacent to the highway, at the southeast end of the station, directly across from the former state marker differentiating sections Tuo.-13-G and Tuo.-13-H (cf. undated "location" and "position" maps). The newer gas/oil house, built in 1930, was located near the truck shed and the blacksmith shop. The semi-subterranean "icehouse" was located behind the dining hall, and a small meat house was between the dining hall and the foreman's cabin (cf. 1950 Baker Station map). It is not known when the icehouse and meat house were removed. The gas and oil house, as well as the underground fuel tanks, were removed in the 1980s: Baker reportedly had a 500-gallon gasoline and a 500-gallon diesel tank. A walkway behind the dining hall apparently accessed the icehouse. Baker had two borrow pits: one at the east end of the station and one behind the truck shed. Oil was hauled up the highway to Baker in order to make the macadam; the oil came heated, eliminating the need for heating kettles at the station.

With improved highways and motor travel, the utility of Baker as a highway maintenance station progressively waned. By the 1960s, it was little used as a base for highway maintenance. Long Barn, about 40 miles to the west, was seen as a better, year-round base of operations for this portion of Highway 108. Long Barn effectively met the

requirement, formalized by a 1969 Circular Letter, that prescribed that normal maintenance crew travel time to the farthest point in their section—in this case, Sonora Pass—should be at least 30 minutes and should not exceed 90 minutes (Lagarra 1969:1). In the years between Caltrans' abandonment and final relinquishment of Baker Station, the Stanislaus National Forest established a pattern of intermittent, summer use of a few of Baker's buildings through lease and rental agreements with Caltrans. From 1979 through the fall of 1981, Caltrans used Baker Station for a total of only 19 days. Caltrans formally relinquished Baker Highway Maintenance Station on October 31, 1981, but a quirk of wording in the special use permit spared it from immediate removal or destruction. Because the permit had not been updated since January 3, 1967, it did not contain the customary clause that, upon abandonment of the facilities, the permittee was responsible for removing them. Instead, the permit contained old wording that, upon abandonment, the facilities became the property of the United States (StF var.). The immediate outlook for Baker Station under Forest Service management, however, was to continue its use as housing for summer seasonal workers; then to use it as a potential training exercise for structural firefighting.

From late 1981 through the present, intermittent use continued of some of Baker Station's buildings by the Forest Service and its cooperators; minimal repairs and maintenance have occurred. In 2002, the Stanislaus National Forest and Columbia College collaborated and proposed using Baker Station as an off-campus learning center... where the place—the Sierra Nevada—is integral to the educational experience. The proposed curriculum will focus on natural resource management, using the surrounding area as a laboratory for adaptive management. In developing the proposal, Baker Station's history was studied and its significance better understood. This evaluation of Baker Station's historic significance is the product of that study.

Baker in Perspective: Eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places

From 1930 through 1945, the California Department of Public Works, Division of Highways built no fewer than 66 maintenance facilities on state owned land throughout California (cf. Fisher 2000: working files; list of Caltrans facilities on state-owned land, by construction date; see also Appendix A). In addition, scores of other maintenance facilities, such as Baker Station, were built on leased lands. Within District X--from Woodfords in Alpine County to Fairfield in Solano County--there were 12 state-owned sites and 13 on leased land; seven of the 13 were leased national forest system lands.

Historic photographs are available in the California State Archives for most of these maintenance stations, and they were compared with project files containing recent photographs (cf. Appendix A). Common construction characteristics of the period, from 1927 – 1935, were gleaned from examining historic photographs of maintenance stations. Many of the stations echoed the recommended Colonial revival style with design characteristics such as a front portico porch entrance. Roofs were most often simple gable and cross-gables, and the roofing material was composition asphalt shingles; some such as at Salinas, had wood shingle roofs and more complicated rooflines. Fireplaces

were not uncommon in larger residences, and they most often had exterior brick chimneys, such as at Paynes Creek. There were some unusual chimneys, such as the foreman's cottage at Pacheco Pass: it was built of rock with brick quoining. The house at Willow Creek also had an exterior chimney of rock, as did a station building at Glendora. Wood siding was common, most often being horizontal and lapped, though it was not uncommon to have vertical board and batten, such as at Goodrich, Montgomery Creek, Butte Creek, and the Pacheco Pass bunkhouse. Few highway maintenance station buildings had full front porches. Windows were wood-framed and were primarily multi-light three-over-three (3/3) and double hung; in northwest California, however, many maintenance station windows were 4/4. The front facades of maintenance station residential buildings were primarily parallel with the roof ridge. The station at Boulder Creek employed similar construction materials as those used at Baker Station: horizontal lapped siding, simple eave brackets, double-hung, 3/3 windows. However, Boulder Creek features an asymmetrical portico entry, and the building footprint appears to be nearly square, rather than rectangular.

Baker Station appears to be unique. Although a few California highway maintenance stations have individual buildings or features that date from the 1920s and 1930s, none—except Baker Station—are virtually intact. In comparing the architectural qualities of Baker Station with those of others, Cabbage Patch Highway Maintenance Station in Calaveras County appears to have been most similar to Baker. The most apparent likenesses were the bunkhouse and the separate bath houses for men and women; although the Cabbage Patch bunkhouse was side- instead of end-gabled. The buildings composing the operational area at Cabbage Patch—the truck shed, gas and oil house, and the blacksmith shop—were all virtually identical in appearance to those at Baker Station. (Lim 2001:np. Lim wrote that Cabbage Patch Station was developed in the 1950s; however, historic sources indicate it was a contemporary of Baker Station). A conclusive statement of Baker Station's uniqueness is not possible until a complete survey of all California highway maintenance stations is complete. However, Baker Station is clearly a good example of a now-rare property type (cf. Hupp 5/2003).

Improvements to the highways, themselves, sometimes resulted in the demise of the maintenance stations associated with the early history of the state's highway transportation system. Proceedings from a 1961 conference attended by maintenance engineering staff highlighted this. It was noted that:

> Rapid improvement of many miles of California highways to freeway standards, especially those on interstate highway routes, has required the relocation and construction of a number of maintenance station facilities. This has been particularly true at locations in the high mountain areas where the original two-lane highways are being reconstructed.... Reconstruction of roads in narrow canyons to required alignment and geometric section standards, has, in some cases, required relocation of maintenance yards. [This has resulted in destruction of] the site of the original maintenance station [Baxter 1961:448].

By the time that maintenance stations built during that era were ripe for refurbishing, California had adopted a preference for prefabricated and metal construction. Division of Highways Circular Letter No. 69-110 iterated the state's adjusted policies regarding size of the road maintenance superintendent's territory, travel times, state-furnished housing, and new guidelines for basic foreman maintenance stations:

> [T]he basic standard design for a typical foreman's maintenance station located in a rural area where no zoning restrictions or esthetic requirements exist.
>
> The station will consist of the following prefabricated prepainted metal buildings:
>
> Equipment storage and crew facilities: The standard design will be 32' x 80' with four 20' bays. One bay will provide an office for the foreman, a locker room with toilet and shower facilities, and a storage room for tools…. Equipment doors shall be of the sectional overhead type with a vertical height of 12' 6".
>
> Warehouse: The warehouse should have approximately 720 square feet and shall be built with a raised concrete dock having a width of 12 feet. Eave height shall be 10 feet to 12 feet above the dock…
>
> Gas-Oil House: This building shall be approximately 180 square feet. There shall be two fuel dispensing pumps, one for gasoline and one for diesel. Underground fuel tanks shall have a minimum capacity of 2,000 gallons... [Legarra 1969:1-3].

In 1975, the ability to build and provide state-furnished housing was formally diminished. A Circular Letter from the Division of Highways, Department of Public Works noted that the state would consider providing housing only in situations where outside housing was not available....

> To qualify for state-furnished housing, it must be shown that outside housing is not available within approximately 15 miles of a snow station [and] of 25 miles of a non-snow station.... Separate housing [in contrast with multi-dwelling housing, such as duplexes] is desirable to provide some relief from continued close contact for the men who must work together and live in close proximity.

Standard plans were to be used, with one developed for a station with 18 men or fewer and another design for stations accommodating up to 30 men. The buildings were to be prefabricated, pre-painted, metal construction. The single foreman crew station of 18 men or fewer was to be on a site of about one acre (Datel 1975: 2-4).

In 1977, Caltrans studied the size and effectiveness of its maintenance sections and territories. One of the conclusions was:

> In many cases, elimination of maintenance stations and accepting the resulting increases in travel time is the most cost effective method of operation. Comparison studies indicate an eight to ten maintenance crew is the most cost effective. A four to five person crew is not fully operational [CA 1977: 1].

It is likely that the writing was on the wall before this Division of Highway Maintenance policy and procedure was formalized in 1988, resulting from a 1987 Office of the Auditor General report:

> It is the policy of the Department to avoid establishment of new, additional or replacement State-owned employee housing, and to place existing and new employees in private housing as soon as private housing is available for permanent rental or purchase [CA 1988].

Implementation of these and similar policies from the 1960s through 1980s conspired to eliminate the historic integrity of most of California's depression era state highway maintenance stations. Unlike stations like Cabbage Patch, Baker Highway Maintenance Station survived the state's building consolidation and construction programs of the 1960s, probably owing—in part—to its circumstance of location. Being a substantial development on national forest land and being within ten miles of Sonora Pass made it a convenient base for spring snow removal operations and also made possible the passive continuation of its intermittent use. Such use created a low profile for Baker Station, since there were few to no demands for repair and maintenance funds from the state for the facility. While Baker Station appears to have had a low profile in terms of the state's attentions, its intermittent use and its proximity to the highway, campground, and other recreational uses in the area seemed to have curbed vandalism.

In the 1990s, Caltrans officials embarked on a program to evaluate the historical significance of the department's highway maintenance stations. As of 1998, all the stations in five districts--1, 2, 3, 11 and 12--were evaluated. Of those, only one was found eligible for the National Register of Historic Places: San Diego Highway Maintenance Station in Old Town San Diego (Parks 1991 in Hupp 5/03). Evaluations were completed for many buildings comprising the stations of the remaining seven districts; only two stations of those evaluated were found eligible: Arroyo Seco and Big Sycamore, both in District 7 (Fisher 1998). A few highway maintenance stations, in the process of being relinquished by the state, were evaluated; sometimes resulting in differences of professional opinion. For example, the contract evaluation of archaeological and historical resources in the Sonora Crossroads Project found that the Sonora Highway Maintenance complex was eligible for the National Register for its connection with early twentieth century highway transportation development (Francis and Thornton 1993:10). Caltrans officials, however, countermanded that conclusion,

citing the Ione Highway Maintenance Station in Amador County—built in the 1930s—as a better example of its type (Fisher 1993).

Unlike Baker, neither the Sonora nor the Ione stations had residential buildings. Though not yet complete, Caltrans is continuing to work on evaluating the historic significance of its remaining historic-era highway maintenance stations. The result of an informal review of records pertaining to historic-era highway maintenance stations was that there were a few isolated buildings that still existed as part of the state's highway maintenance station system, but that their integrity as stations was compromised by infill with unsympathetically designed, modern buildings (J. Hupp 2002).

Baker Station reflects a period in California's highway transportation history that is not well represented. Moreover, its association with the Sonora Mono Road enhances its historic importance; the Sonora-Mono Road is California State Historical Landmark 422, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (CA-Tuo-1629H; Criteria A & C), and is designated a Scenic Highway.

Baker Station is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district under criteria A and C at the state level of significance. The period of significance is 1931 to 1941. During this period, Baker Station was the base of the state's maintenance operations for the trans-Sierra Highway 108 between Long Barn and Sonora Pass. This decade also marks a period when major improvements were completed on upper Highway 108, between Cascade Creek and Sonora Pass. Ironically, these and subsequent highway improvements conducted out of Baker Station, were responsible for its decline and eventual abandonment as a highway maintenance station. Such improvements allowed maintenance stations to become spaced farther apart and responsible for longer stretches of highway.

Under Criterion A, Baker Station is eligible for its association with California's transportation history as a rare representative of the state's early network of highway maintenance stations. While California built most of these stations after the 1923 gasoline tax was imposed to fund construction and maintenance of existing highways, "early" is considered to be those stations built through the Depression era.

Under Criterion C, Baker Highway Maintenance Station's buildings form a distinct and recognizable entity. While none of them appear to be individually eligible, all eleven compose a rare surviving example of Depression-era California State highway maintenance stations. Contributing buildings of the Baker Highway Maintenance Station historic district are:

Bunkhouse (building number 1481)
Social Hall (2814)
Worker Cabin (1222)
Dining Hall (1112)
Foreman Cottage (1113)
Superintendent Cottage (1114)

Men's Bath House (1605)
Women's Bath House (1606)
Hot Water Building (2620)
Truck Shed (2222)
Blacksmith Shop/Generator House (2615)

Additionally, a commemorative marker placed by the California Highway Commission in 1932, contributes to the Baker Station Historic District. Baker Station is an early 1930s California Highway Commission, Division of Highways, maintenance station that has undergone little change since its construction. Baker Station is a historic district because it represents a significant linkage of buildings united historically by physical development, and because it meets criteria A and C. That is, Baker Station is associated with an important historic context—the development of California's transportation system—and architecturally, it represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components, though lacking individual distinction, strongly convey their historic context when taken as a whole (*National Register Bulletin 15* rev. 1991:2, 5). Moreover, Baker Station's High Sierra setting and its proximity to Highway 108 are integral to its historic significance.

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Appendix A

California Highway Maintenance Stations, c. 1921 - 1935

	Maintenance Station	County	Year Built	Style Comments
1	Gasquet	Del Norte	1927/1930	Used smaller Marhart plan (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
2	Laytonville	Mendocino	1927	Used smaller Marhart plan (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
3	Leggett	Mendocino	1927/1928	
4	Burlington		1931	Used smaller Marhart plan (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
5	Idyllwild	Riverside	1930	
6	Calabasas	Los Angeles	1931	Bungalow (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
7	Crescent City	Del Norte	1929/1930	
8	Willets	Menodocino	1931	
9	Garberville	Humboldt	1931	
10	Ukiah	Lake	1931/1932	Used larger Marhart plan (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
11	Trinidad	Humboldt	1931	Used smaller Marhart plan (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
12	Eureka	Humboldt	1932/1935	One building is stockade style.
13	Paynes Creek	Tehama	1927/1930	
14	Boulder Creek	Siskiyou	1929	
15	Goodrich		1930	
16	Montgomery Creek	Shasta	1929	
17	Red Bluff	Tehama		
18	Yreka	Siskiyou		
19	Bird Flat		1929	
20	Long Valley	Lassen	1928	
21	Douglas City	Trinity	1928/1932	Used smaller Marhart plan (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
22	Cedarville	Modoc	1930	
23	Wingate Bar	Siskiyou	1931	
24	Fort Goff	Siskiyou	1931	
25	Susanville	Lassen	1932	
26	Crane Creek	Modoc	1932	
27	Redding	Shasta	1932	
28	Lost Creek	Tehama	1932	
29	Butte Creek	Siskiyou	1932	

30	Marysville	Butte	1928	Used smaller Marhart plan (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
31	Williams	Colusa	1929	
32	Chico	Butte	1929	
33	Tahoe City	Placer		
34	Myers	Eldorado		
35	Smith Flat	Eldorado		
36	Eldorado	Eldorado		
37	Truckee	Nevada		
38	Colfax	Placer		
39	Nevada City	Nevada	1929/1930	
40	Butte City	Glenn		
41	Clear Lake Oaks	Lake	1930	
42	Donner Summit	Placer		Included round truck shed.
43	Emigrant Gap	Placer	1931	
44	Yuba Pass	Sierra	1931	
45	Arbuckle	Colusa		
46	Camp Pyramid	Eldorado		Site
47	Willows	Glenn		
48	Gilroy	Santa Clara	1928	Front gable w/ secondary gable porch on facade (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
49	Fruitvale (Oakland)	Alameda	1928	
50	Slippery Rock (Saratoga)	Santa Clara	1928/1929	
51	La Honda	San Mateo	1929	Combined garage and living quarters; siding was vertical corrugated steel with full front porch on gable end with added cross-overhang.
52	Petaluma	Sonoma	1921	
53	Burlingame	San Mateo	1929	
54	Rodeo	Contra Costa	1929	Bungalow (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
55	Hayward	Alameda	1929	
56	Livermore	Alameda	1930	Used larger Marhart plan (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
57	Hopland	Mendocino	1930	
58	Boonville	Mendocino	1931	Used larger Marhart plan (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
59	Pacheco Pass	San Benito	1932	Bungalow (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
60	Schellville	Sonoma		
61	Shandon	San Luis Obispo	1928	Used smaller Marhart plan (cf. Fisher 2000:3)

62	Buellton	Santa Barbara	1928/1930	Front gable w/ secondary gable porch on facade (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
63	Soledad	Monterey	1928	Bungalow (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
64	Santa Maria	Santa Barbara		
65	Santa Barbara	Santa Barbara		
66	San Luis Obispo	San Luis Obispo	1930	Shops have roofline, with steeper half of gable nearly solid window panels.
67	Big Sur	Monterey		Bungalow (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
68	Cambria	San Luis Obispo	1932	Used smaller Marhart plan (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
69	Willow Creek	Monterey	1932	
70	Cuyama	Santa Barbara	1933	
71	Salinas	Monterey		Built i.a.w. plans in the *Ninth Biennial Report* (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
72	Buckhorn Creek			
73	Paso Robles	San Luis Obispo		
74	San Lucas	Monterey		
75	San Simeon	San Luis Obispo		
76	Rose Station	Kern	1929	Bungalow (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
77	Delano	Kern		Bungalow (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
78	Cathay	Mariposa	1928	Bungalow (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
79	Goshen	Tulare	1928	
80	Los Banos	Merced	1928	Bungalow (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
81	Merced	Merced	1928	
82	Madera	Madera	1929	Bungalow (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
83	Lost Hills	Kern	1929	
84	Mid Pines	Mariposa	1929	
85	Fresno	Fresno		
86	Bakersfield	Kern		
87	Tecoyo Lodge	Mariposa	1928	Site
88	Bodfish	Kern	1930	Rented. Used smaller Marhart plan (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
89	Lemon Cove	Tulare	1930	
90	Bear Creek	Mariposa	1931/1933	One of the few stations that included major rockwork. Used larger Marhart plan (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
91	Maricopa	Kern		
92	Bostonia	San Diego	1928	

93	El Rio	Ventura	1928	
94	Boulevard (near Jacumba)	San Diego	1928/1931	Bungalow (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
95	Liebre	Los Angeles	1929	
96	Sangno			
97	Tejunga	Los Angeles	1929	
98	Lancaster	Los Angeles	1929	
99	Saugus	Los Angeles	1929	
100	Guatay	San Diego	1929	
101	Oceanside	San Diego		Bungalow (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
102	Big Sycamore	Ventura	1929/1930	Spanish colonial revival; wood and stucco (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
103	La Crescenta	Los Angeles	1930/1934	Bungalow (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
104	Serra (near San Juan Capistrano)	Orange	1930	Stucco w/ red tile roofs, tile vents, etc. Spanish colonial revival; wood and stucco (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
105	Las Flores	Los Angeles	1930/1931	Stucco w/ red tile roofs, tile vents, etc. Spanish colonial revival; wood and stucco (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
106	Escondido	San Diego		
107	Ludlow	San Bernardino		Vertical and horizontal battens over wallboard exterior sheathing. Tarpaper roof.
108	Amboy	San Bernardino	1930	Vertical and horizontal battens over wallboard exterior sheathing. Tarpaper roof.
109	Baker	San Bernardino		Vertical and horizontal battens over wallboard exterior sheathing. Tarpaper roof.
110	Barstow	San Bernardino	1934	
111	Cronese Lake	San Bernardino	1931	
112	Deep Creek	San Bernardino		
113	Etiwanda	San Bernardino		
114	Hinkley	San Bernardino		Vertical and horizontal battens over wallboard exterior sheathing. Tarpaper roof.

115	Needles	San Bernardino		Vertical and horizontal battens over wallboard exterior sheathing. Tarpaper roof.
116	Newberry	San Bernardino		Used smaller Marhart plan (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
117	Wheaton Spring	San Bernardino		Vertical and horizontal battens over wallboard exterior sheathing. Tarpaper roof.
118	Yermo	San Bernardino		Vertical and horizontal battens over wallboard exterior sheathing. Tarpaper roof.
119	Inyo (near Deep Springs)	Inyo	1927/1929	Houses purchased and moved.
120	Olancha	Inyo	1931	
121	Warren Creek	Mono	1931	
122	Independence	Inyo	1931	
123	Lee Vining	Mono	1932	
124	Homestead	Kern	1932/1933	
125	Bishop	Mono	1933	
126	Conway Summit	Mono	1933	
127	Crestview		1933	
128	Fairfield	Solano	1929	
129	Baker	Tuolumne	1931	Dining hall with cottages on either side; shake roofs; cottage east of dining hall clad with board and batten.
130	Cabbage Patch	Calaveras	1930	
131	Altaville	Calaveras	1921	
132	Stockton	San Joaquin	1932	
133	Palowalla	Riverside		Vertical and horizontal battens over wallboard exterior sheathing. Tarpaper roof.
134	Panorama	Los Angeles	1930/1932	
135	Goffs (Joffs)	San Bernardino		Vertical and horizontal battens over wallboard exterior sheathing. Tarpaper roof.
136	Helendale	San Bernardino	1930/1931	Vertical and horizontal battens over wallboard exterior sheathing. Tarpaper roof.

137	Westmoreland	Imperial	1928	Vertical and horizontal battens over wallboard exterior sheathing. Tarpaper roof.
138	San Hills	Imperial	1928/1932	
139	Panorama Point	San Bernardino	1928	Built i.a.w. plans in the *Eighth Biennial Report* (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
140	Fillmore	Ventura	1933	
141	Los Alamos	Santa Barbara	1933	Site
142	Glendora	Los Angeles		
143	Desert Center	Riverside		Vertical and horizontal battens over wallboard exterior sheathing. Tarpaper roof.
144	El Centro	Imperial	1928	
145	Fawnskin	San Bernardino	1930	
146	Essex	San Bernardino	1926/1929	Main building appears to be sided with wood; 2 cabins appear to be sided with tarpaper, pinned with vertical battens.
147	Running Springs Park	San Bernardino	1932	
148	Oasis	Riverside	1929	
149	Indio			Vertical and horizontal battens over wallboard exterior sheathing. Tarpaper roof.
150	Carl Inn	Tuolumne		
141	San Diego	San Diego		Spanish colonial revival; wood and stucco (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
152	Borland		1928	Used smaller Marhart plan (cf. Fisher 2000:3)
153	Arroyo Seco	Los Angeles	1930	Spanish colonial revival; wood and stucco (cf. Fisher 2000:3)

Style comments from photographs of highway maintenance station structures, dated 1927 – 1935, reviewed by P. Conners. California Archives, F3778:1364, Box 9 of 40, Location VB462.

Timeline Notes

1864	Completion of Sonora-Mono Wagon Road, in October
1879	Greenbury C. Baker opened Baker Station as a stage stop and summer resort
1901	Sonora-Mono Wagon Road brought into the California highway system
1911	California Highway Commission (CHC) formed
	July 20: Report on Special Use Permit by USFS in behalf of State of California, local road superintendent for corral around existing barn at Bakers Station; recommended no fee be charged. Also noted as extant and under permit was a 10'x12' bunkhouse, located on the south side of the Sonora-Mono Road (NWNW of SW, Sec. 35, T6NR20E). Noted existing, free, SUP for a camp site issued to the same applicant (State of California)
1921	Highway Department/Bureau of Highways renamed the Division of Highways
1923	CHC formally identified two maintenance station sites within the Stanislaus National Forest in the upper elevations of the Sonora Pass Road: One at Niagara Creek and one at Bakers Station. Both were already *defacto* highway maintenance sites on the StF
1924	Increased demands made necessary the addition of four additional highway districts, bringing the total to 10
1931	Forest Supervisor Jesse R. Hall issued a Special Use Permit to the State of California, Division of Highways for Baker Highway Maintenance Station (January 15). It had no written termination date, and no new permits were ever issued, although it was amended three times, with the last one dated January 3, 1967. (If the permit had been updated, a clause would have made the permittee responsible for removal after abandonment. However, the active permit stated that, upon abandonment of the facilities, they became property of the US.) (In the Position Statement for Baker Station Maintenance Camp Abandonment, Rosenbaum/Hahn, 1981, in SO Facility Records for Baker 5304.)
	Ruling from State Attorney General regarding the workweek for state highway maintenance workers that "employees may elect to take one day's rest in seven. This is the employee's privilege and

	it is not necessarily a duty of the employer to see that the employee must take one day off if he does not wish to do so" (Pierce 1931)
1933	District X boundaries were reconfigured and its headquarters moved from Sacramento to Stockton
	State law passed providing for a 5-day workweek for State employees; maintenance workers had previously averaged 5.5 days per week, with many working 6 days per week (Bovey 1934)
1935	An additional highway district was created, bringing the total to 11
1947	Significant organizational change to the Division of Highways
1973	Division of Highways eliminated and its functions assumed by the Department of Transportation
1978	California Highway Commission eliminated as of July 1
1979-1981	CalTrans used Baker Station for official business for only 19 days each of these three years prior to abandonment. The FS leased or rented some of the cabins for 30-60 days each summer to house seasonal employees.
1981	Caltrans formally relinquished Baker Highway Maintenance Station on October 31