

## ICONIC ST. HELENA FARMHOUSE

Purchased by paint and glass magnate WP Fuller in 1872 and remodeled in 1874. Fuller bought the home on advice of his physician to spend more time in the country. Originally purchased as a summer home, Fuller and his family quickly fell in love with the property, so much so that his wife and six children ended up staying in St. Helena full time. WP was an extremely busy man as his company was the largest paint, glass, and oil company on the west coast. Due to his business, he would spend the work week in San Francisco but always returned to St. Helena every weekend. Fuller and his wife Margaret were very involved in the St. Helena community and the home became a focal point for St. Helena art and musical events. A great many concerts were hosted on the home's expansive porch. In another of Fuller's many generousities, legend has it that the little country town was unable to finance a street department, and the deep dust in the roads during the summertime made walking unpleasant and housecleaning a hopeless, endless chore. Without a word to anyone Fuller ordered the latest model watering cart sent up from San Francisco and inaugurated the service of sprinkling the dusty streets himself, one hot Saturday morning

The building that is currently being utilized as washroom and storage has a great history. It is constructed of extremely thick cement and was originally an "icehouse". Legend has it that Fuller liked his cocktails with ice and the only way to get it was to bring your own in. After his first train car full of ice was delivered requests from neighbors, which could not be refused, soon exceeded the supply available, however; so Fuller suggested to his children that they go into the ice business. Mary, Ella, and William Parmer, Jr., eagerly undertook this project. Their father underwrote the venture, but they had the full responsibility of taking orders, keeping books, making collections, and paying bills. The business flourished each summer for several years, and when they finally closed each of the children had a savings account of some two thousand dollars—their first step toward their own fortune.

## The Fuller Mansion

1817 Main Street, St. Helena

By Mariam Hansen

St. Helena Historical Society

William Parmer Fuller (1827-1890) + Margaret Hewitson Fuller(1835-1916)

Children:

Mary Stella Fuller Raynolds (1858–1898)

Wm P Fuller, Jr (1861-1936)

Mrs A H (Ella Fuller) Brawner (1866-1922)

Bertha Agnes Fuller Kinkelin (1868–1912)

Frank Whittier Fuller (1874-1928) died 4-20-28 in St. Helena

George Pope Fuller (1880-1951)

Chain of Title (Partial)

1916 Fuller Mansion was sold to George E Bangle

1924 Owned by Samuel S Small

1927 Small sells to Capt H B Tomkin

1936 Capt H B Tomkin

1951 Fred A Wright

1964 Pearl R. Wright to Kenneth & Pauline Granger

1971 Granger to Peter & Susan Edelen

Wm Parmer Fuller lived in St. Helena as early as 1879 on Main Street near Elmhurst. The house transferred out of the family in 1916.

**W. P. Fuller & Co.** traces its origins to the pioneer firm of Fuller and Heather which began in 1857 in Sacramento. The firm was established when William Parmer Fuller (1827-90) went into partnership with Seton Heather, a young Englishman.

The firm advertised itself as being "Importers and Wholesale Dealers in Paints, Oils, French Window Glass, Brushes, Varnishes, Turpentine, Glue, Gold Leaf, Artists' Materials, etc."

In 1862 Fuller and Heather moved to San Francisco. Heather remained in Sacramento managing what would become a branch operation, while Fuller established the headquarters of the business in San Francisco. By 1867, Fuller and Heather was doing so well that it had outdistanced one of its major competitors in the area, Oliver & Co., and was close on the heels of a second, Cameron, Whittier & Co. That same year the three firms considered merging into a joint stock company as a result of competition from English manufacturers who were undercutting the California paint market by setting low rates. D. J. Oliver pulled out of the

negotiations but William Franklin Whittier (1832-1919), the surviving member of Cameron, Whittier & Co. eventually decided to form a partnership with Fuller. Fuller bought out Heather's interest in Fuller and Heather, and the new company, **Whittier, Fuller & Co.** was formed January 1, 1868. The merger made the company the largest dealing in paints, oils and glass on the Pacific coast.

In the succeeding years the company expanded its operations. In 1873 it began manufacturing paints on the Pacific coast by helping to finance the Pacific Rubber Paint Company. Two years later, the company built a white lead and color works in the San Francisco bay region. In addition, the company established branches in Oakland (1876), Portland, Oregon (1883), Los Angeles (1885), San Diego (1886), Stockton (1890), and Seattle, Washington (1892). They also became the largest importers of glass on the Pacific coast and maintained their mirror-making operations, which had been their first important manufacturing enterprise.

In **1890 when Fuller died**, Whittier offered to buy out Fuller's interest in the business, but Mrs. Fuller refused. The resulting dissension between Whittier, and Mrs. Fuller and her eldest son William P., II (1861-1936) led to a decline in the business.

After an unsuccessful attempt at a reconciliation between Whittier and Fuller, in which a new company was organized with Whittier, Fuller, and F. N. Woods under the same company name, The Fuller family bought out Whittier's and Wood's interest in 1894. Thus, the pioneer firm of Whittier, Fuller & Co. was dissolved and succeeded by W. P. Fuller & Co. The new firm concentrated on paints and glass, having sold its oil business in 1895 to the Standard Oil Co. with whom it had engaged in a bitter struggle for several years.

William P., II became the president of the new firm, and on his retirement in 1905 due to ill health, was succeeded by I. F. Littlefield. Littlefield had been employed by Whittier, Fuller & Co. in 1880 as a bookkeeper and had become the first secretary of W. P. Fuller and Co. He remained president until his death in 1924.

Other Fuller family members also joined the firm. In 1891 Frank W. (1874-1928) came on board and in 1906 followed his mother, Margaret Fuller, as vice president. In 1900 George Parmer Fuller (1880-?), the youngest son, entered the firm, becoming the secretary in 1906 and the treasurer in 1910.

Fuller's business plan was simple. 'What the world needed,' according to *A Fuller Life* and H.B. Fuller, Sr., 'was a convenient, economical, strong adhesive--an adhesive so versatile that homemakers and manufacturers could both use it.' His equipment was also simple: an iron kettle and the family's wood-burning stove. Soon Fuller concocted a wet, flour-based paste with which he was satisfied. He then began selling the mixture in small batches to local paperhangers, who were generally glad not to have to make their own glue. As the Fuller brand name gained recognition, Fuller realized his business required outside capital to sustain growth. The company was incorporated when three Minneapolis lawyers agreed to invest a total of \$600. Thereafter, Fuller Manufacturing Company marketed its glue to a wide variety of customers, including flour mills, shoe companies, box manufacturers, bookbinders, printers, and households. The company also made and sold laundry blueing and did a brisk business in ink for the city schools. By 1888, the company, which was really just Fuller serving as jack-of-all-trades, added its first employee, Fuller's oldest son, Albert. Two years later the company moved into its own manufacturing facility, where Albert assumed primary responsibility for filling orders and discovering new formulas while Harvey generated more revenues by expanding his sales areas.

In 1892 the company acquired a Minneapolis competitor, The Minnesota Paste Company, for \$200. Although several decades later such acquisitions would become regular occurrences, Fuller meanwhile was destined to grow by internal development, particularly through a succession of inventions by the founder that greatly expanded both its product line and its manufacturing capabilities. In late 1893 Harvey successfully produced Fuller's Cold Water Dry Wall Cleaner, intended for use on wallpaper (at that time it was customary to clean walls twice yearly, but existing cleaners tended to decompose under warm conditions), and applied for a patent. The item was in wide production by the following spring and became enormously popular. The elder Fuller's next invention was Fuller's Cold Water Dry Paste, which became even more successful than Fuller's Cleaner. Because it was packaged dry, without the added weight of water, the product could be shipped at lower cost, saving both the manufacturer and the customer money. In addition, Fuller's Paste was remarkably easy to work with, and advertisements boasted that 'a child can mix and use it.' By 1898, Fuller Manufacturing was posting annual sales of \$10,000. By 1905, the company was not only shipping its paste and cleaner to both coasts, it also had entered markets in England, Germany, and Australia.

One setback for the firm, however, was the lack of an obvious successor to the post of president, for Albert and Roger, Fuller's middle son, both left the business. Furthermore, Fuller's youngest son, Harvey, Jr., was more inclined to a career in art than manufacturing. Nevertheless, upon his graduation from the University of Chicago in 1909, Harvey, Jr., joined the company full time and made an immediate impact by bolstering advertising and creating the first comprehensive catalog of Fuller products.

Increasing its workforce to include an experienced bookkeeper, a stenographer, and a sales manager, Fuller Manufacturing entered the 1910s prepared for heightened growth. In 1915 the firm reincorporated as H.B. Fuller Company and issued stock valued at \$75,000. World War I, already underway, was to be the primary impetus for Fuller's short-term growth. With the engagement of American troops came the need for shipping mass quantities of food overseas.

U.S. canneries were ready to comply but had a need for a quality adhesive that would speed the labeling process. Fuller filled that need and prospered. After the war, however, Fuller's sales dropped off and Harvey, Sr., fell ill, dying late in 1921.

It was in 1886 when Harvey Benjamin Fuller began dabbling in glue, figuring that the world needed a convenient, economical, strong adhesive--an adhesive so versatile that both homemakers and manufacturers could use it. By 1887, Fuller had settled in St. Paul, Minn., founded the company that is his namesake, and continued to seek new opportunities for his adhesives.

Convenient, economic, effective, and versatile products that meet customer needs. A hundred years later, H.B. Fuller is sticking with that philosophy and using today's technology to leverage what we've learned along the way.

Here are some of the highlights:

- Fuller, working in an iron kettle on the family's wood-burning kitchen stove, creates a flour-based wet wallpaper paste. St. Paul paperhangers who, until that time were forced to make their own, are delighted with the convenience.
- "Why pay freight on water?" Wet paste was a heavy commodity, expensive to ship. With his usual ingenuity, Fuller creates and markets a dry paste that can be sent more cheaply to distant customers. By 1905, customers in England, Germany, and Australia are willing to pay the cost of shipping to purchase Fuller's premium dry paste and new wall cleaner.
- Fuller anticipates the needs of feeding the troops fighting World War I, and begins manufacturing glue used by the canning industry as it packaged rations for soldiers overseas. This market becomes a major source of company business years later.
- Custom concoctions are created for discriminating customers during the 1920s: Special Tin Paste for the Northwest Metalware Company of Minneapolis; Special Bottle Labeling Gum for the Rex Company of Duluth, Minn.; Cold Pick-up Gum for the Gedney Company of St. Paul.



HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

(State use only)  
 Ser \_\_\_\_\_ Site \_\_\_\_\_ Mo. \_\_\_\_\_ Yr. \_\_\_\_\_  
 UTM UTM See #1 0 \_\_\_\_\_ NR 3 SHL \_\_\_\_\_  
 Lat \_\_\_\_\_ Lon \_\_\_\_\_ Era \_\_\_\_\_ Sig \_\_\_\_\_  
 Adm \_\_\_\_\_ T2 \_\_\_\_\_ T3 \_\_\_\_\_ Cat \_\_\_\_\_ HABS \_\_\_\_\_ HAER \_\_\_\_\_ Fed \_\_\_\_\_

IDENTIFICATION

1. Common name: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Historic name, if known: Fuller Place
3. Street or rural address 1817 Main Street  
 City: St. Helena, CA ZIP: 94574 County: NAPA
4. Present owner, if known: Peter & Susan Edelen Address: same  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_ Ownership is: Public  Private
5. Present Use: residence Original Use: residence  
 Other past uses: \_\_\_\_\_

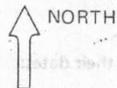
DESCRIPTION & SIGNIFICANCE

The Fuller family, known for their Fuller Paint Company, kept this comfortable country house at the northern end of Main Street which was open country well into the early 1900s. At the corner of Elmhurst Ave. and Main St. on a hill rising above the street, the residence reflects the early character of this neighborhood on the outskirts of the town in the late 19th century. The house, a 2 1/2 story vernacular building with its gable end to the street is rectangular in plan with the characteristic Greek Revival placement of windows and door to the side evident. Note the fine bracketed shelf hood above the second story windows. The gable roof has exposed stylized rafters. A veranda sweeps around three sides which was added in the early 1900s. Siding is shiplap as most common. A large watertower stands to the rear of the house. Elmhurst Avenue, once Brewery Lane, connects Main Street with Spring Mountain Road,

7. Locational sketch-map (draw and label site and surrounding streets, roads, and prominent landmarks):

SEE DISTRICT MAP #2

UTM (St. Helena Quad)  
 10/545450/4262240  
 10/546040/4262360  
 10/546640/4261440  
 10/546700/4261620

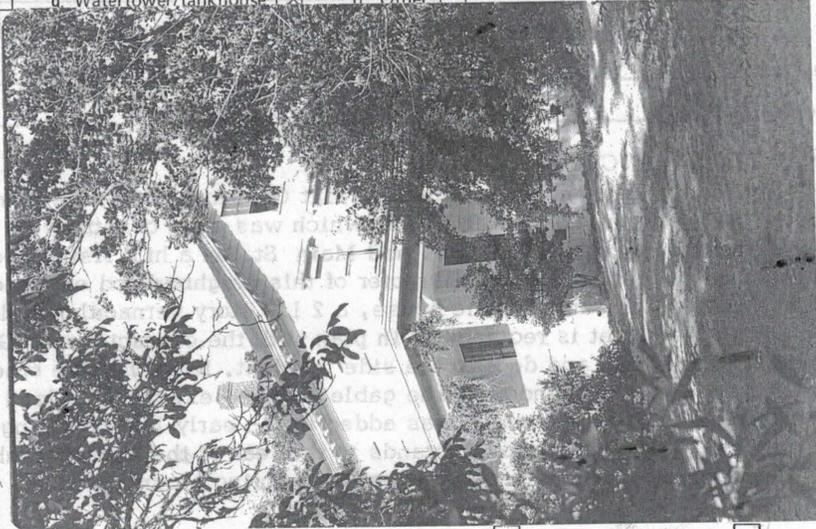


8. Approximate property size:  
 Lot size (in feet) Frontage \_\_\_\_\_  
 Depth \_\_\_\_\_  
 or approx. acreage 1.56
9. Condition: (check one)  
 a. Excellent  b. Good  c. Fair   
 d. Deteriorated  e. No longer in existence
10. Is the feature a. Altered?  b. Unaltered?
11. Surroundings: (Check more than one if necessary)  
 a. Open land  b. Scattered buildings   
 c. Densely built-up  d. Residential   
 e. Commercial  f. Industrial   
 g. Other
12. Threats to site:  
 a. None known  b. Private development   
 c. Zoning  d. Public Works project   
 e. Vandalism  f. Other
13. Date(s) of enclosed photograph(s): #60JM32 7-78

NOTE: The following (Items 14-19) are for structures only.

14. Primary exterior building material: a. Stone  b. Brick  c. Stucco  d. Adobe  e. Wood   
f. Other
15. Is the structure: a. On its original site?  b. Moved?  c. Unknown?
16. Year of initial construction 1890 This date is: a. Factual  b. Estimated
17. Architect (if known): \_\_\_\_\_
18. Builder (if known): \_\_\_\_\_
19. Related features: a. Barn  b. Carriage house  c. Outhouse  d. Shed(s)  e. Formal garden(s)   
f. Windmill  g. Watertower/tankhouse  h. Other  i. None

PHOTOGRAPH



21. Main theme of the historic resource: (Check only one): a. Architecture  b. Arts & Leisure   
c. Economic/Industrial  d. Exploration/Settlement  e. Government  f. Military   
g. Religion  h. Social/Education

22. Sources: List books, documents, surveys, personal interviews, and their dates:

Interview, Starr Baldwin, July 1978  
Sanborn maps, 1899, 1910

23. Date form prepared: 8-25-78 By (name): Napa County Historic Resources Survey  
Address: P.O. BOX 702 City NAPA, CALIF. 94558 ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: (707) 255-1836 Organization: NAPA LANDMARKS, INC.

(State Use Only)

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

(State use only)  
UTM 11W 5467 0 NR 3\* HL  
Lat \_\_\_\_\_ Lon \_\_\_\_\_ Era \_\_\_\_\_ Sig \_\_\_\_\_  
Adm T2 T3 Cat HABS HAER Fed \_\_\_\_\_  
UTM see #7 \* as part of Fuller Place

IDENTIFICATION

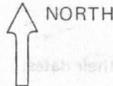
1. Common name: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Historic name, if known: Fuller Place Tankhouse
3. Street or rural address: 1817 Main Street  
City: St. Helena, CA ZIP: 94574 County: NAPA
4. Present owner, if known: Peter & Susan Edelen Address: 1817 Main Street  
City: St. Helena, CA ZIP: 94574 Ownership is: Public  Private
5. Present Use: \_\_\_\_\_ Original Use: tankhouse/watertower  
Other past uses: \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIPTION & SIGNIFICANCE (see also Fuller Place)

A rapidly disappearing part of the rural and town landscape is the tankhouse or watertower. Well into the mid-20th century the tankhouses were a common part of the landscape and were found throughout the communities in Napa County. Though the tankhouses took many shapes, many designed to complement the adjoining residence, this shape is most common. Note the square room on a wide but tapering base with a hip roof. There are windows in each side, doublesash with six-over-six panes and molded trim similiar to that used in the house nearby.

7. Locational sketch map (draw and label site and surrounding streets, roads, and prominent landmarks):

SEE DISTRICT MAP #2  
UTM (St. Helena Quad)  
10/545450/4262240  
10/546040/4262360  
10/546640/4261440  
10/546700/4261620



8. Approximate property size:  
Lot size (in feet) Frontage \_\_\_\_\_  
Depth \_\_\_\_\_  
or approx. acreage 1.56
9. Condition: (check one)  
a. Excellent  b. Good  c. Fair   
d. Deteriorated  e. No longer in existence
10. Is the feature a. Altered?  b. Unaltered?
11. Surroundings: (Check more than one if necessary)  
a. Open land  b. Scattered buildings   
c. Densely built-up  d. Residential   
e. Commercial  f. Industrial   
g. Other
12. Threats to site:  
a. None known  b. Private development   
c. Zoning  d. Public Works project   
e. Vandalism  f. Other
13. Date(s) of enclosed photograph(s): #60JM36 7-78

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f. Other
15. Is the structure: a. On its original site?  b. Moved?  c. Unknown?
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19. Related features: a. Barn  b. Carriage house  c. Outhouse  d. Shed(s)  e. Formal garden(s)   
f. Windmill  g. Watertower/tankhouse  h. Other  adjacent residence i. None

PHOTOGRAPH



21. Main theme of the historic resource: (Check only one): a. Architecture  b. Arts & Leisure   
c. Economic/Industrial  d. Exploration/Settlement  e. Government  f. Military   
g. Religion  h. Social/Education
22. Sources: List books, documents, surveys, personal interviews, and their dates:  
Interview, Starr Baldwin, July 1978  
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