

(LANDMARKS)

AMENDING ARTICLE 10 OF THE CITY PLANNING CODE, PART II OF CHAPTER II OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE BY ADDING APPENDIX F DESIGNATING THE LIBERTY-HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT

Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

Article 10 of Part II, Chapter II of the San Francisco Municipal Code (City Planning Code) is hereby amended by adding Appendix F to read as follows:

SECTION 1. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES. The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that the area known and described in this ordinance as the Liberty-Hill Historic District contains a number of structures having a special character and special historical, architectural and aesthetic interest and value and constitutes a distinct section of the City. The Board of Supervisors further finds that designation of said area as an Historic District will be in furtherance of and in conformance with the purposes of Article 10 of the City Planning Code and the standards set forth therein, and that preservation on an area basis rather than on the basis of individual structures alone is in order.

This ordinance is intended to further the general purpose of historic preservation legislation as set forth in Section 1004 of the City Planning Code, to promote the health, safety and general welfare of the public.

SECTION 2. DESIGNATION. Pursuant to Section 1004 of the City Planning Code, Chapter II, Part II of the San Francisco Municipal Code, the Liberty-Hill Historic District is hereby designated as an Historic District, this designation having been duly approved by Resolution No. 10266 by the City Planning Commission.

SECTION 3. LOCATION AND BOUNDARIES. The location and boundaries of the Liberty-Hill Historic District shall be as designated on the Liberty-Hill Historic District Map, the original of which is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors under File 90-852 which Map is hereby incorporated herein as though fully set forth.

SECTION 4. RELATION TO CITY PLANNING CODE.

(a) Article 10 of the City Planning Code is the basic law governing historic preservation in the City and County of San Francisco. This ordinance, being a specific application of Article 10, is both subject to and in addition to the provisions thereof.

(b) Except as may be specifically provided to the contrary in this ordinance, nothing in this ordinance shall supersede, impair or modify any City Planning Code provisions applicable to property in the Liberty-Hill Historic District, including but not limited to existing and future regulations controlling uses, height, bulk, lot coverage, floor area ration, required open space, off street parking and signs.

SECTION 5. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE. The Liberty-Hill Historic District is significant as an intact representation of nineteenth century middle class housing and developmental practices. It is one of the earliest residential "suburbs" to be developed in San Francisco, with major development starting in the 1860s and continuing until the turn of the century. Since the fire following the 1906 earthquake was stopped at the Twentieth Street boundary of the District, the District contains examples of all architectural styles prevalent during the developmental period.

The District's houses range in size from the small "workingman's cottages" on Lexington and San Carlos Streets, with their uniform facades and setbacks, to the individually built houses found, for example, on Liberty and Fair Oaks Streets, with varying architectural facades and setbacks. While there are only a few "grand" houses in the District, a number were designed by architects well known in the Bay Area, including Albert Pissis, the Newsom brothers, Charles Shaner, William H. Toepke, Charles Havens, and Charles J. Rousseau.

The "suburban" quality of the Liberty-Hill area is retained to this day. It is enhanced by extensive street tree plantings and the very low incidence of commercial establishments in the residential areas. The great majority of

1 District businesses are on Valencia Street, an historic and unifying  
2 commercial corridor, as compared to the typical San Francisco pattern of a  
3 grocery store or saloon on nearly every corner.

4 The District is significant in its representation of San Francisco  
5 development modes of the period. The San Francisco Homestead Union, the  
6 earliest such organization in the City, owned and subdivided one block in the  
7 District in the 1860s. The Real Estate Associates (TREA), the largest builder  
8 of speculative housing in San Francisco in the 1870s, developed Lexington and  
9 San Carlos Streets as well as a number of other sites in the District. Other  
10 blocks were purchased by real estate developers and sold lot by lot.

11 The initial residents in the Liberty-Hill Historic District comprised a  
12 mix of professionals, laborers and small scale entrepreneurs. There have been  
13 a number of famous residents and visitors to the District, including James  
14 Rolph, Jr., John Daly, Susan B. Anthony and Lotta Crabtree. In addition, the  
15 District is associated with both the last alcalde of San Francisco under  
16 Spanish sovereignty, Jose de Jesus Noe, and the first mayor under American  
17 rule, Washington Bartlett

18 Seventy percent (70%) of all the buildings in the District are Victorian,  
19 with forty-two percent (42%) being Italianate, twenty percent (20%) Stick and  
20 eight percent (8%) Queen Anne. Of the buildings in the District,  
21 approximately one third are architect designed. Overall, one hundred and  
22 sixty-three, or over half of all buildings, are classified as "contributing"  
23 to the Victorian character of the District, while seventy-four are  
24 "potentially contributing" in that reversal of inappropriate alterations could  
25 restore the original character of the buildings.

26 SECTION 6. FEATURES. The exterior architectural features of the said  
27 Historic District that should be preserved are described and depicted in the  
28 Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board's case report with appendix titled  
29 "Liberty-Hill Historic District", adopted January 16, 1985, which is hereby  
30 incorporated herein and made a part hereof as though fully set forth.

1 SECTION 7 ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS FOR CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS. The  
2 procedures, requirements, controls and standards in Sections 1005 through  
3 1006.8 of Article 10 of the City Planning Code shall apply to all applications  
4 for Certificates of Appropriateness in the Liberty-Hill Historic District. In  
5 addition, the following provisions shall apply to all such applications; in  
6 the event of any conflict or inconsistency between the following provisions  
7 and Article 10, those procedures, requirements, controls and standards  
8 affording stricter protection to Landmarks, Landmark Sites, or the Historic  
9 District shall prevail.

- 10 (a) Character of the Historic District. The standards for review of  
11 all applications for Certificates of Appropriateness are set forth  
12 in Section 1006.7 of Article 10. For purposes of review pursuant  
13 to these standards, the character of the Historic District shall  
14 mean the exterior architectural features of the Liberty-Hill  
15 Historic District described in Section 6 of this ordinance.
- 16 (b) Minor Exterior Alterations. A Certificate of Appropriateness  
17 shall be required for the following minor exterior changes if  
18 visible from a public street: awnings, copings, retaining walls,  
19 fences, balustrades and security gates.
- 20 (c) New Construction. New construction on vacant sites shall conform  
21 with the general profile of the District, especially as to scale,  
22 sculptural qualities of facade and entrance detailing,  
23 fenestration patterns and materials as described in Section 6 of  
24 this ordinance.
- 25 (d) Masonry, Brickwork and Stonework. A Certificate of  
26 Appropriateness shall be required for painting previously  
27 unpainted masonry, brick or stone exterior surfaces, for cleaning  
28 such surfaces with abrasives and/or treatment of such surfaces  
29 with water-proofing chemicals. Sandblasting and certain chemical  
30 treatment detrimental to masonry will not be approved.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30

(e) A Certificate of Appropriateness shall be required for use of  
texturizing paint products.

SECTION 8. PAINT COLOR. Nothing in this legislation shall be construed as  
authorization to regulate paint colors used within this District.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
George Agnost  
CITY ATTORNEY

RECOMMENDED:  
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

By *George Agnost*  
Deputy City Attorney

By *Dean L. Macris*  
Dean L. Macris  
Director of Planning

JHM/jg/35648

Board of Supervisors, San Francisco

Passed for Second Reading	§	Finally Passed
	§	
October 7, 1985	§	October 15, 1985
	§	
	§	
Ayes: Supervisors Britt Hongisto	§	Ayes: Supervisors Britt Hongisto
Kennedy Maher Nelder Renne Silver	§	Molinari Nelder Silver Walker
Walker Ward	§	
	§	
Absent: Supervisors Kopp Molinari	§	Absent: Supervisors Kennedy Kopp
	§	Maher Renne Ward
	§	

I hereby certify that the foregoing ordinance  
was finally passed by the Board of Supervisors  
of the City and County of San Francisco

*John Taylor*  
Clerk  
*W. Harrison*  
Mayor

File No.  
90-85-2

OCT 25 1985  
Date Approved

SAN FRANCISCO  
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
RESOLUTION NO. 10266

WHEREAS, a proposal to designate the Liberty-Hill Historic District pursuant to the provisions of Article 10 of the City Planning Code was initiated by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board on January 2, 1985 and said Board, after due consideration, has recommended approval of this proposal; and

WHEREAS, the City Planning Commission, after due notice given, held a public hearing on March 21, 1985 to consider the proposed designation and the report of the Landmarks Board; and

WHEREAS, the Commission believes that the proposed historic district has a special character and special historical, architectural and aesthetic interest and value; and

WHEREAS, the Commission believes that the proposed designation would be in furtherance of and in conformance with the purposes and standards of said Article 10;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the proposal to designate the aforementioned Liberty-Hill Historic District pursuant to Article 10 of the City Planning Code is hereby APPROVED;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the precise location and boundaries; the special character and special architectural, historical and aesthetic interest and value; and the features to be preserved as delineated and described in the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board Resolution No. 299 adopted on January 2, 1985 are hereby incorporated herein and made a part thereof as though fully set forth;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission hereby directs its Secretary to transmit the proposal for designation, with a copy of this Resolution, to the Board of Supervisors for appropriate action.

Lee J. Woods, Jr.  
Secretary

AYES: Commissioners Bierman, Karasick, Klein,  
Nakashima, Rosenblatt and Wright

NOES: None

ABSENT: Salazar

DATED: March 21, 1985



# LIBERTY HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT

# LIBERTY-HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT

## LOCATION AND BOUNDARIES

The Liberty-Hill Historic District consists of 293 buildings, predominantly of the Victorian period, on parts of ten blocks bounded roughly by Mission, Dolores, Twentieth and Twenty-second Streets. It consists of all of Assessor's block 3608, and parts of blocks 3607, 3609, 3617 and 3618. The southern boundary is the pueblo charter line of 1834, drawn by Ensign M. G. Vallejo, commandante of Yerba Buena, and authorized by Governor Jose Figueroa. This line marked the boundary between the pueblo and the county, and remained so until the Consolidation Act of 1856 which merged city and county into one governmental unit. The fire following the 1906 earthquake was stopped at Twentieth Street, resolving the District's northern boundary. The western boundary conforms to a natural topographical plateau, where changes occur in the scale of homes as well as the period of time when most were constructed. The eastern boundary includes the "working-man's cottages" that were part of the same period of development.



HILL STREET FROM VALENCIA, 1890'S. - GREG GARR

## ZONING

Most of the District is zoned residential with commercial zoning on Valencia Street. The residential areas west of Valencia are zoned RH3, while the area east of Valencia is RH2. The commercial zoning on Valencia Street itself is C2.



68 FAIR OAKS STREET



3243-45 21ST STREET

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Liberty-Hill Historic District encompasses a significant representation of nineteenth century middle class housing and developmental practices. It is one of the earliest residential "suburbs" to be developed in San Francisco, with major development starting in the 1860s and continuing until after the turn of the century. Since the fire following the 1906 earthquake was stopped at the Twentieth Street boundary of the District, the District contains examples of all architectural styles prevalent during the developmental period.

The District's houses range in size from the small "workingman's cottages" on Lexington and San Carlos Streets, with their uniform facades and setbacks, to the individually built houses found, for example, on Liberty and Fair Oaks Streets, with varying architectural facades and setbacks. While there are only a few "grand" houses in the District, a number were designed by architects well known in the Bay Area, such as Albert Pissis, the Newsom brothers, Charles Shaner, William H. Toepke, Charles Havens, Charles J. Rousseau and others. (See appendix)



900-02 GUERRERO STREET



986 GUERRERO STREET

The "suburban" quality of the Liberty-Hill area is retained to this day. It is enhanced by extensive street tree plantings and the very low incidence of commercial establishments in the residential areas. The great majority of District businesses are on Valencia Street, an historic and unifying commercial corridor, as compared to the typical San Francisco practice of a grocery store or saloon on nearly every corner.

The District is significant in its representation of San Francisco development modes of the period. The San Francisco Homestead Union, the earliest such organization in the City, owned and subdivided one block in the District in the 1860s. The Real Estate Associates (TREA), the largest builder of speculative housing in San Francisco in the 1870s, developed Lexington and San Carlos Streets as well as a number of other sites in the District. Still other blocks were purchased by real estate developers and sold lot by lot.

The initial residents in the Liberty-Hill Historic District comprised a mix of professionals, laborers and small scale entrepreneurs. There have been a number of famous residents and visitors to the District, including James Rolph, Jr., John Daly, Susan B. Anthony and Lotta Crabtree. In addition, the District is associated with both the last alcalde (mayor) of San Francisco under the Spanish rule, Jose de Jesus Noe, and the first under American rule, Washington Bartlett. (See history)

Seventy percent (70%) of all the buildings in the District are Victorian, with forty-two (42%) being Italianate, twenty percent (20%) Stick and eight percent (8%) Queen Anne. Of the buildings in the District, approximately one third are architect designed. Overall, one hundred and sixty-three, or over half of all buildings, are classified as "contributing" to the Victorian character of the District, while seventy-four are "potentially contributing".



76-86 HILL STREET

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF STYLES

Most Liberty-Hill buildings share unifying characteristics relating to scale, height, orientation, material and extent of detailing. Most of the buildings are moderate in size, with one to three units per building as a rule. Typical Liberty-Hill buildings are two stories high, often with an attic or basement. First floors are usually raised above the street level, allowing easy access to the basement or, as the case may be, the garage. (These raised basements may have saved many San Francisco Victorians from the wrecker's ball, as they convert so easily to garages.) Most houses are oriented with the gable to the street, a typical pattern on narrow city lots. On Italianate and San Francisco Stick styles, the gable is hidden by a false front. Detailing is usually restrained and limited to elaborate doors, windows and cornices. Wood is the dominant construction material and rustic cove siding is the most common facade material. Individual buildings exhibit detailing typical of their own architectural style.

Flat-front Italianates usually have hooded and bracketed doors and windows, typically with three windows across a front. Windows are sometimes curved on the top and brackets usually appear at the cornice. Some houses have quoins at the corners.



3243-45 21ST STREET



10 HILL STREET

Liberty-Hill's slanted Italianates are "classical" examples, probably because so many TREA Italianates remain in the District. First floors have a side entrance and a bay window; second floors have a window above the door, as well as the bay. Doors and windows are hooded and bracketed, windows are often gently curved on top and columns often appear between the windows in the bay. Cornices are bracketed and quoins sometimes appear at the corners of the facade. Corinthian columns grace many doorways and entrances.

Stick buildings show the freedom from classic detail characteristic of Stick buildings elsewhere in the City. Typical details include brackets and dentils (sometimes replacing brackets) at the cornice and bull's eyes and diamonds on panels under the windows in the bay. The general feel of the massing is similar to that of slanted-bay Italianates; so much so, in fact, that the two styles harmonize very well, as can be seen on Hill Street.



3300 BLOCK OF 21ST STREET



00 BLOCK OF HILL STREET

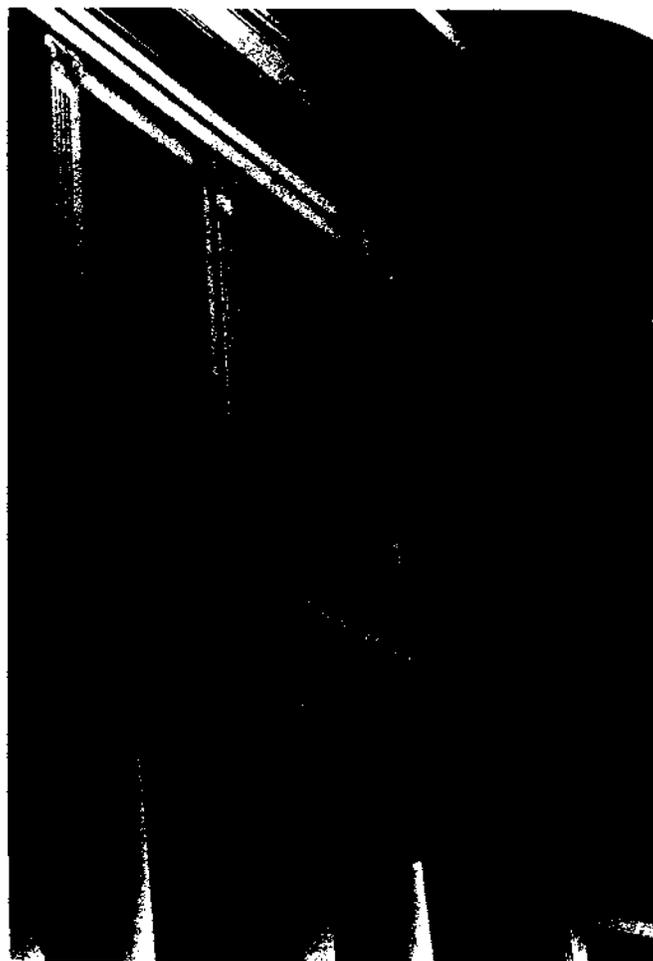
The District has a few representative of later stick styles, occasionally merging with Queen Anne. A significant massing change in later sticks is the exposed gable, often including as gable decoration the sticks that give the style its name. Vertical battens with drips appear on some gables, as do shingles.

The District's Queen Annes continue the progression toward freer use of massing and detail. As is typical of the District, both massing and detail are relatively restrained. Gables and gabled entrance porches often contain sunbursts or other details. Several Queen Annes feature turrets, most notably the three at the top of Fair Oaks Street.

Most post-Victorian buildings continue the scale and range of detailing characteristic of the District. There are representatives of the Classic Revival, Craftsman and Mission Revival styles, and a fair number of Edwardians.



900-02 GUERRERO STREET



850-62 GUERRERO STREET

## HISTORY

The history of the Liberty-Hill Historic District is a history of nineteenth century middle class San Francisco. The history starts in the Mexican era, on December 23, 1845, when Pio Pico, Mexican Governor of California, gave a grant of 4,443 acres to Jose de Jesus Noe. The grant, known as San Miguel Rancho, included the western part of the Mission District and stretched over Sutro Forest to the other side of Twin Peaks. Noe had come to California from Mexico in 1834 with a colonizing party, and he was the last alcalde (mayor) of Yerba Buena (San Francisco) under Mexican rule.

Noe sold 600 acres of his rancho to John M. Horner in January 1854, for \$36,000. The deed was recorded on January 10, 1854; the Recorder's copy still exists:

Comencing at a Small Brook in the Road South of the Mission Dolores Church 400 yards more or less and running up said Brook until it intersects a line of fence being erected by John M. Horner....



68 FAIR OAKS STREET

Horner's Addition, as the developer called it, consisted of 180 blocks, bounded on the west by Castro Street and on the east by the road to the old San Jose Mission (roughly today's Valencia Street). The Liberty-Hill Historic District lies in the middle of Horner's Addition.

John Horner was one of the most colorful characters in a colorful era of the City's history. A native of New Jersey, he and his bride were part of the party of 238 Mormons who came to San Francisco in 1846 with Sam Brannan on the ship Brooklyn. Horner settled near the San Jose Mission in Alameda County and founded the town of Union City. He became the premier agriculturist of California, the first to demonstrate that farm produce could be raised in California in paying quantities. In one year the Horner firm realized \$270,000 profit on the sale of wheat, fruit and vegetables. At California's first agricultural fair in 1852, Horner was honored as the "First Farmer of California." He operated the sidewheel steamer Union between Union City and San Francisco, carrying his produce and passengers. In 1853 he built the first flour mill of any size in California. In 1854, when Horner bought his San Francisco acreage, he was listed in the San Francisco City Directory as being in real estate, with offices in San Francisco.

In the early 1850s the assets of John M. Horner and Co., were estimated at nearly a million dollars, but the financial panic of 1854 ruined the Horners. The crops of 1854 were not sold; no one had any money to buy them, not even potatoes at ten cents per bushel.



3300 BLOCK OF 21ST STREET

Horner is said to have lost everything--house, carriage, even "the watch from his pocket." However, he appears to have held onto his property.

Horner continued to sell his San Francisco acreage after his financial reversal -- sometimes to real estate agents, sometimes to individuals and, on occasion, by the sheriff.

That the Mission District was early perceived to be a desirable residential area is attested to by the fact that the City's first street railroad was built on Valencia Street. Valencia was already important as an early transportation route, for the old San Jose Mission Road roughly paralleled today's Valencia in the Mission District. This was a road connecting Mission Dolores and the Mission San Jose de Guadalupe, founded in 1797, and located in Alameda County.

One of the first paved roads in San Francisco was a toll plank road running out Mission Street to the Mission (1850). On July 4, 1860, service began on the City's first street railroad, running from downtown out Market, on Valencia, and ending at Seventeenth Street. This line, operated by the San Francisco Market Street Railroad Company, was unusual in that the cars were not drawn by horses, as was usual in those days, but by small locomotives known as steam dummies. The firm lasted only a few years; its successor firm discontinued the steam dummies in 1867 and substituted horse-drawn cars. But this early transit on Valencia made this street an inevitable -- and historical -- commercial corridor.



VALENCIA STREET CABLE CAR. BUILT 1882 - BANCROFT LIBRARY

One of the earliest large real estate transactions affecting the District was by the San Francisco Homestead Union, which bought a large tract in Horner's Addition, including the block bounded by Guerrero, Dolores, Twenty-first and Twenty-second Streets. The tract was surveyed on January 30, 1864, and a map was filed at the Recorder's Office on February 24, 1864, at the request of C. S. Capp, one of the officers of the Union.

Homestead associations were popular in San Francisco in the 1860s as a way for persons of modest means to pool their money and purchase large tracts of land to be subdivided into individual building lots. The San Francisco Homestead Union was the oldest of these associations, founded in 1861 when land values were low. The



988-90 GUERRERO STREET



986 GUERRERO STREET

originator of the homestead association concept in San Francisco was said to be Washington Bartlett, one of the founding directors of the San Francisco Homestead Union. Bartlett was a member of the crew of the Portsmouth, which raised the American flag in San Francisco in 1846. He was appointed the first alcalde (mayor) of San Francisco under American rule. Bartlett was also responsible for changing the name of the City from Yerba Buena to San Francisco. It is through Bartlett and Noe that the Liberty-Hill Historic District brings together the end of the Mexican era and the beginning of the American era in San Francisco.

Another early purchase was by Benjamin F. Moulton, a realtor, in 1863. He bought the land bounded by Valencia, Guerrero, Twentieth and Hill Streets, and built a house on his property. He sold the land to real estate developer Aaron Holmes in 1868, who in the next several decades sold the tract off lot by lot.

Holmes' map of the subdivision, filed with the Recorder's Office on June 8, 1871, shows one lot, at about today's 27-29 Liberty Street, with "improvements", on it, presumably Moulton's former house. (An 1894 Queen Anne house is on the site now.) Holmes' map also shows lots with no price tags, and presumably not for sale. One of these lots is today's 45 Liberty, the residence from 1868 on of Marshall Doane, hay press manufacturer. This house still stands.



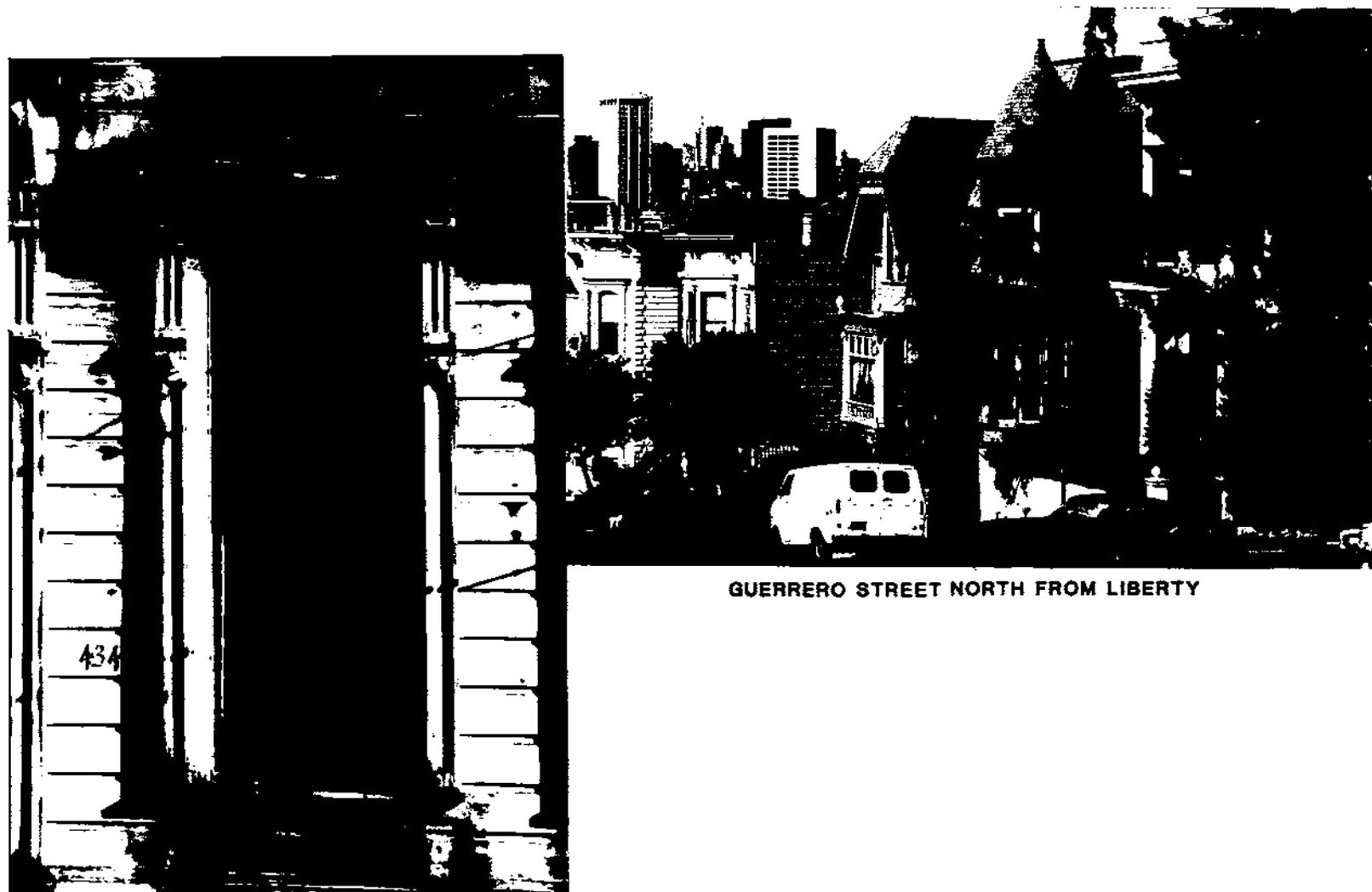
90-92 FAIR OAKS STREET

In February 1868, the Real Estate Circular noted that:

An active demand has been noticeable for lots lying within the boundary of 18th, 26th, Valencia and Castro Streets. This locality is occupied by rolling hills and table land, and heretofore has not been in favor with purchasers... But the perfect nature of its title, the fine view which is obtained from most of the land, and the good drainage which it will have, have lately operated favorably in elevating its prices.

Historian John Young wrote:

Before the close of the sixties....instead of the Mission being a single street with amply spaced houses, in the rear of which cattle grazed in meadows, it had become an indeterminate sort of place practically connected with the more densely inhabited part of the City. There was still plenty of meadow land, but houses were being erected on many streets which were rapidly taking on the shape of thoroughfares....



GUERRERO STREET NORTH FROM LIBERTY

3434 21ST STREET

The real estate activity in the Mission in the late 1860s did not last. The seventies saw a depressed market, due partly to the depression that followed the completion of the transcontinental railroad, and partly to the invention of the cable car in 1873, which opened up areas of the City that were formerly too hilly to develop. In December 1873 the Real Estate Circular noted that although five years prior there had been a rush of buyers "Missionward," by 1873 "the tide had since turned," and the Western Addition, with its new cable car lines and marine views, was the favored site.

1875 marked a change in the mode of development of Liberty-Hill. In that year the Real Estate Associates (TREA) bought the property bounded by Mission, Valencia, Twentieth and Twenty-first Streets. TREA was a land and housing development company owned by William Hollis. Unlike the homestead associations, which sold lots, TREA bought land, subdivided it, and built and sold houses on speculation. TREA claimed to be the largest spec builder of its time, building more than 1,000 houses during the 1870s. Of these, about 100 were built in the Liberty-Hill District, all in 1875-1877. According to Anne Bloomfield, over fifty of these buildings remain in the District, most of them on Lexington and San Carlos Streets. These two streets offer one of the best remaining experiences of a late nineteenth century spec-built environment in San Francisco.

As with cities today, development was tied to good transportation. The effect of the cable car on the Mission's development has been mentioned earlier. The Real Estate Circular continued to lament throughout the seventies that the Mission would never be properly developed until the slow and crowded horse-drawn street cars were replaced by cable cars. Work on the Valencia Street cable car finally began in 1882; the line ran along Market and Valencia to Twenty-eighth Street. By the next year the Circular was able to report that "The Mission shows a larger relative increase of sales, and value, than any other quarter of the City."

In 1872 the Circular had reported that "Between Folsom and Guerrero, Eighteenth and Twenty-third, (there are) now about 300 first and second class residences. Many of the former are not surpassed by any in the City." But in the time of the upsurge in real estate reported by the Circular in 1883, the residents of the Mission were:

people of small, or at least medium means. It is every year becoming plainer that the Mission generally is not to have fine residences. It reached its ultimate efforts in that direction in 1869 and 1870. Large residences are a mistake there.

This observation, despite its somewhat patronizing tone, is an accurate description of Liberty-Hill. There are no grand mansions of the type built on Nob Hill and along Van Ness Avenue in the latter decades of the last century. The Liberty-Hill houses are generally middle-class residences - some larger, for more prosperous owners, others more modest and still suitable, even today, for single-family residency. The significance of Liberty-Hill is, in the words of researcher Anne Bloomfield, that the area is a "capsule history of middle-class housing" from the 1860s on, with examples of every architectural style prevalent during those years.

By the 1880s most of the District was built up. Building activity since 1906 has been limited to replacing older buildings, with post-World War II intrusions limited to a few examples. Liberty-Hill retains the scale and residential character it had a century ago - a remarkable record of stability for a neighborhood located so close to a major urban center.



988-90 GUERRERO STREET

## RESIDENTS OF NOTE

A number of people who were, or were to become, well known lived in the District. James Rolph, Jr., grew up at 3416 Twenty-first Street and went on to become Mayor "Sunny Jim" Rolph of San Francisco (1911-30) and Governor of California (1931-34).

John Daly, for whom Daly City is named, was the proprietor of a 250 acre dairy farm in San Mateo and distributed his products from 1010 Valencia Street. In 1895 he built a large house in the District at 900-02 Guerrero. Following the 1906 earthquake, Daly subdivided his San Mateo properties, selling to those displaced by the catastrophe; this community was incorporated in 1911 as Daly City.

Mathew J. Sullivan moved to 3434 Twenty-first Street when he was seventeen and maintained his residence there for the next thirty years; he also owned other properties in the District. Sullivan was Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court, special legal advisor to Governor James Rolph, State supervisor for the expenditure of \$5,000,000 for the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition, and author of a bill to turn over title to San Francisco of the lands where the Palace of Fine Arts is located. Sullivan was one of sixteen prominent citizens appointed to serve in place of those Supervisors involved in the Mayor Schmitz-Abe Ruef bribery scandals of 1906, and served as volunteer attorney for the prosecution after Francis Heney was shot during the trial.



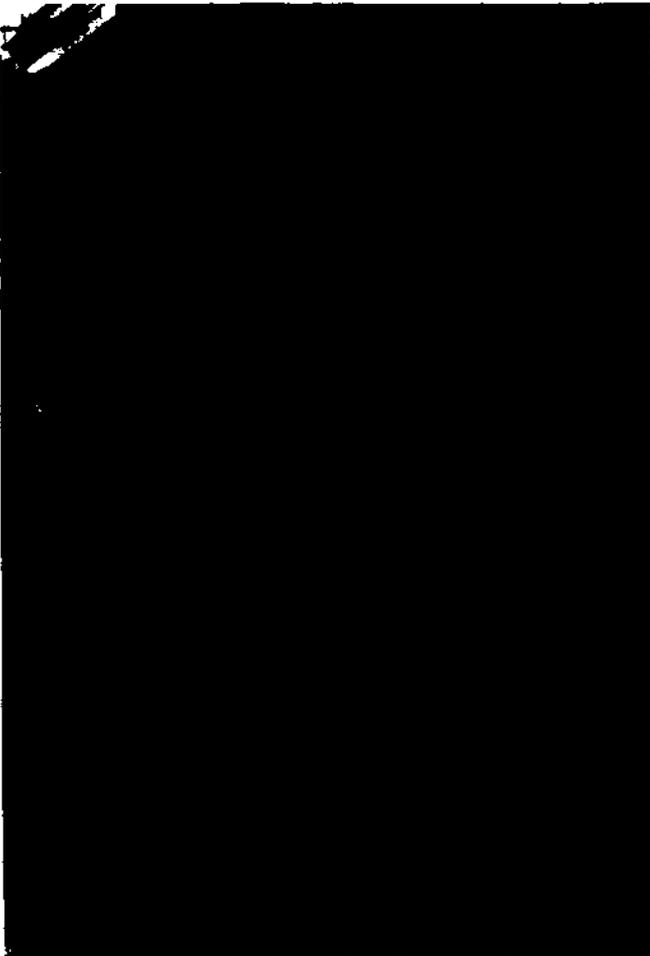
986 GUERRERO STREET

H. H. Birkholm of 3755 Twentieth Street, was a sea captain who went on to become the Danish Consul in San Francisco; following the 1906 earthquake and fire, the Consulate was moved to his home on Twentieth Street and remained there until his death in 1912.

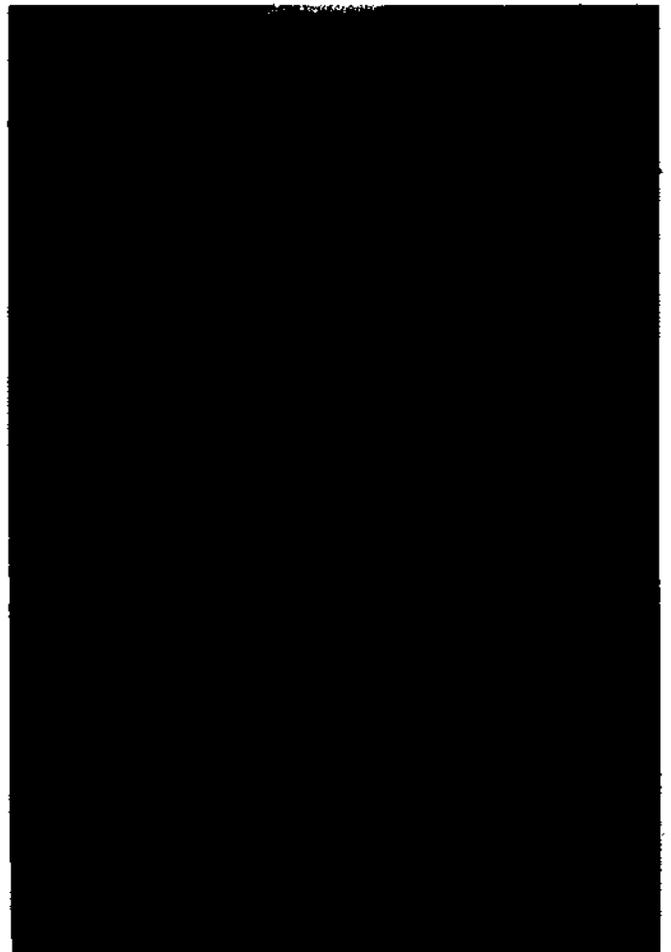
One of America's most famous actresses, Lotta Crabtree, owned and lived at what is now 90-92 Fair Oaks Street. She was the most highly paid American actress of her day until her retirement in 1891.

John McMullen, owner of the grand house at 827 Guerrero, built his San Francisco Bridge Co., into one of the major construction firms in the Pacific, and built dry-docks and bridges at Hunter's Point, Fort Mason, Pearl Harbor, Manilla and in the Pacific Northwest and Canada.

Famous Suffragette Susan B. Anthony attended an organization meeting at 159 Liberty Street on March 27, 1896, the home of Superior Court Judge and Mrs. Daniel J. Murphy.



3326 21ST STREET



3243-45 21ST STREET

## CHARACTERIZATION OF THE AREA BY STREET

The historic and architectural values of Liberty-Hill lie in more than outstanding individual buildings. The District is valuable as a representation of a relatively intact nineteenth century middle-class San Francisco neighborhood. On most blocks, the total urban setting is greater than the sum of the parts. Thus, the most important unit of the District is the block rather than the individual buildings. Because blocks were developed in different ways, the feelings of individual blocks within the District vary widely. This variation in street feel within a common theme gives historic validity to the District. What follows is a block by block characterization of the District streets.

Fair Oaks. Fair Oaks is unusual for a street located so close to a major business center. First, the houses are set back from the street irregularly, so that some of the houses have front yards that would pass as such even in a suburb. Second, Fair Oaks was developed lot by lot, so the architectural style is unusually varied, from classic slanted-bay Italianates to the Queen Annes at the top of the street. Third, most of the houses are detached or semi-detached. The residents have taken advantage of the setbacks to plant greenery, so that Fair Oaks almost seems like a country lane in the city. All this is accomplished at an average density of two or more dwelling units per city lot.



14 FAIR OAKS STREET

68 FAIR OAKS STREET

Liberty Street. The two blocks of Liberty Street offer a street feel similar to that of Fair Oaks. Trees crowd both blocks, with the urbane houses poking their heads through the greenery. Some houses are detached, and there is a some variation in setback. Again, because lots were sold individually, the houses represent as diverse a range of architectural style as those on Fair Oaks, although the memory one comes away with is of the Italianates.

Twenty-First Street. Twenty-first Street between Valencia and Guerrero shares the street feeling of Fair Oaks and Liberty - once again there is a liberal use of street trees. The finest streetscape on this block is the row of San Francisco Sticks at 3341-3375, with their wrought iron railings and gas lamps at curbside.



21ST STREET



LEXINGTON STREET, EAST SIDE



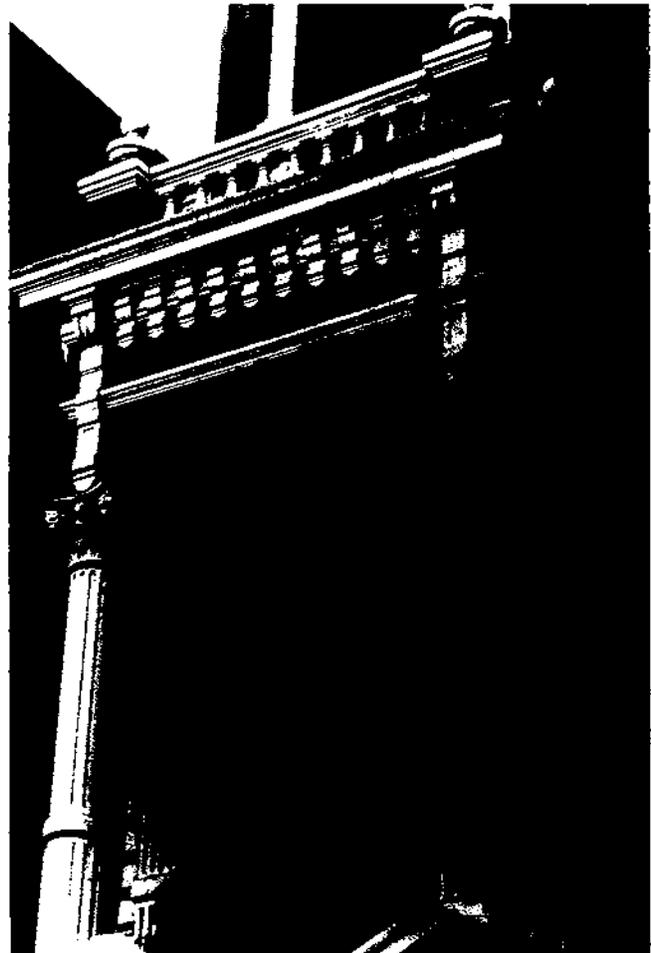
Lexington and San Carlos Streets. Lexington and San Carlos Streets are narrower than others in the District and the houses are smaller. Lexington and San Carlos are two of the most intact nineteenth century speculation built streets in San Francisco, and each offers possibly the best experience of its type: Lexington for flat-front Italianates and San Carlos for slanted-bay Italianates.



LEXINGTON STREET, WEST SIDE



Twentieth Street. Twentieth Street, the northern border of the District, offers the kind of experience one would hope for in a border. Only the houses on the south side of the street are a part of the District. Because of the geography, the south side of Twentieth Street is higher in elevation than the north side. Thus, the Victorians of the south side of the street seem to look down on the "newer" houses of the north side and form an edge; the north side of the street having been destroyed by the 1906 fire.



Guerrero Street. By contrast, Guerrero Street forms the gateway to the District from the north. Although it is a major north-south street, Guerrero is free of commercial intrusions for its entire length through the District. The block between Twentieth and Liberty - the first block of Guerrero as you enter the District from downtown - is distinguished by several outstanding houses, notably the John McMullen house (827 Guerrero) and the house on the corner of Liberty and Guerrero (845 Guerrero), both City Landmarks. These houses alert even the most insensitive commuters that they have entered an area different from the one they were passing through.



827 GUERRERO STREET

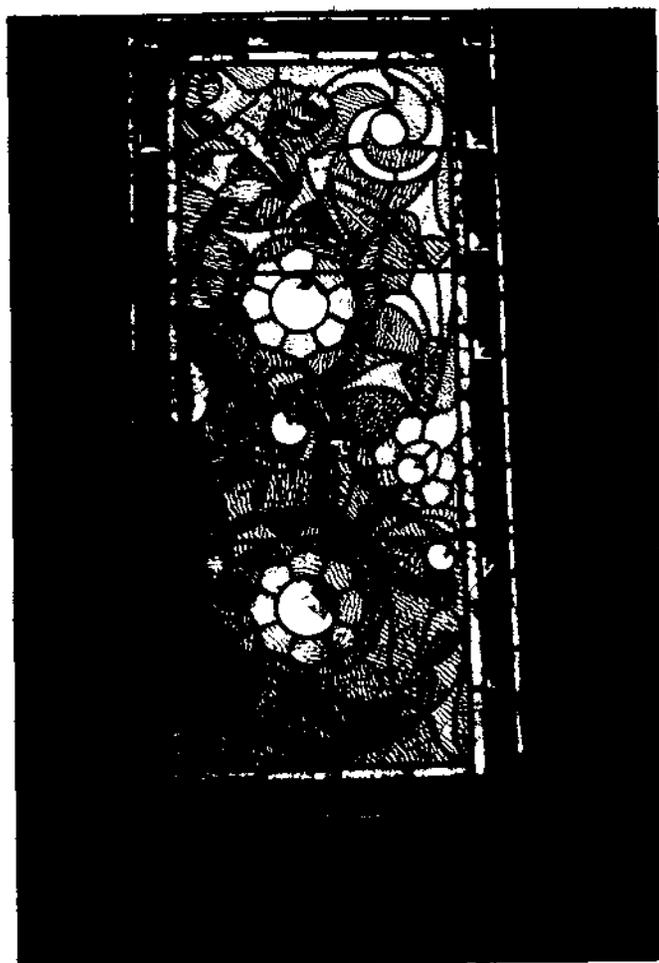
Valencia Street. Valencia, the other major north-south street, is more commercially oriented than Guerrero, but it retains several Victorians, notably some TREA slanted-bay Italianates. Because of its unique mix of support services, Valencia seems somewhat off the beaten tract of late twentieth century commerce, in spite of its commercial nature.

Hill Street. Hill Street offers another feeling, that of an architectural set piece. Hill Street is much less dominated by street trees than are the blocks mentioned above, although the flowering cherry trees put on quite a show when they are in bloom in the spring. As a result, architecture takes the lead. The strongest vision on Hill Street is of the bays - continuous rows



VALENCIA STREET CIRCA 1917 - CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

of them on both sides of the street. Square bays and slanted bays are represented in profusion in a perfect merging of Italianate and San Francisco Stick. Hill Street offers one of San Francisco's most complete visions of a city street of a century ago.



8 FAIR OAKS STREET

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bloomfield, Anne, "One Man's Victorians," California Living Magazine, Jan. 28, 1979
- Bloomfield, Anne, "The Real Estate Associates: A Land and Housing Developer of the 1870s in San Francisco," Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, Vol. 37, No. 1, March 1978
- Bloomfield, Anne, "Liberty Street Historic District District," National Register of Historic Places Inventory - Nomination Form
- Carter, Charles D., Real Estate Circular, San Francisco, various editions
- Corbett, Michael, Splendid Survivors, The Foundation of San Francisco's Architectural Heritage, California Living Books, San Francisco, 1979
- Goucher, Janice, "Liberty Hill Historic District Proposal," Block 3607, Lots 001, 002, 61-74; San Francisco Landmarks Board repository
- Hart, James D., A Companion to California, Oxford University Press, New York, 1978
- History of Washington Township, compiled and written by Country Club of Washington Township Research Committee; Stanford University Press, 1950
- Hittell, John S., A History of the City of San Francisco and Incidentally of the State of California, A. L. Bancroft, San Francisco, 1878
- Hittell, Theodore H., History of California, N. J. Stone & Co., San Francisco, 1897
- Hoover, Mildred Brokke, Rensch, Hero Eugene, and Rensch, Ethel Grace, Historic Spots in California, Stanford University Press, revised edition 1948
- Hunt, Rockwell D., ed., California and Californians, Vol. IV, The Lewis Publishing Co., San Francisco, 1926
- Magee, Thomas, San Francisco Real Estate Circular, San Francisco, various editions
- Patton, Annaleone D., California Mormons by Sail and Trail, Dereret Book Co., Salt Lake City, Utah, 1961
- Recorder's Office, San Francisco: various General Indices, Deed Books and maps
- San Francisco Chronicle, Sept. 8, 1889, San Francisco
- San Francisco City Directories, various editions
- San Francisco Water Department: Service Installation Requests and Tap Records
- Sanborn Maps: various editions
- Society of California Pioneers: Register and Index, extracted from The History of California, Hubert Howe Bancroft; Regional Publishing Co., Baltimore, 1964

Bibliography - page 2.

Thomas, Lately, A Debonair Scoundrel, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, New York, 1962

Watkins, T.H., and Olmsted, R. R., Mirror of the Dream, Scrimshaw Press, San Francisco, 1976

Young, John P., San Francisco: A History of the Pacific Coast and Metropolis, S. J. Clark Publishing Co., San Francisco, 1912

U. S. Coast Survey Maps, various years

## Architects' Biographical Information

### Bolles, Edward Y. (73-75 Liberty)

Had been a member of the San Francisco Chapter AIA (1901). May be the same Edward Bolles who designed Western Pacific Railroad Company building at 526 Mission in 1920.

Biographic Dictionary of American Architecture (deceased), H. F. Whitney, Elsie R. Withey, New Age Publishing, Los Angeles 1956

### Bugbee, Arthur S. (923-27 Valencia)

Born in San Francisco March 28, 1879. Received his California Architect Certificate June 3, 1910.

Index to Architects' Certificates for the State of California. Available at the San Francisco Hall of Records

### Devlin, Charles J. (3639-41 Twentieth Street) and Devlin, Leo J. (3433 Twenty-first)

Charles J. Devlin, (b. 1858, d. 1928) formerly in partnership with brother Leo J., (d. 1933). Native, life-long resident of San Francisco. Specialized in Roman Catholic Church work. One of the Devlin Brothers' noted works was an addition to St. Ignatius Church at Fulton & Potter, said at the time of its dedication in 1914 to be the largest steel frame structure west of Chicago. They also designed St. Patrick's seminary in San Mateo.

Biographic Dictionary of American Architects (deceased), H. F. Whitney, Elsie R. Withey, New Age Publishing, Los Angeles 1956.

### Havens, Charles I. (3356-58 Twenty-first Street)

Admitted to the San Francisco Chapter of AIA in 1901. Died at Kenwood, Calif., April 28, 1916. Credited with the Flatiron Building in 1913 with Havens & Toepke and the Bartlett Doe Building (now Dubbs Building), 1909; and the Maskey Building, 1908.

Biographic Dictionary of American Architects (deceased), H. F. Whitney, Elsie R. Withey, New Age Publishing, Los Angeles 1956.

Splendid Survivors, The Foundation of San Francisco's Architectural Heritage, California Living Books, San Francisco, 1979.

### Newsom, Joseph Cather (3339-42 21st St.)

b. 1857 d. 1930. See Also Newsom, Samuel. Produced buildings throughout Calif. from the late 1870's through the early 1900's.

With his brother, Samuel, produced a 4 volume set of pattern books, Picturesque California Homes along with a number of other pattern books.

The brothers' partnership was stormy but highly productive. They designed buildings for "rich lumber barons, financiers and expanding commercial entrepreneurs" of California's land boom era. Their designs also appeared to home builders and middle income groups. Their most famous building is the Carson Mansion in Eureka.

The Newsoms believed late 19th century buildings should be "up-to-date." They were never originators of a style: J Cather wrote: "There is no disgrace to copy, but the brains have to be extended to know where to put what you have copied."

Samuel & Joseph Cather Newsom, Victorian Architectural Imagery in California, 1878-1908, David Beghard, et al, University of California Press, 1979.

Newsom, Samuel (327 Guerrero)

b. 1848 d. 1908. See Joseph Cather Newsom.

In an article written on the Santa Barbara Mission for the Overland Monthly in 1907, Samuel quotes from Proverbs 22:28 "Remove not the ancient landmark which thy fathers have set."

Immigrated from Canada in 1855

According to Architecture, San Francisco: the Guild: 827 Guerrero was built in 1881 and remodelled in 1890 by S. Newsom. The "moon-gate" entrance is described as "a hallmark of Newsom design".

As a committee member of the California Midwestern Fair held in San Francisco in 1894, he designed the Agricultural and Horticultural Hall, described in California's Architectural Frontier: "whether Moorish, Indian or Franciscan - demonstrated on an immense scale how easily the mission style could become ridiculous."

California's Architectural Frontier, Harold Kirker, Peregrine Smith Publishing, 1973.

Architecture, San Francisco: The Guide, S. Woodbridge and John Woodbridge, American Institute of Architects, 101 Productions, San Francisco, 1982.

O'Brien Brothers & Wilbur D. Peugh (3450 21st St.)

In 1930 O'Brien Brothers & W. D. Peugh designed 130 Montgomery Street, a narrow office building with "modern" styling.

O'Brien with Werner is credited with the 1911 Regency Theater at 1320 Van Ness, a former Scottish Rite Temple

Architecture, San Francisco: The Guide, Sally B. Woodbridge and John Woodbridge, American Institute of Architects, 101 Productions, San Francisco 1982.

Paff & Baur (901-05 Guerrero)

Charles Paff and John Albert Baur together designed the Olympic Club built in 1912 as winners of a 1909 competition. Charles designed the 1912 Orient Building at 332 Pine.

Splendid Survivors, The Foundation of San Francisco's Architectural Heritage, California Living Books, San Francisco, 1979.

Pissis, Albert (3367-69, 3371, 3375 21st St.)

b. 1852 d. 1914. Born in Guaymas, Mexico. Came to California as a boy in 1858, graduated from the local schools; studied in Paris and Rome; entered Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris 1872 as a pupil of Guadet; returned to San Francisco to become a leader in the Western Neoclassic Revival of the Pacific frontier. He is the only known Mexican to practice architecture in California after the province became American.

Responsible in 1908 for retaining the 1896 Joseph Moore facade of the Emporium and designing the present building behind the facade. Among many others, he designed the James Flood Building; The White House; with Wm. Moore, the Hibernia Bank at Market and Jones; the Mechanics Institute, Baker & Hamilton Warehouse at 700-68 7th St., The California Casket Co. (1909) at 965 Mission. Was one of the 5 architects who served on the advisory committee of architectural procedure for the 1915 Exposition.

Architecture, San Francisco: The Guide, Op. Cit.

California's Architectural Frontier, Op. Cit.

Splendid Survivors, Op. Cit.

Toepke, William H. (3343-45 21st St.)

Apprentice of William Mooser (leading American-Swiss architect of the 19th century who co-founded the San Francisco Architecture Society in 1861). In 1891 Toepke was listed in the City Directory as a draughtsman with C.I. Havens with whom he was later to become partners. Admitted to the San Francisco Chapter of AIA in 1901.

"Identified with the profession of architecture for the last eighteen years both in San Francisco and San Mateo Counties. Drew out the plans for the surviving Union High School and other civic buildings and numerous residences in Burlingame, San Mateo and Redwood City. Also an apartment building for the Cuneo Estate and the Doe Estate", History of San Mateo County.

Biographic Dictionary of American Architecture, Op. Cit.

San Francisco City Directory, 1891.

History of San Mateo County, Phillip W. Alexander, Charles F. Hamm, Burlingame, California, 1916.

Rousseau, Charles J. (850-52 Guerrero)

The Rousseau family designed many commercial and residential buildings between 1900 and 1924. Charles J. was in partnership with his father, Charles M., as Rousseau & Son for about four years until 1902 when he left his father's firm to work on his own.

Rousseau, Arthur Francis (probably 899 Guerrero)

Was in partnership at the time of the above building construction (1919) with his brother, Oliver, as Rousseau & Rousseau. Designed and constructed hundreds of commercial and residential buildings in San Francisco.

Shaner, Charles (3755 20th Street)

One of Alameda's leading architects in the 1880's and 1890's - a boom time for Alameda. He was associated with a builder named Brehaut. In contrast to a house built in 1891 and designed by Shaner at 1117 Morton Street (Alameda), described as being "notable for its . . . sparing use of ornament", 3755 20th Street is quite a departure. However, Shaner's own residence in

Alameda is described as having "very elaborate ornamental plasterwork."

Victoria's Legacy, J.L. Waldhorn, S.B. Woodbridge, 1978, 101 Productions, San Francisco, 1982.

Welsh, Michael J. (907-11 Guerrero & 3763 20th Street)

Other buildings attributed to Welsh include two others in our neighborhood, one on Castro and two in "Pacific Heights West".

Victoria's Legacy, Op. Cit.