

1 [Landmark Designation of 1969 California Street (Tobin House).]
 2

3 **Ordinance designating 1969 California Street, the Tobin House, (Assessor's Block**
 4 **Number 0649, Lot Number 016), as a Landmark under Planning Code Article 10; and**
 5 **adopting General Plan, Planning Code Section 101.1(b) and environmental findings.**

6 Note: Additions are *single-underline italics Times New Roman*;
 7 deletions are *strikethrough italics Times New Roman*.
 8 Board amendment additions are double underlined.
 Board amendment deletions are ~~strikethrough-normal~~.

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

10 Section 1. Findings.

11 A. On May 1, 2008, at a duly noticed public hearing, the Planning Commission in
 12 Resolution No. 17590 found that the proposed landmark designation of 1969
 13 California Street (the Tobin House) was consistent with the City's General Plan and with
 14 Planning Code Section 101.1(b). In addition, the Planning Commission recommended that
 15 the Board of Supervisors adopt the landmark designation. A copy of said Resolution is on file
 16 with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. 080720 and is incorporated
 17 herein by reference. The Board finds that the proposed landmark designation is consistent
 18 with the City's General Plan and with Planning Code Section 101.1(b) for the reasons set forth
 19 in said Resolution.

20 B. Pursuant to Planning Code Section 302, the Board finds that the proposed
 21 landmark designation will serve the public necessity, convenience and welfare for the reasons
 22 set forth in Planning Commission Resolution No. 17590, which reasons are
 23 incorporated herein by reference as though fully set forth. A copy of said Resolution is on file
 24 with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. 080720.
 25

Supervisors Peskin, Sandoval
 Planning Commission
 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1 C. The Planning Department has determined that the actions contemplated in this
2 Ordinance are in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (California Public
3 Resources Code section 21000 et seq.). Said determination is on file with the Clerk of the
4 Board of Supervisors in File No. 080720 and is incorporated herein by reference.

5 D. The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that 1969 California Street (the Tobin
6 House), Lot No. 016 in Assessor's Block No. 0649, has a special character and special
7 historical, architectural, and aesthetic interest and value, and that its designation as a
8 Landmark will further the purposes of and conform to the standards set forth in Article 10 of
9 the San Francisco Planning Code.

10 Section 2: Designation. Pursuant to Section 1004 of the Planning Code, 1969
11 California Street (the Tobin House), Lot No. 016 in Assessor's Block No. 60649, is hereby
12 designated a Landmark under Article 10 of the Planning Code. This designation was initiated
13 application of the owner, and affirmed with Resolution No. 623 of the Landmarks Preservation
14 Advisory Board and Resolution No. 17590 of the Planning Commission, which
15 Resolutions are on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. 080720
16 and which Resolutions are incorporated herein by reference as though fully set forth.

17 Section 3. Required Data.

18 (a) The description, location, and boundary of the Landmark site consists of the City
19 parcel located at the south side of California Street, between Gough and Octavia Streets, on
20 Assessor's Block 0649, Lot No. 016, with a street address of 1969 California Street (the Tobin
21 House).

22 (b) The characteristics of the Landmark that justify its designation are described and
23 shown in the Landmark Designation Report adopted by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory
24 Board on March 19, 2008 and other supporting materials contained in Planning Department
25


1 Docket No. 2008.0022L. In brief, the National Register of Historic Places characteristics of
2 the Landmark that justify its designation are as follows:

- 3 (1) Association with the life of Michael H. de Young; and
- 4 (2) Architectural embodiment of the work of a master architect, Willis Polk.
- 5 (c) The particular exterior features that shall be preserved, or replaced in-kind as
6 determined necessary, are those generally shown in photographs and described in the
7 Landmark Designation Report, which can be found in Planning Department Docket No.
8 2008.0022L and which is incorporated in this designation by reference as though fully set
9 forth. In brief, the description of the particular exterior features that should be preserved
10 include, but are not limited to: stucco cladding; gabled roof form with slate shingles; copper
11 chimney pots, flashing, and coping; recessed main entry framed by a Gothic-arched opening
12 at the front façade; stucco panel above the main entry with lion's head ornament; recessed
13 service door at front façade with inset panel and decorative ironwork over glazed, textured
14 glass; two-story angled bay window at the front façade with Gothic-arched, wood-framed, 12-
15 and 14-light casement windows and blind tracery details within the spandrel panels above the
16 first and second floors; tri-partite, Gothic-arched, wood-framed, 12-light casement windows at
17 the second floor of the front façade; Gothic-style scroll and hood moldings at windows and
18 doors on front façade; Gothic half-arch at western end of front façade; leaded glass windows
19 at west and south facades; second- and third-story balconies and copper-capped balustrades
20 at south façade; third-story balcony and copper-capped balustrade at east façade; and
21 decorative concrete lamppost base with inset panel and leaf pendant at front property line.

22 Section 4. The property shall be subject to further controls and procedures, including
23 Certificate of Appropriateness requirements, pursuant to Planning Code Article 10.
24
25

1 APPROVED AS TO FORM:
2 DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

3 By:

4 
5 Mariena G. Byrne
6 Deputy City Attorney

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City and County of San Francisco

City Hall
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

Tails

Ordinance

File Number: 080720

Date Passed:

Ordinance designating 1969 California Street, the Tobin House, (Assessor's Block Number 0649, Lot Number 016), as a Landmark under Planning Code Article 10; and adopting General Plan, Planning Code Section 101.1(b) and environmental findings.

October 7, 2008 Board of Supervisors — PASSED ON FIRST READING

Ayes: 10 - Alioto-Pier, Ammiano, Chu, Daly, Dufty, Elsbernd, Maxwell,
Mirkarimi, Peskin, Sandoval
Excused: 1 - McGoldrick

October 21, 2008 Board of Supervisors — FINALLY PASSED

Ayes: 11 - Alioto-Pier, Ammiano, Chu, Daly, Dufty, Elsbernd, Maxwell,
McGoldrick, Mirkarimi, Peskin, Sandoval

File No. 080720

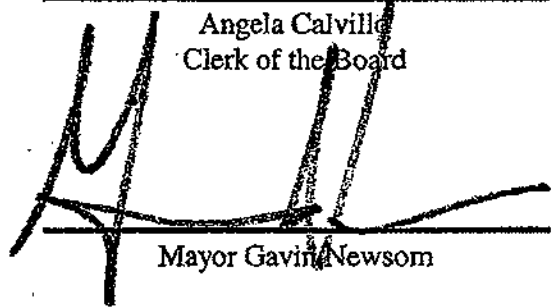
I hereby certify that the foregoing Ordinance was **FINALLY PASSED** on October 21, 2008 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

10/30/2008

Date Approved



Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board



Mayor Gavin Newsom

SAN FRANCISCO
PLANNING COMMISSION
RESOLUTION NO. 17590

ADOPTING FINDINGS RELATED TO THE RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL OF THE LANDMARK DESIGNATION OF THE TOBIN HOUSE (LOCATED AT 1969 CALIFORNIA STREET, ASSESSOR'S BLOCK 0649, LOT 016) AS A SAN FRANCISCO LANDMARK UNDER ARTICLE 10 OF THE PLANNING CODE.

WHEREAS, on January 8, 2008, Brett Gladstone, of Gladstone and Associates, representing the subject property owners, submitted a Landmark/Historic District Designation Application prepared by Karen McNeill, PhD, of Carey & Company, initiating the designation of the Tobin House located at 1969 California Street on Assessor's Block 0649, Lot 016, as a Landmark pursuant to Section 1004.1 of the San Francisco Planning Code; and

Karen McNeill, PhD, of Carey & Company, prepared the landmark designation report for the Tobin House (**Attachment A**), and the Department of Recreation and Park's DPR 532(A) form (**Attachment B**). The property owner, Anthony Meier, reviewed the designation report and supports the designation of the Tobin House as a City landmark. Planning Department staff reviewed the report and prepared comments and opinions for the Landmarks Board; and

The Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, at its regular meeting of March 19, 2008, reviewed the Landmark Designation Report for the Tobin House. The Landmarks Board found that the Designation Report describes the location and boundaries of the landmark site, describes the characteristics of the landmark that justify its designation, and describes the particular features that should be preserved, and therefore meets the requirements of Planning Code Section 1004(b) and 1004(c)(1). That Designation Report is fully incorporated by reference into this resolution; and

The Landmarks Board unanimously adopted Resolution No. 623, in which they recommended to the Planning Commission that they adopt a Resolution recommending that the Board of Supervisors adopt an ordinance to designate the Tobin House as a local San Francisco landmark pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code; and

The Commission held a duly noticed hearing at a regularly scheduled meeting on May 1, 2008 to consider the proposed Ordinance and the Landmarks Board's recommendation.

The Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, in considering the proposed landmark designation employed the National Register of Historic Places criteria and found the Tobin House to be eligible for listing on the National Register under Register under Criterion B (Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past)), as well as Criterion C (Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction); and

The Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board reviewed and endorsed the following description of the characteristics of the landmark which justify its designation:

- a. 1969 California Street is a master architect-designed, three-story plus basement single-family

residence in the Tudor Gothic Revival style. It features sharply sloped slate shingle roofs with heavy copper coping and flashing as well as five partially exposed chimneys topped by clustered copper chimney pots. Gothic details on the façade lend the house character. They include a two-story angled bay with wood 14 and 12 lite, arched casement windows. Scroll moldings surround the windows, and blind tracery extends above the ceiling line of each story. At the second story, just to the west of the bay, is a similar grouping of three pointed-arch casement windows. This façade also features a slightly recessed service door set in a plain pointed arch, and a deeply recessed main entryway set behind a Gothic pointed arch. A panel featuring a lion's head sits above the entry arch. A two-story Gothic pointed half arch completes the western end of the main façade. Character defining features of the west elevation include three leaded glass windows. A two-story bay with diamond-patterned leaded glass arched windows on the first floor, and a third-floor balcony with a copper capped wall comprise the dominant features of the south elevation. The Tudor Gothic style of this house is unique on this block of California Street, while the half arch makes the house unique in all of San Francisco. Just in front of the house, by its easternmost edge, stands a decorative concrete lamppost base. The concrete base, along with the narrow strip of land that currently serves as the driveway to 1969 California Street, is the only surviving artifact of the de Young estate, the residential compound built during the 1880s by one of San Francisco's most influential citizens during the half century spanning 1870 to 1920; and

The Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board reviewed and endorsed the following particular features that should be preserved:

- a. Stucco cladding;
- b. Gabled roof form with slate shingles;
- c. Copper chimney pots, flashing, and coping;
- d. Recessed main entry framed by a Gothic-arched opening at the front façade;
- e. Stucco panel above main entry with lion's head ornament;
- f. Recessed service door at front façade with inset panel and decorative ironwork over glazed, textured glass;
- g. Two-story angled bay window at the front facade with Gothic-arched, wood-framed, 12- and 14-light casement windows and blind tracery details within the spandrel panels above the first and second floors;
- h. Tri-partite, Gothic-arched, wood-framed, 12-light casement windows at the second floor of the front façade;
- i. Gothic-style scroll and hood moldings at windows and doors on front façade;
- j. Gothic half-arch at western end of front façade;
- k. Leaded glass windows at west and south facades;
- l. Second and third-story balconies and copper-capped balustrades at south façade;
- m. Third-story balcony and copper-capped balustrade at east façade;
- n. Decorative concrete lamppost base with inset panel and leaf pendant at front property line; and

The Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board found that the designation of the Tobin House meets the

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Designation of
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required findings of Planning Code Section 101.1 in the following manner:

- a. The proposed Project will further Priority Policy No. 7, that landmarks and historic buildings be preserved. Landmark designation will help to preserve a significant historical resource that is associated with architecture that embodies the work of a master, and that embodies the tenets of the City Beautiful movement.
- b. The proposed project will have no significant impact to the other seven Priority Policies: the City's supply of affordable housing, existing housing, or neighborhood character, public transit or neighborhood parking, preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake, commercial activity, business or employment, or public parks or open space; and,

The Planning Commission concurs with the Landmarks Board's findings and its recommendation of approval of the landmark designation of the Tobin House.

The proposed landmark designation is consistent with the following General Plan Policies:

Urban Design Element

- POLICY 2.4 Preserve notable landmarks and areas of historic, architectural or aesthetic value, and promote the preservation of other buildings and features that provide continuity with past development.
- POLICY 2.6 Respect the character of older development nearby in the design of new buildings.
- POLICY 2.7 Recognize and protect outstanding and unique areas that contribute in an extraordinary degree to San Francisco's visual form and character.

The proposed landmark designation would increase the protection of and outstanding and unique historical resource, thereby helping to better implement the above policies.

The proposed amendments to the Planning Code are consistent with the eight Priority Policies set forth in Section 101.1(b) of the Planning Code in that:

1. That existing neighborhood-serving retail uses be preserved and enhanced and future opportunities for resident employment in and ownership of such businesses enhanced;
The proposed landmark designation will not impact such uses or opportunities.
2. That existing housing and neighborhood character be conserved and protected in order to preserve the cultural and economic diversity of our neighborhoods;
The proposed landmark designation will not negatively impact existing housing or neighborhood character.
3. That the City's supply of affordable housing be preserved and enhanced;
The proposed landmark designation will not negatively impact the City's supply of affordable housing.
4. That commuter traffic not impede MUNI transit service or overburden our streets or neighborhood parking;
The proposed landmark designation will not impede transit service or overburden our streets of neighborhood parking.

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5. That a diverse economic base be maintained by protecting our industrial and service sectors from displacement due to commercial office development, and that future opportunities for resident employment and ownership in these sectors be enhanced;
The proposed landmark designation will not impact the diversity of economic activity.
6. That the City achieve the greatest possible preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake;
The proposed Ordinance would not modify any physical parameters of the Planning Code or other Codes. It is furthermore not anticipated that the proposed Ordinance would result in any building activity and therefore would have no affect on the City's preparedness for an earthquake.
7. That the landmarks and historic buildings be preserved;
Designating this significant historic resource as a local landmark will further a continuity with the past because the character-defining features of the building will be preserved for the benefit of future generations. Landmark designation will require that the Planning Department and the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board review any proposed work that may have an impact on character-defining features. Both entities will utilize the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties in their review to ensure that only appropriate, compatible alterations are made. The proposed landmark designation will not have a significant impact on any of the other elements of the General Plan.
8. That our parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas be protected from development;
The proposed Ordinance would not impact or facilitate any development which could have any impact on our parks and open space or their access to sunlight and vistas.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Planning Commission hereby recommends to the Board of Supervisors that it approve the proposed ordinance; and

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Commission at its meeting on May 1, 2008.

Linda Avery
Commission Secretary

AYES: Antonini, Lee, Moore, Olague, Miguel

NOES: None

EXCUSED: Sugaya

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LANDMARK/HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION APPLICATION

HISTORIC NAME	Tobin House
POPULAR NAME	
ADDRESS	1969 California Street
BLOCK & LOT	0649 016
OWNER	Anthony and Celeste Meier
ORIGINAL USE	residential
CURRENT USE	residential (75%); home office (25%)
ZONING	RH2

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

Check all National Register criteria applicable to the significance of the property that are then documented in the report. The criteria checked is (are) the basic justification for *why* the resource is important.

(A) <input type="checkbox"/>	Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
(B) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Association with the lives of persons significant in our past.
(C) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Embodiment distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
(D) <input type="checkbox"/>	Has yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory.

Period of Significance 1915-1943

Integrity

Despite a few alterations, 1969 California Street bears a high level of integrity in all seven categories: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. It has never been moved and, apart from a few secondary wall repairs and window replacements that mostly cannot be seen from the street, the design remains perfectly intact. Similarly, the singular nature of the structure along this residential street amplifies its historic feeling. Again, although the slate roof and copper chimney pots, flashing, and coping have been replaced, they replicate the original and do not compromise the integrity of materials or the workmanship of the architect's original design or intentions. The surrounding setting has changed significantly, although not within the past sixty years, and the setting of the property itself does not appear to have changed significantly. While only a decorative concrete column and narrow strip of land remain from the estate of M. H. de Young, which used to be located on the adjacent property to the east, this artifact lends integrity of

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association to 1969 California Street with this prominent figure in San Francisco and newspaper history.

ARTICLE 10 REQUIREMENTS SECTION 1004 (b)**Boundaries of the Landmark Site**

Encompassing all of and limited to Lot 16 in Assessor's Block 649 on the south side of California Street, 103 ½ feet east of Octavia Street.

Characteristics of the landmark that justify its designation

1969 California Street is a master architect-designed, three-story plus basement single family residence in the Tudor Gothic Revival style. It features sharply sloped slate shingle roofs with heavy copper coping and flashing as well as five partially exposed chimneys topped by clustered copper chimney pots. Gothic details on the façade lend the house character. They include a two-story angled bay with wood 14 and 12 lite, arched casement windows. Scroll moldings surround the windows, and blind tracery extends above the ceiling line of each story. At the second story, just to the west of the bay, is a similar grouping of three pointed-arch casement windows. This façade also features a slightly recessed service door set in a plain pointed arch, and a deeply recessed main entryway set behind a Gothic pointed arch. A panel featuring a lion's head sits above the entry arch. A two-story Gothic pointed half arch completes the western end of the main façade. Character defining features of the west elevation include three leaded glass windows. A two-story bay with diamond-patterned leaded glass arched windows on the first floor, and a third-floor balcony with a copper capped wall comprise the dominant features of the south elevation. The Tudor Gothic style of this house is unique on this block of California Street, while the half arch makes the house unique in all of San Francisco. Just in front of the house, by its easternmost edge, stands a decorative concrete lamppost base. The concrete base, along with the narrow strip of land that currently serves as the driveway to 1969 California Street, is the only surviving artifact of the de Young estate, the residential compound built during the 1880s by one of San Francisco's most influential citizens during the half century spanning 1870 to 1920.

Description of the particular features that should be preserved

- Stucco cladding;
- Sloping slate roof;
- Copper chimney pots, flashing, coping;
- Deeply recessed entryway, marked by pointed Gothic arch;
- Panel with lion's head;
- Recessed service door with inset panel and decorative ironwork over glazed, textured glass;

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- Two-story angled bay window with arched, wood twelve and fourteen lite casement windows;
- Three arched wood twelve-lite casement windows;
- Gothic style scroll and hood moldings at windows and doors on main façade;
- Blind tracery at the ceiling level between the windows and below the roofline at the projecting bay;
- Pointed Gothic half arch at western end of main façade;
- Leaded glass windows on western and southern elevations;
- Second and third-story balconies and copper-capped balustrades of southern elevation;
- Third-story balcony and copper-capped balustrade at eastern elevation; and
- Decorative concrete lamppost base with inset panel and leaf pendant

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DESCRIPTION



West and North (primary façade) elevations. Carey & Co., Inc.

This three-story plus basement single-family Tudor-style residence is rectangular in plan, with the primary façade facing north. The building is attached to an adjacent brick house at the west, while the east elevation is exposed. The building is wood frame and stucco-clad, with a steeply pitched slate roof.



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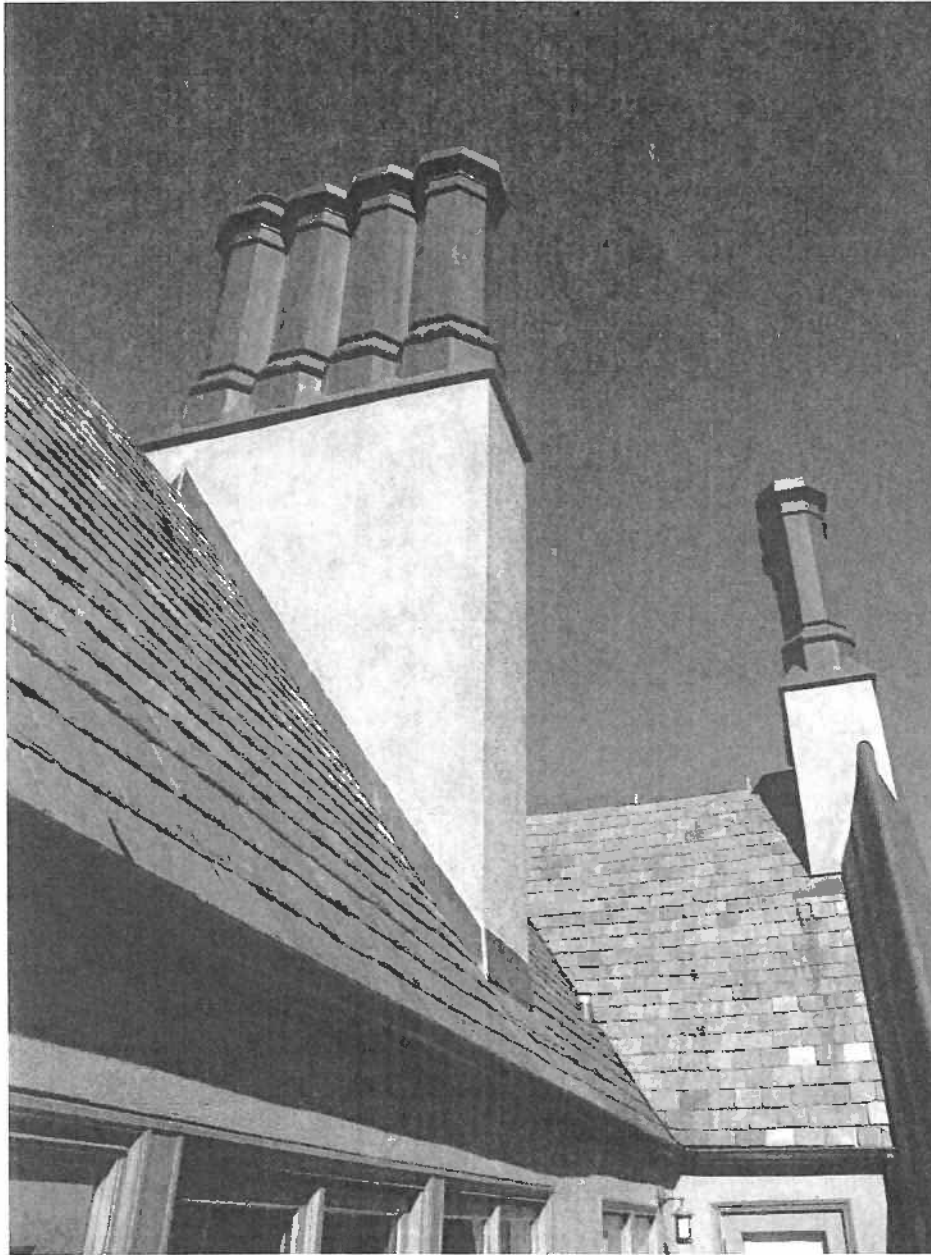
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Slate shingles, copper coping, flashing, chimney pots, from third-story balcony. Carey & Co., Inc.

The roof features two steeply-pitched, parallel side gables separated by a long cross gable. A heavy copper coping outlines the roof edge. Five stucco-clad chimneys project above the roof – one at each end of the side gables and one near the northern end of the cross gable. Clusters of three tall copper chimney pots top each chimney. The parapet connecting the two side gables along the eastern elevation also serves as a railing for a third-story balcony.

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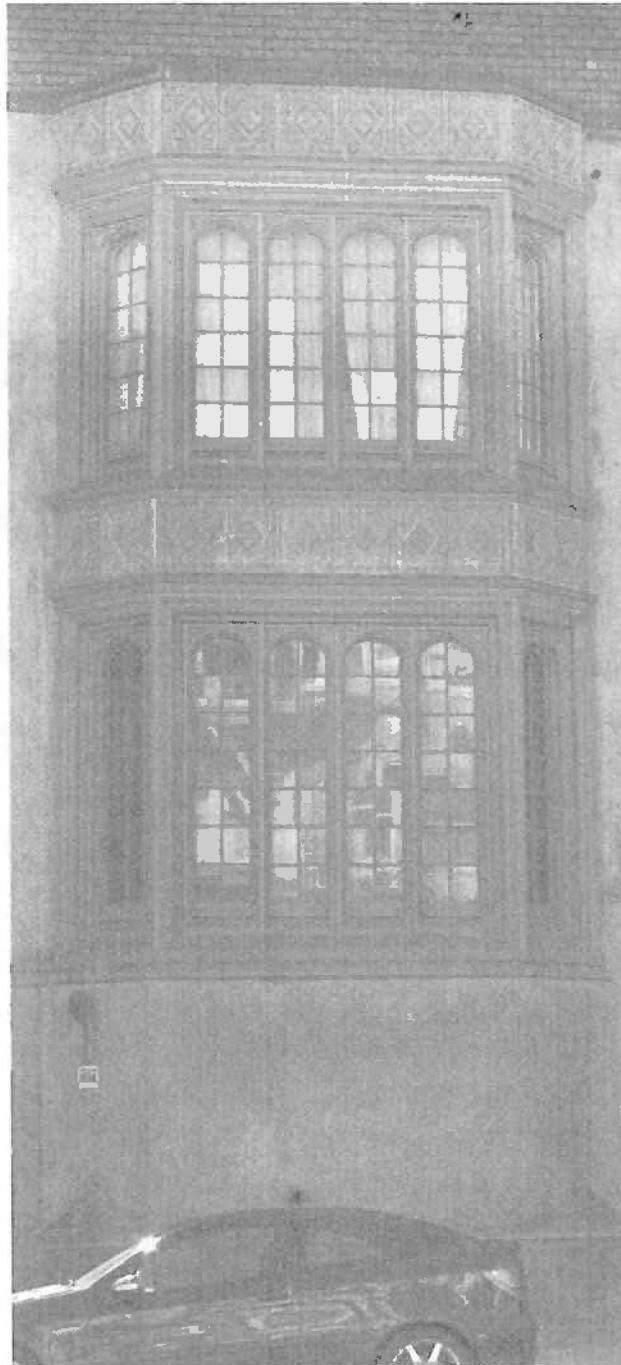
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Full height bay. Carey & Co., Inc.

A full height bay window, standing slightly off-center toward the east, dominates the primary façade.

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Main entrance and half arch. Carey & Co., Inc.

Also prominent are the door openings at the west. These include, at the façade's western edge, a 20-foot tall pointed half arch leading to a pass-through to the rear, and a second pointed archway, approximately twelve feet tall, opening onto the recessed entry.

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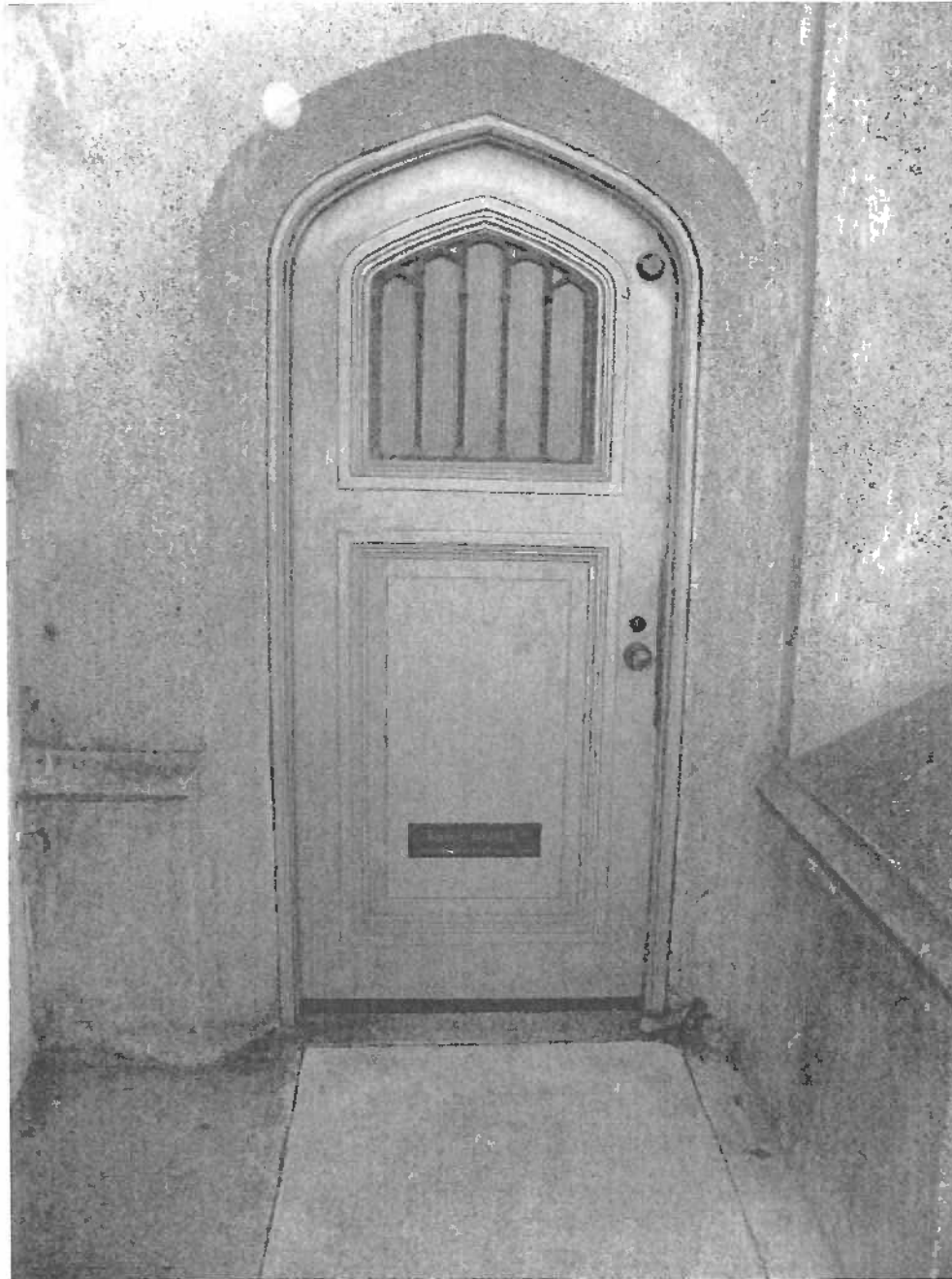
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Service entry. Carey & Co., Inc.

A pointed-top service door, at the base of the façade near the eastern edge, is two-panel, with a decorative iron grille over a glazed upper panel.

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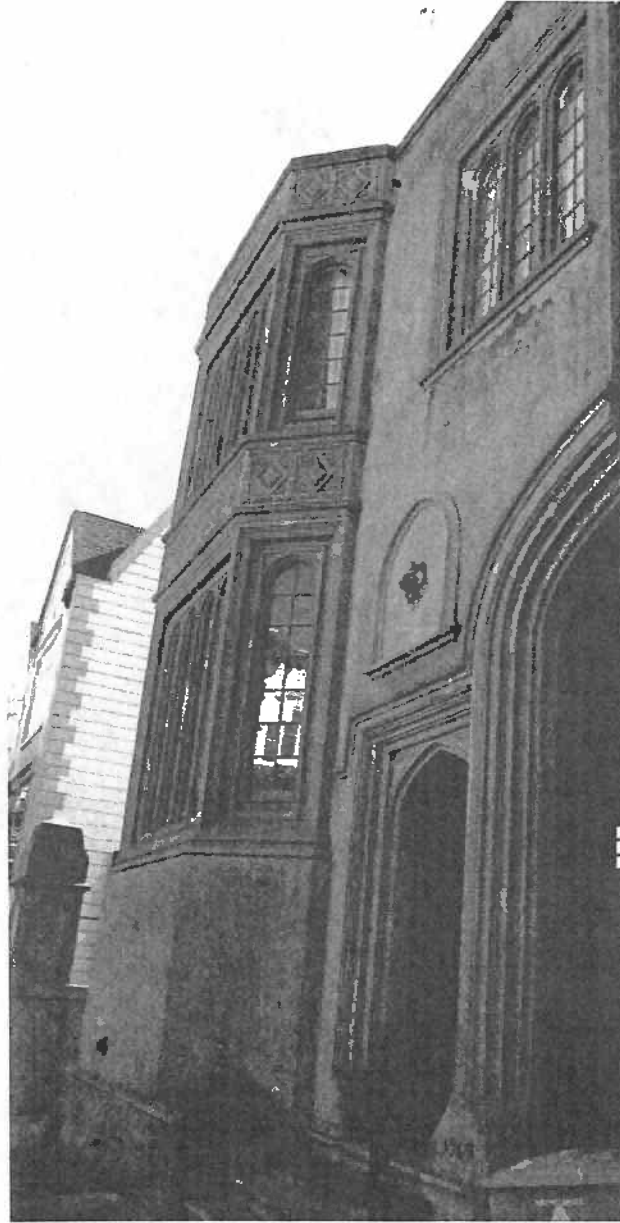
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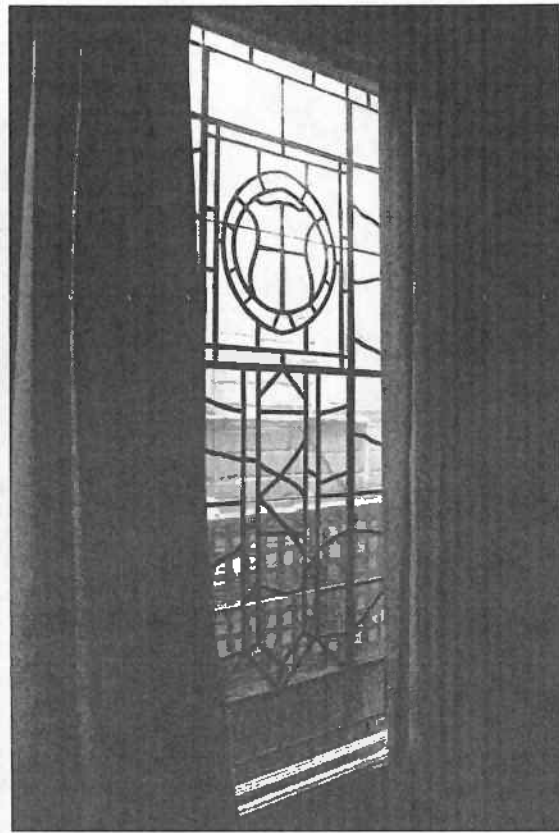
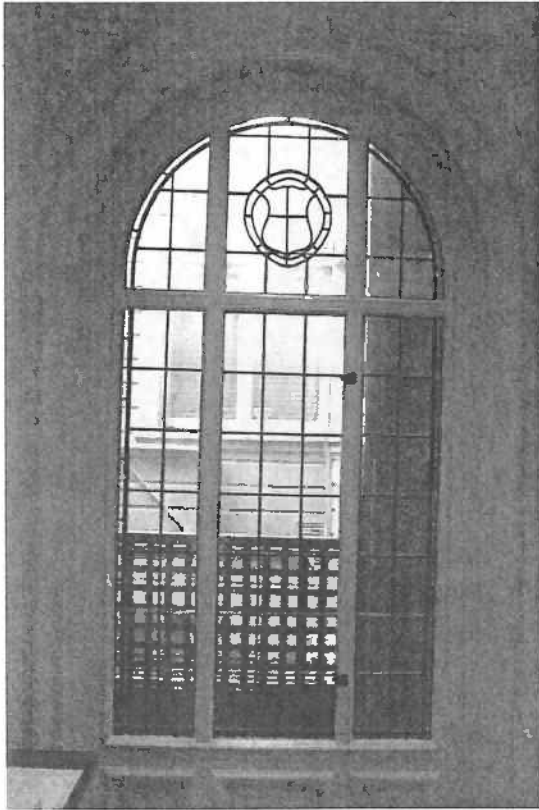
Main façade, featuring slanted bay, ribbon windows, recessed entry, decorative panel, and half arch. Carey & Co., Inc.

Windows occur at the first and second floor of the bay, on all three sides, and at the second floor, to the west of the bay. All are wood arched-top casements; 14 lite at the first floor and 12 at the second. The bay features four casements at the front panel, and one at each of the slanted sides. The western second story window is three-casements wide. Gothic-style scroll moldings surround the window panels and the door openings. At the bay, cast Gothic tracery tops the window bands. A square hood molding tops the main entry doorway, with a cast lion's head set into a molded panel above.

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First-story, west elevation, leaded glass windows. Carey & Co., Inc.

Notable features of the west elevation, which is partially covered by the half-arch pass through, include three decorative leaded glass, fixed windows – two arched and one rectangular.

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South elevation. Carey & Co., Inc.

Bay windows dominate the south elevation. While at the first floor the bay extends most of the building width, at the second, it narrows to form a small balcony at the west side. Copper belt courses outline the tops of the bays, running above the windows. At the first floor, the south face of the bay features a row of five arched single-hung windows replete with lamb's tongue and glazed with diamond-patterned leaded glass. Similar windows light the slanted side panels. Elsewhere on the elevation, including the four at the upper bay, windows are square-topped, clear-glazed, and non-original. A door with a textured glass panel leads to the small second story balcony. The third story has wood fixed windows and a glass paneled double door, which opens onto a balcony extending almost the width of the building. A metal handrail sits atop the copper coping of the balcony wall. To the east of the first-story bay is the single-story addition, featuring French doors with vertical side lights. A copper rainwater leader runs from the third-story balcony to the ground level.

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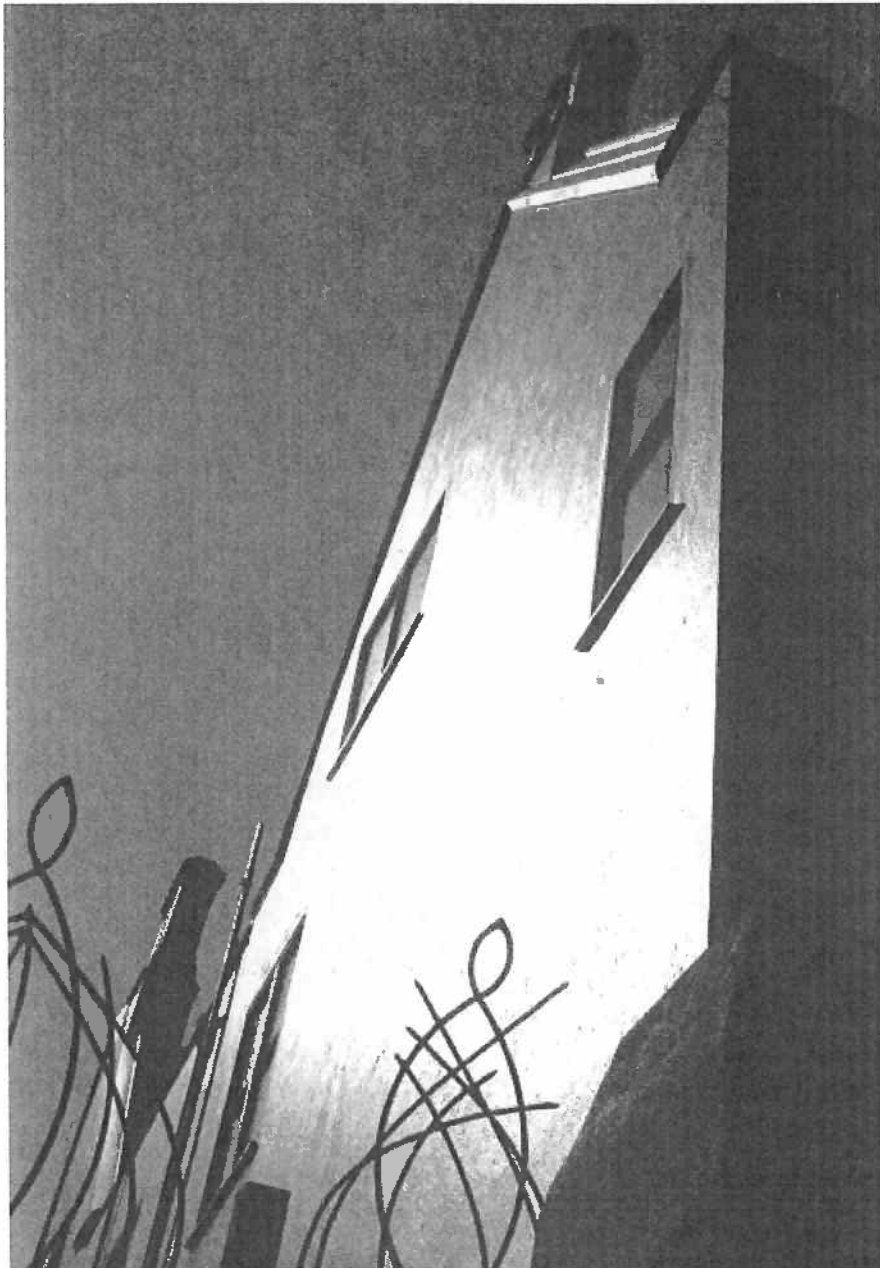
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Windows, east elevation. Carey & Co., Inc.

The exposed eastern elevation is simply-detailed. Windows are one-over-one wood sash with replacement wooden sliders in the side gables. Stairs lead to a door near the front (north) edge.

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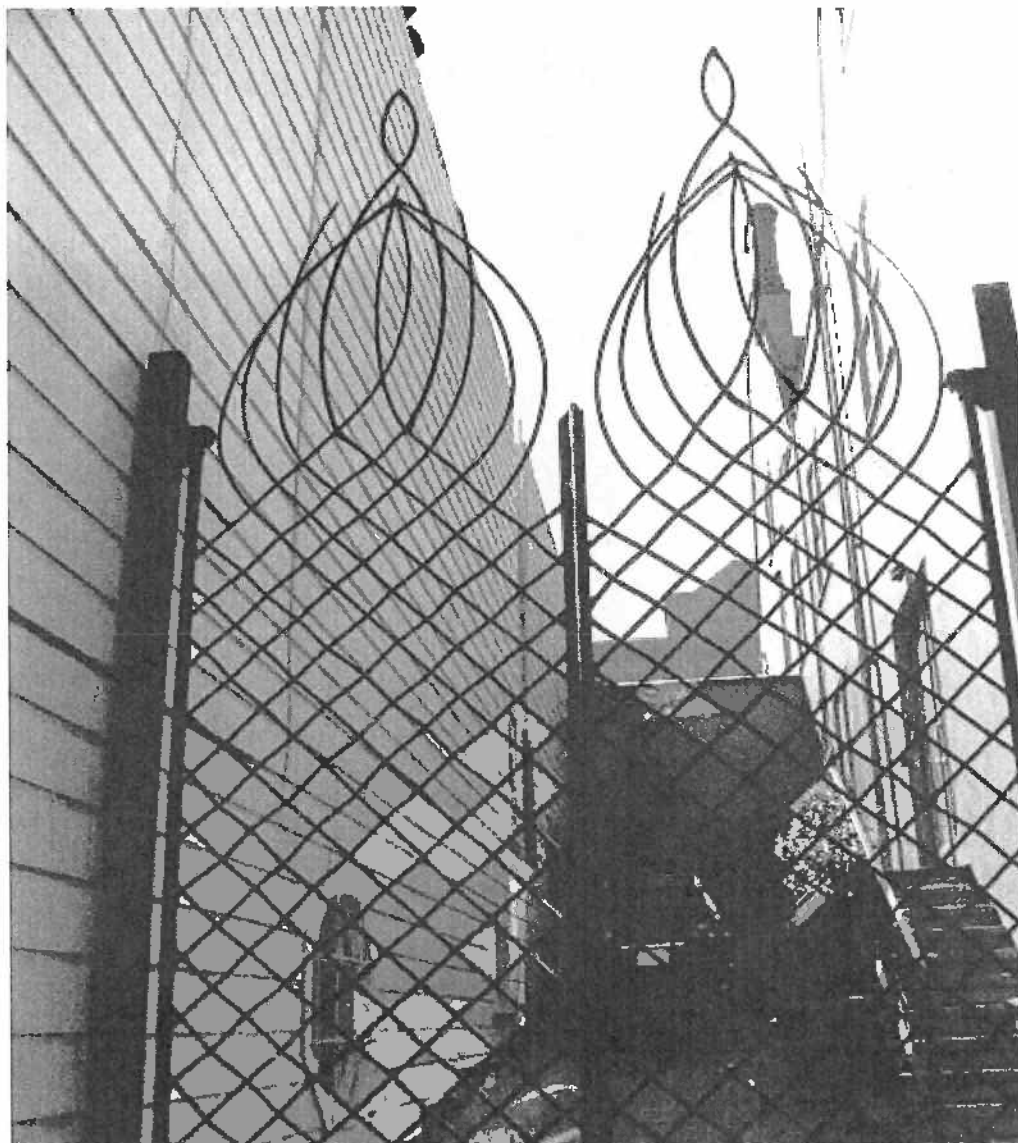
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Single-story extension (left) and east elevation (right). Carey & Co., Inc.

A single-story, one-room deep wing extends from the southern end to the eastern edge of the property line. It features a flat, asphalt-covered roof and a parapet with copper coping and flashing. Permits document that this portion of the house has been heavily modified with new framing, stucco cladding, a parapet, and coping. A once uninterrupted portion of the wall now features French doors that open onto the second-story balcony, at roof of this single-story addition.

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Decorative concrete lamppost base. Carey & Co., Inc.

A concrete lamppost base with a recessed panel and leaf pendant stands on the sidewalk in front and just to the east the house. Over time, a more elaborate cornice, triangular arch, and probably brass or copper candlestick lamppost have been removed.

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The Tobin House, located at 1969 California Street, appears eligible for landmark status under National Register criteria B, for its association with the lives of persons significant in our past, and C, as the work of a master architect. Although built for Constance de Young and Joseph O. Tobin, 1969 California Street stands as the last remnant of the estate of Michael H. de Young, founder of the *San Francisco Chronicle* and leading voice in San Francisco politics, culture, and urban development during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Willis Polk, one of the San Francisco Bay Area's most influential architects of the period, designed the house. It is representative of Polk's penchant for medieval English architecture and restrained use of decoration as panaceas for what he deemed the architectural chaos of San Francisco's late nineteenth-century streetscape. The house also influenced the architectural development of the block during the 1940s and is unique in San Francisco – let alone Polk's oeuvre – for a Gothic-style half arch that leads to a side yard to the west of the house.

PEOPLE

Michael H. de Young (M. H. de Young) purchased lots fifteen and sixteen on block number 649 in San Francisco in July 1911. They are located on the south side of California Street, between Gough and Octavia Streets, directly adjacent to his own estate on lots seventeen through twenty. Technically located in the Western Addition of San Francisco, these lots stand on the boundary line of the Western Addition and Pacific Heights neighborhoods. In August 1911, de Young gave the deed to those lots to two of his daughters, Helen M. Cameron, wife of George E., and Constance M. Tobin, wife of Joseph O. Tobin, an executive at Hibernia Bank and member of one of San Francisco's oldest and wealthiest families. Michael de Young also offered to build homes on these lots for his daughters and their young families, but for years nothing happened. Both the Tobin and Cameron families chose instead to live along the peninsula, in affluent towns south of San Francisco.

M. H. de Young was the patriarch of one of the most powerful and influential families in San Francisco. He arrived in San Francisco from Baltimore with his mother and brother Charles during the Civil War. The brothers founded the *Daily Dramatic Chronicle*, which changed its name to the *Daily Morning Chronicle*, and soon established their dominance in the newspaper industry. By the 1870s their paper was so influential and widely read that the de Youngs could make or break a politician, policy, business deal, or any other matter of importance in Northern California. Though de Young's editorial policies elicited as much ire as they did new subscribers, his paper had become the mouthpiece for the Republican Party by 1880. In 1889 M. H. de Young reinforced his newspaper's power by commissioning the first steel-frame sky scraper on the West coast, a ten-story building designed by the Chicago firm of Burnham and Root, and located at the corner of Kearny and Market Streets. He had also accumulated enough wealth to build the family mansion in one of the most fashionable neighborhoods of 1880s San Francisco, at the crest of California Street in the Western Addition. Taken by the Chicago World's Fair of 1893, a showcase of Beaux-Arts architecture and urban planning, as well as art, technology, consumption, and cultures of the world, de Young spearheaded efforts to stage a similar fair in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park in 1894.

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Not coincidentally, the resulting Midwinter Fair helped to raise the value of the tracts of land that de Young owned in the largely undeveloped sand dunes to the north and south of the park. The fair also fueled de Young's passion for collecting all sorts of objects and artwork. In 1916 he built a museum in the middle of Golden Gate Park to house this collection, which can still be viewed at the De Young Museum. Without question, M. H. de Young was one of San Francisco's most prominent and influential citizens in the media, politics, and development of cultural institutions and real estate throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹

Joseph O. Tobin descended from one of the most influential pioneer families of San Francisco. His grandfather, Richard Tobin, was born in Ireland and raised in Chile. Richard Tobin joined his older brother Robert in California in the early 1850s. While San Francisco witnessed anti-Irish sentiment during this period, most notoriously in the violent actions of the Committee of Vigilance in 1856, San Francisco's phenomenally rapid growth and vibrant public sphere also fostered an unusually tolerant atmosphere for diversity, which allowed the Irish, including the Tobin family, to gain an early stronghold in local politics and commerce. In 1859 Robert and Richard Tobin, along with several fellow Irishmen, founded Hibernia bank. It was one of hundreds of banks to open in California during the nineteenth century, but one of relatively few that survived the unpredictability of California's markets, national depressions, runs on the bank, and repeated lawsuits. Originally located at the corner of Jackson and Montgomery Streets, the bank later moved to the corner of Montgomery and Market. In 1888 the bank decided to move closer to the new city hall, then under construction, and purchased a lot nearby at McAllister and Jones. Albert Pissis designed a Classical temple with Baroque details, featuring a copper-crowned and stained-glass domed entrance. It opened in 1892. Hibernia Bank catered to the Irish working class and built its fortunes on the small deposits on the toilers "whose garnered dollars stand for sweat and strain and self-denial."² By 1906 it counted 80,000 depositors and stood as a vital institution in the city. That year, the fires sparked by the earthquake devoured Hibernia Bank, but with nearly \$30 million in government investments and \$3.25 million in coins safely kept in the vault, the bank was able to reopen less than a month after the disaster. The bank rebuilt its temple at McAllister and Jones, which remains a distinctive landmark in the city's landscape, and was instrumental in financing the reconstruction of San Francisco more generally as well. Joseph O. Tobin joined Hibernia Bank as a lawyer during this first decade of the twentieth century.³

¹ Gray Brechin, *Imperial San Francisco: Urban Power, Earthly Ruin* (Berkeley, 1999), 199; Richard Longstreth, *On the Edge of the World: Four Architects in San Francisco at the Turn of the Century* (Berkeley, 1983), 81, 223-229.

² "Bank Wreckers Must be Caught and Fully Punished," *San Francisco Call*, September 14, 1906, p. 1.

³ For more on the Irish in San Francisco and San Francisco's political culture, see Robert A. Burchell, *The San Francisco Irish, 1848-1880* (Berkeley, 1980); Philip J. Ethington, *The Public City: The Political Construction of Urban Life in San Francisco, 1850-1900* (Berkeley, 1994); Mary P. Ryan, *Civic Wars: Democracy and Public Life in the American City during the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley, 1997). "Bank Wreckers Must be Caught," *Call*; "Robert J. Tobin, Banker, Answers the Call of the Angel of Death," in *ibid.*, September 19, 1906, p. 9; "Joseph S. Tobin, Nominee for Mayor, Enlists Enthusiasm of People and Lynch Seeks to Entrap Liquor Men," in *ibid.*, October 24, 1901, p. 14; "Tobin Speaks to the Point on Important Issues of the Campaign, and Wells Announces that He is Preparing Statement for Publication," in *ibid.*, November 2, 1901, p. 2; "Real Estate Transactions Reach Enormous Daily Aggregate," in *ibid.*, April 9, 1910, p. 15; "Pioneer Citizen Called to Rest," in *ibid.*, May 26, 1909, p. 3; "The Hibernia Bank," *San Francisco Bulletin*, November 28, 1888, p. 2; "The Hibernia Bank's New Building," *Daily Evening Bulletin*, September 14, 1889, p. supplement 4;

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In addition to its leading role in San Francisco's banking industry, the Tobin family enjoyed a prominent place in the city's social and political circles. Robert J. Tobin, co-founder of the bank, was a charter member of the California Society of Pioneers, an organization founded in 1850 to preserve the history of the young state. He was also a charter member of the Pacific Union Club, still one of the most exclusive social clubs in the city. An indicator of the Tobin family's influence in San Francisco lies in Joseph S. Tobin's run for mayor of the city in 1901. Uncle to the owner of 1969 California Street, he was the Democratic candidate and ran as a champion of the working class. A central tenet of his platform was passage of the eight-hour work day, a defining issue of organized labor since the 1880s. M. H. de Young's rival newspaper, the *San Francisco Call*, endorsed Tobin, but Tobin placed third behind Asa Wells, the Republican candidate, and Eugene Schmitz, leader of the Union Labor Party and winner of the election. Although Democrat James Phelan had held the mayoral seat for the three previous terms, the party's popularity sank precipitously – especially among the resurgent labor movement – when city police protected strikebreakers during the bloody teamsters and waterfront strike of 1901. Tobin's erstwhile Democratic votes went to the Union Labor Party instead. Never again did the Tobin family run for public office in San Francisco. At least for a time, however, San Francisco's Democratic and Republican forces united under the roof of 1969 California Street. The younger Joseph Tobin was a Democrat when he moved into the house, but joined his wife in supporting the Republican Party by the late 1920s.⁴

Tragedy struck the de Young family in 1913, which eventually prompted the development of 1969 California Street. Katherine de Young, the matriarch of the family, fell ill with cancer that year, the same year that her only son, thirty-two year old Charley, died suddenly of typhoid fever. Emotionally heart broken and physically stricken with cancer of the spine and kidneys, Katherine de Young died in 1917. According to one of the four surviving daughters, Helen de Young Cameron, the four girls "made it a point never to leave Father alone" during their mother's illness or after her death.⁵ It was during this period, in 1914, that Constance and Joseph O. Tobin decided to take up M. H. de Young's offer to build a house on lot sixteen, directly adjacent to the de Young mansion. One of the most influential architects in the San Francisco Bay Area, Willis Polk, designed the new house, a three-story and basement frame structure clad with cement plaster over metal lath, and designed in the Tudor Gothic revival style. A bridge connected the two properties, underscoring the significance of the relationship between the Tobin house and the de Young estate.

"Commercial Banks Opened in the Bay," *San José Evening News*, May 23, 1906, p. 8; "J. S. Tobin, Bank President, Dies," *Oakland Tribune*, February 6, 1918, p. 4; Michael R. Corbett, *Splendid Survivors: San Francisco's Downtown Architectural Heritage* (San Francisco, 1979), 77; Richard Walker, "California's Golden Road to Riches: Natural Resources and Regional Capitalism, 1848-1940," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 91 (2001), 181-184.

⁴ "Joseph S. Tobin, Nominee for Mayor, Enlists Enthusiasm of People and Lynch Seeks to Entrap Liquor Men," *San Francisco Call*, October 24, 1901, p. 14; "Tobin Speaks to the Point on Important Issues of the Campaign, and Wells Announces that He is Preparing Statement for Publication," in *ibid.*, November 2, 1901, p. 2; "Schmitz Wins by a Safe Plurality Over Wells in the Three-Cornered Race for Mayoralty," in *ibid.*, November 6, 1901, p.1; "Pioneer Citizen Called to Rest," in *ibid.*, May 26, 1909, p. 3; California Register of Voters, 1913, 1921, 1922, 1928; Chris Carlsson, "Abe Ruef and the Union Labor Party," *Shaping San Francisco*, <http://www.shapingsf.org>, accessed April 7, 2008; Ethington, *The Public City*, 403-404, 408-409.

⁵ Helen de Young Cameron, *Nineteen Nineteen: The Story of the de Young House at 1919 California Street*, San Francisco, reprinted edition (San Francisco, 1990), 34-35.

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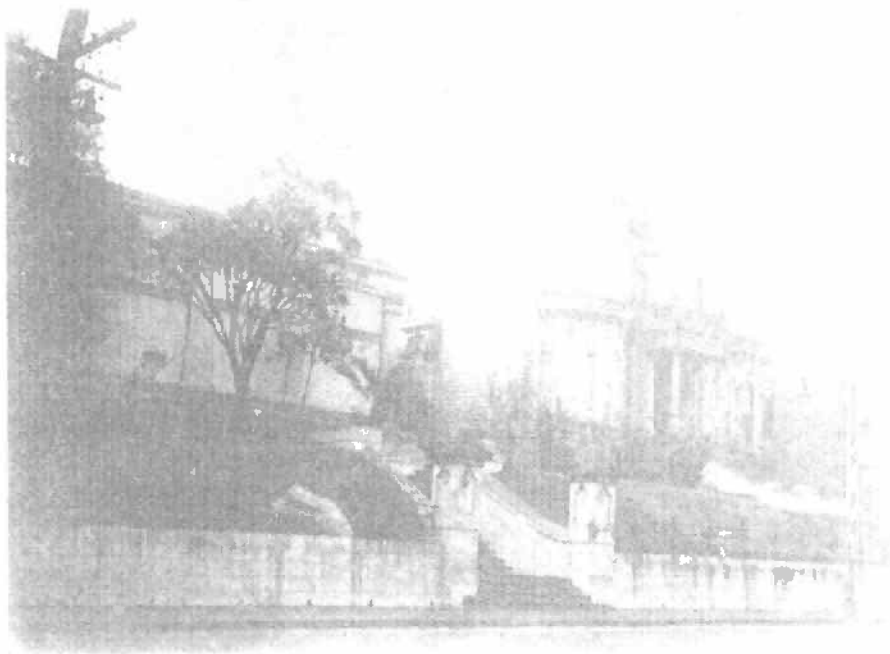
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Constance and Joseph O. Tobin lived with their family in this house for twelve years, from 1915 to 1927. Shortly after M. H. de Young died, the Tobins relocated to the peninsula, where both Constance and Joseph had sisters who were living on estates in the affluent suburbs of San Mateo, Hillsborough, or Burlingame. It is not clear how the house was used or by whom, but the Tobins did not sell 1969 California Street at this time. M. H. de Young's four daughters maintained the old Victorian next door for family gatherings until the late 1930s, by which time the mansion was in dire need of expensive repairs and servants were difficult to find. They decided to sell the mansion in 1940. When one potential buyer proposed to turn it into a boarding house, however, the de Young daughters decided to hand over the mansion to a developer's wrecking ball. At this time, Constance de Young Tobin purchased a portion of M. H. de Young's property from the developers: the space that is now the driveway and upon which the single-story addition now stands. No documents are currently available to determine what this space looked like, how it was used before the Tobins purchased it, or how they intended to use it. The parcel also included one decorative concrete lamppost base that had marked off the de Young property. These elements of block 649, now part of lot 16, are the last surviving remnants of M. H. de Young's residential estate.

Although the evidence is largely circumstantial (and the de Young/Tobin family papers are not yet available to the public to substantiate this further), it appears that the Tobin house – from the initial property purchase, to the motivation for building a house, the departure of the Tobin family from 1969 California Street, and the final sale of this property – was intimately linked to M. H. de Young, one of the most influential residents of San Francisco during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Thus, the Tobin House appears to be eligible for landmark status under National Register Criteria B.



De Young estate, c. 1919, with Tobin House at right. Note the concrete lamppost bases. Courtesy of the Bancroft Library.

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ARCHITECTURE

Master architect Willis Jefferson Polk (1867-1924) designed the Tobin House. He was born in 1867 in Jackson, Illinois, to William Webb Polk, an itinerant carpenter who eventually established a prosperous business in St. Louis, Missouri. Willis Polk cut his teeth in a local contractor's office when he was just eight years old, then graduated to work in his father's office as a teenager. In 1887, Polk joined the prominent Boston firm of Van Brunt & Howe, which was opening an office in Kansas City, Missouri. Under their tutelage, Polk began to understand architecture as an art rather than a trade and was introduced to academic eclecticism. Within years, the budding architect moved on to New York, where he audited courses taught by William Robert Ware at Columbia University and worked in the office of A. Page Brown. Though he did not work with them, Polk also came to know preeminent architects McKim, Mead & White as well as many of the young protégées working in their office. The most influential idea that Polk took away from his association with this famous firm was that an architect should aspire to create beautiful buildings. When A. Page Brown relocated to San Francisco, Polk followed and took his aspirations for beauty with him.⁶

During the 1890s the young Willis Polk established himself as a vocal critic of reigning Bay Area architectural styles and developed a following for innovative domestic designs. For smaller commissions, Polk drew upon northern European – mostly English – precedents to create an informal, rusticated urban aesthetic. Classical architecture guided his larger commissions. In both cases, Polk earned a reputation for academic expression of historic forms and restrained use of ornament, which allowed him to achieve architectural interest through the structural elements. His architecture departed radically from the predominant Queen Anne Style, characterized by irregular and complex plans and elevations, as well as profuse use of applied ornament. Innovations like these have long placed Polk in the pantheon of the San Francisco Bay Area's most influential architects of the turn of the century, along with Coxhead and Coxhead, Bernard Maybeck, and A. C. Schweinfurth.⁷

After a European tour and a brief sojourn in Chicago between 1900 and 1903, where he worked for preeminent American architect, Daniel Burnham, Willis Polk returned to San Francisco and became a leader in the City Beautiful movement. He worked for years as the West Coast representative of Burnham's firm and oversaw the design and construction of such landmarks as the thirteen-story Merchants Exchange Building (1903). The city of San Francisco also commissioned Burnham to devise a city plan, now famous for its series of Parisian-style roundabouts and radial streets as well as the extension of Golden Gate Park's panhandle to Van Ness Avenue. This plan never came to fruition, but the earthquake and fires of 1906 opened the landscape to academic eclecticism of the American Beaux-Arts style that Burnham had popularized. In the post-earthquake period, Polk played a prominent role in plans for a municipal opera house (never built) and a new civic center. For a time, he also chaired the architectural planning committee for the

⁶ Richard Longstreth, *On the Edge of the World: Four Architects in San Francisco at the Turn of the Century* (Berkeley, 1983), 51-56.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 189-220/107-141; Richard Longstreth, ed., *A Matter of Taste: Willis Polk's Writings on Architecture in the Wave* (San Francisco, 1979).

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Panama Pacific International Exposition, to be held in San Francisco in 1915 both to commemorate the opening of the Panama Canal and to celebrate San Francisco's rebirth after the 1906 disaster (ultimately, Polk's arrogance and generally unpleasant personality led to his dismissal from this committee). By the 1910s, he had established himself as one of San Francisco's most well known and highly esteemed architects.

The year 1915 was a busy one for Willis Polk. Two major projects in the preceding two years had rendered him a particularly vocal critic of local government. Although San Francisco voters had clearly shown their support for a Polk-designed municipal opera house by passing a bond measure in 1913, Mayor Rolph supported a superior court decision that declared such a bond illegal. The mayor did not appear to represent the will of the people. The next year found Willis Polk standing atop a steel girder ten stories above ground in protest against city building codes. He deemed cement plaster over metal lath more suitable to his new skyscraper, the Hobart Building, than the reinforced concrete construction that the city demanded for such projects. In the end, Polk relented to the building codes, but the incident rendered him an even stronger advocate for political reform, so much so that in 1915 he considered running for mayor and found a friendly public platform in the *San Francisco Chronicle* to voice his critiques. Apart from being the protagonist in these highly visible public controversies, Polk and his architectural firm designed several buildings in 1915. Most notably, construction began on Filoli, the estate in Woodside of mining magnate and president of the Spring Valley Water Company, William Bowers Bourn II.⁸

The only other Polk-designed residence that local papers mentioned specifically in 1915 was 1969 California Street for Joseph O. and Constance de Young Tobin. The former was a rising executive at Hibernia Bank and descended from one of the oldest and wealthiest families in San Francisco, while the latter was a daughter of M. H. de Young, owner and editor of the *San Francisco Chronicle*. The new house was located in the Western Addition of San Francisco, a term that officially encompasses "the entire area west of Larkin Street, from Fort Mason southward to the slopes of Twin Peaks."⁹ Willis Polk had once written in his typically iconoclastic way, "Our 'Western Addition,' that architectural nightmare conceived in a reign of terror and produced by the artistic anarchists who are continually seeking to do something great, without previous experience or preparation for their work." The late-Victorian Italianate mansion of M. H. de Young originally stood next to the Tobin House, and while the de Young mansion has been described as "one of the most spectacular mansions ever built on California Street" and was one of just thirty-eight homes in the state that was featured in *Artistic Homes of California*, it probably fell into the category of architectural nightmares that Willis Polk disdained.¹⁰ With the Tobin House, Willis Polk articulated his response to garish ostentation of the late-Victorian San Francisco aesthetic.

Original plans for 1969 California Street no longer exist or are unavailable to the public, but on July 2, 1914, Willis Polk submitted a building permit for a three-story and basement residence at 1969

⁸ Willis Polk Scrapbooks, California Historical Society, San Francisco; David Parry, "Polk, Willis Jefferson," *Encyclopedia of San Francisco*, <http://www.sfhistoryencyclopedia.com/articles/p/polkWillis.html>, accessed October 29, 2007.

⁹ Willis Polk Scrapbooks; James Beach Alexander and James Lee Heig, *San Francisco: Building the Dream City* (San Francisco, 2002), 230.

¹⁰ Willis Polk, "The Western Addition," *The Wave*, January 28, 1893, in Richard Longstreth, ed., *A Matter of Taste*, 35, 295-299.

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California Street for Joseph O. Tobin. The proposed structure occupied the entire width of the lot, more than half the depth of the lot, and stood forty-feet high atop a concrete foundation. It had a slate roof and stucco cladding. Polk filed a second permit five months later that called for a slightly narrower, but several feet deeper building. The revised design also call for a lower ceiling at the basement level, allowing for higher ceilings on the first and second stories.¹¹ According to Constance Tobin's sister, Phyllis Tucker, Polk's design for the Tobin house included a twin to the west, with a Gothic archway over a shared driveway.¹²

Although the 1900 block of California Street now has several postwar modern buildings, the Tobin house stood out as the most modern structure on the street when it was constructed in 1915. Polk achieved beauty largely through form and materials rather than applied decoration. With its minimally decorated façade and modern cladding, the Tobin house looked stark next to the ornately decorated de Young mansion, the similarly lavish mansion of M. J. Brandenstein (of MJB Coffee fame) further down the block, and across the street from Victorian row houses and the Atherton house with its complex plan and turreted towers. In addition, the *San Francisco Examiner* noted that the residence's modern features included white enamel walls in the bedrooms, tiled bathrooms, central heating, a vacuum cleaning system, and hot water supply.¹³ These elements made it a model of home technology and sanitary living, two important issues in domestic architecture of the Progressive Era.¹⁴

The setting of the Tobin House changed dramatically during the 1940s, but the architectural significance of the house grew proportionately. M. H. de Young's four surviving daughters had their father's mansion demolished in 1940. That same year, Helen de Young Cameron sold the property to the west of the Tobin residence, thus ensuring that Willis Polk's design would never be completed and that the new property owner would build on the still vacant lot. The Tobin House now stood out as an anomaly on this part of California Street not only as the only Gothic Revival structure, but also as the only single-family residence. The latter still holds true, but 1969 California Street guided the architecture that grew up around it during the next decade. All of the buildings that stand on the former site of the de Young mansion as well as the building to the immediate west of the Tobin House fuse modern architecture with Gothic revival elements. Most notably, they have steeply-pitched side gable roofs, arched entryways, and two-story slanted bay windows on the street elevation.

Gualtiero Bartalini (1898-1994) bought 1969 California Street from Constance Tobin in 1943. He was a colorful figure – a flamboyant man, trained opera singer and artist who published posthumously a spoof on opera – who for forty-five years operated the house as a residential hotel catering mostly to people in the performing arts. Bartalini reportedly opened the interior with

¹¹ Building permit no. 57083, July 28, 1914, and no. 60360, January 20, 1915, San Francisco Department of Building and Inspections.
¹² Mrs. Nion [Phyllis de Young] Tucker to Mrs. von Briesen, June 29, 1966, in file for 1969 California Street, *Here Today*, Junior League of San Francisco, San Francisco History Center, SFPL.
¹³ *San Francisco Examiner*, January 31, 1915.
¹⁴ See Dolores Hayden, *The Grand Domestic Revolution: A History of Feminist Designs for American Homes, Neighborhoods, and Cities* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981); Gwendolyn Wright, *Moralism and the Model Home: Domestic Architecture and Cultural Conflict in Chicago, 1873-1913* (Chicago, 1980); and Wright, *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America* (Cambridge, Mass., 1983).

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arches, painted the walls with bright colors, and furnished the house in a Renaissance style. He constructed a new set of stairs from the third floor to the second-floor bathroom; installed handrails on the balustrades of the second and third-floor balconies; installed a fire prevention sprinkler system; and intended to remodel the interior to create permanent apartments, but never completed this project.¹⁵ As interesting as this period in the building's history may be, Bartalini was a minor character in the opera scene and local history. His appropriation of the house marks the end of its period of significance.

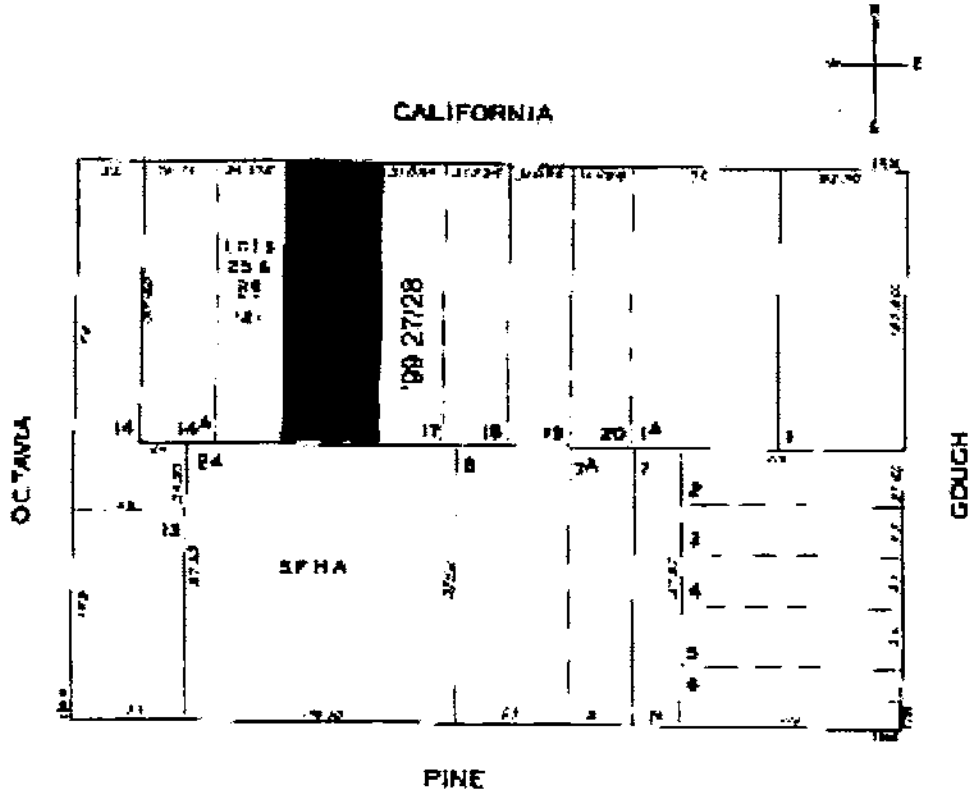
1969 California Street has had six owners since 1988, when Gualtiero Bartalini sold the property. The first owner filed several permit applications to alter the interior radically by upgrading the bathrooms, knocking down some walls, and partitioning the space permanently into apartments. None of these plans came to fruition. Two subsequent owners filed permits to replace the slate roof, but both permits expired before the work was done. Instead, the house fell into a state of disrepair. For years it remained largely uninhabited, except as a haven for homeless transients. By 1996, the south wall of the house had so deteriorated that sections of it had to be replaced, as did several windows. Other alterations in 1997 include remodeling the kitchen, adding French doors along the east elevation, and adding a parapet to the shed on the east side of the house, probably at the sight of the bridge or passageway that originally connected the Tobin House to the de Young mansion. This last project involved practically demolishing said shed and rebuilding it to create a new dining room. The parapet served as a balustrade for a balcony onto which the French doors open. Since 1999, a new fence has been constructed in the backyard; the third floor attic has been remodeled into two bedrooms, a playroom, and a washroom; the roof and copper coping, flashing, and chimney pots have been replicated and replaced; windows on the east side of the house have been replaced, as have eighteen other windows that are not visible from the street.¹⁶ None of these alterations have adversely affected the historical integrity of the house, as they replicate the original work, cannot be seen from the street, or are minor in scale and of secondary importance to the structure. As such, 1969 California Street retains a high level of integrity in all categories of the National Register's Criteria for Evaluation: location, design, setting, material, workmanship, feeling, and association.

¹⁵ Gualtiero Bartalini, *The Opera According to Bartalini: A Book of Doggerel Libretti and Comic Illustrati* (Petaluma, Cal., 1994); Oral history with Gualtiero Bartalini, in California Street, 1919, *Here Today* files of Junior League of San Francisco, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library; building permits, City of San Francisco; city directories, 1943-1989.

¹⁶ San Francisco Department of Building Inspection Online Permit and Complaint Tracking, 1969 California Street, <http://services.sfgov.org/dbipts/>, accessed October 23, 2007.

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CROSS STREET REFERENCE MAP



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LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

DATE:

CASE NO.:

PAGE 26 of 26**LANDMARKS BOARD VOTE**

APPROVED:

PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE

APPROVED:

PROPOSED LANDMARK NO.:

RATINGS*Here Today*, p. 38

DCP 1976: 3

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San Francisco, CA 94108**ATTACHMENTS**

Check all that apply.

523A X, 523B X, 523L (continuation sheets) X,Context Statement , Other