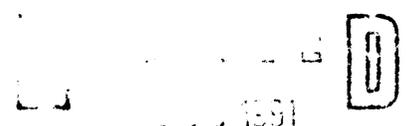


1473

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name GIRTON HALL
other names/site number Senior Women's Hall

2. Location

street & number University of California
city, town Berkeley
state California code CA county Alameda code 001 zip code 94708

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private, public-local, public-State (checked), public-Federal
Category of Property: building(s) (checked), district, site, structure, object
Number of Resources within Property: Contributing (1), Noncontributing (0), Total (1)

Name of related multiple property listing: NA
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets (checked) does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: Kathryn Gualtieri
Date: 8/15/91
California Office of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets () does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official
Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
[checked] entered in the National Register.
[] See continuation sheet.
[] determined eligible for the National Register. [] See continuation sheet.
[] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[] removed from the National Register.
[] other, (explain):
Entered in the National Register: 9/26/91
Signature of the Keeper: [Signature]
Date of Action: [Date]

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL / ClubhouseRECREATION AND CULTURE /Music Facility

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION / School**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Bungalow/CraftsmanOther: First San Francisco BayTradition

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concretewalls WOOD / weatherboard(Redwood Clapboard)roof ASPHALT Shingleother BRICK Chimney and Front Walk

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Architectural Description of Girton HallSummary

Girton Hall is a small, cozy cottage situated on the eastern side of the University of California campus, in Berkeley, next to the Cowell Hospital, and not far from the Faculty Glade, and the Chemistry and Physics buildings. Originally to be found in an open meadow, on the banks of the Strawberry Creek, which is now covered over at that point, Girton Hall was moved some 60 yards downhill, in the 1940's, to the position where it stands today in a small glade of young redwood trees. Constructed around a single main room, with an office and a small kitchen to either side, Girton Hall projects the outward appearance of merely a small cottage or insignificant campus meeting hall. On the outside, the central portion of the building is framed by two small wings, giving Girton Hall a symmetrical

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Social History
Architecture
Other: Women's Heritage

Period of Significance

1911-1941

Significant Dates

Cultural Affiliation

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

Morgan, Julia - Architect
Bruce, William - Builder

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Summary

The historical significance of Girton Hall seems to be notable in two areas. First, by the architectural consideration, in which this building, having been designed by Julia Morgan, deserves some real recognition merely by the account of having been the work of one of the west coast's most significant architects in the early part of this century. Secondly, this building was constructed on the imperative of a group of women students, who saw the importance of having a senior gathering hall, the same as the Senior Men's hall, which the men students had already constructed. Although Girton Hall is certainly small, it may be no smaller than the Senior Men's Hall, on the Berkeley campus, and at the time of its construction it represented a significant step in the progress of equal rights for women, and equal representation on the University campus.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

1. Building With Nature: Roots of the San Francisco Bay Region Tradition
by Leslie Mandelson Freudenheim and Elisabeth Sacks Sussman
Peregrine Smith, Inc.
Santa Barbara and Salt Lake City
c. 1974
2. Julia Morgan, Architect
by Sara Holmes Boutelle
Cross River Press, Ltd.
Abbeville Press Publishers
New York
c. 1988

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other --Berkeley Architectural Herit. Assn.

Specify repository: _____
U.C. Library: The Bancroft Library, Environmental Design Library

10. Geographical Data

creage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

A 10 565703 4191749
 Zone Easting Northing

C _____

B _____
 Zone Easting Northing

D _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Please see attached scale map.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries encompass the building and its immediate setting.

See continuation sheet

1. Form Prepared By

name/title Charles Bucher, Jr.
 organization Berkeley Architectural Heritage Assn. date April 10, 1991
 street & number 2318 Durant Ave. telephone 841-2242
 city or town Berkeley state Ca. zip code 94704

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layout along a horizontal axis; the main front door enters into the north wing, and proceeds from a small vestibule into the main room of Girton Hall. The two wings extend outward at the back of the hall, to form the perimeters of a functional outdoor porch (this porch used to be overlooking the creek until Girton Hall was moved; it further extends the point of view of the back of the building). A moderately weathered wooden clapboard exterior affords Girton Hall the easy rustic, woodsy appearance of the earliest examples of First San Francisco Bay Tradition constructions. An overworn shingle roof of natural redwood was replaced by asphalt shingles at some point during the lifetime of Girton Hall, which lends a somewhat more artificial effect to the entire building.

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While it has at one time been moved a very short distance, the structural integrity of the Girton Hall building seems to have survived entirely intact. While the move of Girton Hall was not a long one, the path of the move is located over such difficult terrain that such a move by today's standards would seem to be impossible. The full thirty foot drop into the short ravine at the bottom of which Girton Hall today is located would seem impossible to negotiate if it were not for the narrow road, a short distance to one side, but even this path seems somewhat implausible. Constructed of heavy beam structural elements, visible from the inside of Girton Hall, typical of the design methods associated with the Shingle style, much of the building still appears to be strong, complete and unharmed, self-supporting and unaffected by the move, or any degradation by age whatsoever. Further structural additions to Girton Hall are uncertain, but that may be closely narrowed down to 1971 or thereabouts, when Girton Hall was turned over to the UC childcare program, include a newly constructed

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fireplace (while the exterior chimney remained intact), replacement of an inside doorway, and extensive reconstruction and remodeling within the small northern wing, including the installation of a small kitchen, and a new location for a bathroom and a coatroom. In addition, on the southern wing of Girton Hall, where there had originally been a small sun porch, with windows opening to the air, and by all appearances, as indicated by the original floor plans, drawn by Julia Morgan, a full brick floor which extended in continuation onto the back porch or terrace area, walls were put in, and windows constructed, separating completely the former sun porch from the back porch area, creating an entirely new room which has now been put to use as Girton Hall office space. Still, for all these changes, the full structural and design integrity of Girton Hall seems to remain largely intact; the building walls stand on a solid foundation, which does not seem to be haphazardly constructed nor offer any evidence of the building having been moved or remodeled at all, and the outward appearance of the whole building is one of appropriateness and harmony.

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Beyond the mere aspect of integrity, the design of Girton Hall, in the initial outward aspect reasonably simple, develops a certain degree of symmetrical interplay between the particular design elements, which makes Girton Hall seem more of an uncommon construction to a close inspection. And the uniqueness of this design interplay fits appropriately with the conceptual style of Julia Morgan's design. The building of Girton Hall is not centered in the conventional way along a regular front and back coordination; the front door has been placed to one side, on the northern wing, and the front wall of the building has all the appearance of having been designed for the backside of any other building. Inside, there are no windows through which one may look out on the ground level, on the front wall of the building, instead, there is a clerestory row of windows all along the front of the main central part of the building, not extending to the external wings on either side, directly underneath the eaves of the roof. This clerestory row extends fully across the front of the building, except where interrupted by the chimney, symmetrically placed right in the center of the main front wall, and wraps around, about three feet deep along the sides of the main building, ending where it abuts the beginning of the

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two wings on either side. These two wings, on north and south, are not directly centered along the longitudinal axis of the building, but rather have been moved more to the back, where the differential from the back wall of the main part of the building forms the space which becomes the back porch. From the back the real outward aspect of the central main room of Girton Hall gains its outward viewpoint with a wide and spacious bay window, which nevertheless has been sunken between the more dominating aspects of the back of the two wings and the location of the porch directly in front. While one may be afforded a clear view from inside Girton Hall, it is narrowed by the presence of the two wings; one must step outside to be unobstructed by the presence of the porch, and one must leave the porch and building entirely in order to gain any perspective of the view to either side. The most basic and simple outward appearance, as though it were merely a cottage, gives way to a harmonically conceived interior, executed for a fully self-contained building, nevertheless presented with curious and contrary aspects appropriated more to draw the attention away from the

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building's center than to completely enclose the aspect of the interior of the building, in its entirety, yet outwardly and from first glance the building effectively hides so much of the uniqueness of this detail. The simple hipped roof, extended on either side by the small wings of the building, completes the outward ensemble of the building as a cottage, bestowing an outwardly simple appearance where inside the building waxes somewhat more contrary.

The Chimney of Girton Hall, in the center of the front wall, is wonderfully constructed in square rectangular brick arrangements. Although the fireplace was partially removed and reconstructed when the building was moved or later, the outside chimney remained intact and still displays some remarkable brickwork, simple and unique, quite evocative and typical of Julia Morgan's style of design. The generous fireplace, although having been reconstructed, still stands dominant at the center of the main room of Girton Hall, the focal point of the whole room, if it were not for the viewpoint presented from the rather expansive glass windows directly opposite to the fireplace, which draw one's attention away from this focal point on the fireplace,

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a sort of conflicting juxtaposition set up perhaps playfully by Miss Morgan. The attention seems to be drawn outward, to the back porch and to the view which may be seen from the bay windows. Seen from the front of the building, the back portion of the outside chimney seems to have been laid in a particularly square pattern, achieved by laying the bricks end on or by utilizing a special cut of brick; this central patterning of brick has been framed on the outer part of the chimney, by bricks laid in a more regular pattern. The same square motif used on this part of the chimney has been utilized intermittently in disparate areas around Girton Hall, and as such seems to be the effective limit on the ornamental decoration of Girton Hall. A minimalist style of decoration seems appropriate to Julia Morgan's style, and the choice sparseness of this particular motif seems to be fully within the intent of Miss Morgan's design. The porch gate in the back of the building, and the window design in the Bay window, and along the clerestory on the front of the building, show a development of this simple, square motif, but that seems

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to be the full extent of any ornamentation used on Girton Hall, as is typical of the simple Shingle style, if not always of the First San Francisco Bay Tradition. The inside fireplace, although having been reconstructed, still happens to be in possession of the building's original fireplace grate, a rather cumbersome, and weighty iron object, uniquely embossed with an emblematic metal design which displays the letters "SWH" (Senior Women's Hall) in triple overlay, original even though this grate carries the original name of the building's use, not its construction.

The bay window of Girton Hall, which looks out upon the back porch of the building, has been formed in a square rectangular shape, and not in the octagonal or polygonal shape so commonly seen in the more common Victorian design; moreover the bay window is situated not at the corner of the building, but in the center of the back wall, and in a position which is fairly dominated by the presence of the buildings two wings on either side. Two separate windows, the same height as this bay window, accompany and frame the bay window in the center of the back porch opening, and fit flush with the sides of the two wings. The terrace walls on

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the back porch are low and thick, constructed around a solid frame, about ten inches wide, and covered on two sides by the same clapboard as the rest of the building, so that the wall of the back porch seems to be constructed completely as a composite with the design of the rest of the building.

Assessing the impact of the move:

Although Girton Hall has been moved, the move was quite short, only sixty yards, and did not remove the building from its historic identification with this part of the UC Berkeley campus. It is believed that the building is still close enough to its original location to convey its historic associations clearly.

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At the building of Girton Hall, California was right at the peak of a long period of energetic women's activism centered around the struggle to win the right to vote for women, the suffrage, a struggle which having begun in the early 1890's, and even earlier, culminating in October 1911, with California proffering voting rights to adult women, by a narrow margin in statewide balloting (125,000 - yes, 121,000 -no). A previous vote which had been put before the voters in 1896, registered 110,000 yes and 137,000 no, a premature refusal for California women. This was one of the more significant and heavily debated of the women's issues of the day, and it was a significant issue in its own right, for turn of the century California. While national women's suffrage was not won until 1920, at the time of the California vote at least four other western states: Wyoming, Utah, Colorado and Idaho had already given women full suffrage, and many states allowed women to vote exclusively in school and municipal elections, locally. With Girton Hall being built in 1911, this meant that its construction came at a time when women's issues and the right to vote, for women, were coming to the forefront of the public attention. As such Girton Hall represents not a milestone, but a marking point, coinciding and not celebrating the triumph of acquiring the women's vote,

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inasmuch as no real mention was ever made, in the preparation and fund-raising for the construction of Girton Hall, in 1903-11, as to how the benefit of the vote for women might affect the rights for women on the University campus. The original and primary motive for the construction of Girton Hall, as cited in the press at the time was to provide adequate and effective meeting space where the Senior women's singing groups and women's academic clubs would be able to equitably gather and make music, on an equal basis with the Senior men students, who already had a meeting hall of their own. For more than fifty years after its construction, Girton Hall was used not only for singing purposes but as a meeting hall for a number of Senior and underclass women's clubs such as the academic Brytannean club, among others. Surely this sort of designated function was not nearly so radical as the women's suffrage groups which had, up until 1911, developed a significant organized network in San Francisco, which they would have needed to continue even until the national suffrage vote for women was realized in 1920.

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Girton Hall, being one of the early works of Julia Morgan's illustrious career, does not represent any significant departure from the elaborate style which she had expressed only two years earlier in the St. John's Presbyterian church (1910) several blocks away on College Ave. in Berkeley, although Girton Hall being much smaller does not adequately represent the elaborate construction displayed beautifully on both the interior and exterior of the St. John's church, nor does it approach another similar construction of Miss Morgan's, built after Girton Hall, the YWCA leadership conference center Asilomar (1913) located in Monterey county, which also was built in much the same early style.

While Julia Morgan is still widely regarded nationwide, even internationally for significant contributions in the field of architecture, she, nevertheless, was only part of a healthy and thriving avant garde of energetic and communicative architects who were making highly significant and experimental architectural statements for the time, locally, in the San Francisco Bay Area. This group of architects, or the particular style which they were responsible for, soon became known as the First San Francisco Bay Tradition, a banner under which a wide range

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of experimental and combinative design efforts achieved intellectual fruition, through the regulative guidance of a set of fundamental principles which outlined basically the value of constructing in the most basic and natural elements. Ostensibly, this "Tradition" had begun with Father Joseph Worcester, who had designed two houses in the early 1870's, one in San Francisco, on Russian Hill, and the other in the Piedmont Hills, in Oakland. Both of these houses, very small rustic and natural in outlook, even at that time, had been built mainly around a central room, at the center of the house, which had as its main focus, a large picture window, which would look out at an (at that time) unobstructed, panoramic view of the San Francisco Bay; all the other rooms were smaller and less significant, and revolved mostly around serving the needs of living mainly in the large room. The most central principles followed in the First San Francisco Bay Tradition were to experiment extensively with combined forms and styles of architecture, always trying to discover new forms and innovations, and always to try to remain as close to the rustic, natural, and simple values as possible,

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always using the most natural elements and materials, always within the most simple expression possible of the architect's design.

Bernard Maybeck, who did most of his work in the city of Berkeley, as well as in other cities in the San Francisco Bay Area, was one of the most prominent and notable exemplars of the First San Francisco Bay Tradition; his buildings in Berkeley have become known nationwide as examples of early experimentation in architecture. Other notable architects collected under the banner of the First San Francisco Bay Tradition include John Galen Howard of the University of California, Earnest Coxhead, Julia Morgan, Lillian Bridgman, John Hudson Thomas and Willis Polk.

When Girton Hall was constructed, Julia Morgan had been practicing architecture for no more than five years. After completing an engineering degree at the University of California in Berkeley, one of the few women students at that time who had done so, and having gone to Paris to study at the prestigious Ecole des Beaux Arts, where she earned her degree in architecture in 1904, she came back to Berkeley where she went to work in the office of University Architect, John Galen Howard, another Beaux Arts graduate. Between 1904 and 1906 Miss Morgan was put

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to work on the detail drafting for the ornate Hearst Memorial Mining Building (1907) when Mrs. Phoebe Apperson Hearst, an energetic University patron, noticed the beautiful conception of her work in Howard's office, and suggested she open an office of her own. The early buildings of Julia Morgan's career show her high potential, particularly noticeable for the real cleanliness of line and conception of design, even if they now seem somewhat limited in their aspect, when compared to the great variety and ingenuity which she exhibited so freely later in her career. These early buildings were designed rather strictly within an ethic of real simplicity and naturalism, right along the precepts of the First San Francisco Bay Tradition, built with natural materials, yet they conform more specifically to the wider outlook of Miss Morgan's own vision, and Girton Hall, small as it is, and neatly fashioned, seems to show no real sign of varying greatly from this standard. The St. John's Presbyterian church and the Asilomar site, which most clearly resemble the standards of Miss Morgan's early career project an aura of harmonic conventionality which she was soon to essentially step beyond in an effort to relieve herself of the conformity with the strict naturalism of the First San Francisco Bay Tradition, while exploring the qualities of innovation in her own manner. One of her responses was

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a return to more conventional classicism and classic design, as well as a more conventional of houses in the Georgian revival style, some of which may be seen in Berkeley. The Berkeley Women's City Club (1929) is a clear example of the Beaux Arts classical method, a debt to her schooling at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, and a real demonstration of her wide ranging ability and design versatility. Although Girton Hall clearly has not been conceived on the same grand scale as the Berkeley City Club, or any of the other monumental projects of Julia Morgan's career the basic efficiency of its design seems to prove it worthy of some consideration.

The original idea for the construction of Girton Hall was initiated by a group of women students at the University of California in Berkeley, who for some time had been left to meet with their singing groups in Hearst Hall, the University gymnasium. As their clubs and groups grew in size they began to find it desirable to have a place where they could meet in privacy and seclusion. The first action in the pursuit of the construction of a meeting hall was to raise money, which they did through a series of gatherings and fundraisers throughout the years 1909 to 1911, up until the construction of Girton Hall in Nov., 1911. They had quickly received permission from the

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University administrators, and so, once they had raised sufficient funds to feel they could proceed they contacted Miss Julia Morgan, in 1910, in request for a set of plans for their new meeting and singing hall project, which Miss Morgan agreed to donate, by consideration, without charge. Throughout the fundraising period the University newspapers attest that the name "Girton Hall" was used freely in reference to the construction of the women's new singing hall, although by the time of the construction the decision was made for the alternative and more simple name "Senior Women's Hall" by which the hall would become known at the time of its opening, in an effort to form a more intuitive connection with the Senior Men's Hall and the other buildings of the UC Faculty Glade, as well, perhaps, to placate the uneasy feelings of some University administrators who might know to what the building's original name had referred. The name Girton Hall was not returned to this diminutive building throughout the period in which it was used as a regular meeting hall for campus women's academic and singing groups, and not until 1969 when the University women's groups gave up the building to UC childcare. In an apparent return to local University heritage, the name of the building was changed to Girton Hall which had never

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been the actual name of the building during its real existence, up until that time; and it has remained under the same name Girton hall since that time.

The name "Girton" however, refers to important events in the progress of women's rights which had taken place in another part of the world. The choice of the name Girton, given to this relatively insignificant campus hall, apparently had been taken from the Girton college in England, at Cambridge University, where in 1873, another group of women was successful in the persuasion of the administrators of Cambridge to allow them to form a college of their own, of equal standing, for the education of women, on the grounds of Cambridge University, the first time that women were allowed the equal chance for higher education in England. After nearly twenty-five years of struggle to bring their goals into realization, Miss Emily Davies and Miss Barbara Leigh Smith, and a large group of dedicated women and men saw the construction of a large college building, about 1½ miles northwest of the town of Cambridge, and the opening of the Girton college of Cambridge University to the education and edification of women. While no great mention

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ever seems to have been made about Girton college specifically, while the name Girton Hall was certainly cited freely in the local and campus newspaper coverage, throughout the period that the UC Berkeley women were gathering money for the building of Girton Hall, and that name was being used, the inference involved seems to have been clear, that the women of the University of California wanted to make a clear statement of alignment with the progress of women's rights, by the parallel name they had chosen.

Although the period of significance for the building extends into the 1960s, the significance has not been shown to be exceptional. Therefore the period has arbitrarily been ended at 1941, fifty years ago.

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Major Bibliographical References (cont.)

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available at the University Archives
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Newspaper room
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5. The Campus -- University of California
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6. Blue and Gold Yearbook
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7. The Campus Historic Resources Survey
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Dean Richard Bender - Director
Sally Woodbridge - Coordinator
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available at Berkeley Architectural Heritage Assn. or
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8. A Tycoon's Home was his Petite Architect's Castle
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Continuation Sheet

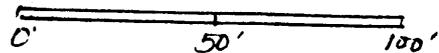
Section number 9 Page 3

Major Bibliographical References (cont.)

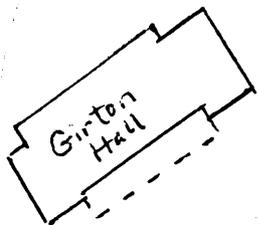
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15. The Simple Home
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Girton Hall
UC Berkeley Campus
Berkeley, Alameda Co.
California

College Ave.



Private Rd.



↑
Boundary

UC Infirmary
Cowell Hospital



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National Park Service

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Section number _____ Page _____

PHOTO LOG

For all photos: Girton Hall
UC Berkeley Campus
Berkeley, California

Photographer: Charles Bucher, Jr.
Negative location: 2318 Durant Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94704

1. Front elevation, facing sw, 1989
2. SE wing and back porch, looking n, 1991
3. NW side and wing, looking SE, 1991
4. SE wing of building, looking NW, 1991
5. Main elevation, facing SE, 1920