

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>California</b>	
COUNTY: <b>San Francisco</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**1. NAME** FEB 23 1972

COMMON:  
**Colonial Dames Octagon House**

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
**\* McElroy Octagon House**

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**2645 Gough Street**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**San Francisco**

STATE <b>California</b>	CODE <b>06</b>	COUNTY: <b>San Francisco</b>	CODE <b>075</b>
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**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____
		<input type="checkbox"/> Comments	_____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
**National Society of Colonial Dames**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**2645 Gough Street**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**San Francisco**

STATE:  
**California**

CODE:  
**06**

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
**Recorder's Office**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**City Hall**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**San Francisco**

STATE:  
**California**

CODE:  
**06**

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
**Historic American Buildings Survey**

DATE OF SURVEY:                     Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
**Federal Building (Room 14321)**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**450 Golden Gate Avenue**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**San Francisco**

STATE:  
**California**

CODE:  
**06**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: California  
COUNTY: San Francisco  
ENTRY NUMBER  
DATE: FEB 23 1972  
FOR NPS USE ONLY

Also: Jr. League of San Francisco Survey

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

Excellent     Good     Fair     Deteriorated     Ruins     Unexposed

(Check One)

Altered     Unaltered

(Check One)

Moved     Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Two-story structure (originally a dwelling): octagonal or eight-sided, originally constructed of concrete (lime, cement and gravel). Exterior walls are covered with clapboards. Architectural style: classical, influenced by Italianate. There is a small wooden cupola, also octagonal, surmounting the building. The sloping shingled roof has eaves projecting beyond the walls. The fenestration is simple: each of the eight walls or sides of the building is pierced on each floor by paired double-hung windows (except for the front wall on the ground story, which contains the entrance). The entrance is deeply recessed within the wall and contains double door; it is sheltered by a simple porch, of classical style; two columns and two pilasters, all square, support a sloping roof also shingled. There are oblong wood (simulating) stone quoins at each corner of the building, reaching from ground to roof.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1861**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |  | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Octagon Houses throughout the United States owe their origin and vogue, during the 1850s and 1860s to the publication of a book by Orson Squire Fowler of New York, in 1848, "A Home for All". This book was intended to stimulate the building of houses by Americans on a new and rational plan: the octagonal plan, designed to provide eight rooms on each floor (of two), and advocated as the most healthful because it gave a maximum of sunlight to the rooms, each receiving light at some period of the day. At one time at least five octagonal houses existed in San Francisco, of which the Colonial Dames Octagon House is one of the last two and the only one maintained and open for the public.

It was built in 1861 by William C. McElroy and wife. McElroy, a miller, had arrived in San Francisco in 1851 and had been successful in his trade. His wife, Harriet, had bought the lot (on the east line of Gough Street) from Charles and Harry Gough, after whom the street was named. The McElroys lived in the house until 1891. For some three years Daniel O'Connell, a noted poet of the day lived in the house and during this period the house was the site of gatherings of the writers and artists of the city.

In 1952 the house was saved from demolition by the Colonial Dames, who bought it, removed it to the west side of the street and had it extensively restored. The restoration was under the direction of Warren Perry F.A.I.A., former chairman of the Department of Architecture at the University of California. The building is now used as a headquarters for the Colonial Dames in the State of California; and also serves as a museum or place of display of predominantly 18th century furniture, manuscripts, and historic mementos.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Baird, Joseph A. Jr., Time's Wondrous Changes: San Francisco Architecture, 1776-1915 (San Francisco: California Historical Society, 1962)  
 Benet, James, San Francisco and the Bay Region (New York: Random House, 1963)  
 Fowler, Orson Squire, A Home for All, or, The Octagon House and the Gravel Wall Mode of Construction (New York, 1854; first edition 1848)  
 Manuscript letter by William C. McElroy, dated July 14, 1861

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		37° 47' 53"	122° 25' 34"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

UTM  
 1455051  
 4183311  
 CD

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **.16 acres**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: **Ralph A. Mead, Secretary**

ORGANIZATION: **San Francisco Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board** DATE: **August 29, 1971**

STREET AND NUMBER: **100 Larkin Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **San Francisco** STATE: **California** CODE: **06**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: *Ralph A. Mead*

Title: State Liaison Officer

Date: October 11, 1971

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

*Ernest A. Conroy*  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

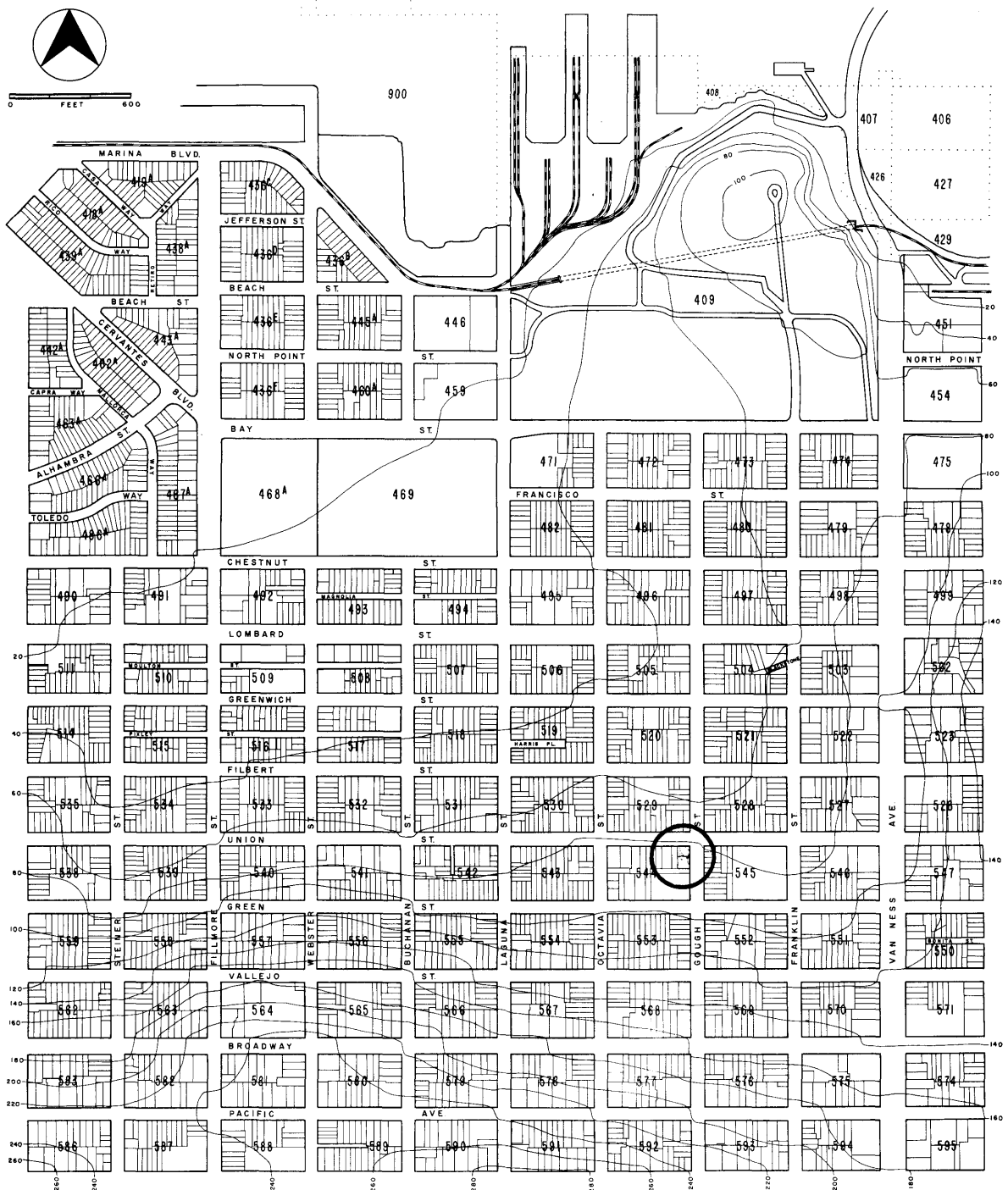
**FEB 23 1972**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: *William H. Bennett*  
 Keeper of The National Register

**FEB 28 1972**

Date: *Jan*



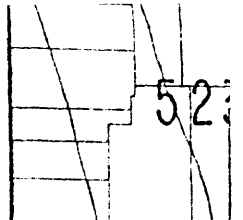
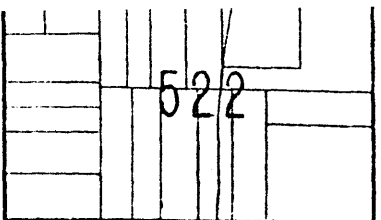
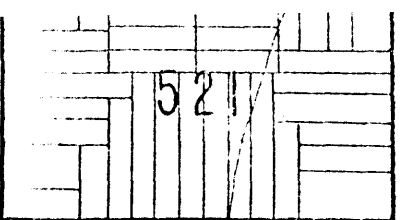
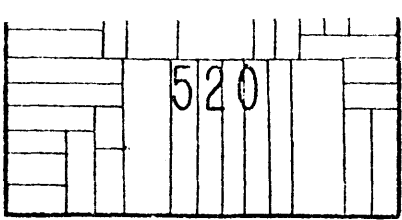
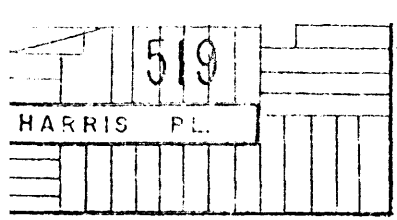
COMMUNITY AREA LAND USE STUDY

MARINA - PACIFIC HEIGHTS

COMMUNITY 3 · PLANNING AREA 2

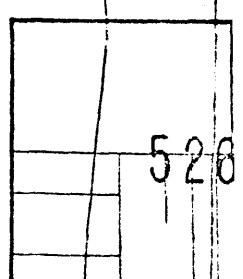
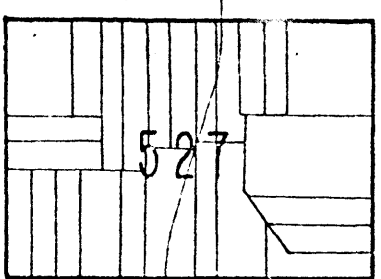
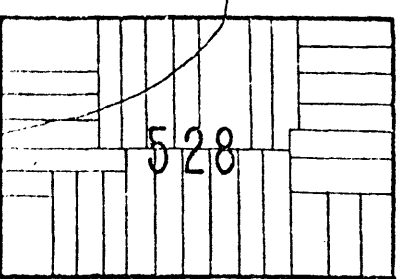
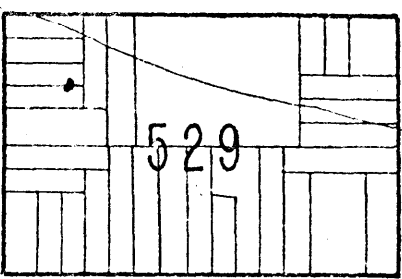
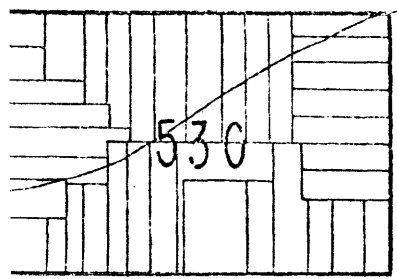
COLONIAL DAMES  
 OCTAGON HOUSE (MCELROY)

FILE 820.3-2(1)  
BASE JULY 1967  
DATA



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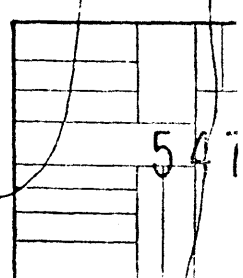
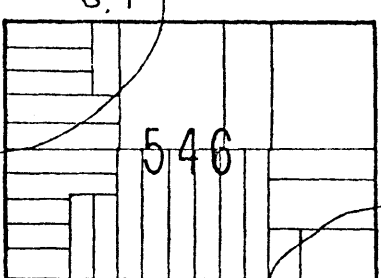
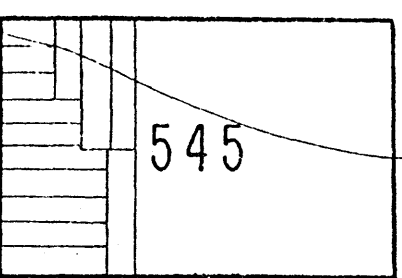
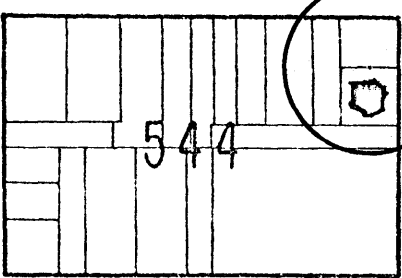
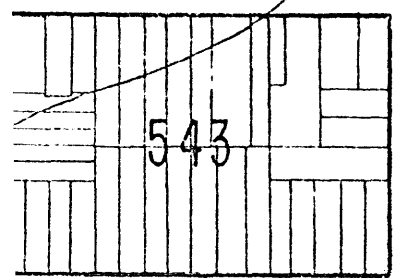
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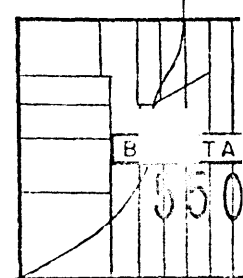
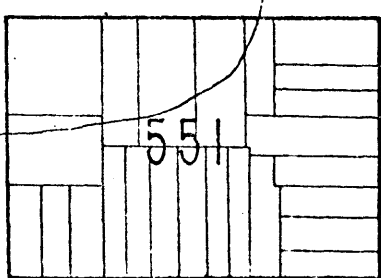
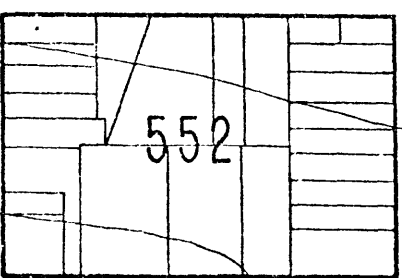
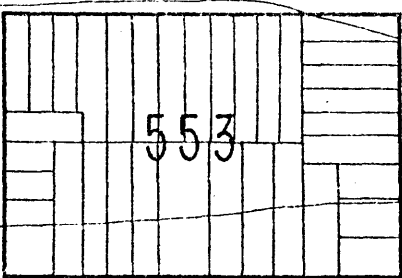
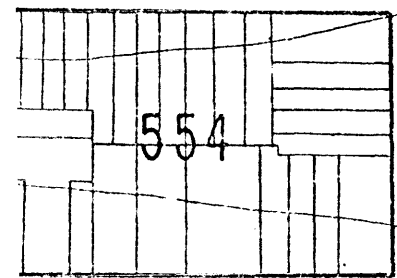
UNION

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GREEN

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OCTAVIA

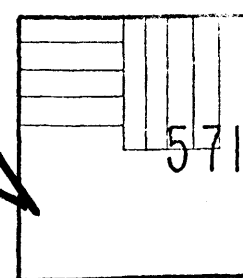
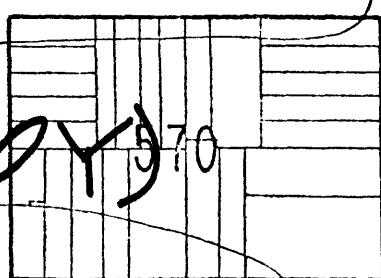
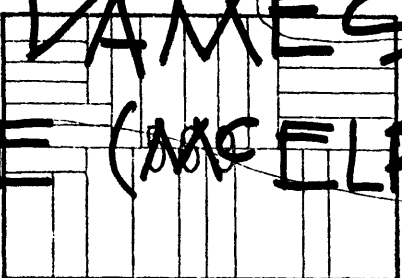
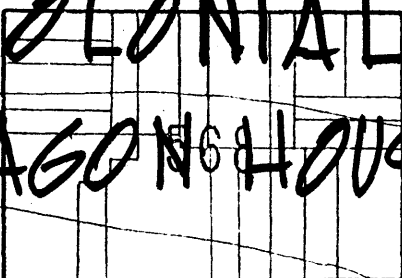
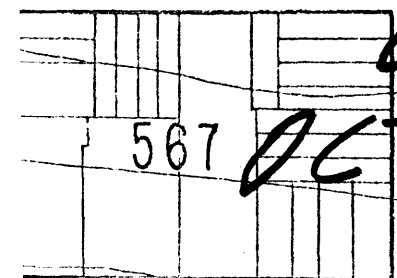
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**COLONIAL DAMES  
OCTAGON HOUSE (MCELROY)**

