United States Department of the Interior Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form



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See instructions in How to Complete National Register	' Forms
Type all entries—complete applicable sections	

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7. Description

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Bush Street-Cottage Row Historic District comprises 20 residences. a walkway and a small park. There is continuity of height and setback; houses step downhill evenly from the northeast to conform with the land contour: lots are narrow and deep. Almost all the houses were developed in four groups, so that six on Bush Street are essentially identical to each other, as are three different ones on Bush, two on Sutter and six on Cottage Row. All these are two-story frame structures of Italianate or early Stick style, with channel rustic siding, double-hung windows, and paneled entry recess. They are tall narrow structures with tall narrow openings balanced by heavy, bracketed cornices on patently false fronts. All except Cottage Row have bay windows on facade or rear. The only non-residential use is an original small corner grocery store on the ground floor of a residence. There are no intrusions or noncontributing structures except two small park shelters and some minor rear garden sheds. Significant alterations occur on only two facades, neither a part of a matched group. Some have been restored as part of a federally funded Redevelopment Project. Rear alterations include porches and garden stairs, additions and some window changes. Several houses have fine but not matching wooden stair balustrades or front fences. The whole area is heavily landscaped and contains a number of mature trees.

Buildings and spaces contributing to the character of the district:

- 1. Corner grocery with residence above (2101-2101A Bush Street): Italianate with 5 -sided corner bay, matching one-story-&-basement rear addition on Webster Street, Moderne marcon tile storefront, cornice and 2ndfloor trim matching No. 2-4.
- 2. House (2103 Bush Street): Italianate, half-octagonal bay on facade, pediments and brackets on door hood and single window above it, essentially identical with No. 3-4; fine wood fence.
- 3. House (2105 Bush Street): essentially identical with No. 2 and 4.
- 4. House (2107 Bush Street): essentially identical with No. 2-3; stained glass door light.
- 5. House (2109-2111 Bush Street, 7-8 Cottage Row): Stick, rectangular bay with pair of windows on center face, gentle gable with barge boards above bay, four residential units, facade partly stripped and wholly shingled.
- 6. House (2115 Bush Street): Italianate, flat front and half-octagonal bay in rear, three segment-headed openings per floor, squeezed pediments above windows, bracketed door hood, high basement with areaway and trim like upper floors, essentially identical with No. 7 and 9-12; fine newells and balustrade on stairs and fence, large redwood tree in rear; restored facade.

(See Continuation Page 4.)

8. Significance

Period prehistoric 1400–1499 1500–1599 1600–1699 1700–1799 1800–1899 1900–	Areas of Significance—C archeology-prehistoric archeology-historic agriculture x architecture art commerce communications	heck and justify below <u>X</u> community plannin conservation economics education engineering exploration/settlem industry invention	ng landscape architectu law literature military music	re religion science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation other (specify)
Specific dates	1874-1882	Builder/Architect	r.R.E.A. and C.L.	Taylor

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Bush Street-Cottage Row District is an intact, century-old enclave within San Francisco's mostly bulldozed Western Addition Redevelopment Area 2. It has been accorded high praise in both of the City-&-County surveys: the Junior League Survey published as <u>Here Today</u>, and the Depart-ment of City Planning's Architecture Survey of 1976. It exhibits typical San Francisco housing developments of the mid-1870s and early 1880s, as all the buildings but one rear-yard cottage (No. 8) are the work of just two housing developers, The Real Estate Associates and C.L. Taylor.

The Real Estate Associates (TREA), San Francisco's largest residential housing developer of the 1870s, built 2115-2125 Bush Street and 1942-1948 Sutter Street (No. 6-7, 9-12, 21-22). In September 1874 the company had bought the whole block west of what is now Cottage Row for \$25,250 and, following its usual practice, had subdivided the land into 23 lots: three facing Fillmore and ten each facing Bush and Sutter. It sold them all for \$4,200 to \$6,623 from 16 Jan. to 28 August 1875. Typically, TREA repeated one facade and plan on Sutter, another on Bush and a third on Fillmore. Also typically it assured a viable development by providing for corner stores--Bashford's Drugstore at Fillmore and Bush, and a lot with store potential at Fillmore and Sutter--by grouping the more expensive houses on Bush and Sutter and the more economical on Fillmore, and by locating the whole next to the horse-car line then running along Bush Street. The District's houses were near the upper end of the company's economic range; the buyers were professional people and businessmen (see Appendix: Some Earliest Known Occupants). One of them at 1942 Sutter (No. 21) ordered the glassed-in entry porch that seems to have been a regular TREA option, for it also appears on company houses at 2572 Washington and 2312 Gough Streets.

In the 1870s TREA built over 1,000 houses, usually in developments similar to this one in San Francisco's Mission District, Western Addition and Pacific Heights. It catered to the working class and up, appealing to a mass market with easy credit and plentiful advertising. The president and mastermind William Hollis (1839-1895) had come to California in 1852 from Missouri, and he drifted through mining, store keeping and reading law, into real estate where he excelled. The development west of Cottage Row was among about 350 houses built by the company in 1875, a period when it regularly employed 300-400 workmen at a time, paying about \$25 for a 60hour week, directly hiring all trades except plumbing. Architectural services in 1875 were provided by Silas P. Ford, Superintendant of the company's Building Department. Additional information about TREA can be found in the enclosed article from the Journal, Society of Architectural Historians.

(See Continuation Page 8.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet 10

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For NPS was only received date entered

Bush Street-Cottage Continuation sheet Row Historic District Item number 7 (cont.) Page 4

7. DESCRIPTION (cont.)

- 7. House (2117 Bush Street): essentially identical with No. 6 and 9-12, fine stair newells and balustrade, cottage (No. 8) on rear of lot.
- 8. Garden cottage (2117-B Bush Street): 1-story and basement, Stick, rectangular bay, bracketed cornice and false Mansard, partly visible from street, on rear of No. 7's lot.
- 9. House (2119 Bush Street): essentially identical with No. 6-7 and 10-12, fine balustrade, large magnolia tree rear, Japanese plum tree in front yard.
- 10. House (2121 Bush Street): essentially identical with No. 6-7, 9 and 11-12, large palm tree in garden, large holly in front.
- 11. House (2123 Bush Street): essentially identical with No. 6-7, 9-10 and 12, rear addition, pair of large street trees.
- 12. House (2125 Bush Street): essentially identical with No. 6-7 and 9-11, several rear additions, entry frame altered to accomodate doors to two flats.
- 13. Party-wall house (6 Cottage Row): simple Stick; no bay or false front; pair of 4-over-4 windows off-center on each floor; simple, narrow, two-dimensional brackets, each with a cut-out circle, at ends of door pediment and gable; beaded boards laid vertically in gable; essentially identical with No. 14-18.
- 14. Party-wall house (5 Cottage Row): essentially identical with No. 13 and 15-18.
- 15. Party-wall house (4 Cottage Row): essentially identical with No. 13-14 and 16-18.
- 16. Party-wall house (3 Cottage Row): essentially identical with No. 13-15 and 17-18.
- 17. Party-wall house (2 Cottage Row): essentially identical with No. 13-16 and 18.
- 18. Party-wall house (1 Cottage Row): essentially identical with No. 13-17.

(See Continuation Page 5.)

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Bush Street-Cottage Continuation sheet Row Historic District Item number 7 (cont.) Page 5

7. DESCRIPTION (cont.)

- 19. Cottage Row Walk (from Sutter to Bush Street, ending between 2107-2109 Bush and 2115 Bush): bricked and landscaped pathway, recently re-bricked, large cypress tree.
- 21. House (1942 Sutter Street): Italianate, half-octagonal bay on facade, segment-headed windows, entablatures over first story of bay and second-story single window, essentially identical with No. 22 except for glassed-in half-hexagonal porch with diagonal entry, cornice and round-headed windows; addition to rear; mature cypress in rear.
- 22. House (1948 Sutter Street): essentially identical with No. 21; mature magnolia tree in rear.

Non-Contributing Property

20. Mini Park (ca. 1942 Sutter Street): trees, gravel, ground cover, grass, chain link fence, two small three-sided wood shelters with benches, drinking fountain, barbecue, former site of a house essentially identical with No. 21-22.

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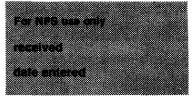
Bush Street-Cottage Continuation sheet Row Historic District Item number 8 (cont.) Page 6

8. SIGNIFICANCE (cont.)

The other developer, C.L. Taylor, put up the rest of the Bush Street-Cottage Row houses in two separate developments, 2101-2107 Bush (No. 1-4) in 1874 and 2109-2111 Bush and 1-6 Cottage Row (No. 5 and 13-18) in 1882. The two construction dates represent two different purchases of land, the second in March 1875. Unlike TREA, Taylor did not hurry to sell his houses but held on to them varying lengths of time for income purposes. The 1882 development was identified in <u>The California Architect & Building News</u> as "tenements," then a non-perjorative term which seems to have meant multi-family rental housing. Taylor owned the 1882 development for at least a dozen years but always maintained his own residence more than a mile away at 709 Bush Street, which burned down in 1906.

"Colonel" Charles L. Taylor (born Maine 1826) came to California in 1850 as master of the <u>Andrew Scott</u> out of Portland, Maine, via Cape Horn. From the early 1850s till 1858 he was in the lumber business in San Francisco, manufacturing sash and blinds; thus he was familiar with the construction business and may have done some as a sideline in later years. From 1858 to 1883 he conducted a general shipping and commission business, then moved full time into insurance, heading the Merchants Mutual Marine Insurance Company in the 1860s and the Sun Insurance Company in the 1880s and 1890s. He belonged to the Marine Underwriters for 25 years or more, and to many civic organizations including the Chamber of Commerce and Starr King's Unitarian Church. He was elected successively to the School Board (1858), the State Board of Harbor Commissioners (1863 and 1873) and to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors (1879). The last office probably resulted from his activity with the Real Estate Protective Association, organized in 1878 to reduce property taxes and assessments. The 1880 Census shows Taylor living in a single-family house with his wife, four children, 86-year-old mother and two live-in Chinese servants. A prosperous man, he kept the title "Colonel" from service in the militia during the 1850s and 1860s. In 1870 he listed personal property worth \$75,000, some of which doubtless financed the two developments.

<u>His 1874 development on Bush Street</u> was a grocery with residence above, and three houses next to it. The grocery was and is on the sidewalk line, the houses set back a few feet. The treatment of upper floor and cornice is similar on all four buildings; Taylor meant them to go together, the setback houses sheltered behind the cornerline grocery. They were probably constructed by Thomas Nash, a carpenter and builder who lived on the block as early as 1875 and at 2103 Bush (No. 2) 1878-1883 as Taylor's tenant. In 1887-1889 Nash rented 2 Cottage Row (No. 17) from Taylor.



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8. SIGNIFICANCE (cont.)

The 1882 development came in two parts. First was the six partywall "tenements" (No. 13-18) announced in The California Architect & Building News in July as being built by Thomas Nash for Taylor. The next month the same magazine announced construction of a "tenement" at 2109-2111 Bush (No. 5) by day work to the design of architects Taylor & Copeland. Frederick L. Taylor of this one-project firm was also living at 2103 Bush; he was not Col. Taylor's son but may have been a relation being given a helping hand. However Fred Taylor soon dropped out of the San Francisco Directory, and Copeland formed a partnership with Charles V. Pierce, also an undistinguished firm. The surviving detail work on 2109-2111 Bush relates so well to that on the Cottage Row houses that one must conclude Col. Taylor's influence dominated, and his economic sense mandated that a larger and more pretentious house would be the best business on Bush Street, and that much more modest houses would work best on the shallow row behind it.

Quality ratings for the District are high. <u>Here Today</u> gives a full-page picture to the TREA group on Bush, and it describes Cottage Row and the two Italianate groups on Bush in such terms as "interesting architectural area," "remarkably unchanged row," "handsome survivors," and "uniformity of street facade." In the Appendix it lists the two on Sutter. The San Francisco Department of City Planning's 1976 Architecture Survey rates the buildings it lists on a 0-5 (high) scale. The two on Sutter are rated "1", but 2101 Bush (No. 1) and Cottage Row as a group are rated "3", placing them among the top 1% of San Francisco's entire building stock. Taylor's three matching Italianates (No. 2-4) received a "4" as a group, and the surveyor's comment: "Important block for image of Victorian San Francisco." The highest rating, "5", among the city's top 100 buildings, went to the group of six TREA houses on Bush Street (No. 6, 7, 9-12) with a note on the "Cottage of similar quality behind 2117 Bush" (No. 8). Surveyor Jeremy Kotas remarked, "Unrivaled group/streetscape of this type in San Francisco."

The District boundaries enclose only the work of C.L. Taylor and TREA, expressing well the consistency, variety and town planning built into developments of the period. Outside the boundaries to the west is cleared land awaiting Redevelopment; across Sutter is a mixture of unmatched Victorian houses with shops on ground floors. A moved Victorian, 1737 Webster by the Newsoms and already on the National Register, adjoins the District to the southeast. South of that is 1717 Webster, a single Italianate not historically related to the

(See Continuation Page 8.)

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Bush Street-Cottage Continuation sheet Row Historic District Item number 8 (cont.) Page 8

8. SIGNIFICANCE (cont.)

District; the rest of Webster Street is new construction. Across Bush Street from the District is a heterogeneous mixture of buildings, mostly Victorian, some unsympathetically remodeled, none related in history or quality to the Bush Street-Cottage Row groups.

Cottage Row is a miniature and very private-seeming enclave within the District. Here Today describes it as "one of San Francisco's few residential walkways comparable to an English mews." The lane itself, as well as the partywall houses and 2109-2111 Bush were all a single piece of private property from Col. Taylor's purchase of the land in 1875 until the Bush Street house only was separated from the rest in late 1944. The Cottage Row houses were separated into individual ownership gradually from 1956 to 1967, and only on that last date was the walkway singled out as an individual holding separate from any house. Taylor himself had chosen the name "Cottage Row," which was listed among San Francisco's streets as early as the 1886 Directory. In the 1930s the walkway was popularly called Japan Street, because the entire District was inhabited by Japanese-Americans until their internment during World War II. In the tiny rear yards of Cottage Row they grew vegetables, which they offered for public sale at an informal weekly open market held every Saturday along the Row.

The San Francisco Redevelopment Agency's involvement with the District began with planning: the Agency's Western Addition Project Area Two goes as far north as the center line of Bush Street. While most Victorian houses in Areas One and Two were bulldozed or moved, this group was intact enough to be worth saving. Its owners were required to bring their buildings up to code and generally to refurbish, the Agency providing some low-cost loans and time-consuming planning services. The Mini Park site was already vacant; the Agency developed the park, and also re-bricked Cottage Row walkway. It has no further plans for the District. Foundations have been renewed, and a great deal of interior work has been done. House No. 6 (2115 Bush) changed from an asbestos-shingle facade without moldings, to unpainted shingles, and again since 1975 to a restored/reconstructed facade matching the other TREA Bush Street houses.

(See Appendix about early occupants, on Continuation Page 9.)

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Bush Street-Cottage Continuation sheet Row Historic District Item number 8 (cont.) Page 9

APPENDIX: Some Earliest Known Occupants, by map numbers:

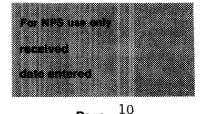
- 1. Henry Schulz, groceries & liquors on site, resident owner 1886+.
- 2. Thomas Nash, carpenter and builder, tenant 1875-1883. Frederick L. Taylor, architect, tenant, 1883.
- 3. B. Strassman, jeweler, resident owner 1875+.
- 6. Samuel B. Steele, wholesale dairy produce, resident owner 1875+.
- 7. Otto Esche, bookkeeper Anglo-California Bank, resident owner 1875+.
- 9. William Fell, dry goods salesman, owner 1875-1878. Samuel J. Strauss, capitalist, resident owner 1880+.
- 10. Henry J. McLerie, contractor & builder, resident owner 1875+.
- 11. Mrs. Lena Konoplitsky, teacher, resident owner, 1875+.
- 12. Jed D. Blanchar, president California Farmers' Mutual Fire Insurance Association, owner and probably resident, 1875+.
- 17. Thomas Nash, carpenter and builder, tenant, 1887-1889.
- 20. Andrew H. Yeazell, livery stable, owner and probably resident 1875+.
- 21. Joseph Craig, attorney, resident owner 1875+.
- 22. Hugh Logan, commission merchant, resident owner 1875+.

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Bush Street-Cottage Continuation sheet Row Historic District Item number 9



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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

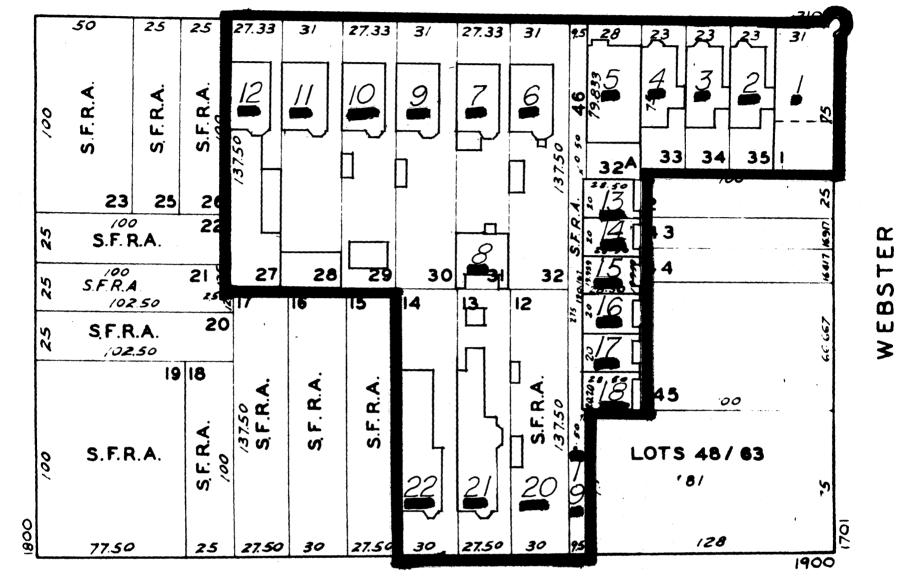
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- ---, 1880, California, San Francisco, 8th Ward, Enumeration District 78: 188A, lines 29-37.

BUSH STREET-COTTAGE ROW HISTORIC DISTRICT SAN FRANCISCO. CA

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