

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received DEC - 9 1983
date entered

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

1. Name

historic The Koshland House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 3800 Washington Street N/A not for publication

city, town San Francisco N/A vicinity of

state California code 05 county San Francisco code 075

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Washington Street Associates

street & number 3800 Washington Street

city, town San Francisco N/A vicinity of state California 94118

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder of the City and County of San Francisco

street & number Room 167 City Hall

city, town San Francisco state California 94102

6. Representation in Existing Surveys SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

Landmark #95, City & County of San Francisco
title has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 7/9/77 federal state county local

depository for survey records Department of City Planning 450 McAllister Street

city, town San Francisco state California 94102

7. Description

Condition

excellent

good

fair

deteriorated

ruins

unexposed

Check one

unaltered

altered

Check one

original site

moved

date N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Situated in the Presidio Heights neighborhood of San Francisco, the Koshland house is a three-story (above a partially submerged basement) building of brick construction with a Colusa sandstone veneer. The sandstone is regular ashlar blocks, 1'-6" x 5'-0" generally, 4" thick, tied onto the structure with wrought iron or mild steel cramps. The exterior face of the block and carved ornament is dressed in a regular horizontal pattern of grooves called broaching, or broached ashlar. At 3800 Washington, the presence of a fine red lichen growing on the stone gives the building a pinkish cast.

Approximately sixty feet wide by seventy-five feet deep, the building appears to be two stories high because the third floor is set back from the parapet and is not visible from the street (see photo #1). The front elevation of 3800 Washington is an academic replica of Le Petit Trianon at Versailles, designed by Ange Jacques Gabriel in 1761 for Louis XV. As such, it features a ballustrated parapet atop the second floor, over a classical entablature with bracketed cornice, plain frieze, and banded architrave. The front elevation is composed of five equal bays separated by four Corinthian columns. The columns have traditional Corinthian capitals, slender fluted shafts two stories high, and attic bases resting upon smooth-faced plinths. This elevation features regularly spaced French windows at both floors. The first floor has pairs of ten-light casements below an eight-light transom. The upper floor has pairs of eight-light casements. This entire elevation rests upon a monumental sandstone terraced entrance which features white marble steps and landings rising to a pair of symmetric curving stairs which arrive at a broad marble terrace which is the main entrance to the building. There are four cast iron light standards, each about nine feet tall, which feature lavender glass spheres on top and clusters of four dolphins at the base.

The third floor has a flat roof, painted cement plaster exterior walls, and irregularly spaced double hung windows.

The east elevation (see photo #2) has the same parapet and entablature. This face, also divided into five bays, has four Corinthian pilasters similar in detail to the front columns. It is here that the basement level can be seen. It is surfaced in heavily rusticated sandstone with deep-set openings for double hung windows, secured behind tubular wrought iron grilles. Between the four pilasters are three large art glass windows designed by artisan and poet Bruce Porter. The middle window bears the greeting "Salve" (Welcome) and the date MCMIV. The flanking windows are images of female-headed terns. There are three smaller art glass windows at the third level, and all are executed in a palette of pink, purple, green, yellow, and blue.

The rear elevation (photo #3), also framed with the parapet, entablature, and rusticated base, has no pilasters or columns. It has unevenly spaced openings, all glazed with the same window type as the front. There is also a small sandstone stair that leads from the garden level to the first floor in one continuous rise. There is one small unglazed opening on the second floor which opens onto a porch, and there is a large fireplace stack centered on the east one-half of this elevation and extending above the parapet.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1902–1904

Builder/Architect Franklin S. Van Trees

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Koshland house is significant architecturally far beyond the implications of its eclectic front facade. Its spatial qualities and the quality of its interior detailing excel among its contemporaries in both richness and monumental character. Its owners have had deep association with San Francisco's commercial life and were intimately involved in the cultural development (specifically music) of this city. They also had a deep commitment to their social and humanitarian responsibilities and generated a legacy of philanthropic endeavor. The building is also associated with the work of artist Bruce Porter who designed and executed the art glass windows and the original formal landscaping.

3800 Washington is far more interesting architecturally than its front facade might suggest. Its period and type define the end of an era in San Francisco, for few such imposing and monumental private residences were built following its completion in 1904. In comparing photographs of 3800 Washington and Le Petit Trianon, it is important to note that while there are minor differences in the details, the concept, massing, and proportions of 3800 Washington are virtually identical to the French original. The terraced base is modified to accommodate the site, but the double curving stair appears to be almost as masterful a solution as the broad, rectangular base of Gabriel's masterpiece. Also, because of the unusually spacious and beautiful interior, this residence continues to intrigue San Franciscans in a way that few other private residences do. Its most recent change in ownership has generated extraordinary media attention (see bibliography). It is almost as if the building were publicly owned, so keen is the public interest in it.

Declared a City Landmark in 1977, the building is also featured in the survey "Here Today" and received high ratings in the Department of City Planning's Inventory which rates only the top 10 percent of San Francisco's buildings.

Little is known about architect Van Trees. This building is undoubtedly his major commission. It is known that he apprenticed in the office of A. Page Brown about the time that Brown was commissioned to design the Ferry Building. Brown's subsequent early death may have delivered the commission for the Koshland house to Van Trees because of his familiarity with the sandstone which is common to both buildings. Van Trees is not listed in City Directories after 1913.

Bavarian immigrant Simon Koshland began his business life in California as a wool sorter in Sacramento's Mission Woolen Mills. Within a few years, he had established his own business, S. Koshland and Company, which was to become one

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 1/2 acre

Quadrangle name San Francisco North

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	0	5	4	8	0	3	0	4	1	8	1	2	3	4	0
Zone		Easting				Northing									

B

Zone		Easting				Northing									

C

Zone		Easting				Northing									

D

Zone		Easting				Northing									

E

Zone		Easting				Northing									

F

Zone		Easting				Northing									

G

Zone		Easting				Northing									

H

Zone		Easting				Northing									

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state n/a code county n/a code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Patrick McGrew, Architect

organization n/a

date 6 May 83

street & number 2398 Pacific Avenue, Suite 403

telephone (415) 922-9330

city or town San Francisco

state California 94115

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature K. Miller

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 8/18/83

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the National Register

date 1/5/84

Alvina Byer
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Representation in
CONTINUATION SHEET Existing Surveys ITEM NUMBER 6 PAGE 2

2. The Junior League of San Francisco, Inc.
1968 Local/County "Here Today"
California History Room - Main Library
Civic Center, San Francisco, California

3. Department of City Planning
1976 Local/County "Architectural
Department of City Planning - 450 McAllister Street
San Francisco, California 94102 Inventory"

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CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

The west elevation (photo #4) has irregularly spaced openings, reflecting the plan functions within. It, too, has a large fireplace stack extending above the parapet. The distinguishing feature of this elevation is its cast iron and glass enclosed entrance porch, which is currently being restored.

Paint scrapings indicate that all of the trim on the building window frames was originally painted a light grey, followed by a dark grey, a dark green-black, and finally its current off-white. It appears that all of the metal work was originally the same dark green-black but seems to have been "glazed" to resemble patinated bronze in the 1930s.

Structurally, the house remains unaltered on the exterior since its completion in 1904. Much of the cornice and all four front columns collapsed in the earthquake of 1906 but were replaced soon thereafter.

Adjacent to the site on the west is the original garage (1909) with servants quarters above (1912), but they are not longer a part of the subject property.

The original landscaping was done in the French style with clipped hedges and formal lawns and a group of Yew trees which give the illusion of an alley when viewed from the center axis of the interior of the house. At the end of the alley was a small sculpture of Pan (now gone) standing in a lily pond. The landscaping was modified many times through the years, and the formal gardens in the rear yard were removed long ago.

The interiors of 3800 Washington feature many notable rooms. See the attached plans for location.

1. Foyer: The foyer is a small rotunda with white marble floors and dark green marble walls. It is flanked on either side by a pair of small conservatories, each accessed by three pair of curved French doors. Each conservatory has a large stone planter.

2. The Atrium: This room was designed to bring light into the center of the house. An opening roughly eighteen feet on each side penetrates the two uppermost floors of the building and is capped by a skylight. At the first floor, the atrium features eight green Irish marble columns with bronze capitals and bases. Centered in the atrium is a small marble fish pond.

3. The Salon: This room is said to have been imported in its entirety from an 18th century French chateau. It features a 12-foot-high white marble fireplace with a rose marble inset. The room is paneled in a light, soft wood which appears to have been sandblasted. There are large wooden columns, pediments, and cornices and a plaster barrel vaulted ceiling.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

4. The Library: This room was designed to conceal the books contained therein behind a system of large wooden panels which are detailed with concealed hardware. The panels are flanked by large wooden columns, and all of the woodwork is a dark mahogany but was painted an off-white in the 1950s. There is an elaborately coffered ceiling and rust-colored marble fireplace.

5. The Dining Room: This room was also paneled in two dark-colored woods and originally featured accents of gold-tooled green leather. The leather has been removed and replaced with mirror. There is a beamed ceiling with gothic detailing and an enormous fireplace with dark green marble facing and a wooden mantel supported by two nearly life-size carved figures of Bacchus.

6. The Ballroom: In the basement, there is a large hall of mirrors which runs the entire width of the house. Each wall features panels of mirrors framed by elaborate gilded boiserie. There are raised platforms at each end which were designed to be used as stages for musical performances. The finishes in this room were restored to their original character in 1982, although the original silvering on the mirrors remains.

7. Second Floor Living Room: This is the second largest room in the house and features a dark wooden wainscot and beamed ceiling. It, too, has a large fireplace, this one in tan stone with an arched opening.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

of the leading woolen companies in America. It later became S. Koshland and Sons, with sons Marcus and Jesse heading offices in San Francisco and Boston, respectively.

Son Marcus married San Francisco native Corrine Schweitzer (daughter of Bernard Schweitzer, a furnishings wholesaler) in 1890, thus establishing a union between two San Francisco families whose commercial successes were to finance a large part of this city's cultural and philanthropic life, continuing even to this day. Marcus died in 1925, leaving his widow and children (Daniel, Robert, and Margaret) a fortune and a legacy of cultural and philanthropic endeavor.

Mrs. Koshland, because of her love of music, played an important role in the establishment of the San Francisco Symphony and the San Francisco Opera. 3800 Washington was frequently the scene of musical events which generated support for the Symphony. Mrs. Koshland was an early Board Member of the Symphony. Musicians who either entertained or were houseguests at the house during this period included Yehudi Menuin (whose education was partially financed by Mrs. Koshland), Issac Stern, Leonard Bernstein, Jascha Heifitz, Pierre Monteaux, and Igor Stravinski.

Later, much of the Koshland fortune went into the establishment of the San Francisco Foundation, through the efforts of Daniel Koshland. This is the major cultural/philanthropic agency in San Francisco, and they have recently instituted a series of bequests called the Daniel Koshland Awards.

The second owners of 3800 Washington also figured prominently in San Francisco's commercial, social, and philanthropic life. They were Mr. and Mrs. Walter Buck. He was an extremely successful financier with interests in banking, shipping, and distilling. He also served for a time as President of the California Palace of the Legion of Honor. After their deaths, part of their estate became the basis for the Buck Foundation (administered by the San Francisco Foundation), which is the major cultural/philanthropic agency for Marin County.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Bibliography ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

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CONTINUATION SHEET Bibliography ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 3

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- Moffat, Frances, Nob Hill Gazette, July 1982, p. 4, "Mystery at 3800 Washington".
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- Morch, Albert, San Francisco Examiner, May 23, 1977, "Marie's Splendid Soiree".
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- Porter, Bruce obituary, Berkeley Gazette, February 18, 1954, "Artist Bruce Porter dead at 88".
- PHAN MAIL, Newsletter of the Presidio Heights Association of Neighbors.
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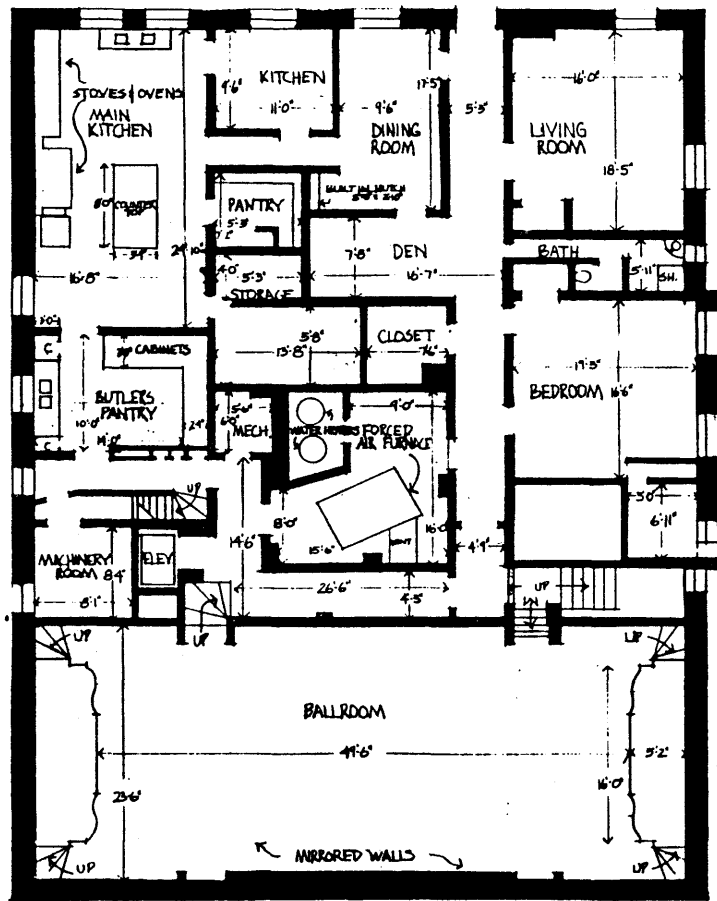
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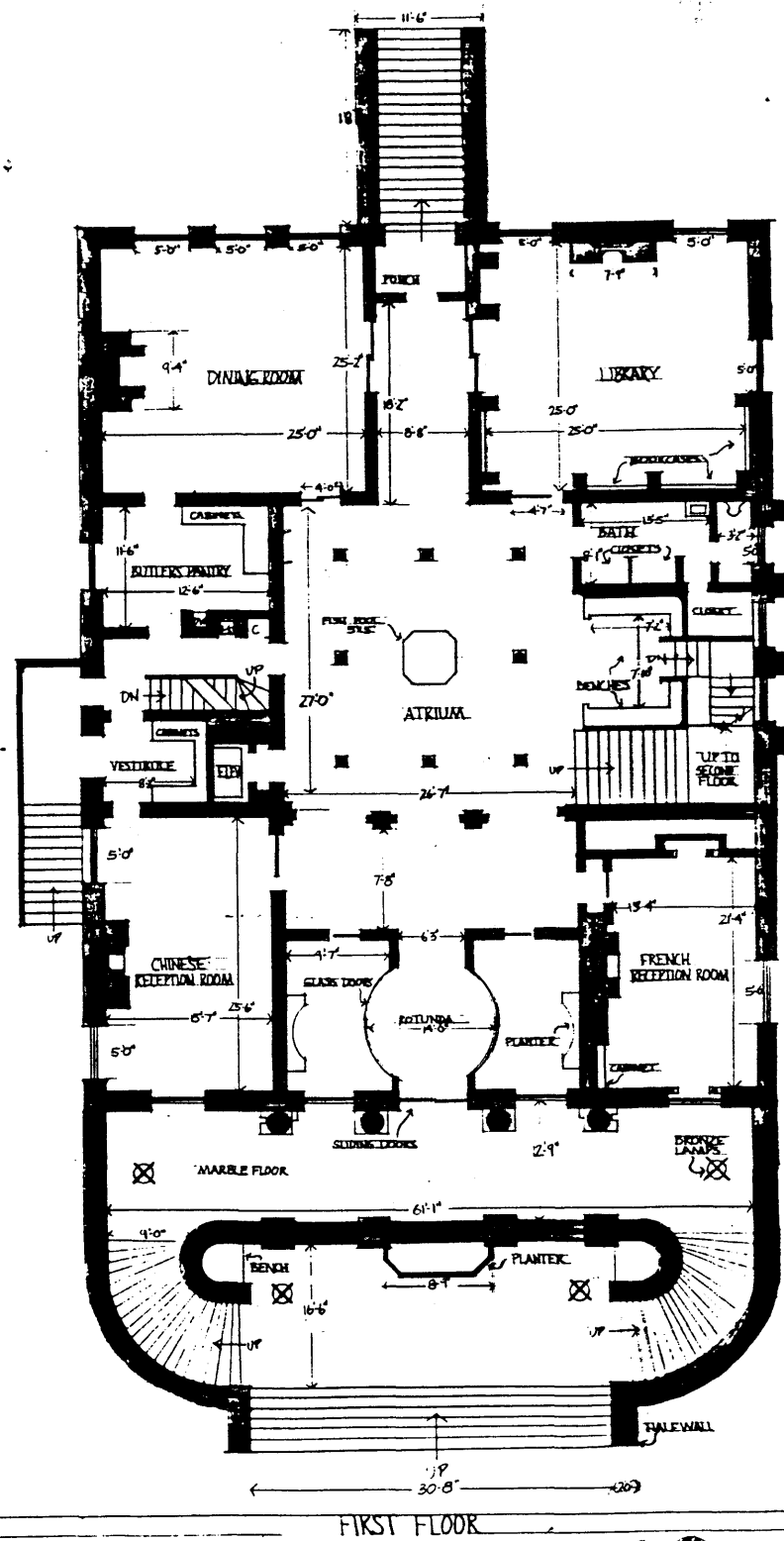
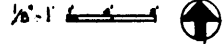
CONTINUATION SHEET Geographical Data ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 1

Verbal boundary description and justification: Beginning at the point of intersection of the northerly line of Washington Street with the westerly line of Maple Street; running thence westerly along said line of Washington Street 117.75 feet; thence at a right angle northerly 169.647 feet; thence at a right angle 117.75 feet easterly; thence at a right angle southerly 169.647 feet to the point of beginning.

Boundaries are drawn upon current lot lines which encompass the historic structure and result from the subdivision of the once larger parcel.



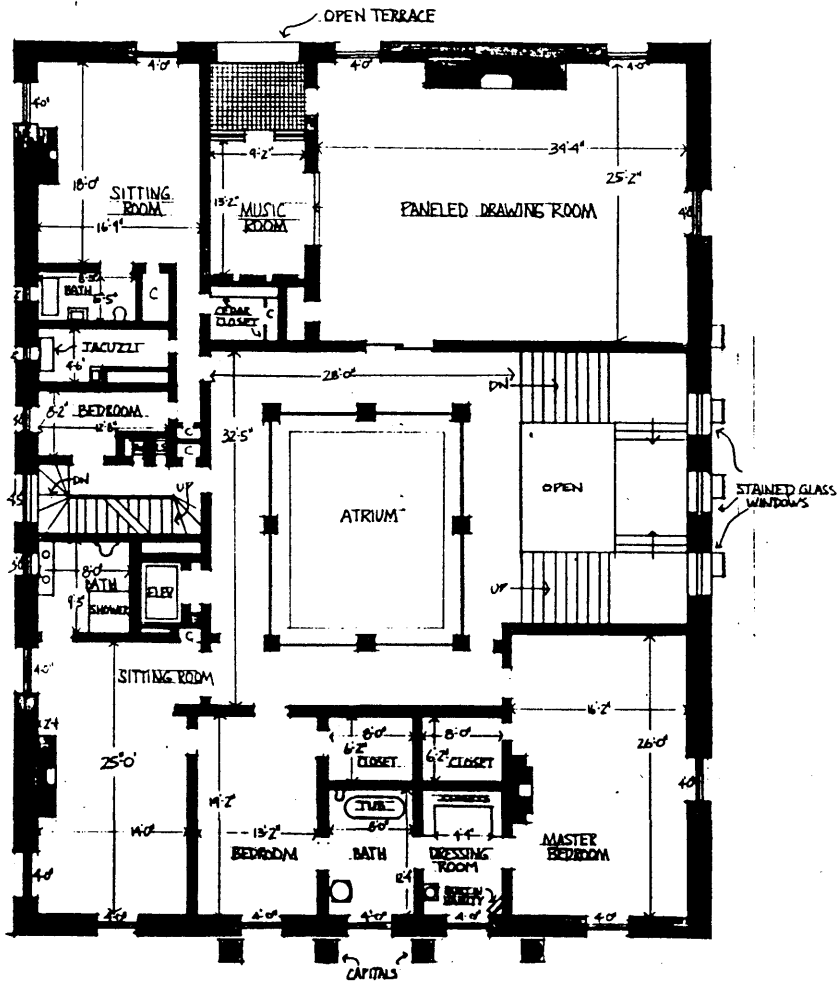
GROUND FLOOR



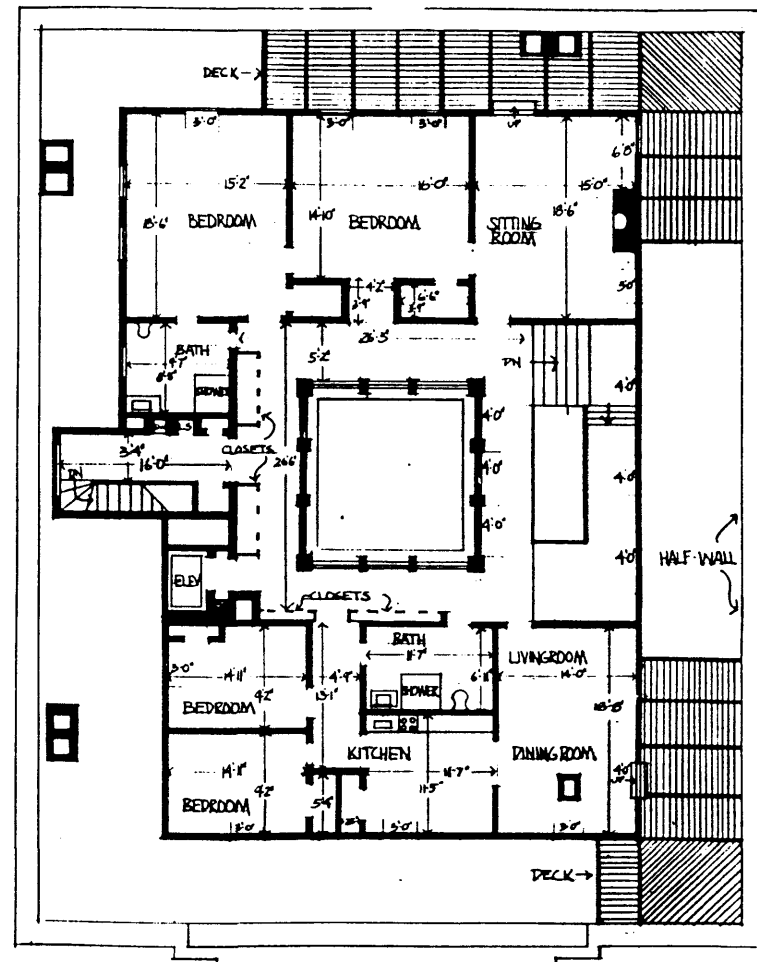
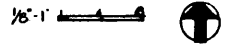
FIRST FLOOR

THE KOSHLAND HOUSE
3800 WASHINGTON STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

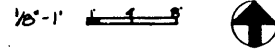
BASEMENT AND FIRST FLOOR PLANS



SECOND FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR



THE KOSHLAND HOUSE
3800 WASHINGTON STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

second and third floor plans

JACKSON

MAPLE

20' 0" 1/2

JACKSON 3785

3769

JACKSON 3765

JACKSON 3757

3777

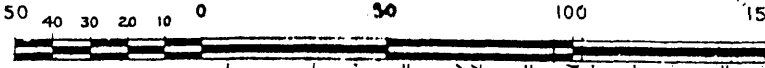
3731

3731

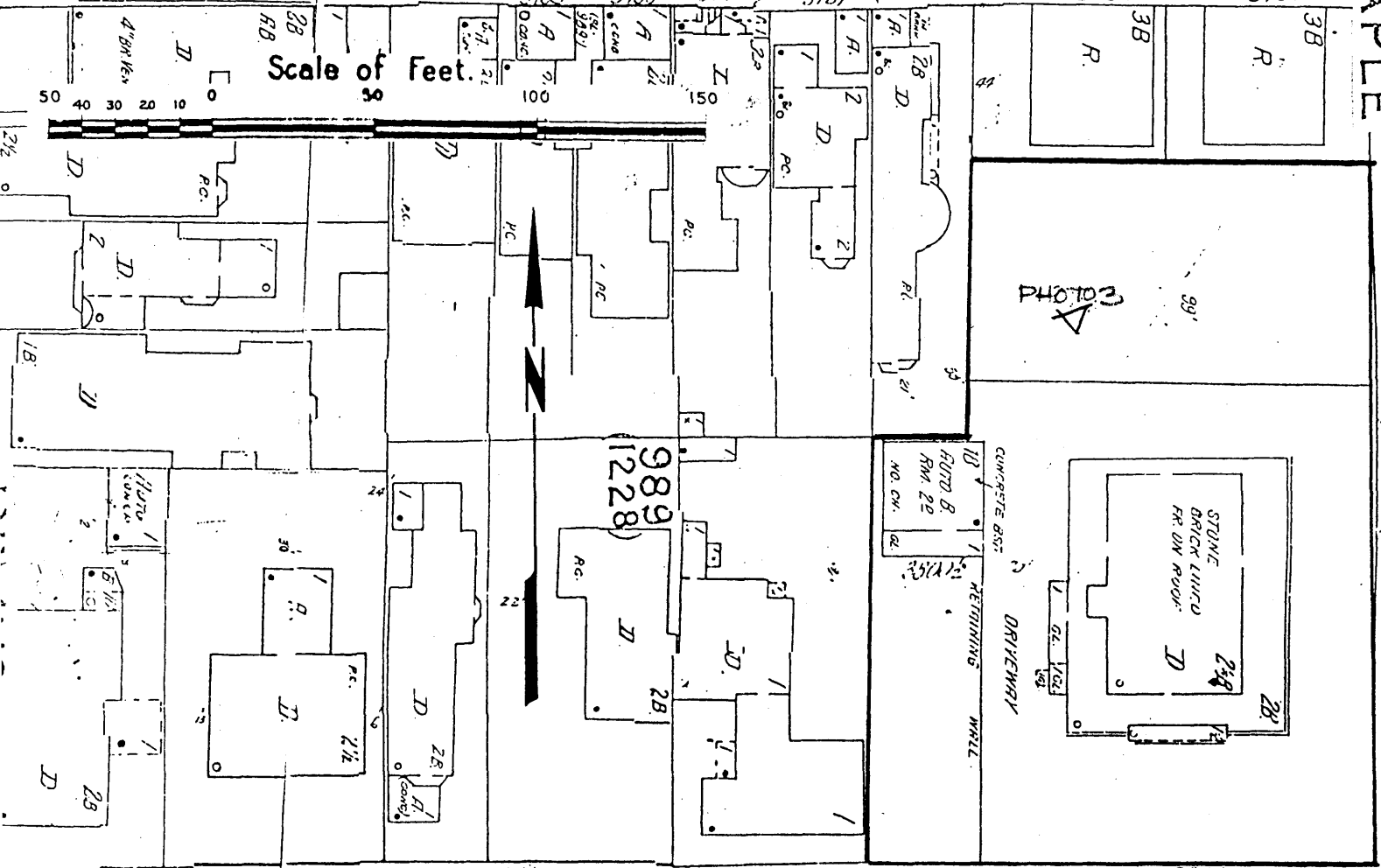
JACKSON 3731 3705

3701

Scale of Feet.



AUTO. HO.
LIME CONC.



3898

3880

3870

3850

3820

3800

3800 WASHINGTON ST

PHOTO 4

PHOTO 1

8" W. PIPE

DR.

THE KOSHLAND HOUSE
3800 WASHINGTON STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

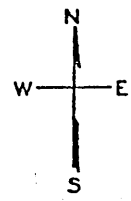
SANBORNE MAP WITH PHOTO LOCATIONS

581064

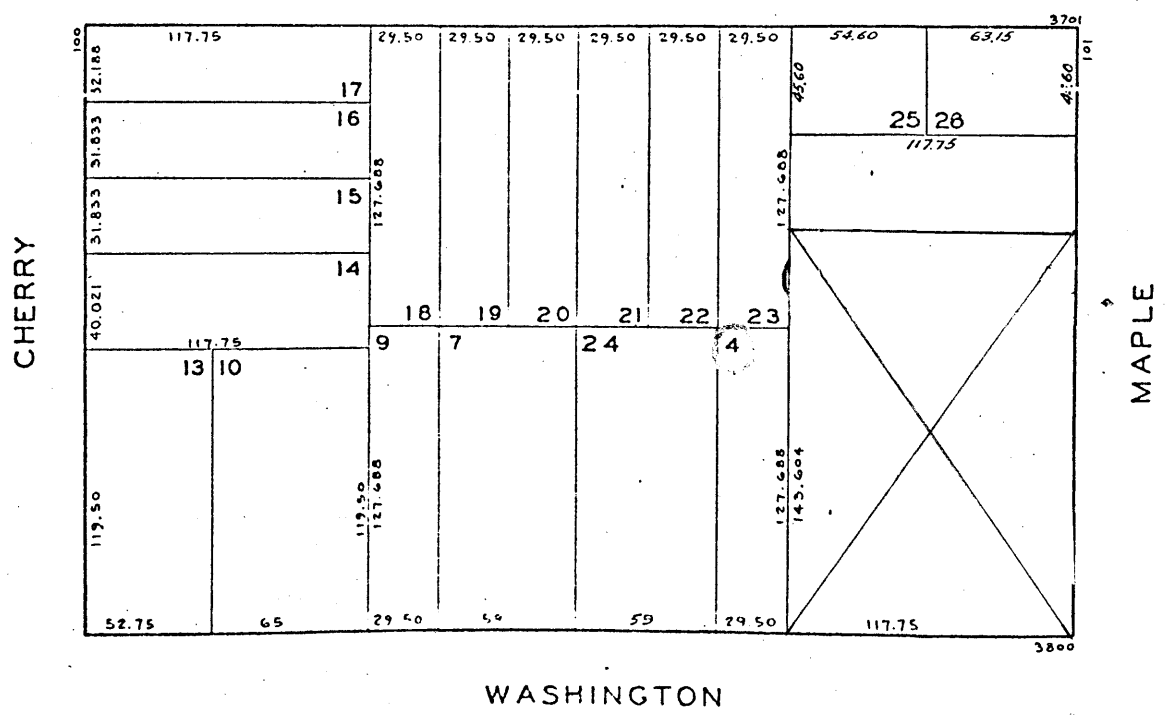
W.A. B...
RE...

LOTS MERGED

LOTS	INTO	LOTS	
8	-	7	'1944'
11-12	-	10	"
12A	-	13	"



JACKSON



THIS IS NOT A SURVEY OF THE LAND, BUT IS COMPILED FROM DATA SHOWN BY THE PUBLIC RECORDS

WESTERN TITLE INSURANCE COMPANY

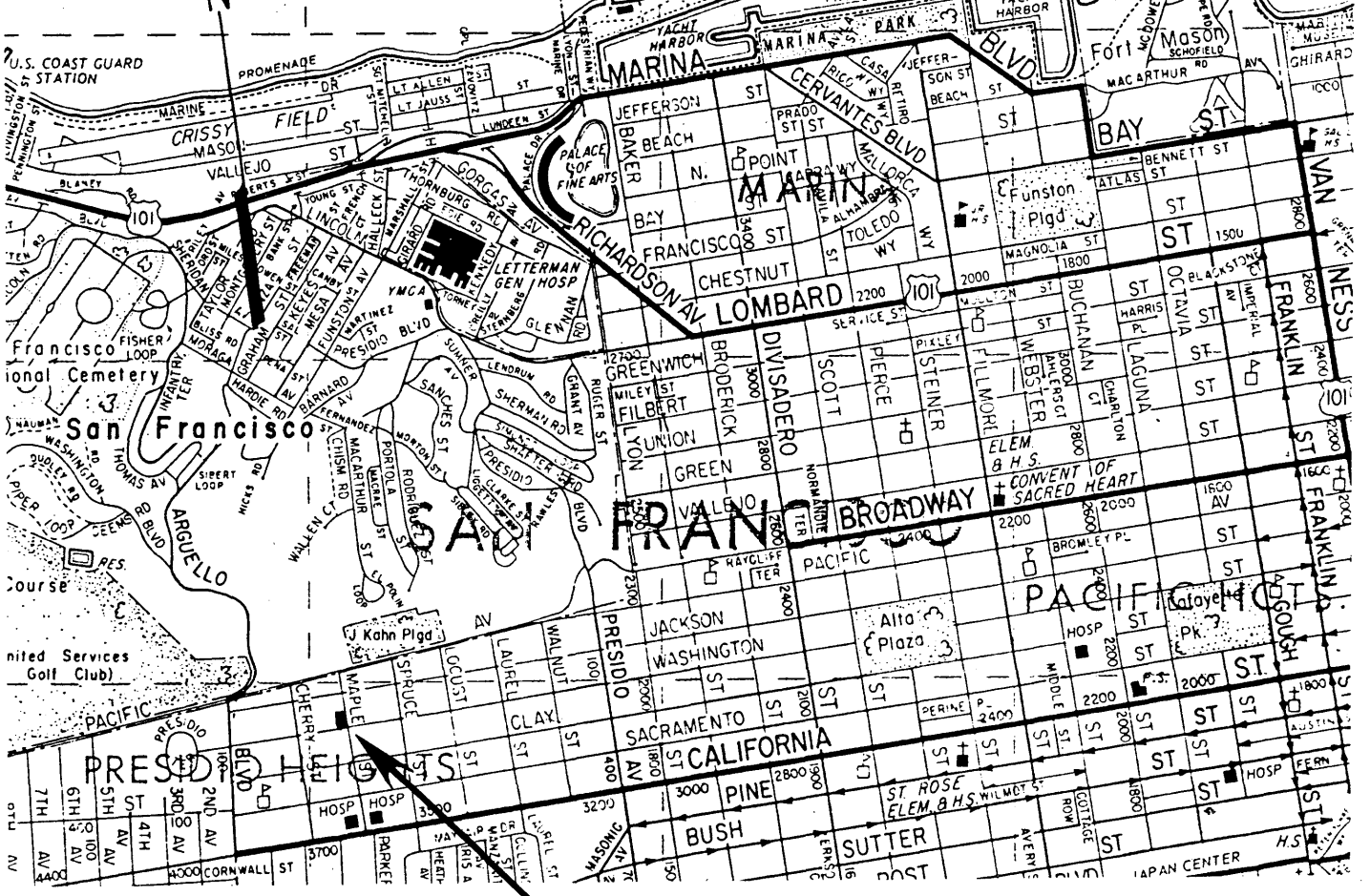
THE KOSHLAND HOUSE
3800 WASHINGTON STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

LOT MAP

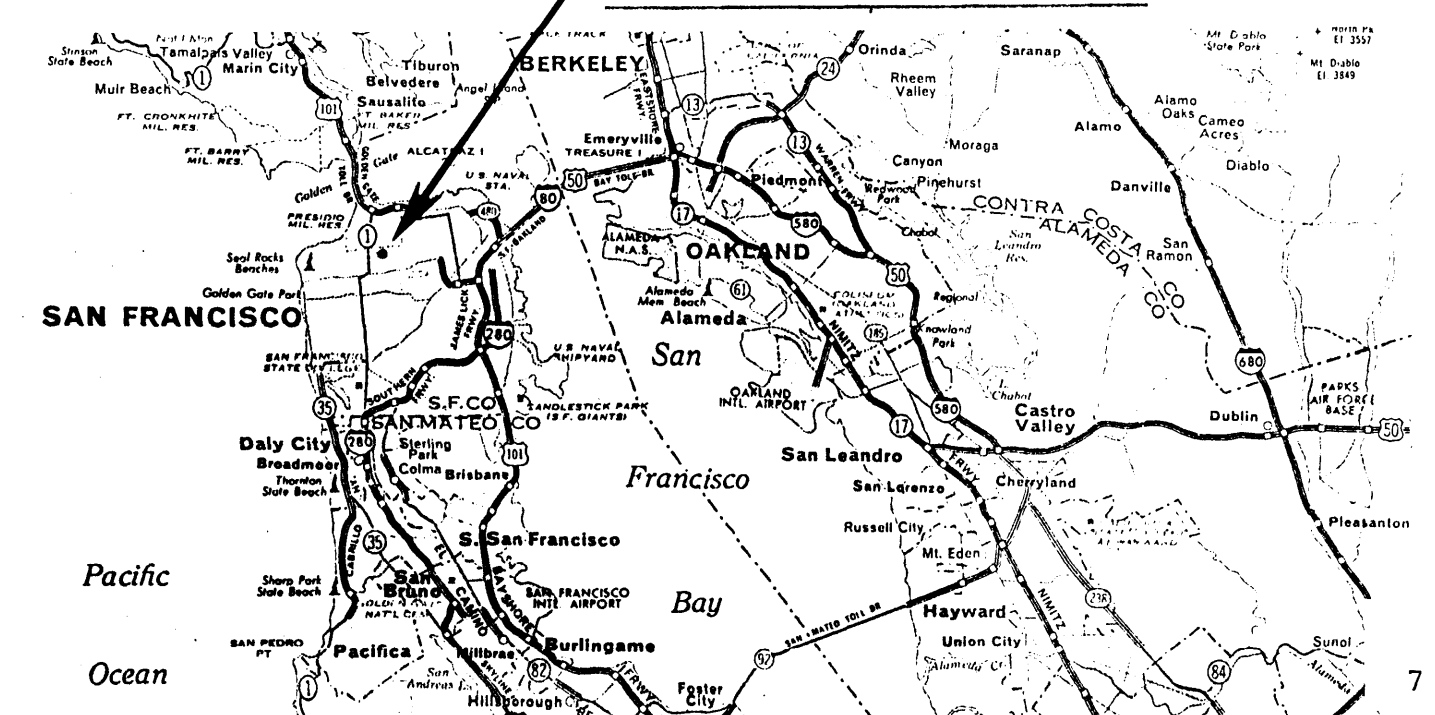
SAN FRANCISCO BAY

INSET OF ST. FRANCIS SQUARE

- 1 ZAMPA LN
- 2 EASTERN SHORE LN
- 3 BUCHANAN LN
- 4 BERTIE WILSON LN
- 5 LOTTIE BENNETT LN
- 6 ANNIE LARSEN LN
- 7 GENERAL BANNING LN
- 8 INCA LN
- 9 OCEANIA VANCE LN
- 10 METHA NELSON LN
- 11 Y.M.C.A.
- 12 TICKETS SQ
- 13 BENDTSEN SQ
- 14 TICHENDP SQ
- 15 MAYHEW TURNER SQ
- 16 GALILEE LN
- 17 SAMAP LN
- 18 QUICKSTEP LN



LOCATION OF SUBJECT PROPERTY



THE KOSHLAND HOUSE
3800 WASHINGTON STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

VICINITY MAP