

RECEIVED
MAY 24 1983

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received **AUG 16 1983**

date entered

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

Final

1. Name

historic The (John) McMullen House

and/or common The Chateau Agape

2. Location

street & number 827 Guerrero Street n/a not for publication

city, town San Francisco n/a vicinity of

state CA 94110 code 06 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Leroy and Katherine Looper

street & number 827 Guerrero Street

city, town San Francisco n/a vicinity of state California 94110

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder's Office, San Francisco City Hall

street & number 400 Van Ness Avenue

city, town San Francisco state California 94102

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title (See Continuation Sheet) has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>n/a</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The McMullen house is a single family residence, now used as a residential care facility. The building is a free-standing structure placed near the north edge of its lot, leaving a south-facing garden of a size unusual in this rather densely packed neighborhood. The house is set back further than the other houses on the block, all of which are (or were originally) Italianate in style, dating from the 1870s. The general area consists of large 19th century houses and early 20th Century apartment or flat buildings with a few later infill structures.

The house has changed little since a major remodeling and enlargement in 1890. Subsequent alterations are confined to harmonious rear extensions, minor interior changes, and its current paint color.

The building is 2½ stories high and in plan is an irregular "L" enriched with various rounded and angled extensions. It is a wood frame building sheathed with coved rustic siding and patterned shingles. The building is topped by a complex roof composed of a steeply sloped pyramidal hip with subsidiary sections ending in jerkinhead gables. The roof is broken by dormer windows; those of the earlier portion are topped by miniature versions of the original jerkinhead gables; the dormers of the later section have shed roofs. There is a round tower topped by a candle-snuffer roof cone. The building appears to retain its original chimneys; they have an elaborate profile created by corbeled brick courses.

The house is on a sloping site, several feet above street level. Granite steps lead from the sidewalk to a landing of black and white marble in a checkerboard pattern. Light colored marble steps lead from there to the recessed entry porch with the same black and white marble floor. There is a granite retaining wall at the sidewalk, punctuated by granite and concrete piers. Between these piers were originally hand wrought iron fence sections of great delicacy. Some of these panels, which are composed of spiral and leaf motifs, are no longer extant. The matching gates, now placed at the first landing, may originally have been located at sidewalk level.

The corner house at 845 Guerrero once belonged to subsequent owners of the McMullen house and was used to house servants. This property was sold off, however, as was the parcel just east which once contained the carriage house.

The north side of the house is largely obscured from sight by the closeness of the building next door. It does, however, appear to be largely intact in its original, Stick Style incarnation. To the rear a series of small additions and enclosures are typical of the effect changes in plumbing technology and kitchen requirements have had on San Francisco buildings of this age.

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/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1881/1890/1898 **Builder/Architect** Unknown/Samuel Newsom

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

827 Guerrero is a superb example of Queen Anne styling, one of the residential styles whose prevalence in the city creates San Francisco's unique visual environment. It is an important work by one of the most influential of California's 19th century designers. It's almost totally intact interiors are the result of a series of alterations carried out between 1890 and 1904 for John McMullen, a contractor who made significant contributions to modern mechanical and hydraulic dredging technology.

With the recent re-examination of the architectural productions of the 19th century, Samuel Newsom has been revealed as a major California designer. The Carson House in Eureka, designed by Samuel and his brother, J. Cather Newsom, is one of America's best known examples of its style and type -- the Queen Anne residential extravaganza. The Newsoms had a wide and successful practice, and designed buildings from Pennsylvania to Hawaii, although the largest portion of their work is in California, both southern and northern. Well over a thousand buildings are documented as having been designed by them. Through publication of a series of plan books, and through unabashed and skillful self-advertisement, the Newsoms exerted an enormous influence upon other architects, and particularly over the vast army of untrained designer-builders of the era. They were, in their own time, identified closely enough with the ornamental styles of the 19th century to provide an easy target for the young Turks of the Bay Area Tradition (Willis Polk, in an attack on what he considered the aesthetic excesses of the time, referred in the public prints to 'The Gruesome Brothers'). More recently, the Newsoms continue to be seen as touchstone figures of the Eastlake and Queen Anne modes which provide the image of the residential areas of many California cities, particularly of San Francisco; in 1979 the Newsom Brothers were the subjects of an extensive traveling exhibition shown locally at the Oakland Museum.

The Newsoms used the standard elements of the design modes of the time (they were always abreast of the latest change in fashion), but deployed them with more daring than most of their contemporaries. They exploited the freedom of non-axial Queen Anne planning to create unexpected spatial sequences; they made their buildings visually dramatic even when this involved treating conventional ideas of proportion and composition with a creative lack of respect; their

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property 0.157 acre

Quadrangle name San Francisco North

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	0	5	5	0	7	3	0	4	1	7	8	8	8	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

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D

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H

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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
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ms. Katherine Looper; Mr. Bradford Paul; Ms. Jean Kortum (research) and Mr. John Beach (architectural historian)

organization Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage date 5/8/83

street & number 2007 Franklin Street telephone (415) 441-3000

city or town San Francisco state California 94102

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 [Signature]

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 5/8/83

For NPS use only
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register
[Signature] Entered in the National Register date 9/15/83
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: [Signature] date _____
Chief of Registration

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The John McMullen House
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Over a period of years, there have been alterations which include: a extensive remodel by Samuel Newsom in 1890. He altered the house by widening it, adding a tower, extending it to the rear and creating a basement. In 1892 the kitchen was extended and widened. In the late 1890's a rear extension was added to the house. In 1904 a butler's pantry was built. Other later alterations include a sprinkler system, and alterations to the bathrooms and kitchen/serving area.

The house as it now exists is the result of extensive 1890 alterations to the existing Stick Style house. Originally built in 1881 on a 25' x 100' lot, the builder and architect are unknown. The visual quality of the exterior of the original building can be sensed particularly clearly along the north side, where such details as an original wooden awning are intact. The jerkinhead gable form and the under eave texture of the wall surface are legacies of the Stick Style. The 1890 additions deferred in the manner of roof form, but the round tower, the horseshoe arch and elaborate ornament of the entry, and the textured shingle surfaces are up-to-the-minute Queen Anne fashion of the 1890's. No traces remain of the 1881 interior, with the possible exception of the second floor door facings.

The front elevation faces west, and entry is through a large horseshoe-shaped, spindle-work arch framing a recessed paneled entryway. This archway is surrounded by pressed metal acanthus leaves framing the arch and a floral motif in triangular arch panels on either side. Three wood cameo faces decorate the bottom of the arch at each side. This arch is the central focus of the street elevation and mediates between the earlier Stick Style jerkinhead gable form on the left hand of the facade, and the typical round Queen Anne Tower to the right. The steeply sloped roof plane unites the disparate collection of facade forms. The heavily-proportioned barge board of the jerkinhead gable is apparently a legacy of the Queen Anne alterations.

The large square bay window to the left hand side of the west elevation has one large sash on the bottom and a series of four smaller transom windows above. This composition creates a more horizontal emphasis than would have been the case in the original house, with the vertical proportions of the Stick Style.

Fluted square pilasters at the corners of the bay are topped with Ionic capitals. Beaded pressed metal garlands are above the window with pineapple finials at the corners above the bay cornice.

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The second story window frames are rounded at the corners and set flush to the wall. Incised floral designs decorate the window hoods. A board and batten gable skirt with sawn balls runs along the lower area below the eave. The broad bargeboard is rounded at the bottom and is decorated with floral wreaths. The smaller rosettes along the bargeboard have been removed.

The horizontal theme is further carried out by the balcony over the entry, and the jerkinhead gable above. The balcony features a small window and the exterior wall is finished in a staggered square butt pattern of wide and narrow shingles. The balusters are in a spindle work pattern and dentils beginning over the porch continue around the tower.

The tower features eight panels of stained glass in the lower part with aligned wood panels below. The upper sashes of the second story are divided into small panes of flashed glass. The tower has decorative bands of fish scale shingles alternating with square butt shingles and a bell-shaped witches cap roof with a finial on top.

The south side of the house, facing the garden, is dominated by a massive bay window. The window frames again have rounded corners and are set flush to the wall, although the main lower window appears to be altered. An incised floral pattern decorates the hood above the second story window, similar to that on the front of the house. Again, a board and batten gable skirt covers the top part of the south facade, but the sawn balls, found on the front of the house, have been removed on the bay. The bay has a clipped gable and the same broad bargeboard found on the front of the house, but the floral wreaths and rosettes remain under the eaves between the tower and the bay.

The large two story plus attic addition at the rear of the house has a slightly different character. The windows are larger than in the rest of the house, and those on the south side of this addition have a projected flat hood. The lower window on the west side of the addition has been stripped of its hood and any other decorative elements it once might have had. The same gable skirt with sawn balls is under the eaves although most of the balls are missing.

Most of the interior survives from the 1890's. The ground floor consists of four main rooms plus entryhall and alcove, kitchen and various pantries, utility and service rooms. The floors are of hardwood laid in patterns which vary from room to room, and there is a wood

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paneled wainscoting which runs throughout the ground floor. Also consistently present, on both the ground floor and the much more simply detailed second floor, is shallow-relief ornamental plaster work in delicate, Adamesque patterns.

The plan is quite idiosyncratic, at least in part, due to the fact that the earlier building imposed certain existing conditions upon the 1890 remodel. For example, two small rooms were apparently joined by the removal of a partition to form the parlor at the northwest corner of the house; the resulting space is unusually long and narrow. In the large room to the east of the entryhall (which runs the full width of the house), structural requirements for support of the existing second floor necessitated a post almost in the center of this space created, again, by removing the partitions between two or more rooms. The post was disguised by enclosure in a pillar of exaggerated proportion which forms the central backrest of a circular banquette.

There are several fireplaces in the house. Of the three extant on the ground floor, the one in the parlor, with the banquette mentioned above, is the most unusual. The overmantel has an Art Nouveau cresting pattern of carved wood, and is supported by collonettes of fluid profile and unusual capital design. The hearth and firebox facing are of vivid, almost chartreuse, green tile, with an inset panel of the same glazes, containing a relief of a reclining human figure. The fireplace of the formal dining room is of emphatically overscaled proportions and is related to similar, classically derived elements in the work of such Bay Area designers as Willis Polk and Ernest Coxhead.

The entrance/stair hall is handsome in both its spatial composition and the ornament of its surfaces. The rectangular configuration is enriched by a circular alcove two steps above the main level. This alcove has a built-in bench around the perimeter, and above it a ribbon band of stained glass windows of geometric design. The stair newell, surmounted by a female figure holding electric lights is Byzantine or Romanesque in its inspiration. Square in section, its surface is furrowed by a series of curving parallel grooves, and it is topped by a capital of floriated ornament. The stair railing is divided into small panels, each of which contains a carved latticework whose pattern is derived from a different geometric figure of composition. These panels are intricately carved from a single piece of wood to imitate woven basket work. There is an unusual floral pattern stained glass window at the base of the stair.

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ornament was exuberant and sometimes unexpected in subject. It is this fusion of spatial richness, formal drama, and fertility of ornament which places their achievement beyond the decorated box which was frequently the best their imitators and competitors could manage.

These elements are all seen in skillful concert in the McMullen House, with its unusual plan and varied spaces, its emphatic contrast between Stick Style linearity/verticality and Queen Anne fullness/horizontality, and such fanciful ornamental devices as the horse-shoe entry arch with tiny carved human faces and the intricate, fake basketweave panels of the stair railing. The Newsoms built mansions and cottages; the McMullen House lies in the standard mid-range of their commissions in terms of its size, but it provides a perfect text case for the ideas which made their work at any scale an important component of the cultural legacy of their time.

The original house may or may not have been designed by the Newsoms (there is nothing to indicate that it was), but their remodeling was so thoroughgoing that they made the building essentially theirs. Later additions, whether by the Newsoms or others, respect the Newsom remodeling to a harmonious degree: the house as it now stands is a visual record of successive change which document the career of its original owner, the history of his evolving prosperity. John McMullen was a pioneer in the hydraulic dredging industry in the last decades of the 19th century. He had projects in the United States, Canada, and the Phillipines, and was an innovator in the 'accomplishment of difficult construction tasks and in building new engineering precedents.' (Pioneers in Hydraulic Dredging.)

Mr. McMullen, a native of Connecticut, arrived in San Francisco in 1876 and became a carpenter/builder by trade. Numerous sources indicate that he established the San Francisco Bridge Company in 1877; "the scope of their operations embraces the building of bridges, canals, pipelines and water works, harbor improvements, etc., and their specialities are the building of hydraulic dredging machines and dredging by the hydraulic method--digging and putting ashore any material except rock." (San Francisco, The Imperial City, 1899.) Incorporated in 1883, the San Francisco Bridge Company was the first of a number of contracting and dredging companies which McMullen organized and served as president. Others include the Atlantic Gulf and Pacific Company of New York, which is still in existence; the Puget Sound Bridge and Dredging Company; and the Atlantic and Pacific Gulf Company of Manila. These various firms were responsible for such

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jobs as coal bunkers at the Green Street Wharf, dredging Oakland Harbor, construction of the tide canal between Oakland and San Leandro Bay, dredging at Mare Island Navy Yard, various bridges in the Northwest and Canada, including 47 bridges for the Canadian Pacific Railway, Section 6 of the San Francisco Seawall, filling in of the Islais Bay, Hunter's Point Drydock, piers at Fort Mason, harbor improvements and construction in Manila Bay in the Philippines, and a contract for the hydraulic dredging of Boston Harbor. His obituary noted "McMullen's history is the history of contracting in the West." (S.F. Chronicle, August 30, 1921.)

In 1879, Mr. McMullen married a Swedish woman, Lena, whom he had met shortly after his arrival in San Francisco. In 1881, they acquired their original lot on Guerrero Street that was 25 feet in width by 100 feet deep. Later that same year, a typical two-story Stick Style Victorian residence was built there for them; the original architect or builder, if any, are unknown. The house contained a small front and back parlor, dining room, and kitchen downstairs, and two or three small bedrooms above. Sometime in the 1880's, McMullen acquired the adjacent lot to the south which allowed the later expansion of the house. In 1890 McMullen retained architect Samuel Newsom to upgrade his house. The contractors were William N. Concannon and John M. Shay, and the cost of remodelling was \$7,775.00, a sum that in those days would have built a whole house. Newsom widened the house, added a tower, extended it to the rear, and created basement rooms under the new additions. (The rest of the house has only crawl space.)

But this by now elegant house was still not satisfactory to the McMullens. Sometime after 1892 the kitchen was widened and extended to the rear, and a garden was built with walkways and a fountain. In the late 1890's, still another section was added to the rear of the house, a large two-story and attic addition, with a grand Edwardian dining room on the main floor (probably the house's third dining room). This work may have been done in 1898 when McMullen took out a building contract with Moore and Cameron. The architect is unknown, but the style is compatible with the earlier Newsom work, and in San Francisco, the Newsoms often used the contracting firm of the Moore Brothers. It may be at this time that the one-story back porch was enclosed, to become two stories. In early 1904, there was still more work done on the house, for Mrs. McMullen signed a completion of work with building contractor A.T. Spence, and the Water Department noted: "Addition completed about one month. Contains butler's pantry -- 1 sink."

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In late 1907 or early 1908, the McMullens left San Francisco for New York, where McMullen was President of the Atlantic, Gulf and Pacific Company. By his death in 1921, McMullen was worth \$2 million, largely in stock of that company. He willed the bulk of his estate to Cornell University, with nominal bequests to various nieces and nephews.

The sale of the Guerrero Street house from the McMullens to Joseph Young was recorded on January 11, 1908. Young was a druggist; in the 1907-08 City Directory he was listed as being at 20th and Folsom. The house continued to remain in his family until 1951. The house has been a residential care facility since 1956.

Later alterations include creation and alterations of bathrooms and kitchen, and the installation of a sprinkler system. Except for the removal of a wall between the kitchen and the large parlor, now used as a dining room, and the removal of one fireplace and mantel, the ground floor public rooms are intact.

There is no currently available documentation as to the original color scheme of the house, although there are general discussions of color by the Newsoms in their plan books. Generally there was a varied collection of colors related by the subdued earth pigment quality they all shared.

The architectural importance of this particular building to its neighborhood and to San Francisco is borne out by its inclusion to city-wide architectural surveys and inventories. These include the Junior League of San Francisco's architectural survey which was published as Here Today - San Francisco's Architectural Heritage, and the Department of City Planning's 1976 Architectural Inventory, which includes only the top 10% of all buildings in the city, in which it was rated in the two highest categories.

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1. Atlantic, Gulf and Pacific. Hydraulic Dredging Since 1899.
New York: Atlantic, Gulf and Pacific, 1962. Page 1-4.
2. California Architect and Builder, September 20, 1890.
3. Delehanty, Randolph. San Francisco: Walks and Tours in the Golden Gate City. New York: The Dial Press, 1980. Page 164.
4. Gebhard, David; Von Greton, Harriette; and Winter, Robert W. Samuel and Joseph Gather Newsom: Victorian Architectural Imagery in California, 1878-1908.
5. "Illustrated Review - San Francisco and Its Commercial Progress and Importance," Bay Cities Publishing Co., January 1867, Page 1.
6. "Oakland Men Seek Fortune of Contractor," The San Francisco Chronicle, November 2, 1921, Page 8, c. 2.
7. Olmsted, Roger and Watkins, T.H. Here Today - San Francisco's Architectural Heritage. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1968. Page 271.
8. Sales Ledgers, San Francisco Assessor's Office, 1917-1978.
9. Sanborn Maps, University of California, Berkeley, California. 1889, 1892, 1905, 1912, 1919, present.
10. "San Francisco Bridge Co." San Francisco, The Imperial City. San Francisco: Mercantile Illustrating Co., 1899. Page 111.
11. The San Francisco Chronicle, August 30, 1921, page 9, c. 1, Obituary of John McMullen.
12. San Francisco City Directories, various editions, 1879-80 through 1910-11.
13. San Francisco Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board. Final Case Report for the John McMullen house. August 10, 1980.
14. San Francisco Plat Map Book, 1894, 1901, 1906, 1909, 1964.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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15. San Francisco Water Department on 827 Guerrero Street.
16. Waldhorn, Judith Lynch and Woodbridge, Sally B. Victoria's Legacy. San Francisco: 101 Publications, 1978, page 54.
17. 1900 Census. Sup. District No. 1, Enumeration District 106, sheet 2, June 1 and 2, 1900.

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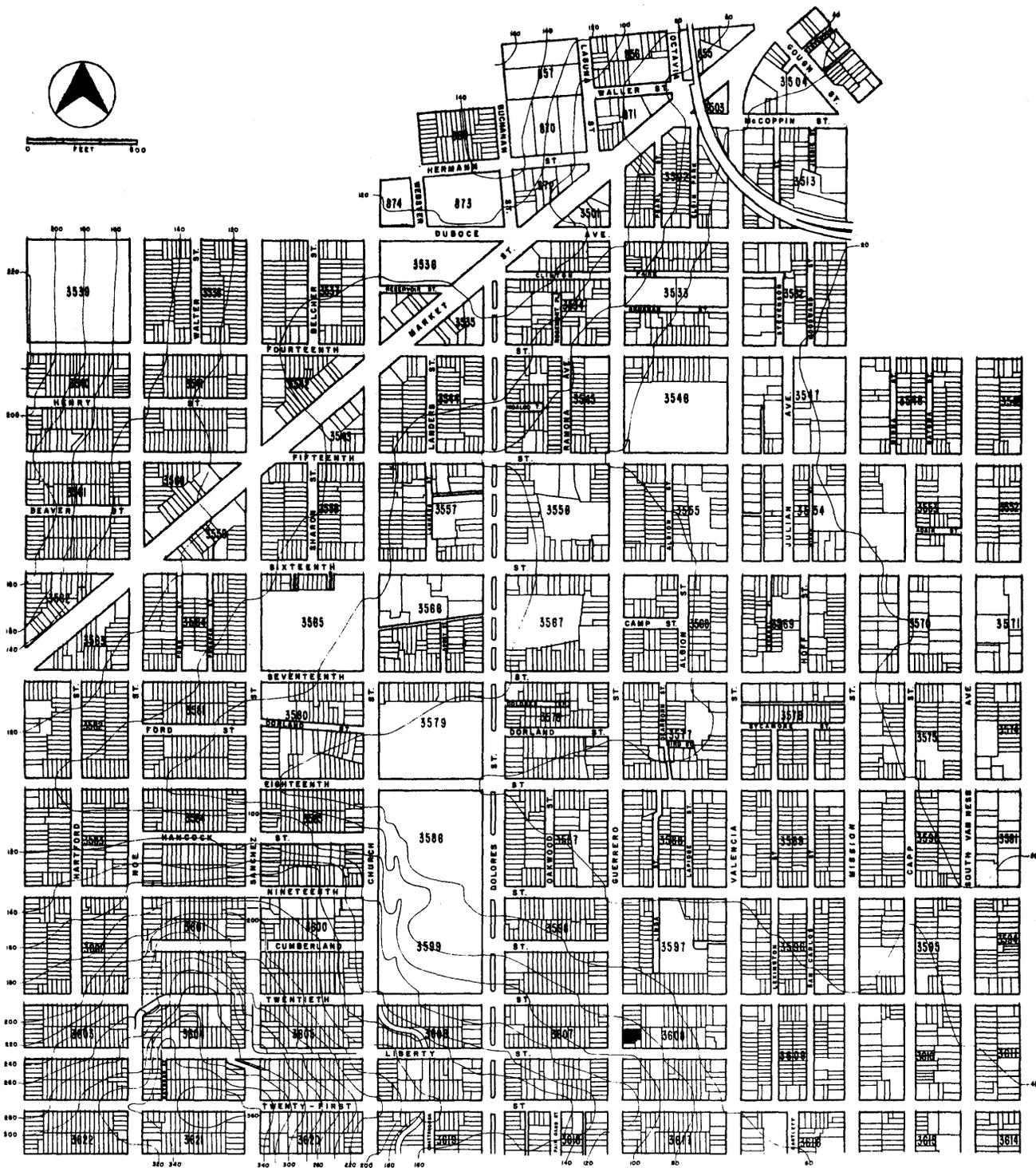
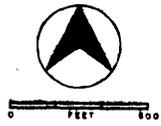
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Lot 76 in San Francisco Assessor's Block No. 3608 is located on the easterly side of Guerrero Street, between 20th and Liberty Streets and is dimensioned as follows:

Beginning at a point on the easterly line of Guerrero Street, distant thereon 27 feet and 6 inches northerly from the northerly line of Liberty Street; running thence northerly along the easterly line of Guerrero Street 75 feet; thence at a right angle easterly 100 feet; thence at a right angle southerly 52 feet and 6 inches; and thence at a right westerly 30 feet; thence at a right angle northerly 7 feet 6 inches; and thence at a right angle westerly 70 feet to the easterly line of Guerrero Street and the point of beginning.

Although the property from time to time was larger, the present lot includes the original building site and the garden lot acquired in the 1880's. Both lots have been joined and are in single ownership.



COMMUNITY AREA LAND USE STUDY

DOLORES

COMMUNITY 7 - PLANNING AREA 2

The John McMullen House
 San Francisco, California