

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED MAY 31 1978

DATE ENTERED NOV 14 1978

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

San Francisco National Guard Armory and Arsenal

AND/OR COMMON

Coastal Artillery Headquarters and training base

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1800 Mission Street at Fourteenth Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

San Francisco

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

6

STATE

California

VICINITY OF

CODE
06

COUNTY

San Francisco

CODE

075 ✓

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERICAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

California National Guard

STREET & NUMBER

2829 Watt Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Sacramento

VICINITY OF

STATE

California 95821

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Recorder's Office, City Hall

STREET & NUMBER

450 Mc Allister, Civic Center

CITY, TOWN

San Francisco

STATE

California

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	*see note	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	see note
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	p. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	p. 3
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR			
<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED		<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE	
<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS		<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED	DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED			

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Armory is the largest building of historical and architectural importance in the San Francisco Mission District (it has a 3 rating on the city's list of buildings of architectural importance) and is in the minds of the community, one of the most important landmarks the community has.

The building was constructed between September 1912 and June 1914 by the contracting firm of McLeran and Peterson and was designed by the firm of Woollett and Woollett. The building now appears on the exterior as it was originally designed. The main building was designed as a Spanish style fortress (early drawings of the building have a much more pronounced appearance of the Moorish influence than does the completed structure.) To this fortress was melded a huge machine age barrel-vaulted gymnasium which was completed some time after the original structure was completed. However it was a part of the original design.

The exterior of the building is designed to give the harsh impression of a fortress, with four octagonal corner towers, a rough clinker brick exterior surface, and long narrow slit windows. The ground storey is very austere; the heavy walls curve outward slightly toward the ground, simulating the enormously thick masonry walls of a Medieval fortress. The only openings in this cruel expanse of rough burnt brick at the ground storey are a very large and heavy door at the center of the two street elevations and a row of what appears to be rifle slots, which have been bricked over from the inside. The fenestration does not begin until very high above the pedestrian's head.

The red/brown brick is interrupted by narrow bands of sandstone in string courses at the height of the top of the doors, between the second and third storeys, and also at the roofline. Limestone is also used in wide mouldings around the entrances and in window treatments at the two upper storeys.

The Mission Street elevation is symmetrical and made very imposing by its two flanking towers and the regularity of the bays between them. Above the ground storey, nine bays of four windows each are slightly recessed behind the plane of the facade. These windows are quite numerous thus allowing sufficient light to enter, but their form is very long and narrow, emphasizing the impenetrable quality of the facade. The upper edge of the wall has a crenelated cornice, with the use of sandstone masonry for the brackets and battlements. The towers are slightly taller, and end in a wide masonry cornice. A flag pole surmounts each of the four towers.

The Fourteenth Street elevation has three bays contained between the two towers of the main structures, to which is attached the large gymnasium space. The giant arched roof of this space is expressed on the street facade by a vast brick wall with a curved upper edge. A large door at the center of the ground storey is the only opening to the pedestrian. At the third and fourth storey levels, above two masonry string courses, is an arrangement of seven very tall narrow windows which vary in height upward toward the center, to echo the dramatic curved roofline. The curve of the roof is further emphasized by a string course and a wide cornice of masonry along the upper edge. The section of the Armory shows a melding of the strict revivalist treatment of the fortress toward a more open embrace of flatness and geometry, characteristic of Machine Age designs. The interior of the arched auditorium has an exciting exposed

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Architectural

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roof structure of curving steel girders which spring from the floor and continue in a smooth line across the entire 170 feet of open space which the architect originally intended to compliment with a glass roof (the present roof is wood).

The structural framework of the fortress is of re-enforced concrete and has a facing of 306 feet on Fourteenth Street and 285 feet on Mission Street. The deep basement across the Mission Street front contains a gymnasium, kitchen, banquet room and the original quarters of the naval militia. The gymnasium is 100 feet long and 60 feet wide and was completely equiped. The kitchen had gas ranges and a large ice box built into the wall. The banquet room had sufficient room to feed 500 people at a siting.

On the Fourteenth Street side, next to the gymnasium, is located a locker room, 50x40 feet. To the west is a seventy five foot swimming pool with a depth of from four to seven feet which has since been cemented over. The swimming facilities included hot showers and continuously running water in the pool.

In addition, the basement also contains a 200 square foot storeroom, a solid concrete arsenal, company storerooms, boiler room, indoor rifle range, meeting rooms for a pistol club, ammunition hoist and storerooms for field wagons with their service elevator which could lift the wagons fully loaded.

The ground floor contained the auditorium (300 x 180 feet) which was described previously, and facing the auditorium, when originally built, the fortress had an open side to provide space for three training guns (a twelve inch mortar, a ten inch disappearing gun and a three inch rapid fire gun) and the immediate area was outfitted on the model of the typical forts of the day with all the necessary equipment, stations and apparatus (and the auditorium was an open drill court surrounded by a brick wall built to the height of the first sandstone string course above the first floor - the wall is now the foundation of the auditorium as can be seen by observing the difference in color of the brick on the back wall of the auditorium).

Reception rooms occupied the front of the first floor and included reading rooms, and lounging rooms finished with stained wood wainscoting which flanked the main entrance. Flanking this was a ballroom 75x50 feet to the left. On the opposite side of the entrance were two reception rooms for ladies and in the northeast corner were four large rooms allocated to the signal corps.

Across the front of the mezzine floor were the administrative offices and officer country. The second and third floors were taken up by the rest of the various units attached to the armory. The building cost \$480,000 of which approximately \$250,000 was spent on the exterior and \$230,000 on the interior. A major part of the consideration of designing the interior was to make the Armory a social center for the city as a recruiting tool (And as a matter of civic pride, it was intended to be a better armory and arsenal than any in existence in the U.S. - with particular reference to the New York Armory).

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Note:

The first floor, and the exterior are unaltered.

The glass ceiling in the auditorium has been replaced by a wood roof

Other floors in the fortress have been extensively remodeled including having walls moved, however this does not significantly affect the importance of the building.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900- 1912	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES Started September 1912
Completed June 1914

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Architects: Woollett & Woollett
Builder: McLeran & Peterson

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The San Francisco Armory and Arsenal is an outstanding example of the metropolitan armories built in the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century. This building in its interior was one of the most ornate of all the armories built, and in its exterior, is a unique combination of revivalist architecture and early twentieth century machine age design and construction. And, like many of the other armories of the period, this one was designed both as an armory/arsenal, and as a social center for the city's residents.

The officially stated purpose of construction of the San Francisco Armory was to house the California National Guard Coastal Artillery, the Naval Militia, and to act as a social center for the city's residents.

On April 20th, 1909 Governor Gillet signed an appropriation of \$480,000 for construction on the condition that the citizens of San Francisco raise \$100,000 for the site (\$60,000 was actually raised and the State made up the difference in the cost of the land). The Fourteenth and Mission Site was select over another at Bay and Van Ness Avenue because of its more central position and its better ability to serve the city, and secondarily because of its supposedly better tactical position militarily.

The architectural firm of Woollett & Woollet presented the buildings' plans in December 1911 and initial reaction was very negative because of the facade's foreboding and warlike character. In fact, because it was considered to be a civic building, the criticism of the facade almost forced a complete re-design of the building. However, the Commanding General of the National Guard particularly liked the design and expressed the opinion that the design was very much in character with its intended use. The design was kept, and the opposition was silenced with the argument that it would be suitable for any civic use (ie it was designed with a ballroom, reception rooms, etc.)

The final contract for the build was let on 12 July 1912 to the firm of McLeran and Peterson and work began in September (the winning bid was \$480,000 - approximately \$250,000 for the facade and \$230,000 for the interior (based on comments in the News Call Bulletin in connection with the rejection of L.A. Hick's bid for exterior work (6/23/12 p 52))). The fortifications and guns were let in a separate contract to the firm of L.A. Hicks for \$75,000 which was paid for by the War Department.

The castle, of steel reinforced concrete with its marble and walnut interior and clinker brick exterior was completed on the week of 1 June 1914, and the auditorium, part of the architects original design was completed at a later date (An architects conceptual drawing shows the completed building exactly as it appears today (re: Mar 1913 - ARCHITECT AND ENGINEER), although the auditorium probably never did have the glass roof intended for it.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Architect and Engineer, March 1913 (picture)
 San Francisco Chronicle 6/7/14 p27/4
 Davis's Commercial Encyclopedia of the Southwest, E.A. Davis, Publisher, Berkeley 1911
 San Francisco News Call Bulletin for the following dates:
 1/31/09, 4/20/09, 4/10/12, 6/23/12, 7/12/12, 7/14/12, 10/8/11, 8/22/12, 8/31/12, 7/7/10,
 8/20/09, 8/24/09, 8/25/09, 9/29/09, 9/30/09, 12/19/09, 4/2/52

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2.2 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A 10 | 551140 | 41800000
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B | |
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The building has a facing of 306 feet on Fourteenth Street and a facing of 285 feet on Mission Street. The rear end of the building abuts on Julian Avenue.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE

Ross Worden, Chairman, Armory Committee

ORGANIZATION

Mission Planning Council

STREET & NUMBER

2501 Bryant Street

CITY OR TOWN

San Francisco, Ca

DATE

JANUARY 1978

TELEPHONE

Home 415-285-8760 - Business 285-5500x38

STATE

CALIFORNIA

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE XX 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

Knorr in Ellison

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 5/22/78

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Charles H. ...
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 4-24-78
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: Marcella ...
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 11-8-78

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The architectural firm of Woollett and Woollett was one of the leading architectural firms in the era immediately after the 1906 Earthquake. The firm was actually two brothers: William I and John W. Woollett, and their most notable buildings prior to the Armory were the Crocker Estate, the Realty Syndicate Building in Oakland and Idora Park. John W. was born on 11 July 1876 and he received his architectural degree from MIT. His first major work was designing the largest hotel in Troy, N.Y. before moving to San Francisco in 1904.

William L. was born on 3 November 1872 (they were both born in Albany N.Y.) and he received his architectural degree from Boston College. After graduation, he joined the faculty of Union College in Schenectady, N.Y., and stayed there until his departure for San Francisco in the summer of 1906 (re: Davis's Commercial Encyclopedia of the Southwest, 1911 edition). In the years immediately following the earthquake, the Woollett firm set a record for the amount of work (in dollars) done in the San Francisco area.

Militarily, the Armory has been the home of the 250th Coast Artillery and its predecessor unit, the California Coastal Artillery, many of whose members have historically come from the Mission District. The Coastal Artillery fought in France during World War I, during World War II, they fought in the Pacific and they served with the United Nations Command in Korea during the Korean War. This unit, the 250th Artillery was trained at the Armory and most of the military lives (with the exception of the three Wars) was spent at the Armory.

As for the Armory's part in the social affairs of the community, it is difficult to say just what civic events did take place there since no records of the buildings activities were kept. However, some events at the Armory were known in their own right and were fairly easy to trace.

Such is the case with boxing. Boxing fights were held on Tuesday and Friday nights at the Armory and some very notable fights took place there including a light heavy weight world title fight between Young Jim Corbet III and Jackie Fields. Some of the other notable fights that took place there included Mike Teague vs Armand Emanuel (Teague was a World Light Heavy Weight Champion during his career); Jackie Fields vs Young Jack Thompson (both were Welter Weight Champions during their careers); Young Corbet (the son of Gentleman Jim Corbet) vs Pete Myers (Young Corbet was a welterweight champion during his career) (The source material is an oral statement by Edy Mueller, former Editor of the San Francisco Examiner and known in San Francisco's boxing circles as "Mr. Boxing").

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TRANSCRIPTION FROM SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE, SUNDAY, 7 JUNE 1914 27/4

The long discussed, long fought over Coast Artillery Reserve Armory and Arsenal at Fourteenth and Mission Streets, erected at a total cost of half a million dollars at last became a reality. The huge brick and concrete building was accepted last week conditionally by the State, the companies which will occupy it have about finished the work of moving in and the first drills will be held this week or the first of next.

San Francisco now has one of the finest armories in the United States, not only in point of cost and equipment, but in point of design. Within it will be housed ten companies of coast artillery, two divisions of naval militia, one signal corps and one engineering corps, besides three bands, one of the artillery, another of the Naval Militia and that of the Fifth Infantry of Oakland.

In the new armory will be every sort of practical appliance for instruction and drill that the best trained army would need. There will be ample room for all who will make the building their headquarters. And there will be recreation and social features that will attract, it is believed, a larger and more regular attendance of the state guard than ever before in the history of the city.

FOUR STORIES AND BASEMENT

The structural framework of the San Francisco Armory is of re-enforced concrete with a facing of clinker brick and limestone. The building has a facing of 306 feet on Fourteenth Street and 285 feet on Mission Street. The rear end abuts on Julian Avenue. The building has four stories with a deep basement under its entire area. Across the Mission Street front of the building in the basement is a gymnasium, mess kitchen, banquet room and temporary quarters of the naval militia. The gymnasium is 100 feet long and 50 feet wide, and will be provided with a full equipment of apparatus. The mess kitchen will have gas ranges and a huge ice box of concrete built into the wall. The banquet room will seat 500 persons.

On the North Side of the basement, next to the gymnasium, is located a locker room for athletes, the room is 50x40 feet. To the west is a huge swimming pool of concrete seventy five feet long and running from four to seven feet in depth. There will be hot and cold showers for the swimmer, and water will run through the tank continuously.

INDOOR RIFLE RANGE

The basement also contains a general storeroom, 200 feet square, a solid concrete ammunition vault or arsenal, company storerooms, boiler-room, indoor rifle range, meeting room of the pistol club, ammunition hoist and a storeroom for field wagons with an elevator by which they may be hoisted up to the Julian Avenue side, after being loaded in the building. In the rifle range the men will shoot through loopholes, both in standing and lying down postures.

The first or ground floor is a marvel of completeness. In the rear is the great open air drill court, 300x180 feet, which later may be enclosed with a glass roof seventyfive

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feet high. All around the wall are powerfull electric lamps, whose brillancy will be further augmented by a high powered search light played on the court from the building. The Fourteenth Street entrance to the Armory opens into this court.

THREE PRACTIC GUNS.

Along the side of the first floor, facing the drill court, are three practic guns, a twelve inch mortar, a ten inch disappearing gun and a three inch rapid fire gun. The gun emplacements will be modeled strictly after those in forts of today with all the necessary equipment, stations and apparatus. While the barrels of the guns will be dummy, the mechanisms will be standard. Dummy mortar shells, weighing from 845 to 1048 pounds each will be handled in practice loading and unloading, and the same will be the case with the other big guns.

In gun drills, the artilleryman will be in actual battle, so far as their maneuvers are concerned. At the command of the battery commander, who in turn will be under the battle commander, the men will load, aim and fire, working out ranges and elevations mathmatically on a gun plotting board. Orders will be communicated by telephone from the commander's station elevated above the drill court. The side of the building where the guns are stationed is only partially enclosed so as to allow unrestricted maneuvering.

ROOMS FOR RECREATION

Reception rooms occupy the front of the first floor. To one side of the main entrance are two reading and lounging rooms, finished with stained wood wainscotting for the men. This is flanked by a dance hall 75x50 feet provided with a piano and a place for the orchestra.

On the other side of the main entrance are two reception rooms for women, and in the northeast corner of the floor four big rooms for the signal corps. The entire building is furnished with steam heat and in rooms and halls are arts and crafts metal chandeliers.

Across the front of the mezzanine floor are the administration offices including those of Colonel George A. Schastey, chief the coast artillery, commanding. Sergeant Major Alvin R Fouratt, in command of the work completing the building and installing the companies and the quarters of all commissioned and non-commissioned officers and company commanders. The medical corps commanded by Major Frank M Emmal, also will be quartered on this floor.

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The company rooms take up the whole of the second floor. Here are the quarters of the First, Second, Third, Fourth, Sixth, Seventh, Ninth and Tenth companies of the Coast Artillery, with the corps band and rooms for the engineering corps, now under course of formation. Each of the artillery companies also is equipped as infantry with rifles and field kits.

Eleventh and Twelfth companies of the Coast Artillery have their quarters on the third floor of the building. On the same floor are two divisions of naval militia, the militia band and the Fifth Infantry Band. Throughout the building are a number of spare rooms which may be used for anything fitting or necessary.

In moving into the Fourteenth and Mission Armory, the artillery corps will abandon the old armory at 1548 Van Ness Avenue and the Eleventh company will transfer to San Francisco from San Mateo. The signal corps has been housed heretofore in the 1500 block on McAllister street, and the naval militia in the 1000 block on Market Street.

TO BE MADE POPULAR

In the Armory, two companies will drill each night, Saturday and Sunday nights excepted. A great many social affairs also will be arranged with banquets and dancing, to make the Armory attractive as a meeting place for the State Guard members. Plans for this armory were made as long ago as March 1909. At first, a site on Van Ness and Bay Streets was selected, but to this, Governor Gillet objected as being too far removed from the center of the city. So after a time, the present site was decided upon and it was purchased for \$100,000. Of this amount, \$60,000 was raised by the citizens of San Francisco, the remainder coming from the States armory appropriation of \$40,000. The United States War Department eventually will spend \$75,000 in installing guns and otherwise equipping the building.

Work on the building began in September 1912.