

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 Anna Head School for Girls

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number 2538 Channing Way, Berkeley, California 94720  not for publication

city, town Berkeley  vicinity of congressional district Eighth

state California code 06 county Alameda code 001

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<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 type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name The Regents of the University of California

street & number 689 University Hall, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720

city, town Berkeley (SEE CONTINUATION SHEET)  vicinity of state California

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Alameda County Recorder's Office

street & number 1225 Fallon Street

city, town Oakland, California 94612  vicinity of state

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title CA State Historic Resources Inventory has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date March 1979  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records California State Office of Historic Preservation

city, town Sacramento  vicinity of state California

## 7. Description

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

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Anna Head School is a complex of buildings consisting of one-, two-, and three-storied wooden structures grouped around a central quadrangle and connected by a covered arbor. The structures resemble designs of medieval country houses of England, a style which was being revived in England and the eastern United States in the 1880s. The buildings are massed in the Queen Anne style, but do not exhibit the ornamentation associated with that style. Instead, the complex follows more closely the ideals fostered by men associated with the West Coast Arts and Crafts Movement and represents an early but well-developed solution to the goals of these craftsmen. As such, the buildings are sheathed with unfinished redwood shingles simply applied to blend with the surrounding hills of Berkeley. The interiors continue this theme with rustic paneling, wood floors, and plastered walls and ceilings.

The buildings were built over a period of thirty-five years between 1892 and 1927, but were designed with a singular theme to give continuity to the whole of the complex. Today, Anna Head School is nestled harmoniously in lushly-landscaped grounds and in its surrounding environment which includes environment surrounded by Maybeck's First Christian Science Church to the southeast, a park to the south, and a large brown-shingled building designed in compatible motif to the north. Below is a listing of the buildings and known additions that make up the Anna Head School, categorized by the year they were constructed.

BUILDING #1 (see accompanying schematic layout for correspondent numerals):  
(45 x 120) 3-story

Designed by architect Soule Edgar Fisher, this building, known as Channing Hall, was completed on August 22, 1892. The building is three stories high with a full basement. The third floor is set within a gambrel roof with both major and secondary dormers. A stone chimney projects from the building on the north wall beside the main entrance with its staircase.

A secondary entrance is located on the west side of the building. The building was the center of home life of the girls who attended the school, containing parlor, library, dining hall, gymnasium on the third floor, infirmary, and classrooms. The building is now being used by the University for office space for various research groups. As the building's use has changed over the years, partition walls have been added to divide all three floors into office spaces. Though partitioned, none of the original walls, fireplaces, or stairs have been removed. A complete sprinkler system and exterior fire exit stairways have been added to meet new code requirements.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input 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** 1892 to 1927 **Builder/Architect** Fisher/Ratcliff

## Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

This remarkable complex of shingle buildings evolved over a thirty year period, and remains a strong architectural statement of the Shingle Style and its interpretation in the Bay Area tradition. The complex is strong architecturally and also has considerable historical significance with its association with historical figures, Anna Head, and architect Walter Ratcliff, and in its role as one of the state's earliest and best known schools.

The school is historically significant in that it is the original facility of one of the oldest private girls' schools still in existence in California. Since its beginning in 1892, the Anna Head School has served both as a boarding and day school for thousands of girls, many of whom later became prominent figures in California history. The school operated at this location until 1964 when it relocated to new quarters in Oakland. Anna Head's school was an innovative educational institution designed to do away with the useless routine work that encumbers so much of the ordinary teaching and replace it with what was best in the German and English systems.

The school is architecturally significant in that the original building is the first recorded fully shingled building built in Berkeley. The architect of the original building was Soule Edgar Fisher who ran an architectural office in Oakland from 1888 to 1894. Walter H. Radcliff, another prominent architect, designed eight of the buildings in the complex.

The school is representative of a crucial turning point in Bay Area architecture, 1888-1894, seven years which marked the end of the Victorian style as a central architectural form and the beginning of a Bay Area tradition in architecture. Although the Bay Area tradition took root initially in San Francisco, it flourished in the hills of Berkeley during the late 1890s. The completion of the new Anna Head School building on August 22, 1892 marked the beginning of the Shingle Style in Berkeley.

Thus, the Anna Head School remains a significant structure representing the beginnings of the vernacular style which was later to be known as the Bay Area tradition. As the first recorded fully shingled structure built in Berkeley, the building embodies the ideals of simplicity of plan, honesty of materials, and harmonious siting with the environment. Reflecting the advanced principles and high standards of excellence that the founders of the Anna Head School had as their goals for their students, the building itself embodies these standards and is a reminder of a standard of excellence from a time past to all who view and use it.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See attached Continuation Sheet, Item Number 9, Page 1.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1.9

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

1:24000

Quadrangle name Oakland West

**ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

Quadrangle scale 7.5 min.

UMT References

A 

1	0	5	6	5	4	6	0	4	1	9	1	0	8	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

The corners of Channing Way, Bowditch Street, Haste Street, in the City of Berkeley, County of Alameda, State of California  
(SEE CONTINUATION SHEET)

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

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title James P. Gibbon, Architect, and Elaine Stone, Architectural Graduate Student

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date August 12, 1979

street & number 410 Gregg Place telephone (415) 828-8563

city or town San Ramon state California 94583

# 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Ken Miller*

title \_\_\_\_\_ date May 29 1980



*by  
Pro*

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Also sent notification to:

Architects and Engineers Department  
A and E Building  
University of California  
Berkeley, California 94720

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BUILDING #2: (33 x 50) 2-story

Known as the Gables, this building is two stories high with the second floor being set within a high gable roof. Completed in 1895 by builder (and architect?) John B. Sprague, the building features a roof containing many gable dormers. The building was used as a classroom on the first floor and housed bedrooms on the second. The building is now being used by the University for office space for various research groups. The structure has been little changed except for a sprinkler system and later additions which were attached to it.

BUILDING #3: (35 x 50) 2-story

This structure, built in 1901 by contractor (and architect?) John B. Sprague, became part of what is known as the Gables. The addition is two stories tall with the second floor set within a high gable roof. The roof features many gable dormers. The building is attached to the original gables on the north side. A porch extends the length of the addition on Bowditch Street. The addition contained the school offices, housekeepers rooms, and a book shop on the first floor with five bedrooms on the second floor. The building is now being used by the University for office space for various research groups. The contractor (and architect?) was John B. Sprague.

BUILDING #4: (25 x 25) 2-story

Built in 1901, this building's historic name is the Cottage. The building is two stories high with a four-cornered roof. It has an exterior stairway leading to a second floor entry balcony. The building's original use was as a clinic on the upper level and as Anna Head's residence on the lower. The building is now being used by the University for various cultural activities connected with the University. The building has been little changed except for a sprinkler system and a later addition attached to it. The building (and architect?) was John B. Sprague.

BUILDING #5: (15 x 38) 1-story

Built in 1901, this addition is attached to the Gables as a one-story shed set at ground level with a sloping roof. The addition was originally used as a chemistry laboratory. It was later expanded, but no record exists of this expansion. The addition is now being used for storage.

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BUILDING #6: Size Unknown

This addition was built in 1907. Minor work was completed on Channing Hall between 1901 and 1907. There is no record of work done, but a new dormer was added during this period. Top floor expanded for dormatory space.

BUILDING #7: (22 x 25) 1-story

Designed by architect Walter H. Ratcliff and built by contractor A. Peterson, three additions were added at this time (1911). The first was a senior porch addition on the south of Channing Hall. The second was a two-story addition on the southwest corner of Channing Hall with the first level off the basement. The third addition was a walking arbor south of the building. The two-story addition attached to the south side of Channing Hall was used as a kitchen and pantry. The kitchen and pantry additions are now being used for storage. The additions have been little changed except for a sprinkler system.

BUILDING #8: (18 x 22) 2-story

Designed by architect Walter H. Ratcliff and completed in 1912,, this addition became part of what is known as the Cottage. The structure is two stories high with a gable roof attached to the Cottage. The addition was used for additional rooms to the Cottage building. The addition is now being used for various cultural activities connected with the University. The building has been little changed except for a sprinkler system.

BUILDING #10: (27 x 50) 2-story

Walter H. Ratcliff designed this building which was completed in 1917. Known as the study hall, the building is two stories high with a gable roof and an open beam ceiling in the study hall. A walking arbor is located on the east side of the building and a covered patio is on the west side. The building was originally used for classrooms on the first floor and for a study hall on the second. The building is now being used by the University for office space for various research groups. The building has been little changed except for a sprinkler system, a few partition walls, and later additions attached to it.

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**BUILDING #9: (30 x 35) 2-story**

Completed in 1916, Walter H. Ratcliff designed this two-storied building with a gable roof. It is faced on the south side with two boiler chimneys, and has an exterior stairway leading to a second floor entry. The first floor was used to house an indoor swimming pool with a high open beam ceiling, and the second floor was used as a gymnasium and workshop. The building is now being used for storage. The structure has been little changed except for partition walls on the second floor.

**BUILDING #11: (14 x 40) 1-story**

Completed in 1920, Walter H. Ratcliff's design for an addition is comprised of a one-story, gable-roofed structure attached to the study hall. It features a large skylight on the north side of the roof. The building was originally used as an art room and modeling studio. It is now being used for storage. The addition has not been changed except for a sprinkler system.

**BUILDING #12: (27 x 30) 2-story**

This addition, built in 1922 and designed by Walter H. Ratcliff, became part of what is known as the study hall. The structure is two stories high with a gable roof. It has an extended arbor on the east side of the building. It was originally used for classrooms and a locker room. The addition is now being used by the University for office space for various research groups. It has been little changed except for a sprinkler system.

**BUILDING #13: (25 x 44) 2-story**

Designed by Walter H. Ratcliff, this addition which became part of what is known as the Gables, was built in 1923. The addition is two stories high with the second floor set within a high gable roof. The west side of the addition features a row of windows on the second floor. It is attached to Channing Hall on the north side and the 1901 Gable addition on the south. Originally, the building contained a bedroom on the second floor and an office and entry passage on the first floor. The addition is now being used by the University for office space for various research groups. The building has been little changed except for a sprinkler system, a few partition walls, and an exterior fire exit stairway on its west side.

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BUILDING #14: (45 x 100) 1-story

Known as Alumnae Hall, this building was designed by Walter H. Ratcliff and built in 1927. This structure, the last to be built, is one-story high with a shallow gable roof. It was a mezzanine level, a stage and an open beam ceiling. The building was originally used as a meeting hall, chapel, and general purpose room. The building is now being used as a child care center for the children of University students and faculty. The building has been little changed except for a sprinkler system and a few partition walls.

Being built over a thirty-five year period, the complex historically and architecturally represents the development of the Bay Area Shingle Style tradition. Historically, the first building was built at the beginning of this architectural movement and the last addition was built at the abrupt end of the movement at the beginning of the 1930's depression. Architecturally, the complex through its additions presents the changes that took place in Shingle Style architecture over the span of the movement.

Though the buildings were designed to have a unified style and character, in recent years they have seen some external changes. Repairs have been haphazard. During the late Sixties, two of the buildings, Channing Hall and The Gables, were fire bombed then patched with plywood which can still be seen in places today.

The school grounds cover about half a city block with the other half occupied by a large University parking lot, which is directly adjacent to the west side of the school and further west are commercial buildings which face onto Telegraph Avenue. The parking lot has replaced older houses which once graced this area. Many large trees stand in the parking lot area and on the school grounds. On the grounds there are two relatively new parking areas. One is to the northwest near the large offsite lot and the other occupies the Quadrangle which is surrounded by buildings on three sides.

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APPENDIX

EDUCATIONAL:

For seventy-two years, from 1892 to 1964, the complex of six redwood shingle-style buildings at the corner of Channing Way, Bowditch and Haste Streets in Berkeley, California, was the home of Miss Ann Head's School for Girls. It is one of the two oldest private girls' schools still in existence in California, and the oldest remaining girls' school operating under its original name. Since its beginning, Anna Head School has served both as a boarding and day school for thousands of girls from the Bay Area, Northern California, and across the nation, preparing students from first to twelfth grades for college. In 1964, the school was relocated to 4815 Lincoln Avenue, Oakland, California; there it was joined with the newly organized Royce School for Boys, becoming the Head-Royce School. Today, the original buildings are owned by the University of California and are presently being used to house various campus services such as a Survey Research Center, a Child Care Center, a Chicano Art Center, and a Field Studies Program.

The school's founder and namesake, Anna Head, was born in 1857 in Boston, Massachusetts, the daughter of Judge Edward and Eliza Head. Judge Head moved west to Oakland, California, in 1861 where he established a law practice. Mrs. Eliza Head established a French and English school in 1875 at Adeline and Twelfth Streets in Oakland. Mrs. Head operated the school until 1887 when she retired. She sold the property and used the money to help her daughter, Anna, start her own school that same year.

Anna Head established her school in a house on Channing Way and Dana Street in Berkeley. Miss Head's School was an innovative institution in the Bay Area, as is evidenced by this newspaper report in the Berkeley Daily Herald of August 4, 1892:

Four years ago, Miss Anna Head opened in Berkeley a small school located at Channing Way and Dana Streets in Berkeley for girls. The work was begun under difficulties, because the aim of its founders was to conduct it on principles that were in advance of the methods then in common use, and parents were shy of new experiments. The effort was to establish a school that would do away with the useless routine work that cumbered so much of the ordinary teaching and replace it with what was best in the German and Eastern systems. This was consistently

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done and as its effect had time to show the school commenced to grow.

Another more recent author wrote the following description of Anna Head:

Anna Head was a warm person, herself well educated, and well traveled. Nothing about her suggests the introvert of the "old maid". From her there is a sense of outreach, of going out and trying new ideas within a traditional framework . . . by means of small classes, high academic standards, a supportive environment, and a real concern for each student in her care, Miss Head sought to develop girls into women who could function effectively in their society.

Her biography provides a second description of Anna Head:

The manner of the conduct of this institution has won Miss Head many friends, and she has a wide patronage throughout the state. She takes the keenest interest in advancement along educational lines, is a member of the Association of Collegiate Alumnae, and enjoys a position of prominence among the educators of the state.

The environment which surrounded the students was a major teaching factor for Anna Head. The rural surroundings, the garden-like setting, and rustic home-like atmosphere taught the value of living closely with nature and provided a second home for students who lived at the school. Many of the students came from remote parts of the state and the nation to attend the school. Families sent their daughters from distances as far as New York, and in at least one case, from the Philippines. Many influential and historically significant citizens have sent their daughters to the Anna Head School (for example, John Muir, the internationally-known naturalist and conservationist).

In addition to the mental development stressed at the school, physical health was considered as important for the well being of the students. Some of the outdoor activities consisted of horseback riding, basketball, and tennis. Saddle horses were kept at the school and were available to the students for rides into the country. Basketball games were played between Anna Head and other schools in the area. The girls from Anna Head School played the first Ladies Interscholastic Basketball Game ever played officialy with the freshman girls from the University of California at Berkeley. Two of Anna Head's graduates later became British and American Singles Tennis Champions in the 1920's. One was Helen (Willis) Moody, seven times

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the American Singles Champion between 1923 and 1931 and eight times the British (Wimbledon) Singles Champion between 1927 and 1938. The other was Helen Jacobs, four times the American Singles Champion between 1932 and 1935 and the British (Wimbledon) Singles Champion in 1936.

In the eighty-eight years of its existence, Anna Head School has graduated approximately 2,500 students. Of these graduates, many have left a mark on American history. A short list of graduates who have influenced history would include such women as Margaret Wentworth Owings, well-known artist and conservationist; Miriam Dungan Gross, past art critic for the Oakland Tribune; Mary Woods Bennet, past Dean of Faculty and at one time Acting President of Mills College in Oakland, California; Marguerite Higgins, the noted war correspondent and news photographer who was killed during the Vietnam War; and Margret Jennings Durrance, the noted photo-journalist for the New York Times. At present, there are more than 2,000 living alumnae and approximately 1,000 members in Anna Head School's Alumni Association.

Many people have given spiritual and financial support to the School. Two initial friends were Josiah Royce and the Reverend Joseph Worcester. Josiah Royce, the eminent American philosopher, was a director of the school and married Anna Head's sister, Katherine. His name was selected when the new boys' school was added in 1964. Reverend Joseph Worcester, leader of the Swedenborgian Church in San Francisco, was a close friend of Anna Head.

In the history of Anna Head School, it has changed owners only four times. Headmasters have both owned and directed the School through two World Wars and a Depression as a proprietary school until 1963 when it became a non-profit institution. The directors of the School were as follows:

1887 to 1909	---	Miss Anna Head
1909 to 1938	---	Miss Mary Wilson
1939 to 1950	---	Theophilus R. and Lea G. Hyde
1950 to 1963	---	Daniel and Catherine H. Dewey

At present, the School is guided by a board of Directors and directed by an appointed headmaster. With the move to East Oakland and the addition of the Boys' School, the School became a co-educational institution and dropped the boarding aspect of the early school. Through the years, its role has essentially remained the same as it was in the beginning -- to develop girls and boys into women and men who are capable of acting rationally and forming objective judgments in our complex society.

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ARCHITECTURAL:

Anna Head School has moved only three times in its eighty-eight-year history. After four years in the small school house at Channing Way and Dana Street, Miss Head bought a 300' x 300' square parcel of land fronting Channing Way, Bowditch Street, and Haste Street, from Mr. Godfrey Rhodes, et al., for \$8,500.00 on January 16, 1892. The California Architect and Building News recorded the school's construction in its May, 1892, issue as follows:

Bowditch and Channing Way, Berkeley, to build: owner E. C. Head; Architect, S. Edgar Fisher; Contractor, J. B. Sprague; cost \$10,500; signed March 25; filed, April 6; payments \$2,623, 1/4 frame up; \$2,625, 1/4 brown coat mortar; \$2,625, 1/4 completed; \$2,625, 35 days.

On August 22, 1892, she moved into the newly built three-story school building fronting Channing Way. This building, Channing Hall, was the first and largest of the six presently existing on the site. It is the first recorded fully-shingled building built in Berkeley. As such, it is historically the most important and is architecturally significant for its style in the period in which it was built.

The Berkeley Daily Herald and Berkeley Daily Advocate both marked the opening of the new building with long articles. According to the Berkeley Daily Herald of August 4, 1892:

So successful has [the school] been that a larger building became an absolute necessity and this Spring a large piece of land was purchased at the corner of Bowditch Street and Channing Way, and the erection of a new building begun. In all things the effort has been to throw a home influence around the pupils, and this idea has been carried into the plan of the building itself. No one to look at it would say that it was a school building. It seems rather a quaint old English county house or private mansion.

Inside, the well-lighted rooms, the spacious hallways, and ample stairs carry out the same idea. All the school rooms are on the south side and will be sunny all day long. By an arrangement of folding doors the whole lower floor can be thrown into one great room. The main entrance leads into a large, square hall, from which a wide, easy stair-case leads up to the upper floors. All of the bed-rooms are large and the building will accommodate sixteen boarders under the present arrangements. No expense has been spared to introduce the latest and best

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improvements in sanitary plumbing. The bath tubs are of porcelain, and every point has been looked after for that which would effect the health as well as the comfort of the pupils.

As to appearance from without, it is only necessary to call attention to the cut of the building published in connection with this article. [In lieu of a cut, see Exhibit B, photograph courtesy of the Oakland Museum, taken shortly after the building was finished] The whole of the third floor is given up to the gymnasium which will be fitted up more completely than the gymnasium of any other girls school on the Coast. The apparatus is now on the way from the East and is designed to remedy physical defects by its use rather than the promotion of fancy exercises. This department is under the supervision of Mr. Magee of the University of California and will do for the pupils physically what the ordinary school work does mentally bringing about a well rounded and complete development.

Due to delays in the completion of the building, classes were not started until August 22, 1892. On that date, the Berkeley Daily Advocate wrote a more colorful and detailed article about the building:

Among the most substantial and artistic buildings erected in Berkeley during the past year is that just being completed for Miss Anna Head, by contractor [John] B. Sprague of Oakland, after plans drawn by architect [Soule] Edgar Fisher, also of that city. It is situated on Channing Way, Bowditch and Haste Streets, and is designed for use as a girls school, the old quarters on Channing Way and Dana Street having become entirely too small for the increasing patronage. The building is designed after old Dutch models, and while three stories high, its length and breadth so detract from its height that it appears comparatively low. The main entrance and conservatory entrance, which face on Channing Way, for uniqueness and simplicity stand alone in Berkeley architecture. Their rough greystone foundations, flanked by the massive old stone chimney, lend an air of age to the building which is irresistibly charming. On the first floor is the reception hall, parlor, library, dining-room, and classrooms for the primary, intermediate and high school; also a laboratory, dressing rooms, etc. The feature which attracts attention at once on entering the schoolrooms is their admirable lighting and ventilation. All the rooms have eastern and southern exposure and are flooded with sunshine all day. The same thing is noticed in the sleeping-rooms on the second floor, the halls and staircase being on the north side of the building. Healthfulness and cheerfulness seem to have been the first consideration for the pupils in the construction

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of the house. The dormitories are large and airy, while the study-room, a portion of the main hall on the second floor, is one of the brightest, cosiest spots imaginable. The third floor will be devoted to the gymnasium, dressing rooms and servants rooms. All the work of the institution will be carried on in the basement, which has ample kitchens, pantries, store closets, milk room, engine room and hot air furnace by which the whole building is heated. The finish is in natural wood and is elegant in its simplicity; especially is this noticeable in the main stair way.

When the building is completed, if Miss Head shall favor her friends with a formal opening, it will afford them much pleasure to inspect this beautiful home, which reflects such credit upon her taste and enterprise, and which will no doubt, become one of the foremost education features of our town. The school opens to-day.

The architect of this original building was Soule Edgar Fisher, who also was a second cousin to Anna Head. Born on a farm in Sutter County, California, on July 11, 1865, Fisher with his parents moved to Oakland in 1878 where he graduated from Oakland High School in 1882 at the age of seventeen. Between 1888 and 1894, Fisher ran an architectural office in Oakland. In June, 1895, Fisher contracted tuberculosis and succumbed to the disease that same year.

There is no accurate way of knowing how many buildings Fisher designed during his five years of productive work as an architect. The California Architect and Building News recorded between 1888 and 1892 that Fisher designed seven buildings in the Oakland area during those years. Five of the seven listed were residences in West Oakland, west of Market Street, in what is now part of the Oakland Urban Redevelopment Area. One was just south of Lake Merritt in East Oakland and the other was Anna Head School.

After completion of the first Anna Head building, many large and small additions were added on the site. All the buildings were finished in shingles with an effort to continue the singular motif. The Contractor who worked on the early buildings may have also designed at least 3 of the buildings (#2, 3, 4) It was not uncommon during this period in history for contractors and architects to interchange their function and status depending on which profession was more profitable and successful.

Another significant architect who designed eight buildings in the Anna Head complex was Walter H. Ratcliff. Born in London, England,

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Ratcliff's family settled in Pasadena, California in 1896, then moved to Berkeley in 1898. In 1903, he graduated from the University of California at Berkeley with a Bachelor's degree in Chemistry. After extensive travel in Europe, he returned to Berkeley determined to enter the field of architecture. He joined the office of John Galen Howard where he was employed for three years. In 1906, he opened his own practice which he continued until 1950 when he retired.

The Alumnae Hall of the Anna Head complex was built at the peak of Ratcliff's early career in 1927 when he had the largest architectural practice in the Bay Area. Believing that European and English architecture expressed the essence of meaning for design where every detail within the design was a truthful expression of a tradition of an era and time, his design for Alumnae Hall is an excellent example of his concern. Designing in the West Coast tradition of unfinished wood, he expressed the wood detailing and connections architecturally as a statement of its function. The high truss ceiling members are evidence with their connections boldly revealed with metal flange plates studded with bolt heads. The unfinished trusses are further enhanced by boldly colored square patterns being placed on them. The Alumnae Hall design was an honest continuation of the old English motif of the Anna Head complex.

The period between 1887 and 1894 marks an important turning point in the San Francisco Bay Area's architectural history. This period was the beginning of a significant change in architectural thinking and design that would effect the Bay Region up to the late 1920's when the Depression curtailed much architectural expression. The change began substantially with three shingled houses on Russian Hill in San Francisco in 1887 and culminated with Bernard Maybeck's houses on Highland Place in Berkeley in 1894. These seven years represented the end of the Victorian style as a central architectural form and the beginning of a Bay Area tradition in architecture which was grounded in the philosophy of the simple house. Although the tradition took root initially in San Francisco, it flourished in the hills of Berkeley during the late 90's. The shingle style tradition began in Berkeley, with the completion of Anna Head's new school building on August 22, 1892, the first recorded fully shingled structure built there.

Perhaps the earliest local influence on the shingle style architecture was the Reverend Joseph Worcester, a friend of Anna Head, and an early advocate of the shingle house. Worcester gave the initial impetus for the simple shingled house as an architectural form in

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Northern California with his unpainted shingle clad house built in the hills of Piedmont in 1879. The foundation was laid, through Worcester's guidance, for the shingle in San Francisco with the completion in 1887 of three unpainted shingled houses built on Russian Hill. In 1889, a fourth was designed expressly for Worcester next to the other three. Worcester and his friends, among whom Willis Polk and Ernest Coxhead were counted, sought to design houses that were very plain and simple in outline. The effect was sought by strengthening the mass, simplifying the form, and providing flexible spaces on the interior. Soule Edgar Fisher's own design reflected many of these early principles in the original building, Channing Hall, of the Anna Head School.

Fisher's design for Channing Hall was executed during the very beginnings of the Arts and Crafts Movement on the West Coast and during the turning point in Bay Area Architecture, but represented the developed ideals of this movement in its design. It was a simple design and plan which was consciously brought into harmony with its natural surroundings. The visible effect of this effort was the unpainted redwood shingle house with a simple interior of unfinished redwood paneling. Although East Coast architects, such as H. H. Richardson and McKim, Mead and White were designing shingled houses by 1880, their houses were more formal in style with elaborately treated wooden interiors.

In his book, The Shingle Style, Vincent Scully describes the style of architecture which Fisher employed as that of "vernacular architecture". An article in the American Architect and Building News of 1878 critically describes what the vernacular architect proposed to do:

"...[The vernacular architect] is as innocent of archaeology as the Romanesque work of the Tenth Century, or as any architecture practiced...by men who work without regard for precedent or rule, using forms which they know only by tradition and example, and with a simple adaptation to the wants of a people, to the material and mechanical process at their command..."

Fisher grew up and learned his art in a Victorian world where the Victorian architectural style predominated architecture throughout the Bay Area. This style mixed architecture and ornamentation on impulse, mixed and matched to whim, to create an image of a way of life. In this atmosphere, new design styles in architecture came into visible form with the advent of the simple shingled structure. The transition of the shingle was a logical follow-through from the Victorian, which used painted shingles on the second floor exteriors, to the shingle style which used unpainted shingles around the total exterior

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of the building. Many of the features in the Victorian style were used and expanded upon in the shingles house. One such feature was the use of the curved wall, found in the Anna Head School as designed by Fisher. This wall was used extensively in the design on the third floor both in the area of the observation deck facing West and in the windows on the major dormers facing Channing Way.

Beside the Victorian architecture in Fisher's local area, he no doubt learned from examples in magazines such as the American Architect and Building News, an East Coast magazine which printed pictures of some of the designs by Richardson and McKim, Mead and White during the 1880's and 90's. Fisher's design of Anna Head's School featured some of the same distinct character of the East Coast shingles of the 80's. Such detailing as the stepped gable wall, the gambrel roof, and overall Queen Anne massing found in Fisher's design were similar to that of the Eastern shingle.

Two Eastern architects who came to practice in the Bay Area were Willis Polk and Ernest Coxhead. Both were influenced by the work done in the East; and after setting up practices in San Francisco in 1889, they began designing variations of this shingle style. Polk, who practiced in Oakland for a few months and with whom Fisher was acquainted, designed his first shingled residence in Sausalito in 1891. Coxhead designed his first shingled building, the Church of the Holy Innocent in San Francisco in 1890 and completed his first Berkeley shingled residence, the Loy House, in 1893. Polk, in 1891, published a journal on local architectural thinking called the Architectural News which, "sought to encourage the design of moderately priced shingle houses which would integrate interior and exterior architectural design with the realities of the lives of their inhabitants". The genesis of the First Bay Tradition is most evident here -- a style which was to influence architects such as Worseter, and decades after its inception.

Thus, the Anna Head School remains as a significant structure representing the beginnings of the vernacular style which was later to be known as the Bay Area Tradition. As the first recorded fully-shingled structure built in Berkeley, the building embodies the ideals of simplicity of plan, honesty of materials, and harmonious siting with the environment. Reflecting the advanced principles and high standards of excellence that the founders of the Anna Head School had as their goals for their students, the building itself embodies these standards and is a reminder to all who view and use it of a standard of excellence from a time past which is still relevant today.

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The Anna Head School site (81,000 square feet) is a portion of Assessor's Parcel No. 55-1875-9-1 as described below, formerly 55-1875-1:

Beginning at a point formed by the intersection of the southerly line of Channing Way with the westerly line of Bowditch Street; running thence westerly along said southerly line of Channing Way 300 feet; thence at right angles southerly 270 feet to the northerly line of Haste Street, thence at right angles easterly along the said northerly line of Haste Street 300 feet to the said westerly line of Bowditch Street, and thence northerly along said westerly line of Bowditch Street, 270 feet to the southerly line of Channing Way and the point of beginning.

Being portions of Lots 5 and 6 in Block 7, as said lots and block are shown on the map of "Property of the College Homestead Association, Oakland, Alameda County, California", recorded May 15, 1866, in Book "T" of Deeds, at page 799, in the office of the County Recorder of Alameda County.

SCHMATIC LAYOUT  
270'

