

**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 McCrea House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 3500 Mountain Boulevard ___ not for publication

city, town Oakland ___ vicinity of congressional district 8th

state California code 06 county Alameda code 001

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

4. Owner of Property

name Holy Names College, a California Corporation

street & number 3500 Mountain Boulevard

city, town Oakland ___ vicinity of state California

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Alameda County Courthouse

street & number 1225 Fallon Street

city, town Oakland state California

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Nominated for Oakland Landmark has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes no
Status

date 2/17/81 ___ federal ___ state ___ county local

depository for survey records

city, town Oakland state California

①

7. Description

Condition
 excellent deteriorated **Check one *** unaltered **Check one** original site
 good ruins altered moved date _____
 fair unexposed (Earlier structures altered in 1913; unaltered since then)

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The McCrea House, located on the southwest corner of the Holy Names College campus, is a wood frame structure, painted brown with white trim, shingle roofed, one-story except for the bedroom over the kitchen area. The present appearance of the structure dates to 1913, when George McCrea, a Bay Area architect, constructed his private residence there. Significant part of the basic structural material, however, date to the early nineteenth century, when the Peralta family, one of the most significant Californio families, constructed an adobe family chapel and wood frame structures on this site. McCrea in 1913 built his private residence around these structures, preserving much of the original building materials, including the adobe chapel wall. This adobe is covered in plaster and wood siding and is now in the area which served as McCrea's dining room.

Specific descriptions of the exterior, interior, and setting of this structure follow on continuation sheets 7-1 to 7-4.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" 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 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-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1913

Builder/Architect George McCrea

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The McCrea House is significant as a well-preserved early twentieth century architect-built home in the San Francisco Bay Area, exhibiting in its individuality of design, its honest use of wood framing, and its careful adaptation to its natural and historical setting the better characteristics of Bay Tradition architecture. This residence, indeed, reflects an extraordinary effort by the architect, George McCrea to blend a modern structure with its environment; McCrea literally built this structure around a cluster of adobe and wood frame structures built by the Peralta family in the first half of the nineteenth century.

George McCrea, a San Francisco architect, acquired around 1910 a twenty-acre parcel of land in the Oakland Hills for his private domicile. In selecting a homesite within this parcel, McCrea was clearly influenced by the presence of artifacts from previous occupations: an aboriginal site, near the present McCrea House but destroyed in the 1960s; as well as an adobe chapel and several wood frame structures from the Mexican period. In a 1919 article for The Architect and Engineer of California, McCrea explains his reasons for integrating his modern home into the existing historical environment:

My whole landscape and architectural story was thus so adjusted that one could stand here in this Indian's Council Seat, among primitive, undisturbed surroundings, and look downward over the winding paths to the spot where the Spanish padres had sought to take their message to the aborigines, could see what was left of the era wherein the old Spanish families replaced the Indians in the ownership and occupation of the lands, and could feel the exhilaration and satisfaction of having a modern home that answered in every way to the spirit of this ancient history and to the wonders of the landscape itself.

The tangible form through which McCrea "answered... to the spirit of this ancient history" was the reoccupation and reuse of existing structures. The degree to which McCrea preserved the original material of these Mexican-era structures can be seen in the accompanying plans (Attachment A), drawn by McCrea, comparing the floorplan of existing structures with his 1913 residence.² The appearance of the home was, of course, altered drastically by the addition of bay windows, new drop siding, French doors, and other 1913 design features. The plan, however, is basically unchanged, including the orientation to the site with which McCrea was so fascinated. McCrea's landscaping, including the retention of old growth palms and shrubs, and the addition of pergolas to the major front and rear elevations, further integrated the structure into its natural setting.

This 1913 structure exists to day in unaltered condition. The larger parcel was subdivided several times prior to McCrea's death in 1943. The nominated parcel of 1.7 acres remained in the control of McCrea's son, Robin until 1962, when it was purchased by Holy Names College, which had been granted or had purchased adjoining properties in the 1940s and 1950s.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Gray, Sister Gertrude Mary, SNJM, HOLY NAMES COLLEGE AND THE HERITAGE OF ANTONIO MARIA PERALTA, 1842-1955. Privately printed, Holy Names College, Ca 1978.
 McCrea, George E. "An Architect's Home in Alameda County," THE ARCHITECT AND ENGINEER OF CALIFORNIA, LVII, 2 (May, 1919), 39-47.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1.7 acres

Quadrangle name Oakland East

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	10	5	7	11	7	14	10	4	11	8	13	9	14	10
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 1.7 acre parcel is described in Alameda County Recorder's Reel 489, AT 2819, p. 41, January 8, 1962. The dimensions of the lot are identified on the accompanying plan prepared by the Oakland Parks Department, dated 12/21/43.

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

state 7/2 code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary Anne Thatcher, sjnm, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of History

organization Holy Names College date February 17, 1981

street & number 3500 Mountain Boulevard telephone (415) 436-0111

city or town Oakland state California

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 [Signature]

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 10-13-81

For HCERS use only

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

[Signature]

Entered in the National Register

date 2/11/82

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

Chief of Registration

date

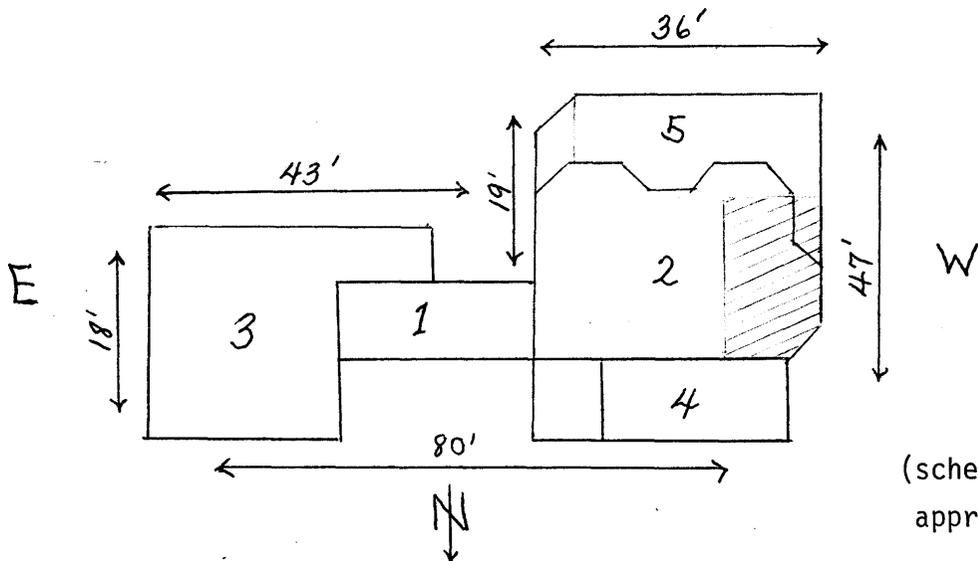
for acting

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

FOR HCRS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JAN 12 1982
DATE ENTERED FEB 11 1982

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1



MATERIALS AND STRUCTURE:

Common to entire structure:

1. Milled redwood lap board exterior painted red (indigenous material)
2. Wooden sash, painted white, white 1 x 6 trim
3. Roof - cedar buck shake, no fascia

Basement - below part of areas 2 and 5 (see above).

Foundation

- Areas 1-3 on concrete slab
- Area 2 concrete perimeter
- Area 4 pre-cast piers

Brick terrace - area 5

INTERIOR LAYOUT:

- Area 1 Dining room
- Area 2 Living room
Entry
Sitting room
Bedroom

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

FOR HCRS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JAN 12 1982
DATE ENTERED FEB 11 1982

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

South Elevation, left to right (west to east):

The brick terrace protrudes out (south) from the perimeter of the building and stands approximately 4' above grade on the left, sloping upward to grade level to the right.

On the extreme southwest corner of the structure is a protruding bay window similar in proportion and style to the one on the west elevation. To the right of this bay window is a window which is centered on the south wall of Area 2. On the right of this window is another protruding bay, similar to the others except that the center bay has french doors leading on to the terrace. This complete the south elevation of Area 2.

Immediately to the right (east) of Area 2 is the southern side of the dining room (Area 1), which has an exterior door on the left (east) end and is partially obscured by the stairway leading upward to the right (east).

The next section of the structure (Area 3) has a complex arrangement of door, window and door, door and window, window on the stairway, pantry, kitchen, and bathroom, respectively.

The roof line of this section is as complex as its fenestration. Its major feature is the main gable of the roof structure. This gabled roof line is broken on the left side by the protrusion of the corner window on the northwest corner of the upstairs bedroom, which is partially obscured by the chimney. To the right, the main gable is interrupted by a smaller gabled dormer protruding to the east.

East Elevation:

The east side of the structure is entirely Area 3, the two-story later addition, which shows an access door to the kitchen and a small window on the ground level and the gabled dormer window of the bathroom set out from the main shed of the roof on the upper level.

To the front of the building (north) is a vine-covered arbor.

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

FOR HGRS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JAN 12 1982

DATE ENTERED FEB 11 1982

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 4

INTERIOR:

The front door, on the west side of the house, opens into a nearly square entry hall which, in turn, opens on the right to a large living room with a fireplace in the east wall, large bay windows at the south end, and an archway opening on the west, with a step down to the now enclosed section of the verandah on the right of the front door. All interior paint is a cream shade.

At the east end of the entry hall, a door leads to a bedroom (currently a music studio), and a 3½-foot wide hallway in the southeast corner leads to a bathroom and to another bedroom (now a studio-office). Each bedroom has an alcove of windows and French doors opening directly onto a narrow brick terrace which runs along the east side of the house. This entire section of the home comprised a separate six-room wood frame structure which was reused by McCrea in 1913. A rough basement and furnace were added in 1913 as part of the renovation.

To the left of the front door, the entry opens into the dining room, the original adobe chapel. The curved ceiling here is lower than the ceilings of the living and bedrooms. The walls here are plastered to match other interior spaces. The room has a continuous row of square windows on its west wall, a fireplace and kitchen hallway on its north wall, and on the east side, a staircase, recessed outside the wall line, leading to the upstairs bedroom. At the foot of the stairs a door opens onto the brick terrace. Unlike the nearly square entry and bedrooms of the southern section of the home, the dining room measures approximately 21' x 9.5'.

The eastern section of the home is the only portion built of entirely new material in 1913. This two-story section includes a kitchen and small pantry, laundry room, and store room on the first level, and a guest bedroom and bath on the upper. A back door opens out from the storeroom on the north wall of the house. The southwest corner of the bedroom upstairs is a window alcove. The east wall also has a window; the north side opens to the bath and to a closet; the south wall, besides the window in the corner, also has a fireplace, a storage area, and the entrance to the stairs.

SETTING:

As discussed in section 8, the setting of this property was extremely important to McCrea's concept of the house. In addition to Mexican-era structures, the parcel contained a prehistoric Indian site. McCrea's landscaping emphasized retention of exotic vegetation introduced by Mexican-era settlers and retention of paths leading from the Indian to the Mexican site. The Indian site, not included in the 1.7 acres nominated here, was destroyed in the 1960s, and the paths leading from it to the McCrea House are overgrown. Landscaping elsewhere on this parcel is largely intact but in need of careful tending.

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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

FOR HCRS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JAN 12 1982
DATE ENTERED	FEB 11 1982

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

2

8

ALTERATIONS:

Minor changes are apparent in the McCrea House. The south side of the front verandah has been closed in. The roof which McCrea had extended over part of the verandah on the north side of the front door has been shortened. The floors, once of wood planking dressed with Persian rugs, are now covered with a 1950s-era asphalt tile, a condition which the College hopes to reverse.

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

FOR HCRS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JAN 12 1982
DATE ENTERED FEB 11 1982

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 1

GEORGE McCREA:

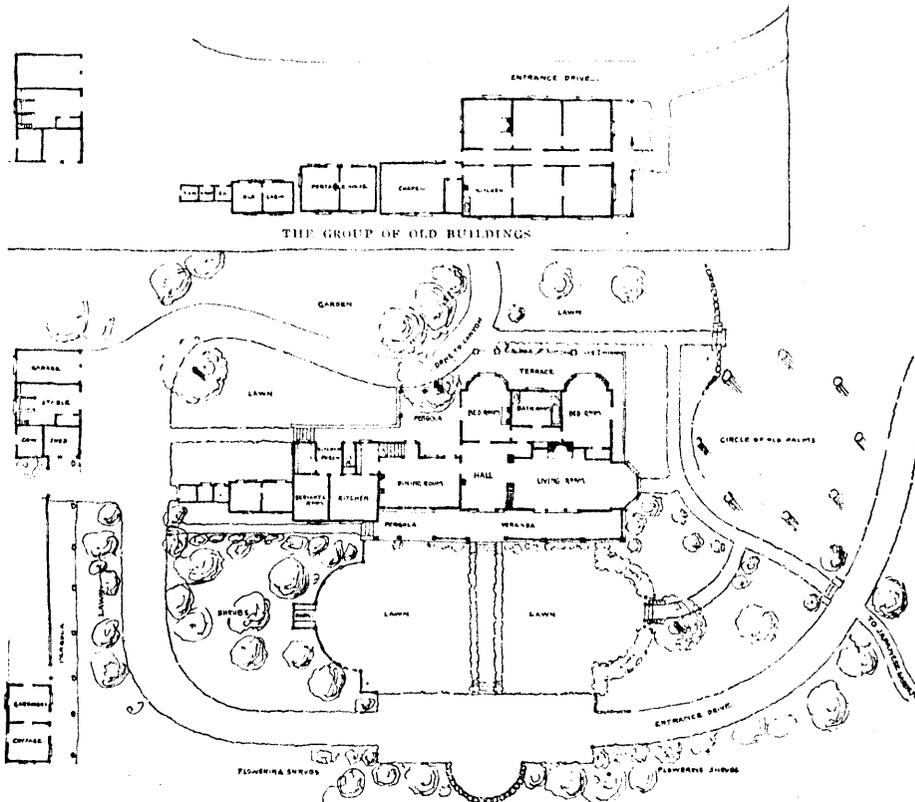
(The following information was obtained in a telephone interview with Robin McCrea, son of George McCrea, on 8 April 1981.)

George McCrea, a Canadian by birth, took three years of the civil engineering course at McGill University and then moved to the United States. For several years he worked as a furniture designer for W. & J. Sloane, San Francisco, serving on the side as a draftsman for architects in the City. Then, having decided that he wanted to follow his bent for architecture, he spent three years in Europe, specializing in church architecture; he did not take a degree, but he was admitted to the A.I.A. when he returned home. (His son knows his father was still in England when Queen Victoria died, 1901, and, thus, dates his A.I.A. membership from the early years of this century.) Among his commissions: St. Leo Church, Oakland; Our Lady of Lourdes School and Rectory, Oakland; churches in San Francisco; planning for the town of Capitola when the resort was still largely privately owned; a home for Hiram Johnson, Governor and U. S. Senator; homes along the San Francisco Marina and in Pebble Beach. He was a close friend of Bernard Maybeck, and the two architects often discussed their work, although they never collaborated on a commission. McCrea's offices, at least for a time, were on Pine Street, San Francisco.

1. George C. McCrea, "An Architect's Home in Alameda County, THE ARCHITECT AND ENGINEER OF CALIFORNIA LVII, 2 (May, 1919), p. 47.
2. Ibid., p. 42.



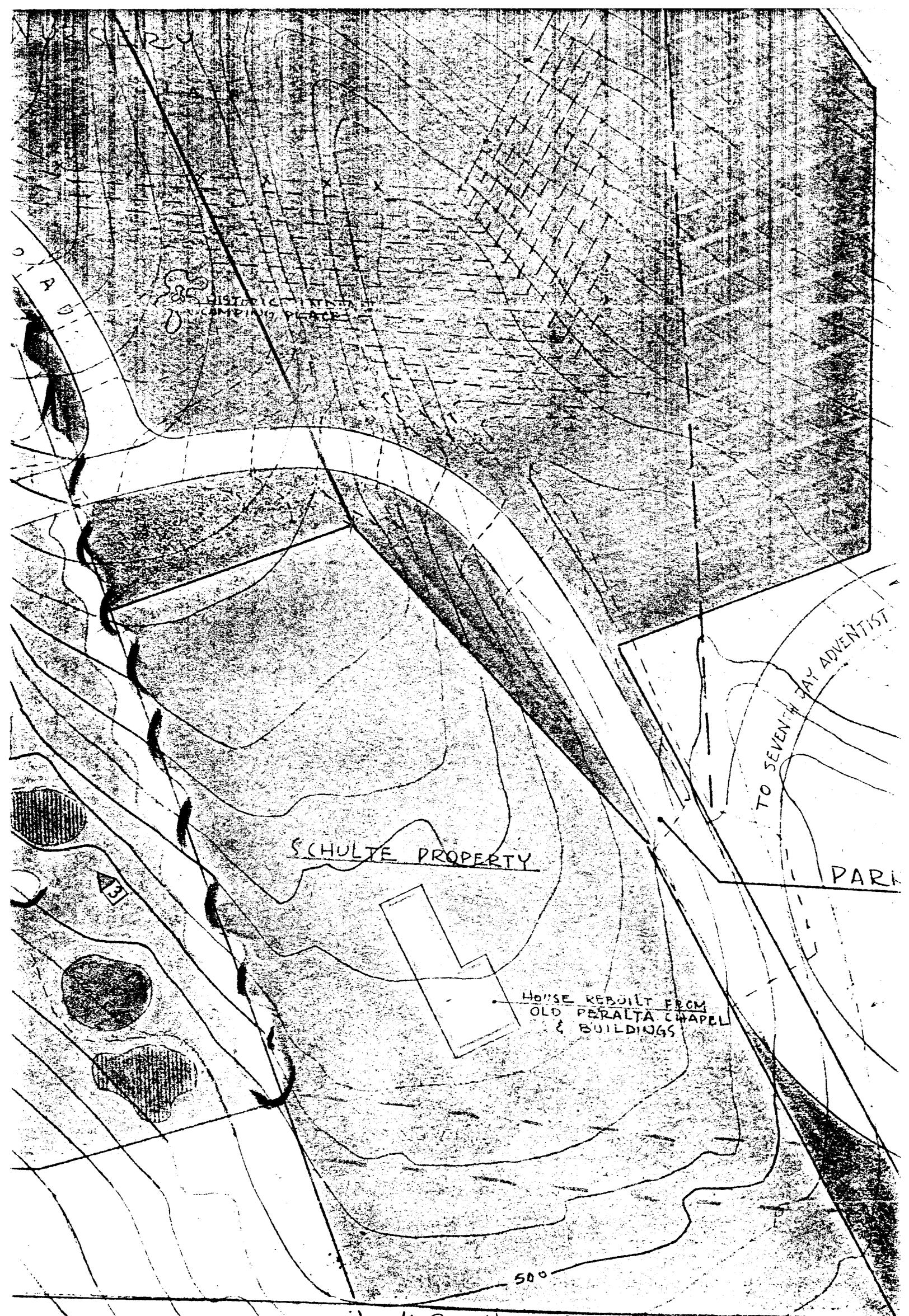
ENTRANCE, COUNTRY HOUSE OF MR. GEO. E. MCCREA
Geo. E. McCrea, Architect



PLOT PLAN, SHOWING BUILDINGS BEFORE AND AFTER ARCHITECTURAL TREATMENT
Geo. E. McCrea, Architect

FEB 11 1982

Attachment A



McGee House, Oakland, Alameda Co., CA

Mountain Freeway

FEB 11 1982

Taken from Oakland Park Dept. plan for a park on the McGee property just west of the McCrea-Schulte property. Note identification of house and of Indian camp ground. Map dated 12/21/43. Scale = 50':1"