

Francisco Sanchez Adobe
San Pedro Valley, San Mateo Co.,
California

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Western Office, Division of Design and Construction
1000 Geary Street
San Francisco, California

FRANCISCO SANCHEZ ADOBE (Residence)
San Pedro Valley, San Mateo Co., California

ADDRESS Linda Mar Boulevard and Adobe Drive, San Pedro Valley
OWNER San Mateo County
OCCUPANT Department of Parks and Recreation
USE Historical and House Museum

ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

San Pedro Valley is of interest in early California history, having been an outpost of the Mission Dolores of San Francisco around 1780. Francisco Sanchez constructed the present adobe near the site of the older mission buildings and on the foundations of a building known to have existed prior to 1817. The Historic American Buildings photographs taken in 1936 and the measurements and drawings of 1938-40 give a record of a building that is a typical development of a Mexican period adobe transformed to a late nineteenth century ranch structure.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Physical History The original land grant by Governor Juan B. Alvarado, constitutional governor of Alta California, to Francisco Sanchez is dated January 20, 1839 and is documented in materials on file at the Clerk's Office, U. S. Circuit Courts, Post Office Building, San Francisco. In 1842 Francisco Sanchez started the construction of the present two storied adobe building on the foundations of a structure that had been reconstructed in 1817. According to San Mateo County tax records, this property was acquired by Felton and Patterson in 1872 and subsequently transferred to General Edward Kirkpatrick in 1879. The property remained in the Kirkpatrick family until sold in 1946 with subsequent purchase by San Mateo County.

Owner-builder Francisco Sanchez was the son of Jose Antonio Sanchez. He was a juez in 1839 and later alcalde of San Francisco. His original adobe construction consisted of three rooms on each story with an open walled area probably the kitchen at the north end of the lower story rooms. It is most likely that the balconies along the south and north sides were constructed by Sanchez but were of a different architectural character than those now existing. Most of the additions were added by General Kirkpatrick in the late 1880's and consisted of wood

framed rooms and balcony at the west end of the structure. The interior stairway dates from this period as do the sash and doors detailed in the 1938 drawings. The San Mateo County reconstruction of 1953 removed wooden portions and the adobe wing walls at the north. The building in this reconstruction was surrounded on all sides with a balcony detailed as they were in the late nineteenth century. The interior stairway was removed and the sash replaced with stock 12 light sash, though the exterior doors remaining on the second story are from the Kirkpatrick additions. The painting reproduced as the first photograph of this set establishes the general character of the Mexican period adobe. Even though the date of the painting is in question (1865 or 1885) it shows the building prior to the additions by General Kirkpatrick. This painting is in the possession of the San Mateo County Historical Association, 124 Baldwin Ave., San Mateo, California.

Historical Events The most significant part this structure has played in local history is its role in the social pattern of its inhabitants. In its isolated position the owners have often played host to community and state leaders. During Sanchez's ownership frequent visitors were Governor Alvarado, Jose Castro, Estaquio Valencia, Guerrero, De Haro, Bernal and Pioche. Later period visitors were, Stephen J. Field, R. C. Ralston, Harry Meiggs, Jesse and Hall McAllister.

Supplemental Materials

Land Grant Documents, Clerk's Office, U. S. Circuit Court
Post Office Building, San Francisco
Bancroft, Hubert Howe, History of California,
San Francisco, 1886
San Mateo County Historical Association, 124 Baldwin Ave.,
San Mateo, California
California Historical Landmark, Number 391

Prepared by

Kenneth H. Cardwell
KENNETH H. CARDWELL
Architect

August 1958

ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

The Francisco Sanchez adobe is in excellent condition and well maintained although the 1953 restoration departs from either the early adobe period or the later nineteenth century additions. The building is open to the public with no admission charge and is used as a local history and house museum.

Architectural Character The building was at its most interesting architectural character after the additions by General Kirkpatrick as illustrated in photograph two of this series. The combination of the Mexican and Victorian details around 1890 created a vernacular architecture of simple charm and graceful proportion. The added length to the original structure and the volumes blocking the ends of the north and south balconies created a design in harmony with the site and living pattern of the occupants. By 1953 much of the wooden structure had deteriorated and was removed in the reconstruction of this building and is indicated on the drawings.

Condition The building is in excellent condition due to the construction in 1953, though the exterior plaster has been removed leaving the adobe bricks subject to weathering and vandalism. Earthquake protection has been added by an inch and one-half gunited concrete over steel mesh on all interior walls and by the introduction of a reinforced concrete bond beam at the first and second floor plate levels.

Exterior The existing structure is twenty-two feet in width by sixty-four feet in length, surrounded by a balcony with a loggia beneath approximately six feet in width. The foundations are of local stone supporting adobe masonry walls approximately three feet in width at the first story and two feet at the second. The adobe sun-dried bricks are ten and one-half by twenty-one by a plus or minus three inches in thickness, with butted vertical joints and plus or minus one inch and one-half horizontal joints of adobe mud. The bricks are laid with the exterior face showing one stretcher course and one header course alternating at each face of the building to create corner bonding. The original plaster on the wall has been removed. The walls are capped at the first story offset and the top of the second story walls with a four by twelve inch redwood plate.

The balcony trim, flooring and original posts are redwood. The posts are a net seven and one-half inches square with two inch chamfers as shown on the drawings.

The chimney of brick construction dating from the 1890 additions has been removed.

The exterior doors on the first floor are 1953 constructions while on the second story they date from the 1890 additions. The present sash are fixed twelve light stock pine sash replacing the earlier double hung (weightless) sash as detailed on the drawings. The detail which shows an upper fixed sash with a movable lower sash without a parting bead is similar to those found in other adobe constructions in the Monterey area. Due to changes in the floor levels at various periods the original first story window lintels have been cut to facilitate the raising of the window openings.

The roof is now of rough split cedar shakes in a simple hip form which covers the balconies on all sides. The original roof was a hip roof over the main adobe structure with the eaves extended to cover the north and south balconies. During the late nineteenth century the roof was shingled with redwood shingles.

Interiors The first story floor is now red colored cement scored in a tile pattern, prior to 1953 it was one by four pine flooring, originally it was probably tamped earth. The second story floor is one and one-half inch by ten inch redwood boards with a one-quarter inch bead exposed on the finished first floor ceiling. The beams supporting the floor are four by seven inches net redwood beams with a quarter inch and half inch bead profiles at each edge.

The present exterior stairway is of 1953 construction and in a conjectural location. The interior stair existing prior to 1953 has been removed and is shown in the photographs and drawings.

The walls are white cement plaster having been structurally reinforced as described above. The door and window reveals are splayed at the jambs and flat at the heads and lined with flush jointed redwood boards painted white. It is possible that some of the windows were fitted with interior wood shutters, (judging from hardware marks) but it is impossible to tell the extent or nature of such due to subsequent changes.

The trim is generally redwood throughout. The sills of the windows are unique, their crude profile probably an indication of the fabrication of all but the smaller molded elements by local craftsmen.

There is no hardware left to give a clue to the nature of early pieces, but the use of wooden pegs in the balcony and roof framing would indicate that such items were hard to come by in this area in the early period of construction.

No special provisions for light or heat are evident in the early construction though fireplaces and flues were added in the late nineteenth century. The overmantle and the chimney were removed in the 1953 reconstruction, though the fireplace was retained and a simple redwood trim added.

Site The site of the Francisco Sanchez adobe near the San Pedro creek and well back in the San Pedro valley indicates the care and thought typical of the selection of early homesites. The adobe is oriented with its long axis east-west giving the south elevation a magnificent view of the Montara mountains which form the south boundary of the valley. Its position approximately one mile east of the shoreline means that the site escapes many hours

of the coastal fogs that blanket the California coast during the summer months. Many of the large eucalyptus trees planted in the late nineteenth century have been removed, but old cypress trees dating from even earlier days remain at the north boundary of the site.

The extent of the ranch outbuildings and of the structures of even the earlier Mission Dolores outpost buildings is the subject of study of those interested in early California communities. Alan Brown of San Mateo County is one who has done some work in this area. Further information may be had by consulting la Peninsula, Journal of the San Mateo County Historical Association, Volume IX, Number 2.

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