

NAVAL TRAINING STATION, SENIOR OFFICERS' QUARTERS  
DISTRICT, QUARTERS NO. 4  
(Naval Station Treasure Island, Officers' Quarters No. 4)  
Naval Station Treasure Island, 4 Whiting Way, Yerba Buena Island  
San Francisco  
San Francisco County  
California

HABS CA-1793-E  
CA-1793-E

HABS  
CA 1793-E

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
PACIFIC GREAT BASIN SUPPORT OFFICE  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
600 Harrison Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

NAVAL TRAINING STATION, SENIOR OFFICERS' QUARTERS DISTRICT,  
QUARTERS NO. 4  
(Naval Station Treasure Island, Officers' Quarters No. 4)

HABS No. CA-1793-E

Location: Naval Station Treasure Island  
4 Whiting Way, Yerba Buena Island  
San Francisco  
San Francisco County, California  
*556005.4185285*  
UTM: 10.555803:4185467  
USGS Quad Oakland West, 1959 (rev. 1980)

Present Owner/  
Occupant: Base Realignment and Closure  
Program Management Office West  
1455 Frazee Road, Suite 900  
San Diego, California 92108-4310

Present Use: Vacant

Significance: Quarters 4 is significant as part of the Senior Officers' Quarters District at Yerba Buena Island. Although short-lived as a training station (1898-1923), Yerba Buena Island was essential in the establishment of a modern American naval presence of the West Coast. One of four such facilities, Yerba Buena Island quickly became a key Navy station while it operated as a training station, and continued to play an important role in the military presence after it was decommissioned in 1923. The Senior Officers' Quarters District represents the major nexus of the island's historic building stock during this period and is significant for its association with the establishment of the Navy Training Station. The district is also significant as a representative of residential military architecture.

## PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

### A. Physical History

1. Date of erection: Quarters 4 was completed in 1901.<sup>1</sup>
2. Architect and Engineer: The construction of Quarters 4 is attributed to the Bureau of Yards and Docks (BuDocks), the Navy department responsible for design, construction, and maintenance of all naval facilities.
3. Original and subsequent use: From 1901 to 1997, Quarters 4 served as Senior Officers' housing. The building has remained vacant since the closure of Naval Station Treasure Island in 1997.
4. Builder: Navy Bureau of Yards and Docks (BuDocks).
5. Original plans and construction: Quarters 4, nearly identical to Quarters 3 and 5 (**HABS Nos. CA-1793-D and CA-1793-F**), was designed and constructed as a rectangular three-story Classical Revival residence. The building faces northwest and is set on a brick foundation and is clad with beveled wood siding. A high hip roof with a decorative ridge roll covers the residence. A hip-roof dormer is set on the east side of the building, and a small shed-roof dormer on the north side. Like other quarters in this district, a one-story porch was centered on the main façade. The porch was enclosed with a wood balustrade with square balusters. This railing was repeated on the top of the porch which doubled as a balcony for the second-floor main bedroom. Fenestration consists of a symmetrical placement of double-hung, diamond-patterned sash windows.<sup>2</sup>
6. Alterations and additions: During the Navy's tenure on Yerba Buena Island there have been numerous changes to Quarters 4, most of which are not documented by architectural plans. Changes on the exterior include replacement of several windows along the rear and north sides of the building, the rebuilding of portions of the foundation with modern brick, and construction of means of egress on the rear side of the building. This egress includes the replacement of a window and a door, and the installation of a metal fire escape.

Alterations to the interior of the building during the 1950s are numerous. One of the most notable changes confirmed by a plan is the Navy's construction of a new chimney and fireplace on the south side of the residence. Physical evidence reveals that the Navy removed and rebuilt the chimney, strengthened the ceiling joist by adding a steel "I" beam, and removed the interior wall that divided the

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<sup>1</sup> E. Hice and D. Schierling, "Historical Study of Yerba Buena Island, Treasure Island, and Their Buildings," Mare Island Naval Shipyard, Base Realignment and Closure, Revision 1, prepared for Environmental Department, Naval Station, March 1996, Table 2, 1-48.

<sup>2</sup> View of the Officers' Quarters, with the Training Barracks located on the right side of photograph, circa 1901.

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front parlor from the rear room during the 1950s. The result was a room that extended from the front to rear wall and the replacement of the rear window sashes with a fixed light. Additionally, the Navy remodeled the kitchen in the 1950s, installing new appliances and modern vinyl flooring. Two bathrooms were added underneath the main hall while other bathrooms were updated and old fixtures replaced as needed.<sup>3</sup>

## B. Historical Context

Note: Please refer to **HABS No. CA 1793-A** for a detailed historical context of the Senior Officers' Quarters District. Additional documentation for Yerba Buena Island can be found in **HAER No. CA-233-A, Torpedo Assembly Building**, and for the Naval Training Station on Treasure Island in **HABS No. CA-2785, Golden Gate Exposition**.

The Naval Training Station at Yerba Buena Island was established after an executive order from President McKinley on April 12, 1898. Although the Army continued to occupy and operate the Torpedo Station, the Navy was granted "a goodly portion" of the island for use as a training station. The need for a western training station was demonstrable and efforts at other small various training stations, such as Mare Station, had failed.<sup>4</sup> The Yerba Buena Island Naval Training Station became one of four Navy training facilities in the United States, and the only one on the West Coast.<sup>5</sup> An ambitious project from the outset, the 300-acre island had limited usable land, only approximately 150 acres with no room for expansion, and remained ill-suited for use as a training station. Even so, the island remained a key facility from 1900 to 1923 before Navy operations were moved to San Diego. This transfer represented an important step in the shift of major Navy installations from northern to southern California, specifically to San Diego.

The Navy, likely the Bureau of Yards and Docks, constructed twenty-three buildings on Yerba Buena Island during the initial period between 1900 and 1905, ranging from simple utilitarian structures like a powerhouse, to the elaborate training barracks building.<sup>6</sup> The large Classical Revival training barrack building served as the station's main facility. Because original plans do not exist for the facilities on Yerba Buena Island, it is difficult to know whether any of these responsibilities were contracted out to private architects. As the construction on the enlisted barracks progressed, the Navy began to build of a series of officers' quarters just up hill. The Navy completed the Commander's Quarters, Quarters No. 1, in 1900, and the seven other Senior Officers' Quarters (Quarters 2-8),

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<sup>3</sup> Navy Public Works, "Married Officers' Quarters No. 4, Layout," Y.B.I Drawing No. 4-221, 1949, on file at the City and County of San Francisco, Department of Public Works.

<sup>4</sup> JRP Historical Consulting Services, "History and Historic Resources of the Military in California, 1796 to 1989," Volume II of *California Historic Military Buildings and Structures Inventory* Prepared for the US Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District, March 2000, 5-7.

<sup>5</sup> E. Hice and D. Schierling, "Historical Study of Yerba Buena Island, Treasure Island, and Their Buildings," 1-14.

<sup>6</sup> E. Hice and D. Schierling, "Historical Study of Yerba Buena Island, Treasure Island, and Their Buildings," 1-15-16.

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between 1901 and 1905. The Senior Officers' Quarters are attributed to BuDocks, and they bear a striking resemblance to officers' quarters at Mare Island Naval Shipyard in Vallejo, also designed by BuDocks during the same period.

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Quarters 4 is a significant example of a Classical Revival-style building in the Bay Area and a representative example of its use in naval residential architecture.
2. Condition of Fabric: Quarters 4 remains in good condition.

### B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Quarters 4 is a three-story residence, approximately 40' tall, 44' wide with four bays, and 30' deep with three bays.
2. Foundation: This residence rests on a brick foundation with a partial basement located on the north side. The brick foundation is laid in a common bond and extends under the porch as well. Small wood hopper lights and louvered vents are located at the ground level. The windows are topped with a simple concrete lintel.
3. Walls: Exterior walls are clad with beveled-wood siding and wide paneled corner boards. Scrolls are located beneath the bay on the second story, and match those seen on Quarters No. 1 (**HABS No. CA 1793-B**).
4. Structural system, framing: Quarters 4 has a wood platform-frame with load-bearing walls. The type of floor and roof framing system are unknown.
5. Porches, stoop, and balconies: A single-story, covered porch is located on the northeast (main) façade of the building. It is supported by four tapered columns, with flat roof, and carries the second-floor balcony. Both the porch and the balcony are enclosed by a wood balustrade composed of wood posts and turned balusters. The northern segment of the porch was enclosed with wood panels and glazing. A covered stoop is located at the building's northwest corner.
6. Chimneys: Two exterior-end brick chimneys are located on the building's north and south sides. Each chimney has sloped shoulders, inset panels, and a square chimney stack with a simple cap.
7. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: The main entrance is centered on the east façade and is composed of a single-leaf, half-glazed door with a wood-frame

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screen door framed by pilasters and flanked by two sidelights. The sidelights consist of a lower wood panel and upper fixed light. On the second level, a set of French doors topped with a diamond-pane transom is sited directly above the main door. On the southwest (rear side) there is one half-glazed wood door, which is located at the rear attached stoop.

- b. Windows: The windows are predominantly double-hung wood sash window with an upper diamond-pattern-lights-over-one-light and are symmetrically arranged on the first and second stories of Quarters 4. Exceptions to this include a window on the front façade that has been replaced with a one-over-two-light wood sash, one on the northwest replaced with a one-over-one double-hung sash, and on the rear side replaced with a fixed-light sash. On the rear side of the building there is a Palladian window, three small three-light wood casement windows, and a four-light square wood window within the dormer.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: A high hip roof is sheathed with composition shingles. Two small bays on the rear are covered with flat roof.
- b. Cornice, eaves: The building has boxed eaves with a simple cornice, block modillions, and a large blank frieze board. Metal half-round gutters with downspouts are set along the eaves.
- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: A hip dormer, located on the front side of the building, has a boxed cornice, pilasters, and block modillions along its frieze. This dormer includes two small one-over-one-light windows. Both dormers are clad with beveled wood siding and the rear dormer has a clipped gable roof.

C. Description of the Interior:

1. Floor plans: Please refer to the floor plans attached at the end of this report.
  - a. Basement: Quarters 4 has a partial basement encompassing 386 square feet on the north side of the residence. The basement is accessed from the stairway near the kitchen and features a hot water room.
  - b. First floor: Quarters 4 is based on a central hall plan. Typical of a central hall plan, the main entrance hall contains the central staircase and the formal living and dining rooms that flank the hall. Service rooms, including the butler's pantry and kitchen, are located behind the hall where dogleg stairs are set at the back and the room is subdivided by a simple flat arch that suggests a separation between entry and stair hall.

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The arch consists of two pilasters that carry a paneled lintel. Two bathrooms are located underneath the stairs in the building.

The two rooms flanking the entry hall serve as living and dining room and are separated from the hall by paneled architraves. Each room has a fireplace set at the corner or along the exterior wall. The room on the south side of the hall has been enlarged by removing the wall separated the formal living room and the rear family room, so that the living room extends the depth of the house.

- c. Second Floor: On the second floor there are three bedrooms and two bathrooms arranged around a cross corridor. A library opens to a balcony located above the main entry porch. Of note are the fireplaces in the bedrooms, which set at the corner of the rooms. Each has glazed tile inset facing, a ceramic hearth, decorative metal grate, and wood mantel with a scroll molding and dentils. The walls in each room are finished with smooth plaster, a wide baseboard, and picture rail near the ceiling. The original flooring has been replaced with narrow oak wood planks, although original wide pine flooring is still located on the building's third floor.
  - d. Attic: The third floor contains two bedrooms and a bathroom.
2. Stairways: The stair features decorative newel and angle posts and shaped balusters. The stair string is open with paneled or bracketed risers, and a Palladian window at the landing.
  3. Flooring: There is narrow oak flooring in all of the rooms except for the bathroom and kitchen, which have modern vinyl sheet flooring. Original wide-plank flooring remains on the third floor.
  4. Wall and ceiling finish: Walls in each room on the first floor are finished with smooth plaster and a picture rail and simple crown molding at the ceiling.
  5. Openings:
    - a. Doorways and doors: Large pocket doors separate the living and dining rooms from the hall and are framed by paneled architraves. Each opening contains a wood, inset-panel door that slides the entire length of the opening. A wood-panel swing door with a square-view light separates the kitchen on the northwest side from the living room and a half glazed door is located on the north wall of the kitchen. Most doors on the second floor are five-panel wood doors.
    - b. Windows: Windows are framed on the first floor public rooms with a decorative surround. The motif used on the architraves is similar to the

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one used on the corner boards on the exterior walls. Finger holds remain on some of the original windows and replacement windows have modern hardware.

6. Decorative features and trim: The front portion of the entry hall features a molded chair rail, wide baseboards topped with quarter-round molding, and a molded picture rail. An elaborate crown molding with beading completes the decorative finishes in this room. Also notable in the hall is the plaster medallion that surrounds the ceiling light fixture and the scrolls at the doorways to flanking rooms. The decorative finishes on the second floor are simpler, lacking medallions and beading on the cornice molding.
7. Hardware: A combination of thumb latches and brass handles are used throughout the residence. A mortise lock is found on the front door, and a push plate protects the swinging kitchen door. Simple brass finger holds are used on the wood panel doors and windows contain finger holds and pull handles.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: Quarters 4 is located in the Senior Officers' Quarters District, which consists of seven residences, two apartments over garages, one five-car garage, and the surrounding landscape features located on Yerba Buena Island. The district is located north of Interstate 80 and the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. These residences sit on an acre of land above what is known as the East Point, the portion of Yerba Buena Island which contains the largest section of flat, buildable land and historically served as the main housing complex on the island. The twelve resources that make up the Senior Officers' Quarters District are roughly arranged in a triangular-shaped district on a hilltop above the East Point. Quarters 1-4 generally face east towards a greensward and overlook a parking lot that originally served as the parade ground at the base of the greensward. Quarters 4 is centrally sited near Whiting Way, between Quarters 3 and 5. A central lawn and several terraced gardens, which form the interior of the triangular district, are located behind (southwest) Quarters 4.
2. Historic landscape design: Quarters 4 is surrounded by planted beds containing a variety of trees and plants. On the southeast side of Quarters 4 is the expansive greensward which slopes down from Quarters 1 to a concrete retaining wall that fronts an unpaved parking lot. At one time, tennis courts (designated as Building 273) sat at the eastern edge of the greensward and were a strong demarcation between the Officers' Quarters and the parade ground. A row of mature rose bushes now fills the center of the space. Located on the western edge of the greensward is a row of box hedges, planted in 1970s and thus not part of the historic landscape. Behind Quarters 4 is a terraced garden designed by Lucille Woolpert, a local Bay Area landscape designer. This garden is bounded by a

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random cut stone retaining wall on the east side and primarily composed of a central lawn with a series of terraced beds. At one time it was planted with perennials on the southern border.

3. Outbuildings: There are no outbuildings associated with Quarters 4.

### PART III: SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural Drawings: There are no original architectural drawings for Quarters 4. Several drawings for alterations to Quarters 4 are on file with the Bureau of Engineering, Department of Public Works, County and City of San Francisco, however these plans are not exhaustive.

Navy Public Works, "Married Officers' Quarters No. 4, Layout," Y.B.I. Drawing No 4-221, 1949.

- B. Early Views:

Record Group 80, General Records of the Department of the Navy, National Archives, Still Picture Branch, College Park, MD.

Treasure Island Museum, Treasure Island, San Francisco, CA.

- C. Interviews: Wickson R. Woolpert, son of Lucille Woolpert, personal communication with Amanda Blosser, 15 November 2003.

- D. Bibliography:

1. Published Sources:

Craig, Lois. *The Federal Presence: Architecture, Politics, and National Design*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1994.

Gebhard, David, et al. *A Guide to Architecture in San Francisco & Northern California*. Santa Barbara: Peregrine-Smith, Inc., 1973.

LCRD McDevitt, E. A., USNR. *The Naval History of Treasure Island*. Treasure Island: U.S. Naval Training and Distribution Center, 1946.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide To American Houses*. New York: Knopf, 1996.

Rifkind, Carole. *A Field Guide to American Architecture*. New York: New American Library, 1980.

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Reinhardt, Richard. *Treasure Island: San Francisco's Exposition Years*. San Francisco: Scrimshaw Press, 1973.

2. Unpublished Sources:

City and County of San Francisco, Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering, plan files for Yerba Buena Island.

Hice, E. and D. Schierling. "Historical Study of Yerba Buena Island, Treasure Island and Their Buildings." Revision 1. Mare Island Naval Shipyard, Base Realignment and Closure. Prepared for Environmental Department, Naval Station. March 1996.

Historic American Engineering Record, HAER No. CA-233-A, Naval Training Station, Quarter's 1, San Francisco, California, April 1998.

JRP Historical Consulting Services. "Cultural Resource Inventory and Evaluation Investigations: Yerba Buena Island and Treasure Island, Naval Station Treasure Island, San Francisco, California, March 1997," Prepared for Engineering Field Activity, West, Naval Facilities Engineering Command.

\_\_\_\_\_. "History and Historic Resources of the Military in California, 1796 to 1989." Volume II of *California Historic Military Buildings and Structures Inventory*. Prepared for the US Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District, March 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Historic Context: Themes, Property Types, and Registration Requirements." Volume III of *California Historic Military Buildings and Structures Inventory*. Prepared for the US Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District, March 2000.

Treasure Island Museum, Yerba Buena Island File.

Woodbridge, Sally. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, "Quarters 1, Yerba Buena Island, Naval Training Center," January 1991.

3. Internet Sources: None

4. Periodicals:

*San Francisco Chronicle*, Wednesday, July 17, 1940, December 23, 1939.

*California-Magazine of the Pacific*, November 1940.

*Shasta Redding News*, February 13, 1984.

E. Likely Sources

Upon operational closure of the former Naval Station Treasure Island, records and materials formerly housed in the Navy's Treasure Island Museum were collected, catalogued and assembled for shipment. As such, these items were not wholly accessible and were not available to the public at the time of recordation. Due to the loan of various drawings and materials to those entities operating and maintaining the property by lease, some records were inaccessible or not indexed, including architectural drawings, contracts, and photographs.

F. Supplemental Material:

1. Location map showing Quarters 4 in relation to other buildings in the Senior Officers' Quarters District.
2. Floor plans of Quarters 4, including the basement, first floor, second floor and attic.

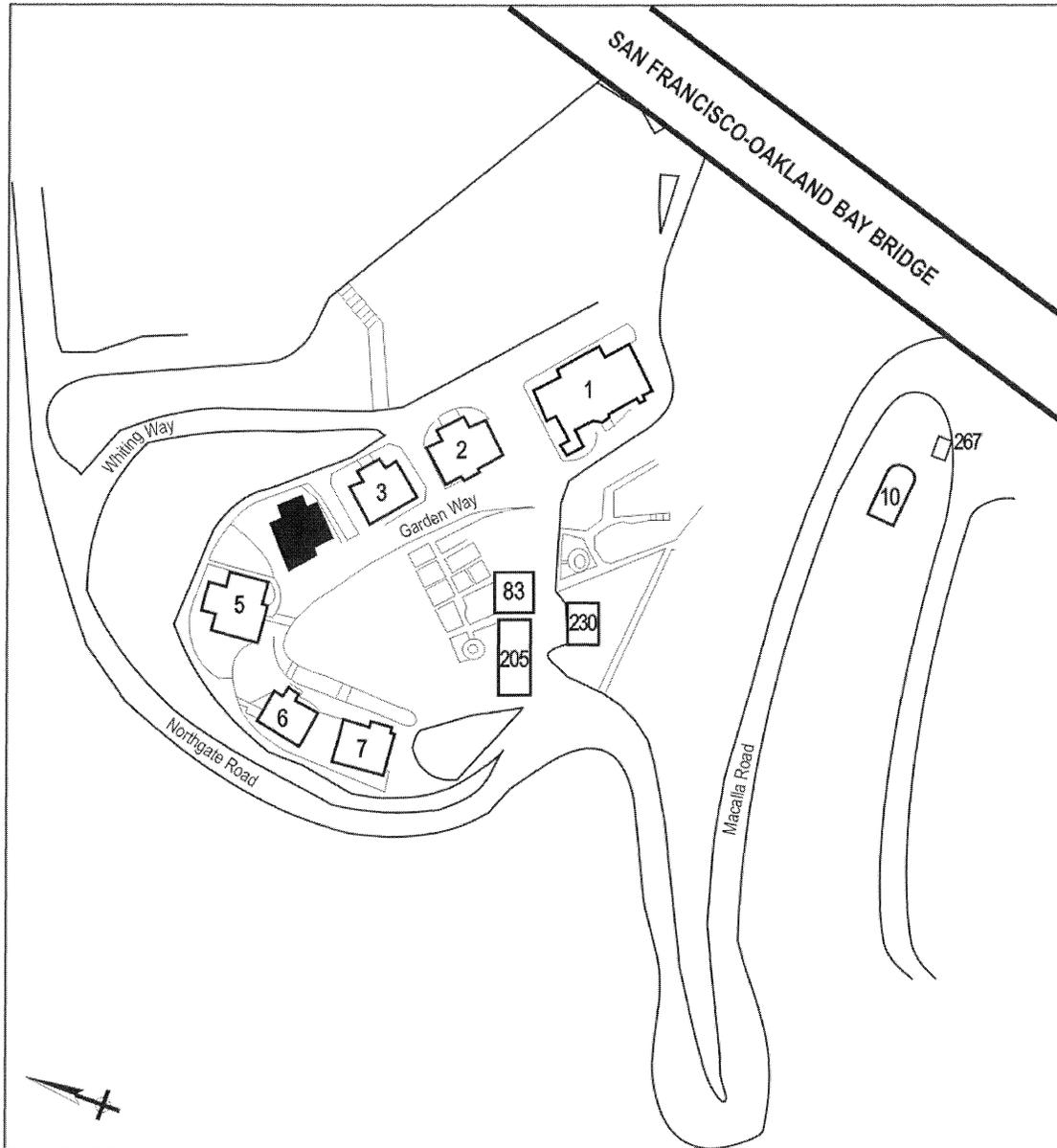
PART IV: PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken to fulfill the requirements of the Memorandum of Agreement between the Navy and the California State Historic Preservation Officer for the layaway, caretaker maintenance, interim leasing, sale, transfer, and disposal of historic properties on Naval Station Treasure Island.

Amanda Blosser and Toni Webb of JRP Historical Consulting prepared this document for Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) and the Navy. Both Amanda Blosser and Toni Webb conducted the fieldwork, wrote architectural descriptions, and the historic context. Both Ms. Blosser and Ms. Webb conducted research for this project at the California State Library, Treasure Island Museum, County and City of San Francisco, Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering. William B. Dewey produced the photography.

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LOCATION MAP



**ORNAMENTAL DETAILS**



**Figure 1.** Detail of central staircase in entry hall. [Source: JRP Historical Consulting]

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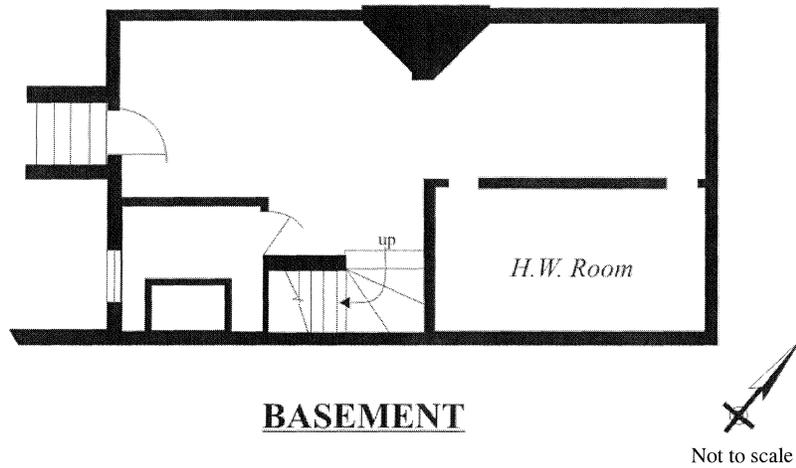
**Figure 2.** Detail of entrance into the dining room from entry hall showing paneled architrave and crown molding. [Source: JRP Historical Consulting]



**Figure 3.** Detail of typical fireplace. [Source: JRP Historical Consulting]

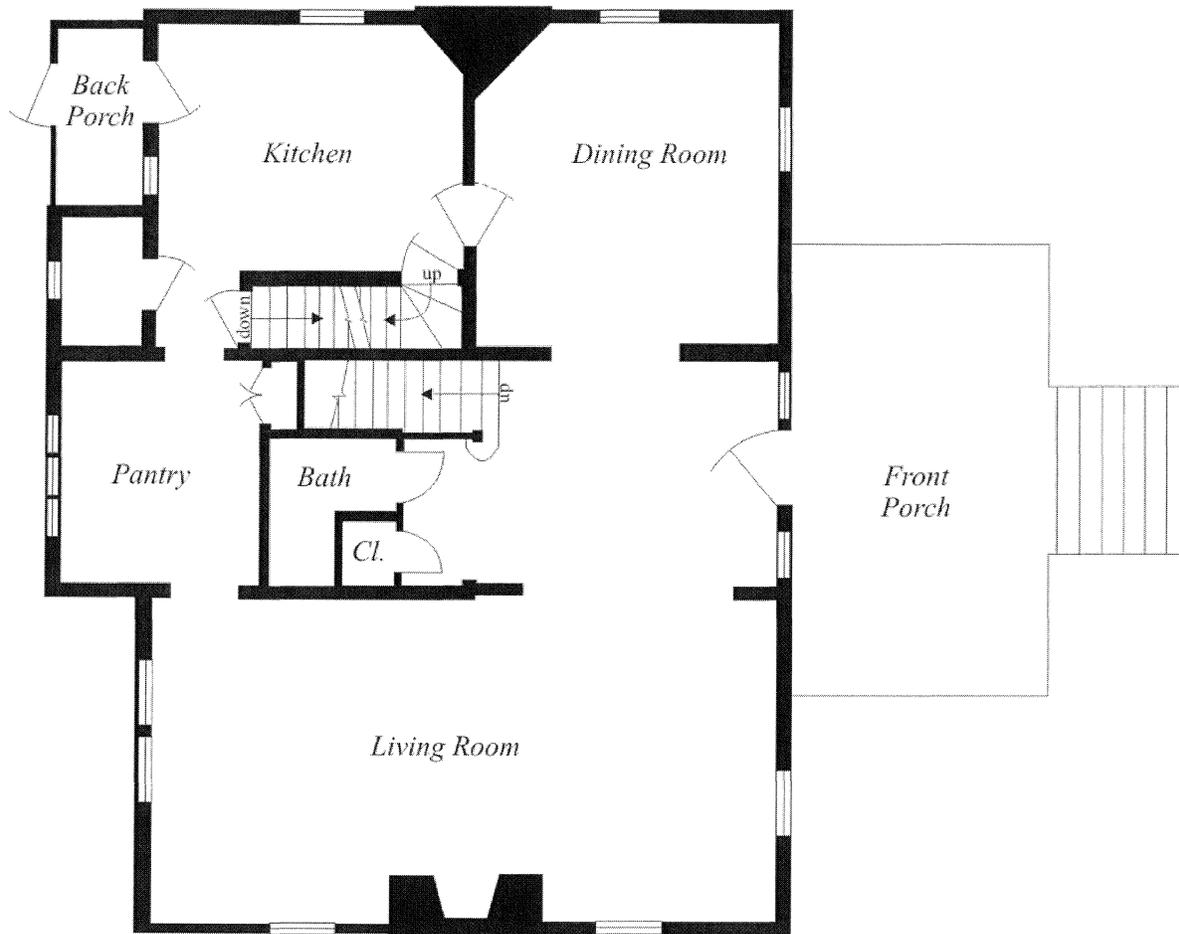
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**FLOOR PLANS**



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**FLOOR PLANS**



**FIRST FLOOR**



Not to scale

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**FLOOR PLANS**

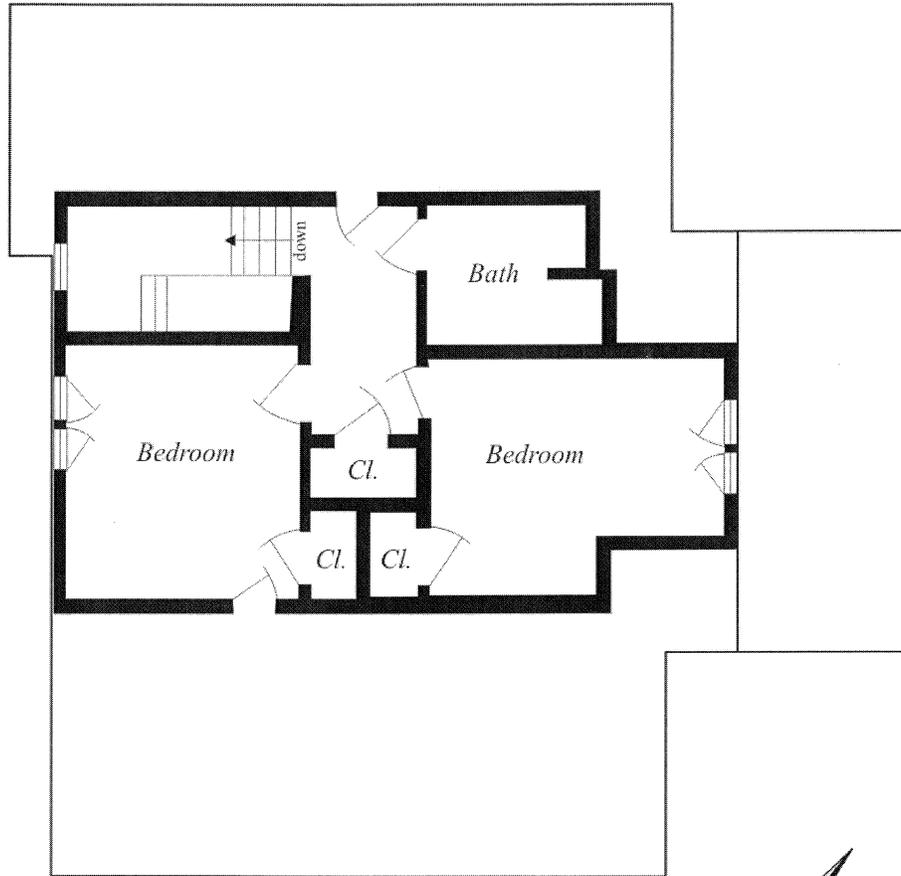


**SECOND FLOOR**



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**FLOOR PLANS**



ATTIC



Not to scale