

PRESIDIO OF SAN FRANCISCO, MAIN POST,
WAREHOUSE
(Building 230)
230 Gorgas Avenue
Presidio of San Francisco
San Francisco
San Francisco County
California

HABS No. CA-2836

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1111 Jackson St
Oakland, CA 94607

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

Presidio of San Francisco, Main Post, Warehouse (Building 230)

HABS No. CA-2836

Location: 230 Gorgas Avenue at Doyle Drive; in the northeast corner of a paved area at the southeast corner of Gorgas Avenue and Halleck Street; northeast of Buildings 228 and 229.
Presidio of San Francisco, Golden Gate National Recreation Area,
San Francisco
San Francisco County
California 94129

U.S.G.S. San Francisco North Quadrangle; Universal Transverse Mercator
Coordinates: 10 / 548127.39 mE / 4184102.31 mN

Present Owner
And Occupant: The Presidio Trust; Presidio Trust Archaeology Lab

Significance: Building 230 is a contributor to the Presidio of San Francisco National Historic Landmark District. The Army constructed the utilitarian warehouse in 1917. Serving as a supply depot, Building 230 was a representative part of the development of the northern portion of the Main Post during World War I.

The Army oversaw construction of several utilitarian warehouses in the northern portion of the Main Post and in the North Cantonment areas of the Presidio during World War I. Unlike the majority of the remaining Presidio warehouses, Building 230 does not belong to one of the two larger collections of warehouses in the North Cantonment, as it stands alone and somewhat isolated from other buildings. Although the building's interior has undergone several modifications over time, the changes are predominantly superficial and reversible. The building's exterior retains both a high degree of integrity to its date of construction and the majority of its utilitarian character-defining features.

Part 1. Historical Information

A. Physical History:

1. **Date of erection:** 1917
2. **Architect:** United States Army.
3. **Original and subsequent owners, occupants, uses:**
 - a. **Owners:** United States Army, 1917 to 1992; National Park Service, 1992 to 1996; Presidio Trust, 1996 to present.

b. Occupants and Uses:

1917-1987: US Army, Main Post Quartermaster operated warehouse/general supply storage

1987-1994: Post Exchange/clothing store

1994-1999: Vacant

1999-Present: Presidio Archaeology Lab

4. **Builder, contractor, suppliers:** U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
5. **Original plans and construction:** Not Available.
6. **Alterations and additions:** Between 1917 and 1941, the Army divided the interior into two large warehouse rooms, added plumbing and restrooms in the north/northwest corner of the building, added skylights, removed the central partition, and installed a corridor with three offices along the north wall of the building.

In 1987, the building underwent a major upgrade when the Post Exchange Retail Outlet moved into the building. The building received a new entrance to the store portion (railed steps, enclosed entrance foyer on the loading dock) and an emergency exit. The Post Exchange added a loft area in the center of the building (with steel columns and a platform), boxed in a number of the beams, installed suspended acoustical tiles and a linoleum tile floor on the north end of the building, and new sheetrock walls in the office spaces.¹

The interior of the building has undergone alterations over time to accommodate modern uses.

B. Historical Context:

Building 230 came into existence at a time when the Army and the citizens of San Francisco had a collective hand in shaping the built environment of the Presidio through the course of preparing for and facilitating a world war, and by way of the celebratory display of a city rebounding from a calamitous earthquake less than a decade earlier. As expected of any defense installation, the Presidio stood as a readied post during this period. Typical Post activities included the removal of artillery from older armaments throughout the seacoast fortification system, construction of buildings for two new cantonments, and the development of the Presidio's major supply depot, which included Building 230, one of several buildings typical of the wooden warehouses in this area of the post .

¹ Physical History Report, Building 230, Physical History reference binder, GGNRA Archives 1992.

As the U.S. readied itself and eventually entered World War I, the Presidio grounds vacated by the exposition were transformed into the North Cantonment of temporary barracks, mess halls, and warehouses. Along with the Letterman Complex enhancement, the wartime climate demanded the expansion of supply depots, including that of Fort Mason's into the lower Post area. In 1917, the Army constructed a railroad line from Fort Mason into the northeastern corner of the Presidio along Mason Street. It is likely the Army used the line to facilitate the Post's function as a major supply depot during both World Wars.²

In addition to the supply depot, the Army erected a handful of new warehouses between 1917 and 1919 including Building 230. Additional buildings constructed during this period included Warehouses 1183, 1184, 1185, 1186, 1187, and 1188. Each warehouse displayed something of a "Transitory" type of common wood construction that replaced previously demolished exposition buildings located in the vicinity of the Palace of Fine Arts. The warehouses were connected to Fort Mason via San Francisco's waterfront railroad—the State Belt Railroad of California. Serving as the Post's major supply depot, the location in which these remaining warehouses stand was a particularly bustling area of the North Cantonment during both world wars.

Changes to circulation patterns during this period occurred at the northeast section of the Presidio as a result of Doyle Drive construction beginning in 1935, including the realignment of Gorgas Avenue. Prior to the construction of Doyle Drive, Gorgas Avenue was aligned northwest-southeast and intersected with Mason Street. During the Doyle Drive construction, Gorgas Avenue was realigned to veer west at present-day Building 230, and to intersect with Halleck Street—this is the current configuration.³ Finally, the development in 1915 of Marina Boulevard along the supply depot right of way lent to circulation improvements within the Corridor. Today, Mason Avenue near its intersection with Marina Boulevard is considered one of the principal street entrances to the Presidio.

Part 2. Architectural Information

A. General Statement:

² Alley, Paul, and Leo R. Barker, Gordon Chappel, Cary Feierabend, John P. Langellier, David Quitevis, and Sally A. Dean., *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form 10-900(Rev.10-90): Presidio of San Francisco National Historic Landmark District, 1993* (San Francisco: National Park Service, 1993), 7-46; Thompson, Erwin N., *Defender of the Gate, the Presidio of San Francisco: A History from 1846 to 1995*, vol. 1. (San Francisco: National Park Service, 1997), 389-393, see 427-442 for discussion of military activities involving troops associated with the Presidio; Thompson and S. B. Woodbridge, *Presidio of San Francisco: An Outline of its Evolution as a U.S. Army Post, 1847-1900*, (Denver Service Center: National Park Service, 1992),196.

³ The old alignment of Gorgas Avenue is represented clearly in Post Quartermaster, Presidio of San Francisco, Plan Showing Building and Roads, Sheet No. 1 of 2, December, 1934, Golden Gate NRA Park Archives, Drawer 312, Folder 2. Gorgas is represented in its newly aligned form in Strauss & Paine, Inc., Lyon Street Connection Plan and Profiles, Sheet No. F127, April 25, 1936, Golden Gate Bridge & Highway District, Golden Gate NRA Park Archives, Drawer 228, Folder 2.

- 1. Architectural character:** Building 230 is a utilitarian, single-story, wood-frame building with lapped (also referred to as shiplap) wood siding that measures roughly 74' x 134' in plan. The building's post-on-pier foundation consists of raised, cast-formed concrete piers that support wood beams. The piers are raised noticeably higher at the west elevation, and appear at-grade on the east elevation. A low pitch gable roof is clad with red asphalt shingles.⁴ The expansive, open warehouse space is created by three rows of aisle posts, with the central aisle post supporting the roof structure at the ridge. A loading dock and extended platform eave flank the east elevation of the building. The eave appears to have been tapered in order to accommodate the angle at which a former rail line carried supply cars immediately adjacent the east side of the building.
- 2. Condition of fabric:** Building 230 was evaluated for possible structural deficiencies by use of the Inventories and Conditions Assessment Program (ICAP), and a checklist developed by the National Earthquakes Hazard Reduction Program (NEHRP) identifies possible weak links in the seismic-resisting system of the building. This evaluation is based largely upon forecasting the performance of lateral bracing.

Deficiencies in the structural system were determined using an on-site inspection of the building, and were duly noted in the ICAP evaluation. No analyses were performed, no finishes were removed, and no materials-testing was done. The deficiencies noted were based on conditions observed and engineering judgment.

The visible members of the structural system are in fair condition. The non-visible members are assumed to be in fair condition also, as the ICAP indicates there is no outward evidence that would indicate otherwise.

The building is scheduled to be demolished in fall 2011.

B. Description of Exterior:

- 1. Overall dimensions:** 74' x 134'. The building is a single-story, rectangular wood-framed structure with crawl space below the ground and floor levels.
- 2. Foundations:** The foundations consist of isolated 16" square concrete pier footings at grade level, which support the floor structure above. The concrete piers are spaced at 10' to 12' on center each way, and are between 1' and 2' high above grade. The perimeter wall construction does not extend down to the foundation level, but instead rests on rows of posts-on-piers.
- 3. Walls:** The perimeter walls above the first floor level are wood frame.

⁴ Bradley, Denise, *Cultural Landscape Report for Presidio of San Francisco National Historic Landmark District and Palace of Fine Arts*, (San Francisco, California, 1994), 7-108.

- 4. Structural system, framing:** The structure rests on a perimeter and two interior rows of post-on-piers that support floor girders. The girders support joists and heavy wood flooring, the wall sills with stud framing, the primary eave wall, and two rows of interior aisle posts. These posts are braced with diagonal brackets to the roof truss. The roof structure is made up of paired rafters secured to perimeter post tops and rafters secured to wall lintels. The rafters are board sheathed to support roofing, which presently consists of asphalt shingle.

The first floor level is platform framed. The straight sheathing at the floors and the roof serve as horizontal diaphragms that span to the perimeter walls. The perimeter walls of the building bear on the first floor platform framing and are not continuous to the foundation.

- 5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads:** A narrow railroad loading dock spans the majority of the east elevation, and a concrete ADA compliant ramp with a metal railing is located on the north elevation.

- 6. Chimneys:** Not applicable.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: A series of four wood horizontal sliding doors with diagonal crossbeams span the east elevation. A modern pair of vertically hinged glass doors with aluminum framing is located at the north elevation. Finally, a four-step stairway flanked by metal hand railings leads to a single, elevated doorway located at the southern section of the building's west elevation.

b. Windows and shutters: A series of eleven 3/3 light fixed windows span the west elevation, with three double-hung 4/4 sash openings located directly below at the northern end. A series of eight double-hung, 4/4 sash openings span the west elevation

8. Roof:

a. Shape, covering: Building 230 has a low-sloped, gable roof that consists of red asphalt shingles over straight sheathing on 2x6 rafters that span to double 2x12 wood beams and wood framed perimeter walls. The wood beams are supported by interior 6x6 wood columns at 20' on center. The roof extends over the loading dock located on the east elevation of the building. A row of five small square modern skylights has been installed on the east side of the roof.

b. Cornice, eaves: Eaves are closed on the north and south elevations of the building. The east and west elevations have open eaves with exposed rafters.

c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: Not applicable.

C. Description of Interior:

1. **Floor plans:** The floor plan consists of a large single room, with a series of smaller partitioned rooms along the south and west portions of the interior.
 - a. **Main floor:** Building 230 measures 74' x 134'.
 - b. **Attic:** Not applicable.
 - c. **Gallery:** Not applicable.
2. **Stairways:** Not applicable.
3. **Flooring:** The flooring consists of straight sheathing over 2x12 wood joists on 16" on center that span to 12x12 or (3)3x12 wood beams. The wood beams (or girders) are supported by stout wood posts extending from the concrete pier footings.
4. **Wall and ceiling finish:** The interior walls are wood framed, non-structural drywall partitions that do not rise above the open roof structure's truss beams.
5. **Openings:**
 - a. **Doorways and doors:** Interior doorways include a pair of two-way, horizontal swinging doors providing an opening to the partitioned storage room at the south end of the interior. Additional single-hung doors provide passage through the smaller partitioned rooms, including the three offices and kitchen at the southwest corner of the interior. At the northwest corner of the interior, a series of three doorways access a pair of anterooms, within which an additional two doorways access a pair of single-stall bathrooms.
 - b. **Windows:** Not applicable.
6. **Decorative features and trim:** Not applicable.
7. **Hardware:** Contemporary throughout the interior.
8. **Mechanical equipment:**
 - a. **Heating, air conditioning, ventilation:** A large, spherical ventilation duct is affixed at the center of the ceiling. The duct leads to a hot air furnace.
 - b. **Lighting:** A series of drop fluorescent lighting fixtures hang throughout the interior.

- c. **Plumbing:** Two restrooms at the northwest corner, and a kitchen sink at the southwest corner are outfitted with functional plumbing fixtures.

D. Site:

- 1. **Historic landscape design:** Not applicable.
- 2. **Outbuildings:** Not applicable.

Part 3. Sources of Information

A. Architectural Drawings: Research indicates the earliest drawing plans for Building 230 date to 1935: “Office of the Constructing Quartermaster C.C.C. Warehouse, Building No. 250—Wahrehouse No. 5,” GOGA 70437, National Park Service, Golden Gate National Recreation Area Park Archives and Records Center, San Francisco, California.

B. Early Views: Research indicates the earliest view of Building 230 appears in a photo dating to ca. 1930 (Presidio—Building 0230, Warehouse 5, U.S. Army Signal CORPS—P91-005-170).⁵

C. Interviews: N/A

D. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Building No. 230 Physical History Report Building Inventory. Presidio Trust Library. San Francisco, California.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Alley, Paul, Leo R. Barker, Gordon Chappel, Cary Feierabend, John P. Langellier, David Quitevis, and Sally A. Dean. *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, Presidio of San Francisco National Historic Landmark District*. October 1993, updated January, 2009.

E. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated: Not applicable.

⁵ Building No. 230 Physical History Report Building Inventory. Presidio Trust Library. San Francisco, California.

F. Supplemental Material: Not applicable.

Part 4. Project Information

This Historic American Building Survey (along with five others occasioned by the Doyle Drive Replacement Project) follows the dictates of the Programmatic Agreement agreed to by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the Presidio Trust, the National Park Service and other stakeholders. The project was initiated by Caltrans District 4 and the San Francisco County Transportation Authority, who contracted with ARUP. The State Historic Preservation Officer, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the Federal Highway Administration were also signatories to the Programmatic Agreement as well as the terms for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

The Cultural Resources Studies team was jointly led by Meg Scantlebury, Senior Environmental Planner (Caltrans District 4) and Dana McGowan, Principal, Cultural Resources (ICF International).

The contract work for the project was performed by ICF International, 620 Folsom, Suite 200, San Francisco, CA 94107.

Prepared by: David Lemon, Architectural Historian, and Edward Yarbrough, Architectural Historian. Affiliation: ICF International. Date: April 7 2011.