

611 North Minter St.
Santa Ana
Orange County
California

HABS No. CA-2855

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

611 NORTH MINTER ST.
(Vaughn Court, Minter Courts)

HABS No. CA-2855

Location: 611 North Minter St. is located in the block bounded by East Santa Ana Boulevard, North Lacy St., East Sixth St., and North Minter St. The property is situated within the James H. Fruit Addition to Santa Ana East tract.¹

The property is located at latitude: 3734779.337, longitude: 420136.9408. The coordinate was taken in August 2010, near the front door of the residence at 611 North Minter St. (Unit N), using a Garmin GPS 60CSx unit with accuracy of +/-5 meters before post processing the data. The coordinate's datum is North American Datum (NAD) 1983. The location of 611 North Minter St. (Units A-H and J-N) has no restriction on its release to the public.

**Present Owner/
Occupant:** City of Santa Ana, California

Present Use: Vacant

Significance: The multi-family residence at 611 North Minter St. does not appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, or the Santa Ana Register of Historical Properties. Constructed in 1930, this turn-of-the-century hip-roofed cottage has lost its integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Historical research has not located any information regarding the historical association of the building as significant to the history and development of the City of Santa Ana. No associations with important events, famous people, original settlers, renowned organizations or businesses, or important centers for political, social, economic, or cultural activity in the City of Santa Ana were identified at this property. Constructed in 1930, the building was not present when the City of Santa Ana was founded in 1869. No persons are known to have made significant contributions to the history of the community while living at this address. The building is not associated with the work of a notable architect, builder, or designer whose style influenced architectural development in the City of Santa Ana or at large.

**Project
Information:** HABS documentation for 611 North Minter St. was prepared by Sapphos Environmental, Inc. staff from August 2010 through May 2011 on behalf of the Community Development Agency, Housing and Neighborhood Development Division, City of Santa Ana, California. The HABS documentation serves as mitigation to comply with the City of Santa Ana

¹ Plat Book of Orange County, California. 1913. City of Santa Ana. Compiled Under the Direction of J. L. McBride, County Surveyor. Los Angeles, CA: H. S. Crocker and Company.

Transit Zoning Code (SD 84A and SD 84B) Environmental Impact Report (EIR).² Photographs and building measurements were taken by Mr. David Lee, production manager, and Ms. Marlise Fratinardo, senior cultural resources coordinator / architectural historian, Sapphos Environmental, Inc. Architectural information and historical context was prepared by Ms. Marlise Fratinardo, and Ms. Laura Carías, cultural resources analyst / architectural historian. Ms. Leslie Heumann, Sapphos Environmental, Inc. historic resources manager / architectural historian, reviewed the final report and supporting documents and provided research, writing, and project oversight.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

- 1. Date of erection:** 1930³
- 2. Architect:** No known architect could be associated with 611 North Minter St.
- 3. Original and subsequent owners, occupants:**
 - a. Owners:** H. B. Woodhill (1930–1954) ; A. H. Woodhill (1954–1957)⁴

Occupants: The property is listed as “Vaughn Court” in residential listings and occasionally in business listings, under “apartments” from 1931 to 1947. In 1935, the property is identified as “Vaughn Court Mrs. W. H. Vaughn mgr” and, in 1950, as Minter Courts.

Only two years of Santa Ana city directories (1954, 1962) were found that listed the individual residents of 611 North Minter St.:

- Minter Court Apartments (1954): A: Mrs. P. D. Miller (Unit A); B: Mrs. Lucile Cunningham (Unit B); M. E. Rice (Unit C); W. M. Campbell (Unit D); M. M. Wager (Unit E); Mrs. Eliz. Standhardt (Unit F); Delphia Trowbridge (Unit G); Mrs. L. M. Sipple (Unit H); L. M. Hager (Unit J); C. L. Slosson (Unit K); Mrs. T. S. Hollrah (Unit L); O. F. Shriver (Unit M); Pauline B. Parsons (Unit N).
- 611 Minter (1962): J. V. Boisvert; F. Brown; A. M. Dannheimer; F. F. Gutknecht; J. R. Hopper; L. Kappelle; A. E. Kester; C. A. Lockhart; L. C. Plesent; O. I. Slosson; N. S. Sluter; P. M. Stahl; E. Truth.

² City of Santa Ana Transit Zoning code (SD 84A and SD 84B) Environmental Impact Report, SCH No. 2006071100. February 2010. Prepared by PBS&J, Los Angeles, California for the City of Santa Ana, Santa Ana, California.

³ March 4, 1930. 611 North Minter St., Building Permit. Building Safety Division. City of Santa Ana, California.

⁴ Partial list, derived from City of Santa Ana building permits and city directories.

4. **Builder, contractor, suppliers:** No known builder, contractor, or supplier could be associated with the construction of 611 North Minter St. Subsequent alterations and repairs / ongoing maintenance at the property include:

February 3, 1940. Reroof by Pioneer Roofing Company for \$150.
August 26, 1954. Demolition of primary garage and lower upper apartment to ground level for H. B. Woodhill, owner, by B & Y House Movers for \$2,000.
5. **Original plans and construction:** A building permit documents the construction of a “court” for \$10,000 in 1930 (owner, H. B. Woodhill).⁵ No original plans or construction drawings were found for 611 North Minter St.
6. **Alterations and additions:** Exterior alterations include the replacement of original doors and original wood windows with metal slider windows. Interiors have been remodeled such that examples of original materials (e.g., wood trim) and architectural details (e.g., shelving, original doors) are often compromised. The interior spatial layout remains intact.

B. Historical Context:

Development of the Lacy Neighborhood, 1895–1930

Santa Ana was founded by William Spurgeon in 1869 as a speculative town site on part of the Spanish land grant known as Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana. The civic and commercial core of the community was centered on the intersection of Fourth and Main Streets. Stimulated by the arrival of the Santa Fe Railroad, incorporation as a city in 1886, and selection as the seat of the newly created County of Orange in 1889, the city grew outwards, with residential neighborhoods developing around the city center. Agricultural uses predominated in the outlying areas, with cultivated fields and orchards dotted with widely scattered farmhouses.

One of the oldest neighborhoods in Santa Ana, the Lacy neighborhood is home to a variety of property types, including residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial, that represent over 120 years of Santa Ana’s history. The Lacy neighborhood is defined by the City of Santa Ana as bordered on the north by Civic Center Drive, on the east by Poinsettia Street, on the south by First Street, and on the west by Main Street. From Civic Center Drive on the north to roughly Fourth Street on the south, the Lacy neighborhood intersects with the Station District area.

In the final quarter of the nineteenth century, Lacy’s residential subdivision and settlement was fueled by the downtown business district, located both in and adjacent to the neighborhood. By the end of the 1880s, this business district encompassed five city blocks, consisting primarily of one- to two-story brick commercial buildings. In the same period, Lacy’s eastern portion had also become the nexus of the Southern Pacific Railway line, brought to Santa Ana in 1878, and the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway line, established in 1886. The Lacy neighborhood was in proximity to local street car and railway connections, with the Santa Ana and Tustin Street Railway

⁵ March 4, 1930. 611 North Minter St., Building Permit. Building Safety Division. City of Santa Ana, California.

running along First Street; the Santa Ana and Westminster Railroad on Second Street, with a terminus point just east of Main Street; the Pacific Electric Railway line on Fourth Street, and the Santa Ana, Orange, and Tustin Street Railway line connecting the 1878 Southern Pacific Depot with downtown Santa Ana, via Santa Ana Boulevard (formerly Fruit Street).

Triggered by this proximity to commerce and transportation, residential development arrived early in Lacy, with numerous residential tracts offering small lots in the 1880s. In 1886, a subdivision dubbed "Santa Ana East" was advertised "on the line of the Los Angeles and San Diego railroad." The current 45-degree angle of Santa Ana Boulevard and Civic Center Drive reflect the layout of this tract, which consisted of 50-foot-wide lots oriented to the Southern Pacific's diagonal swath. In addition to encouraging residential settlement, the Lacy neighborhood's proximity to the railroads brought numerous industrial concerns to east Santa Ana, including lumber yards, food-packing and canning plants, furniture warehouses, and other manufacturing plants.

Two early tracts are located in the vicinity of the Station District area. The "Fruit Addition" and "James H. Fruit Addition to Santa Ana East" are associated with increased residential development in the vicinity of the new railways that reached Santa Ana during the late 1800s, providing vital connectivity to the City. Due in part to their proximity to the railroad and the downtown business district, centered at Fourth and Main Streets, the buildings in these tracts represented a mix of residential and industrial uses. The earliest buildings were typically modest vernacular cottages that housed Santa Ana's working-class residents (e.g., building contractors, dry goods salesmen, carpenters, clerks, and milliners) at the turn of the twentieth century. By 1900, the basic structure of the central core of Santa Ana, including the Lacy neighborhood, was well established and largely as one sees it today (2011), with a cluster of commercial buildings at Fourth and Main Streets, residential areas radiating outward, and a network of interconnecting railway lines, flanked by a variety of industrial and manufacturing buildings, defining the eastern sector of the Lacy neighborhood.

The Lacy neighborhood continued to expand during the pre-World War I period, with an increase in residential development accompanied by the construction of many cultural, civic, and religious buildings, clustered in the neighborhood's northwestern portion. A historical map (Sanborn, 1906) depicts a neighborhood comprising primarily single-family dwellings intermingled with occasional undeveloped lots. The 1920s brought a new focus to the neighborhood when a large number of auto sales and repair shops were established in Lacy's southwestern area. By 1927, at least 12 auto sales and repair shops were clustered between Third and Fourth Streets, and French and Lacy Streets. By the 1930s, the neighborhood was fully developed as a residential community comprising single-family and multi-family properties interspersed with neighborhood services and commercial uses that included agricultural supply businesses.

In the post-World War II era, the construction of large multi-family dwellings began to alter the character of the area toward higher density residential uses. In eastern Lacy, recent redevelopment projects have begun to change the area's formerly industrial character and have brought a new wave of settlement to the neighborhood.

611 North Minter St.

The residences at 611 North Minter St., constructed in 1930, are representative of residential development in the Lacy neighborhood from 1895–1930. The property is an apartment court complex comprising three near-identical buildings that contain 12 attached units (Units A-D, E-H and J-M) and a detached single-family residence (Unit N). There is no Unit “1” that is identified either on the property’s extant signage or on historical Sanborn maps. An 1888 Sanborn map depicts a large building (demolished) on the corner of G St. (North Minter St.) and Fruit St. (East Santa Ana Boulevard) with a square plan and wraparound porch that is labeled “Santa Ana Hotel.” In 1897, the building is labeled “Tenement House.” Subsequent maps (Sanborn, 1906, 1925), drawn prior to the construction of the extant property, depict a building in the same location with a similar rectangular plan and porch configuration; however, the building appears either new or substantially modified. Labeled as “Lodg’s,” the building (demolished) suggests the property’s multi-family use well before the 1930 construction of the extant apartment court. By the 1940s, the area was fully developed as a residential community comprising single-family and multi-family properties interspersed with neighborhood services and commercial uses such as agricultural supply businesses and auto repair garages. A 1949 Sanborn map depicts the footprints of the extant buildings as well as a garage with a rectangular plan (demolished) that previously extended from the northeast (rear) of Unit N. The property is identified as “Vaughn Court” or “Minter Courts” in historic Santa Ana city directories. Specific information regarding the name Vaughn or members of the Woodhill family, who constructed the property in 1930 and owned the property until at least the late 1950s, was not located. No additional information was located regarding the contribution of any individual occupants to the history and development of the City of Santa Ana.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

- 1. Architectural character:** 611 North Minter St. is a one-story apartment court complex consisting of three near-identical buildings (Units A-D, E-H and J-M) and a detached residence (Unit N). The three buildings each contain four apartment units. The building located at the corner of the property (Building 1) at East Santa Ana Boulevard and North Minter Street contains Units A-D. The middle building (Building 2) contains Units E-H. The southernmost building (Building 3) contains Units J-M. Building 1 and Building 3 have south-facing facades. Building 2 is offset slightly to the south and, while generally identical in its design and spatial layout to Buildings 1 and 3, is rotated 180 degrees to create a courtyard area with Building 1. The three buildings, rectangular in plan, each have wood-frame walls clad in rough textured stucco that support a side-gable roof. Roofs are medium-pitched with minimal eave overhang and covered in composition material. A louvered metal gable vent is located on each building’s east and west walls. Window and door openings (original) are arranged asymmetrically along each facade. Each facade has four door openings, which are accessed via a concrete stairway that leads to a small stoop enclosed by a wood railing. A shed roof awning supported by curved concrete brackets overhangs each door opening. Architectural detailing is minimal, with the exception of a series of sloping stucco archways that extend to the east (rear) of each building, creating a passageway. Additional stucco archways, facing

North Minter Street, connect Buildings 1, 2 and 3, including a large archway that spans a driveway between Building 3 and Unit N.

Unit N is a one-story west-facing single-family dwelling. Rectangular in plan, the building has wood-frame walls clad in rough textured stucco that support a front-gable roof. The roof is medium-pitched with minimal eave overhang and is covered in composition material. A louvered metal gable vent is located beneath the crown of the roof. The facade has a full-width side-accessed stucco porch that is offset slightly to the south and accessible by a short concrete stairway to the north. There are two door openings, the primary entrance on the west-facing facade and a rear door located on the north wall. Windows are arranged asymmetrically on all walls.

The stuccoed exteriors and incorporation of archways suggests the influence of the Spanish Colonial Revival style; however, roofs are not tiled and no other character-defining features of the style were used.

2. **Condition of fabric:** The current condition of 611 North Minter St. is deteriorated. Windows and doors are boarded over.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. **Overall dimensions:** Each of the three buildings housing the apartment units has an identical footprint comprise a rectangular plan and overall dimensions of approximately 94'-0" long by 18'-6" wide. Building N, a detached dwelling, is primarily rectangular in plan and approximately 27'-6" long by 18'-6" wide
2. **Foundations:** The four buildings that comprise 611 North Minter St. sit on a concrete foundation.
3. **Walls:** The exterior walls are covered in rough textured stucco.
4. **Structural system, framing:** The structural system for 611 North Minter St. comprise wood-frame walls.
5. **Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads:** The facades of Buildings 1, 2 and 3 have three small concrete stoops accessed by a short concrete stairway and enclosed by a wood railing. The stoops located along each facade comprise two individual stoops and one shared stoop, which provides access two units. Unit N has a full-width stucco porch (addition) with two arched openings to the west (facade) and a flat roof.
6. **Chimneys:** None.
7. **Openings:**
 - a. **Doorways and doors:** Door openings are original with examples of original and replacement doors.

- b. **Windows:** Window openings (original) are arranged asymmetrically along each facade. Windows comprise wood-frame (original), wood casement (original) and metal slider (replacement).

8. Roof:

Units A-D, E-H and J-M are surmounted by a medium-pitched side gable roof with minimal overhanging eaves. Unit N has a front gable roof with a shed rood addition to the east (rear). Composition roofing material covers all roofs.

C. Description of Interior:

- 1. **Units A-D, E-H and J-M:** The interior floor plans (original) of Units A-D, E-H, and J-M consist of a living room / bedroom (combined), a kitchen, and a bathroom. Floor plans are rotated based upon the direction of the building's facade. The entrance to each unit opens directly into the living room / bedroom. Door openings from the living room / bedroom access the kitchen and bathroom. Windows are located along the north and south walls of each unit, with the end units having a single window to the east or west, respectively. Interior flooring consists of carpet and laminate tile. Interior walls are painted and/or textured drywall. Original windows, doors and hardware are often replaced, with occasional original examples.
- 2. **Unit N:** The interior floor plan (original) of Unit N consists of a living room / bedroom (combined), a kitchen, a bathroom, and a mudroom. The entrance to each unit opens directly into the living room / bedroom from which two door openings provide access to the kitchen (north) and bathroom (south). A full-width shed addition, accessed from the kitchen, is located to east (rear). Interior flooring consists of carpet and laminate tile. Interior walls are painted and/or textured drywall. Windows, doors and hardware are replaced.

D. Site:

- 1. **Historic landscape design:** Mature trees, grass, decorative landscape plantings, concrete stepping stones, and paved areas provide the immediate setting of 611 North Minter St. A network of concrete pathways scored with a stone block pattern (original) provides access to the three buildings containing the apartment units. A courtyard located between Units A-D and E-H comprising degraded rock walls and low concrete curbing encloses extant yet overgrown ornamental plantings. Deteriorated remnants of a stucco wall along the rear property line are extant. Existing mature trees include ornamental fig (*Ficus* sp.), common fig (*Ficus carica*), Italian cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens*), boxwood (*Buxus microphylla*), cedar (*Cedrus* sp.), date palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*), olive (*Oleaceae* sp.), and pencil tree (*Euphorbia tirucalli*).

2. Outbuildings: None.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural Drawings:

No original drawings for 611 North Minter St. were discovered.

B. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

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C. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated:

Orange County Historical Society, Orange County Archives, Santa Ana Historical Preservation Society

D. Supplemental Material:

None