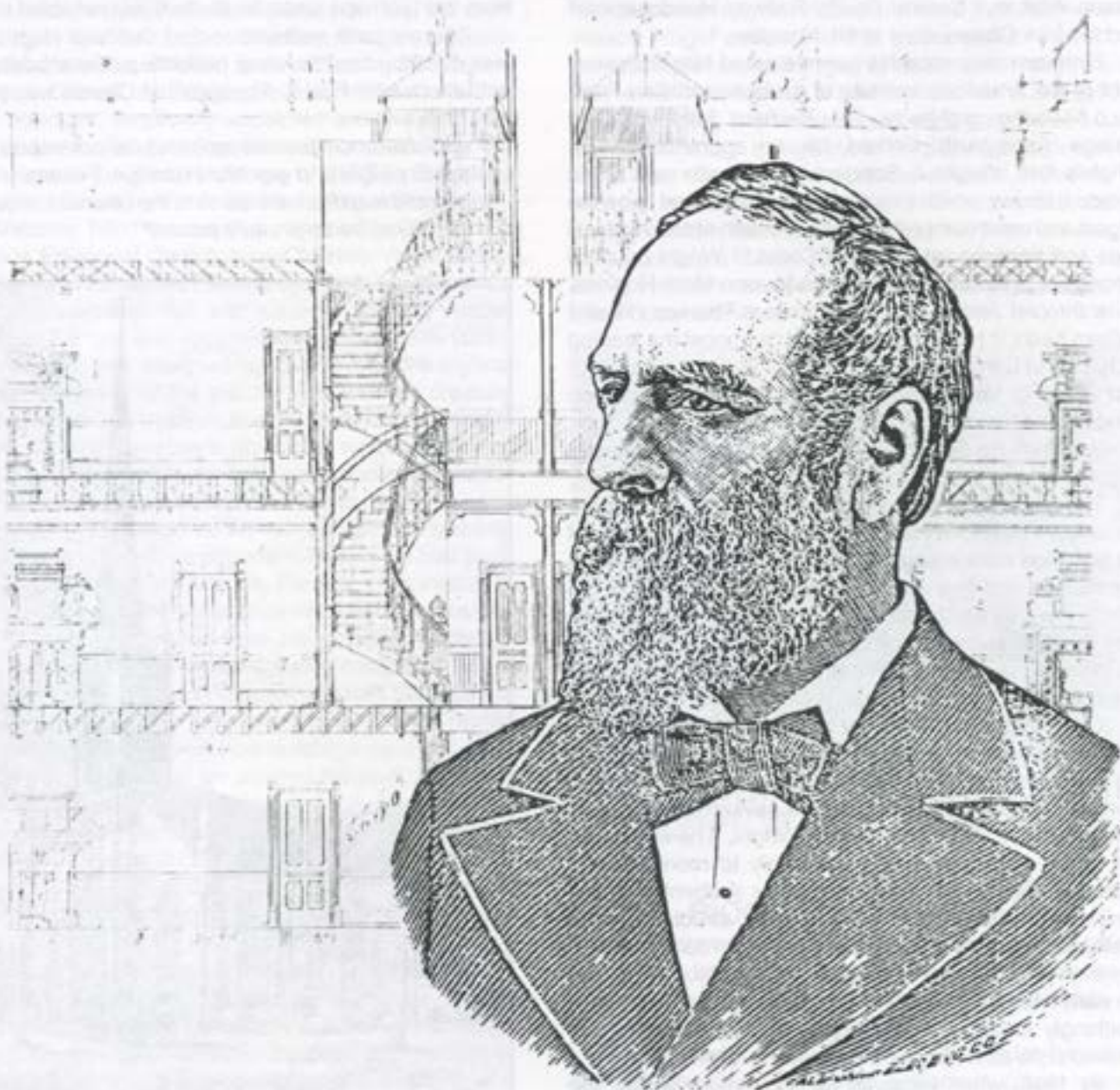


JOHN WRIGHT

(1830–1915)

GRANDFATHER OF
WEST COAST ARCHITECTURE



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The bittersweet life of John Wright *by Norman J. Ronnenberg*

When gaslight San Francisco was booming, and highly ornamented Victorian buildings were thrusting upward from every downtown intersection, John Wright was one of California's most eminent architects.

From 1867 through 1895, he designed more than 100 Bay Area buildings,¹ including such pre-Earthquake landmarks as: the Mark Hopkins mansion on Nob Hill,² The Pacific Union Club,³ First Presbyterian Church,⁴ The Napa Insane Asylum,⁵ Central Pacific Railway Headquarters⁶ and the Lick Observatory at Mt. Hamilton.⁷

By unanimous vote, his peers elected him first president of the American Institute of Architects in San Francisco.⁸ Young architects like Bernard Maybeck and George Applegarth worked for or apprenticed with Wright's firm, Wright & Sanders,⁹ and made use of his personal library, which was generally considered to be the largest and most comprehensive collection of architectural texts and treatises on the West Coast.¹⁰ Wright counted among his personal friends railroad baron Mark Hopkins, philanthropist James Lick, and painters Thomas Hill and William Keith.¹¹ His firm was ranked "amongst the leading architects of San Francisco,"¹² and the *California Architect and Building News* praised him as "one of the masterminds in the handling of architectural studies."¹³

Yet when he died in 1915, John Wright was almost a forgotten man.

The same eminence which brought him rich and important commissions also ensured that the vast majority of his buildings were erected in the heart of San Francisco's commercial and financial districts, and thus directly in the path of the fires which followed the 1906 earthquake. More than 70 of his churches, office buildings, stores and grand residences lay east of Van Ness Avenue. All were destroyed.

Once Wright's main body of work had disappeared, there was no real reason to remember him. His few remaining buildings, such as the turretted, red-brick Stanford Hospital¹⁴ and the sprawling Insane Asylum at Napa were held to be Victorian monstrosities. Wright, if he was recalled at all, was compared unfavorably to more forward looking architects like Maybeck.¹⁵ His exuberant Gothic Revival and Richardson Romanesque structures were aesthetic embarrassments, out of style and decidedly out-of-synch with the cleaner, academic architectural trends of the early twentieth century.¹⁶ One turn-of-the-century critic scathingly characterized Wright's favorite Romanesque Revival style as a "Titanic inebriation in sandstone."¹⁷

By 1986, when research for this article began, the eradication of Wright's memory from the Bay Area's architectural consciousness was almost complete. The local AIA Chapter had no significant information about its first president. The region's excellent research libraries identified fewer than six past and present structures as Wright-

designed. They were unable to provide any significant information about his life and works. Only the fortuitous discovery of Wright's office ledger book,¹⁸ an uncatalogued cache of letters in the Bancroft Library, and an unpublished student manuscript¹⁹ provided the clues which showed that Wright had produced dozens of residences, churches, offices and institutional buildings which had pleased his clients and evoked often rapturous praise from the (perhaps unsophisticated) journalists of the day.

The elegant, mansard-roofed Oakland High School was described as "the most beautiful public school edifice in California."²⁰ First Congregational Church was praised as:

one of the most tasteful architectural ornaments of the city. Light and graceful in design, it seems as if it would leap from the earth to the heavens, where its lofty spire so proudly points.²¹



First Methodist Church, Victoria; John Wright, archt. 1859; photo courtesy BCARS

"Fernside," Railroad magnate A.A. Cohen's 70-room mansion in Alameda, with its four marble-columned entrances and ornate interior spaces, was repeatedly said to be the most beautiful and magnificent structure in the East Bay.²² San Francisco's "Morning Call" reported that the Cooper Medical School was the "most perfectly appointed and arranged building of its kind in the United States."²³

Wright was probably not an architect of the same rank as Julia Morgan, Willis Polk or Maybeck. Yet the six²⁴ remaining Wright buildings in the Bay Area are exceedingly well-crafted, and often quite charming: St. James Episcopal Church in Oakland²⁵ is a rustic Carpenter Gothic structure, exquisitely appointed and detailed, with nicely proportioned groining and redwood vaulting; the three romanesque stone buildings at the San Francisco Theological Seminary²⁶ rise like medieval castles from the San Anselmo hills; the vaulted redwood ceiling of St. Stephens Episcopal Church (now Old Holy Virgin Cathedral)²⁷ in San Francisco's Fillmore District is evocative of a sailing ship's wooden hull, with exposed ribs and trusses swelling to the roof line; and the domed Lick Observatory at Mt. Hamilton was designed not only to meet the highest technical standards of the era, but also with the creature comforts of the Lick trustees and gentleman-astronomers in mind. The Observatory's Main Hall was embellished with marble floors, richly carved walnut doors and wainscoting and multi-colored decorative frescoes.

Although Wright had no formal architectural training, he apparently allowed his patrons to believe he had studied the "Queen of the Arts" in Europe, presumably in England.²⁸ They were free to draw their own conclusions about Wright's background from his published architectural discourses which knowledgeably contrasted European and American design styles.²⁹ His deft treatment of Italianate villas, English Gothic churches, French-roofed mansions and "classical" school buildings gave credence to the popular belief that he learned his craft at a prestigious foreign institution. Such was not the case, however.

Wright was entirely self taught, an auto-didact. His inspiration came from architectural treatises, pattern books, the inspection of other mens' buildings and, most profoundly, from his hands-on experience as a Canadian carpenter and engineer.

Drawing upon the construction skills he had acquired at job sites in Ontario and British Columbia, Wright involved himself in every aspect of the building and design process. He not only determined the aesthetic contours of his projects, but was also the no-nonsense engineer who carefully braced iron to redwood to lessen the destructive effect of anticipated earth tremors. With unexpected sensitivity for the natural environment, he sited his buildings so they would not despoil or overwhelm the natural contours of the landscape.³⁰ Furthermore, Wright typically designed the furnishings and interiors of the buildings for

which he was responsible.³¹

Perhaps because Wright's designs were grounded in his own Scottish practicality, and in his apparent belief that the client was presumptively entitled to the design of his choice, he was extremely popular with Northern California's merchants and capitalists, many of whom repeatedly hired him to draw the plans for their office buildings, stores and warehouses. They found in him a kindred spirit. He was a Presbyterian elder, clubman and pillar of the commercial community—a man who shared their conservative values. Wright understood that businessmen desired not only cost-effective buildings, but also structures with "gravitas," or visible evidence of their owners' worth and solidity. He did his best to give his clients what they wanted.

Seen through today's eyes, Wright's High Victorian designs were often unnecessarily ornamental. However, his designs indisputably reflected the commercial aspirations and often florid exuberance of the Victorian era. He was arguably a mirror of his times, and is, on that basis alone, entitled to a more than cursory review of his place in West Coast architectural history.



"Fairfield" for Hon. Joseph Trutch, Victoria; Wright & Sanders, archts., 1861; photo courtesy BCARS

BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

John Wright was born at Killearn, Scotland, a small village not far from Loch Lomond on May 15, 1830.³² His parents died when he was quite young, and he was raised by his grandparents and unmarried aunts.³³

When he was 15 or 16, Wright immigrated to Canada to live with cousins near Guelph, Ontario.³⁴ Wright learned carpentry in Guelph, and trained as an engineer.³⁵ He also seems to have received some sort of "on-the-job-training" as an architect because by 1856 he was working closely with the eminent Anglo-Canadian architect, William Thomas. Thomas designed numerous Gothic Revival churches and highly ornamented public buildings in Can-

ada.³⁶ Wright apparently acted as his assistant or on-site inspector when the Guelph Town Hall, now a Canadian historical landmark, was built.³⁷

Two years later, Wright had established a connection with Canada's Royal Engineers. According to contemporary sources, he was "sent" by the Government to British Columbia in 1858 "to design lighthouses along the coast."³⁸ With his young wife³⁹ and newborn daughter in tow, he emigrated to Canada's farthest outpost, where he initially settled his family in one of the first European homes built outside of the New Westminster palisade.⁴⁰

Fisguard Light, which still stands watch over the rocky entrance to Esquimalt harbor was, so far as is known, Wright's maiden architectural project.⁴¹ Although an older architect was identified as the project's chief planner, it seems clear that Wright designed a substantial part of the structure. The newspapers of the day described the lighthouse as "picturesque" and "sturdy."⁴³

Victoria and New Westminster were then raw villages on Canada's western frontier. Victoria, in particular, was "a remarkable place, wooden shanties here, there and everywhere . . . many of them not much more than lean-to's, built at odd angles and on odd corners."⁴⁴ Wright understood that shanties must inevitably give way to modern and more substantial buildings, and that Victoria was a place of unlimited opportunity for an aggressive and canny builder. Within months of his arrival, and despite his lack of formal architectural training, he was designing substantial homes for British Columbia's burghers and government officials.⁴⁵ They were apparently impressed by his arrogance, 6'2" height and commanding presence. They may also have been impressed by the notoriety achieved by Wright in the late 1850's, when he was declared a hero by the Victoria press. He was sailing aboard the sloop Pacific when it struck a rock, 70 miles from Victoria. According to a local newspaper, a great rush of water threatened the lives of the 30 passengers. Wright "with great courage and presence of mind thrust his leg into the hole in the ship's side and kept it there, surrounded by blankets, to stop up the hole." By doing this, he "single handedly" saved the vessel and voyage.⁴⁶

During the next few years, Wright became the founding father of British Columbia's architectural establishment.⁴⁷ He acquired a reputation as a skilled church architect, designing religious structures for the Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians, and even what appears to be Western North America's oldest extant Jewish synagogue.⁴⁸ He executed plans for dozens of local structures ranging from girls schools to firehouses, hospitals to grand residences.⁴⁹

Each of his designs was marked by a technical expertise previously unknown to Western Canada. One commentator has called him the man who "changed the architectural thinking of Victoria."⁵⁰ Professor Martin Segger of the University of Victoria describes him as "British Columbia's first professional architect with a "reputation



"Angela College" Victoria; Wright & Sanders, archts., 1866; photo courtesy BCARS

for innovation which he was to carry throughout his career."⁵¹ Exemplary of Wright's technical skills and flair for novelty were Fisguard Lighthouse, which had the region's first spiral staircase, and for which Wright received a patent;⁵² and the clean-lined, provincial Gothic Pandora Methodist Church, which possessed the earliest hot air furnace in the Western Territories.⁵³

In 1861, Wright was joined by George Sanders, an Englishman, with whom he formed an architectural partnership.⁵⁴ The firm became known as Wright & Sanders, though Sanders' role in the design of the firm's Canadian projects seems to have been quite modest. Standard texts on British Columbia architecture virtually ignore Sanders, and attribute the firm's trademark "High Victorian" designs to Wright, alone.⁵⁵ Professor Segger, for example, emphasizes that it was Wright, and not Sanders, who:

"established himself as the institutional image maker for the young expanding colony. Within the brief seven years of his Victoria practice, the small West Coast town had begun to establish an urban form which was to a large extent the Victorian eclectic idiom as interpreted by John Wright."⁵⁶

Similarly, from newspapers, clients' documents and oral histories, it appears that Wright, rather than George Sanders, was the designer of most, if not all, of the California buildings which were credited to Wright & Sanders.⁵⁷ A contemporary San Francisco architectural journal reported that many of the City's most prominent institutional buildings, churches and dwellings were a credit to Wright's architectural ability. The same article described Sanders as "associated with Mr. Wright in business matters."⁵⁸

Sometime in 1866, Wright visited San Francisco for the first time.⁵⁹ It was a heady time in the City's history; Mark Twain was writing for the "Alta California"; public elementary schools were being established; the transcontinental railroad was slowly creeping towards its 1869 completion; and a massive influx of new residents was making land speculation a growth industry. According to family legend, Wright learned there would be a competition to design the

new State Blind and Deaf school in Berkeley. On a "dare," he submitted plan drawings and, much to his own surprise, won the competition.⁶⁰ The million dollar Blind School project was large, complex and time-consuming. It was also an aesthetic success. The institution's Board of Governors praised Wright for designing "a building of fine lines, beautiful appearance [and] enduring character . . ."⁶¹ David Gebhard, a modern architectural historian, describes the "Ruskin-ian Gothic" school as "functionally and in the realm of imagery . . . thoroughly up to date." When compared to other buildings of the era, "there was nothing retrogress or provincial about its design."⁶² Completion of the Blind School commission—on time and within the budget—obviously gave Wright local credibility as an architect, and helped to establish his reputation as a skillful designer of institutional buildings.

After being awarded a second commission in 1867—the multi-towered 1200 seat Calvary Presbyterian Church⁶³ on Union Square—Wright recognized that his professional future lay in California rather than Canada, and brought his growing family down from Victoria. They settled for a time on Rincon Hill, which was then San Francisco's most exclusive neighborhood, but later moved out to Jackson street, where the last five of Wright's ten children were born.

In 1868 Wright won what was arguably Northern California's most important architectural competition.⁶⁴ The Regents of the University of California announced they were seeking designs for the new University of California campus in Berkeley, and invited dozens of well-known architects to compete for the project. The Regents' committee selected Wright & Sanders' classically-inspired design, which nestled the academic buildings in the slope of the Berkeley Hills; awarded the firm first prize, and asked them to prepare additional working drawings.⁶⁵ When, however, John Wright learned that his fee would not be a flat percentage of the cost of the completed project, but only \$1,500, his arrogance apparently got the better of him. He demanded more money to complete the job. When the additional funding was not forthcoming, he renounced the commission. The campus design project ultimately went to the second place finisher, David Farquharsen.⁶⁷

During the next three decades, Wright was extraordinarily productive. His firm designed shops, office blocks and warehouses for most of San Francisco's post-Gold Rush merchant princes. The iron-fronted White House department store, hailed as being of the "light, airy, and ornamental" school of architecture,⁶⁸ and noteworthy for being one of the few whitewashed commercial buildings in the City, was erected for Raphael Weill;⁶⁹ Levi Strauss commissioned at least one retail structure,⁷⁰ while the Heilers asked Wright to design a "Moorish" office building on Sansome Street, with dramatic arches, minaret-like windows and a fantastic variety of Islam-inspired designs marching up and across the building's facade.⁷¹ The Crockers, McCreerys, Friedlanders and Huntington Hop-

kins also sought Wright's services for their own, less flamboyant, commercial establishments.⁷²

Wright's vast, "Modern Renaissance" Lachman Block at Fremont and Market streets was occupied by pioneer jeweler George Shreve,⁷³ and Mr. Heald's first business college held pride of place in the "elegant and capacious" College Building at 24 Post St.,⁷⁴ which in 1871 was described as and "one of the finest structures built in the last year."⁷⁵ It was the monumental Central Pacific Railroad Headquarters, though, which was Wright's best-known commercial commission. L-shaped with pressed brick facades and multiple entrances, it occupied most of a city block, and was generally thought to be one of, if not the largest, office structures in California.⁷⁶



Civic Seal, City of Victoria; Wright & Sanders, archts., 1865; photo courtesy BCARS

As in British Columbia, Wright & Sanders was particularly renowned for the ecclesiastical structures it built for an ecumenical roster of religious denominations. For the Presbyterians, the firm designed the San Francisco Theological Seminary, with its lovely Montgomery Chapel, as well as Oakland's Independent Presbyterian Church⁷⁷ and San Francisco's Calvary, First and Central⁷⁸ Presbyterian Churches. The latter structure, in what is now the Tenderloin District, had an unusual octagonal auditorium, with narrow, steeply pointed octagonal towers flanking the entry staircase. The Baptists commissioned the Chinese Baptist Chapel⁷⁹ on Waverly Place and the Methodists, Old First Methodist Church on Powell Street.⁸⁰ For the Congregationalists he designed Union Square's elegant "English Gothic" First Congregational Church, as well as Plymouth Congregational, the denomination's mission church in the burgeoning Western Addition district.⁸¹ The Catholics did not even pay for Wright's services. The architect was so impressed by the hard work and noble goals of the Daughters of Charity (vocational training for female orphans), that he designed the St. Francis Technical School for them without fee.⁸² Wright's most interesting religious structure, though, was probably the Second Church of the New Jerusalem⁸³ (Swedenborgian) in the Western Addition. The streamlined, stucco-covered church and rectory had a tall and whimsical bell tower, with

a steeply peaked roof. The round, redwood church auditorium was dominated by a trio of redwood arches at the altar.

Although Wright was responsible for several small and lovely buildings (such as the circular, jewel-like Montgomery Chapel in San Anselmo), he was ordinarily not the architect to whom intimate, small scale projects were entrusted. Rather, from 1867 through 1895, he was the architect of choice for many of the Bay Area's largest and most prestigious institutional buildings—many of which were designed on a truly gargantuan scale.



Cary Castle, Victoria, Wright & Sanders, archts., 1865; photo courtesy BCARS

Toland Medical College⁸⁴ and Lane Hospital⁸⁵ were impressive enough, but the Napa Insane Asylum was extraordinary. It was not only the largest institutional building project in California, but also apparently the largest asylum in the United States.⁸⁶ 850 feet wide, with miles of corridors and multitudes of decorative towers which concealed strategically placed fire cisterns, it could accommodate more than one thousand patients.⁸⁷ The Asylum, described by its authors as "Domestic Gothic" in style, ultimately cost in excess of \$1.5 million.⁸⁸ Similarly, Wright's design for the second Blind and Deaf School in Berkeley (the first was destroyed by fire in 1875), included not only a stately Romanesque Education Building, but also an entire village of dormitories, chalet-style faculty residences, vocational training facilities and stables.

Wright & Sanders designed many grand residences in San Francisco, Marin, Alameda and San Mateo counties. "Fernside" in Alameda, befitting the status and pocket book of one of the Central Pacific Railroad barons, was the largest and among the handsomest private residences in California.⁸⁹ Banker D.J. Tallant's mansard-roofed home on Bush street in San Francisco was in 1869 called "one of the most elegant and costly private residences in San

Francisco."⁹⁰ Judge Garber's rustic retreat in the Berkeley hills, "Bellerose," with its sprawling veranda and corner turret, was an East Bay landmark until it was razed in the 1950's. But the firm's best known, and most notorious project was undoubtedly the Mark Hopkins residence on Nob Hill, which has been called "the last and worst of the railroad palaces."⁹¹

Crowned by turrets and covered with vast amounts of ornamentation, the Hopkins residence seems to have repelled the few architectural critics who have stooped to seriously comment upon it.⁹² Perhaps Wright should not be blamed for the building's excesses, though. According to his grandchildren, the original plan was relatively restrained, and was designed to complement, rather than challenge the neighboring Crocker and Stanford mansions.⁹³ The aspiring Mrs. Hopkins, however, reputedly wanted to "put Mrs. Stanford in her place," and kept adding new and more varied architectural details to the home, intending to make it grander and more eye-catching than its cheek-by-jowl neighbors. Wright, himself, complained about the overwhelming number and variety of the changes which were foisted upon him by Mrs. Hopkins, when he later approached her husband for payment of additional architectural fees.⁹⁵

Despite its critics' displeasure with the building, and notwithstanding its profusion of gables, turrets, shingle patterns and ornamental carvings, many San Franciscans were delighted by Mrs. Hopkins' house. One contemporary found it to be a pleasing variation of Ludwig II's romantic, mock medieval castles in Bavaria.⁹⁶ An elegant and cultured San Francisco socialite, while acknowledging the building's "absurdities," confessed her love for its "stately magnificence." With its terraced gardens and "the castle windows alight, the effect from the city below was enchanting."⁹⁷

Wright also drew up the plans for a disproportionate number of the Bay Area's clubhouses and lodge halls. The bay-windowed Pacific Union Club, which lorded over the northwest corner of San Francisco's Union Square, was acclaimed by its partisans as "the finest clubhouse west of New York," and was erected at a cost of almost \$500,000.⁹⁸ The Society of California Pioneers "Venetian Gothic" clubhouse rose up from Market and Fourth Streets with a squared and vaguely Moorish tower, trimmed in ornamental terracotta tile and three stories of arched Gothic windows.⁹⁹ By contrast, Oakland's Masonic Temple,¹⁰⁰ with its pressed brick facade and severe vertical lines, and the Prohibitionists' classically-inspired Dasha-way Hall¹⁰¹ were remarkably restrained commissions. Wright reached his apogee as a clubhouse designer, however, with the large and resplendent Oddfellows Hall at Seventh and Market streets. At ground level, it covered 22,875 sq. ft. Its foundation footings were eight feet wide and, in 1884, it was one of the first San Francisco structures to utilize steel framing.¹⁰² Most impressive, though, was the forty foot square Encampment Room on the third floor.

Ornately decorated, the room soared thirty feet to the top of its tented ceiling.

Despite his enthusiasm for "big" projects, Wright came late to the "skyscraper." In 1875, when queried about his acknowledged expertise in the earthquake-proofing of Bay Area buildings, he unequivocally pronounced that buildings could not safely go higher than four stories in San Francisco.¹⁰³ Yet, near the end of his career, Wright produced two of San Francisco's most imposing tall buildings. Even if derivative, they were impressive examples of engineering and design. In 1888, Wright and Sanders executed the six-story First National Bank at Sansome and Bush



Drawing for Stable at Deaf & Blind Asylum, Berkeley, Cal.; Wright & Sanders, archts., 1888; courtesy California State Archives, Sacramento

Streets in San Francisco.¹⁰⁴ One commentator maintains that the Bank, which predated Burnham and Root's Chronicle Building by one year may have been San Francisco's first real "skyscraper."¹⁰⁵ The building presented a melange of design elements: rough stone Richardsonian construction, capped by an elaborate roofline and dormer windows. However, its corner entrance had an endearing exuberance, with an elaborately carved American Eagle cresting the lintel, which was flanked by prowling marble grizzly bears. The Pacific Mutual Life Insurance Building, built in 1893, rose to seven stories, or if you counted its bulbous dome, eight.¹⁰⁶ It was also done in a Richardsonian-style, with rounded stone exterior walls. It was simpler, more restrained, and perhaps for that reason, less engaging than the First National Bank.

Wright once announced to San Francisco's architectural community that he aspired to be a "master builder" — an architect who combined pure aesthetic sensibilities with a carpenter's "thorough knowledge of materials and their proper adaptation to truthful construction."¹⁰⁷ In his inaugural address as president to the American Institute of Architects in San Francisco, Wright argued that "the office of designer and builder have been divorced, with consequences exceedingly detrimental to each."¹⁰⁸ A designer of buildings, who was unable to truly understand the materials and construction skills used in modern buildings, was in danger of producing "superficial" structures, no matter how "artistic" he might be.¹⁰⁹

At least with respect to engineering sophistication and structural stability, Wright's designs were anything but superficial. He is acknowledged to be one of the first, if not the first local architect, to design his buildings with earthquakes in mind.¹¹⁰ The Bank of British North America, the School for the Deaf & Blind in Berkeley, the White House department store and First Congregational Church were advertised in the popular press as earthquake-proof.¹¹¹ And it appears that most of his structures actually survived the 1906 earthquake. They were destroyed by the subsequent fire, or were purposely razed to act as a fire block to save the rest of the city from the conflagration.¹¹²

Since his buildings were obviously designed to stay up, it was presumed that Wright could recognize the strengths and weaknesses of other peoples' designs. He frequently acted as an arbitrator or umpire in disputes between architects and clients. During one two-year period, he was hired to evaluate the structural safety of kilns and furnaces throughout the State, negotiate party wall and subsidence disputes, and determine whether, during the next earthquake, the State Capital rotunda in Sacramento was likely to collapse over the heads of California's legislators.¹¹³ The City of San Francisco retained him to act as the consulting architect for the new and exceedingly expensive City Hall, designed by Augustus Laver.¹¹⁴ In that capacity, he produced voluminous essays on the controversial structure's heating, ventilation and sanitation systems.¹¹⁵

John Wright's wife died in 1890. With her death, he began to lose interest in his work. Finally, in 1895, he stopped actively practicing his trade.¹¹⁶ For the next 20 years, he enjoyed the money he had made in his architectural business and real estate speculations. He sent his daughters to European boarding schools, personally



Drawing for University of California at Berkeley; Wright & Sanders, archts., 1867; courtesy Bancroft Library, U.C., Berkeley

financed the European studies of promising young architects,¹¹⁷ and frequently travelled throughout the United States, Canada and Europe. In 1915, while en route to Ontario, Wright stopped off in Victoria, where he intended to visit friends. Aboard ship, he became fatally ill. Fittingly enough, he died in Jubilee Hospital, a building which, in part, he had designed.¹¹⁸

Although Wright left no diaries or letters which evidenced his pride in, or feelings about, the buildings he had planned, the 1906 earthquake must have been a terrible emotional blow. In forty-eight hours, the greatest part of his architectural lifework was destroyed. Most of the buildings which had established his reputation were now gone. Where once dozens of his buildings had dominated the heart of San Francisco's business district, now other architects' structures had taken their place. There was little left standing to remind anyone that John Wright was once an architect of note and consequence in San Francisco.

A family photograph shows the elegantly barbered Wright bicycling on the Windsor Castle grounds in 1912. The formerly penniless immigrant looked satisfied with himself. He enjoyed wealth, a secure position in the San Francisco Social Register and the love and respect of his large family. Nonetheless, one wonders if his pleasure in all of this was tempered by the nearly total destruction of the buildings which had made his reputation and fortune.

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Mark Hopkins House, San Francisco; Wright & Sanders, archts., 1878; photo courtesy San Francisco Public Library.

1. See further the exhibition list.

2. Wright obituary, "San Francisco Examiner," August 30, 1915 at p. 80.

3. *Ibid.* The Pacific Union Club was located at the northeast corner of San Francisco's Union Square, at Post and Stockton streets.

4. "California Architect and Building News" (CABN), vol. III no. 10, (October 1882) at p. 152. Until it was dynamited to deter the spread of the Great Fire of 1906, First Presbyterian Church stood at the southeast corner of Van Ness Avenue and Sacramento Street in San Francisco.

5. "Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased), Los Angeles, 1970 at p. 674.

6. The "Alta California," September 16, 1872 at p. 1. The Central Pacific's headquarters building (and later the Southern Pacific's) was located at Fourth and Townsend streets in San Francisco.

7. Mary Lea Shane Archives of the Lick Observatory, University of California at Santa Cruz. Miscellaneous correspondence and diaries, including letter dated January 15, 1900 from Lick Trust affirming that "Wright and Sanders were the architects employed by the Lick Trustees, in the building of the Lick Observatory and the dwelling..."

8. CABN, Vol. III, No. 6 (June 1882) at p. 79. He was one of only 75 "members" of the A.I.A. in the United States. CABN, vol. III, no. 11, (November 1882) at p. 178.

9. Cardwell, K.H. *Bernard Maybeck: Artisan, Architect, Artist*, Peregrine Smith Books, Salt Lake City (1977) at p. 26; Family papers of Florence Horton, Wright's granddaughter; Applegarth family papers, Bancroft Library.

10. CABN, Vol. V, no. 1 (January 1884) p. 10.

11. Horton, Florence "Oral History" (transcript); it appears that the personal connection with Lick led to Wright's appointment as the architect-of-choice for the trustees of the Lick Trust. Both Wright's office Ledger and the *California Architect & Building News* show that Wright executed numerous commissions for the Lick Estate, including the ornate Lick Baths, the Lick Observatory and additions to Lick House. In addition, he designed the Society of California Pioneers Headquarters in 1884, on land bequeathed to the Society by Lick.

12. "The Colonist," Victoria, B.C., December 1879, quoted in "The Colonist," December 18, 1955 at page 10. In 1892, the precursor of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce published an illustrated volume which was intended to entice new businesses to come to San Francisco. The book depicted 28 of San Francisco's most prestigious commercial and institutional buildings. Approximately one-third of these were designed by Wright & Sanders. Metropolitan Publishing Company, *The City of San Francisco and State of California* (1892).

13. CABN, vol. V, no. 1 (January 1884) p. 10.

14. *California Architect and Building Review*, vol. II, no. 10 (October 1881) p. 108. Formerly called the Cooper Medical School, the Stanford Hospital stood at the corner of Sacramento and Webster Streets in San Francisco until it was razed in 1972.

15. Cardwell, *supra*, at p. 29. See also Longstreth, Richard *On the Edge of the World*, Architectural History Foundation, New York (1983) at pp. 88-89 where Wright's architectural partnership was dismissed as a firm "of little distinction."

16. See, for example Kirker, H. *California's Architectural Frontier*, 1960, Huntington Library Press at p. 101, where an eminent architectural historian criticizes Wright & Sanders' "Richardsonian" First National Bank as "prosaic," showing little feeling for the materials used, and a lack of understanding of the purpose of the building.

17. Cultural critic, Willis Polk, cited in Kirker, *supra*, at p. 101.

18. Before carbons and copy machines, businesses often kept handwritten records of all incoming and outgoing correspondence in large, leather-bound ledger books. Although most of John Wright's personal papers, architectural plans and business records were destroyed by the 1906 Earthquake and Fire, one office ledger book survived, and is now in the custody of Wright's grandson, Norman S. Wright. This partial office record refers to and describes many buildings which were designed by Wright and Sanders.

19. Preservation architect Ron Reiss A.I.A. prepared a paper on Wright & Sanders while a student at San Francisco State University. Entitled "Wright & Sanders: San Francisco's Leading Architectural Firm in the Nineteenth Century," it identified approximately 25 local Wright & Sanders designs. In light of the few primary resources available to Reiss, the paper admirably sets forth the history of the firm in San Francisco. Reiss is currently preparing a monograph on Wright which will catalogue all of the architect's known designs, and evaluate each structure within its architectural and historical context.

20. "California Teacher Magazine," October 1871.

21. Langley, *San Francisco City Directory*, 1872, at page 23. Even Ernest Peixotto, a critic of most Victorian San Francisco architecture, grudgingly counted the First Congregational Church among the best of the older churches of San Francisco. Peixotto, E. "Architecture in San Francisco," *The Overland Monthly*, May 1893, vol. 21 at p. 456. The Church was situated on the southeast corner of Post and Mason Streets until 1906, when it was destroyed by the Great Fire.

22. See, for example, "The San Francisco Chronicle," March 24, 1897. When built, the 70-room Fernside was the largest private residence in California. Mark Hopkins is said to have selected Wright to be architect of his Nob Hill mansion after viewing Cohen's palatial home. Richey, E., *The Ultimate Victorians*, Howell-North Books, Berkeley (1970) at page 74.

23. "San Francisco Morning Call," November 5, 1882. Cooper Medical School was later renamed the Stanford Hospital.

24. Portions of two, and perhaps four, other buildings in San Francisco are attributable to Wright & Sanders. A pair of middle-class Victorian residences at 1191 South Van Ness Avenue and 1794 Page St. were unquestionably designed by Wright, but have been substantially altered

or remodeled. CABN vol. III no. 8 (August 1884) at p. 124; and vol. XV, no. 8 (August 1894) at p. 96. St. John's Presbyterian Church, now located at Arguello and Lake streets is a "direct descendant" of Old St. James Episcopal Church which was designed by Wright for a site on Post, between Mason and Taylor streets. Withy, *supra*, at p. 673; Wright Ledger at p. 384. According to Presbyterian church archives, the Post Street building (rechristened St. John's after its sale to the Presbyterians) was bodily moved to California and Octavia streets in 1888. In 1906, a new St. John's was built at the present Arguello location, but "copied almost exactly" the first church. The arch spanning the pulpit pews and pulpit furnishings were all from the original building.

Similarly, in 1869, Wright designed the ornate and substantial Calvary Presbyterian Church on Union Square (Withy, *supra*), which was characterized by a facade of three arches under a classical cornice. Around 1900, the valuable Union Square lot was sold, and a new structure built at Fillmore and Jackson. Although a contemporary architect was hired to design the relocated building "by popular consent, every brick and stone of the old building was marked and reused." Willard et al, *Sacred Places*, Presidio Press, San Francisco (1985) at page 81, as was most of the interior woodwork. The present church is held to be "almost a duplicate" of the 1869 structure. *Calvary Centennial Bulletin* (1854-1954), np.

25. Rawlinson, J. *Patient to Endure, Parish History of St. James Episcopal Church*. (1983) p. 23. Constructed in 1887, St. James still stands at Twelfth and Foothill in Oakland. Although its exterior is heavily weathered, the well-maintained and richly decorated chapel interior bears witness to the generosity of the church's formerly affluent parishioners who contributed notable stained glass windows and burnished brass fixtures to St. James.

26. Junior League of San Francisco, Inc., *Here Today*, Chronical Books, San Francisco (1968) at p. 230; CABN vol. XV, no. 4 (April 1894) at p. 40. Scott and Montgomery Halls (1892) and the Montgomery Chapel (1894) are still in active use. The San Francisco Theological Seminary is located at 2 Kensington Road, San Anselmo, CA.

27. CABN, vol. II, no. 7 (July 1881) at p. 72. Located at 849 Fulton Street in San Francisco's Fillmore District, St. Stephens has been transformed from a traditional Anglican house of worship into an icon-covered, pew-less Orthodox sanctuary. Although the exterior walls have been inappropriately stuccoed, thus destroying the carved Gothic traceries of the streetside walls, the Russian Orthodox priests have lovingly and carefully cared for the church's natural redwood interior.

28. See, for example, Hopkins, Caspar, "California Recollections of Caspar T. Hopkins," *California Historical Society Quarterly*, 1948 at p. 172.

29. e.g. CABN, vol. IV, no. 10, (October 1883) at page 168.

30. See generally Correspondence files of the U.C. Regents Buildings and Grounds Committee, 1868-70, University of California Archives, Bancroft Library, and letter of Wright to Regents, dated July 6, 1869. See also the as-built locations of Montgomery and Scott Halls and Montgomery Chapel at the San Francisco Theological Seminary, and Professor Gebhard's comments, *The Architectural/Historical Aspects of the California School for the Blind and California School for the Deaf, Berkeley* (1867-1979); copyright, The Regents of the University of California, 1979, at page 74.

31. Hopkins, Caspar T., *supra*, [Bank of British North America]; Mary Lea Shane Archives at the University of California, *supra*, [Main Hall, Lick Observatory]; CABN vol. VII no. 5, May 1886 at pp. 72-74 [New Zealand Insurance Co.]; Horton, Florence, Family papers, [Bellerose, the Garber Mansion]. The large "Gothic" bookcase designed by Wright for the stately Garber home in Berkeley's Claremont District is now in the permanent collection of the Oakland Museum.

32. CABN, vol. V, no. 1, (January 1884), page 10.

33. Horton, Florence; Family letters.

34. *Ibid.*

35. *Ibid.*; Guelph local assessment roll, 1858 (West ward); unidentified newspaper clipping, Guelph Public Library archives.

36. *Historic Guelph: The Royal City*, vol XXIII, August 1984, pp. 71-79.

37. Burrows, Acton, *Annals of the Town of Guelph*, page 93.

38. Obituary, "The Colonist," Victoria, British Columbia, August 24, 1915; Horton Florence, Oral History (transcript at page 6.)

39. Wright married Agnes Scott Armstrong in Guelph in 1858. The new Mrs. Wright was the daughter and sister of two of Ontario's most successful businessmen.

40. Horton, Florence. Family letters.

41. Segger, Martin. "British Columbia's first professional architect: John Wright (1830-1915)." *Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada Bulletin* volume 10, no. 1, March 1985 at page 12.

42. *Ibid.* See also "The Daily Colonist," Victoria, B.C., December 18, 1955, p. 10., citing contemporary newspaper reports.

43. *Ibid.*

44. "The Daily Colonist," Victoria, B.C., December 18, 1955, p. 10.

45. Segger, Martin, Victoria, *A Primer for Regional History in Architecture*, Pilgrim Guide in Historic Architecture (1979), at page 40.

46. "Victoria Gazette," October 28, 1958.

47. Segger, "British Columbia's first professional architect" *supra*, at pages 12 and 14.

48. *Ibid.* The Synagogue of Congregation Emanu-el was erected at 1461 Blanshard St. in Victoria in 1863. It has recently been restored to its Victorian Romanesque style, and is now a Canadian national historical landmark. "Heritage West," summer 1979, at page 3. According to sources at the Judah Magnes Jewish Museum in Berkeley, California, they are aware of no other extant West Coast synagogue which antedates Wright's 1863 structure.

49. At least 10 of Wright's Canadian designs are still standing in British Columbia. For a summary of his surviving Canadian projects, see both Segger articles, *supra*, *passim*.

50. "The Daily Colonist," Victoria, B.C., December 18, 1955, at page 10.

51. Segger, Martin, "British Columbia's First Professional Architect ...", *supra* at page 12. Professor Segger, an eminent architectural historian, has extensively researched and written about Wright's career in Victoria before he came to California in 1867. His writings on Wright's Canadian career have been of great assistance in understanding the architect and his works.

52. *Ibid.*

53. *Ibid.*

54. Transcript of testimony of George Sanders from a San Francisco lawsuit, page 219 of the Wright & Sanders Office Ledger. According to the Bancroft Library's collection of Applegarth family papers, Sanders was born in England, but moved with his family to Guelph, Ontario in 1832. His father was a sometime schoolteacher. His grandfather, John Sanders had been a respected English portrait painter and member of the Royal Academy. George Sanders followed Wright to British Columbia, and subsequently accompanied him to San Francisco. He married Euphemia Armstrong, the sister of Mrs. John Wright in San Francisco. His nephew, George Applegarth, later became a highly respected California architect.

55. Segger, Victoria. *A Primer for Regional History in Architecture*, *supra*, *passim*.

56. Segger, "British Columbia's First Professional Architect," *supra*, at p. 12.

57. Horton, Florence. Oral History (transcript at page 8: "Sanders [Miss Horton's great uncle] was an architect too. He was more the business part of the firm, and Grandfather [Wright] was more the art part. ... Grandfather drew up the plans for their buildings.") Professor Segger advises that the architectural styles, engineering ability and careful workmanship for which the firm of Wright and Sanders became later known, were much in evidence in British Columbia before Sanders associated with Wright. Furthermore, unlike Wright, there is no evidence that Sanders had any training in either architecture or engineering prior to his association with Wright. Ms. Linda Kearns, reference librarian for the Guelph, Ontario Public Library, unearthed information about Wright's background as builder and engineer from Guelph newspapers, directories and tax records. Although Sanders was also a resident of Guelph, there is no indication that Sanders had experience in the building or design trades before he joined Wright in British Columbia.

Quite possibly, however, Sanders was the firm's aesthetician. Coming from a family with strong artistic traditions, and known to have pronounced views concerning architectural aesthetics, Sanders may well have been Wright and Sanders' trend setter—the person who determined that Italianate styles were passé, or that Moorish arches were now the vogue.

58. CABN vol. IV, no. 1, (January 1884), at page 10. Wright was clearly the more "visible" of the two partners. Whenever cornerstones were laid, and the "Principal Architect" identified, Wright was the man on the scene. See, for example, the commemorative broadsheets for the dedication of the Society of California Pioneers Building (1884) and Montgomery and

- Scott Halls at the San Francisco Theological Seminary. (1892). Furthermore, although Wright & Sanders' reputation was on the wane during the early 20th century, Wright at least was remembered in various newspaper obituaries. See "The San Francisco Examiner," August 30, 1915 at p. 80 and "The Colonist," Victoria, B.C., December 1879, quoted in "The Colonist," December 18, 1955 at page 10. Sanders' death, on the other hand, seems to have passed without public notice.
59. Horton, Florence. Oral History (transcript at page 1).
 60. *Ibid.*
 61. Gebhard, David. *The Architectural/Historical Aspects of the California School for the Blind and California School for the Deaf*, Berkeley (1867-1979); copyright, The Regents of the University of California, 1979, at p. 67.
 62. Gebhard, *The Architectural/Historical Aspects etc.*, *supra*, at pages 68-69.
 63. Various descriptions as "Greek," "Italianate" or "partaking of a combination of styles" (Langley, S.F. City Directory 1869 at page 17), the vast Calvary Presbyterian Church at Powell and Geary Streets in San Francisco was erected at a cost of \$90,000 (id).
 64. Wright & Sanders seem to have won a disproportionate number of architectural competitions. Not only did the firm take first prize for the California Blind School and the first U.C. campus design, it also won the competitions to design the elaborate Oddfellows Hall, with its tented meeting rooms, the Napa Insane Asylum, the Oakland Masonic Temple and the Society of California Pioneers headquarters.
 65. See generally Correspondence files of the U.C. Regents Buildings and Grounds Committee, 1868-70, University of California Archives, Bancroft Library. See particularly, letter of Regent John T. Doyle, dated November 10, 1868 awarding Wright and Sanders the commission to design the new campus. See also, Bloomfield, Anne "David Farquharsen, Pioneer California Architect," *California History*, vol. LIX no. 1, (Spring 1980) pages 16-30. Wright & Sanders' original campus design plan is in the collection of the University's Bancroft Library.
 66. Correspondence files of the U.C. Regents Buildings & Grounds Committee, *supra*. See particularly Wright's letter of August 27, 1869.
 67. Bloomfield, *supra*.
 68. Langley, *San Francisco City Directory* (1871) at page 22.
 69. Ledger, page 49. The White House, one of San Francisco's pioneer dry good stores, was built on the corner of Kearny and Post streets.
 70. CABN, vol. XIII, no. 5 (May 1892) at p. 59.
 71. CABN, Vol. VIII, no. 11 (November 1887) at p. 153. The Heller Building stood at 212 Sansome Street until it was destroyed in 1906.
 72. *San Francisco City Directory* 1870, pp. 18-19; CABR vol. II, no. 6 (June 1881) at p. 59; CABN vol. IV, no. 12 (December 1883) at p. 212, and vol. IX, no. 7 (July 1888) at p. 93.
 73. CABN vol. XIII, no. 1 (January 1887) at p. 13; and "The San Francisco Newsletter," August 2, 1890.
 74. Ledger, page 49.
 75. Langley, *San Francisco City Directory*, 1871, pp. 23-24.
 76. "The Alta California," 16 September 1872, at page 1; Langley, *San Francisco City Directory*, 1873-74 at page 17.
 77. UC Regents Archives, *supra*, Wright letter March 1869. Built in 1870, the Independent Presbyterian Church was sited at 12th and Jefferson streets in Oakland.
 78. "The Alta California," 9 September 1872, page 7; Central Presbyterian Church stood at Tyler (now Golden Gate Ave.), between Jones and Taylor in San Francisco.
 79. CABN vol. XIII, no. 12 (December 1887) at p. 167.
 80. Ledger, page 384; The oldest Methodist congregation in California built Old First Methodist Church on Powell, between Washington and Jackson streets in 1870.
 81. CABN vol. III, no. 6 (June 1882) at p. 91; Plymouth Congregational Church was located in San Francisco on Post Street, between Webster and Buchanan.
 82. St. Francis Technical School was erected in 1885 at the southwest corner of Geary and Gough in San Francisco. After the Earthquake, the school as used was one of several administrative centers by the City of San Francisco. It also served as the temporary meeting place of the Native Sons of the Golden West. See Daughters of Charity Archives; and CABN vol. VI, no. 8 (September 1885) at p. 161.
 83. Not to be confused with the shingled First Church of the New Jerusalem on Lyon Street, Wright's church was built in 1891 and located on O'Farrell, near Webster Street in San Francisco. See CABN vol. XII, no. 5 at p. 59; no. 6 at p. 72 and no. 10; and Swedenborgian Church archives.
 84. CABN vol. V, no. 1 (January 1884) at p. 10; Withey, *supra*; Built in 1884, Toland Medical College stood at Stockton and Chestnut streets in San Francisco.
 85. CABN vol. XIV, no. 8 (August 1893) at p. 24; Lane Hospital, later a part of the Stanford Hospital complex, was built in 1893 at Clay and Webster streets in San Francisco.
 86. Ledger, pp. 131, 175.
 87. "Napa Weekly Register," January 17, 1874 at p. 3.
 88. "Canadian Patent Office Record and Mechanic's Magazine," August 1873, pp. 153-154.
 89. Richey, Elinor, *The Ultimate Victorians*. Howell-North Books, Berkeley (1970) at p. 74.
 90. Langley, *San Francisco City Directory*, 1869, at page 20.
 91. Kirker, *supra*, page 94.
 92. See, for example, Kirker, *supra*, at page 93.
 93. Comments of Florence Horton and Norman S. Wright.
 94. Kirker, *supra*, at page 94.
 95. Ledger at page 212.
 96. Baird, J.A. *Time's Wonderous Changes*, p. 25.
 97. Neville, A.R. *The Fantastic City*, Houghton-Mifflin, Boston, 1932, page 178.
 98. *The History of the Pacific Union Club*, pp. 13-14.
 99. CABN vol. V, no. 9 (September 1884) at p. 174; the Pioneers Building was one of the earliest California structures to use terracotta for architectural ornamentation. Somewhat earlier, Wright & Sanders designed the Gladding, McBean building on San Francisco's Market Street to showcase that company's terracotta ornamental tiles and reliefs. See Kurutz, Gary F. *Architectural Terracotta of Gladding McBean*, Windgate Press, Sausalito (1989) at p. 90.
 100. CABR vol. I, no. 1 (January 1880) at p. 9; Ledger at page 57; Oakland's Masonic Temple was built in 1884 and stood at 12th and Washington streets in Oakland.
 101. Ledger, at pages 225-226; There were at least two buildings in San Francisco named Dashaway Hall. The Wright design was built in 1878 on Post Street, near today's Grant Avenue. The structure was later occupied by H. Liebes' dry goods store.
 102. Reiss, *supra*, at page 18.
 103. Ledger, at page 75.
 104. CABN vol. IX, no. 12 (Dec. 15, 1888) at p. 150.
 105. Reiss, comments, n.p.
 106. Pacific Mutual Life Insurance Co. corporate archives; CABN vol. XII, nos. 3, 4, and 12 1891; The Pacific Mutual Life Insurance Building stood at Montgomery and Sacramento streets in San Francisco until 1906.
 107. CABN vol. III, no. 6, June 1882.
 108. *Ibid.*
 109. *Ibid.*
 110. Kirker, *supra*, at p. 84.
 111. See, for example, Langley, *San Francisco City Directory*, 1870, at page 18.; *Id.*, 1871 at page 22; "San Francisco Morning Call," November 15, 1882.
 112. For example, see: First Congregational Church, "100th Anniversary Directory," at page 19.; Peterson, L.A., *History of First Presbyterian Church, 100 years in San Francisco*, at page 25; Gebhard, *Architectural/Historical Aspects*, *supra*, at pages 73-74 [State School for the Deaf and Dumb]; Andersen, Arthur R., *How Sturdy an Oak*, *supra*, at page 64 [Oakland Masonic Temple]; "Architect & Engineer," May 1906 [Odd Fellows Hall]; The St. Francis Technical School survived to become the Earthquake Relief headquarters from 1906 through 1908.
 113. Ledger, pp. 72-73, 241-243.
 114. "The San Francisco Examiner," August 30, 1915 at page 70.
 115. Ledger, page 143 et seq. . . .
 116. Despite his retirement from active practice, Wright apparently acted as a mentor or consultant for younger Bay Area architects. He

regularly conferred with architect Willis Polk about Polk's designs for the expanding California School for the Blind and Deaf in Berkeley. In addition, during the first few years of this century, he worked with Sanders' nephew, George Applegarth. Gebhard, *supra*, p. 74. See also "The San Francisco Examiner," August 30, 1915, at page 70.

117. During his inaugural year as A.I.A. president, Wright enthusiastically promoted the establishment of scholarship fund to send worthy young architects to Europe for Beaux Arts training. CABN vol. III, no. 6 (June 1882); He personally subsidized the European training of George Applegarth and other promising young architects. Papers of Florence Horton; Applegarth family papers. In addition, he proposed the establishment of free classes for architectural students to be taught by AIA members, as well as a series of design competitions targeted solely at young draftsmen and architects. CABN, vol. III, no. 6, (June 1882).

118. Segger, Victoria, *Primer for Regional History in Architecture*, *supra*, at page 351.



San Francisco Theological Seminary, St. Anselmo; Wright & Sanders, archts., 1892-4; photo courtesy SFTS

EXHIBIT LIST by Martin Segger

CALIFORNIA BUILDINGS:

**SAN FRANCISCO THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
BOLINAS AVE., SAN FRANCISCO, 1892-97**

WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.

WM. PENN MOTT, LANDSCP. ARCHT.

[EXTANT]

-Montgomery Hall, 1892

-Scott Hall, 1897

-Montgomery Chapel, 1894

- Line drawing, front elevation, Scott Library Hall (courtesy of SFTS)
- Line drawing, alcove in Montgomery Hall (courtesy of SFTS)
- Line drawing, entrance to Scott Hall (courtesy of SFTS)
- Line drawing, the Seminary Library, Scott Hall (courtesy of SFTS)
- Photo (courtesy of SFTS)
- Photo (courtesy of SFTS)
- Lithograph, postcard

LACHMAN BLOCK,

MARKET & FREEMONT STREETS, SAN FRANCISCO, 1887

WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.

[NOT EXTANT]

- Lithograph, n.d.

CALIFORNIA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND,

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA, 1867

WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.

[NOT EXTANT]

- Photo, 1875 scheme (courtesy of California State Archives, Sacramento)

- Photo, 1875 scheme (courtesy of California State Archives, Sacramento)
- Blueprint, 1875 scheme "Education Building" (courtesy of California State Archives, Sacramento)
- Line drawings, coloured, ink on linen. Dated 07 March, 1877, various elevations and sections. (courtesy of California State Archives, Sacramento)
- Line drawing, ink on linen. Dated 16 March, 1877 (courtesy of California State Archives, Sacramento)
- Line drawing, ink on linen. Stable building. Dated May 07, 1886 (courtesy of California State Archives, Sacramento)
- Facsimile, Office Ledger, Wright & Sanders, March 06, 1877

**FRIEDLANDER'S BUILDING, FOR ISAAC FRIEDLANDER,
CALIFORNIA & SANSOME ST., SAN FRANCISCO, 1869**
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.

[NOT EXTANT]

- Photo, California Historical Society FN-8648

**CALVARY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
POWELL STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, 1869**

WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.

[NOT EXTANT]

- Photo, Powell & Geary Streets (courtesy of San Francisco Public Library)

**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA CAMPUS DESIGN COMPETITION,
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA, 1869**

WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.

[NOT EXTANT]

- Photo, presentation birdseye perspective (courtesy of Bancroft Library, U. California, Berkeley)
- Facsimile, office ledger, Wright & Sanders

**COOPER MEDICAL COLLEGE,
WEBSTER & SACRAMENTO STREETS, SAN FRANCISCO, 1881**

WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.

[NOT EXTANT]

- Photo, at Webster & Sacramento Streets (courtesy of Bancroft Library, U. California, Berkeley), n.d.

- Facsimile, office ledger, Wright & Sanders

**FIRST METHODIST CHURCH,
POWELL STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, 1870**

WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.

[NOT EXTANT]

- Photo, view northwest on Powell Street (courtesy of Bancroft Library, U. California, Berkeley)

THE WHITE HOUSE,

KEARNY & POST STREETS, SAN FRANCISCO, 1870

WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.

[NOT EXTANT]

- Lithograph, for publication
- Facsimile, office ledger, Wright & Sanders

OAKLAND HIGH SCHOOL,

OAKLAND, 1871

WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.

[NOT EXTANT]

- Photo (courtesy of Oakland Public Library)
- Facsimile, office ledger, Wright & Sanders

**CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
TYLER STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, 1872**

WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.

[NOT EXTANT]

- Photo (courtesy of San Francisco Public Library)

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,
POST & MASON STREETS, SAN FRANCISCO, 1873**

WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.

[NOT EXTANT]

- Lithograph, exterior corner view
- Lithograph, interior

**CENTRAL PACIFIC RAILROAD GENERAL OFFICES,
FOURTH & TOWNSEND STREETS, SAN FRANCISCO, 1873**

WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.

[NOT EXTANT]

- Photo (courtesy of Norman Ronnenberg)

**STATE INSANE ASYLUM,
NAPA, CALIFORNIA, 1874-77
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[NOT EXTANT]**

- Photo, lithograph, front perspective (courtesy of Norman Wright)
- Photo, lithograph, birdseye perspective (courtesy of Norman Wright)
- Lithograph, postcard views
- Photo, aerial (courtesy of California State Archives, Sacramento)
- Facsimile, office ledger, Wright & Sanders

**MCCREERY'S BUILDING,
PINE ST., SAN FRANCISCO, 1876
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[NOT EXTANT]**

- Photo, lithograph

**RESIDENCE, FOR MARK HOPKINS,
NOB HILL, CALIFORNIA & POWELL STREETS, SAN FRANCISCO,
1878
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[NOT EXTANT]**

- Photo (courtesy of San Francisco Public Library)
- Lithograph, Drawing Room
- Lithograph, Salon
- Lithograph, Great Hall
- Illustration, from *Artistic Homes of California*, 1888, reproduced in *Victorian Classics of San Francisco*, SF, 1987

**DIBBLEE MANSION (PROJECT), FOR T.B. DIBBLEE,
SANTA BARBARA, S. CALIFORNIA, N.D.
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[NOT EXTANT]**

- Period photo, Maybridge (courtesy of Norman Wright)

**THE GARBER MANSION, "BELLEROSE" FOR JUDGE JOHN
GARBER,
CLAREMONT AVENUE, BERKELEY, 1880
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[NOT EXTANT]**

- Lithograph (Elliott, Oakland), n.d.
- Photo, garden side
- Photo, interior, study

**N.P. COLE RESIDENCE,
FRANKLIN & SACRAMENTO ST., SAN FRANCISCO, 1887
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[NOT EXTANT]**

- Photo, *Artistic Homes of California*, 1888, reproduced in *Victorian Classics of San Francisco*, SF, 1987

**GRAND ARMY AND REPUBLIC ARCH,
SAN FRANCISCO, 1886
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[NOT EXTANT]**

- Photo (Courtesy of San Francisco Public Library)

**PACIFIC UNION CLUB,
POST & STOCKTON ST., SAN FRANCISCO, 1885
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[NOT EXTANT]**

- Lithograph, n.d.
- Photo (courtesy of California Historical Society Library)

**ODD FELLOWS HALL,
MARKET & SEVENTH ST., SAN FRANCISCO, 1884
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[NOT EXTANT]**

- Lithograph, n.d.
- Photo (courtesy of San Francisco Public Library)
- Facsimile, office ledger, Wright & Sanders

**PIONEER BUILDING, FOR THE SOCIETY OF CALIFORNIA
PIONEERS,
MARKET AND FOURTH STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, 1884.
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[NOT EXTANT]**

- Photo (courtesy of San Francisco Public Library)
- Photo (courtesy of San Francisco Public Library)

**RESIDENCE, FOR E.W. PLAYTER,
14TH & CASTRO STREETS, OAKLAND, 1882.
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[NOT EXTANT]**

- Lithograph, n.d.

**RESIDENCE "BURNSIDE MANOR" FOR THOMAS MENZIES,
MARIN COUNTY, SAN RAFAEL, 1882
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[NOT EXTANT]**

- Photo (courtesy of Marin County Historical Society)

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
SACRAMENTO & VAN NESS STREETS, SAN FRANCISCO, 1882
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[NOT EXTANT]**

- Photo, Fl. Mosen (courtesy of California State Historical Society)

**LICK OBSERVATORY; MAIN HALL, GREAT DOME,
MT. HAMILTON, SANTA CLARA, 1881
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[EXTANT]**

- Photo, litho postcard
- Photo, litho postcard
- Facsimile Plans & drawings: Wright & Sanders, n.d.
-Detail section, Observatory Building (courtesy of U. California, Santa Cruz)
-Elevation and plans

**ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
FULTON STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, 1881
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[EXTANT]**

- Photo, exterior (courtesy of Bancroft Library, U. California, Berkeley)
- Photo, interior nave (courtesy of Bancroft Library, U. California, Berkeley)

**ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
OAKLAND, SAN FRANCISCO, 1887
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[EXTANT]**

- Photo, lithograph of exterior with pre-1887 church adjacent
- Photo, contemporary with belltower addition (courtesy of Norman Ronneberg)
- Photo, contemporary interior (courtesy of Norman Ronneberg)

**FIRST NATIONAL BANK,
SANSOME & BUSH STREETS, SAN FRANCISCO, 1888
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[NOT EXTANT]**

- Photo, elevation, n.d. (courtesy of Norman Wright)
- Photo, entrance detail, n.d. (courtesy of Norman Wright)

**LICK BATHS, FOR JAMES LICK,
TENTH STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, 1889
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[NOT EXTANT]**

- Litho, facade elevation

**PARROTT'S BUILDING (PROJECT),
MARKET ST., SAN FRANCISCO, 1889
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[NOT EXTANT]**

- Photo, Competition drawing (courtesy of Norman Wright)

**NEW JERUSALEM CHURCH,
O'FARELL STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, 1891
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[NOT EXTANT]**

- Lithograph, CABN Oct. 1891

**PACIFIC MUTUAL LIFE INSURANCE BUILDING,
MONTGOMERY & SACRAMENTO STREETS, SAN FRANCISCO,
1893
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[NOT EXTANT]**

- Photo, n.d. (courtesy of Norman Wright)

BRITISH COLUMBIA BUILDINGS:

RACE ROCKS LIGHTHOUSE [NOT EXTANT]

FISGUARD LIGHTHOUSE,
ESQUIMALT HARBOUR, 1859
[EXTANT]

JOHN WRIGHT, ARCHT., HERMAN OTTO TIEDMANN, ENG.

- Photo, Fisguard Lighthouse, VCA 98402-06-594
- Photo, Race Rocks Lighthouse, VCA 98402-06-575
- Plans, Fisgard Lighthouse, ink on linen, signed John Wright and Joseph Pemberton. n.d. (courtesy of Canadian Parks Service)
- Plans, Landing-Place, Fisgard Light House, Esquimalt Harbour, Vancouver Island, 1864. (courtesy of Canadian Parks Service)

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH,
PANDORA AT BROAD STREET, VICTORIA, 1859

JOHN WRIGHT, ARCHT.
[NOT EXTANT]

- Engraved illustration, perhaps based on the architect's presentation sketch. BCARS #HP 8182
- Photo, soon after construction, BCARS #HP 15266
- Photo, after completion of crossing, BCARS #HP 8183
- Photo, nave interior through crossing, BCARS #HP 53638
- Facsimile, Victoria Gazette, July 23, 1859

"CLOVERDALE" HOUSE FOR SIMON FRASER,
TOLMIE, SAANICH, 1860

JOHN WRIGHT, ARCHT.
[NOT EXTANT]

- Photo, VCA
- Quote: Colonist Nov. 24, 1929

"WOODLANDS" HOUSE FOR JAMES BISSETT,
GOVERNMENT STREET, VICTORIA, 1860

JOHN WRIGHT, ARCHT.
[EXTANT]

- Photo, VCA 98407-21-461
- Photo, VCA 984-7-21-498
- Facsimile page from A.J. Downing, *Architecture of Country Houses*, 1850

"FAIRFIELD" HOUSE FOR HON. JOSEPH TRUTCH,
TRUTCH STREET, VICTORIA, 1861

WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[EXTANT]

- Photo, southwest view. BCARS #HP 51736
- Plans, ink on paper, signed. Dated 31 May, 1861. BCARS
 - Front elevation
 - South & north elevations
 - Two section elevations
 - Moulding details and sections
- Facsimile, Colonist, May 18, 1860

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH,
NANAIMO, 1861
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.

[NOT EXTANT]

- Photo, BCARS
- Photo, BCARS
- Facsimile, Colonist, July 6, 1860

"ARMADALE" HOUSE FOR SENATOR W.J. MACDONALD,
JAMES BAY, VICTORIA, 1861

WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[NOT EXTANT]

- Photo, house as it appeared in 1866. BCARS #HP A-6687
- Facsimile, Victoria Press, April 23, 1861

ST. GEORGE'S HOTEL,
VIEW STREET, VICTORIA, 1862
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.

[NOT EXTANT]

- Photo, N.E. View. BCARS #B-458
- Photo, N.W. View over Victoria from Church Hill (Driard Hotel upper right)
- Facsimile, Colonist, Dec. 8, 1862

DICKSON CAMPBELL & CO. BUILDING,
STORE STREET, VICTORIA, 1862

WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[PARTIALLY EXTANT]

- Photo, Victoria harbour, ca 1870. VCA # 2-10
- Facsimile, Colonist, December 8, 1862

CIVIC SEAL, CITY OF VICTORIA, 1862
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS., E. WATSON, ENGRAVER.
[Survives in use as part of City of Victoria Coat of Arms.]

- Image of the Corporate Seal
- Facsimile, City of Victoria Council Minutes Aug. 25, 1862; Sept 8, 1862; Sept. 19, 1862; Daily Press, 10th Sept. 1862
- Image, present armourial bearings, City of Victoria

HYACK ENGINE HOUSE,
COLUMBIA STREET, NEW WESTMINSTER, 1862.
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.

[NOT EXTANT]

- Photo, BCARS #HP 9328
- Photo, BCARS #HP 12191
- Facsimile, British Columbian, July 26, 1862

SEARBY & ROBINSON BROS. BUILDINGS,
GOVERNMENT STREET, VICTORIA, 1862
WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.

[NOT EXTANT]

- Photo: View north from Fort Street, CVA #41
- Facsimile: Colonist, Dec. 8, 1862

ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH,
YALE, B.C., 1862

WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[EXTANT, DESIGNATED]

- Photos (contemporary)

ST. NICHOLAS HOTEL,
GOVERNMENT STREET, VICTORIA, 1862

WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[NOT EXTANT]

- Photo, Government Street ca 1870. BCARS #A-3006
- Facsimile, Colonist, Dec. 8, 1862

POINT ELLICE, HOUSE FOR C.W. WALLACE (LATER OWNED AND
ENLARGED BY PETER O'REILLY,
PLEASANT STREET, VICTORIA, 1863

WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.

- Photo, "Point Ellice", garden front, 1870s (courtesy of B.C. Heritage Properties Branch)
- Photo, "Point Ellice", from the harbour side, BCARS #HP 50115
- Photo, "Point Ellice", drawing room, BCARS #HP 87422
- Photo, "Point Ellice" (courtesy of B.C. Heritage Properties Branch)
- Photo, Government St., BCARS #8705

RICHARD CARR HOUSE,
JAMES BAY, VICTORIA, 1863

WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[EXTANT]

- Photo, Carr House from the southwest, ca. 1869, BCARS #HP 49835
- Photo, Carr House from the northwest, ca. 1891, BCARS #HP 24836
- Facsimile: Extracts from house construction accounts of Richard Carr (transcribed), BCARS

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
BLANSHARD & PANDORA STREETS, VICTORIA, 1863

WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[NOT EXTANT]

- Photo BCARS #HP 34562 n.d.
- Photo VCA Churches #6 n.d.

HOUSE FOR J.S. DRUMMOND,
RAE STREET/COURTENAY STREET, VICTORIA, 1861

WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[NOT EXTANT]

- Photo: View from Church Hill, CVA #7B

CONGREGATION EMANU-EL,
BLANSHARD AT PANDORA, VICTORIA, 1863

WRIGHT & SANDERS, ARCHTS.
[EXTANT, RESTORED, DESIGNATED]

- Photo, Historic, facade (courtesy of Congregation Emanu-el)
- Photo, Historic, interior (courtesy of Congregation Emanu-el)
- Photo, Contemporary, interior (courtesy of Congregation Emanu-el)

**"CARY CASTLE" RESIDENCE FOR THE COLONIAL GOVERNOR,
ROCKLAND, VICTORIA, 1865.**

WRIGHT & SANDERS ARCHTS.

[NOT EXTANT]

- Photo: H Cary "Castle", view from the east, ca 1860. BCARS #1860
- Engraving: The Governor's Residence
- Photo, Government House, northwest view, BCARS #8202
- Photo, Government House, southeast view, BCARS #8199
- Photo, Government House, Guard House, BCARS #7760
- Photo, Government House, east view, BCARS #F-2009
- Plans: Ink on linen, n.d., BCARS
 - Front elevation
 - East, South & West Elevations
- Watercolor (photo repro) Josephine Crease, Upstairs Hallway, Government House. BCARS #pdp 2980
- Watercolor (photo repro) Josephine Crease, Billiard Room, Government House. BCARS # pdp 2981
- Facsimile: "New Gubernatorial Mansion", Colonist June 7, 1865

ANGELA COLLEGE,

BURDETT AVENUE, VICTORIA, 1866.

WRIGHT & SANDERS ARCHTS.

[EXTANT]

- Photo repro, Drawing, "The Ladies College, Victoria, V.I.", n.d. BCARS #HP 80045
- Photo BCARS

FEMALE INFIRMARY,

PANDORA STREET AT CHAMBERS STREET, VICTORIA, 1864.

WRIGHT & SANDERS ARCHTS.

[NOT EXTANT]

- Photo repro, Litho, Royal Hospital from H. Murphy Royal Jubilee Hospital n.d. Artist unknown
- Facsimile, Colonist, April 25, 1865, The Female Infirmary
- Facsimile, Colonist, June 20, 1861, List of subscribers

"INCE COTTAGE" HOUSE FOR HENRY P.P. CREASE,

"PENTRELEW" HOUSE FOR H.P.P. CREASE,

FORT STREET, VICTORIA, 1874

WRIGHT & SANDERS ARCHTS.

[NOT EXTANT]

Plans: Ink on paper

- North Elevation, "Ince Cottage", BCARS
- Section, "Ince Cottage", BCARS
- South Elevation, "Ince Cottage", BCARS
- South Elevation Sketch, "Pentrelew", BCARS
- Photo, North Front "Pentrelew", VCA 98407-25-537 after 1889 & 1911 additions
- Photo, South Garden Front "Pentrelew", VCA 98407-25-538 after 1889 & 1911 additions
- Design XXV A.J. Downing Country Cottages 1850, p. 52
- Facsimile, Crease Papers, BCARS

CREDITS

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GRANDFATHER OF
WEST COAST ARCHITECTURE
1830-1915

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