“FROM GREEN REFUGEE SHACKS TO COZY HOMES OF THEIR OWN”:

SAN FRANCISCO’S EARTHQUAKE RELIEF COTTAGES

AS VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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The 1906 earthquake and fire in San Francisco devastated the city and left 200,000 people homeless. To house the displaced population, small cottages were built in camps in the city’s parks. With the closure of the camps after one year, refugees were permitted to move their cottages and establish them as permanent homes elsewhere in the city, providing many with the opportunity for first time home ownership. Remarkably, some authenticated cottages have persisted through the decades in the urban landscape. A survey revealed 45 cottage sites; all have been greatly altered over their 110-year lifespans. These modifications make the relief cottages outstanding examples of vernacular architecture--an originally blank building that was moved and adapted according to the needs of its occupants. As such, the cottages reflect manifestations of significance and integrity that necessitate careful, creative evaluation to fit within the framework of modern historic preservation in the United States.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

On the morning of April 17, 1906, San Francisco was a thriving city.[1] Inundated with people and money since the Gold Rush days, by the beginning of 1906 San Francisco had hosted a world's fair, created Golden Gate Park, one of the nation's great city parks, and had rapidly grown into a humming metropolitan outpost on the American West Coast.[2] By 1906, the city's population had reached 460,000, the county line separating San Francisco and San Mateo Counties had been drawn, and the city had begun to take its signature 49-square-mile form.[3]

By the evening of April 18, 1906, much of San Francisco was in ruins. The largest shock hit the city at about 5:15 AM, lasted around 65 seconds, and was felt along the extent of the San Andreas Fault.[4] Cities throughout the bay area--San Jose, Palo Alto, Santa Rosa, Redwood City, San Mateo, and Berkeley to name a few--experienced significant damage to residences, commercial, and municipal buildings alike; no building type was spared.[5] In terms of today's Richter scale, devised in 1935, the 1906 earthquake has been estimated from 7.8 to 8.3 in intensity[6] (Figure 1).

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[1] Richard Linthicum, *"Lest We Forget:" Complete Story of the San Francisco Horror* (San Francisco: Hubert D. Russell, 1906), 33.

[2] William Issel and Robert W. Cherny, *San Francisco, 1865-1932: Politics, Power, and Urban Development* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 109-110.

[3] Grove Karl Gilbert, et al., *The San Francisco Earthquake and Fire of April 18, 1906 and Their Effects on Structures and Materials: Bulletin No. 234* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1907): 134.

[4] The Roebling Construction Company, ed., *The San Francisco Earthquake and Fire: A Brief History of the Disaster* (New York: Roebling Construction, 1906), 14.

[5] Gerstle Mack, *1906: Surviving San Francisco's Great Earthquake & Fire* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1981), 24-31.

[6] Mack, *1906*, 35.

Figure 1: The devastation of San Francisco. (Image: San Francisco Public Library)

Following the shaking, broken gas lines were swiftly ignited by survivors simply hoping to cook a meal, and the resulting fires that burned for three days following the earthquake leveled any surviving structures in the city's core area. Attempts were made by the city's inexperienced fire corps to halt the movement of the conflagration by dynamiting fire lines in several areas of the city, but they proved to be largely ineffective and ultimately caused more damage than good.[7] Even buildings considered "fireproof" by turn-of-the-century standards were unable to withstand the 1906 disaster.[8] At the time of the fire, more than 90 percent of the buildings in San Francisco were made out of wood, and it was wood-framed residences that suffered the worst fate at the hands of the fire.[9]

The best estimation of total ruined homes is 250,000, though it is likely even more

[7] Mack*, 1906*, 43.

[8] Roebling Construction, *The San Francisco Earthquake and Fire*, 33.

[9] Gilbert, et al., *Effects on Structures and Materials,* 135.

dwellings were destroyed.[10] By the morning of April 20, Nob Hill, Russian Hill, Telegraph Hill, the Tenderloin, downtown San Francisco, and much of the Mission District were in ruins. In all, the fire consumed 2,831 acres, 490 blocks, and 4.7 square miles of the heart of San Francisco, a fate substantially worse than the legendary fires of both London and Chicago[11] (Figure 2).

Much has been written about the San Francisco earthquake and fire. Richard Linthicum's anthology *"Lest We Forget" The Complete Story of the San Francisco Horror,* and the Roebling Construction Company's *The San Francisco Earthquake and Fire*, both published in 1906, are exceptional primary and firsthand reports of the disaster

Figure 2: 1906 map showing the burned district of San Francisco. Source: U.S. Army Special Report.

[10] Charles O'Connor, et al., *The San Francisco Relief Survey: The Organization and Methods Of Relief Used After The Earthquake and Fire of April 18, 1906* (The Russell Sage Foundation, New York Survey Associates, 1913), 4.

[11] William Bronson, *The Earth Shook, the Sky Burned* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company Inc, 1959), 83-84.

and its aftermath. William Bronson's *The Earth Shook, The Sky Burned,* and Gerstle Mack's *1906: Surviving San Francisco's Great Earthquake and Fire*, are popular contemporary accounts and serve to illustrate the great extent of the damage and its impact on San Francisco history.

While these, and most, volumes on the earthquake mention the immediate housing crisis and the makeshift tent camps that sprang up around the city, they overlook the longer-term measures needed to the house the homeless, which involved substantial efforts to construct temporary cottages for the refugees in the city's parks. This little-mentioned but vital part of the earthquake refugee experience deserves attention and consideration, as the cottages built at this time represent one of the few remaining components of the built environment in San Francisco that link directly to the disaster.

At their conception, the shelters built to house the homeless displaced by the earthquake were officially called "refugee cottages," and considered respectable solutions to the refugee crisis. Yet, almost immediately, they became colloquially referred to as "shacks," as the term appears in nearly every newspaper article and personal account of the disaster. While period newspaper articles that refer to the "shacks" are tinged with notes of condescension, in the present-day the stigma around the term has been completely erased. Since the resurgence of the cottages in the public eye in the 1980s, they have been consistently known as "shacks" rather than "cottages," and "shack" has now become the popular buzzword (and Google search term).

This thesis presents a study of the earthquake refugee cottages, beginning with the history of the effort to house the homeless immediately after the disaster, and continuing with a survey of the 63 authenticated cottages that survive to the present day. The title quote is taken from a 1909 *San Francisco Call* article, "From Green Refugee Shacks To

Cozy Homes of Their Own," which acted as both an inspiration and critical primary source for my research.[12] All of the cottages still in existence have been greatly altered over their 110-year lifespans, and it is these modifications that make the relief cottages outstanding examples of vernacular architecture--an originally blank building that was moved and adapted according to the needs of its occupants. As such, the cottages reflect manifestations of significance and integrity that necessitate careful and creative evaluation to fit within the framework of modern historic preservation in the United States.

Literature Review

There is little available scholarly material in print about the earthquake refugee cottages. As they were generally disregarded as rudimentary shacks built for the working class in the aftermath of the earthquake, the cottages never received much scholarly attention. Some general volumes on the history of the 1906 earthquake history include perhaps one or two photographs of a cottage camp, and several studies of transitory housing and disaster relief planning make mention of the cottages, but they have been largely neglected in academic literature. The only current study of the earthquake cottages, Jane Cryan's manuscript *Hope Chest: The True Story of San Francisco's 1906 Earthquake Shacks,* remains unpublished. Her study provides some background information on the cottages and their origins, but focuses principally on the resurgence of the popularity of the cottages in the wake of several prominent demolitions in the 1980s and her role in the preservation of several cottages.

[12] See Appendix A.

One academic volume on the relief effort, which outlines the plan for the refugee cottage program, was compiled in 1913 on commission by the associated Relief Committee. Officially titled *The San Francisco Relief Survey: The Organization and Methods of Relief Used After the Earthquake and Fire of 1906*, it is a lengthy collection of demographic data analyzed through the efficacy of the relief programs, evaluated six years following the disaster. The survey makes a substantial contribution to this thesis, as it goes in-depth into the ways in which the shacks were moved, then modified, and addresses the quality of life the cottage families experienced in the years following the disaster.

A fortunate number of newspaper articles from the time of the earthquake and fire mention the refugee shacks, and several full-page features include detailed accounts of the cottage experience, complete with illustrations and photographs.[13] These articles, written exclusively by journalists and relief strategists, tend to position the refugees squarely in a "deserving poor" mentality, and often speak of them as intelligent and capable, but ultimately helpless without the generous aid of charity organizations. However, when the traces of paternalism and condescension are sifted through, these articles present themselves as near-perfect primary sources for the investigation of earthquake cottages.

To inform the study of the cottages as vernacular architecture, traditional vernacular scholarship was pertinent and enlightening in application to this thesis, and explicated well the vernacular identity of the refugee cottages. Henry Glassie[14] and Dell

[13] See Appendix A

[14] Henry Glassie, *Folk Housing in Middle Virginia,* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1976).

Upton,[15] scholars in the field of vernacular architecture studies, articulated the need for documentation, research, and preservation of America's common houses--those buildings traditionally neglected by architectural historians due to their lack of high-style aesthetics. This field of study grew in conjunction with the emergence of the "new social history" of the mid-20th century, in which historians began to illuminate the stories of everyday people, up to that time disenfranchised by historical scholarship.[16] Earthquake shacks easily fit into this mold; not only were they occupied by a marginalized population, but they also demonstrate ideal character as vernacular dwellings.

Along with their social implications, the earthquake cottages merit study for their architectural qualities. A thesis for a Master's of Architecture written by Sergio Amuntegui in 1989 explored the cottages in their "pure archetypal configuration" and discovered that their utmost utility and potential derived from their pure simplicity. [17] Susan Garfinkel, in her article "Recovering Performance for Vernacular Architecture Studies," pushes the envelope of vernacular buildings even further beyond their recognition as personalized house forms. In her "performance theory," vernacular resources are not only considered to be relics of the past useful for their information, but also the result of the changes over time made by their inhabitants.

[15] Dell Upton, "The Power of Things: Recent Studies in American Vernacular Architecture." *American Quarterly* 35, no. 3 (1983): 263-279.

[16] Upton, "The Power of Things," 265.

[17] Sergio Amunategui, "Shelter, Dwellings, and Metamorphosis: Adaptations of the 1906 Earthquake Refugee Shelter in a Single Family Dwelling" (master's thesis, University of California at Berkeley, 1989), 22.

Conceptual Framework

The earthquake cottages are a unique, but classic, example of the definition of vernacular architecture, as they have been moved, modified, and utilized primarily according to the needs of their inhabitants. The shacks were constructed to be temporary and removable, and their remarkable reuse as permanent dwellings points to both the resourcefulness of the refugees and the cottages' worthwhile value as building forms. Their modifications continue to illustrate their historical narrative of a shared experience, and indicate that their history did not cease with the closing of the cottage camps in 1907. Instead, their narrative continues to the present day as an expression of a broad pattern of history of a certain place, people, and time.

An analysis of the cottages through the lens of modern historic preservation theory--the National Historic Preservation Act and eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places--magnifies unique qualities of the cottages and the ways in which they do, and do not, fit the current framework of American historic preservation. A careful examination of their integrity illustrates the non-traditional nature of the cottages and how they manifest their character and authenticity in distinctive and successful ways. Though the earthquake shacks have been both moved and changed, it is because of these conditions, and not in spite of them, that they have survived to the present day. The historical narrative and the inherent meaning of the earthquake cottages would not be complete without their adaptations, which are integral to a comprehensive understanding of the dwellings, their place in history, and their modern meaning.

Because historic preservation in the United States largely revolves around the National Register of Historic Places, I advocate for the significance of the cottages according to Criterion A: association with important events or broad patterns of history.

The earthquake relief cottages, as a group, are an important remaining aspect of the built environment linking to the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, which substantiates their eligibility together as a noncontiguous National Register Historic District.

Research Methods

A survey of all authenticated refugee cottages visible from the public right-of-way was conducted in the winter and spring of 2016. A survey form was created on which was compiled useful data about the current location, condition, materials, and details of the cottages, and this data was used to create a matrix to easily investigate the similarities and differences among the extant cottages.[18] A useful product of this particular investigation was the development of a cottage building typology, which distinguished ten current form types based on correspondences in building massing and roof forms. This survey data was then compiled into an interactive GIS map,[19] where patterns of cottage migration and concentrations in certain geographic areas are easily visualized. This map should prove useful in the future projection of where more undiscovered cottages may be located and from what camps they may have originated.

The method presented in Thomas Carter and Elizabeth Cromley's *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture*[20] was used to synthesize the survey data. The five aspects of time, space, form, function, and technology, as applied to vernacular buildings, demonstrate how culture can determine behavior, and how behavior then determines

[18] See Appendix B

[19] See Section IV.

[20] Thomas Carter and Elizabeth Collins Cromley, *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture: A Guide to the Study of Ordinary Buildings and Landscapes* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2005).

physical environment. The patterns present in the cottage locations and forms, as examined through the five aspects, assist in peeling back the layers of adaptations to better understand changes in the cottages and how they have evolved through time.

Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is twofold. First, I will recount the history of the refugee cottages, focusing intently on their record as structures, and examine their materials and methods of construction. With a survey of all authenticated cottages, a better understanding of patterns in use and change over time can be explicated and a more complete understanding of the current diversity of the cottages can be gained.

Second, I will advocate for the cottages within the framework of historic preservation. According to the current preservation agenda, the significant modifications of the cottages detract from their authenticity and integrity. However, with a creative and evocative interpretation of the seven aspects of integrity and the criteria for National Register eligibility, it is demonstrated that the refugee cottages, in their current state, remain as outstanding historic resources that communicate their significance in effective and meaningful ways.

Intended Audience

This research originated from investigations of the refugee cottages by the San Francisco Planning Department. My initial intent was to prepare this study in order to elucidate the idiosyncrasies and challenges that planners may confront when they are charged with a decision about the future of an earthquake cottage. This study has now grown to include discussions of historic context and vernacular forms. I hope this thesis

will serve to substantiate the significance of the relief cottages as important landmarks in the history of San Francisco, and encourage resourceful ways to think about the cottages and their continued presence on the urban landscape. Ultimately, I hope that the information that I provide may one day be considered for the San Francisco Property Information Map, an award-winning resource that holds the most comprehensive collection of data for every building in the city of San Francisco.[21]

Local historical societies, particularly the Bernal Heights History Association and the Western Neighborhoods Project, will hopefully find this thesis useful as they proceed with the identification and documentation of the refugee cottages. Additionally, any book that may one day become a reality from the material in this thesis will surely find a place in the collections of curious and caring San Franciscans, especially those who are fortunate enough to call an earthquake cottage their home.

[21] propertymap.sfplanning.org

CHAPTER II

COTTAGES IN HISTORIC CONTEXT

For many survivors of the San Francisco earthquake, on April 18, 1906, the first instinct was to flee the city. They rushed to transport themselves and their families far away from the decimated city and left behind the ruins of their lives and homes for an unknown future. It is impossible to know just many of San Francisco's 460,000 residents chose to abandon their city that lay in smoldering ruins.[22] Even before the great fire was wholly contained, they streamed through the streets, toward downtown, and affixed their attention to the shores of the north, south, and East Bay[23] (Figure 3).

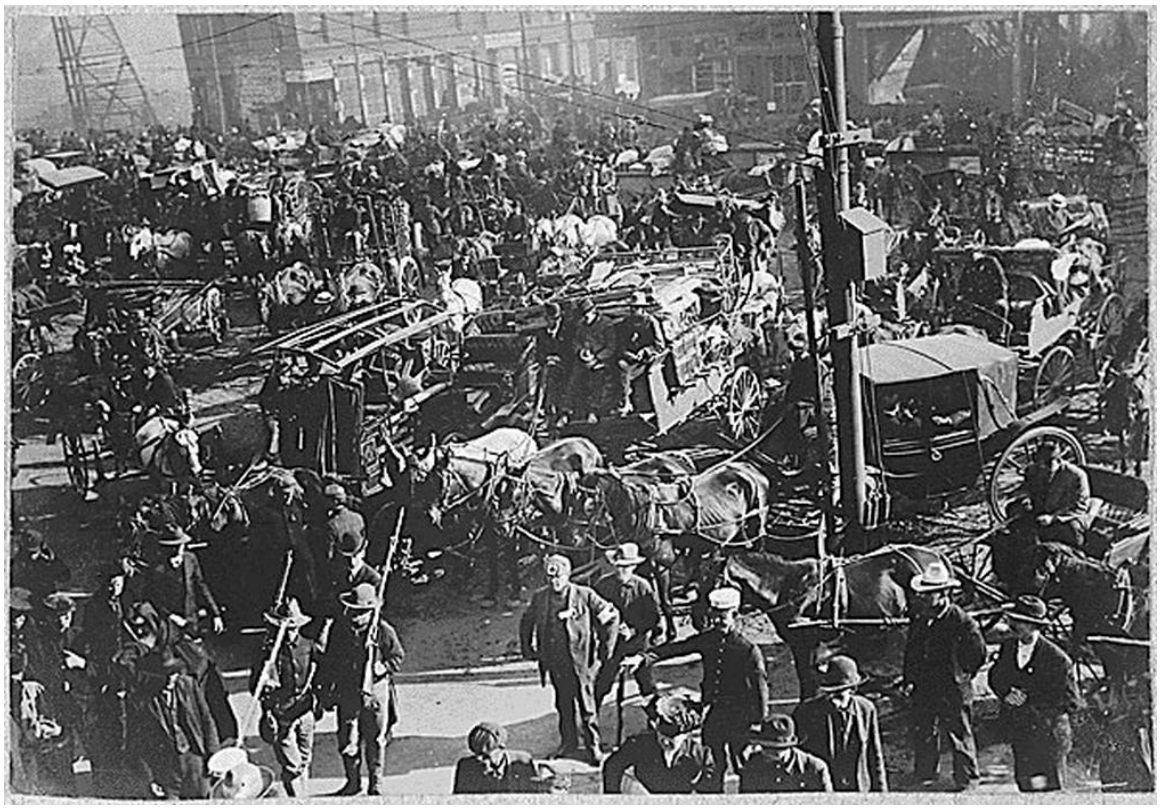

Figure 3: Earthquake Refugees as they fled the city. (Image: CBS News).

[22] William Bronson, *The Earth Shook, the Sky Burned* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company Inc, 1959), 51.

[23] Bronson, *The Earth Shook*, 71.

In the hours and days immediately following the earthquake, no special arrangements for transportation were made.[24] The Southern Pacific Railway, in control of the ferries and rail lines in the San Francisco Bay Area, threw open their entry gates and allowed the crowds to stream onto boats and trains alike. Refugees fled the city at a rate of 70 per minute, and did not stop until about 78,500 San Francisco residents had left the city behind.[25] For some, the disaster provided a way out, a reason to escape the difficulties of city living and begin anew, and to jumpstart a new life in a new locale.[26]

However, a distinct segment of the city's population remained within the confines of the city that had just dissolved around them. That first night, as the city burned, 300,000 people slept outdoors; afraid to return to their dwellings if they still stood, and without any other option if their homes did not. They improvised shelter from whatever material could be found: discarded debris suddenly functioned as roofs, kitchens, sleeping platforms, and latrines.[27] It took nearly a week for everyone to find some spot to lay their heads, and it undoubtedly took equally long for some to find a moment to sleep at all. Soon, "in every convenient spot outside the burned district there speedily sprang up tent cities and temporary barracks, into which the destitute crowded as fast as they could" described the U.S. Army's Special 1906 Report of their immediate disaster relief effort.[28]

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[24] Charles O'Connor, et al., *The San Francisco Relief Survey: The Organization and Methods Of Relief Used After The Earthquake and Fire of April 18, 1906* (The Russell Sage Foundation, New York Survey Associates, 1913), 59.

[25] U.S. Army, Pacific Division, *Earthquake in California April 18, 1906: Special Report of Maj. Gen. Adolphus W. Greely, U.S.A., Commanding the Pacific Division, on the Relief Operations Conducted by the Military Authorities of the United States at San Francisco and Other Points, with Accompanying Documents* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1906), 49-50.

[26] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 61.

[27] Bronson, *The Earth Shook*, 118.

[28] U.S. Army, *Special Report*, 34.

These improvised refugee camps were short-lived. They quickly became unsanitary, unsavory, and unsafe, and it was nearly impossible to form an orderly system for the distribution of food and supplies amid the disorder (Figure 4). Many primary accounts mention impostor campers who found it far too easy to take advantage of the chaos, and managed to stockpile rations far greater than their honest allotment.[29] In addition, the temporary camps were supervised by a plethora of different agencies and committees, which often upheld different standards and had little communication between each other.[30]

Figure 4: An improvised earthquake refugee camp in Mission Park. (Image: San Francisco Public Library).

[29] Jane Cryan, *Hope Chest: The True Story of San Francisco's 1906 Earthquake Shacks* (unpublished manuscript, avail. San Francisco Public Library San Francisco History Center, 1999), 22.

[30] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey*, 20.

The first attempt to move away from makeshift camps and formalize encampments for the homeless came only one month after the disaster, with the addition of government-issued tents for the refugees (Figure 5). Major General Adolphus Greely, in command of the U.S. Army Presidio at the time of the earthquake, appointed Lieutenant Colonel R. K. Evans as "commander of permanent camps" on May 13, 1906.[31] The boundaries of the first fifteen of what would ultimately total 31 permanent camps were drawn that day, many of which occupied spaces in the city's public parks.[32]

Contrary to popular belief, martial law was never officially declared in the wake of the disaster, and the city as a whole always remained under the definitive control of the municipal government.[33] These early camps, wholly regulated by the U.S. Army, were well organized, and had little occasion for disorderly conduct. An official Special Report Issued by the Army in 1906 stated:

> *As to the inmates of these camps, there were no restrictions on personal conduct or liberty save for three purposes--those of decency, order, and cleanliness. Unless occupants were willing to conform to those three simple rules, they were obliged to forgo the benefits of government canvas, government bedding, and relief stores.*[34]

There was no tolerance for camp dwellers that did not follow orders:

> *All persons sheltered in permanent camps will render prompt and implicit obedience to the camp commander in regard to matters of decency, order, and sanitation. Any person ejected from a camp under military control for failure to obey proper orders of the camp commander will not be admitted to any other military camp.*[35]

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[31] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 16.

[32] U.S. Army*, Special Report*, 71-72.

[33] Bronson, *The Earth Shook*, 46.

[34] U.S. Army, *Special Report*, 35.

[35] U.S. Army, *Special Report*, 73.

Figure 5: Tent camp in Speedway Meadow in Golden Gate Park. (Image: OpenSF History).

These standards were not unreasonable. The Army reported that, "a not unimportant factor in the preservation of public health was the clean, orderly, and systematic life which was necessarily conducted by the occupants of these camps."[36] It was vital for the permanent camps to provide a standard of living as respectable as possible, in order to ensure the safety and security of all "inmates"[37] and of course, prevent the spread of disease.

Epidemics are generally of primary concern following a disaster in which large groups of people become displaced. The San Francisco earthquake and fire were no exception, and daily official reports of sanitary officers in each camp remark extensively

[36] U.S. Army, *Special Report*, 36.

[37] Term utilized in the Army Special Report

on the sanitation situation and describe every new instance of illness.[38] An enormous effort was made to vaccinate every single resident and staff person in the camps. Compulsory vaccination quickly became a condition of camp occupancy, though curiously, no reports comment on which diseases were the specific targets for vaccination. Smallpox and tuberculosis were the most concerning communicable diseases, but many other diseases were anticipated and prepared for by the staff doctors.[39]

Remarkably, the camp commanders had an astute understanding of contagion and disease. They ensured that the eating areas were kept free of flies, all water was boiled before use, and most importantly, that the latrine facilities were as far removed from the kitchens as possible.[40] The germ theory of disease had only become accepted in the previous few decades, and the science of domestic disease prevention was still in its relative infancy.[41] Yet, due to the shrewd directives and careful planning by the camp's sanitary commanders, not one major outbreak of disease was recorded in the earthquake's aftermath.[42]

Provisions for shelter in the permanent camps were good. A brief mistake was made in the attempt to erect emergency barracks in several camps, which turned out to be not only demoralizing, but also highly flammable and unsanitary. It was quickly realized

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[38] Inspection Reports of the Sanitary Officer of Camp 13, Franklin Square, May 1906, Box 1, Record Group 112, Correspondence and Related Records Pertaining to the San Francisco Earthquake and Fire of 1906, Records of the Office of the Surgeon General, Army General Hospital, Presidio of San Francisco, National Archives and Records Administration of the United States, San Bruno, California. (Hereafter cited as NARA Records)

[39] Box 1, Reports of the Medical Officer, NARA Records.

[40] U.S. Army, *Special Report*, 59.

[41] Nancy Tomes, *The Gospel of Germs: Men, Women, and the Microbe in American Life* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 28-49.

[42] U.S. Army, *Special Report*, 33.

that tents afforded the most practical solution for rapidly constructible accommodations.[43] Government-issued tents were provided to every family; each tent had a plank floor, and was subjected to daily ventilation and inspection, as "exposure of the interior of the tents to sunlight was insisted upon."[44] Each official tent camp included hot and cold running water, communal latrines, bath houses, laundry facilities, and full kitchens.[45]

Despite the relative security in the camps, the task of relocating all the city's homeless was an uphill battle. Many refugees failed to trust the Army after they observed distasteful conduct by some soldiers during the turmoil of the fire.[46] Some refugees outright refused to move into an official camp, and remained in their rough shelters made of everything from polling booths and railway cars, to underground cisterns and whatever else could be easily appropriated.[47]

In fact, many refugees believed that they were better able to care for themselves than any of the relief agencies, public or private, were able to care for them. Refugees living within the camps began to express their dissatisfaction with camp organization and the distribution of funds and supplies. They vocally protested against the living conditions, food allowances, and strict rules. By June, camp residents began to organize rallies around what they felt to be unfair dispersal of flour rations, and were effective in sparking a conversation about the future of the refugee situation.[48]

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[43] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey*, 71.

[44] U.S. Army, *Special Report*, 33.

[45] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 79.

[46] Bronson, *The Earth Shook*, 74.

[47] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 12.

[48] Cryan, *Hope Chest,* 24-26.

A Need for Permanent Temporary Housing

A shift toward a more permanent situation for the refugees began at the end of May and the early days of June 1906. Dr. Edward T. Devine, the leader of the Red Cross effort in San Francisco, began at this time to push for the provision of "shelter more adequate than that provided by the tents."[49] The San Francisco Relief Survey (Figure 6), the lengthy and detailed official document produced in 1913 to evaluate the efficacy of the relief effort, described the beginnings of the housing shift:

> *During June and July, the pressure to give food and temporary shelter was yielding to the pressure to furnish permanent shelter and other means of rehabilitation. The problem of housing was very complicated. No one knew how far shelter would be provided by private enterprise; no one knew whether manufacturing plants and wholesale and retail business would seek old locations; no one knew where the shifting population would settle. There was delay in collecting insurance, uncertainty as to the land, labor, and materials available and as to the future street car* [sic] *service and water and sewer connections. There was difference of opinion as to whether subsidized building should be of a permanent or temporary character, of scattered individual dwellings or large blocks, as to whether financial aid should be in the form of bonuses or loans*.[50]

As the need for permanent shelter became apparent, the necessity for an official, conglomerated relief effort became clear as well. Until June of 1906, the organizations guiding the execution of the relief efforts were varied and widespread. Government administrations, nonprofit groups, religious organizations, ladies' charities, the U.S. Army, and some private citizens were all providing aid to refugees in a variety of ways. At this June turning point, it was decided that the entire relief effort would be released from the control of the Army and incorporated into one organization to be known as the

[49] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 16.

[50] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 21-22.

"San Francisco Relief and Red Cross Fund."[51] On July 20, 1906, this corporation was formed with former San Francisco Mayor James D. Phelan as its President, and with notable San Franciscans M.H. de Young and Rudolph Spreckles as members of the board. The Fund established headquarters at the still-standing Saint Francis Technical School on Geary and Gough Streets, and was structured into five departments: (1) Department of Finance and Publicity; (2) Department of Bills and Demands; (3) Department of Camps and Warehouses; (4) Department of Relief and Rehabilitation; (5) Department of Lands and Buildings.[52]

Not only was Major General Greely eager to retire the Army's troops from the relief effort, but he also desired to put the multitudes of unemployed public officials back to work. Police officers, firemen, medical practitioners, and teachers would now have a role (and a steady income) in providing aid to the refugee population.[53]

Fortunately, the balmy weather of springtime in San Francisco simplified the earliest urgent needs for refugee shelter. Without harsh weather the tents served well: "the mildness of the climate, the abundance of canvas, and the considerable number of squares and public grounds"[54] provided adequate conditions for the time being. However, with the impending rainy winter it was clear that more substantial refugee quarters were necessary. Before the weather turned cold and wet, the Army (though no longer in charge

[51] Hereafter referred to as the "Relief Committee"

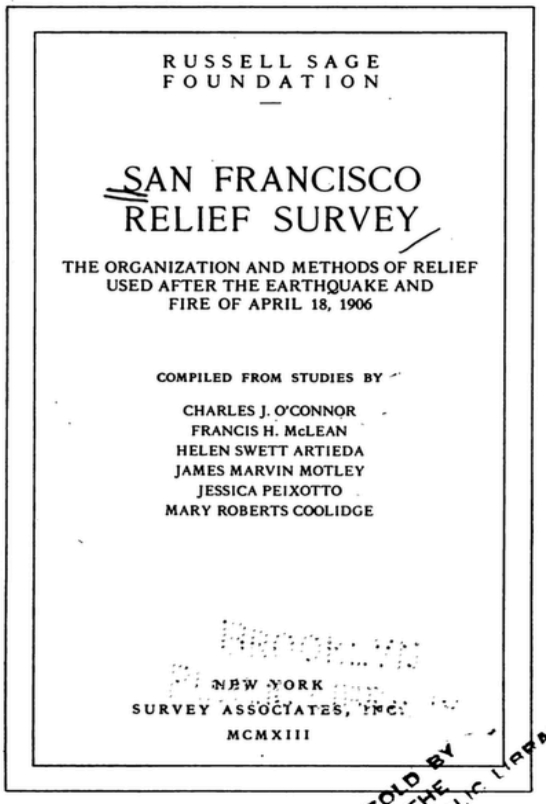
[52] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 26.

[53] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 22.

[54] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 22.

of the camps) recommended that the Relief Corporation immediately begin construction of temporary buildings on public ground for at least 10,000 people[55]

The occupants of the refugee camps were largely working class and foreign born. The coordinators of the relief effort, largely well-to-do Americans, adopted an attitude of acute paternalism toward the refugees in their care. The Army's special report outlined that the directions of the relief effort for the unfortunate needed to "stimulate individual resourcefulness, foster self-helpfulness, discourage dependence, and discount pauperism."[56]


RUSSELL SAGE
FOUNDATION

SAN FRANCISCO
RELIEF SURVEY

THE ORGANIZATION AND METHODS OF RELIEF
USED AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE AND
FIRE OF APRIL 18, 1906

COMPILED FROM STUDIES BY

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MCMXIII

Figure 6: Title page of the San Francisco Relief Survey. (Image: google books).

[55] U.S. Army, *Special Report*, 34.

[56] U.S. Army, *Special Report*, 40.

Writing on behalf of the Associated Charities, a nonprofit relief organization, Anna Pratt Simpson also exhibited this attitude of condescending protectiveness in her 1909 *San Francisco Call* article "From Green Refugee Shacks to Cozy Homes of Their Own."[57] To her, camp families were not "the vicious or really indolent, but inept; the people who could not initiate anything for themselves.. The outlook was not encouraging, but with this unlikely heritage of the calamity a miracle was wrought."[58] The work of the Associated Charities did in fact assist many "shiftless and unfortunate families" residing in the camps, but this organization's approach was fundamentally patronizing and belittling.[59]

While the Relief Survey was also tinted with a shade of this condescension, the intentions of the organization for not only relief, but rehabilitation, were summarized in a more positive light:

> *"In the field of relief we are discounting mere almsviging and are fighting for constructive treatment and permanent betterment…the idea of rehabilitation, of giving to those who have been left with the least a reasonable lift on the road to recovery [is] a natural fructifying of the modern philosophy of charity"*[60]

There is little doubt that the intentions of the relief organizations were noble, and through documents like the Relief Survey, it is clear that the eventual post-camp improvement and successful continuation of lives of the refugees was not merely a happy accident but a targeted objective.

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[57] See Appendix A

[58] Anna Pratt Simpson, "From Green Refugee Shacks To Cozy Homes of their Own," *The San Francisco Sunday Call*, 2 May 1909.

[59] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey*, 86.

[60] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey*, viii.

When the Relief Fund's Finance Committee released a bid for proposals to construct permanent or semi-permanent refugee housing, applications streamed in from across the country. A builder from Chicago presented his plans for two-room portable houses made of pine with canvas roofs (Figure 7, right). A proposal from Michigan included prefabricated, modular nail-free houses with a folding interior stairway (Figure 7, middle)[61]. Several newspaper articles accompanied by line drawings illustrate some proposed alternatives. A *San Francisco Chronicle* article from August 9, 1906, shows a square, brick bungalow-type home with a pyramid roof and dormer windows. Another article dated July 21, 1906, depicts a tall, thin, front gabled two-story home with an attached kitchen and bathroom (Figure 7, left). However, out-of-town propositions were swiftly declined due to a desire to keep all design and labor local. Other, more local and proletarian ideas were tinged with practicality: ideas to construct refugee homes out of bricks from the fallen ruins of the city were sensible, but ultimately time consuming and fraught with issues of ownership and liability.[62]

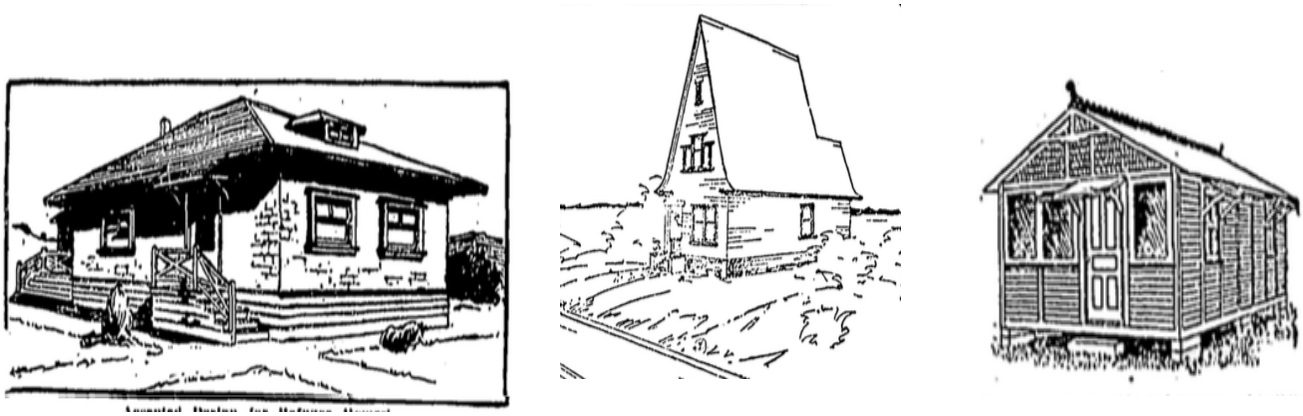

Figure 7: Proposed relief shelters. (Image: *The San Francisco Chronicle*).

[61] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 31.

[62] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 31.

While disagreements arose amongst many of the stakeholders in the relief effort, one issue remained uncontested: it was necessary and crucial to prevent any incarnation of relief housing that would resemble tenement-style living conditions.[63] New tenement regulations had been recently passed in New York in 1901, which strictly regulated the size, ventilation, water, and sanitation requirements of tenement apartments, and protected the rights of tenement occupants to livable conditions.[64] However, among some of the local experienced relief organizations, tenement housing was a reflex solution for post-disaster shelter. Anna Pratt Simpson succinctly argued for tenement construction:

> *The parks have to be cleared at a given time. There are no houses for these people to live in. What will be done with them? Some one must build tenements to house them – model ones, to be sure, but tenements….[there was] no solution but the building of tenement houses, those cancers of complex city life. Too bad, but they have to come. All big cities have them. Handicapped as she is, San Francisco cannot be the exception.*[65]

Yet, "those cancers of complex city life" were never constructed. The Red Cross and the members of the Relief Fund were acutely aware of the living conditions of the poor "before they were burned out"[66] and many refugees did indeed come from rented quarters that were akin to tenement-style dwellings. Though the reconstruction of hazardous tenement conditions seemed all but unavoidable, judicious and thoughtful actions were fortunately taken in order to prevent it.[67]

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[63] Cryan*, Hope Chest*, 31.

[64] Roy Lubove, "Lawrence Veller and the New York State Tenement House Commission of 1900," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 47, no. 2 (1961): 673.

[65] Anna Pratt Simpson, *From Green Refugee Shacks to Cozy Homes of Their Own.*

[66] Anna Pratt Simpson, *From Green Refugee Shacks to Cozy Homes of Their Own.*

[67] Some barracks-style refugee housing was constructed at official camps in South Park and Golden Gate Park – Speedway.

The Department of Lands and Buildings, under the direction of Tom Magee, settled on a plan for mass-produced, but not prefabricated, refugee housing. However, the strategy for the structures themselves was only one portion of the problem; the location for the permanent shelters was equally problematic. Real estate companies saw a money-making opportunity, and proposed to have large camps assembled on private land in the outlying areas of the city. Several developers also proposed to build permanent model communities that would be occupied by the displaced in perpetuity. San Francisco Mayor Eugene Schmitz, (who would be indicted for graft within the year), pushed for permanent homes constructed by private builders and sold to the refugees for a profit.[68]

Magee decided against construction on private lands, due to complications with lease agreements. If the Relief Corporation were to lease private property, it would need to exist as an institution for at least five years, a requirement that garnered little interest. The relief effort needed to be officially completed as soon as responsibly possible, and would thus involve the dissolution the Relief Corporation sooner than a five-year mark. Furthermore, the real estate firms wished to construct the camps on "large tracts of unimproved land [that] as a rule were situated in outlying and inaccessible districts. Practically all of those who were seeking shelter had formerly lived near the business center of the city…they had no desire to take up permanent residence in an outlying district where excessive expenses would have to be incurred."[69] The fear that San Francisco's working class-turned-refugees would entirely vacate the city if not provided

[68] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 30-32.

[69] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey*, 217.

with adequate and practical shelter motivated the Relief Corporation to develop a more suitable solution.[70]

On July 31, before Parks Superintendent John McLaren was even consulted, Magee designated 11 public parks and squares to serve as settings for the new shelters, largely due to their proximity to centers of employment.[71] The camp numbers signify their status as one of the 32 total official refugee camps, the others either remained as tent camps, had barracks constructed for unmarried refugees, or became a "model camp" with institutional buildings to care for the elderly and invalid (Table 1). The city's parks were ideal locations for refugee camps. They were subject to responsible policing, had access to good sanitation, would provide a respite from graft and favoritism, and were, ultimately, situated near places of work and industry.[72]

The shelter effort was additionally motivated by a very real problem, as the real estate supply in the city after the disaster was, quiet simply, dire. Before the earthquake, most refugee families had been paying $8 to $12 a month in rent for their quarters, and if left without any assistance post-earthquake they would have to pay at least four times as much for a comparable number of rooms. Anna Simpson Pratt wrote, "To complicate matters further, accommodations, even at the quadrupled price, were extremely limited."[73]

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[70] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 30.

[71] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 32.

[72] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey*, 84.

[73] Anna Pratt Simpson, *From Green Refugee Shacks to Cozy Homes of Their Own.*

Table 1: Official refugee camps and locations.

CAMP NO.	CAMP NAME	SHELTER TYPE	BOUNDARIES
1	Presidio General Hospital	Tent	Presidio Grounds - Lombard Gate
2	Presidio Tennessee Hollow	Tent	Presidio Grounds - Southeast
3	Presidio Ft. Winfield Scott	Tent	Presidio Grounds - Northwest
4	Presidio Golf Links	Tent	Presidio Grounds - Arguello Gate
5	Children's Playground	Tent	Golden Gate Park - Recreation Grounds
6	Speedway	Barracks	Golden Gate Park - Speed Road & Middle Drive
7	Park Lodge	Tent	Golden Gate Park - Stanyan Entrance
8	Harbor View	Tent	Baker, Pierce, Chestnut, and North Point Streets
9	Lobos Square	Shack	Chestnut, Bay, Webster, and Laguna Streets
10	Potrero Park	Shack	Indiana, Third, Mariposa, and 22nd Streets
11	Bothin	Tent	Marin County, Near Sausalito
12	Ingleside (original #)	Tent	Junipero Serra Blvd, Holloway, Ocean, and Ashton Avenues
13	Franklin Square	Shack	16th, 17th, Bryant, and Hampshire Streets
14	Camp Lake	Unofficial shacks	Market, Waller, and Laguna Streets
15	Fort Mason	Tent	Northern terminus of Van Ness Avenue
16	Jefferson Square	Shack	Laguna, Gough, Golden Gate, and Eddy Streets
17	Lafayette Square	Tent	Sacramento, Washington, Laguna, and Gough Streets
18	Mission Park (before shacks)	Tent	Church, Dolores, 18th, and 20th Streets
19	Duboce Park	Tent	Duboce and Sanchez Streets
20	Hamilton Square	Shack	Geary, Post, Scott, and Stiener Streets
21	Washington Square	Shack	Columbus Avenue, Filbert, Union, and Stockton Streets
22	Alamo Square	Tent	Fulton, Hayes, Scott, and Steiner Streets
23	Precita (Bernal) Park	Shack	Precita, Cesar Chavez (Army), Folsom, and Alabama Streets
24	Columbia Square	Shack	Harrison, Folsom, 6th, and 7th Streets
25	Richmond	Shack	13th and 14th Avenues, from Lake to Cabrillo Streets
26	Ingleside (reassigned #)	Model Camp	Junipero Serra Blvd, Holloway, Ocean, and Ashton Avenues
27	No camp this number		
28	South Park	Barracks	Brannan, Bryant, 2nd, and 3rd Streets
29	Mission Park	Shack	Church, Dolores, 18th, and 20th Streets
30	Portsmouth Square	Shack	Grant, Kearny, Sacramento, and Clay Streets
31	Garfield Square	Tent	Treat, Harrison, 16th and 17th Streets

Refugees had thus far been occupying the tent camps rent-free. According to the Relief Survey, when the Relief Corporation decided to move ahead with the plans for more permanent refugee housing:

> *...it was thought best to charge a nominal rental. The argument was that to give everything and ask nothing in return, on the one hand killed the self-respect of the efficient class and on the other hand gave opportunity to the idle to shirk all civic and social responsibility.*[74]

[74] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey*, 83.

The plan was made public on August 1, 1906.[75] The San Francisco Relief and Red Cross Fund would be the lessor of the new accommodations, and the refugee the lessee. However, the lease itself would be in fact a contract of purchase, for the tenant would become the official owner of the shelter if rent was paid in full through August 1, 1907. On that day, occupants would be responsible for removal of the shelter from the camp at their own expense, or risk forfeiture of the property.[76]

Finally, the Relief Corporation asked the Park Commission and Superintendent McLaren for permission to occupy the parks. Without any authority to do so, the Parks Commission agreed to allow the new shelters to be constructed in the parks and squares "on the understanding that such use was for a period of not more than one year."[77] Nothing in the parks' by-laws allowed them to strike this type of deal, and in fact, it was quickly found illegal for the public agency to collect rent on housing located on city property.[78]

To remedy the situation, the Relief Fund and the Park Commission reached a "non-agreement agreement."[79] The monthly payments would be considered not rent, but "installments" toward:

> *…a contract of purchase and sale, whereby the occupant agreed to buy outright the house occupied by him and to pay for it in monthly installments which equaled the rent formerly agreed upon. The amounts advanced on the properties by the occupants were later refunded to those who purchased lots on which to move their [new] houses.*[80]

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[75] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey*, 82.

[76] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey*, 83-84.

[77] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey*, 84.

[78] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey*, 222.

[79] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 32.

[80] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey*, 222.

The installments were in the amount of $2 per month, and were not to total more than $60. Refugees would then be eventually refunded their installment payments "upon satisfactory personal rehabilitations and removal of the house from the campsite."[81] From the start, then, the Relief Commission took into consideration that the plan to house the homeless should also include a way to elevate the status of the refugees; to lift them out of a perpetual rent-paying cycle and possibly even into the position of home ownership.[82]

Genesis of the Refugee Cottage

The ultimate design selected for the new permanent shelters was a joint effort between the Relief Corporation's Department of Buildings and Lands, the Army, and the San Francisco Parks Department. It was to be a very small, front gabled cottage,[83] with one door and three windows.[84] An idea to vary the cottages in design to "avoid ugliness" was proposed, [85] but ultimately they became uniform and adopted three sizes (Table 2).

Table 3: Cottage size, dimensions, and cost to build.

SHACK TYPE	DIMENSIONS	CONSTRUCTION COST
Type A	10' x 14'	$100
Type B	14' x 18'	$135
Type C	15' x 25'	$150

[81] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 32.

[82] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 30.

[84] Cryan, *Hope Chest,* 32.

[85] "Small Houses for the Poor," *The San Francisco Chronicle,* June 2, 1906, p. 16.

Several contractors, both local and out-of-state, were awarded refugee cottage contracts: William Mackie; L. Swenson; The Home Building & Construction Company; and the Leonard-Frost Company all participated in the significant construction effort.[86] The Department of Lands and Buildings hired exclusively union labor to construct the cottages, which consisted of redwood wall planks, fir floorboards, and cedar shingles[87] (Table 3). All building materials for the refugee cottages needed to be transported to San Francisco from outlying parts of California, as the Bay Area's building materials had been rush-purchased by speculators soon after the earthquake. Two proprietary planing mills, solely to process earthquake cottage materials, were erected in the South of Market district in order to cut the lumber locally and save costs.[88]

Table 4: Cottage elements and materials.

ELEMENT	MATERIALS	DIMENSIONS	NOTES
Tongue-and-groove floorboards	Fir	1" x 6"	Rested on 2" x 6" floor joists
Sill and top plates	Redwood	2" x 4"	Connected by 4" x 4" corner posts
Wall boards	Redwood	~ 5" x 3/4"	No studs or battens in framing
Roof laths	Redwood	1" x 3"	Roof laths nailed to rafters
Rafters	Redwood	2" x 4"	at 6" intervals
Roof shingles	Cedar	5"	Had a 5" reveal

The cottages were assembled using the box-frame construction method. The flimsy walls were devoid of studs and composed only of ¾" thick boards attached to a sill and top plate (Figure 8). Cottage doors were hung in two styles but were mostly four- or five-panel wood, and painted white to increase nighttime visibility. Casement windows were situated on the front and rear elevations, generally 6-light, and opened either inward

[86] Cryan, *Hope Chest,* 33.

[87] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey*, 82.

[88] Cryan, *Hope Chest,* 32.

or outward, depending on the position of the cottages in the camp.[89] Their interior configurations were varied--some remained single-room, while larger cottages were sometimes divided into two and three rooms.[90]

Ultimately, when the cottages were actually constructed, the builders did not always adhere to the design specifications. Period photographs from cottage camps show many variations in size, fenestration, location, and detailing. The exterior paint color "Park Bench Green" was selected by Superintendent McLaren, who was notoriously unhappy with the presence of the refugee cottages in his public parks. He settled on the notion that a green color would blend best with the park setting, and perhaps make the cottages less noticeable.[91]

A galvanized metal chimney flue was installed on the right rear roof slope of every cottage.[92] The flues were attached to either a coal or wood-burning stove, sold by the Relief Corporation to the refugees at cost.[93] Adequate heating was a delicate balance in the cottage camps:

> *Families wishing to escape the maintenance of wood- and coal-burning stoves and oil lamp lighting could buy a gas stove from the Relief Corporation that, depending on the model, cost from $5.25 to $8.00. A fee of 50 cents per month for one gas jet and 25 cents per months for each additional jet for lighting was levied by the Relief Corporation. Most refugee families opted for less expensive heating and lighting methods.*[94]

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[89] Several camps were so tightly packed that sliding windows replaced casement-style to avoid bumping into neighboring cottages or the foreheads of camp-dwellers.

[90] Lester Walker, *Tiny, Tiny Houses*, (Woodstock: Overlook Press, 1987), 69-73.; Cryan, *Hope Chest,* 33.

[91] Cryan, *Hope Chest,* 32.

[92] Walker, *Tiny Houses*, 69.

[93] It is a miracle that no major fires were ever recorded in the cottage camps.

[94] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 38.

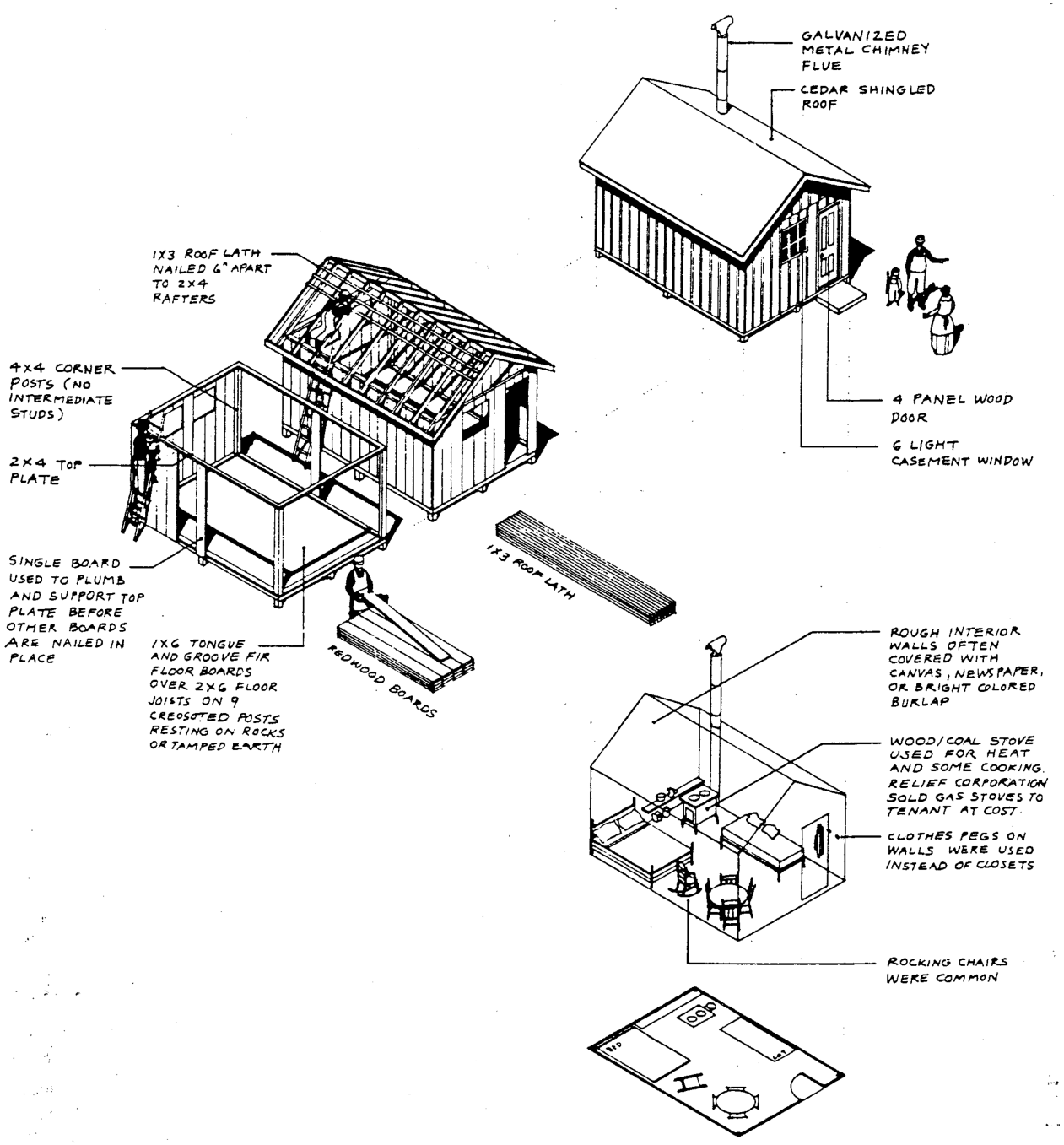

Figure 8: Refugee cottage specifications. (Image: Lester Walker, *Tiny Houses*, p. 69.)

Style Versus Form

While the refugee cottages may arguably be a style in their own right, they largely do not adhere to any one traditional architectural style. The turn of the 20th century in San Francisco saw a gradual departure from the highly embellished Queen Anne and Stick-Eastlake styles in residential architecture, and a migration of builders and architects toward the more understated Craftsman-style.[95] At the time of their construction, the relief cottages displayed none of the elements of popular architectural style.

However, when eventually relocated to private lots away from the refugee camps, many cottages were beautified and disguised by their owners with Craftsman-style and Queen Anne-style elements, among many variations. Wood double-hung windows, exterior shingles, porches, bay windows, and exterior embellishments all appeared on the newly relocated dwellings.[96]

Despite the cottages' lack of architectural style as built, their form was not entirely novel.[97] With a combination of both simplicity and versatility, the front-gabled cottage is a highly adaptable form type, and is found in both rural and urban environments around the United States. The front-gabled cottage has origins in English medieval forms, and was developed and influenced in the 19th and 20th centuries by Tudor Revival pattern books. Front-gabled cottages became so popular that Sears

[95] The Junior League of San Francisco, ed., *Here Today: San Francisco's Architectural Heritage* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1968), 7.

[96] See shack survey information in Section II, and Appendix C.

[97] A discussion of similar relief cottages in Chicago will follow in Section II.

advertised a small-front gabled home kit in the company's catalogue, called "Modern Home No. 105," from 1908-1910, right around the time of the earthquake.[98]

Realization of the Cottage Plan

With the design, funding, and space considerations for the cottages sorted out during August 1906, it appeared that construction was ready to begin. Yet, much like the myriad of difficulties present across the entire spectrum of the relief effort, the execution of the refugee cottages, officially titled the "Cottage Plan" by the Relief Survey, was met with several strategic delays. Financially, some East Coast donors were unhappy with the sudden consolidation of the relief effort into the conglomerate San Francisco Relief and Red Cross Fund, and placed a stay on their donations until the new monetary and administrative partnerships were made clear.[99] Delays in construction also came from inflated post-disaster labor costs, the preoccupation of many local contractors, lateness of insurance adjustments, and the fundamental uncertainty of which neighborhoods of the city would be regenerated for commercial and residential uses.

Additionally, issues with building material supply and demand proved to be a large hurdle. Private builders had quickly purchased all the available lumber and supplies in the wake of the fire, and the Buildings and Lands Committee was forced to source lumber and shingles from outside the region and wait for them to arrive by train.[100] Ultimately, by August, many of the vital needs of refugees still had not been met, and "the extraordinary amount of work involved in supplying food, clothing, water, sanitary

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[98] Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings, *American Vernacular Buildings and Interiors: 1870-1960* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2009), 137.

[99] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey*, 216.

[100] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey*, 216.

protection, and temporary shelter" provided the greatest delay in moving forward with the refugee cottages.[101]

In his memoir, George Leonard, part owner of the Leonard-Frost Company hired to build the dwellings, remarked "we will never make any money, but we will at least break even and these people have got to have housing."[102] This mode of determination to assist the relief effort ran through contractors, the Relief Corporation, and labor unions alike, and despite the difficult setbacks, together they planned to have 4,000 cottages constructed by October 25, 1907.[103] Construction commenced on September 10, 1906, and continued steadily until March of the following year.[104]

Execution of the relief cottages was a feat in both design and construction, and the ingenuity and resourcefulness of the contractors were paramount to the remarkably swift construction of the cottages. Though they were not pre-fabricated *per se*, their assemblage was manufactured for speed and cost-effectiveness. Everything but the floorboards was pre-cut to size at the planing mill, so little lumber would have to be modified on-site, and only tall laborers were hired to avoid the necessity of scaffolding.[105] The entirety of the material needed for one house was laid out at the structure's footprint ahead of the laborers' arrival, and small groups were assigned to

[101] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey*, 82, 217.

[102] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 35.

[103] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 34.

[104] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey*, 221.

[105] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 35.

construct each structure from start to finish, excepting the roof shingles[106] The wage for the "common laborers" was $2.50 per day, skilled carpenters earned $4.00 daily, and in the early weeks of construction, they were erecting more than 25 shacks per day. Shinglers, however, unionized on the jobsite and demanded an increase in wages from $3.75 to $4.00 to match the carpenters. They held out during the middle of construction, and soon more than 200 shacks were completed but stood without roof shingles (Figure 9). The shinglers and contractor's foremen were forced to negotiate a deal, and they reached an agreement for wages of $3.75 per shack rather than per day. Despite the arrangement being wholly against union rules, the cottages did receive their shingles.[107]

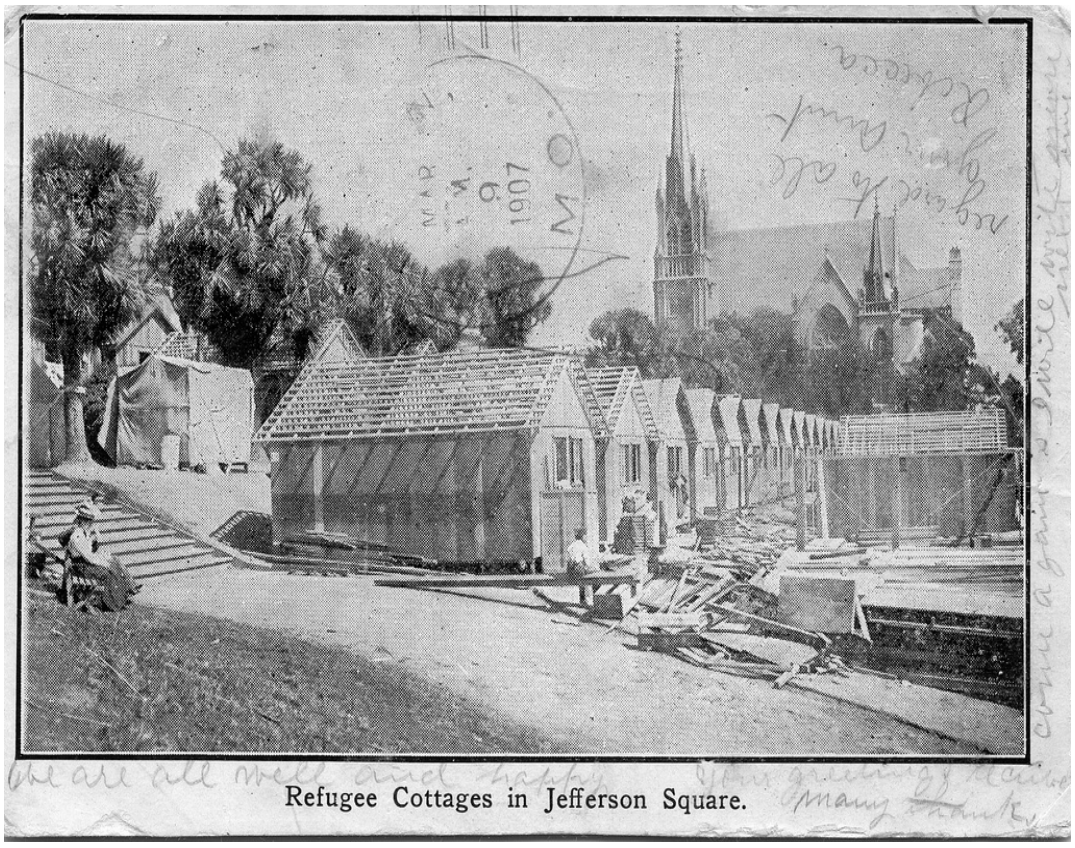

Figure 9: Cottages in Jefferson Square await their shingles. (Image: Western Neighborhoods Project.)

[106] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 36.

[107] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 35.

The first twenty provisional cottages were ready for occupancy at Camp 20 in Hamilton Square on September 16, 1906, only six days after the beginning of construction and 151 days since the earthquake.[108] It was another two-to-three months before a considerable number of cottages were ready for refugees, but they proved to be immediately popular and were occupied as quickly as they could be constructed.[109] Camp commanders designated the following order of tenancy for the shacks: (1) those families already living in official refugee camps; (2) families living in tents and makeshift shelters elsewhere in the city, and; (3) citizens of San Francisco who had been forced to lodge with friends and family outside the city.[110]

Camp Life

Between September 1906 and June 1908, the refugee camps cost the Relief Committee $884,558.81 to construct, and an additional $453,000.04 to maintain, at a daily maintenance cost of 6 cents per cottage.[111] Predictably, the camps were a challenge to execute and sustain, as they were charged with providing for every domestic and infrastructural need of the cottage families. Individual cottages lacked their own plumbing and utilities, and in order to convert the previous tent camps into cottage camps, 667 patent flush toilets, 247 hoppers, 6 miles of gas and water pipe, 325

[108] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 82.

[109] "Relief Cottages Completed," *The San Francisco Call*, September 18, 1906.

[110] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 83.; The relief survey makes a brief note that "Some who had not been burned out, but needed to be better housed, received cottages and moved them for permanent use to lots which they owned or leased." If some shacks indeed never made it into a camp and were immediately used for private residence around the city, I have not been able to substantiate or investigate this further.

[111] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 86.

galvanized sinks, and 624 gas brackets were installed across the 11 cottage camps to fashion communal kitchens, baths, and laundry facilities for the inhabitants.[112]

Sanitation was of the utmost importance to the camp supervisors. The strict rules of decency, order, and cleanliness, in place since the days of Army camp administration, were still considered gospel in the refugee cottage camps. Remarkably, any outbreaks of disease were swiftly contained and no major epidemics afflicted the cottage camps under the organization of the Relief Committee. Each camp was assigned a skilled team of surgeons, doctors, and nurses to treat patients on location, and a greater staff of ambulance drivers, pharmacists, social workers, and firefighters were employed on retainer by the Relief Committee to respond to emergencies in any camp as needed.[113]

Physical life safety issues in the camps were more ambiguous, as the irony of the earthquake shacks themselves not being earthquake-proof appears to have been either overlooked by or lost on the relief officials.[114] By design, plank frame structures are not sturdy and do not perform well under shear force. The cottages, with their lack of stud wall construction and solid foundations, would likely have tumbled and splintered apart in the event of another earthquake. The threat of fire was perpetually imminent, and with the presence of stoves in each shack, was difficult to police with any real diligence. The camp officials took some provisions; emergency cisterns of water were present at every

[112] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 32.

[113] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 91-92.

[114] Of course, to build earthquake-proof temporary refugee housing would have been logistically impossible, but I have not been able to locate any intimation of the issue or dilemma amongst decision-makers.

camp,[115] and it is incredible that fire never caused any significant damage to a cottage camp.[116]

Life in the 11 official cottage camps was difficult, tedious, arduous, tiresome, cramped, demanding, noisy, and sometimes dangerous (Figure 10). Inhabitants of the camps had recently lost most of their earthly possessions, and had little choice but to try and make the best of their new living situation. While some campers certainly embraced their circumstances, newspapers were always quick to publish sordid stories of life in the camps and their sorry inhabitants. Accounts of drunken parents, neglected children, lecherous teenagers, violent altercations, armed robberies, and untimely deaths presented the camps to the greater public as acutely unfavorable places. Even Parks Superintendent McLaren seethed that the camps were "pestholes, breeding a pauper class, and a menace to the welfare of the community…a harbor for thieves and vagabonds and full of disease and crime."[117]

However, some accounts did find the camps a charming and successful solution to the refugee crisis. The *San Francisco Chronicle* ran an article that considered them

> *Picturesque and full of interest, especially at dusk when the fogs steal in and wrap them in their soft gray mists, when the lights of the little many-paned windows creep out, one by one, and lend their half timid luminance to the scene.*[118]

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[115] Inspection Reports of the Commanding Officer of Permanent Camps, 12 May 1906, Box 1, Record Group 112, Correspondence and Related Records Pertaining to the San Francisco Earthquake and Fire of 1906, Records of the Office of the Surgeon General, Army General Hospital, Presidio of San Francisco, National Archives and Records Administration of the United States, San Bruno, California.

[116] Louis J. Stellman, "Moving 20,000 Refugees," *The San Francisco Chronicle*, August 11, 1907.; O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 91.

[117] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 46.

[118] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 46.

Figure 10: Close quarters in Hamilton Square. (Image: OpenSF History.)

Undeniably, there were suggestions of civility amidst the unpleasantness of camp life. Several camps even opened schools "with a view of guarding [children] against the lowering tendencies of camp life."[119]

Whether the camp occupants themselves were content or unhappy, many cared deeply for their temporary homes and environments. A Mrs. Mary Kelly, who we only know as "a woman past the age of 50 years," became notorious for crusading for refugee rights. She made it her personal struggle to agitate against anything she felt might be an injustice in the camps. Kelly habitually unrightfully occupied any refugee cottages she saw fit, and consistently refused to pay her rent installments, in protest of (what she felt

[119] U.S. Army, *Special Report*, 36.

to be) suspicious and underhanded conduct by the relief officials. She became a newspaper sensation, and her ongoing saga served as an overdramatized characterization of the ups and downs of refugee cottage life itself[120] (Figure 11).

Many other camp inhabitants also brought disputes in camp procedure to light, as in December of 1906 when a widespread rent dispute permeated through the cottage camps. As the refugees had previously lived rent-free in tent camps, some argued that they had been unfairly forced to pay rent for a new shack they did not wish to occupy. While the cottage camps were being built up around them, the dissenters refused to vacate their tents, and the San Francisco Police Department was forced to briefly intervene and involuntarily remove the protesting campers from their canvas shelters. Mayor Eugene Schmitz fueled the dispute with his vocal opinion that rent should never be collected on occupants of buildings on public lands, and furthermore, any family with the ability to pay $2 to $6 per month was not considered needy and did not deserve to live in a refugee cottage at all.[121] Overall, tensions often ran high in the camps, but the they were viewed by both the public and the cottage dwellers as necessary and adequate solutions to the refugee problem.

[120] "Mrs. Mary Kelly Defies Relief Corporation and Takes Ride in Cottage to Ingleside," *The San Francisco Call,* November 4, 1906.; O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 41-45.

[121] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 38-29. As there were few endeavors in San Francisco that infamous labor boss Abe Ruef did not have his hand in, the newspapers speculated that he exerted his notorious influence over Mayor Schmitz and was the actual instigator of the cottage rent dispute. Truly, no examination of turn-of-the-century San Francisco would be comprehensive without a cameo appearance by Boss Ruef.

THE SAN FRANCISCO CALL. SUNDAY, NOV

Mrs. Mary Kelly Defies Relief Corporation and Takes Ride in Cottage to Ingleside.

Denied Admittance, She Spends the Night on the Road,

The difference of opinion between Mrs. Mary Kelly, a Jefferson-square refugee, and the Relief Corporation as to how the relief fund should be administered was brought to an issue yesterday. The relief cottage of which Mrs. Kelly had taken forcible possession was loaded on to a truck and, with Mrs. Kelly in it, carted out to Ingleside camp. At the gates of Ingleside Captain J. N. Killan, commander in charge of the camp, refused Mrs. Kelly and Mrs. Kelly's cottage admittance. The cottage, woman and all have been left on the roadside until the various departments of scientifically administered relief can come to some understanding as to what shall be done with Mrs. Kelly and the house she claims.

Since the fire and until recently Mrs. Kelly, with her paralyzed husband and

MRS. MARY KELLY, THE REFUGEE, AND HER COTTAGE, WHICH, WITH ITS DEFIANT OCCUPANT, WAS BOWLED AWAY FROM JEFFERSON SQUARE AND LEFT AT THE ENTRANCE OF INGLESIDE PARK YESTERDAY.

inmates of the camp realize that the best that can be done for them under the circumstances is being done. They are observing the rules without objection. It would be folly to admit a disturbing element; such a course would bring my efforts here to naught. In a matter which might end in such serious consequences I should at least have been consulted."

REFUGEES FILE A MEMORIAL.

Ask Supervisors to Protest Against Removal From Parks.

A memorial was filed yesterday with the Board of Supervisors by the United Refugees, of which Alva Udell is chairman, urging that action be taken to enable the refugees to remain in the tents and temporary houses erected in the parks and public grounds until October 1, 1907. The board is asked also to request the Mayor to give protection to the lives and persons of the refugees and to cause the arrest and conviction of any person or corporation that without authority of law disturbs the peace of the refugees or collects rent for the use of the tents or temporary houses now or hereafter erected upon any park.

Resolutions accompanying the memorial recite that the Park Commissioners have directed the removal of the tents and temporary houses in the parks on November 1, 1906, and that such action would be an unwarranted injustice and result in great suffering by the refugees.

PREFERS CHARGES

Figure 11: Mary Kelly's Ride. (Image: *The San Francisco Chronicle).*

Cottage Life

Over the course of their short lives, some of the cottage camps reached the magnitude and efficacy of a small city.[122] This achievement can be seen from the many available historic photographs which depict veritable seas of earthquake shacks, whose gabled rooftops undulated over the hilly topography of the city (Figure 12). A total of 5,610 shacks were constructed by the Relief Corporation; of these, 4,068 had three interior rooms, and the remaining 1,542 had a two-room layout.[123] Though cottage contractors likely had a set of construction standards to build to, in reality, not all shacks were built identically. Historical images of cottages and camps show several variations in shack siding, shape, foundation, color, and fenestration type and placement.

Figure 12: Potrero Park camp. (Image: Western Neighborhoods Project).

[122] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 46.

[123] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 221.

Cottage residents began to alter and modify their dwellings while they still inhabited the camps. The unchinked plank walls of the cottages were highly porous and necessitated several layers of interior burlap or newspaper to fend off the elements.[124] Some domestically-minded refugees hung muslin or lace curtains in cottage windows to create a "homey" environment in the bleak camps. The *San Francisco Call*'s October 1907 article "Enrichment of the Refugees" professed: "Many families have already begun the improvement of their homes while still in the camps.[125] They have papered the rooms or even put up extra paneling. Shelves and other gimcracks add to their attractiveness." Some camps allowed even more dramatic modifications to the cottages, with some sporting front porches, landings, sheds, and even exterior stucco[126] (Figure 13).

Figure 13: Variations in siding and windows. (Image: San Francisco Public Library).

[124] One firsthand account recalls fog going inside and settling in the shacks.

[125] Hanna Astrup Larsen, "Enrichment of the Refugees," *The San Francisco Call*, October 20, 1907.

[126] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 46.

In spite of their temporary nature, the cottages themselves held up well as family dwellings. Aside from the threat of fire that thankfully never materialized, the refugee cottages were remarkably well built and substantial for their size and framing type. The Relief Committee went so far to report that "considering the number of cottages made habitable, we have had very few complaints as to the workmanship…this comment couldn't be made in connection with many houses erected by regular contractors."[127] While this was likely not entirely the case, it is a nice sentiment that echoes the general satisfaction refugees felt with their provisional new homes.

The San Francisco Relief Survey tactfully refers to residents of the refugee camps as "members of the efficient class," and while many cottage dwellers were indeed of the working class, in reality the disaster forced together San Franciscans from across the socioeconomic spectrum (Figure 14). While the earthquake and fire did disproportionally affect lower income populations, rich and poor alike found themselves homeless in the wake of the disaster.[128] Most camp families were two-parent households with two to three young children, but a significant number were also widows, "deserted wives," (a designation which warranted its own category in the survey charts), the aged, infirm, or invalid.[129]

[127] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 86.

[128] Bronson, *The Earth Shook*, 106.

[129] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 224.

Figure 14: Cottage families from all walks of life. (Image: California State Library).

Most cottage families had been self-sufficient before the earthquake, many with breadwinners who earned their wages through service or mechanical work. Yet, with the destruction of both their homes and places of employment, they now became fully dependent on the relief effort for survival through no fault of their own.[130] These residents represented nationalities from many parts of the world. Irish, Italian, German, Mexican, Puerto Rican, and French populations mingled together in refugee cottage camps, which became *de facto* heterogeneous centers of multiculturalism in the city's public parks[131] (Table 4). Asian refugees were marginally represented in the camps, as only 37 out of the 153 cottages in Portsmouth Square, nearest to Chinatown, were allotted

[130] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 226-227.; Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 22.

[131] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 223.

Table 5: Nationalities of cottage families. (Source: *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* p. 233.)

TABLE 65.—NATIONALITY OF APPLICANTS RECEIVING AID UNDER THE COTTAGE PLAN

Nationality	Native born applicants whose parents were of each specified nationality	Foreign born applicants of each specified nationality
American	193	..
Irish	16	127
Italian	6	73
German	4	55
Mexican	1	52
English	2	34
Porto Rican	0	27
French	1	15
Other nationalities	8	66
Total	231	449

to Chinese families. The Japanese refugee population was largely relocated to the East Bay, and was assisted mostly by a relief fund established by the Japanese national government. In both cases, most Chinese and Japanese refugee families mostly did not apply for aid or shelter from the Relief Fund, opting instead to distance themselves from the official camps.[132] The U.S. Army's Special Report noted that "it is gratifying to report that…no relief committee has shown discrimination against the Chinese…," though it is very likely that prejudice against the Asian refugee populations did occur in the cottage camps.[133]

The official Relief Survey summarized cottage camp life as a melting pot of people and attitudes:

> *The large number of cottages erected made it necessary to place them close together. In the parks regular streets were laid out on which the cottages fronted with very little space intervening between the buildings. The compact housing of*

[132] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 95.

[133] U.S. Army, *Special Report*, 46.

people meant that in some cases respectable people were compelled to associate to a certain extent with the less desirable. On the whole, however, the general moral conditions were not bad, the statements of some that the camp environment was bad for young people being offset by those of others that they had been able to maintain their accustomed moral standards. Naturally, the families whose living conditions had been most favorable before the disaster were the ones most tried by the abnormal camp life.[134]

Closing Camps and Moving Cottages

According to the "non-agreement agreement" struck between the Relief Corporation and Parks Superintendent John McLaren, the city's parks were to be cleared of the shelters after a period of no more than 12 months.[135] However, when this time arrived, around August of 1907, camp occupants were initially unhappy about what they felt to be forced removal from their homes.[136] Yet, as it became clear that cottage tenants would, in fact, be refunded their promised rental installments and be permitted to remove their dwellings, their reluctance waned and the camps rapidly began to clear.[137]

Fortunately, the cottage plan had been as well organized as it was executed. While the cottages were anticipated to be used as temporary shelter for the first winter following the earthquake, they were simultaneously planned to be "buildings of a portable kind," so "if [the refugees] desired to take the buildings with them, they will be given possession."[138] With the refugees able to remove the cottages from the camps themselves and use them for permanent shelter on private lots around the city, the closure of the

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[134] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 231.

[135] "Fifteen Hundred Cottages Gone," *The San Francisco Chronicle*, August 20, 1907.

[136] "Jefferson Park Will Be Clear," *The San Francisco Chronicle*, August 23, 1907.

[137] "Mission Park Free of Camps," *The San Francisco Chronicle*, October 22, 1907.

[138] "First of Relief Cottages Erected in Hamilton Square," *The San Francisco Chronicle*, September 17, 1906.

camps did not create a second refugee crisis. Nearly every refugee in the camps would have somewhere to go, as:

> *The largest of the camps have given shelter to as many as a small town; and when the order was given to have the parks cleared a few weeks ago, there were two problems confronting the city – where to provide homes for the 14,000 people still remaining in the camps and what to do with something more than 5,000 cottages occupying the public squares. The two problems solved each other beautifully. The houses and the houseless ones have come together by the simple process of taking up the cottages from their places in the camp, placing them on big trucks and moving to some vacant and available place big enough to hold it. Refugees who have lived in their cottages and paid rent, or as it is called to avoid the technicality of the law, installments, on their homes, are refunded the money. Those who have not paid anything can buy a cottage of two rooms for $35 or one with three rooms for $50. The cost of moving, together with the plumbing and other necessaries, seldom amounts to more than $100 and when several families can settle close together the cost of water pipes may be lessened. Those who have been paying their monthly installments for some time generally have to their credit the sum necessary to purchase the cottage and maybe the cost of moving it.*[139] (Figure 15)

Figure 15: Cottage moving, Army Street. (Image: California Historical Society.)

[139] Larsen, "Enrichment of the Refugees."

Refugees were not permitted to remove their cottages at will; they were only allowed to do so under several conditions.[140] First, a "certificate of cleanliness" was required by the Department of Health to verify that the cottage was free of vermin, and most importantly, a proof of deed to an actual lot within the San Francisco Bay area was mandatory before removal was allowed.[141] Thus, a refugee family needed to be financially stable enough to either purchase a lot or pay ground rent before they could assume ownership of their cottage. Ultimately, despite all of its trials and challenges, the rental installment plan worked extraordinarily well; 5,343 of the 5,610 cottages constructed were moved and used for permanent housing, and $109,373 of the $117,521.50 total rent collected was repaid to the refugees. Only $8,148 in payments went unreturned.[142]

McLaren and the Parks Commission were not sad to see the cottages go, as the presence of the camps in the city's parks was seen as a blemish to both the reputation and use of the public open spaces. At the beginning of the removal process in August 1907, each cottage cost its owners an additional $50 to $70 to buy out before it could be relocated. Within a month, this fee was reduced to $35 to $50, and soon eradicated entirely at the request of the Parks Commission, who urged the Relief Committee to streamline removal procedures in order to vacate the camps as quickly as possible.[143] As many as 50 shacks per day were evacuated from the camps during the peak removal

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[140] "Exodus of Refugees Begins From Parks," *The San Francisco Chronicle*, July 8, 1907.

[141] "Installments Are Refunded," *The San Francisco Chronicle*, March 27, 1907.; *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 85.

[142] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 222.

[143] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 47.

period in fall 1907. Surplus cottages soon became so abundant that camp families were permitted to remove as many cottages as they were able, free of charge; eventually, "worthy applicants" from outside the camps were permitted to purchase extra shelters as well.[144]

As the city's landlords greatly inflated rent prices immediately following the earthquake and fire, it became significantly more feasible for a working class family to arrange for a private lot for their cottage than to relocate back to a rental unit.[145] In fact, the concept of ground rent was new to post-disaster San Francisco, and quickly became the norm for many cottage families, as a ground rent agreement ranged from $6 to $15 per month, while lot purchases could exceed $3000. During the removal process, the greatest costs incurred by refugee families were the fee charged by house movers to relocate their cottages. Moving prices varied by distance, number of cottages, and lot accessibility, but ranged from $12 to $100. Often, landlords would advance the family funds to relocate their home to the new plot of land, and they would then pay a monthly ground rent and repay the moving advance. As a result, the cottage family owned the building, but not the land it sat on.[146]

A notice of evacuation was posted in the refugee cottage camps, "in nearly every civilized language known to mankind." It stated:

> *NOTICE: Occupants of refugee cottages in public squares are hereby notified that by order of the Park Commissioners, all refugees must move as soon as possible, and that no cottage will be allowed to remain in the city parks after the seventeenth of August, 1907.*[147]

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[144] "Many Refugees Move Each Day," *The San Francisco Chronicle,* July 27, 1907.

[145] Larsen, "Enrichment of the Refugees."

[146] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 222-223.

[147] Stellman, "Moving 20,000 Refugees."

Of course, this goal of August 17, 1907 was decidedly ambitious, and the last official cottage camp at Lobos Square would not close until June 30, 1908.[148] However, the speed with which the shacks were removed from the camps was remarkable enough to warrant observation by several news articles. As described by the August 1907 San Francisco *Chronicle* article "Moving 20,000 Refugees,"[149]

> *For several months there has been a steady exodus from the city's refugee camps in all directions, and the total population has decreased at the rate of about 150 per day. As high as forty-two cottages have been moved in twelve hours, and the movement, which was very slow at the start, has recently become cumulative to a marked degree."*

The cottage relocation process itself was built on a long tradition of house moving in San Francisco. Popular beginning in the late 1850s, lightweight balloon-framed houses of considerable size were considered more valuable to move rather than to demolish and reconstruct. House moving was, surprisingly, relatively inexpensive, and building materials in early San Francisco so scarce that relocating a house simply made the most sense. Larger houses were raised off their foundations on to platforms, which were then connected to cables that fed around a capstan, a large jackscrew device secured to the street bed, which used two-horse teams to turn a large crank which would inch the shuffling house toward its new location[150] (Figure 16).

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[148] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey*, 32.

[149] See Appendix A

[150] Diane Donovan, *San Francisco Relocated* (California: Arcadia Publishing, 2016), 26.

Figure 16: House moving in Michigan with a horse and capstan. (Image: Diane Donovan).

When it came time to move the little refugee cottages, the procedure was far less elaborate. Shacks would most often be relocated by simple teams and makeshift platform trucks, and driven across the city to their new location.[151] Unfortunately, during the moving process the cottages were often betrayed by their box-frame construction, and many were so flimsy that bracing elements had to be tacked to the sides in order to prevent total structural failure during the bumpy ride (Figure 17). Firsthand accounts dictate that the removal of the relief cottages was a memorable sight to behold:

> *Everywhere one goes, from the Ferry to the Cliff House, one sees teams laden with little green cottages, moving hither and tither, without any concerted destination. Sometimes, the windows are removed and the sides of the skeleton habitations re-enforced with cross cleats; sometimes they look as if they had been picked up by some giant hand and sat upon the wagon body while the family was cooking dinner, because the inhabitants are inside of them, the furniture is*

[151] Donovan, *San Francisco Relocated*, 47.

undisturbed, and everything is going on just as it has always done--except that the house is travelling. It is a strange sight to see a procession of these refugee cottages moving down fashionable Van Ness Avenue or busy Fillmore Street, faces peering from the windows, and men, women and children going about their household tasks as if their little home was securely perched upon a cement foundation and surrounded by a garden and a fence.[152] (Figure 18)

There were all sorts of physical complications in the business of transferring the cottages and the movers resorted to a variety of makeshifts. The little houses had to be taken from the hills and flats and carried long distances to heights and depths. The movers became most ingenious. They seemed to defy the laws of gravitation, handling leaden loads like feathers…Everyone remembers the days when the streets were filled with the green cottages being bumped along over the pavements on trucks drawn by sturdy horses…Few realized the full significance of this pilgrimage.[153]

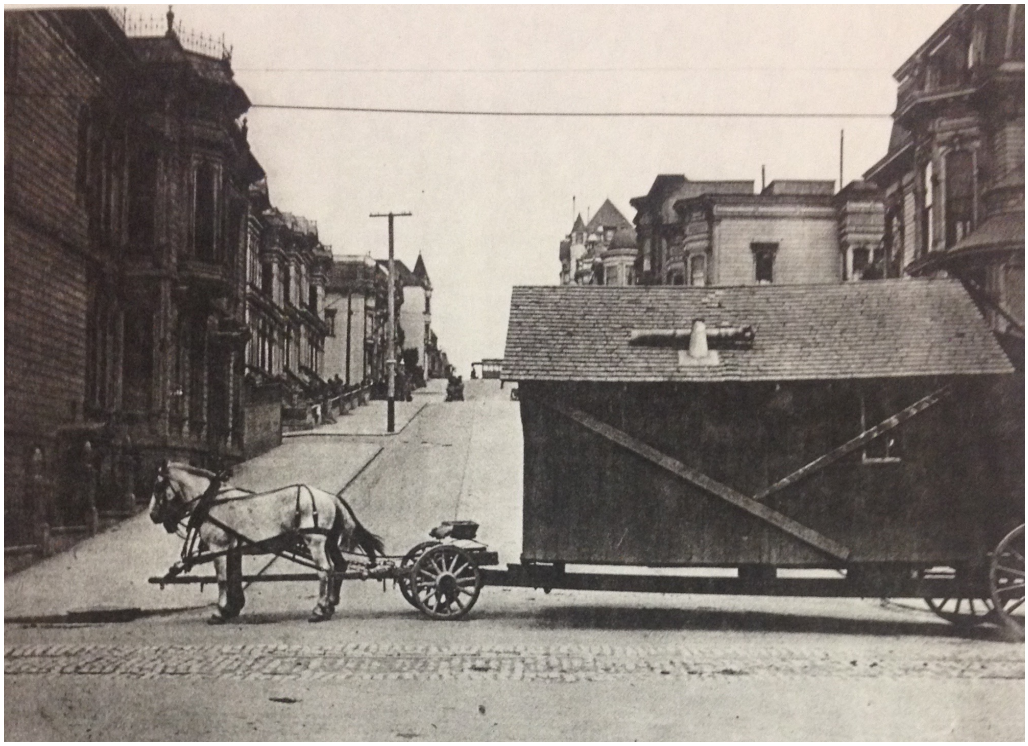

Figure 17: Braced for impact. (Image: *Tiny Houses,* p. 71.)

[152] Stellman, "Moving 20,000 Refugees."

[153] Simpson, "From Green Refugee Shacks To Cozy Homes of Their Own."

Though cottage moving was a relatively unassuming and inexpensive activity, not all refugee families had the resources to hire movers. Chinese families dismantled their homes from Portsmouth Square, strapped the pieces to their backs, and hiked back to Chinatown where they were reassembled.[154] In fact, earthquake cottages were, in some instances, considered just as valuable in pieces than they were as whole dwellings. One newspaper article recounted an instance of thieves breaking into a camp while it was in the process of closing, and making off with just portions of cottages.[155] A newspaper announcement advertised the sale of "only chimneys" from the shelters, while others

Figure 18: "Faces peering from the windows." (Source: Western Neighborhoods Project.)

[154] "Chinese Carry Houses on Backs," *The San Francisco Chronicle*, September 10, 1907. It would be an interesting investigation to see if any shacks remain in Chinatown backyards.

[155] "Steal Parts of Cottage," *The San Francisco Call*, 30 January 1907.

marketed "part or all" of their cottage for sale.[156]

New Homes Away from Home

When the mobile cottages landed in their new neighborhoods, they were not always welcomed with open arms. While the relief shelters appeared to the outside as a quaint solution to the refugee problem, as soon as they began to appear in established communities across the city they seemed to their new neighbors less charming and more like "makeshift, unsightly hovels" with "wretched conditions of living."[157] San Francisco property owners did not look upon cottage families as desirable additions to their neighborhoods, as some of the same sensational activities found in the camps did accompany the cottages to their new locations. Newspapers continuously published accounts of crime and misfortune; at least three separate articles refer to elderly women burning to death in their own refugee cottage homes.[158]

The greatest concern to the municipality of San Francisco was not the relocation of individual cottages, but the fear that many groups of families would move together and relocate their cottages in conditions similar to those in the camps. This concern was not unfounded, as families became fast friends while in residence at the cottage camps and reasonably surmised that they could reduce costs by sharing their new lots and splitting

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[156] Advertisements, Column 6, *The San Francisco Call,* 24 November 1907.; "Will Sell All Or Part," *The San Francisco Call*, June 29, 1909.

[157] Simpson, "From Green Refugee Shacks To Cozy Homes of Their Own."

[158] "Aged Woman Fatally Burned Alone in Shack," *The San Francisco Call*, January 4, 1910

utility payments.[159] After their relocation, the Relief Corporation found that at about 70% of cottage families occupied a lot with at least one other cottage.[160]

One cottage dweller-turned-speculator saw opportunity in the relocation of shacks *en masse.* His name is unknown, but when the camp closures were announced, he quickly purchased a large sand lot, graded it, installed plumbing, and was granted a permit to host relocated cottages. Opened for business on May 1, 1908, most of the cottages in this settlement, named *Villa Maria*, came from Lobos Square, the camp that housed the lowest-income refugees. Each cottage plat in Villa Maria was 20 feet by 37.5 feet and was contracted to a three-year ground lease costing $6-$8 per month. Sanitary conditions in this private camp were technically passable but not ideal; one toilet and water source were allocated to every four cottages, and were under no municipal inspection or regulation. However, Villa Maria residents, much like their counterparts on individual lots in the city, began to modify and beautify their cottages with small additions and aesthetic improvements. Villa Maria was structured very much like an official cottage camp; it had plank sidewalks and gravel streets, and a total of 121 cottages at its height. Though this makeshift settlement was executed by people without professional experience in housing development, the Relief Survey found that "the housing conditions of the majority of these people, seemed, on the whole, to be better than before the fire"[161] (Figure 19).

Indeed, the care with which the dwellings were removed and relocated signaled an inherent understanding of their value, both physically and psychologically. Not only

[159] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 232.; When cottages were grouped together in the neighborhoods, as many as 10 families might share an outdoor privy.

[160] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 233.
[161] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 235-236.

were the shelters valuable for their existence as viable dwelling places for thousands of displaced refugees, but they also represented an upward transition for the low-income, cottage-dwelling people of the "efficient class." The Relief Committee anticipated that the cottages might benefit the working-class population in the refugee camps, but the extraordinary way that the earthquake cottages brought numerous people out of poverty took many by pleasant surprise.

A vital component of the 1913 Relief Survey was an examination of cottage families and their qualities of life after they had relocated and refashioned their homes. Of the original tens of thousands of people who relied on aid following the earthquake and fire, the Relief Survey counted only 703 that needed to still be cared for at the closing

Figure 19: The first cottages in Villa Maria. (Image: *The San Francisco Relief Survey*, p. 235.)

of the last camp.[162] It was also found that, while actual wages for the refugee families did not necessarily increase after they moved with their cottage, the fundamental difference between their lives pre- and post- disaster was their new-found status as homeowners.

Without the need to pay monthly rent for their dwellings, cottage breadwinners were able to save their earnings and make longer-term investments to provide for their families.[163] Some cottage families even established their own small businesses in extra cottages they were able to inexpensively remove from the camps (Figure 20). On the whole, each and every cottage meant:

> *...the acquisition of a real home by someone who perhaps has never owned one before and under ordinary circumstances might not have acquired one in the*

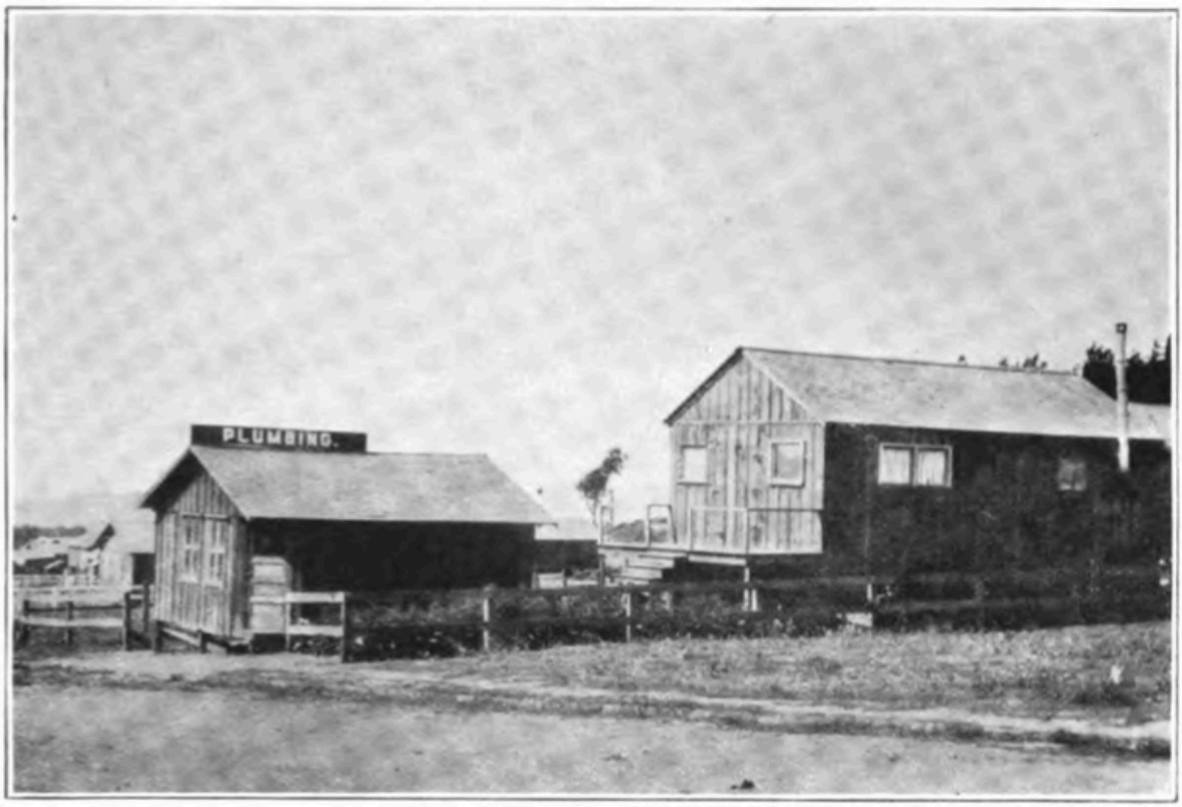

Figure 20: "A plumber's new start." (Image: *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* p. 178.)

[162] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 90.

[163] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 227.

> *course of a lifetime… Of all the work accomplished by the Relief from the time of the bread line to the breaking up of the camps nothing is of greater importance to the city than that of establishing 5,000 families in their own homes. On the roads leading to the suburbs moving trucks are trundling the little green houses that spell comfort, independence, and happiness to these thousands*.[164]

Single women and widows, too were given the opportunity to establish themselves as heads of households by the acquisition of an earthquake cottage. Prior to the disaster, it was generally difficult to engage in a rental agreement or sale of property as an unattached woman, but following the earthquake, many were able to obtain their own refugee cottage and become self-sufficient.[165]

Following the relocation of the cottages onto their new lots around the city, refugee families set to work making disguises and modifications to their homes, if they had not already begun to do so in the camps. Unquestionably, some stigma did exist surrounding residing in a relocated relief cottage, and cottage dwellers were quick to realize they could make small aesthetic improvements to conceal the true nature of their small homes. According to the taste and the means of the individual cottage owners, alterations to their dwellings included siding changes, fenestration reconfigurations, addition of porches, and in some cases, the planting of gardens surrounding their new minute homes.[166]

Through the various accounts of the earthquake, fire, devastated city, displaced population, makeshift shelters, tent camps, and finally refugee cottage occupation, one theme persists throughout every stage of the ordeal. The unceasingly positive attitudes of

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[164] Larsen, "Enrichment of the Refugees."

[165] Hanna Astrup Larsen, "No Women Need Apply, Is the Dictum of San Francisco Landladies," *The San Francisco Call*, January 20, 1907.

[166] An evaluation of the cottage adaptations and improvements will be explicated in Section II. See Appendix C for photographs of alterations.

the affected San Franciscans are noted in countless places, and signal a true resilience of the human spirit galvanized in a time of dire catastrophe. The Relief Survey commented, "there was a good-natured acquiescence in the hardships of the situation, and an optimism that was inspiring."[167] Even the official U.S. Army Special Report documented the persistence and optimism amongst the refugees:

> *The majority of the community was reduced from conditions of comfort to dependence upon public charity, yet in all my experiences I have never seen a woman in tears, nor heard a man whining over his losses. Besides this spirit of cheerful courage, they exhibited qualities of resourcefulness and self-respect which must command the admiration of the world.*[168]

Though tragedies of this magnitude have occurred elsewhere in time and place, the willingness of San Franciscans to loyally adhere to their ruined city demonstrates to posterity their dedication to rebuild their environment and prosper in the aftermath of disaster, a feeling that perhaps may only be inspired by a city like San Francisco.

[167] O'Connor, *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* 77.

[168] U.S. Army, *Special Report*, 47.

CHAPTER III

COTTAGES AS VERNACULAR FORMS

The refugee cottages are miracles of persistence. Built to act as refugee shelters for only one year, they have persevered over the decades, and remain small dwellings on the San Francisco landscape. The continued existence of the cottages is wholly a testament to their value; generations of inhabitants have understood their worth as a dwelling place, and through the years have modified their homes to create increasingly more permanent residences inscribed with their personal identities.

Intentional Impermanence

Stewart Brand, in his work *How Buildings Learn,* declared "the whole idea of architecture is permanence." Yet, though buildings are evolving entities, few are constructed with an intended abbreviated lifespan, as the refugee cottages were.[169] It is rare for buildings to be constructed with an end date already in mind. The intended permanence of most architecture is missing with the refugee cottages; they were constructed expediently with what may be considered *intentional impermanence.* Built with the explicit intention to be only temporarily useful, the surviving refugee cottages have endured through generations and remain remarkably viable dwellings to this day.

Intentional impermanence is not limited to situations like disaster housing; buildings are also constructed to be transitory during wartime, in mining camps, and

[169] Stuart Brand, *How Buildings Learn* (New York: Viking Press, 1994), 2.

occasions like World's Fairs. Yet, these structures are rarely, if ever, still standing today. If a building was erected to be temporary, the overwhelming odds are that it is gone.[170]

Accordingly, the intersections of architectural intention and social usage patterns can be observed across space and time.[171] As the cottages were meant only to be used for one year, that temporal quality embodies their original architectural intention. Yet, despite this temporary purpose, the Relief Committee still hoped that the shacks would somehow serve to lift the refugees out of perpetual rentership and into their own homes. When that hope turned into a reality, and a new cohort of homeowners emerged from the wrecked city, a new social pattern materialized, though it is unlikely that the Relief Committee foresaw the cottages becoming such long-lasting and extra-ordinary entities. In the case of the refugee cottages, their collective architectural intentions informed the resulting social pattern, an important characteristic of what architectural historians and historic preservationists call *vernacular architecture*.

What is Vernacular Architecture?

Nearly every building standing today has at least one thing in common, and that is its consistent use. Because these buildings are continuously in use, they also undergo many transformations, though some aspects of them may remain visually unchanged. As inhabitants change and adapt buildings, they take on qualities of their surroundings, and

[170] Some notable exceptions exist: the Chicago Field Museum of Natural History, the San Diego Museum of Man, and the San Francisco Palace of Fine Arts

[171] Jennifer Flathman, "Rereading the Library: A Cultural Conservation Approach to Determining the Architectural Significance of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, Maryland" (master's thesis, University of Oregon, 2007), 24.

undergo a process of "cultural weathering."[172] Scholars of vernacular architecture examine, buildings and structures that have undergone adaptations and changes over time. As such, the classification of "vernacular" can be applied in some way to most extant buildings, especially domestic architecture, because, as its base, vernacular architecture is a humanistic endeavor that seeks to understand human behavior through the study of not only buildings but also objects, and settings.[173] The study of vernacular architecture encompasses "the widest possible range of buildings" and "has been stretched--but not strained--to include the recording and analysis of structures of every age, form, and function."[174]

Vernacular architecture is a broad and evolving field. Its earliest iterations brought forth consideration for buildings that had been neglected by traditional, high-style architectural history--usually buildings "that seemed to not have been consciously designed."[175] As described by vernacular scholar and theorist Susan Garfinkel, an original goal of the emerging field of vernacular architecture was to disregard "an elitist canon that limits the range of buildings considered worthy of attention."[176]

The earliest incarnation of what may be called "vernacular studies" emerged from Providence, Rhode Island, where architects Norman Morrison Isham and Albert F.

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[172] Kingston Heath, *The Patina of Place: The Cultural Weathering of a New England Industrial Landscape* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2001).

[173] Thomas Carter and Bernard L. Herman, "Introduction: Toward a New Architectural History," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* 13, no. 2 (2006-2007): 1.; Dell Upton, "The Power of Things: Recent Studies in American Vernacular Architecture," *American Quarterly* 35, no. 3 (1983): 267.

[174] Thomas Carter, *Images of an American Land: Vernacular Architecture in the Western United States* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997), 3.; Camille Wells, "Old Claims and New Demands: Vernacular Architecture Studies Today," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* 2, (1986): 4.

[175] Upton, "The Power of Things," 263.

[176] Susan Garfinkel, "Recovering Performance for Vernacular Architecture Studies," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* 13, no. 2 (2006-2007): 106.

Brown produced a careful documentation of Newport's common houses in the 1890s. Their aim was to promote the understanding of *all* buildings, not only traditionally notable ones, through meticulous, thorough, and accurate measured drawings and comprehensive documentation. This created a documentary inventory that illuminated the value of the everyday homes. This idea had its roots in European antiquarianism, and reflected the late 19th century American fascination with science in all things.[177] Additionally, Isham and Brown recognized the importance of supplementing their fieldwork with primary documents, like probate inventories, in order to compile more complete historical profiles of each building in their investigation.[178] These common residences were just that, everyday houses not designed "consciously" according to established architectural principles, but built according to the specific needs of their occupants.[179]

Henry Glassie, with his 1975 volume *Folk Housing in Middle Virginia*, established the groundwork for modern vernacular studies.[180] Glassie studied the vernacular housing stock in his Virginia study area and applied to it an architectural language, a grammar structure that translated into a demonstration that vernacular buildings "are the products of deliberate and often complex design processes that possess linguistic analogies."[181] He effectively created a "language" of patterns in vernacular architecture that offered a prescriptive understanding of everyday buildings. He

[177] Upton, "The Power of Things," 265.

[178] Upton, "The Power of Things," 265.

[179] Upton, "The Power of Things," 263.

[180] Henry Glassie, *Folk Housing in Middle Virginia*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1976).

[181] Carter and Herman, "Introduction," 2.

understood the houses in his study as composed of a list of features, forms, plan types, and elements to be itemized according to his superimposed rules of vernacular grammar.[182]

Today, formative vernacular scholar Dell Upton articulates "vernacular" architecture as applicable to "anything not obviously the product of an upper-class, avant-garde, aesthetic movement."[183] Furthermore, it has taken on a multiplicity of theoretical meanings. In his article, "The Power of Things: Recent Studies in American Vernacular Architecture," Upton defines "vernacular" not as a type of building, but rather a way to look at them; not the kind of buildings, but instead a way to go about them.[184]

The vernacular idea is saturated with the relationships between buildings and the people that inhabit them. It is:

> *…as a field of study…concerned with making informed inferences about what the built environment meant and continues to mean to the people who built it and used it and to those who continue to build and use it.*[185]

Within a decade of the publication of Glassie's *Folk Housing* in 1976, Dell Upton had absorbed Glassie's principles, combined them with the changing tides of the new social history, and envisioned a way to apply a more complex and profound meaning to studies of vernacular architecture. Similarly, Susan Garfinkel, a student of Bernard Herman's at the University of Delaware, described Upton's critique of Glassie's vernacular grammar,

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[182] Carter and Herman, "Introduction," 2.

[183] Upton, "The Power of Things," 263-264.

[184] Upton, "The Power of Things," 263-264.

[185] Thomas Carter and Elizabeth Collins Cromley, *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture: A Guide to the Study of Ordinary Buildings and Landscapes* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2005), 45.

> *As an avowedly neutral concept, it can add little to the understanding of the social meanings which are embodied in architectural performances, and which give vernacular buildings their local character.*[186]

To Upton and Garfinkel, Glassie treated vernacular houses as simply "an utterance" of newly invented and imposed rules. They wished to develop and expand upon Glassie's vision of the vernacular, and believed that a vernacular house is not only an expression of architectural grammar, but also the product of the way its inhabitants have used and changed it over time.[187]

The New Vernacular History

In response to the evolving social and political climate of the 1960s, a new lens through which to study the past was brought into focus. Known as "the new social history," it was born out of a:

> *Concern that history had become preoccupied with great men and events. The new historians moved to correct the injustice by bringing the forgotten people of the past--blacks, women, workers, the poor-- into the mainstream of history.*[188]

Along with the emergence of feminism and civil rights movement, the new social history sought to bring to light the human experiences of historically disregarded, disenfranchised, and overlooked populations. The beginnings of modern vernacular architectural studies originated in a similar way. Early practitioners of vernacular architecture wanted a forum to speak out "vigorously against the elitism of traditional architectural history, [and make a] plea for understanding how common buildings

[186] Garfinkel, "Recovering Performance," 107.

[187] Garfinkel, "Recovering Performance," 107.

[188] Carter and Herman, "Introduction," 3-4.

occupied contexts comprising wide social and economic spheres."[189] In the same vein of the adage "history is written by the winners," traditional architectural history is characterized by the overwhelming persistence and attention given to formal, high-style buildings.[190]

While the new social history began as an effort to rewrite history from a new perspective, the ideology broadened in the 1980s into a desire to "cultural wholes" and emphasize the holistic nature of society as a living and working organism.[191] The arc of vernacular architecture studies and the creation of the Vernacular Architecture Forum in 1979 developed in much the same fashion. Initially a medium to raise up forgotten buildings like slave dwellings and farm houses, it evolved into a broad field dedicated to all types of common buildings. Vernacular studies attempted to move away from the traditional American exceptionalism that permeated preservation and architectural historical analysis, and began to recognize that all aspects of culture hold meaning and importance.

Changes Over Time

In regard to all architecture, not only vernacular, a recalibration in thinking was also necessary--away from the moment of creation often privileged in high-style architecture, and toward a consideration that current buildings are in fact are a collection of transformations over time.[192] Nicola Camerlenghi proposes a new architectural narrative, one that offers a "profitable and less trodden avenue of exploration," inspired

[189] Carter and Herman, "Introduction," 4.

[190] Upton, "The Power of Things," 279.

[191] Carter and Herman, "Introduction," 3-4.

[192] Nicola Camerlenghi. "The *Longue Durée* and the Life of Buildings." In *New Approaches to Medieval Architecture*, edited by Robert Bork, et al., 11-12. Burlington: Ashgate, 2011.

by the *longue durée* philosophy from the mid-20th century work of the French historians in the École des Annales. The *longue durée* accounts for historical changes in terms of both medium- and long-term forces and their ability for transformation, rather than attributing changes solely to individual events.[193] A philosophical and methodological application of the *longue durée* to the life of buildings can help illuminate aspects of their current forms, uncover the changes that brought them to their present state, and provide a more holistic understanding of a building and its history.[194]

The distinct vernacular nature of the refugee cottages is expressed through their transformations over time; it is their collective qualities that have evolved over generations of adaptation and use by their inhabitants that qualifies them as "vernacular." They reflect "cultural weathering," as explained in Kingston Heath's article, "Assessing Regional Identity Amidst Change: The Role of Vernacular Studies," as "the product of layers of collective change over time."[195] When applied to vernacular buildings, cultural weathering reveals that:

> *People alter objects, buildings, spaces, and settings in accordance with prevailing opportunities, constraints, and sensibilities. These strategies of accommodation in response to a broad range of external and local factors, serve to define, collectively, the particularities of places.*[196]

It is in this same way--the variety of alterations over time--that earthquake cottages reveal their vernacular qualities. The shelters began their lives as mass-

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[193] Camerlenghi, The *Longue Durée* 12.

[194] Camerlenghi, The *Longue Durée* 12.

[195] Kingston Wm. Heath, "Assessing Regional Identity Amidst Change: The Role of Vernacular Studies," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* 13, no. 2 (2006-2007): 79.

[196]Heath, "Assessing Regional Identity," 79.

produced, indistinctive, basic shelters, and evolved over time into manifestations of the collective personal needs, wants, and hopes of the earthquake refugee population.

It was the misfortune of the disaster that acted as the catalyst for the refugee cottages--their initial *raison d'etre*--but it was a subsequent range of forces over the passage of time that anchored the identity of the cottages to a particular place, people, time, and situation.[197] As with nearly all vernacular buildings, social practices may alter and define original spatial and aesthetic organizations.[198] As "a product of ever evolving human and environmental factors," the cottages were subject to influence from a variety of external societal forces that prompted their modifications.

Here, the long-lasting quality of the relief cottages exceeds their simple material nature. Not only have they persisted over 110 years to remain meaningful dwelling places, but their sustained functionality elevates them past the traditional types of "winning" buildings that generally dominate the metropolitan landscape. The cottages are so significant as cultural informants that even though they were not "the houses of the better-off," they have been always able to successfully communicate their value and avoid replacement by something "better" (Figure 21).

As Dell Upton has noted, "the buildings that have survived in numbers are those that have been best adapted to the lives of subsequent generations."[199] When examined under the lens of this sentiment, is it not a surprise that the cottages remain today. Because their adaptations have been executed specifically in order to accommodate the needs and lives of humans, it can be easily understood why subsequent generations have

[197] Kingston Heath, thesis draft comments.

[198] Flathman, "Rereading the Library," 24.

[199] Upton, "The Power of Things," 279.

been able to benefit from the shacks' changes and maintain them as modern, effective dwelling places.

Figure 21: The cottage at 1448 Kearny Street remains despite its location in desirable Telegraph Hill. (Photo by author).

Yet, the origins of the shacks were anything but the complex and dynamic buildings that remain today. They were originally constructed under the most dire circumstances, as the Buildings and Lands Committee needed to provide massive amounts of shelter very quickly at a low cost. The Committee was confronted with this multi-layered conundrum and needed to act swiftly: what were the very minimal accouterments and necessities for human shelter that would be able to justify the expenditure of relief funds? Whatever this looked like, it needed to be easily

manufactured with available materials and human resources, and ultimately, be an improvement over the living conditions provided by the Army tents. Over the course of the design process, a final requirement was decided upon: the new shelters would also need to act as future permanent housing. Therefore, they must have the ability to be easily moved to a new location. [200]

Vernacular Performance Theory

Before scholars could assess "meaning," in vernacular architecture, it was necessary to identify traditional building forms. These investigations of material folk culture of established regional patterns of influence, diffusion, and distribution.[201] By the the 1970s, architects and folklorists began to examine how architectural intention along with human behavior shapes and defines vernacular buildings.[202] Both Dell Upton and Susan Garfinkel urged scholars to scrutinize vernacular structures on a deeper level than their materiality and "consider architecture as the result of social patterns as well as the intentions of a master designer."[203] In this context, Garfinkel defined the term *performance* as "to carry out, accomplish, finish, or consummate" and "the intensification or completion" of a building form.[204] Performance, when applied to vernacular buildings, "implies presence, audience, and the creation of meaning across the passage of time."[205]

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[200] Amunategui, "Shelter, Dwellings, and Metamorphosis," 19.

[201] Kingston Heath, thesis draft comments.

[202] Flathman, "Rereading the Library," 23.

[203] Flathman, "Rereading the Library," 24.

[204] Garfinkel, "Recovering Performance," 110.

[205] Garfinkel, "Recovering Performance," 106.

These sentiments lie at the heart of performance theory in vernacular studies. Camille Wells, in her introduction to the second volume of the 1986 Vernacular Architecture Forum's *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture,*[206] asserts that the multitude of ways that buildings are *used* is what defines their meaning, that "all ordinary buildings are the results of complex mental processes that have been shaped by learned cultural priorities and are therefore worthy of study."[207]

While vernacular forms, indeed, hold intrinsic value, the initiation of their "meanings of cultural forms are constituted at the moment of their use."[208] Common building forms are enriched by their methods of use, and may remain anonymous and uninteresting without an understanding of the ways in which occupants interacted with the building itself. These patterns of use over time, in conjunction with the intentions that generated the initial creation of the building, explicate vernacular performance theory, as repetitions of use with variations, create layers of meaning unable to come from the walls and roof of the building alone.[209] A building's use, in turn, dictates the *role* it will play in the lives of its residents. "Multiple roles," Garfinkel stated, "to be experienced either by design or opportunity in unpredictable, unplanned, but locally meaningful ways."[210]

There can be no analysis of vernacular buildings without a simultaneous study of the people who inhabited them. Even when their inhabitants have gone, evidence of the occupants and they ways they changed and used their buildings are inevitably left behind.

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[206] Camille Wells, "Old Claims and New Demands: Vernacular Architecture Studies Today," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* 2 (1986): 1-10.

[207] Wells, "Old Claims," 3.

[208] Garfinkel, "Recovering Performance," 107.

[209] Flathman, "Rereading the Library," 25.: Carter and Cromley*, Invitation*, 45.

[210] Garfinkel, "Recovering Performance," 111-112.

At its core, vernacular scholarship is humanistic scholarship; a study of the common people related to common buildings forms the cynosure of any vernacular conversation. Garfinkel notes, "by itself, connoisseurship of the buildings is not enough;" we must also take into consideration the roles those buildings played in the lives of the people who used and changed them.[211] A vernacular approach to architecture helps us to understand the powerful relationships people form with their material world. Vernacular buildings, therefore, help us to comprehend the particular cultural circumstances and situations that shaped them.[212] Vernacular "architectural historians must explore the range of relationships that surround an object: who paid for it, who designed it, who built it," and in what ways that building was used and reused.[213]

Vernacular buildings are often defined as "the buildings common to a particular region or community,"[214] and this community-based exploration is critical to an understanding of vernacular architecture. The common shared experience of a group of people inevitably results in similarities in their habitats, and a common consistency can often be found when studying vernacular buildings in this way. The ways these communal similarities indicate an architectural tradition is expressed not as a simple repetition of previous established examples, but "as a shared body of knowledge in which choices arise out of the tensions between individual inclinations and social context."[215]

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[211] Garfinkel, "Recovering Performance," 108.

[212] Carter, *Images of an American Land,* 3.

[213] Flathman, "Rereading the Library," 24. See Kingston Heath's discussion of the transformations of three-decker tenement houses and their resurrection as dwellings for many generations of New Bedford, Mass. mill workers in *Patina of Place*, pgs 122-133.

[214] Carter, *Images of an American Land,* 3.

[215] Upton, "The Power of Things," 274.

Through the ages, vernacular structures have been overlooked and disregarded because they often have little "curb appeal;" they are unable to visually "tell their story" just from their looks alone. Yet, vernacular buildings come alive and demonstrate their value through their historical narrative, their dynamic story that chronicles the occupants of the buildings and how they have changed it over time. Without this narrative, vernacular buildings are often unable to communicate their highest potential. These narratives then lend the vernacular building its meaning and identity as succinctly summarized by Garfinkel:

> *Designing a house is one thing, while living in a house is another, and both are not only legitimate but necessary activities in the process that makes a building into a house and then into a home.*[216]

Refugee Cottages as Vernacular Forms

The refugee cottages were, at their essence, the most basic conceivable form of shelter. Sergio Amunategui, in his 1989 Master's of Architecture thesis at the University of California at Berkeley, refers to them as a "pure archetypal configuration."[217] Amunategui's thesis expanded on the potential of the shelter in its truest form, and uncovered a depth of potential in the form type. Amunategui explicated and illustrated cottage expansions, contractions, modifications, combinations, and additions in order to explore a simple form type as a valuable model for future use. As an architectural study, Amunategui's thesis is intriguing and foreshadows the resurgence of the tiny house movement in the 21st century.

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[216] Garfinkel, "Recovering Performance," 110.

[217] Sergio Amunategui, "Shelter, Dwellings, and Metamorphosis: Adaptations of the 1906 Earthquake Refugee Shelter in a Single Family Dwelling" (master's thesis, University of California at Berkeley, 1989), 22.

The core essence of the earthquake cottages are the multiple ways they have taken the form of a dwelling place. Initially, they were used as designed, then continued their lives in many truly unpredictable ways, perhaps the most unpredictable of all being their continued existence to the present day. Without this understanding, a cottage remains simply that; a tiny front-gabled shack with no discernible rhyme or reason. In fact, this is how they appear to the untrained eye; from the right of way they simply look like a strangely small home, and this reality lends to their being written off by the uninitiated. Yet to those who understand their extraordinary narrative, the dwellings generate interest, investigation, and explication. The cottage at 369 Valley Street exemplifies the curious nature of the dwellings compared to others on the block (Figure 22).

Figure 22: Without a knowledge of its history, the cottage at 369 Valley Street is easily overlooked. (Photo by author).

Within the context of the close quarters of the camps, it comes as no surprise that refugee families shared and borrowed the ways they altered their dwellings. Though some alterations did take place before they were moved, the majority of modifications came after the structures were relocated. The camps fostered a sense of unity, and cottage families were inclined to help their fellow refugees improve their living conditions in any way possible. It makes perfect sense that cottages began to be altered in specific ways. If one family invented an especially effective way to improve their shelter, they would likely share their technique with others. Additionally, when refugees began to remove their cottages from the camps, they valued their new-found communities so highly that refugee families often relocated their new homes next to others on private lots in the city.[218] In fact, following the closure of the camps, it was unusual to see a lone cottage on the San Francisco landscape. These camp families were bound by the shared experiences of disaster and refugee life, and their dwellings grew and changed accordingly. The consistency in the behavioral patterns of the refugee families reflected a shared and dedicated set of operating values.[219] Once again, the intention behind the changes to the cottages over time indicates a deep and rich tradition that has continued to the present day.

Ultimately, it is a combination of the people, place, time, and situational context that provides the refugee cottages their character and value.[220] Both the circumstances initially surrounding the cottages and the subsequent chain of events that followed

[218] Cottage families also relocated near each other to share costs of ground rent and utilities.

[219] Carter and Collins, *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture*, 45.

[220] Heath, thesis draft comments.

affected them in specific ways and lend them their distinct identity.[221] Not only do the dwellings become reflective of a particular moment in time, but they also reveal their place in the collective refugee experience and cultural memory. This "cultural moment"--the earthquake--combined with a shared human experience become informative benchmarks for understanding the essence of these vernacular forms in their particular human context.[222] Because of their layers of alteration and change, the relief cottages have solidified their place in the complex cultural moment of the earthquake refugee experience.

Architectural Blanks and Regionalism

This ordinary, bare-bones property of the refugee cottage characterizes them as a valuable example of an *architectural blank*. The established concept of an architectural blank is a vernacular tenet well-defined in Kingston Heath's article "Assessing Regional Identity Amidst Change: The Role of Vernacular Studies." Heath described the blanks as a building "aesthetically neutral, regionally indistinct, perfect for adaptation...[and] a product of [the] corporate logic that shaped it originally."[223] Heath's article focuses on the regional adaptation of manufactured trailer homes in southwest Montana and southwest North Carolina, and the modes in which they were adapted to the climate and other requirements of their specific regional environments (Figure 23). Without any stretch of the imagination, the refugee cottage--capable of being multiplied, divided, or moved--apply well to this concept of architectural blanks.

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[221] Garfinkel, "Recovering Performance," 111.

[222] Heath, thesis draft comments.

[223] Heath, "Assessing Regional Identity," 86-87.

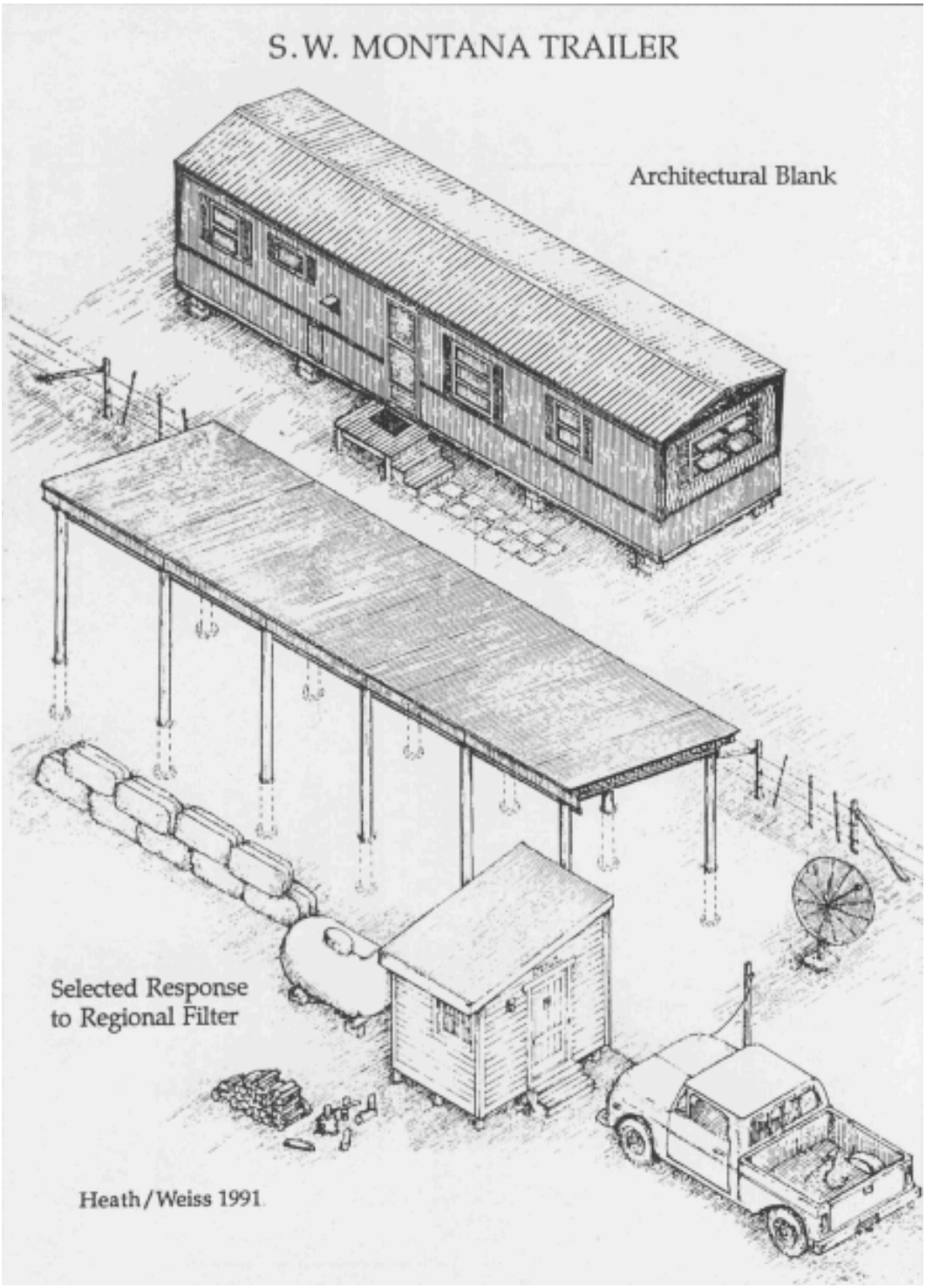

Figure 23: A southwest Montana trailer demonstrating the specifics of regional response.
(Image: Kingston Heath, "Assessing Regional Identity Amidst Change.")

Yet, when applied to cottages, Heath's discussion of regional influence requires elaboration with a consideration of the shared immediacy of the disaster, functional necessity, and later, a desire for beautification. Earthquake cottages were not acutely

influenced by regional elements in a "situated" sense as products of their unusual circumstances. In their most basic form, the shacks were ultimate architectural blanks, ready for adaptation and change: they were aesthetically fully neutral; devoid of any easily identifiable architectural style or influence. Ultimately, the shacks were analogous to the trailer homes studied by Heath in the sense that

> *One can extract the [original]…container from layers of adapted response…and begin to understand…programmatic priorities, environmental strategies, material preferences, and social practices that begin to reflect the…preferences of one socioeconomic group.*[224]

As demonstrated by the restoration of the cottages in the Presidio of San Francisco,[225] changes to the cottages can be peeled away, layer by layer, to reveal the original "container" within. To examine the shelters as architectural blanks reduces domesticity to its very essence: the parameters informed and transformed the domicile itself, and how it is subsequently interpreted through space and time.

Interestingly, it is the very ordinary quality of the refugee cottages that has determined their sustained survival. Carter and Herman insist that "the largest and most substantial buildings are the ones that survive, [and] the *truly* ordinary structures have vanished."[226] Likewise, Stuart Brand proposes, "Almost no buildings adapt well. They're *designed* not to adapt; also budgeted and financed not to, constructed not to, administered not to, maintained not to, regulated and taxed not to, even remodeled not to."[227] While these sentiments may apply to most common buildings, they do not apply to the relief

[224] Heath, "Assessing Regional Identity," 89.

[225] See discussion in Section V.

[226] Carter and Herman, "Introduction," 2.

[227] Brand, *How Buildings Learn*, 2.

cottages, which have survived through the decades precisely because they have been adapted and changed.

It may be argued that the original shelters did "vanish" as Carter and Herman contend, because today they look so different from their original forms. But, the cottages have undergone these transformations as means necessary for their survival; in order to remain relevant, they needed to adapt to the changing needs of their occupants. They, therefore, have not vanished at all. On the contrary, the human scale of the cottages combined with the creative modifications executed by their inhabitants make them stand out in San Francisco's urban landscape, and provide, as a collection, the cultural narrative of place. The cottages are so simultaneously curious and appealing, they elicit second glances regardless of their neighborhood or location (Figure 24). They may be ordinary in their original design, but the relief cottages are truly extraordinary in their intention

Figure 24: 81 Pearl Street is visually distinct from its neighboring buildings. (Photo by author).

and philosophy.[228]

Nearly synonymous with the study of vernacular architecture is the notion of regionalism. In order to understand the ways and reasons a building has transformed over its lifespan, its geographic and socioeconomic context must also be taken into consideration The specific geographic location of a vernacular building shapes and influences the way that building is used and changed over time. Most modern scholarship on vernacular architecture is regionally focused, and with good reason. Many external factors act as incentives for buildings to change, and a consideration of those factors, both local and extra-local, will illuminate otherwise mysterious aspects of a building's history. As discussed in Kingston Heath's article, the changes in the Montana trailers over time were highly influenced by local land and weather patterns, in addition to the needs of their inhabitants. These regional factors led to dramatically different changes in trailers found in different locales.[229]

In a vernacular context, the meaning of "local" not only denotes location, but, as Susan Garfinkel writes,

> *Local also suggests an immediate community of which the architectural structure is a part, leading to the…point that the vernacular is 'shared' – that is it arises from and inhabits a cultural context, which by definition requires a group of people, past or present, who all have a great deal in common.*[230]

Carter and Herman consider geographic and cultural context as a foundation for vernacular studies: "Many of the best examples of vernacular architecture research adopt

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[228] I do not want to appear to romanticize the shacks or camp life. Under no circumstances was daily living in the shack camps comfortable or easy, and the individual refugee reality can get lost in the midst of a philosophical consideration of the earthquake shacks.

[229] Heath, "Assessing Regional Identity," 85-87.

[230] Garfinkel, "Recovering Performance," 109.

a regional perspective by exploring a close connection between built form and local culture."[231] Though the framework of regional influence applies less acutely to the San Francisco earthquake cottages than it does to more conventional vernacular buildings, the closely related idea of "local" is essential to a vernacular conversation around the dwellings. With respect to regional geographic influence in vernacular buildings, the refugee cottages once again defy convention. Because the cottages were a product of a specific event, one that has the potential to occur in many places, it is difficult to think of their vernacular qualities from a fundamentally geographic perspective. In their case, the latter part of Carter and Herman's statement applies; the shacks were inextricably tied to the local culture and the situational event, but less so by their geographic location. The mere fact that the earthquake and fire occurred in San Francisco and California did not have any measurable effect on the shack's building type or form. Rather, it can be surmised that any disaster of this magnitude may have produced similar refugee shelter results, and in fact, it has.

The Great Fire of Chicago, Illinois, burned from October 8th to 9th, 1871. It is considered one of the great disasters in American history, destroyed 17,450 buildings, left 98,500 homeless and consumed a total of 3½ square miles.[232] While the Chicago fire only consumed a fraction of the area that was affected in San Francisco, the relief efforts mounted were remarkably similar. Following the Chicago fire, homeless families were able to apply for temporary housing, known as a fire relief or shelter cottage. The Chicago cottages were distributed for free by the Chicago Relief and Aid Society, and like the earthquake shelters in San Francisco, they were one- and two-room and

[231] Carter and Herman, "Introduction," 2.

[232] Elias Colbert, *Chicago and the Great Conflagration*, (Chicago: J.S. Goodman & Co, 1872), 288.

extraordinarily small. Fire relief cottages came in 12 by 16 foot and 16 by 20 foot models, which cost $75 and $100 to construct, respectively.[233] Also, like the San Francisco cottages, the fire shelters were exceptionally prolific: the first round of production created 5,200 shelters, and in subsequent months, 3,000 more were built.[234] Fire cottages were furnished and used in largely the same way as their San Francisco counterparts. The original construction directions dictated that the fire cottages were:

> *Completed in a simple but sufficient way for comfortable living by the addition of a cooking stove and utensils, several chairs, a table, bedstead, bedding, and sufficient crockery for the use of the family; and the total cost of the house when thus furnished was one hundred and twenty-five dollars.*[235]

There was one critical difference between the Chicago and San Francisco cottages. In San Francisco, the shacks were constructed on site with union labor, while in Chicago the shelter were distributed in kits to survivors, who would then assemble them themselves. The kits contained everything necessary to build the fire shelter: 52 studs, floor joists, rafters, sills, battens, doors, windows, and 40 pounds of nails, among other building components (Figure 25). Though homeowners were responsible for the construction of their own shelter, it was noted that,

> *The majority of those who received the prepared material for these houses were mechanics enough to put them together for themselves, or had the means to hire builders; but for the large class of widows, infirm, or otherwise helpless persons, the house was built and put in complete readiness for the proposed tenant by the [Relief] Committee.*[236]

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[233] *Report of the Chicago Aid and Relief Society of Disbursement of Contributions for the Sufferers by the Chicago Fire,* (Chicago: Riverside Press, 1874), 185-189.

[234] Sandy Keenan, "Treating His House Like a Museum," *The New York Times*, August 6, 2014.

[235] *Report of the Chicago Aid and Relief Society*, 187.

[236] *Report of the Chicago Aid and Relief Society*, 187.

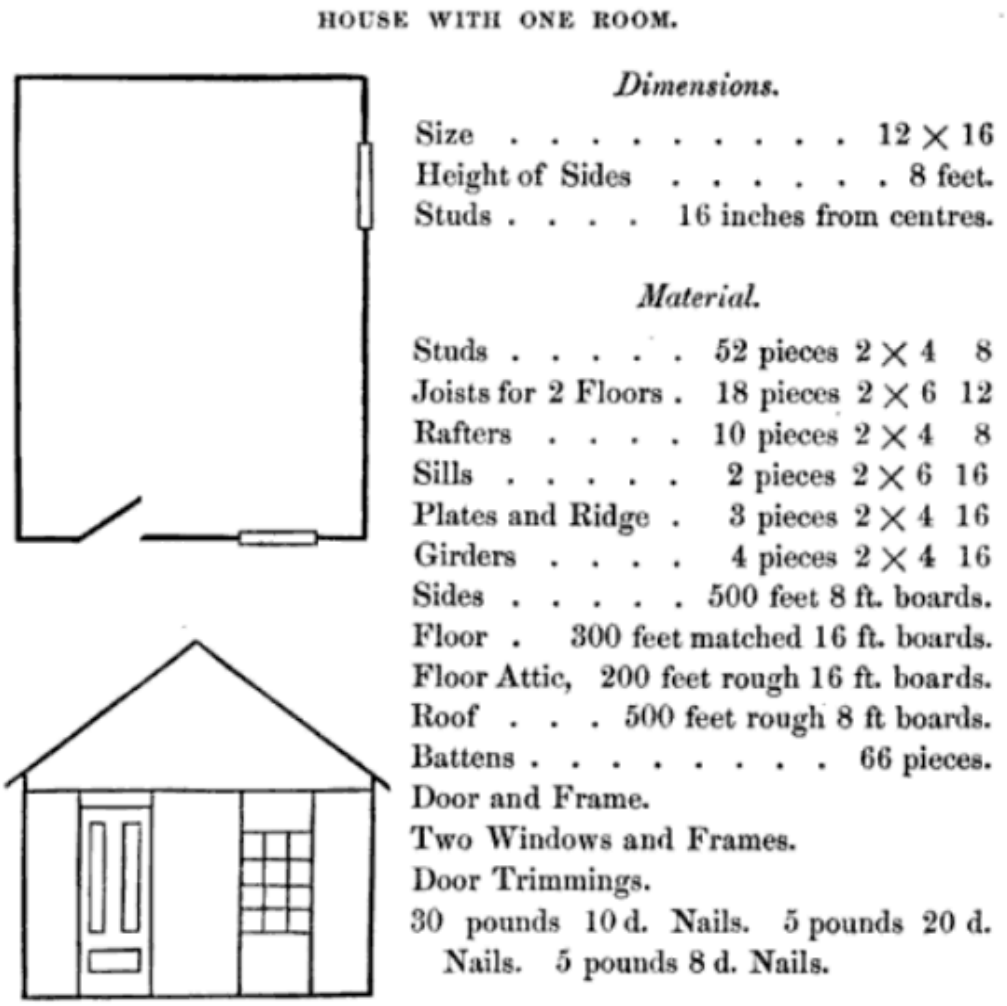

Figure 25: Details of one-room Chicago fire shelter cottages. (Source: *Report of the Chicago Relief and Aid Society,* p.187).

The two cottage types differed in construction as well: earthquake cottages were box-framed, while Chicago's fire shelters were built with conventional stud wall framing. Additionally, the fire shelters were never grouped together in camps as the earthquake cottages were, and they did not undergo the migration process that lends today's San Francisco cottages their distinct narrative. Ultimately, while the two shelters were both altered and

modified over time to meet the needs of their occupants, they did not share the same fate. Today, 45 earthquake cottages have been so far authenticated in San Francisco, while only two officially identified fire shelter cottages exist in Chicago today (Figure 26).

Figure 26: One of the two remaining fire shelters in the city of Chicago. (Source: *The New York Times*).

Buildings as Primary Documents

The many elements so far discussed that comprise the materiality of a vernacular structure all contribute to the building's utility as documentary evidence. Vernacular research methods suggest that buildings be viewed as primary documents, for the traditional types of primary sources (e.g. letters, newspaper articles, and the like) are both are essential to a complete understanding of a resource. Dell Upton notes the importance of assembling all types of primary information: "buildings are…examined for aspects of the past that can be known imperfectly, or not at all from other kinds of evidence."[237] Otherwise, the messages and narratives hidden within the walls of vernacular buildings would often otherwise go entirely unstated.[238]

With any investigation of primary documents, buildings or otherwise, the source of the material must be taken in consideration. Virtually all of the documentation that survives today about the earthquake cottages derives from news articles and official government documents. While such information is essential to this evaluation, or nearly any study of architectural history, an issue arises from the narrow viewpoints of the authors. The most essential news articles, especially *Enrichment of the Refugees* by Anna Simpson Pratt, were authored by the upper-class ladies' relief charities. To the modern reader, such sources glaringly omit a perspective from the cottage-dwellers themselves. Similarly, the *1913 San Francisco Relief Survey* was conducted and composed by professional sociologists from New York City, and while it includes a wide range of empirical data on cottage families, the survey fails to incorporate any personal testimony from the inhabitants of the cottages.

[237] Upton, "The Power of Things," 268.

[238] Carter, *Images of An American Landscape*, 4.

Because the primary sources available do not originate from the refugees themselves, since they were given no forum to leave their sentiments for posterity, there is only one primary document to examine that will provide insights into to a cottage-dweller's reality: the cottages themselves. The dwellings therefore become our most informative primary source.[239]

"Every Man is His Own Architect" – Cottage Modifications

The realities of camp life-- most notably very close quarters, ethnic diversity, and a working class population--together amounted to a stigma against refugees amongst the general population. This stigma existed alongside the condescending paternalism expressed toward the refugees. Taken together, these attitudes amounted to a generally negative association ascribed to the inhabitants of the camps by the public. While the government charity workers and the populace agreed that the shelters and camps were overall a suitable temporary solution to the refugee crisis, the refugees themselves were viewed as distinctly "less than." Comprised mainly of low-income San Franciscans, it would have been unlikely for the camp inhabitants to have somehow become more palatable to the general public.

Still, intentions remained as noble as they had ever been. From the genesis of the cottage plan, there were objectives to improve the quality of life for the unfortunate families in the cottage camps. The cottages had always been conceived by the Relief Fund for people who had previously been renters, who would be unable to build or own

[239] For example, unfortunately, there is no extant record of the way in which the Chinese reused their cottages. We do know that they dismantled them and carried them on their backs, but after that the legacy is lost. A rich tenet for further study would be an investigation of how, or if, different nationalities used and changed their cottages

their own house without the aid of the relief effort.[240] An excerpt from an October 1907 *San Francisco Call* article titled "Enrichment of the Refugees" explains the favorable effects of the cottages on the lives of their inhabitants:

> *There were many old people, especially women, who before the fire lived inexpensively in some unused and unwanted corner of a house and just managed with a little sewing, or washing, or janitor work, to earn enough for their living expenses. The fire swept away their homes and often their opportunities for making the frugal wage they depended upon. It was expected that a large number of such people would become dependent upon charity, and the charitable societies were preparing to make an especial effort in their behalf. The refugee cottages have provided homes for many of them and have enabled them for yet a while to enjoy their independence.*

In response to the social stigma of occupying a refugee cottage, and an intrinsic desire to improve the quality of their dwelling places, many cottage inhabitants immediately set out to improve their homes, if they had not begun to do so while already in the camps. The "elimination of everything that suggested the relief cottage" was of the utmost importance.[241] Matter-of-factly, "when the cottage [was] set up in its place outside, the transformation began, that is to make of the shack a bungalow."[242]

In many cases, the telltale park-bench-green color was the first feature to go. "From Green Refugee Shacks to Cozy Homes of Their Own" remarked:

> *They [refugees] were all busy painting out every vestige of green, the color that made the refugee settlements look like a lot of orphan children, all dressed alike. In some places blue and even pink have been used as a decoration for the house trimmings, but never green. That would be the worst form.*[243]

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[240] Cryan, *Hope Chest*, 38.

[241] Simpson, "From Green Refugee Shacks to Cozy Homes of Their Own." See Appendix A.

[242] Larsen, "Enrichment of the Refugees." See Appendix A.

[243] Simpson, "From Green Refugee Shacks to Cozy Homes of Their Own."

Exterior cottage walls were often disguised further with a siding treatment that became popular around the turn of the century: wood shingles[244] (Figure 27). According to "Enrichment of the Refugees," shingles "added warmth and beauty" to the otherwise plain cottages, and further aided in disguising the shacks as "completely as possible."[245] Interestingly, it was women who especially benefitted from the shingled exteriors; one *San Francisco Call* article notes that refugee "women developed remarkable skill as carpenters [and] many also became an expert in shingling. It was not an uncommon thing…to see a woman balanced on a ladder measuring and hammering shingles."[246]

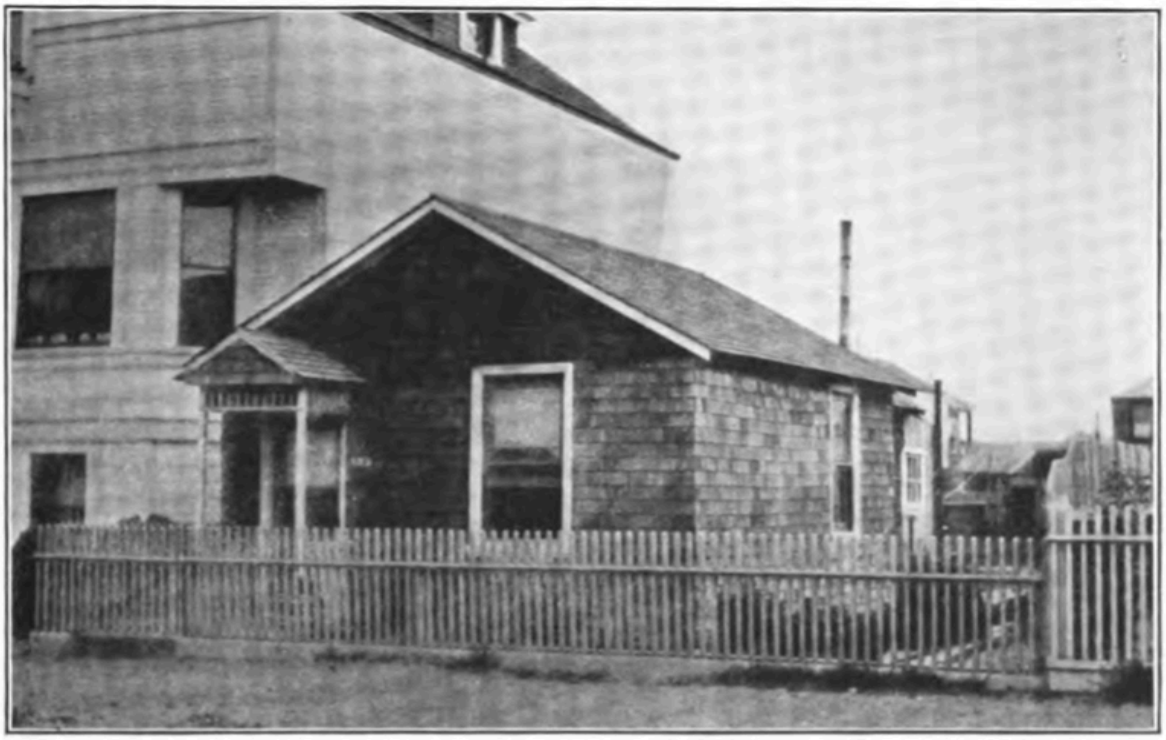

Figure 27: A refugee cottage converted to a comfortable home is clad in wood shingles. (Image: *The San Francisco Relief Survey,* p. 219).

[244] Many of the extant cottages are still clad in wood shingles.

[245] Larsen, "Enrichment of the Refugees."; Stellman, "Moving 20,000 Refugees."

[246] Simpson, "From Green Refugee Shacks to Cozy Homes of Their Own."

Improvements to the actual envelope of the cottage came next, with the addition of "gables, turrets, bay windows, verandas, and every variety of architectural ornamentation…according to the taste, means, and enterprise of the owners."[247] In some cases, several cottages were joined together "in the most artistic shapes" and became relatively ornate houses, and on the whole, were upgraded from the bare shacks in the refugee camps and transformed into proud family homes[248] (Figure 28). Again, the *Call* article "From Green Refugee Shacks to Cozy Homes of their Own" provides a vivid description of the changes:

> *Some of the new homes are made up of two cottages and some of three, the cottages varying in size, some containing two, others three rooms. They were arranged in an inconceivable number of ways. Some were placed 10 feet or more apart and a room was built between them; others were placed at right angles, making a desirable L, sometimes one on each side; the position of others allowed for a side as well as a front porch. In some cases, the little green shacks were placed on top of one another, making two story houses; in other cases they were raised so that a cellar might add something to the comfort of living. Bay windows were built out and casements opened attractively to the sun and air.*[249]

Overall, the early modifications to the refugee cottages established a set of somewhat standard architectural modifications that has endured with the cottages to the present day. Amazingly, many of the earthquake cottages, as they exist today, remain in the same or similar forms to those described in the articles from the early years of the 20th century. Images of recently relocated and modified cottages from the San Francisco Relief Survey are strikingly similar to today's cottages.

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[247] Stellman, "Moving 20,000 Refugees." See Appendix A.

[248] Larsen, "Enrichment of the Refugees."; Stellman, "Moving 20,000 Refugees."

[249] Simpson, "From Green Refugee Shacks to Cozy Homes of Their Own."

Figure 28: Three cottages are joined together to make a commodious home. (Image: *The San Francisco Relief Survey*, p. 217).

CHAPTER IV

THE 2016 EARTHQUAKE COTTAGE SURVEY

In the spring of 2016, a reconnaissance-level survey was conducted of all extant earthquake cottages in the San Francisco Bay area. Through photography and documentation of every cottage visible from the public right of way, insight was gained into the specifics of the modifications to each cottage and the ways they have been transformed over the course of eleven decades. In total, 45 cottage sites were surveyed, all of which were authenticated by the San Francisco Planning Department, Jane Cryan, or curbed.com (Table 5). The current homes at some locations are composed of several individual cottage components, so that approximately 60 cottage components are represented at the 45 total sites.

Table 5: Authenticated Extant Resources.

Location	Neighborhood	Size*/Indiv. Components	Typology	Alterations
164 Bocana St	Bernal Heights	C / 1	X – Front gable/side entry	Wood shingles, red trim
14 Elsie St	Bernal Heights	B / 1	VI – Front gable/flat roof addition	Long setback
57 Elsie St	Bernal Heights	B / 1	X – Front gable/side entry	Ext. shingles, high on foundation
211 Mullen Ave	Bernal Heights	B / 1	VII – Front elevation modificatio	Classical style, pediment gable
217 Mullen Ave	Bernal Heights	B / 1	IX – Additional roof forms	Front landing, imbrication in gable
20 Newman St	Bernal Heights	B / 2	II – L/T shape	Front porch, exterior shingles
43 Carver St	Bernal Heights	B / 2	III – Parallel forms	Small gabled hyphen connects two shacks
673 Moultrie St	Bernal Heights	B / 1	V – Original form/rear extensions	Shingles and yellow trim
848 Moultrie St	Bernal Heights	C / 1	V – Original form/rear extensions	Stucco exterior

CHAPTER IV

Table 5 continued: Authenticated Extant Resources.

Location	Neighbor hood	Size/Inidv. Components	Typology	Alterations
48 Cortland Ave	Bernal Heights	C / 1	VIII – Garage under	Middle front door, raised foundation
143 Cortland Ave	Bernal Heights	A / 1	IX –Additional roof forms	Setback
148 Crescent Ave	Bernal Heights	unknown	VII – Front elevation modification	Enclosed front landing, vinyl windows
615 Ellsworth St	Bernal Heights	A / 1	IX – Additional roof forms	Redwood exterior shingles
160 Montcalm St	Bernal Heights	B / 1	IX – Additional roof forms	Exterior shingles, mostly obscures from ROW by fence
206 Montcalm St	Bernal Heights	B / 1	I – Original form	Middle front door, two front windows
222 Montcalm St	Bernal Heights	B / 1	IX – Additional roof forms	New siding, rear addition
230 Montcalm St	Bernal Heights	B / 1	VII – Front elevation modification	Front bay window
1665 Alabama St	Bernal Heights	B / 1	VI – Gable end/flat roof addition	Not in great shape, attached garage
1837 Alabama St	Bernal Heights	A / 1	I – Original form	Used as garage, exterior shingles and garage door
107 Franconia St	Bernal Heights	B / 1	IX – Additional roof forms	Side staircase, siding in poor condition
311 Prentiss St	Bernal Heights	unknown	VIII – Garage under	Recently remodeled, entrance on side
59 Bradford St	Bernal Heights	A (possibly B) / 1	VI – Gable end/flat roof addition	Side addition with front wall
3653 Folsom St	Bernal Heights	B / 1	VI – Gable end/flat roof addition	Attached garage, exterior shingles
81 Pearl St	Mid Market	B / 1	I – Original form	Horizontal droplap siding, possible rear extension
1046 Diamond St	Diamond Heights	B / 1	Not visible from Right of Way	N/A

Table **5** continued: Authenticated Extant Resources.

Location	**Neighborhood**	**Size/Inidv. Components**	**Typology**	**Alterations**
58 Ord St	Eureka Valley	B / 1	IX – Additional roof forms	Exterior shingles, low hipped roof
300 Cumberland St	Noe Valley	A & B / 2	III – Parallel forms	Two shacks joined by hyphen, roofs at different elevations
369 Valley St	Noe Valley	B / 1	II – L/T shape	Front bay window, exterior shingles
39 Diamond St	Castro	B / 1	Not visible from Right of Way	N/A
233 Broad St	Ocean View	A / 1	V – Original form/rear extensions	Long setback
254 Montana St	Ocean View	B / 1	IX – Additional roof forms	Front lawn, brick basement under
74 Lobos St	Ocean View	B / 2	VIII – Garage under	Two story, two front bay windows
30 Niantic St	Ocean View	A / 2	IV – Two story	Two stories with side shed roof addition
16 De Long St	Ocean View	A / 2	III – Parallel forms	Recent fire, v. poor condition, likely has orig material
252 Holyoke St	Portola	A / 1	Not visible from Right of Way	N/A
Post Hospital Shacks	Presidio	A / 2	I – Original forms	Restored shacks
533 33rd Ave	Richmond	A (possibly B) / 2	Not visible from Right of Way	N/A
1549 22nd Ave	Sunset	unknown	IX – additional roof forms	Hipped roof
1227 24th Ave	Sunset	A & B / 4	II – L/T shape	San Francisco Landmark # 171
1224 46th Ave	Sunset	B (possibly C) / 2	II – L/T shape	Stucco exterior, front bay window
1232 47th Ave	Sunset	B / 1	IX – Additional roof forms	Hipped roof, front dormer
4329-4331 Kirkham St	Sunset	A & B / 2	Not visible from Right of Way	N/A
1448 Kearny St	Telegraph Hill	unknown	X – Front gable/side entry	Exterior shingles, raised on foundation
330 9th Ave	Santa Cruz, CA	A / 2	III- Parallel forms	Shacks combined with hyphen; orig massing
810 San Antonio Ave	San Bruno, CA	A / 2	III – Parallel forms	Heavily altered, stucco exterior, front porch

*Size refers to the original Type A, B, and C configurations. See page 29.

Similarities and differences were noted between many of the altered cottages, and gradually, a form typology began to emerge from the field research. Ten major types are distinguishable among the cottages in their current states (Tables 6 and 7). This typology serves to elucidate some of the changes and adaptations over time according to the needs of their inhabitants that make the earthquake cottages exceptional examples of vernacular architecture

Table 6: Earthquake Cottage Typology.

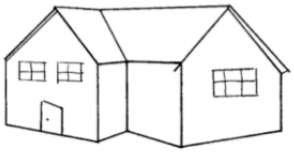
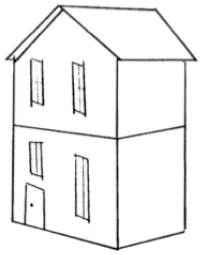
I	ORIGINAL FORM		Front gable with front entrance
II	L or T SHAPE		Two or more shacks combined in a perpendicular format
III	PARALLEL FORMS		Two or more shacks combined in a parallel format
IV	TWO STORY		Two shacks stacked atop one another

Table 6 Continued: Earthquake Cottage Typology.

V	ORIGINAL FORM/REAR EXTENSION		Appears in original form from the front elevation, but has been extended to the rear
VI	FRONT GABLE/FLAT ROOF SIDE ADDITION		Attached garage or other flat roof added to one side facing the street
VII	FRONT ELEVATION MODIFICATION		Porches added to front elevation
VIII	GARAGE UNDER		Lifted to accommodate a garage underneath
IX	ADDITIONAL ROOF FORMS		Rear additions that take varied roof rorms
X	FRONT GABLE/SIDE ENTRY		Front entry no longer faces the street

Table 7 : Cottage totals per type.

TYPE	NUMBER OF RESOURCES
I - Original Form	4
II - L or T Shape	4
III - Parallel Forms	5
IV - Two-story	1
V - Original Form/Rear Extension	3
VI - Front Gable/Side Addition	4
VII - Front Elevation Modification	3
VIII - Garage Under	3
IX - Additional Roof Forms	10
X - Front Gable/Side Entry	3
Unknown - not visible from right-of-way	5
TOTAL:	**45**

The earthquake cottage typology was partly defined by subjectively chosen characteristics (e.g. entry orientation, roof forms, and cottage combinations). Although somewhat arbitrary, these defined types aid in understanding patterns in cottage adaptation and spatial distribution over time. Earthquake cottage types can also indicate changes in the situation and lifestyle amongst refugee cottage residents. For example, in Bernal Heights, at least four cottages are Type 6, gable end with a flat roof addition. These additions often take the form of garages, and suggest that the owners of the cottages eventually gained a high enough financial standing to purchase and maintain a vehicle (Figure 29). True to vernacular architecture form, owners modified

their homes to meet their changing needs, and today the residents of the Type 6 cottages are grateful for the parking spaces along the tight, windy streets of Bernal.

Similarly, the overwhelming trend of cottages to be altered with additional roof forms may indicate a general need among cottage inhabitants to build both up and out. While the original cottage form is still considered a useful dwelling space and maintained, a growing family necessitates more room, or an increase in socioeconomic status can create an increase in personal effects, and a need for more space. The additional roof forms not only afford the home more space, but also serve to further disguise the original cottage form.

Figure 29: The Cottage at 3653 Folsom Street in Bernal Heights includes a garage. (Photo by author).

Earthquake Cottage Survey Analysis

Thomas Carter and Elizabeth Collins Cromley's 2005 work, *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture: A Guide to the Study of Ordinary Buildings and Landscapes*, lays out a well-defined method for the analysis of information gleaned from a survey of common buildings. The book synthesizes the architectural properties of vernacular structures through five aspects: (1) time; (2) space; (3) form; (4) function; and (5) technology.[250] An analysis of these five properties provides a basic framework to investigate vernacular buildings in their current form and work backwards in an attempt to uncover the "ideas, values, and beliefs--patterns of culture--that caused an object to come into being."[251] In application to the earthquake cottage survey, an examination of the patterns--the identified cottage typology--through time, space, form, function, and technology, helps peel back layers to understand the cultural forces acting upon the houses, and how those forces have affected the cottages over time.[252]

Time

The knowledge of when a building was constructed is fundamental and crucial to placing it within its appropriate historical framework. An understanding of the broad patterns of history and events that may influence construction of the built environment in a certain location contextualizes a building, and can reveal intentions behind everything from its initial creation to the inclusion of certain minute details. Being able

[250] Carter and Cromley, *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture*, 47.

[251] Carter and Cromley, *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture*, xiii.

[252] Carter and Cromley, *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture*, 45.

to place a building within its temporal context is essential to understanding its intended function, materials, and methods of execution.[253]

Though the relief cottages never had building permits or dedicated construction documents, the relatively concise range of their construction dates is fortunately well known. More difficult is the determination of the dates of the renovations and expansions made to the dwellings over time. Research in the building and construction records in the City of San Francisco is unusually time consuming, but may yet yield information on specific improvements made by cottage owners through the years.

Space

The way buildings are distributed spatially in the study area indicates their contextual relationships with their surroundings and displays consistencies (or inconsistencies) in behavioral patterns.[254] Geographic analysis of the earthquake cottage survey data has generated insights into relationships between the cottages and the camps, the cottages and the city, and the cottages and each other (Figure 30). By comparing the location of current cottages with their original locations in the camps, it is possible to estimate the routes followed by the house movers as they relocated the cottages to their new permanent lot.

With a visualization of this data, it is easy to see which camps are closest to the current cottages, though it is still difficult to determine which cottages originated from which particular camp. The visual groupings of cottages on the landscape corroborate the historical information that many homes were often moved as a group to one neighborhood or area. For example, with many extant cottages in Bernal Heights, it can

[253] Carter and Cromley, *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture*, 47-51.

[254] Carter and Cromley, *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture*, 52

be projected that these originated from Camp 23 in Precita Park, and that the cottage families consciously decided to relocate their new homes together.

Form

For the purposes of vernacular analysis, form can be separated into *style* and *type.* Architectural style is often the primary way to identify a building, and a jumping-off point for further research. Though the refugee cottages, in their original incarnation, were so simple that they defied discernable stylistic influence, this changed upon their relocation away from the parks. Carter and Cromley refer to style "the way in which something is done, produced, or expressed."[255] When viewed through this lens, the style of the refugee cottages may be called something as simple as "practical," as the cottages were designed and built to meet the greatest amount of need while using the least amount of resources. These conditions precluded designing the cottages in the popular styles of building in San Francisco around the turn of the century; neither the established Queen Anne or the burgeoning bungalow styles fully apply to the original shelters. Yet, if style is viewed not as a group of character-defining features within a national popular movement--a designation which often fails to accommodate vernacular buildings--but alternatively as actions with intention, the cottages do, in fact, reflect a style: utilitarian.

Alternately, type traditionally refers to a designation regarding the function and categorization of a building. "Bungalow" and "cottage" are both types of dwellings that may apply to the refugee cottages, which then, for the purposes of survey and study, may be broken down further into a typology. *Invitation* defines

[255] Carter and Cromley, *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture*, 54.

typology as:

> "*a group of objects having certain features or traits in common [and]…are usually used in architectural studies to gather sets of similar buildings into manageable units for the purposes of study, and it is usually up to the researcher to determine what the distinguishing elements will be."*[256]

Function

Function is the result of human intentions in architecture.[257] In an evaluation of the earthquake cottages as vernacular structures, there is no doubt as to the original intention of the dwellings, which can often be a mystery when investigating vernacular buildings. It is certain that the relief cottages were originally intended to deliver temporary winter shelter to earthquake refugees. They were then used to provide a method for their inhabitants to relocate from the camps and become homeowners and independent of charity and aid. Also, their function as a dwelling place has persisted over time; many vernacular buildings often undergo various changes in function.

Technology

When perceived as the "various systems available for putting together a building so that it will be able to carry out the functions required by its builders, owners, and users,"[258] technology in vernacular architecture informs conclusions about time, space, form, and function combined. With the examination of a vernacular structure, technology can point to the available methods and intentions of construction

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[256] Carter and Cromley, *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture*, 57-58.

[257] Carter and Cromley, *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture*, 59-60.

[258] Carter and Cromley, *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture*, 6.

during a certain time period, geographic location, in a certain style, and for a certain purpose. The mediums and materials used in structures can carry powerful messages, and the technologies used to construct buildings can also easily denote status, purpose, and intention.[259] For example, the earthquake cottages were built using box-frame construction, likely used because it was the most expeditious and economical way to provide the number of shelters needed in the shortest amount of time.

A Complete Picture

It is almost certain that more shacks exist unseen in San Francisco. As cottage residents gained economic status, many earthquake cottages that had initially served as homes were relocated to backyards to serve as storage sheds or garages and today remain obscured from the public view. As cottages were often moved to new locations together, the current clusters of earthquake shacks are a good place to start; if there are some in a certain location, there are likely to be more. During the course of this survey, another 60 or so homes were identified as possible earthquake shacks, simply from their size and shape visible from the right-of-way. These potential cottages will become a part of further investigation, in effort to compile a complete picture of the refugee cottages on the San Francisco landscape. Unfortunately, cottages not visible from the street will likely remain hidden, unless an informed homeowner is able to realize the magnitude of the treasure on their hands.

[259] Carter and Cromley, *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture*, 61.

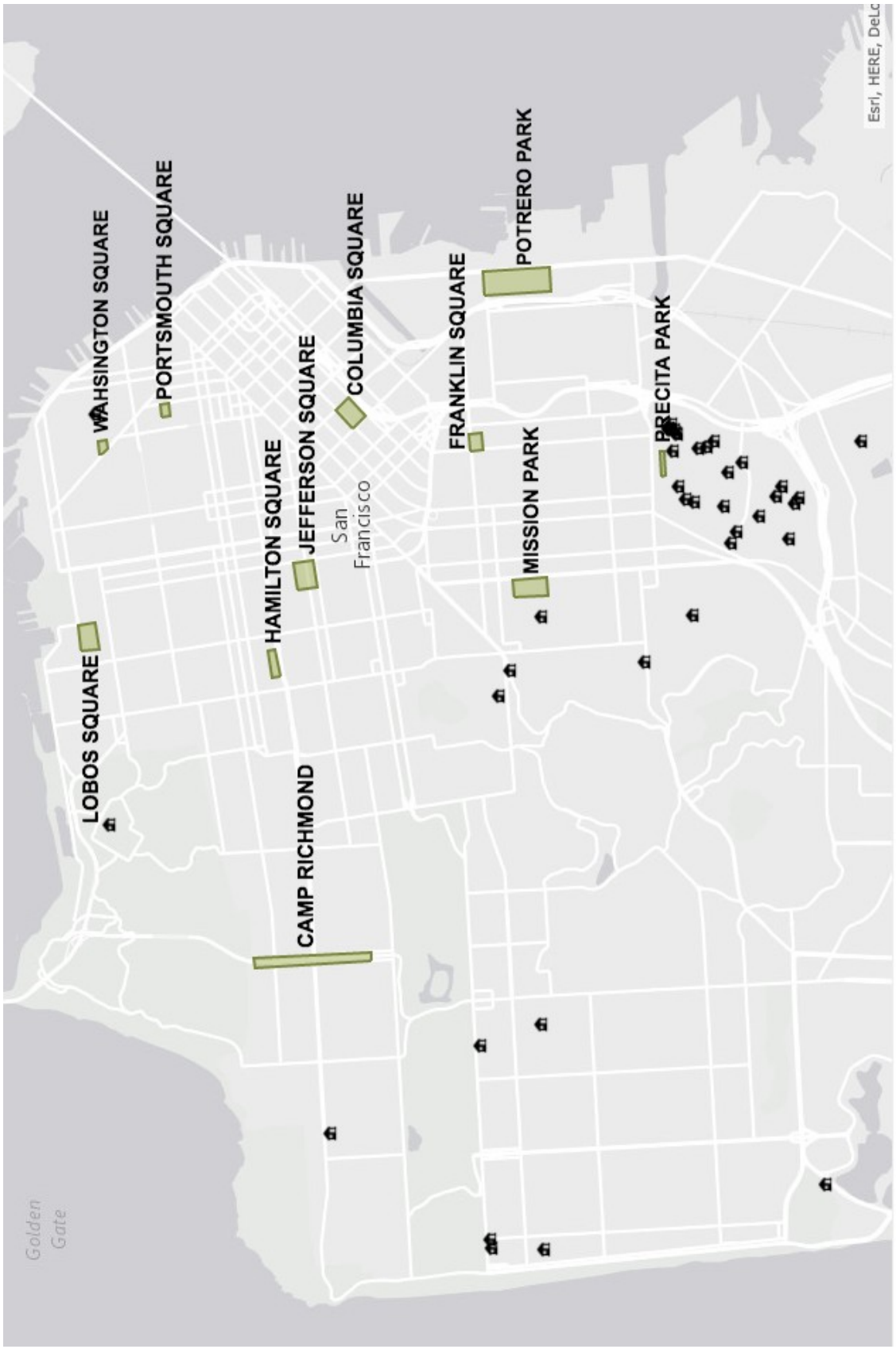

Figure 30: Geographic Information Survey map of historic camp and current cottage locations. (Map by author.)

CHAPTER V

COTTAGES AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The field of historic preservation in the United States aims to identify and evaluate historic resources considered valuable in American heritage. While this may seem fairly straightforward, the incredible breadth of existing historic resources combined with a myriad of methods to interpret them leaves historic preservationists and the structures in their care at the intersection of many preservation theories.

An increasing sense of urgency on the local, state, and national levels, resulting in part from the epidemic loss of historic resources during the period of urban renewal, gave the federal government impetus to establish a national historic preservation program around the middle of the 20th century. As such, the modern iteration of American historic preservation began in 1966, with the congressional passage of the National Historic Preservation Act.[260] The NHPA, among many things, expanded the criteria for the burgeoning National Register of Historic Places, created the individual State Historic Preservation Offices, and designated the National Park Service, under the Department of the Interior, as the federal agency responsible for the execution of historic preservation on a national level.[261]

Secretary of The Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties

The Secretary of the Interior has developed guidelines for handling historic resources, known as the Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, which

[260] Robert E. Stipe, ed., *A Richer Heritage: Historic Preservation in The Twenty-First Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003). 11.

[261] Stipe, *A Richer Heritage,* 11.

addresses four major treatment options: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. Each of these treatments has a distinctly different definition:

> *Preservation is the process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of the historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction.*
>
> *Rehabilitation is the process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.*
>
> *Restoration is the process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period.*
>
> *Reconstruction is the process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving historic resource for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location.*[262]

Often, historic buildings can benefit from multiple treatments, or a combination of treatments. Existing earthquake cottages are no different, and due to their highly vernacular qualities, the Secretary of the Interior treatments apply to them in especially interesting ways.

Preservation of an extant cottage would involve a careful evaluation of its current features and their condition, and an assessment of which of these features give the home its distinctive character. Removal of any of the unique physical layers of history would not be consistent with a preservation-only treatment, and any porches, windows, trims, sidings that illustrate the historic nature of the building and its changes would be retained and repaired where necessary. A preservation treatment would be most appropriate for

[262] Kay D. Weeks and Anne E. Grimmer*, The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings.* (Washington, D.C.: U.S Department of the Interior Heritage Preservation Services, 1995), 17-165.

property owners who are satisfied with the features, utilities, systems, floor plan, building envelope, and overall aesthetic character of their cottage, and would focus on ongoing preventative maintenance to keep the home in its current condition.

Rehabilitation of an earthquake cottage would be applicable to a home that no longer meets the needs of its inhabitants. If a family requires more space, an extra bathroom, or more light, for example, rehabilitation of the cottage would include additions and alterations to make the home more comfortable and viable for its residents. Rehabilitation is often complicated in vernacular buildings due to the lack of clear delineation of which features and fabric are historic and which are not. Because it is often not clear which alterations to an earthquake shack were made at what time and for what reason, since some alterations may have been undertaken even prior to relocation, it may be difficult to decide which elements to retain under a rehabilitation treatment. Today, many extant cottages have undergone extremely extensive rehabilitation to create a marketable living environment for a modern family.

Restoration of an earthquake cottage is well-represented in the "Goldie Shacks"[263] which now reside at the Presidio of San Francisco. When rescued, the Goldie shacks were in poor condition but were remarkably complete for their age; by far they are the remaining earthquake cottages with greatest amount of original material intact. The two cottages were excellent candidates for restoration, and were brought back to their original condition through a combination of replacement of missing materials in kind, and a careful retention of any original material still viable. The result of the restoration is two

[263] Discussion forthcoming.

cottages, on view in a public space, that fully communicate their original, as-built character.[264]

Reconstruction of an earthquake cottage is not a prohibitively expensive or labor-intensive process, due in part to their small envelope, simple materials, and the knowledge of original construction conditions. For example, a reconstruction of an earthquake cottage located in one of the original camp parks, would be an effective vessel for interpretation and public education; such a strategy might take the form of a commemoration of the refugees who inhabited the parks, include an educational history component, and provide a way to return at least one cottage to its original condition and context.

For each of the four treatments, a subset of standards exist that detail the principles and values of each treatment. For both Preservation and Rehabilitation, standard number 4 reads: "*changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved."*[265] This one tenet of the Secretary of the Interior Standards addresses vernacular properties with unconventional histories--properties that have so uniquely changed over time--and applies to the refugee cottages quite well. Though it has not yet been possible to track and trace individual changes to specific cottages, it is clear that their modifications are an essential component to their historical narrative, and should be retained as interesting manifestations of exceptional dwellings with an exceptional story.

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[264] Sometimes, there is only one way to save a building, and the treatment absolutely necessary to retain the property is not always the one that would be the best application.

[265] W. Brown Morton III, et al., *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior Heritage Preservation Services, 1997), vii.

Character-Defining Features

In the words of National Park Service Preservation Brief 17,

> *The Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties embody two important goals: 1) the preservation of historic materials and, 2) the preservation of a building's distinguishing character…Character refers to all those visual aspects and physical features that comprise the appearance of every historic building.*[266]

Known in the field of historic preservation as "character-defining features," these visual aspects of character can include a building's overall shape, materials, craftsmanship, details, interior spaces, and aspects of its site and environment. A determination of the character-defining features of a historic resource is important to understand which elements must be considered when applying and executing any treatment standard.

On a general level, "the major contributors to a building's overall character are embodied in the general aspects of its setting: the shape of the building, its roof and roof features, the various projections on the building, [and] the openings for windows and doorways."[267] At close range, exterior surface materials, their craftsmanship, and detailing act as character defining features of an historic building.[268]

In an examination of the character-defining features of the refugee cottages, two categories are necessary: one to compile the character-defining features of the cottages as-built, and another to understand the character-defining features as they apply to the cottages in their current state. In 1906, the character-defining features of the relief cottages included:

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[266] Lee H. Nelson, *Preservation Brief 17, Architectural Character: Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving Their Character* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior Heritage Preservation Services, 1982), 1.

[267] Nelson, *Preservation Brief 17*, 2.

[268] Nelson, *Preservation Brief 17*, 11.

- Construction: boxed frame construction, lack of stud walls.
- Siding: redwood boards approximately 5” wide, “park bench green” paint color.
- Fenestration: six-light window, window openings on front and rear, casement type, simple five-panel door.
- Interior: fir floorboards, wood/coal stove or gas hookups, specified room divisions, newspaper or canvas wall coverings.
- Roof: cedar shingles with a 5” reveal, galvanized metal chimney flue, front gable with a 4.2/12 roof pitch.
- Shape and size: rectangular, one of the three as-built sizes: A, B, and C.
- Setting: located in an official refugee camp.

A determination of the character-defining features of current earthquake cottages is more difficult. Because they have been so heavily altered from their as-built condition, they do not retain much of their original character-defining features in the traditional sense. As such, some of the character-defining features of extant cottages are more abstract and possibly subjective, but still equally important in uncovering the narrative and identity of the cottages:

- Layers of history: changed and adapted over time to reflect the needs of the occupants.
- Additions: size, shape, floor plan expanded and altered.
- Oral tradition: evidence of shack authenticity through accounts from previous owners.
- Relocation: moved away from the refugee camp to another site on private land.
- Box frame: retention of the foundational method of construction.
- Interiors: new wall cladding for insulation against the box framing.
- Roof: arguably the most important character-defining feature of extant shacks. Often, the roof slope and front gable are the only cottage features identifiable from the right of way.

The classification of a building’s character-defining features is essential to the evaluation of the characteristics of a historic building that should be retained, and those that need not be. Often, the loss or alteration of certain fundamental character-defining features can affect the ability of a building to properly communicate its significance, and thus compromises its integrity.

Integrity

The National Register of Historic Places was greatly expanded with the creation of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, which refined the measures with which properties can be nominated and included in the Register. Today, in order to be considered eligible for the Register, a historic resource must have *integrity*, defined as "the ability of a property to convey its significance."[269] Earthquake cottages, by virtue of the extent of their changes over time, at first glance may not appear to retain many qualities of integrity. However, with closer consideration and explication of the cottages' vernacular qualities, the shacks can, in fact, be understood to communicate many aspects of integrity.[270] In terms of eligibility for the National Register, the Secretary of the Interior has identified seven aspects of integrity:

Location

Location is "the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred…The location of the property is important in recapturing the sense of historic events and persons. Except in rare occasions, the relationship between a property and its historic associations is destroyed if the property is moved." [271] Right away, an issue is evident with the refugee cottages and this aspect of integrity. When viewed through a strict lens, extant cottages appear to no longer maintain their location, and thus have lost their historic associations. Yet, another view does the cottages far more justice: because the dwellings were always intended to be moved, their

[269] Patrick W. Andrus, et al., *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior Cultural Resources Division, 1997), 45.

[270] The rarity of the property type must be taken into consideration when evaluating integrity. If the historic resource is in poor condition but remains one of the last examples of its type and association, a greater leniency in integrity may be appropriate.

[271] Andrus, *National Register Bulletin 15*, 44.

relocation away from the camps does not detract from, but instead adds to their integrity, as it fulfills their fullest potential for their (always intended) use. If, for some reason, an earthquake shelter would be today still located in one of the parks, the full narrative of location-based integrity would not be complete, as it leaves out the essential story of the relocation of the cottages.

Design

Design is "the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of the property. It results from conscious decisions made during the conception and planning of a property…and reflects historic functions and technologies as well as aesthetics."[272] Again, earthquake cottages may present a lack of design integrity as traditionally defined. Granted, the present cottages do not entirely retain original materials, organization of spaces, fenestration patterns, textures, colors, and massing. However, the fact that these things do not remain is also an integral part of their historic narrative. It was a widespread and popular practice to disguise the cottages as much as possible, and alterations in design became an inevitable component of the lifespan of an earthquake cottage. Because there are no cottages today that have fully maintained their original design, the textbook definition must be expanded to include these less tangible but historically important elements of design.

Setting

Setting is "the physical environment of a historic property. Whereas location refers to the specific place where a property was built…setting refers to the character of the place in which the property played its historic role. It involves how, not just where,

[272] Andrus, *National Register Bulletin 15*, 44.

the property is situated."[273] To discount the cottages because they no longer adhere to their original setting would also be a disservice to a major portion of their story. A fundamental, essential, and crucial aspect of the cottages' narrative is their relocation and subsequent rebirth as proprietary homes for working class families. The current settings of the homes manifest this essence of upward mobility for the refugees; they were now able to claim as their own not only a home, but a plot of land as well. Additionally, refugees often took their cottages to locations on the outer reaches of the city, and were able to provide for their families open spaces and superior living conditions than they experienced before the disaster. Without this new setting, a refugee cottage would just be a shack, and would fail to represent the fortunate social component of the refugee cottage experience.[274]

Materials

Materials are "the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form the historic property… A property must retain the key exterior materials dating from its period of its historic significance.[275] Once again, a cursory evaluation of the extant earthquake cottages suggests an apparent loss of material integrity. However, the changing and substitution of materials over time illuminates an important aspect of the historical narrative of the cottages. New materials were carefully chosen by cottage owners to beautify and disguise their cottages once they were moved to their new locations. Additionally, the new materials, especially sidings, made the cottages far more livable,

[273] Andrus, *National Register Bulletin 15*, 45.

[274] A lack of appropriate setting is one reason why the Goldie Shacks at the Presidio are likely not eligible for the National Register.

[275] Andrus, *National Register Bulletin 15*, 45.

and added to their functionality and viability as dwelling places that have been able to persist through the ages. In this way, the earthquake cottages do possesses material integrity.

Workmanship

Workmanship is "the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history. It is the evidence of artisan's labor and skill in constructing or altering a building."[276] It is true that the current refugee cottages do not entirely manifest their original workmanship; the efforts of the union contractors and laborers are largely no longer physically visible. But, the tradition of earthquake cottage workmanship did not end with the men who constructed them. After their relocation, the cottage owners began to upgrade their homes carefully and intentionally. Often, the remodel construction and carpentry work was done by the occupants themselves, and reflects an aspect of integrity in workmanship that remains true to the hands and efforts of the refugees. The energies poured into making a drafty earthquake shack into a comfortable home should not be discounted when considering integrity through workmanship.

Feeling:

Feeling is "a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. It results from the presence of physical features that, taken together, convey the property's historic character."[277] While today's earthquake cottages may not suggest their specific origins as refugee shelters, because of their small envelope, they communicate a distinctly human, comfortable scale and generate undeniable feelings of

[276] Andrus, *National Register Bulletin 15*, 45.

[277] Andrus, *National Register Bulletin 15*, 45.

homeliness that, even from the right of way, are often not experienced with other types of dwellings. Because of their diminutive stature, they stand out on their streetscapes, and to the untrained eye elicit feelings of curiosity; *why is that house so small?* (Figure 31).

Association

Association is "the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. A property retains its association if it is in the place where the event or activity occurred and is sufficiently intact to convey that relationship to an observer."[278] A direct association between the refugee cottages and the 1906 earthquake is unquestionable. Not only is it remarkable that any cottages have survived to the present day, but they remain as reminders of the incomparable disaster, and suggest a resilience of the human spirit in the face of unfathomable conditions. The cottages are made up of so many layers, and each one establishes an association with a particular occupant, and effectively links the past with the present.

Association along with feeling, comprise the most subjective aspects of integrity and can depend largely on personal perceptions. As such, the presence of association and feeling alone are not considered enough to qualify the integrity of a property; other aspects must also be present.[279] In turn, when considered on a more perceptive level, the remaining earthquake cottages prove to exhibit not only these subjective aspects of integrity, but the other, more objective ones as well.

[278] Andrus, *National Register Bulletin 15*, 45.

[279] Andrus, *National Register Bulletin 15*, 45.

Figure 31: 233 Broad Street retains its small envelope and scale. (Photo by author).

Significance, Eligibility, and the National Register of Historic Places

With the establishment of the National Register of Historic Places in 1966 came very specific criteria with which to judge the *significance* of historic resources and their eligibility for inclusion in the Register.[280] These criteria outline the five formats that resources themselves must take in order to be considered eligible for the National Register. These are:

1. Buildings: principally used to shelter any form of human activity.
2. Structures: functional constructions not created for human shelter.
3. Objects: artistic in nature, small and simple in scale, and associated with specific setting or environment.
4. Sites: location that possesses historic value, often associated with a significant event or building, regardless if any physical remains are present.

[280] Thomas King, *Cultural Resource Laws and Practice* (Lanham: Altamira Press, 2013), 83-85.

5. Districts: a concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites united by plan or physical development.[281]

Not only must a potential National Register resource fit into one of the above five categories, and possess most of the seven aspects of integrity, but it must be proven *significant* for at least one of four criteria:

A. Associated with the events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
C. Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.[282]

Known to historic preservationists as the four criteria for eligibility, a historic resource must demonstrate significance through at least one of the four criteria to be considered for inclusion in the Register. Significance, as conceptually applied to the National Register, comes from the determination "whether the characteristics or associations of a particular property" are important within the property's historic context.[283] As examined in this study, the context and framework for the cottages' important place in history runs deep, and elevates them to a status that is patently significant.

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[281] Andrus, *National Register Bulletin 15*, 4-5.

[282] *National Historic Preservation Act of 1966,* Public Law 89-665, 89th Congress (October 15, 1966), Section 36 CFR 60.4.

[283] Andrus, *National Register Bulletin 15*, 45.

Earthquake cottages are buildings that are not associated with any important individual, are not architecturally significant, and cannot yield any archaeological data; it is clear that Criterion A: broad patterns of history, is most applicable to the cottages. Criterion A is founded on the existence of the resource at the time of, and its association with, the important event or broad pattern of history.[284]

A checklist to determine if the property in question is significant for its associative values under Criterion A is provided in the National Register Bulletin #15: *How to Complete the National Register Registration Form:*

1. Determine the origin and nature of the property
2. Identify the historic context with which it is associated
3. Evaluate the property's history to determine whether it is associated with the historic context in any important way.[285]

Much factual information and many period photographs exist to confirm the beginnings of the narrative of the shelters as associated both with a specific event, (the San Francisco earthquake) and a pattern of events (the refugee migration). Furthermore, "the event or trends must be important within the associated context…the property must have an important association with the events of historic trends, and it must retain historic integrity"[286] in order to be considered eligible for the National Register. Even the most surface-level knowledge of San Francisco is permeated with the gravity of the 1906 earthquake, which persists as the most influential event to occur in the history of San Francisco.

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[284] Andrus, *National Register Bulletin 15*, 12. Associations must be documented and confirmed; speculative associations are not eligible.

[285] Andrus, *National Register Bulletin 15*, 12-13.

[286] Andrus, *National Register Bulletin 15*, 7.

The word "our" in the Criterion A definition can mean any group of people, from a neighborhood, all the way to citizens of the United States. In their nature, Criterion A properties are, according to cultural resource historian Tom King, "judged in whatever spatial and social contexts are relevant."[287] Somewhat non-instinctively, properties eligible for the National Register do not need to be significant on a national level--local, regional or national relevance are all acceptable. Depending on the context of the resource, properties may be placed in the Register even if they are only important to their immediate surrounding community.[288] As such, earthquake cottages, while part of a broad pattern of history that affected a greater area, are considered significant on the local level. The cottages were not relocated outside of the Bay Area, and remain to the local population as reminders of the disaster present on the San Francisco landscape.

"Portable" cultural resources are customarily thought to be ineligible for the National Register.[289] While "portable" most often refers to resources like trains, ships, and the like, (which are becoming increasingly accepted as eligible), the idea of a portable historic resource may also applies to the refugee cottages. Designed with motility and portability in mind, the shelters fulfilled their ultimate purpose by being portable for the refugees who needed them. The Register, however, does make some considerations for technically ineligible buildings that still hold great significance, referred to as Criteria Considerations. These Criteria Considerations refer to resources that can be religious

[287] King*, Cultural Resource Laws and Practice*, 87.

[288] Properties that are significant to the nation as a whole are often eligible as a National Historic Landmark, a higher honorary designation.

[289] King, *Cultural Resource Laws and Practice*, 317.

properties, cemeteries, reconstructions, commemorations, properties less than fifty years old, and, most importantly, moved buildings. Criteria Consideration B reads:

> *A building or structure removed from its original location but which is significant primarily for its architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event.*[290]

The relief cottages are not necessarily significant for their architectural value, but do fall under Consideration B when understood as important surviving structures of a significant event. The National Register Bulletin continues Criteria Consideration B with several points:

- *Significance is embodied in locations and settings as well as in the properties themselves. Moving a property destroys the relationships between the property and its surroundings and destroys associations with historic events and persons.*[291]
- *A moved property significant under Criteria A or B must be demonstrated to be the surviving property most importantly associated with a particular historic event or an important aspect of a historic person's life...meaning that it must be the single surviving property that is most closely associated with the event or with the part of the person's life for which he or she is significant.*
- *Moved properties must still have an orientation, setting, and general environment that are comparable to those of the historic location and that are compatible with the property's significance.*
- *A property designed to move or a property frequently moved during its historic use must be located in a historically appropriate setting in order to qualify, retaining its integrity of setting, design, feeling, and association. Such properties include automobiles, railroad cars, and ships.*[292]

Two main types of National Register nominations exist: nominations for individual sites and nominations for districts. A site normally includes one major component, usually a building, which stands on its own and communicates its significance separately from its surroundings. A district, "possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or

[290] Andrus, *National Register Bulletin 15*, 25.

[291] Andrus, *National Register Bulletin 15*, 29.

[292] Andrus, *National Register Bulletin 15*, 30.

continuity of sites, buildings, structures or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development."[293] National Register Historic Districts traditionally apply to places like campuses, business districts, farms, neighborhoods, and transportation networks, all encompassing a "number of resources that are relatively equal in importance."[294] Yet, not all historic districts necessarily need to be connected geographically:

> *A district may also contain individual resources that although linked by association or function were separated geographically during the period of significance…A district may contain discontiguous elements only where the historic relationship of a group of resources does not depend on visual continuity and physical proximity.*[295]

The refugee cottages are prefect for a discontiguous district. Because their relocation is an essential component to their history, and are still inextricably and undeniably linked by their similar origins and associations with the earthquake and the refugee experience, a discontiguous district would suit the remaining cottages perfectly. Often, properties within a proposed National Register district are not independently significant enough to qualify as eligible for the Register on their own. It is their collective existence that makes the group significant and eligible for the National Register as a district. As individual dwellings, the earthquake cottages likely do not possess enough significance to qualify as separate nationally significant properties, but grouped together would form an excellent discontiguous district.[296]

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[293] *National Register Bulletin 16a: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior Cultural Resources Division, 1997), 15.

[294] *National Register Bulletin 16a*, 15.

[295] Andrus, *National Register Bulletin 15*, 6.

[296] This is distinct from a National Register multiple property designation because resources included in a multiple property nomination generally need to be considered individually significant.

The Society for the Preservation and Appreciation of San Francisco's 1906 Earthquake Shacks

The National Register of Historic Places is not the only way to commemorate a significant historic property. Most states and many municipalities compile their own registers of historic places in order to recognize the resources that are locally significant to their community, but may not be significant enough to qualify for the National Register. Local registers often include many historic resources that are highly specific to their immediate communities, and the San Francisco Register is no different. Article 10, Section 1004 of the San Francisco Planning Code delineates the establishment of a "official list of properties that embody the architecture, history, and cultural heritage of the City and County."[297] Property owners in San Francisco are able to submit an application to initiate the designation of their property as a local landmark, which then must be approved by the Landmarks Board before it can be included in the local register. The National Register criteria have been adopted by the San Francisco Landmarks Board, but applied to properties significant on a local level only.[298]

In 1983, a San Franciscan named Jane Cryan began to research the provenance of her unusually small home in the Sunset District at 1227 24th Avenue. When she discovered that she lived in a house composed of three refugee cottages, Cryan soon became most prolific earthquake cottage advocate to date. Within the year, her landlord informed Cryan that he would be placing the cottage up for sale, and she immediately began the process to nominate her cottage, as a representative of all the surviving

[297] *San Francisco Preservation Bulletin No. 5: Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures*, (Planning Department, City and County of San Francisco, 2001), 1.

[298] *San Francisco Preservation Bulletin No. 5*, 6.

cottages, as a local San Francisco landmark.[299] She presented her home for designation as a true "people's landmark," as a meaningful structure inhabited by the city's poorest citizens. The Landmark Board and the Planning Commission unanimously approved the application, and 1227 24th Avenue became Local Landmark #171.

The narrative of the cottages in the 1980s and 1990s did not end with the local designation. Hidden from view and thought since the 1910s, this was the first time in nearly 70 years that they returned to the public consciousness. The local landmark status of one cottage quickly snowballed into a frenzy of research and survey, as shacks and shack stories began to emerge from backyards and long forgotten memories.[300]

Cryan quickly formed her own cottage advocacy nonprofit, "The Society for the Appreciation and Preservation of San Francisco's 1906 Earthquake Shacks." The Society was soon committed to identifying as many extant cottages as possible, and to educate owners about the precious resource on their hands. Most importantly, the Society worked assiduously to save as many cottages as possible. With rapidly increasing real estate values, earthquake cottages were rapidly being proposed for demolition, and Cryan and the Society crusaded to organize neighbors, property owners, buyers, and landowners to orchestrate a surprising amount of cottage moves and saves.[301] Even *The New York Times* took notice and ran a piece about Jane Cryan and her unusual little homes.[302]

One of these victories stands out above all the rest, and serves as a successful example of cooperation between refugee cottage stakeholders large and small. A dwelling

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[299] Cryan, *Hope Chest,* 63.

[300] Cryan, *Hope Chest,* 63-65.

[301] Records of the Society for the Preservation and Appreciation of San Francisco Refugee Shacks, 1983-1999, Box 1, Record Group SFH 9, San Francisco History Center, Public Library Main Branch.

[302] Carole Rafferty, "Saving Old Shacks in San Francisco," *The New York Times*, February 2, 1984.

comprised of two earthquake cottages on 34th Avenue in the Richmond District had already been awarded a demolition permit, to make way for a more profitable multifamily building, when Cryan stepped in and began to investigate the property. She found that the owners and inhabitants of the cottages, who Goldie and Ray Raczkowsky moved in in 1974, were only the third occupants of the home, and that the original owners had informed them that the cottages came from nearby Camp Richmond.[303]

The "Goldie shacks" became Cryan's most complicated save (Figure 32). The two cottages, one Type A and one Type B, retained a remarkable amount of original fabric. However, the dwellings themselves were in extremely poor condition, nearly uninhabitable, and were on the verge of condemnation by the city. Cryan was able to generate so much press, visibility, and support for the Goldie Shacks that her proposal to save them was expedited before the Landmarks Board, Planning Commission, and City Council, and even gained the participation of the United States Army. The Post Commander of the Presidio of San Francisco, a native to the city and a history enthusiast, offered Cryan a site for the Goldie Shacks on the Presidio grounds. Cryan and the Society volunteers engineered a deal in which the property owner of the Goldie Shacks would donate them to the U.S. Army, pending the Army's assistance in their relocation. In January of 1985, members of Company D, 864th Engineer Battalion arrived at 485 34th Avenue to remove the Goldie Shacks, which conveniently also served as a training exercise for the company.

[303] Archives of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Cryan Earthquake "Goldie Shacks" Collection, Record Group 2742, Presidio of San Francisco.

Figure 32: The Goldie Shacks are uncovered by Army soldiers (Image: Golden Gate National Recreation Area Archives).

Initially, the Army engineers were puzzled about the most effective method to move the cottages. In a remarkable return of events, Cryan, on site, showed the Captain in charge several images of the same task being performed in 1907, who proclaimed, "Well I'll be damned. Of course that's the way to do it." So, with clues from the first shack exodus, the cottages were successfully relocated to the Presidio.[304] There, the Goldie Shacks were subject to what Cryan refers to as "mending," but what modern preservationists would consider to be a restoration. Several original six-light windows, doors, and large swaths of siding were recovered from the Goldie site, some in condition to be restored and reused, others relegated to serve as models for reconstructions and conserved in the Presidio's museum (Figure 33). Extraordinarily, the interior green paint and some of the newspapers used to cover inside walls to keep out the damp fog are still

[304] Archives of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Cryan Earthquake "Goldie Shacks" Collection, Record Group 2742, Presidio of San Francisco.

present with the Goldie Shacks; these elements were preserved and can still be seen with a visit to the restored cottages today (Figure 34). Now under National Park Service jurisdiction, one Goldie Shack has been repurposed into a small interpretive center, and the other has been mock-furnished with period interior furnishings (Figure 35).

Figure 33: The Goldie Shacks on the Presidio grounds. Park Ranger Jose Roldan leads interpretation. (Photo by author)

Figure 34: Newspaper wall lining is still visible in the Goldie Shacks. (Photo by author)

Figure 35: Period and replica furnishings suggest the realities of refugee life.

Refugee Cottages and The San Francisco Planning Department

Cryan disbanded the Society for the Preservation and Appreciation of San Francisco's 1906 Earthquake Shacks in the late 1990s, and they once again largely disappeared from view. It was not until the most recent San Francisco real estate boom of the last decade that the cottages once again drew significant attention, but this time it was not with the public, but with the San Francisco Planning Department. The City's historic preservation planning staff began to notice a number of requests for demolition permits for unusually small houses. Because these houses, like so many in San Francisco, were over fifty years old, a permit request automatically triggered a Historic Resource Inventory form, a brief analysis of the history, integrity, and significance of the property in question.[305] The Department systematically contracts out these inventory forms to local professional historic preservationists, certified according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. These professionals performed the necessary research and evaluated the current cottages in question according to the established preservation metrics. They determined that because the resource had been moved from its original location, altered beyond reasonable recognition, and the materials had changed considerably, it did not qualify as a historic resource.[306] The inventory forms they produced clearly state their conclusions--the structures no longer retain any integrity and are appropriate for demolition.

Thankfully, this determination was not accepted by the Department's preservation planning staff. On the contrary, Jane Cryan's research and her preliminary survey list of

[305] This trigger is caused by the California Environmental Quality Act. See San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 16.

[306] State of California Department of Parks and Recreation, *Building, Structure, and Object Inventory Record Form*, for 1218-1224 46th Avenue and 1231 47th Avenue, 1994.

existing refugee cottages were uncovered and integrated into the official Property Information Map. Today, many authenticated earthquake cottages are now considered Class A Historical Resources, eligible for the National, California, or local registers, under the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act. Category A resources are subject to the highest criteria of scrutiny when under consideration for alteration or demolition permits, and any potential changes made to the property must not adversely affect their character-defining features or aspects of integrity.[307]

However, because the cottages have such unconventional character-defining features, it is possible to devise creative treatment strategies to protect them from demolition. By now, it is clear that the fact that the cottages have all been relocated is an essential component to their historical narrative. As such, if a current cottage is in danger of demolition, it is altogether appropriate to propose relocating it again in order to save the dwelling. Another move of a cottage would not detract from its character-defining features; because it has been already moved and because that move is important to its story, moving it again would simply continue the narrative. In the same vein, if a current cottage owner is interested in changing or adding to their home, these can also be acceptable modifications because one of the character-defining features of the cottages *is* that each owner has changed and crafted them into a personal dwelling space. This lends to a great deal of room for resourceful and imaginative solutions if a cottage is in danger of demolition.

A Preservation Sea Change (Across the Sea)

The City of San Francisco's recognition of earthquake cottages as a worthy historic resource exemplifies a burgeoning fundamental shift in the way historic

[307] *San Francisco Preservation Bulletin No. 5*, 3-5.

preservation evaluates its principles like integrity. While expanding definitions of integrity and authenticity are new to American preservation theory, cultural historians and conservationists elsewhere in the world incorporate traditional aspects like design, materials, and workmanship, while also considering intangible factors like function, tradition, language, spirit, and feeling when evaluating integrity.[308] Pamela Jerome, in the *Association for Preservation Technology* journal, notes that foreign preservation standards have transcended "…that of the monumental. This shift has substantially broadened the definitions of cultural heritage to incorporate a wide range of tangible and intangible expressions of authenticity."[309] International preservation standards recognize "the legitimacy of layered authenticity, [and] evoke successive adaptations of historic places over time."[310] Historic preservation in the United States is only beginning to confront these issues of integrity and authenticity that preservation theories from other nations have already challenged and expanded upon. Jerome concludes with the pronouncement that "authenticity [according to international standards] is a concept much larger than material integrity."[311]

Raging Against the (Preservation) Machine

To push back against the traditional standards of integrity and authenticity so deeply engrained in American preservation theory is not an easy task. Institutions like the National Register of Historic Places have established the foundations and principles of

[308] Pamela Jerome, "An Introduction to Authenticity in Preservation," *Association for Preservation Technology Bulletin* 39, no. 2/3 (2008): 3.

[309] Jerome, "An Introduction to Authenticity," 4.

[310] Jerome, "An Introduction to Authenticity," 4.

[311] Jerome, "An Introduction to Authenticity," 4.

preservation; to challenge them will take a multitude of progressive, like-minded preservationists with solid examples of the way traditional interpretations of integrity and eligibility fail unconventional historic resources.

Judith Wellman, in an article in *The Public Historian*, contests the established characterizations of integrity as they relate to her research uncovering and authenticating historic sites along the Underground Railroad. Much like the earthquake cottages, the Underground Railroad sites have been physically changed since their period of significance, and no longer retain much of their original materials, workmanship, or design. Because many current preservation models continue to focus on the treatment of historic resources expressed primarily through their architectural components and design quality, important historic places like refugee cottages and those associated with the Underground Railroad tend to fall through the cracks, because they do not always fit neatly into the guidelines drawn by traditional preservation standards.[312]

This modern preservation shortcoming becomes even more difficult when the resources are considered common or vernacular:

> *Rarely imposing to begin with, most of these buildings have been continuously occupied and changed. Owners frequently view such changes as a way to save the building my making it usable for new generations.*[313]

As understood with the refugee cottages, these changes make it difficult to divine which transformations are significant and from which era they arose. However, if American historic preservation is able to see beyond the myopic seven aspects of integrity, and perhaps begin to instead conceptualize integrity as encompassing a broad

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[312] Judith Wellman, "The Underground Railroad and The National Register of Historic Places: Historical Importance vs. Architectural Integrity," *The Public Historian* 24, no. 1 (Winter 2002), 23.

[313] Wellman, "The Underground Railroad," 24.

spectrum of attributes and values, it can be understood that that all buildings change, and those changes can be incorporated into to their historical narratives in an additive way.[314] Special resources like Underground Railroad sites and earthquake refugee cottages deserve attention equal to their high-style, high-integrity counterparts. As Wellman notes, "In terms of integrity, we need to balance our desire for physical integrity with our pressing need to preserve material culture resources that document and help us interpret important parts of our history,"[315] even though this history may not manifest itself in conventional ways.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act, whose fundamental philosophies have gone unchanged since its inception. As time goes on, and definitions of what constitutes a historic resource continue to expand, the regulations that guide the field of preservation must expand with them. The National Register and its Keeper are the one program charged with the significant task of maintaining a roster of sites important to Americans at local, regional, and national levels, and as such, have a great deal of influence on what is perceived to be historically significant to our shared heritage.[316] If only resources with traditional physical integrity are considered eligible for the National Register, historic properties with unconventional displays of integrity, like the refugee cottages, will be undervalued and left unrecognized. To ensure the inclusive and affirmative future of the field of historic preservation, a departure is necessary from the viewpoint that buildings are merely things constructed in

[314] Wellman, "The Underground Railroad," 25.

[315] Wellman, "The Underground Railroad," 29.

[316] Wellman, "The Underground Railroad," 29.

the past, and move toward their recognition as dynamic products and representations of people and their experiences throughout history.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Andrew Jackson Downing, a father of American landscape architecture, described his primary architectural theory as: "the first object of a dwelling is to afford shelter to man, the first principle belonging to architecture grows out of this primary necessity, and it is called the principle of fitness, or *usefulness*."[317] As an enthusiast of the simple cottage house form, Downing divined the vast practicality and usefulness of dwellings of the simplest forms, which often germinated from the urgent and most basic need for people to have a roof over their heads. I feel certain that Downing would have appreciated the refugee cottages and their journey from the humblest origins to their persistent success in the present day. Not only have the tiny dwellings managed to survive for so many years, they have time and again demonstrated their usefulness to many generations of inhabitants.

Yet, to those with a less intently focused vision of historic preservation, preserving such a small cottage in San Francisco makes little sense. The land that the cottages sit on today is worth, in some cases, over 100 times more than the structure itself. Preserving an earthquake cottage is simply bad for the bottom line, no matter how historic or charming they may be. My response to this way of thinking is twofold.

First, the current cottages not only serve as one of the last physical vestiges of the 1906 earthquake, a natural disaster on an historic scale, but they also function as a reminder of the determination of the human spirit in the face of tragedy, and as such are valuable for far more than their historic qualities (though those are important, too). The

[317] Andrew Jackson Downing, *Cottage Residences, or, A Series of Designs for Cottages and Cottage Villas* (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1847).

cottages have defied the passage of time to become enduring expressions of resourcefulness and resiliency, not only at the hands of earthquake refugees, but for every subsequent occupant the cottages have had over their lifespan. The earthquake cottages inform today's San Franciscans and the modern citizens of the world about people, places, times, and moments, and manifest stories and narratives through their physical form and the changes they have undergone over the course of time.

Second, the earthquake cottages are not finished teaching their lessons. The ingenuity with which cottage inhabitants have formed and molded these simple structures over time to meet their changing needs represents a spirit of reuse and resourcefulness that should inform our attitudes toward all existing buildings. Though it may seem obvious to the preservationist, the relief cottages widely prove that a building need not be large and new to be useful and viable. The continued occupancy of the cottages over eleven decades demonstrates that is still possible to consolidate increasingly material modern lives much in the same way the earthquake refugees were forced to in 1906. Earthquake cottages are the original tiny houses, a "movement" that has become popular among people who wish to intentionally simplify their lives by residing in exceptionally small houses. This tiny house concept is firmly grounded in history, and the refugee cottages link that history with the resurgence of these small-living ideas of the present day.

It is no secret that all buildings change. If buildings never changed, if they did not adapt to fit the needs of the people who occupy them, they would lose their usefulness and likely be discarded. Yet, as demonstrated by the vernacular perspective, these changes should not always be considered a bad thing. The unique ways and avenues in which the earthquake cottages changed over time make them exceptional examples of

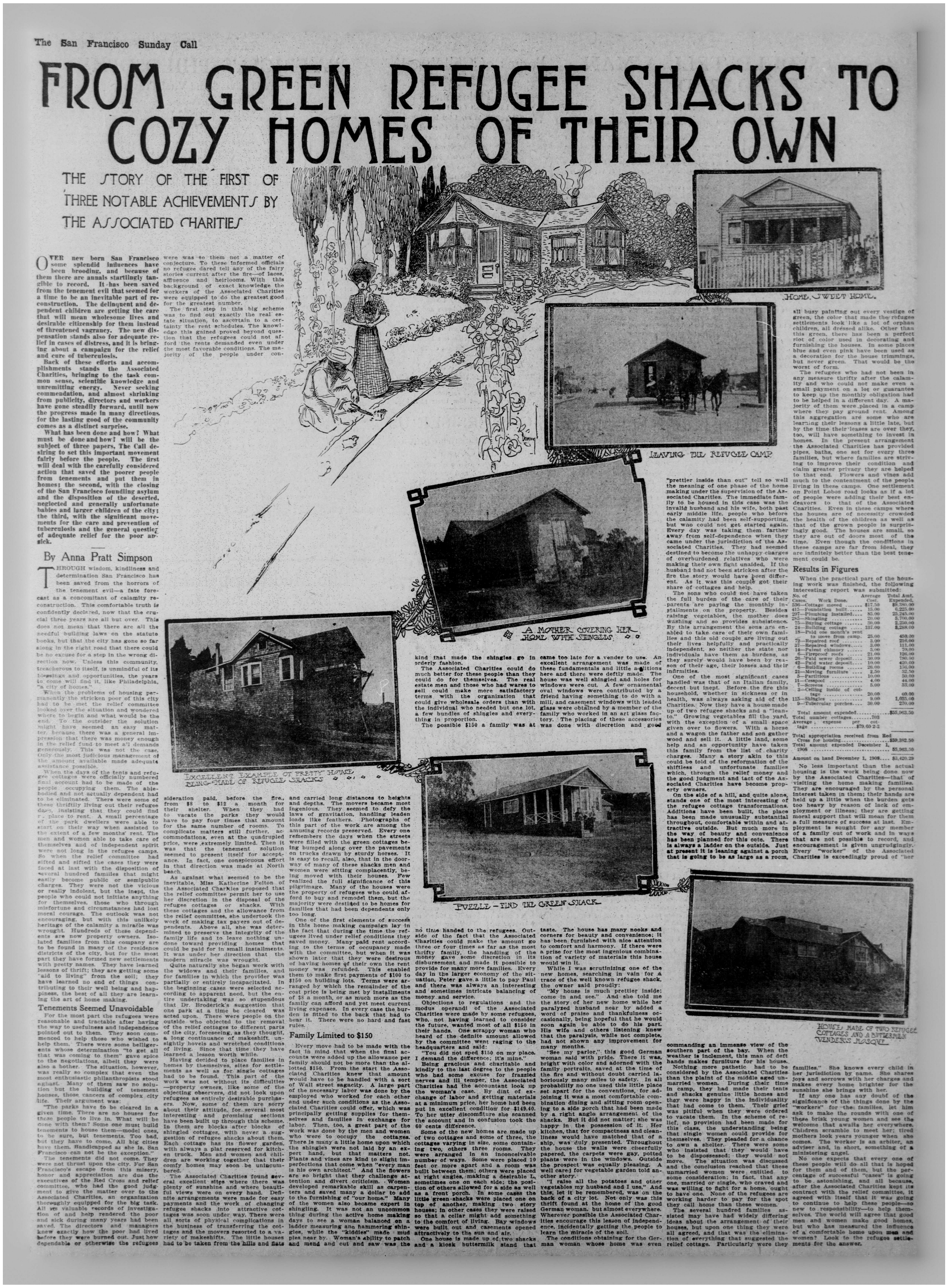
vernacular architecture. However, it is these same qualities that also make these structures a conundrum when it comes to modern conceptions of historic preservation.

This conundrum presents itself as a challenge to the field of preservation and its directives for the evaluation of historic resources. Currently, a historic property is not considered "eligible" for the National Register of Historic Places unless it is able to properly express its significance and integrity according to carefully-crafted criteria. If resources, like the earthquake cottages, are unable to adhere to these criteria due to dramatic changes over time, then they are simply considered not significant. However, this thesis has contended that such resources should, in fact, be maintained, presented as distinct and extraordinary in their own right, and considered eligible for acknowledgement and preservation alongside their traditional counterparts.

Finally, the earthquake cottages deserve preservation in the face of perplexingly rising housing and living costs in San Francisco. Very much like the earthquake survivors, residents of San Francisco today deal with rapidly inflating housing prices, and risk the loss of their livelihood to factors entirely outside of their control. Because the cottages have low square footage and are often located in the outlying neighborhoods of the city, they become (relatively) manageable places to live and buy, and still embody the spirit of accessibility of homeownership that initially gave them so much meaning. The persistence of the cottages over 110 years of a constantly-changing landscape San Francisco can be summarized thusly: they forge a connection between the present day and the most important event in San Francisco history; they prove that they can still be useful, enjoyable, and viable places to live; and the fact that so many people have cared about them over the course of generations signals a desire to cultivate homes and habitats that have a deeper, more meaningful story than just four walls and a roof.

APPENDIX A

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES



The San Francisco Sunday Call

FROM GREEN REFUGEE SHACKS TO COZY HOMES OF THEIR OWN

THE STORY OF THE FIRST OF THREE NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS BY THE ASSOCIATED CHARITIES

OVER new born San Francisco some splendid influences have been brooding, and because of them there are annals startlingly tangible to record. It has been saved from the tenement evil that seemed for a time to be an inevitable part of reconstruction. The delinquent and dependent children are getting the care that will mean wholesome lives and desirable citizenship for them instead of threatened vagrancy. The new dispensation stands also for adequate relief in cases of distress, and it is bringing about a campaign for the relief and cure of tuberculosis.

Back of these efforts and accomplishments stands the Associated Charities, bringing to the task common sense, scientific knowledge and unremitting energy. Never seeking commendation, and almost shrinking from publicity, directors and workers have gone steadily forward, until now the progress made in many directions for the lasting good of the community comes as a distinct surprise.

What has been done and how? What must be done and how? will be the subject of three papers, The Call desiring to set this important movement fairly before the people. The first will deal with the carefully considered action that saved the poorer people from tenements and put them in homes; the second, with the closing of the San Francisco foundling asylum and the disposition of the deserted, neglected and generally unfortunate babies and larger children of the city; the third, with the significant movements for the care and prevention of tuberculosis and the general question of adequate relief for the poor and sick.

were was to them not a matter of conjecture. To these informed officials no refugee dared tell any of the fairy stories current after the fire—of laces, affluence and heirlooms. With this background of exact knowledge the workers of the Associated Charities were equipped to do the greatest good for the greatest number.

The first step in this big scheme was to find out exactly the real estate situation, to ascertain to a certainty the rent schedules. The knowledge this gained proved beyond question that the refugees could not afford the rents demanded even under the most favorable conditions. The majority of the people under con-

By Anna Pratt Simpson

THROUGH wisdom, kindliness and determination San Francisco has been saved from the horrors of the tenement evil—a fate forecast as a concomitant of calamity reconstruction. This comfortable truth is confidently declared, now that the crucial three years are all but over. This does not mean that there are all the needful building laws on the statute

HOME, SWEET HOME.

LEAVING THE REFUGEE CAMP

A MOTHER COVERING HER HOME WITH SHINGLES

EXCELLENT EXAMPLE OF PRETTY HOUSE BEING MADE OF REFUGEE SHACKS

PUZZLE—FIND THE GREEN SHACK.

HOUSE MADE OF TWO REFUGEE COTTAGES AND A BUTTERMILK VENDER'S KIOSK

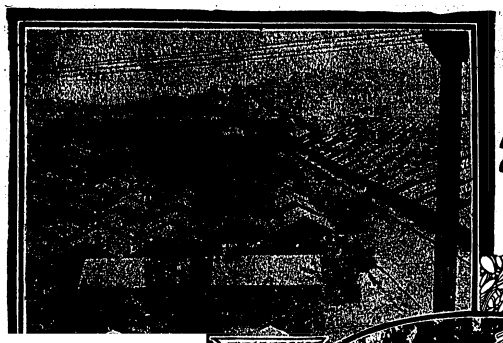
Tenements Seemed Unavoidable

Family Limited to $150

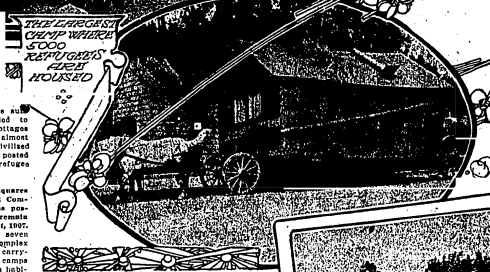
Results in Figures

Anna Simpson Pratt, "From Green Refugee Shacks to Cozy Homes of their Own," *The San Francisco Call,* 9 May 1909.

MOVING 20,000 Refugees



EXECUTIVE OFFICER FREDERICK ISSUING ORDERS TO A FIRE COMMANDER DURING INSPECTION.



HOW THE REFUGEES' HOME IS MOVED.

WHOLESALE MOVING OPERATIONS IN JEFFERSON SQUARE.

FIGHTING TO MOVE A WHOLE ROW OF HOUSES AT ONCE.

By LOUIS J. STELLMANN.

NEARLY twenty thousand fire sufferers have been commanded to pick up their little green cottages and walk by August 17th. In almost every language known to civilized man, the following notice is posted throughout the various refugee camps of San Francisco:

NOTICE.

Occupants of refugee cottages in public squares are hereby notified that by order of the Park Commissioners all refugees must move as soon as possible, and that no cottage will be allowed to remain in the city parks after the seventeenth of August, 1907.

When Hercules undertook to perform the seven labors he had scarcely a heavier or more complex duty to perform than the Relief Commission is carrying out to-day. In the San Francisco refugee camps there are 17,504 people, living in 8579 tiny green habitations spread over every public square in town. Where are they going to go? this army of poor, who have lived on the city's bounty ever since the fire destroyed their homes. It is not an unanswerable question, but it is one of the biggest and hardest any body of men has ever been called upon to solve. An army of men, women and children, representing that class of the city's populace perhaps the least able to take care of itself, of all the many thousands whom the fire rendered homeless. Even the most sanguine hopes of the Relief Commission do not attain to the accomplishment of their task on schedule time, but it is hoped that by August 17th not more than a thousand cottages will remain on city property, and thoke it is planned to remove as rapidly as conditions will permit.

For several months there has been a steady exodus from the city's refugee camps in all directions, and the total population has decreased at the rate of about 150 per day. As high as forty-two cottages have been moved in twelve hours, and the movement, which was very slow at the start, has recently become cumulative to a marked degree. Everywhere one goes, from the Ferry to the Cliff House, one sees teams laden with little green cottages, moving hither and thither, without any concerted destination. Sometimes the windows are removed and the sides of the skeleton habitation re-enforced with cross rleats; sometimes they look as if they had been picked up by some giant hand and set upon the wagon body while the family was cooking dinner, because the inhabitants are inside of them, the furniture is undisturbed, and everything is going on just as it has always done—except that the house is traveling. It is a strange sight to see a procession of these refugee cottages jolting down fashionable Van Ness avenue or busy Fillmore street, faces peering from the windows, and men, women and children going about their household tasks as if their little home was securely perched upon a cement foundation and surrounded by a garden and a fence.

Oddly enough, the aim of the refugee in most instances seems to be to change his environment as completely as possible. From the crowded laboring districts south of Market street, they are streaming oceanward to the wide spaces; the bigness of the all-out-doors and the unrammeled greenness of nature; from the Richmond district and other suburban camps where the refugee dwellers have long enjoyed those semi-rural delights, they are marching cityward and taking up their new abodes amid the rush and bustle of the city's heart. In many places one sees refugee houses perched on the top of debris in the middle of some ruin which the fire left; on top of bricks and mortar and the ruins, possessions that were theirs before the fire laid them low. This is done, in many instances, to protect titles clouded by the destruction of deeds and records, in others because temporary ground tenure can be had free or for next to nothing. The inhabitants can thus enjoy all the delights of central location until building operations drive them forth again. Hillcrest and Vista Grande, two realty tracts beyond Ingleside, already represent the nuclei of thriving communities recruited from the refugee camps. Here, on the slopes descending toward the sea, are already several hundred former refugee homes. Some of them are very ornate. According to the taste, means and enterprise of the owners, they are adorned with gables, turrets, bay windows, verandas, and every variety of architectural ornamentation. Some remain green as before, others hide their verdant hue beneath an extra cuticle of shingles, and still others blaze resplendant in new coats of different colored paint.

Most of the pioneers in this new residence section are enjoying their first ownership of a home. Most of the little children, who play about in the sandy loam, are having their fill of fresh air and sunshine and room to move around for the first time. Many white faced, thin haired women are learning what it is to have flowers that are not confined to tomato cans and soap boxes. Their gardens are blooming, and their hearts and souls and bodies are unfolding in an atmosphere of larger things. It is a unique little community, this pioneer city of former refugees. There are all sorts of funny little stores and other places of business in refugee cottages unadorned, in abandoned street cars and in more pretentious structures, all of which are thriving and pushing the commercial interests of a place where, ere long, there will be a Chamber of Commerce and other essentials of the urban mart. About 40 per cent of the refugees are intelligent, reasonable, law-abiding souls, gratefully appreciative of the earnest work that has been done to give them shelter and the conveniences of home, under conditions stupendously trying. With these the relief committee will have no trouble, but the remaining 10 per cent will give them more than enough. Included among them are the vicious and the ignorant, which represent the dregs of every city's population. They are slothful for the most part, pessimistically suspicious of everybody and everything, and determined not to comply with the orders of the Park Commission, largely because they are orders. Because they would ordinarily object to the change of location, but because they are habitually contrary. In these, the Relief Board is going to find its Augean stables—has found them, in fact, ever since the refugee movement began. The history of the refugee movement has never been told in detail. It represents one of the most remarkable achievements in the history of the world. The fire left some twenty thousand practically helpless people without homes. The only available places where such homes could be provided were the city's smaller parks and public squares, of which, fortunately, San Francisco had a goodly number.

Competent men were appointed as heads of the various departments of relief. The Park Commissioners permitted the use of property under their jurisdiction for one year, from August 17, 1906, and before September 1st 4093 cottages had been erected. These were built at a cost of about $100 for the two-room houses and $150 for the three-room houses, each holding from three to four people.

The first lot of cottages was immediately filled with fire sufferers, and it was found necessary to erect 1486 more during the winter which followed. These were divided into different camps, according to location, and placed under strict military rule.

A camp commander was appointed to look after the interests of each camp, and under him were a number of subordinates, each with a definite and well-defined duty, which he was required to carry out with strict regard to discipline. Great stress was laid upon the sanitary equipment of camps, and this from time to time was so improved that when Brigadier-General Davis made an examination of the camps not long ago he declared the standard very, very high.

Added to this is the report of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, which states that the health of juvenile refugees is much better now than before the fire, and the Board of Health finds that the refugees, as a class, enjoy better health than the balance of the city's population.

One of the first precautions taken, aside from the sanitary question, was the organization of efficient fire brigades in each camp. This was done under the supervision of experienced fire fighters, with the result that several blazes, which might have destroyed thousands of cottages and many human lives, were so quickly controlled that practically no loss resulted. Despite the fact that refugee habitations are so close together in most of the camps that an ordinary man can span the distance with outstretched arms, no disastrous fires or epidemics have occurred. One fire, which took place in the Richmond camp, however, resulted in a further protection, which no doubt was a valuable one. Rope clothes lines, in this instance, so completely cut off the dwelling that was burning from fire-fighting apparatus that before the flames could be controlled a woman had been burned to death. Immediate orders were, therefore, issued that all interlining clothes lines be forthwith removed. Wire lines were substituted, placed in such a manner that they did not obstruct ingress and an increase in both cleanliness and safety was scored.

Many of the refugee cottages are equipped with illuminating and fuel gas, 25 cents a month for the former and 50 cents for the latter being charged. Two and four burner gas stoves, at cost, were also supplied by the Relief Committee.

Among other conveniences furnished refugees are kindergartens for the children, sterilized water, flush latrines, steel garbage cans, carefully kept board walks, which are swept daily, medical attention, fuel boxes and hot and cold water for laundry and bath, the latter containing many porcelain-lined tubs.

One of the chief "bones of contention" between the refugees and the Relief Committee has been the collection of what the former called "rent" and the latter called "installments." This is in the form of monthly collections of $4 for a three-room house and $4 for a two-room cottage. It is neither rent nor installment, because it is all returned to the person who pays it as soon as he files affidavit to the effect that he has secured, by lease or purchase, a piece of land in this city, where he proposes to move his little green house. When this is done all the money that he has paid the Relief Committee's collectors is returned to him and he is presented with his cottage free as well. The scheme is nothing more than paternalism in the form of a compulsory savings bank and was inaugurated for the purpose of insuring refugees sufficient funds to re-establish themselves in other locations when their tenure limit on the city's property expires.

A great cry of protest arose against this exaction of "rental" payment, as the refugees called it, when the plan was first put into operation. Such strong pressure was brought to bear on the Supervisors that an ordinance was passed declaring the collection of this money illegal. The ordinance, however, did not become operative. Executive Officer Broderick went at once to Mayor Schmitz and, after a stormy interview, compelled the former municipal chief executive to admit that the collection plan was not

some basing their contention on the fact that t
Francis Hotel still remains upon city property, c
pleading illness or destitution, which is the
result of their failure to comply with the colle
demands of the Relief Committee.

It is the present intention of the committee
Park Commission to make all necessary excep
where a reasonable excuse for failure to remo
the proper time is presented. Those who are
physically too feeble to take up a new location
probably be transferred to the Ingleside indigen
invalid camp. Those who are openly obstinate
doubtless be forcibly evicted. At any rate,
will be great times about the middle of August
the city will have a hard struggle to reclaim its
lic property, for the use of which it was origi
intended.

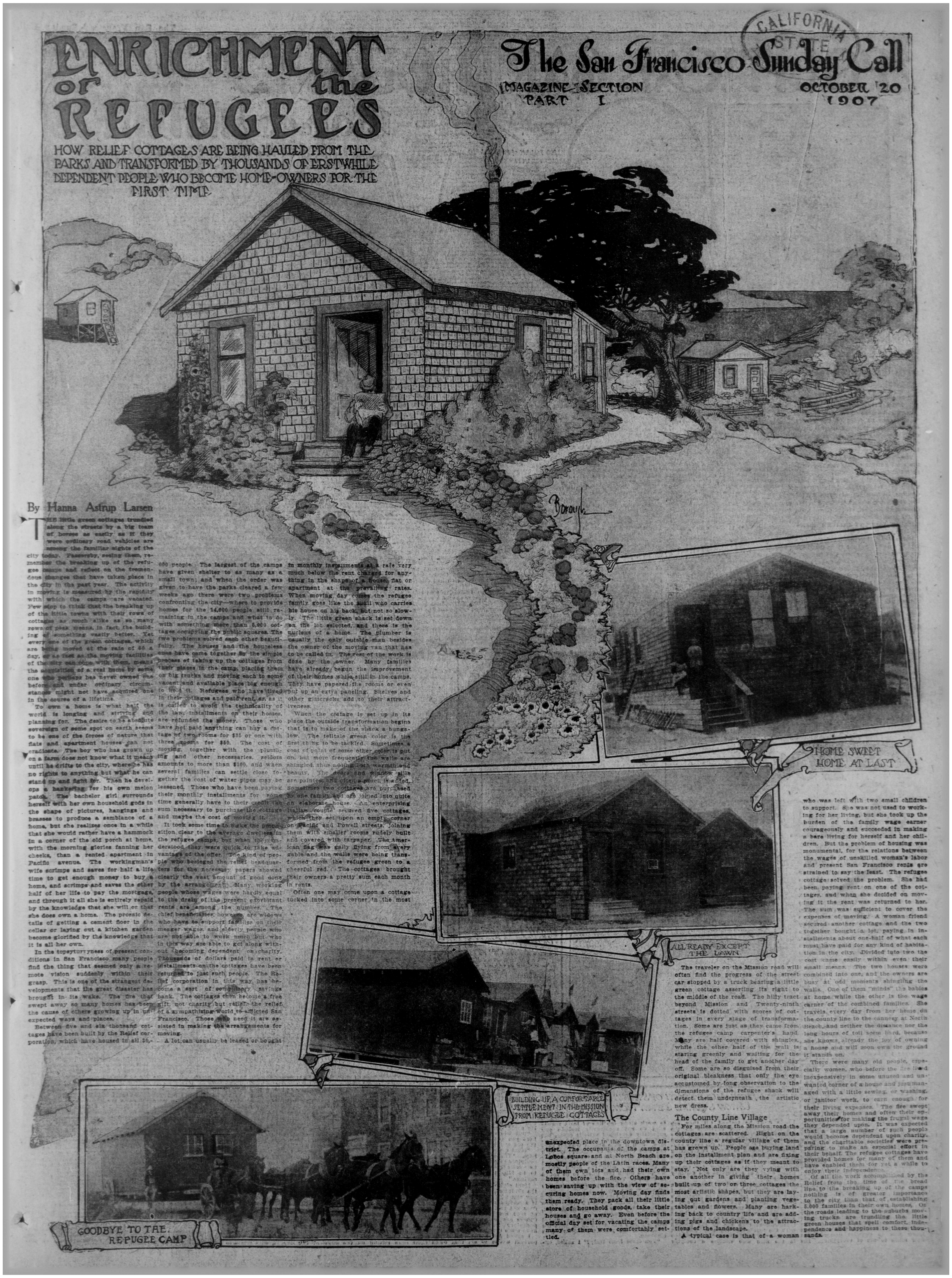
The city has had a hard time taking care o
many thousand homeless ones, and the indica
are it may have even a harder time to quit doing

A ROMAN PROBLEM

THE police on duty in the Plazza Col
(the Trafalgar square of Rome)
astonished a few nights ago, says
London Leader, to see it invaded
shabby little procession consisting
man, his wife, their four children,
the domestic pets, and a porter pushing a barrow
which were piled the scanty effects of a small fa
Arrived at the bandstand, the unloading of the ba
was begun, when the inspector on duty put a
to the proceedings with a stern inquiry as to wh
all meant.

"It means this," said the head of the family,
have been turned out of our miserable room by

Louis J. Stellman, "Moving 20,000 Refugees," *The San Francisco Chronicle*, 11 August, 1907.



ENRICHMENT of the REFUGEES

The San Francisco Sunday Call

MAGAZINE SECTION PART I

OCTOBER 20 1907

HOW RELIEF COTTAGES ARE BEING HAULED FROM THE PARKS AND TRANSFORMED BY THOUSANDS OF ERSTWHILE DEPENDENT PEOPLE WHO BECOME HOME-OWNERS FOR THE FIRST TIME

By Hanna Astrup Larsen

THE little green cottages trundled along the streets by a big team of horses as easily as if they were ordinary road vehicles are among the familiar sights of the city today. Passersby, seeing them, remember the breaking up of the refugee camps and reflect on the tremendous changes that have taken place in the city in the past year. The activity in moving is measured by the rapidity with which the camps are vacated. Few stop to think that the breaking up of the little towns with their rows of cottages as much alike as so many rows of peas means, in fact, the building of something vastly better. Yet every one of the green cottages, which are being moved at the rate of 56 a day, or as fast as the moving facilities of the city can cope with them, means the acquisition of a real home by some one who perhaps has never owned one before and under ordinary circumstances might not have acquired one in the course of a lifetime.

To own a home is what half the world is longing and striving and planning for. The desire to be absolute sovereign of some spot on earth seems to be one of the forces of nature that flats and apartment houses can not eradicate. The boy who has grown up on a farm does not know what it means until he drifts to the city, where he has no rights to anything but what he can stand up and fight for. Then he develops a hankering for his own melon patch. The bachelor girl surrounds herself with her own household gods in the shape of pictures, hangings and brasses to produce a semblance of a home, but she realizes once in a while that she would rather have a hammock in a corner of the old porch at home, with the morning glories fanning her cheeks, than a rented apartment in Pacific avenue. The workingman's wife scrimps and saves for half a life time to get enough money to buy a home, and scrimps and saves the other half of her life to pay the mortgage, and through it all she is entirely repaid by the knowledge that she will or that she does own a home. The prosaic details of getting a cement floor in the cellar or laying out a kitchen garden become glorified by the knowledge that it is all her own.

In the topsyturvyness of present conditions in San Francisco many people find the thing that seemed only a remote vision suddenly within their grasp. This is one of the strangest developments that the great disaster has brought in its wake. The fire that swept away so many homes has been the cause of others growing up in unexpected ways and places.

Between five and six thousand cottages have been built by the Relief corporation, which have housed in all 30,000 people. The largest of the camps have given shelter to as many as a small town; and when the order was given to have the parks cleared a few weeks ago there were two problems confronting the city—where to provide homes for the 14,000 people still remaining in the camps and what to do with something more than 5,000 cottages occupying the public squares. The two problems solved each other beautifully. The houses and the houseless ones have came together by the simple process of taking up the cottages from their places in the camp, placing them on big trucks and moving each to some vacant and available place big enough to hold it. Refugees who have lived in their cottages and paid rent, or, as it is called to avoid the technicality of the law, installments on their homes, are refunded the money. Those who have not paid anything can buy a cottage of two rooms for $35 or one with three rooms for $50. The cost of moving, together with the plumbing and other necessaries, seldom amounts to more than $100, and when several families can settle close together the cost of water pipes may be lessened. Those who have been paying their monthly installments for some time generally have to their credit the sum necessary to purchase the cottage and maybe the cost of moving it.

It took some time to make the proposition clear to the average dwellers in the refugee camps, but when they understood they were quick to take advantage of the offer. The kind of people who besieged the relief headquarters for the necessary papers showed clearly the vast amount of good done by the arrangement. Many working people whose wages were hardly equal to the drain of the present exorbitant rents are among the number. The chief beneficiaries, however, are widows who have to support families on their meager wages and elderly people who are not able to work much but who in this way are able to get along without becoming dependent on charity. Thousands of dollars paid in rent or installments on the cottages have been returned to just such people. The Relief corporation in this way has become a sort of compulsory savings bank. The cottages then become a free gift, not charity but relief, the relief of a sympathizing world to afflicted San Francisco. Those who need it are assisted in making the arrangements for moving.

A lot can usually be leased or bought in monthly installments at a rate very much below the rent charged for anything in the shape of a house, flat or apartment at the prevailing rates. When moving day comes the refugee family goes like the snail who carries his house on his back, but not so slowly. The little green shack is set down on the lot selected, and there is the nucleus of a home. The plumber is usually the only outside man besides the owner of the moving van that has to be called in. The rest of the work is done by the owner. Many families have already begun the improvement of their homes while still in the camps. They have papered the rooms or even put up an extra paneling. Shelves and other gimcracks add to their attractiveness.

When the cottage is set up in its place the outside transformation begins that is to make of the shack a bungalow. The telltale green color is the first thing to be tackled. Sometimes a coat of paint of some other color is put on, but more frequently the walls are shingled, thus adding both warmth and beauty. The doors and window sills are painted, and often a porch is added. Sometimes two cottages are purchased by one family and are joined into quite an elaborate house. An enterprising Italian couple secured five cottages, which they set upon an empty corner on Pacific and Powell streets, joining them with smaller rooms rudely built and covered with tarpaper. The American flag was gaily flying from every gable and the walls were being transformed from the refugee green to a cheerful red. The cottages brought their owners a pretty sum each month in rents.

Often one may come upon a cottage tucked into some corner in the most unexpected place in the downtown district. The occupants of the camps at Lobos square and at North Beach are mostly people of the Latin races. Many of them own lots and had their own homes before the fire. Others have been saving up with the view of securing homes now. Moving day finds them ready. They pack all their little store of household goods, take their houses and go away. Even before the official day set for vacating the camps many of them were comfortably settled.

The traveler on the Mission road will often find the progress of the street car stopped by a truck bearing a little green cottage asserting its right to the middle of the road. The hilly tract beyond Mission and Twenty-ninth streets is dotted with scores of cottages in every stage of transformation. Some are just as they came from the refugee camp carpenter's hand. Many are half covered with shingles, while the other half of the wall is staring greenly and waiting for the head of the family to get another day off. Some are so disguised from their original bleakness that only the eye accustomed by long observation to the dimensions of the refugee shack will detect them underneath the artistic new dress.

The County Line Village

For miles along the Mission road the cottages are scattered. Right on the county line a regular village of them has grown up. People are buying land on the installment plan and are fixing up their cottages as if they meant to stay. Not only are they vying with one another in giving their homes built up of two or three cottages the most artistic shapes, but they are laying out gardens and planting vegetables and flowers. Many are harking back to country life and are adding pigs and chickens to the attractions of the landscape.

A typical case is that of a woman who was left with two small children to support. She was not used to working for her living, but she took up the burden of the family wage earner courageously and succeeded in making a bare living for herself and her children. But the problem of housing was monumental, for the relations between the wages of unskilled woman's labor and present San Francisco rents are strained to say the least. The refugee cottage solved the problem. She had been paying rent on one of the cottages, and when she decided on moving it the rent was returned to her. The sum was sufficient to cover the expenses of moving. A woman friend secured another cottage and the two together bought a lot, paying in installments about one-half of what each must have paid for any kind of habitation in the city. Divided into two the cost came easily within even their small means. The two houses were combined into one, and the owners are busy at odd moments shingling the walls. One of them "minds" the babies at home while the other is the wage earner of the combined families. She travels every day from her home on the county line to the cannery at North Beach, and neither the distance nor the long hours of toil seem hard, because she knows already the joy of owning a house and will soon own the ground it stands on.

There were many old people, especially women, who before the fire lived inexpensively in some unused and unwanted corner of a house and just managed with a little sewing, or washing, or janitor work, to earn enough for their living expenses. The fire swept away their homes and often their opportunities for making the frugal wage they depended upon. It was expected that a large number of such people would become dependent upon charity, and the charitable societies were preparing to make an especial effort in their behalf. The refugee cottages have provided homes for many of them and have enabled them for yet a while to enjoy their independence.

Of all the work accomplished by the Relief from the time of the bread line to the breaking up of the camps nothing is of greater importance to the city than that of establishing 5,000 families in their own homes. On the roads leading to the suburbs moving trucks are trundling the little green houses that spell comfort, independence and happiness to these thousands.

HOME SWEET HOME AT LAST

ALL READY EXCEPT THE LAWN

BUILDING UP A COMFORTABLE SETTLEMENT IN THE MISSION FROM REFUGEE COTTAGES

GOODBYE TO THE REFUGEE CAMP

Hannah Astrup Larsen, "Enrichment of the Refugees," *The San Francisco Call,* 20 October 1907.

APPENDIX B

EARTHQUAKE COTTAGE SURVEY FORM EXAMPLE

DATE: 1-21

SURVEYOR: AM

EARTHQUAKE REFUGEE COTTAGE SURVEY FORM

AUTHENTICATION:	**SOURCE:**
CITY: SF	**NEIGHBORHOOD:**
STREET ADDRESS: 30 Niantic	**ZIP:**
PIM DATE OF CONSTRUCTION:	**BLOCK/LOT:**
NEAREST CAMP:	**CURRENT USE:** Single fam
No. OF CABINS (visible from PROW): 1 (maybe 2 if bottom story is cabin too)	**SITE/GRADE:** flat
STORIES: 2 / **GARAGE/DRIVEWAY:** none	
PLAN TYPE/SHAPE: L - shaped	**OUTBUILDINGS:** small shed at S corner of lot; RV parked in rear
ADDITIONS (anything in addition to original cabin itself): bottom story - either cabin is lifted or 2 cabins were stacked on top of each other - L-shape is a shed roof addition to south of cabin - also 2 stories	
FOUNDATION: unknown	
ROOF: composite shingle; front gable w/ side shed	**WINDOWS:** vinyl with false muntins "4/4" lights
SIDING: horizontal board -	**SECONDARY:** —
ENTRY DETAILS: front door is on South side of main cabin volume	
DECORATIVE DETAILS: window surrounds have Stick-style buttons at corners; full-height corner boards	
CONDITION: good - excellent	**SETBACK:** shallow

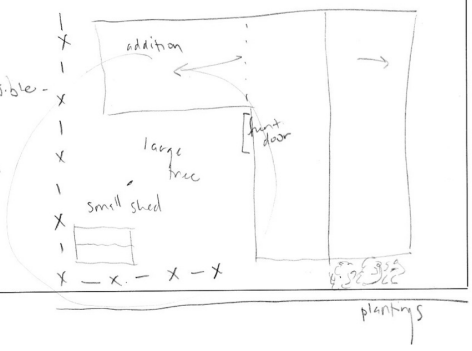
ALTERATIONS:

2 stories - 2 cabins?

roof pitch remains - rafter tails visible - poss. original?

Shed addition has skylight - roof pitch becomes slightly more shallow

big old tree in small front yard



APPENDIX C

COTTAGE TYPOLOGY EXAMPLES

TYPE I: ORIGINAL FORM
1837 ALABAMA STREET, BERNAL HEIGHTS

TYPE II: L/T SHAPE
1227 24th AVENUE, SUNSET DISTRICT

TYPE III: PARALLEL FORMS
43 CARVER STREET, BERNAL HEIGHTS

TYPE IV: TWO-STORY
30 NIANTIC STREET, OCEAN VIEW

TYPE V: ORIGINAL FORM/REAR EXTENSION
673 MOULTRIE STREET, BERNAL HEIGHTS

TYPE VI: FRONT GABLE/FLAT ROOF SIDE ADDITION
3653 FOLSOM STREET, BERNAL HEIGHTS

TYPE VII: FRONT ELEVATION MODIFICATION
230 MONTCALM SREET, BERNAL HEIGHTS

TYPE VIII: GARAGE UNDER
331 PRENTISS STREET, BERNAL HEIGHTS

TYPE IX: ADDITIONAL ROOF FORMS
217 MULLEN AVENUE, BERNAL HEIGHTS

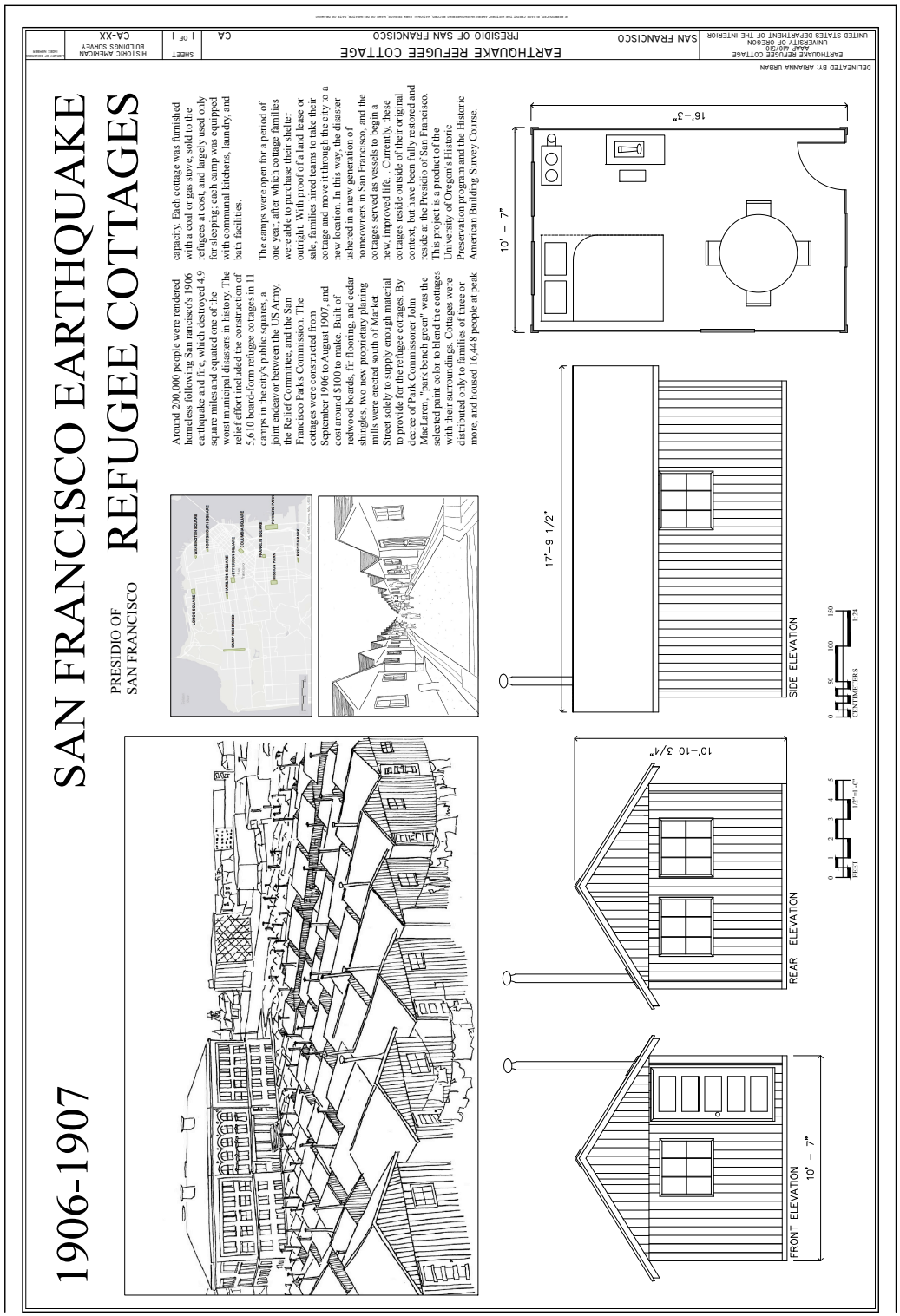
TYPE X: FRONT GABLE/SIDE ENTRY
164 BOCANA STREET, BERNAL HEIGHTS

TYPE XI: SIDE GABLE/FRONT ENTRY
1 KIMBALL PLACE, NOB HILL (not yet authenticated – pending type)

(All photos by author)

APPENDIX D

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY POSTER PROJECT



(Renderings and text by author)

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