



ALFRED H. JACOBS

Architect

(1882-1954)

Alfred Henry Jacobs was born in California on January 29, 1882, the son of Julius and Sara Jacobs. His father's family immigrated to the U.S. in 1854 from Prussia when Julius was just 13. His mother Sara (Adler) was born in New York in April 1844. Alfred grew up in Alameda, the youngest of three children with an older brother Lester born 1871 and sister Florence born 1875.

Jacobs first listed himself as an architect in the 1905 SF Directory with an office at 219 Sansome, also the headquarters of Boole, Sloan & Co., general insurance agents, of which company his father, Julius, was President. They lived at 1000 Sutter. Julius was also the Assistant United States Treasurer, with another office at 608 Commercial Street, now home to the San Francisco Historical Society. In June 1906 Jacobs was awarded his California State Architectural license (B405) after taking the requisite examinations. He had graduated from MIT with a BS degree in Architecture in 1904 and an MS degree in 1905 and then studied at the architectural school *L'École des Beaux-Arts* in Paris. By 1908 he was back in San Francisco and entered into partnership with London-born architect, Walter H. Ratcliffe, Jr., who was a year older and had been licensed in October 1905. They opened an office in 20 Montgomery Street. Together in 1908 they designed:

- Presidio Heights - 3990 Clay, 3535-45 Washington (now 6 condos);
- Russian Hill - 1309 Hyde (7 apts.).

In December the partnership of Ratcliffe & Jacobs was dissolved. Jacobs also got married that month, on December 19, 1908 to Lillian Wollenberg, a 1906 State University graduate. Jacobs had a long solo career in San Francisco lasting beyond World War II. Surviving designs of his include:

- Russian Hill - 935 Chestnut (1909), 2351-53 Larkin (1911, now 2 condos);
- Pacific Heights - 1859 Vallejo (1909, now 4 condos);
- Presidio Heights - 3525 & 3527 Washington (1909), 3991-97 Washington (1910, 4 condos),
- 3653 Jackson (1910), 145 Laurel (1920, 15 apts.),
- **3850 Washington** (1924);
- Downtown - 308 Eddy (1910, Hotel Herald),
- 445 Geary (1912, Curran Theater);
- Nob Hill - 952 Powell (1913, 21 apts.),
- 2100-10 Van Ness (1919, retail);
- Lake Street - 80 21st Av. (1914, for himself),
- 129 24th Av. (1929, for Ansel Adams);
- Balboa Terrace - 1725 Monterey (1931);
- St. Francis Wood - 1600 Monterey (1935).



3850 Washington

3850 Washington is on a 59 foot wide lot with a distinctive curved driveway leading up to it. It was designed for Herbert Bauer of Goldman, Jacobs & Co., an investment securities firm. In 1920 Jacobs began a major project for the Pacific Hebrew Orphan Asylum & Home Society, which had acquired 13 acres of Adolph Sutro's land in the Ingleside along Ocean Avenue. Jacobs designed many structures there and donated a third of his fee as *tzedakah* (a Jewish gesture of philanthropy). The development, Homewood Terrace, was demolished in the 1960's. Jacobs died on December 14, 1954.