INFORMATION CALENDAR
October 27, 2015

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Dee Williams-Ridley, Interim City Manager

Submitted by: Eric Angstadt, Director, Planning and Development

Subject: LPC-NOD: 3049-3051 Adeline Street

INTRODUCTION
The attached Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) Notice of Decision (NOD) is submitted to the Mayor and City Council pursuant to Berkeley Municipal Code (BMC) Section 3.24.240, which states that “A copy of the Notice of Decision shall be filed with the City Clerk and the City Clerk shall present said copy to the City Council at its next regular meeting (Ord. 4694-NS § 4.1(c), 1974).”

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS
On June 30, 2015 a Landmark Initiation for the former Hull Undertaking Complex was submitted by application of at least fifty City residents (LMIN2015-0001). On August 26, 2015 a letter from the owner of the property and the Landmark application author was submitted, clarifying that the building located at 3031 Adeline Street is not intended to be included in the proposed Landmark designation.

On September 3, 2015 the Commission opened the public hearing. Staff recommended designation of the Hull Undertaking Complex (excluding 3031 Adeline Street) with findings under the Landmarks Preservation Ordinance (LPO) significance criteria for its architectural merit as an example of Story Book style architecture and as the work of notable architects; and for its cultural value as associated with the larger context of the funeral and wedding industries in the City. The Landmark application author recommended designation under multiple LPO significance criteria, including for the value the complex adds to the neighborhood, for its cultural value associated with uses established in the 1970s, and for its historic value associated with uses established prior to construction of the complex. The Commission then approved a motion (Olson, Hall) to designate the above properties as Landmark(s), excluding 3031 Adeline Street, with the findings as proposed by the Landmark application author (Yes: Beil, Belser, Brown, Hall, Linvill, Olson, Schwartz, Shenoy, Sucyznski Smith; No: None; Absent: None; Abstained: None).

BACKGROUND
BMC Section 3.24.300 allows the Council to review any action of the Landmarks Preservation Commission in granting or denying a Structural Alteration Permit. In order
for the Council to review the decision on its merits, the Council must appeal the Notice of Decision. To do so, a Councilmember must move this Information Item to Action and then move to set the matter for a hearing on its own. Such action must be taken within 15 days from the mailing of the Notice of Decision, or by **October 27, 2015**.

If the Council chooses to appeal the action of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, a public hearing will be set within 25 days pursuant to BMC Section 3.24.300.B. The Council must then rule on the application within 30 days from the date that the public hearing is opened or the decision of the Landmarks Preservation Commission is automatically deemed affirmed.

Unless the Council wishes to review the determination of the Landmarks Preservation Commission and make its own decision, the attached Notice of Decision is deemed received and filed.

**ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

Landmark designation provides opportunities for the rehabilitation of historic resources within the City. Rehabilitation achieves construction and demolition waste diversion; promotes clean transportation options such as cycling, walking, and public transit; and does not negatively affect natural habitat.

**POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION**
The Council could choose to appeal the decision by the Landmarks Preservation Commission, setting a public hearing at a later date.

**FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION**
Additional staff time would be required to prepare the necessary Council report and resolution.

**CONTACT PERSON**
Eric Angstadt, Director of Planning and Development, (510) 981-7401
Sally Zarnowitz, Secretary to the Landmarks Preservation Commission, (510) 981-7429

Attachments:  
1: 3049-3051 Adeline Street (LMSAP #2015-0001) – LPC Notice of Decision (NOD)
DATE OF COMMISSION DECISION: September 3, 2015
DATE NOTICE MAILED: October 12, 2015
APPEAL PERIOD EXPIRATION: October 27, 2015
EFFECTIVE DATE OF DECISION (Barring Appeal or Certification): October 28, 2015¹

3049-3051 Adeline Street

Consideration to designate the above properties as City of Berkeley Landmark (LMIN2015-0001)

The Landmarks Preservation Commission of the City of Berkeley, after conducting a public hearing, APPROVED the following designation:

DESIGNATION: Landmark

APPLICANT: Daniella Thompson,

ZONING DISTRICT: C-SA South Area Commercial, R-2A Restricted Multiple-Family Residential

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW STATUS: The designation is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, Public Resources Code §21000, et seq.) pursuant to Section 15061.b.3 of the CEQA Guidelines (activities that can be seen with certainty to have no significant effect on the environment).

The application materials for this project are available online at: http://www.cityofberkeley.info/zoningapplications

¹ Pursuant to BMC Section 1.04.070, if the close of the appeal period falls on a weekend or holiday, then the appeal period expires the following business day. Pursuant to BMC Section 3.24.190, the City Council may "certify" any decision of the LPC for review, within fifteen days from the mailing of the NOD. Such certification shall stay all proceedings in the same manner as the filing of a notice of appeal.
FINDINGS AND APPROVED APPLICATION ARE ATTACHED TO THIS NOTICE

COMMISSION VOTE: 9-0-0-0

YES: BEIL, BELSER, BROWN, HALL, LINVILL, OLSON, SHENOY, SCHWARTZ, SUCZYNSKI SMITH

NO:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

TO APPEAL THIS DECISION (see Section 3.24.300 of the Berkeley Municipal Code):

To appeal a decision of the Landmarks Preservation Commission to the City Council you must:

1. Submit a letter clearly and concisely setting forth the grounds for the appeal to the City Clerk, located at 2180 Milvia Street, 1st Floor, Berkeley; or by facsimile to (510) 981-6901. The City Clerk’s telephone number is (510) 981-6900.

2. The appeal must be received prior to 5:00 p.m. on the "APPEAL PERIOD EXPIRATION" date shown above (if the close of the appeal period falls on a weekend or holiday, then the appeal period expires the following business day).

3. Submit the required fee (checks and money orders must be payable to ‘City of Berkeley’):
   a. The basic fee for persons other than the applicant is $500. This fee may be reduced to $100 if the appeal is signed by persons who lease or own at least 50 percent of the parcels or dwelling units within 300 feet of the project site, or at least 25 such persons (not including dependent children), whichever is less.
   b. The fee for appeals of affordable housing projects (defined as projects which provide 50 percent or more affordable units for households earning 80% or less of Area Median Income) is $500, which may not be reduced.
   c. The fee for all appeals by Applicants is $2500.

If no appeal is received, the landmark designation will be final on the first business day following expiration of the appeal period.

NOTICE CONCERNING YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS:

If you object to this decision, the following requirements and restrictions apply:

1. If you challenge this decision in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you
or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the Landmarks Preservation Commission at, or prior to, the public hearing.

2. You must appeal to the City Council within fifteen (15) days after the Notice of Decision of the action of the Landmarks Preservation Commission is mailed. It is your obligation to notify the Land Use Planning Division in writing of your desire to receive a Notice of Decision when it is completed.

3. Pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.6(b) and Government Code Section 65009(c)(1), no lawsuit challenging a City Council decision, as defined by Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.6(e), regarding a use permit, variance or other permit may be filed more than ninety (90) days after the date the decision becomes final, as defined in Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.6(b). Any lawsuit not filed within that ninety (90) day period will be barred.

4. Pursuant to Government Code Section 66020(d)(1), notice is hereby given to the applicant that the 90-day protest period for any fees, dedications, reservations, or other exactions included in any permit approval begins upon final action by the City, and that any challenge must be filed within this 90-day period.

5. If you believe that this decision or any condition attached to it denies you any reasonable economic use of the subject property, was not sufficiently related to a legitimate public purpose, was not sufficiently proportional to any impact of the project, or for any other reason constitutes a “taking” of property for public use without just compensation under the California or United States Constitutions, your appeal of this decision must including the following information:

A. That this belief is a basis of your appeal.

B. Why you believe that the decision or condition constitutes a "taking" of property as set forth above.

C. All evidence and argument in support of your belief that the decision or condition constitutes a “taking” as set forth above.

If you do not do so, you will waive any legal right to claim that your property has been taken, both before the City Council and in court.
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION
NOTICE OF DECISION
LMIN2015-0001
3049-3051 Adeline Street
October 12, 2015
Page 4 of 4

PUBLIC COMMENT:
Communications to Berkeley boards, commissions or committees are public record and will become part of the City’s electronic records, which are accessible through the City’s website. Please note: e-mail addresses, names, addresses, and other contact information are not required, but if included in any communication to a City board, commission or committee, will become part of the public record. If you do not want your e-mail address or any other contact information to be made public, you may deliver communications via U.S. Postal Service or in person to the secretary of the relevant board, commission or committee. If you do not want your contact information included in the public record, please do not include that information in your communication. Please contact the secretary to the relevant board, commission or committee for further information.

FURTHER INFORMATION:
Questions about the project should be directed to the project planner, Sally Zarnowitz, at (510) 981-7410 or szarnowitz@cityofberkeley.info. All project application materials, including full-size plans, may be viewed at the Permit Service Center (Zoning counter), 2120 Milvia Street, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

ATTACHMENTS:
1. Findings
2. Landmark Application

ATTEST:
Sally Zarnowitz, ARCH, LEED AP, Secretary
Landmarks Preservation Commission

cc: Applicant
    Owner
    Residents
    City Clerk
3049-3051 Adeline Street

City of Berkeley Landmark Application LMIN2015-0001

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Landmark Designation of 3049-3051 Adeline Street (Hull Undertaking Company complex).

CEQA FINDINGS

The project is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, Public Resources Code §21000, et seq.) pursuant to Section 15061.b.3 of the CEQA Guidelines (activities that can be seen with certainty to have no significant effect on the environment).

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION ORDINANCE FINDINGS

Pursuant to Berkeley Municipal Code Section 3.24.110.A the Landmarks Preservation Commission of the City of Berkeley finds:

Consistent with Section 3.24.110A.1.b, The Hull Undertaking Company complex possesses architectural merit. It is an outstanding example of Storybook Style architecture, was featured in the book Storybook Style: America's Whimsical Homes of the Twenties by Arrol Gellner (Viking Studio, 2001), and is listed in the State Historic Resources Inventory with the status code 3S (appears eligible for the National Register through survey evaluation).

The Undertaking Building (1923), located at 3051 Adeline Street, is the most notable example in Berkeley of the work of the Oakland architectural firm Hutchison & Mills, which was active in 1921–1928, designing attractive store buildings and apartments that continue to contribute to the character of Berkeley's built environment. Featuring a round-edged, thatch-like roof, halftimbering, stucco walls embedded with stones, leaded-glass windows, and numerous arched French doors, the Undertaking Building embodies the romantic tendency in the 1920s to borrow quaint, rustic elements from English vernacular architecture.

The Little Chapel of the Flowers (1928), located at 3049 Adeline Street, is the best surviving example of the work of architect Francis Harvey Slocombe, designer of the legendary Mapes Hotel in Reno. Featuring an organically shaped bell tower; a rolling, thatch-like roof with huge dormers; an abundance of leaded glass, stained glass, and steel sash; and the liberal use of brick and stone combined with rough stucco, this instantly memorable building is unique in Berkeley and has remained essentially unchanged over its 87-year life.
Consistent with Section 3.24.110A.1.c., the Hull Undertaking Company complex is an architectural example worth preserving for the exceptional value it adds to the neighborhood fabric. It is the only example of Storybook Style in the Ashby Station district, which comprises a very high percentage of Colonial Revival buildings constructed during the first decade of the 20th century.

Consistent with Section 3.24.110A.2, the Hull Undertaking Company complex possesses cultural value. During the 1940s and ‘50s, the Little Chapel of the Flowers was Berkeley’s most beloved wedding venue. Beginning in the mid-1970s, the Hull Undertaking Co. complex underwent a transformation, becoming a hub for cultural uses. Long-term tenants included the West Coast Print Center, which served the literary community and printed hundreds of poetry books and literary publications; the Fifth String Music Store, an important gathering point for acoustic string players; and Marmot Mountain Works, a world-renowned wilderness equipment store.

Consistent with Section 3.24.110A.4, the Hull Undertaking Company complex possesses historic value. The Hull Undertaking Company represented a continuous chain of ownership from Berkeley’s first mortuary, established by Frank W. Durgin in 1894. Durgin rejoined the business in the late 1920s, and the firm was known as Hull & Durgin until 1941. The Hull Undertaking Company complex retains integrity of location, design, materials, setting, feeling, and association.

The Hull Undertaking Company Complex, excluding 3031 Adeline Street described in the Landmark Application, is hereby designated a City of Berkeley Landmark; and distinguishing exterior features to be preserved include:

**Little Chapel of Flowers, 3049 Adeline Street**
- Cruciform mass
- Hip roof simulating thatch, with rounded lines, rolled edges with closed eaves, clipped gables and triangular vents
- Ten large dormers (six in the nave and four in the transept) with rounded clipped gables and leaded-glass windows containing stained-glass scenic vignettes
- Rough stucco walls with embedded stones
- Bell tower with thatch-shingled onion dome, leaded-glass portholes, wood lookouts and finial
- One-story bell tower entrance with wood-plank door and three round window glazed with diamond leaded glass
- Flagstone court and stone staircase to entrance
- Recessed doorway flanked by stone-covered walls with heavy risers and deeply recessed slit windows glazed with diamond leaded glass
- Double entrance doors faced with wavy-cut planks, three decorative iron bands, and small windows
- Heavy lintel above entrance doors
- Double casement window with diamond leaded glass to the right of the front entrance
- Low descending roof line to the right of the front entrance
- Awning with carved posts and decorative ironwork at front entrance
- Nave galleries along north and south façades, with industrial steel-sash, multi-paned glass walls glazed with textured and stained glass in floral patterns as described in the landmark application
- Wall base along the nave faced with brick and stone in a random pattern
- Polygonal apse with a glazed upper part on the east façade
- Chimneys on southwest and northwest sides

**Hull Undertaking Building, 3051 Adeline Street**
- Two-story structure with three masses
- Multi-part roof with rolled edges and closed eaves
- Small belfry with finial and triangular vents on main roof
- Rough stucco walls with half-timbering and embedded stones
- Wood-framed, multi-paned windows on all façades as described in the landmark application
- Arched French windows on west and south façades
- Leaded glass and colored glass in French windows and other windows as described in the landmark application
- Recessed portico with mansard roof and brick walls
- Second-floor balcony with curled iron railing in roof of south facade
- One-story side entrance enclosure with plank door and stone steps on north façade

**Accessory Buildings, 1905, 1909, 1911-1915 Essex Street**
- Continuous street frontage with one- and two-story heights
- Roofs with rolled edges on first and second stories
- Stucco walls with half-timbering and some embedded stones
(Allowing for changes/upgrades to Wood-framed, multi-paned windows)
Hull Undertaking Co. & Little Chapel of the Flowers
3031–3051 Adeline Street
Berkeley, CA, 94703

Etching by Hiram Edson Newell (1894–1947), courtesy of Wm. Mark Hull, III, Hull Walnut Creek Chapel

Hull & Sons in the 1950s, courtesy of Wm. Mark Hull, III, Hull Walnut Creek Chapel
CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Hull Undertaking Co. & Little Chapel of the Flowers
3031–3051 Adeline Street
Berkeley, CA 94703

Figure 1. Hull Undertaking Co. & accessory buildings, 2005

Figure 2. Little Chapel of the Flowers, May 2015
1. **Street Addresses:** 3031, 3049, 3051 Adeline Street;  
1905, 1909, 1911–1915 Essex Street  
**County:** Alameda  
**City:** Berkeley  
**ZIP:** 94703

2. **Assessor’s Parcel Number:** 53-1595-9-3  
(Newbury Tract, Block O, Lots 2, 3, 4, 5; southwest portion of Lot 6)  
**Dimensions:** 228.26 feet W x 99.96 feet N x 205 feet E x 200.62 feet S  
**Cross Streets:** Emerson Street (N), Essex Street (S)

3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** Yes; status code 3S  
**Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey?** Yes  
**Form #:** 12263

4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**  
   a. **Building(s):** Yes  
   **Garden:** N/A  
   **Other Feature(s):**  
   b. **Landscape or Open Space:** Yes  
   c. **Historic Site:** No  
   d. **District:** No  
   e. **Other:** Entire Property

5. **Historic Names:** Hull Undertaking Co., Berkeley Undertaking Co., Hull & Durgin Co., Little Chapel of the Flowers, Hull & Sons  
**Commonly Known Name:** Marmot Mountain Works

6. **Dates of Construction:** 1923, 1928, and others  
**Factual:** Yes  
**Source of Information:** Building permits #14974 (20 Sept 1923), #30459 (16 May 1928), and others (see Select Permit History, 1923–1989, pp. 7–8)

7. **Architects:** Hutchison & Mills (1923); Slocombe & Tuttle (1928)

8. **Builders:** Felix W. Maurice (1923); James Bowles Bishop (1928)

9. **Style:** Storybook

10. **Original Owner:** William Mark Hull (1887–1967)  
**Original Use:** Mortuary and funeral/wedding chapel

11. **Present Owner:** Athan Magganas  
MAXACO, LLC  
2550 Appian Way  
Pinole, CA 94564  
**Present Occupant:** Various tenants

12. **Present Use:** Commercial & residential  
**Current Zoning:** C-SA  
**Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-SA, R-2A

13. **Present Condition of Property:** Fair  
**Exterior:** Fair  
**Interior:** Fair  
**Grounds:** Fair  
**Has the property’s exterior been altered?** Yes, but not significantly

3031–3051 Adeline Street Landmark Application
Assessor’s Map 53, Block 1595
Amended Map of the Newbury Tract (Bk. 9 Pg. 23)

Buildings in Assessor’s Parcel No. 53-1595-9-3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Description</th>
<th>Street Address</th>
<th>Lot Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little Chapel Florist</td>
<td>3031 Adeline Street</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Chapel of the Flowers</td>
<td>3049 Adeline Street</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertaking Building</td>
<td>3051 Adeline Street</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessory Bldg. No. 1</td>
<td>1905 Essex Street</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessory Bldg. No. 2</td>
<td>1909 Essex Street</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessory Bldg. No. 3</td>
<td>1911–1915 Essex Street</td>
<td>6 (28.50’ x 50.50’ portion in SW corner)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3. The parcel marked in a City of Berkeley zoning map

Figure 4. Satellite view of the parcel (Google Earth)
Executive Summary

The Hull Undertaking Company complex is one of the most outstanding examples of Storybook Style architecture in Berkeley. It was featured in the book Storybook Style: America’s Whimsical Homes of the Twenties by Arrol Gellner (Viking Studio, 2001) and is listed in the State Historic Resources Inventory with the status code 3S (appears eligible for the National Register through survey evaluation).

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The Hull Undertaking Company complex retains integrity of location, design, materials, setting, feeling, and association.

14. Description

The Hull Undertaking Company complex is a collection of six buildings constructed between 1923 and 1948 by William Mark Hull (1887–1967). The complex is situated on the east side of Adeline Street, directly across from the Ashby BART station. Five of the buildings are clustered at the northeast corner of
Adeline and Essex streets. The sixth, separated from the others by a parking lot, is located at the southeast corner of Adeline and Emerson streets.

The earliest building in the complex is the original Undertaking (mortuary and administration) Building at 3051 Adeline Street, constructed in 1923. Subsequent construction included the Little Chapel of the Flowers at 3049 Adeline Street (1928); a greenhouse (1932); an insurance office addition (1938); a second-floor embalming room addition at 1909 Essex Street (1939); a garage and apartment at 1911–1915 Essex Street (1942); a separate public garage at 3026 Tremont Street (1945, now under different ownership); and a florist shop at 3031 Adeline Street (1948).

Although constructed over a period of 25 years, the buildings share a common look and feel inspired by English vernacular architecture. With the exception of the florist shop, all have thatch-like roofs with rolled edges and rough stucco walls with embedded stones and simulated half-timbering. The windows are generally wood-framed and multi-paned, with a great deal of leaded glass, stained glass, and colored glass in evidence.

### Select Permit History, 1923–1989

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Permit #/Source</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Architect</th>
<th>Builder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>14974</td>
<td>Two-story undertaking parlor</td>
<td>Hutchison &amp; Mills</td>
<td>Felix W. Maurice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>22219</td>
<td>Marquise</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>William M. Hull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>28952</td>
<td>Glass-in porch on south side</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>A.E. Stewart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>29415</td>
<td>Storeroom</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>A.E. Stewart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>30459</td>
<td>Little Chapel of the Flowers</td>
<td>Slocombe &amp; Tuttle</td>
<td>James B. Bishop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>30517</td>
<td>Connecting doors between buildings</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>James B. Bishop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>35638</td>
<td>Roof, half-timber, stone, and stucco work</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>H.T. Caskey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>36849</td>
<td>Greenhouse</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>45733</td>
<td>9’x17’ insurance office addition</td>
<td>William M. Hull</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>47014</td>
<td>Add embalming room on top of garage at 1903 [now 1909] Essex</td>
<td>W.C. Ambrose, engineer</td>
<td>A.A. McDonald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>48287</td>
<td>Remodel hall and stairs, convert 3 apts. into 5 layout rooms</td>
<td>F. Harvey Slocombe</td>
<td>William M. Hull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>50372</td>
<td>Employees’ bedroom &amp; bath</td>
<td>William M. Hull</td>
<td>Hull and Sons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>51451</td>
<td>Dressing room in rear of chapel</td>
<td>William M. Hull</td>
<td>William M. Hull</td>
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<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>52552</td>
<td>1-story, 5-room, 25’x50’ dwelling at 1939 Essex</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>William M. Hull</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Permit #/Source</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Architect</td>
<td>Builder</td>
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<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>57122</td>
<td>Public garage, 3026 Tremont</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>William M. Hull</td>
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<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>Ormsby Donogh real estate files, BAHA archives</td>
<td>Little Chapel Florist shop</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
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<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>70175</td>
<td>New front entrance</td>
<td>William M. Hull</td>
<td>William M. Hull</td>
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<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td></td>
<td>Accessibility &amp; connection between chapel &amp; Essex Street annex</td>
<td>Ronald Dean Senna</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Undertaking Building (1923)

The Undertaking Building is a two-story rectangular wood-framed structure comprising three masses under interconnected hip roofs with closed eaves. The roofs are clad in composition shingles (originally wooden thatch shingles) and rolled at the edges to simulate thatch. The walls are clad in rough stucco with embedded stones and simulated half-timbering. Numerous wood-framed windows of various shapes and sizes incorporate multiple panes, colored glass, and/or leaded glass. A small, square, steep-roofed belfry topped by a three-dimensional cross finial is positioned in the center of the front roof. The roof vents are triangular. The architectural style is Storybook eclectic, primarily influenced by English country vernacular.

Frontage

The building used to be fronted by a small lawn with shrubs, surrounded by a low brick border (see Page 2, Fig. 1). The current owner, who acquired the property in October 2012, replaced the lawn and the plantings with a gravel surface. A new entrance with a ramp was opened on the Essex Street corner for a recently established café on the ground floor. Although these alterations and the current color scheme are not altogether sympathetic to the historic building, most character-defining features and materials remain intact.

Front (West) Façade

The front façade is symmetrical, featuring a recessed central portico flanked by an arched full-length French window on each side. Consisting of a metal mansard-roofed canopy supported by hefty red-bricked projections with lateral
long windows, this portico dates from 1951. The original portico (see Fig. 7) was open on three sides, with a thatch-like shingled canopy supported by plain wooden posts. The original entrance consisted of a multi-paned glass door with side-lights. The current door is wood-framed, glazed with sheet glass, and surrounded by two fixed side-lights and three fixed transoms glazed with sheet glass.

Figure 7. The original portico

The two arched ground-floor French windows are multi-paned and divided into two parts. The bottom two-thirds part consists of a double casement with 10 panes (2 over 5) in each sash. The top third is a fanlight with two rows of panes (6 over 4). The windows are slightly recessed and set in a wooden molding. Some of the panes incorporate randomly shaped and distributed colored glass.

On the upper floor, the stucco wall is crisscrossed with screwed-in wooden strips simulating half-timbering, the screw heads serving as a decorative element. Above the portico canopy, three windows are glazed in textured amber glass with random-sized insets in blue, green, red, and white glass. The central component in this group is a small double-hung window with a total of four (2 over 2) panes. On either side is a longer single casement with eight (2 over 4) panes.

Also on the upper floor, positioned directly above each of the lower arched windows, are two triple windows consisting of two single casements of eight (2 over 4) plain-glass panes\(^1\) flanking a wider central window that is either fixed or pivoting. The pane configuration in this central window unit is five over one. Centrally positioned below the two triple windows are two matching scalloped-edged wooden planter boxes supported by pairs of wooden corbels. Shallower versions of the same corbels are set at regular intervals under the lowest “half-timber” beam, along the full length of the façade.

\(^1\) The casement on the extreme left is now louvered.
At the corners, close to the ground, the walls are thickly studded with stones of various shapes, colors, and sizes. The stone distribution thins out further up the walls.

Figure 8. Hull & Sons buildings on a 1943 promotional postcard

**South Façade**

The south façade is complex and asymmetrical, with various projections of differing heights sheltering under projecting roofs. The overall pattern repeats that of the front façade: stucco walls with embedded rocks on the ground floor, simulated half-timbering on the upper floor; full-length arched French windows or doors inset with random colored glass on the ground floor, plain-glass multi-paned windows above.

The **west wing** used to have two full-length arched French windows on the ground floor; the one closest to Adeline Street has recently become an entrance door to a café located in the southwest corner of the building and is accessed via a new concrete ramp with metal railing. On the second floor, the two south-facing windows comprise three single casements with eight (2 over 4) panes each. The east-facing window is identical.

The **central wing** is recessed along the upper floor and lined with four windows. From west to east, they are: 1) a small double-hung window with four (2 over 2) panes; 2) a triple window identical to those on the west façade; 3) a small double-hung window with two (1 over 1) panes; and 4) a triple window identical to those on the west façade. Each of the triple windows has lost an original side casement, replaced with glass louvers. The ground floor projects so that its wall is flush with that of the west wing; its rolled roof reaches just under the second-floor windows. Three arched French windows line the lower floor in a continuous line with those along the entire south façade.

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2 The casement on the extreme right is now louvered.
Figure 9. South façade, January 2015

Figure 10. South façade, January 2015
The east wing projects further to the south than the other two, and its hip roof partially obscures the second-floor windows. Along the ground floor, its walls are half-timbered. A boarded-up arched doorway faces west, and three arched French windows face south. Unlike all the other French windows, these latter three are framed in half-timbering. At the eastern end of the building, the roof continues to the top of the building. Embedded in it at the upper level is a balcony with curled iron railing. Within the balcony, a large window with three vertical mullions and 32 (8 over 4) panes is embedded in a wooden wall with a curved cornice.

North Façade
The north façade is only partially visible. The upper story is half-timbered and appears from aerial views to have eight wood-framed windows (Fig. 5). The two windows at the western end are set with diamond-paned, textured amber glass (Figs. 12 & 13). The right-hand window is high and horizontal, either fixed or pivoting. The one on the left is double hung and retains a bracketed window-box shelf below. In the recessed central section (stairwell of the Undertaking Building), there are several square leaded-glass windows representing an abstract sunburst or flower, with a quarter-round red core in the corner surrounded by a green halo and radiating curvy lines separating translucent white glass. (Fig. 14). At least one double-hung window is visible as well (Fig. 13).
A narrow one-story addition along the ground floor apparently serves as a connection to the adjacent Little Chapel of the Flowers. It features a shingled hip roof, curved to simulate thatch, and a door made of narrow vertical wood planks between two square wooden posts with decorative brackets at the upper corners. A short stone path and three rounded stone steps serve as the approach to the door (Fig. 15).

The **East Façade** is not visible. The building is connected in the rear to accessory buildings on Essex Street.
Little Chapel of the Flowers (1928)

The Little Chapel of the Flowers is a one-and-a-half-story cruciform building. It is clad in stucco embedded with stones and occasional half-timbering. The lines of its composition-shingle hip roof are rounded to resemble thatch. The roof is punctuated by very large dormers along the nave and transept. A fanciful bell tower crowned by a wood-thatch-shingled onion dome rises from the northwestern corner.

The design is eclectic Storybook Style, incorporating elements borrowed from the traditional Cotswold Cottages of Oxfordshire in an idealized interpretation of medieval and vernacular construction, adapted to a Mediterranean climate.

The 1920s were the heyday of the Storybook Style in California architecture. The inspiration for the style was chiefly derived from Hollywood movies and children’s picture books. At the beginning of the decade, D.W. Griffith’s silent film *Orphans of the Storm* (1921) depicted 18th-century Paris as a city whose streets were lined with romanticized medieval architecture. Rustic vernacular architecture taken to Storybook extreme is notably visible in the famous Spadena House (1921), designed by Hollywood art director Harry Oliver for the Irvin W. Willat movie studio in Culver City and currently located in Beverly Hills.

According to a long-standing rumor, the chapel was designed “from a reproduction of a 400-year-old English tudor [sic] chapel”\(^3\) and “Hull’s mother apparently showed the architect a picture of the chapel from her home village in England and asked him to copy it.”\(^4\)

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William Hull’s mother, née Mary Ann Parsons, hailed from Chipping Norton, a bustling market town in Oxfordshire. Churches and chapels in Chipping Norton are stately and severe in their design, bearing not the slightest resemblance to fanciful thatched cottages. It is the traditional Cotswold cottages themselves, built of stone or half-timber, with undulating rooflines and dormers, which hold a clue to at least some elements of the Little Chapel’s design.

Figure 18. A traditional Cotswold cottage, Buckland, Oxfordshire (britainexpress.com)

Figure 19. Little Chapel of the Flowers, c. 1950s (promotional postcard)
Figure 20. Front elevation, Little Chapel of the Flowers.
Slocombe & Tuttle, Architects & Engineers, April 1928.
West (Front) Façade

The west façade presents an asymmetrical triangle whose apex is the tip of the belfry. From there, a direct line descends to the ridge of the main gable roof over the entrance, then descends again to the ridge of the cross roof on the right (see Fig. 20).

**The bell tower**'s shape is uniquely organic, vaguely resembling a morel. The shaft is stucco-clad and embedded with stones. Squarish, it tapers as it rises. Above the shaft, an onion-domed, thatch-shingled belfry rests on four pairs of wood posts, echoing the belfry on the Undertaking Building, including a similar finial. At the top of the shaft, each facet features two wood lookouts. The west and north facets incorporate small recessed portholes glazed with leaded glass.5

At the tower’s ground-floor level, there is a double casement window under a heavy wooden header and set with undulating diamond leaded glass. Under the window, the base of the tower wall is covered with random-sized stones (Fig. 24, top right).

![Figure 21. Entrance, Little Chapel of the Flowers, February 2012](image)

The central part of the front façade features a clipped gable roof over a large recessed round window set with diamond leaded glass. Simulated half-timbering at the base of the gable façade is hidden by the entrance awning, which is not original.

The entrance doorway is recessed between projecting walls densely covered with random-sized stones. They support heavy wooden risers and feature deeply recessed slit windows glazed with diamond leaded glass. A massive wooden lintel above the door was designed to display the chapel’s name but is now obscured by the awning.

The entrance is approached via a flagstone court and four semi-circular broad stone steps leading to a landing, beyond which one final step leads to the twin

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5 The west-facing porthole is covered over by the Marmot Mountain Works sign.
swinging doors. These are faced with vertical wood planks cut along undulating lines. Three decorative iron bands with cutout pickaxe shapes run horizontally across both doors. Each door has a small rectangular window positioned between the two upper iron bands.

Figure 22. Chapel doors, date unknown (Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley)

Figure 23. Chapel doors, February 2012

http://www.oac.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/tf6t1nb8r4/?docId=tf6t1nb8r4
To the right of the doors, the façade features a double casement window set with undulating diamond leaded glass. The roof descends very low, reaching halfway down the window on the left side and almost down to the ground on the right side (Fig. 24). Unfortunately, the awning over the entrance obscures this very charming detail.

Figure 24. Low roof at southwest corner, west façade, January 2015

Figure 25. Left: porch post, Feb. 2012; right: window at base of bell tower, west façade, Jan. 2015

7 One sash is missing.
Six wooden posts support the awning. Two of these posts are at the front, and four are closer to the building. The four inner posts have diagonal carved brackets. The two pairs of rear posts frame decorative wrought-iron panels.

Figure 26. Left: North face of bell tower, Jan. 2015; right: north façade, Feb. 2012
Figure 27. North elevation, Little Chapel of the Flowers. Slocombe & Tuttle, Architects & Engineers, April 1928.
North Façade

Figure 28. North façade, January 2015

Figure 29. North façade detail, January 2015
The north façade consists of three parts. At the right-hand (west) corner rises the bell tower, featuring a one-story base with a curved, mock-thatch shingled hip roof. The stucco walls are randomly embedded with stones. Located under a bracketed wooden lintel, the single door is faced with wood planks cut along undulating lines. Three rounded stone steps lead to the threshold (Fig. 30).

![Figure 30. Base of bell tower, January 2015](image)

The middle section is the exterior of the chapel’s nave. Here, the roof presents three gigantic dormers sheltering under clipped gables. The dormer windows are pointed arches divided by metal mullions into three vertical parts and incorporate multiple square panes set with a random pattern of textured leaded glass. At the upper center of each dormer window is a small square of stained glass depicting a landscape. The three landscapes are mirrored in the matching opposite dormers along the nave’s south side (Fig. 32).

Below the dormers, the building extends outwards in a one-story, glazed-roof gallery whose exterior steel-sash glass wall consists of three horizontal rows of panes. The upper two rows are mostly textured amber glass with an occasional pane of floral stained glass, while the bottom row consists entirely of stained glass with floral patterns in blue, purple, and green. Metal bands support the glass wall on the exterior. Four bracketed wood posts are spaced apart to match the length of each dormer. Below the glass wall is a solid wall faced with bricks and stones set in a random pattern (Fig. 29).
Figure 31. Dormer windows seen from the chapel’s nave, February 2012

Figure 32. Stained glass panes in the nave’s dormer windows, shot from the interior. The north-facing windows (top row) are mirror images of the south-facing windows. (February 2012)
North Transept

At the eastern end of the north façade lies the chapel’s north transept. Very little of it is visible from the exterior, since an enclosed gated passage obscures the transept’s ground floor. The plan (Fig. 27) shows steel-sash French doors surrounded by steel-sash windows.
Viewing the north transept from the parking lot, one can see the rounded hip roof and the three dormers—one on each of its sides—that contain pointed arch windows, two of them glazed with leaded glass.
East Façade

The east façade is only partially visible. From the parking lot one can see the hip roof of the north transept; the transept’s east-facing dormer, set in a gable roof and containing a blank pointed arch recess; a central rounded gable roof; and a central polygonal apse with a glazed top for illuminating the stained-glass window above the altar. Atop the roof-crossing stands a wooden spire. A square, stucco-clad chimney indicated in the original plan rises from a one-story stucco-clad, flat-roofed addition at the northeast corner of the chapel. A further extension, clad in vertical wood siding, is attached to the addition (Fig. 37).

South Façade

The south façade is entirely invisible from the exterior, but clues to its appearance are provided in the plan and the chapel’s interior. These show a design that is almost identical to that of the north façade, with different features at the front and the rear.

As shown in the plan (Fig. 38), the southwest corner is a low-roofed, cottage-like wing featuring a wood-plank door under a triangular plastered soffit, a small leaded-glass, diamond-paned window, and a stone-trimmed, stucco-clad chimney.

The south transept appears to have some sort of skylit grotto under the dormer and a wood-plan door at the eastern end.
Figure 38. South elevation, Little Chapel of the Flowers. Slocombe & Tuttle, Architects & Engineers, April 1928
Interior Views

Figure 39. Interior looking east, February 2012

Figure 40. Dormer detail, February 2012
Figure 41. Truss and ceiling details, February 2012

Figure 42. Altar window, February 2012
Figure 43. Left: interior, looking west; right: nave gallery wall detail, February 2012

Figure 44. Balcony above front doors, February 2012
Accessory Buildings on Essex Street

Three accessory buildings are attached to the Undertaking Building along Essex Street. They were built gradually between 1923 and 1942.

What are now 1905 and 1909 Essex Street were the original garages for the mortuary’s vehicles. The building at 1909 (formerly 1903) Essex began as a one-story, concrete-floored garage; in 1939, William Hull added the second floor to serve as an embalming room; this accounts for the windowless wall facing the street.

The building at 1911–1915 Essex Street stands on land that used to be the rear of the parcel at 3034 Tremont Street. Hull apparently purchased this parcel around 1942 and demolished the house and garage that stood on it. On 10 April 1942, he took out a permit to build a 25’ x 50’ five-room dwelling at 1939 (now 1911–1915) Essex Street. When built, this structure comprised a concrete-floored garage on the ground floor and living quarters on the second floor, accessed via an external staircase.

The ground floor of 1911–1915 Essex is currently in the course of being remodeled; its garage door (Fig. 45) has been replaced with a conventional door flanked by two full-length windows on either side (Figs. 46 & 50).

In keeping with their function, the Essex Street buildings are utilitarian. Nevertheless, an effort was made to conform their exteriors to that of the Undertaking Building through the use of half-timbering, rolled roof edges, and multi-paned windows.

Figure 45. 1905, 1909, and 1911–1915 Essex Street, April 2011 (Google Street View)
Figure 46. 1905, 1909, and 1911–1915 Essex Street, January 2015

Figure 47. The Hull mortuary complex in 1929 (Sanborn map)
Figure 48. The main Hull mortuary buildings in 1950 (Sanborn map)

Figure 49. Accessory buildings on Essex Street, May 2015

Figure 50. Accessory buildings on Essex Street, May 2015
Little Chapel Florist Shop

The Little Chapel Florist building at 3031 Adeline Street is currently being used as a restaurant. Resembling a rustic chalet, the building features an irregularly shaped roof with a clipped gable on the north façade, gingerbread trim, random-patterned stone-and-brick walls like those used on the Little Chapel’s glazed nave galleries, and ornamental wood siding under the eaves on the north and south façades. The doors and windows have been replaced, and the building appears to have been expanded and modified, but in the absence of plans and historic photos, it is hard to judge the extent of the modifications.

No building permit has been found for the flower shop. It first appeared in the 1950 Sanborn map. Realtor Ormsby Donogh, who kept track of alterations on commercial buildings, entered the date 14 January 1948 and the cost of $1,500 for the florist shop.

![Figure 51. Little Chapel Florist building, now a restaurant, January 2015](image)

Distinguishing Features

The distinguishing features of the Hull Undertaking Company complex include the following:

**Undertaking Building, 3051 Adeline Street**
- Two-story structure with three masses
- Multi-part roof with rolled edges and closed eaves
- Small belfry with finial and triangular vents on main roof
- Rough stucco walls with half-timbering and embedded stones
- Wood-framed, multi-paned windows on all façades as described in the landmark application
- Arched French windows on west and south façades
- Leaded glass and colored glass in French windows and other windows as described in the landmark application
• Recessed portico with mansard roof and brick walls
• Second-floor balcony with curled iron railing in roof of south façade
• One-story side entrance enclosure with plank door and stone steps on north façade

Accessory Buildings, 1905, 1909, 1911–1915 Essex Street
• Continuous street frontage with one- and two-story heights
• Roofs with rolled edges on first and second stories
• Stucco walls with half-timbering and some embedded stones
• Wood-clad walls in 1911–1915 Essex Street
• External staircase in 1911–1915 Essex Street
• Wood-framed, multi-paned windows

Little Chapel of the Flowers, 3049 Adeline Street
• Cruciform mass
• Hip roof simulating thatch, with rounded lines, rolled edges with closed eaves, clipped gables, and triangular vents
• Ten large dormers (six in the nave and four in the transept) with rounded clipped gables and leaded-glass windows containing stained-glass scenic vignettes
• Rough stucco walls with embedded stones
• Bell tower with thatch-shingled onion dome, leaded-glass portholes, wood lookouts, and finial
• One-story bell tower entrance with wood-plank door and three rounded stone steps
• Front clipped gable with half-timbering and large recessed round window glazed with diamond leaded glass
• Flagstone court and stone staircase to entrance
• Recessed doorway flanked by stone-covered walls with heavy risers and deeply recessed slit windows glazed with diamond leaded glass
• Double entrance doors faced with wavy-cut planks, three decorative iron bands, and small windows
• Heavy lintel above entrance doors
• Double casement window with diamond leaded glass to the right of the front entrance
• Low descending roof line to the right of the front entrance
• Awning with carved posts and decorative ironwork at front entrance
• Nave galleries along north and south façades, with industrial steel-sash, multi-paned glass walls glazed with textured and stained glass in floral patterns as described in the landmark application
• Wall base along the nave faced with brick and stone in a random pattern
• Polygonal apse with a glazed upper part on the east façade
• Chimneys on southwest and northeast sides

Little Chapel Florist Shop, 3031 Adeline Street
• Random-patterned stone-and-brick walls
15. History

Origins of the Tract

The Newbury Tract, where the subject property is situated, was part of Rancho San Antonio, a 44,800-acre Spanish land grant made to Sergeant Luis Maria Peralta (1759–1851) in 1820 by the last Spanish governor, Don Pablo Vicente de Sol, in recognition of Peralta’s forty years of military service to the Spanish king. The rancho included lands that form Oakland, Alameda, Piedmont, Emeryville, Berkeley, and parts of San Leandro and Albany.

In 1842, Luis Peralta divided the rancho among his four sons. Domingo and Jose Vicente were given the land that now comprises Oakland and Berkeley.

Within less than a decade, the Peralta properties were overrun by Forty-niners, who squatted on the land, stole cattle, and sold acreage without obtaining title. Berkeley’s earliest pioneers, including Francis K. Shattuck, James Blake, William Hillegass, and James Leonard, made their first land acquisitions (later annulled) by purchase from squatters. Domingo and Vicente Peralta fought the illegal appropriation of their land in the courts. In 1856, the U.S. Supreme Court confirmed the Peraltas’ title, but by then the brothers had been forced to sell most of their land to cover legal costs and taxes. In 1852–1853, Vicente sold all but 700 acres for $110,000, and Domingo followed suit by selling all but 300 acres for $82,000.8

Mark Terry Ashby

Figure 52. Mark Ashby’s land (shaded) in Kellersberger’s Map

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Among the newly arrived settlers who acquired squatters’ claims on Peralta land were Mark Terry Ashby (1826–1912) and his elder brother, William Ashby III (1820–1896). They were born in Newburyport, Massachusetts, to William Ashby, Jr. and Elizabeth Terry, natives of England. William Ashby, Jr. (1878–1881) was a hardware merchant, an accomplished horticulturalist, and a well-known abolitionist. Ashby’s annual “Laurel Parties,” held on the banks of the Merrimac River, drew major literary figures and fellow abolitionists such as William Lloyd Garrison, John James Currier, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and John Greenleaf Whittier.

Elizabeth Terry Ashby died in 1844. Four years later, her widower married Anne Ashby Babcock Gregory, a distant relative. It’s possible that Mark and William III did not get along with their stepmother, for the 1848 Newburyport directory listed them as living separately from their father.

The last record of Mark Ashby in Newburyport is in the 1850 U.S. Census. At that time, Mark and William III were enumerated as farmers, with real estate valued at $5,500 (possibly provided by inheritance from their mother). Living with them was their sister Elizabeth (1821–1878) and the two children of their dead sister, Maria White (1819–1845), named Elizabeth and James.

By 1851, Mark was living in Salem, Mass., and working as a clerk in his uncle’s business. No record pinpoints the exact year in which he came to California, but his biography in the History of the State of California of Oakland and Environs9 relates that William came first, in search of gold, then relocated to San Francisco, established a hay and grain business, and sent for Mark. The biography further states:

Upon the arrival of Mark T. Ashby by the Nicaragua route the brothers formed a partnership in the feed and fuel business in San Francisco and continued on Broadway for four years. At the end of that time they removed to Oakland township and, still in partnership, purchased a tract of one hundred and eighty-seven acres from the Peraltas and began farming. Eighty acres of this tract was later sold to Mr. Woolsey for a ranch. In 1865 the brothers divided their property, Mark T. becoming owner of seventy-five acres, and later he purchased forty acres on what is now College avenue. He built a residence and subdivided a part of the land, assisting materially in the upbuilding and development of the section. His home remained in San Francisco until 1875, although his interests had been on this side of the bay for a number of years.

Historic records offer somewhat different details. William, Mark, and their younger brother, James Terry Ashby (1829–1904), were listed in the San Francisco directory of 1854 as residing at 136 Broadway. However, William went back to Newburyport for a while, as evidenced by the 1855 Massachusetts Census, which enumerated him as a merchant living with his sister, niece, and nephew.

According to deed records researched by the late Jerry Sulliger, Mark and William acquired in 1856 a 320-acre claim for $2,000 from squatters S.D. Taylor and George B. Almy (it is not known whether the Ashbys were subsequently

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deemed entitled to possess this land and whether they kept it). In 1857, Mark Ashby purchased Plot 51 in Kellersberger’s Map\textsuperscript{10} from the French-born banker François Louis Alfred Pioche, paying $5,130 for 173.41 acres (see Fig. 52).

*Berkeley Gazette* columnist Hal Johnson wrote that the Ashby land “originally extended to about what is now Derby Street northerly and almost to the present Alcatraz Avenue. And it ran east and west from above what is now College Avenue to below the present Adeline Street.”\textsuperscript{11}

In the early 1860s, Mark’s unmarried sister, Elizabeth Ashby, came to California with their niece, Elizabeth Terry White (1843–1934), settling on Mark’s farm “in the vicinity of College and Ashby Avenues, Ashby Avenue being named for the family.”\textsuperscript{12} The Ashbys’ nephew, James Terry White (1845–1920), joined the San Francisco publishing firm H.H. Bancroft & Co. in 1862, founding his own publishing house in 1869, and eventually publishing the *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* in New York.\textsuperscript{13}

In addition to his farming and commercial activities, Mark Ashby was involved in education. In 1865, he and his niece were listed among the teacher delegates to the State Teachers’ Institute, which convened in San Francisco on 19 September. Mark Ashby also engaged in real estate at 516 Greenwich Street in San Francisco.\textsuperscript{14} In 1879, the California Department of Public Instruction listed Mark Ashby as District Clerk for the Peralta District in Oakland.

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure53.png}
\caption{Plot 51 (shaded lavender) in Thompson & West Map No. 15, 1878 (David Rumsey Collection)}
\end{figure}


\textsuperscript{12} “Pioneer Resident of Berkeley Dies.” *Berkeley Daily Gazette*, 19 November 1934.

\textsuperscript{13} \url{http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Terry_White}

\textsuperscript{14} 1866 voter registration.
Mark Ashby was among the Berkeley property owners who gathered on 20 January 1874 in the home of County Supervisor Francis K. Shattuck to discuss (and defeat) a proposal of incorporation with Oakland.

In 1876, the Central Pacific Railroad’s Berkeley Branch opened, running 3.84 miles from Shellmound via Adeline Street to downtown Berkeley.\footnote{Guy L. Dunscomb. \textit{A Century of Southern Pacific Steam Locomotives, 1862–1962}. Modesto, California: Guy L. Duscomb and Son, 1967.} The railroad bisected Mark Ashby’s farmland, making it ripe for development. A train stop called Newbury Station was established on Adeline Street near the Ashby Avenue intersection.

![Mark Ashby's property in Thompson & West Map No. 15, 1878](image)

On 20 July 1882, Mark Ashby filed with the County a subdivision map titled “A Portion of Newbury Tract in Plot 51, Peralta Rancho, Oakland Township.” The map included the blocks between Ashby Avenue and Prince Street in the western portion of the tract. Two blocks between Prince and Kent (now Woolsey) streets were added on 13 February 1883. Amended maps were subsequently filed on 8 October 1883 and 8 May 1889, and the eastern portion of the tract (between Shattuck and Wheeler) followed suit on 6 June 1889.
Figure 55. Ashby’s first Portion of Newbury Tract map, 1882 (BAHA archives)

Figure 56. Ashby’s amended Portion of Newbury Tract map, 1883 (BAHA archives)
Figure 57. Newbury Tract in a Woodward & Gamble Map, 1888 (David Rumsey Collection)

Figure 58. Amended Map of Newbury Tract, 1889 (BAHA archives)
The Ashby Station District

In 1891, the Newbury Station district was annexed to Berkeley, and its name was changed to Ashby Station.

The year 1891 was also important for Ashby Station because in that year, two electric streetcar lines laid by the Oakland Consolidated Street Railroad linked it to the greater East Bay. The Railroad, first established in 1889 as the Oakland-Berkeley Rapid Transit, with one of its primary investors again being Francis Kittredge Shattuck, was planned in anticipation of the big real-estate opportunities just waiting to happen across the landscape. As most people had neither the means nor the property to maintain a horse and buggy, the coming of the electric streetcar became the dominant force that enabled a dynamic expansion in the East Bay. The growing workforce could now travel conveniently from the “suburbs”—the new residential tracts where hayfields, orchards, and frog ponds used to abound—to places of work, commerce, or recreation, anywhere in the East Bay or San Francisco.

Running on the two electric streetcar lines that served Ashby Station were the red car and the blue car. The red car, called the “Shattuck,” came up from Oakland, veering at 47th Street to travel along Shattuck Avenue, crossed Ashby Avenue to Dwight Way, where it turned up Ellsworth Street, then turned north to Allston Way (site of Edwards Stadium). The blue car, called the “Lorin,” used the same track from Oakland, but continued on 47th Street to travel along Grove Street to Downtown Berkeley at Center Street (in 1898, these streetcar routes were consolidated to become a part of the future Key System). Still, it was not until after the turn of the century that the influence of the streetcar finally stimulated the development of Ashby Station. And it was not really until after the commencement of the construction of the Webb Building on Ashby Avenue in 1905 and the aftermath of the San Francisco Earthquake and Fire the following year that Ashby Station’s lots were filled up with homes.16

![Figure 59. 3021 & 3025 Adeline Street in 1903 (Sanborn map)](image)

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In 1903, the Key System began running its first San Francisco-Berkeley electric train, the F Line, along Adeline Street. As indicated in the 1903 Sanborn maps, Ashby Station was still sparsely developed at the time. Two recently constructed commercial buildings, still standing today, faced the train stop on Adeline Street between Ashby Avenue and Emerson Street: the Albert E. Hargraves building at 3021 Adeline and the Gustav Möller building at 3025 Adeline (Figs. 59 & 60).

Figure 60. The Hargraves & Möller buildings, 1969 (BAHA archives)

Figure 61. The red “Shattuck” car amid Mark Ashby’s cornfields. Published in “Early Day Trolleys of the East Bay,” The Western Railroader, Vol. 22, No. 4; February 1959.
Block 1595, where the Hull Undertaking Co. complex is situated, contained five buildings in 1903. At the southeast corner of Adeline and Emerson, Alsatian immigrant Jacob Lentz had constructed a two-story building in 1895. The building contained two shops (one of them a saloon17) on the ground floor and residential space on the second. According to the 1897 Berkeley directory, Lentz offered furnished rooms in his building.

Immediately to the south of Lentz’s building, at 3029 (later 3039) Adeline, stood the two-story, brown-shingle residence of George W. Werner, a German-born cement contractor. The house was designed by William Garfield May and built in 1902. Werner’s parcel was L-shaped and wrapped around Lentz’s lot.

At the southeastern corner of Block 1595, facing Tremont Street, stood a row of three almost identical one-story houses designed by A.W. Smith for William C. Moran, a realtor and insurance agent whose office was located at the northeast corner of Alcatraz and Adeline. These houses were completed in the summer of 1901.

Ashby Station received a major boost in 1905, when the Webb Block was constructed at the northwest corner of Ashby and Adeline. The Oakland Tribune announced the building contract on 8 April under the headline **BOOM AT BERKELEY**: “Christopher Webb has let the contract to Walter Sorensen for the construction of a three-story frame building (5 stories and 10 flats) on the corner of Adeline and Mason streets. The total cost of the block, the plans of which were drawn by C.W. McCall, will be $17,744.”

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17 “Jacob Lentz has commenced work on a saloon at the corner of Emerson and Adeline.” Berkeley Advocate, 8 March 1895.
The Ashby Station district, comprising the Newbury Tract and the Central Park Tract, was largely developed between 1900 and 1910, accounting for its overwhelmingly Colonial Revival style.\footnote{18 See BAHA’s architectural survey map of Ashby Station at \url{http://berkeleyheritage.com/essays/ashby_station_map.html}}

The 1911 Sanborn map (Fig. 65) shows the Newbury Tract as a densely built neighborhood consisting primarily of one- and two-story single-family homes, augmented by some flats. Retail stores (including two bakeries) were concentrated near the train station along Adeline, Ashby, and Emerson. Among the commercial and manufacturing facilities were a hay & coal yard, a contractor’s yard, a mattress factory, a laundry tub factory, and an airplane factory. A fire station and a church were located within the neighborhood.
By 1911, three-quarters of Block 1595 were built up. In 1905, George Werner had constructed a three-story building with a bakery on the corner of Emerson and Tremont streets. In 1910, he had built a store addition onto his house. He had also expanded his cement business by erecting a laundry tub factory behind the house.
Two other buildings had been erected on Emerson Street: a two-story store building and a one-story wagon shed. The only vacant lot remaining on the block was at the southwest corner, future site of the Hull mortuary (Fig. 66).

By 1929, the block had undergone significant changes. The Lentz building was demolished for lumber the previous year. Mr. and Mrs. Werner had separated in the mid-1920s, George had moved to Oakland, the store and laundry tub factory had vanished, and Bertha Werner, listing herself as a widow, rented out rooms in her home. On Emerson Street, the small store building had disappeared, and the wagon shed had been transformed into a car garage. The three Moran houses on Tremont Street had added back-yard garages. The dominant element on the block was now the Hull & Durgin Undertaking Co. complex, then comprising four interconnected buildings. The proprietor, William M. Hull, lived above the mortuary with his wife, Myrtle, and his two sons, James and William Mark, Jr.

**Hull Undertaking Co. Chronology**

The history of the Hull Undertaking Company can be traced back to 1892, when Frank Ward Durgin (1860–1934), a Maine-born cable car gripman, went into the undertaking business in San Francisco. Two years later, with his partner, Robert Bleakley, Durgin opened Berkeley’s first furniture and undertaking business at 2129 Center Street. The business soon grew into two separate side-by-side stores, and in 1900 it moved to 2158–2160 Shattuck Avenue.¹⁹

Around 1906, Bleakley went his own way, opening a furniture store at 2484 Shattuck Avenue. Durgin replaced him with Walter A. Gompertz (1873–1965), a former cashier. Both partners plunged into Berkeley’s civic affairs with gusto. Durgin was a leader in the local State of Maine Association, a member of the executive committee of the Funeral Directors of Alameda County, Grand Pursuivant of the Berkeley Masonic Lodge, and active in the Board of Trade. Gompertz held high offices in the Masonic order and the Knights Templar, besides being a Shriner and an Elk. He would serve on Berkeley’s Board of Town Trustees in 1909, work as the city’s Commissioner of Finance in the mid-1910s, and join the school board in 1915.

The Durgin-Gompertz Company’s premises were located at 2178–2180 Shattuck Avenue. An advertorial in the 25 January 1911 issue of the *Oakland Tribune* called the business Berkeley’s largest furniture store, reporting, “The quarters occupied comprise over 11,000 feet of floor space and are stocked to their utmost capacity with furnishings for the parlor, library, hall, sleeping chamber, dining room, and the kitchen, whether it be a cozy cottage or a more pretentious structure.”

Less than two years into the new partnership, Durgin founded a second mortuary under the name Berkeley Undertaking Co., Inc. This business was located at 2133 Allston Way, and its telephone number, Bkly 1111, differed from that of the Durgin-Gompertz Co. number (Bkly 1110) by a single digit.

By 1911, the presidency of the Berkeley Undertaking Co. had been taken over by William B. Ward. Gompertz continued as officer of both companies until 1915 or so, when Durgin changed the name of the earlier business to F.W. Durgin Undertaking Company.

For several years, the two mortuaries founded by Durgin continued their separate operations, Durgin conducting business and maintaining a residence at 2172–2174 University Avenue, Ward working out of premises at 2201 Bancroft Way.
In 1922, a new player entered the scene. William Mark Hull (1887–1967), a Napa man who had come to Oakland a few years earlier, acquired the modest Tefft Undertaking operation at 2901 Grove Street, renaming it Hull Undertaking Company. The following year, he was in a short-lived partnership with William Ward, doing business as Hull-Ward Undertaking. The partnership didn’t last, but Hull ended up owning the Berkeley Undertaking Co. name and phone number. He purchased the vacant parcel on the northeast corner of Adeline and Essex streets, located three blocks away from his Grove Street funeral parlor. On 20 February 1923, “despite objections voiced at the meeting, the [Berkeley City] council reclassified property at the corner of Adeline and Essex streets to permit the erection of undertaking parlors by E.M. Hull.”20

Hull engaged the Oakland architectural firm of Hutchison & Mills to design a two-story building, accommodating the mortuary on the ground floor and the Hull family’s residence on the second.

The Hull Undertaking Co. building cost $28,000 and opened in February 1924. Its ground floor included the Conservatory Chapel, illuminated by arched French windows. The roof was clad in wood thatch shingles. Beginning with the 1923 directory, the business was listed under two names:

BERKELEY UNDERTAKING CO (A J Hillhouse, W M Hull), Funeral Directors, Adeline ne cor Essex at Ashby Station, Tel Bkly 1111 Berkeley

HULL UNDERTAKING CO (Wm M Hull), Funeral Directors, Adeline ne cor Essex at Ashby Station, Berkeley, Tel Bkly 1111

Alfred Hillhouse left the business in 1925, about the time that William Hull added the Berkeley Ambulance Co. to his stable of companies.

In 1927, Frank Durgin closed his University Avenue business. Coming full circle, he sealed a partnership with Hull and rejoined the business he had founded 35 years earlier, now renamed Hull & Durgin. With the partnership came the moniker “Pioneer Funeral Directors,” which Durgin had been using since 1900.

William Hull ushered a new era for the firm and for Berkeley in 1928, when he commissioned the Oakland architects and engineers Slocombe & Tuttle to design a new chapel next to the mortuary. Designed by Francis Harvey Slocombe (1893–1947), the Little Chapel of the Flowers quickly became Berkeley’s most beloved and celebrated funeral (and later also wedding) chapel.

The chapel was flooded with natural light through gigantic pointed arched dormer windows. Below the dormers, steel-sash walls with floral stained glass lined greenhouse-like galleries extending the length of the nave along the north and south sides. Supporting the soaring vaulted ceiling, massive wooden trusses rose between the dormers. The rough plaster walls were impregnated with terracotta pigmentation that cast a warm glow on the interior. An exquisite stained-glass window above the altar completed the fairytale-like scene.
So striking was the chapel that it immediately became the centerpiece of the mortuary’s marketing effort. The Great Depression struck shortly after the chapel’s opening, and the public may have perceived it as an expensive frill. To counteract such an impression, Hull & Durgin launched an innovative newspaper advertising campaign, in which the point was hammered home that the best funeral service amid beautiful surroundings costs no more than lesser service “in some small, incomplete establishment.” The firm’s slogan was “Economy Without Cheapness.”

The Hull & Durgin ads (see examples in Fig. 74) carried similar layouts and graphics, but the headline and copy changed regularly. One ad, published on 28 December 1932, gave five reasons why “The Little Chapel of the Flowers can provide funeral services of finer character at lower cost.” The first ad claimed, “This beautiful establishment was made possible by fortunate real estate investments on the part of Mr. William M. Hull ... not by taxing patrons.” The second cited lower overhead brought about by high patron volume. The third asserted that “the beautiful buildings, grounds, equipment and motor fleet are owned outright, not leased ... another important economy which is passed along to patrons.” On-site maintenance and volume purchases were pointed out in the fourth. The final reason given was that “the owner of this mortuary participates actively in its management ... thus no high salaries for managers, and no profits going to outside capitalists.”

At the height of its popularity in the late 1940s and 1950s, the non-sectarian chapel served as the venue for over 500 weddings.

21 http://www.oac.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/tf358009d8/?docId=tf358009d8
Frank Durgin died in 1934, but the mortuary’s name remained unaltered until 1941, when it was changed to Hull & Sons.

On 1 December 1936, a permit was obtained to move the former Werner house from 3039 Adeline to 2037 Emerson Street. The space between the Little Chapel of the Flowers and Emerson Street was turned into a parking lot (Fig. 75).
In 1940, architect F. Harvey Slocombe was brought back to design an International Style remodel for the Undertaking Building that modernized the hall and stairs, converted three two-room apartments into five layout rooms, and added a six-foot connecting porch runway.

Figure 76. Second-floor hall, Undertaking Building, January 2015

Hull & Sons celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1942, counting back to Frank Durgin’s founding of his first funeral parlor in 1892.

Figure 77. Fiftieth anniversary commemorated in the Berkeley Gazette, 10 June 1942
In 1945, William Hull applied for a permit to build a public garage at 3026 Tremont Street. In the 1950 Sanborn map, the building is shown at the eastern edge of the Hull parking lot with an attached greenhouse. Today it is a live-work space on a separate parcel and under different ownership.

The Little Chapel Florist shop was built in 1948 at the northern end of the parking lot. Also in 1948, the Hulls’ younger son, William Mark Hull, Jr., entered the business, and the following year he purchased the Walnut Creek mortuary of Ruby & Guy. In 1954, he built a new Ranch-style mortuary, believed to have been designed by F. Harvey Slocombe. It was named Hull Walnut Creek Chapel and is still in operation under the direction of William Mark Hull, III.

In 1961, William and Myrtle Hull sold their Berkeley business along with the parcel to Hull & Son Mortuaries, Inc. The purchasing corporation represented undertakers McNary & Morgan, who took over the mortuary, continuing to use the name Little Chapel of the Flowers. They remained here until the end of the decade, when they moved into the modernist McNary & Morgan Chapel at 3030 Telegraph Avenue (now part of the Alta Bates campus).

In September 1971, Hull & Son Mortuaries, Inc. sold the parcel to a group of six investors that included Hugh D. Morgan of McNary & Morgan (22.46%), Larry Campbell (18.67%), Richard L. Tretheway (18.67%), David Herzig (14%), Donald G. Cadoo (13.10%), and Paul St. Amand (13.10%). Under the ownership of this group, the mortuary complex was converted into offices and shops.
On 19 April 1972, the Berkeley Gazette reported that “one of Berkeley’s well-known landmarks” had assumed a new identity: “Renamed ‘Ashby Station Plaza,’ the 49-year-old, architecturally appealing property is now being redeveloped as a commercial center.”

The one time funeral home complex housed some evening classes of the Berkeley Unified School District until recently.

With its proximity to south Berkeley’s new Bay Area Rapid Transit station and the advent of its revitalized use, Ashby Station Plaza is expected to create a “new era image” for the historic site, according to developers George E. Steneberg and Thomas C. O’Mara.22

The article went on to inform that negotiations were then in progress for “the conversion of the picturesque chapel itself into a restaurant.”

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Steneberg and O’Mara’s sales brochure advertised the property as a 17,000-
square-foot, multi-story facility with a three-street frontage and great potential
for varied commercial activities.

The complex was sold in April 1973 to John F. Chase, Jr. (1917–1984) and his
wife, Rose Mary (Pittman) Chase.

The 1970s and ’80s were an eventful period for the Hull Undertaking Co.
complex. Beginning in 1975, the former garage at 1915 Essex Street became the
home of the West Coast Print Center, established by Don Cushman to provide
low-cost printing services to the local literary community.

Its offset presses and photographic darkroom, platemakers and light
tables, were industrial, not craft, equipment. Language poetry flourished,
along with procedural writing and conceptual work in the experimental
tradition. A steady stream of chapbooks, magazines, and small press
publications gave evidence of the vitality of literary activity that connected
the Bay Area art, literary, and performance scenes to those of Southern
California (Beyond Baroque and other sites) as well as to a national network
of activities in New York’s alternative spaces (Franklin Furnace, The Kitchen,
Printed Matter) and beyond.23

With the help of grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the West
Coast Print Center supported a thriving literary publishing scene.

The list of that time’s significant activity looks generationally gargantuan
compared to today’s scaled down hopes. There were John McBride and Paul
Vangelisti’s Red Hill Press, George Mattingly’s Blue Wind, Johanna
Drucker’s involvement with Rebis as well as her own Chaste Press, there was
Cushman’s and Dave Bullen’s Cloud Marauder, Ishmael Reed’s various
imprinturs including I. Reed Books, there was Alta’s Shameless Hussy,
Frances Butler and Alastair Johnston’s Poltroon, Jerry Ratch and Mari-Anne
Hayden’s Sombre Reptiles, Bill Berkson’s Big Sky, Barry Watten’s This, Bob
Perelman’s Hills; and there were Jack Shoemaker’s Sand Dollar, Michael
Wolfe’s Tombuctou, David Meltzer’s Tree, Robert Hawley’s Oyez, Donald
Allen’s Four Seasons, Curtis Faville’s L, Richard Grossinger’s North Atlantic
Books, Bob Callahan’s Turtle Island & Stephen Rodefer’s PickPocket, to name
some, but by no means all, of the press activity.24

Almost 700 books printed at the West Coast Print Center are collected in the
F.W. Olin Library at Mills College. The Print Center soon expanded to take over
the second-floor apartment and remained at 1911–1915 Essex Street for about 15
years.

In 1976, Winlock “Lock” Miller entered into a partnership with Marmot
Mountain Works, opening a pioneering wilderness equipment store in the Little
Chapel of the Flowers. In time, Miller became the store’s sole owner.


23 Johanna Drucker. “From Bohemia to conceptual writing: Literary publishing and printing in
California from 1890 to the present.” Jacket2. http://jacket2.org/commentary/bohemia-
conceptual-writing-literary-publishing-and-printing-california-1890-present

http://www.geoffreyyoung.com/thefigures/history.html
Both stores became Berkeley institutions, each remaining for 36 years.

In 1998, Lock Miller created Locker LLC, through which he acquired the entire parcel from Rose Mary Chase. Locker LLC sold the parcel to the current owner in October 2012.

The Little Chapel of the Flowers is now occupied by Trackers Earth, an educational organization teaching outdoor and traditional survival skills to children and adults.

Principal Personalities

**Frank Ward Durgin (1860–1934)**

Franklin Ward Durgin was born in Otisfield, Maine, in April 1860. His father, Benjamin F. Durgin, was a farmer. Benjamin died in 1864, aged 34, and Frank’s mother remarried two year later. Her new husband, David E. Bean, was a middle-aged widower. Frank and his sister Harriet grew up on their stepfather’s farm in Brownfield, Maine. At the age of 20, Frank was enumerated in the 1880 U.S. Census as “works on farm.”

By the time he was 28, Frank had migrated west, was living at 1585 Valencia Street, San Francisco, and working as a gripman. In 1892, his voter registration indicated that he was an undertaker residing at 2429 Mission Street.

Frank Durgin moved to Berkeley about 1894, establishing with partner Robert Bleakley a furniture and undertaking business at 2129 Center Street, between Oxford Street and Shattuck Avenue.

Durgin & Bleakley was Berkeley’s first mortuary. In 1895, newspapers reported two controversial cases in which the coroner, based in Oakland, sent corpses to an Oakland undertaker against the wishes of the deceased or their families, who had specified Durgin & Bleakley for the funerals.

Initially, both partners lived at the business premises. Within a year, the enterprise had grown sufficiently to separate furniture store from mortuary and
residence from business. Durgin managed the undertaking half, while Bleakley ran the furniture store. In 1900, they began describing themselves in the city directory as “Pioneer Funeral Directors and Embalmers.” By 1901, the business had moved down the block to the very heart of downtown Berkeley. An ad in *Sunset* magazine placed them in the Library Building, 2158–2160 Shattuck Avenue.

In 1896, Frank married Laura Lillian Boynton (1875–1948), daughter of the pioneering Berkeley builder Ira Boynton (also Maine-born), who in 1889 built all the Victorian houses surviving in Peralta Park, as well as several designated landmarks in other parts of town. The Boyntons were related to Moses Chase, one of the earliest residents of Oakland.

Frank Durgin was involved in civic affairs from his earliest days in Berkeley. He was a leader in the local State of Maine Association, a member of the executive committee of the Funeral Directors of Alameda County, Grand Pursuivant of the Berkeley Masonic Lodge, and active in the Board of Trade.

He was also a good friend of architect and Civil War veteran William Wharff, a fellow Maine native and Mason, who designed the Berkeley Masonic Temple on Shattuck Avenue at Bancroft Way.

At the time of his death, on 20 March 1934, Frank Durgin was living at 1165 Sutter Street.

*Figure 81. L to r: Frank Durgin, William Wharff, Mr. Jory, Muriel Durgin & Victoria at Berkeley Camp, south fork of Tuolumne River, 1920s (Durgin family collection, BAHA archives)*
William Mark Hull (1887–1967)

William Mark Hull was born in Napa, California, on 22 October 1887. His father, Thomas Hull (1861–1955), was born in Johnstown, NY, while his mother, Mary Ann Parsons (1865–1948), was a native of Oxfordshire, England.

Thomas Hull came to California in his twenties. Having worked in a skin mill in his hometown, Thomas found employment as a leather dresser in Napa’s tanning industry, later becoming a janitor in Napa’s public library.

After completing high school, William went to work as a traveling hardware salesman and settled in Modesto, where he married Myrtle Elizabeth Heffelman in 1914. His parents, sister, and grandfather had moved to Berkeley about 1911, shortly after the completion of the First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Thomas Hull began a new career as a Christian Science practitioner.

By 1917, William Hull had become an undertaker, joining an established Modesto funeral director as a partner. He left the partnership to serve in World War I, later moving to Oakland. In December 1919, the Hulls’ first son, James, was born, and William was employed as an embalmer.

About 1922, Hull took over the business of the short-lived Tefft Undertaking Company at 2901 Grove Street, on the corner of Russell Street. The premises were in an old house, and Hull looked for another location where he could build a new mortuary and a residence for his family. He found it three blocks away, on the corner of Adeline and Essex streets. The property was not zoned for undertaking parlors, but on 20 February 1923, the Berkeley City Council reclassified it.

The Hulls’ second son, William Mark, Jr., was born on 1 December 1923 at Berkeley General Hospital. The family lived above the business until 1930, when they built a Storybook Style house, designed by F. Harvey Slocombe, at 611 Arlington Avenue.

In the late 1930s, the Hulls moved to the Walnut Creek area, then bought a ranch a mile north of Dublin, built a home there, and kept cattle and horses. They acquired an existing Walnut Creek mortuary in 1949 and built a new facility there in 1954. The Hulls sold their Berkeley mortuary in 1961. William M. Hull died on 20 February 1967 in Reno, Nevada.
Architects

**Hutchison & Mills**

Robert Hutchison and Reginald Mills established their Oakland architectural firm in 1921. The pair’s activities as a partnership appear to have been confined to the 1920s, and their last Berkeley projects were built in 1928.

Reginald Louis Mills (1893–1950) was born in St. Louis, Missouri, the son of an Episcopalian minister. Following the father’s clerical appointments, the Mills family moved several times, eventually settling in Oakland, where Rev. Mills became vicar of the Holy Innocents’ Church. Rev. Mills died in 1916, while Reginald was studying architecture at the University of California. In 1917, the young Mills set himself up as a self-employed draftsman in Oakland.

Robert Alexander Hutchison (1887–1973) was born in Scotland and immigrated to California as a young boy. His father, the owner of a delivery company, died early, and his widowed mother kept a rooming house to make ends meet. It is possible that financial strictures forced Hutchison to begin working immediately after completing his high school education. Nothing is known about his architectural training. In the 1910 U.S. Census, while he was 22 years old, Hutchison was enumerated as an architect with his own office, although at the time he was not yet a licensed architect.25

Before teaming up with Reginald Mills, Hutchison worked with Clement C. MacLean, with whom he designed, in 1915, seven houses for John D. Garretson on the 1500 block of Julia Street. In 1919, as a solo practitioner, Hutchison designed three Berkeley projects, the most notable being a house for civil engineer J.H.G. Wolf at 2700 Claremont Blvd.

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25 In his eligibility evaluation of the Schlueter Building (1951 Shattuck Avenue at Berkeley Way), architectural historian Michael Corbett notes that Hutchison and Mills were not granted their licenses until 3 July 1926.
By the time they teamed up in 1921, Hutchison & Mills had acquired sufficient reputation to be awarded substantial projects, including not only single-family residences but also distinctive apartments and store buildings, many of which are still standing.
A significant portion of the firm’s store buildings were designed for Frederick Ernest Romie (1884–1946), a scion of the first family of Pebble Beach, or for contractor-developer Leslie R. Wilson (1884–1968) of 2216 Blake Street, who also built for Romie.

In March 1924, the Architect & Engineer published an article by Reginald Mills titled “Improved Store Building Design,” which began with the following paragraph:

It is gratifying to note that architects are putting more character into their designs of medium cost store buildings, particularly in the outlying districts of cities where stores are necessary to take care of community demands. Oakland and Berkeley have quite a few of this improved type, the accompanying pictures being selected as typical examples.

The images accompanying the article (some of them mislabeled) included photos of store buildings—all designed by Hutchison & Mills—at 2240 and 2250 Bancroft Way, 2961 and 2992 College Avenue (all still standing, although 2961 College was shorn of its Gothic-style ornamentation), and a plan for a store building at 2330 Telegraph Ave. and Durant (demolished). An adjacent store building at 2362 Telegraph Ave., also built for Frederick Romie, still stands, albeit much altered.

Hutchison & Mills’ last Berkeley projects were an apartment building for James Dowling at 1717 Euclid Ave. and a store building for Romie at 3266 Adeline Street.
Figure 86. Apartments for R.J. Sheridan (1923), 2820 Prince Street (Google Street View, 2015)

Figure 87. Schlueter Building (1922), 1951–75 Shattuck Avenue (photo: Michael Corbett, 2014)

Figure 88. Singer-McKinney House (1925), 1317 Albina Ave. (Google Street View, 2015)
Figure 89.

Top left: Store building for Leslie R. Wilson (1923), 2992–98 College Avenue (courtesy of H. Tulanian & Sons)

Top right: Store building for F.E. Romie (1923), 2240 Bancroft Way, (Google Street View, 2015)

Bottom left: Store building for F.E. Romie (1921), 2961 College Avenue (1939, Ormsby Donogh files, BAHA archives)

Figure 90. Store building for F.E. Romie (1928), 3266 Adeline St. (Google Street View, 2011)
The Hutchison & Mills partnership appears to have broken up by 1930. The U.S. Census of that year listed the two architects as independent practitioners. Mills soon moved to Siskiyou County. Upon his return to Oakland, he went to work for the Federal Home Loan Administration and continued as a government employee for the rest of his life. Hutchison remained in private practice and continued to design Berkeley projects into the 1940s, including several buildings for the Jacuzzi brothers.

**Francis Harvey Slocombe (1893–1947)**

The son of Canadian Quakers, Francis Harvey Slocombe was born on 1 July 1893 in Chicago, Illinois. His father worked in retail stores as a salesman and buyer. Harvey studied architecture in the Towne Scientific School (later Towne School of Engineering) at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. While a student, he claimed exemption from the World War I draft on grounds of religious creed.

By 1920, Slocombe was living in San Francisco. The U.S. Census of that year listed him as a draftsman. The following year, he was being touted as “The firm of Francis Harvey Slocombe, architects and engineers, of New York and San Francisco” when the *Oakland Tribune* publicized developer Fred T. Wood’s Lakemont tract on Haddon Hill. The home-buying public was informed that Slocombe’s “firm has completed a series of sketches of homes in all types of architecture—French, English, Italian Renaissance, and the types particularly appropriate to the splendid view lots of Lakemont.”

![Figure 91. Slocombe designs for Lakemont (Oakland Tribune, 8 May 1921)](#)

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26 “Designs Made to Fit Every Lakemont Lot.” *Oakland Tribune*, 17 April 1921.
27 “A Special Home Design to Fit Every Lot in the Tract.” *Oakland Tribune*, 8 May 1921.
In April 1923, *Home Designer* magazine published Slocombe’s plan for “An Italian Home,” presumably built the previous year.

Figure 92. An Italian Home (Home Designer, April 1923)

In 1923, Slocombe began a brief partnership with Roy Bancroft, when both architects were living and practicing in the St. Mark Hotel in downtown Oakland. One known project of this partnership is a building for Chinese herbalist Fong Wan at 576 10th Street, Oakland. Still standing, it represents a departure from the European period revival styles Slocombe had used until then.

Figure 93. Fong Wan Building (Herb Lore, 1936)
One of Slocombe’s early solo projects in Berkeley was a stucco-clad, flat-roofed Mediterranean-style house, built in 1924 at 1624 Euclid Avenue for future Berkeley Postmaster Louis W. Kenealy, who lost his nearby home in the 1923 fire.

Figure 94. Kenealy House (1924), 1624 Euclid Avenue (Google Street View, 2015)

Another solo project was the Rockridge Masonic Temple (1926) at 5449 College Avenue, Oakland.

Figure 95. Rockridge Masonic Temple, built in 1926 (photo: Our Oakland)
Slocombe’s next partnership was with Paul Vincent Tuttle, a draftsman who listed himself as architect. During the firm’s brief existence, Slocombe & Tuttle managed to produce designs for several high-profile commissions, including the Tracy Inn (1926, listed in the National Register); Casa de Vallejo (1927); and Hotel Alameda (1927). In these projects, the architects utilized Spanish Revival and Moderne elements, sometimes combining the two styles in one building.
In Berkeley, Slocombe & Tuttle designed a house at 116 Southampton and a Moderne three-story apartment building at 2538 Durant Avenue (1926). The Little Chapel of the Flowers appears to have been their last project. The plans were drawn in April 1928, when the firm was no longer listed in the city directory. Given that F. Harvey Slocombe went on to design the Hull residence at 611 Arlington Avenue in 1930 and the interior remodel of the mortuary in 1940, it can be deduced that he was responsible for the design of the Little Chapel of the Flowers.

In 1936, Slocombe employed the Streamline Modern style in designing the distinctive Kurkjian residence at 1815 Leimert Blvd., Oakland.
Slocombe also designed for the mass market. In 1940, he was hired by Oakland developer Chauncey P. Pond to design modestly sized, one-story house prototypes for a new subdivision in San Leandro. Throughout 1941, full-page ads in the *Oakland Tribune* featured the various architectural styles available in the 102-home Pond Tract, including “Cape Cod, Colonial, English and Monterey type of homes ... all designed by Francis Harvey Slocombe, noted Architect ... in accordance with a master scheme.”
Slocombe received one of the largest commissions of his career in 1945, when he was charged with designing Reno’s famed Mapes Hotel.

Figure 102. Slocombe’s rendering for the Mapes Hotel (Nevada State Journal, 2 Dec. 1945)

The architect was hired to design the 12-story, 300-room Mapes on the strength of his prior experience in hotel design. The Art Deco styling was meant to emulate New York City’s Empire State and Chrysler buildings.\(^{28}\) When opened in 1947, the Mapes was the tallest building in Nevada. The final design omitted the two spires, opting instead for a built-out penthouse floor. The hotel closed in 1982 and was demolished in 2000.

Figure 103. The Mapes Hotel as built

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\(^{28}\) Reno Historical. Mapes Hotel. [http://renohistorical.org/items/show/9 - VL9e11ogsrg](http://renohistorical.org/items/show/9 - VL9e11ogsrg)
Among Slocombe’s final projects is the Fremont Pool in Oakland. With associate Leland R. Raymond, he designed the San Andreas Church School (1946) and a plan for the School of Tropical and Preventive Medicine at Loma Linda University (1947, unbuilt).

Francis Harvey Slocombe passed away on 22 March 1947, aged 53.

16. Significance:

Consistent with Section 3.24.110A.1.b., The Hull Undertaking Company complex possesses architectural merit. It is an outstanding example of Storybook Style architecture, was featured in the book *Storybook Style: America's Whimsical Homes of the Twenties* by Arrol Gellner (Viking Studio, 2001), and is listed in the State Historic Resources Inventory with the status code 3S (appears eligible for the National Register through survey evaluation).

**The Undertaking Building** (1923), located at 3051 Adeline Street, is the most notable example in Berkeley of the work of the Oakland architectural firm Hutchison & Mills, which was active in 1921–1928, designing attractive store buildings and apartments that continue to contribute to the character of Berkeley’s built environment. Featuring a round-edged, thatch-like roof, half-timbering, stucco walls embedded with stones, leaded-glass windows, and numerous arched French doors, the Undertaking Building embodies the romantic tendency in the 1920s to borrow quaint, rustic elements from English vernacular architecture.

**The Little Chapel of the Flowers** (1928), located at 3049 Adeline Street, is the best surviving example of the work of architect Francis Harvey Slocombe, designer of the legendary Mapes Hotel in Reno. Featuring an organically shaped bell tower; a rolling, thatch-like roof with huge dormers; an abundance of leaded glass, stained glass, and steel sash; and the liberal use of brick and stone combined with rough stucco, this instantly memorable building is unique in Berkeley and has remained essentially unchanged over its 87-year life.

Consistent with Section 3.24.110A.1.c., the Hull Undertaking Company complex is an architectural example worth preserving for the exceptional value it adds to the neighborhood fabric. It is the only example of Storybook Style in the Ashby Station district, which comprises a very high percentage of Colonial Revival buildings constructed during the first decade of the 20th century.
Consistent with Section 3.24.110A.2, the Hull Undertaking Company complex possesses cultural value. During the 1940s and ’50s, the Little Chapel of the Flowers was Berkeley’s most beloved wedding venue. Beginning in the mid-1970s, the Hull Undertaking Co. complex underwent a transformation, becoming a hub for cultural uses. Long-term tenants included the West Coast Print Center, which served the literary community and printed hundreds of poetry books and literary publications; the Fifth String Music Store, an important gathering point for acoustic string players; and Marmot Mountain Works, a world-renowned wilderness equipment store.

Consistent with Section 3.24.110A.4, the Hull Undertaking Company complex possesses historic value. The Hull Undertaking Company represented a continuous chain of ownership from Berkeley’s first mortuary, established by Frank W. Durgin in 1894. Durgin rejoined the business in the late 1920s, and the firm was known as Hull & Durgin until 1941.

The Hull Undertaking Company complex retains integrity of location, design, materials, setting, feeling, and association.

Historic Value: City Yes Neighborhood Yes
Architectural Value: City Yes Neighborhood Yes

17. Is the property endangered? Possibly.

18. Reference Sources:


Building permits. BAHA; City of Berkeley.

Alameda County assessment records. BAHA.

Berkeley and Oakland city directories. BAHA; Berkeley Historical Society; Ancestry.com.

Block files. BAHA.

Tract maps. BAHA.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. BAHA.

Assessor’s block maps. Alameda County Assessor’s Office.


Ormsby Donogh files. BAHA.

David Rumsey Historical Map Collection. http://www.davidrumsey.com


19. Recorder: Daniella Thompson, 2663 Le Conte Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94709

Date: June 2015