FRANKLIN PANCOAST paid the prodigious sum of $4,000 for his Italianate-style home on Everett Street. Perhaps Enoch Pardee's Oakland home, built in 1868 in the same style, influenced the Alameda squatter.

Italianate

In 1870, when Franklin Pancoast hired builder George Severance to build his home in Alameda, about 400 families lived in the township. According to local historian J. Monro-Fraser, Alameda had made "prodigious strides toward prosperity." Most of the township's residents "owned their own premises," Monro-Fraser informed the readers of M. W. Wood's 1883 *History of Alameda County*.

The Central Pacific Railroad's first transcontinental train had crossed the peninsula less than a year before Pancoast hired Severance. And George Lewis had just announced he had started a stagecoach line from Alameda by way of the towns of San Antonio and Brooklyn (in present-day East Oakland) for the less-daring not willing to take advantage of a new-fangled mode of transportation.

Town fathers were also seriously talking about making Oakland more accessible by way of a bridge at Webster Street. Monro-Fraser called the 1870 alternative of reaching the city across the estuary a "weary, plodding journey to the slimy banks of the San Antonio Creek and across it to Oakland."

Pancoast and Severance chose to build a home in the Italianate style and the Pancoast residence has many of the style's features. These include a low-pitched roof, a balanced, symmetrical rectangular shape—disturbed by an addition of a wing on the south side of the home—and tall windows.

The Italianate style began in England in the 1840s, influenced by the late 18th-century Picturesque Movement. Since the turn of the 18th to the 19th century, homes tended to be formal and classical in style. With the Picturesque Movement, however, builders began to design fanciful recreations of Italian Renaissance villas.

MINE SUPERVISOR D. L. Munson built this Italianate-style home on Eagle Avenue for his family in 1875. The following year, Munson joined other Alameda nabobs as a founding member of the Alameda Loan and Building Association.

Alexander Jackson Davis introduced Italianate as an alternative to Gothic or Greek Revival styles. When the style moved to the United States, builders and designers reinterpreted it, creating a uniquely American style. *Blandwood*, the governor's mansion in North Carolina, completed in 1846, claims to be the oldest example of Italianate architecture in the United States.

One of the earliest—and more famous—Italianate-style homes is San Jose's Fallon House. When Thomas Fallon built the home in 1855, he deliberately made it higher than city hall. Fallon called his home the "prettiest in San Jose."

Typical of the Italianate style, the Fallon House has two stories, a low pitched roof, wide overhangs, a rectangular floor plan, tall ceilings and tall windows with decorative crowns. The home still stands on the corner of San Pedro and W. St. John streets in San Jose.

DENTIST M. F. BISHOP built this home on Clement Avenue in 1876 and lived here with his wife, Jennie, and daughter, Mary.

By the time the transcontinental railroad pulled into Alameda, Italianate was the most popular house style in the United States. Just a year earlier in 1868, prominent Oakland physician Enoch Pardee chose this style for his home. The home still exists at 11th and Castro streets in Oakland.

Perhaps Pancoast and Severance drew inspiration from the Pardee home. Pardee, however, chose to take a step that Pancoast decided against: Pardee added the square tower—a cupola—that characterizes the Italian villa. Although Pancoast chose to dispense with the cupola, he did add a porch and wide balcony to give his family's home a personality of its own.

Other families built homes in the Italianate style in the neighborhood around the Pancoast home. In 1875, D. L. Munson chose this style for his family's home on Eagle Avenue. The Munson home is a taller, more rectangular home, reminiscent of Italianate homes found in larger cities.

Munson was a mining superintendent; he lived in the home with his wife, Mary, and son, Harry. A third Italianate-style home in the neighborhood gives a taller, more massive appearance than the Pancoast or Munson home.

The Munson and Bishop homes have distinctive Italianate features not seen in the plainer Pancoast home: a bay window, taller windows with hood moldings and brackets that define the cornice line.

Before we move on to the Second Empire style, let's have a look at the Pardee family's Italianate villa in Oakland and go on a hike through Squatter Pancoast's land. And we can't forget A.A. and Emilie Cohen's exquisite Fernside villa.

Field trip!

The Pardee's Italianate villa

Pardee Home Musuem
627 11th Street
Oakland, CA 94607

(510) 444-2187
www.pardeehome.org

ENOCH PARDEE BUILT this Italianate villa in 1868 for his wife, Mary, and son, George. George was elected California governor in 1902 and is best remembered as the "Earthquake Governor" for his remarkable leadership after the Great San Francisco Earthquake and Fire in 1906. The home's furnishings and collections are original and authentic, and the guided tour includes the entire house, the gardens and the carriage house.

Take a hike!

Squatter Pancoast

Alameda founders William Worthington Chipman and Gideon Aughinbaugh got more than land when they sealed their deal with Don Antonio Peralta on October 22, 1851. When they purchased the *Bolsa de Encinal,* they inherited the Don's squatters. James J. Foley inherited some of these "knights errant"—as Chipman called these land-grabbers—when he purchased 104.4 acres from Chipman and Aughinbaugh. One of these was Franklin Pancoast.

Foley accused Pancoast of squatting on the northern portion of his property. Before Foley could lift a finger, his uninvited guest had a substantial operation under-way. Imelda Merlin tells us that Chipman recorded in his diary that Foley gave Pancoast five acres in 1851 for "squatter's relinquishment of the rest of his land."

The 1860 federal census lists Pancoast as a farmer with real estate valued at $13,000 and a personal estate worth $4,000. He had a household that included himself, his 3-year-old son, Albert, and 1-year-old daughter, Ann.

A cook and a housekeeper attended to the family. Pancoast also kept farmer Joseph Colson and ten laborers under his roof.

Four years after the 1860 census, Alfred A. Cohen's San Francisco & Alameda Railroad arrived in Alameda, its tracks bisecting Pancoast's farm.

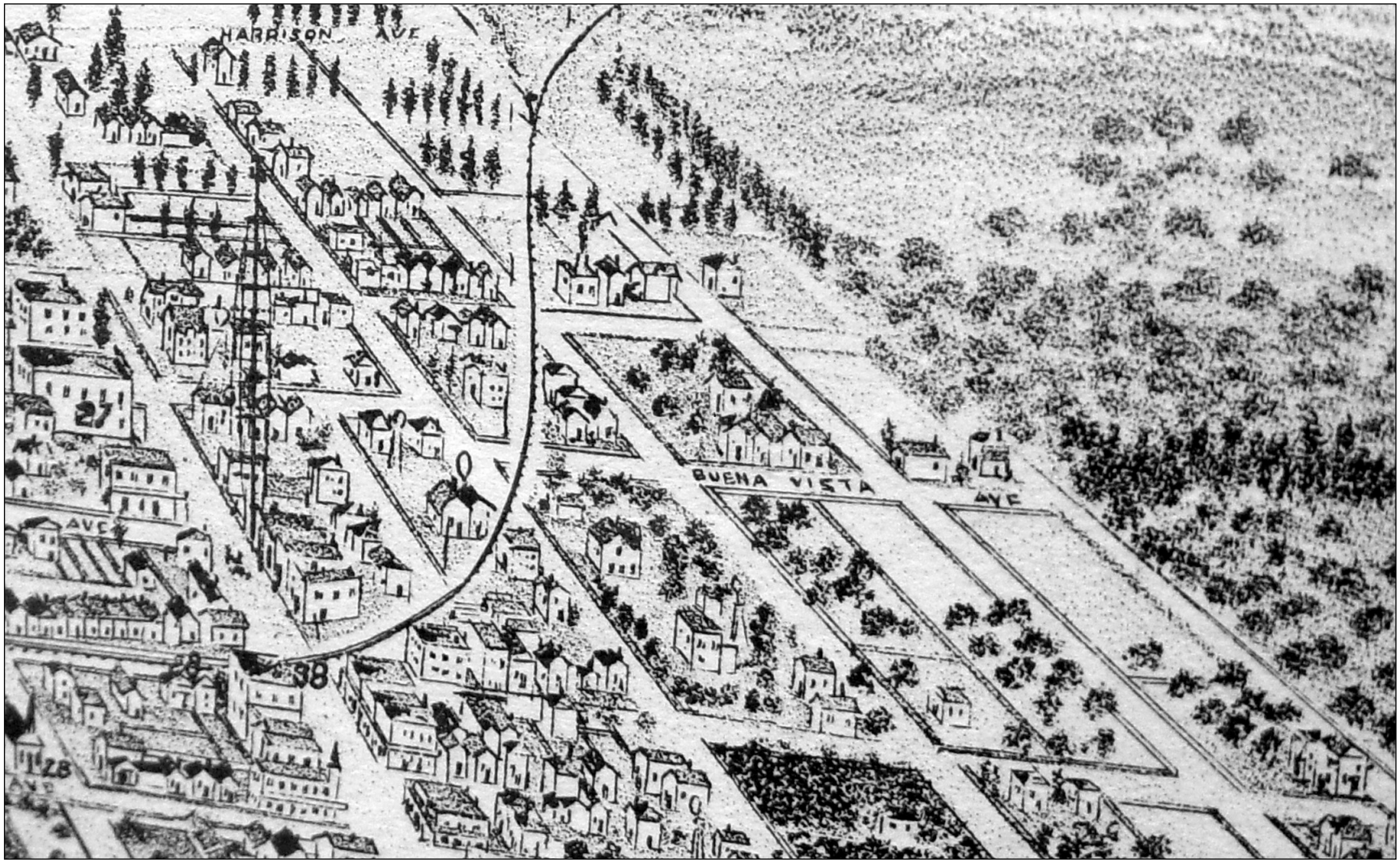
James J. Foley's tract was divided up sometime in the 1870s as crops gave way to homes. Foley Street is all that reminds us of the early property owner. In 1874 the government approved plans to connect the estuary with San Leandro Bay. When the canal was finished, water would flow right by the neighborhood. An 1875 map shows renewed interest in the real estate between the train station on Park Street and new waterway. Franklin Pancoast's farm has been reduced to the small Pancoast Tract.

Banker Levi Jenks likely partnered with Simeon P. Meads to create the "Jenks & Meads Homestead." (Jenks was the president of the original Bank of Alameda, which opened its doors on September 7, 1878. The following October, the institution changed its name to the First National Bank of Alameda.)

Investors also put their hopes in a homestead named for the nearby Alameda Station.

As the 19th century turned to the 20th, homes and businesses began to fill the fields that Franklin Pancoast had farmed with his household. In 1902 estuary water began to flow along the new neighborhood.

Let's take a walk and see what's become of Franklin Pancoast's old neighborhood.



RAILROAD TRACKS CURVE through the neighborhood on today's Tilden Way. This detail from the 1888 *Alameda Argus* map shows the Southern Pacific Railroad's station on Park Street (38) with a light mast just to the north. The Central Pacific Railroad absorbed A.A. Cohen's San Francisco & Alameda Railroad in 1869. The Southern Pacific Railroad absorbed the Central Pacific the following year. Compare this map to the ones on the next page.

Our exploration of Franklin Pancoast's old farmlands starts and ends at Lincoln Avenue and Park Street. (The letters in the text refer to the letters on the map on the right.) As we start we have to imagine the old train station (A) between Tilden Way and Lincoln Avenue just to your left. Starting in 1864, trains entered Alameda on tracks whose bed later became Tilden Way.

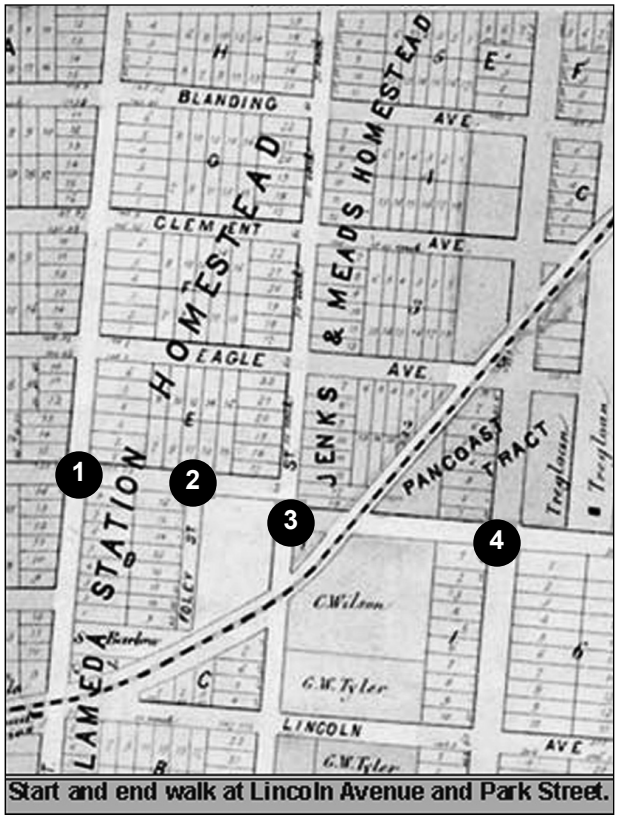
A.A. Cohen built the first station at this spot in 1864. The Southern Pacific Railroad replaced Cohen's station in 1895.

Walk down Lincoln to Everett Street. On the right are three palm trees that define five Colonial Revival homes (B).

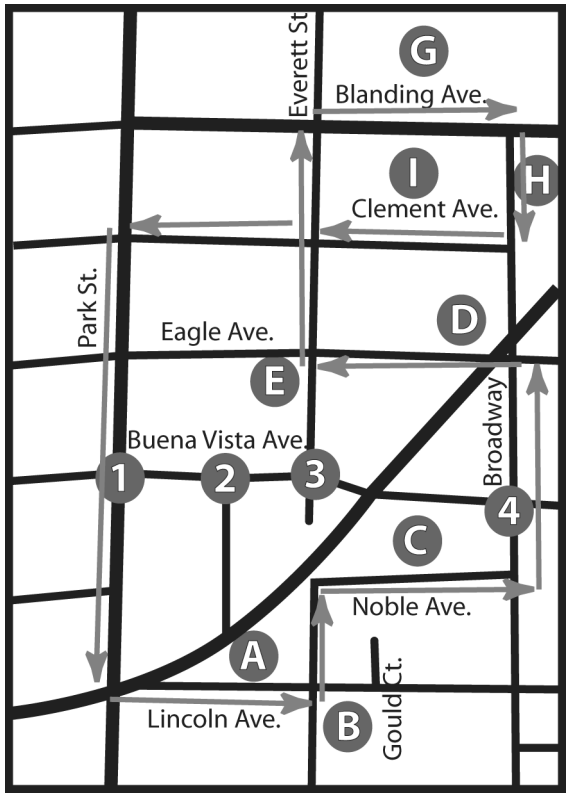
The unknown builder of these handsome homes spiced things up, using the classic box, the peaked gable and the Dutch gambrel roof.

Take a left on Everett and walk one block to Noble Avenue (C). This street is lined with bungalows and remembers George Noble, who was Alameda's most prolific bungalow builder. Walk along the

James J. Foley's tract was divided up sometime in the 1870s as crops gave way to homes. Foley Street is all that's left to remind us of the early property owner.



Start and end walk at Lincoln Avenue and Park Street.



NUMBERS ON EACH MAP show street intersections with Buena Vista Avenue: 1. Park Street; 2. Foley Street; 3. Everett Street; 4. Broadway. Letters refer to stops along the way. Compare these to the *Alameda Argus* map on the previous page.

bungalows until you reach the backyards of the homes along Broadway. The rear of these yards marked the property boundary between James Foley's land and property belonging to former Texas Rangers Jack Hays and John Caperton.

Hays and Caperton also owned property in today's North Oakland and Oakland's Montclair District. Hays served as San Francisco's first sheriff. In 1873, Hays and Caperton had Broadway built through their property from Central to Buena Vista avenues.

Take a left on Broadway, cross Buena Vista Avenue and walk down to Eagle Avenue. Take a left into the cul-de-sac. Notice the handsome green Italianate home here (D). This is the Munson home.

Continue down Eagle Avenue to Everett Street. Look across the street to the left and you'll see Franklin Pancoast's handsome home (E).

Levi Jenks built a more modest home for himself nearby at 2500 Everett Street. Take a right on Everett Street and walk down to Blanding Avenue. Look across Blanding; that's Oakland across the way.

Notice something on the 1875 map? Harrison Avenue is gone; sacrificed to the estuary (F).

Just across the street to the right you'll see the brick building (G) The Alameda Rug Works first did business on this spot. Then the Clamp Swing Pricing Company took over. They manufactured metal card holders that suspended (swung) the price in front of products on store shelves.

Take a right on Blanding Street and walk to the next block. Notice the sign that says "Stone Boat Yard" on the building across the street? That sign is all that remains of one of the area's oldest boatyards and a venerable San Francisco Bay institution. It closed its doors in 2007.

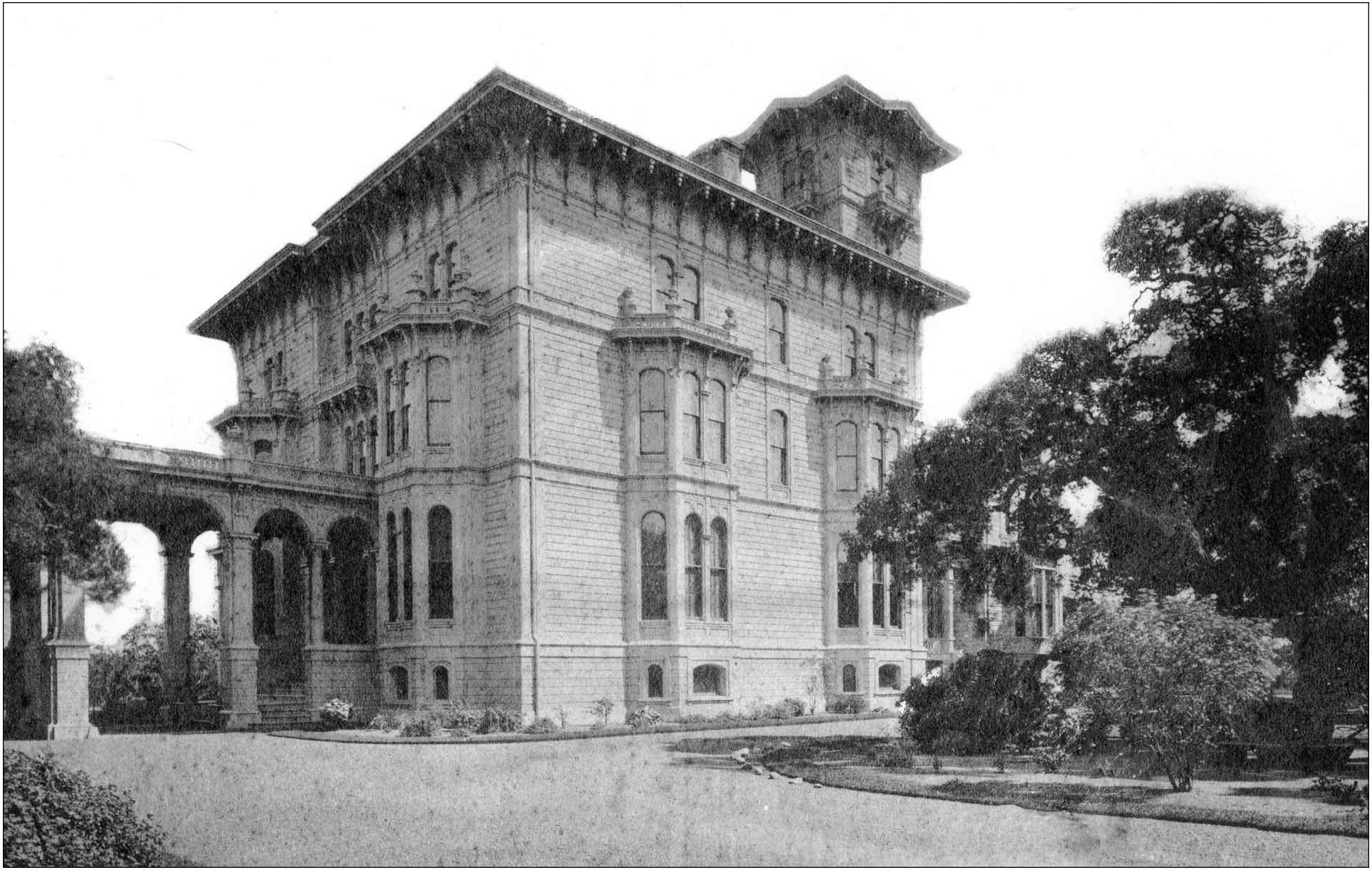
CAPTAIN JACK: San Francisco's first sheriff and celebrated Texas Ranger Captain Jack Hays joined fellow Texas Ranger Major John Caperton to purchase a piece of the *Bolsa de Encinal*.

Take a right onto Broadway. (Be careful, as there's no street sign here). Look across Broadway and you'll see a row of handsome Queen Anne-style homes (H) designed and built by Joseph Leonard (of Leonardville fame) in 1890. They cost $2,500 each to build.

Take a right on Clement Avenue; here you'll see one of the area's smaller dwellings at 2531 Clement. H.N. Maybee built it in 1875. He must have been pleased; he built a similar house across the street at 2532 Clement four years later.

Just down Clement Avenue is the last house on the tour, the Italianate at 2515 (I). Dentist M. F. Bishop moved in with his wife, Jennie,and daughter, Mary, in 1876.

Continue down Clement to Park Street; go left and return to Lincoln Avenue with memories of a stroll through one of Alameda's older but lesser-known neighborhoods.



ALAMEDA'S LOST ITALIANATE VILLA: This Eadweard Muybridge photograph shows the approach to Alfred A. and Emilie Cohen's Italianate-style villa, The entrance to the estate was near the intersection of today's Versailles and Buena Vista avenues.

Fernside

A grand estate

In 1868, Alfred A. Cohen sold the majority of his stock in the Oakland Railroad and Ferry Company to the Central Pacific Railroad's Big Four: Leland Stanford, Charles Crocker, Collis Huntington and Mark Hopkins. A year later he sold the foursome the majority of his San Francisco, Alameda & Haywards Railroad stock.

In September 1869, the transcontinental railroad was set to arrive at San Francisco Bay. There was one problem; the San Francisco & Oakland Railroad's wharf at Gibbons Point was not yet ready to accommodate the trains. Cohen was happy to learn that the history-making train would arrive on "his" tracks—on the "Cohen Line."

When Cohen sold his line to the Central Pacific's Big Four, he became a wealthy man who could afford the best. In 1872, he and his wife, Emilie, hired the architectural firm of Wright and Sanders to help express their affluence.

The following year John Wright and George H. Sanders (variably spelled Saunders) completed the 70-plus-room mansion that anchored the Cohen's palatial estate. In social registers, such as the San Francisco Blue Book, the Cohens listed their residence as "Fernside, Buena Vista & Versailles Avenue, Alameda."

ALFRED A. COHEN described himself as a "horticulturalist" to the federal census taker who knocked at the door of the Cohen residence in 1860. The census taker recorded that Alfred was from England, his wife, Emilie, from Delaware; the couple's two children, Willie and Edgar, were both born in California.

The Cohens had hired no ordinary men to build their home. Five years before they submitted their design to the Cohens, Wright and Sanders had designed the State Asylum for the Deaf, Dumb and Blind in Berkeley (today's Clark Kerr Campus at the University of California).

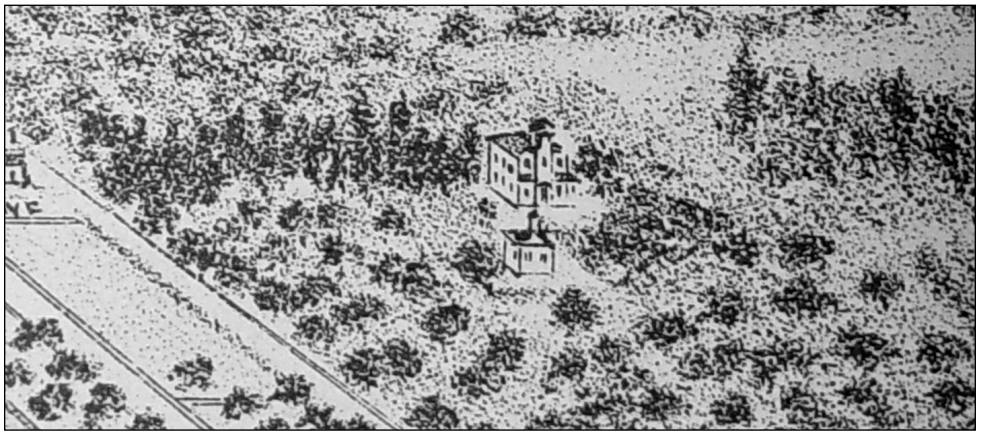
The architects first designed a stone Gothic Revival building for the asylum. When a fire destroyed the structure in January 1875, Wright and Sanders returned to the drawing boards. They designed new buildings that included an educational building, dormitories, support facilities and a private residence for the principal. The asylum's successor, the California Schools for the Deaf and Blind, used these and other later facilities until 1980.

In 1868, Wright and Sanders won the prestigious competition to design the buildings for the University of California's new campus in Berkeley. The pair backed out when they learned the regents would not permit them to be involved in the building process, a step that would have considerably reduced their fee.

Wright and Sanders' Italianate design for the Cohens towered over Fernside. The home with all its trappings was said to have cost the staggering sum of $300,000. In *Ultimate Victorians*, Elinor Richey described the Cohens' home as, "the most splendid of all Italian villas in the East Bay." Richey says that Wright and Sanders—no doubt with some input from London-born A.A. Cohen—used Queen Victoria's summer home on the Isle of Wight as a model.

Richey describes the home as a "vast towered three-story rectangular structure with its sweeping carriage entrance and double porte-cochere." She says it "rather resembled a luxury hotel at a luxury spa." The home so impressed Hopkins that he hired Wright and Sanders to design his Nob Hill home. Crocker and Stanford included some features of the Cohen villa into their own homes.

One impressive feature: visitors could stroll through the Cohens' art gallery, which took up an entire floor, and ogle at paintings by such artists as Albert Bierstadt. Portraits of the Cohen family by Charles Nahl also graced the gallery.



THE ALAMEDA SEMI-WEEKLY ARGUS included A.A. and Emilie Cohen's Fernside mansion and carriage house on its 1888 map.

Cohen remained the president of the San Francisco, Alameda & Haywards Railroad and also served as the Central Pacific's attorney. Richey says that Cohen could scarcely abide members of the Big Four. He looked down on them as, "men whose habits, modes of thought and conversation were not calculated to advance me."

Cohen often clashed with these men, once over how they forced him to leave his private rail car in an out-of-the-way place in the railyards. He resigned as counsel in 1876 in protest over what he called unfair tariffs and practices. He advocated the first bill in California to regulate freight rates.

A.A. Cohen died on Nov. 6, 1887, aboard his private railroad car near Sydney, Nebraska. He was on his way home from New York. He was laid to rest at Oakland's Mountain View Cemetery.

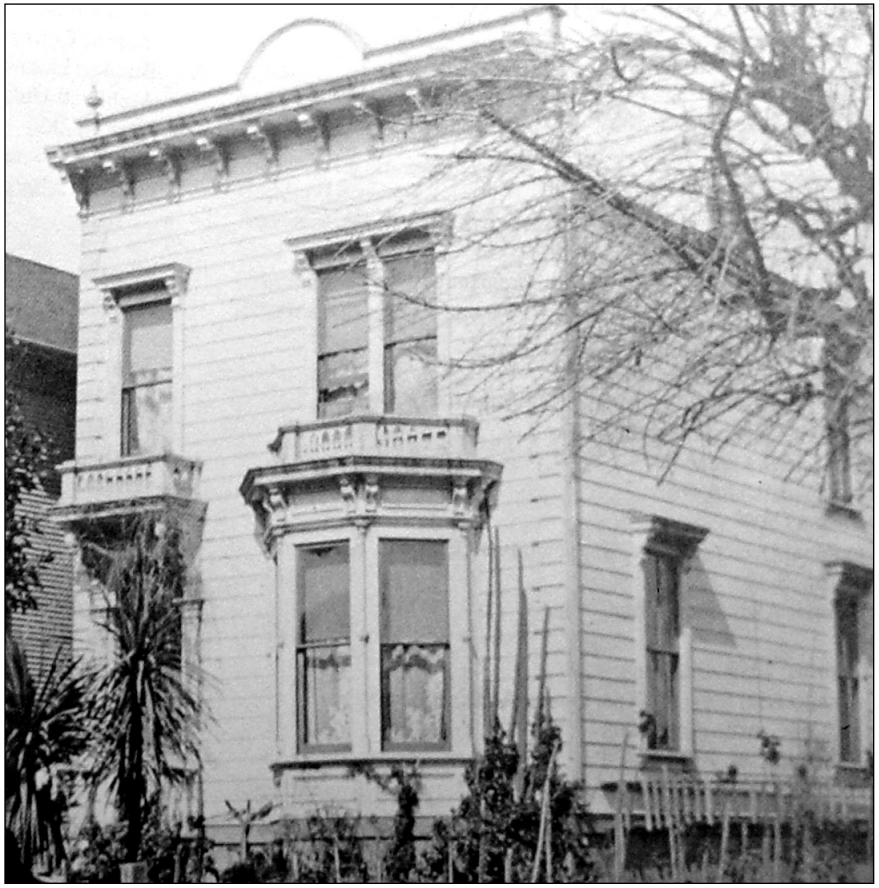
On March 23, 1897, the *New York Times* reported the Cohen family's second devastating loss in 10 years: the fire that destroyed Fernside.

"The handsome residence of the late A.A. Cohen was destroyed by fire from a defective flue," the *Times* told its readers. "The house was filled with elegant furniture and works of art. Many of the pictures in the art gallery had been bought in Europe, and represented a large outlay."

Emilie remained at Fernside after the fire, moving into a less-elegant building on the estate grounds. She had survived the death of her husband; now she survived the fire. When Emilie died in 1925, the children subdivided the estate and sold land to developers south of a boundary line that became Fernside Boulevard. All that's left to remind us of the grand estate's existence in Alameda is the neighborhood's name that echoes its grandeur, "Fernside."

Details, details!

Italianate



HERE'S WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

1. Asymmetrical shapes to imitate the sprawling look of an Italian villa

2. Low-pitched, often flat roofs

3. Bay windows

4. Windows with heavy hoods or elaborate surrounds

5. Quoins: Woodwork that imitates stonework on the building's corners

6. Façade rises above the roofline, called a "false front"

7. Heavy, often elaborately carved supporting brackets under the eaves.

THERE WERE NO RULE BOOKS. Not all Italianate houses had all the elements noted here. For example, the house pictured here is symmetrical, rather than assymmetrical, and the supporting brackets are light, rather than heavy. Did you notice the false front? Read more about this home on pages 107 and 108.