

# GEORGE E. McCREA

Architect  
(1871-1943)

George Edward McCrea was born in Brockville, Ontario, Canada on May 1, 1871 to a Canadian father, Frank, and an American mother, Catherine. He had two younger brothers (Herbert, born in 1873 and Robert, born in 1880). The family emigrated to the United States, passing through Detroit in August 1888. George's father died in 1893 and George became a naturalized citizen, renouncing his allegiance to Queen Victoria, in the Superior Court of Los Angeles County on July 1, 1895.

George moved to San Francisco in the late 1890's, leaving the remainder of his family in Colton, San Bernardino County. He is first listed locally in the 1897 directory as a draftsman working for the Union Iron Works. By 1899, he is shown as an architect with an office in the Hearst Building. George married his four years younger Canadian wife Marie E. (Coonan) in 1898 and they had two sons.

On March 23, 1901, the Governor of California signed An Act to Regulate the Practice of Architecture, thus creating the State Board of Architecture. For six months after approval of the Act, individuals who could demonstrate that they were practicing architecture in the State for a sufficient time prior to 1901 could apply for certification without an examination. Architects who were licensed through this process were given "A" licenses. Just over 300 were issued. After September 23, 1901, the Board began issuing "B" licenses to individuals who passed either a written or oral examination. McCrea was issued license number B416 in 1905.

By 1904, McCrea was working with architect Albert Farr (license A180) who, although 5 months younger, had an established reputation. Farr is the architect of record for 2881 and 2891 Vallejo, the latter parcel having been acquired by the McCrea's in May 1904 and it became their residence until 1908. One of McCrea's first projects was **2727 Vallejo**. The contract notice was recorded in October 1904 with McCrea as 'superintendent', rather than 'architect', because of the licensing rules. The owners, attorney Edward B. Young and his wife Carrie, applied for the water connection in April 1905. In 1909, McCrea, with architect Frank S. Van Trees, designed 2741 Vallejo for D. Lyle Ghirardelli.

In November 1906, McCrea was engaged by the City to design McKinley School at 14th and Castro Streets. Still unpaid for the work by March 1909, he was forced to sue for his 3.5% fee (\$2,677) and a default judgment in his favor was entered in Superior Court in December 1909.

Other notable residences designed by McCrea during a long career are:

- Inner Richmond - 746, 750 and 754 3rd Av., 746 4th Av. (1915);
- Sea Cliff - 738 El Camino Del Mar (1927);
- Marina - 465 Marina Boulevard (1930);
- Telegraph Hill - 266-68 Lombard (1936, now 4 condos);
- Twin Peaks - 86 and 90 Clarendon (also in 1936).



2727 Vallejo

George and Marie moved to Oakland in the mid-1910's, returning to San Francisco in the late 1920's. Marie died on October 4, 1939 in San Francisco and George died on May 22, 1943 in Tiburon.