



PIEDMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

April 5, 2016

Dear Debbi,

Enclosed are the more significant pages from the Ghirardelli files.

The three pages are copies from our 2002 newsletter on the Ghirardelli family. The house at 636 Highland was built by Joseph and Ellen Ghirardelli, and the paragraph on them gives their history.

The page from the Pacific Coast Architect dated May 1915 shows that the Milwain Brothers were the architects of the house as it looks today.

The article from the Piedmont Post dated February 1, 2000 explains why the house was remodeled so soon after it was completed in 1907.

The Oakland Tribune page, dated September 10, 1911, shows a photo of the house still under construction for the remodel. There is no accompanying article with the photo.

Lastly, is a photo of the Ghirardelli house as Ellen Ghirardelli built it in 1906-1907 in the Mission Revival architectural style. Since the house was built before Piedmont was a city, there will not be any building permits for its original construction.

I hope this helps you with your marketing. If you have any questions, please email me at lombardg@pacbell.net.

Gail G. Lombardi

Gail G. Lombardi
Co-Chair

(The Ghirardelli Connection continued from page 1)

It's odd to consider that without James Lick, there might not have been a Ghirardelli Square in San Francisco. Lick had a thriving furniture business in Lima, Peru, where his next door neighbor was Domingo Ghirardelli. Lick sailed for San Francisco in 1847-48 and after seeing firsthand the fortunes that were being made, he wrote to his ex-neighbor urging that Ghirardelli come to California. Fortunately for chocolate lovers, Domingo listened. He sailed into San Francisco Bay in February of 1849 and began a mercantile empire which would consume most male members of his family for the next 100 years.

As early as 1851 Domingo Ghirardelli, Sr., was listed as one of the city's "moneyed men", owning a grocery store, soda fountain, coffee house and 20 room hotel in addition to manufacturing candies, liquors, spices, coffee and chocolate. His Peruvian wife, Carmen, joined him in 1852 and the growing family lived above the manufacturing facility on Jackson Street. Domingo Sr. was civic minded, serving on the 1856 Vigilance Committee, but he chose not to build his home in the rough and sometimes violent San Francisco of those days. He settled, instead, in the city of Oakland in 1859, building a large Italianate Victorian with elaborate fountains, gardens and trees.

The family's fortune was secured in 1867 when workers in the chocolate factory accidentally discovered "broma," the residue created by draining liquefied chocolate. This powered product was non-perishable, unlike regular chocolate, and could be shipped anywhere. By 1885, Domingo sold 450,000 pounds of broma per year.

Domingo died in his home town of Rapallo, Italy, in 1894, and his remains were brought back to rest at Mountain View Cemetery in "Millionaires' Row." Although originally Roman Catholic, the family broke with the Church in 1879 when a priest refused to give

last rites to one of Domingo's granddaughters. Infuriated, Domingo and his sons drove a wagon to the cemetery at night, dug up the family members buried in the Catholic cemetery and moved everyone to the new mausoleum at Mountain View. In a final gesture towards the church, the crypt is marked with a Masonic symbol, not a crucifix.

When Domingo died, he had six surviving children, Domingo Jr., Louis, Joseph, Elvira, Angela and Eugene.

They were a gregarious close-knit clan, with the exception of Eugene, the baby of the family. The red-haired temperamental Eugene refused to become part of the family business and is conspicuously absent from family photos.



Domingo and Carmen Ghirardelli's children and their spouses, 1895. Left to right: Addie and Domingo Ghirardelli, Jr., Ellie and Joseph Ghirardelli, Johanna and Louis Ghirardelli, Elvira and Charles Sutton, Angela and Chris Jorgensen. Photo: City Archives

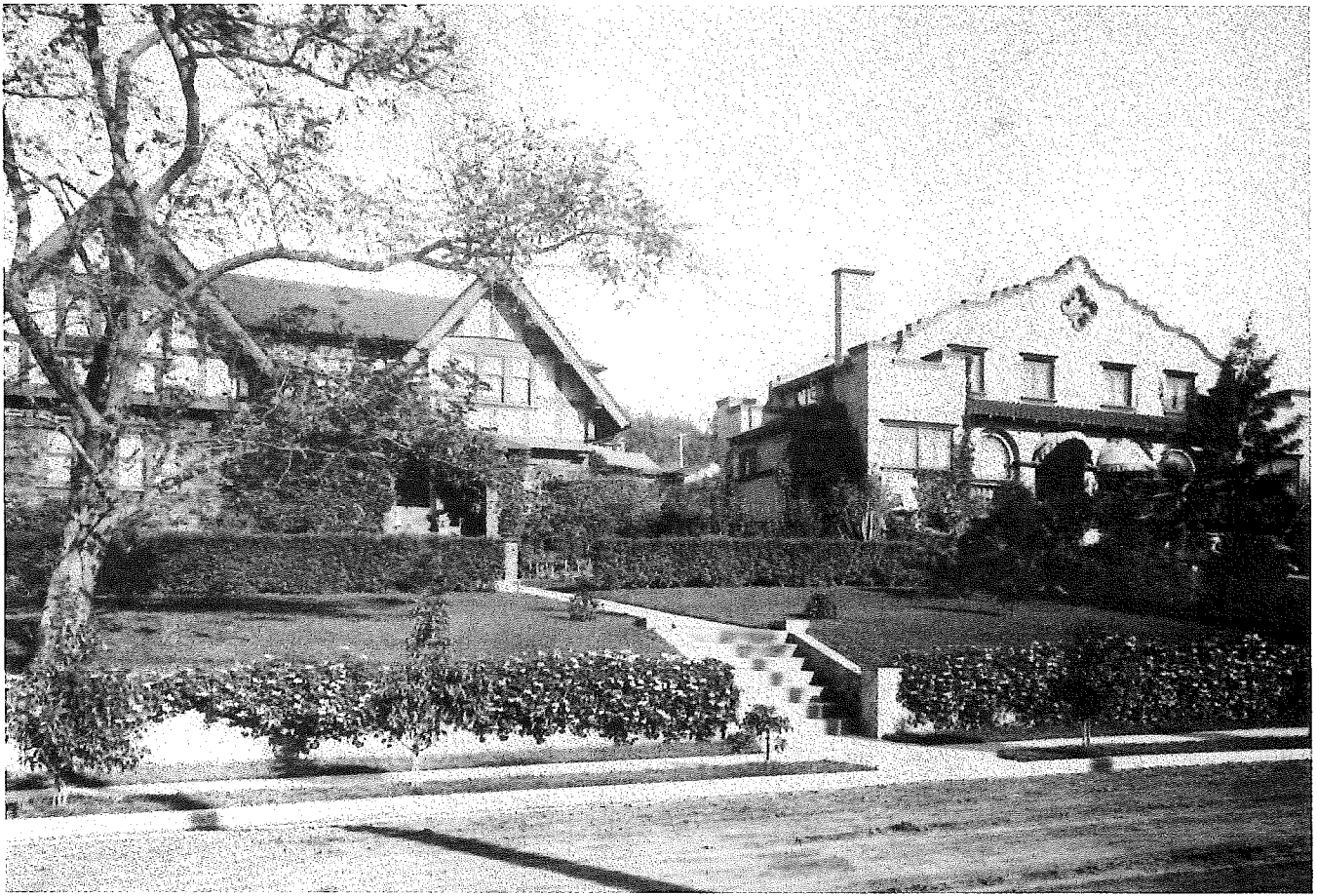
DOMINGO JR. & ADDIE GHIRARDELLI

President of the family business after his father's death. Domingo Jr. was a brilliant businessman and responsible for so many of the company's innovations that he is often confused with his father as the founder of the company. He and his wife, Addie, were the only children of Domingo and Carmen Ghirardelli who chose to live in San Francisco. They built a series of increasingly opulent homes in the city and produced seven children.

JOSEPH & ELLEN GHIRARDELLI CUSHING

Although born in the United States, Joseph N. Ghirardelli was sent to Italy for his education, like his older brother, Domingo Jr. When he returned to California, he attended Santa Clara College, but quit just short of graduation to work in his father's Oakland store. He and Ellen Barstow (Ellie) were married in 1885. They built a house at Market and 19th Street in Oakland and had two children, Joseph N. Ghirardelli, Jr. and Carmen.

In 1906, Joseph and Ellen Ghirardelli purchased a lot at **636 Highland Avenue** on which to build a Mission



In 1907, Ellie Ghirardelli built her house at 636 Highland Avenue (right) in the popular Mission Revival style of the day. Photo: City Archives

Revival home, making them the first Ghirardellis to move to Piedmont. Joseph, however, never saw the completed house. He was in Santa Cruz on business when the great earthquake and fire occurred in San Francisco. Frantic for news of his family, he made his way home, largely on foot, and suffered a heart attack. He died in May of 1906. Ellie and the children moved to Piedmont in 1907, the year that Piedmont was incorporated as a city.

Three years after Joseph's death, Ellie Ghirardelli married long-time friend Thomas Cushing. Tabloids had a field day contrasting the age of her future husband with the age of a vaudeville performer being courted by her son that same year. The Cushings substantially remodeled 636 Highland Avenue, spending \$15,000 (more than three times the cost of the average house that year).

Carmen Ghirardelli lived with her mother and Mr. Cushing at their home on Highland Avenue during the

early years of the century. Her debut in 1913 created a social sensation and was followed four years later by her marriage to George W. Baker, Jr., in 1917. As described in the *Oakland Enquirer*, her wedding was a simple one at the family home.



Carmen Ghirardelli's debut photograph, 1913. Photo courtesy of Mrs. Jose S. Cardoza



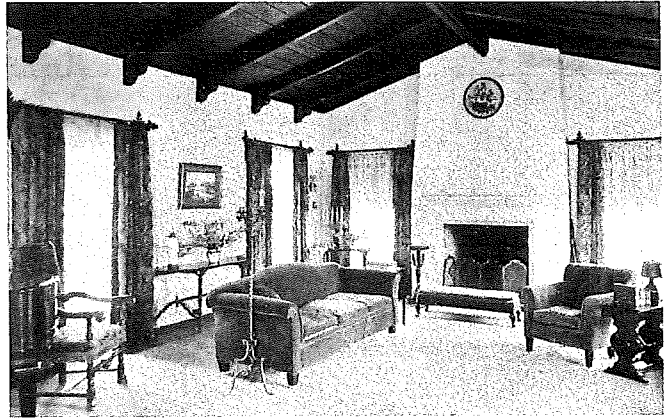
Lt. and Mrs. George Washington Baker, Jr. (Carmen Ghirardelli) on their wedding day, August 22, 1917. Photo: City Archives

“The spacious residence on Highland Avenue made a fine environment for one of the most artistically planned weddings of the season. The drawing room was a charming study in pink, with amaryllis and late pink roses offering the motifs for the final floral decorations. The young people had no attendants, and the ceremony was performed by Rev. Alexander Allen of St. Paul’s Episcopal

church. The bride is a very handsome brunette and she made a charming bride in a wedding gown of white satin, very beautifully trimmed in silver lace. A long wedding veil and a shower bouquet of butterfly orchids completed a very effective wedding costume.”

Although she moved to Tacoma to be near her husband during the war, Carmen returned to Piedmont after World War I and built a house at **210 Crocker Avenue**, just across the street from her cousin Juanita. Like Juanita’s house, the Baker residence was designed by Sidney B. and Noble Newsom.

210 Crocker, designed by Sidney B. and Noble Newsom for Carmen and George Baker, was featured in *Architect and Engineer* in 1924. This was one of three Ghirardelli-related houses near Crocker and Farragut. The Sutton-Reed family lived at 200 Crocker, and Juanita (Ghirardelli) and Harry Hush Magee lived at 201 Crocker. Photo: City Archives



“House of Mr. George W. Baker, Piedmont, California. Sidney B. and Noble Newsom, Architects.” — photo caption from *Architect and Engineer*, 1924. Photo: City Archives

PACIFIC COMPANY ARCHITECTS MAY 1915

EQUIPPED WITH

PITCHER

Disappearing Doors Adjustable Hangers

— AND —

Patented Frames

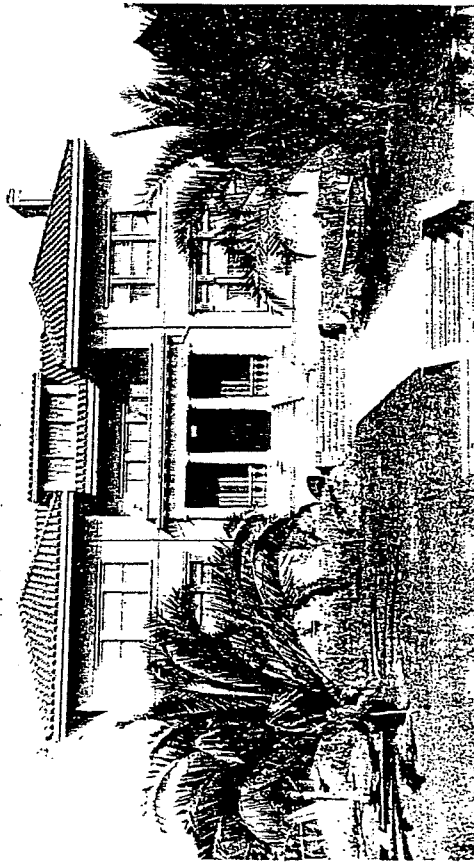
Pitcher Disappearing Doors installed in 5 1/2 inch partitions. No extra thickness of wall required. Specify Sliding Doors in place of Swinging Doors.

WRITE FOR PARTICULARS

NATIONAL MILL & LUMBER CO.

FIFTH AND BRYANT STS.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.



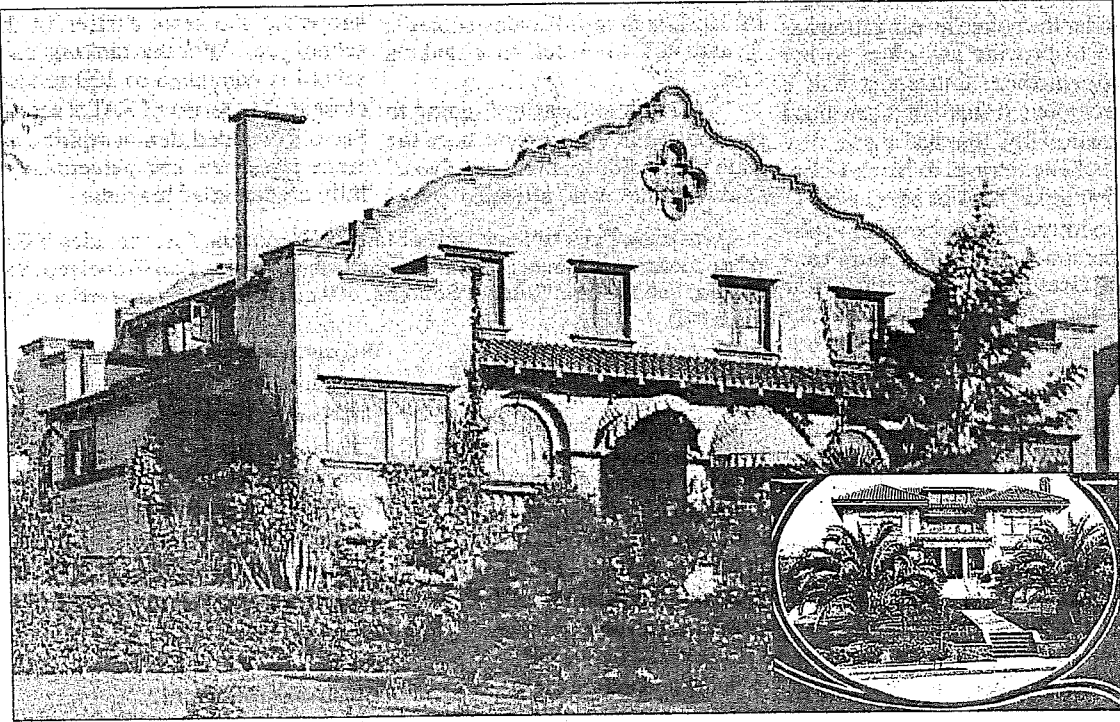
Residence, T. W. Cushing
Oakland, California

Milwain Bros., Architects, Oakland, California

Pacific Sewer Pipe Company

Manufacturers of

From the Piedmont Historical Society Collection



One of the most fascinating aspects in doing historical research is discovering something new about the past. Shortly after the Piedmont Historical Society published the first photo from its

collection (inset) this second photo came to light. Both show the Ghiradelli home at 636 Highland Ave.

A recent trip to the Ghiradelli exhibit at the Museo Italo-Americo revealed some interesting details

about Thomas Cushing and Ellen and Carmen Ghiradelli and may explain why they remodeled their home so soon after it was

see HISTORY on page 16

History

Continued from page 15

built. Thomas Cushing was described as an heir from Santa Barbara. He and Ellen married in 1909 and Carmen had her debut in 1913.

The Mission Revival style of the earlier house was popular from about 1895 to 1915 and was just starting to go out of style in 1909 when the Cushings married. As heirs to the Ghiradelli chocolate company and Santa Barbara fortune, they were able to remodel their home to the newer Colonial Revival Style (inset).

Ellen and Thomas has just married and Carmen was just about to have her debut; either of these events could have influenced the Cushings decisions to remodel. In 1911, Ellen Ghiradelli Cushing took out a building permit for the house. The new construction raised the assessed value from \$4,000 to \$6,300. While construction was underway, the family moved around the corner to 29 Sierra Ave. They returned to their home in 1912.

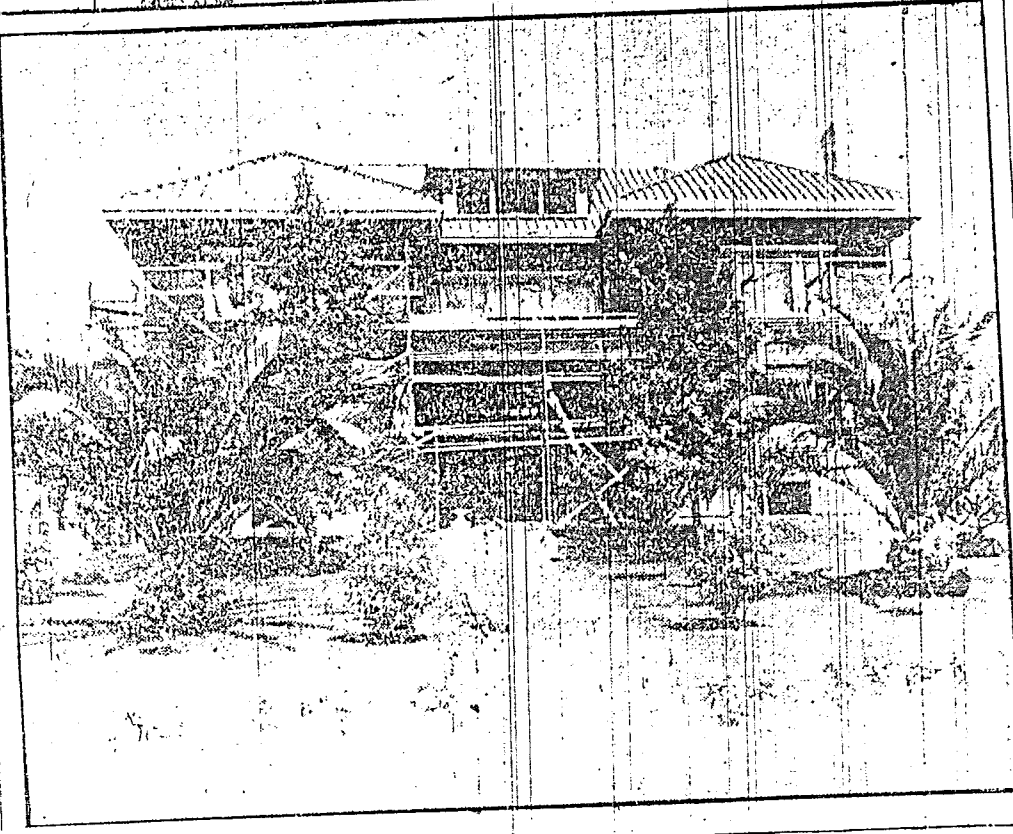
The Piedmont Historical Society is pleased to present this bi-weekly publication of photos from its collection. If you have historic photos you would like to share or if you have any question, write to the Piedmont Historical Society, 358 Hillside Ave., Piedmont, CA 94611.

— Researched for the Piedmont Historical Society by Gail Lombardi

11/10/11

**ICTS
OR CITY
ion to Lure
er the**

The railroad and switched, so as to give com-
the wharves and the
as well as between the
transcontinental rail-
nal wharf there will be
erances and the most
for handling freight to
ds of ships.
-constructing a moun-
the upper estuary with
some facilities of com-
road lines. For the com-
this municipal work on
s have been provided
for a large portion of
work.
Water basin, while the
by the city will not
be importance at once,
prove to be the largest
harbor development on
the coast of the United
to after leaving the shore
of the bay, and at
it contained it would
ended line of the South-
ing wharf. The Key
the designation of the
been these two pier-
der of the War Depart-
ment line has been es-
tablished further seaward than
indicated by former sur-
veys has been given the
the added 200-foot
head constructed on the



RESIDENCE OF J. GHIRARDELLI ON HIGHLAND AVENUE.

of the bulkhead line
has diminished the
new bulkhead line is ap-
land mode and the key
or the reason that these
toward each other. The
ne bulkhead line is ap-
200 feet between the South-
anchise grant, the Oakland
Key Route grant including
Key Route pier.
ew bulkhead is constructed
have the right to wharves
only direction from a newly
nole immediately north of
akland mode of the South-
nd the length of this sur-
chart line will be approx-
et. There is in hand and
this purpose sufficient
nstruct the new bulkhead
s dredging and filling neces-

It is not the plan of the city govern-
ment to at once completely develop the
wharfing facilities about the line of the
bulkhead extending from the Oakland
mode to the Key Route pier, the 1,000-
foot section. It is the intention, how-
ever, of the municipal authorities to at
once make available for commercial use
the wharf along the 200-foot section
which runs parallel to the Oakland mode
and fronts northward on the Key Route
basin. For this purpose a quay wall
will be built, a channel and fairway
dredged in front of and sold filling be
made behind the wall connecting it and
making it a part of the fill of the Oak-
land mode.
The initial steps in this work of im-
provement have been underway for sev-
eral months and the result is apparent
to every person who passes, at the pres-
ent time, over the waters of the bay be-
tween this city and San Francisco by
means of any of the ferryboats traveling
between both points.

**APPLICATIONS
TO BUILD
MANY**

The Permits Issued Last Week
Have Aggregate Value
of \$89,070.

Building permits to the number of 56 and representing an outlay of \$89,070, were applied for at the Bureau of Permits and Licenses for the week ending Wednesday, September 6. Following is the summary:

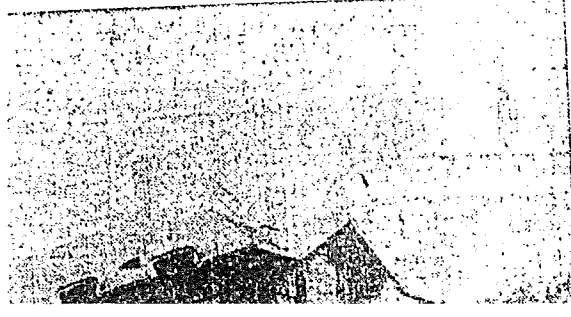
Permits	Amount
1-story dwellings	\$19,875.00
1 1/2-story dwellings	12,875.00
2-story dwellings	22,500.00
2-story flats	3,000.00
2-story flats	2,500.00
2-story apartments	5,000.00
Garages	150.00
Barns	350.00
Sheds	60.00
Alterations, additions and repairs	17,960.00
Total	\$89,070.00

LIST IN DETAIL.
Following is a list in detail of the building permits issued for the week ending September 6:
L. J. Larsen, alterations to flats, 1231 Chestnut street, \$200.
No. of 1231 Market

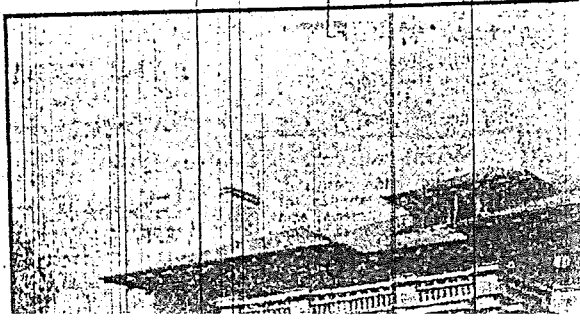
**OAKLAND'S
ON ITS
Result of Fifty Y
puted Possess**

After a fight for fifty years courts for the possession by the city of the lands bordering on shore and estuary, Oakland without chance of interference part of any organization or part of her waterfront, and the abso-
lutely responsible to the business of the Oakland, as charged with the caring for this waterfront.
The municipal government of through the city officers, who are the business interests of the Oakland, as charged with the caring for this waterfront.
Oakland can absolutely regulate the conduct of business of shipping municipal wharves with an ex-
clusively of the business inter-
ests of the city. Oakland is not bound to a business opportunity or a capture trade to the necessity of a fixed yearly revenue from the front. If good business is the judgment of her citizens with such management of her own-
ship a temporary part of the state of the wharves themselves, in order that the general prosperity of the city be prom-
oted. So great has been the ad-
vance of this system that other cities the credit of the state to the many million dollars has been upon the same basis as Oak-
land as an argument that the municipal ownership and con-
trol of this city such an advan-
tage for trade and com-
merce and land that the com-
plaints and borrowed credit
driven out of business.
The Oakland harbor is divid-
ed government engineers into the
long and west waterfront.
The inner harbor of Oakland
of the estuary of San Anton-
io from the 1850s, capital to
San Francisco. The termina-
tion of the Alameda branch of
the Pacific and Western Pacific
mouth of the estuary.
The estuary from the main
Brooklyn basin is approxi-
mately long, and the channel
around the Brooklyn basin
is miles more to the shore line
than a harbor.
From the mouth of the estu-
ary, 230 feet west of Brook-
lyn, the government surveys provi-

NICHOLS ON CROCKER AVENUE.



HOME OF C. M. MacGREGOR ON HILL



Continued on Page 42.

