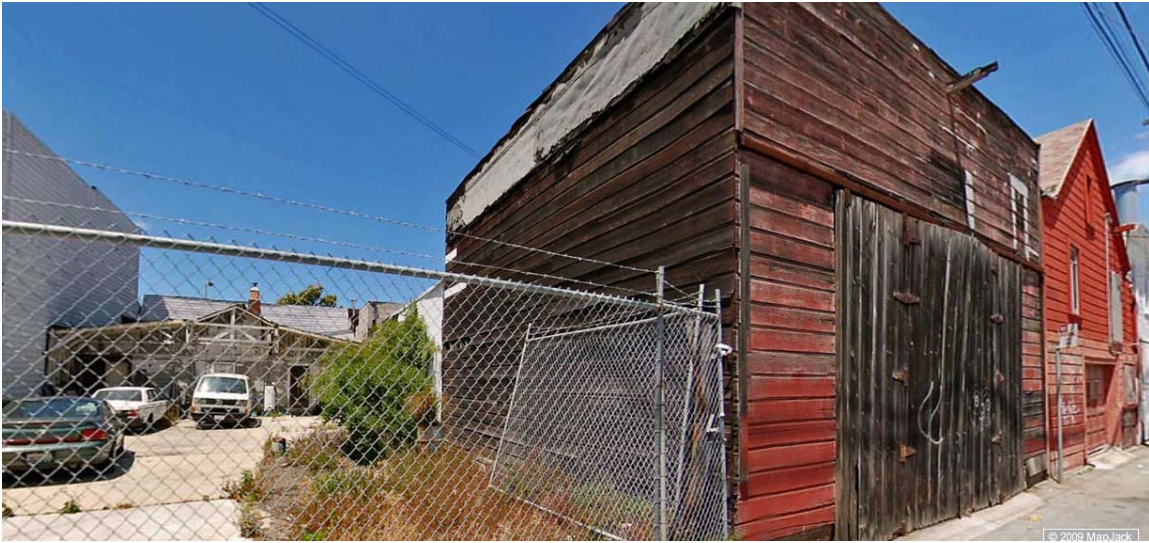


Orange Alley Stables and Lofts



West side of Orange Alley between 25th and 26th Streets.

Boundaries: West side of Orange Alley between 25th and 26th Streets (back-lots with frontage on Valencia Street)

Period of Significance: 1895-1913

Eligibility: California Register of Historical Resources

Thematic Summary: These functional structures comprise a rare cluster of extant, late 19th-century/early 20th-century accessory and commercial buildings designed according to pre-automobile patterns of development: horse-oriented, with upper story lofts and winch-and-pulley systems, located on a service alley. The grouping reflects the utilitarian, back-alley character of a major transportation corridor in the Mission District around the turn of the century.

This historic district in the far southern Mission, comprised of 3 contributors and 3 total properties (originally four separate structures), is distinctly pre-automobile in character. Prior to widespread introduction of automobiles, horses fulfilled vital roles in transportation, labor, shipping, and communication. Family horses were commonly kept in small barns located in rear yards; larger numbers of horses were supported in liverys and stables. As well, commercial buildings involved with the movement of bulk goods and materials were designed with equestrian accommodations. Horses were part of the urban infrastructure, and horse-drawn vehicles remained common in San Francisco throughout the 1910s

*San Francisco Planning Department – South Mission Historic Resources Survey
Historic District Description*

and into the 1920s. Even as late as 1917, the San Francisco Fire Department—considered one of the most modern fire departments in the world at the time—still had 40 employees devoted solely to the maintenance of horse-drawn vehicles.



West side of Orange Alley between 25th and 26th Streets.

The Orange Alley buildings that comprise this historic district (originally four in number, two of which have been semi-attached with a common façade on Valencia Street) all have a “back-lot” orientation, subordinate to detached or semi-detached, front-lot structures facing Valencia Street. Among the back-lot buildings, the oldest is the gable-roof red barn (second from the north) that was constructed in the 1890s to serve the private residence at 1427 Valencia Street, located at the front of the lot and built at the same time. On the southern portion of the wide lot to the south, owner V. Tamo constructed a single-story, redwood-frame livery with stores on Valencia Street and stalls for a dozen horses, as well as a wood and coal yard, in 1907. The remainder of the wide lot was built out in 1911 by R. O’Connell with frame construction on concrete foundation: a single-story “wood, hay, and coal” facility at the front of the lot and two-story stables at the rear (though the building permit specified “no horses”). Two years later, the owner/occupant of the house and barn at 1427 Valencia, John A. Christen, commissioned the construction of a two-story dairy depot at the back of the lot to the north, 1423 Valencia Street, and removal of the older, smaller dwelling. The creamery, a frame building on a brick foundation, completed the original row of four horse-oriented commercial and service buildings along Orange Alley.

This period of intensive horse-oriented traffic and commerce on Orange Alley began to wane as early as the mid-1910s, as a direct result of increasing automobile use and decreased tolerance for domestic livestock. In 1915, D. Tamo (who lived across Valencia Street from the subject properties) converted two

stores in his 1907 livery to a “private garage”, and he underpinned the stables with a brick and concrete flooring to meet Board of Health ordinances. Two years later, Mrs. Grebill converted the entire structure from an “old stable” to an “auto mobile repair shop (no grease)”, which involved removal of horse stalls and replacement of old flooring with concrete. Then in 1920, another automobile service garage was erected on the northernmost lot within the historic district, in front of the Christen creamery (which appears to have operated through mid-century). In 1941, the southernmost two structures within the historic district – the 1907 livery and 1911 coal shed/stables – were remodeled and merged with a shared Tudor Revival-style commercial façade on Valencia Street, though they retained separate structural identities on Orange Alley. The rear section of the southernmost livery structure was removed at some point; the extant portion of the original wagon shed retains historical character, particularly with its exposed structural elements.

San Francisco Planning Department - South Mission Historic Resource Survey
Property Information Catalog (sorted by Street Address)

Assessor Block-Lot	Address (Low #)	Address (High #)	Street	Attribute Code/Description 1	Attribute Code/Description 2	Year Built	Year Built Source	Primary Record (DPR 532A)	Architectural Style 1	Architectural Style 2	Historic District	CHRS	Listing Type	Resource Eligibility	Notes
6530-022	1423	1423	VALENCIA ST	HP8. Industrial Building		1920	SF Assessor	Yes	Utilitarian		Orange Alley Stables and Lofts	3CB	Individual & Contributor	California Register	Dairy depot built by John A. Christen; attached to a building at rear of lot facing Orange Alley that appears to have been original "milk depot" constructed by Christen in 1913.
6530-022_1	1423	1423	VALENCIA ST	HP8. Industrial Building		1913	SF Assessor	Yes	Utilitarian		Orange Alley Stables and Lofts	3CD	Contributor	California Register	This appears to have been the original "milk depot" constructed by John A. Christen in 1913. It is attached to a building facing Valencia Street.
6530-021	1427	1427	VALENCIA ST	HP2. Single Family Property		1890	Sanborn Co. maps (est.)	Yes	Italianate		Orange Alley Stables and Lofts	3CB	Individual & Contributor	California Register	See SFPL Historical Photo AAB-5633.
6530-021_1	1427	1427	VALENCIA ST	HP4. Ancillary Building		1890	Sanborn Co. maps (est.)	Yes	Utilitarian		Orange Alley Stables and Lofts	3CD	Contributor	California Register	Barn.
6530-026	1429	1429	VALENCIA ST	HP6. 1-3 Story Commercial Building		1907	DBI permit	Yes	Tudor Revival		Orange Alley Stables and Lofts	3CB	Individual & Contributor	California Register	Façade altered to Tudor Revival style in 1941; rear of property retains "stables" architecture. Property includes detached stables in rear. See SFPL Historical Photo AAB-5633.
6530-026	1429	1429	VALENCIA ST	HP4. Ancillary Building		1907	DBI permit	Yes	Utilitarian		Orange Alley Stables and Lofts	3CD	Contributor	California Register	Stables.