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# Historic Coxhead Shingle-Style Home with Presidio and Golden Gate Views The Bruce Porter Home

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**Location:** 3234 Pacific Avenue (west of Presidio, “On the Wall”)

**Price:** \$3,100,000

**Lot Size:** Approx: 46’ x 20’ x 46’ x 16’ (Irregular)

**Built:** Circa 1902

**Abstract:** The Bruce Porter Home – second time on the market since it was built! This historic home consists of: four Bedrooms, three Baths, Formal Living Room, Formal Dining Room, Kitchen with Butler’s Pantry, Breakfast Room, and Storage Rooms on the basement level. The roof-top garden was designed by Tommy Church. The home and garden have been extensively published. Please see the House History attached for further information about this home.

- Statement Continued on Reverse -

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Shown by Appointment Only

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## Description:

**Entry Level:** Double doors ornamented with side lights open to the entry foyer with Coxhead signature stair hall. The first level consists of:

- Classic pedimented doorway opens to the Living Room with south and north exposure, fireplace, and large windows with striking views of the Presidio and Golden Gate.
- Butler's Pantry with wood counters and Presidio views.
- Original Kitchen with wood counters, Presidio views, and two pantries.
- Breakfast Room with south exposure.

## Second Level:

- Dramatic and oversized French doors, accented by double Corinthian pilasters, open to a wrought-iron fresh-air balcony.
- A classic, pedimented doorway opens to the Living Room, with north and south exposure, fireplace, and over-sized windows with striking views of the Presidio and Golden Gate Bridge.
- Across the landing is the Master Bedroom with sleeping alcove, Presidio views, and built-in closets.
- The adjacent bath has a shower over tub.

## Third Level:

- There are three Bedrooms and one original Bath with marble counter top.
- The crown jewel of the home is the former Bruce Porter painting studio – now a Family Room. It features a clerestory with Palladian window atop a squared window and stairs that lead to the Loft Library with a door to the roof-top garden.
- The roof-top garden was perhaps one of San Francisco's first and was re-done by Tommy Church in the 50's. It has spectacular (tree-house-like) views of the Presidio and Golden Gate Bridge.

**Basement Level:** There are two large Storage Rooms, a walk-in Pantry, a Bath with claw-foot tub, Mechanical Room and tradesmen's entry. There is still coal in the coal bin!

**To Show:** By appointment only with Listing Agent.



## **Ernest Coxhead and the Bruce Porter Home**

By Janet Schindler

The San Francisco architectural landscape was irrevocably changed and beautifully redefined with the arrival in the 1890's of a group of four brilliant, classically educated architects: Willis Polk, Bernard Maybeck, A.C. Schweinfurth and Ernest Coxhead. Their work came to define the city's new architecture and today, Coxhead's finest work is reflected in his Pacific and Presidio Heights rustic city houses.

In San Francisco's Presidio Heights, one block sums up the quintessential Coxhead style – the 3200 block of Pacific. This steeply sloping triangular site is 45 feet deep at its widest near the Presidio Gate and three and a half feet at its narrowest. Five lots were created which back up to the Presidio National Park (now Golden Gate National Recreation Area) and have the prestigious distinction of being “on the Presidio Wall.” Coxhead embraced the challenging site limitations of the two lots Bruce Porter chose for his own residence (3234 Pacific Ave.) and the home of his Brother-in-Law, Julian Waybur (3232 Pacific Ave.).

Coxhead saw unity of design and simplicity as key elements in his creations. Restraint was favored over the ostentation and visual bombast of Victorian style. He believed that all architectural elements should achieve an overall effect of beauty and dignity in harmony with nature. In San Francisco, these ideas were revolutionary. He was among the first architects to reflect the rustic qualities of the California wilderness, often working with native California redwood, and his designs responded to San Francisco's unique setting – many of his properties incorporate numerous large windows to counter the city's heavy fog and lack of natural light.

The historic home at 3234 Pacific Ave is offered for sale for only the second time since it was built. Original blueprints are still extant (a small miracle as most of Coxhead's plans were destroyed) and it appears to be virtually the same today as when it was built. A license granted by the War Department to build over the Presidio Wall and encroach on U.S. Army territory (signed by the then Secretary of War Elihu Root, later Roosevelt's Secretary of State and winner of the 1912 Nobel prize for Peace) is included in the documentation (prospective Buyer to independently verify its applicability/enforceability today). The blueprints and the license will be donated to the Berkeley School of Architecture.

The home was built for Bruce Porter, a native son who in 1891 embarked on a career that included stained-glass and garden design, mural painting, house decoration and writing. Porter had the neighboring house to the west built for his brother-in-law, Julian Waybur. Bruce Porter was close friends with William and Alice James (William James, brother of author Henry James, was a renowned philosopher and professor at Harvard University). Bruce married Peggy James, daughter of William and Alice James. The home was the first one Peggy and Bruce occupied after their marriage in 1916.

The home has had only two owners since it was built in 1902: Bruce Porter, and Dr. and Mrs. Richard Gratton who purchased the home from the Porter estate.