

From: [Kenneth S. Hirsch](#)
To: [Brown, Mary \(CPC\)](#)
Subject: Rube Goldberg Building, 182-198 Gough St., SF
Date: Tuesday, August 19, 2014 11:51:03 AM

Mary - Following are some comments posted to an SFGate article about the building.

Rube had two brothers, Garrett and William. I've looked in the old city directories, and here's what I've found: Before the earthquake, both Garret and William lived with their father and brother at 1288 McAllister. In 1906, Garrett opened a wholesale paints business at 429 Grove. Starting in 1907, Garrett M. Goldberg, manufacturers and importers of paints and oils has a business address of 477-481 Grove. His brother Walter is working as a salesman and clerk for his brother's company. Both are living at the post earthquake family address of 1310 McAllister. In 1909, Garrett's business moved to the SE corner of 7th and Folsom. In 1911, Garrett's residence address moved to 318 Laurel, where it remained through at least 1920. Walter appears to have never left home and continued working for his brother's company.

While some of these addresses are nearby, it does not appear that any of the immediate Goldberg family ever lived there through 1920. I would suspect that if the family did finance the building, it was as an investment property. All of the family seems to be fairly well-to-do at this time (except maybe poor Walter), so it doesn't make sense that they would live in a small apartment like this. Maybe it was a place for Rube to stay if he was in town, but that's a stretch of the imagination that would require some proof and it hardly matches the story we are being told. < less

For those just reading this, I have done some investigation and I could find no indication that Rube Goldberg built or lived in this building - see further down in the comments. The Assesor-Recorder shows this building being built in 1911. Reuben Goldberg the artist lived at 1288 McAllister in 1904 and 1905. He doesn't show up after that in the city directories (through 1914), although his father is at 1310 McAllister after 1906. He moved to New York in 1907 and eventually settled on Central Park West, according to Wikipedia.

I have gone a little further and searched the Crocker Langley city directories for 1904-1914 and I found no listings for Reuben Goldberg, Max (his dad) or Hanna (his mom) at any address on Gough or Oak street. Their family home before the earthquake was at 1288 McAllister where Max is listed as a bank president and Reuben is a student in 1904 and an artist for the Chronicle in 1905. From 1907-1914, Max (who seems to have gone into insurance after the earthquake - good idea!) is listed as living at 1310 McAllister. This might possibly be the same location with a new address after the quake, or it could be a nearby address.

This claim of Rube Goldberg's connection to this building when it was built seems

dubious to me. I'm not saying it's impossible, but proof is needed.« less

UC Berkeley College of Mining graduate ca 1904 :)

My preference would be to NOT have it designated as a landmark building.

Ken

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