



THE OLD STREETS OF SAN FRANCISCO

*Early Street Names
on
Some Brass Tokens*

by
JERRY F. SCHIMMEL

**PACIFIC COAST NUMISMATIC SOCIETY
SAN FRANCISCO**

1993

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• *PCNS Monograph N°1* •



**PACIFIC COAST NUMISMATIC SOCIETY
SAN FRANCISCO
1993**

to Lynn F. Ludlow,
veteran San Francisco journalist

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Pacific Coast Numismatic Society
San Francisco

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FOREWORD

FROM OUR TOKENS MUCH HISTORY HAS BEEN AND WILL BE LEARNED. Each merchant, organization or governmental entity that issued a piece has added to our knowledge. As a contributor to local history the token far surpasses the coin.

They formed an important part of the daily business of a community. Some are reminders of firms that have disappeared from the scene. One can observe the growth of a town, judge the character of its people and follow changes simply by taking note of its tokens. Each has its own story to tell. The pursuit of them is as interesting as are they themselves.

Jerry Schimmel gives us a great deal of San Francisco history in this publication which he researched because he owned tokens from the various districts. Names of streets have been changed since they were used, sometimes more than once. Did you know that Anna Lane, which appears on one token, is now a part of Cyril Magnin Way, or that Bartlett Alley is now Beckett Street?

The medals and checks of San Francisco also provide us with knowledge that otherwise may have been wiped out by the earthquake and fire of 1906. For instance I have always admired the medals of the Mechanics Institute but I did not know that its Pavilion stood on the site of the Civic Auditorium. From Jerry's study I also learned that certain letters on the tokens stand for names, e.g. the "H" on the obverse of one and the "L" on its reverse mean Henry Loderhose, the issuer.

Histories of persons are important as are histories of streets, blocks and districts of a community. To know these things makes one's life fuller and more satisfying. Such studies as Jerry's should be expanded upon for San Francisco and done as well for other communities across the nation.

Charles V. Kappen
San Jose, California

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THANKS go to Matt Brady of the *S.F. Independent*, Duane Feisel of The Western States Token Society and Ron Ross from The San Francisco History Association for their review and comments. Lynn Ludlow at the *S.F. Examiner*, who edited the first version. Ron Lerch allowed the use of tokens from his private collection. Don Thrall and George Colby at the Pioneer Telephone Museum made the museum's library books available almost on demand. Major Chris Buchanan at the Salvation Army Regional Office helped with the Oregon Street section. Walter Lee, owner of Chew Chong Tai & Co. on Grant Avenue, did the same about Sing Chong. The staff at the S.F. History and Periodicals rooms in the Main Library provided tireless help. Archivist Stan Carroll ended up covered with the dust of ages. In despair Joe Grech at Public Works made a copy of the streets list so that I would not keep bothering him. The Sutro Library and Sullivan Library at the Society of Pioneers supplied valuable help. J.F.S.

INTRODUCTION

A few weeks ago, I read about San Francisco's "hoodlums" in a *S.F. Examiner* Op Ed piece. Back in the 1870s and '80s they made a lot of trouble. Their strange name originated here and has become part of the English language. Somewhere else I saw a faded sign on a brick wall. It read "Old Ship Saloon, Henry Klee, Prop.," barely visible. Klee put it there after the earthquake of 1906. It has lasted 85 years untouched by anything but the weather. There are no hoodlums now (at least of the 19th century variety) or Old Ship Saloon. Curiosity about both led to the library and municipal records where there is another kind of wall. Ready information is hard to come by. City files are thrown out every day. Keeping them costs too much. The 1906 fire wiped away generations of records. Metal tokens like the ones mentioned here sometimes impart otherwise missing information. Store and proprietor names, addresses and the like are a normal part of their designs. Speculations on when and how they were used can be made because of their styles and condition.

A few provide the only documentation that an enterprise ever existed. In this respect they are a little bit like those Roman coins with the sole known likeness of an obscure emperor. Perhaps the comparison of a beer-stained brass token good for a schooner of Broadway Steam to an ancient *denarius* is presumptive, but it makes a point. It is rare when a token can be connected to the names of historic persons like Crocker, Hopkins, Huntington or Stanford (unless her name was Sally—even she would have been too high class for most of their issuers).

They were issued by owners of saloons, brothels, dance halls, grocery stores and cigar stands. Such enterprises seldom caused headlines. Mainly they made the city easier to live in or just more interesting. Token users were working men—blacksmiths, cart drivers, sailors, miners, bricklayers and stablekeepers—from the countless races that chance or design brought through San Francisco. Tokens fit in with their pleasures. Finding one in his pocket could remind a man at sea of his last spree or donnybrook on Pacific Street. An economic boom in San Francisco at the end of the 1890s brought them into circulation as they never had been before..

Slot Machines in San Francisco? You bet! For a time this city was the slot machine capital of the world. Several pioneer inventors had their workshops here like Charlie Fey and Gustav Schultze. Most tokens were intended for their contrivances. The machines were small, about the size of cash registers, and locally were called "card machines." They fit in well with seedy enterprises. Even grocery stores that catered to families and the gentry had one on the counter or back room bar. According to Marshall Fey, grandson of Charlie, many shop owners, especially tobacconists, depended more on income from the machines than they did from their main vendibles. The *Examiner* and *Daily Morning Call* railed about the "noisy boxes" found at every downtown tobacco stand.

The first ones arrived in 1893 from the east coast. They were finally banned in 1909 after persistent campaigns by reformers. Tokens became an issue because the machines were activated by nickels. Objections were raised to the use of coins because, it was claimed, this was open gambling.

The Heart Flush vs. The Broken Heart



S.F. Morning Call, April 4, 1909. Slot machines were banned in San Francisco, July 1, 1909.
 "The Heart Flush" refers to the fact that most machines used poker as a basis for play.

In the late 1890s, the city voted to permit the devices as long as tokens were the only means of setting them in motion. "Trade checks," as they were also known, were commonly brass (less frequently of copper or nickel), 21mm ($\frac{7}{8}$ inch) in diameter, and bore the establishment's name and frequently its address. An expression of value in cigars, drinks or cash was often a part of the design. Larger sizes were used for higher denominations.

Many of these checks were not designed for slot machines. Pieces with odd shapes or most of those in sizes larger than a nickel were credit or advertising chits. Many were tallies for simple accounts or admission tickets to places of amusement. After 1906 there was a shortage of small change and thousands were pressed into service as temporary coins. All of them served to promote their issuers in one manner or another and had purposes as varied as one can imagine.

October 1, 1993

Jerry F. Schimmel
 P. O. Box 40888
 San Francisco CA 94140

Thirteen disused street names on a batch of old metal tokens inspired this set of accounts. The tokens were made and circulated in San Francisco between 1895 and 1920. The street names are among the earliest in the city—all long since changed by official dictates.

Anna Lane

The Arrow Messenger Service



1.

Cyril Magnin Way is a short block west of the Hallidie Plaza cable car turntable. Two-and-a-half blocks long, it runs from Market Street to O'Farrell Street. It is more like a short expressway for airport tourists barreling into the hotel district than a conventional city thoroughfare. The late Cyril Magnin, a clothier with numerous civic benefactions to his credit, inspired its latest title. The section between Eddy and Ellis Streets was once a quiet alley with the pleasant name of Anna Lane.

For a time Magnin Way was called Fifth Street North when Hallidie Plaza was created. The need for the latter was prompted by the construction of the Bay Area Rapid Transit System in the 1960s. In 1968 the small triangle of land between Market and Eddy streets was bulldozed open and the next blocks widened. These included Anna Lane and a deadend off O'Farrell Street called Carlos Street. Only the east sides of both alleys now remain. The lane received Anna's name in the late 1850s when plans for the neighborhood west of Union Square were first put on paper. Anna Lane became Glasgow Street for a year in 1909. It was changed back in 1910 by a special action of the Board of Supervisors for reasons that will probably never be known.

The Arrow Messenger Service could not have been around long. It left no record at any ready source. Its token carries a San Francisco street address and telephone exchange and is probably the only evidence of the company's existence. It has considerable wear which suggests that the firm was in operation for at least a few months. Don Thrall, Curator of the Pioneer Telephone Museum, notes that the DO(uglas) telephone prefix was introduced in 1906. Time of the token's issue: 1906-09. Given out one to

a customer after each delivery, it was redeemable against future charges. This was a common method of encouraging return business, something like the frequent flyer miles that travelers earn these days.

Who was Anna? The answer has eluded all professional as well as my amateur investigative efforts. Published lists of street name origins reveal nothing or else copy word-for-word an old "Riptides" column in the *Chronicle*. This was Robert O'Brien's fantasy explanation about two Gold Rush brothers who made a bet. The winner got a substantial sum of money, the loser the privilege of naming a street after his daughter. A likely donor was Anna Bishop, a 19th century British operatic soprano.

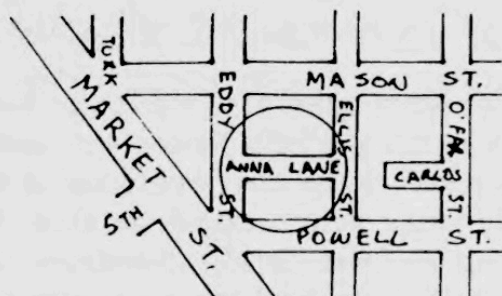
Early San Franciscans, mostly men, named a lot of their smaller streets after the women with whom they fell in love—Jessie Street, Minna Street, Clementina Street and so on. Sometimes the names were inspired by stage personalities like Madam Bishop. According to biographers, she first came to California in the late 1840s when John Sutter was still kicking nuggets out of the path of his pack mules. In 1854, she toured California again, especially San Francisco, receiving standing ovations. In 1866, on a return visit, she was by all accounts treated as royalty. Her farewell visit lasted several months in the mid 1870s. She died in New York in 1884.

Described as one of the most popular English singers of her generation, she was married at twenty-one to Sir Henry Bishop, a noted composer and musical director. Eight years later she deserted him and her three children to elope with her accompanist, harpist Nicholas Bochsa, an outstanding musician and composer in his own right. Bochsa also knew how to forge official documents. He never returned to his native France, where an arrest warrant had been outstanding for years.

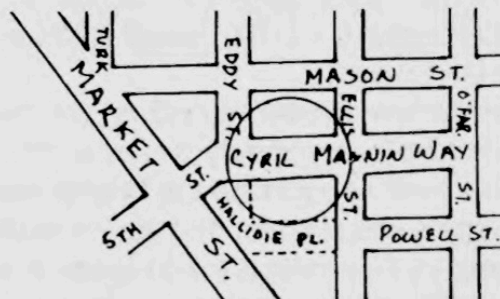
If the etymology of Anna Lane remains unknown, the street was not. On the afternoon of December 18, 1917, Tessie Wall, one of the city's best-known madames, plugged her former husband, Republican boss and gambling czar Frank Daroux, on its narrow sidewalk. She was quoted in the *S.F. Examiner* as saying "He broke me and left me penniless...I shot him. No, I am not sorry that I did it...I was in love with Frank, and I still love him." Daroux survived and did not press charges. The event did not impel him to reconcile with Tessie.

Anna Lane and Cyril Magnin Way in Different Eras

1915



1990





2.

Walk west on Market Street from Cyril Magnin Way to City Hall. Climb the Polk Street steps and look east. Try to imagine that the Civic Center Plaza—along with the State Building, Public Library, Civic Auditorium and other governmental structures—were once ordinary city blocks filled with streets, Victorian flats, shops, saloons and alleys. Old City Hall was on the southeast side of McAllister and Larkin Streets, built over the Yerba Buena cemetery. City Hall Avenue ran parallel to Market Street. City Hall Square joined the two. Both have since been obliterated by the extension of Grove Street to Hyde Street. The Mechanics Institute Pavilion stood on the site of the Civic Auditorium. Like so many structures east of Van Ness Avenue, it went down in the 1906 fire. Loderhose's grocery store was at 318 Polk Street on the northeast corner of Polk and Ash Avenue. Ash had been a narrow route halfway between McAllister Street and where Fulton Street used to be. It ran west from Larkin Street to Buchanan Street. A small fragment lingers under the Central Freeway, now being demolished. Ash Avenue was one in a series of alleys named for trees, most of which thoroughfares still exist.

The Civic Center in Different Eras

1900



1990



Loderhose, a groceryman in 1897 and 1898, had worked in 1896 for the previous owner, a fellow named Schonfeld. Like many such stores before Prohibition, it had a bar. The practice had been almost universal in town since the Gold Rush. In 1876 B.E. Lloyd wrote:

(In these stores) are kept for sale a great variety of family groceries—not necessarily much of any one thing, but a little of many kinds of family supplies, so as to meet the contingent wants of the residents in the surrounding blocks. Of the whole number of these in the city, it would be difficult to find one but has a bar, at which all kinds of common liquors are sold. This is generally placed in the rear of the store shielded from view by a board partition and having two entrances and another at the rear, the door of which is used as a sign-board and bears the suggestive words 'Sample Room'.

He described how the rooms were used for card playing and "loafing" by "mechanics, laborers and idlers of the neighborhood." The bars were, he suggested, places that generated many of the "hoodlums" infamous at the time. The existence of a bar explains why the token has a "5¢ drink" designation. The 316 street number indicates that the bar was as Lloyd described, at least superficially separate from the food sales section. The token was made for slot machines and issued in the late 1890s after the use of coins had been declared illegal.



3.

One-block Beckett Street in Chinatown is a half-dozen strides downhill from Grant Avenue. At its south end is Jackson Street, on the north, Pacific Avenue. A Gold Rush alley, it probably dates from 1847. Originally it was named after Lt. Washington A. Bartlett, the first Yankee *alcalde*. His name was removed in 1909 to avoid its confusion with Bartlett Street in the Mission District. Who Beckett was remains a mystery.

The west side of the street, where number 33 was found after 1906, is an almost continuous wall. Closer inspection reveals bricked-up, painted-over windows and doorways. No interiors can be seen, but they cannot be large. Some resemble jail fronts. Paint did not improve anything. A few doors function. Addresses coincide with those on 1913 fire insurance maps where they are visible. None has the number 33. In 1913, both sides of the street were solid rows of brothels, eleven on one side, thirteen on the other. They were not the kind with plush drapes and oriental carpets.

Thirty-three used to be midway on the block, now replaced with a brick wall. The alley got a lot of publicity in 1914. Number 40 across the way was raided by the district attorney to test a new Red Light Abatement law. *The results were limited.* Ping Yuen East, a public housing project, has been erected over its former site. Number 28-30 is the earliest bawdy building to survive on the east side (1907). It has a stairwell, window bays and remodelled front. Twelve, Ten and Eight Beckett Street, more humble competitors, are the only doorways that look now as they did in 1912.

In that day the vicinage bordering the six hundred block of Jackson Street was erected on an economy of low-budget *maisons de joie*. Co-existent Chinatown had its own ways mainly, but its entrepreneurs in the flesh trade commercially mingled with their Caucasian brethren. Saloons were present on the Jackson and Pacific streets corners to instill whisky courage among the gentlemen callers. Dance halls were a few doors beyond. One was the Leader. Bartlett Alley lay less than a block from the intersection of Pacific and Kearny streets and Montgomery Avenue. Those in the know saw the sinway as a part of the Barbary Coast.

Before 1917, the city's cheaper brothels and squalid cribs could be found in the alleys and small streets that are now part of Chinatown, Jackson Square and North Beach, especially along those intersecting Pacific Avenue. In 1869, the *S.F. Chronicle* listed Bartlett Alley among the routes of the fallen. Maps from 1885 and '90 show the street occupied by



Beckett Street, looking North from Jackson Street



A seedy Bartlett Alley, circa 1911

The Old Corner Saloon opened in 1907 and was torn down soon after this picture was taken

Chinese courtesans. After 1906, Cyprians of every skin hue and physiognomy were in residence. First Class assignation houses were found on the main thoroughfares, especially west of Union Square. Our token's issuer is first recorded in the 1909 phone book as "Lucie Mathieu, rooms, 747 Commercial St."

Throughout the 19th and into the early part of the 20th Century the word "rooms," and more often "lodgings," as found in old directories, were common euphemisms for these places. B.E. Lloyd's experience in 1876 indicated that things had changed little in nearly four decades:

There are few lodging-houses in the city but that are more or less used as houses of assignation. Many of these harbor professional prostitutes, and the name 'lodging-house,' as applied to them, is only a polite appellation for houses of ill-repute.

The spelling of Lucy's first name was deliberately French. In her trade Frenchness was a highly valued trait to have, or at least to pretend to have.

The metal check is a whore's tally. Pieces like hers were used in second and third class parlor houses, establishments with a regular complement of women and often young girls. Twenty-five cents was a rock bottom rate for sex at such places if historians Herbert Asbury and Curt Gentry are to be believed. The former describes such tokens as prepaid receipts, the client paying in advance, selecting his date, then giving her the token in advance of their liaison. The women rarely handled real money except for tips. A fifty-cent token with Lucy's name has been reported, but details are unavailable. Other houses on Bartlett and Ross alleys issued metal chits with the same denominations.



747 Commercial Street
Lucy's 1908 "Rooms"

Tessie Wall would never have used tokens. Sally Stanford made no mention of them in her book, *The Lady of The House*.

Their affluent clients paid at the end of an evening, usually a hefty bill with charges for champagne and towels. Their customers were gentlemen and came from among the state's political and business leaders, men who were unlikely to risk a bad name resulting from unpaid entertainment bills. Lucy's customers were the sailors and miners who came long distances to revel in the city's fleshpots and the dock and foundry workers who had walked over from East Street or south of The Slot. A working man always had to pay up front.

A word about Commercial Street: If ever any San Francisco thoroughfare had a claim to the title "Brothel Row" after 1906, it was the 700 block between Grant Avenue and Kearny Street. (The competition was always keen at any time.) Another venue sporting a worse reputation was Morton Street fifteen years earlier, now the fashionable (and amusingly named) Maiden Lane. Today nearly all of the original two- and three story

buildings-of-ill-repute on the Commercial Street block remain with the same street numbers. They are well-built with ornamental facades that were not cheap to install. Lucy's 1909 address stands as a lesser facility, a common-looking storefront, now employed as a Chinatown apparel sweatshop. Commercial Street catered to a higher class clientele and had political influence. It was not considered part of the "Coast."

Across the way from Lucy's old location is number 742 on one of the fanciest buildings. This was Jerome Bassity's Parisian Mansion, mentioned by Curt Gentry as "especially favored by fathers who believed their



742 Commercial Street
The Parisian Mansion

sons should be taught the facts of life in the European manner." Bassity was an all-around promoter of sinful establishments and issued a handsome advertising check when the mansion opened in 1908. It depicts a busty young woman with bare shoulders. Most of the old hostleries have their original cornices, windows and doorways. Several are disfigured by security gratings. Even so, the block is a "must" in anyone's Chinatown walk, but cannot be found in any guide book.

Lucy Mathieu's name with a "y" spelling is shown in 1913 and 1914 as "widow, residence, 942 Broadway" near Taylor street. In 1916 a remarkably similar name appears, "Mrs. Louisiana Mathieu, home, 1155 Taylor Street," then nothing else. These listings were announcements for later operations. Not surprisingly the Bartlett Alley

address was never mentioned, and her token provides the only confirmation of that enterprise. It was issued around 1911 or 1912, before she moved up the hill.

• • •

While I was on foot and touring the streets for this series I was approached by an attractive Asian woman carrying a large hand bag. When she flashed me a come-on smile, we were standing less than a half block from Lucy's Bartlett Alley emplacement. Some neighborhood traditions never die.



Turbo Liquors in 1992

Devisadero Street

Carl Albert's Groceries, Liquors and Cigars



4.

Until 1909 the Spanish name for this Western Addition thoroughfare was officially misspelled Devisadero with an "e" after the first "D". In 1907, Carl Albert clerked for Schlesselman's Groceries, Wines & Liquors, apparently in the same way as Henry Loderhose. The shop was at 1300 Hayes Street on the northwest corner of Devisadero Street. Carl and his wife, Kunigunde, operated the store from 1908 until 1920. Today, 601 Divisadero Street (*nee* 1300 Hayes) is Turbo Liquors-Deli and Fresh Sandwiches, a shop like hundreds in the city. Across the street is Popeye's Famous Chicken—franchised fast food and cholesterol. Both are located in the Western Addition, an area with a black population declining under pressure from rising real estate values. The Turbo Liquors building appears to be from the 1880s. The lower exterior has been badly "modernized", apparently several times and indescribably.

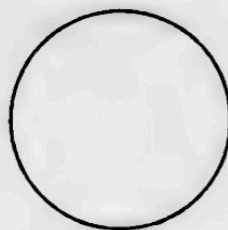
Like Loderhose, any grocer could set up a small bar along with his regular trade, but it required a separate address. Throughout the years sporadic reform efforts were made to ban the combination grocery/bars.

None were successful until the passage of Prohibition in 1920. After the latter's repeal in the 1930s, no such arrangement has been allowed in California.

On the bar could always be found at least one card machine or "trade stimulator." The original "trade check" used for this section has a number of circular nicks from its past use in one of those contrivances. Others have thin, straight scratches made by different machines. Just before the earthquake of 1906, the slots had been banned once again. Immediately afterward, their use was expanded to the largest number ever licensed in the city. Few officials were much bothered about them while the city lay in ruins. Whatever position they may have taken previously, the machines' license fees provided substantial revenues that helped in reconstruction. Many of the nickel-sized tokens, like that of Carl Albert, can be traced to the 1907-09 period. The relationship of gambling gadgetry to San Francisco history is described by Marshall Fey in his colorful *Slot Machines: The First 100 Years*.



5.



Grant Avenue is the city's oldest thoroughfare. *La Calle de La Fundacion* was the name it received from William A. Richardson in 1835 to honor the new Yerba Buena village administration. The *calle* was little better than a track. Market Street was sand dunes, brush and wild animals. The future Montgomery Street was either a beach or an aromatic mudflat, depending on the tide. The navy landed on it in 1846 from the *USS Portsmouth*. Its commander, Captain John Montgomery, took possession of the settlement with little more than a ceremony. His Lieutenant, Washington Bartlett, was appointed as local *Alcalde* because he spoke some Spanish. Bartlett renamed De Haro's *calle* for Captain, later Admiral, Samuel Du Pont, one of the officers involved in the capture of California. By the following year all remaining streets had been surveyed by Jasper O'Farrell. To the future city's plan, a number of underwater lots were added. The layout that now snarls traffic was largely the result of his effort.

The avenue begins downtown at Market Street. Its length is two and one-eighth miles and follows a straight line northeast over the lower reaches of Nob and Telegraph hills to Fisherman's Wharf. Most of us associate the avenue with Chinatown, although that part is only eight blocks long. The Chinese name for the street was *Dupont Gai*, which many oldtimers use even now. In 1886 the first four blocks of Dupont Street, those between Market and Bush streets, were renamed Grant Avenue. By 1908 the rest had been changed as well.

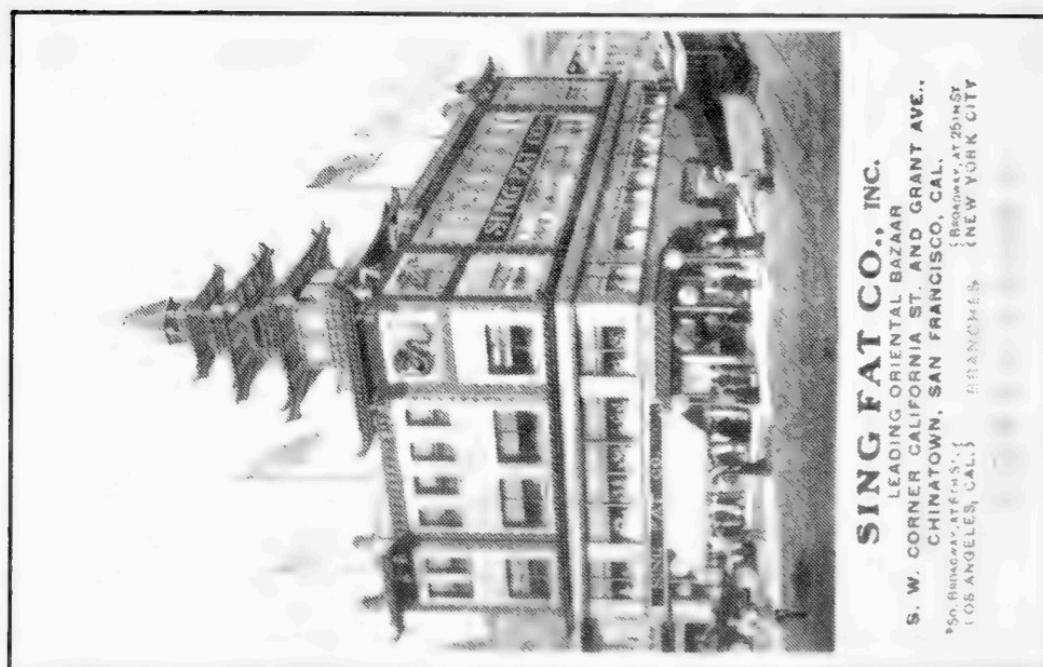
In 1912 a Scottish artist, Joseph Pennell, published the following:

Sing Fat and Sing Chong are conspicuous bazaars of Chinatown. It is commonly supposed that they are named for their proprietors, but the names of Chinese bazaars have some significance. Sing Fat means 'Living Riches'; Sing Chong, 'Living Prosperity.' Interesting hours of leisurely shopping may be spent in the bazaars which extend for two blocks on Grant Avenue from California to Clay Streets. Here Chinese merchants lay before the appreciative customer treasures of silk, brocade and embroidery; of carved ivory and teak, sandal and camphor wood; of gold, silver, jade, bronze, cloisonne, lacquer and porcelain; but mingled with these is merchandise for the demands of the casual customer. Much that is meretricious and gaudy trash 'made for the American trade' are also found.

Two blocks beyond the Bush Street gate, pagoda-style towers sit on the southwest and northwest corners of Grant Avenue and California Street. The buildings have appeared on countless postcards and promotional



Sing Fat and Sing Chong, circa 1912



brochures. Across from them is Old St. Mary's Catholic Church, built in 1853, but which dates from 1849. The pagodas were put up in 1907 after the earthquake. The Sing Fat Company occupied the southwest corner. The other was taken by its competitor, Sing Chong Company, Inc.

Sing Fat was the older. Its name is found in city directories beginning with 1895 at 614 Dupont Street, next to St. Mary's. One of its advertising cards claims that it opened in 1867, but records for Chinese merchants were not regularly kept by white officialdom. Historian Thomas Chinn reports that the proprietor was Tong Bong, a man noted locally and in his home village for philanthropy. After reconstruction, the new Sing Fat was listed as "southwest corner of Grant Avenue and California Street." Its last directory entry was for January 1931. A firm that could restore itself after the 1906 disaster failed to weather the Depression of the 1930s and Mr. Tong returned to China.

Sing Chong did business at one location for sixty-five years, although forced into a year's respite when the store was destroyed in 1906. From 1905 to 1970 the firm held forth at 601-611 Dupont Street/ Grant Avenue. First incorporated in California in May 1905, it was reincorporated in January 1907 and operated continuously thereafter. It produced many things that collectors like, objects "for the American Trade," so to speak. Among them was the token shown. It was issued by the firm's manager, Mr. Look Tin Eli, sometime between January 1907 and June 1908. On it is the MOISE K Co. diesinker signature (Moise-Klinkner Company of San Francisco) which occurs after 1906.

The purpose of the piece is not readily apparent. It is the size of a slot machine token but somewhat lighter in weight. The chances of a "card machine" or any variation like a "trade stimulator" being operated in an art goods store seem rather small. This one was probably a telephone token, a kind of tally with which the manager kept track of outgoing calls. Custom-made phone checks with the merchant's imprint were well-known elsewhere, but, in most cases, the word "telephone" was included in the legend.

Look Tin Eli was a founder and President of the first Canton Bank according to historian Chinn. His name is both Chinese and English, hence the middle name "Eli." He and Mr. Tong were among the backers of a Chinatown contingent organized for the 1909 Portola Festival. Telephone books show Mr. Look as manager of the Sing Chong Company through 1939, although historian Chinn believes that he died in 1919.

The only person on Grant Avenue who remembers the two firms today is Walter Lee, proprietor of Chew Chong Tai & Company at number 905. His store has been a fixture near the corner of Washington Street for more than ninety years. Postcards dating from about 1912 show Sing Chong and Sing Fat on their corners. The Sing Fat trade mark was a dragon. According to Mr. Lee, the Sing Chong trademark was a Chinese zodiac. Both designs were affixed near the tops of their respective buildings.

The two structures survive after more than eighty years. Upstairs in Sing Fat's is the Yamato Japanese Restaurant; downstairs is a boutique going out of business. In the Sing Chong building the upper floors hold the Cathay House Restaurant. At street level is Grant Avenue McDonald's

serving "the American trade,"— Chinese-American, that is.

街板都 門牌
話筒 生發日本漆器
差拿 計生昌公司日本漆器 201

*The 1908 telephone book listing for Sing Fat and Sing Chong.
The middle four characters of the top line stand for "Dupont Gai."*

Part of this section appeared as "The Artifacts of Sing Chong" in
The Token and Medal Society Journal, August 1992.



6.

The old name of The Embarcadero was East Street, changed in 1909 by Ordinance 988. Throughout the late 19th Century the docks, especially where they connected to the advancing shoreline, dictated its route. Riesenbergh described the thoroughfare as it was known in the 1860s as:

...crooked, flange-like, lurching in many directions,...(holding) back a bursting city...as it threaded through the wharves where the masts of tall ships rose to form a leafless forest.... The identity of East Street was vague. It had no destination, its existence was constantly threatened by new enterprise. As the city changed shape, so did East Street, but always it remained the waterfront.... At many points it discontinued; farther on, it sprang up suddenly for a stretch, then disappeared in the maze of docks and other streets....

...the landing-place of lumber, hay, bricks, grain and other cargoes...(the street was)...merely the threshold of the inner city. It was laced throughout its irregular length by saloons, business houses, crimping joints, and restaurants. Soon it became the most dangerous of thoroughfares on stilts, as its worm-eaten piles crumbled, sending huge loads of lumber into the Bay. By day it was crowded with people of the sea; at night criminals worked from its shadows.

When the two Castles were opened for business, the northeast shoreline was much as it is now. The city seawall was complete as far south as Market Street. East Street was better defined, though it was mostly unpaved or only planked for a few stretches. The saloons were located on the west side of East Street—The Castle on East Street South between Howard and Folsom streets, and the Branch on East Street North between Jackson and Pacific streets next to Dunsmuir and Son's Coal Yard. All address numbers south of Market Street were even, to the north, odd.

John Stange opened the Castle Saloon at 250A East Street in 1897. The barkentine *S.N. Castle* inspired its name. Stange had been the ship's carpenter. His bar was considered respectable among sailors. He ran it continuously through the 1906 catastrophe. Luckily for him, the big fire, driven by winds from the east, stopped a bare half block north.

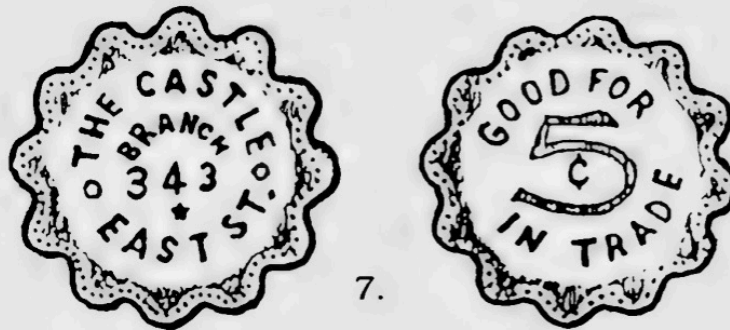
In 1900, with John Seeba, he opened the Castle Branch. Its location next to the coal piles was its undoing. It fell to the 1906 conflagration. If directories are accurate, Stange's partnership with Seeba did not last more than a year. In 1915 Stange left the waterfront and opened another

gin mill at Anza Street and Seventh Avenue. After 1917 he is no longer mentioned.

By 1905 there were at least two other Castle Saloons, a common name at the time. Several establishments like the Excelsior, Golden Gate and Pioneer saloons were repeated in name as well, three for each. Lawyers had not yet seen the potential for trade-name litigation. Maybe it was not worth the bother.

At present, the site of the original Castle Saloon looks as though it has been leveled several times over. The nearest building is of concrete block construction and no visual interest. A jagged amputation of the old Embarcadero Freeway dangles overhead. The site of the Branch, long since redeveloped, is covered by the Golden Gateway Tennis and Swim Club, Members Only. The concrete freeway that curved overhead has been consigned to bay fill.

The 250A address token has slot machine marks. Its Moise-Klinkner signature indicates that it was issued after 1906, and maybe as late as 1909, during the machines' last rattles. The serrated shape of the Branch's token suggests that it was a bar girl check or, as was common enough, a gambling counter. It was issued before 1906.





Las Guitarras Mexican Restaurant in 1992

Howard Street in the Mission

Dan Crowley's Saloon and the Little Mint Bar



8.



9.

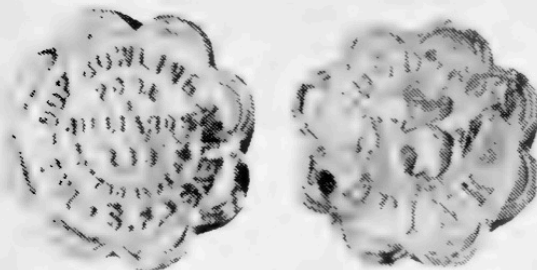


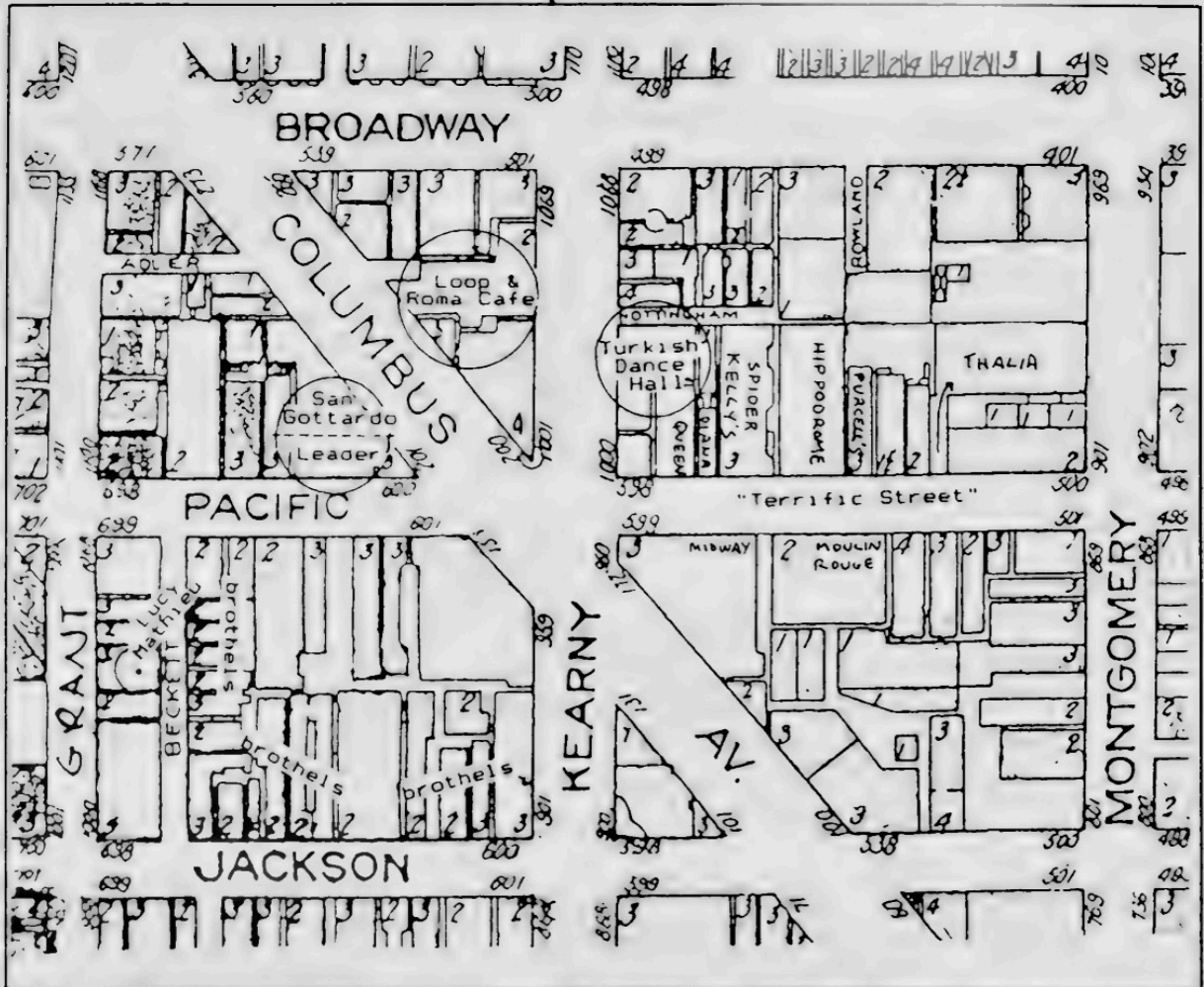
Out in the Mission District, South Van Ness Avenue has had its name only since 1932. Before then it was the southernmost section of Howard Street from 13th Street to Army Street. Crowley was at the 24th Street corner for two years, 1907 and '08. Another bar in the same building was called The Little Mint, although exactly when has yet to be determined. As with Arrow Messengers, directory listings are missing. Possibly Crowley's and the Mint were the same. The two tokens are similar in design. The old building still stands, nicely restored with Italianate Victorian gingerbread around the cornices and rectangular bay windows. Around the time of the Panama-Pacific Fair the upstairs was a general purpose area called the Mission Golden Gate Hall.

The ground floor saloon area is now Las Guitarras Mexican Restaurant at 3200 24th Street, two blocks east of the Mission and 24th streets BART station. The Irish and Germans are gone from the neighborhood. Only a few octogenarians hide in their woodframes on back streets like Capp and Shotwell. Different dialects of Spanish are heard in the shops and at corner gatherings, considerably more so than any other language.



City map (above) and inset of local block plan (facing page)
showing locations of establishments





The Barbary Coast
1907-1917

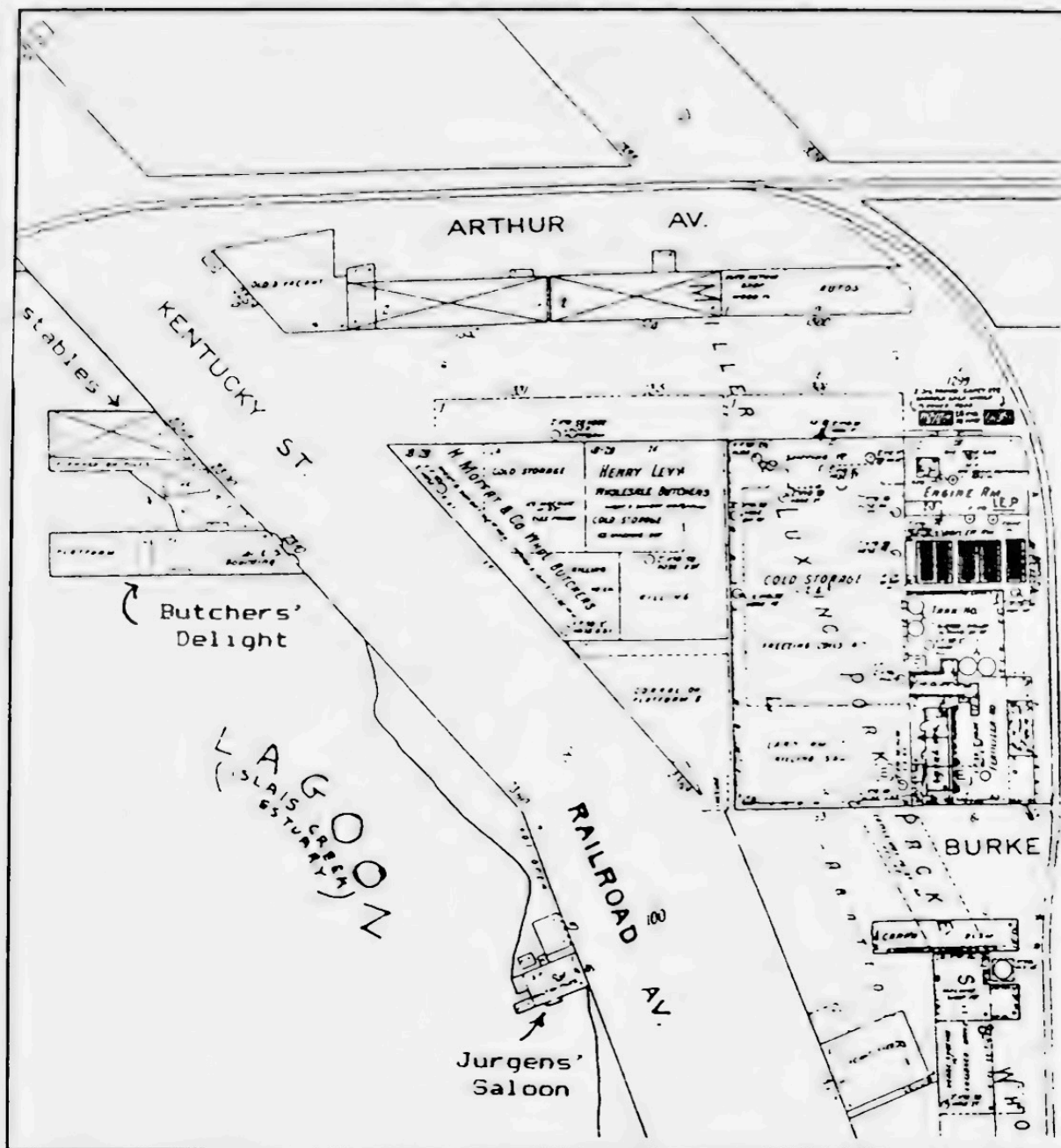


10.

Drive east from South Van Ness Avenue over Potrero Hill and down the other side to Third Street. From Mission Creek to Islais Creek, Third Street was once called Kentucky Street, one of several in the Mission and Potrero Hill districts named after states. It became the middle section of Third Street in 1917. The Butcher's Delight Saloon stood on the west side of the planked road midway between the Islais Creek bridge and the intersection of Kentucky Street, Second Avenue South (Burke Avenue after 1909) and Railroad Avenue. Forty feet north of the Delight was a horse stable at First Avenue South (now Arthur Avenue). South past the bend where Railroad Avenue began was a smaller bar run by Henry Juergens. The saloon side of the road served as an embankment for what was left of the creek estuary. Maps show the stable and bars on stilts over the water. Across the street from the Delight were corrals and killing sheds run by the Henry Levy, Miller & Lux, and H. Moffat companies. The surrounding district had been rebuilt on pilings after the 1906 quake, which earlier that year took forty-five seconds to level nearly all of the local buildings when the landfill liquefied. Meat packers lined adjacent Railroad Avenue for the next two and one-half miles. They called it Butchertown.

At least from 1900 to 1904, Herman Stumme was a teamster for Miller and Lux, the largest cattle and meat firm in the state. For another three years he worked in its abattoir. By 1908 the two-story Delight was opened. Its ground floor housed the bar, the upper story a working man's boarding house. When the street name changed, so did the the address from 2312 Kentucky Street to 3426 Third Street. An Irishman, William L. Foley, became Stumme's partner in 1910. Together they ran the place until January 16, 1920, when the Eighteenth Amendment took effect. Stumme's token was for a slot machine, issued 1908-09. (A German, pronounce his name SHTOOM-eh.)

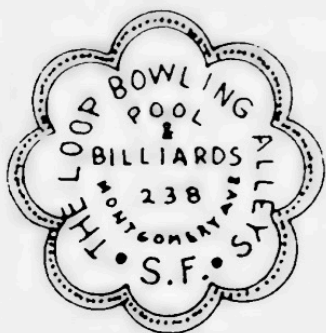
Gladys Hansen's San Francisco Almanac defined Butchertown for 1868 as that section south of Islais Creek "bounded by First Ave., west by Kentucky St. and Railroad Ave., east by I St. and south by Bayshore." That translates in today's terms to Arthur Avenue, Third Street, Ingalls Street and the bay. After World War II, most of the meat packers gradually left the area. An industrial park covers their old territory. The Delight has been razed, the site filled. No address with that number exists.



*Intersection of Kentucky Street and Railroad Avenue
circa 1912*

Montgomery Avenue

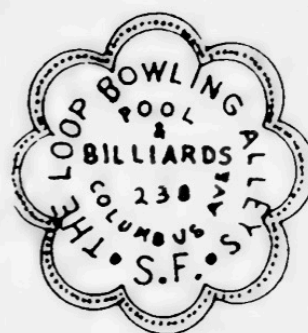
The Loop Bowling Alleys and Roma Cafe



11.



Common Reverse



12.

Few visitors to the city, or natives for that matter, are unacquainted with Columbus Avenue. Practically nobody knows that it started out as Montgomery Avenue. Confusion of the "Avenue" with Montgomery "Street" must have impelled many a mail carrier into the Roma Saloon for a short one. Then as now the Italian community was vigorous and influential. Renaming the route in 1909 after a *paisano*, Christopher Columbus, scored a few points for City Hall.

Columbus/Montgomery Avenue did not always trace a diagonal line across the northeastern corner of the city. Maps from the 1850s and 1860s reveal O'Farrell's uninterrupted grid falling impossibly over Telegraph Hill cliffsides. Early drawings of Yerba Buena village show a trail leading southwest from the settlement to Mission Dolores and northwest between Telegraph and Russian hills to the Presidio. Montgomery Avenue razed a path along the northern route. It was a practical decision designed to extend busy Montgomery Street and open the northern city to development. The project was launched by the state legislature in 1869. Costs were to be laid on local property owners. Inevitably the plan stalled and a "freeway revolt" came into being a century before they knew what to call it. Neighbors and landlords delayed the work by three and one-half years through lobbying and lawsuits. Many just held out for more money.

Demolition and grading began in May 1873, at the corner of Montgomery and Washington streets. In late September 1874, the avenue officially opened. Unhindered carriage traffic would come later. Sewers and paving were not in place. Demolished were the Exchange Building at Washington and Montgomery streets, an early International Hotel, Tom Maguire's Opera House, and a dive called the Pacific Melodeon at Pacific Street.

Constructed after 1906, the two-story Loop Bowling Alley building survives. Its Kearny Street side faced the Turkish Dance Hall, now Morty's. A few steps downhill at Pacific Street was the Barbary Coast. The Tosca Cafe, today a fashionable gathering place for celebrities and politicians, occupies the largest part of the Columbus side at street level. The Tosca used to be the Roma Saloon and, later, the Roma Cafe.

The Loop operated upstairs at number 238. Its Montgomery Avenue address was shown only in 1911. That address was inconsistent with the



The old Loop Building in 1992, showing the Tosca Cafe and Palladium

1909 ordinance, but entries are erratic for this pool palace until the late 1920s. Its address without a name was shown as a saloon in 1907. The entrance at 1031 Kearny Street was open from 1929 to 1947. In 1948 the Columbus Avenue door reopened with the name "Loop Bowl" on a marquee. It finally closed in 1959. Today 1031 Kearny Street is the main entrance to The Palladium, a rock-and-roll dance hall between Pacific Avenue and Broadway. The Columbus Avenue door is its rear exit.

The lobed tokens neatly demonstrate the name change and are identical except for street names. Estimated dates of their issue are 1907-09 and 1909-12. They may have been used by women who hustled drinks. There were several different round brass tokens with single digit numbers issued which were tallies for the pin boys. The Roma's token was a credit chit issued in 1912. It did not get much use—a year later the Tosca was born.



13.



14.

Oregon Street was deleted from city maps more than twenty years ago. In the 1890s it opened into East Street one block south of the Castle Branch. Like Belden and Leidesdorff streets, it was narrow, not an easy fit for large vehicles. Sandwiched between Jackson and Washington Streets it traced a direct line from Battery Street to the waterfront. Its identity was formed by ships and sailors. City Hall and the Redevelopment Agency erased it in stages between 1967 and 1969.

The towers and plazas of the Golden Gateway Apartments now cover the area between Battery and Drumm Streets. Rents start at \$700 a month for a studio room and rise to \$3000 for a townhouse. The Tennis and Swim Club occupies the rest. The ground level along Jackson Street displays orderly, well-stocked shops including a liquor store, a supermarket and the Gateway Cinema. The Washington Street side is a blank wall. During weekdays a street life is generated by the office workers from surrounding buildings.

A scruffy bunch of bicycle messengers often hangs out in Walton Park across Jackson Street. Shaves and haircuts are not a part of their world. Their clothing is sweatbands, cutoff jeans, tank tops and torn tennis shoes. Two-way radios dangle from belts and shoulder straps. While they wait for calls there is a lot of horseplay. No attention is paid to anyone else. Bicycles lie where they have fallen and are a hazard—each a concoction of unmatching used parts. Their owners are the closest thing in the neighborhood to the rough men who worked nearby on the docks and aboard ship. In the evening and on weekends the streets are deserted.

No one remembers Oregon Street. Experts on local names do not mention it. No documents record its entry into the city lists. If any existed they burned in 1906. A map from 1851 first shows its future route at the bottom of the bay. One line in LeCount and Strong's 1854 directory carries the earliest description: "Oregon Street - opens at 120 Front Street, east side." A map of the same year shows it bisecting one of several land tracts labelled "Govt. Reserve." By 1856 the compilers were more thorough: "Oregon Street, from Drum west to Battery between Jackson and Washington." As the sea wall moved east, it got longer. A year later it had been opened to East Street. The Customs House on Battery Street lay at its head by 1854. Federal inspectors wanted straight access to the bay. In the late

middle decades of the 1800s, public pressure was sufficient to sell off the reserve to private enterprise. The street became an active part of the old business district with hotels, shops and saloons. By the 1890s commerce had moved to Market Street and obsolescence had set in. A section was closed off for use as a coal yard. A meat packing plant occupied another. However, there was still a lot going on in small workshops, warehouses and lodgings.

Where its name came from will never be known. Streets with state names were not adopted until the late 1850s. Those were and are located at some distance out in the Potrero District. The most likely inspiration was a Gold Rush-era ship, the *Oregon*, a seagoing, paddle-wheel steamer. With its two sister ships, the *Panama* and *California*, they constituted the Pacific Mail Steamship Line. Built in 1848, it entered Pacific service the following year. California was admitted to the union in 1850 and *Oregon* brought the news. If the steamer was the source of the name, then the announcement it bore was the reason.

A ship with a lifeboat is a normal state of affairs. A street with one is a surprise. The vessel named on the 28mm diameter brass check shown was not a boat at all. It was a Salvation Army shelter for homeless men. A directory lists the Oregon Street Lifeboat only in 1897. Located on the north side between Davis and Drumm Streets, the site is now a parking garage for tower residents. Salvation Army Mission No. 10 was at 117 Jackson Street on the opposite side of the block. It had been the Portuguese Exchange Hotel which extended through to Oregon Street. The latter was a sailor's saloon and lodgings. Very likely, Lifeboat opened at the rear, but old maps are not exact on the position of number 120. There is a Lifeboat today on Eddy Street at the back door of the Army's Turk Street Corps program. An iron gate and walkway lie between the Battambang and Eddy Street markets in the Tenderloin, its main entry. The program's symbol hangs next to the door, an old-fashioned red life preserver.

Explaining the Salvation Army is better left to its experts. Suffice it to say that the organization has been around for awhile. It has never flinched in the face of society's most intractable social problems—poverty, homelessness, alcoholism or drug addiction—and it gets results where others throw up their hands in despair. Mayor Adolph Sutro paid the organization homage by having its members distribute his personal funds. During the economic downturn of the 1890's he found that his personal charity efforts were being overwhelmed. The unemployed and derelict turned up at his office in steadily increasing numbers. It became simpler for him to let an organization that knew the job do it for him.

The Lifeboat program was started in 1891 by Joseph McFee, a British ex-sea captain. As a former sailor he knew the problems of his old shipmates. Life for seamen was tough. A sailor's social status was low. Alcohol and opium were favorite painkillers and substance addiction was rampant. AA meetings and Betty Ford clinics were decades in the future. The hard times were putting many seamen on the streets with everyone else. Like many sailors, McFee's own drinking and smoking had gotten out of control. He joined the Salvation Army and stopped both.

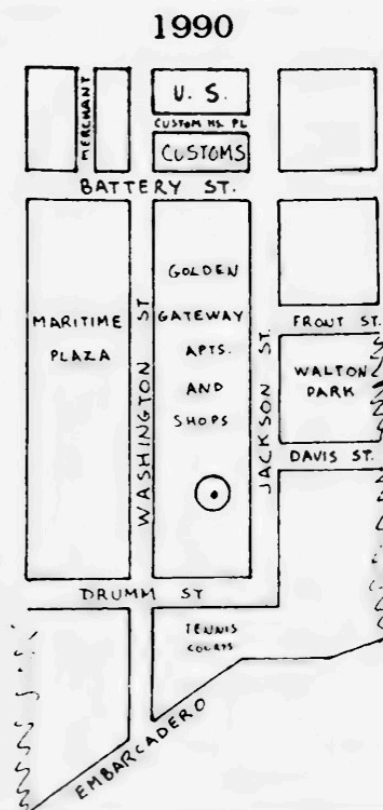
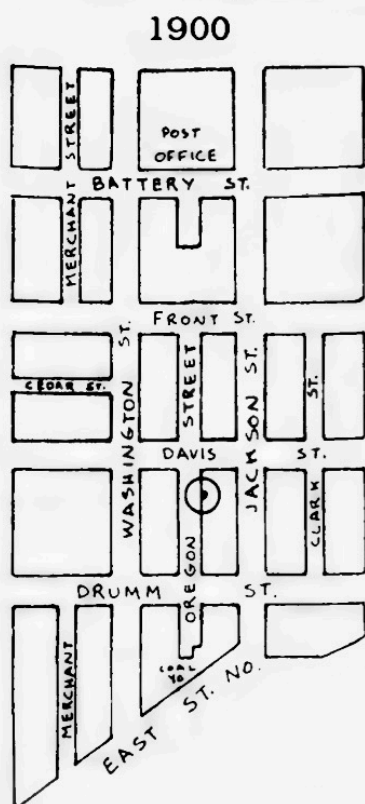
Oregon Street was a good berth for Lifeboat. Sailors' hotels abounded

in the area. Maps for 1890 show the presence of more than thirty establishments in the vicinity like the Castle and Branch. Three thousand licensed purveyors of alcohol kept the city well-oiled twenty-four hours a day. They were mainly saloons, but included nearly all of the grocery stores. Unlicensed "blind pigs" existed in alleys and basements, never counted. Percentage girls of the Barbary Coast were a bare five minutes away on foot. The social and economic costs accruing from easy access to cheap booze were enormous.

For Christmas, McFee set up money collection pots like the ones now seen every year on street corners. His first were in the Ferry Building and they proved successful. A holiday meal was served to anyone who asked. More was to come. The *S.F. Chronicle* in 1893 noted "the launching of the Salvation Army's 'Lifeboat', or the turning of one of the worst dives in the city, at the corner of Kearny and Sacramento Streets, into a refuge where the homeless may obtain a bath, a bunk and a breakfast for 15 cents." If McFee had anything to do with the Oregon Street Lifeboat is not known, but he probably was not far away.

Major Chris Buchanan collects Salvation Army memorabilia and has studied how the old-timers worked. He believes that the token was given to men who were willing to cut firewood. They could turn it in for a meal. Metal checks of similar design, but for patently different purposes, were used in Barbary Coast dives like Bottle Koenig's or Golden City. Major Buchanan said that the old volunteers liked to employ instruments "used by the devil." The old saloon on Kearny Street and this brass piece are good examples of things turned to do "God's work." Today crisp, professional leaders like the Major do not worry too much about the devil. They just get on with a job that is never quite finished.

The Oregon Street Neighborhood in Two Eras



Pacific Street

The Leader and Turkish Dance Halls



15.



16.



17.

Walk across Walton Park from the Gateway Towers to Pacific Avenue. Turn left and go west to Bricks Bar & Grill at Battery Street. Make sure that you stop and look at the "Old Ship Saloon" sign. Continue uphill through the former Barbary Coast. Many of its post-1906 buildings still stand in the 400 and 500 blocks. A few doors up Pacific from the Kearny Street and Columbus Avenue intersection is 626. It is a small back entrance between two vegetable stands. Over it is a sign in English and Chinese—Susie Hotel. This was the entrance to the Leader.

Like the Tosca Cafe and Palladium building, the Susie faces two streets. Its main entrance is 237 Columbus Avenue. Until the 1950s it was the San Gottardo Hotel which opened at 215 Montgomery/Columbus Avenue. Its old door leads to law and travel offices walled off from the Susie. From 1900 to 1906 the downstairs was the Columbia Dance Hall. A decade before that it held Bottle Koenig's, open since the 1860s. Farther up Pacific and across the way is Beckett Street. The site of 33 Bartlett Alley is less than a minute's walk. Lucy's, the Roma, Loop and Leader were all contemporaneous.

Pacific was always called "Street." Surveyor Jean Vioget first put it on paper in 1839. As an unnamed track it ran from Yerba Buena Cove up to the *Calle de la Fundacion*. "Broad Way" (an earlier spelling) did not exist even as pencil lines. When U.S. forces occupied Alta California in 1846, they gave the street Bartlett's name for a few months. In July of 1847 it officially became Pacific Street. After 1871, the blocks from Larkin Street

to the Presidio were added and changed to "Avenue." Newly settled Pacific Heights residents did not want to be associated with the "street" and its inelegant proclivities. It all became "Avenue" in 1929.

The obvious reason for a substitution was consistency, to help those of us who confuse easily. But Pacific "Street," especially between Kearny and Montgomery streets, had always been the heart of the Barbary Coast. Nicknamed "Terrific Street," it was the symbol of a previously wide open city that continued to annoy moralists and reformers. The latter became locally potent in the first decades of the 20th Century. Their efforts were crowned with the passage of Prohibition. Eliminating the word "street" removed the last outward vestige of the old Coast.

The Leader Saloon name was listed at 626 Pacific Street from 1907 to 1909, one of many saloon dance halls in the post-fire Barbary Coast. Across the way Yuen Lee served Chop Suey. A few doors down from Bartlett Alley, Hop Kee kept pool tables and slot machines. Like the Castle, at least four different Leader Saloons proliferated throughout the city from 1907 to 1917. Louis C. Vannucci was the main proprietor of this one along with a changing roster of partners. His name is found on other tokens issued for nearby dives. He ran the Violet Saloon at 519 Pacific for a year or so around 1902. Evidently he wanted to revive something like the Columbia, but, after 1906, six-twenty-six did not pay well. He moved downhill across Montgomery Avenue and uphill to 1028 Kearny Street on the corner of St. Charles Alley (now Nottingham Place). The real action was there and the new Leader Cafe was open by 1910. In 1912 it was renamed The Turkish Dance Hall. It fronted on Kearny Street in the same building, one door down. Checks of several denominations were struck for the latter. The name Turkish Grill was used for a time when dance hall girls were banned. Today it houses Morty's Night Club and Cho-Cho Japanese Cuisine.



18.



19.



Both of Vannucci's Leaders had stiff competition from such places as the Thalia, Hippodrome, Midway, Needmore, Purcell's, Spider Kelly's and others. The Turkish eventually acquired a bad reputation of its own if Herbert Asbury's accounts are accurate. In the post-quake period the "evil" appellation to the "Coast" was relative. The area was increasingly a tourist stop. Saloon owners were not going to let much happen to the new geese and their golden eggs.

The 626 Pacific Street hall issued three denominations of tokens—10, 25 and 50 cents. Ten or twelve-and-one-half cents were the usual prices for drinks, five cents for a half shot of whisky or a beer. Dances were usually 20¢ or 25¢ at most of the dives in the area on regular nights. Some of the smaller places



The Turkish Grill in 1913



Morty's Nightclub in 1993

1024 Kearny Street

farther away charged only 10¢. Both the dime and quarter tokens shown in the drawings had considerable wear. They were the Leader's drink check and dance ticket. The token from the Turkish was for a dance. (The initials "C.C." stand for Chris Christensen, manager of several Barbary Coast resorts at different times.)

Women hired by Coast saloons were called "percentage girls." Each received a share of the drink and dance prices paid by her escort. In the *S.F. Examiner* of June 24, 1913, an interview was published with a woman arrested during a police raid:

Lena Madison, one of the young girls taken out of the Moulin Rouge at 551 Pacific Street, said that she was given a check for all the drinks she was instrumental in selling, with the understanding that she was to get half.

Given the reputation of the "resort" owners, a term employed by the press, it is doubtful that she ever received that much.

The use of checks as drink and dance tallies goes back at least to the Columbia—and probably to the wine taverns of Imperial Rome. In 1900, *The S.F. Call* wrote:

The cleanest, newest and brightest of all the dance halls on the Coast is the Columbia, 630 Pacific Street. These qualifications apply only to the outward material appearance and not to the female fixtures, who ply the same vocation as their sisters on Kearny Street. A dance for a drink and a drink for a commission is their watchword. Whenever the drink is bought the woman receives a brass check.

The Leader's 50¢ tokens were never used. Most are still bright and shiny after eighty-five years. Maybe they were the price for a companion. That was a common rate in second or third class brothels. It is probable that Vannucci had or was working on special arrangements for rooms upstairs in the San Gottardo. Other dives had private booths. Special cubicles at the Thalia provided for doubtful assignments. Girls at Purcell's actually did double duty as hostesses and prostitutes, but this was not the general rule. There were too many popularly-priced *bagnios* down the block.

Paying the price for an hour with a "percentage girl" did not always mean that a customer got what he really wanted. Robert O'Brien wrote of the Temples to Terpsichore in the *S.F. Chronicle* in 1947 about a few of the



The Susie Hotel and People's Ave Mall, 1993



practices developed by the dance palaces, information gleaned from old timers with first-hand experience:

...patrons were offered a dozen percentage girls, more or less alluring employees of the house whose difficult assignment was to stay sober and protect themselves in the clinches, and yet, at the same time, convince their boozy escorts that the limits of their resistance lay just beyond one more drink. (An additional task was)...to assist the managements in their common endeavor—the swift separation of patron and everything he owned up to, and sometimes including the clothes on his back.

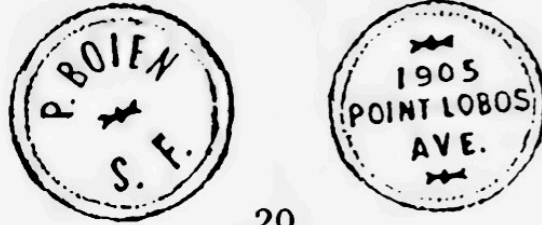
How many erstwhile lovers ended up at a Lifeboat shelter will never be known.

The Leader's old edifice has two floors and a small mezzanine on the Pacific Avenue side. A basement level shop with a wide front entrance at 620 opens at sidewalk level. There is a curious name stenciled on its awning: "PEOPLES AVE MALL, INC." (People's Avenue Mall? People Save Mall?). A colorful Chinese vegetable market operates there daily. Behind the glass door at 626 is a flight of narrow, dirty grey-green stairs leading to a locked door on the right about a third of the way up. The smell of Chinese cooking is strong. The stairs lead further to what seems to be the third floor, but is really the second. Several dim, single bulbs light shadowy hallways in the same unwashed color. Long rows of forlorn, identical wooden doors suggest to the visitor that when proceeding any further he or she should abandon all hope.

The locked door on the stairs, if it were open, would lead to the mezzanine dining room of Brandy Ho's Restaurant which is behind the Mall's outside awning. This was the ballroom, small, about 25 by 50 feet, and rather claustrophobic. But then, most of them were undersized except for the Thalia and Spider Kelly's. Another door is to the right of PEOPLES AVE MALL and is the Pacific Avenue entrance to Brandy Ho's bar. It is easy to picture the latter as an adjacent saloon providing watered social lubricant for the suckers.

• • •

On two of the corners at Battery Street and Pacific Avenue city workers have incorrectly imprinted the sidewalks. Their handiwork in both instances reads "Pacific St."



20.

About three and one-half miles west in the apparently more decorous Richmond District, the Point Lobos Avenue name was changed in a grand shuffle. The year was 1909. That route became a long extension of Geary Street starting at Central Avenue. It ends now at 48th Avenue and Adolph Sutro's old gardens. In 1931 all of Geary Street west of Presidio Avenue was redesignated as a boulevard. Thirty years after that it was pushed east to Gough Street as a six-lane expressway, taking with it most of the Western Addition's old Victorians and displacing an obscenely large number of black families. The Point Lobos name was transferred to the scenic drive which begins with a right half-turn off Geary at 39th Avenue. The latter proceeds downhill past the Cliff House and ends at the beach. It was once called Cliff Avenue. According to the National Park Service Guide Book, Point Lobos was named after *los lobos marinos*, sea wolves in Spanish. We know them as sea lions. The actual promontory is a bit north of the Sutro Baths ruin.

Boien opened his grocery and bar in 1902 on the southwest corner of Eighth and Point Lobos avenues. Less than a year later on a Summer's evening, he was lounging at the bar with a regular, John Driscoll. Three men silently, but quickly, strode in. Two were masked and held revolvers, hammers cocked. Boien thought it was a joke until a pistol barrel poked his chest. Money was demanded. The bartender was marched across the room and a cash drawer rifled for seven dollars. Seventy more came from Boien's pockets, his gold watch undisturbed. In the grocery proper, a villain got the small change and a few telephone tokens. The day's receipts lay unnoticed in a cigar box. Fleeing up Eighth Avenue, the incompetents disappeared into Golden Gate Park.

Boien remained through 1916, the 1906 fire never coming near. The street name and numbers had changed from 1901 Point Lobos Avenue to 4401 Geary. In 1917 he moved the store a half block east to 4353 and stayed until 1940. After that his name no longer appears, although the store continued as Boien's Grocery through late 1960. The address at 1905 was listed only in 1908 and 1909 when a slot machine was installed on the bar.

At present, Boien's 4401 location is Pyramid Liquors—Deli, Sandwiches, Lotto, Discount Liquor and Beer, a completely featureless two-story box. I drove by twice before I realized it was a store. Number 4353 no longer exists, but an old brick building can be found at 4419, Custom Brake & Alignment. It was the last coal yard in the Richmond.

Railroad Avenue

The Potrero Wine & Liquor Company



21.



West of Candlestick Park, the southern part of Third Street once was Railroad Avenue. It began just below the Islais Creek Channel at Burke Avenue, a few feet beyond the Butcher's Delight, and ended at San Bruno Avenue. This was the second and final addition made to Third Street, done in 1921, four years after Kentucky Street. Its intersection with San Bruno Avenue has since been obliterated by the James Lick Freeway. Williams Avenue on the token was W Avenue South until 1909. The "22nd" used to be 22nd Avenue South, changed in 1911 to Van Dyke Avenue. "22nd" is technically wrong for the token's 1913 date, but old names die hard. Even the newspapers were calling Beckett Street "Bartlett Alley" as late as 1914.

The Potrero Wine and Liquor Company, a saloon from about 1911 to 1917, was run by a Greek family with the name of Kardassakis. Several first names were listed through the years—Demetri, Dentra, Daniel and possibly another. Entries are inconsistent. The single-story building lay a little more than a mile south of the Delight, and the two were contemporaneous through the 1910s. Today the site of the old Wine and Liquor Company is James' Soul Kitchen, 5298 Third Street, next to Romeo's Louisiana Fish in the Hunters Point-Bayview neighborhood. In 1913 the area was still officially called South San Francisco. Unofficially, it was the southern part of Butchertown. The Kitchen's building is at least the same vintage as the token and probably earlier. An old saloon-style corner door shows a spoke-design light transom. Remnants of fancy cornicework border the roof. Old photos show windows near the entrance, now walled over. The outside has been inexpertly remodelled several times.

This token was for a slot machine, by the looks of it, and, if so, it was in use well after the city's ban of 1909. The neighborhood was really the boondocks in those days. Enforcement came slowly.



James' Soul Kitchen in 1992



Appendix I: Summary of Street Name Changes

"Before 1835 the village of Yerba Buena had neither name nor existence." (Soule, Gihon and Nesbit, p. 162). There was a single trail from Mission Dolores north to the Presidio. For part of the way it lay close to the anchorage at Yerba Buena cove. (Eldredge, pp. 616-7)

1835 - Mexican Governor Jose Figueroa appoints an *Ayuntamiento* for Yerba Buena. Captain William A. Richardson prepares a map showing one thoroughfare, the *Calle de la Fundacion*. Richardson's house is on it at what is now the intersection of Clay Street and Grant Avenue. It stands until 1852. (Eldredge, pp. 500 & 505)

1839 - The *Ayuntamiento* appoints surveyor Jean Vioget. A new map is prepared for the area bounded today by California and Montgomery streets and Grant and Pacific avenues. No names are assigned. (Bancroft, p. 654)

1846 - The village is occupied by U.S. forces. Names of American political leaders are given to some of Vioget's streets, e.g. Clay, Jackson and Washington. Others receive the names of military officers involved in the California occupation i.e. Bartlett, Du Pont, Kearny, Montgomery and Stockton. (Bancroft, p. 654)

1847 - A new survey is commissioned. The "Bartlett Map" is prepared in February on which Pacific Street is called Bartlett Street, Dupont is Stockton, etc. (Bancroft believed this map to be the result of preliminary work done by Jasper O'Farrell.) By August, O'Farrell completes a new map upon which are street names which came into common use. Yerba Buena village is renamed the Town of San Francisco. (Bancroft, p. 654 & Eldredge, pp. 513-4)

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A record of name changes from about 1900 to date is available at the San Francisco Department of Public Works, Bureau of Subdivisions and Mapping. Legislation numbers and dates of official actions are noted. For street name origins see Gladys Hansen's *San Francisco Almanac* and Louis Loewenstein's *Streets of San Francisco*. The original reasons for many names have been lost.

First-time entries of street names in city directories may vary by as much as six months before or after the dates of street dedications. Before 1880 many thoroughfares in what are now the western and southern parts of town were little more than names on paper. City directory street guides, especially those before 1860, can be unreliable in relation to smaller streets. Titles such as *street*, *alley* and *lane* were used interchangeably, regardless of legal designations.

Anna Lane

Anna Lane appears first in City Directories but as "Anna or St. Ann Street."	May 1, 1859
Anna Lane appears alone	September 1, 1861
Anna Street appears on map (Official Map of the C. & C. of S.F., Ord. 966)	October 26, 1870
Anna Street to Anna Lane, Res. 1770	1884
Anna Lane to Glasgow Street, Ord. 988	December 8, 1909
Glasgow Street to Anna Lane Street, Ord. 1318	September 27, 1910
Anna Lane Street and Carlos St. to Fifth St. North Res. 659-68	September 30, 1968
Fifth Street North to Cyril Magnin Way Res. 985-82	December 24, 1987

Ash Avenue

Ash Avenue appears first in City Directories

September 1, 1867

Ash Street appears on map

October 26, 1870

(Official Map of the C. & C. of S.F., Ord. 966)

Ash Street to Ash Avenue, Res. 1756

January 23, 1884

Ash Avenue to Ash Street, Ord. 988

December 8, 1909

Bartlett Alley

Bartlett Alley appears on City map

November 9, 1849

(Re-survey made by Wm. M. Eddy, surveyor of the town of San Francisco.)

The street very likely dates from 1847.)

Bartlett Street to Lozier Street, Res. 1684

1882

Lozier Street to Bartlett Alley, Ord. 2958

1896

Bartlett Alley to Beckett Street, Ord. 988

December 8, 1909

Beckett Street

See Bartlett Alley

Calle De La Fundacion

See Dupont Street

Columbus Avenue

See Montgomery Avenue

Cyril Magnin Way

See Anna Lane

Devisadero Street

Benton Street first appears in City Directories

1858

Devisadero Street first appears in City Directories

June 1, 1860

but as "Devisadero or Benton Street."

Devisadero Street appears alone

September 1, 1861

Devisadero Street to Divisadero Street, Ord. 988

December 8, 1909

Dupont Street

Calle de La Fundacion

1835

(Map by William A. Richardson)

Calle de La Fundacion to Stockton Street

February 22, 1847

(Initial Survey by Jasper O'Farrell)

Stockton Street to Dupont Street

July 1847

(Final plan by Jasper O'Farrell.)

Dupont Street

November 9, 1849

(Re-survey made by Wm. M. Eddy, Surveyor of the Town of San Francisco)

Dupont Street to Grant Avenue

(Market St. to Bush St. section) Ord. 1872

July 31, 1886

(Bush St. to North Point section) Ord. 473

June 8, 1908

East Street

East Street unofficially designated

1849

(Always the shore line roadway regardless of any overlapping street designations.)

East Street to East Street North & East Street So., Res. 1893

Jan. 3, 1887

East Street North & So. to The Embarcadero, Ord. 988

December 8, 1909

Embarcadero, The

See East Street

Geary Boulevard and Street

See Point Lobos Avenue

Grant Avenue

See Dupont Street

Howard Street

Howard Street first appears in City Directories

October 1, 1856

Howard Street to South Van Ness Avenue

(13th Street to Army Street), Res. 332

May 19, 1932

Kentucky Street

Kentucky Street first appears in City Directories

1865

Kentucky Street to Third Street, Ord. 3205

April 20, 1915

(China Basin to Burke Avenue; also see Railroad Avenue.)

Montgomery Avenue

Montgomery Avenue officially opened September 21, 1874

(See *Daily Morning Call*, Sept. 22, 1874.)

Montgomery Avenue to Columbus Avenue, Ord. 988 December 8, 1909

Oregon Street

Oregon Street first appears in City Directories 1854

Oregon Street vacated by city:

(Battery Street to Front Street) April 29, 1968

(Front Street to Davis Street) June 11, 1968

(Davis Street to Drumm Street) March 20, 1967

(Drumm Street to The Embarcadero) July 29, 1969

Pacific Street

Unnamed northernmost street (Survey by Jean Vioget) 1839

Unnamed street becomes Bartlett Street February 22, 1847

(Initial survey by Jasper O'Farrell)

Bartlett Street to Pacific Street July 1847

(Final street plan by O'Farrell)

Pacific Street November 9, 1849

(Re-survey made by Wm. A. Eddy, Surveyor of the Town of San Francisco)

Pacific Street to Pacific Avenue

(Larkin Street to The Presidio section) Res. 2161 1871

(The Embarcadero to Larkin Street section) Res. 31589 Oct. 28, 1929

Point Lobos Avenue

Point Lobos Toll Road appears in City Directories 1867 & 1868

(from Cemetery Avenue to the Cliff House)

(No further mention of toll road.)

Geary St. to Point Lobos Ave. (Central Ave. to 39th Ave.) Res. 2309 1890

Point Lobos Avenue to Geary Street, Ord. 988 December 8, 1909

(From Central Avenue to 48th Avenue; adds section from 39th to

48th Aves; changes Cliff Avenue to Point Lobos Avenue.)

Geary Street to Geary Boulevard, Res. 34999 September 2, 1931

Railroad Avenue

Railroad Avenue appears first in City Directories October 1, 1868

(At that time at least two other streets with identical names existed.)

Railroad Avenue to Third Street August 4, 1921

(Burke Ave. to San Bruno Ave.; also see Kentucky St.) Ord. 5437

South Van Ness Avenue

See Howard Street

Third Street

See Kentucky Street and Railroad Avenue



Appendix II: Narrative Descriptions of the Tokens

Below are descriptions for each token. O: (obverse) and R: (reverse) refer to the wording on either side. Several characteristics of the checks are mentioned, such as the kinds of metal, size, shape, border and edge designs. All are round unless indicated otherwise. For specialists, letter and number combinations are listed under each description, designating the two major cataloguers of California tokens, Stephen Album (A) and Charles Kappen (K).

ANNA LANE

1. Brass 28mm, recessed beaded borders with plain edge.
O: **ARROW SERVICE/ (an arrow)/ MESSENGERS / PHONE**
DOUGLAS/ 64 / No 40 ANNA LANE / OFF EDDY, NEAR POWELL
R: **THIS CHECK/ REPRESENTS/ 5¢ / TO BE REDEEMED BY OUR/**
REPRESENTATIVE ON THE/ FIRST OF EACH MONTH
A#SFO80-A60; K#83

ASH AVENUE

2. Brass 21mm, plain borders and edge.
O: **H/ 5¢ DRINK**
R: **L/ 316 POLK ST.**
A#SFO80-L5; K#unlisted

BARTLETT ALLEY

3. Brass 28mm, recessed beaded borders and plain edge.
O: **LUCY MATHIEU/ 33/ BARTLETT/ ALLEY**
R: **25¢**
A#SFO80-M64; K#1577.

DEVISADERO STREET

4. Brass 21mm, plain borders and edge.
O: **ALBERT/ N.W. COR./ HAYES/ .&./ DEVISADERO**
R: **GOOD FOR/ 5¢ / DRINK**
A#SFO80-A32; K#40

DUPONT STREET

5. Brass 21mm, plain borders and edge.
O: **SING CHONG CO./ INC./ 601/ DUPONT ST. S.F./ moise k. co.**
R: (blank except for a raised rim)
A#SFO80-S93; K#2430

EAST STREET

6. Nickel Alloy 21mm, plain borders and edge.
O: **THE CASTLE/ JOHN/ E.W./ STANGE/ PROP. 250A EAST ST./**
moise klinkner co. s.f.
R: **GOOD FOR 5¢ IN TRADE**
A#SFO80-C176; K#451
7. Twelve-scalloped brass 26mm, recessed beaded borders, plain edge.
O: **THE CASTLE/ BRANCH/ 343/ EAST ST.**
R: **GOOD FOR/ 5¢ / IN TRADE**
A & K unlisted. See also *Pacific Coast Numismatic Society Journal*, April 1987, pp. 8-9.

HOWARD STREET

8. Brass 21mm, beaded borders, plain edge.
O: **DAN CROWLEY'S/ N.W./ COR./ 24th & / HOWARD/ STS./ SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.**
R: **GOOD FOR/ 5¢ / IN TRADE**
A#SFO80-C154; K#613
9. Brass 21mm, denticled borders on obverse, beaded on reverse, plain edge.
O: **THE LITTLE MINT/ BAR/ N.W. CORNER/ (ornament)/ 24th & HOWARD**
R: **GOOD FOR/ 5¢ / IN TRADE**
A#SFO80-L64; K#1448.

KENTUCKY STREET

10. Brass 21mm, plain borders and reverse.
O: **BUTCHERS DELIGHT / H. STUMME / 2312 / KENTUCKY ST. / moise k. co.**
R: **GOOD FOR / 5¢ / DRINK**
A#unlisted; K#366

MONTGOMERY AVENUE

11. Eight-lobed aluminum 28mm, recessed beaded borders with plain edge.
O: **THE LOOP BOWLING ALLEYS/ POOL/ &/ BILLIARDS/ 238/ MONTGOMERY AVE./ S.F.**
R: **GOOD FOR / A 5¢ / DRINK**
A & K#unlisted
12. Another identical except for the street name, **COLUMBUS AVE.**
A#SFO80-L73, K#1463
13. Brass 24.5mm, recessed denticled borders, plain edge.
O: **ROMA CAFE/ 242/ COLUMBUS AVE.**
R: **GOOD FOR/ * ONE */ DRINK**
A#SFO80-R52; K#unlisted

OREGON STREET

14. Brass 28mm, recessed beaded borders and plain edge.
O: **S.A./ LIFEBOAT/ 120/ OREGON ST.**
R: **MEAL / CHECK**
A & K# unlisted

PACIFIC STREET

15. Octagonal brass 29mm, recessed beaded borders, plain edge.
O: **THE LEADER/ DANCE HALL/ 626 PACIFIC ST. S.F./ moise-k. co.**
R: **10**
A & K#unlisted
16. Similar, but eight-lobed brass 28mm. The reverse reads **25**. A & K#unlisted
17. Similar, but round brass 29mm. The reverse reads **50**
A#SFO80-L28; K#1409
18. Brass 21mm, plain borders and edge.
O: **HOP KEE & CO. / 633 / PACIFIC ST. / SAN FRANCISCO**
R: **pattern of seven 5-pointed stars.**
A#SFO08-H105; K# unlisted
19. Octagonal brass 26.5mm, recessed beaded borders, plain edge.
O: **TURKISH DANCE HALL/ 1028/ KEARNY ST./ S.F./ * C.C.***
R: **25**
A#unlisted; K#2604

POINT LOBOS AVENUE

20. Brass 21mm, beaded borders, plain edge.

O: **P. BOIEN / S.F.**

R: **1905 / POINT LOBOS / AVE**

A#SFO80-B110; K#285

RAILROAD AVENUE

21. Brass 21mm, plain borders and edge.

O: **POTRERO/ WINE & LIQUOR/ CO./ 1798 RAILROAD AVE./ COR
22nd & WILLIAMS AVE./ 1913/ irvine jachens.**

R: **GOOD FOR/ 5¢ / IN TRADE**

A#SFO80-P97; K#unlisted

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The Pacific Coast Numismatic Society, founded in 1915 in conjunction with the Panama Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco, is the oldest scholarly numismatic society west of the Mississippi. Members have met monthly in San Francisco ever since. Its 933rd meeting was held at the end of 1993.

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PCNS publications, including a quarterly journal since 1984, range through the numismatic gamut: ancient, medieval, modern world, U.S., in both metal and paper, and private issues (called "exonumia"), such as the history-laden tokens described in this monograph.



PCNS MONOGRAPH N° 1

1993