

## Port Walk #25



### Treasures in the Mud

If you were to dig deep enough at the spot right beneath your feet, you would even find some sunken ships. In the early 1800s, this area consisted of salt marshes, beaches, and tidal mudflats. During the Gold Rush, developers filled tidal wetlands to create new and valuable real estate.



SAN FRANCISCO, 1878.

### Buy the Bay

Pilings outlined lots for sale on the bottom of San Francisco Bay (near present-day Bay & Stockton Streets) during the Gold Rush-era land boom. In the 1850s, many such water lots were filled in and built on. Seawalls constructed in 1867 and 1878 put a limit on underwater real estate speculation. Parcels behind the seawalls could be drained and developed.



### Where's North Beach?

Before the 1860s, North Beach really was a beach. Today, the neighborhood known as North Beach is five blocks inland. In the rush to create new land, Gold Rush-era settlers filled the shallow waters beyond the beach with anything they could find – old ships, construction debris, household trash and junk. Today, excavations in this area expose an artifact-rich record of life in 1800s San Francisco.



### Edward Kemble, Printer

“The great event of that spring was the sale of the beach and water lots... [They were] sold at an auction on the 20th day of June, knocked-off by a sprightly little fellow whom the alcalde had appointed sheriff. For a few hundred dollars men bought real estate on which they realized two or three years afterwards as many as hundreds of thousands of dollars.”

- Excerpted from *A World Transformed: California Before the Gold Rush*, 1847