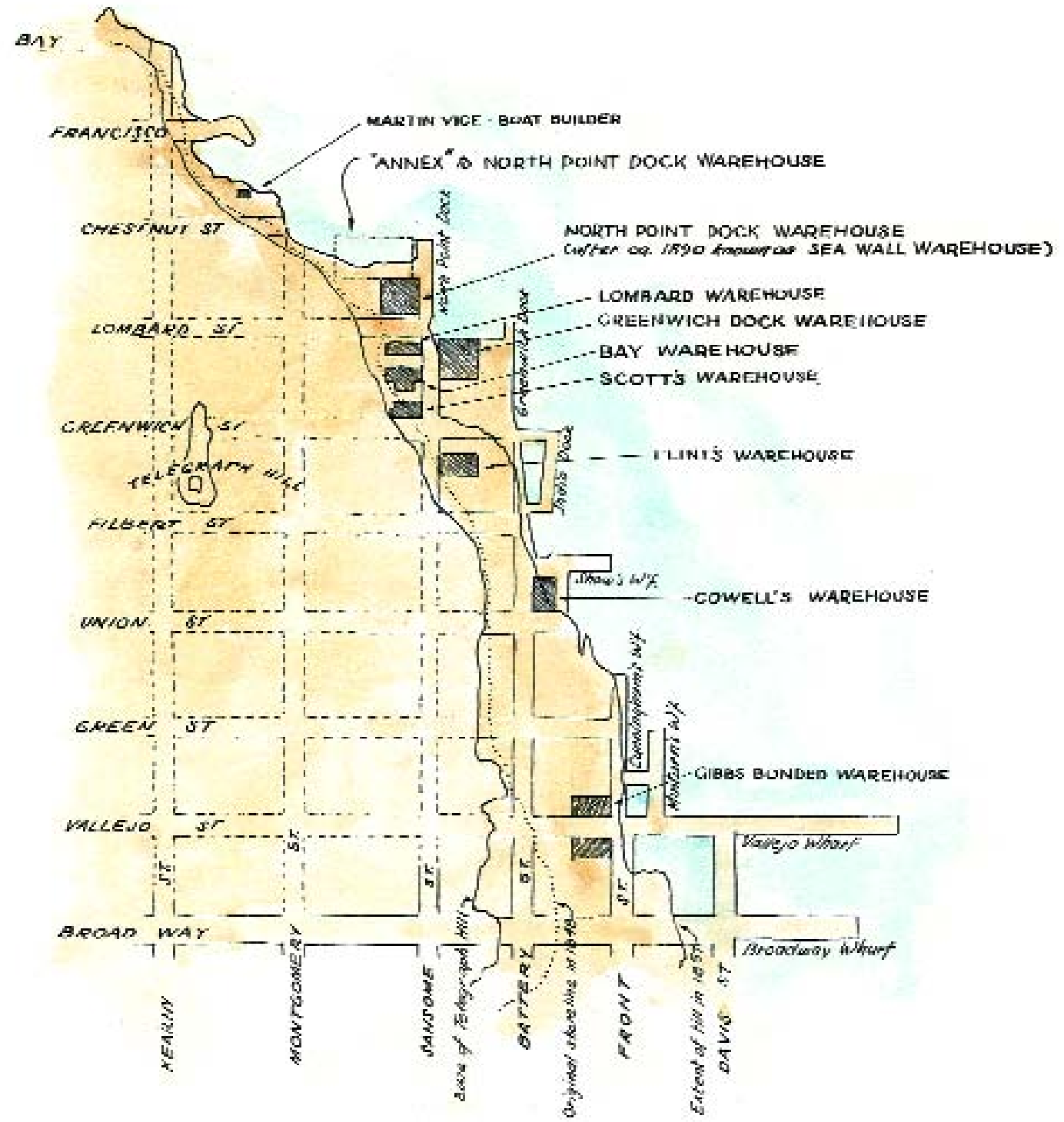


Join us for a fascinating journey through San Francisco's old North Waterfront. You will relive its history during the times of the Native Americans, the Spanish and Mexican settlers, and the early statehood of California. Experience the waterfront's evolution into a dynamic neighborhood, its eventual deterioration after World War II, and the revitalization that continues today.

Use the enclosed map and walking tour to witness firsthand a methodical, private restoration process that started in 1960 and continues to this day. It has created one of San Francisco's most desirable commercial and residential neighborhoods.

You will enjoy a walking tour through an urban "preservation paradise."

Sincerely,
Ron Kaufman



HISTORY OF THE OLD NORTH WATERFRONT

(I) THE GROWTH OF THE NORTH WATERFRONT IN THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY.

This map shows how landfill gradually expanded the district. The buildings indicated are historic warehouses, many of which were originally constructed on the water's edge.

For most San Franciscans, the Old North Waterfront is not an area that stirs many memories. Most can't even accurately place its location, confusing it with the more famous Fisherman's Wharf a short distance away. Fisherman's Wharf and the adjacent piers are certainly part of the modern North Waterfront, but this was not always the case. Were you to ask for directions to Fisherman's Wharf in the late nineteenth century, you would be directed to the Filbert Street dock, nicknamed "Italy Harbor." There you would find small boats called *faluccas* with triangular sails and, nearby, fishermen mending nets and talking with each other in their Genoese dialects. The area from Bay Street to Broadway (see map opposite) forms what is known as the Old North Waterfront, an area rich in history but mostly unknown to the general public.



***(2) GREEN STREET
PIER IN THE 1860s.***

The two steam engines shown on each side of the pier pulled ropes attached to pulleys on the ship's rigging to lift heavy cargo and bring it onto the wharf.

Perhaps most people are unfamiliar with this district because the Old North Waterfront's story has never been fully told. It is a rather small area, less than half a square mile in size; however, it would not be a stretch to say that it was critical to much of our city's history. It was here that countless generations of Native Americans pulled up their reed boats to dry in the sun. It was at the North Waterfront that Captain Montgomery rowed ashore with the Marines to claim San Francisco for the United States, and where many of the ships of the Gold Rush docked, unloading the people who triggered the first population explosion for both San Francisco and California. It was here that the first men were shanghaied, long before the Barbary Coast even existed. It was at the North Waterfront that the Committee of Vigilance "arrested" their first victims. It was here, at a boarding house on Sansome and Lombard, that San Francisco's notorious city boss, Abe Ruef, received his first lesson in street politics. It was here that the naval ships under the command of Lieutenant Frederick Freeman brought the men and supplies that saved San Francisco from being completely destroyed by the firestorm that raged after the great earthquake of 1906. And it was here in 1927, at a laboratory only a few blocks from the wharves, that Philo T. Farnsworth invented television. The North Waterfront also witnessed the largest labor strike in the history of the Western United States, one that brought the city to a virtual standstill in 1934. Finally, it is the place where some of San Francisco's oldest buildings are to be found, and where the city's most successful and enlightened private redevelopment program was completed. Despite all this, its own individual history has yet to be written.

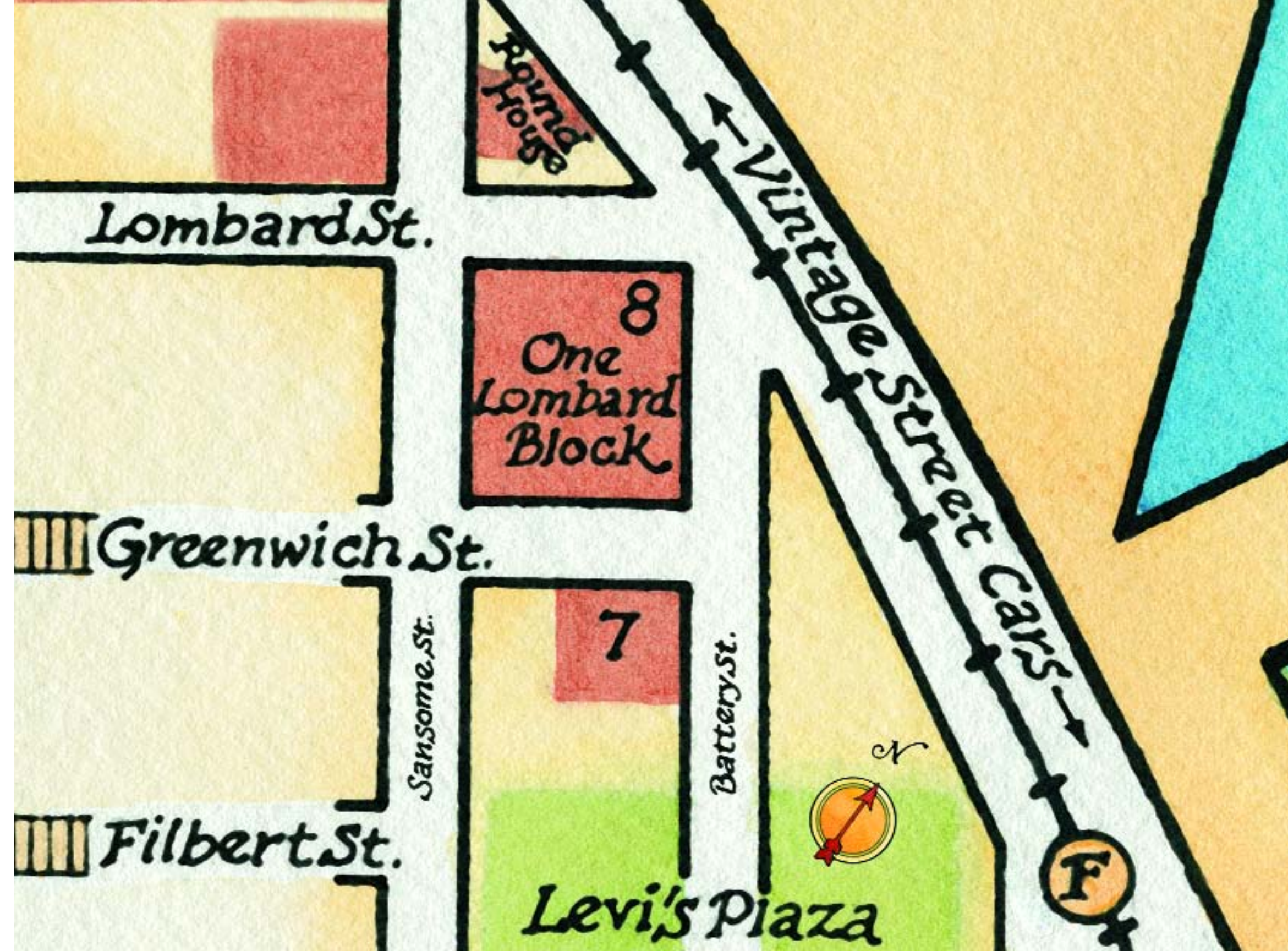
The story of the North Waterfront cannot be adequately told unless a general knowledge of San Francisco's own history is understood. The two are inextricably woven together, and each cannot exist without the other. We shall start at the beginning.

LOMBARD STREET, BETWEEN SANSOME AND BATTERY

As we walk east on Lombard, toward Battery at its terminus at the Embarcadero, you will see to your left a large gray building housing several businesses on the ground level. It is the site of the former Beltline Railroad Locomotive Roundhouse. The current building is fairly modern, but designed in the style popular in the 1920s so it would complement the older structures of the district. The Beltline Railroad once ran seventy miles of rails throughout San Francisco's harbor system and carried countless tons of cargo to or from the freighters that docked along the city's eastern shore (more on the Beltline shortly).

To your right, just past the garage, is the One Lombard building, built in 1895. It was formerly the Merchants' Ice and Cold Storage Company (see following pages). While it was only one of the three facilities owned by Merchants' Ice on the North Waterfront (two others were west of Sansome Street), it was certainly the company's most magnificent building, and they eventually located their headquarters and offices here. The main entrance has an arch built from the bricks of the much older adjacent building that preceded it. The entrance area behind it was where Merchants' had their ice cream works (if you have ice, why not make ice cream?) One Lombard was briefly a box and carton factory before Merchants' Ice purchased the premises shortly after 1900. It now houses the offices of the Ron Kaufman Companies, whose owner was a leading figure in the redevelopment and economic revival of the North Waterfront. Let us turn left at the intersection, and walk northwest on Embarcadero.

(33) Map detail.



ONE LOMBARD

Formerly Merchants' Ice and Cold Storage / The S.F. Bay Club

Building No. 8 on the map

As landfills were planned to push the wharves on the eastern side of the North Waterfront away from the previously dockside warehouses, and as those warehouses became creaky with age and more outdated in design, a partial redevelopment of sorts took place in the 1890s and early twentieth century. It was at this time that many of the older warehouses and buildings, particularly those constructed of wood or sandstone masonry, were torn down and replaced with more modern structures. It was during this period that the Italian Swiss Colony and W.P. Fuller warehouses were built, as well as the great icehouses of the North Waterfront: National Ice and Cold Storage on Union Street and Merchants' Ice and Cold Storage on Lombard Street. Of these two, the first to be constructed—and the first in architectural beauty—was the Merchants' building, built in the mid-1890s.

The demand for ice was especially critical at the major ports, where the long-range shipping of previously perishable meat and produce was now possible. Quick to address that need, Charles Swanson and Henry Westphal founded the Merchants' Ice and Cold Storage Company in the early 1890s in San Francisco. Their offices were initially on Clay Street, and their first warehouse was on Davis Street. From the beginning, both Swanson and Westphal had ambitious plans for the North Waterfront, and soon opened a major factory/warehouse across Sansome Street, where the Levi's Plaza Market and the 101 Lombard condominiums now are. A short time later, they bought the One Lombard premises, and eventually moved their offices there as well.

(34) One Lombard. Once housing a factory and the headquarters of Merchants Ice and Cold Storage, it is now an office building and home to several San Francisco businesses and foundations.





(35) This illustration shows a part of the Old North Waterfront, just a few years into the Gold Rush. Flint's warehouse is in the lower right foreground, near where the Italian Swiss Colony warehouse would later stand. Landfill would eventually expand the shoreline just beyond Flint's, and here the Greenwich Dock warehouse would be built, replaced in 1895 by the One Lombard building.



(36) In this 1864 photograph we see the massive Greenwich Dock warehouse in center frame. Sansome Street runs across its front. Approximately thirty years later, the far side of the Greenwich Dock warehouse would be replaced by the One Lombard building, which would use as its adjacent warehouse the foreground section of the Greenwich Dock structure. The latter would be replaced by a more modern warehouse, then another in the 1950s, this last destined to serve the future Bay Club.

(37) In this shot taken in 1920, we are looking east on Lombard Street and can view part of its intersection with Sansome. One Lombard is in the rear, and a bit of the older Merchants' Ice and Cold Storage buildings are in the right foreground, on this side of Sansome. The left and center of the photograph shows us the old Seawall warehouse building, with the ancient original structure in the background. In the foreground is 1620 Montgomery, the former Del Monte Milling building. The Seawall warehouse was one of the oldest existing warehouses in San Francisco until its demolition in the 1970s.



(38) In the lower left photograph from 1950, we see the Merchants' Ice and Cold Storage building (One Lombard) with its warehouse in the foreground, the building that replaced the Greenwich Dock facility decades earlier. In a few years, this warehouse would itself be replaced by the building now used by the Bay Club.

(39) The lower right photo is the Sansome Street facade of the original Seawall warehouse.

While the One Lombard building was not designed by a major architect like Burnham or Polk (the name of the building's architect is lost to us), it can nevertheless hold its own against their similar work in San Francisco, like the W.P. Fuller Glass warehouse. Still, the inefficiency of its multi-story design slowly became apparent by the mid-twentieth century. By the 1970s, it was an inescapable fact.

The development of the Merchants' Ice and Cold Storage block was pursued by Ron Kaufman for 13 years. In 1975 the new owners of Merchants agreed to sell, and Kaufman presented a proposal for its renovation and conversion to his partners—John McGuire, James Kelso and Tom Plant. The concept was for a total reconstruction and redesign of the One Lombard building's interior to accommodate offices. The two freestanding walls on Sansome and Lombard (remains of the earlier warehouse) posed a danger, and would be demolished to make way for a parking garage connected to the office building. The massive freezer plant and warehouse on the south side of the block could be converted to meet other needs.

Street Wise:

Lombard Street. Many local people think that Lombard Street was named by an Italian resident in honor of the region of Italy called Lombardy (Lombardia). However, like Sansome, Lombard is named after a street in another city. In this case, it was named for the Lombard Street of New York, which was located in one of that city's early nineteenth century financial districts. The name of New York's Lombard Street has changed a couple times over the last hundred and fifty years and is now largely forgotten. San Francisco's Lombard Street remains.

Soon after the block was acquired two young men, John Melin and James Gerber, approached Kaufman with a well-crafted business plan to create a quality fitness center. The plan would develop into the Bay Club, which now occupies the former freezer and much of the warehouse building. It celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary at the North Waterfront in 2002. Under Gerber's leadership, it is now undergoing an ambitious expansion of the facilities to position the Bay Club for "the next twenty-five years." The One Lombard building has attracted many fine tenants, including H.O.K. Architects and Foote Cone Belding Advertising. The present occupants are Western Athletic Clubs (parent company of the Bay Club), InterPacific, Nathan Roth, D.D.S., the Gerson Bakar Foundation, the Mosaic Fund, and numerous other charitable foundations, many of which were created by the descendants of Levi Strauss. The Ron Kaufman Companies and the Kaufman Management Corporation are headquartered here as well. Solidly built, and sporting large, beautifully-arching windows, it is one of the crown jewels of San Francisco's older historic buildings.

WALKING NORTHWEST ON THE EMBARCADERO, PASSING LOMBARD

As you walk along the Embarcadero, you will quickly encounter a small building just past the newer one on Lombard. It is the old "sandhouse" for the Beltline Railway (sand was spread on railroad tracks to give them traction if they were slick from rain or damp fog). Past the sandhouse is an old watering trough for the steam locomotives that once operated here. On the far side of the trough is the Beltline Roundhouse itself, where you will see the old rail lines still leading to the various numbered garages within the building. Here the locomotives would be serviced and/or led to a huge, balanced turnstile that rotated them so they could head out the same way they came in.

As the watering trough makes evident, the Beltline ran old steam locomotives for the first fifty or so years of its existence. Diesel-powered locomotives replaced them in the late 1940s and early 1950s. As more shipping businesses moved to Oakland, the need for the Beltline trains dwindled. Surprisingly, a few still continued to be operated until the early eighties.

Excerpt from Ron Kaufman's book The Old North Waterfront.

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