

ROARSHOCK PAGE

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January 23, 2018, do you know where your freedom lies? Another question ROARSHOCK PAGE poses in the year to come with many varied offerings for you the Readers. Now please consider another selection from the ongoing series of California Street Sketches.

CALIFORNIA STREET SKETCHES TRAILS WEST

California Street extended beyond the old city boundary at Larkin Street to Divisadero Street when the Van Ness Ordinance created the Western Addition in the 1850s. Originally lined with little farms, after several decades and the invention of the cable car the whole area became a suburb of downtown. The Great Fire following the Earthquake of April 1906 was finally halted at Van Ness Avenue.

In the 20th and 21st centuries the California Street cable car line ended at Van Ness Avenue and the 1 California MUNI line traveled outbound on Sacramento Street to Steiner Street where it turned left for a block then right onto California Street westbound. Those blocks were not directly served by regular transit lines, a stretch of street for cars and pedestrians. After decades in the City, A.. A... had traversed those blocks dozens of times, as distinct from the thousands of trips on the 1 outbound and inbound along Sacramento and Clay Streets. Those blocks of lower Pacific Heights along California were full mostly of apartment blocks, but there also were many Victorian era mansions that had survived the great earthquake and fire. Many famous houses were along that row. There was the strange Gothic house before Octavia Street. On its right side was a half arc. The Great Fishbini had once explained that the builder had intended to build a second house next door identical to the first with an arch on the left that joined with the first to make a carriage entrance. Each house was intended for one of the builder's two daughters, but for whatever reason the western house was never built.

On California Street at the corner of Webster Street stands Temple Sherith Israel and apparently in the 21st century little changed from when the sanctuary was officially consecrated on September 24, 1905. The structure with its signature dome was built as a fusion of Byzantine and Romanesque forms and long remained one of

San Francisco's distinct buildings and visible from many vantage points in the City. The Congregation Sherith Israel ("loyal remnant of Israel") existed from long before the California Street synagogue — dating from early in the California Gold Rush — and was one of the oldest Jewish congregations in North America. The Congregation Sherith Israel evolved into part of the progressive Reformed Judiism movement. Those first settlers — in fact they were 49^{ers} — mostly arrived from Europe and the eastern United States, even as other Gold Rush 49^{ers} of every faith and persuasion arrived in California — the new Promised Land — each to attempt to fulfill the golden dreams of their own Golden Lands. Of course, results were mixed, as always, but the dreams still persist decade after golden decade.

The blocks were bound by supermarkets at either end. All Paycheck Market at California and Franklin Streets in a repurposed building formerly on the outer edge of the famous Van Ness Auto Row, and on the west end near Steiner was Stoned Molly's Market. Alright, A.. A... had never actually gone inside Stoned Molly's. He had a sense of who would be shopping there—The same people parading along upper Fillmore Street and frequenting the high-end boutiques, getting hair stylings or just blowouts, eating artisanal burgers, tacos and ice cream in precocious bistros, drinking exquisitely expensive cocktails in incredibly clean bars. A.. A... figured Stoned Molly's prices probably reflected the neighborhood which was one of the reasons he never went in there to shop. He did note that the building the stoner chain market was in formerly housed the old time Grand Central Market and it still said that outside on the ancient marquee.

A.. A... did shop sometimes at All Paycheck Market which was pretty near his apartment. He could get delicacies there for less than at specialty markets (but he did make a point to shop local and small as much as possible) and the generic brand products were not priced too dear. Still the final receipt was invariably higher than anticipated. Then All Paycheck Market was engulfed and devoured by Babylon, the monster company that was systematically absorbing industries. They had started with the booksellers and were now turning towards the food business. Some prices did drop at All Paycheck Market, but the ambiance and the pace of the store seemed somehow more rushed and crass even than it had before. A.. A... could still go there and get a couple

of bottles of Pliny the Elder for the lowest price in the City if he arrived there early enough on a Wednesday afternoon before it sold out. One Wednesday it was quite crowded around all the check-out counters. There were several people ahead of A.. A... and his grocery basket. Some bros were playing grab ass in line while waiting to take advantage of a special on Lagunitas beer. An older gentleman was directly in front of him and had a nice assortment of fancy cheeses and other treats. A thin older woman pushed up past A.. A... and confronted the man. “You are still in THIS line?!” she nearly screamed at him. “STILL in this line!?” She began grabbing the wedges of cheese, hands and arms trembling with rage, and throwing them back into the man’s shopping basket. “I HATE this store!” she hissed. “I HATE IT SO MUCH! We are going to Stoned Molly’s! That’s where we *should* have gone in the *first* place!” Then they were gone. A.. A... placed his groceries on the space on the conveyer belt they had opened up. Looking through the heavy windows of the store he could see across the steep block of California Street and the First Church of Christ, Scientist. Sitting and leaning against its wall was the Old Man of the Mountain. He looked meditative blinking out of his head into the pale sunlight. A.. A... wondered about him as he always did when he saw him. It was pretty clear where he slept, right there on California Street, but where did he go to the bathroom? What did he eat and drink? A.. A... could not ever visualize the Old Man of the Mountain *inside* the All Paycheck Market — or imagine the Old Man of the Mountain receiving a paycheck for his efforts— with A.. A... and the older gentleman and the older gentleman’s hyper-angry wife. She could afford super fancy cheese but was obviously at her wits end. The Old Man of the Mountain did not appear to ever venture much further through lower Pacific Heights towards Fillmore and Stoned Molly’s (A.. A... had never seen him beyond Franklin Street), and for him the concrete sidewalk was his day bed, and yet he seemed serene. Both he and the lady were on California Street journeys traveling trails west.

— D. A. Wilson

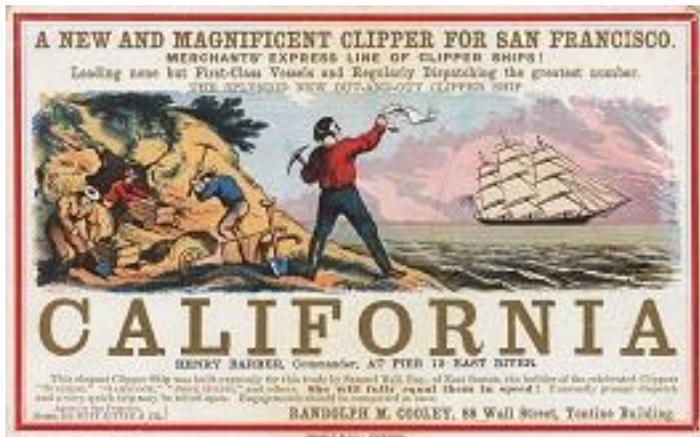
JANUARY ALMANAC

- 01/01 2018 FULL WOLF MOON
NEW YEAR’S DAY
- 01/02 1967 Ronald Reagan was sworn in as 33rd Governor of California.
- 01/05 1941 Hayao Miyazaki born in Bunkyō, Tokyo.
- 01/09 475 Emperor Zeno was forced to flee from Constantinople as his General Basiliscus gained control of the Byzantine Empire.
- 1960 Dr. Loren Dare Council was born.
- 2007 Steve Jobs introduced the original Apple iPhone at Macworld in San Francisco.
- 01/10 1929 *The Adventures of Tintin* by Hergé first appeared in *Le Petit Vingtième*, a children’s supplement to the Belgian newspaper *Le Vingtième Siècle*.
- 01/14 1953 Josip Broz Tito was inaugurated as the first President of Yugoslavia.
- 01/15 2018 Dolores O’Riordan of The Cranberries died in Mayfair, London age 46.
- 01/16 2018 NEW MOON
- 01/17 1961 U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower’s farewell television address warns against the “military–industrial complex.”
- 01/19 1920 The United States Senate voted against joining the League of Nations.
- 01/20 2018 Chef Paul Bocuse died above his restaurant, L’Auberge du Pont de Collonges, in the same room in which he was born, age 91, Collonges-au-Mont-d’Or, France.
- 01/22 2018 Ursula K. Le Guin died in Portland, OR.
- 01/23 2018 Hugh Masekela died in Johannesburg.
- 01/26 1918 Philip José Farmer born, Terre Haute, IN.
- 01/31 2018 FULL BLUE MOON

<http://roarshock.net/january.html>

Calling for Contributions! ROARSHOCK PAGE invites submissions of art, photographs, poetry, and micro-prose, to be considered for inclusion in future issues.

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