

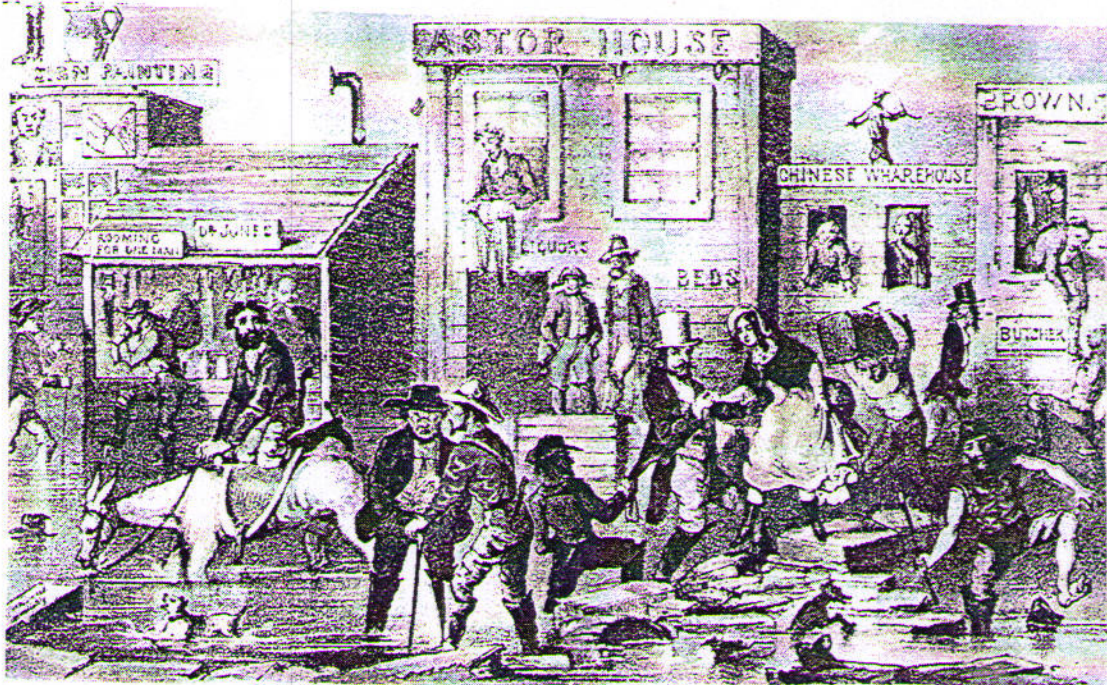
## Arriving in San Francisco

Once they arrived in California, the would-be miners needed equipment and supplies. But with so many fortune-seekers pouring in, goods and services were scarce. Prices were sky-high. Morris Schloss was an immigrant from Poland and England who sailed around Cape Horn to seek wealth in California. When he arrived in San Francisco, he got a big surprise about the value of things.

I arrived in San Francisco, September 25, 1849 landing at the foot of Broadway Street with my baggage.

I brought with me a wagon packed in a large box and, at the landing a man asked me what was in the box. I told him a wagon and he asked me the price of it. I told him \$125 and he offered me \$100, which rather surprised me as he had not seen the contents of the box. I accepted his offer and he paid me in gold dust.

The man was very careful in opening the box not to break the lid, and then taking out the wagon, he said to me: "Stranger, you may keep the wagon, for I only want the box" (for which I paid \$3.00). "That case is what I want," he said. "I am a cobbler, and in the daytime it will be my shop, and at night, my residence." That box measured seven feet by four feet."



San Francisco as it appeared in its first few months

Houses and shops made of wooden boxes didn't last long. San Francisco grew rapidly to meet the needs of the newcomers. Buildings seemed to go up overnight. The new city offered many kinds of jobs, but with them came some old problems. Mifflin Gibbs, the son of a Philadelphia minister, sailed to California by way of Panama in 1850. A free black man, he describes his experiences soon after his arrival in San Francisco.



Mifflin Gibbs

After dinner, I immediately went out, and after many attempts to seek employment of any kind, I approached a house in the course of construction and applied to the contractor for work. He replied he did not need help. I asked the price of wages. Ten dollars a day. I said would you oblige me by giving me a few days' work as I have just arrived. After a few moments thought,....he said if I choose to come for nine dollars a day, I might. ...I chose to come.

...I was nor allowed to long pursue carpentering. White employees finding me at work on the same building would "strike."...All classes of labor were highly paid including blacking boots. I after engaged in this and other like humble employments, part of which was for John C. Fremont, "the pathfinder overland to California."

While some in San Francisco were prejudiced, many others were tolerant and welcoming. Joseph Heco was a Japanese sailor whose ship was wrecked. An American ship rescued him and the rest of the crew and took them to San Francisco. Here he describes being transferred from one American ship to another.

By way of salutation [greeting] we fell on our knees and bowed to the deck and prayed before the deck-officer and the one who had escorted us on board. . . . The crew were very kind to us, when we went on deck they thronged around us and showed us over the vessel. They also tried to teach us...naming various things by their name. ..We met with nothing but the utmost kindness from all on board. In fact, according to our notions we were treated over-well, and one day a great discussion arose among us as to what the object of the foreigners might be so dealing with us. And one would say to the other that the strangers were fattening us for their future meat, and another would say that surely could not be. Then our wise old grey-haired Captain Manzo put in his word and spoke quietly. He was going on to say that what they were saying was wrong and was doing an injustice to our benefactors [protectors], when one fellow interrupted him rudely and bluntly asked "What object then do they have in treating us in such a way?"

And after a second our Captain answered gently, but I could see that there was indignation [outrage] deep down in his breast. "These men," he said, "are simply good and charitable [generous] people and are kind to us, because they know that we have lost everything and that we are strangers in a strange land, and helpless as the year-old infant in that we understand not nor speak the speech of the land."