

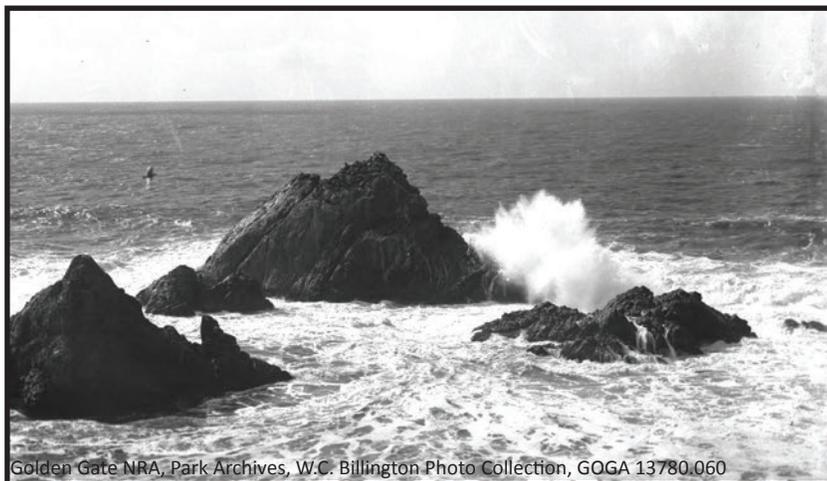
Seal Rocks

These rocky islets that lie off the shore below the Cliff House were once home to hundreds of sea lions. Visitors to Lands End walked the Cliff House balcony to view the creatures, hoping to catch a glimpse of the biggest, most famous sea lion of all -- Ben Butler.

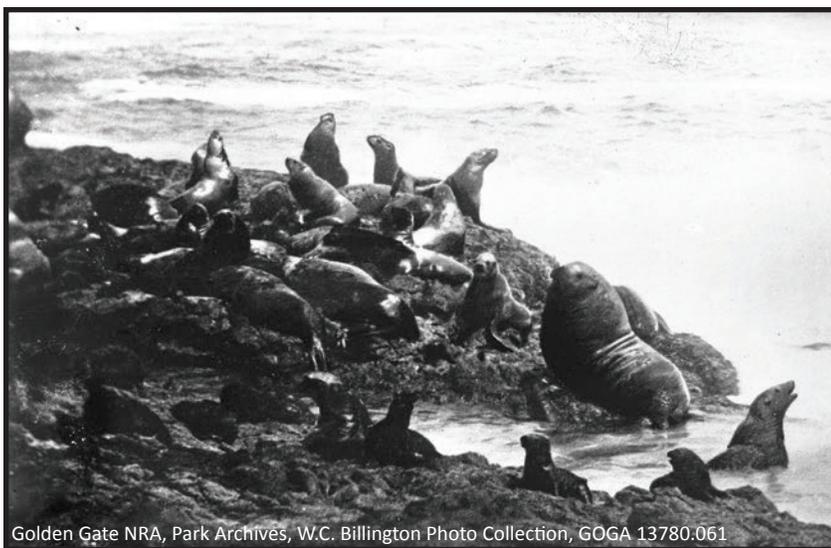
Seal Rocks were also the focus of many public spectacles. Wires were strung between the Cliff House and the Rocks for several famous tightrope walks. Racing swimmers navigated their way around the outcrops.

At the urging of Adolph Sutro, Congress granted Seal Rocks to the City of San Francisco in 1887, essentially becoming one of the nation's first congressionally designated marine sanctuaries. The City was charged with keeping Seal Rocks, "free from encroachment by man and preserve from molestation the seals and other animals now accustomed to resort there".

After the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, the sea lions moved to Pier 39 in San Francisco. They began to return in the mid 1990s, taking up residence in summer and staying into the fall. Even without a huge sea lion population Seal Rocks provide visitors with a picturesque view of the Pacific horizon.



Golden Gate NRA, Park Archives, W.C. Billington Photo Collection, GOGA 13780.060

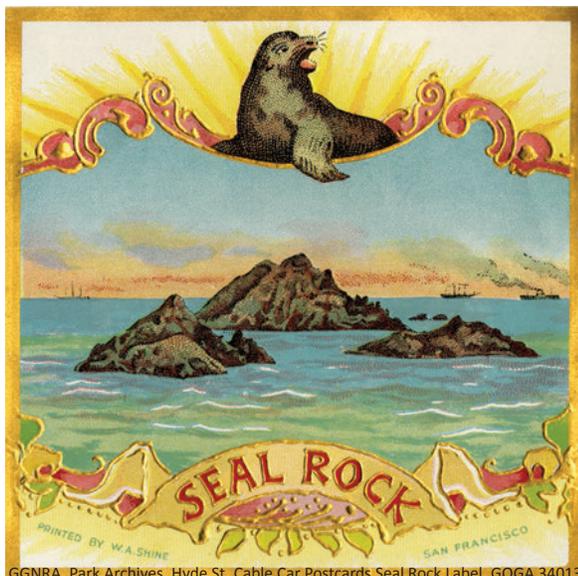


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Top: Waves hitting Seal Rocks, ca. 1894-1907;

Center: Sea Lions on Seal Rocks, ca. 1896-1907;

Bottom: Seal Rocks cigar box label printed by W.A. Shine, ca. 1911.



GGNRA, Park Archives, Hyde St. Cable Car Postcards Seal Rock Label, GOGA 34013