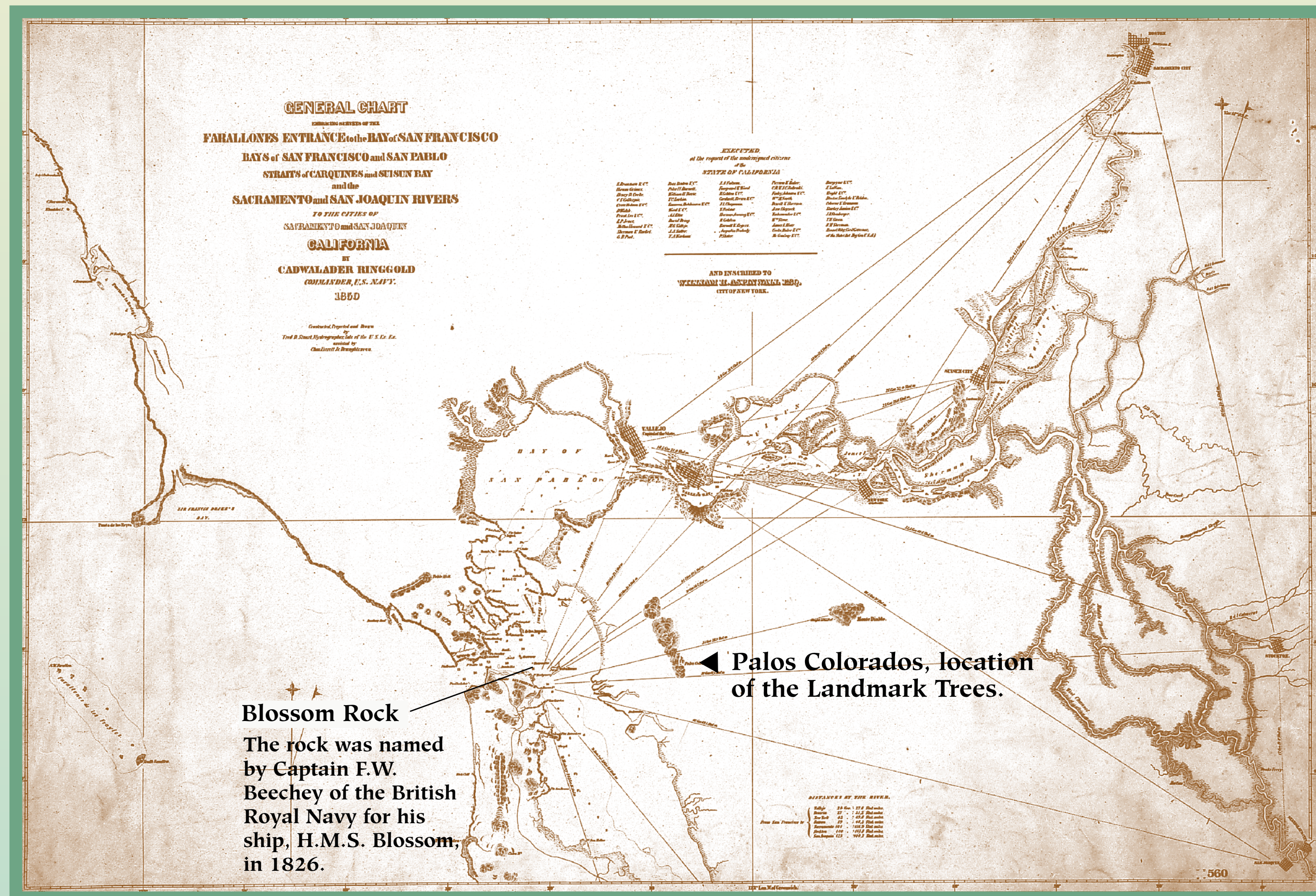


The Landmark Trees

In the early years of navigation on San Francisco Bay, a major hazard, "Blossom Rock," lay submerged between Yerba Buena and Alcatraz Islands. Following an 1827-1828 tour of the Pacific Ocean, a British sea captain, F.W. Beechey, recorded the presence of the rock, and described the sight lines necessary to locate it:

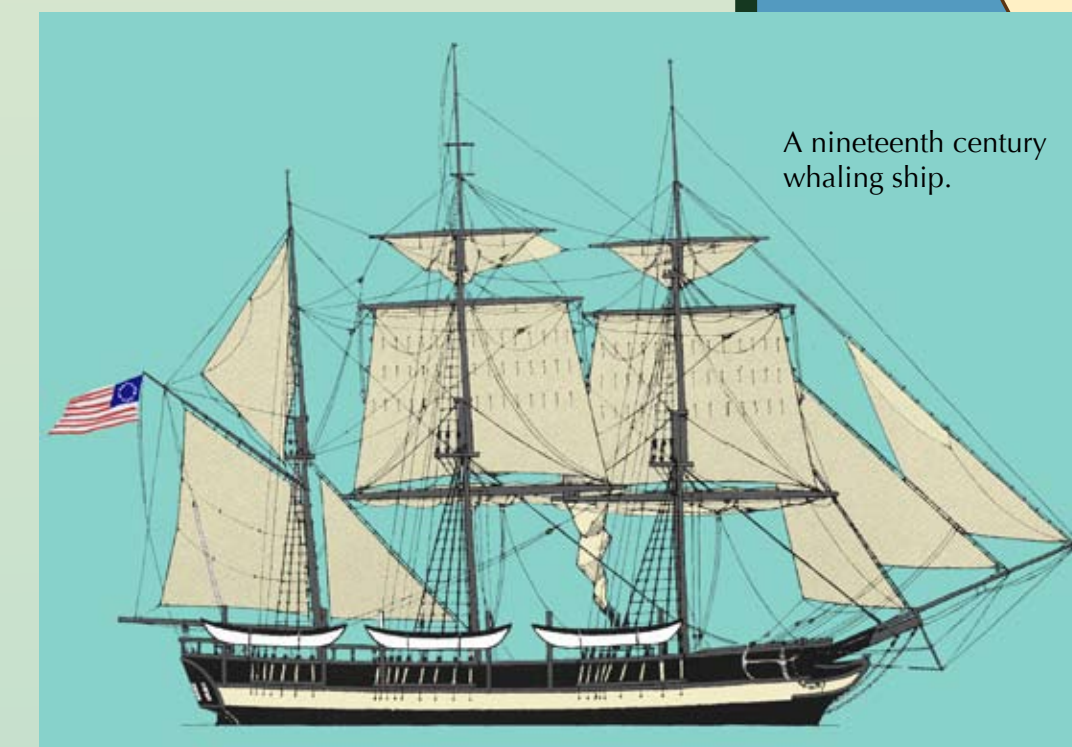
"After passing the fort, a ship may work up for anchorage without apprehension. . . The only hidden danger is a rock with one fathom on it at low water. . . between Alcatraz and Yerba Buena Islands; it has seven fathoms alongside it, the lead therefore gives no warning. The marks when on it are the north end of Yerba Buena Island in one with two trees (nearly the last of the straggling ones) south of Palos Colorados, a wood of pines situated on the top of the hill, over San Antonio, too conspicuous to be overlooked. . ."



In 1851, U.S. Navy Captain, Cadwalader Ringgold published this map of San Francisco Bay.



U.S. Navy Captain, Cadwalader Ringgold (1802-1867)



adapted from a drawing in "The Whale", Crescent Books, New York

The towering redwood trees that helped nineteenth century sea captains steer clear of Blossom Rock are gone now, but visitors to Roberts Regional Recreation Area can picnic among their descendants in a beautiful grove of second-growth redwoods.

