

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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The Great Seal

By request we are reprinting an article which appeared in the Peninsula Diary a number of years ago. It concerns the Great Seal of the City of Monterey and the whys and wherefores of the various parts of the seal which is painted on the sides of all the municipal automobiles.

"Arms of the City of Monterey" is the title of an article which appeared in the Alta Californian on June 6, 1870, and aside from telling about a gay celebration which marked Monterey's 100th incorporation birthday, it relates how the city seal was designed. The issue of the paper in which the article appeared is in the files of the California State library. At the conclusion of the article there is a simple signature "Sefton," therefore we have no farther information concerning our historian, who might be pleased if he knew that Monterey did celebrate again in 1946 and in 1949 and on June 3rd, 1950, the 200th birthday of the city was again honored.

The article continues: "The festivities of the day, as a matter of course, wound up with a grand ball at Colton Hall: the quadrille, the waltz, the contra-danza and the jarabe, In the rich dialect of one of the early and worthy residents of Monterey, the dance was kept up 'till th' wee sma' hours ayant the twal' and by some even until the rosy fingered morn had drawn aside the curtains of the East.

"In designing the arms, it was sought to observe heraldic devices with such lights in that obscure science as we then possessed, and to avoid all incongruities as landscapes, cornucopias, railroad cars, canal boats, steamboats, etc., and yet avoiding fabulous monsters, as dragons and griffins.

"If anyone will take pains to examine the arms of the 13 original states, he will see at a glance there is a meaning and a propriety in them, and the rules of heraldry observed which the ecutcheon of the strong-minded heathen lady, with a coal scuttle on her head and her tame bear does not possess, and which tasteful design was made by the leonine sage of the Dale of Lyons.

"The shield of Monterey is a field vert, as the environs of the town are always green, with a bar sinister in or showing an auriterous streak with a somewhat irregular

birth, not being a portion of the ancient domain of the United States.

"The field is charged with an anchor and sheaf proper, showing how hopeful we were to be able to see in the future a large commerce and production: the supporters, a horse and bull rampant, were at that time very important items in the wealth of the country.

"The crest was a rising sun in, or expressing our hopes, at least, that we were a rising town, whatever the facts might have been. The motto 'Anda,' caused some objections on the part of the scholars; they said it should have been 'Adelanto' forward: that 'Anda' being an imperative of the Word 'Andar', to go on, to move on, was a homely expression, only used to drive cattle, and to urge aborigines to move along; but as there is a wide latitude in the choice of mottoes, from 'Excelsior' down to 'Strive and Thrive' notwithstanding their learned and undoubtedly correct remonstrance, 'Anda' was retained.