

Peninsula Dairy Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

March 12, 1956

### **Monterey's Seal**

On Aug. 18 1952, Mrs. Agnes Burge of Sana Cruz mailed to Mrs. Mary Greene, the curator at the Old Custom House a clipping from a San Francisco newspaper telling history of Monterey's seal and its meaning.

She explained that the clipping was found in the back of an old album which had been the possession of her parents Joseph and Eliza Clarke Boston pioneer residents of Monterey for many years. Boston was a partner of Thomas Oliver Larkin in a merchandise store in the Casa de Oro, corner of Scott and Olivier streets, now a State Historical monument. Mrs. Burge, the last of the Boston family died on Jan. 22, 1955.

The clipping bears no date. The self-styled authority on the meaning of the Monterey seal merely signed "Sefton, San Jose, and June 8<sup>th</sup>."

The letter to the paper is headed: "Arms of the City of Monterey, interesting Reminiscences of Early Times in California –A Contribution to History." reads in part:

"In your account of the recent festivities in Monterey, your reporter has been misinformed in reference to the flag bearing the arms of that ancient city, which was carried in the procession. The late Lt. Derby did not design the arms or emblazon them upon the flag. The arms were designed by a member of the City Council, and officially adopted as the arms and seal of the city in the year 1850. Lt. (now Gen.) J. Sully, in hinting some of his father's talent, as an artist, and withal having a taste for heraldry, painted the arms in proper colors, technically emblazoned on them. The flag was painted to be used in a Fourth of July procession that year, Mr. Sully directing the whole ceremony. It being the first Fourth of July after the adoption of the State Constitution and as the times were flush in Monterey in those days, everyone was brim full of patriotism, as you may suppose, and we all looked forward to a glorious career for old Monterey."

Alfred Sully was the young army officer who played in the first plays at California's First Theater. He married Senorita Manuelita Jimeno, the daughter of Dona Augustias Jimeno and Don Jose de la Guerra of Santa Barbara. She died in Monterey on March 28, 1851, at

the age of 17 years, and with her infant son is buried in the Monterey Catholic cemetery.

Sully was the son of the famous portrait painter, Thomas Sully. He was graduated from West Point and came to Monterey with Col. J.D. Stevenson's regiment in 1848. During his stay here he made a number of drawings and water color sketches.

The writer of the letter reports further: "In our mind's eye we saw vast fleets of ships laden with rich merchandise from every quarter of the world, riding at anchor in the fine harbor or discharging at imaginary wharves. We saw a vision of a railroad with its ridges and embankments, its engines and long train of cars carrying the aforesaid rich cargoes into the San Joaquin country and southern mines, and returning with yellow buckskin bags corpulent with that golden dust which has been described as so hard to get, yet harder to hold.

"We expected to rival San Francisco (or as it sometimes was called in those days, Yerba Buena); but not the faintest shadow of an iota of this beautiful vision was ever realized. Some of the grumblers blamed our worthy mayor and Common Council for not bringing about the state of perfection so ardently desired. Perhaps the grumblers were right, and upon the heads of those officials must be laid the blame of allowing San Francisco to take the lead and drawing away from the ancient capital its commerce and its prosperity.

"The ships would not come and the railroad consequently was not built. But some of us were so hopeful that we purchased lots and kept them a good many years."