

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

March 14, 1956

Anda!

Today we will continue our story of the Arms of the City of Monterey, as told by a correspondent to the old Alta, a newspaper published in San Francisco before the turn of the century. We told in the last issue of the July 4 procession in Monterey in 1850 when the city seal had been painted on a banner by Lt. Sully, who directed the first celebration of the state constitution.'

The unknown correspondent wrote: "To return to the procession. It assembled in the plaza in front of the church, with the band of the 2nd Infantry at its head, preceded by the famous banner which was carried by a character whose modesty would probably be put to blush to see himself in print, the celebrated Dennis McCarty, or 'the double-breasted child of the forest,' as he called himself, who was gotten up for the occasion in leather breeches and top boots; there was also a mounted escort of young men wearing red "bandas" or "fajas" across the breast. It took up the march at the house of Gen. Riley, who was waiting to receive it in full uniform, girded with the yellow sash won at Chapultepec; he was received with drums rolling and banners waving, and took his place in the line which wended its way towards Colton Hall. The ceremonies there consisted in reading the Declaration of Independence by Capt. F. K. Kane of the Army, followed by a translation into Spanish by Lt. John Hamilton, an oration by John A. McDowell (brother of the general), and some remarks in Spanish by the Rev. Padre Ramirez, in his Dominican habit, with national airs from the band. It was an unusually fine day; we were somewhat younger then - we were in fine spirits and our hopes ran high.

"The festivities of the day, as a matter of course wound up with a "gran baile" at Colton Hall; the quadrille, the waltz, the contra dance and the jarabe."

After this description of the celebration of the California's first Fourth of July, Sefton goes on to write of the designing of the Monterey City Seal.

"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 such incongruities as landscapes, cornucopias, railroad cars,

canal boats and 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 escutcheon 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 stage 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 auriferous stake, 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 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 scholars; they said it should have 'Adelante' forward that "Anda' being the imperative of the verb 'andar,' meaning 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 mottos, from 'Excelsior' down 'Strive and Thrive,' notwithstanding their learned and undoubtedly correct remonstrance, 'Anda' was retained. The knowledge of the Spanish language on the part of the Common Council in those days was extremely small - limited, perhaps, to such expressions as 'youstay wamos akee manyana, yu wanos tombeen, star weener.'

"It might not be out of place to mention that the said Common Council voted Gen. Riley on the eve of his departure a massive gold medal, with the city arms rudely fashioned and engraved. These civic dignitaries did not, however, get as far as their venerable compeers, the city fathers of the rival commercial emporium and City of San Francisco and vote themselves each a gold medal.

"But in spite of the rampant bull and the furious steed of the supporters, and the imperative character of the motto, Monterey would not 'andarrons': the young men's hair is now sprinkled with gray: their steps are not as springy and elastic as they were in those days,

but the wind still sighs through the pines; the surf
rattles and thunders on the beach, and to all
appearances the old town of Monterey is still the same.
Sefton, June 8th."