

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **San Jose's Seal**

A few weeks ago, the City of Monterey received a request from the American Society of Heraldry, for information on the Great Seal, which appears on all official stationery, and all city owned cars, trucks, and other equipment. We were able to supply that information. The "coat of arms" was designed by a member of the city council, and officially adopted as the arms and seal of the city in the year 1850.

We now read that San Jose has received the same request concerning that city's seal. The society has asked what the "coat of arms" looks like, the date on which it was adopted, the name of the artist, and the reasons for adoption of the particular design. San Jose claims that it does not have a "coat of arms," but it does have a seal. The city clerk and his assistant, set about the task of finding out when, where and why San Jose's seal was adopted.

"All we have to do," Francis L. Greiner, city clerk, said, "is the next best thing, check the records and find out this information on the seal." He checked, his assistant checked, other city employees checked, but came up without even a suggestion of an answer. So, a letter was written to Frank M. Jordan, California secretary of state, asking for examination of state records to determine when, and by what authority, San Jose began using its seal.

Jordan's office replied that the right to use the seal was granted by the city charter, approved by the State Legislature in 1915, but first authority to use the seal was an act of the legislature in March 1850. "But" the secretary added, "We can shed no light on the source of the design."

San Jose city clerk and his staff checked city records as far back as April 1853 and could find no record of adoption of the seal.

The seal shows a sheaf of wheat and grape vines, two of the area's important crops in the 1850's, indicating that the seal was devised before the introduction of prunes in the 1870's. The biggest mystery of all, however, is who is the unknown artist who designed this seal that is contained in every official document of the city of San Jose. We fear that our early city officials were vary

negligent in recording such items which are considered important history today.

Saturday, Oct. 5, at noon, the California Historical Society will sponsor the dedication of the plaque marking Registered State Historical Landmark No. 563, at the Charles Krug Winery, Saint Helena., Those who do not wish to travel in their own cars, will be taken by chartered bus from the Woman's Athletic Club, 640 Sutter street, San Francisco, at 9:30 a.m., which will also stop at the society's building, 2090 Jackson Street the tour will arrive at the winery about 11:30. The dedication program at noon is in charge of Dr. Albert Shumate, and will include remarks by Hon. Joseph R. Knowland; representatives at the Krug family and the Mondavi family; Dr. Aubrey Neasham of the State Division of Beaches and Parks; and Miss Ivy Loeber, president of the Napa County Historical Society. At 1 o'clock luncheon will be served. During the afternoon members will be taken on guided tours of the winery. The return trip will start at 3:30 p.m. The round trip fare is \$2.00, and luncheon is \$3.00.