

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

March 5, 1959

### **The Sloat Monument**

We continue to pursue the Sloat Monument on Presidio Hill in today's column, for there are many folks in Monterey, we are sure, who have never driven by automobile to the site, let alone walked the short distance up the hill to read the many markings on the stones which form the base for the American eagle on top.

Miss Gladys Tilden of Berkeley has written us a second letter informing us in more detail of her father's connection with the stone cross at the Portola-Serra landing place near the Presidio gate, as well as more information on the Sloat Monument. Herewith we quote from her letter:

"From a clipping showing original version of the planning for the Sloat Monument at Monterey, which I found pasted in a history of California, as well as several references to it in Monumental News in the University of California Library, I find it credit to Rupert Schmidt. The latter book was published in the 1890s and early 1900s.

"Later, both Earl Cummings and Arthur Putnam were given the credit. Apparently, the original design was ordered from Rupert Schmidt. The pedestal with its many-labeled 'cornerstones' was part of his original design, the original \$10,000 came from the California State Legislature in 1898.

"In December 1903, Schmidt had proceeded to complete the work. His studio at this time was on Grant avenue, I believe. The bronze statue of Cmdr. John Drake Sloat, who raised the U.S. Flag at the Custom House on July 7, 1846, was to be 10 feet high, there were four medallions, four guns, etc., all very elaborate.

"Apparently all this was lost in the 1906 fire, and earthquake in San Francisco. Then Maj. Edward A. Sherman, secretary of the Sloat Monument Assn., secured another \$10,000 from the United States Congress in 1907, the work was turned over to a contractor who secured the eagle from Putnam and the medallion of Sloat from Cummings, and the completed (and to my estimation quite truncated) monument was completed in 1910.

"Schmidt's 12 x 232 frieze on the Memorial Arch at Stanford was completely demolished in 1906, but his

quite good monument of President William McKinley at San Jose in St. James Park survived. He died in Alameda Aug. 21, 1932."

The bronze version of the Berra medallion on the Monterey Cross is at Mission Dolores in San Francisco. Harry Downie at Carmel Mission reports that there is another version at Mission San Luis Obispo. A plaster cast is at St. Mary's College.

Miss Tilden writes that she has the original and Dr. Evans of the Society of California Pioneers has expressed interest in sending it to the Serra birthplace in Petra on the Island of Mallorca, together with a story and a photograph of the Monterey Cross.

This medallion was designed by her father, Douglas Tilden, an early well-known artist of San Francisco.

In another letter received a few days ago we are asked to supply information regarding a Mexican grant in Northern California. Mrs. Donald S. Simpson of Saugus is compiling a history of her family from the Atlantic to the Pacific and wants advice as to where to go and how to look for these early records of that period of California history. Needless to say, I have answered the letter to the best of my ability.

Mrs. Simpson writes of her family:

"My grandfather's grandfather, William Campbell, arrived in Santa Clara Valley in October 1846, and purchased a part of a Mexican grant there. His son, Benjamin Campbell, purchased a part of a Mexican grant in 1851. and in the 80s established the town of Campbell. My grandfather's father, Ira Joseph Lovell, came to California in 1852 and in 1853 he purchased 231 acres in what came to be known as the Moreland District, near San Jose. He obtained an uncontested title to this land which had been part of a Mexican grant. I should like to have photostatic copies of deeds written in Spanish or English of the above transactions. Sounds like a puzzle, doesn't it?"