

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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Bookplate Collection Exhibited

The late Thomas Wayne Norris, president of the Monterey History and Art Association in 1950 and 1951, was a collector of Californiana, much of which is now in the Bancroft Library in Berkeley and in the Huntington Library in San Marino. He also collected book plates and had a handsome one of his own which is in the collection shown at present in the library of the California Historical Society in San Francisco.

Collectors of Edwardian days sought rare book plates as avidly as philatelists stalk their own present-day rarities, according to a column published in "Notes" of the California Historical Society. The great private book plate collections have all but vanished, but the use of a properly designed ex libris still remains de rigueur among all acknowledged book collectors. Special inserts in issues of the "California Librarian," official publication of the California Library, contain examples of "Ex Libris California." The first appeared in the July 1963 issue, and reproduced plates for Adam A. McAlister, the Santa Fe's California Limited, Thomas Wayne Norris, and Riverside Library's Flavius B. Clement collection.

The Monterey History and Art Association's library was recently presented with several books on California law by Dr. William D. Pratt of Carmel Valley Manor, each book containing the interesting and beautifully designed book plates of the late James D. Phelan and the late Noel Sullivan. The book had been saved when a fire destroyed the old home, after the property was purchased for the site of the present Carmel Valley Manor.

Doyce B. Nunis Jr. has published a book which anyone interested in early California history should have in his library. The Talisman Press of Georgetown, Calif., is the publisher of "Josiah Beldon: 1841 California Overland Pioneer. His Memoir and Early Letters", limited to 750 copies, priced at \$6.95.

An important and early pioneer, Josiah Belden was a member of the first planned overland immigration to California in 1841. His account of that epic trek led by John Bartleson, and accompanied by such notable persons as John Bidwell, Cheyenne Dawson, Thomas Fitzpatrick and others, adds dimension to the established narrative of that event, which was to

become the opening wedge for the great migration to California, Beldon dictated his recollections, in 1878, to an assistant of Hubert Howe Bancroft, and that memoir forms the nucleus of this book.

Beldon was an associate of Thomas O. Larkin, operating a store for the latter in Santa Cruz in 1844. Beldon's comments on the social and political life of Mexican California are graphic. Later, after the occupation of California, Beldon became merchant, politician, and one of the leading pioneers in Santa Clara County. Since he was an eyewitness to the transition period between Mexican and American California, his memoir and letters form a backdrop for our enlarged and enriched comprehension of California history in this fateful decade of the 1840's.