



Sourisseau Academy

Smith-Layton Archive presents:

When Artists Flew Like Birds!

by Tom Layton

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Les Amis (The Friends)

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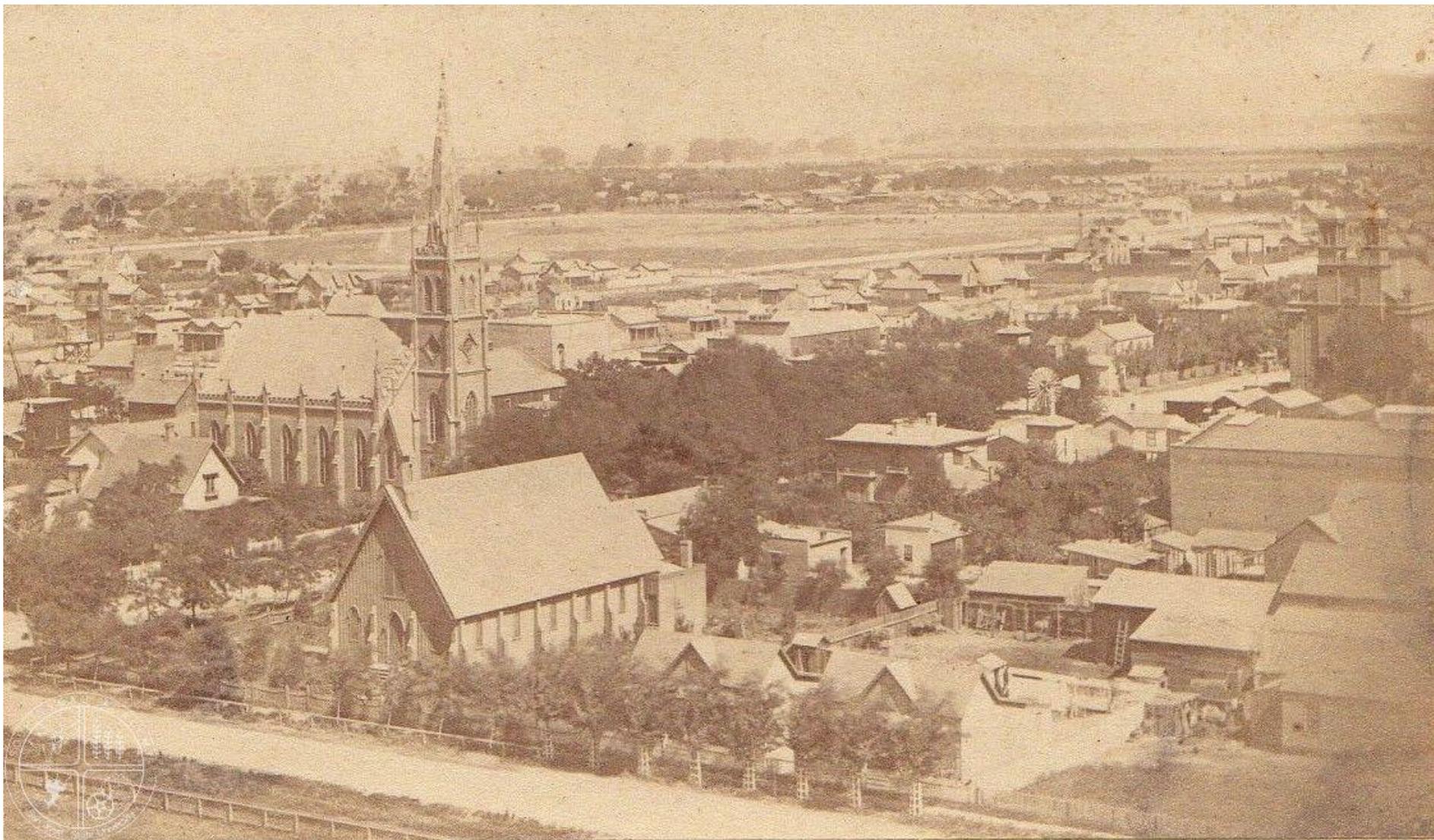
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[127] **View from the top of City Hall, 1858** - Among our very earliest panoramic views of San Jose is this 1858 vista, sketched from the city hall rooftop facing south along First Street — across the Santa Clara Street intersection. Subsequent artists and photographers would seek ever-higher elevations for their views of the city.



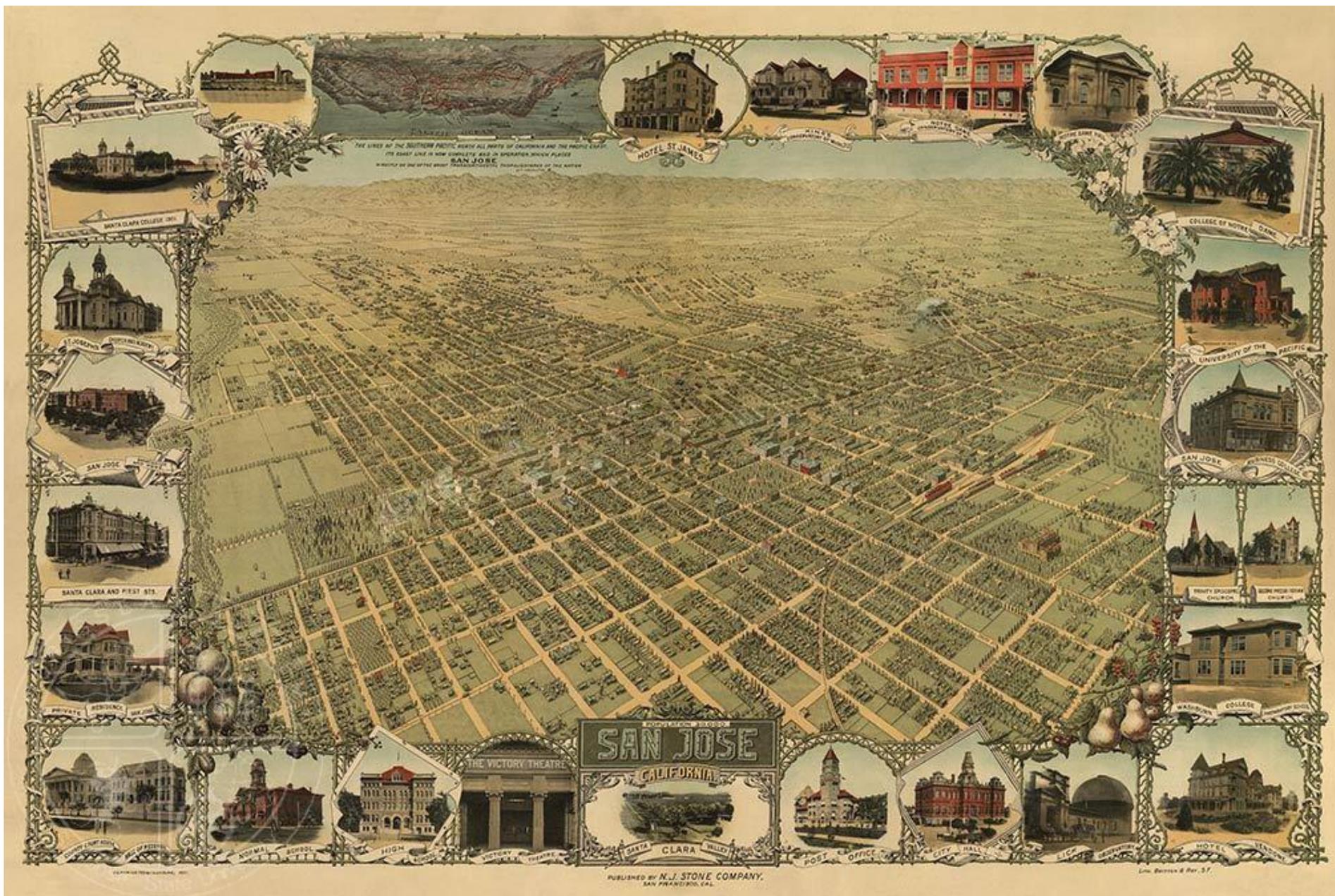
[128] **The Court House Dome** - In 1868, the "birds-nest" walkway atop the 115-foot dome of the new County Court House became the highest vantage spot from which to view San Jose. Nevertheless, master photographer John H. Heering's camera could capture but a small portion of the 360-degree vista, as in this view southwest past the tall steeple of First Presbyterian Church. The church unfortunately fell in the 1906 Earthquake.



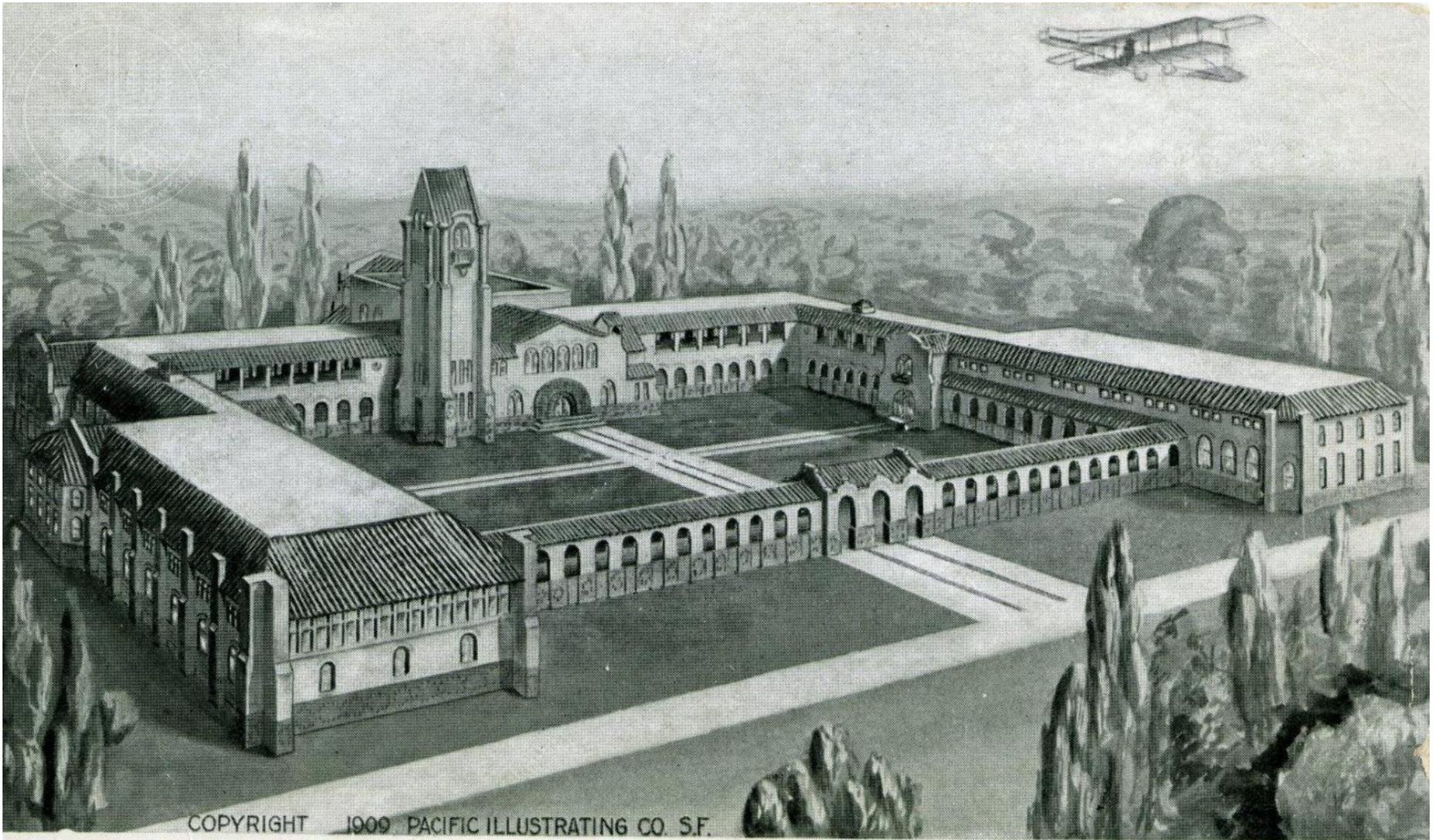
[129] **The View South, 1869** - There was a long tradition in Europe and America of talented artists redrawing street maps into birds-eye panoramic views. In 1869, a San Francisco lithographer published this aerial view, facing southeast toward Morgan Hill. The town of San Jose is situated between Coyote Creek on the left and the Guadalupe River to the right.



[130] **The View North, 1875** - However, San Jose was growing rapidly; and in 1875, a San Jose lithographer published an updated north-facing view of the city, with the San Francisco Bay in the far distance, and a baseball game in progress in the foreground. Note the train heading south down the tracks on Fourth Street to the left of the baseball game.

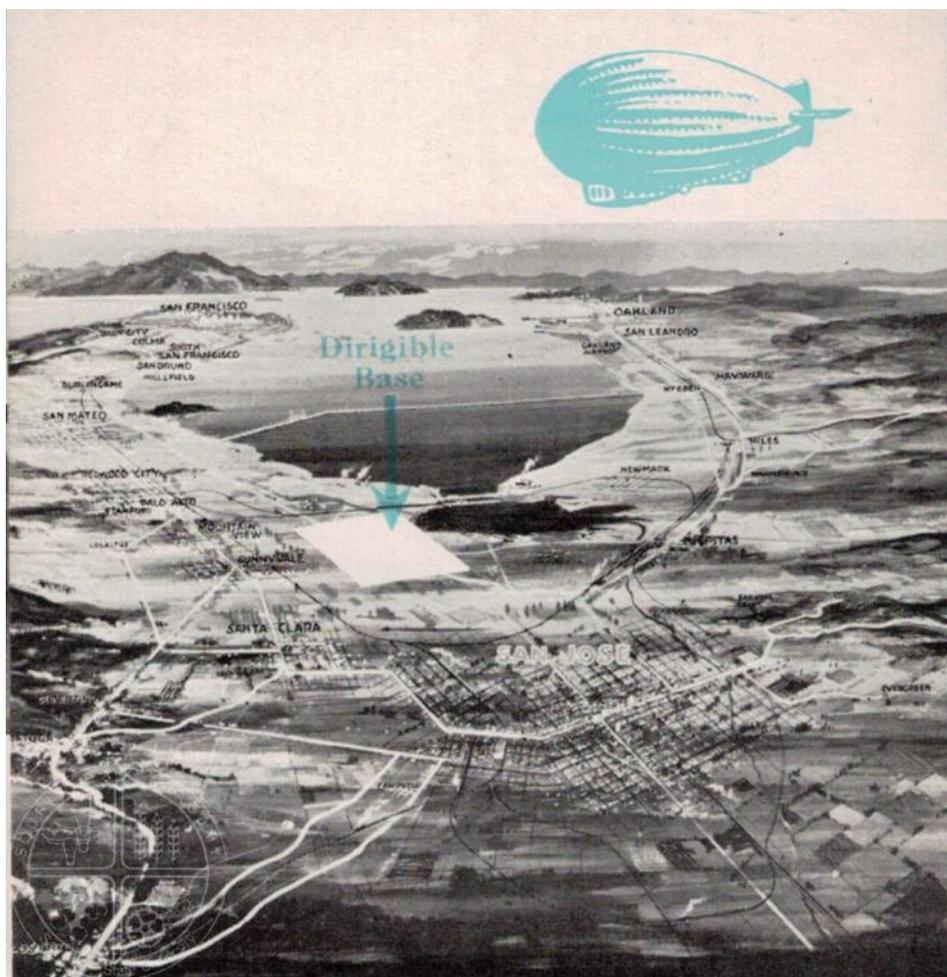


[131] **The View Southeast, 1901** - This 1901 panorama of a much larger San Jose, as depicted by a San Francisco publisher, was framed with images of the city's most important buildings. Bird's eye views were also done in 1885 and 1891. In 1906, the first aerial photo showing downtown San Jose, would be photographed from a hot air balloon and marketed to residents of the town. 6



STATE NORMAL SCHOOL, SAN JOSE, CAL. Birdseye view of new State Normal School, San Jose, Cal., the finest Normal School in this country, which cost the State of California \$325,000. It numbers over 700 students and has a faculty of thirty-four. President, Morris Elmer Dailey.

[132] **San Jose Normal School circa 1909** - Artists also produced detailed and imaginative views such as this 1909 architectural rendering of the Normal School. The biplane overhead tells the viewer that San Jose is a modern and progressive town,



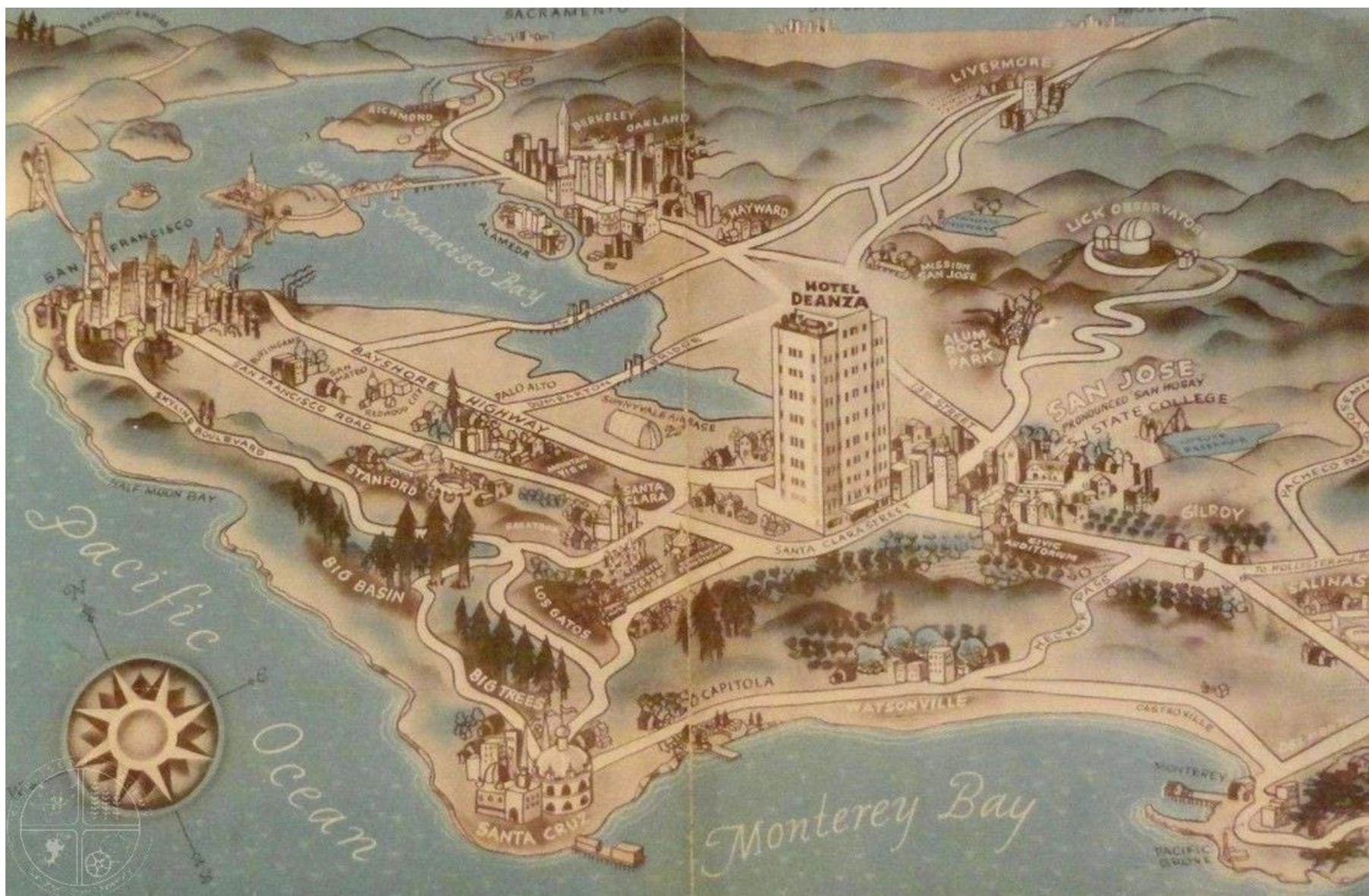
[133] **The "Y" at the bottom end of the Bay!**

Left] In 1915, the San Jose Chamber of Commerce published this birds-eye pictorial postcard featuring San Jose as a major commercial hub at the south end of the Bay — with railroad connections, dividing like a "Y" to run north along both of its shores, and a prominent dashed line out through the Golden Gate, labeled, "To Panama Canal." The clear message: San Jose was connected to the World!

Right] In 1931, the Chamber of Commerce published an improved pictorial map in a promotional brochure presenting a similar view featuring both the brand new Dumbarton Bridge (1927) and San Mateo Bridge (1929) and touting a landing site for military blimps, then under construction and later (1933) to be named Moffett Field.



[134] **Peeking through the Clouds** - In 1926, the Standard Oil Company *Bulletin* featured the U.S. Army's technologically advanced, experimental, 6-engine, 3-wing Baring Bomber (powered, of course, by Standard's fuel), in this fleeting peek at San Jose through the billowy clouds. Sourisseau's airplane expert, Frank Nichols, reports that, because of disappointing performance, only one test model was built, and no bomber of comparable size was built until 1937.



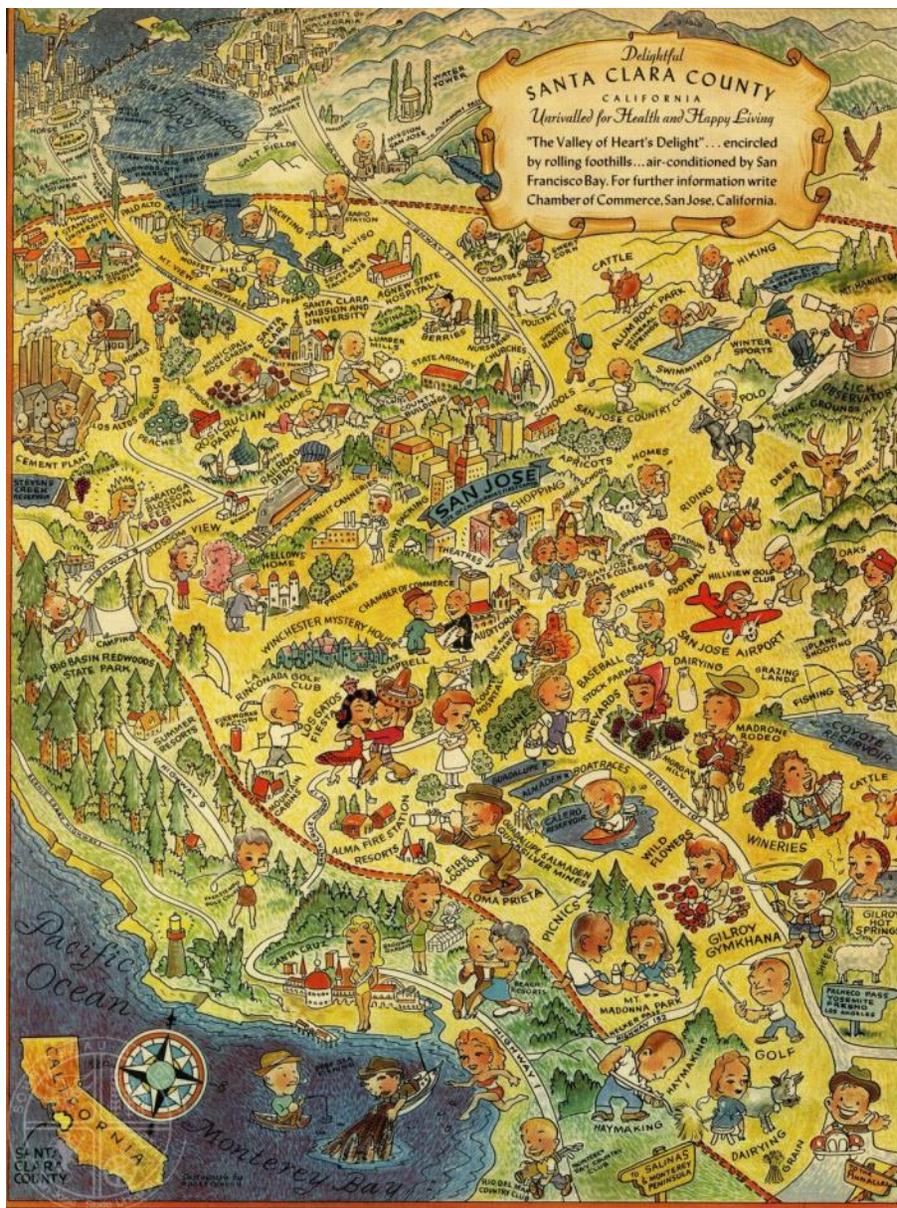
[135] **Dining at the Stylish De Anza!** - In 1939, San Jose's elegant Hotel De Anza printed paper placemats for their coffee shop, showing the entire Bay area, with the De Anza dwarfing San Francisco. Treasure Island, where the Golden Gate International Exposition would be the next most important tourist venue on the Pacific Coast, is shown along with old favorites like the Santa Cruz Boardwalk, the redwoods, Lick Observatory and UC-Berkeley.



[136] **Treasure Island!** - Visitors from San Jose and everywhere else could find their way around Treasure Island aided by this magnificent full color birds-eye "Cartograph" with all the sites numbered and identified.



[137] **Location, Location, Location!** - Post World War II, housing demand brought real estate developers, who bought Santa Clara Valley orchards for subdivision. In 1956, developers Stone & Schulte, who marketed themselves as “Northern California’s Largest Realtors,” published this exaggerated birds-eye view. It shows their many new housing developments, and if you qualified for a GI loan, they were happy to sell you a house — No money down! “Detailed street maps available at our office!”



[138] **Santa Clara County: "For Health and Happy Living!"** - In the late 1950s, the San Jose Chamber of Commerce commissioned a birds-eye view of *Beautiful Santa Clara County* — modestly claiming territory from San Francisco to Santa Cruz.



[139] **Ralph Rambo, Illustrator Extraordinaire**—San Jose artist and history enthusiast Ralph Rambo spent his professional career designing fruit can labels but also turned his artistic skills to illustrating many histories of the Santa Clara Valley. One of his triumphs was this 1962 birds-eye view of the entire Valley, crowding over 250 years — from the Ohlone Indians to *Frontier Village* amusement park onto one very action packed page!