



# LIVERMORE HERITAGE GUILD

P.O. Box 961, Livermore, California 94550

## LIVERMORE TOWN HALLS



## LIVERMORE TOWN HALLS

Until a community is incorporated and authorized by the State to conduct business, it has no need of a Town Hall or City Hall. But once it has organized, a place for meetings and a place to keep records is a necessity.

Discussions about a campaign to organize and incorporate the town of Livermore were held in November and December of 1875, when the town was six years old. At that time the town had a census of 830, an area of 840 acres and 234 buildings. The town was on a transcontinental railroad line and it had a water company (that brought water from the Arroyo Valle using wooden water pipes - see example in Duarte Garage Museum) and a fire fighting company. It had a public school, a newspaper, a Collegiate Institute, a library association and a number of lodges of various denominations. The first brick building had been built, there was a fire station on Second Street that had cost \$1000 and coal had been found in the hills east of town.

In 1876 a diphtheria epidemic caused 25 deaths and the adjacent town of Laddsville suffered a disastrous fire.

### JUSTICE CHURCH'S OFFICE

The drive for incorporation began in December, 1875, when, according to The Livermore Enterprise, a large number of citizens had held a meeting in Justice Church's office to discuss the incorporation of the town. A committee was appointed to draft the charter and a meeting was set for January 3, 1876, to discuss it. The voters were very insistent that matters of taxation should be entirely with the voters of the town.

On January 26, it was reported that Senator James Beazell (of Livermore) had introduced the bill in the State Senate that would incorporate the town of Livermore. The bill was signed by Governor Irwin on April 1st.

### BRAGDON'S HALL

One of the places where discussions on the proposed incorporation had been held was Bragdon's Hall. In the June 10, 1876 issue of the Livermore Enterprise there is an ad for "Bank Exchange Saloon and EXCHANGE HALL, next door to the post office. E.P. Bragdon, Proprietor."

After the incorporation had become a fact, an election was held on May 8, and a meeting was called at Exchange Hall on May 15 at 8:30 a.m. to organize a Board of Trustees. Temporary officers were elected, and the temporary Town Clerk was authorized to procure the necessary books needed for keeping records. The meeting then adjourned until 7:30 the same evening.

When it reconvened, it attended to a number of items of business, including appointing a committee to ascertain on what terms the Board of Trustees could have the Justice office for their meetings. We know that a building had been built the previous year on Second Street for use as a fire station and that it had (at least at a later date) the Justice Court on its upper floor. It is likely that this is the building where the "Justice office" was.

#### ODD FELLOWS HALL

At a meeting on May 29, a committee was appointed to obtain a place for the Board of Trustees to meet. On June 1st the committee reported that: Mr. Bragdon would not set any price for the rent of his hall, the Odd Fellows offered the use of their ante-room, and the firemen offered the use of their room free if the Board would furnish its own lights and fuel. Trustee Holmes moved that the offer of the Odd Fellows be accepted, and the motion carried.

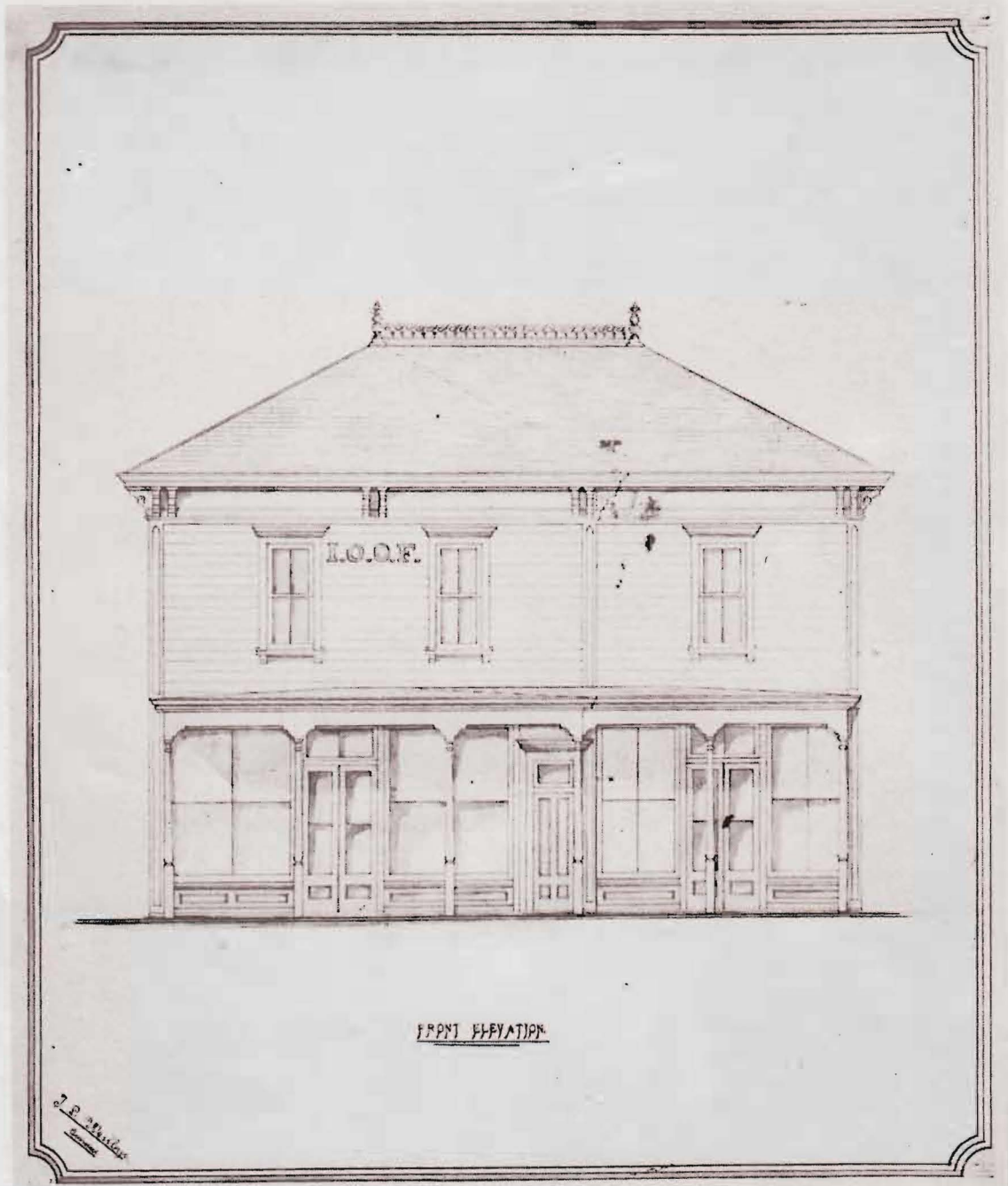
#### THE TRUCK HOUSE

Thus the Odd Fellows building was used for the early Board meetings. One of the bills allowed on May 7, 1877, was one for \$21 for the Odd Fellows. But on August 6 of that year, an Ordinance was adopted fixing the place of meeting of the Board of Trustees at the Truck House of the "Livermore Hook and Ladder Company No. 1, upstairs, said Truck House being situated on Second Street in the Town of Livermore", to take effect immediately after its passage.

Discussion about finding a suitable site for a Town Hall was held in December 1878. A committee was appointed to investigate the matter, and on January 8 it asked for more time - which was not granted. Yet on May 5, 1879, the committee reported that to purchase the lot desired would require more funds than were then in the treasury and recommended that nothing be done in the matter. The committee was then discharged.

In May the next year, one of the items the Board ordered was that the Police Box containing one pair of handcuffs,

one Star, the calaboose keys, and one whistle be credited to C.B. Acker, past Marshal and debited to C.L. Hilton, present Marshal. A year later, the balance in the treasury was \$613.



Architect's drawing of the IOOF building on the north side of First Street. It was the first official meeting place of the Livermore Board of Trustees.

In January 1882, the Trustees decided to buy the building on Second Street from the Livermore Hook and Ladder Co. No. 1. The Clerk was instructed to draw a warrant for \$1200 to pay for it. Later that year this building is referred to in the minutes as the Town Hall. A picture of it is included in the border of the panoramic map of Livermore published in 1889. It is labeled "Town Hall."

It was a two-story building on the south side of Second Street between K and L Streets. It had a fire station on the ground floor and the Justice Court and Town Hall meeting place on the upper floor. Next to it was the curfew bell, at the top of a tall tower, and behind it was the jail.

The purpose of the curfew bell, according to Ordinance No. 48, was "to prevent minor children (under the age of 16) going at large during certain hours." The ordinance

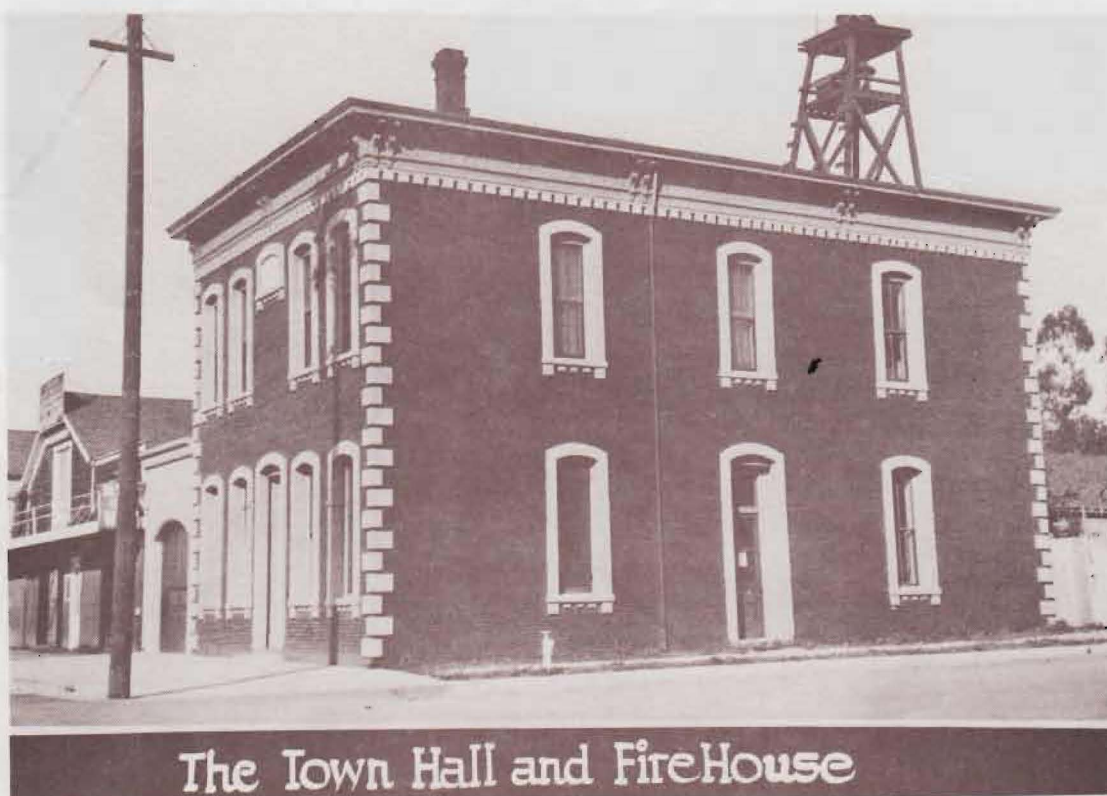


*This is the only known picture of the Town Hall on Second Street. The building was later moved to the northeast corner of Third and K Streets and made into apartments.*

specified that the bell is to be rung at the fire station from 20 September to 20 March, at half past seven, by striking the bell distinctly seven times slowly, and from 20 March to 20 September, said bell to be rung at half past 8 o'clock, slowly, 8 strikes on said bell. If caught, children must immediately go to their homes. If they fail to comply, to be arrested and taken to the Town jail and kept there until after sunrise the morning following, unless some person shall deposit the sum of three dollars. Second violation shall get \$5 or three days.

#### THE OLD BANK BUILDING

On January 6, 1905, the Trustees passed a resolution authorizing the purchase of "the lot and old Bank Building" for a Town Hall providing \$1000 be paid immediately, \$1000 by January 1, 1906, and \$1000 by January 1907 or 1908 to the Livermore Valley Bank which has taken the property over from Miss Jessie Whipple Robson." This was the building at the southeast corner of First and McLeod Streets that is still standing and now houses the YMCA and a stereo store.



*This building at the southeast corner of First and McLeod was first a hotel and then a bank. It became the Town Hall in 1905.*



*The "old bank building" after it had been surfaced with stucco and modernized. It was the Livermore Town Hall from 1905 to 1957.*

In 1957, after the population of the town had grown to over 4000 and was rapidly increasing, the City decided to purchase the Bank of America building at the northeast corner of First Street and Livermore Avenue, and, as the town grew, the buildings adjacent to it on First street were added - also the ground floor of the Masonic Building on the other side of First Street and the other side of Livermore Avenue. Later the offices behind the old City Hall building on McLeod Street were used as well.

*The Bank of America Building.  
It was the Livermore City Hall  
from 1957 to 1979.*



#### CIVIC BUILDING

The Bank of America building had no meeting hall, and a privately built "Civic Building" that included a meeting room was used for meetings of the City Council. This building is on the west side of Livermore Avenue near the Bank of America building. To this day City Council meetings continue to be held in the Civic Building.

The City Fire Department continued to operate from the old quarters on First Street next to the old Town Hall until 1976 when it moved to new quarters on East Avenue. The Police Department also continued on First Street until 1974 when it moved to a new building on South Livermore Avenue.

When all these City departments were, so to speak, using First Street as a corridor of City Hall, there was a lot of pedestrian traffic from one side of the street to the other.

#### THE LIVERMORE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

Now, in October 1979, when the population of the town has grown to over 50,000, all the City Departments, except for the Fire Department, are under one roof. This is the impressive new structure on South Livermore Avenue. It is built over the previously constructed Police Building (that now forms the ground floor) and is titled "Livermore Administration Building".





*An early meeting of the Trustees in the building  
at First and McLeod Streets.*



*1940 Livermore City Council*

*(left to right)*  
Elmer Still, City Clerk  
Sam Bothwell, Councilmember  
Ernest Wente, Councilmember  
F. Ray Hearn, Treasurer  
George Doten, Chief of Police  
George Tubbs, Councilmember  
Clark Clarke, City Engineer  
Harold Anderson, Mayor  
Louis Gardella, Councilmember  
Richard Callaghan, City Attorney

MAYORS OF LIVERMORE

1876	A. J. McLeod	1 yr.	1926	F.C. Lassen	6 yrs.
1877	C. J. Stevens	1 yr.	1932	R. P. Bernhardt	3 yrs.
1878	A. J. McLeod	1 yr.	1935	George F. Tubbs	5 yrs.
1879	Dr. L.H. Cutler	1 yr.	1940	H. W. Anderson	10 yrs.
1880	C. W. Comegys	1 yr.	1950	Louis Gardella	4 yrs.
1881	C. J. Stevens	1 yr.	1954	B. F. Carter	2 yrs.
1882	Wm.M.Mendenhall	1 yr.	1956	Dr. B. O. Burch	2 yrs.
1883	C. J. Stevens	1 yr.	1958	James Nordahl	2 yrs.
1884	James Beazell	5 yrs.	1960	Robert J. Patterson	1 yr.
1889	H. H. Pitcher	2 yrs.	1961	Manuel Medeiros	2 yrs.
1891	James Beazell	1 yr.	1963	Dr. John B. Shirley	2 yrs.
1892	Wendell Jordan	2 yrs.	1965	Milo Nordyke	2 yrs.
1894	A. G. Beazell	1 yr.	1967	Robert Patterson	1 yr.
1895	Jos. Fletcher	1 yr.	1968	Gilbert R. Marguth	3 yrs.
1896	George Beck	1 yr.	1970	Roger L. Silva	1 yr.
1897	A. W. Feidler	1 yr.	1971	Clyde E. Taylor	2 yrs.
1898	J. F. Meyers	2 yrs.	1973	Donald G. Miller	1 yr.
1900	D. J. Murphy	3 yrs.	1974	Robert H. Pritchard	1 yr.
1903	T. E. Knox	7 yrs.	1975	Archer H. Futch	1 yr.
1910	F. Mathiesen	6 yrs.	1976	Helen M. Tirsell	2 yrs.
1916	F. C. Lassen	2 yrs.	1978	Dale Turner	1 yr.
1918	T. E. Knox	3 yrs.	1979	Marshall Kamena, incumbent	
1922	Wm. Rees	4 yrs.			

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Editorial Committee:

Carl R. Schneider  
Barry Schrader  
Ralph Newton

Photo Credits:

Cover: courtesy Tri-Valley Herald  
I.O.O.F.: Architect's Drawing, 1873  
"Town Hall": from 1889 Panoramic Map, Elliott Dopking  
"Old Bank Building", brick: Elliott Dopking  
"Old Bank Building", stucco: Elliott Dopking  
Bank of America Building: Tri-Valley Herald  
1905 City Council: John Jensen & Richard Callaghan  
1940 City Council: Elliott Dopking

# Highlights In History Of Livermore

(Compiled by City Clerk Elmer G. Still)

## TOWN TRUSTEES AND CITY COUNCILMEN

May, 1876—A. J. McLeod (pronounced Ma-Cloud) (1837-1905)—1 year.  
 R. N. Caughell pronounced Caw-'l)—3 months.  
 N. B. Holmes (1828-1907)—1 year.  
 Jesse Bowles (pronounced Bohiz) (1830-1909)—1 year.  
 Moritz Hupers (1830-1899)—1 year.  
 September, 1876—J. H. Mahoney—8½ months.  
 May, 1877—C. J. Stevens (1823-87)—1 year.  
 G. W. Comegys—I year.  
 John L. Mitchel (1851-1906)—1 year.  
 Wendell Jordan (1837-1901)—2 years.  
 Simon Wetterau (generally pronounced Wet-er-o)—2 years.  
 May, 1878—A. J. McLeod—I year.  
 Peter McKeany (pronounced Ma-Ken-ey) (1836-1915)—1 year.  
 Dr. L. H. Cutler (1822-94)—2 years.  
 May, 1879—Geo. E. Kennedy (born in 1846)—2 years.  
 G. W. Comegys—2 years.  
 Moritz Hupers—1 year.  
 P. E. Heslop—1 year.  
 May, 1880—Christ Gardemeyer—1 year.  
 Wm. M. Mendenhall (1825-1911)—3 years.  
 John Aylward (1843-1906)—1 year.  
 May, 1881—C. J. Stevens—1 year.  
 Peter Moy (1848-1934)—2 years.  
 Simon Wetterau—1 year.  
 Patrick Callaghan (born in 1840)—1 year.  
 May, 1882—James Beazell (1830-92)—10 years.  
 John L. Mitchel—4 years.  
 J. H. Taylor (1825-1907)—1 year.  
 May, 1883—John Callaghan (born in 1838)—2 years.  
 Patrick Callaghan—1 year.  
 C. J. Stevens—1 year.  
 May, 1884—Geo. E. Kennedy—1 year.  
 J. F. Meyers (1836-1910)—1 year.  
 May, 1885—Wm. M. Mendenhall—1 year.  
 Patrick Callaghan—1 year.  
 Geo. Beck (1853-1925)—1 year.  
 May, 1886—Hiram Bailey (1830-1917)—1 year.  
 A. J. McLeod—1 year.  
 W. F. Laumeister (pronounced LO-mas-ter)—1 year.  
 Louis Schaeffer (1854-1923)—2 years.  
 May, 1887—Reuben Hunter (1849-1932)—2 years.  
 John L. Mitchel—1 year.  
 Patrick Callaghan—4 years.  
 May, 1888—A. J. McLeod—1 year.  
 Wendell Jordan—1 year.  
 May, 1889—H. H. Pitcher (1850-1900)—2 years.  
 F. R. Fassett (1840-1914)—1 year.  
 Geo. E. Kennedy—1 year.  
 May, 1890—A. J. McLeod—2 years.

Reuben Hunter—2 years.  
 May, 1891—Jos. Wilkinson (1834-1910)—2 years.  
 Henry Gardemeyer (1850-1909)—1 year.  
 May, 1892—Patrick Callaghan—1 year.  
 A. G. Beazell (1845-1922)—3 years.  
 J. F. Meyers—1 year.  
 Wendell Jordan—3 years.  
 May, 1893—Samuel Sellar (born in 1848)—5 years.  
 B. F. Thomas (1835-1909)—1 year.  
 John L. Mitchel—8 years.  
 May, 1894—Jos. Fletcher (1842-1925)—2 years.  
 May, 1895—Geo. Beck—2 years.  
 A. W. Feidler (1863-1906)—3 years.  
 May, 1897—Dr. S. L. Savage (1842-1928)—1 year.  
 May, 1898—J. H. Dutcher (1853-1914)—1 year.  
 C. A. McClain—1 year.  
 Jos. Fletcher—1 year.  
 J. F. Meyers—7 years.  
 May, 1899—Chas. S. Victor (1851-1920)—5 years.  
 Wm. H. Ryan (1869-1933)—1 year.  
 D. J. Murphy (1854-1921)—10½ years.  
 May, 1900—Thos. E. Knox—10 years.  
 June, 1900—Geo. E. Kennedy—4 years.  
 April, 1902—Max Berlin—13 months.  
 June, 1903—Fred Mathiesen (born in 1851)—12 years, 10 months.  
 April, 1904—John D. Ryan (1857-1928)—11 years, 1 month.  
 Chas. E. Beck (18 -19 )—6 years.  
 November, 1909—F. A. Schrader (pronounced Shray-der) (1851-1915)—4 years, 5 months.  
 April, 1910—Fred C. Lassen—8 years.  
 P. M. O'Donnell—4 years.  
 April, 1914—Bernard Harron (1870-1935)—4 years.  
 J. H. Wilson (1874-1934)—4 years.  
 June, 1915—Wm. Rees—16 years, 10 months.  
 April, 1916—Thos. E. Knox—5 years, 9 months.  
 April, 1918—D. D. Emminger—5 years, 9 months.  
 R. A. Hansen—4 years.  
 E. C. Utendorffer—3 years, 9 months.  
 Jan., 1922—Dr. Frank L. Savage—4 years, 3 months.  
 Chester M. Beck—2 years 3 months.  
 April, 1922—Wm. J. Hunt—4 years.  
 March, 1924—Fred C. Lassen—8 years, 1 month.  
 April, 1924—H. A. Evans—8 years, 2 months.  
 April, 1926—R. P. Bernhardt—9 years.  
 Carl G. Clarke—incumbent.  
 April, 1932—Geo. F. Tubbs—incumbent.  
 S. Bothwell—incumbent.  
 June, 1932—G. O. Smallcomb—11½ months.  
 June, 1933—Frank Fiorio—incumbent.  
 April, 1935—John E. Jensen—incumbent.

## Mayors

May, 1876—A. J. McLeod (1837-1905)—1 year.  
 May, 1877—C. J. Stevens (1823-87)—1 year.  
 May, 1878—A. J. McLeod—1 year.  
 May, 1879—Dr. L. H. Cutler (1822-94)—1 year.  
 May, 1880—C. W. Comegys (pronounced Cum-e-jiz)—1 year.  
 May, 1881—C. J. Stevens—1 year.  
 May, 1882—Wm. M. Mendenhall (1825-1911)—1 year.  
 May, 1883—C. J. Stevens—1 year.  
 May, 1884—James Beazell (1830-92)—5 years.  
 May, 1889—H. H. Pitcher (1850-1900)—2 years.  
 May, 1891—James Beazell—1 year.  
 May, 1892—Wendell Jordan (1837-1901)—2 years.  
 May, 1894—A. G. Beazell (1845-1922)—1 year.  
 May, 1895—Jos. Fletcher (1842-1925)—1 year.  
 May, 1896—George Beck (1853-1925)—1 year.  
 May, 1897—A. W. Feidler (pronounced Fyd-ler) (1863-1906)—1 year.  
 May, 1898—J. F. Meyers (1836-1910)—2 years.  
 June, 1900—D. J. Murphy (1854-1921)—3 years.  
 May, 1903—T. E. Knox—7 years.  
 April, 1910—F. Mathiesen (pronounced Math-e-sen)—6 years.  
 April, 1916—F. C. Lassen—2 years.  
 April, 1918—T. E. Knox—3 years, 9 months.  
 January, 1922—Wm. Rees—4 years 3 months.  
 April, 1926—F. C. Lassen—6 years.  
 April, 1932—R. P. Bernhardt—3 years.  
 May, 1935—George F. Tubbs—incumbent.

## City Clerks

May, 1876—George E. Freeman (1830-1903)—1 year.  
 May, 1877—August Mueller—10 months.  
 March, 1878—Thomas Glaskin—2 months.  
 May, 1878—Theo. Gorner (1850-1911)—1 year.  
 May, 1879—N. D. Dutcher (1850-1933)—1 year.  
 May, 1880—F. A. Anthony (1846-1910)—2 years.  
 May, 1882—Wm. F. Mitchell—4 years.  
 May, 1886—D. M. Conner (1843-1929)—2¾ years.  
 February, 1889—Norman McLeod (1862-1935)—10 1-3 years.  
 June, 1899—Wm. Bailey (1857-1903)—2 months.  
 August, 1899—Theo. Gorner—1 year.  
 July, 1900—W. H. Wright (1842-1909)—6½ years.  
 January, 1907—A. L. Henry (1868-1920)—5¼ years.  
 April, 1912—M. M. Sanderson (1873-1923)—5 months.  
 September, 1912—D. A. Smith—5 years.  
 September, 1917—F. Mathiesen—7 months.  
 April, 1918—Elmer G. Still—incumbent.

*Elmer G. Still, City Clerk of Livermore, a local historian and an editor of the newspaper The Livermore Echo, published numerous "Highlights of Livermore History" like the above. These were passed in the first Minute Book of Livermore.*