

## Letter from Charles Knowlton to March Butz

Charles Knowlton  
143 N. Acacia St.  
Fullerton, CA

July 18, 1959

Dear Mrs. Butz:

When the subdivision came before the County Supervisors the plan was approved by them, with the proviso that the Company properly grade the roads as planned.

In 1916, after the property owners had failed to get the Company to fulfill their promise they asked the Supervisors to form a Road District so the roads could be improved.

The first requisite was a survey to determine what would be the probable cost of such a project. William J. Renshaw, City Engineer of Fullerton, was employed to make the survey and estimate. As I had considerable experience as surveyor's helper I was employed by Mr. Renshaw and I was on the job from beginning to the end.

The Assistant Engineer was Raymond Spalding, a very competent man. I was on every corner of property that intersected road centers, so I became somewhat acquainted with many of the owners who were quite interested in the project. With some of those owners I maintained friendship for many years, but now most of them have gone, or passed on.

Among them was Dr. Marshburn, who had an office and small store on Yorba Linda Blvd. Another was the elder Mr. Starr, who lived on what is still known as the Starr Ranch, as far as I know.

One of his close neighbors was Frank Sheppherd with whom I maintained friendship for quite several years. He told me that he was the first person to buy a parcel of the Yorba Linda Tract. He had been a member of the original faculty of the El Centro High School and where he taught Chemistry for some 35 years. He had a major Stamp Collection, which was one of the reasons for many of my visits to him. I would not be a bit surprised if he may have left many things that should be of interest to you, but of course he was there only part of the time. I have no information as to what became of his possessions, and it is quite possible that some of the Starr family may still have something of interest to you. I well remember that they had many old time things in their house and around the yard and out buildings.

This survey included all of the holdings of the Yorba Linda Water Company and which included some portions of the townsite of Carlton and as far south as the pumping plant south of the Santa Fe tracks. Orange County Road District #1 was the result of the survey. I would suppose that the Special Tax for it should be well paid off by now.

After the contract had been let and the job completed the then Supervisor, William Shumaker, told me that the estimate that was made was the most nearly accurate of any the County had ever received.

Something of my background. Our family arrived in Anaheim on the evening of April 14, 1886. Having left Nebraska a week before and when I was eight years old. We lived in Anaheim until July 5, 1894 when we moved to where we now live, on Acacia Ave., Fullerton.

In recent years I have been interest in the history of towns and settlements in Southern California and I have lamented at the great lack of documented history of most of the area.

In January of 1907 I went to Ventura County to do some work and I was there until August of 1910, so there are some details about Yorba Linda with which I am not familiar. I had no recollection of Jacob Stern having anything to do about their beginning, and am still wondering about it. I do know, however, that Janss Investment Co. acquired the tract and that they employed Hiram Clay Kellogg to lay out the tract and townsite.

Charles S. Knowlton