

Keep this for future reference

Oct. 31

[w/1918] 23m

Offer to Exchange

Subject: McKelvey House, Murray Hill

Mr. Fletcher: Judge Edward Keating authorizes me to make the following offer on McKelvey house:

Keating owns, free and clear, 18 acres of land on State Highway, lying in a wedge shaped piece between Judson and Robinson homes, just this side of Tunnel Hill. You will recall the piece when I remind you that you secured highway right of way from Keating for State Highway. The land is splendid, being nice slope and in a highly developed section. The big houses close to it give it an undoubtedly good chance to be sold to high class buyer. If you go out that way you can tell it because it is all uncultivated, making distinct boundaries where it adjoins Judson and Robinson land.

Keating offers to exchange it, free and clear, for McKelvey, free and clear. He agrees to pay 2 1/2 per cent commission.

On Mrs. McKelvey's valuation of \$5500. this seems a low offer: but you know that it would be an impossibility to get any such money for her house and land. The place could be duplicated in San Diego on a lot in good location for \$3500., provided it was put into first-class condition. It's trade value here would not be over \$4000. It would require \$250. at least to put the house in as good shape as it was when new, and more than that if a new roof is required. The garage roof is entirely gone.

As to future price she may get, you know more about the future than I do, so I will not need to discuss that. But I know that the house will have depreciated into no valuation at all if left vacant as it now is unless it is painted and kept in repair. It is a small house, as you know, with two bedrooms, dining room, kitchen, hall, and bathroom --- a five-room bungalow.

C. O. Graves and others around Bostonia hold such land as Keating's at \$300. per acre, which would make Keating's 18 acres worth \$5400. Of course this is too high, we know it is, but not much higher, in my estimation, than Mrs. McKelvey's at \$5500. Personally I would rather take chances on getting the money for Keating's, on account of the Judson and Robinson improvements, the State Highway, etc. I consider Keating's place worth about \$200. an acre, or \$3600. for the 18 acres.

Perhaps Keating would stand for a return offer for him to pay some difference, payable in mortgage or monthly. You know Mrs. McKelvey and I do not, so you are in better position to talk to Keating than I am. I know he wants the place, and that he plans to move his wife out there if he gets it. Maybe he wants to get her farther out of town for questionable purposes, the Lord only knows! Anyway he has made a real, honest-to-goodness offer. Please instruct me.

Hofflund

[w/1918] 23m

Mr. Fletcher: If I owned the high plateau of land on far Northern boundary of "S" Tract, on slope this side of San Diego River watershed, I would certainly multiply land values about ten times by developing it along lines adapted by land owners of rough mountainous land along and across the river from Pasadena. Through planting eucalyptus and other trees in rainfall drainage bottoms, washes, creek beds, etc. they have made an otherwise unattractive and barren country into a beauty spot. Trees will grow readily along all the long cuts in the land up there made by rainfall drainage, and will make that a wonderful region in the future. Such an investment would not be heavy, and would mean converting land which will otherwise never be utilized, into as fine a country home section, at desirable altitude, as there will be outside San Diego. It would be an investment, in my opinion, with big future returns for you or your children.

I suggest having Adam Nick or some one else plant a nursery and care for it, ~~maxima~~ taking payment in land rental or deeded acreage --- Nick could apply upon contract for land he now has under option. When, when trees are right for planting, get a few laborers to spend a week setting them out, putting fiber or

other protector around each tree, to keep off rabbits. Then let them shift for themselves. If planted along water drainage courses only, you will get practically 100 % results.

If you will go up there with me, I believe I can show you my point very clearly. It is certainly the only way to make that sort of land come into high value.

Hofflund

[4/19/21
C8M]

Mr. Fletcher:

The well at Flinn Springs has caved in under the engine house, and must be fixed by a well digger. If the old fellow taking care of the property for Kaufman tries fixing it, he will either kill himself, or do a job which will mean more work later on to clean out the well. The cement flooring of pump house is without support in a large area until well is properly curbed over caved section and earth filled in and packed under house. *It seems to me Kaufman should attend to this.*

The high water was too much for outlet gate at dam, and overflowed both sides, cutting under sidewalk up to the bath house. No serious harm done, but I believe future trouble will be averted if boards are put up on both sides of dam so that water runs directly over face when a flood which is too much for the outlet gate and spillway pipe comes along. Upper dam also needs boards on sides.

Caretaker for Kaufman tells me he expects Kaufman back this summer to operate resort. I believe Kaufman plans to winter a lot of his animals there next winter. It does not look like a good proposition to me. Training bears and lions does not harmonize properly with a resort where children and women are vacationing. The caretakers seem to be worthy people and doing their best, but no effort is made to get patronage. I have two parties figuring on leasing at \$75. a month for first year and \$100. for next four; but I can not go far with them if there is any chance that Kaufman is not going to leave. And I believe he will make a fight to retain his lease. It is an ideal grove and swimming pool for his bears and other animals, as a winter quarters. Please notify me definitely if you want me to go ahead with my parties openly negotiating for lease while Kaufman still holds lease.

Hofflund.

[4/19/21
C8M]

Mr. Fletcher: - Adam Nick can be either closed up on an optional deal, provided you meet the following proposition, or ~~or~~ he will, I think, buy the McGraw place, which has been offered to him at less than \$100. per acre, including improvements. I hate to lose him because I honestly believe that his energetic performances are a big help to the entire Flinn Springs Tract. I call your attention, also, to the fact that Oleson, proprietor of Saddlerock Grill on Fourth St., just bought 40 acres of cleared grain land about 1000 feet off the highway, in El Monte portion of Flinn Springs, ~~near~~ across State Highway from Fletcher-Wister property, for \$35. an acre. I think my belief that \$125. an acre from Nick is a good price, is justified.

Nick will pay \$125. an acre provided he buys land within actual boundaries of property only, not paying for any land in streets. He agrees within year's option to clear land (worth about 5 dollars an acre to clear) and to have all ploughed and under cultivation. Upon payment of \$200. by him within one year he has option to take up contract at \$200. or more annually, at 6 %, as per contract you said was agreeable to you provided it was made an option up to time of first \$200. payment.

It is impossible to convince him in regard to area in streets. He has measured and computed net area, and says that he can not afford to pay for land not under his own use. You can see what I am up against with him. He is a hard worker, and to him the idea of paying for half a road he will never use seems uncalled for.

It is simply a proposition of whether you want to sell at \$125. an acre, net land, or not. I think the price good and know that Nick will fulfill the contract.

Hofflund.

MUST KNOW TODAY.

[W/1918]
C8m

Office,
Mar. 25.

Mr. Fletcher: B. A. Cornelius was in at noon today, in regard to boundary settlement of line between his ranch and south line of "S" Tract. I took him to your house so that he could have a talk with you on way down to the Santa Fe, but you had left just before I arrived.

Cornelius seems anxious to adjust matter if possible without further surveying or court expense. He says that ranchers between him and El Cajon whose ranches run to the grant line (South line of "S" Tract) dispute the location of line as now established.

Why would it not be a good opportunity to sell Cornelius a piece of land from "S" Tract, adjoining disputed boundary? He is in better position to use this land than any one else, because he already owns practically the entire valley bottom. I believe I could interest him in a purchase if same was made to include a portion of the disputed strip free, by way of boundary settlement. He seems to have money.

I have agreed to write him at once in regard to an appointment with you. He made the trip ~~to~~ especially to see you, and is very anxious to get the matter settled. He would like to lease adjoining land from you, but if you can make a sale, through giving him a good and liberal boundary settlement, it seems to me like a legitimate and opportune time to do business through a sale. How about it?

Hofflund

[C. MAY, 1920]

Mr. Fletcher: Joe Miller's offer for Black Diamond Coal Co. 80 acres is \$50. per acre, or \$4000. for the piece. \$2000. cash, \$2000. mtg. at 7% 2 years. Five per cent (\$200.) commission to you.

I am offered \$75. per acre for the 40. acres of this piece which lies East of the railroad, between railroad and road to Hawley's corner on Bostonia Road. That is \$3000. for half the \$4000. property. Terms \$200. cash, \$1000. in 90 days, \$900. per year for two years at 7%. Buyers are Italian vineyardists, who will plant vineyard at once.

This would leave the 40 acres West of railroad, which runs only on lower slopes of the mesa. At a net price for the entire 80 acres of \$3800. (\$4000. less your commission) this 40 would cost \$800. when you figure the \$3000. price secured for the other 40. The profit on this deal is good, if you can get the Black Diamond people to sell to you at \$3800. net, or to me or some other buyer at \$4000. and take commission, then have me sell to my people the 40 at \$3000.

Maybe Miller would make this deal, buying as per present arrangement and selling off a 40, paying commission. We could get two commissions this way. If you do not care to handle the deal yourself shall I try this out?

I can assure you that you are in no way double-crossing Miller, for, as you know, I have worked hard on this piece. I want to make something on it if I can. You will recall that when I put it up to Miller, per your instructions, the lowest price you would make was \$60 to \$75 per acre. I could have made a good cleanup for us long ago had I known \$50. an acre would take it. The whole question now is, what is the upper 40 acres worth? It looks cheap enough to me at the \$800. my deal would value it at.

Hofflund

[W/ 1930's]

SILVA DEAL

Mr. Fletcher: The Silva boys offer to take a minimum of ten acres of the land East of El Capitan School at \$100. per acre. Of this they will pay \$ 25 cash to make a contract; they will dig a well fifty feet deep for \$350, or 60 feet deep for \$450. They have made a proposition at \$5 per ft. for first 10 feet, then \$1. per ft added every ten feet, which would be \$50. for first ten ft; \$60 for next ten ft; \$70. for next ten; etc. They furnish powder; you furnish curbing and they install it. They will dig a well on that piece East of Blossom within the next four months and apply on land contract.

I will take Rumsey out, measure the land, and at same time locate pipeline on Froehlich vineyard tract for Gerache.

Do you want reservation for road next to El Capitan school or at east line of tract? How wide a road? Ten acres takes in considerable mountain land, steep bluff. Do you care how line runs on this mountainside?

The Silvas agree to dig well and clear the piece they are getting. They will pay balance of contract in mtg. or labor. You may want laterals drilled, and they can do that work. They say they can develop over ten inches of water.

The thing to do is to guarantee \$150. per year minimum to electric company, set line right in, and be ready to pump the new well at once. You can get a good tenant the minute well and pump are ready.

Hofflund

[W/ 1930's]

WAKEHAM RANCH DEAL

Mr. Fletcher: The Wakeham ranch, 160 acres, has about 30 to 40 acres of silt land that occasionally raises a good bean crop. If I could get him a long lease, without danger of sale, I believe I could get Springstead to put in pumping equipment there and farm that to crops peculiarly adapted to the silt, which is unusually fine and powdery on this ranch. It would mean development which would ultimately make this land come back nearer to value.

You paid \$27,000. for this 160. The amount of land in the new river channel is simply appalling. I would like to try out something to bring back as much of it as possible, and with a man like Springstead I can see a chance to make good. If he gets the present good land under irrigation he can be induced later to tackle portions of the bottom in the river that are tillable. In this way the property can be brought back to best possible shape. I understand there is a big mortgage there.

To make this deal I would have to give him every advantage as to rental, as he puts up all money for developing water, etc. Let this proposition come from him. I will take him up there Sat. or Sunday, when I go up to see Beers.

Lets go thoroughly into this ranch now, and if you want to ~~play~~ ~~the~~ work toward reclaiming it as rapidly as possible lets start in on a deal that will do the work. To sell immediately would entail a bigger loss than I would take if it were mine. The chances to make it worth more in this deal are too good to lose.

Why not sell the lumber in that big barn up there while lumber is high? It is way out of proportion for the size of the property.
Hofflund

Ed Fletcher Papers

1870-1955

MSS.81

Box: 12 Folder: 16

General Correspondence - Hofflund, ?



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