

March 17, 1937

Mr. Lee Shippey
Del Mar, Calif.

My dear Mr. Shippey:

As per your request, the following is the history of Warner's Ranch:

When California became a part of the United States, the United States made a treaty with Mexico, agreeing to recognize all existing legal titles which had been heretofore granted by the King of Spain. Congress passed a law and a commission was appointed to determine the validity of these titles to land in California. Public notices were printed to the effect that everyone must prove their titles, either by adverse possession, or by a grant of the King of Spain, within the next five years. I believe this bill was passed in 1856.

The King of Spain had many years before made the Warner's Ranch a Spanish grant, known as San Jose de Valle, covering one half of the ranch, and Valle de San Jose, the other half. In granting this patent, the King of Spain made a reservation in the patent that the Indians, who had lived at Warner's Hot Springs for hundreds of years, were to be protected in their rights, to have the use of the Springs and a certain area around the Springs, I believe six hundred hectares, for themselves, their children, and their children's children, for ever.

When the owner of the Warner's Ranch proved his title under the Act of Congress, a United States government patent was issued without the reservation protecting the Indians. J. Downey Harvey, the owner in the early eighties, brought a suit to evict the Indians. They contested it. Public funds were secured and the case went to the Supreme Court of the United States, who decided that you could not go behind a United States patent.

Congress passed a law authorizing the purchase of other lands for the Indians. However, a great amount of public opinion was aroused and a commission was appointed including Mr. R. C. Allen of San Diego,

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and they were given authority to purchase lands, which they did at Pala, for the Indians as their future home.

Before the Indians were evicted, I was up there and took a bath and paid the Indians twenty-five cents. They were in possession at the time.

When they were evicted, the government send up a company of soldiers with wagons and loaded the Indians' goods on the wagons, and the Indians were forcibly moved to Pala.

The night before the Indians left, they held a meeting or ceremonial and pronounced a curse on the present and future owners of the ranch, praying to their gods that their prayers might be answered. During the night some of the Indians ran away into the mountains overlooking Warner's Ranch, others created new tribal homes on government property, but a majority of them went to Pala.

J. Downey Harvey, the owner of the ranch, went bankrupt, lost the ranch and misfortune seemed to follow him to his death. The ranch fell into the hands of Vaile and Gates, cattle men from Los Angeles. Mr. Vaile was thrown from his horse and nearly killed; he was bitten by a gila monster in Arizona; and died a violent death, killed by an electric car in Los Angeles. Mr. Gates, in my presence, dropped dead on Warner's Ranch, dying from heart disease.

The Pacific Light & Power Company, controlled by H. E. Huntington and W. H. Kerckhoff, purchased the ranch and intended to build a dam and develop electric energy to be used in the operation of an electric railroad that Mr. Huntington expected to build from Los Angeles to San Diego. The franchises were secured and many acres of land along the coast between Del Mar and Oceanside were purchases, but H. E. Harriman, by purchasing a majority of the Pacific Electric stock, blocked the extension of the railroad, and I sold the ranch for the Pacific Light and Power Company to William G. Henshaw in 19

I was put in charge of the ranch for Mr. Henshaw. My sympathies had always been with the Indians. The Hot Springs had been the salvation of the Indians with their many ailments, particularly rheumatism and stomach trouble, and when they asked to go and get the benefit of the great curative waters during the time of Mr. Henshaw's ownership, they were allowed to go there free of charge. I gave the Indians work whenever possible, and when a committee came and asked for permission to bury their dead in the cemetery, I gave them that permission. I also gave them the free right to use the old Indians bath house and Mr. Batchelder, and myself formed a committee of three to raise funds to rebuild the old mission for the use of the Indians. Mr. Henshaw furnished the tile.

The Times

TIMES BUILDING
LOS ANGELES, CAL.

September 30

Dear Colonel Fletcher

I'm going to ask you for some friendly advice. At the L A County Fair the other day, my wife signed one of those prize-deawing things, and a few days later was notified that she had won a lot in Paradise Halls, San Diego. Then, two days ago, she received from the Harris Realty Co., San Diego, a letter saying she had won a lot and could make her choice of any \$300 in the subdivision, and "the only cost to you is for the drawing of papers, deed, guarantee of title, conveying, etc., which is \$49."

The Los Angeles representative of the company tells me this subdivision is adjoining the east side of National City but is part of San Diego. I have such faith in San Diego that I think any lot there is worth more than \$49, if there isn't a small fortune of special assessments piled up against it. The letter says I must claim the lot by October 6 or forfeit it. And, as time is hard to make, I'm asking you if you think it worth while for me to run down there and claim it. I don't want you to go to any trouble, but if your office can conveniently phone the city engineer to find what assessments are pending, and you could write me yes or no, if you think it worth while or not, I will greatly appreciate it.

Thanking you

Lee Shippey

Southern California is America's ideal Summer as well as Winter Resort.

Average mean temperature, June, 66; July, 70; August, 71; September, 69.

October Seventh,
1 9 2 9

Mr. Lee Shippey,
c/o Los Angeles Times,
Los Angeles, Calif.

My dear Shippey:

Enclosed find letter from the San Diego Realty
Board that is explanatory.

My advice is for you to keep out.

With kind personal regards,

Sincerely yours,

EF:AK

Ed Fletcher Papers

1870-1955

MSS.81

Box: 25 Folder: 7

General Correspondence - Shippey, Lee



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