

## Historical Picture Donation from Jeanette Butler Gowin - James Peterson Butler Family

by Ann & Ray Vincent

Here is an amazing early photo of a stone house at 21419 Devonshire in 1938. Today, this acreage is the Ralphs Market Chatsworth Plaza, and the stone house would be in the parking lot.

At that time, this was a 10 acre lot owned by James Peterson Butler II (known as Jim), and it was a *citrus nursery*. In the 1940 census, *J.P. Butler III* lived there, and his daughter Jeanette Butler Gowin was three years old. Jeanette shared this photo with us.



1937-38 photo of James Butler II in front of James Butler III home at 21419 Devonshire, today's Ralphs parking lot.

A “then and now” comparison of the 10 acre parcel is below, using a 1945 ucsb aerial photo and Google Earth. The stone house is circled in yellow, the larger structure above it in the middle of the field is a barn/nursery.



Jim Butler managed over 250 acres of citrus groves in Chatsworth and the west valley that included 100 acres of his own. He had also created his own weather station on his property to help monitor the temperatures to set out smudge pots as needed. Other farmers in the area paid attention and followed his leadership. He was the President of the Chamber of Commerce, Vice President of the Los Angeles County Farm Bureau and chaired the Citrus Growers Dept. In addition he was on the Board of the Canoga Citrus Association. In the 1960's he developed the Devonshire acreage that became the Chatsworth Plaza.