



County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors

SUPERVISOR LEONARDO COTA

Term: 1853
District: Not Applicable
Date of Birth: 1816
Death: 1887

Leonardo Cota served as county supervisor for one term. He was elected in 1853, the year after the Board of Supervisors was created.

Cota was born in 1816, and arrived in Los Angeles early in his youth as part of a contingent of Mexican colonists sent from Mexico to govern the town. His father, Guillermo Cota, was Los Angeles' first "commissioner" under colonial rule.

With the help of his father's influence, Cota gained the reputation of being a rich and powerful leader among the "Californios." In 1846 Cota led a revolt against the military occupation of Los Angeles during the start of the Mexican-American War. A year later he married the daughter of Bernardo Yorba, one of the most prominent ranchers of early California history.

In February 1848, a treaty was signed ending the war and giving the United States undisputed control of California. Cota and his wife went to live on part of the family ranch in what is now Orange County. For many years Cota occupied the land, using it primarily for cattle grazing. His triangular-branding symbol was a familiar one in California beef markets for many generations.

In 1850 Cota led an effort that culminated in the creation of the city of Santa Ana. His efforts as a founding father did not go unnoticed in political circles. Three years later, he was elected to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.

In 1887 Cota died. He was 71.

Source: Mexican Los Angeles, A Narrative and Pictorial History; History of the Harbor District of Los Angeles; Pomona Valley Historian.