

# Smith's Bluff and Grigsby's Bluff, Texas: Two German Immigrant Communities of Jefferson County, Texas, 1850-1880

By W. T. Block

Despite two world wars fought with Germany in the twentieth century, and the natural antipathies created by each, it cannot be denied that German immigration was a dominant factor in early Texas history from 1845, when 10,000 Germans emigrated to Texas, until 1900, when 157,000 Germans had arrived in Texas. Some 300 German towns or small community names exist over the state, as well as the cities of New Braunfels and Fredericksburg, to attest to that fact.

While early German immigration to Jefferson County at no time compared to that of Central Texas, it was still the largest of any foreign group, with 29 of the 63 foreign-born residents of the 1850 census being Germans. By 1860, 900 of the 194 foreign-born, out of a total free population of 1,688 were immigrant Germans.

Prior to 1871, Germany or "the Germanys" consisted of 300 free cities, principalities, baronies, provinces ruled by a graf or count, with Brandenburg-Prussia being the only kingdom among them. However in 1845, that part of Central Europe was exceedingly overpopulated and under the tyrannical grip of Prince Metternich of Austria, with the poorest or peasant classes being unable to own one acre of land or to earn a decent living. Thus for sixty years, German immigrant ships continued to arrive at Galveston; many of them were plague ships, quarantined because of cholera or yellow fever aboard. Usually one-tenth of the Germans had already succumbed to the long, 3-months voyage, and those who arrived were usually so weakened physically, that they quickly fell victim to any pestilence within the city. The crew and all the passengers of one quarantined German immigrant ship died while anchored in the harbor.

It was said that the foul odors aboard a German immigrant ship were second only to the odors aboard an African slave ship. When the 588 persons aboard the Wendish ship Ben Nevis sailed from Germany in 1854, 76 persons died of cholera and were buried at sea. Slave ships often had less loss at sea than that. The 588 Wends were crammed into a sail ship only 146 feet long, or about the length of one city lot.

The worst disaster came in the winter of 1846, when 6,000 Germans arrived at Indianola in January, for which no provisions whatsoever had been made. The miseries suffered

by those German "Pilgrims" of that year were equal to the Plymouth Pilgrims, the rate of death being three out of four. Cholera and dysentery took its toll once more, and 4,500 of the 6,000 starved to death or died of disease during the 200-mile walk to New Braunfels. Wherever corpses had been buried in shallow graves, the wolves had uncovered and eaten them. One survivor recalled coming upon a large, loaded wagon stuck in the mud. The bones of the oxen were still in the yoke, as were the bones of the driver and his family on all sides, cleaned to the bone by the buzzards and wolves. The survivor wrote back to Germany that the "proud German eagle" of the Adelsverein's coat of arms should be exchanged for a Texas buzzard. (Galv. Weekly News, Nov. 12, 1877.)<sup>[1]</sup>

One must remember that even the East Texas pioneers of 1830 had to be very selective about where they settled. They needed a large bayou or river that would afford them easy access to a town or the Gulf of Mexico, as well as a high bluff to build on, sufficient to repel or withstand the tidal flood overflows. Being usually farmers, they also needed open spaces for farms, as well as a timber reserve to provide trees for log cabins, a supply of firewood, and a game preserve. Both Grigsby's Bluff (now Port Neches) and Smith's Bluff fulfilled those needs superbly, whereas the site of Nederland could offer only open prairie, considered to be only grazing land.

Smith's Bluff (the site of Sun Oil and Union Oil of California riverside property) and Grigsby's Bluff (now Port Neches) were the only two high land bluffs on the Neches River south of Beaumont. Before 1780, Grigsby's Bluff, explicitly that part of Port Neches immediately east of Port Neches Park, had been an Indian town for at least 1,500 years, at first of the Karakawa tribe, whose 7-foot skeletons were often found in the burial mounds there; and after 1650 of the Nacazils, a sub-tribe of the Attakapas, who were a short and stocky people before their extinction about 1780. As of 1841, there were six large burial mounds at Grigsby's Bluff, size about 60 feet wide, 20 feet tall, and 100 yards long, comprised entirely of clam and sea shells, skeletons, pottery shards, and other Indian artifacts. Between 1841 and 1901, all six of the mounds disappeared, a result of human actions.<sup>[2]</sup> Grigsby's Bluff became a post office in 1859 (there was also a store and sawmill there), but the office was discontinued in 1893, with the writer's grandfather, Albert Block, as the last postmaster there.<sup>[3]</sup>

The former site of Smith's Bluff is bounded today by the curvature of Block's Bayou and Grigsby's Bluff on its east side and the Kansas City Southern Railroad on its west side, and on its north and south sides, by all the land between Neches River and Highway 366. Although never a post office, Smith's Bluff was recorded after 1902 as a freight terminal for Sun Oil Company, which is 1 mile north of Nederland; Unocal, and its predecessor, Pure Oil Company. An 1840 map of Jefferson County showed a dirt road extending south of Beaumont; turning east at the site of the FM366 and KCS Railroad underpass to Grigsby's Bluff, and then south to Aurora, the 1840 predecessor of Port Arthur.<sup>[4]</sup>

Grigsby's Bluff had its beginning when T. F. McKinney received the first Mexican land grant of 1 league there on April 21, 1831, and he gave Grigsby's Bluff its first names of McKinney's Bluff, McKinneytown, or Georgia. McKinney had keelboated cotton from Nacogdoches down the Angelina and Neches rivers beginning in 1830. However the first white settler there was Joseph Grigsby, who measured the boundaries of his league of land (4,428 acres) in 1835 and settled there with 25 slaves. When Grigsby died in 1841 (and his family moved away), he still referred to the site in his will as being "McKinneytown." After a second post office was established there in 1902, the new name became Port Neches.[5]

The site of Smith's Bluff was originally a 1-league land grant to Jose Maria Mora of Nacogdoches, but the site reverted to public school land following the Texas Revolution. About 1838, a frontier widow named Maria Turner acquired the easternmost 177-acre grant (1 Spanish 'labor'), straddling Block's Bayou, most of which today is in the Mobil Oil Company tank farm, or Port Neches' western city limit. In 1839, Johan Kucher (later changed to Kutcher for easier pronunciation) became the first German immigrant to settle in Jefferson County, and in the same year, he was awarded a 160-acre land grant (1/4 section) at the location of the present Sun Oil Company office, beside the railroad 1 mile north of Nederland, by the Board of Land Commissioners of Jefferson County. In 1839, the Jasper County Board of Land Commissioners awarded all the land between Turner and Kucher's grants, a 1/3 league of 1,476 acres, to James McDaniel. About 1845, G. W. Smyth, Sr., a signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence, bought the McDaniel land certificate. Smyth contributed his name to the site, although the spelling was soon altered to 'Smith's Bluff,' but he never lived here. (Smyth was executor of the large Grigsby estate.) His son, G. W. Smyth, Jr., operated a sawmill at Smith's Bluff briefly (1866-1867), following his return from the Confederate Army.[6] By October, 1847, the names of both Smith's Bluff and Grigsby's Bluff appeared in the Jefferson County Commissioners' Court Minutes.[7]

Two large German families arrived at Grigsby's Bluff about May, 1846, having sailed from Bremen on Feb. 10, 1846, but they moved around some before settling at Grigsby's Bluff permanently in 1854. George Frederick Block, wife Augusta, and six children lived in Beaumont from 1848 until 1854, when they sold out and moved back to Grigsby's Bluff. George Christian and Charlotte Gentz and their six grown children moved to Wiess Bluff in Jasper County a few years before moving back to Grigsby's Bluff about 1853, where in 1858 they built their home at Block's bayou (now Oak Bluff Memorial Park), on land belonging to T. F. McKinney. After Christian Gentz' death in 1868 at age 75, the house and land were purchased by Albert Block, born in Germany in 1840, who was both a farmer, the last Grigsby's Bluff postmaster, and the writer's grandfather. The lumber for the Gentz or Albert Block home had been cut at the Remley sawmill in Grigsby's Bluff.[8]

George F. Block and wife Augusta had 3 more sons born 1848 and 1853, and by 1880 there were eight Block families living in Grigsby's Bluff. Between 1866 and 1882, G. F. Block and his 8 sons were both farmers and operators of a shingle mill, where they made 333,000 shingles in 1869. F. W. Block and his wife died at Smith's Bluff about 1880. Between 1866 and 1882, George F. Block served for 16 years as Jefferson County commissioner and a part of that time as Justice of the Peace for Precinct 3, Grigsby's Bluff (such was possible then). Albert Block served as both constable and the last postmaster prior to his death in 1893. Between 1892 and 1896 Will Block, Sr. served as Justice of the Peace at age 22, prior to his marriage to Dieuwertje Koelemay of Nederland in 1899.<sup>[9]</sup>

By 1854, many other German families had arrived at Grigsby's Bluff and Smith's Bluff. When a county commissioner "called out all hands" to work on the dirt road from Beaumont to Grigsby's Bluff in 1854, the following German immigrants of Mid-Jefferson County were called, namely: Friedrich W. Block, Karl (Charles) Block, Heinrich Wendling, Alexander Wahl, Johan Mikiel Staffen, Johan Wiltz, and Robert Ruff. Wahl, Ruff, Wiltz, Staffen, and Wendling all lived at Smith's Bluff, whereas he remainder lived at Grigsby's Bluff.<sup>[10]</sup>

On September 25, 1851, Johan Kucher transferred his 160-acre Smith Bluff grant, at the site of Sun Oil Company 1 mile north of Nederland, to Johan Wiltz, where the latter soon built his log cabin. The Wiltz family included wife Christina; daughters Luisa, Maria, and Christina, all born in Germany; and 5 more children born at Smith's Bluff. In July, 1859, Wiltz sold 20 acres of the Kucher tract to Karl and Wilhelmina Meinke, Prussian immigrants, also a shingle maker, who soon built a log cabin there. By 1880 Wiltz owned a total of 600 acres at Smith's Bluff. He lived until about 1882 and is buried in an extinct cemetery there.<sup>[11]</sup>

In 1848, Johan Mikiel Staffen, wife Wilhelmina, and daughters Henrietta and Hannah, arrived at Galveston from Germany, but they later settled at Smith's Bluff in 1851. In February, 1853, Staffen purchased the Turner survey of 177 acres, 86 acres of which he soon sold to his son-in-law, Seaborn Berry, the husband of Henrietta Staffen. Berry died at Smith's Bluff in 1881, and his lone tombstone survives today in the Mobil Oil tank farm nearby. Eventually, Johan Staffen acquired another 500 acres of the McDaniel survey as well. About 1865, Staffen deeded to Jefferson County one acre of land for a school site, but the writer doubts if ever a school were taught there.<sup>[12]</sup> In fact, the end of Smith's Bluff as an inhabited community can be dated to 1922, when Flora Block Staffen sold 350 acres there to Pure Oil Company for a gasoline refinery.<sup>[13]</sup>

Friedrich W. Block and wife Mary (Flora Block's parent , where they both died about 1880, and are both buried in the extinct cemetery there. Another early Smith's Bluff family in 1851 were Heinrich and Frederike Wendling, who arrived from Germany with five children, Lewis, Ernestine, Frederike, Wilhelmina, and

August, and who bought 100 acres at Smith's Bluff. Frederike married Herman Holst, another German immigrant at Smith's Bluff, in 1858. After their arrival here, the Wendlings had three more sons, Rudolph, Otto, and Henry, before Heinrich Wendling died at Smith's Bluff in 1860. In 1861, the widow Wendling married Heinrich Wendt, a German immigrant shoe maker at Smith's Bluff. [14]

Hannah Staffen (Kucher, White, DeBlanc), born in Hamburg, Germany in 1839, arrived at Smith's Bluff in 1851. On September 9, 1859, she married Johan Kucher, the first German settler at Smith's Bluff, by whom she had three children, Plato Kutcher, Ellen Kutcher (Wendling), and Laura Kutcher. Following Kucher's death in 1867, she married twice more, and bore six more children. She lived for sixty years in her 160-acre farm home, built at the intersection of present-day Highway 366 and the Unocal plant road to Smith's Bluff. When Hannah Staffen died at her home ne 7, she was the last surviving member of the original German colony at Smith's Bluff. [15]

Many early German settlers at Smith's Bluff moved away following their marriages, usually to Beaumont. In February, 1855, Luisa Wiltz married a German immigrant, Alexander Wahl, and a year later, she and her husband moved to Beaumont. Soon afterward, Mary Wiltz married an immigrant Prussian, C a, and she and her husband moved away. In January, 1868, Christina Wiltz also married a German immigrant, Henry Heisler, Sr., and their son married Katie Block of Grigsby's Bluff in 1899. In 1877, Rudolph Wendling married Ellen Kutcher, the daughter of Johan Kucher and Hannah Staffen, and that couple moved to Beaumont as well. [16]

One other early Smith's Bluff German immigrant couple was actually a Neches River cotton steamboat owner. According to the 1860 census, Capt. Charles and Mary Hausinger lived at Smith's Bluff, from whence Capt. Hausinger took his steamboat Kate, which pulled a large barge, up the Neches and Angelina rivers as far as Pattonia, in Nacogdoches County, and brought back to Sabine Pass loads of up to 400 bales of cotton. The Hausingers must have resided at Smith's Bluff at least eleven years since they had an ad for the steamboat Kate in the Sabine Pa n in June, 1871. [17]

The writer has a record (1870 census) of other German families that settled at Smith's Bluff during the late 1860's. One Prussian couple were Friedrich and Mary Plata Happe and two children (res. 112 of 1870 census), who farmed on the McDaniel survey for a few years. Another family (res. 112, 1870 census) were Charles and Matilda Gentz (of Prussia), who married after Gentz' discharge from the Confederate Army, and who farmed in the vicinity of present-day Central Gardens Addition, north of Nederland. Another partly German family at Smith's Bluff in 1870 (res. 115) was B. Stewart, whose wife was the former Wilhelmina Wiltz, born in Germany. [18] As late as 1900, there were still children from those early German families, who were attending school in Nederland, as follows: Frank, Margaret, Gelder, and Ida Gentz; and John, May, and Emma Staffen. [19]

There were at least two cemeteries, both now extinct, at Smith's Bluff, where many of those German settlers were buried. One cemetery of perhaps four graves, is located on Unocal (formerly Pure Oil Company property). Another nearby cemetery contained about fifty graves and lies on the Kucher survey on present-day Sun Oil Company property.

The present Unocal (Union Oil of California) plant road, exiting on Highway 366, was formerly the site of Port Arthur Irrigation Company's main canal flume, that was about 100 feet wide and built in 1898. When Pure Oil Company bought the site in 1922, that firm leveled the high canal levees to form the the road bed for its new plant entrance. Formerly, there had been only a dirt road, running parallel to the canal, for buggies going to Smith's Bluff. The dirt road also bordered the eastern edge of Sun Oil property, which until about 1908 was unfenced. The larger cemetery of about fifty graves was on the Kucher survey near Sun Oil's eastern property line.

In March, 1909, the writer's mother, Sarah Jane Sweeney (later Staffen, Block) married Robert L. Staffen and she resided at Smith's Bluff from 1909 until 1917. Jane Staffen recalled that as of 1909, what was left of the cemetery was located, unfenced, under a couple large oak trees, where the prairie cattle bedded down at night and during the heat of the day. As a result, the cattle had already broken off most of the thin marble tombstones, and had covered them with cow manure. With no perpetual care, the cemetery vanished soon afterward, which was why those families of 1900 bought lots in Magnolia Cemetery in Beaumont. Many of those earliest German families who were buried in that extinct cemetery include Johan and Wilhelmina Staffen, Caroline Staffen, Otto Staffen, Johan and Christina Wiltz, Friedrich W. and Mary Block, Heinrich Wendling, Heinrich and Frederike Wendt, August Wendling, John Kucher, and many others whose names are unknown.

Between, 1850-1880, Grigsby's Bluff had a varying population between 100-150 persons, as well as a sawmill, a store, and a post office, about evenly divided by German immigrants and families of old Southern Anglo heritage. Although a few slaveholders lived there named Remley, Johnson, Brewer, and Hillebrand, the two largest slaveholders at Grigsby's Bluff by far (whose residences there were soon interrupted by their deaths) were Joseph Grigsby (1835-1841) and W. S. Mosley (1855-1858), each of whom owned about 25 slaves, but several years apart. There were no slaves owned by any of the German families of either community.

By 1880, there were eight Block families living at Grigsby's Bluff. One family died about 1880, and all six other Block families, except Albert, 82, to be closer to a cypress timber supply. After building his home on Block's Bayou in 1858, Christian Gentz died at Grigsby's Bluff in 1868, at a time when there were four Gentz families living there. A large marker in Oak Bluff Cemetery now honors Gentz as the

first burial in that cemetery. His widow moved to her son Charles' home at Smith's Bluff.[20]

Other German families who lived in Grigsby's Bluff during the 1850s included a shoemaker, Friedrich and Charlotte Rexas, and their teenage children Amelia, Mary, and George. During the Civil War, Mary Rexas married Charles Theobald, a German immigrant tailor and a Confederate soldier at Sabine Pass. After the war, the Charles Theobald family moved back to Grigsby's Bluff, where Theobald died about 1868. In the 1870 census, Mary Theobald was still there, a widow with two small children in her household. The George Friedrich Rexas family lived on a 10-acre site on East Port Neches Ave., behind the old Texaco asphalt plant. George Rexas, Jr. later lived at Sabine Pass.[21]

Another early German family at Grigsby's Bluff was a shingle maker, Friedrich and Wilhelmina Behlke, who arrived there about 1858. They had two teenage children, Heinrich and Wilhelmina. The Behlke family were still in 1870, but they had disappeared by 1880, having either died or moved away.[22]

Another German family at Grigsby's Bluff by 1874 were August and Agnes Schram and their five children (four named Schneider and Mary Schram). Actually, August Schram had been captain and owner of a schooner at Galveston and Grigsby's Bluff during the Civil War, and may have been a Confederate blockade runner. In 1880 the family owned 299 acres of land, worth \$400. In 1874, August Schram sailed his schooner back to Saxony, Germany, to visit his father. He soon met and married his father's housekeeper, a widow named Agnes Schneider, who had four children, but the Schrams returned to Grigsby's Bluff in 1875. August Schram is believed to have been the last survivor of Grigsby's Bluff's old German community, having died at Port Neches at age 86 in 1934. The writer has an excellent memory of August Schram, for he often visited the Will Block home before he died.[23]

The six Block families that moved to Orange in 1882 included George F. and Augusta Block, George L. and Lorna Block, August and Nancy Block, Adolf and Charlotte Block, Charles and Louisa Block, Joseph and Margarethe Block, and Leopold Block, leaving only Albert and Ursula Block to remain at Grigsby's Bluff. The Blocks were all farmers, boat builders, and shingle makers, and they left for Orange because of their constant need for a supply of cypress logs and lumber. George F. Block owned 100 acres that included present-day Port Neches Park, where his shingle mill was located. Albert Block's farm covered 200 acres, 100 acres on each side of Port Neches Avenue. In 1876, he purchased his first 100 acres and the old Gentz home for \$500. Late in the same year, he purchased the second 100 acres, sold at a sheriff's sale for taxes, on the courthouse steps for 5 cents an acre.[24]

Of the three surviving Confederate soldiers named Gentz, all born in Prussia, Ferdinand and William married and continued to live at Grigsby's Bluff, but Charles Gentz moved to a farm near Smith's Bluff. G. F. Block sold out to another German family, Johan and Emeline Kline, who lived in Grigsby's Bluff from 1882 until 1890, before moving on to Beaumont. Emeline Kline (Cline) was a sister of Lorna, Luisa, and Ursula Block.

In some households only the wife was from Germany. For instance, John Beaumont of Grigsby's Bluff was married to Frederike Gentz. The four Schneider children, Ernst, Johan, and August Schneider and Anna Schneider Revia, grew up in Grigsby's Bluff between 1874 and 1890, but lived principally in Beaumont thereafter. Ernst and August Schneider were Neches River tugboat captains.[25]

Since nothing else about early German immigration to Jefferson County may ever be written, perhaps the immigrants to Sabine Pass and Beaumont should be included. The first German immigrants to Sabine Pass were Johan and Margarethe Schleikel, who moved there in the late 1840's.[26] There were perhaps seven German families living there by 1860, including Mrs. Alvina Gentz Stewart, Wilhelm and Charlotte Gentz Maas and 8 children, Charles Theobald, Karl and Mary Kappas and several children, Christian and Emile Knodell and family; Capt. Lewis King, master of the s.b.t. Orleans; Charles Kuhlmeil, a merchant; Charles Ruff, a wealthy speculator and blockade-runner; Bernhard Kawatz, H. F. C. Rosenbaum, and Heinrich Schram, a sailor aboard the s.b.t. Sabine.[27]

There are at least two extinct cemeteries at Port Neches that the writer can recall. One with about twenty graves was located on the southeast corner of the intersection of Rachford and Dearing Streets on land currently occupied by a shell company. That cemetery site was deeded in perpetuity to the State of Texas more than a century ago, as the deed records reveal, but was maliciously bulldozed in 1945 by persons the writer prefers not to name. While the writer was still a soldier, home on leave, in 1946, he saw the site when it had been freshly bulldozed, and broke ones were still flattened and above ground. An old man named Palmer, who lived in the last house on Rachford Street, showed me a broken tombstone for Mary Moseley Hillebrand, wife of Lastie Hillebrand, who died in childbirth at age 20 in 1860. Her name is listed in the county mortality census of that year. The cemetery was called the Remley-Hillebrand Cemetery. Another cemetery that was also bulldozed during the 1930s was the original Block Cemetery, located between Merriman and Llano Streets and on land no longer in the Block family, near Port Neches Park. Such greed and vandalism beyond belief distresses this writer, whose father started Oak Bluff Cemetery in 1905.

In 1860, the Texas and New Orleans Railroad was being built across north Jefferson County, and about 30 German railroad laborers were probably no more than temporary residents, whose names will be omitted. However, there were many other German

immigrant families living in or near Beaumont permanently. Three Ruff brothers, Otto, Robert and Charles (the latter of Beaumont and Sabine Pass), for reasons unknown were the wealthiest German immigrants. They settled at Beaumont during the late 1840s. Otto Ruff became a merchant and owned a sawmill by the late 1850's. In 1862, he and Charles Ruff owned the cotton steamboat Uncle Ben and the Confederate blockade-runner Tampico, but according to his probate File 195, Otto Ruff died of yellow fever at Beaumont in October, 1862, leaving his widow a very substantial estate. Charles Ruff, a "speculator" in the 1860 census, also owned property worth \$21,000, a very substantial amount in 1860.[\[28\]](#)

Other early German immigrants at Beaumont included Elisabeth, Emile and Oscar Holtz, Alexander and Luisa Wiltz Wahl, Herman and Frederike Holtz, Charles Wohlers and wife, a merchant; Friedrich Wilhelm and wife, an innkeeper; Christian Knost, Jacob Roth, Jacob and Charlotte Ender, Ernst and Frederike Langenstrassen, Mary Holtz Carr, August Blumaier, and Friedrich Springmann. Ruff brothers, Ender, Langenstrassen, Roth, Springmann, and the Block family all lived in Beaumont during the late 1840s.[\[29\]](#)

Perhaps a dozen or more German immigrants served in the Confederate Army, although many of them were Unionists and Abolitionists. Charles Kuhlmeier and B. Kawatz were in Co. A, Spaight's 11th Battalion. Four Block brothers, F. W., Karl, Albert, and George L., were in Co. B, Spaight's Battalion, as well as Johan Kline, F. Pavell, and Charles Theobald, all mustered at Sabine Pass. William, Ferd, and Charles Gentz; Oscar Holtz, Robert Ruff, Franz Schuessler, and Franz Schupp were all mustered at Beaumont in Co. E. of that Battalion.[\[30\]](#)

Early German immigration to Jefferson County, and especially to Smith's Bluff and Grigsby's Bluff, was the largest of any foreign nation, 94 out of 194 in 1860. While most of them were farmers, a number of them rose to the merchant and manufacturing level by 1860, a time when wealth and capital on the frontier were extremely scarce. Some of them, such as the Blocks, arrived entirely by accident, the result of an oncoming hurricane in the gulf, instead of moving on to Central Texas, as was originally intended. Most of them were an industrious, ambitious people, who sought only to become and were proud to become citizens of their adopted country.

## Endnotes

1. "German Immigrant Disaster," (Galv.) Weekly News, Nov. 12, 1877.
2. "Indian Mounds," (Hous.) Telegraph and Texas Register, June 2, 1841; "Indian Burial Place," (Galv.) Daily News, Dec. 28, 1896; W. Kennedy, "The Geology of Jefferson County, TX.," American Geologist, XIII (April 1894), pp. 268-275.

3. List of Grigsby's Bluff, TX. postmasters, furnished by U. S. Postal Service; also (Galv.) Weekly News, Nov. 1, 1859.
4. O. H. Delano, "Map of Jefferson County, TX.," Apr. 1840, Texas General Land Office.
5. Vols. A, pp. 27, 79; and D, p. 423, Jefferson County Deed Records.
6. Vol. B, p. 143, Jeff. Co. Deed Record; "Biography of J. Grigsby," Beau. Journal, Nov. 12, 1905; also Block, "Joseph Grigsby," History of Jefferson County, TX. etc.(Nederland: 1976), p. 46; also W. T. Block, Sapphire City of The Neches: A History of Port Neches etc., (Austin: 1987), pp. 19, 88, 116-117.
7. Vol., B, p. 123, Jefferson County Commissioner Court Minutes; also Block, East Texas Mill Towns and Ghost Towns (Lufkin: 1995), Vol. I, p. 132.
8. Sapphire City, see index; also Block, East Texas Mill Towns and Ghost Towns, I, p. 114; also (Galv.) Weekly News, May 26, 1857; July 26, 1876; also Block, History of Jefferson County, Tx., p. 63.
9. Sapphire City of The Neches, pp. 69-78; Gentz families, 66-68; Beaumont Enterprise, Nov. 22, 1908; also Block and Quick, "The 1850 Jefferson County Census Schedules," Texas Gulf Historical and Biographical Record, VII No. 2 (May, 1972), res. 253, p. 128.
10. Vol. B, p. 123, Feb. 21, 1854, Jefferson County Commissioners Court Minutes.
11. Sapphire City, pp. 58, 70; Vols. L, p. 589; and Q, p. 251, Jefferson County Deed Record; 1860 Jeff. County Sch. I census, residences 389, 395.
12. Vols. J, p. 61; Q, p. 622; and R, pp. 424, 453-455, Jeff. County Deed Records.
13. "Car Helped Start Pure Oil Refinery," Beau. Enterprise, Nov. 6, 1955.
14. Sapphire City, pp. 68-69; also 1860 Jeff. Co. census, residence 399.
15. "Obituary of Hannah Staffen DeBlance," Beau. Enterprise, Aug. 30, 1917.
16. Sapphire City, pp. 68-70; see also Jeff. County Marriage Books, Vols. A and B.
17. Sapphire City, pp. 45, 66, 110; also Sabine Pass Beacon, June 10, 1871; also Galv. Tri-Weekly News, Dec. 19, 24, 1873.
18. Sapphire City, p. 45; also 1870 Jeff. County census, residences 110-115.
19. The 1900 census for Smith's Bluff; also Sapphire City, p. 75.

20. Sapphire City, pp. 66-68.
21. Ibid., pp. 31, 54-59, 110, 169-170.
22. Ibid., pp. 19, 31, 45, 66, 110.
23. Ibid., pp. 59, 64-65, 110.
24. Ibid., pp. 20-21, 30, 47-49, 51-60, 76, 88, 110, 171.
25. Ibid., pp. 62-65.
26. Manuscript Jeff. County census, 1850.
27. 1860 Sabine Pass census, residences 304-357.
28. Block, History of Jefferson County, pp. 42, 47, 57, 57, 61, 86-88, 101.
29. Manuscript censuses, Jeff. County, TX., 1850 & 1860; JC Probate File #195.
30. Spaight's Battalion muster rolls, in Texas Gulf Historical and Biographical Record, VIII (Nov. 1972), pp. 28-37.