

TOWN OF SULPHUR BLUFF, TEXAS

Sulphur Bluff was founded by four Hargrave brothers in 1842-43, : who migrated from Booneville, Warrick County, Indiana. They came in two separate overland caravans, and equipped to found their own town in the Republic of Texas. Williams and Hezekiah Harvey and their families, numbering some twenty persons, arrived in Clarksville, Texas, first. They engaged Selon Stout, an Indian Scout, to lead them into the wilderness country south of the Sulphur River. Stout was most knowledgeable of the Caddoan Country and its network of trails. Late in 1842, after two days of travel, they arrived at the high bluff overlooking the Sulphur River. In February, 1843, James and Eldred Glen Hargrave arrived at the bluff. It was considered an ideal location to found their town, and situate it on the high bluff. They could install and operate the mills down below in the river with water power. They went to work building log houses for their many families, which now numbered some 80 people. The four brothers and their families moved on to the areas of Nelta and Birthright to make permanent settlements, with the exception of James's four Sons and two daughters and their families: Robert, Ratliff, John. and Hezekiah. The twin daughters, Anna and Elizabeth were not married.

The town prospered, and soon had a school, store, doctor, grist mill, a carding and spinning machine, and a blacksmith shop, etc. The trade territory south of the Sulphur River at one time reached as far west as Hunt County, mainly due to the flour mill. Soon after Sulphur Bluff was founded, many settlers began to settle between the Sulphur and White Oak Rivers.

The Republic of Texas granted Headright Certificates for selecting, locating, and surveying incidental to obtaining a Patented title to the land. The eligible single men received Certificates for 1/3 league of land, and the married ones received larger amounts. My Great Grandfather, William Brinton, having come to Clarksville in 1833, received a 1/3 league Certificate in 1838, when he had reached his majority. There was considerable buying and selling of parts, or all, of such Certificates, and buyers often were years in making necessary surveys for the grant of a Patent title, even though they often improved and lived on the located tracts. Sometimes they sold the unpatented places subject to issuing a warranty deed upon receipt of a Patent title. In that day, much trust could be placed in people, for the most part. Caveat Emptor, (let the buyer beware, since he should not be so ignorant), was seldom regretted, as a man's word could be trusted, and was considered a bond.

In 1846, Robert Hargrave purchased the James Barrett Headright Certificate issued in 1842 and sold to F. L. Blanton. Robert Hargrave platted a new townsite in the northwestern part of this 640 acre survey, and the old town of Sulphur Bluff was relocated to the present site. The Hargraves again built stores, a flour mill (operated by treadmill oxen), a blacksmith and wood shop, a sawmill, and carding and spinning machines, etc. As the area population grew, so did the new Sulphur Bluff. Soon it had a school, church, stores, blacksmith shops, wagonmakers, doctors and various artisans of that time. The people were generally farmers

and livestock raisers until in the 1860's when the first cotton gin was built by Joseph Staten. Afterwards, little patches of cotton became fields, and replaced grains as the principle cultivated crop. Following the War Between The States, more and more people migrated to the area. Some of the 19th century stores were owned by Robert Hargrave, John South, J. P. Hargrave, Hezekiah Hargrave, Turner and Wafford Lowe and Russell, Posey and Son, J. K. Pierce, Silas Husky, D. T. Lake, G. A. Hinnant, L. H. Stringfellow, Wash Cole, Mahaffey, et al. There were the Staten, and the Dawson gins, several blacksmith shops, doctors, churches, school, lodges, etc., that adequately served the trade territory.

ROBERT HARGRAVE

Robert Hargrave was born on February 18, 1816, in Indiana. He first married Sicera B. Smith in 1836. She died at Sulphur Bluff on August 29, 1857. The following excerpted from his inventory of the Community Estate are interesting as to prices of 1857:

Lemual Evans Survey \$ 2.00 Acre
James Barrett Survey lands worth 25.00 Acre
James Jones Headright 15.00 Acre
Nathaniel Harris Survey 2.00 Acre
Lots in Tarrant 50.00 Each
60 Head cattle 6.00 Each
200 Hogs 1.00 Each
4 Horses 50.00 Each
1 Wagon 60.00
Half interest in a thresher 225.00
Household property 250.00
1,000 bushels Wheat .75 Bu.
Solvent debts worth 500.00
Goods in Store 500.00

He bought goods from wholesale houses in New Orleans, as well as in Jefferson, Texas, which was a port and commercial city. The community property appraisals were made by J. H. Lowe, and Franklin

G. Pierce, and notarized by A. C. Maxwell, as Justice of Peace of Precinct #3.

Robert Hargrave distributed to their six children their interests in the community property land and household stuff. Sere Ida and Aurela received \$400.00 each for one 'Session of Schooling at McKenzie College' which included clothing and other schooling expenses. McKenzie College of that time was a very highly rated private school near Clarksville, Texas.

Robert Hargrave afterwards married Sarah Hogue, and they had a son named, Robert, and called, "Little Bob."

In 1860, James Hargrave, father of Ratliff, John, Hezekiah, Robert, Lettice Houghton, Anna Hopkins, and Elizabeth Brinton, delivered to William N. Dawson a Bill of Sale on the payment of \$2,300.00 for one Negro woman of black color by the name of Polly, about 28 years old, with five children, four girls and one boy. The children's names were Gracy, Clarcy, Orilla, Susan, and William. J. P. Hargrave and V. D. Tucker witnessed the signing by James Hargrave. James Hargrave died in 1861 at the age of 71.

Robert Hargrave and wife, Sarah, and children (also daughter Aurelia), Robert, Martha and Marion Conditt; Mary and Dr. P. H. Archer; Serelda and Eugene Potts; Nellie and Mack Peters; Susan & John Henry Gregg, and his sister and her husband, Lettice and Judge W. L. Houghton, and their families moved from Sulphur Bluff to California in a caravan of forty wagons. The long journey started on October 20, 1868.

The earliest marriages at Sulphur Bluff were: Elizabeth Barilla Hargrave and Thomas Carr Clark (1843). Rachel Hargrave and John Woods; Anna Hargrave and David Hopkins (1845); Elizabeth Hargrave and William Brinton (1846); Emmaline Hargrave and David Clark; Louisa Jane Hargrave and Josiah Gregg (1846); Sarah Ann Hopkins and Shepherd Coyle (1848), and Louise McFall and Joslin Hopkins.

[unknown author; date unknown; contributed by Gloria Hargrave]