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## **HEISIG CEMETERY**

Latitude 30° 14'36", Longitude 96° 25' 47"

On private property about 4 miles north of Brenham on Cedar Hill Road

A deed of December 22, 1899, states "But there is especially excepted from this conveyance, one half acre of land, upon which is situated the private graveyard of the said Ferdinand J. R. Heisig, known as the Live Oak Grove, said one half acre to be so taken, as to include said graveyard which is to be the center of same, same graveyard being situated east of south from the present dwelling house upon said premises, about (blank) yds. The said one half acre of land, including said graveyard, is hereby reserved for the use and benefit of the said Ferdinand J. R. Heisig, his heirs and assigns forever." The cemetery is still reserved in the latest transfer of the surrounding property in 2006. There is a fence surrounding the four marked graves. It is unknown if there are others within the half acre.

The following history was written by Valerie Vance Locher, a great-great granddaughter of Ferdinand & Elisa Heisig.

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There are four tombstones in the Heisig cemetery, with the following engravings. Further discussion follows in the text:

1. Elisa Marie, Wife of Rev. F. Heisig, Born Oct. 2, 1838, Died Sept 1, 1873. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."
2. Hier ruht in Gott Meine liebe Mamma Sophie Heisig, Gebr. Breihan, 3, Feb, 1846 Gest. 16, Dez. 1877 [The translation of this is "Here rests in God my dear Mamma."]
3. Esther Heisig, Born July 1873, Died September 6, 1873
4. Robert Heisig

Elisa Marie (Bock/Bach) Heisig was the wife of Reverend Ferdinand John Robert Heisig, who was born in Leobshutz, Germany in 1833 and brought his family to the United States in 1870. Elisa Marie and Ferdinand had ten children, six of whom lived into adulthood and have descendants all over the United States.

Elisa Marie Bock (or Bach) may have been born in Paris; her family was said to be from Alsace-Lorraine. The correct spelling of her maiden name is unknown; the record for the ship on which

the Heisigs came to the U.S. shows a fellow traveler who was probably her brother, with name spelled (Johan) Bock, but family notes say she played the piano excellently and used both spellings. The death certificates of her two eldest sons, much later, stated her name as Bock. She also went by Eliza Maria while in Europe; some records, including family notes, have her as Eliza, and one child was given that name. She spoke French and German and never conquered English. She was very small and had brown hair.

Her husband Ferdinand Heisig heard his calling to the ministry at 22 and was licensed at the Berlin Church, Germany in 1855. He emigrated to England in 1856 and married Elisa Marie in 1858. He graduated from Regent's Park College, London in 1864, became ordained at the German Missionary Church in London on January 3, 1866, and pastored there from 1865 to 1870. Ferdinand and Elisa Marie had eight of their children in London before they left for the United States. (The children are listed below.)

The Heisigs came to the U.S. in 1870. Ferdinand's purpose was to carry his German Baptist ministry to central Texas near Brenham, where many German immigrants had settled. The family of ten traveled on the SS City of London from Liverpool, landing in New York August 2, 1870. Family said they also traveled to Galveston by ship.

On February 27, 1871, Ferdinand Heisig co-purchased the former homesite of General Sam Houston, in Independence, Washington County. He sold it less than two years later, on December 23, 1872. On January 9, 1873, he purchased 70 acres on Tommelson Creek in the Cedar Hill community, near the Cedar Hill Church where he was pastor. In July of that year, the 10<sup>th</sup> child to Ferdinand and Elisa Marie was born, but in September both mother and baby Esther died 5 days apart. Both are buried in the Heisig cemetery located on this Cedar Hill property. At the time Elisa Marie died, her living children were ages 14, 12, 11, 10, 7 and 2.

Ferdinand served as pastor of the Cedar Hill German Baptist church from at least 1872 to 1879. According to History of Texas Baptists, this was the second German Baptist Church in Texas (the first being the Ebenezer German Baptist Church in Greenvine, Washington County, where Ferdinand also preached). The Cedar Hill church is no longer standing. In 1879, Ferdinand headed north, where he held pastorships at St. Paul, Minnesota, 1879-80; at the 2nd German Baptist Church, New York, New York, 1880-86; at Houston, Texas, 1886-92; at Newton, Kansas, 1892-99; and finally, at Denton, Texas from 1900 until he retired.

Ferdinand was actively involved in the Baptist and German Baptist state organizations. He attended their association meetings and state conventions and gave sermons or the opening prayer at such events. He was also a Moderator of the German Conference of Baptist Churches and a member of that organization.

In Flowers and Fruits in the Wilderness, published in 1872, the author stated, "Two years ago Elder F. Heisig came to Texas, leaving the pastorate of a German congregation in London, England, and has since been giving to the German mission the benefits of his talents and

energies. As a Baptist, he makes no compromise with error. He is in possession of a clear and discriminating mind, has enjoyed the benefits of a thorough education, and is eminently qualified to oppose those systems of error that have taken such a deep hold upon the German mind. He is under the patronage of the mission board of Union Association, and while he preaches with great power in his native tongue, preaches also acceptably in English.”

After Elisa Marie’s death, Reverend Heisig married Sophie Breihan in July 1874. They had one child (see below). Sophie died December 16, 1877, and is also buried in the Heisig cemetery on the Cedar Hill property.

Ferdinand married his third wife, Johanna Menten October 15, 1885 in Union, New Jersey. She was born in Emmden Germany on July 17, 1844 and died March 8, 1921. They had no children. As of 1910 Ferdinand and Johanna still lived in Denton, and he was retired. Ferdinand died in 1918, at age 85, and is buried in Odd Fellows Cemetery in Denton County, Texas.

Ferdinand was a strict father, dogmatic, domineering and ruled the purse strings. The family spoke German, French and later English. Most of Ferdinand’s sermons were in German. All of his children were ambitious, worked hard from childhood and became successful. His two entrepreneurial sons Paul and CT offered to invest money for Ferdinand, but he would only agree if the money was used after his death to build a church in the German village where he was born. It is not known whether this ever occurred.

Children and grandchildren of Ferdinand and Elisa Marie Heisig: Due to space the information on the grandchildren is abbreviated and further descendants are not included. For further information, see [www.geneagenie.net](http://www.geneagenie.net) :

1. Dr. Theodore Heisig, born April 4, 1859, London, England; married Anna Hammann about 1888; died Nov. 7, 1929.

Dr. Theodore Heisig graduated from Baylor University in 1882, while it was located in Independence, Texas and became a Baptist preacher like his father. He also attended Rochester Theological Seminary in New York where he obtained a degree in 1888. He was ordained at Waterford, New York, pastored churches in the north and south United States including New York and New Jersey. He was also a teacher at Baylor College at Independence for some time. He moved to Beaumont in 1902 to join his brothers in investments while he continued his church work. His wife Anna was born Anna Von Hammann on June 5, 1862; she died August 21, 1951 and is buried at Magnolia Cemetery, Beaumont, Texas. Family notes said they met in Germany when Theodore returned to visit; however, the 1920 Baylor yearbook entry for Mrs. Anna Heisig states “She with her brother came as a young girl to Baylor at Independence from their home in Germany. In a most remarkable way, she adapted herself to Texas customs. She learned English so perfectly that she would never be considered one of foreign birth. After a few years she and her brother became teachers in Baylor College. In 1888 they visited their

home in Germany and took with them another Baylor Teacher. Mention should be made of Dr. Theodore Heisig, who was also a teacher in Baylor College at Independence. He has been a most generous contributor to the Baylor College loan fund, and never fails to respond to an appeal for Christian Education.”

Children of Theodore and Anna:

- a. Elsa Heisig McLane (1892-1977). Born in New York. She married Alan McLane and had a son Alan, Jr. who was raised in Louisiana and died in Houston in 1993.
- b. Theodore Heisig, Jr. (1897-1970). Born in New Jersey while his father was pastor there, married Marie (maiden name unknown) and worked as an executive at Texaco for years, living in both Texas and the New York area. He died in Baytown, buried Forest Park Cemetery, Houston. Two children Anna and Charles Theodore (“Ted”).

2. Ferdinand John Robert Heisig, born March 8, 1861, London, England; married M.F. Barnhill in Burleson County, Texas in 1886; married Nellie Nance on December 18, 1896 in Washington County; died May 17, 1911 and is buried in Magnolia Cemetery, Beaumont. [Note his birth record in England gives his name as Ferdinand John *Frederick* Heisig, but all U.S. records have shown him as Ferdinand John Robert (or F.J.R.) Heisig.]

In 1880 Ferdinand, Jr. worked on a farm in Fayette County. In 1900 he, wife Nellie, and daughter Nellie C. lived in Austin County, Texas where he was a school teacher.

Children of Ferdinand Jr. and Nellie:

- a. Nellie C. Heisig (1897-1983). Her father’s 1911 obituary stated she was a pupil at Baylor College (she would have been only 14). In 1922 she married V.R. “Jack” McManus, a rancher, in Liberty County. As of 1940 they had 3 sons and were living in Liberty County, Texas.
- b. Charles Heisig (per family records).

3. Dr. Ernest Samuel Heisig, born March 16, 1862, London, England; married Emma Cornelia Bering (daughter of August Bering, of one of Houston’s founding families); died November 26, 1943. (Emma was born about 1863 and died Feb 7, 1941 in Houston.) Both are buried in Glenwood Cemetery.

Ernest was a physician in Houston, Texas from at least 1892 and continued his practice there for many years.

Children of Ernest and Emma:

- a. Gladstone Heisig (1893-1986). Attended University of Texas (1917); became Professor of Chemistry at University of Minnesota; also lived in New York.
- b. Ernst Willers Heisig (1896-1914). Died at age 18 of illness while attending Rice University; buried Glenwood Cemetery.
- c. Merle Heisig (1899-1919).

- d. Doris Heisig Brown (1902-1988). Attended Rice University; married Arthur Lee Brown and lived in Houston.
4. Charles Theopolis (“CT”) Heisig, born March 31, 1863, London, England; married Vida Jane Young, January 1, 1900; died June 13, 1932, Beaumont, Texas; buried in Magnolia Cemetery. [Note his England birth record spells the middle name Theophilus although many subsequent records have shown Theopolis and it was said that this was Latin for “City of God”.]

CT moved to Beaumont around 1898 and became a successful real estate investor. He built the Heisig Hotel, owned the Heisig Storage Company, the Beaumont Coca-Cola Company, part of the Gray Building, helped found Gulf Steel Company (later Lone Star Steel Company) and was a director of Citizen’s National Bank. In 1901 he was one of the founders and first secretary of the Higgins Oil Company which drilled at Spindletop and found the second major gusher; it was later absorbed by a larger company. CT spent a great deal of money and time backing agricultural enterprises in southeast Texas and at the time of his death he owned a rice farm and a large fig farm. In 1903 CT was listed in the Houston Post’s publication of “Men of Texas: A collection of portraits of men who deserve to rank as typical representatives of the best citizenship, foremost activities and highest aspirations of the State of Texas.”

Children of Charles and Vida:

  - a. Cecil Emerson Heisig (1902-1903) Died at one year old while on a trip with his mother to visit her sister in Pennsylvania. According to the family, the doctor gave him an overdose of medicine while treating him for the croup.
  - b. Carla Theo Heisig Harris (1900-1928) Married J. Wylie Harris. Died shortly after the birth of her second child. Two children, deceased.
  - c. Helen Ruth Heisig Vance (1904-1987) Married Andrew Milton Vance, divorced, worked for United States civil service for many years; son John Vance deceased.
  - d. Dorothy Grace Heisig Price (1912-1973) Married John Edward Price, lived in Beaumont; two daughters, one still living.
  - e. Marjorie Jane Heisig Browne (1917-2005) Married Ernest Browne; lived in Beaumont for many years; two sons still living.
  - f. Marguerite Joyce Heisig Schlosser (1917-2000) Married John Henry “Jack” Schlosser; lived in Plano, Texas; 3 daughters still living.
5. Henry Albert Heisig, born September 2, 1864, London, England; died March 14, 1865 (age 6 months).
6. Paul Henry Albert Heisig, born August 26, 1866, London, England; married Amelia Tod Hathorne in 1891; died January 8, 1950. (Amelia, known as “Aunt Toddie,” was born February 15, 1864 and died 1915, buried at Evergreen Cemetery in El Paso. The maiden

name seems to be Hathorn rather than Hawthorne; a son was named Hathorne with this spelling in the records; however, Paul, Jr. spelled his mother's maiden name "Hawthorne" in his SAR application.)

Paul moved to Beaumont around 1899 and entered real estate with his brother CT. He owned Norwell & Heisig Co., the local wholesale grocery business, local newspaper "The Beaumont Enterprise," and various buildings including the Gray Building downtown. After first wife "Toddie" died, he remarried Mary B. and moved to Los Angeles, (as of the 1920 census he was still in Beaumont with Mary, Hathorne and Gilbert) where he also practiced real estate and himself purchased the former home of Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks, "Pickfair."

Children of Paul and Toddie:

- a. Paul A. Heisig, Jr. (about 1895-1957) Attended University of Virginia; 1st Lieutenant in World War I served May 8, 1917 to September 1919 and a Major in World War II (no active service); died in El Paso.
  - b. Fergus "Hathorne" Heisig (1898-?) Followed his father to Los Angeles, California.
  - c. Gilbert Heisig (1901-1975) Attended Virginia Military Institute (1917); died in Los Angeles, California.
7. Lydia Rosa Heisig, born October 12, 1867, London, England; died July 14, 1868 (age 9 months).
  8. Florence Eliza Heisig, born July 6, 1869, London, England; died August 25, 1870 (age 13 months). Note that this baby traveled on the ship with the Heisigs to New York, arriving on August 2, 1870 but died only a few weeks later.
  9. Fanny Davis Heisig, born July 15, 1871, Independence, Texas; married Allen B. Robinson; lived in Palmyra, New York; died, February 10, 1907. No children.
  10. Esther, born July 1873, Cedar Hill, Texas; died September 6, 1873 (age 2 months); buried in Heisig Cemetery.

Children and grandchildren of Ferdinand and Sophie Heisig:

1. Lillie Heisig, born August 25, 1875; as of the 1880 census, Lillie was living with her grandparents, the Breihans, in Austin County, Texas. Her mother Sophie died in 1877 and is buried in Heisig cemetery. Lillie married Otto Lindemann (born September 1870) on February 22, 1900, perhaps at the German Methodist Episcopal Church in Industry. Lillie died December 3, 1909, age 34, and is buried in the Industry Methodist Church Cemetery.

Children of Lillie and Otto:

Robert Otto Lindemann, born December 13, 1904; married Hedwig "Hattie" Frieda Eckermann; died December 16, 1985; child Robert Lee Lindemann (1933-2007).

2. Robert Heisig, buried in Heisig cemetery, may also have been Ferdinand and Sophie's child. This has not been confirmed, but Lillie Heisig Lindemann named her son Robert; perhaps she named him after her brother who she lost, possibly when she also lost Mama Sophie.

### Sources

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