

Pat Morrison, April 22, 1971
16" x 12" Medallion and Plate
Comal County (Job # 3247A)
Location: Main Plaza, New Braunfels

3247-A

SITE OF ***
OLD SCHMITZ HOTEL *

FIRST PORTION--OF LOCAL CEDAR
AND LIMESTONE--WAS BUILT ABOUT
1851 BY RUDOLPH NAUENDORF. EARLY
GERMAN IMMIGRANT JACOB SCHMITZ
BOUGHT BUILDING IN 1858 AS NEW
LOCATION OF HIS "GUADALUPE HOTEL".

OLD WORLD ATMOSPHERE OF THE
INN-STAGESTAND WAS PRAISED BY
NOTED WRITER FREDERICK OLMSTED.

IN 1873 THIRD STORY WAS ADDED
AND HOTEL WAS RENAMED FOR OWNER.
ORIGINAL FACADE HAS SINCE BEEN
MUCH ALTERED. BOUGHT (1969) BY NEW
BRAUNFELS CONSERVATION SOCIETY. **

RECORDED TEXAS HISTORIC LANDMARK--1971 ***

- * 1/2 " lettering
- ** 3/8 " lettering
- *** 1/4 " lettering

RECEIVED
READY FOR

JUN 8 1971

SOUTHWELL ORDER
TEXAS HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

APPROVED

Truett Latimer

by Bob Watson

6-4-71

RECEIVED

JUL 20 2001

THE MAN WHO NEVER WAS

By John D. Rightmire

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Rudolph Nauendorf entered this world in a most unusual way. He wasn't born in a hospital, or at home or even of a woman. No, a man gave birth to Rudolph right here in New Braunfels on Friday January 25, 1850 in the 300 block of south Seguin Street.

Rudolph was a business partner with Jean Jacques von Coll and once owned arguably the choicest piece of land in Comal County: Town Lot # 25. Today the Schmitz Hotel building, New Braunfels Coffee and the façade of the old Guaranty State Bank rest on this land on the Plaza in New Braunfels at the corner of Seguin and San Antonio streets. No history of the Guadalupe Hotel, Schmitz Hotel or Plaza Hotel is complete without mentioning Rudolph Nauendorf.

I had known of Rudolph for years from reading about him on page 95 of the Oscar Haas book about the History of New Braunfels and Comal County where it says he built the Guadalupe Hotel in 1853. Rudolph's accomplishments were again heralded on page 43 of the 1993 Pictorial History of New Braunfels, Texas. Finally he was mentioned on two pages (115 & 120) of the 1995 New Braunfels Sesquicentennial Minutes. His name is ever present in the unpublished papers on the old Guadalupe Hotel property found in the Sophienburg Archives. However, for decades Rudolph has been given credit for the accomplishments of another man, namely Mr. C. Adolph Nauendorf. I discovered the error after I made the same mistake Oscar Haas made forty years ago.

I was doing research on Town Lot # 25 when I noted where Rudolph paid \$400.00 for half of the lot in the courthouse deeds Book B, Page 26. J.J. von Coll owned the other half and together they were in business known as the firm of Coll and Nauendorf, which was a saloon. Coll died in 1852 and his half of the lot was transferred on October 31, 1853 to Adolph Nauendorf (Deeds Book D Page 230) making him sole owner of the entire lot. I thought, how could he own the entire lot when Rudolph already owns half? Every other land transaction in the courthouse was made in the name of Adolph, why was only one in the name of Rudolph? I went back to the courthouse deeds Book B Page 26 to verify the Rudolph name. Sure enough, it was there in black and white, but this time I read the entire transaction and discovered towards the end of the document the name Adolph Nauendorf. For the third time I looked at the name Rudolph at the beginning of the deed. It was at that moment I discovered the birthplace of Rudolph. On that day, January 25, 1850, the County Courthouse was in the 300 block of South Seguin Street on Town Lot # 85. When the clerk recording the land transaction penned the name "Mr. Adolph Nauendorf" he made a curved tail on the 'R' in 'Mr.' which caused Adolph to look like Rudolph. That is the moment when a man, clerk Conrad Seabaugh, gave birth to Rudolph Nauendorf, the man who never was. When Oscar Haas did the original research for his book, which was published in 1968, all he saw was Rudolph. Every author since has followed suit and Adolph lost out on his rightful place in history, which is a shame because he was also the tenth Mayor of New Braunfels. Make the appropriate changes in the three books mentioned above. Rudolph is dead, long live Adolph.

NEED
PLEASE ADD THIS TO THIS HISTORICAL MARKER FOLDER
FOR COMAL COUNTY, SCHMITZ HOTEL. THIS WILL
SERVE TO CORRECT THE NAME "RUDOLPH" TO ADOLPH.

John D. Rightmire
1358 TIMBERHILL DRIVE
NEW BRAUNFELS, TEXAS 78132-4164
(830) 608-9633

Thank you.

Plaza Hotel

Plaza Hotel, a three-story stone structure on Main Plaza in New Braunfels, began as a two-story business building about 1851 or earlier. The site was acquired by Rudolph Nauendorf in 1850.

The structure also was named the Guadalupe and the Schmitz Hotel during its 119-year history.

It was known as the Nauendorf and Coll building in November 1852 when it was offered to the Comal County Commissioners Court for use as a courthouse. The asking price was \$3,500; \$1,500 down payment and the balance in three installments.

The court did not buy the building, however.

d. 1874
 one of founders of NB; cook on Massachusetts place mission
 Jacob Schmitz, who came to Texas from Germany in 1843 with colonists bound for Castroville, bought the Nauendorf building for \$1,500 in 1858 as the new location of his Guadalupe Hotel which he had operated on South Seguin Ave.

The time of Schmitz' arrival in Texas is documented in a letter from his wife Catarina to the German Immigration Company in 1845 when she requested permission to travel to Texas to join her husband under company auspices.

Schmitz, she said, had found employment with Prince Solms-Braunfels for five months when he first came to Texas. With other Castro colonists, he had been stranded in San Antonio.

A description of the circumstances which brought him to New Braunfels is given by Prince Solms in his Third Report to Adelsverein directors from San Antonio, Aug. 26, 1844.

"Twenty odd settlers who are stranded here since May want to come with me, some as laborers, come to enlist in the mounted company to serve as a guard against the Indians.

"I pointed out to them that I could not be a party to alienate them from Mr. Castro and thus give him cause to complain against the Verein.

"Since I can get laborers only by paying them high wages and these men can be had for lower wages than can be secured elsewhere, I explained to them that they were not bound by contract.

"They could go to Castro or not as they wished, but that I would give work to anyone that I could find. The wage of a laborer or ranger is \$5 per month with board. The cost of boarding a man is \$2.48 per month," Prince Solms wrote.

Schmitz is listed among the founding colonists of New Braunfels. He was present for the drawing of town lots in April 1845. The settlement was founded March 21, 1845.

He also accompanied John Meusebach, successor to Prince Solms as administrator of the settlement, on his expedition into Indian country to make a peace treaty with the Comanche chiefs March 2, 1847.

The innkeeper was cook on the expedition, in the employ of Meusebach, according to Dr. Ferdinand Roemer's TEXAS 1845-1847.

When Schmitz still operated his hotel on South Seguin, famed journalist Frederick Olmsted was a guest. His 1854 account reveals the kind of establishment Schmitz operated:

" we were in Germany . . . nothing wanting, nothing too much." It was like inns of the Rhineland, he said.

Plaza Hotel - 3

The main room had pink walls with stenciled panels and scroll ornaments in crimson. There were neatly framed lithographic prints on all sides, a sofa covered in pink calico with small vine pattern.

The long, thick, dark oak table with rounded ends and oak benches at the sides. Chairs were chiseled oak. In one corner was a stove; in another, a mahogany cupboard with pitcher and glasses.

Olmsted was given a room with blue walls and oak furniture. Roses were trained over the outside of the large windows. Books were on the bureau, a porcelain statuette, plants in pots, a brass study lamp, large ewer and basin, and thick towels two yards long.

Schmitz, according to the hotel register which was rescued from a trash fire in 1910, was host to the illustrious of the South at his hotel on Main Plaza to which he moved in 1858.

Sam Houston, ^{formally} president of the Republic of Texas, was a guest.

Among signatures in the register during the Civil War were those of the president of the Confederacy, Jefferson Davis, Gen. H. H. Sibley, Gen. B. Magruder and staff, Col. James Reiley, Col. Tom Green, Major R. J. Brownrigg and wife, and Capt. H. Ragsdale.

As a stage stop, the hotel was host to many travellers, for New Braunfels was at the end of a day's ride from San Antonio en route to Austin.

Presidents, governors, generals, frontier drummers, adventurers, the old hotel has known them all.

The establishment became Schmitz Hotel after the owner added a third story in 1873. Previously, he had added a two-story gallery. The New Braunfels Conservation Society, now owner of the building, plans to restore the hotel to its 1873 glory.

*Statesmen
military
leaders*

Jacob Schmitz died on August 18, 1874, at 61 following a complicated operation performed by Dr. Ferdinand Herff Jr. and Schmitz' son-in-law, Dr. Levin Claessen. He was buried in New Braunfels Cemetery, according to his obituary in the August 21, 1874 NEU BRAUNFELSER ZEITUNG.

Mrs. Schmitz conveyed the numerous properties owned by her husband to her daughter, Mrs. Paula Claessen, May 11, 1882. Dr. Claessen had died in Jan. 1882.

In June 1882, Mrs. Claessen leased the hotel to Emil Braun, along with personal property which is listed in the Comal County Deed Records (Vol. Q 470-472). Rent was to be \$100 per month for the first two years, \$125 each month thereafter.

The agreement granted Braun the right to have a bar and billiard saloon in one of the rooms.

Mrs. Schmitz, Mrs. Claessen, and the latter's children returned to Germany. In 1910, the Claessen family sold the hotel to Charles Koch.

The hotel had been operated from 1858 to 1874 by Jacob Schmitz and was owned by him and his heirs for 52 years.

3247-A

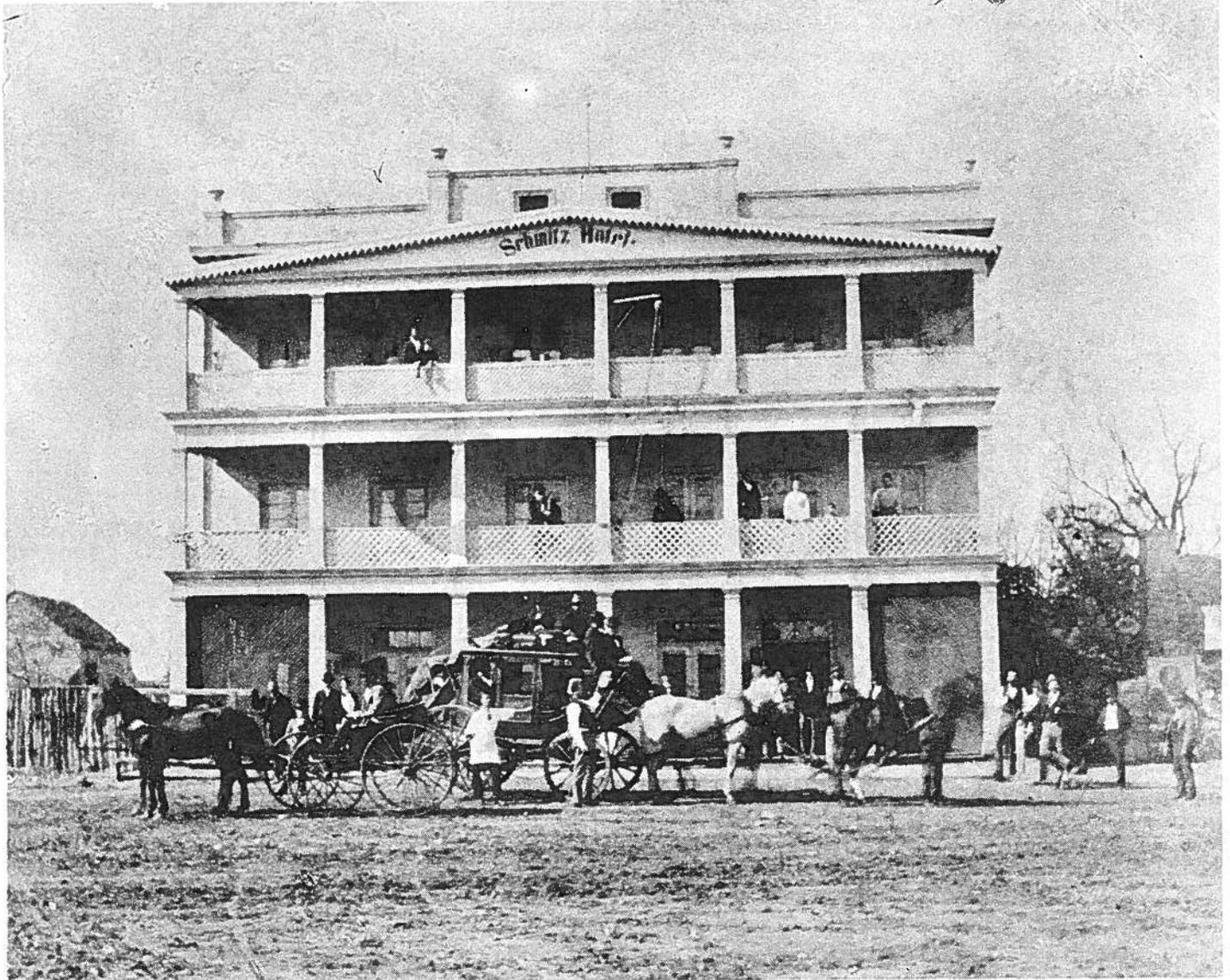
Site of
OLD SCHMITZ HOTEL

Built about 1851 by Rudolph Nauendorf. Owned by Jacob Schmitz 1858 - 1874 who operated Guadalupe and Schmitz Hotels here. Additions made in 1858 and 1873. Constructed of native limestone and cedar timbers. Stagecoach stop until 1880. Purchased by New Braunfels Conservation Society in 1969.

Building has been extensively altered.

Used as hotel until 1961; then converted into apartment house

3247-A



Schmitz Hotel — 1873

Today's Plaza Hotel was Schmitz Hotel back in 1873 when the third story was added, above. It is this stage, the peak of its glory, which the New Braunfels Conservation Society hopes to restore through a widespread fund drive. The building was declared structurally sound following a recent inspection by a San Antonio engineering firm, Beretta, Greenslade & Associates. The first two stories were built about 1851, and its thick walls are of native limestone.



PLAZA HOTEL

NORRIS INSURANCE
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A U.S. GAZETTES LIST
MORNING NEWS
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