A Note on "Vinzent's Texanische Pflanzen, 1847"

S. W. Geiser

I

The *Botanische Zeitung*, 5, 447-48, May, 1847, printed the following note by Otto Boeckeler of Varel a/Jahde, Grand-duchy of Oldenburg. As no further notice appeared in subsequent volumes of the journal, and as it poses a problem that has concerned students regarding the identity of the collector "Vinzent" in Texas, I translate the note freely:

Herr Vinzent some years ago settled in Rusk County, northeastern Texas, not far from Crockett. At my suggestion he has devoted himself to collecting plants from that region in considerable numbers; and some time ago his first shipment of dried plants arrived for me to dispose of. After the names of the plants have been determined (which Professor [Moritz] Seubert has kindly undertaken), I shall offer them to botanical students. The lots for sale include 100 species, and will be disposed of at the extremely moderate price of 1 louis d'or, or 5½ thalers per century [about $4.00]. They are in excellent condition. This first century contains only phanerogamous plants (among them, two new Compositae, named by Dr. C. H. Schultz, and several new grasses, which I—except for an *Agrostis*—will be able to distribute generally through the collections).

Professor Seubert in Carlsruhe has very kindly offered to take orders for Vinzent's plants and to ship them out; and those subscribers who would find it more convenient to order them from Carlsruhe than from Varel can do so. Also, Professor Buchinger of Strassburg, and Apotheker [Johann Nikolaus II] Buek in Frankfurt a/Oder have indicated a willingness to help in the distribution of the plants, in similar fashion.

If Mr. Vinzent is encouraged to continue in his collecting, through the disposal of his plants, without doubt we may soon be able to anticipate a second, larger shipment from this region, which may furnish much that is new and interesting.

The foregoing notice, when it came to my attention ten years ago, piqued my interest in a Texan collector who has long been lost sight of. Ignatius Urban, in his historical publications on the Berlin botanical museum (1881, 150, 162; and 1916, 407) mentions a collection of Texas plants received from Vinzent "about 1847"; but only a few references to Vinzent or his plants seem to have gotten into the literature. That the first century (of 1847) was disposed of, seems to be clear, but probably was not very prominently or widely distributed. There are Vinzent specimens in the British Museum (Natural History), the Jardin des Plantes.
in Paris, the De Candolle herbarium in Geneva. Professor Joseph Ewan encountered many Vinzent plants in the British Museum, easily recognizable by their printed, characteristic labels; and Dr. Lloyd H. Shinners at the Missouri Botanical Garden (Engelmann herb.) encountered numerous Vinzent sheets. He says, "I perhaps saw as many as fifty sheets. They bear printed labels, with habitat-notes, but few 'spot-localities,' being generally ascribed to Rusk County. They were rather good and complete for their day, roots in many cases being retained, and the plants not 'mere snips of a school-girl's collection,' as has been said of the col-

Charles Vinzent (1816-82)

Joseph Ewan to S.W.G., 1 Feb., 1955.
lections of some of our great early field-botanists. Probably Vinzent collected not more than ten specimens to a 'number'; and the sets were sold obscurely, chiefly in Germany, so that they escaped the attention of monographers. I have found Vinzent sheets in no other herbarium in America."

As is shown in the figure, the labels were printed in toto, and are easily recognizable at sight. Many of the habitat-notes emphasize the sandy, hilly, and pine-clad character of Rusk County: "pinetis arenosis," "collibus arenosis," and "sabulosis sylvaticis" occur to me in passing. In the Paris herbarium, Panicum brachyanthum Steudel (Vinzent 124, Texas) is labeled, 'in sabulosis sylvaticis, Texas, prope coloniam [Mount Enterprise], Rusk County, Vinzent coll. 124" [fide Hitchcock & Chase, Panicum, 1910, p. 128]. One wonders if Vinzent's "in collibus arenosis" may not be a spot-locality for a contemporary settlement, Sand Hill; and "in sabulosis sylvaticis" similarly a spot-locality for contemporary Pine Hills, another settlement in the County.

The following references to Vinzent specimens have come to me in the literature:

41b. Panicum scoparium Lam.
51. Ceanothus americanus L. (BMNH, ex Auerswald herb.; MBG, Engelmann herb.)
69. Andropogon provincialis Lam. var. pycnanthus (DC., Monogr. Phanerog. 6, 1889, 443).
79. Gerardia Pedicularia L. (BMNH, ex Auerswald herb.)
87. Rhus copallina a latifolia 1 latialata (Herb. Berol. Paris; DC., Monogr. Phanerog. 4, 1883, 384).
96. Molothria pendula (DC., Monogr. Phanerog. 3, 1881, 587).
122. Pluchea purpurascens DC. (BMNH, Auerswald herb.)
124. Panicum brachyanthum Steudel. "In sabulosis sylvaticis, prope coloniam [Mount Enterprise, type locality], Rusk County, Texas." (Hitchcock & Chase, N. A. Panicum, 1910, 128)
134. Erianthus saccharoides Mx. ss. a genuinus (DC., Monogr. Phanerog., 6, 1889, 131).

I have already indicated that the collector "Vinzent" was in some way associated with a "colony" in Rusk County, identified as Mount Enterprise. Suffice it to say here that there were two Vinzents, Edward and Charles, at this place—both merchants—who in the early 'forties of the last century established a small settlement on the Leonardo Williams league in Rusk County, about 17 miles (by present

2Personal communication.
Relief Map of the Portion of Rusk County, Texas, in Which Charles Vinzent Collected Plants, 1844 to 1847. Map based on S.A.C., Beaumont and Shreveport sheets, U.S.C.&G. Survey. The area cross-hatched represents a part of the Leonardo Williams league in southeastern Rusk County, including some 4,000 acres of land. The stippled area within the hatching (lying between the Mt. Enterprise-Henderson and the Mt. Enterprise-Carthage roads) represents the position of the "old town" of Mount Enterprise, something in an excess of a mile north of the present town, indicated on the map. The scaled parallel (32° N. Lat.) is in minutes. Contour-interval, 500 feet.
roads) southeast of Henderson, present county-seat, and 1 1/2 miles north of the town presently known as Mount Enterprise (which new settlement dates from 1906 or 1907).

II

Edward and Charles Vinzent were born in the village of Ovelgonne, Grand-duchy of Oldenburg, in the years 1813 and 1816, respectively. Much has been lost regarding their early life; we can only surmise that their parents possessed considerable means, and that the boys (after attendance on the Bürgerschule of their native village) matriculated at the Gymnasium at Oldenburg, capital of the Grand-duchy. If we may further conjecture, they probably took their Maturitätszeugnis about 1832. It is possible that the botanist Karl Hagena (later to write a book and a few papers on the flora of Oldenburg—he apparently was a gymnasial teacher at Oldenburg for forty years) was influential in awakening an interest in botany in the boys. The Vinzents had attended the Oldenburg Gymnasium about the time when Friedrich Ernst (later to go to Texas) was head-gardener at the Schlossgarten of the Grand-duke there. In 1831, Ernst was in Texas, where in Austin County he founded the German settlement of Industry. Finding farming conditions in Texas almost ideal, especially for his impoverished compatriots of Oldenburg, Ernst wrote an enthusiastic letter to a friend there. This letter was widely copied in the newspapers of the Duchy, as well as in other parts of Germany; as a result, there was a noteworthy emigration to Texas, then a Mexican province. The Vinzents, as a consequence, were well aware of Texas as a Promised Land; and some eight years later set out on their oversea migration. They probably reached

\[\text{3Frederick Vinzent DuBrutz to S.W.G., 18 July, 1957. Mr. DuBrutz, grandson of Charles Vinzent, is the genealogist (s.v.v.) of the Charles Vinzent family.}\]

\[\text{4Karl Hagena, teacher at the Oldenburg Gymnasium, published (1839) an edition of Johann Friedrich Trentepohl's [1748-1806] work on Oldenburg botany under the title, Trentepohl's oldenburgische Flora, zum Gebrauch für Schulen und beim Selbstunterricht, bearbeitet von Karl Hagena, an octavo of some 300 pages, at Oldenburg; "Zur oldenburgischen Flora" (Bot. Zeitung 18:166-68, 1860); and "Phanerogamen-Flora des Herzogthums Oldenburg" (Bremen, Abhandl. d. naturw. Vereins 2:299-333, 1878). Oldenburg seems to have neither produced nor harbored many botanists, besides Trentepohl, Hagena, Otto Boeckeler and Friedrich Ernst (both of whom came from Varel), and Albrecht Wilhelm Roth (1757-1837). Roth was born at Döllchen a/Hunte, described many Oldenburg plants, and was a specialist on East Indian as well as German floras. Otto Boeckeler (1804-99) lived and died at Varel; his great collection of 1500 species of Cyperaceae (given to the Berlin museum in May, 1899) included no Texas collections other than those of Drummond.}\]

\[\text{5Rudolph L. Biesele (1930) in his The History of the German Settlements in Texas, 1831-1867, 43-48, has given an excellent account of Friedrich Ernst and his activities in early Texas. In Chapter iii of this work Biesele names many Oldenburgers who came to Texas, influenced by Ernst's interest and example.}\]
Texas, now a republic, in 1839, and settled in Rusk County about 1840. There they also found the conditions for successful agriculture so much in advance of those of Oldenburg that Charles Vinzent conceived the plan of establishing a settlement, principally of Oldenburgers, on the Leonardo Williams league in southeastern Rusk County, about halfway between Nacogdoches in the county of that name, and Henderson, newly-chosen (1843) county seat of Rusk County. In 1843, therefore, Charles Vinzent returned to Oldenburg, there to awaken interest in his matured migration-project; and for twelve years performed a very useful service in cutting up large grants in Rusk County into smaller portions, of 80 acres or more, that would be attractive to peasants of small means from his native Duchy. In the real-estate records of Rusk County are some 63 deeds executed by Charles Vinzent, 4 by Edward Vinzent, and 13 by Caroline, widow of Edward Vinzent (she died in late November, 1895). The final extinction of claims to titles to land owned by the Vinzents in Rusk County was made by Charles Vinzent's heirs in 1905.

The Vinzent brothers appear to have been notable capitalists and entrepreneurs in eastern Texas. This was particularly true of Charles Vinzent, who, while the younger, showed more initiative than his brother Edward. In an Agreement entered into between them regarding their joint-estate (6 October, 1851), valued at $50,000.00, it was divided between the two in the proportion of three to one; and in a later Agreement (recorded two days before Edward's death, in 1854), the estate had grown to an evaluation of $120,000.00, of which three-fourths was again ascribed to Charles and one fourth to Edward. Charles was the more civic-minded of the two; in 1851, largely on his motion, the Mount Enterprise Male and Female Academy was established, and during the five or six years of its existence Charles Vinzent made up its deficits out of his own purse. Besides his activities as a real-estate dealer and

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6 Charles Vinzent's Texas passport, as "a citizen of Texas," was issued by J. H. Brower, Texan Consul in New York, on 1 July, 1843; and bears the visa of H. Y. Track (?), Oldenburg Consul-general in London, 1 August, 1843.

7 Charles Vinzent became a member of Mount Enterprise Lodge U. D., (later, No. 60), A.F.&A.M., in the fall of 1849; was treasurer in 1849-60; and demitted in 1864.

8 The first session of the Mount Enterprise Male & Female Academy opened in January, 1851; the 5th session, on the date of its chartering, 7 February, 1855; and the 6th session on 8 January, 1856—each a term of five months. The Millennial Harbinger (ser. iv, vol. 5, p. 174, 1856) spoke of Vinzent as "one of God's noblemen, whose heart is large, and one of God's stewards of the bounties of his rich providence, having been given large means, as well as a large heart," because of his interest in establishing and maintaining the Academy, which was under the auspices of the Disciples.
colonizer, Charles Vinzent was a merchant and manufacturer, and described his holdings as "lands, tenements, negroes, houses, workshops, machines, mechanical tools and implements of trade, merchandise, goods, moneys, bills, bonds, notes, accounts, rents, issues, and profits." In Farmer's account of the history of Rusk County⁹ (which in detail is not too trustworthy), it is stated that one Westfall, a German, "about 1840 operated a factory making furniture, farm implements, and caskets," at the Laneville and Shiloh road-crossings (in the neighborhood of later Mount Enterprise); and it would appear that the Vinzents "who soon

had the reputation of being unusually hard workers and very enterprising" took over the business from Westfall. In the 1850 Census schedule\[^{10}\], Charles Vinzent had living with him, besides his family, two clerks from Tennessee, a wool-carder from Alabama, two German blacksmiths, a German tinner, a German cabinet maker, and two German tanners; so it may well be concluded that the settlement of Mount Enterprise was indeed on a small scale a manufacturing center in east Texas.

In the early part of 1854, Charles Vinzent purchased 100,000 acres of land in Upshur and Wood Counties from Matthew Cartwright\[^{11}\] of San Augustine, and the next fall listed it for sale in 125 parcels (with other tracts in his possession) in a total of 165,000 acres located mainly in Rusk, Shelby, Titus, Upshur, and Wood counties.\[^{12}\]

III

About 1855 or 1856, Vinzent left Texas for California. He lived the rest of his life in San Francisco and its vicinity.\[^{13}\] In 1856, he was listed in the San Francisco directory as residing on Green Street, near Larkin, and engaged in business as a broker, stock- and merchant-broker, with an office in the 300 block of Montgomery Street. In 1866 or 7 he changed his residence to Oakland, maintaining his office.

\[^{10}\]1850 Census Papers (Barker History Center, University of Texas Library), p. 587. The Charles Vinzent entry is No. 673, and was entered (3 October, 1850) by Thomas M. Likens, Assistant Marshal of Rusk County, enumerator.

\[^{11}\]Matthew Cartwright (1807-70) of San Augustine, like Vinzent, was a merchant who dealt extensively (1847-60) in Texas lands. The account is given in the Clarksville (Tex.) Northern Standard, 8 July, 1854, p. 4, col. 2 (copied from the San Augustine Herald).

\[^{12}\]Charles Vinzent had printed at the press of the Nacogdoches Chronicle a 17 x 19 inch broadside, dated "Sept. 1, 1854." It was titled, "Interesting to Immigrants | One Hundred and Twenty-five Tracts | Offered for Sale containing | One Hundred and Sixty-five Thousand Acres of Land"; and then follows the list, showing numbers of acres in each parcel, description of land and name of headright, and county in which located. The price Vinzent was to pay Cartwright for his 100,000 acres was $1.50 per acre; the principal payable at the end of six years, and the interest in annual installments.

\[^{13}\]For information on Charles Vinzent in California, I am indebted to the following scholars and archivists: Allan R. Ottley of the California State Library, James deT. Abajian of the California Historical Society, John Barr Tomkins of the Bancroft Library, and to Miss Dolores Cadell of the San Francisco Public Library. I am also much indebted to Mr. Fred Vinzent DuBrutz of Oakland, California.
in San Francisco until 1878 or 1879. From San Francisco
and Oakland directories we find that he was city agent of
the Life Association of America (1871), stockbroker (1872,
1873), dealt in loans and commissions (1874), and in min­
ing stocks (1875, 1876), was president of the General Land
Agency of California (1877, 1878), capitalist (1878), stock­
broker (1878-79), and in 1880 and 1881 dealt in real estate
at his residence in Oakland. In the early part of 1882 he
moved from Oakland to adjoining Alameda, and died there
on July 19 of that year. His wife, Caroline A. Vinzent, had
predeceased him by a couple of weeks.

Near the end of his life he had lost his fortune through his
mining-stock exchange, and in unfortunate real-estate
investments as president of the General Land Agency of
California.

While a resident of Mount Enterprise, Texas, Vinzent,
reared in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Oldenburg,
became a member of the Church of the Disciples (“Chris­
tian Church”), and he remained devoted to the church of
his adoption to the end of his life.14 His interest in educa­
tion, which first evidenced itself in the establishment of the
Mount Enterprise Academy, also continued, and eventuated
in the devotion of his time and money to higher education.

I have no doubt that the “Vinzent plants” were collected
by Charles Vinzent in the neighborhood of Mount Enter­
prise in the years 1844 to 1847; but find no indication of
later collections. In California he certainly made none; nor
was he even a member of the California Academy of
Sciences.

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14E. B. Ware, History of the Disciples of Christ in California, 1916, p. 238; see, also,