

# Grigsby Places Across America

By Matthew Beard

## Chapter 1: Grigsby, Texas



This is the first of several articles on the various towns and locations in the U.S. named after a Grigsby. I was driving back from the Southwest Chapter meeting in 2000 and saw that I would be passing near Grigsby, TX. Of course, my curiosity took over and I was soon passing by the place. You have to be looking hard to see it. The town covers the sign you see above, one small store, and several houses off of the main road.

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That was when I got the idea of this series. What could I find out about these locations? I'm sure other people have more information and if you send it to me, I will include it in future articles.

This Grigsby is located in Shelby County, Texas. There is also one in Perry County, Kentucky and one in Hawkins County, Tennessee. I have also found references to Grigsby's Bluff, Texas which will require some research to locate but was the home of Joseph Grigsby, the son of Nathaniel and Elizabeth (Butler) Grigsby. There are two canyons called Grigsby Canyon—one located in Lake County, California and another in Real County, Texas. A Grigsby Draw is also located in Lake County, California. In Limestone County, Alabama there is a Grigsby Ferry. In Madison County, Illinois there is a Grigsby Lake. In Coos County, Oregon there is a Grigsby Rock. In Plumas County, California there is a Grigsby Springs.

Each of these locations must have a fascinating story

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to tell. I invite anyone who has information about any of these places, or any not currently identified, to share the stories and let everyone know about them.

Grigsby, TX is located 17 miles east of Nacogdoches on Highway 17. As mentioned earlier, it is a small place with only one store (a bait shop, and a couple of houses located off of small dirt roads close to the store.

According to "GRIGSBY, TX." *The Handbook of Texas Online*. <<http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/view/GG/hrg29.html>> [Accessed Mon Mar 19 22:15:01 US/Central 2001], in an article by D. R. Taylor, this town was founded in 1905 by an employee of Waterman Mill named Mr. Grigsby. It states that he built a tram to "the site" which implies having built one from the town to the place of employment. A post office was also opened in 1905 and ran by Postmaster Rance E. Emmons. In 1914, the population was 100 people. In 1946, with the town including a church, two stores, and several houses, it had a population of around 50. In the 1990 census, the town had only 45 residents.

In an email from the Shelby County Historical Society of Shelby County, Texas, states "The original store in Grigsby was owned by Tom Davis. His son Layton Davis says that the community was named after a Mr. Grigsby who built a large sawmill there at the turn of the century. Grigsby, in the 1920's, was a prosperous community. It had four merchandise store, blacksmith shop, Station master, two cafes etc...".

The email also states that there is not a record of a Grigsby living in the area in the Federal censuses. So who was this Mr. Grigsby?