

STANOLIND OIL AND GAS COMPANY

712 MAIN ST. P. O. BOX 3092

HOUSTON, TEXAS

September 25, 1944

Dr. H. B. Stenzel
Bureau of Economic Geology
University of Texas
University Station, Box B
Austin 12, Texas

Dear Dr. Stenzel:

Charles W. Stuckey, Jr. and Wilber A. Nowotny, both paleontologists with Stanolind, made the trip to Smithville with me a week ago. The weather was ideal for field work, the river appeared to be at a low stage, and we felt that we obtained about as complete a set of samples as is possible.

The first section was made in a deep gulley about 15 yards east of the bridge. It appeared to be unfossiliferous, and we tentatively correlated it as probably being the uppermost portion of the Zilpha member. The next good exposure was encountered 100 yards west of the bridge. We tied in this section with the hard sandstone (Bed III_m) of the Zilpha, which cropped out near the base of the exposure, and most of the samples ranged upward from this sandstone. Proceeding up the river, our next samples were taken 150 yards west of the bridge. The brown sand (Bed III_b) was identified where the section was taken, and we found outcrops of the bentonite bed and ironstone concretions above it a little downstream. A two inch highly fossiliferous streak, occurring 3 feet above the brown sand, interested us in this section. It carries abundant pelecypods, gastropods, and corals. We collected a few of the larger fossils and are forwarding them to you under separate cover. None of us could make any identifications, and you can make whatever disposition of the material you wish.

The main exposure, about 1000 feet west of the bridge and between the riffles and the water guage, was the last section taken. I have been interested in trying to tie in this section with the one measured by Deussen in his geology west of the Brazos. He made no mention specifically of the oyster bed, but I have wondered whether it might be the fourth bed from the bottom in his section, which was described as a two foot bed of "fossiliferous limonite, very hard." We know very little about oysters, but the species which is so common in this bed appears to be Ostrea sellaeformis smithvillensis, described by Harris in volume 6 of Bulletins of American Paleontology. The thickness of the oyster bed perplexed us. Free blocks lying on the ledge appear to be about two feet

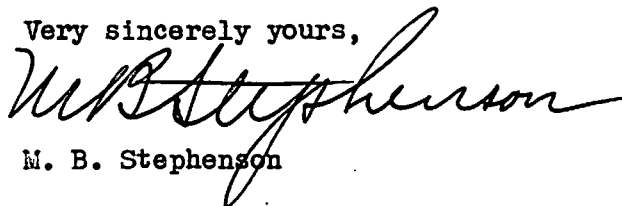
thick. The question arises as to whether the surface of the ledge represents the local dip of the bed at this point, or whether erosive action of the river has truncated the upper portion. The overall vertical extent of the bed, from its base to the point back on the ledge where a marl is exposed above it appears to be some 8 to 10 feet. We located the one foot limestone bed forming the top of the Tyus, and were able to obtain one sample immediately below it. This was some 10 feet from the water's edge, and the remaining section was concealed.

We visited your Reklaw locality on Ridge Creek, and found it to be an excellent exposure. On the return trip, we collected several samples reported to be in the Yegua, near the highway a little west of the town of West Point. The formation appears to be nonmarine in this vicinity.

We are deeply grateful to you for your assistance in making the field trip a real success. Bastrop County appears to be a critical area in which we can learn a great deal concerning the lower Eocene geology of the coastal plain. The geology of the county should be worked up in detail, and I for one would like to see you tackle the job.

Thank you so much for your interest in our work and your helpful suggestions. I only hope that in some way we may be able to repay your kindness.

Very sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'M. B. Stephenson', written in dark ink.

M. B. Stephenson