

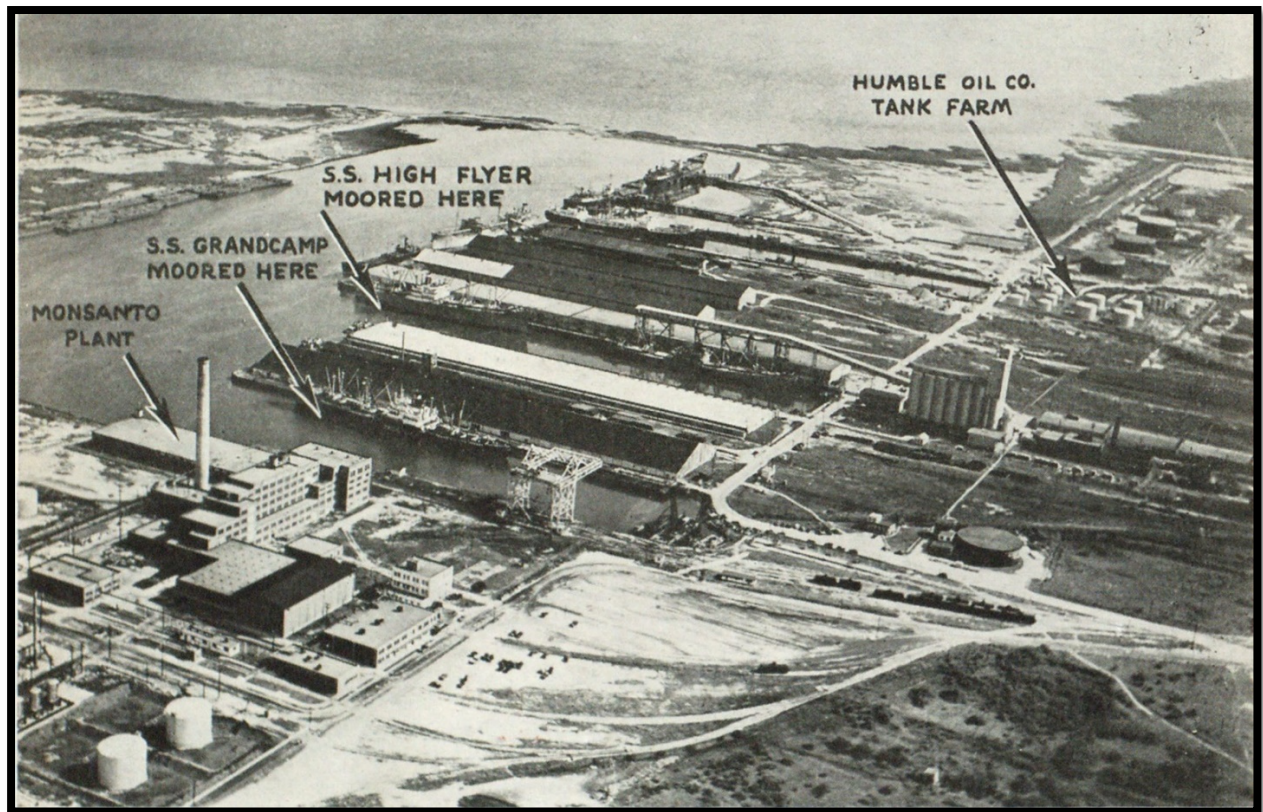
A Deadly April in 1947 Images

By Steven W. Hooper



Figure 1: Deputy Collector Peter Bima, age 60, was fatally injured in April of 1947 when the SS *Grandcamp* exploded while docked at the Port of Texas City, Texas. Bima was employed by U.S. Custom for 28 years. He began his career as an examiner at the Port of Galveston.

Source: Officer Down Memorial Page website,
<https://www.odmp.org/officer/reflections/1728-deputy-collector-pier-harry-bima>.



*Figure 2: Aerial photograph of the Texas City docks illustrating the position of the vessels *Grandcamp* and *High Flyer*. The Monsanto Plant and the Humble Oil tank farm were also destroyed by the explosion of the two vessels. Both vessels were loaded with ammonium nitrate.*

Source: Fire Engineering website, <https://www.fireengineering.com/leadership/ammonium-nitrate-explosion-held-cause-of-texas-disaster/#gref>.



Figure 3: Photograph of the SS Grandcamp prior to the explosion and fire at Texas City, Texas in April of 1947. A combination of fire in the hold of the ship containing ammonium nitrate and steam pumped into the hold of the ship to extinguish the fire caused the largest non-nuclear explosion in United States history. The cause of the fire was never determined.

Source: Moore Memorial Public Library website, <https://library.texascitytx.gov/466/The-Grandcamp>.



Figure 4: Parked cars located a quarter mile from the SS Grandcamp explosion.

Source: University of Houston Digital Library, Public Domain,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=11834231>.



Figure 5: View from the Texas City Post Office where Deputy Collector Peter Bima's office was located. Note the shattered glass in the open window. U.S. Customs also had an office on the dock near where the *SS Grandcamp* exploded. Bima's exact location at the time of the blast is unknown.

Source: The Portal to Texas History website,
<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph11799/>.



Figure 6: View of smoke from the SS Grandcamp explosion from downtown Galveston which is located approximately ten miles from the Texas City docks.

Source: The Portal to Texas History website,
<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph11803/>.