



GERMAN-TEXAN IMMIGRATION

German Records at the GLO begin with the organization of the *Adelsverein*, or *the Society for the Protection of German Immigrants in Texas*, which was established on April 20, 1842 by a group of 21 Nobles in Biebrich, Germany. Essentially, this endeavor was to create an economic foothold in Texas.

With its liberal immigration policies, Texas afforded various groups the opportunity to establish colonies in the Western frontier regions. Although poorly funded and not well organized, the *Adelsverein* did not actually have a contract with the Republic of Texas to settle immigrants; however, with the help and partnership of Henry F. Fisher and Burchard Miller, they were able to settle a vast majority of the immigrants in what is known as the “Fisher and Miller Colony,” which was established on June 26, 1844. The colony included more than three million acres situated between the Llano and Colorado rivers.

German immigrants typically went through Galveston or Indianola after a three month voyage from Germany. From Indianola, the German immigrants followed a predetermined route, with stations set up along the way, in various locations such as Agua Dulce, Victoria, Gonzales and Seguin. The most prominent destinations for the German immigrants were New Braunfels, in Comal County, and Fredericksburg in Gillespie County. Smaller German communities developed in towns such as Industry, Round Top, Castel, Boerne, Walburg, Schulenburg and Weimar.

OTHER RESOURCES FOR GERMAN-TEXAN RESEARCH IN TEXAS

◆ SOPHIENBURG MUSEUM & ARCHIVES:

401 W. Coll Street, New Braunfels, Texas 78130

(830) 629-1572

<http://www.sophienburg.com/>

◆ BRISCOE CENTER FOR AMERICAN HISTORY:

2300 Red River Street, Austin, Texas 78712

(512) 495-4532

<https://www.cah.utexas.edu/index.php>

◆ PIONEER MUSEUM:

325 West Main Street, Fredericksburg, Texas 78624

(830) 990-8441

<http://www.pioneermuseum.net/>



GERMAN RECORDS AT THE TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE

◆ GERMAN IMMIGRATION CONTRACTS (1844-1845):

Language: German; translations are available

German Immigration Contracts (Agreements) include contracts made between individuals immigrating to Texas and the “Society for the Protection of German Immigrants in Texas” (*Verein zum Schutz Duetscher Einwanderein Texas* or *Adelsverein*). Contracts are indexed alphabetically by surname of grantee and apply to the Fisher-Miller Colony. These records show the date and place of departure, place where immigrant was from and original signatures. None of the contracts are associated with an original Texas Land Grant. German Immigration Contracts use the file prefix “GER.”

◆ FISHER MILLER TRANSFERS (AGREEMENTS) (1842-1856):

Language: English

These are contracts made between the Fisher Miller Company, or German Immigration Company, and colonists. These contracts split half the land granted between settler and company as a way to pay expenses. This stipulation was later overturned and withdrawn. Fisher Miller Transfers show the name of the colonist, the date and place of arrival in Texas, and the name of the ship they arrived on. Fisher Miller Transfers use the file prefix “FMT.”

◆ FISHER MILLER COLONY GRANTS:

Language: English

Heads of families were eligible for 640 acres of land, while single men were eligible for 320 acres. Land had to be located within the boundaries of the colony, and settlers were required to cultivate at least 15 acres to receive a patent. Fisher Miller Colony Grants are typically filed under the Bexar third class heading.

◆ COLONY REPORTS:

Language: English

Fisher Miller Colony reports of certificates issued from 1850-1855. These reports list the certificate number and date of issuance, name of grantee, the amount of acreage, along with possible witnesses and remarks.

◆ GERMAN MAPS OF TEXAS:

Language: German, English, Spanish

One of the strengths of the General Land Office Map Collection is the German-language maps of Texas and the Southwest that promoted immigration to the region. In many cases, these maps helped shape perceptions of Texas for many Europeans.