



## German Collections of the Texas General Land Office

German Records at the General Land Office (GLO) begin with a colonization grant issued to Henry Fisher, Burchard Miller, and Joseph Baker on June 7, 1842 that allowed them three years to bring 600 families from Germany. They were not successful and sold their interests in the organization to the **Adelsverein**, or *the Society for the Protection of German Immigrants in Texas*, which was established previously on April 20, 1842 by a group of 21 Nobles in Biebrich, Germany. Essentially, this endeavor was to create an economic foothold in Texas for the Germans, and bolster the Texas population.

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 such as Agua Dulce, Victoria, Gonzales and Seguin along the way. 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.

Over 10,000 immigrants settled in Texas between the years 1842–1850.

### **Other resources for German-Texan research in Texas:**

#### **Sophienburg Library:**

401 West Coll St. New Braunfels, TX 78130 (830) 629-1572

#### **Briscoe Center for American History:**

2300 Red River St. Austin, TX 78712 (512) 495-4532

#### **Pioneer Museum:**

325 West Main St. Fredericksburg, TX 78624 (830) 990-8441

# German Collections of 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. (Use the prefix **GER**).

## **Fisher Miller Transfer (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. (Use the prefix **FMT**).

## **Fisher Miller Colony Grants** (Typically in the form of Third Class Headrights):

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. (Typically use the prefix **Bexar 3<sup>rd</sup> Class**)

## **Colony Reports (1840-1855):**

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.



Texas General Land Office

• **George P. Bush, Commissioner** •

1700 North Congress Avenue, Austin, Texas 78701

Phone (512) 463-5277, 1-800-998-4GLO

TDD (512) 463-5330