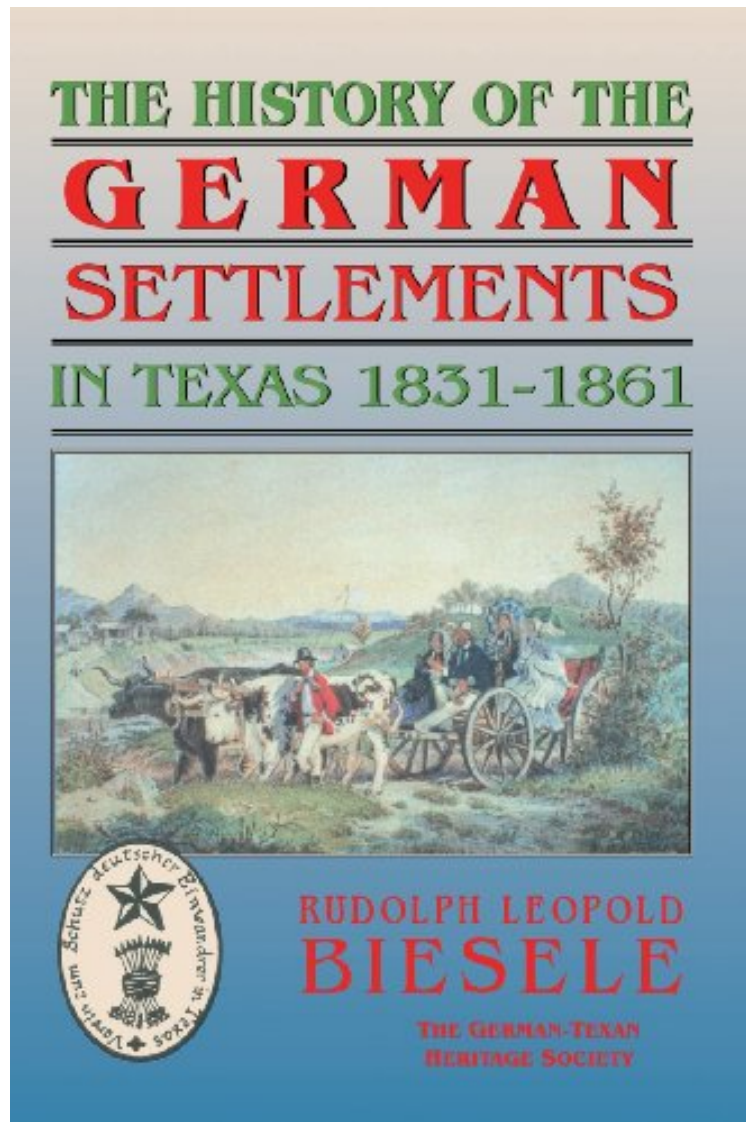


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History of German Settlements in Texas Prior to the Civil War

Rudolf Biesele

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resourceBy A CustomerThis is a good basic history of German migration to Texas. It covers the circumstances in Germany that lead to migration, and the reasons why German immigration was organized, rather than ad hoc like many other European migrations to the New World. German history is important to understanding Texas and Southern history. Texans of German heritage are the 4th largest group (behind Angles, Hispanics, and Africans). The remaining traces of German influence in the southern US become clearer after reading this book. In Texas, these cultures have mingled, so that some "Mexican" music owes more to Germany than Spain. The reader should not expect a history on settlers to provide too much insight in these matters, nor does this book go on to list the accomplishments of German Americans, other than brief acknowledgments like Nimitz. The index is sparse. If you want to look for proper names (family names or ship names), you will be disappointed. Likewise, name lists are haphazard. Some settlement rosters are given. On the other hand, the book provides a great list of sources, and it gives good insight as the limitations of historical sources. It details when fires destroyed records, and it provides the reasons why some records are unreliable. The reader comes away with good idea of who these immigrants were, why they came, and how they made a new life.

Unsatisfactory social, economic, and political conditions in Germany from the close of the Napoleonic period through the revolutionary periods of 1830 and 1848 stimulated immigration to Texas. This book portrays the interest of both German and non-German groups in German colonization in Texas from 1812 to 1840. The primary interest in founding these German settlements was generated by Friedrich Ernst, who wrote a glowing account of Texas and its advantages to a friend in Germany. The publication and wide circulation of this letter provided the impetus for the immigration fever. A second significant event was the founding of the "Society for the Protection of German Immigrants in Texas," which offered support and advice as well as land to qualified persons desiring to immigrate to Texas. This account covers the actual founding and history of many German settlements and towns in Texas prior to the Civil War. It is the first and, despite its original publication in 1930, still is the only extensive study of this subject.