

IN DEFENSE OF SLAVERY: DILEMMA OF A GERMAN-AMERICAN CONFEDERATE IN  
ANTEBELLUM TEXAS

by

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This thesis challenges previous historians' characterizations of Ferdinand Lindheimer as simply the "Father of Texas Botany" and defender of freedom. Instead, Lindheimer acted out of his own self-interest to preserve his German-American ethnic identity, and by extension the community he helped to build. Only when Anglo-American political and social issues endangered his community in the 1850s, did Lindheimer actively engage in the Anglo-American political sphere. Lindheimer expressed minimal concern for those oppressed by the dominant culture. Lindheimer used his publication, the *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung*, as a shield to protect himself and New Braunfels, the physical manifestation of this ethnic identity, from Anglo-American intrusion. In so doing, Lindheimer became the most visible German-American supporter of slavery, secession and the Confederacy in antebellum Texas.



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ANTEBELLUM TEXAS

A Thesis

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by

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## Introduction: For Liberty, Ferdinand?

When German-American botanist Ferdinand Jacob Lindheimer, best known as the “Father of Texas Botany,” founded the *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung* in 1852, it was only the second German-language paper in Texas.<sup>1</sup> As editor, he used his publication to openly support slavery, secession, and the Confederacy. In the years leading up to the Civil War, Lindheimer denounced others in the German-American<sup>2</sup> community for their anti-slavery, pro-Union stance. Throughout the conflict, and even after, Lindheimer remained consistent in his support for the Confederacy and Anglo-American society. Lindheimer’s public support of slavery, secession, and the Confederacy in antebellum Texas challenges previous historians’ characterizations of him as a defender of freedom and humble botanist.

Lindheimer’s status as a political refugee to the US in 1834 and subsequent service in the Texian Army from 1836-1837 led many historians to brand him as an individual dedicated to fighting oppression. Historians including Samuel Wood Geiser and Douglas Hale assert that his service in the Texian Army demonstrated his contempt for injustice. In their view, Lindheimer’s enlistment in the military challenged General Antonio López de Santa Anna’s<sup>3</sup> illegal seizure of power and preserved Texas from tyrannical rule. Both Geiser and Hale claim that his military service was merely an extension of his status as a political refugee. As recently as 2020, scholar John E. Williams describes Lindheimer as a “bold, outspoken, sword-wielding warrior determined to defeat ignorance, blind faith, and tyranny.” According to Williams, Lindheimer

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<sup>1</sup> Marilyn McAdams Sibley, *Lone Stars and State Gazettes: Texas Newspapers before the Civil War* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1983), 228.

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this study, people are described as being ethnically German/German-American if they are: 1) first-generation Germans - those individuals born in the German Confederation and immigrated to the US as adults, 2) individuals born in the German Confederation, but immigrated to the US at a young age and primarily raised in the US, and 3) second and third generation German-Americans, incorporating those individuals whose parents were German, who spoke German, were members of German-American societies, went to German-American schools, and actively practiced German traditions.

<sup>3</sup> Antonio López de Santa Anna (1794-1876) was a Mexican politician and general.



“intended to conquer the world through knowledge.”<sup>4</sup> Like many scholars, Williams, Geiser, and Hale overlook, and in most cases downplay, Lindheimer’s public support for slavery, secession, and the Confederacy during the Civil War era. For his first twenty years in North America, Lindheimer was apathetic towards Anglo-American political and social issues in his writings. He never mentioned slavery and rarely discussed major social or political issues facing the US. By 1854, however, Lindheimer could no longer remain silent. He entered into Anglo-American politics strongly in support of Anglo-American society and transitioned from supposed political firebrand to defender of slavery.

This thesis deconstructs the view of Lindheimer as simply the “Father of Texas Botany” and someone dedicated to fighting against oppressive forces. Instead, it reveals him to be an individual motivated by his own self-interest. Lindheimer entered into the Anglo-American political sphere in the 1850s to shield himself from retribution for German-Americans’ perceived anti-slavery stance. Lindheimer’s actions did not derive out of an act of altruism, but self-preservation. Faced with the dilemma of choosing between his German-American ethnic identity<sup>5</sup> and challenging slavery, Lindheimer chose himself. When slavery threatened his ethnic identity Lindheimer entered into Anglo-American politics in defense of slavery. Lindheimer’s

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<sup>4</sup> John E. Williams, *The Writings of Ferdinand Lindheimer: Texas, Botanist, Texas Philosopher* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2020), xx.

<sup>5</sup> This study subscribes to Don Yoder’s definition of ethnic identity, that “an attitude towards oneself and one’s cultural world which is shaped in individuals and eventually in groups through contact with other self-conscious groups of human beings.” Don Yoder quoted in Christian B. Keller, *Chancellorsville and the Germans: Nativism, Ethnicity, and Civil War Memory* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2007), 6-7.

defense of Anglo-American society successfully preserved his German-American ethnic identity, and by extension the community he helped build, from degradation by external pressures.

The historiography of Lindheimer is not extensive. Outside of his work in botany<sup>6</sup>, Lindheimer is discussed only in the periphery of the larger narrative of German-Americans in Texas. Works of this nature include Gilbert Giddings Benjamin's *The Germans in Texas: A Study in Immigration* (1909), Moritz Tiling's *History of the German Element in Texas from 1820-1850* (1913), and Rudolph L. Biesele's *The History of the German Settlements in Texas, 1831– 1861* (1930). Lindheimer is included as a tertiary character in the founding of German-American settlements, laying the groundwork for individuals considered more central to the story such as Solms-Braunfels and John O. Meusebach.<sup>7</sup>

Lindheimer receives similar treatment in Douglas Hale's *Wanderer between Worlds* (2005) and Jefferson Morgenthaler's *Promised Land: Solms, Castro, and Sam Houston's Colonization Contracts* (2009). *Wanderer between Worlds* focuses on seven German-American political refugees in the 1830s and their transition to life in the US, one of whom is Lindheimer. The work is primarily biographical and provides minimal analysis of any of the individuals it features. Hale's portrayal of Lindheimer reveals a deep misunderstanding of Lindheimer's early years in North America. At one point, Hale refers to Lindheimer as "the most influential spokesperson among German [Americans] settlers in Texas" but does not substantiate the claim.<sup>8</sup> Hale's treatment of Lindheimer also minimizes his later support for Anglo-American society in Texas.

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<sup>6</sup> For information on Lindheimer's extensive work as a botanist see George Engelmann and Asa Gray's *Plantae Lindheimerianae: An Enumeration of F. Lindheimer's Collection of Texas Plants* (Boston: Freeman and Boles, 1845), and J.W. Blankenship's *Plantae Lindheimerianae Part III* (Boston: Freeman and Boles, 1907).

<sup>7</sup> John O. Meusebach (1812-1897) succeeded Solms-Braunfels as Commissioner General of the *Adelsverein*. He also famously negotiated the Meusebach-Comanche Treaty in 1847 which allowed German Americans associated with the *Adelsverein* to travel safely across traditional Comanche territory.

<sup>8</sup> Douglas Hale, *Wanderers Between Worlds* (Bloomington: Xlibris, 2005), 16-17.

Although Lindheimer is mentioned throughout *Promised Land*, Morgenthaler provides only basic information, some of which is inaccurate. In one instance Morgenthaler claims that Lindheimer and George Engelmann met during their university years while living in the German Confederation. Given their seven-year age gap, it is unsubstantiated they would have matriculated through university at the same time. Minetta Altgelt Goyne notes in her work, *A Life among the Texas Flora: Ferdinand Lindheimer's Letters to George Engelmann* (1991), that a letter written by Lindheimer to a former pupil, Gustav Passavant, indicates he and Engelmann first met through a youth botanical society in Frankfurt.<sup>9</sup>

In *Nassau Plantation: The Evolution of a Texas-German Slave Plantation* (2010), James C. Kearny writes, "Solms-Braunfels also discovered the botanist Friedrich Lindheimer at the Cummins Creek community and offered him a position with the Society. His subsequent contributions as a scientist, newspaper man, and leader of the Germans during the difficult days of the Civil War are well documented."<sup>10</sup> Kearny only cites one source as reference to Lindheimer's well-documented contributions – Samuel Wood Geiser's *Naturalists on the Frontier* (1948). While Geiser's work devotes an entire chapter to Lindheimer, it suffers from excessive veneration and does not provide sufficient citations for his claims. In addition, if Lindheimer's contributions were so well documented, Kearny would have credited him as *Ferdinand Lindheimer*, as opposed to *Friedrich*.

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<sup>9</sup> According to Goyne, the botanical society was the Senckenberg Foundation in Frankfurt. Minetta Altgelt Goyne, *A Life among the Texas Flora: Ferdinand Lindheimer's Letters to George Engelmann* (Texas A&M University Press, 1991), 30.

<sup>10</sup> James C. Kearny, *Nassau Plantation: The Evolution of a Texas-German Slave Plantation* (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2010), 82.

One reason Lindheimer is omitted from the historiography is lack of access to English sources. Until John E. Williams' recent translation of Lindheimer's memoir, the only accessible source in English was Minetta Altgelt Goyne's, *A Life among the Texas Flora: Ferdinand Lindheimer's Letters to George Engelmann*. Goyne's work is critical resource, but the translated letters only cover the period between 1841-1847, which excludes Lindheimer's time as editor of the *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung*. Access to the newspaper also poses a unique set of problems to researchers.

The newspaper remains largely untranslated. Exceptions include small sections translated in articles and other works. The newspaper is not digitized apart from the first fifty-three issues (1852-1853), which are available on The Portal to Texas History website. The delicate condition of the paper also prevents the paper from being made available on digital platforms.<sup>11</sup> Because of the limited availability of online resources, the majority of research must be done in person. This limited accessibility is further complicated by the newspaper's being housed in two different locations: the Sophienburg Museum and Archives in New Braunfels, Texas and Texas State Library and Archives Commission, in Austin. Some of the newspaper is available on microfilm, but quality of the microfilm available varies. In sum, if one can read German and allocate sufficient time visiting both locations, the *Neu Braunfelser Zeitung* is an excellent resource to examine Lindheimer's views during the Civil War era.

The most significant source materials for this study were Minetta Altgelt Goyne's, *A Life among the Texas Flora*,<sup>12</sup> Lindheimer's memoir *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen* and its recent

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<sup>11</sup> Economic struggles throughout the Civil War drove repurposing of materials, producing poor quality paper. One example is wood pulp paper, which was a less expensive alternative to cotton and linen, the standard at the time. Issues of the *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung* were made from wood pulp paper, which is also seen in Confederate Muster Rolls. The author spoke with Conservator Sarah Norris at the Texas State Library and Archives Commission regarding possible digitization plans for the newspaper.

<sup>12</sup> Goyne's *A Life among the Texas Flora* is a collection of translated letters from Lindheimer to Engelmann during their business partnership. The letters provided key insight into Lindheimer's views, or lack thereof, on

English translation by John E. Williams,<sup>13</sup> Lindheimer's editorials from the *Neu Braunfelser Zeitung*,<sup>14</sup> and Francis R. Horne's *War between the States: Comal County Texas in the Civil War*.<sup>15</sup> These primary source materials were invaluable resources and helped piece together Lindheimer's life in North America. In particular, they revealed how his views and perceptions of Anglo-Americans, indigenous peoples, and even German-Americans transformed over time. Close readings of these works challenge previous conceptions of Lindheimer as a fervent supporter of freedom and reveal him to be motivated out of self-interest with minimal regard for those oppressed by the dominant culture. It is clear from his life and writings, that Lindheimer was a multifaceted person motivated out of self-interest to preserve his German-American ethnic identity.

The following chapters examine Lindheimer's life and experiences to assess the motivations that led him to defend slavery, secession, and the Confederacy. Chapter One: Coming of Age in the Restoration Era evaluates Lindheimer's early life in the German Confederation. Specifically, how this experience influenced his decision to immigrate to the US compared to other Germans in Europe. Chapter Two: Vagabond Botanist explores how

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Anglo-American political and social issues. In addition to translations, Goynes provides extensive biographical information on Lindheimer. She touches briefly on his time as an editor and his memoir but does not provide any significant analysis on Lindheimer or his views.

<sup>13</sup> Lindheimer's memoir and Williams' translation, *The Writings of Ferdinand Lindheimer: Texas Botanist, Texas Philosopher*, is a collection of previously published articles in the *Neu Braunfelser Zeitung*. The majority of which were edited and updated before the memoir's publication in 1879. There are thirteen essays in total which range in topics from botany, to school instruction, as well as criticism of the Texas government treatment of indigenous tribes. This source was crucial in revealing Lindheimer's positive relationship with indigenous peoples and how it contributed to his deteriorating relationship with Anglo-Americans in the 1840s.

<sup>14</sup> The *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung* remains an under-utilized source, due in large part to its language barrier and limited accessibility. The paper was a critical resource, tracing Lindheimer's views on slavery, secession, and the Confederacy throughout the Civil War. During his tenure, Lindheimer consistently demonstrated his support for slavery, secession, and the Confederacy, even at the expense of other German-Americans in Texas.

<sup>15</sup> Horne's *War between the States* provides portions of Lindheimer's translated editorials from the *Neu Braunfelser Zeitung* between 1859 to 1865. *War between the States* was a crucial resource to efficiently navigate through the vast number of editorials during that period for translation.

Lindheimer's early years in North America solidified his German American ethnic identity and highlighted his apathy toward Anglo-American political and social issues. Chapter Three: In the Heart of Comanche Land examines Lindheimer's attitudes towards Anglo-American movements such as Manifest Destiny and the Mexican-American War, his role with colonization efforts in Texas, and how his positive relationship with the Comanche transformed Lindheimer's apathy into contempt for Anglo-American society. And last, Chapter Four: In Defense of Slavery examines how Lindheimer's growing anxiety regarding the Anglicization of Texas, concerns over divisions within the German-American community, and his fear of rising nativism thrust Lindheimer into the Anglo-American political sphere. As well as how he used the *Neu Braunfelser Zeitung* as defense mechanism to preserve his German-American ethnic identity.

This thesis adds complexity to the existing historiography of German-Americans in antebellum Texas and challenges previous historians' characterizations of Lindheimer as simply the "Father of Texas Botany.

## Chapter One: Coming of Age in the Restoration Era

Coming of age in a period characterized by historians as the Restoration era (1815-1830), Ferdinand Jakob Lindheimer was shaped by significant political, economic, and military unrest throughout Europe. Lindheimer was born on 21 May 1802<sup>16</sup> in Frankfurt am Main, Hesse and his experiences growing up in this period of transition differed from the majority of Germans in three distinct ways. First, Lindheimer's economically advantageous early life and extensive education was uncommon. Most German children at this time did not receive standardized public education or go on to study at the university level. Second, his tenure as a teacher elevated his position in society as a member of the intellectual elite, a group who actively challenged the repressive governance of the German Confederation<sup>17</sup> in the 1820s and 1830s. Last, Lindheimer's connections within the intellectual elite linked him to political activities against the German Confederation and forced his emigration to the US as a political refugee in 1833. Lindheimer's status as a political refugee contrasts with the majority of Germans who emigrated to the US during this period as a result of economic concerns. This chapter examines Lindheimer's early life in the German Confederation and how his experiences distinguished him from his peers.

### Early Life and Education

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<sup>16</sup> Geburts-Register, Frankfurt am Main 1801-1802, 410 quoted in Minetta Altgelt Goyne, *A Life among the Texas Flora: Ferdinand Lindheimer's Letters to George Engelmann* (Texas A&M University Press, 1991), 194. There is discrepancy in the literature regarding Lindheimer's birth year. Joseph Blankenship in *Plantae Lindheimerianae* (1907), Gilbert Giddings Benjamin (1909), and John E. Williams (2020) cite Lindheimer's birth year as 1801. Lindheimer's tombstone also reads 1801. Gustav Körner in *Das deutsche Element in den Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika* (1884) and Goyne in *A Life among the Texas Flora* (1991) cite his birth year as 1802. Goyne researched official birth records in Frankfurt am Main and Lindheimer's birth year is listed as 1802, which will be used as the official date in this study.

<sup>17</sup> The term German Confederation will be used throughout this study to refer to the thirty-nine German-speaking states in central Europe, and their political and economic activities. This is more accurate than using "Germany" to define this region because Germany was not an internationally recognized political state until 1871, existing only as a "geographical expression." The reference to the German Confederation as "Germany" by historians is not only incorrect, but it fails to accurately assess the implications of political movements throughout Europe in the early to mid-nineteenth century.

Little is known about Lindheimer's early life. His proclivity for privacy is a contributing factor to the lack of information on his family and childhood in the German Confederation. Throughout his life and writings Lindheimer rarely mentioned personal information, remaining guarded in his correspondence, even with friends. His memoir *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen* published in 1879 shortly before his death, also does not include extensive biographical information, with some exceptions pertaining to his first few years in North America. Based on the information that is available, Lindheimer was born into an economically stable, if not affluent family. Lindheimer's father, Johann Hartmann Lindheimer, was a prosperous merchant in Frankfurt, a city long recognized as cosmopolitan and an influential center of trade. Compared to the well-documented economic struggles of the majority of the population at this time, it does not appear that Lindheimer's childhood was greatly impacted by economic hardship. Even after Johann passed away when Lindheimer was a child, his family remained in Frankfurt and Lindheimer entered the *Gymnasium* to pursue his studies. Sources do not mention how Johann's widow, Lindheimer's mother, Johanetta Magadalene (nee Reiseren sometimes spelled Reusern) handled her husband's passing or financially supported the family. Given Johann's position as a prominent merchant, it is probable he was able to provide his family with sufficient financial support in the event of his death.<sup>18</sup>

Some scholars, such as Samuel Wood Geiser, allude to friction and eventual excommunication in 1834 between Lindheimer and his family. Geiser based these conclusions on an unpublished letter written by Eugene Lindheimer, Lindheimer's son, that purportedly provides information on Lindheimer's early life in the German Confederation. The letter indicates that the acrimonious relationship between Lindheimer and his family stemmed from his

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<sup>18</sup> Goyne, *A Life among the Texas Flora*, 4; Joseph Blankenship, *Plantae Lindheimerianae. Part III* (Boston: Freeman and Boles, 1907), 127.



probable liberal political leanings. According to Geiser, Lindheimer severed all contact with his family and “reject[ed] all financial aid,” including monies from his mother’s estate.<sup>19</sup> However, because the letter remains inaccessible to scholars, it is difficult to verify this interpretation of events.<sup>20</sup>

Letters written by Lindheimer between 1835 and 1842 while living in North America, suggest Lindheimer maintained some communication with his mother and other family members. In January 1835 Lindheimer penned a letter to his friend George Engelmann requesting him to advise his mother on how to correctly pack and ship such items as his, “tools, linens, and bed” to Mexico.<sup>21</sup> Whether Lindheimer and his mother were on friendly terms remains unknown, but his letter indicates communication remained between the two to some degree.<sup>22</sup> In his letter to Engelmann in October 1842, Lindheimer wrote that he had little interest in letters from Frankfurt except those written to him by his brothers’ families, collectively referred to “Andreae’s” and letters from the “Senckenberg Institute.”<sup>23</sup> This letter indicates a regular correspondence existed between the brothers, even if Lindheimer mentions it infrequently in his letters. These letters refute claims made by Geiser that Lindheimer was completely excommunicated from his family.

One of the major differences between Lindheimer and other German children during this period was his comprehensive education. Exact dates of his early education are unknown, but it

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<sup>19</sup> Samuel Wood Geiser, *Naturalists on the Frontier* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Muriwai Books, 2017), 457.

<sup>20</sup> The letter Geiser references in *Naturalists on the Frontier* appears to be held in the private collection of Lindheimer’s son Eugene, rather than being housed in an archive accessible to historians.

<sup>21</sup> Ferdinand Lindheimer, letter to George Engelmann, 17 January 1835; Goyne in *Life among the Texas Flora*, 12.

<sup>22</sup> Detailed in *A Life among the Texas Flora*, Goyne notes there is a letter written by Lindheimer to George Engelmann in 1835 asking him to instruct his mother on how to send various items to him while he was living in Mexico and Lindheimer later mentions her death to Englemann in a letter in 1841. Even if there were a falling out between mother and son, Lindheimer to some degree maintained correspondence with members of his family.

<sup>23</sup> Ferdinand Lindheimer, letter to George Englemann, 4 October 1842; Goyne in *Life among the Texas Flora*, 50-51. According to Goyne the Senckenbergische Naturforschende Gesellschaft (Senckenberg Natural Science Society) was founded in Frankfurt in 1817.

can be inferred that Lindheimer completed his *Gymnasium* and successfully passed his *Abitur* in the early 1820s, both of which were required before enrolling at a university. Literature suggests that Lindheimer attended a separate preparatory school in Berlin in addition to his *Gymnasium* schooling before applying to the University of Bonn (Universität Bonn) and studied law for a brief period at Friedrich Schiller Universität<sup>24</sup> in Jena, Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg (now Thuringia, Germany) around 1820. Lindheimer enrolled at Bonn in November 1825 after receiving a scholarship to study philology and withdrew from the university on 24 March 1827.<sup>25</sup> During his time at Bonn, Lindheimer studied Greek and Latin literature and mythology. He also took courses in Hebrew, Algebra, and Philosophy focusing on the works of Kant, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel, and even took a course in geometry.<sup>26</sup> References to classic works and literature can often be found in his personal correspondence and editorials in the *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung*.

Lindheimer's considerable education was the result of his affluent upbringing. *Schulpflicht* (compulsory education) was not standardized in the German states or in the later German Confederation. Although the education system in the German states underwent reforms in the early nineteenth century, significant restructuring was really only accomplished in Prussia. Efforts to establish public education in Prussia appeared as early as 1716 and again in 1763. The laws, however, focused on economically disadvantaged children or those who were not already receiving some form of instruction. The children of wealthy families and high social standing were excluded from these mandates as they already "had private tutors or attended

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<sup>24</sup> Prior to 1921 and 1934 Friedrich Schiller Universität was known as Herzoglich Sächsische Gesamtuniversität and Thüringische Landesuniversität, respectively. For clarity, this paper uses Friedrich Schiller Universität as the official name.

<sup>25</sup> Goyne, *A Life among the Texas Flora*, 9; Blankenship states that Lindheimer completed his degree in its entirety, but archives accessed by Goyne from the University of Bonn indicate that Lindheimer did not graduate with his doctorate, but instead withdrew from the university.

<sup>26</sup> Goyne, *A Life among the Texas Flora*, 8.

*Gymnasium*.”<sup>27</sup> There was not a genuine effort to provide education for children considered nonelite until 1806.

Even with steps toward reform, conflict existed in the aristocracy regarding what education for the masses should entail. Many in the Prussian nobility were wary of providing education that would be considered outside reasonable means of achievement for the lower classes. The aristocracy also held serious concerns over “providing the masses with too much schooling or schooling that was too classical.”<sup>28</sup> In spite of efforts to curb *Schulpflicht*, eighty percent of school-aged children (6-14) in Prussia received some form of educational instruction by 1837.<sup>29</sup> These statistics are only applicable to Prussia’s education system. Taking into consideration the tumultuous political climate, it is unlikely that statistics from Prussia accurately reflect educational reforms in Frankfurt, where Lindheimer received most of his early education. It is evident, given the Lindheimer family’s economic stability, Lindheimer’s formal education was not an opportunity afforded to all.<sup>30</sup>

Not only was Lindheimer fortunate to receive this extensive education, but he was also fortunate that he continued on to study at the university level. A common practice during this period among those in business or industry was to withdraw young men early from school to learn the intricacies of the commercial industries in which their family members practiced.<sup>31</sup> Had Johann lived through Lindheimer’s adolescence and given his position as a successful merchant, it is probable that Lindheimer would have been withdrawn early from the *Gymnasium* to become

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<sup>27</sup> Francisco O. Ramierz and John Boli “Political Construction of Mass Schooling,” *Sociology of Education Ethics*, 60, no. 2 (January 1987): 4.

<sup>28</sup> Ramierz and Boli, “Political Construction of Mass Schooling,” 5.

<sup>29</sup> Karl A. Schleunes, “Enlightenment, Reform, Reaction: The Schooling Revolution in Prussia,” *Central European History*, 12, no. 4 (December 1979): 317.

<sup>30</sup> David Blackbourn, *History of Germany 1780-1918: The Long Nineteenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 119.

<sup>31</sup> Blackbourn, *History of Germany 1780-1918: The Long Nineteenth Century*, 119.

acquainted with his father's business practices. Johann's death therefore altered Lindheimer's education trajectory that propelled him into the world of academia and an elevated position in society as a member of the intellectual elite.

### **A Member of the Intellectual Elite 1820s-1833**

Lindheimer's fortuitous opportunity to study at the university level propelled him into the intellectual elite. Following the conclusion of his studies at the University of Bonn, Lindheimer accepted a teaching position at the Bunsen Institute (*Erziehungsanstalt für Knaben*) in Frankfurt. He returned to his home city in the fall of 1827 and remained in that position until 1833. His tenure at the Institute solidified his status as a member of this group, elevating his position in German society. The intellectual elite emerged within the German Confederation in opposition to the turbulent Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815) and regulations imposed by the Congress of Vienna. After Napoleon's surrender in 1814 and nearly thirty years of military conflict with France, representatives from European nations convened in Vienna, Austria in June 1815 to redraw the boundaries of Europe. This event significantly shaped the concept of regional and in some cases national identity in the German states.<sup>32</sup> From the Congress of Vienna emerged the German Confederation, consisting of thirty-nine German-speaking states, and an alliance with the Kingdom of Prussia and the Austrian Empire.

The Napoleonic Wars challenged the existing system in Europe in a variety of ways - economically, politically, socially - and many hoped a unified Germany would replace governance by an elite minority.<sup>33</sup> Klement von Metternich, a known conservative who served as chair for the proceedings, had no interest in establishing a representative government.

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<sup>32</sup> Martin Rink, "The German Wars of Liberation 1807-1815: The Restrained Insurgency," *Small Wars and Insurgences*, 25 no. 4 (2014): 828.

<sup>33</sup> Christopher Clark, "The Wars of Liberation in Prussian Memory: Reflections on the Memorialization of War in Early Nineteenth Century Germany," *The Journal of Modern History* 68, no. 3 (1996): 552.

Metternich firmly believed representative government to be “a weak and unsatisfactory method of administration.”<sup>34</sup> Instead, Metternich and fellow representatives from the “Big Six” (Austria, Prussia, Britain, Russia, France, and Spain) intended to “restore” Europe to its pre-war system of rule. In place of a strong, unified German nation, the German Confederation emerged as a loose association between German States subject to the rule of Prussia and the Austrian Empire. Metternich went to great lengths to ensure that previous class systems and government rule returned to their pre-war existence.

Despite their efforts to retain control of the government in the German Confederation, the aristocracy faced a growing, educated middle class. In the 1820s, society in the German Confederation slowly transitioned from an inheritance based society to a society based on one’s personally acquired wealth. Europe also experienced significant technological advancements throughout the conflict with the introduction of large-scale manufacturing. Rapid industrialization nearly doubled the population of Europe from 145 million people to 265 million people.<sup>35</sup> The growing population viewed university graduates as more qualified than the aristocracy to tackle issues related to increased industrialization.<sup>36</sup> Lindheimer’s education and long-term tenure at a respected university placed him firmly within the ranks of the intellectual elite, elevating his status in German society.

### **Status as a Political Refugee**

Under the guidance of the intellectual elite, German universities became a rallying point to challenge the restrictive measures enacted by the Congress of Vienna. One way universities

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<sup>34</sup> Alan Palmer, *Metternich: Councillor of Europe* (London: Faber and Faber, 1972), 7.

<sup>35</sup> Martin Öfele. *True Sons of the Republic: European Immigrants in the Union Army* (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 2008), 1.

<sup>36</sup> Konrad H. Jarausch, *Students, Society, and Politics in Imperial Germany: The Rise of Academic Illiberalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 9.

combated the prohibitive reforms was *Burschenschaften*. These were student founded reform organizations that advocated for political freedom and endorsed unification of all German-speaking peoples under one nation-state.<sup>37</sup> Many within the intellectual elite participated in the Napoleonic Wars and hoped to see the German states politically unified after the conflict. Alternatively, they witnessed the return of suppressive governance orchestrated by Metternich and other members of the aristocracy. After 1815, a large number of these individuals went on to either found, teach, and/or attend universities across the German Confederation to challenge the political system. As part of their curriculum, they established chapters of *Burschenschaften* to challenge the German Confederation.

Georg Bunsen, founder of the Bunsen Institute and Lindheimer's mentor, is one such individual. Bunsen, a radical figure in the German Confederation, fought in the Napoleonic Wars during the War of Liberation (1813-1814). He enlisted as a volunteer in the Prussian Army, known as the *Lützowsche Freikorps* (Lützow Free Corps) and the experience significantly impacted him. Bunsen fought along-side Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, known colloquially throughout the German Confederation as "Turnvater Jahn."<sup>38</sup> Jahn, a controversial figure in his own right, strongly advocated for a unified Germany, seeking to "revolutionize Germany through secondary education."<sup>39</sup> Following the receipt of his doctorate, Bunsen founded his school in 1820 on principles promoted by Jahn. He included gymnastics, established an active *Burschenschaft* chapter at the school, and frequently recruited teachers from within the student population.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Lisa Fetheringill Zwicker, "The Burschenschaft and German Political Culture, 1890-1914." *Central European History* 42, no. 3 (September 2009): 398-399. <http://www.jstor.com/stable/40600783>

<sup>38</sup> Rolland Lutz, "The German Revolutionary Student Movement, 1819-1833." *Central European History* 4, no. 3 (September 1971): 220. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4545608>.

<sup>39</sup> Rolland Lutz. "'Father' Jahn and his Teacher-Revolutionaries from the German Student Movement." *The Journal of Modern History* 48, no. 2, (June 1976): 3. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1877816>.

<sup>40</sup> Lutz, "The German Revolutionary Student Movement," 234.

*Burschenschaften* and political reform efforts were pervasive at the Bunsen Institute and other universities Lindheimer attended. The *Burschenschaft* chapter at Jena underwent a massive reorganization in 1820 while Lindheimer was studying there. The University of Bonn, where Lindheimer matriculated in 1825, was founded in 1818 under the auspices of Wilhelm von Humboldt's educational reform policies and Enlightenment ideals. The university promoted the ideal of individual *Bildung durch Wissenschaft* (individual cultivation through scholarship).<sup>41</sup> Universities served as important havens of liberal political thought as government officials increased their attempts to suppress liberal reform.<sup>42</sup>

Metternich and delegates from principal German States, threatened by the growing influence of German universities and the intellectual elite, enacted the *Karlsbader Beschlüsse* (Carlsbad Decrees) in 1819. The decrees granted German States unprecedented power to censor published materials and insert themselves into university administration. Under the decrees, German States reserved the right to prohibit the publication of material throughout the Confederation that exceeded twenty pages. Representatives of the Confederation monitored university activities, retained the power to dismiss professors, and censor what they perceived to be "dangerous lectures." In addition, the decrees established the Mainz Commission to whom all revolutionary activity was to be disclosed and forced student organizations, such as the *Burschenschaften*, to disband.<sup>43</sup>

Records at the archives of the University of Bonn indicate that the German Confederation subjected Lindheimer to monitoring procedures imposed by the decrees. His school record noted that he did not participate in "forbidden student associations" or misbehave

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<sup>41</sup> Jarausch, *Students, Society, and Politics in Imperial Germany*, 9; "200 Years of History," Universität Bonn, accessed May 13, 2020, <https://www.uni-bonn.de/the-university/about-us/history>.

<sup>42</sup> Jarausch, *Students, Society, and Politics in Imperial Germany*, 11.

<sup>43</sup> Palmer, *Metternich: Councillor of Europe*, 205-206.

in any capacity while attending the university.<sup>44</sup> Taking into consideration measures enacted by the decrees to suppress universities, it is probable Lindheimer opted to maintain a relative low profile, at least while he was a student. The Bunsen Institute was well-known for its anti-German Confederation stance and desire to establish a unified Germany. It is unlikely he would have accepted a position at the Bunsen Institute if he had an aversion to political reform. If Lindheimer did have an aversion to political reform, it was not a strong one.

If Lindheimer was ignorant of the school's liberal views before teaching at the Institute, it is unlikely he remained unaware of their activities while employed. Six teachers during Lindheimer's tenure were arrested for sedition in accordance with the Carlsbad Decrees.<sup>45</sup> It is unknown to what extent Lindheimer was involved in these activities during his time at the Bunsen Institute, if at all. It is difficult to conclude, however, that Lindheimer, did not engage in some form with the *Burschenschaften* or related activities. Arguments could be made that he only accepted the position in an effort to be closer to family after spending time away to complete his studies. Some may point to his lack of participation in student organizations at the University of Bonn as evidence of his apathy towards universities' reform efforts. His long tenure at the Bunsen Institute, and later emigration to the United States because of his association with the school, suggests he supported the efforts of the Bunsen Institute to some extent.

The events on the morning of 3 April 1833 forever altered Lindheimer's life. Gustav Bunsen, younger brother of Georg Bunsen, led roughly 50 students from the Institute in an attempted *Putsch*, or coup, against the German Confederation. The attack briefly caught Confederation security forces off guard. Members of the coup seized several buildings in the city briefly, but by the afternoon Confederation troops suppressed the coup. The *Putsch* was an

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<sup>44</sup> Goyne, *A Life among the Texas Flora*, 8.

<sup>45</sup> Goyne, *A Life among the Texas Flora*, 9.



overall failure and did not ignite the spark of revolution anticipated by the conspirators.<sup>46</sup> Those involved in the *Putsch* hoped it would signal a chain reaction at other universities to take up arms and forcibly challenge the government of the German Confederation. Instead, individuals involved in the coup's planning faced prosecution, imprisonment, or in Lindheimer's case, exile.

Compared to the small number of people who participated in the *Putsch*, the number of people prosecuted in the following years overshadowed the event itself. In 1836, 204 students were prosecuted for their involvement, with 192 eventually sentenced for their actions. Roughly 1800 people in total were listed as conspirators, with 1200 linked to the *Burschenschaft*.<sup>47</sup> The ramifications for those involved with the *Putsch* were immediate and long-felt. Gustav emigrated to the US shortly after the failed coup, while Karl Bunsen the middle brother, served a three-year prison sentence. Georg Bunsen emigrated to the US in 1834 and Lindheimer joined him in exile as a political refugee. Lindheimer's emigration to the US in 1834 along-side Bunsen distinguished him as a *Dreißiger*, a Thirtier, a group of elites who fled the German Confederation as a result of political repression.

Lindheimer's status as a political refugee separates him from the majority of Germans who emigrated because of economic factors. The growing population of Europe, linked to the rapid industrialization in the early nineteenth century, strained economic resources. Farmers acutely felt the pressure of the growing population. Not only were they required to feed a growing number of people, they were also forced to divide arable land to accommodate the increasing population. In most cases, the division of arable land resulted in parcels too small to sustain the number of people living on it and decreased available land for farming which

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<sup>46</sup> Lutz, "The German Revolutionary Movement, 1819-1833," 221.

<sup>47</sup> Lutz, "The German Revolutionary Movement, 1819-1833," 240-241.

produced lower yields for crops.<sup>48</sup> Industry was inundated with displaced farm laborers seeking employment, resulting in lower wages in factories and straining limited economic resources even further forcing many in the German Confederation to search for opportunities outside of Europe. Lindheimer's affluent upbringing, education and status as a member elite, shielded him from these particular economic concerns.

Eugene Lindheimer later claimed that his father denied any active involvement with the *Putsch*, in its planning or otherwise. Eugene asserted that his father felt compelled to emigrate to the US in solidarity with his fellow teachers, support which stemmed from political sympathies and affection.<sup>49</sup> The assertion that Lindheimer's emigration was out of loyalty to his peers, frames his exile as voluntary instead of compulsory. However, considering Lindheimer's long-time association with the Institute, its political activities, and his friendship with Bunsen it is likely that he would have faced imprisonment or been forced to emigrate. These experiences, for better or for worse, went on to shape his life and career in the US.

Ferdinand Lindheimer's entire educational career was characterized by liberal and political reform. In the event that Lindheimer did not support the political reforms or actively participate in *Burschenschaft*, it is unlikely he remained untouched by their endeavors. Lindheimer's extensive education, position within the intellectual elite, and status as a political refugee separated him from the majority of people living in the German Confederation. His skill with language, writing, and teaching prepared him for a future career as a newspaper editor. His experience as a political refugee provided him a heightened awareness to changing political tides, as sectional tensions increased in the US throughout the 1850s. This experience perhaps

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<sup>48</sup> Hansen, "The Revolutions of 1848 and German Emigration." *Journal of Economic Business and History* 2, no.4 (August 1930): 631.

<sup>49</sup> Goyne, *A Life among the Texas Flora*, 9.

made Lindheimer more adept at altering his opinions in order to bear the storm in the 1850s and 1860s, rather than risk upheaval again based on political views or he truly supported slavery, secession and the Confederacy.

## Chapter Two: Vagabond Botanist Lindheimer's Early Years in North America

Ferdinand Lindheimer's early years in North America functioned as an extension of his life in the German Confederation. This period defined his German-American ethnic identity<sup>50</sup> in the US and highlighted his apathy towards Anglo-American political and social issues. His interest in botany and connections with prominent German-Americans provided the basis for developing his German-American ethnic identity in two crucial ways. The first was Lindheimer's opportunity to travel. The opportunity to travel distinguished Lindheimer from the majority of German-Americans in the US, who tended to settle permanently in one location after their arrival. By comparison, Lindheimer lived in, and traveled to, four different locations (Illinois, Mexico, Missouri and Texas) in North America in the span of ten years (1834-1844) with each of the locations in different political and social climates. Second, during his travels Lindheimer remained isolated within German-American communities. His isolation allowed him to observe the founding of these communities and determine which aspects he felt truly embodied *Deutschtum* (Germanness) outside of the German Confederation. Each of the communities Lindheimer lived in advocated for a New Germany in North America. Lindheimer fortified his German-American ethnic identity through his pursuit of a New Germany. For Lindheimer, aspects that represented his identity included the development of a German-

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<sup>50</sup> For the purposes of this study, people are described as being ethnically German/German-American if they are: 1) first-generation Germans - those individuals born in the German Confederation and immigrated to the US as adults, 2) individuals born in the German Confederation, but immigrated to the US at a young age and primarily raised in the US, and 3) second and third generation German-Americans, incorporating those individuals whose parents were German, who spoke German, were members of German-American societies, went to German-American schools, and actively practiced German traditions. This study also subscribes to Don Yoder's definition of ethnic identity, that "an attitude towards oneself and one's cultural world which is shaped in individuals and eventually in groups through contact with other self-conscious groups of human beings;" Don Yoder quoted in Christian B. Keller, *Chancellorsville and the Germans: Nativism, Ethnicity, and Civil War Memory* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2007), 6-7.

language newspaper and various *Vereine* (clubs or societies), both of which provided opportunities to celebrate German culture and tradition. Each of these characteristics (newspapers, societies, and efforts to create a New Germany) are present in New Braunfels, Texas where Lindheimer called home. This chapter examines these aspects of German-American community in Lindheimer's view and how these different communities affirmed his German-American ethnic identity in the US.

### **Hot Off the Presses: German-Language Newspapers in the US**

German-language newspapers were the most influential foreign-language publication during the nineteenth century and remained unrivaled by those of any other immigrant group. By 1861, roughly 260 German-language newspapers were in circulation in the US. German-language publications appeared as early as the colonial period following the first substantial wave of German-American immigration in the early eighteenth century. German-Americans settled predominately in the northeastern US. Pennsylvania, in particular, witnessed the first large-scale development of German-language publications. The first German-language publications focused on Bibles, hymnals, and almanacs before transitioning to newspapers in the 1730s. The first German-language newspaper in the US, *Die Philadelphische Zeitung*, was founded in 1732 with the assistance of Benjamin Franklin.<sup>51</sup> The paper was intended to provide information including "historical data and laws, as well as news," for the newly arrived German immigrants.<sup>52</sup> Although the paper ceased publication after the first few issues, *Die*

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<sup>51</sup> Carl Wittke, *The German Language Press in America* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1957), 13; Leah Weinryb Grohsgal, "Extra! Extra! German Immigrants in the United States," *Chronicling America*. Accessed June 20, 2020. <https://www.neh.gov/divisions/preservation/featured-project/chronicling-americas-historic-german-newspapers-and-the-grow>.

<sup>52</sup> Wittke, *The German Language Press in America*, 14.

*Philadelphische Zeitung* highlighted the need for quality German-language publications in German-American communities.

Christoph Sauer, a German-American who immigrated to the US in 1724, recognized this need for German-language publications. He is credited as the most successful German-language publisher of the colonial period and held a virtual monopoly on German-language publications until 1762. Sauer standardized the use of *Fraktur* type in German-language publications. The majority of German-language newspapers in the US used *Fraktur* well into the twentieth century, including Lindheimer's *Neu-Braunfelsener Zeitung*. By 1830 with Sauer's influence, 47 German-language newspapers expanded into six states: Pennsylvania, Maryland, Ohio, Virginia, Massachusetts, and New York.<sup>53</sup> Until the early nineteenth century, the majority of German-language publications remained in New England and the Eastern region of the US.

The major factor slowing the growth of German-language publications was stagnant immigration. Between 1800 and 1830, only 5,753 Germans immigrated to the US from the German Confederation during this period.<sup>54</sup> This small number prevented the number of German-language publications from developing significantly in other areas. Several newspapers collapsed entirely. It was not until the second major wave of German-American immigration in the 1830s that German-language publications gained a foothold in German-American communities and developed in other regions of the US.

The second major wave of immigrants, known as the *Dreißiger*, played a crucial role in reviving declining German-language newspapers. Higher literacy rates and level of education

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<sup>53</sup> Oswald Seidensticker, *The First Century of German Printing in America, 1728-1830* (Philadelphia: Schaefer & Koradi:1893), viii; Adam Thomas, ed., *Germany and the Americas: Culture, Politics, and History: A Multidisciplinary Encyclopedia Vol I* (Santa Barbara: ABC CLIO, 2005), 906; Wittke, *The German Language Press in America*, 15-19.

<sup>54</sup> United States. Department of Homeland Security. *2018 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics, 2019, 6.

among *Dreißiger*, contributed markedly to German-American journalism in the US. They took over roles as editors at existing newspapers, as well as instituted new publications. High profile and influential newspapers established during this period include the *New Yorker Staatszeitung* (1834), the *Tägliche Cincinnati Volksblatt* (1836), and the *Beobachter am Ohio* (late 1830s/early 1840s) in Louisville, Kentucky. As German-Americans migrated west and established communities in Illinois and Missouri, German-language publications followed.<sup>55</sup> The most notable German-language newspaper in the West during this period was *Anzeiger des Westens* founded by Heinrich Bimpage in 1835.<sup>56</sup>

German-language newspapers, like *Anzeiger des Westens*, played a vital role expressing German-American ethnic identity in the US. First, they assured the continued use of German in the US. Although preservation of the German-language proved to be an integral part of German-language publications, it presented a unique situation for many newspapers. While the majority of the German Confederation spoke German, the German Confederation was linguistically diverse. Each *Bundesstaat*, or state, spoke a slightly different dialect of German. Consequently, newspapers and other publications in the US adhered to the practice of printing in Standard High German or *Hochdeutsch*, which differed from the German many immigrants spoke, but was meant to promote more widespread comprehension.

For a brief period of time in the US, *Hochdeutsch* existed only as a written language and did not reflect the dialect many German-Americans spoke throughout the US. Many newspapers in the colonial period avoided using colloquial words and phrases from the dialect of

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<sup>55</sup> Carl Wittke. *Refugees of Revolution: The German Forty-Eighters In America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1952), 12; Library of Congress, *Chronicling America* <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/essays/667/>, <https://www.loc.gov/item/sn84038451/>

<sup>56</sup> Thomas, *Germany and the Americas*, 92.

Pennsylvania German to ensure the preservation of *Hochdeutsch*.<sup>57</sup> The *New Yorker Staatszeitung* even faced criticism from its readership as late as 1834 for using *Hochdeutsch*, with many German-Americans resentful of “its classical ‘high German’ style and preferred vernacular.”<sup>58</sup> Despite disagreements within the German-American community on *Hochdeutsch*, the German-language press successfully preserved the use of the German-language into the twentieth century. The *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung* is one such example. The paper continued to be published in German until its merger with the English-language paper *The Herald* in 1947 and still in publication today.

German-language newspapers also expressed ethnic identity by reporting on social, cultural, and political activities of other German-American communities. Ethnic identity of German-Americans represented a need to balance, and reconcile, ethnic identities previously established in the German Confederation with new manifestations of collective identity in the US. German-language newspapers provided a medium through which German-American communities could connect with each other, strengthen community ties, and celebrate *Deutschtum*.

Newspapers during the colonial period focused primarily on local and regional issues pertinent to the early German-American communities, such as agricultural and religious practices. By the mid-nineteenth century, German-language newspapers reflected the new wave of immigrants, a small, but influential portion of whom were political refugees. The immigration of the *Dreißiger* coincided with increasing sectional tensions in the US and debates over the expansion of slavery into newly acquired territories. The German-language press adapted to

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<sup>57</sup> Wittke, *The German Language Press in America*, 7.

<sup>58</sup> Wittke, *Refugees of a Revolution*, 14; *New Yorker Staatszeitung* 14 April 1858.



include social and political concerns of the US.<sup>59</sup> *Anzeiger des Westens* was one of the first German-language newspapers to address the issue of slavery and take an active role in Anglo-American politics. Under Wilhelm Weber's editorship the paper took a firm anti-slavery stance. Taking into consideration Missouri's status as a slave state during this period, Weber's decision to voice his opposition to slavery was bold.

Lindheimer had direct ties to the St. Louis based paper, *Anzeiger des Westens* because of his connections with the intellectual elite and status as a political refugee. The founders of the paper, described by historian Douglas Hale as the "*Anzeiger Clique*," comprised of "the German [American] economic and professional elite" from both Belleville, Illinois and St. Louis. Many of them were Lindheimer's friends and colleagues.<sup>60</sup> The "*Anzeiger Clique*" counted Georg Engelmann, Gustav Körner, and Lindheimer's mentor Georg Bunsen among its members. Weber, the first long-term editor of the paper (1836-1850), met Lindheimer in Belleville in 1834 and traveled with him for a few months before returning to St. Louis in the fall of 1834.<sup>61</sup> Lindheimer maintained ties with Weber, *Anzeiger des Westens*, and the intellectual elite in Belleville and St. Louis through his extensive writings. During his early years in Texas (1836-1844), Lindheimer contributed a number of articles to the paper by way of Engelmann. Lindheimer's contributions to *Anzeiger des Westens* manifests in his later role as editor of the *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung*. Lindheimer's founding of the *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung* in 1852 is a testament to his long involvement with German-American newspaper culture and the development of his German-American identity. Lindheimer actively participated in German-

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<sup>59</sup> Martin Öfele, *True Sons of the Republic: European Immigrants in the Union Army* (Westport: Praeger, 2008), 21.

<sup>60</sup> Douglas Hale *Wanderers Between Worlds* (Bloomington: Xlibris, 2005), 224.

<sup>61</sup> Minetta Altgelt Goynes, *A Life among the Texas Flora: Ferdinand Lindheimer's Letters to George Engelmann* (Texas A&M University Press, 1991), 12.

language newspaper culture for twenty years before becoming an editor. He submitted articles to *Anzeiger des Westens*, as well as the *New Yorker Staatszeitung*, regularly. Both papers circulated nationally, providing Lindheimer with a national platform and capacity to reach a diverse German-American audience. His position as editor of the *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung* demonstrates Lindheimer's understanding of the critical role German-language publications played in German-American communities and their far-reaching capabilities.

Unlike his peers and colleagues at *Anzeiger des Westens*, Lindheimer's views on Anglo-American political and social issues remained conspicuously absent, a trend in Lindheimer's writings well into the 1850s. Although Engelmann, Körner, and Bunsen vocalized their opposition to slavery, Lindheimer never once addressed the issue in his articles. Lindheimer's contributions to *Anzeiger des Westens* focused only on the colonization efforts of the *Adelsverein*<sup>62</sup> in Texas. Lindheimer mentions his work for *Anzeiger des Westens* throughout his entire correspondence with Engelmann but avoids the issue of slavery entirely.<sup>63</sup> During this period Lindheimer only vocalized concerns when they affected him personally or activities he was involved in. It was not until his role as editor of the *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung* that Lindheimer addressed Anglo-American political and social issues, which will be addressed in more detail in a later chapter. In contrast to his later role as editor, the period between 1834 and 1852 marked Lindheimer's apathy to Anglo-American concerns. Lindheimer's focus remained on forging his ethnic identity, not only through newspapers, but also cultural societies.

### **Where Everybody Knows Your Name: German-American Cultural Societies in the US**

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<sup>62</sup> The *Adelsverein* was a German colonization company interested in settling Germans in Texas. Their efforts will be explored later in this chapter and additional chapters.

<sup>63</sup> See Ferdinand Lindheimer to George Engelmann 30 September 1844; Goynes in *Life among the Texas Flora*, 112 and Lindheimer to Engelmann 18 April 1845; Goynes, *Life among the Texas Flora* 113 for a few examples.

Similar to their role in revitalizing German-language newspapers, the *Dreißiger* also played a formative role in establishing German-American cultural societies in the US. These cultural societies had origins in the German Confederation. *Turnvereine*, or Turner, that pervaded German-American communities across the US in the early nineteenth century, stemmed from the political, social, and economic upheaval the German States experienced during the Napoleonic Wars.<sup>64</sup> Lindheimer and other members of the intellectual elite were heavily influenced by the teachings of Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, or “Turnvater Jahn,” who founded the *Turnverein*.

Born in Prussia in 1778, Jahn founded the *Turnverein* in Berlin in 1811. Jahn envisioned the *Turnverein* as a vehicle to liberate the German States “from French occupation...., overthrow the feudal order, and end the division of Germany into many small states in favour of a one-nation state.”<sup>65</sup> Jahn advocated strongly for physical exercise, incorporating events such as running, jumping, lifting, and climbing.<sup>66</sup> He believed that physical fitness championed national unity and identity. During the Napoleonic Wars and War of Liberation *Turnvereine* wielded a considerable amount of influence as part of the larger German Nationalist movement through the lens of physical fitness. A significant number of *Turnverein* members enlisted in the Prussian Army to fight against French occupation. As mentioned briefly in the previous chapter, Bunsen

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<sup>64</sup> The *Dreißiger*'s role introducing *Turnvereine* to the US is often overshadowed by later efforts of the Forty-Eighters. Like the *Dreißiger*, the Forty-Eighters were political refugees who fled to the US arriving in the 1850s following a second failed attempt to unify the German States in 1848. Although the Forty-Eighters deserve recognition for popularizing *Turnvereine* in the US, they are afforded too much credit in the historiography for bringing *Turnvereine* to the US. As early as 1824 students of Jahn, including Karl Follen, Frances Lieber, Franz W. Gräter, and Franz Joseph Grund founded *Turnverein* chapters in the US, even organizing physical training at Harvard. For more information on their efforts see Carl Wittke's *We Who Built America*.

<sup>65</sup> Annette R. Hofmann, “The American Turners: Their Past and Present,” *Pädagogische Hochschule Ludwigsburg, Ludwigsburg, Germany, Rev Bras Ciênc Esporte*, 37, no.2 (2015): 120 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.rbce.2014.11.020>; Wittke, *We Who Built America*, 190-191.

<sup>66</sup> Hoffman in “The American Turners” notes that the term “gymnastics” is often used to describe the physical exercises performed by the *Turnvereine*. Hoffman states that while some aspects between the *Turnverein* and gymnastics are similar, they are more akin to track and field events than modern day gymnastics.

fought along-side Jahn in the *Lützowsche Freikorps* and was a mentee of Jahn. Despite the *Turnverein*'s high social standing in the early nineteenth century, the society soon endured similar scrutiny experienced by Lindheimer and the *Burschenschaften*. *Turnvereine*, which supported a unified German state, clashed with the "German particularism" of the new German Confederation.<sup>67</sup> *Turnplätze*, outdoor training grounds, experienced restrictions and closures stemming from censorship afforded to the German Confederation by the Carlsbad Decrees. Jahn was even imprisoned for five years on suspicion of disloyalty and acts of subversion.<sup>68</sup>

Similar to his ties with the *Burschenschaften*, Lindheimer is closely linked to Jahn and the *Turnverein* through his association with Bunsen. Given Lindheimer's proximity to these organizations, it is likely that he did engage with the *Turnverein* during his time in the German Confederation. Concrete evidence of Lindheimer's involvement with the *Turnverein* in the US does not emerge until 1855 in New Braunfels. Lindheimer, along with 34 other individuals, is listed as a charter member of the *Turnverein* chapter in New Braunfels founded on 1 July 1855.<sup>69</sup> His time as a botanist, however, required high levels of physical fitness to traverse the difficult terrain, suggesting Lindheimer routinely engaged in exercise. His letters to Engelmann often detail his arduous journeys through swamp land and warding off animals, even alligators, while out botanizing. On one occasion, Lindheimer's wagon sank into "greenish clay soil that lay hidden beneath quicksand."<sup>70</sup> Lindheimer dug out his horse and his wagon all on his own. Lindheimer describes the incident as a badge of honor and a routine part of his work. It is also evident that Lindheimer valued his physicality. In his discussion of his time in Mexico,

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<sup>67</sup> Hoffman, "American Turners," 121; Wittke, *We Who Built America*, 190-191.

<sup>68</sup> Hoffman, "American Turners," 121; Wittke, *We Who Built America*, 190-191.

<sup>69</sup> Oscar Hass, *History of New Braunfels and Comal County 1844-1946* (San Antonio: Burke Publishing Company, 1968), 104.

<sup>70</sup> Lindheimer to Engelmann 14 September 1843; Goyne in *Life among the Texas Flora*, 71.

Lindheimer boasts that he is best climber among the group while working on the plantation.<sup>71</sup> At one point in his correspondence, Lindheimer is even despondent at the idea that he put on weight while visiting Engelmann in St. Louis, writing “I have lost the corpulence again which had me worried that I might be getting fat.”<sup>72</sup> It is clear that Lindheimer prided himself on physical fitness, considered it important to his work as a botanist, and made it his objective to establish a *Turnverein* in New Braunfels as an essential part of German-American life. These cultural societies, and Lindheimer’s involvement with them, signaled publicly what it meant to be German-American.

In the German Confederation *Turnvereine* embodied national identity and unity. In the US, cultural societies put German-American ethnic identity on public display. In addition to *Turnverein*, German-American cultural societies manifested in various ways and were widespread throughout the US. *Vereine*, or clubs, took a number of forms and included associations dedicated to literature, music, and singing as a means of promoting *Deutschtum* in the US. In contrast to newspapers, *Vereine* represented what historian Kathleen Neils Cozen coined as “ethnicity as a festive culture.”<sup>73</sup> Cozen argues that cultural societies widely promoted German-American ethnic identity through public displays, especially events that included beer gardens or parades. Celebrating *Deutschtum* in such a public way, German-American cultural societies functioned as public relations firms. They simultaneously celebrated German-American culture, but also controlled which aspects of *Deutschtum* were exhibited. Cultural

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<sup>71</sup> Ferdinand Lindheimer, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen* (Frankfurt am Main: Buchbruderei von Theodor Wentz, 1879), 121; John E. Williams, *The Writings of Ferdinand Lindheimer: Texas Botanist, Texas Philosopher* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2020), 179.

<sup>72</sup> Lindheimer to Engelmann 27 May 1843; Goynes in *Life among the Texas Flora*, 61.

<sup>73</sup> Kathleen Neils Cozen, “Ethnicity as Festive Culture: Nineteenth Century German-America on Parade,” *The Invention of Ethnicity*. ed Sollors, Werner (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).  
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/eastcarolina/detail.action?docID=272990>.

societies display of literature, singing, and music publicly signaled what German-American communities defined as being expressly German. Although Lindheimer did not actively get involved with German-American cultural societies until the 1850s, he experienced cultural societies in Belleville and St. Louis.

Both Belleville and St. Louis had established a variety of *Vereine* celebrating German-American literature, music, and singing by the 1840s. Like most German-American communities in the US, Belleville and St. Louis also counted *Turnverein* chapters among their numerous *Vereine*. Other notable organizations in Belleville include the German Library Society, formed in 1836, and the *Sängerbund* (singing society) formed in 1853. By the mid-nineteenth century German culture thrived in Belleville and St. Louis. It was commonplace to hear German spoken on the streets or see German-language signage above storefronts. Lindheimer stayed with Engelmann in St. Louis during the winter of 1842 (November 1842-April 1843). When writing of his impending visit, Lindheimer referred to St. Louis as “Canaan.” Although his comment strikes the reader as being facetious, even mocking, Lindheimer’s use of “Canaan” indicates he recognizes St. Louis as the Promised Land of German-American culture, and by extension, the US as a new beginning for the people with whom he shares ethnic and cultural ties. Lindheimer’s experiences with cultural societies in the German Confederation and their reincarnations in the US affirmed his German-American ethnic identity and opened the door for his work with the *Adelsverein* and attempts to establish a New Germany in Texas.

### **Ein Neues Deutschland: A Delusional Attempt for a New Germany in North America**

Lindheimer’s emigration to the US and travels throughout North America were directly or indirectly shaped by persons with significant interest in establishing a *Neues Deutschland*, or New Germany, in North America. Lindheimer’s isolation and experiences in these communities

fortified his German-American ethnic identity and reinforced his connection to his life in the German Confederation. His later involvement with the *Adelsverein* affirmed his interest and connection with those who attempted to create a new, unified Germany in North America. The first example for Lindheimer of a *Neues Deutschland* was modeled in the German-American communities of Belleville and St. Louis.

Most of the German Americans who emigrated to Belleville and St. Louis, including Lindheimer, were directly tied to efforts to facilitate German emigration to the western US states in the 1830s. Gottfried Duden, a lawyer in the German Confederation, moved to the US in 1824 to scout potential locations for a German settlement. After Duden arrived back in the German Confederation, he published 1500 copies of his *Report on a Journey to the Western States of North America and a Stay of Several Years along the Missouri* (1829). His book profoundly affected those living in the German Confederation. Similar to other publications of that era, Duden's book heavily romanticized the Missouri River Valley region between St. Louis and Hermann, Missouri. His favorable review of area's culture and land, coupled with the political and economic unrest in the German Confederation, prompted tens of thousands of Germans to emigrate to the region.<sup>74</sup>

Protestant minister Friedrich Münch and attorney Paul Follen<sup>75</sup> in particular were influenced by Duden's work. Disappointed by the outcome of the failed political and social reforms in the 1830s, Münch and Follen founded the *Giessener Auswanderungsgesellschaft* (Giessen Emigration Society) in 1833 in efforts to establish a new, unified German State in the US. Like Lindheimer, both Münch and Follen had ties to the *Burschenschaft* movement during

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<sup>74</sup> Charles Van Ravenswaay, *The Arts and Architecture of German Settlements in Missouri: A Survey of Vanishing Culture* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1977), 23.

<sup>75</sup> The spelling of Follen's last name is cited in some sources as Follenius.

their time at the University of Giessen.<sup>76</sup> Follen's brother, Karl Follen, was a founding member of the *Burschenschaften* movement and instituted the first organization at the University of Giessen in 1815.<sup>77</sup> Inspired by Duden's writing, Münch and Follen penned a pamphlet in 1833 titled "Invitation and Explanation regarding Emigration on a Large Scale from Germany to North America."<sup>78</sup> In the pamphlet they described Missouri as the perfect location to found a new German State, arguing that a settlement in Missouri "will assure the continuance of German customs and the use of the German language" as well as "create a genuine free life, based on German ideals."<sup>79</sup> The Giessen Emigration Society precipitated the emigration of roughly 500 Germans to the US in 1834, including Georg Bunsen and his family in the spring of 1834.<sup>80</sup> Although the efforts of Duden and the Giessen Emigration Society focused on establishing German settlements in Missouri, a large number of emigrants opted to settle in Illinois because of the presence of slavery in Missouri.

Lindheimer, traveling separately, also left the German Confederation in the spring of 1834 to meet up with Bunsen and other political refugees who made their home in Belleville. Although Lindheimer never registered as a member of the Giessen Emigration Society, he lived in the German Confederation at the time of Duden's publication in 1829 and the formation of the Giessen Emigration Society in 1833. It is therefore very likely Lindheimer was familiar with Duden's work, as well as efforts by Münch and Follen to establish a new German State in the

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<sup>76</sup> Zachary Stuart Garrison, *German Americans on the Middle Border: From Antislavery to Reconciliation, 1830-1877* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2020), 14.

<sup>77</sup> Rolland Lutz, "The German Revolutionary Student Movement, 1819-1833." *Central European History* 4, no. 3 (September 1971): 217. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4545608>.

<sup>78</sup> Gustav Körner, *Das deutsche Element in den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika 1818-1848* (Cincinnati: A.E. Wilde & Co., 1880), 300.

<sup>79</sup> Garrison, *German Americans on the Middle Border*, 15; Körner, *Das deutsche Element in den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika 1818-1848*, 300.

<sup>80</sup> Georg Bunsen and his family are listed as members of the Giessen Emigration Society. Documents from the organization list Bunsen's occupation as a teacher and indicate that he traveled to the US on the ship the *Olbers*.



US. Taking into consideration Lindheimer's decision to follow Bunsen to Belleville, it is clear that Lindheimer had a considerable interest in establishing a *Neues Deutschland* with his fellow refugees. While both Belleville and St. Louis boasted large German-American communities well into the twentieth century, the hopes of a German State within the US were never fully realized.

As early as 1834, hopes of the German State the Giessen Emigration Society desperately desired unraveled. Körner, an active participant in the *Putsch* of 1833 and political refugee, abhorred the conditions he found in Missouri. In 1834, he authored a very public rebuttal to Duden titled, *An Illumination of Duden's Report on the Western States of North America from the American Side*. In his work, Körner highlighted difficulties of German emigration to Missouri, including travel and economic opportunities, and criticized Duden's oversimplification of the climate, territory, and the existence of slavery. Körner served as mouthpiece for many German Americans that felt betrayed by Duden and the Giessen Emigration Society, with a large number of them relocating to non-slave holding areas.<sup>81</sup> The feeling of betrayal compounded by the relocation of a large number of German Americans to other areas in the US halted the development of a New Germany in Missouri. Lindheimer, however, witnessed a second opportunity for the creation of a New Germany while living in Mexico.

Initially bound for Texas in the fall of 1834, Lindheimer ultimately found himself in Veracruz, Mexico. Circumstances, such as the loss of travel companions (including future *Anzeiger des Westens* editor Weber), monetary assets, and political unrest in Texas, necessitated an alteration of plans. Lindheimer's connections with prominent German-Americans in Belleville and St. Louis afforded him the opportunity to settle at the German-owned hacienda El

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<sup>81</sup> Garrison, *German Americans on the Middle Border*, 15; Körner, *Das deutsche Element in den Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika*, 300; Alexander Banks and Michael Spachek, "German Americans and Slavery," in *German Migration to Missouri: A Transnational Student Research Project* ed. Andrew Stuart Bergson (2019), 16.

Mirador in the autumn of 1834. Compared to Lindheimer's experience in Belleville and St. Louis, the desire to establish a New Germany in Mexico was present, though less overt. The majority of Germans initially favored Texas during the first wave of immigration to the region in the 1820s and 1830s which resulted in limited German immigration to southern Mexico.

German immigration to Mexico began in 1821 following Mexico's independence from Spain. Similar to Duden's work on Missouri, Alexander von Humboldt's,<sup>82</sup> *Political Essays on the Kingdom of New Spain* sparked interest in Mexico peaked in the German Confederation after its publication in 1811. Humboldt a geologist, geographer, naturalist, and explorer, noted in *Political Essays* the possibility of untapped mineral resources in Mexico. Based on Humboldt's recommendations, a German textiles firm opened in 1821 ushering in the first wave of German emigrants to Veracruz.<sup>83</sup> Among the new emigrants were Friedrich Wilhelm Stein and Karl Christian Sartorius. Both men were prominent figures of the *Burschenschaft* movement in the German Confederation and followers of Karl Follen, whom they met while studying at the University of Giessen. Karl Follen, the older brother of Paul Follen one of the founders of the Giessen Emigration Society, organized the first, and arguably most radical, chapter of the *Burschenschaft* at the university. Due to his involvement with the *Burschenschaft*, Karl was forced to flee to Switzerland and eventually emigrated to the US in 1824.<sup>84</sup> Following in the footsteps of Follen, Sartorius also fled the German Confederation in 1824 as a result of his own political activities. Sartorius longed to establish "an independent German settlement" in Mexico and to this end purchased a tract of land of roughly 11,000 acres.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Alexander von Humboldt is the younger brother of Wilhelm von Humboldt whose educational reform policies shaped the education system in the German Confederation and influenced the structure of higher learning institutions.

<sup>83</sup> Hale, *Wanderers Between Worlds*, 199-201.

<sup>84</sup> Lutz, "The German Revolutionary Student Movement," 218.

<sup>85</sup> Hale, *Wanderers Between Two Worlds*, 201-202.

Although initially pleased with El Mirador describing it as “one of the most beautiful areas of the earth,” Lindheimer quickly grew disillusioned with the plantation.<sup>86</sup> The beautiful landscape dwindled against difficult working conditions and limited employment opportunities. Unlike other German-American communities Lindheimer experienced, El Mirador was considerably smaller and far more isolated. Not only was El Mirador isolated geographically, it was also isolated economically. Two sugar plantations provided the primary economic support and employment for Germans at El Mirador. Other businesses included a general store, blacksmith, sugar mill, and brandy distillery. Outside of those occupations, economic opportunities were limited.<sup>87</sup> At the time of Lindheimer’s residency at El Mirador, only 19 Germans, five of whom had families, lived and worked on the plantation. Although El Mirador was intended to create a New Germany, the lack of interest by German emigrants to travel to the region stifled any chance of that goal coming to fruition. During his sixteen months in Mexico, it likely became clear to Lindheimer the importance of expressing his ethnic identity through external means. It was not enough to have an independent German community, or a New Germany, the community also needed to provide extrinsic vehicles, like German-language newspapers and cultural societies to express German-American ethnic identity. In 1836, Lindheimer realized his time in El Mirador had come to an end and decided to continue on to Texas.

Lindheimer’s original intention to travel Texas was chiefly derailed by internal strife within the Mexican government. Infighting between the federalists and centralists in the Mexican government resulted in the “political ascendancy” of General Antonio López de Santa

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<sup>86</sup> Lindheimer, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen*, 101; Goyne, *A Life among the Texas Flora*, 19-20.

<sup>87</sup> Lindheimer, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen*, 102-104; Goyne, *A Life among the Texas Flora*, 20-22.

Anna<sup>88</sup> in 1834.<sup>89</sup> Santa Anna seized control of the Mexican government, assumed authoritarian rule, and rejected the Constitution of 1824 which declared Mexico a federal republic. Events throughout the 1820s and 1830s drew Texas economically closer to the US, as Texians resisted Santa Anna's efforts to tighten his grip on the Mexican state. Anglo-American settlers in Texas voiced their opposition to Santa Anna's regime, eventually declaring Texas an independent state. The Texas Revolution came to a head during the Battle of San Jacinto on 21 April 1836 when the Texian Army defeated Santa Anna's forces in a decisive battle. On 14 May 1836 Santa Anna signed the Treaty of Velasco that acknowledged Texas as an Independent Republic and agreed to withdrawal troops from the territory. Although the Mexican government never openly acknowledged Texas a separate political state, they lacked the financial and military means to reclaim the territory. Texas, therefore, effectually won its independence. Lindheimer, wishing to fulfill his vision of traveling to Texas, viewed the Texas Revolution as his opportunity to reach his original destination and enlisted in the Texian Army on 20 April 1836. He arrived in Texas on 18 May 1836, one month after Santa Anna's defeat at the Battle of San Jacinto.<sup>90</sup>

Lindheimer joined the Texian Army only as an efficient means of getting to Texas from Mexico. Some scholars, including Samuel Wood Geiser and Hale assert Lindheimer's enlistment in the Texian Army derived from his earlier status as a political refugee. Geiser claims Lindheimer enlisted "to fight for Texan independence because of his hatred of all political oppression." Hale asserts that "Lindheimer resolved to go to Texas and join the fight for a free

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<sup>88</sup> Antonio López de Santa Anna (1794-1876) was a Mexican politician and general.

<sup>89</sup> Joseph L. Locke, and Ben Wright, eds. *The American Yawp* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2019), Chapter 12.

<sup>90</sup> Some historians like Howard Elkinton conflate Lindheimer's enlistment date with the date he arrived in Texas. In his writings Elkinton uses it as a dramatic story that Lindheimer arrived one day too late to face Santa Anna's army. First pointed out by Minetta Altgelt Goynes, the Archives of the Texas State Library show his enlistment in the Texian Army on 21 April 1836 and his arrival in Texas on 18 May of the same year.

republic.”<sup>91</sup> A closer re-examination of the original German text and English translations provided by Geiser, Goynes, and Williams reveals Lindheimer to be motivated out of his own self-interest, rather than a desire to stave off political oppression. In his memoir Lindheimer writes, “I recognized that the exactly right time had arrived to continue in the most interesting way my original plan to travel to Texas. If I hurried, I might reach Texas before the battle was decisive, perhaps before Santa Anna’s army had confronted the Texans.”<sup>92</sup> Rather than demonstrate a genuine desire to challenge Santa Anna’s assault against Texas, Lindheimer’s words emphasizes his indifference towards Anglo-American concerns and showcases his pragmatic behavior. He did not join the Texian Army because he actually wished to fight, he joined because it was a convenient way for him to travel to Texas, his desired destination since 1834. Lindheimer’s enlistment in the Texian Army is strictly self-serving, despite his criticism of Santa Anna.

Lindheimer condemns General Santa Anna’s military actions and calls him a “usurper,” but nowhere does he explicitly state that he enlisted to combat oppression imposed by Santa Anna.<sup>93</sup> While on his way to Texas, fellow German Juan José Holzinger (born Johann Josef) offered Lindheimer an artillery officer’s position in the Mexican Army.<sup>94</sup> Lindheimer declined telling Holzinger, “this campaign would have an unfortunate outcome for the Mexicans and that one in Mexico knows too little of these Americans and therefore underestimates them.”<sup>95</sup> Lindheimer does not refuse the position because he believes Santa Anna’s actions to be

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<sup>91</sup> Samuel Wood Geiser, *Naturalists on the Frontier*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Muriwai Books, 2017), 463-464; Hale, *Wanderers Between Two Worlds*, 228-229.

<sup>92</sup> Ferdinand Lindheimer, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen von Ferdinand Lindheimer in Texas* (Frankfurt am Main: Buchbruderei von Theodor Wentz, 1879), 139; Goynes, *A Life among the Texas Flora*, 26.

<sup>93</sup> Lindheimer, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen*, 138; John E. Williams, *The Writings of Ferdinand Lindheimer: Texas Botanist, Texas Philosopher* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2020), 196.

<sup>94</sup> Holzinger was a German-born mining engineer who served as a colonel of artillery under Santa Anna.

<sup>95</sup> Lindheimer, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen*, 143; Williams, *The Writings of Ferdinand Lindheimer*, 201.

abhorrent. He does not even express concerns about the possibility Texas might be oppressed by a dictator. Lindheimer declines the appointment because he does not believe Santa Anna will be victorious against the Texian Army. When Lindheimer enlists in April 1836 the majority of the fighting is complete. Lindheimer never witnesses active battle. Lindheimer fondly remembers his time in the army as helping him with his botany.

Lindheimer openly boasts to Engelmann that both of his commanding officers, Captain John Coffee Hayes and Captain Jerome Bonaparte Robertson permitted him to botanize instead of performing mandatory military duties, such as drill.<sup>96</sup> Robertson even provided Lindheimer with a boat so he could “botanize and collect flowers on the opposite bank of the river.”<sup>97</sup> Lindheimer never once addresses the political or social implications of the Texas Revolution in his correspondence with Engelmann. He only mentions the war and his enlistment to highlight the significant role it played in reference to his collection of botanical specimens. Lindheimer’s pragmatic mentality stems from his time in the Texian Army.

Lindheimer’s arrival in Texas in 1836 is a small example of larger immigration trends by Germans to Texas in the 1830s and 1840s. German immigration to Texas began in the 1820s, with the first formally recognized German settlement in Texas founded in 1831 by Friedrich Ernst. Mexico, interested in growing Texas’ population, appointed men as *empresarios*, or immigrant agents, to assist with the settlement of the land.<sup>98</sup> Between 1821 and 1835, 41 *empresario* contracts were signed, which relocated 13,500 families from the US to Texas, including Ernst. Ernst received a “league of land on the west side ... of Mill Creek” through a

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<sup>96</sup> Muster roles at the Archives of the Texas State Library show that Lindheimer served in two different companies while enlisted; Goyne, *A Life among the Texas Flora*, 28.

<sup>97</sup> Lindheimer to Engelmann, 13 January 1842; Goyne, *A Life among the Texas Flora*, 42.

<sup>98</sup> Robert A. Calvert, Arnaldo De Leon, and Gregg Cantrell, *A History of Texas* (Hoboken: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2014), 57.

colonization contract with the Mexican government.<sup>99</sup> As an Independent Republic, Texas, economically drained from the conflict with Mexico, continued the colonization contract system enacted by the Mexican government to recoup lost funds and foster new immigration into the region. This enterprise appealed to a small aristocratic group of men in the German Confederation interested in founding a unified German State in North America.

Interest by the *Verein zum Schutze deutscher Einwanderer in Texas* (Society for the Protection of German Immigrants in Texas), known colloquially as the *Adelsverein*, to establish a German State in Texas followed after the publications by Ernst and fellow German Detlef Dunt. Ernst, so enamored by Texas, penned letters to friends in the German Confederation describing the region's many wonderful attributes. Local newspapers in and around his hometown area of Lower Saxony published and distributed his letters. Dunt, another resident of Oldenburg, captivated by Ernst's letters traveled to Texas to meet Ernst in 1833. Following his visit, Dunt returned to the German Confederation and published, *Reise nach Texas: Nebst Nachrichten von diesem Lande; für Deutsche, welche nach Amerika zu gehen beabsichtigen* (Journey to Texas: Including Information about this Country for Germans intending to Go to America) in 1834. Similar to Duden's earlier work on Missouri, *Reise nach Texas* is both a travel guide and narrative of Dunt's experiences. In the book, Dunt describes the colonization contract system employed by the Mexican government and praises the numerous economic opportunities associated with it. Dunt offers travel advice to those interested in emigrating and spends a large portion of the book praising Texas' natural resources and beautiful climate.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Rudolph L. Biesele, *The History of the German Settlements in Texas, 1831–1861* (Austin: Von Boeckmann Jones, 1930), 43.

<sup>100</sup> Dunt and Ernst's writings represent a number of publications pertaining to Texas printed in the German Confederation, but hold the distinction as being the first, and arguably, most influential. Following Dunt and Ernst, other similar publications during this period include F. Hoehne's *Reise nach Nord Amerika und Texas* 1838-1841, Charles Sealsfield's *The Cabin Book* (1841) and Herman Ehrneberg's *Der Freiheitskampf in Texas* (1844), all of

Both Ernst and Dunt's writings echo Duden's publication on Missouri from 1829 and efforts by the Giessen Emigration Society to foster German emigration to North America. It is also extremely likely Lindheimer's interest in Texas originated from these publications, as much as it fostered interest from the *Adelsverein*.

Nowhere in his writings does Lindheimer explicitly state why he was initially drawn to Texas in 1834. Lindheimer's sojourn to Belleville and St. Louis can reasonably be attributed to Duden's work and the Giessen Emigration Society through his connections with Bunsen, but why did he want to travel to Texas? It is probable that Lindheimer was drawn to Texas, like the *Adelsverein*, because of Ernst and Dunt's work. Lindheimer lived in the German Confederation when Ernst and Dunt's work was published. It is probable Ernst and Dunt's description of Texas' ecologically diverse landscape appealed to Lindheimer's interest in botany and planted the seed that eventually drew him to Texas in 1836. By 1844, Texas was Lindheimer's adopted home. With the help of the *Adelsverein*, he attempted to make Texas' the adopted home for other German immigrants with the founding of New Braunfels in 1845. Lindheimer's connection to the German-American community was so acute, he never again left Texas.

Ferdinand Lindheimer's experiences in Illinois, Mexico, and Texas profoundly impacted what he considered to be expressly German. His isolation within these communities defined his German-American identity and provided him with a foundation on which to build his ideal community. Lindheimer valued German-language publications, *Vereine* that celebrated German culture and tradition, and highlighted his pursuit of a New Germany. By 1855 New Braunfels had a German-language newspaper, numerous *Vereine* to celebrate German-American culture, and direct ties to the German Confederation's colonization efforts to create a new, unified

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whom romanticized Texas soil and land. Compounded by economic and political struggles in the German Confederation, these high-profile publications are credited with bolstering German immigration to Texas.



Germany outside of Europe. In short, New Braunfels possessed all the qualities Lindheimer felt a thriving German-American community required. His seclusion in these communities, however, served as a bubble from growing sectional tensions in the US. His lack of commentary on these issues reinforce his apathy towards US political and social issues.

### Chapter Three: In the Heart of Comanche Land

After eleven years in North America and nine years in Texas, Lindheimer finally found his Canaan. Lindheimer standing atop a hill, is intoxicated by a breathing taking view. Light dances across the winding Comal River. The rushing water is surrounded by seemingly endless fields of flowers and lush vegetation. For just a moment Lindheimer is overtaken by the sheer vastness of Comanche territory stretched out before him. The untouched wilderness sparks in him the desire to final establish permanent roots in Texas. Speaking of the new German-American settlement of New Braunfels in 1845, Lindheimer writes:

“Streams flow crystal clear over the rocky beds. The fluid element gleams emerald green, and in its greater depths the fish rush back and forth visibly. Powerful springs cascade down from the rocky hills.....Here I have seen for the first time the splendor of the prairies. Flower upon flower, richer than the richest Persian Carpet. Fragrances that sometimes remind one of violets, often of vanilla, flow around the wanderer. The sea wind breathes with a living freshness over the prairies and streams through the treetops of the forest like the murmur of a distant surf.”<sup>101</sup>

But the German-American community Lindheimer searched so long for and labored to build quickly faced opposition from external forces. Anglo-American political and social movements such as Manifest Destiny, the Mexican-American War (1846-1848), and the United States’ annexation of Texas, threatened the equilibrium of his German-American ethnic identity. Lindheimer’s apathy toward Anglo-American issues transformed into disdain, if not outright contempt, particularly in reaction to Anglo-Americans’ treatment of indigenous populations. This chapter examines how Lindheimer’s work with the *Adelsverein* represented his personal Manifest Destiny. It evaluates how his lack of participation in the Mexican-American War illustrates his continued apathy towards Anglo-American issues, as well as how the German-

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<sup>101</sup> Ferdinand Lindheimer to George Engelmann, 18 April 1845; Minetta Altgelt Goyne, *A Life among the Texas Flora: Ferdinand Lindheimer’s Letters to George Engelmann* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1991), 112.

American community's alliance with the Comanche attempted to protect both communities from Anglo-Americans' growing influence in the region. These movements and relationships highlight Lindheimer's growing frustration with the Anglo-American community.

### **Lindheimer's Manifest Destiny: The *Adelsverein* and Founding of New Braunfels**

Lindheimer's efforts with the *Adelsverein* unintentionally lent legitimacy to the popular US nineteenth century doctrine of Manifest Destiny. Popularized by John O'Sullivan in 1845, Manifest Destiny existed as a concept since the founding of the US. It expressed the widely held belief that US expansion was not only defensible, it was inevitable and ordained by God. Manifest Destiny emphasized expansion as the method to protect US interests and "achieve its destiny" by sharing democracy with the world.<sup>102</sup> Lindheimer's experience with the *Adelsverein* can reasonably be described as his own personal Manifest Destiny. The *Adelsverein* intended for the settlement to embody the unified Germany that did not exist in Europe. Lindheimer envisioned New Braunfels as a vehicle to promote German language and customs. Similar to the US, Lindheimer and the *Adelsverein* used expansionist ideology to justify their interests in Texas. Lindheimer recognized the possibility of creating his own unified German-American community soon after meeting Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfels in July of 1844.

In a letter to Engelmann in September of 1844, Lindheimer lavished praise onto Solms-Braunfels and his efforts to establish a German settlement in Texas. Lindheimer describes Solms-Braunfels as a man of "noble character, even if he does make mistakes in his undertaking."<sup>103</sup> Having "spoken with Carl Prince Solms personally for quite a while about his plans," Lindheimer outlines Solms-Braunfels' motives for establishing a German colony in

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<sup>102</sup> Joseph L. Locke and Ben Wright, eds. *The American Yawp* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2019), Chapter 12.

<sup>103</sup> Lindheimer to Engelmann, 30 September 1844; Goynes, *A Life among the Texas Flora*, 101.

Texas, which include the development of a burgeoning market between the colony and the German Confederation. Solms-Braunfels' intent to economically link the settlement and the German Confederation, illustrates the *Adelsverein's* expansionist aims to grow the German Confederation's international influence. The goals of the *Adelsverein* to create a unified Germany outside of Europe mirror intentions by the US to expand outside its borders. It is clear from his letter that Lindheimer is immediately captivated by the venture posed by Solms-Braunfels and protective of the *Adelsverein's* endeavors.

In the same letter to Engelmann, Lindheimer is critical of an article published in the *Deutsche Schnellpost* that disparaged colonization efforts in Texas writing, "we here do truly know more about the matter than the one who submitted the essay, who exerts himself to arrive at a judgement based upon conjectures about circumstantial evidence."<sup>104</sup> In response to the criticism, Lindheimer states that he is writing a rebuttal and assures Engelmann that he will hear "from our point of view in one or two essays soon."<sup>105</sup> Lindheimer's use of "we" and "our" demonstrates his established his German-American ethnic identity. The words "we" and "our" used in this context also indicate Lindheimer's acceptance as a member of the *Adelsverein*. Within two months after meeting Solms-Braunfels, Lindheimer recognized the *Adelsverein* as his opportunity to finally establish roots. His articles in the *Anzeiger des Westens* and *New York Staatszeitung* also provided the *Adelsverein* with positive representation in the German-language press, an influential vehicle within the German-American community. His involvement with Solms-Braunfels and the *Adelsverein* is a far cry his earlier efforts to establish roots in Texas.

Lindheimer attempted several times to settle in Texas. Douglas Hale asserts Lindheimer was gifted a 1,476 parcel of property following his discharge from the Texian Army on 5 December

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<sup>104</sup> Lindheimer to Engelmann, 30 September 1844; Goynes, *A Life among the Texas*, 100.

<sup>105</sup> Lindheimer to Engelmann, 30 September 1844; Goynes, *A Life among the Texas Flora*, 101.

1837. Hale states that instead of claiming the property in central Texas, Lindheimer remained in Houston and suffered poor economic circumstances like many others who remained in the bustling new town.<sup>106</sup> It is unclear why Lindheimer refused the land grant. It is possible his lack of financial means prevented him from traveling to the area or cultivating the land. The more probable reason is lack of a thriving German-American settlement in Houston at that time. Lindheimer did however, attempt to settle down again in 1839.

Deeds from Harris County, Texas show that Lindheimer purchased a ten-acre farm roughly four miles outside of Houston on 24 November 1839.<sup>107</sup> It is uncertain how frequently Lindheimer stayed on his property during this period. By 1839 his interest in botany transitioned into his primary form of income. Lindheimer worked for Engelmann and Harvard Botanist Asa Gray<sup>108</sup> to collect botanical specimens throughout Texas, which required frequent travel. Taking into consideration Lindheimer's penchant for traveling and lack of a German-American community, he presumably did not remain on the farm for long periods of time. Despite his long absences Lindheimer earnestly expressed interest in farming and owned the farm for roughly three years. In August 1841, he boasts to Engelmann that he finally made "quite a little start toward realizing [his] farming fantasy."<sup>109</sup> Perhaps by the end of 1841 Lindheimer was ready to establish roots in Texas, but his foray into farming was ultimately a failed venture. Writing in January 1842 Lindheimer wistfully expressed to Engelmann that, "For almost forty years, like the children of God of old, I have been running around on this earth looking for my promised land, and still I have been unable to find anything."<sup>110</sup> Even after purchasing the farm,

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<sup>106</sup> Douglas Hale, *Wanderers Between Worlds* (Bloomington: Xlibris, 2005), 229-230.

<sup>107</sup> Goyne, *Life Among the Texas Flora*, 29; Harris County Deed Records, Bk. E pp 351-352.

<sup>108</sup> Asa Gray (1810-1888) was a prominent nineteenth century botanist. He was a professor of botany at Harvard University and employed Lindheimer to collect specimens in Texas.

<sup>109</sup> Lindheimer to Engelmann, [date illegible] August 1841; Goyne, *Life Among the Texas Flora*, 34.

<sup>110</sup> Lindheimer to Engelmann, 19 January 1842; Goyne, *A Life among the Texas Flora*, 43.

Lindheimer is dissatisfied with his circumstances. In May 1842, Lindheimer writes to Engelmann to say that he is staying in a camp near his old farmhouse, suggesting that he sold the property within the previous six months. His refusal of the initial land grant in 1837 and sale of his farm shows that while he attempted to settle in Texas, other circumstances prevented in his permanent settlement. It is clear that Lindheimer was unsuccessful in finding a community that felt like home until he met Solms-Braunfels in 1844.

While Lindheimer despaired at his lack of home in 1842, overseas the *Adelsverein* initiated plans to settle a German colony in Texas. Henry Francis Fisher, a German emigrant to Texas in the 1830s who worked for the San Saba Colonization Company,<sup>111</sup> secured a colonization contract in June 1842. The grant covered an area over three million acres between the Llano and Colorado Rivers. Fisher traveled to Bremen in the German Confederation as an ambassador for Texas to encourage interest overseas in the colonization project. He met with the *Adelsverein* in June of 1844, at which time the *Adelsverein* purchased interest in the venture. Solms-Braunfels oversaw the enterprise with the assistance of Lindheimer and other local German-Americans.

Lindheimer joined Solms-Braunfels in December 1844 to help escort the 400 newly arrived German immigrants to the land allocated by the Fischer-Miller grant. The large group started their journey in January 1845 but faced difficult travels over the next two months. In addition to the harsh terrain and difficult climate, the land agreed to in the grant was located almost 300 miles inland from the port of Galveston. Despite preparations made by the *Adelsverein*, food, money, and medicine were in limited supply. Recognizing that travel to the Fisher-Miller grant required semi-permanent encampments, Solms-Braunfels, Lindheimer, and other leaders searched for the group's first way station in March 1845.

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<sup>111</sup> The San Saba Colonization Company was a private company founded in 1836 to explore and locate land in San Saba country for colonization contracts.

In some sources Lindheimer is credited with helping locate the settlement site, while others only list him as an observer. Solms-Braunfels does not mention Lindheimer in his official reports and only credits Johann Rahm<sup>112</sup> as recommending the particular track of land, known as “Las Fontanas” on which to settle.<sup>113</sup> In an editorial published on New Braunfels’ 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Lindheimer corroborates Solms-Braunfels official reports and credits Rahm with locating the site.<sup>114</sup> However, in a letter to Engelmann in mid-July 1845 suggests Lindheimer possibly played a role in identifying a location. In the letter Lindheimer, outlines an article he wrote for *Anzeiger des Westens*. He describes the conditions of the territory and “how we looked for the site for the settlement.”<sup>115</sup> Lindheimer’s use of “we” indicates he had some involvement in choosing the land. It is likely Lindheimer’s early years in Texas and familiarity with vegetation as a botanist greatly assisted Solms-Braunfels decision to settle in that particular area. It is therefore reasonable to conclude Lindheimer played a minor role in finding a location for the settlement. Solms-Braunfels purchased the land, located roughly half-way between the Port of Galveston and the Fisher-Miller grant (see Figure 4.1) on 14 March 1845. He christened the encampment New Braunfels on 21 March and Lindheimer finally had a place to call home.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> Born Johann Jacob Rahm in Switzerland, Rahm served as a Texas Ranger under John Coffee Hays’ Ranger Company during the Texas Revolution.

<sup>113</sup> Gilbert Giddings Benjamin, *The Germans In Texas: A Study in Immigration* (San Francisco: R and E Research Associates, 1970), 43.

<sup>114</sup> Ferdinand Lindheimer, *Neu Braunfelser Zeitung* 13 May 1870; trans. by Oscar Hass in *History of New Braunfels and Comal County, Texas 1844-1946* (San Antonio: Burke Publishing Company, 196), 142.

<sup>115</sup> Lindheimer to Engelmann, mid-July 1845; Goyne, *Life Among the Texas Flora*, 114.

<sup>116</sup> Chester W. Geue and Ethel H. Geue, *A New Land Beckoned: German Immigration to Texas, 1844-1847* (Waco: Texian Press, 1966), 7-8; Rudolph L. Biesele, *The History of the German Settlements in Texas, 1831– 1861* (Austin: Von Boeckmann Jones, 1930), 115-118; Mortiz Tiling, *History of the German Element in Texas from 1820-1850 and Historical Sketches of the German Texas Singers' League and Houston Turnverein from 1853-1913* (Houston, 1913), 75-77. Ironically, no German-American settlement was established on the land provided through the Fisher-Miller grant while the *Adelsverein* was active. Other settlements such as Mason, Boerne, Comfort, Llano, Brady, San Saba, and Paint Rock were established on the land provided by the grant in the late 1840s, but had no affiliation with the *Adelsverein*.

The efforts of the *Adelsverein* attracted 10,000 German-Americans already living in the US to Texas and assisted with the emigration of 7,380 Germans from the German Confederation.<sup>117</sup> The growing number of Anglo-Americans moving to Texas, in addition to the increase in white immigrant populations, emboldened the US' position to annex Texas, a major contributing factor to the Mexican-American War. Although the actions of the US and the *Adelsverein* stemmed from disparate motivations, the *Adelsverein* helped advance efforts of the US to expand. Military conflict provided the US with the opportunity to secure additional territory.

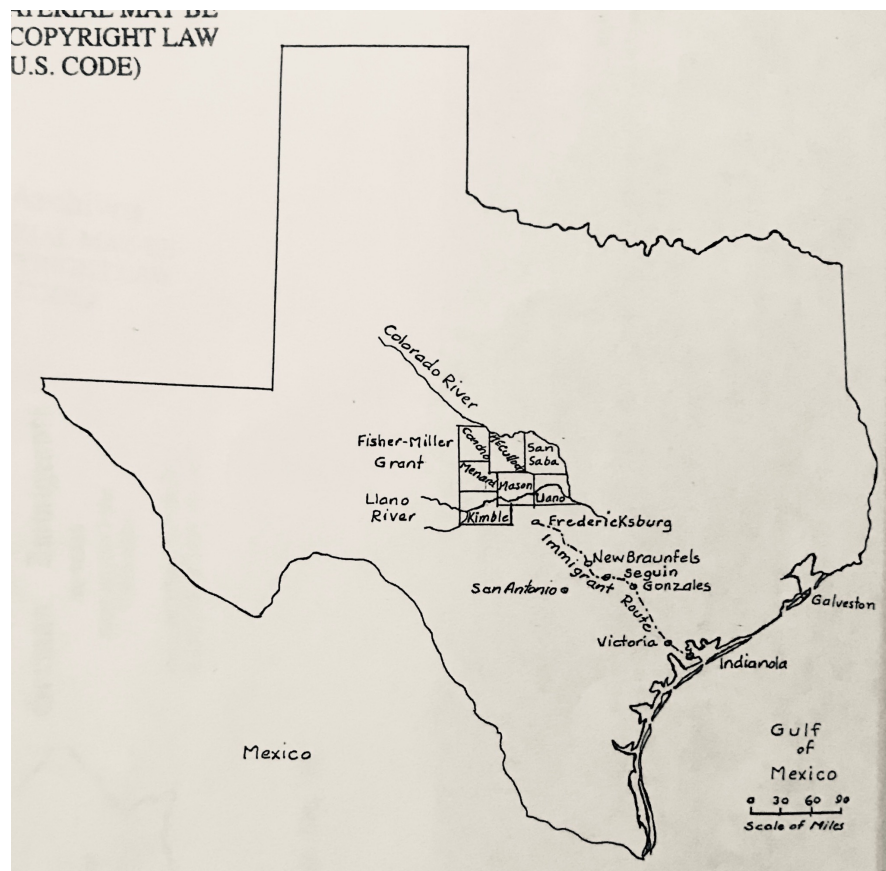


Figure 4.1 Map showing the ports of Galveston and Indianola, the route traveled by Solms-Braunfels, Lindheimer, and the newly arrived German immigrants to the Fischer-Miller Grant.

<sup>117</sup> The *Adelsverein* is considered responsible for “the largest single immigration of Germans to the United States.” Theodore Gish, Introduction, *Voyage to North America 1844-45: Prince Carl of Solms’s Texas Diary of People, Places, and Events* (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2000), 1; Geue and Geue, *A New Land Beckoned*, 12.



## Aggressive US Foreign Policy and the Mexican-American War

The Mexican-American War was directly tied to expansion efforts facilitated by Manifest Destiny. President Polk, elected on an expansionist platform, promoted a controversial policy with Mexico that placed US troops near a contested section of the border. The presence of US troops provoked conflict with Mexico and confirmed suspicions that Polk wanted to annex Texas. In the 1840s, the majority of Anglo-Americans in Texas agreed with its annexation. Anglo-Americans expressed concerns of maintaining long-term economic stability as an Independent Republic, as well as fear of re-annexation by Mexico. Even Lindheimer conveyed his views on annexation writing in 1845, “annexation of Texas would be pleasanter for me than my crates would not be broken open each time in New Orleans when I ship plants.”<sup>118</sup> Although the comment was likely made in jest, it reinforces Lindheimer as an individual only concerned with his own self-interest. Mexico, alternatively, viewed the placement of troops as an aggressive military tactic.

Mexico, who still considered Texas part of their national boundary, perceived the Americans’ annexation of Texas in December 1845 as a deliberate land grab. Tensions between the two countries escalated and war officially erupted on 25 April 1846. After two years of conflict, hostilities ceased with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed on 2 February 1848. As part of the treaty’s provisions, Mexico transferred over roughly half of its national territories, including what is now California, Utah, Nevada, as well as parts of Arizona and New Mexico.<sup>119</sup> Lindheimer recognized the possibility of a US war with Mexico as early as 1842, but made it clear he wanted no involvement.

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<sup>118</sup> Lindheimer to Engelmann, 18 April 1845; Goynes, *A Life among the Texas Flora*, 121.

<sup>119</sup> Robert A. Calvert, Arnaldo De Leon, and Gregg Cantrell. *A History of Texas* (Hoboken: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2014), 108.

On several occasions, Lindheimer declared his lack of interest in a war with Mexico. He wrote to Engelmann firmly stating that “in case of war between Mexico and Texas, I shall not enter service as a Texas citizen serving under American officers. I had the very best of officers during my erstwhile service in the army, but I know how little Americans are inclined to trust the soldier.”<sup>120</sup> Lindheimer reiterated his position in March of 1842 writing, “I shall not go into the field of battle as long as I can avoid it.”<sup>121</sup> Lindheimer’s casual observations on the rising tensions between the US and Mexico reinforces his indifference towards Anglo-American political and social issues. His observations also hint at his growing feelings of antagonism. Lindheimer made it very clear that he would not enter military service again, let alone on behalf of the US military. His letters rarely mentioned the Mexican-American War and instead prioritized his work as a botanist.

In his letters Lindheimer only touches on the Mexican-American war in passing, often downplaying the severity of the situation in Texas. He only writes to say that either no serious mention of war yet has been made or “there does not seem to be an earnest scent of war with Mexico.”<sup>122</sup> Even after war is declared, Lindheimer is extremely cavalier about the presence of troops in Texas, noting offhandedly that “Governor Henderson and Lamar<sup>123</sup> passed through on their way to the war site.”<sup>124</sup> Lindheimer displays roughly the same amount of interest in the Mexican-American War as he did with the Texas Revolution. It is evident he was only concerned with how these larger movements would personally affect him and his own interests. Lindheimer established a pattern of apathy that is traced back to military service during the

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<sup>120</sup> Lindheimer to Engelmann, 19 January 1842; Goyne, *A Life among the Texas Flora*, 43.

<sup>121</sup> Lindheimer to Engelmann, 20 March 1842; Goyne, *A Life among the Texas Flora*, 45.

<sup>122</sup> Lindheimer to Engelmann, 20 November 1845 and 25 March 1846; Goyne, *A Life among the Texas Flora*, 130 and 155.

<sup>123</sup> According to Goyne, J. Pinckney Henderson and Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar served as chief executives of Texas. Lamar additionally served as President of Texas from 1838-1841.

<sup>124</sup> Lindheimer letter to Engelmann, 8 July 1846; Goyne, *A Life among the Texas Flora*, 159.

Texas Revolution. The Mexican-American War, however, would have long-lasting impacts on Lindheimer and his German-American community, drawing them into rising sectional tensions in the US. As a way of challenging Anglo-American dominance in the region, German-Americans formed a coalition with the Comanche Nation.

### **German-American Relations with the Comanches<sup>125</sup>**

Early German-American settlements in West Texas had minimal interaction or fear of conflict with Comanches. It was not until the arrival of the *Adelsverein* in 1844 that Solms-Braunfels recognized the need for possible talks between the settlers and the Comanche. Shortly after Solms-Braunfels arrived, he requested more weapons be sent to “make an impression on the Indians.”<sup>126</sup> Despite his forceful, even intolerant tone, Solms-Braunfels details peaceful relations with the Comanche in his official reports and diary, as well as discusses the possibility of treaty negotiations. Solms-Braunfels’ writings foreshadow the amicable relationship between the Comanche and the German-American settlers. Overtime the Comanches became the strongest allies of German-American settlers against both Anglo-American and Mexican forces. Although agreeable negotiations were reached between the two groups, Solms-Braunfel’s apprehension of the Comanche was not misplaced.

Solms-Braunfels’ cause for concern stemmed from the Fischer-Miller grant. The land on which the land was located was located on was traditional Comanche territory and left all settlers (Anglo-American, German-American, and Mexican alike) unfamiliar with the landscape vulnerable to raids. The Comanche territories were vast and comprised of land in what is now

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<sup>125</sup> Despite relatively balanced depictions of the Comanche in Solms-Braunfel’s and Lindheimer’s accounts, as well as the Meusebach-Comanche Treaty, I was not able to locate literature detailing the Comanches’ perspective during the negotiation process or any literature to corroborate the anecdotes described by Lindheimer. Pekka Hämäläinen’s *The Comanche Empire* (2008) details the Comanche history from their perspective and provides much needed revision to Anglo-centric works.

<sup>126</sup> Solms-Braunfels official report quoted in Biesele, *The History of the German Settlements in Texas*, 179.

the southwestern US.<sup>127</sup> Early acceptance of horse culture introduced by the Spanish, helped the Comanche dominate the region and remain in a position of power through the 1850s. They exerted control, not only over other Native American groups, but also Mexican and Anglo-American settlers. The Comanche wielded unrivaled economic influence in the region “by trading in Texas and raiding in Mexico.”<sup>128</sup> In addition to livestock and goods, the Comanche also traded people they took captive, particularly women and young children. Persons enslaved by the Comanche were either integrated into their societal structure or used for economic gain, often being sold to other indigenous groups as laborers.<sup>129</sup> In a lively conversation between Lindheimer and Comanche Chief Santa Anna,<sup>130</sup> Santa Anna offered “two beautiful mules and a young Mexican woman” in exchange for his son Eugen.<sup>131</sup> Lindheimer told the Comanche Chief that his son was not for sale, but his interaction with Santa Anna perfectly illustrates how the Comanche commodified the people they took captive.

In spite of some of the Comanches more contentious practices, Lindheimer, Solms-Braunfels, and John O. Meusebach, who replaced Solms-Braunfels as Commissioner General of the *Adelsverein* in 1845, deeply respected the Comanche and their socioeconomic influence. On multiple occasions, both Lindheimer and Solms-Braunfels wrote about the mistreatment of the Comanche and other indigenous groups at the hands of Anglo-Americans. The mistreatment of Native Americans by Anglo-Americans only deepened the divide between German-Americans

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<sup>127</sup> “About Us,” Comanche Nation: Lords of the Plains, accessed September 2, 2020, <https://comanchenation.com/our-nation/about-us>.

<sup>128</sup> Locke and Wright, eds. *The American Yawp*, Chapter 12.

<sup>129</sup> Pekka Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 252.

<sup>130</sup> Chief Santa Anna of the Penateka tribe of the Comanche is not to be confused with Mexican General Santa Anna

<sup>131</sup> Ferdinand Lindheimer, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen von Ferdinand Lindheimer in Texas* (Frankfurt am Main: Buchbruderei von Theodor Wentz, 1879), 69; John E. Williams, *The Writings of Ferdinand Lindheimer: Texas Botanist, Texas Philosopher* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2020), 114.

and US citizens. When tensions between the US and Mexico increased, Meusebach openly acknowledged the Comanche's dominance and promptly reached out to begin peace talks.

Multiple first-hand accounts of the Meusebach-Comanche Treaty<sup>132</sup> describe negotiations as a respectful and dignified affair. As part of the proceedings the Comanche offered robes made of buffalo for Meusebach and his aides to wear. Meusebach was even distinguished with a nickname, El-Sol Colorado, or The Red Sun, on account of his red hair. The treaty between the German-American settlers and the Comanche was signed on 9 May 1847 after months of negotiations. To commemorate the alliance, the Comanche traveled to Fredericksburg<sup>133</sup> to celebrate. The treaty is remarkable for its call to both groups to “use every exertion to keep up and even enforce peace and friendship between both the German [American] and Comanche people.” A provision of the treaty specifically states that should an action by an individual threaten the alliance to bring that person forward to be dealt with accordingly. Terms of the treaty also allowed for German-American settlers to visit any part of the Fischer-Miller Grant on Comanche land and be offered protection “by the Comanche Nation and the Chiefs thereof.” The treaty also encouraged the Comanche to “likewise come to the German [American] colonies, towns and settlements.”<sup>134</sup> Chief Santa Anna is known to have visited Meusebach and other German-American settlements regularly, often dropping in unexpectedly.

During the celebration Meusebach encouraged closer relations between the two groups, particularly for German-Americans to learn the Comanche language. He encouraged marriage

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<sup>132</sup> The treaty only made accommodations for German-Americans living in “the country between the Llano [River] and the San Saba.” Therefore, only German-American settlements associated with the *Adelsverein* were covered under the provisions of the treaty; Irene Marshall King, *John O. Meusebach: Colonizer in Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1967), 175.

<sup>133</sup> Fredericksburg was the second German-American settlement founded under the auspices of the *Adelsverein* in 1846.

<sup>134</sup> The Treaty between the Commissary General of the German Emigration Company quoted in King, *John O. Meusebach: German Colonizer in Texas*, 175.

between the two groups. Meusebach also openly acknowledged equality between German-Americans and the Comanche stating, “I do not disdain my red brethren because their skin is darker, and I do not think more of the white people because their complexion is lighter.”<sup>135</sup> Meusebach’s words are an indication of his and the German-American community’s respect of the Comanche. His words signify equality and unity that contrasts sharply with actions taken by Anglo-Americans. Although some of the language he used is antiquated, Meusebach and the German-American community’s treaty with the Comanche publicly promote an equal partnership. It was one of the few treaties with the Comanche that was never broken. The Meusebach-Comanche Treaty of 1847 heavily influenced Lindheimer’s perspective on Anglo-Americans’ treatment of indigenous populations and highlights his growing discontent with Anglo-American policies.

In his memoir, Lindheimer penned an essay titled “Crimes of the Texas Government against Native Americans.”<sup>136</sup> The essay evaluates what Lindheimer believes to be the greatest atrocity committed by Anglo-Americans against indigenous populations - the violent removal of tribes from their traditional lands. He argues that most of the removals were conducted using fraudulent and aggressive tactics. In response to these violent actions, Lindheimer strongly advocates for the rights of indigenous populations. He asserts that statements given by native groups regarding their territory should be given “more credence” than the opinions of US officials in the proceedings. Lindheimer argues that US officials had conflicts of interests which prevented them from siding with indigenous populations. He paints them as greedy “land-

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<sup>135</sup> King, *John O. Meusebach: Colonizer in Texas*, 118; Anonymous, “Meusebach’s Zug,” quoted in Penniger (ed. comp.), *Fest-Ausgabe*, 104.

<sup>136</sup> Lindheimer invokes language pervasive during the period when referring to indigenous groups, using the term “Indians” and “savages.” He also divides indigenous groups into two categories: “wild” and “civilized.” He considered Comanche as being “wild.” In addition to support for the Comanche and other tribes, Lindheimer also includes stories to demonstrate their capability to inflict “violence” and “destruction” so as to not be accused of bias.

sharks” only trying to increase the political and economic influence of the US by incorporating more territory.<sup>137</sup> Lindheimer even defends retaliatory actions of indigenous groups after their forced removal, writing “Who can blame them? Americans would have done the same in their place.”<sup>138</sup> Lindheimer’s words indicate that he is a fervent supporter of indigenous populations’ rights. His commentary on the issue of Native Americans’ removal emphasizes his growing disdain with Anglo-American politics and society. Lindheimer was not alone in his feelings within the German-American community. Lindheimer’s language in his essay echoes sentiments expressed by Solms-Braunfels.

In 1846, Solms-Braunfels wrote a scathing letter to Queen Victoria<sup>139</sup> titled *Memoir on American Affairs*. In the letter Solms-Braunfels discusses the situation in Texas and its possible annexation by the US. Solms-Braunfels is extremely critical of the US and his comments contain anti-American sentiments. He writes to Queen Victoria that the US is made up of the “worst element of all European nations... it can be easily said that the United States possesses the vices of all of the European nations without having inherited any of their good qualities.”<sup>140</sup> Solms-Braunfels is outraged by the mistreatment of Native Americans at the hands of Americans. He tells Queen Victoria that Native Americans’ frequent mistreatment and betrayal by Anglo-Americans makes indigenous populations German-Americans’ greatest allies in west Texas. He distinguishes the Comanche as the strongest tribe in the region and lauds their fighting prowess. His comments to Queen Victoria anticipate the treaty of 1847 but provides insight into

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<sup>137</sup> Lindheimer, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen*, 66; Williams, *The Writings of Ferdinand Lindheimer*, 109.

<sup>138</sup> Lindheimer, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen*, 67; Williams, *The Writings of Ferdinand Lindheimer*, 111.

<sup>139</sup> Queen Victoria was the reigning Queen of England from 1837 to 1901.

<sup>140</sup> Solms-Braunfels, *Memoir on American Affairs* in, *Voyage to North America 1844-45: Prince Carl of Solms’ Texas Diary of People, Places, and Events* (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2000), 212.

German-Americans' motivations to align themselves with the Comanche. Solms-Braunfels' letter also provides a link to Lindheimer's growing contempt for Anglo-American policies.

The similarity of the language used in Solms-Braunfels' letter and Lindheimer's essay suggests that Solms-Braunfels influenced Lindheimer's views on the treatment of indigenous groups by Anglo-Americans (or vice versa). The mistreat of native populations provides the foundation for Lindheimer's increasing disdain for Anglo-American political and social concerns. It is also likely, given their friendship, both men held similar views on the issue of Native Americans' mistreatment and discussed the topic regularly. Solms-Braunfels' assertion that the Comanche are the greatest allies against Anglo-Americans mirrors language evoked by Lindheimer in his memoirs. Lindheimer writes that when "the revolution broke out between Texas and Mexico, it was of paramount importance to secure friendship with the Indians."<sup>141</sup> As early as 1836, Lindheimer recognized the Comanche's power and the importance of establishing positive relations with them. It is apparent that German-American leaders intended early on to form an alliance with the Comanche against US and Mexican influence.

Lindheimer's personal accounts and supplementary literature, indicate that he was on good terms with the Comanche and often praised for his unique relationship with the tribe. According to some sources, Lindheimer was even looked to as a "powerful medicine man," because of his exceptional knowledge of flora in the area.<sup>142</sup> His reputation with local plants proceeded him on his travels and he often encountered indigenous tribes while out botanizing. On one such occasion, Lindheimer's curiosity drew him to explore a particularly rocky area while out surveying the area around New Braunfels. After making the difficult ascent with his

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<sup>141</sup> Lindheimer, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen*, 63; Williams, *The Writings of Ferdinand Lindheimer*, 103.

<sup>142</sup> Interview by Sarah S. Mckeller, quoted in Glen Lich "Goethe on the Guadalupe" in *German Culture in Texas: A Free Earth, Essays from the 1978 Southwest Symposium*, ed. Glen E. Lich and Donna B. Reeves (Woodbridge: Twayne Publishers, 1980), 47.



horse, Lindheimer unexpectedly met a tribe of Native Americans atop the plateau. The tribe complimented Lindheimer for his horse's ability to climb the treacherous rock, but immediately noticed that he was armed. When they asked him why he carried a weapon, Lindheimer replied, "cuidado es muy bueno" (caution is good). According to Lindheimer, they smiled and said he was right.<sup>143</sup> The anecdote testifies to Lindheimer's strong relationship with indigenous groups and recognition of the treaty. Lindheimer is also well-known for his for amicable relationship with Chief Santa Anna.

Lindheimer highlights his friendship with Santa Anna in his memoirs, saying that he had the fortune to speak on several occasions with one of "the most distinguished chiefs" among the Comanches. Lindheimer speaks highly of Santa Anna and credits him as being "a tall, well-built man of sound judgement." Lindheimer mentions Santa Anna's frequent visits to German-American settlements to exchange gifts and maintain peaceful relations with the German-American community. When Lindheimer asked Santa Anna why he agreed to peaceful relations with German-Americans, Santa Anna replied, "You cannot make war with the whole world, you have to be on peaceful footing with a part of the people. We want to go to war with the Mexicans and the Bluejackets (US soldiers), but we want to live with you in peace and we want to sell you horses, mules, and Mexican women."<sup>144</sup> From Lindheimer's writings, it is evident an alliance between German-Americans and the Comanche was born out of necessity. Both groups needed the support of the other. Together they were stronger and could challenge the growing influence of US and Mexican forces. Unlike Anglo-Americans, Lindheimer and his German-American community valued indigenous groups and engaged in an equal partnership with the Comanche. Lindheimer maintained his high regard for the Comanche and other indigenous groups

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<sup>143</sup> Lindheimer, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen*, 72; Williams, *The Writings of Ferdinand Lindheimer*, 116.

<sup>144</sup> Lindheimer, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen*, 69; Williams, *The Writings of Ferdinand Lindheimer*, 113.

throughout his life. But the capacity for the alliance between German-Americans and the Comanche to wield influence against Anglo-Americans waned in the 1850s.

Anglo-American political and social movements threatened the promised land Lindheimer worked so hard to build. Manifest Destiny, the annexation of Texas, and the Mexican-American War strained relations between German-Americans and their Anglo-American peers. The acquisition of Texas as a US state secured Anglo-American dominance in the region and weakened the alliance between German-Americans and the Comanche. The mistreatment of indigenous populations at the hands of Anglo-Americans transformed Lindheimer's apathy toward Anglo-American issues transformed into disdain. Although he preferred to stay out of Anglo-American politics, the rise of the Know Nothing Party and pressure from Anglo-Americans in Texas, forced Lindheimer into the political arena. In the process Lindheimer, became a reluctant protector of Anglo-American society in Texas.

## **Chapter Four: In Defense of Slavery**

Ferdinand Lindheimer's transition from disdain to political activism on behalf of Anglo-Americans in Texas did not develop rapidly, but gradually over a six year period (1848-1854), culminating in 1854. Lindheimer, cognizant of growing mistrust of German-Americans by the Anglo-American community, adopted a pragmatic approach to keep him, and by extension his community, safe. Using the *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung* as his mouthpiece, Lindheimer, guided by his own self-interest, entered into the Anglo-American political sphere and publicly condemned German-Americans' anti-slavery activism. He threw his support behind Anglo-American society and encouraged other German-Americans to do the same. Lindheimer became the most visible German-American supporter of slavery, secession, and the Confederacy in Texas. This chapter examines his motives for entering into the political sphere including Lindheimer's growing anxiety regarding the Anglicization of Texas, his concerns over divisions within the German-American community and fear of rising nativism in Texas. This chapter also evaluates how Lindheimer used the *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung* to publicly support secession, slavery, and the Confederacy throughout the war as examples of his pragmatism.

### **The Anglicization of Texas and German-American Division**

Lindheimer accepted the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo as cementing Anglo-Americans' dominance in Texas. For Lindheimer, the Anglicization of Texas was seen through the burgeoning number of Anglo-Americans living in Texas and the increasing presence of slavery. Both of which stemmed from the colonization contract system implemented by the Mexican government to promote immigration to the region in the 1820s and 1830s. The majority of colonization contracts between 1821 and 1835 had been awarded to Anglo-American families,

most of whom came from the southern US.<sup>145</sup> Following its annexation, Texas continued to attract a large number of immigrants to the area. The 1850 census shows that of the roughly 212,000 people living in Texas, Anglo-Americans from southern states accounted for more than half. Including those from northern states, Anglo-Americans comprised roughly sixty percent of Texas' total population.<sup>146</sup> Compared to Mexican-Americans and German-Americans, both with populations around 11,000 in 1850, Anglo-Americans had a significant majority. The Comanche, German-Americans' closest allies, also struggled against increasing Anglo-American population.

The Mexican-American War marked the peak of Comanche power in the Southwest. During the nineteenth century, the Comanche experienced severe population loss, due to smallpox and cholera epidemics between 1848 and 1852. Massive losses from disease, coupled with internal economic struggles and overhunting of food sources, left the Comanche susceptible to the encroachment of Anglo-Americans on their territory.<sup>147</sup> The Comanche population of 40,000 in 1780 dwindled to 4,000-5,000 by 1870.<sup>148</sup> Following the Mexican-American War, provisions of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo divided Comanche territory and enforced regulations to prevent the tribe from entering Mexico. As a result, when the US and the Comanche came into what historian Pekka Hämäläinen calls "critical contact" in the 1850s, the Comanche "had

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<sup>145</sup> Using the definition provided in Andrea Mehrländer's, *The Germans of Charleston, Richmond, and New Orleans during the Civil War Period, 1850-1870*, any reference to "South," "Southern states," or "southern US," unless otherwise noted, includes the eleven states that made up the Confederacy from 1860/1861-1865: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia (13). See also K. Michael Prince "Coming to Terms with History: An Essay on Germany and the American South," *Virginia Quarterly Review* 76, 1 (Winter 2000) 67-75.

<sup>146</sup> Terry G Jordan, "Population Origins in Texas, 1850," *Geographical Review*, 59 (January 1969), 85; The Seventh Census of the United States: 1850 (Washington, 1853), Vol. 1, pp. xxxvi-xxx.

<sup>147</sup> Pekka Hämäläinen asserts in *The Comanche Empire* (2008), that although the Comanches' collapse and Anglo-American ascent to dominance may seem causal, "Anglo-American expansion did not trigger [the Comanche's] decline" Rather Anglo-Americans came into significant contact with the Comanches as their power was already in decline; Pekka Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 293.

<sup>148</sup> Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire*, 102 and 339.

ceased to be an imperial power.”<sup>149</sup> Although Lindheimer and German-Americans remained on good terms with the Comanche, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo signaled the death knell of Comanche power. Lindheimer likely recognized that their alliance with the tribe would not be able to provide long-term protection from Anglo-American control of Texas. The German-Americans small population relative to Anglo-Americans, as well as the Comanches’ significant decline in power, placed German-Americans settlements precariously in the hands of Anglo-Americans. Anglo-American dominance existed not only their physical numbers, but also facilitating the spread of slavery.

Because the majority of colonization contracts were signed by US citizens in slave-holding states or territories, slavery expanded into the region. The Mexican government had regulations in place to limit the spread of slavery with the National Colonization Law (1824) and State Colonization Law (1825).<sup>150</sup> These regulations, however, did not directly ban the institution. Eager to continue large-scale immigration, Mexico overlooked the initial immigration of enslaved persons to Texas. The Mexican government abolished slavery in 1829, but the damage was done. Colonization contracts entrenched slavery in Texas. By 1850 58,558<sup>151</sup> blacks lived in the Texas, the majority of whom were enslaved. As an Independent Republic Texas formally legalized slavery in 1836. Following annexation, Texas joined the US as a slave state, increasing the already contentious debates regarding the institution’s

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<sup>149</sup> Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire*, 292-293; “Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo,” opened for signature February 2, 1848, *Treaties and Conventions between the United States of American and other powers since July 4, 1774*, Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1871, [https://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th\\_century/guadhida.asp](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/guadhida.asp).

<sup>150</sup> The National Colonization Law and the State Colonization Law oversaw the appointments of *empresarios* to execute signed colonization contracts, regulated the size of individual land grants, and monitored the number of immigrants settling on each tract of land.

<sup>151</sup> The 1850 census does not make a distinction between free and enslaved blacks. The census of 1860 reported only 350 blacks as being free. Therefore, it is likely the majority of blacks listed on the 1850 census were enslaved.

expansion.<sup>152</sup> Increased sectional tensions between the North and South also highlighted divisions within the German-American community on the issue of slavery.

Divisions within the German-American community on slavery coincided with an influx of immigrants from the German Confederation in the 1850s. Designated as the *Forty-Eighters*<sup>153</sup>, this large group of immigrants numbering at roughly one million Germans, mirrored immigration patterns of Lindheimer and the *Dreißiger* in the 1830s.<sup>154</sup> Another democratic movement, led by an educated and economically secure German middle class was overthrown by the German Confederation government in 1848/1849.<sup>155</sup> Similar to the *Putsch* in 1833, the failed revolution resulted in the exile of many of the participants to the US.

Three to four thousand of the *Forty-Eighters* were considered political refugees like Lindheimer. These new immigrants, referred to as the “Greens,” criticized the older generation, the “Grays,” for their “poor journalism, ineffectiveness in [Anglo] American politics, and their failure to end slavery.”<sup>156</sup> Lawrence S. Thompson and Frank X. Braun assert in their essay “The Forty-Eighters in Politics” that the main dividing factor between the Greens and the Grays stemmed from the Grays lack of significant involvement in Anglo-American politics, particularly their attitudes toward slavery.<sup>157</sup> However, the majority of *Forty-Eighters* immigrated to

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<sup>152</sup> Robert A. Calvert, Arnoldo De Leon, and Gregg Cantrell, *A History of Texas* (Hoboken: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2014), 58. See also Don Biggers, *German Pioneers in Texas: A Brief History of Their Hardships, Struggles, and Achievements* (Fredericksburg: Press of the Fredericksburg Publishing Co., 1925) 18-19.

<sup>153</sup> For a thorough review of the *Forty-Eighters* see Carl Wittke’s *We Who Built America* (1939), *Refugees of a Revolution* (1952), and collection of essays in *The Forty-Eighters: Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950), edited by A.E. Zucker.

<sup>154</sup> United States Department of Homeland Security. *2018 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics*. Washington, DC: US Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics, 2019, 6.

<sup>155</sup> For a detailed history on the failed 1848 Revolution, see Veit Valentin’s *1848: Chapters of German History*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Hamden: Archon Books, 1965).

<sup>156</sup> Carl Wittke, *We Who Built America: The Saga of the Immigrant* (Cleveland: The press of Western Reserve University, 1939), 193.

<sup>157</sup> Lawrence S. Thompson and Frank X. Braun, “The Forty-Eighters in Politics,” in *The Forty-Eighters: Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848*, ed. A.E. Zucker (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950), 115.

northern US states where slavery was illegal. The *Forty-Eighters* vocalizing their opposition to slavery in slave-free states resulted in different experiences than German-Americans living in the South. By the time German-Americans settled in Texas, slavery was a well-established institution and accepted it as part of life in Texas. The *Adelsverein* even purchased an additional tract of land near Industry, Texas with the intent to establish a plantation when acquiring colonization contracts in the 1840s.

Despite vocal protests within the German-American community, the *Adelsverein* nonetheless participated in the slave economy. Count Joseph von Boos-Waldeck, one of the original surveyors for the *Adelsverein*, purchased the land. In addition, he procured materials for the plantation, including the acquisition of 17 enslaved persons: seven men, eight women, and two children. Christened the Nassau Plantation<sup>158</sup> after the primary founder of the *Adelsverein*, the plantation consisted of roughly 4000 acres with crops and other industries that helped fund New Braunfels. Solms-Braunfels traveled frequently to the plantation during his time as Commissioner General. He wrote about the plantation in his private diaries and his official reports to *Adelsverein* leadership.<sup>159</sup> It eventually transitioned out of the *Adelsverein* ownership in 1850 and by 1859 all previous land associated with the Nassau Plantation had been sold.<sup>160</sup> The *Adelsverein* was aware the slavery was legal in Texas before signing the colonization contracts. German-Americans living in New Braunfels and the larger Comal County did accept slavery as an institution of Texas and participated in the slave economy through the Nassau Plantation. Although the majority of Comal County residents did not own enslaved persons, 193

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<sup>158</sup> In some of the original documents and translated materials the German word for “farm” was used in place of “plantation.” Considering the connotation of the word of plantation, this was likely done to distance the *Adelsverein* from their involvement in the slave economy.

<sup>159</sup> Prince Carl of Solms -Braunfels, *Voyage to North America: Texas Diary of People, Places, and Events 1844-1845* (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2000), 36-38, 40-42, 57, 77-78, 97, 116, 150, 170-173.

<sup>160</sup> James C. Kearny, *Nassau Plantation: The Evolution of a Texas-German Slave Plantation* (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2010), 208.

enslaved persons are listed on the 1860 Comal County census.<sup>161</sup> German-Americans participation in the slave economy cemented the divide between the Greens and the Grays. As a “Gray,” Lindheimer was indifferent towards slavery.

Lindheimer remained apathetic in his attitude towards slavery. He never mentioned slavery in his correspondence with Engelmann. Lindheimer only mentioned slavery once in his memoir, to provide a comparison between abolition of slavery and cotton production to livestock and agricultural practices in Texas.<sup>162</sup> While Lindheimer rarely mentioned Anglo-American issues, he discussed them on occasion if they impacted him directly. Evidenced by his discussion on the Texas Revolution and the Mexican-American War, Lindheimer only referred to these conflicts because they directly affected his interests. Not until the 1850s did slavery pose a threat to Lindheimer and only then did Lindheimer involve himself in the discussion. Divisions within the German-American community, in addition to rising nativism throughout the US, pushed Lindheimer closer to Anglo-American politics.

### **Rise of the Texas Know Nothings**

Originally founded as a secret society, the Know Nothing party gained considerable footing in Anglo-American politics in the 1850s. Anti-Catholic and anti-Immigrant, Know Nothings were critical opponents of large immigrant populations in the US. They campaigned heavily to restrict the voting rights of immigrant groups to limit the “influence of persons of foreign birth in political and economic affairs.”<sup>163</sup> The party originated in the East, but made significant advances in the South, particularly Texas. In some areas Know Nothings superseded

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<sup>161</sup> 1860 Comal County Census used in Oscar Haas, *History of New Braunfels and Comal County, Texas* (San Antonio: Burke Publishing Company, 1968), 262-295.

<sup>162</sup> Ferdinand Lindheimer, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen von Ferdinand Lindheimer in Texas* (Frankfurt am Main: Buchbruderei von Theodor Wentz, 1879), 62; John E. Williams, *The Writings of Ferdinand Lindheimer: Texas Botanist, Texas Philosopher* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2020), 100.

<sup>163</sup> Ralph Wooster, “An Analysis of Texas Know Nothings” in *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 70, no. 3 (January 1967): 414. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/30237906>.



the Whig Party<sup>164</sup> to challenge the Democratic Party's control. They intended "capitalize on resentment of the increasing numbers of foreigners in Texas."<sup>165</sup> As a measure to counteract nativism, *Forty-Eighters* held state conventions with the purpose of coordinating "political thought and activity of the German-Americans."<sup>166</sup> One such convention was the annual *Staats Sangerfest* hosted in San Antonio in 1854.

Held over two days, German-Americans used the singing festival as an opportunity to voice concerns on political and social issues facing the US. Representatives from five German-American communities in Texas (New Braunfels, Fredericksburg, San Antonio, Sisterdale, and Coletoville) drafted proposed resolutions centered on three issues: political, social, and religious reforms. Under social reforms the convention addressed the issue of slavery, asserting that slavery was an evil that should not exist in the US, as a nation dedicated to democratic ideals. They did not believe the federal government had any right to intercede on the issue of slavery, rather it should be up to individual states to determine if slavery should be legal within their own boundaries. If, and only if, a state decided to abolish slavery as an institution could the Federal government be requested to assist in the removal of slavery from state government operations.<sup>167</sup> The convention and the proposed reforms prompted swift backlash from both Anglo- and German-American communities. As debates over the extension of slavery dominated news cycles in the US, German-Americans' loyalty to Texas, and to a larger extent the South, was called into question. Many Anglo-Americans viewed this declaration as a criticism of Texan

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<sup>164</sup> The Whig Party was a political party active in the nineteenth century. The party faded out of power in the mid-1850s.

<sup>165</sup> Wooster, "An Analysis of Texas Know Nothings," 414.

<sup>166</sup> Thompson and Braun, "The Forty-Eighters in Politics," 119.

<sup>167</sup> The reforms offered at the convention echoed the premise of "popular sovereignty" in the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which allowed for residents to decide if slavery would be legal within the boundary of a territory instead of the federal government. The Kansas-Nebraska Act went into effect on 30 May 1854; Oscar Haas Papers, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History.

culture and politics. They grew increasingly concerned about the large number of German-Americans living in Texas and visible display of *Deutschtum* through their cultural societies. By 1850, New Braunfels was the fourth largest city behind Galveston, San Antonio, and Houston.<sup>168</sup> New Braunfels also had numerous cultural societies including a *Turnverein* and “Germania,” a *Sängerbund*. German-American community’s growing visibility only strengthened the Know Nothings’ platform to limit the influence of immigrant groups. The convention and its fallout proved too much for Lindheimer. 1854 signaled the end of his silence on Anglo-American political and social issues.

Shortly after the convention, Lindheimer, utilizing the *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung*, published a petition signed by 135 residents of New Braunfels. The petition stated that the representative at the convention did not reflect the views of the community at large. Lindheimer asserted that the convention placed the German-American community in a bad light and put their actions under a microscope.<sup>169</sup> Lindheimer openly opposed the Know Nothing Party and defended the German-American community from repeated nativist attacks. When Anglo-Americans attacked German American cultural societies, asserting they were “abolitionist bases” Lindheimer confronted these nativist attacks directly stating that, “[Anglo] Americans were acting in an unrepugnant, inquisition-like, and illogical manner in casting suspicion on the German [American] settlers as a whole for the actions of a few.”<sup>170</sup> As a result of Anglo-Americans’ negative reactions, Lindheimer encouraged German-Americans to adopt the views of their Anglo-American peers and initially cautioned his community not to “meddle in [Anglo-

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<sup>168</sup> Rudolph L. Biesele, *The History of the German Settlements in Texas, 1831– 1861* (Austin: Von Boeckmann Jones, 1930), 135.

<sup>169</sup> *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung*, 26 May 1854.

<sup>170</sup> Glen E. Lich, “Goethe on the Guadalupe,” in *German Culture in Texas: A Free Earth; Essays from the 1978 Southwest Symposium*, ed. Glen E. Lich and Donna B. Reeves (Woodbridge: Twayne Publishers, 1980), 68.

American] affairs.”<sup>171</sup> Lindheimer’s friend, and former colleague, Adolph Douai served as an alarming example to the German-American community of what could happen if Anglo-Americans were antagonized.

Born in 1819 in Altenburg, Thuringa, Adolph Douai appeared on the surface to be Lindheimer’s twin. Like Lindheimer Douai was well-educated. He attended *Gymnasium* and received his doctorate at the University of Leipzig in 1841. Dissatisfied with the government of the German Confederation and lingering restrictive measures from the Carlsbad Decrees, Douai participated in the failed 1848 Revolution to unify the German States. Douai even served a year in prison for his involvement. Upon his release he immigrated to New Braunfels in 1852. Given his prior experience with newspapers in the German Confederation, Douai assisted Lindheimer with the *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung* in its early stages. Douai also wrote an article for the paper’s first edition printed on 26 November 1852.<sup>172</sup> Shortly after arriving in Texas, Douai was offered his own position as editor.

Douai moved to San Antonio in 1853 to edit the city’s first German-language publication the *San Antonio Zeitung*. An ardent abolitionist, Douai repeatedly denounced slavery in his editorials. After the convention in 1854, Douai supported the proposed reforms and continued to promote his abolitionist platform. Douai’s public support of the convention and anti-slavery stance incited criticism from Anglo-Americans and the Know Nothing Party. By 1856 growing criticism from the Know Nothings, Anglo-Americans, and the German-American community

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<sup>171</sup>*Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung*, 23 June 1854; also quoted in Lich, “Goethe on the Guadalupe,” in *German Culture in Texas*, 67.

<sup>172</sup> Biesele states in *The History of the German Settlements in Texas, 1831–1861* (1930) that only one copy of the first edition of the *Neu Braunfelser Zeitung* survived. The copy of the paper belonged to Hermann Seele, an immigrant brought to Texas under the auspices of the *Adelsverein*, and founding member of New Braunfels. According to Biesele, the surviving copy had “Dr. Douai” written in pencil under the article titled “Die Deutschen in Texas.” Biesele argues Seele’s position as a founding member, familiarity with the community, and Douai’s name written under the article, indicates that Douai was likely the author of the article instead of Lindheimer.

forced Douai and his family to relocate to Boston. Douai eventually settled in New York in 1866 and never returned to Texas.<sup>173</sup> Lindheimer actively participated in Douai's condemnation. Lindheimer likely witnessed Anglo-Americans' treatment of Douai and was determined not to follow in Douai's footsteps. New Braunfels was Lindheimer's home and the manifestation of his German-American ethnic identity. He did not wish to leave it under any circumstance. In order to remain in Texas, Lindheimer reluctantly defended Anglo-American society to preserve himself and the German-American community he helped to build. Following his initial criticism of the *Staats Sangerfest* in 1854, Lindheimer continued to publicly support the institution of slavery. He supported secession and Confederate war efforts using the *Neu-Braunfeler Zeitung* as his first line of defense.

#### **Lindheimer and the *Neu-Braunfeler Zeitung*: Views on Secession, Slavery, and the Confederacy**<sup>174</sup>

On the issue of secession, Comal County was exceptional in their views relative to other German-American counties in Texas. Lindheimer openly acknowledged in 1861 that the majority of German-Americans in Texas were against secession. Lindheimer states that the reasons for division in the German-American community on secession are varied, but the majority of German-Americans are concerned there will be "evil" consequences if Texas seceded. Lindheimer highlights concerns relating to reduced economic opportunities with industry and trade, as well as access to major ports like Galveston and New Orleans. Although Lindheimer recognizes the majority of German-Americans are not in favor of secession, he states

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<sup>173</sup> Biesele, *The History of the German Settlements in Texas*, 202-203; Marilyn McAdams Sibly, *Lone Star and State Gazettes: Texas Newspapers before the Civil War* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1983), 230-237.

<sup>174</sup> Lindheimer used derogatory terms and language regarding enslaved persons consistent with the time period in his editorials. For translation purposes, derogatory and outright offensive terms have been replaced with terminology deemed more appropriate by historians of the Civil War era. One such example is "enslaved person" versus "slave."

that it is already “fact [sic] accompli,”<sup>175</sup> secession was officially decided by the election of Abraham Lincoln. Lindheimer urges German-Americans in Texas to support the decision to secede as a sign of solidarity to the Anglo-American community.

When Texas voted to secede from the US, Comal County voted 239 in favor of secession and 86 against.<sup>176</sup> Compared to other primarily ethnic German-American counties the numbers contrasted greatly. Gillespie County, for example, overwhelmingly voted against secession with 398 votes against and 16 in favor.<sup>177</sup> Comal County is only one of three German-American counties that voted in favor of secession. Comal County is also the only German-American county that voted in favor of secession with the overt majority. Comal County’s majority vote indicates that Lindheimer had some influence over the population in Comal County for them to vote in favor of secession. Regardless of the reason, Comal County’s vote for secession visibly demonstrated their support for Texas and the Anglo-American community.

To further reinforce German-Americans commitment to Texas and the South, Lindheimer continuously printed editorials that supported slavery and challenged the idea that German-Americans had a natural aversion to the institution. In an editorial in March 1859, Lindheimer argued that German-Americans did not own enslaved persons because of moral concerns, but rather ones of practicality. According to Lindheimer the main reason German-Americans did not own enslaved persons is because the majority of German-Americans in West Texas were not born into the aristocracy and therefore must work and sweat “to earn their living.”<sup>178</sup> Put simply, German-Americans could not afford to own enslaved persons.

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<sup>175</sup> Lindheimer misspelled the French phrase “fait accompli,” which refers to a decision or action that has already occurred or been decided on.

<sup>176</sup> *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung*, 1 March 1861

<sup>177</sup> Frances R. Horne, *War Between the States: Comal County Texas in the Civil War* (Lubbock: Word Publications, 2011), 7.

<sup>178</sup> *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung*, 11 March 1859

Lindheimer outlines the financial situation in the region. Around Comal County, enslaved persons cost \$1200-\$1500 (roughly \$37,000-47,000 today). Lindheimer states that taking into consideration interest over a 25-30 year period, and with an interest rate of 10%, enslaved labor would be required to produce work that earned a minimum of \$200 (a little over \$6000 today) in order to be considered worth the investment. Lindheimer also voices concerns on the role speculation plays in determining the cost of enslaved people and the additional expense of purchasing animals to assist with the work. Therefore, it was more cost effective for German-Americans to run their own small farms than to purchase enslaved peoples.

In Lindheimer's view, the absence of enslaved people in German-American communities is one of financial means, rather than taking exception to the institution. Lindheimer's descriptions of why the majority German-Americans did not own slaves is distressing to a modern reader, but not wholly unfounded. The majority of German-Americans arrived in Texas between 1844 and 1847. Accounting for the economic factors that motivated the majority of German-Americans' immigration to Texas, it is reasonable to conclude that the majority of them would not have had the capital required to purchase enslaved persons. Whether this is why German-Americans did not own slaves is difficult to say, but Lindheimer makes a strong case to defend the absence of slavery in German-American communities against accusations made by Anglo-Americans. Lindheimer addressed the issue of slavery again, closer to the presidential election in 1860.

In September of 1860, Lindheimer ardently disagrees with the idea that slave labor takes away from the free market labor system and believes the existence of slavery should not be decided with use of force. Lindheimer says that if slavery is to be called an evil, then it is an old evil, similar to that of a chronic illness and cannot be easily be removed. Therefore, German-

Americans in Texas should not get involved in this “unnatural crisis” that is being initiated by the North over an inherent right of the southern states.<sup>179</sup> This statement is meant to reassure Anglo-Americans of German-Americans’ support of slavery showing that they accept it as a legal practice. The election of Lincoln, according to Lindheimer, firmly placed responsibility for sectional tensions on the South.

In Lindheimer’s view, Lincoln’s election means that slavery is no longer a political question, but rather a question of social, moral, and religious beliefs and as a result, have become fanatical. To Lindheimer, this election clearly indicates that German-Americans cannot avoid making a decision to side with or against slaveholders. Lindheimer writes, “those of us in Texas, embrace the political and social beliefs of our adoptive homeland and those of the slave-holding citizens. We do not sit on the fence, but are fortunate to share the opinions and sentiments of German [American] Texas citizens through our paper.”<sup>180</sup> Lindheimer also stated that their voting rights as immigrants are not restricted and they are able to voice their opinion through political participation. Lindheimer’s mention of German-Americans’ voting rights serves two purposes. First, it signaled to the Know Nothing Party that German-Americans remained enfranchised despite attempts to diminish the voting rights of immigrant groups. Second, it emphasizes German-Americans’ commitment to Texas by celebrating their privilege to vote like their Anglo-American peers. Lindheimer continued his support of slavery throughout the war and addressed Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation<sup>181</sup> in January 1863.

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<sup>179</sup> *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung*, 7 September 1860

<sup>180</sup> *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung*, 13 April 1860

<sup>181</sup> President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on 1 January 1863. It declared “that all persons held as slaves” in the Confederacy “are, and henceforward shall be free.”

Rather than reprinting the Emancipation Proclamation, Lindheimer printed Confederate Brigadier General John Magruder's<sup>182</sup> Proclamation in response to Lincoln. Magruder discusses the Emancipation Proclamation and warns Texas citizens of steps being taken in other southern states. Magruder states that former enslaved persons will not only be armed and operate as military police, but under Lincoln's government will be considered US citizens and earn a monthly stipend. Magruder assures the people of Texas that the practice of paying former "property" will likely die, and in the meantime Texans are "free from worry or fear" that their land or enslaved persons will be seized like the terrorism seen in other Confederate states when property was confiscated by the federal troops.<sup>183</sup> Lindheimer's reprinting of Magruder's Proclamation is intentional. Lindheimer uses the proclamation as a means to underscore German-Americans continued support of the Confederacy even in the face of "setbacks." By omitting the Emancipation Proclamation, Lindheimer gives preference to the concerns of the Confederacy and sends the message that German-Americans commitment to Texas is unwavering. This was a skillful move by Lindheimer following challenging events in 1862.

In June 1862, German-Americans from Gillespie, Kerr, and Kendal counties established the Union Loyal League. The organization functioned as a society to support the policies of Lincoln and prevent German-Americans "from coercion into bearing arms against the United States."<sup>184</sup>

The Union Loyal League drew negative attention from the Confederate government. These

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<sup>182</sup> John Magruder was a senior officer in the Confederate Army. Following his own personal missteps during the Seven Days Battles in the Eastern Theater with Lee, Magruder was reassigned to Texas in November 1862; Thomas M. Settles, *The Military Career of John Bankhead Magruder* (Ph.D. dissertation, Texas Christian University, 1972).

<sup>183</sup> The terms *Union* and *Union Army* are replaced with *Federal*, *United States*, and *United States Army*. These terms are consistent with modern interpretations of the Civil War, as official military records of the era do not refer to the US or US Army as the "Union" or "Union Army;" W. Todd Groce, "New Wine Old Bottles: Using Historical Markers to Reshape Public Memory of the Civil War," in *Interpreting the Civil War at Museums and Historic Sites* ed. Kevin M. Levin (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017).

<sup>184</sup> Ella Lonn, *Foreigners in the Confederacy* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1940), 426.



activities reinforced the idea that German-American communities were not committed to the Confederacy and needed to be restrained through extreme measures such as martial law.

The German-American counties of Gillespie, Kerr, and Kendal were placed under martial law in July 1862.<sup>185</sup> The rules and regulations of the laws imposed were published in English and German in the *Neu-Braunfelsener Zeitung*. The law stated that white males above the age of 16, “alien or Confederate citizen” needed to present themselves to the Provost to register and provide necessary information. Citizens would be required to take an oath of loyalty to the Confederacy, with a promise not to disclose secrets to the enemy. After signing they would be unable to travel outside of their county without proper documentation. If they did not comply, they would be required to pay a fine or be “dealt with vigorously.” Placing these counties in particular under martial law demonstrated clear mistrust of German-Americans by the Confederate government. It is an extreme step to suppress anti-Confederate activity. Lindheimer, however, appears to have fully supported the decision to place the counties under martial law. This is evident in Lindheimer’s lack of response to the Nueces Massacre.

After Gillespie, Kerr, and Kendal were placed under martial law tensions in the region heightened between German-Americans and the Confederate government, culminating in a violent altercation between German-Americans and Confederate forces on 10 August 1862. Sixty-one German-Americans attempted to flee to Mexico to avoid taking the oath of allegiance to the Confederacy. Confederate troops attacked German-Americans’ encampment along the Nueces River. The skirmish resulted in the death of nineteen German-Americans and nine wounded individuals were executed hours later. Thirty-seven German-Americans escaped the

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<sup>185</sup> Lonn, *Foreigners in the Confederacy*, 427.

initial attack, but Confederate troops continued to pursue them to the Mexican border, resulting in further German American casualties.

Lindheimer's willingness to print the martial law regulations, as well as translate them into German, indicates his public cooperation with the Confederate government. His lack of response to the Nueces Massacre is also telling. As sole editor, he controlled the content of the *Neu-Braunfeler Zeitung* and willingly published it, even though the measure specifically targeted German-American communities. It is possible he was required to publish the regulations of martial law in accordance with the Confederate government, but it is more likely that Lindheimer cooperated with them. Comal County was never placed under martial law and did not receive the harsh treatment that Gillespie, Kerr, and Kendal experienced. Despite other German-American communities' anti-Confederate actions, New Braunfels remained shielded from Confederate intervention. It illustrates Lindheimer's skills as a pragmatist to keep himself and his community safe. When Lindheimer printed Magruder's Proclamation in January 1863, he continued the precedent he set by giving preference to the Confederacy's concerns. This is also extended to the Confederacy's need for soldiers.

Throughout the war Lindheimer encouraged German-Americans to show their support for the Confederacy with military service. In September 1861, Lindheimer encouraged Comal County residents to volunteer for the military because it was their responsibility to defend the Confederacy and put patriotism of their adoptive homeland on public display. According to Lindheimer, it was the greatest shame that German-Americans in the North chose disunion and war, and because of their actions the good German name needed to be redeemed. Redemption could be accomplished through military service. As with German-Americans' voting rights,

service in the military would openly challenge nativist criticisms regarding German-Americans' commitment to the South and visibly demonstrate their loyalty and patriotism to Texas.<sup>186</sup>

Comal County furnished three companies of troops to the Confederate Army, two cavalry and one infantry company. During the Civil War a number of Comal County residents also served in state militias and were eventually called to active service as wartime pressures increased in 1863.<sup>187</sup> Since the majority of Comal County's population was ethnically German, the three companies furnished to the Confederate Army were primarily ethnic companies and maintained their ethnic composition throughout the war. Military participation is frequently used as a benchmark to assess German-Americans patriotism and loyalty during the Civil War. It is clear German-Americans living in Comal County felt they had demonstrated their commitment to the Confederacy more than their Anglo American peers. On multiple occasions Lindheimer felt called upon to defend German-Americans' service in the military.

One example occurred in April 1862 Lindheimer addressed discrimination felt by German-Americans in the Confederate Army. Lindheimer writes that if there were any "underlying doubt[s] that the German [American] population from Texas" sent an equal number of men to the Confederate Army consistent with native born southerners, German-Americans can be full of patriotism and satisfaction. Lindheimer asserts that German-Americans not only sent more troops to the Confederate Army, but they were better trained and more capable soldiers.<sup>188</sup> This comment was an outgrowth of Lindheimer's early years in the German Confederation and growing up during the Napoleonic Wars. His statements indicate that is proud of his German heritage and the visible display of *Deutschtum* in the ethnic companies sent to the Confederate

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<sup>186</sup> *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung*, 20 September 1861

<sup>187</sup> Haas, *History of New Braunfels and Comal County, Texas*, 159; General Services Administration, National Archives and Records Service, Washington, DC.

<sup>188</sup> *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung*, 25 April 1862

Army. It also highlights his belief that German-Americans surpass Anglo-American soldiers' abilities. Lindheimer asserts that the trials experienced by Germans in the German Confederation required considerable military training and involvement in many conflicts. Lindheimer argues there is reason to conclude that German-Americans are better equipped to fight than their Anglo American peers.<sup>189</sup> Lindheimer again defended German-American military service in October 1863.

Lindheimer responded to accusations of cowardice and desertion, particularly of German-Americans from Comal County. He assures the families of these soldiers that they did not desert, are good soldiers, and in good health.<sup>190</sup> Although desertion rates were high in the Confederate Army, and affected both German-American and Anglo-American troops, German-Americans desertion received far more attention in the press. By challenging Anglo-American discrimination of German-American troops, Lindheimer reaffirmed his own German-American ethnic identity. Although he publicly supported Anglo-American society, Lindheimer's *Deutschtum* was his priority. Throughout the Civil War era, Lindheimer did not allow negative comments that would undermine his German-American identity.

The Anglicization of Texas, divisions within the German-American community, and the rise of nativism drew Ferdinand Lindheimer into the Anglo-American political sphere. Lindheimer acted out of his own self-interest to preserve his German-American ethnic identity. Only when Lindheimer and his community were endangered, did he engage in Anglo-American political and social issues. The *Staats Sangerfest* in 1854 acted as a catalyst, inducing Lindheimer to criticize any activity that went against the dominant culture. Lindheimer used the *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung* as a shield to protect himself and New Braunfels, the physical

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<sup>189</sup> *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung*, 25 April 1862

<sup>190</sup> *Neu-Braunfelser Zeitung*, 9 October 1863 quoted in Horne, *War between the States*, 94.

manifestation of his ethnic identity, from intrusion by the Anglo-American community and in so doing, Lindheimer became the most visible German-American supporter of slavery, secession, and the Confederacy in Texas. He publicly condemned German-Americans' anti-slavery and anti-Confederacy actions throughout the war to protect himself. Lindheimer's actions were not based on altruism, but self-preservation. By supporting Anglo-American society Lindheimer successfully preserved his German-American ethnic identity.

## Conclusion: Pragmatic Defender

Ferdinand Lindheimer never shed his former life in the German Confederation. His life in North America merely served an extension of that time. Lindheimer remained fully immersed in German-American culture. He continued to use German as his primary language. He was a charter member of, and participated in, numerous German-American cultural societies and founded a German-language newspaper that endures today.<sup>191</sup> Lindheimer never resided outside German-American communities and his isolation within those communities only fortified his German American ethnic identity. His extensive travel to multiple German-American communities offered examples of what a *Neues Deutschland* could look like outside of Europe. In 1844 when he met Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfels, Lindheimer seized the opportunity to create his own German-American community. Only when his paradise was endangered, did Lindheimer step outside his German-American community to engage in Anglo-American political and social issues. For much of his first twenty-years in North America, Lindheimer was apathetic towards Anglo-American concerns. In his correspondence and memoirs Lindheimer rarely mentioned issues pertaining to the US, unless it directly affected him. This includes his discussions on the Texas Revolution, Mexican-American War, as well as slavery. Instead Lindheimer used these events to forward his own interests.

Lindheimer did not join the Texian Army to challenge oppression Texan citizens would face under General Antonio López de Santa Anna, as numerous historians have claimed. Rather, he joined the military because it was an efficient and convenient way to travel to Texas, his desired destination since 1834. Lindheimer's efforts with the *Adelsverein* lent legitimacy to the

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<sup>191</sup> The *Neu-Braunfeler Zeitung* is published today at the *Herald-Zeitung*. The paper merged with its English counterpart, the *Comal County Chronicle* in 1954. After a second merger in 1957, the paper was printed entirely in English, but retains vestiges of its German-American heritage.

US nineteenth-century doctrine of Manifest Destiny, to which the Mexican-American War was directly linked. Although he made it clear he wanted no involvement with war in Mexico Lindheimer, in partnership with the *Adelsverein*, used expansionist ideology to justify his interests in Texas. Lindheimer was, and remained, a pragmatic individual who acted only in his own self-interest.

German-American settlers associated with the *Adelsverein* enjoyed peaceful relations with the Comanche tribe that contributed, however, to friction with Anglo-Americans. Their treatment of indigenous groups transformed Lindheimer's apathy towards Anglo-American issues into disdain, if not outright contempt. Lindheimer criticized the US government for its violent removal of tribes from their traditional lands and defended indigenous groups' retaliatory actions. His commentary on Native Americans' removal emphasized his growing disdain with Anglo-American political and social issues. Despite all his bluster and work advocating for indigenous groups, Lindheimer's support melted away against increasing sectional tensions and the rise of nativism in Texas in the 1850s.

The *Staats Sangerfest* in 1854 propelled Lindheimer into the Anglo-American political sphere. Only when slavery threatened to dismantle the community he labored to build and destroy his German-American ethnic identity, did Lindheimer engage in Anglo-American political and social issues. Lindheimer's pragmatic defense of Anglo-American society preserved his German-American ethnic identity, and by extension the community he helped build, from degradation by external pressures. Lindheimer became the most visible German-American supporter of slavery, secession, and the Confederacy. He threw his full support behind Anglo-Americans and encouraged other German-Americans to do the same. By supporting the dominant Anglo-American society, Lindheimer successfully safeguarded himself and New

Braunfels from more violent measures experienced by other German-American communities during the Civil War era.

Some historians have argued that Lindheimer truly believed slavery to be an evil institution and took a moderate stance on slavery and secession to protect New Braunfels from invasion by Confederate forces. These assertions come from letters Lindheimer wrote to his former pupil Gustav Passavant in 1878 while working on his memoir. In the letter Lindheimer wrote, “that slavery had to be eliminated because it was a blemish on our civilization.”<sup>192</sup> Lindheimer goes on to say that his moderate stance stemmed from the “North’s wish to dominate the South” and his inability to “tolerate” their efforts.<sup>193</sup> These comments only reinforce Lindheimer’s commitment to his own self-interests, rather than demonstrate his abhorrence of slavery. Lindheimer only states that he wished to protect his community, and therefore himself from a dominating, northern aggressor. Lindheimer’s actions did not derive out of an act of altruism, but self-preservation. Lindheimer’s support of slavery, and later secession and the Confederacy, was an intentional act to preserve and maintain his ethnic identity.

Lindheimer’s criticisms of Anglo-Americans regarding their treatment of indigenous populations demonstrates that Lindheimer was capable of challenging Anglo-American society, but not when it came at his own expense. The Comanches dwindling population and influence in the region, made Lindheimer’s criticisms of Anglo-Americans empty. He had nothing to risk by criticizing Anglo-Americans’ actions because Comanche retaliation was no longer a real threat. Conversely, as demonstrated with Adolph Douai, criticizing slavery could have forced

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<sup>192</sup> Ferdinand Lindheimer to Gustav Passavant, 24 July 1878 quoted in Minetta Altgelt Goyne, *A Life among the Texas Flora: Ferdinand Lindheimer’s Letters to George Engelmann* (Texas A&M University Press, 1991), 188.

<sup>193</sup> Lindheimer to Passavant, 24 July 1878 quoted in Goyne, *A Life among the Texas Flora*, 188.



Lindheimer to relocate. Lindheimer did not want to leave New Braunfels under any circumstance. Recognizing that German-Americans' alliance with the Comanche would not protect them from Anglo-American influence, Lindheimer supported slavery, secession, and the Confederacy and in so doing maintained his German-American community and by extension his German-American ethnic identity.

The year 2020 marks the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of New Braunfels. The year was marked by events and programs celebrating its founding, including *Sängerfeste* and *Biergarten*. Although German-American culture does not exist in the same capacity as it did in the nineteenth-century, Lindheimer's defense of Anglo-American society insured, at least in some form, German-American culture is still alive and well.

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