MUENSTER, TEXAS: A CENTENNIAL HISTORY

THESIS

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By

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Muenster, Texas, in Cooke County, began in 1889 through efforts of German-American colonizing entrepreneurs who attracted settlers from other German-American colonies in the United States. The community, founded on the premise of maintaining cultural purity, survived and prospered for a century by its reliance on crops, cattle, and oil. In its political conservatism and economic ties to the land, Muenster resembled its neighboring Anglo-American communities. Its Germanic heritage, however, became pronounced in the community's refusal to accommodate to the prohibitionism of North Texas regarding alcoholic beverages and in the parishioners' fidelity to the Roman Catholic faith. These characteristics are verified in unpublished manuscripts, governmental documents, local records, and interviews with Muenster residents.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I dedicate this work to my wife, Judy Carol (Meredith) McDaniel, and to my friends, the people of Muenster.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgement
Introduction
CHAPTER I: THE NATURAL SETTING
CHAPTER II: FOUNDING A NEW COLONY
CHAPTER III: BUILDING A NEW TOWN
CHAPTER IV: MUNSTER AND AGRICULTURE
CHAPTER V: MUNSTER AND OIL
CHAPTER VI: MUNSTER AND THE WET-DRY ISSUE
CHAPTER VII: GERMAN IDENTITY IN MUNSTER
Conclusion
Appendices
Bibliography
LIST OF MAPS AND APPENDICES

Map 1: Cooke County: Soils .................................. 9
Map 2: Cooke County: Native Vegetation .................. 12
Map 3: Cooke County: Early Settlements ................. 20
Map 4: Plat of Muenster ..................................... 35
Map 5: Cooke County: Petroleum ............................ 75
Appendix A: Incorporation Petition ....................... 123
Appendix B: Alcohol-Related Elections in
Cooke County, 1902-1959 ................................. 124
Appendix C: Questionnaire on German Identity ......... 127
INTRODUCTION

A history of Muenster, Texas, during the first century of its existence will not be a documentation of a unique community. This city of 1,408 citizens is very much part of the life of North Central Texas, and its prosperity is directly connected to the economic realities of oil and cattle which dominate life in this part of the state. A history of Muenster will trace its growth during the prosperous cotton years of the first decade of the twentieth century, as well as the hardships of the lean years of the 1920s and 1930s. The post-war boom and the change from a cotton economy to a cattle economy that characterized the life of Cooke and the surrounding counties in Texas and Oklahoma affected this city. Located first on a major east-west railroad and then on a major federal highway, Muenster witnessed the migrations during the period of the Great Depression away from the rural setting, as well as the gradual return of population to Cooke County since World War II. What makes Muenster, and consequently the history of Muenster, different is that the people of Muenster are different from the majority who form communities in the area from Gainesville on the east to Saint Jo and Nocona on the west. Cooke County, Texas, is part of the white protestant
homeland that stretches from Virginia on the east to far West Texas and goes by the name of the Upper South. Yet Muenster has and has always had its cultural roots not in the American Upper South but in Germany, and its cultural center was not the evangelical protestant meeting house but the Roman Catholic parish church.

Muenster, Texas, owes its existence not to the gradual progress of settlers northward and westward, as most Texas towns and cities do, but to the concerted efforts of determined men and women who were colonists in the old sense of the word—people who came to an unfamiliar, often hostile environment because some entrepreneurs convinced them that it would be worth their while. In that sense, its origins are not unlike that of the Peters Colony or the Anglo-American empresarial colonies of Stephen F. Austin and others in Mexican Texas. Once the settlement was made, however, the early settlers survived not only the expected hardships of drought and unsure agricultural market, but the pressure from the Anglo Saxon protestant culture on all sides to conform. Muenster, then, belongs on the distinctive list of German-American settlements which span Texas. Present-day Muenster is as Texas a city as Gainesville or Nocona, and the values that its people hold are the conservative values of farm belt America, but even the slightest contact with the people of this city will show that under the superficial cover of the Germanfest each
spring, the European and Catholic heritage is a vital ingredient in their history. Their history as a German colony specifically planned to avoid the effects of the traditional American melting pot has made the townspeople aware of their differences from their surroundings. But the twentieth century has eroded much of that early cultural distinctiveness.
INTRODUCTION: NOTES

Since the history of any community of people is a story of their struggle with the natural environment, the history of Muenster, Texas, must begin with the natural setting that the first settlers found there in the late nineteenth century when they settled permanently. Muenster lies within the northern portion of the physiographic region known as the Gulf Coastal Plain, which is an area composed of broad belts of sandy clay and limestones which slope gently toward the Gulf of Mexico.\(^1\) This sloping of the Gulf Coastal Plains towards the Gulf of Mexico changes the elevation in Cooke County from 1,200 feet above sea level in the northwestern part to approximately 600 feet above sea level near the Grayson County line along the Red River.\(^2\)

Topographically, Cooke County is divided into two drainage basins. The northern one-third of the county is drained by the Red River, which is fed by a number of relatively small tributaries of which Fish Creek is the most important.\(^3\) The southern two-thirds of the county is drained by several creeks, the largest of which is Elm Fork of the Trinity River, an intermittent creek, which snakes through Muenster.
in a southeastern direction.*

The topography of the area where the Plusche brothers purchased the original 22,000 acres for the building of Muenster is part of the physiographic subdivision known as the Grand Prairie, an area of limestones and clays of the Comanchean series which cover the Trinity sands and support numerous species of grasses.* The Grand Prairie physiographic region is the dominant region of Muenster and the surrounding area. The geologic materials of the Grand Prairie found around Muenster are the Trinity sands, Goodland limestone, Kiamichi clays, and the Duck Creek limestone.*

Trinity sands form a rolling topography because the exposed sands are weathered easily by the elements, and as the loose mantle erodes, the Goodland limestone that is exposed changes the contour of the land from rolling hills to a rugged topography where the ravines developed are narrow channels having nearly vertical sides.† The ravines around Muenster have sheer sides which support this concept. Goodland limestone is composed of hard, white semi-crystalline limestone which, when exposed at the surface, breaks into thin plates.*

One feature of the topography which the early settlers would have found different from their previous Old World and New World homes was the whitish clay that covers much of the surface. Kiamichi clay found exposed in the Muenster area
consists of ledges of hard, yellowish limestone which is composed of oyster shells mostly. This Gryshea-bearing limestone is found at the top of the Kiamichi clay and when the clay underneath erodes, the limestone breaks off, and these slabs of stone are referred to by the locals as "edge rock." These edge rock have been used by Muensterites to build fences, veneers for their homes, sidewalks, and border decorations. These rocks can be found standing on edge or at any angle between vertical and horizontal." The Duck Creek limestone formation occupies a broad belt running north and south near the center of Cooke County. This rock formation produced the oil that drillers discovered around Muenster in the 1920s and afterwards.

The early settlers who came to Cooke County in the last decade of the nineteenth century were concerned with the surface of the land, the soils in which they would raise their crops, and the intermittent streams which would be the source of their water. But in the twentieth century the minerals that lay under the surface became important. The geology of Cooke County is dominated by the "Muenster Arch," an eroded pre-Pennsylvanian mountain. The three most prominent of these ridges are referred to as the Hood, Pilot Point, and Lindsay Ridges. Hood Ridge enters Cooke from Denton County and extends through the towns of Era and Hood in the southwestern part of the county. Pilot Point Ridge is well developed at the Denton-Cooke county line, but is
poorly defined across the central part of Cooke County. Lindsay Ridge can easily be distinguished about a mile south of Lindsay and extends through the county, leaving northwest Cooke County near Bulcher. Locally this ridge is referred to as Wolf Ridge in the eastern part of the county north of Lindsay and Muenster, Nubbin Ridge north of Marysville, and Tyler's Bluff where it exits Cooke and enters Montague County on the west.

Because agriculture has been the main business in Muenster since the early German settlers broke the prairie sod, it is important to consider the soil types that they encountered. (See Map 1.) The dominant soil formations in the Muenster area of western Cooke County are of the Sanger, Slidell, San Saba, Malatorre, and Venus soils.

Sanger, Slidell, and San Saba soils are found in the rolling hills of Muenster on all sides. The slope of these rolling hills is gradual, from 0 to 8 percent. Sanger soils measure about forty inches in depth, with the top fifteen inches being a very dark grayish-brown and the lower twenty-five a less dark grayish-brown. Slidell soils are approximately forty-one inches in thickness, a very dark gray in color for the first twenty-five inches to a dark gray in the lower sixteen inches. San Saba soils are the clays which are about fifteen inches thick and very dark gray in color. Malatorre and Venus soils are found along the edges of limestone escarpments and along footslopes.
Map 1

COOKE COUNTY
SOILS

1. Sanger-Slide-San Saba
2. Normangill-Wilson-Crockett
3. Sanger-Malotere-Venus
4. Purves-Malotere-Aledo
5. Callisburg-Gasil-Aubrey
6. Duffau-Windthorst
7. Konsil-Aubrey-Bixome
8. Tinn-Frio
9. Gaddy-Teller-Miller

Soil Survey of Cooke County, Texas. United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service in Cooperation with the Texas Agricultural Experimentation Appendix
which range in steepness from 1 to 30 percent. Malatorre soils, much more shallow than Sanger, Slidell, and San Saba soils, are approximately five inches thick and are grayish in color. They consist of gravel and loamy clay. Venus soils are about twelve inches thick. This loamish soil is dark grayish-brown in color. Locally these soils, when wet, are referred to as "gumbo," but when this soil is dry, it is rock-hard.

The limestone and soils in the vicinity of Muenster are part of the Grand Prairie physiographic region of Texas and can be considered a true prairie. Since the structure, fertility, and soil content are fairly uniform throughout the region, the vegetation found near Muenster varies only according to the depth of the soil. Except for small avenues of trees found along the creek bottoms, the prairie which surrounds Muenster is barren of trees, a characteristic of the Grand Prairie.

Trees are a source of shade from the fierce Texas summers and fuel for fires to quell the cold Texas winters. The indigenous trees found along these creeks are pecan (Carya illinoensis), blackjack oak (Quercus marylandica), post oak (Quercus stellata), hickory (Carya buckleyi), black walnut (Juglans nigra), hackberry (Celtis occidentalis), elm (Ulmaceae americana), bois d'arc (Maclura pomifera), persimmon (Diospyros virginiana), and willow (Salicaceae babylonica). Although Muenster sits on the open lands of
the Grand Prairie, wooded areas lie not far away on every
side. North, south, and west of the city, no more than ten
miles distant and within the boundaries of Cooke County, are
sections of the Western Cross Timbers, a wooded region which
begins near the Trinity River in Central Texas and extends
north along the western edge of the Grand Prairie and
terminates at the southern bank of the Arkansas River in
Oklahoma. Twenty miles to the east lies another belt of
timber called the Eastern Cross Timbers. (See Map 2.)

Most of the land surrounding Muenster was overgrown
with prairie grasses before the first settlers came to the
area. Most of that native grassland has long ago succumbed
to the plow, but these grasses, unnamed at that time, were
thick. Traces of them can still be found in the area:
little blue stem (Andropogon scoparius), Texas needle grass
(Stipa leucotricha), prairie drop seed (Sporobolus asper),
big blue stem (Andropogon furcatus), Indian grass
(Sorghastrum nutans), and switch-grass (Panicum
virgatum). Several acres of these prairie grasses are
still baled as prairie hay. The two largest are the acreage
on the old Ball-Campbell Ranch, which is now the 24-K Ranch,
and the Bishop's Prairie. It is called Bishop's Prairie
because the Dangelmayr family has owned this property since
coming to Muenster and one of the sons, Augustine
Dangelmayr, became a bishop in the Roman Catholic Church.
In 1841, William Kennedy, a historian travelling through the
COOKE COUNTY
NATIVE VEGETATION

Grand Prairie, described this early prairie cover in great detail:

In the summer the prairies are covered with long, coarse grass, which soon assumes a golden hue, and waves in the wind like a ripe harvest. In the low, wet prairies, the center of the main stem of the grass, which bears a seed, acquires great thickness and shoots up to the height of eight or nine feet, throwing out a few long coarse leaves or blades. The traveller often finds it higher than his head as he rides through it on horseback. The plants, although numerous, and standing close together, appear to grow singly and unconnected; the whole force of the vegetative power expanding itself upward. But, in the rich undulating prairies, the grass is finer, with less stalk, and a greater profusion of leaves. These grasses afforded ample forage for the indigenous animal population which thrived in the area before the advent of the white man and his hunting rifles and farm implements. To be sure, scores of small animals such as rabbits and coyotes lived in the prairie grasses, but the grasses were especially vital to the larger species such as the buffalo, the wild mustang, and the various deer and antelopes. Jared Smith wrote this insightful description of the prairie as it was right before the advancement of civilization:

Among stockmen the tendency has been to look upon these wild lands as never having been grazed until cattle and sheep were introduced, but there is abundant evidence to show that they have always been closely pastured. The early explorers differed in their accounts of the luxuriance of the grass vegetation, but the difference was no greater than can be accounted for by local or temporary causes, such as variable seasonal rainfall, which still occur today.

It is estimated that the southern buffalo herd contained not less than four million head. This vast number grazed in the district south of the Platte River, retiring to the plains of Texas, and the Indian
Territory, at the approach of winter; turning northward again in early spring. There were also numberless herds of wild horses....

There was a constant shifting of the wild herds in their search for the best pasturage, drifting northward in the spring, southward at the approach of winter and congregating where water and grass could be found. The conditions were entirely unrestricted. The intermittent grazing and resting of the land, which resulted from the roving habits of the buffalo and mustangs, was an ideal method of fostering and improving the natural pasturage. The result of this alteration of pastures, which was conducted on a gigantic scale was that the native grasses were allowed to ripen fully their seeds, perpetuating themselves each year in the most liberal manner. The best grazing grasses were developed by the processes of natural selection and survival of the fittest. Weeds and brush were kept in check.¹⁰

With the soils and plant life of the area serving as a constant, the greatest variable in the natural life of the area around Muenster is the weather. The weather in Texas is affected to a great extent by the contact of continental air masses from the northern plains with air from the Gulf of Mexico. In the spring and autumn, this contact produces two seasons in which rain can reasonably be expected. The surface temperatures in Cooke County manifest a considerable range, from an average January minimum of 32 degrees Fahrenheit to an average of 96 degrees.¹⁸

Average yearly precipitation is 33.88 inches.²⁰ But it varies considerably from year to year, and farmers in the county have had to learn to live with these fluctuations, from unseasonal floods such as the October 1983 deluge to parching droughts.

The most violent and dramatic meteorological phenomenon
of the area around Muenster is the tornado. North Texas falls within the high-density tornado area called "Tornado Alley." Two strong windstorms destroyed parish churches twice in the history of the community. On 1 August 1893, the parish priest wrote to his abbot:

Yesterday at 2:30 p.m., a heavy blow struck our congregation. Our beautiful church was reduced to a heap of wreckage by a cyclone. Within three years Muenster has been visited for a second time by such a calamity. The first church had hardly been blessed, when it was destroyed by high wind.

Hail is always a threat to a grain-growing community, and Muenster has not been spared. An early-day settler recorded in his memoirs:

On the ninth of December 1895, my father died. Mother and I were all alone then. That spring we had another disastrous hailstorm. It came the same month, the same day, the same hour as the one in Iowa in 1888. Before the hail storm, I had cut three rounds from the wheat patch and we had got 42 bushels of wheat. After the hailstorm, we got no more wheat, nor did we harvest any oats or corn.

Winters are generally mild, but they can also be perilous. During the week of 22 February-3 March 1945, the city was paralyzed by an ice storm. All electrical power was lost, rendering the city water supply inoperable. Water was trucked in from Saint Jo.

The prairies of north central Texas held little for the pre-European inhabitants of the region. Historical records show no evidence of native-American tribes making use of the lands around Muenster as hunting grounds. W.W. Newcomb, Jr., in his book on the Indians in Texas, states that
Muenster is located between the Caddos to the east and the Comanches to the west and does not indicate that any particular tribes resided in the area on a permanent basis. However, A. Morton Smith in his history of Cooke County relates tales of Indian raids in Cooke and Montague counties in the early days of white settlement, but these were encounters between white settlers and hunting and raiding parties of Indians.

Western Cooke County existed as a grass-covered prairie with tree-lined streams and ample if not rich soil, home primarily to the buffalo, the deer, and small game. It would stay in this state from prehistoric times until the years following the Civil War, when cattlemen came to realize that domestic herds could graze the prairies just as well as the buffalo. But it was not until virtually the last decade of the nineteenth century that any permanent settlements were established that put to an end the pure state of this prairie wilderness.
NOTES


3. Ibid., 9-10.
4. Ibid., 10.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid., 13.
8. Ibid., 16.
9. Ibid., 20.
10. Ibid., 50.


12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.


17. William Kennedy, Texas--The Rise, Progress, and Prospects of the Republic of Texas (London: 1841; reprinted,


20. Ibid.


22. Fr. Bonaventura Benzigger to the Benedictine Abbot of Einsiedeln, Switzerland, 1 August 1893. (Typed manuscript, without any note as to the translator, in the Archives of the Subiaco Benedictine Abbey, Subiaco, Arkansas), 4.


CHAPTER II

FOUNDING A NEW COLONY

Muenster was hardly a pioneering community when it was settled in 1889. Anglo-American settlements had been in Cooke County for almost fifty years, for the eastern part of the county had been a part of the Peters Colony, an enterprise in the last years of the Texas Republic to bring settlers to the Upper Cross Timbers from the Upland South and Midwest.¹ Gainesville's first settlements were made on the banks of Elm Creek in 1849.² (See Map 3.) To the south and west of the site of Muenster, settlers inhabited the Forestburg area of adjacent Montague County by the late 1850s. The prairies of western Cooke County had not been as attractive a settlement area for farm folk as the more wooded sections of the Eastern and Western Cross Timbers.³ The relocated Upper Southerners found the wooded lands more suited to their kind of subsistence agriculture and economy, since the prairies found scattered throughout the wooded areas were suited to corn and vegetable crops. While the hardwoods of the forests provided not only lumber for home construction, they also supplied the wild birds and game that these Upper Southerners felt they needed. (See Map 2, p. 12.) Predominant vegetation consisted of waist-
COOKE COUNTY
EARLY SETTLEMENTS

Map 3

Sivells Bend
(1859)

* Bulcher
(1875)

Marysville
(1869)

*Dexter
(1873)

*Coesfield
(1881)

* Walnut Bend
(1900)

*Callisburg
(1883)

*Muenster
(1889)

Lindsay
(1891)

*Gainesville
(1848)

*Woodbine
(1879)

Burns City*
(1881)

*Era
(1878)

*Mountain
Springs
(1878)

* Rosston
(1872)

*Valley View
(1872)

* Bloomsfield
(1875)

*Leo
(1894)

*Hemming
(1887)

0
10
miles

high grass with woodland along the creeks. The result of this was that as late as the 1880s western Cooke County was still range land.

As mentioned above, in the last days of the Texas Republic, efforts had been made by enterprising men from Kentucky to bring settlers into what was known as the "Forks of the Trinity." This colonizing effort, which is known in Texas history as the Peters Colony, had been only moderately successful, since the colonizers had felt forced to return to the state legislature to request more and more land to be added to their allotment. By the 1850s, the less organized, more spontaneous patterns of migration had populated the eastern and northern sections of Cooke County with Anglo-American settlers. People settled in the western sections of the county, in which the communities of Muenster and Lindsay would be the centers, not because of these informal, individualized migration patterns which characterize most American settlement, but instead formal, institutionalized colonization methods as old as the Virginia and Plymouth Companies of Colonial America.

This pattern of land settlement did not entail settlers coming to look for the land and then securing the land, either through purchase or homestead, from the public domain. The land, in a sense, came before the settlers. Entrepreneurs who held title to the land used advertising to convince a group of settlers to buy the land from them.
What made the Muenster settlement different from the Peters Colony forty years earlier and similar to efforts in the Texas Hill Country some fifty years earlier was the fact that the entrepreneurs were already American citizens, and the target for their marketing was not the American South but other German-Americans already in the United States. But these colonizing efforts shared one important characteristic with earlier American colonies like the New England colonies. The Upper Southern independent settlers were examples of members of one cultural group who were planning to re-establish in North Texas the same culture with the same shared values that they had held in Tennessee or Kentucky or Missouri. By contrast, the Germans who came to North Texas in the early 1890s and settled in Muenster did not want to share in that cultural mainstream. Like the Separatists who came to Plymouth Bay in the 1620s, they wanted to establish a community that would remain distinct from the world around them. In that sense, then, the Muenster experience ran at cross-currents to the more orthodox American experience. The Muenster colonists wanted the economic benefit of the cheap land that was being offered them, but they insisted that their Old-World values, especially those associated with their religion, be retained and that their ethnic identity not be assimilated into the Anglo-American culture of Texas. As Emil Flusche, a leader of the Muenster colony, wrote, "No Catholic worthy of the
name would settle in a locality where religious facilities are lacking." As time has passed, the cultural and ethnic purity that these early colonists cherished has weakened, but in the beginning the separatist impulse among the colonists was strong.

Terry Jordan, Texas geography and demography specialist, says in his article "A Century and a Half of Ethnic Change in Texas, 1836-1986" that the German immigration pattern in Texas followed a pattern consisting of three elements. First was a "dominant personality," that is, one entrepreneurial person who generated the first interest in the colonizing effort. This role in the Muenster experience was performed by August Pulte, a Westphalian who settled southwest of Gainesville in 1877.

A second element in the Jordan pattern is the targeting of one particular area as a source for the potential immigration market. Unlike the Central Texas German colonizers who appealed to their countrymen still living in Europe, the pitch for coming to the Muenster colony was made to German settlements which the Flusche brothers had already made in the American Midwest, specifically in Westphalia, Iowa in 1872.

The third element in Jordan's pattern is what is called the "America letter," a common device throughout the whole American colonial experience as early as the seventeenth century. Such letters spoke of the advantages that the
would-be colonists could expect from relocating in the New World. By means of his America letter, August Pulte came into contact with a family that he had had some acquaintance with in Westphalia. In February 1889, Pulte wrote a series of letters to a Saint Louis periodical called Amerika, in which he spoke of the suitability of the land in southwest Cooke County.* These letters came to be read by Emil Flusche, who with his brothers came to be the founding force behind the Muenster colony. The day after his fledgling colony had celebrated its first religious observance, Flusche himself came to write his own letter to Amerika.

Münster, Cooke County, Texas, 9./12.89


Das Vermessen des Randes wurde erst von 4 Wochen und das Auslegen des schönen Stadtplanes sind schon über 4000 Acker Rand an deutsche Katholiken verkauft, sowie eine stattliche Zahl Bauplatze in der Stadt für Geschäftshäuser sowohl als auch für Wohnplätze. Der Stadtplan enthält einen Kirchenblock in herrlicher Lage, hoch und fast ganz eben, mitten in der Stadt, 1065 Puss lang, 450 Puss breit, der einen Überblick über die ganze Colonie gewährt, ebenso einen Park mit dem schönen klaren Elm Bache an zwei Seiten und einem praktigen, schattigen Walde an drei Seiten, während die der Stadt und der Eisenbahn zugekehrte Seite ebenes Prairie-Rand ist. Wohl noch selten hat eine neue Colonie allgemeineres Interesse erweckt und mehr

Emil Flusche

Translation

Yesterday, on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, was a day of joy for the local St. Mary Community and the Muenster Colony. Here yesterday for the first time the Sacred Host was offered up (i.e., Mass was celebrated) by the Very Reverend Mr. Brickley of Gainesville. 23 men, 7 women, and 6 children, all members of the colony, attended the Sacred Service with devotion, joy, and feeling. Many good people sang hymns to heighten the devotion. Father Brickley was surprised and overwhelmed by the religious zeal and efforts as well as the number of present colonists in this place, where a couple of weeks ago there were no human signs, except for the railroad tracks.

The land survey was finished four weeks ago and the presentation of the city plan made the next Friday... and already over 4000 acres have been sold to German Catholics, so that there is a considerable number of lots in the city for commercial buildings as well as residential buildings. The plat of the city contains a church-block in a prominent place, high but also flat, in the middle of the town, 1065 feet long and 450 feet broad, which offers a view of the whole town, and also a park with the beautiful, clear Elm Creek [Elm Fork of the Trinity River] on two sides and a magnificent shady woods on three sides, while the side facing the town and the railroad is prairie. Rarely has a new colony aroused such universal interest and received such demonstrations of sympathy from near and far as this one has. Still, all those who take time to verify the conditions have been and continue to be delighted with the land, the climate, the wealth of the colony in wood and water, the railroad facilities, and the original intention, that here would be established a beautiful pure German community and town. Land and lots in the town will now be purchased by
practicing German-Catholics, and good business-people and craftsmen will be sought and welcomed. A Catholic parish-school with a capable German teacher will be opening around the New Year.

Emil Flusche

The Flusche brothers, whose efforts led to the first settlements in Muenster in 1889, were not novice colonizers. Emil Flusche, the primary force behind the Muenster colonizing effort, had a long career as a German land-developer in the United States. Born Franz Emmerich on 10 February 1849 in the Westphalian village of Wamge, he was the son of Stephan and Elizabeth Gante Flusche. Emil, as he was called, had five brothers, as well as one sister who died. Two of the brothers, Karl and August, joined him in his colonizing enterprises in North Texas. The older Flusche was a schoolteacher in Liesterscheid, near Wamge, and also ran a nursery specializing in fruit trees and Tannenbaumen, a kind of pine tree used by the government for reforesting. Flusche's mother was a cousin of a priest, August Hitze, who not only became a Monsignor in the Roman Catholic Church but also a member of the German Imperial Reichstag. Flusche's memoirs, written when he was sixty-five, stress the solid religious background of his native village as well as his family life. He recalled that Catholic doctrine and Bible history were among the subjects taught in his father's school, which he attended. Flusche remembered enjoying his study of Latin under the local priest, who was also a family friend. "I enjoyed studying,"
he immodestly recalled, "and was always top in each class."^{11}

The instability of European politics made life hard for the Flusche families, with so many brothers subject to the draft into the Prussian army. The war between Prussia and Austria in 1866 caused fear. "How clearly I remember the worry and sorrow of the wives and mothers of the men that had to go to war. Luckily, none of my older brothers had to go."^{12} No doubt, escaping the constant fear of the draft to fight in the Kaiser's wars made emigration to peaceful America a desirable alternative for the young Emil Flusche.

The father of the Flusches died on the Prussian King William's birthday, 22 March 1867, forcing the six Flusche brothers to seek employment. Emil, the fifth and second youngest son, took a job in an ironworks in the Ruhr Valley city of Hoerstel.^{13} Emil feared that he would be called into the army to fight in the Franco-Prussian War in 1871, but he was still a year too young when the war came to an end. Following the war, Flusche became a travelling salesman for a tobacco and wine merchandizing company. He recalled this time as one of his happiest times, "during which I never missed a chance to attend Mass, even on weekdays."^{14} It was probably during this time that the young man learned the business and entrepreneurial skills that would allow him to serve as merchant and land agent in the United States.
Anton Flusche, the fourth brother, had become a druggist and emigrated to Saint Louis in America. Fearing the draft, three of his brothers, Joseph, Karl, and Emil also emigrated. They sailed on the steamer Bremen and landed in New York on 1 June 1872. From there the three brothers went to Minnesota and joined a colony called Westphalia near the town of Wilmer, where a former neighbor from Germany, was living. Then Emil read in a Milwaukee German newspaper, Seeboten, about German colonizing in Harlan County, Iowa. "On the lonesome long trip it came to me as a vision that I would be instrumental in finding homes for many of our kinsmen," he recalled.

On 6 September 1872, Emil Flusche signed his first land-purchase contract in a career in land development that would last for the next half-century. (In this study, the availability of Emil Flusche's memoirs has led the author to cite his work most frequently as founder of Muenster. In all fairness, however, Emil's brothers Wilhelm, Joseph, August, Anton, and Karl played significant roles in the history of German settlements in north Texas.) Emil Flusche bought the land from a man named Ketteler who, Flusche slyly remembered, drank heavily and could not write German, an indication, no doubt, that Flusche thought that he had bested him. These eighty acres became the center of the colony of Westphalia, Iowa. More of the Flusches--brothers, aunts, and finally the mother--joined
him and the colony grew. Three years later, in 1876, German Catholic missionaries held an eight-day mission in Westphalia, and the priest, Father Haag, inspired the twenty-seven-year-old Emil.

[He] said to me that there was no greater and more meritorious missionary work than to gather German Catholics in such parishes and give them the opportunity to practice and keep up their faith. This encouraging remark impressed me very much and gave me encouragement in later ventures in other colonies.¹³

Emil Flusche learned in Iowa that his fortune obviously lay in land speculation. He sold the Westphalia farm for $10,000, and even though he was a justice of the peace and notary public, he began looking for another place to colonize.²⁰ A series of financial and medical setbacks to the other brothers and their families made Emil the head of the Flusche family. It was at this time that Emil himself married Anna Hesse in Kansas City in 1881.²¹

The land that Emil Flusche chose to colonize was in Kansas, near Emporia. Emil came down with malaria while trying to get the Westphalia, Kansas, colony underway. After his recovery, he and his brothers set up a general merchandise store, land office, and insurance company. Emil also founded a second Kansas colony, called Olpe. But the potential of cheap land in the Sooner country of Indian Territory became very attractive to Emil, who always had a sharp eye for a good land deal. He went to Indian Territory, but considered it too desolate. (Later, in 1899, he moved to Oklahoma, near Tulsa, but stayed only a
few years before returning to Texas.\textsuperscript{22})

As Father Joseph P. Fuhrmann, the historian of Sacred Heart Parish in Muenster wrote in the seventy-fifth anniversary history of the church in 1964,

From their experience in the Middle West they knew that many Catholic parishes in these regions had reached the limit of providing a living for the ever-growing families, that high cost of land made it difficult for newcomers and newlyweds to make a beginning in these parishes, and that many settlers there preferred a milder climate.\textsuperscript{23}

The Flusches were especially interested in southern Oklahoma or northern Texas. In fact, the general pattern of the Flusche brothers' colonizing enterprises was a movement south and west, to warmer weather and cheaper land. After Muenster, Pilot Point, and Lindsay in the years 1889-1891, they sought their next colony in Windthorst farther west in Archer County in 1891 and Mt. Carmel in Wilbarger County in 1907, their last colony.

They had read a series of letters written by August Pulte, their boyhood acquaintance in Westphalia who had emigrated to Texas in 1877, and published in \textit{Amerika}, a German-language periodical published in Saint Louis. Pulte's letters had, like all such letters encouraging immigration, told his countrymen looking for cheap land that the opportunities were wonderful in Cooke County. No doubt Pulte, living in the middle of Anglo-American protestant North Texas, missed the company of his fellow Germans. And should other German Catholics settle near him, church
authorities might call for the establishing of a parish in his vicinity. (When Pulte first moved to Cooke County, he and his family had to make the three-day journey to Sherman to attend services, although eventually a Catholic church was built somewhat closer, in Gainesville.)

In addition to their successes in the Midwest and the recommendation of Pulte, the Flusches also received encouragement in the form of support from the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas Railroad, which had constructed a rail line west from Gainesville, through Cooke and Montague Counties, reaching Henrietta in Clay County in 1879. A man named Cross, a Katy employee, had become aware of the colonizing success of the Flusche Brothers in Iowa and Kansas. Cross realized that if the German brothers establish a prosperous town on the Katy right-of-way, the railroad would benefit. He gave free passage to the land-seeking brothers to inspect the lands bordering the line from Gainesville to Henrietta. This favor brought the Flusches in contact with the ranch lands of the western section of Cooke County.

The land-owners in that part of the county also knew that they could make a financial profit from speculative ventures like the Flusches'. North Texas ranch-owners were eager to convert their land and cattle holdings into cash so that they could make investments in such rapidly-growing cities as Dallas or could take advantage of even cheaper
lands in West Texas. Father Bonaventura Binzegger, an early-day parish priest at Sacred Heart, writing to an Abbot of the monastery of Einsiedeln in Switzerland three years after Muenster was founded, stated:

Everywhere large ranches (20,000 to 75,000 acres) are being put on the market at $5--$10--$15 per acre. The ranch owners are going further west, where entire counties with a thousand or more square miles are still uninhabited and land can be bought for 25 cents an acre or even less.28

This combination of reasons led the Flusches to make their initial trip to Texas, arriving in Gainesville in March of 1889.29 Emil and August looked over large tracts of land along roughly two hundred miles of the Katy right-of-way west of Gainesville but decided that the lands they inspected were no more suitable than the lands directly west of Gainesville.30

The three ranches in western Cooke County which bordered the Katy line were the Ball Ranch, the Lindsay Ranch (later to be colonized by the Flusches as the Lindsay community), and the Childers-Fisher Pastures. The last tract became the site of Muenster. But the Flusches returned to Iowa without making a definite commitment to buy. A few months later, Emil Flusche, joined by John Koll, also of Westphalia, Iowa, returned to Texas to make further inspection of the Childers-Fisher lands, but again they returned north before making any final arrangements with the owners of the property, Jot Gunter, C.E. Wellesley, and J.W. Childers, to purchase it. Indications are that the owners of the
22,000-acre tract wanted the Flusches to sell the lands to colonists within one year, a stipulation that the Flusches considered too restrictive and was probably one of the clauses that the older Emil Flusche, writing in his sixty-fifth year, would call "cunning and deceitful" in the contract with Gunter. Like the entrepreneurs of the Peters Colony of some fifty years earlier, they were not sure that the colonists would come that quickly to the lands and therefore sought longer terms for the settlement contract.

After Flusche and Koll returned to Iowa, rancher Jot Gunter wrote to Flusche, saying that the ranchers were willing to compromise. For this third trip to Texas, Emil was accompanied by his brother Dr. Karl Flusche and Joseph Reuschenberg. The three arrived in Gainesville 2 October 1889, and spent the night with the Flusches' acquaintance, Pulte. The next day they looked at the Childers-Fisher Pastures again. When they came back, Gunter, who had made a special trip by train up from Dallas, was waiting for them at the Lindsay Hotel.

For two days, 3 and 4 October 1889, Jot Gunter, representing himself and the other owners of the Childers-Fisher Pastures, wrestled with the details of the contract that would transfer title of the 22,000 acres to the German-American settlers. A verbal agreement was finally arrived at, with Karl Flusche and Rauschenberg
witnessing for the Flusches and John Hird and a Captain Shopmeyer of Gainesville witnessing for Gunter, Wellesley, and Childers.

The signed contract detailed the way in which the Flusches were to dispose of the land. They agreed to survey, cut up, and divide said lands at their own expense, and after the same are so surveyed and cut up, the original owners are to value and put a price upon each and every part of said land, said prices are to be fixed as not to average more than $10.00 per acre for each and every acre of the Fisher Pasture [the eastern half of the tract] and $12.00 per acre for the Childers pasture [the western tract].

The contract had in it a clause that raised the price the Flusches had to pay for the land. All land that had not been sold at the end of six months from the signing of the contract was to increase 5 percent in price, with a 2.5 percent increase at the end of each ninety-day period. The same contract required the Flusches to sell at least 5,000 acres of the land within six months, 7,000 within one year, and the entire 22,000 acres within two years. The Flusches, then, received a kind of compromise with the ranch owners, but Flusche was accustomed to being on the profit end of the negotiation, not the concession.

The ranch owners agreed also to donate up to twenty-five acres of land for "schools, churches, a cemetery, and a park." They also were to receive $15,375 from sale of lands in the townsite. (See Map 4.) Then, after that sales figure, money from the sale of townsite lands was to be divided between the ranchers and the Flusches. The
Map 4
PLAT MAP OF MUENSTER
JANUARY 18, 1890

[Diagram showing a plat map of Muenster with blocks labeled and streets marked.]

BLOCK 59 Public Park
BLOCK 5 Church and School
BLOCK 4 Cemetery
BLOCK 36 Public Square

Plat Records, Volume 1, page 18, Cooke County Clerk's Office, Gainesville, Texas.
ranchers also retained the right to graze cattle and run horses on the lands until they were sold. The Flusches were also bound by the next to last clause in the contract not to "colonize directly or indirectly any other lands in the State of Texas until the above mentioned lands have been sold."

The Flusches' success with the colonization process depended completely on the railroad service to the site. The railroad in question was the Missouri, Kansas, & Texas, known popularly as the Katy Railroad. Originally, the line from Gainesville west was constructed under the auspices of the Gainesville, Henrietta, and Western Railway Company, chartered on 23 July 1886. The actual construction was done in 1887.

This railroad played a significant role in the history of Muenster and Cooke County from its construction in 1887 until its abandonment. In fact, the running of the tracks north to what would become Muenster killed the chances of the already established communities of Myra and Lazarus, both in the western part of Cooke County, of becoming thriving commercial centers.

The railroad served as the primary commercial link between Muenster and the rest of the world until the general decline of the railroad in America in the 1950s. On 15 May 1959, the last passenger train passed through the city. Nine years later, on 15 July 1968, Katy officials informed
the city that service on the line between Gainesville and Wichita Falls was being discontinued, and on 31 December 1969, freight service on the eighty-two year old line ended. 43 But by that time trucks carried most of the freight along US Highway 82.

But the railroad was still supreme transportation method in the 1880s, when the Flusches planned their venture. The contract that the ranchers had wanted and that the Flusches were obliged to accept to start their new colony in North Texas was now signed. Flusche later complained that the slowness of the surveying of the land and the designing of the town plat discouraged many would-be purchasers of plots. 44 The Flusches now had perhaps the hardest part of their task ahead of them—convincing the German settlers of their previously established Westphalian colonies in central Iowa and eastern Kansas to pull up stakes, put all their families and belongings on the railroad, and come south to the drought-plagued, almost timberless prairies of North Texas, where nothing but a cattle pasture marked the site of the yet unnamed town.
CHAPTER II

NOTES

The only published history of the city of Muenster is a two-edition book which is actually a history of the Sacred Heart Parish. The first, written in 1939 by a Benedictine brother named Joseph Fuhrmann, was published by the parish as A Golden Jubilee History of the Sacred Heart Parish. In 1964, it was reprinted, with some updating material by another Benedictine, Father Thomas R. Moster, as A Diamond Jubilee History of the Sacred Heart Parish. Since the pagination in both editions is essentially the same, in these notes, these volumes will both be referred to as Jubilee History. The letters of the Flusches and others to the Saint Louis German-language publication Amerika are also quoted from and cited from the Jubilee History. Also, the prominent Muenster family Fisher recently changed the spelling of its family name back to the original German Fischer. In this study, its notes and bibliography, however, the spelling Fisher, as it appeared on the unpublished manuscript is used.


2. A. Morton Smith, The First Hundred Years in Cooke County (San Antonio: Naylor Company, 1955), 12.


6. William J. Pulte, "A Biographical Sketch of August and Caroline Pulte" (Unpublished manuscript in the
possession of Mrs. Lillian Appel, Muenster, Texas, 1977), 1.

7. Ibid., 4.


10. Ibid., 2.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid., 3.


15. Ibid.

16. Ibid., 5.

17. Ibid., 6.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid., 8.

20. Ibid., 9.

21. Ibid., 10.

22. Ibid., 15.

23. Fuhrmann, Jubilee History, 15.


26. Fuhrmann, Jubilee History, 16.

27. Ibid., 17.
28. Fr. Bonaventura Binzegger, O.S.B., to the Abbot of Einsiedeln, Switzerland, 1 August 1893 (Unpublished manuscript in the Archives of the Subiaco Benedictine Abbey, Subiaco, Arkansas), 56.


31. Emil Flusche, "Life History," 11. The *Jubilee History* contains the full text of the contract. The disposition of the original contract is unknown.


33. Ibid.

34. Ibid., 19.

35. Ibid., 20.

36. "Cooke County und Seine Naturlichen Hilfsquellen," Reprint of booklet found in the cornerstone of the Sacred Heart Church was opened in 1896, *Muenster Enterprise*, 22 April 1949, 1.


38. Ibid., 22.


40. Ibid.


43. Ibid., 26 December 1969, 1.

44. Emil Flusche, "Life History," 12.
CHAPTER III

BUILDING A NEW TOWN

Although Emil Flusche complained that the townsite was not laid out fast enough, settlers came quickly to the new settlement. They had to make homes and plant winter crops if they wanted to make a decent harvest the next year.

Cooke County people in general were pleased with the prospect of a new colony in the western part of the county. The Daily Hesperian, published in Gainesville, had reported back in January that a new town on the west branch of the railroad would be beneficial to Gainesville.\(^1\) When news spread about the Flusche brothers' negotiations, the newspaper again applauded the plan as "a big thing for the Gainesville lumber dealers, the barbed-wire dealers, the agricultural implement dealers generally, and in fact every other character of merchant in this city...."\(^2\) The newspaper continued to play on the economic benefits of the new settlement, which it estimated:

> will enrich the county tens of thousands of dollars each year by the products raised thereon, and it will be only a short time till the entire county will be most wonderfully enhanced in value by the acquisition of these industrious law-abiding German citizens.\(^3\)

By the end of October 1889, the Flusches hired a German carpenter named Bundschu from Gainesville to come the fifteen miles west to the proposed townsite and build three
structures: one two-room building, fourteen feet by twenty-two feet, that would serve as the land office, and two barns. Three Germans, a G. Koll and two Wiesmann brothers, Theodore and Joseph, helped with the construction. These three men, who did stay on, have the best claim to being the first settlers of the new town.

The Flusche brothers saw no need to change their practice of naming their colonies. Westphalia, Cooke County, Texas, should follow the other Westphalians in Iowa and Kansas. But a settlement in Falls County, Texas, east of Waco, had already taken that name. The Flusches then chose Muenster, the name of the cathedral city of their German home province. 4

Despite the usual slowness of travel in the late nineteenth century, news travelled fast up north to the Westphalian colonies. Within six weeks, on 14 November 1889, a train coming west from Gainesville on the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas stopped at a telegraph pole on which a piece of paper with MUESTER written on it had been posted. A small group of people, mainly Germans from the Flusche colonies in Iowa and Kansas, got off, and the train continued on west. These first arrivals included John Koll, who had come to Cooke County with Flusche on one of the preliminary expeditions, in addition to the Derichtsweiler, Hesse, John Koester, H. Koll, and M. Finken families. Also included was someone referred to in the old histories as
"der alte Onkel Kuhl" ("old Uncle Kuhl"). Father Joseph Fuhrmann, the first historian of Sacred Heart Parish (and for him and many the history of the parish is the history of the city), praised these first arrivals:

It took men with brave hearts, indeed, and with extreme courage, to tell their families that this was the place where they intended to settle, to work, to pray, to raise families, to build church and school, to found their fortunes for this world and the next.

The settlers used one of the ranch barns as a community kitchen and converted another into a sleeping place for the men. The women and children, who were fewer in number, slept in the Flusche brothers land office.

The arrival in Muenster of Franz (Frank) Hesse, his wife Elizabeth, and his children became a part of the legend of the city. Fisher wrote:

They passed by train through extensive prairies, well inhabited by a strong race of cattle famous for horns of immense length. The young mother [Mrs. Hesse] was afraid of them, "but then," thought she, "we shall soon be in Muenster in our sunny little home." All of a sudden, to her great surprise, in came the conductor [on the MK&T train], calling out in a loud voice: "Muenster, alles aussteigen for Muenster." He was an Irishman who afterwards found out and because so much talk went on over the little German colony in the wilderness he in good Irish wit gathered up these few words to cheer the new comers." [There was no sunny home when Frank Hesse helped his wife and child down from the train.] "Now we are in Muenster," he said cheerfully. "But where are the houses?" she inquired, for there was not as much as a station building. Her husband, alert for the occasion, quickly opened the umbrella saying, "Now dearest, we are under roof."

Over the next few weeks many more settlers arrived. Most stayed in temporary housing in Gainesville, while others presumably abided with friends in the new town.
Others, according to Flusche, went "unverrichterer sache" (without having achieved their purpose) back to their Midwestern homes and farms.  

The Flusches continued advertising the Colony in the Amerika, the Saint Louis German-language newspaper in which August Pulte had written about Cooke County the year before. In a letter written at the end of the first winter, Emil's younger brother, August, wrote a glowing account, announcing first of all that mail to the members of the community would no longer have to be received at Myra because a post office had been set up in Muenster on 1 February 1890. Then he reported in glowing terms about the continued growth and the prosperity of the colony.

Marz 3. 1890


-- F.A. Flusche¹⁰

Translation

3 March 1890
Muenster is making satisfactory progress in every respect. Some thirty families already live here, and daily new immigration of more arrive, and they are buying (land) here. The existence of a strong community is beyond all doubt. Many good business establishments have already been prepared, and the plans are made for about a dozen more dwellings and places of business are made. Likewise, work progresses with all zeal on the new church, and by next Easter it will be ready for use for Holy Services. A good teacher has already been hired, and he himself will open our German-Catholic school in a few days. The number of school children has reached forty. The weather all last winter was thankfully favorable, until the last week when a Norther blew in with storms and frost, the first of the winter. The health of the colonists is better.

F.A. Flusche

Even though Emil Flusche's efforts to establish a German-Catholic colony in North Texas led to the founding of Muenster, it would be difficult to call him the founder of Muenster simply because he himself never established a permanent residence in that city. The title of the father of the city more appropriately belongs to a pioneer settler by the name of Franz or Frank Hesse (1839-1924). He was born in Dralshagen, a village in Westphalia. His father died when he was five, but the mother, Anna Hesse, kept the family together. At the age of eighteen Franz was apprenticed to a barrel-maker. He was soon drafted into the Prussian Army, where, according to a writer remembering him ten years after his death, he learned "soldierly deportment and other martial virtues." Many of the Westphalian men who emigrated to American colonies like the ones in Iowa and Kansas did so because they resented the militarism of the
Prussian state which had annexed Westphalia after the Napoleonic Wars. Bismarck's policies and pro-Prussian militarism and anti-Catholicism combined to make men such as Franz Hesse and the Flusche brothers find it more desirable to go to America than to take their chances with the Prussians. A testimony from one early Muenster resident shows the antagonism toward Prussian militarism. Bernard Heinrich Voth (1836-1921) had seen a Prussian officer manhandling a soldier. His family records say, "He then and there resolved that no son of his would do military service in Germany if he could avoid it."12

Franz Hesse served in the Prussian army through the Austro-Prussian or Six Weeks War of 1866, as well as the Franco-Prussian War of 1871. He marched with the army that brought French prisoners from Metz to Berlin, and he maintained that the French were well treated in that they were fed wheat bread rather than German Schwarzbrot or black bread.13 But after he was discharged from the army, the anti-Catholic May Laws of the newly formed German Empire led him to seek his fortune in America.14 Earl Fisher, chronicler of the life of Hesse, wrote:

The same suffering, hopes, and aims united these people and in spite of many hardships, these settlers grew attached to their soil, worked hard, and prospered. They were devoted to their priests: one of them was a certain Father Weber, who had also suffered during the persecution. He had been imprisoned and later exiled.15

His mother and two younger brothers joined him where he
had established himself in the Flusche brothers Westphalia community in Iowa. Hesse, who now called himself Frank, went into the lumber business. He even prospered enough to be able to afford a trip back to Germany to visit the Hesse brothers that stayed there. Hesse married a Westphalia girl named Elizabeth Mueller. "Old Mister Frank," as he was called, lived until 1924 as the patriarch of the German colony in Muenster. His granddaughter, Mrs. Norbert Koesler, counts 225 persons, 11.25 percent of the population now living in and around Muenster, as direct descendants of Frank Hesse.

The religious imperative behind the founding of the "Münster Colonie" was so important that most Muensterites consider the first religious activities in the new settlement as the actual beginnings of the town. When the handful of settlers got off the Katy Railroad in November, the closest Catholic church was in Gainesville. The Gainesville parish of St. Mary's was part of the Roman Catholic diocese of Galveston until 1890, when church officials created the Diocese of Dallas. The problem with attending services in Gainesville was linguistic. The Roman Catholic Mass throughout the world was said or sung in Latin, but the Westphalian colonists needed to make their confessions, hear homilies, and receive other pastoral ministries in their native German. The promotional material that the Flusches published in Amerika constantly repeated
the idea that a German-speaking parish and parochial school was first on the list of priorities for the new settlement. The fulfillment of that promise was not immediate. The Flusches had asked for a German-speaking priest from the Franciscan order centered in Saint Louis, but none had been sent by November. Therefore, they had to request that the English-speaking priest, Father Henry Brickley from Gainesville, come to Muenster for the first public religious service. The colonists rearranged the Flusche brothers office to resemble a chapel as best they could, and on Sunday, 8 December 1889, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, Father Brickley celebrated mass for them. Emil Flusche counted twenty-five men, seven women, and six children in attendance at this service. A choir of men and women sang hymns without organ accompaniment. In his account of the founding of the community, Father Fuhrmann wrote, "Perhaps nothing proves the Catholic character of the new colony more clearly than the fact that the founders as well as the first settlers always speak of 8 December 1889, as the beginning of Muenster." The first child born in Muenster, Frank Hesse's daughter Anna (Mrs. August Walterscheid, 1890-1985) was born the following 18 February, and baptized by Father Brickley five days later.

Two days before the Gainesville priest read mass for the first time in the new colony, the surveyors that Gunter and Wellesley hired two months earlier to plat the townsite
finished their work. (See Map 4, p. 35.) One of the first to secure a lot was August Pulte, the German settler who had been living southwest of Gainesville before the Flusche brothers came. He obliged himself to build a "good two-storey house." Franz Hesse took a lot and agreed to build a "good store," while others agreed to establish, among other things, a blacksmith shop and a "good hotel." No doubt the latter was much to be welcomed, since the only public accommodation in the town was John Koll's tent, set up in November beside the railroad, which he rented as a boarding house. Father Brickley returned later that month for a Christmas mass in the Flusche land-office building, near the present-day intersection of Main and Division streets. As soon as Frank Hesse completed his general store at Sixth and Oak streets, the church held services on the second floor.

But these primitive facilities, the mainstay of frontier Western America, would not suffice for the new settlers, because they desired more permanent buildings. A discussion on New Year's Day, 1890, led to the decision to start construction on a school building first, since rancher Jot Gunter had promised a $500 donation for that purpose in the original contract. A church building would soon follow. The school building could be used temporarily for religious services. The building, which cost about a thousand dollars, was finished before spring. The school benches
were planks resting on empty beer kegs. Upon completion of the school building, the people constructed a rectory, in hopes that the latter would tempt church authorities to send permanent clergy.

That first spring the Catholic authorities in Dallas sent the first German-speaking pastor to the flock in Muenster—a Franciscan named Father Hugo Fessler. Lamentably, one of his first duties was to read funeral services on 8 April 1890, for Frances Wilde, a three-year-old girl. He also consecrated the first marriage approximately a year later, when on 21 April 1891, Margaret Knauf was married to Steve Grewing.

It was not until May 1891 that a resident clergyman, Father Joseph Blum, was assigned to Muenster. During his residence, the Sisters of Divine Providence of San Antonio received the responsibility of administering the parochial school which had been constructed.

The assignment of a permanent priest to the growing German community was complicated by a certain amount of competition between the Franciscans and Benedictines. When Bishop Brennan of the Diocese of Dallas resigned in early 1893, Bishop Edward Fitzgerald of Little Rock, Arkansas, became the temporary administrator of the Dallas area. While he held that post, he transferred Muenster, Gainesville, and Lindsay to the jurisdiction of the Benedictines. Since 1893, then, the parish in Muenster has
had priests coming from the Benedictine Abbey of Subiaco in northwest Arkansas.33

The first permanent church structure, first proposed at the 1 January 1890 meeting, was built at the corner of Sixth and Main, the site of all Catholic churches in Muenster. A December storm in 1891 destroyed the building before its actual completion.34 The second church building, which carried the name St. Mary's, was completed in April 1892, at the cost of $6,000, and consecrated by the Bishop of Dallas, Thomas Brennan, on the first episcopal visit to Muenster on 24 April. The parishioners enjoyed their new building only three months, for a tornado at 2:30 in the afternoon of 31 July destroyed the building completely.35

Having their new church blown away was just one of many hardships, typical of the American frontier, that the colonists faced that first year. Late starts in plowing and planting that spring, along with a hot dry summer, all meant poor crops in the fall. The shortage of drinking water led to difficulties. One Muenster pioneer recalled:

We dug cisterns in the pasture and carried water on sleds to barrels. Sometimes the water would be very dirty and it had to be boiled to purify it. We had chills and fever quite often in the summer until we dug a deep well. Sometimes water was so scarce that the whole family would wash in one pan.36

The town depended on stagnant creek water in the first year, and because cattle walked in it, the water became almost unfit for use. Typhoid fever took the lives of eight of the colonists that first year.37
The tornado, the hostile weather, and the bad agricultural depression of 1892-1893 led Father Bonaventura Binzegger, to write a pathetic letter to the Amerika seeking charity:

1. Aug. 1893

Dieser zweite Schlag trifft aber die Colonie um so härter, weil er erfolgte, ehe man sich vom ersten erholt hätte. Es dürfte ja wohl zu den Seltenheiten gehören, dass eine Gemeinde innerhalb 2 1/2 Jahren die dritte Kirche zu bauen hat. -- Wenn man bedenkt dass die Ansiedler durchweg noch Verbindlichkeiten auf ihrem Lande haben, dass dieses Jahr die Ernte in Allgemeinen hinter den Erwartungen zurück blieb, dass zudem [sic] Weizen und Hafer zur Zeit aussergewöhnlich tief im Preise stehen, Korn durch die lange erhaltene Hitze und trockenheit sehr gelitten und auch auf die Baumwollen ernte allem Anschein nach wegen des ebenfalls niedrigen Preises nicht grosse Hoffnungen gematch werden können, so wird man wohl begreifen, dass es uns nicht möglich ist. Aus eigenen Miteln und ohne fremde Hilfe abermals ein Gotteswiirdiges Haus zu bauen, und entschuldigen, wenn wir hiermit an mitleidige Herzen appellieren und um werktätige Hilfe in dieser harten Heimsuchung bitten. Jede auch noch so kleine Gabe wird mit dankbarem Herzen angenommen.

Rev. Bonaventura Binzegger, O.S.B.

Translation

This second blow struck the colony so very hard, since it followed before we had recovered from the first. It was an unheard of rarity, that a community would have to build a third church within two and a half years. When one keeps in mind the fact that the colonists still owed money on their lands, that the harvest fell far below all expectation, that wheat and oats have remained low in price, that corn, also hurt by the prolonged heat and drought, has remained low in price, thereby not offering us much hope, then can we lament that we must, with such limited means and without help from the outside, build a Godly House, and we must apologize for the fact that we must herewith make an appeal with sorrowful hearts in this our affliction. Any gift, howsoever small, would be thankfully accepted.

Fr. Bonaventura Binzegger, O.S.B.
The presence of a German-Catholic settlement on what was in the last decade of the nineteenth century still a raw near-frontier environment was a novelty that made the town a curiosity. The town was subject in its early years to periodic visitations from rowdy cowboys with little use for civilization, especially religion, especially foreign religion. Ranchers objected to the fences that the farmers erected to block their use of free range. One pioneer recalled:

At one time a group of outsiders came to town and began shooting up the place. They rode their horses up and down the street, shooting at all the buildings. No one was hurt, although several people got bullet-holes in their coats and hats. After this, when a shot was fired, everyone left their home carrying Winchesters, shotguns, or six-shooters.\(^3\)

A long-time Muenster resident remembered one such occasion when a gang of ruffians rode into town and tied their horses in front of the church. Herbert Meurer recalled:

They walked right down to the front of the pulpit and altars and insolently swinging examined everything. This brought down the righteous wrath and emotionalism of all the women in the congregation, to say nothing of the tight-laced Christian men. The accounts do not say that any shooting was done in the House of God, but pandemonium broke out in general, and it took a battle little short of all-out war to drive the heathens back to the sticks. I would imagine that a lot of Holy Water had to be used to cleanse the desecration done by these invaders.\(^4\)

Reading the recollections of these early pioneers shows that the German settlers respected and cherished their priests. Among the most dedicated to the clergy was Frank Hesse. A Muensterite remembered:
A new comer who was permitted to stay in the colony made some ugly remark of [sic] the priesthood. He was dealt a good blow on the mouth [by Mr. Hesse] and sent out of the settlement at once.41

August Pulte's son-in-law saw the old settler confront a gang of outlaws at a Fourth of July picnic.

[One of the rowdy men, an outlaw named John Childress,] struck our parish priest, Father Blum [sic]. My father-in-law . . . came to the priest's defense and knocked down Childress and his brother-in-law.42

These hardy believers would not tolerate any attacks on their much-beloved pastors.

Conflicts with the outside world were not their only conflicts. The parishioners themselves started squabbling over what to name the parish, which had gone by the name St. Mary's since 1891. The priest who came two years later, Father Binzegger, favored the name of St. Joseph because of his own special devotion to the husband of the Blessed Virgin. Father Binzegger's devotion to St. Joseph led to his asking the parishioners to treat the saint's feast day, 19 March, as a holiday.43 In Muenster today, it is still an unofficial holiday, with most businesses closed at least half a day, and until 1970 even the public schools let out that day. Others in the parish professed devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. To solve the dilemma of the name, the priest called for a drawing. Equal numbers of red, white, and yellow slips of paper were put into a box, and each parishioner withdrew one piece. A red slip meant a vote for Saint Joseph, a white one for Saint Mary, and a
yellow one for Sacred Heart. The yellow slips prevailed, and the parishioners believed that Providence had chosen their parish name. It has been Sacred Heart Parish since that time.**

The Flusche brothers, who had made the initial negotiations with the local Texas ranchers, moved on to found newer colonies in Pilot Point in Denton County and Windthorst in Archer County. They had turned over their land agency to J.M. Richter, who reported in a letter published in the Amerika in December 1890 that forty-five families were living in the colony, entailing over 250 persons. Moreover, when all the settlers arrived who had bought land, there would be an additional twenty-three families. At that time, 14,000 acres, over half the original Childers-Fisher Pasture, remained unsold.*** In March 1892, John Koll, who had by then taken over the land agency, reported that eighty-six families had settled, with twenty-two more anticipated. Only 8,000 acres of the original colony remained on the market. His advertisement in Amerika announcing these figures ran in six consecutive numbers of the Saint Louis periodical.**** On 11 May 1892, in a letter to Amerika, Father Blum says that where just a short while ago open and wild prairies were to be seen, with only "einige Cowboys auf ihren winzigen, aber doch feurigen und schnellführenden Texas-Ponies, mit Sombrero in dem Kopfe und Lasso in der Hand," ("a few cowboys on their elegant yet
fiery and fast-running Texas ponies, with sombreros on their heads and lassos in their hands"), now could be seen rich farms the likes of which could not be seen in any of the other states. (It is interesting to note that in a few short years the "German purity" that the Flusches and others had cherished so much was already beginning to be tainted; English and Spanish words were already in Father Blum's vocabulary.)

In August 1894, Richter, again agent for the original Flusche land, ran a last advertisement about the "Deutsch-katholische Colonie." In it he said that only 3,000 of the original acreage was for sale, but he added that cheap land in neighboring tracts were for sale. The Muenster colony had grown well beyond its first boundaries, so that by the time of the Fiftieth Jubilee of the parish, the parish historian could write that "today the land owned by them [i.e., German Catholics] is at least fourfold the 22,000 acres originally set aside for a Catholic colony."

The end of the first decade saw the settlement grow from a tent by the railroad to a thriving town with many businesses and homes, and a new parish church with a spire standing against the horizon. Muenster had survived those harsh early years, but equally hard times were to follow.
CHAPTER III

NOTES

1. The Daily Hesperian, 3 January 1889, 1.
2. Ibid., 18 September 1889, 1.
3. Ibid., 6 October 1889, 1.
5. Ibid., 24.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Earl Fisher, "History of Mr. Frank Hesse, the First Pioneer Settler of Muenster Colony, Founded 1889" (Unpublished manuscript in Archives of Subiaco Benedictine Abbey, Subiaco, Arkansas), 5.
10. Ibid., 31.
12. "The Voth Family" (Unpublished biographical manuscript in the possession of Mrs. Elsie Horn, Muenster, Texas.)
14. Ibid. The May Laws were a series of laws passed in the 1870s by Prussia, through the instigation of the Prussian Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Education, Adalbert Falk, a Bismarck appointee. The first, in 1872, required that all priests and ministers have attended a German high school or university. Such a requirement assured that the priests had been indoctrinated in the strong cultural nationalism of Bismarck. In effect, it gave the Berlin government a veto power over church appointments. A subsequent law abolished Papal jurisdiction
over the Catholic Church in Prussia. These laws imposed severe fines and jail sentences. By 1876, all Prussian bishops were either in exile or in prison. By 1877 one out of three Catholic parishes in Prussia was without a priest. Halo Holborn, *A History of Modern Germany, 1840-1945* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1969), 263.

15. Ibid.
16. Ibid., 4.
17. Ibid.
20. Ibid., 25.
27. "Cooke County und Seine Naturlichen Hilfsquellen", Reprint of a booklet found in the cornerstone of the Sacred Heart Church when it was opened in 1896, *Muenster Enterprise*, 22 April 1949, 1.
28. Ibid., 25.
29. Ibid., 48.

34. Ibid., 33.

35. Fr. Bonaventura Binzegger, O.S.B., to the Abbot of Einsiedeln, Switzerland, 1 August 1893 (Unpublished manuscript in the Archives of Subiaco Benedictine Abbey, Subiaco, Arkansas), 54.


37. Fuhrmann, Jubilee History, 33.

38. Ibid., 34.


43. Fuhrmann, Jubilee History, 55.

44. Ibid., 45-46.

45. Ibid., 41.

46. Ibid., 42.

47. Ibid.

48. Ibid., 43.

49. Ibid.
CHAPTER IV

MUENSTER AND AGRICULTURE

The men who bought land through the Flusche brothers and settled on the prairies of western Cooke County came for the most part to farm. As we saw in earlier chapters of this study, men such as Frank Hesse went into retail business, and later farming, but by far most of the German-Americans who settled Muenster in its earliest days were farmers. Since the first plow broke the soil in the winter of 1889-90 to get ready for spring planting, Muenster's fortunes have been tied to the agricultural market.

Likewise, Muenster has not existed in isolation from the land around it. Muenster's agricultural history is part of the overall history of the agricultural history of Cooke County. Since agricultural data is gathered by and reported to the federal government by counties, the most reliable way to look at the agricultural heritage of Muenster is to look at the progress of farming in Cooke County.

Over 80 percent of the income in Cooke County is generated by agriculture. Throughout its history, the county has been heavily agricultural in its character.¹

In 1900, ten years after the first farms were established in Muenster, Cooke County had 3,307 farms,
averaging 142.4 acres each. The farms were almost equally
divided between those owned by the people who worked them
(44.1 percent) and those worked by sharecroppers (42.2
percent), with a small number of cash-rent farmers. In
1900, farm income exceeded $2.2 million. Federal census
figures indicate that cattle in the county numbered 48,765
head, while the production of grain measured 1.68 million
bushels of corn, 840,790 bushels of oats, and 622,460
bushels of wheat.²

In the early days of its history, Cooke County was at
the western edge of the great Cotton Belt that stretched
from the Blacklands of Central Texas to the Tidewater of
Virginia. At the turn of the century, Cooke County ginned
11,332 bales of cotton, and Muenster farmers contributed
greatly to that production. Ray Klement, a member of a
pioneer farming family in Muenster, recalls that virtually
every Muenster area farmer grew cotton.³ During the years
between World War I and the Depression, cotton production
peaked at around 20,000 bales per year.⁴ The devastation of
the Dust Bowl and Depression years reduced cotton
production to 8,906 bales in 1936. Only 1,540 bales were
produced in 1956, but it increased to 6,200 in 1965. No
cotton gins operated in the county by 1984.⁵ Muenster had
one gin, the Muenster Ginning Company, located on the west
side of Main Street between Second and Third streets. It
was owned by Lee Stock and William Walterscheid, who closed
By 1910, the Agricultural Census indicated that the percentage of farms operated by tenants rather than owners had risen from 42.8 percent in the previous census to 51.0 percent. Moreover, only 54.9 percent of the farms which were owner-operated were mortgage-free. Cooke County farmers enjoyed basically good times, but lean years soon came. 

Alois Hesse, a lifetime farmer of Muenster and the son of Frank Hesse, recalls that in 1917 farmers received $2.65 per bushel for wheat. His father would not sell his 4,000 bushels of wheat because he thought the price would go to $3.00. He finally had to sell, however, for $2.00 a bushel because the price began to drop when all the farmers in the area had good crops, also.

The 1920s was a bad decade for agriculture across the South, as the bottom dropped out of the cotton market. Cooke County was hit hard, statistics show. Klement recalls that in addition to low prices, his family's cotton farm was hurt heavily by the invasion of the boll weevil around 1924.

We planted sixty-eight acres in cotton that year and harvested twenty-four bales. The next year [1925] we planted one hundred acres in cotton and got just 24 bales. The boll weevils hit us. The next year, forty acres in cotton—we didn't pick a single boll. Boll weevils and a wet summer caused it.

The number of farmers owning the land they worked decreased from 1,299 in 1920 to 1,078 in 1925, and plummeted to 720 in 1930, a 44.6 percent decrease in one decade. Conversely, the number of share-croppers increased from 1,390 in 1920 to
1,848 in 1925. The number dropped to 1,673 in 1930 as tenant-farmers were going broke and moving away from the county. The New Deal years, with all the federal price support, saw the trend reverse somewhat. By 1940, tenants operated 51.9 percent of the farms in the county, being either cash-renters or share-croppers. But the Muenster community remained relatively free from the hardships of farm tenancy.

In 1940, Cooke County had 2,396 farms, only 72.5 percent of the number at the turn of the century. The only kinds of farms to increase in number in the late 1930s were large ones, that is, over 180 acres. The numbers of farms over 700 acres increased in the 1935-1940 period from sixty-five to eighty-two. Consolidation was clearly at work in Muenster as it was all around Cooke County.

Meanwhile, dairying in Cooke County continued to grow as the chief agribusiness. The number of cows and heifers kept mainly for milking increased from 7,929 in 1930 to 11,565 in 1940. As cotton production decreased and the cattle industry expanded, corn production rose. In 1934, farmers harvested 78,840 bushels of corn. By 1939, that number increased to 465,671 bushels. Wheat production increased in the period, 1934-1939, by 62.75 percent.

By World War II, the composition of the Muenster agriculture picture had become more diverse, shifting from being part of the Cotton Belt, as it was before 1920, to...
being a part of the West, that is, a rich cattle producing area. The number of hogs and pigs in the county rose during the 1930s by 24.9 percent.\textsuperscript{14}

As in the rest of Texas and other agricultural regions of the nation, farms run by sharecroppers and family farmers gave way to larger, more productive farms, and Cooke County became a significant meat and dairy-products area. In 1987, twenty commercial dairy farms operated in the Muenster farming community.\textsuperscript{15}

Agriculture still provides the fundamental economic basis for Cooke County, with 77.9 percent of the county's total area occupied with farming. Of these farms, 57 percent of the acreage is pasture or rangeland. In the 1978 Agricultural Census, the value of all agricultural products sold was $26,095,000, 81.8 percent of which was derived from livestock and livestock products. Of the income from livestock, 36.7 percent came from dairy products, and 58.7 percent from the sale of cattle and calves. Cooke County is still cattle country.\textsuperscript{16}

The crops in the county continue to reflect the predominance of livestock. Corn production decreased, from 930 acres in 1974 to 288 acres in 1978. Bushels of grain corn decreased from 18,235 in 1974 to 1,520 acres in 1978. Sorghum production in that period also decreased slightly. Wheat and oats were primary crops, with 756,571 bushels of wheat and 862,543 bushels of oats being produced in 1978.
Peanut production increased from 663,446 pounds in 1974 to 1,098,435 pounds in 1978. Hay tonnage increased from 46,257 in 1974 to 66,165 in 1978. Cotton production was about 5 percent of cotton production in the peak years of the early 1920s. The economic tenure of the farmer became stronger following the Depression, with 58 percent of the farms owned by the farmer, and only 11 percent being worked by tenants. By 1978, Cooke County remained oriented toward family farms, with 87.4 percent operated by individuals or single families. Corporations owned under 1 percent of the farms.

The first Westphalians who came to the grasslands of western Cooke County in 1889 would be pleased, no doubt, to know that their descendants still tilled the soil they cleared. The vagaries of the agricultural markets remained vital concerns to everyone who made a living in this farm-belt community.

When the Flusche brothers encouraged settlers to come to the Muenster colony in the last decade of the nineteenth century, settling in the townsite or in the surrounding countryside made little difference so far as the basic comforts of life were concerned. Living standard improvements during the first decades of the twentieth century brought town dwellers comforts and conveniences denied to their country kinsmen and friends. Most of these comforts were associated with the availability of
electrical power. An early advocate of rural power for Cooke County recalled: "I used to read a lot by kerosene lamp, and then I saw one of those Aladdin lamps and got one to read by, and I knew I wanted them." During the 1920s and early 1930s, the rural farm families of Cooke County had tried unsuccessfully to convince the private power companies to supply electricity to the outlying farms.

The people around Muenster then decided that the public sector rather than the private was their best chance for electrification. Rural electric co-ops could provide the services that commercial companies could or would not. In 1937, under the leadership of Justin W. Hess, the community leaders began exploration of Muenster's becoming part of the recently inaugurated Rural Electrification Administration (REA) program.

Prospective members held meetings to learn how to form a co-operative. In May 1938, Hess, who became chairman of the Cooke County Electric Co-operative, also known unofficially as the Muenster REA, received notification by letter from William G. Morrison, state rural electrification officer in Waco, that the local REA would have to be organized and membership fees paid before the federal government would issue a charter. Hess told prospective members that the $5 membership fee would have to be paid by each member and easement papers signed before the construction of lines could start. By the end of May, Cecil
Murphy, REA attorney in Gainesville, had received notification from the national REA headquarters that approval had been given to the Muenster charter. On 7 July the state of Texas issued through the Office of the Secretary of State a charter of incorporation for the Cooke County Electric Co-operative Association. The initial directors were Barney Voth, J.H. Otto, and Henry Fette of Muenster; W.L. Young representing Marysville; Casey Jones from Forestburg; and R.M. Felty of Hood and Joe Bengfort from Lindsay. Hess became manager at a salary of $4 a day and a mileage allowance of five cents per mile.

The Cooke County Electric Co-op moved quickly to supply power to the farm homes. Efficient operation required that three households per mile join, and the charter members were asked to recruit new members. The early rates were quite low, as low as $2.50 per twenty-six kilowatt hours used. Such low rates could not pay for the expenses of the co-op. The directors authorized obtaining a credit voucher of up to $1,500,000 from the federal government to pay for the construction and operation of electric generating, transmission, distribution, and service facilities. Shortly thereafter, the co-op secured a loan for $178,000 for 195 miles of line construction, done by a Dallas firm, to serve 424 customers. Electric service finally flowed over the REA power lines on 19 May 1939. Frank Felderhoff, who worked for J.E. Morgan and Sons of
Dallas, the firm which contracted the building of the first 195 miles of electrical lines, recalls that he received thirty cents per hour in 1941 when he went to work for the Muenster REA as a lineman. The men on his crew would do everything from digging the holes to stringing the wires. The tools they used were crowbars, prybars, shovels, and even dynamite when necessary. Felderhoff remembers one hole south of Muenster that had to be dug in solid rock and it took two men three days to dig the hole.

The success of the Muenster-based co-op led to other communities' asking to join, and in May 1939, the REA appropriated $37,000 to finance forty-eight miles of additional electrical lines to serve the Callisburg, Marysville, and Spring Creek communities. To insure the success of the venture, the directors required that signers of petitions for REA services actually to sign up for available services and have meters installed.

At first, the Cooke County Electric Co-op bought its power from Texas Power and Light from Dallas. But in 1940, they switched suppliers to Brazos River Electric Transmissions Co-operative. The Cooke County Electric Co-op is still a member of that larger co-operative.

The Cooke County REA project has grown steadily, except for a period in 1942 when seven miles of lines had to be taken down around the government's Camp Howze, a military installation northeast of Gainesville.
came in the years right after World War II, from 470 miles in 1945, to 535 in 1946, to 711 in 1947, and 1,000 in 1948. The switch to electricity as a power source for oil wells caused an increase in service demand in the late 1940s.

Frank Felderhoff also recalls the ice storm during the winter of 1949 which caused havoc for the Muenster REA. Felderhoff tells that during this winter he and several others from the local co-op had gone to Seymour, Texas, to help repair damage done by an ice storm in that area. When the Muenster men returned the Sunday after completing the job, the weather was cold but sunny. The next morning when they went to work in Muenster the sky became overcast and freezing rain began to fall. Before the ice storm ended, the system suffered damage on 751 miles of line served by the REA. Felderhoff relates that local men and the crews from neighboring rural co-operatives took three weeks and three days to restore power to all customers.

In 1981, such power-consuming facilities related to oil wells and the petroleum business account for 65 percent of the revenues brought in by the co-op. Also, in the 1980s an increase in meter hook-ups can be seen because of increased oil drilling. In 1980, 303 new meters were installed, 372 in 1981, 289 in 1982, 380 in 1983, and 376 in 1984. When the price of oil began to decline in 1985, the number of new meters installed also decreased from 376 in
1984 to 266 in 1985, to 198 in 1986, to 75 through June of 1987. Oilman Jimmy Jack Biffle stated that oil wells producing only a few barrels daily were shut down.

From these modest beginnings, the Cooke County Electric Co-operative grew from its original two employees and 424 customers on 195 miles of lines to its present size, 2,368 miles of lines with 9,423 meter connections. The Cooke County Co-operative aided the local economy in that approximately 80 percent of its $200,000 budget was spent in Muenster in 1986. Twenty-seven of its current thirty-four employees lived in Muenster. By 1986, the co-operative served virtually all of Cooke County, as well as parts of Montague, Denton, Wise, and Grayson counties. The efforts, then, of the German-American farmers in and around Muenster to bring the benefits and conveniences of modern civilization to their homes led to the extension of these benefits to areas far from Muenster.
CHAPTER IV

NOTES


5. Ibid.


12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.


17. Ibid.

18. Ibid., 556.


20. Ibid.


22. Ibid., 27 May 1938, 1.

23. Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting, Cooke County Electric Co-operative Association, Muenster, Texas, 7 July 1938.

24. Muenster Enterprise, 6 June 1938, 1.

25. Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting, Files of the Cooke County Electric Co-operative Association, Muenster, Texas, 7 July 1938.


27. Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting, Cooke County Electric Co-operative Association, Muenster, Texas, 10 October 1938.


30. Muenster Enterprise, 28 October 1938, 1.


32. Muenster Enterprise, 26 May 1939, 1.
33. Ibid., 16 June 1939, 1.

34. Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting, Cooke County Electric Co-operative Association, Muenster, Texas, 6 December 1940.


36. Ibid.


39. Cooke County Electric Co-operative Association Financial Analysis and Annual Report, Muenster, Texas, 1981. (These publications are privately printed by the Cooke County Electric Co-operative Association.)


43. Ibid.

44. Ibid.
CHAPTER V

MUENSTER AND OIL

For the first four decades of the Muenster community, the main source of livelihood was agriculture. Even the retail and service establishments in town depended on the agricultural market. In general, the economy of Cooke County was keyed to the plight of the farmer.

This one-sided economic picture for the town changed in the decade of the 1920s, and, as has happened with many other towns throughout the Southwest, the change was brought about by oil, a commodity that the Flusche brothers would never have expected for their colony. Muenster has not been alone in its change from a purely agricultural to an oil-producing community. Because of its geological formations, Cooke County in general has prospered from the petroleum and natural gas industry.

The region around Muenster has always been instrumental in the history of oil and gas production in Cooke County. In fact, the Muenster colony had not been in existence a full decade when the first oil well, primitive by modern standards, was drilled within five miles of Muenster. (See Map 5.) In 1898, drillers sank a shallow well on land owned by George Ball in the Myra townsite, south and east of
By 1901 they had reached a depth of 830 feet, with oil and gas showing up in the Trinity sands at 650 feet. A small oil boomlet ensued, with lots in Myra leasing for $500 each. Drillers abandoned the well in 1901 and moved to Ball's ranch north of town, where they sank a 730-foot well that produced oil and gas for six months before they abandoned it.²

From 1912 until 1926, oil-well drilling in Cooke County moved from Myra to Callisburg in the northeastern part of the county and Bulcher in the far northwest. The Bulcher field was very productive with 300 wells by 1949, and an employment of 100 workers.³

On 24 September 1926, the first successful oil well was drilled in the Muenster field, north of the townsite itself. This well, the Lynch, Stahl and Burress Number 1 Dangelmayr, was completed to a maximum depth of only 806 feet and averaged a mere ten barrels a day.⁴ The next January, the Oil Operator's Trust drilled the Luke Number 1 on the western edge of the Muenster townsite. It was almost twice as deep as the first Dangelmayr well, producing at a depth of 1,600 feet.⁵ Its yield was much greater than the more shallow well, reaching a maximum of 100 barrels a day. In the early 1930s exploration continued in Cooke County with the development of the Andress, Walterscheid, Trev, Trubenbach, and Huggins oil pools.⁶

The discovery of oil near the town of Muenster provided
the impulse for the city's incorporation. The community of Muenster spent almost the first four decades of its history as an unofficial town, not as an incorporated city. As previously stated, settlers arrived at this location in 1889, but not until 1927 did the inhabitants of the town perceive any need to seek legal incorporation. Muenster's official municipal incorporation did not stem from any growth spurt in the 1920s, as the census figures indicate. As an unincorporated town the townspeople had a post office, a school through the parish and the public school system, and law enforcement through the county government. Also, as a community of uniformity—nearly everyone of the same ethnic and religious background, with strong interfamily ties connecting the members of the community—need for an external force to maintain order was minimal.

Times changed, however, and certain realities of twentieth-century life began to threaten the community as additional persons arrived who did not reflect the lifestyle of the existing tightly-intervoven group. Those new people were first the transient workers who followed the Oil Boom that hit all over North and East Texas in the 1920s. After all, the Ranger Oil Fields and the Burk Burnett Oil Fields were within an easy day's travel of Muenster. Also, oil had been discovered near Muenster itself in 1926, bringing the alleged lawlessness of the oil-patch workers close to the town. The oil-drilling companies brought equipment to the
town and parked it on public property such as street easements and on private undeveloped lands. The people in the Muenster community feared that they needed some legal sanction for finding ways to protect the city against the intrusion of these infringements on their rights by oil companies and transients who would not share the "Germanic idea" of hard, stable work, respect for private property, and close ties to family and church.

According to J.M. Weinzapfel, a citizen of the community who later served as the city's first secretary, the incorporation stemmed from a desire to improve living conditions in the community.\(^7\) State law required the filing of a petition indicating the intent of a significant number of the inhabitants of the community to incorporate. On 2 February 1927, such a petition, containing forty-one signatures, was filed in the Cooke County Courthouse in Gainesville, seeking an election to determine if the community had a sentiment for incorporation.\(^8\) (See Appendix A.) The County Clerk declared the petition valid and set the election for 26 February with Ben Hellman to serve as election judge.\(^9\)

In the election, a total of 113 persons voted, with 77 in favor and 36 against incorporation. Although the election demonstrated a two-to-one sentiment for incorporation, not all citizens shared that feeling. Weinzapfel recalls that those opposing incorporation did so
out of a fear of increased taxes. The pro-incorporation vote undoubtedly reflected the concern of the members of the community for the manageability of these newcomers without legal authority. On 2 March 1927, the formal incorporation document was filed in the Cooke County records.

The next step in the legal creation of a city was the election of the officers who would conduct the city's business. The city would need a mayor, a marshal, and five aldermen. Officials posted notices of the upcoming election at the bank, the post office, and the town's hotel.

The 5 April election was conducted within six weeks after the incorporation vote. The electorate chose the following persons as their initial municipal officers: former county judge Ben Hellman, mayor; D.J. Rollman, city marshal; and Meinard Endres, H.P. Hennigan, W.D. Greeson, H.G. Stelzer, and William Walterscheid, aldermen. The balloting drew only twenty-five voters, and each of these candidates ran without opposition. The townsmen obviously had already decided who would serve in these positions, and this list indicates that the governing of the city would lie in the hands of a coalition of men who came from the original settlers. With the election of these officers, the new city began its business.

The new board of aldermen worked quickly to address the issues that had brought about the drive for incorporation.
The number of men travelling around the state and camping out in tents and other impermanent structures in parks and on railroad rights-of-way had caused alarm all over the state. The first ordinance made it an offense "punishable by fine, for any person to establish a camp or any manner of residence or abode, upon the public park, public grounds, streets, and alleys of the town of Muenster." The ordinance successfully saved the community from the physical intrusion of the oil-field equipment and gave the city legal recourse against some of the less desirable moral implications of a boom-town atmosphere.

The anti-oil-field attitude that surrounded the incorporation process in Muenster did not affect the actual search for new oil, which continued in the 1920s and into the next decade. In the 1930s drillers explored to the east and south of town. Kuehn and Kingery brought in a successful well on the northeast corner of the Robert Yosten farm southwest of Muenster that produced 25 to 30 barrels daily from a depth of 850 feet. The Voth field south of town, on the S. Hinkle survey, drilled by Whitfield, Pearson and Grimes, opened in December 1938, with its Number 2 well yielding 1,000 barrels a day from a depth of 1,793 feet. The Voth pool is often referred to as the Texas Christian University (TCU) pool on oil maps. (See Map 5, p. 75.)

Other fields opened in 1939 south of Muenster near the
Linn community. Ray Klement recalls that he was farming during the oil boom years and earned fifteen cents an hour for working on a threshing machine while oil field hands received $4.00 a day. Frank Felderhoff stated that his father leased his farm north of Muenster for oil exploration at $1.00 an acre. Felderhoff also recalled his father saying that the $1.00 an acre lease money paid the taxes on the farm, and if it had not been for the lease money his father might have lost the farm. Alois Hesse related that some people leased acreage from area farmers for $5.00 an acre and resold the leases to oilmen who came to Muenster for $20.00 per acre, thus making more money than the original landowners.

The field closest to the city of Muenster proper is the Dangelmayr field, named for the pioneer family on whose property the city's first well was drilled in September 1926. The field lies one and one-half miles north of the city. Following the shallow 1926 well, the field had four wells by February 1927, with a total combined yield of twenty-five barrels a day. Most of this production came from only one well. The wells in this field have consistently continued to produce. In 1949, the wells in the Dangelmayr field produced 104,092 barrels, for a cumulative total of 742,671 barrels. Oil production in the Dangelmayr field decreased greatly after the late 1940s. By 1979, the Dangelmayr field produced only 108,969
barrels annually. Then the crash in oil prices came, and for the first five months of 1987 the wells in this field produced only 7,501 barrels of oil.

The severe drop in oil prices in the mid 1980s, like the collapse of the cotton market in the years following World War I, made land far less valuable for those Muensterites who had produced and sold such great amounts of oil in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. The drop in oil production in fields around Muenster can be seen in figures from other fields in the area. For example, in 1979 the wells of the Voth field produced a total of 42,995 barrels. During the first five months of 1980, only 13,509 barrels, far below half, came from the same leases. In 1979, the wells of the Gatewood field produced a total of 93,207 barrels. During the first five months of 1980, only 30,257 barrels, hardly a third of the 1979 annual amount, were pumped on the same leases. The farmers around Muenster found the oil booms of the 1950s and 1970s a boon to their personal economies, since their land could produce income for them even without their having to till the land. By the mid 1980s, however, the decline in production and mineral revenue caused a dramatic reduction in their personal incomes.

While oil and gas became the most important mineral resources in the county other than the soil itself, the area also contained other mineral resources. In the 1927
University of Texas Bulletin on the geology of the county, the authors noted the presence of other minerals of limited yet true economic worth. Asphalt resources were discovered west of Muenster on the Montague-Cooke county line. This sand asphalt deposit found in association with the Goodland limestone has not yet been developed for commercial use.32

Building stone, although not in sufficient quantities for commercial significance, found local use. Some local residents used the local Goodland limestone, Kiamichi clay, and quarry limestone for such projects as fences and stone veneers for homes. Many local residents took advantage of these stone deposits to fashion sidewalks, porches, and patios for their homes, some of these showing the fossilized remains of prehistoric plants and animals.

Gravel and crushed stone, on the other hand, have been developed for commercial profit, most of it deriving from the nearby creekbeds. Two gravel companies established mines outside the city, one approximately four miles east of the city, another six miles east.

Now that oil prices are rising again, it is likely that production and exploration will resume in the Muenster, no doubt to the satisfaction of those whose family farmlands had become profitable oil-leases in the 1950s. No one can predict, however, if the boomtimes will ever strike again.
CHAPTER V

NOTES


2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., 24.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.


8. Minutes Book No. 1, City Council, City of Muenster, Texas, 1.

9. Ibid., 2.


12. Minutes Book No. 1, City Secretary's Office, City Hall, Muenster, Texas, 5.

13. Ibid., 6.


15. Ibid., 9.


84
17. Heydrick Map Service, Cooke County Map No. 3 (updated to 28 August 1984). In possession of the author.


32. H.P. Bybee and Fred Bullard, Geology of Cooke County (Austin: University of Texas Bulletin No. 2710, 8 March 1927), 52.
A fundamental theme to this study is that the Muenster community, an island of middle-European catholic settlement in the broad sea of Anglo Saxon protestant southern America has produced a distinct culture. Trying to determine where that difference lies is a study for a sociological paper, not a historical one. For better or worse, however, in the minds of most of the community's neighbors, this difference is readily determined. In a subsequent chapter, this study will examine the extent to which the local residents have identified with and still identify with their German heritage. This chapter will deal with a more tangible difference between Muenster and the social milieu of North Texas.

Although no one could maintain that rural North Texas represents any great dominion of sobriety, the fact is Muenster has had the option of legal purchase of alcoholic beverages far longer than most North Texas communities. From Denison fifty-three miles to the east, to Denton forty-five miles to the south, and Wichita Falls seventy-one miles to the west, Muenster and its sister German-American
community of Lindsay have been oases of legal package stores and public drinking places in North Texas since the late 1950s. For that reason, most North Texans identify Muenster as not just a German town but a beer-drinking town. To the teetotalers and temperance league types, the city has had a tainted reputation. During this author's youth, long before he knew anything about the German heritage of this town, he recalls that Muenster was a "beer-joint" town. To the "hell-raisers" and "connoisseurs of the fruit of the vine," Muenster was an island of sophistication and drinking pleasure, a loop-hole, as it were, in the Bible Belt in which the only other sources for alcoholic beverages were bootleggers.

The provincial mind-set of the southern white evangelical protestant would simply explain Muenster as an example of popish, foreign decadence. The reality behind Muenster's difference from its neighbors lies not in morality but ethnic taste and tradition. The strict, morality-conscious Westphalians and Hessians who came from the midwest to Cooke County in the 1890s were members of a culture which did not hold complete abstention from strong drink as part of its moral code. The drinking of beer and wine as part of everyday folkways is as common to the German-Catholic culture as it is to the Mediterranean cultures of Italy and Greece. The wholesale condemnation of these beverages by the Anglo Saxon evangelical protestants
no doubt seemed as strange to the early Muenster settlers as their open, shameless imbibing did to their new neighbors. The retention of its folkways in relation to the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages is the most obvious and critical difference between Muenster and any of its nearby neighboring communities. The attempts of the Muensterites to retain and legalize these practices is an important part of this community's history. It shows not only the persistence of Germanic culture but the antagonism which cultural differences can create in southern America, the section of the United States in which non-white Anglo Saxon protestant cultures have traditionally had the greatest difficulty in being not necessarily assimilated but accepted.

When the Flusche brothers' first colonists got off the Katy train that November day in 1889 to found their German colony on the north Texas prairie, they found themselves in the midst of a section of Texas which, if one looks at voting patterns, was not basically hostile to the consumption of alcoholic beverages, one of the basic folkways of the new settlers. (See Appendix B.) Just four years before their arrival, a majority of the Cooke County electors approved the sale and possession of spirituous liquors by a vote of 1,861 to 1,500.\(^1\) Cooke County lined up with state-wide sentiment, since in 1887 Texans defeated a prohibitionist amendment to the state constitution.\(^2\) In
1902 in another county wide election, prohibition proponents again failed by a vote of 2,454 to 2,086. By 1910, however, the national prohibitionist sentiments, fired by Carrie Nation and other anti-alcohol activists, had become so strong that the prohibitionist faction won. On 28 May 1910, in a county-wide election the drys prevailed by a vote of 2,348 to 1,954. State-wide, Texas came close to a prohibitionist stand. In 1911 when voters barely defeated a prohibition proposition to the state constitution, 167 counties were already "dry" by local-option decisions and 61 were only partially "wet."

With this county-wide decision of 1910, the German-Texans in Muenster found that their hopes of establishing a community in which their customs and personal habits could be perpetuated without interference from the Anglo-Scotch-Irish Texans around them were to be severely curtailed. They could no longer legally buy a bottle of beer or wine. The sale of alcoholic beverages continued surreptitiously. The Texas Liquor Control Board (TLCB) made frequent raids on local businesses in Muenster attempting to prevent the illegal sale of alcoholic beverages. State authorities made periodic checks to fine violators of the prohibition law, which had become the supreme law of the land with the ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution in 1919. In 1937 alone, the Texas Liquor Control Board fined four Muenster businessmen
for selling beer illegally."

According to local newspaper accounts, one of the main objectives of the agency's numerous raids was the domino parlor and local watering place in Muenster run by Joe C. Trachta at the corner of Fourth and Main streets. In September 1939, Trachta's establishment, known to the locals as "Joe's Joint," was completely cleaned out, and the violator was warned that his next offense would mean a heavy fine and a year or two in jail. These threats did not deter Trachta, who paid his fine and resumed his business before the TLCB officials could get back to Gainesville. Trachta continued running his illegal tavern until his marriage when his wife persuaded him to go into a more legal line of work. He started a drug store, but continued bootlegging on the side from the drug store. Another frequent objective of anti-liquor raids was the Bright Gable Inn, a restaurant on the west wide of town on the road to Saint Jo.

Not all of these anti-liquor raids succeeded, and one in particular produced embarrassment for the liquor control board's personnel. The raid took place in September 1939, when three officers arrived to search the Cooke County Electric Co-operative's warehouse, on Main Street between Division and First streets. The manager, Justin William Hess, objected, but the search took place anyway. Hess especially complained when the officers asked for the key to
the garage and warehouse used by the co-op. According to
the Muenster Enterprise, local residents believed the
officers were conducting the search on a false lead given to
them that the co-op was storing beer and liquor for A.C.
Stelzer, who operated a lunchroom next to the co-op. The
TLCB officials were so chagrined when their raid turned up
nothing that F.O. Goen, supervisor for the Dallas District
of the liquor control board, came to Muenster to offer his
apology. His remarks were published in the Enterprise: "We
want the entire community to know that the co-op office is
above suspicion, also that the liquor control board does not
make a habit of molesting law-abiding citizens." Obviously the locals were in sympathy with the violators of
the anti-liquor laws, and when the TLCB was not looking the
operators of these illegal establishments operated without
social stigma.

When businesses and residents of Muenster lost the
legal right to buy or manufacture alcoholic beverages, a
certain "wet" faction tried to gain sufficient support for
voting back in the right to sell spirits, especially after
the repeal of national prohibition with the Twenty-First
Amendment in 1933. In the state-wide special referendum
concerning the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment, Cooke
County voted for a slate of "dry" delegates by 59.3 percent,
but the Muenster precincts voted "wet" by 98.5 percent. In
1934, three Cooke County precincts, including Muenster,
voted "wet" on the sale of 3.2 percent beer by a 53 percent margin, while Muenster voted "wet" by a 98.3 percent margin.\textsuperscript{14}

The prohibitionists won another victory in 1936 when Cooke County citizens held another wet-dry election. It was the slimmest of victories, since the anti-prohibitionists lost by only two votes.\textsuperscript{15} Encouraged by this near-success, the "wets" tried again the next year and petitioned for another election on 20 March. This time the "wets" compromised by calling for the legal sale of "vinous or malt liquors of not more than four percent alcoholic content by weight." The residents of the rest of the county, unwilling to go along with even this watered-down version, defeated the proposition 1,734 to 1,422. In Muenster, 363 voted for the change, and eight voted against it.\textsuperscript{16}

Undaunted, the "wets" in the county tried again the next year. This time the "dry" victory was by a healthy 517-vote majority.\textsuperscript{17} In the late summer of 1939, Muensterites hosted a goodwill rally (actually, a pro-"wet" rally) in Muenster's City Park in an attempt to gain support from other communities in the county for a "wet" vote in the upcoming election. Approximately 1,000 residents of Gainesville and the surrounding area attended the rally, according to the \textit{Muenster Enterprise}. A Gainesville band, four singing trios and quartets, a juggling act, an impersonator, and an accordion duet entertained the crowd,
and speakers told them of the benefits of voting "wet."²¹

They heard Mayor Ben Seyler ask for their support in the election scheduled for 19 August. Mayor Seyler asked those in attendance

in the spirit of good will, to help us legalize beer so that our community can have it in an open and respectable manner. After that is done, dry communities have the privilege of voting themselves dry by precinct local option elections. In this way the drys can be dry and the wets can be wet.²²

Such a well-attended rally no doubt gave heart to the "wets," but when Cooke County went to the polls, the result was the same; the "wets" went down to defeat by a margin of 552 votes.

The German-American communities in the western part of the county were almost to-a-man in favor of repeal of the prohibitionist restrictions. North Muenster voted 304 for legalized drinking and 1 against, and South Muenster voted 107 for and 2 against. Lindsay voted 180 for and 3 against, and two other small communities, Burton and Freemound, voted "wet", Burton with 21 for and 3 against, Freemound with 12 for and 2 against. The "dry" strength lay in Gainesville and in the rural Eastern Cross Timbers region, with 623 for and 1,005 against in Gainesville and the rural areas voting 236 for and 991 against.²³ This result of the 1939 election prompted several local men to ask Mayor Ben Seyler to write to Texas Attorney General Gerald Mann to request information on the steps necessary to divide Cooke County. This group wanted the dividing line to be drawn between Lindsay and
Gainesville and to extend north and south to the Red River and the Denton County line respectively. The main reason for the proposed secession of the western part of Cooke County from the eastern section was the present regulations against beer. As Mayor Seyler said, "Drys in the rest of the county have defeated the selling of beer in Muenster and Lindsay in the last five elections." The mayor also claimed another grievance in that excluding the city of Gainesville, the western portion of the county paid much more than half of the tax burden but received less than its proportional share in improvements. But everyone knew that the real rationale behind this short-lived secessionist movement was prohibition. Nothing ever came of Seyler's separationist movement. One can only speculate what the German-Texans would have called their new county or what other laws it would have enacted, but undoubtedly laws regulating beer, wine, and other alcoholic beverages would have been sent down to quick and overwhelming defeat. The "wets" waited a full twenty years before vindication which came only when the Texas Supreme Court gave validity to the idea that the individual incorporations within the counties could decide independently on the liquor issue.

On 29 July 1959, in ruling on the case Myers v. Martinez, the Texas Supreme Court interpreted the statutes concerning the sale of alcoholic beverages to reaffirm the previous appellate court ruling that each incorporated town
could determine its own destiny, within the doctrine known as local option. The only people who could vote in the election were the people living in each town. Muenster's residents swiftly took advantage, voting 5 September 1959, to legalize the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages.

The outcome of this election was never in doubt. The protestant ministerial community in other parts of Cooke County blasted the almost-sure going "wet" of Muenster. Local legend has it that one of the more vociferous Gainesville preachers whose anti-"wet" sermons were broadcast on radio station KGAF was persuaded to let up on his anti-Muenster denunciations from the pulpit when a party of Muenster men drinking on the Oklahoma side of the Red River surprised the evangelist over there, not only imbibing but also in the company of a female companion not his wife.

On 5 September 1959, the Muenster community held an election to determine whether alcoholic beverages would be sold within the city limits, with Joe Luke as the presiding judge and R.E. Hamric as assistant clerk. The voting hours were from 8:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. Each voter drew a line through the proposition on the ballot he did not favor. The two choices the voter had were to be for or against beer being sold in grocery stores for off premises consumption, beer, wine, and mixed drinks being sold in cafes and taverns.
for on premises consumption, and package store for the sales of all types of alcoholic beverages for off premises consumption.¹⁸ Muensterites voted 352 to 14 (96 percent) in favor of the city having the right to sell alcoholic beverages.¹⁹

The Muenster City Council subsequently enacted an ordinance regulating where such products could be sold. The Council established the liquor zone as one half block on both sides of Main Street from Highway 82 to Third Street, and one half block on both sides of Highway 82 from the overpass to the east city limits.²⁰ The current eastern and western boundaries of the liquor zone are the respective city limits. This extension of the legal-sale boundaries occurred in 1978 when the State Highway Department removed the overpass in 1978, and when the Kountry Korner convenience store began to sell beer on 25 July 1979.²¹ The only other change in the liquor zone came on 5 March 1984, when Fischer's Market opened their eating establishment, Fischerhaus, on the corner of Third and Oak. Although the business is on Third Street, a full half-block outside the liquor zone, the City Council approved the request so long as the establishment, which is a lunchroom, served drinks during the lunch hours of 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.²²

The City Council exempted three organizations from the original liquor zone: the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 6205, the Knights of Columbus Muenster Council 1459, and the
Saint Joseph's Society. These fraternities were already established prior to the election and would sell beer not as a business, but as a service to its private membership.\(^3\) After this favorable election in 1959 businesses which had applied and received a license to sell alcoholic beverages from the state had to wait thirty-five days before they could begin selling their product. Legal sales of alcoholic beverages began 1 October 1959.\(^2\) The Texas Liquor Control Board granted licenses to Fisher's Market, Pagel's Grocery, and Hofbauer's Grocery.\(^3\) Clyde D. Fisher had a license to be a distributor.\(^6\) Others who later received licenses were Urban J. Endres, and Gilbert Endres as distributors, and L.D. Cochran and Carl Walterscheid to operate package stores.\(^7\) The latter knew that the residents of his city were so eager to start legal purchase of beer and liquor that he telephoned his permit number from Austin to his clerks rather than waiting until he made the return trip to Muenster.\(^3\)

With this election one of the original precepts of the Flusche brothers' first colonists had been reaffirmed. From 1910 to 1959, the German Catholics found that they had to circumvent the laws of the county which the non-German majority in the county imposed on them, so far as their imbibing traditions were concerned. When the Texas Supreme Court presented the opportunity by means of a judicial decision, they did not hesitate to vote overwhelmingly to
legalize this tradition, and since that time Muenster has not only provided itself with the beer, wine, and other alcoholic beverages, but also has served the center of the tier of Red River counties as a center of retail beer and liquor trade.
CHAPTER VI

NOTES

1. A. Morton Smith, The First Hundred Years in Cooke County (San Antonio: Naylor Company, 1955), 104.


7. Ibid., 22 September 1939, 1.


11. Muenster Enterprise, 8 September 1939, 1.

12. Ibid., 15 September 1939, 1.


18. Ibid., 11 August 1939, 1.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid., 25 August 1939, 1.

21. Ibid., 1 September 1939, 1.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.


26. Urban Endres, interview with author, Muenster, Tex., 4 April 1984. Original tape recording and transcript of a portion of this interview is in Oral History Collection, North Texas State University Library, Denton, Texas.

27. Muenster Enterprise, 4 September 1959, 1, 6.

28. Ibid.


32. Ibid.


34. Muenster Enterprise, 11 September 1959, 1.

35. Ibid., 2 October 1959, 1.

36. Some confusion might exist over the variant spellings of the name Fisher in Muenster history. The store
opened on 17 March 1927, with the Americanized spelling Fisher, at the northwest corner of Main and Highway 5 (now U.S. Highway 82). But on 6 October 1975, Francis ("Butch") Fisher and John Fisher bought the store from the founders, Joe and John Fisher, Sr., their uncle and father, respectively. They reinstated the original German spelling Fischer to the name of the store but not to the family name. Francis ("Butch") Fisher, interview with author, Muenster, Tex., 12 May 1984. Robert McDaniel, "All in the Family: Fishers carry on business tradition," All Around Gainesville, 4 (May-June 1984), 31.

37. Muenster Enterprise, 2 October 1959, 1.

CHAPTER VII

GERMAN IDENTITY IN MÜNSTER

Determining cultural identity is a sociological process, but the historical process must also be considered. The German heritage of Münster, Texas residents shaped their experiences so thoroughly that, even with the passage of almost a century, the self-image of a transplanted German society remained. On the subject of regional identity, some interpreters claim that only a person born on Texas soil is a true Texan, while those born elsewhere before becoming Texas residents contend that being Texan is a state of mind. Most of the latter identify with Texas through attitude and preference just as much as those native born. In Münster, with its preserved identity in respect to that community's background, the people refer to themselves as German-Texans and German-Americans.

These hyphenated Americans in Münster today face no real problem in claiming their German heritage, since in the 1980s having German ancestry is respectable and honorable. Such was not always the case. In 1917, as the United States cast aside its official neutrality to enter the Great War against Imperial Germany, American newspapers referred to Germans as Huns and barbarians. News stories cast doubt on
the humanity of the German emperor Wilhelm II, whom they poked fun at by calling him "Kaiser Bill." To some Americans, a Germanic heritage brought suspicion of disloyalty. This segment of Muenster's history is clouded in ever-dimming memory.

The situation in Muenster in the days of World War I was complex. Virtually the entire city was of Germanic heritage. Many of the residents had been born in the United States—in German-speaking Catholic communities, nonetheless, but still in this country. For decades their loyalty to the American nation had not been questioned. As Rhinelanders and Westphalian Catholics, the Muensterites had little reason to be blindly loyal to the Kaiser and his national purpose, especially since the Prussian armies had conquered Westphalia only a century before. Bismarck's anti-Catholic policies had motivated the exodus of many Westphalians and Hessians to America, as stated previously in this study. Upon arrival in the new land, the sense of separateness and the desire to avoid the corrupting influences of non-German culture served as the rationale for the colonizing efforts of such entrepreneurs as the Flusche brothers. The desire to guard the Catholic traditions free of protestant influence did not alienate the Muensterites nearly as much as did their retention of German customs and, most potently of all, the German language. In April 1917, when President Woodrow Wilson asked Congress for a
declaration of war against Germany, Muenster was only a scant twenty-seven years old. Prussian Kaiser or not, Germany was still Deutschland, and though German loyalties may not run any deeper than any other nationality's, they run just as deep.

Muensterites quickly determined that the eyes of their fellow American communities would be on them as soon as war broke out. A week after the declaration of war against the German Empire, Gainesville hosted an area parade designed to show "loyalty to Old Glory."² The Gainesville Daily Register reported, early in the story, that Muenster was well represented. "Several German citizens [from Muenster] made patriotic talks," the report stated. Approximately twenty automobiles, with six persons per car, made the twelve-mile drive, while "a goodly number" of other Muensterites came on the Katy train. Among the delegates listed was one of Muenster's patriarch, "Old Mister Frank" Hesse, who had, as previously recounted in this study, fought off ruffians from his store and had resorted to fisticuffs to defend the honor of the Roman Catholic clergy. Hesse and the others knew that as much as they might want to keep the Muenster parish pure German-Catholic, wartime was no time to do it.

Within weeks of American entry into the war, anti-German sentiment ran high. The days in which sauerkraut was rechristened "liberty cabbage" brought all things German
under suspicion. Herbert Meurer, who wrote a journal of his early life in Muenster, noted this unpopularity of German things: "the people of German ancestry were looked upon with suspicion." The editor of the Gainesville Daily Register printed an apologia for the Cooke County German-Americans within six weeks of the declaration of war. In an editorial discounting presumed German-American support for the Kaiser's regime, the writer stated:

They (the German-Americans in Texas) left the Fatherland, seeking homes in this country, where they could have better advantages in life's pursuits and be allowed to enjoy all the rights and privileges of citizenship.3

Though the editor extolled the loyalty of the German-Texans on page two, he ran front-page stories of Teutonic barbarity with near-hysterical accounts of German spy activities in this country. The reports almost always focused on German-Americans or non-naturalized Germans. The local pro-war effort zealots became so suspicious of the community of still-German speakers a dozen miles to the west of Gainesville that they created an ad hoc special committee to keep close watch on non-naturalized aliens in the area. One local historian summarized the effort by stating:

Although this investigative panel never found any evidence of subversive activities, and despite the absence of open friction between local English-speaking and German-speaking residents, feelings of uneasiness grew into a quiet tension during the Great War.4

The anti-German climate in the state led the priests in the parishes of St. Peter's in Lindsay and Sacred Heart in
Muenster, as well as the schoolteachers, to feel compelled to preach and teach only in English. Muensterites resented what they saw as an infraction on their harmless cultural heritage. Within a month of Armistice Day, when no one had any reason to fear subversion any more, a writer for the Texas Banner, a newspaper of short life in Muenster, complained about the "cranks, idiots, and know-nothings" who had brought about the outlawing of the German language."

One of the most public ways of supporting the war effort was financial. On 15 June 1917 bonds for the first Liberty Loan drive went on sale in Cooke County." Capital holdings of a community's banking establishments determined quotas of bond sales. Muenster was the first community to meet its quota in this first war-bond drive." The community planned a celebration to mark this demonstration of support and loyalty. Cooke County historian, Michael Collins, wrote:

Merchants closed their shops, workers left their jobs, and school children were dismissed from classes to attend the public assembly and to hear county judge J.H. Holman deliver an address. But he never appeared. Finally, Dr. R.W. Crawford [a non-German Muensterite who had led the Muenster delegation to the first loyalty parade in Gainesville back in April 1917] spoke a few words to the assembly and bank teller Frank Schoech hoisted the stars and stripes up the flagpole as the entire throng proudly joined in and sang the "Star Spangled Banner."

Although Muenster men donned the uniform of the United States and served, were wounded, and died on the battlefields of Europe, the stories of parades of "Sammies"
on the streets of Gainesville seldom mentioned Muenster men. Likewise, Muenster's contribution to the war-bond drive was not as large in proportion to the population as support from other communities. For example, the 6 May 1918 issue of the Gainesville Daily Register listed the subscriptions of the Cooke County banks. Of the $667,050 which the county raised for the war effort, the Muenster community purchased bonds in the amount of only $18,500. Myra, a non-German community to the east, subscribed almost half again as much, or $26,850.  

As might be expected, stories of the sense of alienation between the German-Americans of Muenster and the rest of North Texas still circulate. One such story, documented only in local retelling and not in any published source, is that a party of folk from Gainesville came to Muenster seeking arms that Muensterites were holding in a cache in Sacred Heart Church. The same legend persists in nearby Lindsay, except the guns in St. Peter's Church were elevated to cannon status. Had such ever occurred, it would not have been surprising, considering the anti-Catholicism inherent in southern evangelical protestantism and the fever pitch fired by such wire-service reports as one in the Gainesville Daily Register in April 1918 which claimed that the Germans had a million rifles in America to "Germanize" it.11 Neither Staniforth's history of the county during the war nor any of the other published
histories of Cooke County, or even the memoirs of Hesse, the Flusches, and Meurer, substantiate any stories of actual violence. The days of World War I are long since past. Antagonism against German-Americans in the United States was negligible during World War II compared to the previous confrontation with Germany. Japanese-Americans were the object of paranoia and hysteria and became victims of internment camps, while the loyalty of German-Americans and Italian-Americans (understandable in part because the commanding officer of the Allied invasion of Europe carried a German-American name, Eisenhower) was never systematically questioned. The solid way in which Cooke County German-Americans supported the war effort in the previous world war, even to the sacrifice of soldiers' lives, combined with the national hatred against Nazis rather than against all Germans, made the community 100 percent American during World War II.

The sons of the Westphalians and other German-Americans who prided themselves on their Germanic heritage found it difficult to hold on to that heritage during the twentieth century, at least linguistically, and especially because of the mobility that the automobile brought and the coming of mass-media entertainment in the form of the radio and the Relax Theater on Main Street. German, the only language of communication for such pioneers as the Flusche brothers, Frank Hesse, and Father Binzegger, became the language of
the elders as the homilies that the Benedictine priests came to be delivered in English. On the twenty-fifth anniversary of Sacred Heart Parish, the priest requested that the bishop send a visiting priest who could deliver a sermon in "the old language," but not on the fiftieth anniversary. The linguistic assimilation was complete. Doubtless, the antagonisms of World War I, even though not blatantly or violently confrontational in Cooke County, contributed to the decline of German language. Elders such as Emil Flusche and Hesse wrote their memoirs in German in the 1920s, because these men were educated in German, but for the most part their descendants could no longer read them. Even today, Spanish, not German, is the only foreign language taught in either the public or parochial schools in Muenster.

In sociology, however, there is a dictum called Hansen's law. It says that "what the son tries to forget, the grandson tries to remember." The current revival of the German flavor in Muenster, with the annual three-day Germanfest the last weekend in April, shows such to be true. Muensterites are eager to put up billboards and hold festivities that have a flavor of the Old World. The question remains as to whether this revival is real or cosmetic.

Testing the cultural differences between Muenster and other small North Texas cities can be done informally. A
quick look at the meat display counter in a Muenster grocery store will show an array of wursts and cheeses that an Anglo-American stores would consider delicatessen specialties. But even in Muenster these "German" foods are in a minority as American beefsteak and chicken predominate. The only way to determine how the locals really perceived their Germanic heritage and how they thought it made a difference in their lives could be done only by interview.

The author conducted these interviews with a thirty-item questionnaire on German identity distributed to fifty-five local residents of varying age groups during the spring of 1987. (See Appendix C.) Forty persons responded. This instrument inquired about the German background of families, information on German life that grandparents passed down to them, knowledge of German as a language in Muenster, perceptions of non-German-Americans about them, and how they relate to the concept of a German-American personality. This informal instrument was not designed as a scientific sociological data-bank. In a small community such as Muenster, this form served to elicit people's responses to these attitudes.

The interviewer expected that the age level of the informants would be the single greatest factor in the decline of ethnic-origin consciousness. For that reason, he gave twenty questionnaires to those above and twenty questionnaires to those below the age of sixty. Sixteen
persons under the age of sixty, and twenty persons above
the age of sixty, responded. All but one of these had
German parentage on both sides.

The author assumed that information about the German
heritage would come from grandparents. None of this
particular age-group, however, had any memories of extensive
conversations with grandparents. Likewise, only one of them
reported hearing a grandparent talk extensively about life
in Germany. Only one recalled any incident in which their
German-American relatives spoke of life in the Old Country
so as to create the impression that life there was any
better than life here. Four of the sixteen reported that
these German-American kinfolk spoke of life before
immigration to America as actually being worse, a
substantiation to the idea that the Flusches had that
Germans left the Fatherland in order to have a better life.
Only three of the sixteen recalled any specific reasons
given by family tradition explaining why their ancestors
left Germany, two of those being military conscription
obligations and one political oppression. Only two of the
sixteen recalled that the American branch of the family kept
any contact by correspondence with the European branch.
Half of the respondents named a specific German city or
community that their families came from. Perhaps the
latter would explain why only half of them rated a trip to
Germany as being high on their list of personal priorities.
Only four listed such as being very high on their list of priorities.

Memories of the times in which Muenster was much more of a German community were clear in the minds of persons under sixty. Ten could remember hearing German used as a conversational language, while fourteen had grandparents who spoke it on a conversational basis, although only eight said it was their grandparents' first language. Only four remembered ever hearing stories about the older settlers feeling uncomfortable speaking German in front of their Anglo-American neighbors.

Consciousness or sensitivity to anti-German prejudices was low in this group. Fourteen had heard "kraut" used as a contemptuous term for Germans while thirteen had heard the ethnically inaccurate but nonetheless common term "dutchmen." Eleven considered "kraut" more offensive than other ethnic slurs against Germans. Only two recalled any stories of anti-German prejudices, and only one remembered any instance in which his or her German heritage caused questions about the loyalty of German-Americans during the two world wars. None expressed any embarrassment about discussing the world wars.

The devout Catholic Emil Flusche would be pleased to know that all but two of the informants of this age group linked their German identity to their Catholicism, half of them saying that the two were linked very much in their
minds. For fourteen of them, being a good Catholic was part of being a good German. Yet thirteen said that they were not made aware of their Germanness very often, and fourteen reported no concerted effort in their lives to transmit this German heritage on. In regard to the linking of an Old-World upbringing with stricter parental supervision, nine of the sixteen felt that people brought up in German-American communities had a better upbringing than those in non-German-American communities. Certain racial or ethnic stereotypes also persisted. More than half the respondents marked "hard-working," "thrifty," "religious," "family-oriented," and "tidy" as characteristics in which German-Americans excelled over non-German-Americans. "Hard-headed" and "clannish" were also noted by more than half, indicating that at least in the consciousness of the city's residents the sense of inflexibility and alienation still survived.

The most remarkable information from informants older than sixty was their similar responses about Germanness in their lives and the community in comparison to the younger age group. Only two of the fourteen remembered extensive conversations with their grandparents. Three recalled that their older kinfolks spoke about life in the "Old Country" as being better, and only four understood the earlier life as being worse. Six listed specific reasons why life was bad in Germany, according to their kinfolks, with scarcity of farm land, political oppression, and military
conscription being paramount. Eight recalled the places of their German origin, citing the provinces of Alsace-Lorraine, Westphalia, Baden, and Bavaria. Nine listed a trip back to the "Old Country" as a personal priority, but only two of the fourteen expressed that desire as strong.

An insignificant number of the over-sixty group recalled German being spoken in Muenster as a conversational language, perhaps because the suppression of the German language at the time of World War I brought about a change in language usage in homes and groups. Every one of this group had grandparents who spoke German conversationally, however, and for twelve of them, German was their first language. Only three recalled hearing their German-American elders speak of situations in which they refrained from speaking German, those situations being during wartime and on trips to neighboring non-German towns. "Krauts" and "Dutchmen" headed the list of ethnic slurs that they were aware of, and "heine," a word associated with World War I, was cited by five of the fourteen as genuinely offensive. Twice as many of these as in the younger group had heard stories of anti-German prejudice. Again, none expressed any embarrassment at discussing historical issues such as the world wars.

Surprisingly, considering the association we all have with the older age groups and religiosity, especially ethnic religiosity, fewer than half of the fourteen linked their
German-American identity with their Catholicism, and ten of the fourteen, in response to the question "To what extent is being a good German-American linked in your minds with being a good Catholic?" ten responded "not at all." The explanation for this reply could be that this age group considered religiosity to transcend ethnicity.

The degree to which their German-American identity was part of their everyday consciousness was low in this age group. Only eight noted any consciousness of it at all on an everyday basis, and seven of those responded "not very often." All but two reported making no conscious effort to transmit their German heritage on to the next generation. Over half felt that the more commercial aspects of Muenster's promotion of German culture was either unimportant or had nothing to do with real German culture. Yet eleven of the fourteen said again that being brought up in a German-American community was a positive difference in their lives. They saw such people as having a better upbringing than non-German-Americans. One-half of the respondents in both groups cited ethnic characteristics of German-Americans as "hard-working," "thrifty," "religious," "family-oriented," and "tidy" on the positive side, and "hard-headed" on the negative side. Understandably enough, only three of the older group perceived the clannishness that nine of the younger group felt as being a strong characteristic of German-Americans.
It is unsafe to draw anything but the most general and qualified conclusions from these forty informants. But we can see that a yearning for the Fatherland is certainly not a part, and seems never to have been part, of the Muenster mind-set. Memories of the regular use of the German language are dim. All that does remain as German about the city is the persistence of an old-fashioned respect for work, frugality, and family, along with loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church.
CHAPTER VII

NOTES

1. Gainesville Daily Register, 18 April 1918, 2, 4; 29 April 1918, 1. Page 4 of the same issue has the headline "Americans Defeat Huns." The next day the Gainesville newspaper has a headline reading "Huns Burn Russ Town." In the 29 April issue, the newspaper refers to the German Kaiser as "the Beast of Berlin."

2. Gainesville Daily Register, 15 April 1917, 6.

3. Ibid., 17 May 1917, 2.


5. Ibid., 48.


7. Collins, Cooke County, 48.

8. Ibid., 49.

9. Gainesville Daily Register, 6 May 1918, 2.


11. Gainesville Daily Register, 8 April 1918.


Hansen's Law is also referred to as the law of third-generation interest.
CONCLUSION

As Muenster, Texas, approaches its centennial, it has indeed much to celebrate. The city exists not because of any natural or demographic reason that a city should stand on the high grounds and prairies near the head of Elm Creek. It began here because of the enterprise and determination of German colonizers who wanted a farming community where their countrymen might thrive when applying the principles of hard work, family loyalty, and adherence to the faith of their fathers. It survived and prospered because of these qualities. The difference between Muenster and Anglo-American communities around it is, in the minds of its inhabitants and their neighbors, Muenster's conservatism is associated with Old-World values.

This study examined those early days when the transplanted Germans first plowed and fenced the Texas prairie. It traced their survival during drought and storm and the ups and downs of the agricultural market--factors which Saint Jo and Whitesboro and other area communities faced. In addition, Muenster had to survive the suspicion of its Anglo-American neighbors at a time when "German" was equated with "enemy."

Die-hard German-Americans might wish this study to
reveal that Muenster has survived with the ethnic purity that Emil Flusche envisioned in his "Amerika" letter almost a century ago. Such is not the case. The Germanness of Muenster as manifest in Germanfest is a mere imitation of the more popular fests in the Texas Hill Country. The true German nature of the community lies in less superficial areas. First of all, the people of Muenster fought year after year to try to convince their protestant evangelical brethren in Cooke County that the sale of beer, wine, and spirits did not mean moral decline. When the whole of Cooke County did not respond as desired, Muenster and its sister-community Lindsay went it alone under the local-option alternative in 1959. Second, even though it might be argued that the Roman Catholic Church does not have the power and influence it had in the days of Father Binzegger, it is undeniable that the parish and its auxiliary groups still are the focal point for the spiritual life and social life of most of the community. But Muenster did not retain a German culture in the strict sense. The German-speakers are long since dead, and even hearing the language spoken is the dimmest of memories. Only a few Muensterites long for a trip to the Fatherland. So what is German about Muenster is that which in other Texas communities might be thought of as simply old-fashioned ways—devotion to family, labor, conservatism in morality, politics, and economics, and adherence to old-time religion. The difference is that
whereas in Saint Jo, a person adhering to those values might call them old-fashioned Americanism, the Muensterites going into their second century think of such as their German heritage.
APPENDIX A
APPENDIX A: INCORPORATION PETITION

The following residents of Muenster signed the petition to incorporate. The petition is dated 2 February 1927. This list of signers is located in the Minutes of Cooke County Commissioners Court, Vol. II, 18, County Clerk's Office, Gainesville, Texas.

H.P. Hennigan
John Lenhrtz
L. Schumacher
Mrs. H.P. Hennigan
Joe Becker
Paul J. Nieball
C.M. Walterschied
Jacob Pagel, Jr.
Joseph A. Luke
C.W. Wilson
Rufus Booker
Frank Trachta
Mrs. Louis Wies
Nick Miller
H. Bernauer
J.M. Weinzapfel
J.W. Meurer
J.M. Luke
Meinard J. Endres
Mrs. M.J. Endres
Ben H. Hellman

Frank Seyler
William Walterschied
F. Hoenig
Joe Sieger
Charles A. Reiter
C.W. Walterschied
W.D. Greeson
H.G. Stelzer
Joe Kathman
L.A. Bernauer
Marie Kaiser
Mrs. L.A. Bernauer
F.J. Schenk
Mrs. F.J. Schenk
Charles Pagel
H. Walterscheid
Henry Trachta
J.D. Hall
J.C. Trachta
J.P. Fisch
APPENDIX B

ALCOHOL-RELATED ELECTIONS IN COOKE COUNTY, 1902-1959

These figures do not completely report the returns from all precincts in Cooke County, but only Muenster and those cities and communities with which a comparison to the Muenster figures will show the distinct difference between the German-Texas city and its non-German-Texas neighbors.

A. 24 May 1902 (sale of intoxicating liquors county-wide)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voting Area</th>
<th>&quot;Wet&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;Dry&quot;</th>
<th>% &quot;Wet&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muenster</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>93.1 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindsay</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>96.4 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gainesville</td>
<td>719</td>
<td>1232</td>
<td>36.9 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooke County</td>
<td>2086</td>
<td>2454</td>
<td>45.9 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Record of Cooke County Election Returns, Vol. III, 1900-1912, Entry No. 28, Cooke County Courthouse, Gainesville, Texas)

B. 28 May 1910 (sale of intoxicating liquors county-wide)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voting Area</th>
<th>&quot;Wet&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;Dry&quot;</th>
<th>% &quot;Wet&quot;</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muenster</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>93.5 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindsay</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>88.0 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gainesville</td>
<td>774</td>
<td>1067</td>
<td>42.0 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marysville</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>26.7 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooke County</td>
<td>1954</td>
<td>2348</td>
<td>44.5 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Record of Cooke County Election Returns, Vol. II, 1930-1941, Entry No. 36, Cooke County Courthouse, Gainesville, Texas)
C. 26 August 1933 (Repeal of 18th Amendment)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voting Area</th>
<th>&quot;Wet&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;Dry&quot;</th>
<th>% &quot;Wet&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muenster</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>98.5 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindsay</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>98.4 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gainesville</td>
<td>592</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>44.3 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooke County</td>
<td>1221</td>
<td>1582</td>
<td>43.6 percent</td>
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*(Record of Cooke County Election Returns, Vol. II, 1930-1941, Entry Nos. 27-28, Cooke County Courthouse, Gainesville, Texas)*

D. 26 August 1933 (3.2% beer, county wide)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voting Area</th>
<th>&quot;Wet&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;Dry&quot;</th>
<th>% &quot;Wet&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muenster</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>98.5 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindsay</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>98.4 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gainesville</td>
<td>616</td>
<td>744</td>
<td>45.2 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooke County</td>
<td>1277</td>
<td>1566</td>
<td>44.9 percent</td>
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</table>

*(Record of Cooke County Election Returns, Vol. II, 1930-1941, Entry No. 31, Cooke County Courthouse, Gainesville, Texas)*

E. 28 April 1934 (3.2% beer, county-wide)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voting Area</th>
<th>&quot;Wet&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;Dry&quot;</th>
<th>% &quot;Wet&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muenster</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>98.1 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lindsay</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>98.3 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gainesville</td>
<td>866</td>
<td>960</td>
<td>47.4 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooke County</td>
<td>1726</td>
<td>2154</td>
<td>44.5 percent</td>
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*(Record of Cooke County Election Returns, Vol. II, 1930-1941, Entry No. 40, Cooke County Courthouse, Gainesville, Texas)*

F. 28 April 1934 (3.2% beer in Precincts 4, 5, and 8)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voting Area</th>
<th>&quot;Wet&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;Dry&quot;</th>
<th>% &quot;Wet&quot;</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muenster</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>98.3 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>All Three Precincts</td>
<td>551</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>53.0 percent</td>
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*(Record of Cooke County Election Returns, Vol. II, 1930-1941, Entry No. 41, Cooke Count Courthouse, Gainesville, Texas)*
G. 8 February 1936 (legalizing 4% beer and wine, county-wide)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voting Area</th>
<th>&quot;Wet&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;Dry&quot;</th>
<th>% &quot;Wet&quot;</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muenster</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>99.7 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindsay</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100.0 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gainesville</td>
<td>866</td>
<td>848</td>
<td>50.5 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooke County</td>
<td>1676</td>
<td>1678</td>
<td>49.97 percent</td>
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(Record of Cooke County Election Returns, Vol. II, 1930-1941, Entry No. 59, Cooke County Courthouse, Gainesville, Texas)

H. 20 March 1937 (legalizing 4% beer and wine, county-wide)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voting Area</th>
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<th>&quot;Dry&quot;</th>
<th>% &quot;Wet&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muenster</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>74.3 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lindsay</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100.0 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooke County</td>
<td>1422</td>
<td>1734</td>
<td>45.1 percent</td>
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(Record of Cooke County Election Returns, Vol. II, 1930-1941, Entry No. 77, Cooke County Courthouse, Gainesville, Texas)

I. 19 August 1939 (beer only)

<table>
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<th>Voting Area</th>
<th>&quot;Wet&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;Dry&quot;</th>
<th>% &quot;Wet&quot;</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Muenster</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>99.3 percent</td>
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<td>Lindsay</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>98.4 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gainesville</td>
<td>866</td>
<td>848</td>
<td>61.9 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooke County</td>
<td>1450</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>42.0 percent</td>
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(Record of Cooke County Election Returns, Vol. II, 1930-1941, Entry No. 113, Cooke County Courthouse, Gainesville, Texas)

J. 5 September 1959 (alcoholic beverages)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Voting Area</th>
<th>&quot;Wet&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;Dry&quot;</th>
<th>% &quot;Wet&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muenster</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>96.1 percent</td>
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(Record of Cooke County Election Returns, Vol. IV, 1956-1976, Entry No. 35, Cooke County Courthouse, Gainesville, Texas)
APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE ON GERMAN IDENTITY

Age of Informant: Birthplace:
Length of Residence in community:

1. Were both sides of your family of German extraction?
   [ ] yes
   [ ] no

2. If not, which ones were?
   [ ] my father's
   [ ] my mother's

3. Do you remember having long talks with any of your grandparents?
   [ ] many
   [ ] not very many
   [ ] not at all

4. If they were German-Americans, how much did they ever talk about life in Germany?
   [ ] very much
   [ ] very little
   [ ] not at all

5. Did your German-American kinfolks talk about German life and German ways so as to give the feeling that life in the "Old Country" was in any way better than life here?
   [ ] yes
   [ ] somewhat
   [ ] no

6. If you answered "yes" to # 5, how was, according to their way of thinking, life better over there? (Check as many as apply.)
   [ ] moral climate
   [ ] social life
   [ ] religious atmosphere
   [ ] more solid home-life
   [ ] closer sense of community
   [ ] other:

7. Did your German-American kinfolks talk about German life and German ways so as to give the feeling that life in the "Old Country" was in any way worse than life here?
   [ ] yes
8. If you answered "yes" to # 7, how was, according to their way of thinking, life worse over there? (Check as many as apply.)

[ ] somewhat
[ ] no

[ ] scarcity of land for farming
[ ] colder climate
[ ] political oppression
[ ] military draft obligations
[ ] other:

9. Did your family keep touch (by correspondence) with any German relatives?

[ ] yes
[ ] no

10. Do you personally know the name of the specific community in Germany that your ancestors came from?

[ ] yes
[ ] no

11. If you answered "yes," what is that place?

12. How important on your list of priorities of things to do in your life is a trip back to the "Old Country"?

[ ] very high on the list
[ ] not very high
[ ] not important at all

13. Have you in your lifetime ever heard anyone in this community speak German on a conversational basis (that is, more than just using a few words)?

[ ] yes
[ ] no

14. Could any of your grandparents speak German on a conversational basis?

[ ] yes
[ ] no

15. Did any of your grandparents speak German as their first language, that is, use it more than English?

[ ] yes
[ ] no

16. Have you ever been told of situations in which your German-speaking ancestors in this community ever were made to feel that they should not speak German in front of Anglo-Americans?

[ ] yes
[ ] no
17. If you answered "yes" to # 16, what was that situation?

18. Which of the following words have you ever heard used by non-German-Americans to refer to either Germans or German-Americans?
   - Heines
   - Dutchmen
   - Krauts
   - Jerries

19. If you answered "yes" to # 18, which do you find the ugliest?
   - Heines
   - Dutchmen
   - Krauts
   - Jerries

20. Have the older members of your family told you any stories about prejudice expressed against German-Americans by non-German-Americans?
   - Yes
   - No

21. If you answered "yes" to # 20, would you be willing to share these stories?
   - Yes
   - No

22. Have you ever had anyone question you about your German heritage, especially in relation to historical events of the 20th century like the two world wars?
   - Yes
   - No

23. Have you ever found it difficult or embarrassing to talk about these historical events, in which Germany is thought of as the "enemy"?
   - Yes
   - No

24. How much is your identity as a member of a German-American community linked with your identity as a member of a Catholic community?
   - Very much
   - To some extent
   - Not at all

25. To what extent is being a good German-American linked in your mind with being a good Catholic?
   - Very much
   - To some extent
   - Not at all
26. How often during an average day are you made aware of your German-American heritage?
[ ] often
[ ] not very often
[ ] not at all

27. Have you made a conscious effort in your life to transmit what you consider your German heritage?
[ ] yes
[ ] no

28. How do you feel about what this community is doing to promote German heritage and culture?
[ ] It is very important.
[ ] It is all fun, but not much related to German culture.
[ ] It is not very important.
[ ] It has very little to do with real German heritage.

29. Do you honestly feel that people who grow up in German-American communities are different from those who grow up in non-German American communities in the same area?
[ ] yes -- they have a better up-bringing
[ ] yes -- they have a worse up-bringing
[ ] no -- they are no different.

30. Which of the following characteristics do you associate more with German-Americans than non-German-Americans?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>very much</th>
<th>a little</th>
<th>not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hard-headed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strict</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clannish</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hard-working</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thrifty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>religious</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fun-loving</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>free-thinking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>old-fashioned</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stingy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>family-oriented</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tidy or neat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>
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