

18" x 28" Official Texas Historical Marker with post  
Comal County (Order #4466)

Location: 401 W. Coll St., New Braunfels

4466

HERMANN SEELE\*  
(APRIL 14, 1823-MARCH 18, 1902)\*\*\*

A NATIVE OF HILDESHEIM, HANOVER,  
GERMANY, HERMANN SEELE CAME TO  
TEXAS IN 1843. HE BECAME THE FIRST  
SCHOOL TEACHER IN NEW BRAUNFELS  
ON AUG. 11, 1845, WHEN HE HELD CLASS  
FOR 15 PUPILS BENEATH ELM TREES  
AT THE FOOT OF THIS HILL. SEELE  
HELPED ORGANIZE FIRST PROTESTANT  
CHURCH, THE NEWSPAPER "ZEITUNG",  
AND SEVERAL SOCIAL AND CULTURAL  
CLUBS. HE WAS FIRST DISTRICT CLERK  
FOR COMAL COUNTY, 1846-54, STATE  
LEGISLATOR, 1863-65, JUSTICE OF THE  
PEACE, MAYOR, CITY ALDERMAN, AND  
POSTMASTER. A FARMER, LAWYER, AND  
SUPPORTER OF PUBLIC EDUCATION,  
SEELE LEFT WRITTEN ACCOUNTS OF  
PIONEER LIFE IN NEW BRAUNFELS. \*\*

(1976)\*\*\*

\*3/4 inch lettering  
\*\*1/2 inch lettering  
\*\*\*1/4 inch lettering

APPROVED  
Truett Latimer  
*by Bob Wako*  
2-23-76

FILE COPY - DO NOT REMOVE

FREDERICK HERMANN SEELE

(1823-1902)

by  
Gladys Bartling

Known to every person in New Braunfels as the first schoolteacher in the town (1), Hermann Seele came to the New World in his twenties. He was well equipped to make a success of himself wherever he was situated.

Herman Seele was born April 14, 1823, in Hildesheim, Hanover, Germany, son of Jonas and Anna Runge Seele. He attended primary school, high school, and the university of Hildesheim, mastering sciences and modern and classic languages. (2)

He was of a bold and enterprising spirit, and early in life decided that America offered the finest field for the exercise of his versatile talents; hence he embarked for the young Republic of Texas, and on December 12, 1843, landed in Galveston. (3)

He celebrated Christmas with friends in Galveston, reminiscing with them of the customs that were kept back home on this holy day. During the 1843-44 winter he worked for Carl Rossi, a fellow countryman, who had engaged him to help cultivate a crop. That employment was not steady, however, so he took a walking trip from Galveston across Dickinson's Bayou and on to the settlement of Brazoria. There he found congenial entertainment with the Giesecke family from his home town. However, he did not find employment, and took the long walk back to Galveston. This was in April 1844. He was not to find steady work on the coast, and in May 1845 optimistically joined the wagon trains of settlers going northwestward into the Indian country. In the frontier community of New Braunfels, he acquired a town lot and put up a block house for himself, finishing it in the summer. In August he was approached by the town's spiritual adviser, the Rev. Louis Cachard Ervendberg, and gladly accepted the pastor's suggestion that he teach the children of the town. His work began on August 11, 1845. He was taking on a responsibility with which the pastor had been charged by Prince Carl of Solms Braunfels,... to see to the "establishment of a school, in which the settlers' children receive moral and religious training and be taught reading, writing, and 'rithmetic in English and German languages. The pastor approached me; Seele later recalled, "and being at leisure since the middle of June when my one room block house was finished, I accepted the offer. At the beginning there were fifteen boys and girls. School fees were set at 50¢ a month per pupil. Later I was allowed to draw rations from the Emigration Company's ware-house equal to rations allowed to officials, amounting approximately to \$8.00 a month." (4) He taught under the grove of trees at the foot of Sophienburg Hill. This was the very beginning of New Braunfels schools, which were two years under the auspices of the Colonial Council.(5) The church house was begun in 1846 and "Hermann Seele's school was held in the building. Teachers were Reverend Ervendberg and Seele, but the school was never denominational." (6)

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(1) Oscar Haas, "Varied Historical Notes on Hermann Seele", unpublished manuscript furnished to the City Council P.T.A., New Braunfels.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Memorial and Genealogical Record of Southwest Texas (Goodspeed Brothers, Chicago, 1894).

(4) Haas, as cited, quoting from Seele's writings.

(5) Oscar Haas, "History of New Braunfels and Comal County, Texas 1844-1946", p.174.

(6) Ibid, p.108.

In a new community, many institutions needed to be launched. At some time in 1845 he helped to organize the First Protestant Church in the town. He was elected secretary (a post he was to fill, along with that of lay preacher many times for the following 57 years). He was a deeply religious man and throughout his life "he never let a day pass nor started a new interprise without a prayer." as Mrs. Eiband quoted in the Houston Chronicle May 3, 1931, page 6.

When Comal County was formed in March, <sup>1846</sup> Mr. Seele in the elections of July was elected District Clerk. (Bieseles, page 129) He remained in that post until 1854. While serving in that position, he was chosen in 1852 along with four other men "to represent and defend the citizens of New Braunfels in a law suit brought by the Verimende heirs to dispossess the citizens of the land on which New Braunfels is established." (Jahrbuch 1882, page 43)

Never one to have idle time on his hands, he began the study of law and was admitted to the Bar on April 27, 1855. He was elected Justice of the Peace the same year. (Texas Banner, published in San Antonio, April 21, 1904) He was listed in the Census of 1850 as school teacher; the Census of 1860 as an attorney. Meantime he contributed to the cultural life of the community by helping to organize and launch (as a charter member) the New Braunfels Target Club, organized July 4, 1849. He was also a charter member of the New Braunfels Germania Singing Society, organized March 2, 1850.

Having been a correspondent for various newspapers in Texas and elsewhere, he acquired a fondness for journalism, and was early instrumental in the establishment of a good paper in his town. In 1852, with the aid of others, he established the "Zeitung", and contributed to its columns for a long while. For a time he had editorial control of the paper. (7)

He served on the committee on arrangements for the first state song festival (Staats-Saengerfest), held in New Braunfels on October 16, 1853, and when the third Staats-Saengerfest was held in New Braunfels two years later, Seele's Saengerhalle, a brick building thirty by eighty feet which had been built in the spring of that year, was used for the meeting place.

On October 21, 1854, he helped to organize the New Braunfels Dramatic Society and, probably because of his interest in public education, caused the proceeds of the first six performances to be donated to the school board for the building fund of the first public school in New Braunfels. (8)

He led the German settlers who joined with other Texans in the 1850's in opposition to the Know-Nothing party. Seele served as secretary of the mass meeting of Comal County citizens on December 9, 1860, to consider secession. (9)

Previous to the Civil War he was a Democrat, and made several canvasses in Comal and adjoining counties in the interests of the party and served several times as delegate to the State Democratic Convention. (10)

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(7) Memorial and Genealogical Record, as cited.

(8) Rudolph L. Bieseles, "Hermann Friedrich Seele", in The Handbook of Texas (Texas State Historical Association, Austin, 1952), II, page 589.

(9) Bieseles, as cited.

(10) Memorial and Genealogical Record, as cited.

"In the first week of May 1860 the dedication of the new courthouse for Comal County took place when in it the Spring Session of District Court was held under the chairmanship of Judge M.P. Norton of Corpus Christi sitting for our own Judge Thomas J. Divine," Seele mentions in his "Assembled Writings." Continuing he says the Honorable Jacob Waelder spoke the dedicatory speech for [which] Judge W.C. Jones [who] had presided at the First District Court Session of Comal County in the Fall of 1846. "As attorney for the complainant in the civil case Beyer vs Thomas it was my privilege to be the first one in the new courthouse to speak to the petit jury." (Page 141) On invitation of Judge Norton I accompanied him to Blanco County where he was to preside at the First District Court in the newly created county with me acting as District Attorney pro tem."

Seele was a strong Union man until Texas seceded. Then, like other thousands of native Texans by adoption, when the alternative was presented of taking up arms for or against Texas, his love for his adopted state prevailed. He entered in<sup>th</sup>er service, and from 1861 to 1865 served as adjutant and inspector general of the 31st Brigade Texas Militia with the rank of major. (11) During the Civil War period he was mayor of New Braunfels from June 1861 to March 1866. From 1863 to 1865 he also served in the Tenth Legislature. (12)

Also, during the Civil War period, he took another serious step and married Mathilde Blum on January 25, 1862. Together they established a household and had a family which included four children who lived to adulthood: Harry and Fritz (who later lived in San Antonio), Emily (later Mrs. John Faust) and Hulda (later Mrs. George Eiband). (13)

While serving as Mayor of New Braunfels, June 1861 - March 1866, he again became affiliated with the schools, although his interest in the education was life long, for he served as an ex-officio trustee. When his term of Mayor was concluded, he was elected as a regular member of the Board of the New Braunfels Academy in May 1866 and served until 1879. He applied, when there was a vacancy, for a teaching position and was elected to teach in the upper grades, as noted in the 1868 Board minutes.

Due to Seele's experiences and studies concerning financing of public schools it was through his urging that Jacob Waelder, member of Texas State Convention which wrote the 1876 new constitution, <sup>introduced</sup> included the section creating independent school districts with power to assess and collect taxes for financing public schools. (14)(15)

Herman Seele was one of the most monumental figures in Texas education and untiringly worked in behalf of constructive school legislation in Texas. He organized the first Teachers Conference, 1871, and when in 1872 the Texas State Board of Education sent out a mandate for all counties in the state to create Teachers' Institutes, Seele's served as a pattern, needing only to change the name. Semmer [?] <sup>Summ?</sup> Normal School 1882 minutes state that "thanks of the Institute are hereby tendered to Professor Hermann Seele who during the entire session proved himself not only a zealous member of the Normal School, but likewise an untiring and efficient recording secretary, an experienced friend of education and a courteous and obliging gentleman." (16)

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(11) Haas, as cited.

(12) Biesele, as cited.

(13) Haas, as cited.

(14) Memorial and Genealogical Record, as cited.

(15) Haas p183, Jahrbuch 1882 p49.

(16) Haas, Zeitung-Chronicle, August 29, 1966.

Hermann Seele was Chairman of the Ceremonies honoring the Centennial of the United States. New Braunfels was credited as having one of the most elaborate and impressive celebrations in the state of Texas. (17) (Mrs. Claude Aniol, granddaughter, has a clock that was given to Mr. Seele by his friends for his leadership as chairman with the inscription date of October 23, 1876 -- which still runs!)

In the minutes of the New Braunfels Academy, September 5, 1876, page 211, Seele was granted an indefinite leave of absence from his teaching position "as his services in the Citizens land case were absolutely indispensable". Serving as representative of the committee since its formation in 1852, "his single legal service to New Braunfels was the suit to clear land titles of the pioneers. He was the last surviving party to the original suit which was settled on April 24th, 1879, in the Circuit Court of the United States. The words of the final decision ~~are~~ perpetuated on the base of the Settlers Monument in Landa Park. (18)

In 1954 the Texas Heritage Foundation sponsored a painting honoring 84 Heroes and Heroines of Texas Education at the Texas State Fair. Hermann Seele was included as the promoter of the first special school Tax, as printed in the October 1954 Express Newspaper. *reported in a story*

From October 1, 1889, to February 28, 1895, he was Postmaster of New Braunfels. (19) A clear-eyed; open-browed, ruddy-cheeked stalwart man...he was a striking example of what a person without hereditary taint may be. A man of pious mind and poetic temperament, benevolent instinct and habit, and pleasant, agreeable ways, he seemed to carry perpetual summer in his heart. (20)

Ever the philosopher, Seele wrote incessantly in his youth. His book Dis Cypresse und Gesammelte Schriften is a rich source of information about the life of the early German colonists.

"Seele's activities however were not limited to teacher, preacher, attorney and justice-of-the-peace, he also was a farmer -- on his farm Elisenruhin in partnership with his friend Fischer --, and as a sideline, also news-correspondent, auctioneer, dancing teacher, also took part in amateur plays as actor and play director - and even inn-keeper. And all these without the diminishing of his dignity one particle!" (April 21, 1904, TEXAS BANNER).

"Called the "soul of New Braunfels" and the "first German schoolmaster west of the Colorado," Hermann Seele spent a varied and influential life among Texas' German immigrants. The twenty-year-old Hanoverian arrived in Texas in 1843 and two years later joined the Adelsverein pioneers in founding New Braunfels. That year he opened the town's first public school and was for many years a teacher and member of the school board. He also helped found the First Protestant Church in 1845 and served as its lay preacher and secretary (1845-1902). Seele became the first Comal County district clerk in 1846, and served as justice of the peace, mayor, alderman, postmaster, and representative in the 10th State Legislature. He also devoted himself to building schools and waterworks, and served as secretary

(17) Haas, page 203.

(18) Jahrbuch 1882, p.55 (Herald article June 27, 1966).

(19) Biesele, as cited.

(20) Memorial and Genealogical Record, as cited.

of the Fair Association and hospital (Krankenhausverein). During the Civil War he was adjutant and inspector general of the 31st Brigade, Texas State Militia. He was cofounder of Many New Braunfels Cultural and social institutions, including the Germania Singing Society (1850) and the Dramatic Society (1854). On his motion, the first State Saengerfest was held in New Braunfels in 1853, and two years later the 1855 Saengerfest was held in Seele's new Saengerhalle. A few years later, he organized the annual children's Masque Parade and Ball to raise funds for the school and library. A prolific writer, Seele was a founder, editor, and contributor to New Braunfels' newspaper and recorded the pioneer life of German immigrants in a series of historical monographs which he illustrated... His full life spanned all stages of the town's settlement and growth." (21)

In his lifetime, the community revered him for his works of leadership. Later the Protestant congregation named their activities building in the church complex "The Seele Parish House" in his honor. His last resting place in the Comal Cemetery bears only a modest inscription:

F. Hermann Seele  
Geb. April 14, 1823  
Gest. Mar. 18, 1902  
Hildesheim, Hannover

The first German teacher west of the Colorado River

When Texas was celebrating the Centennial of her own Declaration of Independence in 1936, she was aided in funding the various activities by a grant from the Federal Government. Federal funds were used for a handsome shaft of Texas pink granite to form the background for a marker inscribed to New Braunfels and its founding fathers. This marker originally stood on the spot where Seele taught his first term of school in 1845 "under a beautiful grove of oak trees at the foot of the Vereinsberg", and it mentions Seele as the original schoolmaster in the town. (22)

The relocation and dedication of the monument for Hermann Seele will be the Bicentennial observance on March 2, 1976 at the Sophienburg Museum, above the original spot. The event sponsored by the New Braunfels Council of P.T.A.'s and P.T.O.'s enabling each student, teacher and parent to participate in this celebration are busy planning details.

Hermann Seele was heart and soul of New Braunfels constantly sanctioning, and doing his part, in all undertakings for the public good.

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(21) J.P. McGuire, INSTITUTES OF TEXAN CULTURES, Hermann Seele Display presently in San Antonio, October 1975.

(22) Biesele, as cited; also Monuments Commemorating the Centenary of Texas Independence (Commission for control for Texas Centennial Celebrations, Austin, 1938).

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- Assembled Writings by Hermann Seele.  
New Braunfels Zeitung, German language newspaper.  
New Braunfels Herald, English language newspaper.  
Memorial and Genealogical Record of Southwest Texas.  
Registers of First Protestant Church of New Braunfels.  
Schutze Jahrbuch 1882 German Language Chronicle, Austin.  
Biesele, Rudolph L., History of German Settlements in Texas 1831-1861.  
Haas, Oscar, History of New Braunfels and Comal County, Texas 1844-1946.  
Texas Banner, German Language Newspaper, San Antonio.  
New Braunfels School Board Minutes as quoted in New Braunfels Herald.

FREDERICK HERMANN SEELE  
(1823-1902)

- ① 1843-1845, Galveston and Brazoria counties
- ② 1845: school teacher -- began session on Aug 11, 1845  
Helped organize German Protestant Community; was secretary and lay preacher until his death in 1902
- ③ 1855: was admitted to the bar
- ④ 1849: charter member Target Club
- ⑤ 1850: " " Singing Society
- ⑥ 1854: " " Dramatic Society
- ⑦ 1855: donated proceeds of 6 performances to build schoolhouse
- ⑧ 1862 m. Mathilde Blum
- ⑨ 1846: became District Clerk  
to 54
- ⑩ 1860: secretary of mass meeting on secession
- ⑪ 1860s: mayor of New Braunfels
- ⑫ 1863-65: was in the Tenth Legislature
- ⑬ 1889-95: was postmaster of New Braunfels
- ⑭ 1861-65: served as adjutant and inspector general of the 31st Brigade,  
Texas militia
- ⑮ 1852: established the Zeitung and for a while had editorial control

4466

Fickelauer  
 Kübiger's Sündens Lehren  
 & Neufassung derselben v. G. F. P. v.

- 1.) Frau Augustina Pfütz  
 1. Aufl. v. 1857
- 2.) Subjekt Sündens  
 & Jesu's v. G. F. P. v.  
 a. Kuhnert 18<sup>20</sup>/<sub>6</sub> 61 (61, 33)  
 b. Jung 18<sup>11</sup>/<sub>6</sub> 63 (63, 51)  
 c. Ruffinck 18<sup>4</sup>/<sub>11</sub> 65 (66, 20)  
 d. Ellmann 18<sup>16</sup>/<sub>12</sub> 67 (68, 61)  
 e.) C. K. v. 18<sup>1</sup>/<sub>7</sub> 70 (72, 1)  
 f.) F. v. 18<sup>10</sup>/<sub>5</sub> 66 (73, 109)  
 g.) M. v. 18<sup>16</sup>/<sub>12</sub> 72 (73, 110)  
 9. F. v. 18<sup>10</sup>/<sub>7</sub> 74 see # 45 1880

- 3.) Jung 2 Sündens <sup>Hamilton</sup> v. <sup>Ohio</sup>  
 + v. Schenck & Ellen Parker +  
 a. Harry Clement, 18<sup>27</sup>/<sub>5</sub> 64
- f. S. Lehren & Familien Sündens  
 a.) Harry v. 18<sup>9</sup>/<sub>6</sub> 68
- b. W. v. 1888 (23, 109)  
 v. v. 1888 (23, 110)  
 v. v. 1888

- 4.) Frau W. v. v.  
 Paula  
 F. v. v. 18<sup>27</sup>/<sub>10</sub> 62 (62, 81)  
 F. v. v. 18<sup>25</sup>/<sub>1</sub> 64 (64, 5)  
 + F. v. v. 18<sup>31</sup>/<sub>3</sub> 66 (66, 29)  
 F. v. v. 18<sup>26</sup>/<sub>6</sub> 66  
 F. v. v. 18<sup>5</sup>/<sub>9</sub> 67 (67, 90)  
 F. v. v. 18<sup>13</sup>/<sub>7</sub> 71 (71, 102)

4466

# Caspar Friedrich Sturm

born in Schmalkalden, Kurhessen 7-25-1807 2 a.m.  
 married 8-1-1830 to Katherine Marie  
 née Lesser born in Schmalkalden 6-6-1810 3 p.m.

Children of this marriage are:

1) Ernst Hermann Sturm, born 18<sup>15</sup>/<sub>9</sub> 31, married 18<sup>15</sup>/<sub>9</sub> 55 (Nov 17),  
 Hermann Schulz

2) Ludwig Friedrich Sturm, born 18<sup>29</sup>/<sub>7</sub> 33,  
 married 18<sup>15</sup>/<sub>11</sub> 59 (Nov 9) with Johanne  
 geb. Gerhard, born 18<sup>8</sup>/<sub>12</sub> 38

3) Ernst Friedrich Sturm, born 18<sup>30</sup>/<sub>7</sub> 36  
 engaged to Charlotte, Butler, Ohio  
 with Helena, daughter of Carl, married  
 18<sup>13</sup>/<sub>3</sub> 64, Paris.  
 18<sup>25</sup>/<sub>9</sub> 67 married to S. Sturm, married  
 in Hamilton with Justine, born 18  
 geb. Pauline

4) Mathilde Sturm, born 18<sup>10</sup>/<sub>7</sub> 45\*  
 engaged 18<sup>25</sup>/<sub>6</sub> 62 (Nov 2) with Hermann  
 geb. zu Hildesheim 18<sup>24</sup>/<sub>4</sub> 23

5) Emma Sturm, born 18<sup>5</sup>/<sub>12</sub> 48 (48, 7, 18)  
 engaged with Julius Habermann

\*See reverse side for Mathilde's family record (#4) with names of her five children with day, month, and year of birth and baptism number for year of birth.

4466

B. biography  
from Texas Hand book

New Braunfels Zeitung

Dec. 22, 1854

Mar 25, 1855

Dec 14, 1860

May 22, 1895

Mar 20, 1902

Aug 18, 1938

Mr. & Mrs. CLAUDE ANGL  
7834 BROADWAY #503

San Antonio

78209

A Short Sketch of Comal County 1885

"The German Colony of New Braunfels in May 1845"  
pp. 93 of Albert Schuetze "Jahrbuch  
für Texas" for 1882

Memorial & Genealogical Record of San. Texas, 1894

Hermannstele in "Gallery of Noted German-Texans  
in Texas" banner (San Antonio) Apr. 21, 1904

Die Cypresse - (6 Personal Memories) Privately  
published New Braunfels, 1936

Handbook of Texas - 1952 - Vol. 2 - pg. 189 - (Refers to  
having one son. Should read two sons.)

grave inscription - located in Comal Cemetery in New Braunfels.

F. Hermann Seele

4466

Geb.

April 14, 1825

Gest.

Mar. 13, 1902

Hildesheim, Hannover

Der erste Deutsche Schul-lehrer  
The first German teacher west of the Colorado River  
Masillien von Colorado

Wahr ist das das Christenthum  
Weit wahr ist das der Christ  
Der wie sein Sittler lebt  
Hier schon im Himmel ist

Note: Hermann Seele, a grandson, of 318 Top Hill, San Antonio, Texas.  
also Mr. and Mrs. Claude Aniol (their address on reverse side)  
Mrs. Aniol is granddaughter) copied the above from grave-stone  
in Comal Cemetery.

See reverse side for notations they made which call attention  
where bibliography data can be found.

VARIED HISTORICAL NOTES ON HERMANN SEELE  
By Oscar Haas

"The success of men in general depends upon character as well as knowledge, it being self-evident proposition that honesty is the best policy. Mr. Hermann Seele, the most efficient postmaster of New Braunfels, Texas, is a man whose character is above reproach and whose education has been most thorough and complete."

The above quote is the opening paragraph for a biography of Hermann Seele from "Memorial and Genealogical Record of Southwest Texas. Chicago, Goodspeed Brothers, 1894."

There are variant names for Hermann Seele; namely Hermann Frederick Seele and Frederick Hermann Seele. However he signed all of his documents, official documents and others, plain Hermann Seele, and all school children of New Braunfels, adults too, know that the first school teacher in New Braunfels was Hermann Seele.

And therefore, this compiler of historical notes on Hermann Seele, shall permit Hermann Seele himself, tell the historical notes, and this compiler excerpts from out of "Die Cypresse und Gesammelten Schriften von Hermann Seele" (The Cypress and Assembled Writings by Hermann Seele).

"MY FIRST CHRISTMAS EVE IN TEXAS. It was in the winter of 1843, when the day after our arrival on 14th of December, the Rossi family and Behrmann and Budde, had for the sum of \$12.00, rented a 2-story frame residence till the first of the New Year. And I having gone into an agreement with Carl Rossi to work for him for the one-fourth of the proceeds of a crop we wanted to cultivate on land he proposed to purchase, I was permitted to move into one of the rooms on the second story. And so ~~at~~ the noon meal on the 24th of December, the time of day back home being 7 o'clock in the evening, our conversation topics turned to Christmas Eve gatherings then going on with candles being lighted on Christmas trees by members of families they had left behind."

"GALVESTON COUNTY IN THE YEAR 1844. It was in Easter week in early April with my walking cane in hand, I set out to walk across country to Dickenson's Bayou, and from there to Brazoria. With the enthusiasm of youth which only a twenty-year old youth can exert, I succeeded climbing over two tree trunks that served for the recently washed away timber bridge and found myself standing on the west bank of the bayou, before me lay the wide prairie."

"ON THE BRAZOS IN 1844. It was on the third day after I started out on foot from Dickenson's Bayou that I came to the left bank of the Brazos. An old flat ferry ferried me across the muddled yellow colored twenty feet deep stream. The town of Brazoria founded ten years ago in a rich fertile area of Republic of Texas, was in process of deterioration. An exception was the well preserved store building of Eduard Giesecke, to which I had directed my steps. There I found a congenial welcome by the Gieseckes from my home town. That evening I enjoyed pleasant hours of entertainment rendered by piano and violin music and song. The Giesecke farm on the Brazos below the town is in well kept cultivation chiefly devoted to tobacco culture. The Gieseckes had no opening for me and all inquiries in town where I might find employment were fruitless and compelled me to tramp back to Galveston."

"THE GERMAN SETTLEMENT NEW BRAUNFELS IN MAY 1845. It was in beginning of May 1845 when some Texas teamsters in employ of the German Emigration Company arrived at Indian Point which at that time consisted of one residence and one ware shed for the storing of the company's wares, arrived to take those of us who were left behind by the first wagon train taking settlers to the first German settlement on the Guadalupe River fifteen miles above Seguin. It required four weeks for the oxen drawn wagons to go through the rain-soaked prairie to Seguin. It was a hot and weary voyage along the east bank of the Guadalupe River from Seguin to New Braunfels following the wagon tracks cut by the first teamsters, the first sign of civilization in this wilderness area of Texas."

"MY FIRST SCHOOL DAY IN NEW BRAUNFELS THE 11th DAY OF AUGUST 1845. Yet standing at the spot in center of the street is a tree of a once beautiful forest which rimmed the foot of Sophienburg Hill and where on Sunday evenings in early New Braunfels, church services were conducted by the Rev. Louis Cachand Ervendberg whom Prince Carl of Solms Braunfels called from East Texas as spiritual adviser to the pioneer settlers and see to the establishment of school, in which the settlers' children receive moral and religious training and be taught reading, writing, and arithmetic in English and German languages. The pastor approached me, and being at leisure since the middle of June when my one room block house was finished, I accepted the offer. At the beginning there were fifteen boys and girls. School fees were set at 50¢ a month per pupil. Later I was allowed to draw rations from the Emigration Company's ware-house equal to rations allowed to officials, amount approximately to \$8.00 a month."

The following historical notes are excerpted from the listed bibliographies at bottom of this sheet.

Hermann Seele was born April 14, 1823, in Hildesheim, Hanover, Germany, son of Jonas and Anna Runge Seele. He attended primary school, and high school, and university of Hildesheim, mastering in modern and classic languages. When the First Protestant Church of New Braunfels was incorporated in 1845 under statutes of Republic of Texas, he was elected secretary by the congregation and served as secretary, also lay preacher, until his death in 1902. When in 1846 The First Legislature of Texas created Comal County, he was elected the First District Clerk of Comal County. He was a strong union man until Texas seceded. Then, like the thousands natives of Texas by adoption, when the alternative was presented of taking up arms for or against Texas, his love for his adopted state, he entered in her service, and from 1861 to 1865 served as adjutant and inspector general of the 31st Brigade Texas Militia with the rank of major. In addition to his long and efficient services as an educator in New Braunfels, he filled many responsible offices. For eight years he filled the office of Clerk of the District Court with distinguished ability. He has been Justice of the Peace and Mayor of the City. He represented his people in the State Legislature, serving in the memorable 11th session. Having been a correspondent for various newspapers in Texas and elsewhere, he acquired a fondness for journalism and was early instrumental in the establishment of a good paper in his town.

January 25, 1862, Mr. Seele was married to Miss Mathilda Blum. They have four living children: Harry, Hulda, Emily, and Fritz. All four are married. Harry and Fritz reside in San Antonio, and Hulda is the wife of George Eiband, and Emily that of John Faust, both successful merchants of New Braunfels. Harry and Fritz are successful business men in San Antonio.

A man of pious mind and poetic temperament, benevolent instinct and

habit, and pleasant agreeable ways, he seemed to carry perpetual summer in his heart.

Hermann Seele died March 18, 1902. His wife died September 23, 1925. They are buried in the Comal Cemetery in New Braunfels, Texas.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Schutze Jahrbuch 1882 German Language Chronicle, Austin.  
History of German Settlements in Texas 1831-1861  
History of New Braunfels and Comal County, Texas, 1844-1946

HISTORIC PERSON CHECK LIST

4466

1. WHAT IS THE FULL NAME OF THE PERSON?
2. WHAT ARE HIS BIRTH AND DEATH DATES?
3. WHERE WAS THIS PERSON BORN?  
WHERE DID THIS PERSON DIE?  
WHAT WAS CAUSE OF HIS DEATH?
4. WHO WERE HIS PARENTS?  
WHO WAS HIS SPOUSE?  
WHO WERE HIS CHILDREN?

HERMANN SEELE

APRIL 14, 1823      MARCH 18, 1902

HILDESHEIM, HANOVER, GERMANY.  
NEW BRAUNFELS, TEXAS.  
DEBILITATION

JONAS SEELE & ANNA RUNGE  
MATHILDE BLUM

HARRY	28 OCT 1862	31 MAR 1945
HULDA	25 JAN 1864	23 AUG 1936
ERNST	31 MAR 1866	26 JUN 1866
EMILIE	15 SEP 1867	26 SEP 1957
FRITZ	13 JUL 1871	25 MAR 1943

5. GIVE FULL ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE

Educated in schools in Hildesheim, Hanover, Germany.  
Dec. 12 1843, landed at Galveston, Jan. 30 1845, joined immigration movement at Indianola and came with 2nd wagon train to New Brfls., July 1845. Opened first school in New Brfls, Monday, Aug. 11, 1845.  
Charter member First Prot. Church, & its secretary during all his life; from 1845 thru 1902, here.  
Charter member New Brfls. Target Club organized July 4 1849.  
Charter member New Brfls. Germania Singing Society, March 2 1850.  
Charter member New Brfls. Dramatic Society organized 1854; donated proceeds of first 6 performances to school board for first public school house built 1855

6. IF HE WAS IN MILITARY SERVICE GIVE FULL ACCOUNT

He was , previous to the Civil War a Democrat, and served as delegate to the State Democratic Convention. He was a strong Union man until the state seceded; when the alternative was presented of taking up arms for or against Texas, his love for his adopted state prevailed, and he entered into its service at once, and from 1861 to 1865 served as Adjutant, and Inspector General of 31st Brigade Texas Militia with the rank of Major

7. Note any outstanding achievements, accomplishments, which make this person worthy of commemoration.

He had not been in New Braunfels much over a month when the governing directors of the infant settlement, because of the good education he attained in the public schools of his home-town, approached him to teach the settlers' children. He accepted the position and at beginning taught 15 pupils at a fee of 50¢ a month per pupil, teaching them the three r's in two languages under shade of elms; from where school was moved into the First Protestant Church log house, until 1853 the city council rented two rooms until the first public school house was built 1855.

Due to Seele's experiences and studies concerning financing of public schools it was thru his urging that Jacob Waelder member of Texas state convention which wrote the new constitution included the section creating independent school districts with power to assess and collect taxes for financing public schools

8. State reasons for desiring to commemorate this person.

He was heart and soul of the town constantly sanctioning, and doing his part, in all undertakings for the public good.

9. Attach a copy of the inscriptions on all stones at the grave of this person. Give name and location of cemetery.

F. Hermann Seele  
Geb. April 14, 1823  
Gest. Mar. 18, 1902  
Hildesheim, Hannover

(\*)

10. Attach a bibliography or list of published or printed material

HANDBOOK OF TEXAS, Vol. II, page 589  
by Rudolph Biesele  
DIS CYPRESSE UND GESAMMELTE SCHRIFTEN  
by Hermann Seele  
Schutze's Jahrbuch für Texas 1882 by  
Albert Schutze, Austin

## SEDWICK, TEXAS

er moving to Fort Bend is granted a league and a January 16, 1850. Although erroneously reported that this July, 1852, he died a son on February 3, 1854. ixon and L. W. Kemp, *Heroes of H. S. Thrall, History of Texas State Gazette*, July 28, 1854.

The office of secretary of Article IV, Sections 1 and of 1876.<sup>97</sup> It was created as institution of 1845,<sup>98</sup> super- the Republic of Texas. The ointed by the governor and his annual salary is set by o.

the office are to attest the id affix the state seal to ions to office, and other p a file of the official acts e legislature; compile and a roster of all elective and the state; administer the aws; issue charters of In- l collect the franchise tax ister the laws concerning ppoint the notaries public; member of several state

with, *A Lawyer's Guide to tive Agencies* (1945).

## Dick Smith

ecunity, a lumber shipping ity in eastern Montgomery orado, and Santa Fe Rail- Waukegan, was promoted ompany. The town did not one store and a population orted in the census of 1920. aia, in northeastern Collin at 1870 and was first called ugal established a gristmill Mathis operated a general hanged by 1900, probably is granted. Population de- in 1900 to twenty in 1910; was replaced by rural de- One business and a popu- ere reported in 1940.

ite. South of the Arkansas tle Route was identical ul.<sup>99</sup> Diverse routes were r and the Missouri line. Arkansas near Fort Smith, ough the then Cherokee Arkansas state line, cross- the vicinity of Maysville, driven by way of Fort ollowed the Shawnee Trail vicinity of Neosho.

## T. C. Richardson

Sedwick, in southeastern the Missouri, Kansas, and own as Vesta prior to 1896, l Railroad named its sta- k upon whose ranch it was mmunity was in the midst covered in 1921 and had a own, but the town disap- as fully developed. Popu-

## SEEFELD, TEXAS

lation was fifty in 1910. In 1948 there was new oil activity in drilling for deeper oil in the Ellenberger formation.

## J. R. Webb

Seeoid, Texas. Seefeld, in northeastern Dimmit County, is an irrigated truck farming community on a mail route from Big Wells.

Seele, Hermann Friedrich. Hermann Friedrich Seele was born in Hildesheim, Germany, on April 14, 1823. Emigrating from Germany, he landed at Galveston, Texas, on December 12, 1843. When the settlers of the Adelsverein<sup>97</sup> arrived in Texas, he joined them on January 30, 1845, and became one of the original settlers of New Braunfels. A charter member of the First German Protestant Church of New Braunfels, he was elected as the first secretary of the congregation upon nomination by L. C. Ervendberg<sup>98</sup> and served in that capacity until his death. Seele also substituted as pastor when the regular pastor could not be present or when there was a brief pulpit vacancy. The activities building of the congregation bears the name of Seele Patriot House in his honor.

On August 11, 1845, he opened the first public school in New Braunfels under a beautiful grove of oak trees at the foot of the Vereinsberg. Interested citizens of New Braunfels later placed a memorial marker on the spot just west of the site of the freight office of the Missouri Pacific Railroad.

For several years Seele served with George W. Kendall and Ferdinand J. Lindheimer<sup>99</sup> on a committee to examine teachers for Comal County; he was an ex officio member of the Comal County teachers' institute; and he headed the first three summer normal schools held in New Braunfels. On October 21, 1854, he helped to organize the New Braunfels Dramatic Society and, probably because of his interest in public education, caused the proceeds of the first six performances to be donated to the school board for the building fund of the first public school in New Braunfels. He served on the committee on arrangements for the first state song festival (*Staats-Saengerfest*), held in New Braunfels on October 16, 1853, and when the third *Staats-Saengerfest* was held in New Braunfels two years later, Seele's *Saengerhalle*, a brick building thirty by eighty feet which had been built in the spring of that year, was used for the meeting place.

In 1846 Seele was elected as district clerk of Comal County and in 1855 was admitted to the bar. He led the German settlers who joined with other Texans in the 1850's in opposition to the Know-Nothing party.<sup>97</sup> Seele served as secretary of the mass meeting of Comal County citizens on December 9, 1860, to consider secession, and during a part of the Civil War was mayor of New Braunfels. From 1853 to 1865 he served in the Tenth Legislature and from October 1, 1889, to February 28, 1895, was postmaster of New Braunfels.

Seele married Mathilde Blum on January 25, 1862. Two daughters and one son were born to the couple. Seele died in New Braunfels on March 18, 1902.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: *New Braunfels Zeitung*, December 22, 1854, May 25, 1855, December 14, 1860, May 22, 1865, March 20, 1902, and August 18, 1918; Hermann F. Seele, *A Short Sketch of Comal County* (1885); Albert Schuetze, *Jahrbuch Für Texas* (1882); Rudolph Leopold Biesele, *The History of the German Settlements of Texas, 1831-1861* (1930).

Rudolph L. Biesele

Seeley Academy. See San Antonio Academy. Seep Spring Mountain. Seep Spring Mountain is a 2,280-foot elevation between the towns of Rocksprings and Vance in east central Edwards County.

Segno, Texas. Segno, in the southeast corner of Polk County, is a farming and oil field community which in 1947 had a post office, two stores, and a population of eighty.

Segovia, Texas. Segovia, a one-store settlement twelve miles southeast of Junction in Kimble County, was named by the early Spanish settlers of the area who saw a resemblance in the territory to a town in Spain.

Seguin, Erasmo. Erasmo Seguin (Juan José Maria Erasmo de Jesús Seguin) was born in San Fernando de Bexar (San Antonio) on May 26, 1782. In his adult years he was a well-known and influential citizen of San Antonio; his ranch house near present Floresville was widely known as a stopping place for early travelers to Texas. He was one of the first Texans to experiment in cotton growing. In 1812 he helped organize the first municipally-controlled school in present San Antonio. In 1820 he was first alcalde of Bexar. In the spring of 1821 he was sent by Governor Antonio Maria Martinez<sup>97</sup> to Natchitoches as a member of a commission to meet Moses Austin<sup>98</sup> and his settlers and escort them back to San Antonio. On his arrival at Natchitoches, he found that Moses Austin was dead and that Stephen F. Austin wanted to fulfill the contract. On their way back to San Antonio a firm friendship was cemented between the two men.

In 1823 Erasmo Seguin represented Texas in the constituent congress called in Mexico City after Mexico's independence from Spain. He established considerable influence which he used to secure colonization provisions favorable to the Anglo-American settlers in Texas. By obtaining a liberal interpretation of the antislavery clause in the Mexican constitution, he exempted Texas from its application and saved Austin's colonists from bankruptcy. He was forced, however, to consent to the union of Coahuila and Texas since Texas lacked sufficient population to sustain herself as a separate state.

Through the years preceding the Texas Revolution when the colonists demanded schools, religious toleration, protection against antislavery measures, and local self-government, Seguin and other Mexican leaders stood staunchly by the side of the Anglo-Americans in their demands. The Convention of 1833<sup>99</sup> selected Erasmo Seguin to accompany Austin to Mexico City to present the petitions drawn up by that assembly. He was unable to go, but a year later, when the Monclova-Saltito dispute left Texas without a constitutional government, he supported his son, Juan N. Seguin,<sup>97</sup> in calling a convention at San Antonio to provide a provisional government, but the convention failed to materialize.

When the Texas Revolution started in October, 1835, Erasmo Seguin was removed from his office of postmaster by Martin Perfecto de Cós<sup>97</sup> and forced to walk the thirty-three miles to his ranch. He made his home a storehouse and supply station for Texas troops; beeves, oxen, sheep, mules, horses, blankets, food, wagons, and harness were given without stint to James W. Fannin, Jr., Philip Dimitt,<sup>97</sup> and others until the fall of the Alamo in

Presently at Inst. of Japan Cultures.

HERMANN SEELE (1823-1902)

J.P. Mc Guire

Called the "soul of New Braunfels" and the "first German schoolmaster west of the Colorado," Hermann Seele spent a varied and influential life among Texas' German immigrants. The twenty-year-old Hanoverian arrived in Texas in 1843 and two years later joined the Adelsverein pioneers in founding New Braunfels. That year he opened the town's first public school and was for many years a teacher and member of the school board. He also helped found the First Protestant Church in 1845 and served as its lay preacher and secretary (1845-1902).

Seele became the first Comal County district clerk in 1846, and served as justice of the peace, mayor, alderman, postmaster, and representative in the 10th State Legislature. He also devoted himself to building schools and waterworks, and served as secretary of the Fair Association and hospital (Krankenhausverein). During the Civil War he was adjutant and inspector general of the 31st Brigade, Texas State Militia.

Hermann Seele was a cofounder of many New Braunfels cultural and social institutions, including the Germania Singing Society (1850) and the Dramatic Society (1854). On his motion, the first State Saengerfest was held in New Braunfels in 1853, and two years later the 1855 Saengerfest was held in Seele's new Saengerhalle. A few years later, he organized the annual children's Masque Parade and Ball to

## Early New Braunfels — CXVIII

## Seele Instigates Public School Taxation in Texas Constitution

By Oscar Haas

Fifty-five (55) continuous weekly installments on schools from colonial, to parochial, to municipal, to district, to state free school for which the material generally was garnered from minutes of meeting of Board of Trustees New Braunfels Academy has exhausted minutes book No. 1.

Upon returning minutes book No. 1 to the office of New Braunfels Independent School District at 407 West Mill Street and asking for minutes book No. 2, it was a source of great pleasure to find that among other records preserved there, minutes of First Teachers Conference, 1871, also Comal County Teachers Institute, 1872, plus Minutes of Proceedings of the Summer Normal School at New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas.

It is immeasurably fortunate that all minutes beginning more than a hundred years back are intact. These may some day supply information for students desirous of appraising the educational influences the early "German Geist" in Texas had on the American spirit, in the state's educational system.

We know by Hermann Seele's writings that Jacob Waelder, native of Hesse Homberg, Germany, who represented the Twenty-Ninth District in the Constitutional Convention of 1875, (at instigation of Seele) had a stipulation written into the constitution whereby all school districts in Texas were given the right to assess and collect taxes for public schools. "Further that the Durchsetzung (prosecution) of a law for the purpose by the Legislature was the work of Representatives William Clements and C. L. Wurzbach."

And that the law was patterned after the law by which the legislature in 1852

the German-English School of San Antonio.

An interesting excerpt from minutes Friday, August 11, 1882, Summer Normal School reads: "Mr. Seele being called upon, spoke of his opening the first school in New Braunfels 37 years ago today."

Another garnered from minutes of the Normal Institute, is wording of one of 10 resolutions voted Wednesday 9, 1882, reading as follows:

"That the thanks of the Institute are hereby tendered to Professor Hermann Seele who during the entire session proved himself not only a zealous member of the Normal School, but likewise an untiring and efficient recording secretary, an experienced friend of education, and a courteous and obliging gen-

tleman."]

According to the Teachers Conference minutes, among six articles in its constitution voted September 23, 1871, article No. 2, reads as follows:

"Any teacher of the public free schools at or in the vicinity of New Braunfels may become a member of this Conference by signing the Constitution thereof; and such other person may become an honorary member as may be invited by a resolution of the Conference." (There are 23 signatures, as follows).

Hermann Seele, Andrew Kissam, T. L. Lyons, Fred J. Heilig, Ferdinand Nehls, Rudolph Wipprecht, Charles Ohlrich, Albert Kypfer, Josi Hubusberger, Hugo H. L. Duveneck, Henry Meyer, August Klingemann, Gustav

Bodemann, August Schuchard, Charles Pantermuehl, H. Ciliax, J. T. Stroeck, G. D. \_\_\_\_\_?, August Harborth, Paul Engehardt, W. T. Barber, Gustav Heilig, Chauncey Miller.

Minutes of September 28, 1872, read that at a regular meeting of the Teachers Conference it was "Resolved that the Conference be resolved into a Teachers Institute, to be styled the Comal County Teachers Institute . . . And after objects and advantages of such association were explained . . . the draft for a constitution was adopted . . ."

Article No. 2 of the constitution reads as follows: "The object to this Institute shall be the improvement of its members in the Science of Teaching, and in the most approved practice, by mutual instruction, and to establish a uniform system of teaching; the diffusing of information upon the system of common school education among the people and promoting harmony of feeling and the greatest possible advancement in scientific and general information."

## GALLERY OF NOTED GERMAN-TEXANS

### Hermann Seele

Translation from TEXAS BANNER, German language newspaper,  
published in San Antonio, Thursday April 21, 1904.  
Photo of Hermann Seele was shown as subject No. 9.

It is the portrait of one of the most versatile ~~persons~~ and in his es-  
pecial ~~life~~ sphere of activity also most influential and authoritative  
man, that we today portray in the "Texas Banner" namely that of Hermann  
Seele - "the soul of New Braunfels," (Seele, translated is soul; mind;  
heart; human being), as he has been called for decades, but not <sup>because</sup> ~~to~~ to  
employ a rather common ~~name~~ name play of words, but rather out of inner-  
most conviction and in accord with the facts! (What was actually meant, is,  
Hermann Seele, the soul of New Braunfels).

Friedrich Hermann Seele was born at Hildesheim on the 14 of April 1823,  
in the former Kingdom of Hannover (Germany) and already, by 1843, when he had  
absolved the "Gymnasium" of his native city (classical school of the first  
grade) had decided to emigrate to America and particularly to the then yet  
not much known Republic of Texas.

At the end of 1843 he arrived at Galveston (he ~~himself~~ himself wrote  
that it was December 12 1843) and when after a year he had sought fruitlessly  
for some employment, he together with a friend who arrived in December of  
1844, joint the "Adelsverein" which had in West Texas on the Springs of the  
Conal established the German colony (settlement) New Braunfels. Beginning of  
May 1845 the two reached their goal. (He himself tells us that they reached  
Indianola, where the settlers were in camp, January 30 1845, and reached New  
Braunfels with the second wagon train bringing settlers in May 1845).  
Prince Solms, had shortly before (Seele arrived) left discouraged to return  
to Europe and (in the Prince's stead) at the head of the settlement stood  
Baron Ottfried von Meusebach who was earnestly endeavoring to establish order  
into the chaos <sup>conditions</sup> that had developed.

Meusebach, ~~immediately~~ recognizing that the young immigrant <sup>would be</sup> a highly  
valuable acquisition for the new settlement, immediately found work for him

(It has generally been said that it was a group of Elms trees. Mr. Seele wrote that it was under the same trees where church services were held Sunday evenings until the first log church was finished in March 1846 and school was then held in the church.)

And several times, when a <sup>pulpit</sup> vacancy existed, Seele stepped in and functioned as preacher for the congregation, although without training in a theological seminary and without holding to ~~any~~ dogma of any particular denomination, he set a good example and lived his moral teachings.

When Comal County was organized in 1846, Seele became the first District Clerk, which office he accompanied for a decade.

The in the year 1850 first organized <sup>German</sup> singing club (The Germania) was about to be dissolved again, after its director, Mr. Petmecky, had moved away, but through Mr. Seele's efforts it was reorganized in 1853 and at one festival sponsored by this club in August the same year, to which singers also had come from San Antonio and Austin, the German-Texas Singers League was organized on motion of Hermann Seele, which league then in October that year celebrated the first German state-wide song festival (in New Braunfels) and of which the 50th anniversary celebration was held last year. (Also in New Braunfels. Mrs. John Faust has a fine photograph of the arch-of-triumph that was built on San Antonio street entrance to the main plaza.)

→ In 1855 Mr. Seele also was admitted to the bar as attorney and was elected Justice of the Peace the same year. Seele's activities however were not limited to teacher, preacher, attorney and justice-of-the-peace, he also was a farmer-- on his farm Eisenruh in partnership with his friend Fischer-- and as a side-line, also news-correspondent, auctioneer, dancing teacher, also took part in amateur plays as actor and play director-- and even inn-keeper. And all these without the deminishing of his dignity one particle!

His political career also was not void of variety and versatile talent. He was representative from Comal County in the 12th Legislature, during the Civil War years, mayor of New Braunfels, and repeatedly member of the City Council, also Postmaster four years. Yes, he also had a military career, he

was also Adjutant of the 21st Brigade of State Militia with Major's

4466

Bibliography  
from Texas Handbook

New Braunfels Zeitung

Dec. 22, 1854

May 25, 1855

Dec 14, 1860

May 22, 1895

Mar 20, 1902

Aug 18, 1938

MR. & MRS. CLAUDE ANIOL  
7834 BROADWAY #503

San Antonio

78209

A Short Sketch of Comal County 1885

"The German Colony of New Braunfels in May 1845"  
pp. 93 of Albert Schuetze "Jahrbuch  
für Texas" for 1882

Memorial & Genealogical Record of San. Texas 189X

Hermann Seele in "Gallery of Noted German-Texans  
in Texas" Banner (San Antonio) Apr. 21, 190X

Die Cypresse - (8 Personal Memories) Privately  
published New Braunfels, 1926

Handbook of Texas - 1952 - Vol. 2 - pg 589 - (Refers to  
having one son. Should read two sons.

Early New Braunfels — CXXXIX

# Teacher Seele Granted Leave To Plead Settlers' Land Case

By Oscar Haas

The Board of Trustees of New Braunfels Academy, according to minutes of September 5, 1878, voted to grant Teacher Hermann Seele an indefinite leave of absence from his teaching position. The following translation is of an entry in the minutes, page 211:

"G. J. Groos (ersuchte) (requested) the meeting, in name of the Executive Committee of the 'Stadtischen Klage' (City's Suit) to grant ('eines Urlaubs') as teacher for an indefinable length of time to Mr. Seele, as his services in the 'Angelegenheit' (case) were absolutely indispensable."

Seele represented the people of New Braunfels in the land title case, which was decided in favor of New Braunfels.

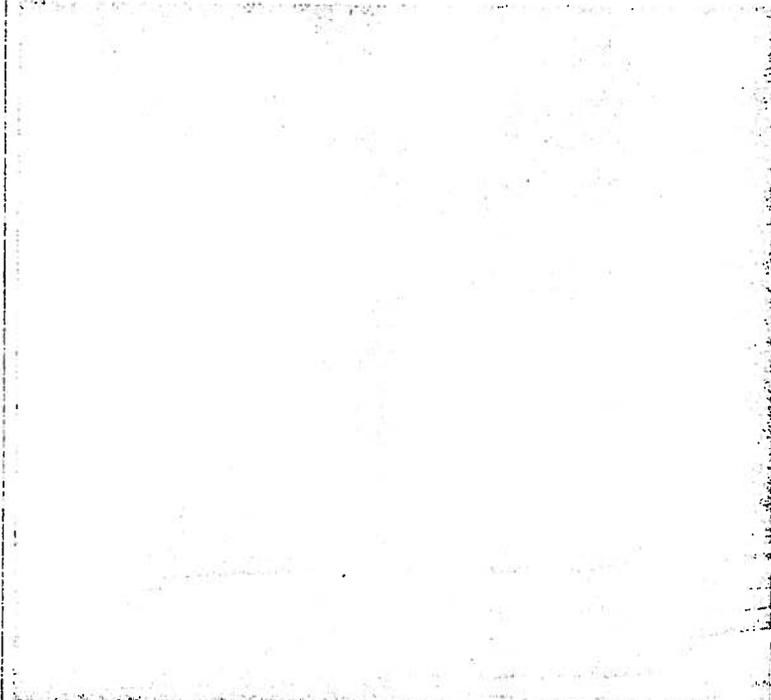
Seele himself touches on the above mentioned "City Suit" in two places in his Chronological History of New Braunfels in Schutze Jahrbuch 1882. On page 55 he has:

"Ending December 1876, a certain (Mr.) Kerr of Kansas, as assignee of the Veramendi heirs, filed a suit in the United States Circuit Court against a number of the citizens and demanded possession of the land on which New Braunfels was founded."

"It occasioned new worries and labor for the committee of whom two only survived, Koester and Seele. Through a mass meeting by the citizens, the following were added as members of the committee: G. F. Groos, Jos. Landa, Wm. Clemens, L. Kessler, and Geo. Pfeuffer.

"The committee put forth every effort to engage ('tuchtige') (proficient) attorneys and gather all required 'Beweismittel and Zeugnisse' (evidence and despositions).

"On 24th April, 1879, the United States Circuit Court rendered a 'Entscheidung' (decision) in favor of the citizens of New Braunfels and assumed



**TELLS HISTORY** — Historian Oscar Haas wonders how many New Braunfels citizens have taken the time to study the history of their city in the plaques on the pioneer monument in Landa Park near Peninsula Playhouse.

Dedicated to the early German settlers, it was unveiled August 21, 1938. Bronze plaques illustrate departure from Europe, arrival on the Texas coast, overland crossings by oxen wagon, and the Sophienburg and first school under the Seele elm in New Braunfels. And there are Meusebach making a peace treaty with the Comanches and the Kaffeemuehle church in Fredericksburg.

Preserved in bronze are the words of the United States Circuit Court decision which assured property rights of the pioneers.

Atop the monument is a pioneer family sculpted by Italian-born Hugo Villa in San Antonio.

accrued interest, the Veramendi heirs refused to accept the money and filed suit for damages against the several owners as trespassers. A committee consisting of Dr. Th. Koester, F. Moureau, G. J. Groos, James Ferguson, Herman Seele represented the citizens in this case which was finally won by the New Braunfels citizens."

The wording of the final decision handed down by the United States Circuit Court perpetuated for us on bronze on pedestal at left of base of

POSSIBLE. TO MEET THE EXPECTATIONS WITH WHICH THEY HAD LEFT THEIR DISTANT HOMES AND EMIGRATED TO THIS NEW AND COMPARATIVELY UNSETTLED COUNTRY. THEY WITH THEIR CHARACTERISTIC INDUSTRY AND FRUGALITY, HAVE TOILED AND ENDEAVORED AND HAVE SUCCEEDED IN BEAUTIFYING AND RENDERING COMFORTABLE THEIR HOMES. A CITY HAS GROWN UP, PROPERTY HAS ENHANCED IN VALUE AND THE COUNTRY

Early New Braunfels — CXXV

# Board Resigns Due to Error:

## Transfer Students Charged \$1

By Oscar Haas  
"Called meeting of the Board of Trustees held February 21, 1896 (all members present) County Judge Ad. Giesecke, Mayor Joseph Faust, Alfred Homann, Fritz Hampe, Wm. Schmidt, Otto Forke, Wm. Seekatz, Fritz Druibert. (Minutes book No. 3 page 39)

Texas, February 21, 1896, which was signed by all the members of the Board. (Signed) Joseph Faust, President. Fritz Druibert, Secretary."

"The meeting, held April 14, 1896, (minutes page 41) "was called to order by Chairman Faust, and the oath of office was administered to the newly elected members by Mayor C. A. Jahn."

"In the meanwhile, Mr. Jahn had been elected Mayor of New Braunfels. "The Board then organized as follows: Jos. Faust, President; Alf. Homann, Treasurer; Fritz Druibert, Secretary."

"Chairman Faust then appointed the following Standing Committees: Finance, C. A. Jahn, Ad. Giesecke, Wm. Schmidt. Rules, A. Homann, F. Hampe. F. Druibert. Instruction, Ad. Giesecke, C. A. Jahn, F. Hampe. Building, Wm. Schmidt, Wm. Seekatz, F. Druibert.

Among other matters con-

qualified. New Braunfels.

sidered at that meeting, was "A motion prevailed to the effect that the action of the board at a previous meeting, affecting pupils residing outside of the district be reconsidered, and a monthly fee for attending the city school per month by a unanimous vote."

Called meeting August 24, 1896 (p. 47) County Judge Giesecke had transferred 18 children. On motion duly seconded the board accepted the transfers.

Teaching staff, 1897, 1898 (pp. 48&58) J. G. Neuss, salary \$85 monthly for 10 months; C. A. Brown \$75; J. P. Pratt \$70; A. C. Coers \$65; Miss E. Toepferwein \$55; Miss Alexander Hellig \$50.

March 7, 1899 (p. 62) "Principal J. G. Neuss read communication from A&M College regarding application of affiliation with the college. On motion of Mr. Jahn to accept the proposition which was duly seconded and car-

ried, Principal Neuss was instructed to make application."

"Motion to buy 50 diplomas to be used for the 8th grade only was seconded and carried."

The Judge of Comal County and the Mayor of New Braunfels not members any more of the school board according to minutes of a called meeting April 25, 1899 (p. 63).

"The President presented letters from the State Superintendent of Public Schools in which he advises that the County Judge and Mayor, who were heretofore ex officio members of the Board, were not members anymore, and that from now on the School Board should consist of six members."

For 41 years, or ever since the Legislature in 1858, at the voluntary request of New Braunfels passed an Act creating the New Braunfels Academy which also gave the city the power to assess and collect a tax for public school purpose, the Judges of Comal County and Mayors of New Braunfels were, as stipulated in the Act, members of the school board.

And Hermann Seele, as has been told in previous installments, tells us that when the 1875 State Constitution was written, it was at his instigation that Hon. Jacob Waelder

of San Antonio, a member of the constitutional convention, and the labors of our Hon. Representative Wm. Clemens, that the provision was included in the Constitution patterned after the 1858 New Braunfels law whereby school districts were given the right to assess taxes for public school purpose. (Schutze Jahrbuch 1882 page 49). 7

Says the CENTENNIAL HANDBOOK TEXAS SCHOOLS 1854-1954, page 50: "The 1875 law creating independent districts placed the control of the schools in the hands of the city councils. But it directed that a majority of two-thirds of the taxpayers was necessary to vote a tax for school purposes. The provisions proved in the end to be barriers to progress. They subjected the schools to political interest and the cupidity of property owners. A prolonged struggle was essential in each independent district to separate the school from the city administration and lodge responsibility in an elected board responsive to the people's will."

In New Braunfels the vote of the citizens for the school tax was unanimous both in 1858 and 1875. See Schutze Jahrbuch 1882 pages 49 & 57. Go to Church Sunday!

reaching these shores, with the purpose of making a life's work, and was admitted to the bar April 27, 1855. While in the Fatherland, as far back as 1837, he had become a member of the Protestant Evangelical Church, and in his new home he set about founding a church of the order. In 1845, soon after his coming, he aided in the organization of the German Protestant Community of which he has continually been an active member and leader.

In that year August 11, also, he opened the first German English school west of the Colorado River, and engaged in teaching. At that day, the endeavor to advance civilization in the wilderness was attended with hardship and danger enough to daunt any save the boldest heart. It is stated that this organization of his inception held its services beneath the boughs of a beautiful grove, the of God's first temples. It was Mr. Seale who first advocated that each community should have the right to tax itself for the support of education, for the good of the great majority of people who were not able to pay for it, and at an early day, he secured the co-operation of the late Hon. Jacob Walder of San Antonio, who was instrumental in having embodied in the constitution of Texas that clause authorizing it. The Legislature passed laws relative to it, and to-day, it is a proud reflection that under the beneficent system of free schools 100,000 of the scholastic population of Texas have received and are receiving free education, the system first adopted by the little town of New Braunfels as early as 1852.

Mr. Seale is the author of the "History of New Braunfels," "History of German Emigration in Texas," "Sketches of Prominent German Statesmen and Citizens of Texas—Living and Dead," etc., and these messages from his facile pen wrought mightily towards inducing emigration from Germany to this favored land, and to them may be largely ascribed the honor and distinction Comal county now enjoys of being a county allied with a patriotic, God-fearing, debt-paying, law-abiding people.

Previous to the CIVIL WAR, he was a Democrat, and made several campaigns in Comal and adjoining counties. In the interests of the party and served several times as delegate to the State Democratic Convention.

[which he served as secretary.] While secretary Alderman his ability and advocacy gave the city its splendid system of water works, and he was organized and promoter of the Texas Saengerbund as early as 1853. Having been a co-respondent for various newspapers in Texas and elsewhere, he acquired a fondness for journalism, and was early instrumental in the establishment of a good paper in his town in 1852, with the aid of others, he established the "Zentrum," and contributed to its columns for a long while. For a time he had editorial control of the paper.

At a time when land titles were clouded, and owners of land were assailed by other claimants and threatened with irritating and expensive suits, the citizens organized a committee who pledged themselves to aid each other in defense of their rights of property. He was a member of the committee, and his secretary, and exerted himself faithfully in carrying out the objects of the organization. After a litigation of thirty years in the District and Supreme courts of the State, a suit was decided by the Circuit Court of the United States, April 24, 1879, which settled the question justly, and it is claimed that to-day hundreds of families are in great part indebted to Mr. Seale's unceasing activity for the quiet possession of their homesteads, and the quieting of their title to the same.

January 25, 1862, Mr. Seale was married to Miss Hulda Blum. They have four living children: Harry and Fritz reside at San Antonio, and Hulda is the wife of Mr. George Elband, and Emily that of John Faust, both successful merchants of New Braunfels. Mr. Seale is now one year beyond the scriptural allotment of three score and ten years, and is still in harness, showing that his years are a burden he does not feel. A clear-eyed, open-browed, ruddy-cheeked stalwart man of seventy-one he is a striking example of what a man without hereditary taint, by clean and wholesome living, may attain to. A man of pious mind and poetic temperament, benevolent instinct and habit, and pleasant agreeable ways, he seems to carry perpetual summer in his heart.

Mr. Seale died March 18, 1902.