

People Names in Native-Plant Names, Part III

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All during the time of the Texas Republic, from 1836 to 1845, Ferdinand Lindheimer botanized in southeastern Texas. Part of the time he collected in the coastal area around Houston and, later, inland around the area of the important German center of Industry. He sent specimens to George Engelmann at the Missouri Botanical Gardens, and Engelmann sent Lindheimer money, equipment, and books. Lindheimer looked forward to the annexation of Texas by the US so that the crates of plant specimens he sent to St. Louis would not have to be broken open by customs agents in New Orleans.

Lindheimer was among the Texas Germans who met the first arrivals of Carl von Solms-Braunfels' colonists when they landed at Port Lavaca in December, 1844. He accompanied these immigrants to a site on Comal Spring northeast of San Antonio, where a new German colony of about 500 people was founded in the spring of 1845.

Lindheimer was given a small cabin, and next to that he pitched a borrowed tent for his botanical collections. Eventually Lindheimer was able to move his specimens indoors on a plot of land he acquired on the banks of the Comal River. On his little parcel he wanted to have a botanical garden of Texas plants, an arboretum, and an agricultural experimental garden.

Tending his little farm, cooking his own meals, mending his own clothes, and keeping up his botanical collection required more

work than he could do alone. At first he hired help, but eventually found it necessary to get married. Fortunately he found a woman who diligently toiled side by side with him in all his endeavors. The house in which the Lindheimers lived and worked and raised a family is now a tourist attraction in an older section of New Braunfels.

Among Lindheimer's many contributions to New Braunfels was editing and publishing a highly regarded and widely influential German-language newspaper, the *Nue-Braunfelser Zeitung*. The first issue was printed in 1852, and this newspaper was continuously published solely in German until 1957.

Ferdinand Lindheimer gained international recognition during the 1840s when Gray and Engelmann published "*Plantae Lindheimerianae*," containing Lindheimer's Texas collections. Because of Lindheimer's esteemed reputation, he was sought out by the young German paleontologist and naturalist Dr. Ferdinand von Roemer, who visited New Braunfels in 1846.

Roemer wrote, "At the end of the town, some distance from the last house, half hidden beneath a group of elm and oak trees, stood a hut or little house close to the banks of the Comal." There in the yard of that little house, the coarsely dressed, bearded man who would become known as the Father of Texas Botany looked up from chopping wood to meet the young German aristocrat who would one

day be called the Father of Texas Geology.

Ferdinand Roemer was sent by the Berlin Academy of Sciences to help survey the mineral resources of Texas, at the request of the *Adelsverein*, a society of German nobles which intended to purchase Texas land for German colonization.

From December 1845 to April 1847, Roemer explored much of Texas, making notes on the landscape, geology, soils, vegetation, and peoples. Also he collected fossils and plants. During Roemer's stay in the New Braunfels colony, he made collecting trips with Lindheimer. Roemer's observations were published in 1849 in a volume he entitled "Texas" (also known as "Roemer's Texas").

Roemer made the first general physiographic and geologic maps of Texas. In addition, he took many plant specimens back to Germany to be described by botanists there. In a scientific misstep, some of the plant collections he had exchanged with Lindheimer were mixed with his own collections, and descriptions of many Lindheimer specimens were published in Germany before Gray and Engelmann could complete the rest of "*Plantae Lindheimerianae*." Several Hill Country plants bear Roemer's name. For example, his name is given to cedar sage (*Salvia roemeriana*), Roemer's acacia or catclaw (*Acacia roemeriana*), and Roemer's spurge (*Euphorbia roemeriana*).