

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Today in Texas History

By Bandera Spirits of Texas

On this day in 1845, two pioneer German-Texans, Friedrich Wilhelm von Wrede Sr. and Oscar von Claren, were killed and scalped by Indians at a place referred to as Live Oak Spring, 10 to 12 miles from Austin, probably near Manchaca Springs.

Wrede made an initial trip to Texas in 1837 and traveled and made notes of his observations in America. He returned to Germany in 1843 and compiled and published *Lebensbilder aus den vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika und Texas* (1844). Wrede's travel book is a generally realistic account of the opportunities and difficulties of colonists on the American frontier, especially in Texas.

The book helped to influence prospective German settlers to come to Texas, despite the negative effect of Wrede's own violent death in Texas the following year. Wrede returned to Texas in 1844 as an official of the Adelsverein.

His companion in death, Oscar von Claren, immigrated from Hannover to New Braunfels, Texas, probably early in 1845. His family correspondence indicated his interest in the botany and wildlife of the New Braunfels area, and he collected turtles and snakes to sell to naturalists in Germany. He wrote *Indianer bei Neu Braunfels im Jahre 1845* (1845), a group of essays depicting Texas Indians.

The two authors were buried at the site of the massacre by United States soldiers, who gave them military honors. Wrede's son, Friedrich Wilhelm von Wrede Jr., settled in Fredericksburg but returned to Germany after the Civil War.