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### Beckmann Family Papers, 1825-1958

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## A Guide to the Beckmann Family Papers, 1825-1958

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### Descriptive Summary

<b>Creator:</b>	Beckmann Family
<b>Title:</b>	Beckmann Family Papers
<b>Dates:</b>	1825-1958
<b>Creator Abstract:</b>	Born in Westphalia, John C. Beckmann (1815-1907) immigrated to the United States in 1841. Arriving in San Antonio via New York and New Orleans, he worked as a blacksmith and became active in local organizations, particularly the many German-American institutions in the city.
<b>Content Abstract:</b>	Correspondence, legal documents, financial records, printed material and photographs are part of the Beckmann family papers, documenting several members of the family.
<b>Identification:</b>	Col 10931
<b>Extent:</b>	1.84 linear feet (2 document boxes, 1 oversize box)
<b>Language:</b>	Materials are in English, German with English translations, and Spanish with one transcription and English translation.
<b>Repository:</b>	DRT Collection at Texas A&M University-San Antonio

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### Biographical Note

Members of the Beckmann family were part of the early wave of German-speaking immigrants to Texas, where they became prominent in San Antonio business and society circles. Born in Westphalia, John C. Beckmann (1815-1907), a Catholic, decided to immigrate to the United States; according to family history, his choice was due to barriers to his proposed marriage to a Swiss Protestant, Regina A. Müller (1815-1905). In 1841 Beckmann and his intended sailed to New York, where they were soon married and their first child was born.

The Beckmann family next moved to New Orleans and then on to Texas, settling in San Antonio. There, John C. Beckmann worked as a blacksmith and became active in local organizations, particularly the many German-American institutions in the city. The Beckmann's were the parents of seven children, though only two lived into adulthood. Their youngest son, Albert F. Beckmann, studied architecture in Germany, returning to Texas to

serve as a topographical assistant to the U.S. Army before establishing an architectural practice in San Antonio. Working in partnership with James Wahrenberger and on his own, Beckmann's designs were concentrated in San Antonio, though he also was involved in projects in Mexico, particularly Piedras Negras.

In 1886, Albert F. Beckmann married into another prominent German-American family in San Antonio when he wed Marie D. Guenther, daughter of the founder of Pioneer Flour Mills. The couple had five children: Adolph Guenther (1887-1954), Regina Augusta (1889-1959), Albert Erhard (1892-1951), Werner Noonan (1894-1962), and Kurt Detmar (1897-1976). All remained active in San Antonio area businesses and organizations. Albert F. Beckmann died in 1900; Marie Guenther Beckmann died in 1921.

### *References*

Long, Christopher. "Albert Felix Beckmann." *Handbook of Texas Online*.  
<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fbe94>.

Pease, S. W. "John Conrad Beckmann." *Handbook of Texas Online*.  
<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fbe16>.

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## **Scope and Content Note**

Correspondence, legal documents, financial records, printed material, and photographs are part of the Beckmann family papers, documenting the activities of several members of the San Antonio, Texas, family.

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## **Organization of Collection**

This collection is organized into six series that gather items associated with particular family members.

Series 1: John C. and Regina Müller Beckmann papers

Series 2: John A. Beckmann papers

Series 3: Albert F. and Marie Guenther Beckmann family papers

Series 4: Albert F. Beckmann business, professional, and political papers

Series 5: Property records, Helotes, Bexar County, Texas

Series 6: Photographs

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## **Restrictions**

### **Access Restrictions**

No restrictions. The collection is open for research.

### **Usage Restrictions**

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## **Index Terms**

### **Personal Names**

Beckmann family.  
Beckmann, John Conrad, 1815-1907.  
Beckmann, Regina A., 1815-1905.  
Beckmann, John A., 1850-1912.  
Beckmann, Albert Felix, 1855-1900.  
Beckmann, Marie Guenther, 1864-1921.  
Guenther family.

### **Subjects**

Architects--Texas--San Antonio.  
Battle of Flowers Parade (San Antonio, Tex.)  
Germans--Texas--San Antonio.  
Land titles--Registration and transfer--Texas--San Antonio.  
Swiss--Texas--San Antonio.

### **Locations**

San Antonio (Tex.)

### **Genres/Formats**

Family papers.  
Correspondence.  
Deeds.  
Financial records.  
Legal documents.  
Photographs.  
Printed ephemera.

Property records.  
Scrapbooks.  
Vital statistics records.

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## **Related Material**

Adolph Guenther and Milby Giles Beckmann Family Papers, 1859-1982, Col 14629, DRT Collection at Texas A&M University-San Antonio.

[Alfred Giles Family Papers, MS 325](#), University of Texas at San Antonio Libraries Special Collections.

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## **Administrative Information**

### **Preferred Citation**

[Identification of item], Beckmann Family Papers, 1825-1958, Col 10931, DRT Collection at Texas A&M University-San Antonio.

### **Acquisition Information**

Gift of Helena Hurst Harrison and Amanda Hurst Ochse, 1999-2002, 2011.

### **Processing Information**

Processed by Warren Stricker, 2001.

Spanish-language deed dated 1825 March 10 translated by Dora Guerra, 2001 May.

German-language materials translated by Lore A. Senseney, 2008-2009.

Finding aid edited and encoded by Caitlin Donnelly, 2010 September.

Accrual (2011) processed and finding aid updated by Caitlin Donnelly, 2012 October.

Finding aid updated by Rebeka Delgado, 2020 March.

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## **Detailed Description of the Collection**

### **Series 1: John C. and Regina Müller Beckmann papers**

The first series is made up of the papers of John C. and Regina A. Beckmann and includes a number of letters from family and friends in Switzerland and Germany. Some official

documents from their life in Switzerland are also found. A number of property records date to Beckmann's arrival in Texas in the 1840s and include the property near the Alamo where he established his blacksmith's business. The remainder of this series gathers a miscellany of financial documents, printed items, and items related to organizations. Some genealogical notes are found here, including a small register of births, marriages, and deaths.

**Box Folder**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | Correspondence, 1850-1905  |
| 1 | <p>Joseph Beckmann, New Orleans, Louisiana, to John C. Beckmann, 1850 October 5.</p> <p>Unknown author, Zurich, Switzerland, to children [incomplete], 1852 September 19.</p> <p>Felix Müller, Zurich, Switzerland, to children, 1856 February 10.</p> <p>Unknown Müller, Zurich, Switzerland, possibly to Regina and John C. Beckmann, 1856 March 24.</p> <p>Carl Beckmann, Rulle, Prussia, to John C. Beckmann, 1867 July 10.</p> <p>Carl Beckmann, Rulle, Prussia, to John C. Beckmann, 1870 December 30.</p>   |
| 2 | <p>Carl Beckmann, Rulle, Prussia, to John C. Beckmann, 1875 January 25.</p> <p>Julius Berends, Frauenfeld, Switzerland, to John C. Beckmann, 1886 December 6.</p> <p>Lisette Roelofsen, Münster, Prussia, to John C. Beckmann, 1889 June 6.</p> <p>Lisette Roelofsen, Münster, Prussia, to John C. Beckmann, 1890 February 23.</p> <p>Lisette Roelofsen, Münster, Prussia, to John C. Beckmann, 1892 January 15.</p> <p>Possibly Lisette Roelofsen, Münster, Prussia, to John C. Beckmann [incomplete], 1893 October 18.</p> <p>Lisette Roelofsen, Münster, Prussia, to John C. Beckmann, 1893 November 23.</p> <p>Adolph Beckmann to John C. Beckmann, 1905 January 25.</p> |
| 3 | Swiss documents, 1829-1841   |
| 4 | <p>Marriage record, John C. Beckmann and Regina Müller, 1841</p> <p>Property records, 1825-1896</p>  |
| 5 | <p>Deed: Maria Josefa Hernandez to Antonio Salazar, 1825 March 10.</p> <p>Deed: Maria de Refugio Morales to Johann Conrad Beckmann, 1848 January 8.</p> <p>Deed: Antonio Salazar to Johann Conrad Beckmann, 1848 January 8.</p> <p>Plat and field notes: J. C. Beckmann lot, 1848 February 22.</p> <p>Title bond: Thomas J. Devine and Francis Giraud, Jr. to John C. Beckmann, 1852 November 17.</p>  |

- Deed: Thomas J. Devine and Francis Giraud, Jr. to John C. Beckmann, 1853 November 28.
- 1 5 Deed: Jacob Waelder to John C. Beckmann, 1858 September 25.  
Articles of agreement: Jacob Waelder and John C. Beckmann [2 copies], 1859 September 2.  
Deed: Jacob Waelder to John C. Beckmann, 1866 February 22.  
Deed: John C. Beckmann to Henry Elmendorf, 1878 June 1.  
Release: Henry Elmendorf to John C. Beckmann, 1880 June 1.
- 6 Notes: Alamo property transactions, 1877-1883.  
Deed: John C. Beckmann to John J. Stevens, Trustee [2 copies], 1889 January 25.  
Deed: John C. Beckmann to J. T. Woodhull, Trustee, 1895 January 26.  
Deed: John C. Beckmann to J. T. Woodhull, Trustee, 1895 September 7.  
Deed: John C. Beckmann to J.T. Woodhull, Trustee, 1896 February 24.  
Deed: John C. Beckmann to J.T. Woodhull, Trustee, 1896 April 29.  
Deed: John C. Beckmann to J.T. Woodhull, Trustee, 1896 June 20.
- 7 Promissory notes, 1896  
Receipts, 1849-1904
- 8 San Antonio taxes, 1849-1900
- 9 Bexar County taxes, 1849-1899, 1904
- 10 Confederate taxes, 1861-1864
- 11 Bills, 1892  
Certificates, 1865-1876
- 12 Registration, 1865-1872
- 13 Membership, Deutsch-Englischen Schulverein, 1876.
- 14 Organizations: Arbeiterbunde, 1852
- 1 15 Announcements and invitations, 1867 and 1891  
Funeral notice, Joseph Beckmann, 1867  
Wedding anniversary, John C. and Regina Müller Beckmann, 1891
- 16 Menus
- 17 Poem: "An John un Albert Beckmann," possibly by Ernst Dosch, 1862  
Biographical and genealogical material
- 18 Family register
- 19 Notes

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## Series 2: John A. Beckmann papers

This series contains a small number of items of the Beckmann's oldest surviving son,

John A. Beckmann, including a small notebook containing photographs of family ranch property northwest of San Antonio.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
1	20	Will and estate records
	21	Autograph book pages [photocopies]

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
Oversize		Photograph album
1		

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### **Series 3: Albert F. and Marie Guenther Beckmann family papers**

The third series gathers personal papers of the Beckmann's youngest son, Albert F. Beckmann, and his wife, Marie Guenther Beckmann. A few items date from prior to their marriage, including some letters and school material. Property records, estate records, financial documents, and printed material make up most of the remainder. Two scrapbooks, one of Marie Guenther Beckmann, the other belonging to her daughter Regina Beckmann Hurst, contain clippings on family, friends, and social events.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
1		Correspondence, 1875-1881, 1941
	22	Albert F. Beckmann, 1875-1881
	23	Regina Beckmann Hurst, 1941
		School records, 1871-1879
	24	Report card: Marie Guenther, High School for Young Ladies, 1879. Identification cards: Albert F. Beckmann, Polytechnische Schule, 1871-1873.
	24	Certificates: Albert F. Beckmann, Königliche Polytechnische Schule zu Hannover, 1871-1873.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
Oversize		Progress reports: Albert F. Beckmann, Königliche Polytechnische Schule zu Hannover, 1872-1874.
1		

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
1	25	Marriage license
		Will and estate records, 1898-1904, 1921
	26	Albert F. Beckmann, 1898-1904
	27	Marie Guenther Beckmann, 1921
	28	Deeds, 1884 and 1899 John E. Ochse and Lewis J. Furtner to Alfred F. Beckmann, 1884 March 14. Albert F. Beckmann to Marie Dorothea Beckmann, 1899 February 8.
	29	Birth record: Statement of Ferdinand Herff on birth of Albert F.



		Beckmann, 1871.
	30	Financial records: bills, receipts, and notes
1	31	Stock certificates: Museum of Natural History of San Antonio [attached receipt], 1885.
	32	Creative works
		Essay: "Some Thoughts relative to climatic and topographic changes in West Texas" by Albert F. Beckmann, 1889.
		Poem: "The Callaghan Green" by Albert F. Beckmann
	33	Sketches: Albert F. Beckmann, from autograph book [photocopies]
		Printed ephemera
	34	Dance cards, 1885-1888
	35	Invitations, 1886 and 1920
	36	Menu, 1886
	37	Funeral notice, 1900
	38	Program, 1904
	39	Calling card
	40	Clippings
<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
Vault map case		Oversize clippings
		Scrapbooks
<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
Oversize 1		Marie G. Beckmann, 1889-1918
		Regina Beckmann Hurst, 1890-1958
<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
1	41	Scrapbook pages

#### **Series 4: Albert F. Beckmann business, professional, and political papers**

The fourth series includes a small number of items associated with Albert F. Beckmann's civic and business activities. Orders and other official documents date from his work as an army topographical assistant; a miscellany of letters and associated documents are related to his architectural work; and his service as an alderman for the city of San Antonio is documented by election certificates and a city council resolution on his death.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
1	42	Military records, 1881-1882
	43	Architectural practice records: letters, printed material, and legal documents

**Box Folder**

Oversize Certificate: San Antonio Mid-Winter Fair, 1895-1896  
1

**Box Folder**

1 44 City Alderman records: certificates of election and resolution, 1891-1900  
45 Clippings

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**Series 5: Property records, Helotes, Bexar County, Texas**

The fifth series contains records pertaining to Beckmann and Guenther family property near Helotes in Bexar County, Texas. Various members of the Beckmann family are mentioned, as are Marie Dorothea Guenther Beckmann's father Carl Hilmar Guenther; her brother Erhard Rosini Guenther; and her brothers-in-law Hermann Schuchard and Adolph Wagner.

**Box Folder**

2 46 Deeds, 1880-1956  
C. K. and Sarah W. Rhodes to Carl Hilmar Guenther, 1880 August 23.  
John C. and Regina Beckmann to John A. Beckmann, 1899 February 10.  
Erhard R. Guenther, Hermann Schuchard, and Adolph Wagner, executors of estate of Carl Hilmar Guenther, to Marie Dorothea Guenther Beckmann, 1903 March 31.  
John A. Beckmann to John C. Beckmann, 1905 July 29.  
John C. Beckmann to Marie Dorothea Guenther Beckmann, 1905 August 12.  
William B. Rossy to Adolph Wagner, 1915 May 17.  
Adolph Wagner to Marie Dorothea Guenther Beckmann, 1915 May 17.  
Werner Noonan and Kurt Detmar Beckmann to Carmel T. Marnoch, 1925 September 28.  
Carmel T. Marnoch to Werner Noonan and Kurt Detmar Beckmann, 1925 September 29.  
Walter and Mary Chumbley Johnson to Werner Noonan and Kurt Detmar Beckmann, 1956 September 24.

47 Plat and field notes, 1892 March 16-17

48 Maps, 1887 and undated  
"Map of Bexar County," showing land owners and properties, compiled and drawn from the records of surveys in Bexar County, sketches from General Land Office, and sketches and memoranda of the present County Surveyor, John D. Rullmann, Draughtsman,

County Surveyor's Office, 1887 June 7.

Helotes property, undated.

2	49	Letter: Webb & Goeth, Attorneys at Law, San Antonio, Texas, to Marie D. Beckmann, San Antonio, Texas, describes enclosed deeds and abstracts of title, enclosed statement from Bexar County tax collector, 1905 August 26.
	50	Abstracts of title, 2 items, 1900-1926
	51	Notes, 1943, undated

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## Series 6: Photographs

The final series includes views of Albert F. Beckmann-designed buildings in San Antonio and Mexico, informal family photographs, a number of photographs of group outings and organizations, and general scenes.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
2	52	Albert F. Beckmann architectural work City brewery construction [1 item], 1897 A. Staacke residence [1 item], undated C. Harnisch residence [3 items], undated Oficinas Federales, Cd. Porfirio Diaz, Piedras Negras, Mexico [1 item] Aduana, Cd. Porfirio Diaz, Piedras Negras, Mexico [2 items] Unidentified residence [1 item]
	53	Wahrenberger and Beckmann, architects
	54	Mexico: Zacatecas, Saltillo, and possibly Piedras Negras
	55	John A. Beckmann
	56	Beckmann home, Casino Street, San Antonio
	57	Battle of Flowers Parade floats, 1904, 1906, 1911, 1912 Pictured: Regina Beckmann, Milby Giles, Amanda Guenther, Dorothea Guenther, Helena Guenther, Lieschen Guenther, Etta Hummel, Jesse Newton, Marie Schuchard, and Eleanor Stevens.
	58	John C. Beckmann and Regina Müller Beckmann Group photographs
	59	Casino Club theater group, 1868
	60	Beethoven Maennerchor
<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
Oversize		San Antonio Opera Club picnic, 1880
1		
<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
2	61	General and unidentified groups
<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	

Oversize  
1

Unidentified

**Box**    **Folder**

2	62	San Antonio: flood, 1921
	63	Unidentified