



Turning Germans into Texans: World War I and the Assimilation and Survival of German Culture in Texas, 1900-1930

Matthew D. Tippens

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Here is the first full-scale discussion of the impact of World War I on ethnic Germans in Texas. Germans were among the first settlers to Texas, and contributed greatly to the growth of the state in the fields of business, religion, music, agriculture, ranching, and cultural activities. Despite such accomplishments, German Texans became the targets of an anti-German hysteria during World War I. In the lead up to America's entry into the war, German Texans were subjected to intense scrutiny. After the United States declared war against Germany in April 1917, the response to German-Texan activities lost all sense of proportion to the danger. Simply being German or using the German language aroused suspicion. In the state, people tarred and feathered, beat, and whipped German Texans. Based on extensive archival research, author Matthew D. Tippens details how the attackers intended to turn Germans into Texans using whatever means necessary. Following the war, the strive for "100% Americanism" by groups such as Ku Klux Klan continued the assault. Despite the years of attacks, by 1930, German-Texan culture, though not unscathed, proved that it had survived the war and would continue for several more decades.

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