

HEINRICH HINMAN HOUSE  
On Castell Avenue between  
San Antonio and Coll Streets  
New Braunfels  
Comal County  
Texas

HABS No. TEX-3253

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. TEX-3253

HEINRICH HINMAN HOUSE, NEW BRAUNFELS, TEXAS

Location: On Castell Avenue between  
San Antonio and Coll Streets  
New Braunfels  
Comal County  
Texas  
Latitude: 29° 42' 06" N Longitude: 98° 07' 28" W

Present Owner: First National Bank of New Braunfels.

Present Occupant  
and Use: Now used as a meeting place for civic organizations.

Statement of  
Significance: On this site a blacksmith shop and log house were  
built in 1845 by Peter Arnold, one of the early  
founding settlers. Ten years later he sold the lot  
and improvements to Heinrich Hinman, blacksmith.  
In 1868 the industrious Hinman was able to erect  
the two-story stone house, one of the fine homes of  
the city.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION:

A. Physical History:

1. General History: In 1842 the "Verein zum Schutze deutscher Einwanderer in Texas" (Society for the Protection of German Immigrants to Texas) was formed in Germany. Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfels, director of the Verein, had purchased a large, remote tract north of the Llano River, but when the first scheduled settlers began arriving in Texas ports in July 1844, it was quite urgent to acquire a location nearer to the coast. A small tract was purchased at the junction of the Comal and Guadalupe Rivers. The first settlers arrived there in March 1845, and the town was named Neu (New) Braunfels. The earliest homes were built of logs in the typical American manner, but soon the townspeople began employing their skilled craftsmen to build better houses of "fachwerk" or of brick or stone, using the construction methods of their original homeland. The census of 1850 gave the population of New Braunfels as 1298 persons; it was the fourth largest city in Texas. The following craftsmen were listed: Blacksmiths 11; Brick-makers 3; Cabinet-makers 7; Carpenters 23; Locksmith 1; Sawyer 1; Stone-masons 6.

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2. **Ownership of the Property:** The street plan of the town was laid out by surveyor Nicolaus Zink; most of the lots had a street frontage of 100 German feet (equal to about 96 English feet), and a depth of 200 German feet. These plots were doled out by lot to each family head or adult. Peter Arnold, blacksmith, drew lot No. 76, the site of the present house. Soon he built a blacksmith shop and log house on the lot. In 1855 he sold the lot and improvements to Heinrich Hinman, another blacksmith, for \$550. Hinman labored hard and in 1868 was able to build one of the fine large stone houses of the city. The newspaper editor, Ferdinand Lindheimer, in describing the 25th anniversary celebrations wrote, "one (of the houses) in particular deserves mention, the fine massive built two-story Hinman home, and the more so, being one of the finest monuments to hard labor and thrift".
3. **Date of erection:** 1868.
4. **Builder:** No definite information is available, but evidently the builder was an immigrant stone mason trained in the traditional construction methods of the German homeland.
5. **Alterations and additions:** In 1913 the house was sold by the widow of Heinrich Hinman to their grandson, Dr. A. J. Hinman. At a later date the interior of the original house was remodelled and additions were made; these included: the northwest entry, the two-story frame portion, and the one-story kitchen. The front downstairs rooms were used for the doctor's medical practice. In 1958 the First National Bank of New Braunfels purchased the property; the rear portion of the lot is now used for parking, but the house is rather well maintained and is used as a meeting place for civic organizations.
6. **Persons connected with the Structure:** The original owner of the lot, Peter Arnold, was born at Stephanhausen, Germany about 1803. With his wife and four children, he arrived December 21 aboard the ship "Ferdinand", and was among the original settlers of New Braunfels who arrived in March 1845. On the lot on Castell Avenue he built a blacksmith shop and log house, and in 1855 sold the property and improvements to Hinman. The census of 1860 lists Arnold as a farmer.

Heinrich Hinman was born at Heinsen on the Weser, Germany in 1819, and there he learned the smith's trade. In 1836 he emmigrated to America and for the next thirteen years travelled and worked in various parts of the United States. In 1849 he settled in New Braunfels and five years later married Therese Sickhold. The census of 1860 lists him as a blacksmith; there were three children at that time but his total family was ten children (eight of whom grew to adulthood). The fine two-story stone house was built in 1868, and he lived in it until his death in 1899.

B. Bibliography:

- Biesele, Dr. R. L. History of the Early German Settlements in Texas, 1830-1860. Austin, Texas: von Boeckmann-Jones Co., 1930.
- Geue, Chester William and Ethel Hander. A New Land Beckoned, German Immigration to Texas, 1844-1847. Waco, Texas: Texian Press, 1966.
- Haas, Oscar. The History of New Braunfels and Comal County, 1844-1946. Austin, Texas: The Steck Company, 1968.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER:

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: It is a fine two-story stone house built in 1868 by Heinrich Hinman, an early settler of the city. The exterior of the stately house with its two-level porches suggests the style of the classical revival. The interiors were reconstructed and redecorated in this century and no longer reflect the original character.
2. Condition of the Fabric: The original exterior stone walls are in excellent condition and show little evidence of repairs. The squared posts of the front porch appear to be original, but wood trim, railings and window sash have been replaced. The rear addition built of wood framing, is somewhat in need of repair.

B. Technical Description of the Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: A rectangular plan (with porch) 40'-5" x 38'-8" with later rear and side additions. Original portion, two story with a small cellar. Description below refer to the original stone house unless otherwise noted.
2. Foundations: Mortared stone walls to a depth below the cellar floor. The still under the center of the ballroom floor is supported by stone piers.
3. Wall construction: Original exterior walls are 20" stone masonry, of squared, hammer-dressed local limestone laid up with wide lime-mortar joints in ashlar courses.
4. Floor framing: The first floor is supported on 7" x 7" roughhewn joists, 3' - 6" on center; these are mortised into 10" x 10" sills. Joists for the second floor and attic space are not accessible.
5. Porches: On the southwest there are porches, two level, the length of the house. The six columns, solid wood posts 8 1/2" square, have simplified classical bases and caps. The end posts support heavy wood beams which carry the stone masonry triangle above the ends of the porch. The floor of the lower porch is of flagging, squared, random pattern. The wood railing of the second level porch has an interesting design of geometric pattern.
6. Chimney: The house was probably originally heated with wood-burning stoves, but there is now no evidence of the early chimneys. The large fireplace and its flue and chimney near the center of the house were constructed in this century.
7. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: The only original door is the one to the front porch, second level. The six-foot masonry opening has a pair of two-panel doors with a decorative narrow transom above. The main entrance door at the lower level is a heavily moulded "Spanish type", not original. The masonry openings of both doors have stone lintels above.

b. Windows: All window openings have stone lintels above, and projecting stone sills. All sash have been replaced, six-over-six, probably following the pattern of the original windows, but with heavier muntins.

8. Roof:

a. Shape, covering: Over the original portion there is a low (2 in 12 pitch) ridge roof covered with raised-rib sheetmetal, painted red. The two-story addition has a similar roof; the kitchen wing has an asphalt shingle roof.

b. Cornice, eaves: The original portion has a classical type cornice, projecting 12" on the gable ends, 20" on the front eave.

C. Technical Description of the Interiors:

1. Floor Plans: There is evidence that before remodeling there was a central stairhall. It appears that on either side of the stairhall there were two rooms, one large and one small. When the partitions of the stairhall were removed, perhaps in the 1920's, a new stair was built in the north corner of the house. The frame additions were probably built at that time. The large "Ballroom" was used by Dr. A. J. Hinman in his medical practice.
2. Stairway: The original stair was probably single run. The present stair is an enclosed C-form type with winders.
3. Flooring: New oak flooring (2 1/2") has been laid over the original plank flooring. The addition, first floor, has cement tile flooring. The cellar floor is now concrete.
4. Wall and Ceiling Finish: The ceilings of the ballroom and the upstairs bedrooms are coved. All are plastered with a heavy "Spanish daubed" finish. First floor ceilings are 10' - 7"; the second floor, 9' - 9".
5. Doorways and Doors: None of the original interior doors are in place. Existing doors are typical mill stock, usually two-panel.

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6. Trim: Windows have wide wood stools, plaster return on jambs and heads. Doorway trim is typical mill stock, 4" wide.
7. Lighting: The house is wired for electricity; in the ballroom there are two chandeliers (wired).
8. Heating: There is no evidence now of original chimneys, but it is probable that the house was heated with wood-fired stoves. In the remodelling of the house in this century the fireplace was built, and a gas-fired, gravity hot-air furnace was installed in the cellar.

D. Site:

1. General Setting and Orientation: The original lot had a depth of 192' and a frontage of 96' on South Castell Avenue. The front porch is 28' from the street curb line, with a white wood picket-fence across the front. Side property lines have 6-foot chain-link fences. At the west corner there is a pair of decorative wrought-iron gates that give access to a 12' asphalt-paved driveway. The rear portion of the lot is now used for parking.
2. Landscaping, Walks: A flagstone walk extends from the front gate to the porch, and near the west and north corners of the house there are small terraces of flagstone. To the west and northwest of the house there are three large pecan trees (18" to 24" trunk diameter) and several other smaller trees; viewed from the street, it presents a pleasant shaded setting for the stately stone house.

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