



Maria von Blucher's Corpus Christi: Letters from the South Texas Frontier, 1849-1879 (Canseco- Keck History Series)

Maria von Blucher

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In 1849, a young German bride and her husband stepped off a ship in Corpus Christi Bay to establish their home in the new frontier settlement. For the next three decades Maria von Blücher wrote letters home describing the hardships of droughts and Indian and bandit raids, the chaos of the American Civil War, the discomforts of pioneer living, the joys and heartbreaks of family life, and the development of a town that her descendants would help to build into a thriving city.

Her letters record above all the woman's side of pioneer life. Although they offer insight into political events and economic developments in Germany, the United States, and South Texas, their greater value lies in the picture they paint of the deprivations, cruel hardships, sacrifice, and dangers faced in everyday life. Maria's letters stand as a personal account of the pioneer experience and an elegant testimony to the role played by Germans in the settlement of South Texas. They provide an intimate look inside the homes and ranches, the schools and farmyards, the stores and churches of early Corpus Christi. They examine families and friendships, communities, congregations, and social unions.

In *Maria von Blücher's Corpus Christi* Bruce S. Cheeseman has edited and annotated more than two hundred of the nine hundred letters that are held in the von Blücher family's papers on deposit at the Special Collections and Archives of the Mary and Jeff Bell Library at Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi.

In her life and in her letters, Maria von Blücher joined all of the courageous pioneer women who helped to lay the foundations of Texas communities. These letters unerringly draw a Texas landscape that is gone forever.

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