

# THE RECKNAGELS OF ROUND TOP

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Edward Recknagel was born on September 4, 1851 in Bayreuth, Bavaria, Germany. He was the oldest of four children born to Karl and Margaretha Riedel Recknagel. Edward completed his education as a pharmacist in Germany, and immigrated to Texas in 1878. He was the only individual in his family to travel to the United States.



Having crossed France and embarking from Le Havre, France, Edward landed in New York. He then boarded a ship to Galveston, and rode by horseback to San Antonio. While residing in San Antonio, Edward learned there was a need for a good pharmacist in the German village of Round Top. Edward established himself as the leading pharmacist in Round Top until the family left to live in Burton, Texas in 1917.

On June 1, 1886 Edward married Friederike Caroline Elise Michaelis in the town of Round Top. Fiedericke (Fritzchen) was born on February 29, 1860 at the Nassau settlement near Round Top, Texas. She was the first of two daughters and three sons born to Theodor Wilhelm and Hedwig (Groos) Michaelis, both of whom had immigrated to the United States from Germany. On August 29, 1887 a daughter, Louise, was born to Edward and Friederike in Round Top.

April 2, 1888 Edward and Mathilde Henkel sold to Edward Recknagel 14,625 sq. feet of land facing Live Oak Street in Round Top for \$290.00. Edward paid \$10.00 cash with a signed promissory note for \$280.00, which he paid in full by January of 1889. Edward built two wooden buildings side-by-side on his land, which faced Live Oak Street. One building, The Apothecary, was for his pharmacy, and the second was his house. The Apothecary is standing today on Henkel Square Market in Round Top, and the Recknagel's house has been moved to Bybee Square in Round Top.



By the mid-1890s Friederike was operating a photograph shop in the back of the pharmacy.



She used glass-plate negatives to make images of buildings, events, and people of Round Top.

Many of the buildings on the images are gone, such as the stone house and boarding school built in 1865-66 for Johann Adam Neuthard, then the pastor of the Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

Another of her

photographs reveals the original wooden courthouse built in 1888, which burned in 1924. Her photographs have been displayed in books, pamphlets, businesses, private collections, post cards, and universities. The photographs were also exhibited in *Frontier American: The Far West*, a 1975 exhibition organized by the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.



In 1917 Edward and Friederike sold their property in Round Top to Otto Koenig and moved to Burton, Texas. Friederike Recknagel lived alone a few years after Edward died on December 14, 1937. She then joined her daughter in Houston, where she died on December 31, 1956. She is buried beside her husband in the Florida Chapel Cemetery outside of Round Top, Texas.

#### Sources:

Fayette County Deed Records, Vol. 32, p. 506, La Grange, Texas.

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