

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 1

## Supplementary Listing Record

NRIS Reference Number: SG100002086

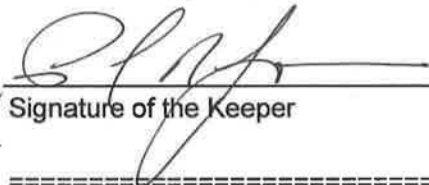
Date Listed: 02/02/2018

Property Name: Walzem Homestead

County: Comal

State: TX

This Property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation



Signature of the Keeper

2/2/2018

Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

**Historic Function:**

The Historic Functions are revised to include the following subcategories selected from the list of standardized terms:

*Domestic-Single Dwelling; Secondary structure*

*Agriculture-Agricultural outbuilding; animal facility; agricultural field*

*Landscape*

The TEXAS SHPO was notified of this amendment.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

**National Register property file**

**Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)**

56-2086



NPS Form 10-900

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Walzem Homestead Other name/site number: NA Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 690 Mission Valley Road City or town: New Braunfels State: Texas County: Comal Not for publication: [ ] Vicinity: [ ]

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] nomination [ ] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [X] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance: [ ] national [ ] statewide [X] local

Applicable National Register Criteria: [X] A [ ] B [X] C [ ] D

Signature of certifying official / Title: Mark Wolfe, State Historic Preservation Officer Date: 12/14/17 Texas Historical Commission State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. Signature of commenting or other official Date State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is: [X] entered in the National Register [ ] determined eligible for the National Register [ ] determined not eligible for the National Register. [ ] removed from the National Register [ ] other, explain:

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action: 2/2/2018

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property:** Private

**Category of Property**

	building(s)
x	district
	site
	structure
	object

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3	1	buildings
0	0	sites
6	0	structures
1	0	objects
10	1	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions:** DOMESTIC – single dwelling, outbuilding, cistern  
 AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE – barn, trough  
 LANDSCAPE – fencing, rock walls, pastures, stock tank

**Current Functions:** DOMESTIC – single dwelling, outbuilding, cistern  
 AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE – barn, trough  
 LANDSCAPE – fencing, rock walls, pastures, stock tank

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification:** OTHER: Mid-to-Late-Nineteenth Century Vernacular

**Principal Exterior Materials:** Wood, Stone, Corrugated Metal, Stucco

**Narrative Description** (see continuation sheets 8-13)

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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## 8. Statement of Significance

**Applicable National Register Criteria:** A, C

**Criteria Considerations:** NA

**Areas of Significance:** Exploration/Settlement, Agriculture, Architecture

**Period of Significance:** 1854 – 1933

**Significant Dates:** 1854

**Significant Person** (only if criterion b is marked): NA

**Cultural Affiliation** (only if criterion d is marked): NA

**Architect/Builder:** NA

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (see continuation sheets 14-20)

## 9. Major Bibliographic References

**Bibliography** (see continuation sheet 21)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

**Historic Resources Survey Number** (if assigned): NA



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property:** 83.4262588 acres

**Coordinates** (see continuation sheet 22)

**Verbal Boundary Description:** (see continuation sheet 22)

**Boundary Justification:** (see continuation sheet 22)

## 11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Kristina Kupferschmid/Architectural Historian  
Organization: Hardy·Heck·Moore, Inc.  
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City or Town: Austin State: TX Zip Code: 78731  
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Date: May 2017

## Additional Documentation

**Maps** (see continuation sheets 23-28)

**Additional items** (see continuation sheets 29-39)

**Photographs** (see continuation sheets 5-7, 40-74)

*This project was funded in part through a Certified Local Government Grant from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, as administered by the Texas Historical Commission.*

*The contents and opinions, however, do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Department of the Interior, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior.*

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**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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**Photograph Log**

Name of Property: Walzem Homestead  
City or Vicinity: New Braunfels  
State: Texas  
Number of Photographs: 35  
Photographer: Kristina Kupferschmid  
Date photographed: November 9, 2016

Photo No. 1 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0001)

View of primitive dirt drive along southern boundary of property, view facing east.

Photo No. 2 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0002)

View of barn (RIDN 81039 b) and non-contributing barn (RIDN 81039 c), showing relationship to one another, view facing southwest.

Photo No. 3 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0003)

View of rock fencing (RIDN 81039 g) and wood and wire fencing (RIDN 81039 h) separating the barns and the house, view facing southwest.

Photo No. 4 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0004)

View of fenced-in domestic area, view facing north.

Photo No. 5 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0005)

View of stock tank (RIDN 81039 i) southeast of house, view facing south.

Photo No. 6 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0006)

View of barbed wire and split-wood post fencing separating building clusters from fields, view facing northwest.

Photo No. 7 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0007)

View of fields and wooded area in northern part of the property, view facing northeast.

Photo No. 8 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0008)

Oblique of house (RIDN 81039 a), view facing northeast

Photo No. 9 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0009)

Side east façade of house (RIDN 81039 a) showing rubble stone, view facing west.

Photo No. 10 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0010)

Side west façade of house (RIDN 81039 a) show cut limestone, view facing east.

Photo No. 11 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0011)

View showing chamfered porch columns on house (RIDN 81039 a), view facing east.

Photo No. 12 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0012)

View showing floor mortis at porch on house (RIDN 81039 a), view facing northeast.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 13 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0013)

Oblique view of rear house (RIDN 81039 a) addition, view facing southeast..

Photo No. 14 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0014)

View of interior door to rear addition of house (RIDN 81039 a). Door was originally a window, view facing north.

Photo No. 15 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0015)

Ceiling beams in eastern room of house (RIDN 81039 a), view facing east.

Photo No. 16 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0016)

Stove and stone hearth in eastern room of house (RIDN 81039 a), view facing northeast.

Photo No. 17 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0017)

View of enclosed breezeway with opening to rear addition and door onto front porch of house (RIDN 81039 a), view facing south.

Photo No. 18 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0018)

View of door connecting the two western rooms in the house (RIDN 81039 a), view facing south.

Photo No. 19 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0019)

Front façade of barn (RIDN 81039 b), view facing southeast.

Photo No. 20 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0020)

Oblique view of barn (RIDN 81039 b), view facing southeast.

Photo No. 21 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0021)

Oblique view of rear south façade of barn (RIDN 81039 b), view facing northwest.

Photo No. 22 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0022)

View of root cellar in barn (RIDN 81039 b) and curved stairway, view facing west.

Photo No. 23 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0023)

View of root cellar in barn (RIDN 81039 b), view facing east.

Photo No. 24 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0024)

Side east façade of barn (RIDN 81039 b) showing line down the middle, view facing west.

Photo No. 25 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0025)

Partial stone wall at entrance of barn (RIDN 81039 b), view facing northeast.

Photo No. 26 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0026)

Partial stone wall in middle of barn (RIDN 81039 b), view facing southwest.

Photo No. 27 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0027)

View of stone cistern by house (RIDN 81039 e), view facing northwest.

Photo No. 28 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0028)

View of stone trough (RIDN 81039 f), view facing southeast.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 29 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0029)

View of outhouse (RIDN 81039 d), view facing north.

Photo No. 30 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0030)

View of rock fence (RIDN 81039 g) in front of and to the side of the house, view facing east.

Photo No. 31 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0031)

View of rock fence (RIDN 81039 g) in front of barn, view facing west.

Photo No. 32 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0032)

View of rock fence (RIDN 81039 g) separating domestic area from barns, view to the north.

Photo No. 33 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0033)

View of wood and wire fence (RIDN h) separating the area in front of the house from the barns, view facing southwest.

Photo No. 34 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0034)

View of stock tank (RIDN 81039 i) southeast of house. View facing north.

Photo No. 35 (TX\_ComalCounty\_WalzemHomestead\_0035)

Oblique view of non-contributing barn (RIDN 81039 c), view facing northwest.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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## Narrative Description

The Walzem Homestead is a mid-to-late nineteenth century agricultural property located in Mission Valley in southeastern Comal County, Texas. Approximately five-and-a-half miles northwest of downtown New Braunfels, the district consists of a ca. 1855 barn and house, as well as several small-scale structures, objects, and landscape features typical of a nineteenth-century agricultural complex found in the county. Johann Walzem, a stonemason from Germany, likely built the barn and house using local limestone and timber in a technique and style typical of early German settlers in Comal County. The homestead is located off Mission Valley Road and encompasses approximately 83 acres. The boundaries of the homestead follow present-day property lines and include both buildings and land relevant to the property's history (map 4). The homestead has ten contributing resources and includes pastures and fields. There is one non-contributing resource on the property, built outside the period of significance (1854-1933) and dates to around 1990. The historic character of the property remains intact and its buildings retain exceptional integrity. Despite large-scale modern residential development east of the Walzem Homestead, the property itself has very little modern infill and manages to retain a rural and agricultural feel and setting and an overall high degree of integrity.<sup>1</sup>

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## General Overview of Property

The Walzem Homestead is located in a historically rural part of Comal County known as Mission Valley, approximately five-and-a-half miles northwest of downtown New Braunfels. The property is located off a private dirt drive accessed from the north side of Mission Valley Road. Less than a mile east of the property runs one of the county's major thoroughfares, State Highway (SH) 46. Due to the property's proximity to SH 46, as well as the continued expansion of New Braunfels, historically agricultural and rural neighboring and nearby properties have been subjected to more recent commercial and residential development. In the twenty-first century, previously large undeveloped swaths of land to the north and south of the Walzem Homestead were subdivided and developed into residential subdivisions. Despite the expanding growth of New Braunfels and nearby development along SH 46, the Walzem Homestead remains somewhat secluded from the growth by natural buffers, including trees and rolling hills, allowing it to maintain its rural setting and feeling.

The homestead encompasses approximately 83 acres of land along the Balcones Fault and is characteristic of the foothills of the Texas Hill Country, with slight elevation changes and areas of oak, mesquite, and juniper trees (map 4). The cluster of built resources is located on the highest point of the property in a surround of trees in the southern portion of the parcel near the property line. This cluster consists of the ca. 1855 house (Resource ID No. (RIDN) 81039 a), ca. 1855 barn (RIDN 81039 b), a ca. 1855 cistern (RIDN 81039 e), ca. 1855 stone fence (RIDN 81039 g), ca. 1930 wood and wire fencing (RIDN 81039 h), the ca. 1990 barn (RIDN 81039 c), and a historic stock tank (RIDN 81039 i) (map 6). This area is accessed via a private dirt drive. The drive runs along the southern property line before turning north up an incline to reach the buildings (photo no. 01). The drive circles around the barns and also provides access to the west side of the house. The ca. 1855 barn and ca. 1990 barn are next to one another, approximately 100 feet southwest of the house (photo no. 02). A chicken coop historically stood between the house and the barn, but it was removed ca. 1938. Historic stone fencing runs just north of the barns, providing separation between them and the house. Stone for the fence came from clearing the land in the nineteenth century. Over time, the wall deteriorated, falling down in some areas, but the current owner rebuilt the fence by hand in the 1990s. A historic wood-and-wire fence extending from the house's southwest corner to the stone fence helps demarcate the domestic area from the agricultural area (photo no. 03). Over time, the domestic zone in front of the house expanded by extending the fencing further from the house. Within this domestic area are several trees (photo no. 04). Just west of the house, outside the wire fencing is a historic outhouse. Historically, to the northwest of the

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<sup>1</sup> The words district, property, and homestead are used interchangeably throughout the document.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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house, a stone smokehouse once stood. It was deteriorated by the 1930s and removed. To the east of the house historically was a hog pen. It was removed sometime in the 1930s. A ca. 1855 earthen stock tank is at a slightly lower elevation, approximately 200 feet southeast of the house (photo no. 05).

Barbed wire and split wood post-fencing dating to sometime in the 1980s separates the cluster of buildings from the fields to the north (photo no. 06). On a slightly lower elevation than the southern section of the property, the former cultivated fields, now used for grazing, encompass approximately 16 acres. The fields, surrounded by fencing, give way to a slight incline and a wooded area, approximately 51 acres, in the northern part of the property (photo no. 07). At the edge of the field and the wooded area are two historic stock tanks. Modern-day fencing demarcates the property boundaries. Current aerial photographs clearly show the property boundaries by differences in field and tree patterns from neighboring parcels (map 4).

### Individual Building Descriptions

#### House – RIDN 81039 a (photos 8-18)

#### EXTERIOR

The house on the Walzem Homestead is an L-shaped limestone residence, made up of three historic rooms, a center hallway (that presumably was originally open like a breezeway), and a 2000 rear addition (photo no. 08). Likely built by Johann Walzem, a stonemason, beginning around 1855, the house presumably began as a smaller house and was added onto in stages over the years. The main (south) façade has an inset porch on its eastern half. Outside of the rear addition, the house configuration remains as it was when the Rahe family purchased the property in the 1930s. Facing south, the house stands one-and-a-half stories in height, including its attic. The historic four façades (front south, side east, side west, and rear north) are composed of load-bearing limestone. The house's base utilizes more durable limestone while the upper courses and areas around window openings make use of a softer caliche-like limestone. The eastern wall consists of rubble-like stonework, while the western wall consists of ashlar-cut limestone (photo nos. 09 and 10).<sup>2</sup> The limestone for the house likely came from clearing the fields on the property or from a nearby quarry. The stone walls set within the porch on the east side of the south front façade are covered with stucco, which was added in 1988. The center passage is enclosed with board and batten that replaced horizontal lap wood siding around 2000. Wood-frame, double-hung windows with six-over-six lights are located on the sides and front of the house. Three single wood doors are located within the porch: on the east side of the western ell, in the enclosed center passage, and one on the porch's eastern end. The rear addition also has a single-door entry on the east and west facades. Attic openings—two in the eastern gable end and one in the western gable end—have wood frames and still-operable wood shutters. The side-gable roof, clad in corrugated metal, extends across the front of the house, creating the inset porch along the eastern side of the house's front. The roof line is not centered, creating a longer rear side. This roof form allowed more rain to drain into the cistern to the rear of the house. Before windmills became ubiquitous, this water-catching technique was common in the mid-nineteenth century. Originally, the house likely had a cedar shingle roof, as was common in and around New Braunfels. The porch is supported by squared wood posts. The two easternmost columns and the southeast corner column are chamfered only on their two outward-facing sides. The middle column is chamfered on all four sides (photo no. 11). There also is a visible floor mortis at the porch (photo no. 12). The rear addition, built off the original north stone wall has a shed roof, wood-frame construction, and stucco exterior (photo no. 13).

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<sup>2</sup> The use of rubble stone for one wall and ashlar-cut stone for another has led some to speculate that these walls were not built at the same time, and that the western half of the house was built sometime after the eastern half.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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## INTERIOR

The house's eastern room contains two original doors; one on its south wall that opens to the porch, and one on its west wall opening to what would have been an open center passage, but is now a hallway (fig. 1). What originally was a window on the north wall is now a door opening onto the rear addition (photo no. 14). Ceiling beams are milled on all four sides (photo no. 15). This room has a stove on its side eastern wall, flanked by two windows. The stove has a stone hearth (photo no. 16). Both the south and north walls have niches built into them, approximately 14 inches deep. Window and door openings are deep; approximately 12 to 16 inches.

The center passage, likely enclosed sometime before the 1930s, has a door opening onto the porch, and extends to the rear addition (photo no. 17). Before the addition, the center passage was enclosed with wood boards (fig. 2). The two western rooms have separate doorways that open onto the central hall as well as a shared single doorway in their common wall (photo no. 18). The front (south) room contains another doorway that opens onto the porch. The rear (north) room has a door that originally functioned as a rear exit—leading to the smokehouse—but now opens into the addition. Ceiling beams in the western front rooms are hand-hewn, and the ceiling is approximately 12 inches lower than the height of the ceiling in the house's eastern half. Cuts in the ceiling of the rear room on the west side indicate that a stove once was in this room and that it possibly functioned as a kitchen. These two rooms were likely added after the completion of the eastern room, either at the same time or in stages. The rear room might have been added first, as it is in line with the eastern half of the house, and the second room could have been added sometime later, sometime in the early twentieth century, creating an L-shaped plan during the period when such a configuration was popular. The windows are equally as deep in these two rooms as they are in the eastern room.

Walls in the three historic rooms, and the center passage, are plastered. When the Rahe family bought the property in the 1930s, the walls were already plastered. When renovation work was completed on the house in the early 2000s, plaster was reapplied in some places. The plasterers created a historically accurate mixture, using hay in the plaster. They also left a small section of the wall uncovered in the east wall of the center passage that shows the bare rubble stone and structural wood component. Floors in all the historic rooms are wood and have base boards. All the historic doors have wood frames, and the window openings have wood lintels and sills.

## INTEGRITY

The evolution of the house from what likely began as a one- or two-room building to its current form is typical of many mid-nineteenth century houses in Comal County. Other than the 2000 rear addition, the construction of additional rooms onto the house occurred during the period of significance and are important because they help convey the history of the property and the people who lived there and how their needs evolved over time.

The renovation and preservation work completed on the house by the current owners in the early 2000s, does not detract from the house's overall historic character. Before the work, the house was falling into disrepair. Wood was rotting and grout holding the stone together had deteriorated. Horizontal wood boards at the center passage were replaced with the current board and batten, and the stone was repointed during the renovation. Like the barn, the renovation work was historically sensitive to the house. Lime and sand rather than concrete was used in re-chinking the stonework, and hay was mixed in with the plaster, as it had been originally done.

The largest alteration to the house is the 2000 addition onto the rear of the house. During the construction of the addition, the enclosure of the north side of the center passage was opened. The rear addition, due to its location and smaller size—it does not overshadow the original structure—has minimal impact on the house's overall historic character and sense of the past. Overall, the house retains all aspects of integrity, as defined by the National Park Service.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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**Barn – RIDN 81039 b (photos 19-26)**

The Walzem barn, as it stands today, is 40 feet wide and 22 feet deep (photo nos. 19-20). The front north and side façades are constructed of load-bearing ashlar-cut limestone, and the south rear façade has a wood post and board frame with corrugated-metal cladding. The south elevation has a lean-to shed with wood posts and a corrugated metal roof (photo no. 21). A non-historic wood fence and metal gate enclose the area between the barn and the non-historic barn to the south, creating a feeding and holding pen for livestock. The center “dog trot” entrance on the barn’s north side was likely originally open, but is currently enclosed with vertical wood boards. Wood boards replaced corrugate metal at the opening around 1988. Recessed windows to the barn’s cellar stand at the ground level in the middle of the easternmost bay on the north façade and in the middle of the north half of the side east façade. Both side façades also have window openings with operable wood shutters. The opening on the west façade is higher than that on the east façade. Four eight-inch square openings are evenly spaced on the north façade to the sides of the entrance. The purpose of the openings is unknown. One possible theory suggests that the openings provided ventilation, while others speculate that the openings are actually gun portals. Regardless of intent, these openings are a distinctive feature of the barn. A nearly identical barn on the Rockwall Ranch on Schoenthal Road, approximately seven miles southwest of the Walzem Homestead, has identical openings, as did a barn in Johnson City, Blanco County that is no longer extant (figs. 3 and 4). Though slits—longer and narrower than the Walzem barn openings—are typically associated with ventilation of stone barns, larger openings such as these could be associated with ventilation. Located four feet from the top of the cellar, the height of the openings is said to be ideal for shooting a rifle. During this period, property owners could have been protecting their land, cattle, and equipment from Comanche or Kiowa raids or from thieves, as such incidents occurred in Comal County during the mid-nineteenth century. The gable ends on the side façades are enclosed with board and batten. Board and batten replaced corrugated metal in the 2000s. The corrugated metal may have replaced stone that was originally there, but the only evidence suggesting this part of the wall at one time was stone is the nearly identical barn on the Rockwall Ranch that does have stone all the way to its roofline. The limestone walls on the southern halves of the side façades slope downward from the center of the barn, and the board and batten from the gable ends extends to meet the stone. Historically, the southern ends of the side façades had openings where hay could be thrown into the barn. The openings were enclosed in the 2000s when work to stabilize the barn occurred. The barn has a side-gable roof clad in corrugated metal.

Inside the barn, in the northeast corner, a root cellar is accessed by a curved stone stairway (photo no. 22). The cellar has two windows (as described previously), and a vaulted stone ceiling (photo no. 23). Originally a dirt floor, stone was added during the barn’s stabilization efforts.

Likely built by Johann Walzem, a stonemason, sometime around 1855, the exact history and evolution of the barn is unknown. The current owner believes that the barn’s original size was possibly smaller and its configuration and use slightly different than today’s building. His theory regarding the barn’s history is that it was constructed for use as both a barn and living quarters for the Walzem family while they built the house. In this configuration, the building would have had two rooms separated by the dog trot and that sometime later, the building was converted exclusively into a barn. The barn on the Rockwall Ranch is said to have been originally used as both living quarters and barn. Additionally, on the Walzem barn’s east and west sides, a distinct line or seam is visible where the stones are not coursed together. This feature suggests that the southern half of the barn was an early addition (photo no. 24) and that the northern half would have been used as living quarters originally. If true, the original southern wall was either unfinished or was removed to create a larger interior space. The current interior configuration, with partial stone walls at the “addition” site at the rear of the barn, and at the dog trot entrance lend some credence to this theory (photo nos. 25-26). The Rockwall Ranch barn retains an intact interior stone wall that creates an entirely separate room, unlike the Walzem barn, which lacks such a feature and has a more open configuration. The other interior “wall,” a partial wall, on both barns is identical (photo no. 25, fig. 5).



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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## INTEGRITY

Although the original appearance of the barn is not known, the building has changed only minimally since the Rahe family acquired the property in the 1930s. By the 1990s, the barn was in a state of deterioration. Without a foundation—the stone was laid directly on the ground during the original construction—the walls, particularly on the north side had separated from the southern half and started to lean (fig. 6). Board-and-batten walls and wood-frame window openings also were deteriorating. In 2007, the current owner undertook a rehabilitation project that took two years to correct the leaning by pushing the north wall back into place incrementally. During this period, the owner also added the stone floor in the cellar, the wood cellar door, and enclosed the openings for hay on the barn's side. All work was done with regard for the historic building and does not detract from the barn's historic character and its ability to convey a sense of the past and the property's historic and architectural significance. The barn retains all aspects of integrity to a noteworthy degree.

## Other Contributing Resources

In addition to the barn and the house, the Walzem property has eight other resources that contribute to the property's historic character and sense of the past. The eight resources include five small-scale objects and structures and three landscape features.

The small-scale resources include: a historic stone cistern; a historic stone trough; a one-room wood outhouse; and wood and metal, and stone fencing. The cistern, trough, and outhouse are all located in the cluster of resources in the southern part of the property. The hand-dug 30-foot cistern (RIDN 81039 e, photo no. 27), dating to ca. 1855, currently abuts the rear addition to the house; prior to the addition, it was approximately 20 feet to the northeast of the rear of the house and would catch rain runoff from the roof. Originally, the cistern was covered by a wood structure, but in 1939 the current masonry structure was added to cover the cistern. The trough (RIDN 81039 f, photo no. 28), dates to ca. 1855. It is original to the property, but was moved to its current location near the entrance to the rear addition outside the period of significance. The outhouse (RIDN 81039 d, photo no. 29), repaired over the years due to deterioration typifies this distinctive property type. It is a one-room wood structure with a corrugated metal shed roof. The property's stone fences (photo nos. 30-31) were built by the Walzem family and have been maintained and repaired by the current owner. Commonly found throughout Comal County, stone fences were built during the nineteenth century when farmers were clearing their fields. By one account, German settlers in Comal County had built several hundred miles of rock fences by 1860.<sup>3</sup> On the Walzem property, the stone fences separate the property's domestic zone from areas used for more agricultural purposes that include the barn, fields, and stock pond. The stone fence encircles the house to the south, east, and north (photo no. 32). A ca. 1930 wood and wire fence more clearly defines the domestic area from the agricultural area to the west (photo no. 33).

The three stock tanks on the property also are contributing resources that enhance the ability of the property to convey its significance. One tank is approximately 200 feet southeast of the house (photo no. 34), and the other two are located at the edge of the pasture near the wooded part of the property on a hillside. The tanks were dug in the caliche clay-like soil by horse-drawn scrapers guided by someone walking behind, and are said to hold water well. The tanks were the primary source of water for the property's livestock. Hand-dug cisterns made of rock were built next to each cistern, but none remain.

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<sup>3</sup> Terry G. Jordan, *German Seed in Texas Soil*. University of Texas Press, 1982. p. 165.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

**Non-Contributing Buildings**

Only one resource on the Walzem property is classified as non-contributing; a wood-frame barn with corrugated metal walls that was built outside of the period, around 1990 (photo no. 35). Though it is a non-historic building, the construction materials and shape of the barn are similar to historic barns typically found on other farms and ranches in Comal County.

**Overall Integrity of Property**

Overall, both the land and buildings on the Walzem Homestead retain excellent integrity. Land historically used for agricultural purposes north of the house remains undeveloped and open. Although the current owners do not grow any crops in areas believed to have historically been used for such purposes, the land still retains its agrarian character. Cattle graze the field, and the property’s setting and feeling remain largely unchanged from the period of significance. Additionally, the presence of historic landscape features—rock, as well as wood and wire fencing, and stock ponds—all contribute to the property’s sense of the past. Though several small-scale historic buildings—such as a chicken coop, a smokehouse, and a hog pen—have been removed from the property, their loss does not impact the overall property’s ability to convey its significance. The one non-historic building on the property also does little to diminish the property’s overall historic character, as previously discussed in the Non-Contributing Buildings section. The two main buildings on the property, the barn and the house, both retain excellent integrity. As a whole, the Walzem Homestead has excellent integrity and easily conveys its history and significance as a mid-to-late-nineteenth century homestead.

**INVENTORY TABLE**

The Walzem Homestead has eleven resources: ten contributing and one non-contributing. The table below presents an inventory of resources within the district boundaries, based on field survey conducted November 2016. Dates of construction are based on research and information provided by the current owner.

RIDN	Address	Property Type	Year Built	Contributing Status	Photo No(s).
81039 a	690 Mission Valley Road	Building – Single-family dwelling	ca. 1855	Contributing	8-18
81039 b	690 Mission Valley Road	Building – Barn	ca. 1855	Contributing	19-26
81039 c	690 Mission Valley Road	Building – Barn	ca. 1990	Noncontributing	35
81039 d	690 Mission Valley Road	Building - Outhouse	ca. 1855	Contributing	29
81039 e	690 Mission Valley Road	Structure – Cistern	ca. 1855	Contributing	27
81039 f	690 Mission Valley Road	Object – Trough	ca. 1855	Contributing	28
81039 g	690 Mission Valley Road	Structure – Stone fencing	ca. 1855	Contributing	30-32
81039 h	690 Mission Valley Road	Structure – Fencing	ca. 1930	Contributing	33
81039 i	690 Mission Valley Road	Structure – Stock tank	ca. 1855	Contributing	5, 34
81039 j	690 Mission Valley Road	Structure – Stock tank	ca. 1855	Contributing	n/a
81039 k	690 Mission Valley Road	Structure – Stock tank	ca. 1855	Contributing	n/a

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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## Statement of Significance

The Walzem Homestead is an excellent representation of an early German homestead in Comal County dating to the mid-nineteenth century. The district is significant in that it reflects the county's early settlement patterns, as well as the important role agriculture played in Comal County's early history. German immigrants Johann and Anna Gertrude Walzem settled the property in 1854 in an area approximately five-and-a-half miles northwest of New Braunfels, known as Mission Valley. The family likely constructed the extant buildings on the property and established a successful working farm in the mid-nineteenth century. After the Walzem family's ownership, the property passed through a number of different owners, before the Rahe family purchased the property in the early 1930s. Like many agricultural properties in the county, the Walzem Homestead increased in acreage throughout the nineteenth century as farm production increased and became more profitable. Over time, and into the twentieth century, as agricultural output on family farms slowly decreased, land was sold off, and the property became smaller. Even though the property is now smaller than it was during its peak in agricultural productivity, and is no longer fully devoted to agriculture, cattle still graze the land. Without the addition of modern infill, the Walzem Homestead retains the character-defining features of a nineteenth century agricultural property. As modern residential subdivisions develop on historically rural agricultural land adjacent to and near the property, and across Comal County, the Walzem Homestead represents an important piece of disappearing Comal County history. The Walzem Homestead is locally significant under Criterion A in the areas of Exploration/Settlement and Agriculture. The Walzem Homestead is also locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The property's house and barn are excellent examples of a common building style used by early German settlers in Comal County. The Walzem Homestead's period of significance begins in 1854, when the Walzem family made their preemption claim with the state and presumably began building on the property, and extends to 1933, when the Rahe family took over ownership and the property no longer operated as a full-time agricultural residence. The district contains 11 resources on approximately 83 acres that contribute to its historic character and significance.

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## Criterion A

### Exploration/Settlement

Declaring independence from Mexico and becoming its own nation in 1836, the Republic of Texas encouraged settlement by offering land grants to incoming settlers. From 1836 to 1842, the Republic of Texas offered a series of headright grants—legal grants of land to settlers—to those willing to meet certain requirements. Through these headright grants, over 36 million acres of land was given to new settlers in Texas. The Republic also made contracts with individuals promising to establish colonies in Texas. The individual would receive a large land grant and settlers in the colony would each receive 640 or 320 acres, depending on their marital status. Colony land grants in Texas totaled nearly to 4.5 million acres.<sup>4</sup> In Comal County, German immigrants associated with Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfel and the Adelsverein, a German society that had purchased an interest in one of the colony land grants—the Fisher-Miller Land Grant near present-day Fredericksburg on the Llano River—as well as 1,265 acres from Juan Martin Veramendi, who had received a Mexican land grant in 1825 along the Comal and Guadalupe Rivers, settled New Braunfels in 1845. By the end of 1845, nearly 500 settlers, predominantly German immigrants, were living in the newly established community

The initial wave of German settlement associated with the Adelsverein was soon followed by subsequent influxes of new settlers to Texas. This new group overwhelmingly consisted of German immigrants—who were not associated with the Adelsverein or any colony—as well as other European immigrants and men and women

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<sup>4</sup> Aldon S. Lang and Christopher Long, *Handbook of Texas Online*, "Land Grants," accessed March 14, 2017, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/mp101>.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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migrating from the southern United States. After arriving in Texas at Galveston or Houston, many Germans settled in enclaves with other Germans, predominantly in south-central Texas, including Comal County. The continued influx of Germans to Texas was due in part to the already established German population in the Republic, the continued social, political, and economic instability in Germany, and Texas's continued push to encourage settlement. In 1845, the Republic of Texas passed the first Preemption Act, allowing settlers who previously settled upon, or who promised to settle upon and improve vacant public land, the right to purchase up to 320 acres. In 1854, the Homestead Act reduced the amount of land granted to settlers from 320 acres to 160 acres and required residence of three years before land could be purchased.<sup>5</sup> It was through these preemption grants, that hundreds of German immigrants, including Johann Joseph Walzem, settled and became land owners in Comal County from 1845 to 1898.<sup>6</sup>

Johann Joseph Walzem immigrated from Sinzing, in the Rhine-Westphal region of western Germany, with his wife Anna Gertrude and their three children: Johann Jr., Gertrude, and Anna in 1852.<sup>7</sup> The family, listed with the last name Wolzenn in passenger records, departed Germany from Bremen and arrived in Galveston on February 2, 1852, on the *Magnet* with 70 other passengers. Both Johann and Anna Gertrude—recorded in the passenger records as John and Gertrude—have listed ages of 34, and their three children are recorded with the ages of 8, 4, and 2. Only Johann has a listed occupation: bricklayer.<sup>8</sup> A Matthias Wolzenn, age 30 and documented as a bricklayer, is also recorded as a passenger on the *Magnet*, and possibly was a brother to Johann. It is not known whether the Walzem family travelled directly to Comal County upon arriving in Texas in 1852, but by 1853 Comal County tax records existed for Johann Walzem. In 1853, Walzem owed \$214 in taxes.<sup>9</sup> One year later, in August 1854, Walzem filed a preemption claim for 160 acres with the State of Texas in Comal County (fig. 7). In September 1854, the district surveyor of Bexar District surveyed the 160 acres for Survey No. 361 for Walzem, approximately five miles northwest of New Braunfels in an area known as Mission Valley (fig. 8). In 1857, three years after the filing of the preemption claim, the Chief Justice of Comal County declared that Walzem “fully complied with the preemption act, having resided upon and cultivated the tract of land surveyed,”<sup>10</sup> and in April 1859, Walzem officially acquired the 160 acres of Survey No. 361 from Texas. Between 1854 and 1855, during the requisite three year period on which Walzem lived on and cultivated the land, county tax records show an increase to \$240 owed for 1854, and \$700 owed for 1855.<sup>11</sup> In comparing other Comal County tax records for other those years, an equal across the board increase for other properties in the county was not seen; therefore, one can speculate that the Walzem homestead's increase in property value stemmed from improving and cultivating the land, building the barn and/or house, or all of these. Walzem, listed as a stonemason in the 1860 census, likely built both the barn and the house during this period, using stone from clearing the land or from a nearby quarry.<sup>12</sup>

During this period, after the initial founding of New Braunfels in 1845, settlement in Comal County fanned outward from New Braunfels, as new arrivals claimed larger parcels of land through grants. Mission Valley, where the Walzem family laid roots, was one of many small communities that emerged in the mid-nineteenth century in the county. Other communities included Danville, Sattler, Smithson Valley, and Spring Branch. Closer to New

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Preemption land grants operated from 1845 until 1898, but the program was cancelled during this time for a ten year period from 1856 to 1866.

Alton Rahe, *History of Mission Valley Community: Now Part of New Braunfels, Texas* (San Antonio: Alton J. Rahe and Historical Publishing Network, 2010), 45.

Galveston Historical Foundation, Galveston Immigration Database, <http://ghf.destinationnext.com/immigration/Search.aspx>.

<sup>9</sup> Texas General Land Office, Land Grant Database, File No. 005550, Abstract No. 662.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> As a stonemason, it would have been highly unusual for Walzem to hire someone to build the house and barn on his property.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Braunfels, German immigrants laid out homesteads at Hueco Springs and Mission Valley beginning around 1846. Mission Valley, near present-day SH 46 and Loop 337, was given its name after Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe Mission, established in 1757 by Spanish missionaries on the Guadalupe River. The exact location of the mission was and is not known, as no evidence of it has been located. A 1862 General Land Office map shows that many of the land grants in the Mission Valley area all similarly sized at around 160 acres, whereas larger parcels are further away from New Braunfels, near the county borders (fig. 9). In addition to the Walzem family, other early settlers in Mission Valley and nearby Hueco Springs include the Arnolds, Kesslers, Brechers, Dietzs, Bremers, Kappmeyers, Foerstes, Boehms, Muellers, Startzs, and Kendalls. The 1860 census shows Mission Valley as a largely homogenous community made up of neighboring farmers, of whom most had emigrated from Germany. Sprinkled within the community were farmers from Mississippi, Tennessee, and Ireland, an Evangelical Lutheran clergyman from Switzerland, as well as a cartwright, wagoner, and stonemason (Walzem). The land, abundant in limestone and timber, led to the building of stone houses and barns on many of the early settlers' properties. Walzem, a stonemason who is said to have sometimes traveled to San Antonio on weekends and worked there during the week, presumably helped build some of the early stone houses and barns in the Mission Valley area.<sup>13</sup>

In Mission Valley, a cohesive community emerged in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. Unlike other communities in the county, Mission Valley never grew to have a post office, cotton gin, or general store, possibly because of its proximity to New Braunfels. Despite its lack of such amenities, Mission Valley was an interconnected rural community, centered around the school and Schuetzen Verein (shooting club), and largely composed of farmers. By the early-1870s, Mission Valley had a Schuetzen Verein (established ca. 1849), a permanent school (the first was built around 1870 and later replaced by a stone building in 1884), and a church (built 1870).<sup>14</sup> Central to the community was the Schuetzen Verein. Popular in Germany, shooting clubs provided more than gun training and shooting competitions for men. Organized shortly after settlement, sometime around 1849, the Mission Valley club promoted community by hosting school programs, as well as meetings and social events such as dances. Equally important to the community was the organization of a school. Prior to the construction of Mission Valley's first school building around 1870, children attended classes in community members' houses from 1861 to 1869. From 1866 to 1868, Mr. August Tampke taught 22 children in a room in the Walzem house.<sup>15</sup> In 1884, the community built a new stone school building and the 1870 frame school building became a teacherage. Less integral to the community was the small chapel, completed in 1870, it was the community's only church.<sup>16</sup> Constructed by Walzem in the northern part of his property, the chapel is a small stone building (fig. 10).<sup>17</sup> The exact history of the chapel is unknown, but various stories—newspaper and family histories—state that it was constructed by Walzem and his son as a thanks for providing Johann safe passage to and from Germany to visit family sometime after his initial settlement in 1854. The story goes that before departing for a trip to Germany in the late 1860s, Walzem said he would build a chapel as thanks for safe passage. In 1871, after his safe return, Walzem deeded the acre of land with the chapel, then known as St. John Chapel, to the Reverend Bishop C. M. Dubois and the Catholic Church.<sup>18</sup> A small building, approximately 25 feet long and 20 feet wide, the chapel was not used for large services, but instead provided space for an occasional mass by Father Fleury from New Braunfels. The chapel served the Catholic community who otherwise would have had to travel to New Braunfels on primitive roads for mass. At least three burials are known to have occurred near the chapel: Anna Gertrude Walzem (1873), Barbara Schneider (1874), and

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Alton Rahe. Texas Historical Commission. *Homesite of Johann and Gertruda Walzem*, Official Texas Historical Marker application, 2000.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 56, 99.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 56.

<sup>16</sup> The date of 1870 is based on a stone above the chapel's opening with 1870 engraved into it.

<sup>17</sup> The chapel is not included as a contributing resource, as it no longer is associated with the rest of the Walzem Homestead property and including it would create a discontinuous district.

Rahe, 37. The chapel remains today, though the land was bought by a developer and now the chapel is surrounded by the Mission Hills Ranch Subdivision.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Wilhelm Laux (1875).<sup>19</sup> The chapel remains today, and is located in the southern portion of the nearby Mission Hills Ranch Subdivision.<sup>20</sup>

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, Mission Valley carried on as a small rural agricultural-based community. In 1931, the New Braunfels Country Club was built on land in Mission Valley, and in 1943, the community gained a bowling alley. But like many of the small communities to develop in the mid-to-late nineteenth century outside of New Braunfels, Mission Valley's cohesiveness and independent identity declined in the post-World War II era. With better roads and commercial centers more easily accessible, as well as a diversification of employment opportunities that saw a shift away from agriculture, these small communities tended to disappear or merge with other or larger nearby communities. In Mission Valley, the local shooting club was sold to the New Braunfels Schuetzen Verein in 1946, and in 1952, the Mission Valley school closed when the New Braunfels Independent School District annexed Mission Valley's school district. The teacherage and school building became a community center. Agricultural land also saw non-agricultural development in the post-war era. The Mission Valley Guest Ranch, a recreational "dude ranch," opened in 1946 on Mission Valley Road. The guest ranch became the T-Bar-M Guest Ranch and Tennis Resort in the late 1960s and still operates as a guest ranch and tennis center today. In more recent years, several subdivisions, including the Mission Hills Ranch Subdivision, have developed on former agricultural lands in Mission Valley, a trend that reflects the rapidly increasing population of New Braunfels and Comal County.

### **Agriculture**

Comal County has an agricultural past, and most of the early settlers in the county in the nineteenth century engaged in farming and ranching. Many of the Germans in Comal County, despite training in and practicing another trade in Germany prior to immigrating, became farmers and ranchers in their adopted country. Having little to no previous agrarian experience, many Germans moved to Comal County in part due to its rich farm and ranch land. Bankers, merchants, and stone masons, like Walzem, found themselves in a new country attempting to succeed in an unknown field. In part due to the inexperience of the settlers, agricultural societies and clubs emerged in Comal County shortly after the creation of new communities. Despite Mission Valley having no agricultural society, Walzem successfully established a working and income-producing farm after settling the land. Between 1850 and 1860, the county's population increased over eight percent to reach over 4,000 people, and the number of farms dramatically rose from 55 to 472.<sup>21</sup> Most of the crops grown were for subsistence, but cash crops, including corn and cotton, were also grown on these early farms. In Comal County, the number of farms and the size of farms continued to increase throughout the nineteenth century as farming production increased and became more profitable, before leveling off in the early twentieth century, and peaking in the 1930s. During this period, farmers diversified their crops and important cash crops included wheat, corn, and oats. Many farmers also raised sheep, cattle, and milk cows for, wool, dairy products, and beef for additional income. Family farms and ranches occupied much of the property in Comal County during this period. After 1930, the number of farms in the county declined, a trend that largely continued throughout the remainder of the twentieth century, as agricultural trends shifted away from small family farms to larger commercial and industrialized operations.<sup>22</sup>

The history of the Walzem Homestead reflects these early county-wide agricultural trends and the important role farming had in the development of Comal County in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Based on a cursory

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<sup>19</sup> Rahe, 43.

<sup>20</sup> Only one burial was located and was relocated in the 1960s.

<sup>21</sup> HHM Inc. *Final Report: Comal County Historic Resources Survey Partial Inventory of Zones 1, 2, and 4*. June 2013. p. 18.

<sup>22</sup> David W. Moore, Jr., Martha Freeman, and Maryellen Russo. *Agricultural Theme Study for Central Texas*. August 2013. p. 4-23.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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comparison of neighboring properties, the 1860 agricultural census shows that Walzem's farm was typical in terms of size (160 acres) and cash value (\$1,500) as compared to neighboring farms. Similarly, Walzem had average numbers of farm animals for Mission Valley: seven horses, three mules, 20 milk cows, 16 cattle, two sheep, and seven pigs. Distinguishing Walzem's farm from neighboring properties was the large amount of wheat, rye, Indian corn, and barley he grew. Walzem also grew more peas and beans, and sweet potatoes than any neighboring farm according to the 1860 agricultural census. In the 1860s and 1870s, Walzem greatly increased his property's acreage. In 1867 Walzem purchased two tracts, each 160 acres. The 160-acre Henriette Boehme tract (Survey 447), abutted Walzems property to the north, but the 160-acre Survey 503 that Walzem purchased from G. F. Kunz, was separated from his property to the northwest by several other tracts of land. Walzem connected his landholdings in 1871 when he purchased an additional 1,380 acres (fig. 11). Walzem purchased the 1,380 acres for \$4,100 at an auction<sup>23</sup>. The land came from the estate of George W. Kendall, regarded as the father of sheep ranching in Texas, and the namesake of neighboring Kendall County. These acquisitions enlarged his property to the north, northwest, and northeast. The 1870 agricultural census shows Walzem's farm as one the highest valued among his neighboring farmers, at \$4,000. In comparing with neighboring farms in the census records, the Walzems had an average number of horses, mules, milk cows, cattle, and pigs, and they grew about the same amount of cotton, sweet potatoes, and produced an average amount of butter, hay, and molasses. The Walzems though, produced on average more wheat, rye, Indian corn, oats, and grass seeds than their neighboring farmers. Beginning in the early 1870s, around the time Anna Gertrude became ill, Walzem began deeding his land out to their children, and he would continue to do so until his death in 1885. By 1880, Johann Jr., with his wife and children, along with his brother Peter were living and farming the property. The agricultural census for that year, shows that the property was again, a typical Mission Valley farm. Johann, who lost his wife Anna Gertrude in 1873, remarried in 1875 and moved sometime after to Seguin where he died in 1885.

The Walzem children began selling the property off in the late 1880s, dividing it in the process. In 1902, all but 5 acres of the original 160 acres of Walzem's property and much of the 160 acres from Survey 447 to the north were purchased by one owner. In 1907, the owner sold 122.7 acres, of which the Rahe family would purchase 116 acres in 1933.<sup>24</sup> Census information from 1900, 1910, 1920, and 1930<sup>25</sup> list the owners of the Walzem Homestead as "General Farmers." Albert and Linda Klar Rahe purchased the property in two pieces, in 1933 and 1934. Their ownership marks a shift in the use of the property from a full-time agricultural residence to a "weekend" house. Rahe, a school teacher in Sattler, approximately 20 miles north of the Walzem Homestead, lived with his family in the school's teacherage. According to Rahe's son Alton, who now owns the property, the family purchased the land after the Great Depression as a way to ensure, that they could work the land, if necessary, to make a living. Economic situations never forced the Rahes to work the land and so the family only spent weekends and parts of the summer at the homestead. Albert Rahe took care of business in New Braunfels on Saturday, and on Sunday, the family attended church. The Rahes raised cattle and some chickens on the property. Today, Alton Rahe still visits the property regularly to take care of cattle and the homestead.

## Criterion C

### Architecture

Early settlers in Comal County, of the mid-to-late nineteenth century, typically constructed buildings using what was available: limestone, and unmilled wood. During this period, the railroad had not yet reached Comal County

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<sup>23</sup> Rahe, 46.

<sup>24</sup> Approximately 10 acres north of the property belong to the current owner's sister, while the remaining 26 acres of land has been sold to different buyers.

<sup>25</sup> 1890 census data was unavailable.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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and travel was relegated to primitive roads, making milled and standard materials and buildings plans largely inaccessible and cost prohibitive to these pioneers. Many early settlers, Germans in particular, readily used stone in their construction. Often, Germans built *fachwerk* houses using a traditional half-timbering building technique utilizing rough-hewn timbers as structural components and rubble masonry or clay as infill. This type of building, rooted in tradition dating back to medieval times, was seen by the Germans as “pure,” and was thought to allow them a fresh start in their new home. In areas with more abundant stone, such as in Mission Valley, and with local men skilled in stone masonry, such as Walzem, German immigrants constructed houses and ancillary buildings and structures, such as barns, smokehouses, cisterns, and fences out mostly limestone. Some argue that Germans incorporated stone into their building in part because it provided them, as immigrants, a sense of permanence in their new country.<sup>26</sup> Settlers used stone from their property, as well as from nearby quarries. In Mission Valley, farmer Conrad Kappmeyer presumably had a quarry on his property, as did Wilhelm Hillert.<sup>27</sup> Both Kappmeyer and Hillert also had lime kilns on their properties. From the hardest limestone, they made a lime-based mortar for building construction. Germans also commonly built stone fences on their properties. These fences, made with stone from clearing the land, typically separated domestic areas from work and agricultural areas and fields. One estimate suggests that by 1860, Germans had built several hundred miles of rock fences in Comal County.<sup>28</sup>

The early houses of the settlers were similar, predominantly small one- or two-room buildings with rectangular footprints. Oftentimes these houses were one-and-a-half stories tall and had a side-gable roof. Interiors typically had plastered walls and exposed timber ceiling rafters. The houses usually began small and were added onto multiple times over the years. Very few of the mid-nineteenth century houses that began as one or two rooms stayed as such. Families, as they grew and lifestyles evolved with modern advances, added onto these houses. When enlarging the residences, breezeways were typically incorporated into the design—an influence of Southern settlers—and at a later date, families again altered their houses—enclosing breezeways and creating a hallway or an additional room. The barns German settlers built were also similar—rectangular with a center breezeway, or opening, and a side-gable roof.

The house and barn, as well as the rock fences, on the Walzem Homestead are excellent examples of this German-Texas building style that was common in Comal County in the mid-nineteenth century. The buildings, both of limestone construction and likely built by Walzem, reflect the early German influence on Comal County’s built environment and are indicative of this important early settlement and architectural and construction trend. The house also reflects the house enlargement trend common to Comal County, showing the progression of construction methods and additions to what likely began as a small one-room house, to a multi-room house. The house also took on an L-plan, which may show the influence of popular building styles that emerged after the arrival of the railroad in the late-nineteenth century.

In Comal and nearby counties, examples of these stone houses and barns remain, but with rapidly growing population and development, many are threatened and are disappearing. The Walzem Homestead buildings are not only a testament to the quality of workmanship involved in this early type of construction, but they also convey a significant piece of Comal County history that is threatened by modern-day development. Due in large part to the architecture of the buildings on the Walzem Homestead, their salient physical features—limestone construction, small rooms, one-and-a-half stories tall—and their high degree of integrity, a sense of the German influence on the early settlement of Comal County remains easily identifiable.

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<sup>26</sup> Moore, Freeman, Russo, 4-28.

<sup>27</sup> Rahe, 34-35.

<sup>28</sup> Rahe 14.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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**Summary**

The Walzem Homestead is representative of the early settlement patterns of Comal County in the mid- nineteenth century and the important role Germans played in the development of the county. Emigrating to Texas after the first wave of German immigrants and claiming land through preemption grants, Johann and Anna Gertrude Walzem were early settlers in Mission Valley and were important within the community, opening their house for school classes, building the chapel, and most likely helping build other residents' houses and barns. Like most of their neighbors, the Walzems also farmed and supported themselves through agricultural endeavors. The district represents a typical mid-to-late nineteenth century Comal County homestead and reflects significant settlement and agricultural trends. The property is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the areas of Exploration/Settlement and Agriculture at the local level. The homestead also is architecturally significant under Criterion C at the local level. The extant buildings that are excellent examples of the traditional German-Texas building vernacular common in Comal County in the mid-to-late nineteenth century.

**Period of Significance**

The Walzem Homestead has a period of significance that begins in 1854 and ends in 1933. The year 1854 represents when the Walzem family first occupied the land on which they built their homestead. The year 1933 marks the date that the homestead no longer functioned as a full-time residence and agricultural property.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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- Texas Department of Transportation. Photo Library.
- Texas General Land Office. Land Grant Database. File No. 005550, Abstract No. 662.
- Texas General Land Office. Archive Map Store.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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## Geographic Data

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

1. Latitude: 29.73266° Longitude: -98.208418°
2. Latitude: 29.734121° Longitude: -98.206092°
3. Latitude: 29.730019° Longitude: -98.202504°
4. Latitude: 29.729988° Longitude: -98.200893°
5. Latitude: 29.730562° Longitude: -98.199817°
6. Latitude: 29.728° Longitude: -98.197713°
7. Latitude: 29.725259° Longitude: -98.201156°
8. Latitude: 29.726547° Longitude: -98.202442°
9. Latitude: 29.727339° Longitude: -98.201441°
10. Latitude: 29.728544° Longitude: -98.202499°
11. Latitude: 29.72861° Longitude: -98.205005°

**Verbal Boundary Description:** The southern parcel boundary for tract no. 81039 acts as the southern boundary for the property. The southern halves of the eastern and western boundaries follow the parcel boundaries for tract no. 81039. Parcel boundaries for tract nos. 72234 and 72235 create the northern halves of the eastern and western boundary. The northern parcel boundary for tract no. 72235 acts as the northern boundary for the Walzem Homestead.

**Boundary Justification:** The boundaries for the Walzem Homestead were drawn following the current property boundaries to include land historically owned by Johann Walzem, and that is currently owned by the same property owner. The boundaries encompass the following three parcels: 81039, 72234, and 72235. The boundaries incorporate the built resources associated with the homestead, as well as historically important agricultural land that remains either in use agriculturally or remains undeveloped and open, and adds to the significance, feeling, and setting of the property.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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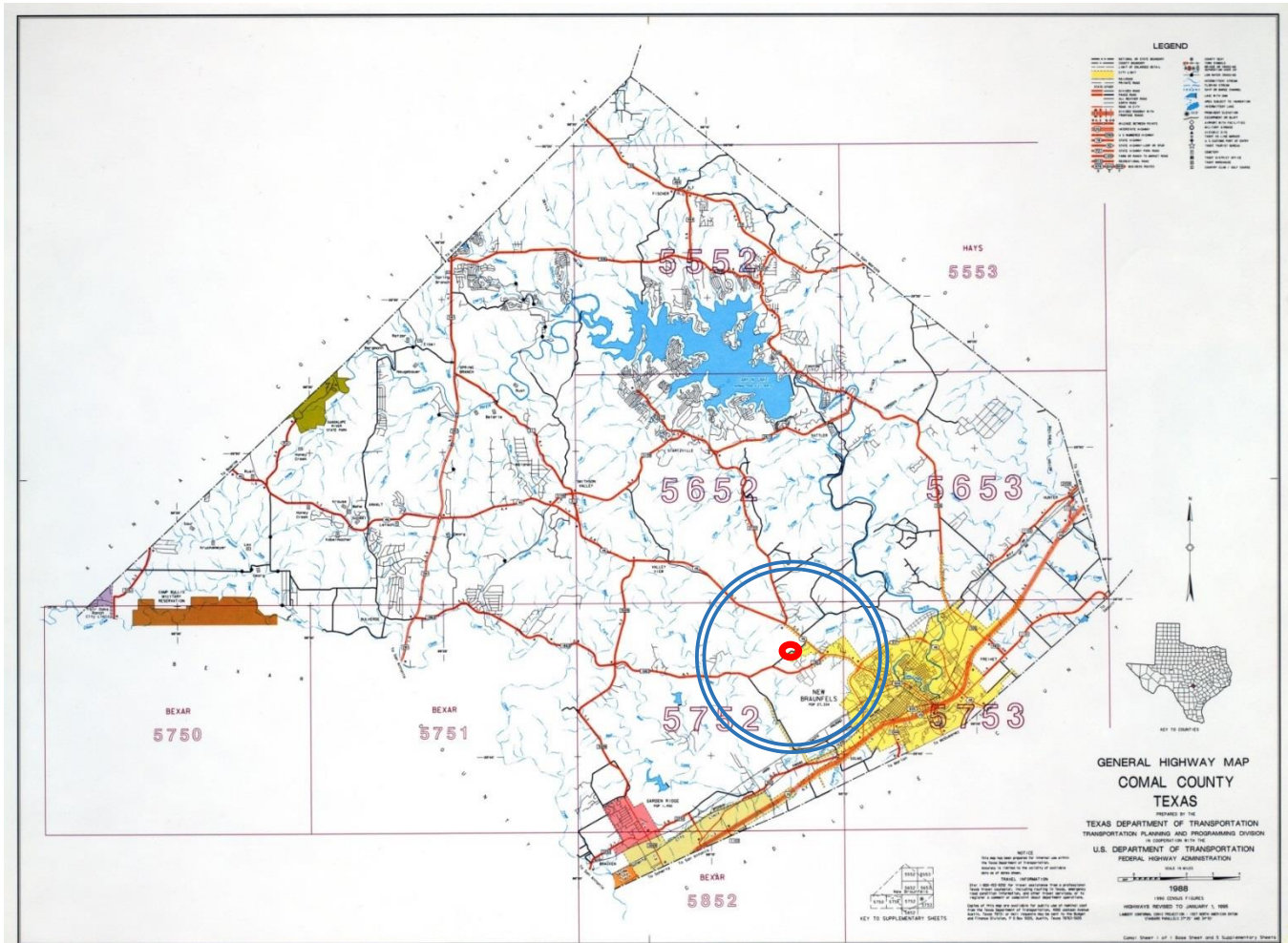
**Additional Documentation**

**Maps**



Map 1. Comal County, Texas – highlighted in red.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas



Map 2. Comal County Highway Map (Source: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/txdot/tccoma01.jpg>). The red dot represents the approximate location of the Walzem Homestead.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas



Map 3. Walzem Homestead with boundaries in red and latitude and longitude coordinates in blue.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas



Map 4. Walzem Homestead with boundaries in red and parcel boundaries in white.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas



Map 5. Walzem Homestead with boundaries in red, parcel boundaries in white, contributing resources in black, and non-contributing resources in blue.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas



Map 6. Inset of Walzem Homestead showing the cluster of resources located in the southern part of the property.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

Figures

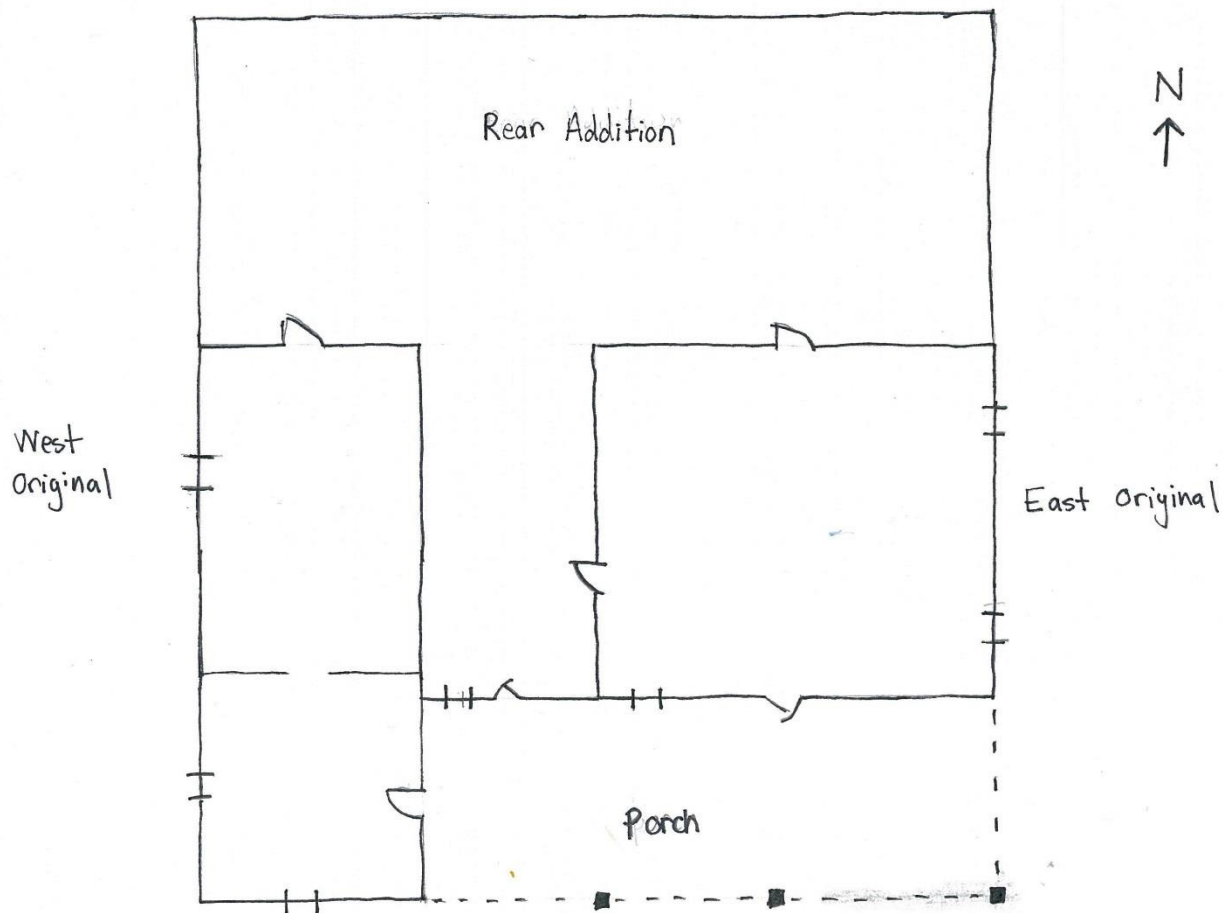


Figure 1. Rough sketch of the floor plan of the Walzem House. Source: HHM.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Figure 2. Photographs of north rear wall of Walzem house. Photograph on left shows center passage way enclosed with horizontal wood boards prior rehab work. Photograph on right shows center passage way enclosed with board-and-batten after rehab work. With the construction of the rear addition, the board-and-batten was removed and the passage way is now open. Source: Alton Rahe.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Figure 3. Front façade of the barn on the Rockwall Ranch on Shoenthal Road in Comal County. Source: HHM.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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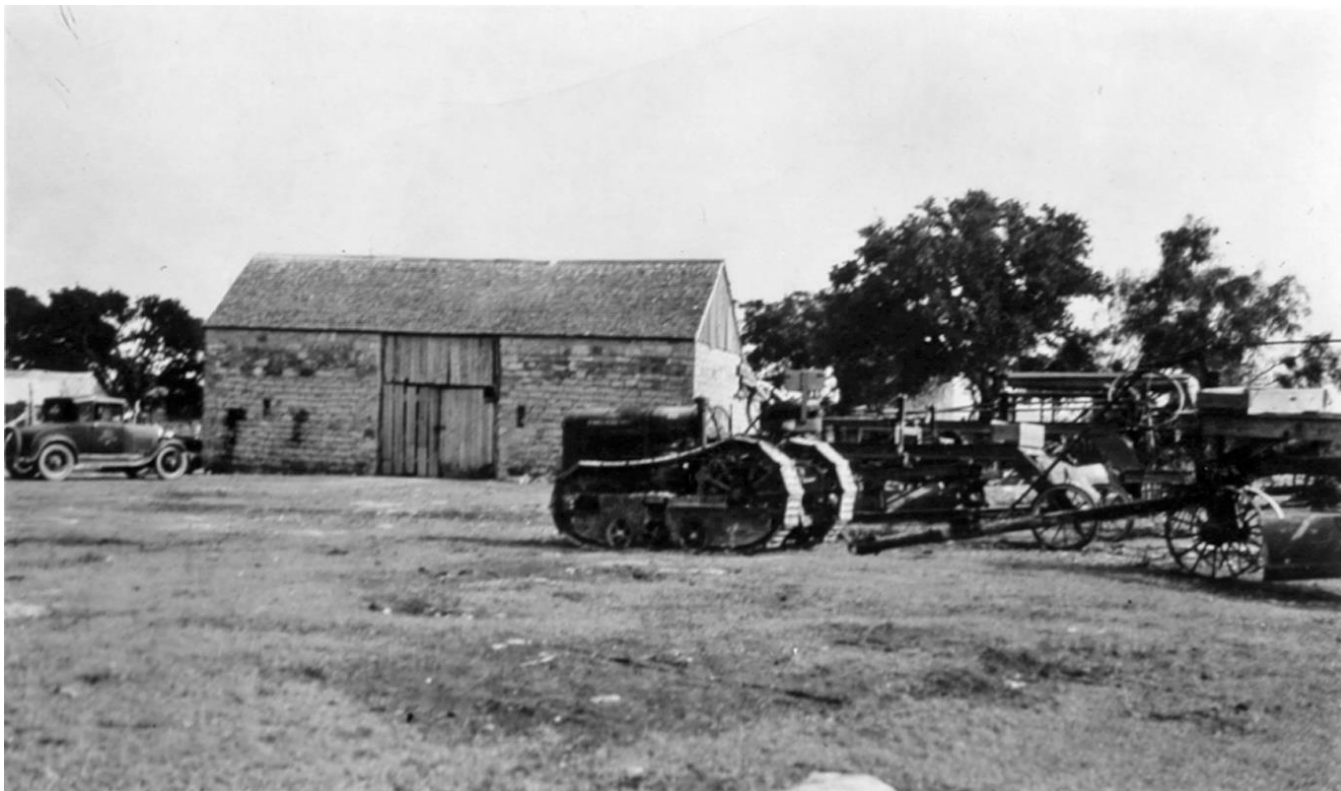


Figure 4. Historic photograph of barn in Johnson City, Texas from around 1930. At the time of the photograph, the barn served as the Blanco County Warehouse for the Texas Highway Department. Source: Texas Department of Transportation, Photo Library.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Figure 5. Photograph of barn on Rockwall Ranch on Schoenthal Road in Comal County. The partial wall shown at entrance is identical to the partial wall in the same location in the Walzem barn. Source: HHM.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Figure 6. Photograph from 2001 showing the side west façade. Notice the north and side sides separating from one another. Source: Alton Rahe.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

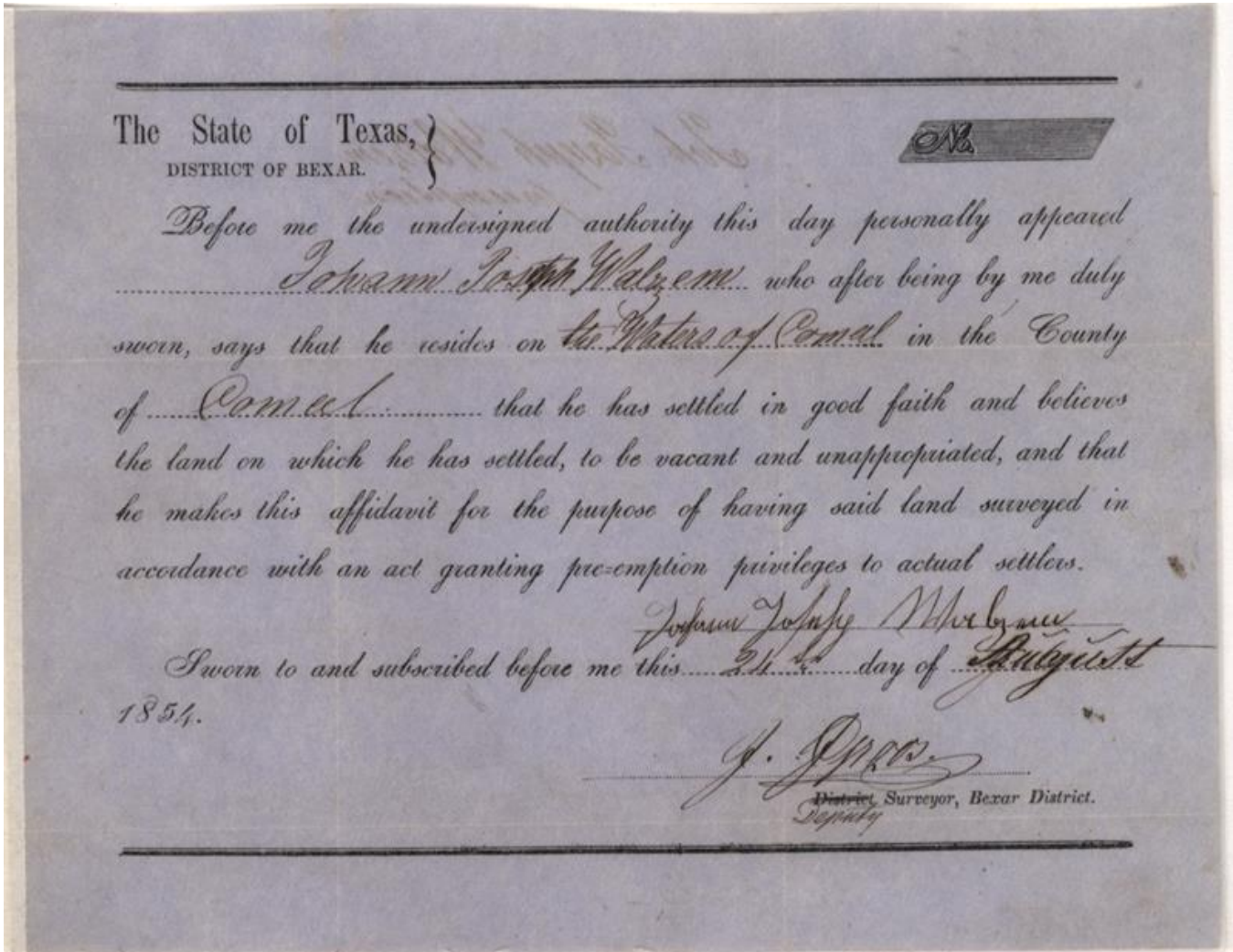


Figure 7. Preemption land grant for Johann Walzem from 1854. Source: Texas General Land Office.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

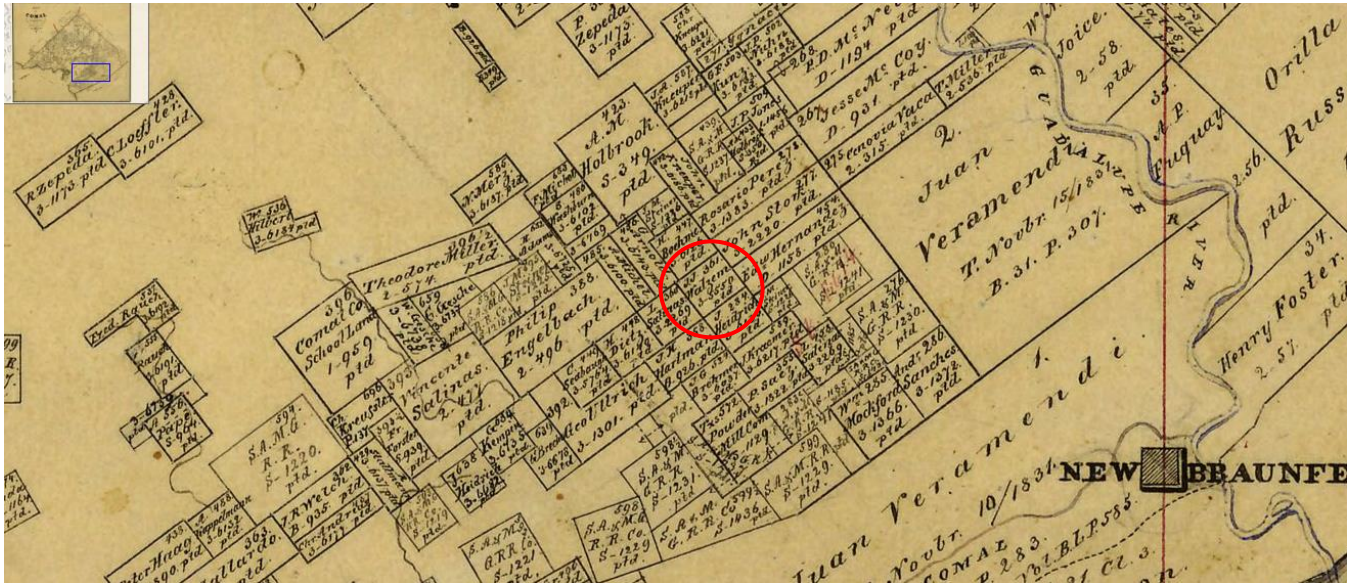


Figure 8. 1862 Comal County map showing land grants. Johann Walzem's original 160 acre tract (Survey 361) is circled in red. Source: Texas General Land Office.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

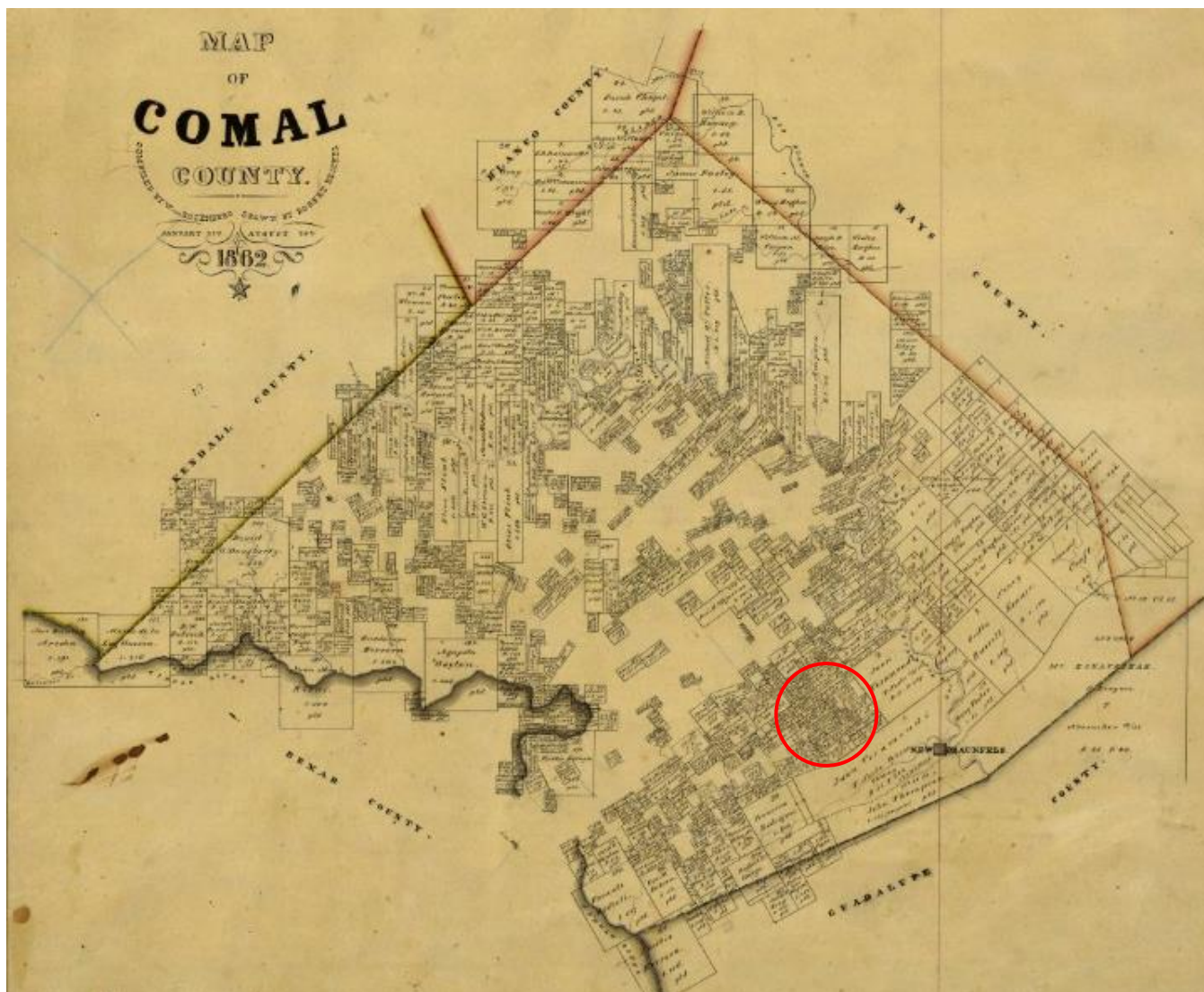


Figure 9. 1862 Comal County map showing land grants. The area around Mission Valley is circled in red. Notice the larger tracts of land along the county borders. Source: Texas General Land Office.



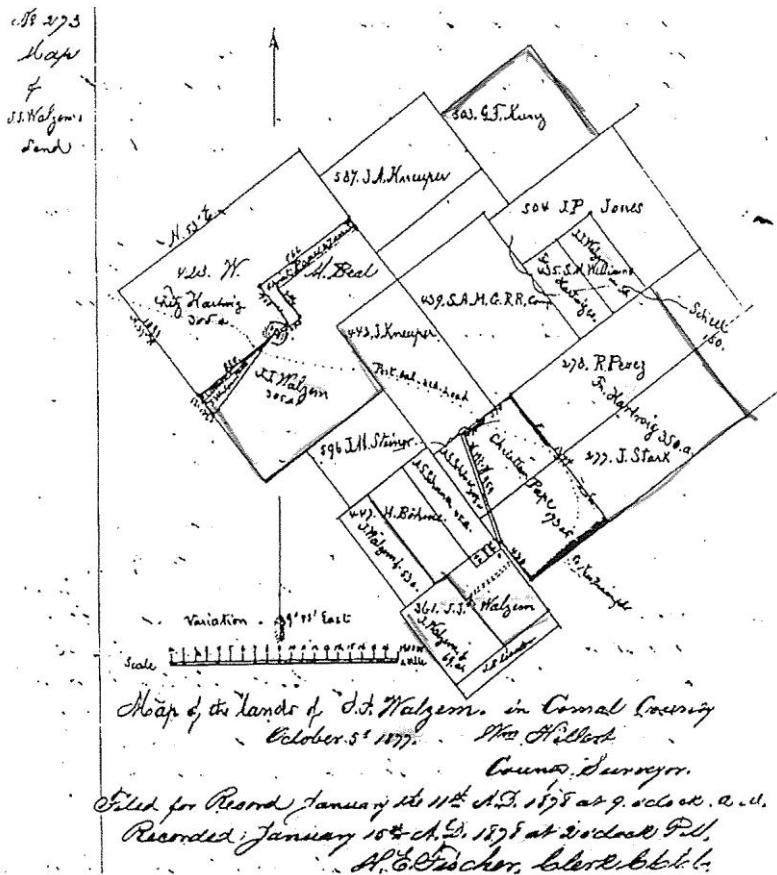
Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Figure 10. Photograph of the Walzem Chapel. Source: Comal County Historical Commission.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas



Map of the lands of J. J. Walzem recorded in Book N, p 505, at the Comal County Deed Records, drawn by Wilhelm Hillert in October of 1877.

Figure 11. Map showing Walzem's land holdings in 1877. Source: Alton Rahe, from the Comal County Deed Records.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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**Photographs**



Photo No. 1. View of primitive dirt drive along southern boundary of property, view facing east.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 2. View of barn (RIDN 81039 b) and non-contributing barn (RIDN 81039 c), showing relationship to one another, view facing southwest.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 3. View of rock fencing (RIDN 81039 g) and wood and wire fencing (RIDN 81039 h) separating the barns and the house, view facing southwest.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 4. View of fenced-in domestic area, view facing north.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 5. View of stock tank (RIDN 81039 i) southeast of house, view facing south.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 6. View of barbed wire and split-wood post fencing separating building clusters from fields, view facing northwest.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 7. View of fields and wooded area in northern part of the property, view facing northeast.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 8. Oblique of house (RIDN 81039 a), view facing northeast



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 9. Side east façade of house (RIDN 81039 a) showing rubble stone, view facing west.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 10. Side west façade of house (RIDN 81039 a) show cut limestone, view facing east.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 11. View showing chamfered porch columns on house (RIDN 81039 a), view facing east.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 12. View showing floor mortis at porch on house (RIDN 81039 a), view facing northeast.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 13. Oblique view of rear house (RIDN 81039 a) addition, view facing southeast.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 14. View of interior door to rear addition of house (RIDN 81039 a). Door was originally a window, view facing north.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 15. Ceiling beams in eastern room of house (RIDN 81039 a), view facing east.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 16. Stove and stone hearth in eastern room of house (RIDN 81039 a), view facing northeast.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 17. View of enclosed breezeway with opening to rear addition and door onto front porch of house (RIDN 81039 a), view facing south.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 18. View of door connecting the two western rooms in the house (RIDN 81039 a), view facing south.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 19. Front façade of barn (RIDN 81039 b), view facing southeast.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 20. Oblique view of barn (RIDN 81039 b), view facing southeast.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 21. Oblique view of rear south façade of barn (RIDN 81039 b), view facing northwest.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 22. View of root cellar in barn (RIDN 81039 b) and curved stairway, view facing west.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 23. View of root cellar in barn (RIDN 81039 b), view facing east.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 24. Side east façade of barn (RIDN 81039 b) showing line down the middle, view facing west.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 25. Partial stone wall at entrance of barn (RIDN 81039 b), view facing northeast.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 26. Partial stone wall in middle of barn (RIDN 81039 b), view facing southwest.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 27. View of stone cistern by house (RIDN 81039 e), view facing northwest.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 28. View of stone trough (RIDN 81039 f), view facing southeast.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 29. View of outhouse (RIDN 81039 d), view facing north.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 30. View of rock fence (RIDN 81039 g) in front of and to the side of the house, view facing east.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 31. View of rock fence (RIDN 81039 g) in front of barn, view facing west.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 32. View of rock fence (RIDN 81039 g) separating domestic area from barns, view to the north.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 33. View of wood and wire fence (RIDN 81039 h) separating the area in front of the house from the barns, view facing southwest.

Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 34. View of stock tank (RIDN 81039 i) southeast of house, view facing north.



Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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Photo No. 35. Oblique view of non-contributing barn (RIDN 81039 c), view facing northwest.





































































































HDX  
20 ft x 100 ft  
Black Plastic

Leave it  
Mon  
Two choices  
Take it  
or  
Leave it











































UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Walzem Homestead

Multiple Name: \_\_\_\_\_

State & County: TEXAS, Comal

Date Received: 12/19/2017      Date of Pending List: 1/29/2018      Date of 16th Day: 2/13/2018      Date of 45th Day: 2/2/2018      Date of Weekly List: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference number: SG100002086

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

- |                                       |  |   |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal       | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape       | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver       | <input type="checkbox"/> National        | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other        | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP             | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years         |
|                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG             |   |

Accept       Return       Reject      2/2/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: The Walzem Homestead is locally significant under National Register Criteria A and C in the areas of Agriculture, Exploration/Settlement, and Architecture. The property is an excellent local representation of an early German-immigrant homestead in Comal County. Developed starting in 1854 during the area's initial European settlement period, the farm buildings and landscape illustrate the typical patterns of mid-nineteenth century agricultural development in the region, including distinctive German-associated stone construction.

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept NR Criteria A and C

Reviewer Paul Lusignan      Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2229      Date 2/2/2018

DOCUMENTATION:      see attached comments : No      see attached SLR : **Yes**

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



**TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION**  
*real places telling real stories*



**TO:** Edson Beall  
 National Register of Historic Places  
 Mail Stop 7228  
 1849 C St, NW  
 Washington, D.C. 20240

**From:** Mark Wolfe, SHPO  
 Texas Historical Commission

**RE:** Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

**DATE:** December 11, 2017

The following materials are submitted:

X	Original National Register of Historic Places form on disk. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the National Register of Historic Places nomination of Walzem Homestead, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas
	Resubmitted nomination.
X	Original NRHP signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
	Multiple Property Documentation form on disk.
	Resubmitted form.
	Original MPDF signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
X	CD with TIFF photograph files, KMZ files, and nomination PDF
	Correspondence.

**COMMENTS:**

- SHPO requests substantive review (cover letter from SHPO attached)
- The enclosed owner objections (do ) (do not ) constitute a majority of property owners
- Other:

