When the Texas Medical Association was founded in 1853, George Capples, MD, of Scotland became the first elected president. Foreign-born and foreign-educated physicians have been contributing to Texas medicine ever since.

Now known as International Medical Graduates (IMGs), these are physicians who graduated from medical schools outside the United States. In 2006, IMGs accounted for one of every five physicians in Texas. They are on the rolls in 99 of 125 county medical societies. The history of medicine in Texas, and, indeed, the history of TMA, is also the history of IMGs.

To read about more IMGs who have contributed so much to Texas medicine, go to the TMA Web site at www.texmed.org.

All images and items portrayed are from the TMA collection unless otherwise identified.

### Physicians Come to Texas From Around the World

#### 1845-91

Statehood in 1845 made Texas yet another destination for Western Europeans seeking refuge from political unrest, overcrowding, or crop failures. The Civil War (1860-65) briefly slowed the influx. By 1880, annual immigration to the United States and Canada reached a peak of more than 20 million Texas residents.

#### 1892-1945

Ellis Island opened in New York harbor in 1892. The 1900 census showed less than 6 percent of 3 million Texas residents to be foreign-born, mostly from Germany and Mexico. The first large wave of Latin American immigrants crossed the Texas border to escape the Mexican Revolution of 1910. World War I created upheavals for Latin Americans, Eastern Europeans, Southeast Asians, and Africans. The U.S. immigration policies of the 1920s limited immigration. In the 1930s, the Mexican Revolution and the Great Depression led millions to flee Mexico.

#### 1946-91

Cold War (1945-91) turbulence scattered Latin Americans, Eastern Europeans, Southeast Asians, Africans, and Middle Easterners. The U.S. J-1 Visa program, introduced in 1948, allowed foreign-born professionals to receive advanced training in the United States. Many stayed, and in 1956 the American Medical Association and others created the International Medical Graduate (IMG) system. In 1985-96 Congress upped visa availability for targeted professions. More IMGs from underdeveloped countries applied.

#### 1992-2005

The break-up of the Soviet Union, changes in the licensing exam, and new laws targeting needed professions dramatically increased the IMG population. In response, AAMA and TMA established IMG membership sections within their organizations and programs. The 2000 census shows more than 20 million Texas residents. Almost 14 percent are foreign-born, primarily from Latin America. In 2006, Texas ranked sixth among the states with 10,478 IMGs.