

Rare Books for November 30, 2008
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I am always in the process of completing some project or several projects. In addition to sorting out Mr. Harrison's files, I am attempting to convert my thesis into a manuscript for publication. This morning I was frantically trying to find the date the Congress of the Republic of Texas repealed the 1841 Land Act. I didn't find that; but I did find a few books that will be very helpful to both history and genealogy researchers.

The first book I picked up was *Republic of Texas Second Class Headright: March 2, 1836 – October 1, 1837* compiled by Benjamin F. Purl in 1904 and transcribed by Alma Nettie Wilson Barnes in 1874. Anyone who was able to prove that he or she arrived in Texas during this time period was given land at no expense except surveying and registering the land certificate. The young republic gave 1,280 acres to heads of households and 640 to single men. Mrs. Barnes transcribed and checked each of Mr. Purl's land entries with records at the Texas General Land Office. Her work includes the name of the original grantee, the county in which the land was located at that time, the certificate number, amount of land given, land district and file number. This is valuable information for those trying to gain entry into Sons of the Republic of Texas or Daughters of the Republic of Texas.

Another book I highly recommend is the 1965 *Cracker Barrel Chronicles: A Bibliography of Texas Town and County Histories* by John H. Jenkins. The author very succinctly states his thesis with these words, "Slipshod writing by historians usually involves, at least in part, insufficient use of source materials." Thus stated, Jenkins compiled a list of books, articles, theses and dissertations available in 1965 for each of

the 254 counties in the state. There are seventeen listings for Hunt County. Seven are available in the Northeast Texas History and Genealogy Center, three are available at Texas A&M University-Commerce, one at SMU, and one at the University of Texas. The other five we probably find on-line or through another library.

The third book I found is somewhat of an oddity. Published by the Gammel-Statesman Publishing Company of Austin in 1903, *Yearbook for Texas: Party Conventions, Election Returns, Inauguration of Governor Lanham and Lieutenant-Governor Neal, Legislative Work, Public Officials and Current Reports of Departments and State Institutions, Important Events, Obituaries of Distinguished Dead, Industrial Development, Statistics, Biographical Sketches, and Historical Manuscripts Never Before Published* was compiled by C. W. Raines, State Librarian. Something like an almanac with out advertising, the volume includes all the materials in the title and then some. Typical of the entries is “Unveiling Ceremonies of the Confederate Monument in the Capitol Grounds.” A parade preceded the unveiling with the order of the parade participants proudly listed. The program and a synopsis of speeches are included.

If your ancestor was somebody in Texas in 1902-1903, here is the place to look. If you want to know the names of fraternal organizations in Texas at the time, look here. And if you want to know what was happening in Texas, try looking in the *Yearbook of Texas*. Unfortunately, this is the only copy we have of any *Yearbook of Texas*. I suspect it wasn't a long-term project. And unfortunately, I still don't know when the 1841 Land Grant Act was repealed.