

After Slavery: Exercising the Rights of Citizenship in 19th-Century Texas by Carol Schlenk

Grade level: 7th (can be adapted for grades 4-8)

Subjects: Texas History and Geography

Time Required: 2 sessions of 45-60 minutes

Rationale or Purpose: Students will explore a variety of county government records to learn how Ransom Williams, an African American living in post-Civil War, Texas, began the transition to freedom by exercising the right to vote and own property. Students will work with partners to analyze a 19th-century primary source document, then create their own county government documents and answer questions about Ransom Williams and the functions of county government.

Materials: Access to Internet; Texas Beyond History (TBH) website (www.texasbeyondhistory.net/ransom/index.html) student computers (iPods, iPads, etc.); Interactive Whiteboard; Following documents (included):

- *1860 Slave Schedule*
- *1925 Property Plat Map*
- *Ransom Williams' Property Tax Record*
- *Texas Voter Registration Application*
- *Ransom Williams' Voter Registration Record 1867*
- *Mark & Brand Record*
- *Analyzing A Written Primary Source Document*
- *Photo of Ransom Williams' horse branding iron*
- *Mark & Brand Application Form* (also available at www.tscrabrands.com/)
- *Ransom Williams: A Nineteenth-Century Travis County Citizen form*

Objectives:

- To learn about the role of county government in the lives of Texans, past and present
- To use technology
- To work cooperatively with partners

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS):

History

1A) Identify the major eras in Texas history, including Texas in the Civil War and Reconstruction.

5B) Analyze the political, economic, and social effects of the Civil War and Reconstruction in Texas.

6B) Identify significant individuals, events, and issues from Reconstruction through the beginning of the 20th century, including the development of the cattle industry.

Geography

8A) Create and interpret thematic maps, representing various aspects of Texas.

Government

15A) Describe the structure and functions of government at the county level

Social Studies Skills

21) Apply critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired through established research methodologies from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology.

21A) Use valid primary and secondary sources to acquire information about Texas.

22) The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms.

23) The student uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings.

Citizenship

16B) The student explains and analyzes civic responsibilities of Texas citizens and the importance of civic participation.

Technology Applications

2) The student acquires, analyzes, and manages content from digital resources.

5) The student practices safe, responsible, legal, and ethical behavior while using technology tools and resources.

NOTE: Prior to beginning activity, teacher will:

- Familiarize students with all necessary technology tools and applications.
- Print out copies of: *Analyzing A Written Primary Source Document* form and *Ransom Williams: A Nineteenth-Century Travis County Citizen* form.
- Review history of slavery and emancipation in Texas.

Directions for the teacher:

Day 1

Step 1: Display the Web exhibit (www.texasbeyondhistory.net/ransom/index.html) and briefly go over main titles and pictures with students. Explain that as they learn about the life of Ransom Williams, an African-American freedman living in post-Civil War Texas, they will discover how the functions of his county government helped him succeed as a citizen and property owner.

Step 2: Display the *1860 Slave Schedule*. This document illustrates how enslaved African Americans were listed only by age, gender, and color on U.S. Census Rolls. Point to the names of the slave owners, and show that the names of the slaves themselves were not given, only a number and description. After emancipation, most former slaves had to establish a legal identity of their own.

Step 3: Display the Travis County *1925 Property Plat Map*. Explain that during slavery, African Americans themselves were owned as property. After slavery, freedmen like Ransom Williams managed to buy their own land. To prove ownership of his land, he registered his property deed at his county courthouse. This plat is one county record of Ransom Williams' land ownership.

Step 4: Display Ransom Williams' Property Tax Record. Point out that this document recorded William's legal ownership of his land, horses, and wagon as well as his property's value.

Step 5: Display the *Texas Voter Registration Application* (included and available on your county website). Point out that all Texas voters must register to vote and that in most Texas counties, the County Tax Assessor-Collector is also the County Voter Registrar. Briefly go over the application questions aloud with students. Ask why so much information is required of voter registrants.

Step 6: Display the *Ransom Williams' Voter Registration* document. Explain that as slaves, African Americans could not vote or hold office. Becoming a registered voter gave Ransom Williams a legal identity that he hadn't had as a slave.

Step 7: Display a copy of the *Mark & Brand Record* (or distribute downloaded copies to students). Explain that Ransom Williams owned mules and horses, and wanted to be able to prove that they were his.

Step 8: Have students choose a partner to work with. Distribute copies of *Analyzing A Written Primary Source Document* to students. Explain that a primary source document is one that was created at the time under study, (e.g., this document was created during the lifetime of Ransom Williams). Read the questions aloud with students and have them complete the form with their partners.

Step 9: Students turn in completed *Analyzing A Written Primary Source Document* forms to teacher.

Step 10: Display Ransom Williams' Horse Brand photo (included) and explain that it was one of thousands of artifacts found on the Williams' farmstead site. Point out that this brand was most likely a discard, as it is backwards (the shank was on the wrong side) and it doesn't display the "A" shown on his brand application. The complete brand was registered at Williams' county courthouse.

Step 11: Ask students to create a working definition of the word *ownership*. Then have them make a list of everything they, themselves, own. Ask them how they

can prove ownership of each of their belongings. Point out that proving ownership of items can be difficult and in order to prove ownership of our vehicles, homes, and properties, we must register them with the government and pay taxes on them.

Day 2

Step 1: Have students pair up again with their partners.

Step 2: Distribute copies of the *Ransom Williams: A Nineteenth-Century Travis County Citizen* form. Read the questions aloud with students. Have them use the Internet to help them answer the form's questions and complete their brand registration forms.

Step 3. Have students attach their *Ransom Williams: A Nineteenth Century Travis County Citizen* form to their downloaded and printed *Mark and Brand Record* and turn them in to the teacher.

Step 4: Ask students to volunteer examples of services that their county provides. Possible correct answers may include: birth, marriage, and death records; land deeds and deed transfers; property tax and foreclosure records; livestock brand registrations; sheriff and sheriff deputies services; county court and jury information; child and adult protective services; automobile title transfers; etc.

Step 5: Explain that in the 19th century, county government was the most useful form of government to citizens because it directly influenced their everyday lives and was usually the closest government office to them geographically. Today, federal and state governments are important, too, but county governments continue to serve many vital functions.

Modifications: For students with specific learning needs or IEPs, have step-by-step instructions for the computer and all necessary applications available and allow more time for completing forms, if necessary.

Student Products:

- Completed *Analyzing A Written Primary Source Document* form
- Completed *Mark & Brand Application* form
- Completed *Ransom Williams: A Nineteenth Century Travis County Citizen* form

Assessment:

- Completed *Analyzing A Written Primary Source Document* form
- Completed *Mark & Brand Application Form*
- Completed *Ransom Williams: A Nineteenth Century Travis County Citizen* form

Extension Activity:

Have students play *Counties Work*, an interactive game about county governments

<http://www.icivics.org/games/counties-work>

Related Websites:

National Association of Counties - interactive map

<http://www.naco.org/Counties/Pages/FindACounty.aspx>

Texas 4-H Organization

<http://texas4-h.tamu.edu/>

Texas Secretary of State - voting information

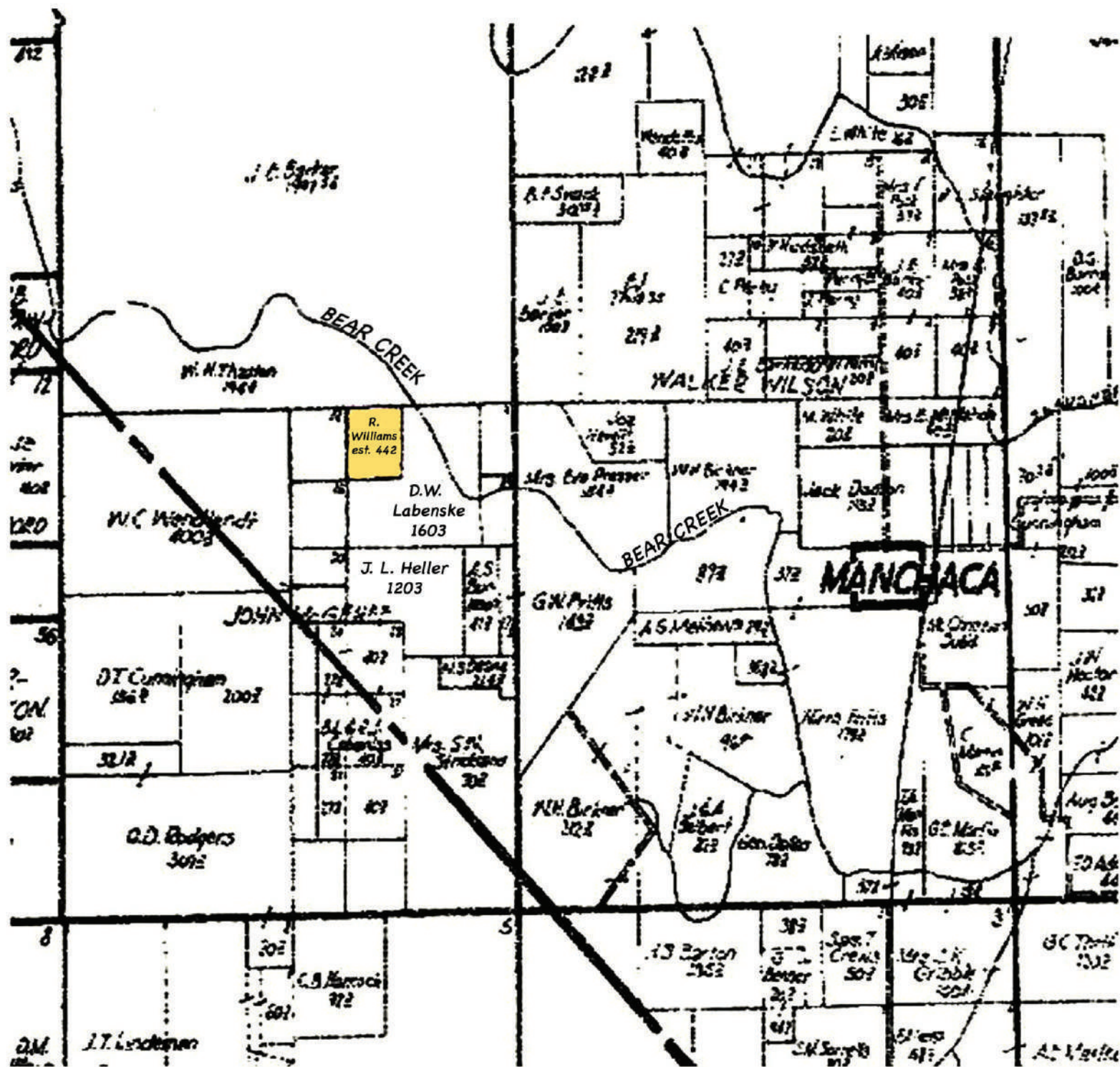
<http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/pamphlets/largepamp.shtml>

Texas Historical Commission - Ransom Williams Farmstead

<http://www.preservationconnection.com/?p=1800>

SCHEDULE 2.—Slave Inhabitants in Sub Division No 1 in the County of Hay State
of Texas, enumerated by me, on the 11th day of June, 1860. J H Cook Ass't Marshal.

| 1 | NAMES OF SLAVE OWNERS. | 2 Number of Slaves. | 3 DESCRIPTION. | | | 6 Fugitives from the State. | 7 Number manumitted. | 8 Deaf & dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic. | 9 No. of Slave houses. | 1 | NAMES OF SLAVE OWNERS. | 2 Number of Slaves. | 3 DESCRIPTION. | | | 6 Fugitives from the State. | 7 Number manumitted. | 8 Deaf & dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic. | 9 No. of Slave houses. |
|----|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------|--------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|--|---------------------------|---|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------|--------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| | | | 4 Age. | 5 Sex. | Color. | | | | | | | | 4 Age. | 5 Sex. | Color. | | | | |
| 1 | <u>J M Branton</u> | 1 | 27 | F | B | | | | | 1 | <u>W W Fintress</u> | 1 | 25 | F | B | | | | |
| 2 | | 1 | 1 | " | " | | | | | | | 1 | 23 | M | " | | | | |
| 3 | | 1 | 1 | " | " | | | | | | | 1 | 19 | F | " | | | | |
| 4 | <u>J W Branton</u> | 1 | 42 | " | " | | | | 1 | | | 1 | 18 | M | M | | | | |
| 5 | | 1 | 19 | M | " | | | | | | | 1 | 16 | F | B | | | | |
| 6 | | 1 | 14 | " | M | | | | | | | 1 | 13 | " | " | | | | |
| 7 | | 1 | 14 | F | " | | | | | | | 1 | 9 | M | " | | | | |
| 8 | <u>Nancy Brown</u> | 1 | 80 | M | B | | | | 5 | | | 1 | 3 | F | M | | | | |
| 9 | | 1 | 40 | " | M | | | | | | | 1 | 1/2 | " | " | | | | |
| 10 | | 1 | 27 | " | B | | | | | | <u>Daniel Mayes</u> | 1 | 13 | M | M | | | | 1 |



Larva

nd

436 1045

Texas Voter Registration Application

For Official Use Only

Prescribed by the Office of the Secretary of State

VR17.2011E.13

Please complete sections by printing LEGIBLY. If you have any questions about how to fill out this application, please call your local voter registrar.

1 These Questions Must Be Completed Before Proceeding

Check one

☐

New Application

☐

Change of Address, Name,
or Other Information

☐

Request for a Replacement Card

Are you a United States Citizen?

☐

Yes

☐

No

Will you be 18 years of age on or before election day?

☐

Yes

☐

No

If you checked 'No' in response to either of the above, do not complete this form.

Are you interested in serving as an election worker?

☐

Yes

☐

No

| | | | |
|---|------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 2 Last Name Include Suffix if any (Jr, Sr, III) | First Name | Middle Name (If any) | Former Name (if any) |
|---|------------|-------------------------|----------------------|

| | | |
|---|--------|----------|
| 3 Residence Address: Street Address and Apartment Number. If none, describe where you live. (Do not include P.O. Box, Rural Rt. or Business Address) | City | TEXAS |
| | County | Zip Code |

| | | |
|---|------|----------|
| 4 Mailing Address: Street Address and Apartment Number. (If mail cannot be delivered to your residence address.) | City | State |
| | | Zip Code |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| 5 Date of Birth: (mm/dd/yyyy) □□/□□/□□□□ | 6 Gender (Optional) <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female | 7 Telephone Number (Optional) Include Area Code (□□□)□□□-□□□□ |
|--|--|--|

| | |
|--|---|
| 8 Texas Driver's License No. or Texas Personal I.D. No. (Issued by the Department of Public Safety) □□□□□□□□ <input type="checkbox"/> I have not been issued a Texas Driver's License/Personal Identification Number or Social Security Number. | If no Texas Driver's License or Personal Identification, give last 4 digits of your Social Security Number XXX-XX-□□□□ |
|--|---|

9 I understand that giving false information to procure a voter registration is perjury, and a crime under state and federal law. Conviction of this crime may result in imprisonment up to 180 days, a fine up to \$2,000, or both. Please read all three statements to affirm before signing.

- I am a resident of this county and a U.S. citizen;
- I have not been finally convicted of a felony, or if a felon, I have completed all of my punishment including any term of incarceration, parole, supervision, period of probation, or I have been pardoned; and
- I have not been determined by a final judgment of a court exercising probate jurisdiction to be totally mentally incapacitated or partially mentally incapacitated without the right to vote.

X

Date

/ /

Signature of Applicant or Agent and Relationship to Applicant or Printed Name of Applicant if Signed by Witness and Date.

Hays

| DATE OF REGISTRY. | NAMES | PLACE OF RESIDENCE | PRECINCT. | NATIVE | SIGNATURE OF DIRECTOR. | GENERAL REMARKS |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| July 26 | William J. Apple | Hays County | S. 2 | Female Jim Ford | W. J. Apple | |
| 27 | George W. Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 28 | John W. Apple | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 29 | James Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 30 | John Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 31 | James Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 32 | William Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 33 | John Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 34 | James Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 35 | William Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 36 | John Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 37 | James Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 38 | William Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 39 | John Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 40 | James Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 41 | William Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 42 | John Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 43 | James Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 44 | William Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 45 | John Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 46 | James Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 47 | William Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 48 | John Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 49 | James Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 50 | William Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 51 | John Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 52 | James Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 53 | William Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 54 | John Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 55 | James Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 56 | William Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 57 | John Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 58 | James Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 59 | William Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 60 | John Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 61 | James Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 62 | William Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 63 | John Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 64 | James Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 65 | William Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 66 | John Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 67 | James Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 68 | William Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 69 | John Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 70 | James Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 71 | William Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 72 | John Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 73 | James Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 74 | William Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |
| 75 | John Thompson | | | Male | W. J. Apple | |

| NUMBER. | Date of Registration. | Name of Owner. | RESIDENCE. | To whom Sold, Residence and Remarks. | MARKS & BRANDS | | PLACE BRAND |
|---------|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------|--|----------------|---------|---------------------|
| | | | | | Marks. | Brands. | |
| 105 | June 30, 1870 | White Louis | Tex. | Cancelled at request of owner 22 Aug 74 For value received I transfer this mark W hand & Louis Gorman No. 1787. Nathan & Theod. | | LW | |
| 106 | Nov. 19, 1870 | Wood Nathan | | | | N | |
| 107 | Nov. 22, 1870 | Wall James | | | | OO | |
| 108 | Nov. 25, 1870 | Washington James | | | | JJ | |
| 109 | Sept. 10, 1873 | Washington Geo. est | | | | OOO | |
| 110 | May 3, 1871 | Wallace W. A. | | | | W | |
| 111 | June 3, 1871 | Watrous Henry | | | | J | |
| 112 | June 5, 1871 | Wingard Rhode John L. | | | | CW | |
| 113 | July 1, 1871 | Waldron Mildred | | | | E | Landco before this. |
| 114 | Oct. 21, 1871 | Whelan G. E. & Co. Delia | | | | E | |
| 115 | Nov. 6, 1871 | Whipple Sarah E. Mrs | | | | E | |
| 116 | Nov. 25, 1871 | Wells H. B. | | | | WLS | |
| 117 | May 10, 1872 | Williams Mike | | | | J | |
| 118 | Apr. 4, 1872 | Williams Quinson | | Horse brand | | RA | |
| 119 | May 23, 1873 | Wilburn D. L. | | | | FW | |
| 120 | July 24, 1872 | Woody Jordan R. | | | | 8 | |
| 121 | Apr. 10, 1872 | Wilson Albert | | | | AW | |
| 122 | June 1, 1872 | Wilford J. | | | | U | |
| 123 | Apr. 27, 1872 | Wilson Sam | | | | 33 | |
| 124 | Apr. 30, 1872 | Wade J. A. | | | | JIM | with. |
| 125 | Dec. 4, 1872 | Waddell J. D. | | | | IZ | |
| 126 | July 26, 1873 | Wandee Joseph | | Cancelled & discontinued Sept. 2d, 1874 | | O | only |
| 127 | Dec. 3, 1873 | Washington Richard | | | | RC | |
| 128 | Dec. 18, 1873 | Whitt Jesse | | | | J | |
| 129 | Mar. 24, 1874 | Wilson J. P. | | | | PW | |
| 130 | May 11, 1874 | Womack Jesse | | | | 2 | right |

Analyzing A Written Primary Source Document

1. TYPE OF DOCUMENT (Circle one):

Newspaper

Magazine

Advertisement

Letter

Telegram

Government Record

Census Report

Map

Calendar

2. UNIQUE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DOCUMENT (Circle one or more):

Interesting fonts

Information typed

Information hand-written

Dates

Drawings

Notations

3. What is the subject/purpose of the document?

4. Why would the information in this document need to be recorded?

5. What is the range of dates on this document?_____

6. On what date did Ransom Williams register his brand?_____

7. List two things this document tells you about life in Texas at the time it was written.

8. Write a question to Ransom Williams that is left unanswered in this document.

Photo of Branding Iron Fragment



MARK AND BRAND APPLICATION

THIS FORM MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE COUNTY CLERK IN THE COUNTY IN WHICH YOUR LIVESTOCK RESIDE

THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS APPLICATION IS AUGUST 31, 2011 TO AUGUST 31, 2021

Renewal of this Brand/Mark must be filed during the period August 31, 2011 to February 29, 2012

This form shall only be used to record a single brand or mark for one or more locations on an animal.

Please print or type information (* Required information):

The undersigned hereby makes application for the registration and recording of the following mark(s) and/or brand(s) by the County Clerk of * _____ County, Texas:

* New: ☐ Renewal: ☐ Release: ☐ Transfer: ☐

Contact Information:

* Owner/Agent: _____

Ranch/Business Name: _____

* Address: _____

* City: _____ * State: _____ * Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

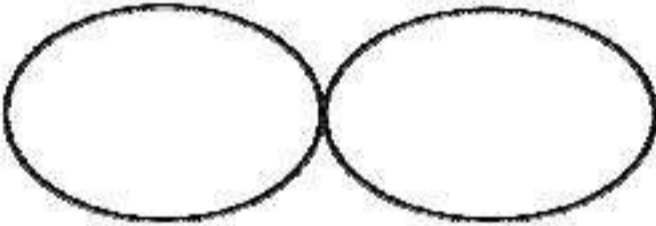
Brand/Mark Information: Male: ☐ Female: ☐

* Specie: Cattle: ☐ Horse: ☐ Swine: ☐ Sheep: ☐ Goat: ☐ Ear Marks Only: ☐

Volume/Book: _____ Page: _____ Cert#: _____

BRAND

MARK

| Draw the Brand <i>If multiple brands, please use additional application.</i> | Right Ear Left Ear |
|---|---|
| |  |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| * Brand Location on Animal: | <input type="checkbox"/> Left <input type="checkbox"/> Right | <input type="checkbox"/> All Locations <input type="checkbox"/> Shoulder <input type="checkbox"/> Side/Rib <input type="checkbox"/> Flank <input type="checkbox"/> Hip/Loin | <input type="checkbox"/> Thigh <input type="checkbox"/> Jaw/Face/Nose <input type="checkbox"/> Tail/Back <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | Electronic Chip#: _____ Tattoos: _____ |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|

* Brand Description: _____

* Signature of Applicant: _____ *Date: _____
(Owner/Agent)

By: _____ Deputy, _____ County Clerk
(Deputy's Name) (County Clerk's Name)



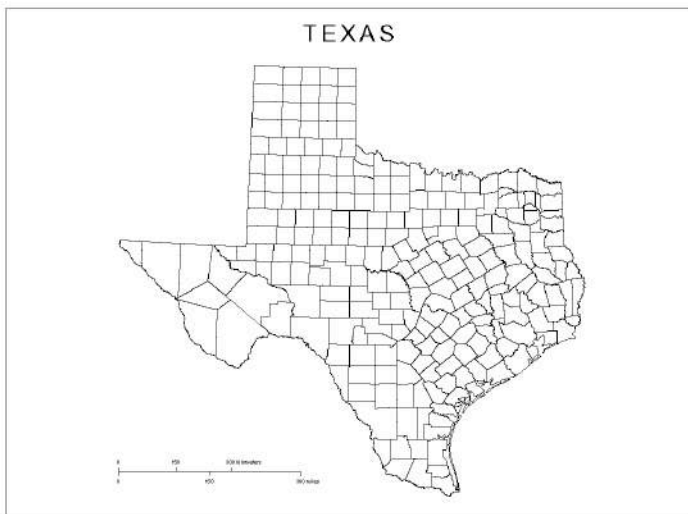
Ransom Williams: A Nineteenth-Century Travis County Citizen

In 1872, Ransom Williams had to travel approximately 13 miles by horse or wagon (which would have taken the better part of a day) from where he lived near Manchaca, Texas to the Travis County courthouse in Austin, Texas, to register his horse brand and take care of other county business. Color Travis County red on the map below.

Download and print out a current brand registration form at <http://www.tscrabrands.com/> and use information on that website to help you design a brand and complete the form.

Completed registration forms would have to be taken to the courthouse in your county. What county do you live in?

Use the online map at <http://geology.com/county-map/texas.shtml> to locate your county and county seat. Color your county green on the map below. If you live in Travis County, draw a blue circle around it on the map.



Each of Texas' 254 counties has a county seat, a town or city where the county courthouse is located and where county business is conducted. In what town or city is your county seat?

Search the Web for your official county website. On it, find five services your county provides and list them below. Draw a star by any services that would not have been available to Ransom Williams in the 1800s.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.