



The Daughters of the Republic of Texas , TEXAS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mirabeau B. Lamar Day, A Salute to Texas' Father of Education

January 26 is Mirabeau B. Lamar Day, a day to salute the Father of Education in Texas. On that date in 1839, the Republic of Texas Congress passed The Education Act, setting aside land for public schools. It was President Mirabeau B. Lamar, second President of the Republic of Texas from 1838-1841, who successfully argued the importance of public education, and proposed the first actions that laid the foundation for a public school system in Texas. His accomplishments earned him the title of Father of Education in Texas.

While the Texas Constitution of 1836 had addressed the duty of Congress to provide, by law, for a general system of education, no laws had been enacted. Lamar was determined to follow through with legislation, and made an innovative proposal: to establish public education with land endowments. Why land? The reason was simple. The Republic of Texas lacked hard cash, but its public domain lands were immense and viewed as sources of great wealth. Before the public lands were exhausted at the end of the nineteenth century, millions of acres had been endowed for the purpose of public education.

Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar, an important figure in Texas history, was born on August 16, 1798 in Georgia. A multi-talented individual, he had become an expert horseman, an accomplished fencer, a writer of poetry, a publisher, a painter, and a state senator before coming to Texas in 1835. He joined in the fight for Texas independence and served as a secretary of war and a vice-president before becoming the second

President of the Republic. After statehood, Lamar served the U.S. during the Mexican-American War, and later as Minister to Nicaragua and Costa Rica. Two months after returning from his diplomatic mission, Lamar died of a heart attack on December 19, 1859, at his home in Richmond, Texas. He was eulogized in the Texas Telegraph and Register as "a worthy man."

Monuments to Lamar are numerous across Texas, with many schools and streets named in his honor. Lamar County, in northeast Texas is named for him, and also the small community of Lamar in Aransas County. (*include your local monument information here*)

Mirabeau B. Lamar Day is one of twelve Texas Honor Days designated by The Daughters of the Republic of Texas. The D.R.T. is the oldest women's patriotic organization in Texas and is dedicated to the preservation and education of Texas history. For more information on Mirabeau B. Lamar, Texas Honor Days, and the work of the D.R.T., please visit the website at www.drinfo.org

Sources: History of the University of Texas: Based on facts and records, by J. J. Lane, Henry Hutchings, State Printer, Austin, 1891. (Google eBook); History of Education in Texas by J. J. Lane, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1903 (Google eBook); Texas State Historical Association, Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/mnl01>; Texas Education Agency, Snapshot 2011 State Totals, <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us>; The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2012 Higher Education Almanac, <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/>; Pamphlets: Education. English. 1810-1906], Volume 12 (Google eBook); Daughters of the Republic of Texas, Texas Honor Days, Mirabeau B. Lamar Day, <http://www.drinfo.org/mirabeau-b-lamar>.