

SABINE COUNTY, TEXAS
The First One Hundred and Fifty Years
(1836-1986)

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by

Robert Cecil McDaniel

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11.13 COUNTY COMMISSIONERS PRIOR TO 1876.

The county commissioners prior to 1876 are shown below. They did not represent specific precincts as is the case beginning in 1876.

N. B. Alford.....	1867
C. Latham.....	1867
John Deweese	1867
J. H. Smith	1867
R. P. Sibley	1866
William Scurlock.....	1866
R. Harrold	1866
H. Pratt	1866
Appointments made by Andrew Hamilton, provisional governor of Texas.	
James L. Sweet	1865

(Did not qualify)

William Scurlock	1865
S. N. Beckcom	1865
H. C. Evans	1865

ELECTION OF AUGUST 6, 1864

R. H. Davis.....	1864
* Joel Halbert	1864
William Scurlock	1864
Allen Robertson	1864

ELECTION OF AUGUST 2, 1862

Alexander Harris.....	1862
John S. Goodrich.....	1862

(Resigned)

William McDaniel	1862
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ELECTION OF AUGUST 6, 1860

Robert Polley	1860
Isam Alford.....	1860
Alexander Harris.....	1860
John H. Smith.....	1860

ELECTION OF AUGUST 2, 1858

John H. Smith.....	1858
Alexander Harris.....	1858
George L. Clapp.....	1858
Liscomb Norvell.....	1858

ELECTION OF SEPTEMBER 6, 1856

George L. Clapp.....	1856
* Joel Halbert.....	1856
John B. Gaines.....	1856
Adam J. Bennett.....	1856

ELECTION OF AUGUST 7, 1854

R. A. Hankla.....	1854
Thomson Allen.....	1854
Robert H. Smith.....	1854
Robert Gellatly.....	1854

ELECTION OF AUGUST 2, 1852

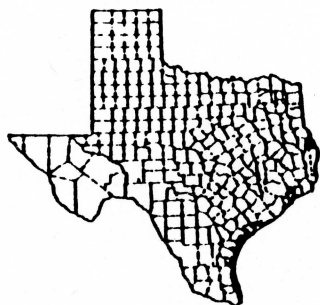
R. A. Hankla.....	1852
W. C. Weatherred.....	1852
M. D. Hines.....	1852
R. H. Smith.....	1852

ELECTION OF AUGUST 5, 1850

R. A. Hankla.....	1850
Major Smith.....	1850
Robert H. Smith.....	1850
Francis M. Weatherred.....	1850

ELECTION OF AUGUST 7, 1848

R. A. Hankla.....	1848
R. H. Smith.....	1848
B. F. Burroughs.....	1848
Major Smith.....	1848



CHAPTER XIII

Public Education In Sabine County

13.1 EARLY PRIVATE SCHOOLS. *Milam Masonic Institute* was established in the town of Milam under the sponsorship of the Jackson Lodge No. 35, A.F.&A.M., and was chartered by the state legislature on February 10, 1854. The first school session began on May 6 of that same year with a course of study consisting of three groups. Group one was spelling, reading, writing, and arithmetic. Group two consisted of English grammar, geography, history, and natural philosophy, and group three included geometry, botany, surveying, plain and fancy drawing, and civil engineering.

Professor Bertrand McCloskey was the principal; A. S. Kyle, president of the board of trustees; and Gideon A. Norford was board secretary. The school ceased in 1859.

Sabine Baptist College was opened in Milam during 1858 under the sponsorship of the Central Baptist Association. Due to the lack of students the school closed during the Civil War, but was reopened in 1868 under the direction of the Bethlehem Baptist Association, the Sabine Valley Baptist Association, and Mt. Zion and New Hope Baptists. The college was under the direction of W. C. Maund. Due to financial problems, the school closed permanently in 1870.

Sabine Valley University was chartered as a corporation by the State of Texas on June 7, 1879, with the purpose of founding, maintaining,

managing, and controlling an institution of learning to be located within one mile of the courthouse in the town of Hemphill, Sabine County, Texas. The corporation was established to exist for a period of twenty years. The original trustees were:

Hampton Pratt	Jas. T. Polley
W. M. Reese	W. T. Morris
J. J. Nash	M. J. Brown
* Joel Halbert	

The capital stock of the corporation was \$25,000.00, and was divided into one thousand shares of twenty-five dollars each.

The school was situated on a thirty acre site directly across the highway from the present-day Starr Funeral Home, and the site was probably obtained from G. W. Cartwright and John Brooks.

In a deed dated May 17, 1910 (and recorded in vol. 3, page 326 of the deed records of Sabine County), the last two surviving trustees of the university (W. M. Reese and W. T. Morris) conveyed the thirty acre tract which was still owned by the university, to the trustees of the Hemphill Common School District No. 1. The trustees of the common school district were J. A. Watson, N. A. Williams, and J. D. Fuller. Possibly the conveyance was in fact a gift inasmuch as the deed reads "for one dollar and other considerations."

During the time of its operation, the university was under the sponsorship of the Mt. Zion Baptist Association and the Bethlehem Baptist Association. Due to the competition from the emerging state free public school system, the university was forced to close, but the exact date is unknown.

On February 27, 1881, a weekly Hemphill newspaper entitled *Sabine Valley Record* listed the university board of trustees as follows:

W. J. Brown, president	G. W. Conn
A. J. Peddy	H. Pratt
A. J. Beckcom, secretary	W. T. Morris

Also in the same issue of the newspaper, a full page advertisement listed the courses to be taught commencing on the first Monday in

September 1881. Major courses listed included the following: a preparatory course to prepare students for college; a teachers course for those who desired to teach; a business course; an engineering course to fit students for every form of county surveying and for the ordinary duties of civil engineering; a scientific course; a classics course designed to fit students for the position of teaching ancient languages and for professional schools of law, medicine and theology. The tuition charges ranged from \$5.00 to \$7.50 per quarter.

13.2 LANDMARKS IN PUBLIC EDUCATION. From the beginning of the arrival of Anglo-Americans in the State of Texas, public education for their children was a primary concern. One of the major reasons that Texas desired independence from Mexico was the failure of the Mexican government to permit a system of public education. Some of the landmarks in the formation and growth of the present-day public school system are summarized below.

1839—COUNTY SCHOOL LAND

In 1839 the Congress of the Republic authorized the donation of three leagues of land to each county for the exclusive use in financing a public school system. The following year one additional league was added. The actual implementation of this act insofar as Sabine County was concerned did not occur until 1879. The details of the land granted to Sabine County are outlined in a succeeding paragraph.

1845—THE PRINCIPLE OF A FREE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

The policy of the state in the establishment of a statewide FREE public school system was first stated in the Constitution of 1845. Section 2, Article Ten of this document directed that as early as practicable the legislature should establish FREE public schools throughout the state. Also, there was a provision included which directed that not less than ten percent of the annual revenue of the state derived from taxation be set aside as a perpetual fund for the exclusive support of a public school system.