

Founding the Town of Montgomery, Texas

Montgomery, Texas was founded in two distinct phases. The two phases in the development of the town can be described for easier understanding as:

1. The Original Town Site Under the Hill.
and
2. The New Town Site on the Hill.

History of The Original Town Site Under the Hill

In 1831, William C. Clark purchased 600 acres of land from John Corner in the northwestern part of the John Corner League. In 1835, W. W. Shepperd purchased 200 acres of this land from William C. Clark. These 200 acres of land were part of the 600 acres Clark had purchased in 1831 and were located in the northwestern most corner of the John Corner League. These 200 acres were situated primarily along a low-lying creek. To the south, the 200 acres rose up along the side of a hill.

These 200 acres were located in the center of a settlement in Stephen F. Austin's Second Colony which had become known as the Lake Creek Settlement. W. W. Shepperd established his trading post/store at this location in 1835. W. W. Shepperd's store was commonly known as "the store of W. W. Shepperd on Lake Creek."

By 1837, Shepperd had decided that the population of the Lake Creek Settlement had grown sufficiently to justify the founding of a town. In July of 1837, W. W. Shepperd in association with John Wyatt Moody, the First Auditor of the Republic of Texas, founded the town of Montgomery. The name of the new town of Montgomery appeared in print for the first time in the July 8, 1837 edition of the *Telegraph and Texas Register* newspaper published in Houston, Texas. The creek that ran through the 200 acres the new town was located upon became known as Town Creek.

Five months after the town of Montgomery was founded, Sam Houston signed the Act creating Montgomery County on December 14, 1837. Montgomery County was named after the town of Montgomery. By February of 1838, the town of Montgomery had already begun to serve as the first county seat of Montgomery County.

History of The New Town Site On the Hill

For some reason, possibly the hazard of flooding, the location of the town of Montgomery under the hill and along the creek was not desirable. On February 26, 1838, W. W. Shepperd purchased 212 additional acres of land on the hill due south and adjoining the original town site. Shepperd purchased these 212 acres on the John Corner League from John Corner.

Three days later, on March 1, 1838, Shepperd donated an equal half undivided interest in 200 of the 212 acres of land on the hill to Montgomery County. The Montgomery County Commissioners' Court unanimously accepted the donation. The Montgomery County Commissioners' Court then voted to move "the place of the town" to this new location. By a stroke of the pen, the county seat jumped from the lower elevation down by the creek to the top of the hill. The town of Montgomery grew and flourished at this new location as the county seat of Montgomery County for many decades.