There were many officials mentioned in Minute Book A. In this listing we have noted when they appeared in the records in their official capacity; however, these dates do not necessarily cover their entire term of office but rather indicate their appearance at court in their official capacity. A better understanding of the significance of dates given can be obtained by using the index to follow these officials through the records.

BAILIFF

Bennett, Madison M.: Grand Jury, June term 1847; Grand Jury, December term 1847; Grand Jury, May term 1850.

Chenault, W. M.: Petit Jury, May term 1851

Chenault, Wesley M.: Grand Jury, November term 1850; Grand Jury, May term 1851; Grand Jury, November term 1851; Grand Jury, May term 1852; Grand Jury, May term 1853; Grand Jury, November term 1853; Grand Jury, May term 1854; Grand Jury, November term 1854

Cole, John P.: Petit Jury, May term 1851; Petit Jury, November term 1851

Glover, George W.: Grand Jury, December term 1846

Haught, Adam: Grand Jury, November term 1849

Hibbert, John: Grand Jury, November term 1848; Grand Jury, May term 1849

Horton, James: Petit Jury, May term 1854

Manning, Thomas: Grand Jury, May term 1848

McKenzie, Robert J.: Petit Jury, May term 1853; Petit Jury, November term 1853

COUNTY CLERK

Cochran, William M.: April 1847; October 1847; August 1848

Crockett, J. M.: August 1849 (deputy clerk for John W. Smith)

Harwood, Alexander W.: January 1850 (deputy clerk); September 1850; February 1851; August 1851; March 1852; September 1852; March 1855 (deputy clerk)

Peak, W. W.: September 1853; March 1854 (deputy clerk); May 1854 (deputy clerk); September 1854; March 1855

Smith, John W.: February 1849; August 1849

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Blake, Thomas W.: December 1846, appointed pro tem in place of McClarty.

Burford, Nat M.: November 1850; May 1851; November 1851; May 1852; May 1853; November 1853; May 1854

Cravens, John E.: November 1854

Fowler, Andrew Jackson: May 1848; November 1848; November 1849; May 1850

McClarty, John: December 1846 failed to appear.

Shedd, Thomas W.: June 1847; December 1847

DISTRICT CLERK

Browder, Edward C.: 23 September 1850 through 6 March 1855.

McCoy, John C.: Served from 7 December 1846 through 8 December 1846 and then resigned.

Pryor, Samuel B., M.D.: 8 December 1846 through 20 May 1850.

JUDGE OF DISTRICT COURT

Clark, Amos: June term 1847 through December term 1847.

Jewett, Henry J.: May term 1854.

Martin, Bennett H.: May term 1848 through May 1850; May term 1851 through May 1852.

Ochiltree, William B.: December term 1846

Reagan, John H.: May term 1853; November term 1853; November term 1854

Roberts, O. M.: November term 1850

TEXAS SUPREME COURT

CHIEF JUSTICE

Hemphill, John: 1 February 1850; 28 April 1852; 29 May 1854.

Thomas, John: 26 May 1848

CLERK
Green, Thomas: 26 May 1848; 1 February 1850; 28 April 1852; 29 May 1854

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE
The Clerk of the District Court, the County Clerk and the acting Justice of the Peace for Dallas county selected jurors by drawing the names of male property owners in good standing from box #1. The following men served as Justice of the Peace in this process.

Beard, Allen: 23 September 1850; 25 February 1851; 20 August 1851; 20 November 1851; 1 March 1852; 22 March 1854; 2 September 1854; 6 March 1855

Bennett, Hiram: 27 February 1849

Hord, William H.: 12 April 1847; 28 October 1847; 23 February 1848; 5 August 1848

Lanier, John: 15 September 1852; 21 February 1853; 16 September 1853

Lennard, William M.: 27 Aug 1849; 26 January 1850

Justice of the Peace mentioned in other capacities.
Beard, Allen: 19 May 1853
Porter, John: 12 May 1851
Stewart, W. T.: 15 November 1850

SHERIFF

Hawpe, T. C.: 11 November 1850; 12 May 1851; 10 November 1851; 10 May 1852; 9 May 1853; 7 November 1853; 8 May 1854

Haught, A. C.: 6 November 1854

Hewitt, John: 14 July 1846; 8 December 1846; 12 June 1847;
6 December 1847; died 7 January 1848 (recorded 24 May 1848)

Hewitt, Roland: 22 May 1848

Jenkins, William: 19 November 1848; 21 May 1849; 19 November
1849; 20 May 1850

DIVORCES MENTIONED IN MINUTE BOOK A

Atterberry, Nathan vs Sarah Atterberry

13 November 1854 divorce case submitted to jury & divorce granted

Ballard, Sara J. vs Nely N. Ballard
12 May 1854 petition for divorce filed & divorce granted

Beeman, James vs Catherine Beeman
13 November 1851 divorce hearing
14 November 1851 divorce granted

Bryan, Elizabeth vs James B. Bryan
9 May 1853 petition for divorce amended
20 May 1853 leave to amend petition for divorce
21 May 1853 motion for alimony
21 May 1853 property sequestered
7 November 1853 amended petition for divorce allowed
8 November 1853 date set for divorce trial
11 November 1853 parties announced they are ready for divorce trial
12 November 1853 case continued until next day of court
14 November 1853 property division defined
14 November 1853 divorce granted
16 November 1853 division of rent from properties approved

Carver, Mary Ann vs Solomon Carver
8 June 1847 petition for divorce filed
10 June 1847 divorce granted
10 June 1847 Solomon Carver & Eleanor Wilcox indicted for adultery
8 December 1847 suit for adultery abated by marriage of parties

Dalton, Charlotte vs Joseph N. Dalton
8 December 1846 divorce granted

Elkins, Smith vs America Elkins
19 May 1851 divorce case continued
11 November 1851 divorce case dismissed

Hewitt, A. J. vs Martha Hewitt
17 November 1851 petition for divorce filed & divorce granted

Hibbert, John B. vs Elizabeth Hibbert
11 May 1852 case continued
10 May 1853 divorce granted

Langford, Garrett vs Elizabeth Langford
7 November 1853 request to amend petition for divorce granted
8 November 1853 date set for divorce trial
16 May 1853 divorce case continued

10 Nov 1853 divorce granted

Pendleton, Sarah vs Robert Pendleton
7 June 1847 petition for divorce filed
8 June 1847 divorce granted

Pruitt, William A. vs Elizabeth Pruitt
17 November 1853 defendant not served in divorce suit & case continued
12 May 1854 petition for divorce filed & divorce granted

Underwood, Hannah vs Norman Underwood
23 November 1848 petition for divorce filed
22 May 1849 divorce granted

DEATHS SUGGESTED IN MINUTE BOOK A

The deaths of the following persons were suggested in the pages of Minute Book A. In Black's Law Dictionary, “suggested” is defined as a statement, formally entered on the record of some fact or circumstance which will materially affect the proceedings but which can not be pleaded. Thus if one of the parties dies after issue and before trial, his death will be suggested in the record.

The date given is the date the death was recorded in Minute Book A and means that the person had died by that date. In only one instance was the exact date of death written in the record; John Huit's actual death date was given as 7 January 1848.

Peter Apperson died before 10 May 1853.
--- Bush died before 22 May 1849.
William S. Cook died before 16 November 1850.
T. V. Griffin died before 12 May 1854.
A. G. Harris died before 7 November 1854.
John Hewitt died before 23 May 1847 (7 January 1848.)
R. H. Hibbert died before 18 May 1853.
John Johnston died before 23 May 1847.
William Latham died before 10 May 1852.
G. L. Leonard died before 7 November 1854.
James Macky died before 12 May 1852.
Joseph Mather died before 7 June 1847.
Cornelius McConroy died before 13 November 1854.
William Shelton died before 9 November 1853.
N. T. Stratton died before 12 May 1854 (mentioned twice.)

ITEMS OF INTEREST MENTIONED IN MINUTE BOOK A

BAILIFF — At the first sessions of court in December 1846 and June 1847, the bailiff was paid $1.25 per day of service, but by December 1847 his allowance rose to $1.50 per day which continued through this book to November 1854.

DISTRICT CLERK — At the first sessions of court in December 1846 and June 1847, the district clerk was paid $12.50 per year, and after that time he was allowed $50.00 for most years. Additionally, it was also recorded that he was paid very small amounts for extra services.

OFFICE RENT — Initially this expense was entered into Book A of District Court minutes, but ceased being recorded after 25 May 1850. Apparently after this time, this expense was recorded elsewhere, perhaps with the county treasurer's office. Rent was paid after the fact and recorded as $12.50 for the last six months and sometime $25.00 for the last twelve months.

SHERIFF — Initially he was paid $45.83 for twelve months services, later the amount allowed was $25.00 for six months or $50.00 for twelve months. The last account recorded for these services was on 13 May 1852. Apparently, after this time, this expense was then being recorded elsewhere, perhaps with the county treasurer's office.

GENERAL OFFICE SUPPLIES, ETC. — On 11 December 1846, office supplies were mentioned for the first time, and the following were ordered. Unfortunately, the cost of these items was not recorded.
Docket Book
Execution Book
Final Record Book
Judgement Docket
Jury Book
Order or Minute Book
Ream cap paper
Subpoena Book
Desk (ordered to be procured on 12 June 1847)

COURT HOUSE REPAIRS — Ordered on 10 December 1847 that repairs be made on the Court House by John Huit (then sheriff) and he was allowed $1.00 for the repairs.

JAIL FACILITIES —

November 1849 it is ordered by the court that persons convicted in criminal cases be conveyed to the jail of Collin county, there being no jail in Dallas county.

May 1853 John Wells is sentenced to imprisonment of twelve months in Dallas county jail.

November 1854 The Grand Jury finds that the jail of the county is unsafe and unhealthy and humanity requires such repairs as would insure a free circulation of air.

NEWSPAPERS —

On 8 June 1847, it is noted in Sarah Pendleton vs Robert Pendleton that due process had been served by publication for 8 successive weeks in The Bonham Sentinel, a newspaper published in Fannin County. The said paper being the nearest one published to the county of Dallas, there being no newspaper published in Dallas County.

On 10 May 1854 in a letter to Judge Henry J. Jewett, the members of the Grand Jury mention a newspaper, the Dallas Herald; so by this time there is a newspaper being published in Dallas.

LEGAL TERMS USED IN MINUTE BOOK A

Alias capias: A legal writ commanding the officer to arrest the person named it.

Assumpsit: A common-law action alleging damage from breach of agreement.

Autrefois convict: A plea by a criminal in bar to an indictment that he has been formerly convicted of the same crime.

Capias Pro Fine: An execution order for collection of fine(s).

Certiorari: A writ of a superior court to call up the records of an inferior court.

Demurrer: A pleading that there is some defect which should prevent the case from proceeding.

Ejectment: An action for the recovery or possession of real property and damages and costs.

Ex officio: By virtue of or because of an office.

Execution: A judicial writ empowering an officer to carry out a judgement.

Garnishee: To serve with a legal summons or warning concerning attachment of property or wages to satisfy a debt.

Guardian ad litem: A guardian appointed by the court to prosecute or defend for an infant in any suit to which he might be party.

Habeas corpus: Any of several common-law writs issued to bring a party before a court or judge.

Malfeasance: Wrongful conduct, especially by a public official.

Mandamus: A writ issued by a superior court commanding the performance of a specific act or duty.

Misnomer: The misnaming of a person in a legal document.

Nisi: Taking effect at a specified time.

Nolle prosequi: An entry on the record that the plaintiff or prosecutor will proceed no further in his action.

Pro tem: Short for pro tempore meaning for the time being or temporarily

Scire facias: A judicial writ, requiring person against which it is brought to show why record should not be annulled. Most common application of this writ is to revive a judgement after a lapse of time or change of parties.

Sequestration: A deposit whereby a neutral depositary agrees to hold property in litigation and to restore it to the party to whom it is adjudged to belong.

Specific performance: The performance of a legal contract strictly or substantially according to its terms.

Subpoena: A writ commanding a person designated in it to attend court under a penalty for failure.

Trespass to try title: The name of an action for recovery of pos-session of real property with damages for any trespass committed upon the same by a defendant.

Venire: An entire panel from which a jury is drawn.

These definitions are taken from Webster Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary and Black's Law Dictionary.

Revised: March 21, 2008