

# Farmersville Historical Markers

## 1 Aston Building [National Register listing](#) (no marker)

Location: 121 S. Main St.

Description: The masonry, two-story commercial building constructed for W.S. Aston in 1888 is one of the most distinctive structures in the business district of Farmersville. The street facade makes handsome use of massive blocks of limestone, and is topped off by its original tin cornice. W.S. Aston was a locally prominent merchant, operating his retail store from this building. He also served as a director of the First National Bank. The building was built by W.S. Flynn, a contractor from Honey Grove, who evidently had a thorough understanding of stone detailing;, as evidenced by the three arches that divide the ground floor into three bays. The structure bears a very strong resemblance to the nearby Times Building, also constructed in 1888. The building was totally rehabilitated by Bob Heath in 2007.



## 2 Audie Murphy's Homecoming June 15, 1945

Location: Main Street downtown, just East of Gazebo

Marker inscription: With Allied victory in World War II Europe secured, Farmersville celebrated the return of the area's most famous citizen soldier. On his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, Audie Murphy enlisted in the U.S. Army at the Greenville Post Office. In more than two years of combat, he fought in North Africa, Sicily, Italy and France and earned every Army citation for valor, including the Congressional Medal of Honor. His homecoming after nearly three years away drew an audience of several thousand to the town square. LIFE Magazine's July 16, 1945 issue made the Farmersville Ceremony and Murphy's family reunion its over story, commemorating the efforts of a grateful nation and hometown (2008)



### 3 Bain-Honaker House

Location: 108 College Street

Marker Inscription: Anna Melissa Hicks Bain (1834-1906), widow of John Alexander Bain, built this house in 1865 on 6.75 acres of land east of the town square in Farmersville. She reared five daughters here: Mary Clorinda, Martha, Catherine, Christina and Margaret. An astute businesswoman, Anna Bain divided her property into lots, built commercial buildings and sold some property to the Red River Railroad Company. She also provided room and board for teachers and students from nearby private schools. The Farmersville Culture Club was founded here.

In 1902, three peaked gables and a narrow porch were replaced by an asymmetrical façade and new porch, and the northeast bedrooms were extended.

Anna Bain's daughters Mary and Catherine (Cassie) married brothers, Henry Honaker and Andrew Honaker. Martha married William S. Aston. Cassie Bain Honaker lived here while her husband was in medical school, where he died. She later married James E. Jones and lived here until her death in 1928. Five generations of the Bain-Honaker family lived in this house.

Honaker family descendants donated the house to the Farmersville Historical Society in 1989.

Recorded Texas Historic Landmark 1996



### 4 Farmersville – Historical marker

Location: Farmersville Parkway, just East of Hwy 78

Marker inscription: Originated 1849 as a settlement on the Jefferson-McKinney Road, and near Republic of Texas National Road. Named by pioneers for their chief occupation. After 1854, the years and their neighbors of Sugar Hill (2 mi. NE) began relocating here. Dr. H.M. Markham, practicing here by 1855, is said to have been Collin County's earliest physician. The First Methodist Church was organized in 1856. William Gotcher on March 4, 1859, donated land for the public square. A school was operating as early as the 1860s. The First Baptist Church was organized on May 14, 1865. Town was incorporated on June 2, 1873. First Major: John S. Rike. Aldermen: James Church, Ben King, John Murchison, Tom Tatum, John P. Utt. Marshall: Jeff Hines. Institutions of 1880s still in operation include Farmersville "Times" and the First National Bank. As town became a trade center, agriculture kept pace. Farmersville in 1930s was known as the "Onion Capital of North Texas", annually shipping over 1,000 carloads of onions. Along with some small industry, cattle, cotton, and maize crops remain important. Audie Murphy, the most decorated American hero of World War II, had been a resident of Farmersville before he entered the United States Army. (1973)



## 5 Farmersville I.O.O.F. Cemetery - Historical marker

Location: Sycamore St, 0.25 mi. E of SH 78

Marker inscription: Farmersville is one of the oldest towns in Collin County. It has historic ties to the antebellum (pre-Civil War) era of Texas and the pioneer settlement of Sugar Hill (1.5 mi. NE), founded by John Yeary. The center of settlement soon shifted to this area in the 1850s with the beginning of Farmersville, a community named for the agricultural background of its pioneer residents. In 1875, Pride Lodge No. 208 of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.) formed with 15 charter members. In 1899, the organization established a cemetery here on a high hill at the north edge of the town. The Odd Fellows Order, known as the "Three Link Fraternity" for the symbolic use of three chain links representing friendship, love and truth, had its origins in 18th-century England. The earliest marked grave in this cemetery is that of Mattie Robinson Hicks, who died in 1898, the year before the Odd Fellows formally set aside the land as a burial ground. The second oldest marked grave was for a child of G.C. Burkett. Other early graves include those of individuals reinterred here from nearby family cemeteries and rural burial grounds. Enlarged over the years, the Farmersville I.O.O.F. Cemetery today encompasses 25 acres of landscaped grounds. Notable features include a 1902 mausoleum, carved statuary, including one of a sailor, and a wide variety of memorial stones that reflect popular architectural design influences through the years. Still in use, the site now also serves to chronicle the history of Farmerville through the lives of those who made their home here, from the pioneer era to modern times. Historic Texas Cemetery – 2006



## 6-7 Farmersville Masonic Lodge No. 214, A.F. and A.M –

### National Register listing and Historical marker

Location: 101 S. Main St.

Marker inscription: This Romanesque Revival structure, built in 1888-89, housed a second story fraternal hall above a first floor mercantile. One of the earliest surviving buildings in Farmersville, it features locally quarried limestone, narrow double-hung windows, an arched second story window, and a corbelled pressed metal parapet. Two Grand Masters of the Grand Lodge of Texas were from the local Masonic lodge, chartered in 1858. The lodge met here until 1966, and the Farmersville Times newspaper has officed here since 1956.

Recorded Texas Historic Landmark – 2007



## 8 First Baptist Church of Farmersville Historical marker

Location: 124 N. Washington St.

Marker inscription: Fifteen charter members, meeting under a brush arbor at this site on May 14, 1865, organized the First Baptist Church and chose the Rev. John C. Averitt (1818-1895) as the first pastor. Worship services were held in private homes and later in the Masonic Hall on the east side of the town square. After a successful interdenominational revival, the Baptists decided to erect a permanent church building. The congregation bought the site of the old brush arbor and in 1877 built a simple frame church. A bell installed in the steeple heralded special events to the community. Another successful revival in 1898 emphasized the need for a larger structure. More land was acquired and the present church building constructed in 1900. A combination of several architectural styles, the brick edifice is topped by a roof of pressed metal. The exterior walls of the sanctuary form a multisided projection flanked by matching towers with steeply pitched roofs. The bell from the 1877 church was transferred to the north belfry. Educational buildings were added in 1938 and 1955-56. This congregation provides many community-oriented services, including a church-sponsored library. Several well-known Baptist leaders served as pastor here. Recorded Texas Historic Landmark - 1977

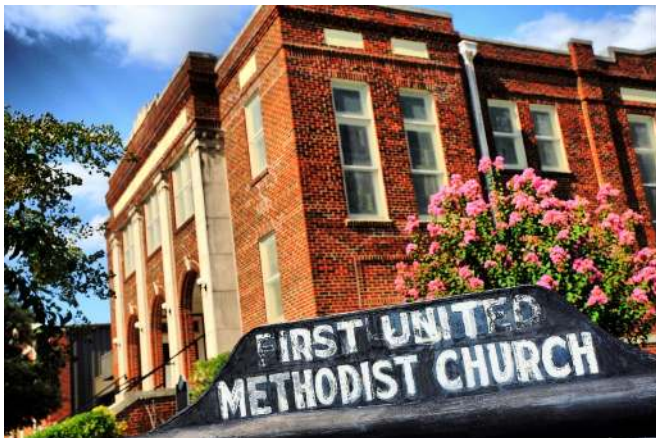




## 9 First Methodist Church of Farmersville Historical marker

Location: 206 N. Main

Marker inscription: This congregation traces its beginning to organized Methodist classes conducted in 1856 by the Rev. J.W. Chalk in a local schoolhouse west of the pioneer town of Farmersville. A community-wide all-night revival held in Farmersville's lone church structure in 1870 aroused many in attendance to join the Methodist congregation. Arbor meetings were held for 15 years on property near Brushy Creek owned by Sam R. and Mary Hamilton beginning in 1873. The congregation built its first church structure at this location in 1875. The one-room building was razed and replaced in 1902 with a grand ornate church building designed by James Edward Flanders. The magnificent structure was destroyed by fire at great cost to the congregation in 1924. Church services were held in the Cornes Theater before a new Greek revival style church structure was completed in 1926. The congregation has a history of service to the local community. Space in the church building was used for a community blood drive and as an air raid shelter during World War II. Renamed the First United Methodist Church in 1968, the congregation has sponsored youth programs in New Mexico and participated in missionary work in South America. (1992)



## 10 First National Bank of Farmersville Historical marker

Location: 223 McKinney Street

Marker inscription: Named for the occupation of many of its citizens, the town of Farmersville was founded in the mid 1850s. A private bank, the Exchange Bank was established in 1885, and housed in the rear of the Aston Brothers store. A national bank charter was obtained on January 17, 1887, and the

Exchange Bank merged with the First National Bank of Farmersville. Pioneer Doctor A.H. Neathery served as the first president. The bank building, then located at 119 South Main Street, was destroyed by fire in 1905 but it was rebuilt. The First National Bank absorbed the Farmersville National Bank in 1929. In 1933 the First National Bank of Nevada, from the small town of Nevada south of here, was also absorbed. Despite experiencing heavy losses and undergoing two reorganizations during the Depression of the 1930s, the bank never failed and its customers suffered no interruption of services. The bank moved to its present location in 1970, and expanded the building in 1979. The bank converted to a state bank charter in 1986, and changed the name to the First Bank at Farmersville. The bank, one of the 20 oldest independent banks in Texas, has served Farmersville and the surrounding communities continuously for more than 110 years. (1996)



## 11 Honaker Cemetery

Location: About 2.5 miles northeast of Farmersville, between the old Farmersville-Bonham Rd and Farm Road 2994.

Comments: No burials since 1930s. 199 gravesites. It is possible that we have missed some markers. Also it is highly likely the cemetery contains graves that for various reasons were never marked. Over the years this cemetery, which served as Farmersville's first public burying grounds has suffered seriously from both natural neglect and vandalism. The Honaker-Murchison graveyard originally contained many more graves. In 1899 when the IOOF Cemetery was established on the northwest edge of Farmersville local families who could afford to do so had the, bodies of their kin moved to the new location. Of those left at the old site about half were children, one was a former Union soldier, and one a former slave. It is likely that other blacks were buried here because the graveyard was opened before the era of Jim Crow segregation. The earliest identifiable grave in this section dates from 1870. The first grave in this list is located in the southwest corner of the cemetery

## 12 Honaker-Holsonbake House Historical marker

Location 211 College Street

Marker inscription: Prominent businessman John Milburn Honaker and his wife Malinda (Bickley) built a Queen-Anne home at this site in 1893. They extensively remodeled the house in 1910 in a Neoclassical style, adding a full second floor and two-story porch with Doric columns and oblong balcony. After Malinda's death in 1913, John wed her sister Carrie in 1917; he died just months after the wedding, leaving his three daughters with his widow. She sold the house to niece Willie (Honaker) and Bob Holsonbake. Known for generously housing area teachers and for hosting special events, the Holsonbake family owned the home until 1977. Today, the landmark is a link to early Farmersville society. Recorded Texas Historic Landmark - 2005



### 13 Huson Cemetery – Historical marker

Location: from Farmersville take CR 611 (old McKinney Road) off SH 78, about 9/10 mile west to CR 610, go north on CR 610 about 8/10 mile to CR 814, go east on CR 814 to its end at cemetery

Marker inscription: Allen Daniel and his family came to Texas from Tennessee in 1847. He and his wife Elizabeth were the parents of eight children. They settled in this area in 1850 and Daniel purchased 480 acres of land in May 1851. Less than one year later, on February 25, 1852, he died and was buried on his land. Allen and Elizabeth Daniel's daughter, Tennessee P. Daniel, was married to D.E. Huson. Tennessee Huson bought the family land from her mother in 1875, and it was during her ownership that the property surrounding her father's grave was given to the community as a public cemetery. It gradually became known as Huson Cemetery. Those interred in this historic graveyard include many pioneers of the area, including the Daniel, Huson, Wilcoxson, and Redwine families. John Hendrex and William Piunckney Chapman, who are credited with naming the town of Farmersville, and William Gotcher, who donated land for the town square, are buried here along with members of their families. Also interred here are many former slaves and their descendants, including the Nelson, Sneed, Glass, and Bryson families. The cemetery contains hundreds of marked and unmarked graves. (1989)





## 14 Onion Shed –Collin County Historic marker

Location: 151 S. Main

Marker inscription: This historic Onion Shed, restored in 2002, was one of several onion sheds in Farmersville, built by the railroads for the packing and shipping of the "Collin County Sweets." In 1925 local farmers began planting onion crops, and by 1935 Farmersville was known as the "Onion Capitol of North Texas." Migrant workers came each January to plant the onion slips. In late May or June, the crews returned to harvest the onions. Many of Farmersville's young men worked on the sheds, grading and sacking the onions to make them ready to ship by rail to places all across the country. The smell of onions permeated the town. The "Collin County Sweets" were mild onions, popular for their sweet flavor. For several years, during the height of the season, an onion festival was held, complete with a parade, marching bands, and an onion queen, Queen Noino, (onion spelled backwards). The industry declined as south and west Texas developed onion varieties which were not as perishable, making them easier to ship.



## 15 Prairie Grove Cemetery - Historical marker

Location: E of Farmersville on US 380, then S on FM 547, W on FM 643

Marker inscription: The Prairie Grove Cemetery served residents of the Aleo community from the late 1800s until the middle of the 20th century. The burial ground has ties to the Prairie Grove Baptist Church, which set aside land to be used for burials. The oldest known grave in the cemetery dates to 1895. World War II hero Audie Murphy lived in the area for a time, and his mother and grandparents are buried here. Victims of the 1927 tornado that came through nearby Nevada are also interred here. A vestige of rural settlement of the 19th century, the cemetery serves as a reminder of the pioneer community of Aleo.  
Historic Texas Cemetery – 2005





## 16 Thompson Cemetery

Location: Nevada. On SH 78, about 2 miles north of Lavon. 8.1 miles south of Farmersville, Texas on Hwy 78, cemetery on the east side of the road. On Hwy 78 about .25 mile north of the intersection of Hwy 78 and Hwy 6.

Comments: The first burial took place in 1852. There are over 800 graves. HTC designation