

# Chambers County History

**CHAMBERS COUNTY**, originally part of Liberty and Jefferson counties, was established in 1858 with Wallisville as the original county seat. The new legal jurisdiction was named for General Thomas Jefferson Chambers, a local landholder and an important figure in early Texas and Mexican history. His nephew, William Morton Chambers, was the first chief justice. After Wallisville passed a controversial stock law in 1906, residents of Anahuac called an election the next year to move the county seat to their town. The election carried, but a series of legal battles ensued over the next year. The courthouse was finally relocated to Anahuac in 1908. These events were known as “The Courthouse Wars.” Wallisville was substantially damaged during the 1915 Hurricane, but the town survived until the 1960s when it was purchased by the Federal Government as part of the Wallisville Lake Project.

**WALLISVILLE**, originally settled in the winter of 1824-25 by E. H. R. Wallis and his family, remained one of the county’s leading towns until it was severely damaged in the 1915 Hurricane. The Wallisville Townsite, now owned by the federal government, was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982. Also located nearby is another National Register site, the “El Orcoquisac Archeological District,” which includes the sites of a 1754 French trading post and a 1756 Spanish mission and presidio complex. The Spanish military and ecclesiastical authorities operated Presidio San Agustín de Ahumada and Mission Nuestra Señora de la Luz until 1771.

**ANAHUAC** figures prominently in early Texas history. It was originally known in 1814 as “Perry’s Point,” and was used by filibusterers as a base camp. Colonel Juan Davis Bradburn landed there in 1830 and constructed Fort Anahuac on that site. A series of confrontations between Bradburn and the colonists, known as “The Anahuac Disturbances,” led to a brief skirmish there in 1832. A large number of the colonists retired to the home of local cattleman Taylor White on Turtle Bayou and set down their grievances in a document known as “The Turtle Bayou Resolutions.” Colonists also managed to secure the release of two local attorneys, William Barret Travis and Patrick C. Jack, who had been imprisoned by Bradburn. Travis, who later died in the fall of the Alamo in 1836, came back to Anahuac in 1835 and forced Captain Antonio Tenorio to surrender his command at Fort Anahuac. That incident became known as the Second Battle of Anahuac.

In addition to Wallisville and Anahuac, other towns include BEACH CITY, COVE, DOUBLE BAYOU, EMINENCE, HANKAMER, MONT BELVIEU, OLD RIVER-WINFREE, SMITH POINT, STOWELL and WINNIE. The Wallisville Heritage Park contains extensive files on each of these towns and the families who settled there.