1948

A History of Organized Medicine in Harris County, Texas

Harris County Medical Society, Historical Committee

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A History of Organized Medicine
In Harris County, Texas

SURRENDER OF SANTA ANNA AT SAN JACINTO

William Henry Huddle's famous masterpiece "Surrender of Santa Anna." The original painting is owned by the State of Texas and hangs in the rotunda of the capitol.

In this picture, the man in the foreground (with his back to the observer) is said to be the Surgeon-General of the Texas Army, Dr. Alexander W. Ewing. He is shown as he is interrupted while dressing General Houston's wounded ankle. Two years later he became president of the first recorded medical society in Harris County.
Although practice of the healing art by white men in Harris County may be said to have begun with Cabeza de Vaca in 1529, this area remained relatively undeveloped until after the battle of San Jacinto.

The first record we have of an organization of medical men here is dated August 1, 1838. At that time there was a “Medical and Surgical Society of Houston,” of which Dr. Alexander Ewing was president and Dr. Richard Stanley Lee was secretary. It published a fee schedule in the Telegraph of August 4, 1838, “—so people would know what to expect.” This ran as follows: first visit, $5; succeeding visits, $3; after 9 P. M., double charge in all cases; visits out of the city limits, an extra charge of $1 per mile during the day, and $2 at night; office call, $5; detention on case, $3 per hour; venesection, $2; tooth extraction, $2; cupping, $5; surgery, according to the difficulty and danger of the case; ordinary labor, case, $10; for treating a family, one call, plus $1 extra for each individual; medicines furnished, 50 cents per dose.

Also in the Telegraph, it is reported that Houston’s population in March, 1837, consisted of perhaps ten (10) citizens, living in two log houses: by 1839, it had grown to 2073 souls—of which 453 were females.

The Morning Star of October 10th and 13th, 1840, reports another meeting of the Medical and Surgical Society of Houston, which had occurred on February 3, 1840. Another fee list was adopted—a higher one—which the Society stated was “—regulated by fees customary in other countries. In New Orleans and other cities of the Union and of Europe, $5 is the ordinary fee for a visit: and surely a physician who ventures into the frontier country, and exposes himself to the dangers of southern climate, should be entitled to at least equal remuneration for his services.” Fees were to be paid in advance, and in par funds. (This evidently refers to the fact that the national currency of the Republic of Texas was at that time somewhat below par value: so that, if paid by Texas currency, the prices would have been higher.) The list follows:
In practice, for each and every visit .................. $5
After 9 P. M. ................................................. $10
Mileage, by day ............................................. $2
Mileage by night ........................................... $4
Consultation fee ........................................... $25
Professional advice at office .......................... $5
Letter of advice ........................................... $10
Detention, per hour ...................................... $5
Bleeding or extraction of tooth ........................ $2
Cupping ....................................................... $5
Ordinary case of labor .................................... $50

Cases of preternatural labor charged for in proportion to their difficulty and danger.

Perhaps we may be pardoned for a few personal words about pioneer Harris County physicians who held high political office during the days of the Republic of Texas: but it must be kept in mind that besides these eminent men in the profession, there were many others who—with great courage and sacrifice—emigrated to Harris and its adjoining counties, often enticed by the romantic origin and the future greatness of this young Republic.

Dr. Alexander W. Ewing, mentioned above, was Surgeon-General of the Texas Army at the Battle of San Jacinto.

Dr. Ashbel Smith, educated at Yale and Harvard and in Paris, succeeded him as Surgeon-General. He was a roommate of Gen. Sam Houston, and established a military hospital in Houston in 1837. He later lived on Galveston Bay near Cedar Bayou; and he was Minister to France and England, and the last Secretary of State of the Republic.

Dr. Lorenzo DeZavala was a signer of Texas' Declaration of Independence and first vice-president of the Republic.

Dr. Anson Jones, while a resident of Brazoria County, began and ended his political career in Houston. He held many offices, from member of the Legislature to President of the Republic. He was its fourth and last President, having turned Texas over to the United States.

Dr. Phillip Anderson was Chief Surgeon of the Texas Navy.

Dr. Francis Moore, Jr., a veteran of Texas' War for Independence, was editor of the Telegraph, and several times mayor of Houston.

Through the influence of these men, and others, a law was enacted on December 14, 1837, authorizing the appointment
of a Board of Censors to regulate the practice of medicine in the Republic; there was to be one member from each senatorial district. This Board was empowered to examine all applicants and grant licenses on satisfactory evidence of qualifications. Single members of the Board might grant temporary licenses at a charge of $20 each, until a meeting of the body afforded opportunity for examination. All monies obtained from licenses were to be appropriated as the Board might deem proper. Dr. Ashbel Smith represented this district until the Board was abolished by law in 1848.

Houston was visited by an epidemic of yellow fever in 1839, and later by seven others; the last occurred in 1867. Of course, there were “scares” later, but they did not materialize.

We find no further record of the Medical and Surgical Society of Houston. On March 11, 1857, the “Houston Medical Association” was organized, with the following avowed objects: “To cultivate the science of medicine and all its collateral branches; to cherish and sustain medical character; to encourage medical etiquette and to promote mutual improvement, social intercourse and good feeling among members of the profession.”

There apparently were, at that time, no irregular schools of medicine save the homeopaths, and this organization adopted rather strong resolutions against this cult.

Many men at that time, and for many years thereafter, were practicing medicine without ever having attended any medical school, and this Association recommended to the “—citizens of this flourishing city—” that they demand anyone practicing medicine to show a diploma from a medical school, and not be imposed on by men with a diploma from a medical society or a certificate of qualifications as a dresser in a hospital.

Although a Texas State Medical Association was officially organized in 1853, it did not survive. So, we find that the Houston Medical Association issued a call inviting physicians from other points in the state to assemble in Houston for the purpose of organizing a State Medical Association. But both of these organizations evidently expired during the Civil War period of 1861-1865.

The next recorded information shows that in 1868 the Houston physicians met and organized the “Harris County Medical Association.” They evidently had in mind the necessity of this organization to form the nucleus for a State Medical Association, for shortly thereafter a call was issued by these Houston physicians to the physicians of the state to assemble
in Houston for the purpose of "—reorganization of the State Association."

This reorganization meeting was held on April 15, 1869, in the west parlor of the Hutchins House, which was the elite hotel of Houston at that time, and was located at the corner of Franklin and Travis—now the site of the Southern Pacific building. A two-day session was held; but, beyond perfecting a thorough organization, little was done. Annual meetings of the State Association were held in Houston in 1870, 1871, and 1872; each meeting apparently being called on April 15th.

At the fourth meeting in 1872, it was determined to abandon the idea of making Houston the permanent headquarters of the Association, and it was decided to hold future meetings at various points in the state. In line with this, Waco was chosen as the next meeting place.

The meeting called in Houston in April 1869 was considered for many years the real beginning of the Texas State Medical Association, and the annual meetings were numbered from it: in fact, it did mark the beginning of the continuous existence of said organization.

We find no further reference to the Harris County Medical Association which was formed in 1868, and it seems to have been practically abandoned after the State Medical Association was formed. The interest of the medical men of the state seems to have been almost wholly in the State Medical Association.

In the summer of 1887, Drs. R. W. Knox, J. W. Scott, and S. C. Red organized a medical society in the office of one of them at the corner of Main and Prairie. Dr. Knox was chosen president, Dr. Scott secretary-treasurer, and Dr. Red was the membership. However, the organization grew. Meetings were held in various physicians' offices for more than three years; but it seems to have become inactive sometime thereafter.

On February 4th, 1894, a meeting of the eligible physicians of Houston was called by Drs. S. C. Red, E. T. Cook, N. P. Dolan, R. W. Knox and J. W. Scott for the purpose of organizing a medical society. They met in the reading room of the Houston Lyceum (in the market building, Travis, Milam, Congress and Preston), and organized.

The name chosen for the new society, at its first meeting, was: "Harris County Medical Society." There were present at that meeting twenty-two doctors, and Dr. J. W. Scott presided. At the second meeting of this organization—only eleven days later—there was a motion by Dr. S. C. Red to change the
name to the “Houston District Medical Association”; and this was adopted after considerable discussion. The reason for this change was to attempt to get physicians from a wider territory. This attempt met with little or no success, however, as all the members of the Association lived in or very near Houston.

This Association met a few times in rented halls, but mostly in the offices of various doctors who were members; changing the location of the meeting place from time to time on the invitation of various members. Meetings were held regularly on the second and fourth Monday evenings of each month; they were principally scientific and were very interesting and instructive.

A fee schedule was adopted in September of 1894. A month later the “Texas Medical Journal,” which had been founded in 1885, and was owned and published by Dr. J. M. Daniel of Austin, was made the official organ. This Journal estimated that there were 5000 physicians in Texas, in November, 1894. Another medical journal, called the “Southern Medical Review,” was established in Houston in June, 1894, by Dr. Phenix; but only one number was ever issued.

In 1895 there was agitation in Houston for a medical practice act: this grew stronger with the passage of time, and as the increasing need for it was evident. In this same year the “Southwestern Medical Publishing Co.” was incorporated: it published the “Southwestern Medical Record,” a predecessor of the present Medical Record and Annals. The “Record” in 1897 quoted from the American Journal of Surgery and Gynecology an estimate that there was one physician per 500 people in the United States at that time; and it deplored the reputed existence of contract practice at $1.20 to $1.60 per person per year.

In 1895 the president of the Houston District Medical Association, Dr. Knox, appointed a committee to get more members, and to “stir up lukewarm” members. Notices of the meetings were printed in the newspapers.

In April of 1896, a delegate was appointed to the American Medical Association. The officers of the Association at this time were elected semi-annually.

In March, 1897, a member was expelled for advertising; and in June of that year the proposition of professional cards in the newspapers was brought up, discussed, and forbidden.

In April of 1898, Dr. Massie read an essay on “Suggestive Therapeutics,” and hypnotized a patient at the meeting: how-
ever, it was not called "psychosomatic medicine." In this same month, a committee of six was named to represent the Houston District Medical Association at a meeting of the Texas State Medical Association at San Antonio. Two months later, another member was expelled for advertising.

At the turn of the century there were 40 members, but only 30 of them were on record as having paid any dues, and only 10 or 15 were very active and usually attended the meetings. There were no regular dues: the expenses were only for postal cards and an occasional minute book, as the meetings were in the offices of various members. This amounted to 25 cents per member about once yearly; it was cheerfully paid by most, but bitterly resented by some, members.

In 1901 there was discussion and favorable comment about reorganization to effect closer affiliation of the local, state, and national medical organizations; but no positive action was taken.

At the last meeting of the Houston District Medical Association, which was held on June 1, 1903, a committee was appointed to work out the details of affiliation with the State and national associations.

Thus, the Houston District Medical Association remained in active existence until it was reorganized—on July 27, 1903, in the Harris County Court House—to form the present Harris County Medical Society.

The reorganization was perfected at the urgent request of the American Medical Association, which saw the great need for close affiliation of organized medicine in the United States. The various medical Associations of that time were not affiliated to any great extent, and were not accomplishing the advancement that was so greatly needed by the profession.

Dr. John T. Moore, who was then practicing in Galveston, and was a Councilor of the Texas State Medical Association, was appointed by that body to reorganize the profession in this part of the state. At his request the members of the Houston District Medical Association met in the Court House on the evening of July 27, 1903. He was present, called the meeting to order, and assisted in the formation of the new Society. Dr. W. B. Russ of San Antonio, was also present, and gave useful information and advice.

All members of the Houston District Medical Association who so desired were made charter members, and the officers of the Association were made officers of the new organization. There were sixty-five doctors who were designated charter
members. The following officers served until January, 1904, and then were re-elected for another year: Dr. E. M. Armstrong, president; Dr. James H. Bute, vice-president; Dr. R. B. Morris, treasurer; Dr. J. Edward Hodges, secretary.

The first regular meeting of the present Society was then held on October 12, 1903, in the offices of Dr. Bute: ten members were admitted at this time. In 1904 there was an adjournment during June, July, and August; and this became a custom which is still followed. Dues in 1904 were $2.

Soon after the reorganization the City Health Officer invited the Society to use his large waiting room for a meeting place; this offer was accepted, and the meetings held there for several years. When this room became too small, the Chamber of Commerce invited the Society to use their assembly room. Meetings were then held in this room, first in the old Temple Building on Main Street and then for several years after it was moved to 800 Texas Avenue. Meetings at that time were held on the same twice a month schedule which had been followed by the Houston District Medical Association. About 1909, after long discussion, it was decided to hold meetings once each week: this was done to increase attendance, and was continued until 1947.

The meetings were moved to rather commodious quarters, seating 74, in the Kress Building in 1912; and soon after this a fire destroyed all the minutes which had been accumulated since 1904. Meetings continued to be held in the Kress Building, however, for about ten years. Larger quarters were then obtained in the Marine Bank Building (Keystone Building, United Gas Building); first on the third floor, then on the seventh, and finally on the roof. In 1926 the assembly room was moved to the 16th floor of the Medical Arts Building, and in 1939 to its present location (229 Medical Arts Building).

The active participation in the Society during the first three years was largely by men who had been practicing fifteen years or more. The few young men who did attend complained that the older ones ran the Society, and gave them no chance; however, the fourth president was the youngest who has ever held that office. He called on every young man in Houston, and said: "I am one of you; come out now and let us make it a young man’s Society." Then, when they did come, he called on every man present to discuss the paper of the evening. The older men rejoiced at the interest of the younger ones and the Society did better than ever.
By 1912, the membership had grown to 133, and the dues were set at $5 per year.

By 1915, discussion of the papers was more abundant, and a resolution was passed limiting the first discussion of each paper to five minutes, and subsequent ones to three minutes; there were to be no repeaters without unanimous consent of the Society. Another resolution was passed, making it mandatory that all papers written for presentation at a meeting of the Texas State Medical Association be first read in full at a meeting of the County Society.

On February 27, 1915, Dr. J. M. Blair moved that the Society incorporate, so as to be able to hold property; and look forward to acquiring a home of its own. A committee was appointed to implement this idea. It was found that, from a legal standpoint, the Society could not hold real property: so, a separate corporation was set up for the purpose. This was called the “Houston Academy of Medicine.” Ten trustees were provided for: they were each to be elected for five years (except for eight of those on the first Board), with staggered terms; so that two new ones were to be selected each year. Donations were solicited, and a $2 per year assessment was levied. In 1917, a goal of $19,000 was set up as necessary for the purchase of a home. At present, the assets of the Academy have grown to almost a quarter of a million dollars: but the Academy-owned home remains a dream.

In 1916, the Harris County Medical Society first purchased a slide projector. Also, the Society worked to get the Texas Compensation Law changed so that it would not limit payments to one week; this attempt was successful.

In 1917 new By-Laws were adopted which laid down definite procedures to be followed in trials: these were principally to protect accused members. In former years, it was necessary in a number of instances to conduct trials of members. These clarified some situations which were unwholesome: so that, no trials have now occurred for many years.

During World War I, dues of the Society were raised to ten dollars per year.

There were seventy-three members of the Harris County Medical Society commissioned as medical officers during World War I, but only sixty were called to active service. Fortunately, none were killed or seriously injured while on active duty; but Dr. McNeil died of influenza while in the service.

In 1921, a monthly “clinic” was begun at Camp Logan to
supplement the scientific programs; these were later carried on in various hospitals for several years.

In April of 1921, the Society was incorporated: a Board of Directors was elected, and the body operated as a corporation for five years. This was finally dissolved, on account of doubtful legality, and improper distribution of responsibility.

In 1922 a "Widow's Fund" was organized: this was a variety of mutual insurance. However, it was not enthusiastically supported by members, and was completely closed out by 1930.

In 1924, the Texas State Medical Association decided to put on an "educational campaign," and to finance this by a raise in dues to $15. The Harris County Medical Society doubted the value of this campaign, and protested; however, it was in effect during 1925. The Harris County Medical Society's dues were raised to $30 per year as a consequence. In 1926, the campaign being dropped, State dues were reduced to $10, and those of the H.C.M.S. to $25.

In 1926, as the Medical Arts Building was opened, the Society raised $4,125 for the furnishing of the assembly room. Also, the Society entered into a contract with the Federal Publishing Company to publish the "Bulletin of the Harris County Medical Society." The "Medical Record and Annals" which had been published in San Antonio for twelve years, moved its editorial office to Houston. Later, in 1934, the publication of the "Bulletin" was stopped, and the "Medical Record and Annals" became the official organ of the Society.

In 1928 a stenographer was first hired for the meetings. The members' dues were raised $1 per year to pay for this; and the honorarium of $50 per year which the secretaries had been getting for about 20 years, was soon dropped.

During 1928 and 1929, the Constitution and By-Laws were "codified" and brought up to date; the new laws being re-adopted in November of 1929.

By 1930, the membership had grown to 326: and a committee headed by Dr. Elva Wright reported that 95 of these did $622,431 worth of charity work in one year. She estimated that $1,500,000 or more in medical charity work was done in Harris County per year.

In 1931, the Society voted to establish the Post-Graduate Medical Assembly of South Texas. In November of 1931 the Board of Medical Economics was created by a change in the Constitution.

In 1932 a motion was passed forbidding sub-classification
of doctors in the telephone directory, and also the use of bold-faced type.

April of 1933 saw a change in the By-Laws to allow a new member to pay only $10 during his first year of practice, $15 the second year, and thereafter the regular dues (then $23): this remained in effect only three years, however.

There was economic stress during those years, and the Society adopted an amendment regulating contract practice. Soon, the Board of Censors reported on three contract schemes which were unethical.

Still another amendment to the By-Laws was passed in 1933: this forbade a member to serve on a charity hospital staff, which staff was not represented on the Executive Board.

In 1934 a ruling was adopted against "unfair" contract practice; each contract was to be passed on by the Board of Medical Economics.

In 1935 the Society attained a membership of 400, and its peak attendance: namely, 75.5 plus members per meeting. Economic matters were still in the foreground: the Medical Economics Committee was enlarged from 3 to 5, and a "Special Committee on Medical Economics" was set up. This latter consisted of six elected and six appointed members. This "Special" committee arranged for the establishment of a "Permanent Arbitration Committee" (now called the "Adjudication Committee") and the "Medical and Dental Service Bureau:" it then passed out of existence.

On motion of Dr. M. B. Stokes in 1935, action of the Society made positions on the staffs of ethical hospitals in Harris County dependent on membership in the Harris County Medical Society.

In 1936 the Medical Economics Committee was further enlarged to eleven members: nine were to be elected, on staggered terms; there being three new ones each year—with the president and the secretary of the Society serving ex-officio.

The Adjudication Committee set the following fees for compensation work for 1937: office calls, $2; house calls, $3; night calls, $5.

The Ladies Auxiliary wanted a speakers' bureau to supply public talks on medical subjects. This was discussed and finally acted upon—with the proviso that the proposed speeches be scrutinized by the Board of Censors before delivery.

In October, 1937, a nominating committee was established by amendment to the By-Laws. Also in 1937, provision was
made that the treasurer of the Society be bonded, in the amount to be determined by the Board of Censors.

Late in 1937, a member of the Harris County Medical Society accepted employment with the Group Health Association, Inc., of Washington, D. C. Early in 1938 the Society's Board of Censors was informed by the secretaries of the District of Columbia Medical Association, the Texas State Medical Association, and the American Medical Association that the conditions of this contract were unfair and unethical as judged by A. M. A. standards; namely Article VI, Section 3 of the Principles of Medical Ethics of the A. M. A. Thereupon, it proceeded to do its duty, and preferred charges against said member for unethical conduct. Although these charges were later dropped for want of evidence (a certified copy of the contract in question could never be obtained)—nevertheless a suit was filed in the Criminal District Court No. 1 of the U. S. in the District of Columbia, styled: "U. S. A. vs. A. M. A., et al." In this suit the Harris County Medical Society was named as a defendant, and charged with "conspiracy in restraint of trade:" specifically, violation of Section 3 of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. The following month, this Society was found not guilty. Still, much work and many anxious days and some $673 in cash were expended before this dismissal was reached: and the parent body was later held guilty.

In 1940 a Historical Committee was first appointed, and began a systematic collection of clippings from the newspapers on local medical affairs. In this same year, the Bureau was made a corporation, and put on a voluntary basis.

By amendment to the By-Laws in November, 1940, an "Executive Committee" was established. This was to consist of the President-Elect, President, Vice-President, Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Chairmen of the Board of Censors, Adjudication Committee, and Board of Medical Economics: and it was empowered to act on anything—but decisions of a "serious nature" were to be subject to approval of the Society.

In January, 1941, a resolution was passed that members entering the armed services should pay no dues. Membership, which had reached 519 in 1940, dwindled rapidly as World War II progressed.

In the summer of 1942 the Society endorsed in principle the city manager form of government, and spent $147 on newspaper advertising to assist in establishing same.

One hundred ninety-six members of the Harris County
Medical Society answered their country’s call to the colors in the late War: of these, six never came back.

Lt. Col. Simm H. Moore died on Dec. 6, 1941.

Lt. Frank Cone was captured by the Japs on Bataan peninsula, April 2, 1942, and died in a prison camp on June 6, 1943.

Capt. Walter D. Campbell was killed in an airplane accident near Waco, April 12, 1942.

Lt. (j.g.) John M. Johnson was killed on the aircraft carrier “Hornet,” October 26, 1942.

Lt. Jack Kinell died at Corpus Christi, in April, 1944.

Commander Judson Taylor died, November 28, 1944, in Houston.

On July 9, 1936, Mr. Monroe D. Anderson had established the Anderson Foundation; and on Aug. 6, 1939, he died—leaving about $20,000,000 for cancer research, education and hospitals. The trustees of this Foundation, Col. W. B. Bates and Messrs. John H. Freeman and H. M. Wilkins, arranged for the purchase of 134 acres of land from the City of Houston at Fannin Street and Marlborough Drive. Then, with the coming to Houston of Baylor Medical School, the formation of a Medical Center in this city became a certainty.

On June 21, 1943, Houston got its first medical school. Baylor University’s School of Medicine, which had been established in Dallas forty years before, moved to the old Sears, Roebuck store on Buffalo Drive. The Harris County Medical Society was not consulted before the decision on this move was reached, and some of the local physicians entertained misgivings about such an undertaking under wartime conditions. But a liaison committee of seven members—all over 65 years of age—was appointed, and in a surprisingly short time the transplanted school was functioning smoothly.

An amendment to the By-Laws of the Harris County Medical Society was passed in October, 1943, to provide for Associate Membership; which was to be limited to teachers and researchers. This was later found illegal.

In 1945 the Society approved, in principle, prepaid medical insurance; and a tentative basis for fees was worked out by a special subcommittee. This committee decided that a single major operation or illness should cost no more than one-twelfth of the average annual income of the patient, and that $200 per month was about par for incomes: thus a patient making $150 per month would be entitled to pay only 75 percent of a normal fee, and so on. A resolution adopted in 1945 approved, in principle, the Basic Science Bill.
And in 1945, our burdens were lightened by the munificence of Mr. and Mrs. H. R. Cullen in giving five million dollars to four Houston hospitals. Late in the year an application for a charter for the Texas Medical Center, Inc., was filed. Many more of Houston’s citizens have now contributed to this Center, and a glorious future for it is assured. Participation of four universities and the construction of a dozen or more hospitals are already in the plans.

Although 1945 was recorded by the Health Department as the healthiest year in the history of Houston, the new facilities of the Medical Center will eventually contribute very materially toward still further improvement; and, we hope, may lead to fuller understanding of the causes of cancer—and more certain methods for curing it—among other advances.

In 1946, several committees of the Harris County Medical Society chalked up notable progress. The Adjudication Committee was given authority to use its efforts in private cases where bills were in dispute; and it was enlarged to eleven members. The Legislative and Public Health Committee collected $7660.04 from doctors and their friends for publicity against socialized medicine: a motion picture was made on the subject, and the newspapers were used for education of the public as to the facts concerning state medicine. The Maternal and Neo-Natal Mortality Committee—which group is probably doing more than any other toward preventing needless human suffering and untimely deaths—made its first report. And a new committee to assist widows or heirs in the proper disposal of deceased members’ assets was formed of the three immediate living past presidents.

Also in the year 1946, diphtheria immunization was made compulsory by the Houston School Board.

In 1947, our dues were raised to $50 per year; but provision was made for interns and residents to obtain membership for only $6 per year.

Our Constitution and By-Laws were brought up to date, and several major changes were made in them. The changes will be mentioned briefly. A Nominating Committee consisting of the immediate living past president and four members holding no other office in the Society was set up. The Executive Committee was enlarged by three members, and named the Executive Board. The Society, as such, meets for only three business and six scientific sessions per year, on the second Wednesday of each month—except those in the sum-
mer. But provision was made for the establishment of Sections and Branches.

On November 19, 1947, a Medical Section was organized and held its first meeting. It now has regular meetings on the third Wednesday of each month, except in the summer.

On December 17, 1947, the Surgical Section was organized and held its first meeting. It now meets regularly on the fourth Wednesday of each month, except those in the summertime.

Early efforts to form permanent medical societies in this County were spasmodic, and only partially successful. But since the affiliation of the county, state, and national organizations, success has been assured—and progress almost continuous.

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Signed by the Historical Committee of the Harris County Medical Society on October 28, 1948,

J. ALLEN KYLE
J. EDWARD HODGES
LYMAN C. BLAIR, (Chairman)
### PAST PRESIDENTS

**HOUSTON DISTRICT MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Term</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. J. W. Scott</td>
<td>February, 1894—July, 1894 (inclusive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. E. T. Cook</td>
<td>August, 1894—January, 1895</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. S. C. Red</td>
<td>February, 1895—July, 1895</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. R. W. Knox</td>
<td>August, 1895—January, 1896</td>
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<td>Dr. R. C. Hodges</td>
<td>February, 1896—July, 1896</td>
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<td>Dr. Robt. Morris</td>
<td>August, 1896—February, 1897</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Jos. Mullen</td>
<td>March, 1897—October, 1897</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. F. B. King</td>
<td>November, 1897—February, 1898</td>
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<td>Dr. J. B. Massie</td>
<td>March, 1898—June, 1898</td>
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<td>Dr. O. L. Norsworthy</td>
<td>July, 1898—May, 1899</td>
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<td>Dr. D. McKay</td>
<td>June, 1899—December, 1899</td>
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<td>Dr. J. O. Williams</td>
<td>January, 1900—September, 1900</td>
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<td>Dr. J. G. Boyd</td>
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<td>Dr. Z. F. Lillard</td>
<td>January, 1902—May, 1903</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. E. M. Armstrong</td>
<td>June, 1903—</td>
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### HARRIS COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY

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<td>Dr. E. M. Armstrong</td>
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<td>1905</td>
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* (Died—January)