

# The History of Canadian Texas

Canadian, Texas has been the county seat of Hemphill County since 1887. In early 1887, E.P. Purcell and O.H. Nelson laid out the 240-acre town site on the southern bank of the Canadian River. Purcell and Nelson headed the Kansas Railway Townsite Company. In the summer of 1887, the Southern Kansas Railway had constructed a



Source: River Valley Pioneer Museum

bridge across the river from the settlement of Clear Creek (also known as Hogtown). With the completion of the bridge, many of the Hogtown residents moved their families and homes across the river to Canadian. The City started as a temporary tent city, but it did not take long for permanent structures to be constructed. In August of 1887, the first hotel (the Log Cabin) was established by Nelson Peet and a post office opened. On July 4, 1888, Canadian's reputation as a rodeo town began when a commercial rodeo was staged by the annual Cowboys' Reunion, one of the first in Texas. By the 1900s the town was incorporated and became a major center for shipping with the railroad division headquarters, roundhouses, cotton gins, banks, schools, and other small businesses. The City had 13 saloons, but the County voted to go dry in 1903. In the early 1950s, the City lost its railroad roundhouses and division headquarters due to reorganization by the Santa Fe. The City continues to thrive on farming, ranching, and oil and gas production.

- Adapted from the Handbook of Texas Online, by H. Allen Anderson



## History of the Canadian River Trails

Trails along the Canadian River are not a new idea. The use of trails along the Canadian River are older than recorded history. In 1541, the trails were used for trade, exploration, and hunting by Coronado. In 1840, it was a route for Josiah Gregg and 34 men from Missouri. They carried goods...

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