

historical women

of denton county

There are many women who have been a significant part of the history of Denton County: just to name a few, Mildred Bridges, a widow, who with her sons founded the first settlement in Denton County, Delilah King and her family who were the first settlers in the Little Elm area, Angelina Burr who was the first African American to purchase land in Quakertown, Dr. Claudia Potter who was born in east Denton County and was the 6th woman to graduate from the University of Texas Medical School in Galveston and served on the staff of Scott and White Hospital for 41 years, and all of the women who were leaders in Denton and members of the Ariel Club.

One woman was especially remarkable, Annie Webb Blanton. She was a teacher, suffragist, and the first woman in Texas elected to a statewide office. She was born on August 19, 1870, in Houston. She supported herself by teaching while studying at the University of Texas, where she graduated in 1899.

From 1901 to 1918 Blanton served on the English faculty of North Texas State Normal College (now the University of North Texas) where she became active in

the Texas State Teachers Association. Because she established herself as a strong believer in equal rights for women and also was known for having written a series of grammar textbooks, she was elected president of the association in 1916. She was the first woman to hold this position.



When William P. Hobby, who was sympathetic to the women's movement, ran for governor in 1918, the suffragists supported him and put up their own candidate for State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annie Blanton. She won the election by 100,000 votes becoming the first woman to be elected to a state office in Texas. She served until 1922 and then joined the education faculty of the University of Texas where she taught the rest of her life. She was also the founder of Delta Kappa Gamma Society, an honorary society for women teachers. She died in Austin on October 2, 1945.

Several schools in Texas were named for Dr. Blanton including the Denton County School, the Annie Webb Blanton School, which later consolidated with Double Oak and then Lewisville. ■



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