

## The Masonic College

In 1853, the local Masonic Lodge, Murchison Lodge #80, undertook to construct a private school for boys. A building committee of John W. Kelly, Isaac J. Foster, Maryland Jones, Bulford B. Walker and J.J. Ballard were appointed. The committee and others solicited donations and pledges to finance the project and in time they contracted with Abner K. Foster to construct a building 60 feet long, 30 feet wide and three stories high, with an observatory on the roof. The building was located on Block 20, property donated by John W. Kelly and Josiah Dowling, both members of the Murchison Lodge.

It was reported in The Gonzales Inquirer that the citizens (of Hallettsville) and the Masonic fraternity have now under contract a magnificent Male College to be 60 feet long, 30 feet wide, three stories high, with an observatory on the top – the building to be of wood, and expected to be completed by the first of January 1855.

In January 1854, a storm wrecked the construction which was only partially complete. But by October, it was reported by the Texas State Gazette that the building was progressing toward completion.

### References:

Free State of Lavaca p. 171

The Gonzales Inquirer October 29, 1853

Texas State Gazette October 28, 1854

