



MISSION VALLEY, TEXAS (Medina County).

Mission Valley was a black settlement located on the north and south banks of Hondo Creek two miles north of Hondo in central Medina County. The majority of the original settlers were brought as slaves in the 1850s; many arrived in 1856.

Evidence suggests that in 1869 former slaves living in central Medina County established a settlement with a church and school on the north bank of Hondo Creek two miles north of the future site of Hondo.

An unusually large oak tree just north of Cottonwood Cemetery became known as the Emancipation Oak and the site for an annual celebration. In 1876 L. L. White, an outspoken abolitionist sold thirty-two farm lots of twenty acres each exclusively to former slaves and their families at a site near the unnamed black settlement.

This community was named Mission Valley by one of its original settlers, Austin Grant. It had both Methodist and Baptist congregations and a school. By 1882 many residents of Mission Valley had moved two miles south to the newly established railroad town of Hondo City and taken the Methodist church with them.

In 1904 the Baptist congregation followed suit. In 1942 the United States Army Air Forces requisitioned much of the land on the site of Mission Valley south of Hondo Creek to build.

In 1948 the city of Hondo acquired the abandoned field and made it a city park, which has been the site of the annual Medina County Fair since 1980.