



## **#17: Dr. J. B. DuBose – Humble's First Mayor**

Humble's history is full of people who contributed to the development of the city, yet aren't well known to the residents of the Lake Houston area today. Dr. J. B. Dubose was one of these prominent people. Dr. John Brown Dubose was born in 1876 in Robertson County, Texas, and married La Rue Robinson in January 1900. He was working as a physician for the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1903 when he and his wife moved to the small-town lumber town of Humble. In addition to working for the railroad, he also opened his own practice in Humble, and shared an office with Dr. Sandlin on Main Street. Dr. and Mrs. Dubose built an impressive home on Higgins Street (i.e., mansion), where the Victoria Apartments now stand across from the McKay home. In this home, Dr. Dubose reputedly owned the first telephone in a private residence in Humble.

In his first years in town, Humble became an oil-boom town. As a physician in a small western, oil-boom town he treated his fair share of injuries. These included men burned or crushed in oil-field accidents, travelers injured in train accidents, and people who were flat-out shot in classic western duels and feuds. In 1916, he was injured in a runaway accident, where he suffered three fractured ribs and other internal injuries, but he was able to recover and resume his duties as a physician.

When the early Humble school district was transformed into the Humble Independent School District, Dr. Dubose was elected to the Board and served as its first President (from 1919 through 1923). His knowledge and respected leadership helped guide the new district through its formative years.

In 1933, the citizens of Humble voted to incorporate Humble into a city (by the way, it was the second time Humble citizens had voted to incorporate...a story for a later time). They also voted to have Dr. J. B. Dubose serve as the first Mayor of Humble. The major accomplishments of his administration were laying out water mains and sewers, widening and paving the streets, and setting up street lights for the new city. The next year, Dr. Dubose suffered a serious back injury in a fall at a Fourth of July picnic. However, that didn't keep him from exercising his civic duties. Newspapers across the state reported that, after being confined to a hospital in Houston for many weeks due to his injury, Dr. Dubose had an ambulance drive him to Humble so he could cast his vote in a city election.

Dr. Dubose's health declined after the death of his wife in 1939. He was confined to a hospital in San Antonio for the last years of his life, where he passed away in 1947. A true Humble hero, he devoted a good portion of his life to Humble, and left his mark as a doctor, as the first President of the Humble ISD School Board, and as the first Mayor of the City of Humble. He is buried among his friends in Rosewood Cemetery in Humble.