



## **#1: Joseph Dunman, Hero of the Republic**

Humble was once home to a true Texas hero. Joseph Dunman was one of the earliest known residents of the Humble area. Originally from Louisiana, he and his family moved to the Atascocito District in 1825 as part of the Anglo-American colonization effort in Mexican Texas. Today, the Atascocito District consists of 10 counties between Humble and Louisiana, including Liberty, Chambers, San Jacinto, Jefferson, Polk, Hardin, Orange, Tyler, Jasper and Newton. Next door to the Atascocito District was Austin's Colony. Nineteen present-day counties comprised Austin's Colony and included present-day Humble. Two of the earliest land grants in Harris County are in the Humble area and were granted during the time of Austin's Colony.

Over the next few years, the colonists in the Atascocito District lived their lives and cultivated their land in this new wilderness. Dunman tended his land as a farmer and also raised cattle, eventually receiving a land grant in Liberty of 4,428 acres from the Mexican government. In 1835, the Texas Colonists revolted against a new, more conservative Mexican government and raised an army. By February 1836, the Texas soldiers took over the Alamo Mission in San Antonio as part of their battles against Mexican President Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna. Greatly outnumbered, Col. William B. Travis wrote a letter pleading for reinforcements to the Alamo and sent copies to Texas towns.

Dunman was the courier who delivered Travis' letter to Liberty. After delivering the message to the citizens of Liberty, he rode on to Anahuac. The Alamo fell on the morning of March 6. Fortunately, the Texans were successful on April 21 at the Battle of San Jacinto, leading to independence and the creation of the Republic of Texas. Dunman continued to serve the new republic by driving and fencing cattle for Fort Galveston.

As the republic distributed land for economic development, Dunman received one of the earliest land grants in the Humble area: 177 acres on the banks of the San Jacinto River. Some of his relatives also received land grants in the area, including his son-in-law Wherry B. Adams, son-in-law Jacob Ryan, nephew Robert Dunman, and son Joseph W. Dunman.

Downtown Humble sits within the Wherry B. Adams survey. Over time, Dunman and his children purchased more land in Humble, extending their holdings from the river all the way down to Rankin Road.

Dunman was a leader in the area, allowing his home to be used as a polling place for many elections in Harris County throughout the 1840s and 1850s. In addition, the Humble Cemetery at the corner of Isaacks Road and Humble Road originally started out as the Dunman family graveyard. Dunman died at his home on April 3, 1859. A few years later, in 1866, a Civil War veteran from Louisiana named Pleasant Humble arrived in Harris County. Humble eventually purchased key sections of land from the Dunman family, eventually helping to create the town, and later the city, of Humble.

Nowadays, most people have forgotten Joseph Dunman and his contributions to the republic and to Humble. However, to recognize this Texas patriot and early Humble settler, the local chapter of the Daughters of the Texas Revolution (the Seth Hurin Bates chapter) will be placing a marker at the Humble Cemetery in his honor on April 28.