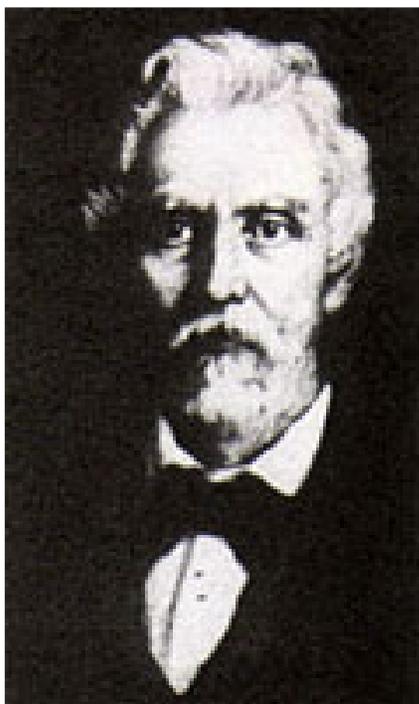


## John Howland's Texas Legacy

By Ross L. Shipman  
San Antonio Colony  
Texas Mayflower Society

Texas Mayflower descendants are often asked, "How did a *Mayflower* descendant get to Texas?" *Mayflower* descendants coming to Texas are not a recent phenomenon. Before Texas was a state, before Texas was a republic, when this area of Texas was a part of the Mexican State of Coahuila y Tejas, direct descendants of John Howland, Governor William Bradford and Francis Cooke were here.

One direct descendant of John Howland left Pendleton, South Carolina, angry over the nullification policy of John C. Calhoun, stayed a while in Alabama and then came to San Antonio De Bexar. This man was Samuel Augustus Maverick. Sam Maverick was a Yale graduate who had studied law in Winchester, Virginia, before he began his peregrinations. Sam's genealogy, beginning with John Howland, continues with John's daughter Lydia Howland and then James Brown to his son Isaac Brown who lived in Rehoboth, Massachusetts. Isaac's daughter married a Samuel Maverick in 1772 in Charleston, South Carolina. Their son, another Samuel, was married in Pendleton, South Carolina in 1802 and his son Samuel Augustus Maverick himself was born in Pendleton in June of 1803.



Samuel A. Maverick  
Painting by Iwonski

When Sam Maverick arrived in San Antonio in 1835, it was a village of adobe and jacal buildings and dwellings. The public water system was the river and the irrigation ditches which the Mexicans called acequias. Sam was getting established when the Anglo-Texan settlers began to seek their independence from Mexico. He served as a guide for the Texan volunteers when old Ben Milam led his 300 men to seize San Antonio from Santa Anna's brother-in-law General Martin Perfecto de Cos. That is why the Texans were inside the Alamo when, two months later, General Santa Anna laid siege to the Alamo.

Sam Maverick was not in San Antonio during the siege. He had been delegated by his friends to represent them at the "Convention of 1836" at Washington-on-the-Brazos where on March 2, 1836 the Texas delegation of Independence was signed. This occurred during Santa Anna's thirteen-day siege of the Alamo. The Alamo fell on March 6, 1836 and,

as you know, the defenders were massacred. Had not Sam Maverick been sent by his friends to the convention, he would have been in the Alamo and this story would end here.

However, Sam Maverick survived and went back to Tuscaloosa, Alabama where he married Mary Ann Adams. They soon returned to Texas and he became a successful lawyer, merchant and landowner. He served as mayor of San Antonio and as a representative in the Congress of the Republic of Texas.

In 1842, during the "Republic of Texas" period, Mexican General Adrian Woll surprised and overwhelmed San Antonio by leading an invasion army of some twelve hundred men. He seized all of the Anglo men in San Antonio, which numbered about 67 because the District Court was in session, including Sam Maverick, and marched them back to Mexico. There were several small battles along the way and additional captives were taken. The men were imprisoned in the infamous Perote Prison in Mexico City. After their release, the survivors, including Sam Maverick, made their way back to San Antonio.

Samuel Maverick was a lawyer and speculator in land. He was never a rancher, but in 1847 he took 400 head of stock cattle in payment of a \$1,200 debt and turned them loose on Matagorda peninsula. He and his family were living on Matagorda peninsula at the time but they soon moved back to San Antonio leaving his cattle under the care of a slave named Jack. Jack did not keep the increase in cattle branded. In 1854 Sam Maverick moved the cattle and Jack to a range on the San Antonio River about 50 miles below San Antonio. Here Jack continued his easy way and the cattle went wild. This was the time of open range in Texas. There were no fences so the cattle were allowed to roam freely. Every year the ranchers and their workers (vaqueros) would round up all the cattle they could find and brand the calves with the same brand that was on the mother cow. When the cattlemen in the area saw an unbranded heifer, cow or bull, they'd say, "that must be one of Maverick's." Before long such an animal was simply called a "maverick". In time the word maverick got into the dictionaries. Some authorities on etymology explained that maverick means: 1) An unbranded or orphaned range calf or colt. 2) A horse or steer that has escaped the herd. 3) One who refuses to abide by the dictates of his group or dissenter, an independent.



The Maverick Homestead, San Antonio

Sam and Mary Ann built their house in San Antonio on the corner of Houston Street and Alamo Street overlooking the Alamo Plaza. Their house and the St. Anthony Hotel were built on the irrigated farmlands that belonged to the Mission San Antonio de Valero, what we now call the Alamo. When the mission

was secularized in 1793, the land was deeded to the Mission Indians who were farming it at that time. The Indians later sold the land and Sam and Mary Ann Maverick owned much of it. They gave "Travis Park", the park that is across the street from the St. Anthony Hotel, to the city of San Antonio but required that it be forever a public park. In 1858 they also gave several lots for the construction of Saint Mark's Episcopal Church, directly across the Travis Park from the front of the St. Anthony Hotel. Incidentally, Lt. Col. Robert E. Lee was on the Vestry of Saint Mark's prior to the "War Between the States" when this gift was made.

When Texas seceded from the Union in 1861, Sam Maverick was one of the three commissioners appointed to receive the surrender of all United States troops and military supplies in Texas from Major General Twiggs. The troops surrendered were one-tenth of the existing United States Army at that time. There is a town in Texas named for Sam Maverick and Maverick County down along the Rio Grande River is also named for him.



Mary A. Maverick was the paradigm of the pioneer woman of the Texas frontier. Born in Alabama, she married Samuel Maverick, a prominent lawyer and politician, and journeyed to San Antonio in the Texas settlements in 1936. Her memoirs give one of the most engrossing and colorful accounts of life on the wild frontier. Photo courtesy the Maverick family.

Samuel Augustus Maverick died in 1870. Mary Ann Adams Maverick lived until 1898, as the matriarch of a large family, many of whom are still prominent in the state of Texas and the United States. She started keeping a diary before she left Tuscaloosa, Alabama and it has been published. It is not only a valuable historical document but it is delightful and interesting to read. Mary Ann was a substantial inspiration and supporter of Saint Mark's Episcopal Church. The large brass cross on Saint Mark's altar was dedicated to her memory by the Women of the Church in 1898.

Our Pilgrim ancestors braved the stormy North Atlantic Ocean to reach a shore where, to quote William Bradford, "*they had now no friends to wellcome them, nor inns to entertaine or refreash their weatherbeaten bodys, no houses or much less townes to repaire too, to seek for succoure.*"

So too, their descendants again braved the lonely frontier to settle new lands and to again face the savage Indians, this time the cannibalistic Karankawas and the marauding Comanche's.

So you see, had Christopher Jones, the Master of the *Mayflower*, had his ship in Bristol fashioned with all ropes and lines neatly coiled, our Texan history might have been quite different. You recall, I'm sure, that when young John Howland came on the deck of the *Mayflower* during the storm, he was swept overboard by a wave. He was able to catch a topsail halyard that was trailing behind the ship and was pulled back aboard somewhat the worse for the experience. His life having been saved, he went on to become a productive and reproductive member of the plantation. Without John Howland we would have had no Sam Maverick. And who knows? All of the cattle in Texas might have been branded and we would have no name to call dissenters or dissidents. Then too, you might need a tourist visa to come to Texas today and have to avoid drinking the water.

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