

**FP-044**

**PROSPERO BERNARDI STATUE**

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Who is this dignified gentleman with the well-groomed mustache and the military bearing?

Well, he was an Italian who became one of Texas's lesser-known heroes.

Prospero Bernardi was born in Italy in 1794 and was a notary by trade. He arrived in Texas 42 years later aboard the schooner Pennsylvania. He enlisted in the Texas army a couple of weeks later.

Bernardi proved valiant in the Battle of San Jacinto that year but suffered a spinal injury that led to his discharge. A couple of years later, the minor hero's whereabouts were unclear, and two fellow soldiers said they understood him to have died from his injuries.

Italian residents of Texas paid for this tribute to the unsung hero of the Battle of San Jacinto. The bust was executed by the Italian artist Pompeo Coppini, who also crafted the six statues found within the Hall of Heroes inside the Hall of State.

Texas Governor James Allred unveiled the statue on October 12, 1936 during Italian Day at the Texas Centennial Exposition. A representative of Italy's then - Fascist government attended the event, at which Governor Allred declared, "Prospero Bernardi was one of many unsung heroes who fought and gave their blood for Texas one hundred years ago. Some of them are known, like Bernardi. Others are unknown, but all live in the hearts of our people."

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