

Georgia and the Texas Revolution

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An unfortunate incident—Colonel Ugartechea's demand for the cannon which the Texans had for their defense at Gonzales—soon developed into a crisis. The skirmish which followed between the Texans and the Mexicans here on October 2, 1835, precipitated the Texas revolution. The thunderous "No" which the Texans gave on that memorable day by firing the cannon at those who had demanded its surrender, appealed tremendously to the imagination of the people of the United States. From this day on the people of practically every state in the Union showed some enthusiasm for the Texas cause which they chose to describe as one of "liberty vs. tyranny." Several forces were at work to guarantee that this American enthusiasm would never die, but that it would continue to manifest itself with increasing intensity throughout the conflict.

First among this list of forces, and one on which the Texans counted heavily, was the natural ties which bound the two peoples together. This is well attested by the communication sent by the Permanent Council of Texas to the people of the United States in October, 1835. It ran in part as follows: "You are united to us by all the sacred ties that can bind one people to another. You are, many of you, our fathers and brothers—among you dwell our sisters and mothers—we are aliens to you only in country; our principles, both moral and political, are the same—our interest is one."¹

1. E. C. Barker, "The Journal of the Permanent Council," in *The Texas State Historical Quarterly*, VII, 273.

There was likewise an economic tie which continued to exist between the Texans and the people of the United States. In this connection one notable historian says:

While there is no evidence that the Anglo-American colonists settled Texas with the intention of tearing it from Mexico and annexing it to the United States, they formed by their immigration no real ties with Mexico and broke none with the United States. A perennial state of revolution compelled the government to leave them largely to their own devices in local affairs, and an unwise suspension of the tariff in their favor encouraged trade with the United States instead of Mexico. Vessels rarely sailed between Texas and Mexican ports, though both had regular connections with New Orleans. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Texans turned to the people of the United States for aid at the beginning of their contest with Mexico.²

In addition to the two broad general incentives cited above which seemed to make aid from the United States inevitable, certain specific motivating factors were at work. Some eminent historians, as well as notable newspaper editors, have insisted that land speculators exerted great influence by spreading damaging propagandá because they were interested in the conquest of Texas in order that they might reap handsome dividends from lands which they had already acquired or might acquire in the future.³ Historians equally eminent, however, have contended that "land speculators may have been at the bottom of some of the enthusiasm displayed for the Texas cause, but their influence can hardly be established."⁴ Liberal grants of land offered by the General Council no doubt lured many volunteers to Texas, and played a prominent role in arousing enthusiasm and maintaining it at a high pitch of inten-

2. E. C. Barker, "The United States and Mexico, 1835-1837," in *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, I, 3.

3. *New York Courier and Enquirer*, October 31, 1835.

4. E. C. Barker, "The United States and Mexico, 1835-1837," in *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, I, 9.

sity.⁵ The Convention at Washington on the Brazos offered even more liberal terms.⁶ While granting lands to interest volunteers, the Council members did not forget to reserve a certain number of ranking positions in the army to appeal to men of ambition in the United States. Some writers have maintained, though without convincing proof, that the extremely selfish slavocracy of the South conspired to promote the revolution and the final annexation of Texas.⁷ Individual slave owners, no doubt, felt keenly the need of creating new slave territory; but proof is lacking that this interest was ever so organized as to approach the formation of a conspiracy. This proof is not forthcoming despite the extravagantly-expressed views of distinguished men of the time. One noted historian, in referring to the annexation of Texas, which to him was only the consummation of the revolution, said that the "bridal dress in which Calhoun had led the beloved of the slavocracy to the Union was the torn and tattered Constitution of the United States."⁸ Again, in referring to the diatribe of W. E. Channing against annexation, he asserted that "The eagle grew tired of playing the vulture, and learned to become ashamed of that role, but Texas became the Nesus robe of the Elavocracy."⁹ Furthermore,

5. R. W. Steen, "Analysis of the Work of the General Council, 1835-1836," in *Texas State Historical Quarterly*, XII, 337. The volunteers were to receive the same pay, clothing, and rations as the soldiers in the United States army; and in addition they were to receive one section of land for service for the duration of the war, and one-half section for three months enlistment.
6. *The New Orleans Commercial Bulletin*, April 7, 1836. On March 17, 1836, the Convention agreed that those who were in the service and who remained to the end of the war should have 1280 acres; that those who served less than six months should have 640 acres; that those who enlisted prior to July 1, 1836, and served to the end of the war, should have 960 acres, provided the service period amounted to six months; and that those who entered after July 1 should have land in proportion to the length of time served. In case of death the land would accrue to their heirs.
7. James Ford Rhodes, *History of the United States*, I, 75 ff.
8. H. Von Holst, *The Constitutional and Political History of the United States*, II, 712-713.
9. *Ibid.*, 714. Channing, in denying the wisdom of annexing Texas, had said that "Our eagle will whet, not gorge, his appetite on his first victim; and will snuff a more tempting quarry, more alluring blood, in every new region which opens southward." See William E. Channing, *Letter to the Hon. Henry Clay on the Annexation of Texas to the United States* (Glasgow, 1837), 18. See also William Jay, *A Review of the Causes and Consequences of the Mexican War* (Boston, 1849), 106.

it may be assuredly stated that adventurous persons looked upon Texas as a veritable paradise, and many there were who repaired to Texas for no other reason than adventure. Patriots, however, of that day and this, prefer to pitch the cause of the seething interest of the people of the United States in the Texas-Mexican affair on a somewhat higher plane. To say that the volunteers were interested because the war was "a fight in behalf of liberty and chartered rights" is only to mention another, if not fundamental, reason why the Texans might always depend on enthusiastic support from their kinsmen in the United States. It was in reference to this fight for freedom that David Crockett declared that "this is the kind of a mess I like to have my spoon in." So it was with many others.¹⁰

Meetings of Texan Sympathizers

One of the first evidences of the interest which Georgia citizens had in the welfare of the Texas Colonists appeared soon after the arrival of the news of the skirmish between the Texans and Mexicans at Gonzales, October, 1835. "The cries of our fellow countrymen of Texas have reached us calling for help against the *Tyrant* and *Oppressor*" ran the headlines of the *Macon Messenger* of early November, 1835. "Let all who are disposed to respond to the cry, in any form, assemble at the courthouse, on Tuesday evening next, at early candle light."¹¹

The meeting in Macon on November 10 was declared by the newspapers to have been the largest assembly ever witnessed in that city. At this meeting, presided over by Levy Eckley, the causes of the struggle in Texas were outlined and the general situation in the province was

10. David Crockett, *Autobiography*. It need not be said that, to use Crockett's words, "My occupation was gone." He had made the mistake of opposing Andrew Jackson in his fight on the bank; and before Jackson finished with the bank, he "finished off" Crockett in the congressional race in Tennessee.

11. *The Georgian*, November 19, 1835, quoting the *Macon Messenger*. See also *Savannah Republican*, November 19, 1835.

discussed. *The Messenger* said that Lieutenant Hugh McLeod, recently from the Military Academy at West Point, "Gave a spirit-stirring appeal, pledging himself to resign his commission and embark as a volunteer in the cause of liberty." The resolutions agreed upon by the "great concourse" of people declared that the citizens of Macon felt sympathy for the people of Texas "now struggling against tyranny and oppression"; that they would give all aid not forbidden by the laws of their own country; and that a committee of five should be appointed to correspond with the Provisional Government of Texas, receive donations, and enroll the names of those disposed to "risk their lives, their fortunes, and their Sacred honor" in the support of a noble cause. Furthermore, the resolutions authorized the committee to correspond with all cities and towns in the state to solicit aid.¹² At this meeting there were twenty-nine volunteers, and \$3,141 was immediately subscribed to defray expenses of the trip to Texas. The volunteers were to be commanded by William Ward, the other officers to be chosen after the Company's arrival in Texas. It was agreed at the meeting that Wednesday, November 18, would be the day for the departure.¹³

There was considerable opposition in the United States to participation by American citizens in the conflict between Texas and Mexico, a country with which we were at peace, the basis of the argument being that such participation was a violation of our neutrality. This opposition stemmed mainly from New York and

12. *Savannah Republican*, November 19, 1835. The committee was composed of Gen. Rob't A. Beall, Col. Henry G. Lamar, G. G. Holt, James A. Nesbit, and Dr. Robert Collins.

13. *State Rights Sentinel* (Augusta) November 20, 1835. See also *The Georgian*, November 19, 1835. The names of the volunteers at the Macon meeting were Wm. Ward, Jno. T. Lamar, U. J. Bullock, Wm. L. Hudson, W. Carten, Jno. M. Payton, Bradford Fowler, James Smith, Wm. L. Wilkerson, James Monroe Elles, Samuel Rowe, Thos. W. Hazard, Basil Lamar, Zachariah Suns, Rob't A. Pace, Jared E. Groce, Samuel G. Hardaway, Wm. Wood, K. McKenzie, Monroe Bullock, Jesse M. Womack, Alex E. Patten, James Thompson, James O. Allen, David Holt.

Philadelphia newspapers. A writer for the *Philadelphia National Gazette* who styled himself "Columbus" said that he proposed to "Trace the subject of the *Texian revolt* through the whole concatenation of its primary causes and objects," and to expose to the world the "motives of personal aggrandizement, avaricious adventure, and unlimited enduring oppression" which prompted the vested interests that promoted the Texas Revolution.¹⁴ "Columbus" here attempted to show that the revolt in Texas had not grown out of dissatisfaction on the part of the settlers but that it was the work of land speculators and the aristocratic Southern slavocracy. In New York the news that donations were being received in the Southern states to aid Texas inspired an editorial in the *New York Courier and Enquirer* protesting against such unneutral acts. The editor of the *Enquirer* insisted that they were nothing but "a set of frontiersmen styling themselves Texians or Texonians" and that a "cohort of schemers and speculators," having failed to get the United States to purchase Texas, had determined to conquer that country.¹⁵

These arguments in no way deterred the Southerners, but the Georgians were interested in making certain that their activities were within the letter of the law to insure them that they would not become involved in a violation of the neutrality act of the United States Government. The promoters of Texas aid in Georgia assured the volunteers that a "critical perusal" of Section Six of the Act of Congress of 1818, which act prohibited American citizens from enlisting against countries at peace with the United States, revealed that the prohibition extended only to "enlisting as a soldier, sailor, or marine" and not to taking passage for any country regardless of intent.¹⁶ Happily enough, almost

14. James E. Winston, "Pennsylvania and the Independence of Texas," in *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, XVII, 277.

15. James E. Winston, "New York and the Independence of Texas," in *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, XVIII, 370.

16. *New Orleans Commercial Bulletin*, November 25, 1835.

simultaneously with the beginning of the assistance program in the South, the question was settled by the United States Circuit Court of the Southern District of New York. Gideon Tucker, Foreman of the Grand Jury, addressed to the Court this inquiry: "Is it a violation of Section Six of the Act of April 20, 1818 that meetings should be held, and committees appointed to provide means and make collections for the purpose of enabling the inhabitants of Texas to engage in a civil war with Mexico now at peace with the United States?" The Court ruled that Section Six applied only to setting on foot military expeditions to be carried on from the United States against a friendly power. The conclusion reached by the Georgians, as well as by others in the South, was, therefore, that their activities in no way violated the law of the land.¹⁷

On November 17, 1835, a group of Texan sympathizers met at Girard (opposite Columbus) and thirty-five men volunteered for immediate departure for Texas. Wm. A. O. Wadsworth was chosen commander.¹⁸

In spite of the attempts of Whig newspapers in the North to cool the ardor of the enthusiasm in the South for the Texan cause, volunteers continued to offer themselves for active duty. The *Macon Messenger* of November 26, 1835, said that "up to today, eighty-two recruits for Texas, all well equipped, have left here for Texas." Actually, the enthusiasm for the Texas cause reached such heights as to interfere with certain industries. The editor of the *Macon Telegraph* in the issue of November 26, 1835, had the following statement, headed *Texas Fever*: "The Texas fever has treated us worse than the Cholera!

17. *Ibid.*, December 2, 1835.

18. *The Georgian*, December 3, 1835, quoting the *Columbus Sentinel* of November 27. The names of the Columbus volunteers are as follows: Wm. A. O. Wadsworth, Thos. B. Reese, S. A. I. Mays, J. L. Wilson, Hitchcock, Wm. W. Frazer, J. B. Rodgers, R. Slatter, S. Youngblood, H. McLain, N. R. Allen, J. Christie, H. Brown, C. Frazer, S. Simmons, J. Baldwin, J. C. B. Murphey, J. Gamble, C. C. Milner, T. Horry, J. M. Wilson, J. R. Watson, J. S. Brown, A. Ingram, M. Simmons, I. J. Goode, E. B. Helstrad, B. R. Chew, Atwell, Emmitt.

Our office is completely swept! Journeymen and apprentices, men and boys, devils and angels, are all gone to Texas. If our readers get an empty sheet or no sheet at all, don't blame us."¹⁹

Meetings of Texas sympathizers continued to be held in Georgia as late as September, 1836. On April 21, the very day of the battle of San Jacinto, the *Macon Telegraph* reported that "Captain Robert S. Patton, of this place, expects to leave for Texas in a few days, with all the men and means that he can carry to their assistance. Any individuals that are disposed to go with him can do so, free of expense, if they will report themselves without delay."²⁰ On the evening of September 2, a meeting was held at the Exchange in Savannah, and Levi S. D'Lyon presided over its deliberations. Aside from appointing a committee to solicit donations to aid volunteers in Texas, little recorded results from this assembly are known.²¹ The resolutions declared that Mexico had invited emigrants and that they responded after being guaranteed constitutional liberty,—"life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"; that their hopes along these lines had been disappointed; that the fight was not yet over; that the Texas revolution bore a striking resemblance to their own in which their forefathers poured out their life blood; and that it was hoped by all that, when Texas had established her independence, the United States would recognize her independent state.²²

19. *Macon Telegraph*, November 26, 1835. The same issue also mentioned the fact that thirty volunteers from Huntsville, Alabama, under Colonel Wyatt passed through Macon on November 8, enroute to Texas.

20. *Savannah Republican*, April 25, 1836.

21. *The Georgian*, September 6, 1835. The men appointed were Major W. P. White, Captain B. B. Sturges, S. E. Muse, W. H. Miller, L. Wylly, A. J. Pratt, W. D. Berrien, J. Bartow, Colonel A. Drysdale, James Stevens, Chas. Rossignol, Captain Thos. Bourke, P. G. Shick, and Colonel Isaac D'Lyon.

22. *The Georgian*, September 23, 1836. A similar meeting was held at Walthourville on September 7. It seems that the men attending this meeting assumed that Texas would be annexed to the United States. Colonel D. M. Stewart pointed out the advantages of volunteering and said that "Texas would be a great acquisition to the Southern Country."

Georgia Volunteers in Texas

The Macon volunteers, under the command of Wm. Ward, left Macon on November 18, 1835, for Montgomery, Alabama, by way of Columbus, Georgia, where they planned to join the Columbus Company. In the meantime, Miss Joanna E. Troutman of Knoxville, Crawford County, Georgia, had made a beautiful banner of white silk with a blue lone star upon it, and had Lieutenant McLeod to present it to the Company at Columbus. After presenting the flag, McLeod wrote a letter of acknowledgment to Miss Troutman:

Colonel Ward brought your handsome and appropriate flag as a present to the Georgia Volunteers in the cause of Texas and Liberty. I was fearful from the shortness of the time that you would not be able to finish it as tastefully as you would wish, but I assure you, without an emotion of flattery, it is beautiful, and with us the value is enhanced by the recollection of the donor. I thank you for the honor of being the medium of presentation to the company; and, if they are what every true Georgian ought to be, your flag will yet wave over fields of victory in defiance of despotism. I hope the proud day may soon arrive, and while your star presides none can doubt of success.²³

On one side of the flag appeared the words "Liberty or Death" and on the other *Ubi libertas habitat, ibi nostra patria est* (Where liberty resides, there our Country is). According to Knight, a Georgia historian, the flag was first unfurled at Velasco, January 8, 1836, and raised on the same liberty pole with the flag of Independence which had just been brought from Goliad by Captain William Brown. Further, according to Knight, the flag was taken to Goliad by Fannin's regiment and on receipt of the news of the Declaration of Independence was hoisted to the top of the flag pole. When it was being lowered at sunset, the silk of the "Banner of the Lone Star" became entangled in the halyards and was torn into shreds, only a small fragment remaining. That small fragment still waved when Fannin evacuated Goliad.²⁴

23. L. L. Knight, *Georgia and the Georgians* (Chicago, 1917), I, 593.

24. *Ibid.*, 595.

At Montgomery the Georgians took passage on the *Benjamin Franklin*, for Mobile. H. A. Slade, captain of the *Franklin*, referred to the volunteers as "fellow emigrants to Texas" and further described them as "the brave and patriotic band of emigrants from Georgia to Texas in the sacred cause of freedom and the rights of man."²⁵ They arrived at Velasco, at the mouth of the Brazos, on Sunday, December 20, aboard the schooner *Pennsylvania*, which they had boarded at New Orleans. They were welcomed there by Austin, Fannin, Wharton, and Archer. Austin, though ill, was then, in company with Wharton and Archer, on his way to the United States for assistance.

The Georgia volunteers who served in the Texas revolution, with a few exceptions, constituted the first three companies of the Georgia Battalion of Fannin's command. The first company had been enlisted by William A. O. Wadsworth at Columbus, Georgia, Fannin's home town. The company's original strength was about thirty-five, including men from Alabama and Mississippi who enlisted en route. At one time or another the names of forty-eight men appeared on the rolls of the company. The second company had been enlisted at Macon, by Major William Ward, with U. J. Bullock as captain. The probable greatest strength of this company at any one time was forty-six, while fifty-seven names appeared on the rolls from first to last. As in the case of Wadsworth's company, these men were not all from Georgia, some from Alabama and Mississippi having joined Ward on the way to Texas. This company was organized and mustered into service at Velasco, December 25, 1835. Ward likewise recruited the third of these companies, drawing his recruits from Macon and Milledgeville. This company was completed in November, 1835, with J. C. Winn as captain. If all those whose names appeared on the

25. *Mobile Daily Commercial Register and Patriot*, December 4, 1835.

rolls had remained in the company, its strength would have been forty-nine, but its actual strength was thirty-six.²⁶ The second and third of these companies were equipped with United States rifles borrowed by Ward from the arsenal of the State of Georgia.²⁷ These three companies from Columbus, Macon, and Milledgeville united at Velasco on December 22, 1835, to form the Georgia Battalion, with William Ward as Major.²⁸ The Georgians, having had little or no military experience, adopted two brilliant young soldiers, Joseph M. Chadwick, and John S. Brooks. Chadwick, who came to Texas from Illinois and who had spent two years at West Point, was made sergeant-major, while Brooks of Virginia, with one year's experience in the United States Marine Corps, was made adjutant.

On December 23, the day following the organization, the officers of the three companies addressed a communication to J. W. Fannin,²⁹ a native Georgian in Texas since 1834. The letter was, in effect, an invitation to Fannin to command their battalion. Among other things the letter said: "Be assured, Sir, that a welcome from any other source, however kind or respectable, could not have given rise to prouder feelings. As Americans we hail you as the Champion of liberty, as Georgians, we hail you as a brother—Actuated by

26. See Harbert Davenport, *Unfinished Manuscript*, State Library, Austin, Texas.

27. Wadsworth's staff was composed of Reese and Wilson, lieutenants; Smith, Mays, Wallace, and Neely, sergeants; McSherry, Brown, Murphy, and Kenyon, corporals. Bullock had Lamar and Patton as lieutenants; Hunt, Fowler, Ames, and Dickinson, sergeants; Munson, Freeman, Brown, and Vigal, corporals. Captain Winn's company was staffed by lieutenants Hughes and Brooks; sergeants Bates, Thorn, Callahan, and Hughes; together with corporals Gimble, Davis, Stevens, Powers, and Ray.

28. H. Cozart to *Southern Recorder*, December 24, 1835, in *The Southern Recorder*, January 26, 1836. Warren J. Mitchell, who later became major, was surgeon; David Holt was quartermaster, with H. Cozart and L. M. H. Washington as assistants; James Hughes was commissary, with Green B. Buchanan (Milledgeville) as assistant.

29. Fannin had received military training at West Point. He migrated to Texas in 1834; and when the difficulties arose at Gonzales in 1835, he raised a company of men known as the "Brazos Guards" and hastened westward. His company, for the most part, defeated the Mexicans at Concepcion where he won the title of the "Hero of Concepcion." At a later date he was sent west of the Trinity on a recruiting mission, but was ordered to Velasco in December, 1835. He went to Goliad about February 1, 1836. See H. S. Thrall, *A Pictorial History of Texas*, 532-539.

that inborn love of liberty and detestation of tyranny peculiar to the American character, and recently so eminently developed in you, we paused not to calculate the cost, but with arms in hand at once resolved to unite with our brethren in Texas, and share their destiny."³⁰

Fannin, in his reply, assured the battalion that, though he lived in Texas, he could never forget that he was a Georgian, and concluded by giving the men some sound advice, which many of them straightway forgot: "Engage not in the political affairs of Texas. Leave that to those who have learned. Mistrust any one who attempts to engage you in political discussion. A residence of one year and acceptance of your headright makes you a citizen with the privilege of one. I trust that no member of the Georgia Battalion will assume those rights sooner."³¹ The regiment, composed of the Georgia and LaFayette Battalions, was organized at Velasco with Fannin as Colonel in command. Ward was promoted to the lieutenant-colonelcy and Warren J. Mitchell became major of the Georgia contingent.

The men remained about one month at Velasco and then proceeded to Copano, where they were immediately dispatched to what was called the mission at Refugio, some twelve or fifteen miles from the coast. Three weeks after their arrival at the mission they were removed to Goliad, about twenty-seven miles away. They took possession of the fort there and remained until March 13, during which time Fannin ordered the families in the region around Refugio to remove to Goliad. All carts and teams within a radius of several miles had been impressed by the army and as a consequence some of the families failed to find the necessary transportation to leave the mission area. Therefore on

30. Ward, Mitchell, *et al.* to J. W. Fannin, December 23, 1835, in *Savannah Republican*, February 23, 1836. Those who signed the letter were Wm. Ward, Warren J. Mitchell, W. A. O. Wadsworth, David Holt, H. Cozart, James C. Winn, and U. J. Bullock.

31. *Savannah Republican*, February 23, 1836.

March 11, 1836, twenty-eight or thirty men under the command of Amon B. King were sent to remove them to Goliad. The company arrived at Refugio late in the afternoon of March 11, and found that local Mexicans had been plundering the deserted homes of some of the Irish colonists. King undertook to punish the marauders, and in so doing aroused the enmity of local people, Indians, and Mexican soldiers in such numbers as to require him to take refuge in the mission and to send a plea to Fannin for help. An Irish lad from Refugio reported King's plight to Fannin in the early afternoon of March 13.³²

Ward and the Georgia Battalion, therefore, were ordered in haste back to the mission to relieve Captain King. Samuel G. Hardaway, just slightly over 16 years of age and a member of the original Macon Company, was fortunate enough to escape misfortune during the horrible days which followed. In June of 1836, he wrote a letter to Dr. Robert A. Collins of Macon, in which he described the events which followed the dispatch of Ward and his men to the Mission. He said that Dr. Collins deserved a report since he had been principally instrumental in sending out the volunteers under Ward, and that he had furnished most of the financial support for the expedition. In reporting on Ward's expedition to Refugio, Hardaway wrote:

We marched about 3 A. M. and arrived there about 2 P. M. the same day. We found Captain King in the Church and a large company of Mexicans in sight across the river. We got into the Church, waited for darkness, forded the river, attacked and killed 25 with no loss on our side. Early the next day we went out to the Mexican Camp and burned some houses and supplies. The Mexicans began to be reinforced rapidly and we returned to the Church where we were soon attacked by the whole force.³³

After some delay, Fannin, who had been ordered by Houston to leave Goliad, sent orders to Ward to return to Goliad. In the meantime, however, King had been

32. See Davenport, *Unfinished Manuscript*, State Library, Austin.

33. Hardaway to Collins, June 6, 1836, in *Savannah Republican*, June 15, 1836.

sent out on a scouting party³⁴ and his force had been surrounded and completely annihilated. Ward, however, hearing the firing of shots in the direction King had taken, marched out to his relief, but soon found himself confronted by the Mexican General Urrea's entire force. Ward then retreated to the mission building and made preparation to make a desperate stand. Hardaway said, "We blockaded all the entrances with images, benches, pews, etc., which gave us an advantage." The mission building was an old ruin of stone, exceedingly vulnerable to assault from three sides, while on the fourth side there was a wall which enclosed an old cemetery. Captain Bullock and his Company of about thirty-five³⁵ were placed in this cemetery and the remainder of Ward's battalion occupied the ruins of the mission. "They came up bravely for awhile, received our rifle balls, fell, and were carried off, and others took their place."³⁶ The battle continued until towards evening, when Urrea and his superior force withdrew, but not out of sight. The battalion had taken only 36 rounds of ammunition to Refugio, and that meager supply had been practically exhausted. Ward, therefore, faced with immediate retreat or ultimate surrender, dispatched Murphy and Rodgers, both of Captain Wadsworth's Company, with an express to Fannin at Goliad.³⁷ They were both taken as were the messengers from Colonel Fannin to Ward. Finally, however, a message went through from Fannin with orders to abandon the church, blow up the fort, and retreat to Victoria instead of Goliad, where Fannin would join Ward.

34. There is some question about whether King had been ordered to reconnoiter or whether he, disgruntled because Ward had assumed command, had left of his own accord.

35. According to the muster roll published in 1836 Bullock had forty-three men. See, *Telegraph and Texas Register*, June 9, 1836.

36. *Savannah Republican*, June 15, 1836.

37. S. T. Brown, a native of Georgia, a member of Captain Bullock's Company, and a nephew of Colonel Ward, later wrote that the messenger sent by Ward was James Humphrey of Columbus, Georgia. Humphrey's name does not appear in any of the muster rolls of any of the three Georgia companies.

On the night of March 14, therefore, under cover of darkness, Ward and his men made their escape from the church through the woods and swamps so that they could not easily be pursued by the Mexican cavalry, but Ward took the road to Copano instead of to Victoria.

The Company crossed Melon Creek and destroyed the bridge to delay Urrea's pursuit. Ward then changed directions and tried to make his way to Victoria across the country, without guides, and with very few rounds of powder and ball. On March 16, the Company was lost on the prairie without water or food. Their suffering from thirst became acute, and Ward detached David Holt and a party of seven men to find water. The detachment became lost and were never able to rejoin their battalion. They were dispersed somewhere in the vicinity of Victoria, but all escaped to Texas settlements.

After untold suffering Ward's main force reached Victoria on March 21, only to find that the town had been occupied by the enemy. They were attacked, but managed to escape to the marshes of the Guadalupe, covering their retreat with their last round of ammunition. They spent March 21 in the swamps, during which time fifteen or more men escaped. Ward then rallied the remnants of his force and struck out in the direction of Dimmit's Point on the Lavaca, near Matagorda Bay.³⁸ One of Ward's men, S. T. Brown of Bullock's Company, later wrote of the events subsequent to their arrival at Dimmit's Point:

Next day, 22d March, we halted to rest and concealed ourselves within two miles of our destination, sent two men to the Point to see who was in possession and awaited their return. The remnant of the army which attacked the Mission, which was hovering over this quarter under General Urrea, took the two men prisoners and surrounded us. The two men came within speaking distance

38. See Davenport, *Unfinished Manuscript*, State Library, Austin.

of us, stated our situation and the power of the enemy, and desired Colonel Ward to see General Urrea on the terms of surrender.³⁹

Further, according to Brown's narrative, Colonel Ward, Major Mitchell, and Captain Ticknor (of Alabama) had an interview with General Urrea. The men seemed to understand that, if they surrendered, they would be returned to Copano and thence to New Orleans, or be detained as prisoners of war and be exchanged. Ward opposed surrender, as he said he doubted the faith and humanity of the Mexicans; but in view of his company's empty powder horns, no other course was open. At the time of the surrender Ward had about eighty-three of the approximately one hundred and nineteen which he had on March 14 when he left the Mission.⁴⁰ When the battalion left Refugio, Ward had about one hundred and nineteen men, Wadsworth, thirty-seven Bullock, forty-six, and Winn, thirty-six. Seven, including Bullock, were left sick at Velasco with one attendant; twenty-five had deserted or left without leave; one was shot at Velasco; and one was discharged. Two of Winn's Company were either killed in action or massacred at Refugio, and two of Wadsworth's Company were captured. On March 16, seven men were dispatched to find water and never rejoined the battalion. On the following March 21, seven men were probably massacred and ten were separated from the main force at Victoria. After the surrender, sixteen men were detained by the Mexicans as bridge builders on March 24, and all later escaped. Two were detained for other work and one escaped with Horton's Company.⁴¹ The next day the

39. S. T. Brown to Thomas Ward in *Voice of Sumter*, November 28, 1839 quoted in Baker, *A Texas Scrap Book*, 244-250.

40. *Savannah Republican*, June 15, 1836. Samuel G. Hardaway of Captain Bullock's Company, relates that on the second day after the departure from the Mission he, David Holt, Quartermaster of Fannin's Regiment, and several others left the Company in search of water and were never able to rejoin them. Hardaway, however, finally joined Houston's army and fought at the battle of San Jacinto.

41. Davenport, *Unfinished Manuscript*. State Library, Austin.

once proud Georgia Battalion was marched to Victoria. Soon afterward they were taken to Goliad; and Dr. J. H. Barnard, a physician in Fannin's Command, reported their arrival there as follows: "Colonel Ward and the Georgia battalion were this day brought in as prisoners . . . They had succeeded in getting across to the east side of the Guadalupe when General Urrea, with a superior force, came upon them. Wearied out, dispirited, with no ammunition or provision, they had no other alternative, and surrendered and were conducted back to Goloid."⁴²

The story of the horrible massacre of Fannin's men at Goliad on March 27 has been recounted many times. When the shooting began, S. T. Brown ran away but, even so, saw enough of the gruesome affair. He said that he saw Drury H. Minor of Houston county, Georgia, and a member of Bullock's Company, fall dead by his side, as well as T. S. Freeman of Macon, just in front of him and in the same file. He heard their cries and saw the sickening flow of their blood. Brown's escape was only temporary, and after his recapture he was taken again to Goliad. When he returned he found that Captain Miller's Company of eighty-two men from Tennessee were still in camp, not having been included in the mass shooting. One of these Tennesseans, Mr. Coy, told him of how his beloved Commander, William Ward, had died: "After all the men had been shot the time of the officers came. Colonel Ward was ordered to kneel, which he refused to do; he was told if he would kneel his life would be spared. He replied, they had killed his men in cold blood, and that he had no desire to live; death would be welcome. He was then shot dead."⁴³

42. J. H. Barnard's *Journal*, printed first in the *Goliad Guard* in 1875, reprinted in pamphlet form by the *Guard* in 1912, and reproduced in Linn, *Reminiscences of Fifty Years in Texas*, 148-182.

43. D. W. C. Baker, *A Texas Scrap Book*, 249.

In far away Georgia the rumors persisted that Ward and his men were still alive. The *New Orleans Bee* of April 8 reported that Captain Martin of the Schooner *Equity* knew on good authority that Fannin had fought his way successfully through the Mexican lines and had effected a junction with the Texas army under Houston.⁴⁴ *The Republican* announced through its columns of May 3, that it had news from Colonel Darrington, once a citizen of Macon, written on the margin of a New Orleans newspaper dated April 23, to the effect that he (Col. Darrington) had conversed with two gentlemen of respectability who had informed him definitely that Ward's party had reached Houston's army in safety. A few had been killed at the Mission, Darrington said, and a few had been lost in the Guadalupe bottoms for a few days, but that they, too, were safe.⁴⁵ The Honorable S. Grantland as late as May 8 wrote the editors of the *Columbus Sentinel* that Mr. Forsyth had that evening received a note from the Mexican Minister stating that the rumors which had been spread about the massacre of Fannin and Ward were absolutely without foundation. He said they were prisoners of war at Goliad.⁴⁶

The exact number of Georgians who paid with their lives at Goliad on March 27 is not known. From the best accounts it seems that thirty-seven of Bullock's men were at Goliad; of which nine were detained as physicians and workmen, two escaped, and twenty-six were shot. Of Winn's Company of thirty-eight, thirty-seven were shot, one having been detained. Wadsworth's small company of twenty-five were shot. It seems, therefore, that of Ward's men eighty-three paid the supreme penalty.⁴⁷

44. *Savannah Republican*, April 16, 1836.

45. *Southern Recorder*, May 8, 1836. Perhaps only one was killed at the Mission.

46. *Savannah Republican*, May 24, 1836. This was nearly two months after the tragic occurrence at Goliad.

47. D. W. C. Baker, *A Texas Scrap Book*, 243.