

From Georgia through the Guadalupe Swamp to San Jacinto

On the night of March 21, 1836, eight men from Lieutenant Colonel William Ward's Georgia Battalion hid in the Guadalupe Swamp. They had become separated from their battalion as it was returning from the Battle of Refugio. Ward was trying to rejoin Colonel James Fannin's main forces as they abandoned Goliad and moved toward Victoria. He did not know that Fannin and his men had already surrendered to the Mexican General Urrea after the Battle of Coleto. Ward and his remaining men subsequently surrendered to Urrea as they retreated toward Dimmit's Landing. Both groups of prisoners were marched back to Goliad, where they were gunned down in the Goliad Massacre.

Meanwhile, the surviving eight men of the Georgia Battalion hid separately in the swamp and neighboring grasslands until they moved individually at great risk and privation to join General Sam Houston's army at Croce's Landing. Privates Reason Banks, Charles Hicks, Allen Ingram, and John Lind made their way singly and joined different companies in Houston's army. At the same time, private Samuel Hardaway found privates Joseph Andrews, M.K. Moses, and James Trezevant together at an upstream crossing on the Guadalupe River. Moving east through enemy territory with no supplies, the four men crossed the Colorado River on a bale of cotton. They were eventually met by scouts from Houston's army and, having endured weeks of privation, were escorted to his camp. There, they joined Moseley Baker's company. All eight of this remnant of the Georgia Battalion fought in the Battle of San Jacinto, vindicating their lost comrades.

The Georgia Battalion and its few survivors were representative of the fate of the hundreds of youthful volunteers that comprised the army of Texas, many dying at the Alamo and Goliad. Their devotion to liberty became the rallying cry at San Jacinto.

The most enduring legacy of the Georgia Battalion was the blue star on the banner made for them by Joanna Troutman in Georgia. It flew over all of Fannin's men until the Battalion's demise. In 1913 the legislature of Texas officially recognized that blue star as the origin of the Lone Star on the flag of Texas.

[After San Jacinto, James P. Trezevant stayed in Texas and became a major in the Texas army. Samuel Hardaway wrote one of the most reliable eyewitness accounts of the Georgia Battalion's experience and later lobbied for a monument to the

Georgia Battalion at Goliad.]