

Georgia Battalion Monument

Albany, Texas

In early 1976, some folks in the town of Albany decided to right a wrong by constructing a monument as a bicentennial project. At first glance, their choice of this project seemed puzzling. The town and the county in which it was located were founded long after the events of the Texas War of Independence. Why would the fine people of Albany have an interest in a small group of young men from Georgia and Alabama who, with the exception of a very few, all gave their lives in the fight for Texas Independence? I wanted to understand why.

First, Albany is the county seat for Shackelford County, named for Dr. Jack Shackelford. Born in Virginia, Dr. Shackelford possibly spent a short time in Georgia before making a home in Alabama. In 1835, Dr. Shackelford organized and largely financed a company of men to fight for Texas. They became known as the Red Rovers, due to the color of their uniforms. Shackelford and the Red Rovers were assigned to a regiment of volunteers commanded by General Fannin. Dr. Shackelford led the Red Rovers and also attended to the medical needs of the entire regiment. Dr. Shackelford was with Fannin when he was forced to surrender. He escaped the massacre of the regiment at Goliad because he was needed to treat the Mexican wounded. Though the good doctor was never himself a member of the Georgia Battalion, he in all likelihood knew many of its members and treated a few. Still, I wondered about the connection with Shackelford and the Georgia Battalion and a memorial to it.

Delving deeper into the history of Albany, Texas, I found that many of the first settlers in the region came from Georgia. In fact, the town is named for Albany, Georgia, the original home of many of those Georgians. In those early days the newspapers of each of the Albanys would publish content from the other. Weddings, funeral notices, even advertisements tied the two communities together. Those ties continue today. Although proud Texans, the folks of Albany, Texas, still value their Georgia roots.

Traditionally, Georgians and Texans have another trait in common: righting perceived wrongs. It was one of the reasons so many young men came

to Texas to fight. The people of Albany feel the same. As you may know, in 1855 Texas promised to erect a monument specifically in the memory of the Georgia Battalion. This act was to repay the state of Georgia for arms sent along with the Georgia Battalion. The respective legislatures and governors of both states agreed to pay for the monument. That monument ever happened. Georgia is still waiting. This debt of honor is the prime reason the men and women of Albany built their monument. It was done entirely with contributions from local businesses and people.

The Georgia Battalion salutes the community of Albany, Texas, a place where the community's memories are long and only exceeded by their honor.

We have included several documents and photos of the memorial. You can also follow the included links for more information about this noble deed.

I strongly suggest paying the folks in Albany a visit. Visit the memorial. Tell the folks at the Chamber of Commerce or the Old Jail Museum we sent you. They just might have more to share.

If history is your passion there is much more to see in Albany, and its people are some of the most friendly you will find.

Rick Allen, June 2017