

Alabama and the Texas Revolution

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IN THE early 1830's the Anglo-Americans in Texas became involved in a quarrel with the Mexican government which terminated in a revolution in 1835. The Texans hoped to receive aid from the United States in their hour of trouble. In this they were not disappointed, and among the first states to offer assistance was Alabama. As a matter of fact, public sentiment in favor of giving assistance to the Texans had been somewhat aroused in that state even prior to the arrival of the news concerning the "Lexington of Texas" at Gonzales. This feeling attained considerable proportions as news came to Alabama of the fight at Gonzales and of the formation of an army to march against San Antonio. It reached its peak of indignation as the gruesome story of the tragedy at Goliad in March of 1836 was revealed through the medium of the Alabama newspapers. The numerous public meetings held in Alabama between October, 1835, and May, 1836, furnish eloquent testimony of this ill-concealed fact and show the deep interest the Alabamans had in the Texas cause.

In September, 1835, the Mexicans stationed at San Antonio demanded that the people of Gonzales surrender the cannon which they had for their protection. The Texans refused to give it up, and on October 1, a detachment of Mexican soldiers appeared in the vicinity of Gonzales; on the following day a skirmish occurred between the Texans and the Mexicans. The result, the return of the Mexicans to San Antonio, was of no importance except that it definitely resigned the Texans to war with Mexico and kindled anew in the United States a feeling of brotherhood for the Texans.¹

Just a little more than two weeks later, October 17, 1835, a group of Texan sympathizers held a meeting at the Shakespeare Theatre in Mobile, Alabama. They there resolved that "we shall do all in our power for the cause of Texas, consistent with the

¹Incidentally through the manifestation of brotherly love the men from the United States expected to be rewarded with a few hundred acres of rich Brazos bottom land.

duty we owe our own government."² A committee was appointed to solicit contributions in behalf of the people of Texas and to receive the names of volunteers who were disposed to go to Texas for the purpose of "sustaining the people of that country in their present struggle." The committee³ was also to report to an adjourned meeting to be held at the courthouse Tuesday, October 20. Within a short time after the adjournment on October 17, the sum of \$1,500 was subscribed by the citizens of Mobile, and several volunteers offered for service.⁴

Between October 17 and October 20 the movement to aid Texas gained momentum, and on October 20 a large and (the newspapers reported) enthusiastic crowd met at the courthouse in Mobile with W. D. Dunn presiding and J. T. Case acting as secretary. It was the sense of the meeting that the struggle then in progress was similar to that in 1776 and that it deserved all the assistance Alabamans could give. After commending and approving the devotion of the people of Texas to the Mexican Constitution of 1824 and praising the people of New Orleans and other places in the United States for giving aid to Texas, the meeting appointed a committee of twenty with plenary powers to solicit funds and volunteers for Texas.⁵ A copy of the proceedings of the meeting was prepared so that it could be sent to Texas by James B. Bonham, who attended the session. Bonham was to take the news of the meeting to the president of the Consultation which was, they thought, in session in Texas but which, because of a failure to get a quorum, did not meet until November.

The committee appointed on the evening of October 20 proceeded to work at once. The members assembled the next day with Isaiah D. Fuller as temporary chairman and S. V. V. Schuyler as temporary secretary. Colonel William D. Dunn,

²*Georgian*, October 31, 1835.

³The committee was composed of the following: John R. Blocker, Charles Lewis, C. B. Churchill, A. Dexter, John R. Reid, Colonel Horton, Isaiah D. Fuller, Edward Murray, C. C. Langdon, A. B. Cammack, Colonel Bonham, and Childers. See *Mobile Daily Register and Patriot*, October 19, 1835.

⁴*Mobile Mercantile Advertiser*, October 31, 1835.

⁵*Mobile Commercial Register and Patriot*, October 21, 1835. The committee was composed of Isaiah D. Fuller, Martin A. Lee, John R. Blocker, F. McVoy, General Griffin, John Wood, Edward Murray, Dr. R. Lee Fearn, John R. Reid, A. Dexter, David White, Jeremiah Austell, A. B. Cammack, S. V. V. Schuyler, C. C. Langdon, John C. Megginson, C. Cullum, Charles Lewis, B. L. Barnes, and Richard H. Redwood.

though not a member of the committee, was elected as permanent chairman; S. V. V. Schuyler was chosen as treasurer; J. C. Megginson was to do the secretarial work. Eight of the number were designated to perform the active and executive functions of the committee, working, however, under the supervision of the committee of the whole.⁶ After adjournment on October 21, the committee of eight held a short session⁷ and decided to call a mass meeting for Monday evening, October 27, to make "further efforts in behalf of Texas." This meeting was held according to schedule; subscriptions were taken, and several persons volunteered for service in Texas.

Urgent and earnest appeals for aid to Texas began to appear in the Alabama newspapers in the latter part of October. Among the prominent newspapers of that state which became articulate in the advocacy of military assistance were the *Southern Advocate* published at Huntsville and three papers published at Mobile: the *Daily Commercial Register and Patriot*, the *Mercantile Advertiser*, and the *Mobile Transcript*. Typical of these appeals is one found in the *Mercantile Advertiser* under the caption, "An Appeal to the People of the States to help their Brothers in Texas." It said, in part, that the situation of the Texans demanded not only the liveliest sympathies but such "assistance as will render them capable of offering resistance to the powers attempting to subjugate them." The cause of Texas was the cause of justice against oppression, the appeal said, and it continued:

If we aid them at all it must be effective-tangible. Of what avail would the mere expression of our sympathies be? Do our prayers or wishes give them a shield against knife or bayonet? Of what use are paper resolutions if not backed by money and men? Rise then, good men and true, and march to the aid of your brothers in Texas.⁸

On the night of October 31, a meeting was held by the friends of Texas at Huntsville, Alabama, and a company of volunteers was organized under the command of Colonel Peyton S. Wyatt for immediate service in Texas. It was announced at the meeting that the expedition would start out for the West on Monday, November 2.⁹

⁶The committee of eight was as follows: Dr. R. Lee Fearn, John R. Reid, S. V. V. Schuyler, David White, John C. Megginson, John Wood, Charles Lewis, and A. B. Cammack.

⁷Dr. R. Lee Fearn was made chairman of the executive committee and Charles Lewis, secretary.

⁸*Southern Advocate*, November 3, 1835, quoting the *Mercantile Advertiser*.

⁹*Ibid.*

About one month later, November 30, 1835, a mass meeting was held at Montgomery, Alabama, "to express sympathy and give aid to the revolutionists in Texas." As an inspiration to the Alabamans there were present at this session approximately one hundred volunteers from Macon, Georgia, on their way to Texas. Under the spell of Colonel H. J. Harwell's oratory and spurred on by the presence of the men from Georgia, a large number volunteered. Colonel Harwell urged all units "to emancipate that fertile portion of the globe from the arbitrary thralldom under which it groans" and warned the tyrant in Mexico to beware for "man will not be a slave."¹⁰ Those who volunteered at this meeting, fifteen in number, formed the nucleus around which Captain Isaac Ticknor organized his company of Alabama volunteers. This company was later to see service with Lieutenant Colonel William Ward at Refugio.¹¹ Before adjournment a communication, addressed to Stephen F. Austin and drawn up by a committee of three headed by H. J. Harwell, was agreed upon. Austin was assured of the sympathy of the Alabamans and was promised further aid in "men, money, and arms."

Meetings of the friends of Texas for the purpose of giving aid in the revolution continued to be held up to the early summer of 1836. Meetings after that time confined their activities principally to the adoption of resolutions urging the United States government to recognize the independence of Texas or proposing arguments to support annexation. At Mobile on January 18, 1836, a meeting assembled to hear Colonel Wolf, the agent from Texas. The friends of Texas again assembled at the courthouse at Mobile on April 2, prompted by the story of the fall of the Alamo. One speaker, impressed with the brutality of the Mexicans, expressed the feelings of those present when he said that "we view with abhorrence the unnatural

¹⁰*Telegraph and Texas Register* (Houston), January 30, 1836. It is most interesting to note that those who took the lead in such meetings as are here described and who vehemently and earnestly implored the people to unite to strike down the monstrous tyrant rarely ever enlisted in the service. Theirs was a less hazardous task.

¹¹The fifteen who volunteered were as follows: Isaac Ticknor, S. D. Green, John McGowan, S. W. Flournoy, W. P. DuBose, L. Eubanks, John Oliver, James Lanier, David Johnson, Samuel C. Pittman, Charles Abercrombie, M. B. Tatom, Burton Williams, William A. Smith, and Micharl Curale. The names of six of the above do not appear in later lists of Ticknor's Company. See *Telegraph and Texas Register*, November 9, 1836.

and savage massacre of the garrison at San Antonio—an indelible disgrace to the Mexican name.” The meeting, however, under the spell of the rumors of the impending quick advance of Santa Anna across Texas after the fall of San Antonio, quickly proceeded from speech-making to real business. A committee of ten¹² was appointed to take subscriptions from the citizens of Mobile. Another committee of three was also constituted to correspond with other towns in Alabama in an attempt to raise funds. John Melton, John Mayrant, and F. S. Blount made up this committee of correspondence.¹³ “The books were opened,” said the *Commercial Register*, and a sum between \$4000 and \$5000 was subscribed immediately. At the next Mobile meeting, held on April 9, the committee previously appointed reported that the cash collections already amounted to \$3,552. A new committee, R. D. James and M. J. Kenan, was chosen to receive all unpaid subscriptions, the entire sum to be paid to Samuel M. Williams, agent of Texas.¹⁴

The Texan sympathizers of Huntsville, Alabama, systematically and effectively organized their efforts in behalf of the Texas Republic at a meeting on May 2, 1836. A committee of twelve¹⁵ was appointed to report a resolution “requesting our Senators and Representatives in Congress to use all honorable exertions to have the independence of Texas recognized by the government of the United States.”¹⁶ Another group of men designated the “Texas Committee” was to receive contributions of money, arms, or other things of value; take applications of volunteers; dispose of funds to the best advantage; open correspondence with similar committees in other Alabama towns; call mass meetings when deemed necessary; promote general organization in behalf of Texas; and do all things “necessary and proper to promote the cause of Texas.”¹⁷ Committees of

¹²*Daily Commercial Register and Patriot*, April 5, 1836. The committee members were John Mayrant, Jr., R. D. James, M. J. Kenan, S. V. V. Schuyler, Martin A. Lea, David White, William Sayre, G. Walton, John F. Everett, and F. S. Blount.

¹³*Ibid.*

¹⁴*Ibid.*, April 12, 1836.

¹⁵John D. Phelan, General William A. Aikin, J. R. B. Eldridge, L. S. Banks, Captain William Routt, Colonel Joseph Taylor, Captain D. B. Turner, S. B. Spraggins, Colonel William Fleming, Captain William Robinson, John Robinson, and John A. Thompson made up the committee.

¹⁶*Southern Advocate*, May 10, 1836.

¹⁷Committee members: James J. Donegan, D. B. Turner, E. R. Wallace, Robert Fearn, Dr. David Moore, William H. Hollowell, and Samuel Peete.

three were appointed to operate in eleven other towns of Alabama: Triana, Whitesburg, Vienna, Cobb's, Brownsboro, Lowesville, New Market, Hazlegreen, Meridianville, Cross Roads, and Petty's.¹⁸ These committees were to function in the various towns and were to report to the "Texas Committee." This no doubt constituted the most effective working organization set up anywhere within the limits of Alabama.

Meetings designed to arouse interest and sympathy, receive donations, and urge volunteers to enlist were not the only means resorted to by Alabamans to aid the Texan cause. The *Daily Commercial Register and Patriot* of February 13, 1836, announced a theatrical performance to raise funds for the purchase of materials for the citizens of Texas, "especially in those parts through which emigrants continually pass. The inhabitants have furnished them until they have themselves become destitute." The announcement contained an appeal intended to stir a patriotic feeling among the people of Mobile.

The friends of Texas and of humanity, the descendants of heroes and patriots, all those who truly love the cause of civil and religious liberty, all who can sympathize in the wrongs and sufferings of their fellow beings are now called upon to make every exertion.¹⁹

The program was a dramatic performance starring a Mr. Forbes. A benefit concert was given in Mobile on April 8, 1836, to aid Texas. The announcement of this concert in the papers asserted that the well-known vocalist, Mr. A. F. Keene, would doubtless furnish gratifying entertainment and that the patrons would have the added satisfaction of having aided a worthy cause. There were to be no deductions for expenses.²⁰ This affair produced \$425 for the Texan cause.²¹ The evening of April 26 was likewise set apart in Mobile, this time to aid Texan exiles "now in town, under circumstances of peculiar distress

¹⁸For Triana, William A. Aikin, L. S. Banks, T. B. Murphy; for Whitesburg, William Terry, W. D. Hayes, Alfred Howell; for Vienna, L. Stone, John Kinneborough, T. J. Moore; for Cobb's, John C. Grayson, Bryant Cobb, R. D. Middleton; for Brownsboro, George Taylor, E. L. Scruggs, T. Hewlett; for Lowesville, George J. Weaver, William McDaniel, William Steward; for New Market, George T. Jones, Joseph Rice, W. B. Miller; for Hazlegreen, J. Taylor, Abner Tate, T. B. Coleman; for Meridianville, Dr. John F. Wyche, O. C. Sledge, V. G. Pruit; for Cross Roads, Sam Walker, John W. Estell, Dr. John H. Linns; and for Petty's, Robert Payne, Dr. Alfred Moore, and Stith B. Spraggins.

¹⁹*Daily Commercial Register and Patriot*, February 13, 1836.

²⁰*Ibid.*, April 8, 1836.

²¹*Ibid.*, April 9 and 14, 1836.

and privation."²² The brig *Tensaw* had arrived at Mobile on April 11, with forty refugees, mostly women and children, from Matagorda, Texas, and they reported that only four men were left in that town.²³ The refugees aboard the *Tensaw* addressed a letter to the editor of the *Commercial Register and Patriot* in which they described the horrors of the war in Texas, including an account of the hysterical flight of her people, but declared that "we do not crave your charity—our prayers are for our country."²⁴

Among the first companies of Alabama volunteers formed for the purpose of serving in the Texas army was the one organized at Huntsville under the command of Captain Peyton S. Wyatt. The company, made up originally of twenty men and known as the Huntsville Volunteers, left Huntsville on Sunday, November 8, 1835, equipped with fifty first-class muskets borrowed by Wyatt from the state of Alabama. These volunteers were accompanied some distance from town by the Huntsville Guard and a number of friends and well-wishers. The *Southern Advocate*, speaking of the departure of Wyatt and his Alabama volunteers, said that "he and his companions are accompanied in their patriotic pilgrimage by the warmest and best wishes of our community."²⁵ By the time Wyatt arrived at Nacogdoches early in December, 1835, his number had increased to about seventy, including a company of light infantrymen under the command of Captain Amon B. King of Kentucky, the two groups forming a battalion under the command of Captain Wyatt. In a letter dated December 10, 1835, Wyatt explained that he and his men had followed the overland route via Red River and Natchitoches to Nacogdoches but strongly advised that other volunteers take the New Orleans route. Wyatt, in glowing and extravagant terms, described the kindness with which he and his men were received along the way, detailing the presentation to him of a fine horse by A. E. Johnson at St. Augustine, with, as he said, "full Spanish rigging" and "an elegant gold watch" by Major George A. Nixon, chairman of the Committee of Vigilance and Safety of Nacogdoches, Texas. He said further:

²²*Ibid.*, April 26, 1836. The amount realized from such efforts was rarely ever given by the newspapers.

²³Houston began his retreat from Gonzales on March 13, and in a short time the retreat developed into what has been aptly described as the "run-away scrape."

²⁴*Daily Commercial Register and Patriot*, April 12, 1836.

²⁵*Southern Advocate*, November 10, 1835.

During our whole route from Natchitoches to this place, we have been received with open arms, and treated with distinguished respect. At St. Augustine we were met at some distance from the town by the inhabitants and escorted to our quarters. . . . Thence we proceeded to Nacogdoches where we were received with demonstrations of particular good will and quartered in the house of the chairman of the COMMITTEE OF VIGILANCE AND SAFETY. All our wants have been kindly attended to by citizens of this place—baggage wagons, carriages for our sick, arms, ammunition, and provisions furnished us.²⁶

After a rest at Nacogdoches Wyatt and his company, relieved from the fatigue of their trip and filled with new zeal and determination, proceeded across Texas. They reached Washington-on-the-Brazos late in December, 1835. On January 12, 1836, they were dispatched to relieve Captain Philip Dimitt and became, for the time being, the only garrison at Goliad. Wyatt joined the volunteers at Refugio about January 22, after which time his company, for various reasons, dwindled rapidly. Soon after its arrival at Goliad, James W. Fannin organized a voluntary artillery force, and six of Wyatt's men were transferred to this new group. Many of the men grew discouraged, and when Wyatt returned to Alabama in February, twelve of his men resigned and accompanied him. Six others were granted furloughs; thus the number was reduced to approximately thirty-four.

In addition to the Huntsville Company of Colonel Wyatt and numerous individual volunteers, Alabama furnished three other sizable companies for service in the Texas Revolution. The first was the Red Rovers, so-called from the color of their jeans uniforms, under the command of Captain Jack Shackelford. This company, numbering approximately fifty-five,²⁷ was enlisted largely at Courtland and Tuscumbia, Alabama, and was armed with muskets borrowed from the Alabama state arsenal. It landed at Matagorda Bay, January 19, 1836, and joined Fan-

²⁶Peyton S. Wyatt to the editor of the *Southern Advocate*, December 10, 1835, in *Southern Advocate*, January 19, 1836.

²⁷The number quoted is that given in the *Telegraph and Texas Register*. The number was sixty-six, according to Harbert Davenport, and sixty-two, according to John C. Duval in his book, *Early Times in Texas* (Reprint, Austin, 1935), 248, 249. J. J. Linn, in his *Reminiscences of Fifty Years in Texas* (Reprint, Austin, 1935), gives the same number as the *Telegraph*. The exact number constituting this or any other Alabama company in the Texas Revolution cannot be arbitrarily fixed for reasons generally known. In the first place, the muster rolls were burned at San Felipe in 1836, and in the second place, the personnel of the various organizations was daily undergoing change.

nin at Goliad about February 15. A second company, the Mobile Grays, under the command of Captain David N. Burke, numbered about thirty-five.²⁸ Burke and his company reported to the commanding general at San Felipe November 30, 1835, and were ordered to San Antonio. The company arrived at San Antonio too late to participate in the defense of the Alamo, but subsequently it joined Fannin at Goliad.²⁹

Captain Isaac Ticknor commanded the third of these companies, numbering about forty-one³⁰ and known as the Alabama Grays. These men were enlisted at Montgomery, Alabama, and were mustered into the service of Texas on January 19, 1836. They were assigned to the Georgia Battalion and sailed with it to Copano, below Goliad, on January 24. Ticknor and his company were with the Georgia Battalion when, on March 13, it marched to Refugio to relieve Captain King. The company was with Ward in the fighting on March 14, and Ticknor and fourteen of his men joined King on the night of March 17 in an attack on Lopez Ranch.³¹

These three companies together with the thirty-four in Wyatt's Huntsville Volunteers bring the total in Alabama organized companies to 165.³² These four companies served under Colonel James W. Fannin, whose command was organized into two bodies, the LaFayette and the Georgia Battalions, composing one regiment with Fannin as colonel; William Ward, lieutenant-colonel; Benjamin C. Wallace, major of the Lafayette Battalion; and Warren Mitchell, after

²⁸Harbert Davenport says thirty-eight; J. J. Linn says thirty-five, and J. C. Duval says thirty-four.

²⁹Burke was ordered to attend the Convention at Washington and was there ordered by Houston to go to Mobile on recruiting service. Instead, Secretary of the Navy Robert Potter sent Burke to Galveston, where he took charge of the brig *Pocket*. See Harbert Davenport, Unfinished Manuscript. Davenport made a study of some phases of Texan aid from the United States. This typewritten study is in the State Library, Austin.

³⁰Davenport says forty-two not including one who died at Mobile, three who were drowned at Velasco, January 21, 1836, two who were lost at Galveston, one who was accidentally shot at Goliad, February 11, 1836, and one who died of tuberculosis at Refugio, February 15, 1836. Linn says forty-two; Duval forty-one, the same figure given in the *Telegraph and Texas Register*.

³¹See Davenport, Unfinished Manuscript.

³²*Telegraph and Texas Register*, November 9, 1836. The *Telegraph* of this date has a list of the men who were supposed to have been in each of the companies under Fannin. Dr. J. H. Barnard, who was at Goliad at the time of the massacre, was the *Telegraph's* principal source of information. If the highest numbers in the various muster rolls are taken, the total rises to 177.

the promotion of Ward, major of the Georgia Battalion.⁸³ The organization of these two groups was completed in February, 1836.

Unfortunately the regiment was not kept intact.⁸⁴ When General José Urrea appeared with a large Mexican force in the vicinity of Goliad, Fannin ordered Captain King of the LaFayette Battalion to go to the aid of some families threatened by the Mexicans in the vicinity of the Mission of Refugio about twenty-two miles away. He encountered a large force of Mexicans there and therefore sent a dispatch to Goliad asking Fannin for relief. Fannin immediately sent Ward and his battalion to support him at the mission. With Lieutenant Colonel Ward at Refugio were all or part of four companies. Captain King's company of about twenty-eight men was originally at Refugio; but when Ward arrived, he and King quarreled about who should be first in command, King claiming it on the basis of having been first on the ground, and Ward, of course, insisting that, as lieutenant colonel of the entire regiment, he should have charge. A large majority of the men firmly declared that they would serve under Lieutenant Colonel Ward only; whereupon Captain King, with his twenty-eight men, withdrew and was followed by about eighteen men who had been detailed from Captain Bradford's Company (in charge of Wyatt's Alabama volunteers in Wyatt's absence), leaving Ward with a few more than one hundred men.⁸⁵ The companies remaining with Ward were the three companies from Georgia, under Captains Bullock, Wynne, and Wadsworth, together with Captain Ticknor's company from Montgomery, Alabama.⁸⁶

On the night of March 19 Captain Ticknor of the First Regiment of Texas Volunteers, mostly from Montgomery, Alabama, with a party of fourteen men, surprised the Mexicans about one mile from the mission, killed eight of them, and put the rest to flight. This seems to have been the only independent action engaged in by the Alabamans at Refugio. Soon thereafter Ward received orders to retreat to Victoria, where Fannin would join

⁸³John Henry Brown, *History of Texas* (2 vols.; St. Louis, 1892-1893), II, 542.

⁸⁴The scope of this treatise will not permit the inclusion of the details of the incidents here mentioned, as the purpose is to trace the activities of the volunteers from Alabama only.

⁸⁵Account of S. T. Brown (Bullock's Company) quoted in W. M. W. Baker, *A Texas Scrap Book* (New York, 1875), 244-250.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*, 245.

him. Ward obeyed orders and arrived at Victoria about March 21, only to hear that it had been occupied by the Mexicans. Ward then turned toward Dimmitt's Point but on arrival there was confronted by the enemy under the command of General Urrea. Surrender seemed the only alternative. Lieutenant Colonel Ward, Major Mitchell of the Georgia Battalion, and Captain Ticknor, the only Alabaman present with the rank of captain, held a conference with the Mexican commander, and terms were arranged, according to an eyewitness serving under Ward. There were only about eighty-five men with Ward at this time, the others having left the battalion while en route to Victoria.⁸⁷ Ward and his men were marched back to Victoria and thence to Goliad, where they arrived about March 22.

In the meantime Fannin had received orders from Sam Houston to retreat from Goliad to Victoria. Fannin had with him at that time six companies. They were the Red Rovers under Captain Jack Shackelford; Burke's Mobile Grays under command of Lieutenant J. B. McManomy (Burke being absent on a furlough); part of Wyatt's Huntsville Volunteers under the command of T. B. Bradford (Wyatt being then in Alabama on a furlough); the New Orleans Grays under Captain Samuel O. Pettus; the Mustangs under Captain Duval; and the Regulars under Captain Ira J. Westover.⁸⁸ These men were with Fannin at Coleta Creek and later shared his fate.

The retreat began on March 19, with the Red Rovers leading the van. The retreat was halted for sometime at the San Antonio River because the teams could not pull the cannon up the steep banks. Captain Shackelford of the Alabama Red Rovers reported:

I waded into the river myself, with several of my company, assisting the artillerists by putting our shoulders to the wheels and forcing the guns forward.⁸⁹

Early in the afternoon the retreat halted to let the teams rest. Captain Shackelford and the Red Rovers warmly opposed this delay and urged that the march continue to Coleta Creek, about five miles distant, where the men would have the protection of the timber. Shackelford later declared that the smiles of some of the men seemed to accuse him of being afraid

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, 247.

⁸⁸*Ibid.*, 250.

⁸⁹John Henry Foote, *Texas and Texans* (2 vols.; reprint, Austin, 1935), II, 231.

and of being interested in "taking care of number one." The delay proved fatal, as the Alabaman had warned; a Mexican cavalry force made its appearance about one hour after the retreat had been resumed but before the Alabamans had reached the wooded areas. In the battle which followed, which has been designated as the Battle of Coletto Creek, the order of battle was that of a hollow square with the Alabama Red Rovers and the New Orleans Grays forming the front line, the Alabama company being on the extreme right. In describing the fighting and the behavior of the men under his command, Captain Shackelford said:

I feel no hesitation in saying that the cool and undaunted courage, the fearless intrepidity and chivalrous bearing of many, very many would have done honor to Rome and Sparta in their proudest days of military glory.⁴⁰

"Fearless intrepidity and chivalrous bearing" were not enough as reinforcements, for the Mexicans made victory for Fannin impossible and surrender inevitable.⁴¹ After the surrender, Fannin and his own men were marched back to Goliad, where, on Sunday, March 27, with Ward's men, they were marched out and shot with the exception of a few who escaped or were spared because they were needed as workmen or as physicians.⁴²

Four companies from Alabama were marched out on that memorable March day, 1836. Of Captain Ticknor's company of approximately forty-one men, three escaped from Ward's division and did not fall into the hands of the enemy; four were detained as laborers;⁴³ and apparently none escaped after they were marched out.⁴⁴ It seems, therefore, that about thirty-five of Ticknor's men were massacred. Captain Peyton S. Wyatt's Huntsville Volunteers fared no better. Of his company of approximately thirty-four,⁴⁵ four escaped during Ward's re-

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, II, 234.

⁴¹For an account of the Battle of Coletto Creek, of Fannin's surrender, and of the controversial question of whether or not the surrender was at discretion see E. C. Barker, *Readings in Texas History* (Dallas, 1929), 277 ff.

⁴²J. H. Barnard, *The Goliad Massacre* (Goliad, 1912).

⁴³Davenport says that D. Greene and William Walsh were detained by the enemy at Victoria and that Edward Patterson and John O'Daniel, Jr., were detained later as boat builders.

⁴⁴*Telegraph and Texas Register*, November 9, 1836.

⁴⁵The *Telegraph and Texas Register* gives the number as thirty-four; Duval in *Early Times in Texas* gives thirty-three as the number; Davenport in his Unfinished Manuscript says that there were thirty.

treat; one was detained as a laborer; and one escaped on the morning of the massacre. This company, therefore, contributed twenty-seven to the holocaust of March 27. Of the thirty-five Mobile Grays, three were detained, and four escaped under fire, leaving twenty-eight who fell victims of Mexican brutality.⁴⁶ There were fifty-five Red Rovers, and all except four were killed.⁴⁷ The total number of Alabamans in these companies who died at Goliad on Palm Sunday, 1836, was about 141.

Although most of the men from Alabama fell at Goliad, many later rendered notable service in other fields during the revolution. Among these was Mosely Baker, a former legislator of Alabama who came to Texas about 1835 and who was among the first to raise a company for service in the revolution. Baker was one of Houston's lieutenants who opposed his retreat across Texas and who, when the retreat continued eastward from the Brazos, was left at San Felipe to prevent Santa Anna's army from crossing the river at that point. This he effectively did. San Felipe burned while Baker was in command, Baker always insisting that Houston gave the orders which resulted in the burning of the town. Baker was at San Jacinto and received a slight wound during the battle. When the war was over, he served in the Congress of the Republic of Texas from 1838 to 1839.⁴⁸

A. C. Horton, who perhaps has caused more controversy than all other Alabamans combined, came to Texas at an early date and settled in Wharton County. In the spring of 1836 he raised a small company of cavalry and went to the relief of the Texans at Goliad. Fortunately he took oxen with him to aid in the transportation of the cannon and other supplies on the retreat. He and his small cavalry group acted as scouts for Fannin on the retreat from Goliad. It appears that Horton was cut off from the main army when it arrived at Coletto Creek and, unable to get any reinforcements, found it impossible to rejoin Fannin's command. When the firing started at Coletto, Horton

⁴⁶The revised roll prepared by Davenport says that there were thirty-eight, that one was killed in action on March 19, that three escaped on March 27, and that four were spared on March 27. This would leave thirty who paid the penalty on March 27.

⁴⁷Davenport gives the number here as sixty-six. He says, however, that five escaped with Horton, that two were killed on March 19, that three were killed while trying to escape at Coletto Creek, that four escaped on the morning of March 27, and that one, Dr. Jack Shackelford, was spared. This would leave the number as fifty-one.

⁴⁸Homer S. Thrall, *Pictorial History of Texas* (St. Louis, 1897), 498.

and his men (perhaps about twenty-seven) were on reconnaissance ahead of the army; hearing the shots, Horton fell back to the point where a view of the engagement could be had.⁴⁹ Captain Jack Shackelford gathered the story of what happened here from two of his men, Second Lieutenant Francis and Joseph Fenner, who were with Horton. Shackelford said:

From the direction in which the enemy and ourselves were placed, it had very much the appearance of our commingling together, as they saw troops immediately in our front, and others on our rear, and on our flank;—that Horton's lieutenant, *Moore*, objected to going to our assistance; stating as his belief, that the enemy were within our lines, and that we must be cut to pieces; and immediately dashed off, taking the greater part of the force with him; that Horton manifested a willingness to go in; but after nearly all his men had left him, concluded the attempt, with the few men who remained, would be an act of desperation: that they immediately retreated to Victoria, where they expected to unite with a Texan force; but on reaching that place, found that the troops who had been stationed there, had retreated; and that a large force of Mexicans was but a few miles off. From the statements of these two men, I did not in the least blame Horton. He might have made the attempt to get in; but I candidly believe, even with the whole of his force, he could never have cut his way through such an immense number of Mexican cavalry.⁵⁰

James Butler Bonham was a South Carolinian, but his residence was in Alabama in 1835. He was among the first in the state to urge that Alabamans give aid to Texas and gave weight to his recommendations by going to Texas along with other volunteers. He met William Barrett Travis at San Felipe, from which place he proceeded to San Antonio and the Alamo. He was dispatched by Travis for aid and returned just a few hours before the massacre took place.⁵¹

Other Alabamans who were at San Jacinto or otherwise served notably were many. M. Cartwright, A. M. Hallmark, John F. Pettus, Michael Putman, Rufus Grimes, John H. Jenkins, L. M. Rogers, W. D. Thomas, Jesse Thompson, Hiram Thompson, W. H. Jack, Patrick C. Jack, George Sutherland, and Robert H. Williams all rendered distinguished service from the days of the early quarrels with Mexico in 1832 to the Battle of San Jacinto in 1836. Some rendered service other than in the army; they helped guide Texas through the years of chaos and revolution into the American Union.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 555.

⁵⁰H. S. Foote, *Texas and Texans*, II, 236.

⁵¹John Henry Brown, *Indian Wars and Pioneers of Texas*, 130.