

SWEENY RESIDENTS DESCEND FROM GOLIAD SURVIVORS

By Henry Hanson

Remember your seventh grade Texas History?

The battle cry for Thomas Jefferson Sweeny and his brother William Burrell Sweeny, at the battle of San Jacinto was "Remember the Alamo, Remember Goliad (La Bahia)".

There was a general cry which pervaded the ranks: 'Remember the Alamo! Remember La Bahia!' These words electrified us all.--[Thomas J. Rusk](#), Secretary of War referring to the defeat of the Mexican Centralista Forces at San Jacinto

A park ranger at Goliad once told us "While more men died at Goliad than the Alamo, Goliad is less known because John Wayne wasn't there." (Basil Shannon)





There were three major battles for Texas Independence from Mexico: San Jacinto, the battle of the Alamo where no Texas soldiers survived and the battle of Goliad where on 27 March

1836, 320 Texas soldiers surrendered after a brief encounter only to be lined up and shot in the back. Of those 320 soldiers, after the first volley 28 survived by running for the protection of the San Antonio river when the Mexicans reloaded their rifles.

Of those 28 survivors two men Thomas Kemp and Dillard Cooper would have descendents that lived in the **Sweeny** area and attend **Sweeny** Schools.

THOMAS KEMP was born in St. Helena Parish Louisiana in 1819. After his war years he married Elizabeth Scott on 18 September 1851 in Houston, Harris County, Texas. Elizabeth was formally married to Richard Brownfield Darst, another soldier at San Jacinto.

Thomas and Elizabeth had two children, Clarence Delanour Kemp, and Talitha Kemp. Clarence born in 1852, in Monroe Parish Louisiana but his parents moved back to Texas before his sister Talitha born in 1855 and it is believed she died as a infant.

Thomas Kemp apparently received bounty land before he died about 1855. Thomas's son Clarence owns 3 and 1/6 leagues of land when he married Sarah Jane Crawford in 1875. In the 1880's Clarence Kemp opens a mercantile store in a community named Iago six miles North of Boling in southern Wharton County on FM 1301.

When the community petitioned for a U. S. Post Office, Clarence Kemp becomes Post Master. Kemp became Sheriff of Wharton County in 1914 and serves until 1921. After Clarence Kemp completed his term as Sheriff, he returned to cattle ranching with his partner M. D. Taylor.

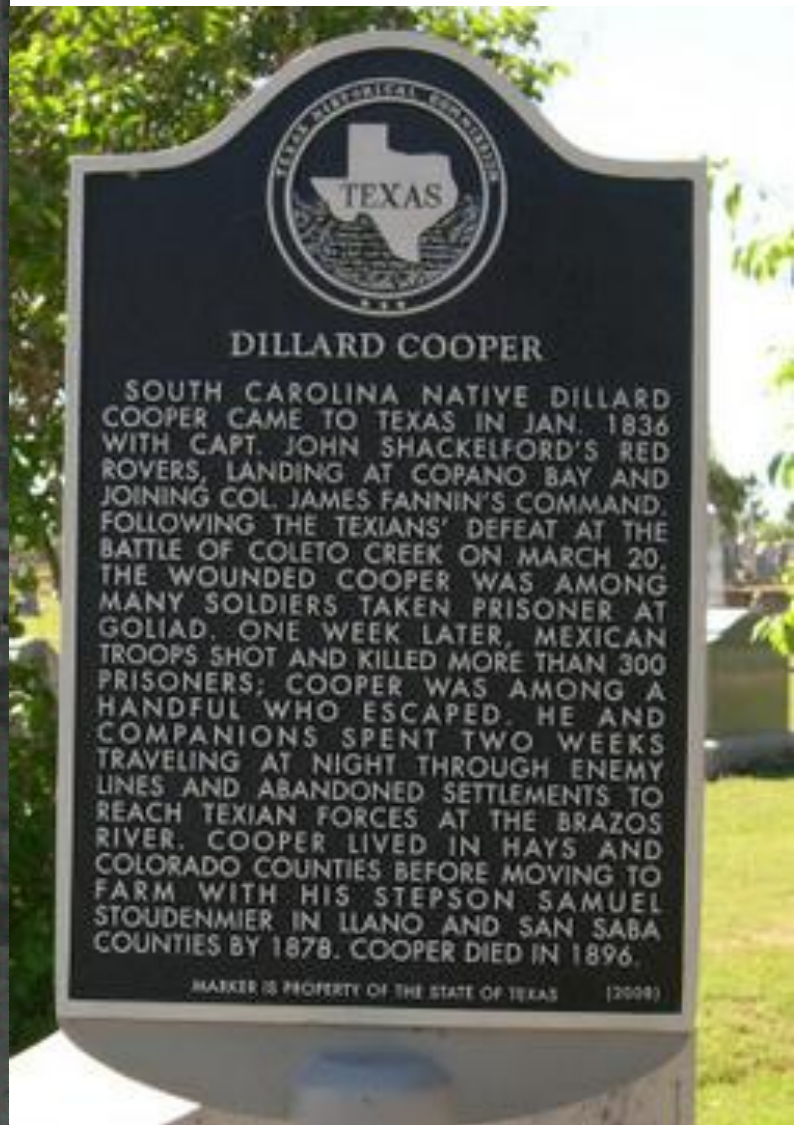
Clarence Kemp and his wife Sarah Crawford had three children. Their son Taylor Dickson Kemp married a lady from Colorado County and they had four children. **The eldest son Taylor Kemp (his adopted son Jack) and his youngest brother James Kemp lived in Old Ocean Acres and both worked for American Oil Company near Sweeny, Texas,** while the middle brother Clarence Smith Kemp became a Optometrist and practiced in Bryan, Brazos County, Texas.

DILLARD COOPER, was born in South Carolina 10 September 1814. He and his wife, Lucinda Fondren, lived in Alabama and Tennessee, where their first two sons William Jasper and Albert Newton, were born before moving to Texas

After Texas Independence, Dillard Cooper returned to Alabama and gathered his family and they moved to Texas settling first in Columbus, Colorado County where the story of his escape was published in the Columbus Citizen newspaper.*1 Following the war for Texas Independence , Dillard Cooper and his wife Lucinda had three more children, Samuel Dillard Cooper, Malissa Adeline Cooper, Elizabeth Jane Cooper. After the death of his first wife, Lucinda, **DILLARD COOPER** married a widow, Mrs. Elizabeth E. Gholson, in October 1878. They moved to Llano, San Saba County, Texas . After Elizabeth's death, Dillard married Amanda Talk on July 19, 1883.

Dillard lived in Llano until his death in 1896 and was buried in the Llano City Cemetery. Members of the Sons of the Republic of Texas dedicated the grave of Dillard Cooper with an Obelisk marker.*2 In November 2008 the Texas Historical Commission placed a historical marker at Dillard Cooper's grave.





Dillard Cooper's daughter Malissa Adeline Cooper married John Calvin Oakes and they had eight children and their youngest daughter Mary Jane Oakes married Charles Besch and they had seven children. Their oldest son John A. Besch married Violet Blanche Smidt and they had four children, their youngest John Paul Besch, married Wanda Windham. Paul and Wanda have two daughters, Dinah Marie Besch the wife of Robert Scott Phillips and Paula Kaye Besch the wife of Darrell Nolen Smith.

Both Dinah Phillips and Paula Smith and their families remain in the **Sweeny** area today.

GOLIAD MASSACRE~(27 March 1836)

Copied from

http://www.fold3.com/page/1038_escaped_the_goliad_massacre_in_1836/stories/#2974/

As part of the Mexican invasion of Texas in early 1836, Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna and his main force of at least 5000 men followed an inland route toward San Antonio. At the same time, Mexican General Jose Urrea with some 900 troops, left Matamoros and followed a coastal route into Texas.

The first town approached by Urrea was San Patricio, where on February 27 he encountered Frank Johnson and about 50 Texans. Johnson and four of his men escaped, but the rest were either killed or captured. A few days later, the Mexicans also fell upon James Grant and another 50 men, and all but one of the Texans were killed.

Citizens of Refugio, the next town in Urrea's path, were slow to evacuate. To provide assistance, James W. Fannin, commander of forces at Goliad, sent two relief forces. The first of these groups numbered about 30 men under Aaron King, followed by a larger group of some 150 men under William Ward. Like Johnson's force, both of these groups were eventually killed or captured by the Mexicans.

Meanwhile back in Goliad, Fannin and his remaining force of about 350 were called on to aid William Barrett Travis and the Alamo defenders. Afterwards, he was also ordered by Sam Houston to retreat with back to Victoria. Due to indecision and carelessness by Fannin, however, he failed to accomplish either of these missions.

After a delay of about five days following Houston's order, Fannin finally began his retreat. It was not long, however, before the Texans found themselves surrounded on open prairie. Several attacks by Urrea resulted each time in the Mexicans being repulsed by the deadly fire of the Texans. By dusk, the Texans had lost about sixty men killed or wounded against some 200 of the Mexicans.

Still heavily outnumbered and with no water and few supplies, the Texans waved the white flag of truce the following morning. Believing that they would be taken captive and eventually returned to their homes, the Texans surrendered the morning of March 20. They were escorted back to Goliad as prisoners.

When news of their capture reached Santa Anna, however, he was furious that the Texans had not been executed on the spot. Citing a recently passed law that all foreigners taken under arms would be treated as pirates and executed, Santa Anna sent orders to execute the Goliad prisoners.

Santa Anna's orders were followed. On Palm Sunday, the 27th of March, the prisoners were divided into three groups, marched onto open prairie, and shot. Thus, all of Fannin's command except a few that managed to escape and several physicians and others deemed useful by the Mexicans, were massacred, collected into piles, and burned.

Like the defenders at the Battle of the Alamo who died only three weeks earlier, the men of Goliad served as martyrs for the remaining forces in Houston's army. Three weeks later, the Texans sought their revenge. Inspired by cries of "Remember Goliad" and "Remember the Alamo," the outnumbered Texans won one of history's most decisive victories at the Battle of San Jacinto.

ANOTHER ACCOUNT:

At dawn of day, on Palm Sunday, March 27th, the Texans were awakened by a Mexican officer, who said he wished them to form a line, that they might be counted. The men were marched out in separate divisions, under different pretexts. Some were told that they were to be taken to Copano, in order to be sent home ; others that they were going out to slaughter beeves ; and others, again, that they were being removed to make room in the fort for Santa Anna. Dr. Shackelford, who had been invited by Colonel Guerrier to his tent, about a hundred yards southeastwardly from the fort, says: " In about half an hour, we heard the report of a volley of small-arms, toward the river, and to the east of the fort. I immediately inquired the cause of the firing, and was assured by the officer that ' he did not know, but supposed it was the guard firing off their guns.' In about fifteen or twenty minutes thereafter, another such volley was fired, directly south of us, and in front.

At the same time I could distinguish the heads of some of the men through the boughs of some peach-trees, and could hear their screams. It was then, for the first time, the awful conviction seized upon our minds that treachery and murder had begun their work ! Shortly afterward, Colonel Guerrier appeared at the mouth of the tent. I asked him if it could be possible they were murdering our men. He replied that ' it was so ; but he had not given the order, neither had he executed it.' "

In about an hour more, the wounded were dragged out and butchered. Colonel Fannin was the last to suffer. When informed of his fate, he met it like a soldier. He handed his watch to the officer whose business it was to murder him, and requested him to have him shot in the breast and not in the head, and likewise to see that his remains should be decently buried. These natural and proper requirements the officer promised should be fulfilled, but, with that perfidy which is so prominent a characteristic of the Mexican race, he failed to do either ! Fannin seated himself in a chair, tied the hand-kerchief over his eyes, and bared his bosom to receive the fire of the soldiers.

As the different divisions were brought to the place of execution, they were ordered to sit down with their backs to the guard. In one instance, " young Fenner rose on his feet, and exclaimed, ' Boys, they are going to kill us%u2014die with your faces to them, like men !' At

same moment, two other young men, flourishing their caps over their heads, shouted at the top of their voices, ' Hurrah for Texas !' "

Many attempted to escape ; but the most of those who survived the first fire were cut down by the pursuing cavalry, or afterward shot. It is believed that, in all, twenty-seven of those who were marched out to be slaughtered made their escape ; leaving three hundred and thirty who suffered death on that Sunday morning.*

* Number of prisoners at Goliad, on the 27th of March, according to Portilla 445

Major Miller's command (80)

Physicians and attendants (8)

Escaped from the slaughter (27)= 115 total spared/escaped

Number who suffered death 330

Names of those who escaped, according to Dr. Shackelford : %u2014

New Orleans Grays : William L. Hunter, William Brannon, John Reese, David Jones, B. H. Holland.

Huntsville Volunteers : Bennett Butler, Milton Irish.

Mustangs : William Morer, John C. Duval, William Mason, John Holliday, John Van Bibber, Charles Spain, Sharpe.

Burke's Company: Herman Eremby, **Thomas Kemp**, N. J. Devany. Horton's Company : Daniel Martindale, William Hadden, Charles Smith. Red Rovers : Isaac D. Hamilton, **D. Cooper**, L. M. Brooks, William Simpson. Company not recollected : N. Rosen, William Murphy, John Williams. Foote, vol. ii., p. 244.

The dead were then stripped, and their naked bodies thrown into piles. A few brush were placed over them, and an attempt made to burn them up, but with such poor success, that their hands and feet, and much of their flesh, were left a prey to dogs and vultures! Texas has erected no monument to perpetuate the memory of these heroic victims of a cruel barbarism ; yet they have a memorial in the hearts of their countrymen more durable than brass or marble.

Colonel Fannin doubtless erred in postponing for four days the obedience to the order of the commander-in-chief to retreat with all possible dispatch to Victoria, on the Guadalupe ; and also in sending out Lieutenant-Colonel Ward in search of Captain King. But these errors sprang from the noblest feelings of humanity : first, in an attempt to save from the approaching enemy some Texan settlers at the mission of Refugio ; again, in an endeavor to rescue King and his men at the same place ; and, finally, to save Ward and his command%u2014until all was lost, but honor.

The "public vengeance" of the Mexican tyrant, however, was satisfied. Deliberately and in cold blood he had caused three hundred and thirty of the sternest friends of Texas%u2014her friends while living and dying%u2014to tread the winepress for her redemption. He chose the Lord's day for this sacrifice. It was accepted; and God waited his own good time for retribution%u2014a retribution which brought Santa Anna a trembling coward to the feet of the Texan victors, whose magnanimity prolonged his miserable life to waste the land of his birth with anarchy and civil war !

1. [Goliad Massacre-Diverse Survivor Accounts](#)

www.tamu.edu/faculty/ccbn/.../goliaddiverse.htm

Escape of the Four [Alabama Red Rovers](#)

Dillard Cooper's Remembrances of the Fannin Massacre

From Rangers and Pioneers of Texas by A.J. Sowell 1884 as reprinted from the American Sketch Book 1881. According to James T. DeShields in Tall Men With Long Rifles, Cooper died in extreme poverty in the 1890's in Llano, TX stating "during his latter years the pitiful pension of \$150.00 a year, provided by the great and opulent state of Texas, barely sufficed to buy food and medicines for the aged hero and his faithful wife. Napoleon was not far wrong when he said 'Republics are ungrateful.'"

.....several....cried out for mercy. I remember one, a young man, who had been noted for his piety, but who had afterwards become somewhat demoralized by bad company, falling on his knees, crying aloud to God for mercy, and forgiveness. Others, attempted to plead with their inhuman captors, but their pleadings were in vain.....On my right hand, stood Wilson Simpson, and on my left, Robert Fenner....while some of them were rending the air with their cries of agonized despair, Fenner called out to them, saying: "Don't take on so, boys; if we have to die, let's die like brave men.....At that moment, I glanced over my shoulder and saw the flash of a musket....."

On the morning of the 27th of March, 1836, about daylight, we were awakened by the guards, and marched out in front of the fort, where we were counted and divided into three different detachments, We had been given to understand that we were to be marched to Capono, and from there shipped to New Orleans. The impression, however, had in some way been circulated among us, that we were to be sent out that morning to hunt cattle; though I thought at the time that it could not be so, as it was but a poor way, to hunt cattle on foot.

Our detachment was marched out in double file, each prisoner being guarded by two soldiers, until within about half a mile southwest of the fort, we arrived at a brush fence, built by the Mexicans. We were then placed in single file, and were half way between the guard and the fence, eight feet each way. We were then halted, when the commanding officer came up to the head of the line, and asked if there were any of us who understood Spanish. By this time, there began to dawn upon the minds of us, the truth, that we were to be butchered, and that, I suppose, was the reason that none answered. He then ordered us to turn our backs to the guards. When the order was given not one moved, and then the officer, stepping up to the man at the head of the column, took him by the shoulders and turned him around.

By this time, despair had seized upon our poor boys, and several of them cried out for mercy. I remember one, a young man, who had been noted for his piety, but who had afterwards become somewhat demoralized by bad company, falling on his knees, crying aloud to God for mercy, and forgiveness. Others, attempted to plead with their inhuman captors, but their pleadings were in vain, for on their faces no gleam of piety was seen for the defenseless men who stood before them. On my right hand, stood Wilson Simpson, and on my left, Robert Fenner. In the midst of the panic of terror which seized our men, and while some of them were rending the air with their cries of agonized despair, Fenner called out to them, saying: "Don't take on so, boys; if we have to die, let's die like brave men."

At that moment, I glanced over my shoulder and saw the flash of a musket; I instantly threw myself forward on the ground, resting on my hands. Robert Fenner must have been instantly killed, for he fell with such force upon me as almost to throw me over as I attempted to rise, which detained me a few moments in my flight, so that Simpson, my companion on the right, got the start of me. As we ran towards an opening in the brush fence, which was almost in front of us, Simpson got through first, and I was immediately after him. I wore, at that time, a small, round cloak, which was fastened with a clasp at the throat. As I ran through the opening, an

officer charged upon me, and ran his sword through my cloak, which would have held me, but I caught the clasp with both hands, and tore it apart, and the cloak fell from me. There was an open prairie, about two miles wide, through which I would have to run before I could reach the nearest timber, which was a little southwest of the place from where we started.

I gained on my pursuers, but saw, between me and the timber, three others, who were after Simpson. As I neared the timber, I commenced walking, in order to recover my strength, before I came near them. When he first started, we were all near together, but as Simpson took a direct course across the prairie, I, in order to avoid his pursuers, took a circuitous course. There were two points of timber projecting into the prairie, one of which was nearer to me than the other. I was making for the furthest point, but as Simpson entered the timber, his pursuers halted, and then ran across and cut me off, I then started for the point into which Simpson had entered, but they turned and cut me off from that. I then stopped running and commenced walking slowly between them and the other point. They, no doubt, thinking I was about to surrender myself, stopped, and I continued to walk within about sixty yards of them, when I suddenly wheeled and ran into the point for which I had first started. They did not attempt to follow me, but just as I was about to enter the timber, they fired, the bullets whistling over my head caused me to draw my head down as I ran.

As soon as I entered the timber, I saw Simpson waiting and beckoning to me. I went towards him, and we ran together for about two miles, when we reached the river. We then stopped and consulted as to the best way of concealing ourselves. I proposed climbing a tree, but he objected, saying that should the Mexicans discover us, we would have no way of making our escape. Before we arrived at any conclusion, we heard some one coming, which frightened us so, that I jumped into the river, while Simpson ran a short distance up it, but seeing me, he also jumped in. The noise proceeded from the bank immediately above the spot where Simpson was, and I could see the place very plainly, and soon discovered that two of our companions had made their escape to this place. They were Zachariah Brooks, and Isaac Hamilton. In the fleshy part of both Hamilton's thighs were wounds, one made by a gun-shot and another by a bayonet.

We all swam the river, and traveling up it a short distance, arrived at a bluff bank, near which was a thick screen of bushes, where we concealed ourselves. The place was about five miles above the fort. We did not dare proceed further that day, as the Mexicans were still searching for us, and Hamilton's wounds had become so painful as to prevent his walking, which obliged us to carry him. We remained there until about 10 o'clock that night, when we started forth, Simpson and myself carrying Hamilton, Brooks, though severely wounded, was yet able to travel. We had to proceed very cautiously and rather slowly.

Fort La Bahia being southeast of us, and the point we were making for, was about where Goliad now stands. We proceeded, in a circuitous route in a northeasterly direction. We approached within a short distance of the fort, and could not at first account for the numerous fires we saw blazing. We were not long in doubt, for the sickening smell that was borne towards us by the south wind, informed us too well that they were burning the bodies of our companions. And, here, I will state what Mrs. Cash, who was kept a prisoner, stated afterwards; that some of our men were thrown into the flames and burned alive. We passed the fort safely, and reached a spring, where we rested from our journey and from whence we proceeded on our travels.

But the night was foggy, and becoming bewildered, it was not long before we found ourselves at the spring from which we started. We again started out, and again found ourselves at the same place; but we had too much at stake to sink into despondency. So once more took our wounded companion, thinking we could not miss the right direction this time; but, at last when day began to break, to our great consternation, we found we had been traveling around the same spot, and were for the third time back at the identical spring from which we had at first set forth. It was now impossible to proceed further that day, as we dared not travel during the day, knowing we should be discovered by the Mexicans. We therefore concealed ourselves by the side of a slight elevation, amidst a thick undergrowth of bushes.

By this time, we began to grow very hungry, and I remembered an elm bush that grew at the entrance of the timber where we were concealed, which formed an excellent commissary for us, and from the branches of which we partook, until nearly every limb was entirely stripped. About 9 o'clock that morning, we heard the heavy tramp of the Mexican army on the march; and they not long after that passed within a stone's throw of our place of concealment. It seems indeed, that we were guided by an over-ruling providence in not being able to proceed further that night, for as we were not expecting the Mexican army so soon, we would probably have been overtaken and discovered by them, perhaps in some prairie, where we could not have escaped.

We remained in our hiding place the rest of the day, and resumed our journey after dark, still carrying our wounded companion. Whenever the enemy passed us, we had to conceal ourselves; and we laid several days in ponds of mud and water, with nothing but our heads exposed to view. When in the vicinity of Lavacca, we again got ahead of the Mexicans; and, after traveling all night, we discovered, very early in the morning of the ninth day, a house within a few hundred yards of the river. We approached it, and found the inhabitants had fled. When we entered the house, we discovered a quantity of corn, some chickens, and a good many eggs lying about in different places. Our stomachs were weak and revolted at the idea of eating them raw, so we looked about for some means of striking a fire, first searching for a rock, but failing to find one, we took an old chisel and ground it on a grindstone for about two hours, but could never succeed in getting the sparks to catch. We then concluded to return and try the eggs raw.

We had taken one, and Simpson was putting on his shoes, which he had taken off to rest his feet, which were raw and bleeding, and had just got one on when he remarked: "Boys, we would be in a tight place if the Mexicans were to come upon us now." So saying, he walked to the window, when to his horror, there was the whole Mexican army not more than a mile and a half off, and fifteen or twenty horsemen coming at full speed within a hundred yards of us. We took up our wounded man and ran to the timber, which was not far off, Simpson leaving his shoe behind him. We got into the timber and concealed ourselves between the logs of two trees, the tops of which having fallen together, and being very thickly covered with leaves and moss, formed an almost impenetrable screen above and around us. We had scarcely hidden ourselves from view, when the Mexicans came swarming around us, shouting and hallooing through the woods, but did not find us. We heard them from time to time, all throughout the day and next night. The next morning, just before day, the noise of the Mexicans ceased, and we concluded they had left. Simpson then asked me to go with him to get his shoe, as it would be difficult for him to travel without it, and I consented to do so. We went out to the edge of the timber and stopped some time to take observations before proceeding further. Seeing nothing of the Mexicans, we proceeded to the house, found the shoe, and possessing ourselves of a couple of ears of corn, and a bottle of water, we returned to our companions. We had no doubt that the Mexicans had gone, so we sat down and drank the water and ate an ear of corn, when Brooks asked Simpson to go with him to the house, saying he would get a chicken, and we could eat it raw. They started, and had hardly got to the edge of the timber when I heard the sound of horses feet, and directly afterwards the Mexicans were to be seen in every direction. I was sure they had captured Simpson and Brooks. Soon I heard something in the brush near us, but did not know whether it was the boys or Mexicans, but it turned out to be the boys, who crept undercover, and, in a few minutes, four Mexicans came riding by, passing within a few feet of where we were lying, with our faces to the ground.

After going into the woods a short distance they turned and passed out again, but it was not long after when six of them came riding quite close, three on each side of us, and leaning down and peering into our hiding place. It seemed to me they could have heard us, for my own heart seemed to raise me almost from the ground by its throbbings. I felt more frightened than I ever had been before; for at the time of the massacre, every thing had come on me so suddenly that my nerves had no time to become unstrung as they now were. The Mexicans passed and repassed us, through the day, so we dared not move from our hiding place. A guard was placed around us the following night, the main body having, no doubt, gone on, and left a detachment to search for us. I think they must have had some idea of our being some of Fannin's men, or they would scarcely have gone to that trouble. About 10 o'clock that night we held a consultation, and I told my companions it would not do to remain there any longer, as the Mexicans were aware of our place of concealment, and would surely discover us the next day. We all decided then to leave, and they requested me to lead the way out. I told them we would

have to crawl through the timber and a short piece of prairie, until we crossed the road near which the Mexicans were posted; that they must be careful to remove every leaf and stick in the path, and to hold their feet up, only crawling on their hands and knees, as the least noise would betray us to the enemy.

I was somewhat acquainted with the locality; for we were now not far from Texana, and I had some times hunted along these woods. Thus I led the way. Hamilton's wounds were so painful that we could move only slowly, and we must have been two hours crawling about 200 yards. When we at length passed the timber and reached the road, I stopped to make a careful survey of the situation. I could see the Mexicans placed along the road, about a hundred yards on each side of us. The moon was shining, but had sunk towards the west, which threw the shadow of a point of timber across the road, and concealed us from view. It would have been hard to discover us from the color of our clothes, as the earthy element with which they were mixed had entirely hidden the original fabric. We continued to crawl, until we reached a sufficient distance not to be discovered, when we rose up and walked. Although Hamilton had, with a great deal of pain, managed to crawl, yet it was impossible for him to walk, and his wounds had by this time become so much irritated and inflamed that he could scarcely bear to be carried. We traveled that night only a short distance, and hid ourselves in a thicket near a pond of water. Brooks had been trying to persuade me to leave Hamilton; but, although our progress was impeded by having to carry him, I could not entertain the idea for a moment. I indignantly refused, but still he would seize every opportunity to urge it upon me. He said it would be impossible for us to escape, burdened as we were with Hamilton. I could only acknowledge the truth of this, for it was a desperate case with us. The foe was around us in every direction. Brooks, finding that I was not to be persuaded, then attempted to influence Simpson.

On the tenth day out, they took the bottle and went to the pond near by, for water. As they were returning, (I suppose Brooks did not know he was so near the place they left us), both Hamilton and myself heard Brooks urging Simpson to leave him. He told him if we remained with Hamilton, we would certainly lose our lives; but there was some slight chance of escaping, if we left him, and that Hamilton's wounds had become so much worse that he was bound to die, unless he could have rest; and, as we were doing him no good, and ourselves a great deal of injury by carrying him, it was, our duty to leave him. Now Brooks had never carried him a step; Simpson and myself having done that; yet Brooks was the first who had ever proposed leaving him; and, although there was a great deal of truth in what he was saying, yet I felt quite angry with him, as I heard him trying to persuade Simpson. Hamilton did not say a word to them when they came in, but sat with his face buried in his hands a long time.

At length, he looked up, and said: "Boys, Brooks has told you the truth; I can not travel any further, and if you stay with me, all will be killed. Go and leave me, boys; if I have rest I may recover, and if I ever should get off safe, you shall hear from me again." He spoke so reasonably, and we were so thoroughly convinced of the truth of what he said, after a brief consultation, we decided to depart without him. Hamilton had known Brooks in Alabama; he called him to him, and gave him a gold watch and \$40 in gold, telling him to give it to his mother. We then bade Hamilton farewell, all of us shedding tears as we parted, but when we turned to go, my resolution failed me, and I could not find it in my heart to leave him. I said: "Boys, don't let us leave him." But Simpson and Brooks said that we could do neither him nor ourselves any good by remaining, and that they were determined to go. I told them I would remain with him, and do the best I could for him. So they started off without me; but Hamilton insisted so much that I should leave him, that I again bade him farewell, and followed and soon overtook the others. The reason that we started off in the day, was that it was raining quite hard, and we thought there would not be much danger in traveling, but we had not gone more than half way through the next prairie. when the weather cleared up, and we saw the whole Mexican army encamped at Texana, about two miles off; but they did not discover us, and we succeeded in reaching the timber on the Navidad. In the evening we walked out to a slight eminence which overlooked the prairie, to reconnoitre. While gazing across the prairie, we could see three men on horseback, but so indistinct were they, that we could not at first tell whether they were Americans or Mexicans. As they approached, we hid in the undergrowth; and as they passed, we saw that they were Mexican couriers returning to the command.

At eight we again started forth, and coming out on the prairie, we discovered a road, which we concluded had been made by the refugees in their retreat from the enemy. During all this time we had nothing to eat but leaves and herbs, and the two ears of corn that we got at the house on Lavacca river. On the twelfth day, we reached the Colorado, at Mercer's crossing. As we were very tired, we sat down on the bank to rest a little, before attempting to swim over. While sitting there, a dog on the opposite side of the river began to bark. When we heard that well-known sound, our very souls thrilled with joy, and that was the first time since the awful day of the massacre that a smile had ever illuminated our faces. We looked at each other, and then burst into a great big laugh. We were all good swimmers, but I some times took the cramp while swimming, so we concluded to cross on a log. We procured a dead mulberry pole, and hanging on to it, one at each end, and one in the middle, we crossed over to the land of freedom, and a land where we found plenty to eat. After recruiting a little, we procured horses, with the intention of joining Houston's army; but before we reached there, San Jacinto had been fought and won.

It was more than a year before I ever heard any thing of Hamilton. He remained in the same place where we left him nine days, some times lying in the pond of water, which assuaged the pain of his wounds. At the end of that time he was so much improved that he essayed to walk to Texana, and succeeded in doing so. He said the best eating he ever had in his life, was when he first entered Texana, and ate the meat from the rawhides the Mexicans had left. The next morning he took a skiff, and made his way down to Dimmitt's landing. He had scarcely reached there when he was taken prisoner by a Mexican soldier. Not long after, other soldiers came in, and tying Hamilton on a mule, started for camp. He suffered so much from his wounds that he fainted several times, on the way. Whenever this occurred, they would untie him, lay him on the ground, and throw water into his face until he revived, when they would again mount him on the mule and proceed on their way. Hamilton remained in their hands for sometime and gradually grew well of his wounds. There was a Mexican who waited on him, who seemed much attached to him, and Hamilton was led to place much confidence in him. One morning, this Mexican told him that if he wanted to live another day, he must make his escape that night, as he had learned that he and two other prisoners were to be shot before morning. Hamilton then arranged a plan for the escape of himself and two of his companions, which was a success, after many trials and tribulations.

Footnotes:

*1 - Columbus Citizen; 30 July 1870

*2 - Find A Grave Online; <http://www.findagrave.com>