

HARDEMAN, THOMAS MONROE - Born in Bolivar, Tennessee, in 1814, a son of Thomas Jones and Mary (Polk) Hardeman. In the Headright Certificate issued to him January 5, 1838, for one-third of a league of land by the Matagorda County Board it was stated that he came to Texas in 1835.

Mr. Hardeman participated in the first battle of the revolution at Gonzales October 2, 1835. At San Jacinto he was a member of Captain William J. E. Heard's Company of "Citizen Soldiers" and on December 13, 1838, he was issued Donation Certificate No. 686 for 640 acres of land for having participated in the battle. On December 15, 1837, he was issued Bounty Certificate No. 884 for 320 acres of land for having served in the army from February 29 to May 30, 1836.

Mr. Hardeman was elected major of volunteers and as such under General Felix Huston led a company at the battle of Plum Creek August 12, 1840. In 1842 he participated in the Vasquez Campaign. He joined the Confederate Army and died September 14, 1862, at Knoxville, Tennessee, while enroute to Virginia. He is buried in the Polk Cemetery at Bolivar, Tennessee. He belonged to the Masonic Lodge and the Episcopal Church.

Major Hardeman was married to Susan Burleson, who was born in 1812, a daughter of Joseph and Lizzie Burleson and great niece of General Edward Burleson. They moved to Caldwell County and founded a settlement named by them Prairie Lea and there Mrs. Hardeman died March 4, 1860.

Children of Major and Mrs. Hardeman were William Fawcett, Monroe, Cora and Lizzie Hardeman, all of whom are dead. Surviving grandchildren

are Mrs. Charles Martin, Mrs. John Starkley, Mrs. Hall Hanna of Houston,
Judge William H. Thompson and Fentriss Thompson of San Marcos.

Macon, June 6, 1836.

Dr. Robt. Collins--

Sir: As you were principally instrumental in sending out the company of volunteers to Texas, under the command of Col. Ward, and furnishing the means of the expedition, and as there is no officer remaining of the Company to tell their fate, and being myself the last man of the original company who made an escape from the enemy previous to the capture and massacre of the Georgia Battalion, I think it proper to give you a plain history of the expedition so far as I am able. It is known to you that we marched from here in the latter part of November of last year, and proceeded to New Orleans; by the usual route from there we embarked on the schooner Pennsylvania, and after being out eleven days, were landed at Velasco, a port in Texas, on the Gulf of Mexico, about 4 or 500 miles from New Orleans. Here we remained about a month; nothing extraordinary occurring beyond the usual camp duty, there being at that time but few Mexicans in the country. From here we sailed to Copano, which is another port still further on the coast towards Metamoras. There we landed and marched up to the Mission, as it is commonly called, 12 or 15 miles from the coast. Here we remained about three weeks, and then went up to Goliad, about 27 miles further into the interior. Here we took possession of the Fort and remained in it until the 13th March, when Col. Ward and the Georgia Battalion were ordered to march in hosts to the Mission to relieve Capt. King who, with about 30 men, was down there endeavoring to protect some families, but who had become surrounded by the enemy,

and his situation become desperate. We marched at 3 o'clock in the morning, and arrived at the Mission about 2 o'clock of the same day; and as we expected, found Capt. King and his company in the church and a large company of Mexicans in sight across the river. We succeeded in getting to the church, where we remained till night, when we crossed the river by fording it at a shallow place, and made an attack on them, and completely routed them, killing about 25, with no loss on our side. We then returned to the church, and early next morning again went out to the Mexican camp, where we saw a few Mexicans endeavoring to carry off their dead, but they made their escape on our approach. From here we went about two miles to a branch and burnt the houses and provisions. By this time the enemy began to reinforce so fast in our sight that we had to return forthwith to the church, and at which we were very soon attacked by their whole force; but having blockaded all the entrances with the images, benches, pews, &c., we had greatly the advantage in position; they came up bravely for awhile, received our rifle balls, fell and were carried off, and others took their place; but after awhile we could see that it was with great difficulty the officers could whip up their soldiers with their swords to make a charge. This continued until towards evening, when they retired a short distance, but not out of sight. We then started an express to Col. Fannin to let him know that we were nearly out of ammunition, (having only taken 36 rounds from Goliad,) and were still surrounded by a large Mexican force. A Mr. Murphy and a Mr. Rodgers, both, I think, of Captain Wardsworth's company, were to

34

carry the express, both of whom were pursued by the enemy's cavalry and taken, and I suppose shot. An express from Col. Fannin to us was also taken. In this battle we got three wounded, none killed. The loss of the enemy was variously stated, but believed to be not less than 200, though it was reported more. Captain King's company, whom we went down to relieve, had went out early in the morning before the battle commenced, to a branch, a few miles distant, and were taken by the enemy, and afterwards all shot but tow, who made their escape. That night we made our escape from the church, and after traveling through the woods and swamps, where their cavalry could not well pursue us, on the 3d day we reached St. Anontio river. On the 2d day after leaving the Mission, David I. Holt, of Macon, and a few others, left the company in search of water, and we never saw them again, but now understand they succeeded in getting in safe. That night we lay in the swamp; next morning crossed the river and made our way towards Victoria, and in the evening heard the firing between Col. Fannin and the Mexicans, apparently distant about ten miles -- we attempted to get to them, but night came on and the guns ceased to fire, and we could not proceed, but got into the Gaudaloupe swamp, where we remained all night, and on leaving it and entering a prairie next morning, we were attacked by a force of 600 cavalry. We fired about three rounds at them, when our powder gave out and we had not a load left; we then retreated back to the swamp, and every man was told to take care of himself. We there got scattered, and I never saw Col. Ward or the company again, but understood that at night while I was asleep in the

cane that he rallied all the men he could, and made his way towards Demit's Landing, but was next day overtaken by the Mexican Cavalry, and having no ammunition, surrendered as prisoners of war and was carried back to Goliad, and all shot, as has been heretofore published. In this battle Wm. L. Wilkinson, of this city, was supposed to be killed.

On awaking, I found myself alone in a swamp, in a country full of Mexicans, near 200 miles from the main army of the Texians, and 13 or 1400 miles from my home, then without a mouthful of provisions for 5 or 6 days, nor was there any prospect of any except a few wild onions which I could get in the swamp. I remained in this swamp all day and all night; next morning went out and took a small path, which I discovered and kept it for about 2 miles, came to a Mexican house, where I saw several Mexicans in and about the house, but being forced by hunger, I determined to go in and ask for something to eat, let the consequences be what they might. On entering the house, one of the men rose and offered me his chair; I asked a woman who was in the house for something to eat; she readily gave me some milk, cheese and dried beef. The men with their guns all looked astonished, and in a few minutes, all left the house and appeared to be looking over the country in all directions, I presume expecting an attack from a large force of which they thought I was the spy. As soon as they all left the house, the woman told me in broken English, that they were all Mexicans soldiers, and I had better leave as soon possible. In a few minutes we saw them returning towards the house, and the woman urged me to start; I did so,

and ran towards a swamp which I saw some 2 or 300 yards distant; as I ran they fired 12 or 15 guns at me, but without effect: they pursued me to the swamp, but I escaped them. I kept in the swamp all day; that night I heard the drum beating at Victoria. Next morning I went near enough to see the Mexican Cavalry; I then returned to the swamp and kept it all day; that night went out and made my way up the river, until I reached a crossing place, and here I overtook three men that had made their escape from the enemy in the swamps at the same time I did, but whom I had not seen before since we retreated and scattered in the swamp; their names were Andrews, Moses and Tresvant. We here got some meal from a house which had been left by the enemy. We remained here all night, and next day made our way through the woods towards the Colorado river, and that night got to a place where the Mexican army had camped a night or two before; here we remained all night, and next morning we reached the river and crossed it on a bale of cotton which we found on the bank and about two miles above where the enemy were crossing at the same time. We lay in the swamp that day - at night we heard the drum, but supposed it was the enemy, would not go to it. Next morning Moses and myself ventured to go in sight of the camp to see who they were, and soon discovered they were Mexicans; we retreated, and in a short distance, saw six horsemen charging towards us; we discovered they were Americans and did not run -- they came up, and much to our relief, we found they were spies from Gen. Houston's camp; their names were Cawmack and Johnson from Tennessee, Shipman and Laplam of Texas, and two others that I did not know. They

37

were astonished to see us at that place, and when I say we were glad to see them, I but feebly express the feelings of my heart. I was then, without hat or shoes, and only a few rags for clothing. While we were here narrating our adventure, and waiting for one of the company whom we had got to go back a short distance after Andrews, we were attacked and fired upon by a small scouting party of Mexicans, but at such a distance as to do us no injury; but upon their seeing that we had got among some trees and were preparing to give them a fire, they retreated and left. We then left that place, and the spies carried us to Gen. Houston's army, where we arrived, I think, on the 2d day of April, our appearance being such as to excite the sympathy of every soldier--and on meeting some gentlemen who had known us in this country, the noble tears of compassion were seen to trickle freely on their cheeks.

We here received all the kindness we desired, and remained with the army, and fought under Gen. Houston in Capt. Baker's company in the memorable battle of the 21st April, in which Santa was captured, half his men slain, and the other half taken prisoners. Incredible as it may appear, this battle was fought with only about 700 effective men, while the enemy had double that number. The loss on our side was only 6 or 7 killed and 20 wounded; among the latter, our Captain and Gen. Houston. The fight commenced in the afternoon about 3 or 4 o'clock, by two six pounders on our side, and a long twelve pound brass field piece by the enemy: but by some fortunate shot at the very beginning we silenced their big gun, and pressed down upon them,

38

continuing the fire from our Artillery, and receiving the fire from their small arms which was doing us no injury as they seemed to shoot above us. When he reached within about 50 yards of them we fired two or three rounds from our deadly rifles which seemed to produce a tremendous effect, and at this moment a charge from all quarters was ordered, and our men rushed upon them with fury and desperation, and with pistols, guns and cutlasses the destruction of human life was speedy and immense. As soon as we had time to look we saw the white flag was hoisted, and the Mexicans had thrown down their arms and were running in every direction. As soon, however, as the call for quarters was heard, and the white flag was seen by the commanders, the work of death was stopped and the balance taken prisoners. Santa Anna himself made his escape that evening, but was taken next morning in a common citizen's dress about ten miles from the camp; he was not recognized until he was brought in, but when the prisoners saw him, they tipped their hats, and exclaimed in their own language, 'Santa Anna's alive.' The appearance of the battle ground can be better imagined than described. Piles and clusters of their dead and dying lay in every direction indeed the ground was literally covered. But the recollection of the dreadful massacre of our brave companions at the Alamo and Goliad, in a great manner relieved our feelings from the horrors of the scene.

On the 30th April I left the camp under a furlough from General Houston, for four months, and proceeded over land to Natchitoches, where I arrived after eight days' travelling on foot: from there I

took the usual route, by steamboats via New Orleans and Mobile, to Montgomery, Ala.

There I understood that a war had broke out with the Creek Indians, and that it would be extremely dangerous to attempt to pass on the stage route thro' the Nation to Columbus; but being anxious to reach home, and finding there a party of about fifteen others, who wished to come through, we determined to make the attempt. On Sunday evening, the 15th May, we left there in two mail stages, passed on that night, and next day early reached Tuskegee. There we got breakfast, and learnt there was great trouble with the Indians: we then passed on to the next stand and found that it had been plundered. As we continued on we found every house and place plundered, or burnt, and some burning, until we reached Thorn's stand, about 20 miles from Columbus; there we saw the houses in flames, and after we had got a short distance by the place, we were fired upon by a part of Indians which we had not seen, but being some distance off, no injury was done. Our drivers then put whip to their horses and run them near half a mile, when we came upon the stages that had been taken the day Before, so piled up across the road, with the dead horses and one dead white man, that we could not pass, and the stages were therefore stopped, and, as we saw the Indians in close phrsuit, the drivers and passengers loosed the horses from the stages, and, as soon as possible, all who could get on them mounted, and made a start, but in a few minutes they were fired upon by a considerable part of Indians, who seemed to be coming in upon all sides. Not having been so fortunate as to

40

get a horse, myself, a Mr. Hallet, of New York, a Mr. Williams, Hamil and Laskey, were all on foot, running after the horses. The two latter were killed and the moment after they were shot I run directly through where the Indians were that had fired, and as I passed two or three others fired at me, but without effect. I made the best of my way towards a swamp, which I saw distant 3 or 400 yards, and discovered I was pursued by two Indians. Just before I reached the swamp I turned and discharged my musket at the foremost, which was in 40 or 50 yards of me; I saw him fall, but before I entered the swamp I saw him rise again. The other Indian run up to him and stopped a few minutes; during which time I had got in the swamp and reloaded my gun; he then came down to the swamp and appeared to be searching for me, and while he was in the act of parting the cane, I shot him in the body, not more than 15 or 20 yards distant. He fell dead. I remained in this swamp^t three days, living on green whortleberries, going out every night, but could not find any road until Thursday night; I got into the road near where the stages were left, and travelled all night back towards Tuskegee, and arrived there on Friday morning about sunrise. Here I was received by Gen. Woodward and treated kindly. I remained here two days, and then went back to Montgomery, and from there, in company with two gentlemen, took the upper route through the Nation, on horseback, and on the third day crossed the Chattahoochee, and again set my foot on the soil of Georgia.

Very respectfully, your most obd't servant,

SAMUEL N. HARDAWAY