

James Fannin

"Fellow citizens ... We urge as many as can possibly leave their homes to repair to Gonzales immediately, "armed and equipped for war even to the knife." ...If Texas will now act promptly, she will soon be redeemed from that worse than Egyptian bondage which now cramps her resources and retards her prosperity."

- J.W. Fannin, October 2, 1835



James Fannin's service to Texas is undeniable. Fannin moved to Texas in 1834 from Georgia. When the Texas Revolution began at the Battle of Gonzales in 1835, he fought and urged Stephen F. Austin to send aid to Gonzales. Fannin also served with Jim Bowie at the Battle of Concepción and in the siege of San Antonio. He was placed in command of the Presidio La Bahia in Goliad.

After the Battle of the Alamo, Sam Houston ordered Fannin to retreat from Goliad to Victoria. But Fannin hesitated, waiting five days to begin his retreat. Mexican forces caught up with his men and defeated him at the Battle of Coleto Creek.

Though Mexican general José de Urrea sought mercy for his prisoners, Santa Anna ordered the execution. On Palm Sunday of 1836, the Mexican Army executed more than three hundred Texian soldiers. The 40 wounded men who could not walk were executed inside the presidio. The Mexican army saved Fannin's execution for last. He was taken by Mexican soldiers to the courtyard in front of the chapel, blindfolded and seated in a chair (due to his leg wound from the battle). He made three requests: he asked for his pocket watch to be sent to his family, to be shot in his heart and not his face, and to be given a Christian burial. All three of these requests were denied. Mexican soldiers took his watch, shot him in the face and burned Fannin's body along with the other Texians who died that day. This injustice angered the Texians and gave birth to the battle cry, "Remember Goliad!"