



Andrew Jackson Hitchcock

February 21, 1813 – August 25, 1887

Veteran – Texas Revolution

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Andrew Jackson Hitchcock

Life Story

Andrew Jackson Hitchcock was born on February 21, 1813, in Columbus, Georgia. Hitchcock's mother, Elizabeth (Betsy) Davis, was born in Orange County, Virginia in 1780. She married (Andrew) James Hitchcock, born in Virginia in 1774, in her native Orange County on July 3, 1799. Several years later the couple moved to Morgan County, Georgia where Mr. Hitchcock and his brother built many of the Court Houses in Georgia.¹

During December 1835 at the age of 22, Hitchcock was one of 112 volunteers from Georgia who came to Texas with Lieutenant Colonel William Ward, nicknamed the Georgia Battalion. Hitchcock, a member of Captain Wadsworth's Company², and his Battalion joined Colonel Fannin during the Texas Revolution. He was present during the Goliad massacre, escaped and was later recaptured to escape again, avoiding an additional recapture leading to the Battle of San Jacinto. Hitchcock continued his service to the Republic of Texas after the defeat of Mexican General Santa Anna at the Battle of San Jacinto and served until the end of 1836 in assurance that the Mexican Army would not return to Texas.

Hitchcock return to Georgia after his service to the Republic of Texas, returning to Texas in 1837 with his friend Kennymore, knowing his parent's and household were following the next year. Davis family records report that Hitchcock' parents and younger siblings moved from Georgia to Texas to join Andrew in the City of Caldwell in Burleson County during 1838.³ Included in the relocation were brothers Isaac and Matthew and his sisters Sarah Ann and Emily, all who remained in the Burleson County area.

Captain J. C. P. Kennymore, a close Georgian acquainted to Hitchcock and fellow veteran, verified in 1859 the correctness of those listed as serving under Fannin referencing the 1936 accompanying copy of the Telegraph & Texas Register roll of Fannin's men. Kennymore confirmed in his letter that

"Accompanying this note you will please find a roll of Colonel Fannin's command, which I look upon as correct ... I can refer you to only a few survivors that I know to be living; General Samuel G. Hardaway, of Bullock's Company, now living in Montgomery City, Ala.; Thomas J. Smith, Richmond, Texas; A. J. Hitchcock, Shreveport, Louisiana; and J. P. Trezevant, of Carroll Parish, Louisiana." [Texas Almanac, 1860, p. 83.]⁴

¹ A Genealogy of the Davis Family; Ancestry.com. North America, Family Histories, 1500-2000 [database on-line].

² The Galveston News. The Texas Almanac, for 1860, with Statistics, Historical and Biographical Sketches, &c., Relating to Texas., book, 1860~; (texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph123766/m1/92/?q=Kennymore: accessed October 24, 2018), University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, texashistory.unt.edu; crediting Texas State Historical Association.

³ Source Citation: Book Title: A Genealogy of the Davis Family; Source Information: Ancestry.com. North America, Family Histories, 1500-2000 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2016.

⁴ The Galveston News. The Texas Almanac, for 1860, with Statistics, Historical and Biographical Sketches, &c., Relating to Texas., book, 1860~; (texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph123766/m1/85/?q=Kennymore: accessed October 24, 2018), University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, texashistory.unt.edu; crediting Texas State Historical Association.

In 1892, Dr. Barnard, about this letter, wrote

“that Kennymore approved the roll as being correct. That roll listed Hitchcock and himself as among Fannin's men spared; and Kennymore could hardly have overlooked a mistake in so listing Hitchcock's name, for he had not only been a member of the same company with him, and a fellow prisoner in 1835-36, but returned to Texas with him in 1837, and noted specially that Hitchcock was living in 1859, and was then a resident of Shreveport, Louisiana.; and no question at all was then made about the correctness of that roll insofar as Hitchcock was concerned.”⁵

Sidney Johnson, Secretary of War for the Republic of Texas, issued 1280 acres to Hitchcock on April 6th, 1839. This total was the largest amount awarded to individuals for their service during battles and for continued service of 6 months or more to the Republic of Texas. On August 2, 1854 Hitchcock was issued Republic of Texas Military Donation Certificate No. 604 for 640 acres of land for having “been with Fannin at Goliad March 1836”, patented on August 19, 1857. On October 1st, 1860, he received Military Bounty Certificate No. 9034 for 111 acres in Denton County which was patented on October 13, 1870, part of the 640 acres of land awarded in Denton and Wise Counties for having served in the Republic of Texas army after the war. Hitchcock was issued 10 certificates to total 1280 acres.⁶

Honorably discharged as Colonel Hitchcock at the age of 23, he remained in Caldwell, Texas for several years with his relocated family. Hitchcock married Sarah Ann Ezille in Caddo, Louisiana, on May 31, 1858, when he was 45 years old. At age 53, he was in Shreveport, Louisiana in 1866, living there during and immediately after the Civil War, recorded by the IRS Tax Assessment roles as living in Louisiana as a retail merchant. Family history records that

“he built up a considerable fortune on the rich river land near Shreveport. Here misfortune overtook him in the loss of his wife and children by yellow fever, he have the disease also but recovering. The greater part of his fortune swept away by the effect of the war between the states, and dissatisfied with conditions as they were in the South, he conceived the idea of a colony in Brazil where he believed he and others in like position as himself could live under happier conditions than in his own county. However, a stay in Brazil for some two years convinced him that this idea was not a practical one and he returned to this county.”⁷

Few details are known about Hitchcock between his leaving Louisiana after the Civil War and his return to Texas to settle in Denton. In a book published in 1893 titled History of Texas, Burleson County history records that

“Andrew J. Hitchcock, came to Texas at an early day, enlisting in Fannin’s command, with which he was captured at Goliad and fortunately made his escape. He has a checkered career, having been twice to South American, several times to Mexico, and an early immigrant to the Pacific coast. He died at Denton, this State, in 1887, near the eightieth year of his age, losing his life at

⁵ Barnard, Dr. Joseph H., "Revised Roll of Fannin's Men", manuscript, Texas State Library and Archives, Austin, 9 leaves, 20x32 cm. Description p. 23. Published in Duval 1892. Davenport, Harbert, "Notes from an Unfinished Study of Fannin and His Men," manuscript source for this online document, The Harbert Davenport Collection, Texas State Library and Archives, 1936.

⁶ Texas General Land Office, Land Grants - List of Surnames “H”, Page 590. <http://www.glo.texas.gov>

⁷ Denton Record-Chronicle (Denton, Denton, Texas) · 7 Jun 1934, Thu · Page 2.

that place by the burning of a hotel.”⁸ Local Denton historian E. D Bates records this event, that “in 1887, when the James Hotel, east of the city hall, was destroyed by fire, Colonel Hitchcock, a veteran of the Mexican War, was incinerated.”⁹

The Caldwell local paper provided a story in 1936 about Hitchcock’s youngest sister

“Emily Hitchcock [wife of Mr. Chiles of Burleson County] was a daughter of James Hitchcock and a sister of Andrew J. Hitchcock, one of the few of Fannin’s men who escaped the Goliad massacre March 27, 1836. She was born December 18, 1824... Mr. Chiles was a member of Captain William H. Patton’s “Columbia Company” at San Jacinto, and on June 16, 1838 was issued Donation Certificate No. 340 for 640 acres of land for having participated in the battle. On March 28, 1838, he received Bounty Certificate No. 2734 for 640 acres of land for having served in the army from April 2 to November 25, 1836. Mr. Chiles settled on the site of the present town of Caldwell, Burleson County.”¹⁰

Hitchcock returned to Texas in 1878 and settled in the city of Denton in Denton County where his remaining Military Bounty lands were located, principally accounting for western Denton county from near present day Ponder, Texas into Wise County.

J. R. Christal, Denton County Tax Collector who grew up in West Denton County between present day Ponder and Stoney, noted in 1934 that he knew Hitchcock very well and that:

“He was a frequent visitor in the tax collector’s office and I recall inquiring of him on one occasion concerning a tract of land which had been patented in his name – the land lying in the neighborhood where I had been born and reared – and he told me that this with other land had come to him as bounty for his services in the war with Mexico. This was followed in modest and unassuming manner with the statement that he served under Colonel Fannin and was with him at Goliad and was one of the very small number to escape that horrible massacre. He was often a guest in the home of my uncle, the late James Hurt Christal, who purchased from him the tract of land referred to. He was held in the highest esteem by all who knew him – his manner and bearing being that of a refined Southern gentleman.”¹¹

The Denton Record Chronical newspaper also reported that Will Williams, son of business owner C. A. Williams, knew Hitchcock, who was:

“A man of rather striking appearance, with a strong personality, very modest and reserved in manner and showed to be a man of culture and refinement. I never heard Col. Hitchcock tell of

⁸ Lewis Publishing Company. History of Texas, Together with a Biographical History of Milam, Williamson, Bastrop, Travis, Lee and Burleson Counties., book, 1893; Chicago, Illinois. Page 587.

(texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph29785/m1/632/?q=%22Andrew%20J.%20Hitchcock%22: accessed October 19, 2018), University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, texashistory.unt.edu;

⁹ E.D Bates, History and Reminiscences of Denton County, McNitzky Printing Company, Denton, 1918, Page 346.

¹⁰ Smith, G. A. The Caldwell News and The Burleson County Ledger (Caldwell, Tex.), Vol. 50, No. 43, Ed. 1 Thursday, January 23, 1936, newspaper, January 23, 1936; Caldwell, Texas.

(texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph175188/m1/6/?q=%22Andrew%20J.%20Hitchcock%22: accessed October 19, 2018), University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, texashistory.unt.edu; crediting Harrie P. Woodson Memorial Library.

¹¹ Denton Record-Chronicle (Denton, Denton, Texas) · 7 Jun 1934, Thu · Page 2.

his past, in fact he did not talk much, but it was common talk here that he was a survivor of the Goliad massacre – the statement being made by the Colonel himself... A very close friend of his was the late Alex W. Robertson, a well know pioneer attorney of this town, who was a close student of Texas history and it is known here that after the sad death of Colonel Hitchcock he never let a decoration day pass that he did not place on the grave of his pioneer soldier friend a Texas flag.”¹²

Three current references to the original A. J. Hitchcock survey of this land grant for his military service are found in the Denton County Appraisal District: Plat A0608A between present day Dish, TX and the Wise County line; A0610A in present day Stoney; and A0614A in present day Lewisville near Vista Ridge Mall and the MKT rail lines.¹³

The best bibliography for Hitchcock is provided by Dr. W. N. Rowell who wrote “A Hero Tragedy Stalks Beyond the Grave” published in April 1932, included in this document.

Andrew Jackson Hitchcock died in an arson fire at the James Hotel, located east of the then City Hall on West Oak Street. The fire was set to disguise the robbery of several hundred dollars in gold coins received by Hitchcock’s selling some of his land holding. His death was on August 25, 1887, in Denton, Texas, when he was 74 years old.

Hitchcock is buried at the IOOF cemetery on the north side of West Highland Street along the west outer fence line of Section B on IOOF Street in the Robertson family plot of his friend Alex W. Robertson.

Also included in this IOOF family plot are:

- Martha S. 'Sophia' Robertson Richardson; Widow of John Richardson; Born in London England; Nov. 16, 1809; Died in Denton Texas; Oct. 27, 1890
- John Richardson; Born in Monrath Ireland; Feb 6, 1810; Died in Bell Co. Texas; July 14, 1881
- Sophia E. Richardson Mounts; Daughter of J(ohn) & S(ophia) Richardson; And wife of J(oseph) H(arrison) Mounts [First wife]; Born Aug. 14, 1846; Died Oct. 10, 1883
- Herbert Mounts; Son of J(oseph) H(arrison) and S(ophia) E. Richardson Mounts; Born Oct. 6, 1883; Died Oct. 10, 1883
- Sgt. Alex W. Robertson, Jr.; Co A.; 29 Tex Cav.; C.S.A.; 1839 – 1926
- Joseph H. Mounts; Co E; 29 Tex Cav.; C. S. A.; 1840 – 1892

¹² Denton Record-Chronicle (Denton, Denton, Texas) · 7 Jun 1934, Thu · Page 2.

¹³ Denton County Central Appraisal District. <https://www.dentoncad.com/>

Life Details

Facts about the life of Andrew Jackson Hitchcox were provided in preparation for the 1936 Texas Centennial. Dr. W. N. Rowell wrote the family narrative of Hitchcox as a remembrance of this Republic of Texas veteran. First appearing the Dallas Sunday News in September 1931 and republished in the Frontier Time in April 1932.

A Hero Tragedy Stalks Beyond the Grave

By Dr. W. N. Rowell, in Dallas News

April 1932

Frontier Times, Vol 09 No. 07¹⁴

Though NOT generally known, even to residents of that little city itself, there lies at Denton the last remains of a man who, as a member of Col. J. W. Fannin's command in the war of Texas independence, was in the massacre at Goliad, March 27, 1836, and was one of the few survivors of that wholesale slaughter.

While viewed from this distant day a thread of romance seems to have been deeply interwoven into this man's life we find also the sinister gleam of tragedy which at times is all predominating, its baneful influence even reaching beyond the grave, and by some strange quirk of fate withholding from him his rightful place in Texas history.

Near one corner of the I. O. O. F. cemetery in Denton there stands over his grave a plain marble shaft, upon which is the following inscription:

ANDREW JACKSON HITCHCOCK

Born at Columbus, Ga., Feb. 21, 1814

Came to Texas a member of

Capt. Wadsworth's Co . Ga . Batt.

Was with Col. Fannin at the

Goliad massacre and escaped.

Burned to death at Denton, Aug. 25, 1887

A brave soldier, a true friend, and

a kind and charitable Christian.

¹⁴ Frontier Times, Published monthly at Bandera, Texas by J. MARVIN HUNTER, "Devoted to Frontier History, Border Tragedy and Pioneer Achievement", Vol 09 No. 07 - April 1932.

As a boy it was my great good fortune to be thrown in every close association with A. J. Hitchcock. A relative of my mother, who also was from Georgia, he was a welcome and honored guest in our home, where, during the last years of his life, he would often be for many weeks at a time and it was there, in the intimacy of the family circle while gathered around the old-fashioned fireside, that I heard from his lips, retold many times, the story of his escape from death at Goliad. It is perhaps not amiss for me to state here that, after his tragic death, my father, the late Dr. E. B. Rowell, was appointed administrator of his estate; and that the many facts brought out at that time by correspondence and otherwise, all corroborated in detail Hitchcock's story as he told it to us.

Coming from a home of wealth and refinement, he was one of that hand of 112 volunteers from Georgia who came to Texas with Lieut. Col. Wm. Ward in December, 1835, to assist the colonists in their struggle against Mexico. This body of men, known as the Georgia Battalion, was placed with Col. J. W. Tannin's command and served under Fannin's orders until the time of his surrender near Goliad on March 20, 1836, the greater part of them being present and meeting death in the massacre in that place some days later.

Passing over the intervening weeks of active strife service seen by the Georgia Battalion in the Texas army, we find, on March 10, 1836, that Fannin was entrenched at Goliad, while the colonists in that section had abandoned their homes and were fleeing eastward for safety. This was brought about the fall of the Alamo at San Antonio, and by near approach of numerous large bodies of Mexican troops. Gen. Sam Houston was anxiously watching the situation, and ready to dispatch orders to abandon Goliad and retire to Victoria. This dispatch was sent by Houston on March 11, but it is only due to Fannin to state that it did not reach him until March 14, at which time about 130 of his men with Ward and King were at Refugio. These men were acting under his orders and he did not think he could, with honor, leave them to their fate.

Some days before Fannin's final evacuation of Goliad, he sent Captain King with a small force of men to remove some American families still remaining at Refugio. King's return was delayed by the appearance of Mexican cavalry, from whom he took refuge in the church, or mission. A courier, sent to inform Fannin of this predicament, reached Goliad about midnight March 12, and Fannin immediately dispatched Lieut. Col. Ward with 100 men to King's assistance. Hitchcock was one of that number.

Ward arrived at Refugio at daybreak on the morning of March 14 and succeeded in joining King in the mission. Permitting his men only a short rest he was about to withdraw his forces, hoping to be able to make his way back to Goliad, when reports came of the approach of a large number of Mexican troops. Not wanting to leave the protection afforded by the mission walls without ascertaining the strength of the enemy, Ward sent King with thirteen men out to reconnoiter. These men, after going only a short distance, were attacked, and finding their return to the mission cut off, attempted to save themselves by making their way to Goliad. This however, they were unable to do, and after wandering around for two days, were compelled to surrender to the Mexican forces. Six hours later they were shot, and their bodies stripped of their clothing and left where they had fallen.

In the meanwhile, Ward and his men, hearing the sound of firing in the direction taken by the reconnoitering party, had attempted to go to their relief. They soon found themselves faced with 600 or 800 of the enemy and were forced to retreat to the mission. There seeing that they were completely surrounded, with all avenues of escape cut off, they prepared to sell their lives as deathly as possible. Under the protection of the mission, firing through holes cut in the walls, they fought a battle lasting

throughout the day. They inflicted a loss to the enemy of over 200 killed and wounded, while their own loss was three seriously wounded.

Night, however, found them with ammunition almost exhausted, and it became imperative that they withdraw from their dangerous position. Unable to carry the three wounded men, they forced their way some 400 yards through the lines of the enemy to a place where they could procure water. Filling several canteens, they left them within reach of their wounded comrades and, then under cover of darkness, made a successful retreat.

With large Mexican forces concentrating upon Goliad, Ward soon found it would be impossible for him to rejoin Fannin at that place. On March 19 he was within sound of the firing occasioned by Fannin's battle with the Mexicans on the Goleta, but he and his men were forced to turn toward Victoria, where two days later with ammunition completely exhausted, they surrendered. They were then taken to Goliad, arriving there on March 25, and were placed with the rest of Fannin's men who had surrendered one day earlier than Ward.

Under such circumstances did Ward and his men rejoin their comrades two days before that never-to-be-forgotten Palm Sunday, when some 330 men of the best blood of the Southland, many of them in the first flush of young manhood, were ruthlessly murdered under orders of the Mexican general, Santa Anna.

As told by Hitchcock, he and the other prisoners were aroused early that Sunday morning and marched out under heavy guard. Curious to know the meaning of this movement, they asked their captors many questions as to their destination but received evasive answers. However, it seems that none of the men suspected treachery, it being generally understood that the prisoners were soon to be liberated.

After going some distance, they were ordered to halt, and their guards, about double their own number, immediately began firing into their ranks. A scene impossible to describe then followed. The first, volley, fired at such close range, killed most of the Texans, and the greater part of those who survived were too badly wounded to make any effort to get away. Hitchcock did not think any would have escaped, had not the Mexican troops at once begun to strip the bodies of those fallen of clothing and valuables. So intent were they on that gruesome work that slight attention was at first paid to the very few who, like himself, remained unwounded, and who, as soon as the first shock of surprise and horror was over, started running in an effort to get away. Most of these were overtaken and butchered before getting very far. Hitchcock, so far as the then knew, was the only one fortunate enough to escape. As he fled a number of the Mexicans gave chase and forced him toward a high picket fence or stockade, which was apparently too high for him to get over. Hitchcock was sure it would have been impossible for him to have done so under less terrifying circumstances, but with the Mexicans so close upon him, he did succeed in scrambling over. He then ran into some brush and timber, through which he made his way to the San Antonio river nearby, he cautiously worked downstream and finally entirely eluded his pursuers.

With the horror of the scene he had witnessed ever before him, Hitchcock made every effort to keep hidden from the troops of cavalry that were soon sent out in search of Texans which might have escaped. But the following day he was discovered and retaken, and with his captors Hitchcock found four other prisoners who, like himself, had escaped death the day before but were now recaptured. It is interesting to note that Hitchcock believed to the day of his death that only he and those four men

survived the Goliad massacre, though it is known that there were 25 or 30 who were so fortunate. Historians generally place the number at 27.

These five men soon began laying plans for escape, although the possibilities seemed to grow less day by day, as they were carried further into the country occupied by the troops of the enemy. Their first plan was discovered by the Mexicans before it could be put into execution. All of the prisoners were involved in this attempt, and it was thought that one of them, in order to gain favor with his captors, had told them of the project plan of escape. So sure were they that such was the case that Hitchcock and one of the prisoners by the name of Gamble resolved not to take the other three into their confidence should another opportunity to escape occur. This, however, did not seem probable now, as they were being watched more closely.

As an aid in crossing the numerous streams encountered in their march, the Mexicans carried small boats, or rafts. These were transported on wagons. Hitchcock and Gamble were placed with the detachment of troops whose duty it was to see after these boats, and they did everything in their power to gain their friendship. Though the rations issued to them were scant at best, they divided what they got with their guards. This and their willingness to help when it became necessary to use the boats, completely won the good will of the Mexicans, and Hitchcock and Gamble were permitted to ride on one of the wagons. This was no small favor, as their shoes were completely worn out and their feet badly lacerated from marching.

The chance for the escape for which these men had been watching came one evening just after dusk. After a hard day's march, and with still some distance to go before the place selected for the night camp would be reached, the weary men, prisoners and troops alike, were issued rations of rum to revive their flagging spirits. Their portion of this Hitchcock and Gamble gave to their guards with them on the wagon; and they never knew whether it was in return for this or because of the gathering darkness, that these troops failed to see them when they slid down off the wagon while crossing a stream and, by diving and swimming some distance under water, made their escape.

Once more free, Hitchcock and his companion now found themselves confronted with a situation so desperate that not only was their ingenuity taxed to the utmost, but it seemed that Providence itself must favor them if they should be successful in winning their way to complete safety. They were many miles within the enemy lines, on a low level plain which would afford scant protection in case they should encounter any of the numerous bodies of troops then being concentrated by Santa Anna for what proved, some days later, to be the decisive battle of San Jacinto.

Their intense suffering as prisoners was as nothing compared to what they now had to undergo. Traveling almost continually both day and night, spurred on by the fear of discovery and recapture, they soon began to feel the pangs of hunger. All their efforts to obtain food failing, they were finally forced to the extremely of eating the horned frogs which they found as they walked along. These, supplemented by two terrapins which they were fortunate enough to run across, constituted their entire food supply during their eight days travel. While the expressions on Hitchcock's face as he told of the enforced fare of raw horned frogs indicated that the recollection was anything but pleasant, it was with a chuckle that he told of his enjoyment of the change in diet provided by the terrapins, although they too, were eaten raw.

At length, on the eighth day, they came to the home of an American settler, which, to their great disappointment, they found to be unoccupied, the owner having carried his family to a place of safety at the approach of the Mexican troops some week previous. However, they found a cache of provisions, and after starting a fire from a piece of flint and an old file, prepared and ate a hearty meal.

Here they rested several days, recuperating from their terrible ordeal. They were ready to leave, after preparing food to take with them, when the owner of the place returned. So vivid was the telling of his part of his experience, that it was clearly seen that this incident was treasured more dearly in Hitchcock's memory than almost any other of that eventful period of his life.

Hitchcock said, "I had never believed in shouting up to that time, but at sight of that white man, I went almost crazy, and danced and shouted like a wild Indian."

As it happened, their very joy came near being the cause of their undoing, for the man, who had returned to look after his stock, did really mistake them for Indians who had taken possession of the place. Stopping some distance from them, he watched their mad antics for a moment, then, as they came toward him, wheeled his horse and was starting to gallop away, when they at least made him understand that they were white men like himself.

The man was almost as pleased as Hitchcock and Gamble at this timely meeting and did everything in his power to persuade them to stay with him and help develop the ranch. This they were not willing to do – they intended making their way to Houston's army for they "wanted to get even with the Mexicans." Not until then did they learn of the battle of San Jacinto, and that Santa Anna was a prisoner in Gen. Houston's hands. They learned, too that hostilities had ceased and all Mexican troops then in Texas were to be withdrawn across the Rio Grande. This meant that the war was virtually over and settlers were already beginning to return to their homes.

Hitchcock refused all the inducements offered him by the ranchman and returned to his home in Georgia. Later he moved to Louisiana, where he acquired extensive holdings of the fertile land lying adjacent to Red River. There he prospered, but there, too, came into his life a sorrow so great as to be almost unbearable. During one of the recurrent epidemics of yellow fever he and his entire family were stricken with that dread disease. He alone recovered and within the space of a few short days, his wife and children were taken from him by death. Then came the war between the States, which left him with fortune greatly diminished but undaunted spirit. Feeling keenly the humiliation to which he and others of his class were subjected by carpetbag rule during reconstruction, he conceived the idea of founding a colony in Brazil, where he hoped that he and friends and relatives could establish new homes and rebuild their broken fortunes under conditions more tolerable.

He spent two years in Brazil traveling over a great part of that country and studying conditions. To his great disappointment he was at last forced to conclusion that such a colony could not be a success in Brazil at that time the conditions there being entirely different from those found by the early settlers in Texas.

I have but an imperfect knowledge of Hitchcock's life after his return from Brazil, until in the early 80's. At that time, he was again in Texas, making his home in Denton. That fortune had not been very kind to him throughout the intervening years was seen by his quiet, rather economical mode of living. For his services in the war against Mexico the State of Texas had given several grants of land, two of which were

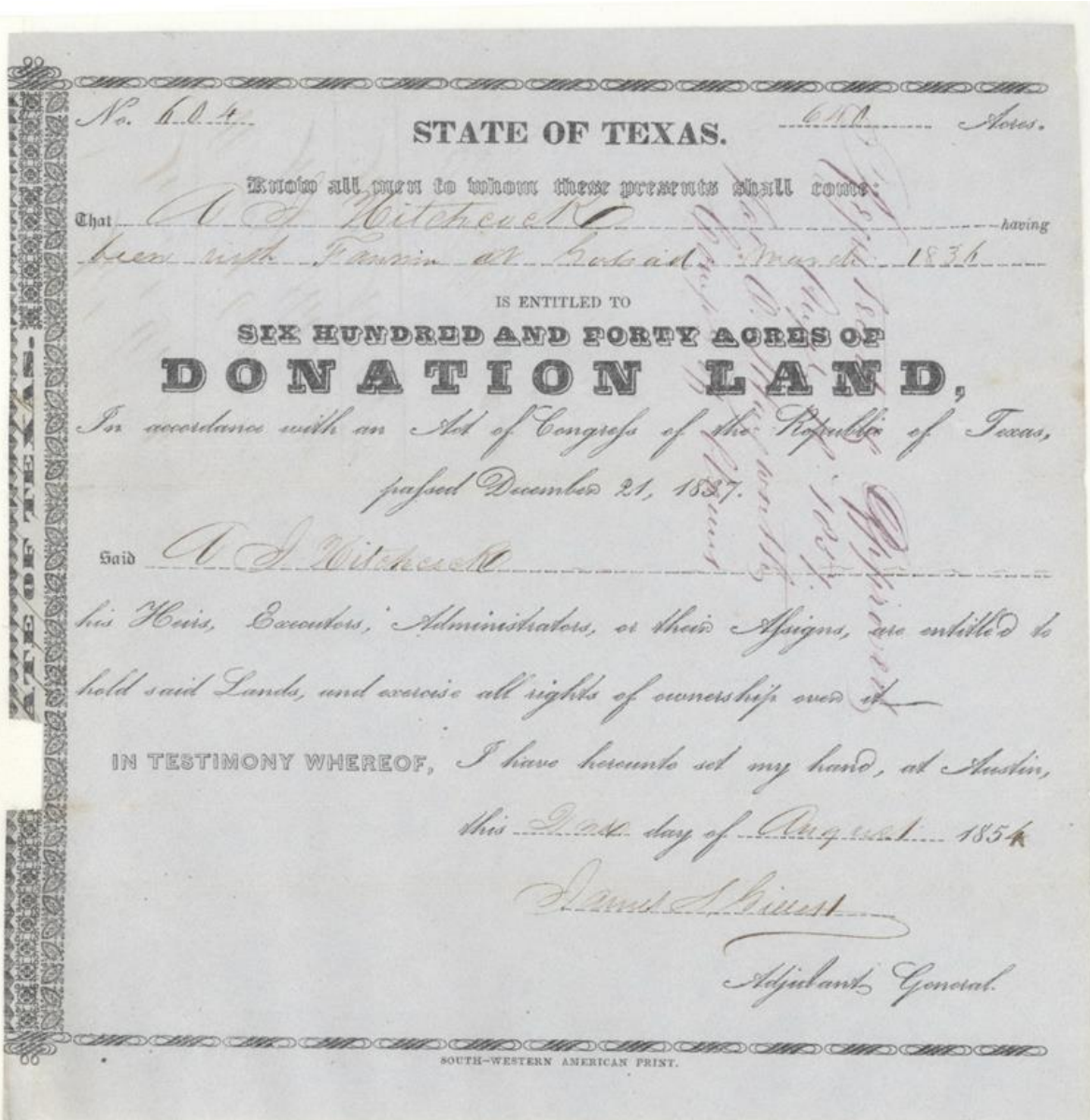
located in the western part of Denton county. One of these, containing about 1,200 acres he sold in 1883 to the late James H. Christal, father of Jack Christal who is at that time county clerk at Denton. What income he had at that time was evidently derived from the sale of this and other lands from time to time, though it was known that he kept about an undetermined amount of money in gold coin.

Early one morning in the latter part of August 1887, a messenger came hurriedly to our home some miles out from Denton, bringing us news of Hitchcock's death the night before in the burning of the house in which he had a room. As quickly as possible we drove into town where we learned more of the tragedy, the circumstances of which were so suspicious that an investigation as to the origin of the fire was already getting under way. The heat of the fire was so intense that the body was almost completely consumed, and only a charred mass of bones remained to be removed by loving hands and interred in the nearby cemetery. Although it was known by a number of persons that Mr. Hitchcock had about his person on the day preceding his death several hundred dollars in gold, no trace of any part of it was ever found. After the ashes of the burned building had cooled sufficiently they were carefully sifted and while the gold buttons from Hitchcock's shirt were found at the spot where the body had fallen, the closest search failed to reveal any coins either of silver or gold. There was soon sufficient evidence at hand for the grand jury to bring true bills of indictment against two men for murder and arson. One of these men in a signed confession, which he afterwards repudiated, admitted starting the fire in order that he might collect insurance on the property which was destroyed. However, after the case had been in court for several years an acquittal of the charges against him was gained.

And so, in tragedy ended the life of one of the last survivors of Goliad; a man, the complete record of whose life would read more like a tale of fiction than that of sober truth. A man, too, of such a lovable nature and endowed with such noble traits of character that it was truly said of him that he was "a brave soldier, a true friend and charitable Christian."

Andrew J. Hitchcox – Land Grant #604 – Service with Fannin at Goliad March 1836

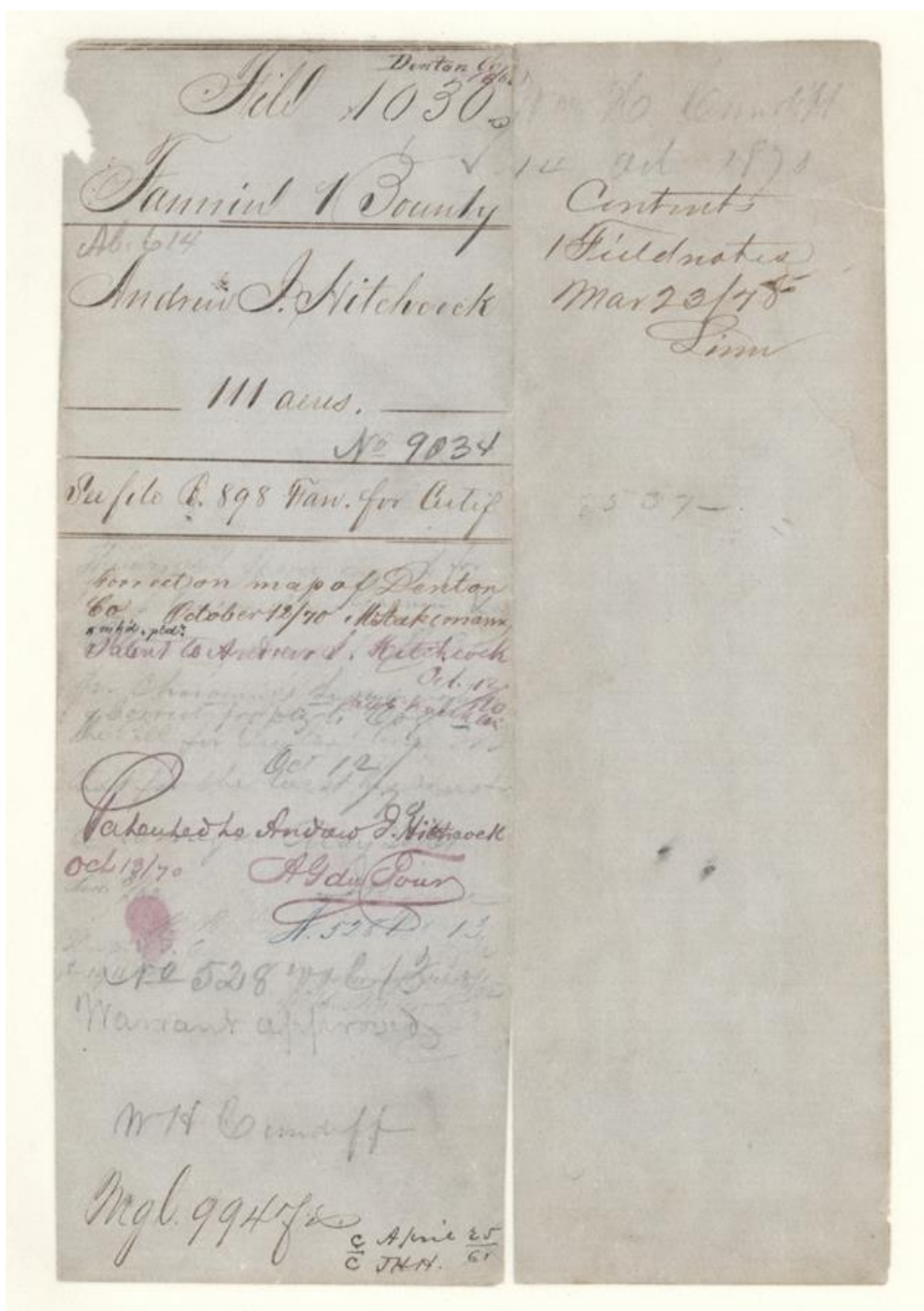
Donation grants were issued by the Republic of Texas for participation in specific battles of the Texas Revolution. Soldiers who fought in the Siege of Bexar and the Battle of San Jacinto, including the baggage detail at Harrisburg, received certificates for their service. The heirs of those who fell at the Alamo and Goliad also received certificates. It must be noted that the Congress of the Republic continually changed the acreage allotted under these grants, so there were Donation grants for differing acreages, although most certificates were issued for 640 acres.¹⁵



¹⁵ Texas General Land Office, <http://www.glo.texas.gov>

Andrew J. Hitchcox – Sample Bounty Land Grant #1030

Bounty grants for military service were issued by the Republic of Texas to soldiers who served in the Texas Revolution and to those who enlisted in the army before October 1, 1837. The amount of land granted varied depending on length of service. Each three months of service provided 320 acres, up to a maximum of 1280 acres. Often the heirs of a soldier who died in battle would be granted the full 1280 acres on the assumption that the fallen soldier would have served for the duration of the war.



Obituaries

September 1, 1887

The Survivor of Goliad Loses His Life in a Burning Hotel at Denton. ¹⁶

DENTON, Tex., Aug. 25, 1887 -- A very disastrous fire occurred here at 2 o'clock this morning in which Col. A. J. Hitchcock, and old and well-known Texas veteran, lost his life. The fire originated in the kitchen of the James hotel on Oak street, recently kept by S. W. Keeton, but for the last few days by a young man by the name of Robert Fain.

It was discovered by A. W. Roberson, Esq., boarder of the place, who at once raised the alarm but being a cripple was unable to make any effort to subdue the flames. the hotel occupied the second story of two brick business houses, and had two stairways, one leading up on the outside, and another, not used, leading down into one of the business houses.

The proprietor, Mr. Fain, examined the condition of the fire and pronounced it beyond control, and notified the guests of the fact Mr. Robinson, who occupied the same room as Col. Hitchcock, says that he aroused him up and told him where the fire was, and that the way was clear to the outside stairway, and that while he was throwing a trunk out of the window that Hitchcock started out and the he followed soon after him, but did not see him any more. Reaching the street and not seeing him any more, and knowing that he was old and infirm, he sent a man to search the rooms to see if he had lost his way or had been overcome with the smoke. search was made in every room except where the flames were already raging, and he was not found, and it was supposed that he had come down the stairs and disappeared in the crowd.

In a few minutes the building was wrapped in flames and in a short time converted into a heap of ruins. It was not until after daylight that the fate of one of Texas' true and tried sons was known. Search was made for the body, and at 2 o'clock p.m. this evening it was found, and it was then discovered that he had gone down the stairway which lead into one of the business houses below, and the door at the foot of the stairs being locked was then caught and perished in the flames.

Colonel Hitchcock was one of the survivors of the Fannin massacre at Goliad, in March 1836. He, there, with two or three of his comrades, eluded the red hand of Mexican vengeance, but last night he was met and surrounded by a more terrible enemy than he had encountered at Goliad-in but a few feet of friends-who knew nothing of his trouble and was forced to succumb. The sad affair is very much deplored here.

¹⁶ The Dallas Weekly Herald, September 3, 1887.

- HOTEL HORROR AT DENTON –
SAD FATE OF AN OLD TEXAS VETERAN
Colonel A. J. Hitchcock, Survivor of
Fannin Massacre, Burned to Death
in the James Hotel

Denton, August 25, 1887¹⁷

A fire occurred here this morning at 2 o'clock in the James Hotel, in which Colonel A. J. Hitchcock, an old Texas veteran and... survivor of the Fannin massacre at Goliad in 1836, was consumed. The hotel embraced the second story of a brick block on Oak Street, and was run until recently by S. W. Keetor, but for the last few days by a young man by the name of Robert Fain.

The fire originated in the kitchen, and was discovered by A. W. Roberson, Esq., who boarded at the hotel and who raised the alarm and notified the proprietor. Mr. Fain, examined the fire in the kitchen and pronounced it beyond control. Colonel Hitchcock, who was an old gentleman, occupied the same room Mr. Roberson occupied, and was awakened by him in ample time to make an easy escape from the burning building, and left the room while Mr. Roberson was throwing some things out of the window, to go downstairs by the outside stairway, which was clear from fire at the time, but on reaching the street Mr. Roberson made inquiries for his friend but he could not find. Nobody had seen him, and a man was sent to search the building for him, which was by this time fast becoming enveloped in flames. All the rooms except the dining room and kitchen were closely examined, but he was not found, and it was decided that he had come down, and had walked away not noticed by the crowd.

The foods were removed from the lower stories and the house left to its fate, which it soon met. But little did the great throng of people who witnessed the scene know that it was also the sad fate of old Colonel Hitchcock. Developments this morning showed that he had, in trying to make his escape from the building, gone down a stairway not used which led into one of the business houses below, and on reaching the foot of the stairs found the door locked. Nobody thought of opening the stairway door, or if so, thought it might be dangerous, and then the poor old man was with all means of escape cut off from above and with no hope save the hope of rescue from below, but alas there was no rescue. The flames roared, the building trembled and crushed and fell and buried beneath its fiery debris as good and as true a man as ever risked his life for the freedom of the Lone Star state. The body was recovered today, almost entirely consumed.

Colonel A. J. Hitchcock was a native of Georgia, 7[3]4 years old, and was in Fannin's command during the revolution of Texas. He escaped the Fannin massacre at Goliad on March 27, 183[7]6, and afterward raised a company and fought through the rest of the war with distinction. He had considerable property in this and other counties in the state. He will be buried here tomorrow.

¹⁷ The Galveston Daily News (Galveston, Galveston, Texas) · 26 Aug 1887, Fri · Page 1.

Andrew Jackson Hitchcock

IOOF marble shaft marker

(Note birth year is 1813)



