



The Texas Lone Star Flag was Actually Created for Georgians

Norm Dasinger, Jr., November 13, 2020
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One of Fannin's men holding Johanna Troutman's flag of the Georgia Volunteers, March 1836 | UTSA Special Collections

The Texas Lone Star flag is unmistakable, with its two horizontal stripes of red and white edged with a vertical stripe of blue centered with a five-pointed star. But there was an earlier flag that flew above Texas— a blue five-pointed star in the center of a white silk field, with the blue words “Liberty or Death” on one side and “Where Liberty Dwells there is my country” in Latin on the other. What is most interesting about this flag is that its creation is attributed to a 17-year-old girl not from Texas, but from Georgia.

From the *Atlanta Journal*, September 20, 1931:

“It was early in November, 1835, that the news reached Georgia that the providence of Texas was chafing under the tyranny of Santa Anna, the Mexican leader. A public meeting was held in Macon, Georgia on November 12, at which, more than \$3,000 was raised and plans were made to organize a company of soldiers to go to Texas and help her in the fight for freedom.

“As plans were being made for the march to Texas by the Georgian soldiers, a 17 year old girl realized that the company would need a flag. So, this thoughtful and patriotic citizen, Johanna Troutman, at Knoxville, Georgia, took one of her silk skirts, designed and made with her own hands the Lone Star flag ... upon the steps of the Troutman Inn, in Knoxville, Miss Troutman herself presented the flag to Capt. William Ward...



A copy of Johanna Troutman's flag | Crawford County Historical Society

“With this flag, 150 Georgians proceeded from the state to Texas, arriving there January 2, 1836. The flag was first raised on Texas soil at Velasco (modern-day Freeport) on January 8, 1836, in front of the American Hotel.”

The flag those Georgians brought from Knoxville would become the national banner. It was the first flag flown at Goliad by Jim Fannin on March 8, 1836, immediately after Texas was proclaimed a free nation. The flag was torn to shreds.

Johanna Troutman—later nicknamed the Betsy Ross of Texas—had brothers and cousins who served in that volunteer unit that marched to Texas in 1835. She married Solomon Pope in 1839 and, following his death in 1872, she married W. G. Vinson, a member of the Georgia Legislature.

While living, Johanna never visited Texas. She died in 1879, but in 1913 at the request of Gov. Oscar B Colquitt, a Georgia native, her remains were removed to the Texas State Cemetery in Austin.

Today, the Texas Lone Star flag waves outside the Crawford County, Georgia, Courthouse in Knoxville.



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