

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

One Tribal Uprising, One Infantry Lieutenant: The Long Gray Line to Honor Unsung Hero of the Texas War for Independence, Joseph Bonnell, West Point Class of 1825

At 2 p.m. on Saturday, March 6th 2010 the West Point Society of Central Texas will conduct a ceremony at The Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum in Austin to commemorate the extraordinary heroism of Lieutenant [Joseph Bonnell](#) who, acting alone in 1836, prevented a large force of hostile warriors from attacking the Army of Texas under the command of General Sam Houston. The event will include a performance by the band of the First Cavalry Division on the Museum's Lone Star Plaza, beginning at 1:30 p.m. Brigadier General Patrick Finnegan, Dean of the Academic Board will represent West Point.

Austin, Texas; February 2, 2010 --- Modern battlefield heroics are often well documented, but it took over 150 years to assemble the facts about Lieutenant [Joseph Bonnell](#) who, on a solo mission in April 1836, confronted the leader of 1700 hostile American Indians on the Western frontier of the United States, negotiating a truce that prevented an attack on the Army of Texas.

Documenting Bonnell's extraordinary mission has been a nearly full-time avocation for Colonel Seldon Graham, amateur historian, World War II veteran, and member of the West Point Society of Central Texas in Austin. "As a native Texan and West Point graduate I became interested in the role of earlier graduates in the Texas Revolution" Graham recently said. "I found records of Bonnell's service on the Texas border following his graduation in 1825, and his 1835 assignment to witness a treaty between the U.S. government and the Caddo tribe."

According to a recent [paper written by Graham](#), Lieutenant Bonnell "...discovered wrongdoing by the U.S. agent and provided a deposition on behalf of the Caddo Indians which ultimately went to the Supreme Court." Graham says "That demonstration of integrity made Bonnell a trusted friend to Caddo Chief Cortes – so when Bonnell was sent back alone a year later to pacify the Caddo and prevent an attack on the fledgling Texas Army as they prepared to engage the Mexican army at San Jacinto, Chief Cortes was responsive to his entreaty." Based on Graham's research, the Texas Legislature in 2005 passed [a resolution](#) recognizing Bonnell as a Hero of the Texas Revolution.

Graham discovered a surprising twist in the young officer's career. "Records of the Texas Army proved the unprecedented fact that Sam Houston personally recognized Bonnell's value, and had him commissioned in the Army of Texas and appointed to his staff as Aide de Camp, even while he (Bonnell) continued to serve in the 3rd Infantry Regiment of the U.S. Army at Fort Jesup!" The document making that appointment can be seen as part of a current display at the museum entitled "The Texas Army Organizes."

The public is invited to attend the March 6 ceremony honoring Lt. Bonnell and take advantage of the monthly Wells Fargo First Saturday at the museum during which there is no admission charge to the exhibits between 2 and 6 p.m. The event will include a performance by the band of the First Cavalry Division on the Museum's Lone Star Plaza, beginning at 1:30 p.m.

About the West Point Association of Graduates:

The West Point Association of Graduates was founded in 1869 to reunite Academy graduates who found themselves on opposing sides during the American Civil War. West Point Societies exist to further the ideals of the United States Military Academy and to serve graduates through social and business networking events, to perform active duty and community outreach initiatives, and to assist with Academy admissions.

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