

PLUNKETT, JOHN - Born in Belfast, Ireland, in 1808 a son of John and Elizabeth (Keanan) Plunkett. His parents, because of financial reverses, emigrated to the United States in 1830 with their children John, Isabella and Elizabeth and located near Andover, Massachusetts. Mr. John Plunkett, Sr., only lived a short time after reaching American, dying at Baltimore on his return home from a visit to a brother in the South. Isabella was married to Charles Dale and Elizabeth to Abiather Holt. In the year 1834 Mr. Plunkett, his mother, and Mr. and Mrs. Dale came to Texas and settled At Matagorda where Mr. Plunkett engaged first only in merchandising and later in various other enterprises.

In the headright certificate issued to Mr. Plunkett for one-third of a league of land January 6, 1838 by the Matagorda County Board of Land Commissioners it is stated that he came to Texas in 1834. He was a member of Captain Robert J. Calder's Company at San Jacinto and was issued Donation Certificate No. 947 for 640 acres of land November 15, 1839 for having participated in the battle. On \_\_\_\_\_ he received Bounty Certificate No. 9505 for 320 acres of land for his services from February 23 to May 24, 1836. After receiving his discharge he enlisted in Captain Thomas Stewart's "Matagorda Volunteers."

Mr. Plunkett was never married. He died in the town of Matagorda, October 3, 1886, leaving his estate to his two sisters. His grave is marked. He was a member of the Texas Veterans Association.

Elizabeth Plunkett, sister of John Plunkett was born in Ireland

February 8, 1814. She was married to Abiather Hold. Mrs. Holt died January 7, 1887, in Matagorda County, Texas. Mr. Holt died in Andover, Massachusetts. Mr. and Mrs. Hold had one child, John Francis Holt, born April 28, 1838 and died November 31, 1921. He was in the Confederate Army in the war between the states.

Isabella Plunkett, sister of John Plunkett was born in Ireland. She was married to Charles Dale. Mr. Dale died in Massachusetts. Mrs. Dale died in San Antonio. Their children were John, James, Charles and Lizzie, all of whom died leaving no children. All of the boys participated in the war between the states. James was in the Union Army. His brothers were in the Confederate Army.

John Francis Holt, son of Abiather and Elizabeth (Plunkett) Holt, and nephew of John Plunkett, was married to Helen Wilkinson. Mr. Holt as has been stated above, died March 31, 1921. Mrs. Holt, born October 8, 1829 died May 4, 1928. Their children were (1) Louise, who married J. S. Mayfield. Mr. and Mrs. Mayfield reside in Houston, Texas. (2) Ann Elizabeth, who married E. J. Kilbride. Mr. and Mrs. Kilbride reside in Bay City, Texas.

The following letter written by Mr. Plunkett to Abiather Holt, Andover, Massachusetts, is in the possession of Mrs. Kilbride:

"Matagorda,  
July 17, 1836

"My Dear Friend;

A few days ago I rec'd yours of the 2nd Feby with much pleasure, it being the first I have heard from friend or relative for five months. I have written to you twice previous to the receipt of this. I thank you for the kind feelings you express and am sorry that we are not more fortunate in our communications to each other. You are partially aware of the difficulties we have to encounter perhaps before this.

On the first of March I left this place to join the army. A few days after from the near approach of the enemy to Matagorda the families were all put on board the vessels for safety and sent to the United States. My brother-in-law and family with my mother were among them. They have not wrote to me since, but I have heard they were in Mobile and well. I joined the army under the command of Gen<sup>l</sup> Houston on the Colorado and continued with it until the beginning of June. My dear friend, I can give you but a faint idea of the difficulties, privations and hardships we had to encounter-figure to yourself 14 hundred men on their retreat from a beastly inhuman foe estimated at 8 thousand, traveling these vast praries, the canopy of heaven for our covering, depending on beef for our sustenance which we killed on our march. When dealt out to us sometimes scantily, we cut a small stick sharpened it at both ends, one end we stuck in the ground, the other we put the meat on before the fire and turned it as it cooked. We sometimes had frying pans but on our march frequently had to leave them not having teams sufficient to carry our baggage.

Next the news of the fall of Snt Antonio when 120 brave Americans were slaughtered, again at Goliad, or near to it, where about 300 were surrounded by more than ten times their number and fought bravely for sometime, after which a formal treaty was made, which ought to have been respected by any Christian Nation, that was to send them back to the United States, but in a few days, by order of the savage tyrant were taken out and shot. Some ten or twelve after being taken out among the rest, made their escape. This and like news we heard, while on the retreat, still ringing in our ears, might have caused us to fear them and tremble at the name of a Mexican, but no-we longed to meet them and revenge the deaths of our murdered countrymen and we did revenge them. The Plains of San Jacinto will be long remembered by the Mexicans where we fought them over two to one, their numbers being 15 hundred our not half. We killed about 6 hundred and took the remainder prisoners more than half of them being wounded.

I was in the action and think have not dishonored the cause for which we fought. You remind of your promise of coming to Texas or rather your intention, I am glad you are doing well, but hope at present, you have no such intention. At some future period perhaps it might answer, but not in the situation the Country is in at present. This country is again threatened with invasion, 10,000 Mexicans are on their march, fully intent to murder all in arms against them. We are all called out agains some have gone and we have information there are 2,000 Mexicans on the Warippe. Tomorrow leave here to join the army. Remember me to Elizabeth. I may yet live to see here; should

I not I trust in God. She has other friends who will not forsake her in the time of need nor prove untrue.

I have given you only a sketch of the whole of the affairs of Texas. You will perhaps see it more fully in some of the papers. Write to me soon and tell my sister to write. I long to hear from her. I should have written to her now but have not time.

Direct as usual to Matagorda. Some friend will send it to me.

Yours with respect,

J. Plunket."