

BALCH, JOHN - Born in Tennessee in 1812. He arrived in Texas in April, 1835, as is stated in the headright certificate No. 421 issued to him in 1838 for one-third of a league of land by the Board of Land Commissioners for Matagorda County. With him came his brother Hezekiah Benjamin Balch. Mr. Balch's headright certificate was rejected by mistake, by the Traveling Board of Commissioners and another was issued to him March 19, 1850, complying with an Act of the State Legislature Approved January 11, 1850, by the governor.

Mr. Balch enlisted in the army October 7, 1835, and was later assigned to Captain John York's Company, pp. 23, Army rolls in the General Land Office. in which he participated in the Storming and Capture of Bexar, December 5 to 10, and was discharged December 14, 1835. In March, 1836, he joined Captain Philip Dimmit's Company, which was disbanded before it could join the main army. On page 65 of the Army rolls in the General Land Office he is shown as being a member, April 5, 1836, of the company recruited by Major Leander Smith. Mr. Balch and most of the men of Major Smith's Company served in Captain Alfred H. Wylie's Company at San Jacinto. Mr. Balch's name was not shown on the San Jacinto rolls printed in 1836, but Adjutant General John A. Wharton in a statement made May 16, 1836, said that Mr. Balch had participated in the battle. On September 24, 1849, he was issued Donation Certificate No. 172 for 640 acres of land for his San Jacinto Services. In Comptroller's Military Service Record No. 7978 it is certified that in the engagement at San Jacinto Mr. Balch lost a horse, saddle and bridle valued at \$100.00. This does not mean

that Mr. Balch rode the horse during the battle. He evidently furnished the animal to the cavalry.

Mr. Balch was married to Elizabeth Rogers in Nacogdoches County January 21, 1841. Mrs. Balch was born in 1826 and died in 1893. Mr. Balch died in the latter part of the year 1900 while a member of the Texas Veterans Association. He was buried in the cemetery at Cove Springs, about twelve miles east of Nacogdoches.

Children of Mr. and Mrs. Balch were (1) Joseph Elijah, (2) Hannah, (3) Hezhkiah, (4) William alfred Wyly, (5) Robert Samuel, (6) Mary E., (7) John H., (8) George Washington, (9) Stephen C., (10) Arthur M., and (11) Fannie M. Balch.

(1) Joseph Elijah Balch was born in Nacogdoches County in September 1842. He joined the Confederate Army and died at Camp Douglas, Illinois, March 30, 1863, while a prisoner.

(2) Hannah Balch was married to John Stewart. Mrs. Stewart was born in Melrose, Texas in 1845 and died at Attoyac, November 29, 1892.

Children of Mr. and Mrs. John Stewart were Lee, Ellen, who married a E. C. Palmer and now resides at 931 Bayland St. Houston; Emma, Annie, John, James and Nettie Stewart. One of the daughters listed above married T. L. Stewart and now resides at 604 East Twenty-fourth Street, Houston.

(3) Hezekiah B. Balch was born in 1848 and now resides in Sonora, Texas.

(4) William Alfred Wyly Balch was born in Nacogdoches County,

July 2, 1850. He was married to Leona Hall. Mr. Balch died in San Augustine in 1905. Mrs. Balch lives in San Augustine, R.F.D. No. 3.

Children of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Wily Balch were Willie, Bessie, Valley and Beth Balch.

(5) Robert Samuel Balch was born in Melrose, Texas, January 5, 1853. He was married to Mary Alice Kelly, who was born in Alabama in January, 1848, and died at Attoyac, Nacogdoches County, in December, 1933. Mr. Balch resides at Attoyac with his son Robert Balch, Jr.

Some of the children of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Samuel Balch were Robert, Texana, who married C. E. Green and resides at Attoyac, Texas; and J. E. Balch, Webster, Texas;

(6) Mary E. Balch was born August 7, 1856 at Melrose, Texas and died at Woodbury, Hill County, March 1, 1898. She was married to Frank Jones.

Children of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Jones were Oscar, Conrad, Edward, Claud, Clyde, Carl and Nettie Jones.

(7) John Houston Balch was born in Melrose, August 2, 1859. He was married to Ella Hatchett. Mr. and Mrs. Balch reside in Ft. Worth. Their children were Brice, Arthur, Mabel, Norma, John and Charles Balch.

(8) George Washington Balch was born in Melrose, Texas, November 4, 1861. He was married to Mollie Green.

(9) Stephen C. Balch was born in Chireno, Texas, March 2, 1865 and died there September 12, 1867.

(10) Arthur M. Balch was born in Chireno, Texas, April 18, 1868

and died there September 12, 1871.

(11) Fannie Belle Balch was born in Chireno, April 18, 1873.

She was married to Ollin Coody. Mrs. Coody resides in Blum, Texas.

Children of Mr. and Mrs. Ollin Coody were Alvala, Earl, Ila,  
Elbert and Jesse Coody.

The following petition signed by Mr. Balch October 29, 1849, is among the files of Memorials and Petitions, Archives, Texas State Library:

"To the Honorable Legislature of the State of Texas.

The petition of John Balch would most respectfully represent to your Honorable body, that he has failed to obtain the Third of a League of land to which as a colonist and settler he is entitled; from causes which he will here narrate

A Certificate issued to him by the Board of land Commissioners for Matagorda County in the year 1838 for the above named quantity of land, but was rejected by the "Travelling Board," and of the fact of its rejection he was not apprized until too late to bring suit in the District Court, and thus avail himself of the legal remedy provided for cases where injustice had been suffered from the action of said Travelling Board. The reason of his ignorance of the insufficiency of his Certificate was, that he had placed it in the hands of Col. John F. Pettus of Mill Creek (Since deceased) for location, but not for sale, where it remained until after his death, without his having informed your petitioner of its defect, or its disposition, and only when too late to sue in Court for the establishment of his just claim did he learn that any doubt existed in relation to it.

What may have been the mistaken ground taken by the Travelling Board for depriving him of his hardly earned settlement right, your petitioner is at a loss to aver, altho it is no difficult task to clearly and conclusively shew to your Honorable Body how well he is

entitled to the land he now petitions for, as also the gross injustice he has suffered from the erroneous action (unintentional tho' it might be) of the Board, in dispossessing him of a just acquisition, and to which end he would ask your attention to the following history of his connection with, and participation in the struggle of Texas for the establishment and maintenance of her independence.

Your petitioner first came to Texas in the Spring of 1835 and enlisted on the 7th of October 1835 in Fannin's Company - afterwards York's, and was discharged Dec the 14th 1835 or thereabouts by York and Burleson having aided in the storming of San Antonio. This discharge was handed to Major Leander Smith at Harrisburg to be recorded, and has not been heard of since, said Smith having afterwards been killed in a recontre at Nacogdoches, altho he had been heard to say that it had been recorded in the War Office - Your petitioner also joined the army at Mill Creek, on its retreat from the West, and was a member of Capt Wylys Company which had previously organized at Harrisburg, continued in said company and was in the Battle of San Jacinto and afterwards discharged. Before this last enlistment he had joined a Company under Dimmitt with the view of joining Houston at Gonzales, but Houston had retreated, and the Company narrowly escaping from the Mexicans dispersed, afterwards reorganizing under Wyly as above mentioned.

In June 1836 under a passport & from the Hon. Jas Collinsworth, then Secretary of State of Texas, which passport is herewith presented, your petitioner left Texas and was absent until 1838 when he returned

to the Country, leaving again the same year and remaining absent until the year 1840, when he again returned and has remained in Texas ever since.

To more fully substantiate the facts herein set forth your petitioner would also refer your honorable Body to the Certificates of Gen Thomas J Rusk, that of Capt Moses L. Patton, and that of Robt H Williams, herewith, presuming that they will be considered amply sufficient without multiplying them by the addition of others which it is in his power to obtain to almost any extent, but which would only unnecessarily occupy the valuable time of the Legislature, the case having been clearly made out already.

And now Your Petitioner would most respectfully and humbly pray your Honorable Body to reinstate him in the just rights (of which he has been unfairly deprived) acquired through an adherence and devotion to the Country in its darkest hour under a determination to sink or swim with it, in its perilous career, which determination was thoroughly tested in the events that followed, and he rests satisfied, that faithful services as a citizen will not be looked upon with apathy and indifference by a Body full of generous enthusiasm for the cause of Freedom and justice, and that his prayer will be favorably answered, so that he may obtain his settlement right of a third of a League of land of which he has been unjustly deprived as before set forth."