

SHAIN, CHARLES B. - Name not shown on the San Jacinto rolls printed in 1836 or on the San Jacinto rolls in the General Land Office. In the headright certificate issued to him December 23, 1839 by the Board of Land Commissioners for Galveston County for one-third of a league of land it is stated that he came to Texas prior to March 2, 1836. He came to Texas in 1835 with Colonel James Tarlton, having been recruited by him for the army of Texas.

On page 14 of the army rolls in the General Land Office Mr. Shain is shown as one of the men of Captain Burr H. Duval's company, Mannin's command, who was led out to be executed March 27, 1836 but managed to escape. Overcoming many dangers and difficulties he reached the main army in time to participate in the battle of San Jacinto as a member of Captain William H. Patton's company. Colonel Jesse Benton, Jr., from his home in San Augustine, September 10, 1856 sent to the Commissioner of the General Land Office, the names of all men who had served in Captain William H. Patton's Company. On this roll he shows Charles B. Shain, Daniel Murphy and Nathaniel Hazen, who had been led out to be shot at La Bahia, March 27, 1836, as having participated in the battle of San Jacinto.

The experiences of Mr. Shain in the Texas army written by Mr. Shain was published in the Louisville Journal, Louisville, Kentucky, June 30, 1836, and in it he stated that he fought at San Jacinto.

Mr. Shain was issued Bounty Certificate No. 9367 for 1280 acres of land January 4, 1840 for having served in the army from February 12, 1836 to May 5, 1837. At the same time he received Donation Certificate

No. 990 for 640 acres of land for "having been in the action of 19
March, 1836 under Col. Fannin."

Mr. Shain was living in Louisville, Kentucky, February 18, 1845
when he sold his headright land through his agent, Alfred W. Lockett.

[Source: Louisville (Ky.) Journal, June 30, 1836.]

For the Louisville Journal

Narrative of G. B. Shain of Louisville

A Volunteer in the Cause of Texas

I left Louisville on the 15th of November, 1835, under the command of Captain James Tarlton. On the 17th our company arrived at the mouth of the Ohio, where we remained hunting game until the arrival of the steamboat Baltic. We got to Natchez on the 25th, and remained there one day, reached Natchitoches on the 28th. That night we took up our line of march, and travelled two or three miles. We started very early next morning, but travelled only 15 miles, the condition of our oxen being such, that we could make no greater progress. On the following day, we obtained a horse team and got along very fast. On the 3rd we arrived at San Augustine where we were very cordially received by the entire population, who fired their cannon during the whole afternoon. We left San Augustine on the 5th, and arrived in Nacogdoches on the 7th, where we were received as brothers. On the 10th, in the evening, we left Nacogdoches, and had gone about two miles, when Capt. Tarlton told the Orderly Sergeant to detach six men and go back for a man by the name of Smith he had two guns that belonged to the company. The Orderly, with Messrs. Perkins, Brown, Bull, Wright, Victor, and myself, went back and found Smith, who refused to go with us or to give up the guns unless Perkins would give him a receipt for them. Perkins agreed to so so and was writing it when I saw Smith suddenly shove Brown Back and draw his knife. He

made a pass at Brown, and I caught the blow on my own knife. Smith then ran out of the door, and I pursued him, but not overtaking him, I saw no more of him until I got to Labahia, or Goliad, when he appeared to be very friendly to us all.

We started for our camp without the guns, and nothing further happened worth relating until we arrived at Trinity Bottom. For six miles before we reached the river, we had to travel through mud and water, sometimes up to our waists. We were all day in crossing. We took up our line of march the next morning quite early, as we were very anxious to get to San Antonio before the fortress should be taken. Some of our men got intoxicated after we crossed the Trinity, and we were divided -- part of the company under the command of Wiggington, by way of Washington, and the balance under the command of Tarlton, by the way of Tinoxticlan to Brasstrop (sic). I went with Tarlton. From Tinoxticlan to Brasstrop, 80 miles, we did not see a house, but it certainly is the finest country in the world. It has more deer and turkey than any other region I have ever seen. I am confident that I saw not less than 300 deer in one drove. On the 24th I killed three buffalo; and two others were killed by some of the rest of the company. We must have seen 500-600 that day. At night we camped out on the St. Mark's River, where we could stand in camp and kill an abundance of turkies (sic). The next night we encamped on the Guadalupe, or Warlupe river.

We arrived in San Antonio on the 27th, in the morning. There were supposed, at the time of our arrival, to be 500 inhabitants re-

siding in San Antonio, and but one white man. The square was all picketed with strong post-oak pickets, and there was no way of getting in except by going through the port hole of one of the cannon. It is a very splendid looking place in the square, but the town looks very badly. The houses are generally built of a kind of cement. Some of them, however, consist merely of pickets driven in the ground, and covered with a kind of straw, cement, and moss. We there joined the cavalry under the command of Captain B. L. Lawrence. On the second, or third day after we left San Antonio, one of our men, Mr. Pike, accidentally shot Mr. Childers. Captain Lawrence, myself and several others were left behind to have his leg dressed. We did so, and put him in an open wagon, but it jolted him so much, that before we could get him to Goliad, he was too far gone for medical assistance. He died six or seven days after we reached Goliad where we staid ten days or two weeks, and then took up the line of march. By order of General Houston, we went as far as the Mission Refugio (sic) to which place Colonel Johnson came with an express, stating that Governor Smith was under duress and that he was appointed to the command of the expedition to Matamoras. General Houston, Colonel Hockley, Major Wallace, Major McIntire, Captain Lawrence, and several others started for San Felipe de Austin. Captain Lawrence resigned his command, our company broke up, and a great many went home. Captain Tarlton and myself started, and got as far as San Felipe, and were there persuaded to stay. Captain Tarlton started back a few days before I did, as my horse was lame.

On the 7th of February, I joined Captain Burr H. Duval's company

and remained in it until the butchery of Colonel Fannin and his men. We went to work and fortified ourselves, pulling down and burying all the houses in the place. We went down the San Antonio river, on one occasion, after some suspicious fellows. We took nineteen of them prisoners and returned in a few days. On the Friday previous to our final departure, our horsemen came in and gave the alarm that there were a good many persons in the woods opposite the fort. Col. Fannin ordered our company and the red-rovers (sic) to cross the river and cover the retreat of the horsemen. We fired two or three rounds of artillery at them, but they soon made off. That night we intended starting after dark, but some of our horsemen came up from the river, and said that there was a picket guard of the Mexicans at each ford. Col. Fannin then ordered Col. Horton to take his horse company and cross over the river with one of our company behind each of them, and to watch until we could have the artillery and baggage carried over. We thought it a very singular order, but we obeyed. The horsemen went forward, and, in a short time, one of them came galloping back, and told us that there were at least 200 horsemen in the act of crossing. In a few minutes we heard horses coming and were ordered to form and receive a charge. They came within fifty yards of us before we could see them on account of the darkness. Captain Duval hailed them, when we found them to be our own men that we had sent to see if there was any chance of crossing that night. We were very near shooting at them. One of our guns snapped; and if it had gone off, we should certainly have killed nearly every man, for we all had our triggers sprung and

our rifles cocked. It was so dark that the Mexicans did not pursue us. We then returned to the fort, and the next morning, at 11 o'clock we were across the river. We marched about six miles, when Col. Fannin ordered us to halt and let the oxen rest. We stopped about one hour, or probably an hour and a half, in which time had we proceeded we could have reached the woods in safety. We had not marched more than two or three miles, when our flank guard came riding in, and said that the Mexican army was advancing on us. By this time they were in sight. We immediately halted and fired two or three cannon at them, but they were too far off to be injured. We then hitched our oxen and marched about a half mile farther when we saw a large body of Mexicans in our rear and on both sides, advancing on us very rapidly. We halted, formed a hollow square and commenced again with our artillery, but they still advanced until within about 400 yards, when at about 3 o'clock, they commenced firing with their muskets but still continued to advance. They marched towards us slowly until they got within 150 yards. We then commenced with our rifles and muskets. As soon as we opened our fire they fell back about 200 yards, and we kept up regular fire until nearly sundown when they retreated. It was then proposed by some of the officers, that we retreat to the woods, but some of the men objected on account of our wounded. We had about 20 or 25 men that would have been left. If our advance guard had not been cut off from us we could have carried our wounded and made our escape to the woods and water, where we could have whipped the enemy with all ease. They kept sounding their bugles every five minutes during the night, and we expected a charge every minute. A prisoner that had been taken at Mission Re-

fusio (sic)

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fusio (sic) said they were all night burying their dead. We had but six killed in the battle and about forty wounded. On the Mexican side, about 1100 were killed or wounded; or at least that is the number Almonte says were missing next morning; but we supposed at that time that about 700 or 800 were killed and wounded.

That night the Mexicans were reinforced with artillery and about 500 men under the command of Colonel Bradburn, a Kentuckian, who had left Christian county, Kentucky, for stealing negroes. Next morning about 3 o'clock, they fired three cannon and hoisted a white flag. We answered it immediately, and their commanding officer, Urea, and two other officers, one a German, and the other a Mexican, came to meet us. Some of the propositions were, that they were to respect our private property, and that we were to be treated as prisoners of war until the expiration of eight days, when we were to be sent to the United States on parole of honor. Colonel Fannin then called all the officers together, stated the proposition to them, and a majority of them consented to it--in fact, I believe all of them consented with the exception of Captain Duval. He told them that they might do as they pleased, but he would never give his consent. The negotiations were concluded. We then stacked our arms and marched in double file back to the fort. We arrived there late in the evening. They gave us nothing to eat that night and nothing till late next day. Then they gave us about as much for twenty-four hours as we could eat at one meal. We were kept in an old church fort two days and nights, after which we were kept in the fort until the next Sunday morning. On Saturday the

26th, six days after we were taken, Santa Anna arrived there, and we were the next morning taken out to be shot, but at the time we thought they were going to comply with the terms of the treaty. They divided us into three divisions. The first division was led out on the Victoria road; the second, the division I belonged to, was taken out on the San Antonio road; as far the other, I do not know where they were taken, but I think that they were killed in the fort, as none of that division escaped. The division to which I belonged had proceeded as far as a brush fence, when a firing commenced in, or near the fort. Our guards immediately ordered us to halt; but the rear had not halted before I heard somebody say, "Prepare!" The enemy all levelled their guns and fired. They were within three or four feet of us when they fired. They missed me and I ran to the river and swam over. While I was swimming they shot five times at me, at a distance of not more than fifty yards. John Duval, John Helleday, Daniel Murphy, Nat Hazen, myself and several others swam the river together, but a good many were killed after they had reached the opposite shore. Murphy and myself met as soon as we crossed, but the others that crossed at the same time were killed on the other side. There were between 350 and 400 men killed; and only 16 escaped. Murphy and myself had hid ourselves in the bushes, until the firing ceased, which lasted about two hours and a half. We then went about two miles to a small bunch of timber, and there we found John Williams in a tree. We concealed ourselves until after night, and then travelled northeast until it became so cloudy that we could not see our course. We stopped on the Coletta until

morning. We then travelled all day, and nearly all the next night, though it was so cloudy we knew not which way we were travelling. On that day we fell in with two more of our companions, one of whom had belonged to the first, and the other to the second division. We went five days and a half without eating. On the sixth in the morning we found a small turtle. We immediately kindled a fire and cooked and ate it. It strengthened us very much, and shortly after that we came to the Guadalupe (sic) shore. We were pursued by six or eight Mexicans, but we saw them first, and ran to the river and swam it. We thought that we would hide in the bushes, but we found a very large Panther in the bushes. The Mexicans in our rear, a large river before us, a Panther in the bushes. Of the three dangers we took to the river and all got over safely and hid in the bushes on the other side until night. We then crossed a large prairie and struck the Gonzales road, upon which we travelled until 12 or one o'clock. It was then raining, but I knew we must be somewhere very near Mr. Burnes' farm. We were in a thick wood, and staid there until morning. We started very early, and, that morning, we got to Burnes' and found some of the best bacon I have ever tasted. We killed a hog that we found in a lot, cooked him, and parched enough corn to last about two or three days. That night we went five or six miles, and my companions had to stop for me, as I was very unwell. The next day we travelled for part of the day, and at night crossed the Gonzales, and struck the Texana road, which we followed until it crossed the san Felipe and Victoria road. We then took the latter, and followed it to the Labaca, when we went up the Labaca

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until we came to the settlements.

We got to Mr. Bent's on the 8th day after we left Goliad. There we met with four others. They were just eating supper when we got there. The people had left all their chickens which we killed and ate. On the following morning we thought we would go over to the next house and kill a hog, and cook him to carry with us. We staid there four days for repose, it being a part of the country not much travelled. We finally started but lost our way, and had to come back about six miles, as we were determined to keep to the road. We travelled two days from Labaca before we got to the San Felipe and Gonzales road. The road looked very much like an army had a few days before, passed along there. We had not travelled far before we saw two men on horse-back coming towards us. We dodged out to one side of the road until they passed. We found them to be Mexican spies. We had a dog with us, which we had brought from the Labaca, and he came very near betraying us several times. The next day we got to the Colorado. Before reaching the river, we met an old Dutchman, and brought him along with us. He was going directly towards the Mexican army. We told him of the butchery of all of Colonel Fannin's men, but he could not understand it. He said that he had heard there was to be war six months ago, but had never heard any more about it. He said all his neighbors had removed, and he was afraid of the Indians. When we got to the Colorado river, Murphy, Kemp, and myself, swam the river, and went to Lacy's four miles distance to kill a hog while the others made a raft to get the Dutchman across the river. We went on to Lacy's and got a very

fine hog in a pen and killed him. While we were skinning him, we heard the Mexican drums. The next morning, after travelling about four or five miles we came in sight of the Mexican camp in Tuskasett Prairie. We went into the woods and followed them around to the San Felipe road. We had not travelled far when we saw about 600 Mexican soldiers: we then got into the woods about a half mile off and staid there until night. That night we came upon the Mexicans encamped on the San Bayard river, and went up that river about five miles before we could get across on account of quicksand. We got in the road again and had come within four or five miles of San Felipe, when we came on a Mexican picket guard lying asleep in the road. We left the road without disturbing him, and went out in the prairie about two miles from where we had seen the picket. It being very cloudy we could not travel so concluded to lie down in the prairie until the moon rose, but we went to sleep and did not wake till sunrise. Then we had about five miles to travel before we could get to the woods on the Brazos river. In doing this we went in sight of the Mexicans at San Felipe, who were sounding their bugles, beating their drums, and firing their cannon. We went through the timber on the Brazos to the river, which one of our company said he could not swim. We then went into the prairie along the edge of the woods which were too thick for us to pass through. We concluded to go to Washington and there cross the river and see if we could not hear any of the American army. We went on to Mr. Cummings' house on Mill Creek which was very high and we had to swim it. We had not been there more than an hour when we saw one of our spies. I called to him

but he was a little backward at first, being some distance off at the time. He came up to us, and that night, rode back to Campana, and sent us horses. That night we staid in our picket guard camp, four miles from Cummings' and four miles from General Houston's camp. The next morning we reached the Texan camp. As soon as I arrived, Colonel Benj. F. Smith sent for me and gave me some clothes and told me that his negro boy would wait on me till I was well. We crossed the Brazos in four or five days after we got to the camp. We crossed at Groces, and staid there two or three days, and then took up our line of march for Harrisburg on Buffalo Bayou. We arrived at Buffalo Bayou opposite Harrisburg on the 17th of April, and that evening our spies took three Mexican espriers with despatches to Santa Anna. The Mexicans were in Harrisburg at the time we encamped on the other side. That night about eleven o'clock, we heard the Mexican drums beating, and the next morning, we heard that they had taken up their line of march towards Anahuack (sic). We immediately crossed the bayou which took us all day, and the army marched nearly all night. The next day we came in sight of the Mexican army. Our army encamped on Buffalo Bayou near San Jacinto that night, we went back and crossed the bridge that crosses Sims' Bayou. On the 20th the Mexicans commenced cannonading our camp. General Houston ordered Colonel Sherman to lead out the cavalry and and take a piece of woods before the Mexican could do so, but the Mexicans got there first, and Sherman not seeing them, marched slowly into the timber, when he was fired on by the Mexicans, but nobody was hurt. There was one horse killed. On the next day, the men were all

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formed, and Gen Houston told them, that such as could not stand the bayonet, must stay behind. The left wing of our army was commanded by Col Sherman, the center by Gen. Houston, and the right by Col. Burleson. The Mexican's army left was commanded by Col. Almonte, the centre by Gen. Cos, and the right by Santa Anna. The Mexicans were in the wood, and had thrown up a breastwork, and we were in the prairie. Col. Sherman's command was led up under the brow of the hill, until they were within seventy or eighty yars. The fire was then opened, and they went in double quick time over the enemy's breastwork. Our whole army was ~~xxxxxx~~ across the breast work in fifteen or twenty minutes after the battle commenced. The Mexicans were then running in all directions, and our men either threw away their guns or used them as clubs, showing the enemy no quarter, at first. Our watchword was "Alamo and LaBahia." There must have been 200 killed in crossing the bay. The Mexicans had in all about 700 killed and between 700 and 800 taken prisoners. We had three killed, and thirteen wounded. We staid there twelve days after the battle and then going on baord a steamboat, I went to Galveston Island.

Charles B. Shain

Louisville, June 25, 1836.