

C Baltzell-Chambers Family, Papers, 1857-1981
3995 .4 linear feet

This collection is available at The State Historical Society of Missouri. If you would like more information, please contact us at shsresearch@umsystem.edu.

INTRODUCTION

The Baltzell-Chambers Family Papers document the lives of a family of blacksmiths and farmers from Deer Ridge, Missouri. The papers consist of correspondence, photographs, a scrapbook, and a genealogy and family history compiled and written by Jerrilee Cain. The collection also contains graduation memorabilia, a high school yearbook, land deeds, and military discharge papers from the Civil War.

DONOR INFORMATION

The Baltzell-Chambers Family Papers were donated to the State Historical Society of Missouri by Jerrilee Cain on 22 April 2003 (Accession No. 5985). An addition to the collection was made on 11 October 2004.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

George Jacob Baltzell, the great-grandson of German immigrants, married Elizabeth Bryan in 1844. The couple lived in Salem, Illinois, before settling in Deer Ridge, Missouri, where Baltzell worked as a blacksmith and kept the local post office. They had seven children, including George Albert.

George Albert Baltzell, also a blacksmith, served in the Civil War in the Missouri State Militia alongside his father. He married Mary Ann Walker in 1866. Together they raised ten children, including Silas Albert and George Lewis.

Silas Albert Baltzell was a blacksmith, as well as a farmer. He lived his entire life in the Deer Ridge, Missouri area, though he did spend several summers when he was a young man working in Montana on a threshing crew. In 1898, he married Emma Francis Mae Chambers and they had five children: Nelda, Maud Hazel, Archibald Silas, Louise Jane, and Jack Delmar.

Nelda Baltzell was a schoolteacher, and in 1920, she married Arthur Lee Cain, the son of Charles Emery Cain and Dora Burke of Pine Grove, Illinois. Arthur and Nelda Cain lived in Illinois and had one daughter, Jerrilee. Jerrilee Cain lived with her grandparents, Silas and Emma Baltzell from 1931 to 1936, so that Nelda could continue teaching school. Arthur Cain had three siblings: Lenna Mae, Elmer, and Sadie. Lenna Mae Cain married J. Wellington Humphrey and had one daughter, Thelma. The family lived in the La Belle, Missouri area. Sadie Cain married Sandy White and moved to Iowa. The lives of the Cain family members are documented throughout the papers.

Hazel Baltzell married Nolan Fountain and had five children. Archibald Baltzell married three times but had no children. Louise Jane Baltzell married twice and had four sons by her second husband, Donald Reeves. Jack Baltzell served in the Navy during World War II and later in Guam. He married twice and had three children, including an adopted son from the Philippines.

George Lewis Baltzell married Nancy Miranda "Rhena" Chambers, Emma Chambers Baltzell's sister. Emma Baltzell and "Rhena" Baltzell were the daughters of

Elias James Chambers and Rebecca Jane Bradshaw. Other children of Elias and Rebecca Chambers include Martha Ann Margaret "Mattie", Jessie W. Bradshaw, and Ida Ethel Grace. Rebecca Bradshaw Chambers remarried after her husband died in 1881 and had another daughter, Rhoda Edwards. Ida Chambers married Smith Fuller, a carpenter in Deer Ridge, Missouri, and they had three children, including Marie and Roy, both of whom died as infants during a diphtheria epidemic.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Baltzell-Chambers Family Papers consist of correspondence, photographs, a scrapbook, genealogical material, graduation memorabilia, a high school yearbook, land deeds, military discharge papers, and other miscellaneous material. The papers have been arranged alphabetically by subject. Throughout the collection, Baltzell is also spelled Baltzel and Baltzelle.

Much of the correspondence is comprised of letters written between Silas and Emma Baltzell while he was working in Montana during the summers of 1909 and 1910. Nelda and Hazel Baltzell also wrote occasional letters to their father while he was away. One letter written by Nelda in August 1909 describes the death of her cousin Roy Fuller from diphtheria. The correspondence from 1968 and 1969 documents the financial aspects of Emma Chambers Baltzell's medical care just before her death.

The papers also include school memorabilia of Nelda Baltzell, Jack Baltzell, and Lenna Mae Cain; discharge papers from the Civil War for Elias J. Chambers and George A. Baltzell, land deeds, and genealogical materials.

The photographs include portraits and snapshots of numerous Baltzell and Chambers family members, as well as other Deer Ridge residents. The collection contains a number of studio portraits, including graduation pictures, as well as snapshots of rural family life. The 1920s folder includes photographs from family reunions. The 1950s and undated folders include photographs of hunting parties. Also included in the undated folders is a tintype of Elias James Chambers from around the time of the Civil War.

The scrapbook mostly contains newspaper clippings and has been photocopied for preservation purposes. One of the clippings is a letter to the local paper from Pvt. Jack D. Baltzell concerning military life while in training at Camp Roberts in California during World War II. The papers also contain an article on foxhunting written by Archibald Baltzell and sketches of Deer Ridge as it appeared at the turn of the twentieth century, which were drawn by Nelda Baltzell Cain and George W. Baltzell, the grandson of George Lewis Baltzell.

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- f. 1 Correspondence, 1892-1906
- f. 2 Correspondence, 1909 July-August
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- f. 5 Correspondence, 1911-1920, 1961-1969
- f. 6 Foxhunting article by Archibald Baltzell, 1981
- f. 7 Genealogy and family history, n.d.
- f. 8 Graduation memorabilia, 1907-1935
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- f. 11 Military discharge papers, 1865
- f. 12 Miscellaneous family records, 1898, 1941-1946, n.d.
- f. 13 Miscellaneous school records, 1916, n.d.
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