

**"1862" Tower Rifle belonging to Cornelius Nicholas Cox
Presented to Comanche Historical Museum
Comanche, Texas
On June 30, 2002**

On June 30, 2002, at the Comanche Historical Museum, an 1862 Enfield musket rifle was presented for loan and display to the Museum. The rifle inscribed with "1862 Tower" and having an embossed crown near the label, once belonged to Comanche County pioneer, Cornelius Nicholas "Nick" Cox. Presenting the rifle was the grandson of Nick Cox, Cornelius Wilburn Cox of Brownwood. He and his sister, Missy Jones, a Museum director, are the children of William Cornelius "Will" Cox and Minnie Steward Cox. Will was the son of Nick Cox.

Museum Musings, by Dorothy Robertson From an article in the Comanche Chief.

Sunday, June 30, we were awakened to a nice quiet rain, which was covering this area. In the afternoon, through the rain, the family of Cornelius Nicholas "Nick" Cox came to the Museum to place on loan and display the musket Enfield rifle inscribed "1862 Tower" that had belonged to "Nick" Cox, a Comanche County pioneer.

The presentation was made by Cornelius Wilburn Cox of Brownwood, a grandson of "Nick" Cox. Also present was his wife, Effie Mae Cox, their son Tony and grandson Stephen. Wilburn was the son of William Cornelius "Will" Cox and Minnie Steward Cox of Comanche. Others in attendance were Missy Cox Jones, a daughter of Will and Minnie, her son and daughter-in-law Mark and Laurie Jones and their daughters, Morgan and Jolee.

Missy Jones shared some history regarding the Cox family which was very interesting. "Nick" Cox was born January 16, 1850 in Smith County, Texas. He was the son of Andrew J. "Andy" Cox and Arenna Ratliff Cox. Andy Cox was born in 1822 in Missouri. The Ratliff family had come to Texas in 1843 from Arkansas.

"Andy" arrived in Texas in a wagon train with his parents, Cornelius and Catherine Jackson Cox. They had traveled from Newton County, Missouri to Dallas County and took up land under the Peters Colony. They arrived in Dallas County March 10, 1845. Andy was the oldest of 10 children.

Andy and Arenna were married in Nacogdoches County, Texas on April 10, 1846, and had four children: William Marion, who married Susan Adeline Savage; Catherine, who married John P. Pettit; Nicholas, who married Mary Jane Johnson, and Amanda who married G. B. Stone, Jr.

Arenna died July 10, 1855 during the move from Smith County to Comanche County. She died in Fort Worth and her grave is lost. Andy was left with four small children, ages 8 to 2 years. The four children were raised by their Uncle and Aunt, Jesse J. Johnson and Adeline Ratliff Johnson near Fleming, Comanche County, Texas. Adeline was a sister to

Arenna Cox. Rev. Jesse J. Johnson was an early day Methodist minister in Comanche County.



Cornelius Nicholas "Nick" Cox married Mary Jane "Mollie" Johnson in Comanche County on April 19, 1875. Mollie was the daughter of Robert Whatley Johnson. He was the son of Peter Cartwright Johnson and Matilda Whatley Johnson. Peter Cartwright Johnson and his family moved to Comanche County from Smith County, Texas. Peter Cartwright Johnson was killed by Indians between Iredell and Meridian, Texas on December 31, 1857. He had traveled to the mill on the Bosque river below Meridian with his small son to have corn ground and buy supplies.

Nick Cox had acquired 80 acres of land west of Union Cemetery near Gustine, Texas before he was married. Later they owned a total of 260 acres of land. He built a log cabin on the first 80 acres and told of holding his horse's reins through the window so he would know if they were disturbed by Indians. One time, the

Indians cut the leather strap holding the cow bell on one of his cows, and took the cow with them. Another time, he told about he and his sister Catherine riding horses looking for livestock that had gotten out of their pasture. A group of Comanche Indians was after them. He said that Catherine was riding a good horse but she was afraid to make it really run fast. He told that he "dropped back and quirted her horse on the rump" and they were able to outrun the Indians.

After Nick and Mollie married, they built a big house on a hill on their place, it had a curving porch on the south side of the house. They were parents of nine children, Robert Whatley Cox, Renier Cox, Joe C. Cox, William Cornelius Cox, Mary Ellen Cox, Berlen Daniel Cox, Arthur Hill Cox, John Henry Lofton Cox and Andrew Jefferson Cox, father of Museum Director Preston Cox.

Pictures of the family show them to be healthy, well dressed, and handsome people. Stories abound of the good times they had and the good food prepared in their home. Their home was always open to family and friends. They went camping and fishing on the South Leon River, and celebrated Christmas with homemade eggnog.

They raised fruit of every kind that would grow in this area. They had big gardens, lots of chickens, hogs, cows and horses. Hogs were butchered, they had homemade sausage and hams and shoulders hung in the smokehouse. There were plenty of hens, fryers and eggs. Vegetables of all kinds were raised in the gardens and fields, dried beans and dried peas, corn, peas, potatoes, tomatoes and other vegetables. Corn was raised for food for the family and for the livestock. Corn was taken to the mill to be ground into corn meal. Fresh milk, cream, and homemade butter were plentiful.

All of the above did not come easy. It required work by all of the family. Mollie Cox and Bobbie Johnson were always busy, food to cook, clothes to wash and iron, bedding to prepare. Stories are told of Mollie and Aunt Bobbie sitting by the fireplace in the winter, piecing quilt tops. They had beautiful quilts, and the Log Cabin was one pattern they used.

The family was always having a good time. Robert Cox played the fiddle, Berl played the banjo, Will and Jeff could play the guitar, and others could also play instruments. They loved playing dominos, and cold weather meant that the tank would have ice on it, and they could skate for a long time.

Henry Cox served in the U. S. Army during World War I. He was injured in France, a bad head injury and a piece of shrapnel tore into his neck. He did survive and returned home.