

-John I. Cox.

THE COX JOURNALS
OR
THE ORIGINAL COX JOURNAL

By Thomas Isaac Cox, The Elder
1733-1817

Thomas Isaac Cox, according to his journal, was born April 15, 1733 in the Valley of Brandywine Creek in southeast Pennsylvania. He records that his father and mothers were married a decade earlier at Camden, New Jersey, where his father was on shore leave from the British Navy. He records in his journal that this was his father's first shore leave in the Colonies since enlisting some eight (8) months earlier at Philadelphia. At age 16 Thomas Isaac Cox joined the Army of New Spain while on one of his many visits to New Orleans. At this time he became Tomas de la Cocques, and remained such until he became the proprietor of Long Meadows Trading Post which was established by Oliver Pollock, the old Irish trader who later became the millionaire grocer to New Orleans, and a friend and saviour to the American Revolution.

In 1756 Thomas Isaac Cox, alias Tomas de la Cocques, became Tomas Cox, one time river boat operator, soldier in the Army of New Spain, and employee of Jose de Escandon. Escandon was a rancher, politician, colonizer, and at one time the governor of Spanish Texas. Tomas Cox also served with Captain Basterra who acted as support to ~~Lieutenant~~ Terreros's expedition to the Lampazos area. Here they traveled in search of a place to build a mission and presidio in an attempt to civilize and colonize the area as a buffer against the annual hordes of Comanches who passed through as they swept on to Mexico. There they stole horses, cattle, slaves, as well as any other things of value. This area around Lampazos river and springs had been visited about 1685. Pedro Salazar, who was one of the priests who accompanied Alonzo De Leon, named the river and springs for his native Lampazos, a city some 80 miles southeast of Laredo in the state of Nuevo Leon. ~~This area had reminded Salazar of that locale. He later founded great horse and cattle ranches to support~~

the church which he later established at Mission Dolores. Incidentally, Jose de Escandon had also once lived in the same area as Fther Pedro Salazar, and had been greatly impressed and influenced by Salazar. This, no doubt, influenced Escandon in his colonization theory of establishing a ranch and livestock industry to support them.

At any rate, Tomas de la Cocques wrote in his journal "Basterra and Terreros each held Father Salazar in high regard. They were very interested in establishing a successful mission and presidio in the area of the Lipan Apache settlements. ~~They were located along the Ancient Emigrant Trail near Arroyo Lucia, where great herds of wild horses and cattle, as well as game, flourished.~~ So it was to this area that Basterra guided Lt. Terreros and his cousin, Father Ferreros with their troops, ~~padres and laborers.~~

It may be noted that the viceroy had discussed with the Terreros cousins the possibility of establishing missions on Rio Colorado and also the desirability of a mission and presidio to be built near the head waters of the San Saba River which was a tributary of the Colorado. It had been reputed that in this area there existed workable silver mines. If their exploration proved that the ~~calim~~ was true about the story of the mines, then it was felt that a presidio and mission would prove a valuable addition. It would also help as another buffer against the Comanche invasions each year as well as protection for the miners who could add greatly to the wealth of New Spain.

All of the Terreros efforts came to naught; however, their efforts at Presidio Terreros where no mission was ever built were valuable to those who followed them. The horse pens, corrals, and traps at nearby Arroyo Caballo helped in the establishment of a successful trading post from which horses, cattle, and other valuable products flowed to New Orleans, and other river ports for the next one hundred and fifty (150) years.