

**OUR FREE-RANGE CATTLE
BARON ANCESTOR**

**HIRAM WASHINGTON (WASH)
COX
1826-1898**



Presented by Gary Sutton

HIRAM WASHINGTON (WASH) COX

His Genealogy

His Pioneering Spirit – Move to Texas – Marriage

His Call to the Frontier – Erath County

The Texas Frontier in 1856

Cattle Gathering and Outlaws

The Civil War Years

War's End – Cattle Drives

The Move to New Mexico – Colfax County

The Colfax County Years

The Move to San Juan County, New Mexico

The Good Years

His Sickness and Passing

Postscript

HIRAM WASHINGTON (WASH) COX

TIMELINE

DATE/YEAR

| | |
|------------|---|
| 9-13-1789 | Joseph Cox born in Virginia to Solomon and Mary Dixon Cox |
| 9-15-1808 | Joseph married Amy Baker in Chillicothe, Ohio |
| 5-1-1818 | James Allard born in Knobby, Benton County, MO. |
| 1-26-1826 | Hiram Washington (Wash) Cox is born in Ray County, Missouri. He is the eighth child of Joseph and Amy Cox |
| 4-21-1836 | Texas wins the Battle of San Jacinto and became the Republic of Texas |
| 8-14-1836 | Nancy Allard was born in Knobby, Benton County, Missouri |
| 12-29-1845 | Texas joined the Union |
| 1846 | Wash Cox joined the Allard family and others moving to Hopkins County, (Sulphur Springs) Texas. His good friend is James Allard |
| 2-11-1849 | Wash married James' 13-year-old sister Nancy in Hopkins County, Texas |
| 12-24-1849 | Wash and Nancy's daughter Elizabeth Francis was born in Hopkins County |
| 1851 | Joseph and Amy Cox moved from Missouri to Bell County, Texas U.S. Army began construction on a second line of frontier forts |
| 1856 | Erath County was established by the State of Texas The Wash Cox family and the James Allard family moved from Hopkins to Erath County, Texas to round up and brand free-range cattle |
| 2-8-1858 | Wash and Nancy's son John S. was born in Erath County |
| 4-17-1860 | Wash and Nancy's daughter Nancy Bell was born in Erath County |
| 3-23-1861 | Texas joined the Confederate States |
| 4-12-1861 | The Civil War began. Wash Cox does not join the war but remains in Erath County. U.S. Troops abandon the frontier forts |
| 4-23-1864 | Wash and Nancy's son James Allard is born in Erath County |

| | |
|------------|---|
| 4-9-1865 | The Civil War ends |
| 1866 | Charles Goodnight and Oliver Loving drove the first herd of cattle over the Goodnight/Loving Trail from Young County Texas to Fort Sumter, New Mexico |
| 1870 | Sheep herds began to appear on ranges in Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and Colorado |
| 3-8-1870 | Wash and Nancy's son Isaac Hiram is born in Erath County Texas |
| 3-30-1870 | Texas fully rejoins the United States |
| 1871 | Barbed wire fences began appearing in civilized Texas |
| 1871 | Wash, his sons, James Allard, friend I.W. Lacy and perhaps others scout out northern New Mexico |
| 2-25-1872 | Wash and Nancy's son William A. was born in Erath County. |
| 1872 | Wash, James Allard and I.W. Lacy moved their family's and cattle to Colfax County, New Mexico |
| 12-10-1873 | U.S. sets aside much of San Juan County for Jacarilla Apache reservation |
| 3-1874 | President Grant resends the set aside for the Apache land |
| 1876 | The Cox family moved to Sn Juan County, New Mexico |
| 1891 | Wash Cox is diagnosed with "brain cancer" |
| 12-16-1898 | Wash Cox died in Cedar Hill, New Mexico at age 73 |
| 1-28-1900 | Nancy Allard Cox dies in Cedar Hill, New Mexico at age 63 |

HIS GENEALOGY

Our Cox family history is full of ordinary people who lived extraordinary lives. Some are well known and well documented. Capt. Christopher Hussey, Rev. Stephen Bachiler, Joseph Cox and even Bluford Cox.

Others are much less known, because of the times, places they lived. They lived on the very frontiers of their day, where the settled world, with its newspapers and other forms of recording history had not caught up. They often did not consider what they were doing as extraordinary. Such is the case of Our Free Range Cattle Baron Ancestor – Hiram Washington (Wash) Cox.

Family Group Record

Husband Joseph Cox

Birth Sep 13 1789 VA
Death 1869 Lampasas co. TX
Marriage Sep 15 1808 Chillicothe, Ross Co. OH
Father Solomon Cox (b Jan 29 176 IL
Mother Martha Dixon

Wife Amy Baker

Birth Sep 15 1792 NC
Birth Apr 13 1855 Bell co. TX
Burial Bell Co- TX on Home Place
Father Amos Baker Dr. (b Apr 8 1756)
Mother Mary Prescott

Children

¹ M Solomon Benjamin Cox

Birth Dec 18 1809 Ross Co, OH
Death Feb 29 1892 Bell co. TX
Burial Pleasant Hill: Nolanville, Bell co. TX
Spouse Martha Jane Cox (m bet 1843 and 1849)
Spouse Mary (Polly) Lile (m May 8 1831)

2 F Mary Cox

Birth Jul 16 1811 Ross Co. OH
Death Dec 8 1907 Cloverdale, CA
Burial Mt. Olive Cem, Cloverdale, CA
Spouse Allen Lile (m Jul 7 1833)

3 M John W Cox

Birth Sep 28 1813 Ross co. OH
Death Apr 18 1874 Bell co. TX
Burial Pleasant Hill, Nolanville, Bell co. TX
Spouse Matilda Castle

4 M Isom Cox

Birth Oct 7 1815 Ross co. OH
Death Jan 4 1909
Macedonia Cem. Chillicothe, MO
Spouse Elizabeth Littlepage (m 1849)
Spouse Elvira Weber (m Nov 6 1842)

5 M: Abel Cox

Birth Mar 19 1818 Ross co. OH
Death Feb 25 1904 Chillicothe, Livingston Co. MO
Burial Anderson Cern, Chillicothe, Livingston, Co. MO
Spouse Sarah M. Caldwell (m Mar 9 1843)

6 M Zeamri Cox

Birth Oct 30 1820 Ray Co. MO

7 F Malinda Cox

Birth Oct 10 1822 Ray Co. MO
Death Feb 12 1894 Bell Co. TX
Burial Pleasant Hill, Nolanville, Bell Co. TX
Spouse Isaac Shriver

8 M Hiram Washington Cox

Birth Jan 26 1824 Ray Co. MO
Death Dec 16 1883 Cedar Hill, San Juan co, NM
Spouse Nancy Allard (m Feb 1 1849)

9M Andrew Baker Cox

Birth Jul 6 1828 Ray co. MO
Death Oct 20 1871 Chillicothe, Livingston Co- MO
Burial Jones Cem. Chillicothe: Livingston Co. MO
Spouse Catherine Ann Shriver (m Apr 27 1847)

10 M William Hugh Cox

Birth May 26 1830 Ray co. MO
Burial Trosper Cem. Breckenridge, MO
Spouse Martha Catherine Walker (m abt 1851)

Pedigree Chart

Chart no. _____

No. 1 on this chart is the same as no. _____ on chart no. _____

2 Joseph Cox

B: Sep 13 1789
P: VA
M: Sep 15 1808
P: Chillicothe, Ross Co. OH
D: Sep 1869
P: Lampasas Co. TX

1 Nica (Necy) Jane Cox

B: Jul 12 1834
P: Chillicothe, Livingston Co. MO
M: Nov 1 1853
P: Bell Co. TX
D: Apr 19 1916
P: Bell Co. TX

Samuel Hampton Cox

Spouse

3 Amy Baker

B: Sep 15 1792
P: NC
D: Apr 13 1855
P: Bell Co. TX

4 Solomon Cox

B: Jan 29 1761
P: Cane Creek, Orange Co. NC
M: 1788
P:
D: bet 1844 and 1850
P: Livingston Co. MO

5 Martha Dixon

B:
P:
D:
P:

6 Amos Baker Dr.

B: Apr 8 1756
P:
M:
P:
D: Jul 6 1850
P:

7 Mary Prescott

B:
P:
D:
P:

8 Solomon Cox Sr.

B: 1745
P: Adams Co.(Lancaster, York) PA
M: 1760
P:
D: 1820
P: Hocking Co. Ohio

9 Naomi (Amy) Hussey

B: Feb 29 1742
P: Adams Co.(Lancaster, York) PA
D: 1818
P:

10

B:
P:
M:
P:

D:
P:

11

B:
P:
D:
P:

12 Jacob Baker

B: May 16 1722
P:
M:
P:

D: Mar 18 1783
P:

13 Grace Billings

B: Apr 15 1720
P:
D: Mar 14 1807
P:

14

B:
P:

M:
P:

D:
P:

15

B:
P:
D:
P:

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Wash Cox is the eighth child born to Joseph and Amy Baker Cox. He was born January 6, 1924, in Ray County, MO. He died December 16, 1883, in Cedar Hill, New Mexico according to family records. According to Grave Markers and New Mexico death records the dates are born January 26, 1825 and died December 16, 1898. I believe those dates are more accurate.

Wash's dad, Joseph, was a true pioneer. He was born in Virginia. As a young man he moved to Ohio, Missouri, and lastly to Texas. He was forever looking for "new land" and new frontier adventures. He certainly passed this pioneering spirit to his son Wash, because Wash's life is full of "pushing the frontier" moves.

We don't know the exact year that Wash left Joseph's family to make it on his own. We do know that his history was lost to Joseph's family for many generations. I detail that story in a book we compiled on Wash's son, Isaac. It's called *Life Tales by Isaac Hiram Cox*.

LIFE TALES
BY
ISAAC HIRAM COX

Written about 1920



Compiled by Gary & Joen Sutton

HIS PIONEERING SPIRIT – MOVE TO TEXAS – MARRIAGE 1848-1856

There were a couple of events that would shape Wash's life that were happening in a faraway frontier called Texas. First, when Wash was 12 years old a man named Sam Houston would lead a rag tag army to defeat a Mexican General Santa Anna at the Battle of San Jacinto and Texas would become the Republic of Texas (4-21-1836)

Then when Wash was 21 years of age Texas joined the Union and became the State of Texas. (3-23-1861), Wash Cox would soon become one of its citizens.

Wash's boyhood friend James Allard was from another Benton County, Missouri family. In 1848, the Allard's along with other families formed a wagon train and headed south to Texas. Twenty-four-year-old Wash Cox was a member of that group. They came to Hopkins County, Sulphur Springs, Texas. where they started a small farm.

James Allard had a younger sister named Nancy. She was 12 years old when the wagon train left for Texas. We don't know when the 25-year-old Wash was first attracted to the 13 year old Nancy. We do know that on 2/11/1849 they were married in Hopkins County, Texas. In December their first child, Elizabeth Frances was born. She was the first of ten children born to Wash and Nancy.

Elizabeth would die at age 12 in 1861. They then had three other children who died shortly after being born. They were Aaron, (1851), Emma (1853), and Andrew, (1854). Their next child was George, (1855) who, much like his father, disappeared from the family at an early age. All of the above-named children were born in Hopkins County, Texas.

HIS CALL TO THE FRONTIER – ERATH COUNTY 1856- 1872

By 1856 Wash had enough of the settled lifestyle of Hopkins County. He and James Allard's family moved to the new Texas frontier, Erath County, Texas. Erath County had been established by the State of Texas in 1856. They settled along Daffau Creek, south of present-day Stephenville.

Their first houses were most likely “dugouts,” because houses or building supplies were not available on the frontier. My wife’s family who pioneered the frontier around Hamlin, Texas lived in a dugout for a couple of years before they hauled lumber from Fort Worth to build their homeplace. The old dugout is still visible on family land to this day.

THE TEXAS FRONTIER IN 1856 1856-1872

At this point I want to pause and get in our minds a picture of the Texas frontier in the 1850s. It was a vast prairie with a few trees along the creeks and rivers. The prairie was covered with native grasses, according to many sources, including Wash’s dad, Joseph, “up to a horse’s belly.” Roaming this vast prairie were large herds of buffalo, deer, and also herds of feral cattle.

Of course, the Indian population also passed through this prairie in pursuit of the buffalo herds, and later to fight the few “white men” who were taking over parts of their hunting grounds.

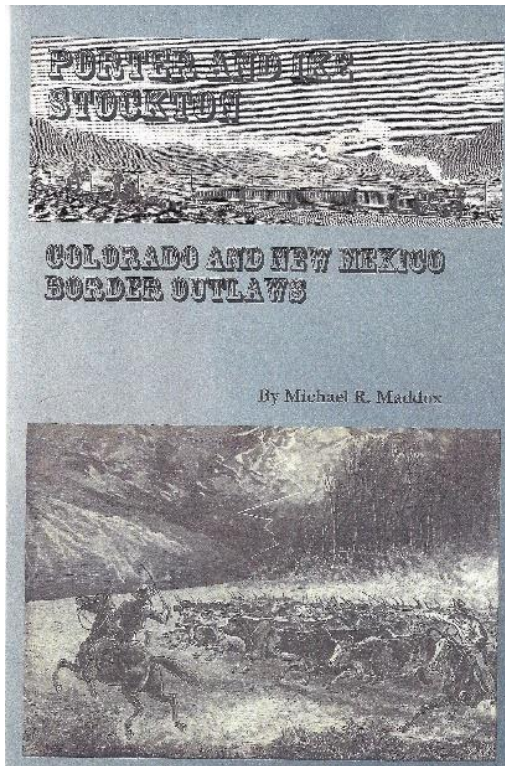
There were NO FENCES. The historic Texas fencing wars would not come for another 20 years (1880-90s).

CATTLE GATHERING AND OUTLAWS 1856-1872

Back to Wash’s story. Wash and James Allard came to Erath County to round up and brand the feral cattle. They would then leave them to graze the prairie until the annual roundup. It was at that time they would “work” the herd and select steers to be sold to the forts and back east in the more settled parts of the state. This “working the cattle” is depicted today by the popular spot of RODEO.

As Wash began to accumulate his herd, others began to steal parts of his herd. They were called “cattle rustlers.”

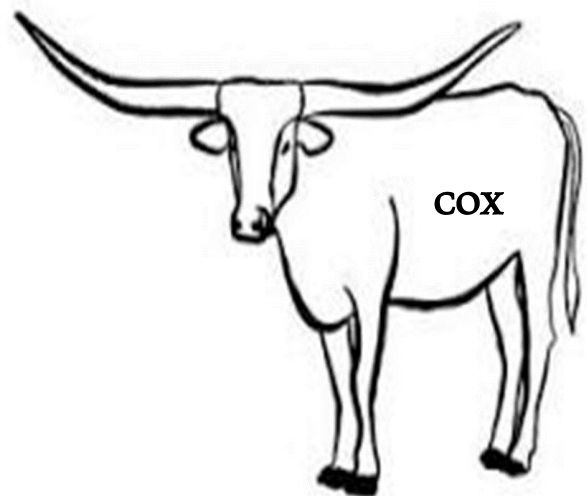
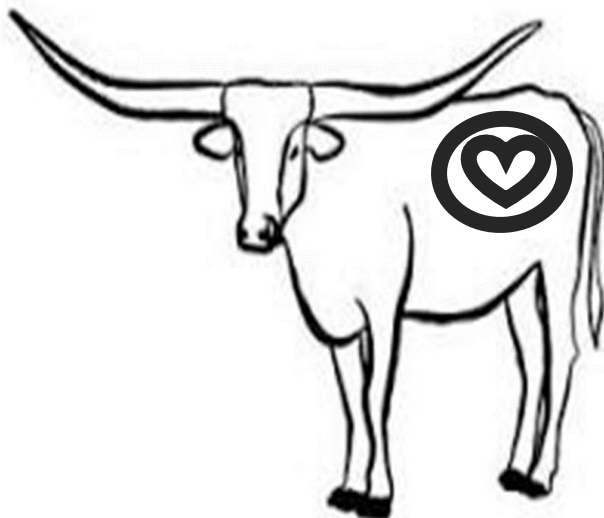
Three years ago, a man from Loving, New Mexico named Mike Maddox made a presentation to this group. His presentation was about a book he had written on two rustlers named Porter and Ike Stockton. These were two cattle rustlers that plagued Wash Cox in both Texas and New Mexico. Mike’s book has been a good source on Wash Cox. We will detail more about Mike and his book later.



One of the first actions of Erath County after its establishment in 1856 was to set up a brand registry to record and publish registered cattle brands of the county's ranchers. Wash Cox was among the first to register his brand. It was:



He is reported to put this brand on the animal three or four places. When he moved to New Mexico he changed his brand to his name COX so there would be no doubt whose animal it was. Wash's herd and business continued to grow.



Not only were Wash and Nancy building a cattle empire in Erath County, they were also building a family. Their first child Elizabeth Francis was born 12-24-1849 in Hopkins County. She died at age 12 (1861) in Erath County. The cause of death is not recorded.

Nancy then gave birth to three more children in Hopkins County; all who died shortly after their birth. They were Aaron (1851), Emma (1853), and Andrew (1854). One other child, George, was born in 1855. No record of his death was found.

The move to Erath County not only marked a career change for Wash and Nancy, but also a new cycle of childbearing. This time all the children not only survived but lived long productive lives.

They were John (1858), Nancy Bell (1860), James Allard (1864), Isaac Hiram (1870) and William A. (1872).

Nancy had borne children over a 23-year span, from the age of 13 to the age of 36. Wash was 48 years old when their last child was born. Also, William A. would have been less than a year old when they made the four-month trip to New Mexico. Talk about a pioneer woman, Nancy was surely one.

THE CIVIL WAR YEARS 1861-1865

On March 23, 1861, Texas left the Union and joined the Confederate States of America. The country was in the Civil War. When the news actually reached the Texas Frontier is unknown. However, it soon became apparent as all union soldiers left the forts protecting the frontier. The confederate army did not effectively replace them. That meant that the frontier was open, once again, to Indian attacks. Several frontier families were murdered in these attacks.

Wash, his family, and his cowboys escaped most this Indian rampage because they were all trained marksmen and women. There are reports that Nancy could outshoot most of the men. Michel Maddox recounts one incident where Wash and his men chased a band of Indians who had stolen their horses to around current day Glen Rose.

They caught them and one Indian “lost his scalp.” The remaining band was released and left that part of the country.

The other effect the war had was to greatly increase the size of Wash’s cattle herd. The fort market was gone. All markets in the US were closed. Many Texas men

were away at war. It seems that Wash continued to gather cattle and pasture them on an ever-larger range.

WARS END – CATTLE DRIVES – GOODNIGHT/LOVING TRAIL 1865-1872

On April 9, 1865, the war between the states ended. While Wash had paid only passing attention to the war, its ending would have a great impact on his future. First the beef market to the U.S. was again open if one could get his cattle to it. Second this period ushered in the era of the great trail drives of cattle to the US market.

The county due north of Erath County is Palo Pinto County. Due west of Palo Pinto County is Young County. These counties had been established in 1856 along with Erath County.

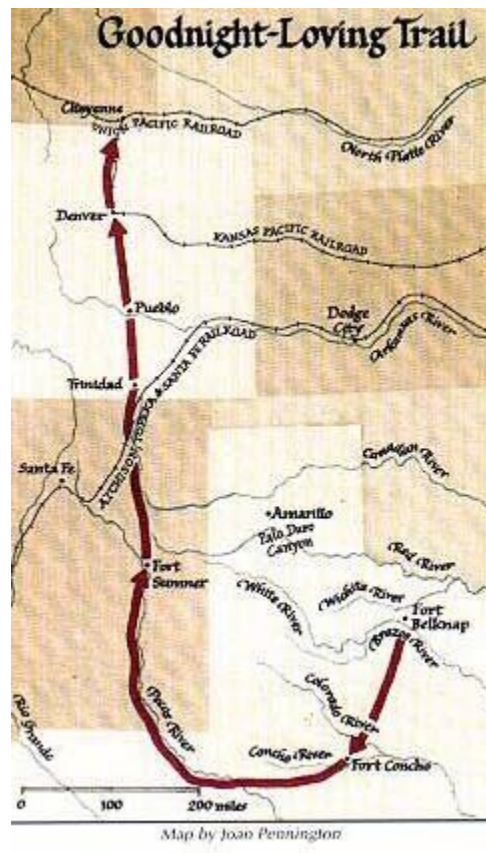
Two men who were in the same cattle gathering business as Wash lived in these counties. Their names were Charles Goodnight and Oliver Loving. Their plan to market their cattle was to blaze a trail to Denver, Colorado. So in 1866 they drove a herd of cattle from Young County Texas to Fort Sumner, New Mexico. The opening of the Goodnight-Loving Trail was perhaps one of the most significant events in Wash Cox's life during this post war period.



Charles Goodnight



Oliver Loving



So, I want to take a few moments discussing the genius of the Goodnight/Loving Trail and its path.

Most of the Kansas Trails (Chisholm, Great Western Cattle Trail, and Texas Trail) went mostly due north, while most major Texas and Oklahoma rivers ran roughly west to east or southeast. That meant that these trails, depending on their starting point, had to cross 7-10 major rivers.

It was not so, for the Goodnight/Loving Trail. They chose to cross the smaller tributaries of most rivers, with the exception of the Pecos in west Texas. On the Pecos they found the one natural crossing - more on this in a moment.



The next thing that Goodnight/Loving did was to follow the Texas Frontier Fort system out of Texas. In 1849 the U.S. Army had built a line of forts on the then frontier to push the Indians west.



By the mid-1850s they had pushed the fort system westward.



It was along this fort line the Goodnight/Loving Trail ran. From Fort Chadbourne (San Angelo) it ran along western tributary of the middle Concho River to its headwaters.



The trail then jumped across to Horsehead Crossing on the Pecos River. The one low water crossing on the Pecos.



Finally, the trail simply followed the Pecos River to northern New Mexico. My point in explaining the Goodnight/Loving Trail is to have you to understand that when Wash Cox decided to move his herd to New Mexico he already had a “superhighway” on which to do it. After years of use, it was described as being 200 to 400 yards wide and as bare as a city street.

THE MOVE TO NEW MEXICO – COLFAX COUNTY 1872-1876

On March 30, 1870, Texas again joined the United States. Erath County is changing. Public lands are being surveyed by the rail roads and sold to individuals. A material called barbed wire had made its appearance in more settled parts of

the state. **The days of the free-range cattle operations were fast coming to an end in Erath County.**

So, in late 1871 or early 1872 Wash decided to move. He had heard of vast free ranges in northern New Mexico from drovers going up the Goodnight/Loving Trail. There is some evidence that Wash, his son John, his brother-in-law James Allard and his fellow cattleman I.W. Lacy had earlier taken a scouting trip to Colfax County, New Mexico.

At the time of the move Wash's family included his wife, Nancy, children John (16), Nancy (14), James (10), Isaac (4), and William (2). Nancy and the younger children made the trip in what is reported to be the first covered wagon into that part of New Mexico. Of course, Charles Goodnight had used chuck wagons on his earlier drives.

According to the Allard Family History (1942), Wash also drove 30,000 head of livestock to New Mexico. The 30,000 number has been disputed by historians, including Mike Maddox.

They make the argument that 30,000 cattle would be impossible to drive. Also that the land could not sustain that amount of cattle.

I make no judgment on the number except to remind you that Texas in 1870 was not Texas of 2022. Perhaps Wash staggered his drives or simply spread the herd over several miles. He had ample cowboys to do that.

Mike Maddox references two of Wash Cox's cowboys, Marion Littrell and Zenas Curtis who made many drives of Wash's cattle from Erath County to New Mexico over a five-year period.

COLFAX COUNTY NEW MEXICO YEARS 1872-1876

At any rate after a four-month trip Wash and his family are in Colfax County, New Mexico. His cattle are again on unrestricted free range. Wash moved his family into an existing house located on the Canadian River where Chico Creek empties into the river. He resumed his cowboy lifestyle.

Wash soon found Colfax County to be like his Erath County days – a lawless place. He was in a constant battle with both Indians and cattle rustlers. This was not new to Wash and he set about trying to clean up Colfax County and protect his herd.



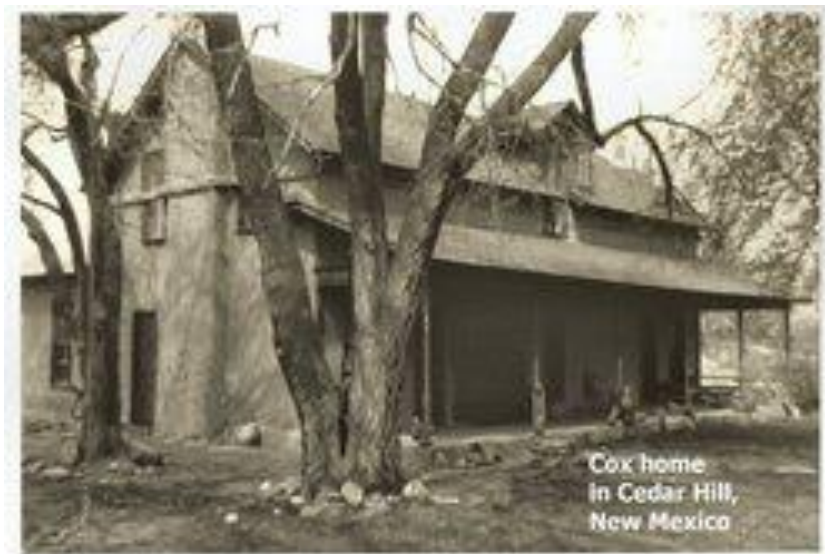
THE MOVE TO SAN JUAN COUNTY, NEW MEXICO 1876

The four corners of our country are the place where the boundaries of four of our states touch each other. They are New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, and Utah. The area even today, is where several Indian Reservations are located. They included the Navajo Nation in New Mexico, Arizona, and parts of Utah. The UTE in Colorado, and the Jicarilla Apache in New Mexico.

The other tribes soon occupied their lands; as granted by the U.S., however the Apache tribe never occupied their land. So, in March 1874 President Grant rescinded the treaty and opened the set aside land to settlement. This set off a land rush into the northeast corner of New Mexico. Among those searching out the land was Wash Cox, his son James, and son-in-law Alf Graves. One look at the Animas River Valley convinced Wash that this would be his next home.

By 1876, Wash Cox and his clan had moved to what later became Cedar Hill, New Mexico. Cedar Hill is only a few miles from the Colorado border. His cattle ranged both in New Mexico and Colorado.

He soon built a two-story house on the ranch that became the headquarters of Wash's operations.



THE GOOD YEARS 1876-1890

The next several years were good for Wash and his business. His cattle ranged far and wide. His influence in San Juan County was great. He was feared by cattle rustlers everywhere. He was reported to be the wealthiest resident in the county.

By 1890 things began to change in the cattle industry. The Longhorn cattle so desirable only a few years earlier were falling out of favor with consumers as other, more tender breeds entered the market. **The era of the free-range cattle was at an end in New Mexico.**



HIS SICKNESS AND PASSING 1890-1898

In 1891 Wash was diagnosed with brain cancer from which he would suffer greatly until his death on December 16, 1898. He was 73 years old. He had fought a great and long fight against this disease. During this period, he lost most of his previous wealth. His obituary says he died “with quite moderate circumstances.”

It also states:

Notwithstanding his advanced age and the intense suffering he has had to endure; he retained his characteristic energy up to a few days before his death. He was always a just and upright man, an enterprising citizen, and a generous neighbor.

His hospitality was always extended to those in need of food and shelter, and many a poor settler, in early days in his struggle to build a home in this new country, had Mr. Cox to thanks for substantial assistance.

Wash is buried in Cedar Hill Cemetery, San Juan County, New Mexico, Plot B-47. A simple metal marker is on his grave.



His wife Nancy Allard Cox died January 28, 1900, at the age of 63. She is also buried at Cedar Hill Cemetery next to Wash in Plot B-48.



Wash Cox lived almost his entire life as a free-range cattle baron. Unlike many who turned their free-range operations into fenced and defined ranches – Wash never did. One suspects that his years spent fighting sickness may have been the reason. Or it simply could have simply been Wash's inability to make the change.
We can all be proud of Hiram Washington Cox Our Free-Range Cattle Baron Ancestor.

POSTSCRIPT

- Did Wash know his dad was 2 counties away when he was in Erath County?
- Did Wash know James Farmer who had moved to Comanche County in 1848?