

Family Ties between
Lampapas and Bell Counties, Texas
By: Les Sutton – 2007

I first heard of Jack B. Cox when Joe Cox mentioned that he had attended his Uncle Ernest's funeral in September, 2006. Later we solicited Jack to take a DNA test to help explain an unusual mutation that had shown up in X. B. Cox' test.

On May 5, 2005 the Lampapas Dispatch published a story about Jack and his heritage. As I read the story I saw an usual number of similarities with the history of my family in Bell County, Texas, which suggested these families must have been very close.

Actually, we are a part of the same family. My great, great grandfather is the same person as Jack's great, great, great grandfather, Joseph Cox. Joseph lived in Bell County, but died in Lampapas in 1869, while visiting his granddaughter, Hulda Childress there.

An often told tale in our family is that James Riley Sutton blazed the first road between Belton and Lampapas by dragging a log tied to the saddle horn of his horse. Benjamin Cox had raised James Riley Sutton after marrying his widowed mother. (my great, great grandmother, Elizabeth Donoho Sutton Cox)

In Jack's story, the Moses and Nimrod Hughes families had moved 50 miles west of civilization to Lampapas Springs after hearing of the medicinal properties of the springs from Indians camped on John Berry's property. Moses was married to John's daughter, Hannah. Hannah's brother, Emanuel was married to Benjamin's daughter, James Riley's half sister, Delila. It is likely that Benjamin Cox and John Berry knew each other in Indiana. Emanuel and James Riley were the chain carriers when Anderson Sutton surveyed his property in Bell County in 1853. By 1860, Jack's great, great grandfather, John W. Cox was living next to my great grandfather, Anderson Sutton in Bell County, surrounded by lots of other Coxes.

It appears that James Riley may have blazed the road between Belton and Lampapas to help the Hughes families move there. So, Jack's genes for being a County Commissioner really do run deep.

In 1880, Emanuel and Delila were living in Coryell County, with no children, but a Frances J. Mitchell, niece, age 10 was living with them. The Thomas Tanner family lived nearby with a 16 year old son, James. In 1900, Emanuel and Delila are living in Bandera, Texas next door to James and Frances Tanner. Their children are named, Delila, Emanuel J. Alice P. and Susan D. The Tanners later

moved back to Bell County. I do not know what had happened to Frances Jane's parents Henson Mitchell and Clarissa Berry. Clarissa was Emanuel's sister *I cannot determine how or if Henson Mitchell was related to Jack's Mitchells, they probably were.*

Both Jack B. and X B Cox descend from John W. Cox, son of Joseph, Jack through John William and X B through James Christopher.

John W. Cox was born in Ross County Ohio, probably Eagle Township, on September 28, 1813. Sometime between 1816 and 1818, the family headed west to Missouri Territory. They stopped in what is now Lafayette County. A short time later, they floated their possessions across the Missouri, to what would become Ray County. Initially, Ray County stretched all the way from the Missouri River to the border on the north, encompassing what later became Livingston and Harrison Counties.

The first census record I can find of John W. Cox is 1830 in Ray County Missouri. Although Missouri became a state in 1818, I cannot find a census for Missouri for 1820. In 1830, presumably John is in the household of Joseph as the boy 15-20. Also in this household are 2 boys, under 5, Andrew & William; 2 boys 5 to 10, Zemari and Hiram; 2 boys 10 to 15, Isom and Abel; Solomon Benjamin is 20 to 30 and Joseph is 40-50. Girls are Malinda 5 to 10; Mary 15 to 20 and mother Amy 30 to 40.

In 1840 John has married Sarah Moberly and they are living in Livingston County, next door to his grandfather, Solomon. It appears that three of his brothers are living with him. In addition to John and Sarah, there are two males 20 to 30, Isom and Abel? and one male 15 to 20, Hiram or Andrew? Allen P. Lile, who is married to John's sister Mary is also living nearby. I cannot find Joseph, but we know he was there in 1837 because the County Court had met in his house for several terms after Livingston County was established. He patented some land in nearby Carroll County in 1843. In addition to his grandfather, living near John are his brother, Solomon B, and Stephen, probably his uncle.

We do not know what happened to John's first wife, Sarah Moberly Cox, nor his daughter Virginia that was born in 1841. The 1850 census began to list the names of the other family members and we find John, now married to Matilda Castle with children Joseph Abel, born September 1, 1848 and Minerva J. born December 17, 1849. John is living in household 173. Joseph, Andrew, Isom and William are in households, 94, 95, 96, and 97. Solomon B. is living in Harrison County, probably because that is where his new wife, second cousin Martha Cox, had moved with her family from Whitley County, Kentucky.

In 1851, John, his father Joseph, his brother Solomon B, sisters Michele Wilkerson and Malinda Shriver and their families set out for Texas. They settled near what is now Nolanville in Bell County, near the intersection of Pleasant Hill Cemetery Road and Highway 439. The 1860 census records in consecutive households; John, Solomon B. Fleming Trigg, Samuel, and Anderson Sutton. Fleming Trigg is the brother of Solomon B.'s wife Martha and Samuel is Fleming Trigg's son. Samuel Cox is my other great grandfather along with Anderson Sutton.

John is still in Bell County in 1870, although the census taker shows him living next door to Anderson Sutton. Exactly where these families lived has always puzzled me. In 1995, we went back to this area and took Uncle Horace Cox with us, who was born in 1898 and lived most of his adult life at the intersection of Pleasant Hill Cemetery Road and Highway 190. I still cannot match the census records with the persons who patented the land, or for that matter, with each other. It is obvious that at least some census records were copied by someone other than the census taker and perhaps they got the families out of order. John was listed as a blacksmith in 1870. The Cox family had operated a coal mine in Missouri.

John W. Cox died in 1874, leaving Matilda with eleven children. Remember, Matilda was John's second wife and 16 years younger. She was 45 when he died. Three years later, Matilda married 28 year old Charley Fade. They continue to live in Bell County and are enumerated in the same area in 1880 and 1900.

The article on Jack Cox mentions Nimrod Hughes serving under the Command of R. Y. Cross, in the 27th Brigade of the Texas Militia. There was lots of interaction between the Coxes, Suttons and Crosses in Bell County. As late as 1935, ten year old Nell Sutton Turner had a crush on one of those little Cross boys that went to Mountain View school. "He was really cute." Riley Y. Cross, son of, James M. Cross was born in Tennessee and was in Milam County by 1850. His brother, William Bailey Cross married Elizabeth Cox, daughter of Fleming Trigg Cox in 1854. Riley Cross was obviously closely associated with Mart Childress. (see separate article from the Handbook of Texas) Mart was married to Solomon B.'s daughter Hulda. They both later moved to San Saba, where Mart became one of the premier cattle drovers.

Most of John W. and Matilda Cox' children were still in Bell County in 1880. Andrew Jackson, Ellen and Ervin are still living with their mother. Benjamin Franklin, age 19 is living next door by himself. John William had married Charlotte Frances Wilhite and is living nearby. Charlotte's 13 year old sister, Amanda was living with them.

It is amazing how much we miss the 1890 census, but on June 14, 1900 a widowed Charlotte Cox is recorded by John H. Stanley in Precinct 4, Lampasas County with

her six children, John O., Junis B., Henry S., Ethel B., Albert M. and Althea L. Living next door are June and Mary Wilhite and their seven children. On the same day, J. A. Burney records a widowed C. F. Cox in Precinct 3, Coryell County, with children Oliv. June, Henry, Ethel, and Albert. Althea is left out and most of the birthdates are slightly off, which leads me to conclude that their Coryell house was vacant and a neighbor gave the information to the census taker. It also may indicate that the move to Lampasas County was recent.

By 1910, June is married living in the Straley Precinct of Lampasas County, Albert, also married, is recorded as the head of the household next door. Charlotte and Ethel are living with Albert. Charlotte indicates that only 5 of her 6 children are living. John is living in Hamilton County.

In 1920, June, Effie and their first three children, Herman, June B. Jr and Elbert are living in Adamsville. His mother, Charlotte is living nearby on Hamilton Road. Ethel and her husband Henry Jackson are also living on Hamilton Road. They are living with Henry's 75 year old adopted father, James F. White. They also have all four of Althea's children ages one to nine. Also living on Hamilton Road are Clarence Mitchell, his wife Grace, Clarence's siblings, Ura, Sid, Lillie and Ernest and Clarence's oldest son, James W.

By 1930, Charlotte Frances Cox age 68 is living with June in Adamsville. She is listed on the census as Frannie. June and Effie's four children, Herman, June Jr. Elbert and Ralph are still at home.

I continue to be amazed at how much traveling they did on horseback or wagon, but the Lampasas Coxes and the Bell County Coxes obviously stayed in touch.