

HOG CREEK INDIAN FIGHT

From "Blazing the Way" by Eulalia Nabers Wells

The Hog Creek Indian fight took place in the Jesse Dickerson League survey in Brown County in 1870, and was fought by Comanche County men.

During the early frontier days there were a determined set of settlers living in Comanche County, foremost among whom were the men who engaged in the Hog Creek fight, who were always on the alert for Indians, and who acted as if an occasional scrap with them was a relief from the monotony of frontier life.

On the date mentioned, Frank Brown, George Wallace and B. Grissom, who were on their way to the mill at San Saba, stopped to rest their team at Mustang water hole in Comanche County. They were soon joined by John Roch, who had been out hunting horses. A few minutes after Roch joined them they heard a noise and looking around were surprised to see about 30 Indians charging down upon them.

Mr. Roch, who had some experience in fighting Indians, took charge of the defense. The Indians came yelling and circling around the outfit. While some of the party were shooting at the Indians, the others hastily constructed a barricade of sacks of wheat. In less time than it takes to tell it Brown was shot in the face with a six shooter ball and Wallace was shot through the arm.

The Indians made a charge with the evident intention of running over the whites, but a lucky shot fired by Brown fatally wounded the leader and they retired, only to renew their charge, but more cautiously.

The whites decided it would be impossible to hold out against such odds. Taking out their mules they made a run for their lives. The Indians pursued, the whites shooting back as they ran. Roch was shot in the back with an arrow which protruded from his breast, and his mule was severely wounded. In the running fight Roch had become separated from the others. After escaping from the Indians he got down to get a drink of water and found he was too weak to remount, and seeing that his mule could not carry him much farther he made his way to C. C. Campbell's place on Mountain Creek, where he arrived late at night.

Falling in the yard, unable to rise, Roch's groans awakened a negro on the place who carried him into the house. Dr. Montgomery pulled the arrow out next morning. Roch hovered between life and death for a long time but finally recovered.

Next morning, Dave Cunningham, with a small posse, went out to the wagons, found them cut to pieces and the wheat poured out on the ground.

About 1 o'clock the next night a posse composed of Dave Cunningham, in command: D. H. Cunningham, Joe J. Cunningham, Joe Nabers, Freeman Clark, Joe Gurley, J. M. Millican, Ed Roch, LARK STONE, JESSE JOHNSON, Sam Powers, John Stevens, Dan Pinkard, Wm. Roos, Ike Ward, John Albin, WM. COX, H. Northcutt, Wm. McAdams, and a Mr. Gardiner with four of Captain Cunningham's bloodhounds, took the trail in pursuit of the Indians. On dry Blanket Creek they found where the chief, wounded the day before, had been buried and his pony had been killed beside his grave to carry him to the happy hunting grounds.

From there the trail was followed with great difficulty into Brown County, the Indians setting fire to the grass in several places along the trail. Several times it became necessary to carry the dogs back to water. About 2 o'clock in the afternoon they arrived at Hog Mountain, where a halt was made and a scout sent ahead to reconnoiter. He soon returned with the information that the Indians were encamped at the spring. A detour was then made, and under a sweeping gallop a charge was made and they succeeded in getting almost among the Indians before they were discovered. The Indians scattered in every direction, except one who came running toward the white men with a six-shooter in one hand and a knife in the other. He was soon dispatched with a dozen bullets in him. Three more Indians were killed on the ground and then a chase commenced after the others.

Dave Cunningham and Freeman Clark soon overtook one, who dodged under Clark's horse and shot Clark under the arm, the ball lodging in the opposite side of his neck and killing him instantly. Dave Cunningham killed the Indian who killed Clark. Three other Indians were killed in the running fight of two miles which ensued before the rest of them gained the shelter of some thickets.

One of the Indians, badly wounded, entered a thicket, and Joe Gurley, Wm. Cunningham, Joel Nabers and Ike Ward were left to prevent his escape while the others continued the chase. Upon return of the pursuing party the thicket was surrounded.

The dogs having been tied to prevent them from going in, the Indian was soon located but before he was killed two of the dogs broke loose, ran into the thicket and attacked him. He killed one of the dogs and shot the other through the breast, the arrow coming out behind his shoulder. The wounded dog came out of the thicket, laid down and deliberately pulled out the arrow. He was carried home and got well. Joel Nabers' horse was killed in the fight and the horses of John Albin and John Stevens were badly wounded.

Dan Pinkard, who died at his home in Blanket in 1935, was the last survivor of this hardy band of frontier Indian fighters.

NOTE: I have every reason to believe that JESSE JOHNSON, AND WILLIAM COX were both members of our family. They all lived near Pettit, Fleming, and Newburg. The Cunninghams, The Albins, The Northcutts, and probably some of the others lived in this area. There was little settlement in the north part of Comanche County at this time. Also, E. L. Deaton's book on "Early Day Indian Fights in Central Texas" has their names mentioned, as does a book written by Peter W. Gravis, an early day circuit riding Methodist Minister who was stationed in Comanche at the time. Peter W. Gravis was not in the fight, but wrote a wonderful book in 1892 about his life and times and mentions the above names in the fight, and preached the funeral sermon for Freeman Clark. Peter W. Gravis is buried at Oakwood Cemetery in Comanche.

JESSE JOHNSON was an uncle of Mary Jane "Mollie" Johnson Cox.

WILLIAM COX was a brother of Cornelius Nicholas (Nick) Cox, Catherine Cox, and Amanda Cox.

LARK STONE, could he be related to G. B. Stone, Jr. who married Amanda Cox December 31, 1872?

Note: This fight started with the men going to mill on February 20, 1870.

Nick Cox would have been 19 years old, being born January 16, 1850.

William Cox was listed on the 1850 census for Smith County on November 26, 1850 as being 3 years old. So he would have been 23 years old when this fight took place.

(This was researched and printed for the Cox family reunion June 24, 2001 by Missy Jones)