

From the *Chillicothe Constitution-Tribune*

Thursday March 27, 1884

THE HORSE THIEF

Sheriff Harris Brings in His Game

The Thief's Nebraska Record

Sheriff Harris returned on the 11 o'clock train Friday night, having in charge, George Washington Cox, the thief who stole John Morris' horse on the night of the 11th inst. The arrival of the thief in custody of the sheriff was witnessed by a large number of persons made up largely of farmers from north of town who had taken an interest in the capture of the thief and recovery of the horse. On the arrival of Sheriff Harris at Lincoln, he was informed that a writ of *habeas corpus* had been issued and would be heard by the court, which was then in session, but within an hour our officer had got the requisition honored by the governor of Nebraska, and a warrant for the prisoners transfer to Missouri, and he went before the judge and demanded custody of the prisoner and he got him without any delay.

Cox is 35 or 40 years of age and some eight or ten years ago lived in Chillicothe, and for a short time kept a low dance house, but the authorities made the town too hot for him, and he left for pastures new in Nebraska, where evil doers whose names are "embalmed" in the records of police courts are safer than in Missouri. Cox is now in our county jail and will have an examining trial before Justice R. S. Moore on April 3d.

Cox denies that he is the man who stole the horse, but the evidence of his guilt is deemed pretty strong and he will have a big job in dodging it.

Below we print Cox's record in the capital of Nebraska, of which highly moral town he and his family are ornamental citizens. T. C. Wilhite is the "big, strapping Missourian" who followed him to his den and secured his arrest. The reporter of the Lincoln paper inadvertently made John Morris the "big, strapping Missourian." But as for that matter, when it comes to taking in a Nebraska horse thief, all Missourians are of that class.

We copy the following from the Lincoln (Neb.) *Daily State Journal* of March 21st.

The Lincoln public is not a stranger to the name of George Washington Cox. His name is embalmed upon the records of the police court and inscribed upon the books of the city caboose and enrolled in the archives of the county jail.

Depopulated hen roosts constitute a monument to his talent and energy in his particular line of business and a sad memory of things that were but are no more hovers around his deeds in the flesh.

But we are to lose him. Missouri has cast an envious eye upon us and longs to add him to their long list of James and Liddils and Fords and other distinguished citizens and he will doubtless go. There will be one solace in his bereavement, however, that Missouri's loss will be our eternal gain.

Yesterday morning a big strapping Missourian, John Morris from near Chillicothe, with blood in his eye, came to Sheriff Melick and said that he had a horse stolen and had traced the thief to this place. The horse had been sold at Shenandoah, and the thief represented himself as a pensioner and had lost a finger on his right hand.

The sheriff and his deputy at once knew the man. G. Washington Cox is a pensioner and has lost a finger. Deputy Evans took the owner of the horse with him and went down to the vicinity of Cox's house which is about fifty yards south of the gas works. When they came near they saw that the door was open and someone was watching. They did not want to give the alarm to any of the family unless Cox was there, so they passed by as if on other business. The Missourian was posted at the rear of the house, and the deputy started to make a detour and come around where he could watch the front. Cox almost immediately came out and started toward the depot. Mr. Evans went around a house and met Cox face to face, much to that gentleman's surprise and arrested him. He asked what the charge was and went along without trouble.

On the way to jail the prisoner took a memorandum book out of his pocket and began tearing out leaves. Deputy Evans took it away from him and discovered in it the following gems of thought:

"from Lincoln to Atchison by rale \$5.50"

"from Atchison to Trenton \$3.85"

"from Trenton to Princeton 75 cents"

"from Shenandoah to Lincoln \$3.73"

The name of J. S. Giles Shenandoah, Iowa was also found in the book.

J. S. Giles is the man to whom G. Washington Cox sold the stolen horse. His memoranda gave a very concise record of his movements, and will be highly interesting reading for the jury which shall try him. He evidently went from Lincoln to Atchison, from Atchison to Trenton, and from Trenton to Princeton "by rale." Near Princeton he stole the horse and rode it to Shenandoah and sold it. He then took the "rale" again and came home.

The sheriff of the county where the horse was stolen has been telegraphed for and will be here as soon as he can come. The prisoner sent for Col. Philpot during the afternoon and a habeas corpus was served upon Sheriff Melick, who, of course, has no papers to hold Cox.

The sheriff who was expected with the requisition arrived yesterday afternoon armed with the papers necessary to enable him to take George Washington with him. The habeas corpus case was not tried, and as it would be fruitless even if won it will probably be dropped. (End of the Lincoln *Daily State Journal* article.)

In the pursuit and capture of Cox and the recovery of the horse, the Livingston County farmers' horse protection company, of which P. H. Minor is president, and C. F. Hageman secretary, have done a good work for community, although it has cost them the price of three such horses to secure this Nebraska thief. (End of the *Chillicothe Constitution-Tribune* article.)

Juanita Firmin's note: This could be our horse thief. Tis said one in every family. The 1850 Livingston Co. census shows a Geo. W. Cox born 1847 enumerated with Stephen Cox born 1816. Stanley (Cox) and I believe he was a brother to Joseph. In 1884 this Geo. W would be 37 years old. Stephen Cox and the other family members were in Bell Co. TX in 1870.

Les Sutton's note: I agree that this George Washington Cox probably descends from our Solomon (*Stephen, Solomon Jr., Solomon.*) A telling fact is that his return was witnessed by "a large number of farmers from north of town." Most of our Coxes were farmers north of town. However, we cannot be certain because there was another George W. Cox, age 40, listed as a farmer in Lincoln, NE in 1880 showing his birthplace as Indiana with father and mother born in Ohio and another G. Cox, age 40, in prison in Lincoln in 1880 that gives his birthplace as Indiana, with father and mother born in Kentucky. There is another George W. Cox born in 1847 in Ray Co. MO, SE of Livingston Co. whose father was born in NC and mother born in TN.

There are several more interesting articles that are worth reading about one of these George W. Coxes in the Lincoln Nebraska *Evening News*.

From the August 21, 1891 edition:

Lincoln Evening News

MIDNIGHT WEDDING

A Peanut Stand as a Trysting Place

LOVES FITFUL TROUBLES

But "the Old veteran Carried Off the Prize" – A Groom of 51 and a Bride of 47 –

But They Get There Just the Same

An Undutiful Son

The course of true love never did run smooth, and age is no bar to the past.

George W. Cox lost his wife about two months ago, but he lost no time finding a

new mate. His choice fell on Mrs. Caroline Pasby, whose lesser half was killed last fall while crossing the B, & M. track on lower O street. The radiant groom is 51 years old and (the bride) is a well preserved English woman of 47.

George got him a wedding license yesterday and engaged Justice Brown to tie the knot. He instructed that gentlemen to be at the peanut stand at the corner of Eighth and P streets at 9 o'clock sharp where he would meet the bride and groom and they would then adjourn to his house for the ceremony. When Judge Brown sighted the peanut stand he found an excited crowd gathered and the bride to be on the verge of weeping.

Mrs. Pasby has a grown son who objected to the wedding. He met his mother at the corner and twitted her of only making a bluff, until she showed the license to prove that she meant business. Young Pasby snatched the paper and started off on a run. The mother was in despair and the groom in a rage, and that is how the crowd came to gather around the peanut stand. The expectant bride and groom plead with the judge to tie the nuptial knot without a license, but his keen respect for the law constrained his sympathies, which were always with the fair sex on such occasions. At his suggestion, however, Officer Bob Malone started after Ted Pasby.

Judge Brown came up to town, saw the Malone shooting fracas at the Capital hotel (a really weird unrelated story) and went home with the consciousness of having put in a full day. Along towards midnight he was awakened from his slumbers, and there at the door were Mr. Cox and Mrs. Pasby. Officer Malone had captured the scion of the Pasby house and taken the license from him.

The judge suggested that the wedding would be just as binding if performed today, but they had "sort o' made up their minds to have it done at once and had arranged the house for the first night." The accommodating judge accordingly made them man and wife on the spot. The groom is an old soldier and after the ceremony he gleefully remarked: The veteran carried off the prize! I want you to put that in the paper, judge. Mrs. Cox says that her son runs a restaurant. She has been doing the cooking and that is why he objected to her marriage. She says she thought she "had a right to get a man so she wouldn't have to work so hard at her time of life."

Lincoln Evening News June 14, 1892 edition:

HIT HIM ONCE

Mrs. G. Washington Cox Creates Some Excitement in Police Court

Mr. and Mrs. George Washington Cox had another of their semi-occasional scraps this morning, and Mrs. Cox did not get the worst of it. Their quarrel was fully rehearsed by a number of witnesses, and at the conclusion the court fined each of them \$1 and costs. Mrs. Cox was feeling right good, thank you, and as they arose to go she suddenly wheeled around and with a mild explanation

whacked George once in his already scratched face. They were separated before any further damage could be done.

The July 18, 1892 edition of the *Lincoln Evening News* states:

The public peace had the honor to be disturbed by Mrs. George Washington Cox, a *lady* of English extraction and a warm effusive manor. When brought before Judge Waters this morning, she exhibited a voluptuous black eye as proof that she had not taken more than two glasses of beer. Her case was continued until 4 o'clock this afternoon.

The August 22, 1893 edition of the *Lincoln Evening News* has this:

Mrs. Rohr had George Cox arrested for using unbecoming language, but failed to appear. Cox was dismissed.

George is also mentioned again in the May 29, 1894 edition of the *Evening News*:

..... The judge also heard some arguments and affidavits in the Houston-Gran case where a motion for a new trial is pending. George Washington Cox swears that when he signed an affidavit that he had seen Houston drinking in Carr's saloon the night he was killed he swore to what was untrue and while he was drunk, said signature being secured by Jim Digan, plaintiffs brother-in-law.