

REMARKS BY LAMPASAS COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
CHAIR JEFF JACKSON
CEREMONY RECOGNIZING LONG MEADOWS/TERREROS PRESIDIO/COX CEMETERY
AS AN HISTORIC TEXAS CEMETERY
18 MAY 2007
(Located on old Pleasant Cox farm, Rumley, Texas)

There are laws in the State of Texas to protect cemeteries. Historical designation can help by identifying older cemeteries with unmarked graves. Un-deeded cemeteries with unmarked graves can disappear with the passage of time as the land title is transferred from one owner to the next. An unmarked grave in the middle of a pasture eventually gets plowed over. The Lampasas CHC has documented and published a list of every known grave in the county. If something should happen, then at least there will be a written record.

This small cemetery has a fence and three marked graves. But the descendants of this family believe there are many more buried here. They believe there are graves dating back to a time before the first Anglo-American settlers began settlement of this state - when Texas was still part of Mexico - when what would become Lampasas was still an Indian wilderness - at a time when Lampasas as a place on the map did not exist.

This makes finding records of those who might have been buried here problematic, questionable, and uncertain - for in that wilderness there are no newspapers or public records - Spanish settlements had not reached this far into the interior. But there is unexplained evidence here. Spanish explorers may have been here at some time.

At that same time, early wanderers or explorers from what would become the United States may have been scouting the land. They probably did not have a legal right to be here in this foreign country. They probably did not have permission to be here from the Spanish governors of this territory. But certainly there were explorers who wandered the great American wilderness. Many of their stories never went down in history. Perhaps some of them died right here in this unnamed county in Texas.

Records of their being here may never be found. The earliest history of this cemetery may have to remain a folk legend. Folk tale or real history, there are marked graves here and archaeological evidence of more. There are grave markers of people who died after the settlement of Lampasas began. There are dated documents that place those pioneers right here.

The Texas Historical Commission has designated this cemetery a Historic Cemetery because of that real evidence. Yet without these markers it might not have qualified but remained a mystery. These few stone markers are the most important documents of proof that this cemetery has been here a long time.

The Lampasas CHC is always interested in finding and documenting any grave within the county limits. If they are endangered we will try to change that. Many people have passed through Lampasas - then and now - and some of them leave no evidence of their being here. But grave stones mark those who died here and will remain here forever. These stones can tell a story to the living. And it is up to the living to set these markers in place. It is up to the living to protect this cemetery.

Jeff Jackson