

TO THE EDITOR...

Out of the Past

To the Editor:
For some time I have been reading stories of the past in our home town paper, and I would like to share with the many people a little story of my own.

My father, Percy C. Cox, was the son of Franklin Dee Cox, upper Hinton Creek farmer. Many people will remember Grandpa Cox sitting on a high stool on the platform at the back of the store owned by M. D. Clark, or in later years, on his favorite mount, "Chub," heading the parade with the American flag. He was just about three months short of 90 when God called him home.

His parents, Samuel and Harriet Cox, came west by wagon train in 1848 and while still in his early 20's, Dee Cox came to Heppner, bringing some horses from the valley, and liked it so well he returned to Hinton Creek to spend the remainder of his life.

He met and married Elizabeth Hayman, and 16 children were born to this union. Three of these were buried on the Cox farm. His sons, Ben and Dee, Jr., still live in Heppner, as does his grandson, Stanley Cox. Percy, who spent the most of his life near his home, died in 1935.

Grandpa Cox rode his horse on the day before he died, and I remember well the stories he told of the Indians watching from the top of the hill while he went about his chores. He told of an attack on a wagon train at the site of the old slaughter house by the bridge above Heppner. On his way to town for supplies he stopped and buried a little three-year-old girl who had been killed.

During these times, when the Indians became hostile, he would tie his dog at the house and sleep in the brush along the creek. Many years later when the CCC boys were clearing brush from along the creek he would not part with his foliage that had been his protection in earlier days.

Many Descendants Here
Dee Cox's father, Samuel, was a nephew of Joseph Cox, who has many descendants in the Heppner area. Among them are the Gontys, Marlatts, Morgans and Stanley Minor, to name a few. All of this has led up to telling you of a visit to my ancestors.

On Wednesday, July 5, 1967, I got into my car in Beaverton and drove to Junction City, arriving at the Brockner Mikkelsen farm about noon. They were just having lunch and asked me to share with them. Due to a mixup they were not expecting me until the following day, and they had been spraying trees.

Arlene (Mrs. Mikkelsen) quickly showered and changed, and we were off on a visit to our ancestors.

Perhaps I should pause here to say that Arlene, like myself, is a great-great-granddaughter of Solomon Cox, Sr., who was born in Tennessee in 1793 and who at the age of 22 joined the Missouri Mounted Militia in the war of 1812, along with a brother, Jesse, who was later massacred by the Indians in Illinois. According to the adjutant-general's office in Missouri, the year was 1814, and they lived in Boone Lick, Mo., when they entered the service under Capt. Sarahel Cooper. Solomon was a private and he furnished his own rations and forage for which he was paid \$15. He received \$15 for his pay and \$24 for the use of his horse.

He was the son of Jesse and Margery Cox and besides Jesse he had a brother, William, and a sister, Rebecca. Sometime before 1818 Solomon settled in or near Warrensburg, Mo. His wife died before he and his children, Benjamin, William, Harriet (Dee Cox's mother), Julitha Ann, and Mary started their long trek to Oregon in 1848. Different senses show him living with different children, and his war records show that he received a pension of \$8 per month. He was quite deaf and very disabled by then.

Gill's of Portland. Also we were able to settle a little dispute on the death of Solomon, Sr. Our information had not gone along with dates on his marker, and it turned out that the marker was in error.

Had Been Scout
From there we went to the library where we learned Benjamin had been a scout. Jesse also had been in the Cayuse Indian War. Next we visited Mr. and Mrs. Lorin Inman, a relative through the Richardson family who had written "The Applegate Trail" for the Lane County Historian. He loaned us a copy of a book which had information on the Richardson family. Perry Richardson had married Julitha Ann Cox on the Platte River on the way to Oregon. They were married June 10, 1848, and I am told had for their wedding breakfast a large pie. William married Mary (Folly) Cox in 1849. Mr. Inman showed us how the "Old Trail" went through Lane county. Among the names of people who lived along the old trail were Mary Hayes, daughter of Richard Hayes, who married Joseph Hayes and lived in Heppner. (I find in the Centennial History of Oregon 1811-1911 a story of Joseph Hayes, former sheriff of Heppner). There was a John M. Ferguson, born 1847, who married Melvina Jane Hinton, and who also moved to Heppner.

Next stop, a Cox neighbor. A very nice old man of 88 years. Yes, he remembers Ben Cox, a very old man who received six dollars a month pension. He knew best Arlene's grandfather, J. D. He talked of the old harvest crew run by J. D. They were quite well known by all the old timers you meet. We left him then and headed down Frontier Road across the once-covered bridge where J. D.'s 12-year-old son, Solly, had met his death on the way home from working for a neighbor. His horse got tangled in some wire on a wagon on the bridge, and, according to the family, "Just knocked his brains out." This was in 1911.

Surrounded by History
We passed the cemetery where our ancestors sleep. The gate was locked so we would return tomorrow. Further on we turned on to Cox Butte Road. Now we were really surrounded by history. We opened the gate and drove up to the old house, got out and walked around back. Ruth Wolford, another descendant of Solomon, had told me of the old spring house, and here it was just ahead. The spring still runs beneath it, and I could almost see the milk and butter sitting in it to keep cool.

They were restoring the old barn. Visualize, if you can, 30 ft. beams all hand hewn, the uprights were about 6x6. Think of the ingenuity it took for these old pioneers to raise them. I couldn't fasten the catch on the door, but Arlene remembered her grandfather's strange combination.

Stopping along the Long Tom we took pictures of the Cox holdings, and from there to the cemetery where we checked once again the many Cox stones. Each generation had laid its loved ones there.

Now down Frontier Road we turned left and were at the home of Wilda Hostich, also a great great granddaughter of our Solomon, Sr. It was through her I had first met Arlene. She talked to us of our ancestors and we learned that Solomon's wife, Diana, had been captured by the Indians. She wore a gingham dress and she tore pieces and dropped them along the way. She looked back and saw her husband and other relatives coming, and she wheeled her horse. The Indians threw a tomahawk which hit its mark in the beaver pelts, and her life was saved.

We went to Harrisburg to the home of Emmett Cook. His granddother was Julitha Cox Richardson.

Once again we headed for Eugene, and we met Dr. Silvy Kraus, editor of the Lane County Historian.

Later we were off again to meet two very charming young people, Merle and Arlene Cox. He was a grandson of William or Uncle Bill Cox.

Cabin Still Stands
Going west from Junction City we could see Cox Butte in the distance. Out past Cheshire and now each house was or had been owned by the Cox family. We went up this beautiful valley, pausing only to take a picture of Bill Cox' old home. As we turned to our destination we could see on the right the little cabin of Emily Cox Carter still standing.

Merle and Arlene had just received a letter from a lady in Missouri and we were thrilled over the information it contained. Mrs. Ruff, who had written, although not of our Cox family, had some information of our Solomon Cox. Her Solomon Cox, however, was an ancestor of Charles Elbert and Claude Cox, all well known Heppner men.

Friday morning Arlene went back to being a farmer's wife, and I headed up the road towards home. I had a last glance at Cox Butte, and I paused a little while and chatted with Emmett Cook. He tells me Aunt Polly is the grandmother of the Portland born singer, Johnnie Ray.

Now I hit the freeway, leaving behind me all the wonderful people I'd met, people who preserve the past as best they can. They have old lamps, old

irons, and old iron kettle, old chairs, churns and even a jar to put the hair combs in to be used later for pillows. I even brought home a recipe for beet jelly. But best of all I brought home the memories of pioneers I wasn't privileged to meet and new-found friends. I plan to go back and go arrow-head hunting on the old land claim. It was thanks to my cousin, Elsie Stephens, that I started this hobby and I'm so grateful.

Looking up my ancestors can be a very wonderful hobby. You meet wonderful people and your mailbox becomes a treasure chest filled with records of the past.

Yes, I found a horse thief. His pioneer file reads "Bill Cox Horse Thief," but I haven't had the heart to look him up. He might not belong to us, and I think every family should have one, don't you?

Sincerely,
Frances Cox Griffin
6985 Highway 217
Beaverton, Oregon

Teenagers

Dear Wes and Helen Sherman:
Thanks for publishing the nice letter from Mrs. Frank Barkley. I always like to hear from old friends. I also like the letters from Art Crawford. Art came upon the Heppner scene several years after I showed up as a baby in the year of 1885. I still consider Heppner as my home town.

Mr. Sherman, I think you were raised somewhere near Castle Rock and know what a sleepy little town this is. The little payrolls here outside the little stores are the public schools. Most people living here either work as loggers or work in Longview at the largest saw-mill in the world. The Weyerhaeuser Timber Co. So, also, this is a town of retired people.

Down in my neighborhood, there are more than 20 teenage girls living here, and the only way they can get to the stores or post office is to go right past my front door. A few days ago I began to compare them with the teenage girls of Heppner when I was a teenager there myself. Now the girls dress like boys and seem to like to be dressed in overalls, with their shirts hanging out. I remember four pretty girls that lived on upper Main street somewhere near where the old power house used to stand. My father's furniture store was where Ed Gonty's shoe store is. Next door, south, was Gillingham & Bisbee's hardware store. Lou Bisbee and I used to play out back there, but Lou was about three years older than I was. But what I liked best was to sit out front on the window ledge and watch for four pretty teenage girls, all dressed in white with ruffled dresses. Their names were, Valajo McAtee, Sadie and Nina Garrigues and red head, Oma Smith. I still think they were the most beautiful girls in the world. I do not know if any of them are still living, but I think Nina is still in the land of the living.

Al and Irene (Zinter) Huit, of Heppner and Lexington came to see me. Al has a good job as piano tuner with Korten's music store. Irene called me and said she has a temporary job there, too. Mrs. N. D. Bailey called me from Kelso where she was visiting Mrs. Halvorsen, her sister, then she left for Olympia. My good old friend, Stanley Minor, keeps me posted as to things in Heppner. Good old friend, too, as his father was. If Bob Lowe ever comes down this way, I wish he would call here.

Sincerely,
O. M. Yeager
Box 476
Castle Rock, Wash.

Cutting Controls

To the Editor:
The citizens of Oregon have the right to know that the Oregon Liquor Control Commission is proposing to throw out most controls and restraints on alcoholic beverage advertising. They propose to allow Sunday advertising, advertising on point-of-sale items (swizzle sticks, etc.), use of sports heroes, testimonials, children, family scenes, cartoons, Christmas, Easter, or nearly anything else that any branch of the liquor industry might dream up. They propose to triple the amount of advertising space available at cocktail lounges, etc.

They propose that it shall be legal to advertise alcoholic beverages on billboards anywhere that there are not presently regulations against it outside incorporated cities.

The OLCC proposes, instead a number of "housekeeping regulations". These will take the place of the legitimate "controls against exploitation" which society has a right to demand. Only a few of the many drastic changes are listed here. The hearing will be at 9:30 a.m. on September 20.

Oregon has been fortunate to have strong regulations regarding advertising and sale of alcoholic beverages. Drinks are available to those who wish them, but this is a "Control State". Consumption of alcoholic beverages is much lower here than in open "licensed states". It follows that our rates of alcohol problems are lower.

Citizens are urged to write for a copy of the regulations and proposed changes so they can see for themselves. Write to: Oregon Liquor Control Commission, P. O. Box 22297, Portland, Oregon 97222.

More Mosquitoes

To the Editor:
Mosquitoes! They have brought misery to Man these many years and the Minnesota "skeeters" no doubt rank in feats of achievement that border close to the impossible. But I bring no dispute here that would tend to tarnish the fine accomplishments of our own insect jet bombers, such as flying away with that tent back in the land of 10,000 lakes, more or less. Ah yes, "the land of Sky Blue Waters."

Nevertheless I hasten to give the crown to the Venezuelan mosquito. The story of the great mosquito disaster of many years ago happened in the outskirts of Caracas, the capital city, when an American construction crew was building a big "tank farm" of tanks to contain the new oil gushers which were flooding the landscape.

The story was related to me in all seriousness by a riveter who was working on the new storage tank in Heppner down below the depot at the time Union Pacific (O.W.R. & N.) was converting its locomotives from coal burning to oil. This was a big deal and attracted the customary crowd of onlookers, of which I happened to be one.

The riveter said he was inside one of the almost completed tanks the day it happened and only the man-hole provided ingress and exit. When he realized what was going on outside either work as loggers or work in Longview at the largest saw-mill in the world. The Weyerhaeuser Timber Co. So, also, this is a town of retired people.

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Mrs. Wavel Wilkinson has returned from a three week's extended trip to Laramie and Newcastle, Wyo.

She took the train to Laramie where she was met by her two granddaughters and accompanied them to their home in Newcastle. Staying at the home of her son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Francis Oslund, and family. Mrs. Wilkinson reports a busy two weeks helping get the two girls ready for college. Carol Sue, a junior, and Nancy, a freshman, are going to Colorado Women's College in Denver for the coming year. Mrs. Wilkinson returned to Heppner by train, where she picked up her car and continued home.

Metsker maps of Morrow, Gilliam, Umatilla, Wheeler counties on sale at the Gazette-Times.

Leader Offers 4-H Dog Obedience Class

Four-H Dog Obedience classes will soon be starting, according to Mrs. Norman Clow, instructor. Any dog can be trained, but the pet should be at least four months old. Dogs are taught to heel, sit, stay, and come. Included in the lessons will be the proper way to care for a dog, and classes will be held at the fairgrounds.

A class of this type was held during the summer and the students put on a demonstration at the fair during the Style Revue, showing what their pets had learned. Mrs. Clow is also interested in getting in touch with any adults who would like to start a dog obedience class and those interested can contact her at 676-9298.

TYPEWRITER RIBBONS and Mimeograph Stencils now available at the Gazette-Times office. 49tfx


Clow Spaniels Place High in Dog Show

Mr. and Mrs. Norman Clow attended the Oregon Brittany Spaniel Specialty Show in Woodburn last week, in which their dogs were entered.

Black Beutte's Touche, a 1½ year old female, won the open bitch class. The dog also took Winner's Bitch and won the Best of Opposite Sex, for which she captured five points toward the 15 she needs to become a champion.

Another dog of the Clows, Junior's Brownie Button, won second in American bred bitch class.

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