

William *Fletcher* Cox

David Bagwell's Great, great grandfather

[the grandfather of my grandfather J.W. Goff]

M, b. 20 February 1834, d. 2 October 1911

William Fletcher Cox went by "Fletcher". He was born on 20 February 1834 near Ozark, Dale County, Alabama. He was the son of William Cox Jr. and Milly Dowling. William Fletcher Cox married Martha Ann Bush, daughter of John Prescott Bush and Mary Frances Johnson, on 25 December 1853 at Skipperville, Dale County, Alabama.

He was a member of the 53rd Alabama Regiment for the Confederate States of America during the Civil War.¹ On April 21, 1862, the Confederate Congress passed the Partisan Ranger Act. The law was intended as a stimulus for recruitment of irregulars for service into the Confederate States Army during the American Civil War. On February 17, 1864 the Partisan Ranger Act was repealed after pressure from Robert E. Lee and other Confederate regulars persuaded Congress to repeal the act.

Overview of the 53rd Regiment, Alabama Partisan Rangers:

53rd Regiment Partisan Rangers was organized at Montgomery, Alabama, in November, 1862. Two of its companies had seen prior service with the 7th Alabama

Infantry Regiment. Men of this command were from the counties of Autauga, Lauderdale, Macon, Pike, Coosa, Tallapoosa, Dallas, Monroe, Wilcox, Lowndes, Dale, Coffee, and Montgomery. It first served in the District of the Gulf and in December contained 517 effectives. The unit was later assigned to Roddey's and M.W. Hannon's Brigade, Wheeler's Corps.

The Unit saw action at Thompson's Station, Brentwood, and Town Creek, was involved at the Atlanta Campaign, then participated in the defense of Savannah and the campaign of the Carolinas. Only a small number surrendered in April, 1865. Colonel Moses W. Hannon, Lieutenant Colonel John F. Gaines, and Major Thomas F. Jenkins were in command.

Cox was wounded in the battle of Athens on January 26, 1864. The Battle of Athens was fought in Athens, Alabama (Limestone County, Alabama), on January 26, 1864, [1] as part of the American Civil War. The Union force was a company under Captain Emil Adams from the 9th Illinois Mounted Infantry regiment. The Confederate force was the 1st Alabama Cavalry, under Lieutenant Colonel Moses W. Hannon.

At the time of the Battle of Athens the unit was under the overall command of Gen. Joseph [“Fightin’ Joe”] Wheeler.² On the morning of January 26, 1864, at around 4:00 a.m., 600 Confederate cavalymen attacked Athens, which was being held by a Union force of only 100. Even though the Union defenders had no fortifications and were outnumbered six to one, they were able to repulse the Confederate attack and force them into a retreat after a two-hour battle.

My grandfather J.W. Goff told me when I was a young boy that HIS grandfather Fletcher Cox, with a bullet or ball in his shoulder which he carried the rest of his life, rode his horse home from Athens, swimming the Tennessee River with his horse by holding onto its tail. He rode home and put the horse out to pasture and never worked the horse again.

William Fletcher Cox died on 2 October 1911 in Near Ozark, Dale County, Alabama,

at age 77. He was buried at Pilgrims Rest Baptist Church, Houston County, Alabama.

Children of William Fletcher Cox and Martha Ann Bush

Georgia Ann Cox-- b. 7 Nov 1854, d. 11 Jan 1889

Rosella Cox-- b. 4 Dec 1857, d. 2 May 1921

William Jasper "Willie" Cox-- b. 17 Sep 1859, d. 29 Mar 1933

Henrietta Earilla Cox-- b. 19 Feb 1861, d. 3 Dec 1897 [David's great grandmother]

Martha Ann Cox-- b. 18 Mar 1863, d. 12 Jul 1865

John Wesley Cox-- b. 9 Feb 1865, d. 17 Nov 1877

Julius Edward "Eddie" Cox-- b. 16 Mar 1867, d. 29 Jul 1924

Frances Lenora "Nora" Cox-- b. 11 Apr 1869, d. 1949

H. Tollie L. Cox-- b. 20 May 1871, d. 24 Dec 1901

Citations

[S450] United States Federal Census, Washington, District of Columbia, Population Schedule: Southern Division, Dale, Alabama; Page: 433, Dwelling: 702, Family Number: 702, Date: 1850.

[S451] United States Federal Census, Washington, District of Columbia, Population Schedule: Beat 3, Dale, Alabama, Page: 137, Dwelling: 130, Family Number: 130, Date: 1870.

[S448] W.L. Andrews, "Early History of Southeast Alabama."

[S455] Martha A. Cox Grave Stone, Find a Grave, www.findagrave.com.

[S456] John Wesley Cox Grave Stone, Find a Grave, www.findagrave.com.

[S3414] Email from Jay Goff Bagwell dated December 2015 to Hunter Wayne Bagwell; Subject Line: William Fletcher Cox Article.

FOOTNOTES

1:

Ozark Tribune story on Cox on September 13, 1904.

2:

Joe Wheeler was later elected to Congress from Alabama, and during the Spanish American War, persuaded the President to have him commissioned as a general officer. Supposedly in Cuba, on horseback and in battle, once yelled “Come on boys; we’ve got the Yankees on the run!” He also fought in the Philipines.