

## Death of General Cox

General Robert C. Cox died at this home in this borough last Friday evening at 5:30 o'clock. He had been confined to the house for about two years and had been steadily declining in strength. Until recently he had been able to sit up for a time every day; but towards the last he had no desire to leave his bed, and when the end came his spirit glided so peacefully into the unknown that those about his bedside hardly realized the presence of the messenger. He was almost seventy-eight years of age.

Gen. Robert Corson Cox was a native of Fairfield township, Lycoming county, where he was born November 18, 1823, a son of William and Hannah (Corson) Cox, the former a native of Montour county, of Irish ancestry, and the latter of Lycoming county, of German Quaker stock. His parents removed to Delmar township, this county, when Robert was about two months old, where they lived some twelve years and then returned to their former home in Lycoming county.

In April, 1841, the family again came to this county and settled near the site of Liberty borough. Here the mother died in May, 1842, and the father in February, 1856. Robert C. was in his eighteenth year when his parents located in Liberty township and had spent his boyhood assisting them on the farm, attending the common schools during the winter seasons and enduring the trials and hardships of those early days. On April 7, 1846, he married Lydia An Wheeland, a daughter of George and Mary K. Wheeland, of Liberty, whose ancestors were pioneers of Loyalsock township, Lycoming county, whence her parents removed to Liberty township, Tioga county, in 1827. Three children blessed this union, as follows: Henry C., of Wellsboro; Mary E., deceased wife of Jacob K. Richards, and Carrie M., deceased wife of A. P. Dartt. After his marriage Mr. Cox took charge of the homestead farm, on which his father had paid \$500, but on account of a defective title Robert was compelled to repurchase the property. Here he lived, clearing the land and tilling the soil, until 1854, when he sold the farm and embarked in merchandising and lumbering at Liberty, which business he followed until entering the army in 1862. In the meantime, he had served six years as orderly sergeant of a volunteer cavalry company, and was brigade inspector of militia, with the rank of Major, from 1854 up to the first year of the war.

On the breaking out of the Rebellion he at once took an active and prominent part in raising troops to defend the flag, some of which were not accepted, Pennsylvania's quota being full. But in August, 1862, he went to Harrisburg with the drafted men from Tioga county, and on the organization of the One Hundred and Seventy-first Pennsylvania Volunteers he was elected Major of the regiment, his commission dating November 18, 1862. This regiment served about one year, principally on garrison duty in North Carolina, and was mustered out at Harrisburg in August, 1863. In the summer of 1864 Major Cox was authorized by Adjutant General Russell to raise a regiment, and the result of his efforts in that direction was the gallant Two Hundred and Seventh Pennsylvania Volunteers, of which command he was commissioned Colonel September 28, 1864. The regiment participated in the closing scenes of the war, including Hatcher's Run, Fort Steadman, the assault on capture of Petersburg, and the surrender of Lee at Appomattox. In March, 1865, while in front of Petersburg, the regiment presented General Cox with a horse and complete outfit, valued at \$550, as a token of their appreciation of his soldierly qualities and the warm place he had in their affections. Its brave and efficient commander

was brevetted Brigadier General April 9, 1865, participated with his regiment in the grand review at Washington, D. C., was mustered out with this command at Alexandria, Virginia, May 31, 1865, and was discharged at Harrisburg on June 5, following.

Returning to his home at Liberty, General Cox resumed the peaceful pursuits of merchandising and lumbering, and again became a plain American citizen.

In politics, General Cox was originally a Whig, casting his first vote for Henry Clay for President, and he was a consistent Republican from the organization of that party. He served as a Justice of the Peace in Liberty from 1862 to 1867, and was Postmaster of that borough from April, 1869, until the autumn of the same year, when he was elected Treasurer of Tioga County, which office he filled one term. While still Treasurer he was elected Prothonotary and Clerk of the Courts, November 13, 1872, and was re-elected six successive terms, serving in that office a period of twenty-one consecutive years. He had been a permanent resident of Wellsboro since the fall of 1872 and was widely known in the State.

General Cox was a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church for nearly half a century and he was always a liberal contributor to church work in this community and he was faithful in the discharge of his religious duties. In 1896 the General and Mrs. Cox celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. Mrs. Cox is surviving. Few men were more favorably known in this section of the State than this old veteran, whose unsullied integrity and clean military and official record endeared him to the people of Tioga county. At his last election as Prothonotary he received 9,302 votes, or fifty-eight more than the combined vote cast for Pattison and Delamater, and during the closing of that term he was frequently urged by many leading men in different parts of the county to again be a candidate for the office which he had filled so long and faithfully, but he firmly declined and retired to private life in January, 1894.

The following is a list of the commissions held by General Cox, which in themselves form the record of a useful and honorable life:

Commissioned Brigade Inspector of Militia, with rank of Major, July 18, 1854 to 1859.

Also, Brigade Inspector in June, 1859 to 1864.

Justice of the Peace from February, 1862 to 1867.

Major of the 171st Regiment, Pa. Vols., November 18, 1862.

Colonel 207th Regiment, Pa. Vols., September 28, 1864.

Brevet Brigadier-General, April 9, 1865.

Postmaster at Liberty, April 13, 1869.

Treasurer of Tioga county in January, 1870.

Major-General of National Guard of Pa., June 6, 1871.

Prothonotary and Clerk of the Courts of Tioga county, November 13, 1872.

Prothonotary, etc., December 14, 1875.

Prothonotary, etc., December 28, 1878.

Prothonotary, etc., December 15, 1881.

Prothonotary, etc., December 16, 1884.

Prothonotary, etc., December 21, 1887.

Prothonotary, etc., December 19, 1890.

Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Army Posts and the Reunion Association of Tioga county.

It is not surprising that in all the years of his political career General Cox should have had the support of all his companions in arms. He was uniformly kind and considerate as a military commander and "the boys" stuck to him like a brother. His genial disposition and kindly nature also won a wide circle of personal friends among the younger men of the county, who honored and respected him as a public servant and a private citizen. One very remarkable incident of General Cox's career as Prothonotary was the fact that during the twenty-one years he held the office he was able to be present at every regular term of court and at all of the adjourned and special courts. His health was uniformly good, and very few were the days in all those years that he was not able to sit at this desk in the Prothonotary's office.

When General Cox took the responsibility of looking after the records of the county the office was located in the little old brick building on the corner near the county jail. The documents were stored in bungling wooden cupboards and constantly menaced by the danger of fire. The inestimable value of these records emphasized the importance of a safer depository, and the new county offices were built and the papers carefully arranged, indexed and stowed away in a manner most convenient for the public. It was largely through his instrumentality that the new county office building was erected.

The funeral services held from Gen. Cox's home yesterday afternoon were very largely attended, but in their tasteful simplicity the modesty of the dead soldier was reflected. The services at the house were conducted by Rev. Joseph Dennis, Gen. Cox's pastor, assisted by Rev. Dr. A. C. Shaw, and Rev. William Heakes. Mr. Dennis, Dr. Shaw and Col. R. T. Wood, of Elkland, made affecting addresses. Mrs. Lloyd Smith accompanied by her daughter, Miss Helen Smith, sang four appropriate hymns.

The casket containing the General's remains was placed in the parlor beneath the mantelpiece, which had been banked with white roses, and on the casket lay the sword the General had used in the civil war, and the casket was draped by the rich flag which had been presented to Major Meredith, of the 207th Regiment, by the Regimental Association, and which he had brought from Harrisburg to adorn the dead commander's coffin.

A large number of members of Geo. Cook Post and visiting veterans of the 207th, with others, met at the G. A. R. building and marched in a body to the services at the General's home and thence to his grave. The grave was in the General's family plot in the cemetery, overlooking the spacious flower garden, with its many roses, and beside the graves of his daughters, Mrs. Carrie Dartt and Mrs. Mary Richards.

The burial service was rendered, according to the affecting G. A. R. ritual by Commander Campbell and Chaplain Pond, of George Cook Post, assisted by comrades in that organization, and at its conclusion, Major Meredith, of Harrisburg, made a few touching remarks. The obsequies were then over, and the many witnesses of the burial dispersed, reflecting on the great loss which the civil war veterans of Northern Pennsylvania, this community and the county had sustained.

The following were the pallbearers, all officers and members of the 207th Regiment: Capt. E. R. Backer of Elmira, Major D. B. Meredith of Steelton, Capt. J. H. Miller of Salladasburg, Col. R. T. Wood of Elkland, Major John J. Reese of Roundtop, George W. Johnson of Covington, O. P. Babcock of Elkland, J. H. Linck of Williamsport, Samuel D. Evans and D. A. Evans of Charleston, D. L. Deane and Louis Doumaux of Wellsboro.