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INTERVIEW - "OLD TIMER"

Georgia B. Redfield
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LAURA HEDGECOXE CAHOON

Wife of E. A. Cahoon - Organizer of
First Roswell Bank

It was learned through an interview with Mrs. Laura Hedgecoxe Cahoon that "it was by chance", as well as for the integrity and force of character of the organizer, "that the first bank of Roswell was established by E. A. Cahoon."

"It was during the year 1884 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, (after Mr. Cahoon's graduation from Amherst College Massachusetts, in 1883) that S. M. Felson while on a visit to Minneapolis saw Mr. Cahoon, and told him of the wonderful "Sunshine Country" of New Mexico, where he had been for the benefit of his health, and had organized stock ranches. One of the finest of these - in the most beautiful location was the ranch established in the Cimarron country 150 miles southeast of Cimarron, another was 35 miles southeast." An uncle of Mr. Cahoon's W. C. Chase and his son M. M. Chase were stock owners and managers of some of the ranches. M. M. Chase was manager of the Maxwell Land and Cattle Company, a company formed for the purpose of stocking all the land in the Maxwell grant - about 1,700,000 acres. "In 1867 M. M. Chase had a residence three miles from Cimarron in a rich Cañon, a half mile to a mile wide. There were 1,000 acres of land on which he kept forty horses and three hundred head of cattle. The horses were for his individual and family use, and the cattle belonged to his children who had them branded with their own marks."

C 18-6/5/41 - W. M. M. M.

Fifteen miles to the north, he and two partners - Dawson and Maulding had a ranch of 50,000 acres, all inclosed twenty miles having wire fence, and fifteen miles were walls of mountains."

"On one of the ranches," Mr. Folsom told Mr. Cahoon, "M. N. Chase and his partner, Dawson, had a band of sheep, 2,500 in number, which had been cut out of the main flock to send to market. It would have surprised a Vermont sheep raiser to have seen that flock. They were fat as butter, most of them full blooded merinos, and woolled down nearly to the ground. The Governor, who was with us was a sheep man, and he exclaimed, 'By thunder, I am beat!' He had never seen as many sheep together, carrying so much wool and mutton, and," said Mr. Folsom, "they have our word for it, the average Vermont stock, stall fed, will not surpass the immense New Mexico herds of thousands that feed on the vast cattle lands."

Mr. Cahoon knew of the beauty and interesting history of this country from his relatives, before meeting Mr. Folsom in Minneapolis, and had been interested in the stories of this ranching and stock raising country.

"I want a job on one of those ranches", said Mr. Cahoon.

"There is a place for you," said Mr. Folsom, "Come as soon as you like." So he came to New Mexico in November, 1884, and worked as cowboy on the ranches in Colfax and San Miguel counties, until 1887. During that year he secured a place as collector, and later as teller, in the Albuquerque National Bank. He remained with this institution until 1890.

It was through the efforts of Jaffa, Prager Company of Roswell that plans were matured for a bank in Roswell. The man who was to be in charge changed his mind. Mr. Cahoon's records were examined. He was found to be of keen business discernment, and was asked to fill the place. He accepted

the responsibility. It was in this way (by a lucky chance) the bank of Roswell was organized and has stood strong, and sound the entire time under Mr. Cahoon's management for forty-four years through the "hard times" of the early years of its organization and the years of depression, until his death December 23, 1934. The success of the bank was largely due to the business judgment of Mr. Cahoon and his thorough understanding of the business conditions, and industries, of New Mexico and to his early training, and experience in the banking business.

"Mr. Cahoon was born August 20, 1862 in Lyndon, Caledonia county, Vermont." He was the son of Dr. Charles S and Charlotte Chase Cahoon. His ancestors were the owners and builders of the town of Lyndon, and were descendants of Roger Williams. They were among the first settlers of Providence, Rhode Island before locating in Lyndon prior to the Revolutionary war.

Mr. Cahoon before his death was president of the New Mexico Bankers Association, president of the Roswell Building and Loan Association, and was director in numerous business corporations. He was charitable - generous to a fault - giving much of his worldly goods to the needy during the early years of the depression and the last year of his life. He was the helpful friend of the deserving youth, and young men of the state. The beautiful Memorial Gates and park buildings of Cahoon Memorial Park in the northwestern part of the town of Roswell were designed by Frank H. Standhardt, young architect, whom Mr. Cahoon had assisted through college.

Four years after the coming of Mr. Cahoon to Roswell he was married, in April, 1894, to Miss Mabel Howell, who died in October, 1902, leaving three daughters, Katherine, Louise and Mabel.

The wife and companion of the last twenty-five years of Mr. Cahoon's life was Mrs. Laura Hedgecoxe Cahoon, a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Otto Hedgecoxe who moved to Roswell in 1897 when Mrs. Cahoon was a child. She and Mr.

Cahoon were married August 15, 1908. One child, a son, was born of this marriage, and was given the name, Daniel of an ancestor who three hundred years ago cleared the land and established the town of Lyndon, Vermont where Mr. Cahoon was born.

Dan Cahoon is a graduate of New Mexico Military Institute and of Stanford University, California. He is at present preparing himself to be a physician, as was his grandfather, Dr. Charles S. Cahoon.

One of the highly valued treasures of Mrs. Cahoon, and her son Dan, is a silver water pitcher presented to Dr. Chas. Cahoon, Grandfather of Dan, as an award for performing a very delicate and serious operation, in the early years of surgery, 1862.

The success and achievement of Mr. E. A. Cahoon were accomplished through his strong minded lever headed squareness, inherited from a good old New England ancestry, as well as for his unusual business ability.

As given by Laura Hedgecox Cahoon.

Dates checked from Twitchell's "History of New Mexico"

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"Editors Run" - By C. M. Chase, Lyndon, Vermont - 1882