

JAMES NATHANIEL COX (#671)

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Pg. 249– James N. Cox was born February 9, 1876 to Captain Robert Alexander Cox and Nancy Joseph Draper. Captain R. A. Cox was a successful lawyer and also served in the Confederate Army. His mother served as post-mistress in Gainesboro, Tennessee, and taught school in a Yankee neighborhood to provide for her family while her husband was in the service.

James N. Cox finished school at the University of Tennessee and entered his first job as assistant postmaster in Gainesboro. Captain G. W. Stephens, who had been a Confederate soldier and a friend with Captain Cox originated the idea of building a telephone line from Celina to Gainesboro, following its completion with his friend J. T. Anderson, with the understanding that James N. Cox was to be taken in as a partner. They organized the Gainesboro Telephone Company. In 1899, the first telephone exchange was established at Sparta. At this time, James N. Cox met Mary Young, who was attending Burritt College at Spencer, Tennessee, and they were married. They were the parents of three daughters and four sons. In 1908, the Sparta headquarters moved to Cookeville. Mr. Cox was elected general manager of the company in 1899, with a salary of \$35 per month.

James N. Cox was a very successful businessman in the telephone industry in Tennessee and Kentucky.

Submitted by: Evelyn Cox

**See Clara Jane Cox Epperson Story: History Putnam Co., TN at:*

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