

Museum Musings Article- Krum News
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Some Early Krum Families

Jacob & Margaret (Miller) Cole

Arrival In Krum Area-Ca. 1882

By Charles Cole & Janice Cole Callarman

Jacob Cole was born in Pennsylvania, just north of Philadelphia, December 5, 1835. The family name was originally Kohl. He migrated to Illinois in 1856 and lived and worked on a farm in Woodford County, just east of Peoria. His farm was near that of the Millers, English-Irish settlers who themselves had just arrived from Ohio. He married one of their daughters, Margaret Emily Miller, in 1864. Jacob paid a proxy \$300 to avoid being drafted into the Federal forces during the Civil War. The newlyweds lived in Woodford County, having seven children, until 1882. Then they moved to Denton County, probably as a result of Margaret Emily's brother Francis's move to Denton County. The area was attractive because many settlers were from Illinois and the Midwest and there were also German settlements like the one at Blue Mound. Jacob and Margaret Emily stayed in Denton for three years, since Jacob had bought acreage west of what is now the town of Krum (on what is now Gregg Road) and was breaking land and building a house.

The Coles lived on the farm while their children grew up and married. One daughter, Anna Belle, married John Edwards, who became the Denton County clerk. Another daughter, Ida, married Walter Finley, son of Lewis Finley who sold the land for the town of Krum. A son of Walter and Ida, Hal, became a pharmacist and ran the Krum drugstore during World War II. Jacob died in 1908. Margaret Emily lived until 1921.

A Cole son, Ralph Leslie, was born in 1879 and went to school Jackson community, located where the Krum Cemetery now is. He went to business school in Waco and founded the R. L. Cole & Co. mill and elevator in 1905. The business competed with three other elevators run seasonally but became the major local outlet for grain farmers for northwest Denton County. Since Krum was the greatest inland port for wheat in 1900, the business was ideally situated for growth. Grain was shipped on the Gulf, Colorado, and Santa Fe Railroad to Fort Worth.

R.L., as he was known, married Emma Adams, a Kentucky immigrant, in 1909. The Coles bought the house Dr. W.C. Kimbrough had built in 1905, 301 W. McCart. As their children were born—Frances, Weldon, Carlton, and Mary Louise—the family added rooms to the house. Dr. J. C. Gose delivered all the children, Dr. Kimbrough having moved his practice to Denton, and was frequently paid with cow feed from the mill.

R. L. added a filling station and oil supply company, located at the intersection of First and McCart streets, and a coal yard, located across from the mill on West McCart. Despite his success in business, he suffered some losses, such as the time when he and a partner speculated in the cotton market in 1922. The bottom dropped out of the market, the partner defaulted, and R. L. took several years to pay off the \$50,000 loss. But he became president of the Texas Grain Dealers Association in 1926 and later the F & M State Bank in Krum. He was active in the Democratic party, “then the dominant party” and very conservative political party in Texas. He continued being a farmer of sorts since he still owned the original Cole acreage, which he devoted to grain crops, and then added some of the Finley acreage, on which he ran a herd of about 100 Hereford cattle. He also found time to serve on the Krum School board.

Emma Cole died in 1929. Frances and Mary Louise both matriculated at the College of Industrial Arts, now Texas Woman's University. Frances went to Goose Creek, Texas, to teach school and married Chester Rogers, a reporter and photographer for the Houston Chronicle. She died in 1986. Their adopted son John Chester died in 2002.

Mary Louise (“Toots”) also became a journalist and while working in Carlsbad, New Mexico, met an Air Force trainee named Tom Barry. After World War II, the Barrys returned to Krum because Mary Louise suffered from cancer. She died in 1947. Tom, however, stayed on, started an insurance business, and later married Billie Harris.

Carlton (“Cotton”) joined the army in World War II, became a second lieutenant as an engineer in the Third Army led by General Mark Clark, and participated in the invasions of North Africa and Italy. After the war he married Janice Holland from Maybank, Texas, and became the owner of the Cole Oil Co. He later ran a motel in Fort Worth and a care facility for older adults in McKinney. He died in 1987. Cotton and Janice had a daughter, now Sulinda Mann, and a son, Richard. Both now live in Austin.

Weldon worked for the Firestone Company, first in Dallas and then in Kentucky. He married Christine Dedmon (whose sister Martha was later to marry Pin Fowler and also live in Krum). He returned to Krum after R. L. died and managed the mill and elevator until the late 1950s. The two children of Weldon and Christine, Bill and Sally, grew up in Krum and went to Krum schools. Christine died in 1960. Weldon moved to Fort Worth, worked with a film developing company, married Wanda Massey in 1963, and died in 1999. Bill now lives in Victoria, Texas, and Sally at the Robson Ranch.

After Emma Cole died, R. L. married Corine Evans, a Krum school teacher from Ellis County, in 1933. They had four children: Ralph (“Buddy”), Charles, Janice, and Jim. The Coles continued to live in the old Kimbrough house. After R. L. died in 1948, Corine continued to live there. All four of the children matriculated at what is now the University of North Texas. Corine was elected to the first Krum City Council when Krum incorporated in 1954. She worked at clothes manufacturing companies in Denton and Krum and later at the Denton State School. She died in 1997 at the age of 95. Buddy worked in financial institutions, served as County Commissioner and County Judge. He and his wife Norma, a retired teacher, reside in Pilot Point. Charles served Methodism pastoring, writing and editing, and working with global missions. He and wife Clarice, a retired educator, are retired in Santa Fe. Jim and his wife are retired from the business world and live in Lewisville. Janice, a retired teacher, and husband John Callarman, retired newsman, live in the Cole home in Krum, staying busy in various community groups.



Front: Ralph Leslie Cole-Emily Cole-Jacob Cole
Back: Augusta Miller-Emily’s sister- Ethie Mae Cole-Ida Cole