

Correcting History: For Whom Was Cole County REALLY Named? OR Making Some Sense of a Scrambled Past. Cole County Bicentennial Kickoff, Marion Missouri River Access, June 5, 2020

I was thinking the other day about these silver souvenir coins what are being sold to commemorate 200 years since the creation of this county and what a coin like this would have meant to the early settlers of this part of the country in 1810 and 1816, two milestone dates for the history of mid-Missouri and Cole county.

1810 was the year the first white settlers mostly, if not all, from Kentucky, took up permanent residence on the south side of the Missouri River, west of the Osage. And 1816 was when a group of Tennesseans decided this was where they would make their community.

Let's remember that in 1810 this was not Missouri; it was still called Louisiana. Lewis and Clark had passed this very location on June 5, just six years earlier, headed upstream. Missouri's first newspaper was just two years old in 1810. A dozen of the 56 men who signed the Declaration of Independence were still living. Eight of the 48 men who signed the Articles of Confederation in 1781 were still alive, In addition, eighteen of 39 signers of the Constitution were still alive including President James Madison, considered the "Father of the Constitution," and his Vice-President Elbridge Gerry (Gary), one of the men who signed both the Declaration and the Articles of Confederation. He was one of three who refused to sign the Constitution because it lacked a Bill of Rights---which Madison soon took care of. His name is part of our current political discussion although it's mispronounced when people speak of Gerrymandering (Jerrymandering).

Six years later when the first settlers arrived in what would be Cole County there were still a half-dozen signers of Declaration, 4 signers of the Articles and 12 signers of the Constitution still drawing breath.

Missouri's first bank did not open until the year the Tennesseans arrived here. A history of banking in Missouri tells us that in those days, "At one time or another monetary value was measured in such exotic currencies as beeswax, whisky, needles, potash, maple-sugar, salt, wood, feathers, bears' oil, and venison, fish and lead...For a time after 1805 it became legal for want of a better medium, to pay Missouri taxes in shaven deerskin, assessed at the rate of three (skins) to a dollar." (Timothy W. Hubbard and Lewis E. Davids, *Banking in Mid-America: a History of Missouri's Banks*, Washington, D.C., Public Affairs Press, 1969, pp. 14-15)

Today, we have a coin we will take home as a souvenir. In 1810 and in 1816, a person with a coin (hold up coin) such as this would be considered incredibly wealthy---although he or she might have had trouble figuring out what to do with it. For us, it's a souvenir.

But it's not just that. It is a symbol of the distance between the people who first settled this region and those of us who meet to honor them today. We can no more truly grasp what life was like here at Marion in 1816 than people like John English, or John Glazebrook, or Dan McKenzie could imagine the life we have now.

This silver coin---and the bronze commemorative version of it---that we take home today should remind us of what remarkable people they were AND remind us that everything

we have and everything we are in Cole County began with those in 1810 and 1816 who came here with courage and hope and little else.

This was dangerous land when a family named Cole became the first white settlers west of the Osage River and south of the Missouri before the start of the War of 1812.

A few years after the war ended and treaties with the Indians made the Missouri frontier safer, several brave people from Tennessee made a long and arduous journey to this area. There were no roads. If there were maps, they were sketchy.

But there was a future, an opportunity for a new life. There was open land. They arrived here knowing that whatever lay ahead of them would be made with their own hands, their own efforts, their own wills.

We know the names of many who were the first to believe this part of what had become Missouri Territory was a place to put down roots---John English and his four sons; Henry McKenney, who had three sons; James Miller and his five boys; James Fulkerson, with three sons; David Young, with three more; John Mulkey with four boys; Martin Gooch, with two, John Harmon and one son, joined by Joshua Chambers, with two sons. The early historical notes we have seen, unfortunately, don't mention wives, but we can be assured that those 27 sons mentioned with their fathers had mothers, too---and undoubtedly had some sisters---women who shared the risks, the tough overland journey, and the work of establishing new homes.

There also are others who undoubtedly came along with some of those settlers from Kentucky and Tennessee---slaves. We don't know how many but slavery existed in Missouri for about 80 years of the 18th century and surely existed when southern settlers pushed into central Missouri in the first couple of decades of the 19th. Missouri did adopt a slave code of punishment in 1804 and retained it in its first constitution, which was being written the year Cole County came into existence. There were about 35-thousand slaves in the Louisiana Territory in 1810. Census records show 637 slaves in Cooper County in 1820. The census would have been taken before Cole County came into existence so some of those slaves would have been here. It was a time, though, when the Constitution provided that those 637 slaves counted as only three-fifths of a person for the purposes of apportionment. We do know that Hannah and William Temple Cole owned two slaves when the Cole family moved from Montgomery County to Howard County.

So it is important in the troubled times in which we begin this bicentennial celebration to acknowledge that black lives as well as white lives probably mattered in the earliest days of settlement in Cole County. Not many, but likely some.

What we know as Cole County was once part of St. Louis County. It became part of Howard County in 1815. In 1818 it became part of Cooper County---with the first county seat of the area that became Cole County located at Cole's fort in present Boonville. Then 200 years

ago Cole County was carved out of Cooper County and this area where we are meeting today became the first town and first county seat of the new county.

There were enough settlers that a town could be laid out. They named it for Revolutionary War hero Francis Marion, known in South Carolina as the “Swamp Fox” for the guerilla warfare he waged. The better part of two centuries later, when the Army created the “Green Berets,” Francis Marion was part of its heritage.

William and Daniel McKenzie platted the town in 1820. Dan McKenzie had a store. E. V. Hollingsworth opened a hotel. Joshua Chambers had a horse-powered mill. The blacksmith was John L. Glazebrook. And a “colored freeman” named Cato had a dramshop.

One account says English built the first brick house in the county although James Ford’s history of Jefferson City and Cole County, published in 1936, has a photograph of a brick house built by Paul Whitley near Sandy Hook and claims IT was the first brick house. Whitley was the county’s first sheriff.

English’s home was the location of the first meeting of the Cole County Circuit Court, two weeks after the bill establishing Cole County went into effect. The first meeting of the Cole County Court---the predecessor of our present county commission---was on April 2, 1821 also at English’s house. John Vivion, James Stark, and Jason Harrison were the first administrators of the new county, appointed by Governor McNair, our first state governor.

The County’s first state senator was a Revolutionary War veteran who ran a dramshop---what we would call a bar today, James Hunter. English became our first State Representative.

The first jail, costing \$690, went up at Howard’s Bluff, the same year that a road was authorized from Marion to the new city of Jefferson. Two years later, in 1825, the first courthouse was put up, for \$748 with then-FORMER sheriff Paul Whitley installing a brick floor, doors and windows. The first school in Cole County was opened March 30, 1827 in the courthouse. The first pupils were children of Jason Harrison, James Miller and other early settlers---plus twenty grown men and women, some of whom came from Cooper, Boone and Howard Counties.

In 1823, Marion resident William Taylor was granted \$59 from the county treasury to pay for food, clothing, nursing and other things for the first child named a ward of the county. The child’s name was Marion Cole, an interesting combination.

Many of the early settlers of this area were Baptists but the county did not have its first church until the Sardis Meeting House was assembled in 1827, the forerunner of the Baptist Church in Elston, seven or eight miles away from us today. Jason Harrison, a member of the first county administrative court, whose children were the first school pupils to meet in the courthouse, was the church clerk.

An 1837 gazetteer---a book describing the geography, physical features, and social makeup of places---recorded that by then no real improvements were made here, and, “The only business in the wholesale and retail line there was carried on by a single concern. This was the commission and forwarding house of Rackoon, Possum & Co.” The Gazetteer suggests this

business, or maybe the rough country in some places, might have led some people to refer to Cole County as “varmint county.”

The Howard’s Bluff area was one of three locations considered in 1820 by a special state commission as the site for the permanent seat of government. But the commission had to find land that had not been exposed to public sale, and the presence of the “Tennessee Settlement” and some other problems led to this site being unfit for the new state capitol.

An act approved on January 21, 1829 provided for a shift of the county seat from Marion to the City of Jefferson. The last meeting of the county court here was February 3. The next time the county court met was March 30, at John Gordon’s house in Jefferson.

We could have waited until November 16 for this event because that would be the 200th anniversary of the day the legislature passed the act forming Cole County. Or we could have waited until January 1, because that’s the day the bill passed in November went into effect. But November and January are not the best times for an event such as this, in a place such as this.

Dates on calendars are important in the telling of the story of a community, a state, a nation or—for that matter---the world. I’m going to spend some time today talking about dates and the confusion they can cause in the telling the story of a family.

After I was asked to speak at this event, I decided to learn about Stephen Cole. Various books on state and local history for decades—at least as far back as 1865---have spoken of him as “a pioneer and Indian fighter” for whom Cole County is named. But what does that mean?

In the process of learning about Stephen Cole, two dates are important: July 20, 1810 and February 20, 1810.

The popular history of Howard and Cooper Counties points to February 20, 1810 as the time when settlement of this part of Missouri took root. On that day, a wagon train led by Benjamin Cooper arrived in Howard County. Members of Cooper’s party built a fort while seventeen members of a family named Cole decided to cross the icy Missouri River and make their home on the bluffs overlooking the river. Hannah Cole, a widow with nine children, her brother-in-law Stephen, with his wife and five children settled in an area that became Boonville. They became the first white settlers south of the Missouri River and west of the Osage River.

Hannah Cole became a widow when Indians killed her husband on July 20, 1810.

That circumstance has been overlooked by many chroniclers of Missouri history for most of these past 200 years.

In case you missed it, as they did, let me summarize what I just said. The Cooper-Cole emigrant train moved from the Loutre Island settlement in Montgomery County about one-hundred miles to the river bottom of Howard County, arriving on February 20, 1810. The group included the widow Hannah Cole and her nine children.

But Hannah Cole became a widow on July 20, 1810, five months later.

That’s right. The often-cited historical record has the widow settling at the future town of Boonville five months before she became a widow.

What’s the truth?

The search for that truth has been a bewildering experience and finding that truth is going to change Cole County history, as of today and could lead to reconsideration of small parts of the histories of Cooper, Howard, Audrain, and Montgomery Counties, too. .

Clearly, one of these dates has to be wrong.

The accounts of the event that made Hannah Cole a widow generally agree. The Coles and the Coopers were part of a settlement on Loutre Island, a piece of land in Montgomery County at the mouth of the Loutre River, generally across the Missouri River from Hermann, when some Potawatomie Indians stole some horses. Six men went off in pursuit a few hours later. They pitched camp after spotting the Indians in the distance and planned to get the horses the next day. During the night, however, the Indians attacked the camp and killed William Temple Cole--Hannah's husband— Larshal Brown, Abraham Patton and Cornelius Gooch. James Murdock hid and was not hurt. Stephen Cole attacked the Indians, killed three and wounded a fourth before taking refuge in the dark forest, seriously wounded. It took him three days to get back to Loutre Island.

That's the thumbnail description of the event. But WHEN was the event?

We have come across eleven accounts of that attack that offer dates from "about 1806 or 7" to the "summer of 1812." In fact, an 1884 history of Audrain County just says, "It is a fact that, in the summer of 1812, James Murdock, Temple and Stephen Cole, James Patton and John Gooch...went in pursuit of a party of Indians who had stolen some horses from them and other settlers."

We have two oral histories from members of the Cole family. One is from Samuel Cole, one of the sons of Hannah and Temple. In the Howard and Cooper County history published in 1884, he recalls, "The river was full of ice. We halted our team where old Franklin was built afterwards and came over the river in a pirogue, leaving our wagon on the other side and swimming our team." (A pirogue is a hollowed-out log.)

In 1861, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* published an account of the battle that made Hannah a widow, as given by James Cole, the oldest son of Stephen and Phoebe Cole, that says the theft of horses, the pursuit, and the attack happened in September, 1807.

So, when was that fatal fight?

It was about 2 a.m., July 21, 1810. Or maybe it was sometime after midnight on the morning of July 20. But it WAS July and it was 1810.

We first uncovered an account pointing to that approximate time in the August 2, 1810 edition of Missouri's first newspaper, the *Louisiana Gazette*, of St. Louis. It said the Indians "butchered four of the men" recently, according to an account the newspaper had received that week.

And then, in the compilation of the Territorial Papers of the United States, can be found the "Claims of Stephen Cole, Cornelius Gooch, William Temple Cole, Samuel Brown, Larshel Brown, and James Murdough, or their representatives, for property of which they were robbed by the Pottawatemy [sic] Indians in July, 1810." The two survivors of the incident gave detailed depositions

James Murdough (pronounced "Mudock"), who was a neighbor of Temple Cole's, testified on August 17, 1810 that "about 2 o'clock on the morning of the 21st, the company was fired upon by the Indians."

Stephen's deposition, taken on September 21, said the attack came "after midnight" on the 20th.

There was thus no doubt the attack took place on July 20 or 21, 1810---and July 20 is the generally accepted date.

So we now have confirmed that Hannah Cole became a widow five months after she supposedly went to Howard County.

What do we do now with the February, 1810 date for the arrival in Howard County and the trip across the river to what became Boonville?

One writer, Margot McMillan of Fulton, says the move to Howard County was not until December, 1810 rather than February. And there are some other sources we'll mention later that suggest the same sort of thing.

An important statement was made by Stephen when on September 21, 1810, he gave his deposition about the fatal attack. It begins, "Stephen Cole being duly sworn, on his oath saith that he resides at the settlement called Loutre, in the township of Fensure Osage, in the district of St. Charles."

So we know that Stephen had not moved to Howard County by late September, seven months after he supposedly did. In fact, in June he and Temple---along with Nathan Boone, Daniel's son---had been appointed as jurors for the October term of the Court of Quarter Sessions.

There even is some indication that he was still living in the Loutre Island area as late as April, 1811. Henry Brackenridge, who made the first non-business "tour" of the Missouri River, as far as South Dakota, wrote in his journal of that trip on April 8 that they had for the last few days been accompanied by "a man and two lads" going upstream in a canoe. "The man seemed to possess no small share of pride and self importance, which, as I afterwards discovered, arose from his being a captain of militia," he wrote and continued, "He resides on the Gasconade; was the second family which settled in that quarter, about three years ago. He has present about 250 men on his muster-roll. We were entertained by him with a long story of his having pursued some Pottawatomise, who had committed robberies on the settlements some time last summer; he made a narrow escape, the Indians having attacked his party in the night time, and killed four of his men after desperate resistance."

He does not mention if the man gave his name, but the only other person who could have told that story was Murdough, and he wasn't in charge of any militia company as far as we have been able to determine.

A couple of Cole family researchers have suggested Stephen by then was maintaining THREE homes---the one in central Missouri, one on Loutre Island during farming season, and a third in one of the nearby Gasconade River caves from which saltpeter was mined---the reason Stephen told Brackenridge he "resides on the Gasconade." In fact, they suggest the Coles settled on the south side of the river to begin with, not on Loutre Island proper.

So if we put these circumstances together, we can create a justified alternative to the traditional telling of this part of the Cole family story---especially since we have proven that the Indian attack was in late July, 1810..

Let's begin by acknowledging that the Coles and the Coopers might have been adventurous, entrepreneurial and certainly hardy people who believed their better lives could be found in the Boonslick Country. But they were not foolish or desperate.

If the Cooper emigrant train did reach Howard County in February, 1810, the Coles were not with it. But traveling separately might not have been an option for the Coles, so it is likely the Coopers and the Coles traveled together---later in the year. Why would they not have made the trip separately?

Children. And Indians.

Different genealogy charts have different birth dates, but the one we will use here says Hannah's oldest child, James, would have been 21 in 1810 and her second son, Halbert, would have been 16. But of the other seven, Stephen would have been eleven; Samuel, ten; Jane, eight; Martha, six; Nancy, four, William Junior, two; and Phebe, probably named after the older Stephen's wife and called "Polly," less than one.

Stephen and Phoebe's five children, James, Rhoda, Mark, Mary, and Eleanor, would be eight, six, four, two, and one or less.

That's eleven children, eleven years old or younger, six of them four or younger---and two close to being newborns.

Would YOU travel 100 miles, almost all of it on foot, on something that was no more than a trail, not a road, to a place with no shelter and at a time of year when game was scarce and food-bearing plants were not to be found with eleven children than young? Would you, upon arriving at the destination promptly climb into a hollowed-out log with sixteen other people, and cross an icy Missouri River, making your horses swim alongside and then have the horses standing with you on the icy south shore with temperatures no better than the 20s and thirties and no shelter? Would you embark on such a trip across the river, knowing you were leaving your wagon behind---and in that wagon were food, blankets, and tools?

Sam Cole remembered that Temple and Stephen had scouted out the area south of the river in the Spring of 1810, before the fatal Indian attack.

If we are to believe Samuel Cole's account more than fifty years later, the Cole family wound up on the south side of the river without food, without shelter. Supposedly the first thing they did was build a shelter, one big enough 17 people. How did they built the shelter? Did they bring axes and saws with them in that crowded pirogue?

The stories of Samuel Cole crossing the river when he was about ten years old and remembering the event about 60 years or more later, and James Cole recalling in 1861 a battle that he thought was fought in 1807, a year before he was born or perhaps even conceived, are reminders that oral history, while valuable, can be flawed.

Further---would you, only a few months after Indians had killed your husband and three of your neighbors set out on a winter trip like that with only yourself and three other adults to travel 100 miles through territory you knew had hostile Indians in it?

Strength in numbers is important in dangerous times, so the Coopers and Coles did travel together, sometime later in 1810 but not in February; more likely in the fall or late fall.

So here's a more common-sense scenario---and we admit it is only that because there are no written records to confirm any of this that we know of:

Sometime, perhaps in October or November---after Stephen had testified he still lived at Loutre Island in September---the Cole families moved to the Boonslick. The kids were a little older, even Eleanor and Phebe, the last two who, one family genealogy says probably were born in 1810. They camped with the Coopers for a while. Stephen and maybe his older nephews---the oldest, James, would have been about 21 and Halbert would have been 16---

made a pirogue. It takes time, using hand tools, to carve a large tree into a boat, which would have to have been done unless they brought the boat cross-country with them, which would have been a pretty good feat. They crossed the river, checked out the area Stephen and Temple had visited earlier, and constructed a shelter for both families before winter really settled in.

When the pirogue had been carved and the shelter had been made---that is when the Cole family went to the south side. Maybe they did go with ice in the water---although it would not have been too good for the only horses they had. Or maybe the oral tradition had been embellished through the years.

This suggestion is not new, although it appears to be seldom noticed. But if we were to go to Hannah Cole's grave in Briscoe Cemetery in Cooper County, we will find a plaque, part of which reads, in part, "In either the fall of 1810 or sometime in early 1811, Hannah and her nine children.....came with the Coopers and others to the Boonslick area." One of the two family researchers I mentioned earlier suggests the move might not have come until as late as early 1812, after the sale of Temple's estate.

That, however, runs counter to other historical accounts that say that other settlers followed them into the area in 1811 and 1812. Stephen and his neighbors built a fort in 1812 and as soon as it was built, all the area settlers gathered there for protection from the Indians who were becoming more militant as British allies in the War of 1812.

Stephen still had to leave to serve as Justice of the Peace in St. Louis County, a position he had held since 1813, which accounts for his apparent encounter with Brackenridge in April of 1811, serving on a juries in lawsuits in February, 1811 and July, 1813; and the court proceedings in 1814 in the St. Louis district. When Howard County was created, he became a Justice of the Peace there.

He was the administrator of Temple's estate. In January, 1814, Hannah had Stephen ask a judge to name her guardian of five of her children who were younger than 14---Jane, Martha, Ann, Elenor, and William Temple Jr. Daughter Phoebe was not included; She had died, perhaps the first child to die in Cooper County. A few days later, two of Hannah and Temple's sons, Stephen and Samuel, asked the court to make Stephen their guardian.

Stephen Cole, was a prominent citizen in the Howard-Cooper County area who helped lay out the Howard County seat of Franklin and undoubtedly watched with interest William Becknell's first trading trip to Santa Fe in 1821. One of those who watched Becknell's 1821 adventure with even greater interest was Benjamin Cooper. Becknell planned to return to Santa Fe in mid-May, 1822, but Cooper hit the trail two weeks before Becknell's departure. With him were two men named Stephen Cole. The second one was Temple Cole's son, Stephen's nephew.

Most of the party returned in October.

But Stephen Cole and his nephew, did not. New Mexico historian Marc Simmons speculated the Stephen Coles headed south along the Rio Grande "to test the trade possibilities in El Paso and Chihuahua" while the rest of the group was concluding business in Santa Fe. Several days later, they pitched camp near a small village across the Rio Grande River, perhaps today's Albuquerque. During the night, a party of Navajo Indians killed them.

Word of their deaths did not reach the Boonslick until twenty months later because the Cooper Party left New Mexico before learning of the fates of the Coles and arrived in Franklin in early October, 1822. Not until May, 1823 did another group head to Santa Fe, also led by Cooper. The party did not return until the end of October. It was this group that returned with “about 400 Jacks, Jennets, and Mules,” a quantity of animals that in time became Missouri’s famous mule industry. It is likely this party also returned with word of the deaths of the Coles.

Although the *Missouri Intelligencer*, the first newspaper west of St. Louis which began publication in 1819 in Franklin, covered the return, it did not mention the deaths until April 10, 1824 when it recounted an interview with one James Purcel, a nineteen-year resident of New Mexico, and heard from him that in August, 1822, a party of “Nabijo” Indians mistakenly murdered the Coles. According to Purcel, the Indians thought the Coles were Spaniards and discovered their mistake as they examined the men’s rifles and other equipment after the attack. He related that, “Afterwards, in a conversation with an American gentleman, they described through an interpreter, their feelings on the occasion and mentioned in emphatic language the sorrow and regret which the mistake had occasioned them. They said that the few Americans they had seen had always treated them kindly; that they were a good and brave nation, against whom they had no enmity; that they were distressed at killing their friends, and that after discovering the mistake, they went away mortified and displeased.”

“James Purcel” was likely fur trapper James Purcell, who is believed to have been the first American to set up trade operations in Colorado. He had gone to Santa Fe in 1805 and was held in custody by Spanish authorities for some time before establishing himself as a carpenter. He went to Colorado in 1833.

Three weeks after the story of the murders was published, the first notices were published in the *Intelligencer* of the settlement of the elder Stephen Cole’s estate through the sale of land to satisfy debts.

Josiah Gregg in his landmark *Commerce of the Prairies*, published in 1844, charts the beginning of trade between Santa Fe and Chihuahua beginning in 1824 when three thousand dollars in goods made it to the city. By 1831, the value of goods reaching there was eighty-thousand dollars, then \$100 thousand in 1839 and triple that a year before Gregg’s book was published.

And that’s the story of Stephen Cole, who was indeed a pioneer and Indian fighter. But there is something he was NOT.

He was not the man for whom Cole County as named. The truth lies in two articles from the *Missouri Intelligencer*. The most important article is on the third page of the April 29, 1823 issue that was part of a series of articles about Missouri counties.

It reads:

“Cole, for one ‘Temple Cole,’ who once lived near ‘Otter Island’ and in hostile times lost his life by *imprudence*, the Indians having stolen and carried away his horses, with those of other

persons; whereupon, to regain his property he collected two or three friends & neighbors and went in pursuit of the rogues.

“At length they perceived much “*fresh Indian sign,*’ and well knew that they were somewhere in the ‘regions round about.

“Notwithstanding every appearance of danger, the company struck up a rousing fire and lay down for the night, contrary to the firm remonstrance of *one* of the company, who prudently retired to the thicket;---those who lay about the fire were attacked and slain in the night by the Indians; amongst whom was ‘*Temple Cole.*’ The cautious man* was likewise brave and ‘terrible as the embattled elephants of old.’ When he saw the savages murdering his *brother*, he flew to his relief, but too late; with his drawn knife, he rushed into the middle of the enemy, and stabbed them with such manly thrusts that his knife was doubled against their bones and rendered useless; then, and not till then, he fled, and leaving his dying companions, found safety in the forest under the cover of night. This heroic man found his way home in safety, to communicate the mournful intelligence.”

The * next to the words “cautious man” led to the bottom of the newspaper column where it was explained that the “cautious man” who became a “heroic man” was “Stephen Cole, still alive, whom God preserve many years.” As noted, this was April 29, 1823. The good wishes of the newspaper were wasted, however, because Stephen was dead by then although word had not reached the Boonslick.

We have not located a specific official document saying Temple Cole *is* the right Cole but several factors support the case, in addition to that newspaper article.

By 1825, Missouri had twenty-eight counties. Only five were named for living people—Henry Clay, a key figure in the Missouri Compromise; Presidents Thomas Jefferson and James Madison; the Marquis de Lafayette of Revolutionary War fame who visited St. Louis in 1825; and John Scott, Missouri’s first Congressman.

Eighteen counties were named for dead people. Among them were Cooper County, named for Sarshall Cooper who was killed by Indians near Arrow Rock in 1814, Callaway County, named for James Callaway who was killed by Indians, also because of *imprudence*, in 1815. When Cole County was carved out of the eastern part of Cooper County, it was named for William Temple Cole, who was killed by Indians a few years before Callaway and Cooper were killed by Indians. The three counties near each other each bore the name of a central Missouri pioneer killed by Indians.

Stephen had credentials as a leading citizen of Cooper County when Cole County was created late in 1820. He was thought of well enough that he was one of four men chosen to lay out the streets and lots of Franklin in the fall of 1816. In July, 1819 he was appointed deputy county surveyor of the new Cooper County. But he was nowhere near the stature of the five living people who were honored with counties named for them and circumstances of the deaths of his brother and the other two Indian fighters were likely more in the front of the mind of those naming counties

The clincher to this argument is an even earlier reference in the *Intelligencer*. It is from January 21, 1823, slightly more than two years after the county was created and three months before the *Intelligencer's* description of the 1810 attack. This earlier article is also about Cole County and concluding with a description of Jefferson City more than three years from becoming the capital city, and said Cole County was named for "Temple Cole, who was killed by Indians."

A chance to correct Cole County history slipped by unnoticed in the March, 1966 *Missouri Historical Review* back-cover tribute to Hannah Cole, Stephen's sister-in-law, who is one of the great women of Missouri history. Hannah was left a widow with nine children after the death of Temple. She and her children, joined by Stephen, his wife, Phoebe (who was Hannah's sister) and their five children, sought safety farther west after the Indian fight and---as related in the article---in February, 1810, crossed the Missouri River and became the first white settlers south of the river and west of Franklin County. Ten families joined them the next year and when Indians became threatening in 1812, the Coles built two forts for protection. When Cooper County was carved out of Howard County, the county seat was established at Hannah Cole's fort, now called Boonville. The magazine article notes, "Cole County was named for her husband," but does not make the connection to Temple, the writer apparently confusing Stephen as her husband.

We know quite a bit more about Stephen Cole than we know about his older brother, William Temple Cole, called "Temple" by his friends. That's largely a function of Stephen Cole outliving his older brother by twelve years—and being able to write.

The man for whom Cole County is really named was born, raised, and married in Virginia, as was his younger brother. The brothers and their wives---who were sisters Hannah and Phoebe Allison--- moved to Wayne County, Kentucky in 1805 and then to Loutre Island (sometimes translated from French and called "Otter Island") in 1807 or thereabouts.

Loutre Island was not really an island. The nine-mile long and one-mile wide area, near the mouth of the Gasconade River and Hermann on the south side of the Missouri River, is part of the land between the Missouri and the branches of the Loutre.

It was from there that Temple and the others set out on their ultimately fatal venture to recover stolen horses. And it was from Otter Island that the remaining Coles and the Coopers headed west toward history and Howard County.

Although Stephen Cole did not give his name to this county, he is remembered in a couple of other places in Missouri.

When Benton County was organized January 3, 1835 out of parts of Pettis and Greene Counties, two locations were named in honor of Stephen Cole. The community of Cole Camp, which began as a post office in 1853 and became a community in 1857 was named for him because he supposedly camped along the Cole, or Coal, River. Cole Township, one of the four original townships also honors him.

Hannah Cole, who lost a husband, a son, and a son-in-law to Indians, is considered Missouri's pioneer mother, the first woman settler in this part of the state. Hannah became outstate Missouri's first businesswoman when she was given a license to operate a ferry on the Missouri River. Her cabin became the site of a fort that became a community center designated by the legislature as the county seat of Cooper County, the town of Boonville. In 1825 she built a cabin on some preempted land about fifteen miles south of the town. There she lived with her slave, Lucy, until she died in 1843. One person suggested during the research for these remarks that Cole County should have been named for her, not for Stephen or Temple. Missouri does have one county named for a woman---Sainte Genevieve County.

But it is not fair to refer to Hannah, as has often been done, as the first white woman to settle south of the river. Let us not forget that there were TWO women, not just one, in that pirogue. Phoebe Cole, the wife of Stephen, was the other. But in the popular re-telling of the story of the first settlers, Phoebe seems to still be on that boat. Her foot as much as Hannah's might have been the first woman's foot to touch the riverbank of present Cooper County. But her story is not as sympathetic as is Hannah's because she was not yet a widow and had only five children at the time of the crossing. But both of these women dared to build homes on those bluffs above the river. Both of these women dared to raise their families there. Both of these women knew the uncertainty of life among the Indians. And ultimately, Phoebe—like Hannah---became the widow of the victim of an Indian attack.

In trying to find out more about the OTHER first woman settler on this side of the Missouri, I have wandered into still another family thicket.

The genealogy website Familysearch.com suggests that it was not only the land on the south side of the river that was fertile, although the popular version of history seems to indicate the river crossing induced some kind of sterility or celibacy in Stephen and Phoebe's household. The website claims Stephen and Phoebe had six more children after 1810, their last born in 1816 when Phoebe would have been about 43 and Stephen about 44. In all, says the website, they had 13 children---two of them were born before they were married---a circumstance I shall leave to the family association to straighten out. The site is vague about the birth and death dates of several of the purported offspring. It also claims that Hannah and Temple had ten children, not nine.

While the focus of the Hannah Cole story is on her role as a businesswoman and as her cabin being the first seat of government in Cooper County, let us remember that Phoebe was often left alone with an increasing number of small children to tend to while Stephen was carrying out his duties as Justice of the Peace in St. Louis County and the St. Charles area.

There's some uncertainty about what ultimately happened to her although it's thought she died in 1825. Hannah was not alone in family loss to Indians. Phoebe lost a husband, a brother-in-law, and a nephew.

If we are to believe the *familysearch* list of children, seven children she left behind would have been nine to fourteen years old. What happened to them? We haven't discovered that. For that matter, we do not know where Phoebe was buried so an appropriate marker could be placed there, too. There are several mysteries yet unsolved about the family whose name this county bears.

Both deserve to be considered the first women settlers of central Missouri, south of the river. But Cole County is not named for either of these hardy women who risked so much and lost so much. Nor, as has been told for many decades, is it named for Stephen. At last we can recognize the person who really was honored and whose identity is confirmed by those two long-ago articles published by a long-gone newspaper from a long-vanished town: William Temple Cole, pioneer and Indian fighter---and the man for whom Cole County was named.

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Now, one more thing before I sit down----something special. Have you ever looked in the mirror and seen part of your parents or grandparents looking back at you? Or have you ever wondered what part of you—nose, eyes, chin, the way you walk, the way you use your hands, the wave in your hair---came from an ancestor so far back that there are no images of him or her?

We have no paintings or drawings of Temple or Stephen or Hannah or Phoebe Cole, but we do have Temple's great-great-great-great grandson and other descendants of Temple and Hannah Colen . Bob Painter, from Smithville, is the President of the Cole Family Association---- and in seeing him, we undoubtedly are seeing something (we don't know what, but something) of the man for whom Cole County was named. If nothing else, we are looking at the DNA of Temple Cole.

Bob would you please join me up here? I have a present for you.

(Bob arrives)

The Cole Family Association is having its annual reunion in Boonville on August 9th. I want the association to have this silver Cole County bicentennial coin---number 10, for 1810--- as a reminder of this day, and of the distance between those who, in a time when this coin would have been far more valuable than a mere souvenir, became the first settlers of the area that is now Cole County.

Would you like to introduce the other Temple and Hannah Cole family descendants who have joined us?

