

Bethinking of Old Orleans

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"I call that mind free which masters the senses, and which recognizes its own reality and greatness: Which passes life, not in asking what it shall eat or drink, but in hungering, thirsting and seeking after righteousness...Which opens itself to light whencesoever it may come; which receives new truth as an angel from heaven..."
-- Wm. Ellery Channing --

Marc W. Cole was the son of Sands Cole Jr. and Carrie Danolds Cole who were decedents of early settlers of Eagle Harbor. He attended the Eagle Harbor rural school and Miss Foster's Select School in Albion which was a private school. But mostly he was a self-educated man. He had an inquiring and brilliant mind which lead him to question and search for answers through untold volumns. He operated the large Danolds farm in Eagle Harbor and was one of the founders of the Albion Golf Club at Eagle Harbor in 1898. This golf club which he and his family ran lasted until the 1930's and is reputed to have been the third officially organized golf club in the United States.

His first wife was Pearl Coann Curtis who died in 1925. They had five children: Ezra, Marsha (deceased), Marc Wheeler (deceased), Fanny and Peter. He later married Florence Terry of Brockport by whom he had another son, Terry. Their family home was a large sprawling Colonial house with formal gardens at Eagle Harbor. It was this residence which was turned into a fine tea room known as The Four Chimney's and operated by Florence Terry Cole during the late 1920's and '30's. Aside from this enterprise they also made candy which was known as "King Cole Mints," as well as another product known as "King Cole Plum Pudding." Around 1950 Marc and Florence moved to the Barlow-Truselle house on South Clinton Street in Albion. There they made their famous "King Cole Watermelon Pickles." Through Mr. Pilato, the local fruit and vegetable man, they were able to procure melons with thick rinds for this purpose from Texas. Although they received help from family members, this was essentially a two-person operation of peeling, preparing and canning. Neighbors will remember the abundant gifts of watermelon meat for only the rinds were used.

Now to Marc Cole and his own personal pursuits. In 1912 he ran on the Democratic ticket and was elected our Assemblyman for one term. This was the same seat his grandfather Sands Cole, Sr., had been elected to sixty-eight years before. He served during 1913 and was much involved in the impeachment proceedings against Gov. William Sulzer who was replaced by Gov. Martin H. Glynn. During his brief career in the N.Y.S. Assembly he introduced the first bill for State aid to the former Gratwick Laboratory in Buffalo, now Roswell Park Memorial Institute. In 1914 he ran for the State Senate but was defeated. The following statement from a political pamphlet in his behalf published in 1914 states: "In the case of Marc W. Cole, let his record speak for him. The press of the State, particularly the Agricultural periodicals, agree in declaring the Assemblyman Cole accomplished more in the furtherance of the interests of agriculture than any legislator of his time."

Marc W. Cole became an intimate friend of Gov. Alfred E. Smith as he continued to be very active in the Democratic Party. Gov. Smith was a house guest of the Coles at the Four Chimneys on numerous occasions.

Marc Cole was active in the Patriotic Farmers' Fund and also served with the Federal Reserve Land Bank. During the administration of President Franklin Roosevelt he became affiliated with the U.S. Dept. of Treasury and served as an investigator with the Narcotics Bureau from 1933 to 1948 when he retired from public service.

His personal interests included gardening, reading and talent shows. He wrote several short stories and was the first person to research and write an article on cobblestone buildings which was published in "Country Life in America" in 1916.

For a number of years he had an interest in directing and performing in local dramas for community causes such as the Free Bed Fund of the Arnold Gregory Memorial Hospital. He also had a keen interest in political science and history and always kept abreast of current events. I remember him vividly, his long black cigarette holder and his ability to talk with knowledge about almost anything.

"'Tis the mind that makes the body rich." -- Shakespeare

Watch next week for a paraphrased version of one of Marc Cole's short stories.