

Bunceton Weekly Eagle, 20 February 1903

## PASSING OF A PIONEER

"Uncle Steve" Cole Died Tuesday Morning, February 17

Aged almost Eighty Years - Died Within Sight of His Birthplace

"Uncle Steve" Cole, one of Cooper County's oldest native-born citizens, and a direct descendant of the county's first white settlers, died of pneumonia Tuesday morning at 2 o'clock, at his home about five miles west of Bunceton. He was born within two miles of the spot where he died and would have been eighty years old in April. His wife died a number of years ago. Four sons and one daughter, all of Cooper County, survive.

"Uncle Steve" was a typical pioneer. In 1853, he crossed "the plains" and returned four years later, being seventy-three days astride a mule on the return trip.

While talking with the editor of the EAGLE some six years ago, "Uncle Steve" said:

"When I was a young I didn't fear man nor devil, but I was mighty badly scared once as we were coming home from California. The main party had gotten some distance ahead when we sighted about 300 Indians. We had been warned to look out for the devils, but had thought little about it until we saw them. They rode up around us, pointing their guns, drawing their bows, all the time yelling like wild men. We rode on at something better than a jog trot, too, and were not hurt. We found out afterwards that the red-skinned rascals were just trying to scare us, and they did it."

"Uncle Steve" was a great hunter, fisherman, and trapper, and always knew where game abounded and where fish would probably bite best. He loved nature and knew her secrets as do few of later generations. His stock of stories concerning incidents and adventures and early recollections was well nigh inexhaustible and made him a most entertaining companion. May the old pioneer, man of simple tastes and rugged honesty, rest in peace.

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Bill Scroggin

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