



## William C. Cole Papers (C0013)

**Collection Number:** C0013

**Collection Title:** William C. Cole Papers

**Dates:** 1942-1947

**Creator:** Cole, William C., 1897-1965

**Abstract:** Correspondence of Republican congressman from Missouri's 3rd District dealing with topics as varied as World War II, agriculture, legislation on labor and the atom bomb, education, foreign relations, immigration, flood control, labor, housing, socialized medicine, politics, and the postal service.

**Collection Size:** 8 cubic feet  
(1,400 folders)

**Language:** Collection materials are in English.

**Repository:** The State Historical Society of Missouri

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**Preferred Citation:** [Specific item; box number; folder number] *William C. Cole Papers* (C0013); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Columbia [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Columbia].

**Donor Information:** The papers were donated to the University of Missouri by William C. Cole on December 15, 1948 (Accession No. CA 2976).

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**Historical Note:**

William Clay Cole was born on a farm in Andrew County, Missouri, on August 29, 1897. He attended public schools. During World War I, Cole served onboard the U.S.S. *Machias*. Cole graduated from St. Joseph Law School in 1928. After being admitted to the bar the same year, he began practicing law in St. Joseph, Missouri. Cole was elected as a Republican to Congress and served 1943-1949 and 1953-1955. He was a member of the Board of Veterans Appeals from 1955 to 1960. He resumed the practice of law in St. Joseph, where he resided until his death on September 23, 1965. [From the *Biographical Directory of the American Congress*]

**Arrangement:**

The collection is arranged in alphabetical subject correspondence files. Within these files, letters are in rough chronological order.

**Scope and Content Note:**

These papers are from Cole's first two terms in Congress. Consisting largely of correspondence to, from, or about his northwest Missouri constituents, the collection illustrates the concerns of average citizens during World War II and the immediate post war period. General topics include conscription and military service, wartime economic restrictions, veterans' issues, education, transportation, censorship and propaganda, agriculture, demobilization, housing, conservation, the elderly, and labor, as well as more specific subjects such as wartime daylight saving time, rural electrification, proposed prohibition legislation, and flood control.

**Container List:**

- f. 1-6            Agriculture, 1943-1946. Correspondence concerning corn, county extension work, feeds, food production possibilities in Missouri, government grain policy, and burley tobacco. Includes transcript of round table discussion entitled "The Farmer Looks at Reconversion."
- f. 7-21            Agriculture Year Book Requests [Material discarded]
- f. 22-26           Antistrike Legislation, 1943-1944. Letters and telegrams regarding the Connelly Bill, antistrike legislation. There are two letters to Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn concerning viewpoints on this bill. See also f. 619, Hobbs Bill, 1943-1944.
- f. 27-29           American War Dads, 1943-1945. Letters regarding Veterans Administration offices in each county, antistrike legislation, return of

- American boys from fighting fronts, and San Francisco Conference appointments.
- f. 30-65 Applications, 1942-1946. Letters asking that married men with children not be sent overseas, letters applying for jobs with the government, applicants for secretary to Cole, letters asking for application blanks for civil service jobs, and letters asking for recommendations. See also f. 141-152, Civil Service Commission.
- f. 66-81 Service Academy Applications [Material discarded]
- f. 82-89 Army Surplus, 1942-1946. Correspondence regarding purchases of surplus equipment such as pipes, motion picture projectors, chairs, training type airplanes, land passenger cars and refrigerators. Includes some letters regarding federal vocational training programs and federal land policy.
- f. 90 Atom Bomb, 1945-1946. Correspondence on atomic energy, including a letter from C.M. Tucker, president of Society of Sigma Xi at the University of Missouri. Other topics include civilian control of atomic energy.
- f. 91-99 Auto Dealers, 1943-1946. Correspondence about alleged discrimination against Chevrolet owners, car dealers discounts, and related topics.
- f. 100-111 Aviation Legislation, 1943-1946. Correspondence regarding bill for commissioning civilian pilots, pay for men in Civil Air Patrol, establishment of an airport in St. Joseph, airline service to St. Joseph, the Lea Airport Aid Bill, and wartime training service.
- f. 112-114 Awards, Servicemen, 1944-1946. Correspondence concerning awards and citations given to servicemen, including Combat Infantryman Badge, Bronze campaign stars, and Silver Star Medal.
- f. 115-116 Banks and Banking, 1943-1946. Correspondence about country banks, House Banking and Currency Committee, commercial banks, lending agencies, and Missouri Bankers Association.
- f. 117-125 Birthdate List [Material discarded]
- f. 126-131 S.P. Boggess and Sons, 1944-1946. Correspondence with a St. Joseph manufacturing company on cartridges, clothing, farm hands, taxes, food, assessments, O.P.A., hardware, farm land, railroads, coffee rationing, canning, compulsory military training, labor deferments, and meat rationing.
- f. 132-140 Chase Candy Company, 1943-1946. Letters concerning shortages of candy, sugar, and corn syrup. Many letters are from Charlie Chase, president of the company, expressing his views on many subjects—social, economic, and political.
- f. 141-152 Civil Service Commission, 1942-1947. Correspondence on obtaining Civil Service positions for Cole's constituents, transfer applications, ratings, assignments to positions, and legislation. Most correspondence is between Cole and the U.S. Civil Service Commission. See also f. 30-65, Applications.
- f. 153-297 Claims, 1942-1946. Correspondence involving disability claims, veterans pensions claims, back pay, National Service Life Insurance, civilian

- pensions, hospitalization, deductions from army pay, Civil War widows pensions, and other claims.
- f. 298-311 Commerce, 1942-1946. Correspondence regarding land grant legislation, steel industry, public carriers, Interstate Commerce Commission, foreign trade, rates of freight forwarders, angora rabbit wool imports, rate making for regulated common carriers, handling of freight, and the Bullwinkle Bill.
- f. 312-317 Communications, 1942-1946. Correspondence regarding wartime limitations on communication industries—radio, telephone, and print. Also includes communication issues not directly related to the war.
- f. 318-324 Congressional Secretaries Club, 1942-1945. Announcements, correspondence, and bulletins.
- f. 325-332 Conservation, 1943-1946. Correspondence about the Rocky Boy's reservation, lumber industry, soil conservation, Ozarks as national forest, and wildlife management.
- f. 333-345 Courts-martial, 1943-1946. Correspondence regarding courts-martial and civilian paroles and pardons.
- f. 346-364 Daylight Saving Time, 1942-1945. Resolution introduced by Cole to repeal daylight saving time, letters commending Cole for his introduction of this bill, and petitions encouraging abolition of daylight saving time and the return to "God's Time."
- f. 365-484 Demobilization, Servicemen, 1943-1947. Correspondence requesting release of servicemen or shipment back to the U.S. Some letters are written to protest sending boys from Europe to the Pacific theatre.
- f. 485-489 Discharge Petitions, Legislation, 1943-1946. Letters urging Cole to sign petitions for anti-poll tax legislation and the Townsend Bill, which opposed federal sales tax and suggested a gross income levy directed at individuals as well as corporations.
- f. 490-516 Drafting, Servicemen, 1943-1946. Correspondence about the draft, universal military training, and deferments, particularly for farmers and fathers.
- f. 517-525 Education, 1943-1946. Correspondence regarding child care, Drury College, veterans training, salaries for teachers, agricultural education, business college at St. Joseph, Missouri, libraries for the blind and veterans education.
- f. 526-527 Equal Rights Legislation, 1943-1945. Letters from National League of Women Voters urging Cole to support Equal Rights Amendment.
- f. 528-529 Excelsior Springs, Missouri, 1943-1945. Correspondence from Chamber of Commerce of Excelsior Springs, re aviation, veterans hospital, appropriations, food, and restaurants.
- f. 530-531 Farm Organizations, 1943-1946. Correspondence from National Farmers Union and American Farm Bureau Federation. Includes the latter's 1945 legislative program, as well as a selected list of national farm organizations compiled by the Library of Congress.
- f. 532-541 Farm Security Administration and Production Credit Association, 1940-1946. Letters and petitions urging the abolition or continuation of the

- Farm Security Administration, the Production Credit Association, and the National Farm Loan Association.
- f. 542-550 Federal Aid to Education, 1943-1946. Correspondence concerning federal aid to education, nursery school programs, child care, W.P.A. educational facilities in the St. Joseph area, national youth organization, and vocational education.
- f. 551 Federal Power Commission [Material discarded]
- f. 552-558 Finances, 1943-1946. Correspondence regarding monetary standards, stock and stockholders of Packard Motor Company, Roosevelt dimes, contracting, banking and currency, legislation regulating voting securities of financial institutions, stabilization, bond campaign, quotas for International Monetary Fund, savings bonds, German bonds, allied military currency, and Federal Reserve bank notes and national bank notes.
- f. 559-584 Flood Control, 1942-1946. Correspondence concerning flood control on the Missouri River, including many letters between Cole and the Corps of Engineers.
- f. 585-596 Food Production, 1943-1946. Correspondence on grocers, price of potatoes, sugar, corn products, margarine, dairy industry, independent wholesalers, retailers, flour, grapes, seed potatoes, coffee, cooking oil, food for schools, and ceiling prices on the commodities.
- f. 597-598 Food for Europe, 1944-1946. Correspondence concerning famine relief for Europe and appropriations for the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration.
- f. 599-604 Foreign Affairs, 1944-1946. Correspondence about the intervention of American troops in the Chinese civil war, fear of Churchill's speeches antagonizing Russia, Prisoners of war, politics in India, Crimean Conference, Atlantic Charter, relations with France and Spain, Neutrality Act, isolationism, expose released by William LaVarre, and territory of Hawaii.
- f. 605-612 General, 1943-1946. Correspondence from constituents on a wide variety of topics, as well as letters regarding the actions of administrative bodies.
- f. 613-618 Highways, 1942-1945. Correspondence on legislation to close a highway around Richmond, Missouri; letters from the automobile club in St. Joseph concerning closing highways in that vicinity; and letter requesting proposed federal highway to come through St. Joseph.
- f. 619 Hobbs Bill, 1943-1944. Letters urging open hearings on the Hobbs antistrike legislation, telegrams urging defeat of this bill, and a letter concerning an article in *Kansas City Star* where C.I.O. blasted Dewey. See also f. 22-26, Antistrike Legislation.
- f. 620-638 Hospitalization, 1943-1946. Correspondence concerning medical treatment and patients at veterans' hospitals, sites for veterans' hospitals, conditions in hospitals, transfers from one hospital to another, and hospitalization of servicemen's families.

- f. 639-655 Housing, 1943-1946. Correspondence concerning rent increases and controls, war housing in St. Joseph, building and construction, veterans' housing, Federal Housing Authority, and price ceilings on houses.
- f. 656-663 Immigration, 1943-1946. Correspondence regarding immigration and emigration, including naturalization and repatriation. Also includes correspondence regarding relocation of Japanese Americans to northeast Missouri, as well as letters concerning overseas travel by Americans.
- f. 664 Inflation, 1943-1946. Correspondence concerning subsidies, inflation, labor union demands, wages, price controls, coal, United Mine Workers, prices on agricultural products, price increase on farm machinery, and retail prices.
- f. 668-687 Insurance, 1943-1946. Correspondence concerning insurance legislation, insurance in general, National Service Life Insurance, and claims on these policies by dependents.
- f. 688-691 Invitations, 1943-1946.
- f. 692-698 Jews, Palestine, and Chinese Problems, 1942-1946. Correspondence concerning the Jewish national home in Palestine, Chinese immigration into the United States, and Indian lands in the Southwest.
- f. 699-736 Killed in Action, 1943-1946. Examples of form letters written to families of boys killed in action informing them of the American flag available to them and expressing sympathy. Remainder of materials discarded.
- f. 737-753 Labor, 1943-1946. Correspondence regarding House Resolution 1952, Bituminous Coal Act, government control of coal mines, and other labor problems.
- f. 754-794 Labor Legislation, 1947. Correspondence requesting Cole to vote for or against certain labor bills.
- f. 795-801 Legal Procedures, 1931-1946. Correspondence about private detectives, real estate titles, prosecution of Axis war criminals, Pearl Harbor investigation, property in Germany, bankruptcy, debts, securities, and divorce proceedings.
- f. 802-810 Livestock, 1942-1946. Correspondence concerning price ceilings on livestock, subsidies and price rollbacks, corn for feeding cattle, release of wheat for cattle feeding beef production, price ceiling on corn, and invitations to speak at livestock and feed conferences.
- f. 811-815 Loans, 1943-1946. Correspondence about government loans, G.I. Bill loans, agricultural loans, Reconstruction Finance Corporation, loans to Britain, Home Owners Loan Corporation, investigation of the Federal Home Loan Bank Administration, and various foreign loans.
- f. 816-820 Medicine, 1943-1945. Correspondence regarding the Industrial Hygiene Bill, State Board of Health, Public Health Service, dental care of personnel in Navy, medical legislation, study of medicine, national health, physically handicapped, osteopaths, and Wagner Bill.
- f. 821 Military Insignia, 1943. Correspondence concerning insignia for 4-F's and retail sales of military insignia.
- f. 822-847 Miscellaneous, 1942-1947. Correspondence involving anti-lynching legislation, Red Cross, requests for passes to Senate and House, thank-

- yous for services Cole rendered, and other matters. Includes racist literature.
- f. 848-859 Missing in Action, 1943-1945. Example of form letters to parents or nearest of kin of all men reported missing in action from Cole's district. Remainder of materials discarded.
  - f. 860-861 Montgomery Ward and Company, 1944. Correspondence concerning government taking over private business institutions, Sewell Avery's controversy with the government, and many protests against such government actions.
  - f. 862-868 Murry, Ozer D., Disability Claim, 1943-1945. Correspondence regarding Murry's request to enter diagnostic center and be re-examined concerning his veteran's compensation. Murry accused the government of fraud to deprive him of his compensation.
  - f. 869-894 Office of Price Administration, 1943-1947. Correspondence regarding rationing, shortages, sugar, ceiling prices, dissolution of the office, and legislation.
  - f. 895-923 Officers' Commissions [Material discarded]
  - f. 924-932 Old Age Pensions, 1943-1947. Correspondence on benefits, Missouri pension law, assistance to dependents of men in the armed services, refunds for retirement deductions, and benefits under the Civil Service Retirement Act.
  - f. 933-965 Personal Correspondence, 1942-1946. Requests from personal friends, letters of commendation, letters to representatives, thanks for services rendered, letters from Elliot Marshall to Mary Ellen Gross, congratulations upon being elected, and other personal letters.
  - f. 966-980 Politics, 1943-1947. Correspondence on subjects including congratulations on Cole's election, delegates to peace negotiations, favoritism in postwar jobs, Cole's reelection and Roosevelt.
  - f. 981-1052 Post Office and Post Roads, 1942-1946. Correspondence concerning postal employees, legislation, the abandonment and establishment of rural routes in Cole's district, railway postal employees, and railway mail service.
  - f. 1053-1070 Prohibition, 1943-1946. Letters, telegrams, and petition regarding prohibition legislation.
  - f. 1071-1073 Railroads, 1943-1946. Correspondence on land grant rates, proposed wage increase for rail employees, and pension bills for retired railroad employees.
  - f. 1074-1076 Religion, 1943-1946. Correspondence from churches and religious organizations about famine in Europe, the Thomas Jefferson Bicentennial Commission, and other subjects.
  - f. 1077-1201 Requests for Publications {[Material discarded]}
  - f. 1202-1242 Requests for Support of Legislation, 1942-1947. Correspondence asking Cole to support a wide variety of bills.
  - f. 1243-1249 Rural Electrification Administration, 1942-1943. Correspondence concerning the completion of R.E.A. Platte and Buchanan Project 41a.

- f. 1250-1260 St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce, 1943-1946. Correspondence, minutes of meeting of safety Council, requests for publications, as well as views on pending legislation, an airfield at St. Joseph, railway mail service.
- f. 1261-1293 Shortages, 1942-1946. Correspondence concerning wartime shortages of farm equipment, plumbing equipment, motor vehicles, coal, buses, tires, and other items.
- f. 1294-1295 Socialism, 1943-1946. Correspondence regarding socialized medicine, private architects, and government corporations.
- f. 1296-1322 Taxes, 1943-1946. Correspondence concerning the rural tax plan, the "pay as you go" tax plan, a tax of one cent on soft sodas, anti-poll tax, a simpler income tax, and other kinds of taxes.
- f. 1323-1341 Transfers and Furloughs, 1943-1946. Correspondence received from servicemen and their families requesting transfers and furloughs.
- f. 1342-1352 Veterans Miscellaneous, 1943-1945. Correspondence concerning pamphlet called "The Lost Generation," Veterans of Foreign Wars, naval reserve, National Guard band, information concerning specific veterans, proxy marriages, and mustering out pay.
- f. 1353-1354 Victory Gardens, 1943. Correspondence about the establishment of fertilizer plants, diseases of garden plants, nursery stock, and fertilizers for gardens.
- f. 1355-1361 Wages, 1943-1946. Correspondence concerning the renewal of contracts, bonuses and commissions, salary stabilization regulations, overtime pay for standby employees, wage adjustments, wage and hour legislation, pay for men in armed services, and merchant Marine wages.
- f. 1362-1367 Wearing Apparel, 1943-1946. Correspondence about price regulation of furs, textiles, and clothing.
- f. 1368-1400 Wounded in Action, 1943-1945. Example of form letter sent to families of wounded servicemen. Remainder of materials discarded.

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