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(*b.* Ashland, Massachusetts, 20 September 1861; *d.* [New York](#), N.Y., 26 May 1926),

mathematics.

Cole was the third son of Otis and Frances Maria Pond Cole. He was graduated from Harvard College with an A.B. in 1882, second in a class of 189. Awarded a traveling fellowship, he spent two years at Leipzig studying under [Felix Klein](#). In 1885 Cole returned to Harvard as a lecturer in the theory of functions. The next year he received his Ph.D. from Harvard; his dissertation was entitled "A Contribution to the Theory of the General Equation of the Sixth Degree." Cole's mathematical enthusiasm, according to W. F. Osgood, who, with M. Bocher, was among Cole's students, was contagious enough to inaugurate a new era in graduate instruction at Harvard.

In the fall of 1888 Cole went to the [University of Michigan](#); he remained there until 1895, when he went to [Columbia University](#). He was to have retired from Columbia in October 1926 but died the preceding May, survived by his wife and three children. He had married Martha Marie Streiff of Göttingen his family since 1908. At the time of his death Cole lived in a rooming house under the name of Edward Mitchell and claimed to be a bookkeeper.

Cole's most productive years were those at [Ann Arbor](#). His research dealt mainly with prime numbers, [number theory](#), and group theory. He was a leader in the organization of the American Mathematical Society and active in its affairs until his death. He was its secretary from 1896 to 1920 and a member of the editorial staff of its *Bulletin* from 1897 to 1920. His appreciation of scholarship and his literary skill exerted a great influence on the *Bulletin*, which in turn did much to establish the American Mathematical Society as an important scientific organization. In 1920, when Cole resigned as secretary and as editor, he was given a purse commemorating his long service to the society. He contributed this money to help establish the Frank Nelson Cole prize in algebra. A second prize in theory of numbers was established in Cole's name by the society in 1929. The *Bulletin* for 1921 was dedicated to Cole, and his portrait was the frontispiece.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. Original Works. Cole revised and translated, with the author's permission, E. Netto's *The Theory of Substitutions and Its Applications to Algebra* ([Ann Arbor](#), Mich., 1892). Twenty of his articles are listed in R. C. Archibald, *A Semicentennial History of the American Mathematical Society, 1888–1938* ([New York](#), 1938), p. 103. See also his reports as secretary of the American Mathematical Society, in *Bulletin of the American Mathematical Society*, **3–27** (1896–1920).

II. Secondary Literature. Cole and his work are discussed in R. C. Archibald, *A Semicentennial History of the American Mathematical Society, 1888–1938* (New York, 1938), pp. 100–103 and *passim* T. S. Fiske, in *Bulletin of the American Mathematical Society*, **33** (1927), 773–777; and D. E. Smith, in *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* (1933), p. 290. See also *American Men of Science*, 3rd ed. (1921), p. 137; "Class of 1882," in *Harvard College Alumni Report* (1883–1926); *New York Times* (27 May 1926), p.

25; (28 May 1926), p. 1; (29 May 1926), p. 14; (31 May 1926), p. 14; (3 June 1926), p. 24; (7 June 1926), p. 18; and *Who's Who in America* (1920–1921).

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