

# *Coleman - Steil*

## *History and Heritage*

*Murray and Kay and Their Ancestors*

by Thomas F. Coleman



My quest to learn all that I could about the histories of Murray Frear Coleman and Kathleen Jannette Steil began in 2010.

When I started my journey into the past, I only knew bits and pieces of the family history of my parents. I knew the names of my maternal and paternal grandparents. Although

I had some information about some of my great grandparents, I had more questions than answers about who they were, where and how they lived, what their religious affiliations were, and what their countries of origin were.

When I was growing up, I had personal experiences of three of my grandparents. My mother's parents, Frank and Catherine Steil, had been a major part of my life. Since my mother was an only child, her parents were able to devote much of their time and attention to the Coleman grandchildren.

My father's dad, Arthur Roy Coleman, died when my father was 11 years old, so I never had the opportunity to meet him. My father's mom, Margaret Coleman, split her time between her daughter Betty's family and her son Murray's family, so the Coleman grandkids saw "Grandma Finney" less often than we did "Grandma and Grandpa Steil." My dad's mother assumed the surname of Finney when she remarried after her husband Roy's death.

As my brothers and sisters and I were growing up, we would occasionally hear our grandparents mention "the old country." But we really knew little about what that meant. We heard them talk about Canada, Scotland, and Germany. There were also occasional references to Ireland. But other than these vague generalities, we knew very little about our Coleman-Steil heritage. We also knew next to nothing about "Grandpa Coleman" who was known to his friends and family members as Roy.

Through this book, which is based on historical materials gathered by me over the past six years, I intend to share what I have learned about the ancestors of Murray F. Coleman and Kathleen J. Steil. I have traced the roots of their parents and grandparents back as far as I could. The Coleman line has roots in Ireland, while the Paterson line originates in Scotland. The Steil ancestors lived in Germany while the Lukaschewski forebearers were citizens of what today is called Poland. So my eight siblings and I are Irish-Scottish-German-Polish Americans.

The nine of us can thank the Irish for our playfulness, the Scotts for our thriftiness, the Germans for our creativity, and the Polish for our perseverance. Most of all, we can thank our parents for giving us life and for raising us the best they could under difficult financial circumstances.

This book is dedicated to the memory of Murray F. Coleman and Kathleen J. Steil. Doing historical research, conducting interviews, organizing materials, synthesizing this information, and writing it all up in short stories has been an intensive labor of love. The book, and associated websites that I have created, are being shared with my brothers and sisters and with my nieces and nephews. I hope they find our family history and heritage to be as fascinating as I do. I also hope they share this family history with their offspring as new branches of our family tree are created by younger generations.

The publication of this book is part of a process of transition – the passing of the responsibility of family history preservation from a Baby Boomer like me to younger family members in Generation Y.

Lindsey Coleman Boyd has agreed to preserve and share the family history materials of our Steil and Lukaschewski ancestors, while Michael Murray Coleman Jr. has agreed to do the same for the Coleman and Paterson branches. Their willingness to assume this responsibility is a great relief to me. Our heritage, and the stories of our ancestors, are worth preserving and sharing with current and future descendants of Murray F. Coleman and Kathleen J. Steil. It has been a privilege to have served as a genealogist for such a large and diverse family.