

INVENTORY

GEORGE W. KASSLER COLLECTION

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COLORADO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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INVENTORY: GEORGE W. KASSLER COLLECTION

INTRODUCTION:

George Washington Kassler, son of Abram and Nancy (Schrader) Kassler, was born on September 12, 1836 in Canajoharie, Montgomery County, New York. He received his formative schooling in his native state. At the age of eleven Kassler took on a part time job as a clerk in a local store. In 1851 he moved to Cooperstown, New York, where once again he became employed a clerk. A year later Kassler took a position in United States Post Office.

Kassler journeyed West in 1857, settling in Omaha City, Nebraska Territory for a few years. He quickly found employment in the banking house of L.R. Tuttle and A.U. Wyman. During Kassler's years in Omaha City he became acquainted with David H. Moffat, Jr. This friendship, in later years, led to a close business association-- an association which led to partnerships and mutual investments which helped to develop the West.

In 1860 Kassler headed to what was then referred to as the "Nebraska Gold Mines," i.e., Colorado Territory. Upon his arrival in Denver he became a cashier for the banking firm of Turner and Hobbs, the first firm to establish itself in Denver. With the onset of the Civil War the bank closed. Shortly thereafter Kassler took on the position of accountant and assistant to Major John S. Fillmore, a paymaster in the United States Army.

In 1862 Kassler journeyed back East to visit with relatives. While staying in Philadelphia he received the appointment of assistant cashier of the United States Branch Mint in Denver. His association with the Mint was short-lived. During the summer of 1863 Kassler signed articles of co-partnership with David H. Moffat, Jr. and C.C. Woolworth. Their new business venture was called George W. Kassler & Co. The company wholesaled and re-tailed books, stationery, periodicals, newspapers, tobaccos, pipes, notions, and later, fire and accident insurance. It was a successful business for over ten years.

In 1873 Kassler was elected city treasurer, a position he held for one term. In April of 1874 Kassler was appointed the assistant cashier for the First National Bank of Denver. He began to minimize his wholesale and retail business and devoted most of his time and effort toward the Bank.

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Also during the 1870's Kassler became affiliated with the Denver, South Park and Pacific Railroad Company. He was elected secretary of the company.

In 1880, following the appointment of David H. Moffat, Jr. as president of the First National Bank of Denver, Kassler was promoted to cashier. In 1882 Kassler resigned from the Bank.

Kassler, an active and prudent businessman, contributed to Denver's commercial and civic progress. Along with Moffat he erected the Moffat and Kassler Block in Denver. Kassler also invested in mining companies and in railroad companies. He served as either secretary or treasurer for the Denver and South Park, the Denver and New Orleans, and the Denver, Utah and Pacific railroad companies. Among his civic duties were his appointment as president of the Denver Board of Fire Underwriters and the Denver Board of Trade. He was also a member of the Board of Denver School District No. 1 and the Board of Capitol Managers, a group actively involved in the design and erection of the State Capitol.

Kassler was married to Maria T. Stebbins, a close acquaintance from New York, on May 31, 1865. They had two sons, Edwin S. and Charles M. Kassler.

Kassler, a truly dedicated citizen who willingly gave his fortitude and money toward making Denver and all of Colorado a better place to live, passed away on July 20, 1890.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The collection contains correspondence (1857-1894), diaries written by George W. and Maria T. Kassler (1862-1928), account books (1859-1883), deeds (1866-1906), abstracts of title (1882-1941), certificates (1865-1886), tax schedules (1870-1890), narratives written by Maria T. Kassler and Philip K. Alexander, Jr., business cards, prints, newspaper clippings (1883-1889), and the publication, The Trail (11/1908).

The many pieces of correspondence, diaries, and accounts found in this collection contain valuable information on one of Colorado's best known pioneer families and on Colorado itself. Researchers interested in overland journeys will especially enjoy reading the diaries of Maria and George Kassler.

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PROVENANCE:

The collection was donated in two parts. The initial donation was made in 1961 by Edwin Stebbins Kassler, Sr. and the family of the late Charles Moffat Kassler. In 1984 Philip K. Alexander, Jr., great grandson of George W. Kassler, donated additional material.

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- BOX I
- FF 1: Correspondence, 3/7/1857-7/8/1863
 - FF 2: Correspondence, 8/10/1863-4/11/1864
 - FF 3: Correspondence, 5/23/1864-11/26/1864
 - FF 4: Correspondence, 12/12/1864-3/7/1865
 - FF 5: Correspondence, 3/16/1865-5/28/1867
 - FF 6: Correspondence, 8/30/1867-5/24/1871
 - FF 7: Correspondence, 5/27/1871-6/27/1871
 - FF 8: Correspondence, 7/4/1871-8/5/1871
 - FF 9: Correspondence, 8/7/1871-4/28/1874
 - FF 10: Correspondence, 4/29/1874-11/17/1876
 - FF 11: Correspondence, 12/8/1876-8/25/1880
 - FF 12: Correspondence, 11/3/1880-12/8/1894; no date
 - FF 13: Diaries: George W. Kassler, 1860; 1862
 - FF 14: Diary: Maria T. Kassler, 1876
 - FF 15: Diaries: George W. and Maria T. Kassler, 1880
 - FF 16: Diaries: George W. and Maria T. Kassler, 1881; 1884
 - FF 17: Diaries: George W. Kassler, 1886
 - FF 18: Diary: Maria T. Kassler, 1908-1911
 - FF 19: Diaries: Maria T. Kassler, 1912; 1912-1916
 - FF 20: Diary: Maria T. Kassler, 1917-1921
- BOX II
- FF 21: Diary: Maria T. Kassler, 1922-1926
 - FF 22: Diary: Maria T. Kassler, 1927-1928
 - FF 23: Diary: Maria T. Kassler, no date
 - FF 24: Birthday book: Maria T. Kassler
 - FF 25: Account books, 1859; 1868
 - FF 26: Account books, 1874-1875; 1877-1878; 1877-1881
 - FF 27: Account books, 1880; 1882; 1880-1883
 - FF 28: Deeds: Warranty deeds, quit claim deeds, and mining deeds, 1866-1906
 - FF 29: Pre-emption certificates, 8/27/1866
 - FF 30: Mineral certificates: G.W. Lode, 3/9/1886; Cymbeline Lode, 3/9/1886
 - FF 31: Abstract of Title: G.W. Mine, 4/15/1882
 - FF 32: Abstracts of Title: Lots 31 to 35, Cheesman and Kassler Subdivision, 9/27/1928; N Block 5, Cheesman and Kassler Subdivision, 4/11/1932; Lots 1 to 5, Cheesman and Kassler Subdivision, 6/30/1941

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- FF 33: Receipts, 1859-1890
- FF 34: Tax schedules, 1870-1890
- FF 35: Miscellaneous certificates: Marriage certificate, George W. Kassler to Maria Theresa Stebbins, 5/31/1865; Fire Escape certificates, 4/3/1884 and 4/5/1884; Treasurer's Certificate of Purchase, 5/28/1885
- FF 36: Narrative and portion of a narrative: "Story" written by Maria T. Kassler of her trip to Denver in 1865; "George W. Kassler: Colorado Pioneer" written by Philip K. Alexander, Jr.
- FF 37: Business cards: George W. Kassler & Co.; Kassler & Patterson
- FF 38: Prints
- FF 39: Newspaper clippings, 1883-1889
- FF 40: Publication: The Trail, 11/1908

OVERSIZED:

- Item 1: Scrapbook of newspaper clippings, 1884
- Item 2: Scrapbook of newspaper clippings, 1885
- Item 3: Scrapbook of newspaper clippings, 1886
- Item 4: Scrapbook of newspaper clippings, 1887
- Item 5: Scrapbook of newspaper clippings, 1888
- Item 6: Scrapbook of newspaper clippings, 1889
- Item 7: Scrapbook compiled by Maria T. Kassler
- Item 8: Notebook entitled "Vol. 2 Colorado Pioneer"

NOTE: Photographs have been transferred to the Photograph Department of the Colorado Historical Society.