

An Inventory of the Papers of
Sylvester Allen (1829-1915)

Collection Mss.00009

A holding of the
Library of the Colorado Historical Society
Denver, Colorado 80203

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Sylvester Allen was born in Windsor County, Vermont on January 5, 1829. As a young man, he moved to Boston and worked for several years as a horse buyer. He later moved to Rock Island, Illinois, where he helped bring the first locomotive across the Mississippi River on a flat boat.

In 1859, he came to the Rocky Mountain region as a gold seeker in the Black Hawk gold rush. As a pioneer in early Denver, he witnessed the city's first hanging. Allen lived the exciting and transient life of the gold seeker and moved from point to point through Wyoming, Idaho and Colorado, searching for the precious ore. He also worked for a time buying beef for the federal government at Fort Lyon. In 1865, he joined the Colorado National Guard and served the required ninety days. In 1868, he and a partner took a tie-hauling contract with the Union Pacific Railroad. The next year, 1869, Allen moved to Pueblo and homesteaded what is now the Teller Ranch at the mouth of Turkey Creek. In 1871, he married Louisa Simms, and they had five children. Allen died in December, 1915.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1829 January 5: Sylvester Allen is born in Windsor County, Vermont.
- 1858 William G. Russell discovers gold in Cherry Creek.
- 1859 Allen moves to Denver.
- 1859 Jefferson Territory is established.
- 1860 Denver annexes the Auraria and Cherry Creek settlements.
- 1864 The Union Pacific begins building westward to construct the eastern part of the transcontinental railroad.
- 1865 February 10: Allen joins the Colorado National Guard.
- April 9: The American Civil War ends with a surrender agreement at Appomattox Courthouse, Virginia.
- May: Allen is discharged from the National Guard.
- 1868 Allen works hauling ties for the Union Pacific Railroad.
- 1869 Allen moves to Pueblo, Colorado.
- The Union Pacific and the Central Pacific Railroads meet at Promontory Point, Utah, completing the transcontinental railroad.
- 1871 Allen marries Louisa Simms.
- 1876 July 4: Colorado gains statehood.
- 1915 Sylvester Allen dies.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS

Sylvester Allen was one of the early settlers into Denver. This collection provides valuable insight into his life and the lifestyle that existed in the very early days of Colorado.

This collection spans the years 1866 to 1915 and contains two series:

1. Diaries 1866-1868). 2. Biographical Material (1915). The biographical material consists of diaries and an obituary about Sylvester Allen, which outline his life in early Denver.

The provenance of the collection is unknown, and there are no other known repositories of Sylvester Allen materials.

COLLECTION CONTENTS

1. Diaries (1866-1868)

FF	Description	Date
1	Diary	1866
2	Diary	1868

2. Biographical Information (1915)

3	Obituary from Newspaper	12-15-15
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