

Colonel John Arkins Collection

Mss.00017

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Summary Information

Repository	History Colorado. Stephen H. Hart Research Center
Creator	Arkins, John, 1842-1894
Title	Colonel John Arkins Collection
Date	1862-1950
Extent	0.5 Linear feet
Language	English
Collection [Box]	0.5 lf

Preferred Citation note

Cite collection as: Colonel John Arkins Collection, Mss.00017 ([accession number when applicable]), History Colorado.

Biographical note

John Arkins was born possibly in New York City in 1842. Associated with newspaper all of his life, Arkins began work in a printshop at a young age. In December 1861, Arkins left his job and joined with the Union Army as a member of the Fifth Minnesota Volunteers. Arkins served with the Union forces through 1864, participating in campaigns in Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. Following the Civil War, Arkins worked as a merchant in New Orleans and later in Chicago.

In 1878 Arkins came to Denver to work as a printer on the old Denver Tribune. It was during this time that Arkins met his future business associates, C.C. Davis and James Burnell. In late 1878 the three men, Arkins, Davis and Burnell, left Denver for Leadville where they founded the Leadville Daily Chronicle. The Chronicle was the first successful newspaper to be printed in the thriving silver boom camp.

In late 1879 Arkins and Burnell left Leadville after selling their shares in the Leadville Daily Chronicle to Davis. The two men headed to Colorado Springs where they founded the Gazette, which was the first daily paper in the Springs.

The following year Arkins bought the Rocky Mountain News from railroad financier William Loveland, and thus began his career as the crusading editor of Denver. A pioneer in the field of wire service news reporting, the Rocky Mountain News under Arkins' direction became the first paper in Colorado to join the Associated Press.

During a visit to Chicago in 1890, Arkins toured the proposed site of the 1892 World's Fair. He wrote an editorial for the Associated Press which helped to sway the selection committee in favor of Chicago.

John Arkins was an active and influential figure on the Denver political scene using the power of the press to expose crime and political corruption. Among his achievements while editor was a series of articles which exposed Soapy Smith, a famous Denver conman.

In the late 1880's Arkins' partner and trusted friend, James Burnell, betrayed him and he lost control of the Rocky Mountain News to T.J. Patterson.

John Arkins died on August 19, 1894 of pneumonia. In a series of articles on the history of newspaper publishing in America (which appeared in the Los Angeles Times), John Arkins was named along with such men as Horace Greeley, one of the twelve great American editors.

Scope and Contents note

John Arkins was a soldier in the Union Army as well as a prominent Colorado newspaper editor in the late 1800's. This collection contains materials mostly pertaining to his time in the Civil War. The materials include correspondence, diary entries, burial records, and a biographical sketch written by his

nephew. The collection includes both bound diaries and loose pages of diary entries. It appears as if the the loose pages are Arkin's original entries and the bound volumes are later transcriptions possible done by Arkins or his wife.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

History Colorado. Stephen H. Hart Research Center

Conditions Governing Access note

Most of the material in this collection is open to researchers without restrictions. Please note that some of the material in this collection owned by the Minnesota Historical Society. Permission to use that material must be sought from them.

Provenance

The material in the collection was donated by Louisa Arkins, widow of John Arkins, in 1922 and William Arkins, nephew of John Arkins in 1950.

Processing Information note

Processed by Clark Hathaway in August, 1984. Updated by Jill Rittersbacher in November, 2013.

Related Materials

Related materials note

John Arkins' wife, Louisa Arkins, also donated six photographs (H.379 and H.380) including one of John Arkins and one of William Arkins. See Research Center staff for more information.

Controlled Access Headings

Genre(s)

- Correspondence.
- Diaries.
- Newspaper clippings.
- Obituaries.

Occupation(s)

- Editors.
- Journalists.

Personal Name(s)

- Arkins, John, 1842-1894
- Arkins, Louisa L., 1847-1894
- Arkins, William M.

Subject(s)

- American Civil War, 1861-1865

Accession number

84.268.1-.3 and 84.269.1-.19

Collection Inventory

FF 1 Civil War Correspondence 7/21-/1862 - 7/27/1882 1.0 File folder(s)

Accession number

84.269.1-.10

Existence and Location of Originals note

Minnesota Historical Society holds the originals.

Conditions Governing Access note

Material in this file is the property of the Minnesota Historical Society. Please contact them for rights and reproductions.

FF 2 Diary 1862 1.0 Item(s)

Accession number

84.268.1 (7353)

FF 3 Diary 1863 1.0 Item(s)

Accession number

84.268.2 (7354)

FF 4 Diary 1864 1.0 Item(s)

Accession number

84.268.3 (7355)

FF 5 Originals of bound diary entries 1863 1.0 File folder(s)

FF 6 Originals of bound diary entries 1864 1.0 File folder(s)

FF 7 Biographical sketch, "My Uncle - John Arkins," by William M. Arkins [1950] 1.0 File folder(s)

Accession number

84.269.11

FF 8 Burial records 1849, 1877, 1903 1.0 File folder(s)

Accession number

89.269.12-.14

FF 9 Poem, John Arkins, Minnie J. Reynolds 1894 1.0 File folder(s)

Accession number

89.269.19

FF 10 Newspaper clippings and excerpts 1894 1.0 File folder(s)

Accession number

89.269.15-.18