



# General William Jackson Palmer 1836-1909

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## Quick Facts

- Born in Delaware in 1836, raised in Philadelphia as a Quaker.
- At 17, worked for the railroad; studied locomotives in Europe.
- At 25, Palmer led a volunteer cavalry regiment which fought successfully throughout the Civil War. Ended war as General Palmer.
- After the war, Palmer led a survey team for the Kansas Pacific Railroad from Kansas to San Francisco.
- In 1869, while in charge of the construction of the Kansas Pacific Railroad into Denver, Palmer traveled south and found a beautiful area at the foot of Pikes Peak to live.
- In 1870, Palmer decided to build his own railroad from Denver to Mexico. Called his railroad company the Denver-Rio Grande
- Married Mary Lincoln “Queen” Mellen in 1870 and brought her to Fountain Colony (Colorado Springs). Built Glen Eyrie for Queen and eventually his three daughters.
- Colorado Springs, nicknamed “Little London”, founded in 1871.
- The Denver-Rio Grande ended up going west to Durango instead of south to the Rio Grande River as Palmer had planned.
- Palmer died in 1909, 2 yrs. after he broke his neck while horseback riding at Glen Eyrie.

### Great Resources on General Palmer

Ayer, Eleanor. *Colorado Chronicles : Famous Colorado Men*. Frederick, CO: Jende-Hagen Bookcorp, c1980, pp. 15-17.

Black, Celeste. *Queen of Glen Eyrie*. Colorado Springs, BlackBear Publishing, c1999.

Lohse, Joyce B. *General William Palmer : Railroad Pioneer*. Palmer Lake, CO : Filter, c2009.

Sprague, Marshall. *One Hundred Plus: a Centennial Story of Colorado Springs*. Colorado Springs: Colorado Springs Centennial, Inc., c1971, pp. 1-8.



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