

disposed and scattered along the bases of the cliffs...the towers of the Castle were English, but the plants and blooms surrounding it were native to the Rampart hills.

Know More!

Palmer Pets

Pets were an important part of the Palmer household. Palmer's love of animals began when he lived on a farm in Delaware. He enjoyed riding horseback during his many years of surveying and traveling across prairies and through the mountains. Names of horses mentioned at Glen Eyrie included **Don and Schoolboy**. He preferred riding horseback to his office in Colorado Springs to riding in a wagon.

Palmer also loved dogs. He owned several Great Danes. Names of his dogs included **Dandy, Girton, Infanta, Coelebs, Leo, Ralph, Gellert, Barbara, Mab, Gilbert, Barosra, and Yorick**. What do you think inspired these names? Which ones do you like best?

Yorick was especially loved by the children in the household during Palmer's final years. Palmer liked to stage pretend circuses with Yorick as one of the circus animals. Yorick, whose name came from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, showed Palmer's love for English literature. Yorick, met a sad fate. He was found dead on a path, apparently bitten by a rattlesnake.

Palmer still loved train travel. He continued to be a railroad nomad riding the rails in his private car. The routes he built were now well traveled. The beautiful city of Colorado Springs was prospering.

Palmer donated parcels of land totaling 2,900 acres to the city for an interconnected park system. A partial list of park lands includes Acacia, Antlers, Alamo, Monument Valley, Palmer, Thorndale, High Drive, Bear Creek, North Cheyenne Canyon, Prospect Lake parks. In addition, he donated the land for Colorado College, the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind, Colorado School of Forestry in Manitou Park, roads and trails, libraries, churches, and hospitals. He made large donations during his lifetime and with the gift, offered his plans for future use and development. He arranged that the city have open space to maintain its attractive appearance and outstanding views.

In 1901, a Century Chest, or time capsule, was created and entrusted to Colorado College with instructions that it not be touched for one hundred years. After New Year's Day 2001, the time capsule was opened. Among newspapers, photos, and documents, it contained a letter from William J. Palmer written in 1901 from Glen Eyrie.

Glen of Palmer: Railroad Pioneer
by Jørgen B. Lohse ©2001

11 A Grand Reunion

Tragedy comes at unexpected times. Palmer survived hardships as a soldier and prisoner of war during the Civil War. He built Colorado Springs and a railroad empire that allowed towns to prosper. He descended deep into the earth to inspect coal and mineral mines. He walked and rode horseback across countless miles of unsettled wilderness. It was **ironic** when a devastating accident occurred on a fine October morning in 1906. Palmer's horse stumbled, and he was thrown hard to the ground. Palmer could not move. His neck was broken, and he was paralyzed.

A man with less endurance might not have survived such a bad fall. **At age seventy**, Palmer had things yet to do. Although he was severely restricted and handi-

capped by his injuries, he continued to participate in family and community life.

Through physical therapy, Palmer regained some movement. **A chair padded with straw and horsehair was made so that he could sit up and travel comfortably.** A rubber bed filled with warm water helped him sleep. His doctor, family, and friends helped him in any way they could. After a visit, a friend wrote, "No one ever saw greater courage under pain and adversity than he displayed."

Palmer took advantage of an important new advancement, the automobile. **He owned one of the first White Steamer touring cars.** It allowed the stricken railroad pioneer to travel around Colorado Springs from his remote location in Glen Eyrie.

The car became Palmer's main transportation. **His brave driver followed Palmer's directions to drive along mountain roads and trails meant for horses, not cars.** Palmer enjoyed motoring around Colorado Springs. He often invited guests and visiting children to pile into the car. He especially enjoyed mountain views from the city parks he had donated.

In the years since the Civil War, members of the Anderson Troop had kept in touch with one another.

Palmer, who rarely missed their gatherings, was distressed. He would be unable to travel to a reunion of the Fifteenth Pennsylvania Cavalry in Philadelphia. He developed a plan. With help from his daughters, he would invite all 280 men to Colorado Springs.

The plan worked. Realizing many of the veterans would be unable to afford the trip, Palmer spent \$50,000 to arrange their travel on a special train. More than one hundred men from the troop showed up in Colorado Springs for their reunion and to visit their ailing general.

The special train arrived on August 20, 1907. Lodging was provided at the Anders Hotel and in vacant rooms at Colorado College. Sightseeing tours were arranged to Garden of the Gods, Manitou Springs, Cave of the Winds, and the top of Pikes Peak. A concert at Colorado College entertained them, and a reception and banquet at Glen Eyrie fed them. Laughter, tears, and memories were shared. Songs were sung. When it was over, the men went home with new memories to cherish.

A year after the reunion party, Palmer's daughters, Elsie and Marjory, were engaged to be married. Elsie's wedding was in January 1908 at Glen Eyrie. She

married Leopold Hamilton Myers from Cambridge, England. The bride wore an unusual brown wrap decorated with huge bronze buckles and 1,000 tiny bronze animals. The couple traveled to New York, then sailed to England.

Marjory planned to marry a British Army Captain named Wellesley in June. Palmer arranged to travel to England with his daughter. For the difficult journey, Palmer brought along his personal physician, Dr. Henry C. Watt. The trip was arranged and they were on their way. After riding the rails he helped build to cross the continent, they took a steamship to England.

Before they reached England, Dr. Watt declared his love for Marjory. He asked her to marry him instead of Wellesley. The wedding in England was called off, but the trip continued. When the visit was over, the group transported Palmer back to Colorado. Dorothy remained single. She moved to London where she worked as a social worker.

The long journey took its toll on the ailing Palmer, and his health became worse. On March 13, 1909, William Palmer died at his home in Glen Eyrie. His cremated remains were buried in Evergreen Cemetery