Moffat the Rabbit
Meets A General

photos and text by Christy Howard
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additional photos courtesy of the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum
Pack your bags, it's time to go.
About a General, how much do you know?
Born on the farm in the first state of Delaware, only time would tell of the vision he would share.

Where was William Jackson Palmer born?
William Jackon Palmer was born on September 17, 1836 to John and Matilda Jackson on a small farm near Kinsale, Delaware. He later was the founder of the city of Colorado Springs, Colorado in 1871.
A country divided brought war to our land; loyal and brave, the Brigadier General in command.

What position and role did William Jackson Palmer serve in the Civil War?
Palmer was brevetted Brigadier General on November 4, 1864 for his efforts in leading the troops during the Civil War and was later awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.
Engrained in his blood from an early age, the General preferred narrow to standard gauge.

What railroad company did General Palmer build?
General Palmer formed the Denver and Rio Grande Railway on October 27, 1870. He dreamed of a line that would connect from Denver south through New Mexico and down to Mexico City. The Denver and Rio Grande was to use the narrow gauge track instead of the more common standard gauge as it was easier to maneuver narrow mountain ledges.
Though not of royal blood, from New York she came;
She fancied the General, Queen was her name.

Who did General meet and later marry?
General Palmer and Mary Lincoln “Queen” Mellen met in 1869 and were married on November 7, 1870. During the brief period Queen lived in Colorado Springs, she started the first school in the city in 1871. She later returned to New York and then moved to England because of her failing health. She died in England in 1894 at the age of forty-four. Today, Queen Palmer Elementary is named in her honor.
An eagle in the valley resting high in a nest,
Inspired the General to build only the best.

What “castle” did the General build
with only the finest materials?
An eagle’s nest in the valley inspired General Palmer to name his new home Glen Eyrie. The “valley of the eagle” is hidden in a valley just north of the Garden of the Gods. He imported tiles and fireplaces from England to give it the feel of a true English castle.
Three beautiful daughters brought joy to his life, returning to the Glen after the death of his wife.

Where were General Palmer's three daughters living before they returned to Glen Eyrie?
The General's three daughters Marjorie, Elsie, and Dorothy were living in England with Queen before her death. They brought the General much joy and happiness and he enjoyed entertaining at the castle with them by his side. Today, continuing in Queen's tradition, the castle is host to holiday celebrations including the madrigal singers during the Christmas Madrigal Banquet.
The General on his horse was a common sight to see; riding hundreds of miles, past streams, rocks and trees.

What places in the city can I still visit today to see General Palmer's lasting influence?
Cutler Hall was the first building of Colorado College and was completed in December 1879. Built on land donated by General Palmer, it was his dream to have education play a major role in the city of Colorado Springs. Today, Cutler Hall is on the National Register of Historic Places and houses the admissions and financial departments of the college.
Built in part with donations from General Palmer, Palmer Hall was dedicated in 1904 and, at the time, was the largest building on the Colorado College campus. Inside, a bas relief plaque of Palmer and one of his dogs can be found. College students rub the dog’s nose for good luck.
The Antlers Hotel that we enjoy today is actually the third hotel, the first being destroyed in a fire in 1898. Queen Palmer originally named the hotel because there were so many antlers in the front lobby.
Running along Monument Creek, Monument Valley Park was designed by the General so that no vehicles could drive through it. It is filled with lakes, walkways and playgrounds. The General also had every kind of tree that grows in Colorado planted within the park.
General William Jackson Palmer passed away on March 9, 1909 and was laid to rest at Evergreen Cemetery in Colorado Springs. Today, his memory is honored by a bronze statue standing at the intersection of Platte Avenue and Nevada Avenue. The statue was erected in 1929 after twenty years of fundraising to remember the city's founder.
Glossary of Terms

Brigadier General - a one-star officer in the US Army, Air Force or Marine Corps
Civil War - an American war fought between the Union (against slavery) and the Confederacy (for slavery) from 1861-1865
Colorado - the "Centennial State" was the 38th state admitted to the Union
Congressional Medal of Honor - the highest military decoration awarded by the United States government
Delaware - Delaware is "The First State" and is located in the mid-Atlantic region on the east coast
Denver - Colorado's capital city is nicknamed the "Mile-High City" as it sits 5,280 feet above sea level
Eagle - the bald eagle is a bird of prey and is recognized as the national bird of the United States
Narrow gauge - the width between the rails being 3 feet, 6 inches
Standard gauge - the width between the rails being 4 feet, 8 1/2 inches
Vision - the ability to plan for the future

Recommended Books

Photo Credits
(Courtesy of the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum)
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Page 4 William Jackson Palmer’s mother, Matilda Palmer
Page 5 William Jackson Palmer, circa 1864
   Castle Thunder, circa 1864
Page 7 15th Pennsylvania Cavalry Reunion at Glen Eyrie
Page 8 Palmer surveying, trestle bridge, DRG Terminal in Colorado Springs
Page 9 Mary Lincoln “Queen” Mellen Palmer
Page 11 Original 22-room frame house and cottage at Glen Eyrie, General Palmer in his
   den, Glen Eyrie floor plans
Page 13 Elsie, Dorothy and Marjory Palmer
Page 15 General Palmer on his horse
Page 16 Cutler Hall at Colorado College
Page 17 Palmer Hall at Colorado College
Page 18 First Antlers Hotel
Page 19 Engine No. 168 being lowered into Antlers Park
Page 20 Monument Valley Park
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William Jackson Palmer: Pathfinder and Builder. Saratoga Springs, NY: George Foster
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Author Bio
Christy Howard has been an early childhood educator for 15 years. While teaching kindergarten, she became aware of the
need for one central resource for parents and educators to locate regional picture books and non-fiction sources. Through her own
travels with her family and children, she became inspired to create a series of books for young children as she saw their
genuine enthusiasm to learn about the great cities and states we live in.
This book is dedicated to my good friend Leah and her delightful family!
I am happy I painted the classroom blue.
Thanks for sharing your knowledge and passion for a truly remarkable man.
-Christy
A Rabbit’s USA Adventure
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