

# Colorado Governors

## Albert W. McIntire



### Scope and Content Note

The Governor McIntire collection comprises approximately 4 cubic feet of record material related to his term as governor of the state from 1895-1896. Record series included in the collection are the **Executive Record**; correspondence; extraditions and requisitions; proclamations; applications and appointments; reports and speeches to the General Assembly. These gubernatorial records cover generally 1895-1896 with a few exceptions. The physical condition of the records are for the most part good. Some documents are in need of repair and may be limited to use.

Governor McIntire's official acts are documented in the **Executive Record**, Vol. 9, pgs. 207 - 668. The correspondence files cover a wide range of topics. However, immigration historians, social scientists and those interested in the labor movement may discover some interesting views on how the McIntire administration viewed society in that day and time. There are a number of files dealing with the labor unrest in the mining camps near Walsenburg (Huerfano County) and Leadville (Lake County). There is also significant correspondence and legal material concerning the "Italian Massacre" in which three Italians were lynched in Walsenburg. Also included

is correspondence and reports concerning the Ute Indians. Ute hunting became an issue about which there are several items in the collection. There is also correspondence referenced as the "Ute Indian Insurrection".

## **Biography of Albert W. McIntire**

By Terry Ketelsen

Albert W. McIntire, the Republican Governor of Colorado from 1895-1896, was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on January 15, 1853. His parents were of Scottish decent. He was the great-grandson of a Revolutionary War officer. McIntire attended private schools, eventually going on to Yale College and obtaining a law degree in 1875. In the following year, the year of Colorado's statehood, he migrated west and settled in Denver; where he opened a law practice.

Four years later, in 1880, McIntire once again gathered his belongings and moved south to Colorado's San Luis Valley, specifically Conejos County. He purchased a large cattle ranch on the Conejos River, north of the present day town of La Jara. It didn't take long for others to determine that McIntire was a competent legal person; and in 1884 he was chosen to serve as the County Judge. He retained this position for three years, displaying wisdom and tact in judicial matters. The next few years saw his cattle business continue to flourish with improved irrigation on his ranch. It was during these years that the future governor became well adept at practicing water law at a time when water impacted the valley's economy.

In 1891, the 12th Judicial District had a vacancy to which McIntire was appointed. He served ably in this position until the Colorado Republican Party nominated him as their candidate to vie for the governorship of the state. He accepted the nomination; and in the November 1894 election, defeated the incumbent Populist governor, Davis H. Waite, by nearly twenty thousand votes.

The inauguration of the new governor was a major event. McIntire chose to have his inauguration at the majestic Tabor Grand Opera House, with a public reception at the famous Brown Palace Hotel and an inaugural ball at the popular Broadway Theater. A few Republican Party faithfuls were excluded from the Tabor Opera House due to limited seating, which caused some hard feelings and ultimately some difficulties for the new governor as he tried to institute his new agenda.

Governor McIntire was the first Colorado governor elected in which women had the opportunity to vote. During his term of office he made an effort to improve state government services for women. He also called for legislation that ensured equal suffrage, that established a state home for girls, and that restricted gambling houses

which were reputedly a great "evil" to the well being of the family. These measures made him more popular with his female constituents.

Expansion of the State Insane Asylum in Pueblo was also another accomplishment for McIntire during his term. He viewed that small segment of Colorado's society that needed help with their mental illnesses as being left out. The asylum provided them with some minimal help for their needs but the institution needed to be expanded for the proper care of its patients. Issues concerning funding procurement were raised, especially as the costs that were being incurred for the State Capitol building construction mounted. In order to deal with these funding appropriation problems, the Governor supported having a central purchasing authority to better leverage state dollars and manage costs.

McIntire influenced other important legislation during his term as governor. Having been a court judge for nearly six years, he was keenly aware of the discrepancies in how civil and criminal sentences were arrived at and applied. He called for uniform sentencing to provide for a more equitable administration of justice. McIntire also sought better protection of the people's money in state chartered banks. It was his opinion, that more state oversight was needed in this arena to detect fraud and corruption in banking practices. There was also the issue of the condition of the state's roads and highways. The Governor called for more spending to improve the condition of the state's thirty-five year old grid of roads. He realized, even then, that transportation would be vital to the state's eventual recovery from the silver panic of 1893 and for future economic growth.

McIntire also acknowledged the need for the state to protect its natural resources. Especially important to him were the stands of native trees throughout the state that had been heavily timbered by the mining industry. He saw a need to create a system of state forests to protect the remaining areas from unscrupulous loggers. Today, the state has only one state forest in Jackson and Larimer counties.

Water was also an important natural resource in McIntire's view. His knowledge of the value of water to the arid regions in Colorado led him to call for the thoughtful application of the state canal system and for water conservation. At the time, the state was overseeing two canals that provided irrigation water to areas of the state which were otherwise agriculturally non-productive.

With the collapse of the silver standard as part of the nation's monetary system in 1893, Colorado's mining activity turned to coal and less precious minerals. During the Governor's term of office several confrontations between miners and mine operators came to the public's attention. The first was in Huerfano County in and around Walsenburg, where union supporting miners began striking for improved working

conditions and better pay. Mine owners countered by instantly replacing the strikers which resulted in violence erupting on both sides. A similar scenario played out in Lake County (Leadville) where union and mine owner unrest had been growing over the same issues as in Walsenburg. The **Leadville Herald Democrat** reported in September, 1896, that "conditions had worsened between the mine workers and the mine operators to the degree that the sheriff, judge and mayor of Leadville could no longer ensure public safety." These local officials implored Governor McIntire to send National Guard troops to the area in order to help protect life and property. The Governor did so after consulting with his advisors. The first troops arrived on the afternoon of September 21, 1896, with more following in the succeeding days. General E.J. Brooks was placed in command and established a military encampment on the northern outskirts of Leadville. The miners immediately began to refer to the area as Camp McIntire.

The arrival of the troops had the effect that the local officials had hoped for. The military presence put an end to any further large, serious outbreaks of violence. The Guard troops provided escorts to the mines for non-striking workers and the mines slowly began to resume production. There were further confrontations between the miners and the mine operators in years to come, but for the time being, McIntire's use of military force was sufficient to quell the miner's unrest.

Albert W. McIntire was not re-elected and returned to his ranch in the San Luis Valley. He continued to practice law and became involved with mining opportunities in old Mexico. In 1898 he went back east to Connecticut. On January 26, 1899 he married Dr. Ida Noyes Beaver in New Haven. He had met his wife in Colorado while she was a member of the Colorado Board of Charities and Corrections. They later divorced, and McIntire returned to Colorado in failing health. He died on January 31, 1935 in Colorado Springs. He is buried in the La Jara cemetery in Conejos County.

## **Bibliography - Albert W. McIntire**

Abbot, Carl. **Colorado: A History of the Centennial State**. Boulder, CO: Colorado Associated University Press, 1976.

**Albert W. McIntire Collection**, 1853-1935, Denver, CO.: Colorado Historical Society Collection.

**Albert W. McIntire Collection**, 1853-1935, Denver, CO.: Denver Public Library Western History.

Baker, James H. **History of Colorado**. Denver, CO: Linderman Publishers Inc., 1927.

**Leadville Herald Democrat**, September 27, 1896, page 1-2. Stone, Wilbur Fisk. **History of Colorado**. Chicago, IL.: S.J. Clarke Publishers, 1918.

## **Series Descriptions**

### **Executive Record**

The Executive Record contains executive orders; appointments; legislative messages; pardons; extraditions and requisitions; and honorary citations and proclamations which were issued by Governor McIntire.

### **Extraditions and Requisitions**

This series includes documentation concerning the transfer of alleged criminals to a different government jurisdiction for trial. Documentation may include the application for extradition, the warrant for arrest and /or correspondence concerning the extradition.

### **Correspondence**

Included in this series is the incoming and outgoing correspondence between the Governor and his constituents, state agencies and other public officials. There are several file folders that address the following issues: highways, health issues, the immigration office, and problems in the mining communities of Walsenburg and Leadville.

### **Applications and Appointments**

This record series focuses on the applications and appointments the Governor received and made to official state government posts.

### **Reports**

The reports for the most part are those received from state agencies, reporting on accomplishments and issues they dealt with in the preceding year.

### **Speeches and Messages**

Addresses to the General Assembly in 1895 and 1897 are included in this series.