

Washington Irving Allen

Washington Irving Allen was born 22 September 1839 in Richmond, Chittenden, Vermont. He was the oldest of three children of Carlos Allen (a physician) and Arville Browning.¹ The family moved to Deckertown and then Vernon, Sussex, New Jersey before 1850.² By 1860, Washington was a college student living with his family in Vernon.³ He attended college at the Green Mountain Liberal Institute in South Woodstock, where students were boarded out in surrounding homes or at the local hotel.⁴ He attended Amherst College in Massachusetts from 1858 to 1861. He was a member of the Amherst chapter of the Alpha Delta Phi.⁵

As the Civil War broke out in 1861, Washington left college at the end of his junior year to enter the US Army.⁶ He enlisted 2 November 1861 and was commissioned as a 1st Lieutenant in Company D of the Massachusetts 31st Infantry Regiment. He was promoted to Captain in 1862 and wounded in the battle of Port Hudson in 1863. He was promoted to Major in 1864. His company was mustered out 9 September 1865 at Mobile, Alabama, and he was then promoted to Lt. Colonel.⁷

After the war, Washington purchased a cotton plantation with two other men in Hayneville, Alabama. He was also connected to a banking company in Chetopa, Kansas. His brother, a college student in Massachusetts, died in 1865 and his mother died in 1867. He returned to Amherst College and completed an A.B. degree in 1869.⁸ From 1869 to 1872, he worked as a foreman in the nurseries of Maxwell Brothers in Geneva, New York. He then moved back to Vernon and worked as a florist until 1880.⁹

Washington moved west to Silver Reef, Washington, Utah Territory, in 1880, where he worked as the mining secretary¹⁰ and then as manager and general superintendent of the Stormont Mining Company until 1893.¹¹ He preferred Cornish miners from England over the Irish Catholics and replaced the Catholics whenever the opportunity arose.¹² He was a good executive, a gifted horseman, and kind. He shed tears over Forrester's lynching, as the Cornish miners in his employ had committed the murder in revenge for the death of Michael Carbis. He showed the Catholic Bishop Tuttle every courtesy when he visited the camp.¹³

In January 1881, Washington made a trip to Salt Lake City and was in contact with the mine owners back east. In February, under the direction of the owners, Washington gave notice to the miners at Silver Reef of a pay reduction from \$4.00 to \$3.50 per day. The miners' immediate response was to

¹ United States Census, 1840; 31massinf.wordpress.com/biographies-index/washington-irving-allen-bio

² United States Census, 1850.

³ United States Census, 1860.

⁴ greenmountainperkinsacademy.org/academy-then.html; 31massinf.wordpress.com/biographies-index/washington-irving-allen-bio

⁵ US School Catalogs, 1765-1935.

⁶ 31massinf.wordpress.com/biographies-index/washington-irving-allen-bio

⁷ Massachusetts Soldiers, Sailors and Marines in the Civil War National Archives: Index to Federal Pension Records; US Civil War Soldiers, 1861-1865; US Civil War Soldier Records and Profiles, 1861-1865; US Civil War Soldiers Index, 1861-1865; 31massinf.wordpress.com/biographies-index/washington-irving-allen-bio; archive.org/stream/obituaryrecordof1823he/obituaryrecordof1823he_djvu.txt

⁸ 31massinf.wordpress.com/biographies-index/washington-irving-allen-bio

⁹ Ibid; United States Census, 1870

¹⁰ United States Census, 1880.

¹¹ 31massinf.wordpress.com/biographies-index/washington-irving-allen-bio/

¹² Silver, Sinners and Saints, by Proctor and Shirts, 1991, p. 133.

¹³ Silver Reef Personalities Legends, by Mark A. Pendleton, 1940.

form a union which refused to accept the reduction and called a strike. The union miners put out the fires at the reduction works and stopped work at the mines.

After a month with no resolution, Jim Fitzsimmons led 60 or more union miners to Colonel Allen's office and told him to leave camp. Washington mounted his horse and was escorted north by a detachment of the miners to the Black Ridge. As an officer in the Union Army, he was deeply incensed when he was escorted from Silver Reef with the Stars and Stripes at the head of the procession. The "tyrant" had been expelled, but there was apprehension throughout the camp.¹⁴

Washington lost no time in reaching Beaver and appealed for an investigation from the Federal District Court. The mines were shut down and twenty-two union leaders arrested.¹⁵ Mark Pendleton, a boy at the time in Silver Reef, described how it happened:

The Federal Grand Jury found indictments against about 40 miners who had participated in the action against Allen and warrants for their arrest were given to US Marshal Arthur Pratt who called on Washington County Sheriff A P Hardy to raise a posse. About 25 men assembled in Leeds. An unusual snow storm screened the sheriff's movement so no hint reached Silver Reef. Marshal Pratt swore in these men as deputies and he and the sheriff lead them early in the morning to Silver Reef, taking the camp completely by surprise. As the jail was small, the large stone dance hall was commandeered and by night 36 men were under arrest. They were taken to Beaver in irons, over muddy roads and cold weather. The ring leaders of the strike were in prison. Col. Allen was back in his office. Two or three stores that had extended credit to the striking miners were closed. The mines and mills were operating at reduced wages, but many of the employees were inexperienced as most of the old timers had departed.¹⁶

In 1884, Washington was involved with John H. Cassidy, James N. Louder, and Julius Jordan, in a fraudulent convention of Republican voters of Washington County held at Silver Reef. The deception was reported by Michael H Quirk to the Salt Lake Herald newspaper.¹⁷ In 1885, a memorial for General Grant was held in the St George Tabernacle. Stake president McAllister was informed that Colonel Allen could not attend because of an urgent need of repairing some mishap in the mine works. It was regretted that the Union officer could not be a guest speaker.¹⁸

Washington, as representative for the Stormont Mining Company, and Richmond T. Gillespie as agent for the Christy Mining Company, applied for a patent for the Manhattan Lode mining claim in the Harrisburg mining district.¹⁹ However, silver prices continued to slide, and all mining operations ceased by 1891.²⁰

In 1893, Washington moved to Jensen, Florida, and became a planter. He moved to Brevard, Florida, where he grew fruit.²¹ He filed for an army pension as an invalid in 1905²² and retired back to his

¹⁴ Silver Reef Personalities Legends by Mark A. Pendleton, 1940, p. 17B; Memories of Silver Reef, by Mark A. Pendleton, in *Utah Historical Quarterly*, 1930, pp. 110-111.

¹⁵ *Salt Lake Herald*, 5 February 1881, p. 3; 1 March 1881, p. 3; 20 March 1881, p. 3; Memories of Silver Reef, by Mark A. Pendleton, in *Utah Historical Quarterly*, 1830, pp. 110-111.

¹⁶ Memories of Silver Reef, by Mark A. Pendleton, in *Utah Historical Quarterly*, 1930, pp. 110-111.

¹⁷ *Salt Lake Herald*, 2 May 1884, p. 3.

¹⁸ *Deseret Evening News*, 12 August 1885, p. 1.

¹⁹ *The Utonian*, 11 November 1890, p. 1.

²⁰ Memories of Silver Reef, by Mark A. Pendleton, in *Utah Historical Quarterly*, 1930, pp. 110-111; *Saga of Three Towns*, by Marietta M. Mariger, 1951, p. 95.

²¹ 31massinf.wordpress.com/biographies-index/washington-irving-allen-bio/; United States Census, 1900.

²² US Civil War and Later Pension Index, 1861-1917.

home in Newton, New Jersey, in 1907.²³ On the 1910 census, he was age 70, living off his own income in a home he owned, with his sister Ardelia.²⁴ He never married. He died of gangrene on 14 March 1918 at his home in Newton and was buried in the Newton Cemetery.²⁵



(Image from *Findagrave.com*)

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²³ 31massinf.wordpress.com/biographies-index/washington-irving-allen-bio

²⁴ United States Census, 1910.

²⁵ US Veterans Administration Pension Payments Cards, 1907-1933; 31massinf.wordpress.com/biographies-index/washington-irving-allen-bio