



# The Molly Brown House Museum

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# The Molly Brown House Museum

## Vocabulary List

**Anaglypta**: textured wall paper

**Annunciator**: a call system to let servants know if they were needed in a certain room

**Artifact**: an object found in a museum

**Collection**: a set of material objects that tells us about a person, place, time or event

**Conservatory**: a room with a glass roof and walls, attached to a house, usually used as a greenhouse to grow plants.

**Curator**: a person who handles and studies artifacts

**Etiquette**: formal manners and rules to be followed in a social setting

**Historic Preservation**: preserving and protecting buildings and artifacts of historical significance

**Immigrant**: person who leaves his or her country to settle in a new country

**Juvenile Justice System**: legal system specifically for young people (separate from adults)

**Mining**: process of obtaining minerals such as gold, silver, or coal from the earth

**Philanthropist**: a person who donates, time, money, experience, or skills to help create a better world.

**Primary Source**: artifacts that provide direct evidence about a historical event, person, topic or building.

**Restoration**: bringing a house or room back to its former condition

**Repeal**: to make a law no longer a law

**Suffrage**: the right to vote in elections

**Urban renewal**: the process where an urban neighborhood or area is changed by tearing down old buildings to construct new buildings.

**Victorian**: time period of the reign of Queen Victoria of England from 1837-1901. This corresponded to the Gilded Age and the Progressive Age in American history from 1865-1918. Across the world, this time period was characterized by flourish of culture, industrialization and etiquette.



# The Molly Brown House Museum

## Important Dates

- 1858 : Gold is discovered in **Colorado** by William Russell Green.  
William Larimer founds Denver City.
- 1860 : Population of **Colorado**: 32,654 men and 1,577 women (ratio of 20 to 1)
- 1861 : The Territory of **Colorado** is organized.
- 1865 : The Civil War ends.
- 1867 : **Margaret** Tobin is born on July 18 in Hannibal, Missouri.
- 1876 : **Colorado** becomes the 38<sup>th</sup> state.
- 1878: **Leadville, CO** is one of the largest mining camps in the world after silver is struck.
- 1886 : **Margaret** Tobin arrives in Leadville and marries mine manager, **James Joseph Brown (J.J.)**.
- 1887 : **Margaret and J.J.**'s first child, **Lawrence** Palmer (**Larry**), is born.
- 1889 : **Margaret and J.J.**'s second, and last, child, **Catherine** Ellen (**Helen**), is born.
- 1893 : The repeal of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act drops the price of silver, closing mines.  
Gold discovered in the Little Johnny Mine in **Leadville, CO**.  
Women in **Colorado** are granted the right to vote in all elections.
- 1894 : Colorado State Capitol building is completed (18 years after statehood).  
The **Browns** move to Denver at 1340 Pennsylvania Ave.  
The Denver Woman's Club is established with **Margaret** as a charter member.
- 1900 : Population of **Colorado** is 539,700 (almost 500,000 more than in 1870).
- 1901 : **Margaret** attends the Carnegie Institute.  
Queen Victoria dies.
- 1902 : **Margaret and J.J.** travel around the world together.
- 1906 : **Margaret** raises funds for several different causes including needy Italian children, art in the public schools and the building of the Catholic Cathedral. For the cathedral, she proposes hosting a Carnival of Nations.



# The Molly Brown House Museum

## Important Dates

- 1912 : **Margaret** survives the sinking of the Titanic.
- 1914 : **Margaret** visits Ludlow, Colorado after the Ludlow Massacre and rallies for miner's rights.  
**Margaret** runs for the US House of Representatives.  
With Alva Belmont, **Margaret** organizes an international conference on women's rights.  
World War I begins.
- 1917 : U.S. joins WWI.  
**Margaret** travels to Paris and works with the American ambulance system. She also works to rebuild bombed French villages and becomes the director of CARD, the American Committee for Devastated France.
- 1918 : WWI ends.  
**Margaret** works in New York teaching blind soldiers the necessary skills to help them transition to civilian life.
- 1920 : The 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution is ratified giving women the right to vote.
- 1922 : **J.J. Brown** dies on September 5.
- 1924: **Margaret** works with other Denver and Leadville feminists to establish the first all-female "Feminist Coalition" for the operation of mines in Leadville. Many people were opposed to women working in business.
- 1927 : **Margaret** traveled with other members of the National Woman's Party to make a personal appeal to President Coolidge for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment.
- 1929 : **Margaret** fulfills her dream of becoming an actress, studying acting and performing for small audiences in New York and Paris. She is awarded the Palm of the Academy of France in recognition of her work in dramatic art and in interpreting the work of actress Sarah Bernhardt.  
The Great Depression begins.
- 1930 : Population of **Colorado** was 1,035,791 (almost 500,000 more than 1910)
- 1932 : In April, **Margaret** received the French Legion of Honor award primarily for her work during WWI. The exact language of the award commended her "overall good citizenship."  
On October 26, **Margaret** dies while living in New York.  
The house at 1340 Pennsylvania Ave. is sold.
- 1970 : The Molly Brown House Museum, owned by Historic Denver, opens its doors.



# The Molly Brown House Museum

## Mining in Colorado

Mining was the most significant industry in the 19th and early 20th centuries in Colorado. In 1858, William Green Russell sparked the Pike's Peak Gold Rush with his discovery of gold by placer mining at the Little Dry Creek (modern Englewood).

Placer mining involves panning for gold in creeks or stream beds that have mineral deposits in them from erosion. When panning, the gold sinks to the bottom of the pan and water carries away the dirt and gravel. Placer mining finds eventually decreased and miners turned to hard rock mining to get to gold and silver ore.



Denver Public Library

Hard Rock mining consists of digging tunnels or shafts into the earth to reach buried ore deposits that contain gold, silver, and other minerals. Once the ore is mined, it must be processed in order to extract and prepare the metal or mineral. The ore is crushed and ground and then chemicals or heat is applied to extract or process the metal.

Mining camps popped up in the Rocky Mountains and along the Front Range. Important mining strikes included silver and gold in Leadville, gold in Cripple Creek and coal in Ludlow. In the 1870's, railroads began to connect the mountain mining towns with Denver and the rest of the country, sparking booms in Denver and Pueblo and bringing new mining towns into being.



Denver Public Library

J.J. Brown worked as a miner in Leadville. In 1893, in the Little Jonny Mine, he found the largest vein of gold and copper in North America. J.J. was made part owner of the mine and eventually invested in mining operations in Colorado, Arizona, Utah, California and Mexico. His son, Larry, also worked in the mines and attended the Colorado School of Mines.

On average, miners worked 8-10 hour days and were paid \$3 a day. Children as young as 8 years olds also worked in mines. Many miners lived in mining camps known as company towns. The mining company that owned the mines also owned the houses, stores and all other buildings in the mining town. Mining strikes in Colorado asking for better pay, fair living conditions and safer working conditions led to national attention for the rights of miners and laborers.

Mining continues today in Colorado, including mining in the Cripple Creek and Victor Gold mine southwest of Colorado Springs.







# The Molly Brown House Museum

## The Victorian House

Victorian architecture, named during the reign of England's Queen Victoria (1837-1901), became popular in the United States in the mid-nineteenth century. Many people in this era regarded their homes as status symbols. Building a large, impressive house was a measure of success and social prominence. Victorian houses were designed with entertaining and hospitality in mind.

Most Victorian houses had distinctive color schemes and exterior features, including balconies, curves, arches, fancy brackets, columns, and unique and large windows. On the front porch of the Brown's house, Margaret installed two lion statues and two sphinxes to impress visitors and show her love of travel. There is also a relief of Alexander the Great entering Babylon, which was to represent the triumphal entry of pioneers into Colorado.



Lion and Sphinx



Anaglypta wallpaper and the Turkish corner

The interiors of Victorian houses were elaborately decorated and filled to the brim with fancy furnishings. Carved and painted moldings and painted plaster decorations caught the light from gas lamps and later, electrical lights. Large stained glass windows added to the colorful decorations.

It was typical to see floral carpets, anaglypta wallpaper, colorful painted walls, velvet and lace curtains, overstuffed chairs, tufted ottomans, marble-topped tables, candelabras, chandeliers, and carved sideboards. One might also see many potted plants, bronze statues, marble figures, and works of art. The Turkish corner with patterned drapery, a small sofa and animals skins was also very popular to show a love of comfort and decoration.



Stained glass window



Dining room plaster decoration

During this time period, a growing wealthy class of people developed and built large Victorian houses as a show of their wealth and social status. Yet, not everyone lived in an impressive Victorian house. Smaller houses with Victorian features were built for a growing population.



The Formal Parlor



# The Molly Brown House Museum

## Victorian Life

The Victorian era was a time of awareness and change in America. The Civil War broke out in 1860 due to the political issue of slavery. The advent of the Industrial Revolution sparked an increase in immigration, technology and urbanization which in turn led to advancements in science, medicine, and an increase of material wealth for some. This era also saw the rise of the middle class and upper-middle-class along with social and cultural changes for the family.

Source: Denver Public Library



Arapahoe School

**Education:** In 1870, only about half of all the children in the United States went to school. Most only finished up to the fourth grade so that they could work in order to support their families. By 1918, it was mandatory for all children to attend school and free public schools were available in all states. Denver's first public school, the Arapahoe School, opened in 1873.

**Home and Work:** In the beginning of the Victorian era, there were separate spheres for men and women in the house. Men would earn a living and engage in politics outside of the home. Women would manage the house and raise children, staying in the home.

The home and public life of women began to change as more began to attend college. Many upper-middle-class women were not content to stay home and raise children. They wanted to put their knowledge and skills to use helping people. Women began to devote their time to publicly helping immigrants, children and promoting women's rights. Middle-class women also began to take jobs in cities. They worked as secretaries, telephone operators and sales girls in department stores.

Working-class and lower class men and women had various jobs. They worked on farms, in the mines, in factories or worked in the household of middle and upper-middle class families.

**Dining:** In an upper-middle class home like the Brown's, all meals would be taken by the family in the dining room throughout the day. They would have breakfast, lunch, tea, dinner and sometimes supper.

Dinner parties in a Victorian home were a long affair. A dinner party would host 10-20 guests and would include around 11 courses of food, individually served by servants. Foods included oysters, soup, fish, several kinds of roasted meat, salad, cheese, sweets, and fruit. Men and women would dress up for dinner. Men would wear a suit or a tuxedo and women would wear long evening gowns.



1899



1902 Harper's Bazaar