

FIRST DRAFT

# Doc Holliday took part in Colorado railroad war

Editor's note: This is the first of two columns.

John Henry "Doc" Holliday was just 36 years old when he died in Glenwood Springs on Nov. 8, 1887, but by then he was famous as a gunfighter and a gambler.

He had lived just five months in Glenwood before he died from tuberculosis.

Most of Doc Holliday's fame stemmed from his days in Tombstone, Arizona, where he participated in the shoot-out that became known as the Gunfight at the OK Corral. He also worked at gambling halls and occasionally as a dentist in Texas, Kansas and New Mexico prior to Arizona.



BOB SILBERNAGEL

But Holliday actually spent more of his adult life in Colorado than any other place.

He resided in Denver, Trinidad, Pueblo and Leadville before he arrived in Glenwood Springs.

John Henry Holliday was born on Aug. 14, 1851, in Griffin, Georgia, later moving with his family to Valdosta. His father was a merchant and small-time slave owner, who joined the Confederate Army during the Civil War.

Small, slender and handsome, Doc Holliday attended dental school in Philadelphia, and he opened a practice in Atlanta in 1872.

That same year, he visited St. Louis and met a young dance-hall girl who called herself Kate Fisher. She would later go by the name Kate Elder and would be Doc's consort off and on through much of his life in the West.

Doc didn't practice dentistry long in Atlanta. Before he turned 22, he headed West. Exactly why is unclear.

Doc had a reputation as a hot-tempered young man that would follow him the rest of his life. And in a fit of anger he may have wounded or killed some young black men who were enjoying themselves at a swimming hole, which Holliday deemed was for whites only. That may have forced his hasty departure.

Also, he was known to be close to his cousin, Mattie Holliday, and they continued a correspondence for the rest of his life.

It's possible he felt a romantic connection, and if she rejected him, he no longer wanted to remain in Georgia.

The other possible reason for his leaving was that he was already showing signs of tuberculosis — consumption, as it was then called. And doctors advised him to head west.

He wandered into Texas in 1873 and opened a dental practice in Dallas.

But he also found he had an affinity for gambling houses and a talent for faro, monte and poker.

He had his first brushes with the law in Dallas. He paid fines for gambling and later was involved in his first gunfight. No one was injured, and Holliday was acquitted on assault charges.

In late summer of 1875, Doc Holliday made his first known appearance in Colorado, working the gambling houses of Denver.

He may have left for a time to visit Cheyenne, Wyoming, and Deadwood, South Dakota. But he was back in Denver in August 1876, to help celebrate Colorado statehood.

He returned to Texas by 1877, partaking in gambling at a variety of rough-and-tumble towns, and briefly establishing his dental practice in a couple of them.

Holliday left the Lone Star State permanently in May 1878, and arrived in Dodge City, Kansas, that same month.

Wyatt Earp was the deputy town marshal there, and Bat Masterson was county sheriff. Doc became friends with both of them.

Doc won Wyatt Earp's lifelong loyalty when Earp was trying to calm down some rowdy cowboys outside the Longbranch Saloon. Another armed cowboy snuck up behind him with a pistol.

Holliday saw the action from inside the saloon, rushed outside and disarmed the man before he could harm Earp.

But Dodge City was not conducive to Holliday's health and he moved to Las Vegas, New Mexico, in December 1878. The hot springs there were supposed to help people with consumption, and it was a booming little town with a growing gambling sector.

By March of the following year, he was back in Dodge City, answering a call from Bat Masterson for a potentially dangerous assignment in Colorado.

By then, Leadville's silver boom was underway, and two different railroads were eager to serve the mining bonanza — Colorado's Denver and Rio Grande Western and the Kansas-based Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe.

But there was only one suitable route from Colorado's Front Range to Leadville: through the Royal Gorge, and neither company wanted to share it.

Masterson, working for the Kansas line, hired Holliday to help him recruit men to head west and confront the forces of the rival line.

The first expedition, in March 1879, resulted in no action. But the Kansas crew returned in larger numbers in June. They established themselves in Pueblo, Colorado Springs and the small town of Cuchara. Doc Holliday is believed to have been in Pueblo.



Doc Holliday as he appeared when he graduated from dental school in 1872.

Information for this article came from the book, "Doc Holliday, the Life and Legend," by Gary L. Roberts; and from the Frontier Historical Museum in Glenwood Springs.

Two men were killed in Cuchara, but the Kansas men held their own in Pueblo and settled in for what might have been a long siege.

However, when documents were presented to Masterson, clearly showing the D&RGW's legal right to the Royal Gorge, and it became apparent the Coloradans could muster greater numbers, Masterson wisely had his troops retreat to Kansas.

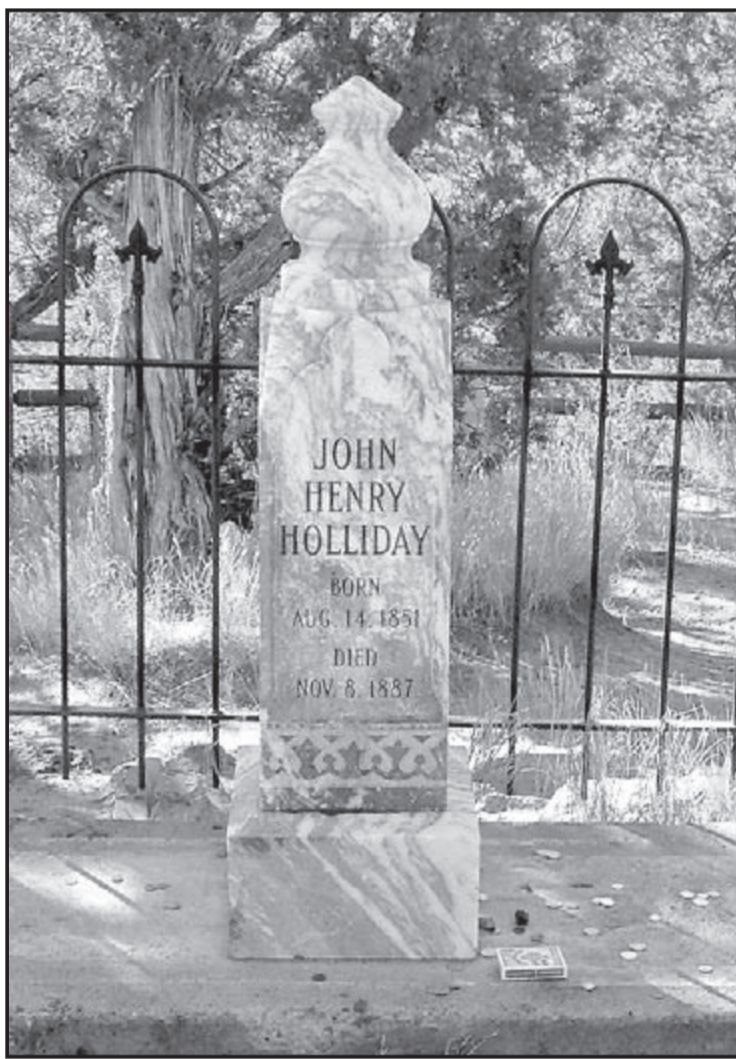
Doc Holliday's participation in this bit of early Colorado conflict drew little public notice.

However, the next time he arrived in this state, he would be a notorious gunfighter, viewed by some as a lawless killer and others as a crusader for justice. But first, he had to leave Dodge City again. He went back to New Mexico briefly.

When his friend, Wyatt Earp arrived for a visit, he convinced Doc there was more money and adventure to be found in Arizona.

Information for this article came from the book, "Doc Holliday, the Life and Legend," by Gary L. Roberts; and from the Frontier Historical Museum in Glenwood Springs.

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JUDY SILBERNAGEL/Special to the Sentinel This is the monument to Doc Holliday in Glenwood Springs' Linwood Cemetery. It is not the actual gravesite, however. That site is unknown.

# Mormon brothers push for medical pot

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SALT LAKE CITY — Twin brothers, both devout Mormons, are among a growing legion of Utah residents embracing medical marijuana as a way to treat a host of ailments.

Nathan Frodsham has advanced degenerative disc disease, leaving him with burning pain as nerves in his neck are pinched by bones. The pain made long days working in his job as a data scientist difficult, and he began looking for ways to manage it. While living in Seattle, where medical marijuana is legal, Frodsham received a prescription for cannabis from his doctor.

He sought guidance from his local church leaders, who told him, "That's something you can take up with you and your own personal relationship with God," he said.

Once he started using the drug, he felt back to his normal self and cut back on painkillers.

"Cannabis helps significantly. Probably better than anything I've used before," he said.

But he was transferred to Utah, where's it's not legal for him to keep using the drug, and he says his health is suffering because of it.

Utah's law only allows those with severe epilepsy to use cannabis extract oil that doesn't contain psychoactive properties.

His brother Aaron Frodsh-

am is a doctor who works with cancer patients and joined his brother in pushing for officials to legalize medical marijuana in Utah. One of their first converts was their devout father, John Frodsham, who said he too wants officials to legalize the use of marijuana for medical purposes.

"I only knew it in the negative side and always believed it was a drug that was very dangerous, and that it was addicting," he said of his changed stance on the issue.

While their devout family is pushing for change, their church is not on board. As state lawmakers contemplated a proposal earlier this year that would broadly expand the use of medical marijuana in Utah, the Salt Lake City-based Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints opposed the measure, saying it worried the law could have unintended consequences.

The church's opposition was credited to helping kill the proposal at the Legislature, where most lawmakers are members of the faith.

More recently, Mormon leaders took a more active stance against expanding marijuana access. The church issued letters to members in October, urging them to vote against ballot measures that would legalize marijuana in Arizona, California and Nevada.

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### Car tampering suspected

Stanton Ramsey, 36, is suspected of forgery and tampering with vehicles Oct. 16.

According to the Grand Junction Police Department, Ramsey was tampering with vehicles in two separate car dealership lots in the southwest portion of the city.

**According to the Grand Junction Police Department:**

■ Alcohol was stolen when a burglar broke a window and entered a business in the 2500 block of Broadway Avenue on Wednesday.

■ A fraudulent check was written at a business in the 2500 block of Rimrock Avenue. Loss was more than \$2,000.

■ A burglar entered a building in the 2800 block of Redlands Parkway and stole items valued at less than \$2,000 on Oct. 16.

■ Items valued at less than \$300 were stolen from a vehicle parked in the 2200 block of North 20th Street on Thursday.

■ A person assaulted another person with a deadly weapon, causing injury, in the 1900 block of Barcelona Way on Friday.

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