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CA State Archives Releases New Digital Exhibit Featuring the Town of Allensworth for Black History Month

SACRAMENTO – Approximately 30 miles north of Bakersfield, lies the town of Allensworth, now an official state park. Founded in 1908 by Allen Allensworth, the town was an exclusively African American community. Marked by its tree-lined streets and grassy vistas, and its avenues named after prominent African Americans, the town of Allensworth flourished for 40 years until its sharp decline and eventual dissolution.

[Click here to view “Allensworth: Realization and Resurrection of an African American Dream”](#)

Using photographs, maps, and documents from the battlefields of the Civil War to the railroad tracks of the Santa Fe railway, the California State Archives’ new exhibit – Allensworth: Realization and Resurrection of an African American Dream – tells the story of the rise and fall of the town of Allensworth in rural Tulare County.

“The legacy and story of Allensworth is embedded in state history,” said Secretary of State Alex Padilla. “Allen Allensworth embodied the spirit of California. Like many others, he arrived to the Golden State with a dream of building a more just world. The State Archives’ work will help preserve the legacy of Allensworth and make this unique piece of state history accessible to all Californians. I am proud to share the story of Allensworth for Black History Month.”

Born into slavery in Kentucky in 1842, Allen Allensworth (1842-1914) served as a first-class Petty Officer for the Union Navy during the Civil War. After attending college, studying theology, and being ordained a minister in 1871, he came to California in a quest for liberty. While witnessing the effects of racism and segregation on African American lives, he decided to create a community for African Americans to live, work, and flourish together.

The exhibit sheds a light on the now vanished town, revealing incorporation documents filed by its founders, hand-printed sketches of the city’s streets, and the official map issued by the California Railroad Commission of the railway that ultimately led to the city’s decline.

Today, Allensworth is a part of the California State Park System. The park hosts Black History Month activities, an Old-Time Jubilee, and Juneteenth celebrations, with an annual attendance of over 5,000 visitors. For more information about the Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park, visit the [Colonel Allensworth SHP](#) website.

This is the State Archives [fifteenth online exhibit to be hosted by Google Arts & Culture](#). Secretary Padilla has made digitizing the treasures of the State Archives a priority.

About Google Arts & Culture

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