Originally from Ohio, William Byers became one of the first settlers of Omaha, Nebraska with his parents in 1854. There he became the very first Deputy Surveyor for the territory of Nebraska. He served as a member in the first city council for Omaha, as well as a member of the first Nebraska Territorial Legislature.

In 1859, Byers moved to Denver to cash in on the booming gold rush in Colorado. Prior to his move, he purchased commercial printing equipment from the defunct Bellevue Gazette and had it shipped all the way to Denver by ox team. Once there, he published a widely circulated hand guide to the known gold fields and began publishing the first issues of the Rocky Mountain News, the very first newspaper printed in Denver. The paper finally ran its last issue on February 27th, 2009. However during his reign at the paper, Byers used the power of mass publication to become Denver’s ranking pioneer and spearhead many civic developments as well as a community organizer for various civic causes. He was present in many of the key events Denver’s history that made it the city it is today.

While living in Denver, he and his wife Elizabeth Byers built and lived in several prominent mansions, including the historic landmark Byers-Evans House, now a museum located next to the Denver Art museum, which the Byers sold to the Evans’, another prominent family in Colorado history. One of the couple’s larger properties south of the city was redeveloped into a junior high school and dedicated to the Denver Public Schools system in 1921. He also served two terms as the city’s Postmaster and even ran for Governor at one point, having the popular vote behind him, but ultimately losing the race. In 1863, Byers purchased Hot Sulfur Springs located in northern Colorado, in an attempt to develop “America’s Switzerland,” a mountain retreat, but ultimately failed due to the delay of the railroad until 1928.

He died at the age of 72 on March 25, 1903 and was buried at Fairmount Cemetery.

Located in Lot 90, Block 3.