

**Forgotten Battles in the Forgotten  
Civil War in the Forgotten West  
including  
Birth of the 1st Colorado Infantry  
Volunteer Regiment  
and its  
“Little Gettysburg of the West”  
1862 Battle  
at Glorieta Pass**

# Earliest Colorado Realities

- 1861 Colorado made a Territory out of Kansas
- Lincoln appoints ex-West Point Cadet Gilpin Governor and urges him to “Save Colorado for the Union”
- **Colorado City voted Territorial Capital 1862.**
- By 1860, of 24,000 Gold Rushers in Colorado 6,000 are Southerners coming west via the Arkansas River. Northerners pour into Denver, via the Platte.
- Secessionists confront Abolitionists. Shootouts in Denver. Turncoat in Colorado City. Arkansas valley 50% rebellion-minded. Confederate camp at Beulah
- Secessionists start a Territorial guerilla war, become insurgents. Incite Indians to attack settlers.

# Start of Civil War in the Far West

- Texas joins Confederacy 1861
- Rebels plan for great Western Empire – Southern New Mexico, Arizona, and California to the sea.
- Jefferson Davis '28 approves a Sibley invasion plan up the Rio Grande in New Mexico to Colorado gold.
- General Sibley '38 enters NM with 3,600 Mounted Texans February 1862.
- Gen Canby '39 requests help from Colorado's Governor Gilpin. Two companies respond early.

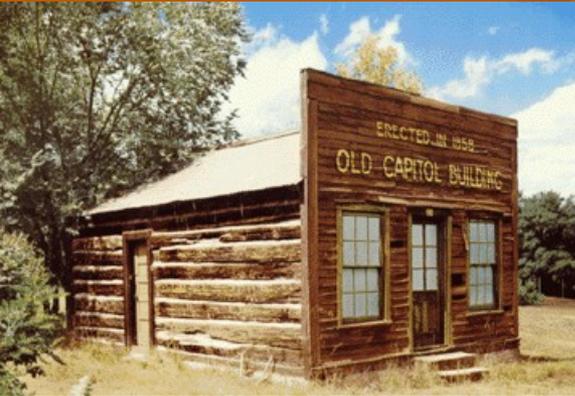
# William Gilpin ex – 1838

## First Territorial Governor



- Entered West Point 1834
- Told his father West Point didn't teach enough Tactics. With perfectly good grades, resigned 1835.
- But Commissioned in the Dragoons, fought Seminoles in Florida, rode with Fremont to Oregon, and fought in the Mexican War.
- So had Military Experience - understood the Rebel Threat to Colorado with too few Fed troops. Raised the 1<sup>st</sup> Colorado Volunteer Regiment

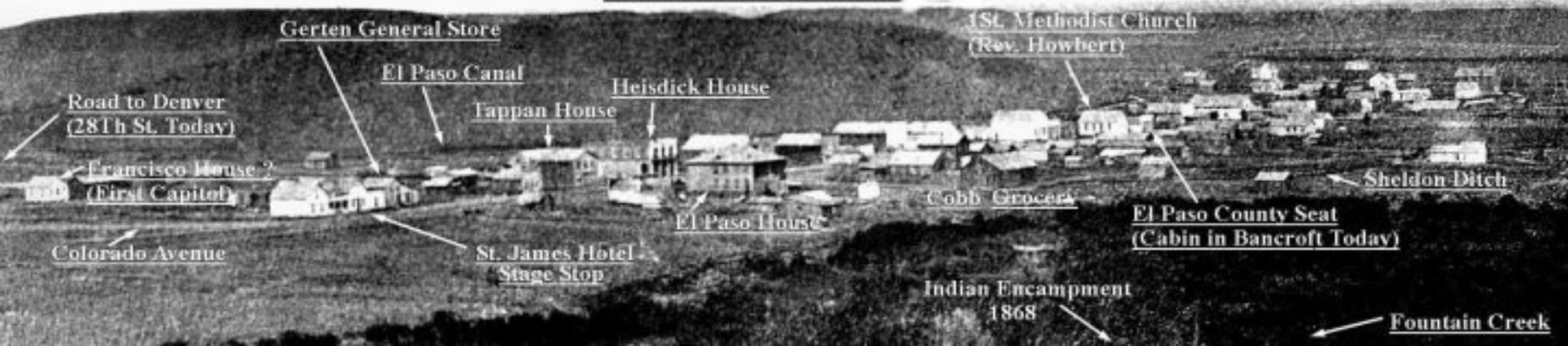
# Pikes Peak Region 1859 - 1862



1<sup>st</sup> Territorial  
Capitol Bldg  
(And Recruiting  
Office?)



## Colorado City 1862



# Early War News in Colorado



- Note date. (Only 4 or so originals exist. I own one of them.)  
Republican paper which only lasted 8 months.
- FULL of the Civil War, including capture of 44 Rebels and a 6 lb Canon at Buelah by Capt Otis '53 4<sup>th</sup> US Cavalry out of Fort Lyon. Marched as prisoners under Federal 'Marshal Townsend' north through Colorado City by mounted Company F, 1<sup>st</sup> Colorado Volunteers, not as 'POWs' but as 'Detainees' to be tried in Denver for treason. Shades of Guantanamo!

# Nov 28<sup>th</sup> 1861 Colorado City Journal Advertisement for Recruits

Miner's Supplies Generally.

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**Recruits Wanted**

FOR  
**COMPANY A.**

**FIVE RECRUITS** are wanted for Company A  
1st Regiment Colorado Volunteers at Camp  
Weld. Apply to

**E. W. WYNKOOP,**  
Captain Co. A 1st Reg't Col. Vol.

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**HARPER'S MAGAZINE**

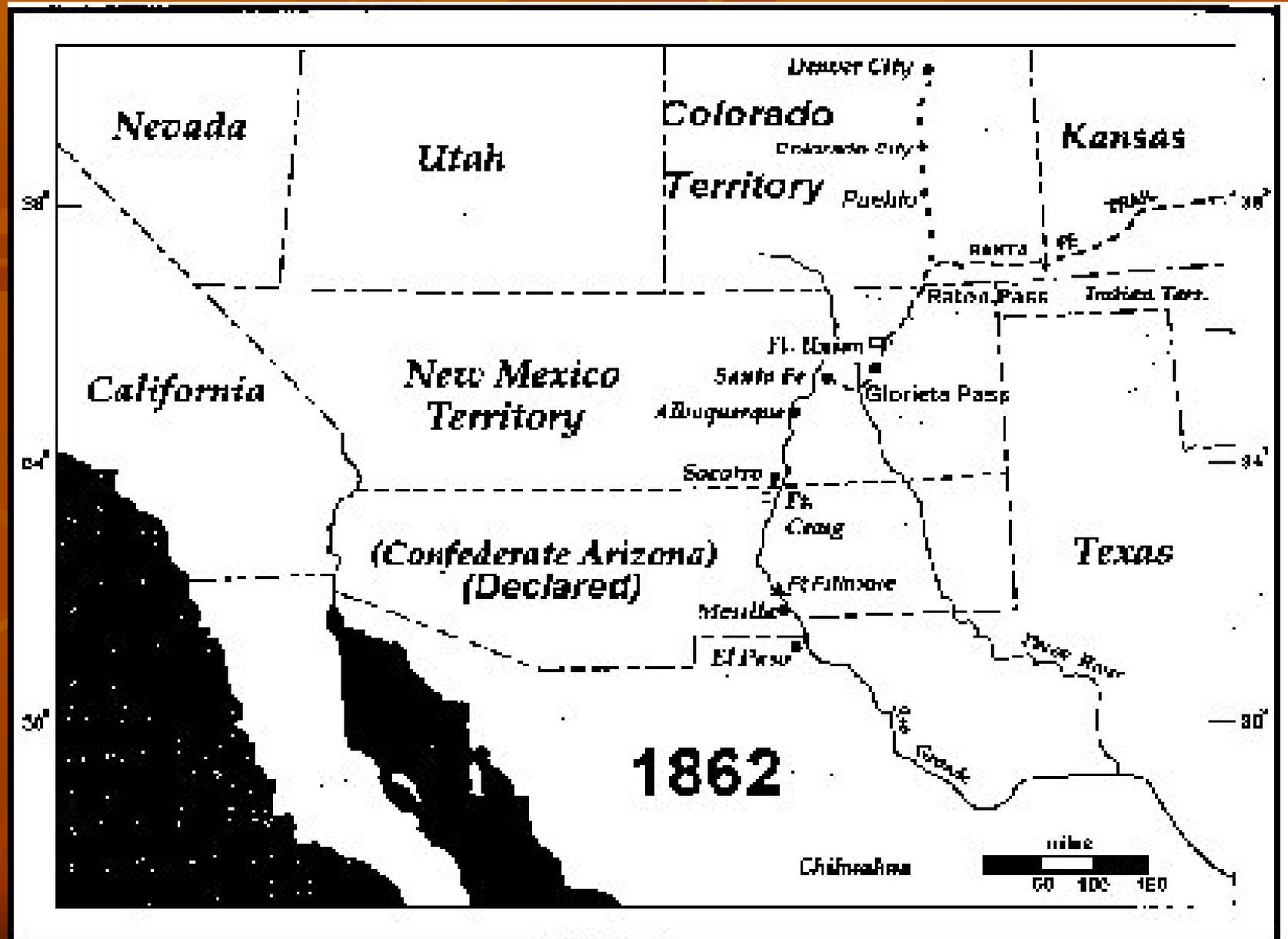
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# And Ad for Musicians for the 1st Colorado Regimental Band

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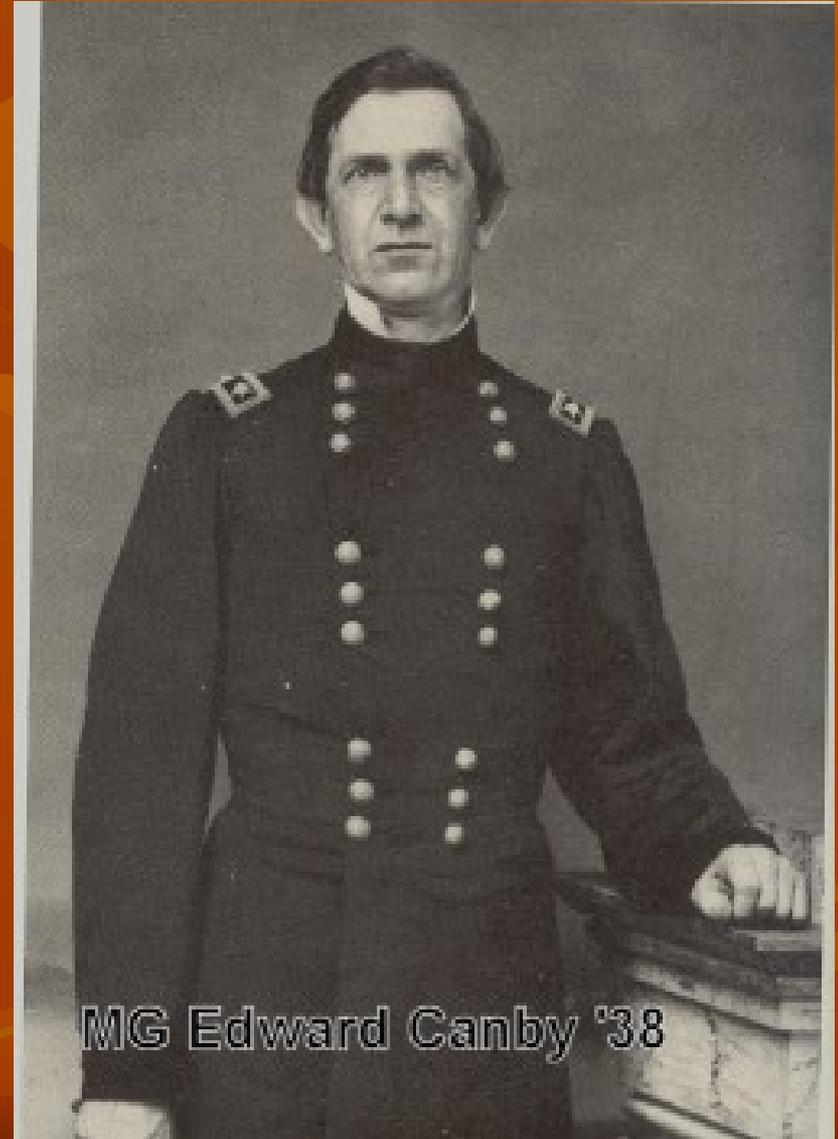
**Musicians Wanted.**  
WANTED, 24 MUSICIANS, and two principal musicians, for Regimental Band of First Colo. n. Colorado Volunteers. Enquire of Col U. S. H. at Head Quarters Larimer St. 6th.

# The Southwest by 1862



# General Edward Canby USA '39

- Colonel, Deputy Cmdr “NM Military Department” 1860.
- Made General and Commander in 1861 after HIS Commander joined the Confederacy.
- Left with only 1,500 Regulars, No Infantry and 4,000 poorly trained NM Militia.
- 120,000 sq mi to defend
- Chose to Defend Fort Craig in southern NM to Block Rebel Advance up Rio Grande toward Colorado
- Reputation for Caution
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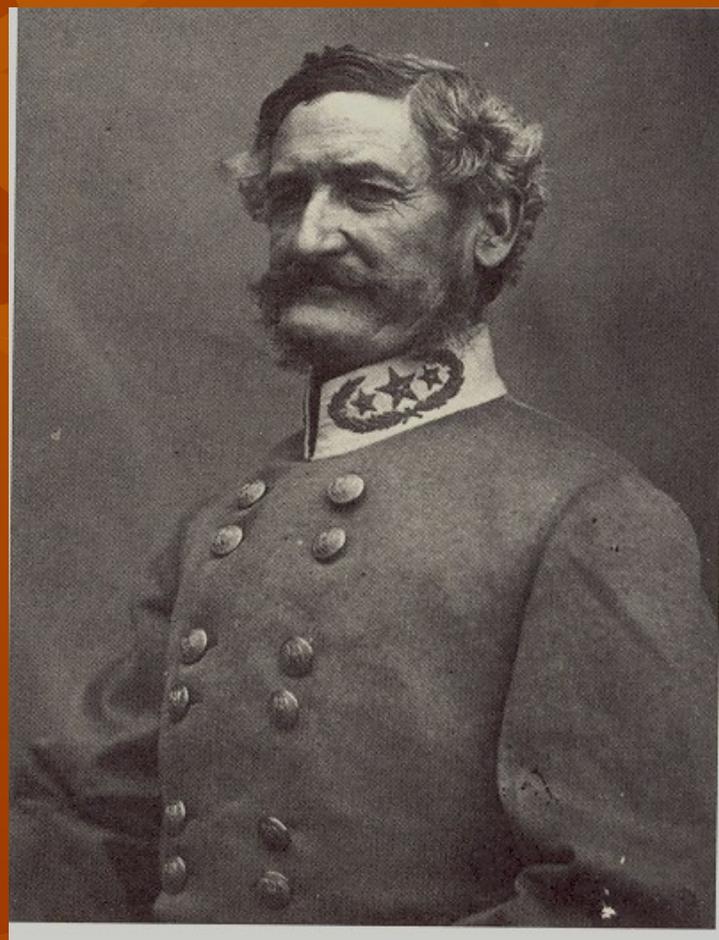
MG Edward Canby '38

**Prepares Fort Union with 2d "Star Fort"  
(Earliest Fort, 1851 - not visible)  
Last Fort – 1863-69 in background**

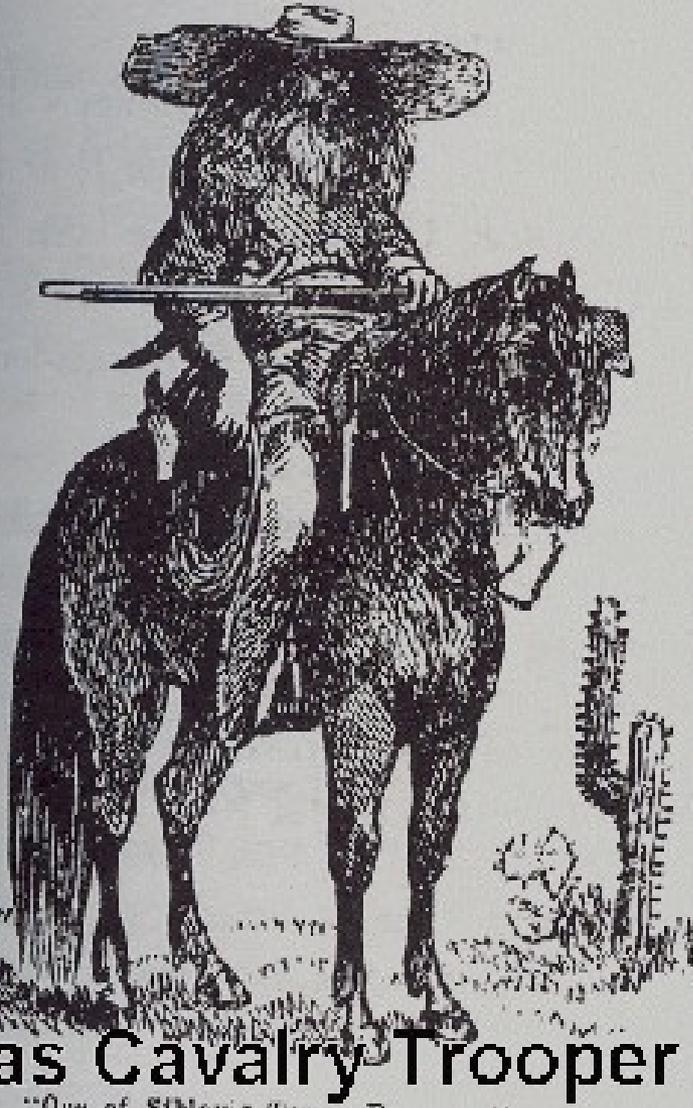


# Brig Gen Henry Sibley CSA '38

- Had soldiered with Canby in New Mexico. Invented Sibley Tent and Sibley stove.
- Commanded Fort Union by 1861 He stocked it very well. Resigned in late 1861, turned Rebel.
- Came back with 'Sibley's Rebel Army' – 7 months later
- 5 West Point Graduates and 2 ex Cadets in his command
- Drank too much.



# Union View of the Texans



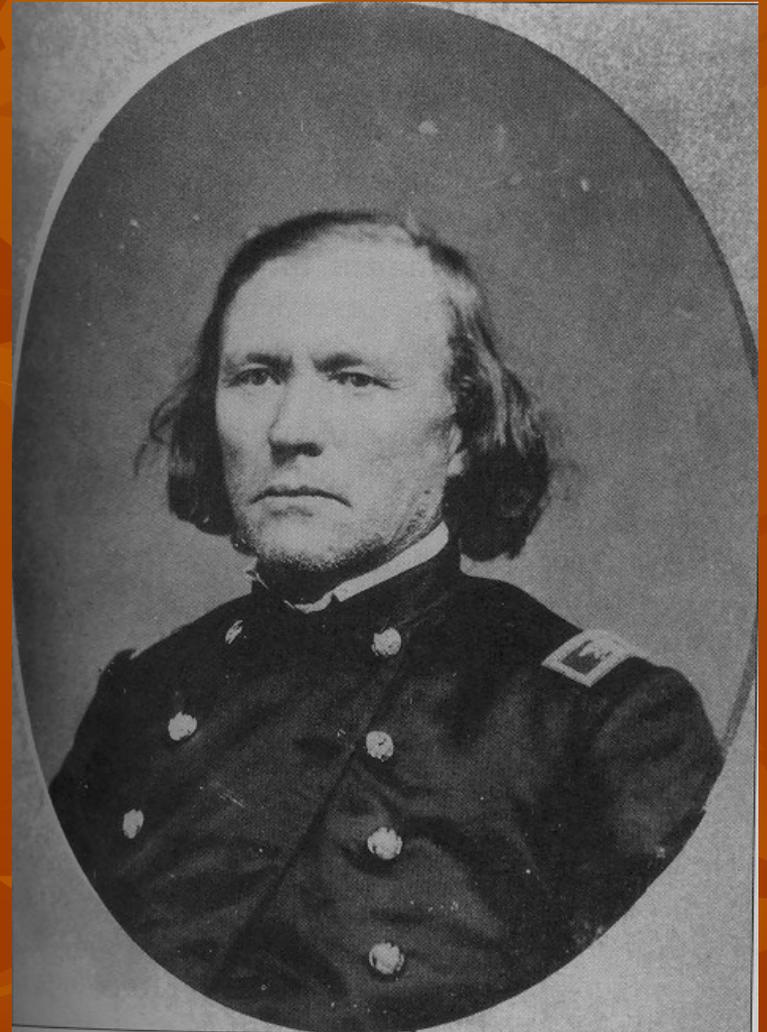
- Most New Mexicans hated and feared Texans; Sibley misjudged this. They cared little for the issues of Secession – eastern stuff
- The Four Mounted Regiments of “Sibley’s Army” recruited from all over Texas . Organized and trained around San Antonio
- After a big sendoff parade - marched through El Paso and Fort Bliss into New Mexico
- Cocky Texans (aren’t they all?) called the 1<sup>st</sup> Colorado Regiment “Gilpin’s Pet Lambs” - until their first defeat in Apache Canyon. Then they called them “The Regular Demons”

- BG Sibley marched his Mounted Texas Army - 3,600 strong in 4 Regiments - across US border Feb 1862. Hoped to seize the supplies from Fort Craig which was a strong fort. Canby had too many poorly trained NM Volunteers and too few Regular US Army units to attack Sibley's Army.
- So Sibley decided to go for Fort Union supplies then onto Denver.



# Col Kit Carson

- So Union he tore down a Confederate flag put up in his home town, Taos. Raised the Stars and Stripes and defended it with his guns.
- As Colonel, commanded the more reliable 1<sup>st</sup> New Mexico Volunteer Regiment at Fort Craig.
- Defended Southern NM during the Campaign
- Fort Carson named for him

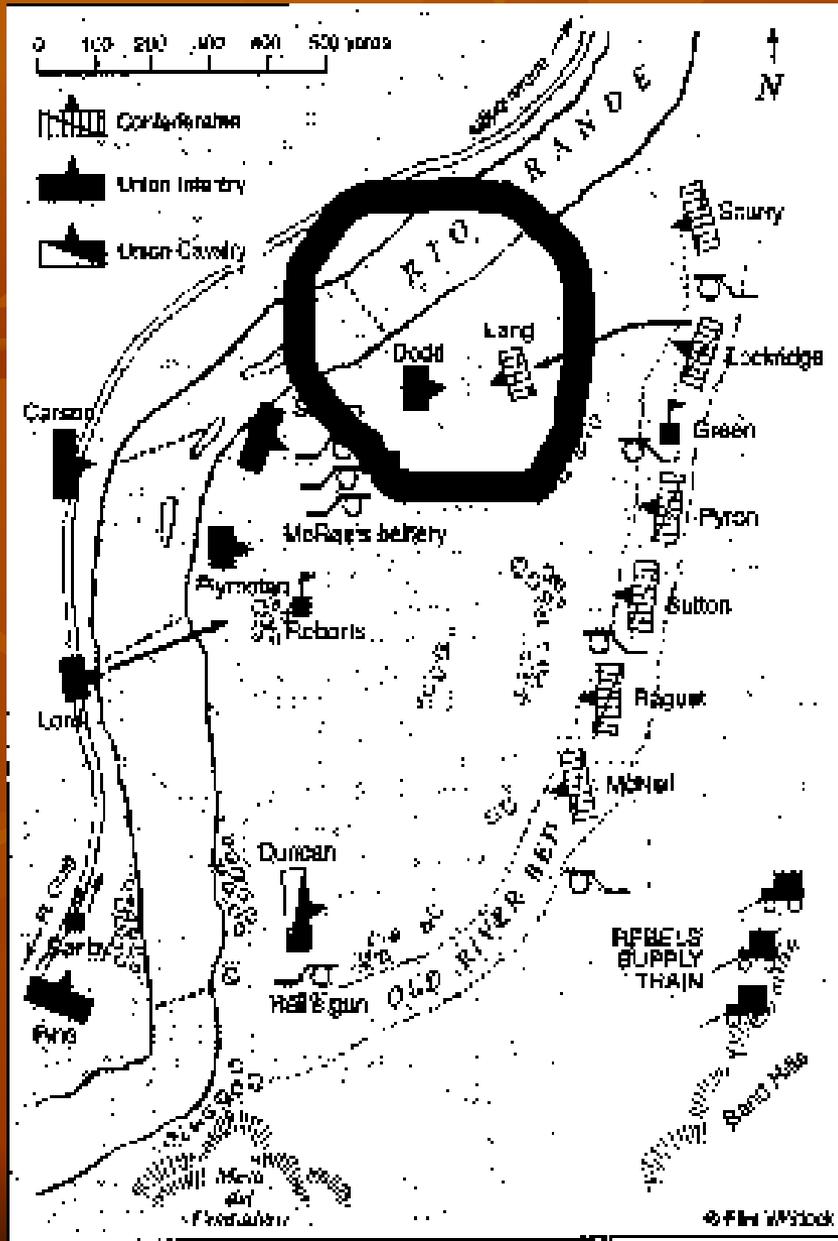


# **First Colorado Territorial Unit to Fight Texas Confederates**

- **Dodd's Independent Company from Canon City sent by Gov Gilpin after Canby's plea. Force marched 110 Miles to Fort Garland in the San Luis Valley December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1861, to be mustered in.**
- **Then marched 375 miles to Fort Craig in S NM**
- **Theodore Dodd, ex West Point cadet '52 commands**
- **Canby puts Dodd's 71 man company on the left of the line at Valverde east across the Rio Grande**
- **Texans think they are NM Militia – easy mark**
- **So Rebels Launch Lancer Cavalry Attack on Dodd**

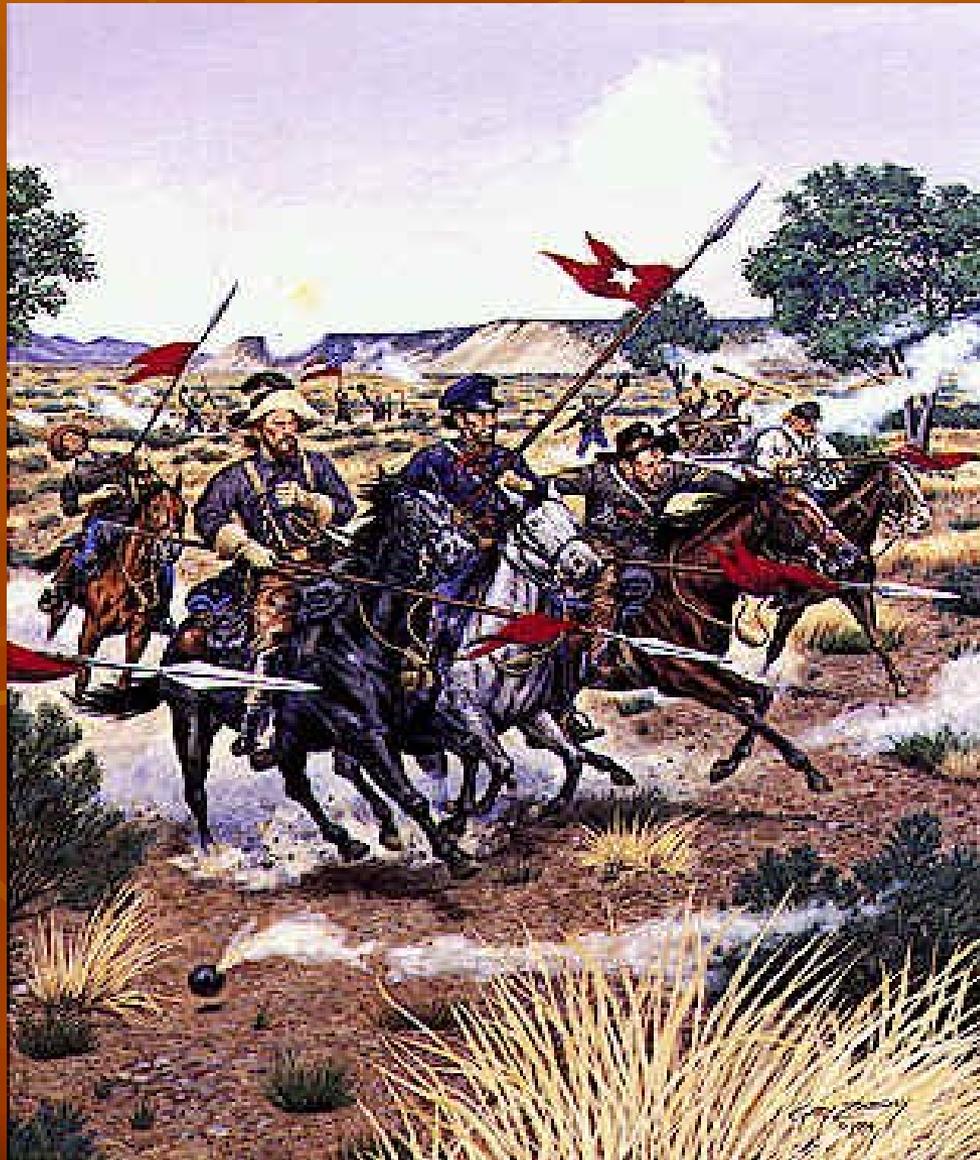


# Union vs Texans Line-Up



- Texans want to turn Canby's left Flank
- 70 Texan Lancers under Capt Lange charge
- Dodd forms a hollow Square classic Infantry defense against Cavalry charge
- Dodd holds fire until Cav gets within 50 yards. Then Dodd yells "They're Texans, give em Hell"

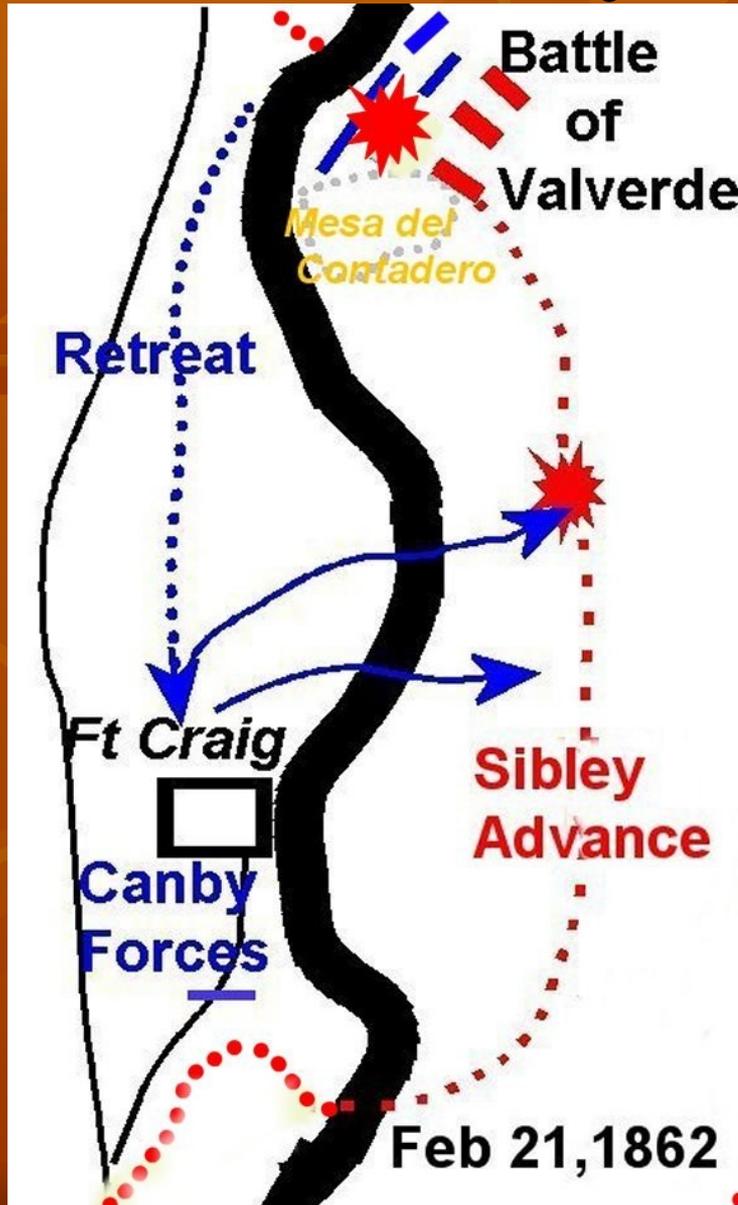
# Lancer Charge on Dodd's Company



# This Was First and Last Lancer Attack in US Civil War

- Texans only armed with 9 foot lances with 12 inch blades – and a Texas white star pennant
- Slaughtered by Dodd's 'buck and ball' fire
- 20 Texans including Captain Lang and his 2d in command die. Their Horses bayoneted
- Only three of Dodd's men wounded (Ickis Diary)
- Following Texas Lancers throw away their Lances and get rifles and pistols to fight 'normally' thereafter.
- So much for the pretty Napoleonic-Texas gesture
- Lancer attacks were obsolete before the Civil War
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# But Canby at Valverde Defeated



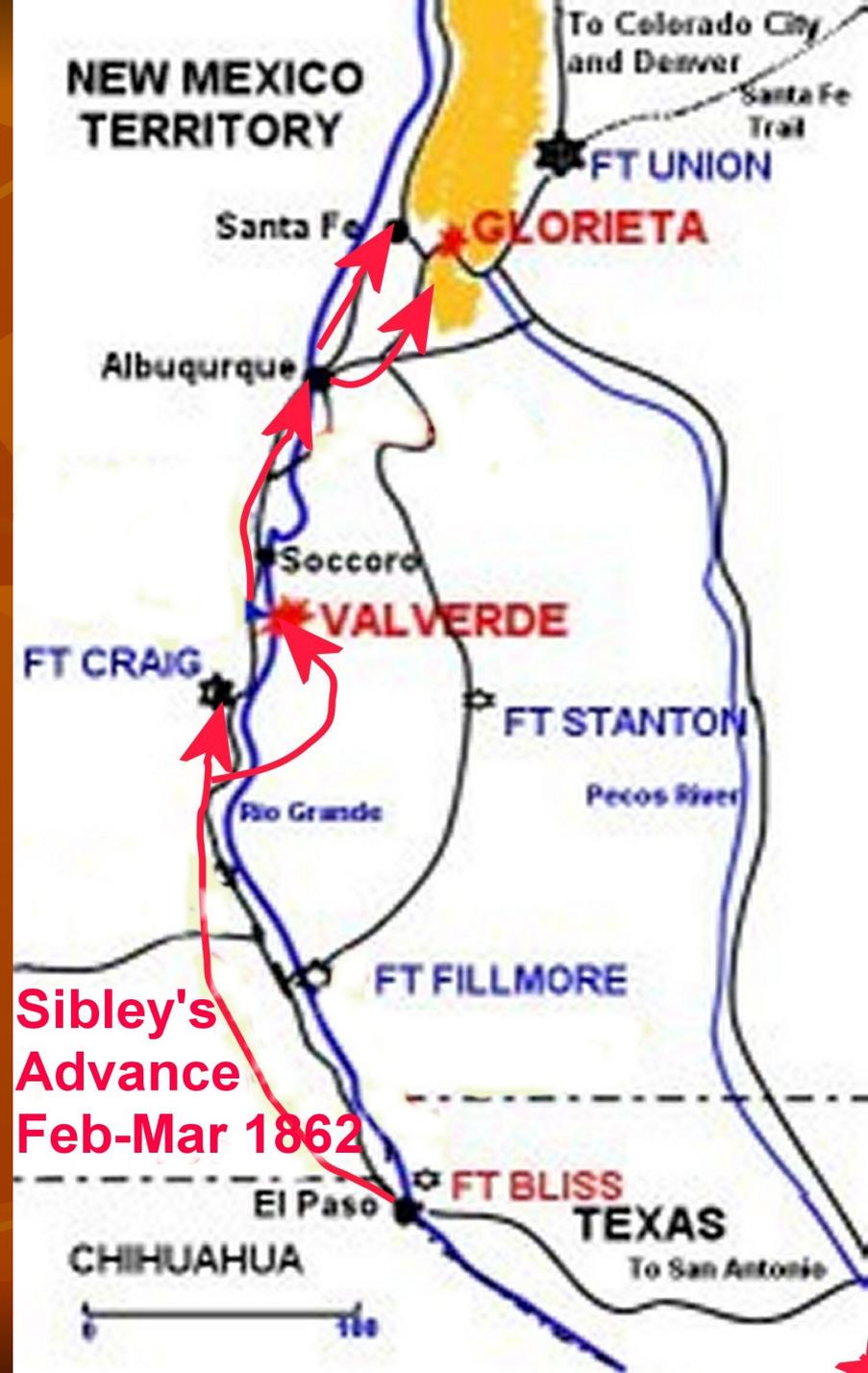
- Sibley avoided direct assault on Ft Craig – too strong
- So crossed the Rio Grande
- Tried to draw Canby out – Canby refused, only probed but opposed Sibley's bypass move
- NM Volunteers folded and ran
- McRae's '51 Battery Lost
- 3 West Point Grads die
- Canby remained bottled up
- Time and fight cost Sibley men and many supplies

# How a Union Battery Might Have Looked



Photograph not from this battle. No “embedded journalists” in the New Mexico War!

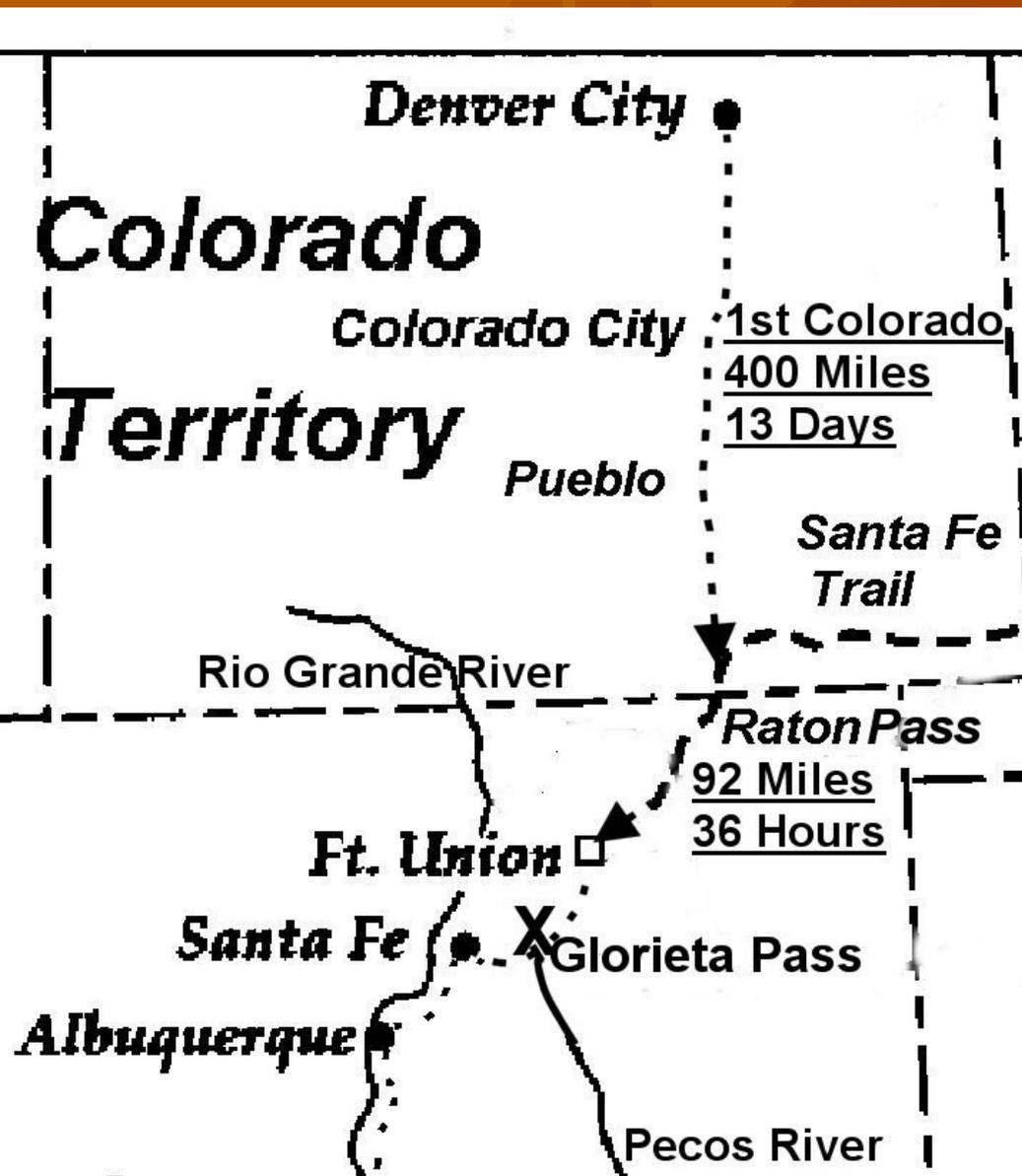
- After defeating Canby near Fort Craig, Sibley moved his Army north.
- Union Quartermaster Capt Enos '56 got supplies out of Socorro just in time. Rebs reach Albuquerque and Santa Fe. but many supplies already burned by Enos.
- Union troops retreat to Fort Union - the critical goal of Sibley. Rebs start toward it, with an advance party under Major Pyron through Apache Canyon and Glorieta Pass



# Was this also a ‘Civil’ Civil War?

- **Louisa Canby saw the wounded Confederates of Sibley’s Army in Santa Fe, short on supplies**
- **She offered to organize Union wives in Santa Fe (their men were trapped at Fort Craig) tend the Confederate Wounded, find medical supplies and comfort them.**
- **But she was the wife of the Union Commanding General Canby, the ‘enemy!’**
- **The Rebels called her the “Little Angel of Santa Fe”**
- **Hurrah for Army Wives! Then and now.**
- **They keep the male fighting animals human.**

# The Forced March of the 1<sup>st</sup> Colorado



Regiment had only 1,200 men All Gilpin could afford with \$375,000 in drafts on the Federal Treasury. Only one company was mounted

Answering Canby's call, the 1st started Feb 22d, 1862 from Camp Weld, Denver for Fort Union, NM.

Marched right down Colo Avenue through Colorado City. Band Playing?

Regiment went over Raton Pass in snowstorm on a legendary 92 mile 36

# The Opening Engagement

■ Texans didn't know whether they were Texans or Confederates – they unfurled the Lone Star flag at the first shots fired in Apache Canyon. Fought bravely, but Cavalry useless in narrow canyon. Texans not used to fighting at 7,000 feet, or on foot. Pikes Peaker grunts hard as nails.



# First Day's Battle. Maj Chivington's Advance force surprises Maj Pyron over Glorieta Pass, captures 80 Texans in Apache Canyon. Confederates stunned.

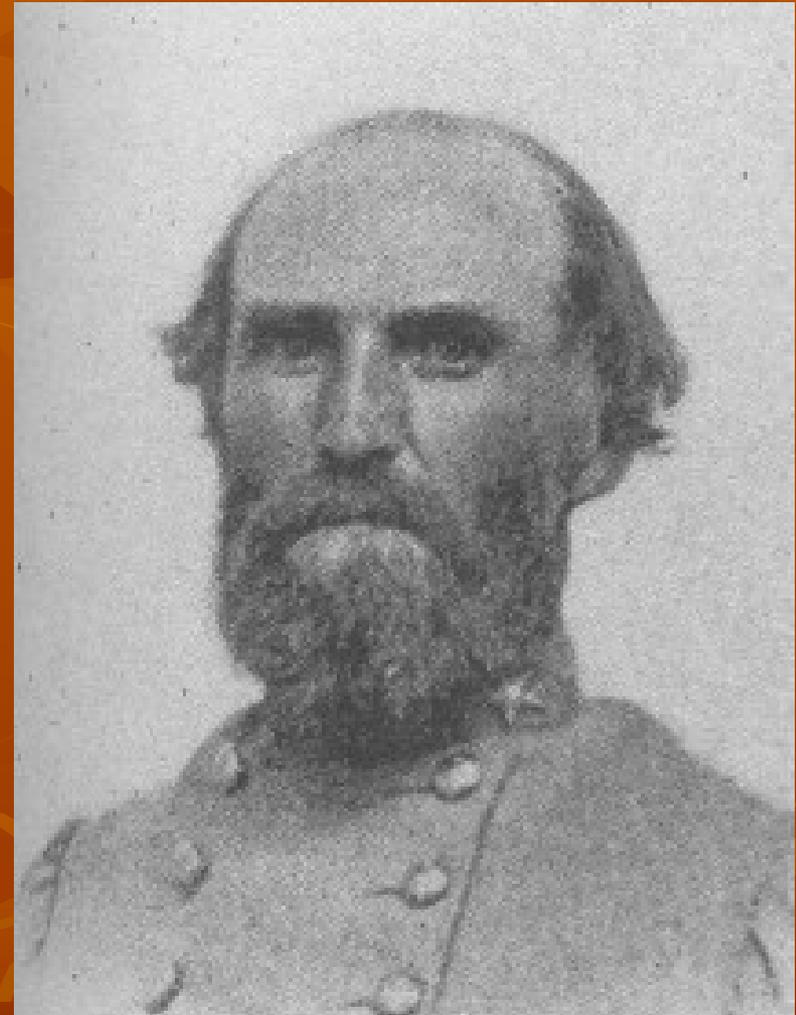
## GLORIETA BATTLEFIELD

March 26th - 28th, 1862



# Confederate Field Commander Lieutenant Colonel Scurry

- Toughest and best Rebel Field Commander
- Personally led 5 Texas Infantry Assaults against Grads Captains Ritter '56 and Claflin's '57 Batteries. Assaults Failed. High Point of Glorieta and the Invasion, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 1862
- Told Sibley "They were the flower of the US Army"
- Requested a Burial Truce
- Mass grave not found until 1987



# Decisive Battle Day. Scurry presses Slough hard, but Chivington destroys all 80 Rebel Supply wagons and 500 horses

## GLORIETA BATTLEFIELD

March 26-28th, 1862



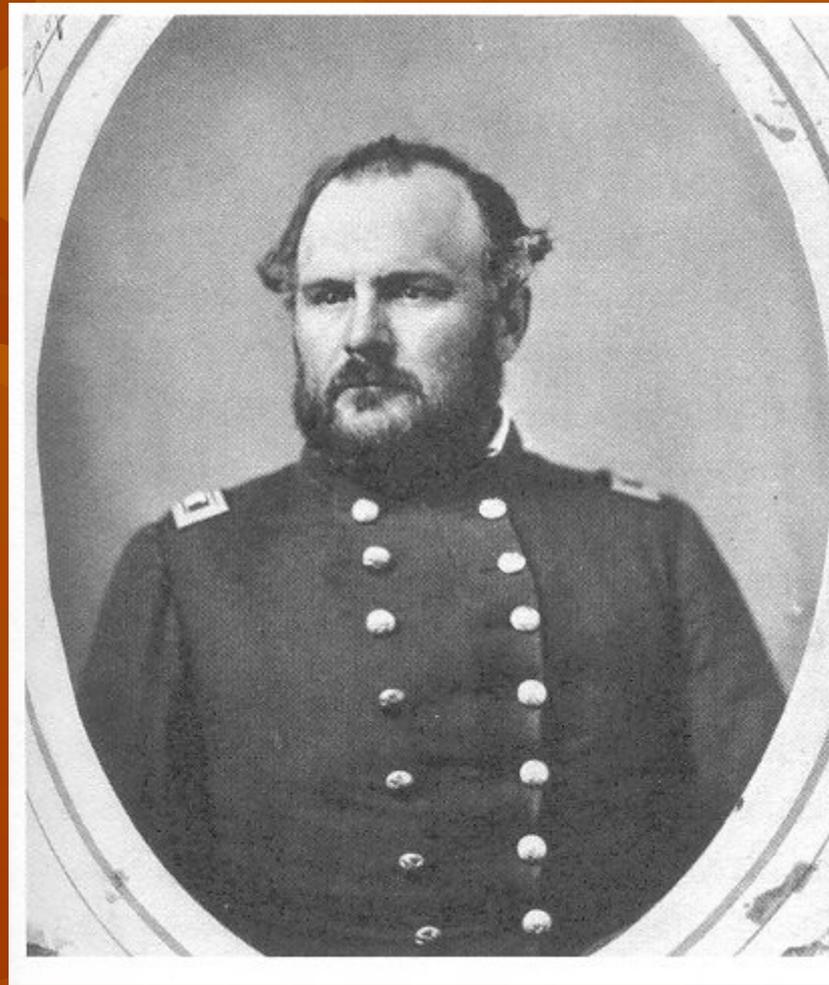
# The Great Texas Retreat

- Sibley, now desperate for supplies forced to start 300 mile retreat. Bypasses Ft Craig 100 hard miles
- Union units out of Forts Union and Craig start pressing Confederates southward. New Mexicans heartened.
- Confederates bury cannon at Albuquerque.
- Sharp overnight artillery engagement at Peralta
- Texas army starts disintegrating, leaving wounded, dead, wagons, horses behind. Some cross the dreaded dry Jornada del Muerte. Beset by raiding Indians.
- Sibley drags into Texas with just 7 wagons and less than 1,000 of the original 3,600 men and 363 wagons.

■

# Major John Chivington

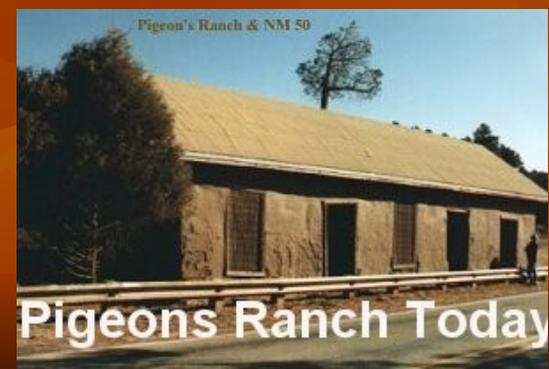
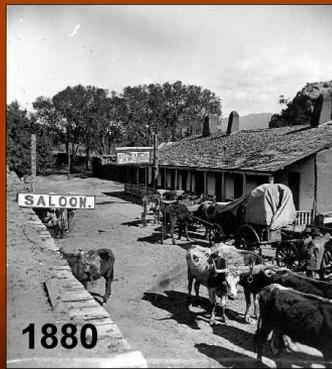
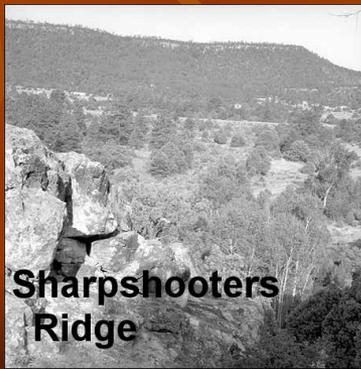
- **Methodist Minister who wanted to fight. Brother was a Confederate**
- **Most impressive Union combat leader during Glorieta Campaign**
- **Officers of 1<sup>st</sup> Colorado lobby him to be Regt Commander - Colonel – over LTC Tappan after Lawyer Slough resigns during Glorieta.**
- **Regiment marches back to Colo City Nov 1862 to be equipped with horses. Becomes the 1<sup>st</sup> Colorado Cavalry**
- **Chivington Commands BATTLE at Sand Creek - 1864**
- **Vilified in hearings by passed-over and jealous LTC Tappan .**
- **Indians continued to kill whites – including at Colorado City 1868**
- **Chivington Railroaded? Yes!**



# STRATEGIC OUTCOME

- Union Victory a “Little Gettysburg of the West”
- Confederate plans for a Western Empire dashed.
- Gilpin saves Colorado for the Union. Loses job
- Colorado City, perfect place for the Capitol, loses out to that overgrown cow town of Denver.
- After Sand Creek, Colorado ignores its Civil War victory. Texans and New Mexicans do not.
- 38 West Pointers –as professional artillerymen, quartermasters, cavalry, large factor in Victory. Utterly Forgotten today. Without ‘embedded’ journalists Glorieta forgotten back east too.

# Battlefields today - off I-25



# Fort Union Today



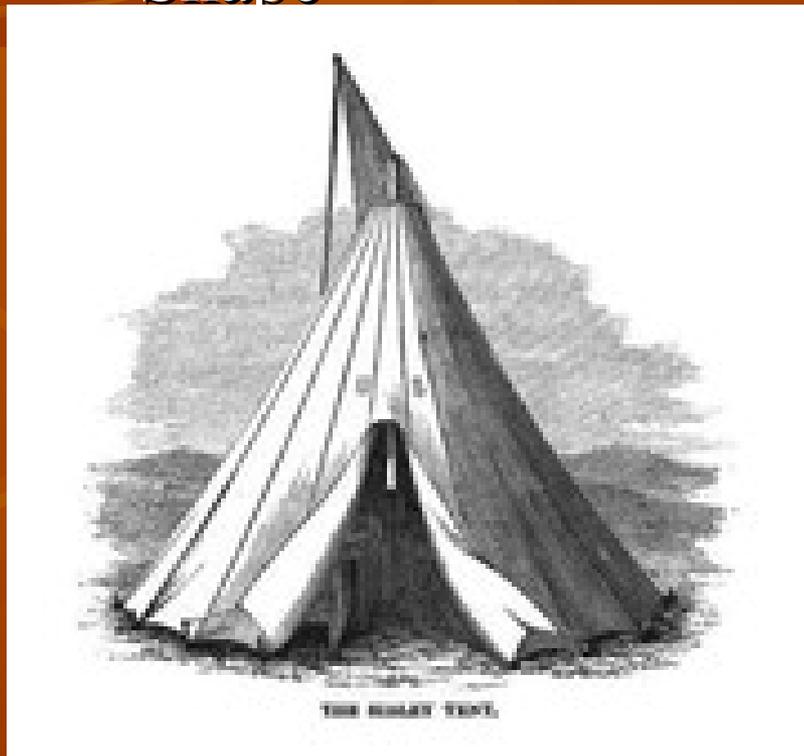
# What's This? Confederate Burial Ceremony in Santa Fe 1993?



Yep, 31 dead Texas Confederates dug up June

# Footnote - Fate of the Sibley Tent

Notice Indian Lodge  
Shape



- Union – then Rebel - Col Sibley invents and patents his military tent in 1856
- US Army agrees in 1858 to pay him \$5 Royalty for each tent it makes
- Army makes and uses 44,000 tents during war
- After the War neither Turncoat Sibley nor his heirs get one nickle

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