

Written by Bob Mallin with major contributions by Don Alberts and John Taylor  
 Design by MW Velgos Design  
 Editorial by Dan Stebbins  
 Photography by: Front cover: Mountain Howitzer fired at living history event/National Park Service photo; back cover: Efraín M. Padró, saber photographed courtesy of the National Park Service Museum at Pecos National Historical Park; Introduction: photo of reenactment by Patrick Christman, Minie balls by Andréa Brooks/WNPA; Marker #1: illustration of Edward Canby from a Civil War-era Harper's magazine, photo of Henry Sibley/ Library of Congress; Marker #2: photo of riflemen at El Rancho de las Golondrinas Living History Museum, Santa Fe, New Mex./Shirley Barnes, photo of John Shropshire courtesy of the Nesbitt Memorial Library, Columbus, Texas; Marker #3: Rob Shenk/Civil War Preservation Trust; Marker #4: Efraín M. Padró; Marker #5: Ben Wittick, courtesy Palace of the Governors Photo Archives (NMHM/DCA), negative #15783; Marker #7: Courtesy of the National Park Service; Marker #8: George H.H. Huey, cannon ball photographed courtesy of the National Park Service museum at Pecos National Historical Park, historic photo, right, Ben Wittick, courtesy Palace of the Governors Photo Archives (NMHM/DCA), negative #42922; Markers #9-10: Efraín M. Padró; Marker #11: Bottom, Efraín M. Padró, (upper right) photo courtesy of the Colorado Historical Society scan #10025590; Marker #12: Pigeon's Hospital by T. Harmon Parkhurst, courtesy Palace of the Governors Photo Archives (NMHM/DCA), negative #9690; (lower left) Courtesy of the Colorado Historical Society, scan #10028910, (lower right) Courtesy of the Colorado Historical Society, scan #10028910; Marker #13: (left) Scott Aldridge/WNPA, (center) Efraín M. Padró, (right) photo courtesy of the National Park Service; Marker #14: Efraín M. Padró.  
 Maps by: Inside front cover by Deborah Reade; Marker #1: map courtesy of Northeast New Mexico Region Four Tourism Board.

© 2009 by Western National Parks Association.  
 All rights reserved.

ISBN 10: 1-58369-123-5  
 ISBN 13: 978-1-58369-123-6

Printed in the United States by West Press  
 22 21 20 19 18 3 4 5 6 7

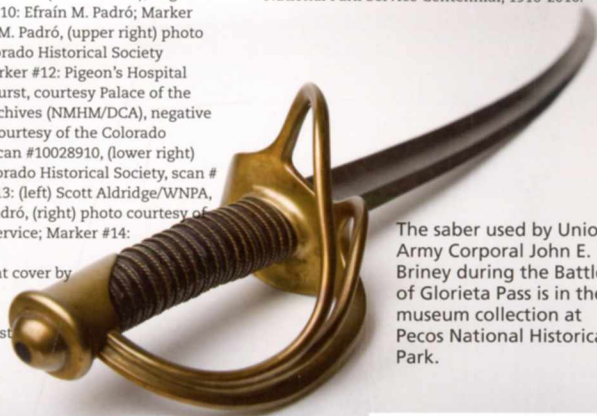
Published in the United States by  
 Western National Parks Association  
 12880 N Vistoso Village Dr.  
 Tucson, AZ 85755

Western National Parks Association (WNPA) is a nonprofit education partner of the National Park Service. WNPA supports parks across the West, developing products, services, and programs that enrich the visitor experience. Learn more at [www.wnpa.org](http://www.wnpa.org).

For information or wholesale inquiries, please contact [publishing@wnpa.org](mailto:publishing@wnpa.org).

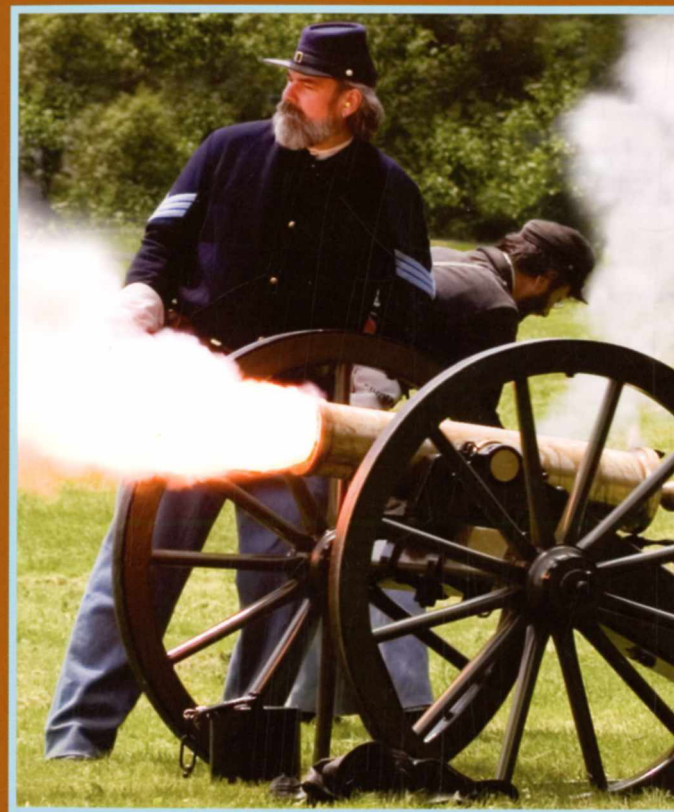
*The Civil War Battle of Glorieta Pass Trail Guide* was financed, in part, by the National Park Service's Connect Trails to Parks program, part of the National Park Service Centennial, 1916-2016.

The saber used by Union Army Corporal John E. Briney during the Battle of Glorieta Pass is in the museum collection at Pecos National Historical Park.



# Civil War Battle of Glorieta Pass

## TRAIL GUIDE



Western  
 National Parks  
 Association



 sustainable forest product  
 This has been printed  
 on an FSC certified stock

ISBN-13: 978-1-58369-123-6



9 781583 691236

**Pecos National Historical Park**



The New Mexico Artillery Company demonstrates cannon fire at the annual Battle of Glorieta Pass Civil War Encampment.

# CIVIL WAR BATTLE OF GLORIETA PASS

**March 26-28, 1862**

## *Confederate westward plans foiled*

THE BATTLE OF GLORIETA PASS is referred to as “The Gettysburg of the West.” It was here in the spring of 1862, along the Santa Fe Trail in New Mexico Territory, that Union troops thwarted an ambitious Confederate military campaign, designed to expand the Confederacy westward. The Confederates hoped to take control of the mining riches of Colorado and press on to capture key ports in the California.

Much as the Confederates were never again to invade the north after losing the Battle of Gettysburg, the Southern Rebels never again attempted a significant action in the far West after the Battle of Glorieta Pass. The battle was fought over three days between March 26 and March 28, 1862. Major fighting on the final day was preceded by a lesser and indecisive encounter on March 26th. As you follow the trail markers, use this guide to learn about the events on the third and final day of the battle. Relive the advances and retreats, read of the tactics that failed, and marvel at the daring Union march across Glorieta Mesa to destroy the vital Confederate supplies that led to the

ultimate Union victory.

For the purposes of this trail guide, the fighting highlighted on this third and final day of the Battle of Glorieta Pass is broken into three sections or phases: Initial, Main and Final. As you travel along the trail, keep in mind that in 1862 this area was not nearly as vegetated as it is today; there were fewer trees and shrubs because they were used for fuel, building, and other purposes.

With approximately 1,200 soldiers on each side, the casualties were high—Union forces suffered 51 killed, 78 wounded, and 15 captured. Among the Confederates, 48 were killed, 80 wounded, and 92 captured. The Battle of Glorieta Pass came more than a year before Gettysburg, and though not anywhere near the magnitude of Gettysburg in terms of men engaged in the fight or resultant casualties, it convincingly demonstrated that the violence of Civil War battles was not confined to the battlefields of the East.



.58 caliber Minié balls were fired by both Union and Confederate riflemen during the Civil War.

## MARKER 1

### *Battle Background - Texans Move Up the Rio Grande, Colorado Volunteers Move South* **Forces met at Valverde in February 1862, at Glorieta in March**

**I**N THE LAST HALF of 1861, Confederate Brigadier General Henry Hopkins Sibley, a West Point graduate and former major in the U.S. Army, raised a force of Texas volunteers to invade New Mexico Territory. His objectives were to capture military supplies from Union forts in New Mexico and to recruit New Mexicans, Utah Mormons, and Colorado miners to the Confederate cause. The mineral wealth of the West, it was thought, would enrich the Confederacy. And, if the California ports of San Diego and Los Angeles could be taken, the South would have access to

international trade, which was severely restricted by the Union blockade of the Confederacy's Atlantic ports.

Col. Edward R. S. Canby, also a West Point graduate and Union commander of the Department of New Mexico, learned of the invasion plans and convinced the governors of New Mexico and Colorado to organize companies of volunteers to augment his 2,500 Federal troops. By early 1862, Canby had a combined 4,000 troops available at Fort Union and Fort Craig to confront the invading, 3,000-man strong Rebel force, which was moving up the Rio Grande attacking Union forts.



COL. EDWARD R. S. CANBY

Canby's and Sibley's forces first clashed on Feb. 21st, 1862, near Fort Craig, 100 miles south of Albuquerque. In what is known as the Battle of Valverde, Confederates triumphed, forcing Canby's forces to withdraw to the safety of the fort. But, in the course of the battle, half of the Confederate supplies were destroyed—a crucial event since the

loss of their remaining supplies in the later Battle of Glorieta Pass would be instrumental in Sibley's decision to retreat to Texas.

Flushed with the victory at Valverde, Sibley moved northward, first occupying Albuquerque, then, on March 10, Confederates took Santa Fe. A little over a week later, Rebel forces began moving eastward along the Santa Fe Trail with the objective of capturing Fort Union, northeast of Pecos. On March 25th, 1862 Confederate and Union forces were, unbeknown to each other, camped on opposite sides of Glorieta Pass, where the Santa Fe Trail narrows as it winds

*Confederate and Union forces were spotted by pickets from both sides on Wednesday, March 26th, artillery duels were fought the next day, and the main troop encounters occurred on Friday, March 28th.*



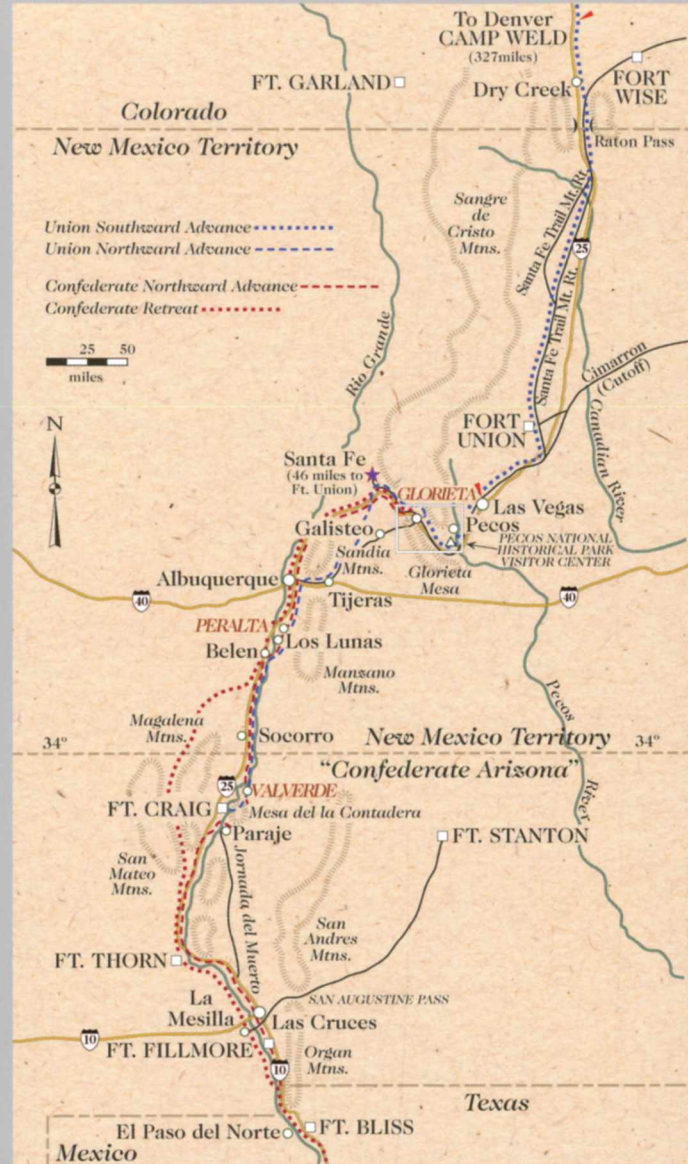
GEN. HENRY HOPKINS SIBLEY

through a low point in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. Troops were sent ahead by both sides to detect enemy forces. These “pickets” would soon discover the other’s forces.

Over the next three days, Union and Confederate troops were engaged in artillery duels, sharpshooting, and fighting at close range that comprised the Battle of Glorieta Pass. Though Sibley’s Confederate forces pressed Canby’s troops into

a series of tactical withdrawals, the Union forces forced the Texans to quit the Pigeon’s Ranch battlefield they had won and return to Santa Fe to resupply, thanks to a bold march over Glorieta Mesa led by Maj. John Chivington. Chivington’s men surprised the Confederate rear guard and destroyed their food and ammunition supplies at Johnson’s Ranch.

The map, opposite, shows the path of Union and Confederate forces in late 1861 and early 1862 leading up to the Battle of Glorieta Pass and the Confederate retreat that followed.



## MARKER 2

### *The Battle at Pigeon's Ranch – Overview of the Third Day of the Battle of Glorieta Pass*

**Friday, March 28th**

ON THE MORNING of March 28th, the third and final day of the Battle of Glorieta Pass, both sides moved toward each other. With about 900 men, Confederate Lt. Col. William Scurry left Johnson's Ranch and travelled east along the Santa Fe Trail. Slough's Union forces left Camp Lewis near Kozlowski's Stage Stop and proceeded west along the same trail. The two forces met where you are today.

You are standing on Artillery Hill. Today, the old Santa Fe Trail in this vicinity is covered by New Mexico Highway 50. The highway passes the remains of Pigeon's Ranch,

a hostelry catering to commercial travelers in the 1860s. The ranch's surviving building is over the hill to your forward right. Early on March 28th, 1862, Union and Confederate pickets encountered each other. Scurry and his Confederate soldiers dismounted and joined the Fourth Texas foot-soldiers, advancing eastward along the trail. Colonel John P. Slough, leader of the First Regiment of Colorado volunteers, brought up the union's artillery and formed a battle line across the trail. This first contact of the



Union riflemen at El Rancho de las Golondrinas, A Living History Museum in Santa Fe, New Mex.

battle lasted only a few minutes.

The Union forces fell back to a stronger position to the north and west of Windmill Hill after a failed flanking maneuver. The Confederates established a similar line, strengthened by three artillery pieces. The Union countered with four mountain howitzers (see Markers 7 and 8). This phase of battle lasted three hours.

The Confederate vanguard was able to

outflank the Union line (to the south, just across Interstate 25). In response, Col. Slough withdrew to a second defensive position, just west of Pigeon's Ranch, strengthened by four pieces of heavier artillery. His infantry and dismounted cavalrymen formed the right and left of the Union line along the ridge north of the ranch and around Artillery Hill.

A brief pause in the fighting allowed Lt. Col. Scurry to reorganize his Confederate forces and plan an assault on this new Federal line. At about 2 p.m., the battle was renewed. On the Confederate right, Maj. John Shropshire marched



MAJ. JOHN SHROPSHIRE

his men around the Union line. Shropshire then led a charge on the wooded areas to your right, and was killed.

The Confederates outflanked the Union forces north of Pigeon's Ranch, and the Federal commander ordered his men to fall back to a third defensive line a mile east of Pigeon's Ranch, ending the main phase of the Battle of Glorieta Pass at about 4:30 p.m. (See more information on Marker 12.)

### MARKER 3

#### *Initial Phase of the Battle* **Morning, March 28th**

**T**HE SANTA FE Trail was just across and slightly below the present NM-50 alignment.

On March 28th, 1862, at about 11 a.m., the

Confederate column

formed a line of battle that included three cannons.

They were opposed by the Union forces, consisting of companies of the First Colorado and Third U. S. Cavalry and four, 12-pound mountain howitzers. Led by Capt. John Ritter, they engaged the Rebels. But the Confederates pushed the Federals back to the near side of the gully you see before you.

In the Union center, Lt. Ira Claflin's howitzers were fired from a position

at the site of this marker.

Claflin was soon supported by Colorado volunteers and U.S. regulars. Both sides maintained a furious fire of artillery and small arms for almost three hours.

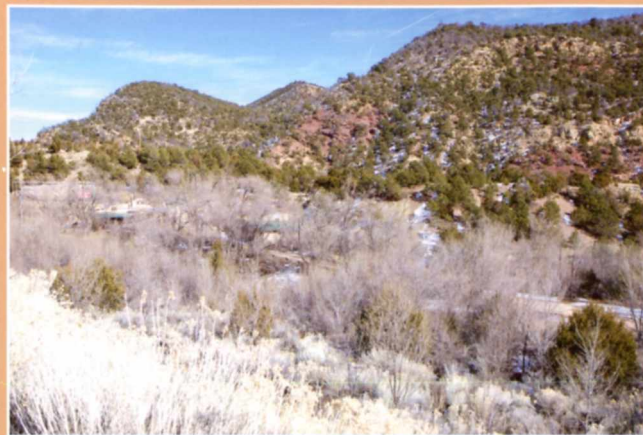
Outflanked by a Confederate vanguard, Col. Slough ordered a withdrawal of the Federals eastward to a stronger position just west of Pigeon's Ranch.

Subsequently, Confederate forces occupied the former Union positions and

Union troops came down from atop Glorieta Mesa to destroy Confederate supplies at Johnson's Ranch.

prepared to assault the enemy at Pigeon's Ranch.

Meanwhile, with the Union forces pushed back, Union Maj. John Chivington led a band of Federal troops across Glorieta Mesa on a daring raid on the Confederate supply train at Johnson's Ranch. That raid wrested victory from the advancing Confederates.



## MARKER 4

### *Attack Near Pigeon's Ranch – Main Phase*

**Late afternoon, March 28th**

**H**ERE YOU SEE the Glorieta Pass battlefield as Lt. Col. Scurry saw it during late afternoon of March 28th, 1862. On the left is the Santa Fe Trail, (today's NM-50). Beyond it a large rock formation marks the northern end of the Union line. Some 300 yards in front of you is Pigeon's Ranch.

Sharpshooters Ridge is immediately north of the Pigeon's Ranch building that still stands today. A

The only remaining original building at Pigeon's Ranch

low adobe corral wall ran southward from the base of Sharpshooter's Ridge. Artillery Hill to your right had a three-howitzer battery near its crest and Colorado volunteers around its base. From this area, Lt. Col. Scurry sent Maj. Shropshire to attack the Union left around Artillery Hill. Majors Charles Pyron and Henry Raguet were dispatched to assault the enemy north of the Santa Fe Trail.

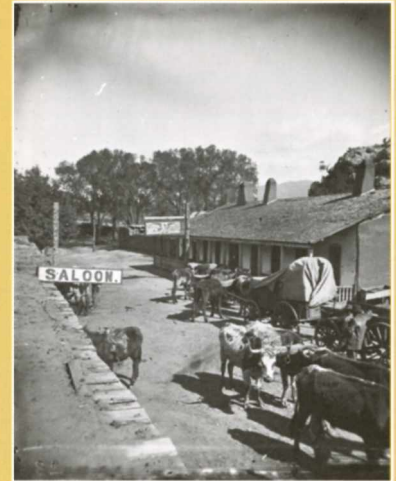


## MARKER 5

### *The Confederate Battle Line – Main Phase*

**Mid afternoon, March 28th**

**Y**OU ARE NOW near the position of the Confederate line during the main phase of fighting. The ditch you see before you was used as a shelter by Maj. Shropshire's men. Federal forces had established a strong second defensive line around Pigeon's Ranch, which Lt. Col. Scurry planned to attack. Fourth Texas Sgt. Alfred B. Peticolas lay in this muddy ditch about where I-25 covers it today. Peticolas later wrote, "We laid in the gully on the right (for) half an hour and then were ordered further



Pigeon's Ranch was a popular stopping point along the Santa Fe Trail both before and after the Civil War. This photo was taken in June 1880.

on..." Peticolas and his Fourth Texas comrades on the Confederate right flank charged the Federals here on Artillery Hill.

## MARKER 6

### *Fierce Fighting in the Center – Main Phase*

**Late morning and afternoon, March 28th**

THIS IS THE CENTER of the battlefield which included several *arroyos*, or gullies. Down this sloping, cultivated field, Lt. Col. Scurry led his center assault column of approximately 500 Texans. However, the Union center at Pigeon's Ranch was too strong. Capt. John Ritter's four 12-pounders and field howitzers, joined by Claflin's three mountain howitzers, blew the Confederate charge to a bloody halt. Scurry retreated, but later returned for a second unsuccessful frontal attack. North of the Santa Fe Trail, however, the

Texans were successful, driving the Federals from Sharpshooter's Ridge, and forcing a retreat from Pigeon's Ranch. Confederate Maj. Raguet was killed in this fighting. About 4:30 p.m., Lt. Col. Scurry mounted a successful third charge against a rear guard of Federals, which was protecting the Union withdrawal. Scurry then came upon the third Union defensive line a mile east of Pigeon's Ranch along the Santa Fe Trail.

## MARKER 7

### *Strong Union Defense – Main Phase*

**Late afternoon, March 28**

HERE AT THE BASE and lower slopes of Artillery Hill, Col. Slough stationed Companies D and K of the First Colorado Volunteers during the main phase of the battle. From behind the rock formations and trees, these Union infantrymen played a key role in stopping the two fierce Confederate attacks against the center of the Federal line. Company D took especially heavy casualties in repulsing the strong Texan assaults.



A howitzer of the type used by Union forces in the Battle of Glorieta Pass.

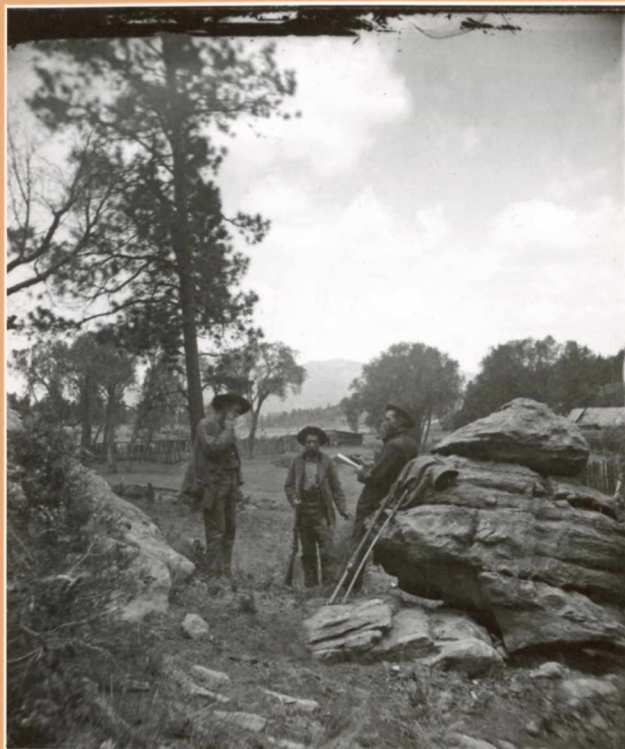
## MARKER 8

### *The Mountain Howitzer Battery – Main Phase* **Afternoon, March 28th**

**A**FTER WITHDRAWING from his position at Windmill Hill, Lt. Claflin took his battery to the new Federal line on Artillery Hill, locating it on a narrow logging road that ran to the top of the hill and curved back to this point. Claflin readied his three 12-pounder mountain howitzers, while his supporting Colorado infantry protected him from the lower positions on Artillery Hill. Soon, he

saw a Confederate force approaching from the south. He feared the Texans would overrun the road to his rear, so he retreated to a position in the valley behind the low adobe corral wall and south of the Santa Fe Trail. There he helped to repulse the two initial Confederate charges at the Union Center. Major Shropshire was killed near this spot. (See Marker 2.)

A cannonball found on the Glorieta Pass battlefield is on display in the Pecos National Historical Park Visitor Center.



Eighteen years after the battle, George Hibbard and two other unidentified men with rifles stand near where Maj. John Shropshire, the commanding officer of Company A, 5th Texas Mounted Volunteers of the Confederate Army was shot between the eyes by a Union soldier.

## MARKER 9

### *Sgt. Peticolas's Adventure – Main Phase* **Afternoon, March 28**

HERE Sgt. Alfred B. Peticolas became separated from the Texans sent to attack the southern flank of Artillery Hill. He accidentally walked through a gap in the Federal line, created when Claflin's battery moved. He was described as having walked "leisurely along the hill towards where their line was, firing at every opportunity down at the enemy." You are following his path, and Pigeon's Ranch is below. Peticolas soon walked into a line of Union soldiers on the crest of Artillery Hill. Wearing a captured Federal

overcoat, he looked like a solitary Union soldier. A Federal officer, Lt. Col. Samuel Tappan, thinking Peticolas one of his own troops, allowed the young Texas sergeant to continue his walk along the top of Artillery Hill and back safely into the Confederate ranks at the base of the hill.

## MARKER 10

### *Artillery Hill Abandoned – Main Phase* **Late afternoon, March 28th**

AFTER encountering Sergeant Peticolas, Federal Lt. Col. Tappan led his men along the logging road, earlier used by Claflin's artillery battery, to abandon Artillery Hill and avoid capture. You are standing on the trace of that logging road at a point where scattered Confederates,

now on the crest of Artillery Hill, fired at the Colorado volunteers, who were withdrawing rapidly down the narrow road toward its junction with the Santa Fe Trail, east of Pigeon's Ranch. One group of retreating Federals stopped here to return the Texans' fire.



A living history event in Socorro, New Mex., south of Albuquerque, brings to life the Civil War engagements along the Rio Grande in early 1862, which were preludes to the decisive Battle of Glorieta Pass.

## MARKER 11

### *Chivington's Surprise Attack at Johnson's Ranch – Main Phase*

**Morning and afternoon, March 28th**

THE DECISIVE tactical maneuver of the Battle of Glorieta Pass was led by Maj. Chivington (see Marker #3). Five hundred Union soldiers, under Chivington, separated from Slough's main force early in the morning of March 28, before the fighting began around Pigeon's Ranch. Chivington and his men climbed atop Glorieta Mesa, south of the Santa Fe Trail, and marched across the mesa to a point at the unprotected Confederate rear where the Rebels stockpiled their food, ammunition and other vital supplies. Guided by Lt. Col. Manuel Chaves of the New Mexico Volunteers, the Union soldiers reached the western rim of Glorieta

Mesa (seen to your right) by 2 p.m. Below them, the Texan camp at Johnson's Ranch (present day Cañoncito) lay vulnerable. Chivington sent his men down a steep bank from the mesa top to burn the Confederate supply wagons and run off the Confederate mules and horses they discovered corralled at the site. Eighty Confederate wagons and the supplies they contained were destroyed, and most

of the mules and horses were stampeded up a narrow canyon. Only a few Confederate guards and teamsters managed to escape toward Santa Fe. Stripped of their vital supplies, the Confederates decided to withdraw to Santa Fe to regroup and resupply. With the wagons burning and exploding, the Union soldiers retraced their route over the mesa, this time guided by former Polish



MAJ. JOHN CHIVINGTON

priest and Union chaplain Alexander Grzelachowski. That afternoon and evening, soldiers on both sides suffered additional hardship when a late-winter snowstorm dropped nearly a foot of snow in the area of the pass. Late that night, Chivington and his weary troops finally returned to Camp Lewis at Kozlowski's Stage Stop. Confederate forces remained at Pigeon's Ranch. Thus ended the most successful Union action in the Battle of Glorieta Pass.

The main building at Kozlowski's Stage Stop where Union forces were camped when Chivington and his men returned from their daring raid.



## MARKER 12

### *Saving Lives at the Union Field Hospital Final Phase*

**Late afternoon, March 28th**

AFTER withdrawing to a spot about a mile east of Pigeon's Ranch, Slough formed a new defensive line across the Santa Fe Trail, and covered the withdrawal of his supply train and ambulance wagons. At about the same time, the Texans got the devastating news that their supplies

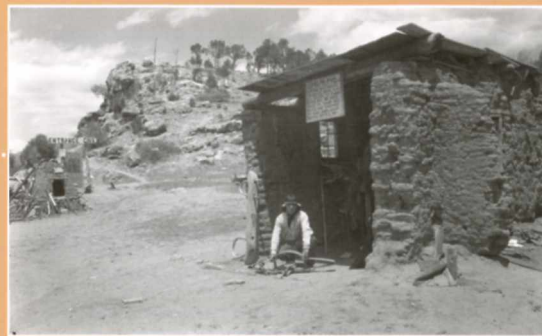
had been destroyed. A truce was declared to allow both sides to tend to their wounded and bury their dead. The Federal force returned to camp at Kozlowski's Stage Stop.

Directly ahead of you was the Union field hospital, under the leadership of Colorado surgeons John Hamilton

and Lewis Tolles. Civil War-era medicine was primitive by today's standards, but equal to the best in the world

of the time. Surgery often ended in infection and death. Amputations were routine for arm and leg wounds. Alcohol was relied upon as a painkiller. Union

soldiers, badly wounded in the fighting at Glorieta Pass, were evacuated by horse and cart to Fort Union, and Confederate casualties were taken to Santa Fe.



The Confederate field hospital that handled casualties after the fighting at Pigeon's Ranch as photographed circa 1935.



Two surgeons from Colorado were in charge of the Union Army field hospital during the Battle of Glorieta Pass, Drs. John Hamilton and Lewis Tolles. Hamilton is shown in the front row, second from the left in the photo on the far left. The remaining officers pictured were also members of the Colorado volunteers.

## MARKER 13

### *Aftermath of the Battle*

**March 29th-April 15th, 1862**

**B**OOTH SIDES INITIALLY felt they had won the Battle of Glorieta Pass. In the face-to-face combat, Scurry's Confederates consistently kept Slough's Federals on the defensive, pushing them back repeatedly. However, the

Federal commander had kept his force largely intact. The fighting around Pigeon's Ranch was a Confederate victory, or at least a draw. But Chivington's destruction of the Confederate supplies at Johnson's Ranch was decisive for the Federals.

Ten days after the Battle of Glorieta Pass, having received intelligence that Canby was moving north from Fort Craig with a large force, the Confederates left Santa Fe and began a lengthy retreat back to Texas. The

Confederates fought one more small action with Federal troops at the village of Peralta, south of Albuquerque, on April 15th, 1862, but the Confederates would never again threaten an expansion in the West.

"Colorado Volunteers at the Battles of Glorieta Pass, March 26-28, 1862... Erected by the people of Colorado in memory of the brave men who fought here."

"In loyal memory of the Texas Mounted Volunteers, Sibley's Brigade, CSA, who died in service at Glorieta Pass, March 28, 1862."



Monuments to Colorado volunteers, left, and Texas volunteers, center, at Pecos National Historical Park, and a gravestone for Union soldiers killed at Glorieta Pass at the National Cemetery in Santa Fe.

## MARKER 14

### *The Battle Remembered* 1862 through the present day

IN 1868, the people of New Mexico erected a monument on the Santa Fe Plaza honoring those who fell at the Battle of Glorieta Pass. Its inscription includes the hopeful words: "May the Union be Perpetual." In later years, the Texas Division of The United Daughters of the Confederacy (1939) and Colorado's State Historical Society (1993) erected monuments on the battlefield itself memorializing those who fought and died here. Until recently, the battlefield was

largely in private hands. During the 1980s, however, the Glorieta Battlefield Preservation Society Inc., assisted by regional Civil War re-enactors, The Council of America's Military Past, and The Conservation Fund, worked to preserve the Glorieta Battlefield. They stabilized the fragile Pigeon's Ranch building, staged annual encampments, and hosted tours. They also assisted State of New Mexico archeologists during the 1987 discovery of the mass grave of 31 Confederate soldiers near here. The

remains were reinterred in the Santa Fe National Cemetery. In 1990, President George H. W. Bush signed an act that formed the Glorieta Unit of Pecos National Historical Park, thus preserving this site.

An obelisk in Santa Fe Plaza honors those killed in New Mexico during the Civil War and also in the Indian Wars which followed. A granite template at the foot of the monument reads, "To the heroes of the Federal Army who fell at the battles of Cañon del Apache and Pigeon's Rancho (La Glorieta), fought with the Rebels March 28, 1862, and to those who fell at the battle fought with the Rebels at Peralta April 15, 1862." An estimated 100 men were killed in the three days of fighting at Glorieta Pass.

