CHAPTER III

THE EXPEDITION OF ZEBULON MONTGOMERY PIKE, 1806-07

Though Pike may not actually have set foot on the territory that fifty-five years later became Weld county, he certainly did traverse the great untamed wilds that embraced it; and his adventure formed the initial part of the great trek westward.

After the United States government had consummated the Louisiana Purchase and come into possession of that vast indefinite domain west of the Mississippi River, knowledge of the territory became of importance. As yet, the need of expansion was not being felt, but it was to meet a future need that this great domain had been purchased. And, in anticipation of the time when it would be needed, a number of expeditions were sent out from Washington at different times for the purpose of exploring the territory. One of the earliest of these was the expedition of Zebulon M. Pike, in 1806-7.

Pike, a young officer of the regular army which was then under the command of James Wilkinson as Commander General of the Military Forces of the United States, was commissioned to cross the plains to the Rocky Mountains and bring back information upon which future plans might be based.

His first duty, however, though incidental to the main objective, was to convoy under United States protection a band of Osage Indians that had been held captive by the Pottawattamies, back to their own lands and people. And also to escort to their native homes a number of Osage and Pawnee Chieftains who had been visiting the Great White Father in Washington. The land of the Pottawattamies was within the territory that is now Illinois.

At this time there was friction between the United States government and Spain over boundary lines. These lines had never been definitely stated in any transaction involving the territory, neither when it passed from France to Spain, nor when back again to France; nor, for the matter of that, when it was first claimed for France by the explorer, Sieur de La Salle. Always

it had been described in such vague terms as "From the Rocky mountains to the Pacific"; "Lands unknown", and "Regions unexplored"; and for three hundred years nothing more definite was attempted. But now, with the establishment of an independent American government, such boundaries were no longer satisfactory. Spain contended that the United States government was reaching beyond the limits of any thing that should have been included, even in the claims of La Salle. So every move of the United States toward exploration was being jealously watched by Spain. Pike was under constant, though secret, surveilliance while making preparations for his expedition, and reports of his activities went before him to all the Spanish agents of the South and Southwest; and it was this that led to the disaster that finally ended his expedition.

Pike's original command consisted of: Lieut. James E. Wilkinson, son of the General; Dr. John Robinson, sergeants Joseph Ballinger and William E. Meek, Corporal Jeremiah Jackson, Interpreter Baronet (familiarly called by Pike "Baroney") Vasquez, and sixteen private soldiers from the regular army; 22 in all.

This expedition left St. Louis July 11, 1806, went to Belle Fountain on right bank of the Missouri River, and left the cantonment there July 16, 1806. Within the next six weeks they made the necessary detour to the land of the Pottawattamies, received the captive Osages and delivered them safely to their people in the Great Osage village, about fifteen miles northeast of the present city of Fort Scott, Kansas. Here Pike procured horses for his farther journey westward. He left the Grand Osage village on September 1. 1806, with fifteen loaded horses. His command, being here augmented by recruits from both the Pawnee and the Osage Indians, now numbered thirty.

The expedition bore northwestward through what is now Kansas, reaching the Pawnee Republic on September 25.

Here discomforting rumors of Spanish surveilliance reached him, the information being that a group of 300 had preceeded him and would be likely to lay in wait at some strategic point. Also he was told that it was here that the Spanish had met and

vanquished an Expedition under Sparks, some months before. From this the Indians reasonably concluded that the Spaniards had great power and were a formidable enemy, and out of friendship for Pike they did their best to persuade him to turn back. But Pike replied that the young warriors with him had been sent by the Great American Father to find out about his country to the west and could not turn back. So, with many misgivings, the friendly Indians saw the white "warriors" move on.

At what is now the site of Great Bend, Kansas, the expedition divided, Lieut. Wilkinson with five soldiers and two guides to descend the Arkansas river, and Pike with the rest of the company to push on westward.

As near as can be guessed from later happenings, the latter division reached Colorado by the end of October or early in November; for it was on November 15, 1806, that Pike caught his first view of the Rocky mountains and the lofty peak that still bears his name. This from the mouth of the Purgatory river. In his journal Pike wrote:

"About two in the afternoon I thought I could distinguish a mountain off to our right. It appeared like a small blue cloud, but half an hour later came into clear enough view to convince the whole company, who simultaneously broke out into three lusty cheers for the Mexican Mountain."

Two days later he describes the first experience of the white man with that peculiar phenomenon, the hallucination of distance; the same that was experienced by members of Long's expedition fourteen years later, and that has been experienced by every traveler in the mountains since that day. He wrote:

"We marched with our usual speed, expecting at once to come upon the mountain, but after six days found no visible difference in distance."

It is not clearly stated by any historian just when or where the following incident took place, though all agree that it did take place; but it must have been somewhere on the way between the Pawnee Republic and what has since become Colorado territory, and likely before the sighting of the great peak.

The story is that Pike and Robinson left their temporary

camp and started out on a hunt for buffalo to reinforce their supply of food, which circumstance shows that their expedition could not have been very well supplied with provisions; indeed, quite the contrary, as we shall see later.

Pike and Robinson were not experienced hunters, nor could they have been in the slightest degree familiar with the country; so they lost their way over the trackless desert and wandered for two days without food or shelter from the keen November winds. Finally, after many anxious hours of wandering, by a path they never could find again, when the daylight dawned on the third day they found the camp just before them. But joy and thankfulness for their safe return was tempered with disappointment and dark forebodings for the future when they learned that in their absence a band of maruading Pawnees, returning from a raid on the Comanche's country, had raided the camp and carried off everything that suited their fancy. They had so far outnumbered the men in camp that resistance was clearly worse than useless, and so in despair the men had watched their meager supplies disappear.

This put the expedition almost wholly on its own, with dependence upon the hunt as their only hope for fighting off starvation. And this with bleak winter almost upon them. The wonder is that they were able to carry on at all. The average person can hardly get a slight conception of the spirit of determination and daring that must have carried them onward.

On November 23, eight days after they had first sighted the great Peak, they stopped; and Pike directed his men to throw up an embankment five feet high on three sides, the other opening to the river, to furnish something of protection from the weather, and from which explorations might go forward.

The historian Smilie says there is no record of Pike's having run up the American flag over this encampment, but that it would have been only true to his daring nature to have done so; and that, if he did, it was the first American flag to float over future Colorado soil. But whether he did plant the flag there or not we know that he did later, which act led to the downfall of his expedition.

They were now nine days nearer the beckoning peak than they were when they had caught the first glimpse of its splendor; they could not be far away; so Pike and Robinson started again about noon on November 24, this time accompanied by two soldiers; they were going to walk to the base of the peak that lured them and return to camp at night. In spite of past experiences they believed it could be done; but after they had traveled twelve miles the base seemed no nearer. However, the daylight was gone and they could not return to camp, so there was nothing else to do but to spend the night where they were. It is not hard to believe Pike's record which states that this night was spent in great discomfort.

But early on the morning of the twenty-fifth (November, 1806) they were again on the march and again nightfall caught them, not at the base of the great peak, but at an elevation to the southeast of it. This was, most likely, Cheyenne Mountain, some ten or twelve miles from the peak we call Pike's.

On the morning of the 26th, thinking it best to travel as light as possible, since that would be the day when they would reach the great peak, they left what blankets and provisions they had and started the ascent. They found the way extremely difficult, sometimes being obliged to climb up rocks that were almost perpendicular. They marched all day and camped in a cave that night without, as Pike's record says, "either blankets, victuals or water."

The following day they reached the peak, only to find that it was not that "highest peak" of their search, but one very much lower, above and beyond which towered others still higher.

For the sake of other ambitious climbers, who may see in such an experience only the glamour of adventure, it may be well to quote verbatim from Pike's own diary the events of that historic day that, after all, had its compensations:

"We were hungry, thirsty and extremely sore from the uneveness of the rocks that had been our bed all night, but were amply repaid for it all by the sublimity of the prospect below us—the unbounded prairie overhung with clouds that appeared like an ocean in a storm, wave piled on wave and foaming, whilst

the sky overhead was perfectly clear."

Here we might break off this story long enough to give the corroboration of a group of trappers who struck Pike's trail three years later and who gave their impressions of the height of the sky-piercing peak in the following language:

"It was so high that we could not see how even a cloud could have passed between its top and the sky."

And now back to the story from Pike's record:

"We commenced our climb up the mountain and in about an hour arrived at the summit of this chain. Here we found the snow middle deep and discovered no signs of bird or beast inhabiting the region. The thermometer stood at 9 above zero at the foot of the mountain but here it fell to 4 below. The summit of Grand Peak which was entirely bare of vegetation and covered with snow, now appeared at a distance of 15 or 16 miles from us and as high again as the one we had ascended. It would have taken a whole day's march to have arrived at its base, when I believe no human being could have ascended to its summit.

"This, with the condition of my soldiers who wore only light overalls with no stockings and were in every way ill provided to endure the inclemency of the region, the poor prospect of killing anything to subsist upon, with the further detention of two or three days which it must occasion, determined us to return. The clouds from below had now ascended the mountains and entirely enveloped its summit, on which rests eternal snows.

"We descended by a long, deep ravine with less difficulty than we had contemplated; found our baggage safe but our provisions destroyed. It began to snow and we took shelter under a projecting rock where we all made a meal of one partridge and two pairs of deer ribs which the ravens had left us; the first food we had eaten for 48 hours," two whole days.

To this Jerome C. Smilie in his *History of Colorado* adds: "So ended the first attempt of Americans to scale Colorado's famous landmark, to the summit of which the locomotive now carries us"—in ease and comfort and in about 90 minutes.

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ing again from the tragic records of Pike's diary:

"The weather was cold and stormy and it continued so with violence, so we remained in camp. The snow was a foot deep and the horses had to scrape it away to find their meager food beneath. And now the poor animals were attacked by magpies; driven by hunger and attracted by the smell of fresh blood from the raw sores on the horses' backs, they ravenously attacked the living animals and even alighted on the arms of the men who tried to drive them off. The thermometer registered 17 below zero."

They estimated the height of the mountain they had endeavored to climb at 18,581 feet, but knew that their instruments were not reliable, because of the numerous mishaps by the stumbling and falling of the horses on the way. So it was not surprising to find later that they had made a miscalculation of about 4,400 feet. However, even at that, they had climbed about 12,000 feet straight up, and that, too, in the last week of November and in midwinter weather.

During December of 1806 and into January of 1807 the wanderings of the party seem to have been under great bewilderment. The weather was extremely severe, the snow lying waist-deep in places, completly burying the scant food upon which the horses must depend. Their own provisions were low, too, the men often finding it necessary to go 48 hours without food. The historian Smilie says that it is impossible to get at these wanderings with any certainty, even Pike's own record and charts being confused; but certain it is that it was a beaten and discouraged remnant of an ambitious Expedition that came through the winter of 1806-7.

In fact, many of the records and observations were seized by Spanish authorities and never returned, as will be told in the story of final capture and imprisonment by the Spaniards.

CHRISTMAS, 1806

Every man in the Expedition had been trained in the tradition of Christmas. It commemorated the day when the Christ Child was born, when Good Will came to the world; it should be

observed with joy and gladness and with bountiful feasts. Pike and his men, in a camp that had been established about seven miles above where Salida now stands, came to the day before Christmas. There was now no food for the men except as they went out and hunted it; sometimes the hunt was successful but oftener not; this was one of the times when it was not. Hunger and Christmas were coming in together. They did not belong together. The hunters went forth, and on Christmas eve returned with more than they had gathered in many weeks—four buffalos. So when came the day came also the feast; buffalo meat in rich abundance and holding the festal board exclusively, not even salt claiming an humble place. But the thanks they returned lacked nothing of sincerity. Pike and his men were 800 miles from the frontier of civilization in the most inclement season of the year, with clothing that would have been insufficient in a New York steam-heated apartment of our own day; they were obliged to lie down at night without blankets, having been compelled to cut them up for socks and other needed things, using for coverings raw buffalo hides fresh from the kill; but they were thankful this night, for they did not lie down hungry.

Passing on from Christmas day, the record tells of the arrival January 4, 1807, after a "hard journey," at the Royal Gorge. On the way, the horses had floundered, stumbled, and fallen, one being so badly hurt going over a precipice that it was merciful to shoot him. The exhausted horses had to be relieved of their packs, the men thereafter carrying or hauling them on improvised sleds.

Only Pike himself essayed to make the passage of the Gorge. When about half way across he gave up and, turning into a small canon to the north, came out upon the summit, and then recognized that the river flowing through was not the Red river, but the Arkansas.

On January ninth the last of the stragglers who had been out exploring came back into camp, glad to get together but "mortified at being so egregiously deceived as to the Red river."

On January 14, 1807, Pike, with a small party of his men, set out again on what Smilie calls his "terrible and foolhardy

was dug on the inside, and stakes six inches in diameter and tall enough to reach above the top driven down, slanting over the top with about two or three feet projection, making the scaling of the wall from the outside an impossibility. Then a ditch four feet wide was dug around the outside and an entrance made by placing a log across the ditch and hewing out a hole in the wall big enough to allow a man to crawl through. This gave them a strong fortification against Indians and Spaniards and they felt safe from attack. Then they ran up the American flag, the very first on record to float over what is now (but was not then) Colorado soil. And it was the floating of the flag perhaps more than the building of the stockade that led to their undoing, because this was construed by the Spaniards as a symbol of possession of territory that they, the Spaniards, still claimed.

On February 7, 1807, the new stockade being finished, the next thing to be done was to bring the men left behind to its shelter. Accordingly Pike dispatched Corporal Jackson with four men. Ten days later the Corporal returned, bringing all but two of the men. Quoting again from Pike's journal, slightly abridged:

"They (the Corporal and his men) said the two helpless men had hailed with tears of joy the rescuers, but were in despair when they found that they must be left behind." (These two men were unable to walk, and the four from the stockade, with the help they must give to those who could walk, were unable to carry the two helpless ones; so with promises to return as soon as possible they went on, leaving the two behind.) Continues Pike's record: "They sent me some of the bones of their feet and beseeched me by all that was sacred not to leave them to perish alone, so far from the civilized world. Oh, how little did they know my heart if they could suspect me of conduct so ungenerous. No; before they should be left to perish I would have carried the end of a litter myself for months to secure for them the happiness of once more seeing their native home and of being received into the bosom of a grateful country. The poor fellows must be invalids for life at the very commencement of manhood, doomed, unless remembered by a grateful country, to a life of

misery and want." Here Pike presupposes a pension but foresees its insufficiency and its inability to compensate for the sacrifices the men had made; for he ends with: "For what is a pension? What man would lose even the smallest of his joints for such a pittance?"

But a careful and pains-taking study of history reveals no record of the two crippled men, whose names were Dougherty and Sparks, ever having received pension or other recognition from a "grateful country."

On Febuary 18, the day following the return of Corporal Jackson, Pike commissioned Sergeant Meek and private Miller to proceed to the place where Baroney Vasquez had been left with horses and then return to the crippled men and bring them in. And in due time they returned to the stockade with Interpreter Vasquez, the two "frozen" lads, the horses and baggage. But the joy of the reunion was destroyed by a fateful thing that happened at the stockade during their absence.

On the departure of Sergeant Meek and Private Miller on their errand of mercy, Pike and one of the soldiers went out to hunt. They had not gone far when they saw two horsemen rising the hill half a mile away. Pike's orders from headquarters in Washington had been to avoid offense to the Spanish government; so, feeling sure the horsemen were Spaniards, he endeavored to shun them; but when he and the soldier with him retreated the horsemen followed at full charge, brandishing lances. Then Pike and the soldier concealed themselves in a small ravine out of sight of the horsemen; but the horsemen came on, hunting for them. Then Pike told the soldier to leave his gun and walk towards them, Pike in the meantime standing guard with his rifle to fire any moment a hand should be lifted in hostile manner.

While the soldier was on his way Pike called to the horsemen, using the only two words he knew in the Spanish language; he shouted "Americans," and "friends." Then the two horsemen came up in friendly manner. They were a Spanish dragoon and a civilized Indian. They dismounted and sat on the ground and talked in most friendly manner and were extremely polite.

They had much difficulty in understanding each other, but the manner of speech meant more than the speech. Yet through it all Pike could not rid himself of the feeling that they were spies.

At last Pike and the soldier arose and started to leave, and the visitors showed their unmistakable intention of going with them. After much effort Pike succeeded in making them understand that if the Spanish Governor, Allencaster, would send an officer with an interpreter who could speak English or French, he, Pike, would give every satisfaction of his intention in coming to the frontier. To this the men agreed. They spent the night on the most friendly terms at the stockade and departed the next morning, carrying with them presents, which necessarily had to be meager, to the Governor.

The men had given no hint of their real purpose and Pike had no tangible grounds for his uneasiness; but, as was afterwards proved, there was a very definite basis for his uneasiness, for the purpose of the horsemen had been to make sure Pike was tresspassing on Spanish territory and that the American flag floated there, designating his intention of taking possession in the name of his country. Pike had made the mistake of believing he had built on the Red river when in reality it was the Rio Del Norte, a Spanish possession.

After the horsemen had gone, not knowing what to expect, Pike established a lookout on the top of a high hill where a watch was kept constantly. He had not long to wait.

On the morning of February 26, a week after the departure of the horsemen, the report of a gun from the lookout informed him of the approach of strangers; and almost at once two riders appeared. They were French interpreters. They, too, were extremely polite and more friendly, if possible, than the others. Pike felt then, and knew later, that they were but hiding their real mission behind this apparent friendly concern for the welfare of the Americans.

They informed Pike that His Excellency, Governor Allencaster, in order to protect Pike and his men from an attack of the Indians whom he had been informed were planning a raid, had dispatched an officer with fifty dragoons who would reach the

stockade in about two days.

But the Frenchmen were not so far in advance of the dragoons as they represented, for almost while they were speaking the company came in sight.

Extreme politeness and seeming friendliness still marked the manner of the Frenchmen, but Pike felt still deeper the conviction that this was but the friendliness that the cat may display toward the mouse just before her anticipated meal of it. In the advancing company were fifty dragoons and fifty mounted soldiers of the militia of the Spanish province, all armed with lances, Spanish carbines and pistols.

The two Frenchmen acted as messengers between Pike and the Spanish commander and arranged for a meeting of the two. The commander was Lieut. Don Ignacio Saltelo; and with him was Lieut. Bartholemew Fernandez.

When the Spanish officers first saw that to enter the stockade they must sacrifice their dignity by walking the log across the ditch and crawling on their stomachs through the hole in the wall, they demurred; but there was no other way of entrance, so down they went and crawled through like any common men.

After a breakfast of deer meat, grouse and some biscuits brought by a civilized Indian, the commanding officer addressed Pike, giving him in polite language the astounding information that he had built his stockade on Spanish territory.

"What?" asked Pike, "how can I be on Spanish territory? Is not this the Red River?"

"No, sir," replied the officer, "it is the Rio Del Norte."

Pike at once offered to take down his flag, since he had so unintentionally transgressed; but that was not enough to satisfy the Spanish commander. Pike was then informed that this command was here to conduct him and all his men into the presence of the Governor at Santa Fe.

Pike said he could not possibly leave at once, and told of the mission of Sergeant Meek and his men to bring in the two crippled members of the expedition, but said he would be ready to start as soon as they arrived. Asked how soon the party might be expected, he replied, "In a day or two at most." But the of-

ficer, who was very firm, notwithstanding his politeness, stated that he would leave an escort of dragoons and an interpreter to conduct Sergeant Meek and his party into Santa Fe as soon as they should arrive.

Realizing that opposition was useless, Pike consented to this arrangement. Some of his men would have preferred raising a "little dust," useless as such resistance would have been; but like good soldiers they yielded to their commander.

Pike wrote a note for Sergeant Meek telling him what had happened and instructing him to leave the stockade under orders of the Spanish convoy. Then he and his men rode forth, on Spanish horses, to whatever fate awaited them. They first stopped at a place about twelve miles up the river where a camp had been prepared for them. In spite of the studied politeness of their captors, they now knew themselves to be prisoners. This was on February 27, 1807.

It may be of interest to follow the fortunes of the captives on farther to where they entered the city of Santa Fe and the presence of the Spanish Governor, Don Joachim Real Allencaster; and then still farther on to their final liberation on July 1, 1807, after five months of captivity.

From Pike's own description it must have been a sorry, not to say ludicrous, spectacle that this tattered company presented as they were ushered into the august presence of the Governor.

As they had carried their baggage on their backs, they had been obliged to leave behind all but the most essential articles, so there was no use in trying to make themselves "smart" before appearing before the Great Presence. Pike himself wore blue trousers, moccasins, blanket-coat and a red cap lined with fox skin. The men wore leggins, breech cloths and leather coats; not a hat in the party.

The governor at first received them in austere manner, possibly in part to hide the smile of amusement their appearance must have inspired; but after a time he relaxed and became quite friendly, even hospitable and cordial. He examined Pike's papers and then ordered the company to be conveyed to Chihuahua where the Commander General would further examine the

papers and question the leader.

They started on this journey on March 5, 1807 and arrived on April 2. They were taken at once to the quarters of General Nimesio Salcedo, Commander General of the Interior Province of New Spain. This officer greeted them graciously, but his face also wore a smile that might have meant any thing. Then directing his remarks to Pike, he said: "You have given us a great deal of trouble."

All papers in Pike's possession were, during this interview taken from him, and so the world can now never know what may have been its losses through the disaster that ended that first far-western expedition. The loss was not complete, however, owing to the foresight of Dr. Robinson, who had made copies of a number of papers, and who was not searched. Had Dr. Robinson been able to foresee what was to happen he undoubtedly would have made more copies, but as it was Pike was obliged to report to Col. Wilkinson that many valuable notes of astronomical and meteorological observations were among the lost.

Some critics have claimed that very little came out of the Pike Expedition of actual geographical or scientific value; that even the Great Peak itself bearing the name of the leader was never ascended by him but only observed from Cheyenne mountain, some 15 or 16 miles away; also that according to Pike's own latitudinal and longitudinal calculations the peak itself would have been about 130 miles west of the western boundary of Colorado. But in view of the tremendous disadvantages under which Pike and his men labored, such criticisms seem uncharitable, even to the point of unfairness.

To begin with, it must be remembered that the government did not outfit the expedition as liberally as it should have done, considering the hazards and importance of the enterprise. True the United States was a young government then and not wealthy; but while this argument could well obtain against the sending out of an expedition, it certainly cannot be urged as a reason for sending one out without sufficient guarantee against starvation and the agonies of actual freezing. Two men, as develops in the story, were maimed for life in the loss of their feet by

freezing, due almost wholly to the insufficiency of their clothing and shelter.

Moreover, it would be but fair to make allowances for miscalculations, geographical and altitudinal, because of the fact that instruments had to be carried on pack horses that often stumbled and fell, thus, no doubt, jarring the delicate instruments out of balance. Considering all these difficulties, it is a far greater wonder that any thing could have been carried through than that still more was not. In view of the heroism, the dauntless courage, and the fortitude with which Pike and his men met these overwhelming difficulties, the American who utters such criticisms should forever hang his head in shame.

The last long march of Pike and his men was started, according to history, on April 28, 1807, the final destination being the American Post at Natchitoches; Sergeant Meek and his men with the two crippled lads had not yet caught up with the main body, but Pike was assured that they would safely and surely follow. The march was by a round-about course, one can hardly understand why, through what is now New Mexico, along the lower reaches of the Rio Grande River and across Texas by way of San Antonio, and must have occupied almost two months of time, for it was on July 1st that they were finally liberated at the American Post of Natchitoches. It is said that when his eyes first beheld the edge of his own country Pike shouted:

"All hail the sacred name of Country, in which is bound up all of kindred, friends and every tie dear to the heart of man."

IT IS ONLY FAIR TO STATE:

In justice to the Spanish government it should be stated that the Governor did not allow Pike and his men to make the long hard journey to their own frontier in the scanty and ludicrous garb in which they first appeared before him, but that he fitted them out with comfortable clothing, fed them well, furnished them suitable lodgings during the whole of their five months of captivity and when liberating them on July 1, 1807, gave them ample money for reaching their homes in the East. Not all conquerors have been so just.

There is no record available, and reliable historians say none exists, of the fortunes of the little party under Sergeant Meek. It is only by inference that the conclusion is reached that they finally came through safely, reaching United States territory and freedom. It is recorded that Interpretor Vasquez was later a Lieutenant in the American army in the war of 1812, and a trader among the Indians on the Upper Missouri in 1920 and, probably, one of the traders penetrating into what is now Weld county. But whether the two boys crippled for life were ever recognized and suitably pensioned by a "grateful country" does not appear in any subsequent documents, whose pages have been examined. But every justice-loving American must hope that, though unrecorded, a provision was made in part, at least, commensurate with the sacrifice.

* * * * *

Pike never claimed to have climbed the lofty peak that bears his name, nor even to have been the first American to behold it; this honor he gives ungrudgingly to James Purcell, whom Pike declares in his papers to have been the first real pioneer who passed under that great peak eighteen years before Pike entered the Colorado country.

BIOGRAPHICAL

Zebulon Montgomery Pike was born in Lamberton, New Jersey, January 5, 1779, and was, therefore, but 27 years of age when he led his ambitious but ill-fated expedition into the Far West. His father, whose full name he inherited, together with his unusual qualities, was an officer in the Revolutionary War and in the United States Army afterwards. The son entered the father's regiment as a cadet, at the age of 15, in 1794; and six years later, November 1, 1800, received a Lieutenant's commission. Six years later, 1806, he was made Captain; then followed his western expedition. Returning safely, he again entered the army, in 1808 becoming a Major, in 1809, a Lieutenant-colonel and in 1812 a colonel. He was nominated Brigadier-General on March 12, 1813 and assigned to duty as Adjutant

and Inspector General; but was killed in battle before the senate had time to confirm his nomination.

On April 27, 1813, he led a storming party against the British fortifications and routed the enemy, who, as they fled, fired a train which exploded a magazine, from which a flying fragment struck the young commander, inflicting an injury from which he died a few hours later.

His body was buried in Ft. Tompkins' Military cemetery at Sackett Harbor, New York, but in 1819 removed to the Military cemetery at Madison Barracks, New York, his final resting place.

His sword, worn at York where he served in the expedition under General Henry Dearborn, is among the collections of the State Historical Society in the State Capitol in Denver.