



# Zebulon Montgomery Pike 1779-1813

Special Collections, PPLD

## Quick Facts

- Born on a New Jersey farm in 1779.
- In 1794, at 15, Zebulon Pike entered the army.
- Married Clarissa Brown in 1801, only one daughter reached adulthood and became a relative of President Harrison.
- In 1805, Lieutenant Pike was ordered to lead an expedition. One goal was to find the beginning of the Mississippi River. Pike took a wrong turn and mistakenly thought Leech Lake was the source, it was not.
- In 1806, Pike sent on an expedition to the American west.
- In Nov., 1806, Pike saw a mountain in the distance “*a small blue cloud*” and thought he could hike there in a day but it was 4 days away and the snow was too deep. Getting as far as Cheyenne Mt., Pike turned back, calling the distant mountain, “*Grand Peak*”.
- In 1807, Pike is taken into custody by the Spanish on suspicion of being a spy but is eventually released back to the U.S.
- In the War of 1812, Pike planned attacks on Canada.
- In 1813, Brigadier General Pike died in Canada during the Battle of York.

## Great Resources on Zebulon Montgomery Pike

Ayer, Eleanor. *Colorado Chronicles: Famous Colorado Men*. Frederick, CO: Jende-Hagan Book-corp, c1980. pp. 2-5.

Sanford, William R. *Zebulon Pike: Explorer of the Southwest*. Berkeley Heights, NJ : Enslow, c1996. (easier biography)

Witteman, Barbara. *Zebulon Pike: Soldier and Explorer*. Mankato, MN : Bridgestone Books, c2003.