Quote: (19 March 1855) Came upon the Rio Ruidoso and followed it down to the junction of Rio Bonita, which we followed upstream for 20 miles. Arrived at an encampment of United States Soldiers, 300 men under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Dixon S. Miles. They are here for the purpose of building a fort to be called Fort Stanton in commemoration of the Captain who was killed three months ago. General John Garland selected the site for the fort today. The officers all got drunk. [Bennett, James A.]

Quote: (30 September 1862) Brigadier General LORENZO THOMAS,
Adjutant General U.S.A., Washington, D. C.

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF NEW MEXICO.
Santa Fe, N.M., September 30, 1862.

GENERAL: I have the honor to inform you that I relieved General Canby in the command of this department on the 18th instant, and he left this city for Washington, D. C., four days afterwards. I find that during the raid which was made into this Territory by some armed men from Texas, under Brigadier General Sibley, of the army of the so-called Confederate States, the Indians, aware that the attention of our troops could not, for the time, be turned toward them, commenced robbing the inhabitants of their stock, and killed, in various places, a great number of people: the Navajoes on the western side, and the Mescalero Apaches on the eastern side of the settlements, both committing these outrages at the same time, and during the last year that has passed have left the people greatly impoverished.

Many farms and settlements near Fort Stanton have been entirely abandoned. To punish and control the
Mescaleros, I have ordered Fort Stanton to be reoccupied. That post is in the heart of their country, and hitherto when troops occupied it those Indians were at peace. I have sent Colonel Christopher Carson, (Kit Carson,) with five companies of his regiment of New Mexican volunteers, to Fort Stanton. One of these companies, on foot, will hold the post and guard the stores, while four companies mounted, under Carson, will operate against the Indians until they have been punished for their recent aggressions.

The lieutenant colonel, with four companies of the same regiment, will move into the Navajo country and establish and garrison a post on the Gallo, which was selected by General Canby; it is called Fort Wingate. I shall endeavor to have this force, assisted by some militia which have been called out by the governor of the Territory, perform such service among the Navajoes as will bring them to feel that they have been doing wrong.

I am, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAMES H. CARLETON,

Brigadier General, Commanding.

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Overview: Fort Stanton

The U.S military established Fort Stanton in 1855 to protect settlements along the Rio Bonito during the Apache wars. Later, it became the first tuberculosis hospital in the country. Today Fort Stanton is a New Mexico State Monument.

Images:

Skeleton pierced with arrows

Links:
New Mexico State Monuments -- http://www.nmmonuments.org

Long Walk: Navajo Route

1862-1868

The U.S. Army's efforts to force the Navajo and Mescalero Apache -- traditional adversaries whose ways of life were vastly different -- to settle at Bosque Redondo were unsuccessful. Conditions at the reservation were worse than dismal. Thousands of Indian people died while being taken to or while living at Bosque Redondo.

Instead of leading to assimilation and conversions to Christianity, the effort led to staggering costs and extreme suffering, disease, depredation, and death of the native people. The Mescalero Apache escaped from the reservation en masse in 1865. The Navajo returned home in 1868, escorted by the U.S. Army to New Fort Wingate near Gallup, New Mexico.

The Navajo were marched along several routes, all marked on this map. The majority of the captured Navajo were sent from Los Pinos to Bosque Redondo between January and May 1864, through multiple removals of people in groups of varying sizes. At least four groups of about 1,000 men, women, and children were sent through Santa Fe and San Jose to Tecolote, New Mexico, or through Tijeras Canyon, Galisteo, and San Jose to Tecolote. They then moved south generally along the Pecos River to Bosque Redondo at Fort Sumner.

The winter weather was bitterly cold, and the Navajo did not have sufficient clothing to keep warm. Close to 200 people died from cold and exposure during one march. There are accounts by Navajo descendants of the Long Walk that describe how elderly people, pregnant women, and otherwise lame or disabled people who lagged behind the marching columns were shot and killed because they could not keep up.

Quote: Along the trail somewhere, the horse that my grandmother's mother loved most developed an ilhtih
(lump) in the leg. My great-grandmother and great-grandfather were instructed to stay with the horse until it died. The rest of the people moved on to Fort Sumner.

While my great-grandparents were waiting for the horse to die, a Navajo family came by with some children. They asked what my grandparents were going to do with the horse. They told the people they were waiting for the animal to die.

The Navajo family had some copper bracelets, a corn pollen bag, and some other valuables that they wanted to trade for the horse. My great-grandparents took the jewelry and then killed the horse for the Navajo family.

The family began to butcher the horse. They built a fire and sang a song around the horse that said, "This is mine." Parts of the muscles of the horse were draining with matter, but they continued to butcher. The family was just beginning to cook the meat when my great-grandparents left because they could no longer stand the sight. My great-grandfather told the people, "We are going now," and they left.

My great-grandfather ran on foot a great distance while my great-grandmother rode a big mule. In this way, they traveled to catch up with the rest of the party who were on their way to Fort Sumner. They followed the deep ruts cut by the wagon train. The grass and plants had all been trampled down by the travelers. The trail looked like it had made a big curve.

My great-grandmother suggested they follow the trail of the others, but my great-grandfather wanted to take a straighter short cut. My great-grandfather would run ahead, and my great-grandmother would ride the mule and catch up with him. Along the trail they saw fresh tracks of horses with metal horseshoes and fresh manure. These tracks led in the opposite direction from which the Navajos had traveled. My great-grandparents then took a different trail. In this way, they caught up with the rest of the people. The relatives cried when they saw them. They thought that the couple had been killed because they had been told that the enemies were attacking people along the trail. The relatives told them that they regretted having left them with the dying horse.

--Jane Begay is from the Lake Valley area. She is of the Sleep Rock People Clan. Her maternal grandmother, Kinanibaa', or Tom Chischilly's Mother, told her the story of her own mother on the Long Walk. [Dine of Eastern Region]

Images:

Navajos at Bosque Redondo, 1863

Links:

Old Overland Route to Texas Settlements

1786-1867

Pedro (Pierre) Vial pioneered this route over the winter of 1786-1787. His profession as a gunsmith had led him into long periods of trade and cohabitation with the Comanche, and he leveraged his familiarity with them to find a guide who could help him blaze the route to Santa Fe. Although he took a roundabout route, later Spanish explorers fine-tuned the route until it took only 38 days to travel between presidios. Despite this, only a handful of Spanish made this difficult and dangerous journey.

During the Mexican period, American traders began to take advantage of this trail, and it is close to the route that the Texas-Santa Fe expedition took in 1841, although they got off course in the panhandle.

By the Civil War, this route was still considered as a possible travel route, though emphatically marked as a trail, rather than a road suitable for military transport. Despite the primitive state of the route, several ranches and villages were springing up along it, notably Portales.
The stretch from Santa Fe to Bosque Redondo was used for transporting many Navajo during the Long Walk to Bosque Redondo. Beck’s Ranch, north of Bosque Redondo, was used for from 1859-1860 as a US Army post.

**Fort Stanton Mescalero Reservation**

1855-1896

Quote: (12 October 1862) Colonel CHRISTOPHER CARSON,

1st New Mexico Vol, en route to Fort Stanton, N. M.

As your scouts from this company come near the mouth of the Penasco they will, doubtless, find plenty of Mescaleros. It was near that point where Captain Stanton was killed by them. In this case you could, if you thought it advisable, move the company down to the mouth of the Penasco to produce an impression upon the Indians, at the same time it watched the approaches to New Mexico by the way of the Pecos; but under no circumstances will it leave the valley of the river unwatched. The other three companies you can divide as you please, but with these you will make war upon the Mescaleros and upon all other Indians you may find in the Mescalero country, until further orders.

All Indian men of that tribe are to be killed whenever and wherever you can find them. The women and children will not be harmed, but you will take them prisoners, and feed them at Fort Stanton until you receive other instructions about them. If the Indians send in a flag and desire to treat for peace, say to the bearer that when the people of New Mexico were attacked by the Texans, the Mescaleros broke their treaty of peace, and murdered innocent people, and ran off their stock; that now our hands are untied, and you have been sent to punish them for their treachery and their crimes; that you have no power to make peace; that you are there to kill them wherever you can find them; that if they beg for peace, their chiefs and twenty of their principal men must come to Santa Fé to have a talk here; but tell them fairly and frankly that you will keep after their people and slay them until you receive orders to desist from these headquarters; that this making of treaties for them to break whenever they have an interest in breaking them will not be done any more; that that time has passed by; that we have no faith in their promises; that we believe if we kill some of their men in fair, open war, they will be apt to remember that it will be better for them to remain at peace than to be at war. I trust that this severity, in the long run, will be the most humane course that could be pursued toward these Indians.

You observe that there is a large force helping you. I do not wish to tie your hands by instructions; the whole duty can be summed up in a few words: The Indians are to be soundly whipped, without parleys or councils except as above. Be careful not to mistake the troops from below for Texans. If a force of rebels comes, you know how to annoy it; how to stir up their camps and stock by night; how to lay waste the prairies by fire; how to make the country very warm for them, and the road a difficult one. Do this, and keep me advised of all you do. I am, colonel, respectfully, your friend,

JAMES H. CARLETON,

Brigadier General, Commanding. [Joint Special Committee of two houses of Congress]

Quote: (19 March 1863) Brigadier General LORENZO THOMAS,

Adjutant General U. S, Army, Washington, D. C.

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF NEW MEXICO,

Santa Fe, N. M., March 19, 1863.

GENERAL : I have the honor to inform you that the operations of the troops against the Mescalero Apaches have resulted in bringing in as prisoners about four hundred men, women and children of that tribe, from their fastnesses in the mountains about Fort Stanton, to Fort Sumner, at the Bosque Redondo, on the Pecos river. This leaves about one hundred, the remainder of that tribe, who are reported as having fled to Mexico and to join the Gila Apaches. Against these last, the Gila Apaches, vigorous hostilities are prosecuted, as I have already informed you.

Want of troops and of forage has prevented any operations against the Navajoes. Now that the Mescaleros are subdued, I shall send the whole of Colonel Carson’s regiment against the Navajoes, who still continue to plunder and murder the people. This regiment will take the field against them early in May. Already I have commenced drawing the companies in from the Mescalero country preparatory to such movement.

It is my purpose to induce the Mescaleros to settle on a reservation near Fort Sumner at the Bosque Redondo, on the Pecos river. The superintendent of Indian affairs for New Mexico and myself proceed to that point, starting today, to have “the talk” with them with reference to this matter. My purpose is to have them fed and kept there under surveillance; to have them plant a crop this year; to have them, in short, become what is called in this country a pueblo. If they are once permitted to go at large again, the same trouble and expense will again have to be gone through with to punish and subdue them. They will murder and rob unless kept from doing it by fear and force.
The bishop of Santa Fé will go down with the superintendent and myself, and, if the Indians agree to my terms, will have a talk with them about sending a priest down to teach them the gospel and open a school for the children. The superintendent will take down farming implements and other useful articles for the Indians, and an agent will remain with the Indians to instruct them in the use of these things.

You will feel pleased to learn that this long-dreaded tribe of murderers and robbers is brought to so promising a condition. Their country around Fort Stanton is fast filling up with settlers.

I shall return to Santa Fd on the 6th proximo.

I am, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAMES H. CARLETON,
Brigadier General, Commanding.

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**Reservation for Navajoes and Apaches**

1867

_The Bosque Redondo reservation was a tragically failed experiment in removing the Navajos and the Apaches from their homeland and forcing them into domestic agriculture. After relentless war upon their people, including shooting any Apache or Navajo male off the reservation, General Carleton secured the surrender of thousands of Mescalero Apaches and Navajos, far more than he could obtain supplies for._

_Many Navajo died on the forced march from Fort Wingate, called the Long Walk, and many from both tribes died of disease, overexposure, and starvation on the under-supplied reservation. The Mescalero left of their own accord in 1865, and in 1868 the Navajo negotiated a treaty for their return to their homeland._

_Quote: I have the honor respectfully to state, for the information of the War Department, that on or about the last of October, 1863, I met Dr. Steck at Fort Union, New Mexico, en route for Washington city. I was present at the last interview Dr. Steck had with General Carleton. The doctor had that day arrived at Fort Union from Fort Sumner, at which post nearly eight hundred Apaches and Navajoes were collected. Dr. Steck, on this occasion, after having personally visited the Bosque Redondo and observed the condition of the Indians, approved, most cordially, the policy pursued towards them by General Carleton. He spoke of the Indians as being happy and contented; he gave it as his opinion that the Bosque Redondo was the only suitable place in New Mexico for a large Indian reservation; and the general tenor of his conversation was such as to impress me firmly with the belief that Dr. Steck intended to use his influence with the proper departments at Washington to have the policy of General Carleton, in this matter, carried out to the very letter._

_I have the honor to be, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,_

BEN. C. CUTLER,
Assistant Adjutant General. [Joint Special Committee of two houses of Congress]

_Quote: (07 February 1864) I believe this will be the last Navajo war. The persistent efforts which have been and will continue to be made can hardly fail to bring in the whole tribe before the year ends. I beg respectfully to call the serious attention of the government to the destitute condition of the captives, and beg for authority to provide clothing for the women and children. Every preparation will be made to plant large crops for their subsistence at the Bosque Redondo the coming spring. Whether the Indian department will do anything for these Indians or not you will know. But whatever is to be done should be done at once. At all events, as I before wrote to you, “we can feed them cheaper than we can fight them.”_ I am, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAMES H. CARLETON,
Brigadier General, Commanding. [Joint Special Committee of two houses of Congress]

_Quote: (11 March 1864) Major HENRY D. WALLEN, U.S.A., Commanding at Fort Sumner., N. M._

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF NEW MEXICO,
Santa Fé, N.M., March 11, 1864.

MAJOR: I have heard that over five thousand of the Navajoes have surrendered, and within a few days you will have over two thousand of this tribe; the other three thousand are about leaving Fort Canby.

_The question about sufficient food for them to support life, is one about which, as you may well suppose, I am very anxious. In conversing with Colonel Carson, Governor Connelly, and Major McFerran on this point, I find it is their opinion that one pound of flour, or of meat, or of meat, per day. to each man, woman, and child, if cooked as atole or porridge, or into soup, could be made to be enough, and is, probably, of more nutriment_
per day than they have been accustomed to obtain. Counting big and little, it is believed that this would feed them. On this basis, one pound of food per day— that is to say, of flour, or of corn, or of wheat, or of meat, made into soup or atole— I can barely see how they can be supported until we get provisions from the States, or their corn becomes ripe enough to pluck. The other day it occurred to me that it would not be well for you to sow much wheat; but I am told the wheat-crop will mature much sooner than corn, and therefore submit the question entirely to your judgment as to how much of each you will plant.

You will at once commence the system of issuing the pound. The Indians themselves must be informed of the necessity of the restriction. Unless this plan be adopted, and at once, ultimate suffering must ensue. Soup and atole are the most nutritious, and the best way in which the food should be prepared to go a long way, and at the same time to be wholesome. ...

I am, major, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAMES H. CARLETON,

Brigadier General, Commanding. [Joint Special Committee of two houses of Congress]

Quote: (30 October 1864) Brigadier General LORENZO THOMAS,

Adjutant General U. S. A., Washington, D. C.

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF NEW MEXICO,

Santa Fe, N. M., October 30, 1864.

GENERAL: I have delayed making a formal report on the important matter of subsisting the Navajo and Apache Indians, now on the reservation at the Bosque Redondo, until I could learn definitely the probable result of the harvest in this Territory. As you have already seen in a report of General Crocker on the condition of the Indians at the Bosque Redondo, everything there was a success, except the crop of corn. We had a field of nearly three thousand acres, which promised to mature finely, when, after it had tasselled and the ears formed, it was attacked by what they here call the cut-worm, or army-worm, and the whole crop destroyed. I enclose herewith the report of a board of survey on the subject.

When this was known, I then hoped the corn, and grain, and bean crop in the Territory would prove adequate to the wants of the Indians, until the crop matures in 1865; but the wheat crop, when nearly ready for harvest, was drenched and beaten down by unprecedented storms of rain, and over half destroyed. In Taos, Mora, Rio Arriba, and San Miguel counties, whence we reasonably expected to get a good supply of corn, the hail-storms and early and severe frosts nearly destroyed the whole crop. This, too, was the case with the beans; so that there is a great scarcity even for the people.

The reports which were sent to Washington that I had purchased last spring supplies enough to last the captive Indians for two years were unfounded in fact, as I wrote to you at the end of last June. The breadstuffs remaining of that purchase will all be consumed by the end of December of this year. We have advertised for wheat, wheat-meal, and beans enough to last until corn can be brought from the States; but, in my opinion, we shall hardly be able to secure the requisite quantity in the country, for the reasons before stated.

This failure of the crop-- a visitation of God-- I could not contend against. It came, and now we must meet the consequences as best we may. The Indians could not be turned loose, or even taken back to their country, without being obliged to war upon the people, as heretofore, or perish. This is stated, not that I have any idea of either turning them loose or taking them back, but in answer to the senseless arguments which a few persons here, headed by the superintendent of Indian affairs, are making against the reservation at the Bosque Redondo.

It then follows that we must feed them where they are, until at least the harvest of next year, which we may reasonably hope, judging from the past, will not be disastrous, as the one of this. The future of not only New Mexico, but of Arizona, depends on the determination and the ability of the general government to hold this formidable tribe, now that it has been subdued and gotten in hand, until it can support itself. Nothing should arise or conspire to let them go again. The axiom, "that that system is the cheapest and best which is cheaper and better than any other in the long run," should be borne in mind as having an exact fitness to the question of holding these Indians.

The enclosed letter to General Crocker about reducing the amount of food to be issued until we can get some more ahead, I have not heard from in reply, but I hope he will be able to carry into effect my request without trouble. You can hardly imagine, general, the great difficulties which have lain in the path leading toward the settlement of this nation.

Congress passed a bill appropriating one hundred thousand dollars toward clothing them and getting them farming utensils, tools, &c. This was the first of July last, and, as yet, not a yard of cloth, or a blanket, or spade, or plough, has reached them. Now the cold weather is setting in, and I have thousands of women and children who need the protection of a blanket. It is said that the goods bought by this money left Leavenworth on the first of October, instant. With good luck they may be at the Bosque Redondo by the tenth of next December. All these things the Indians were told would be here long ago, and they have waited and hoped for them until now, when the winter is upon us, and they think we may be acting in bad faith. This has been very
unfortunate.

Add to this the complete destruction by the army-worm of their crops, which they had labored so hard to raise. Then, to fill the measure of their troubles, the failure of the crop elsewhere obliges me to cut down their ration. These are their troubles....

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAMES H. CARLETON,

Brigadier General, Commanding [Joint Special Committee of two houses of Congress]

Quote: The Dine who went to Hweeldi suffered from lack of food and many other hardships. Some were put on unsaddled horses with their hands tied in the back and a blindfold around their eyes. That is how they made their journey to Hweeldi. Along the way many Navajos lost their lives because of hunger; some were shot by the enemies when they got weak from walking or tried to run away. Navajos who lived through the worst made it through life and lived again. Those who ran away from Hweeldi back to their homeland suffered from lack of food. Some Navajos lived at Hweeldi for years, suffering from lack of food and cold weather. They did not have a home to live in at Hweeldi, just a small hut in the ground like a prairie dog or rabbit home. The Dine used a medicine man to help them pray for serious matters of their lives, but they kept their ceremonies short.

--Annie Succo from White Rock. She is of The Water Flows Together clan. This is the way her maternal great-grandmother told her the stories. [Dine of Eastern Region]

Links:
New Mexico State Monuments: Bosque Redondo Memorial --
http://www.newmexicohistory.org/filedetails_docs.php?fileID=21231

About this Map

U.S. Topo Bureau: Old Territory and Military Department of New Mexico : 1867

Old Territory and Military Department of New Mexico, compiled in the Bureau of Topographic Engineers of the War Department chiefly for military purposes under the authority of the Secretary of War- 1859 - partially revised and corrected to 1867 was based on a list of Authorities from Fremont, 1848 through Official Territorial Map of Arizona by Gird in 1865 and engraved by W.H. Dougal.

A table lists Principal Latitudes and Longitudes Astronomically Determined by Whipple, Emory, and Macomb during the boundary and railroad surveys.

This map captures New Mexico in the midst of its most tumultuous years since the Pueblo Revolt. The resolution of the Mexican-American War demanded a survey, followed by boundary adjustments, negotiations with Texas, more boundary adjustments, a purchase of additional land from Mexico, more boundary adjustments, and the creation of the Arizona Territory, requiring additional boundary adjustments.

General Kearny had generously promised New Mexicans an end to the raiding from the many nomadic tribes surrounding the Spanish settlements. To make good on this promise, the U.S. Army constructed numerous forts to protect both the settlements and the routes of travel into and inside New Mexico. These forts became a target for the Confederate Army, when forces led by Henry Hopkins Sibley invaded, with the hopes of reaching the richer gold fields of Colorado, or even California, giving the Confederates another sea port. Sibley’s hopes were dashed by the end of 1862, but the rest of the Confederacy kept going until 1865.

After that, the Army’s attention turned back to securing the western frontiers. Raids in New Mexico had increased while the Anglos fought each other, and the U.S. Army was willing to back an ambitious, but ill-conceived plan to remove nomadic natives from their homelands and turn them into peaceful farmers. The Indian Wars in New Mexico lasted longer than anywhere else, and ended with the surrender of Geronimo’s band of Chiricahua Apache in 1881.

Atlas Citation: [Eidenbach, Peter]
Map Credits: Library of Congress Geography and Map Division

TIMELINE: AGE OF TECHNOLOGY

1846

President Polk declares war with Mexico; US forces led by General Stephen Kearny seize New Mexico, which surrenders without a shot being fired. Colonel Doniphan writes code for governing the Territory of New Mexico.
New Mexico designated Ninth Military Department.

1847

Philip St. George Cooke blazed the first wagon road from New Mexico to the West Coast.

New Mexico formally annexed; slavery issues had prevented formal annexation until this point.

1848

Mexico signs the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which cedes lands in California, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico to the United States (Statute 922 App I). The international boundary designated as the intersection of 32º N and the Rio Grande to intersection of Choctaw Creek with Red River.

1849

Simpson made a map previously shows town of Rito- Rito is a ruin by the time Whipple arrives because the upstream people took all the water. He traveled through Albuquerque to Pueblo de la Laguna and passed Covero (Cubero), Mount Taylor (named by Simpson in 1849 for Zachary Taylor), and Agua Fria, the last spring before the Continental Divide. Whipple used Sitgreaves' 1851 map as a reference also Walker's 1851 map.

1850

New territories admitted, including New Mexico (including modern Arizona), purchase of additional lands from Texas, boundaries adjusted. El Paso becomes part of Texas.

1851

Sitgreaves' official report, Report of an Expedition Down the Zuni and Colorado Rivers in 1851, was published in 1853. The report explored possibility of using this route for military transport.

1852 Survey

1st international boundary commission established in accordance with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Emory is the designated astronomer. The survey run into difficulties, which are resolved with the purchase of more land from Mexico.

Initial point on the Rio Grande (determined by Commissioners Condé and Bartlett according to the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo) proves to be in the wrong place. Surveyor AB Gray says 32º 22' is wrong, 31º 52' is right. Commissioners Emory and Salazar (astronomers from the first Boundary Commission) later determine the starting point of the line at 32º 47'.

1852

New Mexico legislature passed a single act creating two new counties, redefining five of the original counties to extend across the limits of the territory, and eliminating all non-county area.

1853

Gadsden Purchase from Mexico resolves boundary issues, and give the U.S. the land necessary to build a southern transcontinental railroad. (GP Statute 1031 App II).

1855 Survey

US Commissioner: William H. Emory
Mexican Commissioner: José Salazar y Larregui

Emory and Salazar survey the entire Mexican-American border, including the new area included by the Gadsden Purchase.

The Americans made nearly a dozen monuments along the border to mark the sites, but many were destroyed by surrounding tribes, so the Mexicans rebuilt many and added some. Later surveys added over two hundred more, and rebuilt them as more permanent monuments.

1855 railroad surveys

The U.S. Government commissioned a number of surveys, spaced along parallels, to determine the best route for a transcontinental railroad.

Emory & Parke: 32nd parallel
Whipple & Ives: 35th parallel
Beckwith & Gunnison: 38th-39 parallel

1857 and 1858

Ives' Report upon the Colorado River of the West
1859
Marcy publishes The Prairie Traveler

1861

Colorado territory established; New Mexico’s northern boundary reduced.

Residents of the Mesilla Valley declared their allegiance with the Confederacy and separated from the Union. They hoped the Confederacy would recognize them as the state of Arizona, which they imagined would reach to the Colorado River.

Civil War starts. Confederate troops gather at Fort Bliss and take Fort Fillmore. The plan is to seize New Mexico, and then march on to take the gold fields of Colorado or California. Indian raids on settlements step up as U.S. Army soldiers turn their attention to other matters.

1862

Homestead Act: free 160 acres offered after 5 years cultivation. Later modified to offer 320 acres, and the Desert Lands Act offered 640 acres.

Henry H. Sibley, commander of a brigade of mounted regiments from Texas, marched from Fort Bliss near El Paso up the Rio Grande: taking Fort Fillmore, defeating Union troops at Fort Craig, taking Albuquerque and Santa Fe, and finally defeating the Union troops at Glorieta Pass, near Pecos. By this time, the Confederate troops were starving and without clothes or ammunition, so they retreated back to Fort Bliss.

1862-1871

Railroad Land grants: the Federal government gives away 128 million acres of land to the railroad companies, as an incentive to build railway lines all over the country. The railroad companies sold many of these parcels to homesteaders.

1863

Arizona Territory created by the United States from the western portion of New Mexico Territory and a part of present Nevada. Present New Mexico-Arizona boundary established.

1864-1866

"Long Walk"- Navajo and Mescalero Apache forcibly relocated to Bosque Redondo reservation; The Apache escaped, and the Navajo signed a treaty of nonaggression and returned to their homeland in 1868.

1864-1890

Indian Wars throughout the West. Destruction of the bison herds.

1867

Hayden, King, Wheeler, Powell Surveys map the west comprehensively, while cataloguing flora, fauna, and geology.

1868

Navajo chief Barboncito, along with numerous other leaders, sign a treaty with General William T. Sherman, agreeing to peace with the Americans in exchange for rights to return from Bosque Redondo to their new reservation: a small area within their traditional homeland.

1869

Fort Bliss renamed Fort Bliss.

Cochise and Apache guerrillas active 1871- 1879.

The war to save the buffalo 1874-1880.

1878-1879

Fort Bliss permanently established in current location.

1878

The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe (AT&SF) railroad crosses the Raton Pass into New Mexico, reaching Las Vegas, its first destination in New Mexico, in 1879.

1879

USGS established.
1880
The Southern transcontinental railroad traversed the region.
Geronimo & Chiricahua Apaches active in southern New Mexico and northern Mexico, 1880-1886.

1884
New boundary treaty: the boundary, where marked by the Rio Grande, adheres to the center of original channel as surveyed in 1852 even if the course of the river changes. Boundaries on international bridges at center point.

1886
Geronimo surrenders to General Crook in southern New Mexico. The remaining members of the Chiricahua and Mimbres bands are removed first to Florida, and finally to Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

1889
US/Texas/ New Mexico/Mexico border resurveyed; discovered bancos or alluvial deposits changing land mass on either side of the border.

1891
Forest Reserve Law, designating forest preserves; forerunner of current National Forests.

1905
National Forest service created.

1906
Antiquities Act. Allows a president to protect areas of public land by executive order.

1912
New treaty with Mexico on water rights for irrigation

1916
New Mexico becomes the forty-seventh state of the Union.

1924
Gila Wilderness established.

1925
U.S. Supreme Court decision in New Mexico v. Colorado dismisses New Mexico’s claims and establishes current boundaries between the states.

Visit Atlas of Historic NM Maps online at atlas.nmhum.org.
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