

Postal History Of The Colorado Territory

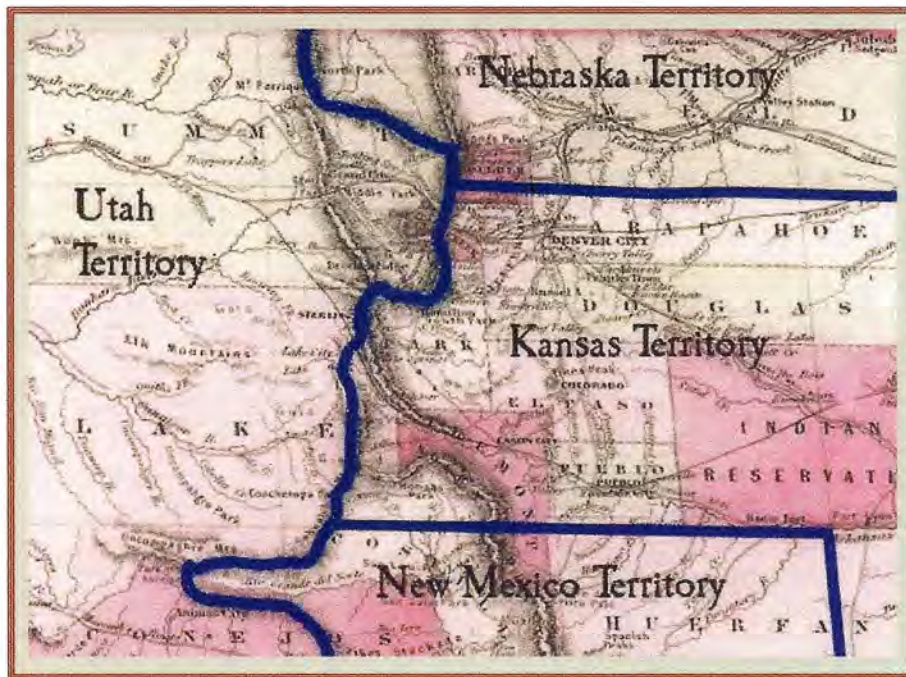
The vast area of the United States known as the Unorganized Territory was acquired at the time of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. In the years ahead it was divided into territories. The mountain region located in the western part of the Kansas Territory was noted for a major gold discovery in 1858, and contributed much to the development of the west.

Kansas Territory

Nebraska Territory

New Mexico Territory

Utah Territory



Colton Map ~ 1859

Courtesy of Richard C. Frajola

The map outlines three major regions leaving the southern border area of New Mexico Territory to be surveyed at a later date. The main settlements in the western Kansas Territory were Auraria, Denver City, Montana City and St. Charles. Denver City on the east side of the Platte River was an ideal town site, and a merger with Auraria in March 1861 combined the two cities.

Denver City became the major supply center for miners and prospectors going west to the mining areas of Black Hawk, Gold Dirt, Idaho, Mountain City, Hamilton, and Tarryall. The placer gold discoveries made in late 1858 through 1860 were among the richest deposits attracting gold seekers.

Two other areas to be explored were Boulder district in the Nebraska Territory a short distance north of the Kansas Territory border and just inside Nebraska Territory. Then further west over the Continental Divide in the Utah Territory a major discovery was made on the Blue River. The town called Breckinridge was soon developed. The lure of gold attracted many brave pioneers to cross these high mountains opening up gold mines, and building towns on the Western Slope.