

SAN PASQUAL BATTLEFIELD STATE HISTORIC PARK.



Commemorating the Battle of San Pasqual 1846



VOLUNTEER IN THE PARKS.

You are invited to join the Volunteer in the Parks (V.I.P.) program. California State Park Volunteers support San Pasqual Battlefield State Historic Park in many ways. We are currently looking for volunteers to help with school presentations at the park, demonstrate historic skills on the first Sunday of each month, host the museum desk and help with office tasks. If you are interested in learning more about the Battle of San Pasqual and sharing that knowledge with park visitors, we need you!

For more information, please call San Pasqual Battlefield S.H.P Staff at 760.737.2201.



SPECIAL THANKS.

San Pasqual Battlefield Volunteer Association
Witman Ranch
Joe Lopez
Lt. Col. Charles Waterhouse USMC
San Pasqual Band Native Americans
Staff & Volunteers
Ben Cueva



THE HISTORY OF THE BATTLE OF SAN PASQUAL.

The Battle of San Pasqual took place on December 6, 1846 between the United States forces led by Brigadier General Stephen W. Kearny and Californios led by Major Andres Pico. This battle was only one of the military encounters in California in the U.S.-Mexican War, but it proved to be the bloodiest and the one with the most controversial outcome.

To conquer California for the United States, the Army of the West had marched in June 1846 from Fort Leavenworth, in what is now Kansas, across the southern desert where they endured the lack of water, lack of food, and poor condition of their cavalry mounts.

A few days out of Santa Fe, in what is now New Mexico, Brigadier General Kearny received erroneous word that California was in American hands and all was secure on the Pacific Coast.

Because of this misinformation, he sent two-thirds of his men back to Santa Fe and continued westward with a force of 100 men. The eastward scout Kit

Carson was pressed into service as a guide for the army troops as they progressed onward.

The journey across the barren desert took its toll on the men and their mounts. When they finally encamped at Santa Maria (now Ramona) on the night of December 5, 1846, they were hungry, exhausted, and stiff from the cold and rain.

Nearby, a Californio force, led by Major Andres Pico, had encamped at the Native American pueblo

of San Pasqual. News of the Californios' presence was brought to Brigadier General Kearny, who sent a nighttime reconnaissance patrol to investigate the Californios' camp. Unfortunately, the presence of the patrol became known because of noises it made. Alerted to the possibility of attack, the Californios prepared for battle.

At dawn on a cold, rainy December 6th, the U.S. Troops rode over the hills between Santa Maria (now Ramona) and San Pasqual to face the Californios in the valley below.

In the resulting battle, the Californios' lances proved to be an overwhelming advantage over the U.S. troops' short swords and rifles with dampened gunpowder. Eighteen soldiers were killed during the battle; three others died later of wounds, and one missing in action. Pico reported that only one Californio was killed. This figure is controversial.

That night, the U.S. forces buried their dead, bound up their wounded, then tried to continue to San Diego the next morning. They were stopped just past Rancho

San Bernardo at what came to be called Mule Hill (just above Lake Hodges). There they were besieged by the Californios until the morning of December 11th when additional troops arrived from San Diego to rescue them. The Californios departed when they sighted the U.S. relief column.

The Army of the West, wounded and bedraggled, finally reached San Diego on December 12, 1846.

