

Major General Joseph Rodman West



Lieutenant Colonel West, circa 1861

Brigadier-General Joseph R. West was born in the state of Louisiana, but in early manhood took up his residence in California, and from there enlisted as a soldier for the Mexican war. He became a private in the mounted volunteers July 17, 1847; was promoted captain July 25; was later attached to the Maryland and District of Columbia volunteers, and was honorably mustered out of the service on August 10, 1848.

He then returned to California, in which state he was residing at the time of the outbreak of the Civil war. On Aug. 5, 1861, he was commissioned lieutenant-colonel of the 1st California Volunteer Infantry which was organized in pursuance of the president's first call upon the state of California for troops.

On the completion of the organization the regiment moved to Camp Latham, between Los Angeles and Santa Monica. On June 1, 1862, Lieutenant Colonel West was promoted to the position of colonel and the regiment became a part of the California column, under command of Brigadier General Carleton, which marched from San Pedro to the Rio Grande and assisted in the recapture of New Mexico. Colonel

West was warmly commended in Carleton's official report of the expedition, and was recommended for promotion. Said Carleton: "I send you a set of colors which have been borne by this column. They were hoisted by Colonel West on Forts Breckinridge and Buchanan, and over Tucson, Ariz.," etc.

On Oct. 25, 1862, Col. West was commissioned brigadier-general of volunteers and continued to serve in that capacity until the close of the war, being honorably mustered out Jan. 4, 1866, when he was given the brevet rank of major-general of volunteers.

Brigadier General West died October 31, 1898.