

## Elbridge Gerry

Elbridge Gerry may have been related to one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. People used to think he was the signer, Elbridge Gerry's, grandson. But no one knows for sure. Some do not think he was a grandson. He was born in Massachusetts on July 18, 1818. He came to Colorado in the 1830's. He came to the mountains to trap beavers for their pelts.

He was a trapper and trader.

People were not wanting beaver pelts any longer. Gerry then went north to Wyoming. He opened a trading post. He started to trade with Native Americans. While in Wyoming, he married a young Sioux woman.

Elbridge Gerry was the first white settler in what is now Weld County.

Other people passed through the area and may have stayed a few days, but Gerry settled here with his wife. They came around 1853. They had a horse ranch and General Store along the South Platte River. Gerry was still trading with the local Native Americans using his store.

He was trusted by the Native Americans because they traded with him and because his wife was a Native American.

Governor Evans asked Elbridge Gerry to help the territory get a treaty (Agreement) with the Native Americans for some of their hunting lands. The Native people would not agree.

Settlers were not keeping the treaty with the Native Americans about the hunting lands.

Between 1862-1864, more and more people were homesteading and farming those lands. The Native Americans and settlers were fighting more often.

The Native Americans planned a huge attack on Denver and the settlements near it. Elbridge's wife's relatives came to warn them.

The Native Americans were planning a huge raid on small settlements and on Denver.

Elbridge Gerry is known as the "Paul Revere" of Colorado.

After the warning, Gerry got on one of his horses and started to ride. He rode a total of 70 miles to alert everyone that may be in danger. It took him two days to reach Denver. His warning gave Governor Evans enough time to get troops ready to defend the towns.

People all over the Colorado Territory called Gerry a hero.

The Native Americans started to raid Gerry's ranch because they knew he warned the people. He lost a lot of horses and mules. But he kept raising horses and also opened the Gerry House Hotel in Evans, Colorado.

Elbridge Gerry died on April 10, 1875.

He is buried in a small family plot near the place where his ranch stood.

People today remember "The Paul Revere of Colorado."