



# Richard Sopris in Early Denver: Captain, Mayor & Colorado Fifty-Niner

*Linda Bjorklund*

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From Gregory's Diggings prospector to Denver mayor, Richard Sopris left an indelible mark on the Mile High City and Centennial State. During an 1860 prospecting expedition, Sopris discovered Glenwood Springs and the nearly thirteen-thousand-foot summit later named for him. Following life as a steamboat captain, he was appointed captain of Company C, First Colorado Cavalry, in 1861 and commanded volunteer troops at Glorieta Pass. After serving as a delegate to the first constitutional convention of Colorado and as Arapaho County sheriff, he helped quell the Hop Alley Chinese Riot of 1880 and enacted public works projects to rid Denver of a deadly typhoid outbreak. After his mayoral term ended in 1881, Sopris became the first commissioner of his beloved City Park. Author Linda Bjorklund celebrates the unsung life and accomplishments of a founding son of Colorado.

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