Mace's Hole, Beulah Colorado

The community of Beulah is one of the earliest settlements in the West and was founded in the 1840s as Fisher's Hole by Robert Fisher, a fur trader, hunter and guide. It is situated in the beautiful Wet Mountains, 23 miles southwest of Pueblo and is approximately 6,800 feet above sea level. In the 1860s it was renamed Mace's Hole after the outlaw and cattle rustler Juan Mace, who hid in the surrounding mountains.

In 1861, when Confederate Gen. Henry Sibley organized his Army of New Mexico to invade New Mexico, Capt. George Madison was commissioned by Sibley to venture into Colorado with a two-fold mission: disrupt federal mail and communication lines, and to help organize Confederate recruitment in Colorado.

A rumor started that many southern sympathizers were staying in a mountain hideout near Pueblo and forming a Southern Military Regiment. The rumor was true. Pueblo was a huge "Southern" area and those who wanted to serve the South could get hooked up there. The mountain hideout was called Mace's Hole. Colonel John Heffinger was the Southern commander put in charge of recruiting and readying this Southern force.

At this time, Confederate recruits in Colorado were first sent to a camp in the Pikes Peak area, and then sent to the main Confederate encampment at Mace's Hole. Gen. Sibley was working on two objectives for his Army of New Mexico at that time: capture of the state of New Mexico to open a path to the Pacific, and capture Colorado to take the much needed gold mines for the South.

At one point, in early 1862, Capt. Madison and his men captured mail en route to Ft. Garland. At the time, they were actively planning a raid on Ft. Garland with Col. Heffinger's regiment (about 600 soldiers) from Mace's Hole. Unfortunately, Federal soldiers learned of the encampment at Mace's Hole and broke up the regiment while many of the Confederates were away. The Federals took those who remained in camp that day prisoner. Following this, Col. Heffinger, his officers, including Capt. Madison and his men, were all ordered to join Sibley in New Mexico.

In 1876 Colorado became a state. The residents of Mace's Hole felt an area of such beauty and promise deserved a more fitting name. "Beulah" won out over three other entries and on Oct. 25, 1876, Beulah became the official name of the community.

Historical Marker 16 on the Highway 78

Mount Signal, Beulah Colorado

Signal Mountain served as a lookout point for Juan Mace's watchmen. It was also used by Confederate soldiers during the Civil War.

Southern Sympathizers made Mace's Hole their Colorado headquarters, aiming to capture Colorado and its gold mines for the Confederacy

Confederates Captured at Mace's Hole
(Colorado City Journal 28 November 1861)

Credits:
• The Beulah Buzz | Beulah, Colorado Community News
• Military Order of the Stars and Bars (MOSB) website (www.coloradomosb297.org/colorado.htm)